

Houston-Galveston Area Council  
Livable Centers Study:

# FOURTH WARD

FINAL REPORT  
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Houston-Galveston Area Council

Fourth Ward  
Redevelopment Authority



# DESIGNWORKSHOP

Landscape Architecture, Planning, & Urban Design

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PROJECT SUMMARY

## Overview

The Fourth Ward Livable Centers Plan is a partnership between the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), Fourth Ward Redevelopment Authority, and the City of Houston, Texas for developing Livable Center recommendations, infrastructure improvements, and urban design solutions for the neighborhood. A series of focus groups helped guide the recommendations throughout the process. The Livable Centers Program, managed through H-GAC, shares four overall values:

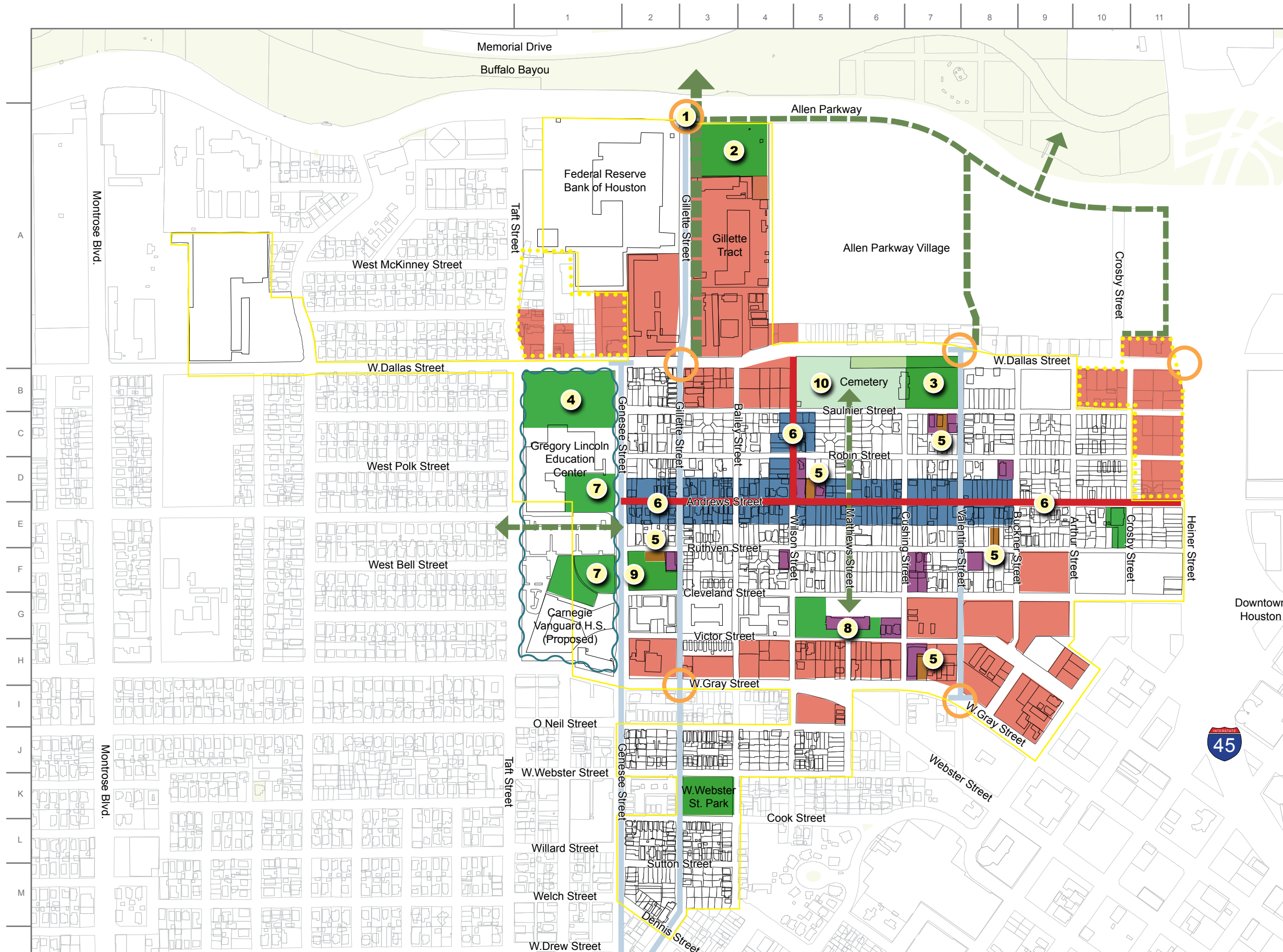
- Increase multi-modal travel choices;
- Create quality, walkable, mixed-use places;
- Protect and enhance environmental quality; and
- Promote economic development.

With these values in mind, the team set goals that work toward each value and those from within the Fourth Ward community and its various stakeholders. The table to the right is an abbreviated version of the categories, goals, and metrics that can be found in the Project Roadmap chapter. Each of these goals should be informed by case studies, market analysis, and site analysis. A plan for implementation, which includes funding options, prioritization, strategies to overcome key regulatory barriers, and a detailed list of associated projects are all steps required to turn a plan into reality.

Based on the values, goals, and metrics outlined in the Project Roadmap chapter, the Community Framework Plan evolved (far right). This framework ties together many of the key themes of the plan – enhancement of centers, better connectivity, and protection of history and culture of the community. It was the driving force behind many of the outcomes of the Fourth Ward Livable Centers plan.

There are forty-five projects that evolved out of the planning process. These include projects relative to Centers, Affordable Housing, Cultural History and Preservation, Streets and Infrastructure, Parks and Open Space, and Parking. The plan highlights an implementation strategy for each project including cost estimates, responsible parties, priorities, and funding sources when applicable. This information is found within the Close the Gap and Preferred Alternatives chapters of this document.

Category	Goal	Metric
<i>Multi-Modal Travel</i>	<p>MMT1 Increase safety for multiple transportation modes such as pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and visiting groups of people.</p> <p>MMT2 Increase accessibility and circulation for multiple transportation modes such as pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and visiting groups of people.</p> <p>MMT3 Utilize Rights of Way in a creative manner that accommodates all users throughout the district.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced speed limits</li> <li>• Streets made ADA compliant.</li> <li>• Bicycle friendliness.</li> <li>• Improved transit access</li> <li>• Conduciveness to transit.</li> <li>• Percent of Right of Way devoted to automobiles, pedestrians, &amp; bicycles.</li> </ul>
<i>Quality Mixed Use</i>	<p>QMU1 Create a development framework that focuses on mixed uses - Live-Work-Play environment - to encourage walkability.</p> <p>QMU2 Strengthen community, identity, tradition, and culture of Freedmen’s Town through quality design.</p> <p>QMU3 Provide residential housing serving the full range of economic groups.</p> <p>QMU4 Provide public spaces that are visible, safe, comfortable, interesting, and accessible to all.</p> <p>QMU5 Ensure that block sizes do not interfere with connectivity and are not a barrier to redevelopment.</p> <p>QMU6 Promote pedestrian activity along the street and near to buildings.</p> <p>QMU7 Provide adequate parking to serve proposed densities and uses without overly impacting the existing neighborhood.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dwelling Units within proximity of a diversity of uses.</li> <li>• Dwelling Units accessible to diverse uses through a variety of transportation means.</li> <li>• Creation of design standards</li> <li>• Funding for cultural arts</li> <li>• Awareness in of the history of Freedmen’s Town.</li> <li>• Affordability as measured against Average Median Income.</li> <li>• Residences in proximity to parks.</li> <li>• Parks that contain a variety of programming.</li> <li>• Improved connectivity</li> <li>• Reduction of “super block” lengths</li> <li>• Improvement of “activated frontage”</li> <li>• Improvement of shaded walking areas (human comfort)</li> <li>• Improvement of on-street and shared parking</li> <li>• Accommodations for event and special use parking</li> </ul>
<i>Environmental Quality</i>	<p>EQ1 Improve air quality by making transit, walking/bicycling trips more feasible.</p> <p>EQ2 Incorporate the environment into the planning process by preserving natural resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced vehicle miles traveled.</li> <li>• Increased transit ridership.</li> <li>• Retention of storm water in study area and filtration of water in neighborhood.</li> <li>• Reduction of impervious cover in the right of way</li> </ul>
<i>Economic Development</i>	<p>ED1 Promote value by serving as a catalyst for investment and development.</p> <p>ED2 Leverage private investment to achieve a balance of land use types.</p> <p>ED3 Promote efficient use of infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gap between Houston’s expenses &amp; revenues in the neighborhood.</li> <li>• Improved access to retail and services by percent.</li> <li>• Capacity maximization for water, wastewater, storm water, streets, and transit.</li> </ul>
<i>Implementation &amp; Coordination</i>	<p>IC1 Ensure coordination and implementation tools are in place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of projects with viable implementation paths.</li> </ul>

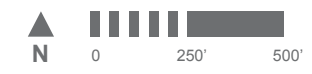


# Overall Community Framework Plan

## LEGEND

- 1** Proposed Allen Parkway Crossing
  - 2** San Felipe Park (Former Site)
  - 3** Founders Memorial Cemetery
  - 4** Open Recreation Field
  - 5** Proposed Community Garden Site
  - 6** Proposed Restoration of Brick Streets
  - 7** HISD Park Spaces
  - 8** African American Library at the Gregory School
  - 9** Wiley Park
  - 10** Beth Israel Cemetery
- Study Boundary
  - Community Parks and Open Spaces
  - Potential Redevelopment Areas
  - Priority Historic Home Replacement Zone
  - Civic and Religious
  - Potential Community Garden Site
  - Proposed Greenway or Trail
  - Restored Brick Streets
  - Proposed Fitness Trail
  - Proposed 2-Way Street
  - Neighborhood Gateway
  - Recommended TIRZ Acquisition Zone

The Overall Community Framework Plan shows various types of proposed projects in relation to each other. It is a comprehensive look at proposed projects in the area.







PROJECT ROAD MAP

## Project Background

The H-GAC Livable Centers Program brings together land use and transportation through a three-pronged coordination strategy that employs the identification and reinforcement of bicycle and pedestrian friendly centers, integration of systems between the centers, and designs based on the context of the neighborhood or community. A “Livable Centers” project category has been created in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and sponsors have proposed both planning and implementation of Livable Centers projects.

“Centers” are places with a mix of uses that allow for “living, working and playing” such as workplaces, shopping, entertainment, and/or housing. Clustering these activities creates opportunities for walking, bicycling, and transit trips, thus reducing the need for car travel. The goal of the Livable Centers Program is to improve access, while reducing the need for single-occupant vehicles. Through a concentration and a mix of land uses, Livable Centers allow for greater accessibility by a variety of transportation modes, including walking, bicycling, and transit.

The City of Houston applied for a Livable Centers Study from H-GAC to help plan for a parcel of land they own in the Fourth Ward referred to as the Gillette Tract. The City with the Fourth Ward Redevelopment Authority teamed up to create a project that would have dual purposes as follows:

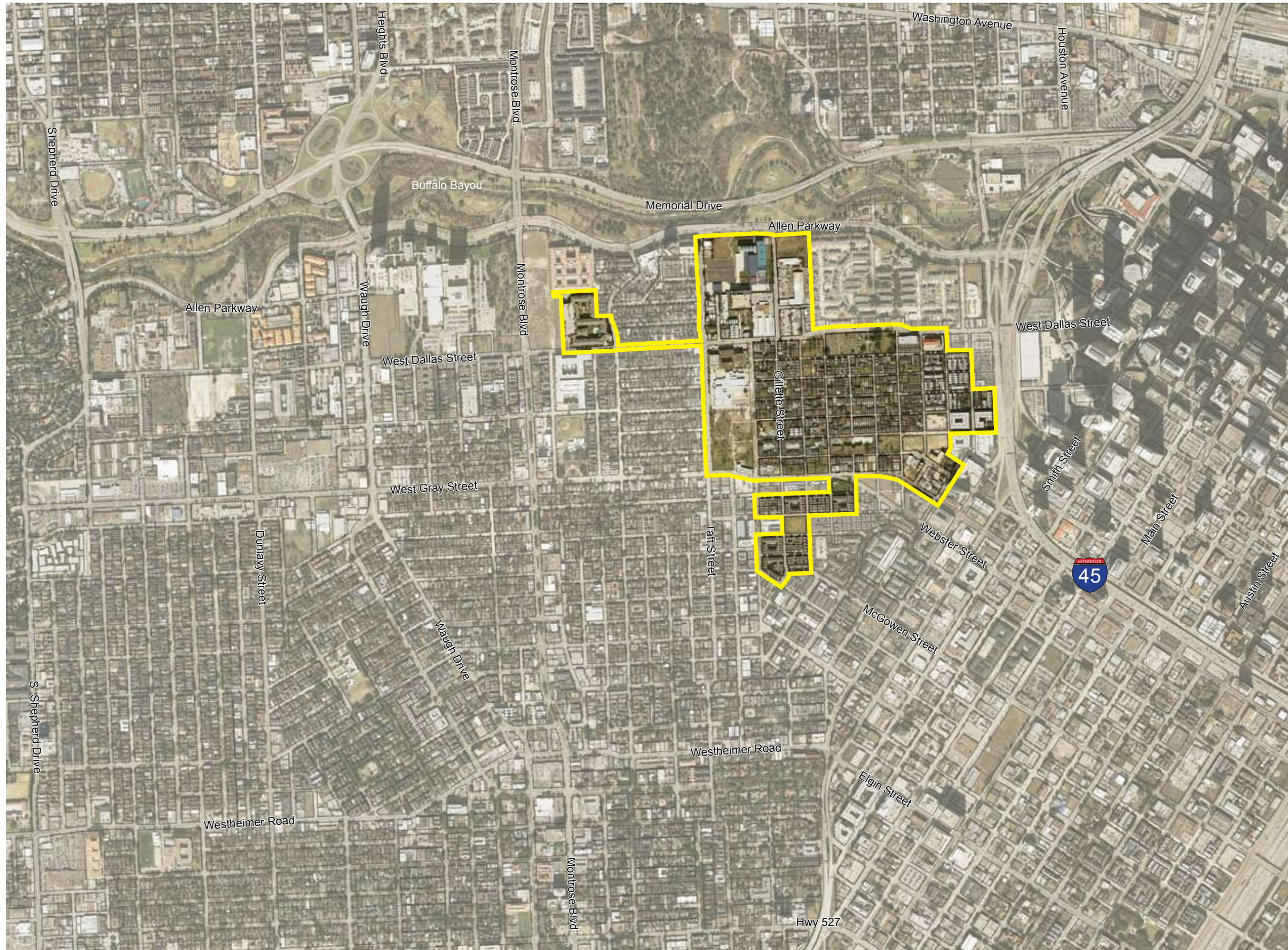
- Plan for the program and character of the Gillette Tract that will provide the City of Houston a reasonable return on investment for the property.
- Plan for infrastructure and other improvements in the neighborhood that will make the Fourth Ward a more livable center.

The resulting plan consists of a preliminary inventory analysis, needs assessment, community visioning workshop, framework plans, urban design guidelines, and implementation strategies.



### *H-GAC Livable Centers Program Facts*

- **Goals Statement:** The goal of H-GAC’s Livable Centers Program is to facilitate the creation of walkable, mixed-use places that provide multi-modal transportation options, improve quality, and promote economic development.
- **Project Types:** The Livable Centers Program funds both studies and implementation projects
  - Studies create the groundwork for future implementation projects by identifying potential investments and generating implementation design and plans.
  - Implementation projects provide funding support for transportation investments identified through planning studies.
- **Funding Source: Federal Transportation Dollars**
  - Livable Centers Studies: STP (Surface Transportation Program)
  - Livable Centers Implementation Projects: CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation Air Quality)
- **Funding Process:** Livable Centers funds are programmed through H-GAC’s TIP (Transportation Improvement Program), a competitive selection process that allocates funding over a three-year period.
- **Funding Level:**
  - Federal: 80%
  - Local Match: 20% (minimum)
- **Project Eligibility:** Projects must be sponsored by an eligible sponsor such as a local government, transit agency or management district. Sponsors must be able to provide at least a 20% funding match. Projects must also meet the project requirements detailed in the Livable Centers Metrics document (found at [www.h-gac.com/livablecenters](http://www.h-gac.com/livablecenters)).



Study Area Map

LEGEND

 TIRZ Boundary

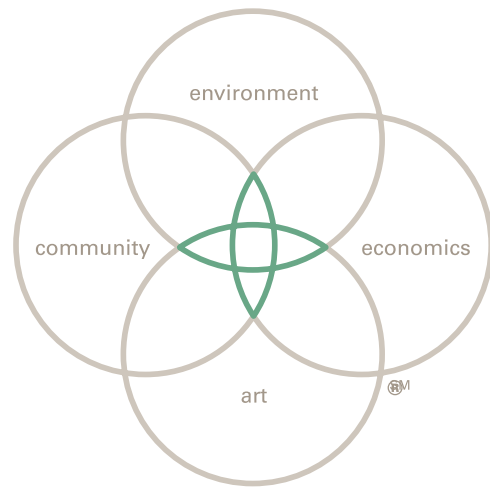


## Project Metrics and Goals

### Legacy Design Method

The Design Workshop Legacy Design® method builds a narrative foundation for a project and then sees the various components of that narrative (i.e. dilemma, thesis, narrative principles and goals) take shape in plans. All aspects of the design process and foundational thinking for a project are captured. Issues associated with the project and our client's Critical Success Factors are defined at the outset. The design team and client define a project Vision, a problem statement called a Dilemma and a design solution called a Thesis.

These steps are intended to build a strong foundational story for the project that aligns team and client to the same principles and goals. DW Legacy Design® metrics are employed to ensure that the project is accountable to principles and comprehensive Legacy goals set at the beginning of the process. The design process emphasizes a deliberate approach to sustainable design solutions that incorporates all four "Legacy" categories: environment, community, art and economics.



*DW Legacy Design® utilizes categories of sustainability to ensure that a comprehensive and unique set of goals, metrics and strategies are developed for each project.*

## Project Dilemma/Challenge

A dilemma is a storytelling device that describes a project's predicament. It sums up the major challenges that must be reconciled to achieve a Legacy outcome. Beginning with a discussion of the project's context, it answers the question: "What is standing in the way of a project's potential for success?" In the case of the Fourth Ward, striking a balance between the goals of H-GAC and the preservation of a fragile and rapidly deteriorating historic community is critical.

*Can this plan accommodate the redevelopment ideals the City of Houston, while protecting the unique and fragile identity of the Fourth Ward (affordable, culture, and community), and can this plan bring a diverse group of residents together around a common vision?*

## Project Thesis/Approach

A thesis is an assertion about the project outcome that will be tested and resolved through the team's design and planning investigations. It is a proposed solution to the central problem or question stated in the dilemma. Collectively articulating the big idea of the project focuses the team around a common goal or story.

*By involving community stakeholders early and often throughout the process, by focusing on implementable projects, and forming the political capital to complete them, we will create a vision that will meet the seemingly conflicting goals of the stakeholders and build capacity for real progress in the study area.*

## H-GAC Critical Success Factors & Goals

The team identified and confirmed the client's critical success factors, which are the principles that must be incorporated into the project that serve to measure the success of the project.

### 1. Create multi-modal travel choices by facilitating a range of transportation mode opportunities:

- Increase safety for multiple transportation modes such as pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and visiting groups of people.
- Increase accessibility and circulation for multiple transportation modes such as pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and visiting groups of people.
- Utilize Rights of Way in a creative manner that accommodates all users throughout the district.

### 2. Create quality, walkable, mixed-use places:

- Create a development framework that focuses on mixed uses - Live-Work-Play environment - to encourage walkability.
- Strengthen community, identity, tradition, and culture of Freedmen's Town through quality design.
- Provide residential housing serving the full range of economic groups.
- Provide public spaces that are visible, safe, comfortable, interesting, and accessible to all.
- Ensure that block sizes do not interfere with connectivity and are not a barrier to redevelopment.
- Promote pedestrian activity along the street and near to buildings.
- Provide adequate parking to serve proposed densities and uses without overly impacting the existing neighborhood.

### 3. Improve environmental quality:

- Improve air quality by making transit, walking/ bicycling trips more feasible.
- Incorporate the environment into the planning process by preserving green space and natural resources.

### 4. Promote economic development:

- Promote value by serving as a catalyst for investment and development.
- Work toward the "highest and best use" of the Gillette tract.
- Leverage private investment to achieve a balance of land use types.
- Promote efficient use of infrastructure.

### 5. Other:

- Ensure coordination and implementation tools are in place.
- Ensure that the Gillette redevelopment complies with agreements made with key stakeholders and owners.
- Work toward historic and cultural preservation.
- Maintain long-term affordability in the area.

## Metrics

DW Legacy Design® Metrics is a discovery-oriented tool to shape a collective point of view about a project's aspirations. It helps to develop more-thorough design solutions by setting goals, integrating strategies from all four circles and measuring outcomes. Metrics help clients understand how DW Legacy Design® will positively impact their project.

Metrics lead to a distilled and iterated set of goals that is applied to design solutions and that results in physical outcomes that evidence the comprehensive direction set by the team. Collectively set by the team and client, Legacy goals keep the project and team accountable by incorporating strategies from each of the Legacy circles and by measuring the results after implementation. The setting of Legacy goals is an iterative process that requires research into baselines and benchmarks in order to be realistic about aspirations and specific goals.

## Legacy Design Process

To determine the Legacy metrics most applicable to the project, the design team initially engaged in a quick facilitated team exercise. Design Workshop's comprehensive lists of topics under the categories of Environment, Community, Art and Economics were printed in large format, pinned on the wall, then circled and annotated by team members to discover areas of opportunity, challenge and overlap.

This initial list was then shared with the client to seek endorsement on which topics were relevant to pursue as goals for the project. The topics were captured in a matrix of goals, strategies and outcomes in order to track progress during the master planning process.

*“The goal of H-GAC’s Livable Centers Program is to facilitate the creation of walkable, mixed-use places that include residential and commercial components, provide multi-modal transportation options, improve environmental quality, and promote economic development.”*

Category	Goal	Baseline	Metric	Risks and Challenges	Cost Implications	Standards and Precedents	Project Number
<i>MMT</i>							
<i>Multi-Modal Travel</i>							
	<b>MMT1</b> Increase safety for multiple transportation modes such as pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and visiting groups of people.	Speed Limits: 30 mph district-wide	Ideal: Speed Limits under 35 mph Designed: 20 mph for interior streets, maintain 30 mph on collectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expensive construction</li> <li>Utility conflicts</li> <li>Long-term implementation</li> <li>Enforcement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of upgrades</li> <li>New signage/updates to signage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Houston Urban Corridors</li> <li>ADA and TDLR Guidelines</li> <li>Sight triangles</li> </ul>	14, 16, 20-32, 34, 35, 43-45
		Intersections striped with pedestrian crossings: 12	Designed: All intersections include crosswalk striping or paving				
		Average distance for pedestrian crossing internal roadway intersection: 22'	Designed: One way street crossings at 10', Two way and fire access crossings at 20'				
		Average of 1 overhead light fixture per block	Designed: Three fixtures per block; minimum of one per intersection (close to .5fc average)				
	<b>MMT2</b> Increase accessibility and circulation for multiple transportation modes such as pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and visiting groups of people.	Block frontages with a contiguous ADA compliant sidewalk on at least one side: 45	Designed: 100% of frontages include an accessible route on at least one side of street (+164)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited ability to implement (leadership and political support)</li> <li>Cost</li> <li>Lane/ROW availability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of upgrades</li> <li>New facilities/updates to signage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Houston bike plan</li> <li>City of Houston Infrastructure Design Manual</li> <li>ADA</li> </ul>	14, 16, 19-32, 34, 35, 43-45
		# of intersections with at least one couplet of ADA compliant crossings = 13	Designed: 100% of intersections include at least one couplet of ADA features (+100)				
		Miles of signed bike route = .88	Designed: 1.18 miles (34% increase)				
		# of transit stops = 22 (6 of which are shelters)	No net change				
		Number of bus routes that directly serve the study area: 2	Designed: 4				
	<b>MMT3</b> Utilize Rights of Way in a creative manner that accommodates all users throughout the district.	Existing ROW for vehicular travel:	Designed ROW for vehicular travel:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expensive to build pedestrian infrastructure</li> <li>Limited right-of-way</li> <li>Limited ability to enforce guidelines</li> <li>City bicycle toolbox does not provide adequate solutions</li> <li>Fire code - Safety</li> <li>ROW too narrow to fit everything</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expensive construction</li> <li>Will require an extensive re-working of existing infrastructure</li> <li>Reduced paving saves money</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LEED ND, ADA, AASHTO, City bike plan</li> <li>City of Houston "Skinny streets"</li> <li>City of Houston Infrastructure Design Manual</li> </ul>	12, 14, 16, 20-32, 34, 35, 45
		West Dallas: 45' of 60' ROW, or 75% for vehicular travel	West Dallas: 44' of 60' ROW, or 75% for vehicular travel; no change				
		West Gray: 45' of 70' ROW, or 65% for vehicular travel	West Gray: 44' of 60' ROW, or 75% for vehicular travel; no change				
		Taft: 40' of 70' ROW, or 57% for vehicular travel	Taft: 40' of 70' ROW, or 57% for vehicular travel; no change				
		Genessee: 24' of 60' ROW, or 40% for vehicular travel	Genessee: 20' of 60' ROW, or 33% for vehicular travel, 7% improvement				
		NS internal: 14' of 30' ROW, or 47% for vehicular travel	NS internal: 10' of 30' ROW (one way), or 33% for vehicular travel; 14% improvement NS internal: 20' of 30' ROW (two way), or 66% for vehicular travel; 19% increase				
		EW internal: 14' of 27.5' ROW, or 51% for vehicular travel	EW internal: 10' of 30' ROW, or 33% for vehicular travel; 18% improvement				
		Gillette North: 40' of 60' ROW, or 67% for vehicular travel	Gillette North: 33' of 60' ROW or 55% for vehicular travel; 12% improvement				

Category	Goal	Baseline	Metric	Risks and Challenges	Cost Implications	Standards and Precedents	Project Number
<b>QMU</b> <i>Quality Mixed Use</i>	<b>QMU1</b> Create a development framework that focuses on mixed uses - Live-Work-Play environment - to encourage walkability.	<p>Existing services:</p> <p>Food Retail: Supermarket (0), Other food store with produce (0)</p> <p>Community-Serving Retail: Clothing store or department store selling clothes (0), Convenience store (0), Farmer's market (0), Hardware store (0), Pharmacy (0), Other retail (0)</p> <p>Services: Bank (0), Check Cashing (1), Gym/health club (0), Hair care (0), Laundry/dry cleaner (0), Restaurant (5)</p> <p>Civic and Community Facilities: Adult or senior care (licensed) (1), Child care (licensed) (0), Community or recreation center (0), Cultural arts facility (museum, performing arts) (2), Educational facility (including K-12 school, university, adult education center, vocational school, community college) (2), Family entertainment venue (theater, sports) (0), Government office that serves public on-site (0), Place of worship (7), Medical clinic or office that treats patients (0), Police or fire station (0), Post office (0), Public library (1), Public park (5), Social services center (1)</p> <p>Existing connected centers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian = 10% of proper path in place to 4 closest centers</li> <li>• Bicycle = 80% of path in place to 4 closest centers (assumes road share)</li> <li>• Transit = 25% of path in place to 4 closest centers</li> </ul>	<p>Ideal centers:</p> <p>50% of the dwelling units are within a 1/4-mile walking distance of 10 diverse uses (see list in baseline), including at least one use from each of the three categories.</p> <p>Designed centers:</p> <p>95% of the dwelling units are within a 1/4-mile walking distance of 10 diverse uses (see list in baseline), including at least one use from each of the three categories.</p> <p>Ideal connection to centers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian = 100% of path in place to 4 closest centers</li> <li>• Bicycle = 100% of path in place to 4 closest centers (assumes road share)</li> <li>• Transit = 100% of path in place to 4 closest centers</li> </ul> <p>Designed connection to centers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian = 100% of path in place to 4 closest centers</li> <li>• Bicycle = 100% of path in place to 4 closest centers (assumes road share)</li> <li>• Transit = 100% of path in place to 4 closest centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No demand for proposed uses</li> <li>• Community push-back on vertical mixed use format</li> <li>• Limited visibility into neighborhood due to density and heights</li> <li>• Increased gentrification rate</li> <li>• Limited ability to enforce guidelines</li> <li>• No cooperation from land owners</li> <li>• Defining Boundary</li> <li>• Low market demand for centers</li> <li>• Expense of land for parks</li> <li>• Lower densities do not support additional parks</li> <li>• Expensive to build pedestrian infrastructure</li> <li>• Limited right-of-way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure up-grades</li> <li>• Private investment at this level will create safer pedestrian spaces</li> <li>• Funding source for buried power lines</li> <li>• Funding source for TIRZ</li> <li>• Loss of density means loss of funding for TIRZ</li> <li>• Will be easier to work affordability into the plan</li> <li>• Expensive construction</li> <li>• Land for parks is expensive</li> <li>• Will require an extensive re-working of existing infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEED ND</li> <li>• ADA</li> <li>• AASHTO</li> </ul>	1-4, 14-17, 20-32, 45
	<b>QMU2</b> Strengthen community, identity, tradition, and culture of Freedmen's Town through design.	<p>No cohesive visual identity</p> <p>Lack of connection to cultural centers</p> <p>Lack of enforceable design standards</p> <p># of programmed public spaces (parks, squares, &amp; plazas) = 4</p> <p>No public art program</p>	<p>Designed; Proposed wayfinding and signage project</p> <p>Designed; Proposed wayfinding and pedestrian pathways</p> <p>Designed; Proposed development of design standards for new City historic district</p> <p>Designed; 9</p> <p>Spend 1% of project funding on public art</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of interest</li> <li>• Who's culture is being represented, and to what extent?</li> <li>• Over-extended funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural additions are a cost beyond conventional development and projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3rd Ward</li> <li>• 6th Ward</li> <li>• Midtown</li> </ul>	1-4, 11-19, 37, 39-44

Category	Goal	Baseline	Metric	Risks and Challenges	Cost Implications	Standards and Precedents	Project Number
<i>QMU</i>							
<i>Quality Mixed Use</i>							
	<b>QMU3</b> Provide residential housing serving the full range of economic groups.	Existing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Units affordable at &lt;80% AMI = 25% (Harris County)</li> <li>Units affordable at &lt;100% AMI = 33% (Harris County)</li> </ul>	Ideal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Units affordable at &lt;80% AMI = 30%</li> <li>Units affordable at &lt;100% AMI = 40%</li> </ul> Designed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Units affordable at &lt;80% AMI = 30%</li> <li>Units affordable at &lt;100% AMI = 40%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to protect long-term affordability in a state where “perpetual” affordability is outlawed</li> <li>Land values will continue to rise.</li> <li>Costs of reconstruction to high historic preservation standards will make affordable housing difficult to deliver.</li> <li>Market rate redevelopment will occur with no required set-aside for affordable housing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land for affordable housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Houston Housing Authority historic restoration work in the study area</li> <li>Project Row House</li> </ul>	1-10, 13, 18
	<b>QMU4</b> Provide public spaces that are visible, safe, comfortable, interesting, and accessible to all.	Existing proximity to parks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% of all residences are within a ¼ –mile walking radius of a park. (with the inclusion of Midtown Park)</li> </ul> Existing park program variety: Founders Memorial Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cultural resource</li> </ul> West Webster Street Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>playground, dog park, pathway, seating</li> </ul> Wiley Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>basketball, playground, picnic, water play, pavilion, pathway</li> </ul> Bethel Baptist Park (Proposed) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>passive areas</li> <li>cultural identity</li> </ul>	Ideal proximity to parks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of all residences are within a ¼ –mile walking radius of a park.</li> </ul> Designed condition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% within a ¼ mile walking radius</li> </ul> Designed variety of park program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community gardens</li> <li>Basketball courts</li> <li>Dog parks</li> <li>Public art</li> <li>Playground</li> <li>Cultural and religious areas</li> <li>Seating and passive areas</li> <li>Environmental improvements</li> <li>Access to open lawn rec areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs of construction and long term operations and maintenance</li> <li>Land values will continue to rise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of cooperation on parks programs</li> <li>Lack of community participation</li> <li>Lack of funding</li> <li>TIRZ funding is limited.</li> <li>Maintenance oversight is crucial to long-term success of the parks and open space framework.</li> <li>HISD may not allow community access to open spaces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project funding</li> </ul>	20-32, 34-35, 36-44
	<b>QMU5</b> Ensure that block sizes do not interfere with connectivity and are not a barrier to redevelopment.	Existing connectivity: 498 publicly accessible street intersections with pedestrian crossings per square mile, including intersections of streets with dedicated alleys and transit rights-of-way, and intersections of streets with non-motorized rights-of-way (up to 20% of total intersections).  Existing “Super-blocks”: Beth Israel and Founders Cemetery: 815lf HISD Tract: 1510lf (along Genesee Street) Gillette Tract: 1200lf (along Gillette Street) Allen Parkway: 2700lf (along frontage, to existing overhead crossing)	Ideal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; 300 publicly accessible street intersections with pedestrian crossings per square mile</li> </ul> Designed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>550 of publicly accessible street intersections with pedestrian crossings per square mile.</li> </ul> Designed to 550lf Designed to 700lf Designed to 400lf Designed to 1600lf max	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large single-user tracts create barriers and dominate the edges of the study area</li> <li>No cooperation from single use land interests</li> <li>Security issues created by public access through school areas</li> <li>Inability to implement</li> <li>Land ownership issues</li> <li>Security issues with public access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of cooperation on parks programs</li> <li>Lack of community participation</li> <li>Lack of funding</li> <li>TIRZ funding is limited.</li> <li>Maintenance oversight is crucial to long-term success of the parks and open space framework.</li> <li>HISD may not allow community access to open spaces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New construction</li> <li>Generation of easements</li> </ul>	1-4, 18, 23, 31, 32, 36



Category	Goal	Baseline	Metric	Risks and Challenges	Cost Implications	Standards and Precedents	Project Number
QMU Quality Mixed Use	QMU6 Promote pedestrian activity along the street and near to buildings.	<p>Existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>26,705 LF of activated frontage including retail at the property line or public plaza, front porches or patios and park amenities consistently open to the public. Must have ground floor windows or outdoor spaces.</li> </ul> <p>Existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7% of pedestrian space shaded by tree canopy (purposely planted street trees on sidewalk – trees on private property that happen to overhang the street do not count)</li> </ul>	<p>Ideal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30,000 of activated frontage including retail at the property line or public plaza, front porches or patios and park amenities consistently open to the public. Must have ground floor windows or outdoor spaces.</li> </ul> <p>Designed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40,000 LF of activated frontage including retail at the property line or public plaza, front porches or patios and park amenities consistently open to the public. Must have ground floor windows or outdoor spaces.</li> </ul> <p>Ideal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% of pedestrian space shaded by tree canopy</li> </ul> <p>Designed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% of pedestrian space shaded by tree canopy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community adoption of standards</li> <li>Enforcement of standards</li> <li>Perception of safety without walls and separation</li> <li>Difficult to include garages on front of units</li> <li>May require alley construction</li> <li>Limited ability to enforce guidelines</li> <li>No cooperation from land owners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expensive construction</li> <li>Will require an extensive re-working of existing infrastructure</li> <li>Cost of upgrades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stull and Lee Plan 1-4, 7, 10-11, Houston Heights Design Guidelines 20-32</li> <li>Sixth Ward Design Guidelines</li> <li>Hill Swift Plan</li> </ul>	
	QMU7 Provide adequate parking to serve proposed densities and uses without overly impacting the existing neighborhood.	<p>Existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Day uses: 42.5% (parks, federal, cemetery, civic, commercial)</li> <li>Evening uses: 49% (parks, res., MF, commercial)</li> <li>Night uses: 44.5% (res., MF, Commercial)</li> <li>Weekend uses: 69% (parks, res., MF, commercial, civic/religious)</li> </ul> <p>Existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 blocks with a mix of land uses that will create balance to the parking demand</li> </ul> <p>Existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No parking to support activity at Bethel Baptist Park</li> <li>Not enough parking to support large events at the African American Library at the Gregory School</li> </ul>	<p>Ideal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible on street parking with clear sidewalk connections to key areas.</li> <li>Approximately 1,300 spaces\</li> <li>Shared parking available for activities in parks and Library</li> </ul> <p>Designed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1,450 on street parking spaces in the study area</li> <li>Shared parking scheme with HISD to support library and religious activities</li> <li>Hourly parking available at surface lots near West Dallas and Heiner for activities in Bethel Baptist Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of cooperation on parks programs</li> <li>Lack of community participation</li> <li>Overflows will affect the quality of life within neighborhood</li> <li>Too much parking is a waste of resources</li> <li>City development standards for on-site requirements</li> <li>The schools may not allow for shared parking.</li> <li>The community may not support a residential parking permit program.</li> <li>Vehicles may not obey parking signs and thereby block the roads.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mixture of uses and activity feeds economics</li> <li>Reduction of on-site visitor spaces will reduce costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Houston Parking Code</li> </ul>	1-4, 20-32, 45

Category	Goal	Baseline	Metric	Risks and Challenges	Cost Implications	Standards and Precedents	Project Number
<i>EQ</i>							
<i>Environmental Quality</i>							
	<b>EQ1</b> Improve air quality by making transit, walking/bicycling trips more feasible.	<p>Vehicle Miles Traveled</p> <p>Existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10,258 annual miles per household</li> </ul> <p>Mode Split</p> <p>Existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24% of commuters using transit</li> <li>76% of commuters using automobiles</li> <li>Negligible % walking or biking</li> </ul>	<p>Vehicle Miles Traveled</p> <p>Ideal: Reduction of 10%</p> <p>Designed: tbd</p> <p>Mode Split Ideal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25% transit</li> <li>50% automobiles</li> <li>25% walking or biking</li> </ul> <p>Designed: tbd</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overcoming barriers to increase transit options</li> <li>Difficulty getting people out of cars</li> <li>Scattered employment and day-to-day services</li> <li>Houston climate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanding transit</li> <li>Cost of making neighborhood more pedestrian and bicycle friendly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other districts</li> </ul>	1-4, 20-32, 34-35
	<b>EQ2</b> Incorporate the environment into the planning process by maximizing natural resources.	<p>Runoff mitigation</p> <p>Existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>95% impervious in the public rights of way</li> <li>0 sf of water quality features</li> </ul>	<p>Designed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% impervious in the public rights of way</li> <li>Approximately 29,500sf proposed in storage features and rain gardens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soil conditions of Houston</li> <li>Flat topography</li> <li>City may prefer a conventional approach to stormwater management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portland, Oregon</li> <li>Austin, Texas</li> <li>Indianapolis, Indiana</li> <li>Midtown</li> </ul>	20-33
<i>ED</i>							
<i>Economic Development</i>							
	<b>ED1</b> Promote value by serving as a catalyst for investment and development.	<p>Return on Public Investment</p> <p>Existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revenues to CITY OF HOUSTON, 4th Ward Red. Authority = 14.5 million</li> <li>Costs to CITY OF HOUSTON, 4th Ward Red. Authority, = 8 million (+-6.5 million remaining)</li> </ul>	<p>Return on Public Investment</p> <p>Ideal and Designed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revenues to City of Houston, 4th Ward Red. Authority= \$400-\$450k p/ year (assume 50-55k SF of retail, 10-15k SF of office and 500-600 residential units (combination of all centers); 9 million (+6.5 million)</li> <li>Costs to City of Houston, 4th Ward Red. Authority= estimates at 29.2 million</li> <li>Gap = 13.7 million needed in private investment, grants and other funding sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centers are not built out as anticipated</li> <li>Needed public investments do not necessarily create economic dollars, but more improve quality of life (ie. basic infrastructure)</li> <li>Market rate development does not lead the way in the centers area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TIRZ will not generate additional revenue if private development does not seek opportunities in the proposed centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Midtown</li> <li>6th Ward</li> </ul>	1-4, 8-9

Category	Goal	Baseline	Metric	Risks and Challenges	Cost Implications	Standards and Precedents	Project Number
<i>ED</i>							
<i>Economic Development</i>	<b>ED2</b> Leverage private investment to achieve a balance of land use types. (Improve access to retail and services)	80-100,000sf of existing retail and service-oriented space in +-200 acre study area (calculations excluded ROW acreage, assumes a 20% FAR to calculate sf/acre).	Base proposed centers development option: +50,000sf, improvement of 50-62%  Ideal proposed centers development option: +70,000sf, improvement of 70-87%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low market demand and delayed delivery</li> <li>• Increased gentrification</li> <li>• Lack of large development parcels</li> <li>• Inflated land costs</li> <li>• Poor infrastructure (developer costs may be high)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will improve TIRZ resources depending on delivery time</li> <li>• May require infrastructure improvements that aren't a community priority</li> </ul>		1-4, 8, 10
	<b>ED3</b> Promote efficient use of infrastructure.	<p>% of Water lines that are up to current city code: 95%</p> <p>% of Wastewater Lines that are up to current city code: 90%</p> <p>% of Stormwater lines that are up to current city code: 55%</p> <p>Frequency of Transit Service in the neighborhood: +-30 minutes</p>	<p>% of Water lines that are up to current city code: 100%</p> <p>% of Wastewater Lines that are up to current city code: 100%</p> <p>% of Stormwater lines that are up to current city code: 100%</p> <p>Frequency of Transit Service in the neighborhood: +-13 minutes or less</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrading utilities will require disruption in existing use</li> <li>• Funding may not be available for all desired improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive design, engineering and construction will be necessary to get all systems in place at once.</li> </ul>		1-4, 12, 20-35
<i>IC</i>							
<i>Implementation &amp; Coordination</i>	<b>IC1</b> Ensure coordination and implementation tools are in place.	Ability to be Implemented Existing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects with implementation path</li> </ul>	<p>Ideal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% of projects with one viable implementation path</li> <li>• 40% of projects with two viable implementation paths</li> </ul> <p>Designed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of projects with one viable implementation path</li> <li>• 60% of projects with two viable implementation paths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land ownership is complex and fragmented</li> <li>• Code or ordinance that conflicts and cannot be avoided</li> <li>• Lack of cooperation from City agencies</li> <li>• Historic restrictions not embraced by community or land owners</li> <li>• Funding unevenly distributed between historic core and corridor projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More expensive construction</li> <li>• Enforcement of standards and review of projects</li> <li>• Historic projects will not bolster the TIRZ as quickly as corridor projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H-GAC Midtown Report</li> <li>• Stull and Lee Plan</li> <li>• Houston Heights D.G.</li> <li>• Sixth Ward D.G.</li> </ul>	All Projects

# Summary of Meetings and Public Involvement Process

## Public Engagement Plan (PEP)

Early in the planning process, a Public Engagement Plan (PEP) was created to ensure a high level of communication throughout the process. It was believed that by considering the best methods of informing and involving the public about the Livable Centers Study, a stronger consensus would be created around the vision, thereby increasing the likelihood of smooth implementation. The PEP provides details about public education, advertising, and community/neighborhood/public outreach. It creates and sustains a message platform that will pro-actively communicate the vision, benefits, progress, and impact of the study to the stakeholders.

Every effort was made to involve the community in the process. Particular attention was given to obtaining input from representative segments of the community, including African-American residents and others with links to historic Freedmen's Town, new residents, landowners, business owners, developers, and non-profit entities in the neighborhood. Many outreach methods were used to inform stakeholders of opportunities to participate in the process, which included the following:

- Email "blasts"
- Personal phone calls
- Mailed invitations
- Word of mouth through churches, HOAs, community groups, community websites
- Posters at local businesses
- Signs around the community
- Flyers door-to-door
- [www.FourthWardLivableCenters.com](http://www.FourthWardLivableCenters.com) (where monthly updates can be found)

## Team Kick-Off Meeting

On March 2, 2010, a team kick-off meeting was held at the Federal Reserve Bank to bring the clients and the consultant team together to review the scope and schedule of the project. During this meeting, the clients' vision and a series of critical success factors were identified. The clients' vision reflects their greatest hopes for the project. Critical Success

Factors are the most important features or results by which the client will ultimately judge the results of the project. Once these were determined, the planning team developed Performance Measures – the metrics by which the client will evaluate the outcome of the project. Critical Success Factors and Performance Measures were continually evaluated through the course of the project.

## Stakeholder and Public Kick-Off Meeting

On March 29, 2010, a stakeholder kick off meeting was held at Rose of Sharon Church. The purpose of this meeting was to review the project purpose, scope and schedule; review a first draft of existing conditions information and analysis; and listen to the stakeholders reflect on opportunities and challenges facing the neighborhood. There were 37 attendees at the stakeholder kick off meeting.

Later that evening, a public kick off meeting was held at the Housing Authority's building on Crosby Street. The purpose of this meeting was to review the project purpose, scope and schedule; review a first draft of existing conditions information and analysis; and listen to the public reflect on opportunities and challenges facing the neighborhood. There were 40 attendees at the public kick off.

## Public Workshop

As part of Task 2: Conceptual Master Plan, the planning team held a three-day workshop (a.k.a. charrette) to provide an open and transparent process for working with the stakeholders in the community. This workshop was held at the Mount Horeb Missionary Baptist Church on April 19-20, 2010. The planning team held a series of stakeholder focus group meetings, conducted several team design reviews, and offered open studio hours where stakeholders could come, roll up their sleeves and participate in the crafting of a conceptual plan for their neighborhood. Over 60 people participated in the open studio hours, providing a rich pool of talent to work through planning and design issues. During the workshop, five stakeholder focus group meetings were held. The following stakeholders were invited to each focus group.

### 1. Community Issues

- Dr. Samuel Smith – Mt. Horeb Missionary Baptist Church

- Lenwood Johnson – Genesee Street resident, APV
- Roland Stroebel – Robin Street Square HOA
- Dave Godwin – Housing and Community Development
- Dr. Sally Wickers - Mt. Horeb/Gregory Lincoln, Coalition of Pastoral Leaders

### 2. Parks and Open Space

- Joe Turner – Parks and Recreation Department
- Margaret Gay – Carnegie Vanguard School, Building Committee
- Renissa Garza Montalvo – Houston Parks and Recreation Dept.
- Lisa Johnson – Houston General Services Department
- Rev. George Broussard – Mt. Horeb Missionary Baptist

### 3. Infrastructure

- Valda Bush - Resident
- Willie Brown - ESPA Corporation
- Ian Rosenberg – Federal Reserve Bank
- Carl Smitha – Public Works & Engineering
- John Obsta – Resident, New Fourth Ward HOA

### 4. Historic Preservation

- Randy Pace – Houston Historic Preservation Officer
- Albert & Jackie Allong – Yates Museum
- Joan Denkler – Yates Museum
- Catherine Roberts – Yates Museum
- Minnette Boesel – Houston Cultural Affairs
- Christine Diaz – Resident

### 5. Affordable Housing

- Minnette Boesel – Houston Cultural Affairs
- Rev. Elmo Johnson – Rose of Sharon Church
- State Representative Garnet Coleman
- Chris Butler – Houston Housing & Community Development
- Bob Bradford – Houston Housing & Community Development

At the conclusion of the Public Workshop, the planning team held a community open house at the Mount Horeb Missionary Baptist Church. On April 21, 2010 from 5PM to 8PM, members of the public were welcomed to the church to explore the content created at the workshop. Boards were set up around the sanctuary for attendees to browse the potential plans



Key stakeholders from the community, various City departments, and consultant team attended a stakeholder kick off meeting at the Rose of Sharon Church. It was the first opportunity for community members to verify existing conditions analysis, get a feel for the goals of the H-GAC Livable Centers program, and raise community issues.



Neighborhood participation in public meetings has emphasized the diversity of the Fourth Ward neighborhood.

and ideas. The consultant team talked with attendees about projects and concepts and gathered additional feedback. Nearly 50 people attended.

### Informal Stakeholder Meetings

In addition to the formal public and stakeholder input opportunities, the planning team met with stakeholders one-on-one to ensure involvement. A series of initial stakeholder interviews and contacts helped the planning team set up the process for maximum success. The following stakeholders were contacted as part of Task 1:

- State Representative Garnet Coleman
- New Fourth Ward Homeowners Association
- Albert Allong, Yates Museum
- Rev. George Broussard (Mt. Horeb Missionary Baptist Church)
- Bob Christy (Houston Department of Real Estate)
- Gladys House, Freedmen's Town Association
- Rev. Elmo Johnson, Rose of Sharon Missionary Baptist Church
- Lenwood Johnson, Free Man's Neighborhood Association
- Tim O'Brien (resident)
- Vanessa Sampson (Fourth Ward Redevelopment Authority)
- Dr. Samuel Smith, Pastors' Coalition / Mt. Horeb Missionary Baptist Church
- Catherine Roberts, Yates Museum
- Council Member James Rodriguez, District I
- Pamela Scott-Moton, Gregory Lincoln Education Center
- Dr. Sally Wickers, Mt. Horeb Missionary Baptist Church

After the public workshop, additional informal stakeholder meetings were deemed necessary to ensure that the conceptual plan and projects were in line with the vision of the stakeholders and that there were real paths towards implementation available for each project. The following stakeholders were interviewed as part of Task 2 and Task 3:

- State Representative Garnet Coleman
- Federal Reserve Bank
- Local developers
- Council Member Wanda Adams, District D
- Horace Allison & Dennis Spellman, Houston Housing Authority

- Christon Butler, Houston Housing Department
- Bobken Simonians, Houston Housing Authority
- Betty Chapman, Houston Historical & Archaeological Commission (Chairman)
- Guy Hagstette, Buffalo Bayou Partnership
- Council Member Jolanda Jones, At Large 5
- Ann Olson, Buffalo Bayou Partnership
- Randy Pace, Houston Historic Preservation Officer
- Diana Ponce de Leon, Houston Community Development
- Dan Rain, Houston Public Works Department (bike)
- Catherine Roberts, Yates Museum
- Jose Soto, Chief of Staff, Council Member Rodriguez
- Claudia Vasquez, Neighborhood Centers Inc.
- Paul Wright, Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- Other stakeholder meetings as determined by developing issues and recommendations

Besides the April 19-20 Public Workshop, there were several opportunities for the Focus Groups to review the evolving plan and projects. On July 7 & 8, the Focus Groups were convened to review the conceptual master plans evolving from the public workshop. The feedback from the Focus Group uncovered issues related to community, infrastructure, affordable housing, parks and open space, and historic preservation. These comments are documented within Section B of the Overall Framework chapter.

Again, on August 17 and 18, the Focus Groups were convened to ensure the resulting projects reflected their priorities. Meetings later that month were set to ensure the resulting projects reflected their stated priorities.

### Final Public Open House

On October 18, 2010, a final public open house allowed all stakeholders and interested citizens to comment on the final plan, including an implementation strategy. The consultant team presented a PowerPoint overview of the vision, goals, projects, and strategies for implementation to a large group at Mt. Horeb Missionary Baptist Church. Many of the attendees confirmed the direction of the plan. The team also took additional comments for revisioning of the final plan.



Stakeholder focus groups worked with different members of the design team on particular project challenges. Diagrams with their feedback and concerns were overlaid with the preliminary masterplan to see where differences occurred.



A public open house was held in the Mount Horeb Baptist Church sanctuary at the end of the charrette. A wide range of residents, stakeholders, and City representatives were able to ask the team questions and review all of the products from previous days.



# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## Land Use

Land uses in the study area are a physical record of Houston's unique approach to zoning, historic uses, and recent infill development trends. Of the many patterns highlighted by the land use map, the prominence of vacant land and the addition of medium density land uses into the core of the district are perhaps the most meaningful. Vacancy and unmanaged redevelopment are having an effect on both the physical and social history of this neighborhood; a history that is significant to the story of Houston.

The study area includes several major land holders. These uses are generally civic, federal, or related to public housing. Examples would be: Houston Independent School District, Beth Israel Cemetery, Federal Reserve, Allen Parkway Village, and City of Houston (Gillette Tract). In their current condition, these uses create development barriers on two of four edges of the community and work against connectivity.

The core of the community remains dominated by single family uses, many of which date prior to the construction of IH 45, when the Fourth Ward was a thriving community that stretched east into Houston's downtown. Several churches are established within the single family core, and continue to serve the local community, as well as generations of previous residents.

### Opportunities

- Long-standing civic and religious organizations can help keep the community united. (Goal IC3)
- Higher-intensity development seems more viable along major roadways and directly adjacent to Midtown. (Goal QMU1)
- Many blocks have retained historic layout and property lines. (Goal QMU2)
- Much of the core of the neighborhood remains single family. (Goal QMU2)

### Challenges

- Land ownership is complex and fragmented. (Goal IC1 and IC3)
- Large single-user tracts create barriers and dominate the edges of the study area. (Goal QMU5)
- Market pressures due to downtown proximity will continue to undermine single family uses and overall affordability. (Goal QMU2)



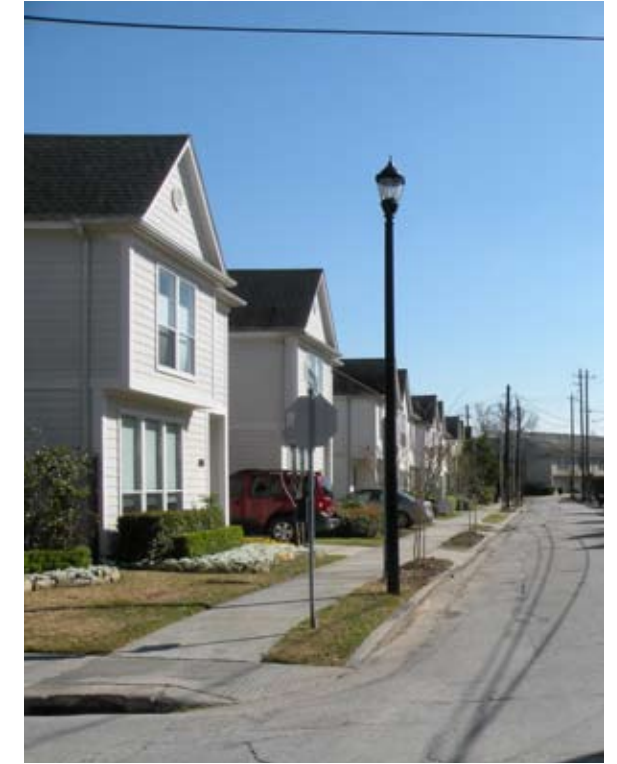
*Vacant or blighted land is a common sight. The scale of this condition varies from single lots to entire blocks.*



*Retail within the study area is generally automobile-oriented and does little to serve the community.*



*Civic uses include active churches, schools (public and charter), community centers, and libraries.*



*Some new single family dwellings make some attempt to address the historic forms and feel of the old Fourth Ward.*



*Historic single family units reflect several shapes, styles, and sizes. Victorian, Bungalow, and Shotgun styles are all present.*



*Modern styled housing units are the predominate redevelopment product in the area. Better connections to the street should be implemented in future work.*

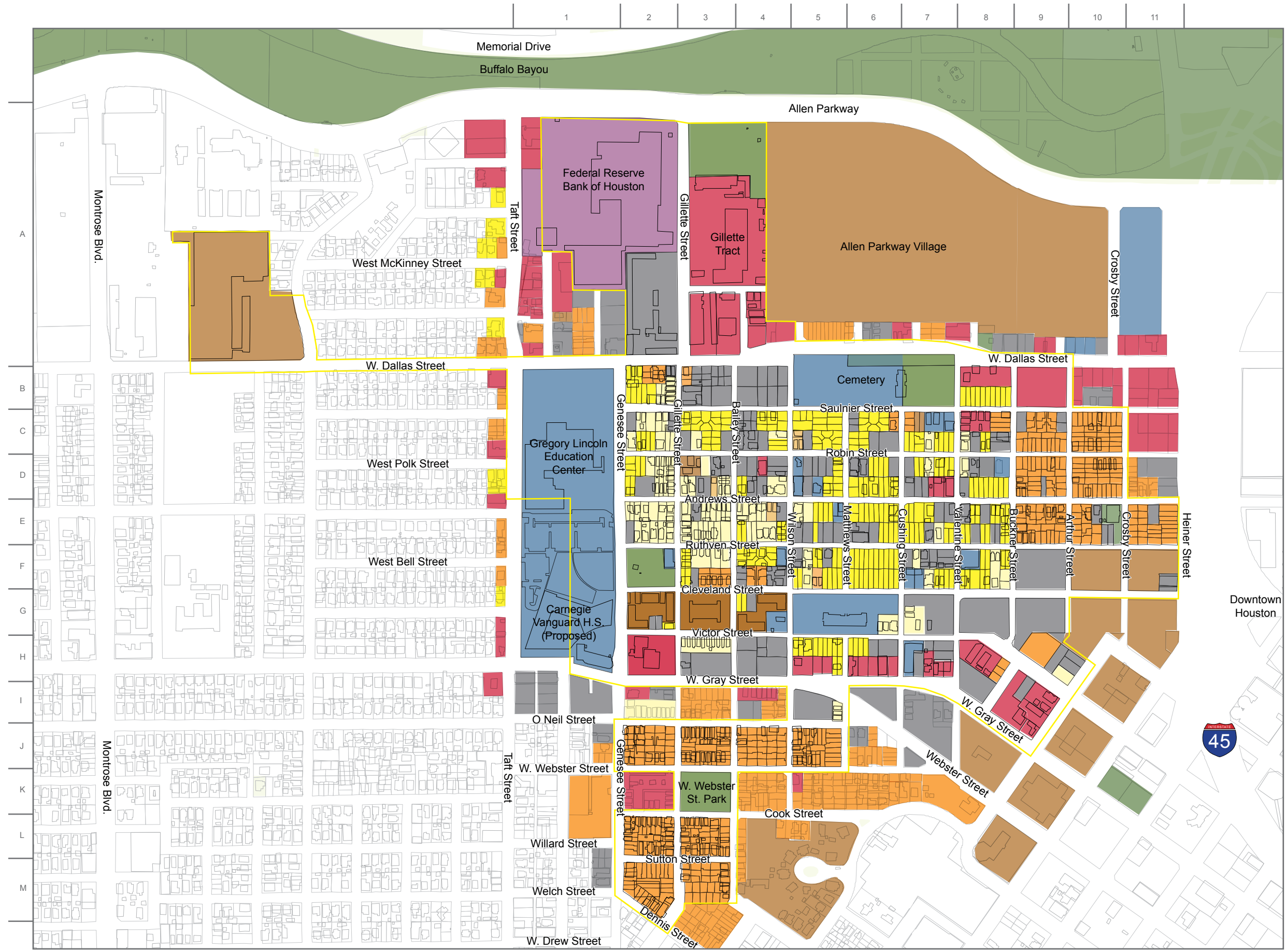


*Some newer construction has repeated historic forms of architecture, which works to maintain the feel of Historic Freedmen's Town.*



*Camden represents the most intense multifamily development within the study area.*





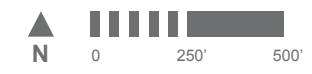
# Land Use Map

## LEGEND

- Vacant
- Commercial
- Federal
- Civic
- Parks
- Single Family
- Single Family (Older Housing Stock)
- Attached Single Family
- Attached Single Family Historic
- Multi-Family



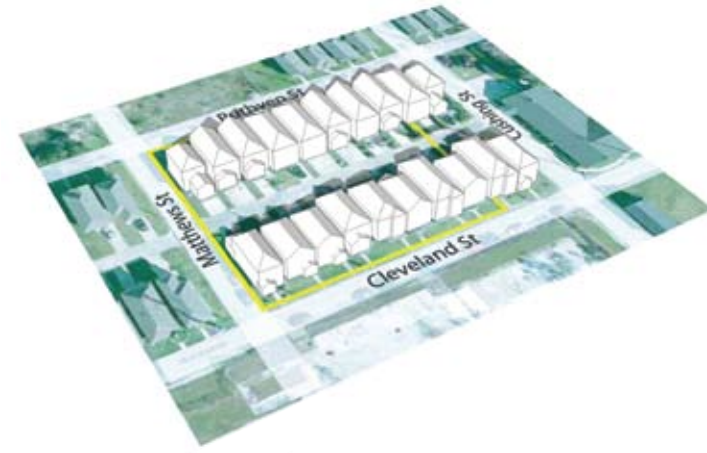
The Land Use Map is a general description of the current land use type for each parcel within, and immediately adjacent to, the study area.



## Existing Densities

The Fourth Ward has experienced a variety of development patterns throughout its history. Block 1 represents the historic development pattern of bungalow and “shotgun” homes described in detail by the Redevelopment for Freedmen’s Town document prepared in 1995 by The Center for Historic Architecture at the University of Houston College of Architecture. Block 2 illustrates how this historic fabric has broken down over time due to demolitions and incompatible redevelopment. Blocks 3, 4, 5, and 6 illustrate the densities and patterns of new development in the Fourth Ward. Townhomes are the typical product while the pattern is derived from the circulation associated with the unit - garage access on the street side, an internal courtyard or a private alley system. Finally, Block 7 represents a typical scenario in Fourth Ward where several parcels have developed as townhomes while others wait for the next great housing market or the opportunity to deliver a mixed-use product to the market.

While analyzing the variety of current neighborhood densities, we found a median density of about 20 units per acre, or 25 units per block. Based on densities in other neighborhoods that are successful mixed use areas, the existing level is a good indicator for a pedestrian-oriented mixed use neighborhood.



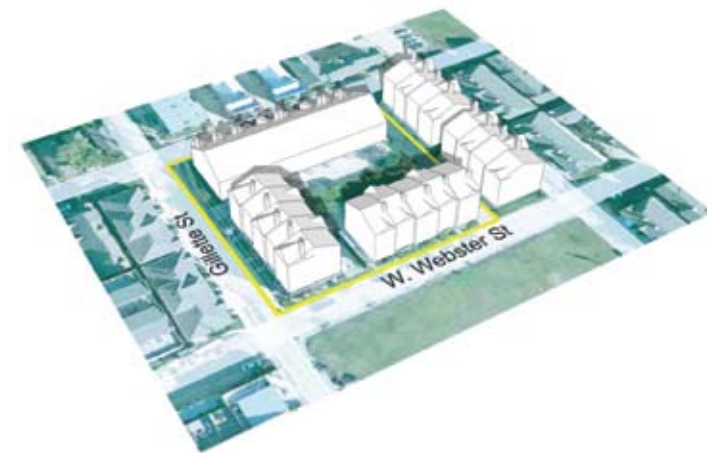
Block 1  
20 units/block, 15.8 units/acre



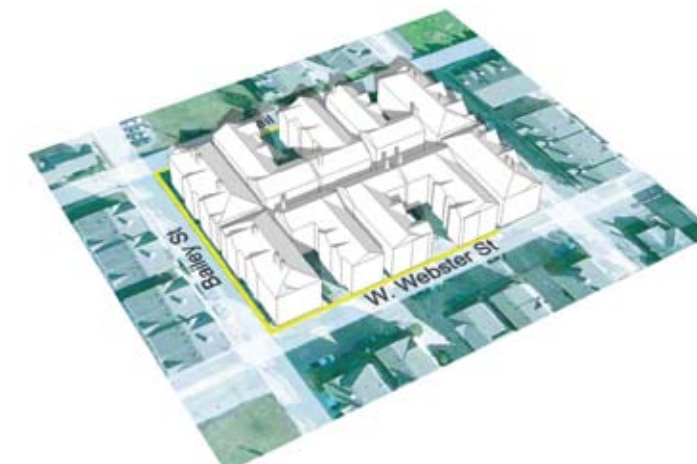
Block 2  
23 units/block, 20 units/acre



Block 3  
30 units/block, 24.7 units/acre



Block 4  
27 units/block, 22.5 units/acre



Block 5  
30 units/block, 26.2 units/acre



Block 6  
30 units/block, 24.7 units/acre



Block 7  
20 units/block, 18.4 units/acre

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

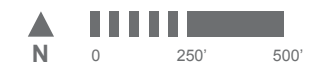
### Existing Density Map

#### LEGEND

- 1** 15.8 units per acre
- 2** 20 units per acre
- 3** 24.7 units per acre
- 4** 22.5 units per acre
- 5** 26.2 units per acre
- 6** 24.7 units per acre
- 7** 18.4 units per acre



*This study shows various densities and massing that exist in the Fourth Ward.*



## Historic and Community Fabric

The Fourth Ward was established as one of four wards by the City of Houston in 1839. The area was the site of 'Freedmen's Town', and was populated by recently freed slaves. The neighborhood became the center of Houston's African-American community in the late 19th century. The freed slaves who settled the community selected the site along the southern edge of the Buffalo Bayou since the land was inexpensive and because white Americans did not want to settle on the land, which was swampy and prone to flooding. The settlers of Freedmen's Town paved the streets with hand-made bricks, some of which remain to this day. Additionally, they provided their own services and utilities.

In the 1920's the Third Ward surpassed the Fourth Ward as the center of Houston's African-American community; the Fourth Ward lost prominence due to its inability to expand geographically, as other developments hemmed in the area. The Allen Parkway Village public housing complex, which had 963 units, opened in 1944. The opening of Interstate 45 in the 1950s effectively served to divide the community and hastened its demise, as it separated an eastern portion of the Fourth Ward area from the rest of the community; that portion eventually became the Allen Center business and hotel complex, and is now considered to be a part of Houston's central business district.

The population of Fourth Ward has been steadily decreasing with each decade. According to the 2000 Census, the Fourth Ward was the smallest neighborhood in Houston with 590 households or a total population of 1,706. While the area around Freedmen's Town is traditionally African-American, Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites have moved to the area in recent years. The Fourth Ward is no longer an enclave for the city's African-American residents, and has been losing its African-American population steadily since the 1970's. Currently, there is now a more equal mix of African-Americans and whites, with an increase in the number of Hispanics as well. Poverty has been a major issue for the Fourth Ward. In 1980, approximately half of the ward's residents were below the poverty line, while 95% of residents did not own their own homes.

In the Jim Crow era Taft Street was one of the dividing lines between African-Americans and whites; African-American families lived east of Taft, while white families lived to the west. Currently, the City of Houston recognizes the boundaries of the Fourth Ward as:

- IH 45 at the east
- West Gray at the south (except for a small portion that includes Gillette Street, that goes south to McGowen);
- Genesee St. at the west; and
- Allen Parkway at the north.

The Freedmen's Bureau opened schools for children in the area after the establishment of Freedmen's Town. The Texas Legislature authorized the creation of public schools for Freedmen's Town by 1870. By 1872 most of the students and teachers who were at the bureau schools, which were closing, left them to attend the state-managed Gregory Institute, named after Edgar M. Gregory, an officer in the Union army in the U.S. Civil War and the assistant commissioner of the Texas area's Freedmen's Bureau. By 1876 the school became a part of the Houston public school system.

The Gregory School (now the African-American Library), a 20,000 square foot elementary school, opened in 1926. It was vacant from 1980 until its adaptive reuse as a library in 2009. The Houston Public Library operates the new African American Library at the Gregory School. The library preserves historical information about the African-American community in Houston, and specifically Houston's Fourth Ward. It features galleries, an oral history recording room, and reading rooms. \$11 million dollars from Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and construction monies from the Houston Public Library and the City of Houston financed the renovation of the African-American Library at the Gregory School. Renovation of the school began in 2008, and in February 2009, the developers of the library asked local residents for memorabilia that the library can use in its exhibits. As part of the renovation process, the school's windows were removed, restored, and reinstalled, and the brick on the east, south, and west sides of the building was cleaned and preserved, with the north side receiving a set of matching bricks. The library's appearance is intended to match its original 1926 appearance. Its new design was created by a local African-American architect, and now stands as one of the jewels of not only the community, but the City.

## Proposed Fourth Ward City of Houston Historic Boundary, 2010 (DRAFT)

A Historic Resource Survey was conducted in 2010 of an abbreviated section of the Freedmen's Town National Register Historic District to determine if there was enough historic building fabric to create a City of Houston Historic District. The boundaries were established by driving the area with City of Houston Historic Preservation Office staff and are roughly defined as a gerrymandered line bordered by Genessee on the west, Victor Street on the south, Saulnier and Robin Streets on the north and Matthews and Cushing Streets to the east. The area was surveyed by an architectural historian and data collected on whether a building was "contributing" or "non-contributing." Historic or "contributing" buildings are those at least 50 years old or older (built in 1960 or prior) and possess integrity of location, design, materials, setting, workmanship, feeling and association. "Non-contributing" buildings are those built after 1960. "Potentially contributing" buildings are those built in 1960 or prior that have suffered unsympathetic alterations that could be reversed following a restoration.

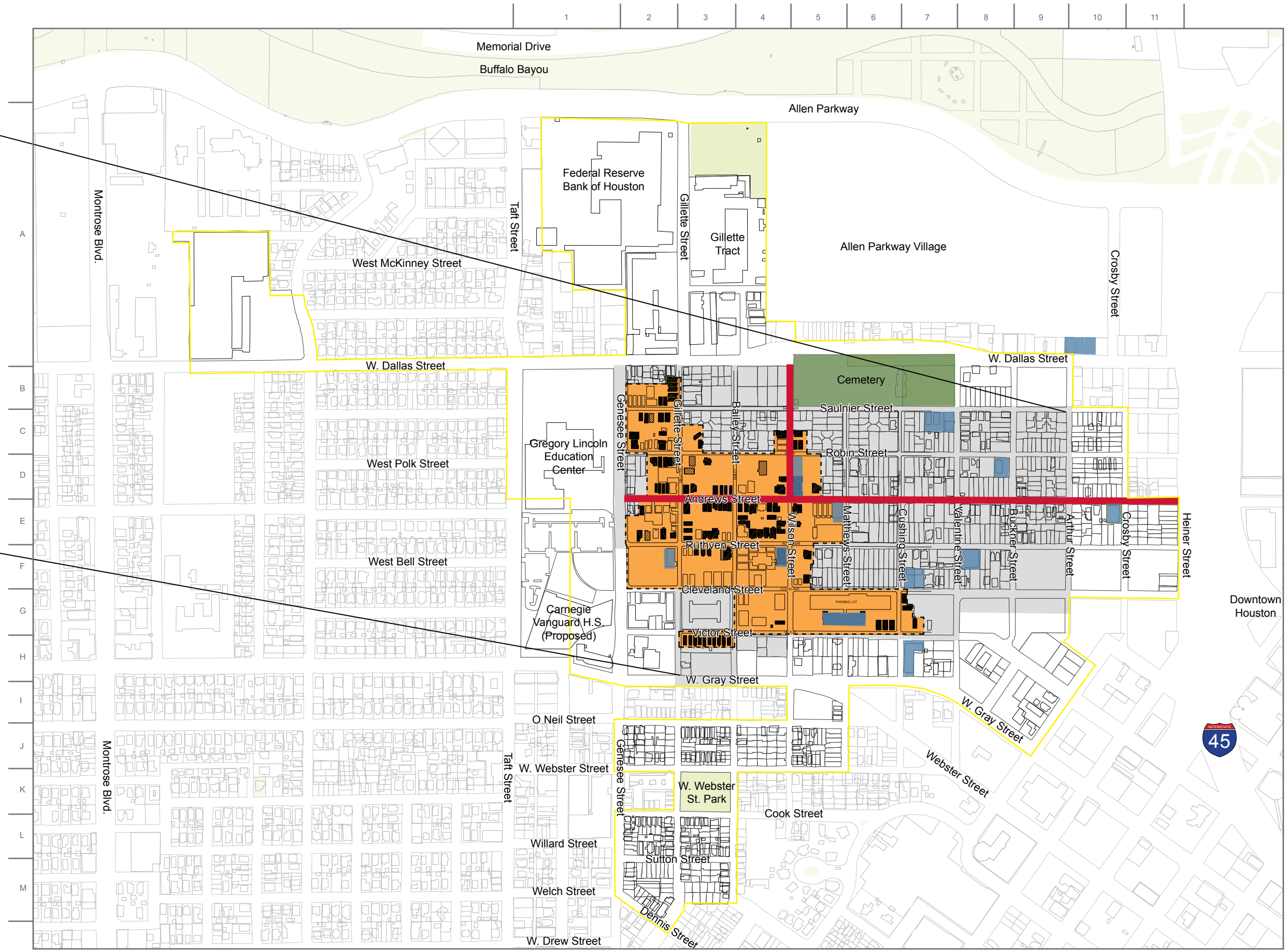
*Text and Map Source: SWCA Environmental Consultants, 2010. Note: Draft version of map, refer to final SWCA report for final version and recommendations.*

## Fourth Ward National Historic Boundary, 1984

This map shows the extents and density of historic ("contributing") structures at the time of a study done in 1995 by The Center for Historic Architecture. To emphasize the rapid deterioration of the local historic fabric, this map provides the proposed boundary area of the SWCA historic as an overlay. This area is subject to a national historic status, but without the local designation, the area will continue to lose historic structures. The City of Houston grants special protections for structures within a local district, but has a very limited review process for structures in a nationally designated area.

*Base Map Source: Freedmen's Town National Register Historic District, 1984 (taken from the National Register of Historic Places nomination, by Kenneth A. Breisch, Texas Historical Commission, 1984)*





## Historic and Community Fabric Map

### LEGEND

- Significant or Historic Civic Use
- Cemetery (Founder's and Beth Israel)
- Brick Pavement
- Proposed City Historic District\*
- National Register Historic District

" The Freedmen's Town Historic District is composed of 580 predominantly residential structures which occupy forty city blocks just west of downtown Houston. It is characterized by one- and two-story frame buildings set close to a series of narrow, rectangularity platted streets, most of which have been paved only in recent years. The buildings themselves are densely packed together, often having been arranged into long monotonous rows of unpainted tenements, duplexes and shotgun houses. Although exact dates for the construction of these buildings are difficult to determine, most appear to have been erected between about 1890 and 1935. There is, in spite of this fifty-year span of time, a remarkable homogeneity among the structures in this district. This derives, in large part, from the singleness of purpose for which the vast majority of the buildings were raised - as low- to medium-cost housing for the black population of the Fourth Ward in Houston. Of the 567 buildings in the district, 530, or 93%, were identified as contributing. "

Text source: Freedmen's Town National Register Historic District, 1984 (taken from the National Register of Historic Places nomination, by Kenneth A. Breisch, Texas Historical Commission, 1984)

\*Map overlay source: SWCA Environmental Consultants

The Historic and Community Fabric Map shows both historic and significant community elements throughout the study area. The extent of the National Register historic district is highlighted in grey, while the recently proposed local district is in orange.

\*Map source: SWCA Environmental Consultants



## Parks and Open Space

Open spaces are critical in meeting the diverse recreational needs of any community. They improve quality of life, foster interaction, and build a sense of community that influences a resident's connection to their surroundings. The study area is currently served by a range of designated parks and open spaces. In general, these areas are well distributed, but lack a full range of program items needed to support the existing community and future residents. Available open space that serves the study area can be divided into three categories: park land, civic land, and cemetery.

### Opportunities

- Parks and open spaces enrich a resident's quality of life, which can attract new residents and businesses. (Goal QMU1 and QMU4)
- Open space reduces the need for storm water infrastructure by minimizing impervious cover and providing opportunities to detain storm water. (Goal QMU4 and EQ2)
- Easy access to parks increases frequency of exercise opportunities, which works toward the creation of a healthier community. (Goal QMU4)
- Parks bring various members of the community together and are a good cross-cultural connector. (Goal QMU2 and QMU4)
- Programs associated with parks and open spaces can help to keep young people active, engaged, and moving in a positive direction. (Goal QMU2 and QMU4)

### Challenges

- Additional parks and open space require additional maintenance. (Goal IC3)
- Land costs make it difficult to purchase large parcels for parks. (Goal QMU4 and ED3)
- Complex land ownership issues can complicate the purchase of large parcels for parks. (Goal ED3 and IC1)
- Funds for building new parks are rarely available from the city capital improvement plan. (Goal IC1)
- Although cemeteries are open spaces, they have very limited recreational uses. (Goal QMU4)
- Allen Parkway separates the community from recreational opportunities along Buffalo Bayou. (Goal MMT2 and QMU4)
- Small lots make extensive park program and active program difficult.



West Webster Street Park is the most functional and diversely programmed park in the study area. It includes a dog park, playground, seating, and open lawn areas. It appears to be heavily used by dog owners.



Wiley Park's main attraction is an interactive water feature that is heavily used in the summers, but dormant in winter months. The park also includes a covered pavilion and seating.



The shell of the Bethel Baptist Church is all that remains after a devastating fire in 2005. This structure is now owned by the parks department (HPARD), who is in the process of developing a park that utilizes the shell as part of the program.



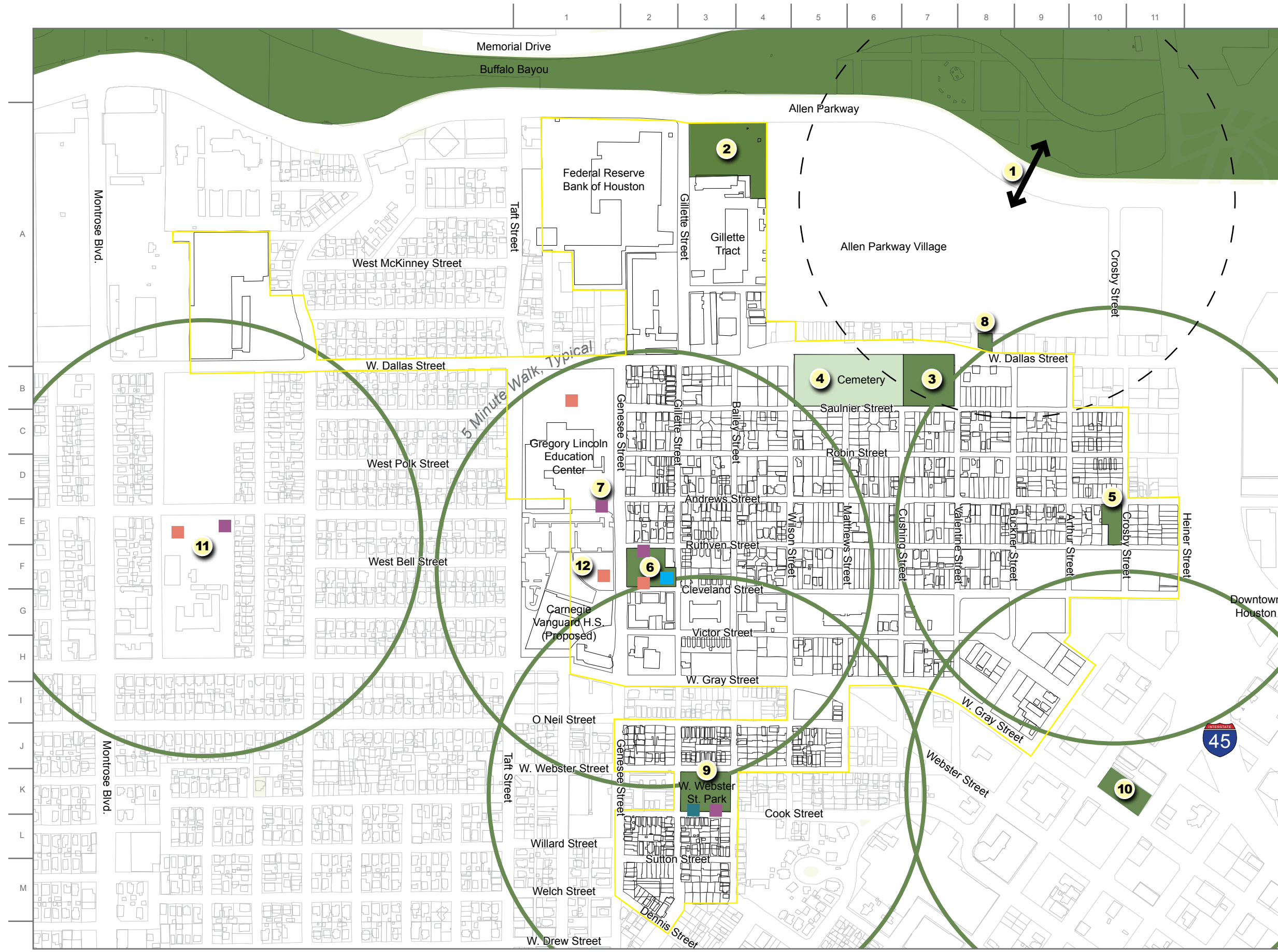
The Founders Memorial Cemetery is owned and maintained by the parks department, but has very limited recreational use and feels disconnected from the community. The adjacent Beth Israel Cemetery is privately owned and maintained.

# Parks and Open Space Map

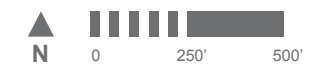
## LEGEND

- 1** Sabine Park/Buffalo Bayou, Ped. Crossing
- 2** \*San Felipe Park
- 3** Founders Memorial Cemetery
- 4** Beth Israel Cemetery
- 5** Bethel Baptist Church Site
- 6** Wiley Park
- 7** HISD Gregory Lincoln Playground
- 8** HPARD Parcel (vacant)
- 9** West Webster Street Park
- 10** Midtown Park
- 11** Wharton Elementary School
- 12** Carnegie Vanguard School (Future Site)

-  Playground
-  Athletic Court or Field
-  Water Park
-  Dog Park
-  Dog Park
-  5 minute walk to park or public open space
-  \*The San Felipe Park was de-listed from the property roles of HPARD by City Council. This was done after a public hearing at 9:00a.m., Wednesday, September 1, 2010.



The Parks and Open Space Map shows public recreational areas and dedicated park land that relate directly to the study area. Circles indicate the limits of a five minute walk.



## Sidewalk and Bicycle Infrastructure

Getting around the Fourth Ward on foot is a task that often requires the pedestrian to walk along curbs, grassy areas, and in the streets. The existing intersecting street grid and relatively short blocks in the study area provide a foundation to support walking and biking, as long as supportive infrastructure and street designs are in place to make walking and biking comfortable, inviting, and an obvious choice for travel. However, within the Fourth Ward the existing infrastructure that serves both pedestrians and cyclists is nearly nonexistent. West Dallas Street, West Gray Street, and Taft Street do have reasonably complete sidewalks, but most are in poor condition and lack basic accessibility features. In general, the study area lacks contiguous pedestrian infrastructure and should be considered totally inaccessible for elderly or disabled residents.

Ramps and sidewalks must meet ADA requirements so all residents, including individuals with disabilities, have the opportunity to utilize commercial facilities and public spaces. National statistics would suggest that 25 percent of a general population cannot easily navigate around a given neighborhood without ADA features, including the Fourth Ward. The only remedy is to upgrade all pedestrian areas to meet the current ADA standards, starting with the most inaccessible.

There are three programs in the City of Houston that address sidewalk and ramp repairs, these include:

1. Safe School Sidewalk Program - Provides for the installation of sidewalks leading to and surrounding schools based on the following criteria:
  - Number of children using pathways
  - Traffic count and road conditions
  - Contractibility issues
  - Located within school block
  - Collector street within school zone
2. Major Thoroughfare Program - Provides for installation of sidewalks along major thoroughfares based on the following criteria:
  - Thoroughfares lacking safe areas for pedestrians
  - Areas around shopping centers, bus stops and other frequently traveled routes
  - Sites with construction issues
3. PAR Program - This program is administered by the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD). Sidewalks and curb cut/ramps are pro-

vided to improve sidewalk accessibility for people with disabilities. A citizen is considered eligible to participate in the PAR Program when there is no safe accessible path of travel to basic necessities such as a grocery/pharmacy, financial institution, personal vehicle, place of employment, medical facility, bus stop, educational facility, or place of worship.

The Houston Bikeway Program has designated West Dallas Street as a shared bike route, with signed routes and shared lanes. Additionally, the bike route signs are posted on Taft Street north of West Dallas Street. This route is direct and easily understood, and provides a through-route east to downtown and west to Wesleyan Street. Although the bike route provides direct access to the downtown, residents and visitors have to navigate on local streets offering no official cycling infrastructure in order to reach internal destinations or to access these major designated bike route corridors. As development proceeds, it will be important to pay attention to creating "complete streets" throughout the study area, building a secure and inviting bicycle network in the area and not just on the major designated routes. The existing bikeway routes provide a strong foundation for future development in the area to make bicycling an even more prominent and popular way to travel around the study area.

### Opportunities

- Increasing pedestrian activity during the day and in the evening encourages a safe and vibrant community; "more eyes on the street". (Goal QMU6)
- Increasing access to businesses and workplaces for those that rely on public transportation. (Goal MMT2)
- Decreasing the use of cars for short trips, which saves energy and lowers emission levels. (Goal MMT3 and EQ1)
- Existing low existing traffic volumes and narrow rights-of-way provide the basis for a great pedestrian environment. (Goal MMT3 and QMU6)
- Existing facilities in the study area would be major attractions for pedestrians. (Goal QMU6)
- New streetscape improvements and furnishings can sometimes stimulate private investment. (Goal MMT3 and ED1)
- Strong pedestrian networks within the study area can encourage residents of the Fourth Ward study area to bike or walk to destinations within

their community. (Goal QMU6)

- Increasing the use of pedestrian systems will therefore reduce vehicle circulation within the area, reduce parking demand (and needed supply), and support the patronage of local businesses and services. (Goal QMU6)
- Upgrading the bike route from existing Class III (Shared Bike Route) to Class II (Striped Bike lane) may encourage more bike activity. (Goal MMT2)
- Improving sidewalks and other bicycle facilities (like ramps at the intersections etc.) would encourage bike activity in the local streets. (Goal MMT3)
- For external visitors, an inviting biking and walking environment will encourage the use of transit to reach the study area in the first place, because people know they do not need to bring a car in order to get around. (Goal MMT2)
- Visitors who choose to travel to the area by car will only need to park once to complete multiple errands. (Goal QMU7)

### Challenges

- Costs associated with constructing new street and sidewalks is high. (Goal MMT3 and QMU6)
- Current condition is unsafe, unattractive, and non-accessible. (Goal MMT1 and MMT2)
- Traffic volumes on West Gray Street, West Dallas Street, and Allen Parkway may be barriers to pedestrian movement. (Goal QMU6)
- Existing utility poles, boxes, and guy wires create obstacles for pedestrian movement, tree growth, and sidewalk construction. (Goal MMT3 and QMU6)
- Poor drainage infrastructure creates pools of water and wet areas that make use and construction difficult. (Goal MMT2 and EQ2)
- Use barriers stifle the pedestrian and bicycle experience within the district, particularly north-to-south. (Goal QMU6)
- Because of high traffic volumes, speeds and road conditions, West Dallas Street is not an ideal environment for bicycle commuters. (Goal MMT1 and MMT2)
- Right-of-way widths in the district will make it difficult to achieve a "complete street". (Goal MMT3)



This photo depicts the conditions of a typical interior street within the study area. Narrow widths, utility poles, and various obstacles are constraints for the creation of pedestrian infrastructure.



Basic accessibility is lacking throughout the district.



The Camden development buried power lines and created a usable pedestrian area.



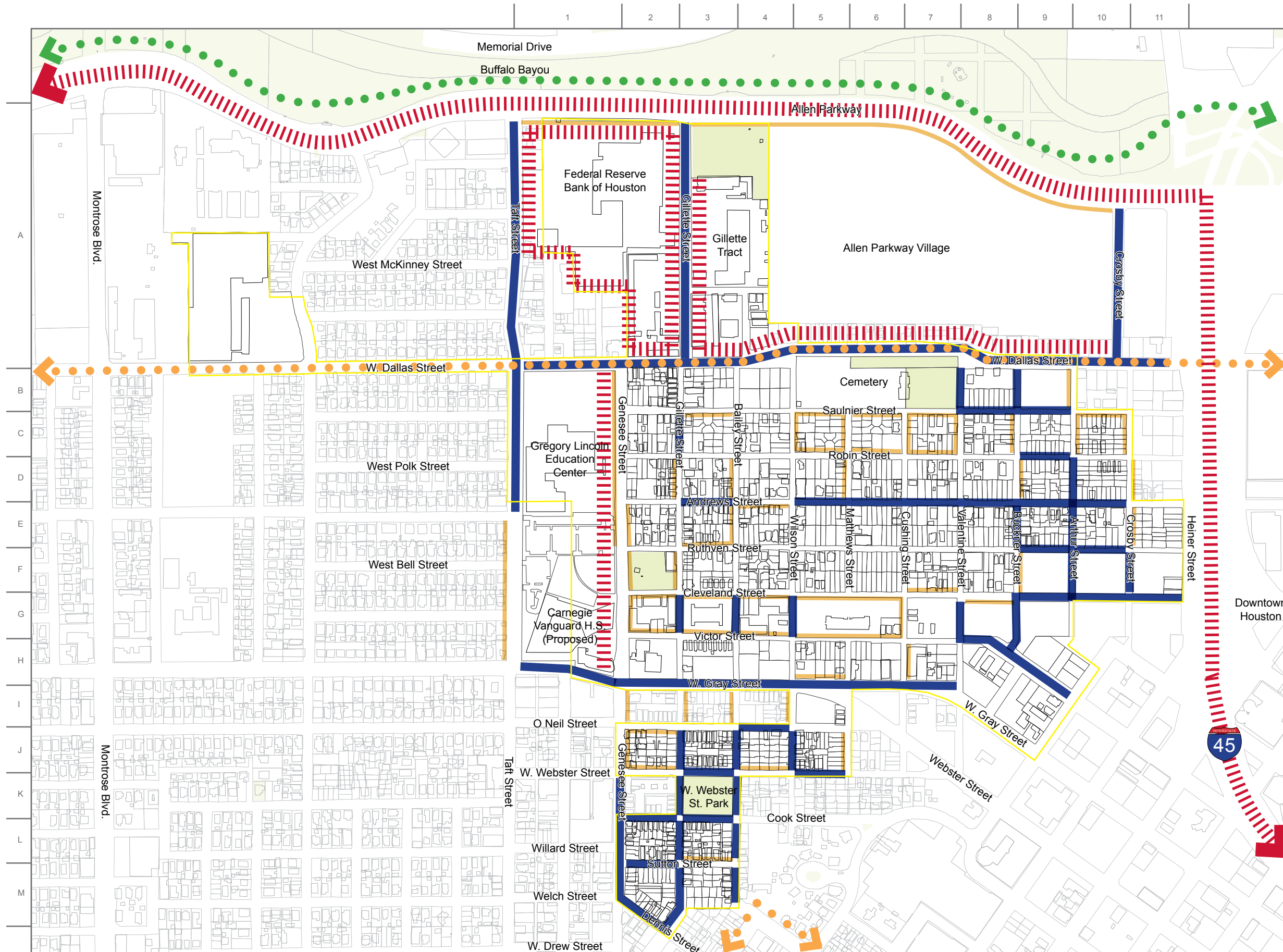
West Dallas Street is a designated bike route, though there is little evidence of that intended use.



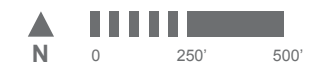
# Sidewalk and Bikeway Map

## LEGEND

-  Sidewalk on one side
-  Sidewalk on both sides
-  Shared Use Trail
-  Shared Use Street
-  Barriers to Pedestrians



The Sidewalk and Bicycle Infrastructure Map indicates locations of existing sidewalks and bike routes. Real and perceived barriers for pedestrians are also included to show influence on overall circulation.



## Human Comfort

Creating human comfort is essential to a successful pedestrian circulation system in Houston. The temperature can often be higher than 100 °F and from May to October, the humidity can exceed 90 percent. Without addressing this issue, other physical improvements to the pedestrian environment may be irrelevant or unsuccessful.

In addition to basic accessibility, lighting, and pedestrian deficiencies in the study area, a lack of improvements that address human comfort is a serious limiting factor for pedestrians. In an urban context, buildings can provide shade for pedestrian areas. However, there are very few buildings in the study area that are tall enough to provide summer afternoon shade for sidewalks.

Other elements of human comfort include the perceived safety of an area at all times of day. Since the mid 1960s, the concepts of “Defensible Space” and “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” (CPTED) have guided urban designers to create spaces where people feel in control of their surroundings. Eliminating dark streets, areas without vehicular access, tunnels, or excessive hiding places for criminals help to make a public space more comfortable and perceived as safe.

### Opportunities

- Increasing pedestrian activity during the day and in the evening will encourage a safe and vibrant community; “more eyes on the street”. (Goal QMU6)
- Creating “defensible” public spaces where people feel safe will ensure their use by a variety of residents and visitors. (Goal MMT1, QMU4 and QMU6)
- Incorporating trees and vegetation into the pedestrian zone will reduce temperatures and provide refuge. (Goal QMU6)
- Selecting paving and surface materials that reflect light will reduce heat island effects. (Goal EQ1)
- The orientation of new construction should provide shade in pedestrian areas and allow desired breezes to flow. (Goal QMU6)

### Challenges

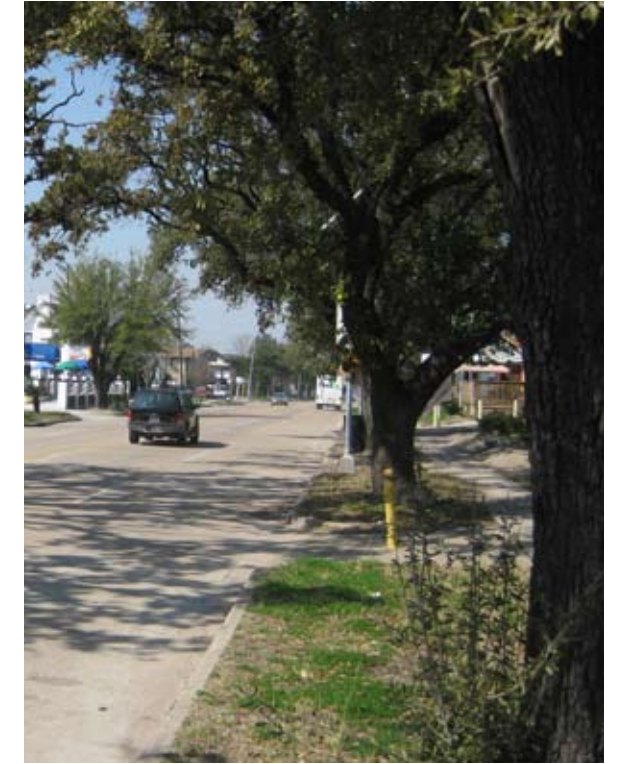
- An extremely narrow right-of-way will limit available space for trees and vegetation. (Goal MMT3)
- Overhead utilities will limit available space for trees and vegetation. (Goal MMT3 and QMU6)
- Existing street layout is not currently oriented to take advantage of breezes. (Goal QMU6)



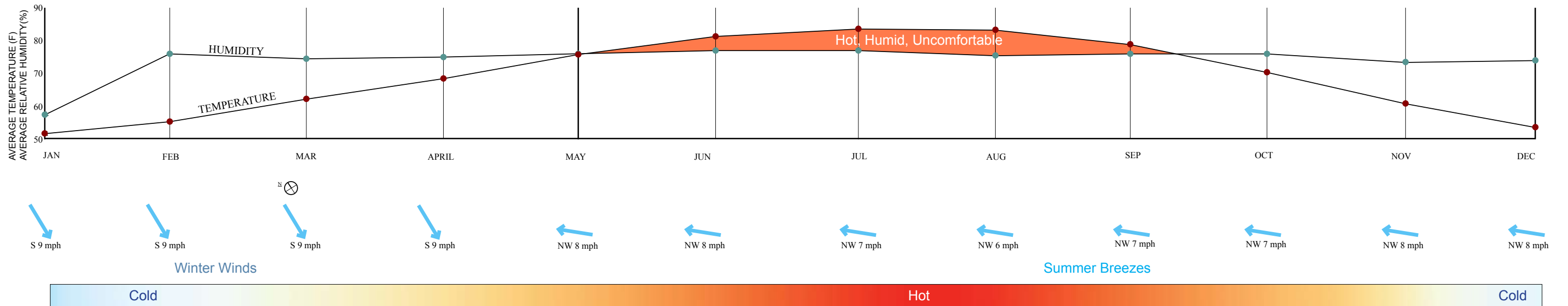
Overhead utility lines and narrow rights-of-way make adding trees and vegetation difficult.



The area around the Camden redevelopment and Midtown has buried overhead utilities and planted trees along the pedestrian areas, making it an attractive destination during the summer months.



Portions of West Gray Street have large Live Oaks as part of the vehicular and pedestrian experience.



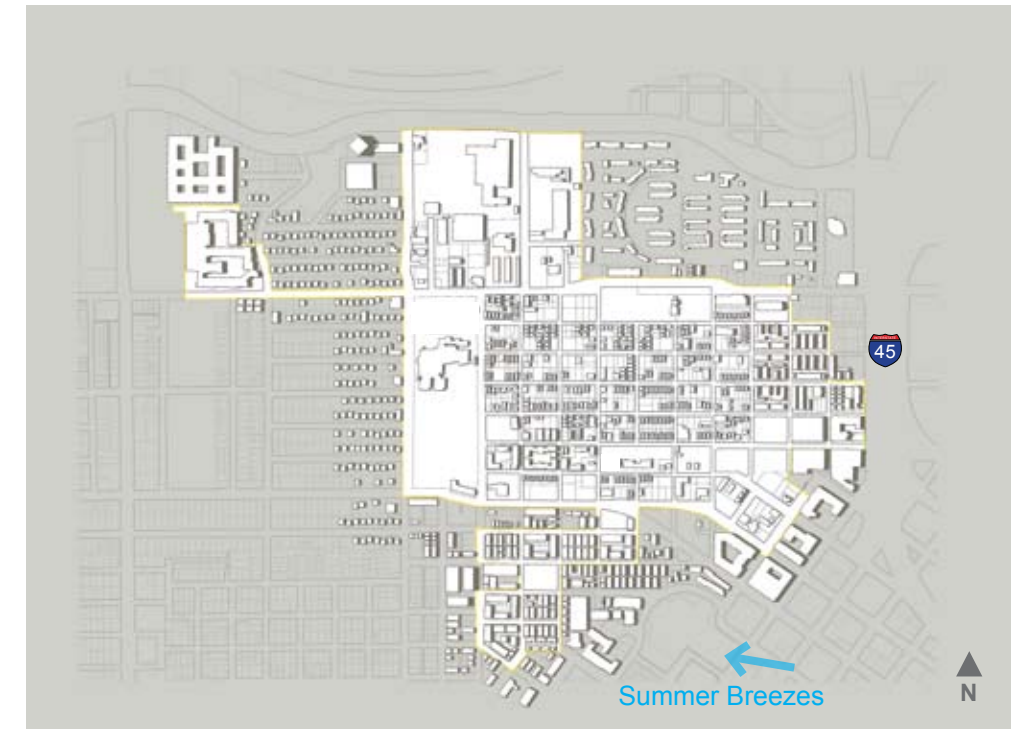
A Human Comfort Graph shows the relationships between time of year, humidity, wind flows, and average temperatures.



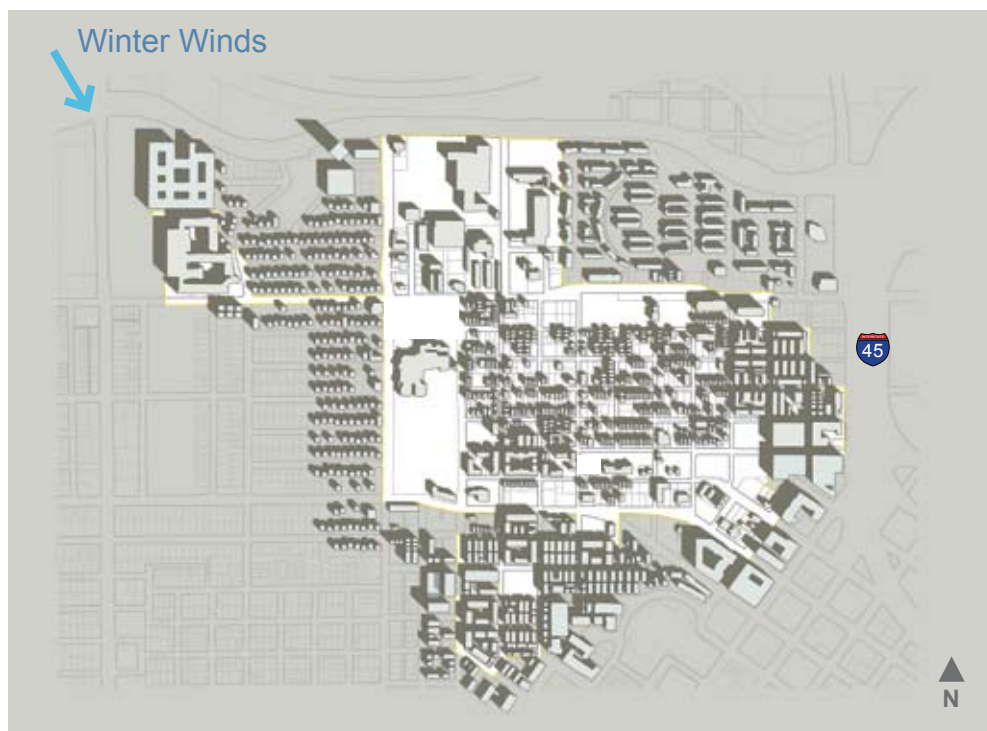
June 21st, 9 a.m.



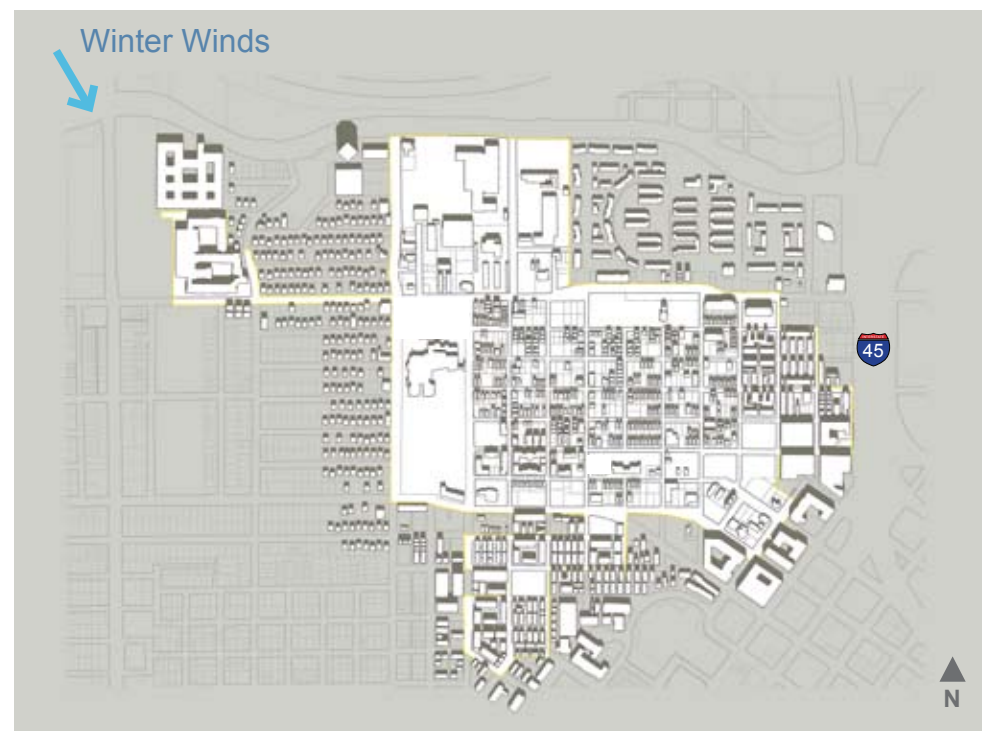
June 21st, 12 p.m.



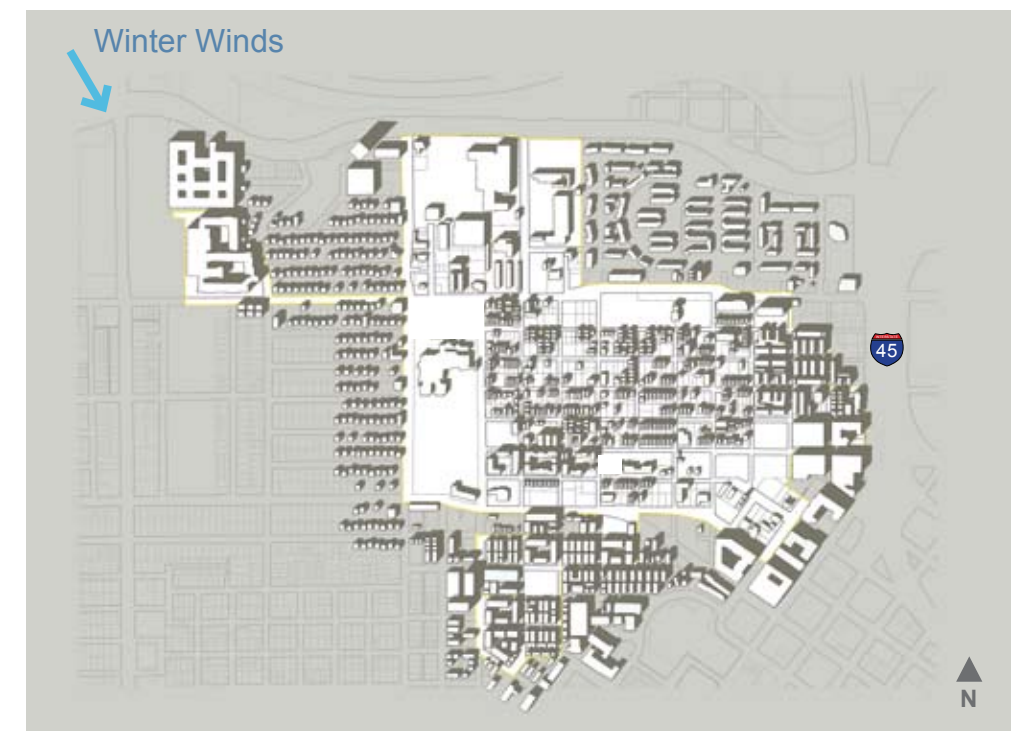
June 21st, 3 p.m.



December 21st, 9 a.m.



December 21st, 12 p.m.



December 21st, 3 p.m.

*Exhibits show the sun's effect on the study area during two different times of year and three different times of day.*

## Activity “Centers”

“Centers” of a community can take on various forms, uses, and scales. Typically, a center would be described as “any place that a local community gathers due to the presence of more than one type of use”. The role of centers in a community is to provide destinations, meeting places, and activity centers for residents. A healthy community should have a balance of centers that are walkable for the benefit of the immediate neighborhood with those that provide more advanced services for multiple communities. These are usually “retail-driven” centers which may require access with the aid of transit, vehicles, or a bicycle.

The Fourth Ward is served by several centers that provide services at various scales. The mixed-use component of Camden/Midtown provides access to restaurants and evening activities attracting patrons from throughout the community, while the node at Montrose and West Gray includes recreational space, a school, and some small retail. These are examples of neighborhood centers, which are likely to be visited on foot or bicycle.

Several community centers serve the area, and are further west on West Gray or south along Westheimer. These destinations include grocery stores, full-service banks, retail shopping, coffee shops, and dining. Access from the study area to these locations is easy via transit, car, or bicycle.

Midtown and Downtown are much larger centers that provide a range of opportunities to Fourth Ward residents. Downtown is a major employment center that has a wide cross-section of job opportunities, as well as retail and entertainment. Midtown has integrated retail, employment, and recreational opportunities. It also includes a grocery store and full-service banks.

## Opportunities

- Neighborhood centers generate pedestrian activity during the day and in the evening. This will encourage a safe and vibrant community; “more eyes on the street”. (Goal QMU1 and QMU6)
- Centers will help to fund the TIRZ. (Goal ED1)
- The vacuum of centers in the study area creates an opportunity for a new center in the neighborhood. (Goal QMU1)
- Increase connections to existing centers for pedestrians and cyclists. (Goal QMU1)
- New centers can be created with the cooperation of civic and religious organizations. (Goal IC1)

## Challenges

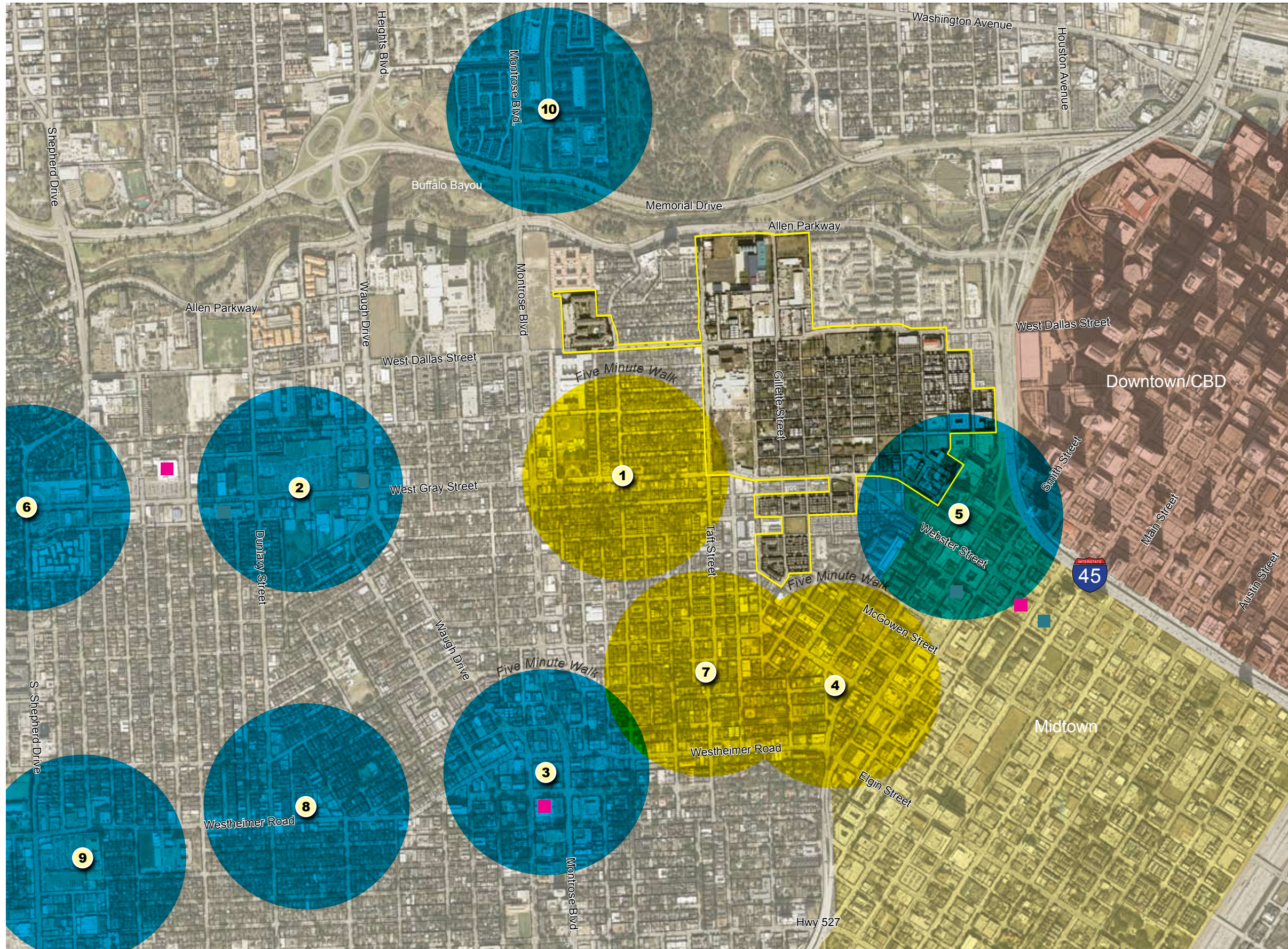
- The market may not support additional retail. (Goal ED1 and ED3)
- Barriers block routes between residents and centers. (Goal QMU1)
- Centers don’t always meet the needs of multiple demographics, age groups, and interests. (Goal QMU1)
- The study area is currently under-served by centers. (Goal QMU1)



Midtown provides a range of services at both a neighborhood and community center scale. Residents of the Fourth Ward have direct access to park space, retail, dining, full-service banks, a grocery store, and other attractions in Midtown.



The River Oaks Shopping Center is a major shopping destination that is reachable by car, transit or bicycle from the Fourth Ward. It includes retail, dining, full-service banks, a grocery store, and other attractions.



### Centers Map

#### LEGEND

- 1 West Gray Street at Stanford
- 2 West Gray Street at Dunlavy Street
- 3 Montrose Boulevard at Westheimer Ave.
- 4 Tuam Street at Bagby Street
- 5 West Gray Street at Bagby Street
- 6 West Gray Street at Shepherd Drive
- 7 Taft at Fairview
- 8 Westheimer Ave. at Dunlavy Street
- 9 Westheimer Ave. at Shepherd Drive
- 10 Studemont at Washington
- Neighborhood Center
- Community Center
- Full-Service Grocery Store (Nearby)
- Full-Service Bank (Nearby)

The Activity Centers Map shows two types of community-serving destinations; the first type would be a place that residents walk to for casual entertainment or services, the second would be considered a vehicular, bicycle or public transit-dependent destination.



## Overhead Utilities

Overhead utilities are one of the defining visual characteristics of the study area. They are present on at least one side of nearly every street, and often on both sides. The general appearance of overhead services indicates that the system has been added to over time to address growth and new technologies, but has seen little or no consolidation during the process. This unmanaged approach has resulted in visual clutter, pedestrian obstacles, and an inhospitable environment for shade trees.

### Opportunities

- Bury overhead utility lines where possible. (Goal QMU6)
- Abundance of poles and service makes adding area lighting easier. (Goal MMT1)
- Consolidate overhead lines on one side of the street. (Goal QMU6)
- Remove unnecessary wires and obstacles from the pedestrian area. (Goal QMU6)



Overhead lines, poles, and accessories dominate the skyline in much of the study area resulting in a lack of vegetation along the street.

### Challenges

- Underground utility lines are extremely expensive to implement. (Goal QMU6)
- Consolidation of lines can be expensive. (Goal QMU6)
- Service may be disrupted during improvement periods. (Goal IC1)
- Limited space in the right-of-way for both poles and sidewalks. (Goal MMT3)
- Excessive lines prevent effective planting of trees to provide shade. (Goal QMU6)
- Utilities present obstacles to development due to additional setbacks and clearances. (Goal ED3)



Conflicts between vegetation and overhead utilities often lead to heavy pruning and growth control by utility companies. This is not good for the general health of the plants, creation of shade, and operation costs of utility companies.





The Camden/Midtown redevelopment area has run all utilities underground, allowing room for trees to be planted and a general de-cluttering of the pedestrian environment.

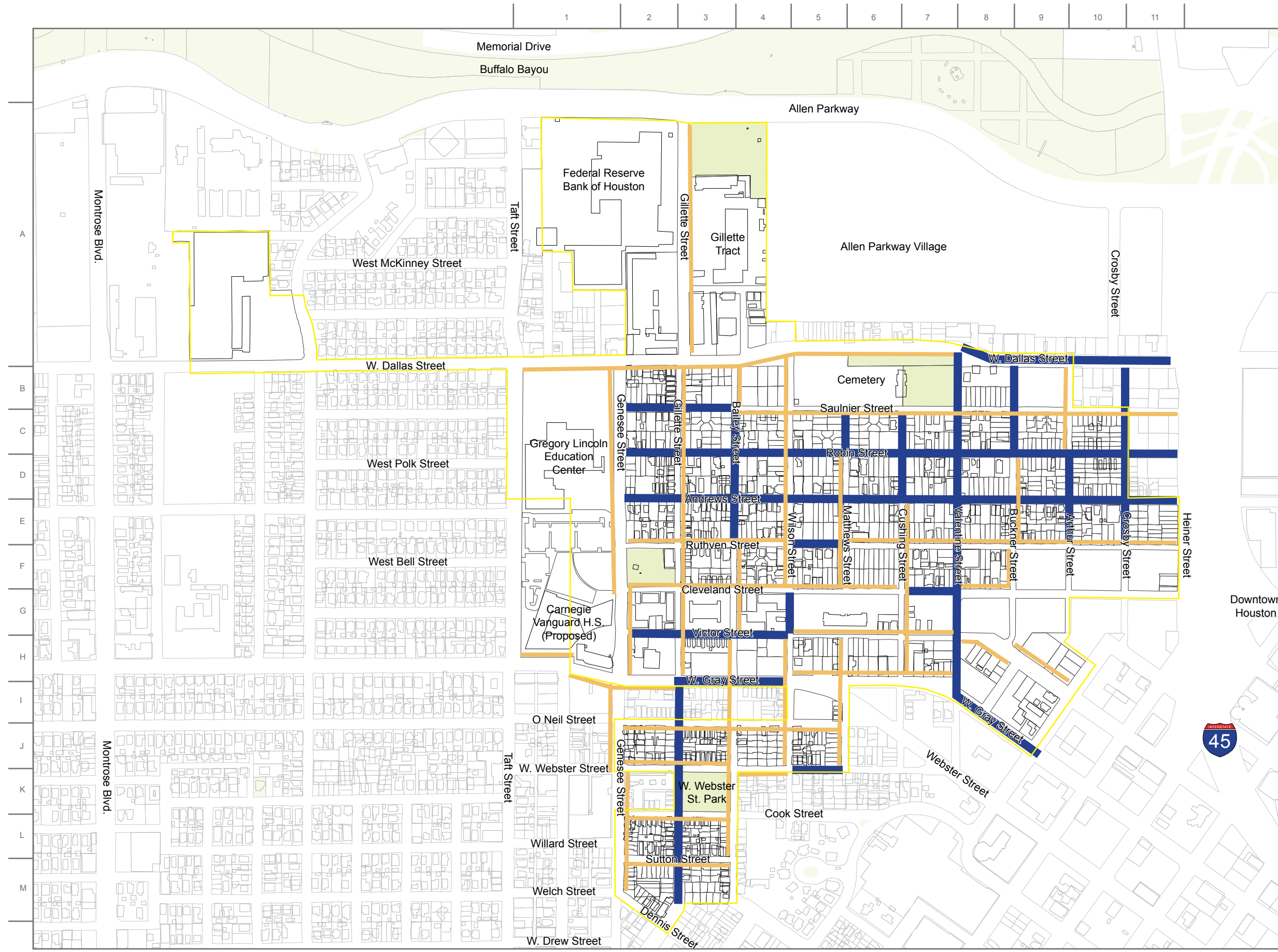


Some new construction includes trees (understory or ornamental) that provide meaningful shade and are “good neighbors” for overhead utilities.

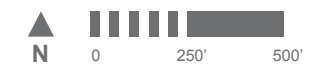
# Overhead Utility Map

## LEGEND

-  Overhead on one side
-  Overhead on both sides



The Overhead Utility Map shows existing overhead line conditions in the study area.



## Underground Utilities

In February 2008, ESPA CORP completed a Utility and Street Condition Assessment. This assessment looked at the quality and condition of existing streets and public utilities within the Fourth Ward Redevelopment Authority / Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone No. 14. The original objectives of the TIRZ was to improve the storm and sanitary sewers, paving, streetlights, parks, streetscapes, historic preservation, and property acquisition, with one third of the tax revenue allocated for affordable housing.

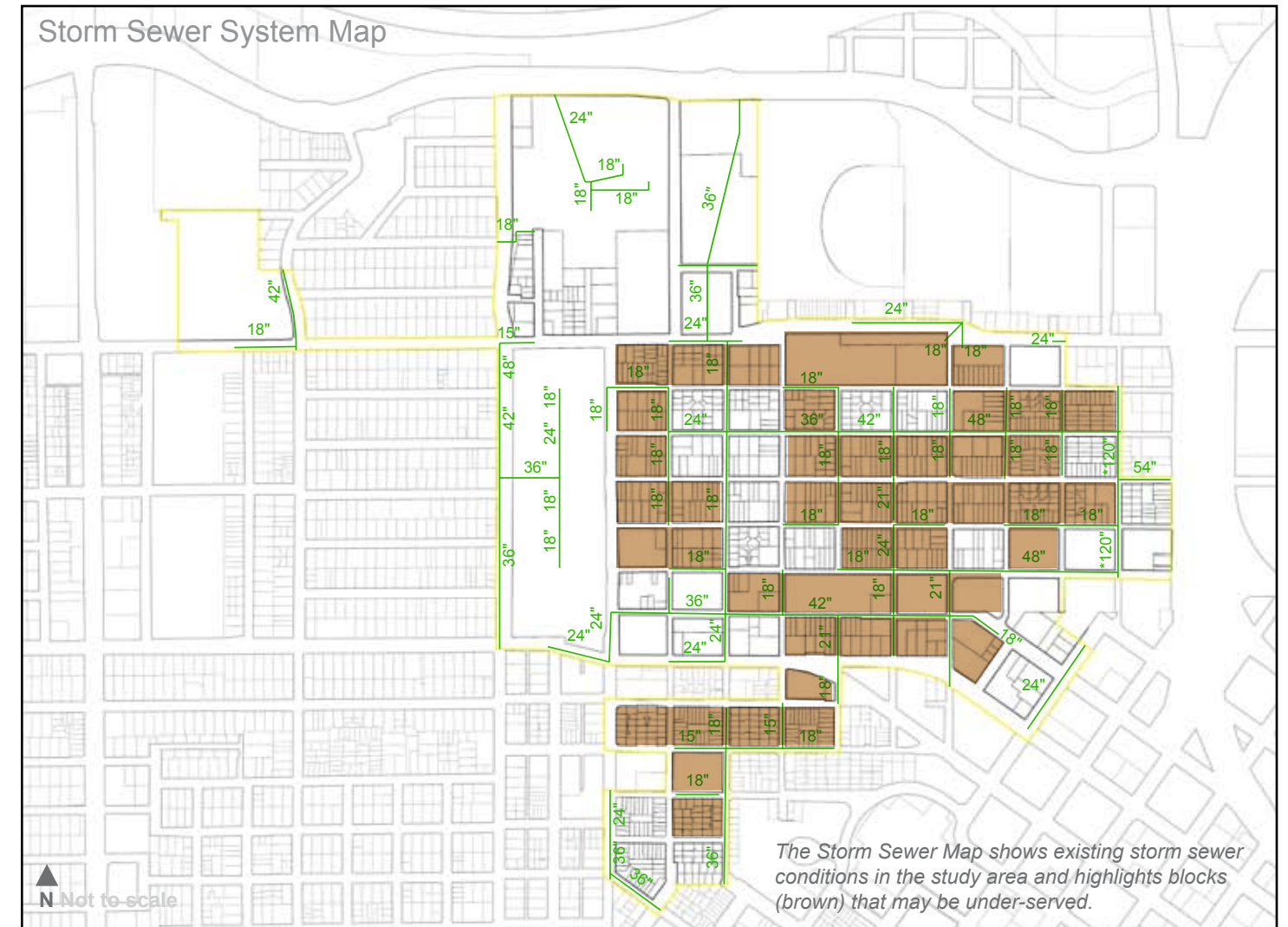
The report details the findings of the infrastructure conditions and concludes that portions of each systems are not in accordance with the latest City of Houston standards and criteria in the study area. For instance, 91% of the storm sewer system, 8% of the waterline system, and 2% of the sanitary sewer system are below City standards. The records and observation of the street conditions have been compared to the current City of Houston Pavement Condition Rating ("PCR") scores. Based on ESPA's findings in addition to the City of Houston's "PCR" scores, about 25% of the residential streets within the TIRZ boundary are in poor condition. Another 26% were found to be in fair condition.

### Opportunities

- Underground utilities can be improved at the same time street reconstruction is occurring. (Goal IC1)
- Green storm water management can reduce velocity of runoff and costly infrastructure. (Goal EQ2)

### Challenges

- Costs of replacing vast amounts of underground utilities will make road reconstruction costly. (Goal ED3 and IC1)
- Storm water infiltration is not a viable choice in most of Houston due to poor soil and geotechnical conditions. (Goal EQ2)



### Storm Sewer System

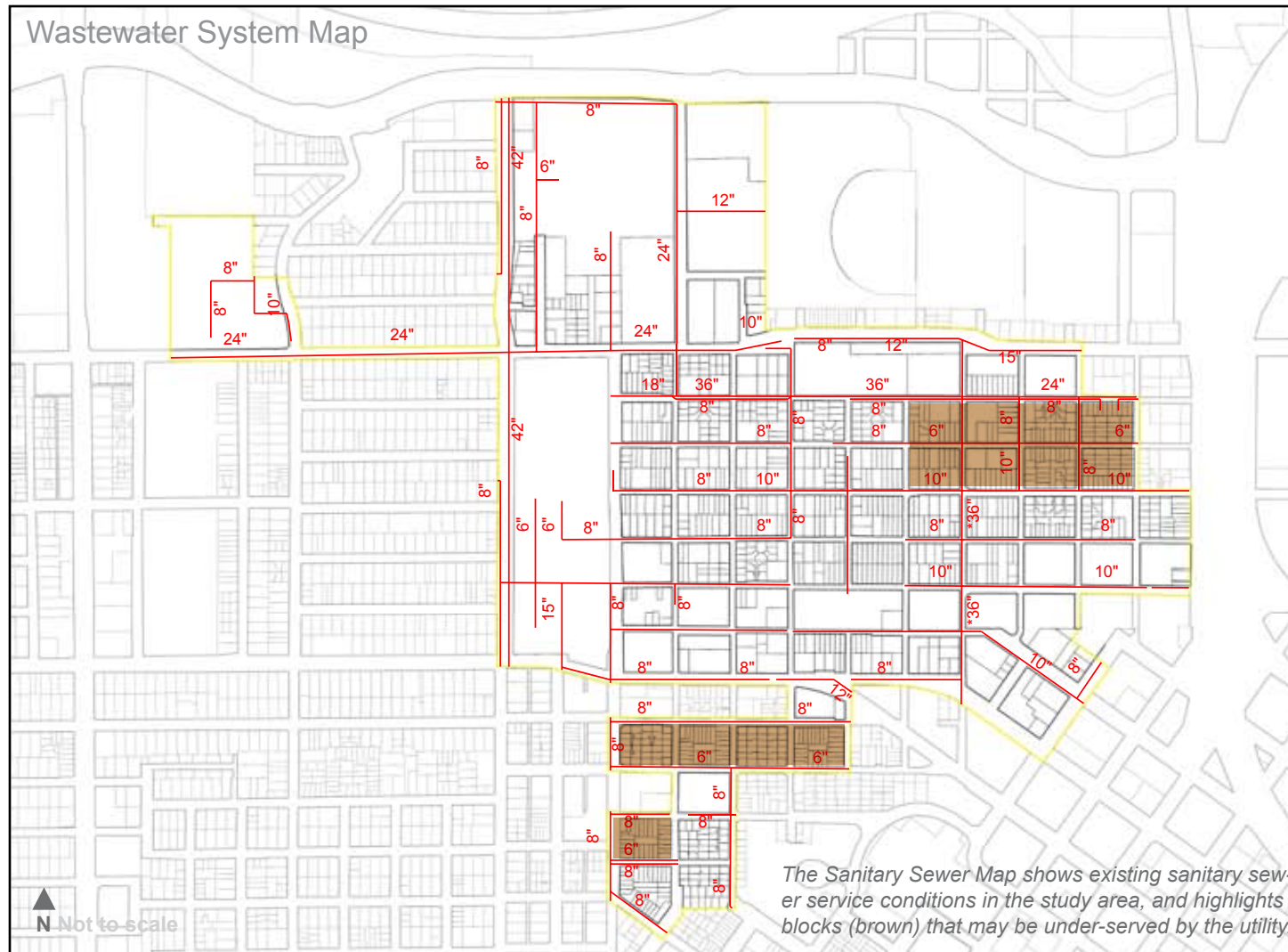
The existing drainage systems within the Fourth Ward area fall within the Buffalo Bayou watershed and ultimately outfalls into Buffalo Bayou. The majority of the study area drains eastward to a 120-inch storm sewer trunk line in Crosby St. The trunk line then outfalls from Crosby Street to Buffalo Bayou as shown in the attached Storm Water Figure.

The specified study area is comprised of storm sewer utilities that range from as small as 15-inches to as large as 120-inches in diameter. To date, the age and condition of the storm sewers are unknown. Currently the City of Houston will not allow any private storm connections to a public storm sewer that are smaller than 24-inches in diameter. The city will consider these lines to be deficient and require developers to extend at the minimum a new 24-inch storm sewer to the proposed development and/or upgrade the deficient public storm sewer to a minimum of 24-inch diameter storm sewer.

Since the area is already mostly developed, any additional development of the same type (residential) should not impact the current drainage conditions. The current subsurface drainage system will need to be evaluated as part of a comprehensive drainage study to establish the existing condition and drainage needs of the area. The results of a comprehensive drainage study will identify the necessary changes and modifications for the existing system. Any change in land usage may have an increased drainage impact, which will require further investigation. Exploring Low-Impact Development (LID) strategies on roadways as part of a neighborhood beautification and storm water quality effort is highly encouraged, along with further investigation to determine the extents of which LID strategies can be used to augment the existing system.

The Flood Rate Insurance Maps for Harris County depicts the specified study area as un-shaded "Zone X," which is to be outside of the 500-year floodplain.





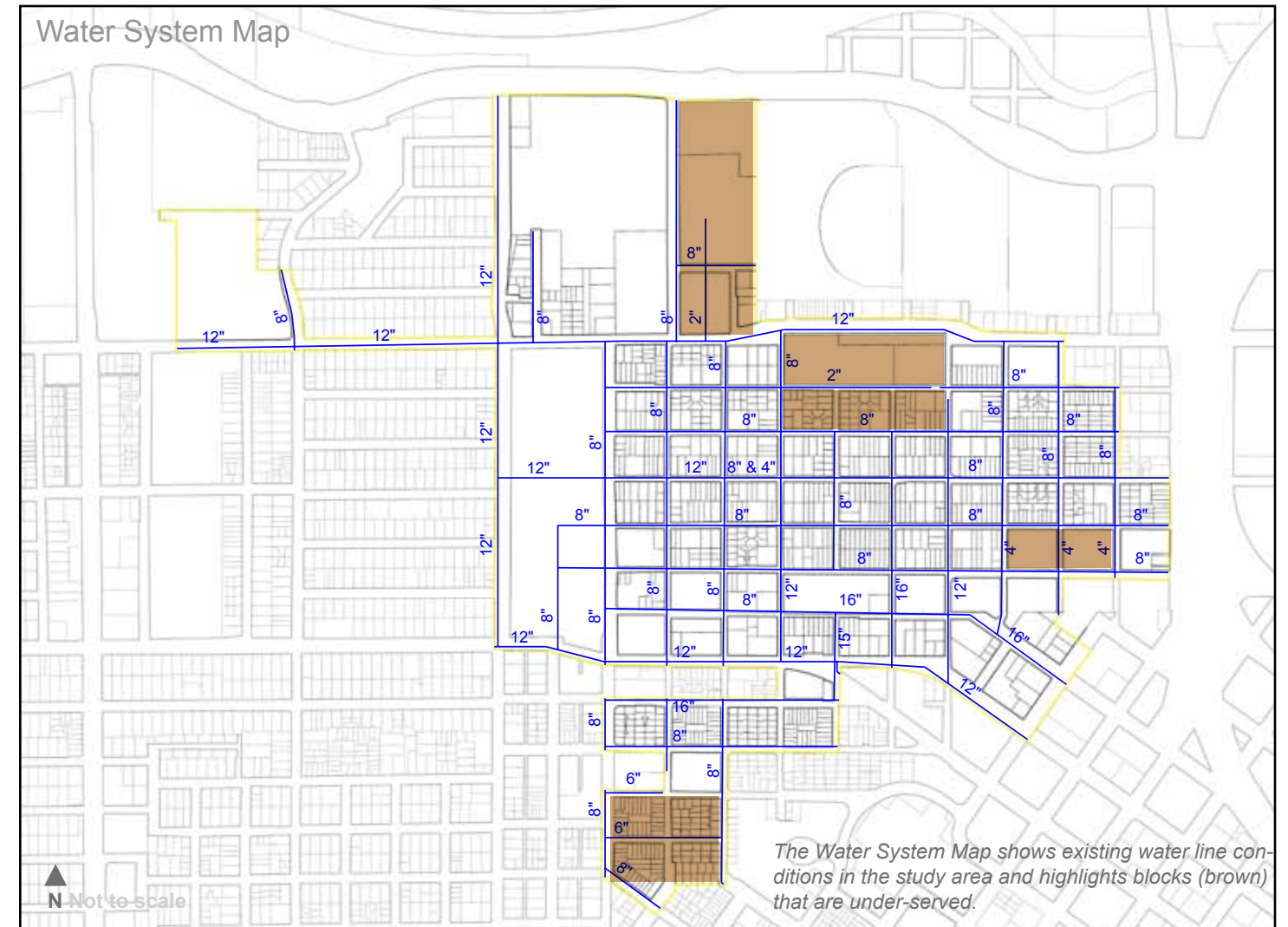
### Wastewater System

To date, the actual availability and capacity of the sanitary sewer plant and infrastructure has not been determined, and the age and condition of the sanitary sewers has not been verified. A program of proposed block densities and usages should be provided to the City Utility Analysis group to ensure that there is sufficient availability and capacity for the proposed developments, densities, and land usages. Current exhibits have been prepared according to the City of Houston Geographic Information & Management System (GIMS), and further study of existing record drawings will be conducted to verify information in these findings.

The existing wastewater system for the specified Fourth Ward study area is served by a 36-inch trunk line in Valentine Street which connects to a 69-inch trunk line in San Jacinto via Webster Street and by a 42-inch sanitary pipe in Taft which outfalls into LaBranch via Hawthorne and Holman Streets. The study area to the north of West Dallas Street is served by the Taft Street line. The area south of West Dallas is served by the Valentine Street

Line. The specified study area is comprised of sanitary sewer lines that range from as small as 6-inch to as large as 36-inch, all of which are shown in the attached Sanitary Sewer Figure. Currently the City of Houston will not allow any sanitary lines to tie into existing lines that are smaller than 8-inches in diameter. The City of Houston considers these existing 6-inch sanitary lines to be deficient and will not allow new private connections to these lines. Connections to sanitary sewer lines that are larger than 36-inches in diameter require City of Houston Public Works and Engineering approval and may not be granted if there are other lines within the vicinity.

Many residents have mentioned odor and backups from the sewer system. Further study would need to take place to determine source and severity.



### Water System

To date, actual fire and domestic flow, availability and capacity of the water treatment plant and infrastructure has not been determined, and the age and condition of the water lines has not been verified. A program of proposed block densities and usages should be provided to the City Utility Analysis group to ensure that there is sufficient fire and domestic flow, availability and capacity for the proposed developments, densities, and land usages.

The existing water line system for the specified Fourth Ward study area is served primarily by looped 12-inch waterlines that connect into a 16-inch trunk line located in Victor/Pierce Street. Currently the City of Houston will not allow same size connections. All connections to existing water lines must be one size smaller than it's connecting point on the existing line. All existing developments are metered, however, the age and condition of those water meters are unknown. Any replaced or proposed water meters must be located on private property in a recorded easement. The size of the easement is determined by City of Houston requirements.

A review of the City of Houston geographic information system for public water lines shows that all blocks except for three within this study area are currently served by lines 8-inch in diameter or greater on at least two block sides. Those three blocks are in the southernmost area of the Fourth Ward, adjacent to Sutton Street, and can be seen on the attached Water Line Figure.

Many residents have mentioned poor water quality from their potable systems, but it is difficult to determine the source of such pollution. It is possible that water can become contaminated within the residential system as well as the municipal system. Further study would need to take place to determine source and severity.

## Transit System

The study area is served by METRO bus routes 3, 48 and 313, which provide circulation to and from downtown Houston, as well as cross town routes. Routes 48 and 313 operate on West Dallas Street and Route 3 operates on West Gray Street. Route 3 operates with headway of 18 minutes for most of the day. Route 48 operates with headway of 30 minutes for most of the day.

Route 313 (Allen Parkway Special) operates in the eastbound direction between 6:00 AM and 9:30 AM with headway of 13 minutes. It operates in the westbound direction between 3:00 PM and 7:00 PM with headway of 13 minutes. The bus stops are located at six locations each on West Dallas Street and West Gray Street. Three of the bus stops are located west of Wilson Street.

The challenge with regard to transit in the area is not so much the availability of transit services, but rather (1) the connections between transit services in the study area are limited and (2) safe pedestrian access to and from transit services is not available in all areas.

The Urban Research Center of Houston at Rice University's annual Houston Area Survey found that 62 percent of Houston-area residents believe the "development of a much-improved mass transit system" will be very important for the future success of Houston.

Data from METRO illustrates the major activity nodes in the study area based on transit boarding and alighting. Route 48 which operates along West Dallas Street has 102 transit users boarding and 114 users alighting the buses at 12 bus stops. This is the busiest transit route in the study area during weekdays in both the eastbound and westbound directions. Route 3 which operates along West Gray Street is the next busiest route with 99 passengers boarding and 55 passengers alighting the buses at 12 bus stops. On Route 313, 33 boardings were observed on a weekday at six bus stops in the eastbound direction travelling to downtown. Route 18 which operates on Allen Parkway along the northern boundary of the study area does not have any stops in the study area. Because boarding data by hour is not available, it is assumed that majority of the passengers boarding the buses in study area will travel east to jobs, entertain-

ment and connections to other lines during the morning peak period and that the majority of passengers will be traveling out of downtown in the evening peak period.

Transit data also shows that 30 passengers boarded and 27 alighted the buses on Route 3 along West Gray Street in the study area on a Saturday. On Sunday, 12 passengers boarded and 15 passengers alighted the buses on Route 3. Routes 48 and 313 do not operate during the weekend. Route 18 operates on Saturday, but it does not have any stops in the study area. Route 48 has dropped its weekend service, which is a huge barrier for resident mobility.

### Opportunities

- During weekdays, bus stops are conveniently located and regularly timed. (Goal MMT2)
- Reroute Allen Parkway routes through the neighborhood to provide more transit options to the neighborhood. (Goal EQ2)
- Creating a transit center at the Gillette tract would give most residents access to more transfer opportunities and modes of transportation. (Goal MMT2)

### Challenges

- During the weekend the West Dallas Street service is suspended. (Goal MMT2)
- The connections between transit services in the study area are limited. (Goal MMT2)
- Safe pedestrian access to and from transit services is not available in all areas. (Goal MMT2)
- Limited access to north-south routes and associated destinations. (Goal QMU5)



Connections between transit service and pedestrian access are the key challenges to transit service in the area.

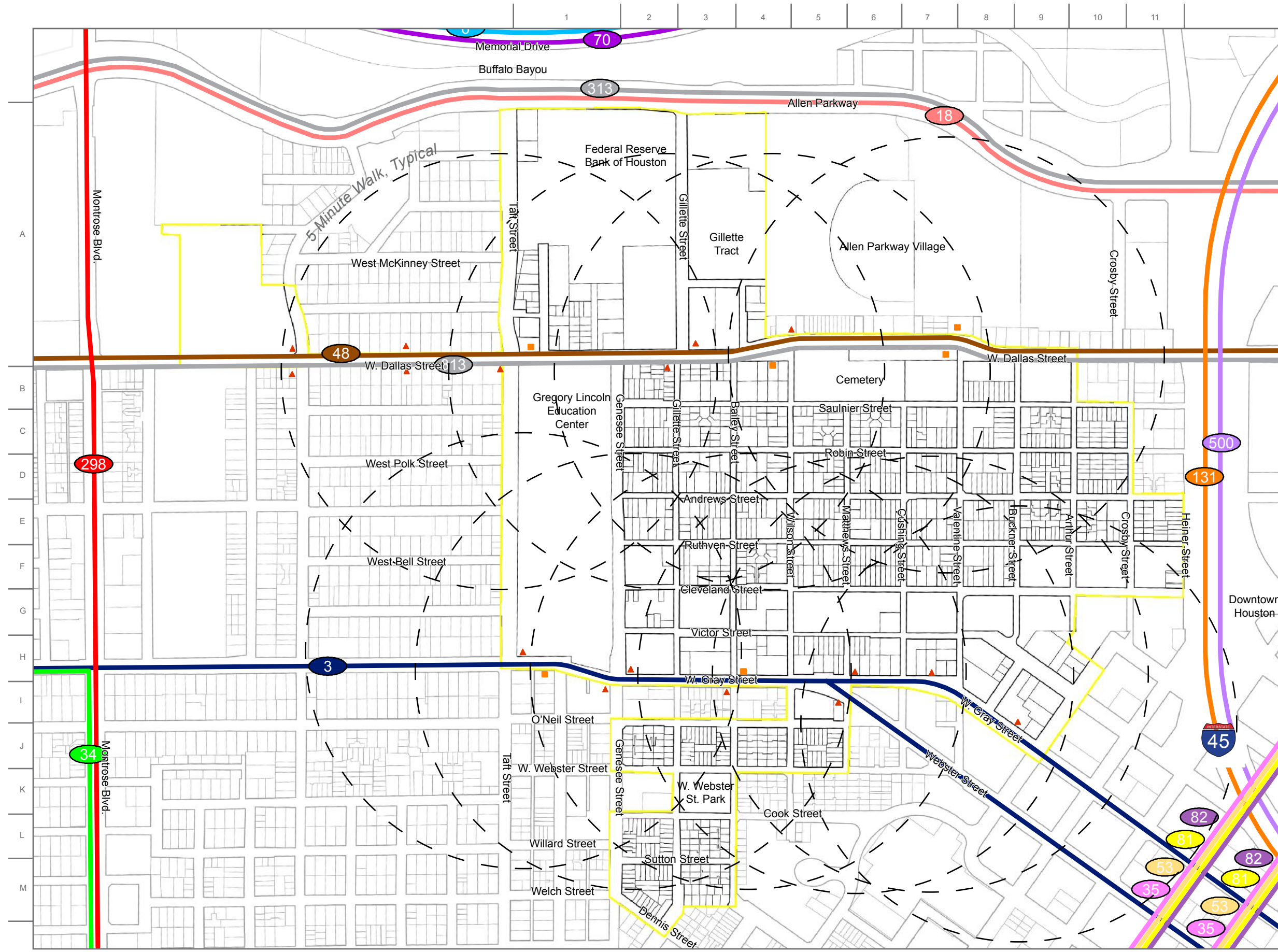


Bus shelters and stops are available on approximately 60% of blocks along West Dallas Street and West Gray Street within the study area.

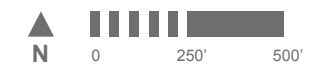
# Transit System Map

## LEGEND

- EXISTING 4TH WARD TIRZ BOUNDARY
- BUS SHELTER
- BUS STOP
- BUS ROUTE 3
- BUS ROUTE 6
- BUS ROUTE 18
- BUS ROUTE 34
- BUS ROUTE 35
- BUS ROUTE 48
- BUS ROUTE 53
- BUS ROUTE 70
- BUS ROUTE 81
- BUS ROUTE 82
- BUS ROUTE 131
- BUS ROUTE 298
- BUS ROUTE 313
- BUS ROUTE 500
- 5 MINUTE WALK TO BUS STOP OR SHELTER



The Transit Map shows public transit service through the study area. The dashed circles indicate a five minute walk to a bus stop. This map indicates that the study area has nearly 100% ideal access to a transit source.



## Vehicular Circulation Systems

In the study area, West Gray Street is designated as a Major Thoroughfare and West Dallas Street is designated as Major Collector street. Taft Street is another principal street in the study area even though it is considered as a local street in City of Houston’s Major Thoroughfare Plan. Some of the north-south streets have different operational characteristics on the north and south side of West Gray Street. Most of the local streets have a relatively narrow right-of-way. The pavement width was observed to be between 18 and 25 feet on most of the local streets.

During both the AM peak period and PM peak period, traffic volumes are moderate along West Dallas Street and West Gray Street within the study area. The field observations indicated that traffic signals along West Dallas Street at Taft Street and Gillette Street and the signal on West Gray at Taft Street are operating at a good level-of-service.

During the PM peak period significant back up of vehicles was observed at the westbound approach to the intersection of West Dallas Street and Montrose Street which is very close to the study area.

The table below presents the bi-directional 24-Hour traffic volumes on major streets within the study area. The data presented below was obtained from Houston Galveston Area Council’s Houston Regional Count Map.

Year 2006 24-hour Traffic Volumes

Street	Count Location	24 Hour Traffic Volume
West Dallas Street	West of Heiner Street	10680
West Gray Street	East of Wilson Street	15060
Taft Street	North of West Gray Street	6330
Taft Street	South of Allen Parkway	6370
Allen Parkway	West of IH 45	11640

Traffic volumes along the local roadways are relatively low. Light to moderate pedestrian activity was observed in the area. Light bicycle activity was also observed along West Dallas Street, which is a designated bike route.

The design of Houston’s rights-of-way has a significant impact on the livability of the city as well as the health, safety and welfare of its citizens. Many

elements such as the width of a sidewalk, availability of shade and wind, availability of seating, number of lanes in the right-of-way, vehicular and pedestrian lighting, and the location of utilities such as overhead power lines and underground waterlines all play a role in shaping the right-of-way.

Based on the February 2008 “Utility and Street Condition Assessment Study Report” by ESPA, there are 25 streets, totalling over 7 lane miles of residential streets located within TIRZ No. 14. Approximately three miles or 38,000 square yards of the residential streets were assessed to be in poor condition, which is based on a pavement condition rating score of less than 40 and is recommended to be replaced with new concrete or receive an asphalt overlay. The residential streets of Fourth Ward are composed of asphalt (68%), concrete (21%), a combination of brick, asphalt and concrete (9%) and brick (2%). A drawing that depicts the surface level pavement types and the condition of the streets is presented in this report. Also, it was noted that the vegetation is very limited in most of the study area.

Streets within the study area are under the jurisdiction of the City of Houston unless noted otherwise. Some streets have specific designations according to the City of Houston’s 2009 Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP). Each hierarchy classification consists of a three-part-code that designates street function, anticipated number of lanes required to meet projected traffic volumes, and the required right-of-way width for the street. The planned number of lanes and right-of-way widths may not be reflected by actual field conditions.

An example of the classification system is provided as follows:

### P-6-100

- P - Street function, either (P)rinciple Thoroughfare, (T)horoughfare, or (C)ollector
- 6 - Number of lanes to meet projected future traffic volumes
- 100 – Minimum required right-of-way width (feet)

All other streets are considered local streets that function to provide access from individual properties to the thoroughfare network. The speed limit along all street segments within the City of Houston is 30 MPH unless posted otherwise.

## Opportunities

- Based on observations the traffic is moderate on West Dallas Street allowing the bike route which is currently a Class III bike route to be upgraded to a Class II to encourage biking to work. **(Goal MMT2)**
- The existing rights-of-way provide for a basic level of public infrastructure. **(Goal MMT3)**
- The establishment of a street ROW exception area creates the opportunity to preserve the scale and character of certain streets. **(Goal MMT3)**
- The existing street network is a grid with relatively short block lengths. **(Goal QMU5)**
- The platooning of traffic along West Dallas Street and West Gray Street creates adequate gaps for pedestrians to cross at non-signalized intersections. **(Goal MMT2)**
- Corridor designs should not consider the right-of-way lines as absolute limits, but rather explore public access easements for parking and sidewalks to compliment the public realm. **(Goal MMT3)**

## Challenges

- Pavement condition needs significant improvement in the study area. **(Goal MMT3)**
- Public right-of-way is expected to support a myriad of infrastructure systems, sometimes within confined areas where the roadways have relatively narrow rights-of-way. **(Goal MMT3)**
- Public improvement projects are confined to the public right-of-way. **(Goal MMT3)**

The following table shows the operational characteristics of streets in the study area:

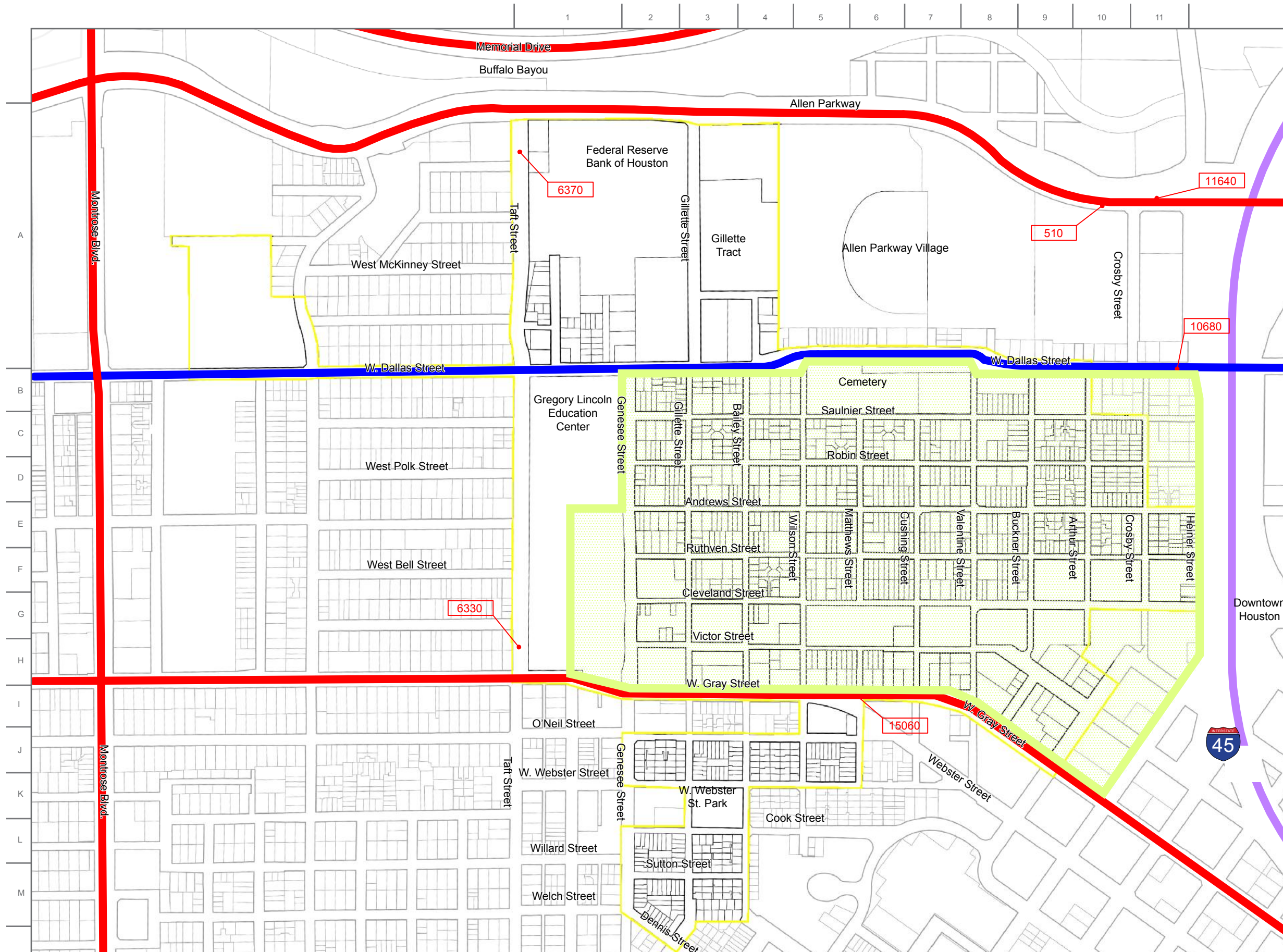
Street Name	Direction	ROW (in Feet)
Allen Parkway Frontage Road	Eastbound	110
West Dallas	Eastbound/ Westbound	60
Saulnier	Westbound	27.5
Robin	Eastbound	27.5
Andrews	Westbound	27.5
Ruthven	Eastbound	27.5
Cleveland	Westbound	27.5
Victor	Eastbound	27.5
West Gray	Eastbound/ Westbound	70
O’Neil	Eastbound/ Westbound	30
Webster	Eastbound/ Westbound	30
Cook	Eastbound/ Westbound	30
Sutton	Eastbound/ Westbound	30
Stanford	Northbound/ Southbound	60
Taft	Northbound/ Southbound	Varies (70-80)
Genesee	Southbound	60

Gillette	Northbound/ Southbound (Southbound only between West Dallas and West Grey)	30
	Northbound/ Southbound (Two way between Allen Parkway and West Dallas Street)	60
Bailey	Southbound (Northbound/ Southbound south of West Gray)	30
Wilson	Northbound (Northbound/ Southbound south of West Gray)	30
Matthews	Southbound (Northbound/ Southbound south of West Gray)	30
Cushing	Northbound	30
Valentine	Southbound	30
Buckner	Northbound	30
Arthur	Southbound	30
Crosby	Northbound	30
Heiner	Southbound	Varies

# Vehicular System Map

## LEGEND

- EXISTING 4TH WARD TIRZ BOUNDARY
- MAJOR COLLECTOR
- MAJOR THOROUGHFARE
- FREEWAY
- 2006 24-HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUME
- COH ROW EXCEPTION AREA









The Vehicular System Map shows street hierarchy and 24-hour traffic counts in study area.

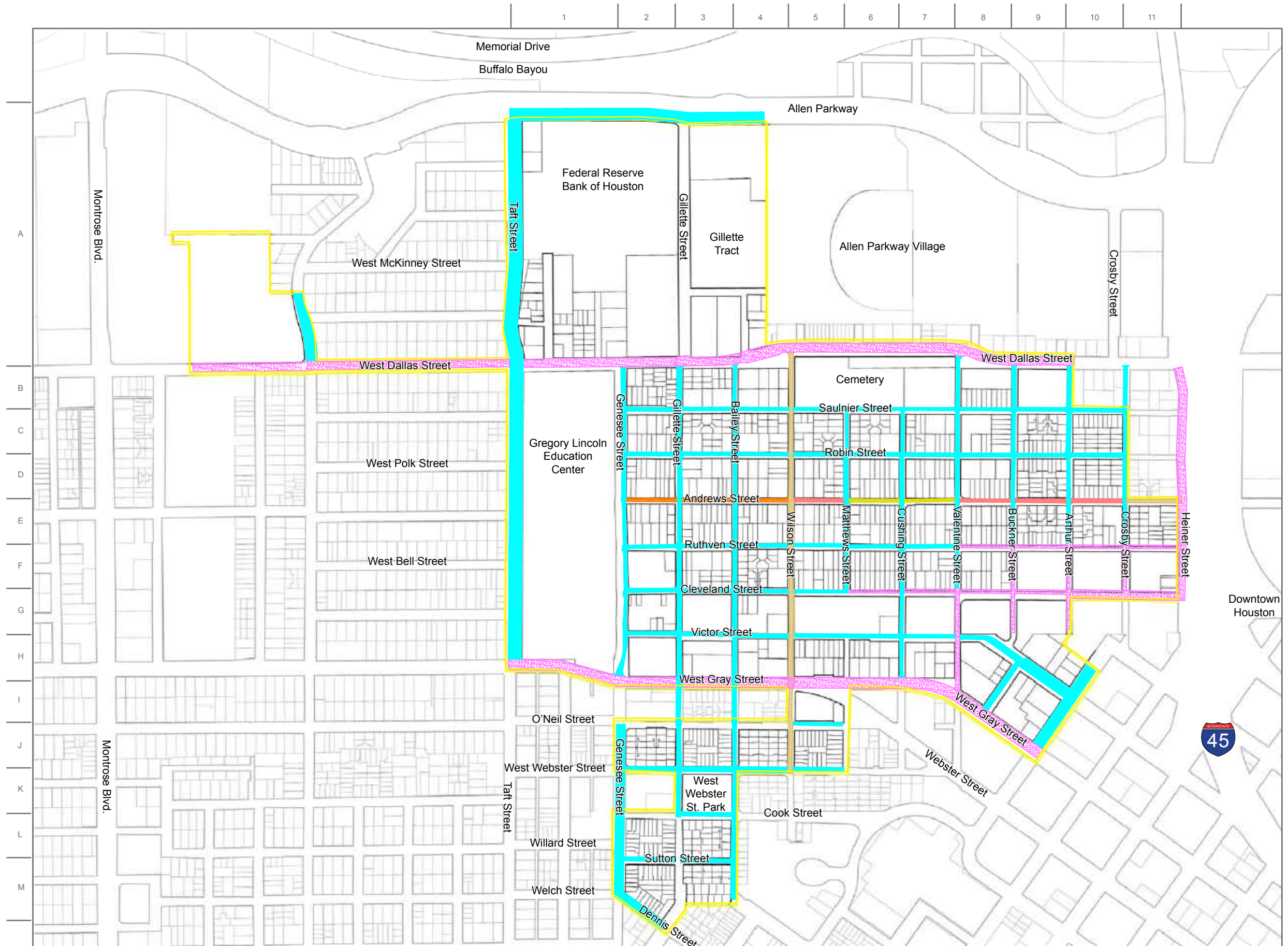
NOTE: Speed Limit on all streets within study area is 30 MPH



# Pavement Type Map

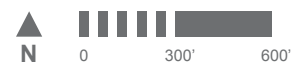
## LEGEND

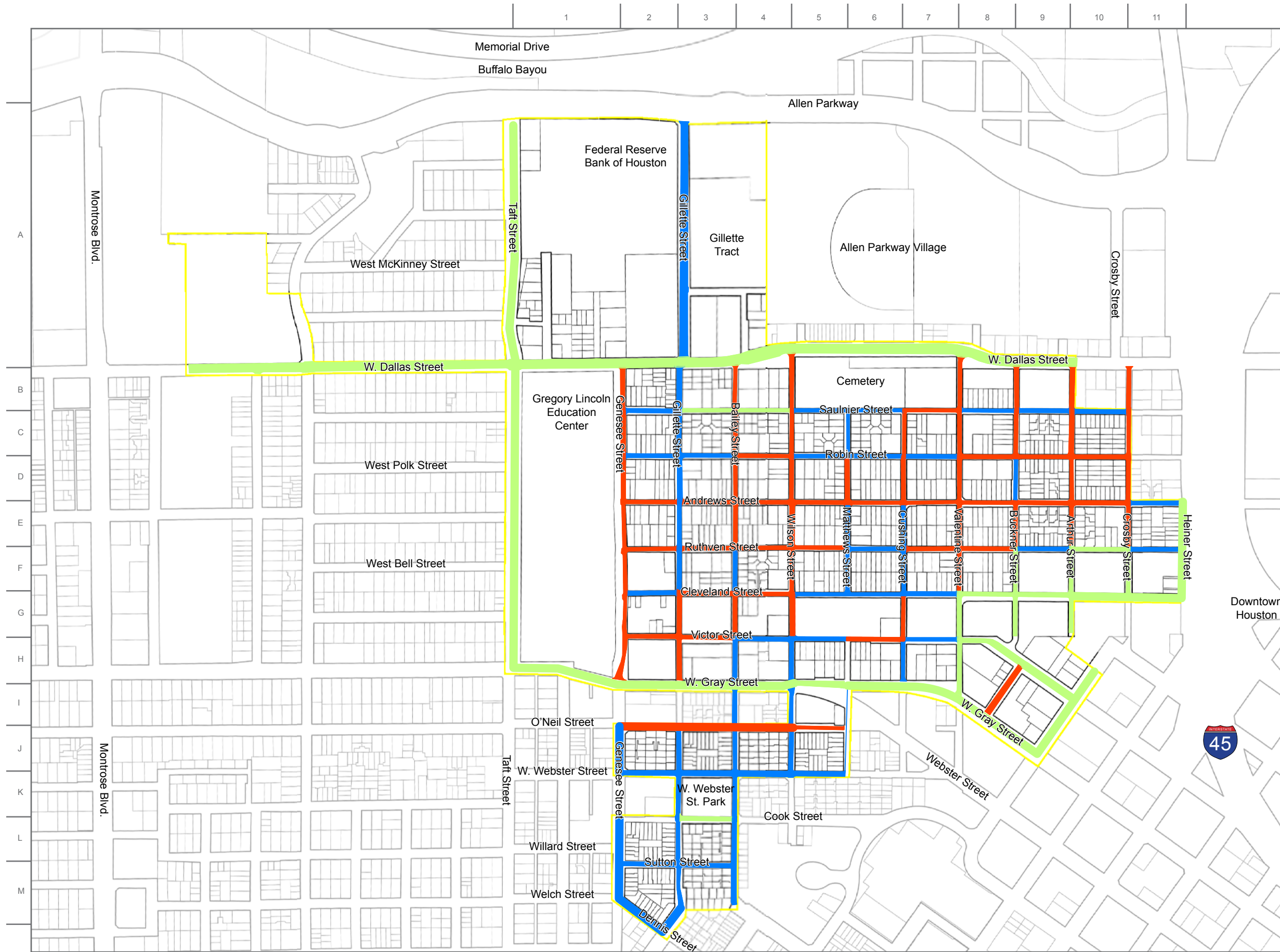
-  Asphalt
-  Concrete
-  Brick
-  Asphalt - Brick
-  Asphalt - Brick - Concrete
-  Brick - Concrete



The Pavement Type Map shows existing pavement surface types in the study area.

SOURCE: Utility and Street Condition Assessment Study Report, February 2008. Prepared by ESPA Corp.





# Pavement Condition Map

## LEGEND

- Good
- Fair
- Poor

The Pavement Condition Map grades the quality of pavement surfaces in the study area.

SOURCE: Utility and Street Condition Assessment Study Report, February 2008. Prepared by ESPA Corp.



## Street Analysis: East-West Streets

### Allen Parkway (Frontage Road)

Allen Parkway eastbound frontage road is a one-way, two lane roadway west of Gillette Street with a speed limit of 30 MPH. East of Gillette Street, it is a two-way street with one westbound lane and eastbound two lanes. It forms the northern boundary of the Fourth Ward study area. It begins as an exit ramp for Waugh Drive and continues east towards Downtown Houston. It terminates at Heiner Street west of IH 45. Sidewalk is provided on the south side of the street for pedestrian access. On-street parking is prohibited at all times on Allen Parkway's Eastbound Frontage Road, west of Gillette Street within the study area. East of Gillette, on-street parking is prohibited from Monday to Friday between 9 AM and 4 PM.

### West Dallas Street

West Dallas Street is a two-way, four lane roadway running east-west in the study area with a speed limit of 30 MPH. West Dallas Street continues to the east of the study area to merge into Downtown Houston. West of the study area West Dallas Street continues until its intersection with S. Shepherd Drive. In the study area, its Major Thoroughfare Plan (MTFP) designation is C-4-60. The intersections of West Dallas Street at Taft Street and Gillette Street are controlled by traffic signals. Exclusive left turn bays are not provided along West Dallas Street at these intersections; however, exclusive left turn lanes are provided on the Taft and Gillette Street approaches. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street for pedestrian access. Signalized crosswalks are provided on West Dallas Street on the east side of Stanford Street, Genesee Street, and Buckner Street and on the west side of Arthur Street. Parking is prohibited along West Dallas on the north side of the street within the study area; however, on-street parking is permitted on some blocks on the south side of the street. Additionally, west of Taft Street, on-street parking is allowed between 9 AM to 4 PM only. The City of Houston's Bikeway Program has designated West Dallas Street a shared-lane bike route in the study area.

### Saulnier Street

Saulnier Street is a one-way, one-lane street running westbound in the study area. Saulnier Street originates at Heiner Street located on the west side of IH 45, continues west and terminates at Genesee Street. Sidewalks are provided for pedestrian access on all blocks on the south side of the street, except one block between Arthur Street and Buckner Street. On the north side, a sidewalk is present only between Crosby Street and Valentine Street. On-street parking is permitted on some sections of Saulnier only on the south side of the street. Between Crosby Street and Buckner Street parking is restricted on the south side of the street between 9 AM and 5 PM except for the vehicles with a valid permit. Saulnier is two-way stop controlled at Arthur Street, Buckner Street, Valentine Street, Wilson Street, Bailey Street, Gillette Street, and Genesee Street.

### Robin Street

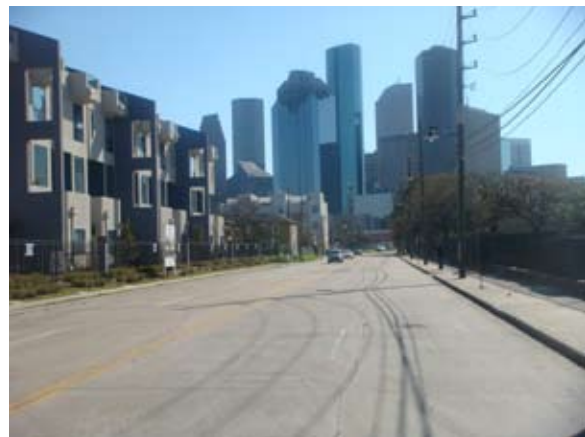
Robin Street is a one-way, one lane street running eastbound in the study area. It originates at Genesee Street east of Taft Street, continues east and terminates at Heiner Street. Sidewalks are provided for pedestrian access on both sides of the street except at a few locations. Sidewalks are not present on the south side of the street between Matthews Street and Cushing Street and between Bailey Street and Wilson Street. Also, sidewalks are not present on both sides of the street between Valentine Street and Buckner Street. On-street parking is permitted on some sections of Robin only on the north side of the street. Between Crosby Street and Buckner Street parking is restricted on the north side of the street between 9 AM and 5 PM except for vehicles with a valid permit. Parking restrictions are not present on the south side of the street between Genesee Street and Matthews, but typically parking is prohibited on the south side of the eastbound, one-way streets in the study area. Robin is two-way stop controlled at Crosby Street, Valentine Street, Cushing Street, Wilson Street, and Bailey Street.

### Andrews Street

Andrews Street is a one-way, one lane street running westbound in the study area. Andrews Street originates at Heiner Street located on the west side of IH 45, continues west and terminates at Genesee Street. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street for pedestrian access. On-street parking is permitted on some sections of Andrews only on the south side of the street. Between Heiner Street and Buckner Street parking is restricted on the south side of the street between 9 AM and 5 PM except for vehicles with a valid permit. Parking restrictions are not present on the north side of Andrews Street in a few blocks, but typically parking is prohibited on the north side of the westbound, one-way streets in the study area. Andrews is two-way, stop-controlled street at Valentine Street, Wilson Street, and Genesee Street. A section of Andrews Street between Crosby Street and Arthur Street is currently closed.



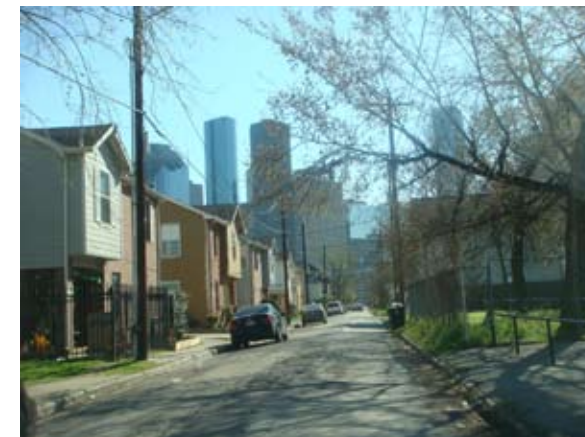
Allen Parkway eastbound frontage road



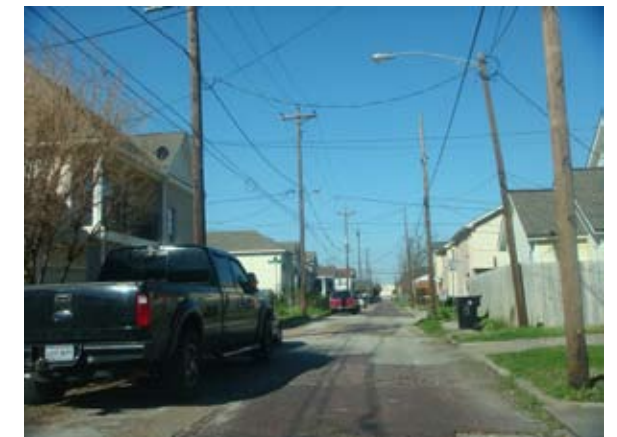
West Dallas Street looking toward downtown



Saulnier Street near IH 45



Robin Street

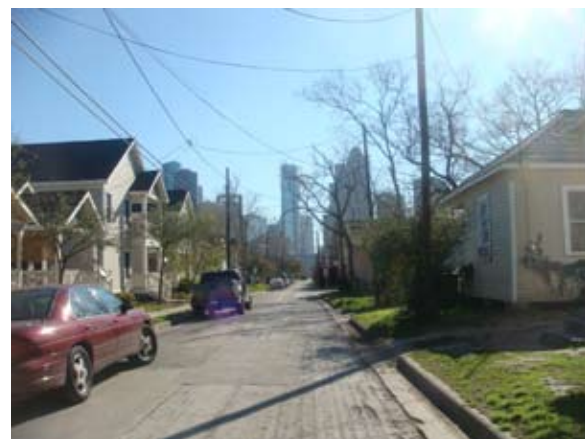


Andrews Street's historic brick paving



### *Ruthven Street*

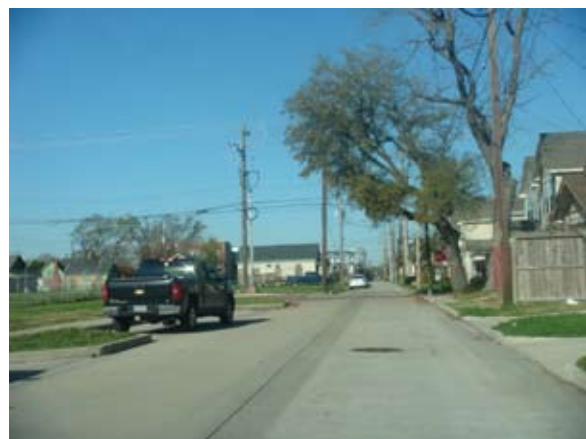
Ruthven Street is a one-way, one-lane street running eastbound in the study area. It originates at Genesee Street located east of Taft Street, continues east and terminates at Heiner Street. Sidewalks are provided for pedestrian access on both sides of the street except at a few locations. Sidewalks are not present on the south side of the street between Gillette Street and Bailey Street. Sidewalks are not present on both sides of the street between Wilson Street and Valentine Street. On-street parking is permitted on some sections of Ruthven only on the north side of the street. Between Crosby Street and Buckner Street parking is restricted on the north side of the street between 9 AM and 5 PM except for vehicles with a valid permit. Parking restrictions are not present on the south side of the street on some sections, but typically parking is prohibited on the south side of the eastbound one-way streets in the study area. Ruthven is two-way stop controlled at Valentine Street, Cushing Street, Wilson Street, and Bailey Street.



*Ruthven Street*

### *Cleveland Street*

Cleveland Street is a one-way, one-lane street running westbound in the study area. Cleveland Street originates at Heiner Street located west of IH 45, continues west and terminates at Genesee Street. Sidewalks are provided for pedestrian access on both sides of the street except at a few locations. Sidewalks are not present on the south side of the street between Cushing Street and Valentine Street. Sidewalks are not present on the north side of the street between Genesee Street and Gillette Street, between Wilson Street and Cushing Street, and between Valentine Street and Buckner Street. On-street parking is permitted only on the south side of the street on Cleveland between Valentine Street and Genesee Street. Parking bays which can accommodate up to 30 passenger cars are present on the south side of Cleveland Street between Crosby Street and Valentine Street. Cleveland is two-way stop controlled at Valentine Street, Wilson Street, and Genesee Street.



*Character of recent street construction on Cleveland Street adjacent to the Camden redevelopment*

### *Victor Street*

Victor Street is a one-way, one-lane street running eastbound in the study area. It originates at Genesee Street east of Taft Street, continues east and terminates at Heiner Street. Sidewalks are provided for pedestrian access on both sides of the street except at a few locations. Sidewalks are not present on the south side of the street between Gillette Street and Valentine Street. Sidewalks are not present on the north side of the street between Cushing Street and Valentine Street. On-street parking is permitted on some sections of Victor only on the north side of the street. Parking is prohibited on the north side of Victor between Valentine Street and Buckner Street. Between Helena Street and Baldwin Street metered parking is available on both sides of the street. Victor is two-way stop controlled at Valentine Street, Cushing Street, Wilson Street, and Gillette Street.



*Victor Street*

### *West Gray Street*

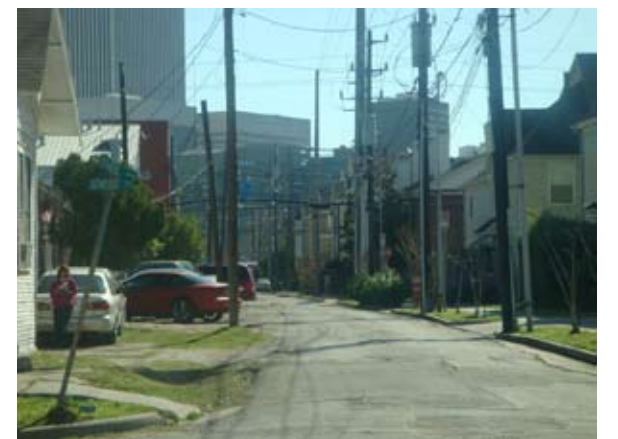
West Gray Street is a two-way, four-lane major thoroughfare running east-west between Taft Street and Wilson Street. East of Wilson Street it functions as a westbound one-way street forming a one-way pair with Webster Street which functions as an eastbound one-way street. In the study area, its Major Thoroughfare Plan (MTFP) designation is T-3-70 in the one-way section and T-4-70 in the two-way section. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street for pedestrian access. On-street parking is permitted on West Gray between Taft Street and Wilson Street. Between Gillette Street and Wilson Street, parking is not permitted between 7 AM and 9 AM in the eastbound direction and between 4 PM and 6 PM in the westbound direction. Parking is not permitted on West Gray between Wilson and Matthews Street. Parking is not permitted between 7 AM and 9 AM and 4 PM and 6 PM, between Matthews Street and Cushing Street. On-street parking is permitted only on the south side of West Gray between Cushing and Baldwin Street. Parking bays are provided along the street in this segment; however, parking is metered between Helena Street and Baldwin Street.



*West Gray Street looking toward downtown*

### *O'Neil Street*

O'Neil Street is a two-way, two-lane local roadway running east-west in the study area. It originates at Taft Street, continues east and terminates at Valentine Street. It is discontinuous between Webster Street and Cushing Street. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street for pedestrian access. On-street parking is permitted on sections of O'Neil within the study area. Additionally, a private parking area is present on the northwest quadrant of the intersection of O'Neil Street and Wilson Street. O'Neil is two-way stop controlled at Valentine Street, Wilson Street, Gillette Street, and Genesee Street.



*O'Neil Street*

*West Webster Street*

West Webster Street is a two-way, two-lane local roadway running east-west in the study area. It originates at Taft Street, continues east and merges into Webster Street. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street for pedestrian access in the study area, except between Bailey Street and Wilson Street. On-street parking is permitted on West Webster Street, except on the south side of the street, east of Wilson Street.

*Cook Street*

Cook Street is a two-way, two-lane local roadway running east-west in the study area. It originates at Genesee Street, continues east and merges into Oak Place. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street for pedestrian access. On-street parking is permitted along Cook Street in the study area. Cook Street is two-way stop controlled at Gillette Street and Genesee Street.

*Sutton Street*

Sutton Street is a two-way, two-lane local roadway running east-west in the study area. It originates at Genesee Street, continues east and terminates at Bailey Street. Sidewalks are provided for pedestrian access on north side of the street throughout the study area. On the south side of the street sidewalks are present between Genesee Street and Gillette Street. On-street parking is permitted on the south side of Sutton Street in the study area. On the north side of the street, on-street parking is prohibited between Gillette Street and Bailey Street. Sutton Street is two-way stop controlled at Bailey Street, Gillette Street, and Genesee Street.

*Dennis Street*

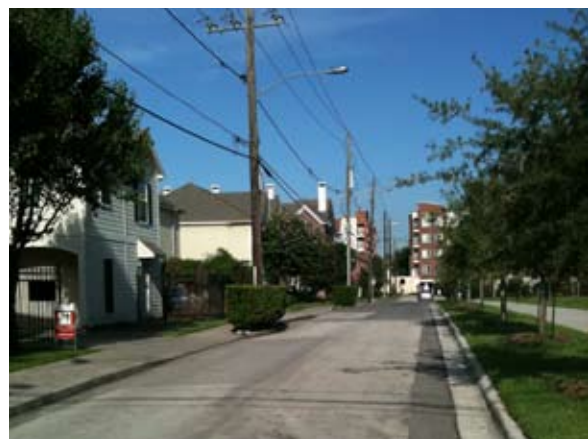
Dennis Street is a two-way, two-lane local roadway running east-west in the study area. It starts as an extension of Welch Street at Genesee Street, continues southeast and terminates at Travis Street. Dennis forms the southern boundary of the study area between Genesee Street and Gillette Street. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street for pedestrian access. On-street parking is permitted on Dennis Street in the study area.

*Stanford Street*

Stanford Street originates at Allen Parkway, continues south and terminates at Woodrow Street located north of US 59. It is a two-way, two-lane local roadway running north-south in the study area. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street for pedestrian access. On-street parking is permitted on some sections of Stanford. Stanford Street is two-way stop controlled at West Dallas Street.



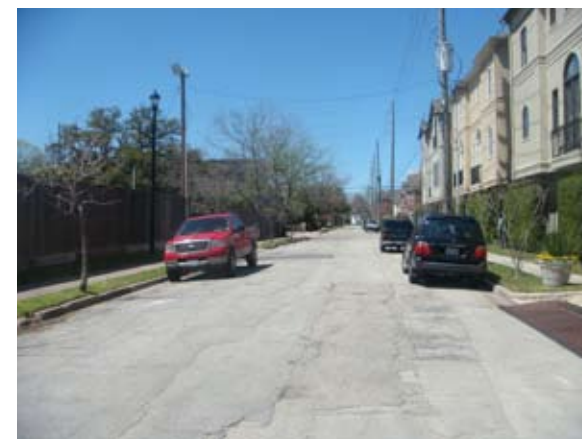
*Diverse street conditions along West Webster Street*



*Cook Street transition between Midtown and Fourth Ward TIRZ areas*



*Sutton Street*



*Dennis Street*



*Stanford Street*

## Street Analysis: North-South Streets

### Taft Street

Taft Street originates at Allen Parkway, continues south and terminates at Hawthorne Street located south of Westheimer Road. It is a two-way, two-lane roadway running north-south in the study area with signalized intersections at West Dallas Street and West Gray Street. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street for pedestrian access. On-street parking is permitted on some sections of Taft Street within the study area. School zone signs are posted on Taft Street for Gregory Lincoln Education Center, and the future site of the Carnegie Vanguard High School.



Taft Street bordered by the school site

### Genesee Street

Genesee Street originates at West Dallas Street, continues south and terminates at Pacific Street. It has different operational characteristics within the study area. Between West Dallas Street and West Gray Street, it operates as a southbound, one-way street with a one-lane cross section. South of West Gray Street, Genesee is a two-way, two-lane roadway. Sidewalks are provided for pedestrian access on the east side of the street only between West Dallas Street and West Gray Street. South of West Gray Street, sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street. Genesee Street is two-way stop controlled at Andrews Street, West Gray Street, West Webster Street, and Dennis Street. On-street parking is permitted on some sections of Genesee only on the east side of the street.



Genesee Street bordered by the school site

### Gillette Street

Gillette Street originates at Allen Parkway, continues south and changes its name to Boston Street at Dennis Street and terminates at Genesee Street. It has different operational characteristics within the study area. Between West Dallas Street and West Gray Street, it operates as a northbound one-way street with a one lane cross section. Gillette Street is a two-way, two-lane roadway on the segments north of West Dallas and south of West Gray Street. Sidewalks are provided for pedestrian access on both sides of the street in some sections. Sidewalks are discontinuous between Saulnier Street and Robin Street, between Ruthven Street and Cleveland Street, and between Victor Street and West Gray Street. North of West Dallas Street, on-street parking is prohibited on Gillette Street. Between West Dallas and West Gray, on-street parking is permitted in some sections of Gillette Street only on the west side of the street. Parking restrictions are not present on the east side of the street on some sections, but typically parking is prohibited on the east side of the northbound, one-way streets in the study area. South of West Gray, on-street parking is permitted along Gillette Street. The intersection of Gillette Street and West Dallas Street is controlled by a traffic signal. Gillette Street is two-way stop controlled at West Webster Street, West Gray Street, Cleveland Street, Ruthven Street, Andrews Street, Robin Street, and Allen Parkway Eastbound Frontage Road.



Gillette Street's right-of-way conditions north of West Dallas Street

### Bailey Street

Bailey Street originates at Hopson Street which is located north of West Dallas Street, continues south and terminates at McGowen Street. It has different operational characteristics within the study area. Between West Dallas Street and West Gray Street, it operates as a southbound, one-way street with a one lane cross section. South of West Gray Street, Bailey is a two-way, two lane roadway. On the north side of West Gray Street, sidewalks are provided for pedestrian access on west side of the street only. Sidewalks are discontinuous between West Dallas Street and Andrews Street. South of West Gray Street sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street. Between West Dallas and West Gray, on-street parking is permitted in some sections of Bailey only on the east side of the street. Parking restrictions are not present on the west side of the street in some sections, but typically parking is prohibited on the west side of the southbound, one-way streets in the study area. Parking restrictions are not present on Bailey Street south of West Gray. Bailey Street is two-way stop controlled at West Dallas Street, Andrews Street, Cleveland Street, Victor Street, West Gray Street, O'Neil Street, West Webster Street and Cook Street.



Bailey Street

### Wilson Street

Wilson Street originates at West Dallas Street, continues south and terminates at Cook Street. It has different operational characteristics within the study area. Between West Dallas Street and West Gray Street, it operates as a northbound, one-way street with a one lane cross section. South of West Gray Street, Wilson is a two-way, two-lane roadway. Sidewalks are provided for pedestrian access on both sides of the street in some sections. Sidewalks are discontinuous between Saulnier Street and Robin Street, between Andrews Street and Cleveland Street, and between West Gray and O'Neil Street on the east side of the street. Between West Dallas and West Gray, on-street parking is permitted on some sections of Wilson only on the west side of the street. Parking restrictions are not present on the east side of the street in some sections, but typically parking is prohibited on the east side of the northbound one-way streets in the study area. Parking restrictions are not present on Wilson Street, south of West Gray. Wilson Street is two-way stop controlled at West Webster Street, West Gray Street, Cleveland Street, Andrews Street, and West Dallas Street.



Wilson Street's historic brick paving

### Matthews Street

Matthews Street originates at Saulnier Street, continues south and terminates at West Webster Street. Matthews is discontinuous between Cleveland Street and Victor Street at the African-American Library. It has different operational characteristics within the study area. Between Saulnier Street and West Gray Street, it operates as a southbound, one-way street with a one lane cross section. South of West Gray Street, Matthews, is a two-way two-lane roadway. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street for pedestrian access. Sidewalks are discontinuous between Cleveland Street and Andrews Street. South of West Gray Street sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street. Between West Dallas and West Gray, on-street parking is permitted on some sections of Matthews Street only on the east side of the street. Parking restrictions are not present on the west side of the street in some sections, but typically parking is prohibited on the west side of the southbound, one-way streets in the study area. South of West Gray, parking is prohibited on the west side of Matthews Street between O'Neil Street and West Webster Street. Matthews Street is two-way stop controlled at Robin Street, Andrew Street, Ruthven Street, Cleveland Street, West Gray Street, and West Webster Street. On-street parking is permitted on some sections of Matthews.



Matthews Street

### Cushing Street

Cushing Street originates at Saulnier Street, continues south and terminates at West Webster Street. In the study area it operates as a northbound, one-way street with one lane cross section. South of West Gray Street, Cushing is a two-way, two-lane roadway. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street for pedestrian access, but they are discontinuous on both sides of the street. On-street parking is permitted on some sections of Wilson only on the west side of the street. Parking restrictions are not present on the east side of the street in some sections, but typically parking is prohibited on the east side of the northbound one-way streets in the study area. Cushing Street is two-way stop controlled at Cleveland Street, Andrews Street, and Saulnier Street.



Cushing Street

### Valentine Street & Arthur Street

Valentine Street and Arthur Street originate at West Dallas Street, continue south and terminate at Webster Street and Cleveland Street, respectively. In the study area they operate as southbound, one-way streets with one-lane cross sections. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the streets for pedestrian access. However, sidewalks are discontinuous in some sections of Valentine Street on the east side of the street. In the study area, on-street parking is permitted on some sections of these streets only on the east side of the street. However, on the east side of Arthur Street, parking is restricted between 9 AM and 5 PM except for the vehicles with a valid permit, between Saulnier Street and Andrew Street. Parking bays are provided on west side of Arthur Street on the sections south of Ruthven. Valentine Street is two-way stop controlled at Andrew Street, Cleveland Street, and West Gray Street. Arthur Street is two-way stop controlled at Robin Street, Andrews Street, Ruthven Street, and Cleveland Street.



Valentine (pictured) and Arthur Streets

### Buckner Street & Crosby Street

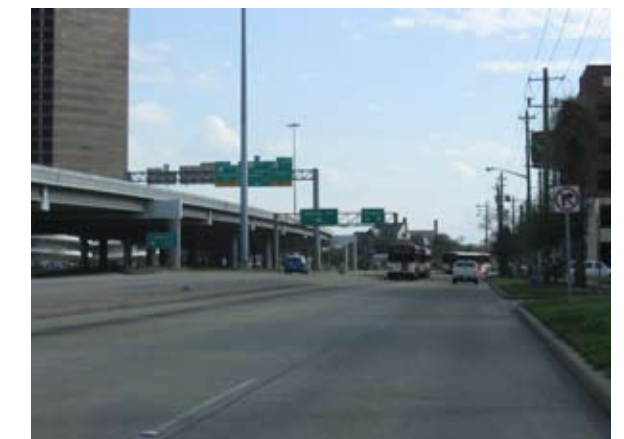
Buckner Street and Crosby Street originate at Victor Street and Cleveland Street respectively, continue north and terminate at West Dallas Street. In the study area they operate as northbound, one-way streets with one-lane cross sections. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the streets for pedestrian access; however, sidewalks are discontinuous in some sections. In the study area, on-street parking is permitted on some sections of these streets only on the west side of the street. Between Saulnier Street and Ruthven Street, parking is restricted between 9 AM and 5 PM except for the vehicles with a valid permit. Parking bays are provided on east side of both streets on the sections south of Ruthven. Buckner Street is two-way stop controlled at Andrews Street, Robin Street, and West Dallas Street. Crosby Street is two-way stop controlled at Andrews Street and Saulnier Street.



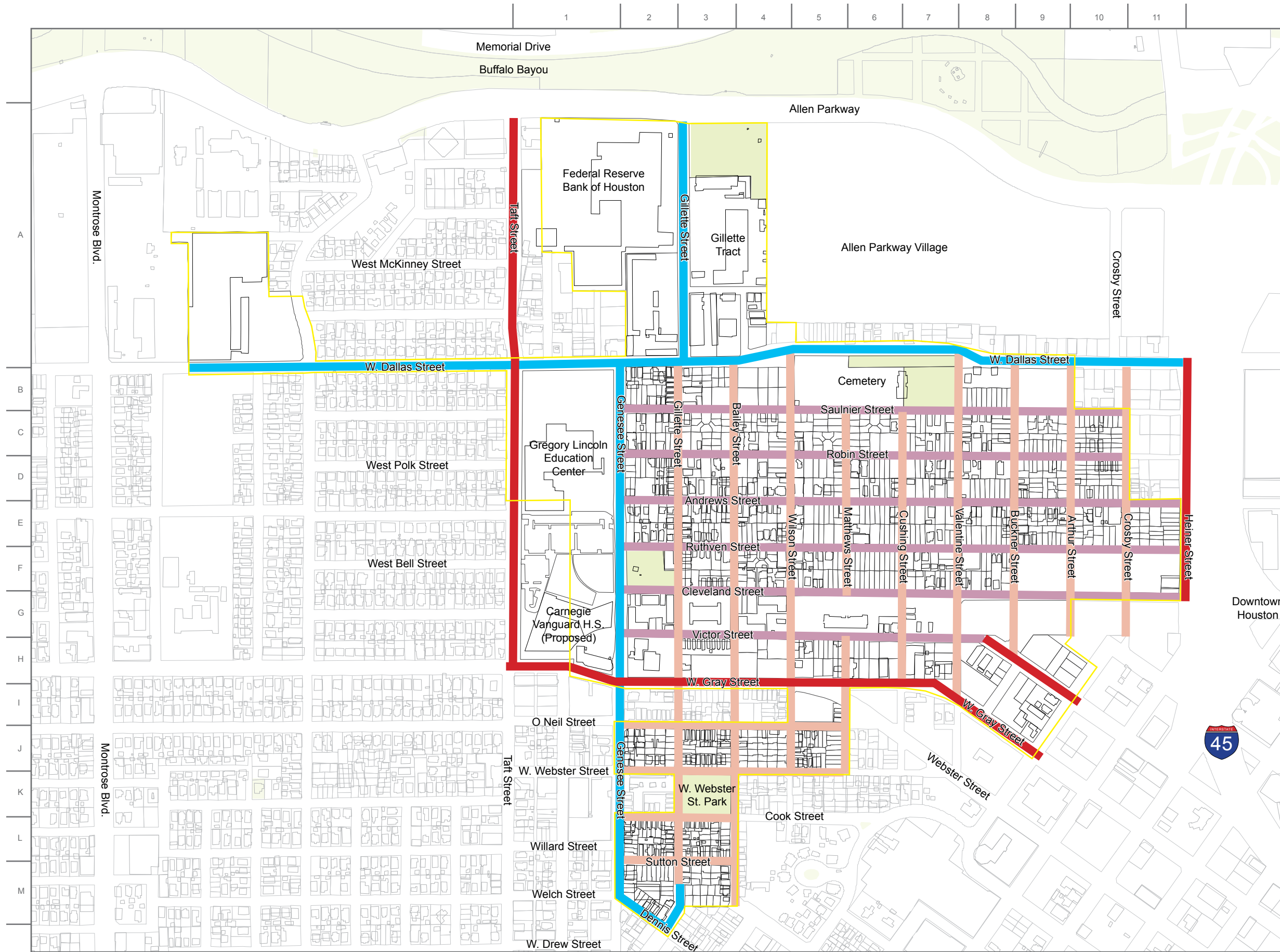
Buckner (pictured) and Crosby Streets

### Heiner Street

Heiner Street begins at the terminus of Allen Parkway Eastbound Frontage Road west of IH 45, continues south and changes its name to Bagby Street at a location south of Cleveland Street. In the study area it operates as a southbound, one-way street with a two-lane cross section between Andrews Street and Ruthven Street. It narrows to one lane at Ruthven Street. Sidewalks are provided on the west side of the street for pedestrian access. On-street parking is permitted on some sections of Heiner. Heiner Street narrows down from two lanes to one lane at Ruthven Street.



Heiner Street along IH 45 frontage



# Right of Way Map

## LEGEND

- 70+’ Right of Way
- 60’ Right of Way
- 30’ Right of Way
- 27.5’ Right of Way



The Right of Way Map shows the pattern of street widths within the study area.



## Intersections and Traffic Flow

The design of Houston’s intersections has a large impact on the pedestrian accessibility of the study area. Pedestrians will be hesitant to cross certain streets if the distance between ramps is too great, or if crosswalks are non-existent or unmarked. The inability for a pedestrian to cross certain streets reduces movement across the study area and promotes the use of personal vehicles. Currently the only marked crosswalks are at the signalized intersections and at a few locations along West Gray Street and West Dallas Street.

Crosswalks are provided on West Dallas Street on the east side of Stanford Street, Genesee Street and Buckner Street and on the west side of Arthur Street. Crosswalks are provided on West Gray Street on the east side of Genesee Street.

Traffic flow in the area is dominated by one-way circulation. Historic traffic flow in the area was two-way, but the circulation was changed during the 1980’s due to the narrow rights-of-way. The one-way designation is not always followed by drivers, and the overall circulation of the area can be confusing.

### Opportunities

- The existing street network is a grid with relatively short block lengths. (Goal QMU5)
- The platooning of traffic along the major streets creates adequate gaps for pedestrians to cross at non-signalized intersections. (Goal MMT2)
- Opening up the traffic flow by creating some two-way circulation will improve safety and increase comfort for visitors. (Goal MMT3)

### Constraints

- Pavement, sidewalks and ramps are in poor condition. (Goal MMT2)

Street Name	Operation
Allen Parkway Frontage Road	One way - Eastbound
Hopson	Two way
West Dallas	Two way
Saulnier	One way - Westbound
Robin	One way - Eastbound
Andrews	One way - Westbound
Ruthven	One way - Eastbound
Cleveland	One way - Westbound
Victor	One way - Eastbound
West Gray	Two way
O’Neil	Two way
West Webster	Two way
Cook	Two way
Sutton	Two way
Dennis	Two way

*Gillette Street Operational Characteristics of East - West Streets*



*The intersection of Taft and West Dallas streets is one of three light-controlled intersections in the study area.*

Street Name	Operation	
	North of West Gray Street	South of West Gray Street
Stanford	Two Way	Two Way
Taft	Two Way	Two Way
Genesee	One way - Southbound	Two Way
Gillette	One way - Northbound	Two Way
Bailey	One way - Southbound	Two Way
Wilson	One way - Northbound	Two Way
Matthews	One way - Southbound	Two Way
Cushing	One way - Northbound	Two Way
Valentine	One way - Southbound	Two Way
Buckner	One way - Northbound	One way - Northbound
Arthur	One way - Southbound	One way - Southbound
Crosby	One way - Northbound	One way - Northbound
Heiner	One way - Southbound	One way - Southbound
Baldwin	Two Way	Two Way

*Gillette Street Operational Characteristics of North - South Streets*

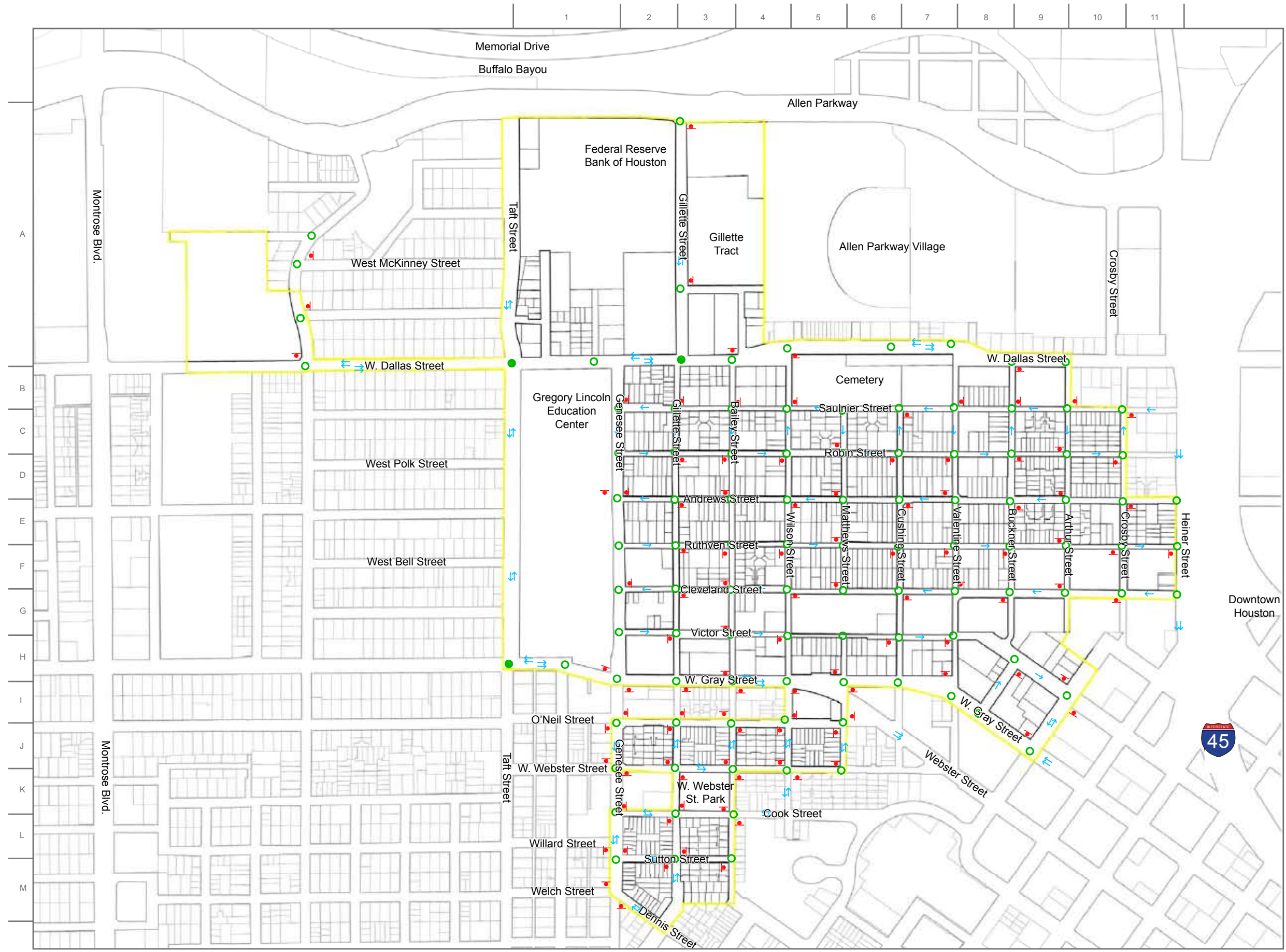


*Most streets in the core of the study area are narrow, one-way roads due to historic land patterns and on-street parking demands.*

# Intersection & Traffic Flow Map

## LEGEND

- TIRZ Boundary
- ↑ Direction of Travel
- ▬ Stop Sign
- Signalized Intersection
- Un-signalized Intersection

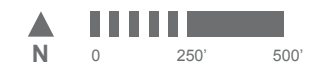


Downtown  
Houston



The Intersection and Traffic Flow Map shows existing intersection control conditions in the study area.

SOURCE: Utility and Street Condition Assessment Study Report, February 2008 Prepared by ESPA Corp.



## Existing Parking

The existing parking within the Fourth Ward consists mostly of on-street parking along both sides of the roadway. Currently there are parking meters along West Gray, Victor, and Baldwin streets near Midtown and residential parking permit restrictions along Saulnier, Robin, Andrews, Buckner, Arthur, and Crosby that limit parking to residents and their guests during the work day.

Currently the biggest issues related to parking are the spillover from downtown during the work day and large events on the western edge of downtown and on Sunday mornings during church. The downtown spillover issue could be addressed through the implementation of a residential permit parking program for the whole neighborhood. This process only requires a consensus among the residents and filing through the city's parking management group, a process that takes approximately six months.

Development of any existing land will impact on-street parking by increasing the parking demand and possibly reducing the on-street parking supply. New restaurants, retail or residential uses will add to the existing parking demand in the area as new employees, patrons and residents try to find parking. The parking supply can also be diminished as new development adds driveways and loading zones that replace the existing on-street spaces. Additionally, limiting parking to one side of the street on narrow streets will reduce the overall parking supply but will provide better access in and out of the neighborhood.

As the parking demand in the Fourth Ward grows it may be necessary to expand the residential parking permit zone to include other areas to control interlopers and preserve parking for residents. Implementing a residential permit program in one area can cause non-residential parkers to move onto adjacent uncontrolled streets exacerbating on-street parking issues in those areas. The permit program benefits residents by providing on street parking for those that need additional spaces and keeps downtown commuters from usurping neighborhood parking.

### Opportunities

- A significant amount of existing on-street parking is unutilized during most of the day and night. (Goal QMU7)

- Large redevelopment parcels are available that could accommodate future structured parking. (Goal QMU7 and ED1)
- Most infill and new development includes on-site parking due to market demand, thus reducing full time resident demand on streets. (Goal QMU7)
- Resident parking permit plan is already in place and should be easy to expand if needed. (Goal QMU7)

### Constraints

- Continued pressure for parking downtown and within the area could put serious pressure on the neighborhood as infill occurs and density increases. (Goal QMU1)
- Shared parking may be needed to meet demand. (Goal QMU7)
- Changes to lane designation and circulation patterns within the neighborhood could eliminate on-street parking in some areas. (Goal MMT3 and QMU7)

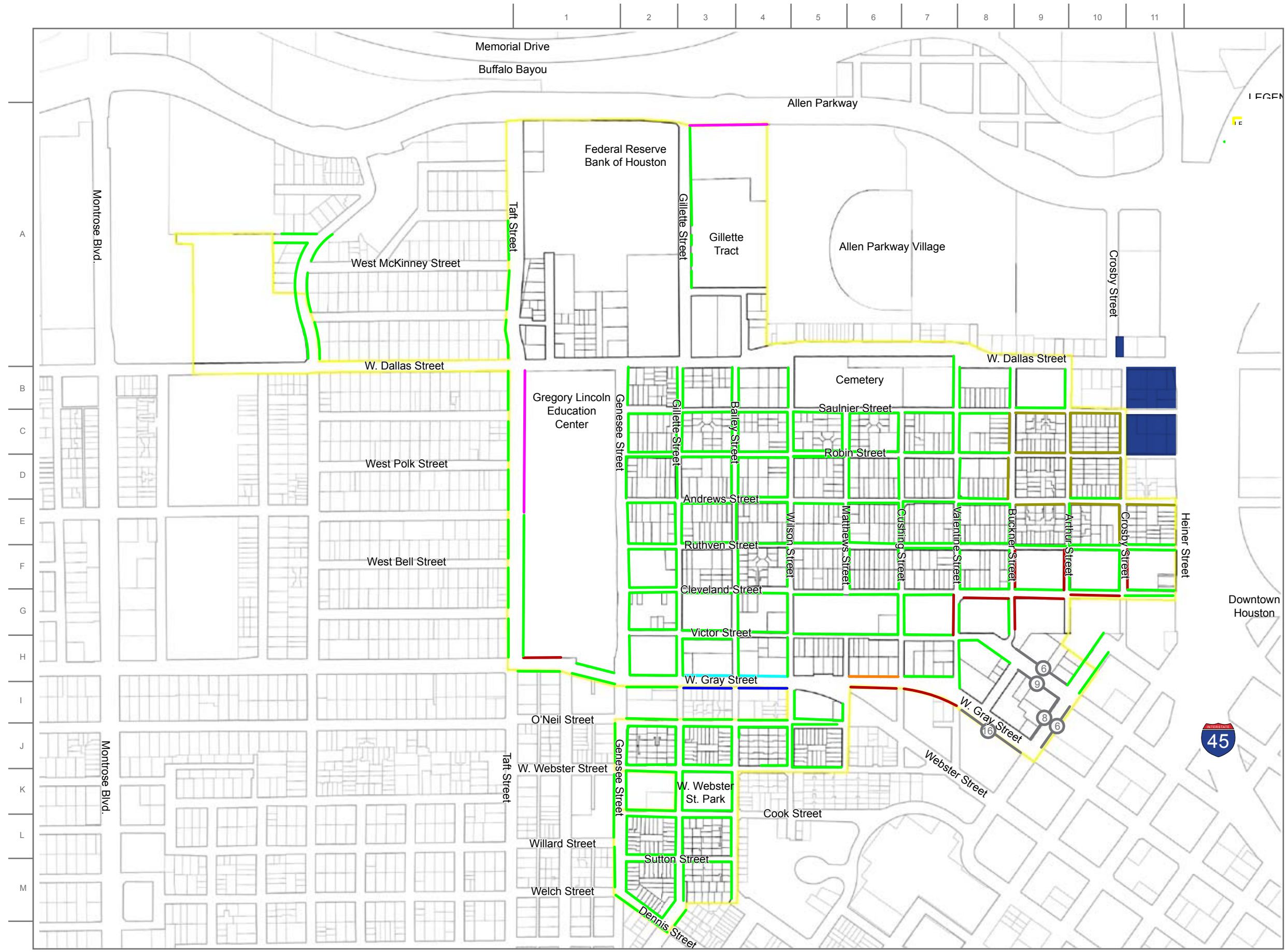


Large parking lots at the African American Library at the Gregroy School and Gregory Lincoln Education Center property to the west seem to be underutilized. Is a parking lot the best use of such a large public land area within the center of the community?



On-street parking is essential because older homes do not have garages or visitor parking. Most churches in the area do not have large parking areas to meet the needs of their users.





Existing Parking Map

LEGEND

- █ On-Street parking
- █ 7-9AM Mon-Fri No Parking
- █ 4-6PM Mon-Fri No Parking
- █ Parking Bay Adjacent to Travel Lane
- █ 7-9AM/4-6PM Mon-Fri No Parking
- █ 9AM-5PM Mon-Fri No Parking
- █ Except with Valid Permit
- X Metered Parking with # of Spaces
- █ Bus Zone
- Paid Parking

The Existing Parking Map shows availability of parking in the study area.



## Identity and Wayfinding Analysis

When touring the Fourth Ward, it is clear the area has been ravaged by time and change over the recent decades. Originally known as Freedmen’s Town, the current district boundaries are unclear and unidentified. The area is in need of a stronger identity and awareness. However, if one looks closer, there is evidence of historic and future planned elements that can help tell the rich history of the area and strengthen the identity of place.

To begin telling the story of the district, the African-American Library is the heart-center. Recently restored, the Library also houses an extensive Interpretive History Exhibit that chronicles the enormous successes and obstacles of the evolution of Freedmen’s Town. The Rutherford B.H. Yates Museum with the planned Historic Workman’s Cottage Barber Shop Museum and the adaptive re-use of Bethel Baptist Church into a neighborhood park will also reinforce the area’s important history.

The following list of Opportunities and Challenges outline ways to further strengthen the identity of the place and raise both awareness of the history and improve the perception of the district.

### Opportunities

- The creation of a Historic District identity will help unify the area. (Goal QMU2)
- Historic District Identification at key entries and boundaries will help define the district. (Goal QMU2)
- Historic District identity signs associated with street identification signs throughout the district (similar to Midtown and the Main Street Corridor) will help define the district. (Goal MMT3 and QMU2)
- Wayfinding signs should lead visitors to important features and destinations off West Dallas Street to the North, IH 45 Frontage Road on the Eastern boundary and West Gray Street to the West. (Goal MMT3 and QMU2)
- A walking tour could reinforce a logical pedestrian “path” that starts at the African American Library at the Gregroy School and leads visitors through important historic sites and features. (Goal QMU2)
- Design a printed Walking Tour Map that guides visitor through the area. (Goal QMU2)

- Use signage and wayfinding to reinforce adjacent connections such as the Federal Reserve Bank Museum, Buffalo Bayou, the Houston Museum of African American Culture and the Museum and Theater Districts. (Goal QMU2)
- Restore and extend existing cues from the past: Tile street/block identifiers, Select Historic structures, Historic Street Identification Marker, Brick paving and rails, and Texas Historical Commission Historic Site Markers (Goal QMU2)

### Challenges

- Creating something authentic and inclusive to the diverse community will take compromise. (Goal QMU2 and IC1)
- TIRZ funding is limited for such projects. (Goal IC1)
- Encroaching development can still erase or disrupt the story of the area after a strategy is in place. (Goal QMU2 and IC1)
- Consensus needs to happen regarding a district name; Fourth Ward or Freedmen’s Town.(Goal QMU2 and IC1)
- Maintenance of these features after installation will need to be assigned to a funded entity. (Goal QMU2 and IC3)



Simple additions can be made to standard signage as a low cost option.



Typical Texas historic markers are used within the study area.



A few cast concrete street markers remain in the area.



The African American Library at the Gregroy School makes a logical starting and ending point for any heritage tourism visit to the Fourth Ward. It provides plenty of parking and is a safe, comfortable environment that would make a good first impression on visitors.



Welcoming entry points on both the north and south facades make the Library a welcoming and accessible facility.



*Tile street markers and block numbers provide a layer of wayfinding throughout the area. Many of these markers are in poor condition or missing.*



*Sign topper programs are another low-cost option for existing signage features in a neighborhood.*



*Similar to the historic Freedmen's Town, portions of Midtown include special designations within the overall district.*



*Wilting shotgun houses are emblematic of the loss of authenticity in the area. A plan that makes the Fourth Ward a heritage tourism destination could turn this trend around.*



*West African symbols at the library could provide some inspiration for a district icon.*



*Midtown has a well established thematic signage and wayfinding system, which is a good case study for Fourth Ward.*



## Public and Non-Profit Land Ownership Analysis

Currently, there are several public and non-profit entities that own land in the Fourth Ward. These entities each have agency missions or visions influencing decisions about their land. However, understanding and matching these with the vision put forth in this document may result in opportunities for collaboration.

The three largest public and non-profit land owners in the study area include the City of Houston, Houston Housing Authority, and the churches. The City owns several of the parks, the Gillette Tract, and the African-American Library. The Houston Housing Authority owns Allen Parkway Village, Victory Place Apartments, and over 30 renovated single-family homes along Andrews Street. Many of the churches have purchased neighboring land for the purposes of expansion or complimentary uses such as affordable housing, educational facilities, or community centers.

### Opportunities

- The public and non-profit owned land may be an opportunity for fulfilling public benefit desires from the community such as public space, affordable housing, and historic preservation. (Goal QMU2, QMU3, and QMU4)

### Challenges

- Land ownership in the Fourth Ward is fragmented which makes implementation of a larger vision challenging. (Goal IC1)
- Planned uses for land owned by public and non-profit organizations must match the mission and vision of that organization. (Goal IC1)



The Houston Housing Authority owns many properties in the area. These structures vary from multifamily apartment buildings to single family historic homes.



The Yates Museum owns several properties around the core of the neighborhood, and has restoration plans for many of them. This structure is one of the more prominent features as visitors enter the neighbourhood from the south.



The Gillette Tract is the largest parcel of land owned by the City of Houston in the area. A redevelopment strategy for this site will be included in the overall approach for this project. Former City property adjacent to the tract is now owned by a private development team.

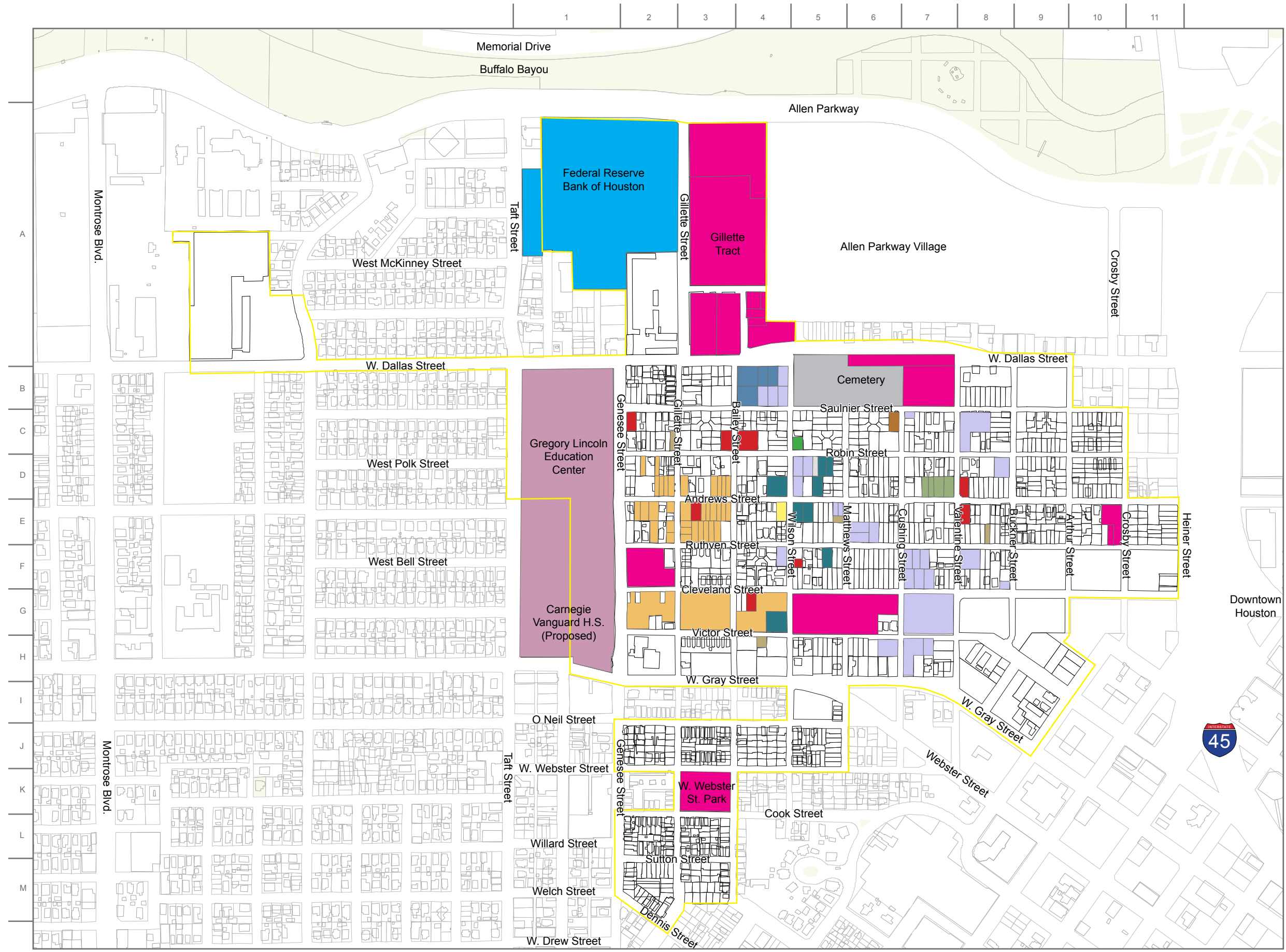


The Houston Independent School District (HISD) currently owns a large area that forms the western edge of the study area. This land was part of the Fourth Ward, but has since been cut off from the community.

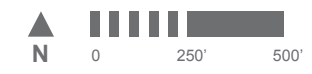
# Public and Non-Profit Land Ownership Map

## LEGEND

- Churches
- City of Houston
- Community Development
- The Federal Reserve
- Fourth Ward Redevelopment Authority
- Freedmen's Town Association
- Beth Israel Cemetery
- Hope Families
- Hou-Tex Redevelopment
- Houston Housing Authority
- Rutherford B. H. Yates Museum
- Scottish Rite
- Uplift Fourth Ward
- Houston Independent School District



The Public and Non-Profit Land Ownership Map shows the location and general intensity of land ownership by such groups in the study area.



## Large Commercial and Private Land Ownership Analysis

Market demand for urban living has attracted developers to the Fourth Ward. The map illustrates private land held by owners with more than 1/4 acre of property in the Fourth Ward. These parcels represent the opportunity to create projects that will act as the catalyst for future redevelopment in the neighborhood. Camden and Post Properties are the largest private land owners in the Fourth Ward. The numbers in the captions refer to the ownership map on the opposite page.

### Opportunities

- Large parcels owned by developers can act as catalysts for future redevelopment. (Goal QMU2)

### Challenges

- Land ownership in the Fourth Ward is fragmented which makes implementation of a larger vision challenging. (Goal IC1)
- Large redevelopment parcels can have a negative impact on the historic character of the neighborhood. (Goal QMU2)



Camden currently holds several empty blocks that are cleared and ready for new construction (6).



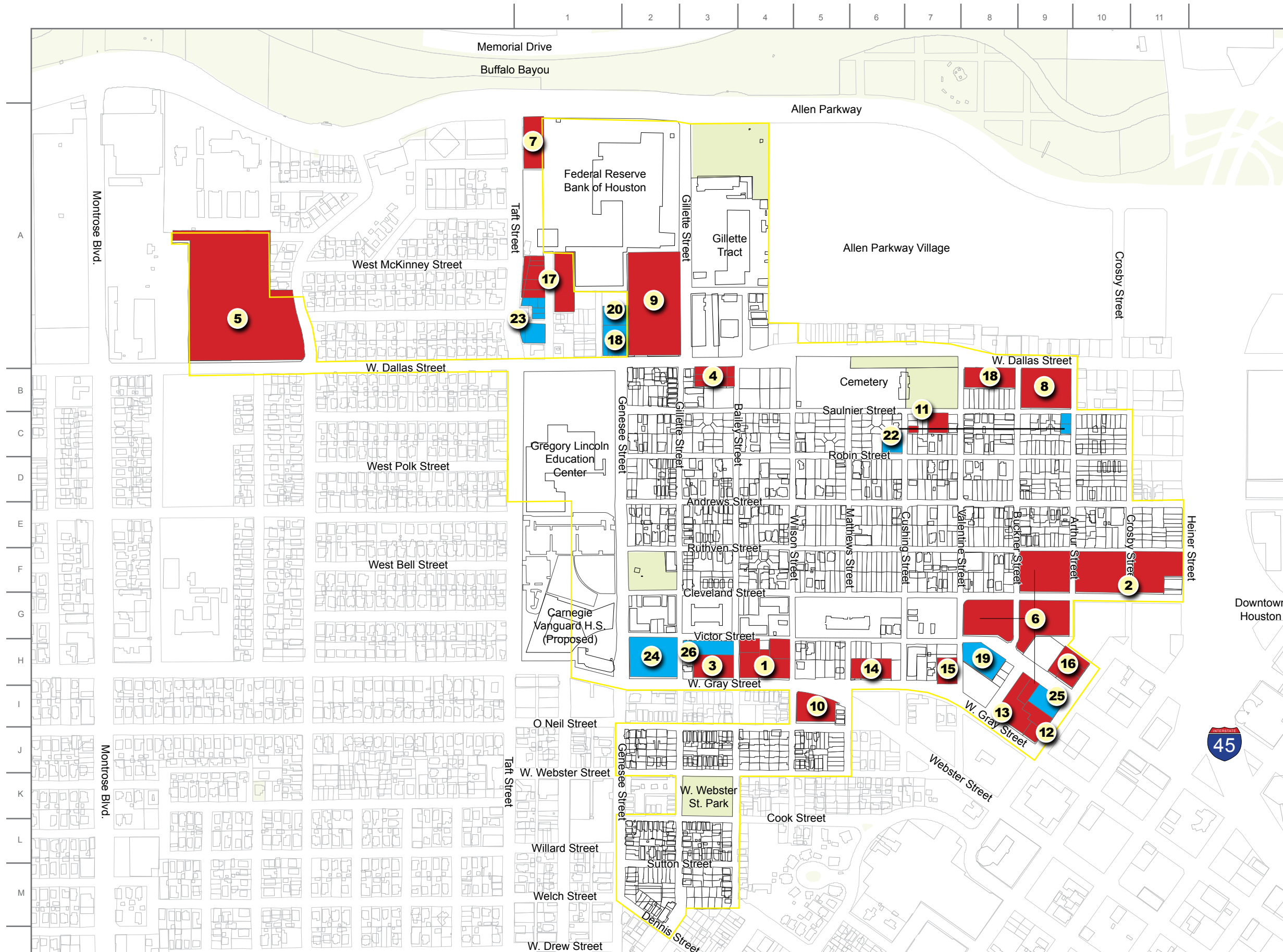
This long row of historic homes is owned by a private individual (26). They are currently uninhabited but could be renovated for affordable or mixed-income housing.



A few large parcels along West Gray are either vacant or undeveloped. These could provide major redevelopment opportunities (23).



The Gillette Tract is the largest parcel of land owned by the City of Houston in the area. A redevelopment strategy for this site will be included in the overall approach for this project. Former City property adjacent to the tract is now owned by a private development team (9).



### Commercial and Private Ownership Map

#### LEGEND

- 1** 170 West Gray Ltd.
- 2** 2009 CPT Community Owner LLC
- 3** 202 West Gray Ltd.
- 4** Amerites Construction LLC
- 5** AMLI BPMT Towne Square Partnership
- 6** Bagby Apartments LLC
- 7** Ballard Exploration Inc.
- 8** Bayou City Lodging GP LLC
- 9** Bellfontaine Stella Link Ltd.
- 10** Casa di Modena LP
- 11** Concord Custom Builders
- 12** FPP Real Estate Holdings LP
- 13** Houston This Is It Cafe
- 14** M & D Gray Properties LLC
- 15** Monte Hasha Inc.
- 16** SMBHC LLC
- 17** Taft Venture Ltd.
- 18** Urban Storage LP
- 19** Aquilina, Anthony
- 20** Byrne, Tome K.
- 21** Doxey, Rebecca
- 22** Dark, Joseph R.
- 23** Duwaji, John
- 24** Gerber, Malcolm Jacob
- 25** Knox, Elizabeth
- 26** Tran, Thuong Thi
- Commercial Property
- Private Property Use

*The Commercial or Private Ownership Map for large parcels shows the major commercial land owners in the area. All owners listed own at least one acre of continuous or combined parcels.*







# 4

## DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

## Overview

A three-day charrette and public workshop was used as a catalyst for the development of alternatives. This event included representatives from the entire project team, as well as regular interaction with community leaders and key stakeholders. Charrettes are used to “rapidly cycle” through a range of ideas and solutions regarding the opportunities and challenges of the project. After three days of intensive work, Mount Horeb Missionary Baptist Church hosted an open house for the design team to present and address questions from the community.

The outcome of the charrette, public workshops, and open house resulted in the development of several overlays that address topics ranging from infrastructure to historic fabric. All of these overlays work toward supporting a “centers-based” approach for the project. This means that the team will focus on several strategic redevelopment areas that have the potential to generate income for the district and provide community services.

Overlay topics included:

- New and proposed “centers”
- Overall community framework
- Overall cultural tourism framework
- Parks and open space framework
- Alternative transportation framework
- Infrastructure-related overlays that include district signage, street hierarchy, conceptual street sections, and a parking framework plan

The Gillette Tract was also looked at during the charrette. The approach focused on how to make the redevelopment fit within the “centers” concept. Several alternatives were developed that included a mix of uses and open space options. Results can be found in Chapter 6 of this document.



Mount Horeb Missionary Baptist Church provided a venue for the open house in the heart of the study area.



The team presented ideas to stakeholders at the open house.



Several concepts for the Gillette Tract were developed at the charrette and presented to the public.

## Community Issues



A “community” is generally defined as a group of individuals functioning within a defined system. The Fourth Ward study area includes economically and ethnically diverse community members that have a well-documented set of community-based issues. Despite background differences among residents and stakeholders, most participants identified similar strengths and weaknesses within the existing community.

### Opportunities

- Create walkable places where residents can live, work, and play
- Utilize vacant land to improve sense of community and safety
- Include a walking track for seniors
- Connect the neighborhood to Buffalo Bayou
- Restore brick streets
- Create pedestrian connections across large parcels (HISD and Allen Parkway Village)
- Create gateways to the neighborhoods

## Historic Preservation



Although the methods and levels of preservation communicated by various stakeholders differs, several common goals and projects begin to take shape. The Fourth Ward has a rich cultural history that has seen significant deterioration and loss of legibility. The common vision combines projects related to physical preservation and renovation projects, housing efforts that are economically and socially inclusive, and signage that documents the story of the area.

### Opportunities

- Put preservation tools in place that protect historic features and properties
- Use cultural tourism as an economic force that will push back real estate redevelopment projects
- Promote redevelopment in specific areas that works with the preservation goals of the neighborhood
- Build a clear and coordinated cultural tourism plan
- Tourism should be served by new retail uses
- Utilize the African-American Library as a launching point for cultural tourism related to the Fourth Ward/Freedmen’s Town
- Focus on both African American and Texas heritage resources to broaden the heritage tourism audience in Fourth Ward
- Key to preservation is the designation of an historic district

## Affordable Housing

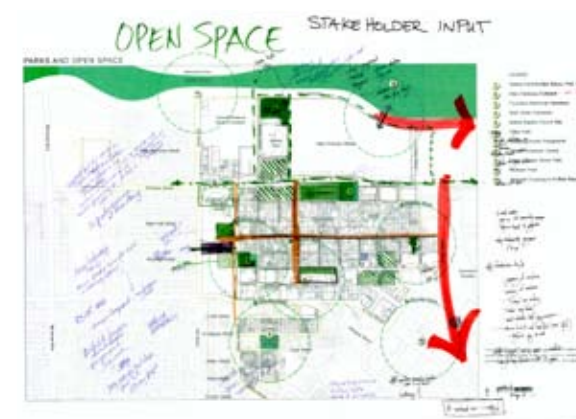


The creation of projects that provide affordable housing at a range of levels is considered a critical success factor for this project; a point made repeatedly by community organizers, religious leaders, and political leaders active in the area.

### Opportunities

- Preserve the culture of the neighborhood by preserving housing affordability
- Collaborate with community development corporations (CDCs), the City Housing Authority, the City Housing and Community Development Department and other low-income service providers
- Define affordable housing by the income of the neighborhood’s historic residents
- Provide space for affordable neighborhood services and retail such as groceries, pharmacies, and laundromats
- Enhance bus service through the neighborhood

## Open Space



The Fourth Ward includes a variety of programmed parks and open spaces that serve the local community. Most of the feedback regarding open space relates to lack of connectivity between spaces, lack of young adult programs, and unsafe pedestrian conditions.

### Opportunities

- All residents should be within a walking distance of parks and open spaces.
- A diverse neighborhood requires a diversity of parks and park programming.
- Active recreation provides opportunities with access to activities that promote a healthy lifestyle, appeal to a broad range in ages, and build a sense of community.
- Parks should provide programs and activities for a wide range of age groups, with a focus on providing activities for young adults.
- Parks can provide fresh food and community-building activities by incorporating community gardens.

## Infrastructure



Based on documented site conditions and community feedback, infrastructure improvements are perhaps the most needed improvements in the area. There is a need for improvements to basic services (water, electric, sewer, roads) as well as community services (sidewalks, signage, transportation).

### Opportunities

- Streets should function as a conveyance tool for cars, people, utilities and be able to function as a safe gathering place for the community.
- Streets should be designed to fit specific needs. Not all streets look and function the same.
- There should be a clear hierarchy to the street network to assist wayfinding and legibility.
- Consistent bus service would provide meaningful access to services and employment.
- Express bus service could stop in the area without causing excessive delays.
- A transit “hub” would make transit more appealing to riders and encourage a seamless integration of foot travel, bicycle users, and transit.
- Parking is an opportunity to activate streets.
- Parking should serve residents and commercial users equally.
- Residents should have improved access to water, properly functioning sewer service, storm water collection, and streets that minimize the clutter of overhead utilities.

## Creation of “Centers”

Providing places where a community can live, work, and play is essential in creating a sustainable community. Accepted planning principles indicate that all members of a community should be within a five-minute walk of a center that includes a mix of uses. Work sessions held by the design team and community members identified a need for three new centers, and a need for improved connections to the fourth center - Post Midtown.

Centers are synergistic developments; the relationships they create make them more sustainable and economically viable. The team feels that this approach will work with existing market conditions around the study area and will have the best chance of providing the services, housing, and diversity that the community desires. These projects do take time and require an experienced development team.

### Principles

- Residents within the study area should be within walking distance of a “center”. (Goal QMU1)
- West Dallas and West Gray should include some level of vertically mixed use development. (Goal QMU1)
- Centers should support forms of transportation other than the personal automobile. (Goal MMT2)
- Connect centers to neighborhoods with safe walking and bicycle routes. (Goal MMT1, MMT2, and QMU1)
- Centers must be economically viable, and take advantage of the differences in market conditions based on their location. (Goal ED1)
- Centers are a viable resource for the development of affordable housing. (Goal QMU3)
- Centers can help support smaller adjacent business that provide additional neighborhood services. (Goal QMU1)
- Centers should be developed with a parking strategy that reduces impact on the adjacent neighborhood. (Goal QMU7)

### Risks and Liabilities

- Low market demand for needed densities can delay projects and allow low-quality development to occur, further delaying the process.
- Increased gentrification rates are possible with the rental prices and costs of construction typically associated with such densities.

- Lack of cooperation from land owners is a huge barrier to redevelopment at this scale.
- Inflated land costs due to limited number of sites large enough for mixed use redevelopment can stall a project.
- Poor quality of infrastructure raises the cost of redevelopment and is a barrier to economic viability.
- New demand for parking within residential areas must be met to achieve retail.

### Community feedback on topic...

*High interest in attracting a grocery store to the area.*

*Outlets for fresh foods and a farmers market would be welcome.*



*Lower scaled mixed use developments can provide neighborhood services and blend with the surrounding neighborhood. (Photo: Plano TX)*



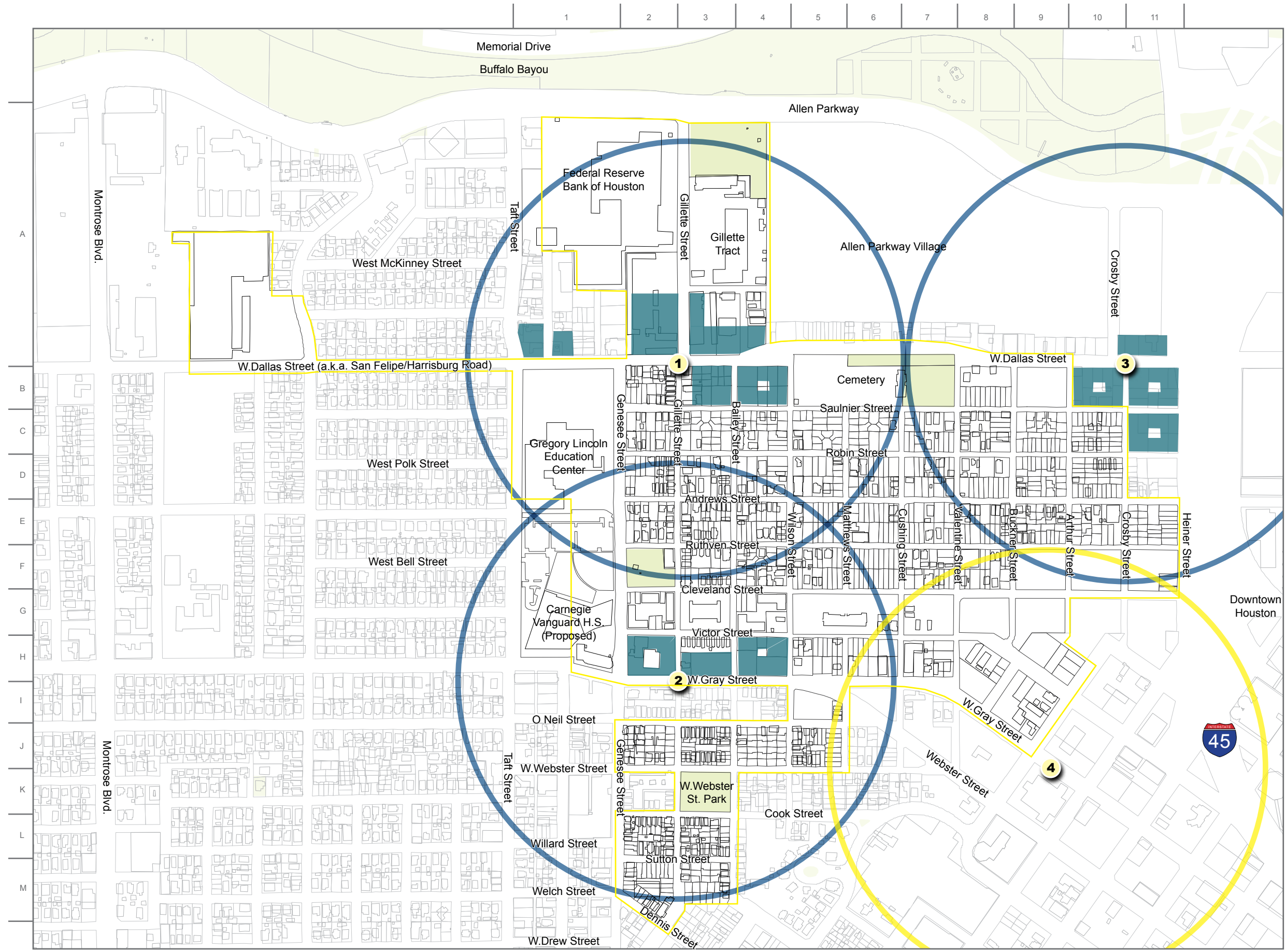
*Larger redevelopment projects might be more suitable along portions of West Gray, at the West Dallas/IH 45 intersection and within the Gillette Tract. These projects can support a mix of uses, income levels, and parking strategies. (Photo: Plano TX)*



*Post Midtown represents an existing center that provides a mix of uses, but has limited access to daily services and shopping. (Photo: Midtown Houston)*



*Encouraging on-street parking and development that is human-scaled will be important for reducing parking demand in the neighborhood and creating places that serve a diverse group of residents. (Photo: Orenco Station, Portland OR)*



### Centers Map

#### LEGEND

- 1** **Gillette Street Center**
  - 20,000-25,000 sf commercial
  - Neighborhood retail and services
  - pharmacy
  - salons
  - laundromats
  - Restaurants
  - quick serve lunch
  - evening eating and drinking
  - School
  - Transit access
- 2** **Gray Street Center**
  - 20,000-30,000 sf commercial
  - Mixed use
  - 3-4 stories
  - Restaurants
  - quick serve
  - evening eating and drinking
  - Convenience goods
  - Gym
  - Transit access
- 3** **West Dallas Center**
  - 10,000-15,000 sf commercial
  - Mixed use
  - 4-5 stories
  - Restaurant
  - quick serve
  - evening eating and drinking
  - Neighborhood retail and service
  - Paid parking
- 4** **Post Midtown Center (Existing)**

- Study Boundary
- 5-Minute Walking Radius of Existing Center
- 5-Minute Walking Radius of Future Center
- Potential Retail/Mixed-Use Development

The Centers Map shows the distribution of both existing and proposed neighborhood activity areas.



## Overall Community Framework

The Fourth Ward has a history of division, isolation, and deterioration of infrastructure. Any proposed framework should emphasize connectivity, revitalization, historic protections, and should work to create community pride. A comprehensive solution for this area should include overlays that address historic/cultural preservation, affordable housing, infrastructure, open space, and economic sustainability.

### Principles

- Encourage redevelopment along corridors and achieve appropriate levels of density depending on size and context. (Goal QMU1 and ED1)
- Annex properties needed to create centers into TIRZ. (Goal QMU1 and IC3)
- Reduce block lengths and eliminate barriers to pedestrians. (Goal MMT2 and QMU5)
- Improve connectivity of neighborhood to downtown, Buffalo Bayou, and adjacent neighborhoods. (Goal MMT2)
- Provide a clear guide for redevelopment projects that improve the livability of the community. (Goal IC1 and IC3)
- Provide a sustainable solution for heritage and preservation in the study area. (Goal QMU2)

### Risks and Liabilities

- TIRZ funding will only cover a limited number of projects.
- Property owners may not cooperate with redevelopment strategy or opt to join the TIRZ.
- HISD site may not allow pedestrian traffic through school site, and may not share facilities after-hours.
- Pedestrian crossings to Buffalo Bayou are politically challenged and can be very expensive.
- Historic designation and preservation issues have been perceived as slowing down needed improvements in the community such as affordable housing provision and street repair.

### Community feedback on topic...

*It is important to get the community back and instill pride in the neighborhood as it once had.*

*At what point do we say we have enough density, don't we have enough people?*

*Gillette Tract improvements should include affordable housing and green space location/program.*

*It is difficult to spend the TIRZ affordable housing set aside (1/3 of the total increment) because of the development pressures and resulting land values.*

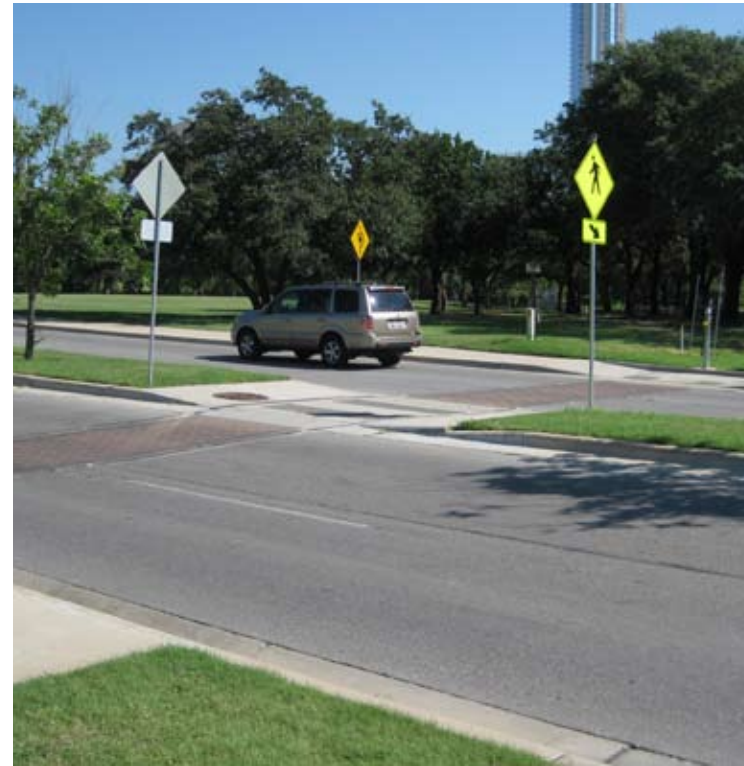
*The churches and Houston Housing Finance Corporation should collaborate on the community garden concept because they own several lots in the neighborhood – some of which are unbuildable.*

*Cemeteries are points of interest in the neighborhood*

*Clear implementation strategies for Allen Parkway crossings should be articulated.*

*Stress the crossing to Sam Houston Park because there are a lot of people headed that way...*

*Determine an implementation strategy for making fresh produce available in the neighborhood.*



*Reconnecting the community to the city and removing barriers will improve quality of life, access to resources and safety. (Photo: Austin TX)*



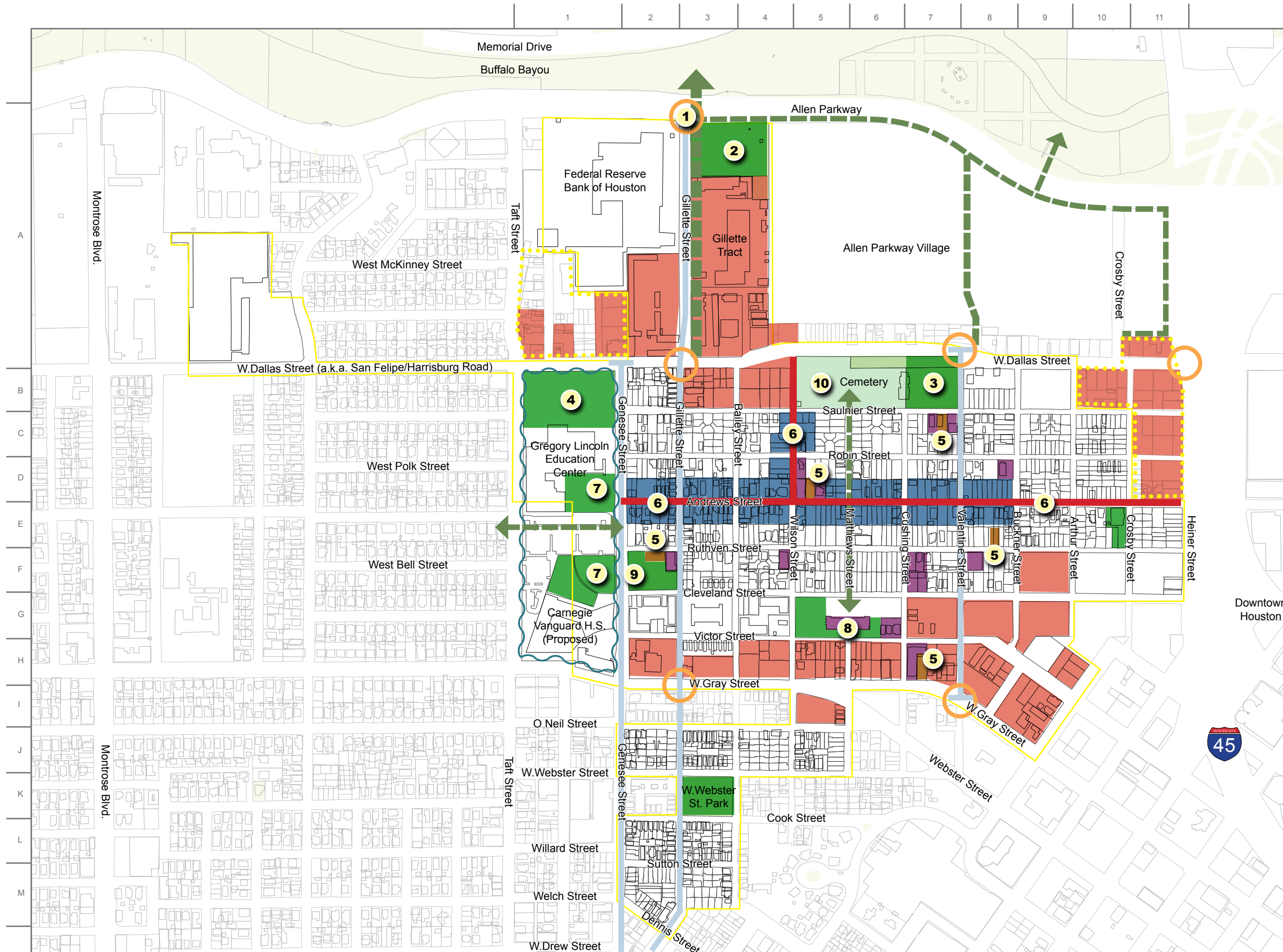
*Community-based programs are a great way to bring a diverse group of community members together, improve safety by providing "eyes on the street" and create community pride. (Photo: Prospect Heights Farm, Brooklyn)*



*New development can be scaled to meet economic realities and blend with the existing community. (Photo: Plano TX)*



*Encouraging on-street parking, better transit service, and development that is human-scaled will minimize parking demand in the neighborhood and create places that serve a diverse group of residents. (Photo: Ruthven Street)*



# Overall Community Framework Plan

## LEGEND

- 1** Proposed Allen Parkway Crossing
- 2** San Felipe Park
- 3** Founders Memorial Cemetery
- 4** Open Recreation Field
- 5** Proposed Community Garden Site
- 6** Proposed Restoration of Brick Streets
- 7** HISD Park Spaces
- 8** African American Library at the Gregory School
- 9** Wiley Park
- 10** Beth Israel Cemetery

- Study Boundary
- Community Parks and Open Spaces
- Potential Redevelopment Areas
- Priority Historic Home Replacement Zone
- Civic and Religious
- Potential Community Garden Site
- Proposed Greenway or Trail
- Restored Brick Streets
- Proposed Fitness Trail
- Proposed 2-Way Street
- Neighborhood Gateway
- Recommended TIRZ Acquisition Zone

The Overall Community Framework Plan shows various types of proposed projects in relation to each other. It is a comprehensive look at proposed projects in the area.



## Forming the Historic “Core”

The role that the Fourth Ward has played in the lives of African Americans living in Houston is perhaps its greatest story. To be sure that legacy lives on for future generations, a strategy to preserve, protect, and educate visitors and residents is critical. Improving the quality of life and renewing a sense of pride in the Fourth Ward is a first step, but policy and planning efforts must also be put in place to fend off further deterioration.

This plan proposes the formation of a historic “core”, which should be focused on the in-place restoration of homes as well as the placement of relocated historic structures when they cannot be saved in-place. While this approach may not be historically accurate, the clustering of these houses will aide in their protection and long-term stainability. It will be important to reinforce to visitors which structures are part of the original fabric, while an infill will give them a look at the overall scale and character of the district as it was. This approach is not significantly different than the approach drafted by The Center for Historic Architecture (CHA) in their 1995 Redevelopment Strategies for Freedmen’s Town study. That study includes a “Proposed Infill Within District” map (p.23). It clearly indicates an effort to infill blocks between Robin and Ruthven Streets, along with the blocks between Matthews and Bailey Streets, north of Andrews Street. The proposal on the Historic Core Diagram shows a reduction of the area proposed by the CHA study. Efforts to reinforce the Freedmen’s Town identity should focus on the Wilson and Andrews Street corridors and work onto adjacent blocks from there.

New structures in the proposed core should either be relocated from other areas or constructed with the proposed CHA guidelines. Efforts should be made to distinguish truly historic structures from others. This could be accomplished with interpretive signage or historic markers. The CHA guidelines should be supplemented with additional site planning guidelines and updated energy requirements.

A recent study by SWCA Environmental Consultants has created a proposed outline for a City designated historic district. Having this in place will drastically help in preservation efforts. That said, funding such preservation efforts is a challenge, as is the relocation and restoration of structures into a historic core.

### Principles

- Use the African American Library at the Gregory School as a hub for both the community and visitors. (Goal QMU2)
- Restore the Andrews and Wilson Street corridors to some level of historic accuracy. (Goal QMU2)
- Preserve structures in place as a first priority. (Goal QMU2)
- Backfill vacant lots along Andrews Street with historic homes that cannot be preserved in place elsewhere in the study area. (Goal QMU2)
- Unify projects and points of interest with a comprehensive wayfinding and interpretive signage program. (Goal QMU2)

### Risks and Liabilities

- There are limited potential funding sources for preservation.
- TIRZ funding will only cover a limited number of projects.
- Complications in historic status and preservation.

### Community feedback on topic...

Priority should be given to achieving local designation for the district AND individual properties outside the district.

The plan should have a map that identifies all remaining historic structures.



The African American Library at the Gregory School should become the center for cultural tourism and a starting point for tours of the Fourth Ward.

Some stakeholders are concerned that allowing historic structures to be moved will appeal to too many landowners.

There is potential to serve tourists on the perimeter without destroying historic properties.

Despite the stakeholder desires to repeat the preservation efforts of the Houston Housing Authority on Andrews Street, this strategy was initially costly and has high ongoing maintenance costs. Likelihood of repeating is low.

Project Row House is a good case study, however the historic structures are not used for housing and have no interior plumbing (just gallery shells).

The Housing and Community Development Department should work together on combining affordable housing and preservation projects.

The TIRZ Affordable housing committee is exploring a land trust as a mechanism for preserving affordability while still offering a for-sale product.

More incentives are needed to guarantee historic preservation of structures. Marketing of historic sites should be a coordinated effort.

Explore the possibility of deed restrictions to preserve the structures in place.



Founders Memorial Cemetery is as much about Texas history as it is Fourth Ward’s. Promoting this may expand interest in the area to a more diverse audience.



Map Source: SWCA Environmental Consultants, 2010. Note: Draft version of map, refer to final SWCA report for final version and recommendations.



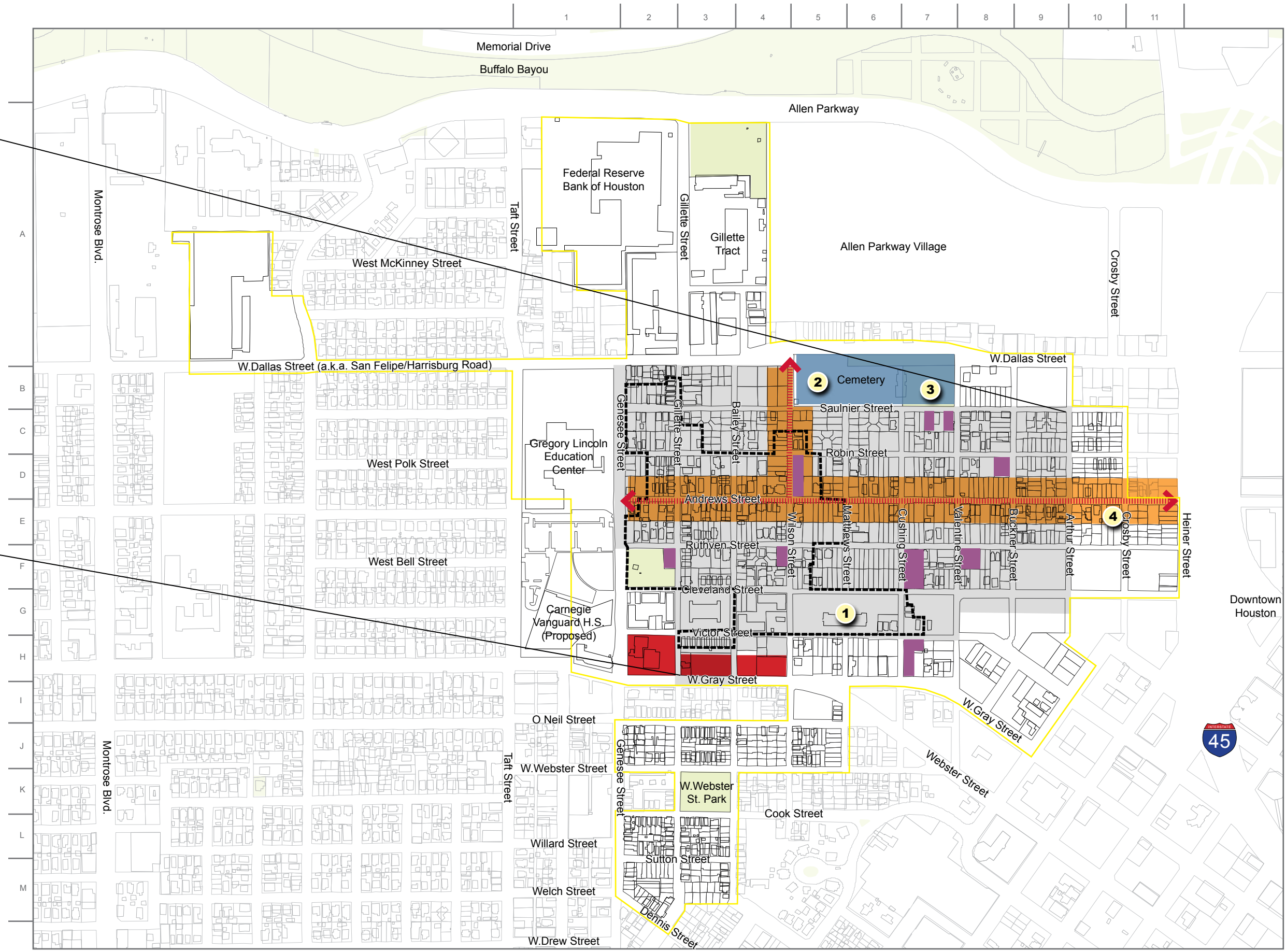
Project Row House in the Third Ward is an example of how clustering at-risk properties can work in preserving and finding sustainable purposes for them. (Photo: Third Ward, Houston)



# Historic Core Diagram

## LEGEND

- 1** African American Library at the Gregory School
- 2** Beth Israel Cemetery
- 3** Founders Cemetery
- 4** Former Church Site (Bethel Baptist)
- Study Boundary
- National Register Historic District
- Historic Core and Infill
- Texas History
- Commercial/Tourist Focused
- Churches
- Historic Street, Interpretive Opportunity
- Proposed City Historic District (DRAFT)



The Historic Core Diagram shows the framework of proposed projects contributing to the historic legibility of the area.

▲ N 0 250' 500'

## Parks and Open Space Framework

The study area includes a good distribution of park land and open space in its current condition, but they are not programmed to meet the needs of the community. A comprehensive parks and open space system should provide opportunities for a diverse group of citizens and promote recreation. Particular deficiencies in the system relate to programs for young adults and active recreation areas. Other problems are due to the lack of connectivity in the area, and the deteriorating state of historically significant sites. Vacant land within the study area is an eyesore, but it is interesting to note that these spaces are regularly used by residents for recreational activity. It is quite common to see people walking dogs in such areas. With this in mind, the question of how the plan addresses these needs as infill development occurs becomes important.

### Principles

- Open space should work with retail and residential uses to create a “live-work-play” environment. (Goal QMU1)
- Parks should be as diverse as the community that they serve. (Goal QMU4)
- Parks and open spaces should support historic preservation and tourism strategies. (Goal QMU2)
- Parks should be used to encourage community interaction and improve environmental quality. (Goal QMU4)
- Parks should incorporate sustainable practices and include a plan for maintenance. (Goal QMU4 and EQ2)
- Parks should be developed as part of the overall infrastructure of the area, and work to improve connectivity as well as environmental quality. (Goal QMU4 and EQ2)

### Risks and Liabilities

- TIRZ funding is limited.
- Maintenance oversight is crucial to long-term success of the parks and open space framework.
- HISD may not allow community access to open spaces.

### Community feedback on topic...

*Potential for a triangle park where West Gray splits.*

*Meet with the Pastoral leaders to explain the concept of the community gardens and determine their interest.*

*Potential for shared park space with the schools; Carnegie Vanguard school will not have a large enough ball field for hitting balls AND Sparks Parks don't apply to secondary schools.*

*Crossing at Allen Parkway to the Bayou – merits of at-grade, under- and over-passes.*

*Land banking opportunities for future uses.*

*Potential park spaces south of West Dallas at Gillette and Bailey.*

*Need to set up a meeting with the HISD trustee, Diane Davila.*

*Potential for a triangle park where West Gray splits.*

*Potential to make all vacant lots green space.*

*Need youth programs.*

*Mount Carmel Church site is going to continue as a religious site, not a park site.*



*Recreation opportunities such as those found at Emancipation Park would be useful to young adults of the Fourth Ward (Photo: Third Ward, Houston)*



*Greenways make direct connections to key destinations, encourage alternative transportation modes, and offer potential habitat for urban wildlife. (Photo: Carmel, IN)*



*Finding opportunities for storm water collection and treatment helps to create sustainable environments, reduce underground infrastructure demand, and provide educational experiences for residents. (Photo: Discovery Green, Houston)*









*Community gardens can activate small spaces, provide eyes on the street, provide fresh foods for the community and bring together diverse groups of people. Local HOA's and civic organizations have the ability to take the lead on these projects. (Photo: Community Garden, Columbus OH)*

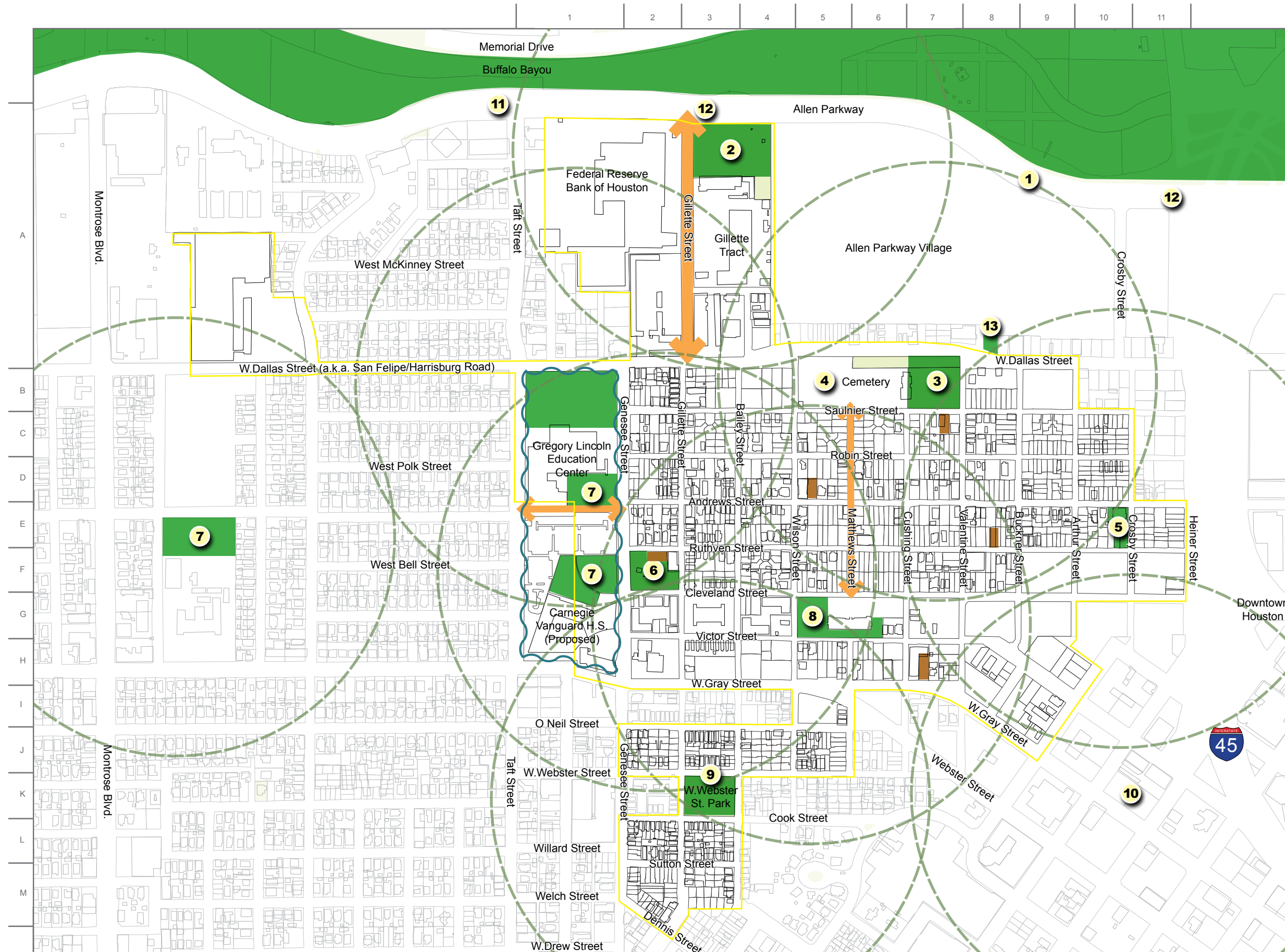
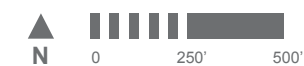
# Parks and Open Space Framework Plan

## LEGEND

- 1** Pedestrian Bridge
- 2** San Felipe Park
- 3** Founders Memorial Cemetery
- 4** Beth Israel Cemetery
- 5** Bethel Baptist Church Site
- 6** Wiley Park
- 7** HISD Playground and Open Spaces
- 8** African American Library at the Gregory School
- 9** West Webster Street Park
- 10** Midtown Park
- 11** At-grade Crossing (existing)
- 12** At-grade Crossing (proposed)
- 13** HPARD Parcel (vacant)

-  Study Boundary
-  5-Minute Walking Radius to Parks and Open Space
-  Proposed Greenway
-  Proposed Fitness Walk
-  Parks and Open Space
-  Optional Community Garden Site

The Parks and Open Space Map shows public recreational areas and dedicated park land that relate directly to the study area. Circles indicate the limits of a 5-minute walk.



## Alternative Transportation Framework

Providing access to alternative transportation is a primary goal of the H-GAC Livable Centers Program, and a request made by a wide range of community members. The existing transit system has seen a reduction in service in recent years, and the existing bicycle infrastructure is not legible to users. The Fourth Ward is currently accessed primarily by personal vehicles only. A goal of the H-GAC Livable Centers Program is to provide access to alternative modes of transportation; therefore, methods to provide easy access to multiple modes of transportation were explored for the Fourth Ward. In addition, many members of the community requested that alternative transportation be considered as part of this study.

There are three modes of alternative transportation that were reviewed: transit, bicycles, and walking. The current transit system provides limited access to bus routes. In order to improve transit access, it is proposed that modifications be made to two existing routes, Route 18 and Route 313. These routes travel along Allen Parkway into Downtown. It is proposed to re-route them to West Dallas via Taft to provide better service to the Fourth Ward. METRO already re-directs routes that normally run along Allen Parkway to West Dallas during events that close Allen Parkway to vehicular traffic.

There is currently a signed bicycle route along West Dallas for the length of the study area. In order to improve bicycle mobility in the area, it is recommended that the bicycle path be better identified and marked, if possible, through the use of bike lane markings or sharrows. To increase the area from which the transportation hub can draw from shared bicycle lanes (Sharrows) are proposed along West Dallas, Taft (south of West Dallas) and Gillette (north of West Dallas). The Sharrows along Gillette also serve to create cycling connection between the neighborhood and Buffalo Bayou with the aid of a pedestrian-friendly crossing at the intersection of Allen Parkway and Gillette.

Throughout the neighborhood, there are roadway sections that have minimal or no sidewalk. To help promote walking, it is proposed that when roadways are reconstructed, there be a well-defined pedestrian realm with an ADA-compliant sidewalk on at least one side of the road.

In order to promote connectivity and mobility, it is proposed to develop a multimodal hub or “transit center” at the intersection of West Dallas and Gillette. This transportation hub, anchored by bus stops, can be equipped with shelters, bicycle racks, Q-card machines, and other amenities to encourage alternative transportation. The location of this hub allows easy access from the neighborhood to the south and the proposed development on the Gillette tract.

During the study, it was recognized that school and tour buses will need to access the interior of the neighborhood, particularly the African-American Library. Because the roadways are narrow, there was a desire to limit the number of turns buses would have to make on the interior roads. Operationally, it is proposed that buses should access the school by traveling southbound on Heiner and making a right turn on Cleveland where they drop-off or pick up activities can occur in front of the school. Buses can then continue on Cleveland to Genesee where they could park in the bus lane.

The stakeholder seasons lead to conversation about the possibility of a “rubber-tire” trolley line running through the neighborhood. This line would follow a similar route to the streetcar line that ran through the area up to the mid-early 1900’s. Though this idea has some historic value and would improve connectivity, current ridership would likely be very low. This concept has a very low probability of funding and sustainability. However, with rising densities and a creative search for funding it may be possible. If the trolley made a loop into the downtown area, tourism and commuter traffic could provide a stable pool of riders in the future.

### Principles

- Create a transit center where all modes can come together. (Goal MMT2)
- Increase the number of transit stops and shelters in the study area. (Goal MMT2)
- Locate all residences and employment centers within ¼ mile of current or planned bus service and/or ½ mile of current or planned rail service. (Goal MMT2)

### Risks and Liabilities

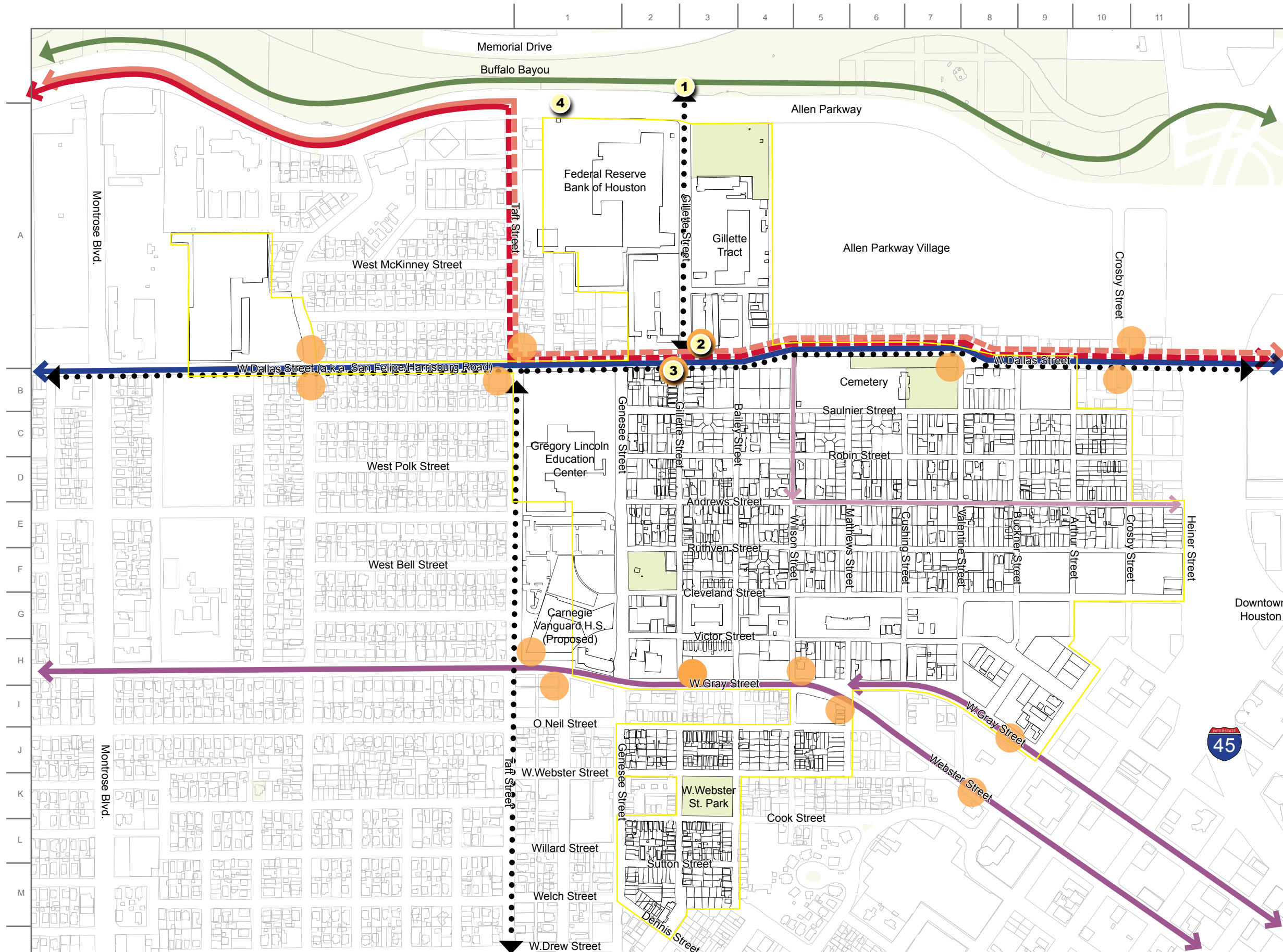
- Continued lack of use will result in a decline of service provided by METRO, including but not limited to reducing bus frequencies and operating days.
- Peak-operation routes might not stop at all in the study area.

### Community feedback on topic...

*There is an opportunity to coordinate stops with the new Whole Foods at Waugh and the New GID project (Regent Square) on Dunlavy.*

*There was support for reinstating the trolley on Old San Felipe Road (West Dallas) that came down Valentine Street. It was planned to be a rubber tire system and run every 20 minutes in the mornings and evenings.*

*West Dallas Street has the potential to be a good transit corridor.*

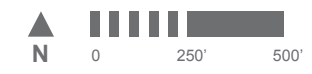


### Alternative Transportation Framework Diagram

#### LEGEND

- 1** Proposed bike and pedestrian-friendly crossing
- 2** Proposed transit center
- 3** Proposed bike locker storage
- 4** Redirect routes off of Allen Parkway
  
- Study Boundary
- Bus Route 18
- Bus Route 313
- Bus Route 18: Proposed Change
- Bus Route 313: Proposed Change
- Bus Route 48
- Bus Route 3
- Bikeway along Buffalo Bayou
- Proposed Shared Bike Lane
- "Rubber Tire" Trolley (Approx. Route)
- Proposed or Existing Bus Stop/Shelter

The Alternative Transportation Framework Diagram shows proposed and existing bus and bicycle routes relating to the study area.



## Wayfinding and Interpretive Framework

Establishing a community identity, helping visitors find their way around, and drawing attention to existing community features can help unify and protect the fabric of a community. Many stakeholders worry that history and heritage will be lost if nothing is done to secure the legacy of the area. A comprehensive wayfinding and signage program would help in preservation and create a framework for tourism. The current plan in use by the Yates Museum should be a considered a starting point for future plans. The Wayfinding and Interpretive Framework Plan proposes new features that relate directly to other projects proposed within this overall plan.

### Principles

- Use the African American Library at the Gregory School as a hub for both the community and visitors. (Goal QMU2)
- Emphasize the role of churches in the history of the area and current community. (Goal QMU2)
- Include burial sites and cemeteries as part of the community story. (Goal QMU2)
- Make a special note of San Felipe/Harrisburg Road. (Goal QMU2)
- Promote cultural exhibits at the Federal Reserve Bank. (Goal QMU2)
- Include interpretive elements at key locations such as churches and cemeteries. (Goal QMU2)
- Create a link to Sam Houston Park in downtown. (Goal MMT2 and QMU2)
- Link new retail to tourism strategy. (Goal QMU2)
- Create a district identity or “brand” symbol (Goal QMU2)
- Use signage to link visitors and residents to Buffalo Bayou. (Goal MMT3, QMU2 and QMU4)
- Associate historic district identity signs with street identification signs throughout the district. (Goal QMU2)
- Reinforce a logical walking path with supporting interpretive materials that begins at the African-American Library and loops back. (Goal QMU2)
- Connect to major adjacent cultural centers: Buffalo Bayou, Museum and Theater District, Houston Museum of African American Culture, etc) (Goal QMU2)
- Restore historic attributes such as tile street markers, brick paving, Texas historic site markers. (Goal QMU2)

### Risks and Liabilities

- Encroaching redevelopment erases patterns, scale and history.
- Community should identify one district name for consistency; Fourth Ward or Freedmen’s Town?
- Physical barriers around the edges of the community make connections difficult.

### Community feedback on topic...

The portion of Andrews Street located on HISD land is an opportunity for interpretative treatment since it is no



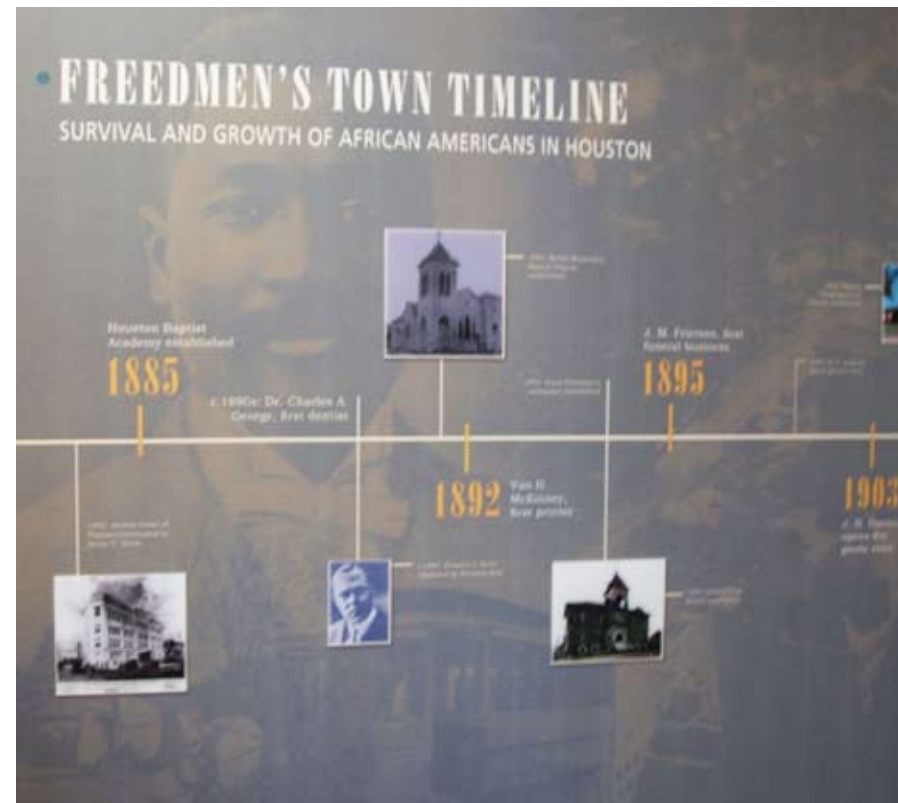
Interpretive signage can be used to tell complex stories about an area.



West African textiles and symbology provide wonderful inspiration for paving patterns and a district icon.



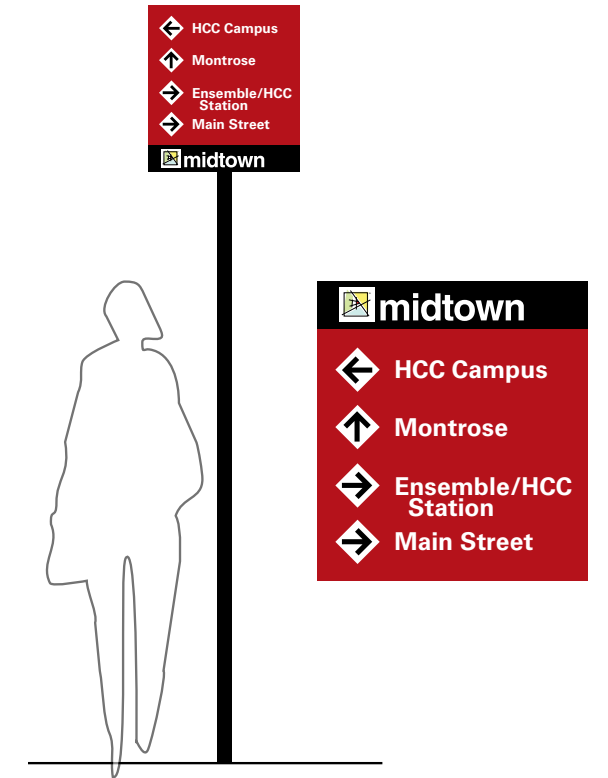
A distinctive street signage program would help with legibility in the area, while historic sign types might be used as art inspiration.



The Freedmen’s Town Timeline makes the African American Library at the Gregory School a logical starting point for any tour of the area. This exhibit can educate visitors prior to touring the area.



Murals at key neighborhood entry points can help tell the story of the area in an authentic way, as well as provide an outlet for artistic expression and visual interest in the community.



Wayfinding similar to what is proposed in Midtown would be useful in guiding pedestrians and visitors in automobiles to, and within, the district.



Texas historic markers should be used at all registered sites.



# Wayfinding and Interpretive Framework Plan

- 1** African American Library at the Gregory School-  
This facility should serve as a starting point for all tours of the area due to its comprehensive historic exhibits, prominence and relevance to the history of the area, and available parking.
- 2** Connections to Sam Houston Park-  
Pedestrians should be able to link between both areas safely and understand their historic connection. This should be enhanced by wayfinding signage and tour maps.
- 3** Beth Israel Cemetery-  
Improved signage that tells the story of this facility should be placed on both north and south sides.
- 4** Founders Cemetery-  
In addition to improved signage and access, a visitor guide should include information about the residents of the cemetery.
- Active Church Sites-**  
Several of the churches already have signage that indicates establishment, but this program should be expanded to talk about their roles in the community.
- Park or Community Garden Site-**  
All parks should include regulatory signage, park naming, and community garden info.
- Interpretive/Storytelling Signage-**  
This type of signage can tell a range of stories from ecologic to historic. They often contain a brief narrative and relevant images. Location for such signage might include:
  - Former Church Sites
  - Greenways and Water Quality Features
  - Historic Sites
  - Neighborhood Gateways
- Gateway to Historic Core-**  
Gateways might include banners, signage or an additional detail added to a street sign. Murals on the sides of existing or proposed buildings should also be considered.
- Neighborhood Directional-**  
This level of signage should be used in getting visitors to the district via automobile, but also are useful to pedestrians.
- Interior Wayfinding-**  
Smaller signs that point visitors in the direction of key destinations and point of interest should be legible to vehicles, but sized for pedestrians.
- Greenways-**  
These should be comfortable spaces that attract pedestrians.
- Brick Streets-**  
The historic streets should reinforce the legibility of the historic core.

Key elements and nodes in the area are outlined by the Wayfinding and Interpretive Framework Plan.

N 0 250' 500'

## Street Hierarchy

The lack of human comfort and adequate pedestrian environments is tied directly to a lack of infrastructure in the area. Demand for on-street parking on narrow rights of way make it difficult to provide significant tree cover. Currently the street system within the central core of the Fourth Ward consists of narrow, paired, one-way streets. Vehicles often park on both sides of the street, inhibiting not only vehicular and pedestrian access, but also making fire protection access difficult. The design team explored asymmetric street designs to accommodate vehicles, pedestrians, utilities and demands for amenities such as trees.

To improve access and mobility in the area, it is proposed that Valentine, Gillette, and Genesee be converted to two-way streets. This would allow for better access to the interior of the residential streets; however, with the narrow ROW on Gillette and Valentine, on-street parking will be prohibited. To allow for better pedestrian access, and through vehicular movement, all remaining one-way streets will have parking limited to one side of the street in dedicated parking pullouts.

### Principles

- Provide a safe, continuous, and accessible pedestrian route for residents and visitors. (Goal MMT1, MMT2 and QMU6)
- Use street hierarchy as a method to aid in way-finding for vehicular traffic. (Goal MMT3)
- Accommodate multiple modes of transportation. (Goal MMT2)
- Maximize access for emergency vehicles as much as possible. (Goal MMT2)
- Incorporate sustainable practices and include a plan for maintenance. (Goal MMT3 and EQ2)
- Preserve on-street parking where possible. (Goal QMU7).
- Consider human comfort in the design of the street. (Goal MMT3 and QMU6)

### Risks and Liabilities

- The TIRZ has limited funding.
- City Engineering staff and Public Works Department may not endorse the street cross-sections proposed.
- There may not be maintenance oversight in the study area once streets are redeveloped.
- Owners of overhead utilities may not endorse and participate in the burying of their lines. Residents

may be unable or unwilling to pay the cost of burying utilities.

- Renovation of brick streets is a complex community and construction issue.

### Community feedback on topic...

*There was a shared desire that no eminent domain be used to take land for additional ROW.*

*When installing sidewalks, consider locating utilities underground.*

*Gillette Street south of West Dallas should provide a good pedestrian connect to the greenway.*

*Genesee could accommodate being two-way while still accommodating parking, pedestrians, and school bus traffic.*

*Matthews Street as another greenway was supported.*

*An intention of connecting Allen Parkway Village roads to surrounding streets was supported.*

*There was a shared desire to explore alternative street cross-sections to better accommodate all the desires of the rights-of-way.*

*The phone company intends to bury lines when they upgrade to fiber optic.*

*There was a desire to reduce the size of West Dallas – making one center turning lane and/or a wider single lane that would accommodate busses to the right and still allow traffic to pass on the left.*

*Alternative drainage solutions should be considered such as bioswales, porous paving and other alternatives.*

*Potential technologies were discussed for restoring the bricks on Andrews and Wilson Streets.*

*Fire department access was a concern on narrow streets.*

*Opportunities for more two-way streets WITH parking and no sidewalks (pedestrians integrate into travel lanes or only one sidewalk) were discussed.*

*There was a desire to explore cheaper streetscapes that are more attractive and safer in the end.*

*Unloading areas were considered on the two-way streets.*

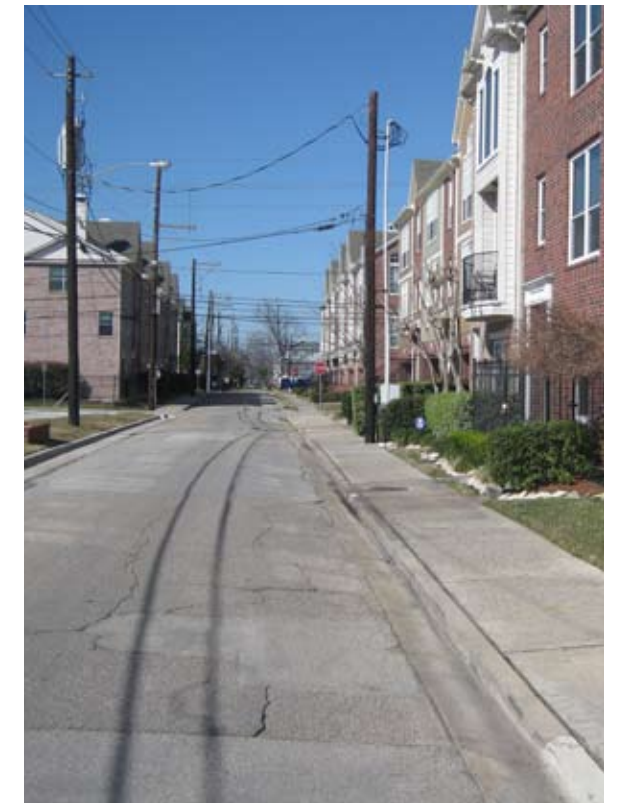
*There was a desire to explore Bailey Street as a two-way street instead of Gillette Street.*



The City's Urban Corridor Planning Initiative provides a sensible and achievable standard for redevelopment along West Dallas and West Gray Streets. This type of pedestrian environment should be included along those roadways regardless of use or scale. (Image: City of Houston Planning and Development Department via internet)

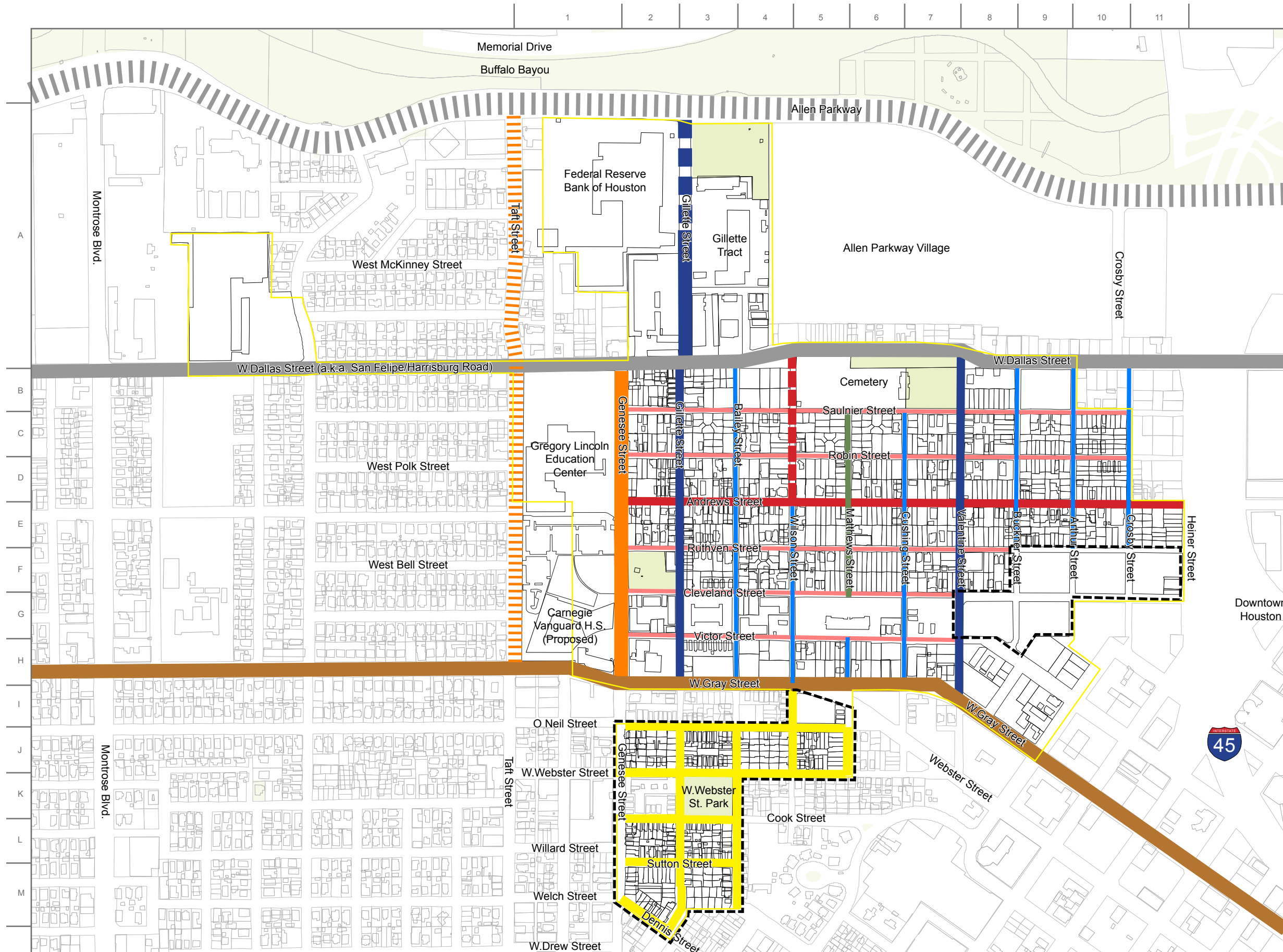


Narrow streets in New Orleans utilize an "overlapping systems" approach in many areas. This street includes a narrow roadway, expanded crushed shell shoulders for parking, ADA pedestrian path, and narrow planter/utility zone. Utilizing pervious materials reduces demand on drainage systems. (Photo: Algiers Point, New Orleans)



Streets south of West Gray Street currently operate without much conflict. The approach is to improve surfaces.





# Street Hierarchy Plan

## LEGEND

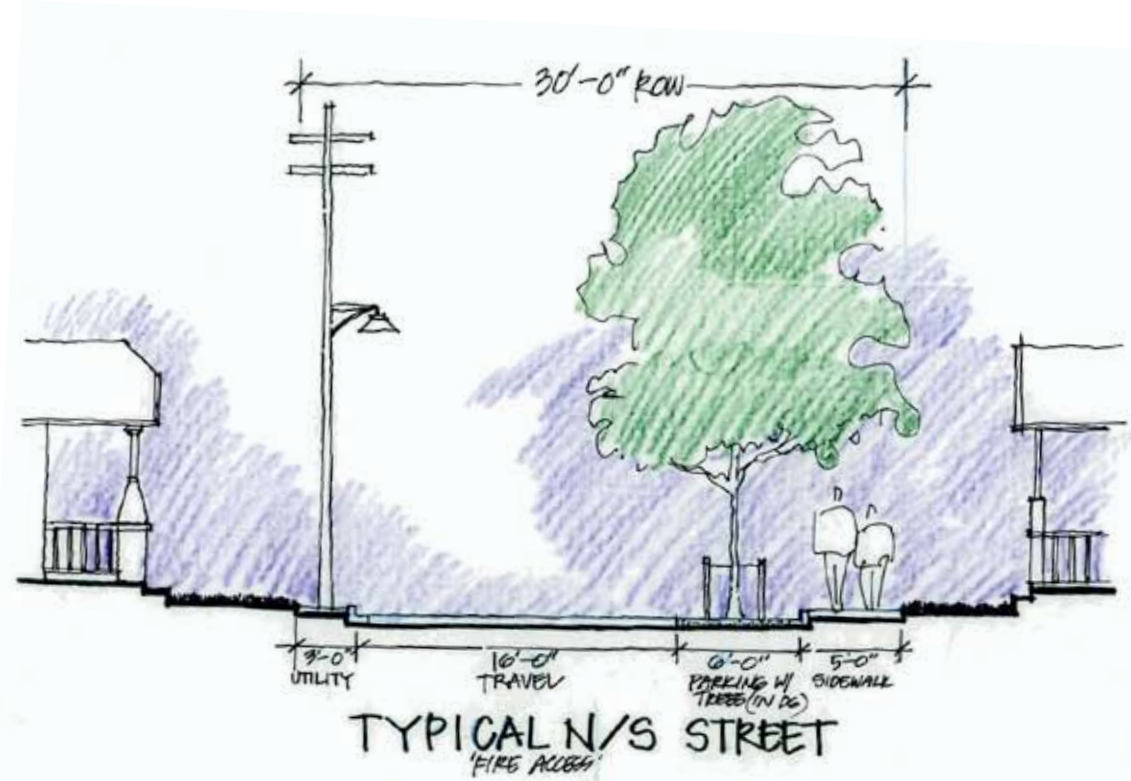
- Study Boundary
- West Gray Street (60' ROW)
- Allen Parkway
- West Dallas St. (60' ROW, 4 lanes, 2 way)
- Taft Street (60' ROW, 4 lanes, 2 way)
- Gillette and Valentine St. (30' ROW, 2 way)
- Gillette Street North A (60' ROW, 4 lanes)
- Gillette Street North B (60' ROW, 3 lanes)
- Genesee Street (60' ROW)
- Andrews (27.5' ROW, Brick Paving)
- Wilson (30' ROW, Brick Paving)
- Typical East-West (27.5' ROW)
- Typical North-South (30' ROW)
- Matthews Street (30' ROW w/Greenway)
- South District Streets (30' ROW, 2 way)
- Minimal Improvements  
(Improvements for surface condition, signage, and accessibility only)

The Street Hierarchy Plan shows the different rights of way and the proposed streetscape conditions.

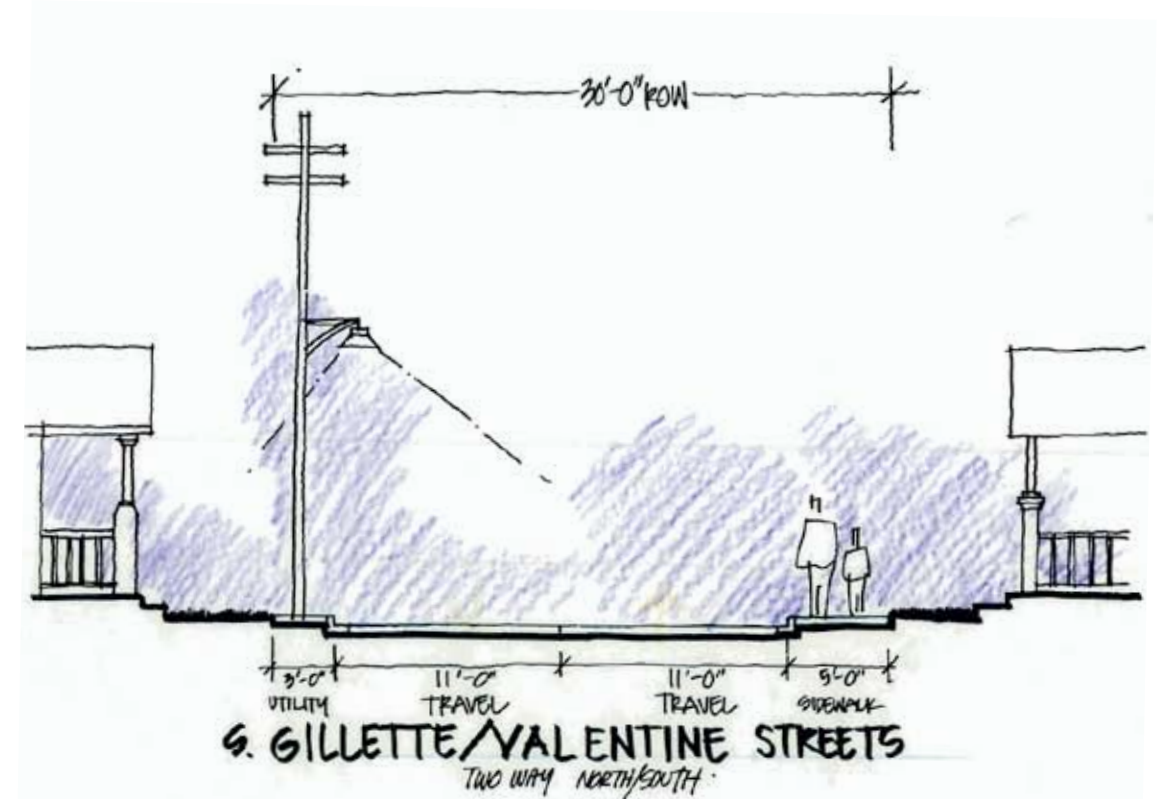


## Street Sections

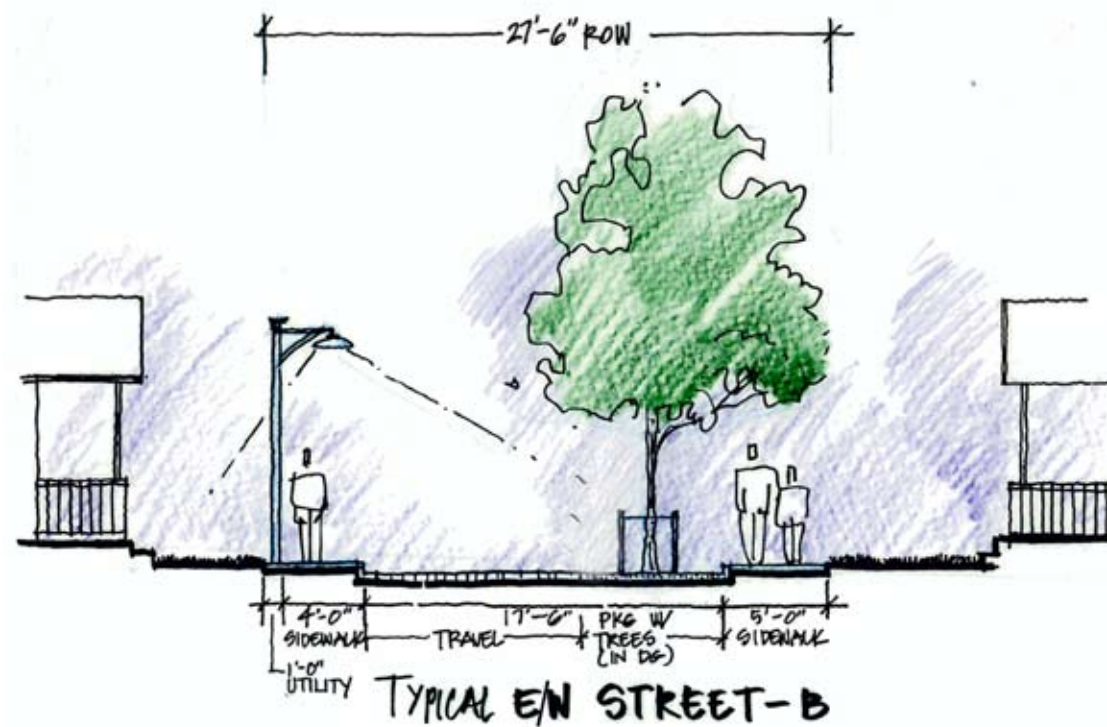
A range of conceptual sections that addressed community concerns and physical constraints were developed during the charrette. This group of sections are among the 16 conditions that were studied.



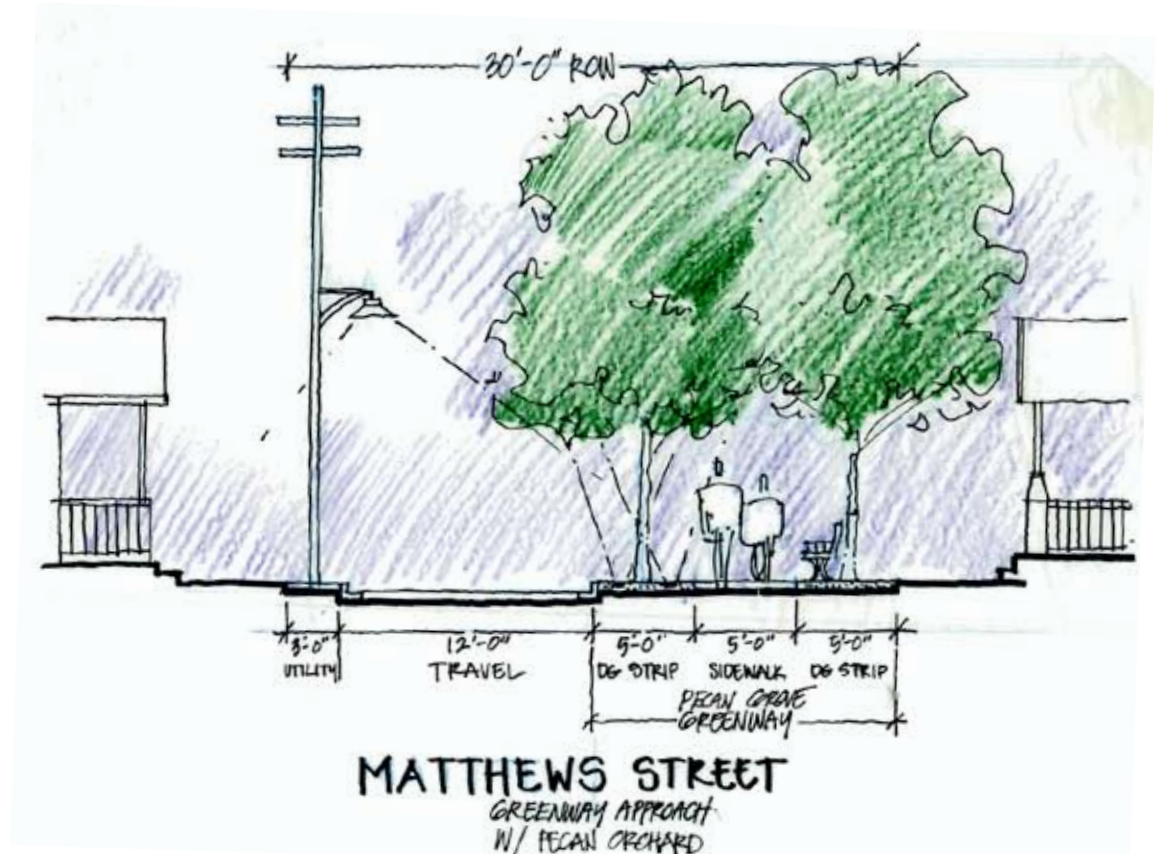
Emergency access and some two-way traffic were a focus for the north-south streets. This section shows a one-way version that improves emergency access feeding off of West Dallas and West Gray Streets. Most of the streets looked at using gravel parking with trees planted in the parking lane.



To achieve two-way circulation within City guidelines, 11' travel lanes were required. This made it difficult to provide a pedestrian area that included trees and was fully accessible.



The typical east-west streets function more like an alley given their small ROW dimensions. This section looked at removing the overhead power lines and providing new lighting. This option proved financially infeasible.



Matthews Street is cut off from the primary circulation of the area by the library to the south and cemetery to the north. It provided an opportunity for a greenway between these amenities, and a point of relief for pedestrians.



The Gillette Street ROW north of West Dallas widens to sixty feet and starts to serve more intense land uses, including the potential redevelopment of the Gillette Tract. This option shows a four-lane roadway (with the assumption that office, residential and commercial uses will be a part of the redevelopment), and a greenway that buffers new development, as well as connects pedestrians to Buffalo Bayou. The greenway and road should work together, providing maximum water quality and scenery.



Genesee Street forms the transition between school uses/activities and the existing neighborhood. This section includes a school bus drop queue that can also be used for weekend parking and tour bus parking to support the Federal Reserve Bank.

## Parking Framework

The lack of convenient parking for residents was a repeatedly expressed concern during the course of the study. We proposed to expand the residential parking permit program that already exists in the east portion on the neighborhood to other areas to control interlopers and preserve parking for residents and their guests. There are already several blocks within the eastern portion of the Fourth Ward that employ this program. We are looking to expand the program so that it serves to deter people from parking in the neighborhood, not just push them further into the neighborhood.

Although current signage generally prohibits parking on one side of the road within the neighborhood, it is acknowledged that vehicle can often be found parked on both sides of the road within the Fourth Ward. The new street design will limit parking to only one side of the road on most roads, and completely eliminate it on Gillette and Valentine. To ensure that these changes would not negatively affect parking availability within the neighborhood, several walk distance studies were done.

As part of a walk distance study and as development takes place it is important to understand how far people are willing to walk from their parking place to their destination. Table 1 describes the maximum acceptable walking distance based on the path from parking facility to the destination.

Acceptable walking distance is also affected by factors such as climate, line of sight (longer walk distances may be acceptable if patrons can see their destination), physical barriers such as having to cross streets, and the type of user. Table 2 describes general walking level of service for various types of situations and users.

Walk Distance Study 1 illustrates the walk distance to on-street parking from the New Zion Temple Church located at Ruthven Street and Gillette Streets. There are approximately 90 on-street parking spaces within 400 feet of the front door of the church. There are approximately 160 on-street spaces within 800 feet of the front door. Walk Distance Study 2 illustrates the walk distance to on-street parking from the Mt. Horeb Missionary Baptist Church located at 112 West Gray.

There are approximately 60 on-street parking spaces within 400 feet of the front door of the church. There are approximately 113 spaces within 800 feet of the church. The majority of the street parking spaces within the study area (approximately 750 spaces) are located within 1,600 of the front door of the church.

Limiting parking to one side of the street and eliminating parking on Gillette and Valentine should not have a negative effect on the parking supply. Based on our occupancy studies there appears to be sufficient on-street parking available within reasonable walk distances to accommodate the existing uses. Eliminating parking on some through streets will facilitate traffic movement in and out of the neighborhood.

It was also recognized during the study that there are several establishments that might require a location for busses to park while patrons were completing their activities. In order to establish a central location where the buses accessing The Gregory School, the Gregory Lincoln Education Center, HISD's Carnegie School and the Federal Reserve Bank could all park; it is proposed that the bus loading and unloading zone along Genesee be established as a common bus staging area.

**Table 1**  
Walk Distance (in feet) Level of Service

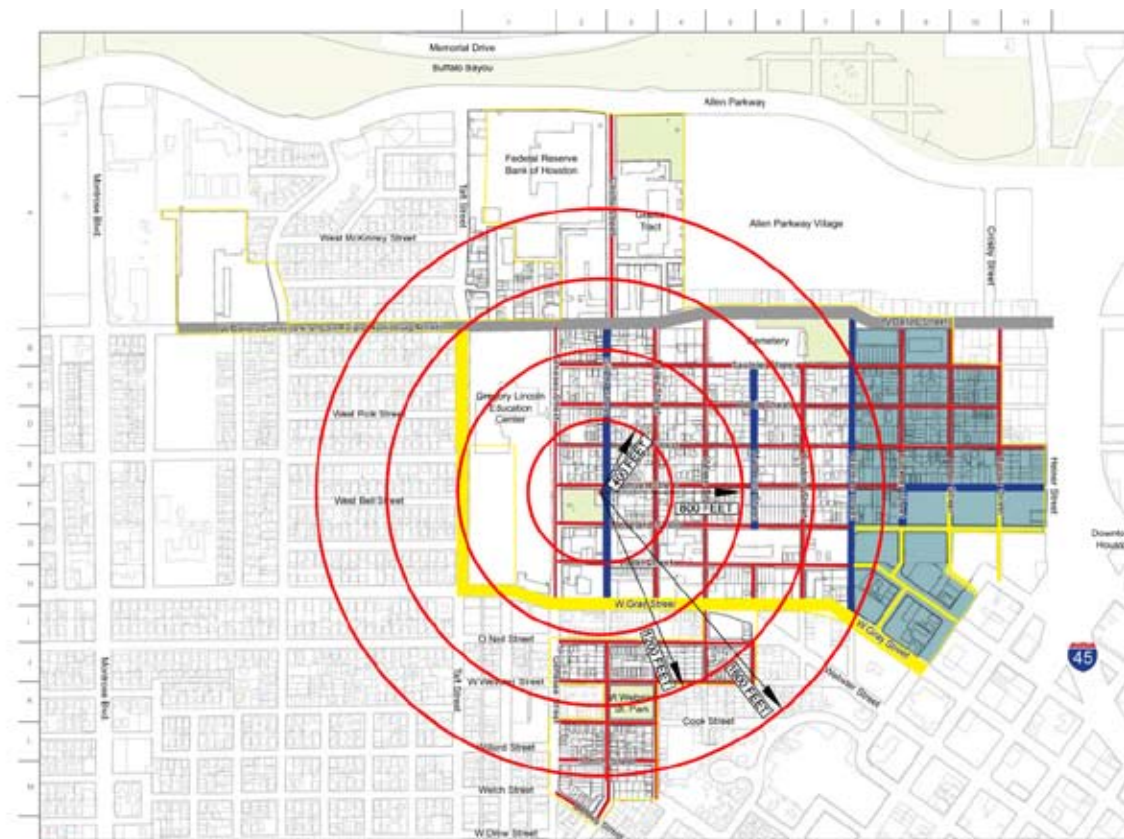
Maximum Walking Distance (Feet)	LOS A	LOS B	LOS C	LOS D
Climate Controlled	1,000	2,400	3,800	5,200
Outdoor/covered	500	1,000	1,500	2,000
Outdoor/uncovered	400	800	1,200	1,600
Through Surface Lot	350	700	1,050	1,400
Inside Parking Facility	300	600	900	1,200

Information obtained from TDM Encyclopedia / Victoria Transportation Institute

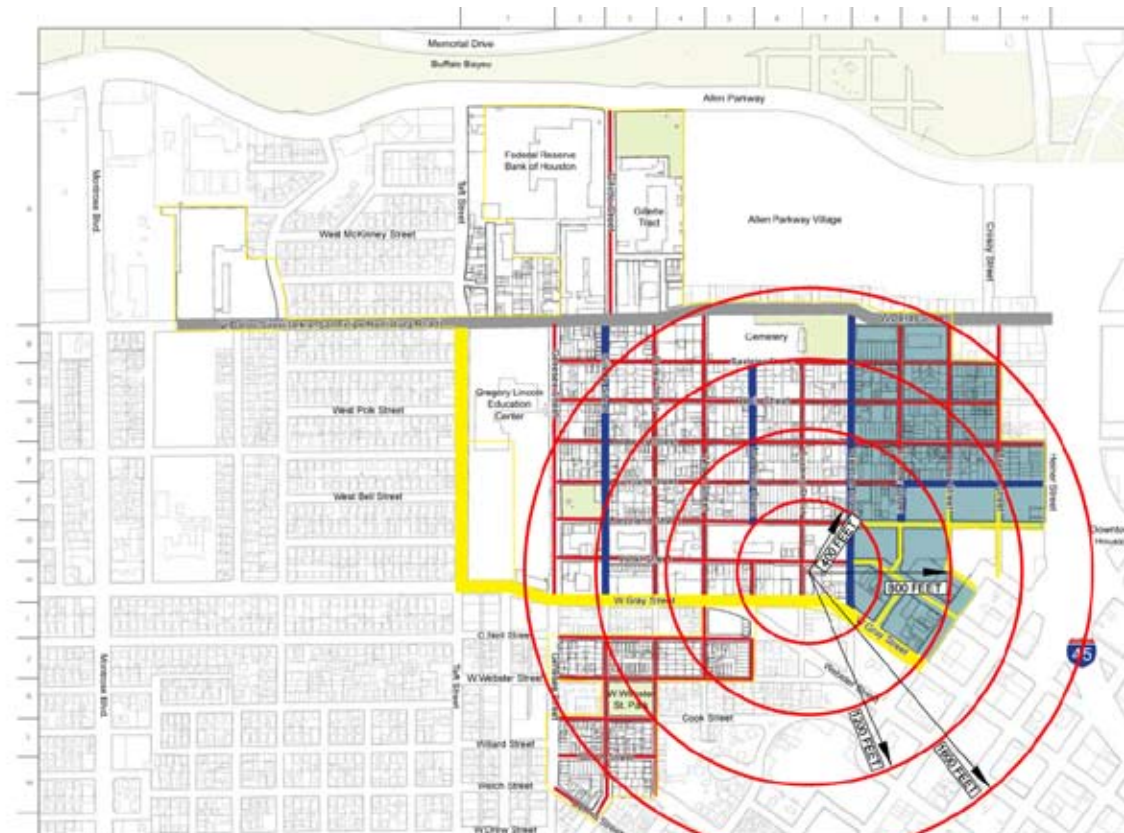
**Table 2**  
Walking Level of Service for Various Situations

Adjacent	Minimal (LOS A or B)	Medium (LOS B or C)	Long (LOS C or D)
People w/ disabilities	Grocery Stores	General Retail	Airport Parking
Deliveries and loading	Professional Serv	Restaurant	Event
Emergency Services	Medical Clinics	Employees	Overflow parking
Convenience Store	Residents	Entertainment Ctr	
		Religious Inst	

Information obtained from TDM Encyclopedia / Victoria Transportation Institute



Walking Distance Study 1: On-street parking distance to New Zion Temple Church.



Walking Distance Study 2: On-street parking distance to Mount Horeb Baptist Church.

## Principles

- Develop a detailed understanding of existing demand and patterns. (Goal QMU7)
- Develop a detailed understanding of proposed densities and patterns. (Goal QMU7)
- Ensure a mix of uses that can share parking areas. (Goal QMU7)
- Provide a shared parking benefit. (Goal QMU7)
- Encourage parking in the rear of the development through use of build-to-lines. (Goal QMU7)
- Encourage shared parking, on-street parking and parking garages. (Goal QMU7)
- Provide convenient bicycle parking and bicycle access. (Goal QMU7)

## Risks and Liabilities

- The schools may not allow for shared parking.
- Some community members may not support a residential parking permit program.
- Vehicles may not obey parking signs and thereby block the roads.

## Community feedback on topic...

The two-way streets that eliminate parking were a concern because of church parking demand.

Consideration should be given to no parking on Andrews Street to preserve the historic view down the street.

Limiting parking time could provide an option for managing people that park in the study area and work downtown.



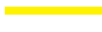




The Residential Permit Parking area should be expanded.

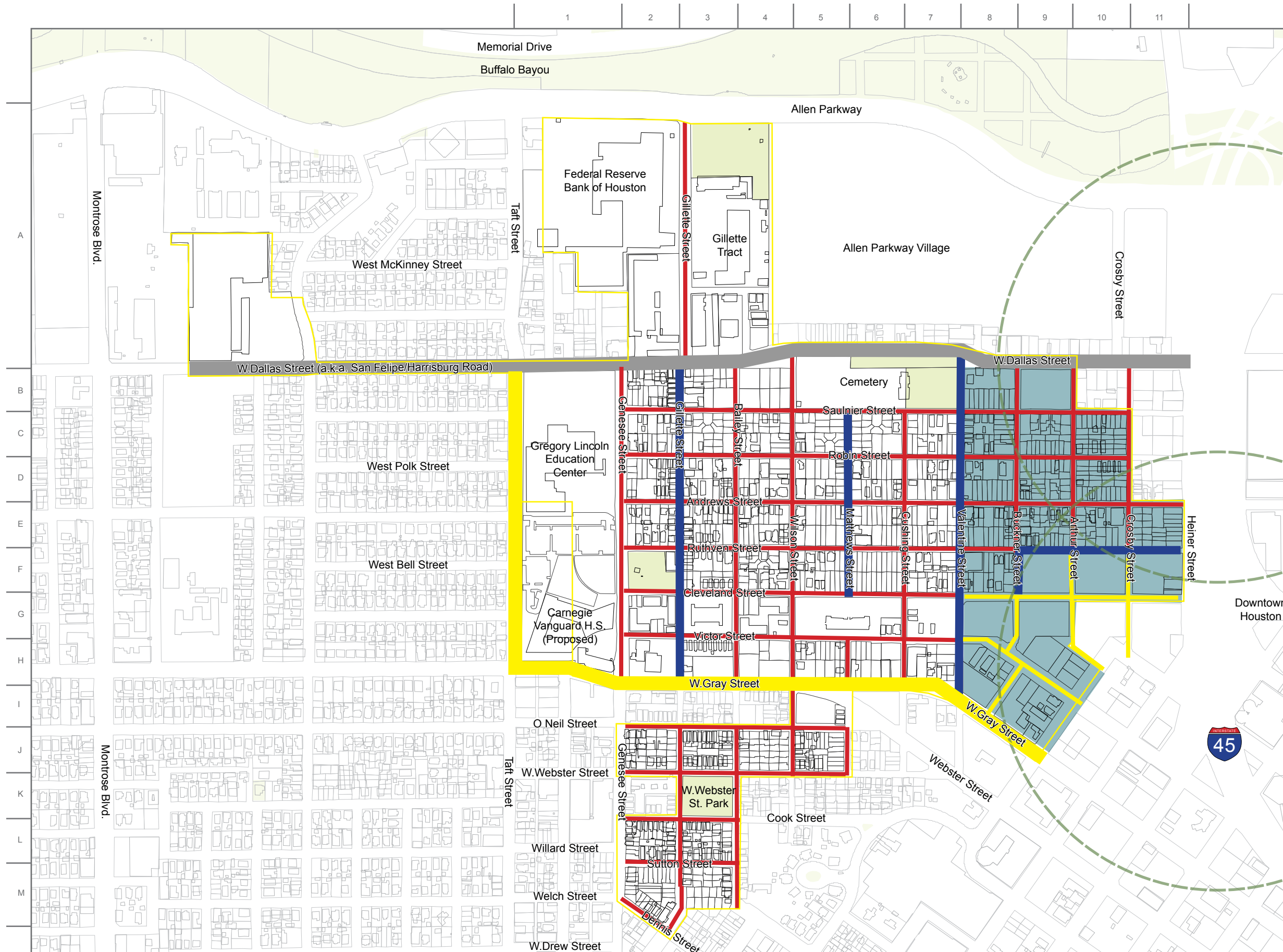
There is an opportunity to share parking between schools and other organizations such as churches.

The City has talked about needing a parking garage near the Library.

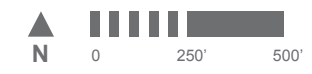
# Parking Framework Plan

## LEGEND

-  Study Boundary
-  Existing Controlled Parking
-  Existing Controlled Parking
-  Parking on One Side
-  No Parking
-  Peak Time: 4 lanes, no parking  
Off Peak Time: 2 lanes, parking on each side
-  Area to Require Residential Parking Pass



The Parking Framework Plan shows existing and proposed parking infrastructure in the area. The green circles illustrate a short walking distance from the study area to downtown. Pedestrians currently park and cross at West Dallas, or cross illegally near the IH 45 ramp and frontage road.



## Storm Water Management Plan

The specified study area is comprised of storm sewer utilities that range from as small as 15-inches to as large as 120-inches in diameter. To date, the age and condition of the storm sewers are unknown. The current subsurface drainage system needs to be evaluated as part of a comprehensive drainage study. A study will assess the existing conditions and drainage needs of the area, and identify any changes or modifications that should be made to the existing drainage system. The City of Houston will not allow private storm sewers to connect to public storm sewers smaller than 24-inches in diameter. The city considers these lines to be deficient and requires developers to extend anew 24-inch storm sewers (at minimum) to the proposed development. The developer may also choose to upgrade the deficient public storm sewer to a minimum of 24-inch diameter. This places a burden on development potential in areas served by pipes smaller than 24 inches.

Exploring Low-Impact Development (LID) strategies on roadways as part of a neighborhood beautification and storm water quality effort is highly encouraged and this will need to be evaluated as roadway cross sections are developed. Advantages of LID typically include a possible decrease in pipe size requirements (and associated cost savings), and the creation of amenity-filled space for pedestrian activity and neighborhood beautification. Because of the space available for improvements is limited, LID cannot completely replace the need for pipes in the right-of-way. However, a hybrid system is recommended to reap the benefits of storm water quality control and the create enjoyable open spaces. Further, in-depth investigation will determine the extents to which LID strategies augment an underground storm water conveyance network in this case.

Currently, there are two preliminary options for managing the quantity of storm water in the right of way. First, a street drainage system could use a trench drain within a parking lane. This drainage configuration is similar to the downtown bus lanes, and uses an inverse crown, allowing water to flow towards the interior of the street instead of toward the edge. A second option would use a curb and gutter system on the side of the road away from the parking lane. The parking lane and roadway would slope to the curb and gutter, making the drainage occur on one side of the road.

### Principles

- Conduct a comprehensive drainage study. (Goal EQ2)
- Ensure open spaces reduce the need for storm water infrastructure by minimizing impervious cover. (Goal EQ2)
- Create locations for storm water detention in parks and other public spaces such as streets. (Goal EQ2)
- Integrate green storm water infiltration strategies into the street designs – the soils in the study area do not lend themselves to adequate infiltration. (Goal EQ2)

### Risks and Liabilities

- The narrow rights-of-way will prevent extensive green storm water approaches.
- The maintenance of green storm water facilities will be higher than conventional piping of storm water.

### Community feedback on topic...

*Storm water drains from one property into the neighboring property throughout the neighborhood.*

*There is support for addressing it in a green/environmentally friendly way.*

*Street drainage currently floods foundations of raised structures during major storm events.*



*Finding opportunities for storm water collection and treatment helps to create sustainable environments, reduce underground infrastructure demand, and provide educational experiences for residents. (Photo: Discovery Green, Houston)*



*Failing and undersized storm pipes are in need of updates and replacement. A comprehensive study of the system should take place before any major construction projects are underway.*

## Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is a critical issue in the Fourth Ward. Many view it as the one thing that will truly preserve the neighborhood over time. Although an important issue in the neighborhood, affordable housing has not been viewed as important throughout the city. The agencies and organizations that have historically participated in affordable housing projects throughout the city are focused on other neighborhoods where land is cheaper. New partners are emerging with a mission of providing affordable housing such as Community Development Corporations.

### Principles

- Facilitate or incentivize an improvement in the range of housing options in the project area. (Goal QMU3)
- Consider a housing trust to provide affordable for-sale alternatives. (Goal QMU3)
- Explore the potential to replicate the Houston Housing Authority model of restoring historic homes for affordable housing. (Goal QMU3)
- Require that ALL new housing provide a certain percentage of affordable units; amount to be negotiated on a case by case basis. (Goal QMU3)
- Work with local community development corporations to provide affordable housing. (Goal QMU3)
- Ensure that the Fourth Ward receives all of its TIRZ dedicated affordable housing funds to spend in the study area. (Goal QMU3)
- Utilize land currently owned by the City of Houston or other public/non-profit entities for affordable housing. (Goal QMU3)
- Purchase land for affordable housing. (Goal QMU3)

### Risks and Liabilities

- Land values will continue to rise.
- Costs of reconstruction to high historic preservation standards will make affordable housing difficult to deliver.
- Market rate redevelopment will occur with no required set-aside for affordable housing.
- City affordable housing regulations on for-sale units only preserve affordability for the 10-year life of the agreement, at which point many units are sold at market rates.

### Community feedback on topic...

*The TIRZ must give the City 1/3 of its increment to use for affordable housing anywhere in the city. The TIRZ should see all or most of that back since affordable housing is integral to preserving the culture of the district.*

*The TIRZ is exploring the potential of using some of their land and affordable housing dollars for a land trust.*

*The agreement on Gillette Tract includes 20% affordability.*

*There is support for the TIRZ to buy down residential units from developers.*

*The Downtown District is setting parameters for affordable requirements for new housing development.*

*Existing public land is the best place for affordable housing because the land values today are too high.*

*The TIRZ does not have the ability to bond. They must pay cash for all projects.*

*The TIRZ priorities are affordable housing and infrastructure. It's about community preservation (maintaining affordability to allow generations to stay in the neighborhood).*

*There was concern about losing the historic shotgun houses on Gillette Street.*

*The look and feel of new development detracts from the original neighborhood.*

*There is support for farmers markets and community gardens.*

*The Houston Housing Finance Corporation owns a few lots that are unbuildable.*



*Historic homes have been renovated to provide affordable housing options that are appropriate to the area. These projects face many challenges, but do provide stable housing and historic preservation.*



*Attached housing types can be easier to fund and provide greater levels of affordability due to their densities. A major challenge for such projects can be the lack of large enough parcels to support such projects.*





PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

## Overview

After the development of alternatives was completed, it became necessary to move toward a set of preferred alternatives that addressed a range of issues:

- Community concerns and feedback
- Fiscal limitations
- Engineering challenges
- Political objectives

Each of these challenge types has differing approaches to resolution. For example, issues affecting the construction of affordable housing may require innovative funding sources, land acquisition and alignment with local political objectives, while basic infrastructure improvements face funding and City review challenges. With this in mind, the path to implementation of proposed projects includes solutions to funding, political, physical design, and regulatory “barriers”.

The Preferred Alternatives section focuses on physical improvements (streets, parks, etc) and features a master project list for the study. Many of these projects are illustrated on the Overall Framework Map in the Development of Alternatives chapter. It is important to understand that not all recommendation made during the charette process (which are outlined in the Development of Alternatives chapter) were included in the preferred alternatives. After weighing community feedback and engineering challenges, many projects did not make it into the final plan.

For those projects that did make it, project numbers were assigned and referenced in each project description. These also relate to a conceptual cost estimate provided in this chapter. In sections that include proposed projects, project numbers in red should be referenced back to the project list.

Projects related to historic preservation and affordable housing may take much longer to implement due to the numerous “moving parts” required for success. Many efforts related to these issues are already in the works, so organization between local efforts and funding sources will be critical in future success. The Development Capacity, Overcome Barriers, and Close the Gap chapters of this document are focused on problems, projects and solutions that go beyond physical improvement.



*For the Fourth Ward to achieve long term success for its residents and its historic relevance, a wide range of projects must work together. Efforts related to infrastructure, historic preservation, housing, neighborhood identity, community, and economics are all important factors in the creation of the Fourth Ward of the future. Local leadership, City of Houston, and residents all play a part in the continued success of the plan.*

Projects List

Project Category	Project Name	Link to Goal	Cost
<i>Centers</i>			
	1. West Dallas & Gillette Center - • Transit hub at Gillette & West Dallas • Redevelopment of Gillette Site • Farmers market	QMU 1-3, 5-7; EQ 1, ED 1-3	
	2. West Dallas & IH 45 Center	QMU 1-3, 5-7; EQ 1, ED 1-3	
	3. West Gray & Gillette	QMU 1-3, 5-7; EQ 1, ED 1-3	
<i>Affordable Housing</i>	4. Expansion of Post Midtown	QMU 1-3, 5-7; EQ 1, ED 1-3	
	5. HOME funds	QMU 3	
	6. Housing Trust	QMU 3	
	7. Conversion of Historic Homes to Affordable Units	QMU 3, 6	
	8. TIRZ Affordable Funds - • Lobby for the ability of the TIRZ to keep its own affordable housing funds	QMU 3; ED 1-2	
<i>Cultural History &amp; Preservation</i>	9. Land Bank - • Designate vacant land for affordable housing • Purchase land for affordable housing	QMU 3; ED 1	
	10. Inclusive Housing	QMU 3, 6; ED 2	
	11. Create Local Historical District	QMU 2, 6	
	12. Brick Streets - • Wilson Street • Andrews Street	MMT 3, QMU 2, ED 3	Coord. cost with City
	13. Historic Structure Infill - • Wilson Street • Andrews Street	QMU 2, 3, 6	
	14. Gateway Improvements - • Gillette and Gray • Valentine and Gray/Webster • Dallas and Gillette • Dallas and Valentine • Dallas and IH 45 • Allen Parkway and Gillette • Allen Parkway and Taft • Allen Parkway and IH 45	MMT 1-3, 6; QMU 1, 2, 6	Final designs needed for cost

Project Category	Project Name	Link to Goal	Cost
<i>Cultural History &amp; Preservation</i>			
	15. Interpretive Program - • Signage • Heritage Tourism Walking Tour	QMU 1,2	Final designs needed for cost
	16. District & Wayfinding Signage - • Wayfinding signage to tourism sites • District signage (street signs, etc.)	MMT 1-3; QMU 1, 2, 6	Final quantity needed for cost
	17. House Museums - • Yates House Museum • Pulman House Museum	QMU 1, 2	
<i>Streets &amp; Infrastructure</i>	18. Design Standards	QMU 2, 3, 5, 6	Scope needed
	19. Rubber Tire Trolley	MMT 1; QMU 2	
	20. West Dallas Street - • Streetscape improvements • Move and consolidate bus stops • Mid-block crossings at Beth-Israel	QMU 1, 4, 6, 7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	\$991,890.00
	21. West Gray Street - • Streetscape improvements • Move and consolidate bus stops • Pedestrian Crossings	QMU 1, 4, 6, 7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	\$992,790.00
	22. Genesee Street	QMU 1, 4, 6, 7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	\$1,273,140.00
	23. Gillette Street - North of West Dallas - • Streetscape improvements • Greenway	QMU 1, 4-7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	\$915,570.00
	24. Typical North/South Street (One-Way) - • Wilson - South of Andrews • Bailey - North of West Grey • Cushing • Buckner • Arthur • Clay	QMU 1, 4, 6, 7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	\$861,390.00 \$1,201,500.00 \$1,028,790.00 \$1,126,350.00 \$928,102.50 \$1,183,072.50
	25. Typical North/South Street (Two-Way) - • Valentine • Gillette - West Dallas to West Gray	QMU 1, 4, 6, 7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	\$1,237,297.50 \$1,167,840.00

Project Category  
Streets &  
Infrastructure

Project Name	Link to Goal	Cost
26. Typical East/West Street - • Robin • Ruthven - Buckner to Genesee • Sauliner • Cleveland • Victor	QMU 1, 4, 6, 7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	\$2,492,257.50 \$1,758,870.00 \$1,949,332.50 \$1,918,845.00 \$1,407,532.50
27. Matthews Street	QMU 1, 4, 6, 7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	\$815,872.50
28. Andrews West	MM1,2,3; QMU1, 2, 6, 7; EQ1	Use City costs
29. Taft Street Sharrow	QMU 1, 4, 6, 7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	\$12-15,000
30. Streets South of West Gray Street - • Gillette • Bailey • Wilson • Mathew • O'neil • West Webster • Cook • Sutton	QMU 1, 4, 6, 7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	\$656,032.50 \$706,432.50 \$385,560.00 \$312,277.50 \$756,562.50 \$1,078,447.50 \$520,008.75 \$563,827.50
31. Allan Parkway Realignment - • Match capacity to need • Accommodate parking for Bayou and events • Pathway along southern edge of corridor	QMU 1, 4-7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	Unknown
32. Connect Rhode Place and Robita Street to Gillette Street and Allan Parkway Village	QMU 1, 4, 6, 7; MMT 1-3; EQ 1-2; ED 3	Unknown
33. Drainage Study/Plan	EQ 2; ED 3	In progress (ESPA)
34. Move Bus Routes to West Dallas - • #18 • #313	QMU 4; MMT 1-3; EQ 1; ED 3	Unknown
35. Enhanced Pedestrian Connections across IH 45 - • West Dallas • Cleveland	QMU 4; MMT 1-3; EQ 1, ED 3	\$25-30,000 each
36. San Felipe Park	QMU 4, 5	Funding TBD
37. Bethel Baptist Church Park	QMU 2, 4	in progress
38. HPARD Tract of West Dallas	QMU 4	None

Parks & Open  
Space

Project Category  
Parks & Open  
Space

Project Name	Link to Goal	Cost
39. Program Upgrades - • West Webster • Wiley Park	QMU 2, 4	\$3-5,000.00 ea.
40. Gregory Lincoln Park	QMU 2, 4	\$450,000
41. Founders Memorial Cemetery Park	QMU 2, 4	\$35-45,000.00
42. Community Garden Program	QMU 2, 4	
43. HISD Recreational Improvements - • Shared facilities • Multi-use Trail at School • Pedestrian connectors through school property	QMU 2, 4; MMT 1, 2	
44. Connections to the Bayou - • Heiner • Allan Parkway Village • Gillette	QMU 2, 4; MMT 1,2	\$15-25,000.00 each
45. Residential parking permit expansion	QMU 1,7 MMT 1-3	

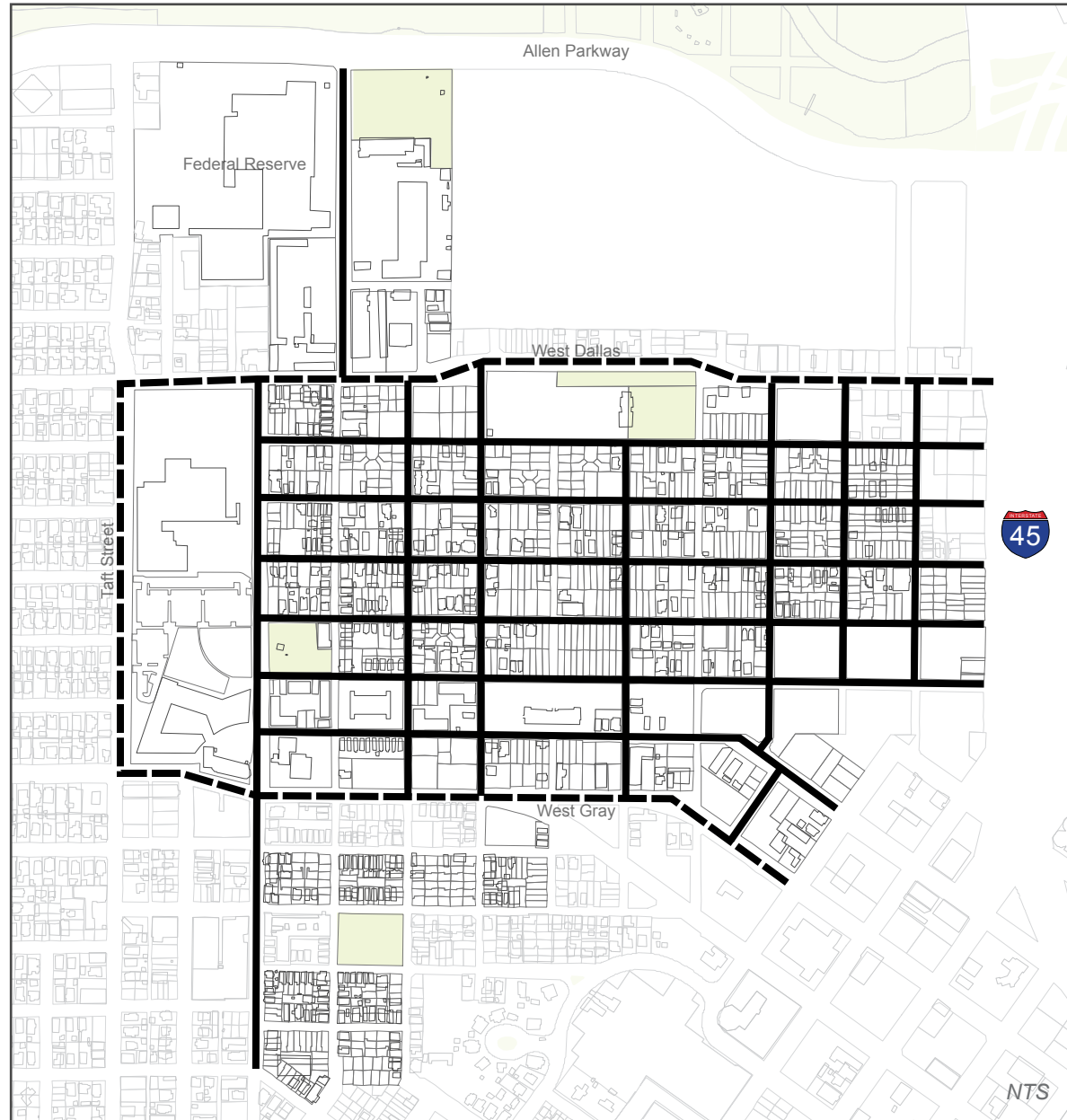
Parking

## Streetscapes: Overlapping Systems

With our unique set of physical constraints in the local right-of-ways, it became necessary to look at a design methodology that includes overlapping systems. This means that some areas can accommodate multiple uses or functions, thus reducing the amount of overall space required to meet all of the program needs.

Major program items for this street system include:

- Storm Sewer
- Water Quality
- Sanitary Sewer
- Potable Water
- Overhead Utilities
- Parking
- Travel Lanes
- Emergency Access
- Sidewalks and Overall Accessibility
- Tree Plantings
- Traffic Barrier Systems (curbs, bollards, etc.)
- Lighting
- Recreation Features (fitness trails, etc.)
- Historic Brick Paving
- Signage and Wayfinding

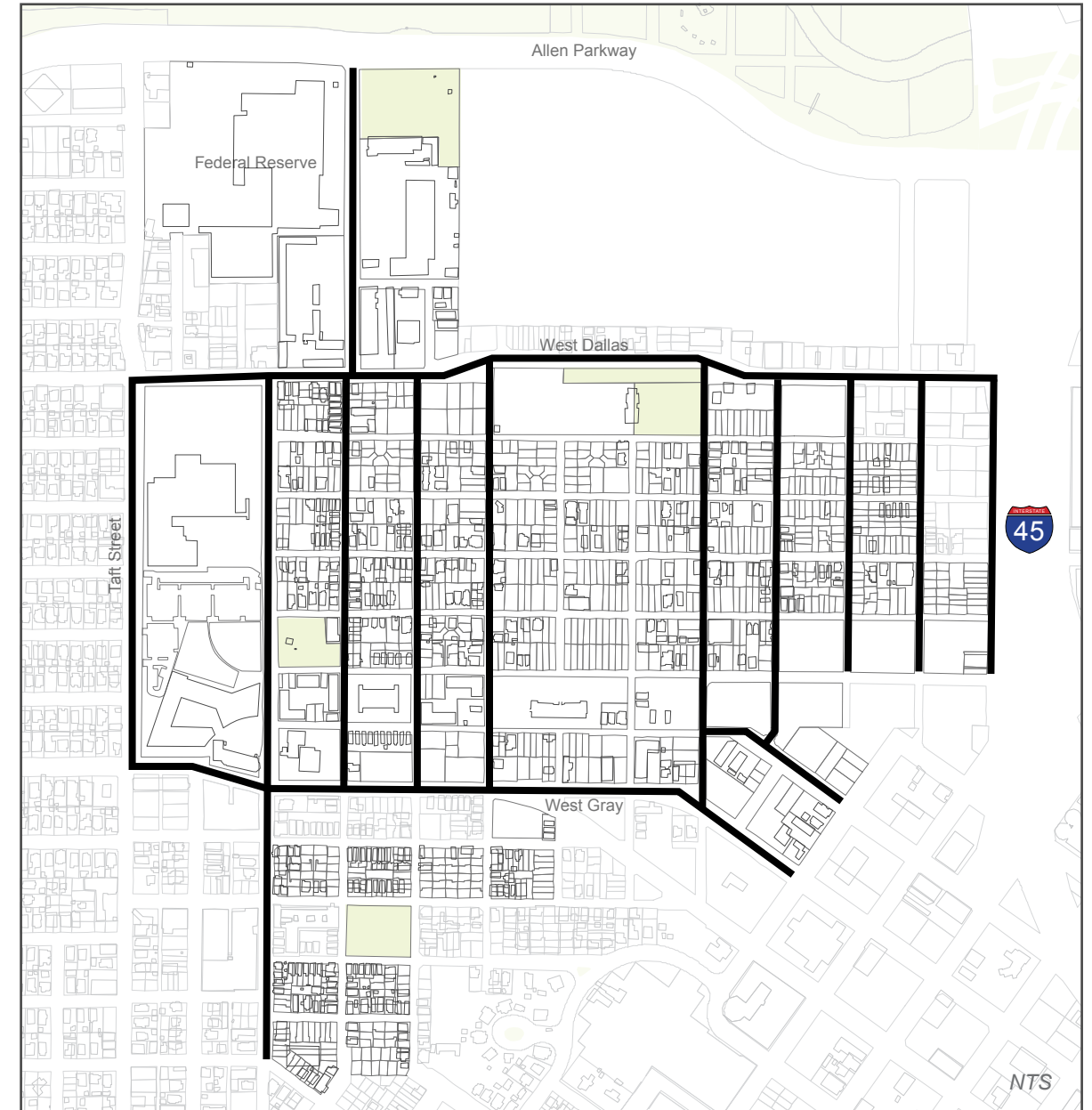


Parking along internal streets is indicated by a solid black line, while off-peak parking is indicated by a dashed line. With the exception of Genesee Street, on-street parking will only be available on one side of the street. Off-peak parking would be available on both sides of the street.

### On-street Parking

Existing on-street parking serves local residents and meets the demands of church visitors who have limited on-site parking available to them. On-street parking also helps to slow traffic speeds, support local retail, and its adds diversity to the street scene.

Strategy: On-street parking will be preserved or improved on most one-way streets, and provided during off-peak times along roadways with a right-of-way greater than sixty feet. New parking lanes will be striped for parallel parking, thus improving the efficiency of street volume, and reducing parking too close to intersections.

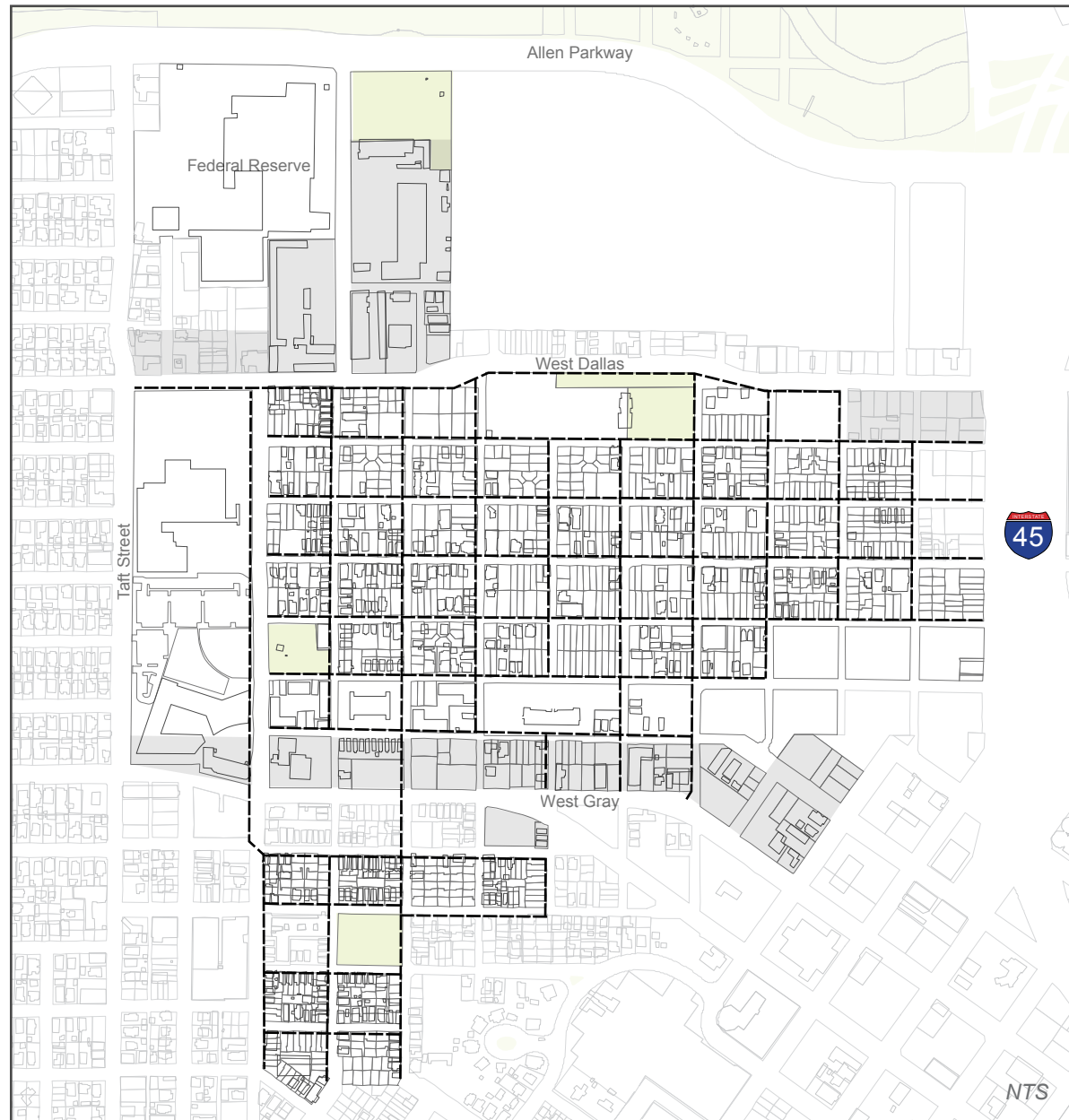


Emergency access to the area would be greatly improved with the proposed access plan. Currently, very few streets meet City requirements for access, which greatly reduces response times.

### Emergency Access

The current options for emergency services (EMS, fire, utility repair, etc.) are very limited. Small right-of-ways, limited turning radii, and on-street parking cause serious delays in service and can prevent such services from reaching their destinations. This is hazardous, and should be addressed in any new street designs.

Strategy: Emergency access should be accommodated on as many north-south streets as possible, with major service off of West Dallas and West Gray Streets. Hydrant design should provide coverage to areas that are cut off by large blocks (Matthews Street and Cushing Street). Turning radii along West Dallas and West Gray Streets should be sized to accommodate such access.

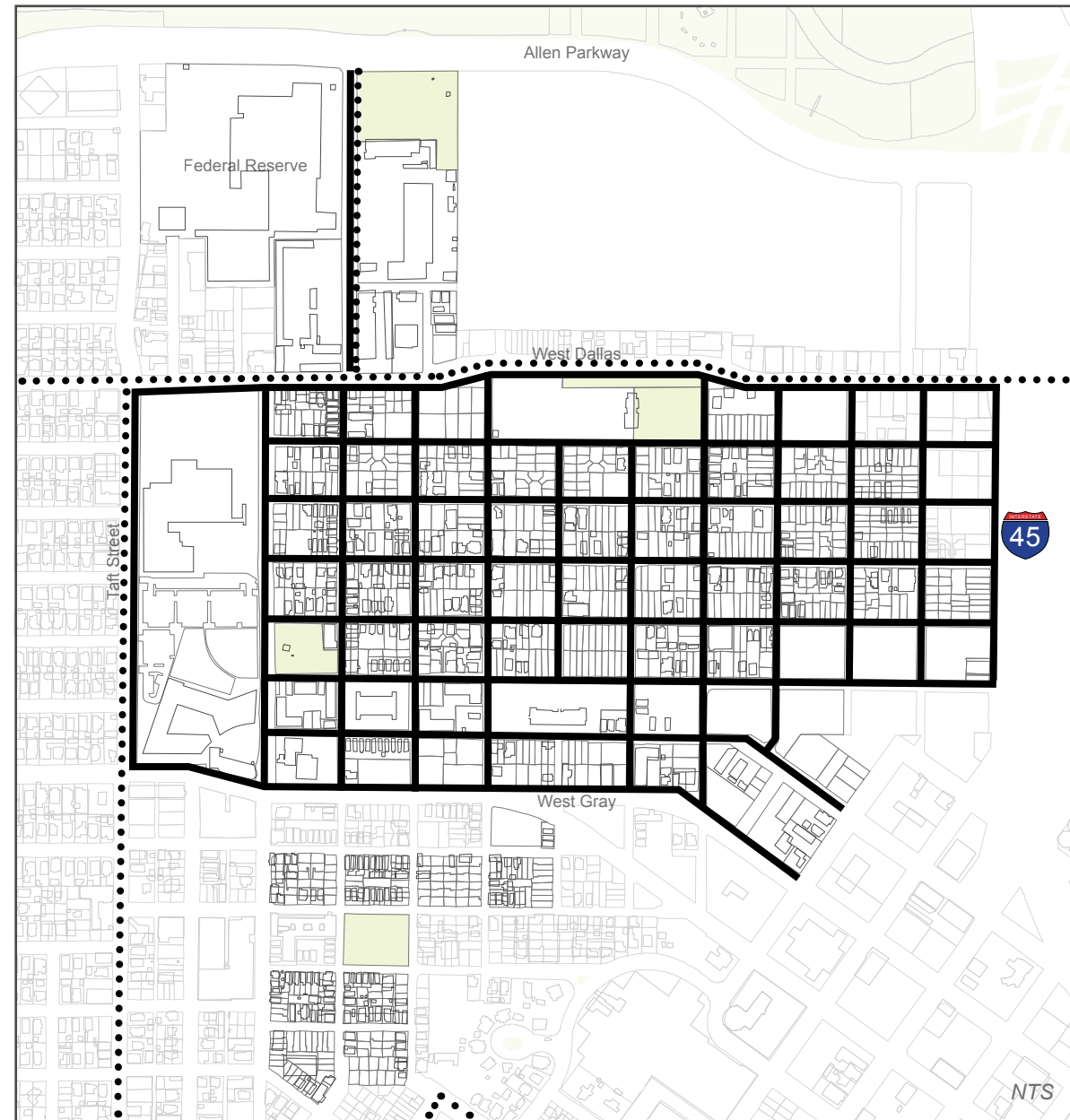


This map shows the overall proposed alignments of overhead utilities in the area. Shaded areas should include proposals to bury all overhead utilities as part of private redevelopment.

### Overhead Utility Lines

Overhead utilities are as much a part of the infrastructure of the area as they are the visual character of the Fourth Ward. The primary challenge with these lines is their use of limited right-of-way space, and their impact on the maintenance of adjacent shade trees.

Strategy: Overhead lines should be run on one side of the street. Existing poles should be consolidated but lines should be left in place where possible, but lines should run on the north side of all east-west streets, and on the west side of all north-south streets. All lines along corridors should be run underground as part of private redevelopment.



All streets accommodate safe pedestrian travel on at least one side of the street as indicated by a solid line. Existing and proposed bicycle routes are shown as a dotted line.

### Proposed Pedestrian Access and Bicycle Infrastructure

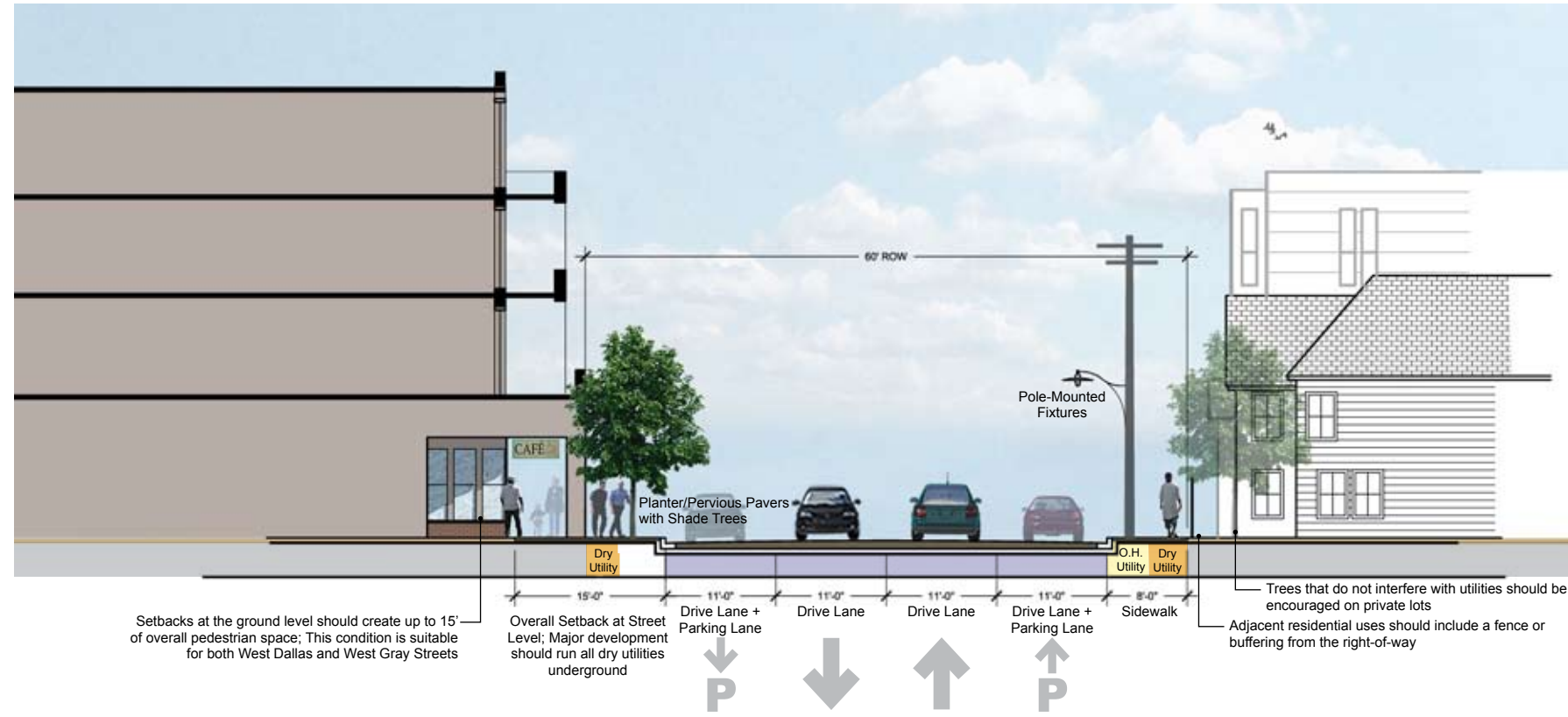
Improved pedestrian access that meets ADA is a critical success factor for this project. While walking in the streets is the current norm and will probably continue after streets are implemented, it is not safe for the elderly, young children and people with disabilities. The goal is to provide safe options for all residents and visitors. Improved bicycle circulation should also be considered as a way to connect destinations, support transit, and encourage non-vehicular travel.

Strategy: All streets should include comfortable, ADA compliant, pedestrian access on at least one side of the street. Additional bicycle infrastructure should be implemented to connect existing east-west routes north to Buffalo Bayou.

## West Dallas Street: 60+' ROW

Redevelopment along West Dallas will be more sporadic than West Gray, so some flexibility will need to be built into the street section. Larger developments should bury all power lines along their frontage, along with the provision of a high-quality pedestrian streetscape. Time-controlled parking on this street should be implemented where possible in support of future redevelopment. Construction up to the property line should allow for a pedestrian breezeway at the street level. (Project # 1, 14, 20, 43)

Key Map; NTS



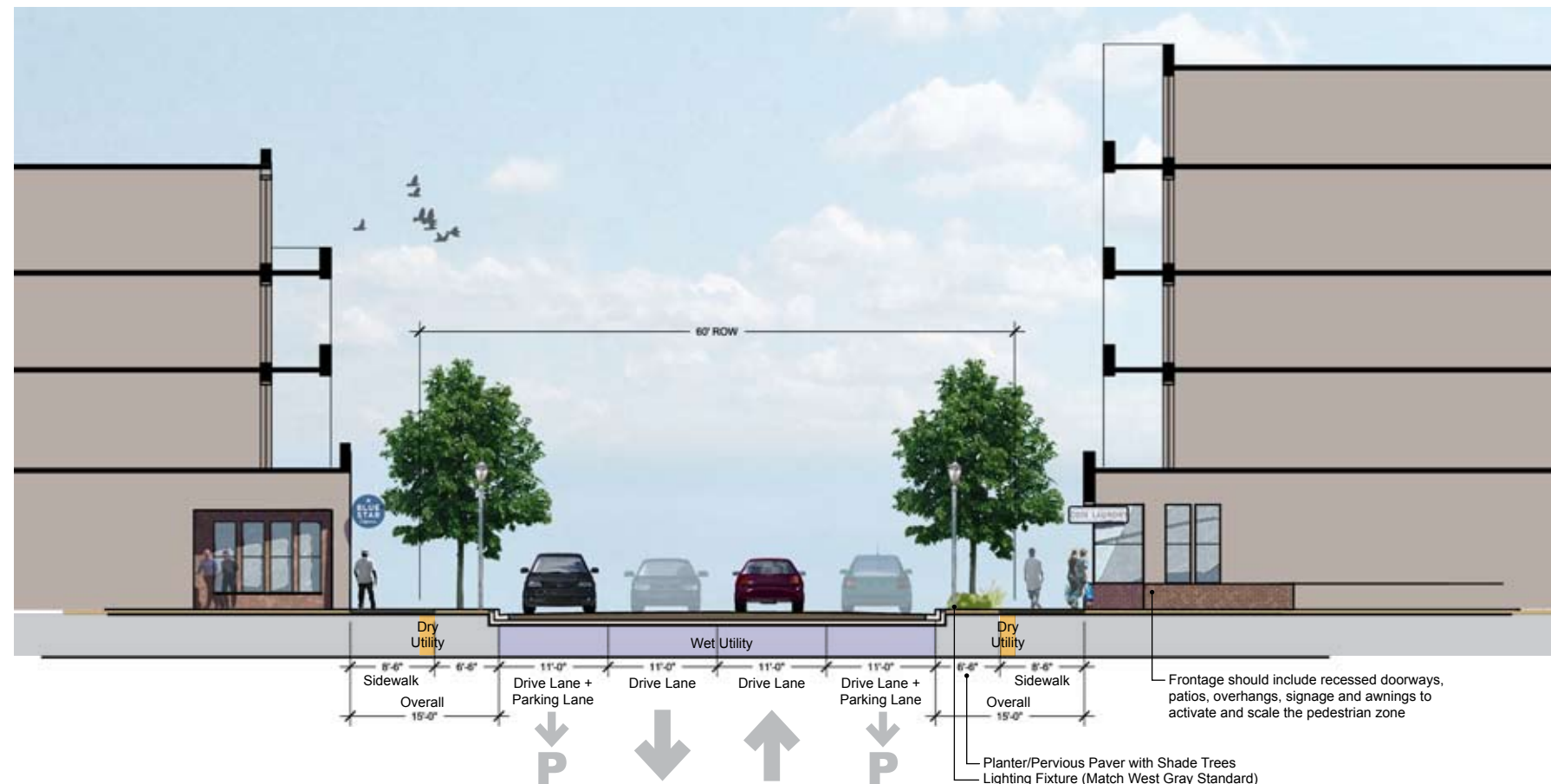
### Street Characteristics:

- 60-70' Right of Way
- 3' Overhead or underground utility zone outside of major redevelopment parcels
- Pole -Mounted Light Fixtures; Improved lighting to City standard for foot candles on roadways and at intersections, use type currently in area
- 11' Drive Lanes
- 11' Time-controlled Parking/Drive Lanes
- Curb and Gutter Construction
- Pervious tree planting zones where possible
- 6' Minimum Pedestrian Walkway, Both Sides
- Ornamental Trees; Planting of such trees should be encouraged on private property fronting on an overhead utility zone
- Dry Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run beneath sidewalks
- Wet Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run in parking lane and center of drive lanes

## West Gray Street: 60+' ROW

West Gray represents the greatest corridor for major redevelopment. A high-quality pedestrian environment should result from such development. Wide sidewalks, tree planters and pedestrian furnishings are all elements that any great street includes, as well as parking and adequate travel lanes. Time-controlled parking on this street should be maintained and expanded where possible in support of future redevelopment. Light fixtures and materials should mimic what is in place around Midtown to provide a consistent and contiguous feel to the district. (Project # 3, 14, 21)

Key Map; NTS



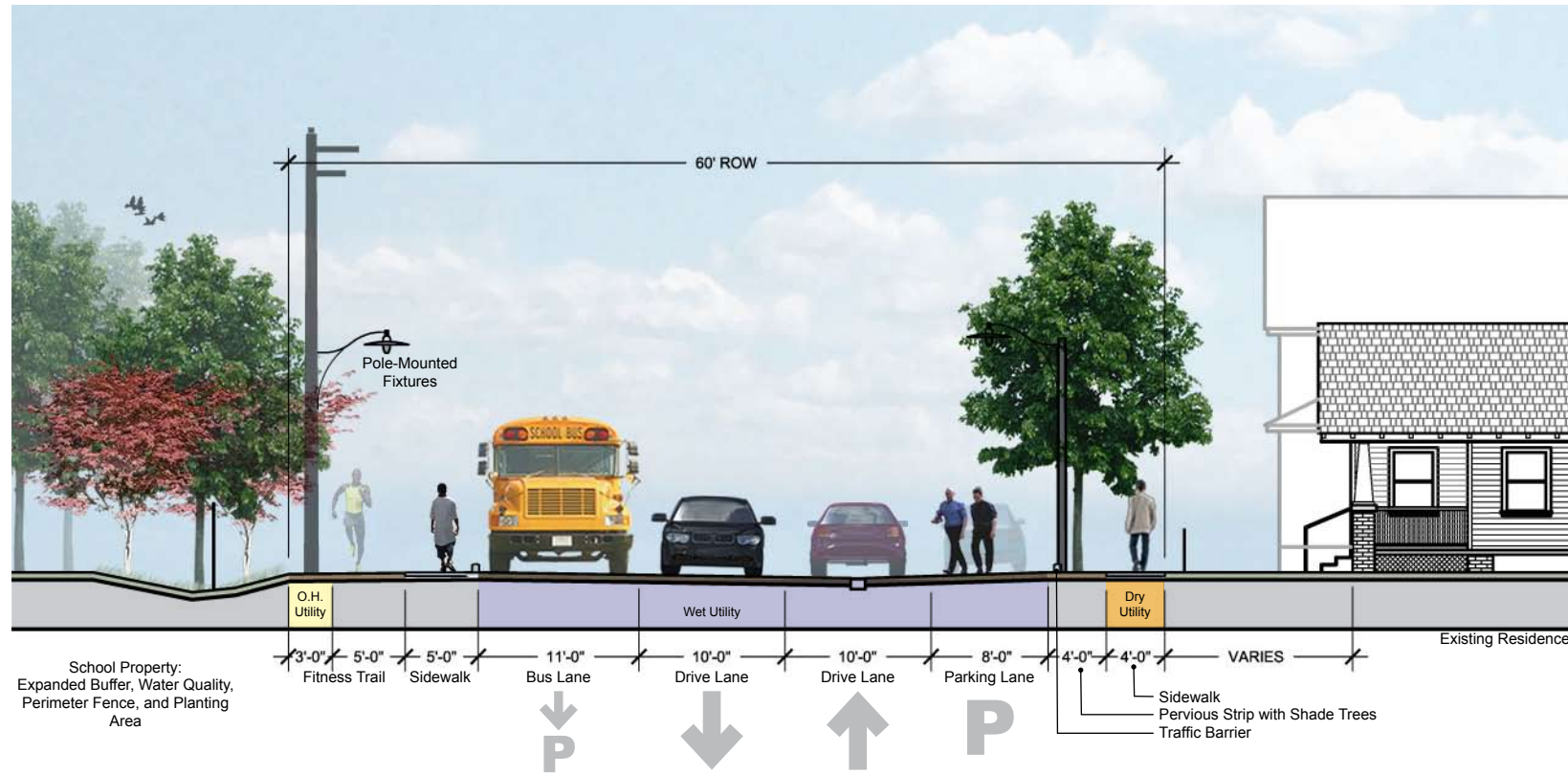
### Street Characteristics:

- 60-70' Right of Way
- Buried Utilities Throughout
- Use roadway lighting fixture similar to Midtown
- 11' Drive Lanes
- 11' Time-controlled Parking/Drive Lanes
- Curb and Gutter Construction
- Pervious tree planting zones in streetscape
- 6' Minimum Pedestrian Walkway, Both Sides
- Dry Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run beneath sidewalks
- Wet Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run in parking lane and center of drive lanes
- Light fixtures and materials should mimic what is in place around Midtown to provide a consistent and contiguous feel to the district



*Street Characteristics:*

- 60' Right of Way
- 3' Overhead utility zone along school property
- Pole -Mounted Light Fixtures; Improved lighting to City standard for foot candles on roadways and at intersections, use type currently in area
- 10' Drive Lanes
- 11' Bus Lane with Time-controlled Parking
- Traffic Barrier/Bollards (in pervious planting zone)
- 4' Pervious tree planting zone
- 4' Minimum Pedestrian Walkway, Both Sides
- Water quality areas and naturalistic tree plantings are encouraged along school site
- Dry Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run beneath sidewalks
- Wet Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run in parking lane and center of drive lanes
- Section should include a pervious fitness trail along school property



Genesee Street: 60' ROW

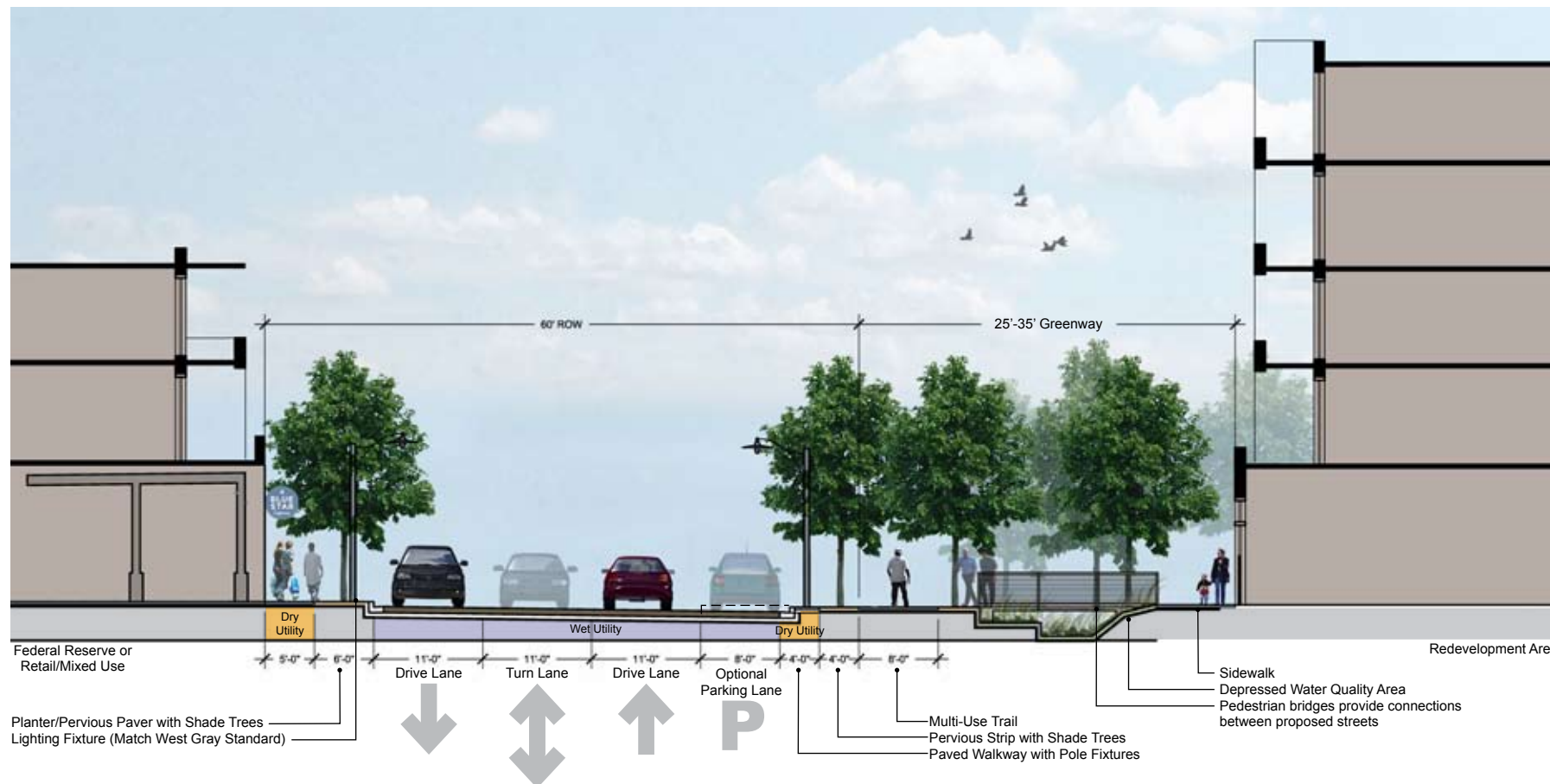
Due to the adjacent school property, Genesee Street has some special operational requirements. The incorporation of a bus lane into the right-of-way should free some school property up for water quality and buffering. This street should also operate as a two-way circulator with pedestrian areas on both sides of the street. A key component to this street is the fitness trail that shares space with the overhead utility easement. (Project # 22, 43)

*Key Map; NTS*



*Street Characteristics:*

- 60' Right of Way
- Buried Utilities Throughout
- Use roadway lighting fixture similar that matches the pole-mounted fixtures in the area
- 11' Drive Lanes
- 11' Turn Lane
- 8' Standard Parking Lane (east side)
- Curb and Gutter Construction
- Pervious tree planting zones in streetscape
- 6' Minimum Pedestrian Walkway, Both Sides
- Dry Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run beneath sidewalks
- Wet Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run in parking lane and center of drive lanes
- Greenway with water quality and shared use trail that accommodates bicycles, pedestrians, and active recreation



Gillette Street North: 60' ROW

Gillette Street North features a narrow greenway that provides water quality, recreational features, and buffering for the adjacent redevelopment project. If retail is included in the redevelopment plan, parking on the east side of the street could provide an additional incentive to retailers. This parking would also work toward meeting demand created by Buffalo Bayou. At a minimum, the street includes one drive lane in each direction with a turning lane down the center. This is a primary connection between Buffalo Bayou and the Fourth Ward neighborhood, so human comfort should have a special emphasis. (Project # 1, 14, 23, 44)

*Key Map; NTS*

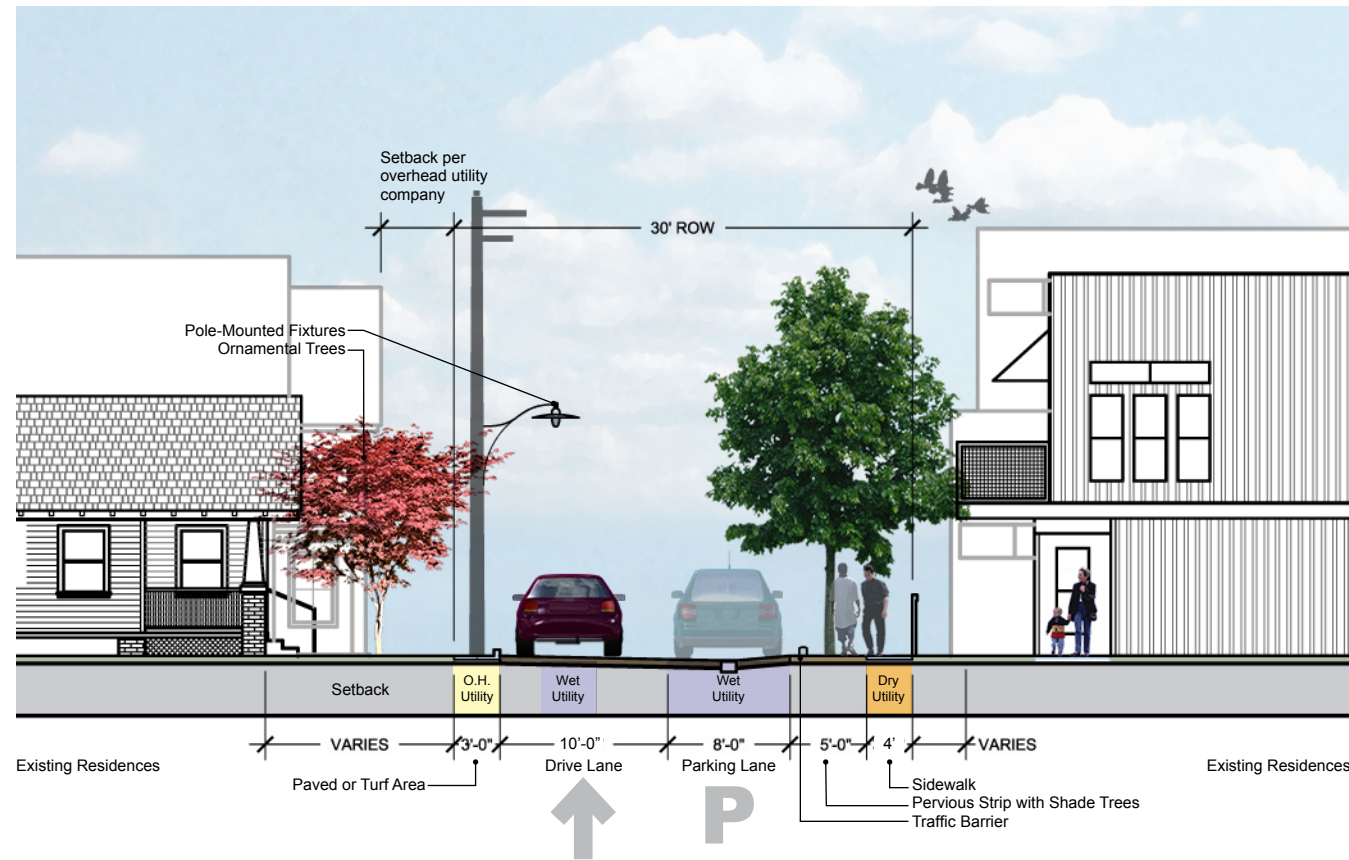


## Typical North-South Street:

### One Way 30' ROW

These streets are designed to move both vehicles and pedestrians safely toward the West Dallas and West Gray corridors. Wider drive lanes, comfortable pedestrian zone, and efficient parking lanes help serve both local and visitor needs in the area. (Project # 24)

Key Map; NTS



### Street Characteristics:

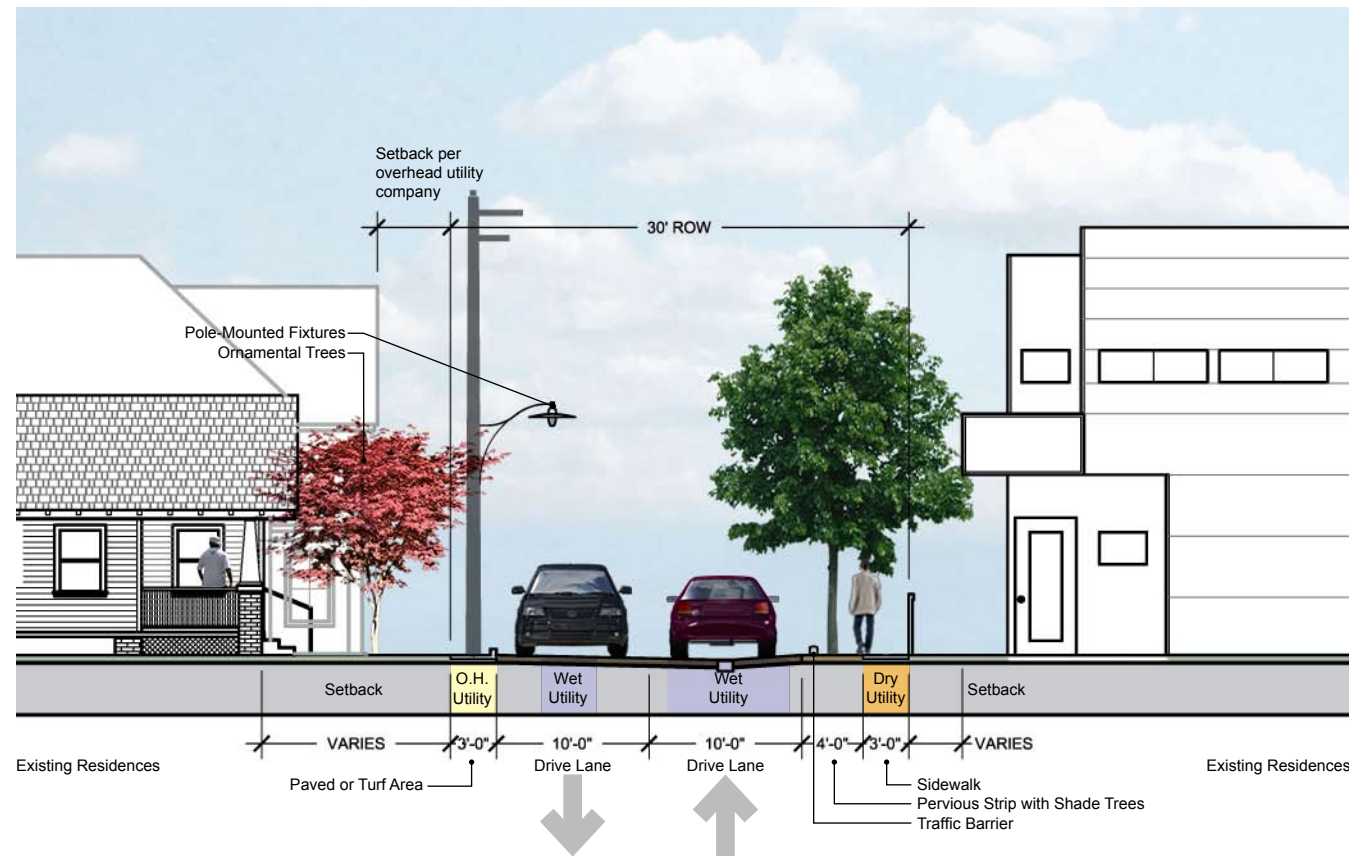
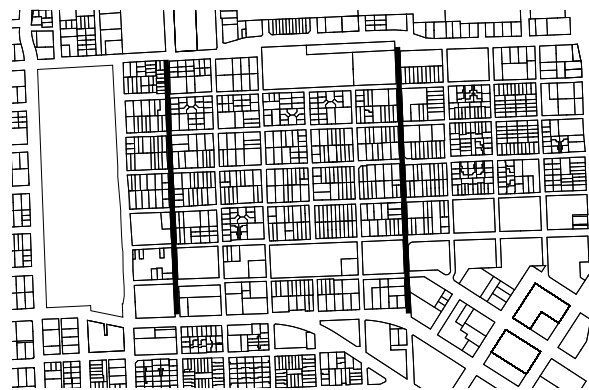
- 30' Right of Way
- 3' Overhead Utility Zone; all overhead lines should run on the west side of the street and be protected by a curb, traffic barrier, or bollard
- Pole -Mounted Light Fixtures; Improved lighting to City standard for foot candles on roadways and at intersections, use type currently in area
- 11' Drive Lane; accommodates most types of emergency vehicles and allows such vehicles through, via West Gray and West Dallas Streets
- 8' Standard Parking Lane
- Traffic Barrier/Bollards (in pervious planting zone)
- 5' Pervious Tree Planting Zone
- 6' Overall Pedestrian Walkway
- Ornamental Trees; Planting of such trees should be encouraged on private property fronting on an overhead utility zone
- Dry Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run beneath sidewalks
- Wet Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run in parking lane and center of drive lanes
- Drainage; Streets are an inverted crown that drains toward center of parking lane

## Typical North-South Street:

### Two Way 30' ROW

The inclusion of a two-way "couplet" in the Overall Framework Plan is intended to help with wayfinding within the core of the neighborhood, as well as focus visitors and residents toward proposed "centers". This will make the neighborhood more accessible, open, and improve overall connectivity. (Project # 25)

Key Map; NTS

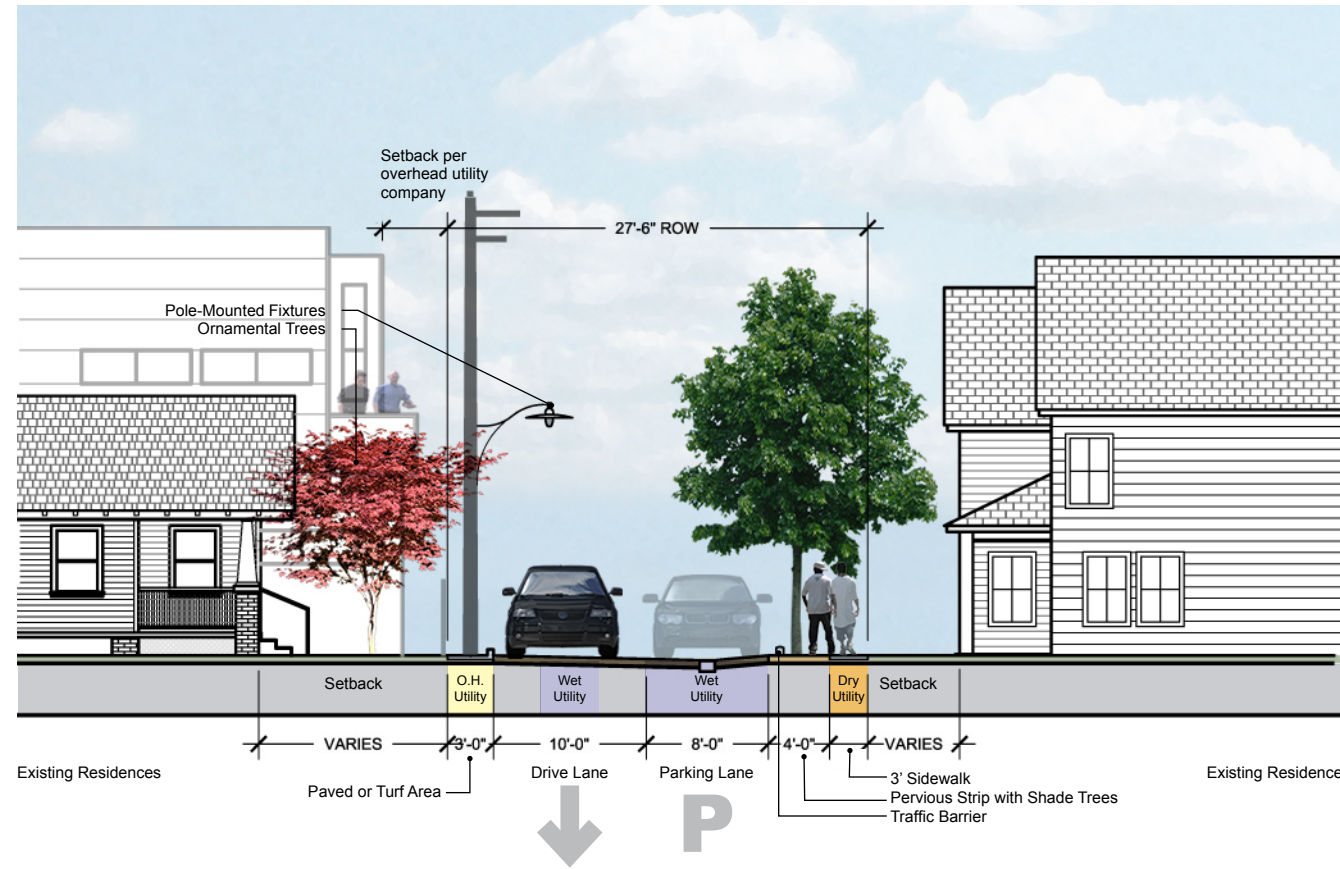


### Street Characteristics:

- 30' Right of Way
- 3' Overhead Utility Zone; all overhead lines should run on the west side of the street and be protected by a curb, traffic barrier, or bollard
- Pole -Mounted Light Fixtures; Improved lighting to City standard for foot candles on roadways and at intersections, use type currently in area
- Two 10' Drive Lanes; accommodates two-way traffic and larger emergency vehicles
- No parking
- Traffic Barrier/Bollards (in pervious planting zone)
- 4' Pervious Tree Planting Zone
- 5' Overall Pedestrian Walkway
- Ornamental Trees; Planting of such trees should be encouraged on private property fronting on an overhead utility zone
- Dry Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run beneath sidewalks
- Wet Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run in parking lane and center of drive lanes
- Drainage; Streets are an inverted crown that drains toward center of south drive lane

*Street Characteristics:*

- 27.5' Right of Way
- 3' Overhead Utility Zone; all overhead lines should run on the north side of the street and be protected by a curb, traffic barrier, or bollard
- Pole -Mounted Light Fixtures; Improved lighting to City standard for foot candles on roadways and at intersections, use type currently in area
- 10' Drive Lane; limited access for most types of emergency vehicles, One Way
- 8' Standard Parking Lane
- Traffic Barrier/Bollards (in pervious planting zone)
- 4' Pervious Tree Planting Zone
- 5' Overall Pedestrian Walkway
- Ornamental Trees; Planting of such trees should be encouraged on private property fronting on an overhead utility zone
- Dry Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run beneath sidewalks
- Wet Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run in parking lane and center of drive lanes
- Drainage; Streets are an inverted crown that drains toward center of parking lane



Typical East-West Street:

One Way 27.5' ROW

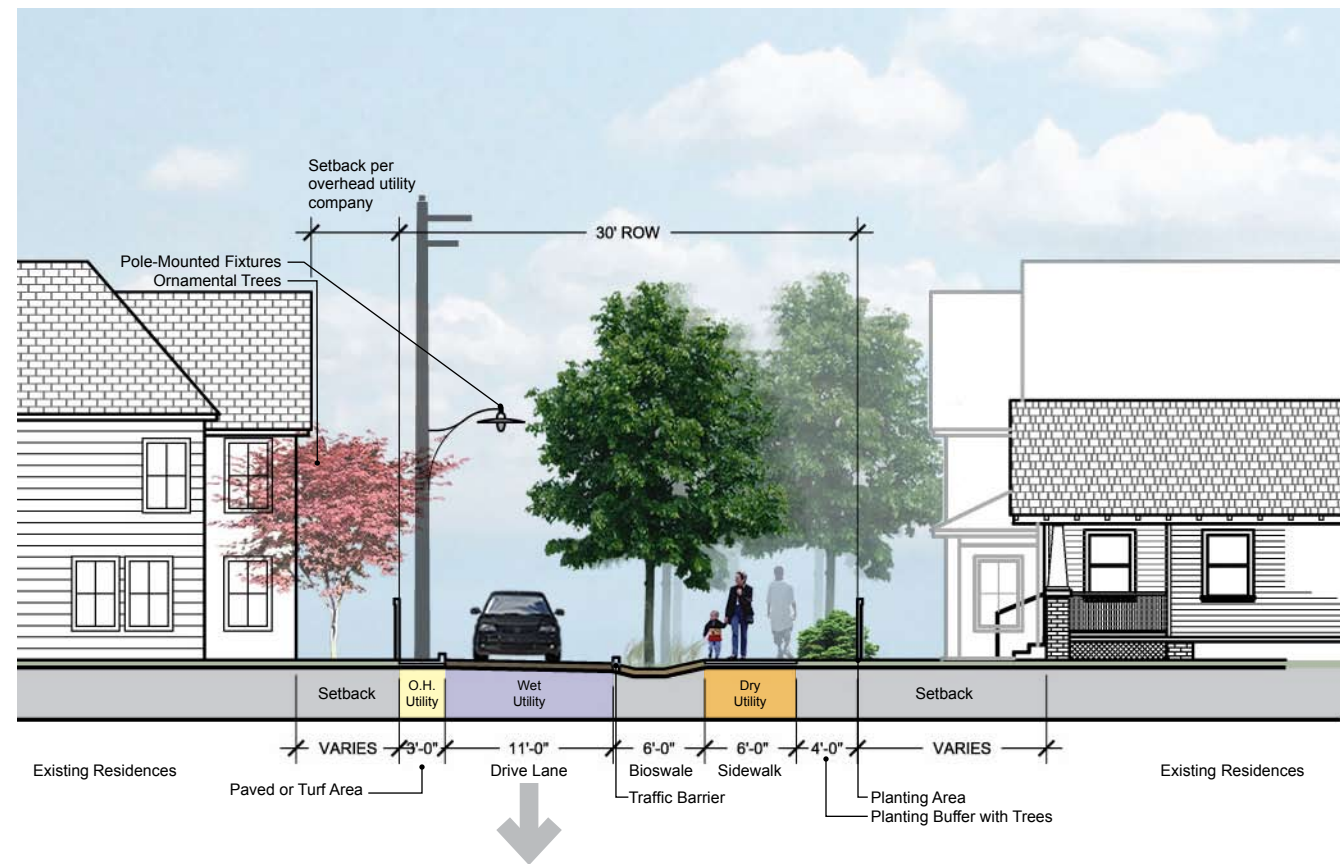
The east-west streets have the greatest constraints and must operate like alleys. Reduced paving sections do not accommodate larger vehicles, but improved parking lanes and pedestrian areas allow the streets to safely accommodate more uses. (Project # 26)

Key Map; NTS



*Street Characteristics:*

- 30' Right of Way
- 3' Overhead Utility Zone; all overhead lines should run on the west side of the street and be protected by a curb, traffic barrier, or bollard
- Pole -Mounted Light Fixtures; Improved lighting to City standard for foot candles on roadways and at intersections, use type currently in area
- 11' Drive Lane; accommodates most types of emergency vehicles and allows such vehicles through, via West Gray and West Dallas Streets
- Traffic Barrier/Bollards (in pervious planting zone)
- Two pervious tree planting zones to include Pecan Tree plantings (Urban food source)
- 6' Overall Pedestrian Walkway
- Ornamental Trees; Planting of such trees should be encouraged on private property fronting on an overhead utility zone
- Dry Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run beneath sidewalks
- Wet Utilities (Buried); such utilities should be run in parking lane and center of drive lanes
- Drainage; Streets are an inverted crown that drains toward center of parking lane
- Continuous bioswale along roadway



Matthews Street: 27.5' ROW

Matthews Street forms a critical north-south link for residents and is the launching point for tours of the district. It includes a wide pedestrian path lined with Pecan trees, which produce edible fruits in the fall. This "greenway" street also has stormwater treatment in the form of a swale that runs along the roadway. (Project # 27)

Key Map; NTS



## Special Conditions

Some streets in the study area had little operational concern voiced by the community, or had recently been improved during private-sector redevelopment. These areas include streets around the Camden redevelopment, Taft Street, Wilson Street north of Andrews Street, Andrews Street, and the area south of West Gray Street.



Camden Streets

Most of the streets around Camden have been reconstructed in the past few years, and should be accommodated as is to the greatest extent possible. Minor work such as re-striping and curb returns may need to occur in coordination with proposed construction. **(No proposed projects)**



Taft Street

Taft Street should include a painted sharrows (shared bicycle and drive lane) and an extended fitness trail area next to the existing sidewalks. There are many operational constraints due to school activity, so disruption of lanes and major construction should be avoided. This area is also on the very outside edge of the community, so spending budget dollars here is of minor benefit to Fourth Ward residents. **(Project # 29)**



Streets South of West Gray Street

These streets operate as two-way with parking on one side of the road. It is recommended that upgrades to drive surfaces per and utilities (per ESPA's study), ADA routes, and signage be made in this area, but no changes to operational characteristics. **(Project # 30)**



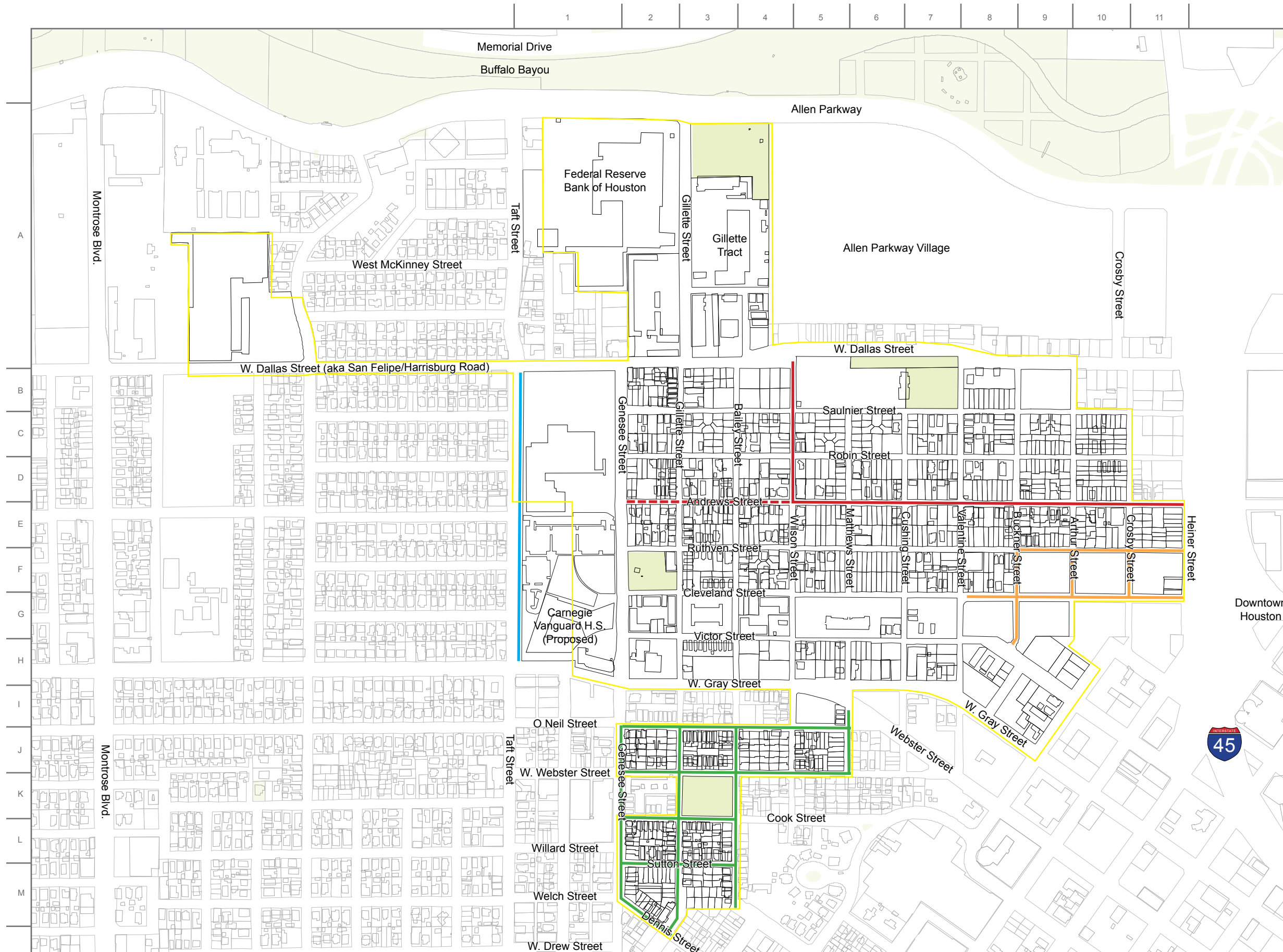
Wilson North and Andrews Streets

Wilson Street and Andrews Street from Wilson Street to Heiner Street are active City projects and will be executed by the City of Houston. The section of Andrews Street between Wilson Street and Genesee Street (indicated by a dashed line) is not currently in City plans, but should be reconstructed at the same time and by the same methods as the other brick streets. **(Project # 28)**

# Project Location Map

## LEGEND

- Streets surrounding Camden properties
- Taft Street
- Streets South of West Gray Street
- Wilson North and Andrews Streets
- - - TIRZ funded reconstruction



*This map show the extents of streets with a special designation or approach.*



## Ingredients of the Streetscape

In addition to district signage and wayfinding, materials and fixtures within the landscape/streetscape can provide a subtle sense of unity and “feel” to a community. The Fourth Ward has a “feel” and vernacular of its own, so any additional elements should enhance that character and not overpower the local community character. (Project # 24, 25, 26)

**Trees:** Species should include Bald Cypress, ‘Cathedral’ Live Oak (upright variety), and Lacebark Elms. Tree species should be consistent on each block, but not necessarily for entire streets.

**Lighting:** Decorative post-mounted fixtures similar to what is already in use around the district should continue. A conventional pole fixture similar to the post-mount should be used in areas that do not have power poles (i.e. Genessee Street). Every intersection should have at least one light source, with a minimum of three light sources per block. The street should have a minimum of .25 fc in all areas.

**Traffic Barriers:** Some form of bollard or traffic control should be placed inside the decomposed granite areas next to the parking lane. The type and installation of this feature should be coordinated with City departments. These devices need to keep vehicles out of the pervious planter areas, and away from the base of proposed trees. An inexpensive option for this item would be preferable.

**Parking Lanes:** The 8’ parking lanes should include 8’x22’ paint striped parking bays and a broom finished concrete surface.

**Travel Lanes:** These surfaces should be concrete with a medium rake finish going perpendicular to traffic flow. All travel lanes should include painted flow arrows at intersections.

**Intersections:** The center area at the intersection of two roads should be constructed of a broom finished concrete surface.

**Pedestrian Crossings:** Painted crosswalks should be utilized throughout the neighborhood, with decorative paver crosswalks at key gateways into the area (refer to the signage and wayfinding section for these locations).

**ADA Features:** All crossings or pedestrian roadway access points shall include detectable warning plates that meet City and national standards. It is recommended that cast iron plates be used in the study area. Cast iron is a durable, and timeless material that would not compete with the historic brick materials in some streets.

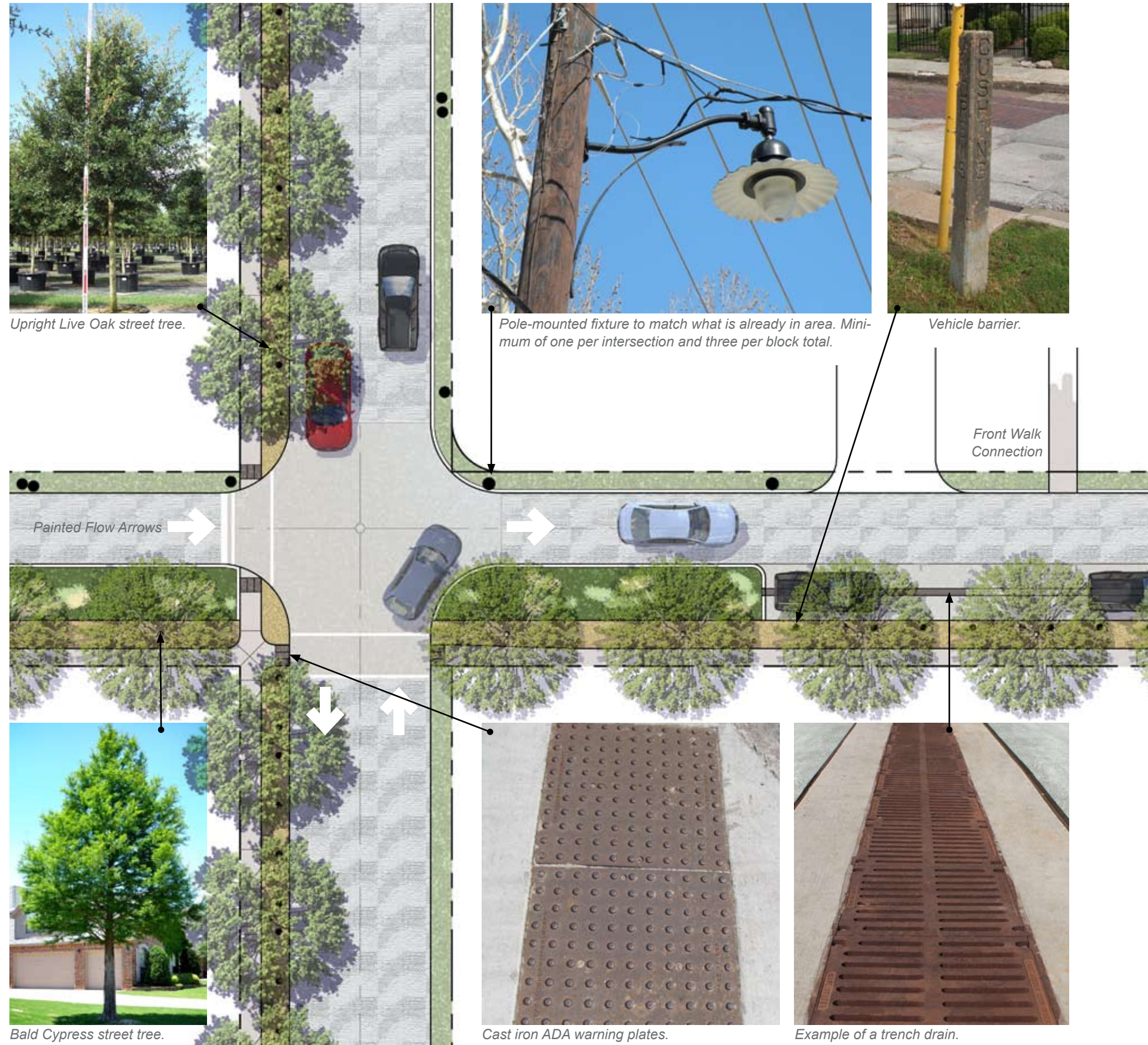
**Drainage Features:** Cast iron trench drains should be used to collect stormwater for both underground systems and collection for rain gardens. This should occur in the center of parking lanes

**Pervious Planter Strip:** This area should be covered with decomposed granite at a compaction rate that meets ADA requirements between trees, and a rate no greater than 65% within 3’ of trees. The use of pervious pavers or subsurface stabilization cups should be used in areas that will receive high traffic or significant water flows.

**Sidewalks:** Walkways should be constructed of basic broom finish concrete with a fly ash content of 20-25%. Jointing meet spacing requirements per geotechnical recommendations, with spacing at maximum intervals to reduce cost.

**Signage:** New signage should meet all City and national requirements, and incorporate design features (refer to signage and wayfinding examples) to the greatest extent possible. Efforts to cluster signs and reduce clutter should be made.

**Rain Gardens:** Placement of rain gardens should be in cooperation with drainage plans and be designed with best management practices in mind. Vegetation for these areas should include plants that meet water filtering, climatic, and maintenance requirements for the proposed conditions. The implementation and overall relevance of these features is further outlined in the stormwater sections of this report. They should be considered part of an overall stormwater management plan.





Wheel stripes painted in parking lane.



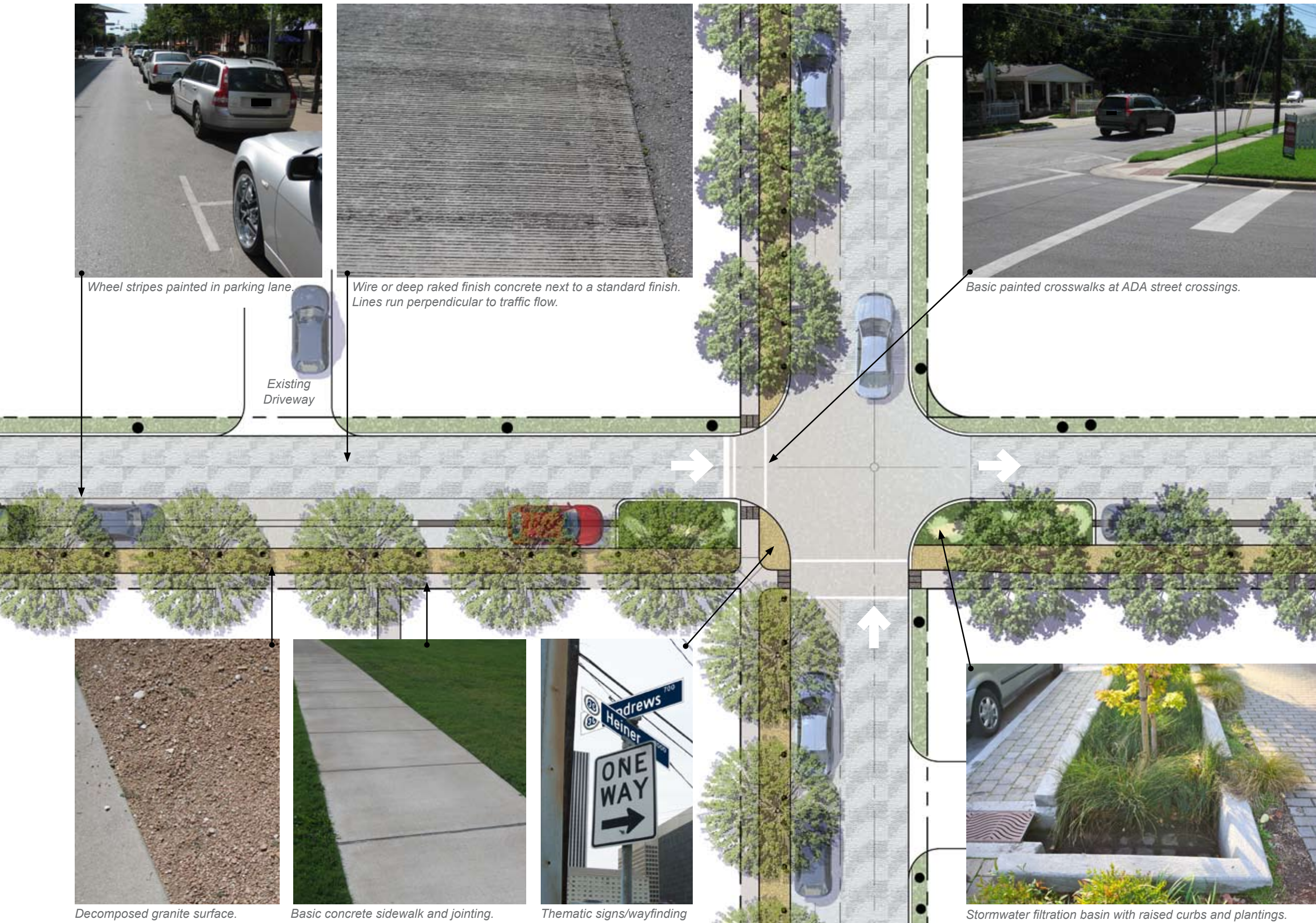
Wire or deep raked finish concrete next to a standard finish. Lines run perpendicular to traffic flow.



Basic painted crosswalks at ADA street crossings.



Pavers with a similar color palette to those used at Camden should be used for crosswalks as key nodes and entry points. Material selection should avoid mimicking historic brick and patterns.



Decomposed granite surface.



Basic concrete sidewalk and jointing.



Thematic signs/wayfinding



Stormwater filtration basin with raised curbs and plantings.



This plan view of a typical east-to-west street shows the "ingredients" of newly constructed streets, as well as how the east-to-west street intersects both a one-way and two-way north-to-south street.

## Signage and Wayfinding

As previously discussed, signage and wayfinding will play an important role in improving the legibility of the neighborhood and drawing attention to its historic assets. Several levels of signage should be considered as infrastructure improvements take place, and as monies in support of historic projects become available. If possible, all of these projects should be done at the same time as major infrastructure improvements.

Street signs should include a common theme, which can take the form of a custom designed sign (similar to Midtown) or an additional sign “topper”. Each has challenges in terms of cost and maintenance, and the district should consider this before moving forward with any projects.

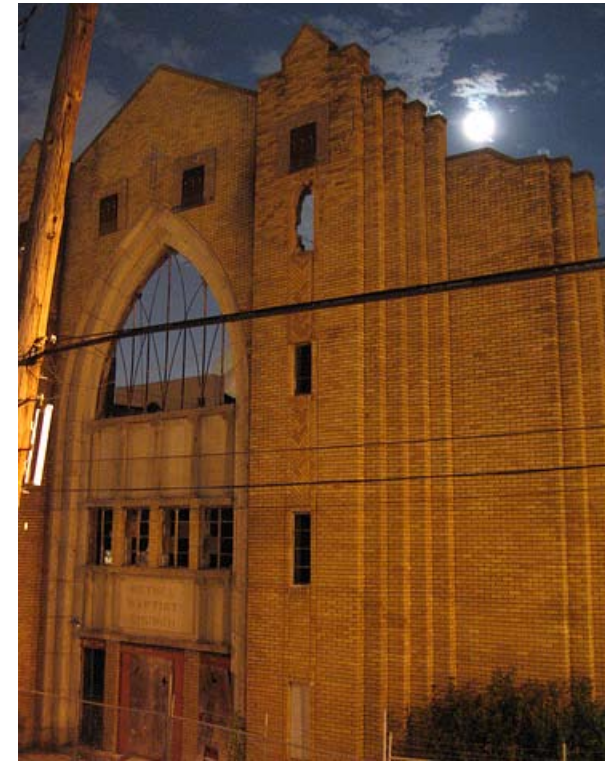
Regulatory signs (stop, yield, one way, etc.) should meet City and national standards, but efforts should be made to reduce quantities and combine signs on single poles to reduce clutter. No customizing should be required for these signs.

District markers and gateways can take many forms. It could be as simple as a small marker or banner on a pole, or could be an extensive mural or piece of art. The district will have to identify opportunities based on proposed locations and available funding.

Historic signage should range from standard historic markers to custom pieces that are unique to each application. The Yates Museum has a program and content for such signage that should be considered by the district for future projects. (Project # 14, 15, 16)



“Endurance” Symbol, West Africa



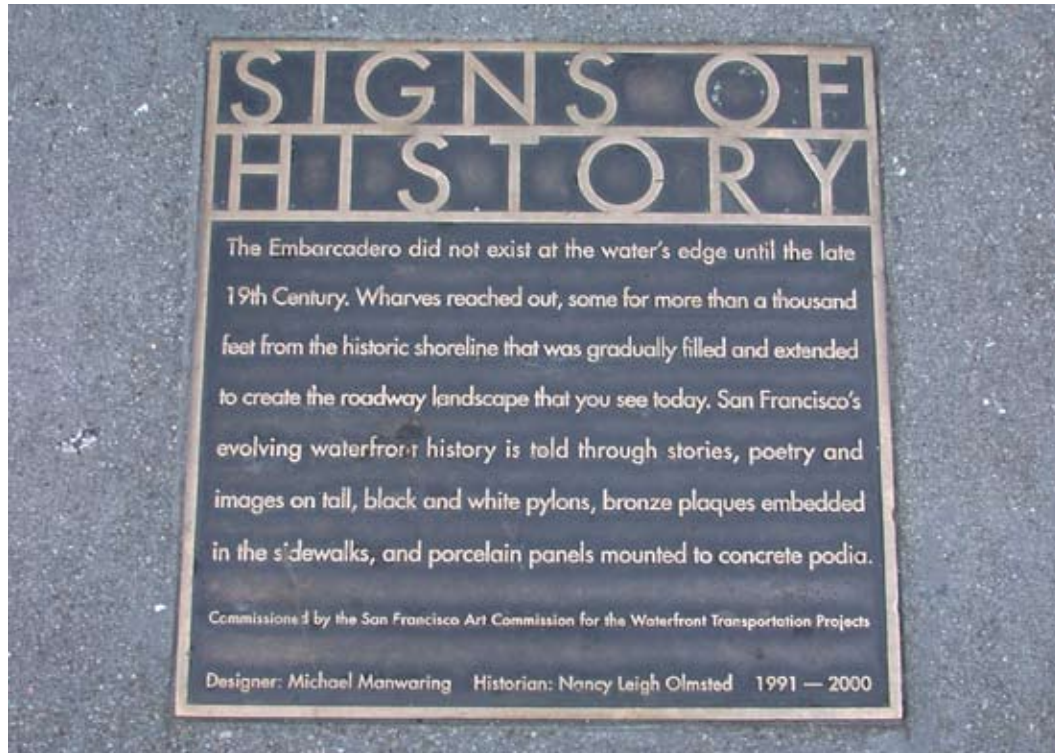
Bethel Baptist Church



### Inspiration

Though this study is not meant to develop a detailed approach to signage and wayfinding in the area, an effort to identify points of inspiration for such a study could provide a starting point for future work. Local symbology, icons, historic features, and maps are an instant source of inspiration for logos, icons, fonts, and thematic elements.



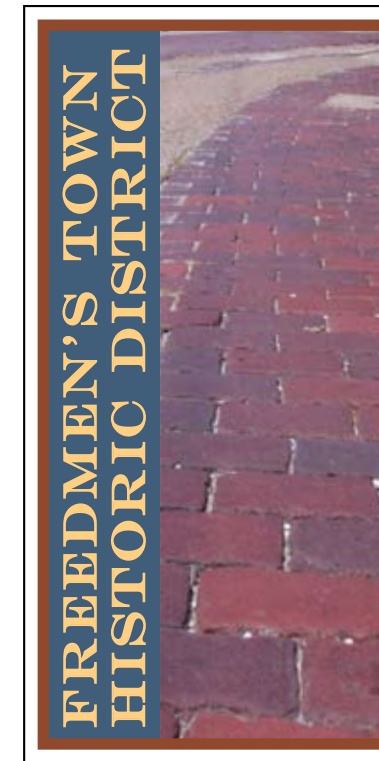


**Interpretive and Historic Signage**

As part of a self-guided walking history tour, durable metal plaques can be embedded into paving. A history timeline can also be implemented by using cast metals or sandblasting. Design and implementation should be coordinated with plans already in the works with the Yates Museum. (Project # 17)



Option 1



Option 2

**District Identification Banners**

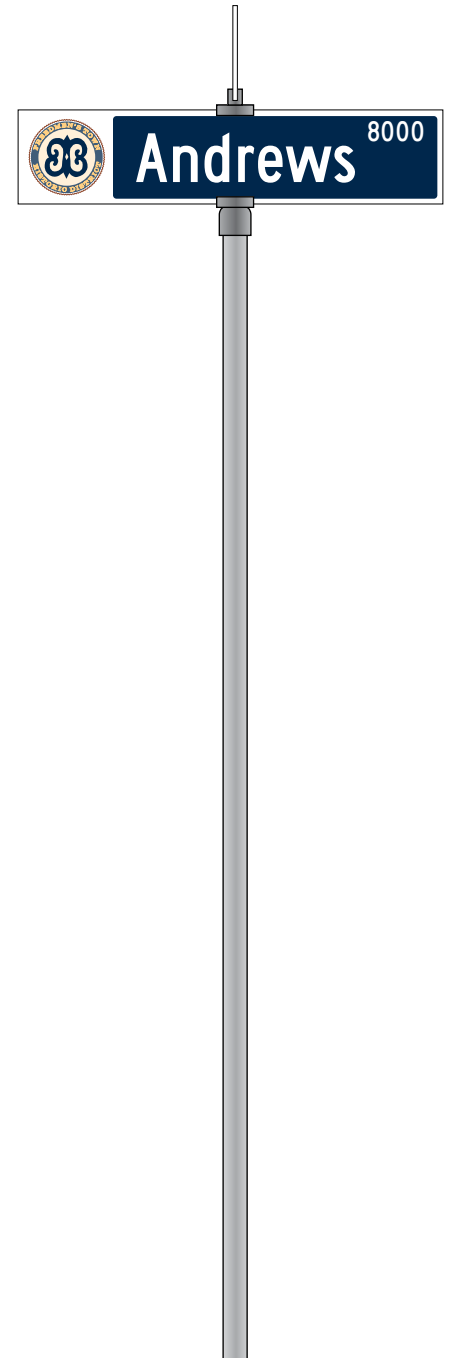
A banner system could be developed for the West Gray and West Dallas Street corridors, as well as areas around parks and major local destinations. Banners could be developed for seasonal or cultural events, but coordination on maintenance would have to be considered. Banners can be used with new street poles or retrofitted to existing poles. Different sizes can be generated for pedestrian areas and vehicular areas.



## District Signage

Signage can be organized in several different formats. Each format has unique maintenance challenges, but these challenges are out-weighed by the consistency and attractiveness of a unified set of district signs.

This level of study should give an indication of some format options that the district can look at in more detail as projects become active. (Project # 16)



ELEVATION: STREET & DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION OPTION 1  
Scale: 3/4"=1'-0"



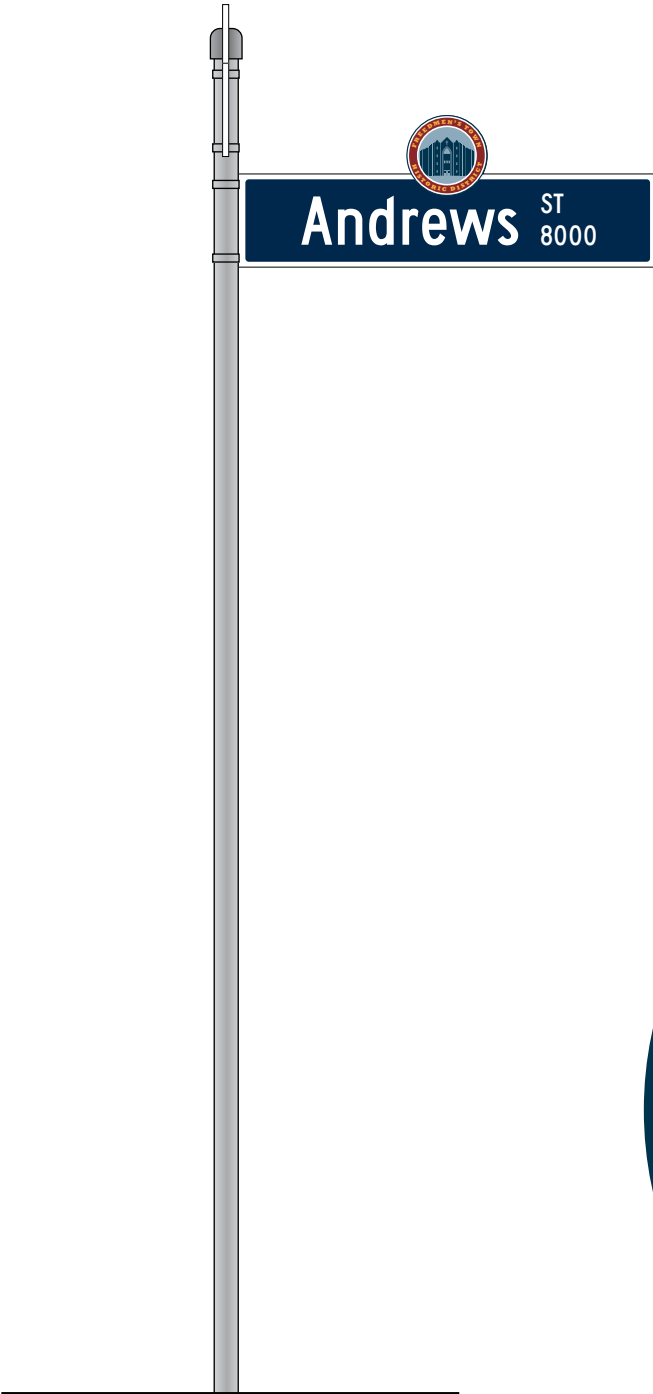
DETAIL: STREET & DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION OPTION 1  
Scale: 3"=1'-0"



DISTRICT IDENTITY OPTION 1



*There is an opportunity to design a consistent format for each district customized with color and logo.*



ELEVATION: STREET & DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION OPTION 2  
Scale: 3/4"=1'-0"



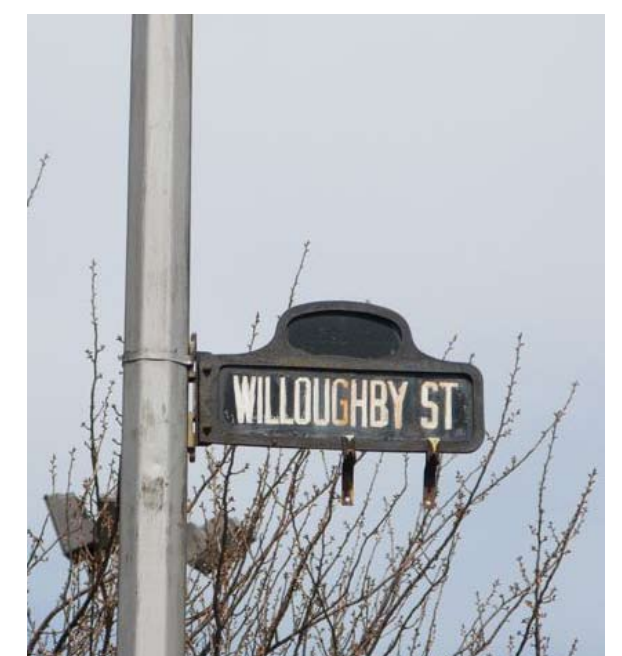
DETAIL: STREET & DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION OPTION 2  
Scale: 3"=1'-0"



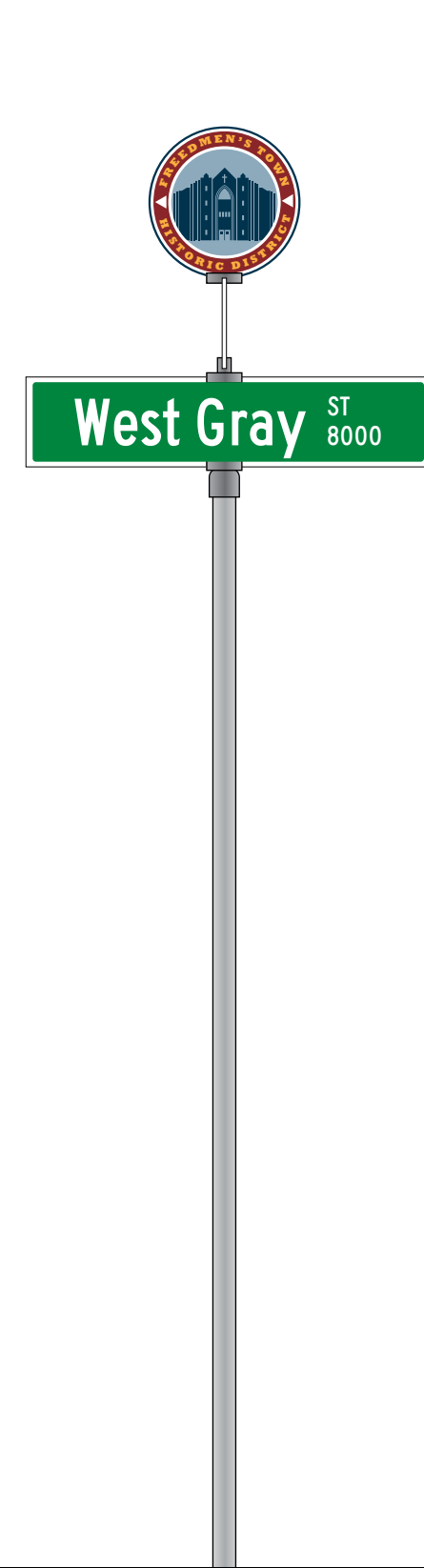
DISTRICT IDENTITY OPTION 2



DISTRICT IDENTITY OPTION 3  
Alternate with "Fourth Ward"



Historic street sign in Brooklyn, New York. The distinctive shape can be an inspiration for new street signs.



ELEVATION: STREET & DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION OPTION 3  
Scale: 3/4"=1'-0"



DETAIL: STREET & DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION OPTION 3  
Scale: 3"=1'-0"



A "sign-topper" could be implemented on existing signage. This would be a lower cost option initially, but could pose maintenance issues if not secured properly.

## District Identity Markers

Free-standing markers could be used to indicate entry points into the district both at vehicular and pedestrian scales. These features could be mounted to utility poles, steel poles, or other site features. (Project # 16)



ELEVATION: DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION  
Scale: 3/4"=1'-0"

ELEVATION: DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION  
& DESTINATION WAYFINDING  
Scale: 3/4"=1'-0"

## Parking Management Strategy

As discussed in the Parking Management Framework, parking was a major concern of the residents. To help address their concerns we propose that there be a multi-pronged approach to the parking management strategy. The first objective will be to simplify and streamline the on-street parking as shown in the proposed cross-section. The second objective will be to address the availability of parking for residents versus those patronizing businesses outside the Fourth Ward. And lastly, we will address parking for busses and during large events.

### Parallel Parking Bays One-way Streets:

Converting several of the streets to two-way without on-street parking may provide fewer overall parking spaces in the core of the neighborhood. By creating defined parallel parking bays on the one-way streets with safe and accessible sidewalks creating protected paths to desired destinations, we open up more of the neighborhood as possible parking. This will help to balance out the loss when there is a clear path to the destination; people are willing to walk a little further to their destinations. This works because in the parking density studies, it was shown that the densities tend to be concentrated on specific locations, not constant throughout the neighborhood.

### Expand Residential Parking Program:

Expanding the existing residential parking program would serve as a low cost way to help ensure that residents and their guests have priority parking near their homes. The proposed area would include all of the blocks east of Valentine between West Dallas and West Gray, and on Victor and Cleveland between Gillette and Valentine to limit parking from businesses along West Gray. This will allow residents and their guests to have priority when parking on the street near their homes. These areas were established to reduce the number of vehicles whose occupants are not visiting the neighborhood and its residents, but rather are headed downtown or to the businesses along West Gray. We know that this program may hit some resistance from residents who do not want to have to deal with permits or parking passes. And because the program is implemented by the COH only when there is a majority buy in from owners on the block, not every block may choose to be included in the program. It is our desire to see as much of this area implement the residential parking program, if not all, so that there

is a consistency to the neighborhood and the parking regulations can be better enforced.

### Buses:

Several establishments might require space for busses to park. A central location where the busses accessing The Gregory School, the Gregory Lincoln Education Center, HISD's Carnegie School and the Federal Reserve Bank could all park is proposed along Genesee in the bus loading and unloading zone near the schools. Buses could access this site directly from West Dallas or West Gray or from any on the east-west streets, via Heiner, without having to navigate the tight turns on the interior of the neighborhood.

### Events:

To accommodate large events at locations with limited parking such as the Gregory Lincoln Education Center or Bethel Baptist Church, it is proposed that they utilize the parking lots at the schools and/or the three lots in the southwest corner of Heiner and West Dallas near downtown. People could then either walk to the venues or a shuttle could be arranged. If the Bethel Baptist Park is utilized for event activities, arrangements to rent portions of the hourly surface lots at the corner of West Dallas and Heiner Street should be in place. This is a short walk to the park, and should mitigate parking impacts on the surrounding area. It is important to note that the entire area has permit parking in place, so visitor parking for that facility will need to be provided adjacent to the park for occasional visitors and in the surface lots for events. If the corner properties were to redevelop as indicated in the Centers approach, space in proposed structured parking might be considered as part of a development agreement.

### Gillette tract:

The Gillette tract is rather isolated from the core neighborhood of the Fourth Ward by West Dallas, which will serve as a deterrent for spill over parking in the residential area. As a result it is recommended that adequate parking for any proposed development be provided both on-site and/or adjacent to the development. It is recommended to promote mixed use and a livable and walkable community feel; that on-street parking is utilized on West Dallas, during non-peak periods, and on Gillette, directly adjacent to the site.












The proposed Bethel Baptist Park will be a draw for visitors and events. Due to permit parking requirements throughout the area, accommodations for parking must be made on adjacent surface lots. (Image source: HPARD)

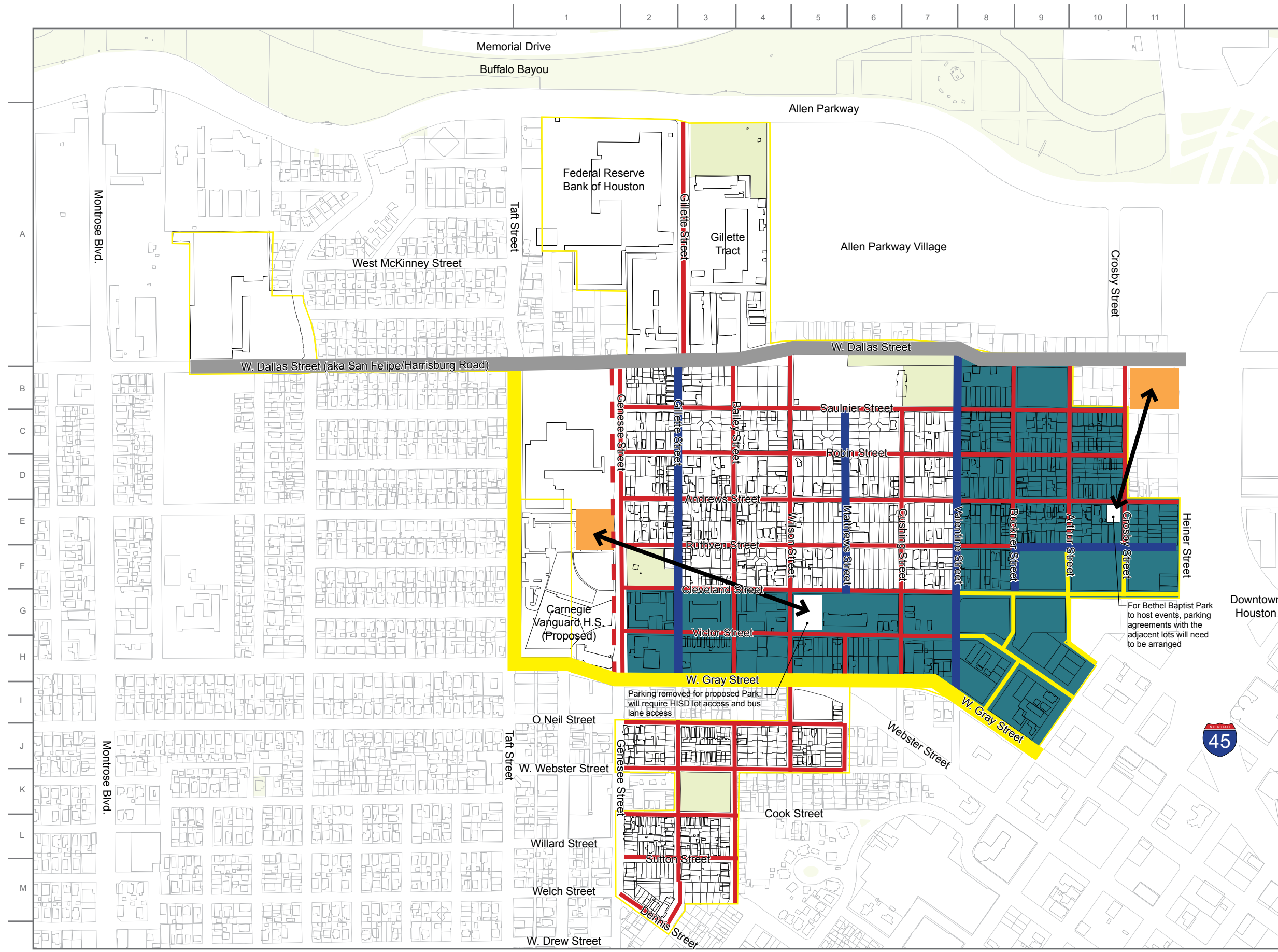


The African American Library at the Gregory School at the Gregory School will continue to be a draw in the area. The proposed park will eliminate parking and must be implemented with a strategy that utilizes nearby surface lots.

# Parking Framework Plan

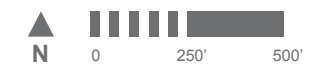
## LEGEND

-  Study Boundary
-  Existing Controlled Parking
-  Existing Controlled Parking
-  Parking on One Side
-  Weekend Parking/ Tour Bus Parking
-  No Parking
-  Peak Time: 4 lanes, no parking  
Off Peak Time: 2 lanes, parking on each side
-  Area to Require Residential Parking Pass
-  Proposed Event Parking Source



For Bethel Baptist Park to host events, parking agreements with the adjacent lots will need to be arranged

Parking removed for proposed Park, will require HISD lot access and bus lane access



The Proposed Parking Framework Plan shows an extended permit parking area along West Gray Street, as well as parking conditions after new improvements are implemented.

## Parks and Open Space Master Plan

The study area has an abundance of parkland, but lacks overall program items that meet the needs of the community. The approach of this master plan is to fill those gaps where possible, and identify future needs as redevelopment and infill occurs. Proposed projects range from specific need recommendations to connectivity improvements that will link residents to existing recreational opportunities. The types of projects can generally be broken up into five categories: neighborhood parks, underutilized public lands, community gardens, HISD synergistic programs, and connections to Buffalo Bayou. Project descriptions are as follows:

1. Allen Parkway crossing at Gillette Street: Early discussions for this project involved an elevated crossing over Allen Parkway for this project. Due to funding requirements and long delivery times for such projects, it is determined that an at-grade solution would be the most practical approach. This project is further outlined later in this section. [\(Project # 44\)](#)

2. Allen Parkway crossing at Heiner Street: This project should be implemented similarly to the Gillette Street crossing, which is further outlined later in this section. [\(Project # 44\)](#)

3. Allen Parkway Trail: The trail project would include a 6' wide pervious pathway that continuously connects the Federal Reserve around to the Heiner-West Dallas Street intersection. It should be fully accessible, incorporate appropriate lighting, and make connections to existing and proposed features. [\(Project # 31\)](#)

4. Allen Parkway Village Greenway: This project includes a series of paving improvements that lead pedestrians to the existing pedestrian bridge. Removal of barriers (fencing, parking), striping or paving renovations on the walking surface, and accessibility improvements should all be a part of this project. [\(Project # 44\)](#)

5. Gillette Street Greenway: This project creates a major connecting point between the neighborhoods and Buffalo Bayou. It also helps with water quality and bicycle circulation in the area. Further details on this project are outlined in the Gillette Tract chapter. [\(Project # 23\)](#)

6. West Dallas at Taft Street: The crossing at this location needs accessibility, features installed and crosswalk (painted) upgrades. [\(Project # 20\)](#)

7. West Dallas at Gillette Street: The crossing at this location needs coordination with reconstruction of Gillette Street north and south. We recommend that the district upgrade this intersection (pavers or decorative paving). [\(Project # 20, 23\)](#)

8. West Dallas at Buckner Street: This is a non-signalized vehicular intersection that should include a crossing that would require a special signalization and striping system. Further details on this project are outlined later in this section. [\(Project # 20\)](#)

9. Downtown Connection: Proposed projects should include reconstructed paving, accessibility features, and district signage. This would encourage visitors from downtown as well as improve the pedestrian environment for residents. If this intersection is improved significantly, it could reduce the number of pedestrian conflicts caused by crossings further south toward Midtown. [\(Project # 20\)](#)

10. HISD Coordination Items: These issues outlined later in this section. [\(Project # 43\)](#)

11. Beth Israel Cemetery: Limited recommendations for the Beth Israel Cemetery are made within the section covering the Founders Memorial Cemetery. [\(Project # 41\)](#)

12. Founders Memorial Cemetery: Related projects are outlined later in this section. [\(Project # 41\)](#)

13. Wiley Park: Minor recommendations are outlined later in this section. [\(Project # 39\)](#)

14. HPARD Property on West Dallas: This area should be programmed and implemented as part of a parks/open space study related to Allen Parkway Village. It provides limited opportunities for Fourth Ward residents, and connects to an existing open space within APV. This site could function as a farmer's market, but parallel parking on West Dallas would have to be in place before that could occur. [\(Project # 38\)](#)

15. West Webster Park: Minor recommendations are outlined later in this section. [\(Project # 39\)](#)

16. Bethel Baptist Park: Projects on the former site of Bethel Baptist Church are outlined later in this section. [\(Project # 37\)](#)

17. African American Library at the Gregory School at the Gregory School (Gregory Park): Proposed park projects are outlined later in this section. [\(Project # 40\)](#)

18. Matthews Street Greenway: This project is detailed in the street sections portion of the Preferred Alternatives Chapter. [\(Project # 27\)](#)

19. Community Garden Projects: These are outlined later in this section. [\(Project # 39\)](#)

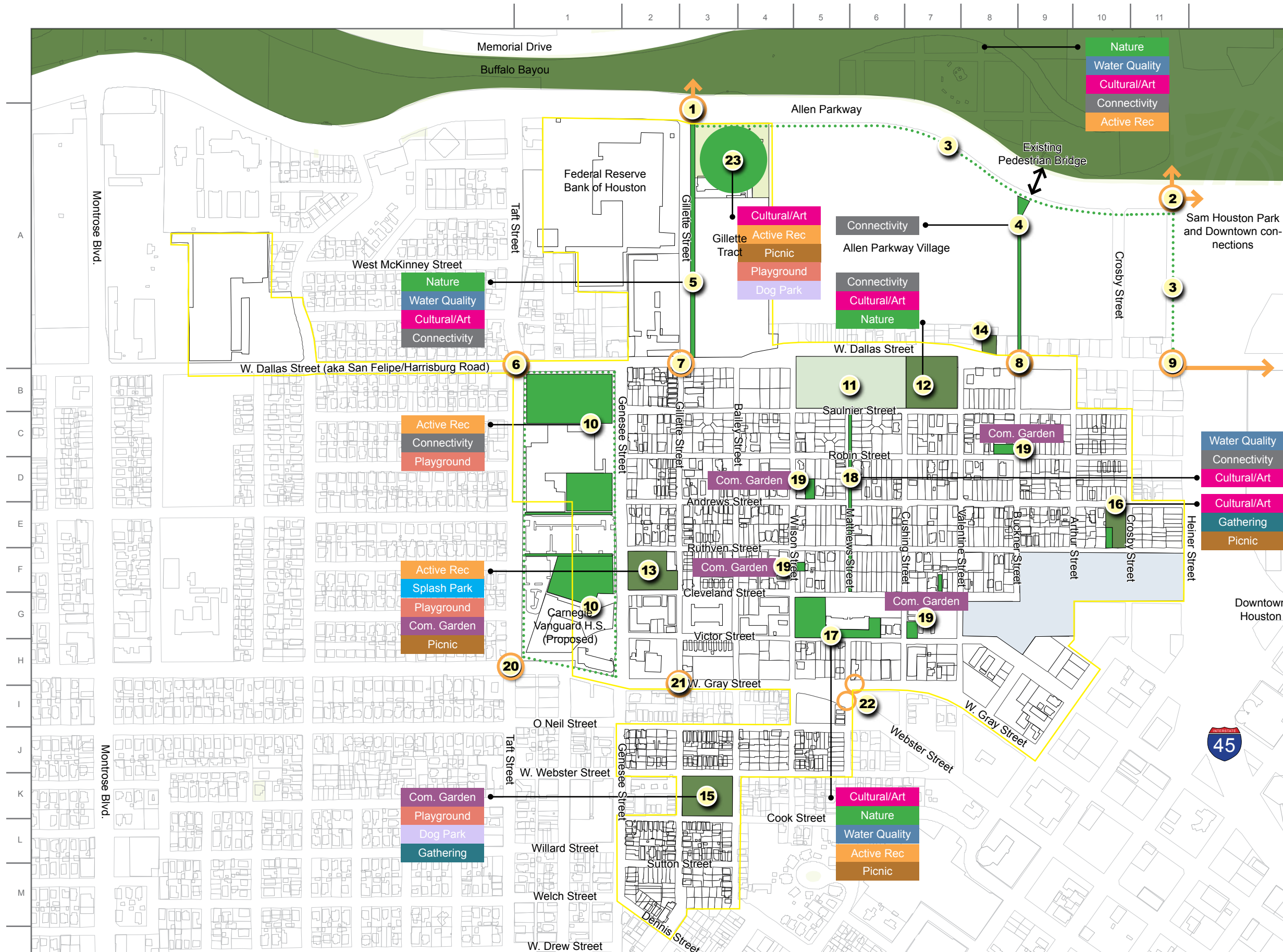
20. West Gray at Taft Street: Updating crosswalks, signals, and accessibility features should be considered due to proximity to school facilities, transit routes and amenities within the adjacent neighborhoods. [\(Project # 21, 29\)](#)

21. West Gray at Gillette Street: This crossing project should be implemented similarly to the Allen Parkway at Gillette Street crossing. There is not a traffic light at this intersection, so warning signs/lights and painted features will be required. [\(Project # 21\)](#)

22. West Gray at Matthews Street: This crossing project should be implemented similar to the Allen Parkway at Gillette Street, with a small pedestrian transition built into the existing median. There is not a traffic light at this intersection, so warning signs/lights and painted features will be required. [\(Project # 21\)](#)

23. San Felipe Park: Projects are outlined later in this section. [\(Project # 36\)](#)





# Parks and Open Space Master Plan

## LEGEND

- 1** \*Buffalo Bayou Crossing A
  - 2** \*Buffalo Bayou Crossing B
  - 3** \*Allen Parkway Trail
  - 4** \*Allen Parkway Village Greenway
  - 5** \*Gillette Street Greenway
  - 6** West Dallas Crossing at Taft Street
  - 7** West Dallas Crossing at Gillette Street
  - 8** \*West Dallas Crossing at Buckner Street
  - 9** Downtown Connection
  - 10** \*HISD Synergistic Opportunities
  - 11** Beth Israel Cemetery
  - 12** Founders Memorial Cemetery
  - 13** Wiley Neighborhood Park
  - 14** HPARD Property
  - 15** West Webster Neighborhood Park
  - 16** Bethel Baptist Church Park
  - 17** \*Gregory Park
  - 18** \*Matthews Street Greenway
  - 19** \*Community Garden
  - 20** West Gray Crossing at Taft Street
  - 21** \*West Gray Crossing at Gillette Street
  - 22** \*West Gray Crossing at Matthews Street
  - 23** \*\*San Felipe Park (Relocation T.B.D.)
- Existing Park or HPARD Land
  - Proposed Park or Open Space
  - Area Served By Private Amenities

\*Indicates proposed new project or new facility  
 \*\*The San Felipe Park was de-listed from the property roles of HPARD by City Council. This was done after a public hearing at 9:00a.m., Wednesday, September 1, 2010.

The Parks and Open Space Master Plan is a comprehensive look at all proposed projects that relate to park land, connectivity or outdoor amenities.

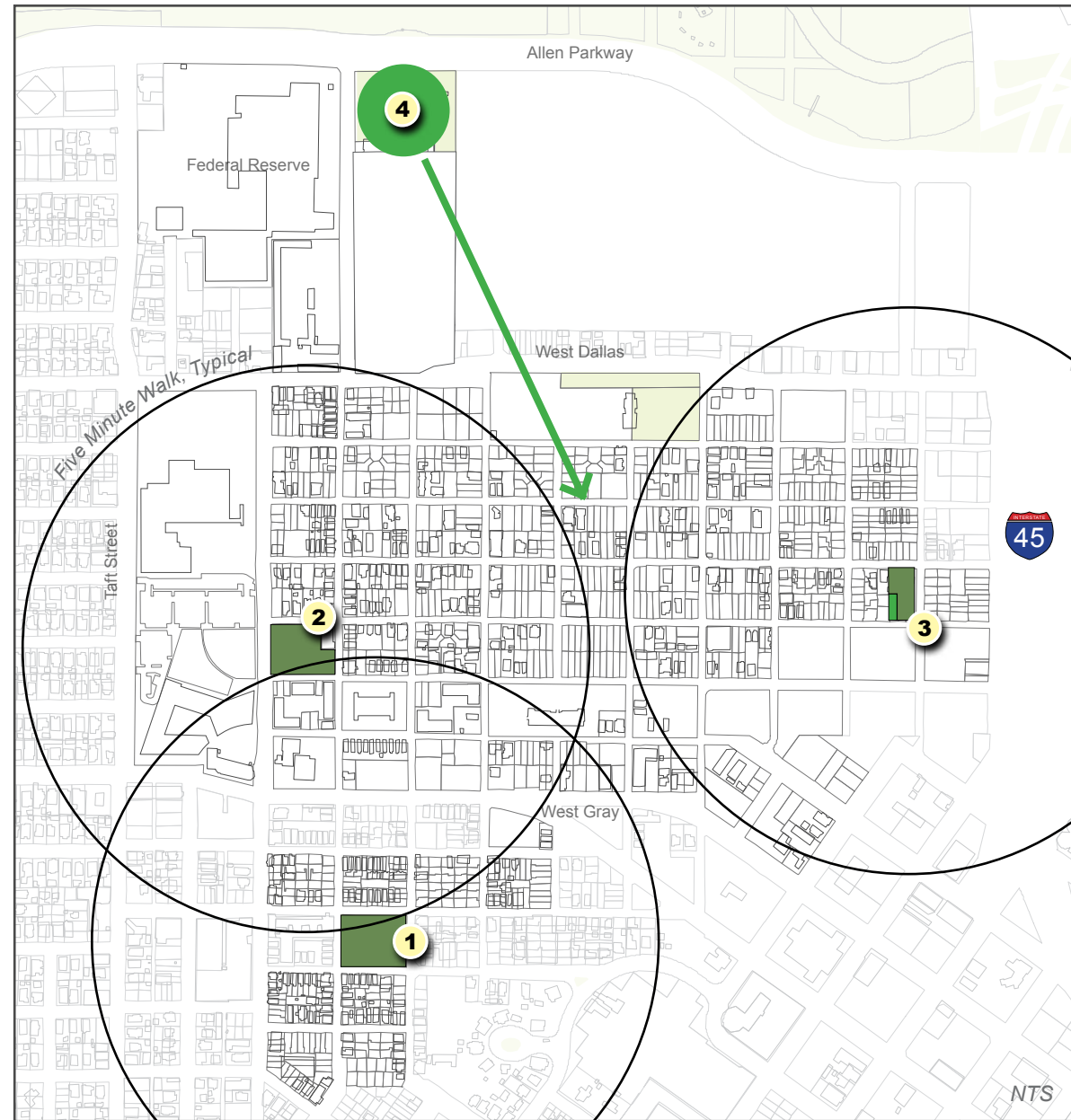


## Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks should serve the day-to-day needs of residents, and provide a healthy diversity of program items for all age groups. Depending on the size of available park land, some program items may not fit in every park. One approach to this is to couple smaller parks programmatically. This means that one park might include a program focused on play and active recreation, while another nearby park might have more passive areas or nature-related amenities.

The existing distribution and quality of neighborhood parks in the area is quite good thanks to early projects funded by the TIRZ. This analysis looks at providing more park programming for residents on the east side of the study area, and filling in a few programmatic gaps within the existing neighborhood parks that serve the south and west areas. The pending relocation of San Felipe Park could become a major factor in this effort.

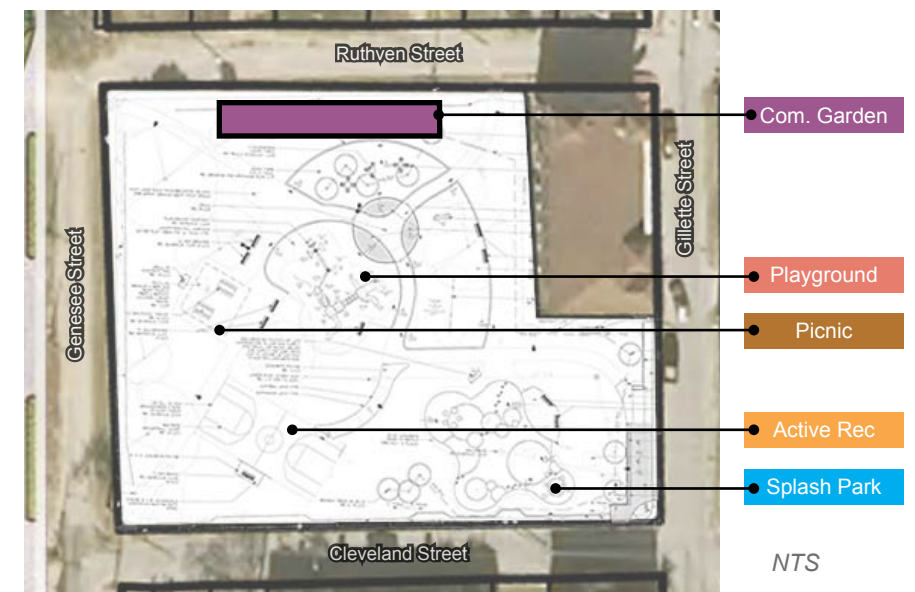
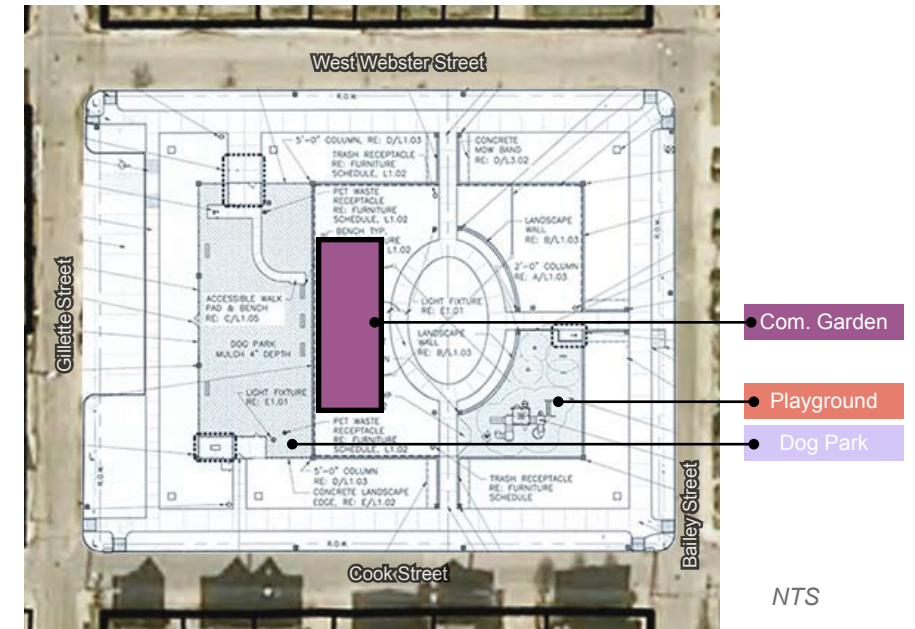
The San Felipe Park was de-listed from the property roles of HPARD by City Council. This was done after a public hearing at 9:00a.m., Wednesday, September 1, 2010. This action has officially changed the land use from park to City property. With this change, the land is subject to sale or development based on City discretion. It is important to note that the City has also committed to "...acquire, improve and designate for park purposes other land of equivalent size in a more central location to the Fourth Ward neighborhood...". This public hearing occurred at the listed time and place with no documented public-received comments. City Council proceeded to vote on the official de-listing of the park.



### Park Distribution

To promote a vibrant, walkable, and diverse community, it is advisable to provide a neighborhood parks program within a five-minute walk of all residences. Early analysis indicated that this would be possible in terms of land availability, but analysis of existing and proposed programming was less comprehensive. Additional park land and programming would need to be considered in the eastern portion of the study area.

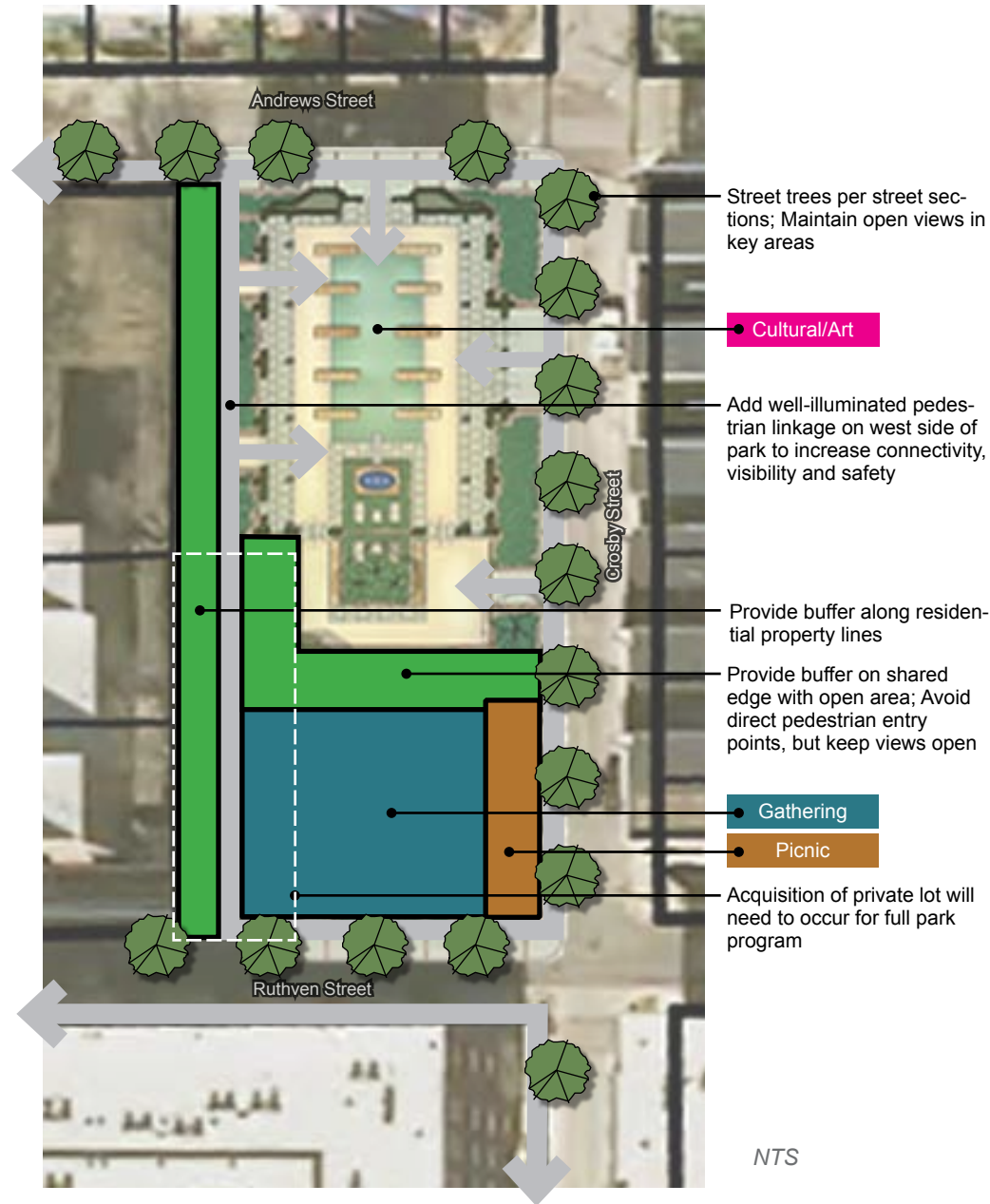
The role of the future San Felipe Park is unknown at this time, but it is safe to assume that it will only supplement what is already a reasonably complete system. While there are limited sites within the study area that have adequate land available, the replacement of San Felipe Park is a key component in the overall parks system that serves the Fourth Ward.



### West Webster Park (1) and Wiley Park (2)

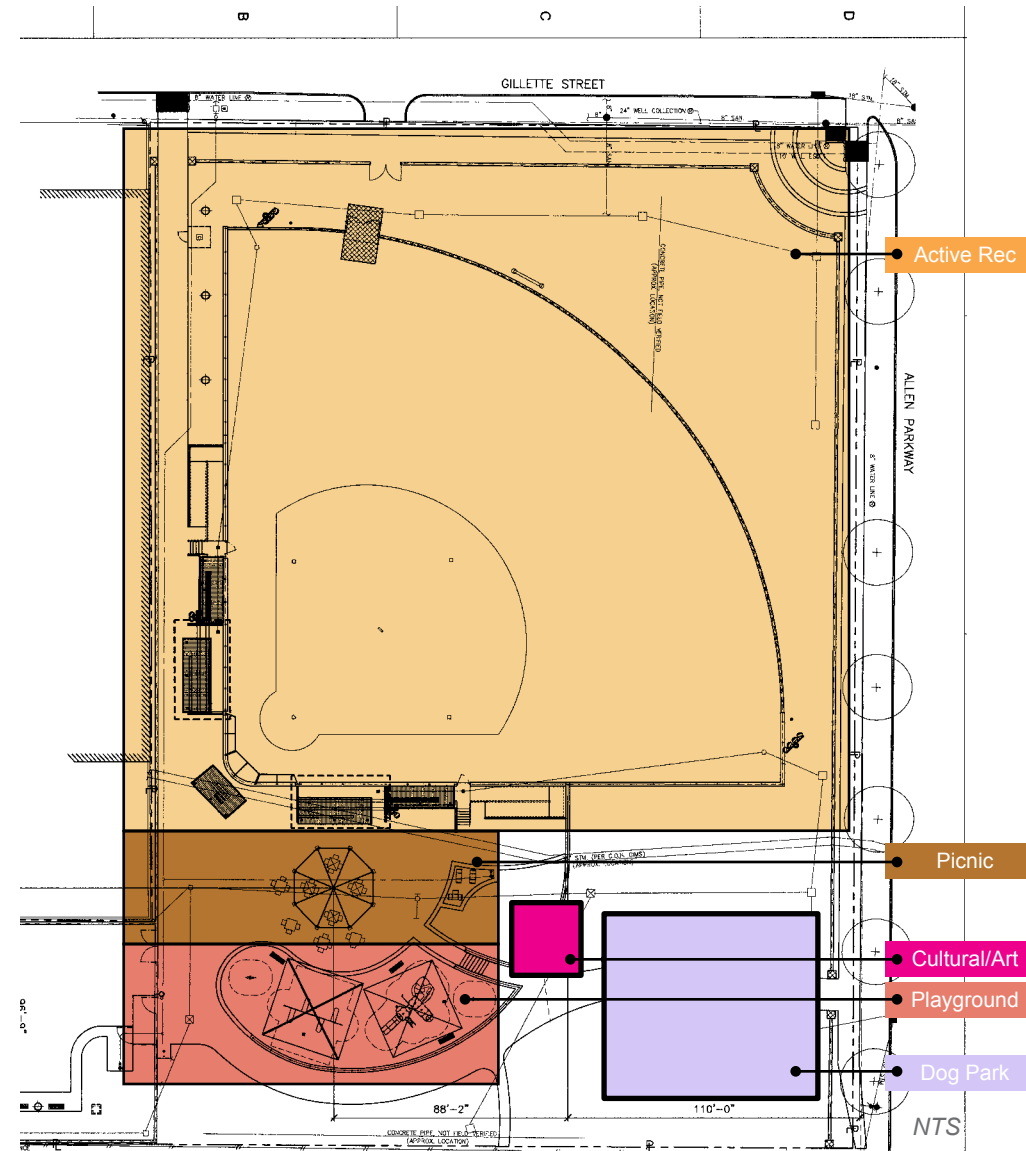
West Webster Park is a fairly open green space that is centered around a dog park and playground. Community gardens are a key addition to the park program for the Fourth Ward, and residents in this area should have the option for access to such facilities. This is not critical to the success of the park. Placing the garden between the dog park and playground would provide some buffering between uses and good solar orientation.

Wiley Park has recently undergone significant renovation, and provides a diverse range of program activities for users. The only addition recommended for this park is in support of the community garden program for the area. This should occur adjacent to the church, and be implemented with minimal disturbance to existing site features. A low fence would be recommended to protect any garden located this close to a public street.



Bethel Baptist Church Park (3)

The proposed plans for the Bethel Baptist Church Park are sensitive to the history of the site, and provide a peaceful environment for reflection and passive activity. Given that this part of the study area is poorly served by neighborhood parks, it is recommended that the proposed program and parkland be expanded. There is a high demand for open gathering space in this area, which is a challenging addition given the size and shape of the existing church site. The acquisition of one adjacent residential lot would allow for greater connectivity through the park, an open space that is buffered from the church site, and a picnic area for residents to gather for events. The addition of a walkway along the western property line will improve connectivity, visibility, and overall safety of the park. No pedestrian entry points should occur on the south facade of the existing church. This will further buffer regular community uses from the church facility.



San Felipe Park (4)

Due to the recent de-listing of the current San Felipe Park site, a new location may be determined within the Fourth Ward and all program items planned for the original location will be included in the new location. Given the current park distribution, it would be best to locate the park as far to the east as possible. This area has the greatest shortage of parkspace and program.

Recommended additions to the program for San Felipe Park include community-related art, and a dog park. The proposed dog park would help to mitigate dog use in other public spaces and parks in the area. Art items might include murals, sculpture or a creative play project to supplement the equipment in the playground. To reduce the number of dogs around the play area, picnic and active recreation surfaces it is recommended that a secure dog park be included in the project. Dogs can provide significant challenges to the maintenance and sanitation of turf-covered recreation facilities. HPARD should consult with residents on the type of recreational facilities most desired.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROJECT CONCERNING 2.6 ACRES OF DESIGNATED PARK LAND NEAR ALLEN PARKWAY AND GILLETTE STREET**

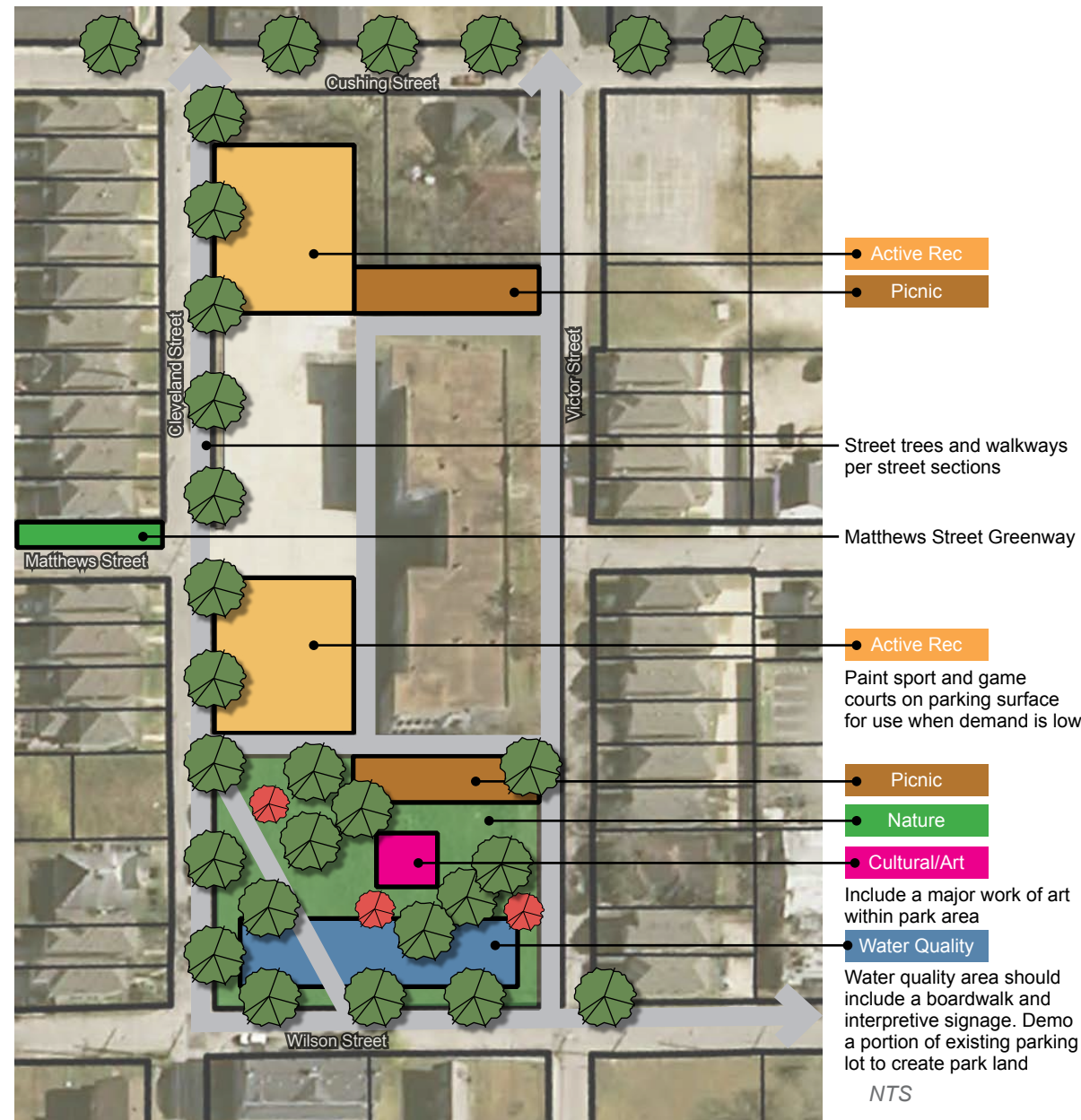
The City of Houston proposes to remove the park designation from a 2.6 acre, more or less, tract of land located adjacent to Gillette Street and Allen Parkway, out of the John Austin Survey, Abstract 1, Houston, Harris County, and which has been sometimes known as San Felipe Park, and in connection therewith, acquire, improve and designate for park purposes other land of equivalent size in a more central location to the Fourth Ward neighborhood and communities (collectively herein, the "Project").

City Council of the City of Houston will hold a public hearing on the Project, beginning at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 1, 2010, in Council Chambers, Second Floor, City Hall, 901 Bagby, Houston, Texas. Persons wishing to speak at this public hearing should reserve time by calling the City Secretary's office at 832-393-1100 before 8:30 a.m. on September 1, 2010.

Notice for public hearing regarding San Felipe Park. Source: <http://www.houstontx.gov/citysec/backup/2010/083110.pdf>

## Underutilized Public Land

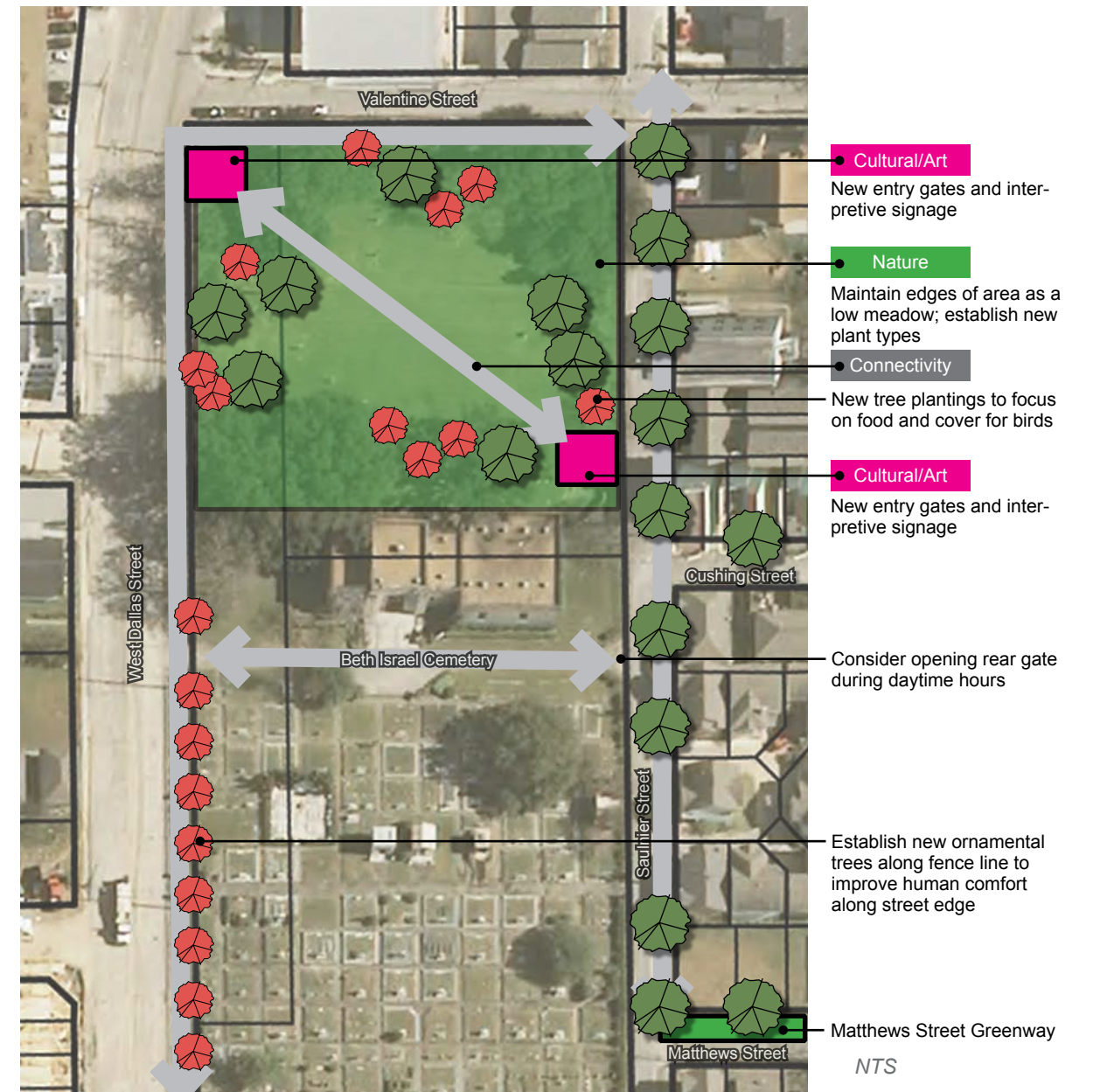
The City of Houston has a variety of properties in the study area, many of which support cultural or recreational amenities. Among these sites are the Founders Memorial Cemetery and the African American Library at the Gregory School at the Gregory School. Both are wonderful cultural centers in the area, and have strong ties to Houston's past. Each of these spaces provides some recreational value to the community in their current state, but several improvements can be made to improve their connection to the community and heighten their roles as part of the open space fabric of the Fourth Ward.



### Gregory Park

The African American Library at the Gregory School at the Gregory School is easily the most prominent building within the Fourth Ward, and has recently undergone significant improvement and investment. It deserves an associated park space that reinforces the teaching goals of the facility and its relevance as a community center.

The heart of this project is the removal of existing parking lot, and the conversion of that space into a functional ecologic park. This feature should capture and process storm water from the adjacent community and remove harmful particles and toxins before sending it downstream toward Buffalo Bayou. It is an opportunity to improve the environment and teach visitors about water quality and the hydrologic systems of the city. It also provides a scenic space for passive recreation, group/visitor picnics and activity. A central feature of this facility should be the inclusion of a major work of art in the natural area of the park. A second project that will improve connection to the community and activate this area during the evening would include the striping of ball and game courts on the remaining parking lot. Land for active recreation is scarce in the study area, and all efforts should be made to combine uses where possible.



### Founders Memorial Cemetery

As it exists today, the Founders Memorial Cemetery is a peaceful and seemingly remote space. It gets very little foot traffic, and has a low level of organization. The suggested approach is to build on the existing feel, but also provide a much needed connection that helps to break up the cemetery "super-block" along West Dallas Street that further separates the neighborhood to the south from Buffalo Bayou to the north.

Improvements to fencing, gates, and signage should be focused on entry/exit points. These will attract visitors to the park, and should be optimized as storytelling amenities. The park should feature a pervious path that connects Cushing Street across to West Dallas at Valentine. Improved connectivity and increased foot-traffic will improve overall safety within the park. Other improvements should work toward providing cover and food for wildlife, specifically birds, while keeping visibility high. Projects might include the establishment of a meadow, wildflowers, understory trees, and a management plan for such plant communities. Ornamental tree plantings within the Beth Israel Cemetery would improve comfort along West Dallas and buffer the cemetery from roadway noise and dust. All proposed improvements should respect and enhance the preservation of existing headstones.



## Community Garden Program

Community gardens are seen as a healthy activity within any community. They provide a source of fellowship, pride, and fresh foods. The south has a tradition of home gardening and connection to the land, which is encouraged as part of this Open Space Master Plan.

Things to consider when establishing a community garden are soil health, availability of sunlight, management of the garden once established, and the security of the land it is built on. Having soil tested prior to building and partnerships with a local non-profit organization are preferred. Resources in Houston are available for these projects. Urban Harvest ([www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)) has a long commitment to such projects, and the various active religious and non-profit groups in the area are a great source of leadership for these gardens. HPARD also has programs that support the establishment and ongoing programming for community gardens.

### LEGEND

- 1** Wiley Park Community Garden  
Leadership: HPARD or New Zion Temple
- 2** West Webster Community Garden  
Leadership: HPARD, private HOA, or citizen's group
- 3** Mount Carmel Community Garden  
Leadership: Yates Museum, HPARD, Misc. Church
- 4** Rose of Sharon Community Garden  
Leadership: Rose of Sharon Church, private HOA
- 5** Mount Horeb Community Garden  
Leadership: Mount Horeb Church
- 6** St. James Community Garden  
Leadership: Yates Museum, St. James Church
- 7** Macedonia Community Garden  
Leadership: Macedonia Missionary Baptist
- Land owned by Non-Profit
- Land owned by City
- Land owned by private entity
- Land owned by Hou-Tex Redevelopment (Houston Housing Finance Corp.)

The Community Garden Map shows the distribution of possible community gardens and walking radius of two to three minutes.



## HISD Synergistic Opportunities

The current site of the Gregory Lincoln Education Center and the future Carnegie Vanguard School represents one of the largest contiguous parcels in the area. In addition to their academic benefits, these facilities have many recreational facilities that could be made available to Fourth Ward residents. There are operational and safety concerns involved with mixing students and the public, and it is not recommended that any of these facilities are open to the general public during school hours, with the possible exception of the fitness trail. However, weekend and evening hours could provide community members with a wonderful range of recreation opportunities for all ages.

Another challenge posed by this facility is its size and contiguous nature. It severely cuts residents off from neighborhoods and amenities to the west. A series of greenways through the site would provide much needed connectivity and recreational opportunity. It would be ideal if at least one of these greenways was open to the public during regular school hours.



Existing Multi-Use Field: This area should be available to the neighborhood for pick-up sports games and passive recreation. Dogs should be discouraged from using this area.

Greenway 1: This Greenway could be defined by a low fence on the southern edge and provide a border for the multi-use field, along with weekend access for pedestrians. Greenways should be well shaded during the day, and adequate lighting during the evenings.

Existing Playground: The community would see some benefit from access to this playground, but the adjacent and newly remodeled play area at Wiley Park adequately serves the area. Playgrounds have the most operational and safety concerns when mixing in public users.

Old Brick Street: These materials should either be used in the reconstruction of Andrews and Wilson Streets, or enhanced as part of the playground in some way.

Greenway 2: This greenway could remain open during school hours due to the open nature of the area and driveway circulation. Greenways should be well shaded during the day, and have adequate lighting during the evenings.

Greenway 3: This Greenway could be defined by a low fence on the northern edge and provide a border for the recreation field, along with weekend access for pedestrians. Greenways should be well shaded during the day, and adequate lighting during the evenings.

Proposed Recreation Field: This field may be able to provide a facility for softball/baseball pick-up games if it is re-oriented. Doing this may provide greater flexibility in the relocation of San Felipe Park.

Proposed Bus Lane: This bus lane should be accommodated within the right-of-way, and should be available to the neighborhood for weekend parking. Land on HISD property that can be re-allocated due to shifting the bus lane should be used for water quality and buffering purposes.

Fitness Trail: This is a key component to the plan. Providing a loop trail for residents would create convenient recreational opportunities that do not currently exist. This trail could be used in conjunction with youth programs, sports training, and general wellness activity.



Standard striped or paver crosswalks may also include lighted signals if they occur at a stop light.



Pedestrian yield zones include flashing lights, pavement striping of some kind, and signage. Lights are only active when pedestrians are in the area.



A fully-protected pedestrian crossing is ideal for high-traffic areas with regular pedestrian activity. Stop lights and signage increase visibility. Pedestrian crossings to the Bayou and downtown should be studied at the time of TxDot improvements to IH 45.

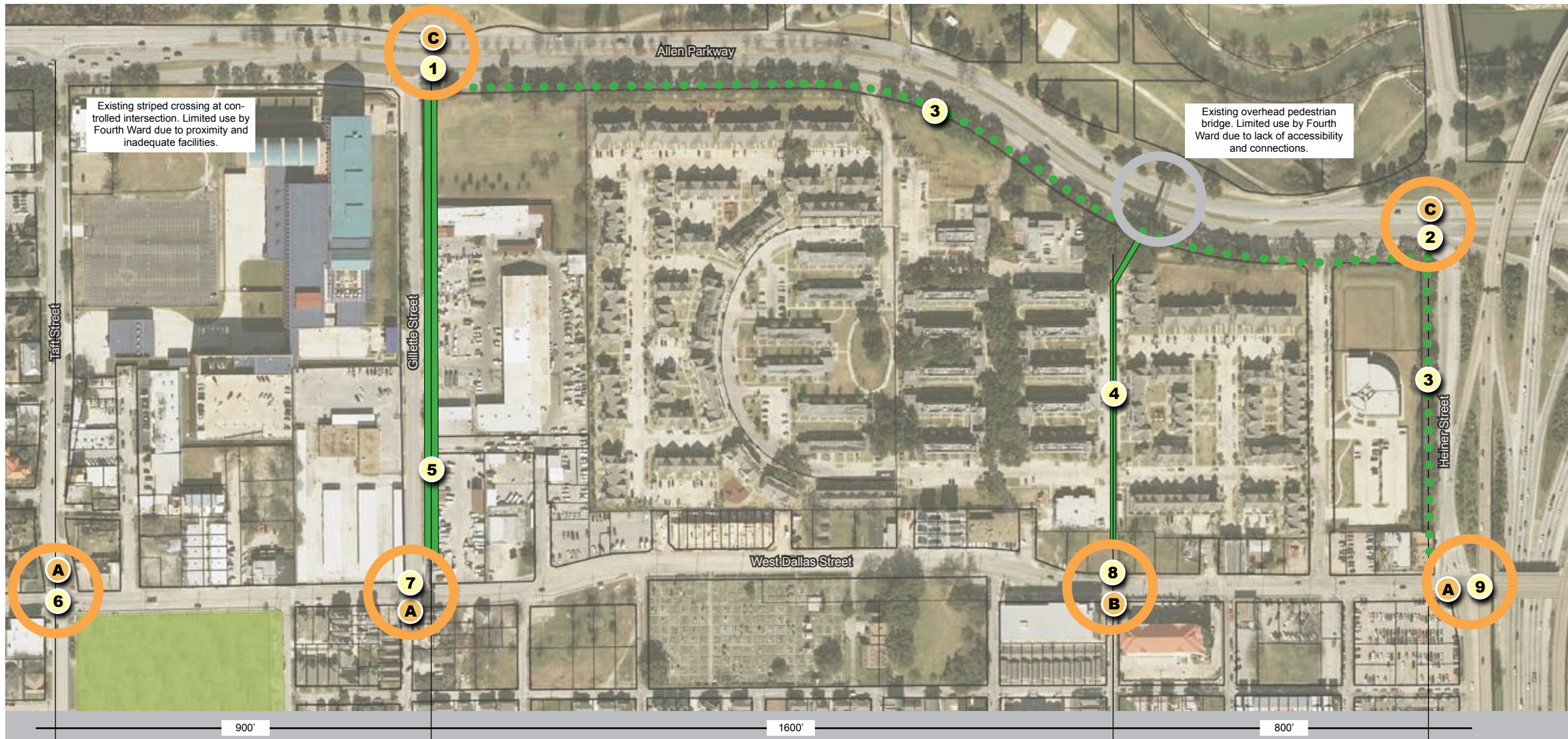
## Connecting to Buffalo Bayou

This is one of the most heavily studied issues facing the Fourth Ward and surrounding areas. Buffalo Bayou has grown into a regional amenity that serves a huge range of recreational needs and provides connectivity to those that can access it. Connecting residents to such a significant recreational opportunity is a major goal of this Open Space Master Plan.

Several methods have been considered; from below-grade crossings and bridges, to at-grade crosswalks. There is no full consensus to what is best, but given the limited funding available, it is recommended that several at-grade facilities be provided to supplement the pedestrian bridge at Allen Parkway Village.

Connectivity is paramount for this task. Getting across Allen Parkway is not the only barrier for users, as West Dallas, the Gillette Tract, and Allen Parkway Village also provide barriers. More crossings on West Dallas need to be implemented, as well as greenways that cross the Gillette Tract and Allen Parkway Village. Not all of these at-grade crossing locations have traffic control lights, so more advanced pedestrian signaling systems need to be considered.

The crossing at Allen Parkway and Heiner Street should be looked at as part of any Allen Parkway re-alignment work, or IH-45 on-ramp work. This work should only occur with such reconstruction.



### LEGEND

- 1 Buffalo Bayou Crossing A
- 2 Buffalo Bayou Crossing B
- 3 Allen Parkway Trail
- 4 Allen Parkway Village Greenway
- 5 Gillette Street Greenway
- 6 West Dallas Crossing at Taft Street
- 7 West Dallas Crossing at Gillette Street
- 8 West Dallas Crossing at Buckner Street
- 9 Downtown Connection

The study area is bound by Allen Parkway on its entire northern edge. This map shows possible crossing locations and recommended methods.







GILLETTE TRACT

## Existing Overall Conditions

The Gillette Tract is currently owned by the City of Houston, and lies approximately 1/2 mile from the central business district. The 11 acre tract that currently serves as a maintenance and storage facility for City vehicles. The San Felipe Park (owned by Houston Parks and Recreation Department) is situated to the north of the site, and terminates at Allen Parkway. In past decades, significant amounts of contaminated fill were used to fill a tributary bayou that ran across the site. This contamination has resulted in the recent closure of San Felipe Park to public use, and plans for a large-scale remediation project.

Community feedback has underscored the importance of San Felipe Park as a recreational necessity and general hub for the community. This process will look at a range of redevelopment approaches for the Gillette Tract, some of which may shift the actual location of the park into other areas of the site or beyond. It is important to understand that despite its exact location or configuration, the San Felipe Park plays an important role within the area and it should always be a part of the community.

As part of this Livable Centers study, the approach for the Gillette Tract will include efforts to integrate various land uses, create community relevance, provide local and destination-based services, integrate multi-modal transportation elements, re-connect the site with its surrounding uses, improve environmental conditions, provide space for recreation, and create a catalyst for a stronger economic base within the neighborhood and TIRZ district.

This project presents a unique set of opportunities and challenges:

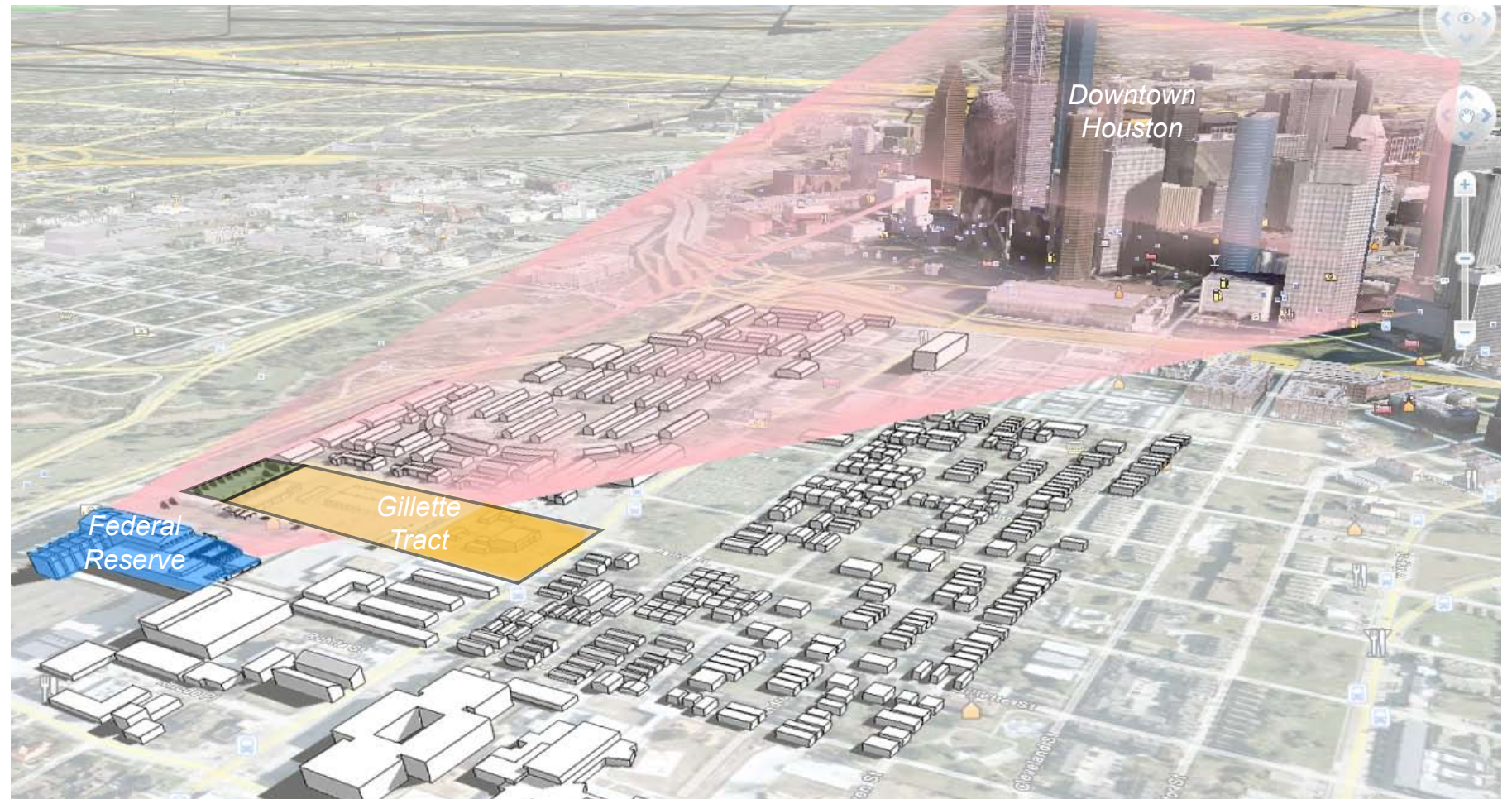
### Opportunities

- This site, along with other vacant lots adjacent to the Gillette Tract, is suited for relatively high density uses that work toward creating a truly “Livable Center”
- Access from Allen Parkway presents an opportunity to create a gateway for the existing neighborhood
- Proximity to Allen Parkway leads to development opportunities that would not be available along other major corridors in the study area
- The south end of the Gillette Tract at the intersection of Gillette and West Dallas presents an opportunity for much-needed “neighborhood center”

- Redevelopment could be used to directly connect the neighborhood to Buffalo Bayou
- New connections could be made to Allen Parkway Village in an effort to integrate with the rest of the area
- Open space could be utilized for improvement to water quality before it reaches Buffalo Bayou
- Integration of affordable housing could be economically feasible due to higher densities

### Challenges

- Development agreements in place with Federal Reserve could limit heights and density
- High cost of remediation for environmental cleanup of existing subsurface fill material could affect financial feasibility
- Lack of cooperation from Allen Parkway Village could hinder the ability of the project to truly connect with its neighbors
- Increased density will impact traffic volumes and require costly infrastructure upgrades
- The development market may not support the intensity and types within a reasonable time frame
- San Felipe Park is currently situated on the most valuable portion of the property



This view is an approximation of the view protections that were negotiated with the Federal Reserve.



Context map

LEGEND

- City Property
- Underutilized or Vacant Lands
- San Felipe Park

The Context Map shows the Gillette Tract in the context of the study area, and highlights underutilized and park land around it.



## Site Context

The Gillette Tract is an 11 acre area located east of the Federal Reserve property, which currently houses one of the City of Houston's Public works facilities. The existing land use is similar to a light industrial use by conventional zoning standards. Primary existing uses include City-owned vehicle maintenance, fueling, and storage (1,2). There is heavily controlled access to the site, with primary entry/exit points along West Dallas and Gillette Street (3).

\*North of the Gillette Tract is the San Felipe Park (4), which is currently the focus of a remediation and reconstruction project that would include neighborhood amenities and a baseball diamond. Historically, this park was used by Fourth Ward residents and included similar uses to what is currently proposed. During the last 10 years, several environmental assessments have led to the discovery of soil contamination which have prompted the City to close the park. It is currently off-limits.

Several acres of vacant or under utilized lands surround the Gillette Tract (5,6). The two blocks south of the site, between Gillette Street and Andrews Street, have very limited amounts of development. An existing covered parking area is at the northwest corner of the West Dallas/Gillette Street intersection, and has no current use or activity. Several properties to the west of this corner are also under utilized or vacant.

A diverse range of active uses surrounds the site. These include affordable housing, educational facilities, and the Federal Reserve. The east edge of the Gillette Tract is formed by the Allen Parkway Village (8), which is a historic low income housing community that has served several different types of residents through the years. This community is very private, and significantly detached from adjacent uses by fences or buffering uses, such as the Gillette Tract.

The Federal Reserve (9) is the only active use on the west side of the site, and are directly across Gillette Street. This is a high security campus that includes a large office/conference center, parking garage, and several smaller support buildings. The City agreed to arrange development restrictions prior to the construction of this facility, many of which have a direct impact on the development potential of the site. These mostly affect adjacent use types and building heights.

The Federal Reserve has a vehicular access point on Gillette Street, across from San Felipe Park. This entry point is primarily used for employee access to parking. The facade of the building along Gillette is large, and includes a gallery for views toward the downtown skyline. This facility accommodates a significant amount of tourist and visitor activity during the week, which requires bus cueing along Gillette Street. The main point for pedestrian access is on the Allen Parkway facade.

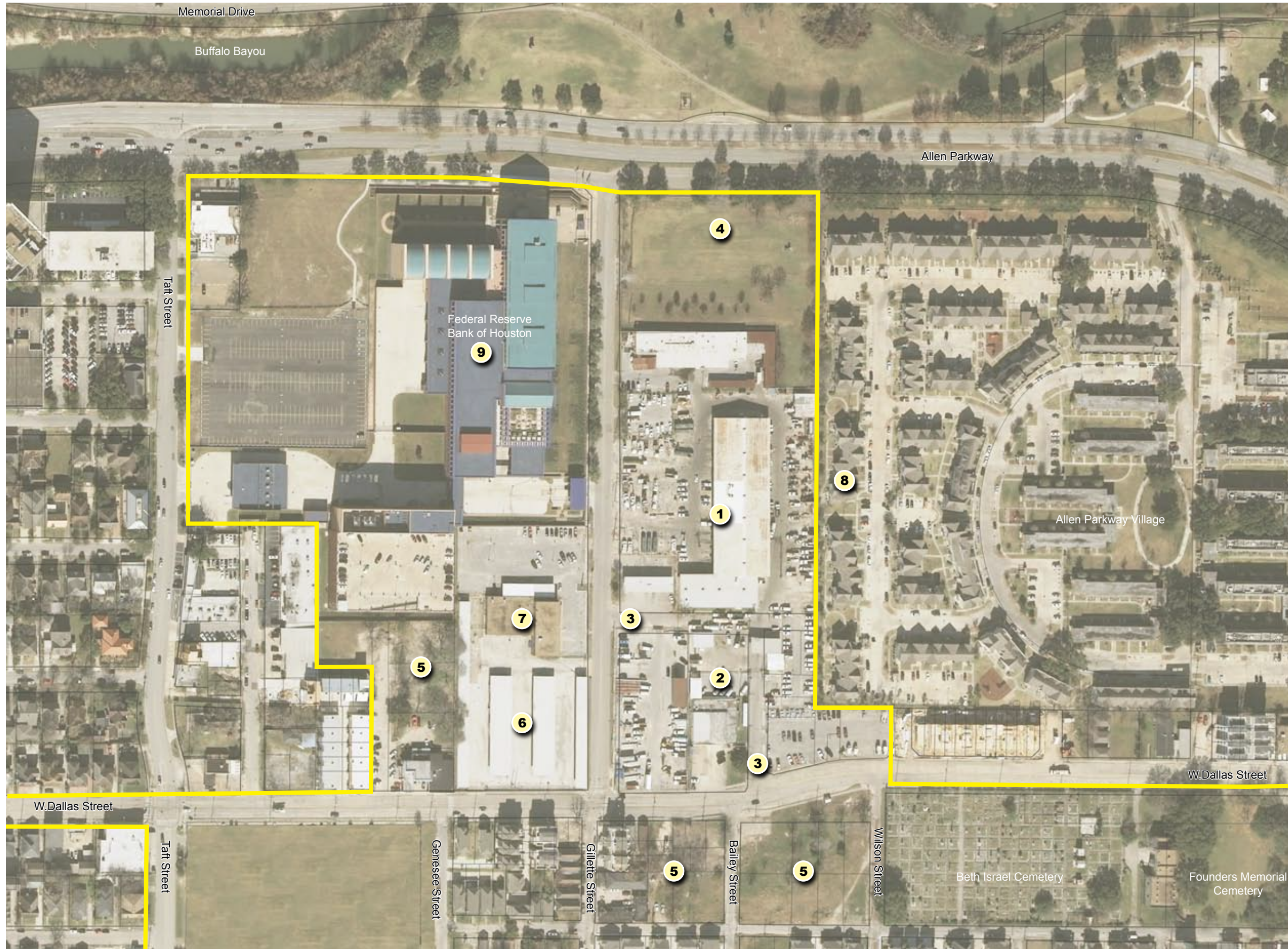
\*The San Felipe Park was de-listed from the property roles of HPARC by City Council. This was done after a public hearing at 9:00a.m., Wednesday, September 1, 2010. This plan reflects the conditions and assumptions regarding the continued use of the property as parkland during the design process.



The view looking northeast toward Allen Parkway from the core of the Fourth Ward. The intent is to give a general idea of building masses that exist today.



The view looking northwest toward Allen Parkway.



## Site Map

### LEGEND

- 1 Gillette Warehouse Area
- 2 Gillette Parking and Staging Areas
- 3 Existing Gillette Entry/Exit Points
- 4 \*San Felipe Park
- 5 Adjacent Vacant Lands
- 6 Existing Covered Parking Area
- 7 Former Gateway Academy site
- 8 Allen Parkway Village
- 9 Federal Reserve of Houston

*The Site Map highlights features around and within the Gillette Tract. The view corridor shown is conceptual, but gives an idea of scope.*



## Site Conditions

Photo 01 shows the empty covered parking area at the corner of West Dallas and Gillette Street. Students at the Gateway Academy use portions of this area for outdoor recreation.

Photo 02 is a view looking north on Gillette Street. The current COH facility is fenced and includes surface parking for City vehicles.

Photo 03 is a view of vacant lands across West Dallas. Both blocks are mostly clear of structures and debris.

Photo 04 is taken from the observation gallery within the Federal Reserve building. This view is currently protected in a development agreement with the City.

Photo 05 is a view looking toward Allen Parkway Village, near the San Felipe Park. The frontage area includes many large trees and passive walking areas.

Photo 06 is a view on Gillette Street looking south toward the Fourth Ward neighborhood. It is taken from one of the entry/exit points utilized by the existing facility.

Photo 07 is of the facility that formerly housed the Gateway Academy.

Photo 08 shows a structure within the Gillette property. Most structures are poor quality and in poor conditions.



Photo 01



Photo 02



Photo 03



Photo 04



Photo 05



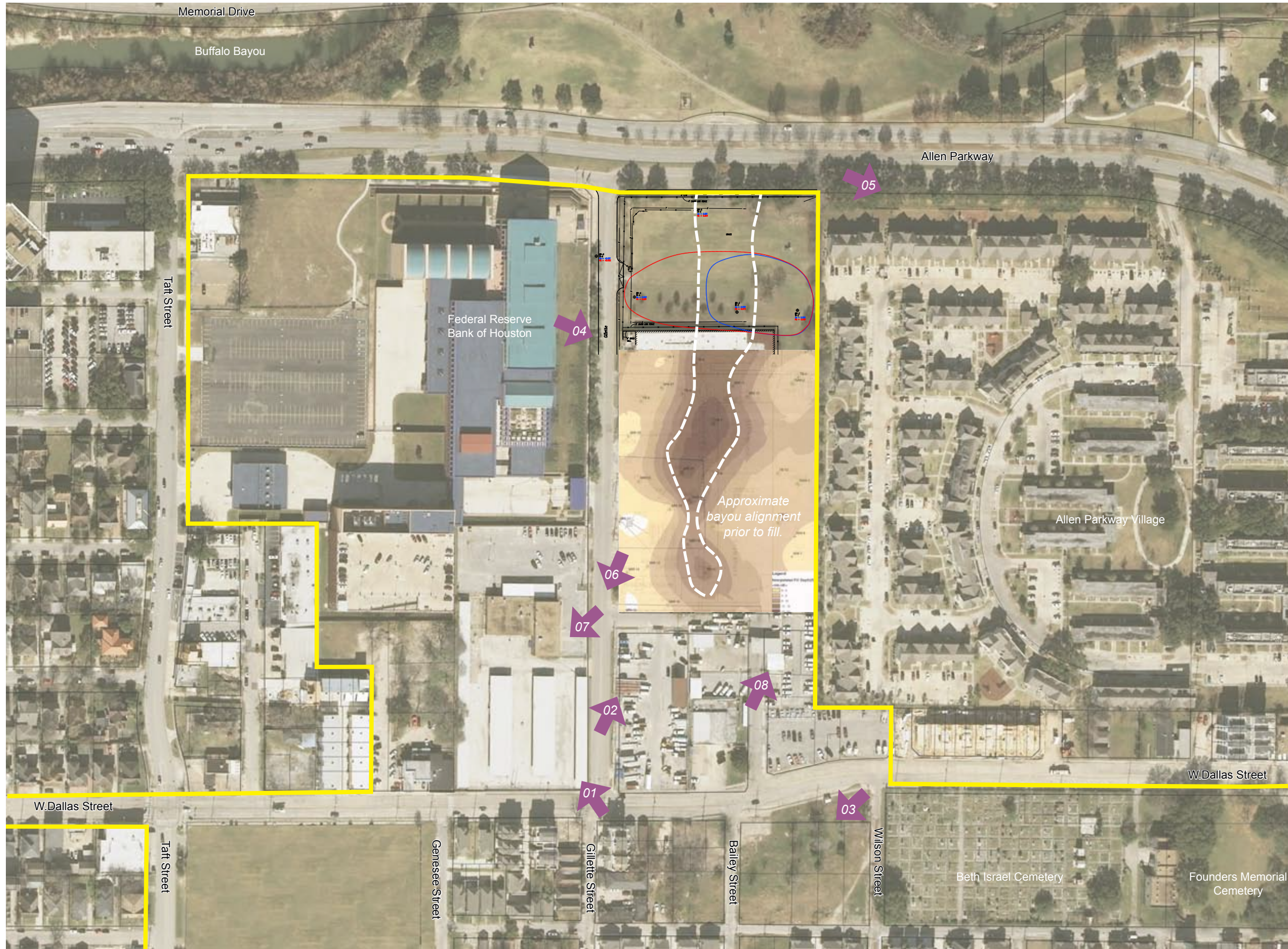
Photo 06



Photo 07



Photo 08



Environmental Site Assessment:

Location of Hazardous Fill

Conclusions from the Terracon geotechnical report are as follows:

- Heavy metals detected in fill exceed action level and require remediation.
- The 64,000 cubic yards of fill would all need to be removed and replaced, at an estimated cost of \$2,256,000.
- Unless geotechnical design requires fill replacement, a protective cap is recommended by Terracon as a lower cost method.
- No further action is required regarding groundwater issues.

As a part of the Gillette Tract redevelopment, remediation would offer a clean slate for a higher density development, residential uses, and recreational opportunities. In general, the costs associated with remediation will make lower density development infeasible.

Items to note:

- Hazardous fill exists on entire site.
- Site assessment estimates cost of replacing fill at \$2.2 million.
- Hazardous fill may be capped for low-rise construction.
- Fill will need to be replaced for mid or high rise construction.

Different studies of fill material and soil toxins were done for the Gillette Tract and San Felipe Park. This map shows a gradient zone representing fill depth in the area, which ranges from 1' to 24'. The red and blue shapes over San Felipe Park show limits of metals contamination (i.e. Lead, Arsenic, etc.)

← # Arrow indicates orientation of photo and photo number as indicated on bottom left of image



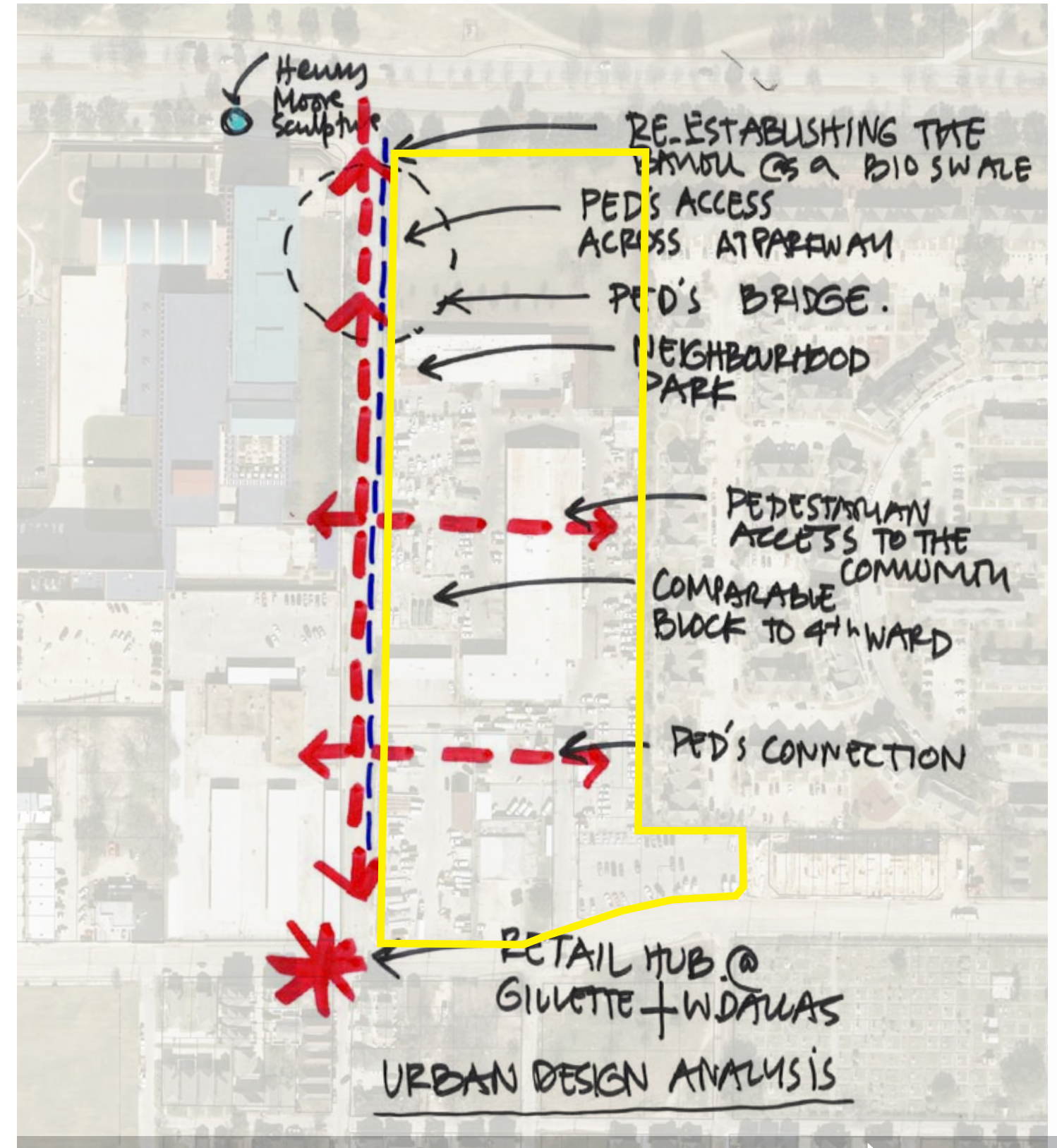
## Development of Alternatives

The team utilized several “urban design objectives” as guidelines for the redevelopment of the Gillette Tract. These objectives included items that address connectivity, community relevance, water quality, and scale.

### Urban Design objectives:

- Divide the Gillette Super block to a comparable neighborhood block
- Reconnect the existing neighborhood streets in this part of the study area
- Establish a pedestrian link between the existing neighborhood and Allen Parkway Village
- Re-establish an open-water bayou along Gillette to acknowledge the historic hydrology of this site and manage water quality from the site
- Create and establish a park area within the Gillette Tract, either the \*San Felipe park or explore different location for the park to serve the neighborhood more effectively by being located closer to the existing neighborhood
- Study a mix of uses for the blocks within the Gillette Tract
- Develop Gillette and West Dallas intersection as a neighborhood “center” with a mixture of retail, housing, office uses, and community uses
- Expand the study area beyond the site limits to adjacent under-utilized and vacant parcels
- Re-configure the Gillette Street and West Dallas intersection to allow for smooth traffic flow and alignment of the roadways
- Explore the possibility of creating a pedestrian bridge over Allen Parkway
- Create pedestrian links between the Gillette Tract and adjacent community to integrate the neighborhood

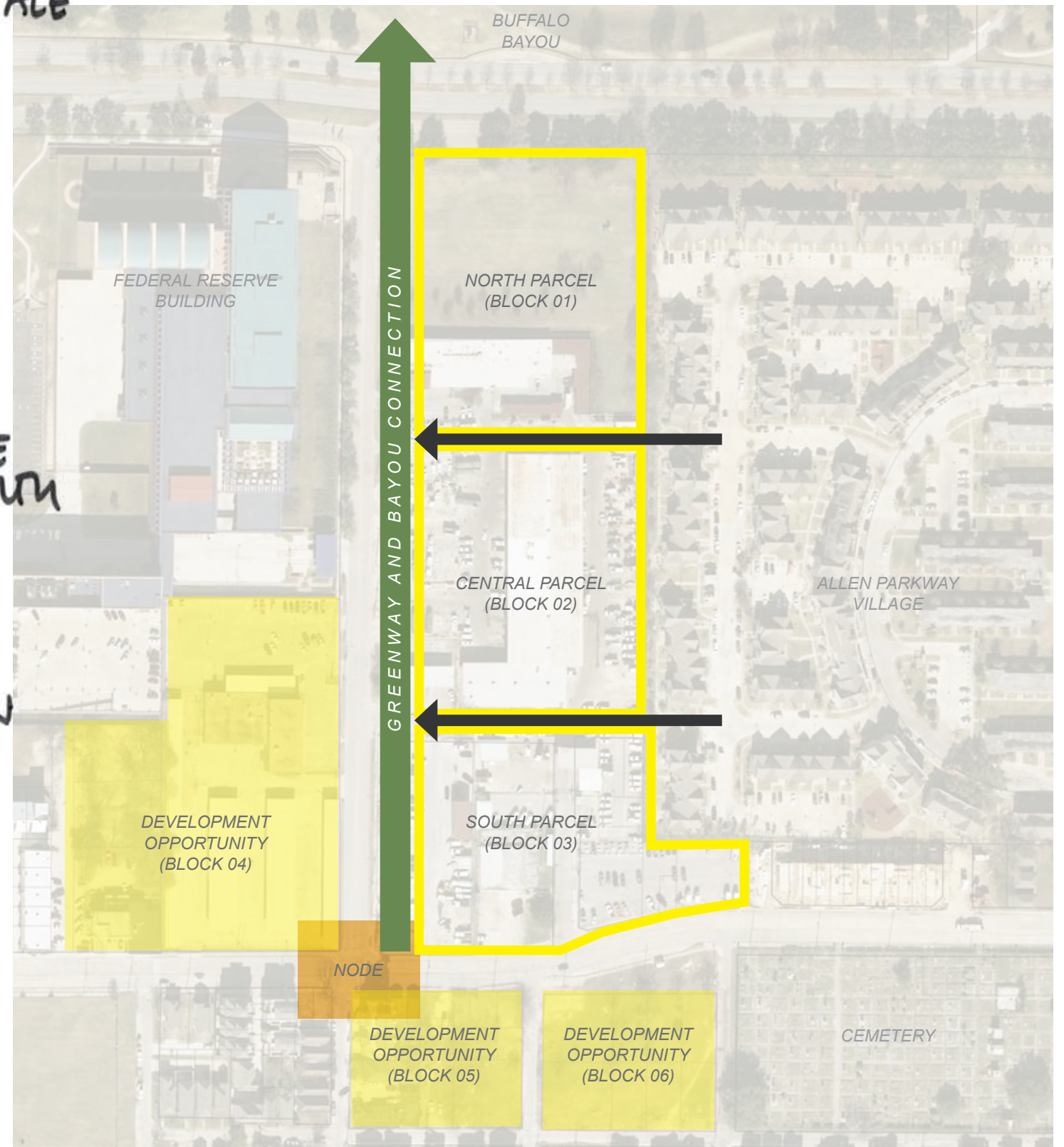
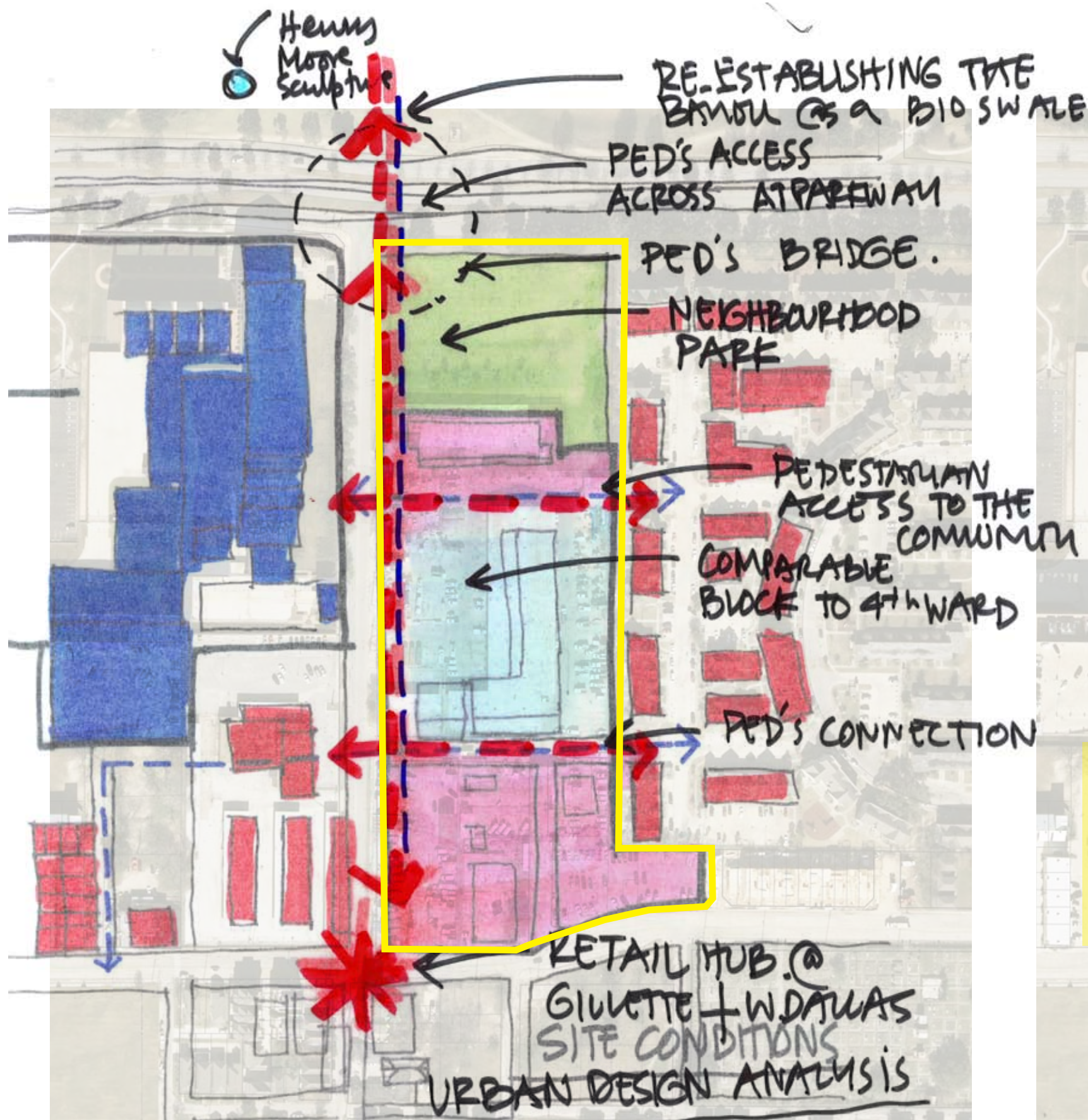
\*The San Felipe Park was de-listed from the property roles of HPARD by City Council. This was done after a public hearing at 9:00a.m., Wednesday, September 1, 2010. This plan reflects the conditions and assumptions regarding the continued use of the property as parkland during the design process.



1

During the charrette, the team developed and understanding of City goals, community goals, and site conditions and outlined these key elements as critical success factors in proposed plans.





2

Each development area has different existing uses, levels of contaminations, visibility from major roadways, and constraints created by the Federal Reserve.

3

The end result of the urban design analysis yielded three distinct development areas, all of which have unique challenges and opportunities.

4

Development of Alternatives

## Alternative A

This option incorporates existing land uses into a proposed redevelopment by maintaining parkland, buffers, and providing connections to adjacent development. The North Parcel will maintain the \*San Felipe Park and accommodate a narrow section of residential development, the Central Parcel will include a residential use, and the South Parcel will form a mixed use neighborhood center with retail and residential uses. All of these uses will be connected by a narrow greenway that extends from the West Dallas node to Buffalo Bayou. Retail areas might include convenience goods, neighborhood retail, full-service banks, neighborhood offices, and restaurants.

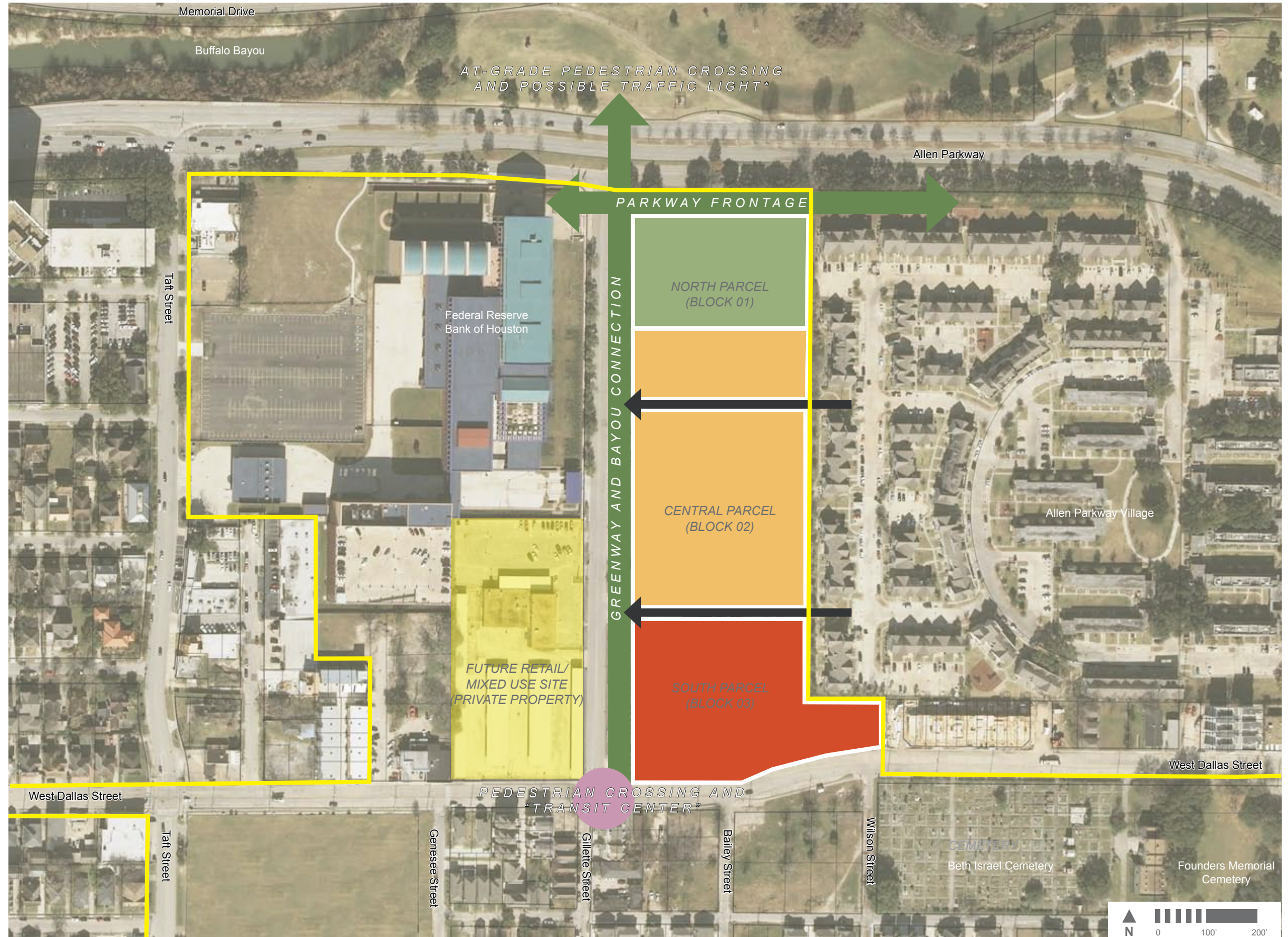
### Opportunities

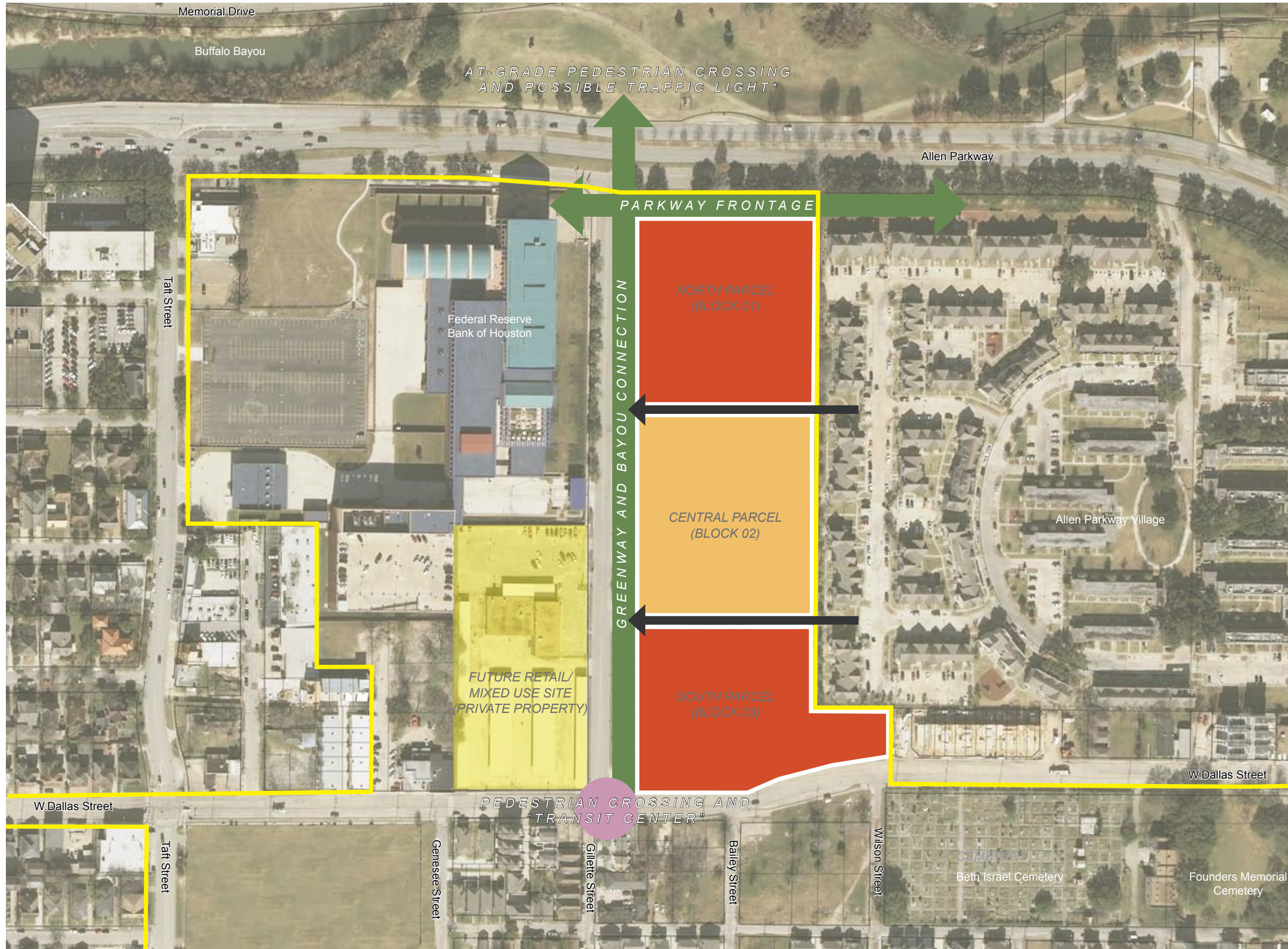
- Park remains in original location and can start construction under current timelines, and with limited modification
- Rental housing, of the quality found in Midtown, brings critical mass or residents to the north side of the neighborhood which can help support small scale retail and restaurants at a proposed center
- Marketability of rental housing on Block 02 will benefit from adjacency to park.
- The open park frontage allows a rental complex to benefit from high visibility from Allen Parkway
- High density rental housing delivers highest value to land while delivering product affordable to a large market base
- Neighborhood retail at Gillette and West Dallas will support a walkable community (project 1)
- This option opens new connections to the Allen Parkway Village development and encourages connectivity (project 32)
- The proposed greenway connects the neighborhood to Buffalo Bayou (project 23)

### Constraints

- \*Park is located on highest value property which would support other uses (offices) that would not be supportable on other parts of the Gillette property
- It would be financially difficult to redevelop in this format due to proposed densities, land uses, and environmental clean-up costs

\*The San Felipe Park was de-listed from the property roles of HPARD by City Council. This was done after a public hearing at 9:00a.m., Wednesday, September 1, 2010. This plan reflects the conditions and assumptions regarding the continued use of the property as parkland during the design process.





## Alternative B

Alternative B looks at a medium density development scheme that maximizes the potential value of the Gillette site. It maintains a wide setback along Allen Parkway, which follows the alignment of the Federal Reserve and Allen Parkway Village setbacks. If the City chooses this approach, the relocation of \*San Felipe Park onto parcels elsewhere in the Fourth Ward neighborhood would need to be considered. The North Parcel will include a mix of residential and office uses, the Central Parcel will include a residential use, and the South Parcel will form a mixed use neighborhood center with retail and residential uses. Some of these retail areas might include convenience goods, neighborhood retail, insurance offices, full-service banks, neighborhood offices, and restaurants.

### Opportunities

- Frontage on Allen Parkway offers a good opportunity for a mixed use. This end of the parcel might be suitable for an office use.
- Parcel 3 helps create a neighborhood center as indicated on the Proposed Centers Map.
- Street-level retail and activity enhances pedestrian experience. (project 1)
- Parcel 3 will trigger development along adjacent parcels to eventually create a neighborhood retail area.
- The proposed greenway creates a pedestrian link from Allen Parkway to the existing 4th ward neighborhood. (project 23)
- Shared parking on two different parcels (1.a and 3) reduces the area required for parking.
- Creates pedestrian connections with Allen Parkway Village and reintegrates neighborhood streets. (project 32)

### Constraints

- \*The relocation of San Felipe Park is not ideal from a community standpoint.
- \*Limited land for proposed San Felipe Park.
- In the initial years of this plan, the neighborhood retail on parcel 3 will serve the immediate needs of this area ; however as the neighborhood gets established it would be good to have retail on both sides of West Dallas and Gillette streets.

\*Traffic light might be required once final densities are in place.

\*Refer to page right for San Felipe Park information.



## Gillette Street Greenway

Greenways are usually linear park spaces that include numerous feature and program opportunities along a central spine or pathway. This type of park is a perfect tool for connecting the community to Allen Parkway and destinations beyond via Buffalo Bayou. In this case, the greenway could be a fairly simple space that provides many uses that would be valuable to current users and future residents.

### Greenway objectives:

- Create a destination for the community and future residents
- Provide an attractive feature that improved connections and relationships to Allen Parkway Village
- Provide a direct connection to Buffalo Bayou for residents within the Fourth Ward
- Create a sustainable ecosystem that works to improve stormwater quality flowing out of adjacent watersheds
- Provide a diverse environment that provides a restful retreat for both people and wildlife
- Provision of shade is a critical success factor
- Offer additional buffering of new development from Gillette Street will make for a more comfortable environment for both visitors and residents
- Provide seating and human-scaled elements that make the space interactive and comfortable
- Create a secure building setback for development facing the Federal Reserve Building
- A low impact development (LID) alternative to the 36" storm pipe that would be required without the greenway drainage feature



*Right; Images of linear parks and greenways in Portland show the general dynamics of a greenway in an urban environment*

*Far right; Rendering of greenway concept with proposed redevelopment looking north along Gillette Street toward Allen Parkway.*





CLOSE THE GAP

## Market Opportunity Analysis

The project team conducted a market opportunity analysis to identify residential and commercial development opportunities in the Fourth Ward over the next 5-10 years. First, an overall assessment of the market was conducted to determine the overall health of the market, general trends occurring in the neighborhood, and potential gaps in supply. In addition, the team modeled several growth scenarios to determine the opportunity for new development across a variety of land uses including for-sale and for-rent residential, retail, and office. Projections include supportable units and square footage by land use as well as recommended pricing and positioning of each land use and product type.

## Demographic Snapshot

The 2009 population estimate for the Fourth Ward and adjacent areas within the TIRZ is 5,400 (2,403 households). Between 1,000 and 1,100 individuals are expected to be added to the Fourth Ward over the next five years. This represents a household growth rate of nearly 20%. This is nearly double the projected household growth rate projected for the Houston MSA over the same period (11%).

The Fourth Ward is predominantly an area of small non-family households (50% of households are one person, 25% have two people.) with moderate household incomes:

- 40% of households earn less than \$35,000 annually
- 42% of households earn between \$35,000 and \$100,000
- The estimated household median income in 2009 was \$45,892.

Nearly 1/3 of growth in zip codes 77019 & 77006 occurred in the Fourth Ward area from 2000-2009; a similar trend is expected during the next 5 years.

## Residential Market Conditions

### Overview

The Fourth Ward contains a mix of residential housing types including single-family homes and multi-family products ranging from homes built over 50 years ago until recent built homes in 2009.

- 30% of all units are in single-family detached dwellings and 30% of all units are in multi-family structures with greater than 50 units.
- 56% of all units were built between 1999 and 2009
- 30% of all units were built over 50 years ago (average in MSA is 13%)

The majority of residential units in the Fourth Ward are renter household. In 2009, 87% of households were renters. This is markedly higher than Houston MSA, which has an average of 37%.

### For-Sale Residential

For-sale product in the Fourth Ward is largely affordable. One-third of owner-occupied homes are valued below \$200,000. Nearly another third is valued between \$200,000 and \$300,000.

New residential construction activity in the Fourth Ward's Primary Market Area (roughly the boundaries of the 77019 and 77006 zip codes) can be characterized as infill attached. This is primarily in the form of new townhome and condo development. Typical projects tend to be less than 20 units each.

- New construction pricing varies from \$150 to \$200 per square foot in general at projects throughout the PMA.
- New construction within the boundaries of the Fourth Ward tends to be at a price discount to the surrounding areas of the PMA. Pricing in the Fourth Ward for new attached construction tends to be in the range of \$125 to \$150 per square foot.
- Absolute pricing for new attached construction in the Fourth Ward area is clustered mainly in the \$300,000s.

Newly constructed single-family detached homes are also prevalent in both the Fourth Ward and the wider PMA. These tend to be smaller lot "patio homes" with absolute prices ranging mostly from \$450,000 to \$650,000. New construction activity in the Fourth Ward is focused along West Dallas and also at infill location in the western portion of the area closer to Montrose Blvd.

### For-Rent Residential

Higher quality newer rental product is not widely found within the boundaries of the Fourth Ward. However, there are many properties in this category in both

Montrose, Midtown, and along the Washington Avenue corridor.

- These communities tend to be well-amenitized three to four story stick built structures.
- They offer mainly smaller 1BR floorplans (under 800 square feet) and 2BR units (1,000 to 1,200 square feet).
- Overall the average rent per square foot at these properties is close to \$1.50. This varies based on location and construction type.
- Absolute base rent for 1BR units range from \$900 to \$1,400. For 2BR units, the range is \$1,400 to \$2,000.

The Montrose-River Oaks apartment submarket is currently experiencing increased vacancy rates and downward price pressure. This is occurring due to a "double whammy" of high construction levels and downward macroeconomic trends. The period from 2007 to 2009 saw a glut of new product delivered to the area's apartment market. The total for these three years was over 4,500 new units in this submarket alone. For comparison, during the three years proceeding this period there were 2,940 units delivered. This spike was particularly pronounced in the fourth quarter of 2009, when nearly 1,100 new units were delivered. This was the highest quarterly delivery rate in over five years.

A spate of new construction combined with the slowing of job growth in the Houston MSA led to an increase in vacancy rates and downward pressure on rents in the submarket.

- After reaching a peak in 1Q 2009, average asking rents have since fallen over 3%.
- Vacancy rates have been increasing since 2Q 2009, as of the fourth quarter of 2009, the average vacancy in the submarket was 10.9%.
- The Montrose/River Oaks submarket has the largest construction pipeline of any submarket in Houston with 2,220 units expected to deliver in 2010.

While these numbers appear to raise "red flags" about the area's apartment market, they should be seen within the context of the greater Houston market.

- Vacancy has been increasing in the MSA overall. It now stands at 12.7% on average, with many submarkets much higher (e.g. the nearby Heights submarket has a vacancy rate of 19.7%).

- Vacancy is expected to start to decline in 2010, however this reversal will be slower to take place in submarkets with a large number of new and planned units, such as Montrose/River Oaks.
- There has been downward pressure on asking rents across the board in Houston. They have decreased by between 5.0 and 5.5% over the past twelve months. In 2010, this downward pressure on rents is expected to continue, but at a slower rate. Asking rents are projected to decrease by 1.2% in 2010.

- The renewed strength in the rental market is largely driven by a return to employment growth that is expected in Houston. After a relatively short recessionary period in the area, employers in Houston will expand payrolls by 2.1 percent in 2010, adding 54,000 positions. In 2009, 98,600 jobs were eliminated.

	Fourth Ward	Zip Codes 77019, 77006	Houston Metro Area
# Households (2000/2009/2014)	1,548 / 2,403 / 2,872	19,082 / 21,742 / 23,558	1.65M / 2.01M / 2.2M
Median Income	\$45,892	\$61,031	\$54,987
% Renter	87%	66%	37%
% 1 & 2 Person Households	75%	84%	51%
% Family Households	36%	31%	72%
Median Age	32	39	33.5

Demographic snapshot

Project Name	Area	Avg. Unit Price	Avg. Unit SF	Avg. Price/SF
Rise Lofts	Midtown	\$289,990	1,941	\$149
Vistas at Midtown	Midtown	\$234,900	1,270	\$185
Ridge 20 Lofts	Washington Ave.	\$259,900	1,629	\$160
West Dallas City Views	Fourth Ward	\$359,000	2,650	\$135
SoWaAve	Washington Ave.	\$251,500	1,587	\$158

Selected for-sale condo / townhome communities

Project Name	Area	Floorplan	Avg. Rent	Avg. SF	Avg. Rent/SF
City Vista	Montrose	1B	\$1,558	969	\$1.62
		2B	\$1,976	1,145	\$1.71
Camden Midtown	Midtown	1B	\$1,156	721	\$1.61
		2B	\$1,685	1,181	\$1.42
The Core	Washington Ave.	1B	\$1,463	928	\$1.61
		2B	\$2,036	1,365	\$1.47
Archstone Memorial Heights	Washington Ave.	1B	\$949	655	\$1.45
		2B	\$1,282	865	\$1.48
Post Midtown Square	Midtown	1B	\$1,210	813	\$1.53
		2B	\$1,590	1,214	\$1.32

Selected rental apartment communities



## Retail Market Conditions

Currently there are a very limited number of retail uses operating in the Fourth Ward. The existing retail spaces are all stand-alone or in small in-line centers; none are within shopping centers.

There are no retail developments proposed at this time. Due to a lack of retail supply, residents' retail expenditures are being made outside of the local area. This area includes the Fourth Ward as well as portions of Montrose, Midtown, and River Oaks. The trade area today has 646 retail businesses. Of these, 212 are located in shopping centers that total almost 700,000 square feet. All of the centers are over ten years old.

Area benefits from highly visible and well-traveled thoroughfares which traverse the neighborhood; specifically West Dallas, West Gray, and Allen Parkway. This presents a strong location for future retail development. Rental rates for the best executed and most visible retail space in the trade area are between \$20 and \$25 per square foot.

A large portion of these expenditures are being made in the local trade area (roughly defined as the area encompassing the 77019 and 77006 zip codes). The trade area has an oversupply today for some store types while it is underserved in other categories:

- Specialty goods retailers (specifically jewelers, sporting goods, office supplies, etc.) and comparison goods (specifically home centers, general merchandise, department stores, etc.) are currently underserved in the trade area
- There is an abundance (i.e., sales >= household expenditures) of furniture stores, electronics and computer stores, restaurants (full and limited service), grocery stores, specialty food stores, books and music, gifts, florists, and clothing stores, BUT these are located mostly towards the west.

Density of local households provides a strong collective purchasing power that will be desirable to certain types of retailers. Nearby retail uses are clustered in several nearby nodes (see Figure entitled "Proximate Retail Activity Nodes"). The area in and around River Oaks Shopping Center and the intersection of Montrose and Westheimer are the current local destinations for neighborhood-serving retail such as grocery stores and other services. Other smaller-scale nodes

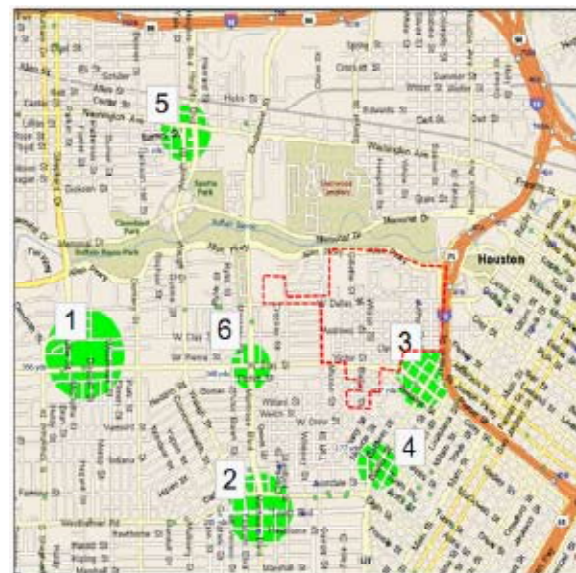
have small-scale eateries and everyday services. There are three of these in very close proximity to the Fourth Ward (i.e., West Gray at Montrose, Midtown Square, and Tuam at Bagby).

Larger-scale retail development in the near-term is likely to cluster in areas with the greatest concentration of new residential construction (such as Midtown and the Washington Avenue corridor). There remains a strong opportunity for smaller-scale neighborhood retail serving the needs of the current and future local population in the Fourth Ward.

In general, retail submarkets in urban infill locations, which include the retail trade area for the Fourth Ward, are expected to see downward rent pressure associated with increased vacancy. Vacancy overall for the MSA, according to Marcus and Millichap, is forecast to peak in the third quarter of 2010 before retreating to 13.7 percent by year end, 40 basis points above the rate at close of 2009.

Rental negotiations taking place in many higher-end submarkets will drag down asking rents to \$15.13 per square foot. This is a year over year decrease of 1.2 percent.

The development pipeline for retail in the MSA will fall to 1.5 million square feet this year, adding only 0.6 percent to stock.



Retail trade area

Retail Submarket	Typical Rent Range (\$/SF/Year)	Description
River Oaks/Kirby	\$25.00 - \$40.00	Higher-end space in regional or local-serving strip centers.
Washington Ave./Heights	\$20.00 - \$30.00	Smaller spaces in unanchored strip centers or stand-alone space. Many spaces are new construction.
Midtown	\$20.00 - \$30.00	Newer spaces in urban formats (either strip centers of street-level below residential). Mix of service, food service, and retail tenants.
Montrose	\$18.00 - \$25.00	Older space in stand-alone or strip center configurations.
Fourth Ward	\$12.50 - \$20.00	Few spaces exist, those that do are older stand-alone spaces or two to three unit in-line strips

Retail submarket snapshot

Map Key	Location	Description	Anchor Tenants
1	West Gray (from S Shepherd to Dunlavy)	Regional and local-serving retail. Includes River Oaks Shopping Center and other local-serving stand-alone and in-line retail businesses.	Kroger Signature, Walgreens, Barnes & Noble, Movie Theater, Marshalls
2	Montrose at Westheimer (and vicinity)	Local-serving node with retail and general services. Currently suffering from high vacancy.	Kroger, Walgreens
3	Midtown Square (West Gray at Baldwin)	Emerging activity node located among new residential development in Midtown. Mostly street-level retail space that is part of mixed-use projects. Tenant mix is local-serving users, particularly many eating and drinking establishments.	NA
4	South Midtown (Tuam at Bagby)	Emerging area for retail (particularly dining and nightlife). Most uses in stand-alone or in-line single-use configurations.	NA
5	Washington Ave at Heights Blvd.	Emerging area with mostly local service-oriented tenants and some bars/restaurants. Likely to continue to evolve given number of new residential projects nearby.	NA
6	West Gray at Montrose	Some local services and limited retail presence. Most spaces are functioning at a sub-standard level.	NA

Proximate retail activity nodes

## Office Market Conditions

The Fourth Ward lies within the Allen Parkway office submarket, however very little multi-tenant (non owner-occupied) office space lies within the boundaries of the Fourth Ward itself. Most of the office product is located further west towards River Oaks.

The Allen Parkway submarket benefits from its location between Houston's two main office centers, the Central Business District (CBD) and the Galleria/West Loop submarket.

A major driver for this market is also its proximity to high-end executive households in River Oaks. Since these individuals tend to be major corporate decision-makers they often like to locate their businesses close to home. The Allen Parkway submarket benefits from this proximity.

Large, Class A buildings are typically found within one block of Allen Parkway given its access and visibility

In the fourth quarter of 2009, this submarket consisted of 3.5m square feet of rentable space. This accounts for 1.2% of the total rentable area in the Houston MSA. For the sake of comparison, the nearby Central Business District (CBD) has total rentable space of 41.7m square feet.

The vacancy rate in Allen Parkway in the fourth quarter of 2009 was 14.0%. This is below the MSA average of 15.9% but higher than the CBD's relatively low 9.8% vacancy.

As with most submarkets in Houston, Allen Parkway experienced negative absorption in 2009. For the fourth quarter, the area gave back 150,000 square feet of space. This is significant considering the smaller relative size of the submarket.

Rents remained among the higher end of Houston submarkets. The average lease rate per square foot per year was \$27.80. Only the CBD had a higher average rental rate (at \$30.27 per square foot).

Rents for more local-serving (quasi-retail) space within the Montrose and Midtown areas typically range from close to \$20.00 for older space to \$25.00 - \$30.00 for higher-end retail space in highly trafficked areas.

Currently there is no new office construction underway in the Allen Parkway submarket.

Overall in the Houston MSA, fundamentals in the retail market will remain challenging but are showing signs of improvement. Metro-wide retail vacancy is expected to climb 90 basis points to 16 percent in 2010. Over the past 10 years, vacancy has averaged 14.7 percent.

As vacancy pushes above the long-term average, concessions will expand. According to Marcus & Millichap Research, asking rents will retreat to \$23.26 per square foot (a year over year decline of 3.4 percent).

The construction pipeline has contracted from recent highs which is good news for the supply-demand balance in the metropolitan area's retail market. Development in 2010 will slow to 1.2 million square feet of competitive space, according to Marcus & Millichap. This represents a modest 0.7% increase in stock.



Allen Parkway Submarket Map (Courtesy of CBRE)

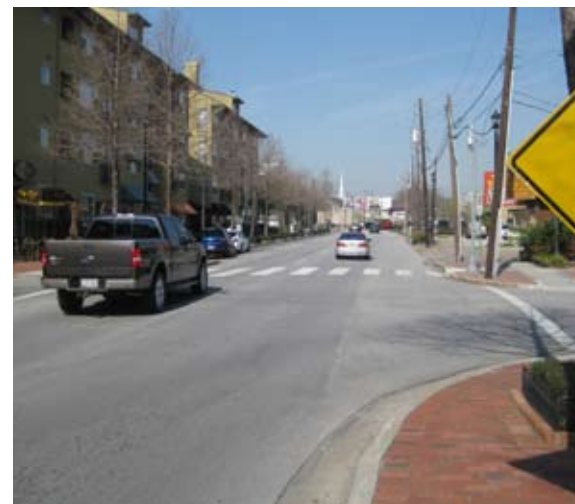


Photo of existing streetscape



Photo of existing streetscape

## Office Demand

Two distinct types of office products are likely to be demanded within the Fourth Ward. The first type, Class A multi-tenant office space, will appeal to corporate users and will likely want to be located with visibility on Allen Parkway (possibly on the Gillette site). The other type of office space will accommodate neighborhood-based locally-serving tenants (including physicians, accountants, financial advisors, etc.)

The strongest demand in the Class A market will be for space priced between \$20 and \$25 per square foot. These tenants will be drawn to the Fourth Ward for its Allen Parkway frontage and proximity to the CBD and Galleria. The Fourth Ward, in particular, could be appealing to some tenants given the likely rent discount relative to these other high priced submarkets nearby.

The Class A space will likely be in a large floorplate mid-rise structure that offers future tenants a large amount of contiguous space. The most logical location for this type of development within the Fourth Ward would be the Gillette Site. Based on historic capture within the Allen Parkway submarket, it is likely that the Fourth Ward could accommodate anywhere from 75,000 to 125,000 square feet of Class A space over the next five years.

Demand for local-serving space will be at lower rental rates (namely \$12.50 to \$17.50 per square foot). Tenants seeking this type of space will be small space users that have professional services aimed at the everyday needs of the local population and business community. These types of tenants typically employ very few people and take space in areas with high visibility and traffic counts (typically neighborhood activity nodes). Retail storefront type locations or second-level space above retail is desirable. Likely tenant roster includes users such as physicians, dentists, health and wellness, banks, financial advisors, lawyers, accountants, etc.

Demand for local-serving professional office space will likely be between 8,000 and 17,000 square feet over the next five years. This type of space is most likely over the near-term to locate on West Gray but may also be attracted to West Dallas given that other types of new development are occurring along this corridor. Its location patterns will be most similar to retail.

## Residential Demand

### For-Sale Residential

The strongest demand for for-sale residential product will be between \$125,000 and \$375,000 per unit. The ability to deliver a product below the \$200,000 price point will drive absorption.

The target market audiences will include young professionals, young families, empty-nesters, and retiree households. Based on likely pricing and target audiences, several for-sale residential product types will likely be embraced by the market in the Fourth Ward. These include urban product types such as: stacked flat condominiums, townhomes, and small single-family detached homes (e.g., “patio homes”).

It is likely that between 140 and 170 new units of for-sale residential can be accommodated in the Fourth Ward over the next five years. These units are likely to be accommodated at both urban infill locations and possibly as part of a larger-scale project.

- Urban infill is most likely to occur closer to West Gray and also toward the western edge of the neighborhood (where this type of development is already occurring).
- Higher density for-sale residential development will be concentrated on West Gray and/or West Dallas

### For-Rent Residential

Demand in the for-rent market will be concentrated in the \$600 to \$1,200 per month rent range. The low end of this range is below what many of the newer, amenitized, and professionally managed projects are currently offering. Rental product in the Fourth Ward will appeal primarily to young professionals and singles along with couples of all ages. The likely format for this use will be garden-style apartments or urban format stacked units (possible above retail).

Likely five-year demand for new for-rent residential units will be between 160 and 190 units. This demand could easily be exhausted through the construction of a medium-sized garden-style project. This type of project would likely locate on either West Gray or West Dallas.

Land Use	Strongest Demand (by Market Rate Price Band)	Target Market Audience(s)	Likely Product Type(s)/Configuration(s)
Residential (For-Sale)	\$125,000 to \$375,000 per unit	Young professionals (singles and couples), young families, empty-nesters, elderly households	Stacked flat condos, townhomes, small lot single-family (“patio homes”)
Residential (For-Rent)	\$600 - \$2,100 per month per unit	Young professionals, singles and couples of all ages	Garden apartments, urban format stacked units (possibly above retail)
Office (Class A)	\$20 - \$25 per SF	Tenants looking for proximity to downtown at a price discount	Mid-Rise Structure with larger floorplates and large amounts of contiguous space
Office (Locally-Serving)	\$12.50 - \$17.50 per SF	Professional tenants serving the everyday needs of the surrounding community	Smaller format professional space, often in retail storefront-type configurations or second-level office space over retail
Retail	\$15.00 - \$22.50 per SF	Neighborhood-serving convenience retail and restaurants	Street-level retail as part of a mixed-use or stand-alone and strip retail

### Summary of Market Demand Assessment

## Retail Demand

The bulk of demand will be for new retail space at rents between \$15.00 and \$22.50 per square foot. This would be a discount to higher profile space located in areas such as Kirby, Westheimer, Museum District, and even Midtown but still a slight premium to the asking rental rates of existing space in the Fourth Ward. These users will be mostly very small in scale and tenants will be a combination of service providers to the local community and small-scale retail and food service outlets.

Five year demand for retail space will be between 30,000 and 50,000 square feet. This is likely to be concentrated in several future activity nodes located throughout the area.

Retail will be in stand-alone configurations, small unanchored strip centers, and possibly street-level retail space as part of a larger mixed-use development (e.g., residential units above retail).

Retail demand is most likely in the near-term to be located along West Gray. This corridor is seeing development pressure emanating from both the west (River Oaks Shopping Center area) and the south-east (Midtown Square and vicinity). West Dallas is a secondary location for retail and it is likely that at least some of the five-year retail demand will choose to locate here, however it will have less appeal to retail users over the near-term.

Land Use	Base Scenario	Upside Scenario
Residential (For-Sale)	140 Units	170 Units
Residential (For-Rent)	160 Units	190 Units
Office (Class A)	75,000 SF	125,000 SF
Office (Locally-Serving)	8,000 SF	17,000 SF
Retail	30,000 SF	50,000 SF

Five-Year Demand Estimate (Fourth Ward). This excludes the Gillette Tract.

## Funding Challenges

Challenges in the Fourth Ward are driven by the market demand, costs of redevelopment, and the current financing environment. Understanding all of these factors is critical in the overall success of proposed projects in the area.

The Gillette Tract presents the opportunity for a large-scale catalytic redevelopment project in the Fourth Ward. Because there are other more desirable neighborhoods within Houston that are still relatively affordable, the density and type of development that the market can support at this location may not justify the costs of redevelopment. The resulting financing gap may require subsidy in order to make the development of this catalytic project feasible. Additionally, the priority for developing and preserving affordable housing within the Fourth Ward and potentially at the Gillette site, will create an additional financing gap as affordable housing units generate less revenues than market-rate units. This section of the report identifies a number of financing sources that provide a subsidy for the development of affordable housing. Finally, much of the feasibility of development at the Gillette site is predicated on the site's attractiveness as an office location. Although the Allen Parkway corridor has been a relatively successful office location in the past, the current oversupply of office in the central business district may inhibit financing of additional office construction along Allen Parkway until supply/demand fundamentals reach equilibrium.

The environmental clean-up anticipated for redeveloping the Gillette site will create additional costs that are currently not factored into the financial analysis. The extent to which these costs widen the financing gap for redeveloping the Gillette site will depend on the City of Houston's strategy for this site. If the developer will be responsible for the environmental clean-up costs, the resulting financing gap may have an impact on the feasibility of the project.

The historic homes and resources within the Fourth Ward provide a sense of character within the community but create limitations for rehabilitation and redevelopment. The cost to preserve or rehabilitate historic structures often exceeds the value of the structure. To create incentives for property owners to make necessary improvements and repairs to historic structures, subsidies or other financing tools will be

required. This section includes some potential sources of funding for historic preservation and rehabilitation to facilitate this component of community revitalization in the Fourth Ward. These homes are not likely to support affordable housing in the future given the high costs of rehabilitation.

The Gillette Tract is one of the only large-scale sites within the Fourth Ward that presents an opportunity for redevelopment. The remaining opportunities include some larger sites along West Gray as well as numerous smaller sites that will require additional costs for assembly given the existence of multiple landowners. The financial yield from development of these smaller sites may not justify the costs of assemblage and development at a smaller scale (in line with current neighborhood densities, building heights, etc), creating a gap between the costs of redevelopment and the financial yield of the project. Non profit, public or other similarly motivated organizations may be best positioned to take on the task of assembling smaller lots throughout the Fourth Ward and redeveloping those sites (after assemblage) to take advantage of some economies of scale. The redevelopment of vacant parcels may also present the best opportunities to create affordable home ownership and/or rentals.

Larger vacant or underutilized sites in the Fourth Ward, located primarily along the West Gray corridor, also present opportunities for redevelopment, though the current and near-term market environments allow for product types and densities that do not justify the current high asking prices for the land. For example, multi-family residential may be a strong market opportunity along West Gray (with retail below), but an unsubsidized project would require rents and densities well above what the market will bear at this location given the current high asking price for the land (ranging from \$45-\$70/SF).

The current capital markets create additional financing gaps for projects in the Fourth Ward that didn't exist several years ago. The current constraints for obtaining financing and changes in loan to value restrictions will limit the amount of financing available for a project, even if the project can support additional financing. This creates a gap that must be filled by developer equity or other alternative financing sources. Developer expectations for return on investment will limit the amount of additional equity that they are willing to put into a project. Subsidies that fill this equity gap, bridge

loans, or other financing sources will be required to make the financing of these redevelopment projects feasible. This section outlines a number of financing sources for specific land uses, such as affordable housing or community facilities, as well as for parking or infrastructure. The applicability of these sources to specific redevelopment projects is highly dependent on the proposed development program and the availability of public funding in a particular fiscal year.

## Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone #14

The Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) established in the Fourth Ward in 1999 provides an additional source of financing for redevelopment projects within the TIRZ area. Under this program, the incremental tax revenues generated in the TIRZ area beyond the base value in 1999 are used to fund infrastructure, acquisition, historic preservation, affordable housing, or other redevelopment activities.

This analysis estimates the additional TIRZ revenues that would be available through this additional increment after a process of redevelopment across the Fourth Ward. The redevelopment scenario tested

in this analysis is based on the supportable market absorption of residential and commercial land uses across the Fourth Ward, as determined in the market analysis component of this report. The market analysis provided both a base and upside scenario of absorption of new development, which are detailed in the table below. It is important to note that this is what the market may likely support, but is not a prediction of what will actually be developed in the Fourth Ward. This only represents the potential new development notwithstanding development and redevelopment challenges in the Fourth Ward with respect to land costs, financing, and so forth.

This analysis estimates the incremental property and sales tax revenues that would result from each of

these development scenarios in the Fourth Ward over a 10-year period. The property values for the for-sale residential units were determined based on weighted average sale price affordable at the household income levels that comprise the demand for these new units, as determined in the market analysis component of this report. The property value for the remaining land uses was based on the income that each would generate, according to the lease rates identified in the market analysis. Market-specific standards for expenses and cap rates were then used to determine the property value on a per square foot or per unit basis. The property values for all land uses were escalated by 3% annually, and were multiplied by the property tax rate to determine the property tax revenues generated by this development over a 10-year period. The analysis indicates that the base scenario would generate over \$38.5 million in property tax revenues over 10 years, and the upside scenario would generate over \$43.7 million.

In order to compare these potential TIRZ revenues resulting from redevelopment within the Fourth Ward

with the current scenario of what exists today, assuming no redevelopment is initiated, we utilized the current assessed value of the TIRZ on a per acre basis. The assessed value was escalated by 3% annually and was applied to the property tax rate to determine what the incremental tax revenue will be over the next 10 years. The resulting 10-year tax revenues are \$21.6 million, reflecting the TIRZ revenues if no redevelopment or policy interventions are initiated.

Additionally, this analysis took account of the incremental sales tax revenues generated by the retail components of the base and upside scenarios. This analysis assumed market-standard sales per square foot of retail space of \$350, although the sales per square foot vary significantly depending on the type of retail establishment. These sales result in an estimated \$1.8 million in sales tax revenues under the base scenario, and \$3.1 million under the upside scenario. Overall, the base scenario creates an estimated \$18.7 million in additional TIRZ revenues over the revenues that would result from what exists today. The upside scenario creates an estimated \$25.1 million in ad-

ditional TIRZ revenues over what exists today. Each of these scenarios would generate significant TIRZ revenues to financing redevelopment within the Fourth Ward.

	For-Rent Residential (Annual)	For-Sale Residential (Annual)	Class A Office (5-Year)	Loal-Serving Office (5-Year)	Retail (5-Year)
Base Scenario	160 Units	140 Units	75,000 SF	8,000 SF	30,000 SF
Upside Scenario	190 Units	170 Units	125,000 SF	17,000 SF	50,000 SF

SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL INCREMENTAL TAX REVENUES	Year 1 2010	Year 2 2011	Year 3 2012	Year 4 2013	Year 5 2014	Year 6 2015	Year 7 2016	Year 8 2017	Year 9 2018	Year 10 2019	TOTAL
<b>Current TIRZ Value Scenario</b>											
Total Assessed Value	\$295,655,563	\$304,525,230	\$313,660,987	\$323,070,816	\$332,762,941	\$342,745,829	\$353,028,204	\$363,619,050	\$374,527,622	\$385,763,450	
Total Property Tax Revenues	\$1,888,500	\$1,945,155	\$2,003,510	\$2,063,615	\$2,125,523	\$2,189,289	\$2,254,968	\$2,322,617	\$2,392,295	\$2,464,064	\$21,649,535
<b>Base Redevelopment Scenario</b>											
Total Assessed Value	\$357,511,653	\$401,541,749	\$447,891,891	\$496,661,653	\$547,954,499	\$636,101,295	\$693,793,664	\$754,375,083	\$817,966,973	\$884,695,439	
Total Property Tax Revenues	\$2,283,606	\$2,564,848	\$2,860,909	\$3,172,426	\$3,500,059	\$4,063,097	\$4,431,607	\$4,818,571	\$5,224,764	\$5,650,992	\$38,570,880
Total Sales Tax Revenues (Local)	\$105,000	\$108,150	\$111,395	\$114,736	\$118,178	\$243,448	\$250,751	\$258,274	\$266,022	\$274,002	\$1,849,955
Total Base Scenario Tax Revenues	\$2,388,606	\$2,672,998	\$2,972,304	\$3,287,163	\$3,618,238	\$4,306,545	\$4,682,358	\$5,076,844	\$5,490,786	\$5,924,994	\$40,420,835
<b>Additional Incremental Revenue</b>	<b>\$500,106</b>	<b>\$727,843</b>	<b>\$968,794</b>	<b>\$1,223,548</b>	<b>\$1,492,715</b>	<b>\$2,117,256</b>	<b>\$2,427,390</b>	<b>\$2,754,228</b>	<b>\$3,098,491</b>	<b>\$3,460,930</b>	<b>\$18,771,300</b>
<b>Upside Redevelopment Scenario</b>											
Total Assessed Value	\$384,658,532	\$436,467,036	\$491,037,857	\$548,490,107	\$608,947,558	\$730,394,819	\$798,989,179	\$871,041,845	\$946,698,580	\$1,026,110,783	
Total Property Tax Revenues	\$2,457,006	\$2,787,933	\$3,136,504	\$3,503,481	\$3,889,653	\$4,665,397	\$5,103,543	\$5,563,780	\$6,047,037	\$6,554,283	\$43,708,617
Total Sales Tax Revenues (Local)	\$175,000	\$180,250	\$185,658	\$191,227	\$196,964	\$405,746	\$417,918	\$430,456	\$443,370	\$456,671	\$3,083,259
Total Upside Scenario Tax Revenues	\$2,632,006	\$2,968,183	\$3,322,162	\$3,694,708	\$4,086,617	\$5,071,143	\$5,521,462	\$5,994,236	\$6,490,407	\$7,010,953	\$46,791,876
<b>Additional Incremental Revenue</b>	<b>\$743,506</b>	<b>\$1,023,028</b>	<b>\$1,318,652</b>	<b>\$1,631,093</b>	<b>\$1,961,093</b>	<b>\$2,881,854</b>	<b>\$3,266,494</b>	<b>\$3,671,619</b>	<b>\$4,098,112</b>	<b>\$4,546,889</b>	<b>\$25,142,341</b>

## Case Studies

Case studies are a great way to look at other locations that have similar opportunities and challenges as the Fourth Ward. This type of research helps to identify potential problems and solutions that others have dealt with in the past.

The case studies included address issues that range from affordable housing issues, to narrow right of way conditions. Many other historically African American communities throughout the U.S. have dealt with infrastructure issues and redevelopment in recent decades. Some have chosen to emphasize historic restoration as a catalysts for redevelopment, while others have looked at much more strict preservation plans. Either way, cities are always on the move, and these case studies can perhaps provide a look at the future of the district.

## Anacostia

### Washington D.C.

#### *Similar to Fourth Ward:*

- Proximity to downtown
- Highway separates neighborhood from downtown
- Historic downtown was/is rundown
- New construction and developments taking over historic buildings
- African American population
- Moderate household income

#### *Project Understanding:*

Anacostia is a historic neighborhood in southeast Washington, located east of the Anacostia River. The Anacostia Historic District, founded in 1854, is an area of approximately 20 blocks. This was one of the first suburbs in the District of Columbia. Anacostia was designed to be affordable to Washington's working class, most of who were employed across the river at the Navy Yard.

In 1978, the Anacostia District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Today Anacostia is home to middle-class, moderate household income families wanting proximity to downtown D.C. Anacostia includes a mix of housing types, retail opportunities, and a variety of amenities. Some of the amenities include Anacostia Park, Frederick Douglas National Historic site, and Smithsonian Anacostia Neighborhood Museum.



*Photo of Anacostia in the foreground. The highway separates the neighborhood and Anacostia park. Downtown D.C. is in the background, across the river.*

#### *Ideas for moving forward with Fourth Ward:*

Renewal / Revitalization efforts and process

- Revitalize a 45 acre piece of the Anacostia River waterfront to promote community.
- Numerous parks restored.
- Engage visitors and residents in learning about the history and use of the area.
- Designation of DC Main Streets Program impacted commercial revitalization

Influence of historic designation

Recently created is the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative plans. The focus of the plan is a 45-acre piece of open space located between the Anacostia River and the historic neighborhood of Anacostia. Plans include several parks, playgrounds, a four-acre 9/11 Memorial Grove, and an Environmental Education Center. The Center will engage visitors and adjacent neighbors to learn about the history and use of the Anacostia River.

In addition to the redevelopment of the open space to revitalize the community, the Anacostia Historic District has revitalized its main street and commercial areas. This was jump started as a result of being designated a DC Main Streets district. This has brought a heightened degree of publicity to the community's efforts to enhance the economic marketability of the area. This program as well as many additional programs have been a vital resource and benefit to the community and Main Street District.



*Photo of houses in Anacostia.*

## South Chicago

### Chicago, Illinois

#### Similar to Fourth Ward:

- Vacant and deteriorating lots
- Highway separates neighborhood from downtown
- Grid street pattern
- Large African American population
- Strong presence of churches

#### Ideas for moving forward with Fourth Ward:

##### Techniques to redevelop

- New construction on brown field site
- Infill in existing neighborhoods

##### LEED ND

Pilot project for the city

Community approached the city

City funded

#### Project Understanding:

Around the early 1900s, immigrants travelled to South Chicago for the World's Columbia Exposition and the presence of the steel mill, US Steel South Works. The mill attracted immigrants from Ireland, Eastern Europe, Scandinavia and Italy. Today the diverse culture still exists in South Chicago; 65% of the population is African American and 30% is Latino. However the booming economy does not still exist. When South Works closed in 1992, the impacts affected residents as well as local businesses.

The South Chicago community reached out to city leaders to support redevelopment schemes, including a new airport, a plan to host the summer Olympics, and new enterprise zones. All of these efforts were without ultimate success.

In an effort to simulate the economy in South Chicago, the City of Chicago is sponsoring its redevelopment. The effort represents one of the largest sustainable neighborhood revitalization developments in the country. This will be a LEED ND project and the plan will serve as a guide to the city for sustainable redevelopment for the next 25 years.

The redevelopment will consist of new construction that will populate the former steel site and urban infill into the existing neighborhood. The long range plan is to produce sufficient households to support new commercial development; residential-over-retail. The development is envisioned to produce a mixed-income neighborhood. One of the first efforts to produce a mixed-income community and of the first projects proposed is an affordable housing project.



Photo of South Shore Drive in South Chicago in 1988.

## Cabrini-Green

### Chicago, Illinois

#### Similar to Fourth Ward:

- Vacant and deteriorating lots
- Proximity to downtown
- Interest from developers to infill

#### Ideas for moving forward with Fourth Ward:

##### Redevelopment and infill efforts

##### Support from government

- Hope VI project funds

Goal to balance plans and economic viability

#### Project Understanding:

Cabrini-Green was home to 15,000 people, living in mid- and high-rise apartment buildings. Over the years, gang violence and the city's neglect created terrible conditions for the residents, and the name "Cabrini-Green" became symbolic of the problems associated with public housing in the United States.

In 1994, the Chicago Housing Authority received a HOPE VI grant from the federal government to begin planning redevelopment at Cabrini-Green. In 1997, the Near North Redevelopment Initiative plan was released; it recommended demolishing most of Cabrini-Green (leaving only the original rowhouses intact) and replacing it with a dense, mixed-income, mixed-use community. The mission was to transform underdeveloped city-owned land, including deteriorated public housing - specifically the infamous Cabrini-Green - along with schools, libraries and parks into a mixed-use, mixed-income community. It was Chicago's largest urban revitalization effort in more than 30 years and has received over \$320 million in public and private investments.

Their support and feedback ensured that the development would properly balance both physical planning and economic viability. Proposed neighborhood plans featured housing densities of 40-units-per acre, meeting the city's housing needs and in keeping with existing adjacent neighborhoods.

The new plan did away with isolated high rises for the poor, replacing them with inter-connected community new schools, improved parks, a town center and mixed-income townhouses and flats (50 percent market rate, 30 percent affordable and 20 percent low income), in which public units are virtually indistinguishable. It is a compact, pedestrian-friendly community that unites, rather than isolates, its residents.



Photo looking northeast on Cabrini-Green housing project in 1999.



Image of proposed redevelopment of Cabrini Green; created by JJR.

## King Plaza Neighborhood Revitalization

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

### Similar to Fourth Ward:

- Vacant and deteriorating lots
- Proximity to downtown
- Interest from developers to infill

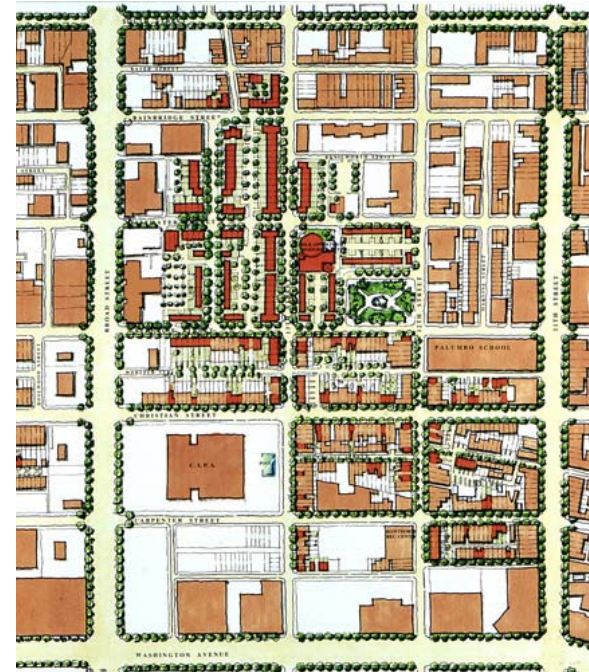
### Ideas for moving forward with Fourth Ward:

Redevelopment and infill efforts  
 Hope VI efforts and funds to support the project  
 Architectural character

### Project Understanding:

The Martin Luther King Plaza Towers were built in 1960 in the Hawthorne neighborhood of South Philadelphia. By the time they were demolished in the late 1990s, over 200 of the 594 public housing units were uninhabitable. The Plaza has been replaced with new streets and contextual architecture, reconnecting the old public housing site to the revitalizing existing fabric of the community. A range of housing types for a mix of incomes and new commercial, institutional and open space use has brought new life to a working-class rowhouse community suffering from decades of disinvestment and disrepair.

Architecture modeled after traditional Philadelphia types residential, retail and local institutional mix of uses reuses existing infrastructure reconnects residents to existing neighborhood provides range of housing options creates new public outdoor space.



Plan of proposed redevelopment.



Photo of housing in King Plaza Neighborhood.



Photo of architecture modeled after traditional Philadelphia housing.

## Alleyways in San Francisco

San Francisco, California

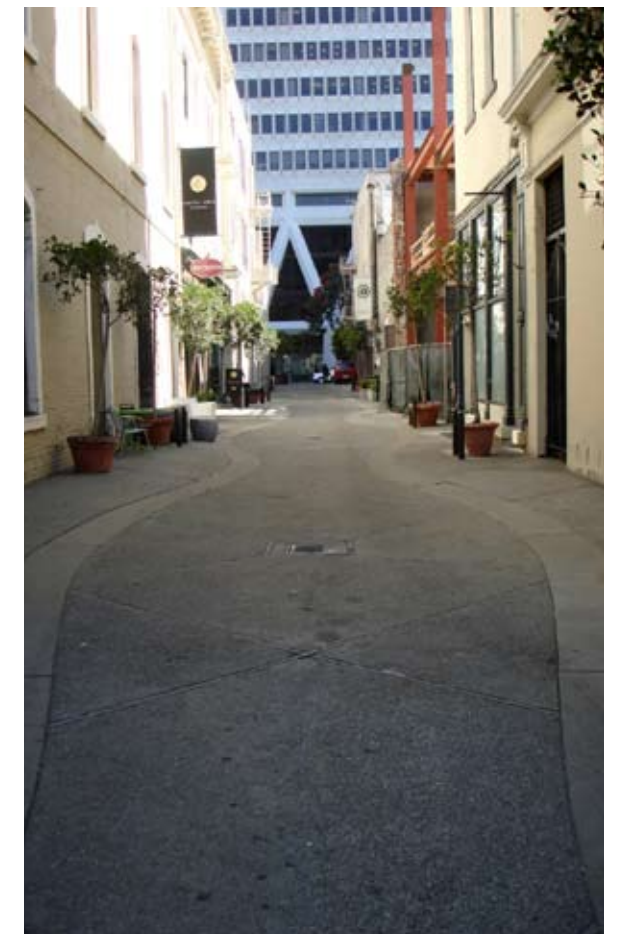
### Similar to Fourth Ward:

- Narrow streets and right-of-ways
- Desire to reuse existing space and infill
- Areas for pedestrians only

### Ideas for moving forward with Fourth Ward:

Reuse of alley space

- Daytime is a space for service to businesses and pathways to different destinations
- Evenings are locations for outdoor dining, entertainment, and community interaction.



Photos of alleyways in San Francisco.



## North End

### Boston, Massachusetts

#### Similar to Fourth Ward:

- Narrow streets
- Strong identity
- Proximity to downtown
- Highway separates neighborhood from downtown
- Strong presence of churches

#### Project Understanding:

The North End is one of the oldest parts of Boston. Over the past two centuries many immigrants have settled in the North End, creating a multi-layered neighborhood. The community visually represents the culture and history of its settlers; specifically its most predominant population of Italian descent.

In the 1950's, the Central Artery was built, which divided the North End from the rest of Boston. Recently the Central Artery was taken down as a result of the Big Dig construction. This created a stronger visual and physical connection, and rejoined the North End to the rest of Boston.

Today, the North End hosts many neighborhood events focused on bringing the community together and celebrating its history and heritage. Every weekend in the summer, the North End hosts religious

#### Ideas for moving forward with Fourth Ward:

Cross section of narrow streets

- Parking on one side
- Street trees on one side
- Narrow sidewalks on both sides in many cases

Preservation of historic streets and squares

Preservation and celebration of history and heritage

feasts. These feasts include religious services, Italian foods, parades and other related activities.

The North End worked to preserve the history and heritage by saving and restoring the cobblestone streets, small squares, and unique architecture. These streets, squares, parks and architecture bring character to the neighborhood and make this section of Boston such a memorable and appealing place to visit.



Photo of one of the narrow streets in Boston's North End. This street provides one way travel lane, one lane for parallel parking, and sidewalks on each side.



Photo of community, public open space in Boston's North End.

## Fells Point and Federal Hill

### Baltimore, Maryland

#### Similar to Fourth Ward:

- Narrow, gridded streets
- Vacant and deteriorating lots
- Proximity to downtown
- Historic downtown was/is rundown

#### Project Understanding:

In the 20th century, Fells Point and Federal Hill were made up of working class families, with business focused around shipping and shipbuilding. When the shipping moved to larger facilities, the neighborhoods began to decline. In the late 1970s these areas became one among many struggling, Baltimore, inner-city neighborhoods, with increasing crime, racial tension, depressed property values, and an aging and decaying housing stock.

In the 1990s, these neighborhoods were discovered by the children of baby boomers. These were individuals who worked downtown, wanted to live in close proximity to employment, and be a part of an urban community outside of downtown Baltimore.

These young professionals first invested in infill and single-family home rehabilitation. Large development

#### Ideas for moving forward with Fourth Ward:

Process to revitalize the neighborhood

- Invested in infill and rehabilitation of existing homes
- Focus on community parks and open space
- Emphasize pedestrian connections and comfort
- Architectural character
- Variety of housing types

Sense of community and connection to neighborhood

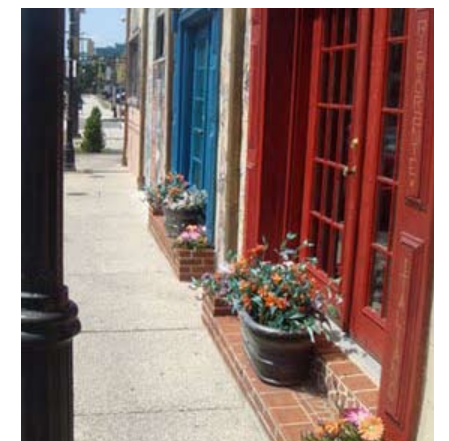
- Support of local businesses
- Walkable community

projects on former industrial sites followed. After the critical mass of residents was created, the final step in redevelopment was the influx of new restaurants and shops.

To help enhance and promote restaurants and shops, an educational campaign called "Buying Local Baltimore" was created to encourage residents to purchase from local businesses. This focus on the local economy, as well as enhancement of parks and open space created a strong sense of community that continues to attract professionals to the area.



Photo of Broadway Street in Fells Point, looking north.



## Hunters Point / Bayview

### San Francisco, California

#### History and Context:

The Hunters Point neighborhoods in San Francisco was developed in the 1860's as the nation's first dry-dock on the Pacific coast, and was purchased by the Navy for a Naval Shipyard in 1939. Hunters Point and the adjacent Bayview neighborhood are located in the southeastern portion of San Francisco. The development of Hunters Point provided jobs and led to an influx of residents working at the yard and the development of the residential neighborhood adjacent to Hunters Point. This area was primarily settled by African Americans, as racial segregation prohibited them from owning homes elsewhere in San Francisco. The residential population of Bayview/Hunters Point grew from around 16,000 to almost 150,000 between 1940 and 1950, having the highest concentration of African Americans among San Francisco neighborhoods. The Shipyard was a major source of employment for the local residents from World War II until 1974, employing up to 17,000 people at its peak.

The process of de-industrialization in the later part of the 20th century and the closure of the Hunters Point naval yard led to high unemployment in the adjacent neighborhood, poverty, and physical blight. The former 500 acre naval yard, factories, and power plant were not fully de-contaminated following their closure, leaving the area with one-third of all of San Francisco's toxic waste sites. This environmental contamination has brought about sickness in adjacent residents and prevented redevelopment or investment in the area, continuing the lack of services and amenities available to residents.

In 1993 Congress authorized the transfer of Hunters Point Shipyard to the City and County of San Francisco, beginning the redevelopment process. A redevelopment plan was adopted for the 500-acre Shipyard in 1997 and in 1999, the private residential developer, Lennar, was selected as the master developer for the redevelopment. The redevelopment plan calls for over 10,000 housing units, 2 million square feet of commercial office space, entertainment and retail uses, new public housing units, artist studio space, parks and open space, and potentially a new stadium for the NFL 49ers team. The redevelopment



is being guided by the City of San Francisco and the San Francisco Redevelopment Authority, with community input facilitated through the the Bayview Hunters Point Project Area Committee and the Citizen Advisory Committee.

The 3rd Street corridor is the primary commercial corridor serving the neighborhoods and has undergone transformation, with the recent completion of the 3rd Street Light Rail Project. The project extended the municipal transit (MUNI) service and reestablished light rail service along the 3rd Street corridor, with 6 new stops in or adjacent to the Bayview neighborhood. The 3rd street corridor has historically been a center of activity in Bayview, and while the light rail line provides economic development opportunities and other community benefits, it is also increasing the economic pressures on longstanding residents and businesses; adding to the effects of gentrification on the neighborhood.

The Bayview Hunters Point Project Area Committee (PAC) was formed in 1997 through public election, and works with the City of San Francisco and the Redevelopment Agency to represent the interests of the community. The PAC worked with the Redevelopment Agency to conduct hundreds of community meetings after being elected, and issued a Concept Plan in 2000 that outlines the community goals and objectives for the redevelopment. The Concept Plan was incorporated into the Redevelopment Agency's Bayview Hunters Point (BVHP) Redevelopment Plan. The PAC also issued the Housing Framework Program, which outlined community objectives for balancing private development with affordable housing production and renovation, and was also adopted into the BVHP Redevelopment Plan. The Hunters Point Shipyard Citizen Advisory Committee has also been involved in ensuring community benefits from the redevelopment project.

#### Demographic Changes:

The redevelopment work has begun, but the majority of the vertical development is still to come. However there have already been clear signs of the impacts of the redevelopment on the local community. A look at demographic trends over time begins to highlight the effects of these pressures. (See table entitled "Demographic Characteristics")

While there has been substantial growth of both total households and household income in the neighborhood over the past twenty years, it is clear that the majority of this growth has occurred by non-African-American households. As an example the percentage of all households that are African-American declined from 47% in 1990 to 27% in 2009. Similarly, while the overall median income has risen over time, African American median incomes have been and remain much lower than incomes overall (\$58,000 for all households, vs. \$33,000 for African-American households. Finally, the neighborhood historically has had the highest percentage of home ownership rates for African-Americans, but that percentage now lags behind the homeownership rates for the neighborhood as a whole.

Many of the major redevelopment projects are yet to come. They include the redevelopment of two public housing projects into mixed income housing, preserving the affordable units that exist in those developments while increasing density to accommodate market rate housing. As well as a 1,400 unit project, with 30% of units set aside for affordable housing. The ultimate impact of these projects on stabilizing the affordability and racial composition of the neighborhood are yet to be seen.

#### Key Milestones:

- 1939 Hunters Point purchased by Navy for a Naval Shipyard
- 1974 Navy closes the Shipyard
- 1993 Congress authorizes the transfer of Hunter's Point to the City of San Francisco
- 1997 Hunters Point Redevelopment Plan adopted
- 1999 Lennar selected as master developer for the Hunters Point redevelopment
- 2005 Community Benefits Agreement between Lennar and the Cit of San Francisco for Phase 1 of the Hunters Point redevelopment
- 2007 Construction is complete on the 3rd Street Light Rail Project and full service runs through the Bayview neighborhood
- 2010 Groundbreaking for demolition of Hunters View public housing through the Hope SF program
- 2010 Groundbreaking on 5800 3rd Street, a 340-unit condo project adjacent to a new light rail station

Demographic Characteristics	1990	2000	2009
Population	40,264	49,586	56,415
Annual Change		2.10%	1.44%
Households	14,732	17,887	21,016
Annual Change		1.96%	1.81%
% Households African American	47%	36%	27%
Per Capita Income	\$13,822	\$26,975	\$34,428
Median Household	\$28,838	\$46,257	\$58,068
Median Household Income - African American HHs	N/A	\$27,347	\$33,458
Housing Units	16,300	18,852	24,553
Annual Change		1.47%	2.98%
Median Home Value (Owner Occupied)	\$216,061	\$294,881	\$538,505
% Owners	41%	42%	38%
% Owners that are African American	N/A	23%	N/A

Source: Claritas



Source: San Francisco Redevelopment Authority, MUNI, Lennar, allbusiness.com, socketsite.com, SFGate.com

## Hunters Point / Bayview

### *Strategies and Lessons:*

Several strategies and key lessons can be gleaned from this neighborhood which has undergone substantial planning over the past 10 – 15 years as it prepares for redevelopment.

#### Key Strategies:

##### 1. Development of a Redevelopment Master Plan

- Commitment of 50% of the Redevelopment Agency's tax increment financing funds allocated to the project area to funding affordable housing programs.
- Deeper affordable housing income limits, including maximum household income levels of 50% of the area median income (AMI) for rental housing and a maximum of 80% of AMI for for-sale housing.
- Requirement of at least 15% of new residential units built in market-rate projects are affordable to households at 50% of AMI for rental and 80% of AMI for for-sale.
- 50% goal for new construction and permanent jobs to be provided to San Francisco residents, with first preference given to BVHP residents.

##### 2. Redevelopment of Failing Public Housing

- The Hope SF program is a local program modeled after the federal Hope VI program, designed to replace substandard public housing units with new, mixed-income communities. In 2007 the San Francisco mayor secured \$5 million from the General Fund to back \$95 million in revenue bonds to finance the Hunters View Hope SF project. The city plans to also rely on additional federal, state, and private funds to complete the Hunters Point project. The market rate units developed as part of the Hunters View redevelopment is key to subsidizing the public housing units.

##### 3. Community Benefit Agreements by private Developers

- Homebuyer Assistance Program, sponsored by Lennar and the City of San Francisco includes down payment assistance, first-time homebuyer financing programs, and homeownership counseling services.
- International African Marketplace, which will be established as venue that hosts a series of regu-

lar events and activities that celebrate cultural diversity.

- Job Training and Employee Assistance Program includes \$225,000 annually during the redevelopment process for job training and employee assistance services for BVHP residents. The job training will be conducted by local organizations, and include the topic areas of construction skilled trades, occupational skills, youth development, and professional services.
- \$750,000 in a community benefits package for the Carroll Station project. The community benefits package was negotiated during the entitlements process and includes funds for job training, senior

#### Critical Lessons:

- Public land, and the ability to direct policy interventions on the uses of that land to further neighborhoods goals is critical. The City of San Francisco is able to ensure affordable housing goals are met, open space goals are met and community benefits exists on land that they own through a development agreement process in partnership with private developers. Maximizing public land ownership to further these goals provides substantial leverage and influence into ensuring that these goals are met.
- Preserving homeownership is a key component to preserving the character and culture of a neighborhood through redevelopment and gentrification. While multifamily rental is important, both to address financial feasibility issues, as well as to meet the needs of households across all income groups; home ownership must also be planned for and supported.
- A strong, well organized nonprofit community development corporation helps to ensure community goals are met; neighborhoods participate in redevelopment and hold stakeholders accountable for their actions. In Bayview, the San Francisco Housing Development Corporation, a private non-profit developer and community organization, has been a key mechanism to implementing a homeownership strategy. Driven by the community goals and objectives, the organization is able to use its resources to provide affordable housing in areas beginning to gentrify before for-profit developers move into the market.
- Planning is critical and should include ongoing community input and revisions given changing market conditions. The Community Concept Plan,

created by the community through the Project Area Committee and incorporated into the Redevelopment Plan, has been an important mechanism for communicating community preferences and guiding the development activity.

- Financial education for the community on homeownership opportunities, financing, and options and opportunities for existing homeowners in gentrifying neighborhoods has proved an effective means of preparing the community and existing homeowners for managing gentrification and benefiting from the changes. Anticipating gentrification and providing financial education in a timely manner equips the existing community to manage and participate in the community investment.

### *Strategies for Redevelopment:*

Provisions in the Bayview/Hunters Point Redevelopment Plan and Community Concept Plan

- Commitment of 50% of the Redevelopment Agency's tax increment financing funds allocated to the project area to funding affordable housing programs
- Deeper affordable housing income limits, including maximum household income levels of 50% of the area median income (AMI) for rental housing and a maximum of 80% of AMI for for-sale housing
- Requirement of at least 15% of new residential units built in market-rate projects are affordable to households at 50% of AMI for rental and 80% of AMI for for-sale
- 50% goal for new construction and permanent jobs to be provided to San Francisco residents, with first preference given to BVHP residents

Disposition and Development Agreement

- Through the 2003 Phase 1 Disposition and Development Agreement (Phase 1 DDA), the master developer was required to provide a certain percentage of the proposed new residential units at below-market rates, in addition to providing public parks and open space on the redevelopment site.

Hope SF

- The Hope SF program is modeled after the federal Hope VI program, designed to replace substandard public housing units with new, mixed-income communities. In 2007 the San Francisco mayor secured \$5 million from the General Fund to back

\$95 million in revenue bonds to finance the Hunters View Hope SF project. The city plans to also rely on additional federal, state, and private funds to complete the Hunters Point project. The market rate units developed as part of the Hunters View redevelopment is key to subsidizing the public housing units.

Community Benefits Agreement with Lennar

- International African Marketplace, which will be established as venue that hosts a series of regular events and activities that celebrate cultural diversity.
- Homebuyer Assistance Program, sponsored by Lennar and the City of San Francisco includes down payment assistance, first-time homebuyer financing programs, and homeownership counseling services.
- Job Training and Employee Assistance Program includes \$225,000 annually during the redevelopment process for job training and employee assistance services for BVHP residents. The job training will be conducted by local organizations, and include the topic areas of construction skilled trades, occupational skills, youth development, and professional services

### *Key Lessons Learned:*

- Preserving homeownership is a key component to preserving the character and culture of a neighborhood through redevelopment and gentrification.
- The San Francisco Housing Development Corporation, a private non-profit developer and community organization, has been a key mechanism to implementing a homeownership strategy. Driven by the community goals and objectives, the organization is able to use its resources to provide affordable housing in areas beginning to gentrify before for-profit developers move into the market.
- The Community Concept Plan, created by the community through the Project Area Committee and incorporated into the Redevelopment Plan, has been an important mechanism for communicating community preferences and guiding the development activity.
- Financial education for the community on homeownership opportunities, financing, and options and opportunities for existing homeowners in gentrifying neighborhoods has proved an effective means of preparing the community and existing

homeowners for managing gentrification and benefiting from the changes. Anticipating gentrification and providing financial education in a timely manner equips the existing community to manage and participate in the community investment.

*Source: Bayview Hunters Point Redevelopment Plan; Lennar; San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, UN Global Compact, San Francisco Housing Development Corporation (Interview with Executive Director Regina Davis, <http://www.sfhdc.org/>)*

## Hunters Point / Bayview

### Major Redevelopment Projects:

#### Phase 1/Parcel A

Phase 1/Parcel A of the Hunters Point redevelopment covers 63 total acres and includes 1,400 new residential units, with approximately 30% of the housing affordable to low-income households, 25 acres of public parks and open space, and 9,000 square feet of retail and commercial space.

#### Candlestick - Hunters Point Phase 2

This phase is in the planning stages and undergoing the environmental review process. The plans include around 10,000 residential units with a mix of market-rate and affordable units, retail, 2 million square feet of commercial office space, new artist studio spaces, more than 300 acres of parks and open space, and the potential site for the new 49ers stadium. The plans also call for the redevelopment of the Alice Griffin public housing project.

#### 5800 3rd Street/Carroll Station Residential Development

This project is a medium-density mixed-use project adjacent to a new 3rd Street light rail station on the site of a former Coca-Cola bottling plant. The project has 340 condominiums and approximately 20,000 square feet of retail space, which is planned to be anchored by the U.K.-based grocer Fresh and Easy. The project is the first privately funded development in the BVHP redevelopment area that is consistent with the Project Area Committee's Community Concept Plan. The project was funded by Goldman Sachs Urban Investment Group (UIG), and UIG also provided \$750,000 in a community benefits package. The community benefits package was negotiated during the entitlements process and includes funds for job training, senior services, first-time homeownership opportunities, and local businesses.

#### Alice Griffith Public Housing

As part of the Phase 2 Hunters Point Development, the Alice Griffith public housing development will be redeveloped through the Hope SF program. The 256 housing units will be replaced by new housing units; the new units will be built adjacent to the existing public housing so that none of the residents are displaced during the construction process. The financing for the



Alice Griffith redevelopment will come through tax increment revenue generated by the Candlestick Point-Hunters Point redevelopment, developer subsidies, and City affordable housing funds.

#### Third Street Light Rail Project

Completed in 2007, the Third Street Light Rail Project was structured to reestablish light rail service along 3rd Street, improve service reliability and travel times, enhance transit connections, and help generate economic opportunities for local residents and businesses along 3rd Street. The light rail service was extended along 3rd Street with a number of stops adjacent to Hunters Point, Candlestick Point, and in the Bayview neighborhood.

#### Hunters View Public Housing

Hunters View, a public housing project located on Hunters Point, was considered by federal inspectors to be one of the worst public housing projects in the country. The project is now part of the Hope SF program to demolish and rebuild the public housing units in a new mixed-use and mixed-income development. Only 137 of the 267 total units are currently occupied, and demolition of 113 of the units is currently underway and expected to be completed by mid 2010. Replacement of the first 113 units, a new park, and new infrastructure is slated for completion in 2011. Additional phases of the Hunters View redevelopment includes rebuilding the remaining 154 units to replace the affordable housing on a one-to-one basis, in addition to developing 84 new affordable rental units and between 350 and 450 market rate condos and townhomes. The final project completion is expected in 2015.

#### UN Global Compact Sustainability Center

The former Hunter's Point Naval Shipyard is proposed to be the United Nation's Global Compact Sustainability Center. The Center would house research and development related to climate change and UN office space. Plans call for the center to open in 2012, and the City is currently working with UN Global Compact office to guide the development plans and fundraising.

Source: San Francisco Redevelopment Authority, San Francisco Municipal Railway, Lennar, allbusiness.com, socketsite.com, SFGate.com

## U Street / Shaw Neighborhood

### Washington, D.C.

#### History and Context:

The U Street Corridor was initially developed in the late 1800's as a Victorian-style neighborhood, in response to the demand for housing after the end of the civil war and the growth of the federal government. The development of a streetcar line in the 1890's and the early 20th century brought commercial activity to the formerly residential neighborhood. The U Street Corridor began to be known as the "Black Broadway" as cultural institutions, jazz clubs, and African American societies or fraternities were established. The corridor served as the cultural and creative center for the African American community. The U Street Corridor's prominence in the African American community and in the cultural arts continued through the 20th century until the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. sparked a wave of violence in the 1968 Washington, D.C. riots. The destruction and violence of the riots was centered on the intersection of 14th and U Streets NW, leading to the flight of affluent residents and businesses from the neighborhood. As a result, the corridor became blighted and filled with drug trafficking and violence for the next several decades.

Beginning in the late 1980's, the revitalization of the U Street Corridor has been a partnership between the city and federal governments, foundations, private and non-profit developers, and community development corporations. Some of the first major revitalization milestones included the development of the Reeves Center, a municipal office building, at the intersection of 14th and U Streets NW and the development of a new Metro stop at the intersection of 13th and U Streets NW in 1991, both on public property.

In the late 1990's funding from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development provided \$7 million for investment in the Shaw neighborhood surrounding the U Street Corridor. The funding was used to encourage redevelopment and the restoration of historic sites and for streetscape improvements to lighting, parking, and commercial façades. The result of this public intervention, and resulting private investment, was the redevelopment of blocks of row houses, the reopening of former theaters and nightclubs, and the construction of new apartment and condominium buildings.



The preservation of the cultural heritage of the U Street corridor has been a key component of its revitalization and recent rebirth. The presence of neighborhood and cultural organizations have kept the community engaged and informed while driving redevelopment that is sensitive to the historical legacy of the neighborhood. One key project is the restoration of the Howard Theater, originally built in 1910 and now undergoing the restoration necessary to bring it back to active use. The Howard Theater is considered a gem in the neighborhood and it played a role in launching many successful and legendary musical careers.

The disposition of public land to catalyze and provide incentives for development has been an important part of the redevelopment efforts. At the beginning of the U Street 'rebirth' and before the market had proven successful for new residential development, the disposition of public property along the corridor to private developers was an important incentive. Both the Harrison Square and the Ellington residential developments were formerly public land that the City disposed to private developers. Once the revitalization was underway and affordability of housing became a concern, the City was able to dispose of public land with deed restrictions and covenants that required affordable housing as part of market-rate developments. The combination of City resources, private development efforts, and cultural and historic resources have all been important components in preserving the culture and heritage of the U Street neighborhood as the neighborhood undergoes this most recent growth and transformation.

#### Demographic Changes:

The majority of redevelopment along the U Street corridor has occurred, the gentrification of the neighborhood coincided with the real estate boom in the mid 2000s accelerating development, and the introduction of new, higher income households and businesses that serve those households. Both of these factors have had an impact on the levels of affordability in the neighborhoods. A look at demographic trends over time begins to highlight the effects of these pressures. (See table entitled "Demographic Characteristics")

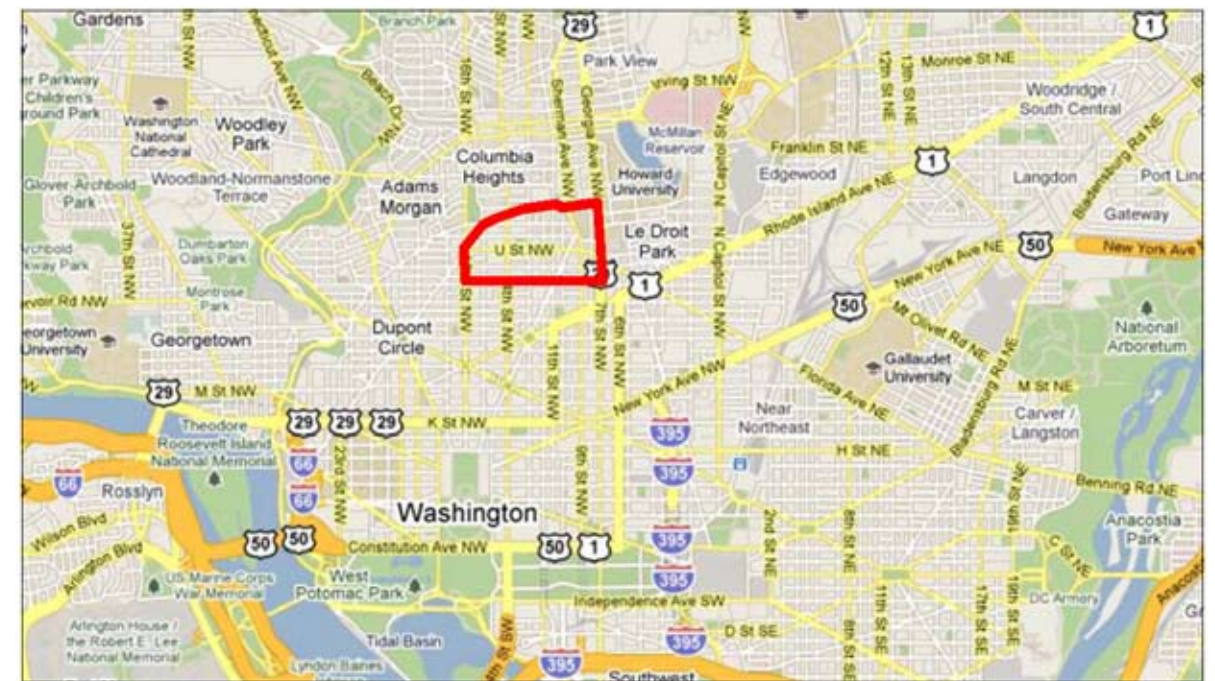
While there has been substantial growth households and household income in the neighborhood over the past twenty years; it is clear that the majority of this growth has occurred by non African American households. As an example the percentage of all households that are African American declined from 57% in 1990 to 32% in 2009. Similarly, while the overall median income has risen over time, African American median incomes have been and remain much lower than incomes overall (\$57,000 for all households, vs. \$25,000 for African American households. Finally, home ownership rates for African Americans lags behind the homeownership rates for the neighborhood as a whole.

#### Key Milestones:

- 1860's-1900 Development of the U Street Area
- 1890's Development of the Streetcar Line
- 1921 Lincoln Theater Developed
- 1921 Southern Aid Society/Dunbar Theater Developed
- 1926 Development of the Howard Theater
- 1968 Washington, D.C. Riots
- 1991 New Metro stop at 13th & U Streets NW
- 1998 Greater U Street listed on National Register of Historic Places
- 2001 Harrison Square redevelopment is complete (home ownership townhomes)
- 2004 The Ellington Apartments is complete (190 rental units)

Demographic Characteristics	1990	2000	2009
Population	8,461	8,830	10,338
Annual Change		0.43%	1.77%
Households	4,065	4,173	4,905
Annual Change		0.26%	1.81%
% Households African American	57%	48%	32%
Per Capita Income	\$15,844	\$29,147	\$40,108
Median Household	\$24,235	\$38,367	\$56,657
Median Household Income - African American HHs	N/A	\$21,277	\$24,875
Housing Units	4,626	4,675	5,568
Annual Change		0.11%	1.96%
Median Home Value (Owner Occupied)	\$141,468	\$225,714	\$517,606
% Owners	24%	29%	31%
% Owners that are African American	N/A	18%	N/A

Source: Claritas



Source: GDA

## U Street / Shaw Neighborhood

### Strategies and Lessons:

Several strategies and key lessons can be gleaned from this neighborhood which has undergone substantial redevelopment over the past 15 years.

#### Key Strategies:

##### 1. Designation of U Street Corridor as a historic district

- Ensures cultural institutions are preserved and restored.
- String organizations formed to hold developers and public sector accountable for retaining and celebrating history of the corridor.
- Over time has enhanced the value of development along the corridor and within the residential neighborhoods.

##### 2. Redevelopment of Public Assets

- The U Street neighborhood was in substantial decline when the initial public infrastructure and investments were made. As such, initial public property offered for redevelopment included little in the way of requirements for affordable housing. Once gentrification took hold, affordability of housing for many residents became unattainable. The City did retain some land ownership, and has been able to enforce affordable housing requirements within those units; but establishing this policy at the beginning may have resulted in many fewer displaced households within the neighborhood.

#### Critical Lessons:

- Public land, and the ability to direct policy interventions on the uses of that land to further neighborhoods goals is critical. Public investment in the development of a new municipal center, bringing thousands of jobs and daytime workers to the neighborhood was critical in beginning to redirect the image of the neighborhoods. Key infrastructure (new Metro stop), made the neighborhood more accessible and enticed private developers to enter the market. Finally, public assets were leveraged to encourage development; once development was in progress; additional public assets have been utilized to ensure affordable housing remains in the neighborhoods. Streetscape, façade and other improvements were critical to attracting private development to the neighborhood.

- Providing small grants directly to residents to complete community based projects. The Neighborhood Investment Fund (NIF) program is funded through a portion of the annual collection of Personal Property tax throughout the District. The program provides grants for job training, job placement for adult and youth, affordable housing preservation, and small business technical assistance, as well as pre-development project grants to support the development and rehabilitation of affordable housing, mixed-use, and community-based facilities, both non profits and individuals are eligible for the funding.
- Strong cultural organizations have helped to guide redevelopment, ensuring the historic designation for U Street was received and historic and cultural institutions are maintained. Local neighborhood and cultural associations have been a key component in the U Street revitalization. These organizations have sought to preserve the historical and cultural character of the neighborhood and communicated community values and preferences for development. These organizations have been a mechanism for sustaining an engaged and informed community that participates in its own investment and revitalization.
- Zoning that support community goals, and works to preserve cultural heritage . The arts overlay district provided a zoning code that supports the development and restoration of arts organizations, cultural uses, small businesses, restaurants, and neighborhood retail and services.

Source: GDA, DC.gov, U Street Main Streets



1	Lincoln Theater	Historic theater
2	Howard Theater	The city's first theater for African American audiences and entertainers
3	Evans - Tibbs House	Home of first internationally acclaimed African American Opera star
4	Prince Hall Masonic Temple	Home of the first African American Masonic Order of the south
5	Southern Aid Society/Dunbar Theater	Built for the United Order of True Reformers
6	Frelinghuysen University	First home of Frelinghuysen University
7	Anthony Bowen YMCA	Nation's first African American chapter of the YMCA
8	Whitelaw Hotel	Historical hotel and meeting place for notable African Americans
9	St. Augustine Catholic School and Church	Religious institution and school
10	Martha's Table	Social services organization
11	Freedom Baptist Church	Religious institution
12	Augustana Lutheran Church	Religious institution
13	Embassy of Angola	International embassy
14	Equatorial Guinea Embassy	International embassy
15	Washington, D.C. Transportation	Municipal office space
16	Howard University & Hospital	University campus and hospital

## U Street / Shaw Neighborhood

### Major Redevelopment Projects:

#### Harrison Square

This 2001 redevelopment of the former Children's Hospital property into a townhome project sparked the redevelopment on the U Street corridor and served to test the market by offering a unique product type to the neighborhood.

#### The Lincoln Condominiums

This market-rate 156 unit condo project is located at 12th and U Streets NW was complete in 2000 and served as a catalyst for redevelopment on the corridor.

#### The Ellington

This 190 unit market-rate apartment building is a mixed-use transit-oriented development located along the U Street corridor at the corner of 13th Street NW. The design of the building looks like separate buildings along the corridor, and is a successful example of the historical architecture in the neighborhood.

#### The Whitelaw Hotel

Manna, a D.C.-based affordable housing developer, purchased the historic hotel in 1991 and renovated the deteriorated property into 35 apartment units. The central dining room/ballroom of the Whitelaw Hotel was also renovated, and Manna created an exhibit to highlight the historical and cultural significance of the neighborhood in the early and mid 1900's.

#### DC Jazz Festival

The DC Jazz Festival is the largest music event in the city, and includes over 100 performances in dozens of venues. The festival also promotes year-round music education programs for youth. A number of the events are hosted by venues along U Street and bring attention to the cultural legacy of this corridor of the city.

#### View 14

This new apartment development in neighborhood surrounding U Street includes 185 apartments with a mix of studios, one, and two bedroom units. To meet Office of Planning requirements, the developers contributed \$1 million to the tenant association of a nearby low-income apartment building. The association used the \$1 million to acquire and rehabilitate 48 low-income apartments as a cooperative. The project



also includes 7 on-site units affordable to households at or below 80% of AMI.

#### Howard Theater Restoration

The historic Howard Theater is planned for a \$28 million restoration which will bring the theater back to use and also will reveal the original building façade from 1910, which hasn't been seen since 1940. This theater is an important part of the cultural heritage of the U Street corridor.

#### The Jazz at Florida Avenue

The proposal for the redevelopment of the current U Street Flea Market at U and 9th Streets NW includes developing a string of WMATA-owned vacant lots along Florida Avenue. This development is proposed to include 124 apartments and 20,000 square feet of retail space in three adjacent buildings. The project is proposed to include 26 units affordable to households at or below 50% of AMI. The proposed project funding includes Low Income Housing Tax Credits and Tax Increment Financing through the Department of Planning and Economic Development.

#### United Negro College Fund Redevelopment

This mixed-use transit-oriented development is planned for the partially vacant site adjacent to the Shaw/Howard metro station. The project will include office space for the United Negro College Fund (UNCF), market-rate and affordable residential units, and retail.

#### African American Heritage Trail

The Cultural Tourism organization of D.C. has organized an African American Heritage Trail of the greater U Street area. The self-guided tour includes major historical and cultural landmarks in the U Street neighborhood, and signs throughout the neighborhood that provide maps, historic photos, and the history of the U Street corridor.

Source: D.C. Department of Planning and Economic Development, D.C. Department of Housing and Community Development, Manna, Dcmud, Banneker Ventures, Urban Land Institute, view14.com, EYA, Howard Theater Restoration, Cultural Tourism DC



## Funding Sources

The following matrix identifies a number of potential funding sources for housing, historic preservation, infrastructure, brownfield redevelopment, and commercial land use and community facilities. The matrix identifies the authorizing body that administers the program funding, potential uses of the funding, and other pertinent program details and restrictions. The applicability of these potential funding sources for the redevelopment of the Gillette tract and for other community development programs or initiatives in the Fourth Ward will vary based on the redevelopment scenario and specific plans chosen.

Category	Name and Authorizing Body	Uses	Program Summary
<i>Housing</i>	Multi-Family Housing Program <b>Federal Funds - HUD (Houston Housing and Community Dev't Dept)</b>	Multi-Family Housing	Funds the acquisition, rehabilitation, relocation, or new construction of affordable multi-family rental housing. Funded through CDBG and HOME Federal funds. For use of the funds in rehabilitation, developers or property owners restrict units as affordable in return for the funding that the program provides for the building rehab. The amount of HOME subsidy for a particular project is determined based on the bedroom count and construction type, and range between \$102,000 and \$214,000 per unit. These funds are issued through the RFP process as funds are available; there is no set schedule for the issuing of these RFPs. \$6,890,323 was designated for this program through federal HOME funds in the 2010 fiscal year, to provide an estimated 250 additional housing units.
	2008 Neighborhood Stabilization Program <b>Federal Funds – HUD (City of Houston, conduit)</b>	Housing	Foreclosed Housing Acquisition, Repair and Resale Program. The City of Houston received \$13,542,193 in NSP funding for the 2010 fiscal year. While the eligible uses and projects for these funds is flexible, all of the 2010 funding is already designated to particular projects. \$8,802,425 is designated for the rehabilitation of the Zollie Scales Apartments.  \$3,385,549 is designated for single family rehabilitation to provide home ownership opportunities for households at or below 120% of AMI. These funds are designated for four non-profits to acquire, rehab, and sell the homes at affordable levels. \$1,354,219 is designated for administration. Funds are administered through the Housing and Community Development Department.
	Affordable Housing Tax Exemption <b>City of Houston</b>	Housing	"Standard" 25% ad valorem tax exemption. In certain cases, an enhanced exemption of 50% will be recommended.
	Residential Development Abatements <b>City of Houston</b>	Residential Development	Certain residential development facilities containing a minimum of three residential buildings. The residential development abatement is for a maximum of seven (7) years.
	Low Income Housing Tax Credits <b>Federal Government through State of Texas</b>	Private and Nonprofit Developers – Rental Housing (all types, family, senior)	Applies to new construction and rehab projects for rental units with tenants earning no more than 60% of area median income. Investors earn dollar-for-dollar credits against their federal tax liability. Investors also get tax benefits from losses. Generally, tax credits are received over the first 10 years of operation. Some tax credits are recaptured by the IRS if the project does not operate for 15 years.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9% New Construction/ Rehab Credit – the standard kind of tax credit.</li> <li>• 4% New Construction/ Rehab Credit – used when the project is federally-subsidized. Texas 2010 allocation estimated to be \$66.9M (9% tax credits); 4% tax credits are not competitive.</li> </ul> <p><b>Fourth Ward 2009 Median Income is \$45,892. Max income for family of 4 for LIHTC is \$38,280 (60% of AMI).</b></p>
	Workforce Housing Program <b>City of Houston</b>	Homebuyers between 80% - 110% of AMI	Down payment assistance program to assist households in purchasing a new home in the Houston Hope areas or any area/neighborhood designated by the Mayor of Houston for revitalization. This program will provide families whose combined gross annual income is 80 – 110 percent of Houston's median income with down payment, closing cost and pre-paid items assistance. The level of assistance provided to each approved applicant will be \$30,000 direct financial assistance to offset portions of the down payment, closing costs, pre-paid items and principal required for home purchase.
	Houston Hope Program <b>City of Houston</b>	Homebuyers at or below 80% AMI – particularly government/public safety employees	Financial assistance to low-to-moderate income homebuyers who are in the Houston Hope areas or any area/neighborhood designated by the Mayor of Houston for revitalization. Provides direct financial assistance to offset portions of the down payment, closing costs, pre-paid items and principal required for home purchase. The family's combined income must be at or below 80% of the area median income The amount of assistance is \$39,900 for teachers, police officers, firemen, and EMS personnel whose income is at or below 80% of the area median income. The amount of the assistance is \$37,500 for all other families whose income is at 80% or below the area median income Applicant(s) combined annual household income must be at or below the amounts listed in the Household Income Limits to qualify for Houston HOPE funds.  <b>Fourth Ward 2009 Median Income is \$45,892. 80% AMI for family of 4 in Houston is \$51,050</b>



Category	Name and Authorizing Body	Uses	Program Summary
<i>Housing</i>	Home Buyer Assistance Program  <b>City of Houston</b>	Homebuyers 80% AMI or below	Provide financial assistance to low-to-moderate income homebuyers in the incorporated area of the City. The family's combined income must be at or below 80% of the area median income must live in the home for 10 years for assistance to be forgiven. The amount of the assistance is \$19,500.  <b>Fourth Ward 2009 Median Income is \$45,892. 80% AMI for family of 4 in Houston is \$51,050</b>
	Houston SFHR Program  <b>City of Houston</b>	Home owners earning up to 80% of Area Median Income (AMI)	Single Family Home Repair Program ("SFHRP") is to assist as many homeowners as possible, to address only repairs needed to alleviate threats to health, life, and safety of homeowners, to improve curb appeal, uplift the general street appearance of the City of Houston, and to keep costs at a minimum. The program is budgeted to repair 241 homes in 2010, using \$4,411,251 in CDBG funds.  The three types of repairs include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Tier I) Emergency Repairs - Repair for emergency situations that were beyond the control of homeowner, Request for repair services must be within two weeks of the event.</li> <li>• (Tier II) Rehabilitation - Repairs to correct deferred maintenance items, i.e., replacement of old roof covering, foundation repair, exterior painting, etc.</li> <li>• (Tier III) Reconstruction - When a structure is determined to be beyond rehabilitation (very poor overall condition), the old structure is razed and a new home reconstructed on the site. Provides up to \$30,000 for repairs.</li> </ul> <b>Fourth Ward 2009 Median Income is \$45,892. 80% AMI for family of 4 in Houston is \$51,050</b>
<i>Historic Preservation</i>	Historic Structures Tax Exemption  <b>City of Houston</b>	Property Owners of Historic Buildings	Grant a tax exemption to qualified property owners who improve designated historic properties. The exemption applies for five (5) years when granted by the City. If combined with other tax entities, the exemption period may apply for up to ten (10) years.
	Tax Increment Financing (TIRZ)  <b>City of Houston</b>	Public/Private Developers/ All Land Uses  Historic Rehabilitation	Applying the value of future tax revenues to the cost of current improvements. Traditionally funds public improvements.  There is a requirement that one-third of the incremental tax revenue is set aside for affordable housing. The project plan for the Fourth Ward's TIRZ also includes the acquisition and preservation of historic properties and implementing an affordable housing plan. This indicates that the TIRZ may be used to finance the rehabilitation of existing historic buildings and homes, particularly if they are affordable.
	Houston SFHR Program  <b>City of Houston</b>	Home owners earning up to 80% of Area Median Income (AMI)  Exterior Rehabilitation of Historic Homes	Single Family Home Repair Program ("SFHRP") is to assist as many homeowners as possible, to address only repairs needed to alleviate threats to health, life, and safety of homeowners, to improve curb appeal, uplift the general street appearance of the City of Houston, and to keep costs at a minimum. This program may be used on the exterior rehabilitation of historic owner-occupied homes.  <b>Fourth Ward 2009 Median Income is \$45,892. 80% AMI for family of 4 in Houston is \$51,050</b>
<i>Commercial Land Uses &amp; Community Facilities</i>	New Market Tax Credits  <b>Federal Government (process through syndicators/investors)</b>	Private and Non Profit Developers  Commercial Development and Community Facilities	Provides a credit against Federal income taxes for investors that make Qualified Equity Investments (QEIs) into Community Development Entities (CDEs). CDEs in turn use the proceeds of these investments to make Qualified Low-Income Community Investments (QLICs).  QLICs include, among other things, investments in businesses and real estate projects in low-income communities. The credit is taken over a 7-year period The credit rate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5% of the original investment amount in each of the first three years</li> <li>• 6% of the original investment amount in each of the final four years</li> <li>• Equals 39% of amount of original investment</li> </ul> <b>Must be located in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT). Fourth Ward is a Qualified Census Tract – Distressed .</b> Ex. A \$1M NMTC would equal ~ \$390,000 in equity investment in an eligible project
	Tax Abatements  <b>City of Houston</b>	Commercial Development/ Business Development	To attract new industry and to expand and retain existing businesses. The taxing unit in the agreement must establish a set of guidelines and criteria, including timeframe of the agreement (which may not exceed 10 years) and delineate a "reinvestment zone" within which the tax abatement will apply.

Category	Name and Authorizing Body	Uses	Program Summary
<i>Commercial Land Uses &amp; Community Facilities</i>	Neighborhood Facilities Funding  <b>Federal Funds – HUD (CDBG Funds Houston HCD Department)</b>	Neighborhood Facilities (libraries, parks, community centers, etc.)	CDBG funds can be used for neighborhood facilities such as libraries, parks, and community centers. Applications for CDBG funding for neighborhood facilities are due in November and HCDD prioritizes the projects and reviews them with City Council and the Mayor in April. In 2009 the city had approximately \$8 million in budget for neighborhood facilities but there were \$110 million in requests. HCDD plans to increase its focus on privately owned projects, with the number of privately owned projects receiving funding increasing from 2 in 2008 to 6 in 2009, and up to 14 in 2010.
	Sales Tax Rebates  <b>City of Houston</b>	Business Assistance	Businesses that collect and remit municipal sales taxes can receive rebates for generated taxes.
	Bond Financing  <b>City of Houston</b>	Sports and Civic Venues, Tax increment projects, Manufacturing and Commercial facilities	Issue debt to finance certain economic development activities.
	Green Tax Abatement  <b>City of Houston</b>	Commercial Development	The investment requirement will be at least \$1 million for a commercial structure with Platinum LEED Certification, and at least \$10 million for a commercial with the Basic Certification.
<i>Infrastructure</i>	Tax Increment Financing (TIRZ)  <b>City of Houston</b>	Public/Private Developers/ All Land Uses  Public Infrastructure Historic Rehabilitation	Applying the value of future tax revenues to the cost of current improvements. TIF can be initiated through petition by at least 50 percent of affected property owners, or, as most typically occurs, TIF may be initiated by a city or county when an area is found to “substantially impair the city or county’s growth”.  Project costs include capital costs, including the actual costs of the acquisition and construction of public works, public improvements, new buildings, structures, and fixtures; the actual costs of the acquisition, demolition, alteration, remodeling, repair, or reconstruction of existing buildings, structures, and fixtures; and the actual costs of the acquisition of land and equipment and the clearing and grading of land.
	4A & 4B Loans  <b>Texas Development Corp</b>	Land Acquisition, Parking Structures, Utilities upgrades	All 4A and 4B loans/grants must facilitate the creation of primary jobs in communities (i.e. traditional manufacturing and industrial employment) or community development activities (i.e. sports facilities, public park facilities, entertainment and tourist facilities, and affordable housing).  Land acquisition and parking garages may be funded to the extent that the facilities support primary job creation or community development activities. Upgrades to water and sewer, electric, gas, telecommunications and internet are limited to projects that create primary jobs in the community or feature community development elements.
	City/County Venue Project Tax per Chapters 334 and 335 of the Texas Local Government Code.  <b>State of TX</b>	Parking Structures	Cities and counties also may fund parking for sports and community venues.

Category	Name and Authorizing Body	Uses	Program Summary
<i>Infrastructure</i>	Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)	Parking Structures	Can be used to fund transit related parking facilities, which also can be used to leverage private or local government investment in non-transit related parking.
	<b>H-GAC</b>		
	Public Improvement Districts	Public Infrastructure, Business Promotion & Retention	Cities and counties may levy and collect special assessments on property. Such districts must be established through petition initiated by the governing body or affected property owners to fund: street and sidewalk improvements; mass transit improvements; parking improvements; library improvements; park, recreation and cultural improvements; landscaping and other aesthetic improvements; art installation; creation of pedestrian malls; supplemental safety services; and supplemental business-related services (e.g. advertising and business recruitment).
	<b>Harris County/City of Houston</b>		
	Municipal Management Districts	Commercial Property Owners, infrastructure, facilities and services above and beyond those provided by the local municipality	Property owners may impose special taxes, special assessments and impact fees or other charges to property owners within the district in order to fund: water, wastewater, health and sanitation or drainage, road or mass transit improvements, solid waste, sewer, power facilities, parks, historic areas, works of art, parking facilities, transit systems, and supplemental services (e.g. advertising, economic development, business recruitment, promotion of health and sanitation, public safety, traffic control, recreation and cultural enhancement).
	<b>City of Houston</b>		
Municipal Development Districts	Land Acquisition, Parking Structures, Utilities upgrades	Cities may establish, through election municipal development districts that may levy additional sales tax for economic development projects similar to those levied under Sections 4A and 4B. Municipal development districts fill a void left by Sections 4A and 4B; under those sections, such taxes may not be levied in a city's extraterritorial jurisdiction and they may not be levied when a city has reached its two-percent sales tax cap.	
<b>City of Houston</b>			
Neighborhood Matching Grant Program	Beautification, Physical Neighborhood Improvements	Provides matching grants up to \$5,000 for projects that benefit the community. Grants are only available for non-profit organizations. The grants match the investment of the non-profit, up to \$5,000, and can be used for beautification or other physical improvements, as long as the project provides long-term benefits for the neighborhood and involves residents. While not applicable to funding redevelopment projects, these grants but may be a good resource for local non-profits or community associations with discrete physical projects to implement in the Fourth Ward.	
<b>City of Houston</b>			
<i>Brownfield Development</i>	Brownfield Development Abatements	Brownfield Redevelopment, all land uses	For investments made subject to a "voluntary cleanup agreement under Section 361.606 of the Texas Health and Safety Code" and located in a reinvestment zone The brownfields development abatement is for a maximum of four (4) years.
	<b>City of Houston</b>		
Brownfields Tax Credit	Private Developers, all land uses	Developers of brownfield sites will be able to expense the cost of certain environmental remediation expenditures in the year the remediation is done. The expenditure must be incurred in connection with the abatement or control of hazardous substances at a qualified contaminated site.	
<b>City of Houston</b>			



# DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

## Overview

Creating a Livable Center involves more than the physical improvements typically articulated in a Livable Centers Plan – the motivation and momentum for implementation is imperative to the success of the plan. The power to implement a plan relies directly on the community - the individuals, organizations, institutions, and businesses that are, and will be, the enduring change agents in the study area. This chapter is about the people and the organizations that already make things happen in the study area. It is about the leaders and groups that have the greatest potential to affect change in the future.

Progress within the Fourth Ward can be observed more in parks and public infrastructure than in economic development. While economic improvements within the Fourth Ward have been slow to develop, this has not stopped the economic influence of the adjacent Midtown redevelopment. This activity has created much higher density in the area, which will create greater demand for retail services that serve nearby residents.

The various entities continue to put a lot of energy into enriching the experiences of community members through parks and cultural centers. Efforts made by local churches, the TIRZ, and Yates Museum are maintaining and uncovering the cultural resources that make the Fourth Ward a unique place to live and do business.

Another major success for the area will be the construction of a modern set of HISD facilities. Proximity to such facilities and programs will improve the overall quality of life and access to opportunity in the area.

Within its geographic context and under the guidance of community leaders, the future of the Fourth Ward is likely to include a healthy mix of redevelopment and cultural restoration. The political will and local interest are both in place to create future success stories in the Fourth Ward.

This section outlines local actors who have the decision making authority to influence the course of development in the Fourth Ward. Here we will examine the City of Houston departments and the various elected officials who have the power to affect change. The role of the TIRZ board is also outlined.



*TIRZ #14 has focused on projects that are an immediate improvement for residents.*



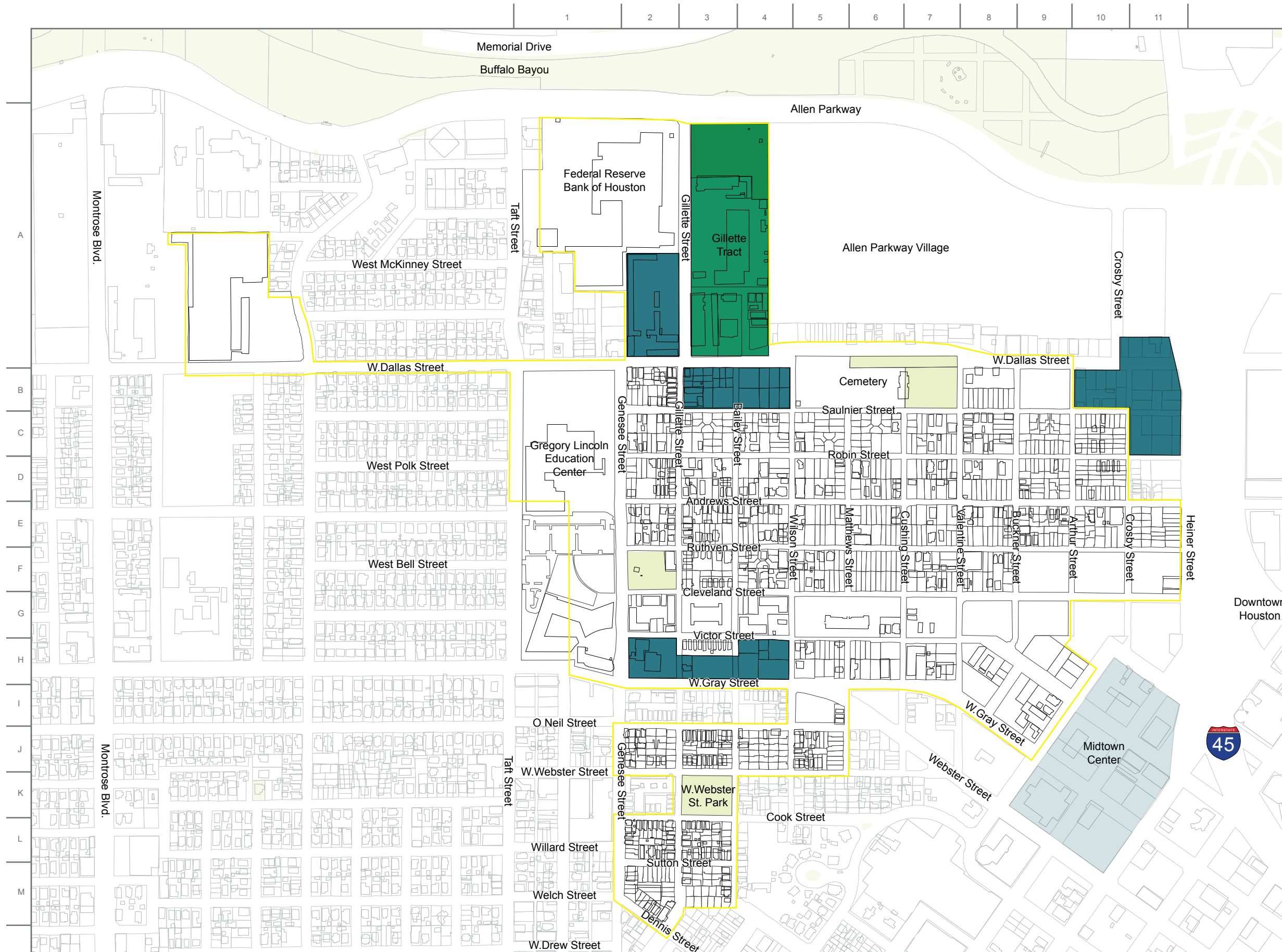
*Preservation and restoration efforts such as the African American Library create enduring cultural and civic symbols in the neighborhood. These types of projects will help to attract redevelopment and investment in the area.*



*Parks improvements at Wiley, West Webster and San Felipe have all been funded by TIRZ #14. These projects not only enrich the lives of residents, they also attract new residents and investment.*



*Camden represents a development pattern that is growing due to the success of Midtown. Although this type of development displaces endemic character, it also provides densities needed to support services and retail.*



## Development of Centers & Gillette Tract

The key redevelopment component of this plan is the creation of “centers”, as discussed in the Overall Framework chapter. It is imperative for local leaders and political leaders to work with land owners and developers to ensure the intent of these developments is met. For the Fourth Ward to attract the types of local services and housing options it desires, these projects must be successful.

The Gillette Tract offers a unique opportunity for the Fourth Ward. Owned entirely by the City of Houston, it currently serves as a public works facility. Due to its proximity to the Federal Reserve property, there are restrictions governing its future usage. A number of options laid out in the document suggest ways in which the property can be used. All proposals currently call for a mixture of uses including residential and a greenway along Gillette Street connecting the rest of the Fourth Ward to Buffalo Bayou.

### LEGEND

- Proposed Center
- Existing Center
- Gillette Tract

*This map shows the three areas that should be considered for new centers, and also identifies the general arrangement of the existing center in Midtown.*



## How Can the City of Houston Help?

### *City of Houston Department of Planning & Development*

The Planning and Development Department's mission is to work to ensure that Houston remains vibrant and sustainable, by partnering with decision makers and the community to balance a spectrum of needs and interests, while addressing the dynamics of growth and change. Some of its key initiatives include:

- Parking Ordinance Review
- Historic Preservation Ordinance Review
- The New HoustonPreservation.org Website
- 2010 MTFP Amendment Process

### **City of Houston Receives Recognition of Outstanding Planning by Texas-APA:**

Planning & Development have already made tangible progress in this regard, with the Texas-APA (American Planning Association) Awards Committee choosing the City of Houston as the recipient of the Chapter's 2010 Project Planning Award. The award recognizes the Houston Midtown Livable Centers Study which was inspired by Houston-Galveston Area Council's Livable Centers Program. The program is designed to facilitate the creation of walkable, mixed-use places that provide multi-modal transportation options, improve environmental quality, and promote economic development. It is the goal of this next study to attain the same status, but also to enable development and implementation of many of the goals derived in the Study.

Planning and Development have been part of the effort to address historic preservation in the City, with various levels of success. In 1995, City Council adopted Houston's Historic Preservation Ordinance, in an effort to preserve these important reminders of our past.

Through this ordinance, the City of Houston offers several types of ways to help maintain Houston's architectural history. Landmark and Protected Landmark designations allow for both recognition and protection of individual historic structures; while Historic District designations help neighborhoods by classifying a specific area of a community as historically and significantly important.

Charged with administering the ordinance is the

Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC). The HAHC is responsible for reviewing and nominating all designations as well as Certificates of Appropriateness (COA), a process required for all projects that seek to alter the exterior appearance of a city designated historic property.

### *Historic Preservation Ordinance Amendments*

The City of Houston is proposing amendments to the Historic Preservation Ordinance that will protect historic properties within city-designated historic districts. The proposed changes include:

- Elimination of the 90-day waiver for historic properties when a Certificate of Appropriateness is denied by the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission;
- A revised historic district designation process;
- Clarifications regarding the use of new building materials.

With these efforts coordinated by the Mayor's Office, Planning and Development, and Council, these ordinances could go a long way toward protecting many of the valuable landmarks and history of the Fourth Ward.

### *Neighborhood Planning*

The Neighborhood Planning division of the Planning & Development Department works to build the capacity of neighborhood organizations and super neighborhood councils. They actively partner with other agencies to create a broad-based, multi-disciplinary program focused on providing technical assistance and training, responding to emerging issues and building healthy neighborhoods.

Some of their programs and activities include:

- Deed Restriction Assistance
- LARA Board Plans
- Management Districts
- Neighborhood Leadership Institute
- Neighborhood Matching Grant Program
- Minimum Lot Size / Building Line
- Super Neighborhoods
- Prohibited Yard Parking Program

The division also supports programs and initiatives designed to encourage the stabilization or revitalization of neighborhoods.

### *City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department (PARD)*

One of the oldest departments in the City, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) was created by City Ordinance on March 15, 1916. The Department of Public Parks, as it was called at that time, began with two facilities - Sam Houston Park and Hermann Park. Taken together, they totaled about 465 acres of land.

Today, PARD manages over 38,992 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston; develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all abilities; maintains greenspace for the Houston Public Library and the Houston Health Department; and manages all PARD facilities.

A partnership with the Fourth Ward has been positively created, with the care and development of two (20) parks currently within the District. However, it remains to be seen if this relationship will stand the test of time, as the imminent development of San Felipe park toward uses benefiting the community at-large, will have a lasting impact on all involved. There has been a level of communication that has been appreciated, so there is hope that this intentionality will continue.

### *City of Houston Department of Public Works and Engineering (PWE)*

The City of Houston Public Works and Engineering Department (PWE) provides many of the basic services that affect the daily lives of everyone who lives and works in Houston. The department is primarily responsible for the administration, planning, maintenance, construction management and technical engineering of the City's infrastructure. This includes the production and distribution of over 146 billion gallons of water per year, and the treatment of over 90 billion gallons per year of wastewater. It also includes the maintenance of the City's 16,000 lane miles of streets, over 60,000 stormwater manholes, over 100,000 stormwater inlets, over 900,000 street name and traffic control signs, over 17,000 freeways and under bridge light fixtures, over 50,000 fire hydrants and traffic signals at over 2,000 intersections.

PWE is staffed with a work force of approximately 3,900 employees under the leadership of Daniel W. Krueger, P.E. The annual operating budget of the department is approximately \$1.2 billion. Operating funds are derived from a number of sources including user fees, utility charges and General Fund revenue. The department is also responsible for implementing the storm water, street, wastewater and water programs of the Mayor's five-year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) with a bond-funded budget in excess of \$450 million per year.

As they are the ultimate arbiters of much of the infrastructure development to occur in the parameters of the Fourth Ward, it is imperative that this department is aligned with the perspectives of the Fourth Ward. They have been consistently involved in all deliberations and discussions, and have weighed in with team members and community members alike. There has been some disagreement over the best approach for some complex infrastructure issues – but there is agreement that they are interested in the most appropriate development and maintenance of the infrastructure of the Fourth Ward.



## What Can Elected Officials & TIRZ #14 Do?

### *Mayor Annise Parker and the Mayor's Office*

Mayor Annise D. Parker serves as the Executive Officer of the City. As the City's chief administrator and official representative, the Mayor is responsible for the general management of the City and for seeing that all laws and ordinances are enforced. Administrative duties include the appointments, with Council approval, of department heads and persons serving on advisory boards.

As Executive Officer, the Mayor administers oaths and signs all motions, resolutions and ordinances passed by City Council. The Mayor also serves a legislative function, presiding over City Council with voting privileges. The Mayor is responsible for advising Council of the City's financial condition and presents to Council an annual budget for approval.

Mayor Annise D. Parker is committed to the preservation of Houston's historic buildings and districts. She was instrumental in the protection of the Old Sixth Ward, enabling it to attain special status as a Historic District. The Office of Cultural Affairs serves as the liaison to arts, historic preservation and neighborhood organizations and works with several Redevelopment Authorities and Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones on neighborhood conservation issues and projects. Additionally, this office works on special projects in Parks and Libraries.

The Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs works on a variety of historic preservation initiatives including strengthening the historic preservation ordinance, creating tax incentives for preservation, and developing outreach materials. The Mayor's Assistant for Cultural Affairs, Minnette Boesel, has been a key member on behalf of the Mayor in the development of the Livable Centers Study, participating not only on the Historic Preservation committee, but on the Community Development committee as well.

### *City Council*

The City Council is the City's legislative body, with the power to enact and enforce all ordinances and resolutions. Nine (9) Council Members are elected from districts and five (5) are elected at-large, by all voters of the City.

The fourteen (14) members of Council, along with the Mayor, act only by ordinance, resolution or motion. They adopt and may alter the annual budget and confirm the Mayor's appointments. Council is responsible for the appropriation and issuance of bonds, the awarding of contracts and the approval of City expenditures over \$50,000. Council may lease or dispose of the City's real estate and may levy assessments against property. Council determines its own rules of procedure, and its meetings are open to the public.

Fourteen Council Members are elected every two years, in odd-numbered years. Council Members are limited to serving three (3) terms of two (2) years each, with each term beginning on January 2 of the even-numbered year. Five (5) Council Members are elected At-Large, or city-wide, while the other nine (9) are elected to geographic districts of roughly the same proportion of population. According to the City Charter, once the population of the City of Houston exceeds 2.1 million, expected for the 2010 census, two more geographic council districts will be added.

The current formation of the City Council in the City of Houston allows for quite a bit of public interaction and dialogue, both through their public Council sessions, as well as through individual meetings with respective Council Members. Many of them have an open-door policy, allowing for the voices of the Fourth Ward to effectively be heard. Once said voices have been communicated, the Council has the ability to assemble information to best serve the interests of the community, as well as the wherewithal to effect appropriate change in the built environment.

Several Council Members have played an integral part in the development of the Plan, as well as were involved in the community. Some of the involvement is detailed below.

### **James Rodriguez**

James Rodriguez, a lifelong resident of Houston's East End and graduate of Milby High School, was sworn in as a Houston City Council Member for District I on January 2, 2008. District I encompasses most of the Fourth Ward.

Councilmember Rodriguez frequently meets with District I constituents and spends most evenings and weekends participating in community events across the District. He is one a first name basis with the District's civic leaders, business owners and clergy members, and we found that most of the leaders in the Fourth Ward had spoken to him personally.

Mr. Rodriguez's current council member assignments include the following:

- M/WBE, Small Contractor Development and Contract Compliance, Chair
- Sustainable Growth, Vice Chair
- Budget & Fiscal Affairs
- Public Safety & Homeland Security
- Regulation Development & Neighborhood Protection
- Transportation, Infrastructure, & Aviation
- Texas Municipal League, Director At Large, Houston
- Houston-Galveston Area Council, Board Member
- Alternate Council Member on the Houston-Galveston Area Council Transportation Policy Council

Of these myriad appointments, it is his participation on the Regulation Development/Neighborhood Protection, Sustainable Growth, and Public Safety committees that could prove most useful to the Fourth Ward. With the constant focus on equitable development, especially given the Ward's tenuous physical association with Downtown Houston, as well as Midtown, a consistent and compassionate focus on the development of Fourth Ward is extremely advantageous. Additionally, there needs to be corollary focus on the Transportation issues of the community, and its infrastructure – both places where CM Rodrigues can help immensely.

### **Jolanda Jones**

Councilmember Jolanda Jones, as a second term at-large member, has relationships in the Fourth Ward that go back years. In addition to being a lifelong resident, she has focuses on housing and community development issues throughout the City, and continues to make that her focus during her tenure on the Council.

Some of her recent Citywide accomplishments include:

- Siding the residents of Southampton – an upscale community in central Houston – against the developers of high rise luxury apartment complex, an out-of-scale project that threatens to destroy the character of their neighborhood.
- Fighting for the senior disabled residents of Bellerive – a Houston Housing Authority property – so they wouldn't be charged for costs they could not afford to clean up asbestos after a fire damaged their units.
- Pitching in after Hurricane Ike, arranging for 18-wheelers stocked with ice and water to stock the PODS on which many depended.

One of her most passionate concerns is the establishment of affordable fresh food in the Fourth Ward area. She has indicated to the Livable Centers team that she will 'do what it takes,' to ensure that this happens for the community. She is also interested in the provision of affordable housing in the District, and as Chair of the Housing Committee for Council, plays a lead role in the success of this endeavor.

## Wanda Adams

Councilmember Wanda Adams is the representative for District D, one of the largest districts at 144 square miles, stretching from Montrose to neighboring Missouri City. For comparison, District D is as large as the city of Atlanta. Its diversity of clientele lends to it being so interesting, according to CM Adams, as many of the concerns of District I, its neighbor, are shared by her district.

CM Adams works with her colleagues on numerous committees, including:

- Neighborhood Protection and Quality of Life, Chair;
- Technology Initiatives and Human Services, Vice-Chair;
- Budget and Fiscal Affairs;
- Development and Regulatory Affairs;
- Flooding and Drainage;
- Housing and Community Development;
- MWBE/Small Contractor Development;
- Public Safety and Homeland Security; and
- Transportation, Infrastructure and Aviation.

CM Adams has done participated at the community level through a variety of endeavors, as her civic engagement began years before her ascent to office. That level of intentionality is readily apparent in her Council appointments, as well as her careful and compassionate ear. She will be integral in the development of the Fourth Ward, especially with Housing and Community Development, Neighborhood Protection, Public Safety, and Transportation and Infrastructure.

## Sue Lovell

The Houston City Council elected Council Member Sue Lovell Vice Mayor Pro-Tem in a unanimous vote on January 2, 2008. Lovell chairs the Transportation, Infrastructure, and Aviation committee. Integral to the development of the Fourth Ward, this committee will consider ground transportation and general mobility, management of public utilities and right-of-way infrastructure. CM Lovell facilitates a monthly, public meeting for this committee on the second Tuesday of each month.

Additionally, Lovell currently serves on the following committees:

- Budget and Fiscal Affairs
- Ethics
- Human Services and Technology Access
- Public Safety and Homeland Security
- Quality of Life
- Sustainable Growth
- Regulation, Development and Neighborhood Protection

In addition to chairing the Transportation committee, her commitment to the Human Services and Sustainable Growth committees could prove invaluable. CM Lovell already has a documented interest in historic preservation, previously serving as Chair of the Historic Preservation Sub-Committee which is a sincere concern for the Fourth Ward. Additionally, her interest in addressing the Digital Divide will go far in eliminating said Divide in the Ward, especially amongst youth and seniors.

During her first term on the Houston City Council, Council Member Lovell served on Budget and Fiscal Affairs, Ethics, Human Services and Technology Access, Public Safety and Homeland Security, Quality of Life, Regulation, Development and Neighborhood Protection, and Environment and Public Health Committee. She was also the Chair of the Historic Preservation Sub-Committee.

## Texas State Representative Garnet Coleman

State Representative Garnet F. Coleman has served the people of District 147 continuously since 1991. His years of service have earned him a reputation as a diligent leader in the areas of health care, economic development and education. He is currently the Senior ranking member of the Public Health Committee as well as the Chairman of the County Affairs Committee. Representative Coleman also serves as a member of the Select Committee on Federal Economic Stabilization Funding, which is charged with ensuring that the state maximize its share of funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

Striving to increase economic development in Texas, Rep. Coleman has been instrumental in passing legislation fostering urban redevelopment. He authored and passed legislation that created the Greater Southeast Management District, the Downtown Management District and the Fourth Ward Redevelopment Authority. Representative Coleman also authored legislation allowing the creation of a commercial and industrial development zone in Harris County, which is designed to promote economic development along the transportation corridors that link Houston-area transportation nodes.

The accolades afforded Rep. Coleman are lengthy – just a sampling from 2009 include the following:

- Texas Medical Association's 2009 Friend of Medicine Award
- Harris County Medical Society's Patient Care Champion Award
- Texas Academy of Family Physicians' 2009 Patient Advocacy Award
- Texas Hospital Association's 2009 Texas Hospital Advocacy Tribute Award
- Texas Association of Counties 2009 Champion of County Government Award
- Capitol Inside Honorable Mention in Best of the Legislature 2009
- Named 2009 People's Friend by Texas Monthly
- Mental Health America of Greater Houston Legislative Award - June 2009
- Cenikor annual - Elected Official Award September 2009
- The Gathering Place 2009 Founder's Award

An ardent supporter of communities, and specifi-

cally the preservation of Fourth Ward, Rep. Coleman is committed to ensuring that affordable housing is preserved and even improved in the areas, in lieu of the increased amount of higher-end rental and for-sale opportunities there. Additionally, he too is focused on the benefits afforded the predominantly African-American community that has been there for generations, allowing for more access to quality foods, better access to transportation, and better infrastructure.

## TIRZ Board

The Fourth Ward Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (Fourth Ward TIRZ) was created under Chapter 311 of the Texas Tax Code to facilitate the revitalization of the Historic Fourth Ward from a blighted and deteriorating neighborhood into a viable residential community, with supporting commercial development. This effort was spearheaded by Texas State Representative Garnet Coleman, and was formally established by Houston City Council on 9 June, 1999.

### Composition of Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of a reinvestment zone generally consists of at least five (5) and not more than 15 members. Each taxing unit other than the municipality or county that created the zone that levies taxes on real property in the zone may appoint one (1) member of the board.

In our specific case, TIRZ #14 is governed by a Board of nine (9) Directors with six (6) appointed by Houston's Mayor and City Council, one (1) appointed by the HISD Board of Trustees, one (1) by Senator Rodney Ellis and one (1) by Representative Garnet Coleman.

Members of the Board are appointed for terms of two (2) years, unless longer terms are provided under Article XI, Section 11, of the Texas Constitution. Terms of members may be staggered. A vacancy on the board is filled for the unexpired term by appointment of the governing body of the taxing unit that appointed the director who served in the vacant position.

To be eligible for appointment to the Board by the governing body that created the zone, an individual must generally:

- Be a qualified voter of the municipality or county, as applicable; or
- Be at least 18 years of age and own real property in the zone, whether or not the individual resides in the municipality or county.

The current Board of Directors of TIRZ #14, representing the Fourth Ward, as of this writing, include:

- Pos. 1 – Director - Dallas Jones - State Senate Appointment
- Pos. 2 – Director - Carvana Hicks-Cloud - State Rep. Appointment
- Pos. 3 – Director - Dr. Roland Strobel – City of

- Houston Appointment
- Pos. 4 – Director- Reverend Owen Brown - City of Houston Appointment
- Pos. 5 – Chairman - Omar Reid - City of Houston Appointment
- Pos. 6 – Director- Jacqueline Bostic - City of Houston Appointment
- Pos. 7 – Secretary- Felix Cisneros - City of Houston Appointment
- Pos. 8 – Director - John Thomas - HISD Appointment
- Pos. 9 – Director- Dr. Samuel Smith - City of Houston Appointment

### Powers and Duties of Board of Directors

The City of Houston by ordinance or resolution may authorize the Board to exercise any of the municipality's powers with respect to the administration, management, or operation of the zone or the implementation of the Project Plan for the zone, except the power to:

- Issue bonds;
- Impose taxes or fees;
- Exercise the power of eminent domain; or
- Give final approval to the Project Plan.

This still gives the Board an amount of power to define the strategy and intent for the growth of the Ward, as well as enabling the Board to set the direction and invite the appropriate parties to help with its development. Much of this occurs through the design and implementation of the Project Plan.

### Project and Financing Plans

One of the primary roles of the Board is to prepare and adopt a Project Plan and a Reinvestment Zone Financing Plan for the Zone, and to forward said plans to the City of Houston. The plans must be as consistent as possible with the preliminary plans developed for the zone prior to the creation of the Board.

The Project Plan must include:

- A map showing existing uses and conditions of real property in the Zone and a map showing proposed improvements to and proposed uses of that property;
- Proposed changes of zoning ordinances, the master plan of the City, building codes, other municipal ordinances, and subdivision rules and

- regulations, if any, if applicable;
- A list of estimated non-project costs; and
- A statement of a method of relocating persons to be displaced as a result of implementing the Plan.

The current Project Plan in place addresses all of the above. Additionally, the Reinvestment Zone Financing Plan must include:

- A detailed list describing the estimated project costs of the zone, including administrative expenses;
- A statement listing the kind, number, and location of all proposed public works or public improvements in the Zone;
- An economic feasibility study;
- The estimated amount of bonded indebtedness to be incurred;
- The time when related costs or monetary obligations are to be incurred;
- A description of the methods of financing all estimated project costs and the expected sources of revenue to finance or pay project costs, including the percentage of tax increment to be derived from the property taxes of each taxing unit that levies taxes on real property in the Zone;
- The current total appraised value of taxable real property in the Zone;
- The estimated captured appraised value of the zone during each year of its existence; and
- The duration of the Zone.

The Board, at any time, may adopt an amendment to the Project Plan consistent with the requirements and limitations of this chapter. The amendment takes effect on approval by the governing body of the municipality that created the zone. That approval must be by ordinance. If an amendment reduces or increases the geographic area of the zone, increases the amount of bonded indebtedness to be incurred, increases or decreases the percentage of a tax increment to be contributed by a taxing unit, increases the total estimated project costs, or designates additional property in the zone to be acquired by the municipality, the approval must be by ordinance, as applicable, adopted after a public hearing. The public hearing and open policy of this clause enables a truly equitable process, and ensures that the voices of the community are not only represented, but can be heard as well.



# OVERCOME BARRIERS

## Overview

This chapter will address some of the key regulatory barriers to achieving the vision set forth in this document such as historic preservation protection, private property maintenance, and setbacks. For each of these, the conflict with the Livable Center vision will be discussed, some similar case studies will be highlighted, and a recommendation will be proposed. The results of this chapter will highlight regulatory changes that should be proposed to ensure development happens in a manner befitting a Livable Center.



*Historic preservation, infrastructure, vacant lands, development pressures, and property maintenance are all issues that have to include regulatory provisions as part of solution. The area is dotted with blighted properties, overgrown lots, and new construction that completely ignores the context of the area.*

## Removal of Visual Blight

There are two ways to improve maintenance of existing structures – with “carrots” (incentives and grants) and with “sticks” (fines and condemnation). There are very few carrots or sticks available for use in the Fourth Ward. The City of Houston does offer a small pool of funds for use towards the maintenance and upkeep of historic structures. Grants are competitive and typically small because the city only has \$450,000 annually to spend throughout the entire city. The City requires that a non-profit access the grant funding and oversee the use of the funds.

It is unlawful for any person to allow a building he has ownership, control, or possession of to be kept or used in violation of the Minimum Building Standards Ordinance. Minimum Building Standards include: property, structural, utility, health, light and ventilation standards for all buildings. Fines are assessed and collected by the City of Houston Neighborhood Protection Corps who seeks to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods by reducing blight and substandard living conditions. Here is a brief list of violations and the fines they can incur:

**Poor Property Maintenance:** Overgrown (greater than 9”) weeds, shrubs, grass and vegetation are fire and safety hazards. The Property owner/occupant is responsible for the property, which includes the right-of-way abutting the property. Fines range from \$50-\$2,000

**Obstructions:** Any obstruction that extends over a public sidewalk, street, or public right-of-way, and creates a public safety hazard. Fines are up to \$500 (\$200-\$2,000 where dumpsters are located on a Public Right-of-Way)

**Visible Junk or Inoperable Motor Vehicles:** A junked or inoperable vehicle is any vehicle that has an expired license plate, invalid inspection sticker and is wrecked, dismantled, discarded or is inoperable and remains inoperable for more than 30 days. The vehicle must be screened by completely enclosing the vehicle in a building. Car covers, tarps and bamboo shades and other types of materials are not acceptable screening. Fine: none

**Broken Fences:** A broken fence must be repaired and keep it in good repair. Fine: \$200-2,000

**Open and/or Vacant Structures on Your Property:** Windows, doors and other openings on vacant buildings and structures must be kept secured to prevent unauthorized entry. A property owner may be required to board up a building/structure if it becomes vacant and is not secured. Storage sheds and garages must also be secured. The property owner is responsible for all buildings and structures on the property. Fines: \$200-\$2000

**Appliances:** Property owners must remove and properly dispose of inoperable refrigerators, freezers, air conditioning units, and other appliances to avoid dangerous conditions for children, animals, and others. Fines: \$200-\$2,000

**Open and/or Visible Storage:** Property owners must not store certain materials out in the open. These materials include dead trees, tires, refuse, glass, building materials, appliances, and inoperable boats. Junk, trash, litter and rubbish cannot be deposited or allowed to accumulate on a lot or street. This includes junked auto parts, appliances, furniture, building materials, tires, discarded paper, tree trimmings, cardboard, plastics, fallen tree limbs and other offensive or objectionable materials.

**Discarded Tires:** Property owners must remove or properly store any tires. Fines: \$250-\$2,000

**Abandoned Appliances:** Property owners must remove or properly store any vehicle that cannot move under its own power, does not have a current license plate or inspection sticker, and is wrecked, dismantled, partially dismantled, is discarded, or that remains continuously inoperable for over 30 days. Fines: \$250-\$2,000

**Abandoned/Inoperable Vehicles:** Property owners must remove or properly store any vehicle that cannot move under its own power, does not have a current license plate or inspection sticker, and is wrecked, dismantled, partially dismantled, is discarded, or that remains continuously inoperable for over 30 days. Fine: \$250-2,000

**Improperly Placing Garbage or Heavy Trash for City Pick-Up:** Waste collected by the City is limited to standard waste generated by a residential user in connection with activities for residential purposes, i.e. garbage OR waste generated in connection with the

maintenance of a vacant lot. Garbage and materials must be placed on the curbside for collection after 6:00 p.m. on the Friday preceding your neighborhood’s designated collection day. Materials placed for collection cannot block the sidewalk, street or ditch.

**Overflowing Dumpsters:** Fines range from \$50-\$2000.

**Dead Trees:** Fines range from \$200-\$2,000

**Visual Blight:** Graffiti is any unauthorized painting, writing, inscription, initials, slogans, or drawings regardless of content, which is applied to a wall, building, fence, sign or other structural surface that is visible from any public property or right-of-way, or from the private property of another person. The property owner is responsible for ensuring that any graffiti that is visible from public or private property, is immediately removed. Fines can be up to \$500

If the owner and/or occupants of a property fail to timely comply with a request to correct any violations, the City may correct the violation at the owners expense and file a lien to recover the cost of abatement. In extreme cases of abandonment, the City could take condemnation actions.



*Visual blight affects the moral of the community, as well as property values. These properties can be dangerous for children and tend to harbor pests.*



*Vacant properties must be well protected from trespassing, vagrancy, and arson. Fencing and boarding are not desirable within a community, but necessary for minimizing criminal activity and harm to historic structures.*

## Historic Protections

In 1995, City Council adopted Houston's Historic Preservation Ordinance, in an effort to preserve historically significant structures, sites, and districts. Through this ordinance, the City of Houston offers several types of ways to help maintain Houston's architectural history. Landmark and Protected Landmark designations allow for both recognition and protection of individual historic structures; while Historic District designations help neighborhoods by classifying a specific area of a community as historically and significantly important. The Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC) is charged with administering the ordinance including reviewing and nominating all designations as well as granting Certificates of Appropriateness (COA), a process required for all projects that seek to alter the exterior appearance of a city designated historic property.

The City of Houston is aware that the existing Historic Preservation Ordinance is too weak to be effective in saving historic structures throughout the city. They are in the process of reviewing this set of ordinances, and the expected changes to this program should revolutionize the tools for preservation available to the Fourth Ward. Most local organizations are aware of this and will gladly enforce it once in place.

In addition, several locally designated historic districts such as the 6th Ward have adopted tougher standards for historic preservation, resulting in inconsistencies across the city. Because of this, the City of Houston is proposing amendments to the Historic Preservation Ordinance that will better protect historic properties within city-designated historic districts. The proposed changes include:

- Elimination of the 90-day waiver for historic properties when a Certificate of Appropriateness is denied by the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission;
- A revised historic district designation process;
- Compatibility guidelines for new construction in an historic district such as setback, exterior features and proportions of contributing and potential contributing structures on the block-face and facing block faces; and
- Clarifications regarding the use of new building materials.

In addition to City regulations, updated design guidelines should be in place for future growth. This particularly relates to new construction within the area defined by SWCA in their 2010 district boundary. This study also recommends that such guidelines are extended along Wilson and Andrews Streets, which is outlined in the Development of Alternatives Chapter.

The Redevelopment Strategies for Freedman's Town publication by the Center for Historic Architecture (1995) should be considered a starting point for local guidelines with additional sections related to site planning, landscape, and energy requirements. The overall structure of the guidelines may need to be re-considered with the drastic reduction of protected area outlined in the 2010 boundary.



Map Source: SWCA Environmental Consultants, 2010.  
Note: Draft version of map, refer to final SWCA report for final version and recommendations.



## New Construction Setbacks

The historic setbacks in the Fourth Ward are quite small; this pattern prevails in much of the district today. The current City of Houston Development Ordinance allows for setbacks of 10 feet along local streets and 25 feet along major thoroughfares. The Fourth Ward area is made up of both types of streets. New development in the Fourth Ward has eroded the historic pattern over the years as variances have been granted that allow much smaller setbacks on the local streets. On the major thoroughfares, the 25-foot setback has resulted in 64-foot setbacks that place all parking in the front of the building.

If a developer requests a setback less than the ordinance, State Law dictates criteria that must be met before the Houston Planning Commission can grant the variance. Economic hardship is not a basis for a variance, nor is good design or New Urbanist principles.

There are many examples where the setbacks along local streets have been reduced to much less than the historic pattern. New townhomes are built nearly to the property line allowing the developer to squeeze in another unit or accommodate access to the site. Since the Houston Planning Commission can control the amount of a variance, presumably they could amend their practices to ensure setbacks are in alignment with the surrounding development patterns.

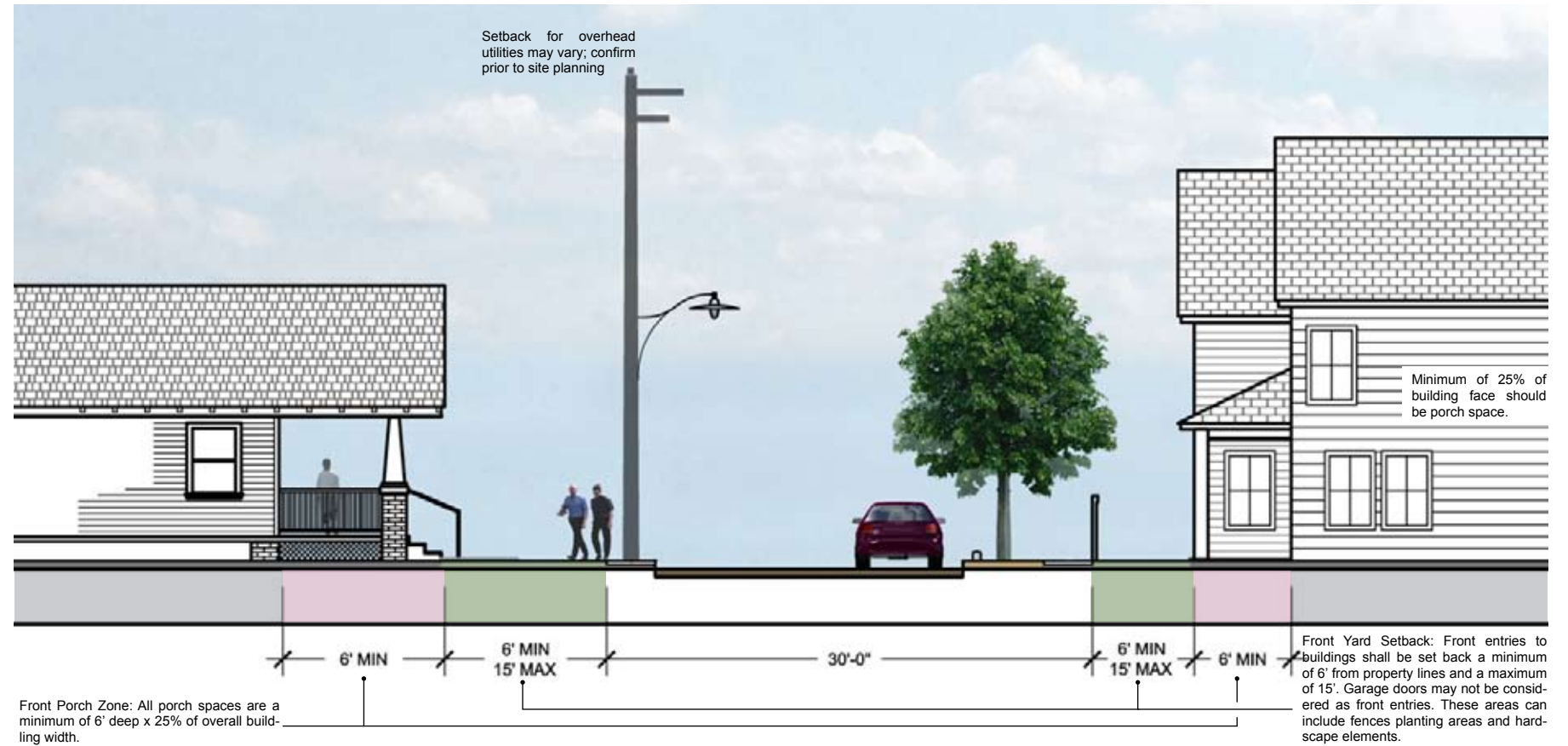
Along West Grey Street and West Dallas Street, developers often set their buildings back more than the 25-foot standard to accommodate circulation and parking. The City of Houston has recently adopted Urban Corridor standards that allow a development along a transit corridor to reduce the setback to less than the 25-foot setback if the developer provides a minimum of 15 feet of pedestrian zone with a 6-foot minimum unencumbered sidewalk. By applying this standard to West Grey Street and West Dallas Street, the Fourth Ward can begin to transition from a very auto-oriented development format along these streets to a more walkable, pedestrian-friendly street.

As an un-zoned city, Houston must write its ordinances to be applied uniformly. So, if any other area in Houston can meet the conditions of Fourth Ward, that area must be able to use the same standards. This accommodation is a challenge, but it can be done

within the confines of existing law. The City would have to draft the Urban Corridors standards to apply to Urban Districts geographically with an easily understandable set of standards and criteria. Houston has done this successfully with the Parking Management Area (PMA) ordinance. The initial PMAs were created when the City of Houston drafted the PMA ordinance. Additional criteria were put in place to provide for new PMAs to be created in other areas of the city where conditions warranted. A city of 620 square miles needs the flexibility to provide opportunities for development within different contexts of conditions.

We recommend amendment of the Urban Corridors ordinance to apply to districts that have created a district-wide master plan, or have an approved Livable Centers Plan. This type of amendment would allow the various Management Districts, TIRZs, and Livable Centers Plans to all avail themselves of the more conducive Urban Corridors provisions.

This is an example of the types of additions that should be made to the Center for Historic Architecture study done in 1995. Several site planning issues need to be addressed, and the energy performance requirements should be updated.



*New construction should have at least one unit (if multi-unit development) that addresses the street with a porch feature and associated yard space.*



*Front porches and architectural detailing make historic homes welcoming from the pedestrian perspective, even with limited front yard space.*

## Traffic Impact Study

The City of Houston's Infrastructure Design Manual, issued in July 2009, introduced detailed guidelines for traffic studies. Chapter 15 outlines the requirements for the traffic studies that are summarized in the following discussion.

There are two levels of traffic studies: Access Management Data or Traffic Impact Analysis. For each proposed development, an Access Management Data Summary form is submitted to determine if a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) is required. Single family homes do not require TIAs. The primary determination of whether a TIA is required is based on the number of new peak hour trips that will be generated by the site. If the development is expected to generate 100 or more new peak hour trips, a TIA will be required. The AM peak hour typically occurs between 7-9 AM and the PM peak hour typically occurs between 4-6 PM;

however, it can vary based on land use. The lower graphic, taken from the Infrastructure Design Manual (Figure 15.04.01 Overview of Traffic Impact Analysis Process), depicts the Traffic Impact Analysis process.

The purpose of the Traffic Impact Analysis is to determine if the existing roadway network can handle changes in traffic volumes based on proposed development traffic. If impacts are identified, the TIA makes recommendations for mitigation methods to maintain an acceptable threshold of mobility. In addition, the TIA provides information for the City to determine if driveway locations are acceptable.

There are four Traffic Impact Analysis categories based on the number of new peak hour trips:

TIA Category	New Peak Hour Trips	Study Boundary Limit
Category I	Less than 100	n/a
Category II	100 to 499	¼ mile
Category III	500 to 999	½ mile
Category IV	Over 1000	½ mile or 1 mile

The scope of the TIA is defined by the TIA category assigned to the development. For a Category I TIA, only an Access Management Data Form is required. For a Category II, III, and IV TIAs, the following tasks must be completed:

- Meet with City Traffic Engineer
- Scope Proposal
- Analysis for Opening Year
- Background Conditions – Opening Year volumes based on annual growth rate only
- Projected Conditions – Background volumes plus site-generated volumes
- Analysis of all site access points
- Analysis of signalized intersections within boundary
- Analysis of major unsignalized intersections within boundary

The boundary limit for a Category II TIA is ¼ mile. For a Category III TIA, the boundary limit is ½ mile. For a Category IV TIA, the boundary limit is ½ mile or 1 mile depending on the location of critical intersections. In addition, analysis for the full build-out year must be included for Category III and IV TIAs.

The purpose of the TIA is to identify any significant adverse traffic impacts and explore potential mitigation strategies for those impacts. The need for mitigation is determined by using Level of Service (LOS) results and a decision tree. The following graphic, taken from the Infrastructure Design Manual (Figure 15.04.04 Mitigation Decision Tree), depicts the changes in Level of Service necessary to require mitigation and the Level of Service that needs to be maintained once mitigation is in place. For locations that are currently at LOS F, the traffic impacts of the development shall be mitigated such that the LOS criteria do not deteriorate beyond background conditions. The City Engineer must approve any deterioration beyond background conditions.

When a TIA is conducted along designated Transit Streets, the number of trips generated should be estimated in accordance with the guidelines. In addition, a summary of estimated trips by mode (automobile, truck, transit, bicycle, pedestrian) should be included in the TIA. When the existing and background levels of service are LOS E or LOS F, a meeting should be held with the City Engineer to review impacts to the community and possible mitigation measures.

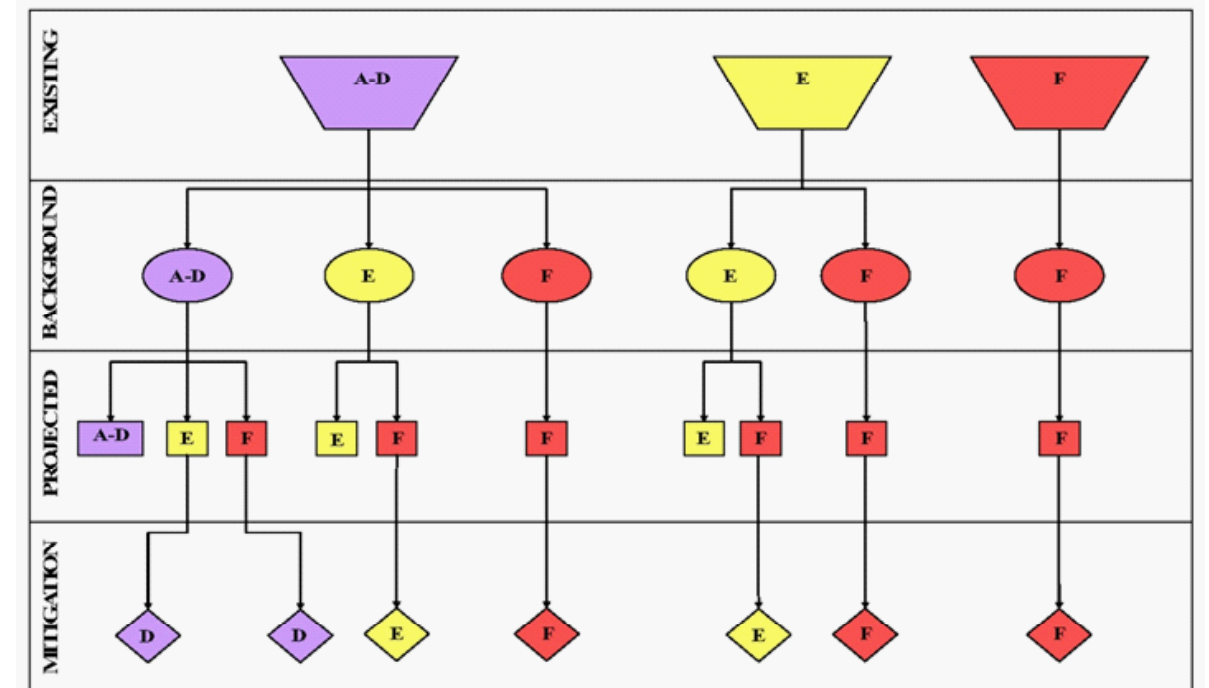


Figure 15.04.04 Mitigation Decision Tree, depicts the changes in Level of Service necessary to require mitigation and the Level of Service that needs to be maintained once mitigation is in place

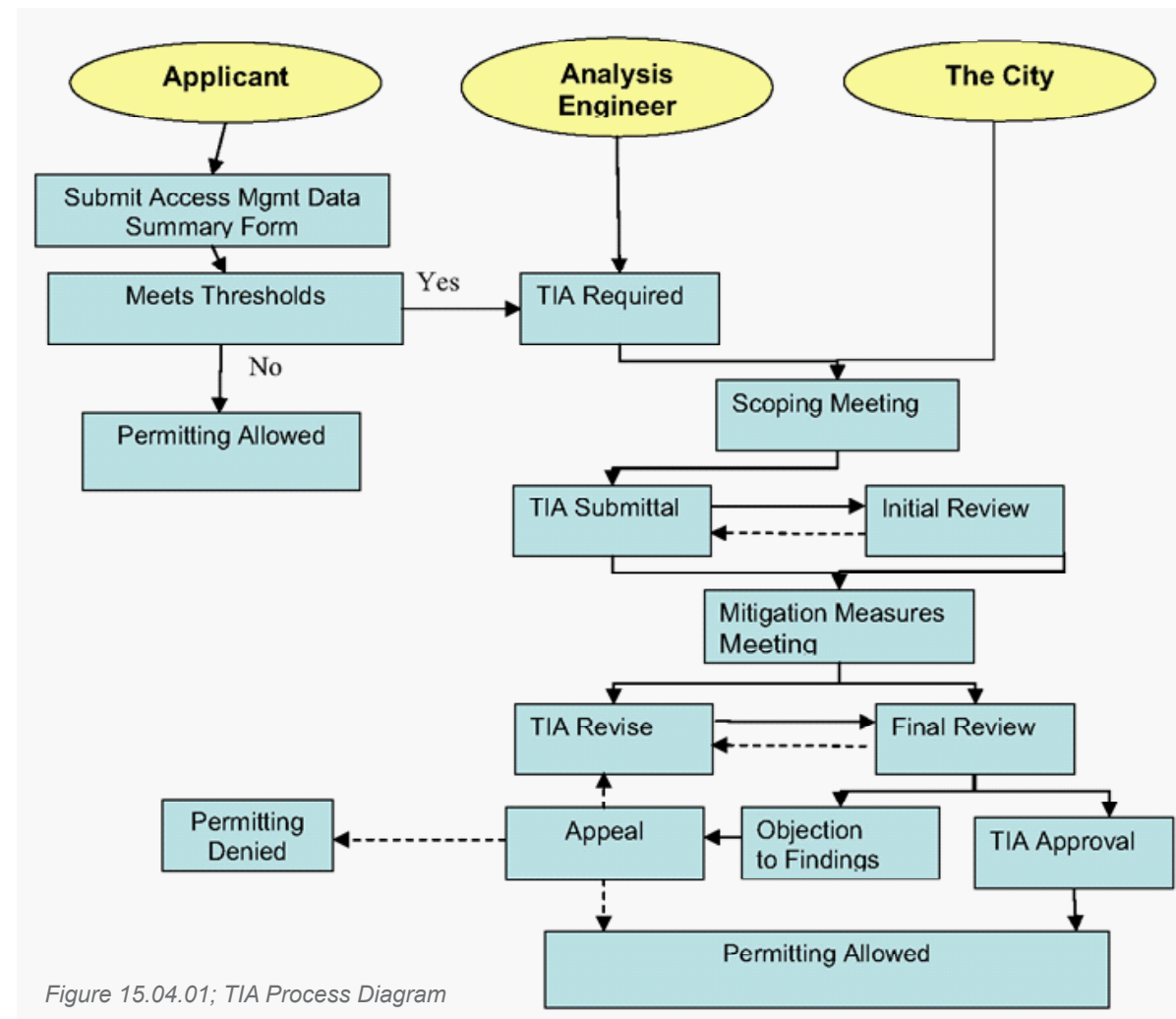


Figure 15.04.01; TIA Process Diagram

Transportation improvements that could be used as mitigation should be included in the TIA. These improvements could include the following:

- Traffic control devices (modification or installation)
- Additional capacity (left, right, or through lanes)
- Acceleration or deceleration lanes
- Modification to length of storage bays
- Access Management
- Improved site circulation

crossing such streets on foot

- Make circulation of private automobiles secondary to other travel modes once within the Center
- Establish pedestrian-friendly speed limits, generally 20 mph or less
- Use access management techniques to increase safety and make the street more accessible for multiple transportation modes

One of the focuses of the H-GAC Livable Centers initiative is mobility. The intent is to make walking, bicycling, and transit more attractive; therefore, reducing local vehicle trips and reducing congestion on major thoroughfares. Some of the items included in H-GAC's checklist for policies and standards related to traffic are:

- Allow people to move between destinations without having to use vehicles
- Provide multi-modal transportation options, including walking, biking, and mass transit
- Promote appropriate street widths (24-36 feet) that help to slow down traffic and encourage pedestrian activity
- Have primary streets with lanes for vehicle circulation, but also with dedicated spaces and clear paths for transit vehicles, cyclists, and individuals

There is a potential for conflict between these project goals and the required mitigation from a Traffic Impact Analysis. For example, if an intersection declines in level of service, the resultant mitigation may be the addition of one lane in each direction. This may conflict with the strategy of maintaining appropriate street widths for pedestrians.

In general, Traffic Impact Analysis studies have been focused on improving private automobile mobility, but when reviewing TIAs within Livable Centers, the focus must be on all modes of travel. The current TIA guidelines allow for trip reductions for pass-by and diverted traffic; pedestrian, bicycle, and transit reduction; and internal capture; however, specific reduction factors are not defined.

The Traffic Impact Analysis guidelines also apply to individual developments and not a larger area such as a Livable Center. Livable Centers are planned as larger communities to ensure convenient interaction between developments. Producing individual TIAs may result in a variety of transportation improvement recommendations that may not adhere to the vision of the Livable Center.

In general the possible requirement of a Traffic Impact Analysis and mitigation adds cost, uncertainty, and risk to the development of a parcel. For the 5-story prototype development (approximately 22,000 SF retail, 89 du), it is expected that this development will generate about 110 peak hour trips. This would require a Category II Traffic Impact Analysis. It is anticipated that this size development should have minimal impacts at the major intersections and required mitigation may be limited to turn bay improvements or similar. However, the results of the study could require more costly mitigation than planned for by the developer.

In reviewing other Livable Centers studies, specific Traffic Impact Analysis requirements are rarely addressed. Some initiatives have conducted “neighborhood traffic studies” that result in the implementation of traffic calming devices; however, intersection level of service analysis was not reviewed in detail.

Other cities address the challenges of traffic impact by focusing their mitigation methods on transportation demand management improvements. The City of Pasadena (California) Department of Transportation has a wide range of suitable traffic mitigation measures categorized by various modes of transportation. The following is a list of mitigation measures taken from their “Guidelines for Transportation Review of Projects” dated September 2004.

#### *Traffic Management System*

- Upgrade Transportation Management Center hardware, software, and monitoring equipment
- Expand Intelligent Transportation System components, such as CCTV and Changeable Message Signs
- Expand the City’s communication/fiber-optic backbone (allows for traffic signal interconnection and optimization along corridors)
- Install additional arterial loop detectors (system loops)

- Deploy traffic monitoring network in residential neighborhoods

#### *Roadway System*

- Upgrade traffic signal to encourage traffic to use major arterials rather than residential streets
- Change roadway striping to enhance safety and reduce congestion
- Install wayfinding signage
- Minimize potential conflicts by encouraging developers to construct fewer driveways

#### *Pedestrian Activities*

- Equip signalized intersections with vibrating or audible pedestrian functions for hearing/vision impaired persons
- Provide streetscape amenities along the entire length of multi-modal corridors that will be consistent with guidelines adopted as part of specific plan areas (Encourages mode shift to walking)

#### *Public Transit*

- Provide information on transportation benefit programs for employees and multi-family residential development projects that encourage non-auto travel, including rideshare, vanpool, bus/rail route, and dial-a-ride information
- Provide transit stop amenities, including bus shelters, benches, and trash receptacles (Encourages mode shift to transit)
- Consider landscaping and related enhancements at transit stops (Encourages mode shift to transit)
- Upgrade traffic signal to provide transit priority provisions
- Contribute to capital costs

#### *Bicycle Facilities*

- Consider video detection for bicyclists at appropriate locations
- Increase the availability of bicycle parking both on-site and on the adjacent sidewalk
- Provide bicycle maps and bicycle safety brochures

#### *Parking and Loading*

- Apply technology to improve the efficiency of parking facilities to minimize traffic impacts on local streets
- Identify locations for priority parking for clean-fuel and car-share vehicles (Encourages carpooling and reduces emissions)

- Implement peak-hour parking restrictions
- Prohibit on-street parking at critical locations to improve visibility
- Assess the adequacy of existing on-street provisions for goods delivery
- Provide passenger loading areas at key locations
- Limit truck delivery to non-peak traffic hours
- Implement parking restrictions or prohibitions to protect adjacent residential neighborhoods from on-street parking spillover

#### *Neighborhood Protection*

- Assess the potential impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods and install appropriate traffic calming measures, such as speed humps, chokers, partial road closures, etc.

In order to meet the intent of the City of Houston’s Traffic Impact Analysis, while maintaining the goals of Livable Centers, four approaches have been developed for consideration. The approaches are not mutually exclusive and can all be implemented concurrently.

The current TIA guidelines allow for trip generation reduction for pass-by trips, internal capture, pedestrians, bicycle, and transit usage. These reduction rates are often subjective for each traffic impact study based on experiences of the engineer doing the analysis. It is recommended that the City consider developing specific trip generation reduction rates for Livable Centers. Many studies have been conducted, by groups like the Institute of Transportation Engineers and the Federal Transit Administration, related to transit-oriented developments resulting in a wide variety of reduction factors. Some TODs result in a 10% trip generation reduction while others result in a 40% trip generation reduction depending on the location of the development. Based on experience in Houston, it is anticipated that the City or H-GAC can develop reasonable trip reduction factors for Livable Centers that can be used in individual Traffic Impact Analyses.

Another alternative is to ensure that the traffic impacts are confined to the Livable Center itself. This means that it would be acceptable to have a reduction in Level of Service at internal intersections, but not at intersections with major thoroughfares. This would ensure that mobility would be maintained along the thoroughfares while allowing internal streets to be more pedestrian friendly and conducive to the Livable

Centers vision. This could require the City of Houston to create a separate TIA mitigation decision tree for Livable Centers.

A third approach to addressing the Traffic Impact Analysis requirement while maintaining the vision of Livable Centers would be to implement mitigation measures similar to those indicated by the City of Pasadena. Mitigation measures such as widening sidewalks, improving bus shelters, and improving signage not only improve vehicle operations but also contribute to the attractiveness of the area. The City of Houston should consider identifying a list of suitable traffic mitigation measures for Livable Centers.

A final approach to addressing the Traffic Impact Analysis requirement while maintaining the vision of Livable Centers would be to conduct an area-wide TIA. This study would be an overall Traffic Impact Analysis based on the City’s current guidelines and the planned development program. Recommended mitigation measures could be reviewed for the overall area instead of at individual development sites. This would also provide developers some level of certainty relative to transportation improvements that they may be required to pay for or provide right-of-way. If an individual property was developed differently than what was defined in the TIA for that site, the developer would have to provide an update to the TIA.

## Regional Stormwater Plan

Drainage criteria for the development within Houston's City limits provide protection from flooding from a 100-year storm event is administered by the City of Houston. City requirements are complemented by Harris County and the Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) for newly-designed and re-designed areas. This is accomplished through the application of various drainage enhancements such as storm sewers, roadside ditches, open channels, detention and overland (sheet flow) run-off. The system which may use any combination of the aforementioned strategies, is intended to prevent flooding from extreme events up to a 100-year storm.

The intention of storm water detention is to mitigate the effect of the new development, redevelopment, or in-fill development on an existing drainage system. Storm water detention volume requirements are based on increased impervious cover. For areas less than 1.0 acre, detention is required at a rate of 0.20 acre-feet per acre of increased impervious cover. For areas between 1.0 acre and 50 acres, detention is required at a rate of 0.50 acre-feet per acre of increased impervious cover. The subdividing of larger tracts into smaller tracts of 1.0 acre and less will require the detention volume of 0.5 acre-feet per acre of increased impervious cover. Detention rates are subject to change at the city's county's discretion.

### *What is the challenge?*

Storm water detention must occur on the site that is being developed and whose storm water runoff is being mitigated. Sites where the impervious area is increased will be required to provide detention. Many of the areas within the proposed development are small, and having to provide detention at the site could make the property un-developable.

What do others do to address this similar challenge? Regional detention and underground detention are common methods employed to address flood mitigation on sites that are constrained by size.

Examples of developments that have employed regional detention are:

- Rice University
- Texas Children's Hospital West Campus
- Methodist West Campus

- Various residential subdivisions
- Examples of developments that have employed underground detention are:
  - Texas A&M Mitchell Physics Building
  - M.D. Anderson Cancer Center Admin Building and Garage
  - BP Westlake

### *What are we recommending?*

It is recommended that the specified Fourth Ward study area be viewed as a region. Requests should be made to the City of Houston Planning Department which would allow for the percentage of pervious and impervious cover to be calculated for the entire region instead of by block or individual tract. Underground detention should also be considered as an effective way to satisfy the City detention requirements. Since many of the redevelopments will replace existing impervious surfaces, net increases to the impervious cover may not be significant and can easily be accommodated for below grade either in pipes or vaults.

## Local Storm Sewer

Storm sewer criteria are administered by the City of Houston Public Works and Engineering Department and are defined in the City of Houston Infrastructure Design Manual. This design manual outlines the following requirements for storm sewer design and analysis for capacity, routing, and connection:

- Design and analysis of storm sewer capacity shall be based on the 2-year storm event.
- All storm sewers and inlet leads entering the City's Right-Of-Way (ROW) are required to have a 24-inch inside diameter or equivalent cross sectional area.
- All larger pipes upstream from new developments or redevelopments must connect to equivalently-sized or larger City storm sewers.
- Storm sewers smaller than 24-inch inside diameter are considered deficient and cannot be connected to by developments or redevelopments.
- Based upon capacity analysis, all new storm sewers, extensions of storm sewers, and re-routing of storm sewers within the City's ROW will be done with a minimum of 24-inch storm sewer pipe.

### *What is the challenge?*

Hydraulic analysis is required to determine the minimum size of storm sewer lines. City design criteria requires 24-inch storm sewer regardless of the results of hydraulic analysis.

### *What do others do to address this similar challenge?*

In lieu of up-sizing existing storm sewers, a development can utilize additional on-site storm water detention to restrict the developed flow to pre-developed conditions or release rates. Otherwise, the storm sewer must be replaced with larger pipes meeting minimum City requirements.

### *What are we recommending?*

It is recommended that developers strategically develop each block so that all storm sewer connections tie to provided City infrastructure that meets the current design criteria as described in the barrier section of this document.

## Private Utilities

All private franchise utilities (power, gas, phone, data, and telecom) are owned and operated by different franchise utility owners. Each franchise utility group has blanket encroachment easements with the City of Houston which allow their utilities to reside within the public right-of-way (ROW). Private franchise utilities located outside the ROW are typically located within a 10-foot utility ground easement. Power utilities typically have 25-foot aerial easements associated with the 10-foot ground easement. If an easement is not documented then the utility will have a prescriptive easement that is associated with the utility.

The specified study area contains various overhead electrical and phone lines, underground gas lines, and underground telecom/fiber optic lines as well as various easements (recorded and prescriptive). The electrical and gas lines are owned and maintained by Centerpoint Energy while the telecom/fiber optic lines are owned and maintained by AT&T, Comcast, and Phonoscope. Each franchise utility has specific criteria which restrict the development from impacting their easements, utilities, and maintenance requirements. Approvals and fees will also be required from the different utility owners in order to remove and/or relocate any of these private utility lines, or to encroach on any of the easements.

### *What is the challenge?*

Many of the private utility lines run through various blocks of the specified study area. These lines may have to be removed or relocated due to aesthetic and developmental reasons.

### *What do others do to address this similar challenge?*

In similar situations, others have abandoned and/or relocated only utilities that obstruct development and cause aesthetic conflicts.

### *What are we recommending?*

It is recommended that the developers meet with each of the private franchise utility owners to determine the abandonment and/or relocation criteria and fees for each franchise utility that is in conflict with the vision of the development.

## METRO Routes and Transit

It is recommended that METRO Route 18 and Route 313 be modified to have a portion of the route travel along W. Dallas into Downtown Houston instead of along Allen Parkway. The modification will provide additional transit service to the Fourth Ward and should increase ridership on those routes. In order to get the route modifications implemented, there will have to be several levels of agency coordination and planning completed. It is anticipated that the implementation plan will have to be coordinated with both METRO and the City of Houston. A barrier to this implementation will only exist if there is opposition to the route changes by one of the agencies.

### *What is the challenge?*

In order to modify the METRO routes, a formal request will have to be submitted to METRO for their review. METRO and the City of Houston may require a travel time study to verify the impact on the overall route time. In addition, a ridership study may need to be performed to quantify the potential increase in ridership to justify any additional costs to METRO to operate the modified route. Several groups within METRO, including planning, operations, and engineering, will need to be involved so the approval process may be lengthy. It is our understanding that METRO reviews their routes on a quarterly basis and makes route changes as necessary.

### *What do others do to address this similar challenge?*

In similar situations, others file formal requests with METRO, as described, to make modifications to bus routes.

### *What are we recommending?*

It is recommended that H-GAC or the Fourth Ward Redevelopment Authority formally request that Route 18 and Route 313 be modified as proposed and then attend coordination meetings with METRO and the City of Houston, as needed.

## HOME PROGRAM

The HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program is a federal block grant to state and local governments used to promote public private partnerships in the creation of housing affordable to low-income households. HOME funds are awarded annually to states and local governments to be used as grants, loans, loan guarantees or other forms of credit enhancement, and rental assistance or security deposits. HOME funds, administered through the City of Houston's Housing and Community Development Department (HCDD), support both home buyer assistance and the creation of new affordable housing through the Multi-Family Housing Program. Houston's Multi-Family Housing Program funds the acquisition, new construction, or rehabilitation of affordable housing for households at low or moderate incomes. HCDD plans to provide an estimated 250 additional affordable multi-family housing units through HOME funds through \$6.8 million in funding for the 2010-2011 program year.

The redevelopment of the Gillette site in Houston's Fourth Ward is a potential candidate for receiving HOME funding if the development program included the development of affordable multi-family rental units. The federal requirements for HOME funded projects include a 20-year affordability covenant to ensure long-term affordability of the units. Of the units subsidized by HOME funds, 80% of units may be leased at High HOME rents and 20% of the units must be leased at the Low HOME rental rates, as determined the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The 2010 High HOME rental rates are affordable to households earning approximately 80% of Area Median Income (AMI), and for the Fourth Ward these rates are \$659/month for a studio, \$735/month for a one-bedroom, and \$892 for a two-bedroom. The 2010 Low HOME rental rates are affordable to very-low income families at 50% of AMI or below, and the corresponding rental rates for the Fourth Ward are \$570/month for a studio, \$610/month for a one-bedroom, and \$732/month for a two-bedroom. These rental rates include monthly utility costs of \$96/month for a studio, \$126/month for a one-bedroom, and \$157/month for a two-bedroom.

The amount of HOME subsidy for a particular project is determined based on the bedroom count and construction type, and range between \$102,000 and \$214,000 per unit. The HOME funds are underwritten

as a loan with 0% interest that is forgivable after the 20-year affordability covenant expires. The underwriting criteria for the HOME funds include using a pro forma vacancy rate of 10% and a cap of 5% on management fees. The program also limits annual rent escalation to 3% and annual expense escalation to 4%.

## TENANTS WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS

National fair housing laws limit discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin. The definition of handicap includes tenants who currently or have previously suffered from alcoholism or drug addiction, except for current addiction to and use of illegal controlled substances. Current users of illegal controlled substances, persons convicted for illegal manufacture or distribution of a controlled substance, sex offenders, and juvenile offenders are not considered disabled and protected under the Fair Housing Act. Federal and Texas Fair Housing laws also do not explicitly protect tenants with a record of other criminal convictions.



