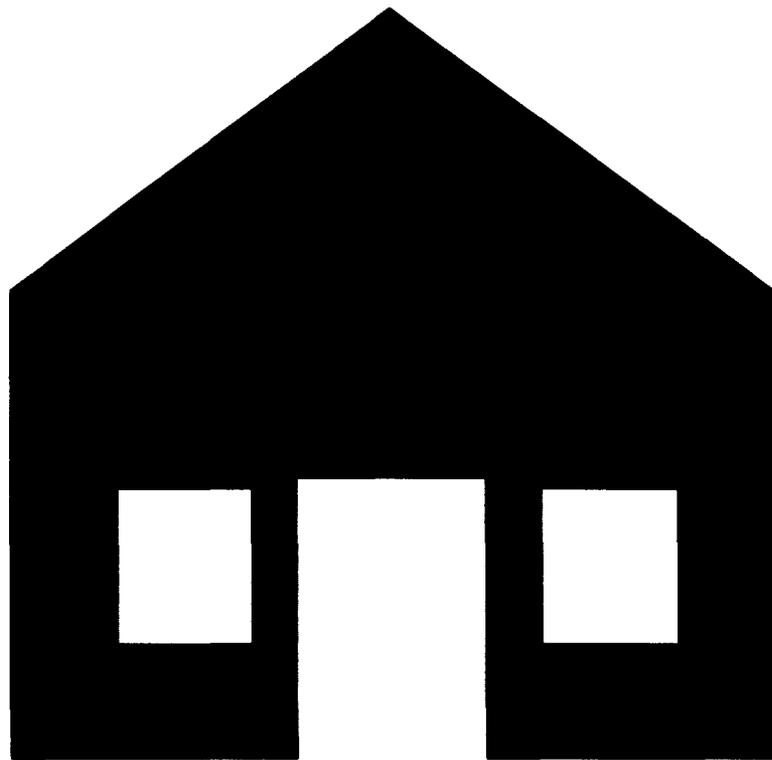
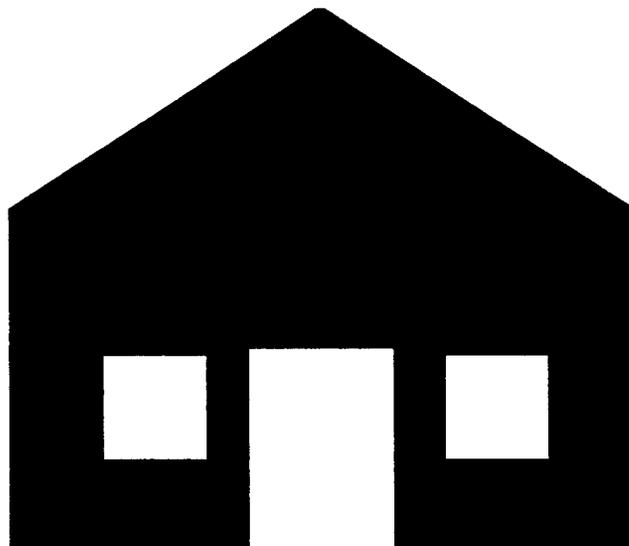

Downtown Neighborhood Plan



City of Round Rock
December 1994



Downtown Neighborhood Plan

City of Round Rock

presented by the
Downtown Neighborhood Planning Team
and
The Department of Planning and Community Development

December 22, 1994

The City Council has formally accepted this document as the Neighborhood Plan for the downtown area. It is a joint effort between the Downtown Neighborhood Planning Team (NPT) and the Department of Planning and Community Development (p&cd).

Neighborhood Planning Team Members

Lisa Adams
Tess Bell
Rosalinda Beltran
Terry Erickson
Carol Gill
Regina Greene
Bill Guajardo
William Koughan
John Ledbetter

Ellen Macaulay
Johnette McNair
Terry Myers
Amy Randall
Jimmie Randall
Sherry Roberts
O'Barr Rost
Nancy Sheppard
Wilbur Wilson

Project Staff

Joe Vining, AICP, Director
Hugh Bender, AICP, Principal Planner
Paul Gambrel, AICP, Senior Planner
Sallie Burchett, Planner
Chris Overstreet, Planning Technician
Mona Ryan, Planning Technician

Vickie Moreno, Senior Administrative Clerk
Courtney Duke, Preservation Intern
David Cladel, Planning Intern
Sean Moran, GIS Intern
Jennifer Hauch, GIS Intern
Steve Roshong, Vocational Intern

This project was funded in part through a Certified Local Government grant from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, as administered by the Texas Historical Commission.

The contents and opinions, however, do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

This program received Federal funds from the National Park Service. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in department Federally Assisted Programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Departments of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.

City of Round Rock

City Council

Charlie Culpepper, Mayor

Robert Stluka, Mayor Pro-tem
Rod Morgan, City Council, Place 2
Rick Stewart, City Council, Place 3

Earl Palmer, City Council, Place 4
Martha Chavez, City Council, Place 5
Jimmy Joseph, Place 6

Planning and Zoning Commission

James Dunham, Chairperson
George Gill
Al Kosik
John Moman
Carrie Pitt

Bob Belanger, Secretary
Larry Grosenheider
Brian Lott
Glen Pierce

City Departments

Bob Bennent, City Manager

Joanne Land, Asst. City Manager
Steve Sheets, City Attorney
David Kautz, Director Finance
Lynn Bizzell, Fire Chief
Dale Ricklefs, Director Library

Sharon Prete, Director Parks and Recreation
Linda Gunther, Personnel
Wesley Wolff, Chief of Police
James Nuse, Director Public Works
Irma Mendoza, Utility Billing



Table of Contents

	page
Executive Summary	1
Introduction	2
Downtown and Business Promotion.....	8
Enforcement Issues	11
Environment	13
Infrastructure	17
Parks	25
Public Safety	28
Traffic and Parking	32
Zoning	35
Other Issues	38



Executive Summary

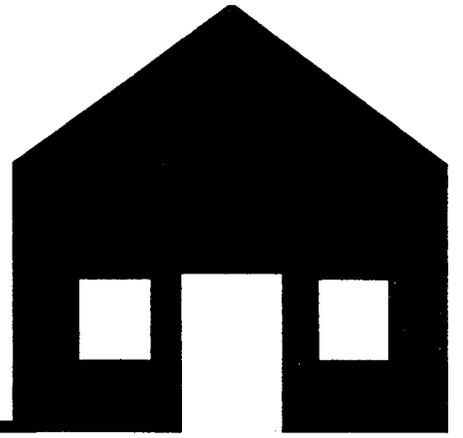
The Neighborhood Plan for the Downtown Area of Round Rock, Texas is a long-range plan for the future of the neighborhood. The Neighborhood Planning Team and the City of Round Rock intend for the plan to strengthen the identity of both the residential and commercial areas, and to help guide change within the neighborhood. The goals of the plan include the following objectives:

- the stabilization and improvement of property values;
- the provision of guidelines to insure new development will be sensitive to existing development; and
- the promotion of the positive aspects of the neighborhood.

Problems and concerns regarding the neighborhood were discussed in public meetings and at Neighborhood Planning Team (NPT) meetings. Problem statements were forwarded to various departments for solutions and recommendations. These recommendations and solutions from the NPT constitute the *Downtown Neighborhood Plan*.

The neighborhood itself is responsible for implementing and tracking many of the recommendations in the plan. City departments and their respective directors will periodically report to the City Manager with their progress on specific projects assigned to them. The Department of Planning and Community Development will be the contact for questions about the neighborhood and will monitor the Plan's progress. Finally, as a long range quality check, the NPT will reconvene in early 1996 to review all elements of the plan and to determine what the City has achieved.

Introduction





Introduction

"This is a great place, let's keep it that way."

The 1990 *Round Rock General Plan* recommends, "established older areas of the City be carefully reviewed to identify structures of historic or architectural significance to be protected." It further states, "older residential neighborhoods have a unique character and neighborhood identification should be protected. These neighborhoods should not be subjected to piecemeal rezoning or redevelopment which would destroy the neighborhood's identity." Further, any changes in zoning should be, "based on a neighborhood plan prepared with citizen participation from the affected neighborhood." (1990 *Round Rock General Plan*, Section 8.6, Revitalization and Redevelopment.)

This recommendation led to the implementation of neighborhood planning in Round Rock. The City Council chose the downtown neighborhood, which includes a National Register Historic District, to be the first area to participate in the neighborhood planning process. The City Council accepted the *Downtown Neighborhood Plan* by resolution. The plan provides the foundation for improved services, new ordinances, and special districts.

The Downtown Neighborhood Planning Team (NPT) is comprised of 18 property and business owners in the downtown area. The downtown area is defined as the area bordered by: Lake Creek, IH-35, Brushy Creek, and the Union Pacific Railroad. (See map on the following page.) The NPT met at least twice a month for over six months to discuss, understand, and to try to solve many of the problems and concerns identified in the downtown area. These meetings and subsequent recommendations from the NPT and City Staff make up the *Downtown Neighborhood Plan*. Each recommendation is categorized into a short term, medium term, or long term objective as indicated. Every goal identified by the NPT and the community at the beginning of the process has been incorporated into a specific problem statement or area of concern. The plan identifies specific goals at the beginning of each section.

City of Round Rock
Downtown Area

Background and Demographics

The downtown neighborhood has been in existence since the late 1870s, when the International and Great Northern Railroad came to Round Rock. The railroad bypassed Old Town (now known as the Chisholm Trail area) and the recently established "New Town" became the center of Round Rock's commercial and social life. Businesses relocated from old town, as well as from Georgetown to take advantage of the strategic railroad location. Downtown was the site of the famous Sam Bass Shoot Out where Sam Bass and his gang robbed a bank, shot the Sheriff, and were killed.

The area was home to the City's first banks, mills, lumber yards, wagon shops, restaurants, and mercantile and hardware stores. The area has continued to be an important commercial district with over 100 businesses including banks, small tourist establishments, shops, the City Library, and City Hall located in the area. Approximately 40% of the businesses are in retail trade with the remainder in professional services.

In 1983, two blocks in the area received National Register of Historic Place designation as a Historic District. In addition, there are over 25 historic buildings in the downtown commercial district. The Chamber of Commerce is in the Palm House, the City's oldest building built in 1873. Other significant buildings in the area (although not necessarily in the Historic District) include the Nelson-Crier House, the Otto Renke Building, the City Attorney's office, and the local paper.

According to the 1990 Census, the area was home to 2,716 people, which was approximately 8% of the City's population. Over 68% of the population was in the work force. Most people were employed in manufacturing, construction, wholesale trade, small businesses, or public service. Median household income was \$19,920, with 19.3% of the population below the poverty level. There were approximately 1,000 housing units in the neighborhood of which over 970 were occupied. Median monthly rent was \$330 and median monthly mortgage payments were \$585.

Solutions and Recommendations

Many of the problems and concerns identified at public hearings and NPT meetings were multi-disciplinary and require the time and input of various City Departments and neighborhood residents. Other problems were more forthright. The City implemented the solutions before the City Council accepted the *Downtown Neighborhood Plan*. The Department of Planning and Community Development (p&cd) sent the problems and concerns to City Departments to analyze, and to return with suggested solutions. Others were more appropriate for the team to discuss and for the neighborhood to address and eventually implement solutions.

The format of the *Downtown Neighborhood Plan* presents the identified problem statements on the left side of the paper. Solutions and recommendations from the City or NPT follow on the right side of the paper. The NPT and City sorted the solutions and recommendations into short term, medium term, and long term objectives as indicated. Short term objectives will be reviewed by April 1995. Medium term goals will be reviewed by the end of calendar year 1995. Long term goals will be reviewed in three to five years, or are otherwise categorized as ongoing efforts. The NPT and the community identified goals at the beginning of the planning process. This document incorporates all the goals into specific problem statements or areas of concern, and are identified at the beginning of each section.

Enforcement and Accountability

The neighborhood planning process is intended to educate and motivate individuals or groups to work for the improvement of the community. There are a number of issues that the neighborhood will be responsible for addressing and tracking. The term "neighborhood" refers to individuals, an organized/recognized group, or an informal group working for a single purpose. The neighborhood will be responsible for calling in enforcement problems, identifying infrastructure improvements, planning community events, and organizing neighborhood "Clean-Up" programs.

The Plan recommends developing two tools to facilitate communication with the neighborhood. The first recommendation is a contact sheet, "Who Ya Gonna Call?" with specific department contacts for the neighborhood to be produced by p&cd. The second recommendation is a direct line to the City Manager, 244-HELP, that administration has already installed. The help line is for complaints or suggestions when an individual has not seen results following the regular service process.

Directors of City Departments are responsible for recommendations made by the NPT and positive responses to requests. At the end of each time period (May 1995 and January 1996) department heads will submit a list of accomplishments to the City Manager. The manager will report their accomplishments to the City Council.

The Department of Planning and Community Development will provide support and advice for the area and will monitor progress in the neighborhood. They will also be the contact for any questions or concerns regarding the general neighborhood or implementation of the *Downtown Neighborhood Plan*.

Finally, for a long-term quality check, the NPT will reconvene in January of 1996 to review the work and progress in the neighborhood.

Business Promotion





Downtown and Business Promotion

Continue to promote the interest, unique character, and amenities of both the business and residential communities.

The downtown area is a model business, municipal, shopping, educational, residential, dining, and entertainment community center, with historic and special amenities, that should be carefully preserved.

Communication between residents, businesses and large property owners (i.e., churches, civic groups, apartment buildings, etc.) must be increased.

There needs to be improved Chamber assistance for small businesses in the downtown area.

The chamber should encourage businesses to locate

Short Term: Existing Neighborhood Association should admit business owners.

Medlum Term: With neighborhood involvement, a representative can act as a liaison to the Chamber and other businesses. Neighborhood social activities will help establish interaction and communication between business owners and residents. (*Neighborhood*)

Short Term: The Chamber would be able to better assist downtown business if more were members; only about half of the downtown business are members of the Chamber. More downtown businesses should join the Chamber.

The Chamber has assisted the Downtown Business Association on several projects and is open to other opportunities to help. The "Shop Round Rock" campaign benefits all business in Round Rock (including downtown) by encouraging people to shop locally. The new Visitors Center increased traffic in the area and has attracted many new people to the downtown. (*Chamber*)

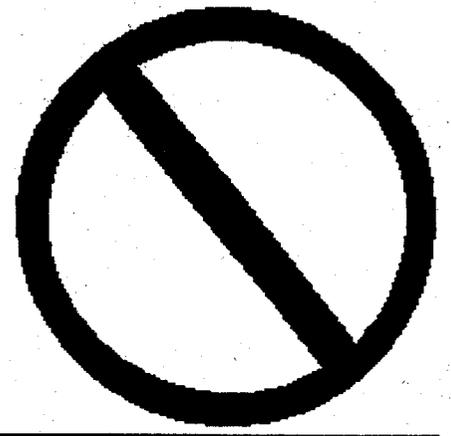
Solution: The Chamber of Commerce always tries to promote the downtown area to businesses. However, because of the lack of available space downtown, adding new businesses to this area is not always feasible. In addition, a number of buildings are owner-occupied and are not available for other uses. There has been some interest in moving downtown, but the high cost of building requirements (food preparation area, ADA regulations, etc.) sometimes makes it unfeasible. (*Chamber*)

Coordinate with p&cd for a more visible and active Visitors Center. Better promotion and signage of center is needed.

Short Term: A representative from p&cd will attend the Chamber's Tourism Committee meetings. Landscape architect in p&cd has a plan for signage of center. (*p&cd*)

There should be an increase in the promotion of historic landmarks in the area. However, an increase in vehicular traffic in the area may not best promote the historic environment.

Medium Term: The p&cd, along with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and the Chamber, will update the walking tour of the historic landmarks in the downtown area. (*p&cd/HPC/Chamber*)



Enforcement



Enforcement Issues

Look into ways to regulate
Union Pacific Railroad noise.
Is a speed limit for trains

feasible?

Short Term: City Noise Ordinance #572 states, "Train whistles: The blowing of any train whistle within the city limits except to give warning of the approach of a train to a grade crossing or as otherwise required by State or Federal regulations," are declared a noise nuisance in violation of the ordinance.

In Round Rock there are numerous places where there is a train crossing and the whistle must be used. Although it may seem that the whistle is always blowing, it is for safety purposes. (*p&cd*)

Medium Term: The Police Department has contacted the railroad about the problem and feels the railroad will help with reducing the noise problem. (*Police*)

Active approach to weedy
lots, rather than on a com-
plaint basis.

Short Term: Weedy lots are a health problem and a nuisance. There is one Code Enforcement Officer who handles weedy lot complaints as well as numerous code related issues. Presently working only on a complaint basis results with the department being accused of heavy handedness, but Public Works (P.W.) would be happy to explore guidelines for a more active approach.

Contact Marion Hastings in Public Works at 218-5553 for complaints. (*P.W.*)

Lack of response to com-
plaints, requests for informa-
tion, and work requests.

Medium Term: City will install a direct phone line to the city manager for lack of response complaints or if departments do not provide an adequate solution.

The line will be installed when the new phone system is on line in early 1995. The number for the City Manager's Help Line is 244 - HELP. (*Administration*)



Environment



Environment

Preserve and enhance the natural beauty of the neighborhood.

The neighborhood requires some restoration, clean-up, and beautification.

Graffiti in the neighborhood needs to be cleaned up on a regular basis.

Recommendation: There should be a neighborhood Clean Up Day once a year in the spring. The neighborhood along with schools could create a program with students to have supervised clean ups. Public Works Department has left-over paint from private and public projects to use in graffiti clean up. Contact Environmental Services in Public Works at 218-5561. (*Neighborhood/ p&cd/ P.W.*)

The neighborhood needs to be cleaned up on a regular basis.

Short Term: Neighborhood Clean Up Day to kick off Neighborhood Plan. (*Neighborhood/ p&cd*)

Long Term: Neighborhood Clean Up Day in spring of every year. (*Neighborhood/p&cd*)

There is too much trash in and around Brushy Creek.

Recommendation: Neighborhood Clean Up Day once a year in the spring. If more people use the park, there may be more pride in its appearance. (*Neighborhood/ p&cd*)

There needs to be better public education about litter and pollution along Brushy Creek and in the City as a whole. This includes the use of toxins and pesticides that flow into the creek.

Solution: Gwen Sharpe (512/239-0051) Public Information Officer at Texas Natural Recourse Conservation Commission (TNRCC) is available to speak with neighborhood groups about this problem. There are also pamphlets in p&cd that address these issues. Additional pamphlets can be ordered from TNRCC's Resource Center, at 512/239-0028. (*p&cd*)

Continue to explore a curbside recycling program.

Recommendation: Periodically check with public on this priority. (*p&cd*)

Too much smoke from BBQ place.

Short Term: There are provisions against excessive smoke and enforcement is available. Citizens should contact TNRCC's complaint investigation line at the regional TNRCC office in Austin at 512/463-7803. Dwane Meckler is the Air Program Director. (*p&cd*)

Silt and dirt from construction may be getting into the Creek. What is the standard for silt fences? Does there need to be more enforcement of environmental laws and construction codes? There may need to be more education for local and state crews about the damage silt and dust can have in the creek.

Short Term: The TNRCC regulates erosion control on work over the Edwards Aquifer. There are general guidelines and enforcement for design. For more specific questions about appropriate fencing, the public should contact TxDOT or Public Works. It is understood that until the downtown road improvements are complete, this is an inconvenient situation. The construction should be completed in early 1995. (*P.W.*)

There is trash in and around Brushy Creek. There is also paper and trash in the creek. More trash cans at the creek are needed as well as more trash cans on construction sites.

Long Term: Many trash cans are stolen or subject to vandalism. The Parks Department has on-going replacement program at a cost of \$200 - \$300 per trash can. (*PARD*)

Can you eat the fish from the creek? If not, how can we better inform the public? Any signs should be in English and Spanish, utilizing symbols. If not, is there a way to clean up the creek so the fish can be eaten?

Solution: Texas Department of Health has no data concerning the fish in Brushy Creek. There is no monitoring program for a city to bring in samples for testing. One time private testing costs approximately \$3,000 - \$6,000 per fish.

Trees and Landscaping

The City and/or neighborhood needs to maintain/replace decaying trees and landscaping. The area needs quality landscaping and/or an increase in landscaping.

Medium Term: The City is researching the possibility of a new staff position, such as an Arborist, as well as looking at the possibility of work being done on a consulting basis. This protection program would affect trees in public areas only. Trees on private property are the responsibility of the owner. *(p&cd)*

Medium Term: The City and neighborhood should spearhead another "Trees for Round Rock" program. *(Neighborhood/p&cd)*

The City should implement a tree protection plan, an urban forestry program, and a public relations plan for the area and its trees.

Short Term: To implement these types of programs, the first step is to inventory the downtown area's trees. The p&cd contracted with Texas A&M University's Urban Forestry program to inventory trees in the downtown area, supply recommendations for maintenance, and create guidelines for the city.

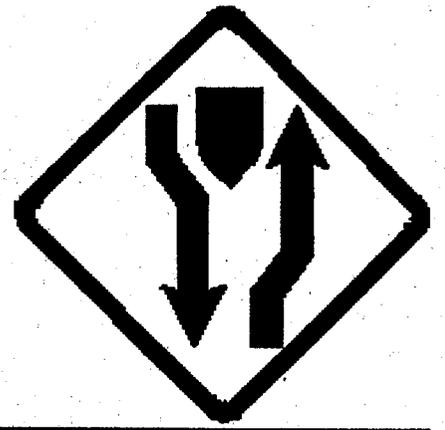
Existing City Staff and resources will be used to implement the recommendations, or as discussed above, a consultant could be hired on a contract basis. *(p&cd)*

Change landscape ordinance to protect all trees, on all types of property.

Medium Term: City Staff will study the possibility of changing the ordinance to protect all very large and old trees, with provisions, in the downtown area. *(p&cd)*

Implement and enforce landscape ordinance in the area.

Long Term: Make sure all new uses and expansions comply with existing code. The City will consider, as always, alternate plans for difficult retrofits. *(p&cd)*



Infrastructure



Infrastructure

The downtown area should be physically maintained for the community as well as to promote tourism.

Alleys

There is too much trash in many of the alleys, especially downtown.

Short Term: A Neighborhood Clean Up Day should be organized to kick off the *Neighborhood Plan*.

Medium Term: The neighborhood, along with the City should have "Neighborhood Clean Up Days" once a year in the spring. The neighborhood should encourage people to pick up trash in and adjacent to their property. (*Neighborhood/ p&cd*)

Alleys are under-utilized.

Long Term: City staff will examine the legal, economic, and physical potential of alternative uses for alleys. This may require a bond issue to implement. Of bond issues cited, it is the number two priority.

There are potholes in many alleys, especially in the downtown Historic District.

Short Term: Notify Public Works as to the location of the potholes and the department will fix them. (*P.W.*)

Sidewalks

Sidewalks need to be extended to Veterans Park and Memorial Park. It is recommended that one street be chosen to be a thoroughfare to the park, with sidewalks on at least one side of the street. Would like to see all the parks connected by sidewalks. Conduct a survey of sidewalks/streets to determine where sidewalks can be installed and the location of priority points (i.e., high traffic areas, school zones, and where children walk and play).

Recommendation: Develop a three phase sidewalk program that would 1) fill in gaps and go to parks, 2) install sidewalks in heavy traffic and pedestrian traffic areas, and 3) provide a walking route through entire downtown area.

Most sidewalk improvements would have to be made in conjunction with drainage improvements. A large scale program would require a bond issue, which along with the drainage improvements, is the number one priority for bond issues.

Recommendations are subject to review by the Public Works Department. Engineers will determine what side of the street to install sidewalks based on utilities and cost. (Continued on next page.)

(Sidewalks continued.)

The attached map/plan are guidelines and recommendations for sidewalks. Actual installation will be determined by Public Works criteria. Considerations will also be given to the appearance and character of the neighborhood, because any large scale sidewalk changes or installations will change the character of the neighborhood.

The p&cd conducted a sidewalk survey on July 15, 1994. See Sidewalk Plan on the next page for details of the following recommendations.

Medium Term:

PHASE I: Build sidewalk to Veterans Park on Spring and Lewis Streets to Main Street and on Pecan Street.

Build sidewalk to Memorial Park on Lee Street.

Fill in gaps in sidewalks on East and West Main Street.

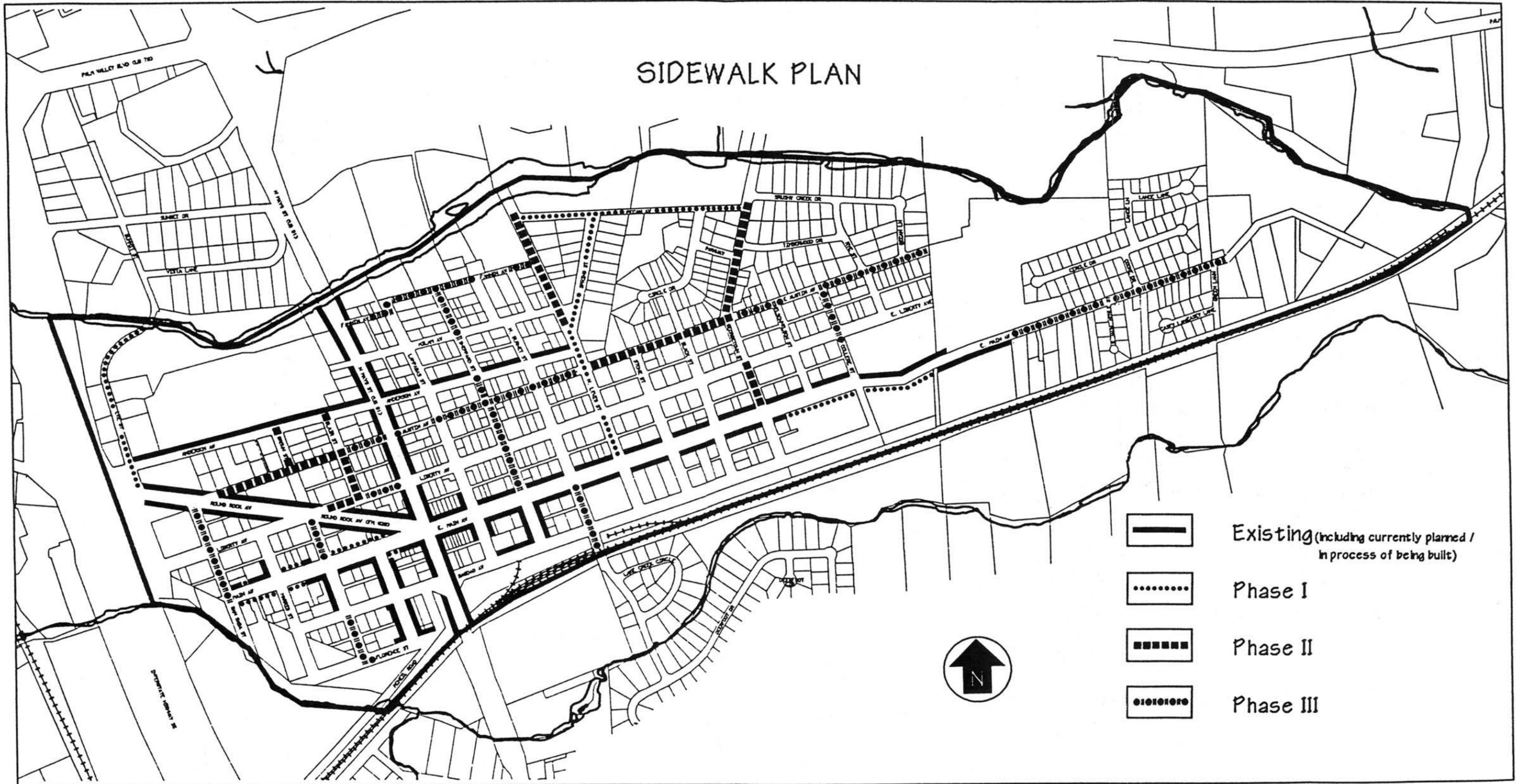
Long Term:

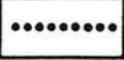
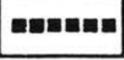
PHASE II: Construct sidewalks in high pedestrian and traffic areas, especially around schools and to parks.

PHASE III: Create a downtown walking route plan.

(p&cd /P.W.)

SIDEWALK PLAN



-  Existing (including currently planned / in process of being built)
-  Phase I
-  Phase II
-  Phase III



Streets

Is there a way to reroute Public Works traffic off the neighborhood streets (Harris, Brown, Blair, etc.) to and from the Public Works building and keep it on the collectors?

A survey of streets is needed to determine what streets need work and paving. Specifically look at Trailway, Pecan, Rye, and Shady Loop Streets.

Short Term: Although Brown and Blair Streets are important access points to the yard site, the department will encourage drivers to minimize use of these streets. (P.W.)

Long Term: The City is jointly purchasing with RRISD 75 acres of land on Sunrise Road for a yard site. The cost of improvements on the site is between \$500,000 and \$700,000. The department anticipates moving within two (2) years. (P.W.)

Recommendation: A significant street maintenance program has been in effect for several years in the downtown area. The Public Works Department encourages citizen input. Input is an important criteria for determining which streets receive an overlay or sealcoat each year. For example, at the request of a citizen, Georgetown Street has been placed on the list for an overlay this year. The City sealcoated several downtown streets in 1990.

Long Term: The neighborhood should request specific problem streets for paving to be evaluated for Fiscal Year 1996. (P.W.)

Lights

There are many areas where lighting needs to be improved. Are there official distances for lights? What are the minimum standards on lights? Are the lights in the area meeting these standards?

Solution: The p&cd surveyed street lights July 13 and August 2, 1994. See Light Map for survey results.

City policy is to locate one light at every intersection and every 300 feet for minor residential streets; Collector Streets have lights every 250 feet; and Arterial Streets have lights every 200 feet. Most intersections are meeting this standard. See Light Map for specifics. (p&cd/P.W.)

Short Term: A "Porch Light Program" would increase light in the area at a relatively low cost (approximately \$2.50 a month per house). The neighborhood and p&cd need to coordinate to advertise and promote porch lighting on a nightly basis. Lights in the middle of blocks are especially important. (Neighborhood/p&cd)

(Continued on next page.)

(Lights continued.)

Medium Term: Install lights at intersections and dark areas as indicated. Trim tree branches blocking lights as indicated. See Light Map on following page for locations.

To have a light installed, contact Public Works at 218-5554 and specify the location. A police officer will evaluate the location at night. Public Works will send a work order to TU Electric if the area warrants a street light. TU Electric installs lights free of charge as well as, owns and maintains all lights in the city. The city pays approximately \$8 a month for each light and budgets for about 50 - 60 new lights a year. *(P.W./TU Electric)*

Some lights are not well maintained. Other lights are obstructed by trees. Can some trees be cut back?

Solution: TU Electric maintains lights on a regular basis as well as cutting back trees from lights. Contact Al Wille at Public Works at 218-5554 or TU Electric at 255-3666 for assistance. *(P.W./TU Electric)*

Lights obstructed by trees in parks have recently been trimmed. (At times PARD and Public Works assist TU Electric in trimming trees.) *(PARD/P.W.)*

There needs to be additional lighting at Veterans and Memorial Parks. Add flood lights.

Medium Term: PARD will work with the neighborhood on a lighting plan for parks in the city. Several lights have recently been added. *(PARD)*

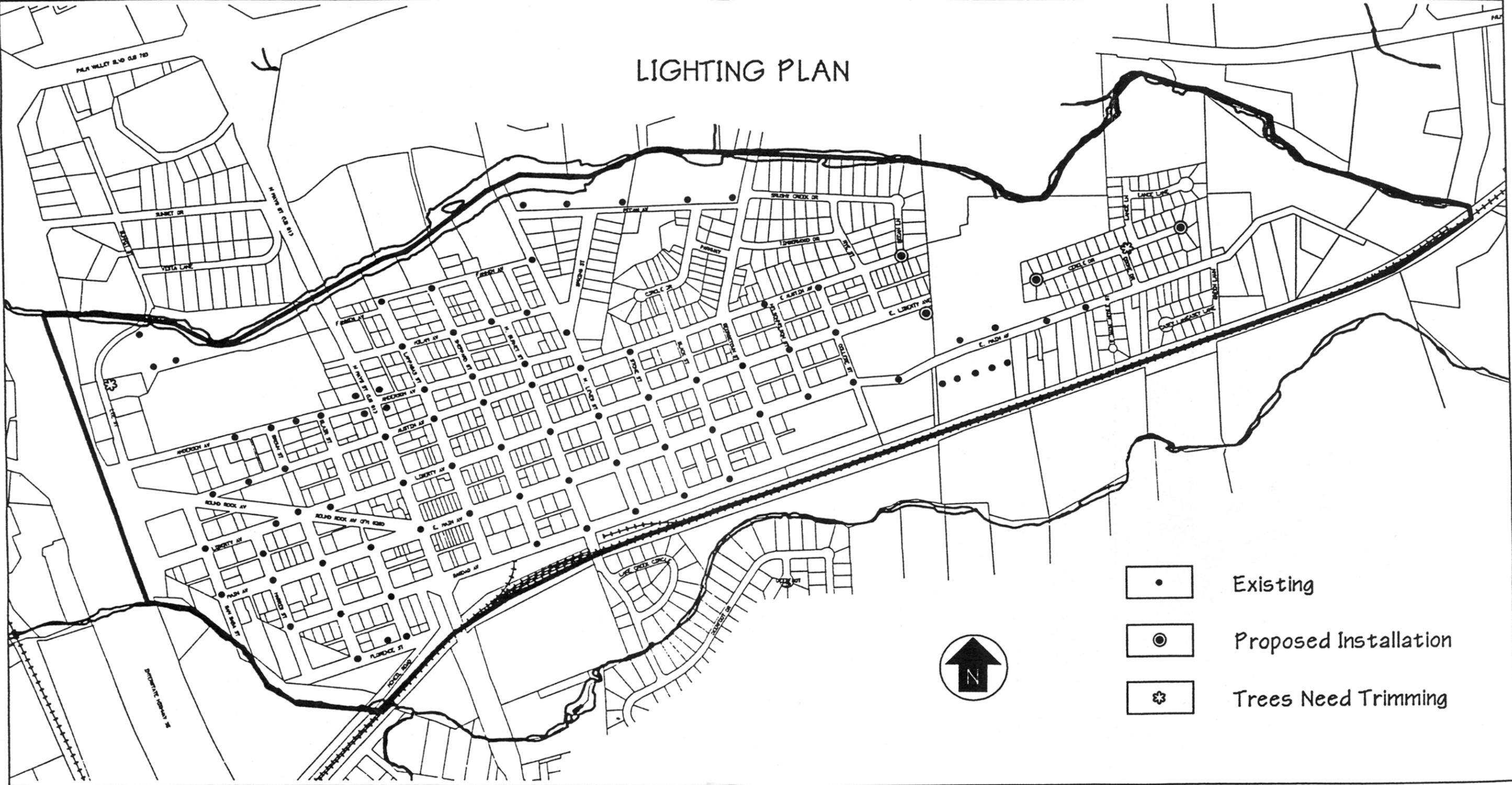
Some lights in the park need to be redirected.

Solution: Lights can be added or redirected. This is an ongoing process. Several lights were recently redirected. *(PARD)*

Add ground lighting for both safety and ambiance.

Solution: Not feasible due to vandalism and liability problems. *(PARD/P.W./ TU Electric)*

LIGHTING PLAN



-  Existing
-  Proposed Installation
-  Trees Need Trimming



Drainage

There is a problem with standing water. Is there a way to channel water without curbs and gutters? Can the storm drainage system be extended? Will ribbon curbs and open drainage work with curbs and gutters in problem areas? Is it possible to phase in a non-ditch drainage system in areas deemed as a priority? Could a timetable and approximate cost of the operation be estimated?

Recommendation: Over the last five (5) years Round Rock has spent over \$150,000 on drainage improvements in the downtown area. This work was only an improvement, not a cure to the problem. Rights of way in the area are narrow with a lot of mature trees and utility conflicts.

Long Term: It would be difficult to make further improvements short of a major infrastructure project including new utilities and streets with curbs and gutters. Such a project would require a grant and/or a major bond issue. Even getting a meaningful cost estimate would require a consultant.

Any work would have to be phased in, starting with priority points and selected areas. Work should also be coordinated with any major sidewalk improvements and would require a bond issue to implement. Of the three issues identified for bond issues, this is the number one priority.

As noted, a project of this type and magnitude will be very costly, affect a lot of trees and forever change the character and appearance of the neighborhood. (P.W.) The City may consider ribbon curbs as an option to improve the area. (p&cd/P.W.)

Better drainage system to and around Brushy Creek.

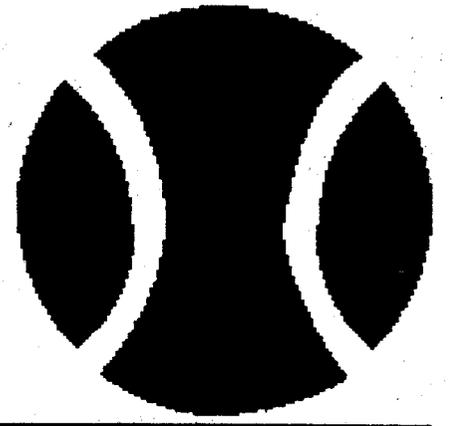
Recommendation: Because the terrain is so flat in this area, any ditches would be very deep and water would still move slowly to Brushy Creek. With any heavy rain, and regardless of improvements, it takes time for water to move. (P.W.)

Is there a maintenance problem?

Short Term: The Public Works Department maintains all drainage facilities on an on-going basis. The Department encourages citizens to call about maintenance problems. (P.W.)

Is there a health hazard due to standing water? The problem is especially bad at Anderson and Sheppard Streets.

Short Term: The current work on Mays Street should eliminate the problem on Anderson. Public Works has recently completed maintenance in the area and encourages citizens to call when a maintenance problem is apparent. (P.W.)



Parks



Parks

The neighborhood should be conducive to exercise and create recreational opportunities for children and adults.

The natural beauty of the neighborhood should be preserved and enhanced.

There are a number of vacant lots that could be put to positive uses.

Recommendation: The City should acquire vacant lots with delinquent taxes for basketball courts, tennis courts, or community gardens for public use. The City should use its vacant properties for the same purpose.

Short Term: In order to begin this process, City Staff will identify city owned lots and lots with delinquent taxes. *(p&cd)*

Medium Term: To most easily accomplish acquiring land for building small parks and organizing gardens, the City needs community support from the neighborhood. *(Neighborhood/p&cd)*

The City/Parks and Recreation Department/neighborhood should market parks as pleasant, family oriented places to be.

Short Term: Reclaim and use parks for neighborhood activities. People need to use the parks for individual, family, neighborhood, and group use. Word of mouth and events in the parks are the best advertisement. *(Neighborhood)*

The citizens of the downtown neighborhood and all of Round Rock should reclaim Veterans Park and better utilize Memorial Park.

Recommendation: People need to use the parks for individual, family, neighborhood, or group use.

Any "Clean Up Days" or other festivities should be headquartered in the parks (this may best benefit Veterans Park).

Report any crime or problems to the proper authorities as soon as possible. *(Neighborhood/Police)*

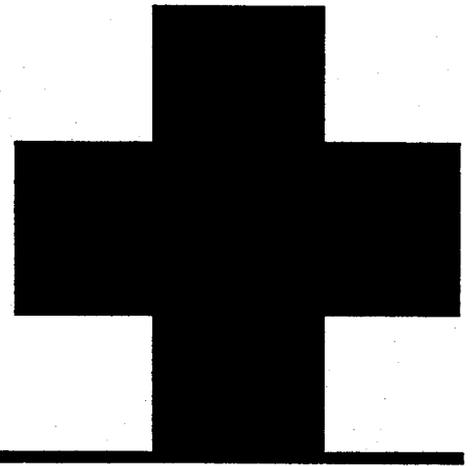
The Parks Department should consider the development of a linear park along Brushy Creek.

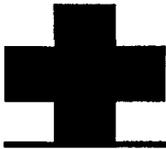
Medium Term: PARD has a plan to utilize the area for a park. It includes hike and bike trails that do not infringe on vegetation. (PARD)

Parks in the City are not well maintained. What can be done?

Recommendation: Evaluate an Adopt-A-Park program where people or civic/neighborhood groups "adopt" an area of a park for clean up and upkeep. The City has tried this option before, but it has not been successful. People lose interest and the group members change. The Department is not opposed to the idea and is willing to work with neighborhood groups that would like be involved in the upkeep and maintenance of the parks. (PARD)

Public Safety





Public Safety

Keep the neighborhood safe.

Ensure the safety of persons and property through programs such as crime watch, gang control, and traffic control.

Police department should create a program with the neighborhood and/or schools to prevent graffiti in the area.

Short Term: A recycled paint program is in effect in the City for graffiti clean up. Any unused paint is donated to the City for people or groups to use to paint over graffiti. Contact Environmental Services at Public Works, 218-5561. (*Neighborhood/P.W.*)

Long Term: The Police Department has a program working with neighborhoods and schools to prevent and remove graffiti. (*Police*)

The neighborhood is dark at night.

Short Term: The neighborhood and p&cd should implement a "Porch Light Program." Porch lights create a sense of community, give considerable light in the area, and is an inexpensive alternative (approximately \$2.50 a month per household) to the installation of new street lights. This program will enhance the darker areas in the middle of blocks. (*Neighborhood/p&cd*)

There have been problems with not enough participation in a neighborhood watch program.

Medium Term: The neighborhood should implement a neighborhood watch program, at a block by block level or zone system. The neighborhood needs to coordinate with the Police Department to create and promote the program. (*Neighborhood/Police*)

Better enforcement of abandoned and junk car violations. An active approach needs to be taken, rather than reacting to problems on a complaint basis.

Short Term: The Police Department previously authorized only one sergeant to enforce code violation laws. After a request from the NPT, the Police Department trained all sergeants in code violation law enforcement, authorized them to impound junk and abandoned vehicles, and to file complaints.

Medium Term: The Police will implement a Public Information Campaign in the next six (6) months. The literature will cost \$1,500 to publish. (*Police*)

There needs to be more visible police protection. Are bike or foot patrols in area feasible?

Short Term: The Police Department received a grant for one Community Police Officer for the downtown area. The Community Police Officer will attend neighborhood meetings and train new officers in Community Policing techniques. The Department feels that Community Policing will be very effective in this neighborhood.

The Police Department will also work on staying as visible as possible. Signs will be posted with Community Officer's name and phone number at entrances to the neighborhood. (*p&cd/P.W.*)

The Police Department deems foot patrols are not feasible, but is currently trying to initiate a bike patrol. (*Police*)

Stray Animals

There needs to be increased efficiency in animal control. More officers are needed or there needs to be improvements in the stray animal process. Presently, the waiting period for traps and response to calls is too long.

Short Term: The City provides a direct phone line for stray animal control, 255-PETS. The Police Department set four traps over 500 times in the last one and a half years. On average, there is a three week wait for one of the four traps. Purchasing six more traps will decrease this wait adequately. The cost of six traps is \$400.00 and is in the 1994/95 budget.

Medium Term: The City will gear more education toward the public regarding stray animal policies. In order to reduce response time, existing equipment needs to be upgraded. These on-going efforts will be put in a future budget.

Long Term: The Police should request an additional Animal Control officer and vehicle in a future budget. (*Police*)

Round Rock Animal Control should more closely coordinate with the Williamson County Humane Society (WCHS).

Solution: An increase in Williamson County Humane Society (WCHS) office hours would improve coordination between the City and WCHS. Currently, the WCHS operates between 10am - 6pm, while Animal Control is open 7am - 10pm.

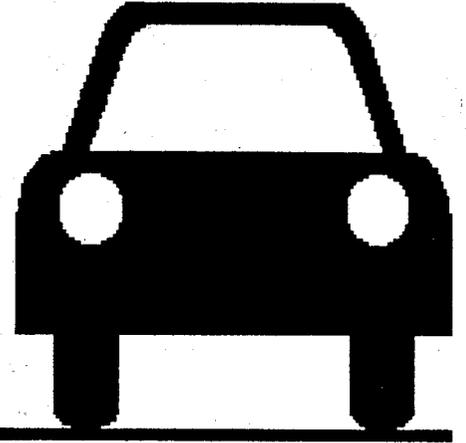
Can the WCHS take more animals at a faster rate?

The WCHS can not take more than one animal per cage per hour. It takes the WCHS at least one hour to process each animal and clean the cage. This is a WCHS policy that is not likely to change. *(Police)*

There is an overpopulation of stray animals in the city.

Long Term: Neutering is an effective method of animal population control. There is one veterinarian in the City that provides this service free. The City (along with the neighborhood) should explore the possibility of free or reduced veterinarian services. It is state law that only veterinarians give rabies shots. Animal Control should initiate a public information campaign concerning the importance and benefits of neutering and spaying animals. *(Police/Neighborhood)*

Traffic & Parking





Traffic & Parking

Keep the neighborhood safe.

Improve traffic conditions on Main Street and in the neighborhood as a whole.

There should be four way stop signs on Main Street at Lampasas, and Austin at Lewis.

Short Term: The p&cd will conduct a traffic study to determine if that location warrants a four way stop. The p&cd will periodically conduct additional traffic studies if initial warrants are not met. (p&cd)

A "Children at Play" sign would be appropriate for Austin Street between Stone and Lewis Streets, at the top of "Thrill Hill".

Short Term: "Children at Play" signs are available at the Public Works Department at the cost of \$20.00 each. Request installation from Larry Madsen in the Public Works Department, 218-5552. Public Works will install signs within 30 days of the request.

Public Works will install a "Caution - Steep Grade" sign at the top of the hill. (P.W./p&cd)

Explore the possibility of bike lanes in the area, especially on Main Street. Increase number and total length of bike trails within the City.

Long Term: Bike lanes for existing streets would require a bond issue for construction and maintenance. The City should implement this program for new developments through the subdivision process. PARD and P.W. would have to work together and develop a plan. Due to space limitations in the downtown area, this project may not be feasible for this area.

Of the three issues requiring bond measures, this is ranked third in importance. (P.W./PARD/p&cd)

Speed limit signs would be more effective if more strategically located.

Short Term: Public Works will install additional signs on Austin and Liberty Streets between Mays and Georgetown, and on the eastern section of Main Street, as identified by p&cd staff. (p&cd/P.W.)

Look into decreasing parking at corners on Main Street, in the historic district, by painting curbs, i.e. no parking zones, loading zones, short term parking zones.

Short Term: City staff will explore two hour parking in the downtown business district as recommended by the Downtown Business Association. (*p&cd*)

More enforcement of speeding in the neighborhood, especially at Austin and Stone Streets, "Thrill Hill".

Short Term: Starting August 1, 1994, the Police Department will increase enforcement in area as time allows. There will be an unmarked car with radar to monitor speed violations in the area. (*Police*)

Bushes and shrubs on corners are too high and obstruct view and create traffic problems, especially in the historic commercial district.

Short Term: A routine maintenance program is in effect in this area. This work is budgeted for 1993/94 and 1994/95. (*PARD*)

Medium Term: The City's landscape ordinance addresses site lines in residential areas only. The ordinance will be changed to reflect site lines, with curbside measurements, in commercial and single family commercial zones. (*p&cd*)

Parking in front yards is unattractive.

Short Term: Head-in parking on lots is discouraged and is prohibited in the right of way. The City will prohibit front yard parking in the downtown area. (*p&cd*)

The downtown area needs a better sense of entry.

Medium Term: The p&cd submitted a plan for antique lighting, signs and brick sidewalks on Mays and Main Streets to the Austin Transportation Study for funds available from the federal ISTEA program. This funding, if available, will create a sense of entrance to the downtown area. (*p&cd*)

Long Term: Public Works will provide continuity with historic street signs. (*P.W./p&cd*)

The neighborhood can sponsor banners, monuments, and signs to mark entrances to the area. (*Neighborhood*)

Zoning





Zoning

Residential areas should stay as unchanged as possible, with commercial impact minimized.

Business activities should be selectively regulated.

The City should create a new zoning classification to address commercial buildings in residential areas (and vice versa) and to restrict certain undesirable uses.

Short Term: Introduce a new zoning classification, that is intended for offices, personal services, shops and other uses predominately serving neighborhood or community needs, which may be located within or adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Businesses in the district should not unduly affect traffic in the area. The area should be designed to accommodate small, single use buildings and to encourage and preserve compatibility with existing neighborhoods through renovation and modernization of existing structures. Any new or remodeled commercial structure must retain single family characteristics.

NPT identified areas in the neighborhood that would benefit from zoning changes.

The areas that this classification would benefit are properties on the periphery between residential and commercial land uses, and are off the major streets (Mays, Main, and Round Rock Avenue.)

Short Term: NPT suggested amending the zoning in the downtown area by changing some of the zoning. The proposed changes would allow compatible uses in residential areas that are currently zoned commercial.
(p&cd)

No C-3 zoning in downtown.

Short Term: Historic Commercial Zoning (C-3) is specifically for the Chisholm Trail area.

The City will propose a Downtown Conservation District that conserves and protects the beauty and heritage of the neighborhood through architectural and land use controls for new development. Visual compatibility standards for single family, single family commercial, and general commercial uses are components of the Conservation District objectives. Features addressed include building materials, windows, compatibility, color, roof type and material, siding, landscaping, signage, and parking, and use restrictions.

The City should modify General Commercial (C-1) zoning in the downtown area.

Short Term: The City will propose amending the existing zoning ordinance to reflect modifications for C-1 uses to prohibit motor vehicle sales and rentals. Drive through businesses should be conditional uses based on the following criteria: 1) discourage through traffic on neighborhood streets and discourage queuing on public streets, 2) plans for noise prevention, and 3) plans for litter. A site plan will also be required. The Development Review Board is responsible for this review. (p&cd)

The City should modify Single Family (SF-2) zoning to allow bed and breakfasts as conditional uses in the downtown area.

Short Term: The City will amend the existing zoning ordinance to modify the SF-2 classification. Bed and breakfasts should be conditional uses with conditions for review including number of rooms, parking, and confirmation of bed and breakfast use only. The amendment should also require a site plan review. A bed and breakfast should be a conditional use in all SF-2 areas within designated districts and in residential historic landmarks. (p&cd)

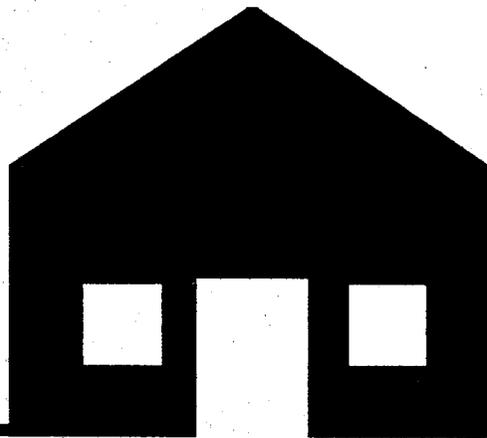
Enforce and/or clarify regulations limiting the number of unrelated persons living under one roof.

Medium Term: City Staff will amend the zoning ordinance to limit the number of unrelated people living in residential units in districts throughout the city. (p&cd)

Create and/or enforce a noise ordinance. It should include specifics about night clubs and cars with loud stereos. Explore possibility of a noise abatement program.

Medium Term: The current ordinance is not enforceable legally because it does not regulate decibel levels. The p&cd, along with the Police Department, is working on a new, more restrictive noise ordinance that has detailed decibel levels for enforcement with specifics for day and night levels and provisions for commercial uses adjacent to residential areas. The Police Department will enforce the new ordinance. (p&cd/Police)

Other Issues





Other

Would like to see MHMR facilities in neighborhood restricted.

Solution: The City requires 1/2 mile spacing between MHMR facilities, otherwise such facilities are permitted by state and federal law. *(p&cd)*

Development on Brushy Creek threatens the waterway.

Recommendation: Decrease development on Brushy Creek. Discuss reducing density through additional parks and hike and bike trails with City Staff and Council. *(Neighborhood/p&cd)*

Create an information contact sheet (and/or phone hotline) for City services and contact personnel.

Medium Term: Produce a handout with pictures and phone numbers of neighborhood department contacts. The City will install a new phone system in spring of 1995 with direct numbers for each department. The p&cd will complete and mail the contact sheet at that time. *(p&cd)*

The neighborhood should work to improve the positive aspects of the area residential/commercial mix, sense of community, civic pride, tourism, etc.

Recommendation: An active neighborhood that holds social and educational events will help improve and promote the area. *(Neighborhood/p&cd)*

Would like the library to remain downtown and have a compatible historic character.

Recommendation: The neighborhood should become involved with the library committee. The neighborhood should appoint a library committee liaison. *(Neighborhood)*

Would like to increase property values.

Recommendation: The plan itself and having active neighborhood involvement should gradually increase property values. *(Neighborhood)*