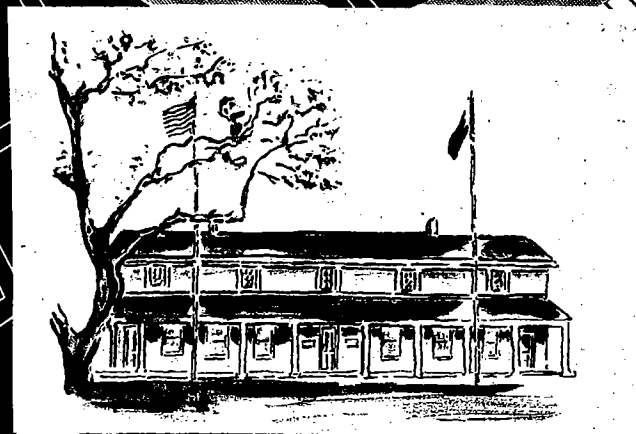
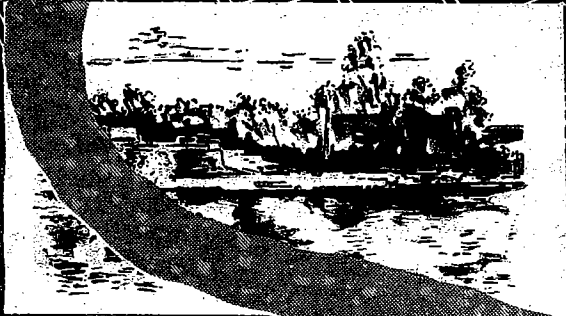


# SAN ANGELO R/UDAT

CONNECTING THE PAST TO THE FUTURE

*Planning for San Angelo's Historic City Center*



Report of the Regional Urban Design Assistance Team of the American Institute of Architects  
San Angelo, Texas February 7-10, 1992

February 11, 1992

To the Citizens of San Angelo:

San Angelo is my home, a home shared with each one of you. It is this shared sense of place that makes our community. During the past six days I have had the opportunity to observe and participate in the R/UDAT process and to see hundreds of people working together to create a vision for the future of our community.

At the core of this process is a dedicated team of architects, planners and urban design experts who have come together from across the nation. They have been assisted by several young architectural students from Texas Tech University. Together this group has labored almost around the clock to listen to hundreds of our citizens, evaluated our resources, and presented us a host of wonderful ideas and concepts upon which we can develop a plan for our future. All of us in San Angelo are deeply indebted for their selfless gift of time and talent.

This effort has been supported by hundreds of businesses, individuals, and institutions. Of special note has been the media's assistance which was vital to the success of the project. The San Angelo Standard-Times, KLST-TV, KIDY-TV, KGKL-AM/FM, KIXY-KJAY, K-LITE, KSJT all dedicated time and resources far beyond anyone's expectations.


The *Standard-Times* deserves special credit. Their people labored long and hard to make this published report a reality.

It was clearly stated from the outset that R/UDAT is "a plan for planning." This report cannot possibly contain all of the answers to the challenges that face our community. It does, however, present us with some exciting alternatives. There will almost certainly be concepts which will stir debate and hopefully an on-going dialogue. That is its true purpose.

At the public forum that was held as a part of this process, I was touched by the children's comments. While listening to them, I could not help but think of the great responsibility that we have for their future. Our generation inherited a beautiful city from our predecessors. Now we owe the same to our children.

I urge every citizen to read this report carefully and to consider the part each of us can play in making these dreams a reality in the months and years to come. And I hope that when the opportunity to participate comes along, that you will seize it with enthusiasm and determination.

All of the elements are here to assure a brilliant future for our wonderful home. The degree of success depends on our level of commitment to this vision.

  
Lee Pfluger, Chairman  
R/UDAT-SJT Steering Committee

# SECTION 1

## INTRODUCTION

A. Over the past twenty years, the American Institute of Architects, through its Urban Planning and Design Committee, has offered to communities the services of a Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team. The city of San Angelo has met all of the requirements for such a visit. Our team study, reported here, is a reflection of wholehearted community support, and the team wishes to express our warm appreciation and best of luck to all of San Angelo citizens who made our visit so rewarding.

R/UDAT Team members who perform their services voluntarily, have been appointed by the AIA's Urban Design and Planning Committee's R/UDAT Steering Group. As with the other 100 teams who have served communities over the past 20 years, each team member agrees not to receive any commission for work based upon the team's recommendations. The AIA has always held this requirement in tact so that fully objective findings and recommendations can be assured.

B. The San Angelo R/UDAT Team had three identified tasks:

- To provide a plan that links the Historic City Center to other landmarks (the Riverwalk, River Stage, Neff's, Fort Concho, and the Santa Fe Depot).
- To identify and explain creative financing tools that are available on a Federal, State, and Local level that can be utilized to implement the proposed plans.
- To recommend methods for coordinating efforts and resources.

There were numerous projects, objectives and concerns expressed by San Angelo citizens, and we list these in Section 3. Although time does not permit all of these concerns to be addressed, our urban design approach attempts to cover those of given priority.

The R/UDAT team also identified the most important community-wide issues and concerns, based upon the input we received. Strengths and weaknesses were identified in Section 4.

In Section 5, the R/UDAT team develops projects, programs and recommendations that respond to local concerns for the preservation of historic resources and encouragement of development.

Strategies and methods to implement the recommendations are described in Section 6.

Finally, a strategy laying out short, medium and long-term actions is provided in Section 7.



# SECTION 2 — BACKGROUND

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

For thousand of years before the westward movement of the European and Black settlers, Native American tribes passed through the area now known as San Angelo. The Concho Rivers were the forage grounds for the herds of buffalo that the Indians depended on. Spanish explorers came here in the 1600's searching for the fabled "Cities of Gold".

In 1849, the Gold rush to California spurred the development of trails used by the pioneers to cross the plains. Due to the presence of Indians, the U.S. Army began the Texas Frontier Defense Line to protect these Trails and expanding frontier development. This was cut short by the War Between the States.

In 1864, the first permanent white settlers arrived in the area that is now Tom Green County. Mr. and Mrs. R. F. Tankersley, with their seven

children and herd of cattle, settled near the South Concho Springs, south of present day Christoval. In 1867, a site for what was to become Fort Concho was chosen. The permanent buildings, many of which are still in use today as the Fort Concho National Historic site were begun in 1869.

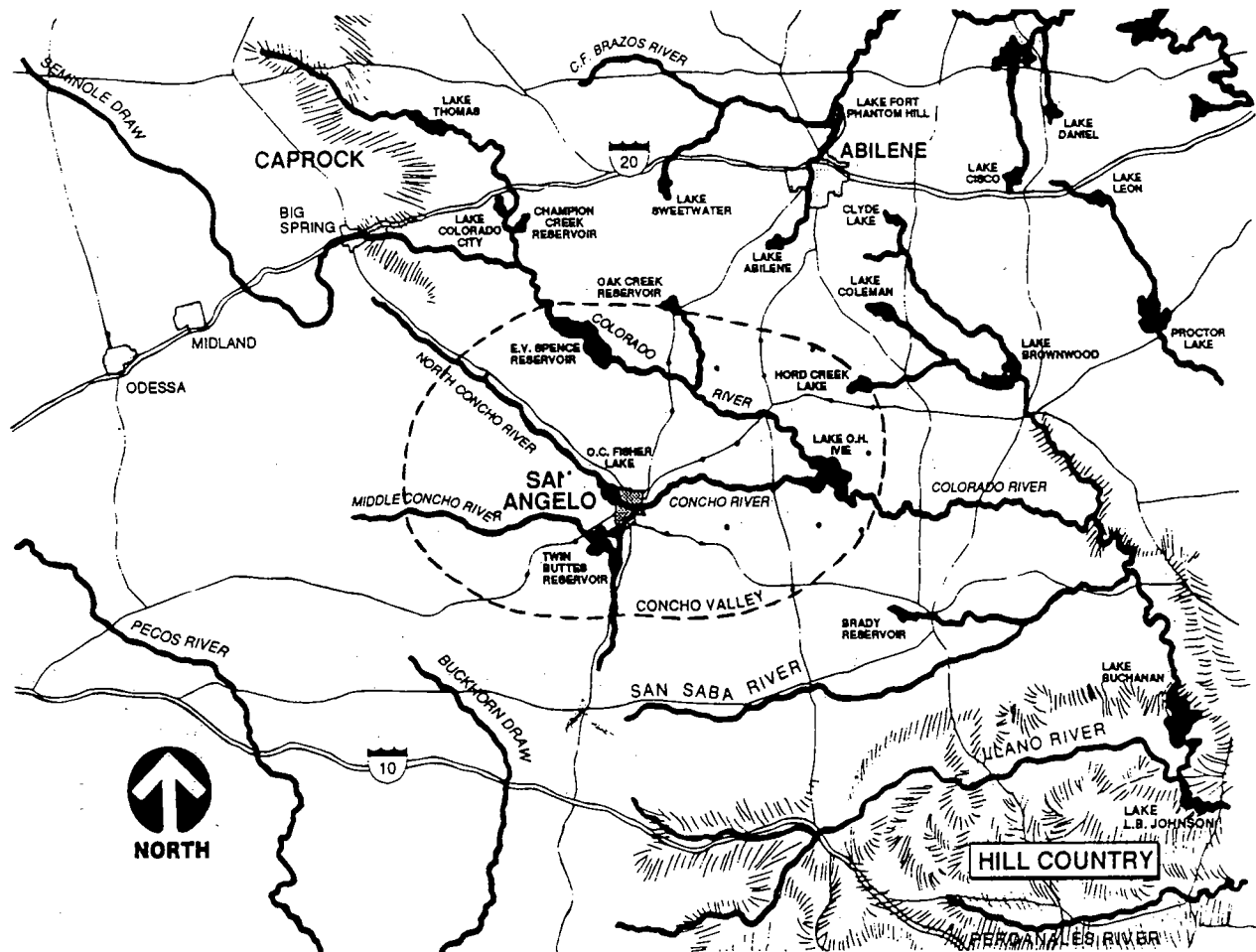
Stationed at the Fort were several "Buffalo Soldier" units comprised of Black troops who distinguished themselves during their service on the frontier. African Americans have been active citizens of the community from the beginning. Mexican and Mexican American families also settled in the area and have played a vital role in the economic and civic life of the community since the earliest days.

San Angelo got its start as a trading post located across the river from Fort Concho. It was established by Bartholomeu "Bart" DeWitt. Simply known as Over-the-River in early days, DeWitt named the settlement Santa Angela after his deceased wife, Caroline Angela DeWitt. The name

was anglicized to St. Angela and finally San Angelo in 1883.

An important aspect of San Angelo's history is its distinction as the center of county government. About 1886, Major Benjamin "Ben" Ficklin established a mail station and stage stand on the South Concho River. The community of Ben Ficklin grew up around this stage stand. Colonel Francis C. Taylor, manager of the stage stand, persuaded the Texas Legislature to incorporate Tom Green County. This was done in 1874. The election for the location of the county seat was hotly debated between San Angelo and Ben Ficklin. Ben Ficklin won the election; but, in 1882, a flood destroyed the community, and San Angelo became the county seat.

By 1886, wool had become an important industry. A wagon freight line was organized in that year to carry wool and other products to the rail head at Ballinger. In 1888, the Santa Fe Railroad extended their line to San Angelo. This brought an end to the need for shipping goods by wagon.



In 1889, January of that year, San Angelo was incorporated for the first time. A city seal was adopted depicting the branches of the Concho River, the water from these rivers being considered the town's greatest asset. On June 20 of that year, Fort Concho was abandoned due to a decreasing need for Army protection.

In 1891, San Angelo's incorporation was abolished. San Angelo was incorporated again the following year, but this was abolished in 1897. By the turn of the century, Tom Green County was well established as the largest cattle center in West Texas, and San Angelo had a population of 3,700. In 1903 the city was incorporated for the third and last time.

Several important events took place during the first decade of the twentieth

century. A school system was created and land was set aside for Santa Fe Park and a playground for each ward school. The Wool Growers Central Storage was established in 1909. This cooperative, allowed area ranchers to have better control of the wool and mohair markets. In 1917, the United States entered the First World War, a generally unpopular move in the city. However, a bigger distraction — was a severe drought. Economic recovery from the drought was helped by the discovery of oil in Reagan County in 1923.

In 1929, a new City Hall was opened as well as Mathis Field and San Angelo Junior College. By the end of the decade, San Angelo was the largest primary wool market in the United States. In 1930, the census showed 25,308 people living in San Angelo. In that same year, the state fish hatchery was opened and the Nasworthy Dam and reservoir were completed. The year 1936 will long be remembered as the year of the flood, which caused substantial damage to downtown San Angelo.

In 1941, the United States entered World War II and the opening of Goodfellow Air Force Base followed. Over 17,000 pilots were trained at Goodfellow before the facility was converted to an Air Force Security Service Training School in 1958. In 1945, the voters of Tom Green County approved organization of a county-wide Junior College District. Two years later, San Angelo College moved to its present site south of Avenue N. During the 1940's, San Angelo more than tripled in land area due to several annexations.

In 1954, San Angelo (now O. C. Fisher) Reservoir was completed. Four years later, the San

Angelo Coliseum was adjacent to the stock show and rodeo fairgrounds. In 1963, Twin Buttes Reservoir was completed. San Angelo College was designated as part of the state college system in 1965, and the name was changed to Angelo State College. Four years later, Angelo State was granted university status.

The Bryant Throughway project began in 1964 and opened in several phases. It was completed in 1972. That same year, land acquisition began for the proposed Houston-Harte Freeway. Economic development efforts of the City and Chamber of Commerce City during this era also attracted the headquarters for General Telephone of the Southwest; Ethicon, Inc., Levi Strauss and Company and regional headquarters for the Federal Aviation Administration and U. S. Customs Service, among others.

Now a city of more than 83,000 people, San Angelo is fighting a soft

economy created primarily by the oil slump of the 1980's. However, the community is optimistically looking to the future. Blessed with a diversified economy, a rich matrix of historic and cultural assets, a pleasant climate and community-minded citizens, there is reason for optimism. The R/UDAT plan which addresses the communities future, is a strong indication that the frontier spirit is still alive in 1992.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Historic City Center study area is bisected by the Concho River with the City's downtown on one side and Fort Concho on the other.

On the Fort Concho side large areas have a run down appearance, and there are a number of vacant storefronts and warehouses and much under used or poorly-used land. There is also a notable lack of connection between the major features and buildings. This is punctuated by intensively used and well maintained areas such as Fort Concho, the Fort Concho Elementary School and the adjacent neighborhood. The Historic Orient/Santa Fe Depot, Municipal Swimming Pool and River Stage are located on this side of the river.

There are thoughtful and detailed plans that exist for the restoration of the Depot and Fort Concho and expansion of the San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts. There is a less specific plan for continued development of the River Stage area. The Convention Center is located here and there is great concern on the part of the Convention and

Visitors Bureau about the perceived inadequacy of the existing facility. Since the defeat of bond issue funding that would have financed expansion of the Convention Center several years ago there have been informal studies, but no specific plan created for the future of this facility.

On the downtown side of the river there is also a dichotomy of conditions. Here the institutional base is quite strong and numerous churches, Shannon Medical Center, city, county and federal offices and other organizations occupy handsome and well maintained facilities. The traditional functions of downtown as the city's retail center has largely been lost, nearly half of the available retail space is empty and numerous former stores have been demolished or converted to other uses. Some businesses, however, are flourishing, such as Fuentes Restaurant.

In the downtown there are a number of large structures that are now unoccupied, but which give the area much of its character. Among these are the Texas Theatre and the Cactus Hotel. The downtown area also has several unique and pleasant features such as the partially restored "Historic First Block" of Concho Street, a river walk, Neff's Amusement Park, Santa Rita Park, and the Municipal Golf Course.

There has been a failed private attempt to restore and adapt the Cactus Hotel. There was also a Junior League sponsored feasibility study to restore the Texas Theatre which was undertaken in 1989.

No cohesive plan exists for Downtown although a struggling Downtown Association has heightened the dialogue about its plight. In 1991 a carefully undertaken "River Corridor Master Plan" was completed by the City Council appointed River Corridor Commission. This plan calls for public and private investment in the river area which would substantially enhance this great asset and help tie together both sides of the river.

## CURRENT TOOLS FOR REGULATION

The city currently has a zoning code that can serve as the framework for HCC regulation. Existing commercial zoning in much of the HCC would allow the mixes of uses being proposed in this report. Manufacturing zoning around the fort area could be modified to accomplish much of the urban citizen recommendations south of the river.

State law further already authorizes the funding techniques discussed later in this report, as well as additional tools to accomplish an overall redevelopment plan.

Several valuable "subarea" or "subtopic" plans have been developed by city commissioners and citizen groups which have served as the basis for part of these recommendations and can be built on in future planning efforts.

**QUOTING A CUSTOMER:**  
*"We drove all over the United States, we drove all over Texas, and we picked San Angelo to retire in."*

— ELMER VOYT

# SECTION 3 - ISSUES & OBSERVATIONS

## PRESERVATION

The city has a wealth of historic structures, which are perceived by many residents as the key to economic revitalization of the Historic City Center. Four historic sites (Texas Theatre, Cactus Hotel, the Santa Fe Depot/Warehouse, and Ft. Concho) have special meaning to the community that is appreciated by most residents, but support for the preservation and reuse of other structures is more mixed. Renovation costs and regulatory controls are the greatest hindrances to preservation efforts. ("Tear it down if it's not workable." "Building new is cheaper than renovating.") There is a call for governmental support of preservation efforts through the development of an historic district and more sympathetic writing and interpretation of building codes and zoning ordinances.

Many civic groups, cultural organizations, and non-profits expressed support for San Angelo architectural heritage, but strong, broad-based support was also voiced by business and institutional leaders, who see it as the key to a quality urban environment that can attract new businesses and employees from other parts of the state and the country.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

There seems to be a desire — a yearning — for continued economic development in San Angelo. New businesses need to be attracted, current businesses need to be retained. City officials and the Chamber of Commerce are ready to assist these efforts. The banks are primed to participate. City officials boast about being debt free and this means that the City has the potential to undertake new investments. It also means the city has missed opportunities for investment in the Historic City Center that could have increased the tax base and expanded jobs.

One of the things that is holding San Angelo back, according to a Chamber of Commerce study, is a shortage of skilled labor. This suggests the need for more vocational training in the future.

Tourism, which in terms of dollars coming into the economy, has been flat for the past decade (negative if accounting for inflation). However, tourism can become important to the economic health of San Angelo. The potential to increase it is one major reason that efforts to restore the Fort and the Historic City Center are vital. Bus trips, carrying passengers from not only the region but from all of Texas and even international locales, is an expanding segment of San Angelo's tourism market. These are people who will be attracted to

the city's amenities. Restoration and reclamation of the city's unique assets will also increase its potential for conventions. The Downtown Association believes the City may need to expand its Convention Center. A new convention center hotel, which some envision, may also be needed.

San Angeloans also commented that their city is a major retirement community, especially for people who were at Goodfellow Air Force Base in the 1940s and 1950s.

## PROCESS / COORDINATION OF EFFORTS

Not lacking in ideas for improving their community and, in most cases, the requisite energy and enthusiasm, the citizens of San Angelo are rather seeking direction or a road map for collecting, coordinating, and implementing their ideas with a community vision. The vitality of the Historic City Center is at the heart of their ideas. The role of City government relative to the private sector is confusing to them. Government involvement through taxes or regulations is often viewed as the stumbling blocks to implementation, not the tools. Citizens seem either wary of, jaded by, or merely uncertain of the value of citizen involvement in the government, decision making and planning processes.

## URBAN DESIGN

Many residents noted that the fundamental urban design issue in the city is a lack of connections. This has been expressed in previous plans such as the River Corridor Plan, and is seen as fundamental to the economic viability of future development efforts. Concerns about connections were expressed in terms of transportation and pedestrian links as well as the visual cohesion of the Historic City Center and the need for consistency of materials, color, quality and streetscaping. Landmarks and key areas need stronger visual links as well as physical connections.

Public open space is profoundly important to the residents, both as passive recreational space (the riverfront), and as active recreational space (Neff's, River Stage, a proposed fiesta plaza.) The river itself is a recognized asset and most residents feel that the success of the Historic City Center depends upon the development of a variety of connections to and across the river.

## TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

San Angelo's citizens expressed concerns about regional access, internal circulation, and parking. They are concerned that the city's relatively remote location limits economic development. Many feel





there needs to be a strategy to alleviate those negative perceptions. Within San Angelo, people are accustomed to and expect a convenient, inexpensive and non-restrictive transportation system. San Angelo is a major city in West Texas, but people want the transportation qualities of a smaller, less urban setting: no congestion, readily available parking, and the ability to circulate freely unhindered, for example, by turning restrictions. A high value is placed on the provision of parking to support existing businesses and institutions and to assist future redevelopment of historic structures.

## CULTURE & THE ARTS

San Angelo has an extremely active cultural community that enjoys widespread volunteer and financial support. A very thoughtful arts plan has been developed but not implemented. A variety of proposals were presented, including arts festivals, a railroad museum, a garden/horticultural center, a children's museum, living history exhibits, military history, a holistic health "Foot Festival," a "Wool Pageant" and wool/agricultural museum, a zoo and livestock exhibits, a Visitors' Center, and an expanded county library. Many speakers expressed the need for activities that support the strong family orientation of this community. There is also a need for space for existing arts groups (rehearsal space, a recital/performance hall, artists' studios), and for headquarters facilities for several non-profits (Junior League, Garden Club).

The Team was impressed by the cooperative spirit that exists between the promoters of these proposals and by the strong tradition of volunteerism in San Angelo. The richness and diversity of cultural life here, including the continuing contributions of the Hispanic and the African-American communities, are a major asset to the city.

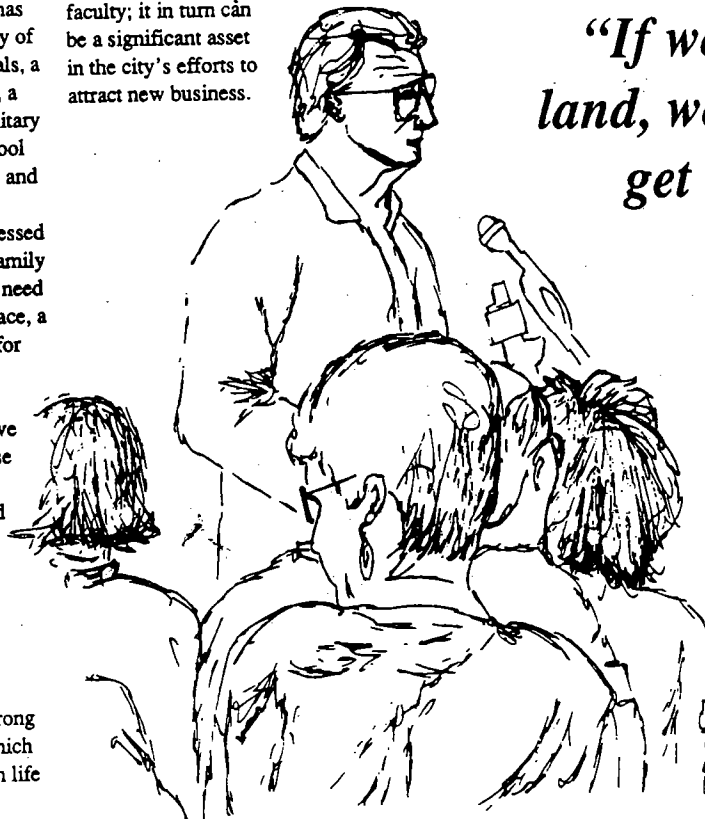
## INSTITUTIONS

San Angelo is fortunate to have several strong institutions within its city limits, several of which are located in or near the core district. Church life is an integral part of this community, and the presence of several active, healthy (and even

growing) congregations occupying architecturally important buildings is a significant contribution to the social and cultural health of the city.

Hospitals are another significant asset, contributing to San Angelo's growing reputation as a retirement center and offering a major attraction to relocating businesses and industries. Hospitals contribute to the economic base of the city, and the presence of thousands of employees and hospital visitors (especially at Shannon) is an untapped source of support for retail and entertainment activities in the Historic City Center.

With approximately 6300 students, Angelo State University is another institution that contributes to both the economic and cultural life of the community. ASU recognizes the importance of a healthy city center in its own efforts to recruit top students and faculty; it in turn can be a significant asset in the city's efforts to attract new business.



## SOCIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY

San Angelo is blessed with a rich cultural diversity. The Hispanic and African-American populations have deep roots in the development of the community. Buffalo Soldiers, a name given units of African-American soldiers by the Native Americans, served at Fort Concho during the times of early settlement. The Hispanic community developed along with the early settlement and have been an integral part of the community throughout its history. The Anglo settlers of the area had strong roots to the Germanic countries.

Although ethnic neighborhoods have developed over time, the community is functionally integrated. The need to celebrate the cultural diversity and physically recognize the cultural history has been expressed to the R/UDAT team.

The family and the importance of children are guiding values which were obvious in the presentations we heard. The increasing role of the community as a retirement center was also stressed. The specialized medical and living facilities have anchored the community's role not only as a retirement center for the surrounding area, but also attracting people from throughout the United States and beyond.

*"If we sell this land, we will never get it back."*

—B.D. PAYNE

## IDENTITY

The R/UDAT team was impressed with one consistent attitude which surfaced in comments we heard over the weekend: West Texas Pride!

There seemed to be a need for some rally-cry, or theme, or motto, to express a consensus of "who we are" and "what we are" as citizens of the San Angelo Community.

West Texas... Western... Southwest... a regional location seemed to be suggested in the boasting comments from many who want the visitors and neighbors to know the significance of this place in Texas. Beyond that, there was a desire expressed to recapture the international image as the "wool capitol of the world".

This same sense of pride was expressed by many in their suggestions to use native plants, to market for tourists the clean air and water, and to preserve and restore the architectural symbols of the past, which everyone seemed to cherish.

## RIVER CORRIDOR

At a R/UDAT information gathering meeting, Jim Gabriel, a downtown business owner addressing the team, made the statement, "...The river is a diamond".

We heartily agree.

San Angelo was built along the banks of the Concho River, a natural amenity which makes the

city proper and surrounding areas unique and very beautiful. Nearly every group and individual interviewed has somewhat turned its back on the river in past years and would like to see an about face where maximum potential can be realized from this wonderful amenity.

The issues, problems and goals pertaining to the Concho River is an area the R/UDAT team feels has been very well covered by a group of citizens appointed by the city in 1982 and called the River Corridor Commission. A comprehensive report titled, *The River Corridor Master Plan*, was published in 1990. The nine people who still serve on that Commission act in an advisory capacity and have been called the "eyes and ears" of the Council and the community in matters affecting the river.

The issues, problems and goals of the River Corridor Commission are quite involved and go well beyond what the R/UDAT team could ever hope to accomplish on the river corridor in the short period of time allotted to perform our work.

While several important concepts and suggestions are presented in a later section of this report, they pertain to details that the Commission seems to fully recognize the need for, as stated on page 25 of their report.

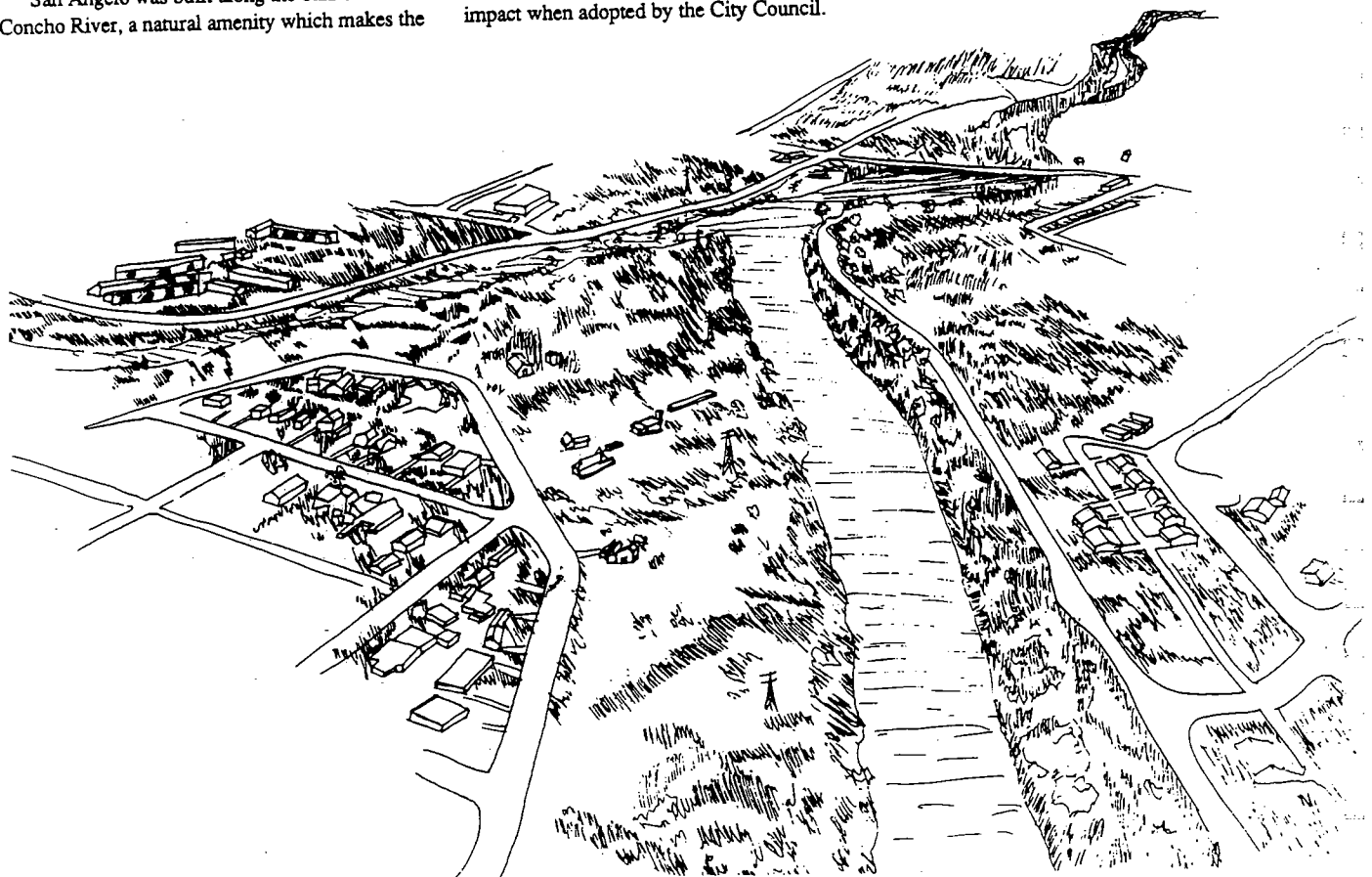
The R/UDAT team recognizes that the River Corridor Master Development Plan was an excellent effort on the part of the River Corridor Commission, however, it will only realize its full impact when adopted by the City Council.

## TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

San Angelo's citizens expressed concerns about regional access, internal circulation, and parking. They are concerned that the city's relatively remote location limits economic development. Many feel there needs to be a strategy to alleviate those negative perceptions. Within San Angelo, people are accustomed to and expect a convenient, inexpensive and non-restrictive transportation system. San Angelo is a major city in West Texas but people want the transportation qualities of a smaller, less urban setting: no congestion, readily available parking, and the ability to circulate freely. A high value is placed on the provision of parking to support existing businesses and institutions and to assist future redevelopment of historic structures.

*"If I didn't live here, I'd move here."*

—WELDON LINDSA





# SECTION 4—R/UDAT TEAM OBSERVATIONS

## SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

### STRENGTHS

- San Angelo has a strong West Texas identity that exemplifies itself through a friendly, open-hearted attitude, pride and spirit. Family life and activities are very important.
- There is a strong tradition of volunteerism and a desire to work together with the leadership of the community.
- San Angelo's established cultural resources and non-profit organizations have recently experienced rapid expansion. Planning efforts that have been undertaken by citizen's groups to identify these resources include:
  - The River Corridor Master Plan
  - Depot Feasibility Study
  - Texas Theatre Feasibility Study
  - Ft. Concho/Art Museum Master Plan
  - R/UDAT - SJT Application
- San Angelo has a wonderful mix of cultures — Hispanic, African-American, etc. — that celebrate their uniqueness with citywide events.

### WEAKNESSES

- There is a lack of strong leadership promoting and encouraging participatory government.
- There is a strong tradition of independence and laissez-faire. This mind set works against the implementation of community goals.

## ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

### STRENGTHS

- San Angelo has a rich tradition of ranching and farming.
- San Angelo is a major urban center and key transportation hub with a diverse economic and market base. The community's major employers include Goodfellow Air Force Base, Angelo State University, Ethicon, Inc., and GTE Southwest. Shannon Hospital and the City's government offices are major assets that provide jobs and attract visitors to downtown.
- The leadership of the business and financial community recognizes the need to be involved with a wide range of projects, especially in the downtown area. Our Chamber of Commerce is dynamic and actively supports business development.

### WEAKNESSES

- If San Angelo is to grow, a highly skilled labor

force needs to be trained.

- City government and personnel are unimaginative, inexperienced and uncertain of the financial and regulatory tools that can be used to stimulate development in the downtown area. This lack of imagination results in the unleveraged use of Federal and State funds in creative ways.

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

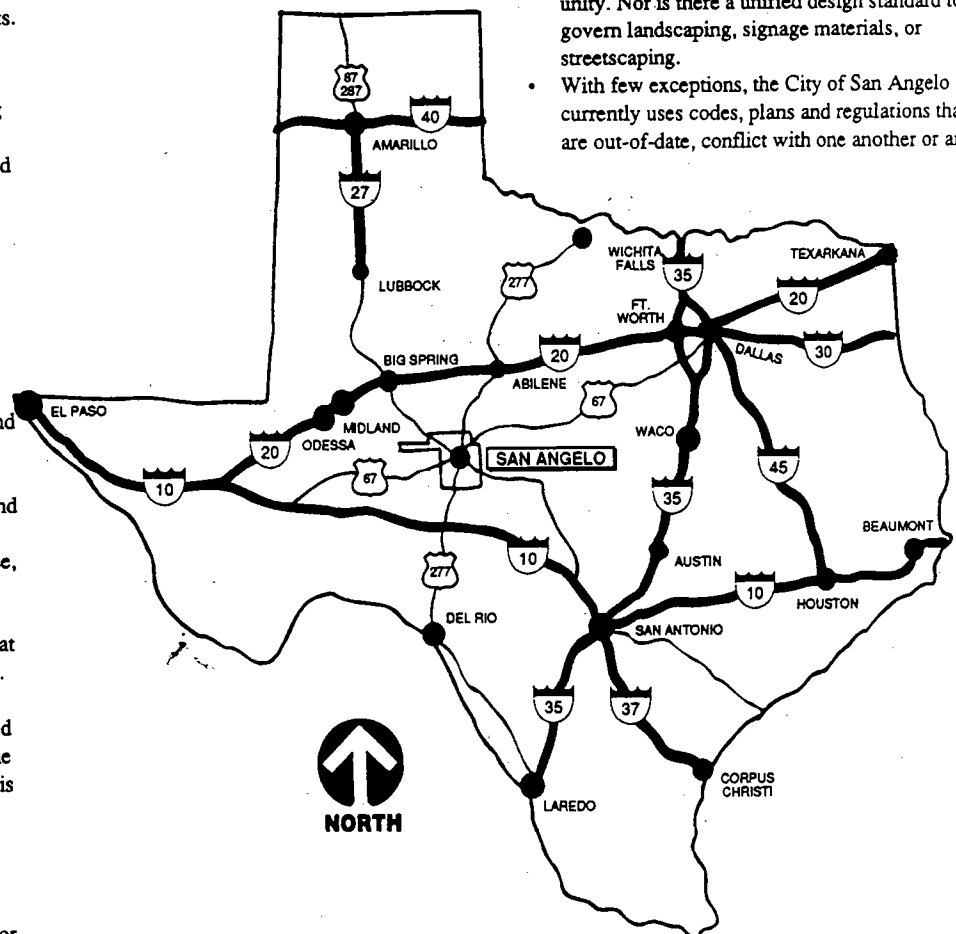
### STRENGTHS

- Downtown San Angelo is a rich cultural and economic center that has a wealth of historic structures and other identifiable features, including the Cactus Hotel and the Texas Theatre. These buildings and their uses are all closely located and have a continuity of design.
- Downtown San Angelo has good traffic flow, wide streets, ample angular parking and easy accessibility to the rest of the city. Impressive views of the river can be seen from many streets.

- Downtown San Angelo is the government and institutional center of the city. Shannon Hospital and other related medical services are also located here. These are major physical assets that anchor the area.
- The river and riverwalks provide important passive and active recreational activities. San Angeloans utilize the riverwalks, river stage, picnic sites, Neff's, municipal pool, and miniature golf course.

### WEAKNESSES

- Downtown San Angelo suffers from a lack of connections to other neighborhoods and activities. This disconnection results in the void of a symbolic focus that identifies the center of the city. One never has the sense of arriving "downtown."
- Downtown San Angelo does not have a system of intentional connections and links between pedestrian or vehicular activities. There is not a parking management plan that addresses the problem of ample, close-in, off-street parking.
- Important landmarks and other buildings lack unity. Nor is there a unified design standard to govern landscaping, signage materials, or streetscaping.
- With few exceptions, the City of San Angelo currently uses codes, plans and regulations that are out-of-date, conflict with one another or are



non-existent in relationship to a coordinated effort development in the downtown area.

- There is no inventory of downtown space, including ownership parcel maps, parking lots and number of spaces, building data, i.e.: floor area, vacancies and land use.

## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

### STRENGTHS

- San Angelo has abundant water resources for West Texas. The area's lakes and rivers provide recreational uses for the region. It's water supply ensures the City's future growth.
- Downtown San Angelo has a river and riverwalk system that is unique. The river's location near downtown provides opportunity for future activities.
- The city's system of arroyos has the potential to become an interrelated recreational and pedestrian system that ties back into downtown.

### WEAKNESSES

- Accessibility to the river is not clearly defined from downtown or the areas that join it. Pedestrian movement is limited to the riverwalk, with no connection to parks, municipal gardens, or other open spaces.
- Surface water run-off from downtown and the adjoining areas contributes to the pollution of the river.

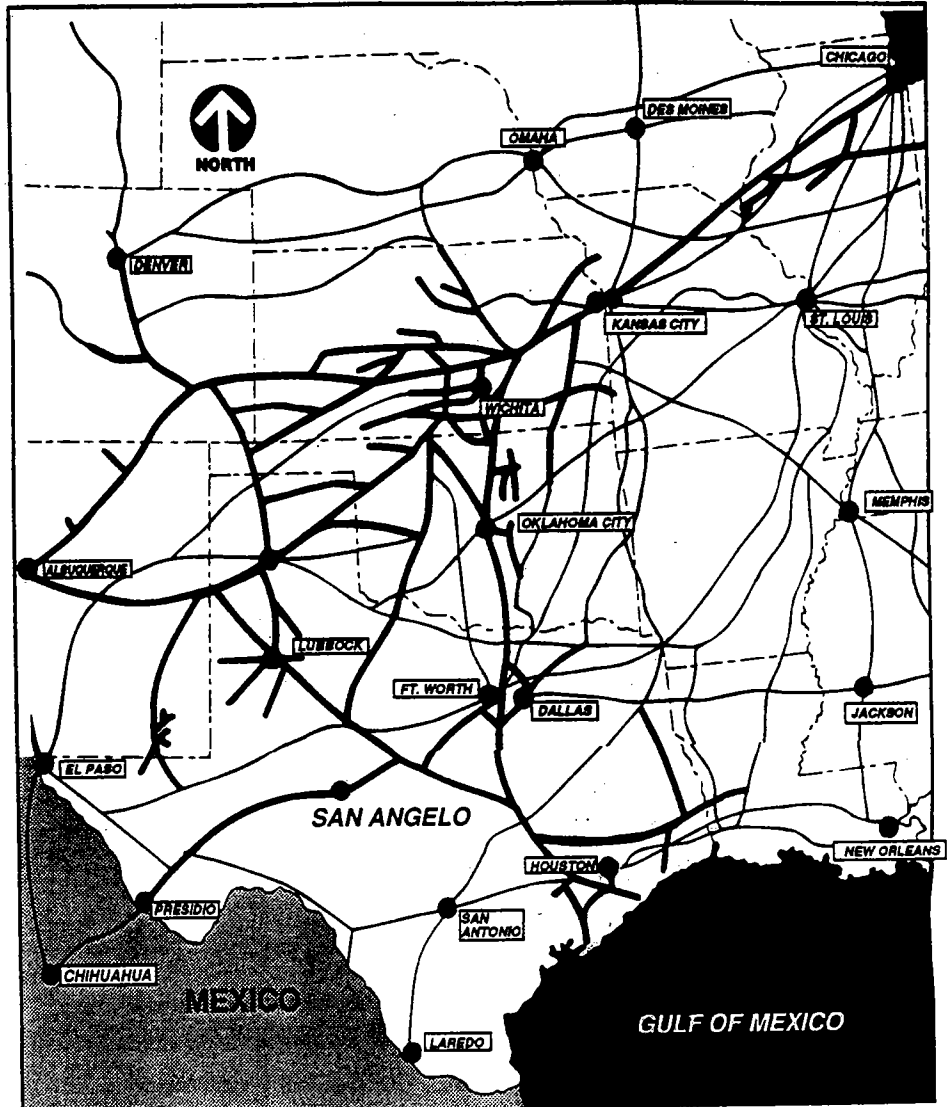
## REGIONAL SETTING

### STRENGTHS

- San Angelo is a key transportation hub in west Texas. Despite not having an interstate highway, the city enjoys excellent highway connections to other west Texas cities, to central and south Texas and to Mexico. This advantageous location is a marketing opportunity.
- San Angelo has the only direct rail line to Mexico of any major west Texas city.
- Good airline connections for a city of this size.

## LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS

- The traditionally wide streets provide ample traffic capacity and contribute to the comparative lack of congestion. While many area residents consider traffic to be heavy on some streets, traffic flows very well.
- The wide streets and angle parking reinforce a western atmosphere.
- Traffic volumes on Abe, Koenigheim, Chadbourne, Beaugard and Harris are some of the highest in the City (10,000 - 15,000 daily



- vehicles). That traffic provides excellent visibility for commercial and other development. It also evidences current vitality in the Historic City Center.
- Chadbourne and Irving especially offer impressive views of landmark buildings. These view corridors should be reinforced.
- Numerous bridges across Concho River make the City Center relatively accessible and provide opportunities to highlight the river and serve as gateways to the business district.

## PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

- River Walk is a major asset and opportunity for further development.

## PARKING

- Angle parking on the typically long blocks provides a very sizeable customer and visitor

- parking supply — typically 20 stalls on each block face or about 2.5 times more spaces than a parallel parking layout.
- Parking supply is sufficient to support additional development and redevelopment in many areas (if zoning changes are made).
- A substantial amount of land area is devoted to off-street parking in the Historic City Center. Parking area appears to exceed built-up area.

### WEAKNESSES

- Lack of interstate highway causes poor perception for industries thinking of locating in San Angelo.

## LOCAL STREETS AND ROADS

- Poor east/west access between Bryant and Depot/Fort/Convention Center area.
- Major streets do not accentuate sense of entry to

City Center

- Bridges do not highlight river or improve river corridor appearance.
- Conflicts occur on some streets with cars lining up at drive-up lanes, and with parking maneuvers. These are inconvenient to be sure, but that they have been tolerated suggests they do not pose a major traffic problem.
- Avenue D penetrates Ft. Concho disturbing its historical context but does not provide local access to the rehabilitated buildings on the south or direct access to Ft. Concho school. It does connect the Ft. Concho Addition neighborhood with Oakes and Chadbourne but does not benefit from traffic signals at those intersections whereas Highland and Washington do.

**PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES**

- Discontinuous sidewalk and trail system discourages pedestrian traffic and raises safety concerns in some locations (Neff's Way, pedestrian stairs at bridges are examples).
- Lack of awnings and covered walkways exposes pedestrians to hot sun.

**PARKING**

- Parking lots break up blocks contributing to the impression of deterioration.
- Off-street parking restrictions are poorly indicated. Drivers are therefore uncertain about which lots are available for public parking.
- Zoning requirements for parking are indeed "onerous" for a city center. The current code is appropriate for outlying, suburban-type areas where buildings stand alone in dispersed patterns; it is not appropriate for the density and mix of uses found in the Historic City Center. For example:
  - all buildings are required to provide parking on the site. This is inefficient and undesirable for mixed-use commercial and historic districts because it creates an economic burden on rehabilitation projects and encourages demolition of adjacent buildings for parking.
  - requirements for retail stores, financial institutions and residential units are excessive. Retail requirements probably considerably exceed actual demand.
  - there is no provision for two or more complimentary land uses to share a common parking supply. This unnecessarily increases the amount of parking required. Individual property owners and tenants may choose to provide more, but should not be required to do so in the

Historic City Center.

- Information on parking supply, restrictions a usage is very limited.

**TWO SAN ANGELOS**

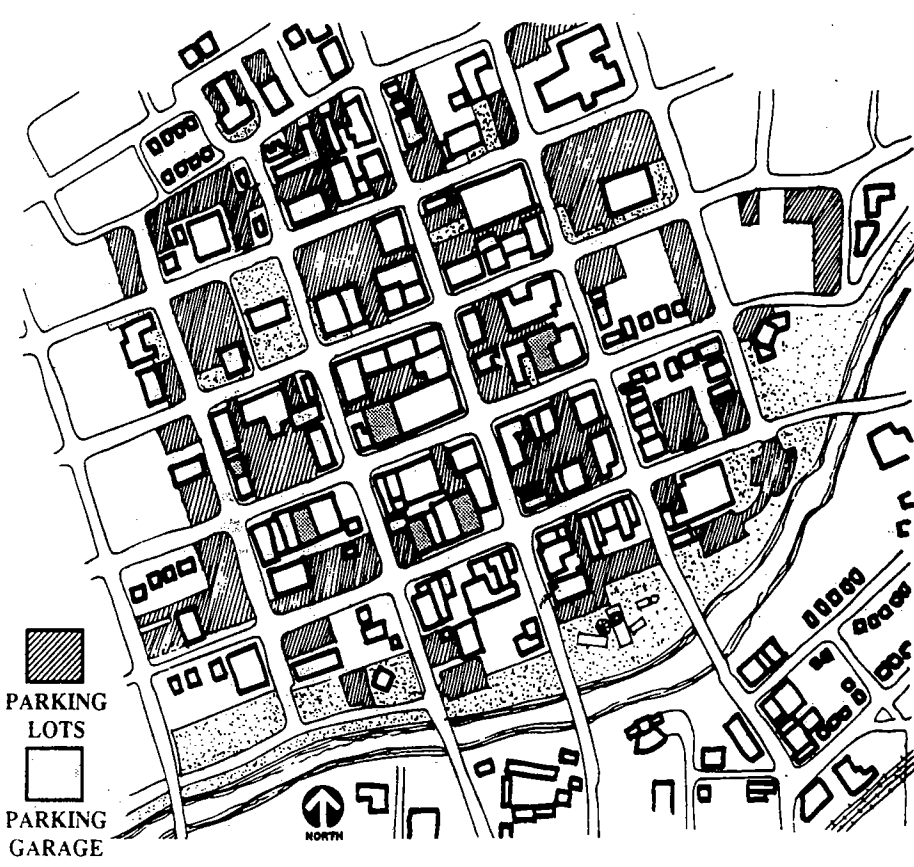
On Friday and Saturday of the R/UDAT visit the team met with and heard from individuals and groups concerned about the future of San Angelo. The sheer number of people that sought us out at the passion with which they expressed their opinions and vision was impressive. Brimming forth with ideas, they were confident about San Angelo's future. This community is one face of San Angelo, a group poised to implement R/UDAT's "plan for planning." It is well-connected politically and socially and financially and is overwhelmingly white.

There is a second face of San Angelo we did not see, a face we can only imagine — the city's poor and minority communities. The city's Comprehensive Housing Assistance Strategy or CHAS paints a picture of these San Angeloans. The low income population of San Angelo is approaching 25%. According to the CHAS, 1/3 are all renters, 1/4 of all minority renters as well as 1 of minority homeowners are low income. In addition, 8% of all rental units and 10% of all homes are substandard. The focus of low income San Angeloans is on survival, including affordable housing, good health care and access to services. It is little wonder why they are not active community participants.

It is beyond the scope of this report to suggest ways to integrate the second face of San Angelo more fully in community planning. Addressing some of their major issues and barriers, however, would be a start. Celebrating the heritage of the minority communities is important, such as preserving Fort Concho, the home of the Buffalo Soldiers, as well as the City's Hispanic heritage. More tangible efforts are also needed.

The R/UDAT team believes that improving people's physical surroundings is fundamental. An emphasis must be placed on better funding of and aggressive marketing for the city's paint-up/fix up low interest revolving loan fund for homeowners. Additional Community Development Block Grants which currently provide \$250,000 funds, should be targeted to this effort. In addition, developing low income housing units in the Historic City Center would not only increase the affordable housing stock, it would also help to breathe life into the area, supporting the remaining retail and entertainment facilities.

Longer-term efforts should emphasize bottom up planning, including development of community councils, giving greater numbers of people opportunities for effective participation. These councils are especially important in disaffected communities.



# SECTION 5 — R/UDAT CONCEPTS

## PRESERVATION

The preservation and reuse of San Angelo's architectural heritage is the key to the economic revitalization of the Historic City Center. The city has already lost some of its architectural heirlooms, and it must act now to protect those that remain. These buildings establish the city's unique character and will be the foundation of the growing tourism and convention business. Historically significant buildings can also provide the anchor for a stronger "in-town" residential and professional presence, which will in turn contribute to the economic health of the Historic City Center.

Although there seems to be broad-based citizen support for the preservation of some local buildings (Cactus Hotel, the Depot/Warehouse, Ft. Concho, the Texas Theater), appreciation of the value of San Angelo's collection of architectural treasures is very uneven. This problem is not unique to this city; even cities such as Boston and Charleston—now known for their historic districts and the sophistication of their preservationists—have not always been conscious of this potential. Education is critical, and in this, San Angelo is extremely fortunate to have such an active and respected cultural and volunteer community. Organizations such as the Junior League and the San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts can be leaders in this effort, sponsoring walking tours, exhibits, lectures, publications, and school-based educational programs for children. An organization such as Historic San Angelo can issue historic building markers that will promote residents' pride in their architectural heritage; an awards program could also promote recognition of those who have contributed to preservation in the city. Greater understanding of San Angelo's architectural history will also lead to greater understanding of its social, cultural and economic history.

An historic district must be established, both to provide for sensitive restoration and reuse of historic structures, and to ensure that any new construction is respectful of the historic context. Citizens have clearly expressed their pride in their West Texas identity; this identity is also very appealing to visitors. Design guidelines should be established that will protect and reinforce this unique aspect of San Angelo; a review board, advisory to the planning director, the Mayor or the City Council, can administer the guidelines.

Design guidelines will identify those aspects of building design that contribute most to the essential West Texas character of the district, such as: color

(e.g. light earth tones with an emphasis on ochre); materials (e.g. masonry, rather than glass); facade treatments (e.g. encouraging canopies); diagonal street parking; building heights (1-2 stories, except at significant locations); architectural expression of typically narrow lot widths (even in larger buildings); perpendicular free-standing signs (e.g. Concho Saddles). This does not mean that new or infill buildings must be copy-cat reproductions; the intent of well-written guidelines is to promote design excellence that is compatible with the district and that supports the community's intentions for the area.

The historic buildings survey must be completed, after which a rating system can be established to identify relative historic significance. Four categories may be useful: Category 1, for buildings of "icon" stature, such as the Cactus Hotel; Category 2, for buildings of major significance, such as the Trimble-Batjer Building; Category 3, for buildings that do not individually have great historic value, but that collectively contribute to the unique identity and character of the district; and Category 4, for buildings without significance. The use of categories indicates the community's priorities, but it also allows increasingly flexible standards for rehabilitation in the district.

Many landowners expressed frustration with the City's application of building code (life safety) standards for new construction to historic buildings, citing the attendant cost and construction restraints as a major impediment to restoration and reuse. The City must not allow its code to destroy its heritage. Historic structures throughout the United States are restored safely and economically, often through the application of special standards for historic buildings that have been added to most of the model building codes. Use of sprinkler systems often also provides mitigation. The local chapter of the American Institute of Architects (perhaps working with the Texas Society of Architects) should take a leadership role, researching other codes and working with



the City and Fire Marshall to amend the existing code to allow innovative responses to the spirit of the code without compromising life safety.

Several residents have expressed their skepticism of any kind of design or development controls, citing the community's desire to maintain its West Texas laissez-faire traditions, to avoid mandates, and to work toward its larger goals through consensus. This tactic will inevitably result in some major conflicts and some tragic losses in the future. Another approach, within the tradition of independence, is to create guidelines and standards that establish "the rules of the game," but that allow landowners to proceed without further undo public or political intrusions. The real estate industry nationally has made it clear that the communities to be avoided are those that are most subject to open-ended negotiations. A clear statement of requirements and greater predictability in the development process remove risk and surprise for potential investors, and provide an additional benefit as well. Many businesses and industries scouting new locations favor communities that have established controls because they understand that communities that improve the quality of the built environment are ultimately promoting the quality of life for their residents.



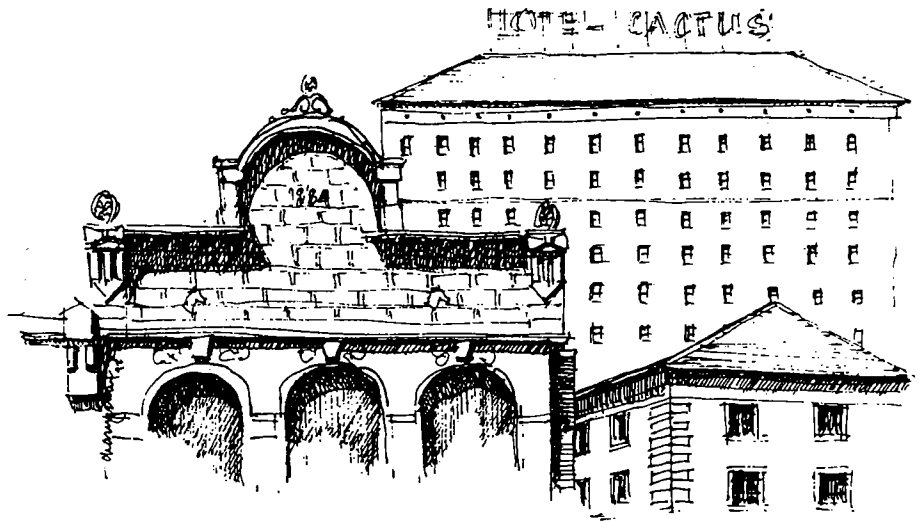
## Economic Development

### Who Does What in San Angelo

Economic development in San Angelo is scattered among three entities: the City, the Chamber of Commerce and Angelo State University. The City's role is limited for two reasons: it has chosen not to use all the financial tools available to it and has allowed other entities — the Chamber and the University particularly — to assume functions which in most cities are handled by government. Within the City the Planning Department administers certain financial tools. The Community Development Department coordinates others. In Chapter 6, the R/UDAT team suggests a new economic development structure that will lead to a clearer delineation of responsibilities.

The Chamber's role of "meaning business in San Angelo" cannot be understated. All the large scale efforts to keep and attract business and industry are undertaken by the Chamber, including business development and retention, San Angelo Industries, industrial zones, a business survey and the Small Business Revolving Loan Fund. It is encouraging to note that the tension between the Chamber and the City — so prevalent in cities like Minneapolis — is minimal in San Angelo. In fact, the two entities publish a joint brochure for small businesses, and coordinate closely on keeping industrial zones out of the City limits (but within the City's ETJ). This keeps industrial property taxes low. The benefit to the City, of course, is new jobs and other economic impacts. What disturbs us is that the Chamber has yet to undertake an effective marketing campaign to businesses in San Angelo. Certainly, its efforts to bring new firms to the City are commendable, but equal efforts must be made on business retention.

Within city government, the Community Development Department handles the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and the Guaranteed Business Loan program. CDBG is a federal program that allocates federal tax dollars for municipal use. Local governments re-invest these funds in the community. In the past CDBG has been used for infrastructure and public works, rather than supporting homeowners, businesses and redevelopment. This is changing. Now funds are allocated to a Revolving Loan Fund for homeowners and for the Chamber's Small Business Loan program. These uses are ideal: it means funds can be used and reused in perpetuity. In funding CDBG projects each year, the city should also give priority to those well suited to spur growth and development. Guaranteed Business Loans are smaller (a range of \$20,000 to \$30,000) non-SBA loans used to finance gaps.



Under current organizational structure the Planning Department administers Public Improvement Districts, enterprise zones, re-investment zones and tax increment financing.

The third player in economic development is Angelo State University, which coordinates the Small Business Loan program for the city, and also runs a Small Business Development Center. The center assists firms in developing business and financial plans.

### The Need for Creativity

City resources must be used as wisely as possible, and all the tools available to the city should be employed to accomplish economic development efforts. This is not done in San Angelo. The city must begin to leverage its funds and resources for maximum impact.

Here are some examples:

1. **Tax increment financing:** This program authorized under the local tax code essentially provides a program to redirect added property tax revenues from a redevelopment project back into the project itself to help write down project cost and make it economically feasible. First, a tax increment financing project and associated re-investment district are established. To support financial feasibility of this project, the city typically "re-invests" the projected future increase in property tax revenues (the tax increment) back into the project. This tax increment is often used to acquire the property, to assist in remodeling costs, etc. This approach has been successful in cities throughout Texas and should be put to work in San Angelo.

Special care needs to be given to identify specific projects or limited areas for re-investment of the top increment to best accomplish city redevelopment plans. Too

large a re-investment district could dilute the effectiveness of the increment funds. Further, state law suggests limitations on the total property that can be contained in re-investment districts. These limitations should be evaluated carefully prior to establishing broad-brushed re-investment district boundaries that don't favor the re-investment and associated redevelopment efforts.

2. The "float" off CDBG funds could be utilized for projects. In essence, this means more projects can be undertaken, and projects that use "float" are financed at very low interest rates. HUD has guidelines, and they should be carefully studied.
3. Tax Abatement and Enterprise Zones are effective tools to attract industries by reducing tax obligations, at least for a period of time. Tax abatement and re-investment zones are outlined by state law and allow designation of areas where property taxes can be decreased or eliminated to encourage new businesses. These programs are established by agreement between the city and the industry. Because tax abatement and tax increment cannot normally be used in the same place (if you abate taxes, there is no increment) it is crucial to consider an overall plan for both tools to avoid unknowingly impairing one program for the sake of the other. Some of the restrictions on overall size of the re-investment district money under tax increment financing should be considered here as well.

Enterprise zones further provide potential sales and franchise tax relief. This program is coordinated at the state level and requires Department of Commerce approval. San Angelo should move quickly to evaluate the relationship between tax increment financing districts, tax abatement and re-investment districts and enterprise zone, to select the appropriate combination of those tools to meet

city priorities and establish the various zones and districts so the Chamber and the city can offer more advantages to new business.

4. Public Improvement Districts (PID's) give property owners the ability to take advantage of public financing to install desired improvements to revitalize the Historic City Center. With this tool, those properties that are determined to benefit from the improvements are assessed a share of the total costs of the improvements. The city then issues bonds (at advantageous city interest rates) to pay for the improvements, and the property owners repay the bonds through assessments on their property tax bill over the life of the bond issue. The advantage to the property owners is a sharing of the improvements on a district-wide basis as well as the lower interest rates from tax free financing.

PID's are initiated by property owners and are well-suited for streetscape kinds of

improvements where affected businesses appreciate the enhanced value and increased business that can be associated with streetscape improvements.

In specific instances, where it is to the advantage of the City, creative tools can also be "pyramided" to get projects off the ground.

## Undertaking Projects

By using combinations of these tools, the City will be able to undertake redevelopment projects. The R/UDAT team suggests that three initial projects be undertaken, the financing scheme for which are described in Chapter 6.

1. Texas Theater
2. Cactus Hotel
3. The County Library

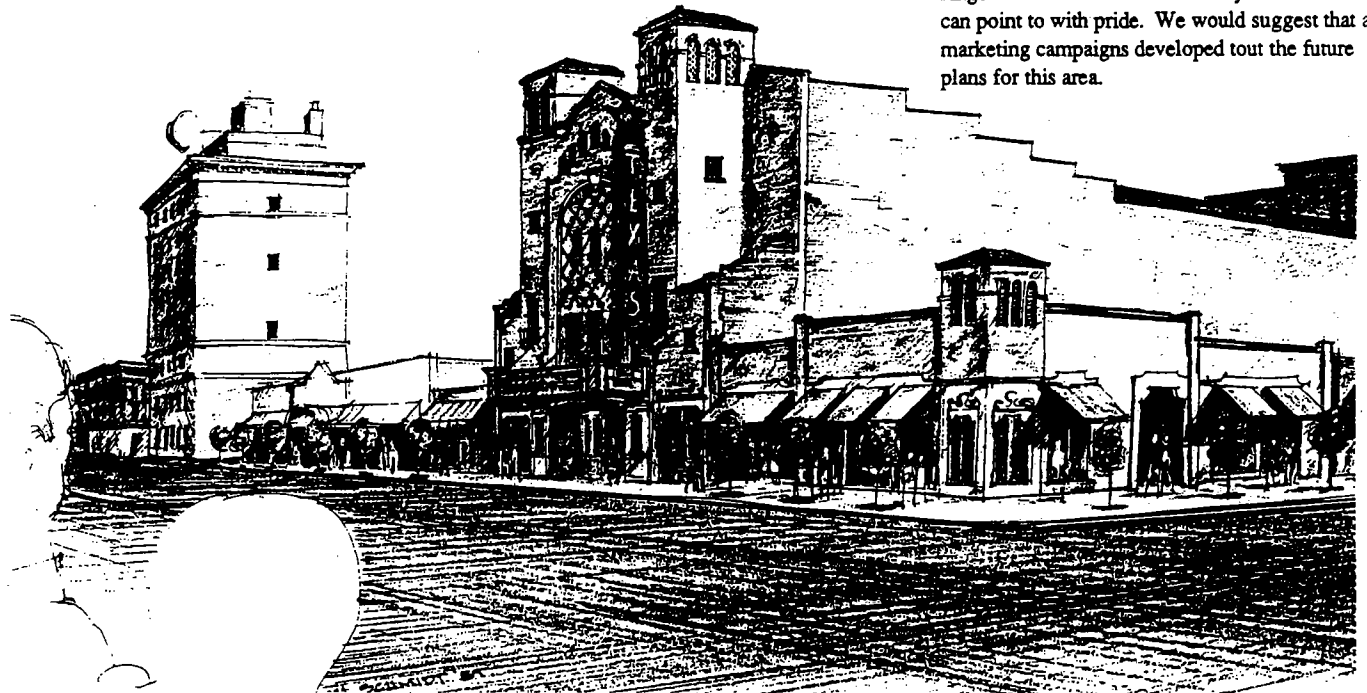
These projects are high visibility projects that address historic assets and community needs.

## Private Responsibilities

Public and private sector resources together can make projects happen. The City and Chamber can help provide the financial impetus, but ultimately the private sector must take over. The idea is leverage, and the City should use its resources where it can achieve the largest private investment. One untapped private resource are funds banks are to provide through the Community Re-investment Act or CRA. A large public project such as the County library would be an appropriate use of this tool.

## What Revitalization Means

Revitalization can be leveraged into increased economic development. One idea the team heard several times is that to attract industries, San Angelo must have an Historic City Center that it can point to with pride. We would suggest that any marketing campaigns developed tout the future plans for this area.



## URBAN DESIGN

Gertrude Stein's famous quote about Los Angeles—"There is no there there"—would never apply to San Angelo. There's plenty of "there" in this city, but finding it is sometimes difficult. Many San Angeloans have noted that their city lacks critical visual and physical connections between significant sites and activity nodes. It also lacks a center; there is no common destination in the core area that serves as either a functional or symbolic heart of the city. This lack of focus jeopardizes the economic feasibility of many

projects that must rely on their individual ability to attract a market. Centers of activity must be drawn together wherever possible in order to create critical mass. Planning and urban design efforts should incorporate redundancies that encourage mutually supportive activities: parking areas that serve diverse needs at varying times; retail, entertainment and commercial uses that can serve both residents and tourists; open spaces that can be adapted to special events and festivals, but that also serve recreational or commercial purposes at other times.

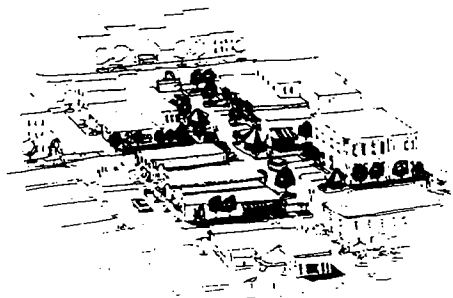
The proposed urban design plan for the Historic

City Center includes five key elements that are mutually supportive:

1. The extended development of Concho Street into an arts and entertainment district.
2. Introduction of residential uses and mixed use into the core of the City Center.
3. The restoration and reuse of the four architectural icons (Ft. Concho, Cactus Hotel, Texas Theater, Depot/Warehouse).
4. The development of a connective sequence of open spaces for active and passive recreational use.
5. The development of a system of "path finders"

## 1. CONCHO STREET ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

Concho Street is currently one of the major tourist areas in the city, but its antique and furniture shops are also patronized by residents. This area can spawn additional businesses and expand into



adjacent properties, growing in tandem with the tourism business while simultaneously providing more attractions for residents.

The catalyst for this expansion could be the establishment of an entertainment district—including restaurants, cafes, country music clubs, jazz clubs, and comedy clubs—that will promote San Angelo's Historic Center City as an entertainment center for the region. These activities, especially suited to small scale historic and new infill structures, would be concentrated in the middle of the Concho-Twohig block, behind Miss Hartie's, and would continue down Cooper's Alley, following the model of Dr. Dave's Back Door Kitchen to create a "jazz alley" across both blocks. The interior of the Concho-Twohig block will include parking, trees and a fountain to establish a small-scale cool pedestrian oasis, as well as direct access into abutting buildings. The pedestrian way can continue through the mid-block north to the Cactus Hotel. Galleries should be encouraged in storefront spaces.

## 2. INTRODUCTION OF RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED USES

The Historic City Center is the site of five significant tall buildings that are plagued by vacancy or disuse: the Trust/Central National Bank Building; the Trimble-Barjer-Cobb Building; the Monarch Tile Building; the Cactus Hotel; and the Town House Hotel. Each of these should be redeveloped for residential occupancy on above-grade floors, with some market variations: the Cactus should be luxury condos (one or two units per floor); the Trust Building may be suited for low-income or elderly housing; the Town House Hotel, located on Concho Street, should be studied for potential use as artist studio/loft space in conjunction with first floor gallery space.

Residential use will provide another housing/lifestyle alternative within the local market, eliminate the current glut of uncompetitive office space, provide 24-hour presence in the core district, and provide an immediate customer base for nearby retail and entertainment activities.

## 3. THE RESTORATION AND REUSE OF THE FOUR ARCHITECTURAL ICONS (FT. Concho, Cactus Hotel, Texas Theater, Depot/Warehouse).

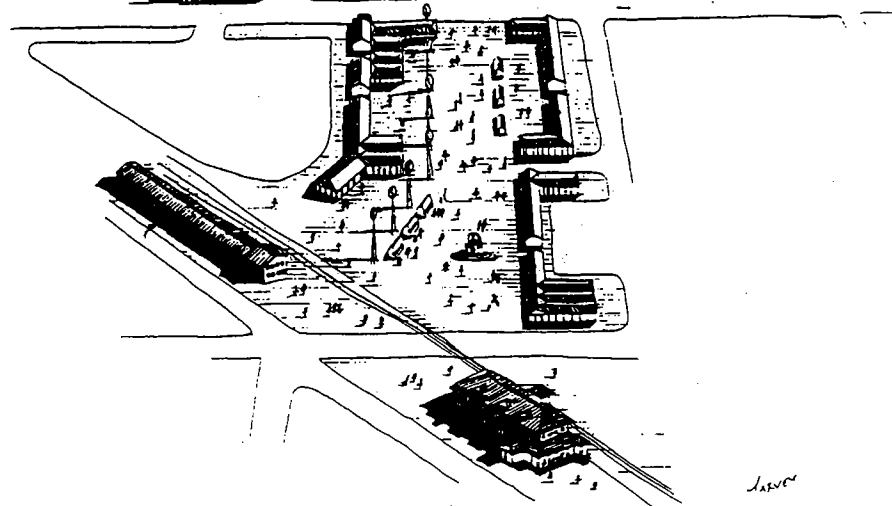
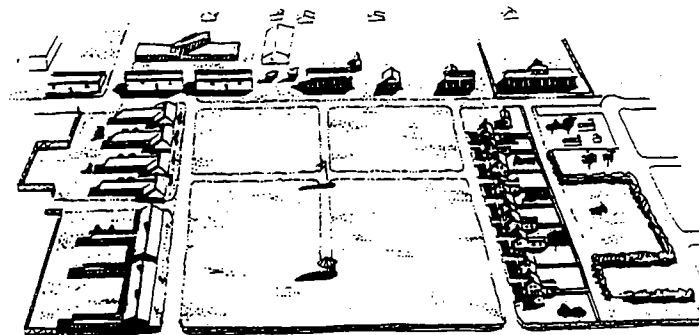
### Cactus Hotel:

As described above, the Cactus should be renovated as luxury condos, with ground floor and ball room space studied for potential retail and high-end restaurant use.

### Ft. Concho:

The current plans for the expansion of the Museum of Fine Arts and the restoration/reconstruction of the fort should be supported. The City should again explore the possibility of management by the National Park Service, which can bring significant resources to the site.

Ft. Concho can be the site of additional compatible uses, such as a Children's Museum, developed in conjunction with a "prairie zoo" featuring indigenous critters; the team recommends that the Monarch Tile additions be demolished to accommodate this use. Living history activities, including re-enactments should be developed to make West Texas heritage come alive. Existing on-site non-profit tenants (with the exception of some specialized museums) should be relocated to historic structures in the core Historic Center City.



**Tree-Lined Street  
with sidewalk from the  
hotels and convention center**

**Designated tree-lined streets**

**Renovated historic  
landmarks**

**Concho St. Arts &  
Entertainment District**

**'Cooper's Walk'  
pedestrian connection**

**Restaurants/shops  
on the river**

**Expanded river park**

**Parking facilities**

**Renovated depot  
and warehouse**

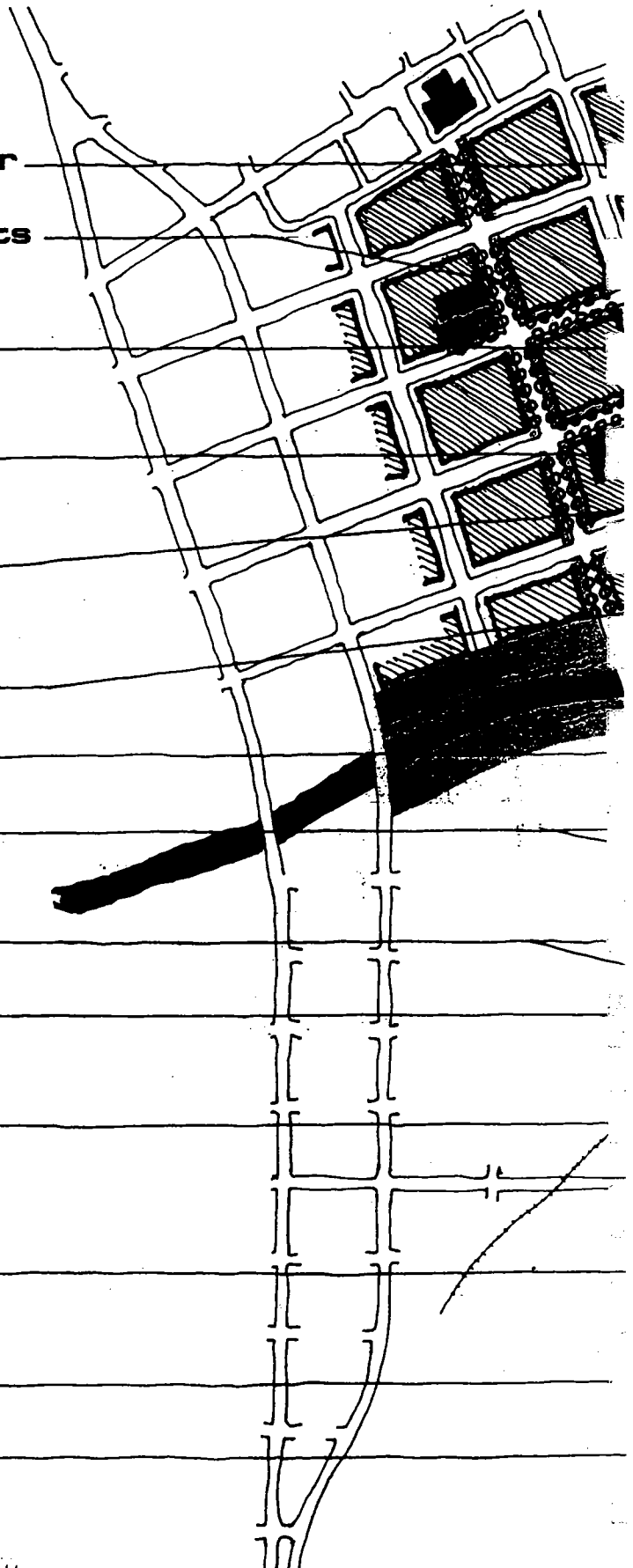
**Windmill row**

**New festival  
marketplace**

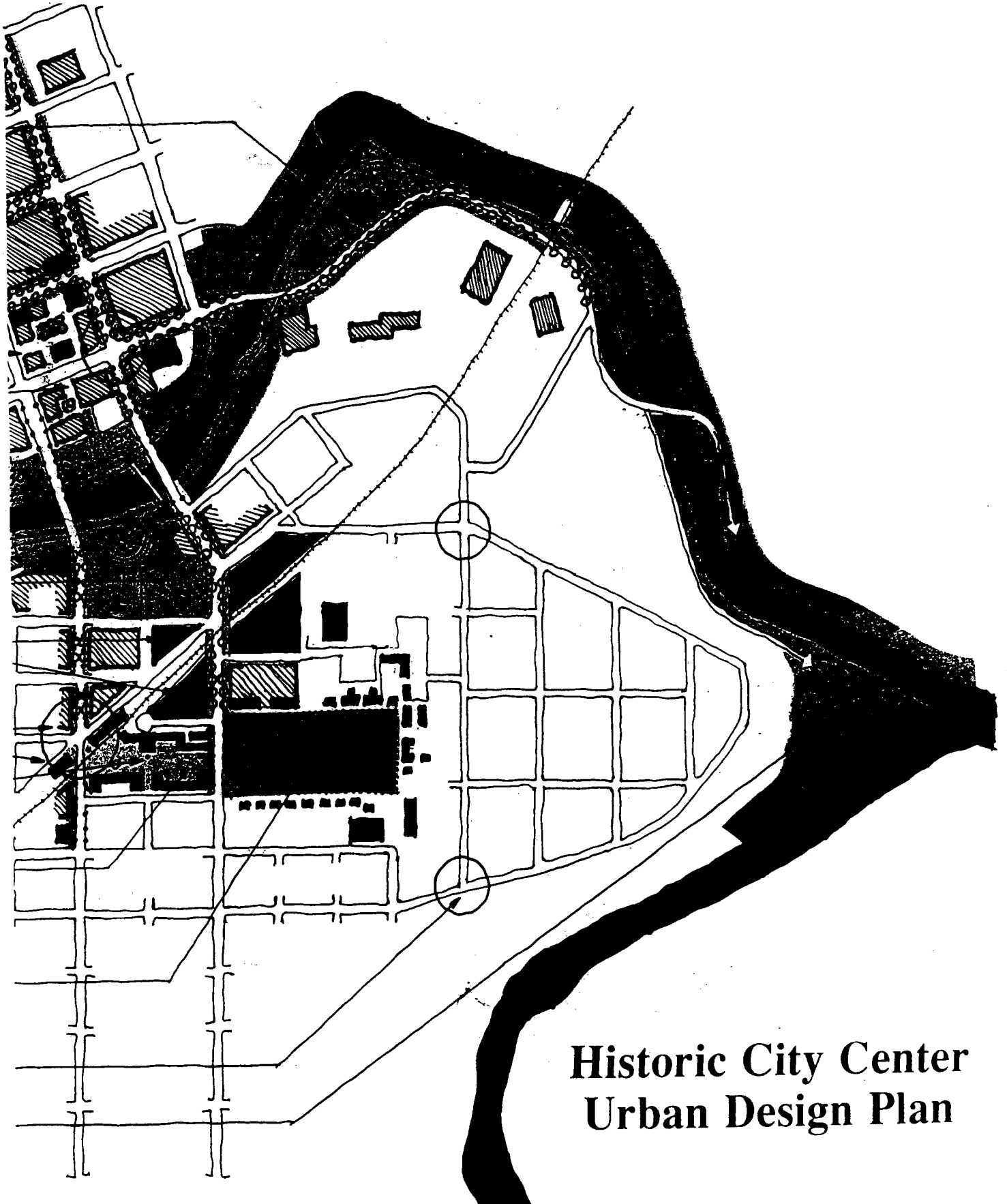
**Renovated Ft. Concho  
with museums and other  
cultural uses**

**Entry features to  
neighborhood**

**New confluence park**







# Historic City Center Urban Design Plan

## Santa Fe Depot/ Warehouse:

The current plans for the Depot/Warehouse should be supported, but can benefit from a more direct connection with the expanded Ft. Concho and with additional compatible development. Many citizens expressed the need for a fiesta plaza; this space should be provided adjacent to the Depot/Warehouse and developed as part of a larger festival marketplace. This festival marketplace will include a farmers' market, a small mercado that provides linkages to the Hispanic community, small retail and service businesses, concession carts, restaurants and tourist-oriented businesses and activities. The plaza will be located at the interior of the block, and will feature decorative hard paving, fountains, and the installation of actual ranch windmills that will function like kinetic sculptures recalling the agricultural heritage of the region and serving as a long-distance landmark. The plaza will also open directly to the parade grounds of Ft. Concho, providing a broad vista as well as flexible space for the accommodation of large crowds on special occasions. Parking will be adjacent to the site.

This will be a significant new public area, and the City should encourage the use of this as a multi-ethnic meeting ground, comfortable for everyone. Sculpture and art commemorating the buffalo soldiers, Hispanic heritage, farming and ranching should be included.

## Texas Theatre:

The Theatre is a wonderful asset that must be restored as a key resource for expanded entertainment opportunities in the Historic City

Center. As the site of performances and as an alternative conference center, the Theatre is a major anchor in the core district.

## 4. DEVELOPMENT OF A CONNECTIVE SEQUENCE OF OPEN SPACES FOR ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATIONAL USE.

Much of the redevelopment discussed above will be connected through a series of open spaces, each distinct in its character and use, that provide pedestrian links through the city as well as nodes for outdoor activity. The River Corridor is a key element of this sequence and the plan for its continued development should be implemented. In addition to the River Corridor, the proposed plan provides the following new spaces:

1. The expansion and physical improvement of the parade ground at Fort Concho as a grassed open space, normally passive in character, but occasionally more active for special events and demonstrations. The parade ground, lined by cultural uses in restored buildings, is analogous to the Smithsonian Mall in Washington, DC.
2. The plaza at the new festival marketplace at the Depot/Warehouse. This is a hard-surfaced public space, modeled on traditional Hispanic plazas and public squares.
3. The River Stage Park should be expanded to include the full block adjacent to the municipal swimming pool. The treatment of this space should include heavy landscaping and possibly water elements, to

reinforce its character as a cool recreational oasis in the city.

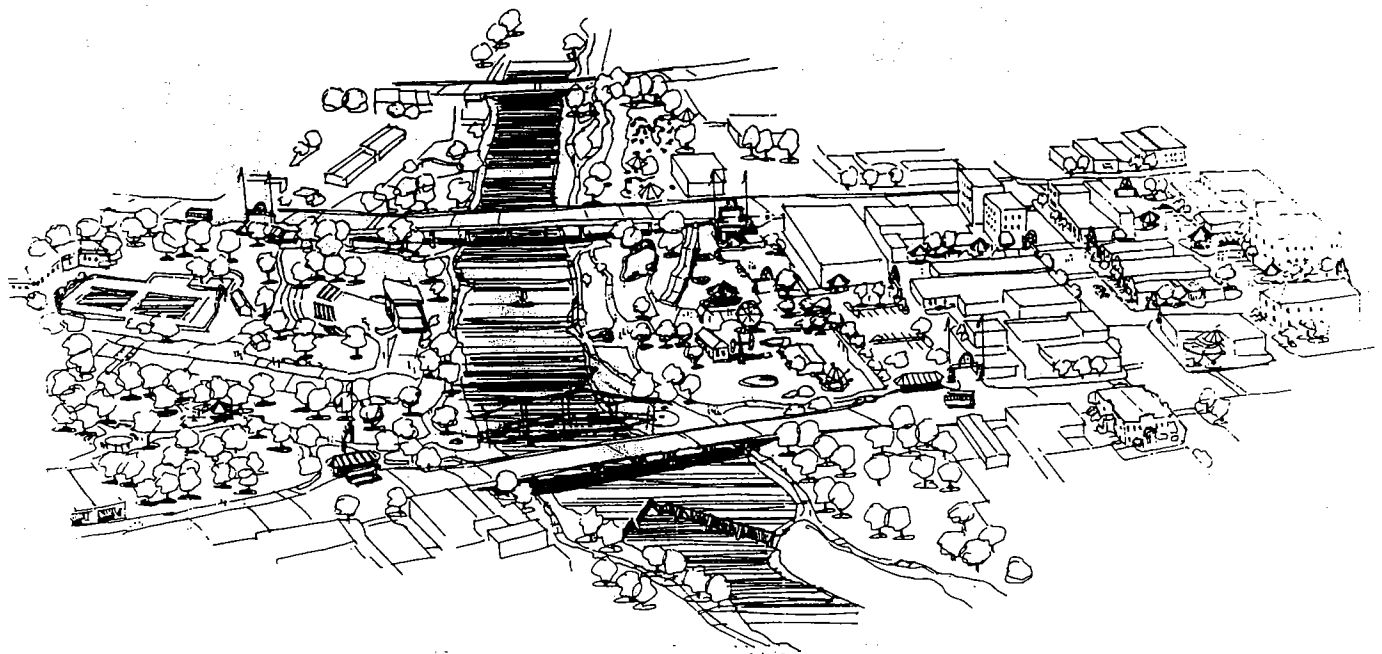
4. Neff's should be maintained and reinforced as a significant active open space that reflects the family-orientation of this community.

## 5. DEVELOPMENT OF A SYSTEM OF "PATH FINDERS"

Pedestrian and vehicular connections can be strengthened through a system of "path finders": street banners, signage and streetlights. These are particularly important at Chadbourne and Oakes streets.

Other kinds of "path finders" are also important: gateway kiosks at important nodes (such as the Concho/Oakes intersection, an important tourist orientation point) and entrances to neighborhoods (such as Alta Loma) festive shaded waiting kiosks at trolley stops.

A hierarchy of "Green Streets" (tree-lined) and "West Texas Streets" (treeless) should be developed, that will established distinctive character. Chadbourne and Concho should be maintained as "West Texas Streets" for example, in order to reinforce their vernacular architectural identity, while Beauregard and Twohig should be softened (and cooled) with trees. The "Green Street" identity should be extended to Irving Street in order to give it greater character. The Irving Street axis (City Hall—Depot) is potentially powerful, but in actuality, the infill structures and uses are too weak to support a more significant role as a major urban spine, a role that more appropriately belongs to Chadbourne street.



## LANDSCAPE COMMENTS

"...Make humans important", commented Roger Allen, director of the Chicken Farm Art Center, during our recent meeting with local residents.

The San Angelo Historic City Center, as wonderful as it is in many respects, must be revitalized from a landscape standpoint if the human users: the tenants, building owners, and investors are again to look seriously at returning to the very heart of your city. The improvements needed are not simple and are not only cosmetic. This report addresses the general nature of the required improvements.

The San Angelo "landscape" consists of far more than plants. It includes elements of the entire outdoor environment around us. Good landscape design should also include components of urban design, site planning, recreation and park design, pedestrian circulation systems, active and passive outdoor use areas, and planting design. Although plants add the final "frosting on the cake" to any project and many types of spaces appear somewhat naked without them, other landscape design elements can also be very important in maximizing the use and beauty of these areas. "Hard" landscape elements such as walks, terraces, plazas, courtyards, street furniture, retaining walls, pools, and fountains, must be taken into consideration when exploring the full potential of the spaces being developed.

Many opportunities exist in the Historic City Center for adding the vitality which is needed to stop the downward spiral of use and enjoyment of this district and, along with all other aspects of our study recommendations, can

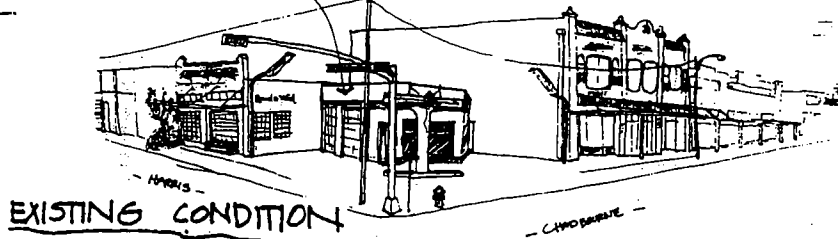
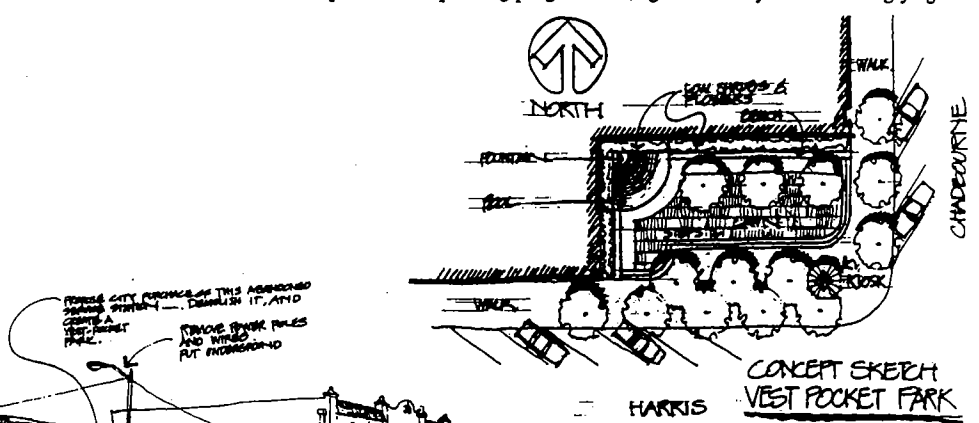
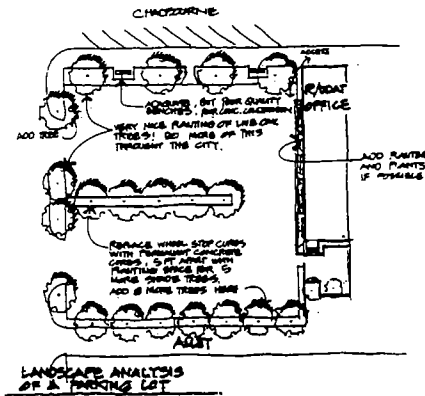
immediately began to add new life.

With regard to the suggestions made by the Historic Preservation and Urban Design counterparts on the R/UDAT team, one key area of conceptual suggestions for the Historic City Center is to appropriately embellish the links between major historic landmarks and pedestrian access to the heart of the river corridor which we have defined as an open space "spine" starting at the municipal swimming pool located above the river stage and ending across the river at the North edge of Neff's amusement park.

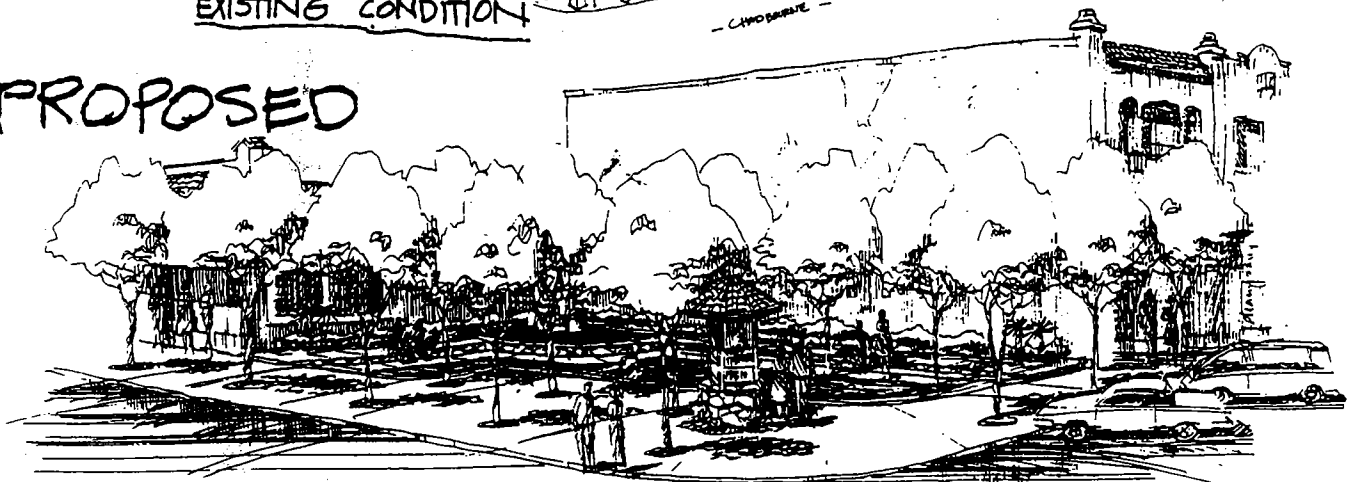
In the majority of "people places" of note in all corners of the world, trees, shrubs, ground covers and/or flowers are commonly seen. Plants add significantly to the vitality of urban areas by incorporating living color, shady areas, pleasant aromas and ambience. There are some, individuals, however, who may feel that the West Texas landscape is more naturally arid and should incorporate little, if any, landscape treatment in order to properly represent the area of the country in which San Angelo is located.

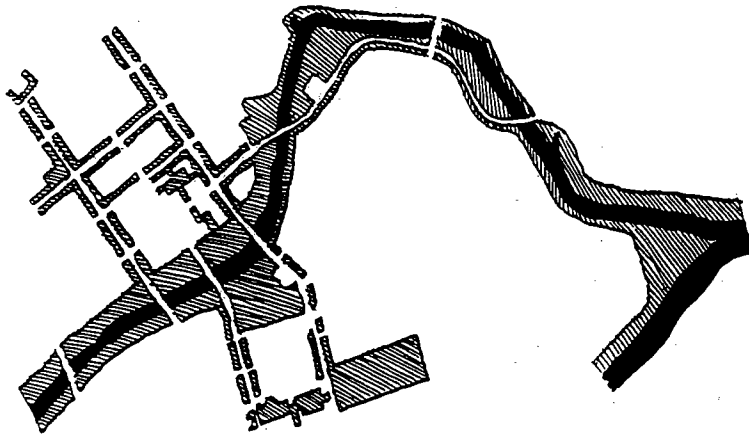
Certainly the West Texas landscape is as unique as the people who reside here, and we want to make every attempt to respect what is natural and appropriate and then incorporate those aspects in our recommendations. It is important to consider, however, that San Angelo's architecture, technology, road systems, and infrastructure take on similarities to many other cities, and it is strongly felt that it would be a mistake to think that the Historic City Center cannot include properly selected varieties of plant material.

Many San Angelo citizens prefer seeing native landscape materials incorporated into planting programs throughout the city and we strongly agree



## PROPOSED





that this should be done whenever possible. It has become widely known that many varieties of native plants in West Texas require less maintenance and less irrigation than cultivated varieties not native to this area. That design philosophy becomes even more appropriate in the open space and green belt areas surrounding the city and will be addressed in more detail in the river corridor portion of this report.

Within these important vehicular and pedestrian circulation corridors, every attempt should be made to create or enhance vistas to the river corridor and to historic architectural elements. These links should be embellished with trees, rich paving material, bollards, street furniture (must tie in with city-wide street furniture package), sitting areas, courtyards, plazas, promenades, and vest pocket parks.

Keeping the above guidelines in mind, it is felt that the City of San Angelo should commission a landscape study of the Historic City Center along with all other aspects of the revitalization guidelines and framework as covered in this report.

In the commissioning of a landscape study which should follow these framework suggestions, every opportunity should be taken to remove not only buildings which are unattractive and inappropriate, but also to phase out all power poles and overhead wires, unnecessary and obtrusive signage, unattractive paving, and broken curbs as our minimum recommendation. Again, it is our strong feeling that a comprehensive and detailed design by a highly qualified firm be undertaken which addresses in detail all revitalization recommendations including landscape suggestions.

A simple, cosmetic approach to the problems which San Angelo is experiencing will not work.

## TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

Transportation concepts are intended to promote economic development, reduce burdensome government regulation and to reinforce efforts to

preserve historic buildings and improve community appearance.

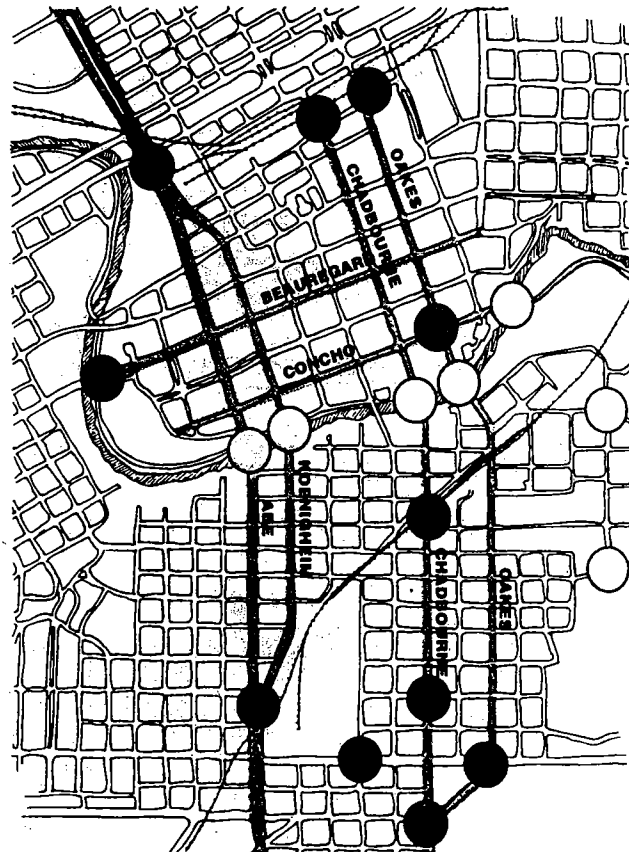
### Regional Transportation

- Vigorously market San Angelo's hub position. Whether through visits to the area, video promotion or testimonials from local industries, the message needs to stress the quality of highway connections and access to Mexico, all of which San Angelo can boast.
- Capitalize on Texas Department of Transportation criteria for establishing priority

projects in the state Highway Trunk System. These include a commitment to serving major military installations, recreational areas and Mexico.

### Local Transportation

- Develop "Gateways" to San Angelo and especially to the Historic City Center. Streets providing the gateway function are Bryant, Chadborne, Oakes, Concho and Beaugard. These would receive special design treatments such as landscaping, lighting, and signs to identify entry to the City Center.
- Use bridges over the Concho River to accentuate the presence of the river and to give a sense of entry to the commercial district by re-installing ornamental lights on the Oakes Street Bridge, and creatively using paint or other materials to improve bridge appearance.
- In conjunction with the gateways, enhance use of signs directing visitors to major activity centers and institutions. Signs of distinctive appearance placed at frequent intervals would greatly assist drivers in finding their destinations.
- Improve access to and between activity centers such as Neff's, the River Stage, the Depot, F Concho and the convention center with improved pedestrian facilities, parking, vehicle routing and special transit services. Specific projects could include:



- Improved pedestrian access from mid-block Concho Street and from Chadborne and Oakes streets to Neff's.
- A foot bridge from Neff's to the River Stage as proposed in the River Corridor Master Plan.
- A second foot bridge at Concho Street to provide continuity in the river trail.
- New parking lots in the Chadborne/Avenue B/Avenue C area which could serve the River Stage, Depot and Freight station.
- Possible future street paralleling railroad from Bryant to the depot. This street would lead traffic directly to the Historic City Center providing another gateway to the city's points of interest.
- Routing the new "Trolley" buses already ordered by the city to link those sites with hotels, restaurants, the stockyards, convention center and other important locations, especially during special events.
- Encourage awnings and covered sidewalks to provide protection from sun and weather.
- Establish design standards and review for proposed curb cuts, driveways and drive-up windows. The purpose is to provide safe and efficient circulation for vehicles, pedestrians and emergency access.

## Parking

- Establish a Parking Management District to improve and monitor parking conditions in the business district. Responsibilities of the District could include:
  - inventorying current parking facilities' location, usage, ownership, restrictions and rates.
  - maintenance of lots and garages.
  - promotion and marketing of parking facilities.
  - working with owners and tenants to allocate parking fairly and efficiently to support existing uses and assist future businesses/organizations to locate in the City Center.
  - advocating for revised zoning requirements affecting parking.
- Provide new parking for:
  - River Stage to support it and other riverfront uses.
  - Depot, Fort Concho and related activities.
- Revise zoning requirements for parking in the Historic City Center to encourage re-use of older buildings, to reduce the economic burden of redevelopment and to recognize the area's special parking characteristics. Suggested actions:
  - Waive on-site parking requirement for existing buildings and uses. This would allow a market-based approach to use of existing parking facilities.
  - Waive all requirements for small retail shops, say for those under 2500 square feet.

- Reduce retail and residential requirements from their currently excessive levels.
- Allow complimentary uses to share common parking facilities. For example, an office with daytime hours and a theater with evening hours could claim the same parking facility for zoning purposes.
- Allow reductions for accessory uses in a mixed-use development (for example, shops and restaurants in a hotel).
- Encourage coordination between major institutions (churches, schools, hospitals) to provide parking.

## RIVER CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT

As mentioned above, the R/UDAT team endorses the River Corridor Master Development Plan. It should be pointed out to the River Corridor Commission, however, that construction implementation of even basic aspects of the plan should not proceed until the project is designed in detail by a highly qualified urban design or landscape architecture firm. Many elements of the pedestrian circulation system to be constructed must be designed in plan view and section, with supplemental plans at a larger scale of detailed areas such as overlooks, pavilions, kiosks, picnic areas, sitting areas, gardens, planting plans, lighting plans, etc.

Equally as important as the design detailing is the emphasis which must be placed on a high level of quality and craftsmanship by the contractor selected to construct the project.

The design firm should establish a hierarchy of trail types in the plan, including promenades; primary walkways; secondary walkways; tertiary walks (nature trails); sidewalks; and special paths such as bridal trails, bicycle trails, etc. It is also suggested that special emphasis be given to tying final plans and construction documents to other design recommendations, especially in the area of the Historic City Center. Pedestrian access from areas along the open space "spine" as defined in our plan, and many points along both the North and South edges of the river are examples.

A number of the comments which Mrs. Neff, of

Neff's Amusement Park, has prepared should be taken into consideration in the detailed design phase of work. Mrs. Neff has numerous ideas pertaining to the location of the proposed pedestrian bridge, possible incorporation of a paddle boat facility at the amusement park, and extension of the miniature railroad to serve an extensive area of the open space on both sides of the Amusement Park.

To minimize maintenance, and to respect the natural character and ecology of West Texas, native plant material should be specified as the dominant plant group for the corridor.

The incorporation of one or more restaurant, cafe, or coffee house facilities along the North bank of the river is recommended. The river corridor trail should access any such commercial facilities, as well as the existing miniature golf course and other businesses located near the Historic City Center as well.

## OTHER

The R/UDAT team feels that there could be a marvellous opportunity to use a "search for identity" to bring the San Angelo community even closer together at this time when changes are being evaluated. We sense that if given the chance, school children and parents might enjoy a contest to capture San Angelo's true identity. We also sense that there could be a good deal of advice given by the senior Angloans, who still remember the historic frontier stories they heard from their grandparents.

The team would suggest that a community-wide search for the most unifying and appropriate title, identity, slogan or theme be conducted among the people of the San Angelo region. When the winning themes emerge, there should be a continuing celebration of the renaissance of the true San Angelo. This emerging sense of renewed pride can be the driving energy to tell the region, all of Texas, and all the world what a rich and wonderful place this is, San Angelo.

And even more importantly, this energy will be extremely valuable to accomplish the many projects which the people of San Angelo have told us they need.

*"The river is not just a gem, it's a diamond. The job of polishing the grand asset, this diamond in the rough, has just begun."*

—JANE GABRIEL

# SECTION 6 - IMPLEMENTATION

## MAJOR PROJECTS

The R/UDAT team is suggesting that redevelopment in the Historic City Center start small. There is no compelling reason to undertake redevelopment on a large scale at this time, since it should always be driven by the marketplace. By starting with three significant projects — the Texas Theatre, Cactus Hotel and the Hemphill Wells Building — the City has a unique opportunity to restore significant buildings and capitalize on the financial tools available to it.

We are suggesting examples of how these three projects could be financed. We are not suggesting they are the only ways to make them happen. We make several key assumptions regarding bonds and interest rates. Of course, the types of financing available will depend on the conditions in the marketplace when the projects are set to proceed. Paramount to our analysis is the assumption that there is a need for the uses we propose for the Cactus Hotel and Texas Theatre. Good market analyses, however, must be undertaken as preliminary steps to redevelopment. If the analysis does not support immediate redevelopment of the Cactus and the Texas, the City should not proceed. In this case, it should invest in the properties' acquisition now, mothball the buildings and proceed when the time is right. Acquisition costs are low enough that the City cannot afford to pass up the opportunity. The library project can proceed immediately. The need has been demonstrated that it needs more space.

### TEXAS THEATRE

#### Financing Its Acquisition and Restoration

Conservatism guided our projections for the Texas Theatre. We assumed that the theater, once restored, will generate revenues of \$108,000 from its primary use (as suggested in the Junior League study) as a meeting facility and conference center. Several of the large property owners indicated their interest in using it for this purpose. We project 216 uses per year, and a daily rental rate of \$500. Additional events ranging from concerts to plays, attracted by an aggressive manager, will increase the revenue base.

We are proposing that the City acquire the theater and two adjacent properties for \$75,000. Restoration of the theater will cost \$2.4 million, according to the Junior League study. Total project costs, therefore, will be \$2.5 million. Approximately \$2.9 million in bonds will be needed for the project. The City will then face two major gaps in capital and operating costs that need to be covered. Ways to do each are suggested below.

## Capital Gap

The first problem is that revenues from the theater (\$108,000) and the rents from the adjacent buildings (\$20,000) totaling \$128,000 will only support \$1.4 million in bonds, which is the maximum the City should issue for this project. The remaining \$1.5 million should be raised through a combination of public and private resources as follows:

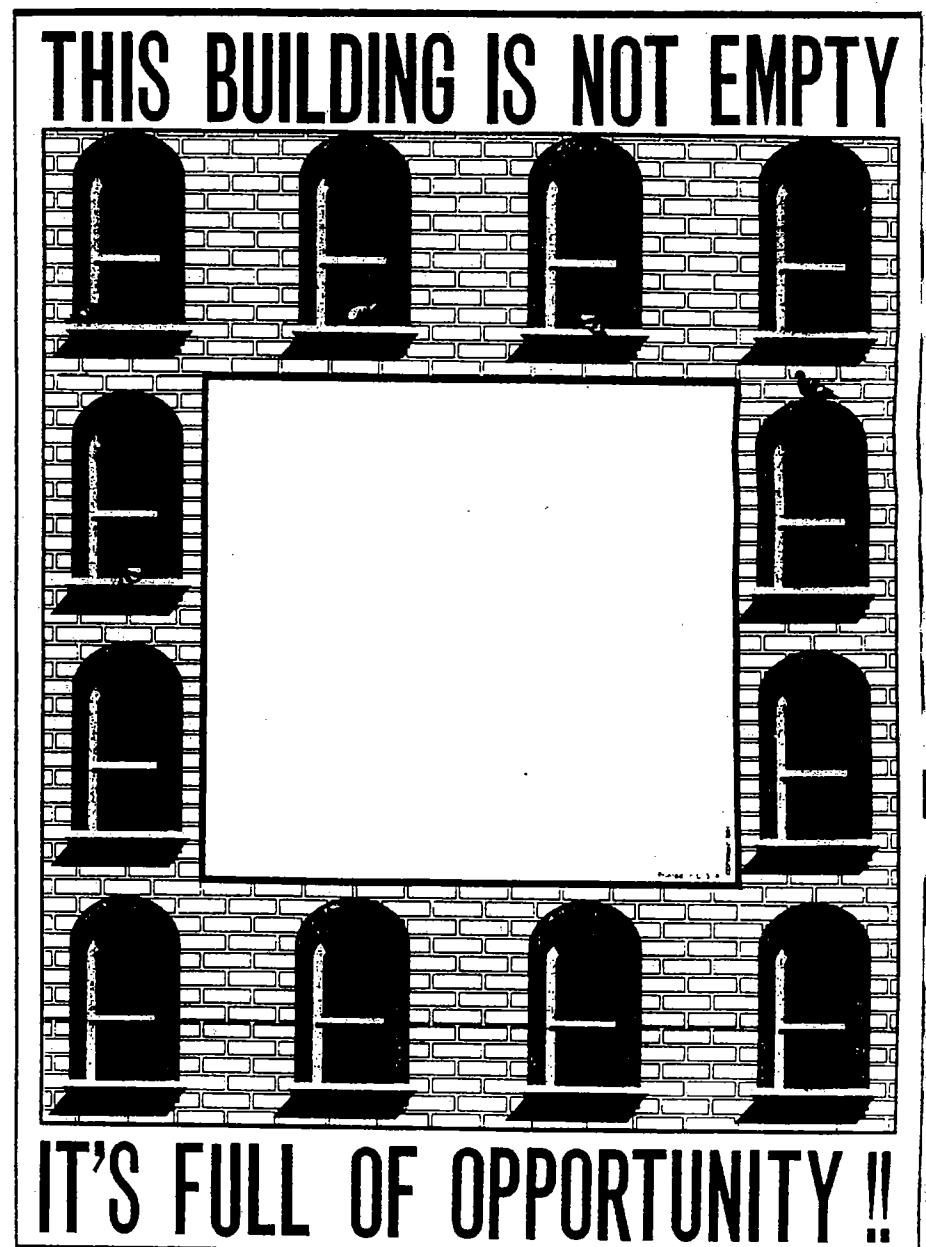
1. The City should commit \$350,000 of CDBG funds to this project for two years, which will provide \$700,000 of the funds needed.
2. The business community and foundations,

spearheaded by a non-profit theater board, should undertake fundraising for the remaining \$800,000, which will need to be raised over a two year period. Consultation with several community leaders indicates that this amount is attainable.

In total, this would mean, the public will finance 2/3 of the theater's acquisitional restoration costs, and the private sector will finance 1/3.

## Operating Cost Gap

To fund the annual operating gap, the business community will need to raise approximately \$100,000 per year in the early years for fixed costs



As events and rental rates increase, this gap will likely disappear.

## Operations

Since fundraising for restoration and operating costs will be undertaken by a non-profit Texas Theater board, it also should be designated to operate the Cactus, hiring a manager for day-to-day activities. Because it is important the Texas not compete with the City Auditorium, this facility should also be operated by the non-profit theater board. A single manager could manage both facilities resulting in a small cost savings to the City.

## CACTUS HOTEL

The Cactus Hotel is a project that will create a residential community in the Historic City Center and will allow the City to use tax increment financing on a limited scale. In fact this scope is a perfect use for tax increment financing.

### Use

The proposed use of the hotel is as follows:

1. The City will own floors 1 and 2 and will rent or donate space to city groups.
2. Floors 3-14 (there is no 13th floor) will be developed as condominiums for an upper-income market. Condominium square footage will range from 7,500 square feet (full floor) to 3,750 square feet (half floor) to 1,875 square feet (quarter floor). A total of 35 condominiums will be built.

### Financing Its Acquisition and Restoration

Total acquisition of the hotel will be \$90,000, which includes its redemption for taxes (\$65,000) and buying out the current owner's option for redemption (\$25,000). These costs will be financed through \$100,000 in tax increment bonds. These bonds will require debt service of \$10,000 per year. This debt service will be paid from the increased taxes (tax increments) from the development of the condominiums. Once acquired, the City will sell the Cactus to a private developer for restoration and conversion into condominiums.

In addition to issuing tax increment bonds, the City will also issue short-term Housing Revenue bonds to finance the Cactus' restoration. Total restoration costs will be \$5.6 million (\$5 million for the condominium floors and \$600,000 for floors 1 and 2). Costs per square foot for restoration of the condominium floors are estimated to be \$60 per square foot; floors 1 and 2, which are in much better shape, can be restored for \$40 per square foot. The developer will be eligible to receive a 20% historic tax credit for the project's restoration.

Total bonds needed will be \$6.5 million for the condominiums, and \$700,000 for floors 1 and 2.

If the condominiums sell for an average of \$70 per square foot (\$500,000 for a full-floor unit), they will generate the revenue to pay off the bonds. This pricing structure is below the average cost of the River Terrace apartments, which sell for \$85 per square foot.

### How Much Tax Increment Can Be Generated

Based on current rates, taxes from the condominiums will be \$125,000 in taxes yielding tax increments of approximately \$120,000. Of this total, \$10,000 is needed to pay off the tax increment bonds.

The remaining \$110,000 (excess tax increments) is available to finance the restoration of floors 1 and 2. The Housing Revenue Bonds for these floors will be paid off in 10 years. At that time, excess tax increments can be used for improvements in the Historic City Center.

*"First there was the river... then came the fort... then came the city. In the spirit of San Angelo with cooperation, we have experienced in the past, we can make it happen."*

—CHASE HOLLAND

### Other Potential Uses

If mixed use development of the Cactus proves feasible, the top floors could be marketed to the Shannon Trust for its offices or for other compatible uses in keeping with the Historic City Center.

### TOM GREEN COUNTY LIBRARY

The R/UDAT team concurs that the Tom Green County Library be moved from the County building to the Hemphill Wells department store. The purchase and renovation of the store will be largely a County function, financed through general obligation bonds. There is a role for the banks in this project, which will help them fulfill their CRA responsibilities.

### Financing Its Acquisition and Rehabilitation

Total acquisition costs for the store will be \$400,000. The Downtown Association estimates that an additional \$1 million will be needed for its rehabilitation. The banks should agree to finance the purchase at 4% (roughly half the market rate)

over 20 years. This interest rate break to the County will represent a \$226,000 nominal investment by banks (\$100,000 in present value terms). Annual debt service on this portion of the project will be \$30,000. Debt service on rehabilitation costs will be \$100,000. Total debt service costs to be borne by the County's taxpayers will be \$130,000. This will mean an increase in annual taxes on the average home in San Angelo of \$4.63.

### Benefits of Redevelopment

It is important to point out that the Historic City Center generally will benefit from these three projects through increased sales activity coming from residents, city visitors and tourists. In addition the City and the State will benefit from increased sales taxes. The projects could also create the climate for additional redevelopment projects in the future.

## REORGANIZATION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNCTIONS

In the previous chapter, we discussed the economic development structure in the City of San Angelo in which three major participants — the City, Chamber of Commerce and Angelo State University — undertake specific tasks. The allocation is not efficient. We are suggesting below a new structure for economic development in.

The Chamber of Commerce would concentrate on:

1. Continual business development and retention
2. San Angelo Industries
3. The business survey

City functions must be housed in a new Economic Development department which would administer these programs:

1. Reinvestment zones
2. Enterprise zones
3. Tax increment financing
4. Public improvement district
5. Small Business loans (including the Small Business Revolving Loan Fund)
6. Industrial zones
7. Any new initiatives that require City investment of funds

San Angelo State would continue to continue to operate as Small Business Development Center and should also assume the new role of continuing technical education of San Angelo work force. Lack of a skilled work force, as cited in a Chamber study, has been a major inhibitor to attracting new industries to San Angelo.

We would expect with this new alignment of functions the same cooperation and synergies that currently exist among these partners to economic revitalization of San Angelo.

## OTHER ‘REDEVELOPMENT’ EFFORTS

The concept of “redevelopment” can range from miniscule efforts to a full blown urban renewal agency and development plan. Although authorized in Texas law, the latter is probably not appropriate for the scale of projects currently proposed. However, that does not get the city off the “redevelopment” hook. City efforts should be concentrated on education, coordination and marketing of efforts to accomplish the redevelopment goals proposed for the HCC.

For example, the city, perhaps in conjunction with the private sector and community organizations, could fund an HCC redevelopment coordinator whose overall charge would be to actively pursue HCC development prospects and to coordinate various projects, people and dollars to maximize their overall benefit to the HCC. This person could be housed in a restructured City Economic Development Department. Specific tasks could include:

- Actively find space in the HCC for all government and civic organization offices.
- Assist property owners with HCC incentives and review processes, perhaps in conjunction with the historic district coordinator discussed above.
- Serve as a clearinghouse for various volunteer efforts and dollars. Find ways to consolidate individual efforts into projects that can best take advantage of a pool of efforts and money for the maximum benefit while still accomplishing the goals of individual groups. Several organizations’ desires for meeting facilities and a “home” could perhaps creatively be combined into a smaller number of focused projects for greater shared results.
- Serve as grant writer or resource person to maximize the city’s exposure to grant opportunities and to provide some professional assistance in effective grants applications. Numerous foundations and other grant sources could probably be tapped with this coordinated approach. The city already has a model for this type of effort for non-profit organizations in the TAP-IN program housed at Fort Concho.
- Coordinate efforts with Chamber economic development staff and small business assistance programs to maximize efficiency of resources. Perhaps meet regularly with these and other appropriate entities in an overall HCC redevelopment council.

At times, actual city acquisition of properties necessary to accomplish the goals of this report may be necessary. Properties for proposed open space and parking must be acquired, since it is neither possible nor appropriate to restrict uses that narrowly on private property. The city has

significant experience with key property acquisition in the area around Fort Concho. Property can be acquired by purchase, lease, bequest, gift or, if appropriate, by condemnation to further urban design goals. Condemnation for urban renewal is authorized in Texas, but requires specific plans and procedures to meet public purpose requirements. More specifics of condemnation under local government code can be explored if the need arises.

Above all else, redevelopment and economic development should be coordinated with other civic organization efforts to maximize the return. Renewal in the historic city center will encourage business to stay and attract new business and families to San Angelo.

## REGULATION AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

This section will describe the regulatory tools the City should consider to implement the goals and vision articulated previously in this report.

### Comprehensive Plan

The first step in the regulatory process is to develop a city wide comprehensive plan that includes an Historic City Center district. The planning process should further refine the urban design goals articulated here, to identify precise blocks and properties that need to be included in the Historic City Center District (HCC). In general these are the blocks and properties necessary to establish the recommended uses, to define gateways and associated HCC context.

Specific comprehensive plan goals for the HCC should be defined. They should include the principles articulated in Section 5 of this report.

Existing plans (the River Corridor Plan, the Community Arts Plan, and the Santa Fe Depot Preservation Plan) that have already been developed through significant citizen effort should be incorporated into the comprehensive plan. Although each will require some minor modification to match the recommendations of this report, they represent valuable input into the planning efforts of the city and are largely reflected in the R/UDAT recommendations.

## REGULATORY INCENTIVES — ZONING

City regulatory efforts must go beyond the plan level. The city should provide regulatory incentives to assist property owners in meeting the goals identified for the HCC.

Overall, zoning controls should make development easier in the HCC than elsewhere in the city—at least development of the institutional, office, service, mixed use residential and associated retail that are to be encouraged in the HCC. Zoning controls should be simple and predictable for the

property owner, not leaving undefined areas of discretion and potential for unpredictable outcome. To the maximum extent appropriate, uses should be permitted outright without significant discretionary and/or political review.

Mixed uses of single structures to allow residential above street level office or retail should be encouraged. The city’s zoning code was amended in 1977 to try to eliminate cumulative uses (a principle that allows all uses allowed “below” in each successively restrictive zone). Although the attempt to eliminate cumulative zoning on a city-wide basis could very well be appropriate, any attempt or interpretation that applies that principle to prohibit residential/commercial mixed uses in the HCC should be revised.

Apparently, when the zoning code was amended, a grandfather provision retained the old C-2 cumulative zoning in much of the HCC. Therefore, as the zoning currently stands, mixed residential and commercial uses in a single structure are allowed. However, any zoning change request, under this same grandfathering provision, must switch to the new non-cumulative commercial zones. As already stated, this should be corrected, at least in the HCC.

## REGULATORY INCENTIVES — PARKING

Parking requirements in the HCC should be relaxed, again to make redevelopment in HCC easier and less expensive. As described in the transportation and parking sections, there is generally adequate parking in the HCC. The code should be amended to allow shared parking and to require less parking for uses in the HCC than elsewhere in the city. The results of the studies recommended in the transportation and parking section of this report can be used to arrive at more precise parking requirements.

There may be other sections of the zoning code that need amendment to eliminate unnecessary requirements in the HCC. Staff or a consultant should review the entire code to identify these areas and then process code exemptions, reductions, or other modifications to accomplish the desired end.

## REGULATORY INCENTIVES — BUILDING AND FIRE CODES

Building and fire codes should also be reviewed to facilitate restoration of significant structures in the HCC. Both the Uniform Building Code and the BOCA Code include chapters that address interpretations of problematic code provisions in the restoration context. Obviously, public safety concerns must be protected, but there can be room for some flexibility in code absolutes in the historic restoration context. As addressed in the discussion



on preservation concepts, the local chapter of the ALA should be charged with the task of reviewing these issues and presenting a report to the city with recommendations on appropriate interpretations or revisions of the code to accommodate preservation while protecting public safety. The city then can draft and adopt appropriate revisions as part of its local amendments to the building code.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION HANDBOOK

Another type of incentive that should be developed for the HCC is to distribute information and perhaps even provide technical expertise to HCC property owners interested in historic preservation and/or other HCC development. Because many of these financial and regulatory issues are complex and because San Angeloans do not have significant experience with historic preservation, education and information is critical. The City, the Chamber, the Downtown Association, the Historical Society, or some combination of the above and others should fund development of a handbook for development in the HCC. That handbook should explain the regulatory incentives, the funding resources and mechanisms, the tax credits and architectural and structural techniques for HCC redevelopment and historic preservation. Many lessons and "tricks" have been learned from years of experience elsewhere that San Angeloans could benefit from.

This handbook of information ultimately should be supplemented by a resource person available to assist interested property owners. Regulations in and of themselves are often not the problem. Rather it is lack of experience or understanding that often drives potential HCC businesses and property owners from weaving through the HCC requirements and incentives.

## HISTORIC INVENTORY

In addition to the regulatory incentives described above, the city should take other affirmative actions to accomplish the goals identified for the HCC. All properties within the historic district should be inventoried and classified as described in the preservation section of this report. Further, specific designation of key historic structures outside the historic district should be accomplished through a nomination process by city, staff, property owners or interested citizen organizations. In general, the city should establish a landmarks board or historic commission (perhaps taking advantage of an existing entity) that reviews the inventory of structures to recommend appropriate classification and considers nomination of structures outside the historic district for class 1 or 2 designation for protection according to the recommended categories. Once designated, those structures should be protected with preservation guidelines established by rule.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design Guidelines should be established to direct modifications of properties within the HCC and to guide new development of infill properties to preserve the overall context of the HCC to implement the goals and vision of this report. Landscaping, streetscaping, building mass, materials, color and architectural styles should all be addressed. These design guidelines should be applied by a design review board that sits in an advisory capacity to either the Planning Director and/or the City Council, depending on the nature of the underlying approvals or permits required. All developments within the HCC should be subject to Design Review. As long as standards are well articulated and reasonable in scope, Design Review should not significantly reduce predictability and ease of permit review in the HCC, an implementation tool stressed above. Professional input should be sought both in establishing the Design Guidelines and in their application to development in the HCC.

Portions of the recommended urban design include protection of key corridors and vistas. Views of prominent features or landmarks in the urban design include the Depot, Fort Concho the River, etc. Height limits and view corridors should be established along these vista corridors to help residents and visitors orient themselves and move from place to place throughout the HCC. The Oakes Street corridor and the open space proposed between Fort Concho, the Depot and the River Stage are examples. The view from the Depot to City Hall, along Irving Street should also be protected. Height limits and view corridors can be established by having regulations in the relevant areas of the HCC.

Utility poles, particularly in the Fort Concho

area and other open space areas were a recurring complaint. The City apparently has no current requirements for placing utilities underground, either in local ordinances or utility franchises. However, the local utility has indicated both a precedent for and a willingness to voluntarily placing utilities underground and split the cost with the City in critical areas of the HCC. This offer should be pursued and formalized, particularly in priority areas such as Fort Concho. The City could also consider undergrounding requirements in the design guidelines for the HCC for future development. PID financing may also be available for broader undergrounding as part of overall streetscape improvements described elsewhere in this report.

## MAJOR INSTITUTIONS

One regulatory issue that has not been addressed specifically in the urban design recommendations relates to the major institutions in the HCC. Each of the existing institutions form a critical part of the continued viability of the HCC. Potential for piecemeal or incompatible development could create problems both for the institutions and the HCC. Links between the commercial and the institutional areas of the HCC should be encouraged and planned for. In this light, R/UDAT recommends the City work with the existing major institutions in the City to develop institutional master plans as part of the comprehensive planning process. Once developed, future institution expansion consistent with these master plans could be facilitated. This principle of institutional master plans could easily be expanded to apply throughout the city.

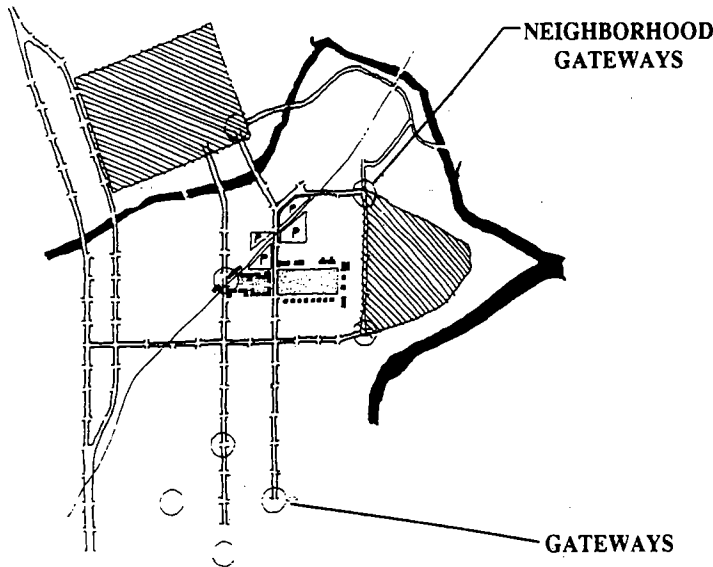
*"I continue to feel the Texas Theatre has potential to be a cornerstone of downtown development, and in fact, "Community Cornerstone" was the name we (The Junior League) gave to the (feasibility study) project. We are all talking about creating community in the historic city center."*

—KATIE JOHNSON

*"If we're not careful, there will be another open space downtown — the Texas Theatre. I've heard many people talk about how they used to smooch in the balcony there."*

—HARVEY SAHLBERG

# SECTION 7 — ACTION AGENDA



**Short Term Street Plan**

## SHORT TERM GOALS

There are several programs which the community can move immediately to implement. These projects range for a couple of dollars to a couple hundred thousand dollars.

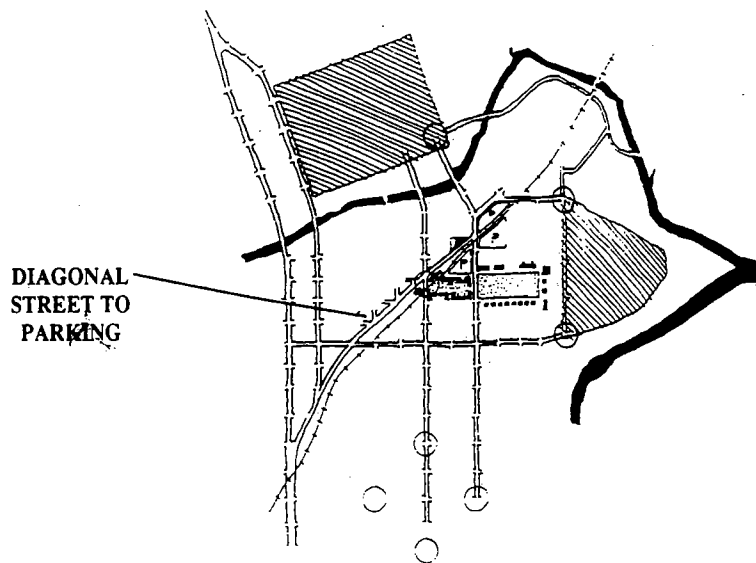
- One of the first projects which should be implemented is design and construction of the pedestrian bridge link between the river stage area and Neff's amusement park. The city could consider a foot bridge design competition or perhaps even take advantage of its local artist resources to make the bridge something unique and special for the city. Moving on the project as soon as possible would provide a critical link that is currently missing in the overall circulation between important city features.
- To further emphasize the importance of establishing critical links early in the implementation, the city should also complete the Cooper's Alley link to Concho Street from the riverfront. This will enable visitors and residents to take better advantage of the restoration efforts that have already largely been completed on "Block One" as they connect through Cooper's Alley to the Riverfront, across the new pedestrian bridge to the River Stage and on to Fort Concho and the Depot.
- To further promote the linkages between key city features to be preserved in the urban design recommendations, the city should expand the pedestrian sign program that has been started. Additional signs are required at critical intersections and other locations to direct the visitor. Locations should be reviewed with interested parties to best serve the goals of the

sign program.

- Form an action group and an action plan for preservation of the Cactus Hotel. Identified as one of the critical landmarks for preservation in these recommendations, this building should be saved. Actual completion of the renovation efforts could take several years. However, work should begin now to develop the plan to save the Cactus.
- Form an action group and an action plan for preservation of the Texas Theatre. This theatre

is another of the city identity features that is important to preserve. Like the Cactus, the actual preservation and restoration work could take some time. However, the action plan should be developed this year to map out the direction so that future decisions and funds be directed to accomplish this goal.

- Sponsor the San Angelo slogan contest. To preserve the momentum from this R/UDAT weekend, the search for the San Angelo identity should begin with the people of San Angelo this year. Community involvement in a fun activity such as the slogan contest can serve to "hook" them into the rest of the R/UDAT planning implementation for the longer term.
- Undertake a full city comprehensive planning program. This planning program is at the heart of many of the R/UDAT recommendations. Ideally, the planning effort should work from the "bottom up," starting with neighborhood planning groups serving as, or in conjunction with, Planning Commission subcommittees to focus the efforts and expedite the overall planning process.
- Establish a system of monuments for the "Highlands Neighborhood" (Fort Concho Annex) to mark the gateways to that community, highlighting its presence and importance to the city.
- Research and establish the parking management district in the Historic City Center. Alleviating the perceived and actual parking problems in the Historic City Center will immediately start to encourage additional use. This shared

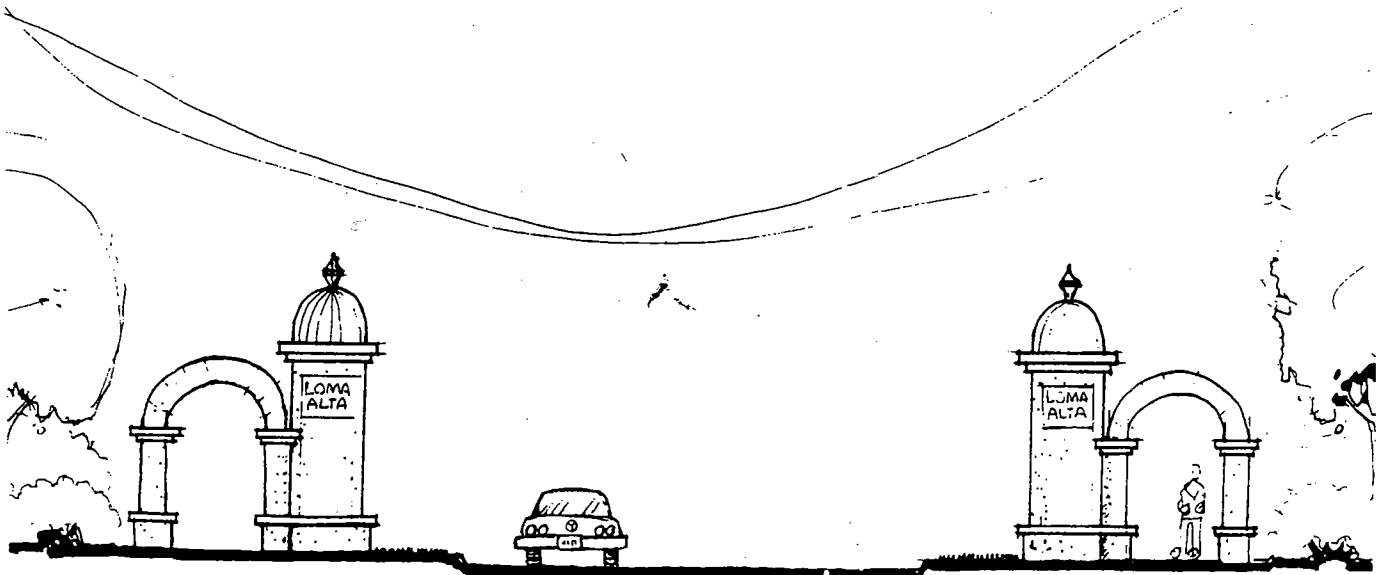
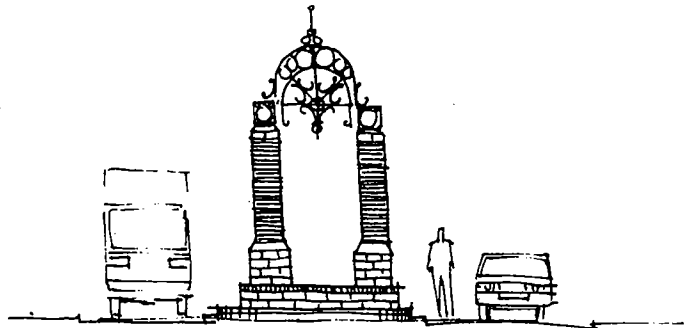
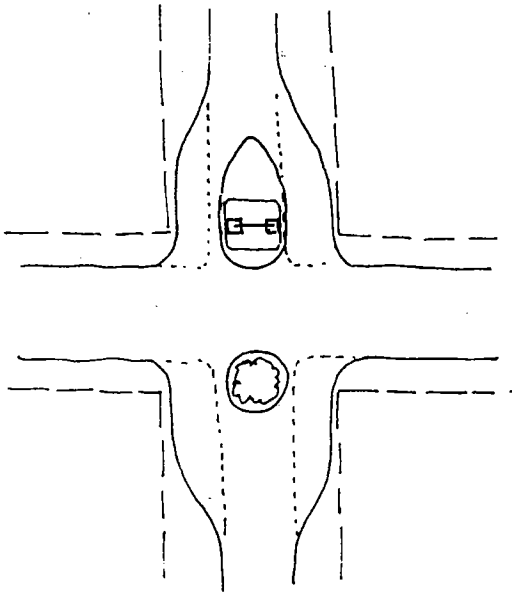


**Long Term Street Plan**

parking program should be in place prior to reducing parking requirements in the district, and therefore should be put in place in the short term. Establish the process to inventory and designate the Historic District for eventual designation and longer term preservation efforts. The existing inventory can be revived, supplements begun and other buildings in the city outside the historic district identified for consideration. The local historical commission, the Junior League and other civic groups can assist in these efforts. Charge the local AIA chapter to begin review of applicable building code issues and prepare recommendations for amendments or interpretations to

facilitate historic preservation efforts. Ask the chapter further to sponsor a local forum on historic preservation to help educate the public, the property owners and to stimulate discussion of an ongoing plan for implementation.

- Begin the process to consolidate and coordinate the "redevelopment" efforts currently occurring in the city. At a minimum, sponsor meetings as a followup to the R/UDAT weekend to inventory existing efforts, to reallocate responsibilities and to plan for future restructuring and expansion of the efforts.
- Develop a plan for moving the library to the Hemphill Wells building. The county and the banks should be approached to discuss their participation.



## MID-TERM GOALS — NEXT THREE YEARS

### Redevelopment

#### 1992

- Acquisition of the Cactus Hotel, Texas Theatre and the Hemphill-Wells department store.
- Conduct market studies as to feasibility of use of the Cactus Hotel and Texas Theatre.
- Begin fundraising for Texas Theatre.

#### 1993

- Undertake redevelopment plan of the three projects.
- Finish private fundraising for the Theatre.
- Begin marketing campaign for theatre events and hotel condominium.

#### 1994

- Complete redevelopment of the project
- Grand opening of the Cactus Hotel, Tom Green Public Library and the Texas Theatre.

## Planning/Design

### 1992-1994

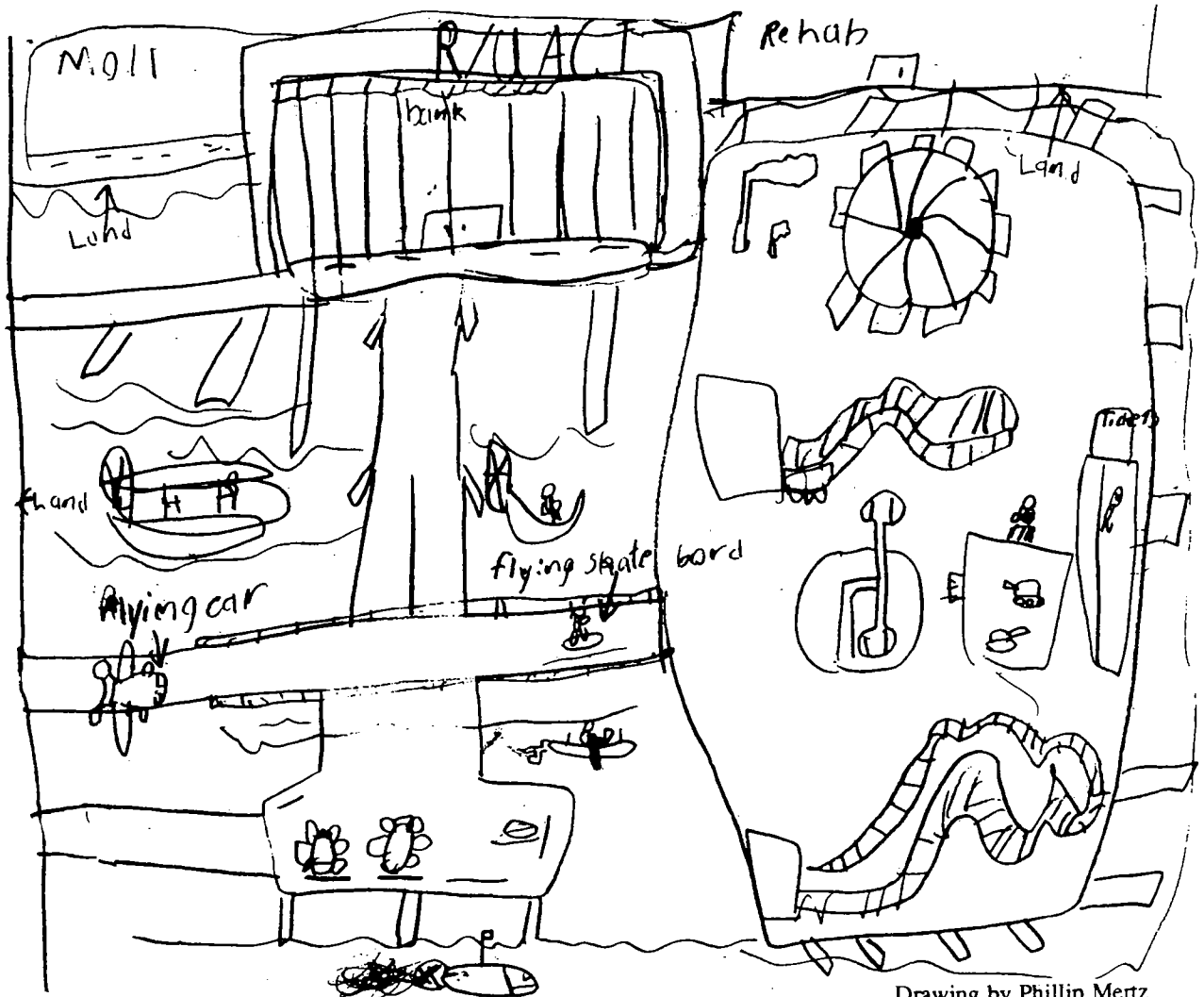
- Development of Concho Street into entertainment district.
- Introduction of residential uses into City Center, in addition to the Cactus Hotel.
- Renovation and reuse of the four icons (Fort Concho, Texas Theatre, Cactus Hotel and Depot)
- Development of connection sequence of open spaces (plazas).
- Development of system of pathfinders.

### LONG-TERM GOALS (3 to 10 years)

One potential action which will depend on how the Depot project proceeds and would require additional time for detailed planning and design is:

The new road from Bryant to the depot, parallel to the railroad tracks.

Of course, many of policy, organizational, management and legal actions initiated earlier would continue after physical improvements reach completion.



Drawing by Phillip Mertz

# R/UDAT — TEAM MEMBERS



## TEAM CHAIRMAN

*Mr. Frank Gray - Director - Economic Development, Lakewood, Colorado*

An expert in urban and redevelopment planning management, Frank Gray has prepared fiscal and physical urban management and redevelopment strategies for communities in California, Colorado, Nebraska and Utah, in addition to assistance to the State of Hawaii and Austin, Texas.

He is the former deputy director for the City and County of Denver, responsible for the planning and economic development aspects of the Denver New Airport Development Project.

Gray holds a bachelor's degree in Industrial Design from San Jose State College and a master's in Urban and Regional Planning from California State University, which included a year of urban sociology study at the University of Uppsala in Sweden.



## Community Development

*Mr. Charles Lutz - Project Manager for Downtown Development Minneapolis Community Development Agency*

Charles Lutz has been project manager for downtown development for the Minneapolis Community Development Agency since 1986. Prior to assuming that post, he had been an administrative aide to the vice president of the Minneapolis City Council and, subsequently, manager of environmental development for Carlson Companies, Inc. of Minneapolis.

He holds a bachelor's degree in sociology and urban studies from the University of Minnesota and received his MBA (concentrated on finance) as valedictorian of his class at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Lutz was also a member of the Baytown, Texas R/UDAT team, has been certified as an economic development finance professional by the National Development Council and was selected as an "outstanding Young Man of America". He is a current member of the Minneapolis Charter Commission.



## Team Coordinator

*Mr. Joe Champeaux - Partner Champeaux Landry, Inc., Architecture and City Planning, Lake Charles, Louisiana*

Joe Champeaux is a former director of city planning for Lake Charles, Louisiana and a past president of the Louisiana Architects Association. He is also a member of the College of Fellows, American Institute of Architects.

He has served as chairman of 10 R/UDAT Teams

including Wichita Falls and Baytown, Texas and others in Missouri, Oregon, Tennessee, New Jersey, California, Iowa and Utah.

Champeaux graduated from Tulane University with a Bachelor of Architecture and earned a Master of Architecture in Urban Design and City Planning from Rice University.

This will be Champeaux's third visit to San Angelo as a member of the American Institute of Architects' R/UDAT Task Force.

## Urban Art Designer

*Mr. Dick Farley - Deputy Director for Urban Design, City and County of Denver Planning and Community Development Office*

Dick Farley has been deputy director for urban design for the City and County of Denver Planning and Community Development Office since 1987.

He has held a variety of design posts throughout the country, in addition to two years with an architectural firm in Bournemouth, England. He is a licensed architect in Colorado, California and Michigan.

Farley holds a bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of Nebraska and a master's in architecture from Cornell University. He has received a variety of awards and has been active in a number of Denver architectural boards and commissions.



## Land Use Authority

*Mr. Jay Derr Parmer, law firm of Buck & Gordon, Seattle, Washington*

Jay Derr is in private practice concentrating mainly in areas of land use, environmental and real estate law, representing clients in real estate transactions throughout the country and before local, state and federal agencies to procure land use permits and approvals and to negotiate agreements and infrastructure mitigation programs.

He also serves as special deputy prosecutor for Adams County and special land use counsel for the City of Snoqualmie,

Washington and has been a lecturer for the University of Washington Department of Urban Design and Planning.

Derr holds a bachelor's degree, summa cum laude, in Resource Development from Michigan State University and a J.D. from Boalt Hall School of Law. He is a member of the Washington State Bar Association, environmental and land use law section; the legislative committee of the American Planning Association; and the University of Washington Urban Design and Planning Professionals Council.

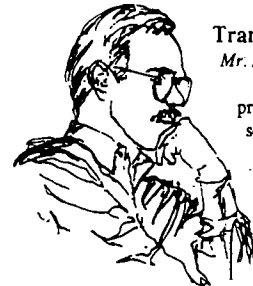
## Historic Preservation

*Ms. Elizabeth Padjen - Principal, Padjen Architects, Inc.*

Elizabeth Padjen is a principal in an architectural practice serving corporate, institutional and commercial clients. She also does urban design and planning work in the private sector, on a pro bono basis and has extensive experience in design review and the integration of historic structures in urban areas.

She holds a bachelor's degree in architecture with advanced standing from Princeton University and a master's in architecture with advanced standing from the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

Padjen is a member of and active in the American Institute of Architects and the Boston Society of Architects. She is also involved in numerous Boston and Massachusetts organizations and was a member of the R/UDAT Asheville, North Carolina team. She is architecture editor of Art New England magazine.



## Transportation Planner

*Mr. F. Ross Tilghman - President TDA Illinois, Inc.*

F. Ross Tilghman is president of TDA Illinois Inc., a private consulting firm providing transportation planning services. Prior to establish the Illinois office in 1991, he was a senior associate with TDA Inc., in Seattle, Washington.

His project experience includes comprehensive traffic and parking plans, master planning for redevelopment districts, resort and special event transportation analysis, environmental impact analysis and market feasibility analysis for communities ranging from the continental United States to Alaska, Hawaii and Malaysia.

Tilghman holds a bachelor's degree in history from Washington University to St. Louis, Missouri and a master's in geography from the University of Washington. He is an associate member of the Institute of Transportation Engineers and a member of the American Planning Association, as well as the Preservation Forum and National Trust for Historic Preservation.



## Land Planner/Landscape Architect

*Mr. Jerry Bailey - Founder, President and Owner, Arteka Corporation, Land Planners, Recently Merged with another firm*

Jerry Bailey was the founder, owner and president of Arteka, a design/build construction company. He has also served as an officer in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and has founded and managed several other companies specializing in land planning and professional design consulting.

His project experience includes land planning, urban design and recreation design/build services for numerous public, commercial and residential clients in Minnesota, Colorado, California and Texas. Mr. Bailey's firm provided extensive input on the land use plan and master development plan for Keystone, Colorado, provided design criteria standards for The Woodlands, Texas and has performed a number of design/build projects in Aspen, Colorado.

He is a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Urban Land Institute, National Association of Industrial & Office Parks, Minnesota Society - American Institute of Architects and Minnesota Chapter - American Society of Landscape Architects.

Bailey holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Landscape Architecture from Iowa State University and is a Registered Landscape Architect.

## VISIONARIES

American Airlines/American Eagle  
 ETHICON, INC.  
 First National Bank of Mertzton  
 Mr. & Mrs. A. Lee Pfluger  
 San Angelo Standard Times  
 Shannon Medical Center  
 Town & Country Food Stores

### DESIGNERS

El Patio  
 GTE  
 Holiday Inn  
 Crockett County National Bank  
 Texas Commerce Bank  
 West Texas Chapter of A.I.A.  
 West Texas Utilities

### BUILDERS

Downtown San Angelo Association  
 Fort Concho National Historic Site  
 Historic San Angel  
 Lone Star Gas  
 San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts  
 Texas State Bank

### BRICKS And MORTAR

Mr. & Mrs. Michael D. Brown  
 Central National Branch of  
 First National Bank at Lubbock  
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Eckert  
 Mr. & Mrs. John Mallard  
 Mr. & Mrs. R. R. Peoples, Jr.  
 Mr. John Shields  
 Southwest Bank  
 Tom Green National Bank

### SUPPLIERS

Albertston's Grocery  
 Allen Young Office Machines  
 Allstate Insurance Company  
 Assembly of God Church East Angelo  
 Automatic Fire Protection  
 City Lumber Company  
 City of San Angelo  
 Coca-Cola  
 Cooper Interiors  
 DeCoty Coffee Company  
 Dunkin Donuts

First Presbyterian Church  
 Charles Fowler, Engineer  
 Fuentes Cafe Downtown  
 H.E.B. Chinese Kitchen  
 Inn of the Concho  
 Jim Bass Ford, Inc.  
 Jim Bean Photography  
 Keaton Kolor  
 Kentucky Fried Chicken  
 KGKL-AM/FM  
 KIDY-TV  
 KIXY-KJAY  
 K-LITE

### KLST-TV

KSJT  
 Lange Helicopters  
 LRK Electric  
 Lynn Alexander's Autoplex  
 M System Food Stores  
 Reg Manning  
 Mayfield Paper Company  
 McDonald's, Bryant Boulevard  
 Mitchell Pontiac-Toyota  
 National Furniture Company  
 Newsfoto  
 The Reproduction Center

Dr. William Ben Robertson  
 San Angelo Convention Center  
 San Angelo Symphony  
 Shakey's  
 Target  
 The Talley Press  
 Tom Ridgway Florist  
 West Supply  
 Western Printing  
 Zenter's Steakhouse

### CRAFTSMEN

Mary Ellen Astudillo  
 Pat Anteberry  
 Johnnie Barrows  
 Barbara Barry  
 Paul Bergman  
 Sharon Biggerstaff  
 Valerie Bluthardt  
 Phil Brassie  
 Darlene Bratton  
 Patti Brejreiter  
 Mitch Brininstool  
 Bill Carter  
 Neal Chavez  
 Pam Clow  
 Donna Crisp  
 Peery Curmutt  
 Marcia Dabney  
 Nejla Desch

Cheryl Ebright  
 Patsy Eckert  
 Dennis Ellsworth  
 Golda Foster  
 Walt Foster  
 Cathy Fowler  
 Jim Gatzwood  
 Annetta Gray  
 Jae Grenier  
 Ken Grimm  
 Carrie Hallman  
 Chris Holt  
 Joan Kesinger  
 Frances Kayes  
 Le Killgore  
 Bob Koob  
 Brenda LaRue  
 Terry Lawrence  
 Arlen Lohabe  
 Nancy Loving

Alicia Lown  
 John Lynch  
 Cathy Marsh  
 Tamara Marshall  
 Chuck Miller  
 Robert Park  
 Patricia Pastino  
 Cora Pugmire  
 Kathi Replogle  
 Dwane Riddle  
 Bill Roberts  
 Jeff Rowland  
 Kathy Rowland  
 Margaret Schmidt  
 John Schwab  
 Kevin Settle  
 Tim Sherman  
 Ross Smith  
 Joyce Sneed  
 Tom Stanton

Robert Stevens  
 Greg Thomas  
 Karen Verell  
 Robbie Viator  
 Cade White  
 Loran Wilkin  
 Marilyn Williams  
 Susan Winn  
 Cindy Wright

### PAPER HANGERS

Sandy Farrell  
 Donna Hughes  
 Joann Kleypas  
 Dr. Leslie Mayrand, Angelo Catholic School  
 YMCA After School Day Care  
 The children of San Angelo who drew their visions  
 of our city's future.

## Speakers - People who provided input to the R/UDAT Team

Mario S. Aloniz  
 Tom Alexander  
 Roger Allen  
 Rich Arent  
 Dennis Backstrom  
 Loeta Barnhart  
 Leona M. Benson  
 Diane Berger  
 Marion Boomsliey  
 Sandra Brillet  
 Debby Brown  
 Stephen Brown  
 Cindy Caldwell  
 Gene Canady  
 John Cargile  
 Ta Clagile  
 Evelyn Chambers  
 Johnny Chape  
 Pete Chape  
 Mary Collins  
 William F. Collins  
 Donna Crisp

Lisa Delibes  
 Del DeWoes  
 Enoch Duncan  
 Patsy Eckert  
 Richard L. Fauser  
 Dick Fewest  
 Anne Ferguson  
 Dickie Ferro  
 Golda Foster  
 Jane Gabriel  
 Jim Gabriel  
 Sandra Gaunt  
 Girl Scouts on the River  
 Bill Graves  
 Nancy Green  
 Nonie Green  
 H. de Orys  
 Noland Haney  
 Jerrell Harmon  
 Morris Hargraves  
 Gene Hirschfeldt  
 Lynda Holcombe

Chase Holland  
 Steve Hoh  
 Elma Jacques  
 Jerry Jenkinson  
 Allen R. Johnson  
 Katie Johnson  
 Sheri Jones  
 Doug Kinsinger  
 Barry Kleypas  
 Joe Kollmyer  
 Bill Lawrence  
 Weldon A. Lindsay  
 Nancy Loving  
 Margaret Mallard  
 LaNelle Manuel  
 Roberta Marsh  
 Florence McClellan  
 Walter McCollough  
 Marilyn McEneaney  
 Winston McGinnis  
 Thelma McMurray  
 Kenneth McNease

Joe Merz  
 Susan Merz  
 Sue Mearchi  
 Ron Michalea  
 Gilbert Moniz  
 Francie Morrill  
 Mrs. Roy Neff  
 LeRoy Olsk  
 Don Osborn  
 Juanita Osborn  
 Robert Pace  
 Tom Parrett  
 Dot Patterson  
 B.D. Payne  
 Bettine Peoples  
 Ma. Kandi Pool  
 Bob Post  
 Kay Neff Reed  
 Tom Ridgway  
 Andrew Rizzo  
 Maurine Robinson  
 Junny Rogers

Jean Ryan  
 Harvey Sealberg  
 Ono E. Scherz  
 Anne Schuene  
 John Schwab  
 Jerry W. Sea  
 Harold Seefeldt  
 Herschel Shelby  
 Johnny Silvas  
 David Smith  
 Dr. Jackson Smith  
 Lester Smith  
 Bill J. Spraggins  
 Leigh Ann Spraggins  
 Steve Stephens  
 Sherry Stewart  
 Dave Stunnett  
 Nina Stringer  
 John Szabanevitz  
 Terry Tase  
 Howard Taylor  
 Glen R. Termin

Burt Terrill  
 David Thurston  
 Alfonso Torres  
 Wayne Ulrich  
 John Vaughn  
 Nancy Verdore  
 Dr. L. D. Vincent  
 Elmer E. Vegt  
 Eileen Waddell  
 Don Weller  
 J. W. West  
 John Wheeler  
 Mrs. Frank (Jo) White  
 Luz D. White  
 Norma Joe Williams  
 Steve Williams  
 Billie Willis  
 Becky Young  
 Debbie Zabica  
 John Zubunawich  
 Johnny Zumiga

Effort has been made to include everyone who has generously contributed their time, talent, and resources to support the R/UDAT Process.  
 Please forgive us if we have inadvertently omitted your name in the rush of producing this report.

## Steering Committee

**Mr. Lee Pfluger - Chairman**  
**Mr. Howard Taylor - Project Co-Chairman**  
**Mr. Henry Schmidt - Project Co-Chairman**  
 Mr. Tom Alexander - Treasurer  
 Mrs. Mort Mertz (Susan) - Secretary  
 Mr. Gary Acevedo - Citizen Participation  
 Mr. Kevin Barry - Report Printing  
 Marion Szurek Bottomley - Transportation  
 Mr. Karl Bookter - Accommodations and Food

Mrs. Richard Crisp (Donna) - Historic/Volunteer Organizer  
 Mr. Doug Kinsinger - Transportation  
 Mr. Barry Kleypas - R/UDAT Office  
 Mr. Jack E. Meek - Students  
 Mr. Tim Norton - Government Agencies  
 Mrs. Lee Pfluger (Meg) - Social Coordinator  
 Ms. Jean G. Ryon - Public Relations  
 Mr. Mark Thieman - Equipment and Supplies  
 Mr. David Thurbon - Resource and Information

## Committee Members

Mr. George Alexander  
 Mr. L. Gray Beck  
 Sandra R. Bralley  
 Mr. Roy Dudley  
 Mr. Edward Fisher

Golda Foster  
 Mrs. Althea Giles  
 Mr. Chase Holland  
 Mr. Stephen Holt  
 Mrs. John Mallard

Mr. Bill McClanahan  
 Mr. Robert McLaughlin  
 Mrs. Richard Mercer (Susan)  
 Mr. Joe Mertz  
 Mrs. Roddy Peeples (Bettimae)

Mr. Charlie Powell  
 Mr. Cal Sugg  
 Mrs. Carlene Tucker  
 Mr. Don Wellen



*Texas Tech Students*

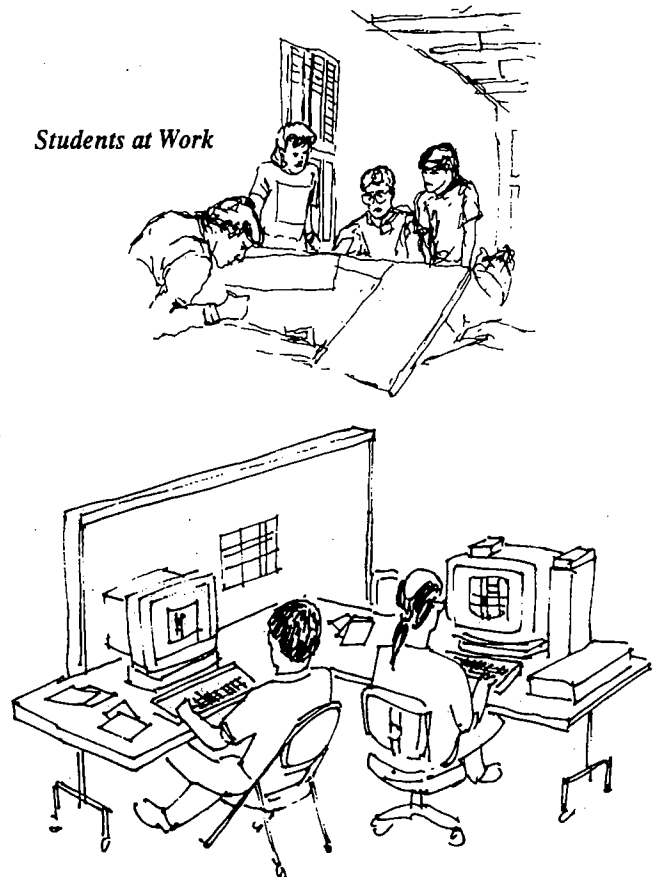
*top) Left to Right*

- .. David Driskell
- ! Bob Vukasovich
- ! Marvey Hernandez

*Bottom) Left to Right*

- .. Blas Lavlom
- .. Sylvia Zapata
- .. Stephanie Andrews
- .. Ray Maestas
- .. Ivan Naranjo

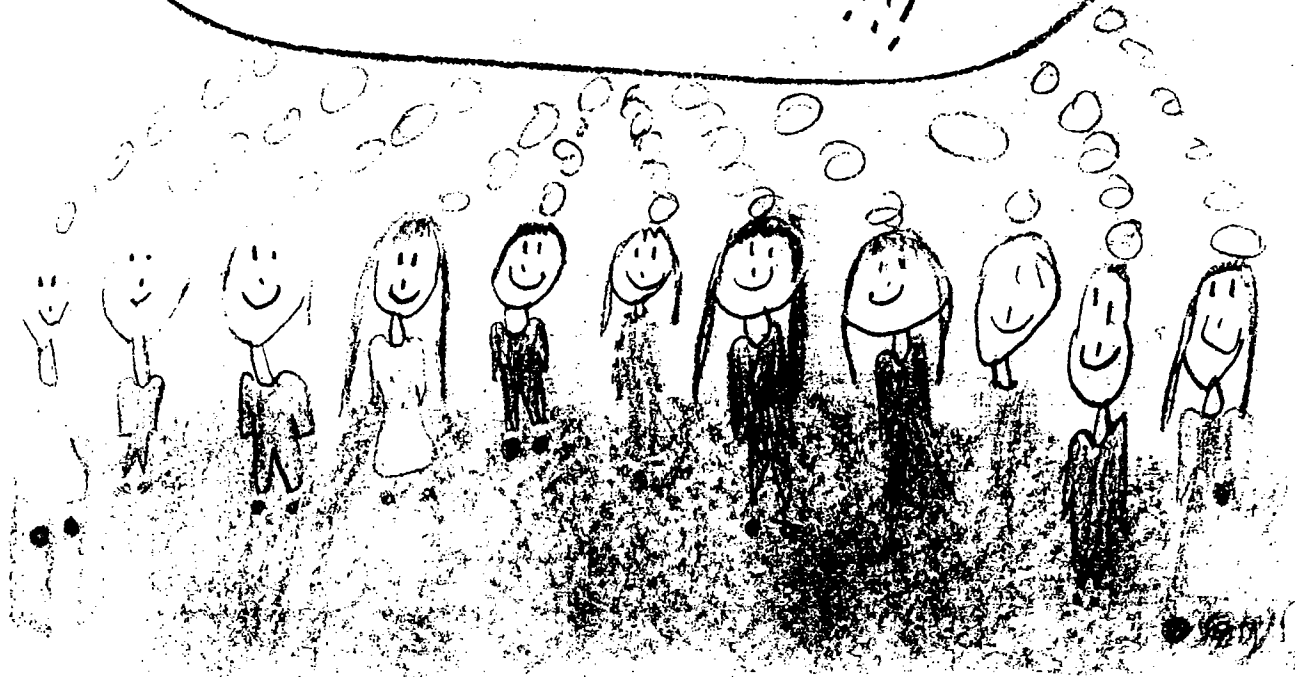
*Students at Work*



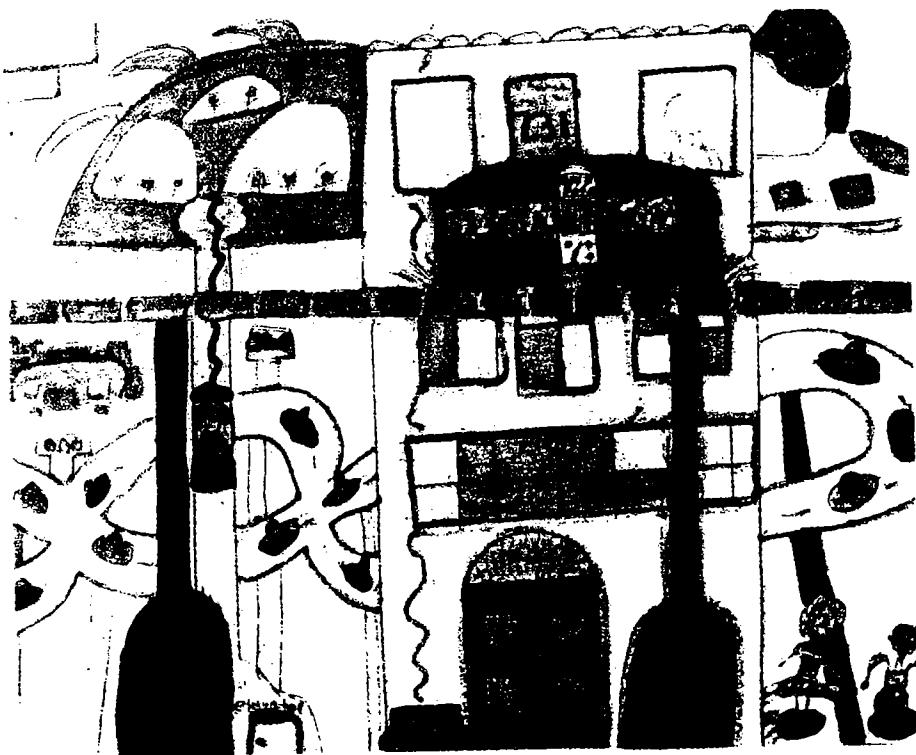
Special thanks go to Ken Grimm and Ross Smith of the Standard-Times who were responsible for setting up the computer network and composing this report on very tight deadlines.

The entire report was paginated on Macintosh computers from text written by the R/UDAT team members and maps and drawings prepared by the team members and their student assistants from Texas Tech University.

WE LOVE SAN  
ANGELO, TEXAS!!!



Drawing by Alexis Norton

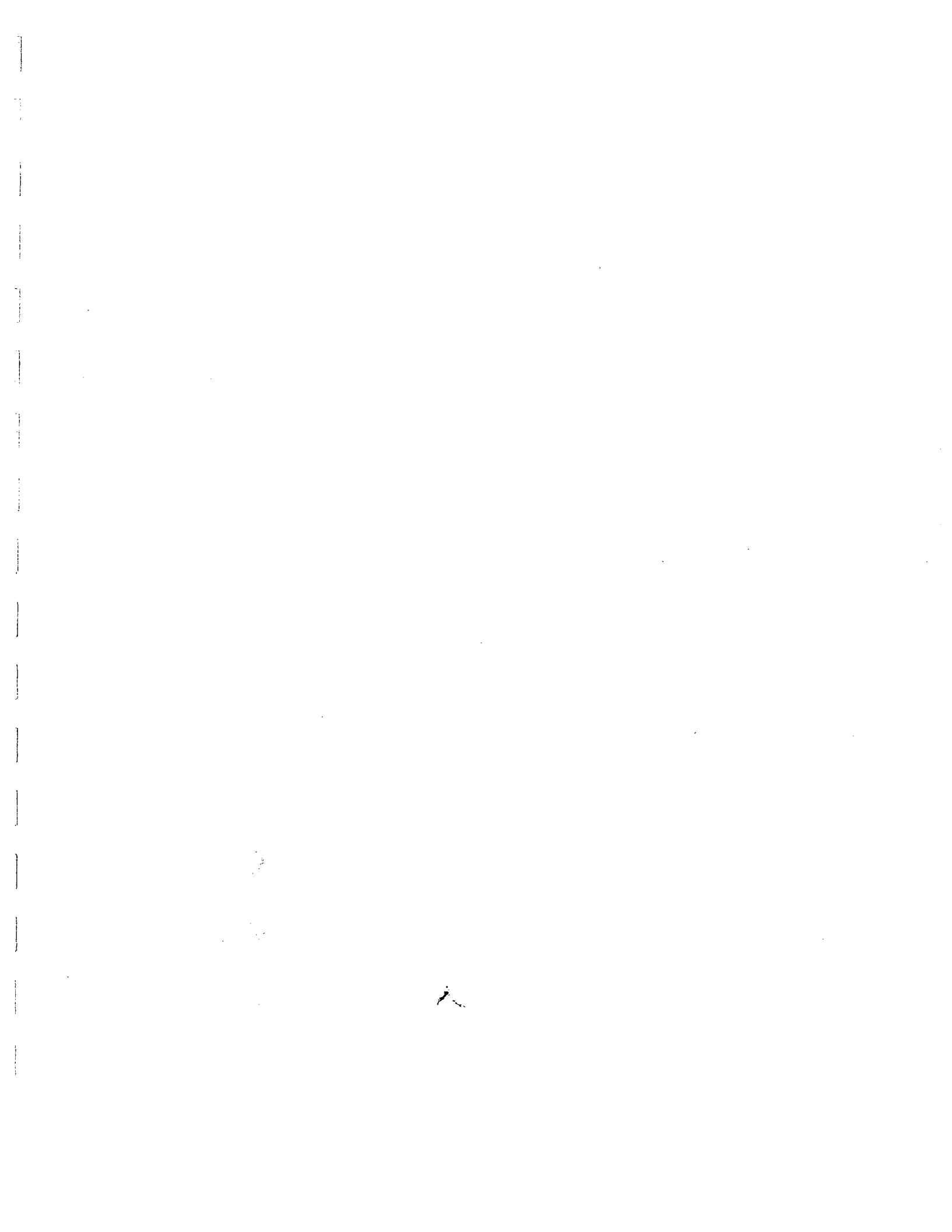


*"It means so much  
to the children to  
believe their  
heritage is a part of  
their community."*

--Eileen Waddell

Drawing by Adrianne Albarado





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