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A PLAN OF REVITALIZATION FOR
HOUSTON'S THIRD WARD AREA

THESIS

BY

DANNY R. PERKINS

1987

A PLAN OF REVITALIZATION FOR HOUSTON'S THIRD WARD AREA

THESIS

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For the
Degree Master of Science in the Graduate School of Texas
Southern University

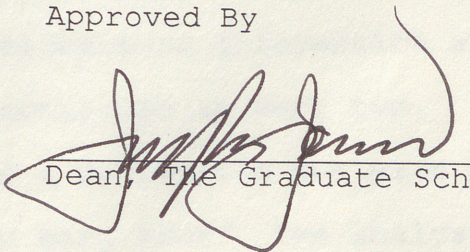
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Danny R. Perkins, B.A.

Texas Southern University

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Approved By


Dean, The Graduate School

Perkins

c. 2

5th floor

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A PLAN of REVITALIZATION for HOUSTON'S THIRD WARD AREA

by:

Danny R. Perkins, M.S.

Texas Southern University

Dr. Naomi Lede, Advisor

The Third Ward is an area located adjacent to the central business district of Houston on the city's southeast side. Due to the nature of the community, the area has presented special social and political problems regarding redevelopment. This thesis project takes a different approach. It is an exploration of Third Ward's history, and existing conditions which seeks an alternative for redevelopment. The project is presented in two parts.

Part one deals with the investigation of the Third Ward Area. It is intended to provide the reader with an understanding of the community's past, the views of public opinion toward it, and existing conditions within the area. For the most part, it serves as background information and as an introduction to the material contained in part two.

Part two is intended to give a systematic analysis of the transportation needs in the Third Ward Area. The analysis will focus on the need for better accessibility from the surrounding regions, as well as with the available public transportation facilities. Part two also evaluates the area's

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VITA

- 1979.....B.A., Texas Southern University
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A considerable debt of gratitude is owed to the remaining members of my committee listed as follows: To Alan Clark, for his direction and interest in the subject and for his valuable suggestions and perceptive comments during the formative stage.

To Lester S. Webster, for his interest in my thesis, his helpful suggestions, and his taking the time to become an integral and contributing member of my committee.

To Dr. E. C. Powell, for his understanding and his continued encouragement and advice.

An expression of appreciation is due to Michael T. [Name] for his enthusiastic and unselfish devotion of time and effort.

which has been a constant source of encouragement and
motivation; also, to his staff for all their cooperation and
assistance in completing this project.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The cooperation and assistance of a number of people
have made this thesis possible. Dr. Naomi W. Lede, as
chairperson and professor, gave generously of her time and
talent, inspiring me to undertake the study and continually
demonstrating her confidence in my ability to successfully
complete it. I am indebted to Dr. Lede not only for the
contribution she has made to this thesis but also to my
professional growth and development. I am especially
grateful for her opening my eyes to the exciting and
challenging world of transportation planning and research.

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An expression of appreciation is due to Michael Y. Chou
for his enthusiasm and unselfish devotion of time and effort

which has been a constant source of encouragement and motivation; also, to his staff for all their cooperation and assistance in completing this project.

Appreciation is also expressed to five organizations who participated in the study: Texas Southern University/Center for Transportation Training and Research, City of Houston/Planning and Development Department, Houston-Galveston Area Council, Houston Metropolitan Transit Authority, and Quadrant Consultants, Inc., for so graciously and generously opening their facilities to me. Each has made this thesis a truly memorable and enjoyable experience.

Most of all, recognition and appreciation goes out to my wife, Melanie, and family who shared in this study with their cooperation, love and understanding. Finally to some others whose assistance has momentarily slipped my mind, I can only apologize for not having mentioned them.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my father, the late Algie "Sport" Perkins, to whom I owe my greatest debt. Without whose inspiration, love, and support none of this would have been made possible.

Part one deals with the investigation of the Third Ward Area. It is intended to provide the reader with an understanding of the community's past, the views of public opinion toward it, and existing conditions within the area. For the most part, it serves as background information and as an introduction to the material contained in part two.

Part two is intended to give a systematic analysis of the transportation needs in the Third Ward Area. The analysis will focus on the need for better accessibility from the surrounding regions, as well as with the available public transportation facilities. Part two also evaluates the area's present conditions, problems, and the

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Third Ward is an area located adjacent to the central business district of Houston on the city's southeast side. Due to the nature of the community, the area has presented special social and political problems regarding redevelopment. This thesis project takes a different approach. It is an exploration of Third Ward's history, and existing conditions which seeks an alternative for redevelopment. The project is presented in two parts.

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advantages. It provides a plan for redevelopment based on ²
the land use cost and the need for housing near downtown.

CHAPTER 2 HISTORY AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This study is presented in two parts; part one deals with the investigation of the Third Ward. The primary purpose is to provide the reader with an understanding of the community's past, the view of public opinion formed in, and existing conditions within the area. Part one serves as background information and as an introduction to the material contained in part two. Part two is intended to give a systematic analysis of the transportation needs in the Third Ward area. The analysis will take as its basis for better accessibility from the surrounding area, as well as with the available public transportation facilities along with the evaluation of the area's economic conditions, its problems and its resources. It is intended to provide a plan for redevelopment based on the land use cost and the need for housing near downtown. The project is a plan for land use and does not itself deal with the design of individual structures.

Part one is the first phase of a two part analysis of the Third Ward area of Houston. This research was done as foundation work to establish the area's past and existing conditions in an effort to determine the direction for

remaining phase will take. The research was aimed at answering the following questions:

(1) For what was the community originally designed?

(2) What is its status?

CHAPTER 2

(3) HISTORY AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This study is presented in two parts; part one deals with the investigation of the Third Ward. Its primary purpose is to provide the reader with an understanding of the community's past, the view of public opinion toward it, and existing conditions within the area. Part one serves as background information and as an introduction to the material contained in part two. Part two is intended to give a systematic analysis of the transportation needs in the Third Ward area. The analysis will focus on the need for better accessibility from the surrounding regions, as well as with the available public transportation facilities; along with the evaluation of the area's physical conditions, its problems and its advantages. It is intended to provide a plan for redevelopment based on the land cost and need for housing near downtown. The proposal is a plan for land use and does not itself deal with the design of individual structures.

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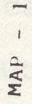
remaining phase will take. The research was aimed at answering the following questions:

- (1) For what was the community originally designed?
- (2) What is its ethnic background?
- (3) Based on its existing conditions, is there any way to change the area while preserving it for the people who live there now?
- (4) What were the forces which led to its present state?
- (5) Are there any structures remaining which could be used to reinforce any proposed changes?

Third Ward's History and Present Conditions

The Third Ward area has been a part of central Houston for over a hundred years. It was one of the original six wards under the old ward system of city government. Like most central city neighborhoods across the country, the Third Ward has been in a nearly constant state of change since the end of World War II. During this time, the area has seen a transition from mostly white, blue-collar residents to a predominantly black, lower income population. An area of higher White and Black households is situated just to the north and south of Braes Bayou in the southern part of the study area.¹ (See Map #1)

¹ Houston-Galveston Area Council, Third Ward Transportation Study, (April 1983), p. 3.



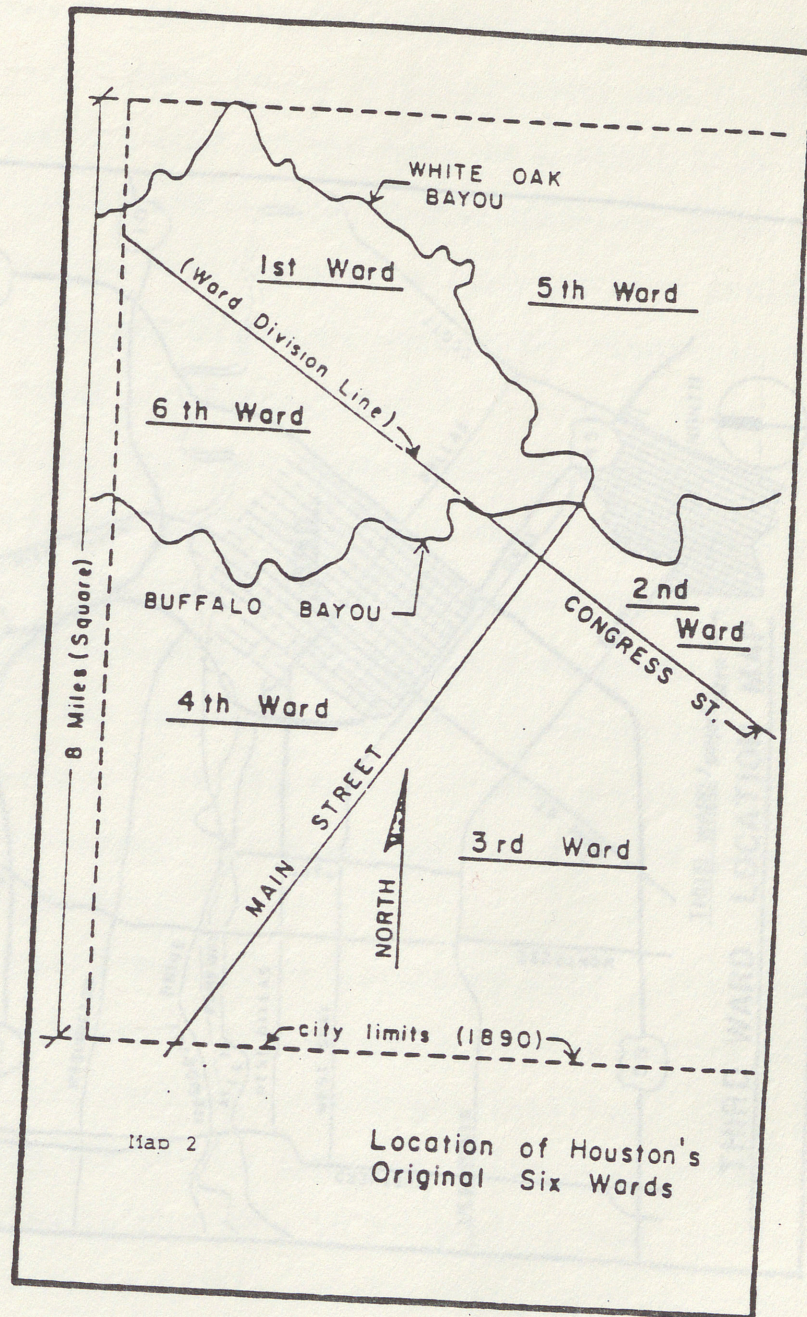
The original boundaries of the Third Ward area as defined by the City of Houston Planning Department are shown on Map 1. The area covers Census Tracts 304, 305, 306, 307 and 316. These census tracts comprise a total of 4.98 square miles or 3,187.2 gross acres. The major subdivisions located in this community are: Washington Terrace, Southwood, Leeland Park, Riverside Terrace, Southmore, Blodgett Park, Oak Manor, B. T. Washington and W. A. Wilson.²

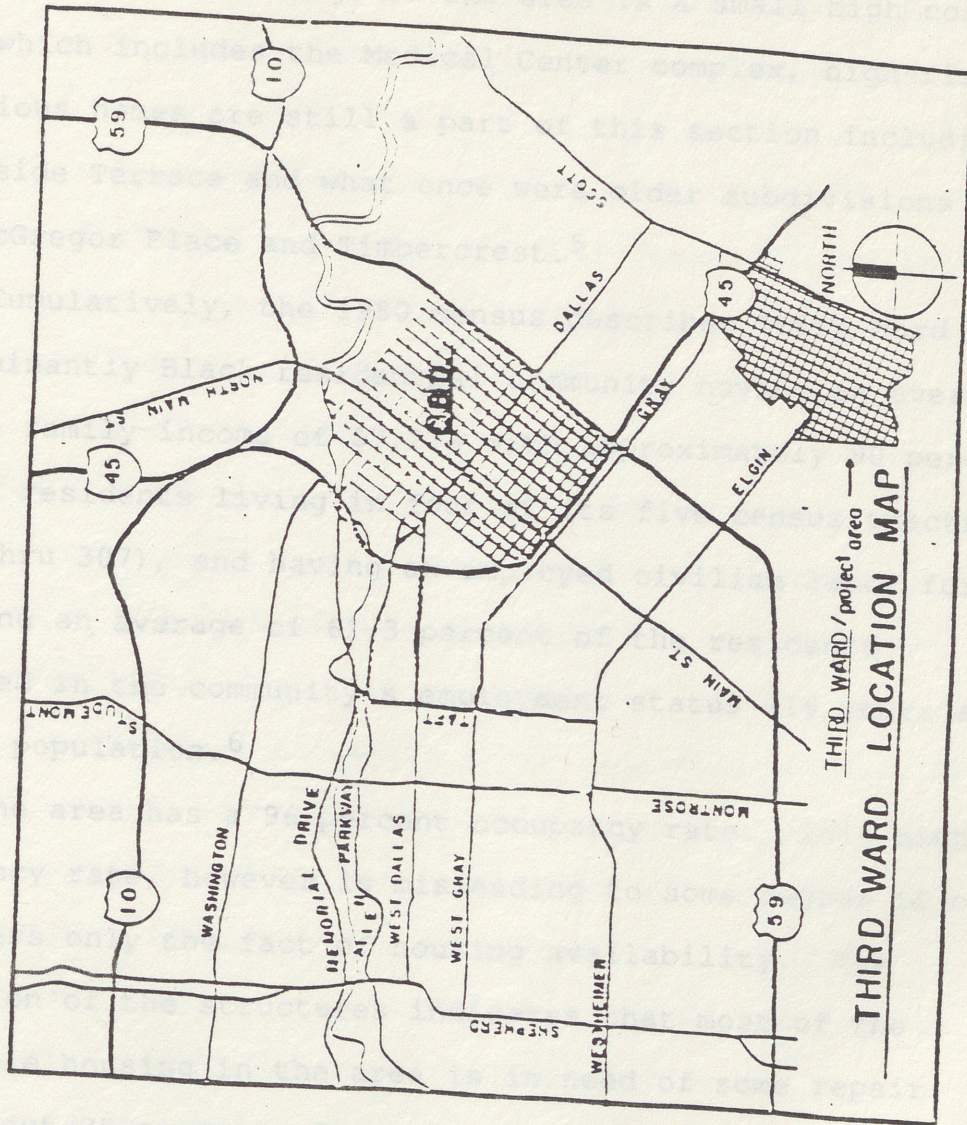
Approximately 80 percent of the community's land area comprised what was formerly referred to as the Model City Program target area. With the advent of the Community Program (which virtually replaced the old Demonstration Cities concept), this same area became known as Community Development Area #21.³

The Third Ward section of Houston is predominantly residential, with a diverse mixture of commercial and institutional usages. This heterogeneous mixture of business establishments and social-cultural entertainment institutions impinge upon the residential sections in the

² Cook, Kenneth R., Third Ward Land Use Study, (March, 1979), p. 1.

³ Ibid., p. 1.





THIRD WARD LOCATION MAP
THIRD WARD / project area

4. Cook, p. 1
5. Ibid., p. 1.
6. Houston Planning and Development Department, Third Ward Revitalization Area Fact Book (November 1, 1985).

area. The area is split by main thoroughfares such as Blodgett, Elgin, Alameda Road, Dowling, Scott and Southmore.⁴

On the western edge of the area is a small high cost area which includes the Medical Center complex, high-rise luxurious homes are still a part of this section including, Riverside Terrace and what once were older subdivisions such as MacGregor Place and Timbercrest.⁵

Cumulatively, the 1980 census describes Third Ward as a predominantly Black residential community having an average median family income of \$7,279 with approximately 90 percent of its residents living in four of its five census tracts (304 thru 307), and having an employed civilian labor force totaling an average of 61.3 percent of the residents included in the community's employment status (16 years and older) population.⁶

The area has a 96 percent occupancy rate. This high occupancy rate, however is misleading to some degree if one considers only the fact of housing availability. The condition of the structures indicates that most of the available housing in the area is in need of some repair. Only about 25 percent of the houses could be considered good structures in the Community Development Target Area #21;

⁴ Cook, p. 1

⁵ Ibid., p. 1.

⁶ Houston Planning and Development Department, Third Ward Revitalization Area Fact Sheet, (November 1, 1985).

over 21 percent of the housing in this designated area are¹⁰
in need of minor repair; about 14.3 percent have been
classified as marginal; 39 percent are considered in need of
major repair, while; less than one percent are classified as
unsound.⁷ (such as enlarging water and sewer lines,

side) There have been several studies made on the Third Ward
for many different reasons. The City Planning Commission,
under a grant from the Federal Department of Housing and
Urban Development, released a report in 1975 entitled, THIRD
WARD: NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN, which was one of several
"blighted" areas studied under the grant to determine
existing conditions and proposed alternative solutions for
the areas. The Texas Southern University, Urban Resource
Center made similar studies to determine community services
needed in the areas and where these facilities should be
located. Also, several investors have studied the area to
determine its potential for commercial development. All of
these studies have resulted in little constructive
improvements for the area. Most people feel the area is
certain to be used for commercial activities due to its
nearness to the Central Business District (CBD). These same
people agree that the desirability for residential use
exists, but in the unofficial words of elected and appointed
officials, "if we (Houston) had zoning, it would be zoned

for commercial use."; and it's a tremendous under-utilization of desirable property."⁸

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The city is presently studying the area again to determine if city funds should be spent to upgrade city services (such as enlarging water and sewer lines, sidewalks, streetlighting, etc.) to accommodate commercial activities. It is generally felt that this study will show the area to be in a state of change and will recommend that monies be withheld until the area's future is more certain than it is at the present time. The city seems to have put the area on defer. As far as trying to improve living conditions, it has adapted a wait-and-see attitude, even though no one would make an official statement. One official did say however, that if there was ever an area of Houston where the city did anything to perpetuate slum conditions, through the lack of proper housing code enforcement and lack of city services, Third Ward would be the area.

The Third Ward, as it now exists, seems destined to deteriorate. Any major change toward commercial use would set a precedent and the entire area would probably be used for commercial development. However, due to some of the narrow streets and small blocks, commercial activity would necessitate the rededication of land to provide blocks large

⁸ Interviewed various elected officials and appointed officials, February, 1986.

remaining which could be used to reinforce its past in a reconstruction project. The only way of preserving this history, would be to build a museum, where it would be documented and available to those seeking information. Third Ward will most definitely change. The remaining question is whether or not this change will be toward a commercial or residential use. The freeways have provided a barrier to the southward movement of the Central Business District. Many feel that the Central Business District is large enough and that due to the vast area Houston covers, it would be better served by other business districts such as the Astrodome and the Medical Center areas. Major developers feel the voids created on the city's east side should be filled in rather than continuing the southward expansion at its present pace.

Houston is in dire need of suitable housing for all income levels. Due to the expense and complications involved with transportation, people are no longer attempting to move as far away from the city as possible. Many are moving back to the inner-city to be nearer their work location. There is very little suitable housing near the Central Business District for those persons working there. Third Ward is an ideal area to provide housing for the inner-city work force.

(a) The expense for supplying suitable housing is not economically feasible.

(3) Only means available through city government to upgrade housing is to strictly enforce the housing codes.

(4) Developers are reluctant to invest in Third Ward for commercial or residential use.

CHAPTER 3

(5) Any change in residential use, from commercial or residential use, will be a change in the character of the area.

Statement of Problem

The Third Ward is an area located adjacent to the Central Business District of Houston on the city's southeast side. Due to the nature of the community, the area has presented special social and political problems regarding redevelopment. There have been several studies of the area in an attempt to upgrade living conditions. There have also been several proposals made calling for commercial redevelopment and the expansion of the Central Business District. The facts and assumptions made about the area are provided below to give a better understanding of my approach to its redevelopment.

The Facts

(1) Certain locations in the Third Ward area are extremely deteriorated.

(a) Structures are beyond practical repair.

(b) Housing is not constructed for modern living.

(2) The majority of the property is owned by absentee landlords.

(a) The expense for repairing existing structures is not economically feasible.

(3) Only means available through city government to upgrade housing is to strictly enforce the housing codes.

(4) Developers are reluctant to invest in Third Ward for commercial or residential use.

(5) Any change, whether it be for commercial or residential use, would change the nature and character of the area, and would require the displacement of a large percentage of its population.

The Assumptions

(1) With the exception of city and church property, the private sector could purchase all of the deteriorating areas.

2) The creation of a new residential/commercial area, to contain facilities for mixed income levels, would be worth the "social impact" of displacing a large number of people.

(3) If suitable housing were provided, people would move into and create an economic stability in the area.

(4) The city would cooperate with the proposal by upgrading city services as described herein.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis tested in this study is as follows: by utilizing the area's existing physical plan, its nearness to downtown, its access and visibility, and its development potential, one could provide a desirable plan for the future. As well as, evaluating the physical conditions and

recognizing the prime areas for commercial and residential use, the plan could provide commercial stimulation for the area while providing a place to live near the Central Business District.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The following section contains an evaluation of the Third Ward's physical conditions with a proposal for its future land use. The key idea was to provide a plan for redevelopment to encourage a mixed residential/commercial community which capitalizes on its location, while providing a viable and cohesive living environment.

Existing Land Use

The Third Ward contains 3,187.26 acres within the designated "project area." Highways take up approximately 769.07 acres, leaving the remaining 2,418.19 acres to be divided for six types of land use: public services, open space, residential, commercial, undeveloped and miscellaneous. The land uses, facilities and conditions of each use is given below (the figures are discussed in a later section).

Public Services (1215.9 acres)

Riverside General Hospital

The hospital does not have adequate facilities and parking space at present, nor does it have space to expand beyond its present size.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The following section contains an evaluation of the Third Ward's physical conditions with a proposal for its future land use. The key idea was to provide a plan for redevelopment to encourage a mixed residential/commercial community which capitalizes on its location, while providing a viable and cohesive living environment.

Existing Land Use

The Third Ward contains 3,187.20 acres within the designated "project area." Roadways take up approximately 769.07 acres, leaving the remaining 2,418.13 acres to be divided for six types of land use: public services, open space, residential, commercial, undeveloped and miscellaneous. The land area, facilities and conditions of each use is given below (Roadways are discussed in a later section).

Public Services (315.9 acres)

Riverside General Hospital

The hospital does not have adequate facilities and parking space at present, nor does it have space to expand beyond its present size.

Quentin Mease Community Hospital

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This hospital situation is similar to the above mentioned hospital, in that it does not have adequate facilities.

Jack Yates Senior High School

The school is in the process of adding a new wing and is constructing a larger parking lot, as a result of acquiring adjacent properties.

Contemporary Learning Center

This school has adequate facilities, but has limited parking.

Blackshear Elementary

Douglass Elementary

Lockhart Elementary

Turner Elementary

These schools have very little parking space, limited playground space, and no room to expand on its present site.

City Fire Station No. 25

The fire station has adequate parking space and facilities to house its equipment. However, it does not have sufficient room to expand on its present site.

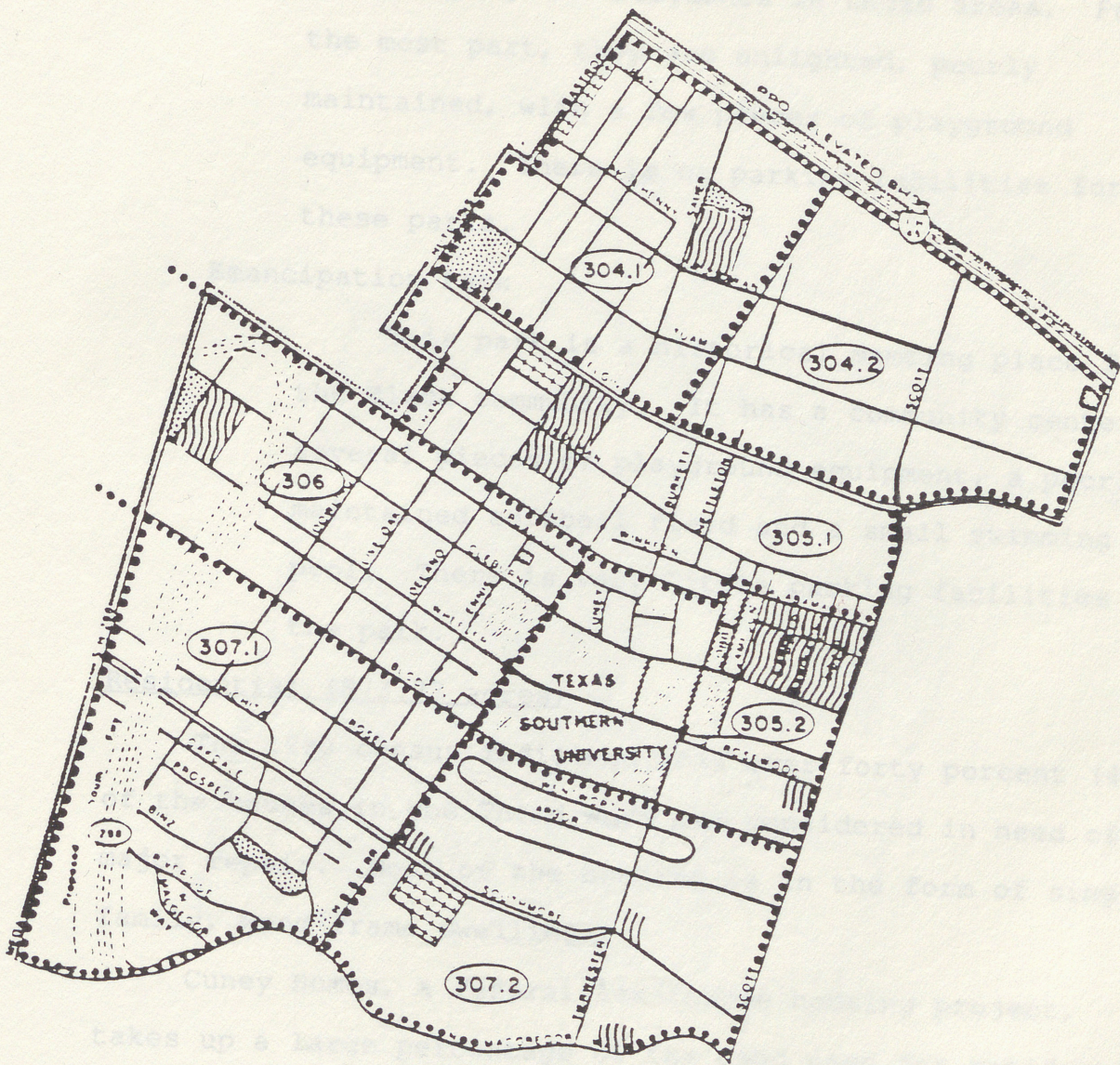
Open Space (427.34 acres)

Bennett Park

Moses Leroy Park

THIRD WARD STUDY AREA

EXISTING LAND-USE



OPEN SPACE



PUBLIC



Peggy Park

20

Riverside Park

These parks are neighborhood parks used primarily by the residents in those areas. For the most part, they are unlighted, poorly maintained, with a few pieces of playground equipment. There is no parking facilities for these parks.

Emancipation Park

This park is a historical meeting place for the Black community. It has a community center, several pieces of playground equipment, a poorly maintained softball field and a small swimming pool. There is very little parking facilities for the park.

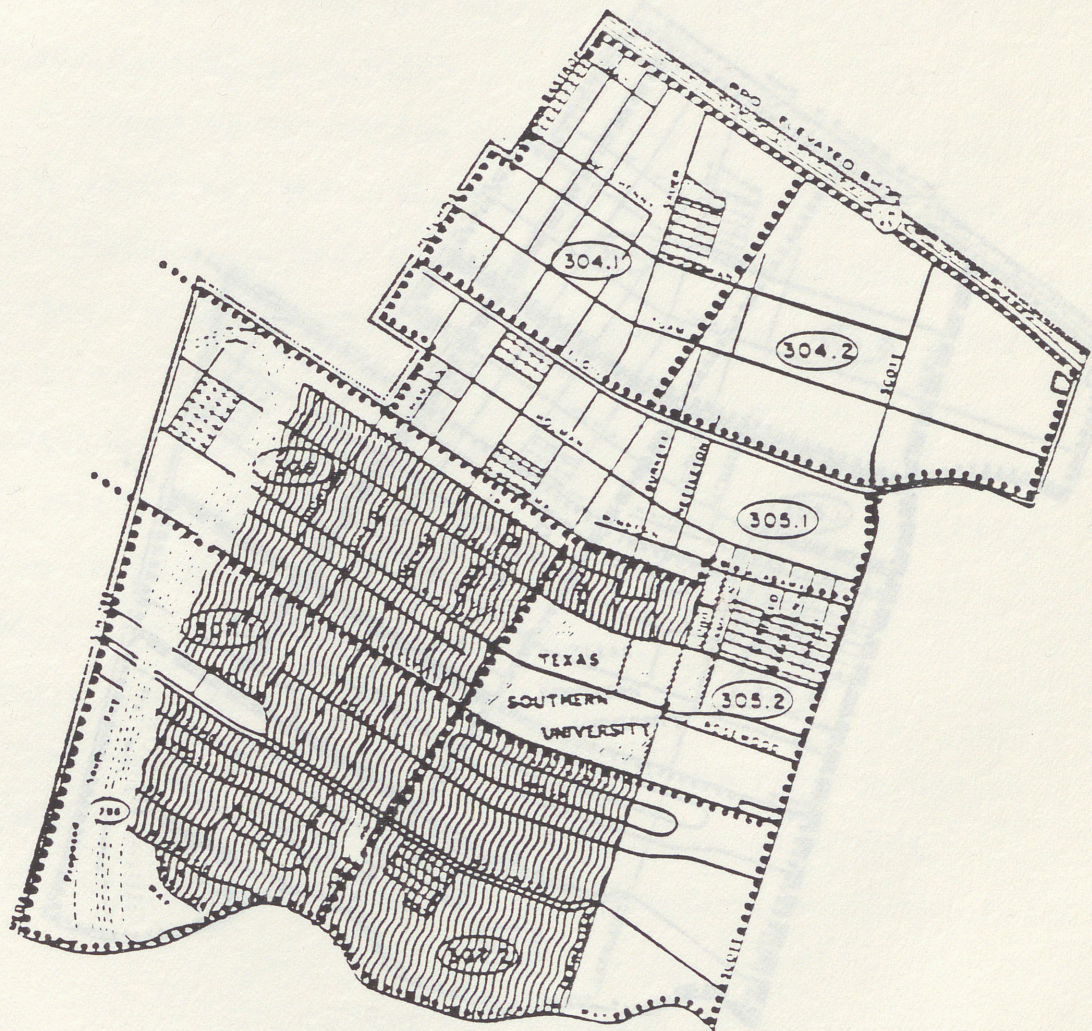
Residential (973.77 acres)

The 1980 census indicated that over forty percent (40%) of the houses in the Third Ward are considered in need of major repair. Most of the housing is in the form of single family, wood frame dwellings.

Cuney Homes, a federal low-income housing project, takes up a large percentage of the land used for residential purposes in census tract 305. It was built in the early 1940's, has 564 units in approximately 40 buildings, and requires heavy maintenance. The complex takes up 34.54 acres.

THIRD WARD STUDY AREA

EXISTING LAND-USE



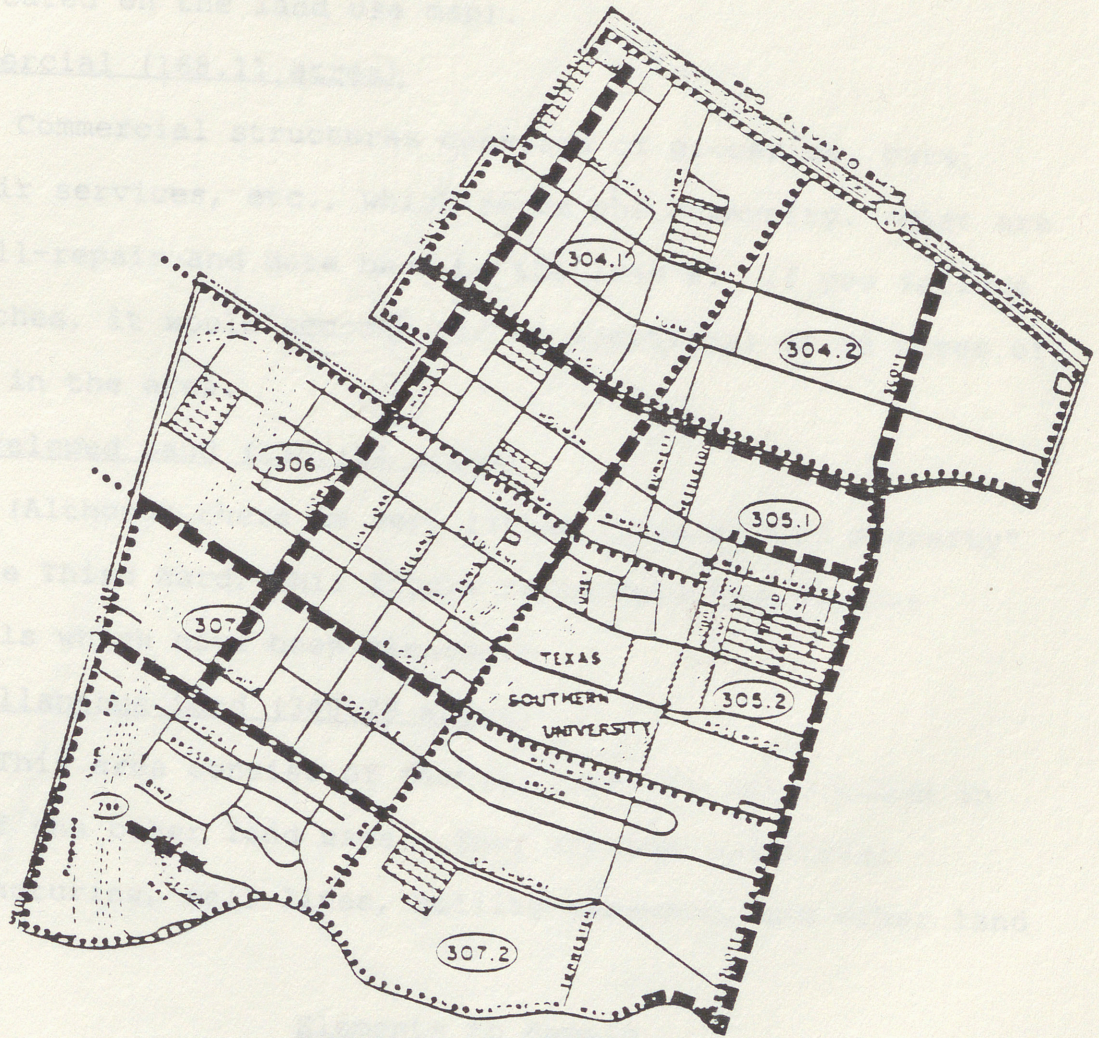
RESIDENTIAL



COMMERCIAL

THIRD WARD STUDY AREA

EXISTING LAND-USE



COMMERCIAL

Owner occupied land accounts for 225.42 acres, approximately twenty-four percent (24%) of the residential property (These were taken from the 1985 City of Houston Planning and Development Department Fact Sheet and are indicated on the land use map).

Commercial (168.11 acres)

Commercial structures consists of groceries, bars, repair services, etc., which serve the community. Most are in ill-repair and date back to the 1940's. If you include churches, it would account for an additional 48.38 acres of land in the area.

Undeveloped Land (136./24 acres)

(Although there is very little "undeveloped property" in the Third Ward, this figure represents the various parcels which have been cleared.)

Miscellaneous Land (348.29 acres)

This area consist of factors that are not include in any of the other land uses. They include industrial manufacturing, rail lines, utility easement, and other land uses.

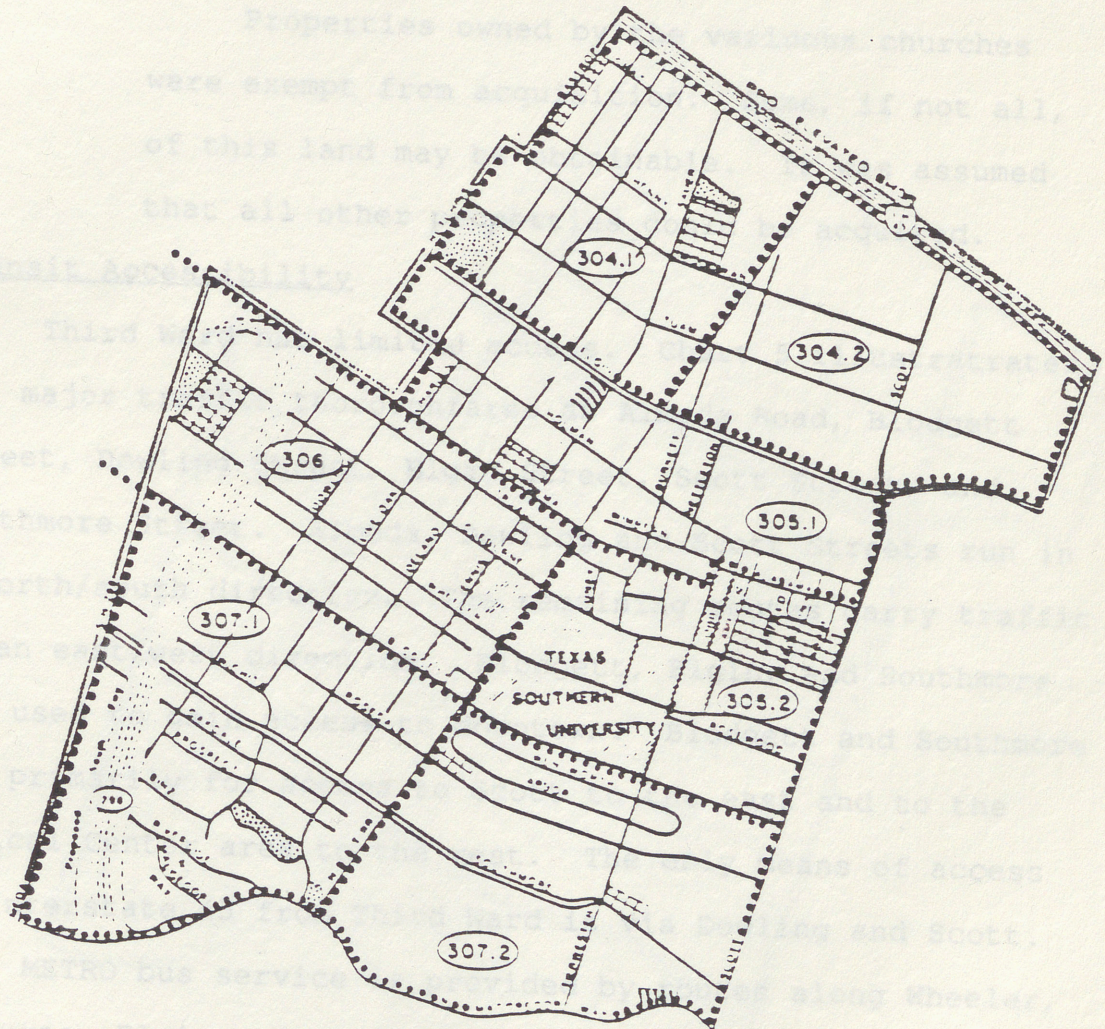
Elements to Remain

After reviewing the existing land uses, there were several sections which were thought to be unobtainable and would remain in the area. These include the following:

Various hospitals, schools, fire stations, and other public service facilities.

THIRD WARD STUDY AREA

ELEMENTS WHICH WILL REMAIN



HOSPITALS



SCHOOLS



PUBLIC FACILITIES



Park spaces such as Bennett Park, Emancipation Park, Moses Leroy Park, Peggy Park, and Riverside Park. These parcels of land have been dedicated for specific uses by the city.

Properties owned by the various churches were exempt from acquisition. Some, if not all, of this land may be obtainable. It was assumed that all other properties could be acquired.

Transit Accessibility

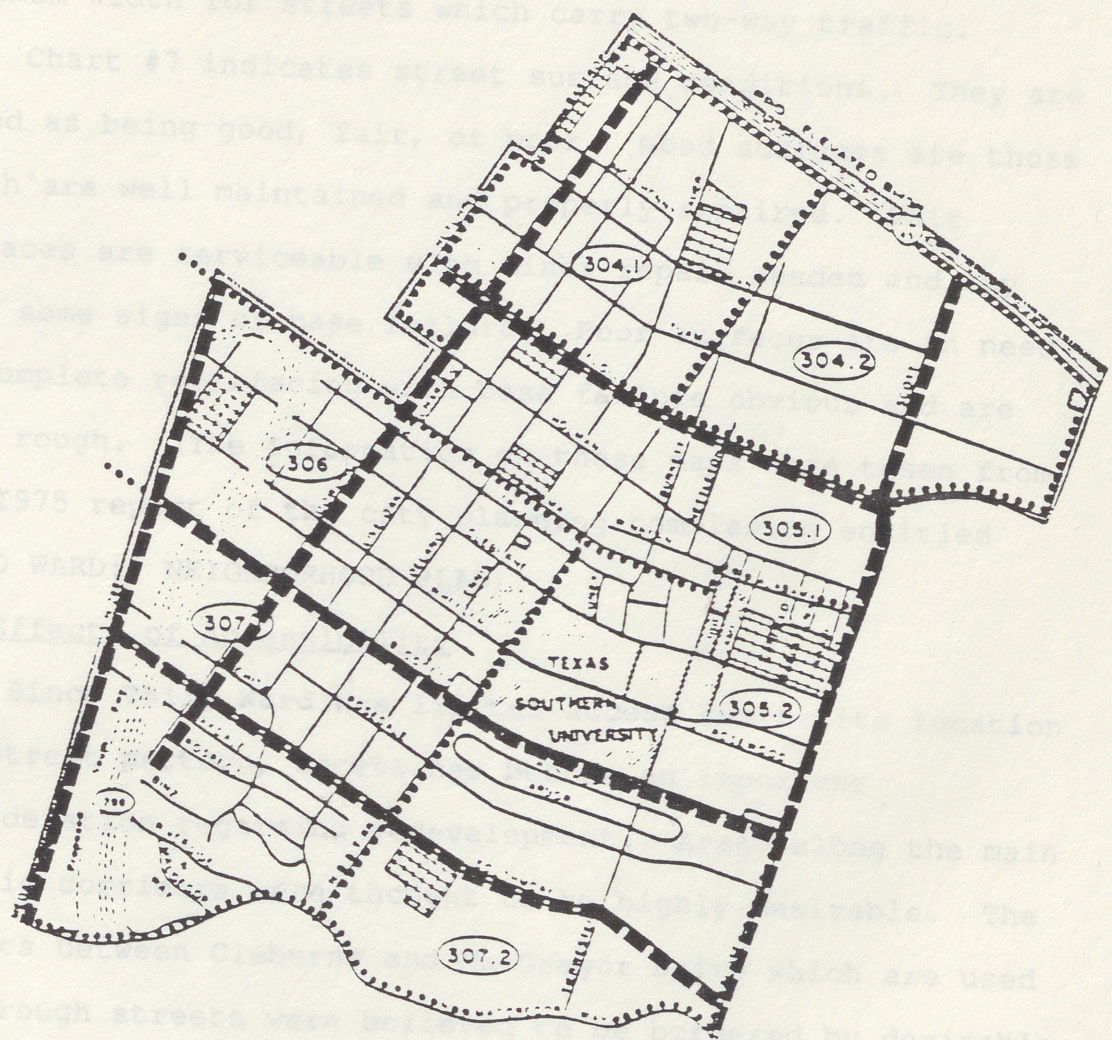
Third Ward has limited access. Chart 5 illustrates the major traffic thoroughfares as Alameda Road, Blodgett Street, Dowling Street, Elgin Street, Scott Street, and Southmore Street. Alameda, Dowling and Scott Streets run in a north/south direction. The remaining routes carry traffic in an east/west direction. Blodgett, Elgin, and Southmore are used to gain access to downtown. Blodgett and Southmore are primarily for access to Scott to the east and to the Medical Center area to the west. The only means of access to Interstate 45 from Third Ward is via Dowling and Scott.

METRO bus service is provided by routes along Wheeler, Cleburne, Elgin and Blodgett in both east/west directions and in the north/south direction Ennis and Tierwester. There are some other major bus routes within the general area from the east on Calhoun and Martin Luther King.⁷

A large number of streets in the Third Ward are narrow and in poor repair. Since there is little off-the-street

CHART 5
THIRD WARD STUDY AREA

ACCESS



ACCESS - - - - -

27

parking and few sidewalks, streets must serve threefold use as parking lot, pedestrian way, as well as carrying automotive traffic. Streets which are less than 28 feet wide are indicated in Chart #6. This is considered to be a minimum width for streets which carry two-way traffic.

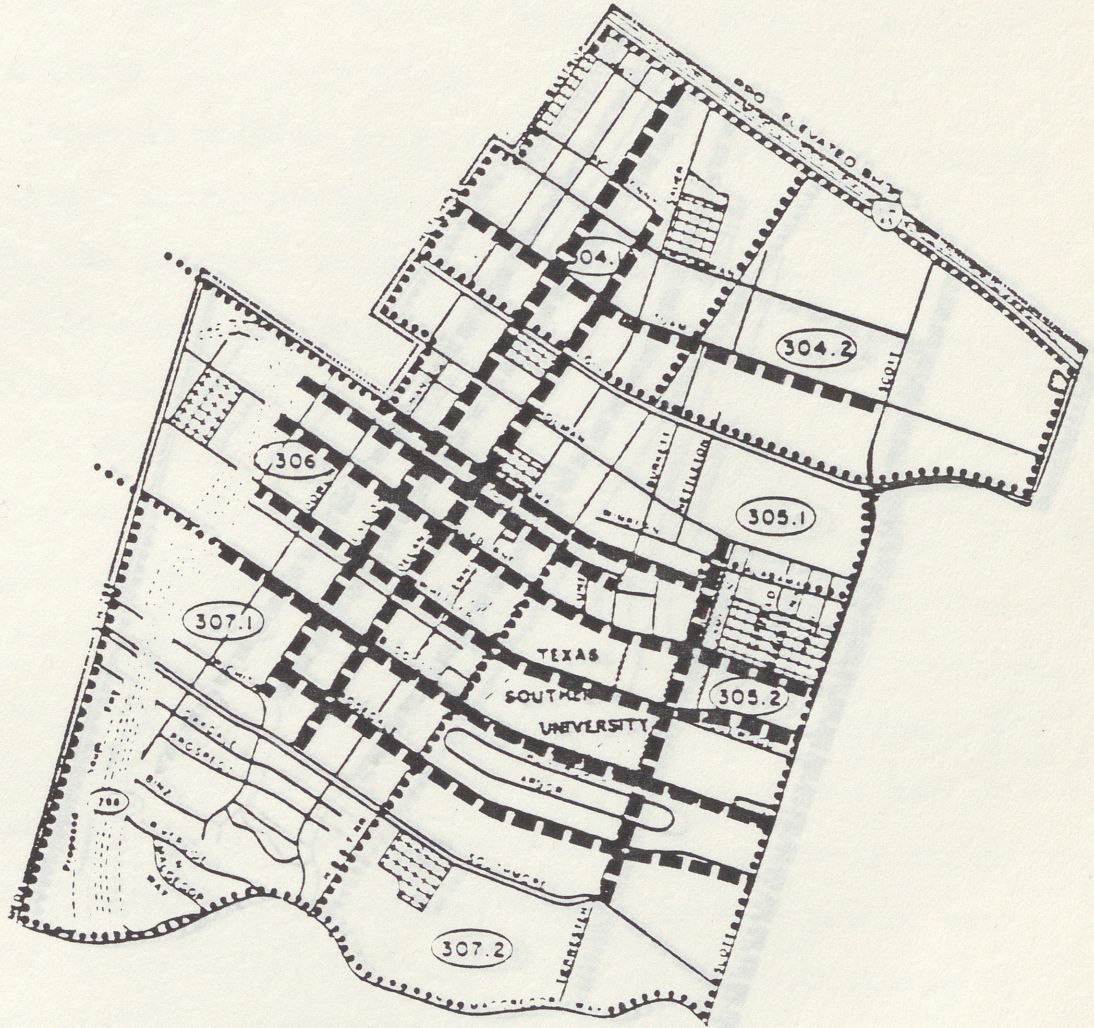
Chart #7 indicates street surface conditions. They are rated as being good, fair, or poor. Good surfaces are those which are well maintained and properly repaired. Fair surfaces are serviceable with minor repair needed and may show some signs of base failure. Poor surfaces are in need of complete resurfacing with base failure obvious and are very rough. (The information on these maps were taken from the 1975 report of the city planning commission entitled THIRD WARD: NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN).

The Effects of Accessibility

Since Third Ward has limited access due to its location and street pattern, access has become an important consideration regarding redevelopment. Areas along the main traffic corridors were thought to be highly desirable. The streets between Cleburne and MacGregor Drive which are used as through streets were believed to be bordered by desirable property, and the interior blocks were considered to be least desirable (based on access).

Property along MacGregor Drive was taken to be the most desirable because it is highly visible and easily accessible. The other sections which were considered to be

THIRD WARD STUDY AREA



STREETS LESS THAN

STREET SURFACE CONDITION

28 FEET WIDE

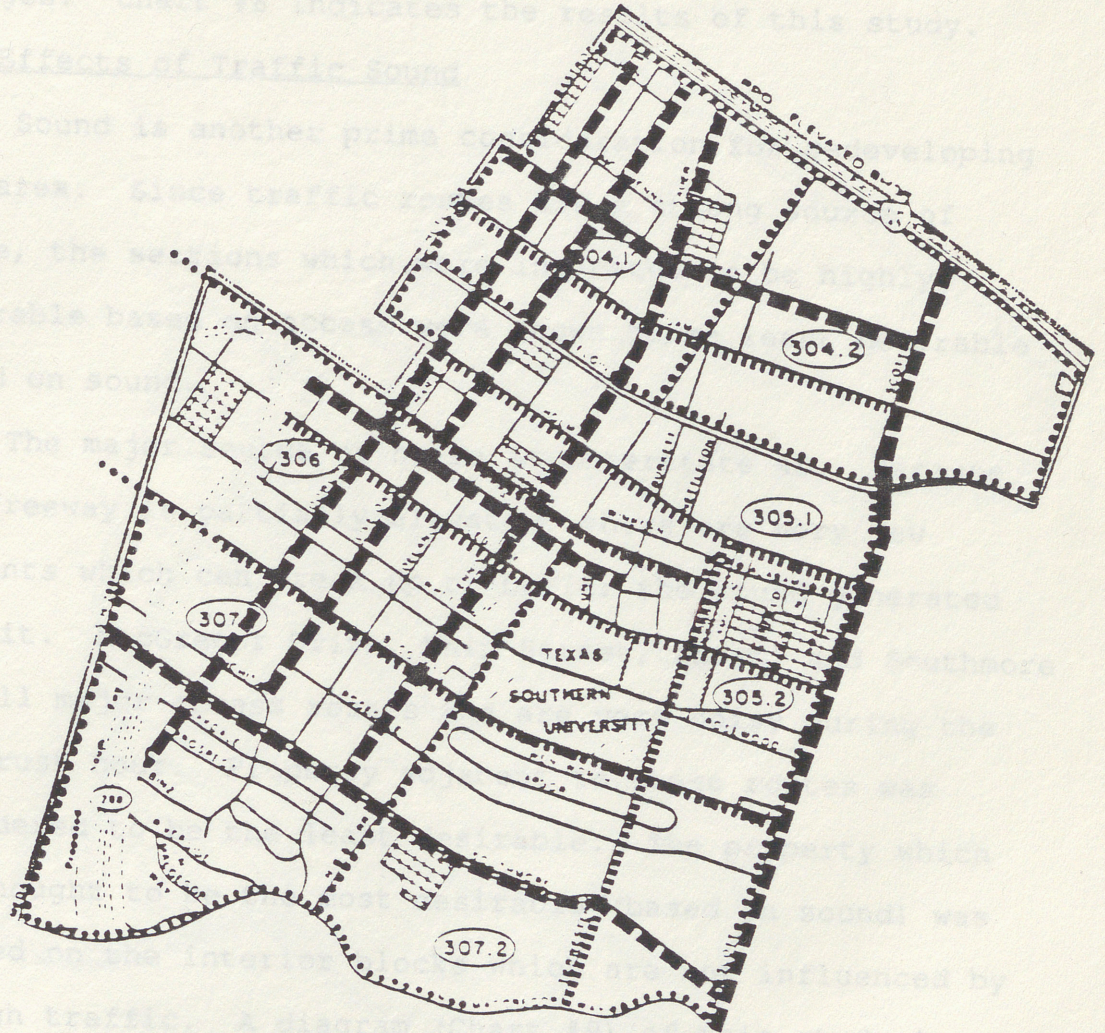


GOOD

FAIR

POOR

THIRD WARD STUDY AREA



STREET SURFACE CONDITION

- Good —
- Fair - - -
- Poor

very desirable are along Scott, Southmore, Main, and Interstate 45.

The least desirable property was located in the Northeast region of the area where the street pattern changes. Chart #8 indicates the results of this study.

The Effects of Traffic Sound

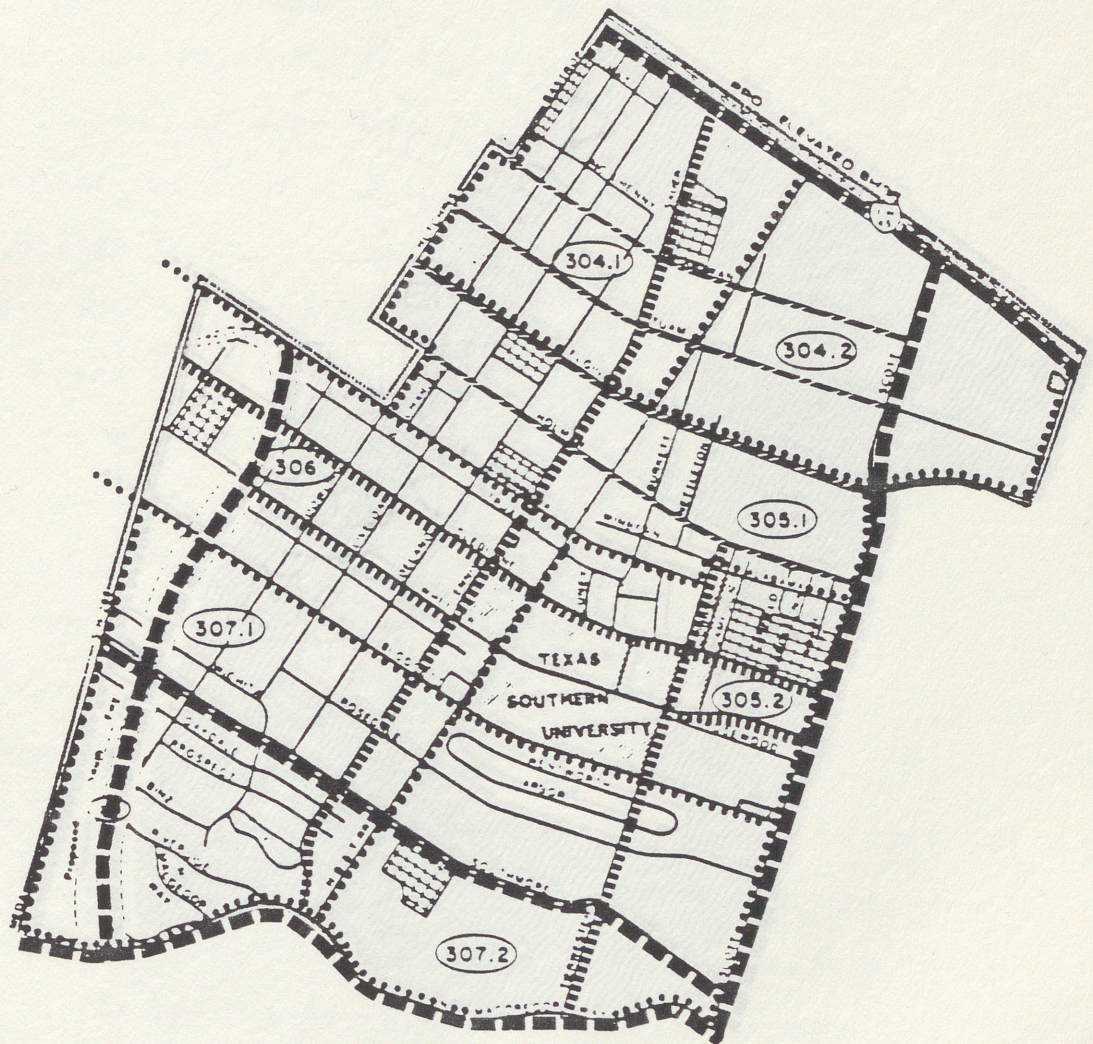
Sound is another prime consideration for redeveloping the area. Since traffic routes are a strong source of noise, the sections which were indicated to be highly desirable based on access were shown to be least desirable based on sound.

The major source of noise is Interstate 45. Because the freeway is partially elevated, there are very few elements which can break up or buffer the sound generated from it. MacGregor Drive, Main Street, Scott, and Southmore are all major access routes and are very noisy during the peak rush hour. Property adjacent to these routes was considered to be the least desirable. The property which was thought to be the most desirable (based on sound) was located on the interior blocks which are not influenced by through traffic. A diagram (Chart #9) of this study is shown on the following page.

Desirable Areas

In each of the two previous studies, a common ground was indicated as being desirable. By overlaying the two diagrams and evaluating the nature of residential and

THIRD WARD STUDY AREA



DESIRABLE AREAS
BASED ON ACCESS

MOST DESIRABLE



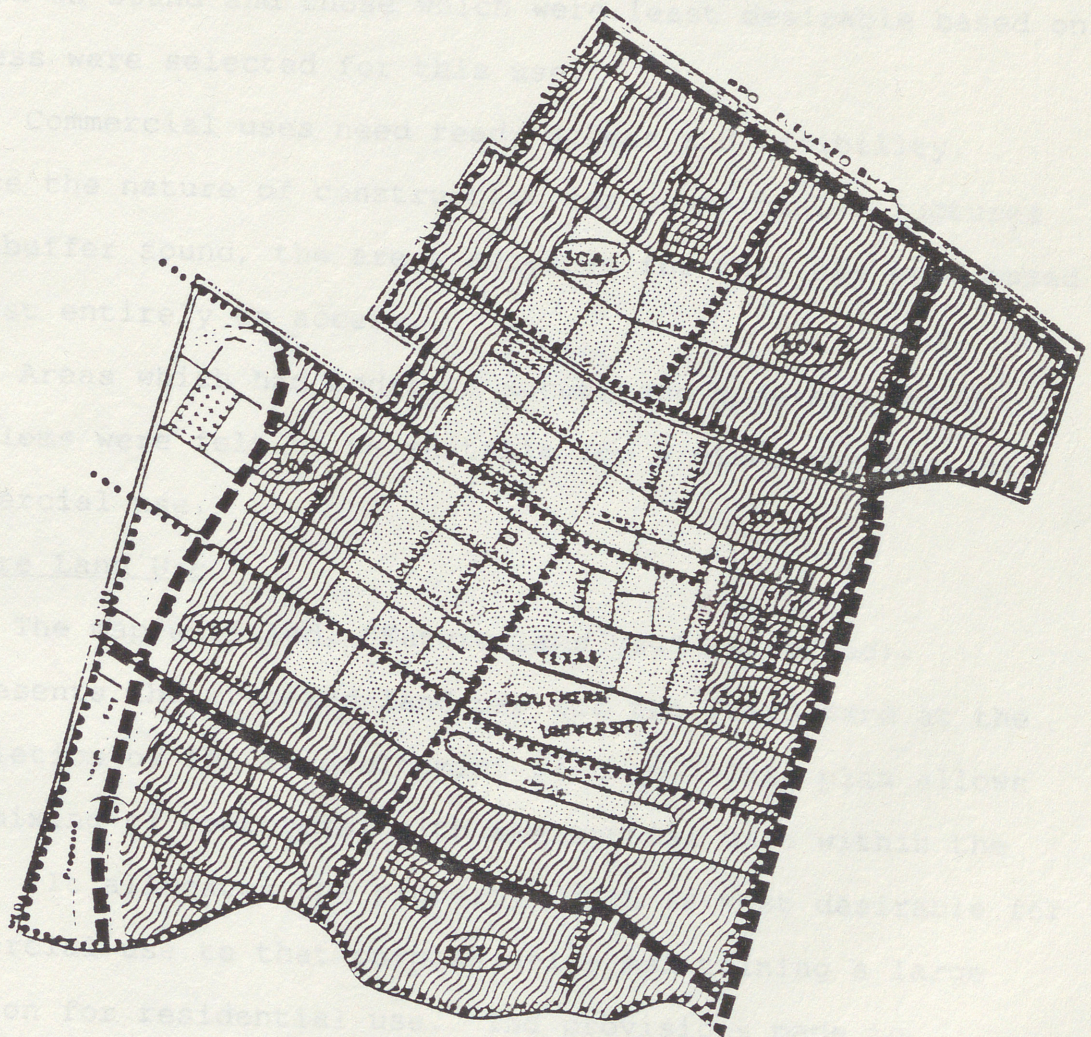
DESIRABLE



LEAST DESIRABLE



THIRD WARD STUDY AREA



DESIRABLE AREAS
BASED ON SOUND

MOST DESIRABLE

DESIRABLE

LEAST DESIRABLE



commercial structures, the prime areas for each function was selected.

Since residential use indicated a quiet, private area, those sections which were considered to be most desirable based on sound and those which were least desirable based on access were selected for this use.

Commercial uses need ready access and visibility. Since the nature of construction for commercial structures can buffer sound, the areas selected for this use were based almost entirely on access.

Areas which had moderate access and moderate sound problems were felt to be suitable for a mixed residential/commercial use.

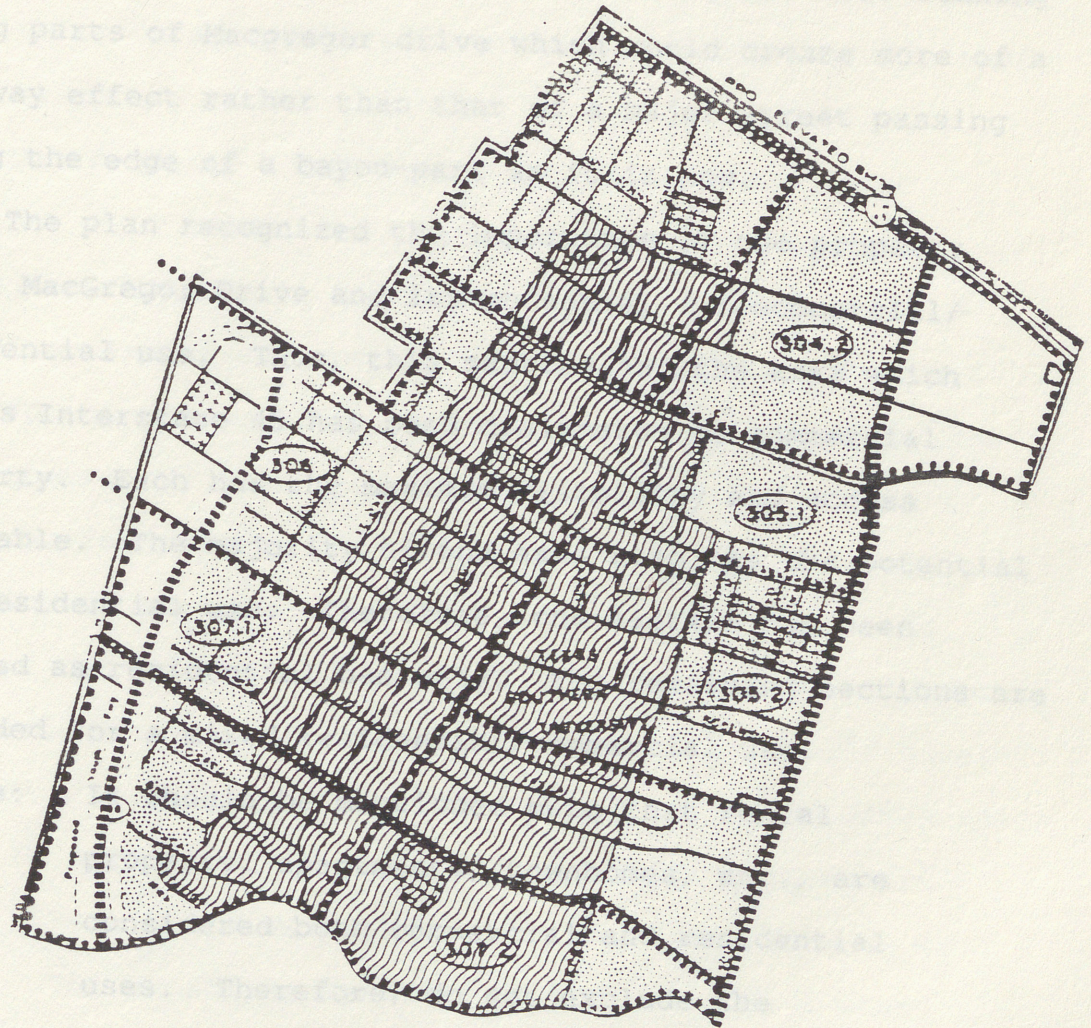
Future Land Use

The map entitled, "Future Land Use" (attached), represents the proposed land use for the Third Ward at the completion of the redevelopment program. This plan allows the mixing of commercial with residential uses within the area. It allocates the property which is most desirable for commercial use to that purpose while maintaining a large portion for residential use. The provisions made to increase the open space and expand existing public facilities can provide the necessary services for the area to become an established, quality neighborhood. Because it is located adjacent to the Central Business District, it

THIRD WARD STUDY AREA

The plan provides greater mobility within and through the area by creating new through streets while maintaining the existing street pattern. There is a main road running along parts of Macgregor Drive which is a primary artery of a parkway effect rather than a main thoroughfare passing along the edge of a bay.

The plan recognizes the existing residential character along Macgregor Drive and the need for a residential frontage. The plan also recognizes the need for a residential frontage along the edge of a bay. The plan also recognizes the need for a residential frontage along the edge of a bay.



PRIME AREAS FOR COMM./RES. USE

BASED ON SOUND/ACCESS

Commercial (dotted pattern)

Residential (wavy line pattern)

Mixed (cross-hatch pattern)

would be an attractive place to live for the people who work downtown.

The plan provides greater mobility within, and through the area by creating new through streets while maintaining the existing street pattern. There is a green belt running along parts of Macgregor drive which would create more of a parkway effect rather than that of a major street passing along the edge of a bayou-park as it is now.

The plan recognized the importance of the property along MacGregor Drive and its potential for commercial/residential use. Thus, this section and the area which fronts Interstate 45 has been designated as commercial property. Each has the maximum visibility and access available. The majority of the area also has the potential for residential use. Therefore, one section has been planned as residential use only. The remaining sections are intended for a mixed residential/commercial use.

Note: It should be mentioned here that rental property, apartments, townhomes, etc., are considered both commercial and residential uses. Therefore, do not exclude the possibility of highrise multifamily living units taking place.)

The section in the west has been designated for the expansion of the hospital. There is a park to add open space and to separate the hospital from the commercial

36

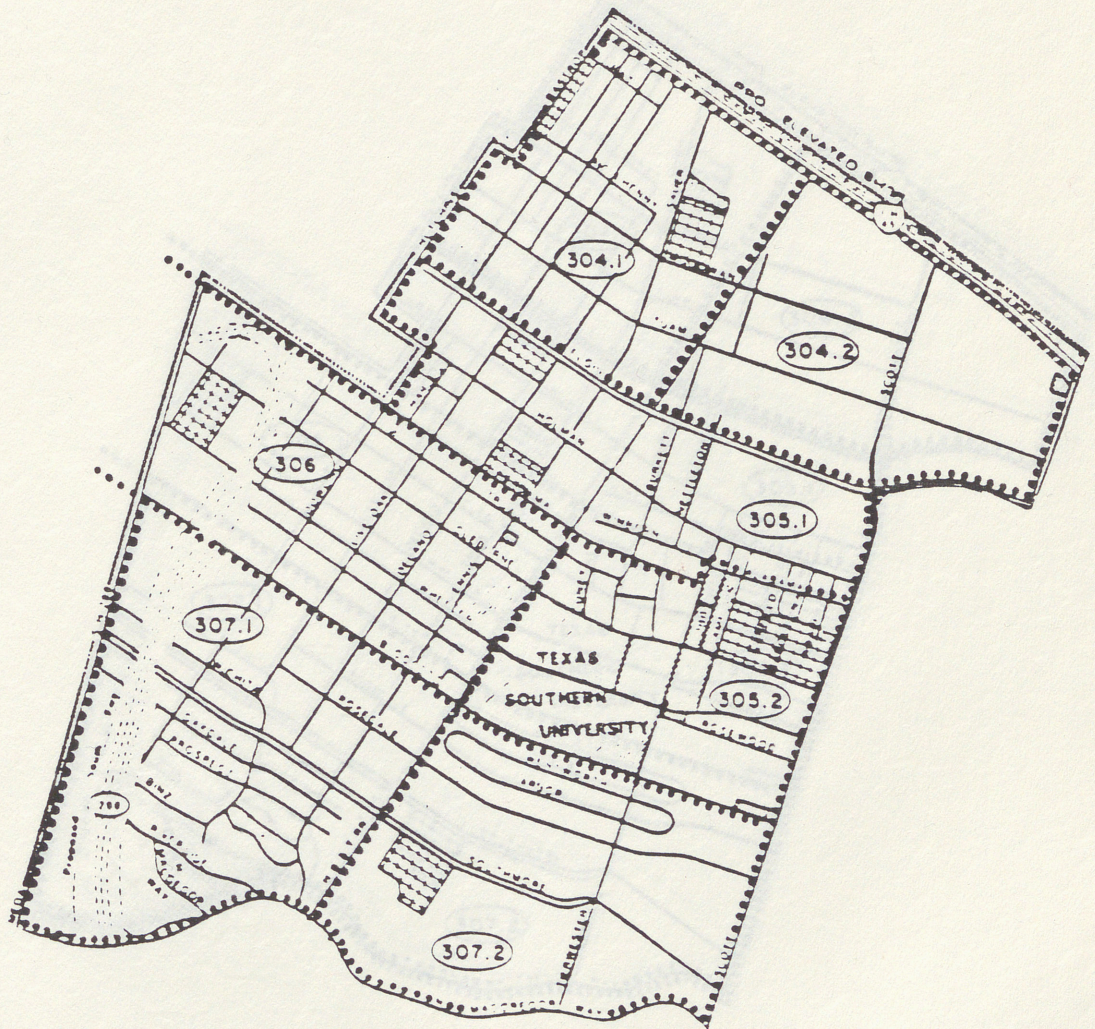
activities proposed along Alameda Road. At present, the area around Texas Southern University is very confining due to Wheeler being so narrow at the Tierwester intersection. A green space has been provided between Wheeler and Rosewood at the Tierwester intersection which would greatly improve visibility to motorists and reduce the confining effect of this space.

The property along Scott, from Interstate 45 to McGowen, is intended for commercial use and the remaining area (from McGowen to MacGregor Drive) is designated as mixed commercial/residential use. This gives commercial development the opportunity to locate on Scott, which has good access and exposure, while allowing it to act as a sound buffer for the residential area to the south.

The interior blocks, from Elgin to MacGregor, are planned for residential use. This is to be primarily owner occupied property. Units would have at least 1,250 square feet of living space, parking for two cars, and green space equal to approximately fifty percent (50%) of the living area. There would be a minimum of 15 units built on each block. The remaining property will be used as a mixed commercial/residential area. This is to maintain a commercial border which also serves as a sound buffer for the residential areas.

THIRD WARD STUDY AREA

FUTURE LAND-USE



OPEN SPACE

PUBLIC

WIDENED STREETS

RESIDENTIAL

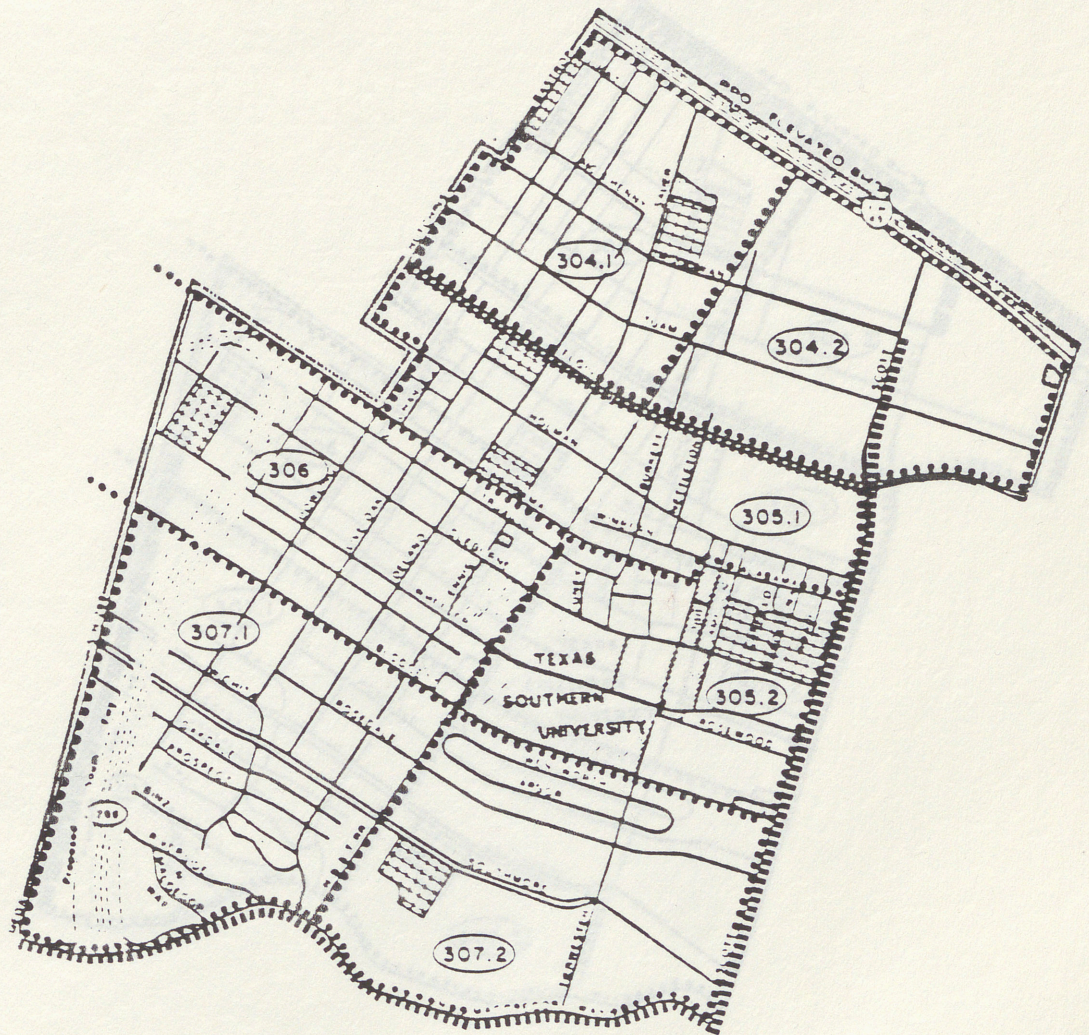
MIXED COMM./RES.

COMMERCIAL

CHURCHES

CHART 12
THIRD WARD STUDY AREA
FUTURE LAND-USE

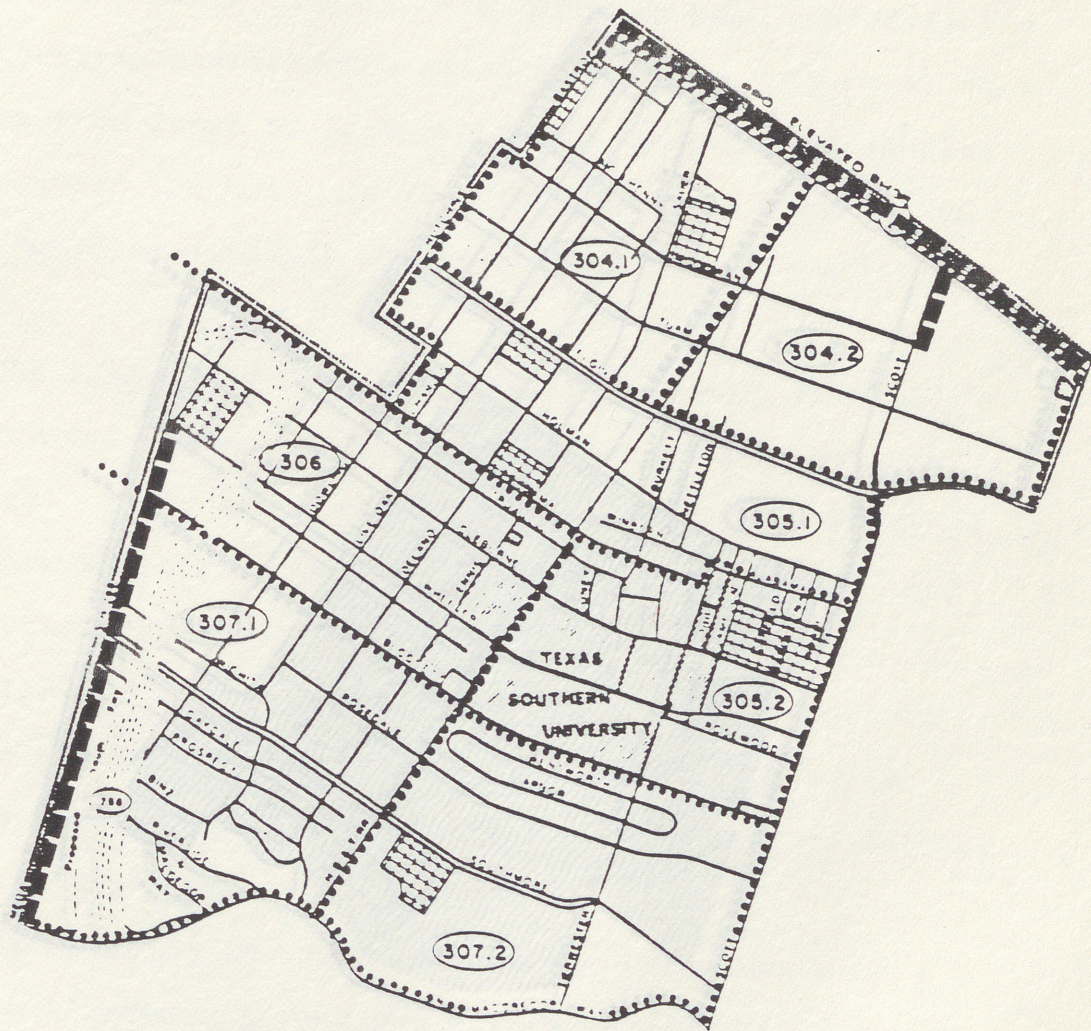
38



MIXED COMM./RES.

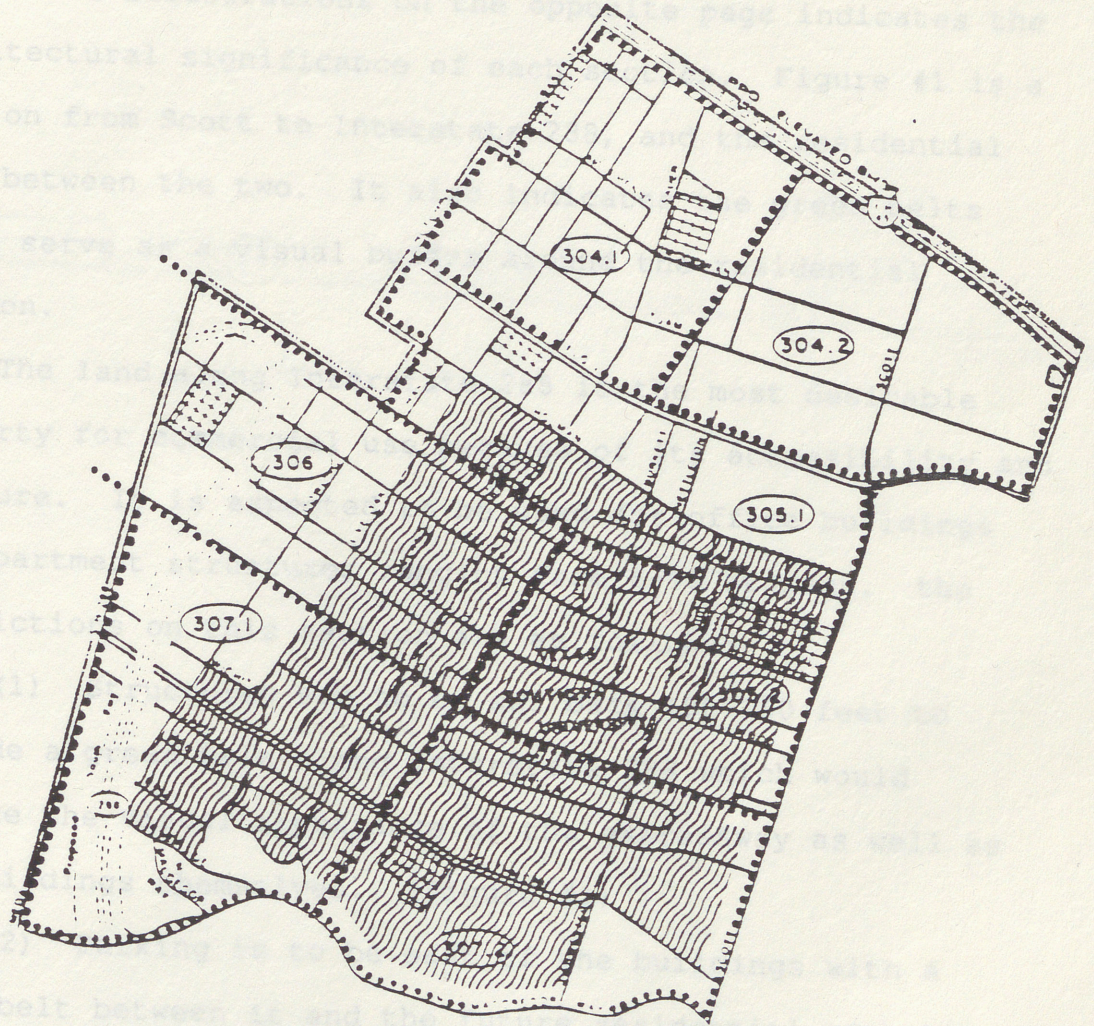
CHART 13
THIRD WARD STUDY AREA
FUTURE LAND-USE

39



COMMERCIAL

CHART 14
THIRD WARD STUDY AREA
FUTURE LAND-USE



RESIDENTIAL



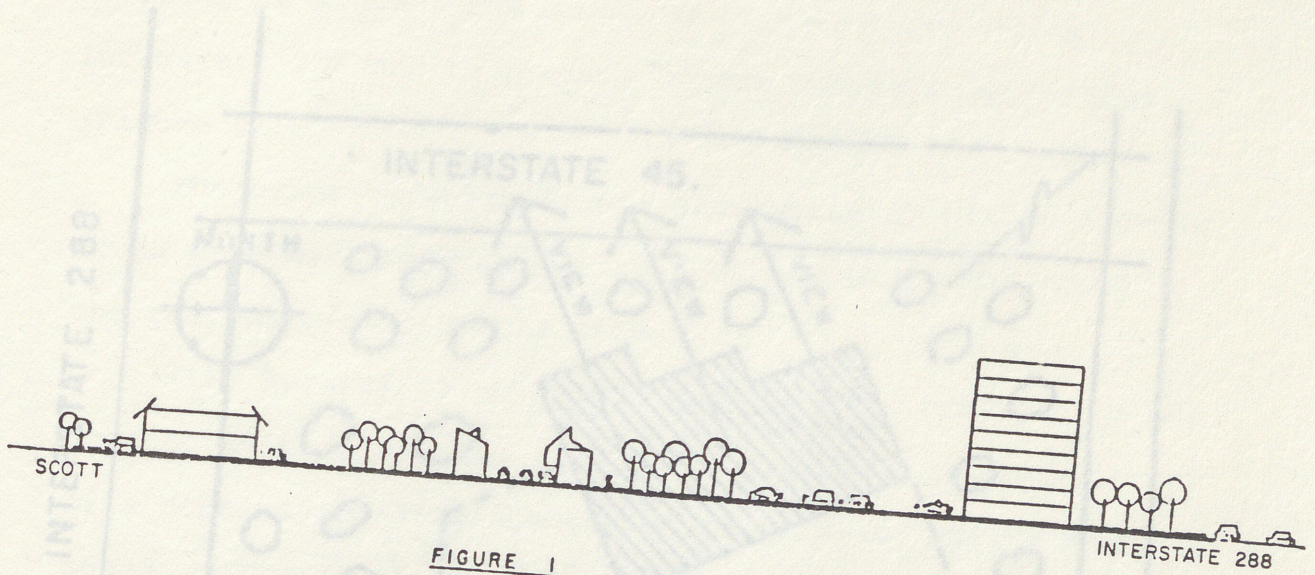
The problems and advantages of each section within the project area relating to its future use, suggests the need for restrictions to achieve the desired character of the area. The illustrations on the opposite page indicates the architectural significance of each section. Figure #1 is a section from Scott to Interstate 288, and the residential area between the two. It also indicates the green belts which serve as a visual buffer around the residential section.

The land along Interstate 288 is the most desirable property for commercial use because of its accessibility and exposure. It is expected to be used for office buildings and apartment structures ranging from 6-10 stories. the restrictions on this section are as follows:

(1) Structures are to be set back 100-150 feet to provide a green belt along Interstate 288 which would enhance the visual appearance of the expressway as well as the buildings themselves. (Figure #1)

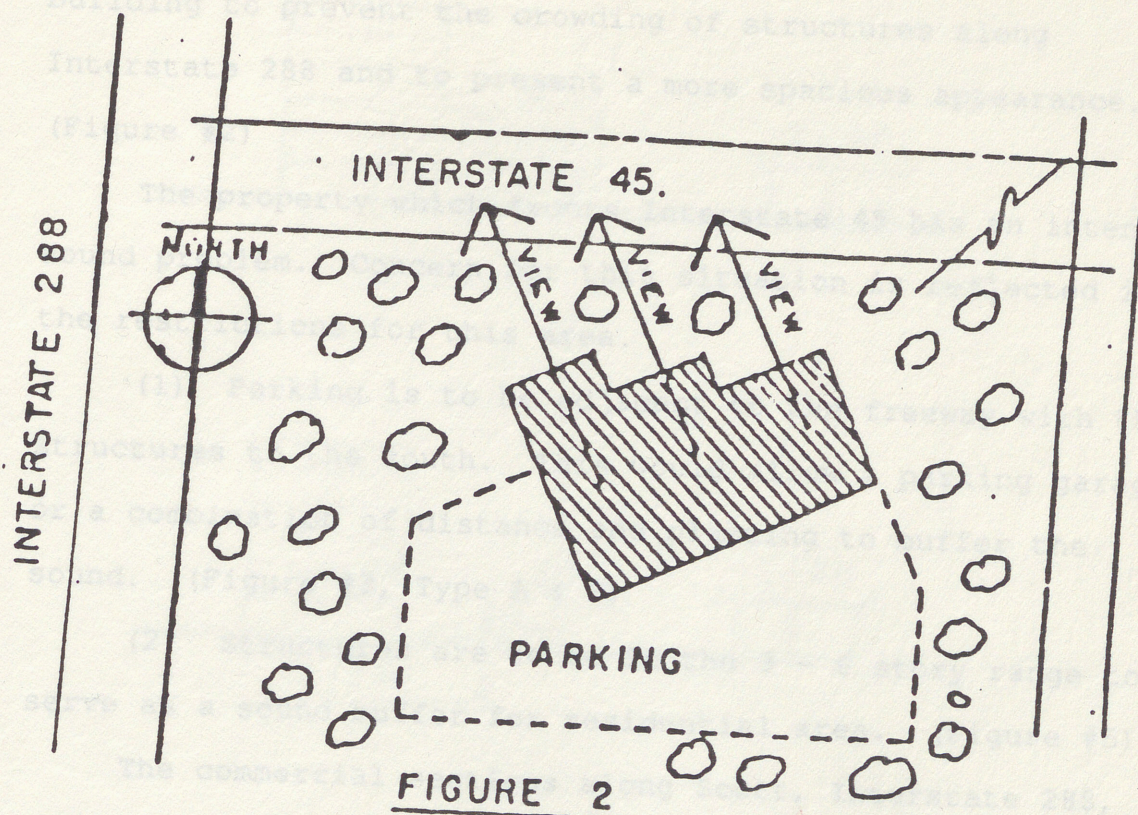
(2) Parking is to be east of the buildings with a green belt between it and the future residential area to provide separation and definition for each use. (Figure #1 and #2)

(3) Structures are to be oriented to the Northwest to take advantage of the view of downtown and to maximize visibility of each facility. (Figure #2)



Architectural Significance for Scott to Interstate
In the Third Ward
Houston, Texas 1986

Redevelopment Policies in Construction
in the Third Ward
Houston, Texas 1986



Redevelopment Policies on Construction

In the Third Ward
Houston, Texas 1986

(3) Parking entrances and exits are to be oriented toward major street.

All residential sites, (owner occupied and rental property) shall have adequate off-the-street parking and open space equal to fifty percent (50%) of the total living area. Figure 16 indicates the minimum special requirements for owner occupied sites.

(4) A green belt is to be provided between each building to prevent the crowding of structures along Interstate 288 and to present a more spacious appearance. (Figure #2)

The property which fronts Interstate 45 has an intense sound problem. Concern for this situation is reflected in the restrictions for this area.

(1) Parking is to be adjacent to the freeway with the structures to the south. This would allow a parking garage or a combination of distance and planting to buffer the sound. (Figure #3, Type A & B)

(2) Structures are to be in the 3 - 6 story range to serve as a sound buffer for residential area. (Figure #5)

The commercial sections along Scott, Interstate 288, and Elgin, which are adjacent to residential sections, would meet the following restrictions:

(1) Height is to be as illustrated in Figure #4.

(2) Adequate off-the-street parking is to be provided for each facility.

(3) Parking entrances and exits are to be oriented toward major street.

All residential sites, (owner occupied and rental property) shall have adequate off-the-street parking and open space equal to fifty percent (50%) of the total living area. Figure #6 indicates the minimum spacial requirements for owner occupied sites.

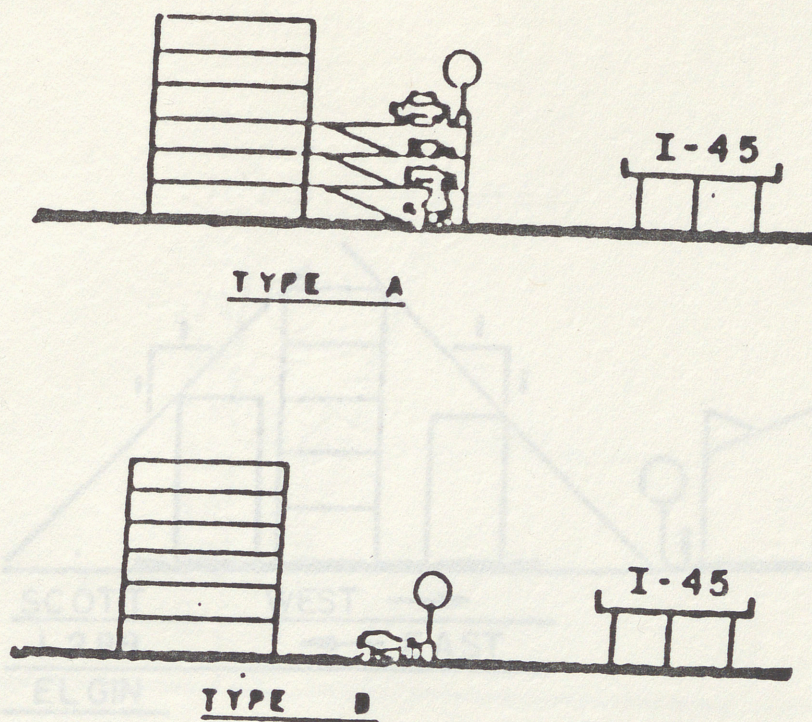


FIGURE 3

Freeway Sound Buffer

In the Third Ward
Houston, Texas 1986

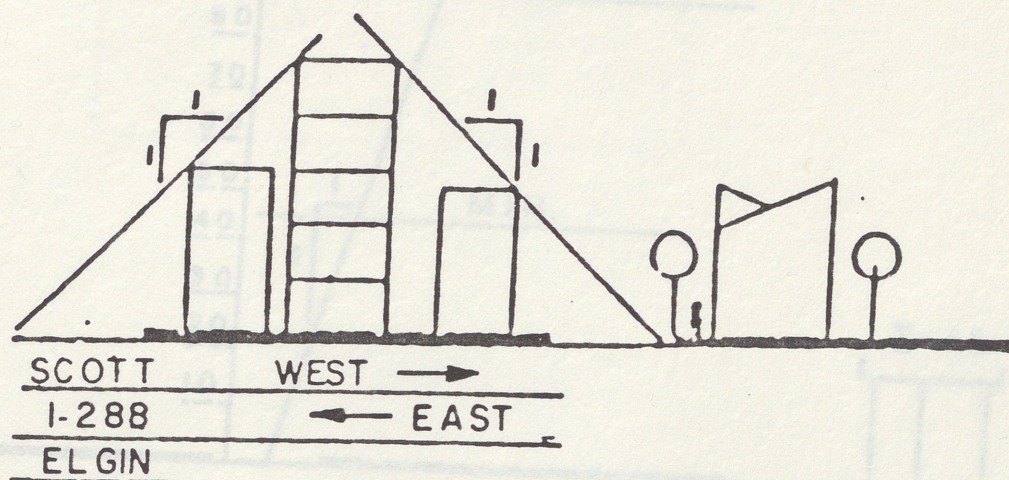


FIGURE 4

Height Restrictions

In The Third Ward
Houston, Texas 1986

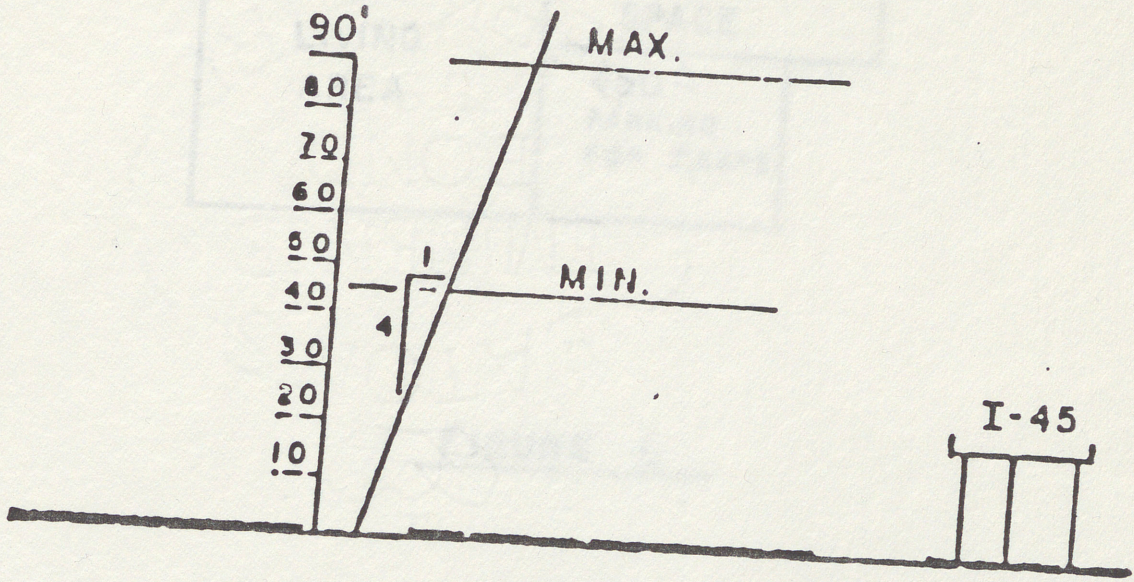


FIGURE 5

Residential Sound Buffer

In the Third Ward
Houston, Texas 1986

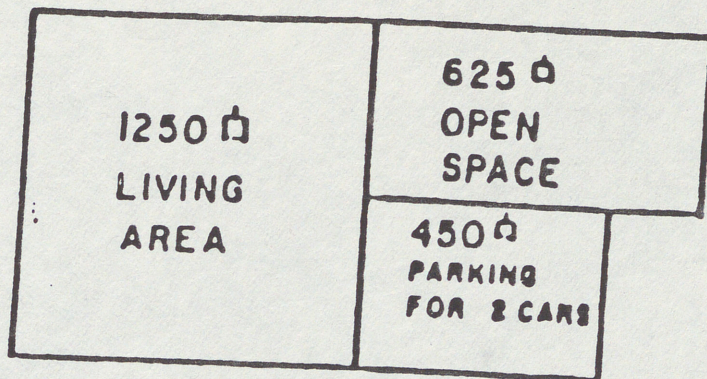


FIGURE 6

Minimum Spacial Requirements for Owner Occupied Sites

In the Third Ward
Houston, Texas 1986

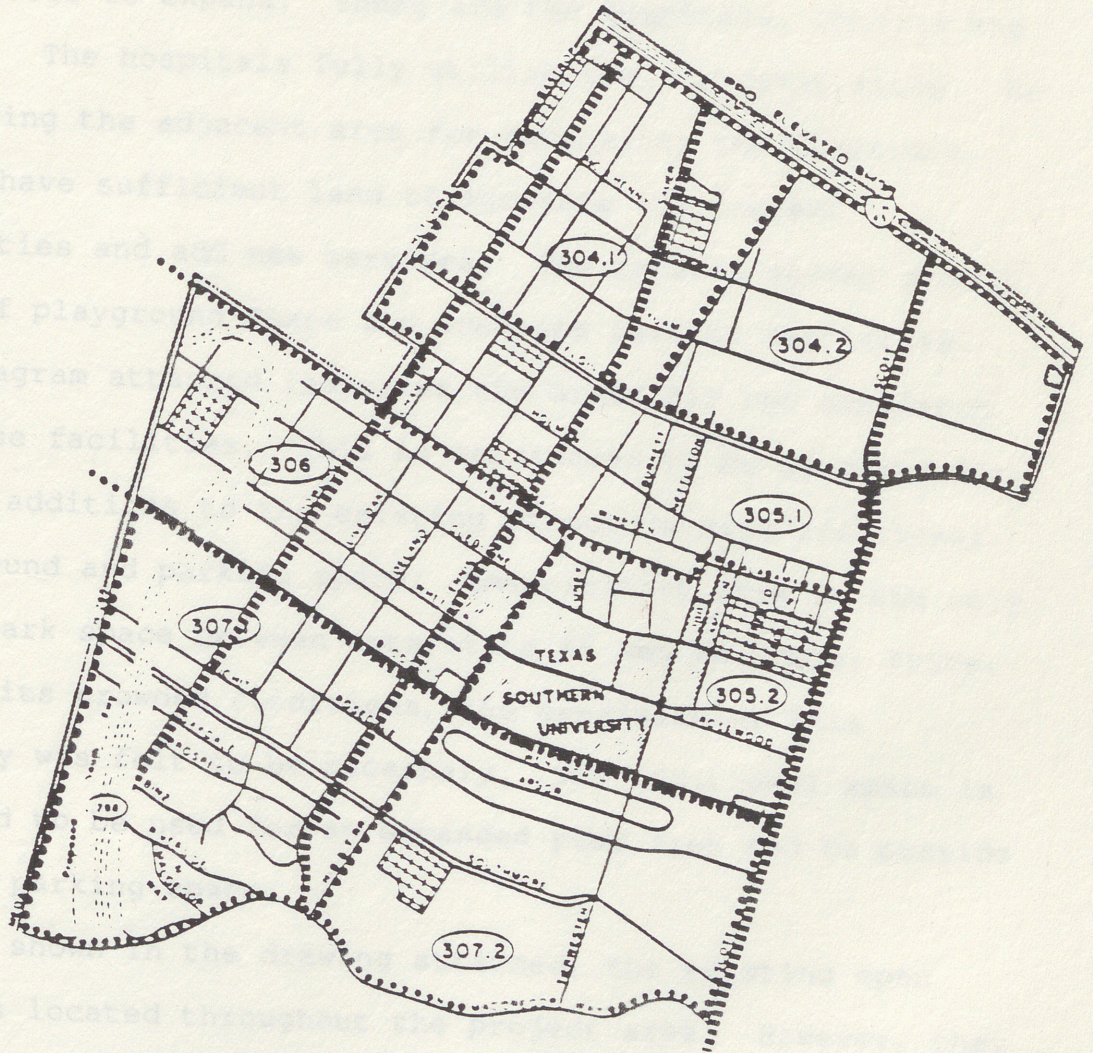
As illustrated earlier, Third Ward's access is oriented in an East and West direction. The lack of North and South through streets causes the existing access routes to be congested and severely restricts mobility within the area. The creation of through routes from Interstate 45 to MacGregor Drive would remove a substantial portion of the traffic load presently imposed on Scott. These routes would also remove the congested condition between Elgin and MacGregor Drive.

The streets to be used as through streets are: Dowling from Interstate 45 to Interstate 288 Ennis/Sauer from Interstate 45 to MacGregor Scott from Interstate 45 to MacGregor, and Blodgett from Interstate 288 to Scott. These streets would be widened to a minimum of 28 feet and resurfaced. The remaining streets are to be repaired and completely resurfaced. They will not be widened except in a few sections (such as the west part of Southmore), where it is needed to provide a consistent street width.

Note: Southmore is approximately twenty-five (25) feet wide at Scott and tapers to about ten (10) feet at Tierwester. Then appears an esplanade, which widens to about nineteen (19) feet and is consistent at this width to Interstate 288 (widening of secondary streets

THIRD WARD STUDY AREA

FUTURE LAND-USE



WIDENED STREETS

would be limited to the removal of areas such as the ten (10) feet section of Southmore).

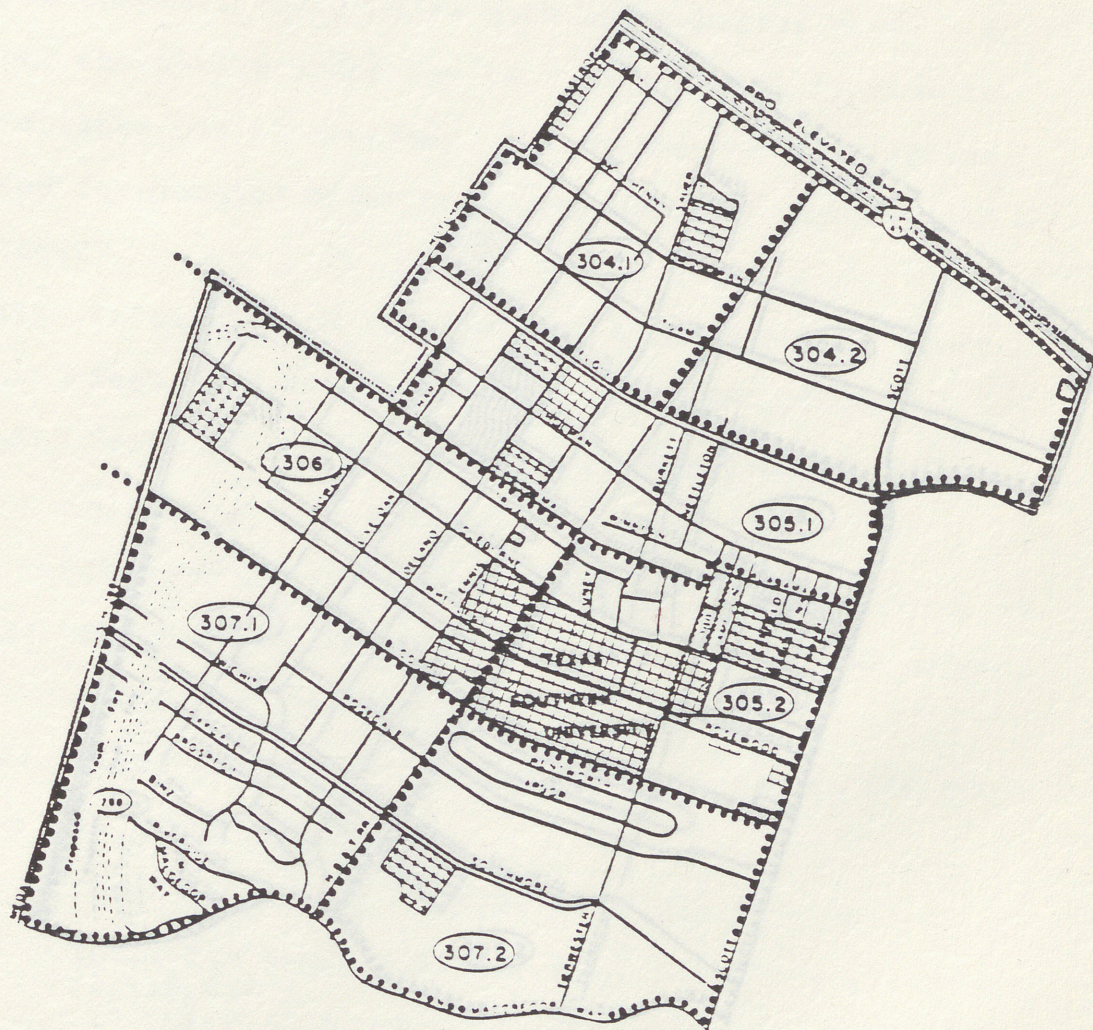
Areas for Expansion

Several of the existing facilities which will remain need areas to expand. These are the hospitals, schools and parks. The hospitals fully utilize their present sites. By providing the adjacent area for expansion, the hospitals would have sufficient land to increase its present facilities and add new services. The schools suffer from a lack of playground space and adequate parking facilities. The diagram attached indicates the areas for the expansion of these facilities. This is considered to be adequate for future additions to the existing structure with additional playground and parking space. Emancipation Park is the only major park space between Interstate 45 and MacGregor Drive. Due to its crowded conditions, the expansion of this facility was felt to be necessary. The additional space is intended to be used for an expanded play area and to provide a small parking space.

As shown in the drawing attached, the existing open space is located throughout the project area. However, they are not large enough to accommodate the population in those areas. Hence, the creation of additional park area is considered necessary.

THIRD WARD STUDY AREA

FUTURE LAND-USE



OPEN SPACE

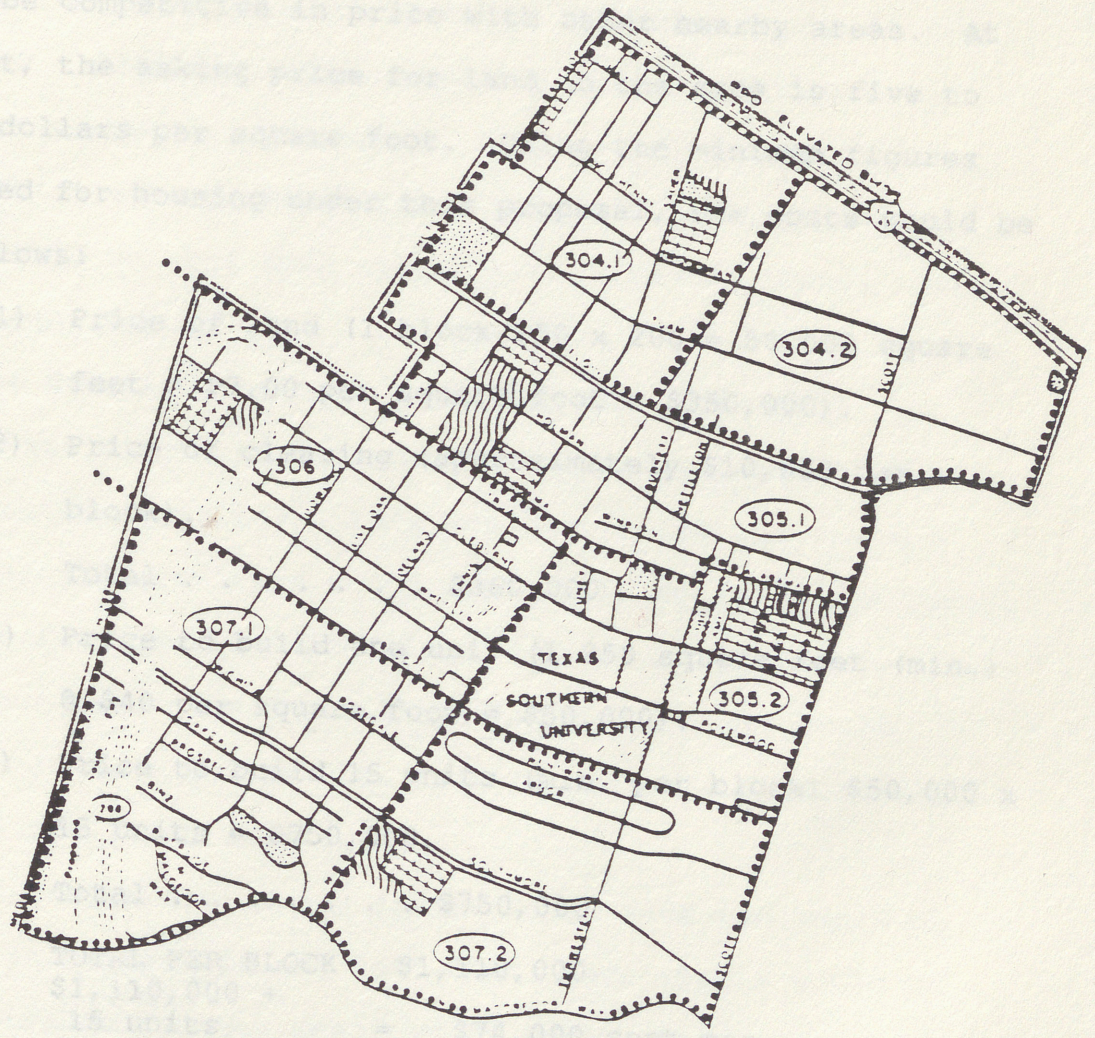
Hospitals

PUBLIC

Schools



CHART 17
THIRD WARD STUDY AREA
FUTURE LAND-USE



OPEN SPACE

New

Existing

were increased to 20 units per block, the price per unit would be \$75,000; for 25 units per block, \$71,000 and so on.

In the area to the southwest, a typical townhome of 1,250 - 1,500 square feet will start at \$70,000. In the area to the west (Medical Center), the price range is from \$100,000 - \$250,000. This does not normally include any exterior property. Therefore, the cost of building residential structures is not prohibitive as the selling price would be very much competitive with the nearby areas.

Development Tracts

The diagram attached, indicates the individual development tracts to be used for the redevelopment program. Due to the grid pattern, this was felt to be the maximum size a single developer could adequately manage. The tracts could be further subdivided into 2-three block tracts: 1-four block tract and 1-two block tract; or 3-two block tracts. It is expected that nothing less than two blocks would be developed as a tract.

The tracts are larger on the North side and could be divided as needed. It was felt that these tracts would be more desirable if they remained as large areas since, after the removal of old dilapidated houses, they would offer the potential of being developed for several functions. This was also intended to provide the future developer with a maximum amount of flexibility. The numbers indicate the sequential order of development. The process should be

gradual, yet continuous. The intended procedure would be as follows:

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Tract #1 is cleared of structures. As construction of facilities in Tract #1 begins, clearing of Tract #2 starts. With the start of construction within Tract #2, clearing begins for Tract #3. This method of clearing and beginning construction of one tract before moving to another would continue throughout the area.

Phasing and Implementation

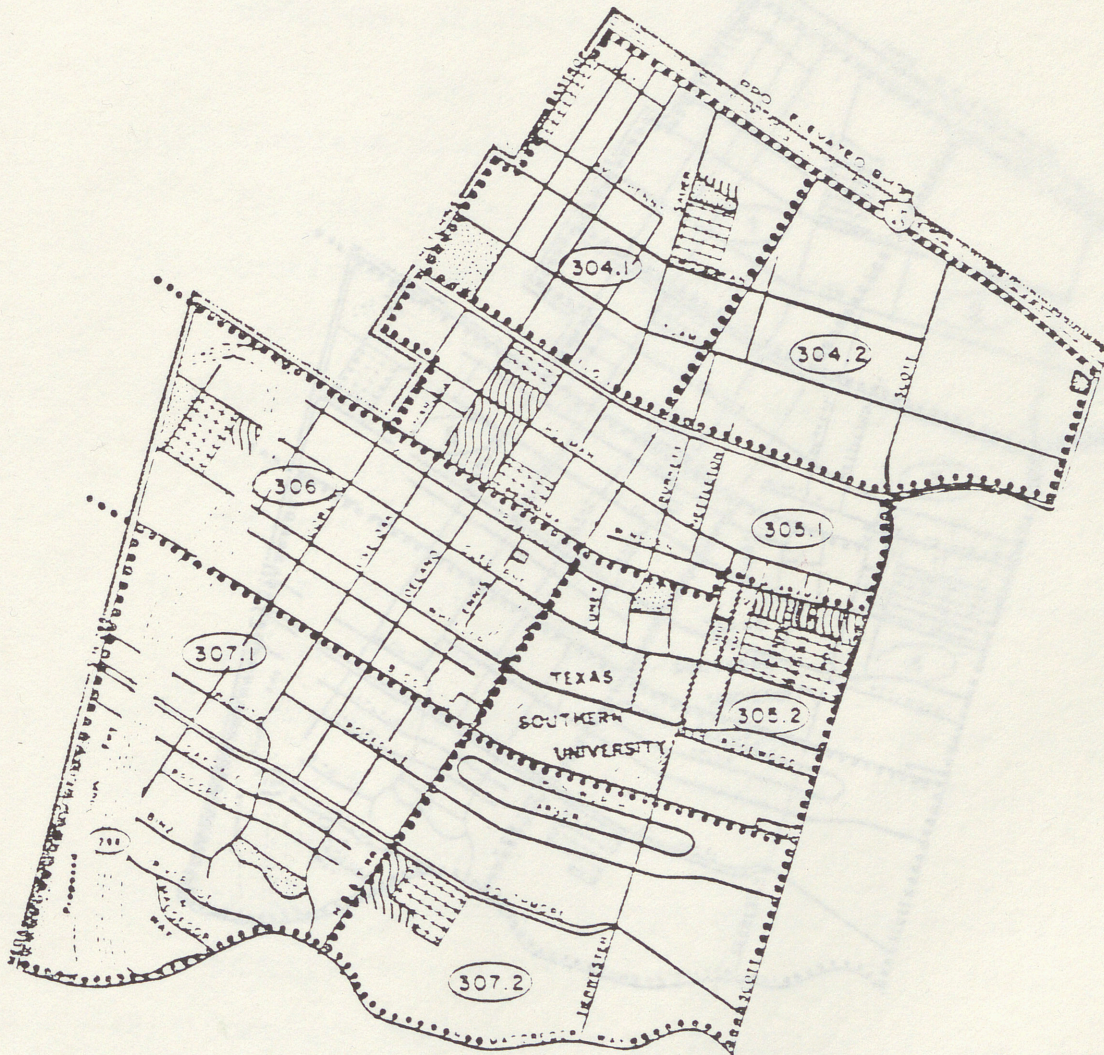
The phasing procedure shown below illustrates the maximum time for redevelopment of Third Ward. The stimulation of new construction and commercial activity is expected to encourage development possibilities and thereby reduce the time required to complete the overall project.

PHASE I (0-5 years)

- (1) Begin acquisition of property for redevelopment.
(Private sector)
- (2) Inspect for and enforce housing code violations.
(City)
- (3) Continued demolition of condemned structures.
(City)
- (4) Begin repairing and resurfacing all streets.
(City)
- (5) Acquire property to expand existing service facilities. (School District, Hospital and City)

Chart 18
THIRD WARD STUDY AREA
FUTURE LAND-USE

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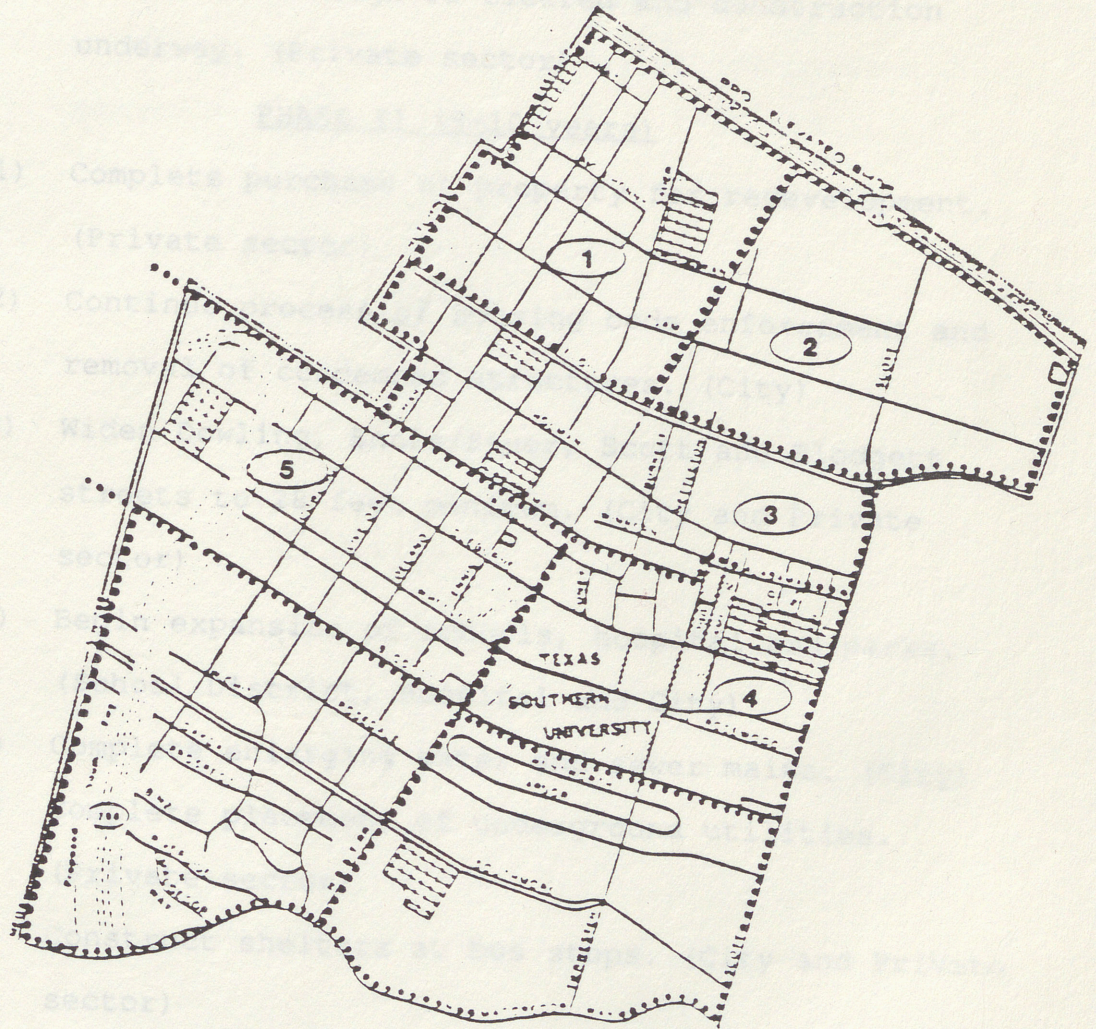
OPEN SPACE

New

Existing



THIRD WARD STUDY AREA



DEVELOPMENT TRACTS

Tract Limits . . .

- (6) Begin placing all overhead utilities underground.

(Private sector)

- (7) Begin enlarging main lines for water and sewers.

(City)

- (8) Tracts #1 through #3 cleared and construction underway. (Private sector)

PHASE II (5-10 years)

- (1) Complete purchase of property for redevelopment.
(Private sector)

- (2) Continue process of housing code enforcement and removal of condemned structures. (City)

- (3) Widen Dowling, Ennis/Sauer, Scott and Blodgett streets to 28 feet minimum. (City and Private sector)

- (4) Begin expansion of schools, hospital and parks.
(School District, Hospital and City)

- (5) Complete enlarging water and sewer mains. (City)

- (6) Complete placement of underground utilities.
(Private sector)

- (7) Construct shelters at bus stops. (City and Private sector)

- (8) Complete construction of Tracts #1 through #3.

- (9) Tracts #4 and #5 cleared and construction underway. (Private sector)

Complete all unfinished construction in Tract #4 and #5. (Private sector)

NOTE: (Street lights and sidewalks are considered to be a part of each tract and will be

provided, as tracts are developed by private monies.) The major "bl" areas, the Third Ward. Even though it is a small area in the City of Houston, it has received much publicity due to its location and high visibility.

The proposed program for redevelopment would completely change the existing nature, character and population. The expansion of service facilities, the creation of through streets, the additional open space, the upgrading of city services and the planned alteration of land use would provide a comprehensive transformation of the area, thereby allowing it to meet the needs of our modern society. The plan would encourage commercial stimulation while providing a cohesive living environment for the future.

The City of Houston would benefit from such a plan by experiencing substantial commercial growth while the people working in the Central Business District would gain a place to live within the proximity of their jobs. Those who live in the area at present could also benefit from the plan by being relocated into more adequate forms of housing. There are too many variables for this proposal (or any other for that matter) to have "all of the answers." It does,

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project has concerned itself with one of Houston's major "blighted" areas, the Third Ward. Even though it is a small area in the City of Houston, it has received much publicity due to its location and high visibility.

The proposed program for redevelopment would completely change the existing nature, character and population. The expansion of service facilities, the creation of through streets, the additional open space, the upgrading of city services and the planned alteration of land use would provide a comprehensive transformation of the area, thereby allowing it to meet the needs of our modern society. The plan would encourage commercial stimulation while providing a cohesive living environment for the future.

The City of Houston would benefit from such a plan by experiencing substantial commercial growth while the people working in the Central Business District would gain a place to live within the proximity of their jobs. Those who live in the area at present could also benefit from the plan by being relocated into more adequate forms of housing. There are too many variables for this proposal (or any other for that matter) to have "all of the answers." It does,

however, provide a viable solution for redeveloping the Third Ward by taking a comprehensive look at its conditions and evaluating its development potential with respect to the future needs of Houston.

When considering a subject for my thesis project, there were several conditions which had to be met before it could be considered a suitable thesis topic. The project would have to be meaningful to the reader and relevant to today's society. The topic had to be different and on a larger scale than anything previously experienced in school. Also, and most important, it had to be educational. The Third Ward area met all of these self-imposed requirements.

The project was started with an effort at understanding the Third Ward and the factors which have led to its present condition. It was important to know how the area had changed, why people continued to live there, why it was allowed to remain in its present state, and if there was anything that could be done to upgrade the living conditions. This became the purpose for Part One of the project.

When the results of Part One indicated there was no means of preserving the area as it exists and still upgrade the living conditions, Part Two became involved with the development of a plan for future land use. It was believed that by utilizing the area's existing physical plan, its nearness to downtown, its access and visibility, and its

development potential, one could provide a desirable plan for the future. By evaluating the physical conditions and recognizing the prime areas for commercial and residential use, the plan could provide commercial stimulation for the area while providing a place to live near the Central Business District.

By studying areas such as the Third Ward and attempting to understand their causation factors, perhaps we can avoid creating similar areas in the future. The Urban Planner of tomorrow must be capable of contending with this type of area and its redevelopment if our cities are going to meet the needs of our advancing society.

APPENDIX I

SURVEY CRITERIA

Good: A basically sound dwelling in need of the following repairs may be included in this category:

APPENDIX

- repair screens
- paint trim
- replace one or two window panes

Minor: A structurally sound dwelling requiring repair of a non-structural nature. These repairs could generally be made by a handyman and include the following:

- complete paint job
- repair porch (i.e., replace floor boards, railings or steps)
- replace or rebuild porch (steep-type)
- repair siding (replace some, not all, shingles, bricks, etc.)
- repair roof (replace portion of shingles, paint tin roof, etc.)
- repair windows (replace all window panes)

Marginal: A structure requiring complete replacement of a non-structural element or repair of a structural element. Houses in this category would be the primary target of both code enforcement and rehabilitation loans. Listed below are types of repairs involved:

- replace all roofing materials
- replace all siding
- replace (rebuild) porch (steep-type)
- replace (rebuild) garage
- replace doors and windows, including frames

Major: Structures exhibiting extensive structural damage. These houses are habitable but exhibit one or several major defects. These defects include the following:

APPENDIX I

SURVEY CRITERIA

Good: A basically sound dwelling. Houses in need of the following repairs may be included in this category:

- repair screens
- paint trim
- replace one or two window panes

Minor: A structurally sound dwelling requiring repair of a non-structural nature. These repairs could generally be made by a handyman and include the following:

- complete paint job
- repair porch (i.e., replace floor boards, rails or steps)
- replace or rebuild porch (stoop-type)
- repair siding (replace some, not all shingles, bricks, etc.)
- repair roof (replace portion of shingles, paint tin roof, etc.)
- repair windows (replace all window panes)

Marginal: A structure requiring complete replacement of a non-structural element or repair of a structural element. Houses in this category would be the primary target of both code enforcement and rehabilitation loans. Listed below are types of repair involved:

- replace all roofing materials
- replace all siding
- replace (rebuild) porch (not stoop-type)
- replace (rebuild) garage
- replace doors and windows, including frames

Major: Structures exhibiting extensive structural damage. These houses are habitable, but exhibit one or several major defects. These defects include the following:

- collapsing roof structure
- damaged vertical supports
- foundation in need of leveling

Unsound: Structures, occupied or unoccupied, that exhibit such extensive structural damage that they are dangerous and unfit for human habitation. These houses would show evidence of:

- holes in roof
- caved in wall
- caved in roof
- caved in floor structure

SURVEY TOTALS
1980 U.S. Census
September 1983

HOUSING	COUNT	PERCENT
Type	15,344	100.0
Single Family	8,721	41.2
Duplex	1,493	13.2
Multi-Family	6,720	41.2
Mobile Home	21	0.2
Garage Apartment	423	4.2
Occupancy		
Occupied	14,413	96.3
Vacant and Closed	521	2.8
Vacant and Open	410	1.2
Condition of Structure		
Good	4,745	24.9
Minor	2,207	11.3
Marginal	2,250	14.3
Unsound	58	0.3
Condition of Site		
Good	10,354	68.3
Trash and Debris	2,136	19.1
Heavy Refuse	243	1.6
Overgrown	57	0.3

Note: As this was a windshield survey, there is a margin of error and these totals do not represent a 100% sample.

APPENDIX II

SURVEY TOTALS
(Based upon 1980 U.S. Census)
December 1985

<u>HOUSING</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
Type	15,056	100.0
Single Family	6,024	41.2
Duplex	1,993	13.2
Multi-Family	6,200	41.2
Mobile Home	35	0.2
Garage Apartment	624	4.2
Occupancy		
Occupied	14,445	96.0
Vacant and Closed	424	2.8
Vacant and Open	187	1.2
Condition of Structure		
Good	3,745	24.9
Minor	3,202	21.3
Marginal	2,157	14.3
Unsound	80	0.5
Condition of Site		
Good	10,358	68.8
Trash and Debris	4,386	29.1
Heavy Refuse	243	1.6
Overgrown	69	0.5

Note: As this was a windshield survey, there is a margin of error and these totals do not represent a 100% sample.

<u>NON-RESIDENTIAL</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>68</u> <u>PERCENT</u>
Type	1,304	100.00
Commercial	1,221	93.6
Industrial	8	0.6
Educational	9	0.7
Public	59	4.5
Open Space	7	0.6
Occupancy		
Occupied	1,224	93.9
Vacant and Closed	65	5.0
Vacant and Open	8	0.5
Condition of Structure		
Good	524	40.2
Minor	304	23.3
Marginal	131	10.0
Major	336	25.8
Unsound	2	0.2
Condition of Site		
Good	948	72.7
Trash and Debris	318	24.4
Heavy Refuse	34	2.6
Overgrown	4	0.3
Structure Type		
Commercial In Home	121	9.3
Converted From Residential	182	14.0
Single Unit Structure	670	51.4
2-5 Units	283	21.7
5+ Units - Shopping	41	3.1
No Structure	0	0
Off Street Parking		
Sufficient Setback	421	32.3
Insufficient Setback	342	26.2
Parallel Parking	6	0.5
No Off Street Parking	528	40.5
Sidewalk Data		
No Sidewalk	21.98	1.7
Sidewalk On One Side	7.72	0.6
Sidewalk On Both Sides	24.04	1.9

<u>STREETS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	69 <u>PERCENT</u>
	(Miles)	
	73.35	100.0
Geometrics		
33' x 33', 6 moving, 0 parking	3.94	5.4
24' x 24', 2 moving, 2 parking	3.34	4.5
40' x 48', 2 moving, 2 parking	21.31	29.1
27' - 30', 1 moving, 2 parking	21.91	29.9
20' - 27', 1 moving, 1 parking	9.77	13.3
Less Than 20'	0.79	1.1
Street Condition		
Good-Serviceable No Problem	29.26	39.9
Fair-Beginning of Base Problem	39.71	54.1
Poor-Needs Resurfacing	4.37	6.0
Street Surface		
Concrete	8.13	11.1
Asphalt	64.40	87.8
Shell or Gravel	0.21	0.3
Unimproved	0.59	0.8
Drainage		
Storm Sewer Satisfactory	48.59	66.3
Storm Sewer Unsatisfactory	10.65	14.5
Open Ditch Satisfactory	3.87	5.3
Open Ditch Debris and Weeds	7.25	9.9
No Drainage Improvements	2.96	4.0
Street Parking		
No Parking Allowed	7.96	10.9
One Lane Parking	5.31	7.2
Two Lanes Parking	56.23	76.6
Peak Hour Restrictions	2.91	4.0
Other Hour Restrictions	0.93	1.3
Sidewalk Data		
No Sidewalk	21.98	30.0
Sidewalk On One Side	7.32	10.0
Sidewalk On Both Sides	44.04	60.0

APPENDIX III
LAND USE INVENTORY OF
THIRD WARD
HOUSTON, TEXAS, 1986

Census Tract	Single Family	Multi-Family	Commercial	Industrial	Educational	Open Space	Water	Resource Production	Undeveloped	Eight-of-Way	TOTAL
304	336.4	31.8	75.2	0.6	2.9	12.0	-	-	27.7	21.9	508.5
305	198.7	73.8	55.4	6.6	97.5	-	-	-	18.6	-	450.6
306	201.9	33.2	100.0	0.3	20.6	3.9	-	-	17.6	36.5	414.0
307	392.4	93.4	60.9	-	22.6	7.0	38.4	-	37.4	71.7	723.5
316	120.7	55.2	334.2	8.0	28.4	449.5	30.7	-	70.9	-	1097.6
TOTAL (Acres)	1250.1	287.4	625.7	15.5	171.7	472.4	69.1	-	172.2	130.1	3104.2
%	39.1	9.0	19.6	0.5	5.4	14.8	2.2	-	5.4	4.0	100.0

APPENDIX IV
SCHOOLS
IN THE THIRD WARD
HOUSTON, TEXAS 1986

Schools	Enrollment		Acreage		Floor Area/Student	
	Actual	Standard	Capacity	Actual	Standard	Actual
<u>Elementary</u>						
Blackshear	1,086		1,122	3.20		56.35
Douglass	818		996	3.00		76.53
Lockhart	890	700-1,000	906	12.17	6-8	67.66
MacGregor	493		625	5.67		87.52
Turner	1,173		1,176	6.91		61.38
<u>Junior High</u>						
Miller	634		1,150	13.00		220.27
Ryan	1,166	1,500-2,000	1,540	6.86	20-25	109.08
<u>Senior High</u>						
Yates	1,446	1,500-2,000	1,771	15.51	25-30	151.37
						95

PARKS
IN THE THIRD WARD
HOUSTON, TEXAS 1986

<u>Park</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Facilities</u>
1) Herman	410.2	Fannin, Main, Hermann Loop Drive, and San Jacinto	18 hole golf course with clubhouse and cafe; play-ground equipment and sand-box; picnic tables and benches; 4 lighted concrete tennis courts; practice ballfield; miniature train; steam locomotive; bridle paths; fishing lake and casting piers; reflection pool; main zoo and children's zoo; Miller Theatre; garden center building; log cabin; concessions; restrooms; picnic shelter; Museum of Natural Science; planetarium; rose garden; perennial garden; fragrant garden; Mecom Fountain; Mecom-Rockwell Fountain
2) Peggy	2.1	4101 Alameda Rd., Chenevert and Cleburne at Wheeler	Fountain with reflection pool; wooded site; side-walks
3) Emancipation	10.0	3000 Dowling at Elgin, Hutchins, and Tuam	Recreation center building with enclosed gym; 2 lighted tennis courts; 2 shuffleboard courts; picnic tables and benches; swimming pool and bath-house and restrooms; concession building; drinking fountains; regulation softball field (lighted); regulation baseball field (lighted); regulation football field; play-ground equipment; bicycle racks; sidewalks

PARKS

(continued)

<u>Park</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Facilities</u>
4) Moses Leroy	0.8	3100 Trulley, Briley, Hadley	Shelter building, playground equipment; basketball court (unlighted); swimming pool
5) Riverside #1	4.1	2610 Calumet at Live Oak	Playground equipment
6) Riverside #2	1.0	5511 Ennis at MacGregor	Open Space

APPENDIX VI
AGE BREAKDOWN BY CENSUS TRACTS
IN THE THIRD WARD
HOUSTON, TEXAS 1986

AGE BREAKDOWN	304		305		306		307		316		Third Ward		City of HOUSTON
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Under 5	1,491	10.4	1,180	10.4	827	10.8	1,340	10.7	411	7.4	5,249	10.2	9.3
5-14	3,009	21.0	2,265	20.0	1,418	18.6	2,010	16.1	511	9.2	9,213	18.0	20.7
15-19	1,282	9.0	1,289	11.4	652	8.5	1,059	8.5	375	6.8	4,657	9.1	9.1
20-54	5,953	41.6	5,062	44.7	3,541	46.4	6,546	52.3	3,233	58.3	24,335	47.4	46.6
55 and Over	2,569	18.0	1,522	13.4	1,196	15.7	1,564	12.5	1,014	18.3	7,865	15.3	14.0

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