Bastrop, Texas SDAT Report



Bastrop, Texas • Nov 14-16, 2011

AIA Communities by Design

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Introduction

The Design Assistance Program

With nearly 300 state and local chapters and over 76,000 members, the American Institute of Architects serves as the voice of the architecture profession and the resource for its members in service to society. The AIA has a 44-year history of public service work. Through the Center for Communities by Design, the AIA has engaged over 1,000 professionals from more than 30 disciplines, ultimately providing millions of dollars in professional pro bono services to more than 200 communities across the country, and engaging thousands of participants in community-driven planning processes. In 2010, the AIA received the 'Organization of the Year' Award from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), recognizing its program impact on communities and contributions to the field.





- **Regional and Urban Design Assistance Teams (R/UDAT):** Created in 1967, the AIA's R/UDAT program pioneered the modern charrette process by combining multi-disciplinary teams in dynamic, multi-day grassroots processes to produce community visions, action plans and recommendations.

- **Sustainable Design Assessment Teams (SDAT):** In 2005, in response to growing interest and concern about local sustainability planning, the AIA launched a companion program to the R/UDAT that allowed it to make a major institutional investment in public service work to assist communities in developing policy frameworks and long term sustainability plans. During the first 6 years of the SDAT program, the Center for Communities by Design has worked with over 50 towns, cities and regions.

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The Center's Design Assistance Team programs operate with three guiding principles:

- **Multi-disciplinary Expertise.** Each project is designed as a customized approach to community assistance that incorporates local realities and the unique challenges and assets of each community. As a result, each design assistance team includes a multi-disciplinary focus and a systems approach to assessment and recommendations, incorporating and examining cross-cutting topics and relationships between issues. In order to accomplish this task, the Center forms multi-disciplinary teams that combine a range of disciplines and professions in an integrated assessment and design process.

- **Enhanced Objectivity.** The goal of the design assistance team program is to provide communities with a framework for action. Consequently, each project team is constructed with the goal of bringing an objective perspective to the community that is outside of the normal politics of public discussion. Team members are deliberately selected from geographic regions outside of the host community, and national AIA teams are typically representative of a wide range of community settings. Team members all agree to serve pro bono, and do not engage in business development activity in association with their service. They do not serve a particular client. The team's role is to provide an independent analysis and unencumbered technical advice that serves the public interest.

- **Public Participation.** The AIA has a four-decade tradition of designing community-driven processes that incorporate substantial public input through a multi-faceted format that includes public workshops, small group sessions, stakeholder interviews, formal meetings and presentations. This approach allows the national team to build on the substantial local expertise already present and available within the community and leverage the best existing knowledge available in formulating its recommendations.

The Bastrop SDAT Process

In November 2010, city officials in Bastrop, Texas, submitted an application to the American Institute of Architects for a Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) project. As the City's application to the AIA stated:

"The objective of this project is to provide a vision for Bastrop in a unique and diverse area that is dense with varying merits and qualities to overcome obstacles to environmental, social, and economic realities.



This project will create a vision that will become the catalyst for sustainability. It will show how an area can be united through their strengths and overcome the weaknesses. This project will significantly help to energize the area towards revitalization by improving the area by linking schools, homes, jobs, and sense of community by providing the link for these options to be accessible for cars, pedestrians and bicycles. Being Bastrop will look at the environmental issues and look toward solutions to current flooding issues in the area, as well as potential for open space and development. It will also look at bringing the public, private, commercial and residential voices together to work towards harmony that will create an area that is truly sustainable for current and future generations. An important end product would be renderings that illustrate Being Bastrop by showing a couple of model projects and clear with concrete implementation steps that identify our next steps to complete the sustainable vision. Staff will then have the ability to take these steps and have accountability measures to make the vision a reality."

The application was accepted in December, and in July 2011, an initial visit to the region was conducted to determine the project scope and identify the expertise needed for the project. In November 2011, a six-member SDAT team conducted a three-day charrette with the community to assess current conditions, listen to resident input, analyze constraints and opportunities, and form a series of key recommendations for the city moving forward. The charrette process included tours of the project area, targeted meetings with public officials and stakeholders, a public workshop, and studio design sessions. At the conclusion of the charrette, the team presented its recommendations at a community meeting.





The following report contains a narrative summary of the team's findings, with particular emphasis in the following areas:

- Land Use Policy, Planning and Zoning issues
- Economic Development and Future Housing
- Urban Design and Development opportunities concerning the downtown and waterfront
- Green Infrastructure policy and practice
- Tourism and Downtown Vitality



The Big Picture

Summary

While each team member authored a specific section of this report, there are clear themes evident across the entirety of our findings. The following summary captures the cross-cutting issues that the community faces, and the team's assessment and core recommendations regarding them.

Bastrop: A Resilient Community

It was the most destructive fire in state history. In September 2011, wildfires spread over a vast area in Bastrop County. In total, the Bastrop wildfires claimed over 55 square miles of land. They wrought devastation over the local landscape, incinerating the rare 'Lost Pines' and wiping out most of Bastrop State Park. The fires burned through the remaining habitat of the Houston Toad, a protected species. They claimed two lives, and destroyed over 1,600 homes, causing an estimated $325 million in damage.

In response to the disaster, the community rallied to the aid of its neighbors. Firefighters worked tirelessly to control the blaze. Volunteers mobilized to aid the effort and helped begin to organize aid efforts for those affected by the fires. Through this turmoil, Bastrop demonstrated that it is a community capable of great things, able to overcome an event of significance and magnitude, and emerge a resilient community - a community committed to its future.

A City of Assets

Bastrop is a city of great assets. The City is known as "The Most Historic Small Town in Texas," and boasts a unique historic downtown that serves as a place of local identity and attracts thousands of visitors every year. The Colorado River, which flows through downtown, provides a dramatic resource for recreation, and the city's pedestrian bridge crossing creates an incredible local experience.

Bastrop's physical assets are matched by its human assets. The city has tremendous capacity for a jurisdiction its size. The team was impressed with the quality of the city administration, staff and professional leadership, as well as the civic leaders and residents we met with during the SDAT process. Bastrop has demonstrated that it is a community that not only forms aspirations for its future, but carries those visions to reality with implementation efforts.











This commitment to getting things done can be seen in the City's new convention center and city hall, and the streetscape improvements that have accompanied new construction.

Plan For Growth

The SDAT Team believes the City is facing a critical juncture in its future development, and needs to take control of its growth. Glenn Kellogg captures Bastrop's growing reality:

"For better or worse, Bastrop is going to continue to grow. Mid-range projections from the Texas Stare Data Center estimate county annual growth slowly attenuating from 3.5% to 2.6% over thirty years. Right now Bastrop is facing real estate pressures from the recent fire that devastated a significant amount of local housing stock. If Bastrop Ciy grows at the same rate, there will be around 1000 new households every 10 years. The information that follows suggests that this may underestimate city growth pressures, because of increasing preferences for living close to downtown as opposed to the outlying suburbs. This means that for a city with 2,500 households, Bastrop may double in size over the next twenty years. This change could overwhelm the town by continuing the recent development trends and patterns. However, if planned for, this growth could be an opportunity to enable the aspirations of downtown. The City must get ahead of the growth by planning for the desired change, and use this momentum to improve downtown rather than disturb it."

Land Use Reform: Form Based Code

One of the Team's central recommendations to proactively plan for growth is the implementation of a Form Based Code. As Paul Dreher explains:

"By implementing a 'community built' Form Based Code, Bastrop can take its best attributes and assets (assets that would be the envy of any city small or large) and ensure through code that the municipality evolves in a manner that is in keeping with the community's vision. With a FBC Bastrop will open its doors to new and inventive land use possibilities and because the code is fundamentally affirmative, the general message that Bastrop will convey to both small and large developers will be positive."













Glenn Kellogg identifies Form Based Code as an important economic development tool for the City:

"To accomplish these economic development goals, regulations must be changed. The SDAT team recommends implementing a form-based code. Currently, many of the vacant lots in neighborhoods are can't be redeveloped because the existing zoning code requires suburban standards for lot sizes and setbacks, robbing the land of productive value. Establishing a form-based code could unlock the potential of these sites and establish certainty about the rules for investors and developers. These new regulations should follow a community visioning process and plan for downtown. This process should seek to build consensus and articulate a common direction for downtown."

Paul Dreher further asserts that Bastrop is well-positioned to be successful:

"Additionally, Bastrop has a distinct advantage with creating and adopting a Form Based Code. It not only has community capacity and a healthy national Main Street program, it also has an incredibly skilled and progressive city government. The interdepartmental, collaborative approach to the city's business and the strengths of the Planning Department specifically, compel the recommendation that Bastrop pursue FBC in-house. The city can utilize stakeholder involvement, the Main Streets organization downtown, and the Bastrop Economic Development Corporation for support and consensus building work during the process."

Connecting Core Elements

The team identified three core elements to downtown Bastrop which can create a vibrant whole once connected. As Tom Laging explains, "Bastrop has three clearly defined parts that need to be nourished: the river, Main Street and the Chestnut Street corridor. All of these could emerge as source of civic pride with a few strategic investments. The city has made commendable progress to this point in its development and preservation efforts. Carefully conceived development controls will insure Bastrop's historic legacy remains in clear contrast with the auto-oriented highway commercial on periphery."

The Chestnut Street corridor is identified as a major component of this strategy for downtown:

"The Chestnut Street Corridor is a huge opportunity for redevelopment and needs attention and planning for capturing growth. With around 17 acres of land primed for redevelopment, this area is suitable for a mix of future housing, retail and employment space. In planning for this area, the City should take care to develop a balanced program of supportable future uses in coordination with the design. Our preliminary analysis suggests this land could provide 80,000 square feet of first floor retail uses on both sides of three blocks, along with over 200 multifamily units and 80,000 square feet of office space for 230 new workers."

Placemaking as a Central Strategy

The Team identified Placemaking strategies as central to Bastrop's future. As Tom Laging explains, "Bastrop's most critical placemaking assets are centered around the river and it's juxtaposition with the historic main street." The team describes a host of development proposals tied to placemaking around a "river loop" concept, incluing the following:

- A series of vistas across the river valley are revealed through careful and selective intervention of the tree canopy.
- The trail system is extended, crossing the river on a new service-road bridge. The extension has an upper loop around the neighborhood going over the bridge back to main street. It also has a lower trail along an easement at the western edge of the river. This new trail loop would mirror the existing upper and lower path system on the east side of the river.
- The river bluff has great possibilities for public–private development. It could include a 30 room boutique hotel, underground public parking and riverside restaurant.
- An important site infill opportunity exists on Main Street.
- The plan proposes a "quiet garden" at the corner of Chestnut and Water Street. This small square would be a place of contemplation with a canopy of trees, an understated water feature, shade plants and a low stone wall at the street to reduce tire whine from Chestnut Street traffic and provide a sense of enclosure.

Linda Harper concurs with this assessment, writing that "As an issue of placemaking, the community currently owns a vacant lot in the center of a retail block on Main Street in the historic downtown. Discussions are ongoing about the use for this lot. Options include rebuilding a permanent structure, temporary uses and creating a small pocket park with public restroom facilities. The team unanimously determined that the best use was to continue a retail use ultimately with a permanent structure. Temporary "pop-up" uses during holidays and festivals were perfectly acceptable until a permanent structure was in place. The team felt strongly that a pocket park and public restrooms were the wrong use. "

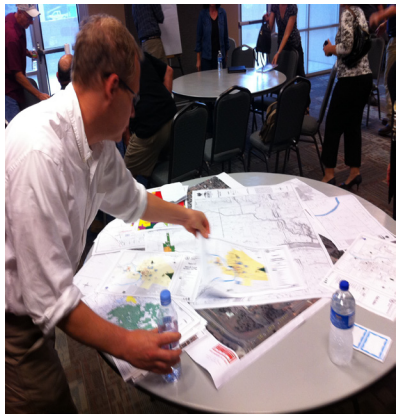
The Importance of Green Infrastructure

Nathan Polanski writes that, "During the SDAT Team's visit the community expressed a desire to be a pioneer in sustainable development and expressed interest in protecting water resources. These interests should be used to set goals and build community support moving forward." Polanski identifies a portfolio of green infrastructure strategies the City can employ moving forward, observing that, "Flooding has been a historical problem for the residents and property owners in Bastrop's downtown study area. The City's Comprehensive Plan notes the lack of storm drainage infrastructure as "a chronic problem." However, current local regulations do not require new construction or development to improve this problem. Instead, requirements state only that new development shall not make the existing condition worse. This approach has left the City and its drainage infrastructure reacting to development instead of development reacting to the environment."

Building Upon Strengths

The team found that the central issues in Bastrop are not concerned with creating something new, but with preserving and strengthening those elements that make Bastrop a great place today. This report lays out a series of recommendations meant to build upon the best qualities of your community by strengthening the City's historic fabric, preserving and enhancing its unique charm, and creating and economic and physical context in which residents can enjoy a wonderful quality of life for generations to come. The team believes that Bastrop has the potential and community capacity to be successful as it moves forward.















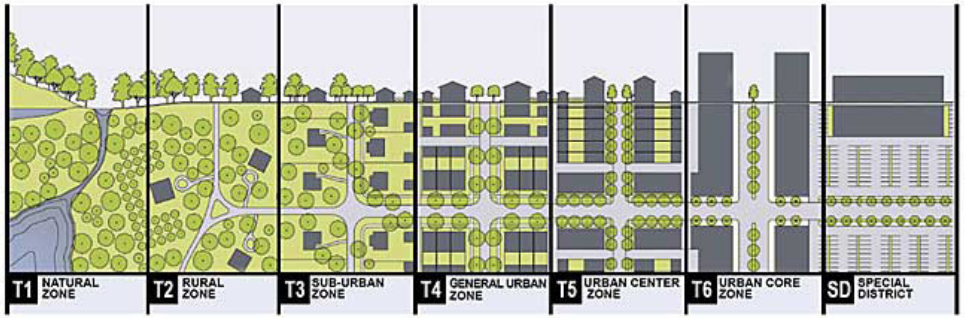
Land Use

General Impressions

Downtown Bastrop (the study area) is bounded by the Colorado River to the west, highway 71 to the south and highway(s) 95/21 to the east. It is almost a text book example of an historic/traditional, incremental growth pattern typical throughout the United States prior to contemporary Zoning ordinances and other incentives that promoted sprawl/auto oriented development.

Generally, the land use pattern in the study area is efficient, compact and flexible—there are several notable historic patterns that potentially set the stage for future land use. The study area is naturally hemmed in on the east and west—by Gil's Branch to the east and the Colorado River west and artificially halted to the south by highway 71. In short, the study area has built in characteristics that limit sprawl. The study area is organized around a rigorous grid street network. In addition to the grid there are two primary organizational systems, a spine system (Chestnut Street) and a core system (intersections of Main, Water Streets and Chestnut, Pines Streets.) In both cases, there is a gradual transition from higher density and more intensive land use to less dense and less varied land use. Along the spine and at the center of the core there is greater density and more varied use with a gradually decreasing intensity of land use as one moves away from the spine and away from the center. Correspondingly, the actual types of uses from commercial to residential also roughly mimic the level and intensity of land use. The center of the core and along the spine tends to be characterized by more commercial uses. As one moves outward or away from the spine or center the real estate tends to become less intensive land use, more open and generally residential. The rigor of the existing grid, the 'walkable"/standardized dimensions of the grid and the high degree of connectivity provide the flexibility to allow for these growth patterns to occur. And these patterns likely occurred organically in the past, based on needs and efficiency. They likely occurred without specific zoning codes to compel the patterns. Ultimately, the "study area" exhibits a high degree of walkability, a healthy mix of uses, multi-purpose places/infrastructure, more than adequate parking and generally a good ratio of open to filled space. Also, the study area is adaptable—the grid, infrastructure and the built form are not singular in purpose or intent.

The "study area", in many ways provides a tremendously fertile case study for "smart" land-use and is an exemplary model to emulate. The existing "bones" or DNA of Bastrop's study area provides a perfect template for future growth and land use. In fact, from south to north (starting at Chestnut Street) and radiating out from the center of the core, the study area generally resembles the "rural to urban transect" diagram—specifically, transect 5 (T-5) to transect 2 (T-2).



One example of the transect from Duany Plater Zyberk

The "rural to urban transect" was developed to illustrate the ideal "rural" to "urban" transitions, which not only permits growth to occur in an incremental manner, but encourages it. The diagram of the ideal accurately describes parts of Bastrop.

More recent developments and growth patterns offer a sharp contrast to the study area. These developments have growth patterns that can be fairly described as auto-oriented subdivisions and commercial strip development, singular in function, prone to obsolescence, and generally inefficient land and resource usage—all attributes that are for the most part the polar opposites of the growth that occurred in the historic downtown. For instance, a single family house at the end of an unconnected street can typically only be used as a single family residence, and a single story warehouse "strip" building at the back of a parking lot is not tremendously adaptable.

Downtown is Central to Future Land Use

The relative merits of either type of growth pattern can be argued, but there are several things that are not debatable. First, the allocation of city resources (water, sewer, and public works) is decidedly more costly in the auto-oriented, more recent developments (longer pipes to run, more roads to maintain, less water pressure at outlying fire hydrants, etc). Second, municipal taxes earned in contemporary, auto-oriented development are significantly less per square foot than in the traditional growth pattern of the study area. Finally, in the commercial areas, private dollars per square foot earned is greater in the historic downtown or study area. If compared solely on economic terms, the traditional growth pattern found in the historic downtown or the "study area" would seem to be more desirable than the more recent sprawl growth pattern. **The study area holds the key to the future growth and land-use patterns of Bastrop.**

Each of the two land use patterns are the result of land use zoning ordinances, or their absence. The "study area" is the result of the lack of a land use ordinance. Development and growth occurred organically, incrementally and in a compact manner with efficient usage of resources as a paramount motivation for development. On the other hand, the more recent auto-oriented development is the direct result of a "use" based land use ordinance (typical throughout the United States) that required the separation of uses and functions (eg: business district, industrial parks, etc) and generally not only encouraged sprawl but often mandated it.

Bastrop's current Zoning ordinance is a 'use" based ordinance and is typical of Zoning ordinances found throughout the country. It is, in many ways, generic and not specific to the "place" that is Bastrop. Even the most tailored aspect of the Bastrop Zoning ordinance, the 14 distinct zoning districts, seem generic, and at the same time tremendously micro-managed. It does not reflect the essence of place so evident in the historic downtown and surrounding areas. The current code is complex, voluminous and difficult to navigate. Also, Bastrop's current code has not only allowed the sprawl (single use) development to occur, it encourages it while discouraging the infill growth and mixed-use development that typifies the downtown.





Current Land Use Policy Has Negative Outcomes

All these aspects of the current code have manifold negative impacts. The first and most obvious is that it encourages low quality, lowest-common-denominator, single-use development that is not as economically viable as downtown's compact development. The complexity of the code can discourage small-scale development performed by small, local entities and tends to favor large-scale development by large financial entities that may not be local or have the local interest in mind. The specificity and micromanaged districts zone out or disallow uses that may be needed for an economically healthy and diverse community. Additionally, the highly specific districts have the potential to create economic segregation in the city and its neighborhoods. The fact that there is a "manufactured housing" district that is distinct from the 4 discreet "single family residential" districts is evidence of this potential.

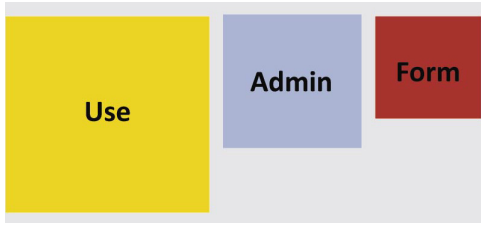
The current code also discourages or disallows many of the desired outcomes for the "study area" expressed by the community in meetings conducted during the SDAT team visit. The community pointed out a lack of rental properties or multifamily structures (rentals for younger demographics), a lack of starter houses, a general lack of housing stock variety and a lack of mixed or multi-use infrastructure—much of which is difficult or unachievable with the current land use ordinance. Bastrop, like many municipalities throughout the country, would find it difficult to replicate, build or perpetuate the land use patterns of the study area's built fabric with its current land use policy and zoning ordinance.

In order to preserve, restore, rejuvenate and replicate the desirable aspects (land patterns, building types, etc) of the historic downtown, Bastrop should consider modifying or amending the land use/zoning ordinance. More specifically, Bastrop should consider implementing a community developed, place sensitive, form based code (FBC).

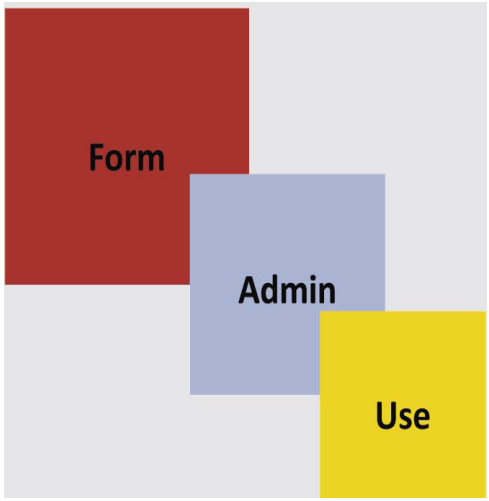
Form Based Code

The implementation of a form based code in the "study area" and surrounding areas is a logical and practical conclusion for future land use policy in Bastrop. Fundamental to the writing of a FBC is finding the desirable "DNA" of a place and writing a code that allows for that place to be regenerated, replicated, restored and repair. Bastrop's study area has countless desirable physical (form) assets and facets that can be the foundation for a new Bastrop FBC.

To a large extent, Bastrop has taken the first steps toward creating a FBC. The beginning of any community's efforts to build a FBC is developing shared community vision and collective understanding of the physical attributes that make any community unique. This step is the biggest and often the hardest step for a community to undertake. Bastrop's successful bid for the AIA SDAT, the resulting community engagement during the SDAT, and the community capacity building as a result of the SDAT have positioned the city for success. The eloquent descriptions, during multiple community meetings, of common aspirations and understandings of what makes Bastrop unique qualifies as a solid first step toward creating a FBC.



Conventional Zoning



Form Based Code

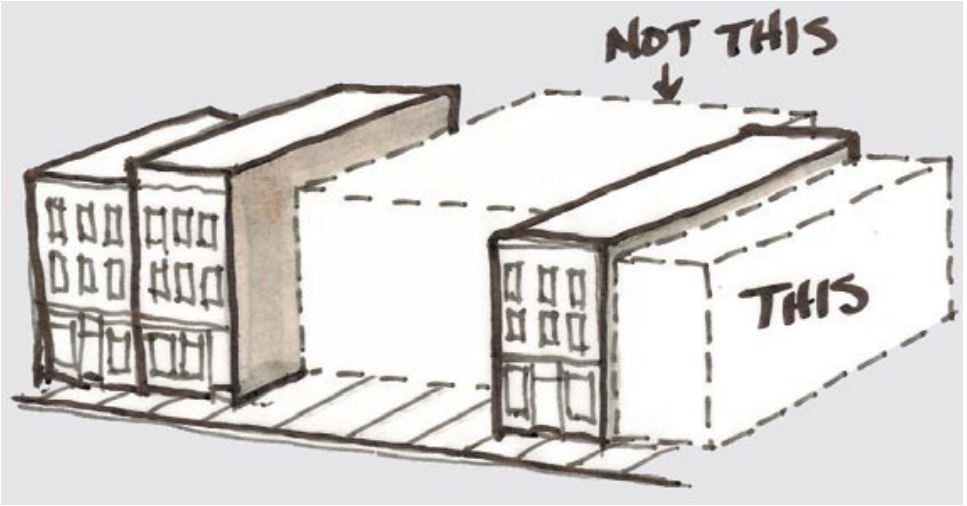
'Community Built' Code

The message was clear from the community meetings: there are real and measurable attributes that the community celebrates, identifies with, and that contribute to the identity of Bastrop. The viable and successful land-use patterns exist and can be cataloged. The less successful patterns also exist. The difficult part of making a FBC has been already accomplished.

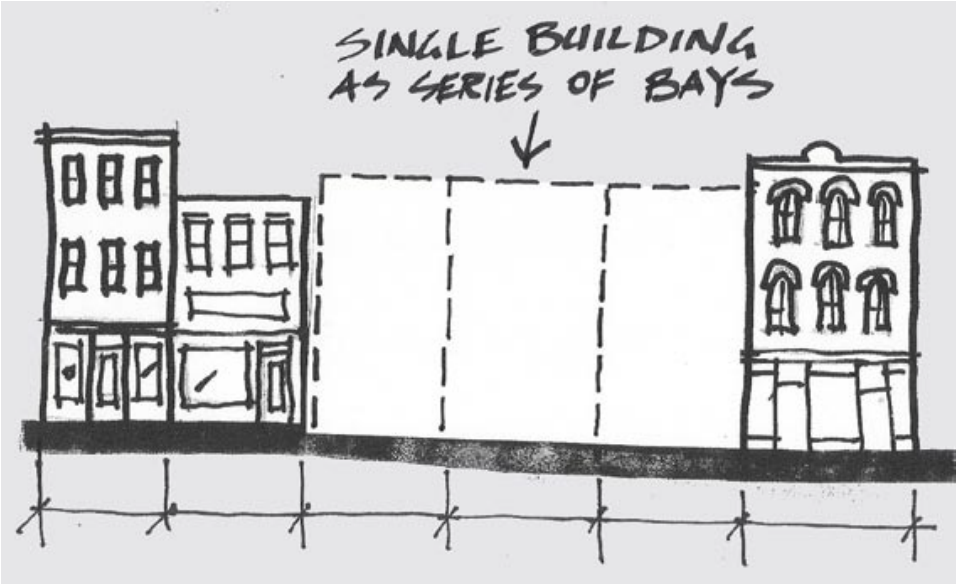
Additionally, Bastrop has a distinct advantage with creating and adopting a FBC. It not only has community capacity and a healthy national Main Street program, it also has an incredibly skilled and progressive city government. The interdepartmental, collaborative approach to the city's business and the strengths of the Planning Department specifically, compel the recommendation that Bastrop pursue FBC in-house. The city can utilize stakeholder involvement, the Main Streets organization downtown, and the Bastrop Economic Development Corporation for support and consensus building work during the process.

By implementing a 'community built' Form Based Code, Bastrop can take its best attributes and assets (assets that would be the envy of any city small or large) and ensure through code that the municipality evolves in a manner that is in keeping with the community's vision. With a FBC Bastrop will open its doors to new and inventive land use possibilities and because the code is fundamentally affirmative, the general message that Bastrop will convey to both small and large developers will be positive.

Because a FBC regulates the form of the building and deemphasizes use, it tends to produce better quality of new development and also promote a high quality of infill. And because the parameters of the code are based on consensus and community vision, permitting can be more efficient and user friendly, which tends to level the playing field. A FBC will act as an economic development tool, but most importantly a FBC in Bastrop will help foster a deepened sense of place and help create vibrant and lively public spaces.



Build-to lines-encourage healthy public realm



Allow for a variety of infill option

Form Based Code Benefits to Bastrop

A Form Based Code will encourage:

- Mixed-use and diverse neighborhoods
- Lively and vibrant public realm
- Better pedestrian experience
- Emphasis on streetscape
- Encourages independent development by multiple property owners

A Form Based Code has the following advantages:

- It is prescriptive, shorter, and more concise than the existing code
- It is organized for visual access and readability
- It eliminates the need for design guidelines
- It is easier to enforce, interpret & determine compliance
- It requires less oversight by discretionary review bodies
- It saves time and money
- It helps foster less politicized planning processes
- It promotes healthy civic interaction

A Form Based Code in Bastrop will have across-the-board positive impacts. The municipality will benefit from increased property values and corresponding increased municipal tax revenues. The community will gain a healthier, more lively public realm and great places. The business community benefits from increased property values and maximized commercial revenues, and a FBC will reinforce and support existing historic fabric and the historic nature of Bastrop. In addition to these gains the process of writing a community based FBC will compel new partnerships, grow new community capacity and create deeper, more involved civic engagement. In short, the code itself will work to maintain the greatness of Bastrop as a place, and the process of creating the code will nurture and promote the already vibrant community spirit, strengths and assets.





Recommendation Package

General Recommendations

- Consider replicating and perpetuating the land use pattern of the study area throughout the city—rather than the auto-oriented (more recent) sprawl land use pattern.
- The downtown study area is an asset—use it to its full potential. Pursue infill development whenever possible, and refill underutilized lots along the spine and in the core.
- Do not encourage sprawl development (codes and zoning ordinances typically not only allow for this type of development, they encourage it.)
- Encourage/support more intensive land use (including infill) along the spine (Chestnut St). and in the core (Main St, Water St and Chestnut St, Pine St area)

Specific to the Land Use Ordinance

- Simplify the zoning ordinance.
    1. Reduce reliance on specific uses and types in the zoning ordinance (example: "manufactured housing" as distinct from general residential zone).
    2. Rely on form distinctions to govern zoning districts.
- Consider adopting a Form Based Code for the study area
    1. Use both street typologies and Transects for regulating form.
    2. Create a Regulating plan depicting streets types and transects.
    3. Develop the code in-house.
    4. Use existing community capacity and City staff capacity to create a Community based code—a code tailored to Bastrop. (http://www.formbasedcodes.org/)
- Allow for transition from "commercial" uses north and south of Chestnut Street mid-block to mixed-use/multi-purpose built form eventually to primarily residential.
- Promote infill development
- Allow for "mother in-law" apartment/accessory uses/apartments
- Allow for multi-purpose/multi-use development
- Allow for and encourage multi-family dwellings-the lack of affordable and market rate apartments is negatively impacting the capacity for young/starter work force capture, and (new) creative class workers to live in Bastrop.
- Re-consider the volume of traffic along the Chestnut St spine as an asset to be capitalized upon rather than a problem.
- Perform a parking audit.
- Consider a parking facility near core (potentially use the change in grade to put parking below and pedestrian oriented use above—at grade and above.)
- Consider tackling the food desert issue (food desert refers to the lack of grocery stores or food access in the study area) through innovative land-use strategies (urban farming and community gardens.)

In addition, consider implementing a Land Value Taxation (LVT) system in the study area in concert with the FBC or Smart Code as an economic and "smart" growth tool. For more information on Land Value Taxation, consult the following online information: http://www.urbantoolsconsult.org/RESEARCH---STUDIES.html



Green Infrastructure

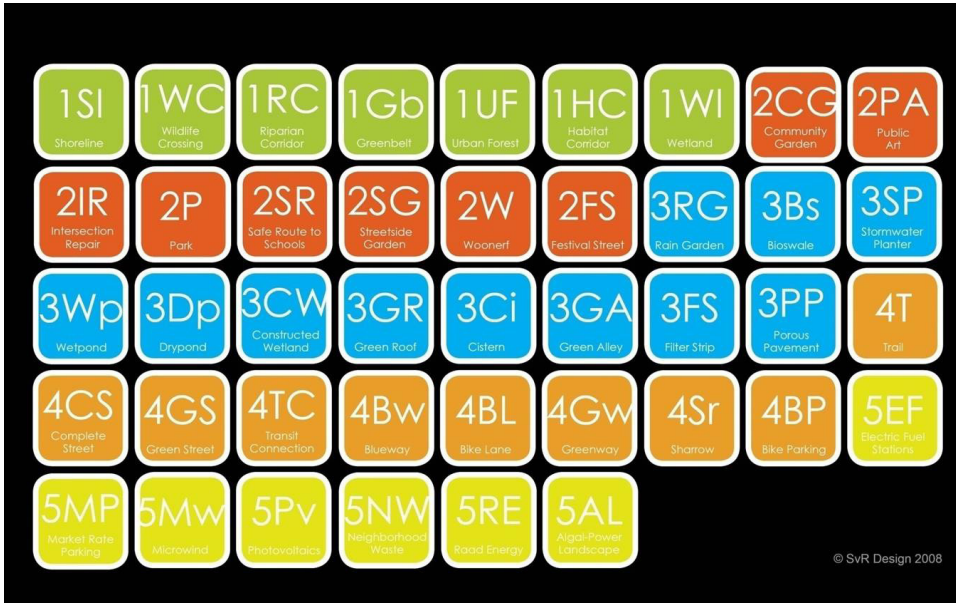
What Is Green Infrastructure?

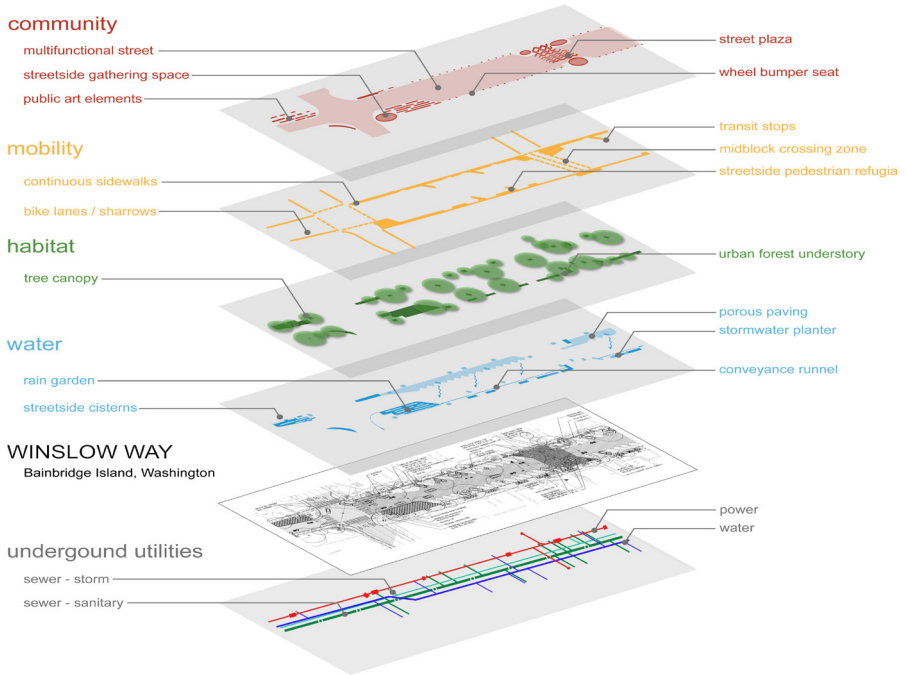
Green infrastructure (GI) uses natural systems to mimic natural processes and reduce and treat stormwater runoff. Through the preservation of native soils and vegetation, GI systems combine the ecological services of the natural environment with the infrastructural needs of our built environment. GI systems typically manage stormwater runoff before it leaves the site by promoting infiltration, allowing for evapotranspiration, and providing opportunities for stormwater reuse. Examples of green stormwater infrastructure include bioretention and biofiltration facilities (e.g. rain gardens and bioswales), permeable pavements, green roofs, amendment of existing soils, trees, and rainwater harvesting.

In many cities across the country GI has become standard practice for managing stormwater runoff. GI systems are also recognized for the multiple benefits that can be achieved to improve our neighborhoods and streets. In addition to stormwater benefits, GI systems can support and enhance mobility needs, create inviting streetscapes and gathering spaces, offset urban heat island effects, and add desired character to the built environment. The graphic below illustrates how a green infrastructure design framework can be described through a set of interdependent systems that benefit mobility, community, habitat, energy and water systems.

Stormwater Challenges in Bastrop

Flooding has been a historical problem for the residents and property owners in Bastrop's downtown study area. The City's Comprehensive Plan notes the lack of storm drainage infrastructure as "a chronic problem." However, current local regulations do not require new construction or development to improve this problem. Instead, requirements state only that new development shall not make the existing condition worse. This approach has left the City and its drainage infrastructure reacting to development instead of development reacting to the environment.









The City has begun to install detention ponds to support and add capacity to the existing storm drain conveyance systems. These ponds have relieved some burden on Gil's Branch, a natural drainage channel and the major drainage course in the study area. However, the ponds are also a high-cost, land-intense solution for managing stormwater in the heart of downtown Bastrop. The use of downtown land for stormwater management is more alarming when considering that much of the flooding is a result of upstream land use.

Existing clayey soils and the City's topography also contribute to the City's stormwater problems. The existing subsurface soils limit opportunities to infiltrate stormwater runoff and recharge the groundwater. The flat topography, or slope of the land, also makes it difficult to move water through the community, resulting in localized flooding and ponding of water. However, small-scale GI systems can provide solutions to address these challenges while also reducing stormwater runoff.

Understanding the Existing Systems

There is precedence for using GI within Bastrop. The convention center has cisterns that catch and reuse stormwater runoff from the building's roof, breaks in the curb at the convention center driveway entrance allow water to flow to vegetated areas and be filtered, and existing roadside ditches throughout the City attenuate runoff and remove sediment. To build upon these examples and integrate GI into the City's existing infrastructure to manage stormwater, a better understanding of the existing storm drain system is needed.





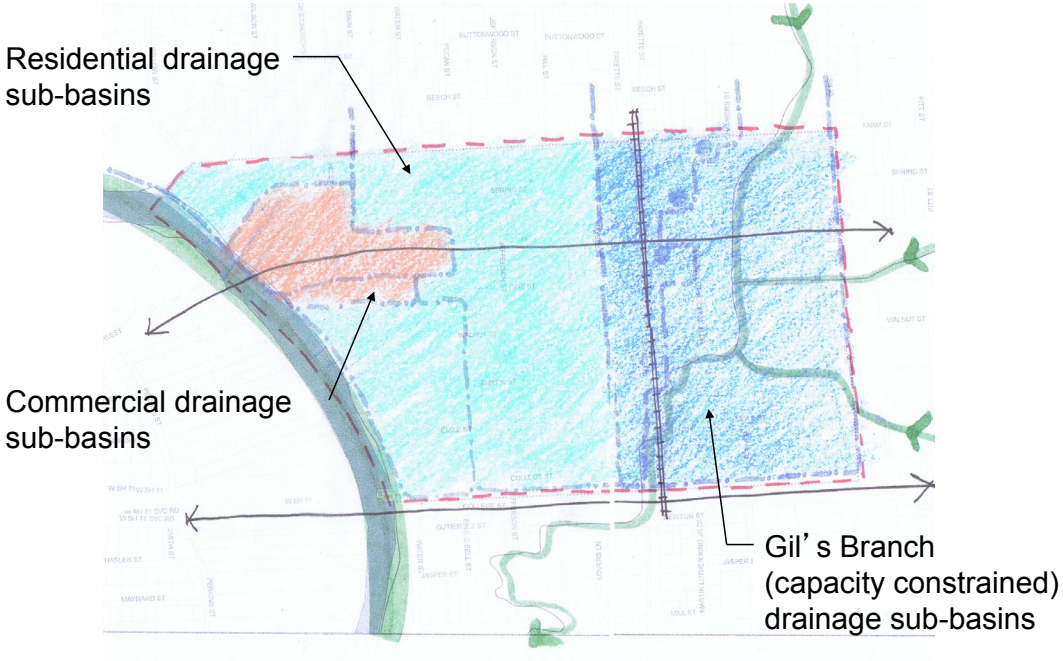


Green Infrastructure Precedents in Bastrop

To understand the existing system, a map of the approximate drainage subbasins within the study area was created. This map was created from information provided by the City Public Works Director during a drive of the study area and from topographic maps (the City does not currently have a map of its public storm drain infrastructure). The map resulted in the delineation and identification of four types of drainage areas:

1. Residential and commercial areas that drain to Gil's Branch upstream of the Gil's Branch railroad crossing.
2.Residential and commercial areas that drain to Gil's Branch downstream of the Gil's Branch railroad crossing.
3. Commercial areas that drain to City pipes and directly discharge to the Colorado River.
4. Residential areas that drain to City pipes and directly discharge to the Colorado River.

These typologies have been identified to characterize the types of stormwater runoff and identify strategies for managing stormwater within each drainage area. A full analysis, or storm drain master plan, of the study area should be conducted to refine the subbasin delineation and better understand the limitations of the existing systems.



Strategies to Integrate Green Stormwater Infrastructure

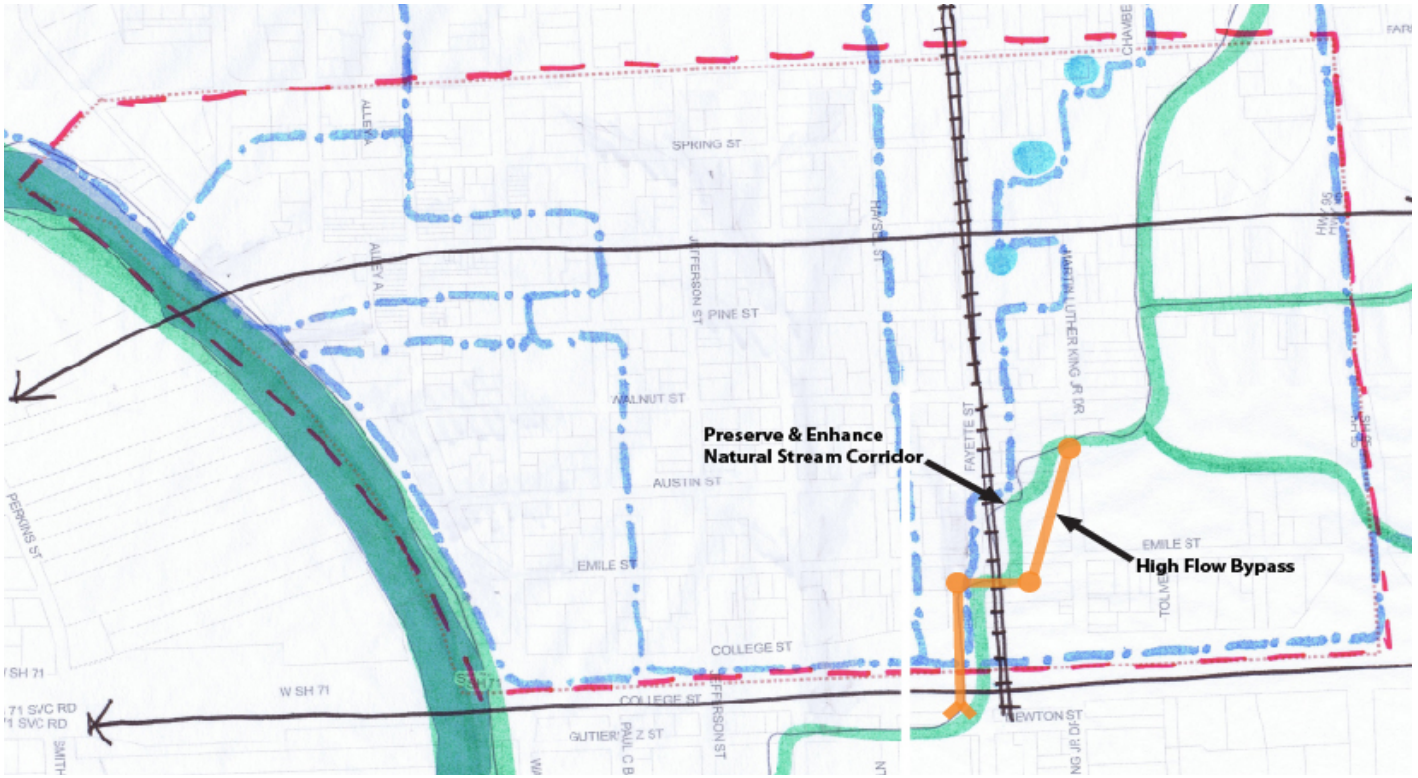
Gil's Branch Upstream of Railroad Crossing

This drainage area is a capacity constrained system and the highest priority area for the City. Gil's Branch is capacity constrained because the channel is no longer large enough to safely convey stormwater runoff through the City. This is a combination of a lack of maintenance along the corridor and upstream urbanization.

To address the maintenance of the channel, immediate steps should be taken to clear the corridor of woody debris and garbage that has built up, constricting the flow capacity of the channel. This effort should be similar to the work done along the convention center site, but with a greater effort at restoring the native habitat. It is understood that a majority of Gil's Branch is located on private land, which requires an easement for access; however, the City must get past this hurdle to address the public safety hazard the current channel presents.

A long-term solution is also needed to address large storm events that result in flooding along the corridor. This report identifies three approaches to managing high-flow scenarios within the channel; each of which protects the existing natural drainage channel (It should be noted that communities across the country are spending millions of dollars to daylight existing drainage channels and reclaim lost habitat to reverse previous engineering and development practices that piped such systems.):

1. **High-flow bypass pipe** – This approach would construct a high-flow bypass pipe, parallel to the natural channel, to convey flows that exceed the capacity of the channel. The parallel system should not disturb the existing channel habitat. The high-flow bypass approach is similar to a project that Austin, TX is doing with Waller Creek. This approach is recommended.



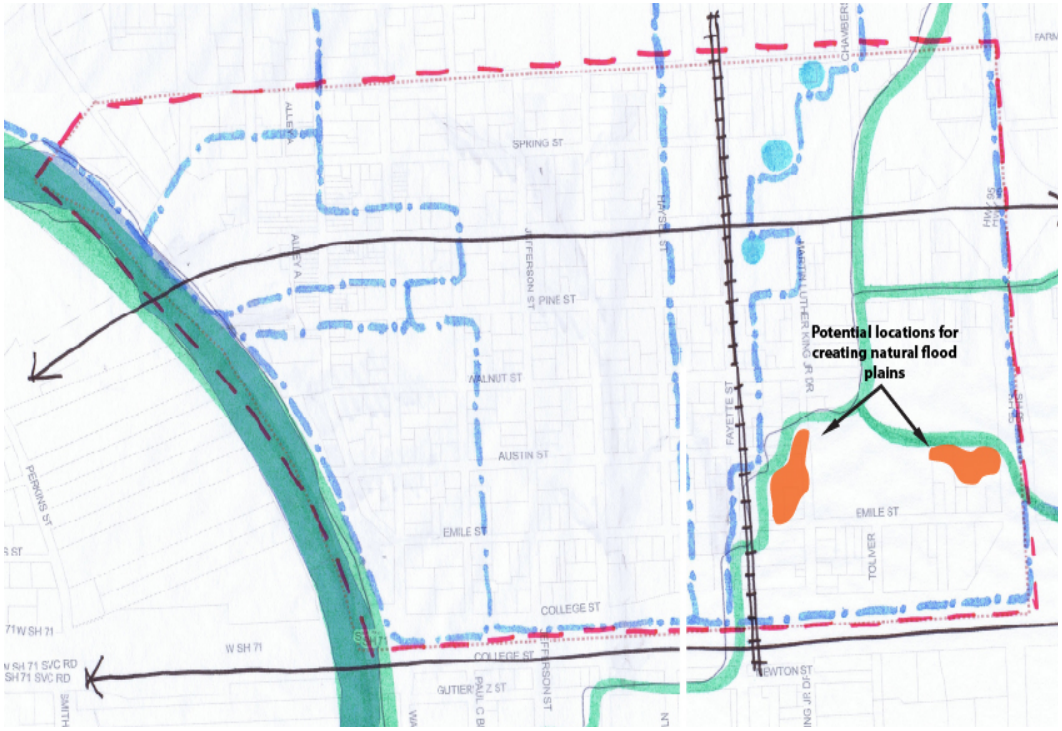
Strategy #1: High-flow bypass pipe

2. **Upstream GI retrofit** – This approach recognizes that much of the drainage problem is associated with land use upstream of the study area and would integrate GI systems in upstream areas to mitigate and control stormwater before it reaches the study area. It is anticipated a combination of conventional and green facilities may be needed to reduce and control flow to reduce impact on the downstream system in the study area.

3. **Natural flood plain and habitat preservation** – This approach would utilize existing open space to create a natural flood plain. Based on site reconnaissance two locations were identified as having opportunities to integrate this approach: the property south of the elementary school on the west side of the existing channel, or the property to the north of the elementary school. In either location considerations should be made to integrate the facility into the existing landscape, preserve and create natural habitat area, create a flexible open space that is accessible during the dry season, and provide educational opportunities that can take advantage of the site's proximity to the school.



Strategy #2: Upstream GI Retrofit



Strategy #3: Natural flood plain and Habitat preservation

Gil's Branch Downstream of Railroad Culvert

This drainage area consists of primarily residential area that drains to Gil's Branch downstream of the railroad culvert. Downstream of the culvert the capacity of the drainage channel is less confined. GI facilities in this area should consider opportunities to provide flow attenuation and water quality treatment. Flow attenuation will preserve the capacity of the downstream system and water quality treatment will protect downstream habitat and water resources.

Recommended facilities include bioretention facilities, permeable pavements, amendment of existing soils and new trees. Each of these facilities can be integrated into the public right of way. Bioretention facilities can be linear or cell shaped depending on site topography and can be used to establish buffers between vehicular and pedestrian areas. Opportunities should be explored to reduce widths of existing roads to reduce impervious surface and/or add new sidewalks. New sidewalks can be constructed of permeable pavements and should be located to provide pedestrian connections or eliminate gaps within the existing non-motorized network.











Areas that Direct Discharge to the Colorado River

These drainage areas consist of commercial and residential areas that drain to the Colorado River. GI facilities in these areas should consider opportunities to provide flow attenuation, water quality treatment and allow for stormwater reuse. Water quality treatment is important to reduce the pollutant loading discharged from City streets to the Colorado River. Stormwater capture and reuse provides opportunities to reduce potable water usage for uses such as irrigation.

Recommended facilities include bioretention facilities, permeable pavements, cisterns, amendment of existing soils and new trees. Facilities can be integrated into the public right of way similar to the previous section, though considerations should be made in commercial areas to urban design (e.g. using rectilinear stormwater planters instead of natural shaped rain gardens). Cisterns should be considered in the downtown to collect runoff from adjacent buildings and used to irrigate landscape areas. Downspouts can also be redirected to drain through new bioretention facilities and attenuate runoff. GI systems can also help strengthen the connection between the community and the Colorado River.

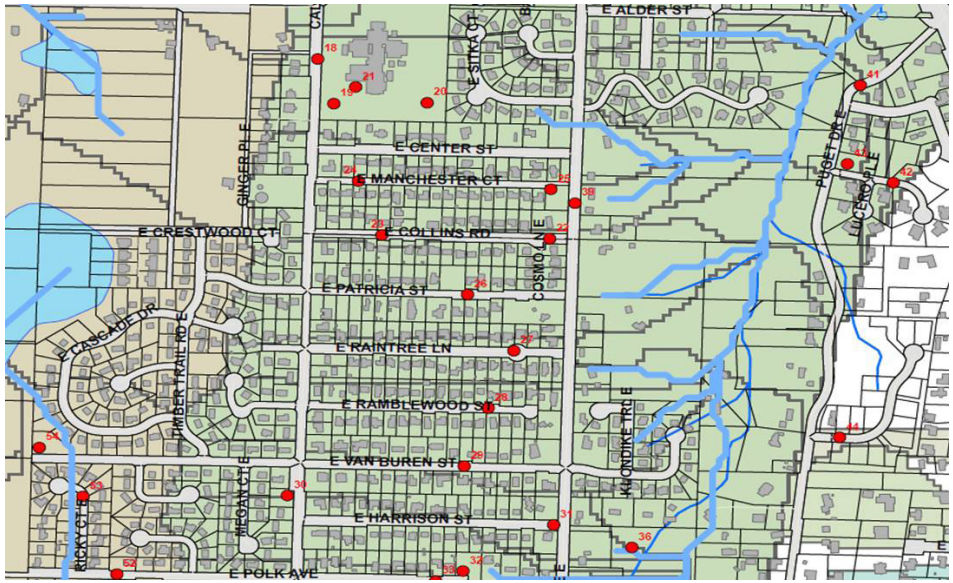


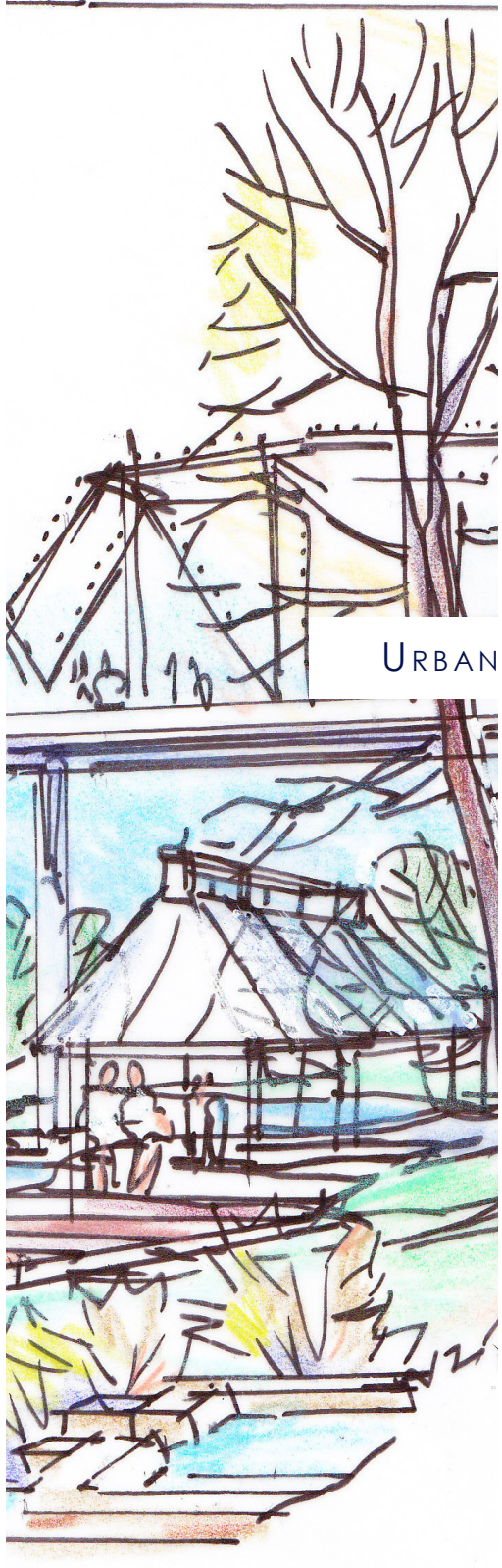
GI systems can easily be integrated and retrofitted into Bastrop's existing infrastructure. A study of GI opportunities is recommended to facilitate the selection of potential project sites. The study should include the identification, evaluation and prioritization of potential sites. This process can identify and examine feasibility of potential projects sites based on historical drainage complaints, review of existing maps and information (i.e. – topographic and geologic maps, utility infrastructure, road networks, parks, etc), and field examination. The prioritization should consider using a triple bottom line approach to evaluate projects on ecological, social and economic factors.

To better protect existing drainage infrastructure the City should establish new requirements for managing stormwater runoff from new and redevelopment projects. To facilitate the use of GI in public and private construction, design standards should also be developed to standardize the construction and the operations and maintenance these systems. Local and national resources are readily available to support these efforts. Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon have developed standard plans and specifications for permeable pavements and bioretention soil that can be referenced and modified to meet local material requirements and conditions. The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin is also an excellent local resource for selecting native plants, seed mixes and general conservation. The Lady Bird Johnson center and University of Texas have also established national guidelines and performance benchmarks for sustainable site design that can be used to guide site design requirements.

From a funding standpoint several grant and funding opportunities exist for using green stormwater infrastructure. Considerations should be given for how stormwater utility funds may be leveraged to manage new GI that not only benefits stormwater, but also improve habitat area, allow opportunities for integrating public art, provide buffers between different transportation modes, and improve the quality of the built environment. During the SDAT Team's visit the community expressed a desire to be a pioneer in sustainable development and expressed interest in protecting water resources. These interests should be used to set goals and build community support moving forward.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION			SITE CHARACTERISTICS SUBTOTAL (5-15 points)	ECOLOGICAL / HYDROLOGICAL SUBTOTAL (5-15 points)	ECONOMIC / COST SUBTOTAL (5-15 points)	SOCIAL / COMMUNITY SUBTOTAL (5-15 points)	TOTAL SCORE (20-60 points)
Site #	Site Name	Location					
10	E Main St Cascade	E Main St between Spring St SE & 2nd Ave E	9	13	11	13	46
6	Village center	Intersection of Colchester Dr E and E Main St	12	8	11	14	45
39	Alaska Ave E Detention Pond	Big detention pond off Alaska Ave E between E Harrison St and E Polk Ave	13	13	7	11	44
15	Manchester Community Church	Between Madrone Ave E, Cedar St E, & E Chester Rd	13	12	8	9	42
29	E Raintree Ln	E Raintree Ln	13	8	13	7	41
68	E Spruce St Cascade	Between Valley Ave E and Spring St SE	9	13	10	9	41





Urban Design

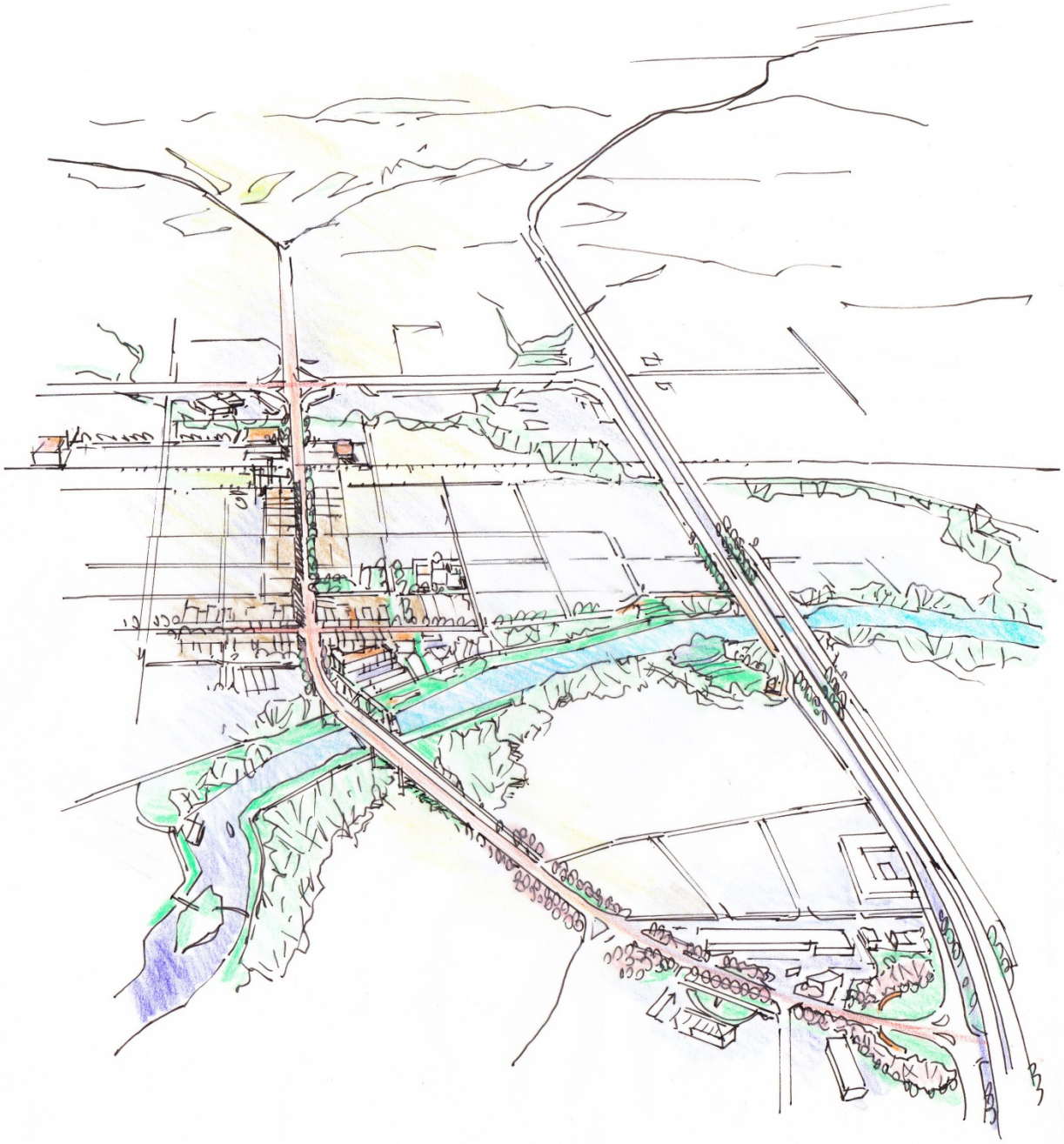
Introduction

The following section captures the major conceptual proposals of the SDAT Team regarding urban design, downtown development, and connectivity.

The importance of Trees Downtown

Ornamental trees provide a powerful entry procession and beginning to the wayfinding system of Bastrop. A parkway of flowering trees guide new visitors to the iconic bridge linked to “Main Street” the place of arrival. The street trees provide a quiet relief and contrast to the jumbled commercial landscape of the highway. Trees are the glue for the Bastrop village landscape.





Within the study area, Bastrop has three clearly defined parts that need to be nourished: the river, Main Street and the Chestnut Street corridor. All of these could emerge as source of civic pride with a few strategic investments. The city has made commendable progress to this point in its development and preservation efforts. Carefully conceived development controls will insure Bastrop's historic legacy remains in clear contrast with the auto-oriented highway commercial on periphery.

The River Loop

Bastrop's most critical placemaking assets are centered around the river and it's juxtaposition with the historic main street. Development proposals contained in this river loop concept plan include:

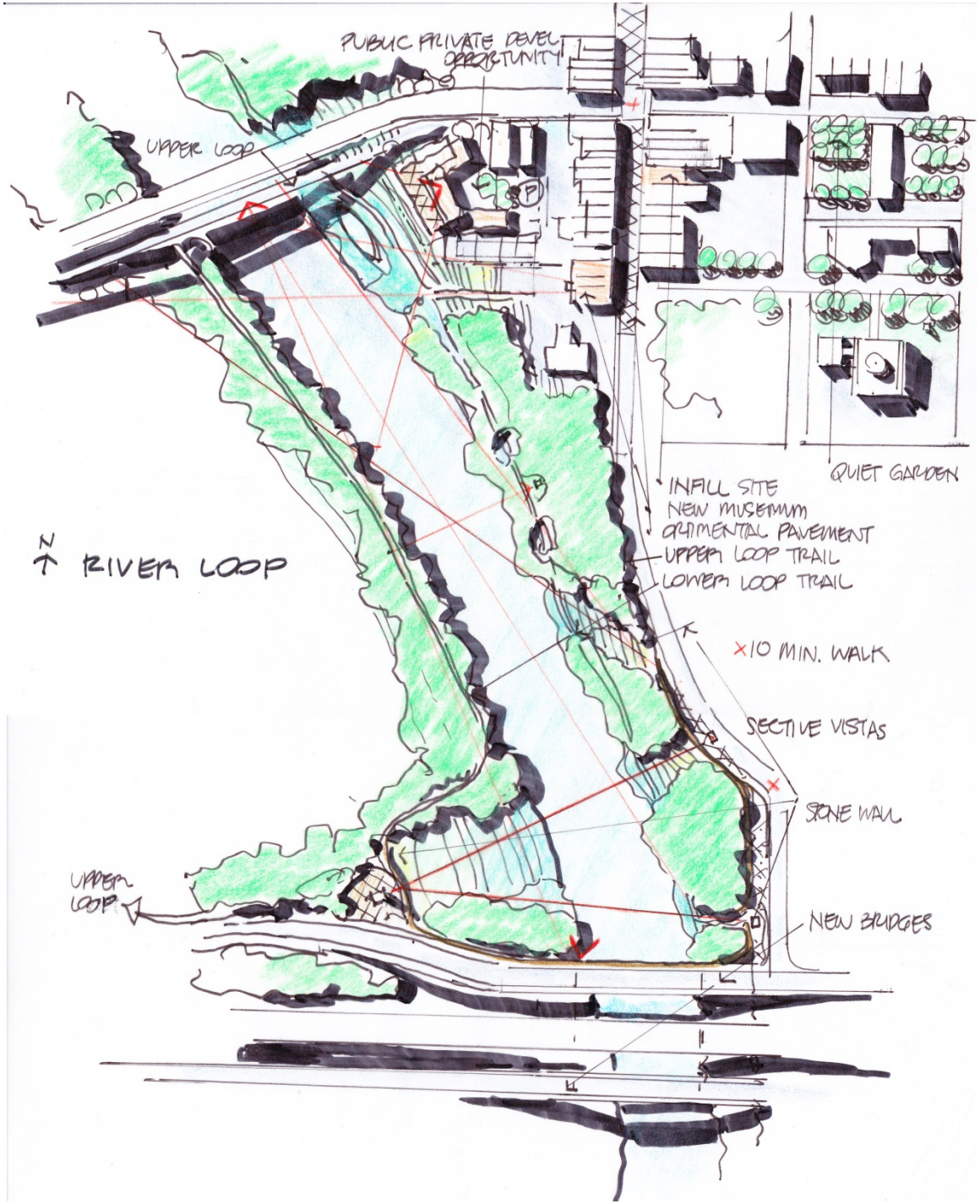
• A series of vistas across the river valley are revealed through careful and selective intervention of the tree canopy.

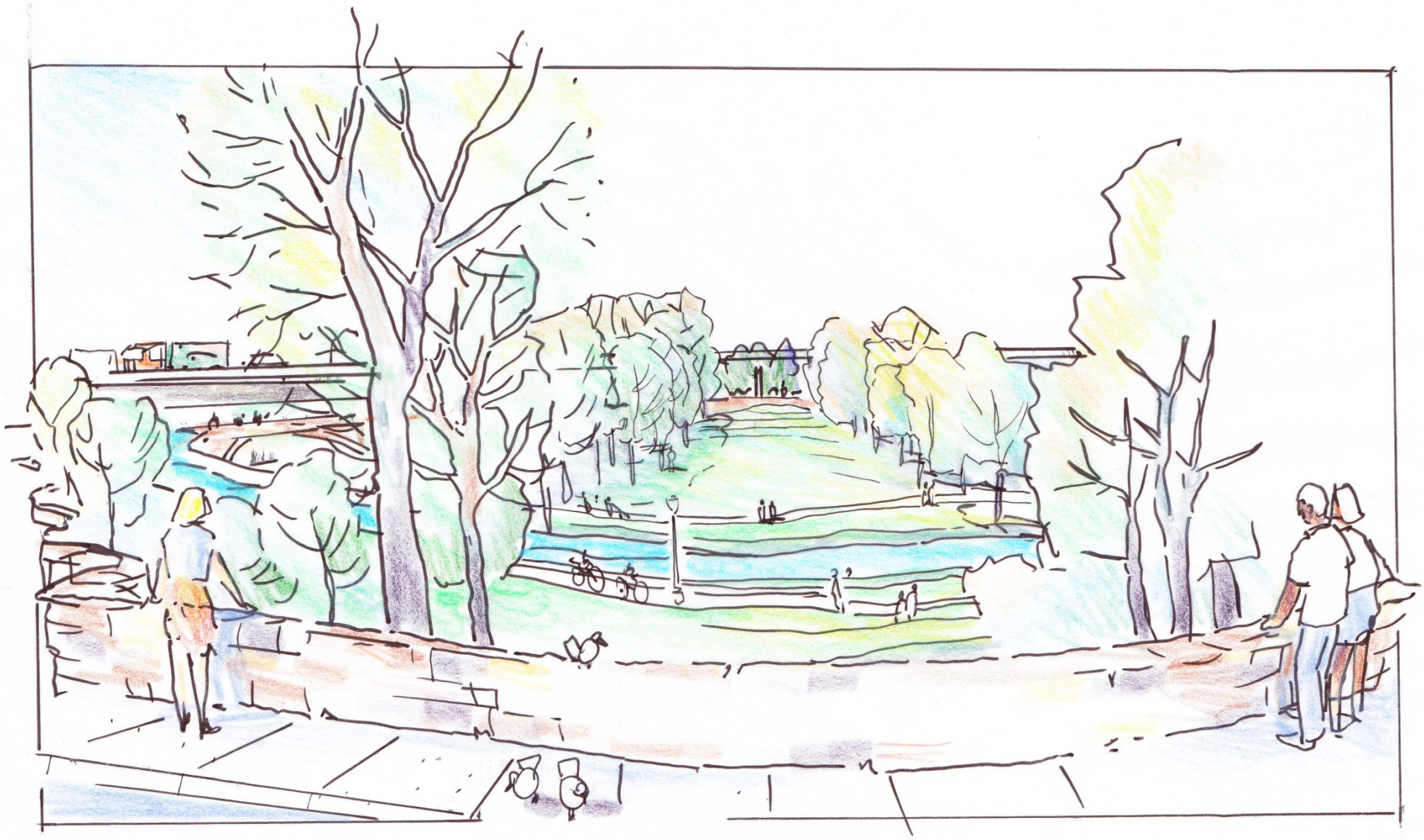
• The trail system is extended, crossing the river on a new service-road bridge. The extension has an upper loop around the neighborhood going over the bridge back to main street. It also has a lower trail along an easement at the western edge of the river. This new trail loop would mirror the existing upper and lower path system on the east side of the river.

• The river bluff has great possibilities for public–private development. It could include a 30 room boutique hotel, underground public parking and riverside restaurant.

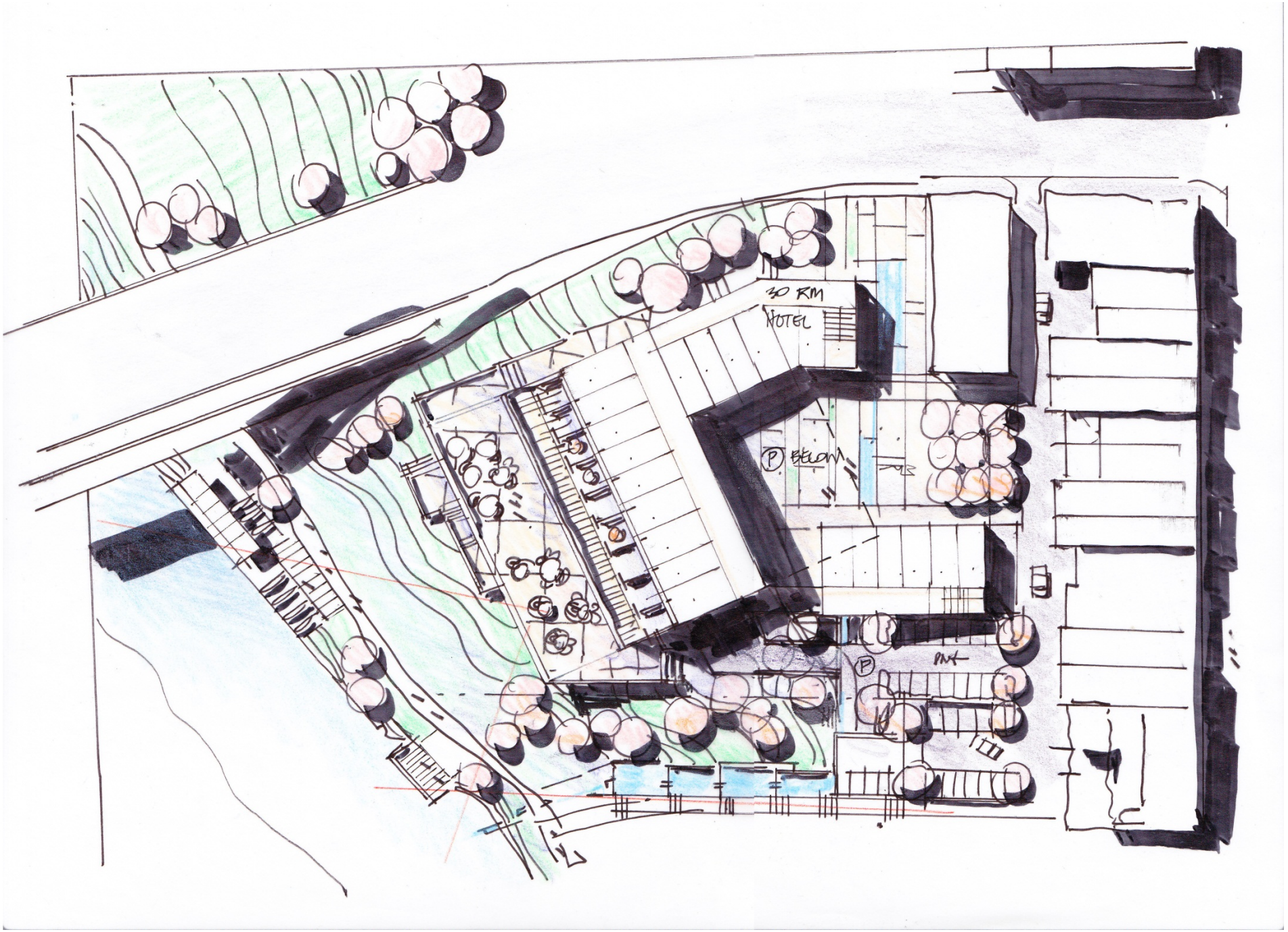
• An important site infill opportunity exists on Main Street.

• The plan proposes a "quiet garden" at the corner of Chestnut and Water Street. This small square would be a place of contemplation with a canopy of trees, an understated water feature, shade plants and a low stone wall at the street to reduce tire whine from Chestnut Street traffic and provide a sense of enclosure.

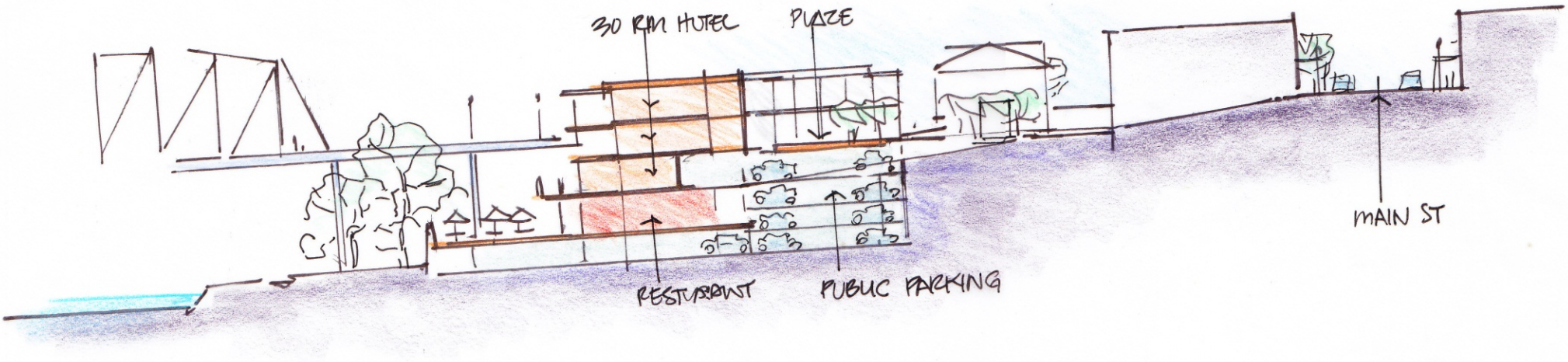




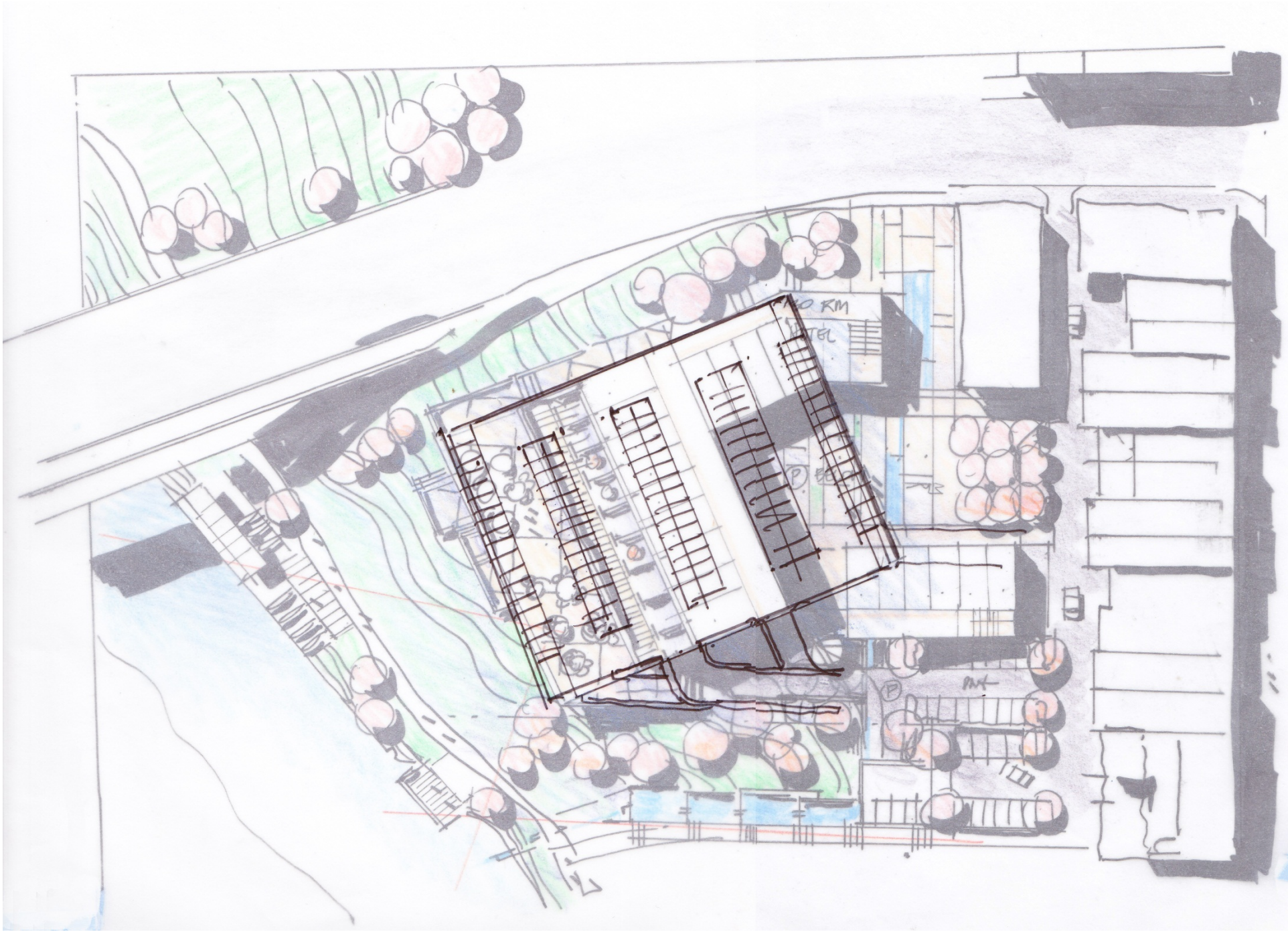
A fairway like vista reveals the extent of the public domain adjacent to the proposed new service–road bridge. A stone wall follows the upper path on the east and continues the thematic material found on street improvements on Chestnut.



This site has wonderful position over the river and excellent accessibility to Main Street businesses giving it a high potential for recreational and tourism use. This plan view indicates a 30-room boutique hotel with a terrace restaurant and a boathouse at the rivers edge. Any development of this site should be carefully studied to leverage its catalytic effect on both river and Main Street activity.



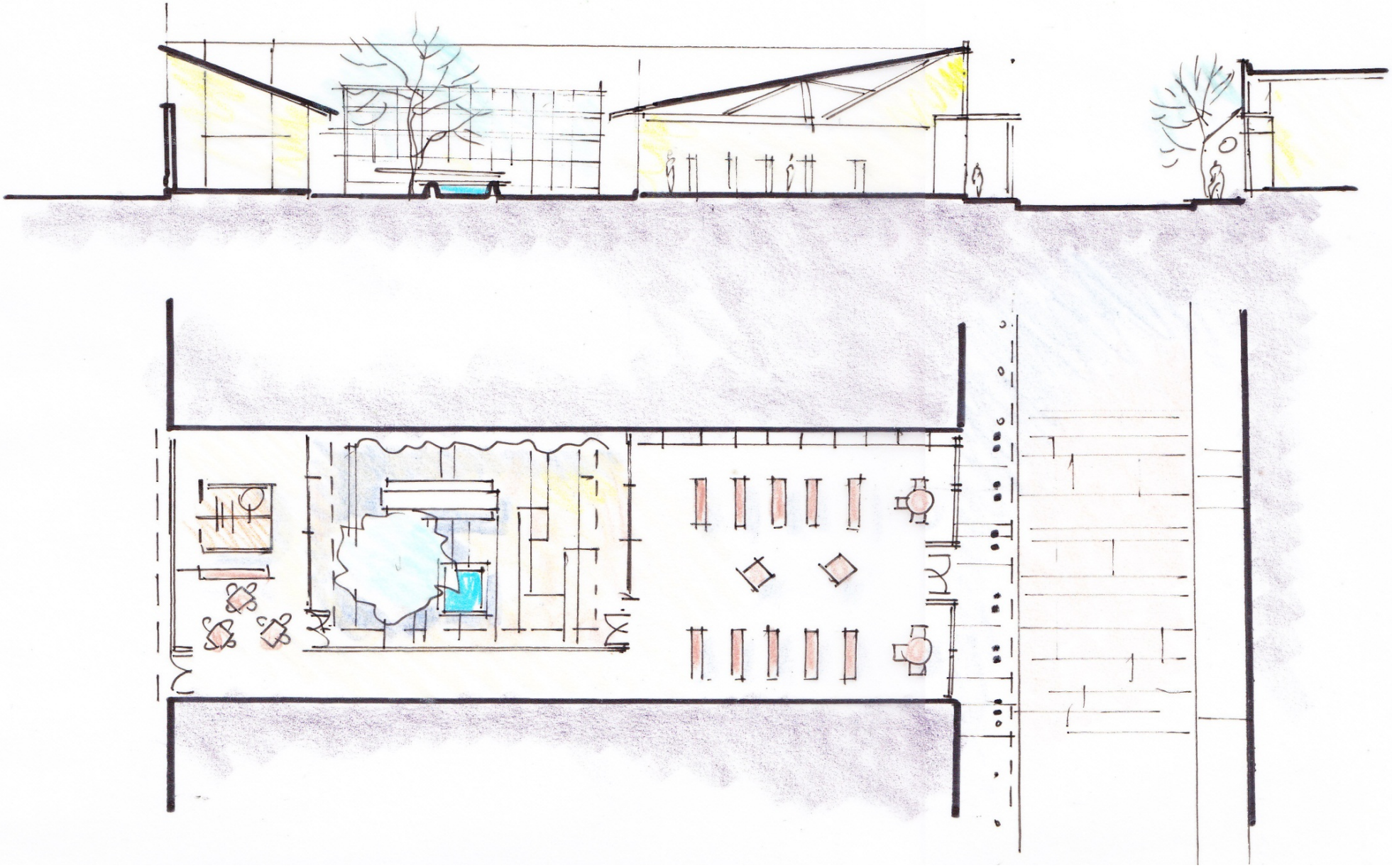
This site section reveals the linkage with the river; the potential for structured public parking and how development can be scaled to fit with the downtown.



The longer term public parking needs for the downtown could be met in one location and be an incentive for a thoughtful boutique hotel developer.

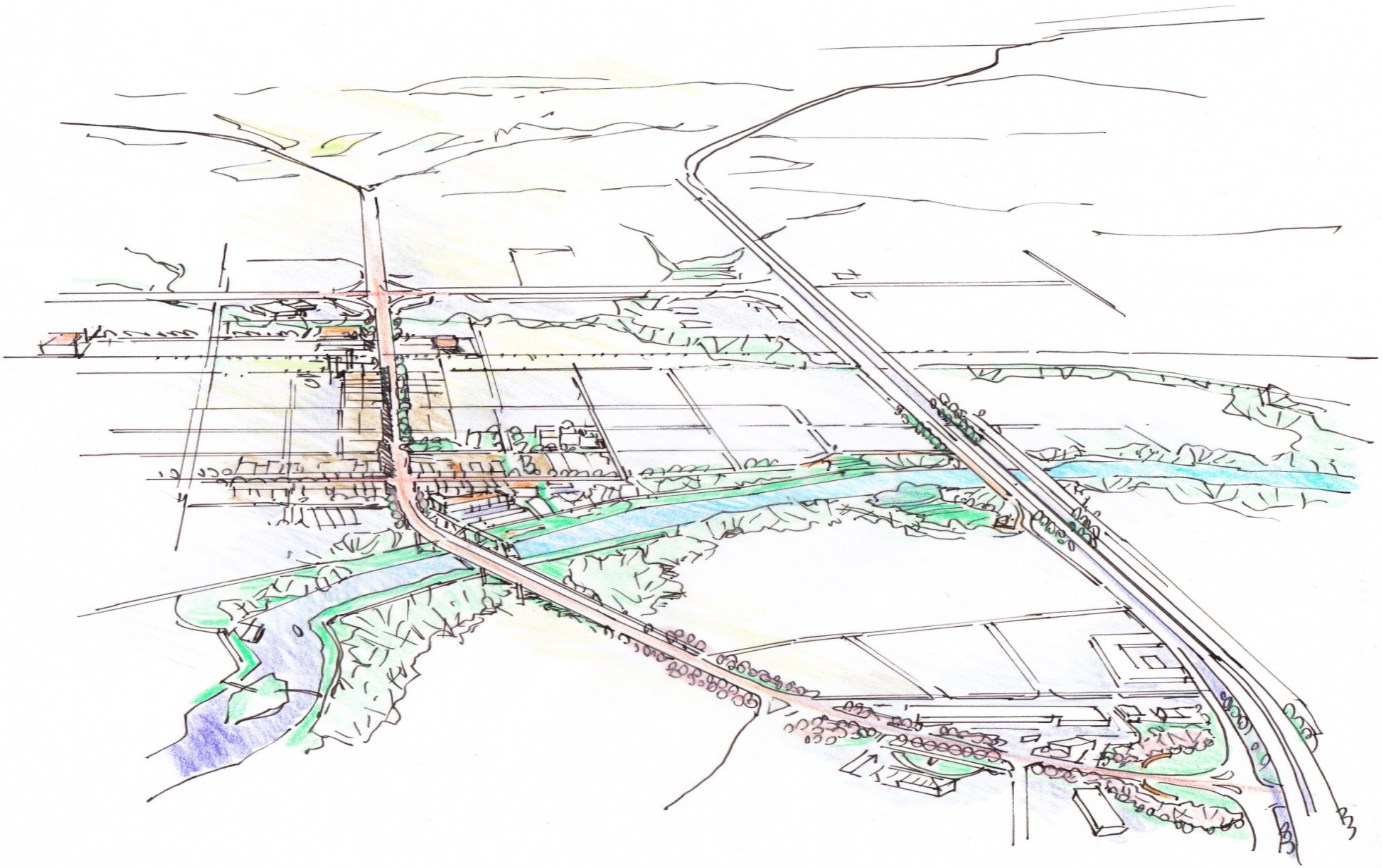


An eye-level view of the river walk picks up the public stair paralleled with the landscaped drainage filtration system; the ornamentally lit bridge; and the terrace overlooking the river and the boathouse.



The team's plan recommends a careful, compatibly scaled infill project on the empty Main Street site. These drawings illustrates a highly transparent storefront to a mixed use shop with an open courtyard inviting visitors to explore its layered space and balanced natural light. Main Street is ornamentally paved to calm traffic and reflect the historic feel of the street.

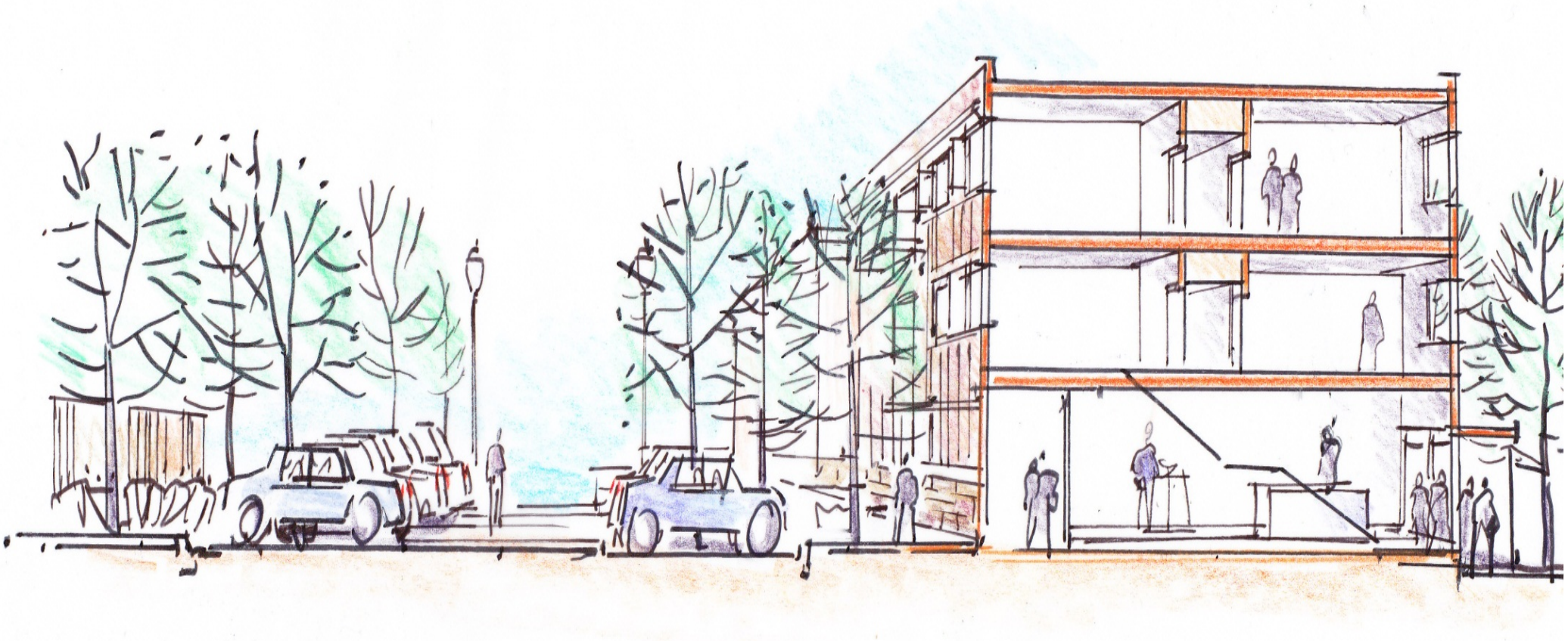




The improvements to the Chestnut Street streetscape are laudable and form an investment of public dollars to be protected, built upon and enhanced. This spine has been a wonderful armature for city hall, the convention center. The next pieces need to focus on intimate involvement of the pedestrian with the architecture.



The form based code recommendation is the best means to link the Chestnut streetscape with historic scale of Main Street. More street trees improve the Chestnut Street's progression and walkability as it moves to the east.



The form based code “build out” includes commercial frontage, as well as screened and landscaped parking in the rear. The second and third stories are office or residential.



A terrace residential option orients away from the street, while providing garages and unique loft units. The intent of the form based code is maintained at the street wall and the transition to a residential neighborhood is gentle on the rear.



Economic Strategy

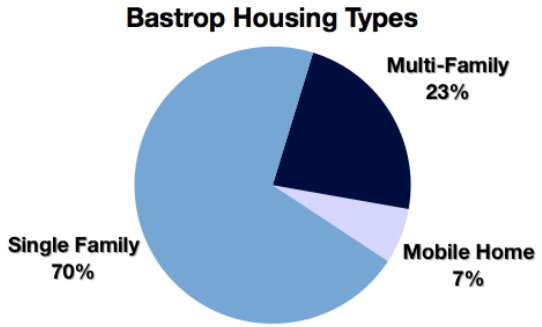
Plan for Growth

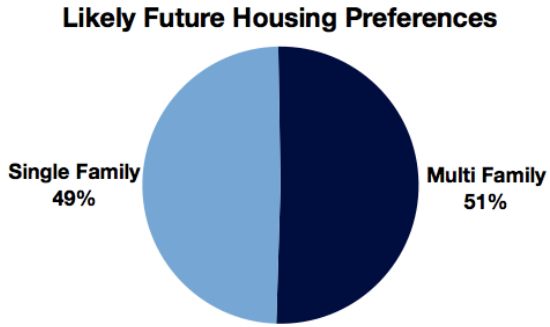
For better or worse, Bastrop is going to continue to grow. Mid-range projections from the Texas Stare Data Center estimate county annual growth slowly attenuating from 3.5% to 2.6% over thirty years. Right now Bastrop is facing real estate pressures from the recent fire that devastated a significant amount of local housing stock. If Bastrop Ciy grows at the same rate, there will be around 1000 new households every 10 years. The information that follows suggests that this may underestimate city growth pressures, because of increasing preferences for living close to downtown as opposed to the outlying suburbs. This means that for a city with 2,500 households, Bastrop may double in size over the next twenty years. This change could overwhelm the town by continuing the recent development trends and patterns. However, if planned for, this growth could be an opportunity to enable the aspirations of downtown. The City must get ahead of the growth by planning for the desired change, and use this momentum to improve downtown rather than disturb it.

Medium Growth Scenario	2010	2020	2030	2040
Bastrop County Population	82,000	112,000	149,000	193,000
annual growth rate	3.5%	3.2%	2.9%	2.6%
Bastrop City Households	2500	3,400	4,600	5,900
change		**900**	**1,100**	**1,300**

Develop a Housing Strategy

There is a national demographic shift in motion as baby-boomers begin retiring and their children, generation Y, are growing up and entering the workforce, buying homes and starting families of their own. Interestingly, the majority of both demographic groups desire the same thing: small lot and multi-family housing in walkable downtowns. This means that the nation as a whole will have a shortage of these products and will need to adjust the housing mix. We have already seen with the foreclosure crisis, the first wave of casualties in this shift as poorly built suburban neighborhoods are vacated and quickly deteriorate. Bastrop currently reflects the national average housing mix, with single family units representing around 70% of the stock. In the future, this ratio will need to change to provide a mix of housing products and prices for the future residents. This reflects one of the goals we heard articulated by participants, that the City should accommodate all ages, incomes and lifestyles. This is not necessarily code for providing low income housing. We heard that while there are expensive, upper income houses as well as small inexpensive units, there is very little available in the middle for workforce housing close to downtown.





Accommodating growth and balancing the mix of housing will require a housing strategy. The strategy will be different for the varied condition of neighborhoods downtown. The neighborhood north of Chestnut needs to be preserved and enhanced; the lots south of Chestnut provide opportunity for infill and rehabilitation; and the corridor along Chestnut is an opportunity for redevelopment. An infill strategy for the existing neighborhoods should help make use of the 9 acres of vacant lots. This does not include housing that is dilapidated, obsolete, or uninhabitable, but only lots that have nothing on them. While 9 acres is not much for a new suburban development, building on these lots at the same scale as their adjacent neighborhoods would accommodate 84 new units in downtown. While this does not sound like much, that would be around 7% of the existing downtown housing stock. This type of infill can be accomplished with housing types and massing that match the existing neighborhoods.

Focus on the Chestnut Corridor

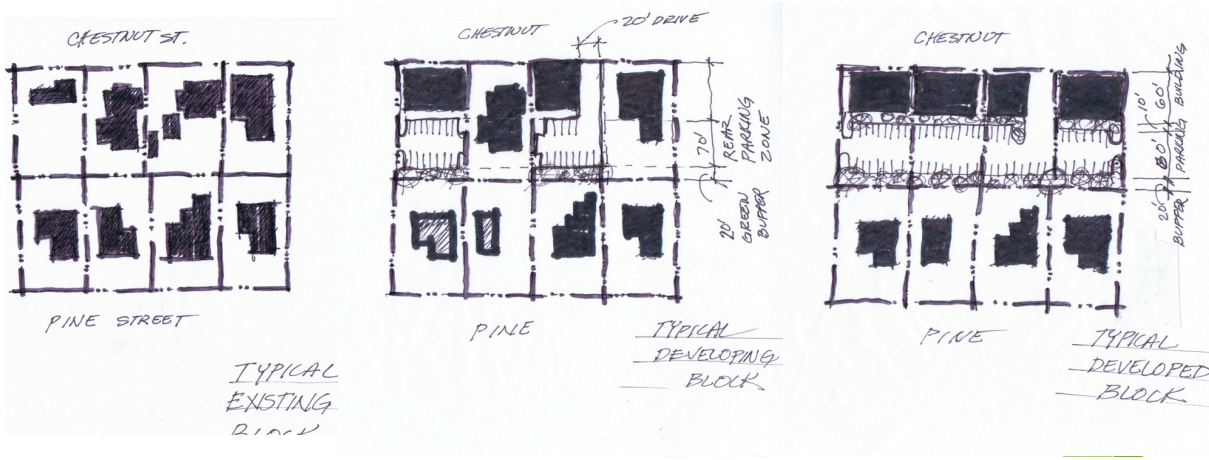
The Chestnut Street Corridor is a huge opportunity for redevelopment and needs attention and planning for capturing growth. With around 17 acres of land primed for redevelopment, this area is suitable for a mix of future housing, retail and employment space. In planning for this area, the City should take care to develop a balanced program of supportable future uses in coordination with the design. Our preliminary analysis suggests this land could provide 80,000 square feet of first floor retail uses on both sides of three blocks, along with over 200 multifamily units and 80,000 square feet of office space for 230 new workers. This preliminary program needs to be revised and coordinated with designs and market analysis, but it suggests the scope of what is achievable based on on-site surface parking.

Housing Infill	acres	units	new lot size	typical dim.
Farm Lots	2.2	16	on 6000 sf lots	54 x 110
Town Lots	6.8	69	on 4500 sf lots	40 x 110
Total	**9.0**	**84**		

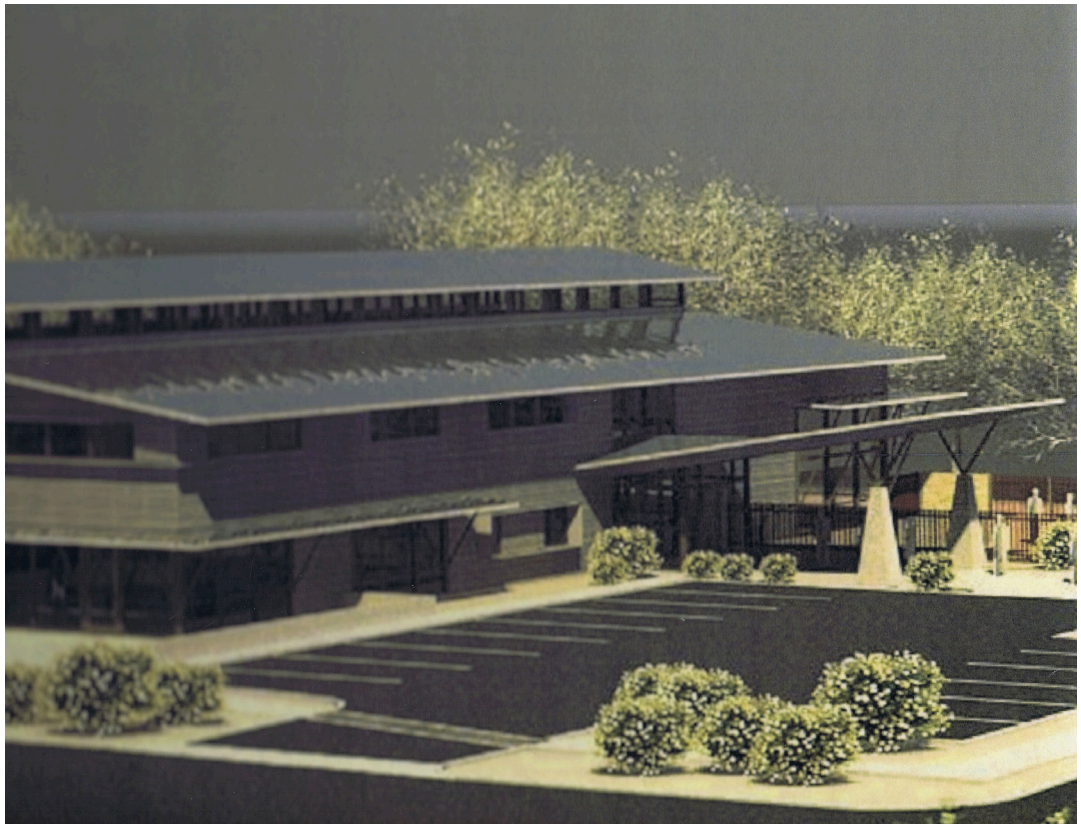




There is a perception that parking in the historic district is difficult, although a recent study suggests that at peak hours parking is at 60% of capacity. Whether or not the study is accurate, the perception remains a problem and requires a coordinated parking strategy for downtown. The existing spaces should be mapped and counted and the strategy and rules need to be articulated clearly. The location of parking needs to be evident to customers and investors. We have heard that one investor decided not to open a new restaurant downtown because they were told of parking requirements per table that were not available. Whether the regulations actually require such parking is in this case less relevant than the perception the investor was left with. The rules must be clearly articulated to welcome new investment and should demonstrate the sufficiency of existing parking to investors and their financiers.



Future development along the Chestnut Street corridor will also require a parking strategy that is closely coordinated with the design of new buildings. The sample redevelopment recommendations of this team show how this area offers an opportunity to provide parking behind new structures, creating parking alleys. As new buildings are introduced with minimal setbacks, they should provide parking at the back of the site. Development of corner lots should allow access to the parking alley. This provides the opportunity for shared parking behind the block. Other coordinated strategies could include the City providing small, discrete public parking lots or providing centrally located public parking lots or decks to relinquish the burden of parking for land and business owners. Existing City parking lots should be considered for their ability to serve this function.



Preserve and enhance the Walkable Downtown

The team was asked to suggest examples of things the City should not do or should avoid. The City should not allow surface parking between buildings and the street. Allowing this type of suburban style development obviates the central distinguishing asset of the downtown. The undisturbed pedestrian block structure of downtown is an enviable asset and one of the greatest strengths of the City.

Allowing this type of parking fails to differentiate the downtown from the suburbs and wastes the existing pedestrian block scale, charm and walkable environment that gives the downtown its competitive advantage and makes downtown a desirable location. Currently, Historic Bastrop is the "only game in town", or in this case the county, when it comes to the ability to provide a walkable environment; don't waste it by building like every other suburban place in America.





Expand Opportunities Downtown

In terms of employment, things are already underway in Bastrop. There is a possibility that Austin Community College will locate here, as well as St. David's Hospital. Take advantage of these opportunities to plan for the connections between their new locations and downtown. The team also heard that an alternative energy company and a bio-tech firm have located in Bastrop, primarily for the quality of life offered in town.

Bastrop already has a coffee shop that is full of young professionals on laptops. But why is this not downtown? These are the small business entrepreneurs who prefer to be in walkable places close to restaurants and, as demonstrated, coffee shops. These professionals represent a potential for cheap, flexible, unconventional office space. This corresponds to participants telling the team that there is demand for office space downtown in units under 500 square feet. Downtown could provide this type of space by cleaning up second floors above retail on Mainstreet and on Chestnut. This is a national trend that is commonly missed in small downtowns. Although most people familiar with downtowns or economic development know that most employment growth is in small businesses, these are hardly ever the target market for office developers who tend to build suburban products with over 15,000 square foot plates. Provide space for these small businesses in downtown.

Bastrop already has much of what it takes to attract new small businesses. The small-town feel, access to nature, cheap space, and attractive housing stock are exactly what many companies and the creative class are looking for. To build on these strengths, the team recommends the following:

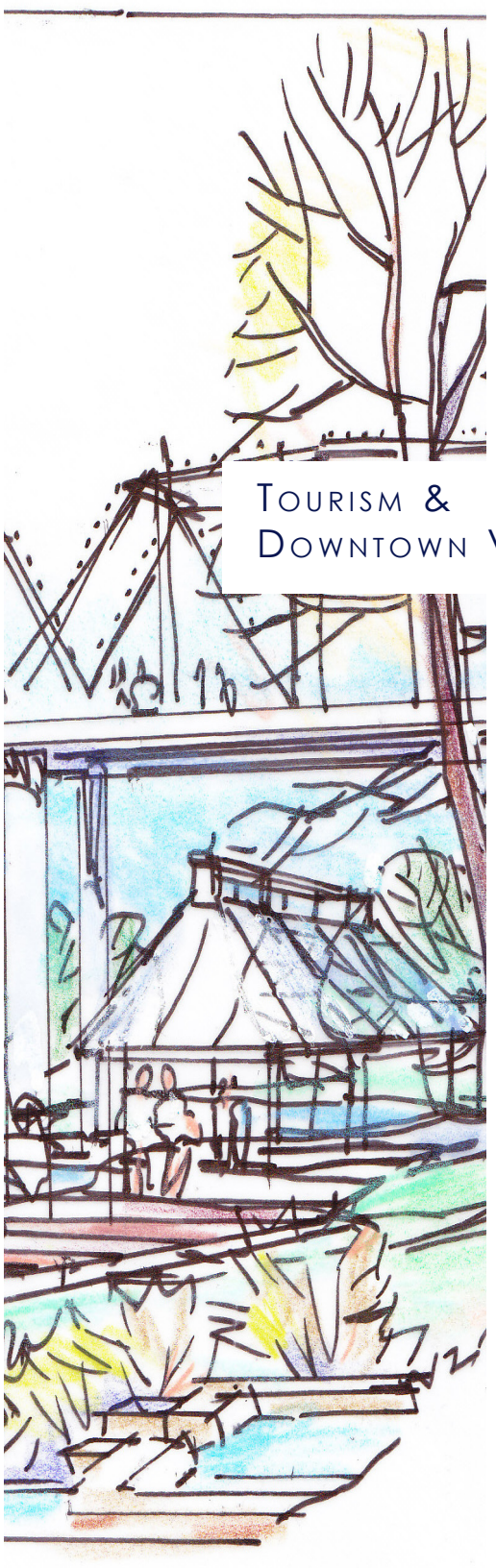
-provide a mix of housing types, especially workforce and middle income units that include multi-family options;
-provide small, cheap start-up space;
-provide more and better amenities like coffee shops, restaurants and grocery stores in downtown.



To accomplish these economic development goals, regulations must be changed. The SDAT team recommends implementing a form-based code. Currently, many of the vacant lots in neighborhoods are can't be redeveloped because the existing zoning code requires suburban standards for lot sizes and setbacks, robbing the land of productive value. Establishing a form-based code could unlock the potential of these sites and establish certainty about the rules for investors and developers. These new regulations should follow a community visioning process and plan for downtown. This process should seek to build consensus and articulate a common direction for downtown.

Perhaps the most necessary strategic action for strengthening downtown will be the revision of the Comprehensive Plan for the City. Currently, this document promotes sprawl. Although the team heard from participants that there is a stable balance between downtown and the east side, every other small downtown in America tells a different story. As the recent map from the Economic Development Department implies, the economic life of Bastrop is not Downtown, but sprawling along highway 71. While some infrequent uses belong on the highway and are more efficiently located there, each apparel store, restaurant, coffee shop and service draws business away from downtown. Don't let this pattern of development continue to sap energy from the downtown. The City, through the Comprehensive Plan, should commit to making downtown the center of economic and social activity.





Tourism & Downtown Vitality

Tourism and Downtown Vitality

Tourism has the potential to be a driving force for the economy of Bastrop. Location, history, an intact downtown with supporting neighborhoods, the Colorado River at its back door, and the proximity of a major state park all play into the future for Bastrop as a town poised to capture the tourism market. However, Bastrop is more than just a place for visitors. It has a real population, which requires a variety of amenities including shopping options, cultural venues, jobs, parklands and ease of transportation. Fortunately, Bastrop can serve both populations if it plans carefully. In Bastrop's case most of the amenities that its citizens want will also be the very things that attract the tourists to the community. If tourism is to be its economic driver, it will need to look at tourism from a "side-ways viewpoint" and straight on.

Creative Economy: from a side-ways view

Bastrop has the opportunity to look at itself in a new way…not just as an historic community but one that is growing with a strong creative spirit. It has the opportunity to link to a growing movement based in the "creative economy." Identified in 2000, this new development paradigm links the economy and culture, embracing economic, cultural, technological and social aspects of development at both the macro and micro levels. Central to the new paradigm is the fact that creativity, knowledge and access to information are increasingly recognized as powerful engines driving economic growth and promoting development in a globalizing world. Together, artists, cultural nonprofits, and creative businesses produce and distribute cultural goods and services that impact the economy by generating jobs, revenue, and quality of life.

Creative class workers are often viewed as the under 30 demographic, but as they age they are looking for the very things that Bastrop provides. In reality, this group of creatives is not about age...it is represented across all age groups. Since there already exists an artistic and creative community in the region, catalyzing an attractive place for this group could bring a new vibrancy to Bastrop.

The creative economy refers to a range of economic activities which are concerned with the generation or exploitation of knowledge and information. The current DCMS definition sets forth eleven creative sectors. They are:

- Advertising and marketing
- Architecture
- Arts and antique markets
- Crafts
- Design (see also communication design)
- Designer Fashion
- Film, video and photography
- Software, computer games and electronic publishing
- Music and the visual and performing arts
- Publishing
- Television and Radio (DCMS 2006)

The much broader area of research and development in science and technology is often included and it is now being argued that the culinary arts should be included.

The Creative Impact

Creative enterprises and individuals contribute significantly to local and regional economies, fueling other sectors of the economy in unique ways. The data is now proving that a relatively higher concentration of creative enterprises and creative workers in a geographic area yields a competitive edge by elevating the area's quality of life and improving its ability to attract economic activity. Other studies show that educational attainment is also an important predictor; people with more formal education attend more live performances and patronize more museums, libraries, and other cultural organizations. Cultural non-profit organizations benefit from residents (and visitors) who value art and culture. On the other hand, a region's vibrant heritage, outstanding cultural institutions, and industry mix will attract and retain bright and innovative members of the creative economy workforce. It presents a dynamic virtuous cycle.

Bastrop is well on the way to having a creative economy. The team met many members of the community who would easily fit into one of these sectors. We identified numerous places in the downtown planning district that are or could be key to the growth of the creative economy: the new performing arts center at the school, the film studio just blocks from the school, the music venue in the downtown, the planned museum, performing spaces at a variety of churches, the opera house, inside and outside venues at the new convention center, the library, and potential space along the riverfront and its parks. Those we interviewed noted that due to the close proximity to the airport, Bastrop now is home to numerous consultants and is brimming with creative entrepreneurship.

The decision to convert the old mill buildings into an Arts Center is just one more step in that direction. While there are some problems with orientation (ie parking on the primary street side), the decision on use is the right one. The current effort should be seen as a first step. Step two would be to consider the use of the surrounding land to include additional exhibition and gallery space and the potential for live-work space. Each of these elements will fit nicely along Chestnut, the commercial street, and will make a smooth transition into the surrounding neighborhoods.





Additionally, buildings across Chestnut to the south should eventually be considered as part of the District. Creating an Arts and Creative District around the Arts Center will reinforce the opportunities in that area and strengthen old ties. Could the creative district include the culinary arts and the return of Bastrop's chocolate maker or expansion of its foundry? There are some exciting possibilities to explore in the future.

One example to learn from is the Miller Beach (Indiana) Arts and Cultural District which was created as a catalyst for urban regeneration, providing a range of places of cultural production and consumption - such as art galleries, dance studios, theaters, art cinemas, music venues, retail establishments, restaurants as well as public spaces for live performances, artistic expression and cultural exhibits in downtown Miller's historic setting. As a cultural destination for the visual, performing and culinary arts, the district is slated to include several Live/Work spaces for artists and other individuals involved in various creative industries. It is also home to the Wirt-Emerson School for Visual and Performing Arts. This public magnet school attracts artistically and academically gifted students from across the region. The school trains young artists in various aspects of painting, drawing, drama, creative writing, pottery, vocal performance and instrumentation and also focuses on the needs of academically high achieving students. With the proximity of the performing arts space at the Bastrop school and the new Arts Center on Chestnut Street the similarities with Miller Beach are striking.

Another small town example is Lancaster, PA, in the heart of Amish country. It now hosts a hip set of artistic types – thanks, in no small part, to a new arts school (think arts center). The creatives have turned Lancaster into a place for art and cuisine and an easy get-away for those in NY, Philly and DC. Staying the night is an artful affair as well with 2 new boutique hotels, both in historic settings - a tobacco warehouse and a cork factory. The performing arts are being transformed, the food scene is growing and the antique shops are already well known. On the first Friday of each month, the town stays opens late for art evenings at more than 70 spaces with shopping, live performances, concerts and, of course, open galleries.

These case studies illustrate the fact that when you meet citizen needs you also create amenities that tourists want. The critical issue to prioritize regarding tourism is that Bastrop should add amenities that are important and significant to its residents first.

Recommendations… for those that live here:

• Take a new look at yourselves through the lens of the creative economy. Learn what it is and review existing studies. Pick the relevant elements from those studies and develop them for Bastrop. Pull the best ideas to set up a format for your own Creative Economy Study. Fill in the blanks and evaluate what is here. Recruit to bring more.

  o (www.NEFA.org) Much of the original work on the topic comes from the New England Foundation for the Arts and its work with Mt Auburn Associates.

  o Read NEFA's The Creative Economy: a new definition 2007 for details and to better understand the primary components of 1- the creative cluster refers to industry (businesses and non-profits), 2 – creative workforce (people and their occupations) and 3 – creative communities (places).

  o Explore NEFA's Creative Communities Exchange and its link to the various projects across the region.

  o Use the Creative DC Action Agenda 2008 as a model for creating an implementation plan.

• Identify the sectors that make the most sense for Bastrop and begin to plan infrastructure, amenities and opportunities for these sectors.

• Identify those in the creative economy sector currently living in Bastrop or in the nearby area…who are they, where are they and in what sector. Discover ways to connect them.

• Bring these voices to the table to glean new ideas, explore options for business entrepreneurship, determine needed incentives, etc

• Identify the community assets that relate to the creative economy and to your events and festivals.

• Use all those elements already in place–sectors and people, places and events – to recruit new pieces of the creative economy.

• Continue to move forward on the new Arts Center but think of it as phase 1

• Establish an Arts and Creative District around the proposed Arts Center as phase 2. Essentially create a cluster of creatives who will “feed” off each other and whose presence will form a solid bookend for the upper end of Chestnut Street. Think broadly about what they will need... studio space, live-work space, temporary spaces, shared spaces for production, retail and presentation space. The development within the district will come in phases as well. Its shape and the buildings should reflect the creative atmosphere while still fitting into the streetscape and surrounding neighborhoods.

• Begin to plan for and acquire land to initiate the development phase, which would primarily take place on the north side of Chestnut Street and to the north and west of the planned Center. Gallery space, studios, and performance venues could be along the commercial corridor with live/work space making the transition with the surrounding neighborhoods.

• Market the community as a great place to “live” because of the arts and its creativity.

Tourism and Marketing

Bastrop should be commended on its initiative to become a Main Street community and to market its history. Its history is authentic and the community is proud of its heritage. Bastrop has a historically significant Main Street with intact storefronts and surrounding neighborhoods to complement the quality of the experience. One set of criteria for bringing tourists to a downtown includes: a concentration of storefront type buildings (best if brick), historic homes, a soda fountain, charm, quaint….Bastrop can check all of those boxes!

These qualities will attract tourists, but the question is how do you get them to stay, and, more importantly, to spend their money. History is a wonderful backdrop and Bastrop has done a great job of telling the visitor to come experience history. It has to be more than what one brochure suggested… it invited tourists to "drive through" our historic downtown and neighborhoods. Bastrop is about to launch a new portfolio of brochures which are generally well done; however, there appears to be no "call to action" and no link between the brochures. Bastrop has a variety of small businesses that are beginning to form a cluster around gifts, galleries and women's apparel. Helping to market and recruit to these clusters would support current businesses. Additional marketing pitches might include cuisine, arts and the creative, and recreation. The current web-based marketing campaign of the Hyatt Resort is an excellent example of making connections across and between the assets in the Bastrop region.

As Bastrop thinks about a new marketing dialogue it is important to understand not just who the tourist is by age (Gen X or Boomer), but how they travel. Who is the tourist for Bastrop: the urban explorer, the knowledge seeker, the family, the foodie, the outdoor enthusiast? Each market will require new collateral material and new programming to reinforce the marketing push. As these new markets are identified, the marketing and promotions committees will need to work side by side to fully understand not only who and where these tourists are but what are their needs and expectations when they arrive. While Bastrop has several very successful festivals which are held annually, new events and festivals will need to be very strategic in exploring – who is the market, what will they require, did we meet the expectations and how can we connect better?





At the current time these vibrant promotions do not appear to be part of an overall marketing strategy but rather a collection of events, which in fact might happen in any downtown across the country. Expanding ideas like 'River of Lights' which focus on the river serve as examples of events and festivals with direct ties to the recreational amenities of Bastrop. Another option might be the links between Bastrop's restaurants and the culinary arts. The community is fortunate to have a number of restaurants, which offer a variety of price and style giving customers a reason to come, and to come back.

The role of the new Arts Center and its complementary components – galleries, studios and performing venues – will be a growing part of the marketing and programming to reach future tourists. These issues are primarily addressed in the Creative Economy section of this report. Also important will be the growing connectivity with the environment, the state park and the Colorado River, which will be addressed in the Connectivity and Place-making section.

Adequate funding for marketing campaigns will be essential. This switch to campaigns beyond the historical point of view needs to be well coordinated and will need sustainable funding to create a solid brand.

Recommendations for those that come to visit:

- Begin to put more emphasis on the activities of Bastrop: eating, shopping, exploring, playing, etc. Create a "call to action" in each brochure and present linkages across the collateral materials. At the next printing, is there space on the brochures to reference the lists of brochures available or to use QR codes to link the information.
- Work with the state tourism office to fully understand the interest of potential new tourism markets for Bastrop. Identify who they are, what they do for fun and what they will expect from their Bastrop experience.
- The DBA should explore new events that support what Bastrop has to offer. The DBA, Chamber of Commerce and others should work together to create a events strategy that ties closely to the overall marketing strategy which really focuses on specific audiences that they want to bring to Bastrop, as well as the assets they wish to promote.
- Develop criteria for new marketing events and festivals. Create new events specific to a new market. Don't create anything new until the committee has tested it against the criteria for the new market.
- Explore cuisine and the culinary arts as a possible new focus.
- Explore the use of an expanded bed tax or re-distribution of the current tax to create a sustainable funding stream for marketing campaigns.





Connectivity and Placemaking

Bastrop is a charming small town with lots of things to keep the citizen and the tourist interested in it…but the downtown district is a bit too big to walk around comfortably. Citizens out for a stroll or their morning jog will find it pleasant and just about the right size. Tourists won't be able to take it all in at one time. However, connectivity is critically important for both the citizen and the tourist.

The team heard many times about making a link between the downtown and the new convention center. Visual links can help (banners and sidewalk medallions) but the reality is that most visitors in the downtown will get in their cars and drive to the new Arts Center or the Convention Center or vice versa. Appropriate parking at these key points will be required. With substantial parking at the Convention Center and several parking lots in the downtown the need might be met, except for festival days, for several years to come.

With that acknowledgement, there remain opportunities to connect the historic downtown with other parts of town, especially along the river and down Chestnut Street. As an example, the new Map of Attractions indicates 5 existing trails, but without the brochure the visitor would not know they exist. The Chestnut Street Medallion trail is somewhat obvious if you happen to be walking down the street...at some point you realize that there are multiple markers, but you may not realize they are different or that they tell a story. As you consider your wayfinding options, consider signs at key points that direct visitors to the trails and key points of interest or ways to provide them more information, either historic details or business directories. With the growth of smart phones, consider the use of QR codes as well as actual signs. The medallion trail brochure does not have a contextual map that alerts visitors to where the trail is in the community. It does not give the addresses of the sites mentioned in the booklet. If you wanted to visit the site you have no way of knowing if that is possible or where it is located.

In the Main Street area, heritage trail signs and brochures will create connectivity, assisting with both information and wayfinding. There exist a few examples (photo: wayfinding is helpful on the parking lot sign) near downtown parking, but there doesn't seem to be a system of signs to assist the visitor.









The fireman's sculpture is a prime example of public art that might be expanded at key nodes or along routes to create interest and connectivity.

Programming between key points will also create temporary or permanent links. Smaller nodes can be created to form linkages along longer routes. Public art such as that at the fire station and the new Convention Center create visual links. Linking with green spaces is especially appropriate for historic communities and those with sunny and hot weather. With the use of QR codes and smart phone apps many layers of information can be developed to support connectivity. Layers might include: tidbits of history, directions to someplace to get a cool drink, information on when the band concert will begin, and others.

Key new linkages will be needed between the recreational components and the creative components. The team plotted on a map the key creative sites and was pleased at the number and the options to connect by both walking and biking. The distances are further for recreation if the state park is to be a part of the effort. Biking trails and biking lanes in traffic ways will need to be constructed and signed. Greenways for walking and biking could be combined with sidewalks to form links between the convention center and the riverfront.

One example that might provide useful insights would be Downtown Hartford's (CT) iQuilt Plan. Hartford identified 45 cultural assets and destinations with a 15-minute walk including museums, performing spaces, historic landmarks, architecturally significant buildings and public art. The community plan links those assets with an innovative pedestrian network.

Geographic uniqueness and the recreation linkages between the state park and the Colorado River would bring people through the Arts District and into the historic commercial core. There are unique opportunities to work with the state park to conduct tours at the park now. While the fire was a dramatic event, there are ways to craft tours to tell the story of fire and the re-birth from it. The slightest greening will bring hope and the economic benefits might exceed expectations. As reported by Helen Morton of the Shenandoah National Park, most of the parks visitors don't stay just at the park. They spend money in the surrounding communities at museums, artisan studios, shops, and restaurants…and often end up booking with local bed-and-breakfasts.





The Colorado River is one of Bastrop's best assets and best-kept secrets. Linking the river physically with trails that extend into town, programmatically with conferences at the park or at the convention center, and with new events that showcase its existence and its beauty are important options for Bastrop's future. Additional comments about the use of the River are found throughout this report.

It is however important to mention three properties as they relate to the Colorado River. The library on the north end of downtown and the museum on the south end could serve as dynamic bookends for programming, visitor facilities and links to the river. The team noted that plans were being made to increase access and programming at the library.

The role of the Museum in the old town hall is an especially critical one for the community. It is located at a key intersection with parking and small businesses to its north and east. Its location, backing up to the river, to parking and the steps leading to the river make it critical as a place that is vibrant and "place-making." If it is only a museum the city has lost a huge opportunity. It should be actively programmed as one of the city's parks and recreation places. It should serve as the visitor center in the historic downtown area. It should have a restaurant and a retail component that are as good as any business on Main Street. The mural on the south side of the building should provide history and wayfinding, and the rear façade should be open and welcoming to the river with activities that happen in the parking lot and along the river bank as well.





The third property is the end of the trail and the small park above it. The park and the land along the bluff as you walk back toward downtown offer exciting options for selective clearing that offer beautiful river views. The current Museum site offers a new location for a small retail or boutique food establishment…teahouse, etc. Sidewalk linkages will be needed to support these options, but visual linkages from downtown could help to support the business opportunities.

As an issue of placemaking, the community currently owns a vacant lot in the center of a retail block on Main Street in the historic downtown. Discussions are ongoing about the use for this lot. Options include rebuilding a permanent structure, temporary uses and creating a small pocket park with public restroom facilities. The team unanimously determined that the best use was to continue a retail use ultimately with a permanent structure. Temporary "pop-up" uses during holidays and festivals were perfectly acceptable until a permanent structure was in place. The team felt strongly that a pocket park and public restrooms were the wrong use. The city has an interesting opportunity to manage this lot much like cities do with most economic plans or industrial parks. However they approach it, they need to be an active participant to assure they will get the best solution and fit for Bastrop's historic downtown. Downtown is about retail and commerce and the space should be returned to that role.

Whether it is downtown, in residential neighborhoods or along Chestnut Street, Bastrop is defined by its historic architecture. The community is proud that it has 137 sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It must be careful not to lose the visual context. This doesn't mean creating fake history or not allowing new architectural styles, but infill buildings need to continue to create density and links across and through the community.









Recommendations for Connectivity and placemaking

• Identify the various uses that could benefit from connectivity: citizens moving about the downtown area, tourists interested in the art or history, those involved in recreation, shoppers, etc and determine which types of trails or wayfinding would most benefit each segment.

• Plot the various creative venues on a map and begin to create as many linkages, especially walking and biking, as possible. Get creative in the routes and what might be the attractions along the way. Discuss which ones might be most used by citizens and which ones by tourists and plan for the appropriate use.

  o Determine where signs might be helpful but be careful not to create "litter on a stick". Can you tell the story with a smaller sign, a logo in the pavement or a QR code or smart phone app?
  o Walk Chestnut Street and identify key sites which might serve as locations for public art. Build on the two sculptures already in place and determine if more might create a visual connection between the historic core and the Arts Center and Convention Center. The open space at the corner of the Catholic Church is an example of a site that might be available. In some instances green spaces and art spaces can be combined and this site at the church is an example of that.
  o Determine how existing trails can be marked and marketed in the new collateral materials.

• Explore with Park officials the plans for the park in the near future to determine what options exist for specialized tours, linkages from the park into town, and co-op marketing opportunities.

• Develop a special task force on the Colorado River: How to market it, how to expand it as an asset, how to get the most economic vitality from it, can you get permission to extend the walk onto the other side of the river, what new recreational uses are permitted, etc.

  o Prioritize the maximization of the land at the bridge to best serve the needs of Bastrop

• Work with the Museum board to develop a business plan which is just as well thought out as one for any merchant along Main Street or at the Mall. In fact, it should be the model for future businesses wanting to come to downtown.

  o If the museum board can manage only the typical museum items (exhibits and traditional programming), then contract with vendors to run the more dynamic pieces for the building.
  o Seek a state arts grant for a mural on the south side of the building.
  o Consider an open –air restaurant on the back of the building with banners/flags and visual links to the step to the river.
  o Program the space immediately behind the Museum and link that programming to both the downtown and the river.

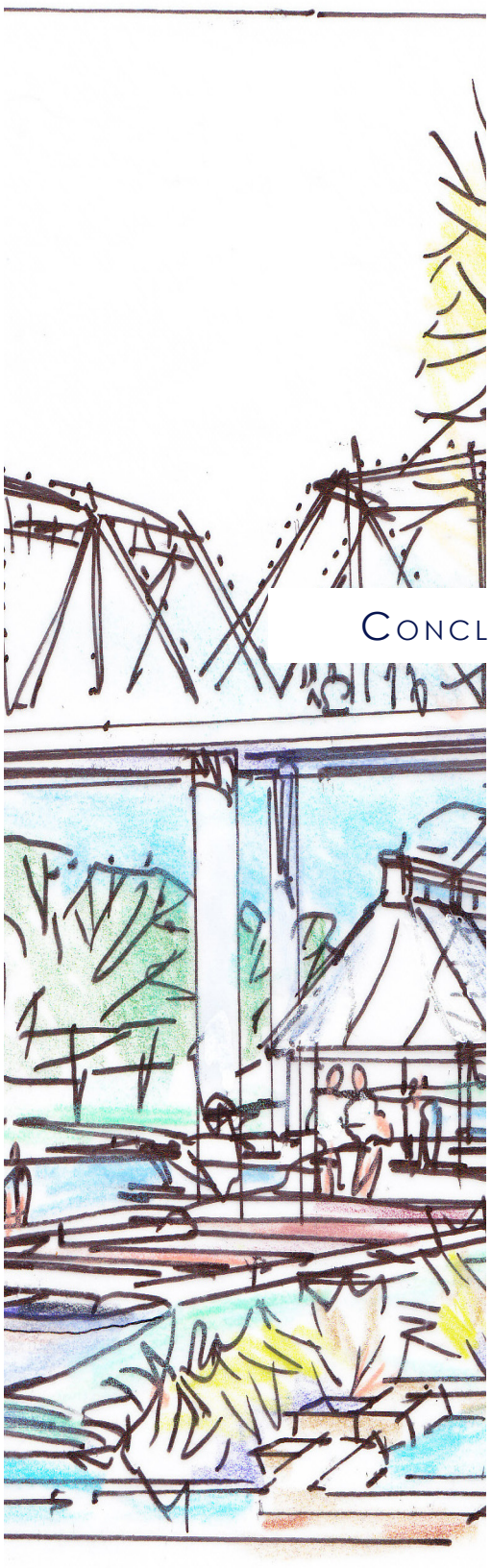
• Explore programming which links the library and the museum.

• Treat the city owned vacant lot on Main Street as a key economic opportunity and use every tool in the city's toolbox to return the space to a permanent retail, tax-producing property.

Conclusion

Bastrop is fortunate that it has many assets to help it compete. As the community grows it can build and market amenities that its citizens want and need while using those same amenities to build its tourism potential. There are hidden assets to bring forward, especially the Colorado River and creative linkages to support both the old and the new. It has built a strong image of an historic community which can now serve as the backdrop with a dynamic arts and creative district alongside and complementing its historic commercial core and outstanding historic residential neighborhoods.





Conclusion

Bastrop's Evolving Identity

Bastrop asked the SDAT for help in creating a common vision for the community. The team can't create that vision for you, but we can provide strategies that will help you solidify and implement your vision for Bastrop. The people of Bastrop told the Team they wanted Bastrop to be:

- Sustainable
- Connected
- Walkable
- Bike-friendly
- Visually attractive
- A community where people want to live
- Supportive of a tourism economy
- Diverse

Happily, we found much community consensus on these characteristics. For the most part, you collectively know what your vision is for your community.

Where we did not find consensus was on how much Bastrop should ***grow.*** This is common in many towns, but it is important to understand that cities and towns do change. They can add population or lose population; they can create jobs or lose them. So rather than "growth," let's use the term "evolve." You have the opportunity to shape your community's evolution. Bastrop does not look the way it did in 1890 or even the way it looked in 1960 or 1990. As a community, you really don't have a decision regarding evolution; you will evolve. Your decision is how much do you want to be a part of that evolution, and how do you want to shape it, remembering that much of what you do, you may not be around to see.

You have committed leadership here; citizens and elected officials who want to make the right decisions and put in place policies that will guide Bastrop in this stage of its evolution. This report will provide a strategy to create a more sustainable, modern Bastrop. Remember that today you are shaping your future, but one day it will be your history.

<u>What NOT to do:</u>

Don't let change happen to you. It will if you take no action. Towns and cities often experience growth after a natural disaster. Be prepared for that growth so you get what you want. Don't build surface parking lots along what you have defined as major pedestrian corridors. Don't be afraid to be BOLD. Make tough decisions. No community ever achieved its goals by trying to please everyone. Bastrop's challenge will be that it has been blessed with numerous recent successes. It has constructed significant new buildings that anchor the far end of the district along chestnut Street and it has risen to meet the challenge of the fire. Now, as it steps into this next stage, progress will come more slowly and will require new partnerships and planning. Bastrop's greatest challenge moving forward will most likely be frustration with the pace of change. Patience to get it right is a great virtue.

You have been masters of change….keep up the good work.





Acknowledgements

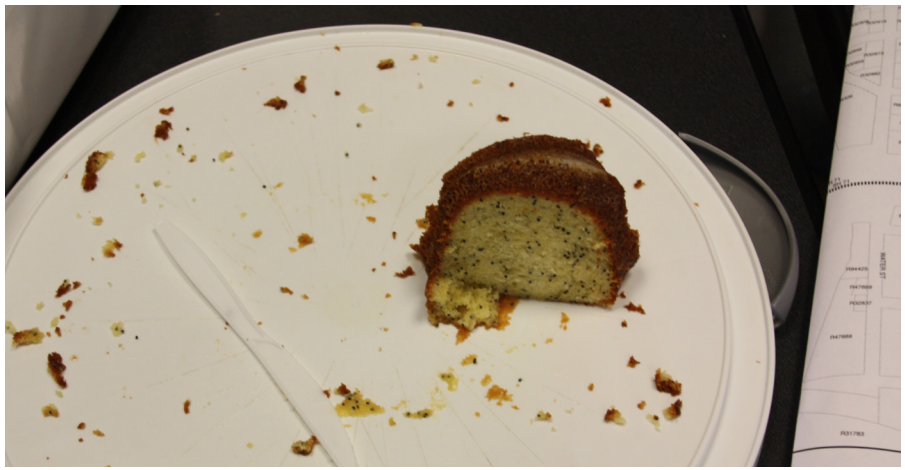
Acknowledgements

The Bastrop SDAT process was the product of public collaboration among many organizations and individuals. The team would like to thank the many public officials, civic leaders, business representatives and residents who participated in the process. In particular, the team would like to thank the following individuals, who helped lead local efforts on the project:

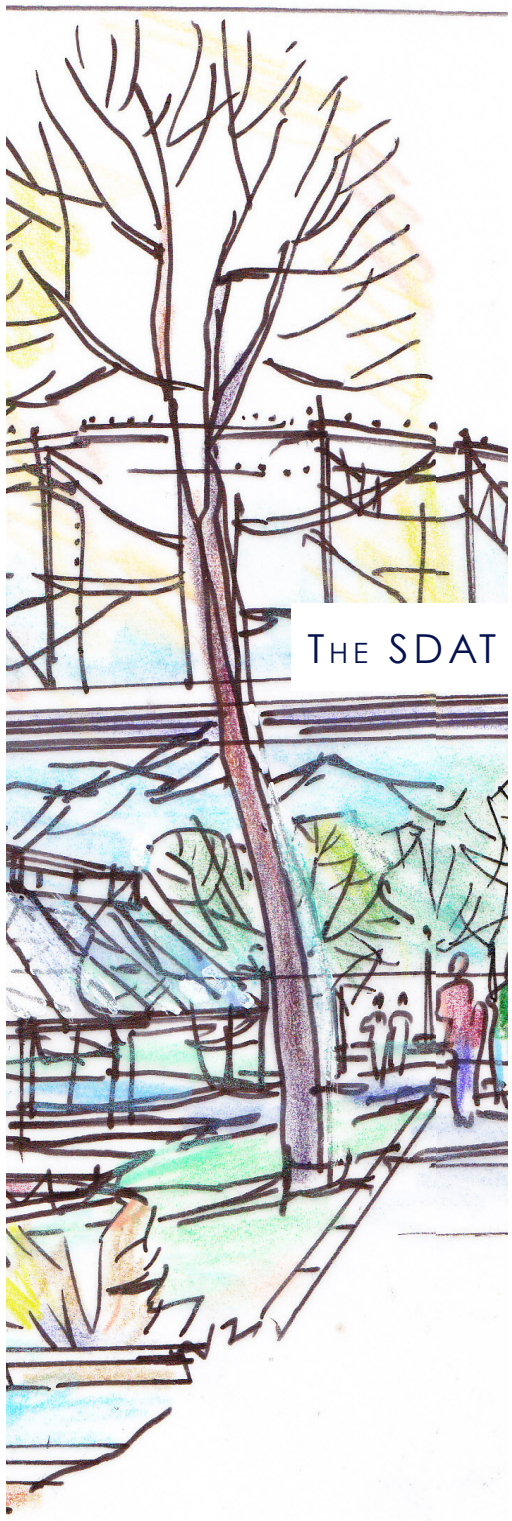
Bill Peterson, Co-Chair, Local Steering Committee, City Councilman
Kristi Koch, AIA, Co-Chair, Local Steering Committee, Bastrop Planning & Zoning Commission
Terry Orr, Mayor
Mike Talbot, City Manager
Melissa McCollum, AICP, Director, City of Bastrop Planning & Development Department
Viviana Hamilton, City of Bastrop Planning & Development Department
Jim Rebececk, Public Works, Parks, & Recreation Director
Nancy Wood, Director, Bastrop Main Street Program

The city's generousity and hospitality during this process was among the most impressive the SDAT program has ever seen, and demonstrated what phenomenal civic spirit the citizens of Bastrop have for their community. The team is greatful for the many relationships that were formed during the process, and looks forward to maintaining contact with city officials as implementation moves forward.









The SDAT Team



Jane Jenkins – Team Leader

Jane Jenkins is the new President and CEO of Downtown Oklahoma City, Incorporated. Previously, Jane was Executive Director of the Downtown Boulder Business Improvement District in Boulder, CO. With over 23 years experience in downtown revitalization and management, Jane is an internationally recognized speaker and expert on urban issues. She currently serves as Chairman for the International Downtown Association Board of Directors. As a former high school educator, Jane was named Teacher of the Year at Union High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Ms. Jenkins was born in Virginia and grew up in Charleston, SC. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Communication Arts Education from Oral Roberts University in Tulsa and a Master of Public Administration from the University of North Texas in Denton. She taught secondary school in Chandler and Tulsa before beginning her downtown management career in Wagoner, OK as the Main Street Manager. After serving in the same capacity in Pawhuska, Jane moved to Denton, Texas where she managed the downtown development program there for eight years before joining the staff of the National Trust for Historic Preservation as the Regional Director of the Southwest Office in Fort Worth, TX. She accepted the position as the first director of the Downtown Boulder Business Improvement District in 2000. Jane has led and participated in design assistance teams in Petersburg, VA, Springfield, IL, Fort Worth, TX, Windsor, CA, and Los Angeles, CA.



Nathan Polanski, PE – Green Infrastructure

Nathan, a dedicated bike commuter, has experience with planning and designing streetscape projects that focus on complete and green street principles. As project engineer, he has worked on a variety of sustainable projects that have focused on mobility and accessibility at local and regional scales to improve levels of service for all modes of transportation. These projects have leveraged sustainable storm water strategies, integrating low impact development (LID) and green infrastructure solutions, including bioretention and swale systems and permeable pavements. Nathan's recent projects include:

- Winslow Way Street Planning and Design, Bainbridge Island, WA
- 21st Street Complete Street Plan, Paso Robles, CA
- Port Townsend Streetscapes, Port Townsend, WA
- Central Coast Complete Green Streets Workshop, California
- Burke-Gilman Trail - 11th Ave NW to the Ballard Locks, Seattle, WA
- University of Washington and Sound Transit LINK Station – Montlake Triangle Improvements, Seattle WA
- Sunnydale Master Plan, San Francisco, CA
- Minneapolis Riverfront Design Competition Finalist, Minneapolis, MN



Tom Laging, FAIA - Urban Design

Thomas Laging is a professor of architecture at the University of Nebraska with thirty-five years of teaching experience. He has extensive expertise in urban design. He holds a Master of Architecture from Harvard University. Professor Laging has also taught at Arizona State University, Dublin Polytechnic, the Autonima University of Guadalajara and was a Fullbright Senior Scholar at Simon Bolivar University in Caracas. As an active consulting architect, he has worked on urban design projects in Lincoln, Chicago, Washington, DC, Minneapolis, Philadelphia and New Orleans. He is the founder of an interdisciplinary program for Architecture and Planning students which has combined teaching with urban design assistance to over fourteen communities and neighborhoods in Nebraska. As leader of design assistance teams for the AIA he has contributed to urban design efforts in cities throughout the country. He is a member of the Urban Design Committee of the American Institute of Architects.

Linda Donovan Harper - Tourism and Downtown Vitality

Linda Donavan Harper is the Executive Director of Cultural Tourism DC. She has more than 20 years experience in community and economic development, as well as demonstrated performance in nonprofit management and fundraising. As principal at LHarper & Associates, she worked with more than 200 communities, state agencies, corporations, and nonprofits in 30 states and three countries, developing a national reputation as a visionary strategic planner, creative thinker, and meeting developer.

Since 2000, Harper has also served as Chair of the Board to The Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery. With her broad, day-to-day duties, Harper worked as the de facto executive director of the organization. In this capacity, she was able to increase the organization's budget from $60,000 in 2000 to $550,000 in 2007, recruit more than 500 volunteers, and develop a fundraising strategy that has generated $7 million between 2002 and 2006. Located in Capitol Hill, the Cemetery has been a member of Cultural Tourism DC since 2002.

In addition, Harper worked as director for the professional exchange and community sustainability program at The Countryside Institute in New York. At the National Trust for Historic Preservation, she was a member of the management committee at the National Main Street Center, a widely recognized program.



Paul Dreher - Land Use

Paul is the Director of Planning and Zoning department and serves as the Zoning Administrator for Newport, Vermont. He works with Newport's Planning Commission and Development Review board as well as owners of buildings and properties in Newport. He facilitated Newport's Form Based Code implementation/ adoption through community forums and outreach. He also serves as chair of the Newport City Renaissance Corporation's Design Committee and was instrumental in coordinating efforts for the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Rural/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) for Newport, VT that took place in March 2009. Recently, he has begun consulting in Damariscotta, ME, Huntington and Johnson, VT on grass roots Form Based Code initiatives. He received his MA, Master of Architecture from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He owns a full service architectural firm specializing in design, design development & renovations of residential, commercial & institutional structures/facilities, programming/feasibility studies, code analysis (BOCA, UBC, IBC) permitting, and historic renovation/tax credits.



Glenn Kellogg – Economic Development

Mr. Kellogg has over 10 years of experience in financial and urban planning services, working in neighborhoods of large cities and small towns. During this experience, he has learned to listen to the concerns of communities and help de-mystify the economic conditions that surround them. Through an understanding of the local economy, he assists communities with feasible, market-based strategies for neighborhoods to achieve their vision.

After graduating from the University of Virginia, Mr. Kellogg was a Lewis Mumford Scholar at the University of Pennsylvania where he studied real estate at Wharton and received a Master of City Planning from the Graduate School of Fine Arts (Penn Design). Mr. Kellogg has served as an Advisory Services Panelist for the Urban Land Institute, a Juror for the Coalition for Smarter Growth, and was a 2005 Knight Fellow in Community Building through the University of Miami.



AIA Staff

Erin Simmons, Director, Design Assistance

Erin Simmons is the Director of Design Assistance at the Center for Communities by Design at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, DC. Her primary role at the AIA is to provide process expertise, facilitation and support for the Center's Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT) and Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) programs. In this capacity, she works with AIA components, members, partner organizations and community members to provide technical design assistance to communities across the country.

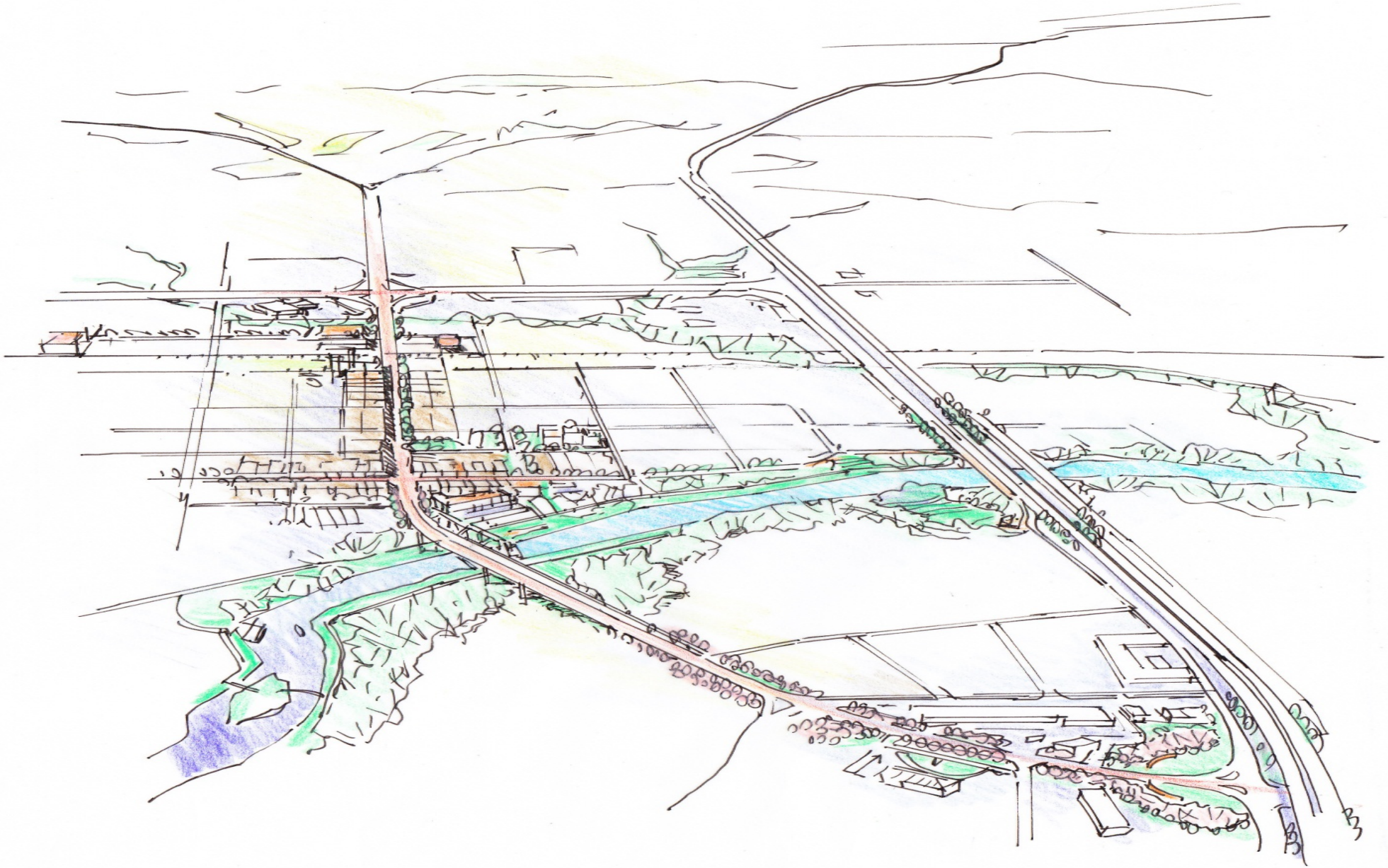
Through its design assistance programs, the AIA has worked in 200 communities across 47 states. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field. To date, Erin has served as staff lead on over 45 design assistance teams. Prior to joining the AIA, Erin worked as senior historic preservationist and architectural historian for an environmental and engineering firm in Georgia, where she practiced preservation planning, created historic district design guidelines and zoning ordinances, conducted historic resource surveys, and wrote property nominations for the National Register of Historic Places. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Florida State University and a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia.

Joel Mills, Director, Center for Communities by Design

Joel Mills serves as Director of the American Institute for Architects' Center for Communities by Design. The Center is a leading provider of pro bono technical assistance and participatory planning for community sustainability. Through its design assistance programs, the Center has worked in over 55 communities across 32 states since 2005. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field.

Joel's career in civic health and governance spans over 18 years, and includes community-based technical assistance, process design, facilitation and training across a number of fields. During the 1990s, Mr. Mills spent several years supporting international democratization initiatives by providing technical assistance to parliaments, political parties, local governments, civic and international organizations. His scope of work included constitutional design and governing systems, voter and civic education, election monitoring and administration, political party training and campaign strategy, collaborative governance, human rights and civil society capacity building. His work has been featured on ABC World News Tonight, Nightline, CNN, The Next American City, Smart City Radio, The National Civic Review, Ecostructure Magazine,The Washington Post, and dozens of other media sources.





AIA
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