River Corridor Master Development Plan: 2006 Edition

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Dedication: The River Corridor Master Development Plan was created by the River Corridor Commission with the guidance and cooperation of City Council. It is dedicated to the individual citizens of the City of San Angelo.

This document is an update of the 1990 River Corridor Master Development Plan.

RIVER CORRIDOR MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN: 2006 Edition

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INTRODUCTION

For thousands of years, the Concho River system has flowed through this valley. Where once there was an open prairie, game, innumerable buffalo, and the campfires of nomadic tribes, there is now a modern city.

The river was the reason this community had its beginning and today the river is the element that makes our community unique and more beautiful than all others in West Texas. San Angelo is affectionately called the "Garden of West Texas" because of the beautiful Concho River system. Although the river has provided water for our population, it has not been used for transportation or industrial purposes and therefore has remained more natural in character than the rivers that flow through most cities. We are a "river town" but not in the same sense as a traditional "river town" that contains wharves, warehouses, factories, industries and heavy river traffic.

Although the river system itself is an element of nature, nearly everything on and around it is the work of man. This includes dams, bridges, pathways, homes, businesses, fountains, recreation areas and parks, and even the trees, most of which were planted by man. It is clear that every action, whether small or large, that is undertaken along the river has an impact on this environment, and one action layers upon another to affect the future of the river.

Recognizing the decisions and actions made regarding the river would have a profound impact upon its ultimate future, the City Council created the River Corridor Commission by ordinance in 1982. The Commission is comprised of a board of nine people appointed by the City Council, who act in an advisory capacity and are in effect the "eyes and ears" of the Council and the community, in matters affecting the river.

Among the various responsibilities charged to the Commission are: the preservation and protection of the River Corridor, protection of the public investment in the Corridor, regulation of land use in the Corridor, and encouraging of public enjoyment of the Corridor. The Commission is also charged with creating a master plan for the long term development of the river.

Since 1982, the River Corridor Commission has met in regular monthly sessions reviewing all projects within its jurisdiction and carrying out an essential watchdog function to protect the community's interests.

This Master Development Plan, which is presented here, is out of necessity a distillation of hundreds of ideas and a large amount of data. It is intended to provide working guidelines for making decisions on a day-to-day basis and broader concepts that will need to be elaborated upon and studied in greater detail, in the years ahead. It is also believed that this plan will allow us to realize the greatest economic and quality of life benefits for the citizens of our community, for generations to come.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following is intended to provide a summary of key ideas underpinning the River Corridor Master Development Plan. The original ordinance creating the River Corridor Commission did not provide for specific guidelines with which the Commission could assess the matters brought before it. Therefore, this report contains Review

Procedures, Guiding Principles and Design Guidelines which are believed to fairly represent the intent of City Council and the needs of the community. It will also facilitate all matters that are brought before the Commission, by articulating more definitive standards.

Regarding the long-term development of the River Corridor, the primary recommendations of the Commission include undertaking long-term planning of river land that goes beyond the present River Corridor. The Commission does not seek extension of its authority but rather the opportunity to suggest methods of potential development on land that is a part of the river system. The majority of this land is within the floodplain and would not impinge upon other development. There is an opportunity to create a substantial resource that would greatly enhance the community's future.

In undertaking this plan, the River Corridor Commission would seek consultation with and review by the City Council, broad public input and close cooperation with the City of San Angelo's Planning Department, the Planning Commission and other affected agencies.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The Concho River system is the very cause of San Angelo's creation. Beginning with the Indians who roamed this region for centuries, through the pioneer days of Fort Concho and up to the present, the Concho River system has enriched the lives of area residents. Indians followed herds of buffalo which frequented the banks of these rivers. Early pioneers took advantage of the same grass-lined streams for raising cattle, sheep and goats. Others saw opportunities in diverting the flow of water to irrigate adjacent land for farming. These competing claims for use of the Concho Valley created need for law, order and military security. To protect early settlers from raids by Indians, an Army post was established in 1867 on high ground at the confluence of the North and South Concho Rivers. The outpost was named Fort Concho. Across the North Concho River from the fort emerged the town of Santa Angela. Founded by the sutlers or supply houses serving the fort and its men, the town became a haven for saloons, gambling and brothels. Fort Concho officers and their wives tended to shun Santa Angela in favor of the more sedate town of Ben Ficklin. It was located 4 miles south of Fort Concho on the lusher, tree-shaded banks of the South Concho River. In 1875, an election was held to determine the seat for the newly created county of Tom Green, and Ben Ficklin won by 65 votes.

By the 1880's, the fortunes of Ben Ficklin began to change. By the 1880 Census, it was revealed that more than 1300 people lived in or near Santa Angela, while about 750 people lived at Ben Ficklin. In August of 1882, heavy rains fell throughout the Concho Valley, and the flooding devastated Ben Ficklin. Homes were washed away, livestock drowned and human lives were lost. By the time rescuers from Santa Angela and Fort Concho could reach the area, 65 Ben Ficklin residents were dead. The devastation was a blow to Ben Ficklin and the town never recovered. Homeowners and businessmen gathered their belongings and moved to Santa Angela.

With the influx of "respectable" people from Ben Ficklin, the county seat was moved to Santa Angela in November of 1882. On October 26, 1883, the post office changed the name of Santa Angela to San Angelo. At Fort Concho, the last flag was lowered on June

20, 1889. The Fort's property was subdivided to make room for the expanding city, and its buildings were converted to private use.

Over the course of the Concho Valley's settlement, both the North and South Concho Rivers have been impounded for a variety of purposes. Two small dams, Kirby Dam at the 29th Street Bridge and Metcalf Dam near the Loop 306 overpass, are located several miles from San Angelo's original town site. Both were also built to create reservoirs of water for irrigating agricultural fields. At other locations, impoundments of water were created behind low water crossings for roadways. The Johnson Dam, located downstream of the city's central business district, was built in 1931 for the purpose of creating a scenic pool of water beside downtown San Angelo.

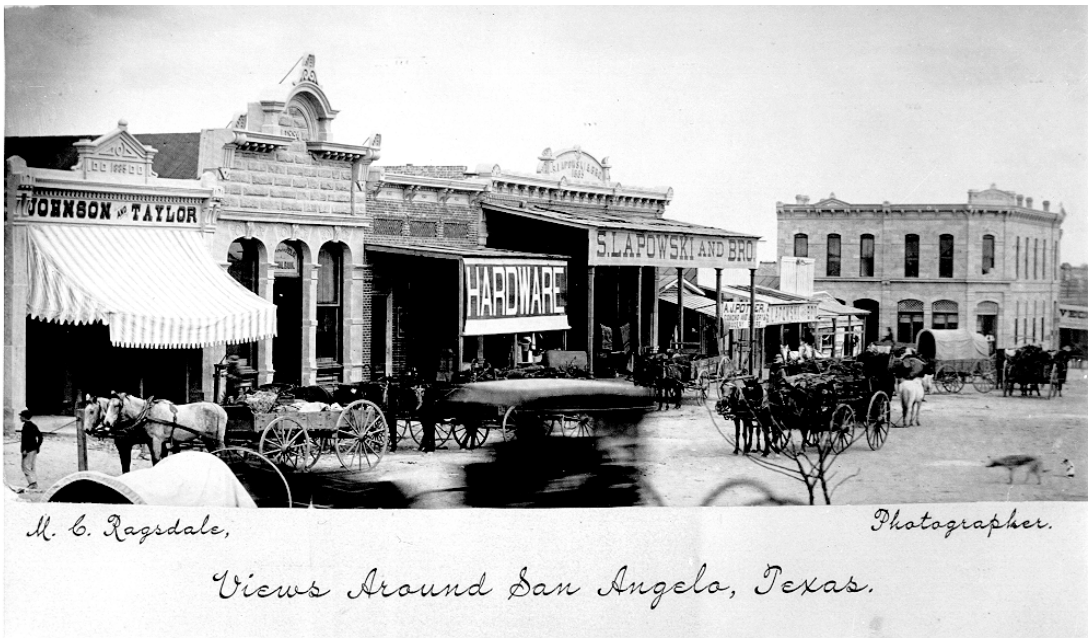
During heavy rains, though, even these small impoundments can make flooding worse, forcing storm water to back up. One devastating flood in 1936 proved to be a landmark in San Angelo's history. It left 1500 people homeless and millions of dollars in property loss. Concho Valley residents were faced with a decision: either the river would have to change, or the city would have to move. In 1941, San Angelo resolved to construct a dam across the North Concho River, several miles upstream of the City. Although not completed until 1952, the decision to construct O.C. Fisher Dam helped to stimulate building and development many years ahead of its actual construction. To harness flood waters from the Middle and South Concho Rivers, the Twin Buttes Dam and Reservoir was constructed between 1960 and 1963. These two massive, manmade dams help protect San Angelo from the most severe floods. Meanwhile, smaller impoundments inside the city continue to provide attractive pools of water on both the North and South Concho Rivers. Droughts, on the opposite end of the spectrum, have also affected the Concho Rivers, specifically the drought of the 1950s.

Although the Concho River system has provided water for our population, these rivers have never been exploited as a transportation or industrial resource. The Concho Rivers have remained relatively unpolluted and their banks less developed, in comparison with other cities beside rivers. San Angelo has a river but is not a "river town" in the same sense as Saint Louis or Cincinnati. These cities were founded at a convenient break or junction in transportation modes, where waterborne traffic connected with overland roads and railways. As a result, the water's edges in these traditional river towns are crowded with heavy industry and transportation activity. The Concho Rivers, on the other hand, are too small to encourage industry and transportation use. San Angelo is fortunate to have a river that is just the right size to lend beauty, character and recreational opportunity, without heavy industry.

The very distinction that the Concho Rivers bring to our city may greatly enhance our quality of life. It may also be one of San Angelo's greater commercial assets, since the river makes this a more attractive community in which to live. It may represent the key inducement encouraging a prospective new economic enterprise to relocate in San Angelo.

Despite the fact that the river is not a magnet for industrial exploitation, it is still a threatened resource. Unregulated, it could suffer from inappropriate development at the water's edge. It is true that hotels and apartment buildings may help create an attractive "edge" or border beside the river and create a general sense of enclosure within the

waterfront environment. On the other hand, these structures may interrupt the continuity of public access to the river and disrupt its natural setting. Another threat comes not from private encroachment, but from the larger needs of a growing community. Highways or utilities, for example, seldom can simply be terminated at the water's edge. As the town continues to grow, these demands will continue to increase.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Concho Rivers represent a unique physical feature not generally found in the American urban environment. Since so much of San Angelo is touched by the Concho River and its tributaries, the character of development alongside these rivers can affect the welfare of more than just a few residents and property owners. The community as a whole needs to undertake a collective effort to ensure that the Concho River Corridor is developed, used, and protected to maximize the river's unique features and function as a scenic, recreational and commercial asset to San Angelo.

These efforts should be guided by a long-range plan which reflects the community's collective vision for use and development of the River Corridor. Such a plan may help prevent the aims of one individual, business or community group from overriding those of others. Any such long-range plan or vision should be rooted in a set of commonly held goals or guiding principles. The plan itself, as well as any specific projects which stem from it, may be judged as to how well it improves or enhances the following goals:

CONNECTION

The River Corridor can be made a more visible and integral part of the larger community. Linkages between the river and nearby activity should be reinforced. For example, San Angelo had its beginnings at Fort Concho which was specifically located at the junction of the North and South Concho Rivers. Then the river was visible from Fort Concho; today, one cannot see or feel any relation between the two. Historic connections may be reestablished through physical, visual linkages between the river and nearby historic attractions. Such connections are not now apparent to residents and visitors. Reinforcing these connections can help bring today's urban community closer to its historic roots. It can also enhance the utility and attractiveness of the landmarks that are linked together.

A few specific ideas that should be implemented include a system of well designed signs and graphics to make people aware of entrances and parking areas from which access to the river's edge is relatively easy. Existing bridges could be modified fairly easily, through such things as banners and signs both to celebrate and make people aware of the nearby waterway.

ACCESS

Simply stated, this means making it easy and attractive for people to reach the river. Access to the river can take the form of roadways for vehicles, walkways for pedestrians, or a combination of both for bicyclists. None of these are possible, though, unless the properties beside the rivers are made accessible to the public. Rights-of-way or other access agreements are necessary to secure and maintain the public's right to reach the river's shore. Local government in San Angelo has a long history of securing and extending scenic areas alongside the river, for the public's enjoyment. While it may not be possible or even desirable to ensure public access to both sides of the entire river system in San Angelo, any development project should generally promote public access, rather than impede it. The pedestrian bridge that parallels Abe Street and spans the river from Sunken Garden Park to Santa Fe Park is an excellent example of providing access. At least two other pedestrian bridges have been built over the North Concho River, in the

historic city center, during the more than twenty years since the first one beside Abe Street was installed.

CONTINUITY

Public/private cooperation in the development of riverside land dates back to the turn-of-the-century, when early land speculators dedicated tracts of this land for public parks. A significant degree of public access to the river is already secure. One of the most attractive aspects of the River Corridor today is that one can walk or drive along its banks, without interruption, for lengthy stretches. It does not take long, though, to feel frustrated with not being able to press forward or to circle back via a different path. Scenic drives, walkways, and riverside recreation areas should be extended still further.

Plans to extend the continuity of public access are presented in the Parks Master Plan. Also, it is unfortunate that a number of neighborhoods nearby the river cannot readily reach the riverside to walk or jog, etc. Any project to develop property beside the river should help reinforce the continuity of public access, eventually resulting in an inter-connective network of movement through the Concho River system in San Angelo.

Where feasible and agreeable to both parties, private owners and developers may wish to dedicate portions of property to the city, for the continued development of public access to and along the shoreline. This has already occurred in a number of situations.

CONSERVATION

Urban residents have always valued whatever elements of nature they could introduce to their environment. The Concho Rivers have long been valued and protected for the way that nature is allowed to flow through the man made environment constructed around us. Like our predecessors, we also have an obligation to conserve this natural resource for those who later inherit this community. Ongoing development by public or private sectors should respect and enhance the natural environment of the River Corridor.

AESTHETICS AND BEAUTIFICATION

Although the river itself is an element of nature, nearly everything around it is the work of people and a part of the built environment. This is true of bridges, dams, homes and businesses, as well as the ball fields, golf courses and even trees, many of which were planted by people. The look and feel, beauty or ugliness of the River Corridor is a product of many individual decisions over time. Everything developed in the future represents an opportunity to make the corridor more beautiful. This includes not only the construction of commercial and residential projects, but also includes more mundane features such as the location of trash receptacles, the appearance of street signs, parking lots and utilities. Besides the essential question of whether something is attractive in its own right, one must also consider its setting and relation to specific surroundings in terms of scale, placement, color and texture. As San Angelo consistently strives to make the River Corridor more beautiful, we can build something that adds dollar value to the whole community as well as to each specific development project.

There are also ways in which public and private groups can enhance the visual quality of the river. For example, planting trees to screen adjacent industrial areas, commissioning works of art and sculpture, and developing neighborhood parks would each go a long way toward enhancing the River Corridor environment.

PARKS

The River Corridor Commission promotes the work of the Park Commission and the implementation of the Parks Master Plan they adopted. The River Corridor Commission will guide and assist the Parks Commission and the Parks Department of the City of San Angelo, in all ways possible for the growth and maintenance of parks in the River Corridor. The River Corridor Commission also recognizes its input may be needed from time to time, regarding parks in the River Corridor and are prepared to assist whenever needed.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

There are relatively few historic structures located directly on the river banks, although there are a number of historic buildings within the defined area of the River Corridor. The municipal swimming pool is an example of a historic building that has been maintained with sensitivity and is a significant asset to the community. Those buildings that are identified as being historically significant should be preserved, maintained, and to the extent that it is practical, be restored to their original appearance. The historic Block One of Concho Avenue offers a wonderful opportunity to preserve and restore the character of the city in one of the earliest stages of its development.

There are areas within the River Corridor that are valuable archaeological sites, and that encompass historic and prehistoric features. These should be thoroughly surveyed and, where possible, scientific examination undertaken before development takes place at these sites. Such sites not only teach us about our past but can also sometimes be developed as historic attractions. The River Corridor Commission is prepared to work with the Historic Preservation Commission and City Council in protecting the historic resources found in the River Corridor.

SECURITY AND SAFETY

A fundamental responsibility of any community is to provide a safe and secure environment, particularly in public places. With so much emphasis on gaining public access to the waterfront, the community must be vigilant to ensure these places are designed with security and safety in mind.

The numerous improvements that have already been made are attracting an increasing number of people. That is a positive and hoped for result. However, it also increases potential security and safety problems. In the years ahead, the city should anticipate increased usage of the River Corridor and allocate greater resources for maintenance, police patrol, etc.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

When well designed, projects on the River Corridor will have a positive impact on the overall character of the River Corridor and thereby enhance the entire community. Applicants must understand and be sensitive to the “Guiding Principles”.

The following recommendations should be considered carefully by all applicants prior to submitting a design for review by the River Corridor Commission.

Except in unusual circumstances where it would obviously benefit the quality of a project the River Corridor Commission will not recommend a project in violation of city code, ordinance or zoning law.

The general architectural character of a project is the most important consideration. The River Corridor Commission will not attempt to impose arbitrary "thematic" characterization applicants. Its primary objective is for projects to demonstrate sensitivity to the River Corridor and adjacent properties in terms of siting, bulk, height, materials, etc. Sensitivity in design and harmonious blending cannot be overemphasized.

Purpose and Scope of Design Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to guide developers, design professionals, property owners and other community members as they conceive their projects, and to be an evaluation tool for City staff as well as the River Corridor Commission, Planning Commission and City Council. As a reference document, these guidelines express the River Corridor Commission's vision and expectations regarding the design of future development in the River Corridor. These guidelines do not promote or require adherence to a particular architectural style, but rather to general qualities that give the Concho Rivers their appeal. The guidelines and the design review process are not intended to stifle architectural creativity, nor to decrease or limit one's use of property, nor are they intended to impose undue economic hardship on any property owner. The purpose is to strike a balance between providing flexibility in building design, yet promote and assure a consistent design quality that complements the existing character of the River Corridor.

These design guidelines also do not presume to assure good design. Rather, the intent of these guidelines is to provide guidance on site planning and architectural design. With respect to building design, the intent is to balance the quality elements found in existing structures with the design and use demands of contemporary buildings. The guidelines will apply to all new developments, alterations to existing structures, and changes of use.

Commercial and Mixed Use in the Historic City Center

I. Guidelines for New Buildings

New buildings should reflect the traditional character of the historic city center but can use new, innovative elements in ways to express the architecture of current times. In this way, new buildings can be clearly distinguished from their elder neighbors. These guidelines are designed to spark development that is creative, yet maintains respect for the architectural history of the district. The goal is to conserve the sense of the past and the distinct historic character of this area while encouraging the continued growth of a vital business district.

The primary goals for the design guidelines for new buildings are to:

• Develop an attractive street façade with storefronts scaled and oriented to pedestrians.

• Place buildings at the appropriate setback.

•Promote mixed-use development with ground floor retail and office or residential uses on the upper stories.

• Encourage a variety of architectural styles that are complementary to the historic precedents set in this area. New developments should be compatible in form, height, building elements and materials with neighboring buildings.

• Encourage continuous building street frontage thereby reducing the visual impact of parking lots.

• Locate parking areas at the rear of buildings or in parking structures.

• Encourage buildings to have dual entryways, allowing patrons to enter from the street and the parking area at the side or rear of the building.

• Locate signs in traditional signage locations on building façades.

A. Site Design and Layout

1. Building Setbacks and the Building Edge

Intent

Creating a good, comfortable sidewalk area for the pedestrian is the primary objective, and building setbacks help define the character of the sidewalk area as public spaces. Within the city center, the character varies from areas that were originally residential areas to the commercial blocks in the core. The height of the buildings, the setbacks, and the character of the landscaped areas determine the sense of spaciousness or, conversely, enclosure. The location and height of buildings, awnings and canopies, street trees, and on-street parking all contribute to the pedestrian's sense of comfort while on the sidewalk.

Typically, commercial buildings in the core of the city have been built to the property line, behind the public sidewalk. Where possible, this alignment should be retained for new construction and additions.

Guidelines

- In the core of the city where storefronts are typical, the building fronts should be located at the property line, to define the sidewalk edge and create a sense of vitality for the public sidewalk.
- Developments can set back from the property line to allow for outdoor dining areas, patios, plazas, and entranceways as long as the façade continuity is not interrupted.
- Ground level uses should be retail, entertainment, customer services, and other uses that generate activity. Large clear windows, prominent entryways, awnings and canopies should be used, where possible.
- In areas of the historic city center where residential buildings are typical, the front setbacks of new or infill

development should be a similar dimension to the traditional setbacks. The front yards should be landscaped. New buildings should draw upon the historic residential building forms that are prevalent in San Angelo.

2. Balancing Pedestrian Areas and Parking

Intent

The creation of a comfortable street zone has a balance maintained between parked cars and pedestrians. Off-street parking is needed to support vital business activity in this area. However, surface parking lots affect the pedestrian character and often appear as vacant underutilized space. Parking can be accommodated as a positive addition to an historic area. Parking lots should be safe, convenient and attractive.

Guidelines

- In order to maintain a consistent and active streetscape and provide a safe pedestrian area, parking should be located behind or beside (not directly in front of) buildings in a landscaped area screened from street view.
- A series of small parking lots with pedestrian connections between them and to the sidewalk is more compatible with the scale of the historic city center, as compared to large parking lots.
- Parking lots should be screened with perimeter landscaping along public sidewalks; trees and hedges in front of a low decorative screening fence or wall are preferred. These walls should follow the existing building line, where possible.
- Wherever possible, parking lots should be screened from view of adjacent properties, with landscaping and decorative fencing.
- Vehicular access to a parking area should be provided from an alley or side street, where feasible, not from a primary shopping street
- Ground floor businesses are encouraged to permit access for patrons from the parking areas located at the rear or side of their buildings. Business signs and decorative lighting at this entry should be oriented to the pedestrian.
- Parking structures should be in harmony with the historic nature of the city center. Access to parking structures should minimize disruption to storefront continuity and not conflict with pedestrian safety.

3. Mechanical Equipment and Service Area

Intent

Service facilities should be unobtrusive, and the location and methods of screening for service access and mechanical equipment should be carefully considered.

Guidelines

- Service, loading and storage areas should be located out of view of the primary shopping streets, and be screened with fences or landscaping. Where feasible, service access and loading areas should be accessible from alleys or from parking lots located at the rear or side of buildings.
- All service and loading areas should be screened from adjacent residential uses by means of architectural treatments, walls, or landscaping.
- Attractive fences or walls should be used to screen dumpsters and trash enclosures.
- All roof-mounted equipment should be screened behind parapets or by other means, so that such equipment is not visible from any of the adjacent streets.

B. Building Design

1. Mass and Scale

Intent

New development must be compatible in scale with the surrounding buildings and respect the pedestrian-oriented nature of the city. The mass, form and scale should relate to the pedestrian scale of the street. Historically, buildings were one and sometimes two stories in height, and the goal is to balance this traditional lower scale with consideration to establish a pattern for more efficient land use. New buildings should be predominantly two and three stories in height.

Guidelines

- A new development's height and form should be consistent with that of its neighboring buildings. Building heights should range from one story to a 50-foot height maximum in the River Corridor.
- Large buildings façades should be divided into modules that reflect the average historic buildings' width of 20 to 40 feet. In addition, vertical and horizontal variations in façades can add interest and definition to buildings.

- Floor-to-floor heights should be similar to those found in traditional buildings in the historic city center.
- Corner locations on a block are highly visible and should be designed with visually prominent elements. The scale and massing of corner buildings are very important, and taller feature elements are encouraged. Corner entryways are encouraged, and alcoves, canopies, or other means of shelter should be provided at corner intersections.

2. Architectural Detail

Intent

Details included in each building's façade should contribute to the richness of the historic city center's architecture.

Guidelines

- The proportions, forms and spacing of windows, doors and other architectural elements should reflect the characteristic proportions and spacing of existing façades found in the historic city center. The size and proportion of window and door openings should be similar to those found on adjacent buildings in this area.
- New buildings should reflect the characteristic rhythm of existing façades along the street. In new development, it is important to maintain storefront façades at the 20 to 40 foot width consistent with those traditionally found in the city's center.
- Patterns and rhythms in the façade of the building can be created with recessed windows, columns, ledges, changes of materials, and other architectural features. Even though contemporary interpretations of traditional windows are encouraged, their basic scale and proportions should be similar to those seen historically in this area. For example, windows that are vertically proportioned and of a certain size can be grouped together on different floors to provide visual interest
- The size and scale of windows should be varied, where appropriate, to define the base, middle and top of a building. Sills and mullions can be used to continue and emphasize a specific architectural style. Features such as recessed windows, pilasters, definition of floor lines, corner quoins, cornices, and parapets can be used to create shadows and visual interest.
- Clear, transparent windows should be used for all ground floor retail uses.

- Primary entrances to each building should be clearly identified with a canopy or awning or, perhaps, a change in roofline. Treatments on the public sidewalk could also be used to define the major entries to buildings.
- Recessed entries to individual storefronts are encouraged, as they create a transition from the sidewalk to the interior of a commercial building. The recessed entry emphasizes the entrance, increases window display area, and provides a safe place for the entry door to open without extending into the sidewalk area.
- Setbacks and patio areas for outdoor dining and seating areas are encouraged.

3. Building Materials and Color

Intent

The use of quality building materials for new development reinforces the image and character of the historic city center. Particularly on the ground floor of buildings, quality building materials convey a sense of richness to the pedestrian environment.

Guidelines

- Materials and color should relate to historic precedents apparent in the immediate environment.
- Using subtle yet rich colors rather than intense, bright colors is in keeping with historical precedents in San Angelo. Colors should be harmonious with those colors found on adjacent buildings.
- Quality materials promote a sense of permanence and are encouraged. Building materials and texture on the ground floor add to the pedestrian experience, and quality finish materials should be used. Compatible materials should be used on all sides of a building.
- Within a development, the materials, texture and color of materials composing individual storefronts should be varied. Contrasting colors for architectural details, awnings, and at entrances should be used to create interesting architectural features.
- Parapets, banding, belt courses, pilasters, quoins, and other types of architectural details in different materials and colors should be incorporated to add visual interest
- Any material used in the public realm should be able to be easily fixed or replicated.

4. Awnings and Canopies

Intent

Awnings serve as a transition between the building, sidewalk and street, helping visually unite them, and providing pedestrian scale to the street. Awnings and canopies provide shelter and shade to pedestrians and reduce glare. They can also provide a color accent to a building and the opportunity for store identification.

Guidelines

- The use of awnings is encouraged, and awnings should fit in proportion to the module of the individual storefront rather than extending beyond a single bay. Awnings can also be placed over entries to bring attention to them.
- Canvas awnings can be either fixed, flat awnings or retractable. Awnings provide the opportunity for a colorful accent and should be compatible with the colors of the building façade.
- Awnings can be an attractive means for store identification with graphics, emblems and store names. Backlit awnings are discouraged.
- Canopies can be either metal or glass and can be located at the major entries to a building or over windows.
- Covered walkways may be appropriate on some buildings and should be used to enhance the character of a building and provide a pleasant streetscape.
- Large panelized products, such as standing seam metal, are not appropriate for awnings or canopies.

5. Roofs and Parapets

Intent

The tradition of simple rectangular building forms with strong rooflines defined by cornices or parapets should be continued throughout the historic city center. The roofline, cornice and parapet are important architectural features that should be strongly defined on commercial buildings.

Guidelines

- The roof designs should relate to the pitch and shape of roofs found on neighboring structures. Flat roofs behind a parapet are typical in the commercial core of this historic city center. In the residential areas, roofs can be pitched and have gables, dormers and other elements typical of the historic residential character.

- Parapets should be used to screen flat roofs and should be designed as an architectural feature. A distinctive cornice can be used to emphasize a varied roofline in the design of a building.
- Buildings at corners can have special roof shapes in order to emphasize their corner location.
- A varied roofline should be a strong design element because it adds visual interest to a building's silhouette. The roofline should vary every 20 to 40 feet in order to emulate the pattern of historic storefronts and break up the visual mass of a large building.

6. Signs

Intent

Signs are an important element that can be an integral component of the building. In the historic city center, pedestrian-oriented signs can be small, and the design and uniqueness of the sign can relay the character of the store. Hanging signs perpendicular to the building are attractive and easily read by pedestrians.

Guidelines

- Hanging signs can use a wide variety of colors and icons to create a unique character for the historic city center and are encouraged.
- Signs should have a minimum clearance of nine feet above the sidewalk for public safety.
- Signs should be incorporated into the architecture of each building.
- Internally illuminated signs are not appropriate for the historic city center.

7. Lighting

Intent

Exterior lighting can be used in a subtle manner to emphasize distinctive architectural elements on a building, the building entrances, and individual storefronts.

Guidelines

- Integrating lighting into a building can enhance the façade and architectural features, and provide for the safety of pedestrians, but should not result in glare and light spill. Lighting can be used to accentuate columns, indentations in the wall, pilasters, or other features on the façade.

- Innovative and attractive light fixtures are encouraged. These fixtures should fit the style of the building and respect the visual character of San Angelo's historic city center.
- Pedestrian-oriented light fixtures should be incorporated into the design of open spaces and should be complementary to existing light standards on public sidewalks.
- Decorative lights are encouraged in parking areas.

II. Guidelines for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings

What are historically significant buildings?

Buildings that help to convey a sense of San Angelo's early character are historically significant. These structures are typically at least fifty years old. Some of the most important of these are recognized on the National Register of Historic Places, and/or are identified with the City's historic overlay zoning.

Why preserve historically significant buildings?

Historic structures contribute to the distinct identity of San Angelo and help to convey a sense of urbanity and expressiveness to the built environment.

What are "character-defining" features of historic buildings?

Those building elements that convey the quality of a building as it once was are its character-defining features. A building's form, materials, window shapes, and ornamental details are all character-defining features.

Over the years, renovations have changed the appearance of many older buildings. Appropriate renovations add to an existing building and may not even be noticeable. Inappropriate renovations hide the original façades and introduce materials that are out of context for a particular building.

A. Façade Renovations

Intent

It is recommended that inappropriate renovations be removed and that original façades be restored.

Guidelines

- The original size and shape of the storefront opening should be maintained. Large panes of glass that were a part of an original storefront opening should be preserved, if possible. If storefront windows have been reduced in size over the years, their original dimensions should be re-established. The glass should fit within the original piers or columns. These essential parts of the design character add interest and should not be obscured. Clear, non-reflective glass should be used for all display windows.

- Storefronts should be maintained at the sidewalk edge for commercial buildings. Display windows adjacent to the sidewalk should be preserved, where feasible, to define the pedestrian zone. This is especially true if the building has historic significance, because the original glass, frame and columns may be intact.
- Existing recessed entries should be maintained. These recessed areas provide pedestrians with protection from the weather and they help to define business entrances. Doors that are flush with the sidewalk should be avoided. If an original recessed entry has been removed, it is recommended that a new one be established. As a way of emphasizing the entrance for customers, a business sign can be centered over the door.
- The kick plate below the display window should be maintained. If the kick plate is missing, one option is to reconstruct the original using old photographs as a guide. This feature adds to the historic character of older buildings and provides for a decorative color accent for the storefront. The color of the bulkhead should be coordinated with other façade elements. Appropriate materials are painted wood or metal.
- The size and shape of upper story windows should be preserved. Typical upper story windows are vertically oriented, and several are often uniformly spaced along the building front. The rhythm of upper story windows is a very important unifying feature in the historic city center because it is repeated on most buildings. Window shades or curtains in colors that coordinate with other accent trim are encouraged. If a lowered ceiling in an upper story is necessary, the lowered ceiling should be pulled back from the window to maintain the original height at the window. Where upper story windows can be maintained, curtains should be used that repeat colors used on first floor awnings or trim. This is especially useful where upper floors are vacant. In this way, the second story can reinforce the color scheme of the business below.
- Awnings can provide weather protection, a place for store identification, create visual interest, and are encouraged on storefronts. Awnings have historically provided shade and shelter for pedestrians and protected merchandise from sun damage. They are a colorful accent to building fronts, which can be changed periodically without great expense. The awning should fit the dimensions of the storefront opening, to emphasize these proportions. Where possible, awnings should not cover any historical decorative ornamentation or transoms in older buildings. Retractable awnings should be considered,

to avoid covering historic ornamentation. The color of the awning should be coordinated with the color scheme for the entire building. Canvas awnings are encouraged and they may be fixed or retractable. On some buildings, horizontal metal canopies may be appropriate, where there is historic precedence for that being used on similar buildings. Metal awnings should be avoided, except where they contribute to the historical character of the building. Materials such as wood, plastic or shingles are not appropriate materials for canopies. Internally illuminated awnings are strongly discouraged.

- The original ornament and detail of building façades should be preserved. Architectural details add interest to the historic city center and contribute to the unique identity of older buildings. Where portions of details have been removed, photographic evidence of the earlier conditions should be used as a reference. If any details have been removed and stored, they can be used as patterns for new or replacement details. Where exact reconstruction of details is not feasible, a simplified interpretation of the original, in which its major form and line are retained, should be developed. Ornamental details on earlier buildings were typically metal or masonry. Wood or molded synthetic materials may be substituted as replacements. Restoring ornamental cornices at the top of façades is strongly encouraged, because such cornices provide a "finished" look to the façade of a building.
- Original façade materials or architectural details should be preserved. Brick and stone are historically dominant materials in the historic city center. If the original material has been covered with materials such as wood siding or face stone, these should be removed, if feasible, to reveal the original finishes and details. The original material is often the most durable surface. If it is masonry, the texture of the wall will contribute to the visual continuity of the block. Replacement materials that are similar to the original finish in color and texture should be used.
- Brick or stone surfaces of a building should be maintained in their original unpainted state, where feasible. Buildings were often painted to protect poor quality brick or to improve the appearance where brick was not matched. If it is clear that the paint is not historic, it should be removed, providing that the masonry would not be damaged. Abrasive techniques, such as sandblasting, will damage the finish of the brick and should not be considered. If it is not possible to remove the paint without damaging the masonry, it is best to re-paint the surface in a

compatible color. Painting or re-painting may also be necessary if the brick has to be repaired and the original color cannot be matched.

- Original roof forms should be preserved. Materials that obscure historic rooflines are discouraged. All existing cornices should remain, and any cladding which obstructs the cornices should be removed. Cornices should be structurally stabilized unobtrusively. Some buildings in the city's center had very simple building fronts with parapets extending above a flat roof. Old photographs should be used to verify the original design which should be replicated, where feasible.
- Horizontal features that can align with adjacent buildings should be emphasized. Horizontal moldings, windowsills and cornices should be accented in façade designs.
- Decorative lighting should be used to illuminate the special architectural features of a building. While display window lighting should be the dominant lighting element, indirect lighting which highlights the distinctive architectural features of a building is encouraged.

B. Additions

Intent

These guidelines help blend the existing structure and the new addition in a harmonious way.

Guidelines

- When adapting a residential structure to a commercial use, the original character of the building should be maintained. The characteristics inherent in a residential building, such as a sloping roofline, front porch, siding materials, or other such architectural elements, should not be substantially changed to accommodate a commercial use.
- New building additions should be designed so as not to alter or destroy any significant historic features. New additions should be set back from the primary or front façade in order to set them apart from the main building.
- New additions to existing buildings should be compatible in size and scale with the main building.
- An addition to a building can be recognized as a product of its own time. Changes in material or color can subtly differentiate an addition from the main building.

Commercial Use Outside of the Historic City Center

I. Site Design and Layout

Intent

The goal of site planning is to take into consideration the preservation of natural amenities, existing topography and panoramic views within the scope of placing a building or project on a site.

Guidelines

- Development that is visible from or adjacent to the river should have well-designed façades on all sides. This is considered a "360-degree" design treatment.
- The importance of spaces between buildings should be recognized. Such spaces should have a planned and useful shape and not simply be uneconomical leftover areas.
- Development should relate to the site's setting, considering impacts and enhancements to natural features and important view corridors.
- Developments should be designed to be sensitive to and incorporate the existing grade of the landscape. Buildings should be designed to take up grade transitions. Where this cannot occur, stepped retaining walls with landscaping should be used. Retaining walls should be distributed throughout the site rather than be designed as high perimeter walls.
- Parking should be screened from the river.
- Orientation of new buildings should consider the orientation of adjacent buildings.
- Buildings, where placed immediately adjacent to sidewalks, should promote visibility and pedestrian orientation with plazas, outside dining or other such pedestrian-friendly areas.
- A sense of entry should be incorporated within the development, by using signage and landscaping.
- Where the rear elevation of buildings is visible across streets or alleys from residential lots, the architectural treatment should enliven the façade. All loading and collection facilities should be screened from view by nearby residents.
- Service and utility panels should not be exposed.
- The building should not turn its back onto the river; the riverside should be well designed and pleasing. Wherever possible, the riverside should be designed as the front of the building.

II. Architectural Detail

Intent

Details included in the building façade should assist in reducing the visual scale of a large building.

Guidelines

- The primary entrance of a building or store should have a clearly defined, visible entrance with distinguishing features such as a canopy, portico or other such prominent element of architectural design.
- Buildings should have their primary orientation toward the street rather toward off-street parking areas. Where possible, the building façade should be located close to a street and sidewalk area. Off-street parking areas should be designed to link the buildings they serve to adjacent street sidewalk or other pedestrian systems, and to give the impression that buildings are an extension of the pedestrian environment. This can be accomplished by using design features such as walkways with enhanced paving, trellis structures, or landscaping treatment.
- Each building should have a well-designed base, middle and top. Architectural detailing or a change of materials or color at the ground level may be used to create the base. The different parts of a building's façade should be emphasized by use of color, arrangement of façade elements, or a change of materials.
- Where applicable, the design of decked parking and parking structures should be integrated with surrounding development in order to create a continuous, attractive streetscape.
- Trash storage areas, mechanical equipment and similar areas should not be visible from the street
- Loading docks should be screened so as not to be visible from the street, and should not be accessed directly from the street.

III. Building Materials and Color

Intent

High-quality, durable materials are encouraged.

Guidelines

- Light to medium intensity colors with low reflectivity are preferred as the background building color. Brighter colors may be used for accents, trim or highlighting architectural

features. The warm, subdued hues of natural, earth colors are encouraged.

- Color can be used to influence the scale of a building by highlighting various architectural elements.
- Materials such as stone, brick, and precast concrete, cast stone and architectural metals can be combined to enrich the appearance of a building and highlight specific architectural features. The River Corridor Commission is generally opposed to prefabricated and/or metal buildings, as well as reflective glass, shiny metal siding, pre-finished hardboard and Masonite used as exterior building materials.
- Signage and awnings, which are color coordinated, can be used to introduce brighter, more intense colors.
- Large areas of white or cool grays and reflective glass wall systems are discouraged.
- Bright corporate colors should be limited in use to signage only.

IV. Roofs

Intent:

Rooflines should be varied to add visual interest in large buildings.

Guidelines

- Variations in rooflines can include gables, dormers and well-defined parapets. Offsets in the roofline break up the mass of the roof and are encouraged.
- Roof overhangs at pedestrian entries provide protection for shoppers and are encouraged.
- Roofing materials should be of a color and material consistent with the architectural character of the building and should convey a sense of permanence and quality.
- Roof-mounted mechanical equipment should be concealed from public view on all sides by screening in a manner consistent with the character of the building.

V. Lighting

Intent:

Decorative and functional lighting should be compatible with the building design and should enhance the design and safety of the site.

Guideline

- The style and placement of exterior accent lighting should enhance each building's distinctive architectural elements such as entry features, pilasters, columns, or landscaping.

VI. Walls and Fences

Intent

Walls, fences and retaining walls should be designed to blend with the building.

Guidelines

- A wall design that provides frequent offsets along large expanses of the wall offers interest and is encouraged.
- Landscape pockets along long walls or fences are encouraged. These pockets should be a design element that is repeated frequently along the length of the wall.
- In order to soften the visual appearance of large retaining walls, two or more trees or shrubs should be planted at the base, the terrace between walls, and at the top of a retaining wall.
- To soften the appearance of retaining walls, trees or shrubs should be planted in the wall or in landscaped areas in front of the wall.
- Retaining walls should be designed to blend with the adjacent buildings or structures
- Large expanses of blank retaining walls should be avoided. Variations in the color of the wall, materials, and landscaping should all be used to improve the appearance of a wall.
- A decorative cap, railing or some similar element should be placed at the top of a retaining wall.

New Industrial Buildings

I. Site Design and Layout

Intent

Buildings should be oriented so that existing landforms and site features are enhanced, the relationships between buildings are strengthened, and pedestrian and vehicular circulation is facilitated.

Guidelines

- On-site natural features and vegetation should be protected. Open space amenities should also be protected and featured, wherever possible.

- Transitions in height from adjacent, less intensive land uses, (especially residential development) to the maximum height of the new development are highly desirable.
- If there is more than one building on a site, buildings should be grouped around a central delivery courtyard so that loading operations are screened from view.
- Accessory structures and outdoor storage areas should be located away from the public right-of-way and be screened from view.
- Building entrances should be oriented towards the primary access street.
- Pedestrian walkways from the public sidewalk to the main building entrance should be provided.
- Wherever possible, automobile and truck access drives should be separated. Pedestrian and vehicular access to and from sites and their relationship to adjacent sites should be planned for in the design of a project.
- All service areas should be screened from view from nearby streets, either by the building or with landscape screening and/or berming. Such service areas should also be located at the side or behind the main buildings.
- Outdoor storage of material, equipment or merchandise should be located in rear yards and screened with a combination of landscaping, berming, or fencing so as not to be visible from the street or from any adjacent use which is different in character.

II. Parking

Intent

The visual impact of large parking areas should be reduced. The design of parking lots should safely and attractively serve the pedestrian making his or her way to and from vehicles parked there.

Guidelines

- Parking lots are encouraged to provide a well-defined pedestrian circulation system within the site. Protected pedestrian walkways should directly link the internal circulation of buildings to off-street parking areas, and also to other buildings.

- Trees, shrubs and ground covers should be used in islands to break up large expanses of paving and provide shade. Water-efficient (xeriscape) landscaping should be used.
- Commercial developments, where possible, are encouraged to provide vehicular access to adjoining properties of similar commercial character, in order to provide connectivity between projects.
- A commercial development should provide pedestrian access throughout the site by linking to adjacent sidewalks, pathways, or transit stops.
- Shared parking between adjacent businesses and/or developments is encouraged, where practical.

III. Building Mass and Scale

Intent

Building mass can be defined as the building's volume or bulk and is usually used in reference to large structures. New buildings and renovations are encouraged to promote pedestrian orientation and appropriate scale. The following guidelines propose ways to break up large building mass and encourage compatibility between large and small developments as well as between differing land uses.

Guidelines

- Variation in the building façade by vertical or horizontal articulation, window and entry variations, patios, plazas or other landscaped pedestrian areas is encouraged. Strong vertical elements such as windows, pilasters, columns, stairs, and towers should be used to identify individual commercial spaces.
- Large volumes or planes should be broken into smaller ones in order to reduce the visual scale of a building. The mass of a building should be varied in form or divided to emphasize the various interior building functions.
- Where practical, gradual transitions in height from adjacent, less intensive land uses (especially residential development) to the maximum height of the new development are desirable.
- The sidewalk in front of a building should be designed with elements that create a pedestrian-friendly environment. Design elements should visually reduce the mass of buildings.
- Variations in roofline and building height can effectively break up massing and provide visual interest. The upper stories of a

building should be distinguished by using offsets or changes of material.

Residential

I. Infill Housing in Traditional Neighborhoods

A. Site Design and Layout

Intent

Sensitive transitions between single-family and multi-family residential uses in traditional and historic neighborhoods requires considering the massing and height of new buildings as well as the design of public and private spaces.

Guidelines

- Primary entrances for residential units should be oriented towards the street and should be clearly defined.
- The depth of front yards on the site of new residences should be consistent with those in front of existing adjacent residences. Smaller-sized infill projects should have compatible setbacks to those of their adjacent neighbors. However, it may sometimes be desirable for larger projects to have differing setbacks within the project and from their neighbors.
- New streets should be considered and planned as extensions of the adjacent community's patterns of streets, trails and open spaces, where feasible.
- Where possible, access to parking should occur from alleys that are suitable improved (paved) for routine driveway access. Parking areas should be located at the rear of the lot. Garages should be incorporated into the design of the housing, or be incorporated at the rear of the lot
- If driveways are required from the street to access garages, consider using wheel-well ("Hollywood") driveways with plantings that soften the visual impact of the driveways.

B. Landscaping

Intent:

On the site of multi-family residential buildings, the landscaping of common areas and front yards enhances the residential character of the project.

Guidelines

- Provide for regularly spaced trees along streetscapes, to extend the existing community character.

- Xeriscape landscaping concepts should be incorporated by utilizing low-water-use plant material and mulches in landscaped areas.

C. Building Mass and Scale

Intent

The massing and scale of new infill development should be of a height, massing and form which is complementary to existing residential buildings.

Guidelines

- The width of a residential unit in a building should not exceed the width of residential structures on neighboring lots.
- Large buildings should be divided into small architectural modules of similar size to the traditional houses seen in the neighborhood.
- Architectural form, mass and scale of new buildings should be similar to or not appear out of character, in comparison with existing buildings that are typical of the neighborhood.
- The finished floor heights should be within the range that is typical for the neighborhood.
- The building roof forms should be similar to those seen in the neighborhood.

D. Architectural Detail

Intent

Characteristic elements found in traditional San Angelo neighborhoods should be incorporated into the design of infill projects. These include architectural details as well as building materials.

Guidelines

- New infill development should have a comprehensive architectural theme that includes the building form, siding materials, material colors, window proportions, roof forms, and other building elements that combine to create a pleasing whole.
- Some elements, such as traditional patterns for windows and doors, should reflect the scale and patterns found in the neighborhood.
- A mix of building materials, both traditional and new, can blend a new building project into an existing neighborhood, yet add new character.

II. Multi-Family Housing in Newer Neighborhoods

New multi-family housing projects should be visually and functionally integrated as part of the surrounding neighborhood and community.

A. Site Design and Layout

Intent

New developments should respect the natural topography, of the development site, integrating new building form onto the existing site, and providing an attractive and comfortable living environment for residents. Functional communal spaces should be incorporated for residents to interact and enjoy outdoor recreational opportunities.

The internal circulation system should safely convey vehicles through the site, while minimizing conflicts with pedestrians.

Guidelines

- Entrances and drive aisles within a multi-family housing development should create a positive image for the development. The entry should be framed by landscaping.
- Residential buildings should frame the gateways and entrances to the project. Residential building should also cluster around and define the common open spaces.
- Sidewalks should extend from public streets into the project, to create a walk-able neighborhood for pedestrians.
- A convenient and continuous system of walkways should be provided, connecting outdoor spaces and tying these spaces together with public sidewalks.
- Parking areas should be visually unobtrusive and not detract from the attractiveness of common areas. Long, continuous rows of parked cars or parking garages are not desirable. Parking should be dispersed around the site in parking courts and in garages internal to buildings.
- Gateway treatments should be used at the entrances to developments.

B. Common Areas

Intent

Common areas should be incorporated as unpaved open spaces in multi-family residential developments, to provide functional recreational areas for the use of all residents.

Guidelines

- Multi-family development should provide both common and private open space areas. Common open space areas should be centrally located, and large areas of open space are preferable to a series of small, isolated spaces.
- Play spaces for children are encouraged and should be located in safe areas where the children can be observed.
- Common open space should be central to the project, and be of an appropriate size for passive and some active recreational pursuits.
- The design, landscaping and character of common open space should enhance the sense of community in a development. Outdoor furnishings, seating walls, plants and other amenities should be incorporated to distinguish these spaces.
- Canopy trees should be dispersed throughout the site to convey a sense of maturity to the project and to provide shade.

C. Building Mass and Scale

Intent

Multi-family housing should incorporate a variety of different building forms within one project. Replicating one or a limited number of building forms and footprints on a site is discouraged. A residential building should clearly convey its functions, and multi-family housing that looks similar to large single-family houses is encouraged.

Guidelines

- There should be a unifying architectural theme for the project, utilizing a common vocabulary of architectural forms, elements, materials and colors around the entire structure.
- With large buildings, the height of the building should be reduced at both ends to reduce the overall impression of size.
- Where multi-family residential developments are adjacent to single-family neighborhoods, the building massing adjacent to the lower density use should reflect the lower building scale, especially along the development's edges and streetscapes.
- Building forms should include façade shifts and articulation, as well as varied building materials and colors, in order to avoid mirror-image duplications of the same building or ends of the same building.
- Three-dimensional elements such as balconies, bay windows, dormers, and chimneys should be incorporated to provide variegated dimensional elements on building façades.

- Roof forms should not consist of long unbroken ridgelines, but should include variations in roof heights and wall planes, with elements such as gables.
- Trash enclosures should be integrated into building forms or should use opaque screening materials.

D. Materials and Color

Intent

Building materials that convey a sense of permanence and quality are appropriate and are encouraged.

Guidelines

- The palette of colors used should complement the architectural theme and harmonize with the colors of the natural materials used.
- Stone and masonry are appropriate at the base of the building and for pillars and pilasters.

III. Subdivision Development for New Single-Family Residential Neighborhoods

A. Site Design and Layout

Intent

The goal is to encourage innovative designs for new subdivisions that enhance neighborhood character, residents' interaction, and create an environment oriented to pedestrians and bicyclists.

Guidelines

- Subdivisions should be designed to minimize disturbances to the natural environment and to preserve natural areas and native vegetation.
- Open space areas for outdoor recreation and off-road pedestrian/bicycle paths should be used to form a buffer between developed and other, more natural areas.
- Recreational or natural open spaces on adjacent developments should be connected by a network of pathways, in order to create more integrated, usable open space.
- Storm water detention basins should be considered for open space use by grading to complement proposed uses, preserving vegetation or re-vegetating, and providing for safe access.

B. Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

Intent

Within new subdivisions, promote the most direct vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle circulation routes that allow for multiple connections to other neighborhoods.

Guidelines

- The walled appearance of collector and arterial streets, typically achieved by residences with privacy fences backing onto the roads, is discouraged. The layout of lots, blocks and streets in new residential lots should not include "double frontage" lots.
- A limited degree of connectivity between neighborhoods is encouraged to create direct routes and connections between adjacent developments.
- Long dead end streets (with cul-de-sac turnarounds) should be limited unless required by extraordinary topographical constraints.
- Traffic calming devices such as traffic circles, sidewalks extending into the street at intersections (e.g., bulb-outs), and narrower street widths can sometimes be used on local streets in new subdivisions, to reduce vehicular speeds and encourage street safety.
- Gateways and entrance parkways into new developments should promote landscape and street improvements that feature native and low-water-use plant materials.
- The type and placement of landscaping should be designed not to obstruct required line-of-sight at driveways and street intersections.

C. Subdivision Streetscapes

Intent

The massing and scale of new development should be varied to add visual interest and character to the streetscape. Attractive streetscapes encourage pedestrian-oriented activity on sidewalks and walkways, thereby making the neighborhood safer and more appealing.

Guidelines

- Lot sizes, setbacks, building orientation and form, and the orientation of porches and garages can all be varied to add interest and character to the subdivision.
- All streets in new subdivisions should include an interconnected system of sidewalks. Where possible, a traditional sidewalk design is preferred, with regularly spaced

street trees, pedestrian-scale light standards, and clearly delineated crosswalks.

- Front porches are desirable to encourage neighbor interaction and visibility of the streetscape, thereby enhancing neighborhood safety. In addition, attractive front yards and the architectural design of houses can enhance the social role of streets. Front porches are not necessary where the general theme of the area is not compatible with front porch design.
- The prominent and repetitive placement of garages should be avoided. A mix of garage locations is encouraged; such as garages located behind the front façade or flush with a front porch area, as well as a small number of protruding front-load garages. Garages and accessory buildings can be integrated into the architectural design of the residence. Side or rear garage access can also be used, depending on the topography and the size of the lot.
- The width of driveway curb cuts along the front of the street should be reduced to approximately sixteen feet. Where possible, other solutions that minimize the visual impact of driveways and encourage balance between landscape and driveway areas should be used. These include such features as "Hollywood" driveways, and using alleys for garage access.

D. Building Design and Architectural Detail

Intent

Characteristic elements found in traditional San Angelo neighborhoods should be incorporated into the design of new subdivisions. These include architectural details as well as building materials.

Guidelines

- Homes in new subdivisions should have a comprehensive architectural theme that includes consideration of color, the building form, siding materials, window proportions, roof forms, and other building elements which combine to create a pleasing whole.
- It is desirable that building's on corner lots be formed with a single-story portion nearest the corner.
- At least two houses featuring dissimilar elevations should be placed between houses of the same elevation on the same side of the street

IV. Traditional Residential Neighborhoods

A. Alleys and Secondary Residential Structures

Intent

Attractive and suitably-improved (paved) alleys can provide access to individual garages and, where allowed by zoning regulations, allow development opportunities for accessory residences that can increase residential densities yet provide the appearance of a single-family community.

Guidelines

- It is desirable that parking garages should be staggered back from the edge of the alley so that the appearance of the alley is not monotonous. Pockets of landscaping, including trees, are desirable behind each housing unit in order to soften the appearance of the alley.
- Parking garages are to accommodate a maximum of three parked cars. The design of the garage should be the same or similar to the architecture of the house.
- The design of fences should not obscure visual surveillance of the alley from the primary residential unit
- Backyard open space should be maintained and integrated with the design and construction of any accessory buildings and garages.
- Alleys should be adequately lit at intersections and mid-block.
- Secondary structures with accessory residences accessible by stairs (from the yard or alley) should feature the same or similar architectural elements, buildings materials and color as the primary residential structure.
- The mass and form of secondary structures should be significantly less than but complementary to the scale of the primary residential structure.
- The privacy of adjacent neighbors should be considered in the design of secondary structures. Views over adjacent property should be screened. In addition, the privacy of the primary residence should also be considered in the layout of secondary structures.

B. Park Areas

Intent

Small parks offer a critical mass of opens pace available to nearby residents, for both passive and active recreation.

Guidelines

- Residential units should front onto any open space area, wherever possible. A road that provides on-street parking can border these small parks. Alleys adjacent to parks and other open spaces will be discouraged.
- Common open space areas should be central to the project, and be of an appropriate size for both passive and active recreational pursuits of the neighborhood residents.

V. Historic Residential Districts

A. Site Design and Layout

Intent

New infill development and additions to existing buildings should be designed to retain and enhance the appearance of the street frontage. Landscaped front yards, street trees, fences and low walls are important elements of the neighborhood setting.

Guidelines

- The street character should be maintained with street edge elements such as low fences and hedges, planting beds, and street trees.
- The setbacks should be consistent with that of other buildings on the block. The front yard should be predominantly landscaped with plants, and hard-surface paving should be minimized.
- A sense of open space should be preserved in front, side and rear yards. Secondary structures should be located at the rear of residential lots. Building forms should be located on a lot to preserve and define usable open space remaining on the lot.
- The primary entrance should be located facing the street and should be visible from the street
- A walkway should be provided to connect the front entry to a nearby sidewalk or street. Perpendicular walkways are encouraged.
- All remote satellite dishes should be screened with trellises, fences, or plantings.
- If there are significant grade changes on the side, landscaped slopes are preferred. If retaining walls are necessary, they should be made of masonry.

B. Building Mass and Scale

Intent

The mass and scale of new buildings should maintain, to the extent possible, the traditional street character of the neighborhood. While new buildings may be larger than the existing older houses, the new buildings should not be so large that they overwhelm their neighbors.

Guidelines

- A new building should not be substantially higher than its neighbors. It should be within the range of heights traditionally seen within the neighborhood.
- The visual appearance of a building can be minimized by stepping down the height towards its neighbors. The back of a building may be taller than the front and can therefore be made more visually consistent with its shorter neighbors.
- The width of the front elevation should not exceed the width of a typical single-family residence on the block. If the building is wider, the elevation should be divided into smaller architectural modules, and sections of the façade should be set back so that there are offsets.
- Developed basements are encouraged to provide additional living space, provided that the finished first floor elevation is not raised above that of adjacent buildings.
- Roof forms and pitches should be used that are compatible with those apparent on other buildings in the block and in the neighborhood. The repetition of similar roof forms provides visual continuity.
- An addition can be made to be distinguishable from the original structure in subtle ways. A jog or connector may be built between the primary structure and an addition, for example, subtle changes in styles of materials can also help distinguish new building additions form the original structure. .

3. Architectural Detail

Intent

New buildings and additions should reflect traditional architectural features apparent in the surrounding environment.

Guidelines

- Front porches are encouraged since they historically occurred in the neighborhood, and they provide a transition from the public street to private buildings.
- Window and door shapes traditionally found in older residential buildings should be used in new developments. The

proportion and grouping of such windows is important to maintain, to provide a degree of architectural consistency throughout the neighborhood.

- A certain amount of design variety is encouraged. The design of all sides of each building should be considered. This is especially important on corner lots that have exposure to both a street and a river.

D. Building Materials and Color

Intent

The intent is to have new buildings harmonize with the neighborhood. While the building form and design may be different, the materials and colors used should be based on those found in the historic district.

Guidelines

- Brick, stone, stucco and painted wood are encouraged as primary building materials. New development can use a mix of these materials.
- The color palette for new buildings should be complementary to the predominant earth-toned colors found in historic districts. Richer hues can be used but bright colors are discouraged. Different colors can be used for accent colors.
- Roof materials should be similar to those found traditionally. Metal roofs are not appropriate on primary structures.

Other Environmental Concerns and the River Front

I. Gateway Opportunities and the River Front

Intent

Ensure high quality development fronting onto the Concho Rivers.

Guidelines

- Buildings should be sited and designed to frame and preserve views, as well as frame gateways along the river front.
- Buildings should be compatible in terms of scale, lot size, massing, building placement and orientation. Buildings should be sited to follow natural grade contours, whereas possible.
- Setbacks should be a minimum of 75 feet from the riverbank and be landscaped to frame buildings as well as to screen loading, refuse collection and outdoor storage areas.

- Buildings should be designed with architectural elements and patterns on the elevations facing the river bank, even though this may be the rear elevation.
- Office Building facades along the river should incorporate a substantial amount of transparent glazing at all office use levels.
- Building or accent colors should not be bright or intense nor should highly reflective surfaces be utilized. Colors of building materials should reflect those found in the natural landscape, such as soft greens, and warm brown tones.
- The character of landscaping should vary from informal planting arrangements bordering natural open space areas, transitioning to more formal landscape arrangements closer to buildings and developed areas.
- The landscape character of adjacent lots along an identified corridor should be coordinated to provide a unified appearance. A unified street tree plan should be selected to ensure the cohesive appearance of a block or a section of a corridor.
- Where walls, chain-link or other security fencing is required, they should be screened from view from the corridor by landscaping, berms, or the placement of buildings.
- Landscaping should be used to screen parking lots from view from the identified River Corridor.
- All landscaping along identified corridors should utilize water-conserving plants and irrigation systems.
- At gateway locations, lighting should be used only for illumination of signage or special features such as public art.
- Major signage should be enhanced through the use of simple but effective landscaping. Landscaping can help draw attention to the sign, and a simple layout will ensure that the sign is the focal point
- Walls or fences adjacent to identified corridors are not encouraged. Rather, berms and landscaping to provide a buffer or transition are encouraged. Where walls are required, they should be designed with unique patterns, textural differences or offsets. The offsets can be landscaped with clusters of trees and shrubs.

II. Storm Water Detention

Intent

Storm water detention basins should be designed to visually integrate the detention area and outlet structure into the surrounding landscape, and make it appear as naturalistic as possible.

Guidelines

- The design of storm water retention and detention systems should complement the surrounding landscape and should be located where they have the greatest overall benefit
- Detention areas should have natural-looking features, fit into the landscape and add to the overall character of an area, as opposed to having boxy and geometric features. The shape of the detention pond should be made to look as naturalistic as possible, with terracing of the slopes and bottom. The top and the toe of the slope should vary, and there should be an undulation in the shape and grading of the sides of storm water detention areas.
- Multipurpose detention facilities are strongly encouraged with recreation activities such as active recreation areas, passive open space areas and pedestrian paths.
- The slopes of detention ponds should vary. It is preferred that, wherever possible, slopes should be 4:1 or flatter.
- Plant material should be used to soften the appearance of the detention area, and blend with the adjacent landscaping and natural features, and conceal any required guardrails.
- Slopes should be well-vegetated to prevent erosion channels. The use of appropriate groundcovers and grasses at the top of the slope help to soften the appearance of detention areas and can incorporate storm water detention areas into the landscape design. Appropriate plant material, such as wetland species or drought tolerant species, should be planted in detention areas and on the slopes. Shrubs and trees should be planted back from the top of the slope. Native and perennial species should be used as much as possible.
- Storm water detention basins designed to improve water quality (as well as mitigate flow) can be located in inverted landscaped islands within parking lots. Buffer areas surrounding parking areas can also be used for detention basins. Other creative techniques for improving water quality and providing detention in or adjacent to parking lots are encouraged.
- Landscaping should be used to prevent water pollution from “non-point” sources, wherever possible.

- Rundowns, which convey runoff from streets and parking lots into channels or storage facilities, should be incorporated into the overall design of new development. Rundowns should allow for water infiltration.
- The maximum height of any retaining wall should be four feet. Retaining walls should be designed to consider slope height and aesthetics, and terraced walls in no more than four-foot heights are encouraged. Should walls need to be any taller, they should be stepped back in four-foot increments with areas between the walls for landscaping.
- Retaining walls should not form any more than fifty percent of the perimeter of any detention area.
- Where it is possible, the foundation of a building can form one side of a detention area.
- The distance between the top of any detention area's retaining wall and any adjacent sidewalk, roadway curb or structured feature should be a minimum of three times the height of the wall, where possible.
- Trickle channels should be designed to be decorative as well as practical, and to accommodate for infiltration and erosion control.
- Where possible, porous paving materials should be used in parking lots to allow for infiltration of storm water, thereby minimizing storm water runoff.

III. Fences

Intent

The design of fences, walls, and other structural landscape features should be compatible with and complementary to the architecture of adjacent buildings and the surrounding setting.

Guidelines

- Chain-link fences should not be used.
- Barbed wire, razor wire, or similar wire on security fences should not be used.
- Fences that entirely enclose the front yard including driveways are discouraged.

- Fences constructed of predominantly natural materials, such as stone and wood, are preferable. However, fences constructed with masonry and textured and/or composed of color-tinted concrete are acceptable.

- Fences accompanied by landscaping are desired, especially to integrate fences with their surrounding site and reduce visual impact.

- Design elements should be used to break up long expanses of uninterrupted walls, both vertically and horizontally.

IV. Avoiding Critical Sites

Intent

Avoid development or minimize undesirable impacts of development on portions of sites whose natural features and functions are particularly valuable to the larger community. Avoid development on sites where soil, water, and flora/fauna indicators are in a fragile condition because of surrounding development or the natural state of the site. Avoid or minimize undesirable impacts of development on portions of sites that meet any one or more of the following criteria:

- land of state, regional, or local biological/ecological significance as identified in state, regional, or local natural resource inventories, assessments and biological surveys;
- prime farmland as defined by the American Farmland Trust;
- land whose elevation is lower than 5 feet above the elevation of the 100-year flood as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA);
- land which provides habitat for any animal or plant species on the Federal or State inventories of threatened or endangered species.

V. Appropriate Location and Density

Intent

The following guidelines are intended to direct development, where appropriate, to existing urban or suburban areas with in-place infrastructure, to reduce development pressure on undeveloped land, to conserve natural resources, to reduce energy use and pollution contributions related to transportation requirements; and to promote a sense of increased community interaction.

Guidelines

- Avoid low-density, undeveloped sites with little or no nearby infrastructure of streets and utilities, unless no other

site is available. Sites selected for new urban development should offer the most comprehensively positive impact for environmental, economic, community, and human benefits.

- Select sites which reuse existing urban/suburban and industrial sites. Such sites are often located near mass transit and public amenities to encourage walking to services instead of driving. Such sites also maximize the use of the existing infrastructure such as utilities, roadways, and other public services. Select sites that support regional development strategies and local comprehensive plans.
- Increase localized density to conform to existing or desired density goals identified in San Angelo's Comprehensive Plan.

VII. Brownfield Redevelopment

Intent

Brownfield's are abandoned or underused areas, usually former industrial sites, where real or perceived contamination hinders development. These damaged or contaminated sites should be redeveloped to reduce development pressure on undeveloped land, utilize existing investments in infrastructure, conserve natural resources, and promote a new sense of community renewal and revitalization.

VII. Erosion and Sedimentation Control

Intent

Reduce the loss of soil and sediment during construction and occupancy by reducing the impacts of wind and water on soil disturbed during development. Reduce the amount of soil and sediment entering streams which contribute to the Concho River system and to the region's water supply.

Guidelines

- Design, site-specific sediment and erosion control plans that minimizes sedimentation within acceptable limits as set by state and/or local authorities having jurisdiction, whichever is more stringent.
- Prevent sedimentation of any existing storm sewers.
- Prevent soil erosion before, during, and after site development and building construction, by controlling storm water runoff and wind erosion.
- Protect hillsides using erosion control measures.
- Prevent air pollution due to dust and particulate matter.

- Strategies to consider include: stockpiling topsoil for reuse, silt fencing, sediment traps, construction phasing, stabilization of slopes, and maintaining and enhancing vegetation and groundcover. The minimum wind speed to start soil movement on an erodible soil is 13 to 15 miles per hour.
- Strategies to consider also include hydro seeding, erosion control blankets, and/or sedimentation ponds to collect runoff.

VIII. Storm Water Management

Intent

Minimize negative impacts on the natural hydrologic cycle as much as possible by reducing downstream impacts of storm water runoff, improving overall water quality and clarity, and recharging groundwater through infiltration.

Guidelines

- Achieve no net decrease in the rate and quantity of on-site water recharge from existing to developed conditions; OR, if existing imperviousness is greater than 25%, implement an infiltration or storage plan that results in a 25% increase in the rate and quantity of on-site water recharge.
- Provide treatment systems designed to remove solids and pollutants from storm water runoff, to comply with water quality standards.
- Provide treatment systems designed to remove 80% of the average annual post-development total suspended solids (TSS), and 40% of the average annual post-development total phosphorous (TP), by implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) outlined by Environment Protection Agency.

IX. Reducing Site Disturbance and Restoring Natural Features

Intent

Conserve existing site features during building construction and site improvement and restore natural areas damaged by such construction. In doing so, the site can sustain some of its natural functions which include water recharge, heat reduction, aesthetic enhancement and biodiversity.

Guidelines

- On previously developed sites: Maintain or improve natural site functions and biodiversity for 50% of site area, in

accordance with existing conditions and surrounding site context. Determine spatially by area measurement, not including building footprint.

- On greenfield sites: Limit site disturbance including earthwork and clearing of vegetation to 40 feet beyond the building perimeter, 5 feet beyond primary roadway curbs, walkways, and utility trenches, 5 feet beyond tree drip lines and the edges of natural areas identified for protection, and 25 feet beyond perilous paving areas and storm water management features that require additional staging areas in order to limit compaction in the constructed areas.
- On all sites: A minimum of 75% of all species planted on the site should be from stock identified as native to the local area. In addition, a minimum of 75% of all trees and shrubs, by quantity, are to be native material.

X. Reducing Site Water Use for Plant Materials

Intent

Limit, reduce, or eliminate potable water demand for maintaining plants and lawn areas.

Guidelines

- Use native plantings that do not require maintenance irrigation after 1- to 2-year establishment period.
- In areas where the use of native plant materials has not reduced or eliminated the need for additional maintenance irrigation, use high efficiency irrigation technology AND/OR use captured rain or recycled water, to reduce potable water consumption for irrigation by 50% over conventional means.

XI. Reduce Light Pollution

Intent

Eliminate light trespass from building sites, improve night sky access, and reduce development impact on nocturnal environments. Reduce overall electrical usage from site lighting, through appropriate selection of type, sizing and operation of light fixtures.

Guidelines

- Do not exceed Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) foot-candle level requirements as stated in the Recommended Practice Manual: Lighting for Exterior Environments.
- Reduce electrical consumption from site lighting, to assist in achieving 30% reduction in overall building energy use.

- Use lamps with broader color spectrum which appear closer to daylight color temperatures, especially in areas of safety/security (i.e. on main walking routes through large parking lots, and in isolated areas), at building entrances, and in locations where identification of objects or individuals is essential.

XII. Reducing Heat Island Effect

Intent

Reduce heat islands (thermal gradient differences between developed and undeveloped areas) to minimize impact on microclimate as well as in human and wildlife habitats.

Guidelines

- Construct a minimum 30% of non-roof impervious surfaces with high-albedo materials, OR
- Construct open-grid pavement system (less than 5% impervious) over a minimum 50% of the parking lot area, OR
- Plant or conserve enough trees, so that a minimum 30% of non-roof impervious surfaces will be shaded within 5 years, OR
- Place a minimum of 50% of parking spaces underground or in a structured parking facility which reduces overall impervious surface coverage by 50%.

XIII. Encouraging Efficient Transportation Alternatives

Intent

Reduce dependence on automobile use, reduce the amount of pavement impacting natural systems, and allow for more ecologically responsive approaches to site development.

Guidelines

- Locate the building within 1/4 mile of one or more bus lines, and within 1/4 mile of retail and public services.
- Provide suitable means and mix for securing bicycles for 5% or more of building occupants or according to local bicycle parking guidelines or zoning requirements, whichever is more stringent.
- Size parking capacity not to exceed minimum local zoning requirements; encourage shared parking with adjacent uses, add no new parking for rehabilitation projects; and provide preferred parking for hybrid vehicle owners, carpools or van pools capable of serving 5% of the building occupants.

- Locate preferred parking, bicycle parking, pick-up areas, and covered waiting spaces within close proximity of the main building entrances, with markings clearly designating these areas.

REVIEW PROCEDURES

It is the desire of the River Corridor Commission to provide positive assistance to all projects which are reviewed by the Commission. The River Corridor Commission must review any proposed exterior renovation, alteration, modification, or development of property (including private and leased city-owned property) within the River Corridor. Applicants should contact the City of San Angelo's Planning Department, which is located in City Hall, for specific information on procedures and scheduling. Telephone inquiries can be made by calling 657-4210. The River Corridor Commission normally meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 3:30 p.m.

It is recommended that the applicant carefully read the "Guiding Principles" and "Design Guidelines of the River Corridor Commission" prior to making an application for review. This is particularly true for a major project which is defined as any project which by its size, site or design characteristics will have a significant impact on the River Corridor and/or adjacent properties. An applicant may make a preliminary presentation to the River Corridor Commission if they would like guidance or suggestions. This is particularly helpful when undertaking a major project.

Preliminary or conceptual plans for new construction, major renovation or redevelopment should be prepared in sufficient detail to show, where applicable, the following:

A. 1) Proposed use, indicating how current conditions will change.

2) Proposed layout of buildings (existing and proposed) as well as other site improvements, drawn to scale.

3) Materials (samples).

4) Lighting.

5) Graphics (signage).

6) Outdoor furniture and seating plan.

7) Awnings/umbrellas.

8) Landscaping.

9) Colors (samples).

10) Dimensions.

11) Other details that will assist the Commission to understand the request, such as photographs, etc.

B. The applicant must submit a Site Plan (scale at 1" = 50' or greater) and at least one Elevation View (scale at 1/16" = 50' or greater) showing the location of the proposed development or redevelopment and its relation to adjacent buildings.

C. Applicant must submit a completed application form, to the Planning Department staff, as part of its application package.

D. The entire application package must be submitted to the Planning Director or his/her designee, not later than two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. Packages should include above items A, B, and C. Requests which are not accompanied by all applicable items will not be placed on the agenda for consideration by the River Corridor Commission.

E. A presentation by the applicant is required to be made at the scheduled meeting of the River Corridor Commission.

F. Conceptual plans on all major projects must be presented and approved by the Commission prior to submission of final construction plans. Failure to present conceptual or preliminary plans on all major projects could delay the project.

G. Once conceptual plans are approved by the Commission, applicant must reapply for consideration of final construction plans. Procedures listed above must be followed. Any changes and supplemental information to conceptual plans must be submitted on final plans. Approved plans will be retained by the Director of Planning.

H. In the event a project is presented to the Commission and it is deemed to be incomplete, or if the overall project is acceptable but certain portions are not approved, an "approval in concept" may be given to the applicant.

In these cases, resubmission is required. Resubmitted plans and drawings should reflect the Commission's recommendations or changes before final approval can be given to the applicant.

I. The River Corridor Commission makes decisions based on the Guiding Principles and Design Guidelines, and the Commission's view of the best interests of the larger community.

Applicants whose requests for development, renovation, or activity are denied by the River Corridor Commission can appeal to City Council for a final decision.

J. Applicants are reminded that required approval may not be limited to that given by the River Corridor Commission. It may be necessary to seek approval from the City Planning Commission or other agencies.

The River Corridor is fortunate to have many parks for public enjoyment scattered throughout the Corridor. The River Corridor Commission will assist the Parks Commission in guiding the development of all public parks in the River Corridor.

IMPLEMENTATION

It is clear from even a superficial survey of our river area that the city has made a substantial and long term investment in its development. This is apparent in the elaborate

dam system and other infrastructure such as bridges and roads and in the extraordinary gardens, recreational facilities and parks that have been created. We can take great pride as a community in what has been accomplished. We should not stop now. We should continue the century-long tradition of improvements and development in the River Corridor.

The ideas presented in this plan were updated by the Planning Department under the guidance of the River Corridor Commission. The first step is to continue and strengthen the relationship of cooperation between the River Corridor Commission and the City Council. The Commission acts as the community's "eyes and ears" on the river. The Guiding Principles and Design Guidelines will clarify and enhance that role. The Commission should work with City Council and appropriate agencies to further develop and refine aspects of this Master Development Plan.

In summary, there are many opportunities to carry forward the tradition of our predecessors. A report produced for the city several decades ago and which gave impetus to many of the amenities that we enjoy today made the essential point when it stated....

> "The rivers and lakes in and adjacent to San Angelo provide a setting unknown to any other Texas Community. This single factor is San Angelo's greatest asset. We recommend that every effort be made to exploit this gift of nature."

It is with great hope and anticipation that this Plan is submitted to City Council and the People of San Angelo.

The River Corridor Commission

2006