

# **GOVERNMENT HILL**

## **Neighborhood Plan**



*Prepared by the citizens of the*  
**Government Hill Neighborhood**  
*in partnership with the*  
**City of San Antonio Planning Department**

***September, 2001***

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Acknowledgements</b>		i
<b>Executive Summary</b>		1
<b>Goals and Strategies</b>		3
<b>Goals, Objectives and Strategies Summary</b>		5
<b>Plan Elements</b>		
Housing		8
Land Use and Zoning		10
Revitalization Strategies		17
Community Initiatives		17
Community Facilities/Recreation		18
Transportation        /Infrastructure		18
<b>Historic Designation</b>		21
 <b>APPENDICES</b>		
Appendix A	Transcription of Meetings	A-1
Appendix B	Ft. Sam Houston Gateway Commercial District Urban Renewal Plan	B-1
Appendix C	Zoning	C-1
Appendix D	City Initiatives	D-1
Appendix E	Demographics and Health Statistics	E-1
Appendix F	Meeting Calendar	F-1
 <b>LIST OF MAPS</b>		
Map 1	Redevelopment Strategies Map	4
Map 2	Existing Land Use	11
Map 3	Current Zoning	13
Map 4	Land Use Plan	16
Map 5	Major Thoroughfare Plan	20

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The City of San Antonio Planning Department and The San Antonio Development Agency (SADA), together with the Government Hill community developed the Government Hill Neighborhood Plan. The Government Hill Neighborhood is bounded by Fort Sam Houston to the north, Fort Sam Houston along Hines Avenue to the east, the Union Pacific railroad yard to the south and Broadway to the west.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Government Hill Neighborhood Plan is to create a specific plan that will help revitalize the neighborhood. The Government Hill community has identified goals addressing housing, preferred land uses, community initiatives, community facilities/recreation, and transportation/infrastructure. Some of the strategies identified to accomplish these goals are mapped on the Preferred Land Use - Redevelopment Strategies Map included as part of the plan. The elements of this plan will be used as a guide by the neighborhood to revitalize the area through partnerships and common goals.

## **Strategies**

These strategies were identified by the community as key to the implementation of the plan and revitalization of the Government Hill area. Each strategy is taken from an objective within the plan elements.

- Work with the various housing agencies to develop a systematic plan to repair and rehabilitate housing.
- Increase the participation of the neighbors to get involved with strategies to improve the neighborhood.
- Work with TxDOT to landscape along both sides of I.H. 35, utilizing existing irrigation system, and create a noise and pollution buffer.
- Encourage a monthly inspection and clean up of vacant lots in the neighborhood.

## **Consistency with Other Plans**

This plan is supported by the following **Master Plan (1997)** Goal:

***Neighborhoods, Goal 2: Strengthen the use of the Neighborhood Planning Process and Neighborhood Plans.***

## **Community Based Process**

Three public meetings were held to gain input from residents, property owners, and businesses in the Government Hill Neighborhood. A transcription of community meetings delineating strengths/opportunities, weaknesses/ threats, key ideas/solutions, and small inexpensive ideas, can be found in Appendix A. Throughout the process, community involvement and partnerships were stressed as critical to the success of this plan.

## **Recognition by the City of San Antonio**

After a process of City Departmental review for policy consistency, the Government Hill Neighborhood plan was reviewed by the Planning Commission to ensure inclusiveness, policy consistency and that the Plan is an accurate reflection of the community's values. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, and its adoption by City Council, the Plan becomes a component of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan.

## **Plan Contents**

The Goals, Objectives and Strategies, and Redevelopment Strategy Map address the Government Hill community's issues. The Plan elements provide information regarding each of the goals and an explanation of the redevelopment strategies.

The appendices include A) Transcription of Meetings, B) Ft. Sam Houston Gateway Commercial District Urban Renewal Plan, C) Zoning Densities and Allowable Uses, D) City Initiatives, E) Demographics and Health Statistics, and F) Community Input.

Community Goals, Objectives, and Strategies were identified at the April 29, 1998 and June 2, 1998 public meetings. Detailed explanations of the strategies may be found on pages 5-7. A summary of the principal goals expressed by the community include:

**1. Housing**

- 1.1 Conserve, rehabilitate and/or replace (if necessary) housing stock.

**2. Land Use/Revitalization**

- 2.1 Redevelop and revitalize the neighborhood.

**3. Community Initiatives**

- 3.1 Increase community involvement and influence.
- 3.2 Increase the safety and security of the neighborhood.

**4. Community Facilities/Recreation**

- 4.1 Improve neighborhood open spaces and community facilities and make the neighborhood pedestrian friendly.

**5. Transportation/Infrastructure**

- 5.1 Improve the streetscape and make the neighborhood a pedestrian friendly environment.

The following map identifies the Government Hill Redevelopment Strategies.

# **Government Hill Neighborhood Plan Redevelopment Strategies**

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the Goals, Objectives and Strategies developed by community participants during the April 29, 1998 and June 2, 1998 community meetings. Appendix A contains a transcription of the information used to formulate these goals.

### HOUSING

#### **Goal: Conserve, rehabilitate and/or replace (if necessary) housing stock.**

**Objective:** To develop a housing preservation strategy to stabilize and improve the real estate values.

**Strategies:**

- Pursue the proposed historic district within the neighborhood (see Map 1) only if agreed upon by the community with ample information and significance and only when all identified criteria in the Historic Revitalization Three Point Program are met (see pg. 8 for criteria).
- Work with the various housing agencies to develop a systematic plan to repair and rehabilitate housing.
- Identify programs that focus on housing repair/rehabilitation or replacement for the elderly.
- Form an oversight committee to monitor and inform landlords/tenants of code violations. In addition this committee will work with residents and area churches to help provide services for elderly and needy.\*
- Maintain Select Housing Target Area in coordination with San Antonio Development Agency.\*

### LAND USE / REVITALIZATION

#### **Goal: Redevelop and revitalize the neighborhood.**

**Objective:** To encourage and support any revitalization and redevelopment efforts consistent with this plan.

**Strategies:**

- Encourage a monthly inspection and clean up of vacant lots in the neighborhood.

*Staff Comment: This is only feasible if initiated by the neighborhood and reported to code compliance.*

- Market the vacant parcels of land to prospective homeowners and businesses.\*
- Recruit desired businesses and the expansion of existing businesses in the neighborhood.\*
- Encourage the involvement of all organizations in the area to work together to improve the neighborhood.\*
- Rezone existing 1938 zoning to 1965 zoning to restrict incompatible land uses.
- Increase the penalties for any code violators.

*Staff Comment: The fine for code violations is assessed by a Municipal Court Judge. If violations are corrected before the case is scheduled to be heard, then the fine is dismissed.*

\* indicates issues outside of the City's jurisdiction

**Objective:** To seek financial incentives to improve housing and entice new residents to the area.

**Strategies**

- Work with local agencies and lending institutions to provide information on grants or low interest loans for home or business repairs as well as first time home buyers.\*

**COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

**Goal: Increase community involvement and influence.**

**Objective:** To encourage 100% eligible voters to register and vote.

**Strategies:**

- Designate a block captain to be responsible for registering all eligible voters to register. \*
- Increase the participation of the neighbors to get involved with strategies to improve the neighborhood.\*
- Coordinate with a central location (a local grocery store) and volunteers from the neighborhood to sponsor an information booth.\*

**Objective:** To work with the various agencies responsible for completing the U.S. Census.

**Strategies:**

- Designate a block captain to be responsible for distributing information on the importance on the Census and contacting all the residents by phone as a reminder to submit all U.S. Census data.\*
- Coordinate with a central location (a local grocery store) and volunteers from the neighborhood to work an information booth.\*

**Goal: Increase the safety/security of the neighborhood.**

**Objective:** To establish a working relationship with each other and public agencies, and the Police Department.

**Strategies:**

- Work with Police Department to support the opening of a storefront sub-station and bike patrol with a SAFFE officer.

*Staff Comment: The neighborhood SAFFE officer has proven a more effective means of fighting neighborhood crime, as storefront services produce minimal impacts.*

- Install speed control devices on identified problem streets throughout the neighborhood.
- Work with TxDOT to install safety barriers between neighborhood and I.H. 35 right of way.\*
- Install stop signs on frontage roads at off ramps from I.H. 35.

*Staff Comment: TxDOT does not install stop signs on frontage roads, because they impede traffic flow.*

- Work with police to establish a zero tolerance of crime in the neighborhood.

\* indicates issues outside of the City's jurisdiction

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES / RECREATION

**Goal: Improve neighborhood open spaces and community facilities and make the neighborhood pedestrian friendly.**

**Objective:** Provide a neighborhood park for recreation and open space within the neighborhood.

**Strategies:**

- Work with the City and School District to identify potential properties for a neighborhood park.
- Connect parks with sidewalks and tree lined streets
- Connect neighborhoods on the north and south sides of I.H. 35 with a pedestrian bridge at Walters St., utilizing abandoned railroad bridge.

*Staff Comment:* Pedestrian safety would be better addressed utilizing a redeveloped Walters St. bridge.

- Work with SAISD or other agencies to establish library, parks, and community facilities (see page 18 for specific locations).

## TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

**Goal: Improve streetscape, roadways and make the neighborhood a pedestrian friendly environment.**

**Objective:** To improve and maintain the existing infrastructure, throughout the neighborhood, in good repair and improve the visual appearance of the streetscape.

**Strategies**

- Improve streets, sidewalks and drainage on N. New Braunfels, Walters Ave., Sandmeyer Street, Mason Street, Carson Street and throughout the neighborhood.
- Install new lighting around bus stops, neighborhood amenities and in needed areas.
- Improve sewage system for entire neighborhood.
- Work with SAISD on issues of shared parking.
- Work with TxDOT to landscape along both sides of I.H. 35, utilizing existing irrigation system, and create a noise and pollution buffer.\*
- Beautify Walters St.

\* indicates issues outside of the City's jurisdiction

The following information provides background research and detailed information on the various strategies that may be implemented to address the goals of the specific Plan elements.

## HOUSING

Housing is an issue in the neighborhood. There are houses within the Government Hill neighborhood that have been identified as historically significant. Therefore, the idea of conserving what is already there is important to the community. However, the ability to build new and more modern structures to replace those houses that are beyond affordable rehabilitation is also an important driving force.

The designation of a section of the neighborhood as a historic district has received support within the neighborhood. The following criteria of the Historic Revitalization Program must be satisfied before the proposed historic district can be implemented.

**Criteria 1** - The creation of design guidelines that are unique to Government Hill, and include a list of lower cost alternative materials to reduce rehabilitation cost.

**Criteria 2** - The implementation of a Residents Assistance Program that will ensure low income persons are not negatively impacted from the implementation of a historic district. This program will outline and initiate an education and follow-up process that identifies opportunities to assist neighborhood residents with the rehabilitation and maintenance of structures. An additional element of the program will address the displacement of families that can no longer afford to live within the district and the adjacent areas affected by the district. This element will include programs to help displaced families become homeowners through a Down Payment Assistance Program. Another part of this element is a Rental Relocation Program to help families that do not qualify for homeownership. The Rental Relocation Program will offer up to three months rent to help families relocate (the first priority is to relocate within the neighborhood).

**Criteria 3** - The identification and commitment of funding sources for the aforementioned criteria that will not affect current funds dedicated to other initiatives within the plan area.

Listed below are additional options identified by the Planning Department to address the housing conservation issue.

### Possible Options:

#### Maintain existing neighborhood:

- No means of conserving housing stock -- No building guidelines.

**Implement Conservation District:**

- Conserves housing through set of demolition guidelines.
- Allows new construction and rehabilitation guidelines.

**Utilize Master Plan:**

- Section III (F) - Urban Design

Goal 1: Preserve and enhance the City's urban design

*Policy 1b:* Develop urban design policies and standards which integrate and coordinate planning for historic and cultural resources, public facilities and services, private development, infrastructure, transportation, arts and cultural resources, libraries, parks and recreation, health and human service facilities.

(6) Develop unique and specific design standards for areas throughout the City, including neighborhoods and the downtown.

**Strategies**

Listed below are the strategies identified by the community to satisfy the housing goal.

- Pursue historic designation of the neighborhood, only if agreed upon by community, with ample information about the significance of this option.
- Clean up abandoned houses.
- Systematic plan to repair and rehabilitate housing.
- Funding to help elderly/seniors rehabilitate their homes.
- Pursue additional funding options for the rehabilitation of older homes.

## LAND USE AND ZONING

### **Existing Land Use**

The current land use pattern for this area is residential. There are pockets and concentrations of commercial and mixed-uses throughout the neighborhood. The major commercial corridors are along N. New Braunfels, Broadway and the I.H. 35 access roads. The majority of the industrial uses are along Seguin St. in the southeastern section of the neighborhood. As well as having the industrial uses located in the southeastern section, this area is also the area with the highest concentration of vacant parcels. See Map 2 for more details.

**Government Hill Neighborhood Plan  
Existing Land Use Map**

**LAND USE AND ZONING****Current Zoning**

The majority of the area north of I.H. 35 is zoned multi-family based on 1938 zoning. The 1938 zoning is based on letters from “A” to “M,” with “A” being single family residential district and “M” being a second manufacturing district. The 1938 zoning codes allow for any use allowed in one zone is allowed in a consecutive zone, for example, anything that is allowed in zone “A,” is allowed in zone “D.”

Based on current zoning criteria, the majority of the area is under utilized for its zoning classification. For instance, there is a high concentration of single family structures in the central section of the neighborhood between N. New Braunfels and Austin. This section is zoned “D” for apartment district. There are some commercial as well as light industrial zones on the western edge of the neighborhood along Broadway and Alamo, which are not being fully utilized as well. There are other sections of the neighborhood that are suitable for their current zoning. An example of this is in the northeastern part of the neighborhood between Frank St. and Edgar/Ash St. that has a “new” zoning classification of R-1 (1965 zoning), which allows single family dwelling units.

The southern section of the neighborhood is a mix of 1938 and 1965 zoning. The majority of the land in this section is zoned for industrial type uses based on 1938 zoning. However, there are some zoned R-5 (1965 zoning), small lot single family, between Palmetto Ave. and Olive St. For further information, see Map 3.

**Appendix C contains a table of zoning densities and allowable uses.**

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**Government Hill Neighborhood Plan  
Current Zoning Map**

## LAND USE AND ZONING

The proposed land use is divided into eight categories based on the issues, goals and stereotypes identified in the plan. The land-use classifications included on the Land Use Plan Map (Map 4) are listed in the table below.

LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS	DESCRIPTION
<b>Low-Density Residential</b>	Primarily single-family dwellings on individual lots. Development densities in these areas will not exceed 7 dwelling units per gross acre.
<b>Medium-Density Residential</b>	Variety of detached or attached dwellings, including single-family homes, duplexes, townhouses, or apartments. Development densities range from 7-15 dwelling units per gross acre.
<b>High-Density Residential</b>	All types of land-intensive housing. Development densities exceed 15 units per gross acre.
<b>Office</b>	Professional, personal and business services.
<b>Mixed Use Commercial</b>	Residential and Local/Convenience Commercial uses.
<b>Local/Convenience Commercial</b>	Moderate-intensity convenience retail or service uses, generally serving small, local neighborhoods.
<b>Light Industrial</b>	General manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing, and research and development uses.
<b>Institutional</b>	Public, quasi-public, and institutional uses.
<b>Recreation/Open Space</b>	Lands for either active or passive enjoyment, and environmental protection uses.

**Low-density residential** areas include the area north of I.H. 35, that is west of Walters and east of N. New Braunfels, with Fort Sam Houston as the northern boundary, and the area south I.H. 35, between Pine and Rogers, with the southern boundaries being the Union Pacific railroad yard (*between Pine and Palmetto*), and Sharer (*between Palmetto and Rogers*).

**Medium-density residential** areas lie between Fort Sam Houston to the east, along Northfleet, and Walters to the west, with Fort Sam Houston and I.H. 35 being the northern and southern boundaries respectively. Other medium-density residential areas include the area between Rogers and Hackberry, with Grayson (*between Pine and Spofford*) and Quitman (*between Spofford and Rogers*) being the northern boundaries and I.H. 35 being the southern boundary.

**The high-density residential** areas include the southeastern and northwestern corners of the neighborhood. The southeastern area is bounded by Hines to the east, June to the west, I.H. 35 to the north, and the Union Pacific railroad to the south. The northwestern area is in the shape of an "L," bounded by Austin St. to the west, Hackberry on the east (*between Quitman and Carson*), and Pine (*between Josephine*

and Quitman), Josephine to the north, and on the south, Carson (between Austin and Hackberry), and Quitman (between Hackberry and Pine).

**Office Use** can be found in only one area in the neighborhood. It is located in the southern part of the neighborhood between Olive and Pine, south of I.H. 35.

**Mixed Use Commercial** areas are located along Grayson between Pine and Palmetto and along the I.H. 35 access road between Willow and Hackberry.

**Local/Convenience Commercial** areas are located throughout the area. There are areas between Broadway and Austin St., as well as along N. New Braunfels, I.H. 35, and Walters. There is a large area to the south of I.H. 35 between June and Roper and extending along the I.H. 35 frontage road. In addition to those areas already described, there is another area in the southwest corner between Olive and Austin.

*Staff Comment: The large area to the south of I.H. 35 between June and Roper and extending along the frontage road currently contains some residential uses. These residential uses, once rezoned commercial, will qualify for nonconforming rights that allow maintenance but no additions to the existing residential structures. Since the future of this area is commercial, the City policy is to no longer financially support housing programs in this area, but to encourage the transition of existing residential uses to the more cohesive part of the neighborhood, north of I.H. 35.*

**Light Industrial** uses have been identified as suitable for one area in the southern section of the neighborhood, between N. New Braunfels and Roper, with Seguin Ave. and the Union Pacific railroad yard being the northern and southern boundaries respectively.

**Institutional** uses vary in size and are located throughout the neighborhood.

**Recreational/Open Space** uses are located in two areas. The first area is in the northern part of the neighborhood to the west of Pershing Elementary School. The other location is in the southern area of the neighborhood, between Lock and June, and bounded by Runnels and Bethune to the north and south respectively.

Map 4 provides a snapshot of the proposed land uses.

## REZONING

Some of the existing commercial uses have been identified as “not appropriate” for the surrounding neighborhood. Therefore, there has been a community request to investigate the current uses allowed under the 1938 zoning. More restrictive zoning classifications are desired in many of the areas currently zoned under the 1938 code.

**Government Hill Neighborhood Plan  
Land Use Plan Map**

## REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES

The revitalization of the neighborhood plays a key role in the identity and image of the neighborhood. Some of the strategies for revitalizing the neighborhood include cleaning up trash in areas around the entrances to Fort Sam Houston, as well as the Union Pacific railroad yard. The encouragement of new businesses into the neighborhood is also an important revitalization strategy for the neighborhood. The previous strategies as well as others are listed on the Redevelopment Strategies Map (Map 1, pg. 4).

Listed below are revitalization strategies for the neighborhood:

- Work with code compliance.
- Landscape along business corridors (Walters and N. New Braunfels).
- Institute regular trash pick up from vacant lots - possibly monthly.
- Clean up abandoned homes/properties.
- Develop/encourage new businesses along Walters St. and New Braunfels Ave.
- Develop a neighborhood commercial corridor along New Braunfels Ave.
- Rezone neighborhood to current zoning code to identify a scope of more compatible uses.

## COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The Government Hill Neighborhood has many community-minded residents who are interested in working to better their neighborhood. The Government Hill Neighborhood is a neighborhood with issues common to many older neighborhoods. During the community meetings, many ideas were envisioned that will effect the implementation of their issues. Listed below are the prioritized strategies:

### Community Involvement

Enhance the neighborhood reputation by:

- Organizing a community fundraiser.
- Educating citizens about participating in the 2000 census and voting.
- Convening all the organizations in the area to work together.
- Fostering community and business partnerships.

### Safety and Security

- Initiate a police bike patrol in the neighborhood.
- Establish a police substation at a church or storefront.
- Develop a working relationship with police.
- Implement speed control devices throughout neighborhood, specifically along Walters and New Braunfels.
- Initiate a neighborhood watch and/or Cellular on Patrol (COP).

*Staff Comments: The Implementation of speed control devices along Walters and New Braunfels is not feasible since both of these streets are identified as thoroughfares in the City's Major Thoroughfare Plan.*

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES/RECREATION

The community has identified the need for community recreation and green space as well as a community center. The area next to Pershing Elementary School has been identified as a preferable location for a community park. An additional suitable location identified for a community park lies on the east side of Willow between Carson and Colita. Other facilities have been identified on a much broader level, such as a park for the southern section of the neighborhood. An additional strategy identified to address the green space issue is to create pedestrian paths connecting the neighborhood from east to west and north to south. Listed below are the Community Facilities/Recreation prioritized strategies:

- Develop a park next to Pershing Elementary.
- Develop a crosswalk over I.H. 35, utilizing abandoned railroad bridge at Walters and I.H. 35.
- Develop a park in the Pine and Carson/Willow and Carson area.
- Create sidewalks throughout neighborhood for walking and jogging.
- Create a park in southern sector of neighborhood.
- Develop a park in the neighborhood to encourage recreation activities.

*Staff Comments:* The Walters St. railroad bridge is not a safe alternative for pedestrian traffic to cross I.H. 35 since there is a heavily traveled frontage road on both ends of the bridge. Pedestrians would still have to contend with traffic at a location that is not feasible for a pedestrian crossing. Pershing Park already exists next to the elementary school. This park is slated for redesign and construction in 2003 as part of the 1998 San Antonio Parks and Recreation System Plan.

## TRANSPORTATION / INFRASTRUCTURE

The community's infrastructure is an area of concern. During the community meeting process, many issues, from streets and sidewalks to sewage and drainage, were identified, and in some instances, noted as very specific areas of concern. However, some issues, such as sewage, were identified as community-wide concerns. Listed below are the Transportation/Infrastructure prioritized strategies:

- Streets, sidewalks and drainage should be improved throughout the neighborhood.
- Prevent sewage from backing up into homes.
- Slow traffic along Walters, especially at bridge over Union Pacific, possibly with stop signs or speed bumps.
- Repave Seguin Ave.
- Repair Sandmeyer St. and Mason St. east of N. New Braunfels (damage is result of water line replacement).
- Repair or repave Carson St.
- Improve "alley" streets with curbs and lighting.
- Improve lighting and benches at bus stops throughout neighborhood.

*Staff Comments:* The installation of speed bumps on Walters would impede traffic flow along this road and therefore would be in opposition to the City's Major Thoroughfare Plan.

## **Major Thoroughfare Plan**

The San Antonio Major Thoroughfare Plan, shown in map 5, illustrates major roadways for the flow of traffic throughout the San Antonio area. Government Hill is serviced by three of these roadways. The first and largest roadway classification is an Expressway and has a public Right of Way (ROW) width of 300 feet or more; I.H. 35 is defined as such. The next roadway classification is the Primary Arterial Type B, which requires a ROW width of 60 – 110 feet. Both Broadway and New Braunfels Avenue are in this category. Walters and Pine/Hackberry are identified as Secondary Arterial Type B roadways, which requires a ROW width between 60 and 86 feet. There is one Arterial Type C roadway, Alamo St., with a ROW width between 40 and 60 feet, which provides service to the Government Hill area.

**Government Hill Neighborhood Plan  
Major Thoroughfare Plan Map**

**History and Study**

The question of the suitability of an overlay historic district zoning designation within the Government Hill neighborhood was considered at some length during the development of the plan.

Staff met with the Government Hill Alliance Neighborhood Association to discuss historic district designation. As part of the designation process, the neighborhood association collected petitions in favor of the designation from property owners who represent 52 percent of the area proposed for designation. Concurrently, the department contracted with a historic preservation consultant from Austin, Ralph Newlan, to prepare a *Historic Resources Survey* of the Government Hill Neighborhood. Completed in August of 1995, the inventory of 1,130 buildings prioritizes the architectural integrity and historic contribution of every structure into a high, medium, or low category. A total of 27 percent of the total number of properties were identified as high priority sites. This number is larger than is commonly found in most districts indicating a high degree of historic integrity.

**STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

The following is a summary of the neighborhood's strengths and weaknesses that were identified by the community participants at the first neighborhood plan meeting. A full transcription can be obtained from the City of San Antonio Planning Department.

**Strengths/Opportunities**

- Location and accessibility to downtown and the highway
- Heritage and historical value
- Diversity of the residents, good people
- Churches in area, schools and institutions
- Fort Sam Houston and the military

**Weaknesses/Threats**

- Lack of code compliance
- Crime - drugs, prostitution, gangs, graffiti, vagrants, and lack of reporting by citizens
- Housing - vacant lots, vacant houses, absentee landlords, Section 8
- Streets - drainage, lighting, paving, signs, speeding
- Lack of parks and greenspace
- No historic designation
- Lighting throughout neighborhood
- Stray animals
- Speeding through neighborhoods

**SOULTIONS**

The following is a transcription of solutions to protect the strengths/opportunities and to address the weaknesses/threats. These solutions were identified by the same, five, small work groups that identified the strengths/opportunities and weaknesses/threats.

**Group 1**

- Neighborhood storefront for police/community service/code compliance
- Bike patrol
- More funds for infrastructure improvements
- Good housing stock for preservation
- More single family housing

**Group 2**

- Strengths will improve when weaknesses go away
- Get state representation
- Join organizations such as neighborhood watch
- Everyone go through Cellular On Patrol (COP)
- City needs a code compliance plan – fines “with teeth” for violators

- Have code compliance meet with community - set up liaison group, build relationships
- Need better businesses
- Incentives for neighborhood businesses
- Find out what financial resources the State has to offer
- Continue efforts towards historical preservation
- Police substation

**Group 3**

- More frequent trash pickups
- Small scale, side street lighting
- Sidewalks and curbs
- Neighborhood watch/Cellular On Patrol (COP)
- Covenants and code compliance
- Informed public - English/Spanish
- Pedestrian friendly traffic between schools and parks
- Grocery store
- C.O.P.S./Neighborhood work together
- Library

**Group 4**

- Low interest loans for home and business repairs
- More people participate in census
- Bike cops
- More fines and better code enforcement
- Neighborhood watch/Cellular On Patrol
- Block Captains
- Historic designation
- Business recruitment
- More city interest in neighborhood
- Speed bumps
- Moratorium on new social service agencies
- Incentives for first time home buyers
- Positive press and advertising

**Group 5**

- Create new funding sources (private and public) for new homes and street repair
- Compatible new home design
- Work with code compliance (lots vacant and junk cars in yard)
- Tax abatement for home repair
- Address absentee landlords
- Take care of the neighborhood
- More day care
- No more fast food and bars
- Develop leadership

## **SMALL INEXPENSIVE IDEAS**

The following is a transcription of small inexpensive ideas, identified by community participants during a small group work session at the community meeting held June 2, 1998. There were five groups and each group worked independently to identify inexpensive solutions.

### ***Group 1***

- Create a Cellular on Patrol
- Work with Fort Sam Houston to beautify and clean up Walters St.
- Work on converting vacant Stop and Go into a library or grocery store
- Work with police to better patrol Grayson St. (use a church as a substation)
- Install lighting that is compatible with the housing

### ***Group 2***

- Dial a trailer - everybody contributes (utilize church bulletins to notify everyone)
- Community effort to powerwash and paint homes for elderly and disabled
- Have area businesses pay for single trees or landscaping
- Have Cellular on Patrol sign up activities
- Work with City of San Antonio to build a Pershing/St. Patrick's library location
- Build sidewalks near the schools
- Check on elderly and disabled - help them with groceries, etc.
- Pick up stray animals
- Community graffiti paint-up days - include kids
- Neighborhood watch program
- Promote safety and quietness in neighborhood
- Pick-up/clean-up after yourself
- Designate key areas for brush pick-up

### ***Group 3***

- Free financial advisors (volunteer or contract) available to community
- Organize a community wide fundraiser, involving all area organizations
- Community action to make the neighborhood friendly to newcomers
- Round table discussion/fundraiser involving businesses and residents
- Change literature to make it easily understood
- Grassroot effort to entice newcomers to be involved
- Get schools involved in the community

**Group 4**

- Clean up along Walters St.
- Educate about 2000 Census to get more public funding for the neighborhood
- Educate about importance of voting
- Work with code compliance to clean up neighborhood (volunteers work block-by-block and follow up)
- Community activity to get neighbors out to meet neighbors (more one-on-one interaction)
- Help elderly – (groceries, etc.)
- Get CPS to install street lights
- Get involved with National Night Out
- Distribute flyers to let people know where to go for home repair assistance
- Work with code compliance to close bars
- Get kids involved with a community efforts (especially to clean up graffiti)

**Group 5**

- No historic designation
- Continue to rehab homes in the select target housing area
- Elderly housing
- Promote historic designation
- Promote more single family housing than multi-family or commercial facilities
- Visit with each other and get to know your neighbors
- Neighborhood watch - work with police
- Get out and vote - lobby your representatives
- Get more information of funding programs and initiatives
- Clean up lots

**FORT SAM HOUSTON GATEWAY URBAN RENEWAL PLAN**

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<b>General Plan</b>	The primary focus of the plan is the a) widening and restructuring of New Braunfels Avenue, b) acquisition of property for right-of-way, and c) addressing blighted conditions around the neighborhood in concert with the city's efforts, the military installation presence, and the neighborhood citizens.
<b>Acquisition</b>	A property will be purchased at fair market value in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies of 1970, when a) an owner refuses to rehabilitate in keeping with the Urban Renewal Plan, b) an owner desires to be acquired due to extenuating circumstances, or c) for project improvement purposes.
<b>Relocation</b>	The temporary or permanent relocation of tenants, businesses, and/or residents from buildings being rehabilitated or acquired.
<b>Demolition</b>	Demolition will be employed only as a last resort for the removal of any building or appurtenance deemed economically or physically infeasible to rehabilitate; land needed for project improvement; or which cannot be integrated into the proposed reuse specific to the Urban Renewal Plan.
<b>Conservation/ Rehabilitation</b>	All buildings not acquired will be rehabilitated. Primary renewal activity will be the encouragement of owners to rehabilitate buildings not acquired. The San Antonio Development Agency will undertake this acquisition when owners do not rehabilitate their property in accordance with approved standards established by the Urban Renewal Plan. Rehabilitation may then be effected by the Agency for eventual disposal to a successful bidder, or stipulate that the successful bidder/developer undertake rehabilitation.
<b>Site Improvement</b>	Improvements such as landscaping, parking, etc. made either to a portion of a parcel (exclusive of the building or structure), or to right-of-way, may represent a cooperative effort by public and private entities.

**HOUSING REVITALIZATION EFFORTS SINCE 1994**

**Rehabilitation:**

1819 North Hackberry  
1607 East Carson

**First-Time Home Buyers:**

714 Hood St.  
720 Hood St.

**Reconstruction:**

323 Stafford  
203 Edgar  
205 Edgar  
2418 Dignowity  
131 Gray  
221 Sharer  
225 Sharer  
311 Sharer

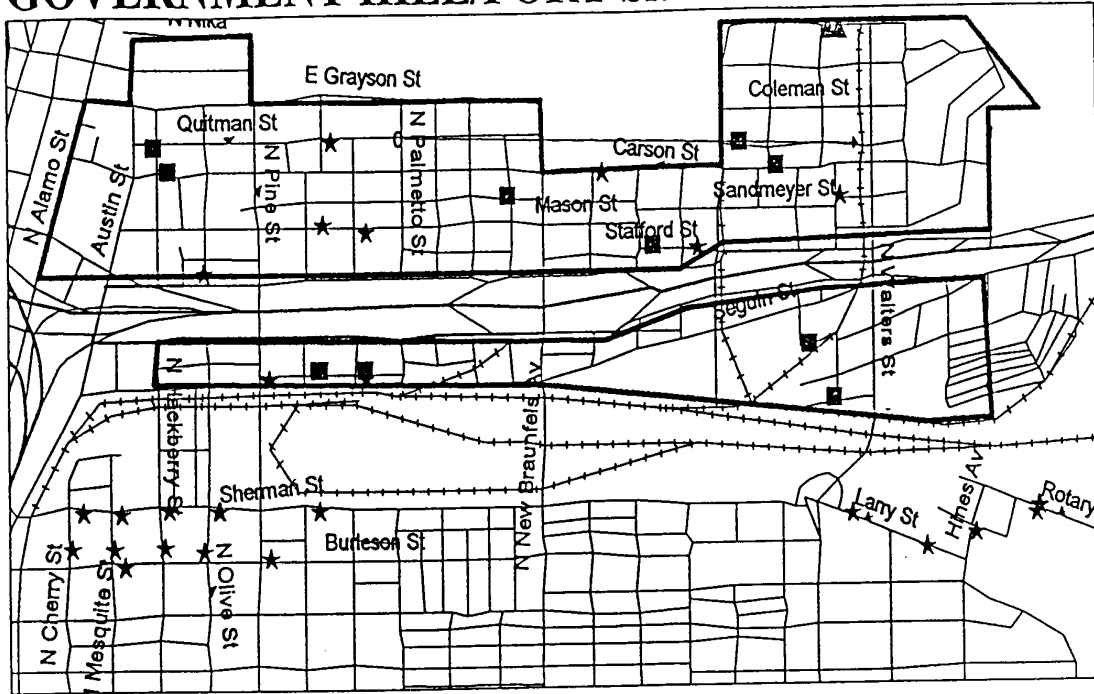
### **COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES**

May 1987	Authorization of Urban Renewal Plan
October 1987	Purchase of land for off-street parking at NNB/Sandmeyer
June 1988	Sale of off-street parking parcel to Johnny's Restaurant, Aaron's Barber Shop
January 1990	Acquisition, relocation, clearance and replanting of hotel site completed
February 1991	Purchase of land for off-street parking at Carson/Rogers
March 1991	Acquisition of Nonken Fritz Buildings
June 1994	Stabilization of Nonken Fritz Buildings commenced
May 1995	Acquisition of Solcher Buildings (Sudden Cleaners)
July 1995	Relocation of Sudden Cleaners to Hingst Grocery and Market Building
September 1995	Sale of parking lot site to SAFD
December 1995	Stabilization of Nonken Fritz Buildings completed
January 1996	Sale of hotel parcels to Edward Markwardt, Developer
January 1996	Sale of Nonken Fritz Buildings to Sandia Interests, Inc.
May 1996	Sale of off-street parking parcel to Atlas Amalgamated
October 1996	Demolition of Sudden Cleaners plant
August 1997	Construction of Solcher Building parking lot

### **PROJECTED TIMELINE**

April 1998	TXDOT to bid resurfacing contract
June 1998	Sale of historic Solcher Buildings
July 1998	Anticipated Completion of Park Inn International Suites Hotel
October 1998	Street resurfacing project design completed
October 1998	Commence utility relocation project
December 1998	Completed utility relocation and commence street resurfacing
September 1998	Completion of Sonic Restaurant Development
Spring 1999	Completion of street resurfacing project

## GOVERNMENT HILL/FORT SAM HOUSTON AREA



## FORT SAM HOUSTON GATEWAY HOUSING REVITALIZATION PROJECT AREA

- Fort Sam Houston Gateway Boundary
- Reconstructions (Since 1994)
- ★ Rehabs
- ▲ First Time Homebuyers

**PERMITTED USES IN ZONING DISTRICTS****1938 Zoning Districts - Identified in the Unified Development Code, June 1995**

**A - Single Family Residence District** - Single family dwellings, churches, schools, colleges, home occupations, family homes, and registered family homes.

**B - Residence District** - Any use permitted in "A" Single family residence district and two family dwellings.

**C - Apartment District** - Any use permitted in "B" Residence district, apartments group day care homes, bed and breakfast, boarding and lodging houses, hospital and clinics, libraries and museums, institution of philanthropic nature, fraternities, sororities, lodges.

**D - Apartment District** - Any use permitted in "C" Apartment District.

**E - Office District** - Any use permitted in "D" Apartment District and offices.

**F - Local Retail District** - Any use permitted in "E" Office District, banks commercial billboards, gasoline filling stations, restaurants, bowling alleys, taverns, and retail stores, automobile sales, automotive oil and lube facilities.

**G - Local Retail District** - Any use permitted in "F" District.

**H - Local Retail District** - Any use permitted in "F: Local Retail District, automobile storage facilities and repair work when incidental to a new car dealership, building material, storage yard and lumber yard where incidental to hardware or building materials retail store.

**I - Business District** - Any use permitted in "H" Local Retail District, bakery, bottling works, brewery, lumber yard, chicken hatchery, machine shop, public parking garage, auto repair, warehouses, wholesale warehouses, contractors facilities and/or storage, and commercial amusement park, automotive tune-up facilities.

**J - Commercial District** - Any use permitted in "I" Business District.

**K - Commercial District** - Any use permitted in "I" Business District.

**L - First Manufacturing District** - Any use permitted in "I" Business District, manufacturing of acetylene gas, alcohol, candles, canning or preserving factory, disinfectant or insecticide manufacture, flour mill, forge plant, grain elevator, foundry or fabrication plant, stone mill or quarry, textile manufacture, veterinary hospital.

**M - Second Manufacturing District** - Any use permitted in "L" First Manufacturing District, manufacturing of acid, ammonia, chlorine, cement,

creosote, gun powder, match, soap, vinegar, smelting or iron ore, distillation of bones.

**1965 Zoning Districts - Identified in the Unified Development Code, June 1995**

**R-A - Residence-Agricultural District**- Single-family dwellings, home occupations, plant nurseries (one acre minimum/no retail sales), family homes, registered family homes and with City Council approval athletic fields, bed and breakfast, cemeteries, day care centers, group day care homes., nursery schools, universities, colleges, equestrian centers and oil wells.

**R-1 - Single Family Residence District**- Single-family dwellings with a minimum lot size for 6,000 square feet for each dwelling unit, neighborhood recreational facilities, home occupation, plant nurseries (one acre minimum/ no retail sales), garage sales, family homes, registered family homes and with City Council approval athletic fields, bed and breakfast, cemeteries, day care centers group day care homes, nursery schools, universities and colleges.

**R-2 - Two Family Residence District**- Any use permitted in “R-1” district and two family dwellings.

**R-2A - Three and Four Family Residence District**- Any use permitted in “R-2” district and three and four family dwellings.

**R-3 - Multiple Family Residence District**- Any use permitted in “R-2A” district and apartment, bed and breakfast, rooming or boarding houses and townhouses.

**R-4 - Manufactured Home Residence District**- Any use permitted in “R-2A” and apartments, bed and breakfast, rooming or boarding houses, manufactured home residences and parks.

**R-5 - Single Family Residence District**- Same as “R-1” but with a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet for each single family dwelling which may be attached.

**R-6 - Townhouse Residence District**- Any use permitted in “R-1” and “R-2” districts and townhouses constructed in a series or group, not exceeding ten units nor being less than two.

**R-7 - Small Lot Home District**- Same as “R-1” district but with a minimum lot size of 4,200 square feet for each single family dwelling which may be attached.

**R-8 - Large Lot Residence District**- Same as “R-1” but with a minimum lot area of 20,000 square feet for each single family dwelling.

**O-1 - Office District**- Offices, fraternal clubs or lodges with no on premises sales and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages, plant nurseries one acre minimum - no retail sales, home occupations.

**B-1 - Business District**- Multiple family dwellings, office uses, dental or medical laboratories, nursing homes, golf courses and limited retail such as gift shops, photo shops, barber shops, antique shops, stationary sales, book stores, watch repairs, radio and TV stations, bed and breakfast, family homes, home occupations.

**B-2 - Business District**- Multiple family dwellings, office uses, general retail, uses such as drug stores, Laundromats, fruit and vegetable stands, department stores, restaurants, sales of alcoholic beverages permitted only for off premises consumption except when incidental to consumption of food, service station with no repair, automobile parts sale, plant nursery, sales, dry cleaning and laundries limited to 5 employees, furniture upholstery completely enclosed with no outside storage, bed and breakfast, home occupations.

**B-2NA - Non-Alcoholic Sales District**- Same as “B-2” except that sale of alcoholic beverages for on or off premises consumption shall not be permitted.

**B-3 Business District**- General retail and such uses as billboards, exterminators, funeral homes, printers, dance halls and when completely enclosed such uses as auto repair garages, building hardware, tool rental; wholesale drug sales, contractors, car washes, fix it shops, wholesale plant nurseries, sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages, welding shops limited to three employees and completely enclosed, mini-warehouses 2 and ½ acres maximum, automotive oil/lube and tune up facilities.

**B-3R - Restrictive Business District**- Same as “B-3” except that no sale of alcoholic beverages for on premise consumption shall be permitted.

**B-3NA - Non-Alcoholic Sales District**- Same as “B-3” except that no sale of alcoholic beverages for on or off premise consumption shall be permitted.

**B-4 - Central Business District**- Uses permitted in “O-1”, “B-1”, “B-2”, and “B-3” districts wholesaling, warehousing, machine shops, planning mills, manufacturing, taxidermist. Intent is that no other areas of the City have this zoning classification.

**I-1 Light Industry District**- Wholesaling, warehousing, outside storage, machine shops, planning mills, packing plants, veterinary clinics, welding shops, and light manufacturing of such uses as brooms, paper products and ceramic tile, home occupations.

**I-2 Heavy Industry District**- More intensive uses such as the manufacturing of acetylene gas, alcoholic beverages, sauerkraut and vinegar.

**Urban Corridor District**- This is an overlay district that imposes development guidelines and sign limitations on new construction.

**Historic District**- This is an overlay district which is intended to preserve, enhance, and protect the historically significant aspects of the City.

## **HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Historic preservation has been identified as a major issue of concern by parties both for and against a defined historic district within the Government Hill neighborhood. Further discussion of the designation has been suggested as a means to reach a reasonable agreement. The following is a list of frequently asked questions that may address areas of concern identified by citizens present at the April 29, 1998 and June 2, 1998 public meetings.

### **Will designation affect the use of my property? NO**

- Use of property is regulated by the City's Zoning ordinance. Whatever uses are permitted by the zoning for the property are not affected by district designation. District designation is concerned with the aesthetics, not the uses of the property.

### **Does district designation require me to "retrofit" my property to a more "historic" character? NO**

- District designation will not require retrofitting. If a property owner elects to make an addition of an improvement to his property after designation the addition will need architectural review and approval by the Historic and Design Review Commission.

### **Does district designation affect changes to the interior of a property? NO**

- District designation does not regulate interior changes to a property.

### **Will I always need to hire an architect? NO**

- Just as before designation, a minor change to a property probably would not need the services of an architect. However, just as in undesignated areas, a property owner would probably elect to hire an architect or other professional to assist in plans for a major change to his property.

### **Can I pick my own paint colors? YES**

- The Commission will review changes in paint colors, but ordinarily the property owner's choice will be respected unless the colors are completely out of character. If colors are determined inappropriate, the Historic Preservation Officer can assist the property owner in color selection.

### **Will my taxes go up? NO**

- Historic designation in itself does not increase taxes. Taxes go up if the assessed valuation of a property increases or the tax rate is increased by a political entity.

**LIBRARY SERVICES**

Currently the Government Hill area is considered part of the Carver Branch Library service area. In addition, the area is within the Central Library's service area. Currently, there is a bookmobile that stops at the Le Chalet Apartments (Pine and Grayson) every Wednesday 1:30-4:30. Everyone is encouraged to use this service and for residents who own a computer, there is a 24 hour internet service.

**CODE COMPLIANCE**

Currently, the Code Compliance Dept. maintains a Blue Card program in which the neighborhood association can cite violations and report them to Code Compliance. These Blue Cards go directly to the District Inspector for investigation. Since May 1, 1998, Code Compliance has issued 406 citations in the Government Hill Neighborhood area. With continued cooperation between the neighborhood and Code Compliance, the level of service that can be provided will continue to increase.

**POLICE**

The Government Hill Neighborhood is currently served by two districts within the East Service Area of the City of San Antonio Police Department (SAPD). In addition to these two districts, there is a San Antonio Fear Free Environment (SAFFE) officer assigned to this neighborhood. Officer Luis Esquivel (SAFFE officer) regularly works with the Government Hill Neighborhood Alliance Association and Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) to address issues dealing with crime and disorder. In response to these issues Officer Esquivel reports what actions have been taken to address these issues.

Currently SAPD is working with citizens in the area that are involved in the Cellular on Patrol program as well as numerous Good Neighbor Programs. Continued participation in these programs is encouraged and will result in a better neighborhood in which to live.

**PROSTITUTION**

SAPD's Vice Unit is regularly in the area making cases on prostitutes and customers. What routinely occurs is the relocation of problems from one neighborhood to another. In this case, when pressure is applied on Grayson street, the prostitutes relocate to the streets north of Government Hill. The SAPD is currently working on solving the back and forth displacement.

## **POLICE (Cont'd)**

### **NOISY BARS, LOUD MUSIC AND OTHER DISORDER PROBLEMS**

When these occur and a citizen calls in a complaint, a district patrol officer is dispatched to take care of the situation. When a particular location, such as a bar, is a chronic neighborhood nuisance because of selling narcotics, having a venue for fighting, or has unruly patrons who are harassing passerbys, the Strategic Nuisance Abatement Program (SNAP) team is assigned to investigate the complaint. SNAP teams consist of Vice Detectives, Health Inspectors, TABC agents, Building Inspectors, Electrical Inspectors, and Code Compliance. They inspect the location for any municipal code and state law violations. If citations are warranted, citations are issued. If the location is declared unsafe due to health or other type of violations, it is ordered closed. The owner, in any case, is warned that the SNAP team is now monitoring the location and that if the problems associated with the location are not corrected, the location will lose its licenses to operate. This approach has been extremely effective at implementing lasting changes in the neighborhoods where it has been applied.

### **TRAFFIC PROBLEMS**

Officers are assigned to address complaints for speeding through radar surveillance. There are a limited number of officers to do this. If a citizen will contact the Traffic Enforcement Unit at 207-7400 and make a complaint, they will assign it to an available officer. That officer is expected to write a report indicating how they addressed the complaint. Usually this consists of "I worked radar at the complaint location for x number of days and I wrote x number of tickets."

### **PARKING PROBLEMS**

Parking problems are not wide spread in the neighborhood, but complaints have been made about the area around the SAISD facilities on Austin Street. Recently, the school district relocated its bus parking area to this location and did not plan for sufficient parking for bus drivers' private vehicles. This action resulted in the overwhelming use of most available street parking in the area. As a result, the Police Dept. was forced to respond to complaints about blocked driveways, congested traffic, accidents caused by school buses speeding down the narrow streets, vehicles parked on private property, etc. Until the school district provides additional parking, these problems will continue.

The following is a brief demographic sketch of the Government Hill Neighborhood. This information is based on 1990 U.S. Census data and 1997 Metropolitan Health District Statistics.

### **Population**

- No. of Persons: 5354
- Median Household income: \$10,200

### **Ethnicity**

- White population            11%
- Hispanic                        71%
- African American            15%
- Indian and Asian             3%

### **Age Cohorts**

- Under 18                    37%
- 18 to 24                    10%
- 25 to 44                    27%
- 45 to 64                    14%
- 65 plus                      12%

### **Housing Market**

- Median Home Value: \$33,800
- No. of Housing units: 2137
- % of owner occupied homes: 39% (Citywide average is 54%)
- % of rental units: 61% (Citywide average is 46%)
- Vacancy rate: 24% (Citywide average is 11%)

### **Health Indicators**

- **Total Births -120**
  - Teen Births: 14
  - Births to Single Mothers: 51
- **Total Deaths - 66**
  - Cancer: 11
  - Diabetes: 3
  - Heart & Cardiovascular: 17
  - Accidents: 0
  - Suicides: 0
  - Homicides: 2

**Community Meetings**

***Identification of Neighborhood Plan Concepts***

Wed., April 29, 1998; 6 – 8 p.m.  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1018 E. Grayson

***Concept Plan Review***

Tue., June 2, 1998; 6 – 8 p.m.  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1018 E. Grayson

***Recommendations/Plan Implementation***

Tue., July 14, 1998; 6 – 8 p.m.  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1018 E. Grayson

***Neighborhood Plan Review***

Tue., November 3, 1998; 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1018 E. Grayson

***Neighborhood Plan/ Resolution Review***

Wed., July 21, 1999; 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1018 E. Grayson

**Planning Commission**

***Planning Commission Public Hearing***

Wed., February 24, 1999  
City Council Chambers, 114 W. Commerce

***Planning Commission Sub-Committee***

Mon., March 22, 1999; 11: 00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Municipal Plaza "C" room

***Planning Commission Sub-Committee***

Mon., April 12, 1999; 11: 00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Municipal Plaza "C" room

***Planning Commission Sub-Committee***

Mon., June 7, 1999; 11: 00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Municipal Plaza "C" room

***Planning Commission Public Hearing***

Wed., July 28, 1999  
City Council Chambers, 114 W. Commerce

## **Planning Commission (cont'd)**

### ***Planning Commission Sub-Committee***

Wed., August 4, 1999; 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Municipal Plaza “C” room

### ***Planning Commission Public Hearing***

Wed., August 11, 1999  
City Council Chambers, 114 W. Commerce

### ***Planning Commission Sub-Committee***

Fri., August 20, 1999; 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.  
Municipal Plaza “C” room

### ***Planning Commission Public Hearing***

Wed., August 25, 1999  
City Council Chambers, 114 W. Commerce