

(continued from the front)

Capital Improvements

One of the strategies for revitalizing the urban villages is to provide capital improvements that leverage private investment and enhance pedestrian and transit access. Three levels of public investment will help spur development in the villages.

The City may provide off-site improvements throughout the village such as infrastructure, streetscape and landscape improvements, thereby creating a more positive image and climate to attract redevelopment.

Second, the City may provide specific community facilities such as structured parking, water and sewer service, roadways and sidewalks, or other public amenities to support a significant private sector development. This can bring amenities to the development while at the same time delivering public services.

Third, the City may also collaborate with developers and investors on a specific development, either financially through an enhanced Community Facilities Agreement (CFA) or by facilitating the approval process, thereby leveraging the private investment.

Mixed-Use Zoning

In March 2001, the City Council removed a significant regulatory impediment to urban development. As with zoning codes in many cities, almost all of Fort Worth's zoning classifications were oriented to low-density suburban development and did not encourage urban buildings.

The design characteristics of urban villages are quite different from those found in conventional suburban districts. Urban elements include walkable streets with wider sidewalks; taller buildings with minimal setbacks and transparent storefronts; on-street parking and street trees to help separate pedestrians from street traffic; and structured parking or surface lots located behind buildings. The zoning code's suburban standards required generous setbacks, low density limits, and parking requirements that assume all residents and customers will travel by car. Furthermore, Fort Worth's commercial districts outside of Downtown did not allow residential uses.

In March 2001, the City Council adopted two mixed-use zoning classifications. These classifications support urban redevelopment in urban villages by applying urban development standards and allowing a mixture of compatible residential and non-residential uses. The "MU-1" Low Intensity Mixed-Use District is intended to support neighborhood-serving urban villages, such as Hemphill/Berry. The "MU-2" High Intensity Mixed-Use District is intended to support higher intensity urban villages, such as Trinity Park Village. Both districts encourage a mixture of residential and non-residential uses through density and height bonuses.



Design guidelines or standards can work in conjunction with mixed-use zoning standards to help ensure a uniform level of development quality throughout an urban village. Village plans in the **Commercial Corridors Revitalization Strategy** recommend basic design guidelines for each village.

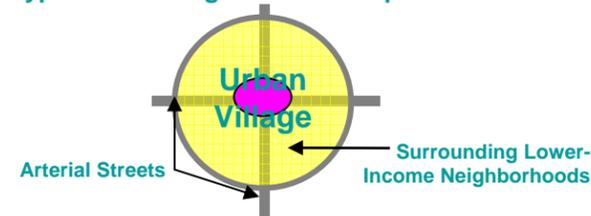
Several community groups, following the lead of Downtown Fort Worth, Inc., are preparing detailed design standards and guidelines for their respective urban village areas. For example, Fort Worth South, Inc. is seeking to secure City Council adoption of design standards for the Medical District, which includes Magnolia Village. This overlay design district will assure property owners, developers, and local neighborhoods that future development will conform to the unique character of that urban district.

Economic Incentives

Economic incentives greatly increase the success of the urban villages by promoting desirable residential and commercial development and density. Household growth in and around the villages strengthens the market for area businesses. These businesses in turn provide goods, services and jobs for area residents. Central city economic redevelopment expands the City's tax base.

The City's principal incentive for urban village revitalization is the Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ) program. In 2002, the City Council endorsed the designation of NEZs for twelve eligible urban villages and surrounding lower-income neighborhoods along seven central city commercial corridors, with a prerequisite that villages be rezoned to mixed-use before NEZ designation. Citizens are leading the rezoning petition drives. With NEZ designation come incentives to qualified mixed-use, residential, commercial and industrial projects. Incentives include but are not necessarily limited to municipal property tax abatement, development fee waivers and release of city liens.

Hypothetical Neighborhood Empowerment Zone



The City is using other strategies in addition to capital improvements, mixed-use zoning, and the NEZ program to encourage investment in the villages. These include seeking state and federal grants, partnering with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and Fannie Mae on multifamily and senior housing, supporting establishment of community development corporations, working with lenders to establish low-interest loan pools, encouraging the use of historic preservation investment tax credits, streamlining the development process, and more.

For more information, call the City of Fort Worth Planning Department at (817) 392-8000, or visit our website: <http://www.fortworthgov.org/planning>.

Fort Worth's URBAN VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Fort Worth City Council is working with private developers, business groups, and neighborhood associations to transform many of the central city's older commercial districts into vibrant "urban villages." These active, diverse, prosperous, and memorable urban villages will help promote the central city as an appealing alternative to the generic and often congested office parks and subdivisions of the suburbs.

This brochure provides information on the benefits of mixed-use urban development, the community planning process behind the program, the locations of sixteen urban villages, and three principal development strategies.



Urban villages are characterized by a mix of uses and open space with densities and designs that encourage transit and pedestrian activity.

Vision and Benefits

Urban villages are urbanized places that have a concentration of jobs, housing, commercial uses, public spaces, public transportation and pedestrian activity. They are frequently centered around significant intersections. Although the vision for each of Fort Worth's villages is unique, they all share certain characteristics. Within these relatively compact geographical areas, different land uses are found side-by-side or within the same structures. This mix of uses in the village, including a variety of owner- and renter-occupied multifamily residential products, is located in taller buildings with minimal setbacks from the street and reduced parking requirements, achieving the densities necessary to support transit and pedestrian activity.

attract private investment, and create a sense of place. Pedestrian activity and access to alternate modes of transportation have the added advantage of helping to improve air quality by reducing reliance on autos.

Urban villages serve as catalysts for public and private investment and support renewed economic activity in the central city, effectively building on the strengths of the area and connecting to adjacent neighborhoods.

Planning Process

In 2002, the Mayor-appointed Commercial Corridors Task Force, with guidance from neighborhood stakeholders and community leaders, identified thirteen urban villages along seven high-priority commercial corridors. The villages were identified as areas that are ripe for development and that hold investment potential despite social and economic redevelopment challenges. The identification and study of these villages were the subject of a two-year planning effort overseen by the Task Force.

The resulting **Commercial Corridors Revitalization Strategy** provided specific recommendations and strategies for revitalization that were adopted by reference into the City's Comprehensive Plan.



This digital rendering illustrates the elements of a mixed-use urban village.

In 2005, the City Council directed the City Plan Commission to evaluate existing and potential new urban villages. As a result, several villages have been added or combined, and two have been eliminated from the original thirteen. Currently, the City is implementing strategies from the original report for sixteen urban villages. Three strategies—capital improvements, mixed-use zoning, and economic incentives—are central to the revitalization effort.

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Community Vision for Urban Villages and Surrounding Neighborhood Empowerment Zones

15. West Seventh



This vibrant, walkable, live/work environment is an important link between Downtown and the Cultural District. Mid- and high-rise housing, retail, and offices overlook the Trinity River corridor, providing scenic and recreational opportunities.

16. Mercado



The festive atmosphere of the village draws pedestrians from across the region to sample restaurants, retail, and performing arts venues with a Hispanic flare.

1. Six Points



This village's location at the confluence of six roadways makes it a natural destination for commercial and residential revitalization near the Trinity River. Refurbished buildings along Race Street contribute to the festive atmosphere.

2. Polytechnic/Wesleyan



This village includes a main street corridor with historic structures and is anchored by Texas Wesleyan University, Polytechnic High School, and William James Middle School in an ethnically diverse neighborhood.

14. Ridglea



This mixed-use district will incorporate high-end retail with pedestrian connections to existing neighborhoods. The lively village is a regional draw for shoppers and visitors.

13. Berry/University



The mix of residential, retail, office, and entertainment is strengthened with the redesign of Berry Street, emphasizing a pedestrian orientation with wide sidewalks, landscaping, and urban storefronts. Connections to TCU, Paschal High School, and adjoining neighborhoods add to the engaging village atmosphere.

12. Bluebonnet Circle



The village includes a neighborhood park in the heart of its commercial core. The surrounding residential neighborhoods, as well as its ties to public transportation, allow this village to be a truly pedestrian-friendly experience.

11. Hemphill/Berry



The village, surrounding the Travis Avenue Baptist Church campus and Victory Arts Center, is one of the key commercial hubs on Berry Street. A concentration of urban uses includes senior housing, retail, restaurants and a vibrant arts presence.

10. Magnolia



The village offers destination retail, office space, and housing supported by structured parking within a historic main street environment. This successful live-work village is connected to surrounding neighborhoods, Downtown, and the Medical District.

9. South Main



Located just south of Downtown, this village is truly connected to the urban atmosphere of the Central Business District. Close proximity to the Medical District, Trinity Railway Express and commercial and entertainment centers make this village's location ideal for activity both day and night.

8. Berry/Riverside



With neighborhoods reemerging around this village, opportunity arises for new quality retail development as well as mixed-income housing. At the intersection of two major roadways, this village will become a destination for residents and visitors.

6. Near East Side



As a major gateway into Downtown, this village combines social services, businesses and housing to create a viable urban experience. With its close proximity to public transportation, the village provides an avenue for sustainable development.

7. Evans & Rosedale



Streetscape improvements and a new public plaza encourage pedestrian activity and visually improve the corridor. A variety of housing types, cultural heritage destinations, neighborhood-serving retail, and entertainment venues will serve local and regional markets.

3. Oakland Corners



The village reemerges as an important Eastside commercial center, with neighborhood-supporting retail anchored by a grocery store. The vision includes mixed-income and multi-generational housing.

4. Historic Handley

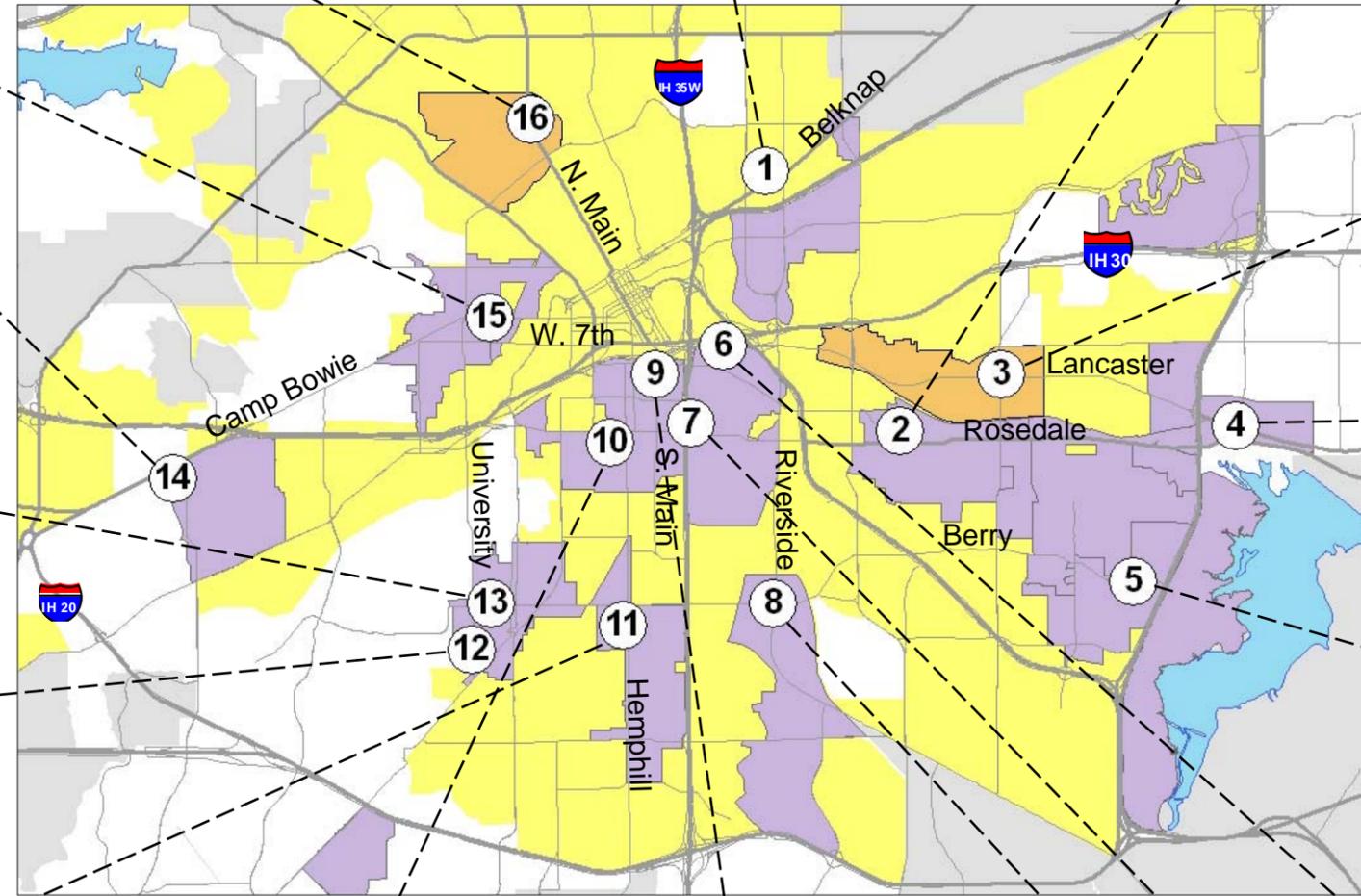


A mix of neighborhood and destination retail are housed in two- and three-story mixed-use buildings, with office and residential above, in an environment reflecting Handley's small-town origins. A proposed commuter rail stop improves connections to this historic area.

5. Berry/Stalcup



This village offers a higher quality of life, and a friendlier, more pleasant place to live, work, shop and play. This village serves as the east gateway entrance to the Berry Street Corridor and provides all that pass through it a vibrant, compact, walkable mixed-use environment.



- Urban Villages
- Designated Neighborhood Empowerment Zone
- Proposed Neighborhood Empowerment Zone

