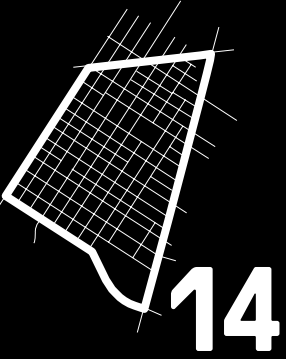


NEIGHBORHOOD



COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARACTER STANDARDS

Focus a regulatory environment to support the development of buildings and community amenities that are context appropriate and conform to community desires and building best practices

PROJECT GOALS:

1. ● 2. ● 3. ● 4. ● 5. ● 6. ● 7. ● 8. ● 9. ●

LIVABILITY PRINCIPLES:

1. ● 2. ○ 3. ● 4. ● 5. ○ 6. ●

PARTNERS*: COH, HSE, MPSN

FUNDING*: SUBSIDIES, LOW-INTEREST LOANS, AND GRANTS

IMPLEMENTER*: COH, HSE, MD, PO

* FOR LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS SEE P.32

PRESERVING THE LANDMARK QUALITY OF MUSEUM PARK

The neighborhood is a desirable location that is experiencing robust growth. Property values have increased considerably in recent years and are higher than is the case in Houston overall. Under heavy development pressures, the characteristic street connectivity and signature architectural quality of historical low-rise building stock has been eroding in Museum Park. Street grid is interrupted along multiple blocks, while medium-to-high-rise development enters the low density context without clear provisions for accommodating increasing traffic volumes, the need for parking, and continuous and comfortable public realm.

This section of the recommendations has a singular purpose: to benchmark Museum Park’s key landmark attributes as a method to evaluate propositions for change – both public and private - as either contributing or not contributing to the quality of the built environment of the neighborhood today and in the future. The intent is for minimum development and construction standards to be exceeded in practice. There are two scales to the approach, the one that sets standards for the neighborhood as a whole and the second one that looks at protecting individual architectural landmarks as the important carriers of the place’s identity.

14.1

ESTABLISH DESIGN CHARACTER STANDARDS TO GUIDE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN MUSEUM PARK

Over the past thirty years, Museum Park has evolved from a predominantly residential area to a vibrant community composed of several distinct neighborhood zones. The plan diagram reflects these areas:

- **Sub-Area 1**
- **Sub-Area 2**
- **Sub-Area 3**
- **Sub-Area 4**

As Museum Park continues to evolve as a culturally distinct district of the city, there are key, trending attributes that define its various neighborhood areas and that should be both preserved and enhanced. These attributes are being shaped by a rich inter-play between the public and private realms, and reflect the interaction of market factors and local regulations.

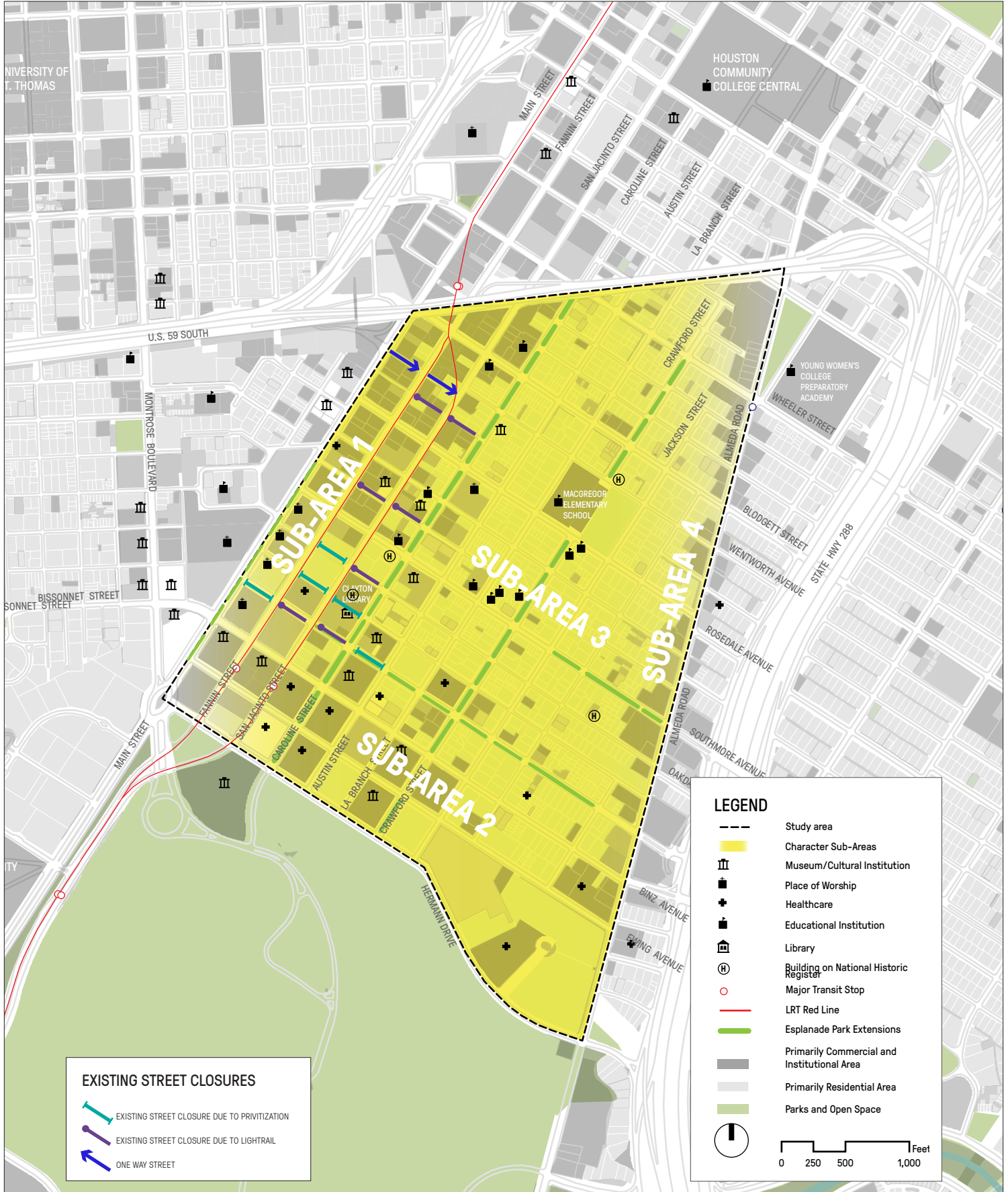
Listed below are Museum Park’s key attributes:

- 1. Connected**
- 2. Contextual**
- 3. Walkable**
- 4. Convenient**
- 5. Green**
- 6. Dynamic**
- 7. Urban Sanctuary**

These attributes can be elaborated and expressed as performance criteria for each of the distinct areas of Museum Park. Bullet-lists and illustrations that follow describe the application of these performance criteria to each of the four distinct areas.

EXISTING BUILDING DENSITY

90



PROPOSED DESIGN CHARACTER ZONES

SUB-AREA 1

(LOW-MID-RISE, MIXED-USE)

This area contains a mixture of uses that develops in a symbiotic relationship with the light rail transit line, at the same time accommodating the increasing volumes of all modes of traffic associated with higher density development. Commercial/retail and public/institutional uses coexist with the residential use by establishing a premier walkable mixed-use cultural district in the city.

1. CONNECTED

- Multi-modal options are expanded to enhance local and regional accessibility
 - Street ROW grid is preserved in the district to keep it porous and route choices uninterrupted
-

2. CONTEXTUAL

- Application of Transit Corridor Ordinance to designated Transit Corridors of San Jacinto and Fannin Streets is critically examined to help preserve lower density, park-like neighborhood setting south of Blodgett Street
 - On Main Street, from US-59 to Mecom Fountain, view corridor is to be protected by maintaining deep building setbacks in future development, consistent with existing cultural institutions on Main Street
 - Strong brand association with the evolving MFAH campus is reflected in more physical connections
 - Evolving architectural styles creates landmark-quality design environment
 - Historical landmarks are protected and new historic designations are sought for landmark buildings in the area
 - Private development on lower levels is transparent and welcoming
 - Upper levels of buildings step back so as not to crowd adjacent properties and to maximize sun exposure and preserve sight lines
 - Art and the public realm are seamless
-

3. WALKABLE

- The pedestrian scale and uninterrupted street grid encourage walking
 - Shaded walkways provide comfort
 - Wider sidewalks exceed the regulatory minimum
 - New street trees fill the gaps to create an uninterrupted street canopy
-

4. CONVENIENT

- Local destinations for services, entertainment and employment are abundant
 - Off-street parking in garages predominates
 - Public on-street parking provided wherever possible
 - Private driveways are grouped to maximize on-street parking
-

5. GREEN

- Main Street designated as a “Green Corridor”
 - Landscaping is used to mitigate flooding and urban heat island
 - Parking Benefits District supports and maintains enhanced streetscapes
 - Open space is provided on private property to enhance mix of uses that attract customers and between the private public divide
 - Overhead power is relocated / buried to reduce sidewalk obstructions, street clutter and allow wider choice for street trees
-

6. DYNAMIC

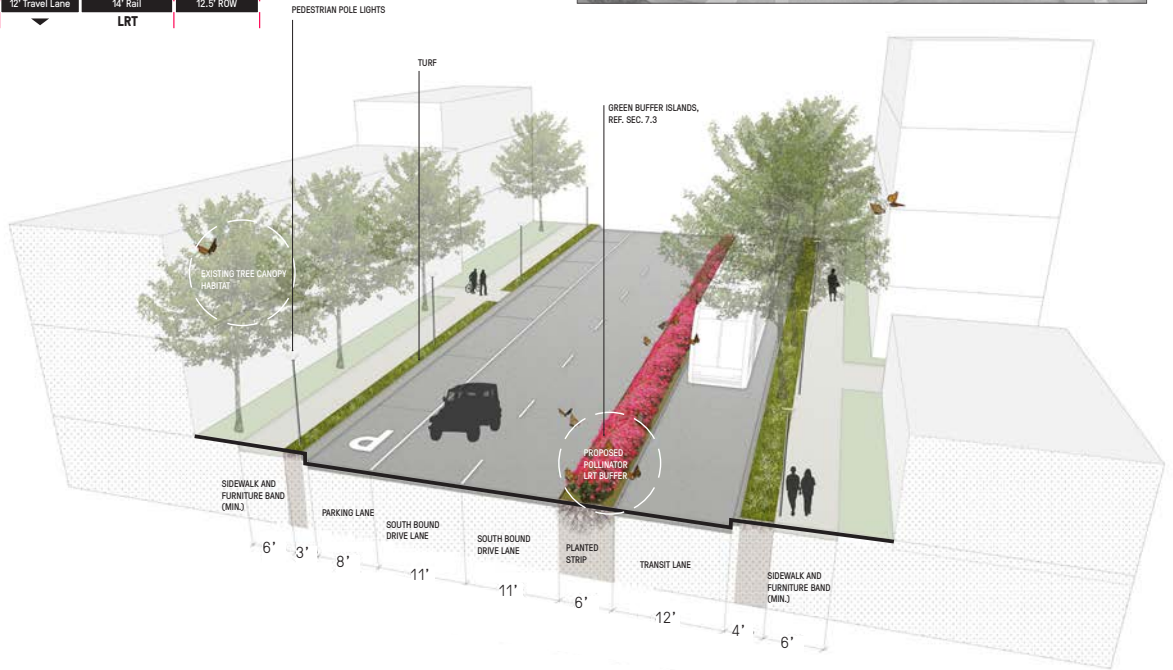
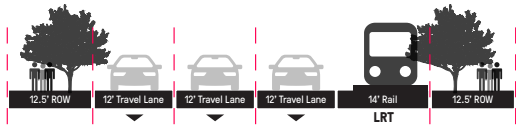
- New development combines a variety and not one single use
 - Mixed-use on ground level prevails
-

7. URBAN SANCTUARY

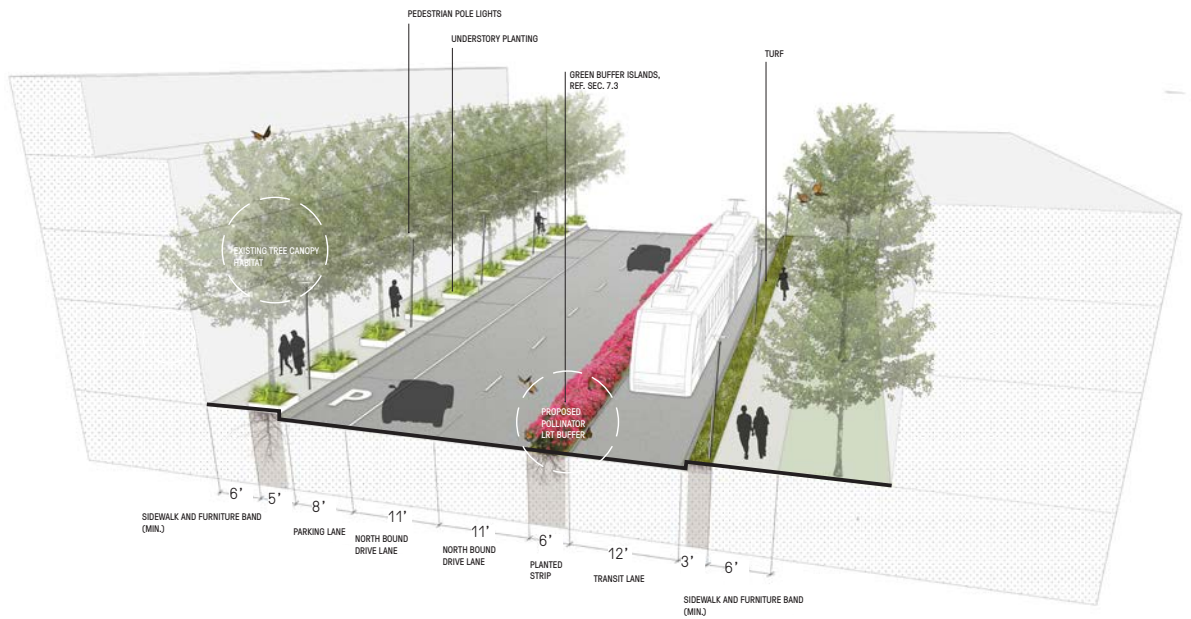
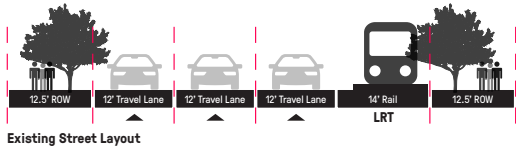
- District is a diverse community of residents, workers, visitors
-

III CONCEPTUAL PLAN

FANNIN STREET



SAN JACINTO STREET



SUB-AREA 2

(MID-HIGH RISE, MIXED-USE)

In this area south of Binz, primarily multi-family residences are intermixed with commercial/retail, public/institutional, and office uses, negotiating the balance of form among them towards mid-to-high-rise structures. Living and working accommodations are seamlessly intertwined with dining/entertainment/culture destinations.

1. CONNECTED

- Multi-modal options are expanded to enhance local and regional accessibility, with emphasis on bicycle connectivity
 - Street ROW grid is preserved to keep it porous and route choices uninterrupted
-

2. CONTEXTUAL

- A mix of development maintains a primarily mid-rise profile and mid-density throughout, and mid-to-high-rise profile and high density on the southern edge where it meets Hermann Park
 - Evolving architectural styles create high-quality design environment
 - Historical landmarks are protected and new historic designations are sought for landmark buildings in the area
 - Private development has welcoming gesture to the street
 - Art and the public realm are seamless
-

3. WALKABLE

- The pedestrian scale and uninterrupted street grid encourage walking
 - Shaded walkways provide comfort
 - Wider sidewalks exceed the regulatory minimum
 - New street trees fill the gaps to create an uninterrupted street canopy
-

4. CONVENIENT

- Local destinations for services, entertainment and employment are well integrated within private residential neighborhood
 - Public on-street parking predominates
 - Management of private institutional parking aids in accommodating increasing public parking demands
 - Private driveways are grouped to maximize on-street parking
-

5. GREEN

- Wheeler, Blodgett and Binz Streets designated as “Green Corridors” under amended ordinance
 - Beneficial Parking District supports and maintains enhanced streetscapes
 - Open space is provided on private property to enhance mix of uses that attract customers and blur the public private divide
 - Overhead power is relocated / buried to reduce sidewalk obstructions, street clutter and allow wider choice for street trees
-

6. DYNAMIC

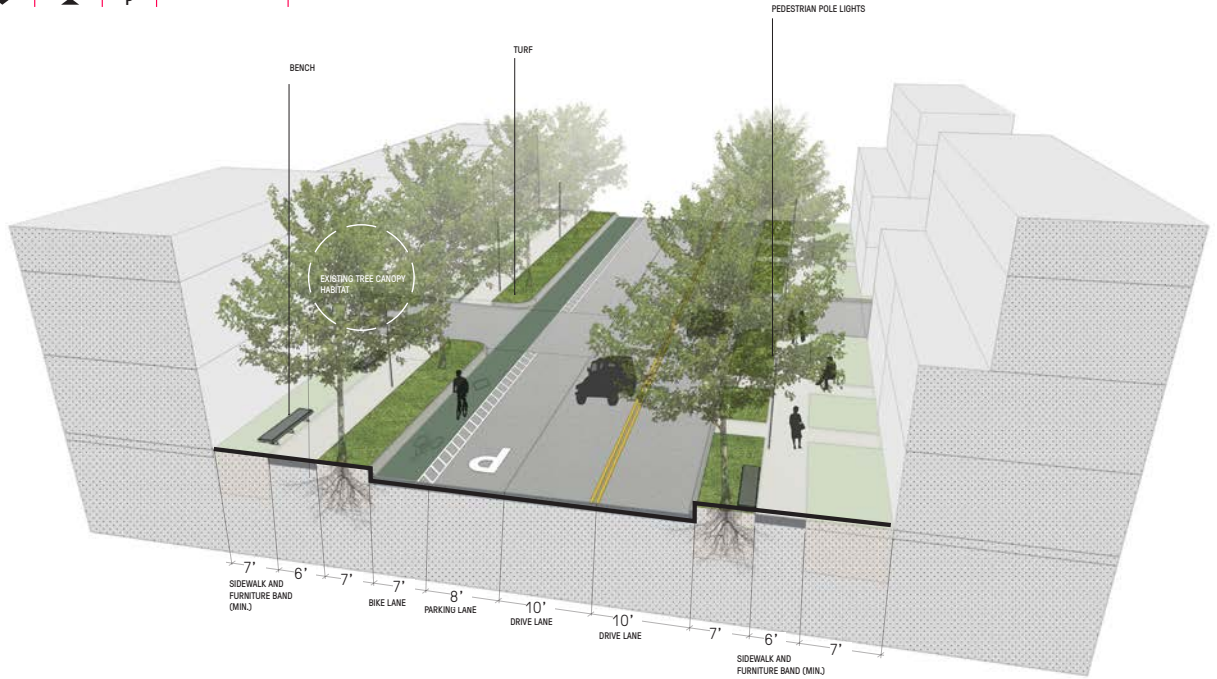
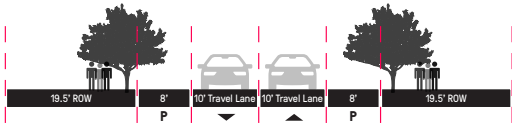
- New development while primarily residential also provides and supports for neighborhood services and cultural destinations
-

7. URBAN SANCTUARY

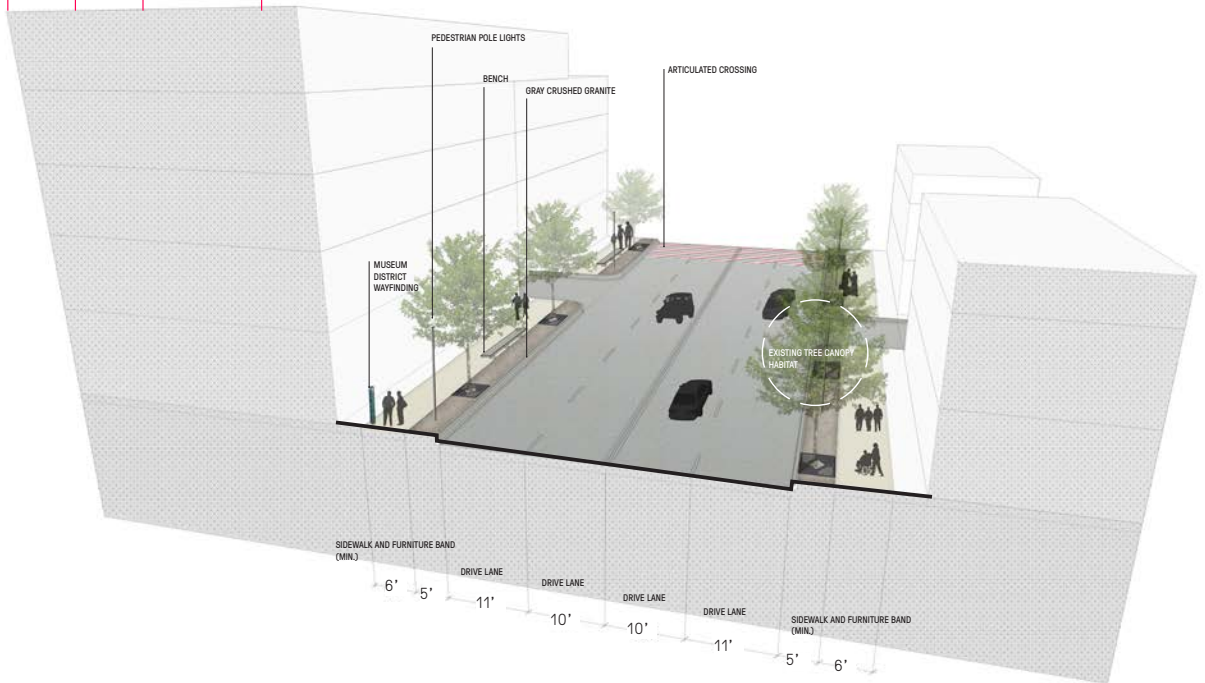
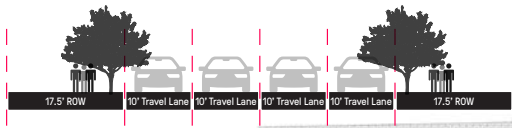
- District is a diverse community of residents, workers, visitors
 - District is community-focused, inviting and safe day and night
-

III CONCEPTUAL PLAN

AUSTIN STREET



BINZ AVENUE



SUB-AREA 3

(LOW-RISE, MIXED-USE)

This zone is the residential heart of Museum Park, where quiet shaded streets create a sense of a comfortable and healthy living amidst a busy metropolitan area, and where local families have easy access to great open space amenities. A mix of town homes and single-family residences is the main building stock with interspersed local professional businesses, and the character of the neighborhood is that of a green urban refuge.

1. CONNECTED

- Multi-modal options enhance local accessibility, with emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle connectivity
 - Street ROW grid is preserved to keep it porous and route choices uninterrupted
-

2. CONTEXTUAL

- Residential development maintains a low-rise, low-density profile
 - Evolving architectural styles create high-quality design environment, new development strives to gain landmark architectural status that highlights local design talent and adds to historical architectural heritage of the area, residential building typologies elevate new development standards to support continuity of public realm in the neighborhood
 - Historical landmarks are protected and new historic designations are sought for landmark buildings in the area
 - Private development embraces and welcomes the street
-

3. WALKABLE

- The pedestrian scale and uninterrupted street grid encourage walking
 - Shaded walkways provide comfort
 - New street trees fill the gaps to create an uninterrupted street canopy
-

4. CONVENIENT

- Local destinations for services and employment are seamlessly integrated within private residential neighborhood
 - Public on-street parking predominates
 - Private driveways are grouped to maximize on-street parking
-

5. GREEN

- Southmore is designated as “Green Corridor” under amended ordinance
 - Beneficial Landscape Program enhances ecological value of planting in the esplanades
 - Available open space is fully developed and utilized as community parks
 - Overhead power is relocated / buried to reduce sidewalk obstructions, street clutter and allow wider choice for street trees
-

6. DYNAMIC

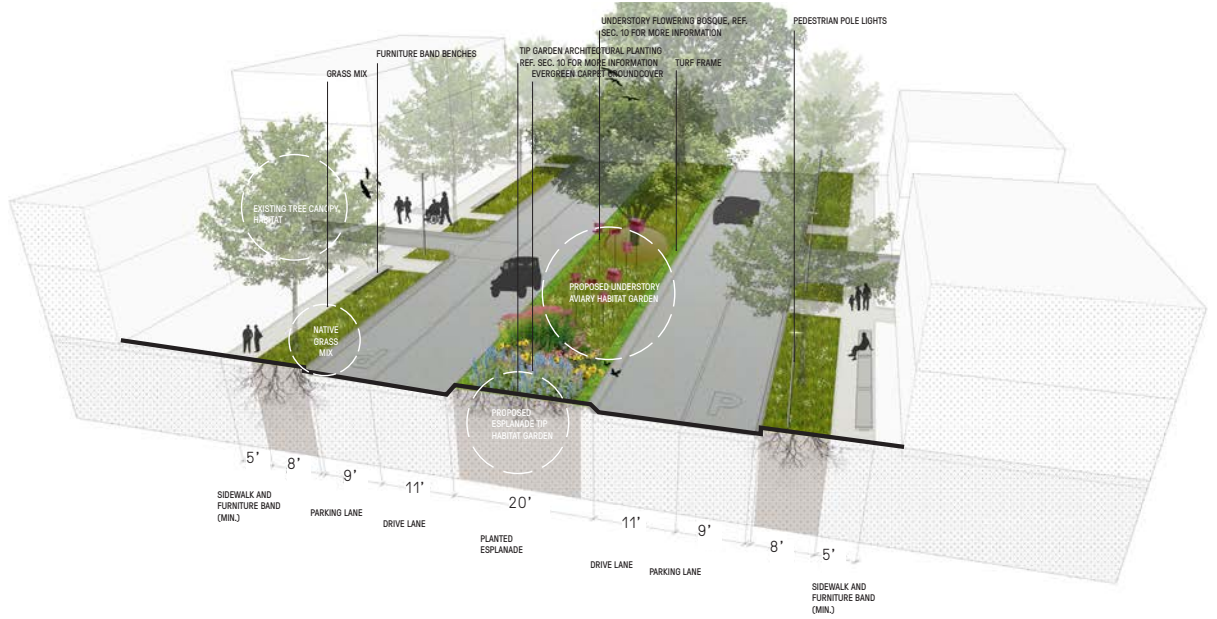
- Streets, green esplanades, and park spaces are designed to become meeting spaces for the residents and accommodate lively community events on regular bases
-

7. URBAN SANCTUARY

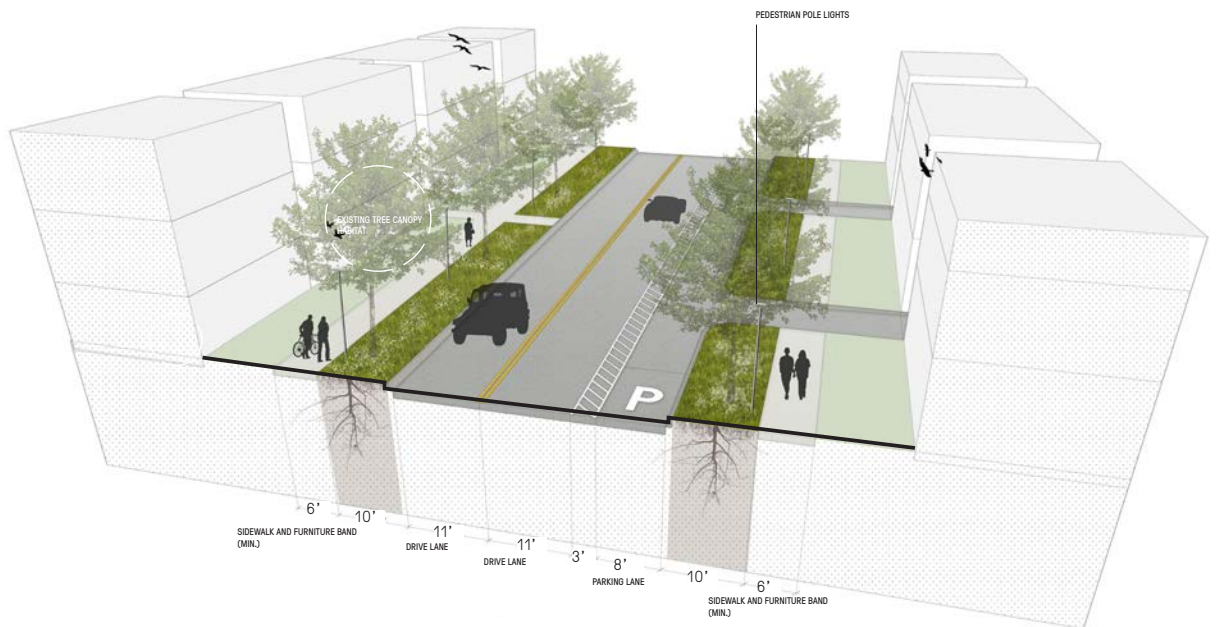
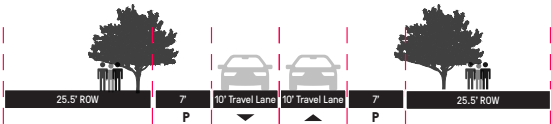
- Area is a diverse community of residents, workers, visitors
 - Area is community-focused, inviting and safe day and night
-

III CONCEPTUAL PLAN

CRAWFORD STREET



BLODGETT STREET



SUB-AREA 4

(LOW-MID-RISE, MIXED-USE)

In this zone, commercial/retail, public/institutional, and office uses are grouped in a commercial spine along Alameda Road. As a significant center for community life in Third Ward, the corridor is a low-rise “Main Street” and a commercial center for a generally low-rise neighborhood that surrounds it.

1. CONNECTED*

- Commercial Corridor designation helps further enhance the area’s character and aids economic development
 - Multi-modal options are expanded to enhance local and regional accessibility, with emphasis on bicycle and transit connectivity
-

2. CONTEXTUAL

- A mix of development maintains a primarily low-rise profile and low density with occasional low-to-mid-rise profile when accommodating a mix of commercial and residential uses
 - Evolving architectural styles create high-quality design environment
 - Historical landmarks are protected and new historic designations are sought for landmark buildings in the area
 - Private development is welcoming to the street
 - Public art and the public realm are seamless
-

3. WALKABLE*

- The pedestrian scale supports the feel of the area as a center of a “Walkable Village”
 - Shaded walkways provide comfort
 - Wider sidewalks exceed the regulatory minimum
 - New street trees fill the gaps to create an uninterrupted shade canopy
-

4. CONVENIENT*

- Local destinations for services, entertainment and employment are easily accessible through the abundance of public on-street parking
 - Private driveways are grouped to maximize on-street parking
-

5. GREEN

- Alameda Road designated as “Green Corridor”
 - Open space is provided on private property to enhance mix of uses that attract customers
 - Overhead power is relocated / buried to reduce sidewalk obstructions, street clutter and allow wider choice for street trees
-

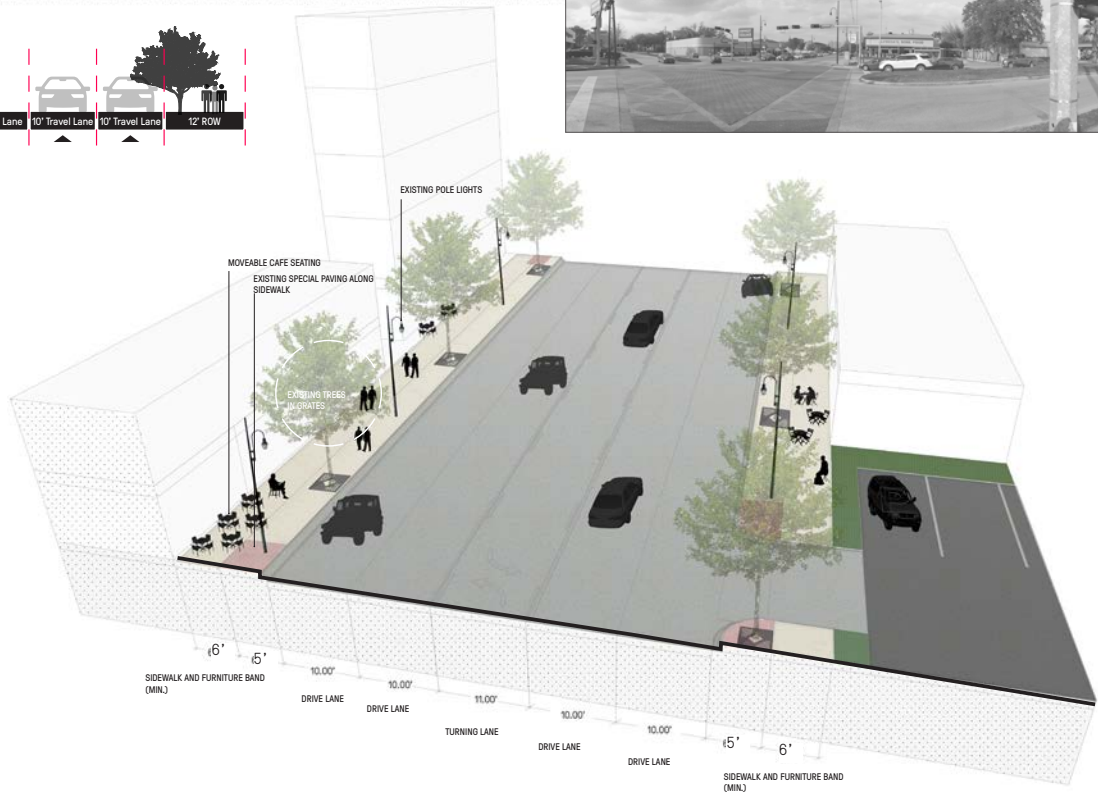
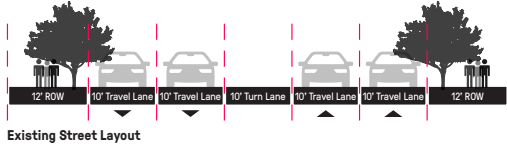
6. DYNAMIC

- New development combines a variety and not one single use
 - Mixed-use on ground level prevails
-

7. URBAN SANCTUARY

- Area is a diverse community of residents, workers, visitors
 - Area is community-focused, inviting and safe day and night
-

ALMEDA ROAD



** Alameda Road corridor has potential to be a more human-scaled commercial spine, a “Main Street” for the neighborhood. Conceptually, the street can be modified to expand pedestrian and bicycle facilities, while addressing the evolving parking needs (See Appendix C: Transportation). To prove out the possibilities, a detailed transportation study would need to be conducted in order to assess the potential balance between future multi-modal transportation facilities and needs for parking.*

BEST PRACTICES

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER PRESERVATION STRATEGIES*

Community Benefits Agreements

Windshield surveys reveal that in recent years, residential development has occurred at a robust pace and is continuing to occur at this pace. Inasmuch as this development is inconsistent with traditional development patterns, a strategy of embracing tools that are designed to decelerate the ongoing degradation of community character is in order. Accordingly, Community Benefits Agreements are a best practice that can be adopted to address development that is planned, but not yet under construction. These agreements enable communities to enter into agreements with developers that set forth mutually agreeable parameters for development.

Conservation Easements

Preserving community character by creating a historic district is not feasible in Museum Park because virtually every blockface that contains a historic property also contains a contemporary town home development. Under these conditions, conservation easements are a more practical approach. These easements enable landowners to retain and use their property, permanently removing development rights in exchange for tax benefits. A land trust would have to be created to manage the easements.

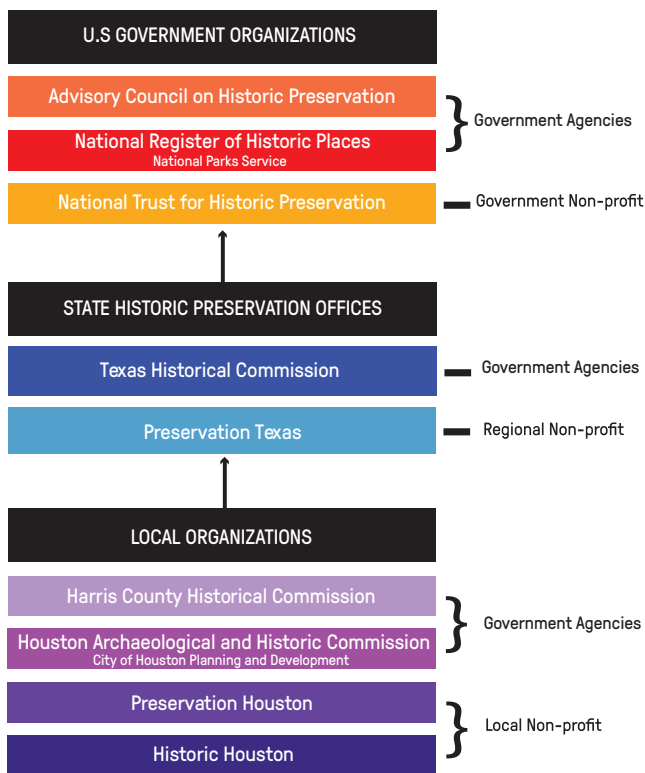
** Both strategies require additional study in their application to specific existing developed sites and future development projects in Museum Park.*

14.2

IDENTIFY PROPERTIES OF HISTORICAL AND LANDMARK VALUE, PROMOTE PRESERVATION AND ADAPTIVE REUSE FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Living history is an essential part of the rich character and fabric of Museum Park. There are several properties that are registered as national historic places, or designated as state or city-level landmarks, subject to historic preservation or protected by the city of Houston. There are also properties that are potentially eligible for various levels of historic designation. While designation of the neighborhood as a whole as historic is not attainable, it is a recommendation of this Study that Museum Park Super Neighborhood would provide necessary guidance to property owners to seek appropriate designations and understand redevelopment strategies that rely on preservation and adaptive reuse of their properties. Engaging through advocacy with different government agencies and not-for-profit groups that help survey, educate about, advocate for, and preserve historic properties of buildings, districts, and neighborhoods will help preserve neighborhood’s landmark image and historic character.

The hierarchy of the historic preservation organizations is shown below:



50 properties in Museum Park have a landmark status. They are categorized according to various systems of designation, explained below.

● Architectural Value

Properties or sites are architecturally significant and recognized by *AIA Houston Architectural Guide Third Edition* (Fox 2012) - a tour guide to Houston and an architectural reference source.

● Historical Value

Properties or sites are historically significant and recognized by *Houston Deco: Modernistic Architecture of the Texas Coast* (Parsons and Bush 2008)- a book that documents Art Deco and Art Modern buildings across southeast Texas between the end of World War I and the beginning of World War II.

● City of Houston Designated Landmarks

Properties are designated by the City of Houston Planning and Development Department.

● City of Houston Designated Protected Landmarks

Properties that are protected from being demolished by meeting the Houston Preservation Ordinance Criteria.

● Texas Historical Commission Listed Landmarks

Properties that are listed as state historic markers by Texas Historical Commission (THC) - a state agency for historic preservation of architectural, archaeological, and cultural landmarks in Texas.

● Texas Historical Commission Surveyed Landmark Site

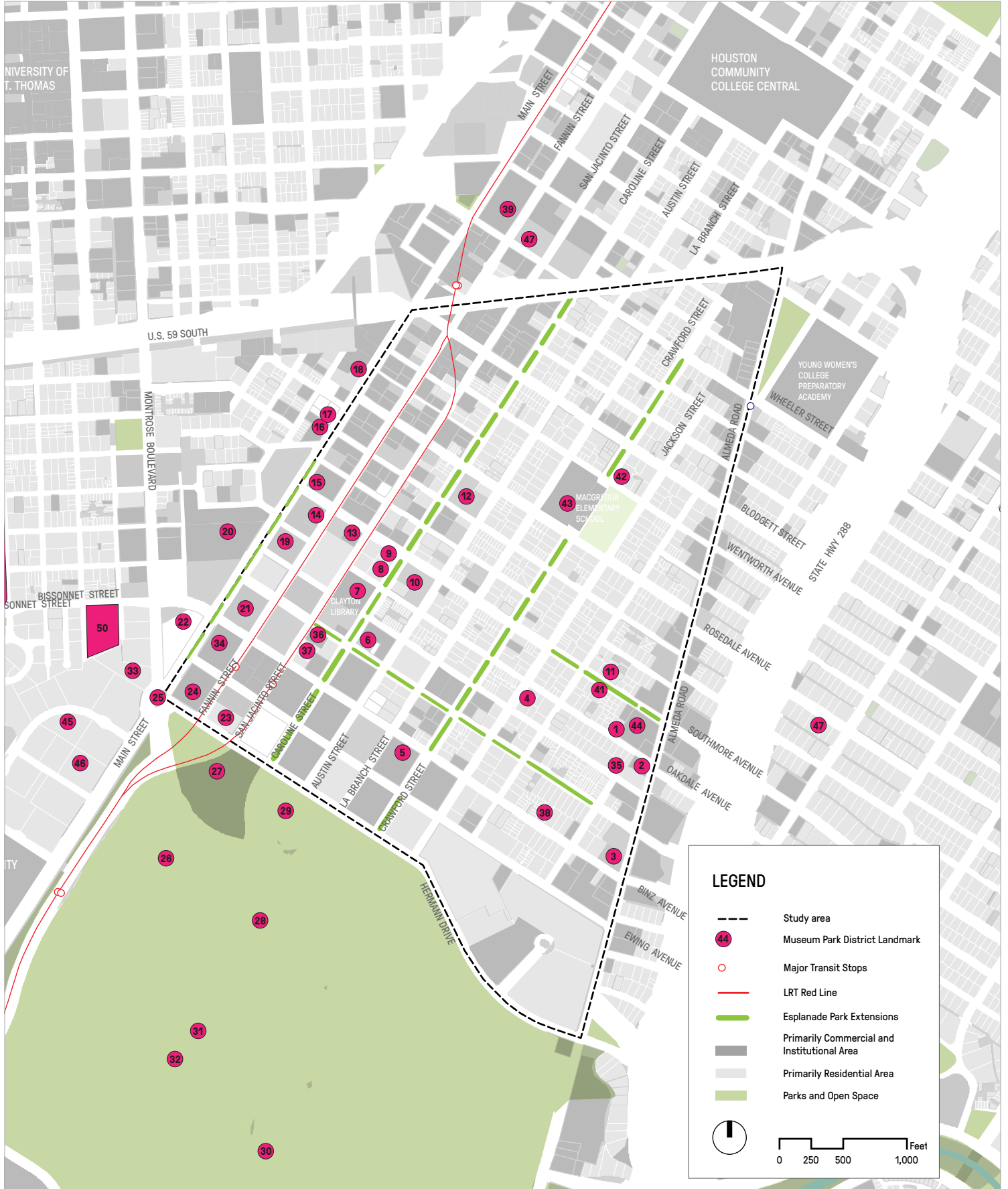
Properties that are surveyed and inventoried by THC as historic resource and potentially can be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

● National Register of Historic Places

Properties or districts nationally significant historic places that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

□ Eligible To Be Listed As Landmark

Properties currently not being designated or protected by the City, but potentially eligible for various levels of designation in the future.



LANDMARK PROPERTIES MAP



01 Oakdale Modern Dwelling (2009)



02 Patio Shops (1931)



03 Third Church of Christ, Science (1928)



04 Glassman Shoemaker Maldonado (2007)



05 Children's Museum (1992)



06 Holocaust Museum Houston (1996)



07 Clayton House (Clayton library Center) (1917)



08 Winslow Court (1929) (Demolished)



09 Blayne House (Macatee House)(1914)



10 Asia Society Texas center (2011)



11 Live-work Studio (2006)



12 Covenant Church (2001)



13 Sullivan House (1923)



14 First Unitarian Church (1952)



15 Bank of Houston (Origin Bank) (1967)



16 Weldon's Café (OmniPlus Pharmacy) (1949)



17 Lawndale Art Center (1931) (2006 Restored)



18 The Playhouse (1951)



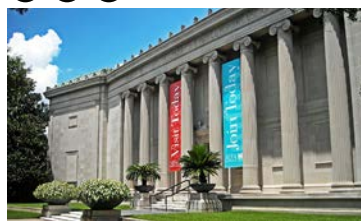
19 First Congregation Church (1927)



20 First Presbyterian Church (1949)



21 St. Paul United Methodist Church (1930)



22 Fine Art Museum (1924)



23 The Warwick Towers (1983)



24 Hotel Za Za (1952)





25 Mecom Fountain (1964)



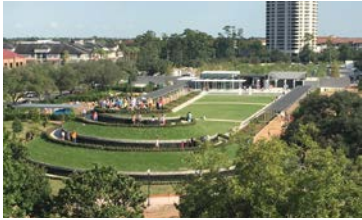
26 Hermann Park (Sam Statue) (1925)



27 Houston Museum of Natural Science (1964)



28 Miller TheaterStudio (1968)



29 McGovern Centennial Gardens (2014)



30 Hermann Park Club House (1933)



31 Lake Plaza (2004)



32 Houston Zoo (Aviary Flamingo Habitat) (1950)



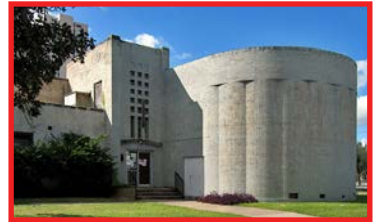
33 Roberson House (2007)



34 Andrey Jones Beck Building (2000)



35 Almeda Court Apartment (1939) (2001 Restored)



36 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (1941)



37 5507 San Jacinto Apartment (1947)



38 1901 Binz (1950)



39 Sears (1939) (2006 Restored)



40 Daughters of Republic of Texas (1936) (1996 Rededicated)



41 Married Ladies Society (Founded 1902) (2007 Restored)



42 4717 Crawford (1930)



43 Macgregor Elementary (1922)



44 Houston Turn-Verein (1929) (now CVS)



45 Wray House (1939)



46 Peden D.D. House (1924)



47 Pemberton Residents (1931)



48 3301 & 3317 San Jacinto (1925)



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