

Clear Lake Shores

Town Center **MASTER PLAN**



City of Clear Lake Shores, Texas
Approved by City Council
March 17, 2009
R1 Map Revisions 5.3.10

ClearCreek
ARCHITECTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2
Executive Summary	3
Project Team	4
Acknowledgements	4
Prologue	5

1 TOWN CENTER VISION

Strategic Vision	6
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2 MASTER PLAN

Goals and Objectives	8
Summary of Key Features	9

3 TOWN CENTER BOUNDARIES

5 Minute Walk	10
Proposed Town Center Boundaries	11

4 SUSTAINABILITY & LIFESTYLE

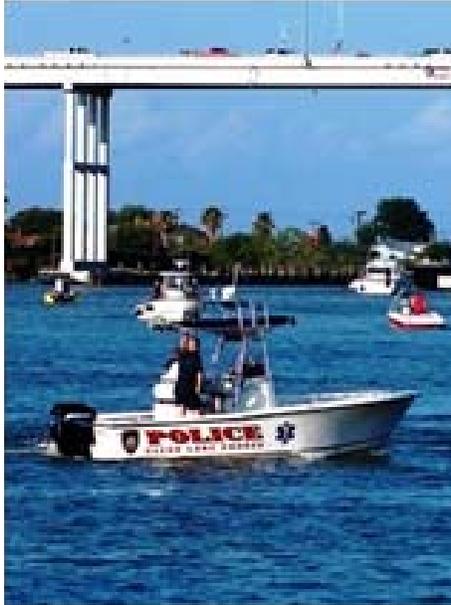
Clear Lake Shores Lifestyle	12
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5 MIXED USE

Themes & Community Development	14
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6 CIVIC AMENITIES

Civic Amenities Map	16
Planning Grid Along Marina Bay Dr.	19
Strip Center Alternative	20



7 TOWN CENTER PARKING

Shared Parking in Town Center	22
Shared Parking Map	22

8 PEDESTRIAN WALKS AND MOBILITY

Walkway Maps	24
Streetscape Elements	25

9 ETJ DEVELOPMENT AND LINKS TO TOWN CENTER

ETJ Objectives	26
Trail Links to Town Center	27



TOWN CENTER EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Planning & Approval Phase

Information Gathering & Feasibility Phase

Identify elements/information leading to a future Master Plan and Mixed-Use Town Center for Clear Lake Shores

- Identify Stakeholders
- County and City Land and Facility Assets
- Transportation & Environmental Issues
- Parks & Open Space
- Historic & Anthropological Elements
- Market Data & Demographic Analysis

Public Involvement

- City Council meetings
- Public EDAC meetings
- Stakeholder meetings
- Workshops
- General Public meetings

Plan Approval

- Recommendation by EDAC
- Final Approval by City Council

Town Center Master Plan

Encapsulate the Town Center Vision into a few "key principals" for approval and public distribution. Use photographs, maps, tables and narrative incorporating the Public Meeting Power Point graphics as the backbone of the final document.

Recommend Vision & Key Features

- Town Center Vision
- Master Plan Key Features
- Proposed Town Center Boundaries
- Sustainability & Lifestyle
- Mixed-Use
- Civic Amenities
- Town Center Parking
- Pedestrian Walks & Mobility
- ETJ & Links to Town Center

Recommend Path Forward for Implementation Phase

- P&Z Completes Town Center Zoning Overlay
- P&Z Completes Pattern Book

Implementation Phase

Zoning Overlay

P&Z completes Town Center Zoning Overlay incorporating

- Permitted Land Uses
- Building Height, Area and Setback limitations
- Streetscape and Pedestrian Enhancement
- Mixed-use Parking Standards
- Signage and Graphic Standards
- Lighting and Crime Prevention
- Landscaping Standards

Pattern Book

P&Z completes Town Center Pattern Book providing guidelines for Architectural elements incorporating:

- Style, Character and Composition
- Height and Volume
- Foundations
- Siding and Trim
- Windows and shutters
- Doors and Screens
- Commercial Storefronts
- Roofs and Gutters
- Streetscape Elements
- Wildlife Habitat
- Water
- Garden Structures
- General Standards



PROJECT TEAM

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Client

City of Clear Lake Shores and the EDC.

For coordination of this effort, the Project Team worked with many interested group and individual stakeholders. We appreciate the contribution made by these groups and individuals and their commitment to the success of the Town Center Concept and the future of Clear Lake Shores.

Mayor & Council:

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City Staff:

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Economic Development Committee (EDC)

Susan Landwer (President), Al Burns, Larry Thomas, Allen Cruthirds, Mike Linbeck, Ian Miller, Ronnie Richards.

Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z)

Mike Bass (Chair), Janet Horton (Vice Chair), Larry Thomas, Tracy McPhilliamy, Jim Mago



PROLOGUE

SCOPE & PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to convey an understanding of planning problems, prior to their implementation. This document serves as a record of the decision-making process, and is for agreement and approval.

INFORMATION SOURCES

This report contains information obtained from work sessions, interviews and public meetings with the Leadership and Citizens of Clear Lake Shores from March 2008 thru March 2009.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public meetings were held during the course of the Town Center studies for Visioning Charettes, Public Updates, Workshops, Stakeholder Meetings with existing business and residents within the Town Center boundaries. The public update sessions were held to allow Citizens the opportunity to convey to the Project Team their view of the City, what Quality of Life they would like to see develop in Clear Lake Shores, and give general feedback regarding the Town Center Project.

MASTER PLAN

PROCESS. The Master Plan is intended to be a “living document”. Elements are included in the report, knowing they will be refined and improved at later stages in the life of the project. The following pages will in words, maps and pictorial formats demonstrate the logic and vision used in the evolution of the proposed Town Center Master Plan.

TASKS. Planning goals for creating the CLS Town Center.

- Encourage and promote the development of a unique place for people with places to live, shop, work, and play.
- Create a new landscape “front door” or “gateway” to the city
- Develop a sense of civic pride through the successful development of the Town Center;
- Define linkages that connect the waterfront to established neighborhoods.
- Respond to the historic and contextual forces of CLS
- Outline the proposed geographical limits for the Town Center.
- Identify Pedestrian links and walkway standards.
- Outline lighting, pedestrian furniture and landscape elements.
- Outline Height limitations, density and green space requirements.
- Identify Shared centralized parking and transportation links.
- Outline Architectural Pattern Book
- Identify links from the Town Center to the ETJ’s undeveloped areas to the south, along Jarboe Bayou.



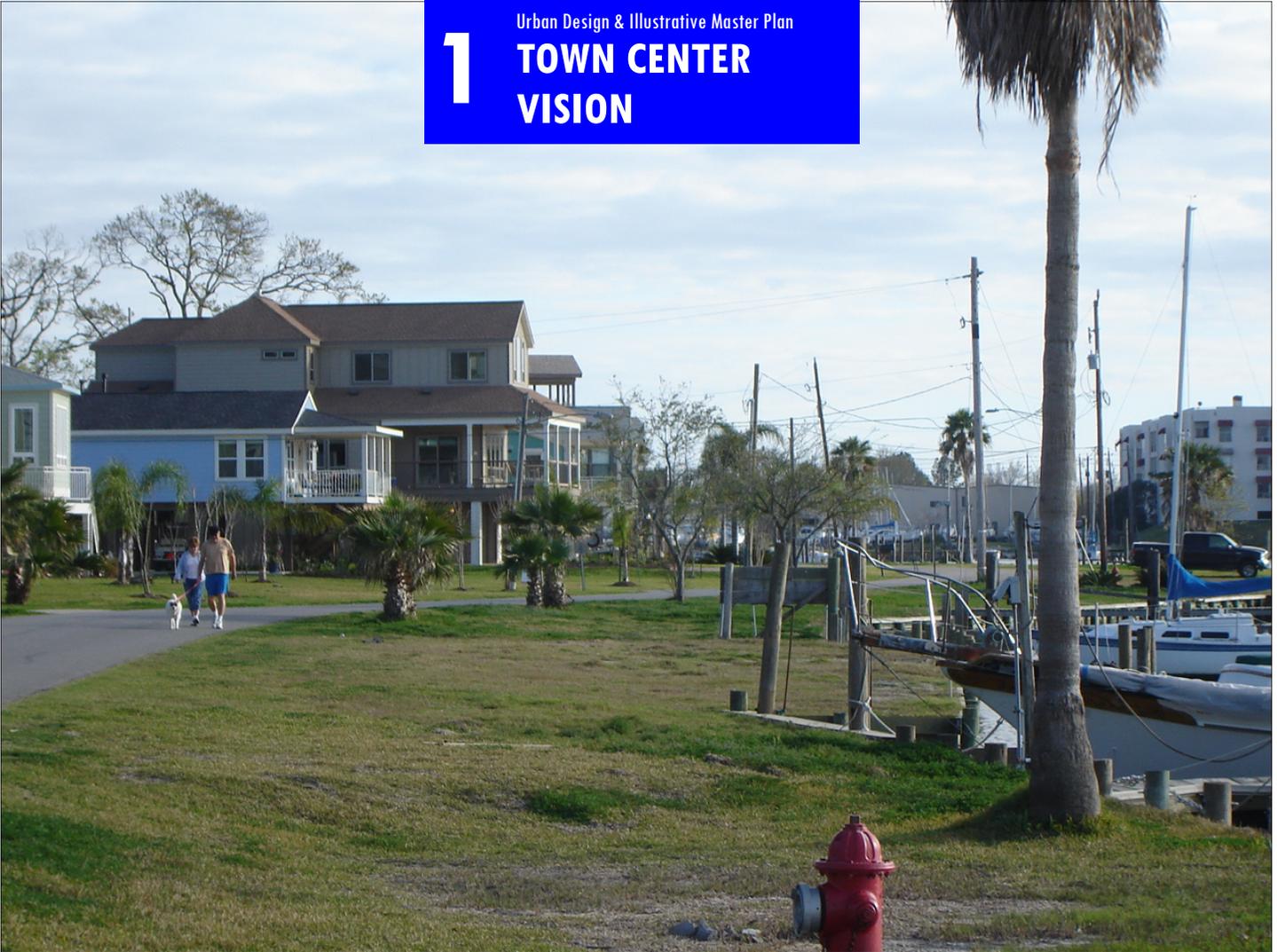
GOALS & OBJECTIVES



- Quality of Life
- Community Development
- Asset Growth



1 TOWN CENTER VISION



Strategic Vision

“I would like to see the island’s unique character extended into the new Town Center and the ETJ areas south of Marina Bay Drive.”

—Island Resident

Build on Clear Lake Shores’ Unique Qualities

Refinements in commercial areas to allow mixed-use, waterfront access and revitalization are a critically important way of maintaining and reinforcing a city's identity in an increasingly homogenous world. Clear Lake is host to the nation's third largest fleet of pleasure craft with slips for 10,000 boats. CLS is a critical part of this water oriented “neighborhood”. The new Town Center should be a place that will protect and preserve CLS residents way of life and unique “island living” lifestyle.

- A place of substance and unique style.
- A place of authenticity, excitement and reflection;
- A place to build a framework for economic success, for Clear Lake Shores and the private sector, a place of jobs and opportunity.

Create A Balance

The Plan must create a balance between; retail, residential, hotel, office, recreational and cultural uses that will bring residents and visitors to the waterfront. Providing mixed-use development opportunities along the waterfront will allow the Town Center to mature, over time, into a true "people place" where living, working and playing activities are blended together.

Maintain Waterfront View Corridors

It is imperative that the Town Center maintain its existing waterfront view corridors and create new ones where appropriate. They exist abundantly now and must remain. In the future, refine and maintain the wide variety of waterfront places and spaces. Maximize the promenades, plazas, and tree shaded lawn areas for walking, jogging, shopping and dining. Include both active areas as well as quiet places for sitting, visiting or contemplation.

Maintain Public Access

Clearly define public access: Provide direct access to the waterfront's edge through convenient pedestrian walkways. Provide access to water taxi and trolley stops when the opportunity becomes available.

Celebrate the History of Clear Lake Shores

Elements of the Clear Lake Shores Town Center history should be told with special signage and commemorative plaques with special sensitivity to the existing "Club House" and the unique way in which the City came in to existence.

Leadership in Environmental Responsibility

The Town Center Master Plan should respect the environment and call for responsible development in the commercial areas. Maintaining the existing park, bird habitat and wetland locations.

This is a Place for People

Town Center is to be a superior place for people. It must be pedestrian friendly; incorporate shade structures, trees, comfortable benches, flowers, colorful awnings over shops, banners, flags, ornamental light posts, fountains, public art, alfresco dining, lawn areas, colored decorative paving blocks, and music. A place in "human scale" that contains great places for employment, shopping, entertainment, recreation, education and living.

Summary of Town Center Vision



- Build on Clear Lake Shores unique qualities.
- Create a Balance between residential and commercial
- Clearly define public access
- Celebrate the History of Clear Lake Shores
- Environmental Responsibility
- Make a Place for People





Master plan

TOWN CENTER MASTER PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



Quality of Life – Establish quality lifestyle through the creation of waterfront-oriented activities and strengthening neighborhoods, parks and open space, and establish the waterfront as an integral part of living in Clear Lake Shores.

Community Development – Provide a planned development framework to initiate and control development activity in a manner that creates a unique destination for residents and visitors and integrates development with public amenities (including park space, hike-and-bike trails, nature areas, and innovative transportation)

Asset Growth – Effectively utilize local assets to attract economic investment in the community and establish Clear Lake Shores as a desired destination in the Houston-Galveston area.

SUMMARY OF TOWN CENTER KEY FEATURES

Town Center Boundaries.

The proposed boundaries of the new Town Center area will have a special Overlay Zone created to encourage a continuation of existing commercial areas along Marina Bay Drive: small, eclectic, unique, mom & pop stores.

Sustainability and Lifestyle.

Use the plan to protect the CLS way of life and residential areas. The “sense of place” to be created by the project’s urban design is geared to the establishment of “people places” that enhance the quality of life and broaden life-style opportunities.

Smart Growth and Civic Amenities

Mixed Use. Plan includes new Mixed-Use areas where small retail, business, restaurants and housing can be integrated where appropriate. Creating opportunities for people to live, work and play in the same location without getting in their car. Examples are Live/Work home offices where people might want to live above or beside their business.

Parking. Identify shared public parking areas created for both electric carts and automobiles so that the existing small sites in the commercial areas may be developed without forcing “strip” projects to “assemble” smaller parcels and to take over development along Marina Bay Drive.

Event Space and Amphitheater. Define a place where Clear Lake Shores outdoor events can occur comfortably with access to restrooms, parking and local retail/restaurants. Examples are Farmers Markets, Arts and Cultural Events, Festivals, Open City Meetings. Provide a grass seat pavilion to help serve this function.

Civic Projects. Identify Capital Improvement Projects which have emerged during the planning process needed for the Town Center to develop.

Pedestrian Walks and Mobility.

Long term plan for pedestrian links between residential and commercial areas of Clear Lake Shores. Locate links and stops along Marina Bay Drive where future mass transit can be incorporated easily into the Pathway Network for CLS. Define a permanent Water Taxi location accessible to the Town Center and the residential neighborhood.

Streetscape Elements.

Standardize walk materials, lighting, landscape and way finding graphics in the public areas to connect the city’s diverse and eclectic architecture.

ETJ Area Growth.

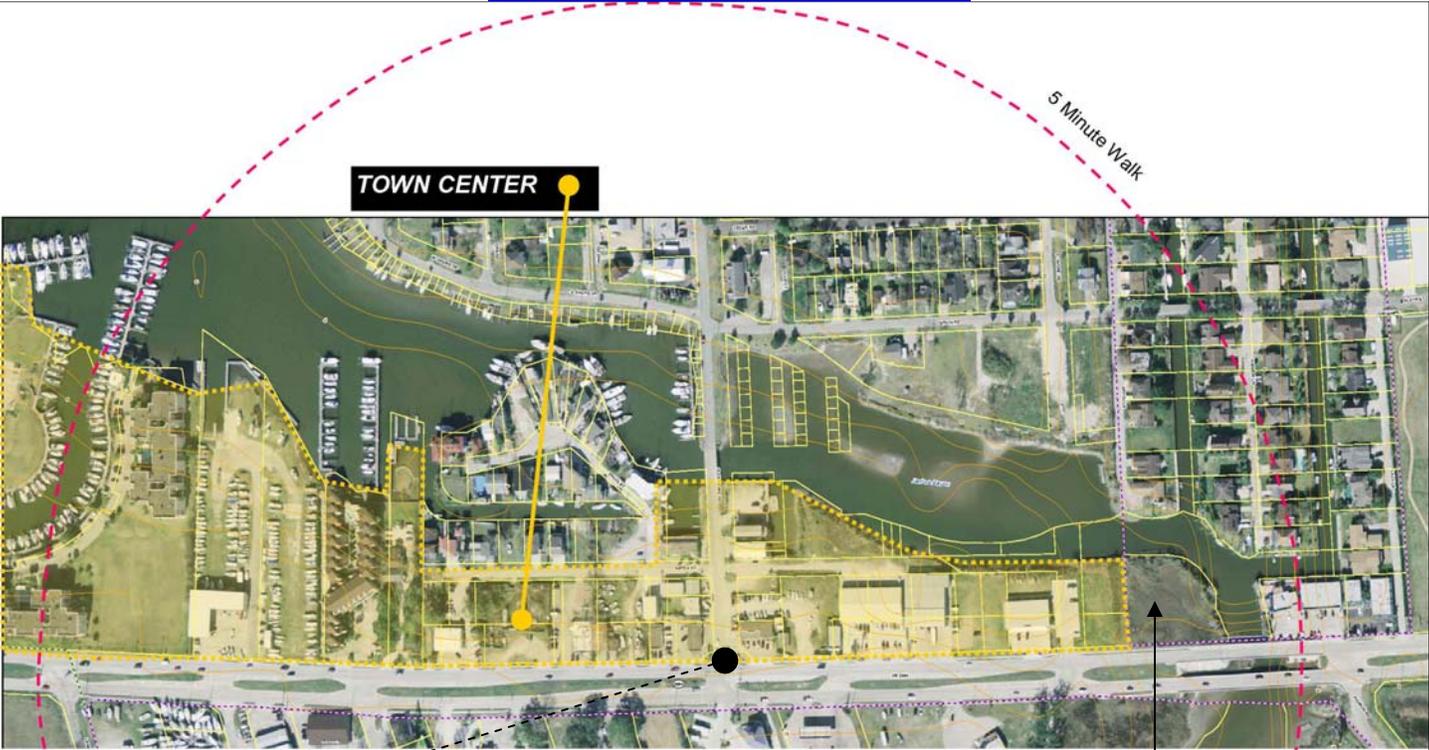
Connect the Town Center with pathway links to the ETJ. Develop an inter-local agreement with the county to help manage development in this important area.

Conservation of Open Space.

Respect the existing open space shorelines, bird watching areas and wetlands.



Town Center Master Plan



Town Center Boundaries: Proposed boundary of New Town Center area where a special Overlay Zone can be created to encourage a continuation of what Clear Lake Shores Residents love and enjoy most about their existing commercial areas along Marina Bay Drive: Small shops and restaurants, individual, eclectic, unique to Clear Lake Shores' water oriented lifestyle.

Future Town Center Element — part of ETJ now

The 5 Minute Walk. This is the distance comfortable for most people to walk, as an attractive alternative to driving. This distance is best represented as one quarter mile, 1,320 feet, or a five-minute walk.



4 SUSTAINABILITY & LIFESTYLE



Sustainable Community . Create a Sustainable Community by keeping the Town Center environmentally friendly, economically profitable and socially sustainable.

Clear Lake Shores Lifestyle . In an ideal world, people would spend far less time in their cars and more time walking in the neighborhood and to work or pedaling to the store. Subdivision building since 1926, when Clear Lake Shores was designed, have taken us away from the ideal of the “Walkable Community”, into the realm where urban sprawl is so pervasive that driving 30 minutes to get anywhere is now the norm. Clear Lake Shores is one of the unique places that survived the transition to sprawl without a lot of planning “improvements” that would have changed the essential “sense of place” everyone enjoys. Much time and money is spent today in new town building trying to go back in time to recreate what Clear Lake Shores already has: small lots, skinny streets, and a small commercial area close by to satisfy residential needs. The problem we are faced with today is how to keep these qualities which create the lifestyle alive in future years.



Clear Lake Shores is a mature community with regard to the existing land areas dedicated exclusively to single family residential, with most lots on the island built out. Residents care about the lifestyle they have already “bought into”... The primary objective of the Town Center is to address this potential loss of individual community character. To craft a plan to allow commercial development, but to stop the proliferation of identical shopping centers, gas stations, franchise restaurants that has transformed thousands of American cities into virtual clones of each other.



10 PRINCIPLES FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES



- Design on a Human Scale
- Provide Choices
- Encourage Mixed-Use Development
- Preserve Urban Centers
- Vary Transportation Options
- Build Vibrant Public Spaces
- Create a Neighborhood Identity
- Protect Environmental Resources
- Conserve Landscapes
- Design Matters



Town Center Master Plan

Urban Design & Illustrative Master Plan

5 MIXED USE



Mixed Use — Continuing to Build a Livable Community for Clear Lake Shores. The City will provide a commercial area thru zoning, but what kind? A Mixed-Use Town Center will provide areas where desired small retail, business and restaurants, can thrive and still be connected with the existing residential on the island. Creating opportunities for people to live, work and play in the same location without getting in their car.



Live/Work Opportunities. Mixed Use means the availability of Live/Work opportunities in the Town Center where home offices are the norm and where people living above their business is possible where appropriate.



Mixed Use Objectives for Clear Lake Shores

THEMES

- Preserve the Clear Lake Shores “island living” lifestyle and sense of place.
- Preserve CLS’s unique public image reflected by traditional walkable neighborhoods and commercial areas with an eclectic architecture.
- Create a unique and simple “CLS Design Vocabulary” for the Town Center Public Areas to establish a common theme to connect the cities different architecture and geographic areas.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Create a mixed-use community where residents can live, work and play in the same place.
- Develop a “Main Event” area along the water in the Town Center where community activities can occur comfortably. This could include an open air pavilion for civic and music events.
- Make the walks and pathways more than just a pedestrian route. The path network should be regarded as a series of linear parks and plazas. Including landscaping, cafes, and decorative lighting. The CLS sidewalks should function as the stage for regular, casual neighborhood activity.

OFFICE & RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

- Attract “mom and pop” type restaurants and boutique retail where possible to provide shopping and dining for local residents.
- Create landscaped entrance or “gateway” on Marina Bay Drive for CLS to increase awareness and civic pride for the residents.
- Provide a mix of car and golf cart shared parking.
- Develop a working model to demonstrate what is possible for the Town Center Area.



Benefits of Mixed Use for Clear Lake Shores. Mixed Use development supports national, state and local land use and transportation policy. Mixed Use creates:

- Economic development and improved tax base.
- Revitalization of the existing commercial area
- Housing close to jobs and services; and the creation of jobs close to where people live.
- Transportation choices and connectivity.
- Walkable communities and transit-supportive development.
- Decreased commuter road congestion
- Efficient use of existing urban services and facilities as an alternative to extending new facilities.
- Energy conservation through reduced reliance on the automobile.



TOWN CENTER CIVIC AMMENITIES SUMMARY



- Mixed-use areas.
- Pedestrian Pathways.
- Outdoor Event Place.
- Amphitheater
- Shared Parking
- New Pedestrian Bridge at Clear Lake Rd. and Jarboe Bayou.

Town Center Master Plan

Urban Design & Illustrative Master Plan

6 CIVIC AMENITIES

Walkways linked to Town Center Pathway system



Future extension of Courtyard Walk to connect undeveloped areas



Mixed Use Live/Work in West Aspen & Tindel residential districts



Water Taxi dock



Laurence Road link to ETJ development



Future Town Center Mixed Use development

PROPOSED CIVIC AMENITIES MAP

Town Center Master Plan

New pedestrian bridge to link island residential with Town



Amphitheater with open air cover & grass seating



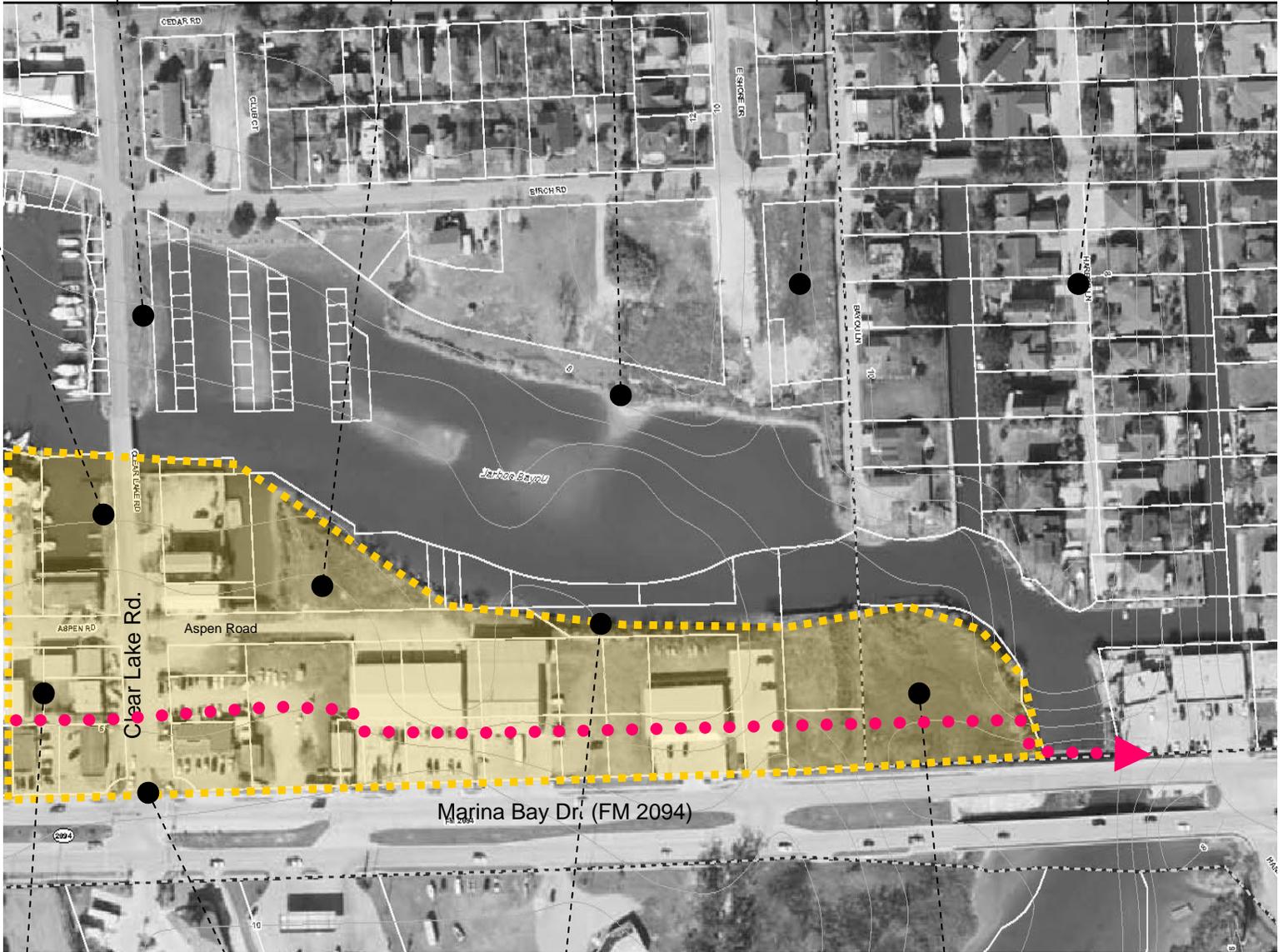
Conserve existing wetlands and bird watching area



Link new pool and pavilion to the Town Center



Existing Lazy Bend ETJ area



Okie's Courtyd. Phase 1



New City Main Entry Gateway at Clear Lake Rd. with Phase 1



Walks along water edge linked to Town Center Pathway

Current ETJ. Proposed future inclusion in Town Center.

Town Center Master Plan



Pedestrian Pathways. Place new pedestrian links between residential and commercial areas of Clear Lake Shores. Standardize walk materials, lighting and way finding graphics in the public areas to connect the cities diverse and eclectic architecture.

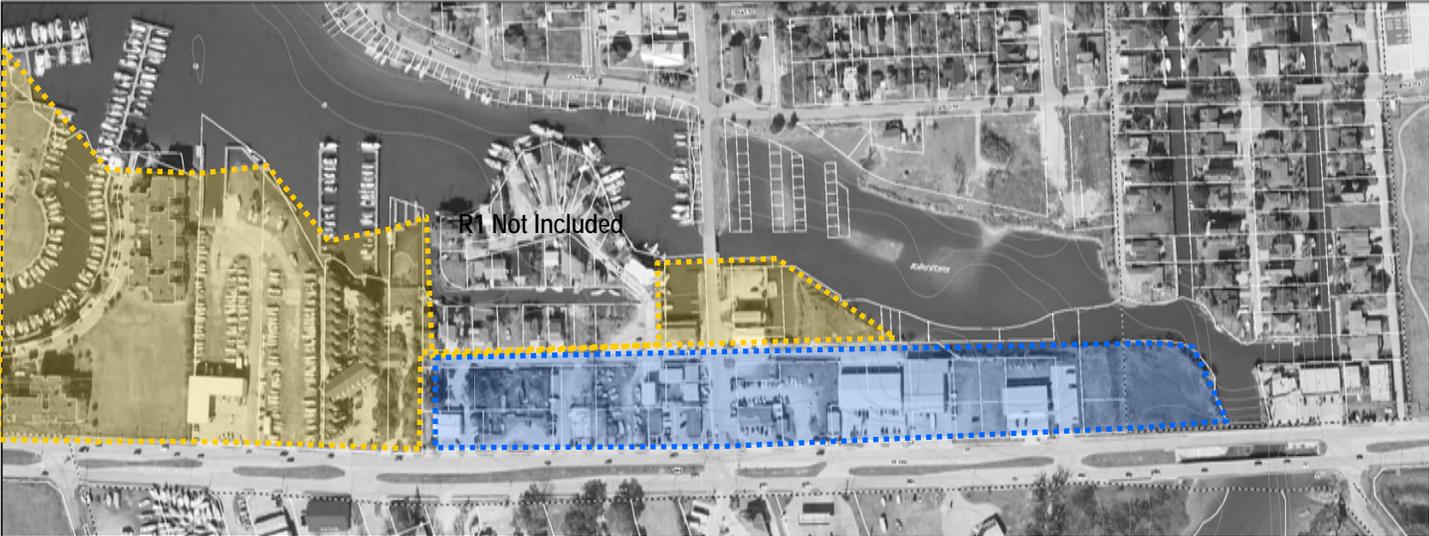
Parking. Share public parking areas created for both electric carts and automobiles so that the existing small sites in the commercial areas may be developed without forcing “strip” projects to “assemble” smaller parcels and take over development along Marina Bay Drive and through out the commercial area.



Event Space and Amphitheater. A place in the Town Center where selected Clear Lake Shores outdoor events can occur comfortably with access to restrooms, parking and local retail/restaurants. Examples are Farmers Markets, Arts and Cultural Events, Festivals, Open City Meetings.

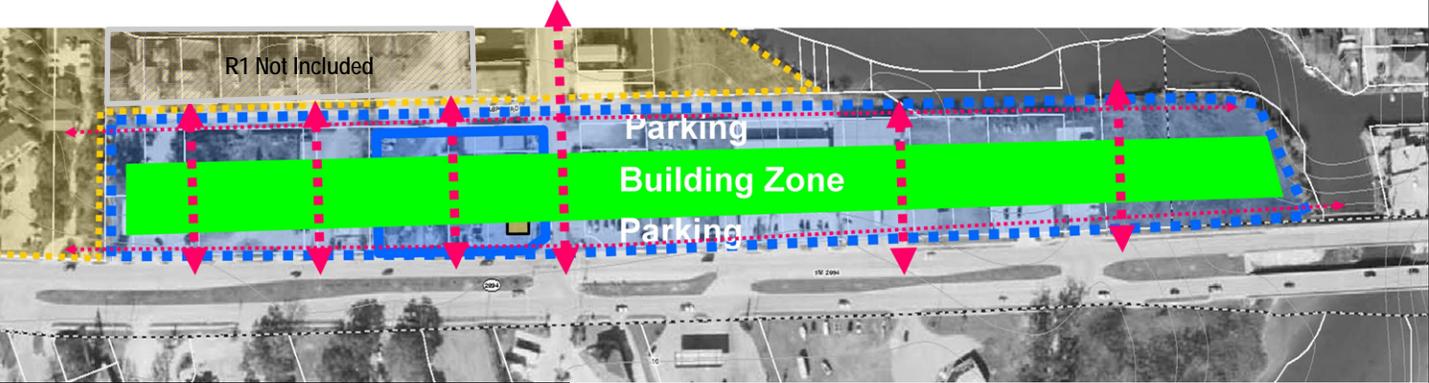


Town Center Master Plan



Planning Grid along Marina Bay Dr.

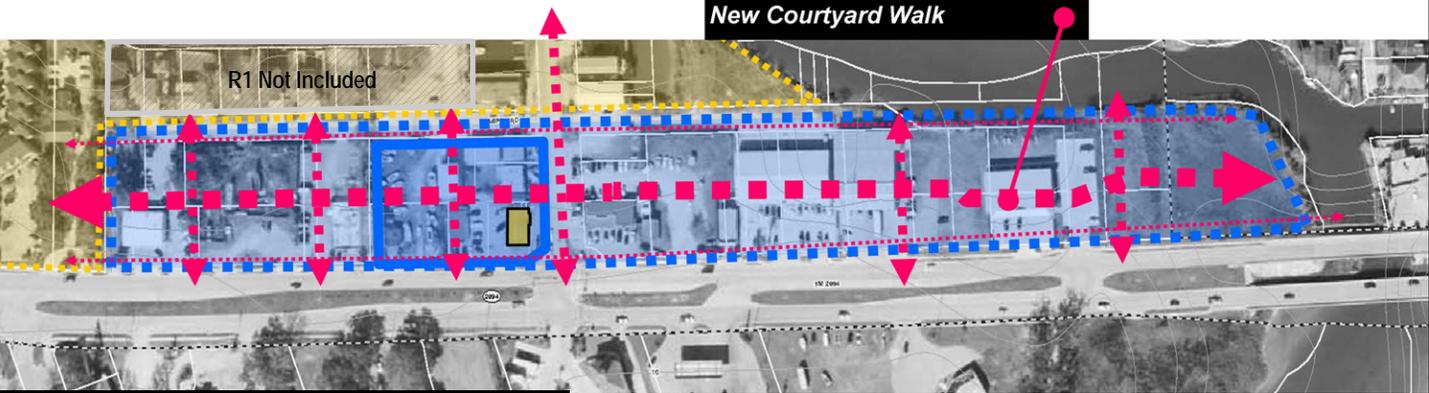
Develop Planning Grid along Marina Bay Drive as each parcel is built out in future years. Beginning with Okie's Phase 1 the Okie's Phase 1.



Building Zone



The Building Zone is sandwiched between parking on each side and in some cases parking in line with the building zone where appropriate. Build in street to street — front to back pedestrian access points thru each area.



Planning Grid

The Planning Grid should allow a Courtyard Walk to be constructed along a central spine — connecting the individual buildings and small commercial sites along Marina Bay Drive. Protected from traffic on the street — pedestrians would walk thru a series of courtyards in each building or site, as each developer along the spine constructs a portion of the walk as the area develops.



Strip Center Alternative. Strip centers are intrinsically linked to the idea of sprawl. The Town Center envisioned for CLS will have a mix of retail, residential, office and even civic uses, offering a real departure from the idea of strip centers. The rationale being that retail, as



part of a mixed-use development positions shopping as less of a destination-focused errand and as more of a leisure activity.

Residential Elements in Mixed-Use Areas. The integration of a small amount and the right type of well designed residential space can provide vitality for the Town Center. A number and assortment of unit configurations can be considered. The Town Center already has existing single family immediately adjacent which enjoys walking distance access to existing restaurants and retail. In-center housing proposed as part of future Town Center development could incorporate town





home type units or a situation where residents could live on a second or third floor over shops and offices. These units would incorporate balconies and floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking commercial space, reinforcing a sense of place and again providing “eyes-on-the-street” security.

Seamless Coexistence and Accessibility. Accessibility focuses on creating connections, and in the Town Center can give residents seamless access to shops, restaurants and offices which help ensure economic and social viability. Access points and circulation paths need to be designed to ensure that one does not detract from another, and that different uses work together.

Vehicular traffic and parking. Vehicular traffic will be de-emphasized in the Town Center. More emphasis will be placed on Shared Parking and on electric carts with specific parking and access for this important part of the CLS lifestyle. The Town Center is located along busy Marina Bay Drive, so cars and people must have a way to co-exist safely. The Town Center is envisioned to be a pedestrian environment where users can park in one location and stroll from place to place on linked set of pathways. A Courtyard Walk is proposed for the commercial areas immediately adjacent to Marina Bay Drive, connecting a series of internal courtyards with shops and retail around the perimeter.



7 TOWN CENTER PARKING



Parking in the Town Center . The Town Center Plan calls for three parking management tools to be used to help minimize the amount of land dedicated to surface parking in the commercial areas.

POTENTIAL SHARED PARKING AREA MAP

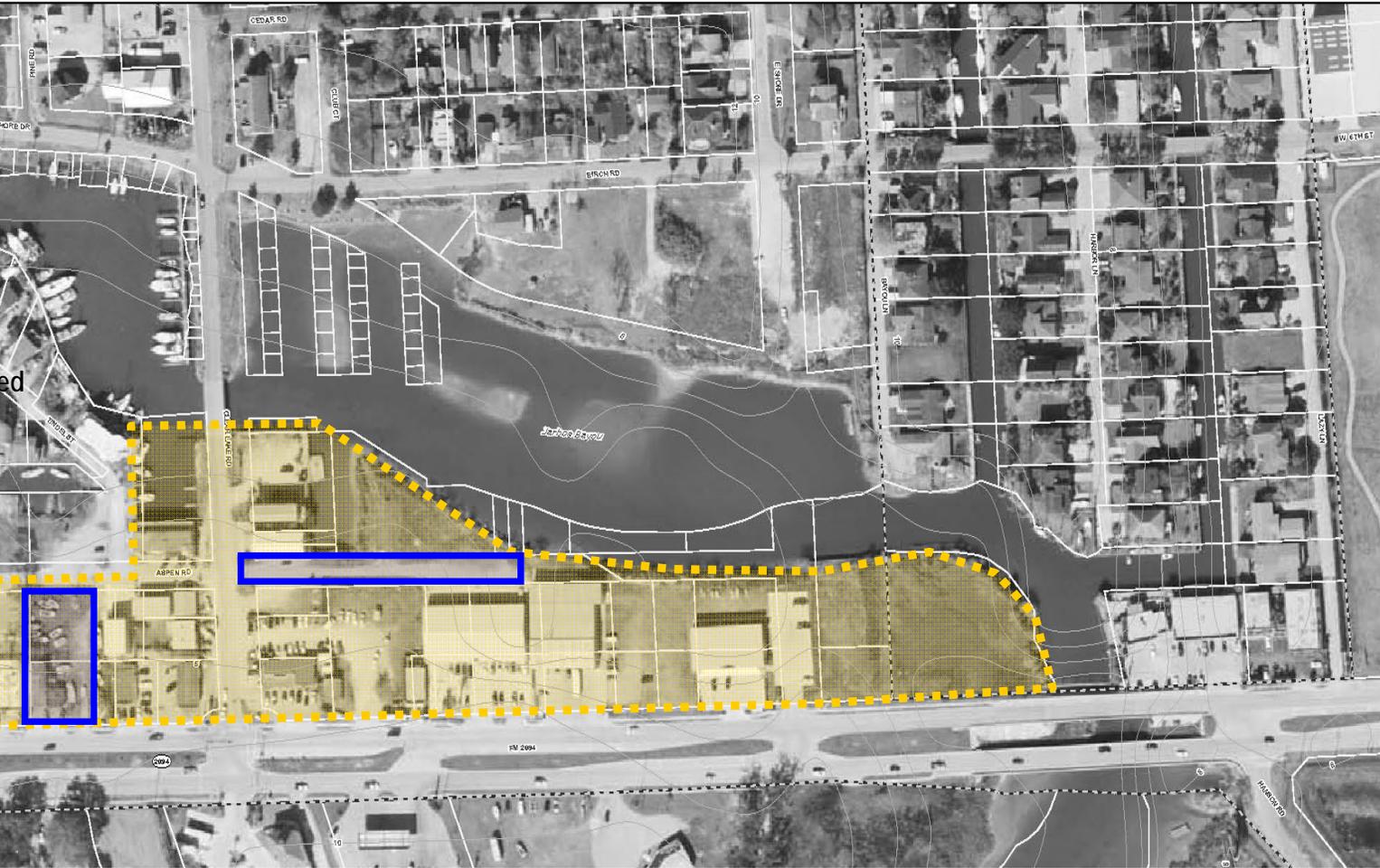
- 1. Shared Public Parking.** Shared public parking areas could be created for both electric carts and automobiles so that the existing small sites in the commercial areas may be developed without forcing “strip” projects to “assemble” smaller parcels and to take over development along Marina Bay Drive. These shared parking areas can be accomplished with internal agreements between land owners and/or the construction of city owned parking areas initially constructed by the City and spaces leased or purchased to reimburse the City’s up front costs. Another potential option for Shared Parking is the use parking districts. Authorize payment of in-lieu fees to help Town Center parking programs and construction of new public parking facilities.
- 2. Add/allow on-street parking when possible.** On-street parking, which makes up a large portion of existing Clear Lake Shores commercial parking areas, creates better pedestrian environments by buffering sidewalks from moving vehicles, increasing the viability of retail shops and services, and reducing the amount of land used for off-street parking lots while decreasing impervious surfaces.
- 3. Establish a maximum parking ratios.** To be included in the Proposed Zoning Overlay for the Town Center.

Legend



Proposed
Now

Town Center Master Plan



Other options available.

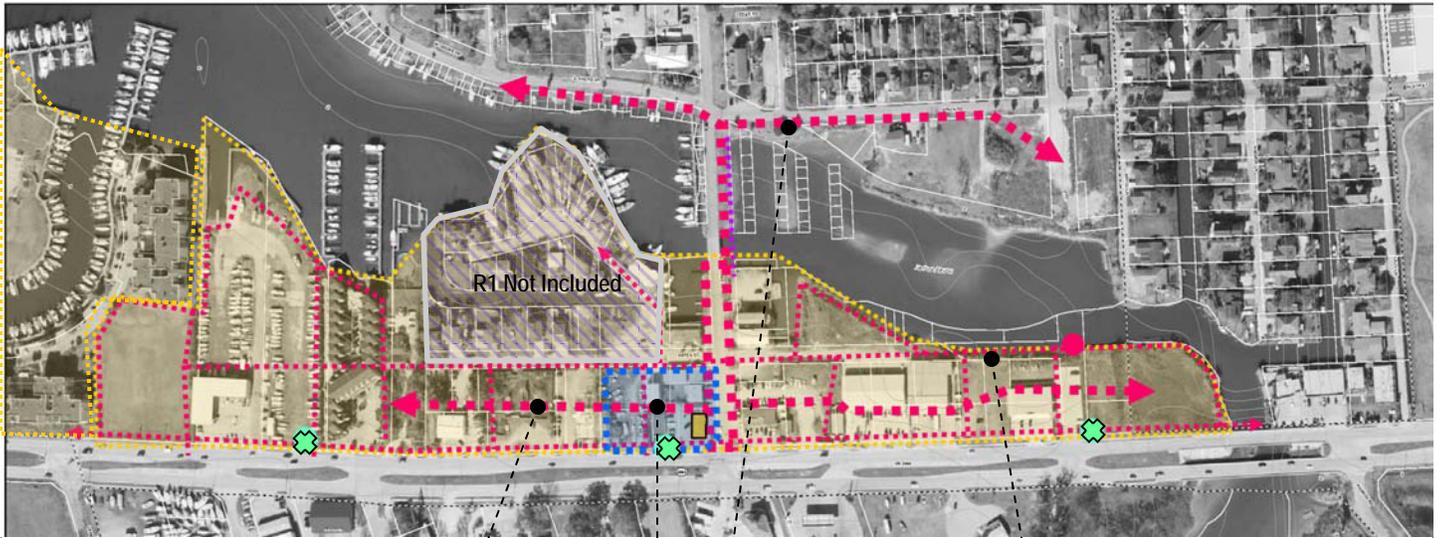
- Inventory parking and parking management.
- Reduce or waive minimum off-street parking standards.
- Allow applicants to reduce with an impact study.
- Give the City Administrator the authority to approve small needs (5 cars) with good reason.
- Encourage structured parking.
- Allow valet parking.
- Free parking zones for shoppers.



Town Center Master Plan

Urban Design & Illustrative Master Plan

8 PEDESTRIAN WALKS & MOBILITY



Future Transit Stops

Courtyard Walk

Phase 1 Okie's Courtyard

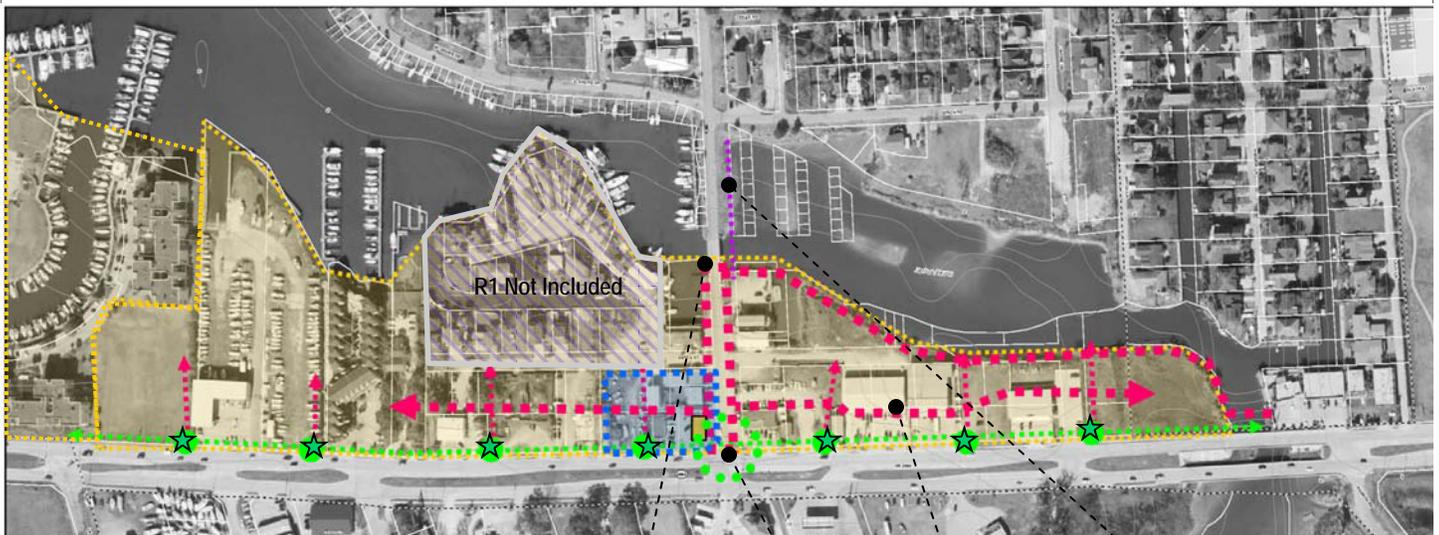
Links across bridge to existing residential



Develop water pathways where possible



WALKWAYS AND MOBILITY MAPS



Marina Bay Drive Walk & Town Center Access Points



Water Taxi pickup point

CLS Gateway

Courtyard Walk

New Pedestrian Bridge adjacent to Clear Lake Rd.

TOWN CENTER STREETScape ELEMENTS



Town Center Pedestrian Pathways.

Long term plan for new pedestrian links between residential and commercial areas of Clear Lake Shores. Standardize walk materials, lighting and way finding graphics in the public areas to connect the city's diverse and eclectic architecture.

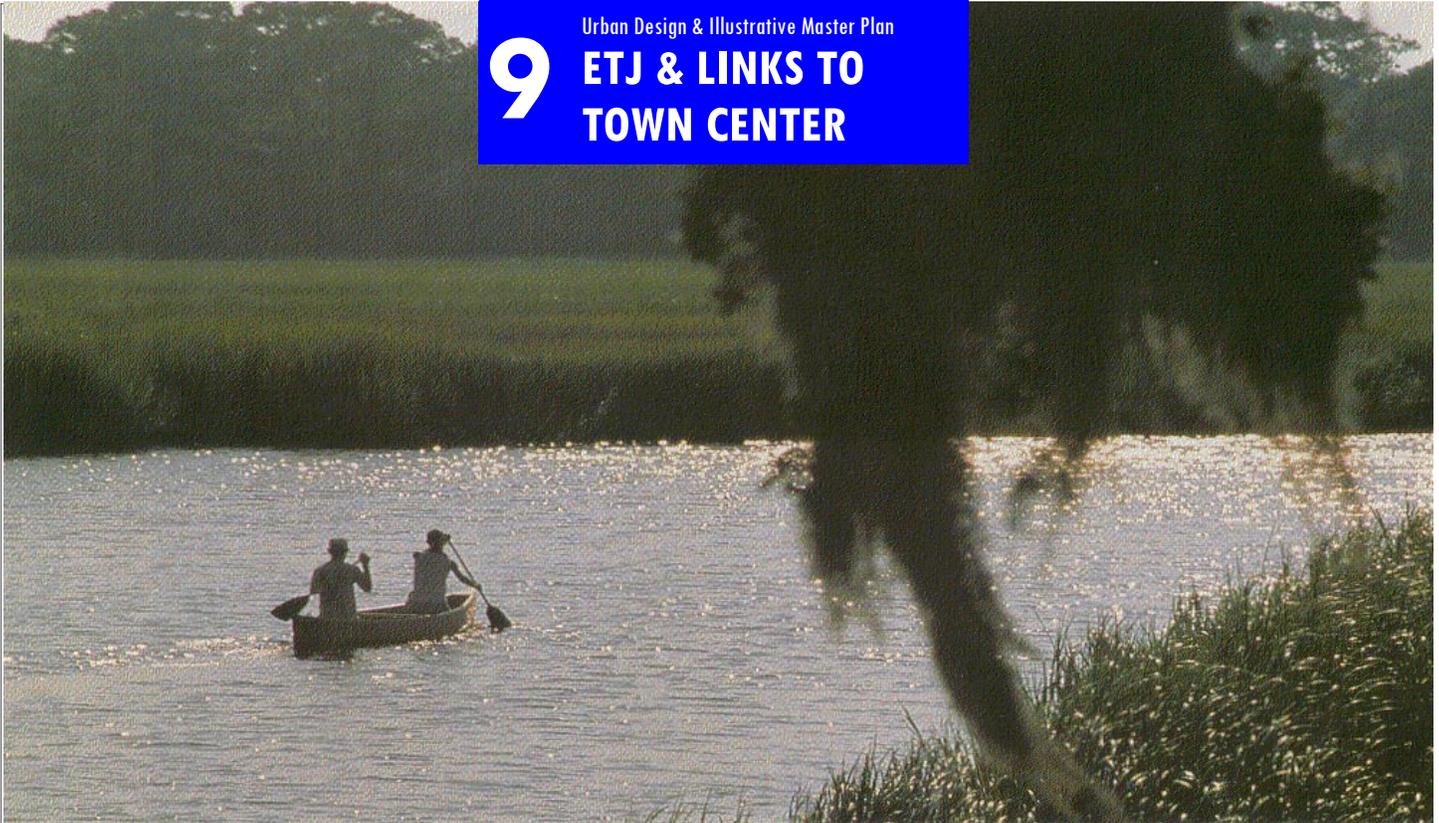


Town Center Street furnishing zone.

An area along a wide sidewalk that allows for the placement of benches, lighting, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, mail boxes, kiosks and similar pedestrian amenities located within the street right of way.



9 ETJ & LINKS TO TOWN CENTER



ETJ AREA GROWTH



- Interlocal Agreement with County for land development
- Sustainability & Lifestyle
- Encourage Extension of Smart Growth & Civic Amenities
- Maintain Pedestrian Walks & Mobility with Town Center
- Use Town Center Streetscape Elements
- Conservation of Open Space



Town Center Master Plan



ETJ Pedestrian Links to Town Center

