

**City of Olmos Park**  
**Commercial District Revitalization Study**

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## **Study Overview**

Communities of all sizes have realized that they need to manage their commercial districts on a day to day basis rather than let the status quo and happenstance dictate the community's future. Each community's approach is unique and depends on local resources and the ability to marshal those resources. This feasibility study was based on a three day examination of local resources, issues, and expectations in November of 2007. This resulting information was analyzed and organized to show how the community can proceed with a revitalization effort. The study tests for the feasibility of the Main Street Approach, developed by The National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center, but also considers the appropriateness of other revitalization approaches as identified by the steering committee. The Main Street Model is comprehensive, incremental, and based on principles of self-determination and direct community participation in the revitalization process. The intent of this type of revitalization initiative is for the community to put in place a community-based board and staff to direct the revitalization effort. Ideally the board will take root and become a sustainable part of the community.

The feasibility study represents the initial steps toward crafting and implementing a commercial district revitalization strategy which reflects the community's vision, is achievable and long-lasting, and builds on the qualities inherent in the district's historic and traditional commercial architecture to define the district's image and strengthen community spirit and pride. The feasibility study offers Olmos Park an objective analysis of the commercial district's strengths and weaknesses, evaluates the likelihood of launching a successful revitalization effort, offers a few key actions, and provides an achievable action outline for the immediate future.

## **Feasibility Study Objectives**

The study had four major objectives:

1. Identifying the commercial district's major problems, opportunities and needs;
2. Providing community members with information about approaches to commercial district revitalization;
3. Determining which revitalization approach is an appropriate strategy for the district's revitalization; and
4. Recommending a realistic, achievable course of action or implementation for the short term.

## **How was the study conducted?**

The consultant (Urban Development Services or UDS) prepared a set of questions to be asked during the interview sessions and focus groups. The steering committee added their own questions regarding prospects for a revitalization effort.

In advance of the interviews, UDS read through background information including census information and other data (see Appendix A for Demographic Information). In addition to this research, UDS spent considerable time driving, walking, and photographing the commercial district in order to survey the necessary physical upgrades. The business district, defined as McCullough Avenue from Hildebrand to the railroad tracks (about three quarters of mile) and a block east and west of McCullough on Olmos Drive, has a number of outstanding destinations but has also suffered notable vacancies.

The visit started with a public presentation that provided an overview of typical issues impacting commercial districts and the ways that communities have solved them. More than 65 people from the community attended this meeting. During the two days after this presentation, UDS conducted various follow-up interviews, some one-on-one, some in focus groups, and some via phone and e-mail. Cumulatively, more than 60 people took part in follow-up interviews, which included a broad range of constituents from both the public and private sectors. Confidential interviews with key players allowed them to express their candid opinions.

After the interviews UDS summarized key findings and met with the steering committee for a debriefing. In this meeting we outlined our observations and our recommendations for immediate action and gained feedback on which aspects of the study Olmos Park wanted to have detailed in the final report.

## Key Recommendations

*(This report is organized around the four points of the Main Street Approach: organization, marketing, economic restructuring and design. Following the presentation of these four key recommendations, further findings are listed throughout the report according to the four points.)*

### 1. **Develop a Request for Proposals for an Olmos Park Commercial District Master Plan.**

Olmos Park's residential area was originally built with a master plan but the commercial district was left to develop on its own. In this day of highly competitive retail and commercial developments, it's imperative that the commercial district have a master plan to consistently govern scale, mass, setback, parking and traffic circulation. This will allow the businesses to become more interdependent which will allow them to capture more revenue from existing customers. This plan is the starting point for the revitalization effort.

### 2. **Establish a Merchants Association and a Non-Profit Revitalization Organization**

UDS recommends that an Olmos Park Business Association be officially incorporated, as should a non-profit, sister organization that would oversee the overall revitalization effort. The difference between these two is that a Merchants Association (501 C-6) is typically motivated by the profits of its members and the sister organization (501 C-3) is motivated by the need for collective guidance over the growth of the commercial area. Please see the chart on Page 10 for a fuller explanation of this distinction. It's anticipated that both organizations will be supported by many of the same people but separating the organizations should be an advantage in fundraising. Most importantly, a 501C-3 can receive grants whereas a 501C-6 typically cannot. Further discussion is given in the organizational section of this report. *(Since this study was undertaken, Olmos Park has also successfully formed the Olmos Park Economic Development Corporation, which is exploring 501C-3 status. The Olmos Park EDC should act as the host agency for the revitalization effort to start with.)*

### 3. **Secure Funding for the Revitalization Organization**

Dedicated, unrestricted funding for the organization is essential for the non-profit arm of the revitalization effort to operate continuously (capital funding for public improvements will be discussed later in the report.) Having to repeatedly stop and start the efforts to raise funds causes a loss of focus and can cause burnout in leadership and volunteers. This is why it's important to take time putting together your fund raising strategy in the early phases of revitalization. *It's recommended that Olmos Park seek a blend of funds from the private sector, public sector, and memberships from the general public so that no one source of funds is overly critical.*

Since the initial draft of this report was completed, Olmos Park passed a ¼ cent sales tax for economic development on November 4th of 2008. This tax was effective as of April 1, 2009. These funds can be used for a variety of things relative to the revitalization effort including the development of a master plan or physical improvements to the commercial district to make this more attractive and walkable. The Olmos Park Business Association was in favor of this tax favor and a petition with over 35 business signatures was presented in support of the measure. Both the sales tax increase and the creation of the EDC put key resources in play to launch the revitalization effort. Ideally the ¼ cent sales tax could be used in part to help fund staff for the organization to head up the revitalization effort.

**4. Consider the Establishment of a Public Improvement District (PID).**

The vast majority of the people interviewed supported the idea of physically upgrading the commercial district's public improvements. Upgrading public improvements in the area could cost anywhere from \$1.5 million or much more, depending upon the approach. This is an expensive proposition but is much needed. In order to do this the city will need a variety of funding sources. The ¼ cent sales tax will generate about \$93,000 per year. A PID can help provide some of the additional funding needed to undertake a more ambitious approach in combination with other funding sources such as grants. At this point the Economic Development Corporation should review this funding source and consider it as a possible tool to employ at some point in the future.

## COMMERCIAL DISTRICT'S PROBLEMS, OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS

Olmos Park is unique in that many of the social functions that establish a sense of community in a smaller community have been absorbed by the larger metropolitan area. Olmos Park doesn't have its own schools, parks (outside of the circle), or libraries; sidewalks are found infrequently if at all in the neighborhoods; and business associations and service clubs are aligned with the greater San Antonio business community. That's not to say that Olmos Park is an undesirable place to live; in fact, just the contrary--it is highly desirable. However, residents, businesses, and city government want the commercial district to improve, in large part because its revitalization could establish a greater sense of community by providing Olmos Park with a community "living room."

A more pedestrian friendly commercial district and an improved business mix are the critical factors. The street needs to be designed to encourage more pedestrian movement through a continuous sidewalk system in the commercial district with businesses that front directly on the sidewalk. Public improvements should encourage people to sit down, pause or rest and food shops and restaurants should have sidewalk dining. An improved business mix will encourage the pedestrian customer to explore and walk further. Crowded sidewalks are signs of a vibrant commercial district.

The community is virtually unanimous in stating that something needs to be done about the physical state of the commercial district, in particular that the sidewalks need to be wider, sidewalks need to be installed in some areas, overhead wires are visually obtrusive, landscaping including trees needs to be added, and that the circle and entrance signs need to be enhanced. There is less unanimity of opinion regarding the vision of the retail composition of the district and the extent and density of redevelopment.

In order to obtain a clearer impression about the type of business district people envision for Olmos Park, the following question was asked: What business districts have you visited or spent time in that you feel would be an ideal model for Olmos Park? Model business districts that people see as ideal or ones that they like to spend time in are:

- Highland Park in Dallas
- Fredericksburg, TX
- Carmel, CA
- Santa Barbara
- Small scale Country Club Plaza
- Park Avenue in Orlando
- Alamo Heights (Broadway)
- Sunset Ridge on New Braunfels Ave.
- Park City, Utah
- Fifth Street, Austin
- No "Butler" Buildings (metal bldgs)
- No Jackson Hole, WY (Themes)
- Carmel, IN
- Cape Cod
- Holland, MI
- Bexley, OH
- Napa/Sonoma
- Charleston, Sc

- Savannah, GA
- Kerrville
- Lewisville, TX
- Boerne
- West University Place Houston (Rice U.)
- Aspen, CO
- LoDo in Denver
- Gas Lamp in San Diego
- Virginia Highland in Atlanta

Carmel, CA, Lewisville, TX, Highland Park and University Place were the most commonly mentioned districts. Collectively, these business districts represent lower height, moderate density, upscale business districts that are more pedestrian oriented as opposed to suburban layout. This last trait is important. Right now Olmos Park is a mostly suburban or auto oriented in its urban design. A key trait of the current district is that some of the parking lots are in front of the buildings. This will need to change if the business district is to meet the constituency's expectations.

### **First projects envisioned by the interview participants**

The following is a list of first projects that interview participants would like to have completed. Most of these are long-range projects and will take some time to implement. Some will obviously have prerequisite steps that must be accomplished before implementation.

- Improved pedestrian safety
- Improve the circle (already completed)
- Underground utilities along McCullough Avenue
- Clean up the general appearance of the commercial district
- Landscaping
- Enforce city codes
- Gateways or entrances need to be apparent
- "We need crosswalks across McCullough Avenue." ("We're not Converse"; "If we always do things the way we're always done them we'll get what we always had.")
- The business district needs make a statement that makes people want to stop
- Change is going to happen, we need to prepare for it.
- A master plan and ordinances for the commercial district need to be developed
- Get residents' buy-in and sense of ownership (There's no social living room for the community)
- Demonstrate that revitalization is worthwhile from a property owner's perspective. Start slow and articulate a vision.

Successful revitalization efforts start with visible results in order to validate the revitalization effort in the constituency's mind. First, much of the initial work that Olmos Park needs to complete in the early phases is not physical change but rather planning-related functions that will make physical change happen in a coordinated manner. It's important to involve the community in these efforts so they will understand what is being done; this generates "buy-in". This also points to the need to have the media

cover the progress of this effort as it moves forward and for the non-profit arm to conduct unabashed self promotion of its successes.

Second, involving the community in the planning phases will develop ownership of the district. This ownership means that the social functions of the street will start to take shape and that volunteers will start to emerge, which is important for this effort to perpetuate itself.

Finally, the district is physically long and physical changes strung out along this corridor may not provide the community with the critical mass of visual changes in close proximity that is needed to sustain the effort. This is not too much of a concern because the district is already seeing several significant redevelopment and new development projects in fairly close proximity to each other. However it may be advantageous to consider the revitalization effort in geographical phases.

One challenge to physically upgrading McCullough and West Olmos Drive is that these portions of the commercial district are located in the City of San Antonio. These gateways or entrances are the first things people see when entering this section of Olmos Park. Although the goal should be that these areas adopt the same set of urban design standards to ensure cohesiveness, at this point it's most important to lay ground work for gaining their support and participation.

## **ORGANIZATION**

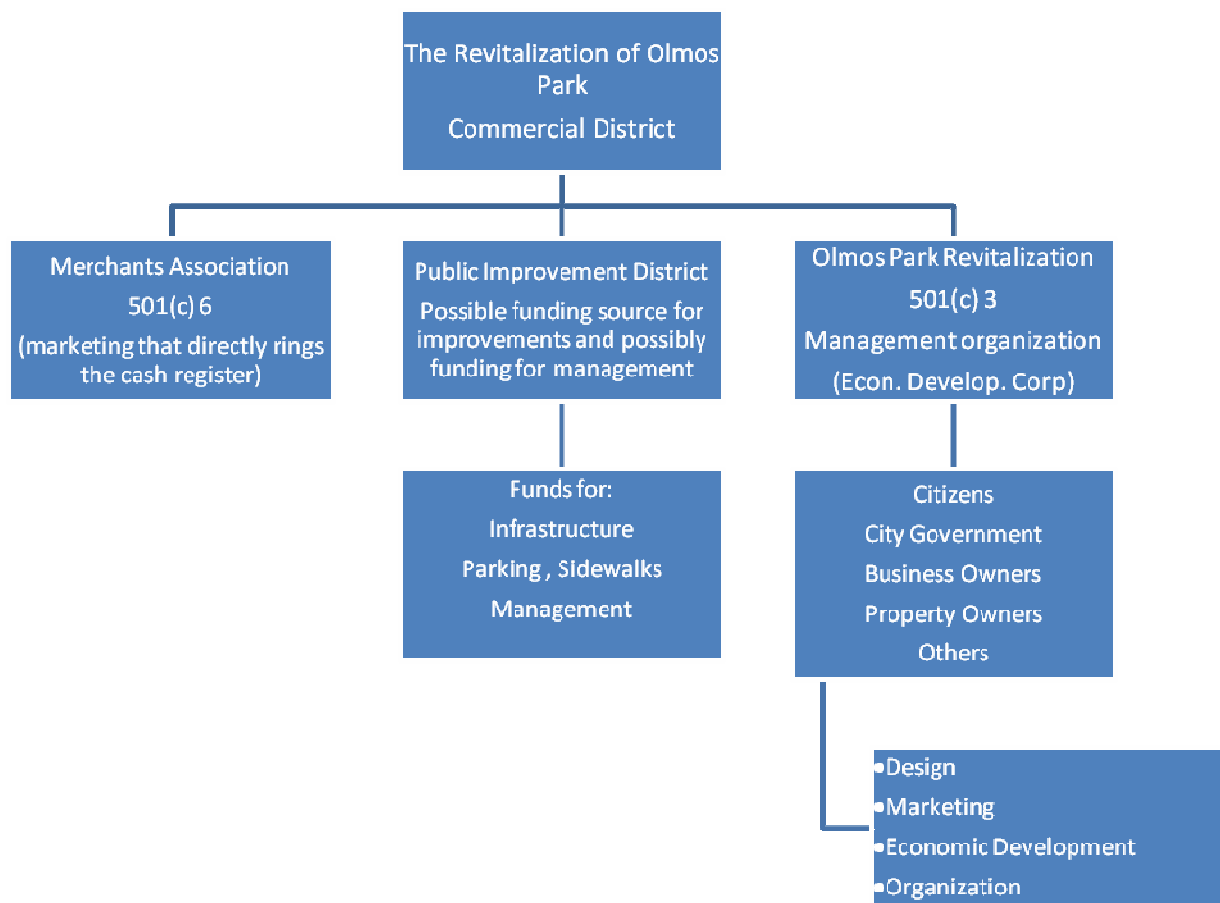
The Main Street model has proven that a commitment to managing the growth and development of a commercial district over time in the four concurrent areas of design, promotion, economic restructuring, and organization is one of the most consistent ways communities are able to successfully undertake revitalization efforts. Olmos Park should model their efforts after the Main Street approach. Proven revitalization programs have three primary organizational strengths: full-time management; funds dedicated to the program; and a strong committee or board of directors to lead this effort. Each of these three action items are discussed in detail below. Olmos Park's revitalization is a totally new effort. The following recommendations break out the organizational effort into critical components that will afford the new organization every opportunity to undertake a successful revitalization effort.

## **ORGANIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Establish three separate entities: Public Improvement District (PID), Merchants Association and nonprofit Revitalization Organization**

This seems like a lot to do but these are essential tools to be employed in the revitalization effort. The most important of the three is to establish is a non-profit revitalization organization. The PID will take longer to implement and this is really a funding source for infrastructure and a possible source for administrative funds at some point in the future. A PID is not an organization, but rather a geographically defined district in which revenue is collected and dedicated to specified public improvements. Given the overwhelming support for revitalization in this district it's anticipated that the businesses will collectively support such a district—but at what level?

As a 501 C-3 cannot undertake marketing for business purposes without risking the loss of its tax-exempt status, it is recommended that a distinct merchants association be formed to carry out these activities. The merchants association would be a non-profit specific to marketing the commercial aspects of Olmos Park businesses, established as a 501C-6 under the federal tax code. The Revitalization Organization would also be a public-private, non-profit but formed as a 501C-3 (a local example of this approach is the River North district in downtown San Antonio) to oversee the complete revitalization effort. The 501 C-3 should avoid any promotions that seem to benefit businesses or specific retailers. More information on these differences is provided below.



\* Note the Public Improvement District is a tool to possibly use in the future. The Economic Development Corporation is considering a 501 (c) 3 status if possible.

### Public Improvement Districts (PID)

The following information summarizes what a PID is and how the money can be used. These districts are established under Chapter 372 of the Local Government Code. Powers granted under this subchapter may be exercised by a municipality in which the governing body of the municipality initiates or receives a petition requesting the establishment of a public improvement district.

PIDs offer cities a means for improving their infrastructure to promote economic growth in an area. The Public Improvement District Assessment Act allows cities to levy and collect special assessments on properties (commercial district) that are within the city.

PIDs may be formed to create water, wastewater, health and sanitation, or drainage improvements; street and sidewalk improvements; mass transit improvements; parking

improvements; library improvements; park, recreation and cultural improvements; landscaping and other aesthetic improvements; art installation; creation of pedestrian malls or similar improvements; supplemental safety services for the improvement of the district, including public safety and security services; or supplemental business-related services for the improvement of the district, including advertising and business recruitment and development. While the new ¼ cent sales tax will generate a significant amount of funding, there will also be the need for additional funds so this may be a useful mechanism.

For more information, contact the Comptroller's Local Government Assistance Division toll free at 1-800-531-5441 or in Austin at (512) 463-4679. More information is available at: <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/statutes/docs/LG/content/htm/lg.012.00.000372.00.htm>.

### **Organizations Created Under Sections 501 C-3 and 501 C-6 of the Tax Code**

The following section outlines the differences between these two organizational structures and the appropriate role for each group.

A 501C-3 is widely acknowledged as an organization that's eligible for grants because it is a charitable organization that conducts research, relieves the burdens of government, works to eliminated slum and blight or operates in an educational manner. These endeavors are not directed to benefit any group, industry, or profession, but to benefit the general public. In contrast, a 501C-6 can only receive revenue for the purposes of a business association. This means that private citizens can't deduct their contributions to this organization but businesses can deduct this as a business expense. Typically organizations created under section 501C-6 are not eligible to receive grants.

The key difference between 501 C-3 and 501 C-6 organizations is the obligation to serve the public good. Section 501 C-3 organizations must serve the good of the general public by making their work available to the public, such as most programs and projects undertaken by the government. Because Section 501 C-6 organizations serve a specific industry or class of members rather than the public, they do not need to make their work available to the public.

To be tax-exempt under the Internal Revenue Code, an organization must be organized and operated exclusively for exempt purposes. None of its earnings may inure to any private shareholder or individual. In addition, it may not be an *action organization meaning that it* may not attempt to influence legislation as a substantial part of its activities and it may not participate in any campaign activity for or against political candidates. The organization must not be organized or operated for the benefit of private interests, and Section 501 C-3 organizations are restricted in how much political and legislative (*lobbying*) activities they may conduct.

## **Funding the Nonprofit Organization**

Securely funded programs will have a blend of funds to guard against the loss of any one source. The total amount for a core operating budget is likely to be about \$80,000 to start with. This money would pay a staff person, meet the needs of an operating budget, and fund projects in the work plan. Office space is typically low cost or no cost because it can be donated. Described below are the most common sources of funding, including memberships from the general public. As funding should come from a blend of these sources, it will take some time to develop them. The most important funding source to develop is the membership.

Dedicated, unrestricted funding is essential for the non-profit arm of the revitalization effort to operate continuously. Having to repeatedly stop and start your efforts to raise funds causes a loss of focus and can burnout leadership and volunteers. This is why it's important to take time putting together your fund raising strategy in the early phases of revitalization.

Since the initial draft of this report was completed, Olmos Park has successfully implemented a ¼ cent sales tax for economic development and has officially formed the Olmos Park Economic Development Corporation. Both of these efforts put key resources in play to launch the revitalization effort. Ideally the ¼ cent sales tax could be used in part to help fund the staff person to head up the revitalization effort. Other funding sources such as memberships from the community and the business district should be a part of the funding equation for a staff person. The Olmos Park EDC should act as the host agency for the revitalization effort.

## **Memberships**

A key part of any organization's development is the ability to raise funds. The process of raising funds causes a deeper sense of conviction among board members and helps to establish a greater sense of pride among volunteers when projects are successfully undertaken. Most urban neighborhoods are limited in their abilities to raise funds from within the neighborhood. Olmos Park is an exception to this. These middle and upper income resources could be sources for memberships in this effort along with the businesses and property owners. City government funding can help fund part of the revitalization but it should not be the sole source. The revitalization effort will need to generate memberships to give it a broad base to operate from and to start developing unrestricted funding sources. This is for organizational funding only. The upgrade to public improvements in Olmos Park should be pursued via the establishment of a Public Improvement District and other funding sources.

Memberships should be in the range of about \$300 per business or owner. Some may be able to do more and some, less. Set a goal of one hundred, \$300 memberships. Included in this category would be property owners, business owners, property management firms and other key benefactors. Individuals that own more than one property or more than one business should be expected to contribute accordingly. Individual and family memberships would be in the range of \$50. Set a goal of two hundred family memberships. Combined, these two would net the effort about \$40,000. City funds and other sources could make up the balance. One way to approach this is to set up automatic payment so that each month

the non-profit's account is credited. This typically will raise more money for the effort than if you ask for one contribution per year. This also reduces the administrative work load. When these funds are solicited they should ask for this amount for the next four years. This will set up the expectation that this effort is to be ongoing and allow the organization the opportunity to operate in a more fluid manner.

Once the revitalization effort is fully operational it will develop a budget as part of the work plan process for each year. The budget should identify possible sources of funds for projects listed in the work plan. Once the volunteers and committees have assembled the work plan it should be forwarded to the board for their approval. The budget should then be approved by the board of directors once the committees and the revitalization steering committee have given approval. At this point discussion should occur to make sure that committees are not competing for the same funds or to determine if the same source can be relied upon to fund each effort and as such a joint proposal can be made.

Many organizations want grant money for funding the administrative costs but typically grants fund specific projects and not administrative costs, although there may be a small percentage allocated for overhead. The best revitalization programs work because they are more private sector and volunteer driven than grant driven. While grants do play a part, don't allow them to be sole source of funding. Focus on renewable, unrestricted sources for your core administrative funding.

### **Finding local community resources**

Local sources can be broken down into philanthropic organizations in San Antonio and the private sector. Most revitalization programs find that the financial community, media, utilities, property owners, business owners, former residents, and industrialists are likely funding candidates. Appendix B lists how each sector of a community benefits from revitalization program. These benefits can be enlisted in the solicitation of these funds. Develop a custom campaign piece for each sector. Even in the most depressed communities money can be raised for an appealing cause. Given Olmos Park's demographics and base of businesses there's a strong likelihood that these funds can be raised. Remember, the primary reason that people don't contribute to causes is merely because they are not asked by someone they know. Plan your fund- raising accordingly.

### **Final thoughts regarding funding raising:**

Rededication of existing funds--This is often a tricky proposition but many revitalization efforts find that by redirecting monies they are able to fund a portion of their goal. This usually occurs because revitalization efforts are seen as an economic development, job-generating program. These funds are sometimes used as a matching portion to leverage other sources.

Raising funds through promotions--Promotions can fund significant portions programs but the reality is that it takes time for these promotions to grow large enough to generate funds; this should be considered a longer-term revenue source.

Raising fund by selling products--Selling products rarely generates funds for programs but they do have the added benefit of generating an identity for the effort. If staff and volunteer time is factored in, these efforts are generally money-losers.

### **Public relations for the revitalization effort**

Some of the residents are feeling left out loop on what's happening with the revitalization effort. That's not to say that they feel disenfranchised or animosity towards the effort. Most are appreciative of this effort and want to participate. This is a good sign. It's understandable that they would feel this way because the effort is in its infant stages and was born in the business community in conjunction with city government. Residents until now have not been asked to participate. As the effort moves forward it will be imperative for the general populous to be informed and involved. Having them involved will develop a volunteer base that will help drive projects, provide ownership of success and failures and provide the effort with a constituency. The following are some suggestions as to how you might be able to be the word out.

- Develop a web page for the steering committee and eventual effort.
- Put a flyer in utility bills
- Create table tents for tops of area restaurants providing a contact number and/or a website information.
- Make flyers available at cash registers

### **Public relations message**

As the effort progresses and staff is hired they will be the face of the program, taking on much of the public relations effort. The overall public relations strategy was expressed very succinctly by one of the interview participants, "start slowly and articulate a vision". Essentially this means build a track record of successes, smaller accomplishments that lead to larger undertakings over time while engaging the community so they develop a sense of ownership. If the revitalization effort advocates a major rebuilding of the commercial fabric first thing with dramatic increases in the density it's more likely that some residents will become antagonistic. (The design charrette recommended later in this report should address the density, height, bulk issues while involving the community and building support to do so.) Although there's a high likelihood that the revitalization effort will need some significant rebuilding of the commercial fabric in order to achieve the vision of a more pedestrian friendly district, start with smaller beautification projects such as signs, painting landscaping around buildings, strategic marketing of businesses, business assistance, etc. It's important to start with the smaller projects because they show quick progress, helping build a constituency. Trying to get larger projects done in the first year or two is unrealistic. Focusing on larger projects means there may not be any of the visible results which are necessary for developing support and synergy for the revitalization effort.

## **The revitalization effort needs to have its own identity**

Make sure that the revitalization effort has its own identity under the Economic Development Corporation. This will allow volunteers, sponsors, contributors and constituents to see more clearly how their time and resources are organized. Sample agency titles could include Olmos Park 2020 or Olmos Park Tomorrow. Tie in the logo with these efforts. The revitalization effort should have its own logo and slogan to reflect its mission. The logo should be on stationary, business cards and identity signs such as a foyer sign where the effort is located and on the web site. More on logos is given in the promotions section.

## **Formalize the Role of the Economic Development Corporation as the host agency for the revitalization effort**

One of the first things that will need to be accomplished is implementing some of the consensus topics outlined in this report. This starts with formalizing the EDC's role, developing committees, and having regular committee and subcommittee meetings. *The subcommittees should be: public relations, design, marketing-promotions and economic restructuring.* A public relations committee is highly recommended because many of the people interviewed were unfamiliar with the effort to date.

Make sure that the committees are composed of a balance of members from local business, property owners, and interested citizens that are committed to the purpose of their committee as well as the need for increased coordination and communication in the district.

The EDC board of directors should have three essential roles: planning and coordination, fund raising, and program accountability. A key planning role for the board is to help the revitalization subcommittees develop an annual work plan at the beginning of each fiscal year. The revitalization effort should have the City council formally approve the work plan to help coordination. This process will require the revitalization organization to plan its actions and to think ahead about how to fund their efforts, a healthy process for any young, fledgling organization. The chair of the EDC should provide a monthly update at the City Council's monthly board meeting. Once staff is hired they can then take on this responsibility.

Again, the first years work plan should try include easy-to-implement, low-cost, and uncontroversial projects. Doing so will allow the revitalization effort to generate emotional and capital support for the effort.

## **Staffing the effort**

Revitalization efforts stay on track and are most successful when there's at least one full-time staff member dedicated to coordinate all work areas. Initially this can be a part-time person but eventually a full-time staff person will be required. Hiring this key position needs to be done in conjunction with a steering committee that represents the business community, residents and city government. Hiring a consensus candidate is necessary because the board and staff will exercise leadership together to steer the commercial district toward the desired or envisioned development.

Finding a staff person will be the most important activity the board of directors undertakes. Take your time to find the right person. Although someone with revitalization experience will perhaps be preferred, the most important trait to look for is someone who's a "people person". This means he or she should be comfortable working with people and able to inspire and lead. The staffer will be the face of effort and will be spending a lot of time out of the office on the street and at meetings. Be patient and find someone who will represent and advance the goals of the revitalization effort.

### **Allow the manager time to be out of the office working with the businesses and property owners**

Once the manager is hired, it will be important to allow time for this person to be on the street working with businesses, property owners, government officials and volunteers. Unless the manager does this, he or she won't be able to determine what's going on, what improvements are being contemplated by businesses, and what "rumors" need to be addressed. It's important for the revitalization to latch on to these first projects and steer them in the right direction because these will be the first projects the effort will be judged by. As these needs are assessed the manager can then determine with the committees and board which resources are most appropriate. This type of "on-the-street" coordination and communication is an essential part of what a fulltime manager brings to the process.

### **Review of the Revitalization Manager**

Regular reviews of the revitalization manager are a prerequisite to retaining him or her. The board, in particular the executive committee, should conduct a written review of the manager. Without a doubt, one of the main reasons that staff stay with a revitalization effort is that there is good, open, honest communication between the staff and board. Successful managers are often "self starters" who operate in a very independent environment. Yes, they follow the work plan but there will inevitably be small things that come up on a day-to-day basis that they'll need to take action on without direct guidance. Regular communication with the board helps provide oversight in this type of environment. The communication process starts with a regular performance and salary review. We suggest that new staff be given a 30 day, three month, six month, and 12 month review. Not all of these need to be formal, written reviews but they do need to provide an opportunity to sit down and discuss how things are going and to air self expectations. We also suggest that at formal reviews that the manager be given the opportunity to review the board and committees.

### **Commercial revitalization needs to be a volunteer driven effort**

Although the manager is a central figure in a revitalization effort, it's imperative to have the local community involved if they're to have ownership of the results and support the results. The key to enlisting the community (more volunteers) is to sell them on the benefits that are of most interest to them:

- greater sense of community,
- more retail offerings close at hand,
- better first impressions of Olmos Park,
- easier to walk to and through, and

- greater sales tax and property tax which should help keep residential rates from picking up the bulk of the ad valorem taxes.

Whenever possible look to sister organizations, such as the garden club, that have similar interests and needs and can help with projects.

## PROMOTIONS

### Strengths

Olmos Park's commercial district boasts diverse retail, restaurant and service offerings, and an advantageous location. Among Olmos Park's strengths, which can support a comprehensive revitalization slate of promotions, are:

- Central location with significant numbers of people living nearby in neighborhoods that are some of the most desirable in San Antonio;
- Anchor institutions, including Trinity University and the University of the Incarnate Word near the district's perimeter;
- City commitment to help promote positive developments and a budding positive image of Olmos Park commercial district;
- Olmos Park's commercial district is well-known, especially in food, home decorating and clothing; and
- Several distinct business clusters, in particular restaurants and some home furnishings/antiques, that can be promoted together and are centered around a higher than average price point.

### Challenges

Olmos Park commercial district's promotional challenges include:

- Limited pedestrian customer traffic but great auto counts;
- Not-quite-ready-for-company appearance, especially in terms of litter and building appearance; and
- Lingering (often self-perpetuated) image of dowdiness by some businesses

Promotion is about generating positive experiences for potential customers and citizens at regular intervals throughout the year. A strong promotional calendar helps to introduce potential customers to changes that are occurring in the district or to help bring people to the Olmos Park commercial district to provide them with a good experience. Often these people, whether from the neighborhood or outside it, become customers of Olmos Park's businesses. Promotions should shape positive attitudes toward the district among those who use it, and promotions should give those users reasons to return.

Very little currently happens in the way of marketing the district aside from individual business's marketing efforts. At the same time residents are leery of large events that bring lots of people from the outside. This points to the need for marketing and promotional efforts to be strategic and it's important that promotions be *regular*, as opposed to *big*.

## PROMOTION RECOMMENDATIONS

### Image development

Image-building activities raise the profile of Olmos Park commercial district in the mind of those who shop in it, or those who might be enticed to shop in it. Image building activities build on the district's inherent strengths and may address real or perceived liabilities. Through public relations, branding, and advertising, they help create an identity for Olmos Park's commercial district.

Right now the district is dowdy in some spots despite having some rather upscale businesses. It is not perceived as an exciting place to shop or live. However, if new residential loft units come on line then you could feature a residential tour event called "Upstairs in Olmos Park". This changes the impression of what people think about the district and exposes them to a new type of real estate product.

### Working with the media

As the revitalization effort continues to develop there will be many opportunities for promotional events. Constantly use the power of the media to bring attention to incremental achievements: a new business ribbon cutting, a facade rehab, the unveiling of a logo, a clean-up event with kids, etc. A lot cost way of doing this is through your own internet website, Twitter, and Facebook. All of these mediums have the

#### Recent accomplishments

Since the study was undertaken in the fall of 2007, Olmos Park has moved forward on a lot of fronts and positive change is occurring over a broad area.

- Two new restaurants have been constructed
- A new bakery and architect's office has opened
- The old Handy Andy (Yarn Barn) is being rehabilitated
- A new City Hall dedication is about to occur
- The corner gas station has been upgraded
- The traffic circle has been transformed into a beautiful fountain

Collectively these improvements total millions of dollars and they should be promoted in numerous ways to consistently remind the public that positive change is not just being talked about but is happening. Constant, unabashed self promotion of the district is what will begin to shape the public's opinion and help build momentum for the overall effort.

potential of strategically reaching thousands of people for a fraction of the cost of traditional media.

### **Economic Facts to Promote**

Very few people are aware of what the business district contributes to city's budget via sales tax. Most think it is negligible at best. The goal is to raise this amount which will reduce or stabilize property taxes for the residents which now make up the vast majority of the city's budget.

- Olmos Park received \$429,000.00 in sales tax revenue in 2007 and \$495,262 in 2008. This represents approximately 12.50% to 13.50% of the entire revenue stream for the City. This amount is growing consistently and at a good rate. (See appendix D.)
- Since 2001, the sales tax for the City Of Olmos Park has almost doubled and 2008 showed a 15% increase despite a recession. Very few commercial districts can boast this trend right now.
- Total city property taxes received for operations and maintenance in 2008 was \$2,368,365 which represents about 65% of the City's total revenue stream. Of this amount the business district accounts for about 6%.

Promoting these revenue figures will help develop broader support for the revitalization effort especially among residents who will begin to see that it's in their best interest to spend their retail dollars in Olmos Park when possible.

## **Shaping an image**

As the revitalization gets going, it can start enhancing the image of the street right away. Develop a logo and webpage for the revitalization program, which can also become synonymous with Olmos Park commercial district. Even though logo contests can generate a good deal of excitement, it's recommended to steer clear of them. The reason is that you'll have to choose from the entries received. It's often the case that, while entries may be very creative, none simply and effectively capture the essence of the district. We suggest finding a local graphic designer to contract for this work. You may even wish to conduct a couple of focus groups with the designer to help her/him hear directly from Olmos Park commercial district users. The logo, if developed under the promotion committee, should be presented to the steering committee (board of directors) for approval and adoption.

- Encourage all businesses to use the logo and/or slogan in their advertising (flyers, newspaper ads, etc.).
- Consider stickers for store windows.
- The logo could possibly be used for new entrance signs to the district.

## **Special Events**

Special events are designed to increase foot traffic and aid in image shaping by providing a “feel good” experience for patrons. The intent is to introduce people to the Olmos Park commercial district in the hope that they will return at a later date to patronize businesses. The payoff from special events takes time; events typically do not contribute to same day retail sales. Examples of these could be an art walk, or a fresh food market, etc. With a little time spent brainstorming, even a small committee can come up with dozens of ideas for special events. Be thinking about a potential new signature event for the district, along with a couple of smaller promotional events.

The best signature events derive from something that is indigenous to the neighborhood: a food, a culture, a holiday that's particularly celebrated in the district, a local industry. For example, events held by some of the Boston Main Street districts, range from a “Lobsterfest” in East Boston (because of its lobster-packing industry) to a Multi-Cultural festival in Upham's Corner, where many new immigrant groups have settled. Consider as well how Olmos Park can bring a new celebration to traditional holidays such as Christmas, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, etc. On a smaller scale, events like farmers markets or art markets can provide regular reasons to draw people to the district. They often serve as small weekly “special events.”

## **History**

History and culture is perhaps more important to a community than buildings, but buildings allow the context of that history to be told and interpreted. History that is not told is often not valued. Make the most of Olmos Park's unique history, including its origins as a horse ranch and ties with the ranch headquarters (Argyle Club) and the stationing of military dirigibles in the area.

## **Retail Promotions**

Retail promotions have the primary purpose of “making the cash registers ring.” These activities should boost sales for merchants in the district. Not all retail promotions are “sale” (i.e., discount) events; retail promotions can be organized around holidays (Christmas, Mothers Day, etc.) or around particular business clusters that customers might shop together such as Coffee Month or Chocolate Month where each restaurant features recipes made with chocolate or coffee.

With plenty of businesses in the Olmos Park commercial district – and a few that constitute small clusters – setting up some new retail promotions or cross-business marketing should be easy to do. Think about ways existing business groups might be promoted together, or might promote each other.

- **Food:** In the food category, the restaurants can cross promote each other using coupons or cooperative advertising. How about a “healthy eating” promotion to connect these businesses?
- **Home furnishings:** Similarly, Lin Marche, Hunt Galleries, the antiques stores, etc can be promoted together.

Not every retail event must be a sale event; in fact very few should be oriented towards discounted prices. Businesses only need sales at a couple of low points during the year. The keys to a successful retail promotion are unity and publicity. There is strength in numbers, so the more participating businesses and customers, the stronger the promotion will be.

## **Building the Marketing-Promotion Committee**

At this point we believe the organization should invest its energy and time in establishing a marketing-promotion committee. Once the steering committee is formalized, it should appoint a chair of promotion.

You may already know of people who are excited about working on promotional activities for Olmos Park commercial district, and you should tap those folks. At first, it is often hard to recruit people to a standing committee – especially if you’re not exactly sure what job they should do. It will facilitate committee-building if the steering committee identifies some initial goals for the promotion committee to begin its work. The promotion chair working with the new committee can then write work plans for initial projects. It’s easier to involve volunteers when asking them to help with specific projects. Ultimately, a committee of five to ten members is large enough to share the work load and small enough as to be manageable. Additional volunteers can be enlisted on a project by project basis to form ad hoc committees.

Consider the use of interns to augment volunteer assistance. With Trinity and Incarnate Word Universities nearby, Olmos Park should have ready access to students interested in marketing (or almost any discipline, for that matter). Interns can be a great resource but, as with volunteers, only take on interns when you have your initial projects outlined and when the executive director has the time to manage them.

## ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

In order for a revitalization effort to create lasting change, it needs to have a solid understanding of the district's economy – its strengths and weaknesses, its customers and its trade area. “Economic restructuring” involves actively guiding the economic development of the district so it can thrive as retailing and business practices change or as residents and neighborhoods around Olmos Park change.

Since most commercial districts are defined by their retail component, the competition within the retailing sector has hurt older streets like Olmos Park's commercial district. Olmos Park has been able to hold on to a modest amount of retail and service business, but it finds itself trying to survive in a world of big box developments, shopping centers and malls. Nevertheless, many urban commercial districts have established new market niches for themselves.

Most economic restructuring work of the first year involves learning about the economy and assisting existing businesses. Every revitalization effort wants to begin with business recruitment, but such efforts inevitably end in frustration. Economic restructuring should always begin with studying the marketplace and helping existing businesses become more profitable. This creates an environment in which successful business recruitment can occur.

The economic restructuring committee's role in changing the commercial district economy will involve four types of objectives:

- ◆ **Business retention** – helping businesses find better ways to reach their customers, improving business skills, and assisting business startups;
- ◆ **Market analysis** – studying businesses, shoppers, and competition to understand better who shops in the Olmos Park commercial district, why they shop there, and what other consumer niche markets Olmos Park attracts;
- ◆ **Business recruitment** – seeking new businesses to complement existing stores, identifying new business opportunities, expanding existing market niches; and
- ◆ **Property development** – taking advantage of underutilized space and creating new uses for it, such as housing, office, or light industry.

Achieving these objectives will require the committee to undertake projects such as creating or revising financial incentive packages, developing business recruitment campaigns, making visits to current businesses, and packaging property development opportunities. Simply talking with a business owner and offering help with city processes, rumor control, partnership development, technical assistance, and building improvements can be a huge aid. The goal is to determine what's needed to help individual businesses with an understanding of the entire area's strengths.

The overall goal of the economic restructuring effort is to position and equip the commercial business district to respond to a constantly changing market.

Olmos Park has continues to see investment in latest economic downtown which bodes well for the district. The former Handy Andy Building (Yarn Barn) is being redeveloped and is already home to the new Bistro Bakery and an architect's office. Just last year two new restaurants have been built from the ground up and the gas station on the circle has reinvested in their image. The City of Olmos Park has also participated in this with the development of the new City Hall. Overall Olmos Park continues to be a healthy place to invest.

While investment continues there's still a need to guide this growth so that it creates greater synergy. The following sections layout some ideas on how an expanded revitalization effort can benefit the businesses, investors and the greater community.

## **Business Mix Observations**

There's a certain sector of Olmos Park residents that would rarely buy locally in certain lines of merchandise because they lack the prestige or extensive product lines of Rodeo Drive, Michigan Avenue or Fifth Avenue. But for certain retail sectors it's just not convenient to purchase these items beyond your neighborhood. These sectors fall out into restaurants, specialty destination, convenience retailing and personal services. Two of these clusters tend to be more prominent along the commercial corridor: Food and home furnishings. These can be a place to start when looking at expanding the business mix as well as customers.

### **Other Observations**

- Overall the majority of these businesses tend to be either moderate price point to higher price point.
- With only a handful of vacancies, Olmos Park commercial district actually hosts a broad variety of businesses, despite its perceived small size.
- Businesses cover a spectrum of types, including convenience, service, retail and light industry.
- Professional businesses occupy key corner locations at the circle, which should be the "100% corner"
- Commercial district is too expensive for some to shop in.
- Residents appreciated locally-owned businesses and want them to do well.

- Most of these businesses get at best 25% of their business from Olmos Park residents. This is not unexpected because there are only about 1,131 households (2000 census) in Olmos Park. It's felt that Monte Vista makes up much bigger proportion of the business district's revenues as per the interviews.

## Convenience Business Clusters

The following section groups Olmos Park's businesses according to possible marketing clusters. The basis of these clusters can be used to recruit other business.

### Restaurants

Olmos Park has seven sit-down restaurants and a bakery-bistro. Most of these have opened in the last seven years and one restaurant has relocated (note this does not include the Bharmacy). This is fairly rapid growth of the restaurant niche. The restaurants tend to be more convenience oriented or more upscale. The emergence of this business group is an interesting trend.

### Restaurants

- Ciao Lavanderia
- Shiraz
- Bistro Vital
- Light House Café
- Panchito's
- Valentino's Italian Restaurant
- Bistro Bakery
- Mary Lou's Café

### Casual Restaurants

- Prime Cultures
- Taco Taco
- Subway

### Specialty Destination

The specialty section has a number of conventional retailers listed but since these businesses are scattered throughout the district and not tightly clustered they function more independently. In-fill development and a good leasing plan to form interdependent clusters will allow these businesses to function more as traditional retailers in the future.

### Specialty Destination

- Hunt Gallery
- Parchman Stremmel Gallery
- Galeria Ortiz
- Gavin Metal Smith

- Uniforms and Service
- Julian Golds
- Graciella
- Painted Pony
- Pinky's
- Le Cake
- Lin Marche
- 3 Upholstery Stores
- Refinishing Shop
- Olmos Rugs
- Piano Restoration and Sales
- Camilla Brink Stationers
- Southwest Investment

- Guitar Tex
- Custom Bedding
- Rodriguez Jewelry
- Robin's Nest
- Intaglio Home Furnishings
- Edward Jones
- Baker
- Alterations
- 2 Massage Studios
- Tuesday Morning
- Nixon Piano

### **Convenience retailing**

- Subway
- Blockbuster
- Wachovia
- UPS Store
- Panchito's
- Schnabels
- Olmos Perk
- Wash and Fold Laundry
- Custom Tailors

- 5 Hair Care Salons
- Veterinarians, Kennels Grooming
- Hair care
- Coffee
- Don and Bens Liquor Barn
- Powell Quality Cleaners
- Slater White Cleaners
- Jackson Hewitt Tax Service

### **Auto Businesses**

- 2 repair
- One auto body
- Four gas stations

### **Antiques**

- Carolyn's Antiques
- Rediscovered Treasures
- Off My Rocker

## **Business That People Want**

The following comments were given by interview participants when asked what types of new businesses they would like to see.

- “The person that owns the business can’t depend upon Olmos Park residents....not enough of them.”
- Go with boutiques
- Book store
- Foodie businesses
- Kitschy Stores
- Men’s Clothing
- Older appearance
- Strength is in convenience retailing.
- Ice Cream
- Another gas station
- Take-out and delivery
- More restaurants
- Kid friendly restaurants like Betos
- More art galleries and antique stores
- Better auto repair
- Bike Shop
- Post Office
- Starbucks

The interesting thing about the focus groups desires is that their expectations are not all that different from the current mix of convenience goods. A word of caution, the above gauges areas of interest and is not a substitute for doing sound marketing research which is what the economic restructuring committee should focus on.

## **ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Establish the Economic Restructuring Committee**

Establishing an economic restructuring committee will be one of the first tasks after the board is established. This committee is a place where business owners, economic development staff, and even interested residents or university students can get involved. Once a group comes together, they should receive some training in how the economic restructuring works after which the group can begin to establish its work plan for the year. Much of this first-year work is typically fairly straightforward. The new committee should look at the following areas:

### **Gather basic data**

The economic restructuring committee should begin by collecting some basic information about Olmos Park commercial district’s businesses and buildings. The database this creates will serve the program well

in the years ahead: in building relationships, targeting vacancies, and working through business transitions.

Data-gathering begins by setting out to introduce the new manager and committee members to all businesses in the district and sitting down with each for an informational interview. The interviews should include a questionnaire that helps economic restructuring committee develop a database of commercial properties and businesses. That inventory should note square footage of the businesses and buildings, contact information, proprietor, type of business, business specialty and other relevant information. Also look for businesses that may be operating on the “fringe” of the district – upstairs or behind the commercial street or on a side street. Often these fringe businesses will seek better locations within the commercial district as they become stronger and space becomes available.

### **Begin Documenting Business Resources**

The realization office should eventually serve as a one-stop shop for Olmos Park commercial district so an entrepreneur can get help writing a business plan or a merchant can find out about a variety of financial or technical assistance programs. The revitalization program itself need not provide all of these services itself, but it can help simply by being a clearinghouse and providing access to programs offered by other non-profits, schools, or city agencies.

Some programs have done things as simple as creating a new business welcome packet to great effect. In the packet you can provide information on how to access the whole variety of assistance programs available in Olmos Park commercial district or in San Antonio. You also might include a step-by-step guide for new businesses so the owner knows where to get appropriate permits, what offices she needs to visit, and in what order. This kind of streamlining will simply smooth the way for a business opening in Olmos Park – a competitive advantage over other districts.

### **Help businesses network with each other**

It's often very helpful in the beginning to provide a forum where business owners can meet and discuss their common concerns. A “business after hours” gathering, or a business breakfast also creates a setting where the revitalization program can share its plans and invite the participation of others.

These networking opportunities also allow it to share new programs with businesses as they develop: facade improvement incentives, special event participation, cooperative advertising participation. Having direct access to merchants in this way will also help coordinate activities around the holidays. In addition, businesses will get a chance to be “heard” so that, even if they are unable to participate on the committee level, owners will know they have a place to voice their ideas or concerns. All of this should bring the added benefit of making it easier for the revitalization effort to raise funds from its merchant constituents.

### **Plan for market analysis**

Much of the economic restructuring committee's early work should focus on getting to know the district's businesses more intimately and helping them perform better. The first two years of work are also a time of learning about the district's economics. Within the coming year, we recommend the economic restructuring committee begin a market analysis of the district. This will include gathering data on:

- ◆ Consumer buying power and spending;
- ◆ Consumer shopping habits;
- ◆ Competing neighborhood commercial districts or shopping centers;
- ◆ Customer attitudes – their likes and dislikes – toward Olmos Park commercial district;
- ◆ Business clusters and developing cluster maps.

Out of the market analysis will come a strategic plan for business development and new business recruitment. The market analysis will also help to focus the promotion agenda so it addresses identified target markets. The market analysis provides much more than data: it paints a picture of Olmos Park's economy across all four points. The information it provides will allow the revitalization program to start articulating strategies for economic development which will help inform the work plans of all the committees.

### **Begin tracking investment**

Just as with the opening of Eve's Market, new economic development – small and large – happens in Olmos Park all the time. But as soon as it happens, people forget. That's why economic restructuring committee should begin tracking investment statistics.. These are quantifiable signs of economic progress. They should be used to assess the effectiveness of the revitalization program and they should be used in the media to demonstrate change. These statistics will be invaluable to the city (and will help solidify city support of the program). Track the following:

- new business openings;
- business closings;
- business expansions;
- number of employees;
- number of new jobs created;
- number of building improvements (and amount invested in each);
- dollar value of public improvements;
- gains in sales tax revenue
- gains in property tax revenue
- and all other quantifiable activities of the revitalization program.

**Look regionally for business recruitment opportunities**

Successful business recruitment to traditional commercial districts usually comes from two places: businesses which are unhappy in their current location (whether in other city neighborhoods or unsuccessful strip shopping centers in and around San Antonio), or businesses which are thriving and considering *expansion* to a second or third location. Olmos Park has already seen this with the relocation of Panchitos to a larger location. Certainly many other prospects for Olmos Park can be found in the San Antonio area – which is an easier approach than recruiting an entrepreneur to start a business from scratch. Don't be shy about going to shopping malls. They've recruited Olmos Park's businesses in the past, some of these may now be ready to return.

Most early attempts at targeted recruitment do not realize their goal. While any recruitment opportunity that presents itself to Olmos Park's leaders should certainly be pursued, in the long run you will find continued success by helping existing businesses now, while researching and planning your strategy for future business recruitment.

## DESIGN

Urban design is a popular aspect of revitalization efforts because its results are tangible, design encompasses everything physical in the neighborhood commercial district. Design includes projects that affect the district's appearance, including public improvements, building rehabilitation and new construction, traffic and parking, sign systems and visual merchandising. Typically historic preservation is an important part of the design work plan but Olmos Park has relatively few older buildings, but as the district rebuilds it can use these principals to guide new development.

Preserving a community's character is still a large part of the revitalization effort, but a commercial district must also grow and evolve. Managing that growth to protect the district's and community's character and the elements that define that character is an essential aspect of any revitalization effort. In communities where many historic buildings remain, the design committee has a great foundation on which to build. In instances where there are gaps the challenge will be to build new structures that embrace the best elements to make this district work as a cohesive unit.

### Aesthetics

The following comments were given by interview participants as they relate to the aesthetic appearance of the district.

- We need to live up to the perception of older and affluent
- Very severe and neglected...it doesn't fit with who lives here
- Broken but changing for the better.
- We're a diamond in the rough
- Quality of the commercial and residential don't match
- Very little of architectural significance
- Looks Dumpy
- Can't walk my baby (lack of sidewalks)
- No cross walks
- Currently functional but not aesthetic
- McCullough is a just a way to get downtown
- Sidewalks not continuous
- Telephone poles create chaos
- Backing into McCullough is difficult
- Haphazard appearance, need cohesiveness
- Show us what you can do for X amount of dollars via different scenarios
- Businesses are better than the urban design
- Wine and liquor store needs to look better
- Need better entrance signs
- Need a quiet zone
- Need uniform landscaping code for streets, street trees
- Commercial District maintenance doesn't match residential
- "Doesn't have to match but the pieces need to link up"
- "Design review is ok for the commercial district but not the residential"
- Enhancement of what we have is the biggest priority, density is an issue.
- Bike lanes are a plus but only if there's room
- Need a good public relations campaign to sell the project.

- Need to spare city council political clout in implementing these improvements
- Green, sidewalks, and reduced power lines are the most compelling items/ vision

## **Design Observations**

Residents realize that the commercial district does not match the quality of the residential district. This is true of the architectural fabric and the public improvements. Some residents are OK with this, in fact. Some welcome it for fear that if the commercial district looks too good then this may attract more shoppers from beyond Olmos Park and development which means more noise and traffic and possibly some gawkers in the residential areas. Residents make up small percentage of the business's trade but yet they're the ones that vote. From their perspective "Quiet growth" would be desirable.

The reality is that change happens regardless and the processes that manage change need to be reviewed in order to make sure it meets as many people's expectations and that it happens to the best of our abilities. Redevelopment and development of buildings is already happening using current development standards and not all are universally satisfied because it's resulting in a physically and visually disconnected business district. Development on one lot doesn't link with another making it difficult for pedestrians and stylistically there's little "flow or unity". The private sector is unhappy with development standards (too strenuous), residents don't see the quality they expect in new construction and the city has an uneasy feeling about new development.

The entire commercial district was constructed without any comprehensive public improvements plan and they've never been comprehensively redone leaving it with pedestrian routes that are hard to traverse at best. Ordinarily communities are encouraged to delay a program of public improvements till later in the revitalization process because of the need to develop a track record of visible accomplishments and due the length of time that it takes to implement a full scale public improvements program. Olmos Park is encouraged to pursue this sooner rather than later. This is due the overwhelming responses from the interview participants that want a more walkable commercial district. How these improvements are funded is where there isn't unity. The views expressed by residents, businesses and government leaders point to diverse funding sources.

Further discontent rests with the pace of traffic. During non rush hour times traffic is perceived as being aggressive. During rush hour it doesn't go fast enough. The sentiment seems to be with establishing some improvements to slow down the pace of traffic a little and adding a couple of crosswalks. This slate of improvements is perceived as not being inconvenient to the motorists. Other suggested urban design elements should further make traffic more subdued, also known as "traffic calming"

## **Design Recommendations**

There are basically six different decisions to explore regarding future development and this will shape the palette of public improvements. These are directly linked to how development standards in the future will site buildings and how these buildings integrate with the street. *The following section outlines some of the more critical points that need to be researched. The community is encouraged to develop a design charrette to flush out these ideas and develop*

*public support for the slate of improvements before making a decision. This charrette should be done as a part of a Development Master Plan for the commercial district. Ultimately the outcome of these efforts should have a profound impact on businesses and real estate values.*

#### **Decision A *Location of Primary Pedestrian Route***

Inconsistent building setbacks make the pedestrian's path circuitous, confusing and treacherous due to isolation. Where will the primary route for the sidewalk be in the future? Will this alignment be the same the entire length of the street? How extensive will pedestrian amenities be and where will they be located?



**Figure 1** Pedestrian routes are not defined or inconsistently routed and lack basic pedestrian amenities.

#### **Decision B *Street Cross Section***

What will the traffic cross section of McCullough look like? Will bike lanes be included? How will parking be handled? Will parking be the same as it is today, or will it include parallel, angle, back-in angle parking?

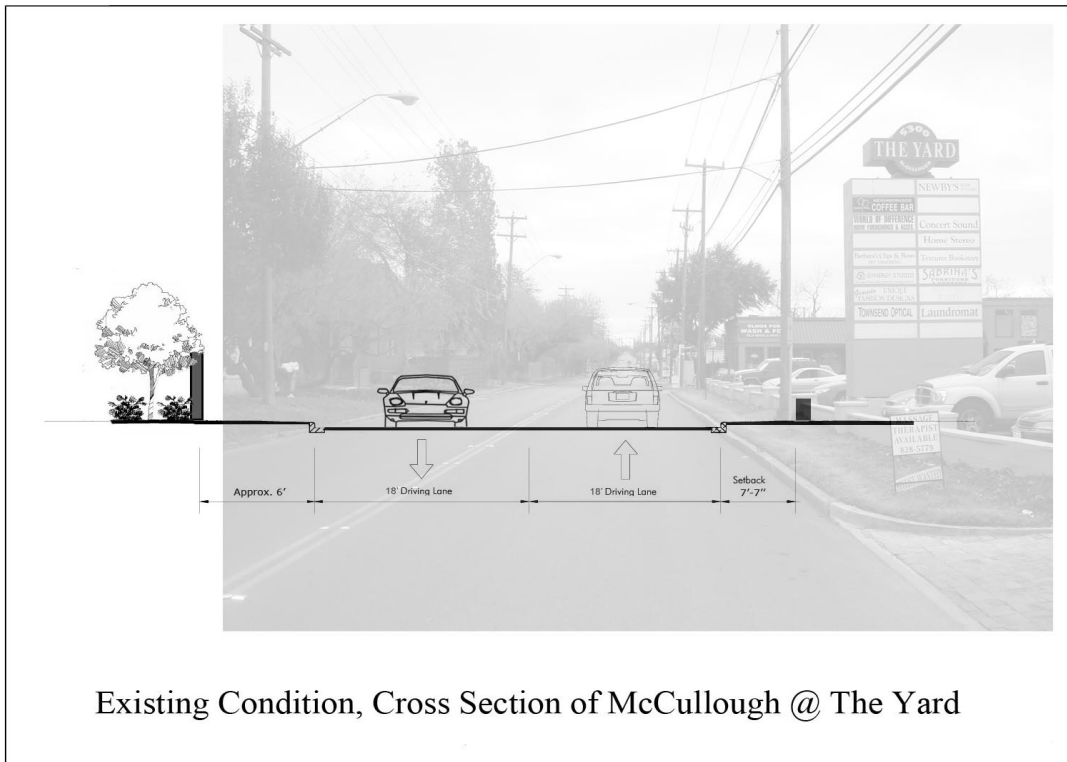


Figure 2 Existing street cross section showing dimensions



Figure 3 Existing Conditions. Looking North @ Panchitos

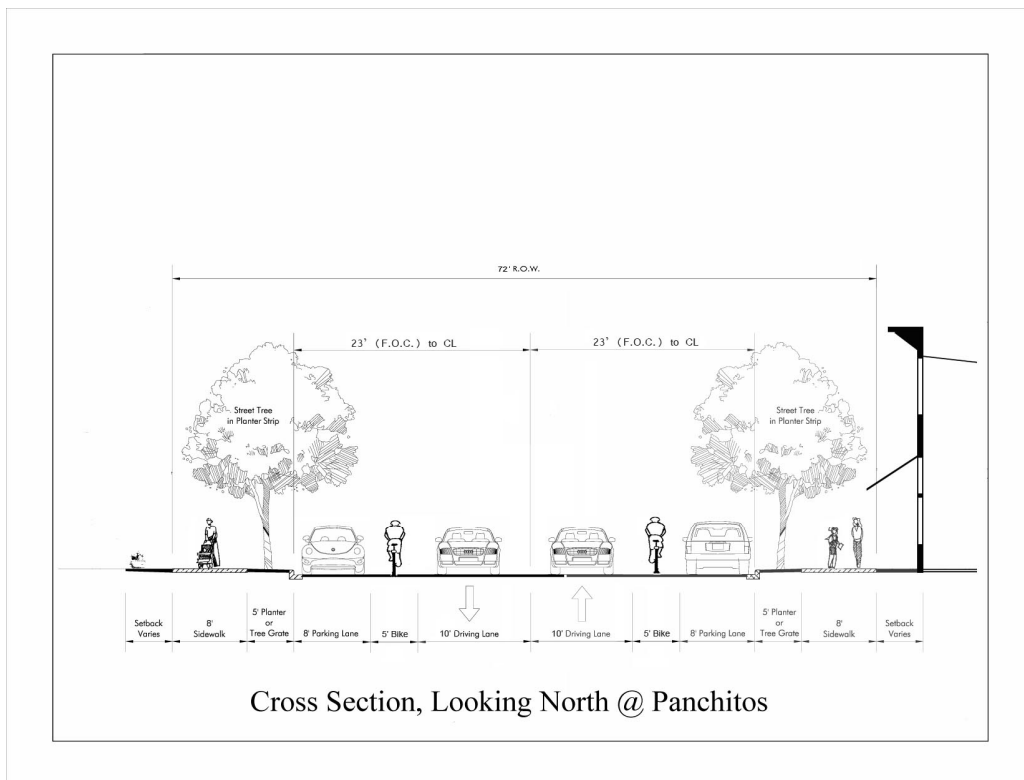


Figure 4 Sample cross section showing pedestrian improvements and retention of parking

### **Decision C *Building Setback***

Will existing buildings be brought up to a new setback requirement as they are replaced with new ones or will they be allowed to remain as they are? If they're required to build to the new setback, what will trigger compliance with the new standards? For example, building in excess of a percentage of assessed evaluation, adding on a certain amount of square footage, etc.

### **Decision D *Height and Density***

One of the key points of concern raised by participants was the density and intensity of new commercial development. (This was brought to light through discussions regarding parking.) The height that everyone felt was fine is the height of the current apartments across from city hall or two stories tall. In actuality the current height above grade is a 45' height limit for the commercial district. This is much taller than the apartments across from City Hall. A design charrette should explore these heights to determine where and in what instances are these heights appropriate and specifically how the height is measured on the lot.

### **Decision E *Location of Utility Lines***

To relocation or bury utilities along McCullough. Right now the lines are visually obtrusive and they limit how property owners can use the front of their lots. With new development standards, a right of way could possibly be reserved for utilities to enter the property from behind. A more in depth study done by CPS estimates that it will take \$6.5 million to bury them. This does not include the costs of working with cable and phone companies.

### **Options for implementing public improvements**

None of the following options are better than the others. The answer will probably rest with the type and amount of funding that is available and the energy level the community has to do a full implementation. Management and coordination of the improvements will be imperative.

1. The first option is merely *fix things up as they currently exist*. This would entail cleaning up building facades and adding some landscaping where it can be added. Essentially dressing up the district.

2. *Phased implementation over years.* This could be done in geographic regions. This affords more control and less chaos but perhaps prolonged implementation. With this approach you run the risk of losing enthusiasm, other priorities could emerge and change in political leadership and community leadership could impact the project. This approach could improve sidewalks, seating, landscaping, lights and telephone pole removal/relocation in a piece meal fashion.
3. *Establish new development codes including setbacks and build the entire streetscape to these standards.* This is the most ambitious of the three scenarios. It would provide Olmos Park with the most dramatic change and the soonest. This is perhaps the most expensive in the short term but there are perhaps some cost saving that could be realized in the process. This approach would improve sidewalks, seating, landscaping, lights, telephone pole removal/relocation in an intensive period of time.

### **Funding for Public Improvements**

One of the key items the community is wrestling with is how to fund the slate of public improvements. It's likely that a blend of funding sources will be used which means that planning and phasing will be required. [Appendix C](#) list some of the likely sources of funds that could be used for this project.

### **Public Improvements Short term**

The early phase of the public improvements portion of the revitalization effort should start with awareness building such as "clean and green" campaigns that would focus on removing litter and weeds. The presence of these items discounts the goods and services sold in the district and it can say to the passing public that the commercial district is not safe. Eliminating the litter problem is one of the simplest ways to show people that the commercial district is improving.

Another possible short term project is an upgrade to the commercial district's entryways. Currently these are not well defined. Residential fabric on McCullough south of Hildebrand and the railroad tracks at the northern end help to create a sense of entrance but these are not as strong as they could be. Upgrades to these areas could be a standalone project separate from the above comprehensive public improvements.

Entryways could be upgraded through a couple of simple signs for example, masonry with wood plaques and lighting that would identify the Olmos Park commercial area. More extensive public improvements could be considered such as banners, planters, street trees, and benches if a more comprehensive streetscape program is pursued.

## **Building resources**

The McCullough Avenue district is quite fragmented in style and development formats. These attributes complicate the district's ability to become more pedestrian friendly. The district has very diverse architectural building styles starting with a vernacular stone commercial structure dating from before Thorman platted the community to Spanish Colonial revival to 1940's-1950's streamlined deco. The new Olmos Park City Hall built in the Spanish Colonial motif and will perhaps point other redevelopment projects in this direction. These structures are not close enough in proximity to each other to establish a strong sense of place due to the more suburban format the community has developed around. These buildings are the densest at the corner of McCullough and Olmos Drive with the Handy Andy Building, Lin Marche's and Southwest Capital. (The latter has been faced over but inside there is a much older building.) Further complicating the McCullough Avenue district's sense of place are the inconsistencies used to site buildings. There are over 6 different setbacks for buildings along this corridor. All most all of the desirable commercial districts mentioned by interview participants employ zero lot setbacks in their commercial districts. (Buildings built directly on the front lot line) One important challenge is to make sure that more buildings are not torn down and replaced with suburban style buildings with front loaded parking lots. More gaps along the street and deeply recessed buildings will establish this area as one for autos and not so much pedestrians. *Making this district more pedestrian oriented is the number one desire of interview participants.*

## **Storefront improvements**

At this point in time no one entity is assisting businesses with storefront improvements. The assessment team sees that a full fledged revitalization project with staff and design committee has the ability to help bring vital technical knowledge to others along the street that want to pursue a program of increased maintenance or rehabilitation. This should be done on a more formal basis with a design committee acting as the brokering agency. This would be limited to helping property owners and developers move their projects in the right direction by assisting with sign design, materials, common maintenance issues and helping them to select qualified contractors to do the work.

As a part of the development for new buildings there need to be some minimum requirements of the storefront itself. These requirements could be built into the development code for new construction and remodeling for Olmos Park

1. The storefront should contain 80 percent glass from 2 feet in height to 10 feet in height and this area should omit any glass that is mirrored, smoked or tinted in any manner. (Sometimes communities establish a standard light transmission factor for the glass)
2. The primary doorway should open directly to the primary facade so that pedestrian activity is concentrated.

This design standard makes sure that the time honored tradition of window shopping can occur which adds to the street's overall ability to create "theater". The desired result is to let potential customers see merchandise in the windows. This happens because 65% of all retail sales are impulse sales or unplanned purchases (department store goods). This standard will generate sales for the businesses and it makes the street seem safer by allowing window lights to illuminate the area in front of the building.

### **Update Sign Ordinance Code**

The sign ordinance needs to reflect the quality of the district. Overall the district is likely to be more upscale in the future and collectively the signs should convey this. Review of the sign ordinance is needed if landscaping and other improvements are implemented. (Consider eliminating back lighted signs.)

### **Parking Lot Landscaping Code**

As new buildings have been developed or redeveloped there's been a substantial omission of landscaping. The city as a part of set of new development standards and master plan for the commercial district could include some minimum landscaping standards. This would include trees, shrubs and possibly some impervious coverage requirements.

### **Managing Parking**

Parking was mentioned several times as being of concern by interview participants. Customers are pointing to not being able to find convenient spaces during peak times. Residents close to the commercial district will likely be fine with current parking standards as they exist because this reduces the impact of on-street parking, one of their fears. Current code requires businesses to provide one parking space for every 200 square feet of gross building area. They're likely to feel that if the standard is reduced then they'll have more parking overflowing into the adjoining residential area. At the same time businesses feel that current parking requirements are somewhat over demanding. The current standard is more typical of regional shopping centers. Most neighborhood commercial district requirements range from about one space for every 300 square feet to one space for 1000 square feet of gross area.

In reality a parking problem is a good problem to have. When there isn't a parking problem then there really is much more serious problem. The current situation points to the need to more actively manage the "parking resource" and to have a plan for future growth and development of parking and transportation infrastructure.

### **Short term parking strategies**

- Find an entrepreneur to start a take-out delivery service for all the restaurants. This lets the restaurants continue to grow without having to add seats or parking spaces.
- Develop a stylish shuttle such as the “Olmos Restaurant Limo” or a horse drawn carriage. This could be modeled after the old Scribner’s package delivery vehicle. This would be free to Olmos Park residents. This would reduce demand for parking spaces and would allow people a designated driver in getting home.
- Develop a valet parking service for all the restaurants.
- Transform the parallel spaces to angle or head in parking. This is suggested for the area on North East El Prado between the southern edge of the new city hall and fire station to the circle. This will reduce the street cross-section which helps to slow traffic but should still allow room for wider sidewalks, street trees and enough room for the fire trucks to get through safely. Parallel parking should be maintained by city hall and the fire station.
- Base the parking code on use and not square footage. The challenge here is that the code needs to be easy to administer and interpret. The idea here is that the code would require less parking spaces for office and more for retail. The weakness in this situation is that it’s possible to build strip centers that are all offices and then eventually lease the spaces with retail. This would cause a parking shortage to occur.
- Shared parking agreements. This would allow someone that has a surplus to develop an agreement with someone that has a shortage.

### **Longer term parking strategies**

- A leasing plan is needed to help locate businesses in strategic locations to bolster their bottom lines and not create parking shortages. For example, help locate restaurants so they don’t all congregate in one area and cause parking problems. (This could be handled by code)
- Possibly convert McCullough to allow on-street parking. (See Figure 4)
- Develop parking lots or deck(s)  
Development of a public lot or parking deck would allow a much more efficient use of land is probably the ultimate solution. Land is not used efficiently when every business or property owner has to provide their own parking. These lots are often only used at most eight hours a day and not every day. A much more efficient use of land is to have the city get in the parking business so that motorists can park in centrally located ramps or lots. Most residents are fine using this form of parking. Typically the prerequisite for this to occur is the district will have to become much more densely developed and with higher real estate prices in order to justify the expenditures.

One final note on parking is that it was mentioned during the interviews that larger vehicles demand more space and that we need to widen spaces allow for today's larger vehicles. Following this thought process, consider reserving smaller spaces for energy efficient vehicles closer to stores and larger vehicles spaces would be placed further away. Some communities let "green vehicles" park free all day. You could also allow building owners to substitute a percentage of parking spaces for providing adequate facilities for bicycle parking. Standards for parking lot travel lane widths should also be reviewed.

## Conclusion

The Olmos Park commercial district has many inherited strengths to promote and the new effort will provide a platform to tell the residents of Olmos Park – and people in the Greater San Antonio area – what a great commercial district this is. A single promotion may last only a day, but if a variety of promotions are conducted regularly through the calendar year – even in small ways – collectively these activities really change customer attitudes and habits.

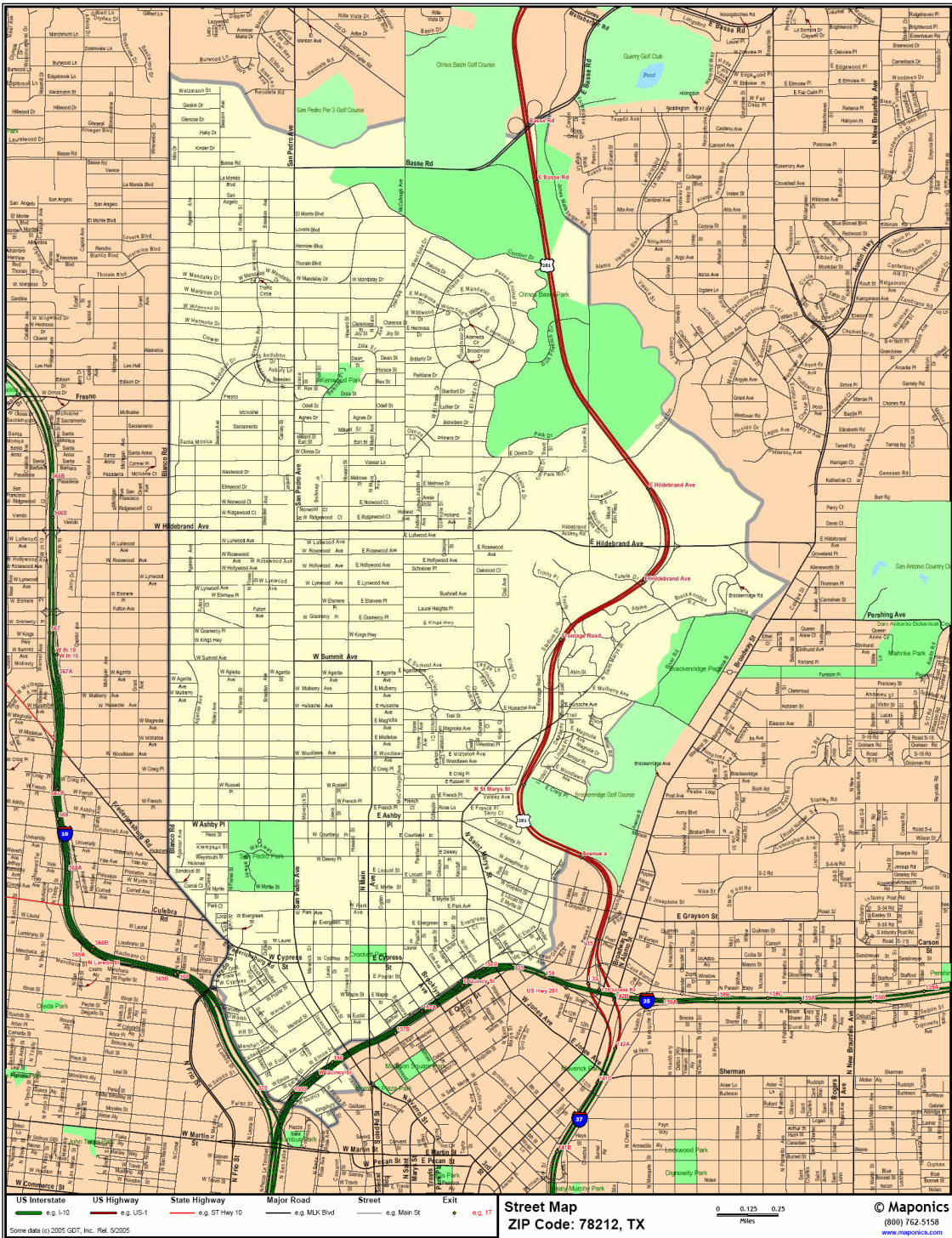
Much of the promotional work in Olmos Park’s commercial district will build on the organizational work that has already begun, and promotions will depend on design projects proceeding at the same time. Cleaner streets, an improved sidewalk system, well-kept planters and better lighting will equally affect a customer’s attitude once a promotion gets them to the Olmos Park commercial district.

Use the coming year to build the economic restructuring committee, develop business assistance programs, and gather information, you will lay the foundation for long-term success. Olmos Park has a diverse and strong economic base to build upon – much the result of the many years of work devoted by dedicated leaders. With the new revitalization program in place, Olmos Park’s economic future can be assured.

## Appendix A

### Demographics

- As of the census of 2000, there were 2,343 people, 1,043 households, and 616 families residing in the city.
- The population density is about 1,483.0/km<sup>2</sup> (3,860.1/mi<sup>2</sup>).
- There are 1,131 housing units at an average density of 715.9/km<sup>2</sup> (1,863.3/mi<sup>2</sup>).
- The racial makeup of the city is 93.60% White, 2.09% African American, 0.47% Native American, 0.68% Asian, 0.09% Pacific Islander, 2.30% from other races, and 0.77% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race are about 14.60% of the population.
- There are 1,043 households out of which 28.5% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 51.0% were married couples living together, 7.0% had a female householder with no husband present, and 40.9% were non-families. 36.1% of all households were made up of individuals and 8.2% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older.
- The average household size is 2.24 and the average family size was 2.96.
- In the city the population is spread out with 23.6% under the age of 18, 5.1% from 18 to 24, 28.1% from 25 to 44, 29.2% from 45 to 64, and 14.1% who were 65 years of age or older.
- The median age is 41 years.
- For every 100 females there are 88.6 males.
- For every 100 females age 18 and over, there are 84.5 males.
- The median income for a household in the city is \$87,560, and the median income for a family is \$128,814. Males had a median income of \$81,296 versus \$35,500 for females.
- The per capita income for the city is \$65,697. About 1.9% of families and 3.9% of the population were below the poverty line, including 3.0% of those under age 18 and 2.1% of those ages 65 or over. The median home price for 2005 is \$400,960.



## **Appendix B**

### ***How a Commercial District Revitalization Program Typically Benefits from Each Sector of the Community***

#### **City Government**

- There are over 120 businesses in the Olmos Park commercial district. This represents the largest employer in your community when these businesses are treated as one.
- It is much easier to have an existing business expand than it is to recruit a new business. Olmos Park has numerous buildings and vacant lots that offer business expansion opportunities.
- Increased Tax Base
- More Tourism
- Increased Property Values
- Increased Number of Jobs
- Better Goals and Vision
- Healthy Economy
- Better Services
- Positive Perception of Downtown and Community
- Better Relations between City Hall and Private Sector Business
- Increased Volunteer Base for City
- Takes Political Heat, Develop Consensus for Political Requests (Avoid "Victimization")
- Easier to Recruit Industries to a Community with Good Shopping in an Attractive Downtown
- Impetus for Public Improvements and Certified Local Government Grant Dollars
- Education Resource for City Leaders (Officials) on Planning and Economic Development

### **Service Business Owners**

- Image Building/Improvement
- Pride
- New/Renewed/Repeated Exposure
- Increases Variety of Services
- Healthier Economy Generates New/More Businesses
- Increased Competition Means More Aggressive Business Styles
- Tapping Leakage
- Increased Population, New Customers
- Improved Image, Creates New Market

### **Financial Institutions**

- Community Reinvestment Act (Federal Government Requirement)
- Potential for Loans, Deposits, and other Services (Bank Cards, Financial Services)
- Improved Image and Good Will
- Survival of Community Critical to Bank Success and Economic Stability
- Central Location More Cost Effective

### **County Government**

- Good Public Relations for County
- Viable Downtown Increases Tax Base

- Ripple Effect- Revitalization May Spread
- Viable Downtown is a Draw for Industry and County-wide Area Businesses
- Common Partnership with City Hall
- County/Community Pride
- Heritage Preservation
- Alternative to a Redevelopment District
- Quality of Life Issues, Especially for Employees
- Helps with Parking Issues if the courthouse is located within downtown

### **Preservationists**

- Main Street Reinforces Common Goal of Preservation
- Increased Coalition Building
- Increased Awareness and Credibility
- Education of Public and Group
- Improved Public Image
- Improved Economic Feasibility of Preservation

### **Utility Companies**

- Economic Reasons
- Additional Businesses
- Longer Business Hours
- More Employees
- Healthy Businesses Feel Freer to Increase Utility Usage

- Healthy Economy Causes Community to Grow
- Public Relations Reasons
  - Overcomes "Bad Guy" Image
  - Proof of New Products
  - Quality in Main Street Public Improvements

### **Commercial Property Owners**

- Increased Occupancy Rates
- Rent Stability or Increase
- Increased Property Values
- Increased Stability
- Reduced Vandalism/Crime Deterrent
- Assistance with Tax Credits, Grants, Loan Programs, Design, and Co-op Maintenance
- Communication Medium with Other Property Owners
- Better Image
- New Uses, Especially on Upper Floors

### **Local Residents/Consumers**

- A downtown that becomes what the community wants instead of a downtown that it is formed by outside forces.
- Enhanced Marketplace (Better Shopping and the Benefits of Shopping Locally)
- Sense of Pride in Downtown
- Social/Cultural Activities

- Opportunities to Keep Kids in Town
  - Sense of Hometown Community
  - Historical Awareness (Preservation of Architecture and Human History)
  - Tax Dollars Stay in the Community
  - Opportunity to Participate/Volunteer
  - Better Communication (Newsletter)
  - Political Advocate
  - Stabilize Home Values Increase
  - More of the city's budget is supported by the commercial district property tax revenues as opposed to residential.

## Appendix C

### Funding for Public Improvements

One of the key items the community is wrestling with is how to fund the slate of public improvements. It's likely that a blend of funding sources will be used which means that planning and phasing will be required. Appendix B lists some of the likely sources of funds that could be used for this project.

### Public Improvement Districts (PID)

Public Improvement Districts (PID's) are allowed under Chapter 372, of the State of Texas Local Government Code. PIDs offer cities a means for improving their infrastructure to promote economic growth in an area. The Public Improvement District Assessment Act allows cities to levy and collect special assessments on properties that are within the city or its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

PIDs may be formed to create water, wastewater, health and sanitation, or drainage improvements; street and sidewalk improvements; mass transit improvements; parking improvements; library improvements; park, recreation and cultural improvements; landscaping and other aesthetic improvements; art installation; creation of pedestrian malls or similar improvements; supplemental safety services for the improvement of the district, including public safety and security services; or supplemental business-related services for the improvement of the district, including advertising and business recruitment and development.

### TIF

The State of Texas website defines this as, “. . .a tool that local governments can use to publicly finance needed structural improvements and enhanced infrastructure within a defined area. These improvements usually are undertaken to promote the viability of existing businesses and to attract new commercial enterprises to the area. The statutes governing tax increment financing are located in Chapter 311 of the Texas Tax Code.” <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/proptax/registry/zone.html>

TIF districts generate dollars for improvements through new investment and through increases of appreciation of existing developments. Specifically, money for infrastructure improvements and other incentives comes from the growth in property tax revenues - the tax increment. What is a “Tax Increment”? A tax increment is the difference between the amount of property tax revenue generated before TIF district designation and the amount of property tax revenue generated after TIF designation. Establishment of a TIF does not reduce property tax revenues available to the overlapping taxing bodies. Property taxes collected on properties included in the TIF at the time of designation continue to be distributed to the school districts, county, community college and all other taxing districts in the same manner as if the TIF did not exist. Only property taxes generated by the incremental increase in the value of these properties are available for use by the TIF.

Establishment of a TIF does require the inclusion or omission of each taxing jurisdiction which can be a slow and cumbersome process.

### **Property Taxes**

Interview participants were asked if they would be willing to fund improvements in the commercial corridor through an increase in property taxes. Most would be willing to fund the improvements through a slight increase in property taxes because the improvements would have common good. Two hundred dollars appeared to be the maximum point at which most people would support this idea. The difficulty here that it's impossible to have same amount added to each property because of the wide array of property values

### **Sales Tax**

*(The following sales tax was approved by the citizens of Olmos Park in November of 2008 and collection of the tax began on April 1, 2009.)* The tax is equal to ¼ cent and is available for local economic development efforts. The current level of commerce would generate about \$93,000 per year. This amount would support a bond issue of approximately \$1,100,000.00 if all the proceeds from the tax were directed at the bond. This is assuming the City of Olmos Park issued the bonds as CO's. If the bonds were issued only on the sales tax then you would probably have to reduce the issue by approximately 20% to allow an appropriate amount of debt service coverage.

Olmos Park's tax rate is now 8.25% (6.25% of which is the State). The city of San Antonio's sales tax rate is 8.125%. This small difference is unlikely to cause any loss of business to San Antonio.

### **Transportation Enhancement Funds**

The Texas Department of Transportation is the agency responsible for the administration of the Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program. Transportation enhancements are provided under the federal transportation legislation, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and the Efficient-Transportation equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The program includes transportation-related activities that contribute to the livelihood of communities, promote the quality of our environment and enhance the aesthetics of our roadways.

The goal of the program is to encourage diverse modes of travel, increase the community benefits to transportation investment, strengthen partnerships between State and local governments and promote citizen involvement in transportation decisions.

The Transportation Enhancement Program is a statewide competitive program and is administered in accordance with applicable federal and state rules and regulations. The funds provided by this program are on a cost reimbursement basis and not considered a grant. Projects undertaken with enhancement funds are eligible for reimbursement of up to 80% of allowable costs. The governmental entity nominating a project is responsible for the remaining cost share, including all cost overruns.

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Kenneth Zigrang  
4615 N.W. Loop 410  
San Antonio, TX 78229-0928  
(210) 615-5923

## **CPS**

On January 19, 2005, the CPS Energy Board of Trustees terminated the Overhead Conversion Fund (OCF) and transferred all of the monies to a new fund when it adopted the Community Infrastructure and Economic Development (CIED) - pronounced "seed" - Fund Policy.

The City's CIED Fund allocations accumulate in an amount equal to one percent (1%) of the Electric Base Rate Revenue of the CPS Energy electric system billed during the previous fiscal year to retail electric customers of CPS Energy residing within the City of Olmos Park.

Some background on the OCF is useful in understanding the CIED Fund. In line with policies typical throughout the utility industry, CPS Energy does not routinely install underground electric distribution or transmission lines because the cost is significantly higher than overhead construction. However, CPS Energy will install new underground facilities to serve new areas or at a customer's request, but only if the requestor bears the incremental cost for undergrounding. For example, in new communities that by code or covenants require utilities to be underground, the additional cost is charged to the developer through a line extension charge.

To meet the public's aesthetic concerns while ensuring that only worthy projects were funded, CPS Energy concluded that it would be appropriate to set aside a specific amount each year for underground conversion and require each affected community to propose the projects to be constructed, within that fixed amount. This was the origin of the Board's resolution establishing the OCF in 1993. CPS Energy electric and gas rates were not increased or adjusted in any way to provide funding for this new policy. Theoretically, the CPS Energy Board could have returned funds accumulated in the fund to CPS Energy customers, however the Board believed that the best use of the funds is for the purposes spelled out in the new policy.

In 1995, the OCF was expanded to permit suburban cities to use their allocation on upgraded overhead facilities. Each suburban city (and the counties in unincorporated areas) was each allocated monies equal to one percent of the electric revenues from customers within their borders. All of the projects funded by the OCF involved construction of CPS Energy-owned electric infrastructure.

For a number of years, our suburban cities have been unable to provide CPS Energy with approved projects equal to its annual allocation, in large part because ***CPS Energy may not pay for the cost of relocating other utilities' facilities. Telecommunications and cable providers refuse to bear those costs and that their reasons for doing so are laws deregulating cable and telecommunications services.***

CIED projects can be in one of three general categories, as the governing body decides:

1. Undergrounding electric lines and upgrading certain overhead facilities (the same as the old OCF);
2. Projects to conserve energy or reduce pollution (environmental stewardship projects); and
3. Economic development projects.
4. Some additional, important features of the CIED policy include the following:
  - a requirement that the applicable governing body approve the project before it is submitted to CPS Energy;
  - a limit on the percentage of funding for economic development projects that can come from the CIED Fund, to ensure that projects are true public/private partnerships;
  - detailed guidance on the type of "typical governmental services" that are not eligible for CIED Fund monies;
  - a requirement that the CPS Energy Board of Trustees approve economic development and environmental stewardship projects (CPS Energy staff will continue to process overhead conversion projects);
  - a requirement that CPS Energy be able to capitalize the expenditure, just as it capitalizes overhead conversion facilities (typically this will be done with a long-term service agreement guaranteeing CPS Energy will serve the new customer);
  - a "use it or lose it" provision so that monies do not continue to build up without being applied to projects; and
  - a clarification of the legal status of previously allocated funds, with an express reservation by CPS Energy of its right to change or stop altogether future allocations to the CIED Fund.

This last point is an important one. The OCF could have been characterized as a trust established by CPS Energy for the benefit of the specified communities. By accepting the expanded uses in the new CIED Fund Policy, affected governmental entities agree that, going forward, CPS Energy may change the funding, terminate the policy or recoup unspent monies.

## **Fund Raising**

Fund Raising from the Olmos Park Community appears favorable given the community's demographics but there's not a history of a project where extensive community philanthropy has occurred. The most commonly mentioned project was the redevelopment of the circle park (name of neighborhood circle). In all likelihood most of the residents are regular contributors to community causes. If the case study can be well presented, a fund raising effort for public improvements would likely be possible. In all likelihood this could conservatively raise between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000. The advantages of this is that only the people that are for the project are the ones that are paying for it where as taxes require everyone to pay for the improvements whether or not they can afford it. This type of capital campaign would be structured around pledges given over a multi year period. The following fund raisers are typically the last layer of fund raising done for a project. It's recommended that you don't lead with these types of projects. Lead with the largest contributors first and finish with the fund raising that will generate broad support.

- Buy a brick, street lamp, bench, etc
- 1% for arts
- Restaurants donate a percentage

## Appendix D

### Sales Tax Revenue, City of Olmos Park

<b>Allocation Historical Summary</b>				
City of Olmos Park Authority Code: 2015067				
	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
JAN	35,563.69	38,400.26	36,888.50	33,628.77
FEB	45,326.68	48,263.03	39,075.20	42,532.88
MAR	32,049.09	34,206.46	31,345.14	28,511.45
APR	32,399.83	37,432.41	34,173.67	32,510.53
MAY	36,210.58	51,015.70	41,352.17	37,313.36
JUN	62,142.77	47,902.71	36,279.15	38,686.48
JUL	36,702.30	36,194.21	35,629.35	31,545.61
AUG	53,669.61	36,453.59	32,204.34	28,906.72
SEP	36,053.81	35,366.14	30,098.51	25,538.31
OCT	.	35,039.15	33,082.39	33,808.35
NOV	.	49,405.87	38,576.66	37,602.35
DEC	.	45,582.34	40,591.48	35,543.77
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>370,118.36</b>	<b>495,261.87</b>	<b>429,296.56</b>	<b>406,128.58</b>
	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2002</b>
JAN	31,392.68	23,619.72	26,633.82	20,735.36
FEB	38,668.70	38,968.41	32,309.12	28,255.96
MAR	27,058.82	28,965.28	24,190.14	20,830.35
APR	30,380.25	29,642.27	22,854.15	20,968.86
MAY	39,231.16	33,385.95	27,773.04	23,637.80
JUN	17,848.51	49,239.19	32,102.67	28,849.35
JUL	43,223.55	25,378.35	21,919.84	19,488.91
AUG	35,069.46	28,330.78	28,658.59	21,782.02
SEP	22,899.66	25,975.21	19,376.63	19,412.55
OCT	34,103.81	28,744.34	24,348.49	19,940.85
NOV	36,533.63	39,015.54	32,532.80	24,817.67
DEC	34,421.64	31,276.17	31,049.06	27,177.49
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>390,831.87</b>	<b>382,541.21</b>	<b>323,748.35</b>	<b>275,897.17</b>

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## Cities by County - September 2009

An asterisk (\*) indicates a change in rate in the past 14 months  
Refer to the [Local Sales Tax Rate Information Report](#).

County/City	Current Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change	2009 Payments To Date	2008 Payments To Date	% Change
Olmos Park	* 1.500%	36,053.81	35,366.14	1.94%	370,118.36	365,234.51	1.33%
Saint Hedwig	1.000%	5,010.90	4,402.64	13.81%	45,721.47	42,704.44	7.06%
San Antonio	1.125%	15,666,439.65	17,091,781.67	-8.33%	153,873,793.43	162,749,207.15	-5.45%
Selma	1.500%	281,834.31	351,110.15	-19.73%	2,951,269.48	2,947,749.86	0.11%
Shavano Park	1.000%	10,614.50	11,988.69	-11.46%	114,799.38	113,658.37	1.00%
Somerset	2.000%	14,325.12	14,120.85	1.44%	152,611.22	151,995.97	0.40%
Terrell Hills	1.000%	5,912.37	9,485.78	-37.67%	109,418.84	117,992.59	-7.26%
Universal City	2.000%	207,045.63	214,752.51	-3.58%	1,884,557.96	1,994,165.82	-5.49%
Windcrest	1.750%	202,161.51	172,652.67	17.09%	1,626,130.18	1,668,004.20	-2.51%

## Appendix E

### Property Tax Values Last For 2007 and 2008

CITY OF OLMOS PARK  
ASSESSSED VALUE AND ACTUAL TAXABLE PROPERTY  
LAST TWO FISCAL YEARS

TABLE 6

Fiscal Year Ended September 30,	Residential Property	Commercial Property	Less: Tax-Exempt Property	Total Taxable Assessed Value*	Total Direct Tax Rate
2007	\$ 396,097,876	\$ 22,815,439	\$ 3,319,918	\$ 415,593,397	0.544546
2008	\$ 439,578,470	\$ 29,030,794	\$ 8,542,208	\$ 460,067,056	0.514787

Source: Bexar Appraisal District.

\* Total Taxable Assessed Value and Total Estimated Actual Value of taxable property is the same.