

Reclaiming Buffalo Bayou's waterfront potential is a key component in downtown Houston's continued revitalization. Today, the Bayou is largely invisible – roadways cover it, access is poor and few retail and recreational activities exist along its edges. Adjacent properties such as parking lots and vacant sites are incompatible with active waterfront use. The *Buffalo Bayou and Beyond Master Plan* emphasizes downtown investments that are multi-purpose and tailored to the larger urban design vision of a high quality waterfront—a great place to live, work and visit.

GOALS :

Create a high amenity urban waterfront by developing Bayou-fronting parks, distinctive bank treatments and supplementary canals

Regrading Buffalo Bayou's banks to improve stormwater conveyance simultaneously creates a priceless opportunity to build distinctive urban destinations. Terraced Downtown Bayou banks will increase floodwater storage capacity and allow activity to take place despite varying water levels. Supplementary canals will provide pedestrian access to Bayou edges, stimulate new development in the North Downtown Warehouse District, and provide a new urban linkage between Downtown and the East End.

Build a pedestrian friendly street network

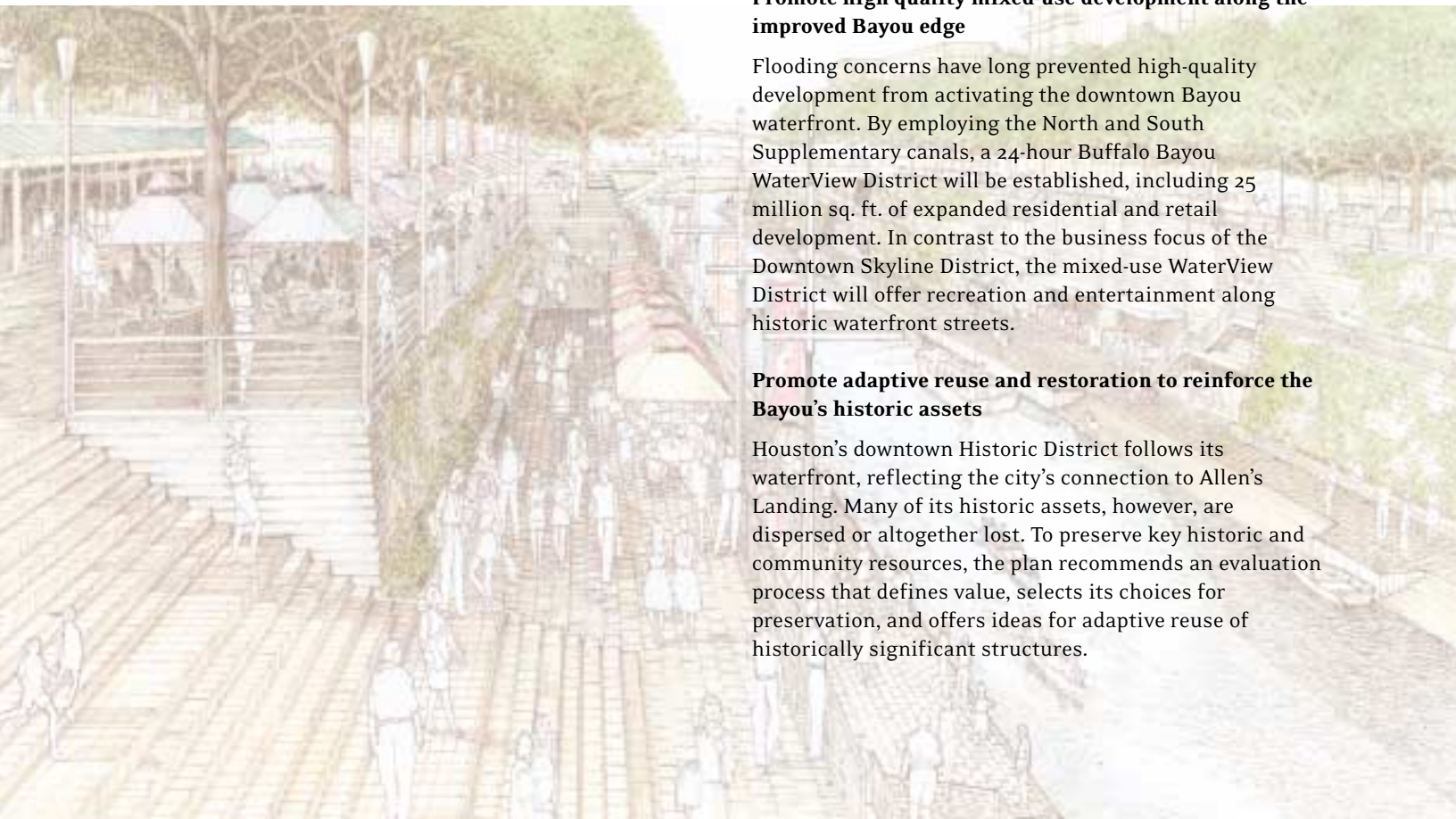
Shaded waterfront promenades will provide a seamless link from Sesquicentennial Park to Festival Place (Post Office site) and from a revitalized Allen's Landing to the new Gable Street Landing. This network envisions using downtown streets near the waterfront for major celebrations and festivals.

Promote high quality mixed-use development along the improved Bayou edge

Flooding concerns have long prevented high-quality development from activating the downtown Bayou waterfront. By employing the North and South Supplementary canals, a 24-hour Buffalo Bayou WaterView District will be established, including 25 million sq. ft. of expanded residential and retail development. In contrast to the business focus of the Downtown Skyline District, the mixed-use WaterView District will offer recreation and entertainment along historic waterfront streets.

Promote adaptive reuse and restoration to reinforce the Bayou's historic assets

Houston's downtown Historic District follows its waterfront, reflecting the city's connection to Allen's Landing. Many of its historic assets, however, are dispersed or altogether lost. To preserve key historic and community resources, the plan recommends an evaluation process that defines value, selects its choices for preservation, and offers ideas for adaptive reuse of historically significant structures.





1 Sam Houston Park Enhancements

Several enhancements are recommended to enable Sam Houston Park to once again be a key recreational destination for Houston. The Plan proposes the acquisition of an additional 20 acres south of existing Sam Houston Park at West Dallas and Bagby. Also important to West End improvements is the redesign of Interstate 45 as it crosses Buffalo Bayou. Relocating highway ramps and structures, and re-linking the landscape of Downtown and West End will address safety concerns, noise and environmental pollution.

2 Festival Place

Framing Downtown as its backdrop, a live-oak shaded amphitheater on the Bayou's north bank will provide a new outdoor venue for the Theater District and reinforce Sesquicentennial Park. A new mixed-use cultural and performance center will be constructed on the existing Post Office site. Expanding the Theater District across



② Festival Place, a mixed-use performing arts redevelopment program, is planned for the current Post Office site.



⑧ *Gable Street Landing, including the restored Gable Street Power Station, will form the Bayou gateway to the Convention Center District and Minute Maid Park.*

The North Canal features a three-tiered quay connected by a system of stairs and ramps, accommodating temporary and seasonal amenities such as cafes, restaurants, open-air markets and exhibitions.

Extending from Gable Street Landing through Guadalupe Plaza and to Guadalupe Landing, the South Canal connects the existing Alexan Development (formerly Las Americas/El Mercado del Sol) and Live Oak Park neighborhoods to Downtown.

the Bayou will create a cohesive arts and cultural destination, an important step in raising Houston's tourist profile and convention appeal.

③ Milam/Travis Signature Bridge

Interstate 45 highway access ramps at Milam and Travis will be reconstructed to create a new signature bridge rising over Buffalo Bayou and announcing arrival into downtown. Raising Milam and Travis ramps above the current railroad alignment and closing the underpasses, which often serve as de-facto floodways at Milam, Travis, Smith and Louisiana, will prevent the flow of White Oak Bayou through these underpasses into Downtown during periodic storm events.

④ North and South Canals

Two new canals will provide supplementary floodwater capacity for Buffalo Bayou. These channels will create new urban edges forming recreation and activity spines to vital new waterfront neighborhoods.

⑤ Allen's Landing

Houston's birthplace at the foot of Main Street will be the centerpiece for a restored Sunset Coffee Building, housing a boathouse, visitor center, restaurant and offices.

⑥ Commerce Street Promenade

Wide and spacious, offering a continuous vantage overlooking Buffalo Bayou, Commerce Street Promenade will connect Allen's Landing - gateway to the Skyline District and Main Street Corridor - to the new Gable Street Landing, the northeast gateway to Minute Maid Field, Brown Convention Center and beyond.

⑦ Allen Place

Potential exists for a mixed-use landmark at the head of Main Street overlooking Allen's Landing. This high-value site has been earmarked for academic expansion by the University of Houston-Downtown. Because of its key location, retail opportunities and public amenities are recommended.

8 Gable Street Landing

A proposed adaptive reuse of Reliant Energy's Gable Street Power Station will create an anchor at the edge of Downtown, directing development eastward along the Bayou. This key location at the head of Crawford Street forms an inviting link between the waterfront and Convention Center District. A great flight of steps will tie the park to the water's edge, creating a natural stage and Bayou vista.



9 Festival Streets

Expanding on the forward-thinking Cotswold Project, a network of pedestrian-friendly, tree-lined streets will connect Downtown waterfront destinations to the Theater District, Skyline District and Convention Center. These "pedestrian preserves" occasionally can be closed to vehicular traffic, serving as a stage for major celebrations and festivals.

10 Allen Avenue

Realignment/removal of Union Pacific's southern downtown rail line provides the opportunity for developing a new east - west transportation corridor, effectively linking Washington/Bagby Streets to the west with the new Festival Place performing arts complex (Post Office facility site) eastward, to San Jacinto and Runnels. This new avenue ultimately will connect to Navigation Boulevard, providing greater connectivity between North Downtown, Gable Street Landing and the East End.

11 Frostown Urban Garden

With the removal of the adjacent Elysian Viaduct, Frostown Urban Garden expands James Bute Park into a 12-acre outdoor art environment.



⑤ Historic Allen's Landing has been reborn as a City landmark.



⑪ Commemorating historic Frostown, the Frostown Urban Garden will offer a site for permanent and rotating works of environmental art.



⑧ Section across the widened Bayou near Crawford Street and Frostown Urban Garden shows bank ledges and steps transitioning to the water edge. A new pedestrian bridge at Austin Street increases access to both Bayou banks.

12 Boat Landings

To encourage recreational use of Buffalo Bayou, a program featuring enhanced waterfront activity and launching areas along the Bayou's length are included in the Plan. Boat landings, some coordinated with parking drop-offs, are being proposed at Sesquicentennial Park, Allen's Landing, Gable Street Landing, McKee Street and US 59.



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