



*EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE*  
***SOUTH CENTRAL***

*AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN*

*An Element of the  
Comprehensive Plan*

*Adopted*

*February 17, 2004*

*Revised July 27, 2004*



**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT**



# South Central Area Development Plan

## INTRODUCTION

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" . . . establish comprehensive planning as a continuous governmental function to guide, regulate, and manage future development . . . "

The Comprehensive Plan is mandated by the City Charter. It requires the City Council to "...establish comprehensive planning as a continuous governmental function in order to guide, regulate, and manage future development..." and, that "all city improvements, ordinances, and regulations shall be consistent with the comprehensive plan."

The Comprehensive Plan is a product of various plan titles such as Policy Statements, Area Development Plans, Capital Improvement Programs, and Master Utility Plans. The comprehensive planning process is a means whereby citizens and community leaders guide community development. The Comprehensive Plan, by definition, is *general, long range, and broad in scope*. To help formulate the Comprehensive Plan, City Council divided the city and its environs into 10 Area Development Plan (ADP) study areas.



Development plans for these areas will help resolve basic issues such as zoning and platting of properties, allocation of public services and facilities contained in the Capital Improvement Programs, and other area specific issues. In any case, follow-up programs are needed to implement the many policies in the Plan. Implementation of these plans will help assure the most appropriate land development and provision of public services.

The South Central Development Plan Area, located south of the ship channel, was originally part of a larger Central ADP area which included the Corpus Christi Beach area north of the ship channel. The "Central Area" was separated into "north" and "south" study areas to expedite formulation of a plan for the Corpus Christi Beach area when the Texas State Aquarium was being planned for development.

The South Central study area embraces the downtown, uptown, waterfront, and is bordered by the Ship Channel to the north; Corpus Christi Bay to the east; Morgan Avenue to the south; and Crosstown Expressway/West Broadway to the west. Historically, this area has been the most planned area of the City. A bibliography of many of these plans is available from the Development Services Department.



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the South Central Area Development Plan is to facilitate redevelopment of the South Central Area over the next 20 years for creating a thriving central area neighborhood community in which to live, work, play, raise a family, invest and visit. The City will focus on implementing the City's South Central Area Development Plan in order to promote an exciting central business district, revitalized inner neighborhoods, expanded economic opportunities, and many more choices for recreation and entertainment, from outdoor activities ranging from sports to cultural events with in the area.

## **PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The guiding goals and objectives for the entire City, ETJ, and all Area Development Plans including the South Central Area are contained in the Policy Statements adopted by the City Council in 1987.

The policies encompassed by this Plan address not only current issues, but needs that the City and South Central residents, property owners, and businesses perceive will become pressing in future years. Recognizing that not all suggested implementations will take place immediately, it is important to foresee and note problems and opportunities, and develop a long term strategy to address them.

The goals, objectives, and policies of this plan are consistent with the Bayfront Plan adopted in 1982 and amended in 1984, and the Project Plan for Reinvestment Zone No. 1 adopted in 1983. This plan supersedes all previous City plans for this area except for the Reinvestment Zone Project Plan which shall remain in force until State law provides for the termination of Reinvestment Zone No. 1. In addition, this plan is an update to the original South Central Area Development Plan adopted May 21, 1991 and later updated in February 28, 1995.

Key goals, objectives, or policies of the Plan are printed in bold print. However, for a full understanding of each policy statement, refer to the entire text of that policy statement.

The specific goal of the City and South Central Area Development Plan is to promote the South Central Area as a place of great vitality, with a mix of educational, residential, retail, office, service, government, arts and cultural, and entertainment development. The health and vitality of the area can contribute in a major way to the city, its local and regional image, and quality of life. It is a place where residents can live, work, learn, and play in the same neighborhood. A fully revitalized South Central Area will need a resurgence of residential and retail development activity. While a resurgence of retail activity has occurred during the last decade, resident population growth is needed to sustain and fully realize the retail commercial development potential in the central business district.



## A. ENVIRONMENT

# E N V I R O N M E N T

### **POLICY STATEMENT A.1**

**Pollution prevention devices should be incorporated into storm water outfalls to capture floating debris, sediments and other pollutants before entering the Bay system.** Dozens of storm water outfalls are located along the bayfront which deposit large volumes of floating debris and other urban pollutants along the seawall, beaches and shoreline areas.

### **POLICY STATEMENT A.2**

**All public and private construction should be in accordance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).** Compliance with these standards will ensure continued availability of flood insurance to the community through the National Flood Insurance Program.

### **POLICY STATEMENT A.3**

**While preserving or increasing drainage capacity, the City will protect the flowing stream in Blucher Park which is overwhelmed during major rain events.** Stormwater retention or detention facilities will be needed for drainage improvements in this area. They will not cause higher water levels in the park than presently experienced and will shorten the time of flooding. Where ever possible, the perennially flowing stream should be retained in its natural state and any channelization should be minimized.

### **POLICY STATEMENT A.4**

**Maintain the one-mile minimum distance from the shoreline for any petroleum drilling operations.**

## B. LAND USE

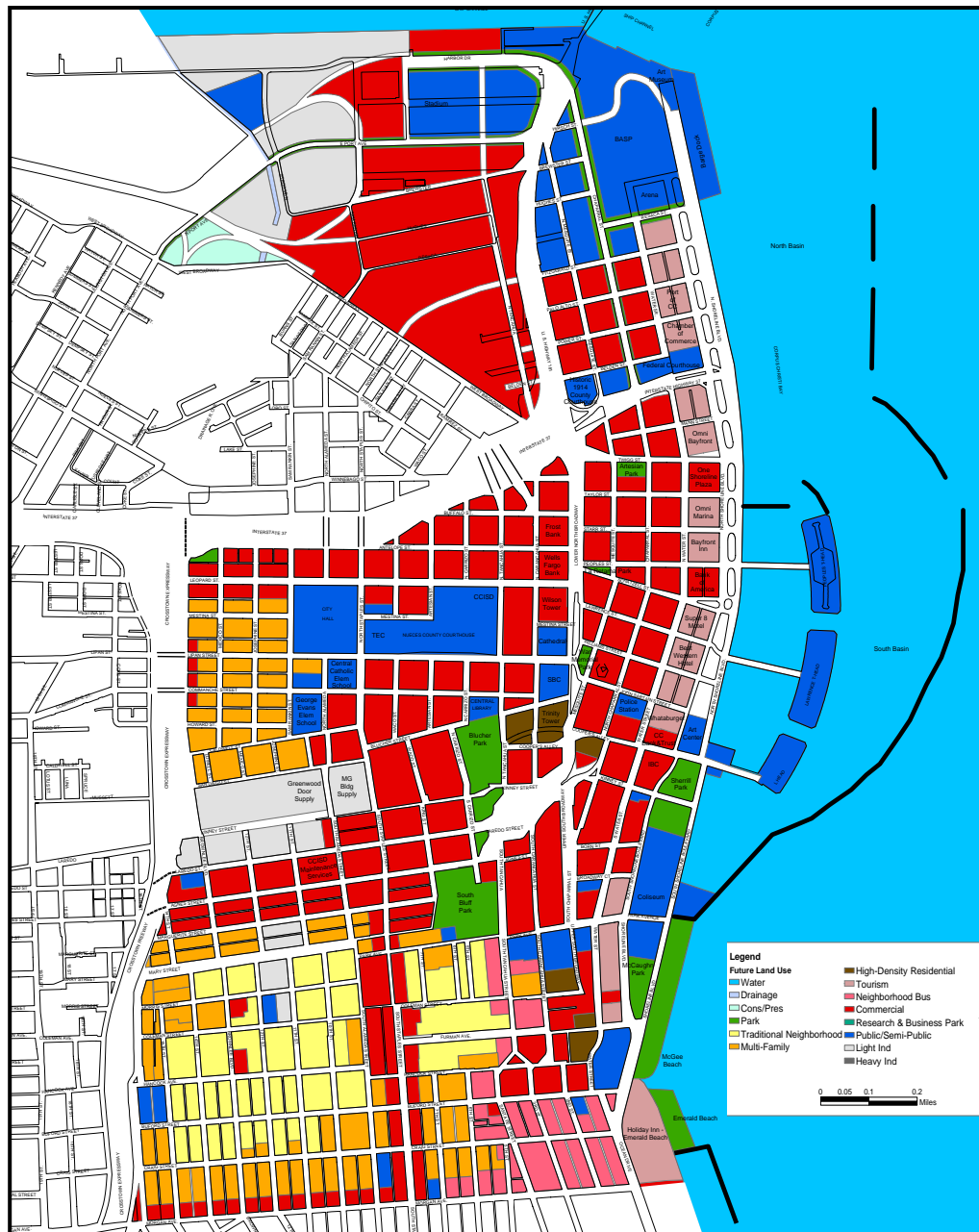
Selected policy statements are listed below.

LAND USE

### POLICY STATEMENT B.1

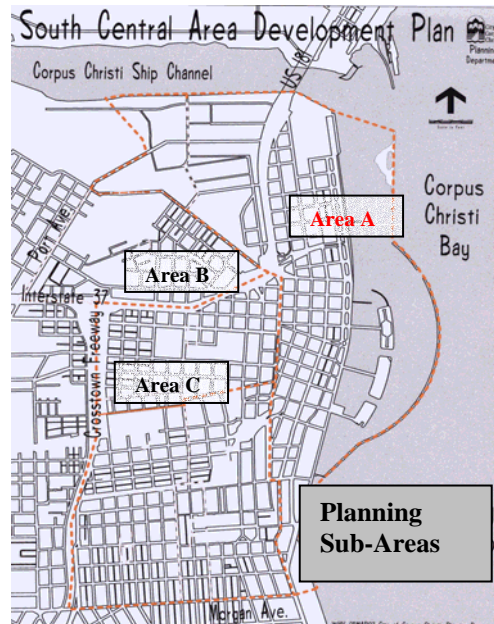
The City Council hereby adopts the Future Land Use Plan map and the accompanying text as a guide for future land use decisions (see Figure 4). The intent of the future land use and development plan is to encourage high intensity mixed use development and civic oriented development of the highest order within the South Central Area. The plan provides guidance for future land use including rezoning, platting, fiscal management, and capital improvement planning. Specific policies for the various South Central Areas are grouped into sub-areas as illustrated in Figure 3.

**FIGURE 4: FUTURE LAND USE**





## AREA A: BAYFRONT AND DOWNTOWN LAND USE POLICIES



### **POLICY STATEMENT B.3 – PLANNING AREA A**

**Promote a mix of tourist, retail, entertainment, residential, and civic uses in the Bayfront and Downtown Business District.** The City should encourage a much higher density and intensity of uses than currently exists in Planning Area A. Development potential for Area A, will depend on a mutually supportive, planned, and coordinated effort between private development and public service entities, of which the provision of adequate utility infrastructure has become of paramount importance (See Public Service Section). Special lighting, signage, landscaping, and street furniture should be used to help visually and functionally integrate public and private development projects.

### **POLICY STATEMENT B.4 – Planning Area A**

**Promote economically viable incentives for development of new tourist oriented uses on private properties fronting Shoreline Boulevard.** The best use of these prime properties is tourist-related and residential uses – not office or non-tourism related business uses. These prime properties should be developed with high-rise hotels and residential uses with tourist-related retail uses occupying a majority of the ground floor. Drive-throughs and similar non-tourist uses should not be permitted on Shoreline Boulevard nor the half block nearest the bay along side streets.

### **POLICY STATEMENT B.5 – Planning Area A**

**Increase the number of housing units and achieve higher housing densities in the Downtown Area.** Incentives should be established, including financial and regulatory, to promote significant increases of quality residential development and compatible mixed uses in the CBD and surrounding residential neighborhoods e.g. conversions to loft apartments, specialty grocery stores, “liveaboard” facilities in the marina, and other residential serving uses and to create a sense of community in the Central Area.

### **POLICY STATEMENT B. 20 – Planning Area A**

**The City will encourage pedestrian friendly retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses along street frontages combined with multi-family residential, hotel, office uses and parking garages on aboveground levels.**

## C. TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION

**POLICY STATEMENT C.1**

a) **The City Council adopts Figure 6 as the guide for future transportation decisions in the South Central area.** The transportation network of this Plan constitutes an amendment to the City Transportation Plan. Those changes requiring state or federal funding will be submitted for review and included in the Metropolitan Planning Organization Urban Transportation Plan.

**POLICY STATEMENT C.3**

**To ensure pedestrian safety, create a Shoreline Boulevard operations plan for temporary closure of travel lanes during large festival events such as Buccaneer Days and Bayfest.**

**FIGURE 6: FUTURE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**





## D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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### POLICY STATEMENT D.1

**Establish a continuous funding source and foster multiple partnerships for on-going capital improvements in the Central Business District.** Possible funding mechanisms include tax increment financing, public improvement district, tax abatement / credits, or similar mechanisms. The TIF funding mechanism has contributed approximately one million dollars annually for the last 20 years to pay for construction of the Texas State Aquarium. If another TIF District is established these monies would be targeted for improvements in downtown and on the bayfront. If it is not feasible to establish another TIF District then some other funding mechanism such as a public improvement district may be appropriate to provide a continuous source of funds for needed improvements in the Central Business District. In addition, multiple partnerships should include the Port of Corpus Christi, Regional Transit Authority, Nueces County, Metropolitan Planning Organization, Corpus Christi Independent School District, Downtown Management District, etc.

### POLICY STATEMENT D.5

**Public/private ventures and public projects in the South Central Area including the marina should be designed and located according to the following criteria.**

- a) Provides a public service or function that directly benefits the general public.
- b) Provides recreational, entertainment, retail, and/or other visitor and pedestrian-oriented types of activities available to the general public. A majority of ground floor uses should be of these visitor and pedestrian-oriented uses. These public uses should be accessible to the general public during peak daytime and evening hours and throughout the week.
- c) Improves the visual quality of the area.
- d) Leverages more private sector investment than public monies invested.
- e) Combines disjointed uses to form a cohesive environment where uses can interact and benefit from their relationship to one another.

### POLICY STATEMENT D.11

**The City will explore the use of the coliseum.**

### POLICY STATEMENT D.12

**Coordinate with Texas A&M University to create a new off-site campus with student housing in or in close proximity to the South Central Area.**





## **E. PUBLIC SERVICES**

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### **BAYFRONT PARK**

### **FESTIVAL PARK**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT E.2**

**Develop a permanent festival park.** The need for a permanent festival park (or parks) is obvious because of the success of Bayfest and Buccaneer Days carnival and other smaller festivals. However, due to unique characteristics of these festivals and their current sites several safety and efficiency of use issues have come to the forefront. The new arena is under construction and scheduled to be completed in late 2004. The arena and convention center expansion projects are being constructed over the west portion of North Shoreline Boulevard north of Resaca Street. And the federal courthouse has imposed restrictions on festivals on the Shoreline Blvd. median in front of it.

With these two portions of Shoreline Blvd. eliminated from effective use for festivals such as Bayfest, the area along North Shoreline Boulevard between Power Street and the Convention Center may not be large enough to accommodate large festivals effectively. Alternative sites should be analyzed and a plan devised to develop a permanent festival site or sites. More than one festival park may be justified. One site could be for low impact type events and the other could be for high impact festivals. Possible sites include: 1) the medians north of I-37; 2) the Coliseum and adjoining parking lots and parks; 3) on what will become available land when the Broadway Wastewater Treatment Plan is relocated in conjunction with the adjacent Concrete Street Amphitheater; 4) the Kerr-McGee Tract; 5) South Bluff Park; 6) Heritage Park/BASP; or 7) Corpus Christi Beach Park.



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## F. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT NEEDS

### UTILITIES

#### BAYFRONT

The following projects are proposed for the bayfront. All of these projects should be compatible with the architectural elements of the seawall i.e. steps, cap, Miradores, and benches.

- Additional shade structures, lighting standards and type of lighting, trash receptacles, bicycle lanes, informational signage and kiosks, and water fountains should be provided on the seawall and adjoining walkway.
- Provide additional McGee Beach facilities, e.g. public showers, public toilets with high frequency of maintenance, shade structures, replacement of concession building and restrooms
- Develop a small amphitheater utilizing the seawall steps with a stage floating in the marina and/or on McGee Beach for regular musical venues/sports events to increase variety of activities on bayfront.

#### TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT

1. Create a Shoreline Boulevard operations plan for temporary closure of travel lanes during large festival events such as Buccaneer Days, etc. to ensure pedestrian safety.
2. Enhanced public transportation system, including but not limited to a fixed alignment streetcar system.

## **G. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND BAYFRONT MASTER PLAN**

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### **POLICY STATEMENT G.1**

**This Plan constitutes the primary guide for the development and redevelopment of the South Central Area.** The Plan provides the overall basis for which the City makes determinations concerning zoning, capital improvement projects and programs such as street improvements, park and marina improvements, and infrastructure improvements, and to a somewhat lesser degree building code issues.

### **BAYFRONT MASTER PLAN**

### **POLICY STATEMENT G.3**

**The City, after conducting a communitywide planning process, determined the most acceptable manner in which to create a Bayfront park is by realigning Shoreline Boulevard and the available public space as illustrated on Figures 7 thru 11, Bayfront Master Plans.** The Bayfront Master Plan, an amendment to the South Central Area Development Plan (SCADP), is consistent with the adopted plan policies which state that the highest priority are activities that benefit citizens and take advantage of the Bayfront's unique natural amenities, including wind, water, and climate. The SCADP also recommends that the City promote economically viable incentives for development of new tourist oriented uses on private property fronting Shoreline Boulevard.

Currently, Shoreline Boulevard is a formidable barrier to pedestrians attempting to cross the six travel lanes and 80 foot median, especially during time of large festival events, to enjoy waterfront activities. In addition, large festival events either block through traffic along Shoreline Boulevard or reduce the City's ability to operate large convention and arena events. The Concept Plan for a Bayfront Park provides the basis for more detailed design studies, specific cost estimates and capital improvement funding/timing.

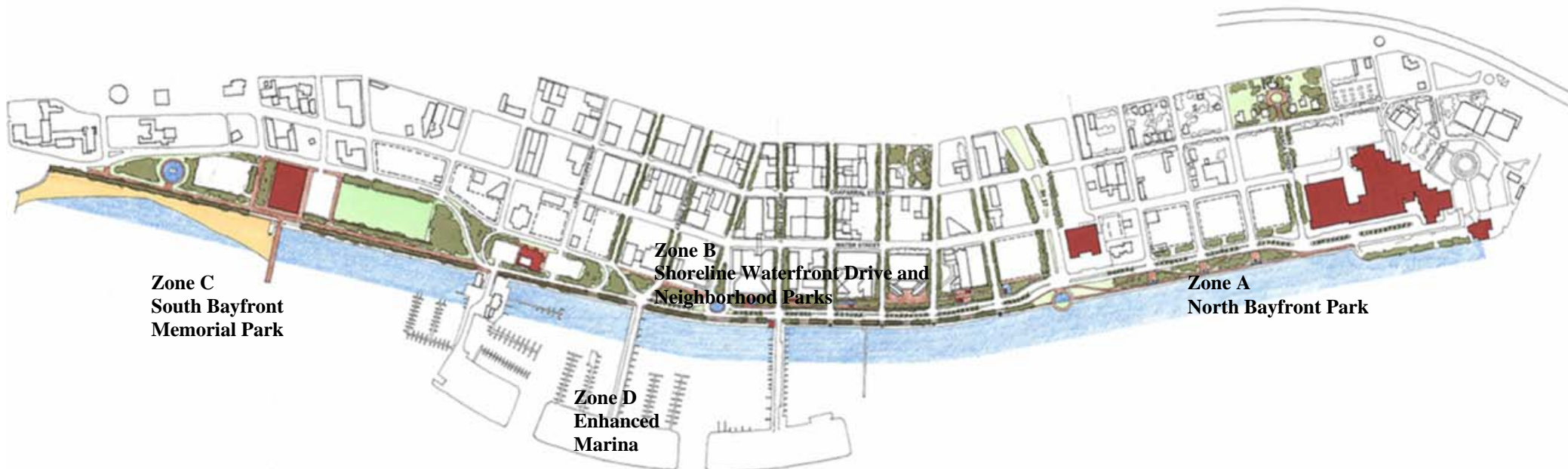
This plan recommends realigning Shoreline Boulevard and designating it as an arterial with reduced separation between the travel lanes in order to consolidate as much of the green space to create larger more useful public areas. These larger areas are located immediately adjacent to the water's edge on the northern and southern reaches of Shoreline Boulevard and adjacent to the landward side of Shoreline Boulevard in the marina area. The actual number of lanes on Shoreline is envisioned to be from four to six total travel lanes depending on the completion of detailed travel analyses prior to commencement and approval of any lane reductions. However, the City will preserve sufficient right of way to maintain six lanes if traffic demands warrant such capacity. With adoption of this plan, the City's Urban Transportation

Plan is amended to indicate a range of street cross section designs providing for four to six travel lanes on Shoreline Boulevard.

The Bayfront Master Plan includes creation of outdoor urban space with pedestrian esplanades and walkways and recreation areas along the Bayfront. The Master Plan Concept includes:

- Variations in green space and the relationship of the automobile to the waters edge;
- Arrival feature at shoreline and IH 37;
- Small scale commercial elements and green spaces;
- Flexibility and multi use capabilities of green spaces; and
- True pedestrian connections to the water of the North and South parks.

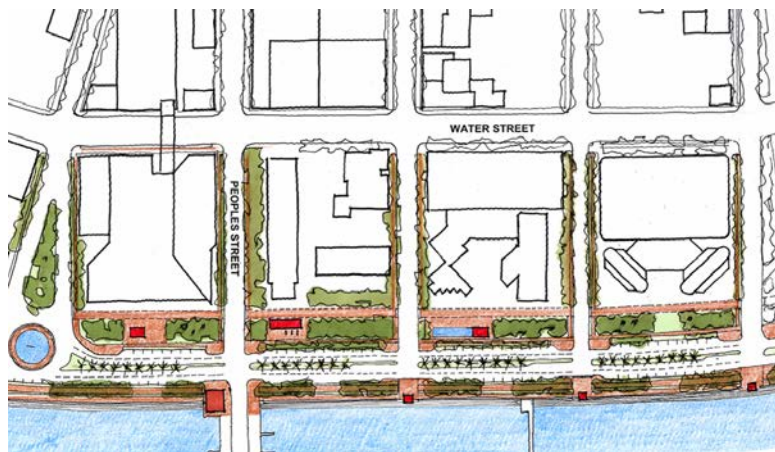
**FIGURE 7: BAYFRONT MASTER PLAN**



**FIGURE 8 ZONE "A": NORTH BAYFRONT PARK**



**FIGURE 9: ZONE "B"  
SHORELINE WATERFRONT DRIVE AND NEIGHBORHOOD**



**FIGURE 10: SOUTH BAYFRONT MEMORIAL PARK**

