

**Report on Focus Group Feedback
West Fort Bend Management District
September 14, 2006**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Focus Group was formed as a representative group of the constituent community covered by the Management District under SB 1820. It was formed with the specific purpose of providing feedback to the WFBMD Board of Directors on the community's vision, concerns and priorities for development of the corridors of West Fort Bend County. This feedback will be referenced in the creation of a Management Plan for WFBMD.

The Focus Group may be reconvened, at the Board's discretion, on an intermittent basis in the future to review and update the feedback.

2. FEEDBACK

A. Common Themes

There were two constants that were revisited in the focus groups sessions. The first was the depth of attachment participants had to West Fort Bend and the second was the desire they expressed that it be developed in a meaningful and thoughtful way. None of the participants advised that they were satisfied with the status quo, and their vision for future development was articulated in the groups' recommendations for further actions to be taken by the District.

The recommendations trended along 2 lines. The first were programs that by their nature would best be executed with a district-wide planning process, such as those suggested by Parks and Open Space and Economic Development. The second trend was for programs, that while they would have a district-wide impact, could be executed on a less master-planned, project-by-project basis.

Interestingly, without any cross-fertilization of members or information, the Focus Group reflected many of the same recommendations and expressed the same areas of concerns as the Standards Committee. The members of the Landscape and Streetscape Committee in particular, expressed the same level of desire for a common theme that would unite the District. They also encouraged the development of standards that would prevent visual blight and encouraged the development of landscaping, services and improvements that, in and of themselves, would attract people to the area.

Different members of the Focus Group expressed differing reasons for wanting an improved development process for the District. Most were encapsulated in the report by the Parks and Open Space Sub-committee. To paraphrase:-

1. Create a strong, sophisticated, uniting identity that reflects the uniqueness of the District.
2. Increase the value of the property within the District, and surrounding properties through beautification of business corridors and transitional areas.
3. Increase economic development and attract businesses by creating an environment that draws people to invest and spend within the District.
4. Lighten the burden of individual investors by utilizing synergies within the cities, counties, and key partners to help with the planning processes and costs of development.

There was also general agreement that the District should complement, co-ordinate and focus resources and services rather than duplicate or replace existing operations and services within the Cities and County.

B. Response of Sub-Committees

The areas designated for specific feedback within the Focus Group were:-

1. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION
2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS SERVICES
3. MOBILITY AND SECURITY
4. LANDSCAPE AND STREETScape
5. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Sub-committees were formed for each of these and their members met and reported back to the rest of the Focus Group on their findings. Following the presentations, time was given for questions, answers and other recommendations from the full group. The final feedback as it appears was accepted by the full group.

The members for the Mobility and Open Space Sub-Committee were unable to attend the feedback meeting. Mr. Galatas, Mr. Neeley & Ms. Heugh provided some input on the day. Following the feedback session, members of this sub-committee then reviewed that feedback, and provided additional input.

The feedback responses from each of the Sub-Committees has been paraphrased and summarized. Where written information was provided it has been included. The summaries follow.

1. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION SUB-COMMITTEE

The members focused both on marketing the Management District – the entity- and the Management District organization. Overall, they believed that it was an area that needed investment of resources and some guidance through the use of a professional Public Relations firm. The full Focus Group supported their presentation.

They recommended that the WFBMD:-

1. Educate: - on the WFBMD – what the District is and what it can, and cannot do.
2. Provide information that is timely and accurate on WFBMD plans and activities, including information on projects.
3. Develop an advocacy interest amongst constituents
4. Leverage information that is available through other organizations to promote and communicate on behalf of the District.

Their feedback addressed planning processes and actions:

A. Planning:

1. The development of Branding or Theme for the District that reflects heritage and history, and the embedding of that theme into different elements throughout the District through strategic uses of logos, slogans and events.
2. Development of strategic partnerships between the WFBMD and key players in the District and County, including the Rose-Rich Chamber, EDCs and others, to leverage opportunities for communication, marketing and funding.
3. The development of both communication and marketing plans and processes tailored to reach different levels of constituents within the corridors.

B. Actions:

For each of the areas of planning, the group developed a series of actions:

1. Hire a Public Relations firm to create the theme and branding elements for the WFBMD.
2. Create a website tailored to constituents that could be used for both marketing and communicating District actions including plans, reports and progress with projects. The web-site could also provide a cross-referencing link with other key organizations in the District and County. The links can work both ways, cross-reference organization back to the WFBMD website.
3. Identify the target audience(s). Create a number of multi-level communication and advertising tools targeted to informing constituents of the WFBMD, and gaining their support. These included the use of Chamber resources, different mail-out options (like utility bill and MUD bill inserts), and running forums and meetings.
4. Develop a list of key organizations that are advocates of both Cities and of the County, and/or are critical to the success of the WFBMD.
5. Develop one or two annual "Signature" events that unite the Cities and are unique to West Fort Bend.

The Marketing Group provided notes of their meeting which follow:-

WEST FORT BEND MANAGEMENT DISTRICT FOCUS GROUP
Marketing & Communications Sub-committee
Meeting – Wednesday, September 6, 4:00PM, -- Rose-Rich Chamber Office

MINUTES

Present: Mark Magee, Gail Parker (Chair), with phone input from Jack Moore, non-member

Absent: Barkley Peschel, Kent Rosenberger, Gary Tavener, and (new member) Ron Ewer

- **VITAL TO MARKETING CAMPAIGN:**
 1. Theme (In order to capitalize on uniqueness of the West Fort Bend heritage, and to endeavor to blend the old with the new, consider incorporating rich history of Fort Bend and Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred, comparable to "The Street of Ten Friends" in Victoria Texas¹)
 2. Logo (used on all signage and printed materials to "brand" the District)
 3. Slogan (utilizing selected theme concurrently with publicity campaign message)
- Chamber resources should be fully utilized
 1. Email
 2. Fax
 3. Mailing
 4. Luncheons
 5. Website
 6. Forums
- Press Releases/Media Blitz
- Comprehensive Website for WFBMD
- Signage on all corridors throughout WFBMD (NOT billboards, but small additional street signs incorporating logo & slogan²)
- Utility Billing Inserts
 1. City Water Bills (Rosenberg and Richmond)
 2. CenterPoint Billing Statements
- Consider **partnership** between WBFMD and Rosenberg-Richmond Area Chamber of Commerce
- Utilize GFBEDC member communications
- Interview and obtain bids from professional advertising and public relations agencies, such as Marion, Montgomery, Inc.

¹ The original colony, founded in 1824 by impresario Don Martin de Leon, was named for the first president of Mexico, Don Guadalupe Victoria. The town was established at a site known earlier as Cypress Grove due to the abundant cypress trees growing along the banks of the Guadalupe River. Victoria was platted by Jose M.J. Carbajal and developed an early importance as a stop on the La Bahia Road, as a stock-raising center, and as a shipping center for the port of Linnville. By 1834 about 300 people were living in the municipality, which was governed by a Council of Ten Friends from 1824 to 1829 and by four alcaldes from 1828 to 1836. The early settlers and friends of de Leon lived along today's Main Street, which was then known as La Calle De Los Diez Amigos, or The Street of Ten Friends.

² In the 1960's, a group of preservationists in Victoria created carved markers that were placed at each intersection down Main Street, designating it by its original name, "The Street of Ten Friends". A large coordinating monument was also placed at one end of the street.

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS SERVICES

The Sub-Committee concentrated on services that could be provided by the District. The services are intended to stimulate and encourage investment in West Fort Bend and divide into 2 planning areas: immediate services and future services.

The services include informational services, District landscaping maintenance and clean-up services, business stimulation and investment assistance services and corridor development services.

A. Immediate Services

The first priority for WFBMD is to become an information resource for the District. The resources need to be directed to businesses and investors either currently in the District or thinking about investing in the District. The information would provide an overview of key economic statistics and benchmarks, together with updates on major infrastructure investment in the community (such as TxDoT) and links to critical related resources or businesses.

The opportunity also exists in these early stages of formation to coordinate a survey for constituents and investors that would provide information on how West Fort Bend is perceived, its strengths and weaknesses and areas that would be ripe for niche development. This initial survey can act as a benchmark, would be ongoing, and the information will help in directing priorities and marketing for the District.

B. Future Services

Other functions for WFBMD:

1. Service Resource for Businesses: Specifically, an investor friendly "one-stop shop" that coordinates information from various public and private entities to help businesses determine and formulate investment options in the District. The District can also leverage buying power for businesses in the District: The specific example given was to combine the funds of each business into a general fund with any other funds the District may be able to obtain, to upgrade the landscape service and maintenance along the corridors. Similarly, the same method can be used for leveraging other business interests in the District.

As time goes on the WFBMD can act as an umbrella body to "demystify" more complex investment options to attract businesses. This includes working with Cities to create tax increment zones, as a liaison to petition for tax abatements for new businesses, and forming a non-profit to maximize the ability to apply for, and successfully win, grants to help finance projects.

2. Create a Corridor Master Vision: The vision would include development opportunities within the corridor and provide clear information on Standards and Services within the District. The Vision, which would translate into a Plan, could be used as a model not only for landowners and

businesses within the District boundaries, but also for those who abut the District and would be interested in adopting the standards.

C. Actions

In the short term the Focus Group recommended that a grant writer be hired by the District to coordinate grant applications. They also recommended that a non-profit be formed to encourage investment.

Notes provided by the Economic Development and Business Services Sub-Committee

Initially, as the District is gaining momentum, emphasis should be placed on informational resources -

The W. Ft. Bend Mgmt. District's (WFBMD) website needs to have a prominent economic development/business services tab/page. One key element of this page can be informational.....key area economic facts and statistics (major area employers and services, hotels, housing, etc.), TXDOT updates and other significant news affecting the District, a list of benefits to locating within the District, etc.

Another key element to the page could be direct links to various resources, like the Chamber, County EDC, Richmond & Rosenberg key ED contacts, and perhaps other key business service providers (appraisal District, utilities, etc.).

As the District matures and the word gets out, emphasis should shift to a resource orientation -

WFBMD can be a service resource for specific segments (geographically or by business type) of the District. Examples include pooling funds for ad buying power & promotion (retail business orientation), helping to create specific economic development zones under the tax code, and become a conduit for businesses in leveraging public and private sector resources (e.g. - grants, abatements, financing, etc.).

3. MOBILITY AND SECURITY SUB-COMMITTEE

The overall responsibility for the WFBMD is to co-ordinate, facilitate and enhance existing services, not replace functions.

The proposals cover both district-wide initiatives as well as individual projects.

Security

Two district-wide projects were proposed. The first was the coordination of radio frequencies between fire (including voluntary brigades), police (all different branches) and other emergency services. This is considered critical for effective communication both for local and more regionalized emergency responses.

The second project was to develop a lighting study for the District, and work on developing a coordinated lighting plan using the revised County Standards. The plan would also provide an opportunity, while designing lighting for security and safety purposes, to develop artistic, architectural standards for lighting in the different corridors and Cities.

A local project is to supplement City security services for special events. The Cities currently bear the brunt of security, traffic control and clean-up costs for hosting special community events and the costs are significant. In the interest of developing signature events within the District, we need to find ways of supplementing those City services.

Another suggestion was to co-ordinate an "Eyes on the Street" program for Cities. An example is 'Citizens on Patrol'. Police departments furnish training and signage for volunteers who then do street patrol in their vehicles. The citizens have no authority other than to report what they see, and are in direct contact with dispatch. When they report an incident, the police department then dispatches an appropriate response. The additional patrol capability helps free trained personnel for law enforcement duties.

Mobility

The Fort Bend District is expected to grow by some 150,000 people in the next 5 years. That is like a small town every year within our current boundaries. The increase in traffic is already a concern for TxDOT who have a number of road widening and improvement projects slated for development within the Corridors.

The WFBMD has a natural role as the umbrella organization for coordinating input from interested parties within the District to TxDOT. This would also be preferred by that agency, as they welcome a coordinated response to projects.

A traffic study aimed at coordinating traffic lights on the major corridors needs to be undertaken. The objective would be to facilitate the most effective flow pattern for the traffic, particularly in the "peak" morning and afternoon commute hours.

Within its coordinating role the WFBMD can work to support the Cities' efforts to develop 'Park and Ride' centers and shuttle systems into hub areas, such as the project currently underway by the City of Rosenberg.

The District should also monitor and encourage a comprehensive freight rail-commuter rail transportation solution for Fort Bend County.

The mobility enhancement projects may also meet some of the requirements for grant applications through the various Clean Air initiatives managed by the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC).

Another facilitation role is the coordination of emergency evacuation procedures: mobility as well as a security issue. The current procedures were found to be inadequate during Hurricane Rita, when the evacuating traffic in Fort Bend County ground to a halt for many hours. Evacuation procedures are being reviewed by the newly created Regional Evacuation and Response Task Force, and this project would be of relevance.

The final suggestion was for a longer term project to review all alternative transportation options for the District including those mentioned above: the simplest being integrated walk and bike paths that join up different key areas of the District to the most complex – the development of commuter rail intra- and/or inter- District.

4. LANDSCAPE AND STREETScape

This sub-committee prioritized the order of importance of their actions which is shown in their attached notes.

The members advised that their objective was to make Richmond and Rosenberg enchanting destinations in the midst of the tremendous growth in Fort Bend County. Their intention was to develop a unique identity by capitalizing on the natural elements, represented by the Live Oak and the rich history of the area. The group identified the active and recognized artists' resident in the County as an excellent resource that can be used to help create public art and monumentation for key areas within the District.

ACTIONS

It is recommended that the WFBMD adopt the Live Oak tree as it's the symbol for the District and actively work to incorporate the tree into the landscape and streetscape plans. The District should encourage the Cities to adopt tree preservation and/or tree replacement, and tree planting guidelines. These guidelines would apply equally to developers, businesses, other public and private institutions and the Cities.

The next area that needs be addressed immediately was general clean-up and renovation of public areas. A plan could be developed with the cooperation of the Cities. Specific actions included:-

1. Developing and implementing as quickly as possible, a uniform signage standard and as a part of that finding a way to encourage the removal of unsightly and "bandit" signs popping up in the corridors.
2. Removal or rebuilding/renovation of abandoned buildings, fences and other structures that are in poor repair and are unsightly.
3. Developing a way to screen unsightly businesses and/or lots within the District.
4. Identifying public areas in need of "clean-up" or repair (such as sidewalks and signs), and working with the Cities to find a way to do so.

The third area that requires immediate attention was to identify key architectural design elements for the Cities that need to be upgraded, improved or replaced. The following were identified by the members for immediate action:-

1. Plan and redesign the entrances into both Cities and FM 359 from SH 59, 2218, 90 and 36. The entrance into Richmond from 90A, over the bridges was seen as particularly problematic
2. Identify key unsightly areas and develop design plans for improvement: these are to include screening the cottonseed plant on Highway 90.
3. Maximize the use of the Brazos River as an attraction and improve areas that abut the river in the town districts, both in Rosenberg and Richmond.
4. Identify and develop signage and/or monumentation for historic landmarks within the District.

PLANNING

The WFBMD needs to work with the Cities to develop a coordinated design plan for streetscapes and landscapes in the District. This plan should incorporate the historical and live oak themes and apply these design characteristics in appropriate ways to various streetscapes and landscapes.

Specifically:

1. The development of a signature "Downtown" architecture in both Cities: the details may be different between both, but they would be tied to each other and to the district through the use of some common design details. This should take advantage of, and enhance the preexisting architecture with further improvements. The improvements would be aimed at developing the downtowns as pleasant meeting and entertainment places. The streetscapes would reflect this by having shade, pedestrian friendly sidewalks, and plantings on the appropriate scale – such as hanging baskets and pots, historical signage, banners and a common lighting architecture and theme. The objective would be to create an environment that attracts businesses as well as visitors.

The George Foundation has developed some standards for lighting and hardscape and these could be used as a model for other projects.

In the longer term, consideration needs to be given to developing parking areas with easy access to the downtowns, but that would allow for some pedestrian walkways or "malls". In the case of Richmond, this could lead ultimately to closing Morton Street between 2nd and 5th for through traffic - creating an area for walking, browsing, shopping and to be used as a meeting place as well as for entertainment.

2. Use the rich and diverse Arts community that resides in Fort Bend to developed public art projects. The mural theme can be carried throughout the corridors: an example given was to use murals as well as landscaping to disguise the cottonseed plant on 90A. Likewise, statues and monumentation can be used to define key areas: water features can within a large landscape, link natural areas to developed ones and on a smaller scale - as fountains – act as focal points in build up areas.

3. Finally, a "Master Plan" for bike paths, parks and walkways needs to be developed. If they are to be used, the bike paths need to be safe from traffic and ideally would link the historic districts together. Walking areas can be incorporated and both could link with pre-existing parks and should take advantage, wherever possible, of the Brazos River. The bike path between the historic areas can ultimately link up with major developments such as Pecan Grove, Rivers Edge, and the new developments starting around FM 723.

The committee felt there would be support for the improvements by many of the merchants as well as several "non-profit" organizations in the community: the Historic Richmond Association, The Fort Bend Museum, the Richmond Garden Club, etc, who are extremely anxious to preserve the historic flavor of the two cities and surrounding areas.

Notes from Landscape and Streetscape Sub-Committee

Improvements we would like to see in the Richmond, Rosenberg and 359 Areas of West Fort Bend: These are in order of priority.

- * Upgrade the entrances to both cities and Hwy 359 from Hwys 59, 2218, and 90. This would include roads, new landscaping with hedges along the cottonseed plant and any unsightly areas, live oaks where suitable and hardy flowering shrubs.*
- * Clean up the area around the Brazos bridge in Richmond and 36 and 2218 in Rosenberg.*
- * Installation of lampposts with hanging baskets on Morton Street*
- * Banners or street signs designating the Historic Districts. (Rosenberg already has the banners).*
- * Pedestrian friendly sidewalks. All sidewalks on Morton Street should match those already in existence along the George Foundation*
- * Directional signage from all the major roads in both cities defining Historic District and sites of particular interest.*
- * Bike paths from Historic Richmond to Historic Rosenberg.*
- * Art, statues creating a walking path between points of interest. Possibility of painting the cotton silos with something g artistic.*
- * Get rid of "bandit" (illegal and political) signs.*
- * Requiring as few trees as possible removed for new construction and replacing all liveoaks that are cut down. They are a trademark of Richmond.*
- * Consider a water feature around Oak Bend Hospital, with landscaping barriers between parking and 90.*
- * Ultimately consider closing Morton Street between 2nd and 5th for through- traffic creating an area for entertainment and casual conversations and sauntering visitors.*

These are put more or less in order of importance to the businesses in the areas involved with the understanding that our immediate priority is the improvement of the entrances to the cities. We also would like to see some of the less expensive items to be addressed as soon as possible.

We feel that much could be done with the help of the several "non-profit" organizations in the community, the Historic Richmond Association, The Fort Bend Museum, the Richmond Garden Club, etc, who are extremely anxious to preserve the historic flavor of the two cities and surrounding areas and make Richmond and Rosenberg enchanting destinations in the midst of the tremendous growth in Fort Bend County.

5. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The groups' report reflects the belief that there is a great opportunity to develop an open space and park plan for West Fort Bend. The plan will reflect the evolving regionalization in District as it transitions from rural to modern urban. The report recognizes the need to capture the genuineness or naturalness of the District – elements that attract people here - and unfold that into a number of different park and open space elements that reflect the increasing sophistication of the District as it matures into an urban landscape.

This sub-committee wrote a comprehensive report on their reasoning and recommendations and it is presented in its entirety, as it remained unchanged after presentation to the full group.

West Fort Bend Management District Parks and Open Space Committee Focus Group

Summary of Recommendations

Introduction: The Parks and Open Space Focus Group Committee believe that there are several goals that the District needs to focus on in order to devise an effective and useful plan for open space. These goals include the following:

- Obtain land for open space or partner with others to create open space
- Create a strong and sophisticated identity for the District within the open space
- Create areas which can beautify the business corridor and provide function
- Increase the value of the property within the District and surrounding properties
- Draw people and potential customers to the District both locally and regionally
- Pool resources with the Richmond and Rosenberg Parks Boards as well as MUD Districts which can sell park bonds
- Create a fluid sense of connectivity between open spaces and landscaped areas

There may be some overlap of the open space concepts with those created by the landscaping committee; however, it is the opinion of the Open Space Committee that the line between these areas should be blurred.

Acquisition of Open Space: There needs to be a clear process for identifying how open space may be obtained. Some of these methods may be as follows:

- Identify open spaces which currently exist and are owned by governmental entities such as Rosenberg, Richmond, TXDOT, Fort Bend County and charitable organizations which can be used to further the open space and identity goals of the District. Contact those agencies to discuss the options that the District may have to use the land and/or partner with in construction.
- Determine if land adjacent to the land described above is available to be purchased to expand the existing open spaces.
- Identify specific areas where availability of open space is absent and determine if land can be purchased to accomplish the long term goals.

Identity Features of Open Space: In order to create a strong sense of identity for the West Fort Bend District, the Committee believes that the District should place monumentation within the open spaces as a strong central element. The monumentation may take multiple forms such as:

- Statues
- Sculpture
- Fountains
- Monoliths
- Traffic sign and signal materials and colors
- Hardscape structures such as: clock towers, bridge enhancements, entry markers
- Logos or identifying symbols for the District

The purpose of the monumentation is to identify the evolving increase in sophistication of the District. This sense of place may also manifest itself so that it can also express the tradition and history of the area which distinguishes the District from other areas of Fort Bend County. Statues and sculpture can be especially effective in conveying these types of themes and to maintain a sense of sophistication

Beautification and Value Enhancement of Property within the District

Open space can be perceived as a designated area or as a group of elements that make up an area. The Committee is of the belief that both of these definitions will need to be used to define and create spaces within the District. The District has some areas where wide open spaces may be utilized such as the U.S. 59 corridor. Other areas are fully developed and large spaces are not available such as areas near Hwy. 90A in Richmond where accent improvements and small open spaces may be more attainable and effective. In either event, the goal should be to create the desire of business owners to be located within the District rather than outside of it. This can also have a positive effect on adjacent housing by creating the supplemental positive impact of creating an area that people prefer to live and work next to.

Areas like the Woodlands have used large open space corridors as the focal point for office uses, retailers, hotels and restaurants. In these areas, combinations of major water features, sculptures, hardscape and landscape elements create an atmosphere that invites pedestrian traffic, scenic views and connectivity between the uses. Areas like Uptown Park in Houston have accomplished these goals by sculpture, landscaping, metal arches, black and white traffic signs and shiny metal traffic signals which is more of an accent approach in the road right-of-way to the definition of an area. Each of these areas is defined differently; however, both of them are effective in creating an area of higher value desired by retailers and businesses.

Utilization and Connectivity of the Open Space

The Committee believes that it was important to define the use of the open space in order for the group to understand the value that it has in setting the District apart from adjacent areas

- Open space should be used to create a sense of identity for the District.
- Open space should be used to signify a break in the monotony of development along the corridor.
- Open space should be a “destination” for those regionally as well as locally as a mechanism to draw customers and traffic to the District.

- Open space should be used to connect the District to adjacent residential areas or business parks for pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
- Open space can be used to serve engineering functions such as detention and drainage for adjacent commercial uses. These functions can be designed to incorporate amenities such as lakes or waterways and provide scenery for business parks and restaurants. The economic and aesthetic uses of the open space might assist local governments in getting landowners to regionalize drainage projects and provide open space to the District in areas that are considered to be desirable

Design Characteristics of the Open Space

The Committee agrees that some of the location, shape and design of the open space is important to the success of the concept within the District. Some important points and recommendations of the Committee in this regard are as follows:

- The open spaces should be highly visible to the public. Parks and open spaces are traditionally thought of and placed in residential areas away from freeways and major arterials. There must be a significant visible public window into all open spaces from the corridors.
- Large open spaces between commercial uses along the corridors can be configured as meandering greenbelts and/or waterways in areas used for detention and or drainage. Bike paths and meandering trails with random tree groupings would be appropriate in these areas. An example of this can be seen on Buffalo Bayou downtown or in the Woodlands Water Way. The greenbelt/waterway would be visible from the freeway or state highway and be a focal point for the businesses that border it.
- A rectangular or linear "mall" concept which might have fountain or more formal statue elements with geometric walkways, trees arrangements and walking paths is another way that open space can be formal and dramatic. Some areas of the mall may be paved or have brick pavers and some may be grassed and hedged. Examples of this might be the areas on all the front and sides of the UT tower in Austin, or the areas in front of the national monuments in Washington D.C. The Committee believes that these could be used to make a bold statement and would be designed specifically for the space and the anticipated adjacent uses. This format lends itself to a campus atmosphere.
- The mall and greenbelts could ultimately connect commercial spaces with City Parks created by the Parks Boards.
- The smaller open spaces such as in more developed areas or in the right-of way in roads will be more dependent on identity features, monumentation and accent features. The configuration of these areas will be limited specifically to the available areas. Business owners may need to be approached to dedicate small parts of areas adjacent to the right-of-way for a more uniform feature that carries the identity of the District through more developed areas.

Coordination and Connectivity:

The Committee believes that it is critical that these spaces be designed so that they can be connected to the residential areas behind the corridor. In fact it is the belief of the Committee that they will promote residential housing behind the District and create a way for the residential traffic to utilize the mall and greenbelt spaces to access the commercial areas as pedestrians. This can

happen if the District can partner with the local Parks Boards and attempt to coordinate the development of the extensions of greenbelts and corridors from the boundaries of the District through the residential areas. In this manner, the groups can work together to promote the planning, financing and creation of a parks and open space that can enhance the value and revenue generated by the areas within the District and enhance the quality of life and convenience of the adjacent residents.

Areas of Interest:

The Committee wants to point out some areas of immediate interest for open space planning purposes. While the Committee understands there are many other areas that could be selected, these are areas that the committee believed should be focused on for the purposes of visibility, availability and promotion of the District:

- Areas at the intersections of the thoroughfares along the U.S. 59 corridor.
- Special recognition should be placed on the open space at the intersection of F.M. 762 and U.S. 59. The change in grade of the highway and the areas adjacent to the park and ride could be a significant opportunity for the District to monument an open space since there is a lot of space in this area now.
- Rabbs Bayou and Dry Creek may be an opportunity to extend greenbelts and waterways from the District into the residential areas and interior parks.

3. Response to Designating Priorities

The group was asked the question which corridors or projects should have priority?

There was no single adamant response. The group agreed that this would - in general - be a matter where opinions would be as diverse as the District itself. Rather, the discussion developed into a set of considerations the Board should use when determining priorities.

Factors that need to be considered when developing project priorities are:

1. Visibility – those projects that have the greatest visibility for those coming into and moving through the District have a higher priority.
2. Positive Publicity – projects that result in positive responses by businesses, residents and visitors are more desirable.
3. Opportunity – piggyback on projects that are planned or underway by TxDOT and the development community.
4. Advocacy – where a constituent group is ready to champion their own project and commit to the process.
5. Marketing Potential – for the Cities: where the project helps project a more positive image of 2 Cities. Particularly noted was the need to develop a cohesive plan for all entry-ways into the Cities.
6. Stage of Development – the areas that are least developed are those that have the most potential to be positively affected in a shorter time frame

It was generally agreed that US 59, which encompasses both Cities and is the major thoroughfare into and through the District would be the one that meets all of the criteria. In addition all key entry points also need to be addressed as soon as possible. Finally, TxDOT has a number of different projects underway or planned for the County and it is important to start working with those immediately.

The following points were also advised:

1. TxDOT is a key partner in the success of the corridor development. It is a complex organization with rules and processes that reflect this, and it takes time to evolve a full working relationship with the organization. As it is a critical element to the District's success, consideration has to be given to selecting a person who will have the primary liaison role with the Department on behalf of the District.
2. The development community has the greatest opportunity to significantly impact the district. As we think about moving forward, we need to embrace the development community and develop programs with them for the less developed areas.
3. Identify key stakeholders: a list needs to be made and a communication plan developed.
4. As funding is a priority, the Board also needs to look at how to increase funding through grants and gifts as soon as possible.

APPENDIX 1

Participants

The participants represented a range of business and property interests along the different corridors represented by the District's boundaries. Membership was voluntary.

The Facilitator, Roger Galatas was chosen for his independence, familiarity with West Fort Bend, his in-depth knowledge of management district, and his experience in facilitation

FACILITATOR	Roger Galatas Roger Galatas Interests, LLC
MEMBERS	
Roland Adamson	The George Foundation
Stan Beard	CrosswellGreenwood
Travis Boeker	Fort Bend County Fairgrounds
Bill Butler	
Steve Crow	Life-Tech
John Dorman	Gurecky Manufacturing Service Inc.
Bill Dostal	Dostal's Fine Jewelry
Catherine Engelbrecht	Engelbrecht Manufacturing
Ron Ewer	Legacy Ford
Frances Kneuppel	Morton Street Gallery
Dean Leaman	Allied Concrete
Mark Magee	Amegy Bank
Marvin Marcell	Group 1 Automotive, Inc.
Teresa Mielsch	Schulze's BBQ and Catering
Jack Moore	Lytte & Moore, LLP

MEMBERS cont.

Barkley Peschel

Fort Bend Economic Development Council

Gail Parker

Rosenberg-Richmond Chamber of Commerce

Tom Petrosewicz

Petrosewicz & Company, Inc.

Kent Rosenberger

Rosenberger Construction

Rowe, David

Oak Bend Medical Center

Tracy Shaw

Oak Bend Medical Center

Tom Shirley

New First National Bank

Gary Tavener

Rosenberg Carpet Center Inc.

Cliff Terrell

Fort Bend County Treasurer

Sharon Wallingford

Sam Yager, III

Sam Yager Inc.

APPENDIX 2

The Focus Group met twice.

The first meeting was held on Thursday, August 17, 2006 was an introductory meeting with the objectives of developing among the participants a common understanding of management districts in general, and a detailed understanding of the West Fort Bend Management District and its powers in particular.

A question and answer session followed the education segments, after which the group divided into groups.

The working groups were:-

1. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION
2. MOBILITY AND SECURITY
3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS SERVICES
4. LANDSCAPE AND STREETScape
5. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The working members consulted between sessions and prepared to give their feedback to the whole group.

The next meeting was held on Thursday, September 14, 2006.

The objective of this meeting was to provide feedback on constituents views of actions and priorities to be taken in the future development of West Fort Bend, with particular emphasis on Services. The feedback forms the basis of this report to the West Fort Bend Management District.

APPENDIX 3

The following handouts were provided either in writing or electronically: collection was voluntary.

1. Overview of Management Districts
2. List of web addresses for Management Districts in the Greater Houston Area
3. Copy of SB1820 – the Legislation
4. Focus Group Vision – PDF presentation of changes in West Fort Bend (electronic)
5. Committee Membership List (electronic)
6. Sub-committee Membership List (electronic)
7. PDF Implementation Strategy Flow Chart – WFBMD (electronic)