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A PROPOSAL FOR THE CORE AREA

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A PROPOSAL FOR THE CORE AREA

FORT WORTH, TEXAS

prepared by

a committee sponsored by the American Institute of Architects, and including representatives of the other design professions.

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Fort Worth Texas
July 1966

PREFACE

Members of the Fort Worth Chapter of the American Institute of Architects have been studying the problems of the Central Business District for the past five years. During this time a number of solutions have been derived, discussed and resolved — and then restudied, changed and re-resolved! To date there has been little communication with the public at-large concerning the possible solutions.

The members of this Committee feel the time has come to involve the public actively in this project. For this reason **A Proposal for the Core Area** is now presented to the citizens of Fort Worth.

Any master plan for the entire core of a city of this size is never a dormant, rigid plan, but is an ever changing, growing, improving process requiring restudy as the city develops according to that plan. This Proposal is presented as an interim solution — and an interim solution only — to the complicated problem of rejuvenating our Downtown Core Area. It is hoped that this Proposal will serve as a springboard to encourage active participation and the exchange of ideas by many citizens and groups. Active participation, in turn, will lead toward a workable ultimate solution of our Core problems.

Through a series of steps an ultimate solution can result. Communication will be the important link throughout this developmental process. As plans are refined and modified they will be presented to the public for analysis and discussion. This Proposal is but a first step in the continuing process of studying our Downtown Core Area. The Downtown Core of Tomorrow can be achieved through farsightedness, hard work and citizen involvement. The success of this Proposal hinges on these factors as well as keeping Fort Worth citizens informed.

Interim solution . . . exchange of ideas . . . active public participation . . . progress . . . ultimate solution! **This Proposal is the first step — the interim solution — the place to begin.**

C O N T E N T S

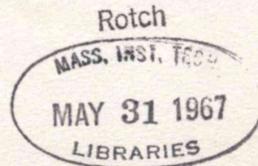
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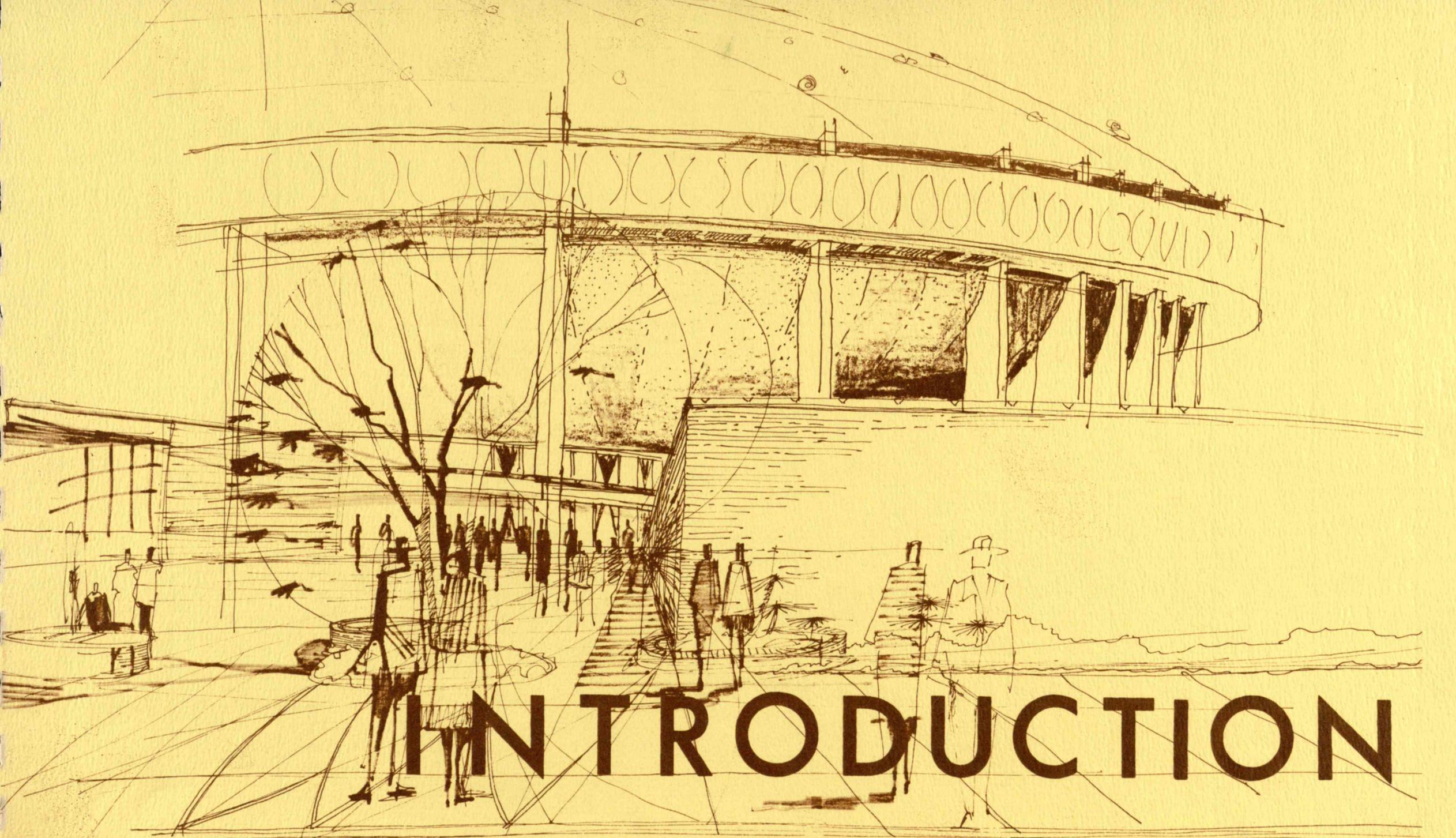
Sketches and renderings used to illustrate this Proposal were selected from a number of studies developed by the following persons:

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ALL OF THE SKETCHES IN THIS PROPOSAL WERE DONE TO ILLUSTRATE POSSIBLE TREATMENTS IN VARIOUS AREAS OF THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT. NONE OF THE SKETCHES DEPICT ACTUALLY PLANNED PROJECTS EXCEPT THOSE OF THE CONVENTION CENTER.





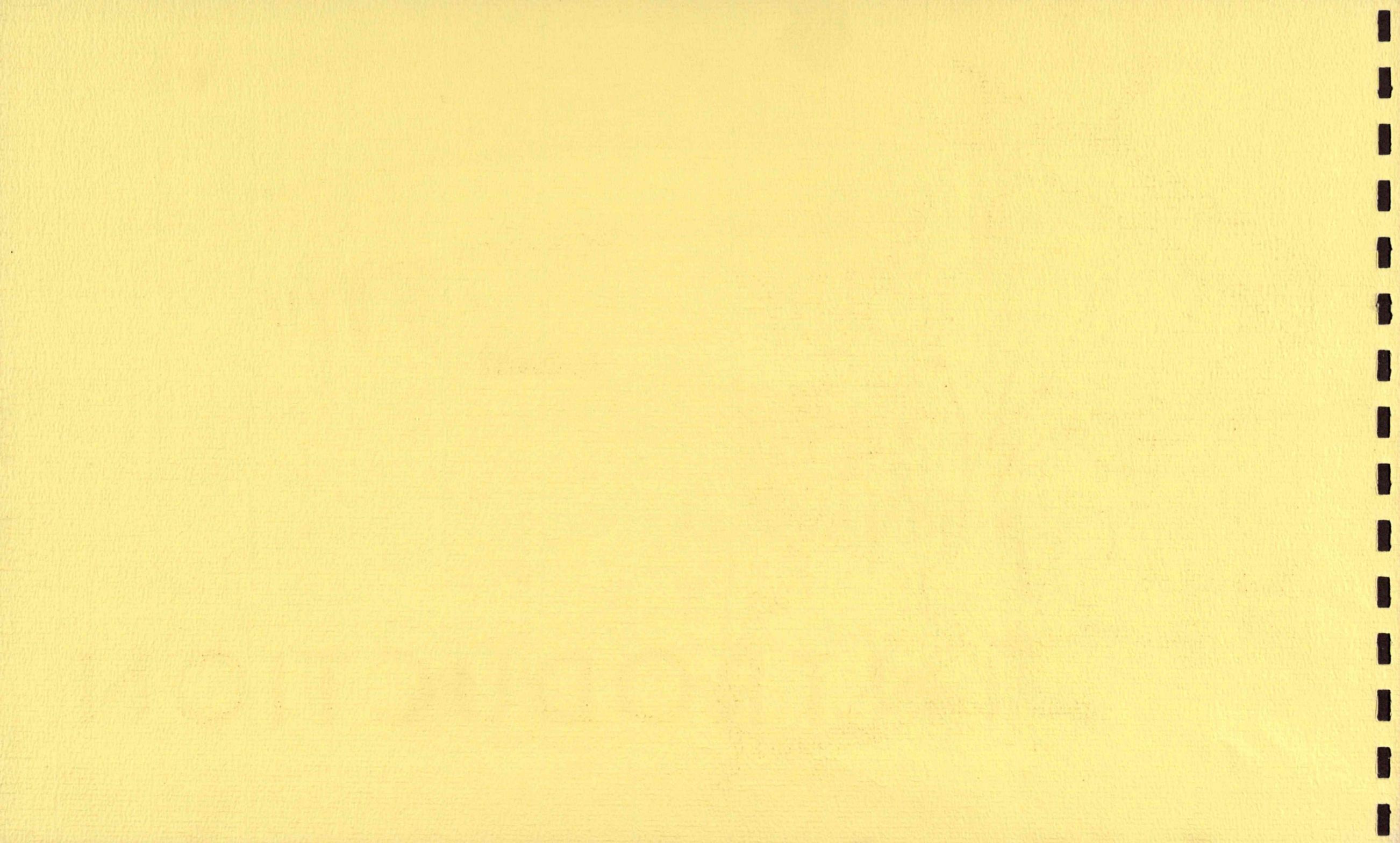
INTRODUCTION

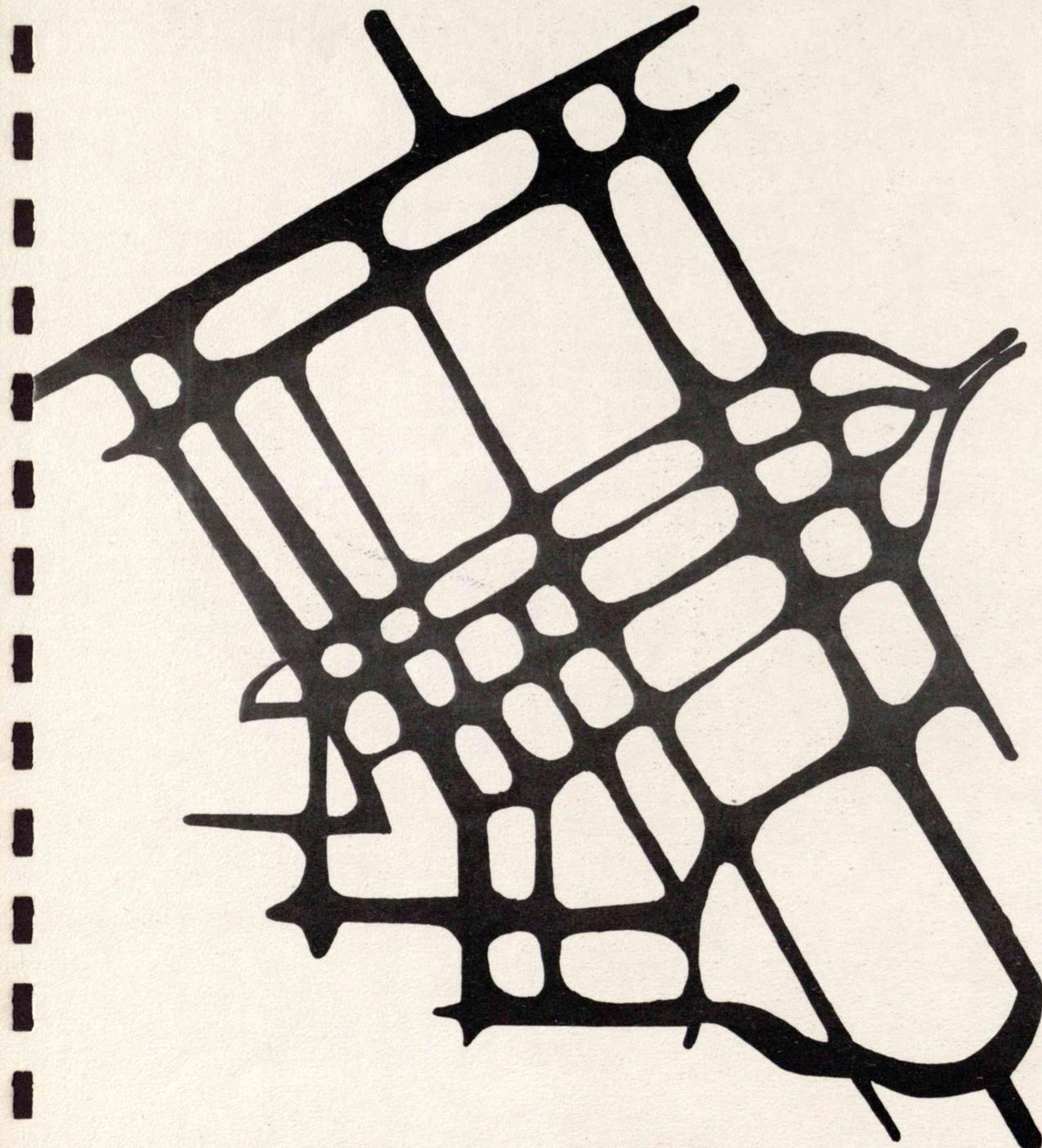
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REPORT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this report are:

- DELINEATE THE PROBLEMS OF THE DOWNTOWN CORE AREA
- PROPOSE AN INTERIM SOLUTION TO THESE PROBLEMS
- ASK THE CITIZENS OF FORT WORTH TO EXCHANGE IDEAS AND PARTICIPATE IN DEVELOPING A SOLUTION TO ULTIMATELY REVITALIZE THE DOWNTOWN CORE AREA

This Proposal is based on a study of existing conditions and projected trends. Detailed data are collected into the Appendix to provide a portion of the background from which the concepts of this report were derived.

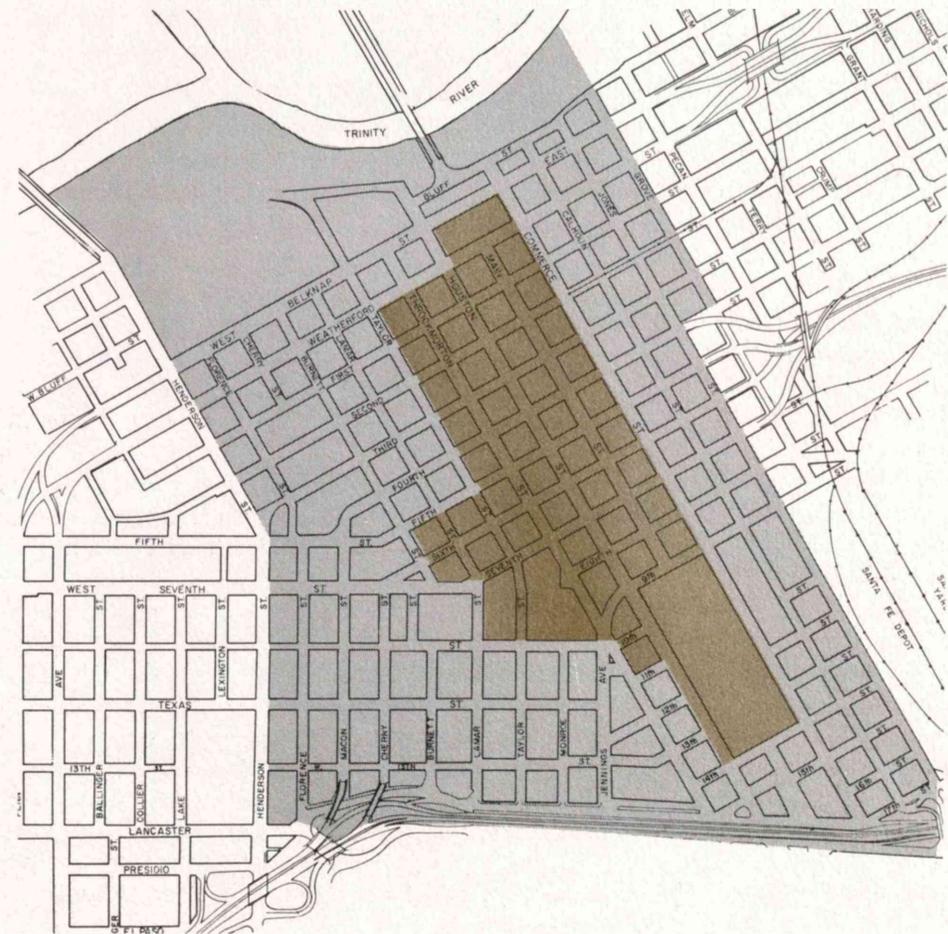


AREA DEFINED

The subject of this report is the portion of downtown Fort Worth shown in yellow on the map. This area is designated the "Core Area." Its surrounding area, shown in grey on the map, is called the "Frame Area." The "Core-Frame Concept" can be applied to any city. The Core Area is the most intensively developed portion of the downtown or "Central Business District." Centers of retail, office, and government activity, large hotels, restaurants, and theaters are typically located in the Core. The Core has the highest land values, the largest daytime population, and the tallest buildings. The Core forms the city's "skyline." You see part of the Core Area of Fort Worth dramatically outlined in lights each Christmas.

The supporting area that surrounds the Core is called the Frame Area. The Frame is less densely developed than the Core and contains fewer tall buildings. Typical land uses in the Frame include parking areas, automobile sales and service, transportation terminals, wholesale enterprises, light manufacturing, and warehousing — uses with generally larger space requirements than the highly intensive uses of the Core. The boundaries of the Frame in Fort Worth are determined by natural barriers on three sides: the Trinity River on the north, the Freeway on the south, and the railroad yards on the east.

The Core Area is the focus of this study; however, the Frame Area is considered in the overall view as it particularly affects the Core.



T H E P R O B L E M

"WHY SHOULD YOU BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE CORE AREA OF YOUR CITY?"

The reason, increasingly evident, is this: The Fort Worth Core Area is in a dangerous state of physical deterioration and economic decline. The Core Area — like the "Old Grey Mare" — "ain't what she used to be." The Core Area used to be the center of city activity. Times have changed. Decentralization . . . suburbanization . . . scatteration — the trend goes by several names. Whatever it is called, it seriously threatens the survival of the Core. And **without a vital Core, the city loses its identity** — becomes a faceless mass of urban sprawl.

However, the trend toward decentralization is not a diabolical plot concocted by enemies of the city. It is rather a natural response to human wants and needs — wants and needs that the downtown Core Area could satisfy at the turn of the century, but has become less and less able to fulfill with each passing decade. The city has changed greatly in size, in population, in technology, and in the habits of the people. The Core Area has not changed — or at least not enough — to keep pace with a changing way of life. One specific lag may be considered the very root of the problem: the inability of the 19th century street pattern of the Core to cope with the 20th century "Age of the Automobile."

Downtown Fort Worth was functional and convenient when people rode streetcars or drove horses and buggies. But it is neither functional nor convenient for the large number of people and the flood of automobiles that engulf it today. Downtown Fort Worth is a complicated place. The noise, the odors, and the conflict of cars, trucks, and pedestrians intermingled on inadequately designed streets create confusion that frequently approaches chaos. **Many people tend to avoid the downtown area entirely** to escape this congestion and confusion. Today, decentralized shopping and business areas satisfy their desire for accessibility, convenience, and pleasant experiences.

In spite of increasing decentralization, however, **it is still the downtown Core that conveys to the visitor** — tourist and businessman alike — **the image of the city.** If the Core is attractive, clean, busy and orderly, with new construction and well-maintained older buildings, the city is judged to be modern, progressive, a good place to live, and a good place to do business. On the other hand, a deteriorating, disorderly, vacant Core projects an unfavorable image of the city.

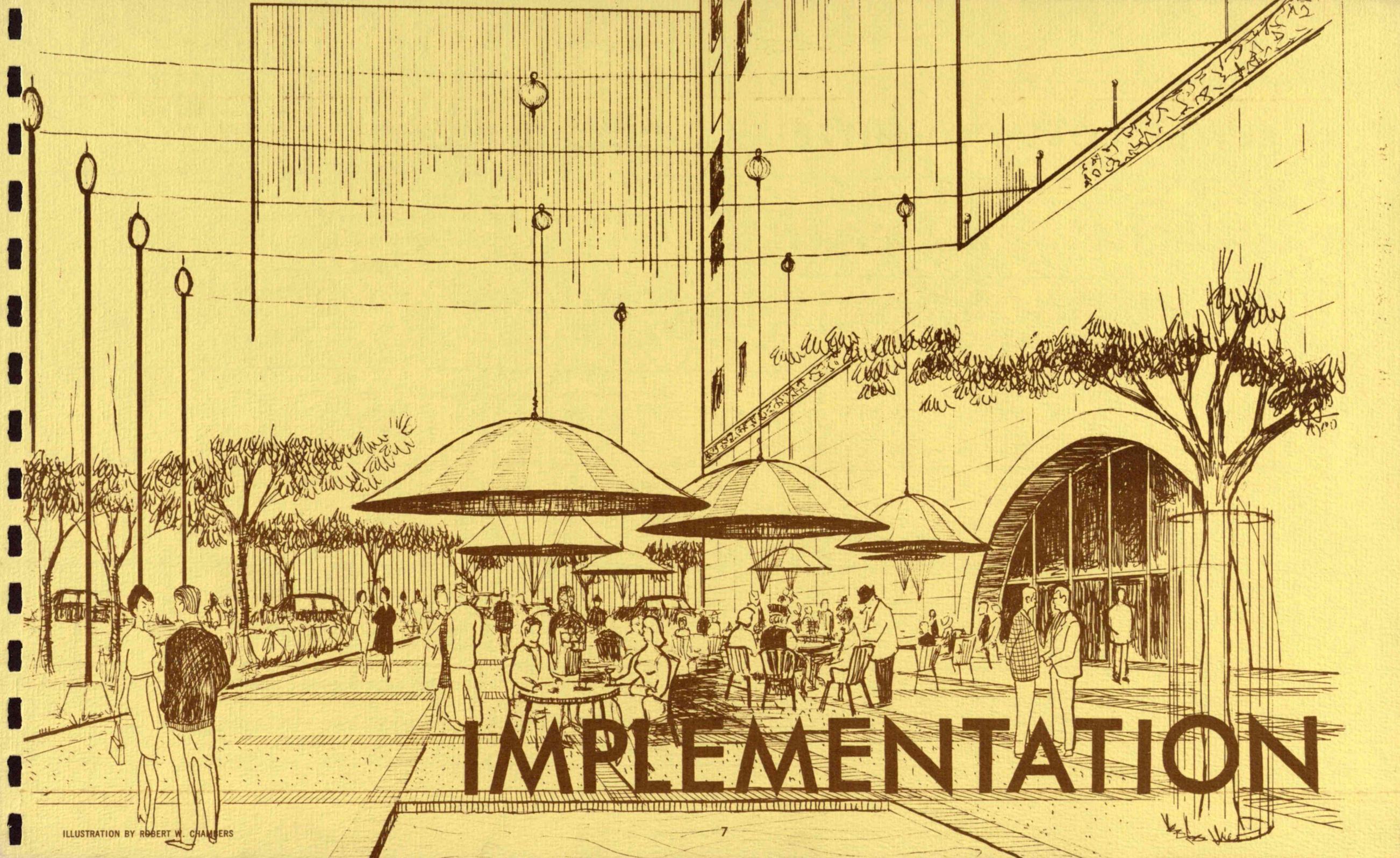
Downtown Fort Worth shows distressing evidence of age and physical decay. Broken sidewalks and curbs, obsolescent paving and buildings, a profusion of overhanging signs and canopies, weeds and litter, sidewalks cluttered with garbage cans and poles, and a great number of vacant and unkempt buildings all contribute to an overall picture of neglect. There are attractive buildings and open spaces, to be sure; but too often they are overwhelmed by the unsightliness of their surroundings.

Few new businesses seek locations in downtown Fort Worth, and established businesses continue to relocate in other parts of the city.

In the past ten years, several major retail and office operations have moved out of the Core. Shopping centers have sprung up all over the city to serve suburbanites as near their homes as possible. The Core Area's share of total county retail sales has declined. The office vacancy rate in the Core is high. Declining property values have reduced the tax base in the Core, depriving the city of tax revenue the area formerly produced — thus increasing the tax burden of homeowners throughout the city. Even though the Core has recently experienced some growth and new construction, it is falling far behind in receiving its proportionate share of the total growth of the city.

Conditions in the Core Area are bad; though they are bad now, they can become worse! They will become worse unless something is done about them. Current downward trends are not likely to magically reverse themselves. YOU — the people of Fort Worth who care about the future of this city — must take positive action — NOW!

This Proposal describes what you can do as a first step toward the solution of this urgent problem, ultimately making the Fort Worth Core Area economically prosperous and esthetically pleasing.



IMPLEMENTATION

BETTER CORE COMMITTEE

An objective of this report states (p.3):

"Ask all citizens of Fort Worth to exchange ideas and to participate in developing a solution which will ultimately revitalize the Downtown Core Area."

All citizens . . . exchange ideas . . . participate — these key words demand group effort, which is a worthy objective. The crucial question, though, is "**How will this group effort come about?**"

Constructive group effort seldom takes place spontaneously. Some kind of organizational structure and strong, positive leadership must be provided.

A single, city-wide Better Core Committee could provide both the organization and the leadership that are needed for effective group effort.

There are already several separate organizations in Fort Worth having the same general purpose of improving the Core Area. These organizations should merge their efforts to form a single **action** committee. This Committee might be composed of one or two representatives from each of the existing organizations, representatives of the Municipal Government — perhaps the City Manager, a councilman and the Planning Director — plus persons from the city at large who are not vocationally related to the Core Area.

The Committee should engage a private consulting firm to perform an intensive analysis of the Core Area. This analysis might be financed through subscription of funds. The consultant should present immediate

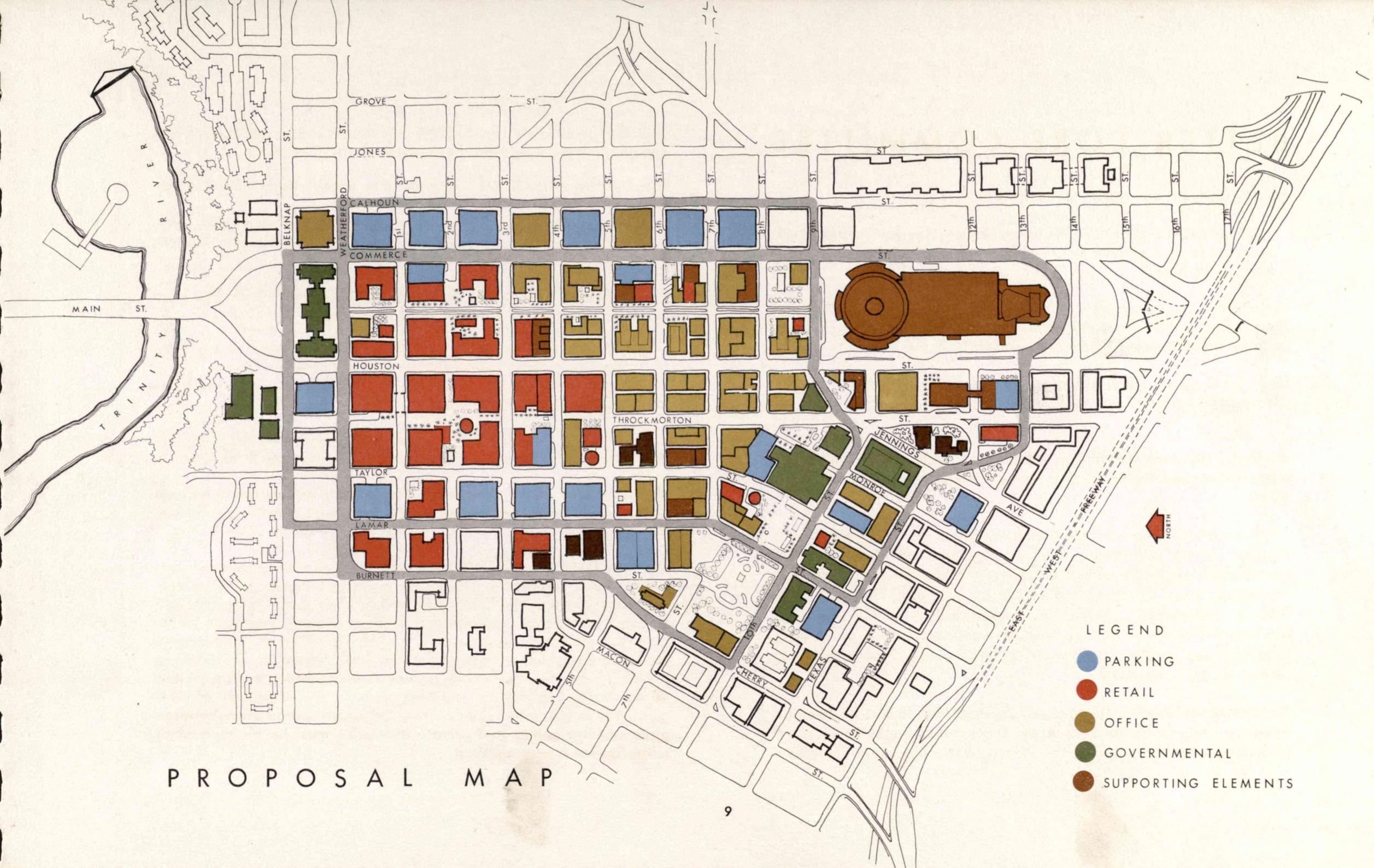
objectives to be undertaken by the Committee and should recommend specific projects, based on the analysis of the Core Area.

The objectives of the Better Core Committee might include the following:

1. Recommend mutually beneficial revisions of existing codes, ordinances, and governmental policies in coordination with the municipal government.
2. Establish liaison with other organizations whose activities have an influence on the Core Area.
3. Provide local assistance for economic investment in the Core Area by making capital risk moneys available or by encouraging local financial institutions to provide long-term low-interest loans for the physical upgrading of individual properties.
4. Conduct a local, state, and nationwide publicity campaign reporting the progress of revitalization efforts in the Core Area.

The Committee should provide the leadership to initiate action and see that it is carried through. They should encourage merchants, property owners, and municipal agencies to participate in **action** projects.

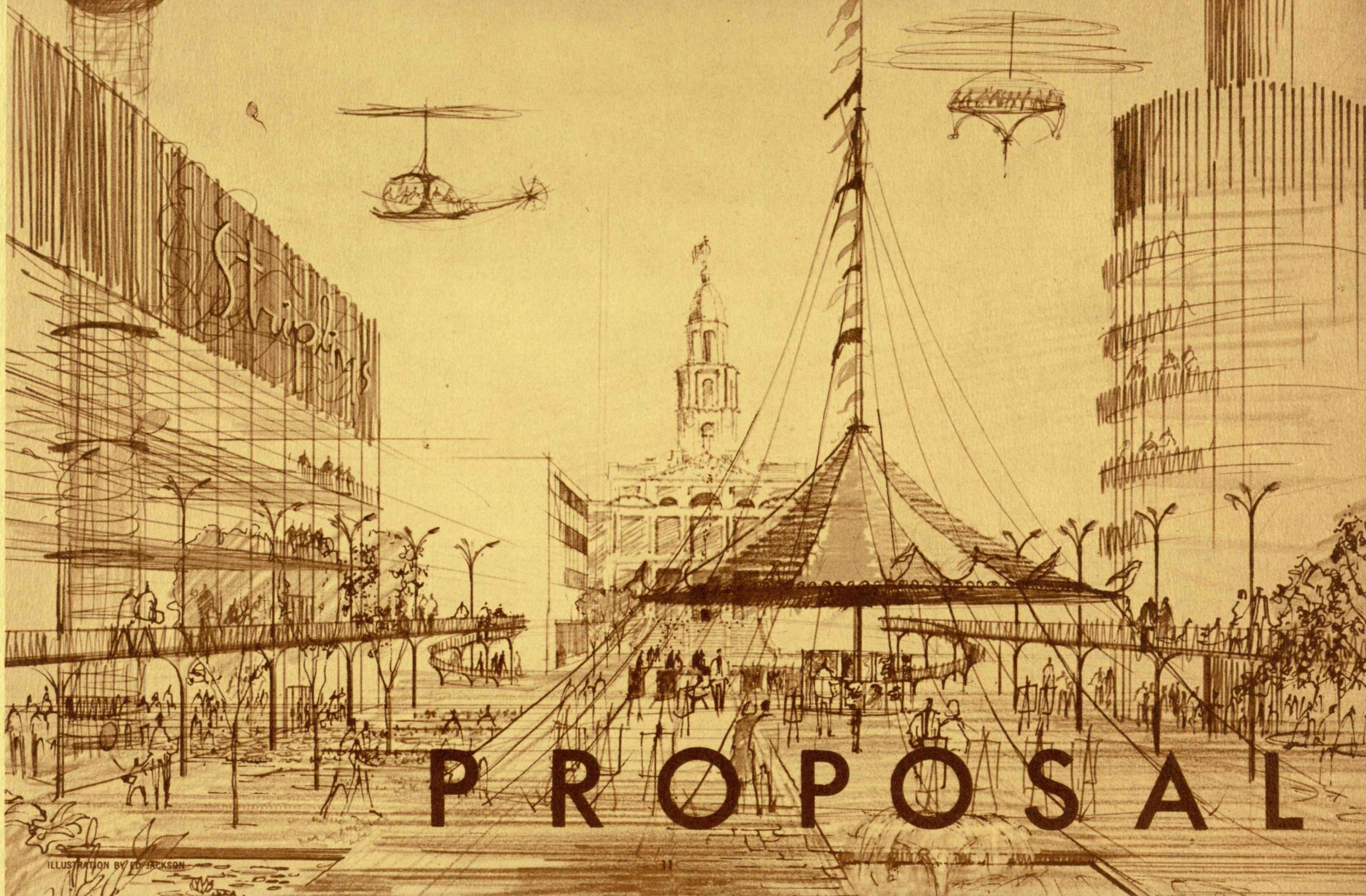
The municipal government should provide a framework of administrative policy, codes, ordinances, and public works activities to stimulate economic investment in the Core. Codes and ordinances should be reviewed and revised where necessary to encourage private investment in the Core Area while maintaining orderly development. Capital improvements should be programmed to coincide with and complement the action of private enterprise. The various municipal departments, such as Public Works, Traffic Engineering, and City Planning, should furnish technical assistance to the Better Core Committee. **Close coordination between governmental bodies and private enterprise must be maintained as revitalization is accomplished.**



PROPOSAL MAP

- LEGEND
- PARKING
 - RETAIL
 - OFFICE
 - GOVERNMENTAL
 - SUPPORTING ELEMENTS





PROPOSAL

P R O P O S A L G O A L S

ACCESS

SAFE, COMFORTABLE, QUICK, AND ECONOMICAL ACCESS TO THE CORE AREA FROM ANY OTHER PART OF METROPOLITAN FORT WORTH.

CIRCULATION

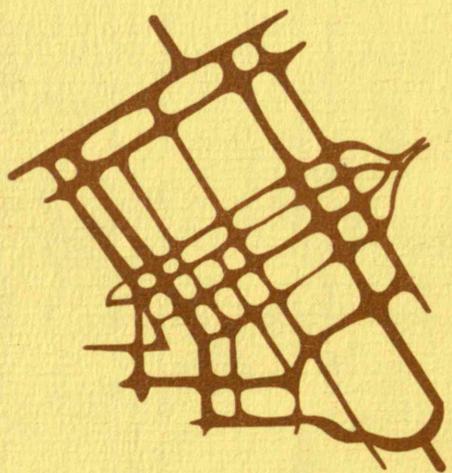
A PATTERN OF TRAFFIC CIRCULATION WITHIN THE CORE AREA THAT WILL MAXIMIZE EFFICIENCY IN TRANSPORTING PEOPLE AND GOODS.

CONVENIENCE

A COMPACT CORE AREA WITH LAND USES ARRANGED FOR CONVENIENCE IN WORKING, SHOPPING, AND CONDUCTING BUSINESS.

IMAGE

A DISTINCTIVE IMAGE PROJECTED BY THE CORE AREA, EXPRESSING THE INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY OF FORT WORTH IN AN IMPRESSIVE AND ENJOYABLE ATMOSPHERE.



P R O P O S A L

C O N C E P T S

HISTORY

Planning for Core revitalization is a developmental process, continually building on the concepts of previous plans. Several plans produced in the past for specific elements of Fort Worth's physical development have included recommendations for the Core. In the early 1900's, both the Kessler and Hare Plans for parks recommended additional open space in the downtown area. The 1927 thorofare plan prepared by Harland Bartholomew and Associates recommended traffic improvements in the Core.

In 1956, the Gruen Plan for "A Greater Fort Worth Tomorrow" attracted international attention with its imaginative proposal for completely eliminating vehicle traffic from the downtown area and converting the entire area into a pedestrian center. The Gruen Plan for Fort Worth was a milestone in the history of downtown planning: it was the first plan to develop the concepts that have since become almost standards for downtown revitalization. These concepts — the pedestrian mall, traffic loops, and peripheral parking — have had a major influence on Core revitalization in other cities. In fact, complete plans similar to the Gruen Plan have actually been constructed in Fresno, California; Rochester, New York; Hartford, Connecticut; and Urbana, Illinois. The Gruen Plan has also strongly influenced subsequent planning for downtown Fort Worth. This Proposal is a direct outgrowth of the interest stimulated by that plan.

In 1961, the Fort Worth Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, in cooperation with the City Planning Department, began work on a

plan to guide the growth and development of the Central Business District (the Core and Frame areas combined). The plan developed at that time is included in the *Preliminary Plan for the 1980 Urban Area*, the comprehensive plan for Fort Worth (approved by the City Council in 1964). The broad outlines of that plan have served as guidelines for the development of this Proposal. This Proposal is intended to provide a practical, attainable first step toward revitalization of the Core Area.

PRINCIPLES

This Proposal expresses two underlying principles:

- The Core Area can be revitalized by refining and expanding present land use groupings, by renovating older buildings, and by integrating new construction with existing development — without tearing down and rebuilding the entire Core.
- The physical layout of the Core should facilitate the countless person-to-person contacts that must take place daily among people in business activity. This constant interaction involves people walking from place to place — from office to office and from store to store. These people — pedestrians — are the main users of the Core Area; therefore, the traffic pattern and land use arrangement should be designed primarily for them.



PEDESTRIAN WAYS

CONCEPT

Free the Core Area from vehicle-pedestrian conflict and make walking in the Area a pleasing experience by providing attractive, open pedestrian spaces.

BETTER CORE TOMORROW

Convert Main Street and portions of Second and Throckmorton Streets into pedestrian ways.

The core of a city is a place for people. People working, transacting business, buying, selling, conferring, governing — busy people. People window shopping, sitting in the park, going to movies, sightseeing, visiting museums, meeting friends, dining out — carefree people. All kinds of people.

The core of a city is not a place for cars. A car is like an overcoat you need to check at the door when you attend a play or social function. An overcoat would be a nuisance to carry around with you at such an event. Similarly, you drive your car to the Core Area; but once you arrive, it becomes a burden — unless you can store it conveniently.

Downtown Fort Worth is overburdened with cars. Congestion of streets and intersections causes you frustration, inconvenience, and delay both when driving and when walking. You are particularly

harassed by the disorder of the environment when walking downtown. There is very little chance to enjoy any of the things that could make walking in the downtown area a pleasure: complete freedom of movement, easy access to shops on both sides of the street, open space, appealing environment through attractive landscaping.

Pedestrian ways can give you, as a pedestrian, all these pleasures and more. At the same time, they can give you, as a driver, greater convenience and safety — if they are a part of a totally coordinated plan for vehicular circulation.

Pedestrian ways must be part of such a plan to be successful. Opening a pedestrian way involves much more than merely closing a street. The traffic from that street must go somewhere. The cars that bring the pedestrians to the mall must park somewhere, too. **Without careful planning, chaos can result. With careful planning, however, everyone can benefit from a pedestrian way.** Drivers and pedestrians benefit from the elimination of conflict at intersections. Downtown merchants benefit because a pedestrian way boosts the economy. A well-designed pedestrian way brings more people to the area — partly because it is often a sightseeing attraction in its own right. More people in the area will mean more business.

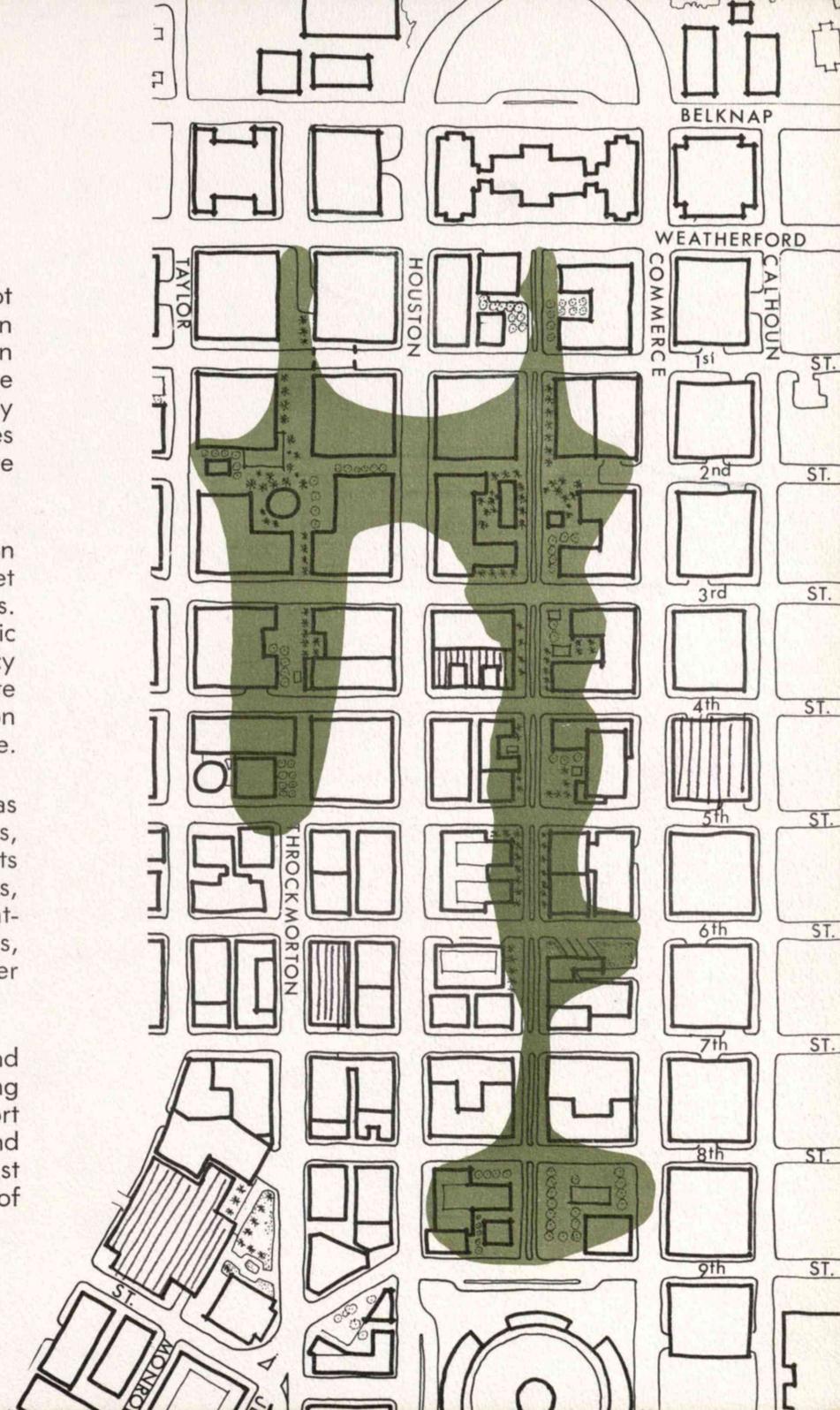
The experience of other cities shows that a pedestrian way is certain to increase sales volumes. In Fresno, California, a six-block pedestrian mall and a series of cross-malls were officially opened in

September, 1964. Canton, Ohio, has a 540-foot long pedestrian plaza that was officially opened in June, 1963. Merchants in both Fresno and Canton have reported substantial increases in sales since the pedestrian ways were opened. These are only two of many possible examples. Cities of all sizes — from Atchison, Kansas, to New York City — have successful pedestrian ways.

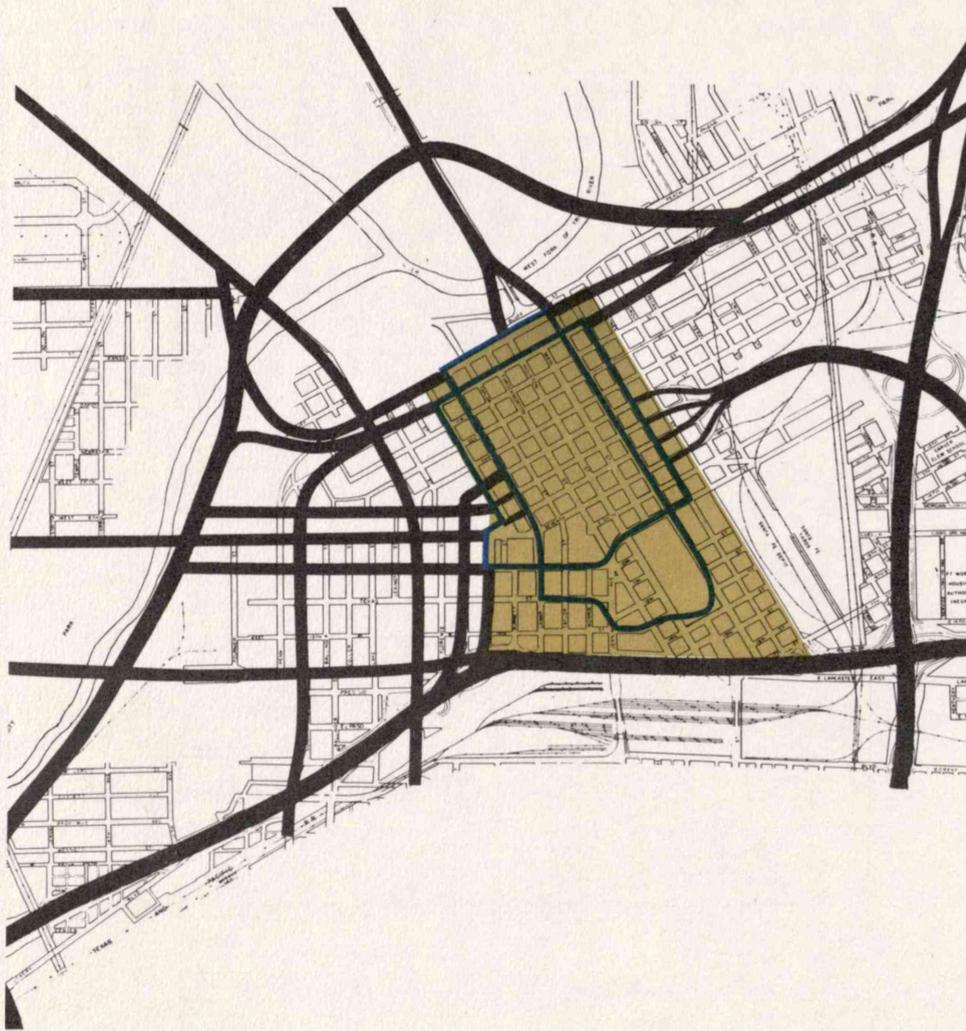
The map at right shows the proposed pedestrian ways for the Fort Worth Core Area — Main Street and portions of Throckmorton and Second Streets. The Main pedestrian way should retain two traffic lanes — one each way — for buses and emergency vehicles only. A minibus system along this route might be used to shuttle between the Convention Center, the retail area, and other parts of the Core.

A pedestrian way should be a visual delight as well as a practical convenience. A variety of shapes, colors, and textures should be used to enliven its appearance. Such features as fountains, ponds, patterned pavement, trees, plants, and special lighting effects add beauty and glamour. Rest benches, shade-providing shelters, covered walks, and other amenities add comfort and convenience.

Pedestrian ways can draw together structures and spaces into a functional and esthetically pleasing design. In the design of pedestrian ways, Fort Worth can capitalize on ideas already tried and tested in other cities; however, any design must be adapted to the unique character and needs of Fort Worth.



T R A F F I C



CONCEPT

Separate vehicles from pedestrians to eliminate conflict, coordinating the two kinds of traffic into an integrated pattern designed for the convenience of both pedestrians and drivers.

BETTER CORE TOMORROW

Encircle the Core Area with a loop street system; close Main Street and portions of Second and Throckmorton Streets; and initiate a freeway on the north and west sides of the Frame Area.

Too many cars pour into the Core Area at peak periods each day now, and the number is steadily growing. Projections indicate that the number of auto driver trips entering and leaving the Core daily will jump from the present 96,300 to approximately 150,000 by 1980 — more than a 50% increase. Existing street patterns and capacities cannot adequately handle that many automobiles.

One of the "top priority" recommendations of this Proposal is a loop street system of paired one-way streets to encircle the Core (see map at right). The loop streets will link the freeways to parking facilities located just inside the loops. Automobiles can be conveniently parked after penetrating only one or two blocks into the inner Core Area. The loop streets will also enable through traffic to bypass the Core Area entirely.

The loop streets should be designed to attract traffic from inadequate interior streets of the Core by offering greater speed and convenience to the motorist. The loop streets should be given preference in traffic signalization; parking and freight zones should be removed to increase traffic flow. As new development takes place on the loop streets, additional right-of-way should be provided through setback restrictions and development ordinances so that the streets may be widened as traffic volumes warrant it. With the loop streets in operation to handle vehicle traffic efficiently, several internal streets should be closed for pedestrian use. Main Street and portions of Second and Throckmorton Streets should be converted into pedestrian ways (see p. 15).

The following street improvements will be necessary to put the loop street system into effect:

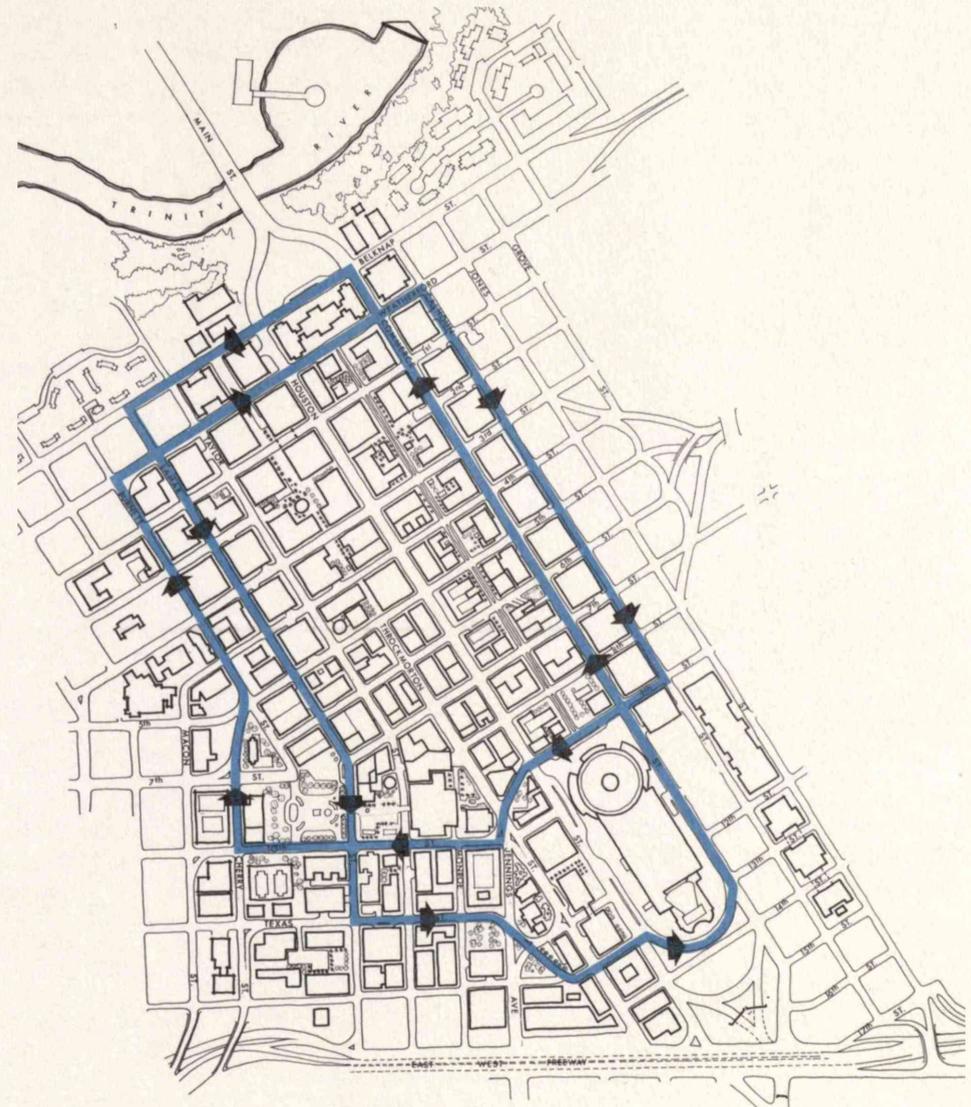
1. Connect Cherry Street to Burnet Street from Seventh to Fifth Streets
2. Connect Texas Street to Thirteenth Street
3. Purchase right-of-way and improve turning radii where loop streets turn at 90°
4. Fill drainage valleys on Taylor and Burnet Streets
5. Resurface existing brick surfaces

Rochester, New York, has a loop street system, similar to the one proposed here, which made it possible to convert portions of the inner Core into pedestrian areas. The highly successful Midtown Plaza project, completed in 1962, covers about 1/5 of the land within the Rochester loop. The new and remodeled buildings in the project area enclose a 300' X 300' air conditioned, skylighted plaza which forms the nucleus of the project. The plaza is landscaped with trees, flowers, fountains, benches, and sculpture. The loop street system, developed to handle traffic efficiently, helps to assure the successful operation of Midtown Plaza.

Fort Worth has an excellent freeway system which will provide good access to the proposed loop streets from the south and east sides of the Core Area. An additional freeway should be initiated on the north and west sides of the Frame Area (see map p. 16) to improve access from these directions. This new freeway would also help relieve overloading of the West and North Freeways by establishing a direct link between the southwest and northeast sections of the City.

If the number of cars continues to increase at the present rate, eventually it will become physically impossible to provide enough streets and freeways to carry them: there would be little area left over for anything else! Mass transit must necessarily be developed as part of the ultimate transportation solution for Fort Worth. The Leonard's subway might be extended through the downtown area to serve as a hub of a mass transit system for Fort Worth.

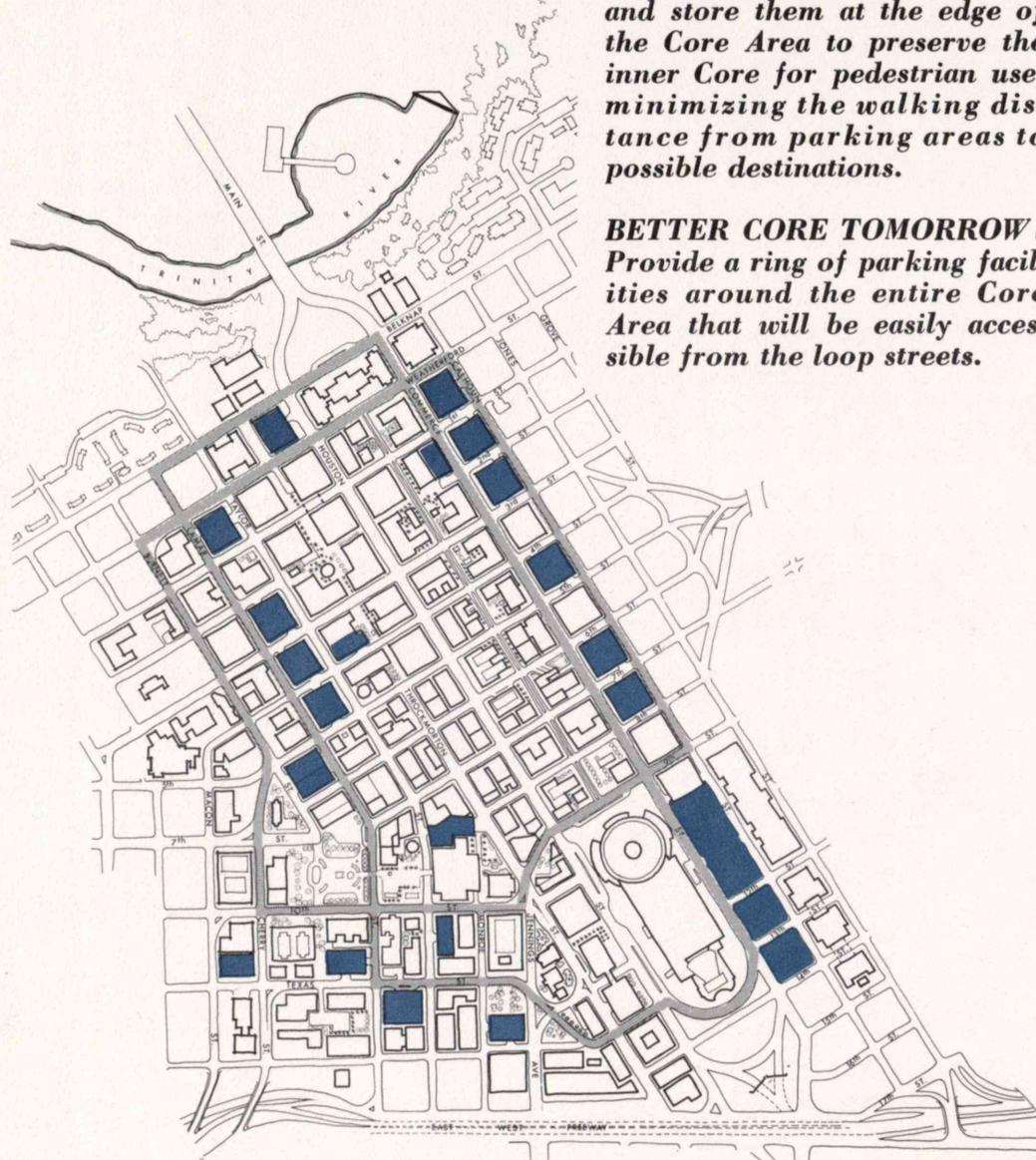
Highways will become inadequate within the next fifteen years for traffic to the new Fort Worth-Dallas regional airport. Some kind of mass transit system, such as a grade or elevated railway, monorail, or elevated bus system, will need to be established. The airport transit system might also be linked with the downtown subway.



P A R K I N G

CONCEPT: Intercept vehicles and store them at the edge of the Core Area to preserve the inner Core for pedestrian use, minimizing the walking distance from parking areas to possible destinations.

BETTER CORE TOMORROW: Provide a ring of parking facilities around the entire Core Area that will be easily accessible from the loop streets.



Approximately 17,000 additional parking spaces will be needed in the Frame Area by 1980. Eight to ten thousand additional spaces will be needed in the Core Area alone.

Proposed parking areas to meet these future needs are shown in blue on the map at left. These areas **would form a ring around the Core to "drain-off" vehicle traffic before it reaches the pedestrian-oriented inner Core.** These locations would be within a two to three minute walk of major destinations.

The amount of land available for surface parking is limited, so that multi-level parking facilities will be required. Parking garages, each covering a full city block, could be constructed with one or two sub-surface levels and five to seven above-surface levels. Covered walkways — overpasses or underpasses — should connect parking garages to surrounding buildings, wherever possible, for the comfort and convenience of the pedestrian.

Additional parking facilities could be incorporated within buildings used predominantly for retail, office, or other purposes. For example, a building might have retail uses on the first two or three levels, with parking on upper levels. Roofs or basements of buildings might also be used for parking. There are many examples of roof or basement parking incorporated within buildings throughout this country.

Parking facilities should be provided by private enterprise. **Merchants in the Core Area should consider the possibility that either free or subsidized parking would pay for itself by attracting more customers** — especially those who now shop in suburban shopping centers where parking is both free and plentiful.

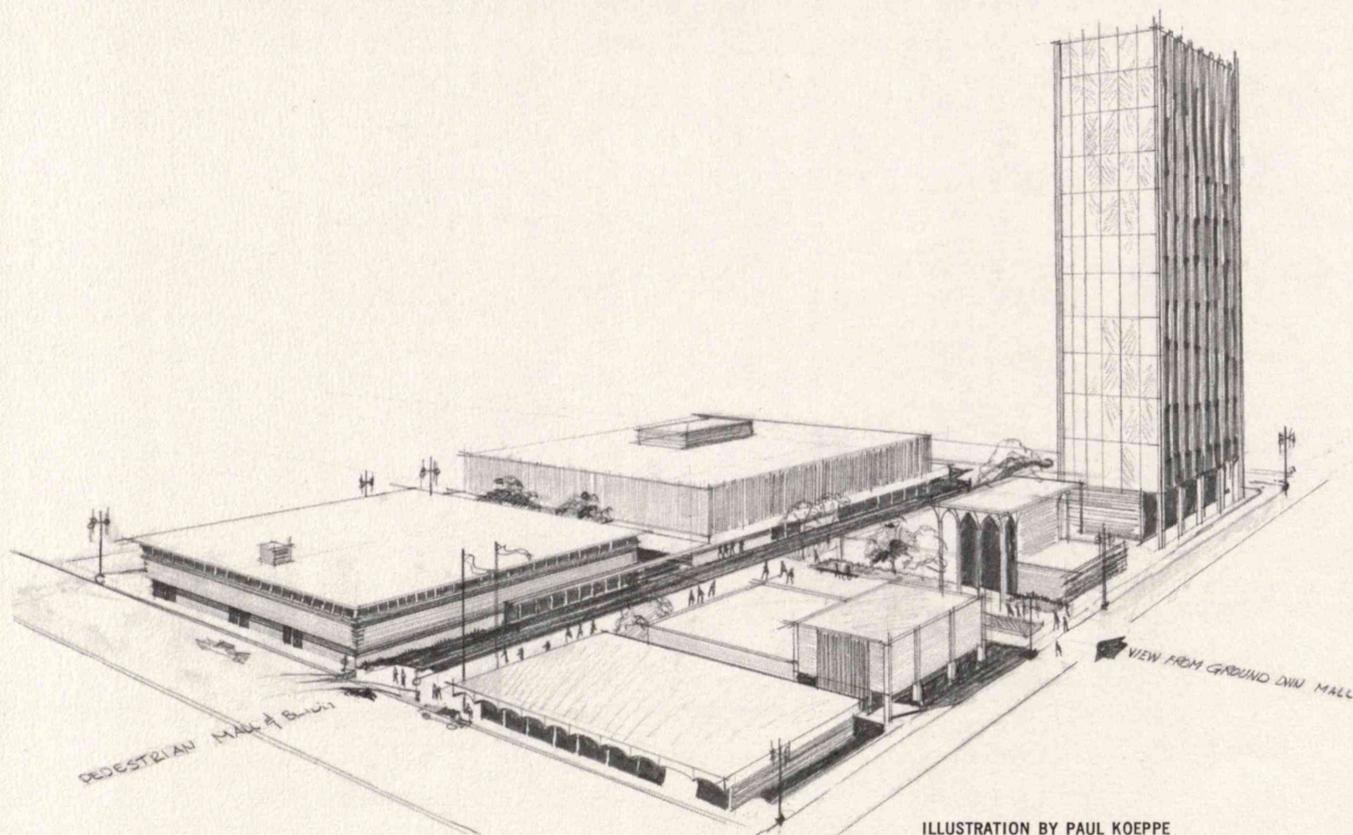
R E T A I L

CONCEPT

Develop a downtown retail center with the advantages of a suburban shopping center plus the special advantages of the Core's central location.

BETTER CORE TOMORROW

Expand and renovate existing stores and build new stores to solidify the downtown retail area into a unified shopping center oriented around the pedestrian ways.



The Core Area now contains about 1.26 million square feet of retail space. Projections show that sales potential will exist by 1980 to support as much as 2.2 million square feet of retail space — an increase of nearly 75%.

Downtown merchants must attract this potential to the Core Area or it will go elsewhere. If the Core Area is to compete effectively for its fair share of potential sales, it must develop some of the features that make suburban shopping centers popular: pedestrian-oriented layout; a casual atmosphere; esthetic appeal; and convenient parking.

Retail property owners in the Core Area must invest to improve their property even to the extent of "going out on a limb" to attract potential sales. A certain amount of risk will be involved, as there is with any investment. But expert economic projections for Fort Worth, as well as experience in other cities, indicate that the risk is worth taking. **Improving the retail Core Area — renovating, expanding, and beautifying — is a good investment that will pay high dividends.**

With the proposed pedestrian ways forming the heart of the retail center, new and expanded retail activities should unify and solidify retail development in its present and adjacent locations. Potential retail development is shown in red on the map, p. 9. Remodeling and new construction should take full advantage of the new design possibilities the pedestrian ways will offer. Buildings should be freestanding, recessed, or projected into pedestrian areas. The resulting variety of spatial arrangement will form a pleasing and interesting environment. Outdoor activity areas in the pedestrian ways, such as sidewalk cafes and outdoor display spaces, could be particularly charming and distinctive.

Owners of retail property in the Core Area should strive to create a uniquely interesting and beautiful area that will attract visitors purely for sightseeing. **People who come to see will stay and buy.**

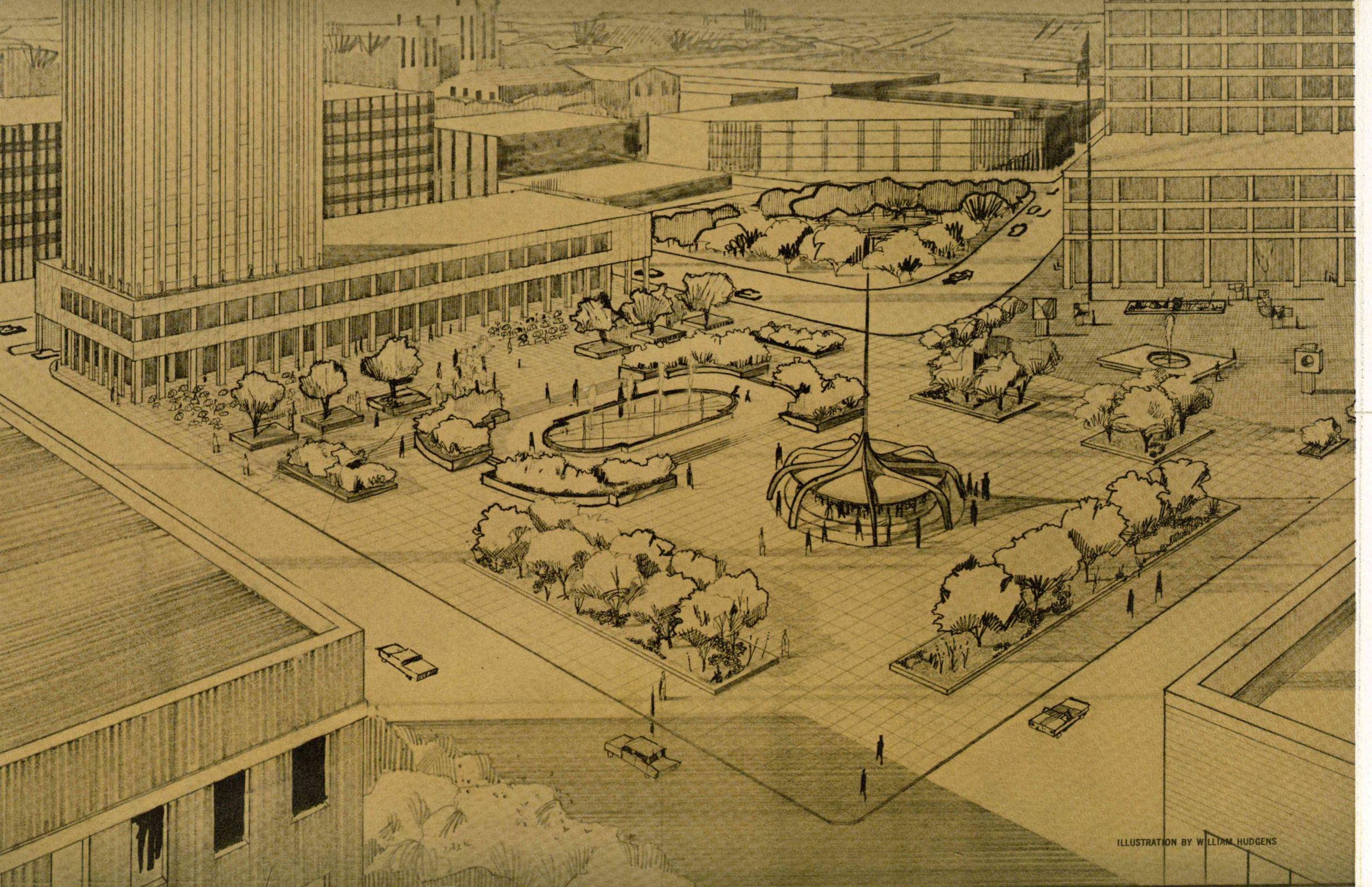


ILLUSTRATION BY WILLIAM HUDGENS

O F F I C E

CONCEPT *Preserve and strengthen the position of the Core Area as the major office center for the entire Fort Worth Metropolitan Area.*

BETTER CORE TOMORROW *Add visual appeal and physical comfort to existing convenience of central location by building new facilities and remodeling present ones.*

The Core Area now has about 2.4 million square feet of office space. If the Core is revitalized, it can support an estimated 4.5 million square feet of office space by 1980 — a 96% increase over present space.

The office vacancy rate in the Core is approximately 23% at present — nearly ¼ of the available space is not being used. Paradoxically, however, new office space will be needed in spite of the high vacancy rate. Much of the vacant space is located in deteriorating, outmoded buildings which need extensive renovation to attract renters and put the property back on a profit-making basis. **New, modern buildings in the Core will attract office uses that are not interested in anything less than first class space.**

New office buildings should be located in or near the existing office area. Proposed office use is shown in yellow on map, p. 9.

The Chamber of Commerce has an active prospecting program to bring new industry to Fort Worth. A similar program should be established to attract new office uses for the Core Area.

The design of office buildings can contribute amenities and attractions to the Core Area in many ways. **Underground or overhead walkways**

should be widely used to connect office buildings with each other and with parking facilities. New office buildings should be set back from property limits to add design interest and create attractive pedestrian spaces. The First National Bank Plaza is an example of effective use of open space around an office building. Structures themselves may be partially raised from the ground level to create covered pedestrian areas. This has already been very successfully done by the Bank of Commerce, where a barren, unattractive corner has been replaced by a comfortable pedestrian space recessed into the building.

The office area should include some diversity of activities to keep the area alive after work hours. The first floors of office buildings could be used for specialty shops and restaurants. Upper floors would be good locations for nighttime entertainment and eating places. A first class supper club on an upper floor of one of the office buildings, possibly with a rooftop terrace for dining and dancing, would be a major evening attraction for the Core Area.

Some solution should be devised to segregate the heavy office pedestrian traffic from the vehicle traffic along Seventh Street, the heart of the downtown office area. Separate levels might be established for the two kinds of traffic to give each one access to the same area with complete freedom of movement and without conflict. An alternative solution would be to restrict vehicles entirely from the area and to provide some other access pattern for vehicle traffic.

Burnett Park, illustration at left, is one of the most attractive portions of the Core Office Area — an asset that should be maximized. **A pedestrian way should be constructed across the block that separates the park from the Federal Center.** This would visually integrate the building with the park and would provide safe pedestrian access for a large number of the downtown populace who use this facility. The visual character of the Burnett Park Area should be expanded and improved to project the image of an outstanding metropolitan office center.

G O V E R N M E N T

CONCEPT *Centralize government offices for maximum coordination and efficiency providing visual and functional transition between government buildings and surrounding areas.*

BETTER CORE TOMORROW *Plan the new City Hall on the site immediately south of the existing one and proceed to develop the adjacent area as a transition between the Convention Center and Federal Center.*

The central location of the Core Area makes it the most accessible site from which government offices serve the entire city and metropolitan area. The more these offices can be concentrated, the more efficiently they can operate from an administrative point of view and the more conveniently they can be reached by the citizens they serve.

It would be ideal for government activity at all levels — federal, county, and city — to be centralized in one nucleus. However, two such centers are more feasible for the Fort Worth Area because existing government offices are already firmly established in two separate areas. The present City Hall, the federal court house, and the new federal office building are located at the southwestern edge of the Core. City and federal government offices should be concentrated in this vicinity. The Tarrant County Court House and county offices are located at the northern end of the Core. This location of the county government center should be retained to preserve the historic court house site and to avoid costly relocation of existing facilities.

Usually when you want or need something, you dream first, then plan, and then wait — or seek — for the opportunity to bring your dreams and plans into reality. Opportunity is knocking in one particular portion of the Core, however, before the dreams have been fully expressed or the plans formulated. The place is the area between the Convention Center, the Federal Center, and the freeway. The need is for a functional and visual transition — a link — between the Convention Center and the Federal Center. **The opportunity to develop this area is here — now.**

The opportunity is here because the bond issue has already been approved for badly needed new City Hall facilities, and the tentative location — a two-block site already owned by the City immediately south of the existing City Hall — is in this area. The new city office building with properly oriented open space developed around it can help to provide a logical transition in function and in appearance between the convention and the federal centers. This new building should create a progressive and dynamic image of Fort Worth which would reflect the ideas and progressive mindedness of the citizens of Fort Worth. This open space could serve a similar purpose to that of the pedestrian ways in the retail center — giving identity and unity to similar functions. **The government center could be the showplace of the Core Area** (see illustration at right), with fine sculpture, fountains, and natural elements of beauty such as grass, trees, shrubbery, and flowers. The result: an attractive strip of harmonious land uses spanning the Core Area all the way from the Convention Center to Burnett Park — a pleasant flow of open space incorporating existing structures and the new City Hall for maximum convenience and visual appeal.

The new City Hall should be designed to foster close coordination between departments for more efficient operation of government. It should also be planned to allow for future expansion if it becomes necessary. The land reserved for future expansion could be used in the meantime as landscaped open space.

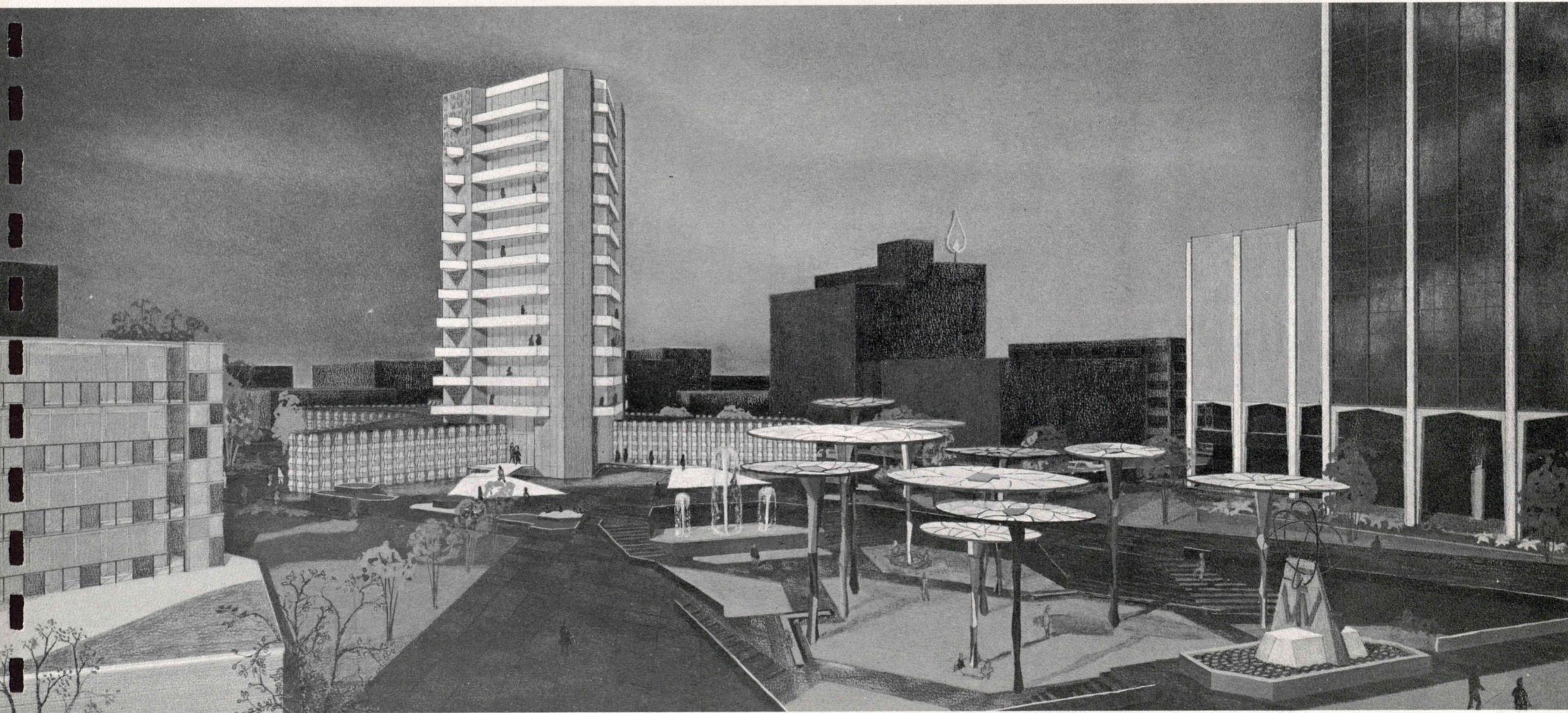
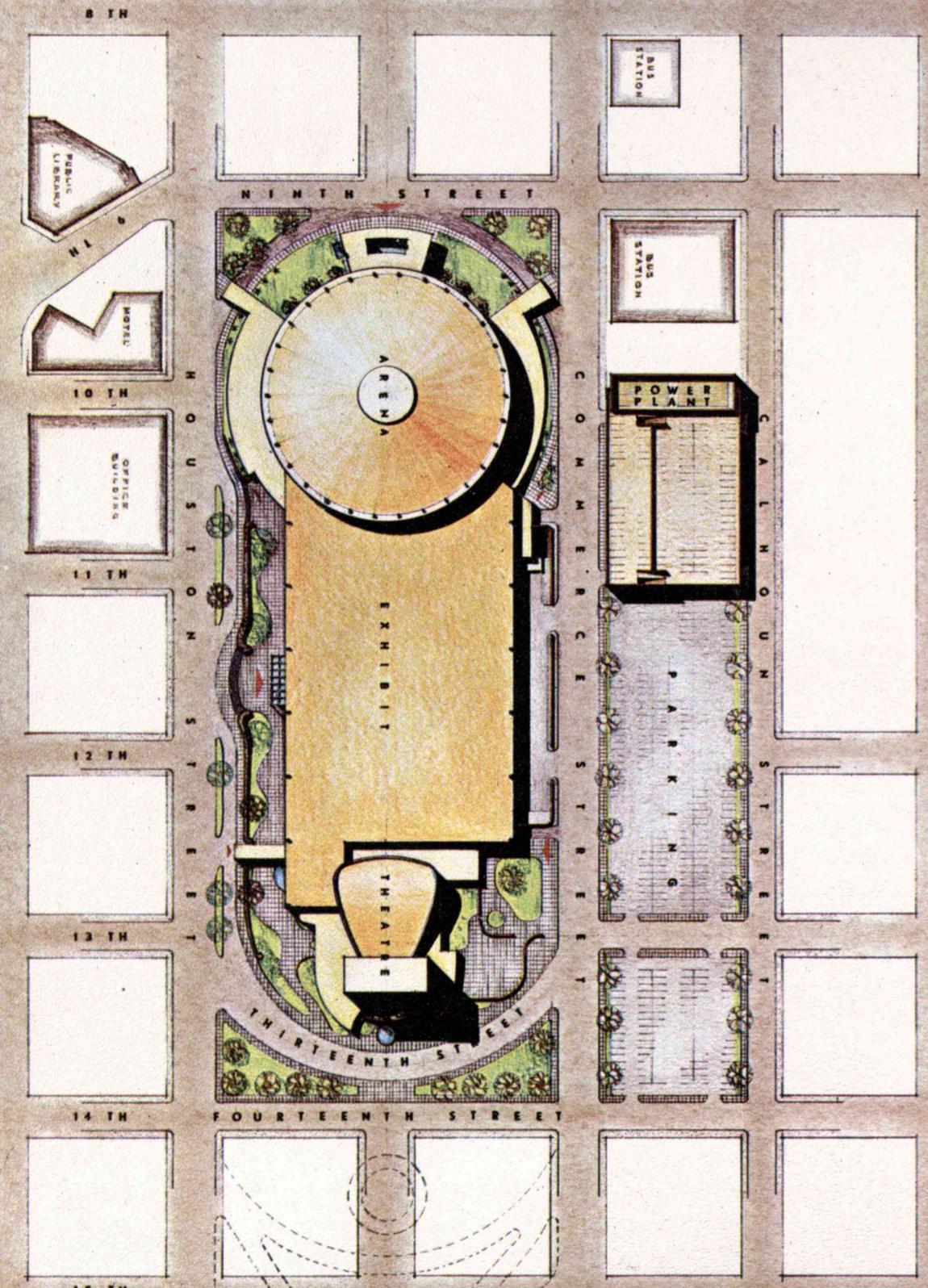


ILLUSTRATION BY HUEY H. BALL



SUPPORTING ELEMENTS

The Tarrant County Convention Center is becoming a reality! The Convention Center is just one element of this Proposal but a big step forward. The Center will displace blight and decay that have afflicted the Core Area. In contrast, the Convention Center will be a visual asset and an object of great pride for the citizens of the Fort Worth Metropolitan Area. **The Convention Center will bolster the economy** by bringing visitors to the City—visitors with money to spend.

The Convention Center will bolster the economy, that is, **if private enterprise provides the necessary supplementary facilities** to make the Convention Center a success. This is a very important "if."

The Convention Center by itself, no matter how outstanding it is, will not automatically and immediately attract large conventions. Adequate supporting facilities are absolutely essential. Unless sufficient hotels, restaurants, and other facilities are provided to serve the needs of visitors, the Convention Center is likely to become a white elephant—big and beautiful but useless.

Even before the Convention Center project was planned, an economic analysis of Fort Worth by expert consultants pointed out a need for 800 new hotel rooms in the Core Area. This need is greatly expanded by the prospect that the new Convention Center will be equipped to draw conventions of 10,000 or more people into the city. An up-to-date, high-rise hotel, located conveniently near the Convention Center, is urgently needed.

Conventioners expect a city to provide more than just meeting places and hotel rooms. Fort Worth cannot afford to be described as a town where "they roll up the sidewalks at nine o'clock at night." If the Tarrant County Convention Center is to compete with convention centers in other cities, the Fort Worth Core Area must offer fine restaurants, live entertainment, and cultural attractions for visitors to enjoy.

These **Supporting Activities** would complement the daytime activities of the Core, as well as the Convention Center, and **would also attract a nighttime population of local people.** People who work downtown, especially, would probably stay downtown for an occasional "evening out" if there were something downtown worth staying for. The Core Area could be kept busy and alive for profitable extra hours every day.



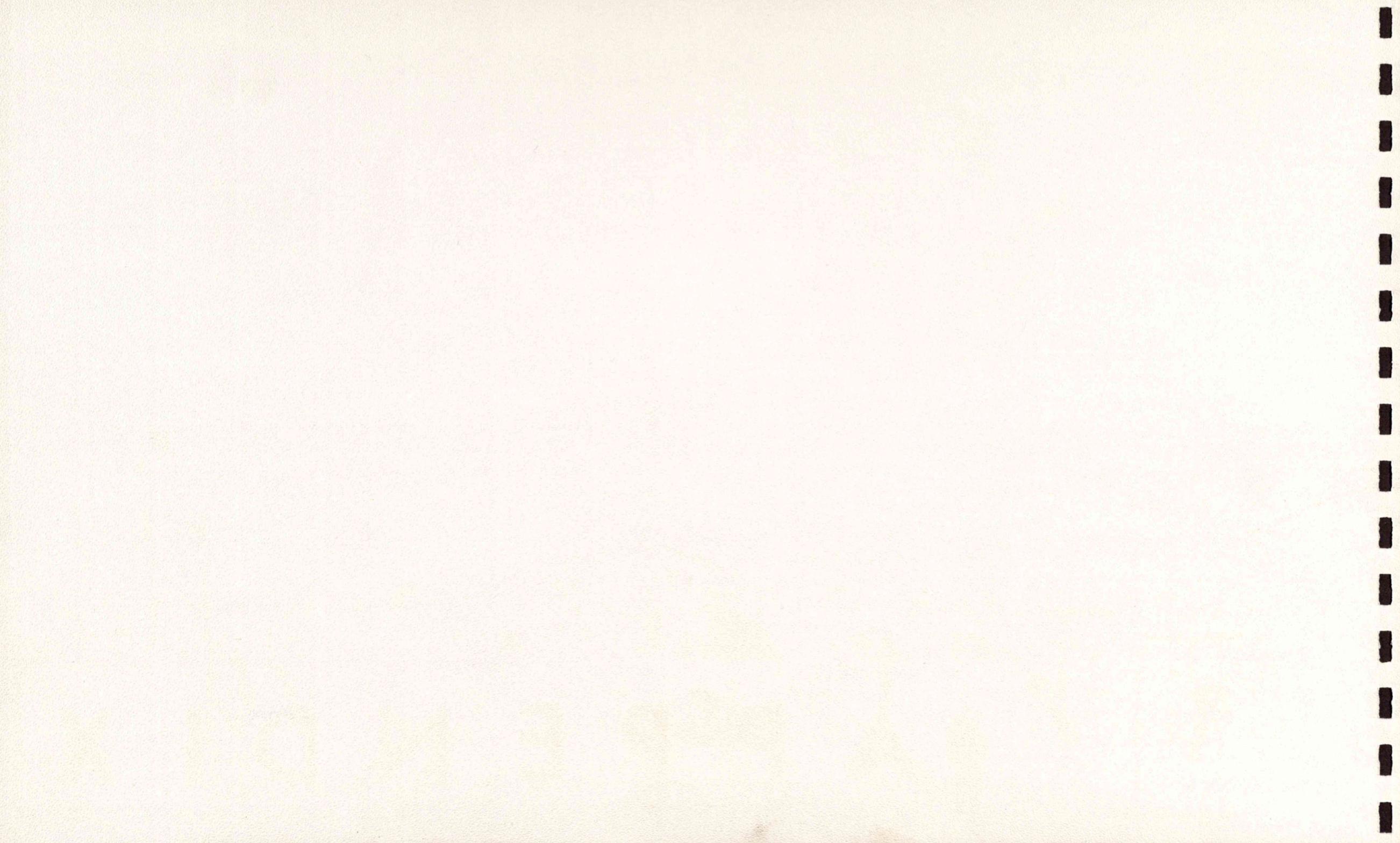
CONCEPT: *Enliven the Core Area with diversified entertainment, cultural attractions, and adequate supporting facilities such as hotels and restaurants.*

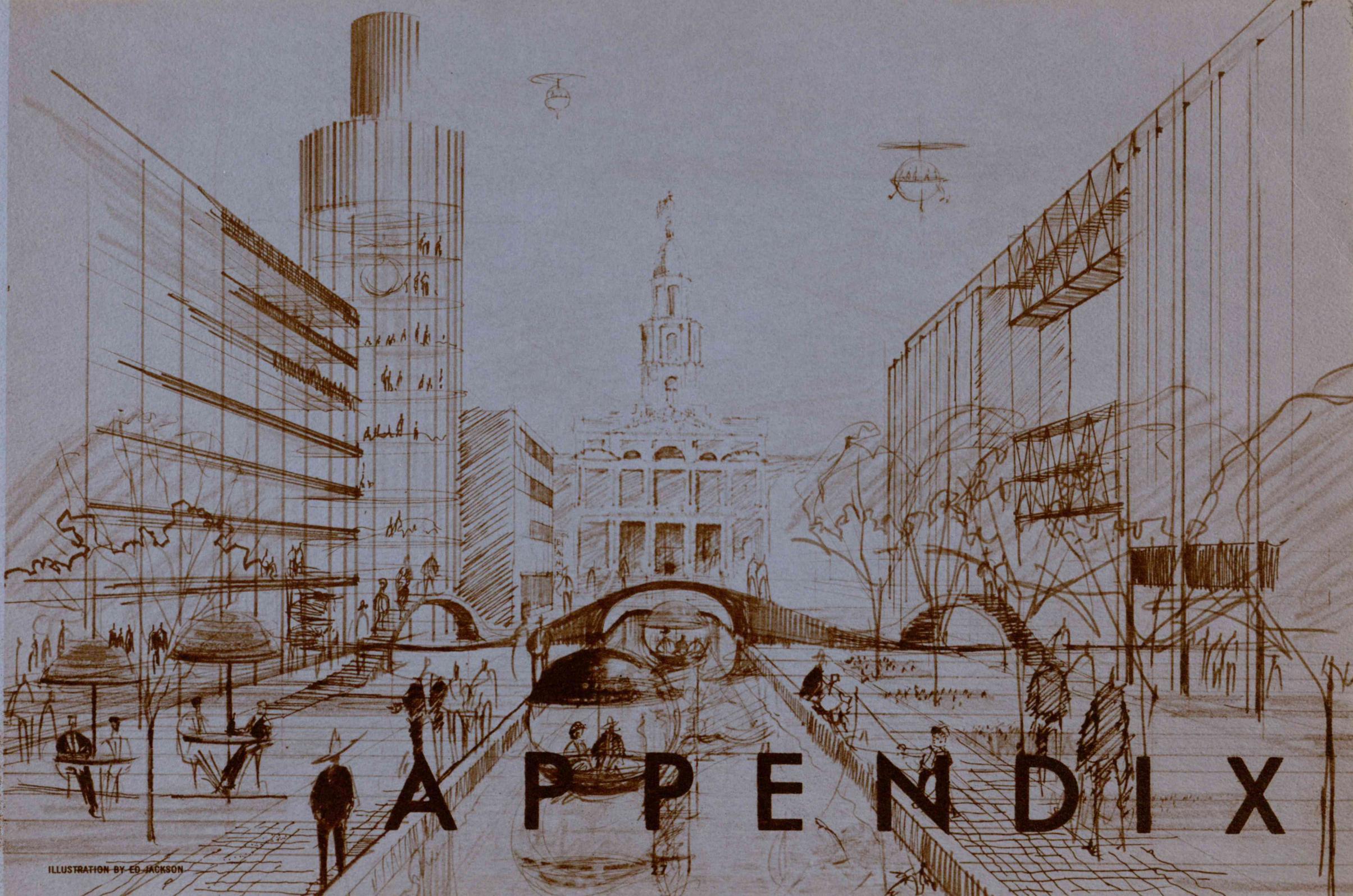
BETTER CORE TOMORROW: *Complete the Tarrant County Convention Center and invest in the hotels, restaurants, and other attractions that are needed to assure its success.*

**Associated Convention
Center Architects:**

- Preston M. Geren
- Morris Parker Associates
- Herman G. Cox
- Hueppelsheuser and White
- Wilson, Patterson, Sowden,
Dunlap and Epperly

ILLUSTRATION BY WILLARD REAVIS





APPENDIX

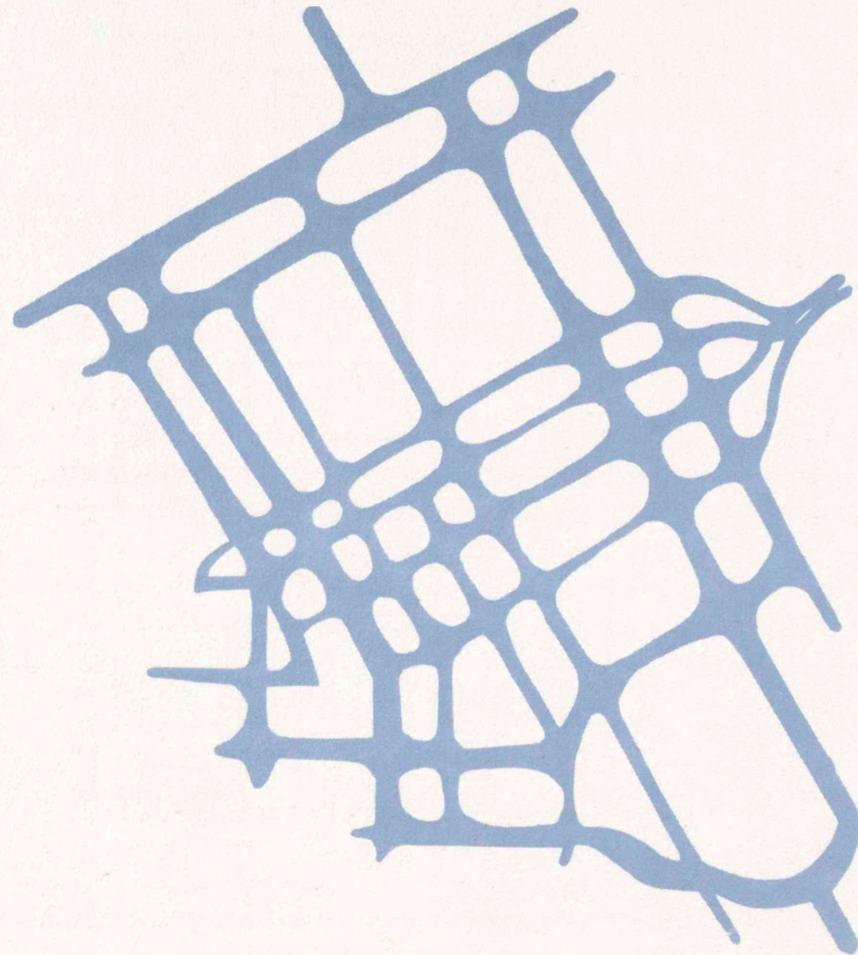
ILLUSTRATION BY ED JACKSON

CONTENT OF APPENDIX

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CORE-REGION RELATIONSHIP	32
TRAFFIC	34
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GOVERNMENT	39

All population and economic statistical data in this report are developed from:

"Tarrant County Economic Analysis of Land Use Requirements" prepared for the City of Fort Worth by Larry Smith and Company, 318 Central Building, Seattle 4, Washington.



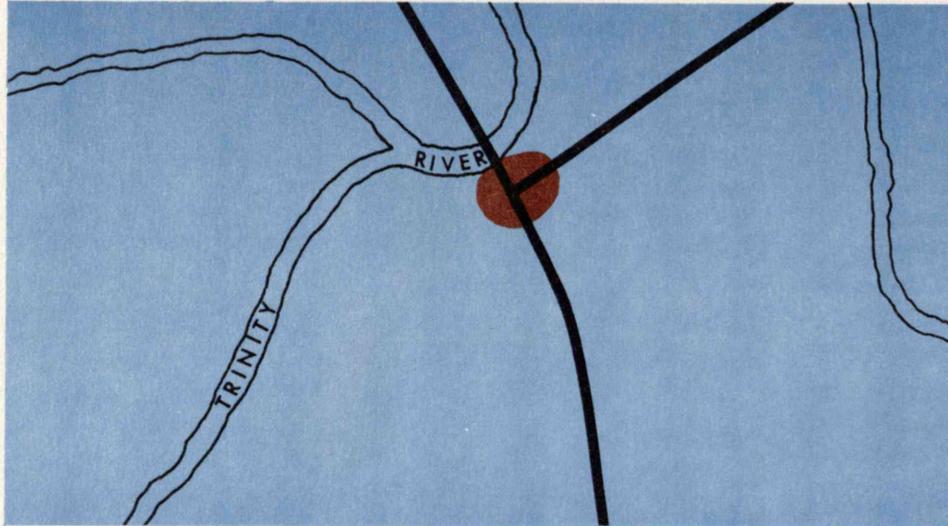
S U M M A R Y

The Fort Worth Core Area is a tight, narrow strip approximately four blocks wide and fourteen blocks long. The Core covers approximately 92 acres or 54 blocks (most of them 200' x 200'). One small portion of this area — approximately twelve blocks of the office area centered on Seventh Street — is modern and attractive and bustles with activity. The remainder of the Core Area, with scattered exceptions, is aging, drab and lifeless.

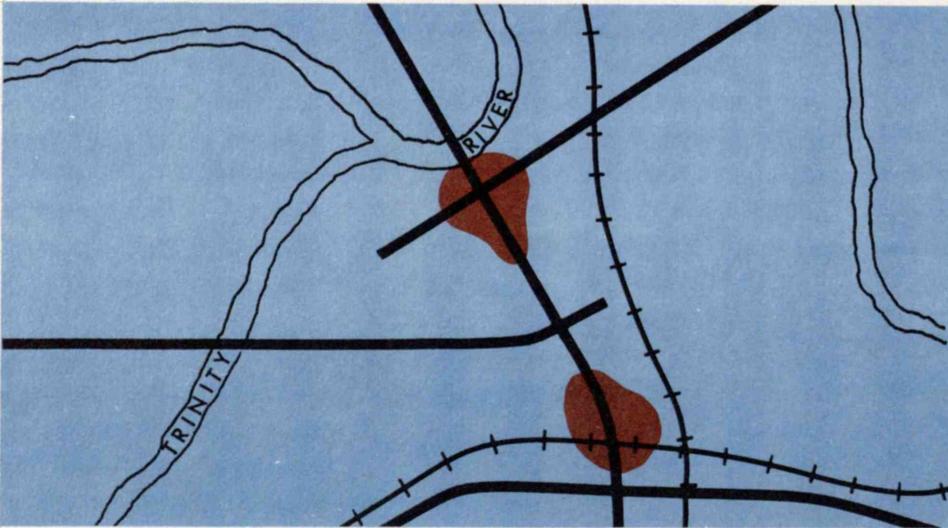
This section of the report contains a summary of existing conditions and projected trends in the following categories of land use in the Core Area: Traffic, Parking, Retail, Office, and Government. The projections are based on the following assumptions:

1. The City of Fort Worth will continue to grow and will not suffer a major economic decline.
2. Fort Worth will not be affected by any major disaster.
3. A plan for revitalization, carried out through private initiative and progressive public policy, will generate upward trends in the Core Area.
4. Present downward trends will continue unless aggressive action is taken to revitalize the Core.

Present downward trends are expressed by a declining drawing power to attract retail trade, a high office vacancy rate, problems of vehicle-pedestrian conflict and insufficient parking, and a deficiency of supporting elements such as restaurants, hotels, and entertainment. **The problems outlined in this section indicate the serious need for action to reverse the downward trends.**



1860



1880

EVOLUTION OF THE CORE

The historical development of Fort Worth has shaped the present character of the Core and Frame Areas. These areas have evolved through time as shown on the four following sketches.

FRONTIER SETTLEMENT

The original nucleus of Fort Worth was the U.S. Army fort built in 1849 on a bluff overlooking the Trinity River at the site of the present Tarrant County Court House. In 1853, after the fort was abandoned as a military establishment, settlers began converting it into a town. This frontier settlement, shown in red on the map, was the foundation for the older area of development in the northern portion of the present-day Core.

RAILROAD TOWN

The Texas & Pacific Railroad entered Fort Worth in 1876, followed soon after by the Missouri-Kansas & Texas (Katy) and the Santa Fe. A second nucleus for the growth of the Core sprang up southeast of the original fort area, around the depot (the lower red area shown on the map). Some of the original structures are still standing in this area, near what are now Jones and Lancaster Streets. The railroads changed Fort Worth from a stopping place along the cattle trail to a major shipping center.

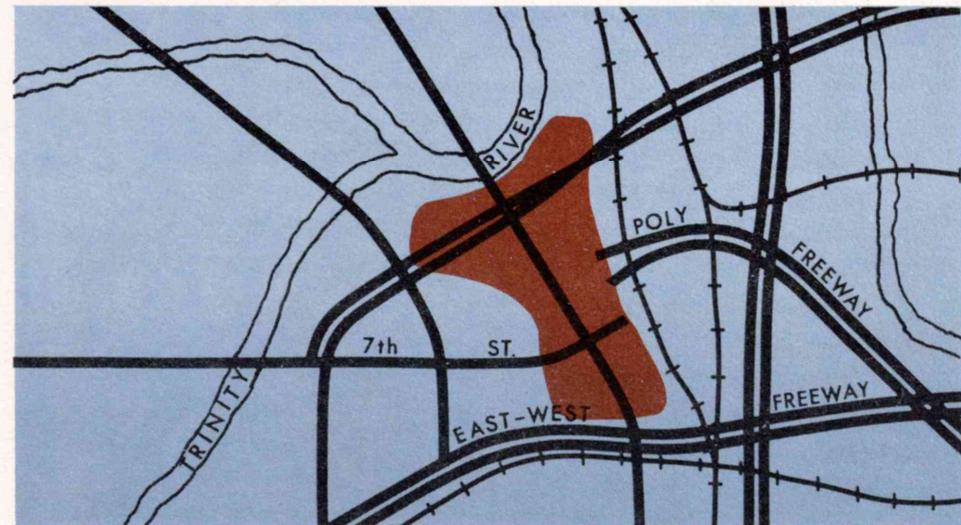
PACKING INDUSTRY AND OIL INDUSTRY

The young city grew rapidly with the coming of additional railroads, the packing industry, and the West Texas oil boom. The newer section of the present Core Area is the result of expansion of the two older areas, as they grew toward each other and filled in the open space between them (as shown on the map). By the early 1900's, the central city had begun to take on its present shape.



1920

1965



MODERN INDUSTRIAL METROPOLIS

Rapid industrialization in the period beginning with World War II brought with it rapid growth for the central city as well as for the entire metropolitan area. An extensive freeway system was built, radiating from the Core Area (see map). The Frame Area grew to fill the area bounded naturally on three sides by the river, the railroad yards and the freeway.

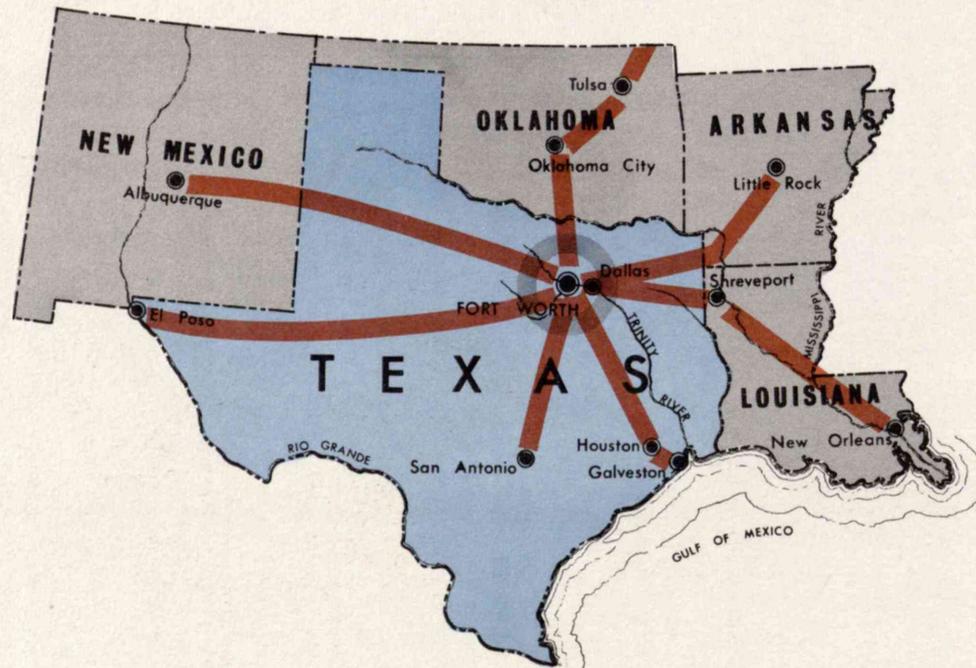
CORE – REGION RELATIONSHIP

The Core Area is not an autonomous, self-sufficient unit. "No man is an island" — neither is the core of a city. The Fort Worth Core Area affects — and is affected by — the surrounding city, metropolitan area and region.

REGIONAL LOCATION

Strategic location of the City of Fort Worth is one asset of the Core Area. Fort Worth is located in north central Texas, literally "where the West begins," at the edge of the vast grazing lands and oil fields of West Texas.

The Fort Worth-Dallas area is geographically the center of the five-state area shown on the map at left. Fort Worth is centrally located with respect to the large southwestern market cities. The city has extensive rail service and air transportation facilities, and is the hub of two interstate highways and several U. S. highways which link the city with the entire southwestern region.



PHYSICAL AND ECONOMIC ASSETS

One of the major factors in the development of the city and the Core Area is the attraction of new industry. The Fort Worth area has several physical assets for industrial development: abundant natural resources; good soils; a mild climate; gently rolling terrain; abundant rainfall; and an adequate supply of high-quality water. The Fort Worth area also has the economic advantages of readily available investment capital and a trained skilled labor force.

POPULATION

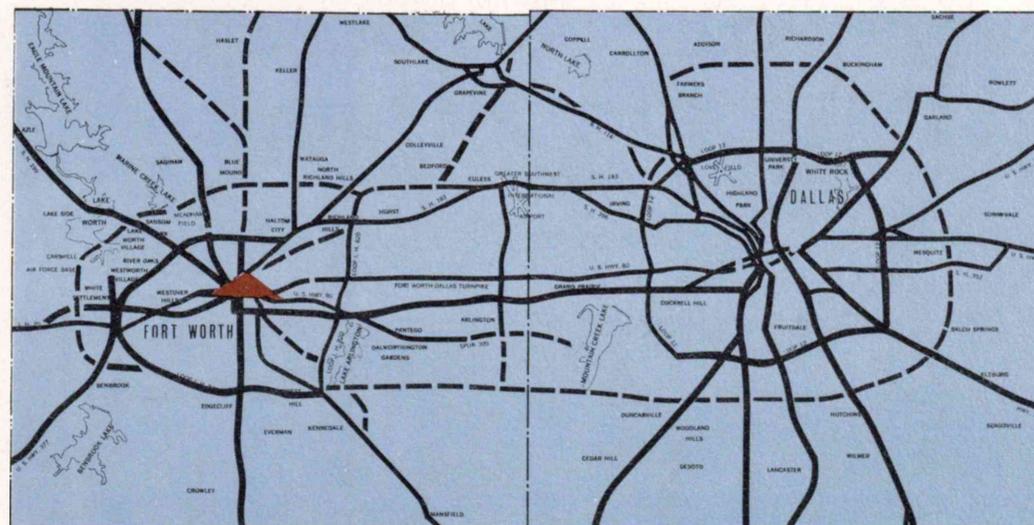
The Fort Worth-Dallas Metropolitan Area (Tarrant and Dallas counties) has a population of approximately 1,836,000. About 603,500 persons live in the Fort Worth Metropolitan Area and nearly 400,000 live in the City of Fort Worth. Fort Worth is one of the fastest growing cities in the United States, as evidenced by a population increase of 27% between 1950 and 1960.

While the population of the city has grown, the Core Area has lost resident population to the outlying areas. Existing low density residential development in the Core Area will have to be replaced with high density high-rise apartments to satisfy the demand for a resident population in the Core.

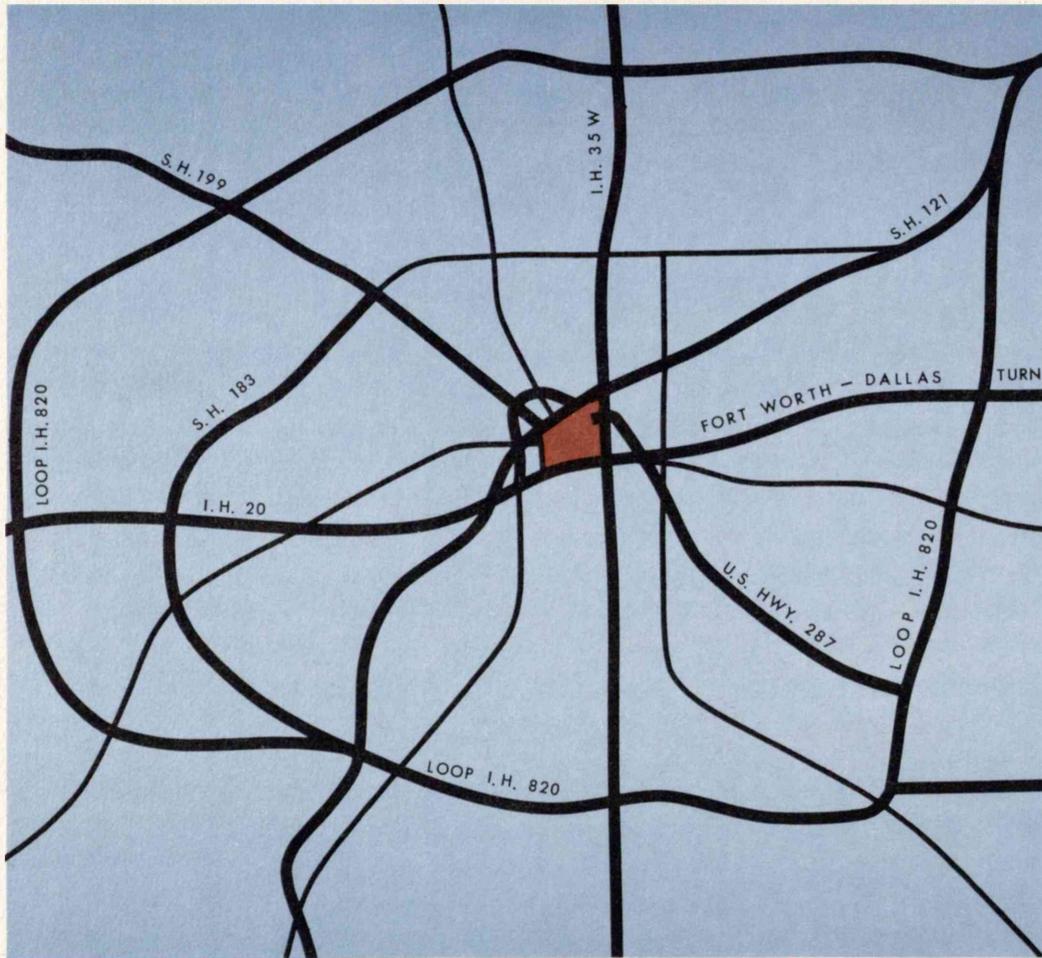
METROPOLITAN AREA

Fort Worth is the western portion of the twin metropolitan area of Fort Worth-Dallas, shown on the map at right. This is the largest metropolitan area in the southwest, and the largest land-locked metropolitan area in the United States. The proximity of the two cities places the two central core areas in stimulating competition, each vying for its share of the commercial, business, manufacturing, and industrial activity of the entire metropolitan complex.

METROPOLITAN AREA



T R A F F I C



The pattern of major thoroughfares and existing and proposed freeways in Fort Worth is shown on the map at the left. When all the proposed city-encircling freeways and connecting radial loops are complete, it will be possible to travel around and through the entire urban area without stopping for traffic signals.

The Core Area (shown in red on the map) lies at the center of this freeway network. Traffic can move on the freeways from outlying areas to the Core with relative ease. Trouble begins when the traffic reaches the Core Area, where the street pattern has not been significantly changed since it was laid out during horse and buggy days. No wonder there is congestion!

Large traffic volumes (see map p. 35) are only part of the problem. Other factors such as the following add to the congestion:

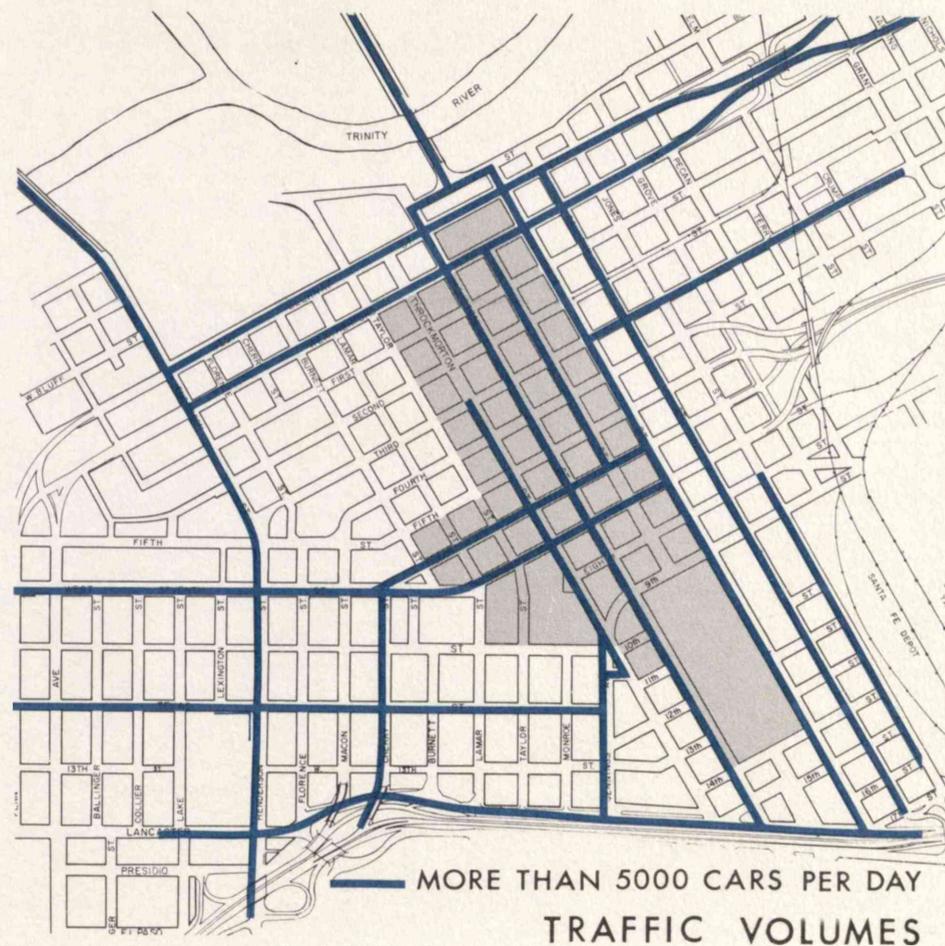
- A large number of automobiles are forced to pass through the Core to reach destinations outside the Core.
- There are too many intersections in the Core because most of the blocks are abnormally small — only 200' x 200'. Each intersection is a point of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.
- The north-south streets in the Core have 80' rights-of-way, but the east-west streets have only 60' rights-of-way. Since the streets were designed, the major axis of traffic movement has shifted from north-

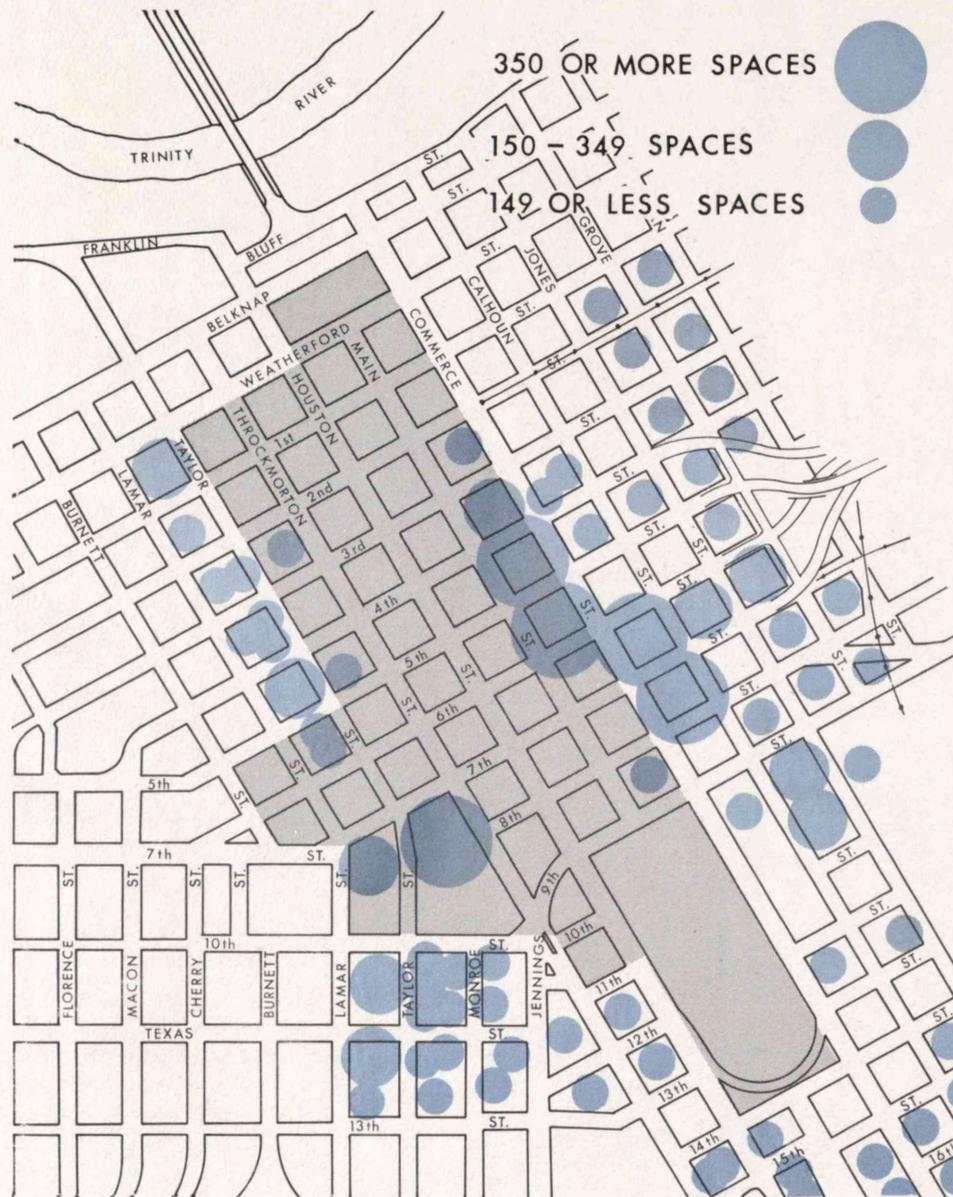
south to east-west. Now, the narrow east-west streets are tending to carry the heavier volumes of traffic.

- Seventh Street carries particularly large volumes of east-west traffic. It also bisects the office area, which contains many tall buildings and high densities of people. The result is conflict, especially during peak hours, between pedestrians entering and leaving the buildings and vehicular traffic on the street.
- Besides carrying automobile traffic, the streets must also be used for bus traffic and truck freight delivery. These vehicles often clog the main traffic with their "stop and go" movements and slow acceleration.

About 96,300 auto driver trips now enter or leave the Core Area daily. Approximately 150,000 auto driver trips are projected in this area each day by 1980. There will also be greater demand for bus transit and freight delivery. The present street system simply cannot meet the needs of the future.

The Traffic Engineering Department is taking steps now to improve downtown traffic circulation. A signalization study of the Central Business District has been made by Wilbur Smith and Associates, recommending new signal equipment for the downtown area. The master controller for the new signal system will be flexible and adaptable to changing needs. It will thus be possible to move signals or redevelop entire areas as needed without rendering the new equipment obsolete.





P A R K I N G

The map on the left shows the location of present parking facilities in the Core and Frame areas. The chart on the right itemizes present parking spaces in the Core and Frame and projected requirements for 1980.

Most of the parking spaces that serve the Core Area are located in the Frame because there is not enough room in the Core itself. Approximately 14,000 parking spaces (both surface and garage) are located in the Frame. About 3,000 more spaces are located in the Core, for a total of about 17,000 parking spaces. An additional 8,000 spaces are provided outside the Frame in Leonard's parking lot. A free subway shuttles approximately 20,000 persons daily from the parking lot to the Core.

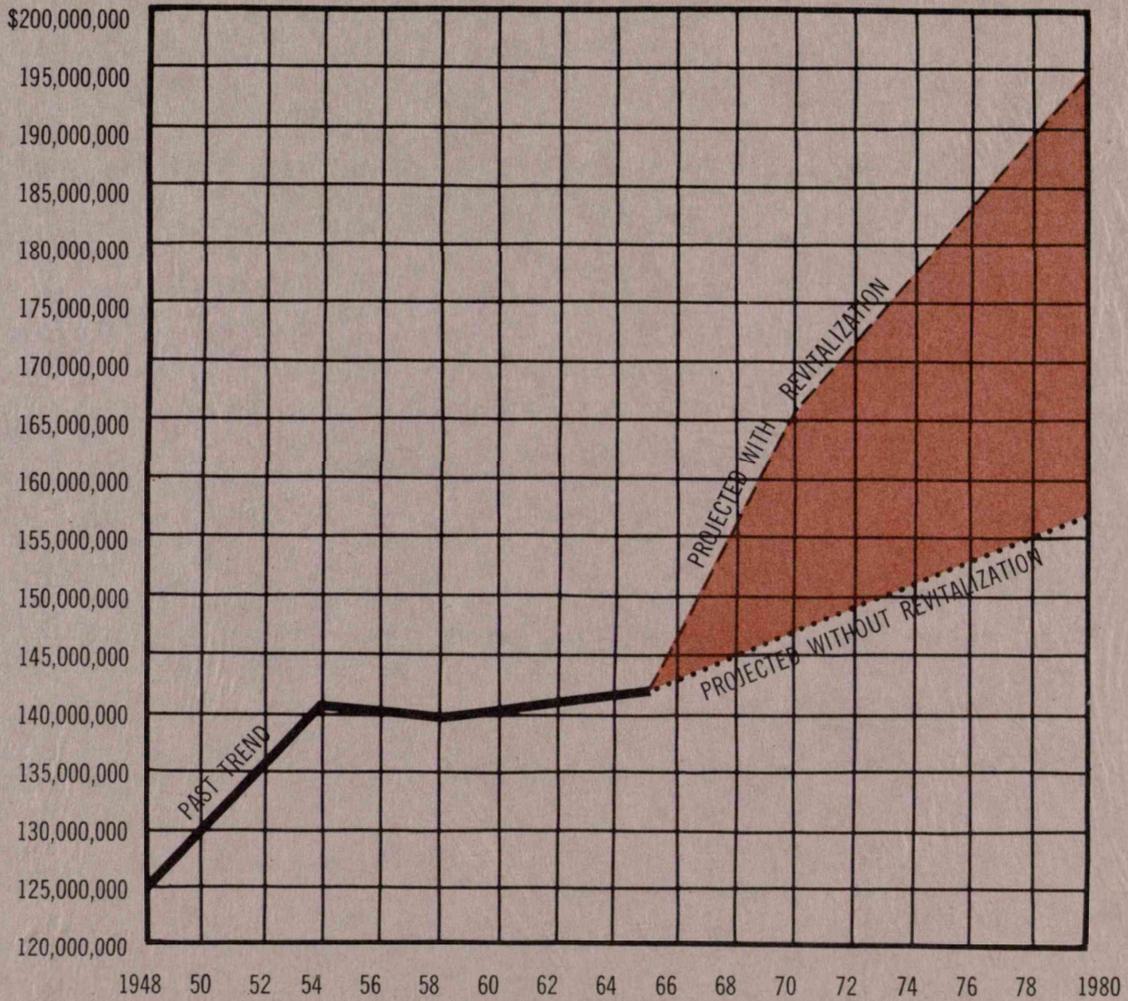
The parking needs of only four closely grouped downtown activities indicate the magnitude of the need for the total Core. Bell Telephone Company now employs 1,130 persons; the new Federal Center employs 2,000 persons; and the city employs 1,025 persons in City Hall and its vicinity. When the Convention Center goes into operation, with 15,000 people expected on occasion, there will be a total of 19,155 people accounted for by these four facilities alone. Assuming three persons per car, this means that approximately 6,400 cars will have to be parked in just the southern portion of the Core. This is a conservative estimate; there will probably be even more cars than stated above because the factor used is sometimes as low as 1.1 persons per car. Using 1.1 persons per car yields 17,400 cars in this area — and the entire Core and Frame areas combined have fewer than 17,000 available parking spaces.

PARKING SPACES *

	EXISTING	PROJECTED
CORE AREA		
LOTS	894	600
GARAGES	1,211	9,000
STREET (CURB)	790	400
FRAME AREA		
LOTS	9,581	15,000
GARAGES	2,075	10,000
STREET (CURB)	2,333	2,000
TOTAL	16,884	37,000

* NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES AVAILABLE IN
THE CORE AND FRAME AREAS, AND
PROJECTED NEEDS FOR 1980.

SALES VOLUMES IN THE CORE



R E T A I L

The map on the right shows two major concentrations of retail development in the Core Area. Retail sales volumes for the Core are shown on the chart at left.

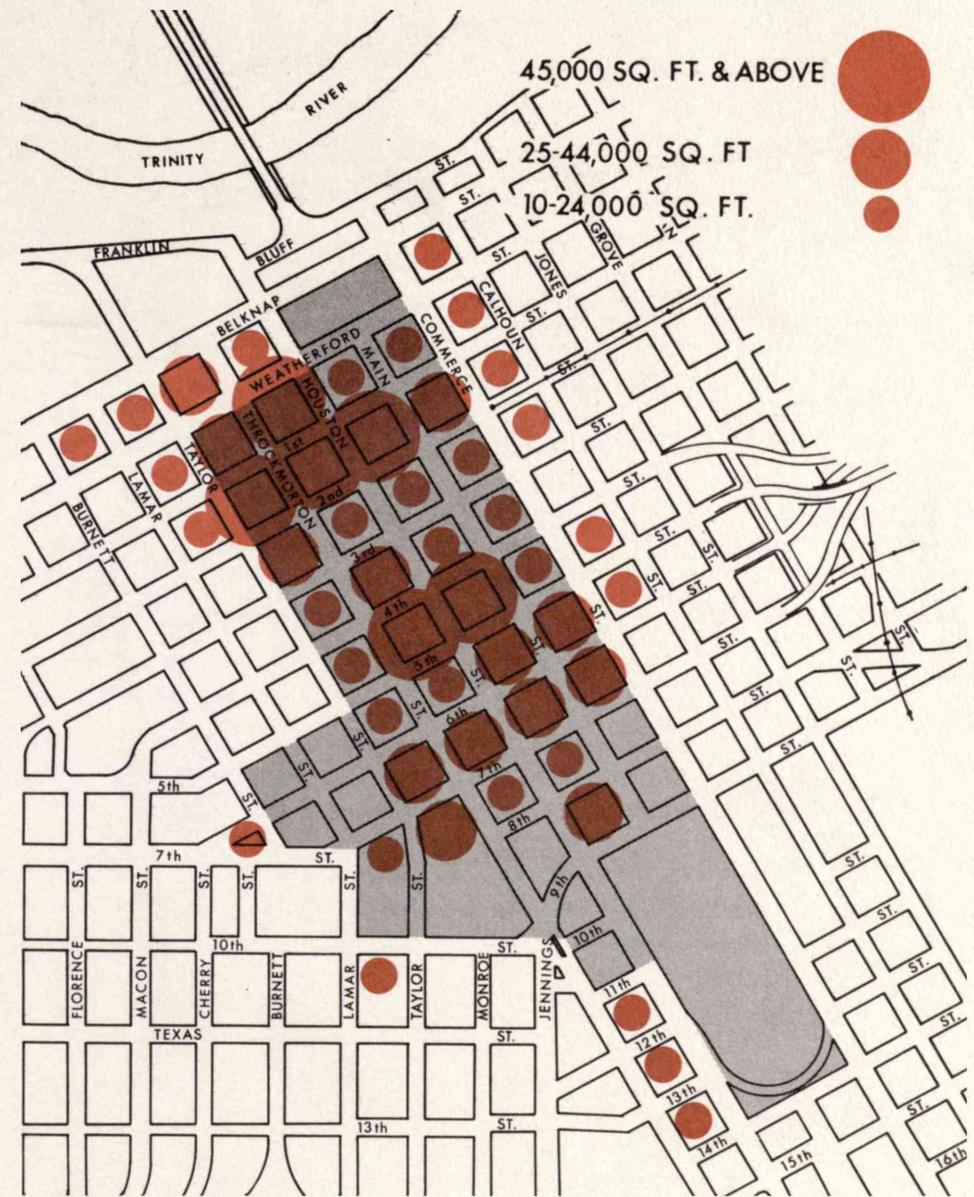
The Core Area has not cashed in on its potential share of retail sales in the Fort Worth Metropolitan Area. The dollar volume of sales in the Core actually declined from 1954 to 1958. In the ten-year period from 1954 to 1964, retail sales in the Core increased only 3½%, while sales in the remainder of Tarrant County (outside the Core) increased 63% — \$430 million to \$690 million. Obviously, the Core has failed to capture its share of the growth of the Fort Worth economy.

Past sales volumes are history; but there are two choices open for future sales volumes. One alternative (shown on the chart by the dotted line) is simply to *do nothing*. "Without revitalization," sales volumes in the Core will increase only slightly — less than ten per cent by 1980.

The other alternative (shown by the dash line) is *action* to revitalize the Core. "With revitalization," retail sales will climb dramatically. The shaded area represents the difference revitalization will make in Core Area sales over the fifteen-year period to 1980: a dividend for Core Area merchants of \$250 million — one-quarter *billion* dollars!

Increased sales in the revitalized Core will substantially increase the amount of retail space required. Approximately 2,190,000 square feet will be needed by 1980 — an increase of nearly 930,000 square feet over the present 1,260,000 square feet.

These projections of retail sales and space demands, published by a nationally known economic consultant, indicate that **REVITALIZATION** is the key for the Core Area to achieve its full economic potential and catch up with the economic potential of Tarrant County and the Fort Worth-Dallas region.



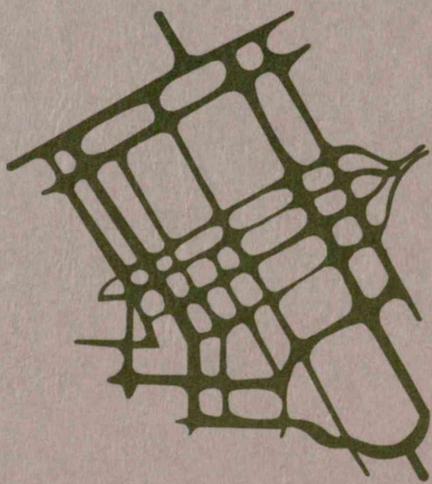
OFFICE BUILDINGS, RENTABLE OFFICE SPACE, AND VACANCY RATE -

HISTORICAL TREND FOR MEMBERS OF THE BUILDING AND
MANAGERS ASSOCIATION, AS REPORTED IN
SKYSCRAPER MANAGERMENTS

YEAR	NO. OF MEMBER BUILDINGS	TOTAL RENTABLE SQ. FT.	% OCCUPIED	% VACANT
1949	15	915,300	100%	—
1951	16	950,100	100%	—
1954	19	1,217,900	98.5%	2.5%
1957	18	1,428,000	95.3%	4.7%
1959	21	1,523,600	93.6%	6.4%
1960	19	1,498,800	85.7%	14.3%
1961	19	1,498,800	85.7%	14.3%
1962	19	1,558,100	81.8%	18.2%

OFFICE SPACE - AMOUNT OF SPACE PRESENTLY
AVAILABLE, PROJECTED REQUIREMENTS TO 1980,
AND AMOUNT OF PERIODIC INCREASE

	REQUIREMENT	AMOUNT OF INCREASE
1966	2.4 MILLION SQ. FT.	—
1970	3.3 MILLION SQ. FT.	.9 MILLION SQ. FT.
1980	4.5 MILLION SQ. FT.	1.2 MILLION SQ. FT.



GOVERNMENT

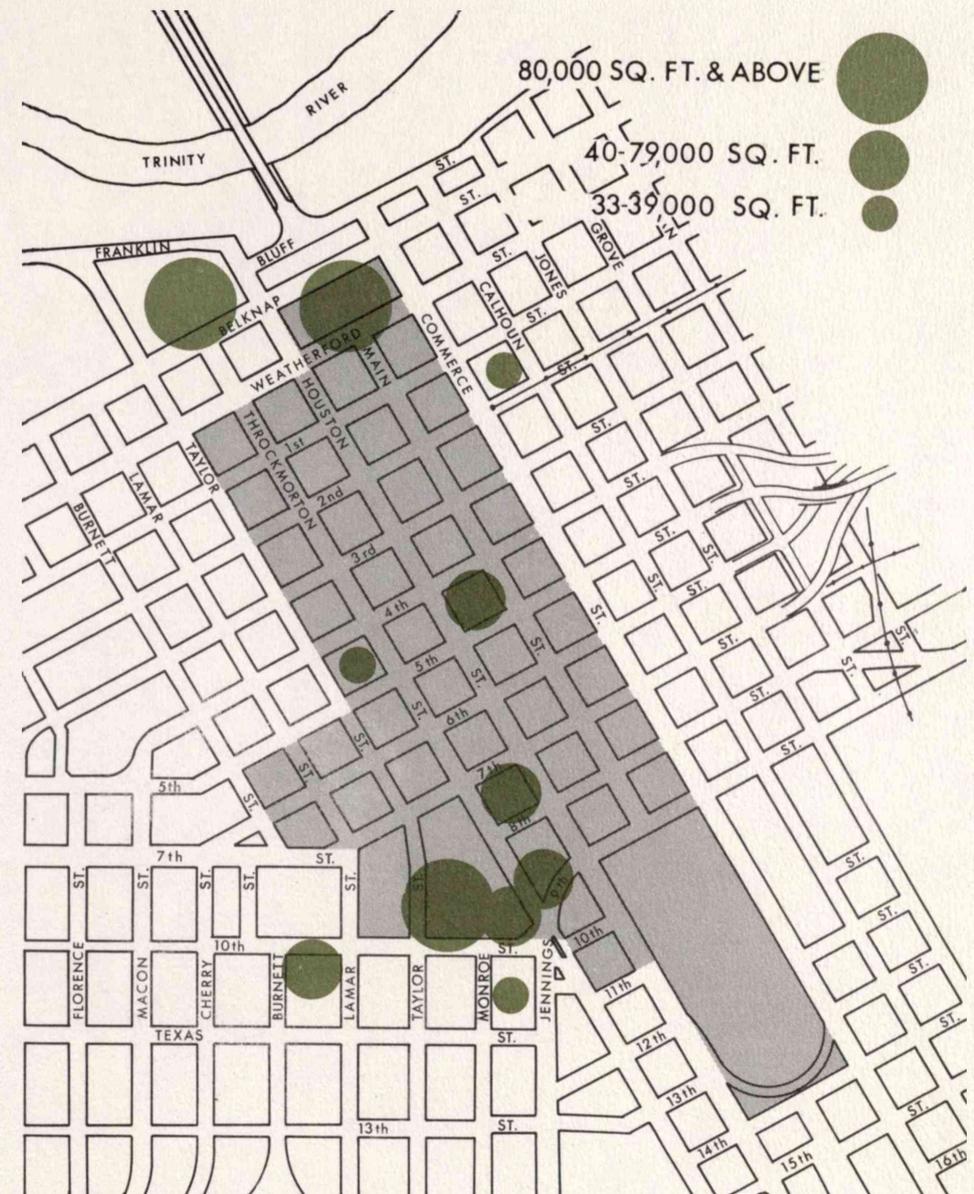
The Fort Worth Core Area is a center for government activity at the federal, county and city levels. The map on the right shows the location of government facilities.

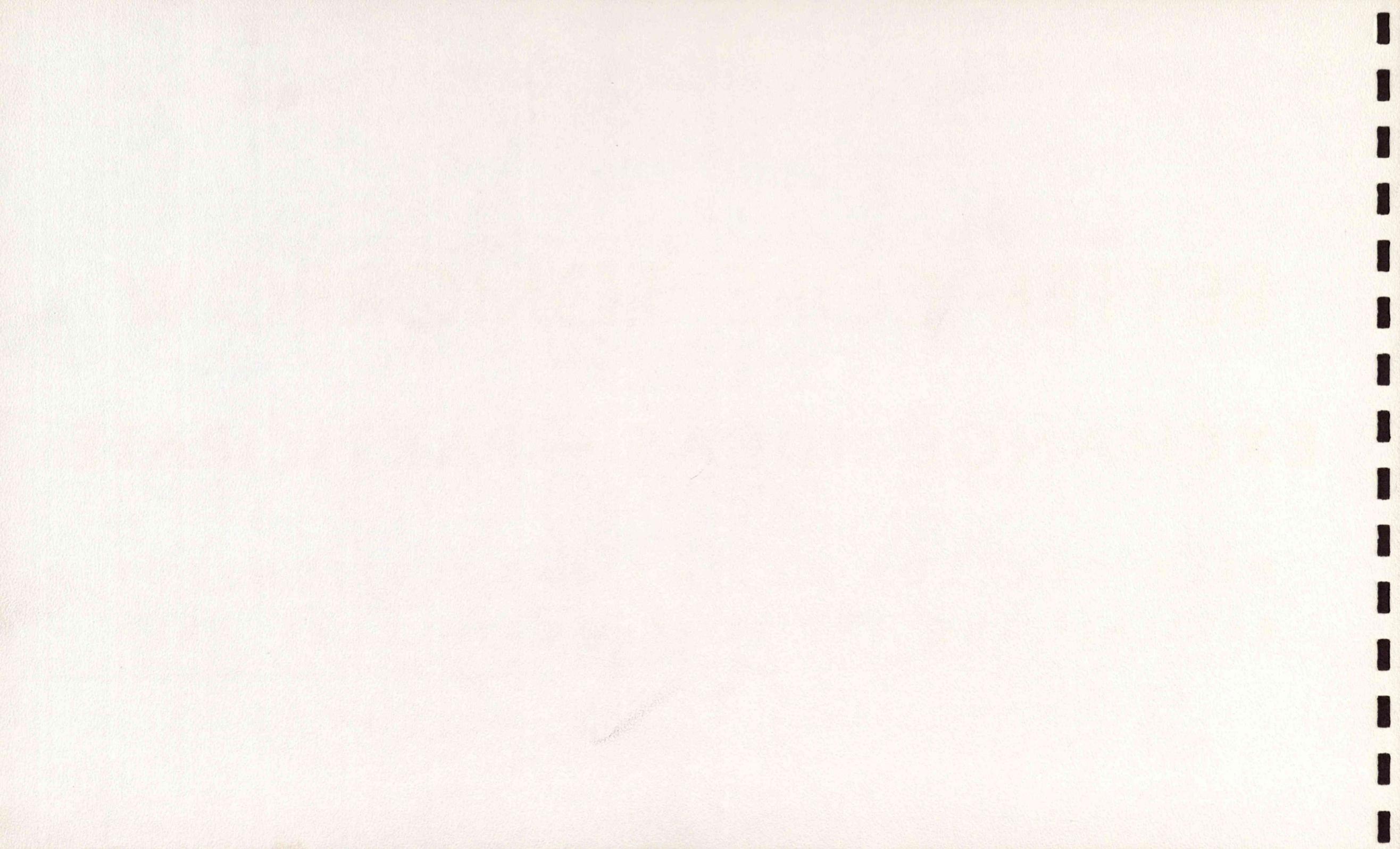
There are two concentrated government areas in the Core: city and federal government in the southern portion, and county government in the northern portion.

City Hall and the new Federal Center are located on a large block at the southern end of the Core, with the Federal Court House nearby in the adjacent portion of the Frame Area. When the new City Hall is built (bond issue authorized in October, 1965), the centralization of city and federal government in this area will be complete.

In the northern end of the Core Area the county government facilities consist of the County Court House and the new county offices and legal chambers. If future needs demand additional facilities, the expansion should be developed in this vicinity.

Population increase will probably create greater demand for local government services; corresponding increases in the number of employees may require additional office space. The Federal Center is expected to be adequate for federal government requirements until 1970, but additional space will be needed by 1980.





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BETTER CORE TOMORROW

EXCHANGE IDEAS — PARTICIPATE

HELP DEVELOP ULTIMATE SOLUTION FOR
REVITALIZING THE FORT WORTH CORE AREA

Substantial Contributions were made to this Proposal by architectural firms donating "company time" to the development of sketches and renderings from which the illustrations used herein were selected. The firms who served in this manner are:

Milton Barrick
Olin Boese & Associates
Herman G. Cox
Preston M. Geren
Lee Roy Hahnfeld
Hueppelsheuser and White
Earl E. Koeppe
Albert S. Komatsu & Associates
Maples - Jones & Associates
Parker-Croston & Associates
Wilson, Patterson, Sowden,
Dunlap & Epperly

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