

Part 2: Colorado River



Inventory and Analysis of Existing Conditions: Colorado River

A resource inventory and analysis was conducted in the summer of 1985 to determine existing conditions of the Colorado River from Longhorn Dam to five miles downstream at the confluence with Walnut Creek. The purpose of this effort was to assess the recreation suitability and land use characteristics of the area, draw conclusions and identify issues. It is important to recognize that a comprehensive resource assessment and more thorough analysis is warranted.

Though preliminary, this assessment established an information base as an initiative for future comprehensive planning, and provided a basis for developing initial goals and policy recommendations. Criteria for conducting the study were focused on river use, riverfront compatibility and potential resource values in the Corridor.

Physical Context

A five mile stretch of the Colorado River, immediately east of Longhorn Dam to the confluence of Walnut Creek, was included in the Corridor Study. The drainage areas of Walnut Creek, Little Walnut Creek and Boggy Creek (and its Fort, Givens Park and Tannehill branches) join the river on the north shore while Country Club Creek joins the river on the south shore.

The free-flowing river is dramatically different in character from the upstream lake and its highly urbanized environment. The variable

level river is influenced by hydrologic and meteorologic impacts. Water release for hydroelectricity and downstream irrigation transforms a bucolic river into a bank-to-bank, fast flowing waterway. Heavy rains can create a dangerous and debris-laden situation.

Three distinct zones characterize the Corridor: the Montopolis zone, the Treatment Plant and Aggregate zone, and the Boggy-Walnut Creek zone.

Montopolis Zone—This area extends approximately two miles downstream from Longhorn Dam to west of the Govalle Wastewater discharge point. Major access is at the boat launch area beneath Montopolis Bridge. Pedestrian access occurs on both shores immediately below the dam, from undeveloped areas of Krieg Complex, on a myriad of trails from Red Bluff Road and Levander Loop, and bluff trails from Grove Park (Colorado River Park).

This zone sustains an exceptionally high participation in recreational activities which include float-fishing, canoeing, general waterplay, photography, bird-watching, picnicking, refuge and respite.

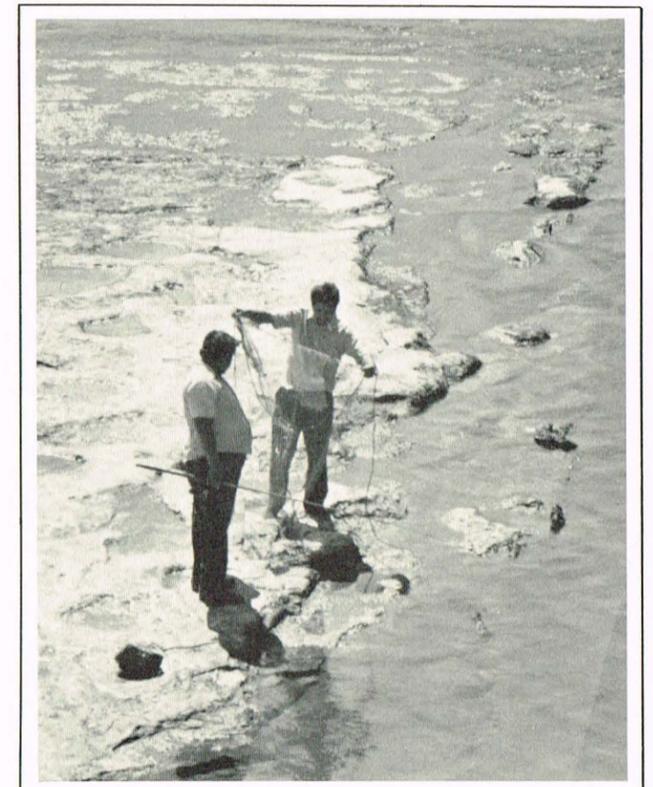
Treatment Plant and Aggregate Zone—The treatment plant discharge creates highly polluted murky conditions for 1½ miles; the extensive resource extraction operation also contributes to the change in water quality. As a rule, boat anglers fish above or below this area, and canoeists paddle through without

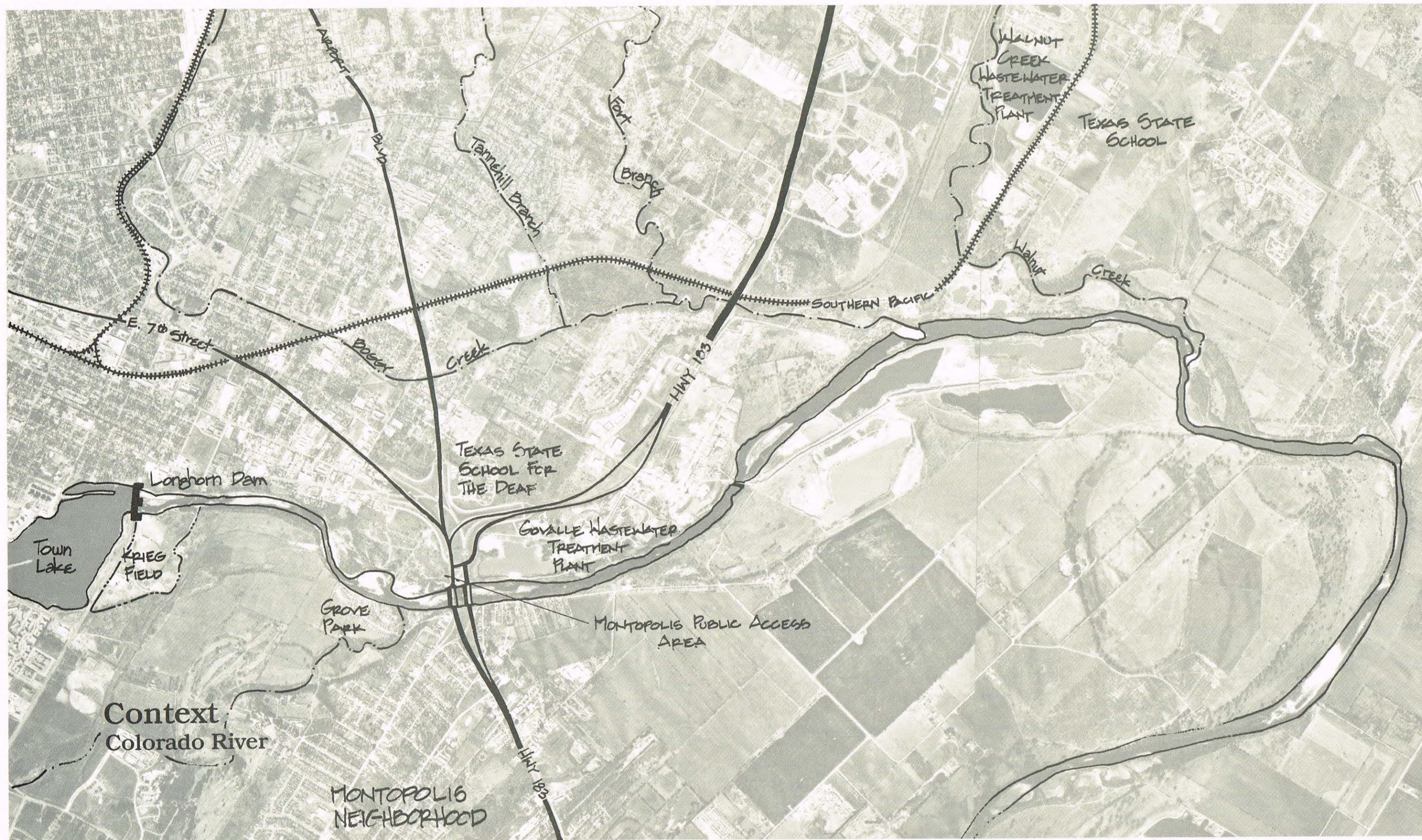


pause. The lack of aquatic vegetation, noise of extraction equipment, diminished visual quality and offensive odors make this zone a most unpleasant area.

Boggy-Walnut Creek Zone—The last one mile stretch is scenic and is almost as popular as the Montopolis zone. Anglers launch boats downstream near the Imperial Drive area, motor up-river and drift downstream. Egrets, herons and cranes wade the shallows, and the more densely wooded north shore provides an interesting habitat.

Viewed as a comprehensive recreation system, the Colorado River and Town Lake present a unique opportunity to provide varied outdoor recreation pursuits for the metropolitan area.





Context
Colorado River

MONTOPOLIS
NEIGHBORHOOD

Town
Lake

KRIEG
FIELD

Longhorn Dam

GROVE
PARK

TEXAS STATE
SCHOOL FOR
THE DEAF

GOVALLE WASTEWATER
TREATMENT
PLANT

MONTOPOLIS PUBLIC ACCESS
AREA

HWY 183

Boeck
Creek

Tannehill Branch

Fort
Branch

WALNUT
CREEK
WASTEWATER
TREATMENT
PLANT

TEXAS STATE
SCHOOL

Walnut
Creek

SOUTHERN PACIFIC

E. 7th Street

Airport
BLVD

Airport
BLVD

Land Use, Zoning and Access

Land use and zoning patterns in this portion of the Colorado River Corridor generally do not reflect sensitivity to the inherent scenic and recreational qualities. Existing zoning permits light industrial and interim single family uses. Public access to the river is difficult because of extensive private ownership and lack of roadways.

Land Use—This area consists of land along the Colorado River from Longhorn Dam to the eastern City limits at Walnut Creek. The north shore is bounded by Pleasant Valley Road on the west and the City limits on the east. The north boundary is defined by East 1st Street to Ed Bluestein Boulevard to the Southern Pacific Railroad line to their intersection with Walnut Creek, which flows into the Colorado River.

The southern shore is bounded by Pleasant Valley Road on the west and the City limits on the east, and on the south by the extension of South Lakeshore Boulevard.

Colorado River Corridor Land Use

Use	Acres	%
Single Family	102.5	7.1
Mobile Home	23.5	1.6
Commercial	12.6	0.9
Industrial	590.3	40.9
Utility	44.5	3.1
Institutional	35.3	2.5
Parkland	134.4	9.3
Other (Agriculture, Vacant)	380.6	26.4
Roads/ROW	118.9	8.2
TOTAL	1,442.6	100.0

Source: Office of Land Development Services

Also included in the analysis of this area is approximately 418 acres of unincorporated land on the south shore of the River. This area was included since the corresponding land on the opposite shore is within the City limits.

The north shore, west of Ed Bluestein Boulevard and the Montopolis Bridge along East 1st Street, consists of a mixture of uses such as service and convenience oriented commercial, warehousing and storage, small fabrication and manufacturing businesses, and single family residential. The residential structures are intermittently mixed among the commercial and industrial uses and are, for the most part, in poor structural condition. The area can be characterized as consisting of small parcel sizes and mixed incompatible uses.

The north shore east of Ed Bluestein Boulevard consists of large tracts of land that are vacant or used for resource excavation and related industrial uses. A large tract of land owned by the State borders Webberville Road, Walnut Creek and the river. The residential areas consist of single family development located near Hester Road and Shelton Road.

Located on the south shore between Pleasant Valley Road and Ed Bluestein Boulevard is Krieg Complex and several vacant tracts of land. Residential development consists of the Grove Mobile Home Park, located west of the Montopolis Bridge. This land has excellent frontage on the Colorado River and is owned by the City of Austin as a future park. A tract of City owned land also exists east of the bridge between Hergotz Lane and the river. Some single family dwellings exist adjacent to the river, on both sides of the Montopolis Bridge.

The unincorporated portion of the study area on the south shore beyond Ed Bluestein Boulevard consists of a large tract of undeveloped

land used for resource extraction. Extraction activities have resulted in several large ponds along the river. A small enclave of single family residences is located near the intersection of Thompson Lane and Hergotz Lane.

Land Use Suitability—In general, land use in the Colorado River Corridor is not compatible with environmental and recreational values of a river near the heart of a city. Three major resource extraction sites appear largely unregulated and respond to the economic values of close proximity to deposits of sand and aggregate.

Of the 590 acres used for industrial purposes, nearly 75% represents the consumption and depletion of land through resource extraction. Little restoration and revegetation is visible although stockpiling of fill does exist; there appears to be little concern for ecological maintenance. While a narrow band of vegetation separates present extraction activities from the river, the encroachment is easily seen. The shoreline has not been altered substantially in recent and present activities as it was during operations of the 1960s.

Five large ponds and six smaller ponds are evidenced in extraction operation areas along the river at three main locations. Earthmoving equipment can be seen from the river as the cycle of depletion, consumption and fill continues.

This cycle suggests re-examination of the resource extraction permitting processes. Since irreparable, injurious public harm is taking place due to resource extraction, compensation seems imperative for future activities, including restoration, revegetation and set back requirements. Approximately 410 acres along the river is presently undergoing considerable environmental disturbance.

Presently, misfits along Red Bluff Road and East 1st Street include warehousing, garages,

outdoor storage, petroleum storage and a mix of unrelated uses. Little encouragement or direction has been given to achieve land use sympathetic to the riverfront.

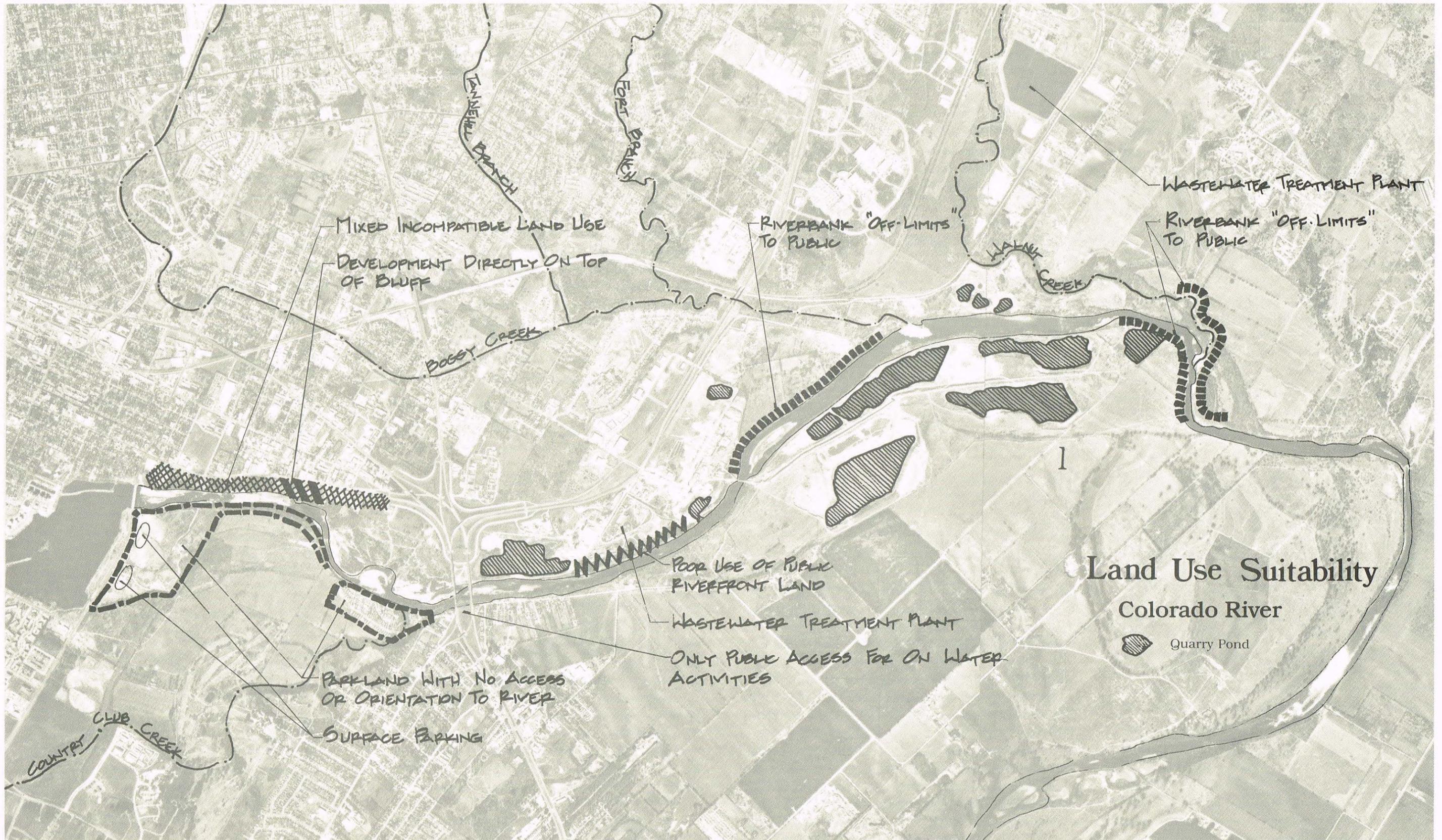
Zoning—The north shore west of the Montopolis Bridge consists of SF-3 (Single Family), CS (Commercial Services), and LI (Light Industrial). Several parcels of land zoned LI and CS located south of Red Bluff Road have frontage directly on the river, and businesses have been constructed that are visually incompatible with the shoreline. In some locations, parking and storage areas front directly on the shoreline causing increased runoff and erosion to the shoreline, along with water pollution. Increased setbacks from the shoreline are needed in this area. A large undeveloped tract of land located west of the Montopolis Bridge is zoned light industrial. This tract would provide excellent public access to the waterfront.

The north shore east of Ed Bluestein Boulevard is zoned for light industrial and single family residential. Although most existing development has not occurred near the shoreline, the potential still exists, thus setback requirements from the shoreline are needed.

The south shore is zoned MF-2 (Multi-family) and SF-3 (Single Family).

Access—Public access is limited to the boat ramp at the Montopolis Bridge. The most obvious need for additional access is along East 1st Street between Pleasant Valley Road and Ed Bluestein Boulevard because of the proximity to a large residential area. A large tract of undeveloped land on the north shore west of the Montopolis Bridge is accessible from Red Bluff Road and would make an excellent location for a park.

Public greenbelts along Boggy Creek and Walnut Creek could provide additional public access to the river.



Recreation Suitability and Potential

A sixty-three acre park, Krieg Complex, borders Pleasant Valley Road south of Longhorn Dam and has extensive river frontage, but no formal access or orientation to the river. The 45 developed acres include eight lighted softball fields, restrooms, concession stand, and off-street parking. Multiple-use occurs on four of the developed fields. One of the softball fields is perilously near the riverbank. The undeveloped area includes brushy flatlands with informal trails frequented by hikers, birdwatchers and motorcyclists. A sandy riverside beach may be accessed with some difficulty through the undeveloped area.

A five acre gap exists between Krieg Complex and Grove Park but funds are available to provide the connections. Once completed, a continuous greenbelt would extend from the heart of the city.

Grove Park (Colorado River Park) is located immediately west of the Montopolis Bridge and temporarily has 150 mobile home sites. Projected for development in 1987, this 31 acre scenic area includes a steep bluff overlooking the Colorado River. The interior is flat historic floodplain, and large trees and woodland vegetation are still intact. Country Club Creek flows through the park on its way to the Colorado River. A lift station to the Govalle Wastewater Treatment Plant is situated on the creek bank within the park. Expansion of Grove Park is possible and negotiations are taking place with an adjacent developer.

The only public access in the study area, a ramp at the Montopolis Bridge, is maintained by the Texas Highway Department, but is in need of improvement and on-site management. Deviant behavior has been observed in this vicinity. An excellent opportunity exists to develop this area into a scenic staging area.

Undeveloped riverfront and creek edge on the Travis State School property is off-limits to the public. This area may represent an additional opportunity to provide recreational access and staging.

The recreation potential of the river is excellent due to varied landforms, fishing opportunities, creek confluences and wooded shoreline. Extensive garbage dumping and debris along the shoreline detracts from the natural, scenic qualities.

Water Quality

Below Longhorn Dam, the Colorado River begins its free-flowing status after miles of impoundments in the Highland Lakes chain. Because the water is released from upper reservoirs, it is of good quality and relatively uncontaminated. After storms, urban runoff impacts the river with debris-laden, polluted water.

Water draining the three creeks—Country Club, Boggy and Walnut—is considered to be of fair quality; however after storms the quality deteriorates substantially. As a recipient of the Govalle Wastewater Treatment Plant and resource extraction activities, the river water is contaminated for over a mile.

The river has four distinct water quality complexions: low water clear, low water dirty, released water, and at flood.

Low Water Clear—An especially clear area of narrow river channel water exists from Longhorn Dam over two miles downstream to west of the point discharge from the Govalle Wastewater Treatment Plant. The river bottom is easily seen (8 inches to nearly 5 feet) and aquatic life seems abundant and diverse. Another relatively clear area is a mile stretch from the gravel bar at the confluence of Boggy Creek at the north bank of Shelton Road pen-

insula to the confluence of Walnut Creek. This area evidences abundant and diverse aquatic life. While river water is clear in these two areas, shoreline litter, site disturbance and urban encroachments are easily observed.

Low Water Dirty—The river runs translucent to opaque for 1½ miles from west of the Govalle Treatment Plant discharge point to the gravel bar above the Boggy Creek confluence at the north bank of Shelton Road peninsula. Particulate pollution is evident with frequent areas of surface film at quiet, south shoreline cachmentments. A clear demarcation of aquatic vegetation occurs at the beginning and ending point of this zone; the filtration provided by aquatic plants appears

Actions Affecting Colorado River Corridor Water Quality

- City and private construction and maintenance activities.
- Direct discharge of septic sewers, and urban runoff.
- Toxic spills and accidents in the watershed.
- Stormwater pollutant loadings from untreated sewage, stored materials, and petroleum.
- Surface runoff of chemical treatment associated with manu facturing and maintenance activities.
- Increased sediment loads in Country Club, Boggy and Walnut Creeks as a result of construction activities.
- Shoreline litter and unauthorized household dumping.
- Temporary inundation of land during water release.
- Upstream land use activities affecting Highland Lakes.
- Resource extraction activities including vegetation removal, machinery maintenance and soil compaction.

Source: Parks and Recreation Department

significantly diminished and no expansive gravel bar exists to provide natural aeration. The wastewater treatment plant and private resource extraction contribute to the unclean appearance of the water. The river channel has been dredged for a portion of this section.

Released Water—As the demand for hydroelectricity and irrigation is announced, the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) releases 3045 cubic feet per second (cfs) at Tom Miller Dam. Clear water flows into the contin-

Peak Discharge vs. Frequency Existing Conditions

Confluence at Colorado River	Peak Discharge in Cubic Feet per Second		
	10 year	50 year	100 year
Country Club Creek	4,070	5,900	6,400
Boggy Creek	9,420	15,910	18,540
Walnut Creek	10,400	17,000	20,500

• **Cubic feet per second**—A cubic foot equals about 7.5 gallons. One cubic foot per second is equivalent to 448.86 gallons per minute.

• **10 year flood**—A flood that, over a long period of time, can be expected to be exceeded an average of once for each 10 years. There is a 10 percent probability that the 10 year flood will be exceeded in any given year.

• **50 year flood**—A flood that, over an extremely long period of time, can be expected to be exceeded an average of once for each 50 years. There is a 2 percent probability that the 50 year flood will be exceed in any given year.

• **100 year flood**—A flood that, over an extremely long period of time, can be expected to be exceeded an average of once for each 100 years. There is a 1 percent probability that the 100 year flood will be exceeded in any given year.

Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development
Travis County Federal Insurance Administration

uous level Town Lake pool and flows over two tilt gates at Longhorn Dam. Normally, water is released on a daily seven hour period. The narrow river channel is swollen and a four foot high water mark on each shoreline is easily observed. The river runs briskly, inundating the shallows and creating nine distinct areas of rapids. Shoreline debris is rarely evident until water recedes and tree branches are adorned with garbage and debris. Warning signs are located on dam wings but no warning sirens are blown during normal water releases. The public may telephone LCRA for tentatively scheduled water release times and duration.

At Flood—Localized rains may swell the lower river from Boggy Creek downstream.

Memorial Day Flood Impact on Colorado River

10 p.m. May 24, 1981—9:30 a.m. May 25, 1981

Time	Cubic feet/sec	Cubic feet Spillage
10:00 p.m.	3,980	7,164,000
10:30 p.m.	7,960	14,328,000
11:00 p.m.	7,960	7,164,000
11:15 p.m.	17,020	15,318,000
11:30 p.m.	25,420	22,878,000
11:45 p.m.	33,820	30,438,000
12:00 mn	42,220	37,980,000
12:15 a.m.	50,620	45,540,000
12:30 a.m.	59,020	53,118,000
12:45 a.m.	67,420	60,660,000
1:00 a.m.	67,420	242,640,000
2:00 a.m.	67,420	242,640,000
3:00 a.m.	67,420	242,640,000
4:00 a.m.	67,420	242,640,000
5:00 a.m.	67,420	242,640,000
6:00 a.m.	38,020	68,436,000
6:30 a.m.	7,960	28,656,000
7:30 a.m.	7,960	28,656,000
8:30 a.m.	7,960	28,656,000
9:30 a.m.	3,980	7,164,000

Source: *Electric Department*

The Country Club Creek drainage area is rather insignificant with little impact on the river. If the Town Lake pool rises one foot and no water is being released for hydro-electric generation, approximately 4310-8620 cfs of water can be released. The one foot pool rise significantly impacts the river as runoff and debris from the upper creeks join that from Country Club and Boggy Creeks. At the confluence with Walnut Creek the river impact is greatly increased due to extent of the drainage area. During normal heavy rainfalls and flashfloods, peak discharge of Boggy Creek may approach 3560 cfs, and nearly 5,000 cfs at Walnut Creek. The flood discharge exacerbates river pollution, especially in fecal coliforms. When the flooding is regional rather than localized, LCRA will release water at Tom Miller Dam and the City of Austin must also raise the seven flood gates (water flows beneath gates rather than over gates). The river then becomes threatening and an immediate danger.

Visual Context

The tranquil, aesthetic quality of the river corridor is harshly interrupted by industrial encroachment. Views along the shorelines change with river complexion, yet constants include sporadic views of massive riparian and mesic vegetation particularly at creek confluences, of inviting gravel bars at jutting peninsulas, unauthorized dumping of household garbage and debris over river bluffs and on vacant lots, excessive litter under the Montopolis Bridge, distant urban skyline settings, and areas of severely disturbed shoreline from resource extraction. A capitol view corridor exists from the southwestern border of Grove Mobile Home Park.

Montopolis Zone—A high steep bluff on the north shore of the river extends from Long-

Hydrology

Longhorn Dam crosses the Colorado River, downstream from the Holly Power Plant. The dam is bridged by Pleasant Valley Road. This is the location of an old cattle crossing in the days of the big cattle drive in Texas in the 1860's and 70's.

The dam is 506 feet long and contains about 30,000 cubic yards of concrete. The roadway across the top of the dam is 48 feet wide with a 5 foot sidewalk down each side. The original capacity of 3,520 acre feet was increased to about 6,000 acre feet due to dredging operations which were started in 1960 and continued until 1975.

Water level above the dam is controlled by seven flood gates, each 50 feet wide and 13 feet high, and two Bascule gates are used for the normal control of the level of Town Lake to the elevation of 428 feet above sea level. These gates raise and lower automatically through use of an automatic hydraulic control system. The elevation of the gates is controlled by the amount of water flow in the river.

Flow through Town Lake is controlled by the Lower Colorado River Authority in the operation of a series of upstream dams. The most immediate upstream dam is the Tom Miller Dam impounding Lake Austin. Maximum release from Tom Miller Dam during normal generation is about 3,045 cubic feet per second. When there is no release of water from Tom Miller Dam, there is negligible to no flow over the Longhorn Dam spillway since the only discharges into Town Lake proper are from storm drains and creeks located in this area, the major discharge from this source being Barton Creek. Longhorn Dam total maximum spillway discharge of all gates (with lake elevation of 429.0 feet MSL) is 67,420 cu.ft/sec.

Source: *Electric Department*

horn Dam to the end of Red Bluff Road. A steep bank on the south shore, immediately below the dam, softens to a gradually sloping bank. The natural sloping becomes a steep terrace at Grove Park until it joins a rock facing immediately west of Montopolis Bridge. Gradual sloping on both shorelines extends throughout the remainder of this zone.

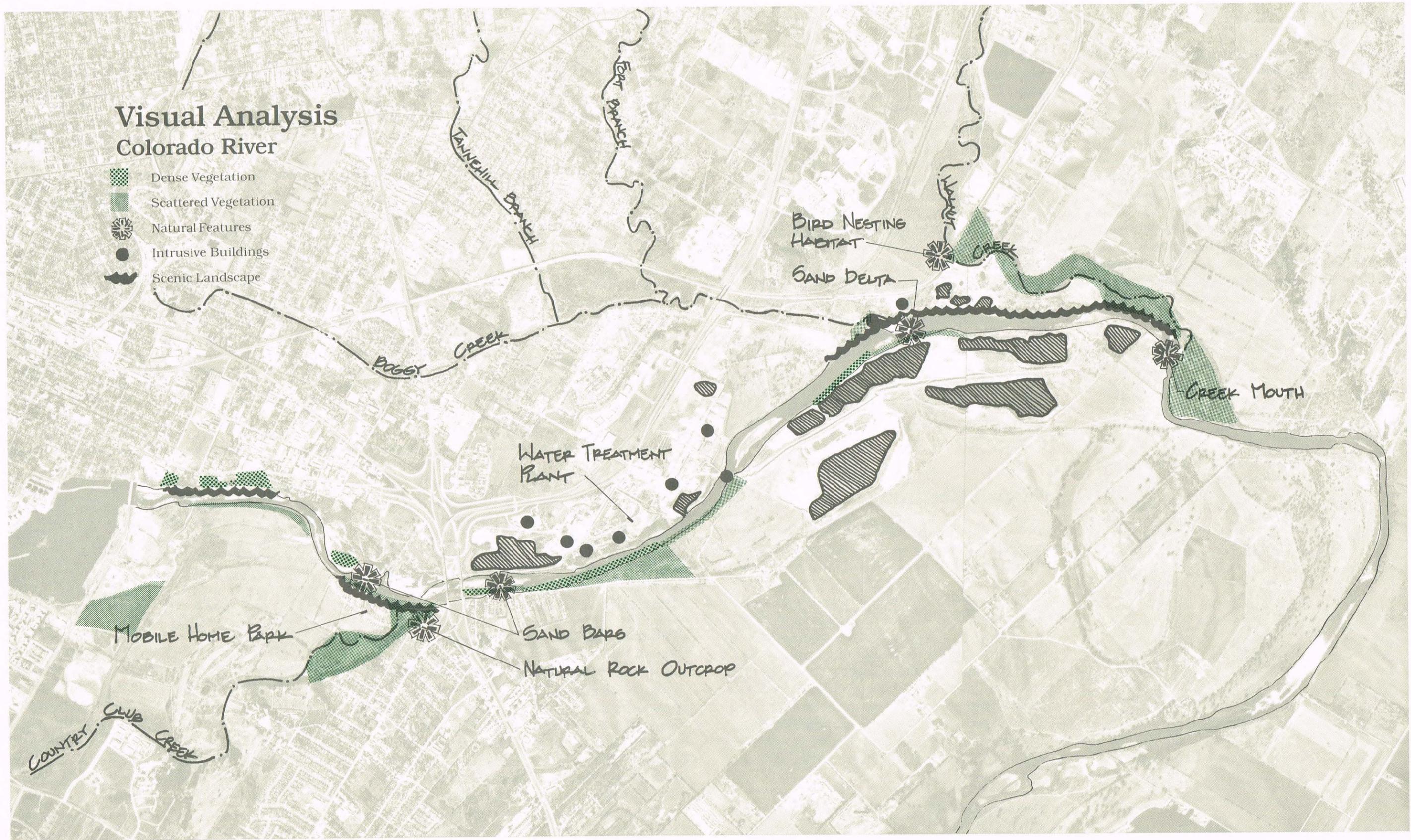
Treatment Plant and Aggregate Zone—Pocked by resource extraction activity, the high terrace is relatively flat land with alluvial soils (sandy loams) deposited over the years by flood water. Two large ponds are nearly 30' deep; three smaller ponds attract migratory waterfowl. This 1 mile zone is greatly disturbed with no visible restoration or revegetation. A gravel pit on the north shore is contiguous with the river and is off-limits to the public despite the absence of "No Trespassing" signs.

Boggy-Walnut Creek Zone—The high terrace continues through this zone contrasting with belts of peninsulas, gravel bars and broader shoreline vegetation. Extraction areas continue on both terraces, yet the riverbanks appear generally undisturbed. Opposite the Walnut Creek confluence, a gravel pit is contiguous with the river, is off-limits to the public and is not marked "No Trespassing."

Because the lower Colorado River within the Town Lake Corridor is subject to frequent and lengthy water release and because it assumes a variety of complexions, the visual context is unstable yet inviting. For the most part the river is sought out as a dramatic yet restful resource. The river, without doubt, has character.

Visual Analysis Colorado River

-  Dense Vegetation
-  Scattered Vegetation
-  Natural Features
-  Intrusive Buildings
-  Scenic Landscape



Natural Resources

The name Colorado, meaning red, is a misnomer as the water is generally clear and has been so historically. Plants and animals normally found far to the east or on the coast have penetrated deeply into dry central Texas along the green corridor supported by the river. The deep shade of once thick forests still cover some stretches of river bank. During spring and fall the area below the Montopolis Bridge is a quiet resting place for numerous migratory waterfowl. This fragile water system and its streambed is the most environmentally sensitive area; portions of disturbed bluff and high terrace areas also have particular sensitivity.

Natural Values—Topographic relief is assumed to be positively correlated with ecological and aesthetic value. This section of the

Colorado River Corridor Partial Botanical Inventory

Aristida grasses	Palofoxia
Ash	Papalum grasses
Box elder	Pecan
Bristle grass	Pennywort
Bulrush	Peppervine
Chaste-tree	Potamogeton (4 species)
Chinaberry	Ragweed
Composites	Rattle box
Cottonwood	River cane (Arundo)
Cypress	River hemp
Dewberry	Rushes
Elephant ears	Sedges
Elm species	Streambank morning glory
Grapevines	Switchgrass
Jerusalem thorn tree	Sycamore
Maximillian sunflower	Virginia creeper
Mulberry species	Willow

Source: *Montopolis Area Study*, 1985, Office of Land Development Services

river has extraordinary appeal with its contrasting gradually sloping banks and steep bluffs.

Accordingly, the floral condition in this five mile section is transitional based on the structure, naturalness, and diversity of the flood plain vegetation. While portions of the more severely disturbed banks are lined with small willows, cattails, and other vegetation in a narrow belt, there are borders of large mature trees, grasses and herbaceous growth with several species of trees and shrubs forming dense wooded habitats. A stable "climax" floral condition is not evident in this river corridor.

The *Montopolis Area Study* (1985) prepared by the Office of Land Development Services includes the following Corridor description:

"The scene is that of the Colorado River in early days: gravel and sandy bars, shallower waters easily fished by many species of water fowl and other birds, beds of submerged aquatic plants, and trees overhanging the banks. . .

. . . numerous birds . . . are highly unusual to the urban scene one mile upstream: American bittern, great-blue and green-backed herons, several hawk species and belted kingfish. . .

The Colorado River below Longhorn Dam has long been known by Travis Audubon Society members as an excellent local area for sightings of osprey, and occasional sightings of eagles and peregrine falcons, during the migration seasons. This is due to its relatively undisturbed nature, i.e. undammed and shallow with riverine plant communities lining the banks.

There are several coves, islands, and sand and gravel bars among which birds seclude themselves for fishing and resting. Testimony to the excellent wildlife foraging is the

extensive blanket of opened fresh-water clam shells left in the water's edge of the bars.

(East of) the Grove Trailer Park and within site of Longhorn Dam longer stretches of the banks are even less disturbed and are thick and lushly vegetated; pecan trees are more prevalent. Occasionally a more recently disturbed portion is dominated by box elder. Silty deposits along the stream edge support emergent rushes, grasses, sedges and elephant ears. Visible clumps of submerged aquatic plants dot the stream bed. . . . The trees of substance and greatest age are the ashes."

The faunal condition is based on the naturalness and diversity of the animal assemblage. In the Montopolis zone the major elements are man-associated species and tolerant aquatic species. The unclean treatment plant and aggregate zone has evidence of skunk, raccoon, nutria and opossum as well as domestic animals. White-tail deer are sighted in the Boggy-to-Walnut Creek Zone but do not appear in abundant numbers.

For the most part the river supports a generous floral condition, a viable population of birdlife, native mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and diverse fishes.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas—Competition in the river corridor among land users, their machinery and chemicals impacts existing terrestrial environments and the most fragile environment, the water. Natural values in the corridor are placed in a no-win situation; the City could provide the positive intervention necessary to secure the area.

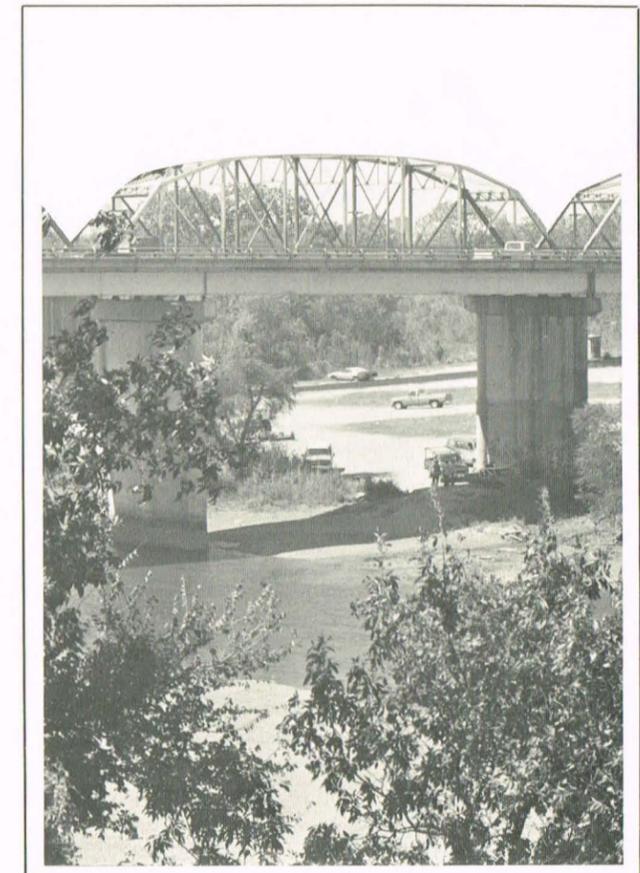
The riverbeds in the Montopolis and Boggy-Walnut zones are sensitive with respect to the gravel shallows, animal life depending on the waterbanks, and most food sources.

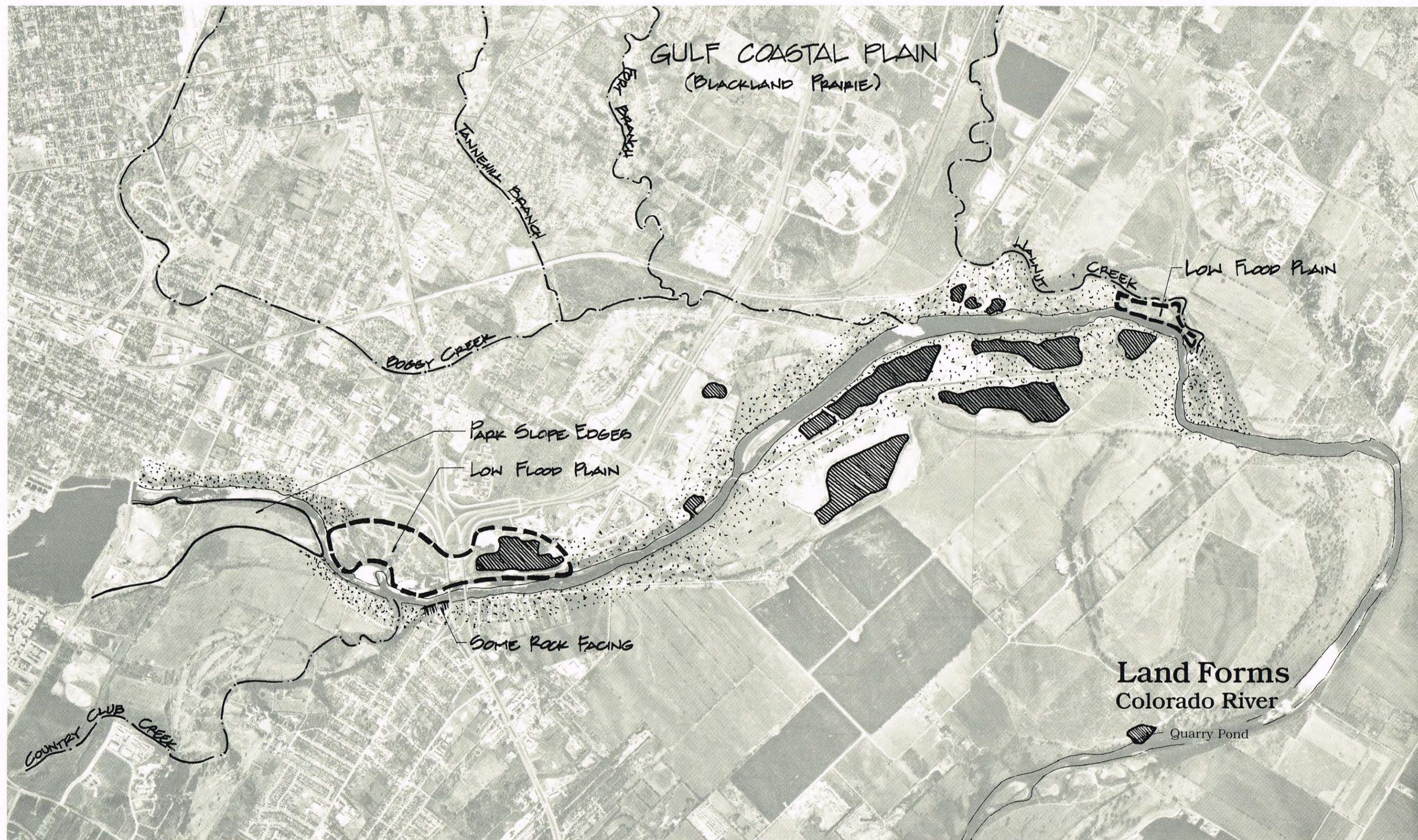
The shorelines in both zones are in various

stages of recovery which will continue to create even more environmentally sensitive areas. Resident birds and nesting materials are endangered in all zones. Resource extraction ponds in the treatment plant and aggregate zone contain surface water essential to waterfowl.

Bluff areas in the Montopolis zone have been disturbed and warrant significant attention for protection and preservation. The same holds true for the creek mouths in the corridor.

The water environment is in constant jeopardy. Downstream disturbance in the treatment plant and aggregate zone must be minimized in recognition of the impact on the Boggy-Walnut Creek zone.





GULF COASTAL PLAIN
(BLACKLAND PRAIRIE)

TANNER BRANCH

BOBBY CREEK

WALNUT CREEK

LOW FLOOD PLAIN

PARK SLOPE EDGES

LOW FLOOD PLAIN

SOME ROCK FACING

COUNTRY CLUB CREEK

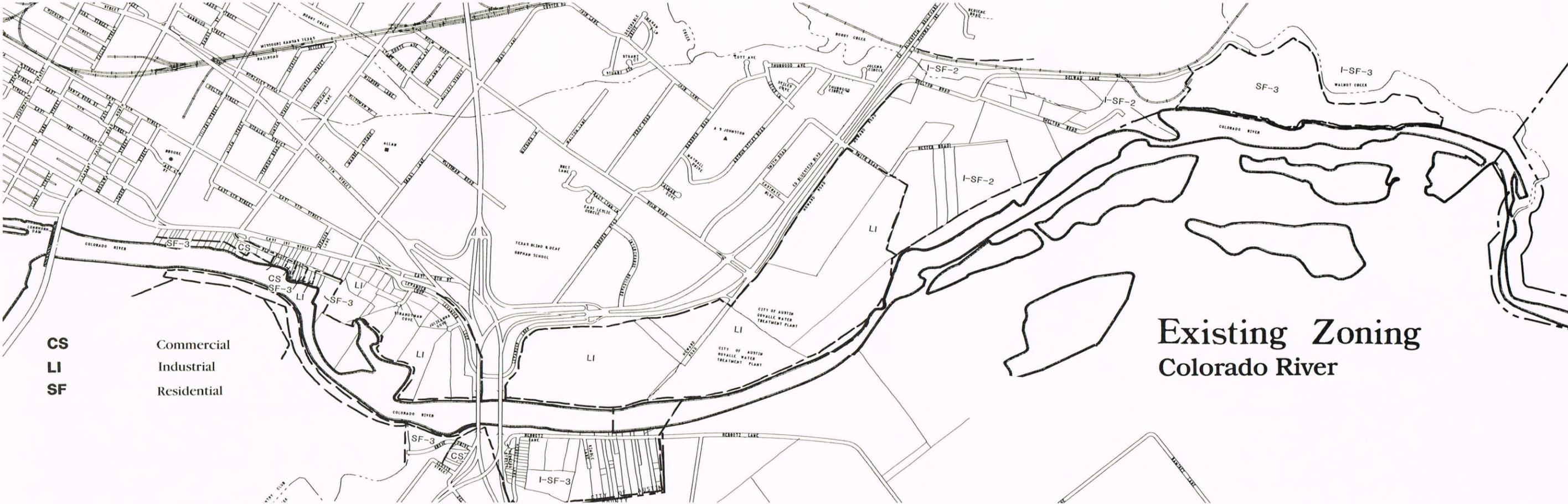
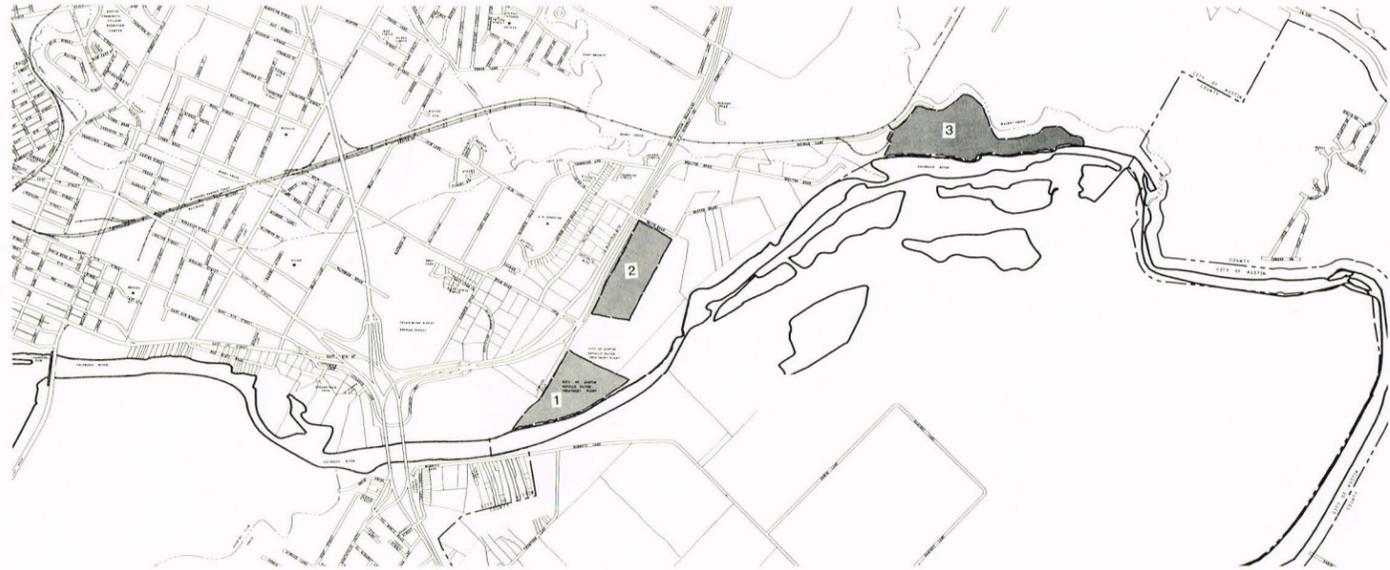
Land Forms Colorado River

Quarry Pond

ZONING HISTORY

Sub Area F

Case No.	Acreage	Sub Area	Action			Requested Zoning	Granted Zoning or Other Action
			PC	CC	Ord.		
1 C14-82-072	115.2		x	x	x	D, 3rd and D, 1st	D, 3rd and D, 1st in accordance with existing structures.
2 C14p-83-071	30.8		x	-	-	Special Permit	CIP improvements to Govalle Wastewater Treatment Plant
3 C14-84-429	90.3		x	x	-	DL, 1st	DL, 1 pending ROW dedication



Goals and Policy Recommendations

GOALS—values, mission statements, desired results

POLICIES—guidelines for action to achieve goals

Field observations, a public hearing, and the *Montopolis Area Study* (1985) provided a basis for developing goals and policy recommendations for the Colorado River Corridor. Inventory and analysis of existing conditions in the study area provided a framework for identifying issues and concerns. A public hearing reflected citizens' high regard and concern for the Corridor. The *Montopolis Area Study* provided additional definitive natural resource information. Taken together, this information is believed to be adequate for goal formulation and policy development.

It is readily apparent that empirical research is needed to assess public opinion and obtain more definitive information on land and water characteristics of the river corridor. Such scientific surveys will lend additional credence and expand the initial brief assessment effort.

The assessment assumes that citizens of Austin care about the Colorado River as evidenced by legal challenges related to overloaded treatment plants and impacts on water quality. Evidence of significant recreation participation on the river is indicative of the high value placed on scenic and recreation qualities.

The goals which follow reflect desired results for the Corridor. The policies are guidelines for action to achieve the goals.

Water Quality

GOAL 1:00 Reclaim water quality of the Colorado River to establish a level of purity which allows full public recreation contact.

Policy 1.01 Establish commitment to and time frames for Austin to become a model to achieve highest possible water quality standards, especially for wastewater effluent including tertiary treatment.

Policy 1.02 Develop a more complete water quality monitoring program geared to three subzones of the Colorado River below Longhorn Dam.

Policy 1.03 Develop an information program to increase public awareness of river water quality as it affects recreation potential (safe and non-safe areas).

Policy 1.04 Develop a comprehensive information base concerning river hydrology and develop a strategic plan for addressing multiple objectives of recreation, drainage, shoreline restoration and revegetation.

Policy 1.05 Implement watershed protection strategies to protect the water quality of the Colorado River including requirements for detention, fill, overland flow, urban runoff, erosion control, grassland swales, restriction of construction on slopes, and litter abatement.

Policy 1.06 Encourage appropriate public agencies to initiate a massive litter and

shoreline clean-up program with initial priority placed on public lands.

Land Use

GOAL 2.00 Aggressively protect and enhance the scenic and recreational potential of the Colorado River through means of accelerated land use planning.

Policy 2.01 Immediately develop a program to annex the south bank of the Colorado River.

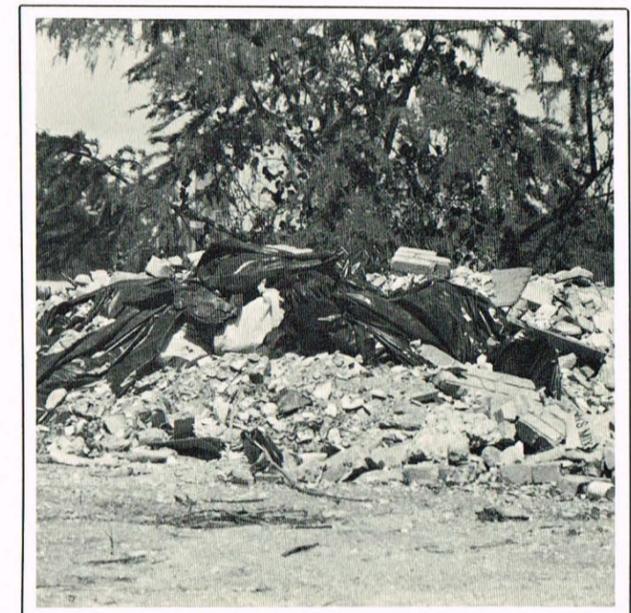
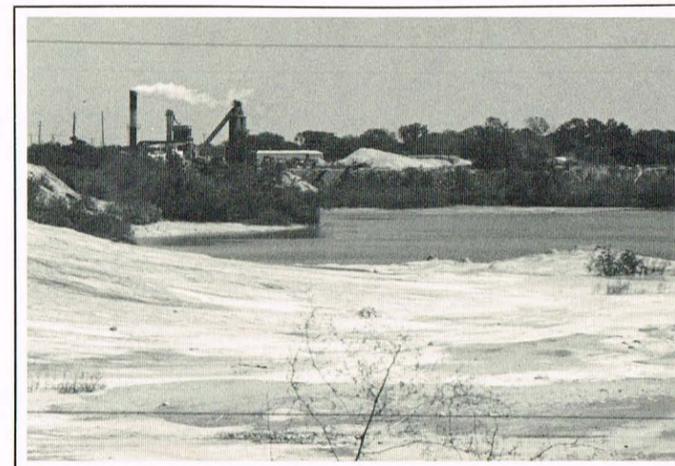
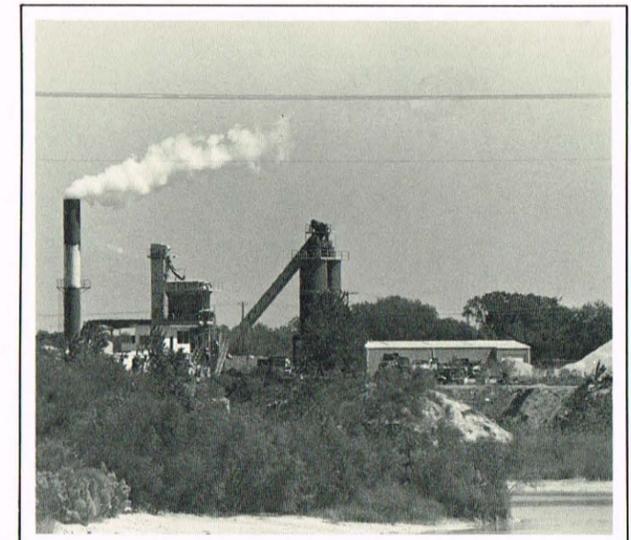
Policy 2.02 Initiate a comprehensive land use planning program for the river corridor; immediately develop land use policies and regulations for compatibility.

Policy 2.03 Form a riverfront coalition of property owners, public agencies and institutions to coordinate development interests and exchange information.

Policy 2.04 Maintain the natural shoreline and bluffs along the riverfront except for necessary stabilization and appropriate riverfront uses.

Policy 2.05 Strengthen law enforcement and security in the area to upgrade and assure a safe recreation environment.

Policy 2.06 Immediately investigate resource extraction permitting procedures and determine if strategies can be developed to create improved compatibility of these activities with the river environment.



Zoning

GOAL 3.00 Improve zoning in the Colorado River Corridor to achieve highest degree of land use compatibility.

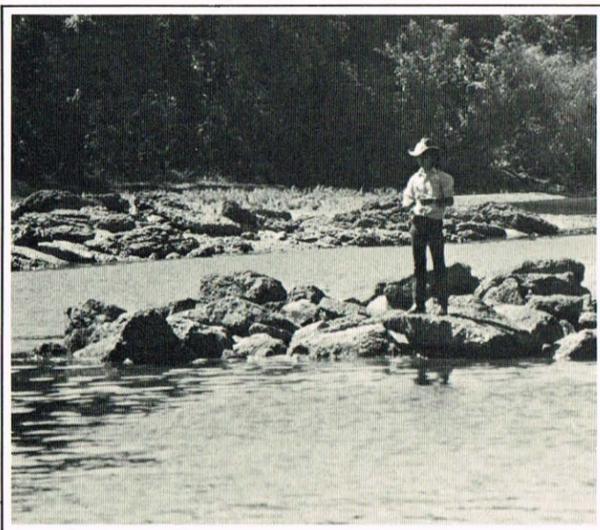
Policy 3.01 Immediately rezone properties to a revised "W" Waterfront zone district.

Policy 3.02 Create a new overlay zone with design criteria geared to special characteristics of development zones.

Policy 3.03 Eliminate all industrial and noncompatible uses from Longhorn Dam to the confluence with Walnut Creek; downzone to a more compatible use; phase out resource extraction.

Policy 3.04 Develop performance criteria for existing resource extraction operations, including shoreline restoration and revegetation plans; preserve potential for future public access and use.

Policy 3.05 Develop design guidelines for private projects along the river's edge.



Recreation Suitability and Potential

GOAL 4.00 Develop a strategic land acquisition plan and aggressively obtain additional parkland on the Colorado River using innovative methods.

Policy 4.01 Extend parkland from Longhorn Dam to the Govalle Wastewater Treatment Plant on both banks of the river.

Policy 4.02 Aggressively pursue greenbelt acquisition on Walnut and Boggy Creeks with highest priority at the confluences.

Policy 4.03 Determine constraints and potential for public use of the river including study of currents, water release impacts, hazards, and water quality.

Policy 4.04 Investigate potential for improving public access to and enjoyment of the Colorado River at the Krieg Complex.

GOAL 5.00 Create an innovative funding process for establishing a Colorado River Metropolitan Park, a minimum area of 200 acres.

Policy 5.01 Assure the City's goals for parkland acquisition are part of a strategic plan for roadway and other public improvements; special urgency should be given to the Montopolis area.

Policy 5.02 Develop a master plan and secure additional funding for development of existing parkland.

Policy 5.03 Explore a wide range of land acquisition methods including conservation

easements, tax incentives and transfer of development rights.

Access

GOAL 6.00 Provide maximum visual and physical access to the Colorado River.

Policy 6.01 Develop a plan to secure public access easements along the shoreline from Longhorn Dam to the confluence with Walnut Creek.

Policy 6.02 Immediately develop a joint use agreement with the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation to upgrade and improve the public access area underneath the Montopolis Bridge.

Policy 6.03 Coordinate with Travis County in providing additional public access to the river.

Policy 6.04 Identify and analyze visual values, attributes and view corridors; develop and implement a plan for protection and enhancement.

Policy 6.05 Incorporate overlook park and amenity considerations into the Grove Boulevard/East Riverside CIP roadway project.

Natural Resources

GOAL 7.00 Protect, enhance and interpret natural values and environmentally sensitive areas of the Colorado River Corridor.

Policy 7.01 Conduct a comprehensive survey of natural and cultural values along the

Colorado River from Longhorn Dam to the confluence with Walnut Creek.

Policy 7.02 Require environmental impact studies, archaeological surveys and mitigation measures for all new development along the river.

Policy 7.03 Maintain the natural shoreline and bluffs along the riverfront.