The City of Rollingwood

Final Report for the City of Rollingwood Commercial Corridor Study

March 2, 1999

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Executive Summary

The City of Rollingwood must consider the profound impacts of Bee Caves Road improvements on its growth and development. The changing dynamic of the roadway, and increased traffic flow, may prompt adjacent properties to redevelop with improvements. Proper guidelines will ensure quality development and improve, stabilize and expand the tax base.

Recommended changes in ordinances include:

- ♦ Add use categories
- ♦ Simplification and regularization of setbacks and landscaping requirements, and consolidation of their location in the Code.
- Recognition of the Dry Creek greenbelt as an amenity. Provide consideration in the form of increasing permitted development or reducing required parking for enhancing the Dry Creek greenbelt or for exceeding landscaping and screening requirements.
- ♦ Elimination of redundant and inapplicable text.
- ♦ Modification of impervious cover standards, to address standards based on slope categories.

Introduction

The City of Rollingwood is evolving into a dynamic community. Changes are precipitated by the ongoing and proposed improvements to Bee Caves Road, and the associated possibility of changes to Rollingwood's wastewater treatment situation—a change from individual septic systems to a centralized wastewater treatment system. To seize this opportunity for cultural and economic growth, City government must fine-tune its development regulations, and create a firm and clear vision for Rollingwood's future.

To some extent, development along Bee Caves Road is at the mercy of Austin's ultimate control over and West Lake Hills' financial and political support of upgraded wastewater service in the corridor. Environmental concerns over increased development must be balanced with concerns over aging septic systems leaking to ground water. Rollingwood's position should be strong support for installing new wastewater lines in conjunction with Bee Caves Road improvements.

Vision

Rollingwood will be a vital community with attractive, accessible and human-scale commercial development concentrated primarily within the Bee Caves Road Corridor.

Goals

- Simplify and regularize the Rollingwood development regulations to eliminate redundancies, inconsistencies, and unnecessary repetition.
- ♦ Expand the tax base by encouraging high-quality commercial development and redevelopment within the Bee Caves Road corridor.
- ♦ Create a Rollingwood Town Center on the north and south side of Bee Caves Road, with tightly integrated city and commercial services, to serve as a focal point of the Rollingwood business community.
- Formally recognize and preserve the Dry Creek greenbelt area, particularly the area within the floodplain of Dry Creek, as an open space and park area, connected to a series of greenbelts and pedestrian areas through the City.
- ◆ Increase the sense of community for Rollingwood by constructing a pedestrian bridge and overpass as indicated in the last section of this report; Guide to Additional Illustrations and Maps.
- ♦ Encourage donation of Bee Cave Road right-of-way by property owners.
- ◆ Promote corridor drainage and traffic safety improvements, roadway beautification and increased tax revenue to the City.

Concerns and Parameters

Through this review of the overall land use planning process and zoning ordinances, the City of Rollingwood will be better prepared to maximize their opportunities and to leverage their future development issues to the greatest extent. The two most prominent goals are to improve the quality of life of the citizens and to improve the economic viability of the community as a whole. It is from this frame of reference that we address the issues and the guidelines that generate the current and future patterns of development. The key concerns addressed here served as our parameters in developing our recommendations for the City.

These points have been identified as central opportunities for the City of Rollingwood to influence its own future. They are issues that have developed from different sources and with different

schedules and it is important for the City to understand and prepare for their influence on the community.

They include:

- ◆ Improvements to Bee Caves Road from Loop 1 to Highway 360, currently in progress, will hopefully reduce congestion and improve safety along Rollingwood's "main street".
- ◆ Development regulations are the primary means Rollingwood has to guide and influence development along the Bee Caves Road corridor. Although that corridor is primarily fully developed, some of the older commercial properties or those most affected by roadway improvements may elect to redevelop totally at some future date.
- ♦ High quality development and redevelopment along the Bee Caves Road corridor will be beneficial to property values, and help to increase and stabilize the tax base.
- ♦ Since Rollingwood is responsible for acquiring the necessary right-of-way for Bee Caves Road improvements, incentives are needed to encourage voluntary dedication instead of requiring purchase or condemnation..
- ♦ A centralized wastewater treatment capability, expected to accompany the Bee Caves Road improvements, will provide new opportunities for development and redevelopment.

Wastewater Treatment Considerations

The City of Austin may impose controls and/or conditions upon wastewater treatment services dependent upon a wastewater line in the Bee Caves Road right-of-way. The City of Rollingwood must press to have adequate wastewater lines in conjunction with roadway improvement. Any limitations imposed by the City of Austin amount to Austin's exercising a defacto control over Rollingwood's development. All recommendations in the remainder of this report assume that the roadway and wastewater improvements to Bee Caves Road will be made within the context and recommendations of this report, and that adequate wastewater service will be available to support any reasonable development proposed within the Bee Caves Road corridor.

Recommendations

After a review of the Rollingwood ordinances, The Rollingwood Commercial Corridor Committee and Land Strategies, Inc. has a number of recommendations that we believe will move the City toward realization of its vision for the future. They are presented below. Appendix A is a presentation of the recommendations in the context of the existing Rollingwood ordinances. That

appendix should be referred to in addition to the specific recommendations presented here and in the other appendices.

Land Uses

- 1. The zoning ordinance text needs to be made less confusing in structure. The C-1 and C-2 districts should be combined, and there land uses that should be added. Add restaurant use to the permitted lists of land uses in retail districts. Specifically disallow drive-through windows. The recommended changes are shown in Appendix B.
- 2. Create a matrix of zoning district vs land uses to show which land uses are permitted, which are conditionally permitted, and which are prohibited in each district. An example of a portion of the proposed matrix is at Appendix C.
- 3. Add townhomes to the list of permitted land uses in the Bee Cave Road Commercial Corridor Area only. Townhome development would have a minimum lot size of 7,000 square feet per unit, and a minimum gross floor area of 1,500 square feet per unit excluding garages. These minimums will help to ensure high-quality development. Townhomes will be permitted to have common walls between units, which will require a 0' interior side yard allowance for townhomes.
- 4. Either define adult-oriented businesses as not permitted, or do not address them at all. Leaving adult-oriented businesses out of the ordinance will make this a special use by default, requiring board review.
- 5. Discontinue and remove non-conforming special land uses that cease operation for at least six months, or in which resumption of use has not been diligently pursued in such six month period.

Setbacks & Development Criteria

6. Revise the definition of impervious cover to be:

Any construction covering the land with natural or man-made materials which prevent absorption of water by the natural land surface.

The following are not to be construed as impervious cover.

- Sidewalks if less than 6 feet in width or if located in residential areas
- Roof overhangs
- Wooden decks or equivalent structures, constructed with provisions for water to pass through.
- Swimming pools.
- Gravel or wood-shaving surfaces, or surfaces which may be demonstrated to exhibit similar permeability.
- 7. Simplify required yards and building setbacks for development other than single family residential, as shown in this table:

Front Yard 25' Street Side Yard 15'

Interior Side Yard 10' (0' for Townhome use)

Rear Yard

20'

A uniform 25 foot front yard will provide adequate building setback and space for landscaping. An interior side setback of 10 feet will make compliance simpler to determine than the current variable side yard. A street yard setback of 15 feet will provide adequate room between sidewalks (if present) and the building for landscaping.

- 8. Increase maximum building heights. In residential districts, 35 foot height maximums allow for two story structures with generous allowance for pitched roofs. Such height limitations are consistent with current fire fighting capabilities. In non-residential districts, particularly within the area of the Bee Caves Road corridor, a 60 foot height maximum will allow for four story structures with adequate allowance for elevator overruns, pitched roofs, and building equipment required to be mounted on roofs. (See also buffering requirements, Appendix D.) Building heights will be determined by using the mean vertical distance between the highest and lowest natural grades adjacent to the building, and the highest midgable of the roof, or the top of the parapet wall for an ungabled roof. (Please refer to Figure 1 in the Guide to Additional Illustrations and Maps at the end of this report.)
- 9. Create a matrix of zoning district showing development criteria applicable in each district. Include items such as maximum building height, minimum and maximum lot size, minimum and maximum building area, required yards and setbacks, and allowable impervious cover. An example of the proposed matrix is at Appendix E.
- 10. Impose setback restrictions on development along creeks. Complete recommendations for development in and near the 100 year floodplain are at Appendix F.

- 11. Allow individual retail structures to be as small as 500 square feet. This will allow "village" type retail, with tenants such as boutiques, coffee shops, sandwich shops, and ice cream parlors.
- 12. Simplify and revise parking requirements. All retail development requires parking at 1 space per 200 gross square feet of floor area. All restaurant development requires parking at 1 space per 100 square feet of floor area. All office development requires parking at 1 space per 250 gross square feet of floor area.
- 13. Within the Bee Caves Road corridor, allow contiguous properties to share parking between dissimilar uses which have different peak hours for parking (e.g., office and restaurant). Shared parking may not be used to reduce required parking to less than 1 space per 300 gross square feet of floor area considering all development utilizing shared parking facilities. Replace the 300 maximum distance criteria for parking, with a requirement for all parking to be on the same site (or on a contiguous site where shared parking is used.)
- 14. Establish impervious cover maximums based on different zoning categories. To protect areas with steeper slopes, provide separate considerations for steeper slope categories and the presence of environmentally sensitive features that may require protection. These concepts are presented fully in Appendix G.
- 15. Storm water detention provisions should be defined for the various zoning districts.
- 16. Develop a cut and fill standard to eliminate drastic site changes that could affect stormwater drainage and visual appeal. We recommend a six foot (6') maximum as a limit to work from. Anything greater will require approval through a variance. Six feet (6') means any cut deeper than 6' and/or any fill greater than 6' in depth, with the exception of structural cut and/or fill that is entirely contained within the extent of a structure's foundation.
- 17. Use the Westlake Hills sign ordinance as a template for a revision to the City of Rollingwood sign ordinance.

Landscape & Buffering

18. Adopt compatibility standards regulating non-residential land uses placed next to residential uses. Require townhome and non-residential development to provide landscape buffering when located adjacent to residential development. Require setbacks for buildings exceeding two stories in height where townhome and non-residential development are adjacent to residential development. Present height setbacks in the form of feet of setback (over and above the required yards) for feet of height. Include lighting standards. Our complete recommendations for the proposed compatibility standards is at Appendix H.

- 19. In conjunction with compatibility standards, create a set of landscape buffer standards for lots which require them. These standards will replace the repetitive text in the current zoning ordinances. Require landscape buffers to contain a mix of elements, and to meet specified average density minimums. Our complete recommendations for landscape buffer standards are at Appendix D.
- 20. Revise landscape requirements as detailed in Appendix I. Require all non-residential and townhome lots to comply with landscaping provisions of the Code. Remove pruning requirements. Require financial commitment to be posted for at least 50% of the estimated cost of required landscaping before construction commences. Replace or supplement references to engineers and architects with references to landscape architects and/or registered landscape contractor.

Application Processing

- 21. Relieve the City Council of responsibility for review of landscaping, fencing and buffering requirements. Transfer responsibility for review to a zoning officer (or the Planning and Zoning Board as a whole), who can then become familiar with ordinance requirements and the special conditions that may exist on individual sites.
- 22. Remove unenforceable provisions from the ordinances. These are:
 - a. Regulation of views into residential structures from commercial buildings. Once both structures are built, there is no acceptable method of policing this regulation. There is also no acceptable remedy for a view situation created by natural processes (such as a tree lost to storm or erosion), or by actions on the part of the residential property owner (such as addition of a window).
 - b. Pruning restrictions on trees. Existing regulations require no pruning that either will reduce the height of a tree to less than 15', or will prevent it from reaching a height of at least 15'. Given safety requirements for overhead electrical lines and limb removal necessary to save damaged trees, this restriction is unenforceable as well as difficult to police.
- 23. Consider your current plan and enforcement process. This is the forum in which considerations for special uses are discussed, and in which negotiations regarding landscaping requirements and Dry Creek protection/enhancement activities, with resulting possible development incentives, will be conducted.
- 24. Develop a comprehensive list of incentives and concessions that a developer may consider. Consider whether to allow incentives for all property, for non-residential property only, on only properties adjacent to Dry Creek. We would recommend limiting incentives and

concessions to development adjacent to Dry Creek. This list should be created after a long-range master plan for park improvements, that will serve as a "wish list". Items on that list or plan to be considered for contributions can include the following:

- Funds donated to the City to be used to mitigate environmental or service costs incurred by the City.
- ♦ In kind contributions
- ♦ Landscape work/ trees.
- **♦** Equipment
- **♦** Maintenance
- ♦ Park feature construction
- ✦ Planning services
- ♦ Development quality exceeding ordinances, i.e., 100% masonry construction, pitched roofs, or high quality building materials.

Develop specific levels of achievement with these items for qualifying for the incentives below. These should not be so difficult to achieve that they are seldom attempted.

Development issues that may be allowances:

- Setbacks may be relaxed if adjacent to the park and the improvements are oriented to and contribute to the park.
- Impervious cover may be increased by a maximum of 10% if significant contributions from the predetermined plan or list are made.
- ♦ Building heights may be increased by one story if significant contributions from the predetermined plan or list are made.
- Parking concessions may be made if significant contributions are made from a predetermined plan or list. Discuss whether or not you want to encourage shared parking between businesses that keep different schedules and whether or not shared parking is allowed as an incentive. Address how overflow parking in fields or non paved areas is considered.
- 25. Write specific rules that address grandfathering of existing uses. Determine how the property's status may be changed by extended closure, or by extensive damage through natural or other means. Consider when a use should be determined to be discontinued. The City may clarify how and if other land use controls besides land use change with substantial remodeling, i.e., setbacks, landscape, and buffering.
- 26. Consider whether or not there are specific views that the City would like to protect by means of a viewshed or view corridor control.
- 27. Require plan review for all P.U.D. districts.

Dry Creek Floodplain Development

- 28. Adopt the Dry Creek corridor, as defined by the incised creek and banks, as a greenbelt corridor. Adopt incentives to enhance the greenbelt in the form of increased development density or decreased setback and/or landscaping or buffering requirements, available to projects and properties which provide enhancements to Dry Creek Park. In conjunction, survey and propose the boundaries of the Dry Creek corridor (Dry Creek Park).
- 29. To effectively tie Rollingwood together as a unified entity, pursue construction of a pedestrian underpass in conjunction with the proposed bridge on FM 2244, and a pedestrian bridge to be constructed across Bee Caves Road at the north end. These constructs would form links in a potential loop of pedestrian trails binding the community together and defining the town center. Specific locations of these recommended structures are shown on the attached Opportunities map.

APPENDIX A CITY OF ROLLINGWOOD ORDINANCE REVIEW

The following discussions are presented in a format consistent with the organization of the existing Rollingwood city ordinances.

APPENDIX A -1 CITY OF ROLLINGWOOD ZONING ORDINANCE REVIEW

Recommendations

- Article V: Residential
- Section 2:

Assumption: Wastewater collection is provided.

Consider provisions for the inclusion of R-2 (townhome) category in designated areas closely associated with the commercial core. For all permitted uses in this section and later, recommend that they be relocated to the matrix illustrating comprehensive land use and zoning compatibility. See *general notes and sketch details*.

Include in Government and Institutional zoning district and remove completely items not in the City, public/private owned property, or easements the following categories:

churches, city buildings, non-profit libraries and museums, fire stations, Public water facilities, public wastewater facilities, reservoirs, filter beds, surface tanks, below surface tanks, artisan wells, pumping plants, wastewater disposal facilities, city administration buildings.

Include public utility facilities in residential district.

Section 4:

The maximum permissible building height should be thirty-five feet (35') instead of 30' for residential measured by the mean ground level to the highest mid-gable of a roof (see diagram in sketch details).

Section 5:

Discussions need to continue regarding reductions in lot size from 15,000 sq ft if wastewater service is available specifically for townhome class, (R-2).

R-2 minimum recommended is 7000 sq. ft.

• Section 6:

If townhomes are allowed, a new criteria should be established. For R-2, minimum average floor plan to be 1500 sq. ft. of net useable space.

• Section 9:

Define Setback. Change the front yard minimum depth from 30 feet to 25' and remove the language that is confusing for the side yard setback and simply say 10'. Also simplify the corner lot language to say 15'. #3 under section 9 needs to be removed or restated clearly.

Note: If townhome clusters are allowed, side setbacks could be reduced to 0'; could have adjoining walls, maintain a minimum of 20' building setback from front yards for off-street parking and 25' rear setback.

- Article VI: C-1 professional and Business Office, C-2 Business
- Section 2:

The maximum permissible building height for the office and business districts should change to Sixty feet (60') maximum instead of 35', but must meet compatibility standards.

• Section 4:

It is important that the ordinance be thoughtful and efficient. The code here needs to remove the criteria of City Council approval by restating that City of Rollingwood will not allow sheds or other kinds of accessory structures to be in this zone but can have small commercial operations. Consider potential "village" retail type of development. example: Boutique, Café, Ice cream. Minimum **retail** structure 500 sq. ft.

• Section 7:

We have suggested that the front setback of 20 feet for the front be changed to 25 ' to allow for a more generous landscape space. Performance incentives as described in a later section should allow for reducing this setback to a minimum of 15' if the required and stated contribution is provided.

10 feet should be included for the side setback so that there are at the least minor glimpses through to dry creek which essentially backdrops the entire stretch of commercial. The concept with this and other proposals is to bring and preserve the presence of dry creek into the corridor which softens the corridor adding more appeal.

• Section 8:

Consider having a separate Buffer section that uses a matrix for buffer types; this would be included in the compatibility section. See sketch detail in last section.

When incompatible uses are adjacent, handle the whole discussion of how this adjacency is addressed through the compatibility standards. Thirty feet (30') natural buffer between residential zone boundary and non-residential impervious construction inside non-residential zone. Relax the requirement with improvement to the dry creek greenbelt that would be a screen or much more appealing and useable to the dry creek users. the planting of a stand of trees that serves as a buffer provided that they do in fact screen can be considered. One problem will be to address the differential elevation between residential and commercial uses.

With regard to City Council approval, landscaped buffers can be addressed without the burden of individual review by the council. Establish graphically and in writing different buffering classes or types and require these depending on the nature of the inconsistent use (or defined by zoning category). See sketch detail in last section. Buffering in areas that have more than 20 feet of elevation change between them will either have to be considered individually case by case by a zoning and planning board or try to establish a criteria based on angle of view and screen height based on the ground elevation of the residential structure.

The review of landscape and fencing or buffering requirements should be removed for the City Councils responsibility and placed with a zoning officer or with the planning and zoning board.

The policing of views into residential structures from commercial buildings is not enforceable; for example, if a tree is lost in a storm opening up a view that didn't exist before or if a home remodels creating the situation themselves. No mechanical units on rooftops.

Light transmission from non-residential uses to residential uses must be shielded, down-turned, and should not exceed normal residential levels (a foot candle range with 5' maximum. Average footcandle is 2.5'). This includes light types, sizes, heights, angles, and also structure materials that reflect. Maximum pole ht of 24'.

• Section 9:

Maybe allowances in parking to the property owner for contributions to Dry Creek Park improvements. Possibility of off-street parking in commercial core area only. #2 should be deleted and have one criteria of 1:250 as the ratio.

Delete the criteria that requires a 300 feet max distance, all parking must be on site. Recommend future shared parking scenarios along Main Street with mixed uses, offset scheduling. Shared parking must have 1/300 space on site.

City may allow performance incentive up to 80% impervious cover based off of new impervious cover definition. - See additional notes in impervious cover section. Maybe allowances for contributions to Dry Creek Park improvements

Remove all references to pavers and grass-crete and the % calculation. This complicates the calculation of impervious cover and is an administrative nightmare. For simplification and clarity call out pavers as impervious and grass-crete as pervious. One warning is that grass-crete is rarely attractive and should be discouraged in general.

Article VII: C-1 Professional and Business Office

Does it make sense to have the combined section and then the two separate sections? Consider reducing this to one sections of C-1.

Section 3:

The same comment as in the previous articles apply to this one. remove all land uses to a single list in a matrix that can serve as the overall land use list for all zoning classes. This will simplify the legibility of the zoning rules and can demonstrate other components such as parking requirements, buffering, etc. One suggestion would be to obtain copies of the list of land uses of the surrounding towns and compare this to your overall permitted or not permitted land uses. See the matrix example in the sketch details. Carefully review this list and the list with article VIII and compare with the other articles to include uses not shown and to eliminate uses having free reign over several categories.

- Article VIII: C-2, Business
- Section 2:

Open up the following categories:

Hotel/Motel
Apparel
Boutiques
Specialty Shops/ Specialty retail

Remove:

Paint Stores
Wallpaper stores

Add hospital to Special Uses List instead of separate zoning category.

Place land use review responsibilities with the Planning and Zoning Board.

Careful about catch all statements within the list of land uses. "Retail uses which supply the everyday needs of residents of the City"; remove this statement and comment that all uses not specifically stated to be considered as a special use to be considered by the Planning and Zoning Board.

With uses such as adult oriented businesses, decide whether or not to call this out as 'not allowed' or to not mention which defaults this use to special use triggering board review.

Do not discourage restaurants, just the drive-throughs. Place restaurants in the normal land use list and specifically disallow drive through windows. Possibly clarify as food service with drive through windows or delivery.

Use 1:200 as a parking ratio for the uses in this zone except for restaurants which should be 1:75, identify this ratio in the land use matrix.

For all commercial zoning classes, special uses that are non-conforming lose their existing land use if they cease to operate over a 6-month period.

- Article IX Government and Institution
- Section 3:

Remove the reference "(a) As permitted in residential district" from residential zoning.

- Section 5: Increase maximum height to sixty feet (60') and four (4) stories.
- Section 8: Change minimum front lot line setback to 25'. Change minimum side lot line bordering a side street to 25'. Remove confusing language concerning abutting rear lot lines and simply say 10'.

• Section 9:

Review the landscape buffer note stated earlier between commercial and residential zones.

Develop section in compatibility standards for all buffering situations. Most of the issues can be covered in a matrix as in the notes/ sketch section here.

• Section 10:

Provide for allowances for reductions in parking ratios only through performance incentives or for contributions to Dry Creek Park improvements.

Change the impervious cover requirement to eighty percent (80%). See impervious cover section toward back.

Should there be consideration for a provision concerning a general incentive structure for improvements to Dry Creek? All contributions would be considered and approved by a planning and zoning board.

Develop "wish list" and/or park plan that are the specific items that can be given through the contribution incentive measures for Dry Creek.

• Section 9:

Use type A, B, or C buffering and establish who offends whom. Define park uses for this, riparian corridor or softball field. May require special considerations with ballfields and netting barriers/ foul ball protection done on a case by case basis.

This entire section appears to have been copied over from another article, revise all criteria to address the appropriate uses. Some of the comments are not even applicable such as views.

Parking requirements need to address the specific activities in the park and not be tied to gross floor area of a building. Verify appropriateness of the ratio and establish a more reasonable measure.

Article X-A: Hospital

This infers that you are open for more of these uses. Refer to legal staff if a zoning category can be removed and placed into C-2 as a special use.

Most of the permitted uses and permitted accessory uses in this article can be contained to C-1 professional offices or C-2 with plan review.

• Section 9:

Contain buffering of adjacent incompatible uses in a buffering section within the compatibility standards.

Thirty-foot (30') greenbelt is recommended as a buffer between the residential zone and the other more intense zone.

Section 11:

All parking and other requirements should refer back to the C-2 commercial zoning category.

- Section 15: Eighty percent (80%) impervious cover if developed within C-2.
- Article XI
- Section 1:

Require Plan Review for all PUD applications.

The Planned Unit Development district ("PUD") is intended for large or complex developments under unified control planned as a single contiguous project. The PUD is intended to allow single or multi-use projects within its boundaries and provide greater design flexibility for development proposed within the PUD. Use of a PUD district should result in development superior to that which would occur using conventional zoning and subdivision regulations. PUD zoning is appropriate if the PUD enhances preservation of the natural environment; encourages high quality development and innovative design; and ensures adequate public facilities and services for development within the PUD. The minimum size generally considered appropriate for a PUD is five acres unless unusual circumstances exist on the site.

• Section 6:

Not necessary to include language about minimum floor space above the commercial zone criteria.

APPENDIX A -2 CITY OF ROLLINGWOOD LANDSCAPING ORDINANCE REVIEW

• Section 1:

Separate out tree preservation from required landscaping. It will read and be understood easier.

Require an initial tree survey: no cedars; 8" and above for hardwoods.

Protected trees are any trees with a caliper of 16" or greater measured at 3.5 feet above natural grade. Require 100% caliper replacement for "protected" trees with minimum of 4" caliper trees. Example: four 4" cal. trees to replace one 16" cal. tree.

Caliper (diameter) is a preferred means of tree size measurement. A 3" caliper is minimum. The goal should be "street tree" planting effect with a spacing target of 25 - 50 feet on center.

Replacement size and quality are issues with preservation. Negotiations are acceptable on heavily wooded sites. Example: 25% replacement should be desired goal with minimum of $\frac{1}{2}$ " caliper trees.

Section 2:

Landscape Requirements should be applicable to all non residential lots, not just Commercial use lots and R-2 if this category is included. List zoning categories. A matrix can be developed that illustrated zoning category, parking requirement, landscape buffers, setbacks, and other data to simplify the process and its interpretation. Please refer to Section Three of this report titled General Notes.

The landscape requirement should refer to 20% of the developed site area, within the limits of construction, which effectively increases the amount of landscaping and should specifically place the work within the built site.

Caliper (diameter) is a preferred means of tree size measurement. It is also useful to specify more than one criteria such as caliper with height and/or ball dimensions. When setting a standard, refer to <u>Texas Association of Nurserymen</u>, <u>Grades and Standards</u>.

The pruning requirement is unclear, General pruning specifications are difficult unless tied to a stated goal. Enforcement is difficult and expensive.

If you are trying to maintain visibility at street/parking intersections then language may be utilized such as "maintain openness in vegetation from 3' to 15' ht within so many feet of the intersection."

Developer should receive one for one caliper credit for existing trees saved unless it doesn't meet other requirements herein such as parking lot trees or street frontages. A four-inch caliper tree should be worth one 4" cal. tree or two 2" cal. trees and so on.

Tree Preservation Program should be developed to preserve existing trees to the greatest degree possible. The note about the soil under the branches is good, this idea would be included in the tree preservation section with a detail of protection measures for the trunk and for the soil under the dripline. Compaction can be one of the greatest killers of trees on a development. As a minimum, use the criteria of 10' or ½ the dripline of the tree for the location of protective fencing. Fencing material can be Nalle flourescent plastic protective fencing or better. Protected trees in parking areas may be required to use 2x4s secured to the trunks for additional protection.

When writing criteria for specific tree or vegetation performance then evaluation is difficult. Develop a recommended species list and encourage native species. Many local nurseries specialize in native species. City of Austin has in their landscape ordinance a recommended list of native plants.

Write parking lot landscape criteria that is simple to understand and calculate. The current ordinance may lead to lots of small areas which are hard to maintain and have minimum positive visual impact. Maybe an addition would be: "...with no calculated landscape space being less than 150 continuous sq. ft."

"Landscaped open space need not be contiguous" This is reasonable however layout standards could be developed. Develop definition of minimum parking lot island such as "one parking space minimum." You may also consider that no parking space will be greater than 100 feet from any landscape or landscaped island with a 2"cal. minimum tree.

Be careful with the reference to open space. There is a difference between how people will interpret open space versus required landscape space. "Each required landscape area including islands will have a minimum of one tree of 2" calipers."

Add financial commitment (bond, letter of credit, cash, etc., posted for at least 50% of the anticipated cost) to allow occupancy to take place.

Enforcement of the landscape requirements must be considered by City Management/Police. Who follows up on this issue? For how long?

The owner or developer should maintain the landscape in perpetuity. Obvious faults should be fined.

With regard to maintenance, it is appropriate to consider asking or requiring Automatic Underground Landscape Irrigation Systems in required landscape beds for all non-residential development. Developers should be encouraged to plant natives to help this in the long run with lesser water maintenance requirements.

Check the consistency with other requirements when describing landscape green belts and buffers. Twenty-five feet (25') and requiring landscaping may be the new requirement. Overall effort must be aimed at maximizing the visual softening effect along the R.O.W. as well as buffering the Residential District lots. If developer increases width of greenbelt perhaps, some incentive should be offered.

The comment about a 20 feet buffer is a discrepancy with the earlier ordinance stating 30' buffer between residential and commercial uses? This is another reason for a standard buffer requirement to be developed in a comprehensive matrix and the use of a "type A, B, or C buffer." Buffering only required when no natural buffering exists.

• Section 3: Variances

This issue is up to the City of Rollingwood City Council. It is the intention of this critique to reduce the dependency on the variance process.

This is a landscape ordinance. Why not a landscape architect or registered landscape contractor? Hopefully engineers and architects are not preparing the plans. It makes since to remove this out of the landscape section and give it its own section to reduce redundancy.

APPENDIX A -3 CITY OF ROLLINGWOOD SIGN ORDINANCE REVIEW

Upon review of the current sign ordinance and in view of the recent critical review by others as well as the unambiguous nature of this section, Land Strategies, Inc. and the Bee Cave Road Corridor Committee have no specific recommendations except that the Westlake Hills sign ordinance be used as a template for any rewriting of the City of Rollingwood's sign ordinance.

Appendix B Land Use Changes

- 1. Simplify the zoning ordinance by combining C-1 and C-2 into a single C-1 district.
- 2. Add the following permitted uses in the C-2 (new C-1) district:

Hotel/Motel

Apparel sales

Boutique retail

Specialty shops

3. Remove the following permitted uses from the C-2 (new C-1) district:

Paint store

Wallpaper store

- 4. Delete the Hospital zoning district, and make hospital a Special Use.
- 5. Add Restaurant to the permitted lists of land uses in retail districts. Specifically prohibit drive-through and pick-up windows.
- 5. Increase the maximum height to 60 feet or 4 stories in the Government and Institution district.

Appendix C Zoning Land Use (example)

The partial matrix shown below is furnished as an example of how a matrix can be used to simplify the presentation of permitted uses, special uses, and prohibited uses within zoning districts. The matrix uses the existing C-1 and C-2 districts and land uses.

	<u>C-1</u>	<u>C-2</u>
Architect Office	X	X
Broker Office	X	X
Banks		X
Commercial Child Care	S	S
Retail Bakeries		X

- X Permitted Use
- S Special Use Requires City Council Approval
- Not permitted in this district

Appendix D Required Landscape Buffering

General Issues

- 1. Landscape buffering will be used to buffer the visual impact upon residential development of other types of development. The general concept is that, from a residential development, the only visible development should be other residential development. Other types of development will be screened or buffered so as not to disturb the visual quality of a neighborhood.
- 2. Landscape buffering will consist of combined landscape elements, located and arranged in such a way as to obstruct the view of a non-residential land use or property from a residential land use or property. Sample standard details for various adjacencies or incompatibilities that require buffering are presented at the end of this appendix.

Buffering Requirements

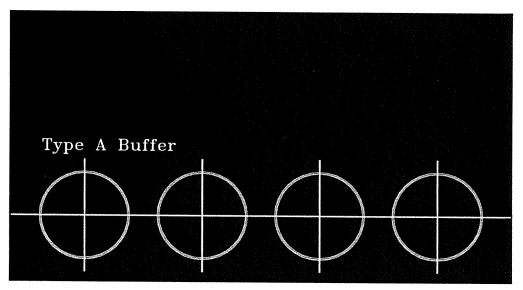
Buffers between like uses. A 5 foot Type A vegetative buffer shall be required between uses in the same zone except where the uses are connected.

Buffers to protect Residential Properties. The following are buffering mechanisms intended to protect residential properties which abut Commercial, Governmental & Institutional, Park, Hospital, and P.U.D. Zoning Districts:

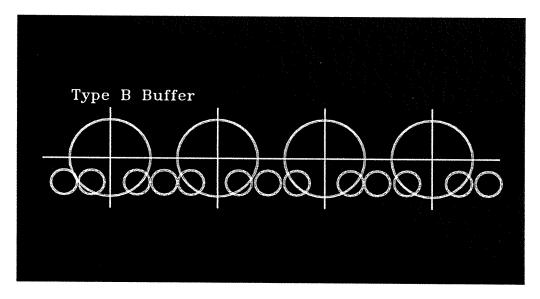
- A thirty (30) foot greenbelt, measured horizontally, will be provided between the boundary line of the Residential District and the impervious cover, including parking and buildings, on every lot located in the above referenced districts. The thirty (30) foot greenbelt will be left in its undisturbed natural state or will be landscaped as required by the Zoning and Planning Board.
- ♦ For Hospital Zoning Districts, if this category stays, the width of the greenbelt buffer is ten (10) feet.
- In areas where terrain and other features do not provide a visual screen between a lot in any of the above referenced districts and an abutting lot in a residential District, screening will be provided by a cedar or redwood privacy fence at least eight feet high, with its smooth side facing the residential lot.
- No fences or landscaping required under the ordinance will be constructed without prior approval of the construction plans by the Zoning and Planning Board and the construction will be in compliance with such approval and with all other applicable requirements of the City.
- Any lighting to illuminate parking lots, buildings or other structures will not exceed the height of 24', and will be installed in a manner which directs or shields the light away from nearby dwellings.

Examples of Buffering Types

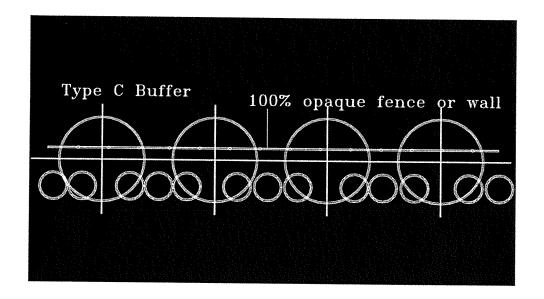
A Type A buffer shall consist of shrubs or trees with a mature height of at least 6 feet, planted at sufficient density to visually disrupt the outlines of buildings, pavement, and other structures on the development to be buffered. An example:



A Type B buffer shall consist of two or more evergreen landscape elements, with a mature height of at least 6 feet, planted and constructed so as to provide a continuous, though not necessarily opaque, visual buffer between the site being buffered and the site from which it is being buffered. An example:



A Type C buffer shall consist of three or more landscape elements, one of which is an opaque fence or wall extending to a height of at least 6 feet from the local grade. Landscaping berms may be used as a portion of this height. An example:



Appendix E Zoning and Development Criteria (example)

The partial matrix below is furnished as an example of how the development criteria in zoning districts may be conveniently presented in tabular form. Restrictions are taken from our proposed revisions to the current Rollingwood zoning regulations.

Minimum Lot Size	C-1 15,000 sq. ft.
Minimum Lot Width	N.A.
Minimum Yards	
Front	25
Street Side	15
Side	10
Rear	20
Building Height	60 ft.
Parking Requirements (Spaces / Sq. Ft. of gross FAR)	depends on use
Maximum Impervious Cover	80%

Appendix F The Floodplain

- 1. The Dry Creek flood plain will serve as a social magnet to catalyze the development of a Rollingwood Town Center through the development of the floodplain as Dry Creek Park.
 - ◆ Develop a Nature Trail Link, using the floodplain, to the City of Austin Nature Center.
 - ♦ Within Rollingwood, establish a loop of pedestrian trails as shown on the attached Opportunities map (Figure 5 in the Guide to Additional Illustrations and Maps which follows these appendices). These trails would include a pedestrian underpass and a pedestrian bridge as shown on that map.
 - ♦ Maintain and leave undisturbed, the natural vegetation for a stated setback from the stream centerline. This will protect against erosion and sedimentation and protect the ecological diversity in the stream corridor that can be used in an interpretation trail if Dry Creek Park is developed, The local schools could help with its design for their programming.
- 2. Specify development that will be permitted in the floodplain. Examples of permitted development would be creek crossings that do not substantially increase backwater, pedestrian trails, fences that do not interfere with flood flow, sports and recreation facilities that are not subject to damage during inundation and which do not interfere with flood flow, parking lots where runoff is filtered by vegetation.
- 3. No construction of buildings, walls, or any other permanent or occupied structure that might interfere with flood flows will be permitted in the floodplain.
- 4. No construction of parking lots shall be permitted where flood depths may exceed 18 inches, or in the floodway.
- 5. Establish setbacks from the centerline of the stream as follows, based on the drainage area of the stream:
 - ♦ Setback for construction, i.e., paving setbacks from stream centerline
 - → > 50 acres drainage basin- 25' "No-build Setback" on each side from centerline of stream
 - ♦ 25 50 acres drainage basin 15' "No-build Setback" on each side of stream centerline
 - ♦ < 25 acres drainage basin No Restrictions
- 6. Include the area of the setback in Site Area Calculation

- 7. Institute an "Adopt Dry Creek Park" program for the floodplain to assure flow of flood water.
- 8. Encourage "View Corridors" so the floodplain/floodway can be seen from Bee Caves Road.
- 9. Maintenance should be allowed in the 100-year floodplain.
- 10. The City of Rollingwood will perform or supervise preparation of a drainage study for entire area of the Dry Creek Basin that is within its corporate limits or extra-territorial jurisdiction..

Appendix G Impervious Cover

1. Recommended maximum levels of impervious cover for different zoning categories are:

Residential	50%
Commercial	80%
Park	50%

2. Make provisions for slopes existing on a site. The following maximum levels of impervious cover apply to the areas on a property having indicated categories of slope.

0 - 15% Slope	100% Allowable Impervious Cover
15 - 25% Slope	20% Allowable Impervious Cover
25 - 35%	10% Allowable Impervious Cover
> 35%	0% Allowable Impervious Cover

Simplified Approach for Calculation of Allowable Impervious Site Cover

- 1. The gross site is the total area of land within a development site.
- 2. Deduct the area of 100 year floodplain from the gross site area to determine the net site area.
- 3. Multiply the net site area by the appropriate value in Paragraph 1 above to determine the maximum allowable impervious cover.
- 4. For each slope category, multiply the acreage within that category by the allowable shown in Paragraph 2 above. The result determines the maximum part of the lot's total impervious cover that may be constructed on slopes of that category.
- 5. Regardless of the results of Step 4, the total impervious cover on the site may not exceed the limit calculated in Step 3.

Appendix H Compatibility Standards

Purpose:

- 1) To protect neighborhoods
- 2) To protect natural features including existing riparian systems and bluffs
- 3) To protect general aesthetics of the community

Applicability:

- 1) Interface of residential with non-residential use.
- 2) Interface of any use with the riparian zone known as Dry Creek

Requirements for new construction:

- 1. Non-residential zones adjacent to residential zones will have landscape or other suitable buffering for activities that are considered undesirable or unsightly when viewed from a residential property.
 - a. Upgrading an existing exposure such as trash collection, storage, or parking, as in the case of a commercial use adjacent to Dry Creek is desirable if the upgrade creates and stimulates the social use of Dry Creek; i.e., café terrace, playscape. Elements not desired for public view need to be relocated to their optimum position and screened with fencing and/or landscaping.
 - b. Architectural compatibility: Consider specific guidelines such as pitched roofs for commercial development; require mechanical equipment to be located on the ground and to be screened; encourage maximum use of native construction materials.
 - c. Develop a uniform lighting standard to include, but not limited to, the following: Light transmission from non-residential to residential needs to be shielded and pointed downward and not to exceed normal residential levels off site. This can be controlled by limiting bulbs to 400 watts, fixtures not to exceed 25' height. An average of one (1) to three (3) foot candles. This issue is both with the size and type of light fixtures, the direction of those fixtures, and reflective materials of the structures. In addition, drives that have night time traffic need to buffer automotive headlights with landscape or fencing if possible.
- 2. Property owners adjacent to Dry Creek will be encouraged to develop Dry Creek Park in a predefined manner in exchange for allowances in other development criteria. Consider special allowances in the area of parking requirements, height limitations, impervious

cover limits, or other constraints in return for contributing to the development of Dry Creek Park.

- 3. To encourage a broader spectrum of activities that support the idea of the "Rollingwood Town Center" Properties adjacent to Dry Creek will be encouraged to redevelop or improve their properties to address both the pedestrian frontage of Dry Creek and vehicular frontage of Bee Caves Road.
- 4. In association with the previous two ideas, Rollingwood City staff will develop maximums for height, setbacks, hardscape, etc., to the amount of allowances available for these programs.
- 5. Establish height setbacks from residential lots. Within 30 feet of the boundary of a residential lot, no building will be allowed to exceed 28 feet height. (This provision is necessary to address development which have received incentives in the form of reduced buffers.) Within 50 feet of the boundary of a residential lot, no building will be allowed to exceed 40 feet of height. Building height may exceed 40 feet (but not the maximum height set by zoning) by one foot for each additional 5 feet of setback from the residential lot. Please refer to Figure 2 in the Guide to Additional Illustrations and Maps.
- 6. This section should replace the buffering requirements currently individually stated in each of the zoning categories. To support and simplify the requirement, develop typical details that address the major incompatibilities such as the size and character of the buffer between residential and commercial uses.

Appendix I Landscape Criteria

- 1. Minimum landscape requirements should be 20% of the developed site area, within the limits of construction.
- 2. Redefine tree size in terms of caliper (diameter). It is also useful to specify more than one criteria such as caliper with height and/or ball dimensions. When setting a standard, refer to <u>Texas Association of Nurserymen</u>, <u>Grades and Standards</u>.
- 3. Existing trees will be considered as creditable toward meeting landscaping requirements provided that they meet minimum height and caliper requirements as stated elsewhere, and provided that they are appropriately located. The existing tree's caliper size may be applied against the *total* caliper inches of landscape trees required. Existing trees will *not* be counted for replacement purposes.
- 4. A tree preservation program should be developed. Protection measures should include fencing around existing trees that are to remain. In order to be considered protected, a tree should be fenced at a diameter of 10 feet, or ½ of the dripline diameter, whichever is less. Fencing should be Nalle fluorescent plastic protective fencing or better. Protected trees in parking lots will be required to use 2x4 timbers secured to the trunks to provide additional protection.
- 5. Instead of writing performance criteria for trees and vegetation, develop a list of recommended species. The City of Austin has in their landscape ordinance a recommended list of native plants.
- 6. In parking lots, do not consider any area smaller than 150 square feet toward the minimum landscape requirements. All landscape areas, to include parking islands, should have a minimum of one tree of at least 2 inch caliper (1-1/2 inch if it is an existing tree).
- 7. We recommend adding a requirement that every parking space be within 100 feet of a landscaped area with an existing or proposed tree of at least 2 inch caliper (1-1/2 inch if it is an existing tree).
- 8. Require posting of fiscal surety in an amount sufficient to cover at least 50 percent of the estimated cost of providing all landscaping, irrigation and plantings, prior to allowing occupancy of any development.
- 9. The City of Rollingwood must determine who will enforce landscape requirements once building inspections are complete and fiscal surety is released. This can be either an

- administrative or a police function. A system of fines should be developed for obvious failures to comply with the landscape ordinance and/or with approved landscape plans.
- 10. We recommend that you encourage use of automatic underground irrigation systems for all required non-residential development landscaping. We also recommend developers be encouraged to use native species to reduce water requirements. These two items might either be made mandatory, or associated with some form of incentive, such as a reduction in some landscape requirements.

Guide to Additional Illustrations and Maps

List of illustrations:

- 1. Measurement of building height
- 2. Building height setbacks
- 3. City of Rollingwood Main Street Corridor Existing Land Use
- 4. Current Constraints
- 5. Opportunities
- 6. Section Illustrating Opportunities

Notes on items 3, 4 and 5.

3) City of Rollingwood Main Street Corridor Existing Land Use

This illustration depicts the existing uses in the corridor but more importantly expresses these land uses within the context that they exist. The current condition of these properties and relationships that they have with each other and with Bee Caves Road illustrates the dynamics of the area and where there are long term and short term opportunities and constraints.

At issue for Rollingwood is how to leverage the opportunities available to them for maximum benefit to the City? Do you want this to be a "Town Center," a substantial tax base, Rollingwood's identity to the surrounding communities and to the commuters that pass through, or some other function? The existing land uses in this section of Bee Caves are a very limited palette as are the opportunities for change that will stimulate the functions that the City might desire. Also figuring into the equation are the schedules of activities that will influence the actions to be taken and the resulting land uses. Bee Caves will be redesigned and realigned, The City of Rollingwood may institute wastewater collection and disposal, and properties are being developed or considered for development. All of these components can and will change the character of the corridor in the future and the City of Rollingwood is in a good position to steer this course of change.

4) Current Constraints

Anybody that lives and depends on the Bee Caves corridor for moving goods and services or for driving to and from destinations during the day understand the limitations of this section of the road. Also understood is the potential that is implicit with the character of the natural features, the opportunities for commerce and so on. These potentials are currently hampered by the very real hazards of the corridor with the pace of traffic, limited sight distances and no intersections or turning lanes to enable the easy flow of traffic. Much of these issues will be addressed directly with the redesign of Bee Caves Road. However, other problems exist that will not be addressed by the road improvements such as the proximity of the floodplain to the road hindering commercial development, and zoning that may not be allowing the proper controls for the development

that does exist. Development of the corridor has also been slowed by the lack of central waste-water facilities. Land uses such as hotels and restaurants that can stimulate the vitality of the commercial district cannot develop with the barrier of requiring wastewater septic fields which both have limited capacity and consume valuable developable land.

5) Opportunities

The solutions that work best are the solutions that reverse constraints into opportunities. Having discussed briefly the problems that are occurring in the corridor and the commercial district, we are now at the point at which the discussion turns to developing ideas that can accentuate the unique features available to Rollingwood. Starting with the idea of "Town Center" and the floodplain, the need to weave together the Dry Creek system with the commercial core is essential for the creation of a "sense of place." It is this quality that is the essence of town centers and is developed through the interaction of commercial, residential and social functions. Dry Creek is the buffer that separates the residential and commercial sections and the improvement of this system can become the linkage that is needed to draw a wide breadth of activities into the commercial core that never before existed.

Rollingwood doesn't have any sense of a town center and the commercial core which typically serves as the location of the center is oriented toward Bee Caves Road which serves as a pass through for commuters that live in Rollingwood and beyond. The character of the road is designed to handle large volumes of traffic and move it quickly, which works against Rollingwood as a destination. This means that people driving through are not as likely to stop there for goods and services but go further up the road where traffic is slower and commercial development is more dense, varied, and accessible. Promoting a traffic light at Montebello and making the pedestrian links more friendly will aid in slowing the traffic down and bringing more attention to this section of the road.

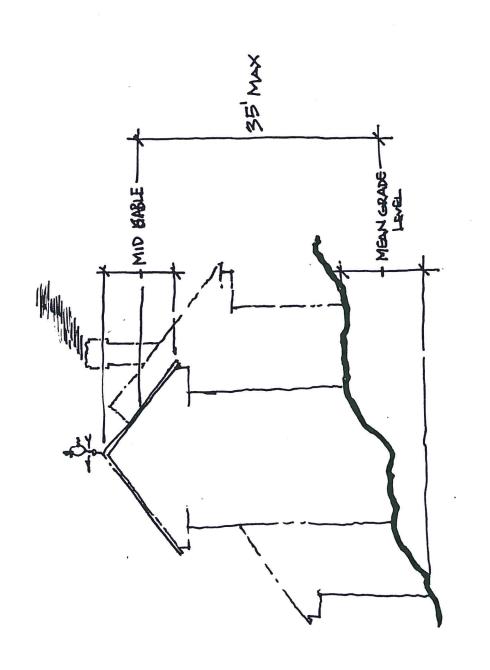
Developing a small pedestrian loop that links the south side of Bee Caves with the north side is an action that serves many purposes. As mentioned above, these links create visual signals of entering into a new area as one drives on Bee Caves. Using Dry Creek as a greenway corridor and developing connections across Bee Caves can link the south side of Bee Caves to the north side and Zilker Park beyond. This action would help to stimulate development activities more inclined to cater to an across-road clientele and stimulate a more pedestrian oriented climate. As discussed in many meetings, the south side of Bee Caves contains the largest contiguous tract of undeveloped land in this section of the corridor and the potential of this tract orienting toward a civic purpose is possible especially when coupled with the expressed idea of maintaining open space in the area for a park and the connectivity of a Dry Creek greenway.

The generation of these projects; the pedestrian loop, the town center, Dry Creek in general, and the potential changes in land use that these conditions would stimulate, all help to develop an identity to Rollingwood giving the City a sense of place. More emblematic in these actions is the development of the pedestrian crossings. It has been suggested with dialogue as well as in the

illustration that a bridge could be built linking the easternmost side of the district. This is the entry into Rollingwood from Mopac/ Loop 1 and it is fitting that a bridge signifying the entrance into Rollingwood be placed on this end with a new logo or emblem for the town which currently does not have one. The Bee Caves redesign and construction present a unique opportunity to include pedestrian access underneath the Dry Creek bridge again intensifying the social connection that would be apparent from Bee Caves. It is this location where the driver is presented with the broadest view of the Dry Creek system. Minimal activities of cleanup, maintenance, and access put in place at this interchange would carry substantial impact with the community.

Creating a pedestrian linkage that connects the Dry Creek/ Bee Caves interchange with the Rollingwood Drive intersection would be a tremendous improvement for the people that walk back and forth from the bus stop on Walsh Tarlton plus adding an easy connection for the busiest commercial core in the area between Walsh Tarlton and Rollingwood Drives.

Several tracts in the corridor are either on the verge of redevelopment or initial development. The City will need to proactively encourage the types of land uses that would be a strong stimulus for the corridor. This action will require the City to engage the owner of the tracts and assist them in their efforts to find appropriate buyers and lessee and/or negotiate as needed with the owners for this encouragement.

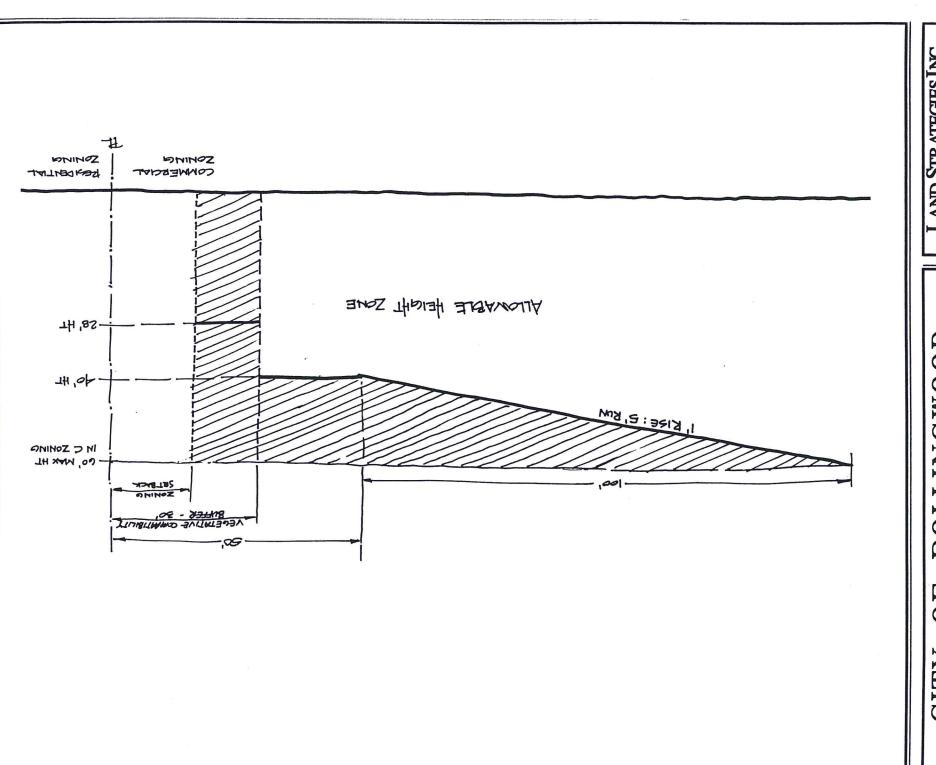


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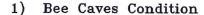
154 0731 Y OF ROLLINGWOOD Measurement of Building Height CITY August 24. 1998

Minatration 1



PAUL LINEHAN & ASSOCIATES





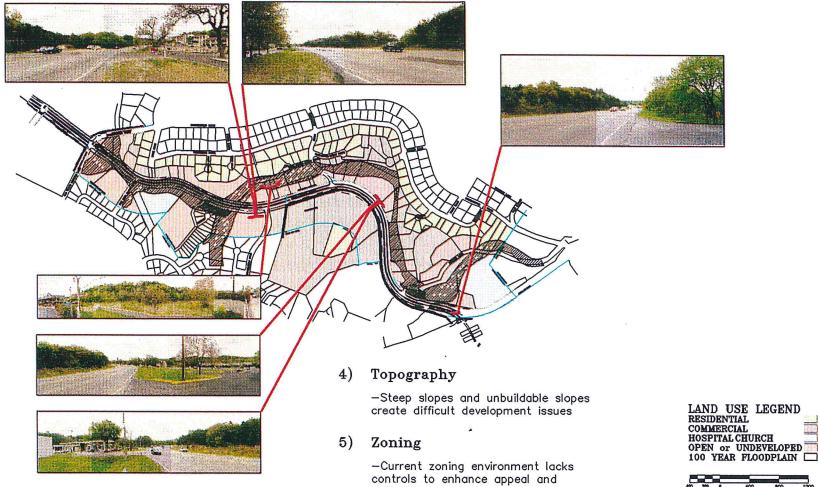
- -No allowance for identity
- -Access and safety

Wastewater Treatment Facilities

-Lack of central facilities discourages development and hinders property values

3) Flood Plain

-Much of the corridor frontage is in the flood plain hindering development



uniformity

LAND USE LEGEND RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL HOSPITAL CHURCH OPEN or UNDEVELOPED



City of Rollingwood
Current Constraints

