

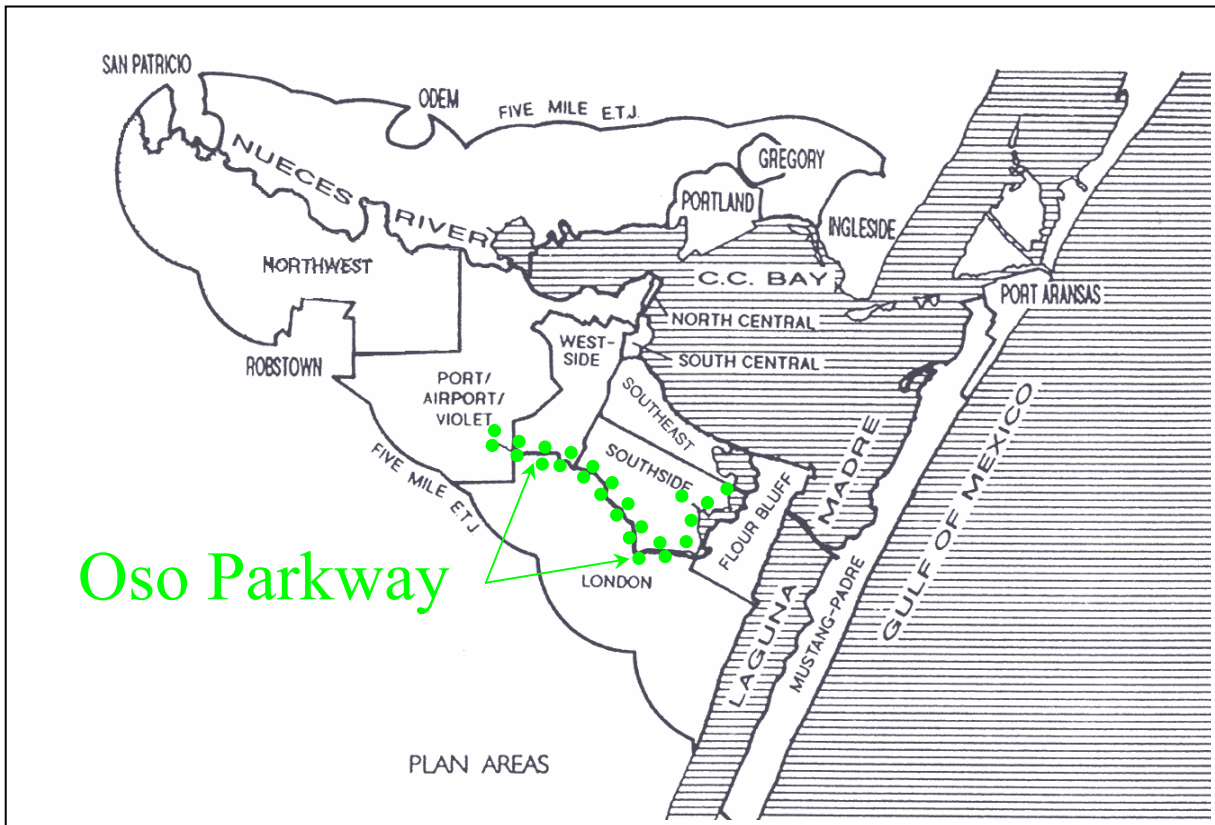
OSO PARKWAY PLAN

A SPECIFIC AREA PLAN



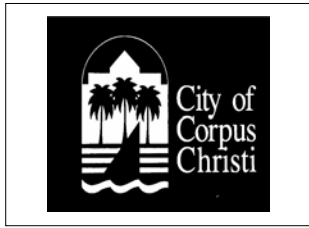
*An Element of the
Comprehensive Plan*

Adopted
November 30, 1993
Amended
February 28, 1995; November 11, 1997



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING





**OSO PARKWAY PLAN
A Specific Area Plan
AN ELEMENT OF THE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Adopted by City Council
Ordinance #02181, November 30, 1993
Amended by
City Council
Ordinance # 22166, February 28, 1995;
Ordinance #023126, November 11, 1997¹**

The preparation of this document was financed in part by a Community Development Block Grant from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

¹ Reprinted with new format July 2001.

**Corpus Christi City Council
November 11, 1997**

Mayor Loyd Neal

Arnold Gonzales
At Large

Betty Jean
Longoria
District 1

John Longoria
District 3

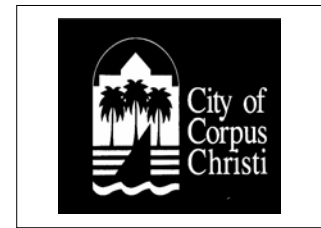
Alex L. Garcia,
Jr.
At Large

Jaime Capelo
District 2

Dr. David
McNichols
District 4

Ed Martin
At Large

Melody Cooper
District 5



**Corpus Christi Planning Commission
August 6, 1997**

Chairman Sylvia Perez

Richard Serna,
Vice Chairman

Billy
McDaniel

Bert
Quintanilla

Brooke Sween-
McGloin

Ron Guzman Danny Noyola

David M.
Underbrink



#021811

AN ORDINANCE

ADOPTING THE OSO PARKWAY PLAN AS AN ELEMENT OF THE CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; ESTABLISHING THE CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI'S DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS FOR THE OSO PARKWAY AREA; AND PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION.

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has forwarded to the City Council its report and recommendations concerning adopting the Oso Parkway Plan as an element of the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Corpus Christi;

WHEREAS, in accordance with proper notice to the public, a public hearing was held on Wednesday, November 3, 1993, during a meeting of the Planning Commission and on Tuesday, November 16, 1993, during a meeting of the City Council, in the Council Chambers at City Hall in the City of Corpus Christi allowing all interested persons to appear and be heard; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that the hereinafter set forth adoption would best serve public health, necessity and convenience and the general welfare of the City of Corpus Christi and its citizens.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS:

SECTION I. That the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Corpus Christi, Texas is amended by making the change hereinafter set out.

SECTION 2. That there is hereby approved and adopted as a portion of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Corpus Christi the Oso Parkway Plan, a substantial copy of which is attached hereto and made a part here of for all purposes, marked Exhibit A.

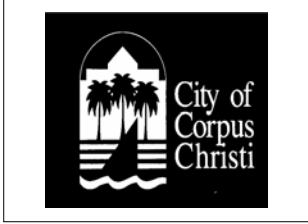
SECTION 3. That the Oso Parkway Plan hereby establishes the City of Corpus Christi's policies for growth, development, and aesthetics for the area described by said plan, a portion of the master and general plan of the City.

SECTION 4. That all ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby expressly repealed.

SECTION 5. If for any reason any section, paragraph, subdivision, clause, phrase, or word or provision of this ordinance shall be held invalid or unconstitutional by final judgment of clause, phrase, word or provision of this ordinance for it is the definite intent of this City Council that every section, paragraph, subdivision, clause, phrase, word or provision hereof be give full force and effect for its purpose.

SECTION 6. Publication shall be made one time in the official publication of the City of Corpus Christi by publishing the caption stating in substance the purpose of the ordinance, this ordinance to become effective upon such publication.



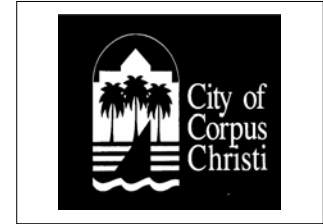


CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION1
A. ENVIRONMENT6
B. LAND USE9
C. ANNEXATION11
D. TRANSPORTATION.....12
E. PUBLIC SERVICES.....17

FIGURES

FIGURE 1 CITY OWNED PROPERTY
ALONG THE CAYO DEL
OSO AND OSO CREEK.....1
FIGURE 2 OSO PARKWAY CORRIDOR.....6
FIGURE 3 OSO PARKWAY STREET
CROSS SECTION8
FIGURE 4 OSO PARKWAY PLAN.....11
FIGURE 5 OSO PARKWAY
CONNECTION WITH
YORKTOWN BOULEVARD.....11
FIGURE 6 METHODS FOR REDUCING
DRIVEWAYS ON THE OSO
PARKWAY11



Oso Parkway Plan

November 11, 1997

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

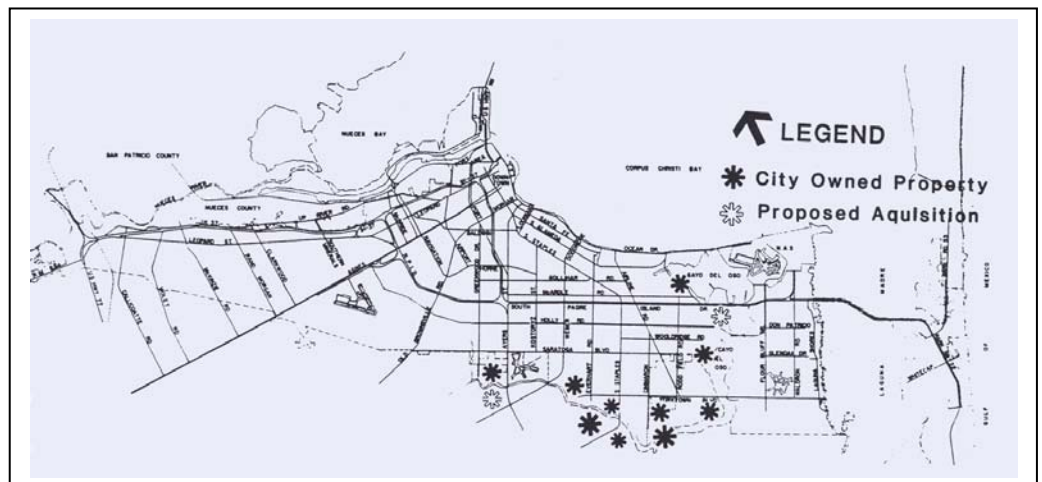
INTRODUCTION

I
n
t
r
o
d
u
c
t
i
o
n

The Corpus Christi Transportation Plan of 1963 was the first adopted city plan to show a roadway system paralleling the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek. The planning consultants of Harland Bartholomew first proposed the concept of a scenic drive and parkway along the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creeks in their 1967 Corpus Christi Comprehensive Plan. Although this plan was never adopted, the first seeds for a future parks and connecting parkway along the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek had been planted. During this 30-year span these initial concepts have been nurtured by many city staff, boards, commissions, and city councils both past and present. Their energy represents a huge investment in the preservation and protection of one of this City's most fragile natural resources.

A significant landmark for the establishment of a parkway system along these waterways occurred in 1986, when the City Council reviewed (but did not adopt) an Oso Parkway Plan and approved a grant application to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for purchase of property along the Oso Creek. Since 1986 the City Council has adopted several Area Development Plans (ADP), many having a direct impact on the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek environs, by recommending acquisition of land along the Cayo and Oso. Due to the diligent efforts by staff, the Park and Recreation Advisory Committee, the Planning Commission, and City Council those initial seeds of a concept are now firmly rooted in city policy with over 600 acres of city parkland along the creek and 3.37 miles of Oso Parkway constructed paralleling the creek. (Figure 1)

Figure 1 City Owned Property along the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek



PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- A. Conservation of the natural environment
 - Integrate buildings and infrastructure into the natural environment with the least disturbance of the environment with assistance from U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Texas Parks and Wildlife.
 - Improve water quality of Oso Creek and the Cayo Del Oso.
 - Minimize disturbance to the existing vegetation and wildlife habitats along the corridor
 - Create a network of public and private open space along the creek and Cayo
- B. Create recreational opportunities consistent with the environment
 - Create active and passive recreational areas close to residential neighborhoods.
- C. Preserve archeological resources
 - Document archeological sites and preserve significant sites and artifacts.
- D. Lessen the impact of stormwater runoff on adjacent urban development.
 - Provide adequate storm water impounding and drainage infrastructure.
 - Provide recreational and natural areas, which double as storm water management infrastructure.
- E. Provide public access to the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek.
 - Develop continuous scenic parkways along the Creek and Cayo for automobile, bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

THE OSO

The Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek provide one of the most important natural drainageways, diverse wildlife habitats and richest archeological areas in Nueces County. The Corpus Christi Policy Statements recommend preservation of public access to these areas and protection of the habitats. Therefore, the Oso has become a prime target for environmental conservation in Corpus Christi.

CAYO DEL OSO/OSO CREEK NATURAL DRAINAGE SYSTEM

The lower reaches of the Cayo are almost entirely developed today. Edgewater Terrace, the municipal wastewater treatment plant, the Oso Beach Municipal Golf Course, Hans A. Suter Wildlife Area, Pelican Bay Estates, Pharaoh Valley, Harbor Village, South Bay, Texas A&M University Corpus Christi, the United States Naval Air Station and Shelter Bay Resort Estates, surround the lower Cayo with either public space or single-family housing. South of Padre Island Drive, in Flour Bluff, are two recent residential subdivisions, Roscher and Tara Estates.





Some development is already occurring among the scattered farms and ranches of the Oso Corridor. South of Wooldridge Road, two single-family housing subdivisions, South Fork and Greenfield-by-the-Bay have been developed overlooking the West Side of the Cayo. At the southeast bend of the creek in Flour Bluff is Central Power and Light Company's Barney M. Davis cooling reservoir.

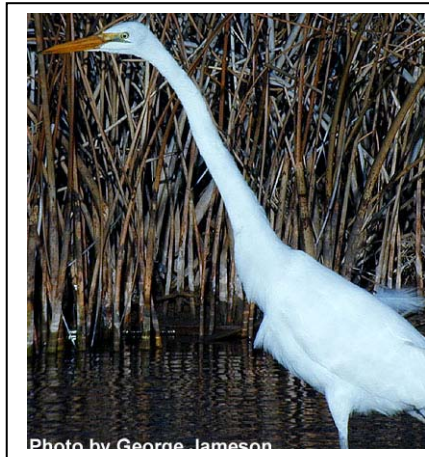
On the north side of Oso Creek, between South Staples Street and Cimmarron Boulevard, significant development has occurred. King's Crossing Country Club Subdivision is the largest development, containing single-family housing, a golf course and a country club.



Across the creek from King's Crossing is the original 110-acre Botanical Garden site. The Botanical Garden has relocated to city property immediately north of Staples Street and on the south side of Oso Creek. The City has acquired the original Botanical Site as parkland from the King's Crossing Subdivision.

Farther upstream is the Lakes Subdivision, which adds mores single-family housing to the Oso Corridor, and the Navy's Cabaniss Airfield.

However, farther upstream the Oso Corridor remains largely undeveloped open space used for agriculture purposes. Until recently, the area had been practically untouched. But if growth trends continue, it will be heavily urbanized within the next fifteen to twenty years.



Most of the land in the Oso Corridor is currently outside the city limits and without zoning. The segments of the corridor already in the city have been included in a variety of zoning districts: F-R (farm rural), R-1B (single-family residence), R-2 (multi-family), B-1 (commercial), and I-3 (heavy industry).

DIVERSE NATURAL HABITAT

Areas immediately adjacent to the Oso include a great variety of soils, topographic features and includes fresh, brackish and salt water to which supports a unique ecology. Many plants and animals are specifically adapted to the sandy soils of Flour Bluff or the clay soils west of the Cayo Del Oso; to the tidal flats of the Cayo or the fresher waters upstream. Some of these areas provide habitat to threatened and endangered species including the piping plover, reddish egret, Sennett's hooded oriole, brown pelican, audubon's oriole, Arctic peregrine falcon, and American peregrine falcon. In addition to these species, coyotes, jack rabbits, white-tailed deer, javelina, owls and ground squirrels are just



Blue Heron

some of the year round inhabitants of the Oso's semi-arid brush. These animals in turn feed on smaller animals, insects or plants, thereby controlling the population of the environment.

During fall, winter, and spring, the Oso also serves as a temporary home for various migratory birds. These include ducks, geese, warblers, flycatchers, orioles, scissortails, finches, and many other migratory species.

Sharing the wetlands and brush areas are numerous reptiles, amphibians and fish. Although many amphibians and fish mix easily with the built environment, reptiles, including snakes, lizards, horned lizards, turtles and salamanders require the open space of the Oso to survive.

The variety of animal life is matched by an abundant number of native plant species including: ebony, mesquite, live oak, retama, agarite, cane breaks, salt cedar thickets, acacias, cactuses, forbs, and grasses which the wildlife uses for food and protection.

ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

Under the Antiquities Code of Texas, a nine member Antiquities Committee is the legal custodian of all cultural resources, historic and prehistoric, within the public domain of the State of Texas. Diverse resources such as historic buildings, shipwrecks, and aboriginal campsites fall with the jurisdiction of the Committee. The Committee may designate these sites as State Archeological Landmarks. A considerable number of archeological sites are known to exist along the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek. These settlements vary in age from 100 to 10,000 years. Many predate the arrival of the Karankawas, Lipans,





Tancahuas, and Comanches. The Oso is an extraordinary laboratory not only for natural science, but also for human history.

Over fifty Native American archeological sites throughout the Oso Corridor have been registered with the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory in Austin. One has been awarded State Archeological Landmark status by the Texas Historic Commission and ten have been included in the National Register of Historic Places by the federal government.

An archeological easement covering one site listed on the National register has been granted to the State of Texas. The southwest bend of Oso Creek includes the remains of several dwellings and open-air hearths. Professional excavation of this site has already revealed much about the people who inhabited the Oso approximately 2,800 years ago.

CITY COMMITMENT TO PRESERVATION

There have also been ongoing efforts to preserve open space and wildlife habitat along the Oso. In 1979, the City established Bill Witt Park by acquiring 136 acres of donated surplus federal land (abandoned Rodd Field). At approximately the same time, the Texas Natural Area Survey identified the Oso as one of the state's most significant urban natural areas. In 1980, at the request of the City of Corpus Christi and the Coastal Bend Council of Governments (CBCOG), the Oso was included the Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan. Furthermore, in 1983, the CBCOG adopted a resolution supporting the acquisition of land for open space preservation.

The Oso Parkway Plan and subsequent actions to implement the plan will preserve, protect and enhance the Oso water system and its environments. This plan has been designed to coordinate the needs for both urban and recreational growth as well as environmental conservation. The following policy statements will provide a link between the goals expressed earlier and the many tasks that must be accomplished to implement this Plan.



Oso Creek at F.M. 43 (Weber Road)



E
N
V
I
R
O
N
M
E
N
T

A. ENVIRONMENT

STATEMENT POLICY

A.1

All development in the Oso Parkway Corridor area (See Figure 2) should comply with adopted drainage policies, including restrictions on developed in both the floodways and 100-year floodplain as delineated by FEMA.

POLICY STATEMENT

A.2

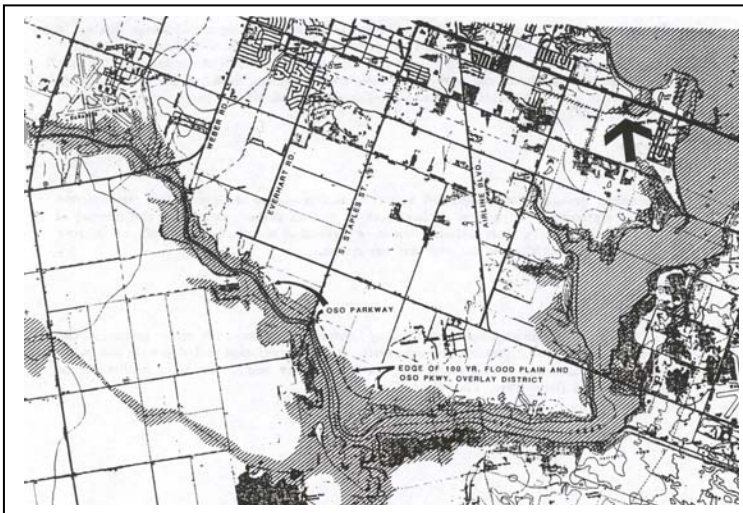
The City should conduct a flood plain study of the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek, based on adopted future land use. If the floodway boundary is determined to expand, then the City should change all appropriate codes and ordinances to protect property from future flood losses. The existing floodway boundary is based on a five-year projection of 1985 existing land use and does not take into account ultimate future land use and the impact each has on run-off and discharge into the Oso.

POLICY STATEMENT

A.3

All development in the corridor area should comply with EPA policies relating to water quality as it relates to discharge into bodies of water. In total, over 270 square miles of Corpus Christi and the surrounding area drains into the Oso.

Figure 2 The Oso Parkway Corridor





**POLICY
STATEMENT**

A.4

The city should require sufficient right-of-way/easements to construct drainage ditches in residential areas of a swale type design as these are more compatible with residential development than the traditional “v” type ditch. Swale type drainage ditches allow the opportunity for park-like amenities, sidewalks/bike paths while providing flood protection. Such drainage facilities should be located to provide a connection between neighborhoods and, schools, parks, recreation centers and other public places.

**POLICY
STATEMENT**

A.5

Stormwater drainage ditches lined with a pervious surface such as indigenous grass rather than concrete lining are preferred. Impervious surfaces such as concrete prevent percolation and filtering of stormwater runoff. Pervious surfaces allow some percolation and filtering of runoff and improve water quality at outfalls into the creek and bay system.

**POLICY
STATEMENT**

A.6

The City should create a special overlay zoning district that includes a site review process, in Oso Parkway Corridor, that protects environmentally sensitive lands, best utilizes private and public open spaces, encourages limited access along the Oso Parkway, and protects water quality (See the Southside Area Development Plan, Policy Statement A.1).

**POLICY
STATEMENT**

A.7

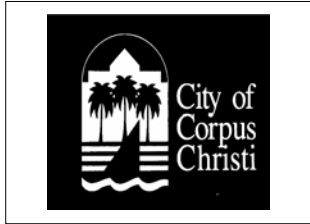
Require a site plan review process for any activity within the Oso Parkway overlay district or corridor (100-year floodplain or 150 feet from the Parkway right-of-way, which ever is greater). This process should be an implementation tool not only for the protection of the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creeks but also for the protection of development and properties within the overlay district or corridor. The following site plan information should be considered minimal and essential in the protection for both the natural and man-made attributes found in the Oso Parkway Corridor.

- a. Parcel or lot dimension;
- b. Location, proposed use, building size, and height;
- c. Yard setbacks and space between building;
- d. Parking, ingress, egress, and circulation
- e. Grading and drainage;
- f. Placement and size of utilities;
- g. Screening;
- h. Landscaping;
- i. Zoning;

- j. Notation and delineation of floodplain and floodway boundaries;
- k. Finish ground and floor elevations;
- l. Locate, and show boundaries and type of wetlands including Corp permit;
- m. Provide copies of Corp permit as well as other permit required by other regulatory agencies
- n. Provide traffic, and utility impact reports, indicating compliance or non-compliance with appropriate master plans; and
- o. Location of refuse collection facilities for uses other than single-family.



Oso Creek and F. M. 43 (Weber Road)



B. LAND USE

LAND USE

POLICY STATEMENT

B.1

Preserve physical access to the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creeks. The goal for physical access is to ultimately obtain adequate access to the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek Shorelines from either publicly owned park property or from the proposed Oso Parkway (right-of-way). This goal applies to both sides of the Oso Creek and to the west shoreline of the Cayo Del Oso. Physical accessibility can be achieved by public purchase, dedication or donation of property between the proposed Oso Parkway and Oso Parkway South and between Ennis Joslin and the Cayo Del Oso Shorelines.

Visual access across private property is also encouraged. Such views can be obtained through large lot development (1 acre or larger lots), by providing street alignment and right-of-way dedication in close proximity to the Cayo Del Oso or Oso Creeks, and dedication of visual corridors, and/or park acreage.

Property owners will be encouraged to preserve such views when requests are made for rezoning and platting adjacent to the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek.

POLICY STATEMENT

B.2

Unbuildable tracts, including but not limited to wetlands, dunes, and archeological tracts, may be given to the public. However, such offerings may not be used to satisfy the park dedication requirements of the platting ordinance.

Dedication of sufficiently large and accessible tracts not only creates nature reserves and passive recreational areas, preserves natural drainage patterns, aids soil retention and maintains scenic vistas, but also allows property taxes on non-remunerative lands.

POLICY STATEMENT

B.3

The City shall promote exceptional and meritorious programs or projects designed to further the appreciation and conservation of the Oso.

Programs or projects worthy of recognition might include: community education, species, habitat or archeological site preservation, creative subdivision, buildings, landscape design, mitigation of detrimental construction effects, restoration of the environment or pollution clean-up. Recognition reinforces conservation efforts and broadens community awareness of the unique resources found in the Oso Corridor.

**POLICY
STATEMENT**

B.4

Develop a special logo and design theme to promote the Oso Parkway as a Scenic Drive.

- a. **The Planning Department, Traffic Engineering Division, and Park and Recreation Department will propose, for City Council adoption, a special logo and unique public signage, street furniture, and lighting to be used along the Oso Parkway.**
- b. **Any utilities necessary to serve development adjacent to the parkway should be placed underground or away from the Oso Parkway right-of-way (see policy statement E.1).**





C. ANNEXATION

ANNEXATION

POLICY STATEMENT C.1

Properties in the proposed overlay district or corridor (See Policy Statement A.7) that are outside the city limits should be annexed into the City as soon as possible.

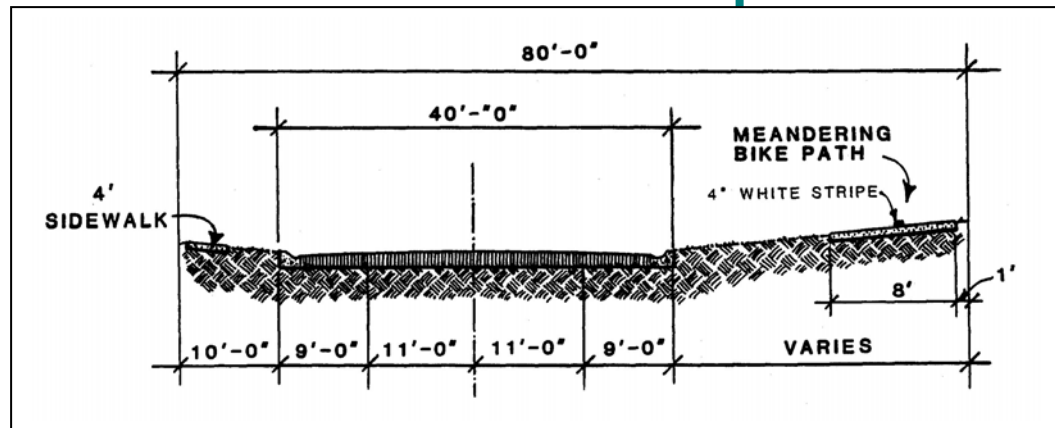
D. TRANSPORTATION

POLICY STATEMENT

D.1

A parkway should be dedicated roughly parallel to the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek, connecting any previously built sections and scenic points consistent with the Oso Parkway Plan Map (See Figures 4 and 5). Design objectives for the parkway include:

- a. 80 foot of right-of-way (See Figure 3, Cross Section);
- b. Two moving lanes and two parking lanes;
- c. A minimum 8-foot wide (unless State or Federal requirements mandate a wider width) combination bike and pedestrian way, adjacent to but separate from the street. The bike and pedestrian way should be located in the right-of-way adjacent to the Cayo Del Oso or Oso Creek. A planting strip should be located between the back of curb and the Bikeway and Pedestrian Path.
- d. A 4' sidewalk on the land side of Oso Parkway; and
- e. Curb and gutter on all sections of the Oso Parkway required with no exceptions, including provisions in the platting ordinance for exemption to curb and gutter requirements in large lot subdivisions.



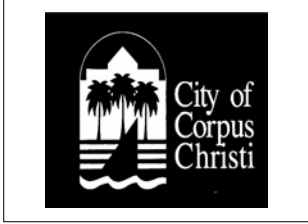


Figure 4 Oso Parkway Plan

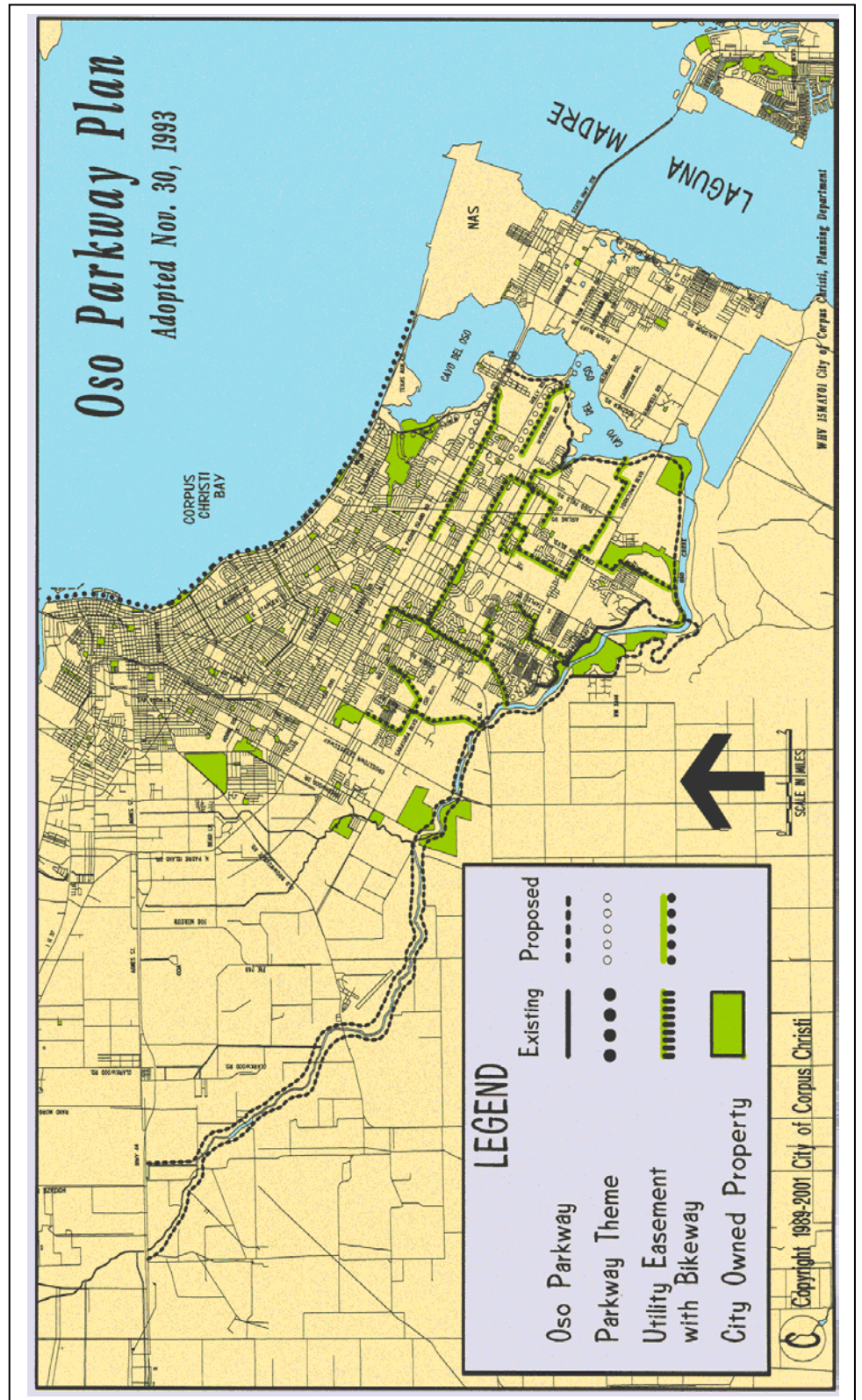
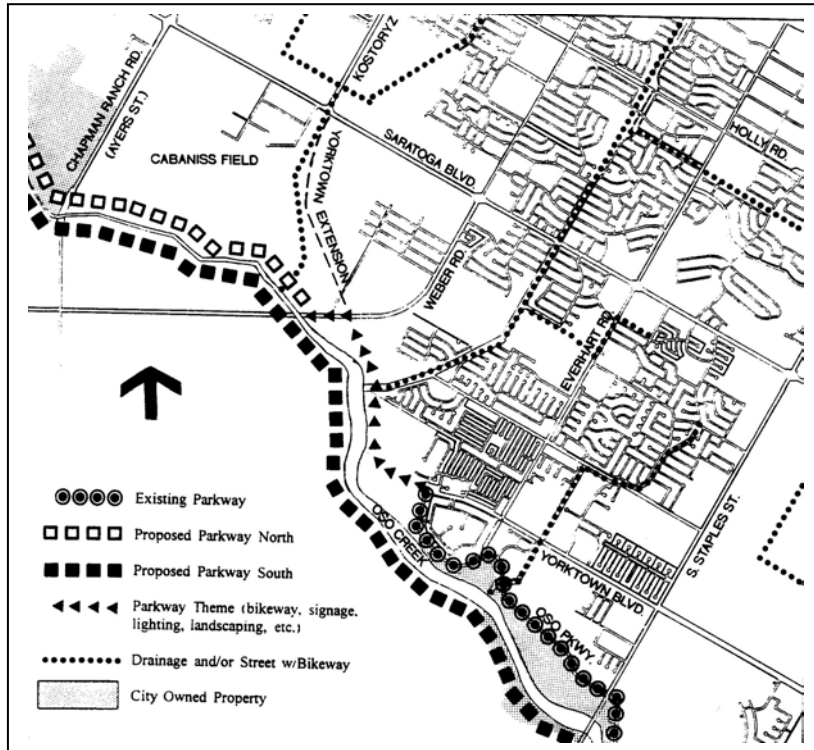


Figure 5 Oso Parkway North Connection with Yorktown Boulevard



POLICY STATEMENT

D.2 (Revised as amended to include item D.2.e by City Council Ordinance 022166, February 28, 1995.)

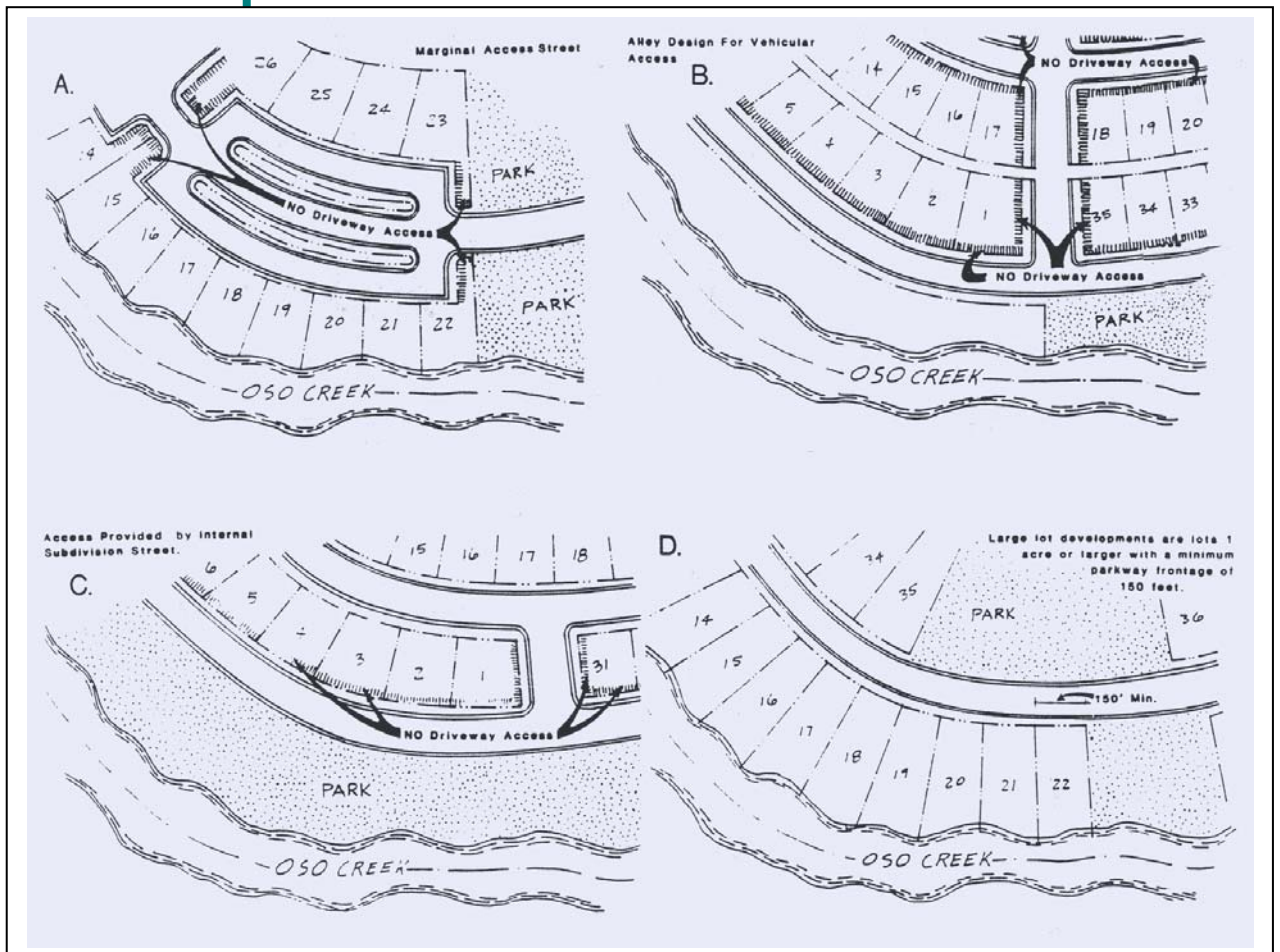
Driveway access to the Oso Parkway should be controlled (limited) so that the roadway can function as a safe visual corridor to the creek, and attractive scenic drive. The following methods for the control of driveways and spacing objective, described below and shown in Figure 6, should be used where these methods do not conflict with visual access to the creek.

- a. Require a marginal access street; or
- b. Provide an alley for vehicular access; or
- c. Provide access to an internal subdivision street; or
- d. Require large lot developments. Large lot development is considered 1 acre or larger with a minimum parkway frontage of 150 feet.
- e. Where the Oso Parkway does not serve as a segment of a major collector or arterial roadway and where the Creek side of the Parkway is public parkland. The following driveways may be considered when all conditions are met:



- 1) On lots with frontage on Oso Parkway, or series of lots, such that the average spacing of driveways is 150' or more when averaging both frontages.
- 2) Such lots are served with garage driveways connecting to alleyways or interior streets.
- 3) No more than one curb-cut driveway per lot is to be provided and does not exceed 24 feet in width.
- 4) The curb-cut accessing Oso Parkway does not provide access to a carport, garage or other parking area for residents.

Figure 6 Methods for Reducing Driveways on the Oso Parkway



**POLICY
STATEMENT
D.3**

Collector and local streets may cross the creek if the following conditions are met:

- a. They will not create traffic congestion in adjacent neighborhoods;

- b. They will not cause flood levels to increase; and
- c. They provide access to a public school or recreational facility.

**POLICY
STATEMENT**

D.4

Arterial and collectors that provide a logical extension of the Oso Parkway, such as Ennis Joslin, that do not intersect nor align with the Parkway, should continue the parkway theme established by the Departments of Planning, Park and Recreation, and Traffic Engineering.

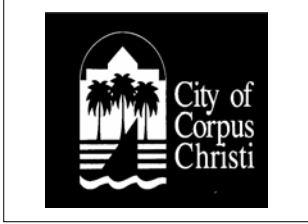
**POLICY
STATEMENT**

D.5

Designation of bike trails along utility easements/drainage ditches are intended to provide a recreational benefit to the neighborhood, as well as serve as possible commuter routes and provide greater connectivity/convenience to the overall bikeway system. Minimum design, safety, and maintenance objectives for the bike paths (two way) along drainageways should:

- a. Satisfy or exceed AASHTO's "Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities";
- b. Be placed on both sides of a drainageway with the option of confining the bike path/pedestrian path to only on side if:
 - ❖ AASHTO's standards cannot be met on one of the sides;
 - ❖ Drainage maintenance operations warrant; or
 - ❖ If abutting development makes bike path/pedestrian path infeasible.





E. PUBLIC SERVICES

P
U
B
L
I
C

S
E
R
V
I
C
E
S

**POLICY
STATEMENT**

**E.1
Utilities within 150' of the parkway or between the parkway and the Cayo Creek should be located underground.**

**POLICY
STATEMENT**

**E.2
Recreational or park infrastructure, located in drainage swales, should not obstruct flow or reduce drainage capacity.**

**POLICY
STATEMENT**

**E.3
Park acquisitions that provide access to the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek should be given the highest priority. Such acquisitions may take the form of property directly adjacent to these water areas or they provide property for placement of pedestrian paths to these water areas.**

**POLICY
STATEMENT**

**E.4
The City should continue efforts to acquire property along the Cayo Del Oso and Oso Creek. Acquisition of property in these areas will help to preserve the wildlife habitats found in the area, enhance water quality through public ownership/control, and assure future generations access to these beautiful areas.**