


# T O M B A L L I

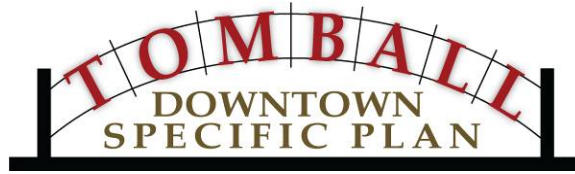
## DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN



# DTAC Design Workshop

## Summary Report

March 2011



# DTAC Design Workshop

## Summary Report



### Executive Summary

As part of the March 3, 2011 Downtown Tomball Advisory Committee Meeting, participants reviewed photographs of various features currently existing within the Downtown Specific Plan area. Participants were asked to review all photos and, as part of a homework assignment, forward feedback.


This report summarizes the feedback received through March 25, 2011, with additional comments received April 11, 2011 (see appendix). Feedback received was synthesized and is not presented verbatim.


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### Main Street Commercial (Slide 16)

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tree needs trimming</li><li>• Tree is a plus</li><li>• Good use of existing buildings; need better signage</li></ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good—no problems</li><li>• Like covered porch, nice Texas building; signage can be seen by oncoming traffic, nice sidewalks with ramp</li><li>• This should be the gold standard</li></ul>

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 3 |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> story of this building does not give a look of a business</li> <li>• Upstairs windows look like they are boarded up; sale sign should be for a brief period of time</li> <li>• This looks more residential than commercial</li> </ul> |
|---|---|---|


- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 4 |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs better signage</li> <li>• Umbrella folded when not in use, looks like it's in good shape, nice pop of color (red) on door and awning light; could use some type of greenery/flowers</li> <li>• Good use of existing buildings; need better signage</li> </ul> |
|---|---|--|


**General main street commercial comments:**

- There is a lack of a consistent downtown theme
- It is apparent that there are no architectural controls
- There is a lack of adequate signing to identify businesses

**Variety of Commercial (Slide 17)**

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 5 |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot identify business</li> <li>• Like the awning, but do not want any more corrugated metal buildings</li> <li>• Could use some greenery and/or color</li> <li>• Need brick façade</li> </ul> |
|---|---|---|

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 6 |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OK</li> <li>• Brick is good and covered walkway; it's clean</li> </ul> |
|---|---|---|

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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7



- Good signage, needs landscaping
- Needs a lot of help
- Need brick façade

8



- Needs clean-up in front of building; junk should be removed
- Needs to be razed

**General variety of commercial comments:**

- Lack of consistency in building materials and signage

**Transitional – Residential/Business (Slide 18)**

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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9



- Too much use of the white picket fence
- Needs landscaping

10



- OK

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#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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11



- Cannot identify business

12



- Cannot identify business; needs larger sign

**General transitional comments:**

- These transitional areas could have problems with visitors thinking it's a business and not a home; perhaps use fencing and/or shrubbery to delineate boundaries
- There should be restrictions in these transitional areas, keeping 'noisy' businesses away from residential
- Current businesses should be grandfathered
- Nice use of older residences that have been converted to small businesses; provides an 'old town' feel

**Residential (Slides 19-20)**

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#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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13



- Good
- Like the use of brick and the pointed roof
- Better than average home in the area

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<b>#</b>	<b>[Photo]</b>	<b>Summary of Comments Received</b>
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14



- Needs landscaping
- Like the cottage look with shutters, gabled porch, and trellis covering the bottom of the house
- Representative home for the area

15



- Is this a residence? Needs some clean-up in the front of the home
- The use of brick and shutters help to improve this residence; grounds seem to be well-kept
- Not a suitable floor plan for lot size; front door should face the street

16



- Good
- Nice mix of materials on first/second story
- Better than average home in the area

17



- Recommend no mobile homes in downtown area
- This will eventually go away
- Needs to be razed

18



- Good
- Like covered porch and dormers on roof
- Nicely renovated home

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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- General clean-up
- We have to deal with city gas meters
- Odd location for a home on the lot



- Shrubs should be added to cover fence
- Like the creative fencing
- Nicely renovated home

**General residential comments:**

- Reluctant to comment too much on residences as I, myself, would not be receptive to forced improvements; however, potential need for driveway standards and additional sidewalks to encourage safe pedestrian activity
- What can be done about existing mobile homes?

**Multi-Family Residential (Slide 21)**

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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- OK
- “Blah” but no clutter



- OK
- Looks clean and has some brick

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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23



- Lack adequate parking
- Needs landscaping
- What is the purpose of the white picket fence?
- Trash can should be placed out of sight

24



- Lack adequate parking
- Too close to street; no set-back
- Hope this is adjacent to alley

**General multi-family residential comments:**

- Do not like the idea of multi-family units in downtown

**Institutions (Slide 22)**

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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25



- OK
- Has some architectural interest

26



- OK
- Historic; like the use of stone material
- Well kept

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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27



- OK; consider adding colorful plants to landscaping
- Could use some color

**General institutional comments:**

- Each have a nice appearance
- Well-designed buildings; like them all

**Streetscapes (Slide 23)**

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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28



- Inadequate street width; looks hazardous
- Hodgepodge parking is an eyesore
- Looks cluttered
- Basketball hoop and vehicles sticking out into street
- Needed infrastructure improvements

29



- Reconsider and/or eliminate billboards downtown
- Cluttered: gas pipes, hydrant, billboards, etc.

30



- OK
- Quaint
- Some of the activity in the background looks cluttered
- Flower bed could use some color
- Clutter obstructing sidewalk

# [Photo]

Summary of Comments Received

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31



- OK
- Like the awning, lamppost, and tree
- Sidewalk is clean
- Nice bench

General streetscape comments:

- Trees and plants should be the only allowed décor in front of businesses (be it on porch, lawn, frontage, sidewalk, etc.)

## Streetscape Amenities (Slide 24)

# [Photo]

Summary of Comments Received

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32



- Good, but perhaps a little more landscaping
- Nice pop of color
- Like lamppost, brick steps, gabled and covered porch

# [Photo]

Summary of Comments Received

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33



- Good
- Nice space with clock (with plaques) and benches

34



- Good seating; we need more of these around town
- Like heavy-duty bench and stone walkway

35



- Neat trash receptacle; good size
- Like heavy-duty, covered trash can in a neutral color that blends-in

**General streetscape amenity comments:**

- Photos depict nice streetscape amenities

## Public Spaces (Slide 25)

# [Photo]

Summary of Comments Received

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36



- Good
- Love the tin roof and weathervane—nice architectural interest
- Trees and landscaping

37



- Good, inviting
- Walkway is protected yet open
- Buildings have color
- Benches for resting or packages
- Shrubbery

38



- OK
- Like use of benches, statues, flags and water

39

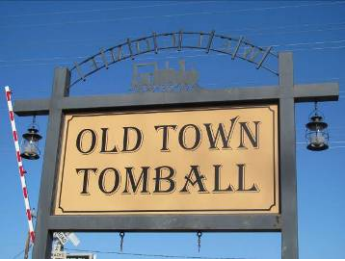





- Neat rear view; no 'junk'
- Alley is clean and landscaped
- Like side awning, windows and signage

### General public spaces comments:

- All photos look good; provide a clean and inviting space
- Great examples of public spaces




## Signage (Slide 26)

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
40		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reconsider this design</li><li>• Represents Tomball's history</li></ul>
41		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't understand</li><li>• Like this; sign is in good shape and parallel to road so oncoming traffic can read it</li></ul>
42		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good signage</li><li>• Sign is easy to read</li></ul>
43		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good "tie-in" between buildings</li><li>• Very nice sign; like the different shape</li></ul>

**General signage comments:**

- Consistent signage would be a definite enhancement along Main Street
- Do not use hand-made or hand-written signs; no painting wording on buildings
- Do not use cardboard or poster board
- Establish criteria for use of banners—only during special events and only after receiving a permit (with fee) from City; see Bellaire’s policy
- Only allow professional signage with dimension criteria; only one sign per establishment
- Can criteria be established allowing English-only narrative?
- Mandate a maximum size neon open/closed signs can be (i.e.:  $\leq 12 \times 12$ ”)
- Do not allow portable, variable message display boards
- Photos depict great signage

**Alleys and Building Backsides (Slide 27)**

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
44		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Add landscaping in front of lattice and railings</li><li>• Trash can needs to have a fence around it or otherwise be out of sight</li></ul>
45		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cluttered; back of building needs upkeep</li><li>• Needs a fenced storage area</li></ul>
46		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acceptable</li><li>• Trash cans need to be stored</li><li>• Boxes and trash need to be removed</li></ul>

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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47



- Signage could be larger
- Trash can needs to be out of sight

**General alley and building backside comments:**

- Consistent alleyway widths and set-backs would make servicing/delivery easier
- Eliminate on-Main Street parking
- Horrible view from the alley; needs a lot of work

**Historic Character (Slide 28)**

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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48



- Under construction
- Like rusted tin; appropriate for the surroundings

49




- Good, neat appearance
- Like gabled roof, covered porch and railings

50



- Too much clutter in front of building and on sidewalk; display only a few things
- Like covered porch as attached from building to awning

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 51 |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs paint and signage to provide history of building</li> <li>• Evaluate type/kind of shrubs; consider period-type landscaping to complement building</li> <li>• Historical; needs fresh paint</li> <li>• Get rid of fiberboard shed</li> </ul> |
|----|---|--|


**General historic character comments:**


- Maintain standards while keeping the ‘theme’ alive
- These historic buildings need rehabilitation

### Historic Elements (Slide 29)

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
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- |    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 52 |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use historic colors</li> <li>• Cute, has color</li> <li>• Like hanging lights and decking</li> <li>• Some of the décor close to the door represents a hazard</li> </ul> |
|----|--|--|

- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 53 |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is this business?</li> <li>• Like use of brick and painted design</li> <li>• Like overhead covering and sign</li> </ul> |
|----|---|---|

- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 54 |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under construction</li> <li>• Creative re-use for an old barn</li> </ul> |
|----|---|---|

**General historic element comments:**

- Maintain standards while keeping the ‘theme’ alive
- These buildings need some updating

## Museum Center (Slide 30)

# [Photo] Summary of Comments Received

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55



56



57






58



**General Museum Center comments:**

- Good; inviting
- Museum Center is a nice part of Tomball; it needs to be promoted more
- Museum Center buildings and properties are well maintained
- Excellent collection of historical buildings

**Depot Plaza (Slide 31)**

#	[Photo]	Summary of Comments Received
59		
60		
61		

62

**General Depot Plaza comments:**

- Family-friendly area
- Lots of green space with trees and landscaping
- Equipped for multi-use
- Well-maintained
- Beautiful, inviting public area
- Needs to be utilized more

**General Downtown Specific Plan Comments**

- Replace overhead power, telephone and cable lines with underground service
- Address drainage
- No more than 5% of Downtown establishments should be tax-exempt
- Vehicles should only be allowed to park in designated parking areas/lots
- Only permanent buildings/structures should be allowed (no mobile homes, tornado catchers, etc.)
- Metal building façades should not be allowed; metal roofing OK
- Building remodels should be consistent with original structure
- Awnings should be allowed with minimal lettering (dimensions relative to awning size)
- Stone and brick should be the preferred building façade material; no veneered or faux-type of stone or brick
- Posts and columns need to have minimum dimensions, criteria
- Establish maintenance policy, including requirements to repair property (cracked windows, etc.) within a certain timeframe
- While there are wonderful existing buildings in downtown Tomball, many want a different, upgraded downtown potentially creating a conflict between existing and future development
- It will be difficult to find individuals/businesses to invest in quality development downtown if there isn't quality development already; redevelopment and revitalization, thus, should be the priority
- There will be inherent conflict between what we "want" and what we can "afford"

- Consider approach to redevelopment/revitalization that a) determines funding availability; b) based on available funding, determine design direction; c) establish sequencing/implementation strategy (spread funding across entire seven-square block area vs. sequence smaller areas for staged implementation)
- Consider Luckenbach, Texas as a potential model for downtown redevelopment, specifically as it relates to establishing Tomball as a great live music venue

## Appendix

(Comments received after report was distributed, published)

**Slide 16, Main Street Commercial**—As buildings are remodeled, signage needs to move to a consistent look(awnings or actual signs i.e. Main Street Crossing would be ideal goals), and height appropriate for building. As much of the original buildings historic look and value needs to be maintained as possible.

**Slide 17, Variety of Commercial**—Consistent & continuous sidewalks are needed to encourage pedestrian friendly atmosphere. Signage does not reflect an “old historic” downtown image-there is a definite need for color scheme consistency. Metal roofing is okay with acceptable colors, all metal buildings does not lend toward a “old historic” look.

**Slide 18, Transitional – Residential/Business**—Consistent and continuous sidewalks needed, to promote pedestrian atmosphere. Corrugated metal siding not consistent with a “old historic” residential look. Front porches should be clutter free in this area.

**Slide 19, Residential**—New construction needs to reflect older historic era, i.e. cottage type home, porches, carports and driveways. Existing structures need to improve with garages or carports.

**Slide 20, Additional Residential**—No mobile homes. No dirt driveways, need asphalt, concrete, or gravel. Carports and consistent fencing. There needs to be a consistent color scheme to reflect “old historic” look.

**Slide 21, Multi-Family Residential**—Any future construction or remodeling should require designated covered parking, common areas need to be required, groomed and maintained.

**Slide 22, Institutions**—Community center needs to be, an example point for the “historic downtown” look. Currently, the building is bland, we want “WOW” this is the community center.

**Slide 23, Streetscapes**—(top left)No parking in grass(front yard), driveways need to be required. No clutter on sidewalks on Main St., makes it look uninviting. Streetlights are inconsistent throughout downtown, and sidewalks too narrow where there are sidewalks. Again, there needs to be consistent sidewalk downtown to promote pedestrian friendly zones. Area around the trees need to be maintained by the city for consistency and appeal, i.e. flowers and edging or no flowers or edging. Ex. The corner of S. Poplar and Main-corner is cluttered , need for sidewalks and pedestrian crossing.

**Slide 24, Streetscape Amenities**—(top left)Front door grabs attention, however it does not reflect historic color scheme. Park benches and trash receptacles need and unify common areas, more of this is needed. More attention needs to be focused on enhancing and utilizing the historic clock area.

**Slide 25, Public Spaces**—(top right)common area is great, however, definite need for historic color theme

**Slide 26, Signage**—The “Old Town” Tomball sign would look good as an arch across the road right after the railroad track, coming into town, and again at Baker. It would be great if it said “Downtown Tomball” or “Historic Tomball.” Bottom right-buildings need to be connected consistently, spacing between buildings is anywhere from 6 in to 2 ft., can we consistently close those gaps.

**Slide 27, Alleys & Building Backsides**—(top left)parking is an issue here, there is no designated parking for this area

**Slide 27 con’t.**-(top right)fencing, shrubs, paint, designated parking(asphalt, gravel, concrete) (Bottom left)need for privacy fencing in back of buildings to hide trash receptacles and backs of buildings. (Bottom right)siding would be preferred over corrugated metal, this does not promote a historic look

**Slide 28, Historic Character**—(top left) the rustic look is great as a barn, not to be incorporated into residential area however, the structure is not complete to give a final opinion (Top right)Is this a historic structure? It is mixed into residential on a previous slide, were there homes with metal siding in historic Tomball? (Bottom left)Structure needs to be preserved for its historic value, clutter on sidewalk needs to be removed and building needs a little clean up

**Slide 29, Historic Elements**—(left frame) Colors here are not historic, eyecatching but not historic (bottom right)finished look?? The blend into historic area hard to visualize at this point

**Slide 30, Museum Center**—Overall, more focus needs to be put into promoting the museum center. Pedestrian access should be encouraged from Main St. to the museum area. It is desperately needed to help incorporate a larger more complete draw to the downtown area. Weddings and activities could be encouraged here.

**Slide 31, Depot Plaza**—A wonderful draw to encourage tourism, but people need more than a one stop draw to make it worth their while.