

# Greenway Proposals

## *Linkages and Public Life:*

### 12 Third Year Design Studio Projects

#### Integrating Urban and Architectural Issues

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The Third Ward is one of Houston's four original voting districts and one of its oldest neighborhoods. It is a neighborhood described by architectural historian Stephen Fox as "a landscape that spatially depicts the development of Houston's Afro-American community from a culture formed under the impact of legal segregation to one that has won nominal equality." Despite persisting inequities and socio-economic disparities, Third Ward remains a unique community, rich in culture and resonant with African American history.

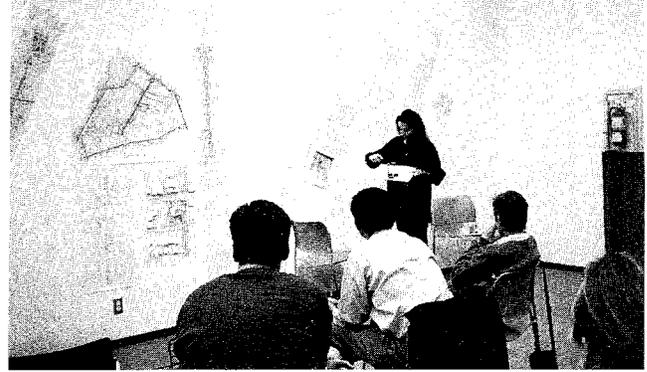
The Third Ward Redevelopment Council, established in August of 1992, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to serve as a planning and coordinating agency for the revitalization of the greater Third Ward. In June 1993, the council released a request for proposals for comprehensive community planning assistance to revitalize the greater Third Ward. Predicated on the concept of community participation and privately funded by local benefactors, the project represents a unique and important grassroots planning effort in a city in which development decisions typi-



Aerial view of the Greater Third Ward planning district and location of the site for the proposed greenway.



Students meeting with architects and planners



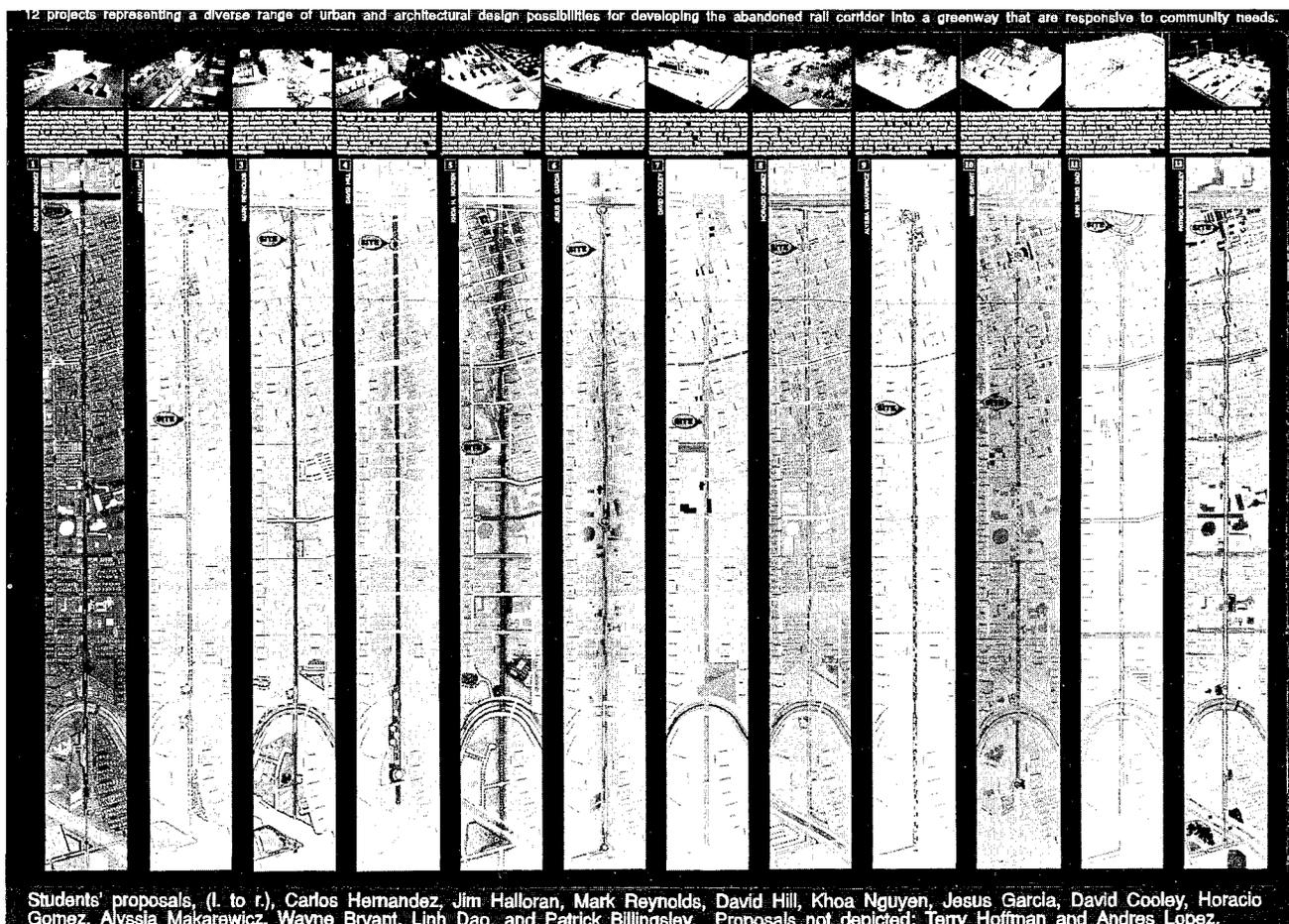
Public presentation and review of proposals

cally descend from above.

From this planning effort came a proposal to develop a linear park or greenway on an abandoned railroad corridor that stretches north-south through the geographic center of the greater Third Ward. In the spirit of continuing and strengthening community/university collaborations, I accepted an invitation from urban planner Roberta Burroughs to explore and develop urban design concepts for the proposed linear park as a project for my Third Year architectural design studio.

Although the issues were the same, each student developed a distinct position or belief that was clearly reflected in his or

her design thinking and design proposals. The studio projects reflect a diverse range of possibilities for the development of a greenway, or what Diana Balmori refers to as a "linear civic center," one that they (we) believe has the potential to unify, strengthen, and link the area's institutions and its' twelve culturally diverse neighborhoods. The projects provided the students with the opportunity to investigate the relationships between urban and architectural design. It introduced them to a variety of concepts that included community participation in the planning and urban design process and "asset-based planning strategies as well as the complexities inherent in designing for and in the public realm.



12 projects representing a diverse range of urban and architectural design possibilities for developing the abandoned rail corridor into a greenway that are responsive to community needs. Students' proposals, (l. to r.), Carlos Hernandez, Jim Halloran, Mark Reynolds, David Hill, Khoa Nguyen, Jesus Garcia, David Cooley, Horacio Gomez, Alyssia Makarewicz, Wayne Bryant, Linh Dao, and Patrick Billingsley. Proposals not depicted: Terry Hoffman and Andres Lopez.