



THE STRAND HISTORIC DISTRICT

Architects: Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Inc.

Location: Galveston, TX

Client: Galveston Historical Foundation

Size: 16 acres

Completion: 1975

This planning study for The Strand, a district of bypassed Victorian commercial structures on the Galveston wharf, was directed toward the reuse and revitalization of the area. Working with community groups, local residents and business people, and the Galveston Historical Foundation, we evolved an incremental strategy for The Strand's rebirth as an active commercial, residential, and cultural community that would also be attractive to tourists. We produced prototypical designs for an integrated system of directional, cultural, and commercial signage; a traffic improvement plan; suggestions for facade colors and treatment; and preliminary design of pedestrian promenades and a small park. To reinforce the history of the Strand and provide enjoyment for the pedestrian, suggestions were made such as painting blank walls with historic murals to create "street museums" and using a miniaturization--child scale--of a Strand elevation to form a wall of the park. The idea of our plan was to produce something that would be feasible, inspiring, and specific enough for people to act on. Of particular interest in this study were:

- the sensitive attempt to find viable economic reuses, which would particularly benefit from the architectural character of the historic warehouse buildings
- the mixed-use, around-the-clock, all-season potential of The Strand
- the incremental approach that tied in to an overview of what one street, The Strand, could do to benefit the total city
- the unique character of Galveston where the undisturbed tissue of the historic town is as important as the major monuments.

Since public acceptance of the plan, active restoration and renovation efforts have grown in number and new businesses started. To date, almost half of the private structures have been repainted to the recommended color schedule and a number of individual historic markers installed.



