Meeting Date 02/12/08

ACTION	TYPE OF ITEM
☐ Approved Recommendation	☐ Info/Consent
☐ Ord. No(s). _____	☐ Report
☐ Res. No(s). _____	☐ Public Hearing (Info/consent)
☐ Other _____	■ Other Study Session

Prepared By: Ashley Golden, Senior Planner

Agenda Item No. R-1

Reviewed By: City Manager ___ City Attorney Rupp Finance SW Other *(Specify)*

DATE: January 4, 2008

TO: City Council
Community Development Commission

FROM: Matthew G. Winegar, AICP, Development Services Director
Development Services Department

Curtis P. Cannon, Director
Community Development Department

SUBJECT: **Meta District Plan**

RECOMMENDATION

That City Council/Community Development Commission consider a report and provide direction to the Planning Manager on a proposed vision for the Meta District, defined as the area bound by Fifth Street to the north, Seventh Street to the south, Oxnard Boulevard to the west, and the alley adjacent to the Ventura County rail way to the east.

DISCUSSION

The Meta District is one of seven districts that comprise the Oxnard Central Business District (CBD) within the Central City Revitalization Project Area (CCRP). The boundaries, features, and redevelopment opportunities of each district were established within the 2005 Oxnard Downtown Strategic Plan (ODSP). In addition to the residents of the area, stakeholders include the Boys and Girls Club, Clinicas del Camino Real, Rescue Mission, La Central Bakery, Home Corporation, Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation, the City and CDC, and various other commercial establishments.

In November 2005, City Council and the CDC directed Planning and Community Development staff to study appropriate housing product types and land uses, including the need for a "pocket park" in the Meta District, before moving forward with development of the Meta District Plan. Earlier this year, staff held two community meetings to solicit information on the significant issues facing property owners, businesses, and residents and to gather input on the community's desires and vision for the District. Community input included:

- Creating a family oriented neighborhood with moderate and market rate housing, both apartments and ownership, large enough to accommodate families.
- Providing alley and intersection improvements including enhanced paving, lighting, landscaping, and traffic calming designs.
- Maintain land uses such as Las Clinicas, Asahi Market, La Central Bakery, Boys and Girls Club, and El Teatro.
- Eliminate bars, motels, boarding houses, pawn shops, pool halls, and the Ventura County Rescue Mission.
- Add a recreation area/pocket park to the neighborhood.
- Prohibit semi-trucks from traveling through the neighborhood.
- Introduce additional parking areas to support commercial/mixed use land uses along Oxnard Boulevard and Fifth Street.
- Establish development design standards specific to the Meta District.

Staff later presented these findings in an update to the Oxnard Downtown Management District Board of Directors.

Oxnard Downtown Strategic Plan (ODSP)

The ODSP envisions the 14-acre Meta District as a "mixed-use urban neighborhood...consisting of medium-density in-fill housing and neighborhood-oriented retail uses." To implement the vision for the Meta District, the Meta District Plan has four main strategies:

1. Determine the appropriate land uses (including housing types and densities), the appropriate location for a "pocket park," and the integration of existing social service providers.
2. Evaluate and potentially abate undesirable land uses.
3. Develop a streetscape plan and determine appropriate circulation patterns.
4. Develop a public property asset management plan to maximize public investment in the area and leverage private investment.

Draft Meta District Plan

A. Land Use

The draft Meta District Land Use Plan (Attachment 1) allows for commercial or mixed use along Fifth Street and Oxnard Boulevard. The La Central Bakery, Boys and Girls Club, Clinicas del Camino Real and Ventura County Rescue Mission are all proposed to remain. An approximately 15,000 square foot "pocket park" is proposed at the southwest corner of Sixth Street and Meta Street. The remainder of the Meta District is planned for medium-density, for-sale and for-rent residential. To implement the ODSP goal of balancing the housing stock within the District, the proposed Meta District Plan includes a policy to allow projects to be 100% affordable as long as no more than 15% of the project consists of low or very low income housing. This policy will allow affordable projects to be built in the district that will complement the affordability levels of the recently built Hacienda Guadalupe Townhomes and the Meta Street Apartments.

The proposed land use plan allows for a maximum of 30 units/acre for residential projects and 39 units/acre for mixed use developments. Architectural styles would be limited to Spanish Revival and Bungalow/Craftsman.

Because this area is primarily envisioned as a residential area, bars, pawn shops, boarding houses, and motels are proposed to be prohibited uses, and the existing businesses classified as such would be abated. Potential strategies to abate these uses include:

- Establish an amortization schedule of 3 to 20 years for the uses listed above;
- Amend the CBD zoning code to not allow the above uses;
- Identify specific uses as existing non-conforming; and/or
- Purchase the businesses and/or property.

B. Streetscape and Circulation

In general, the recently completed downtown streetscape improvements will be extended into the Meta District. These include:

- Street trees placed in tree grates, compatible with the Hacienda Guadalupe Townhome and Meta Street Apartment projects and the Oxnard Downtown Streetscape Master Plan;
- Street furniture;
- Decorative paving at intersections and mid-block crossings;
- Improved lighting (alley lighting improvements are currently underway);
- Improved alleys and public parking lots (recently completed), and;
- Traffic calming along Seventh Street.

C. Asset Management Plan/ Redevelopment Improvement Footprint Areas

The City and CDC own thirteen parcels in the Meta District. A majority of these properties are internal to the Meta District and are planned for medium-density residential. Developers have approached Planning and CDC staff with proposals to provide a variety of housing types and densities within the Meta District. Staff will move forward with further evaluating or pursuing the proposals pending City Council approval of the Meta District Plan. Significant challenges to the successful development of these publicly held parcels exist. They include:

- Lack of contiguous parcels for re-use planning
- Lack of sufficient acreage for project planning and development
- Multiple private ownerships adjacent to City and CDC properties
- Underutilized and blighted properties adjacent to City and CDC properties
- Securing project financing for development of affordable housing, park development/on-going maintenance and continued infrastructure upgrades

Recently-completed projects serve as the catalyst in changing the dynamics and energy of the area. The Meta Street Apartments added 24 residential units in 2004, and 26 ownership units have were just completed at the Hacienda Guadalupe Townhomes. Other recent revitalization efforts in the immediate

area such as the Boys & Girls Club renovation, alley reconstruction/resurfacing, improvements to the public parking lots, and increased community policing also contribute to a family friendly neighborhood.

In trying to overcome the challenges outlined above and implement opportunities for redevelopment, the Meta District Plan defines Redevelopment Improvement Footprint Areas (RIFA) (Attachment 3). The RIFA indicates parcels within each block for potential development opportunities. Each RIFA provides enough of a combined area to enable the development and construction of retail, residential and/or commercial facilities. For example, a single parcel of land would not allow for the development of a medium-density, multi-family housing project, given the requirements for set-backs, parking, open space, etc. By combining parcels there would be sufficient space to design a quality residential project. This "assembly of land" is identified in the CCRP Redevelopment Plan as a key redevelopment activity. RIFA's will further be refined as development projects are considered and proposed within the Meta District. Within the Meta District consideration should be given to how best to assemble parcels within each RFIA using any of the following non-exhaustive list of redevelopment tools:

- Enter into development agreements or owner participation agreements (OPA's) with qualified property owners of underutilized parcels adjacent to City- or CDC-held parcels for development
- Purchase private property adjacent to City and CDC properties to create developable "footprints" for future housing, commercial or mixed-use projects
- Purchase private property to be used in combination with City or CDC properties for permanent public use (i.e. pocket park)

The goal for using any of these strategies would be the disposal of the City/CDC properties to best maximize development of the each RFIA. This would include the possible sale of City/CDC properties to further the goals of the Meta District Plan.

Next Steps

The Draft Meta District Plan, along with relevant ordinance amendments and environmental review, will be presented to the Planning Commission for a recommendation to City Council by the end of 2007, followed by City Council review in early 2008. The final Meta District Plan will contain:

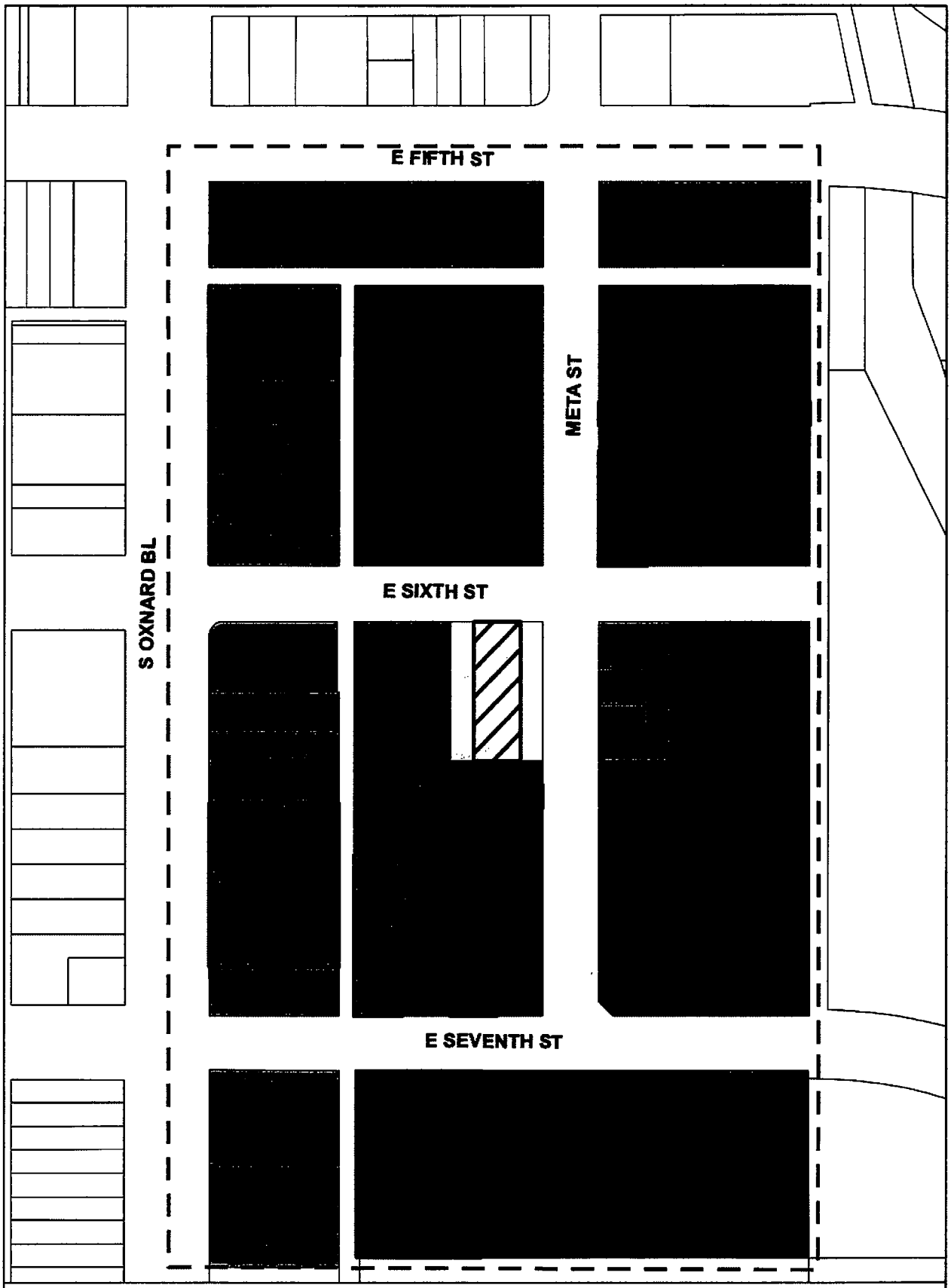
- Existing and proposed land uses, including product type and densities;
- Circulation improvements, including alleys, enhanced pedestrian crossings, and roadway improvements;
- Streetscape improvements, including site furniture, lighting, landscaping, and alley improvements;
- Infrastructure capacity and strategies for improvements;
- Design guidelines;
- Signage for buildings and the Meta District (gateways and landmarks); and
- Implementation Action Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial impacts associated with this study session item at this time.

AMG

Attachment #1 - Land Use Plan
#2 - Streetscape Plan
#3 Redevelopment Improvement Footprint Areas



Legend

- Meta District Boundary
- Parcels
- CDC Owned Parcels
- City Owned Parcels

Land Use

- Institutional
- Mixed use
- Park
- Parking
- Residential (medium)

Meta District Land Use Plan

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ATTACHMENT 1

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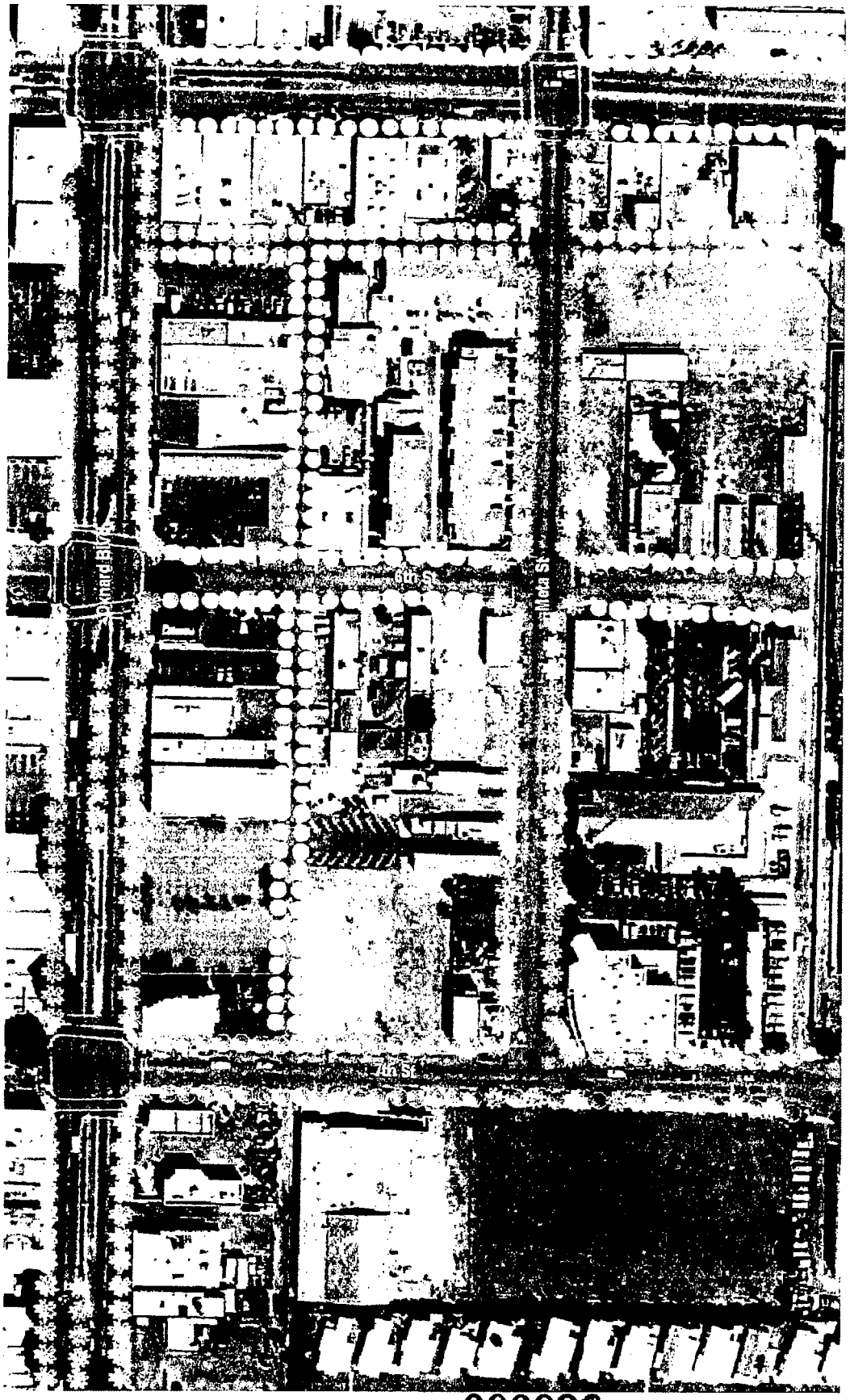
META DISTRICT LANDSCAPE DESIGN



LEGEND

Liquidambar styraciflua
'Palo Alto'
American Sweet Gum

Liquidambar styraciflua
'Burgundy'
American Sweet Gum

Platanus acerifolia
London Plane Tree

Brachychiton populneus
Bottle Tree

Phoenix canariensis
Canary Island Date Palm

Washingtonia robusta
Mexican Fan Palm

Syagrus romanzoffianum
Queen Palm

City Parking
'Tipuana Tipu
Tipu Tree
Ginkgo biloba
Maidenhair Tree

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ATTACHMENT 2
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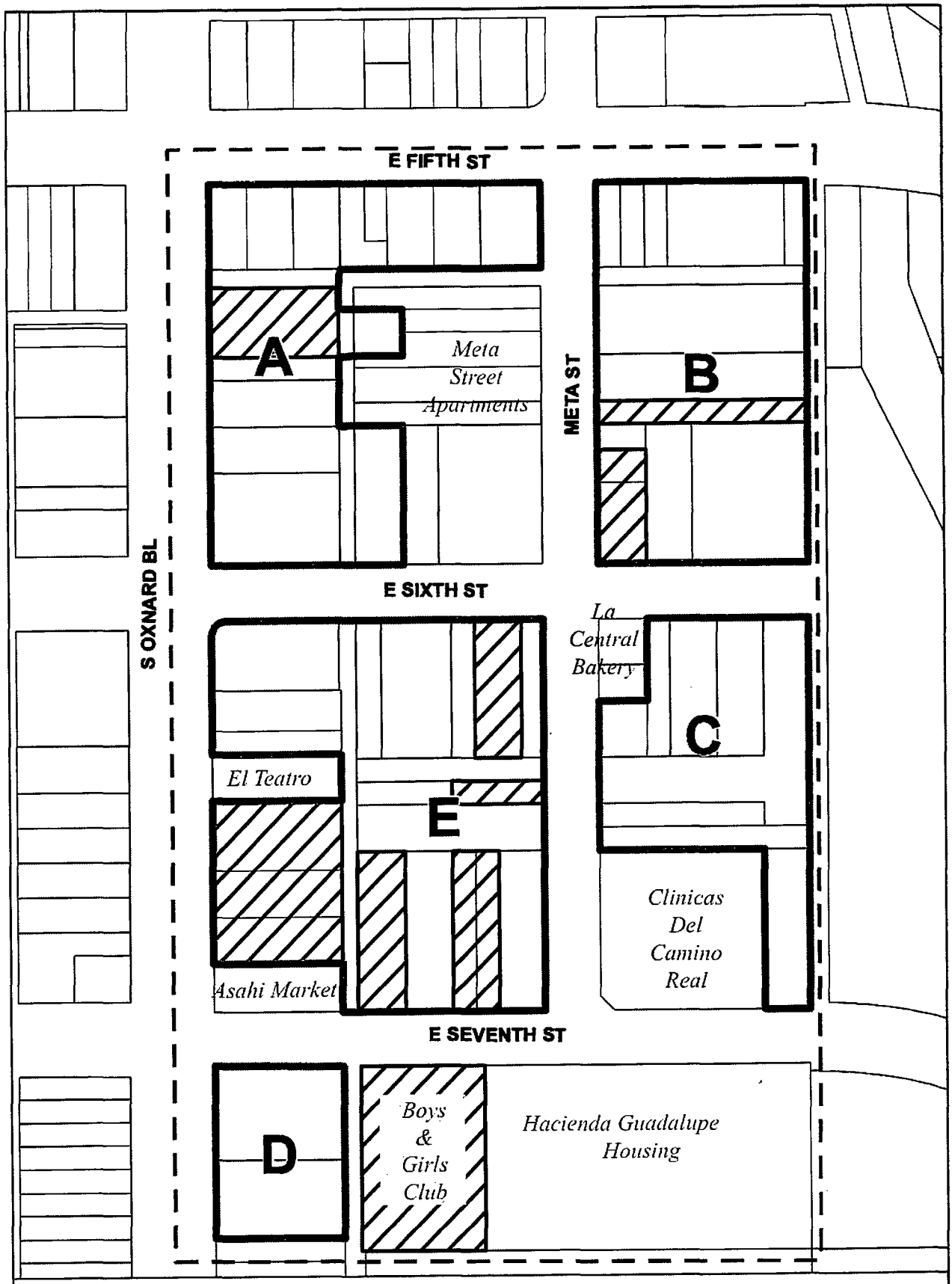

Legend

- Meta District Boundary
- Parcels
- CDC Owned Parcels
- City Owned Parcels
- Improvement Footprints

Meta District Improvement Footprints

0 100 200 Feet

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ATTACHMENT 3

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