
A Better Plan For Temple Terrace

The extra time given developers bidding to build a new downtown for Temple Terrace has led to better results.

When the city council reviews two proposals tonight, it should pick the plan that best entices people to live downtown and creates space for an arts and cultural center. That proposal also would create a home for Temple Terrace's treasured community theater, Masque, and consolidate arts programs in one location, giving the city a creative flair.

The council also should decide to maintain ownership of about one-third of the property in the southern portion of the 38-acre site. That way the city can continue to influence the character of this evolving project and ensure that citizens' vision for a new town center is real-

ized.

It is good to see that the developer, Pinnacle/Ram partnership, has found a way to add more buildings than the proposal it presented council weeks ago. The developer also has reduced expansive parking lots to something more appropriate for a New Urbanist downtown, a style that encourages people to walk among shops and restaurants. Beautiful landscaping, fountains and wide sidewalks aren't yet drawn into the plan, but will play a big role in making this a welcoming downtown.

The process hasn't always been smooth, but with a council vote tonight, Temple Terrace will be taking a big step toward turning a blighted shopping center into a livable downtown that makes all of its citizens proud.