

# Fulshear Comprehensive Plan

RESPECTING OUR PAST.

SHAPING OUR FUTURE.



ADOPTED  
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# Table of Contents

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Mayor and City Council.....4

Planning and Zoning Commission.....4

Parks and Recreation Commission.....4

City of Fulshear Staff.....4

# 1

## INTRODUCTION

Purpose.....1.2

Use of this Plan.....1.2

Planning Authority.....1.3

Why Plan.....1.3

Plan Organization.....1.4

Location and Context.....1.7

A Consistent Vision.....1.9

*Sidebars*

Building on Past Plans and Planning Tools.....1.3

Transition to Home Rule City.....1.5

Historical Context.....1.8

What Fulshear Residents Had to Say.....1.10

*Figures*

1.1 Regional Context.....1.6

# 2

## GROWTH CAPACITY AND MANAGEMENT

Context.....2.2

    Westward Growth of Houston Metropolitan Area.....2.2

    Population Context.....2.2

    Utility Infrastructure Context.....2.5

    Public Safety Context.....2.9

Key Issues and Considerations.....2.11

Framework for Action.....2.12

    Action Strategies.....2.12

*Sidebars*

Expanded City Jurisdiction.....2.3

ISO Rating.....2.9



*Figures*

2.1 Fulshear Area Potential Population.....2.15

*Tables*

2.1 Minimum Water Connections Analysis.....2.7

# 3

**MOBILITY**

Context.....3.2

Key Issues and Considerations.....3.4

Major Thoroughfare Plan.....3.5

Framework for Action.....3.8

    Action Strategies.....34

*Figures*

3.1 Change in Daily Traffic Volume 2009-2012.....3.3

3.2 Major Thoroughfare Plan.....3.11

3.3 Fulshear Parkway Design Approach.....3.6

3.4 Illustrative Parkway Design.....3.7

*Tables*

3.1 Street Right-of-Way Standards.....3.5

# 4

**PARKS AND AMENITIES**

Park System Evaluation.....4.1

Needs Assessment.....4.5

Framework for Action.....4.6

    Action Strategies.....4.7

*Sidebars*

Expanding Scope of Irene Stern Park.....4.9

Seabourne Park Model in Rosenberg.....4.10

Coordinated Public Art Initiative.....4.11

Fort Bend Green.....4.12

*Figures*

4.1 Existing Park Service Areas.....4.5

4.2 Future Park Service Areas.....4.6

4.3 Central Bike Loop Concept.....4.7

*Tables*

4.1 Park Classifications.....4.3



# Table of Contents

## 5

### LAND USE AND CHARACTER

Context.....	5.2
Key Issues and Considerations.....	5.2
Future Land Use and Character Plan.....	5.3
Land Use Policies.....	5.6
Framework for Action.....	5.11

#### *Sidebars*

Future Land Use Versus Zoning.....	5.4
------------------------------------	-----

#### *Figures*

5.1 Future Land Use and Character Map.....	5.14
--	------

## 6

### IMPLEMENTATION

Plan Implementation Methods.....	6.2
Plan Administration.....	6.3
Action Agenda.....	6.5
Plan Amendment Process.....	6.5

#### *Tables*

6.1 Priority Action Agenda.....	6.6
---------------------------------	-----



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# Fulshear Comprehensive Plan

RESPECTING OUR **PAST**. SHAPING OUR **FUTURE**.

# 1

## Introduction

The Fulshear Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide future development, redevelopment, and community enhancement efforts in the city. This plan serves as a framework for thoughtful community discussion on the real and perceived challenges facing Fulshear currently – as well as the upcoming opportunities that will shape the city’s future. Through long-range planning efforts, the community can accommodate its projected growth in a manner that preserves its history, culture and overall quality of life for current and future residents and businesses.

The Comprehensive Plan resulted from a multi-year planning and citizen involvement process. The plan’s findings and recommendations focus on the physical and economic aspects of the City’s projected growth and development in the coming years. The plan provides guiding principles and policies that will help to guide City officials and staff in administering development regulations; determining the location, financing, and sequencing of public improvements; and guiding reinvestment and redevelopment efforts. The plan also provides a basis for coordinating the actions of many different functions and interests within and outside of City government.



## Purpose

A comprehensive plan is usually the most important policy document a municipal government prepares and maintains. This is because the plan:

- Lays out a “big picture” vision and associated goals regarding the future growth and enhancement of the community;
- Considers at once the entire geographic area of the community, including areas where new development and redevelopment may occur; and,
- Assesses near- and longer-term needs and desires across a variety of inter-related topics that represent the key “building blocks” of a community (e.g., land use, transportation, urban design, economic development, redevelopment, neighborhoods, parks and recreation, utility infrastructure, public facilities and services, etc.).

Through a comprehensive plan, a community determines how best to accommodate and manage its projected growth, as well as the redevelopment of older neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas. Like most similar plans, this Comprehensive Plan is aimed at ensuring that ongoing development and redevelopment will proceed in an orderly, well-planned manner so that public facilities and services can keep pace and residents’ quality of life will be enhanced. Significantly, by clarifying and stating the City’s intentions regarding the area’s physical development and infrastructure investment, the plan also creates a greater level of predictability for residents, land owners, developers, and potential investors.

Active streets of Downtown Fulshear



**“Planning” is ... the process of identifying issues and needs, establishing goals and objectives, and determining the most effective means by which these ends may be achieved.**

### USE OF THIS PLAN

A comprehensive plan, if embraced by the city and its leadership, has the potential to take a community to a whole new level in terms of livability and tangible accomplishments. However, comprehensive plans are only words and images on paper if their action recommendations are not pursued and effectively implemented.

The plan is ultimately a guidance document for City officials and staff, who must make decisions on a daily basis that will determine the future direction, financial health, and “look and feel” of the community. These decisions are carried out through:

- Targeted programs and expenditures prioritized through the City’s annual budget process, including routine but essential functions such as code enforcement;
- Major public improvements and land acquisition financed through the City’s capital improvement program and related bond initiatives;
- New and amended City ordinances and regulations closely linked to comprehensive plan objectives (and associated review and approval procedures in the case of land development, subdivisions, and zoning matters);
- Departmental work plans and staffing in key areas;
- Support for ongoing planning and studies that will further clarify needs, costs, benefits, and strategies;
- Pursuit of external grant funding to supplement local budgets and/or expedite certain projects; and,
- Initiatives pursued in conjunction with other public and private partners to leverage resources and achieve successes neither could accomplish on their own.

Despite these many avenues for action, a comprehensive plan should not be considered a “cure all” for every tough problem a community faces. On the one hand, such plans tend to focus on the responsibilities of City government in the physical planning arena, where cities normally have a more direct and extensive role than in other areas that residents value, such as education, social services, and arts and culture. Of necessity, comprehensive plans, as vision and policy documents, also must remain relatively



general and conceptual. The resulting plan may not touch on every challenge before the community, but it is meant to set a tone and motivate concerted efforts to move the community forward in coming years.

It is also important to distinguish between the function of the comprehensive plan relative to the City's development regulations, such as the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. The plan establishes overall policy for future land use, road improvements, utilities, and other aspects of community growth and enhancement. The City's zoning ordinance and official zoning district map then implement the plan in terms of specific land uses and building and site development standards. The City's subdivision regulations also establish standards in conformance with the plan for the physical subdivision of land, the layout of new or redeveloped streets and building sites, and the design and construction of roads, water and sewer lines, storm drainage, and other infrastructure that will be dedicated to the City for long-term maintenance.

## PLANNING AUTHORITY

### State Support for Community Planning – Section 213 of the Texas Local Government Code

Unlike some other states, municipalities in Texas are not mandated by state government to prepare and maintain local comprehensive plans. However, Section 213 of the Texas Local Government Code provides that, "The governing body of a municipality may adopt a comprehensive plan for the long-range development of the municipality." The Code also cites the basic reasons for long-range, comprehensive community planning by stating that, "The powers granted under this chapter are for the purposes of promoting sound development of municipalities and promoting public health, safety and welfare." The Code also gives Texas municipalities the freedom to "define the content and design" of their plans, although Section 213 suggests that a comprehensive plan may:

1. Include but is not limited to provisions on land use, transportation, and public facilities;
2. Consist of a single plan or a coordinated set of plans organized by subject and geographic area; and,
3. Be used to coordinate and guide the establishment of development regulations.

The Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for the ongoing development and redevelopment of the community with respect to land use, thoroughfares and streets, and other matters affecting development within the City.

## Why Plan?

Local planning allows Fulshear to have a greater measure of control over its destiny rather than simply reacting to change. Planning enables the City to manage future growth and development actively as opposed to reacting to development proposals on a case-by-case basis without adequate and necessary consideration of community-wide issues.

Planning initiatives involve major community decisions about where development and redevelopment will occur, the nature and extent of future development, and the community's capability to provide the necessary public services and facilities to support this development. This leads to pivotal discussions about what is "best" for the community and how everything from taxes to "quality of life" will be affected.

Long-range planning also provides an opportunity for the City's elected and appointed officials to step back from pressing, day-to-day issues and clarify their ideas on the kind of community they are trying to create and maintain. Through the plan development process,

### Building on Past Plans and Planning Tools



Previous planning guidance and implementation tools for the City of Fulshear prior to this Comprehensive Plan included:

- **Comprehensive Plan** (2008-09 draft)
- **Future Vision Report** (2002, adopted as City's first Comprehensive Plan in 2003)
- **Subdivision regulations** (1983, 2004)
- **Thoroughfare Plan** (1983, 2004)
- **Visioning Report** (2009, in partnership with the Houston-Galveston Area Council)
- **Zoning regulations** (2012)



they can look broadly at programs for neighborhoods, housing, economic development, and provision of public infrastructure and facilities and how these efforts may relate to one another. The Comprehensive Plan represents a “big picture” of the City, one that can be related to the trends and interests of the broader region as well as the State of Texas.

However, the Comprehensive Plan document is ultimately only a snapshot in time. Important reasons for ongoing long-range and strategic planning in Fulshear include:

- To provide a balance of land uses and services throughout the community to meet the needs and desires of the City’s population.
- To ensure adequate public facilities to meet the demands of future development and redevelopment.
- To achieve an efficient development pattern that reflects the values of the community.
- To ensure the long-term protection and enhancement of the image and visual appearance of the community.
- To involve local citizens in the decision-making process and reach consensus on the future vision for Fulshear and its ongoing development.
- To guide annual work programs and prioritize improvements consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

## PLAN ORGANIZATION

The remainder of this Comprehensive Plan contains and is organized as follows:

### Chapter 2, Growth Capacity and Management

The focus of this chapter is the City’s intent and policy regarding how growth and new development will be accommodated consistent with other fiscal and community considerations. A prime consideration is efficient use of land, along with existing and planned investments in transportation and utility infrastructure, to achieve and maintain a desired community form and character. Current and projected infrastructure capacities and “planning level” improvement needs are also evaluated through this chapter.

### Chapter 3, Mobility

The purpose of this chapter is to ensure orderly development of the transportation system, considering not only facilities for automobiles but other modes of transportation as well, especially pedestrian and bicycle circulation and safety. Recommendations in this chapter

utilize context-sensitive design principles that address mobility improvement while also taking into account safety, neighborhood integrity, urban design, community appearance, and historical and environmental considerations, all of which are essential to establishing and maintaining a particular community character within an area.

### Chapter 4, Parks and Amenities

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate and recommend enhancements to the community’s parks and recreation facilities and other quality of life amenities consistent with growth expectations and other physical planning elements in the Comprehensive Plan. The chapter also promotes opportunities to preserve natural features and open space in the community, particularly along roadway corridors, adjacent to natural and man-made water features, at community gateways, and in other key areas.

### Chapter 5, Land Use and Character

The purpose of this chapter is to assess the community’s long-range development outlook and establish the necessary policy guidance that will be used in making decisions about the compatibility and appropriateness of individual developments within the context of the larger community. The land use plan will also serve as the City’s policy for directing ongoing development and managing future growth, preserving valued areas and lands, and protecting the integrity of neighborhoods, while also safeguarding and enhancing community image and aesthetics. This chapter also includes an assessment of conditions in the City’s extraterritorial jurisdiction and recommends appropriate land uses based on natural and topographical features, the City’s thoroughfare plan, and the existing pattern of land use.

### Chapter 6, Implementation

The Implementation chapter utilizes the recommendations of the individual plan elements to consolidate an overall strategy for executing the Comprehensive Plan, particularly for the highest-priority initiatives that will be first on the community’s action agenda following plan adoption.



## Transition to Home Rule City

After recognizing its attainment of the 5,000 population mark early in 2014, the City of Fulshear in Spring 2014 was exercising its ability to become a Home Rule City. As summarized in publications of the Texas Municipal League<sup>1,2</sup>, the basic principle of “home rule” is the right of citizens at the grassroots level to manage their own affairs, much more in a self-government mode, with nominal intervention from the State. While General Law cities operate based on specific grants of authority from the State to undertake particular functions (Fulshear’s situation since its incorporation in 1977), Home Rule cities, in exercising their “police powers” to protect the public health, safety and welfare, must only heed any specific limitations on their local authority imposed by the State Constitution or laws.

### STEPS TO HOME RULE

Once a General Law city reaches 5,000 population, the following steps may be set in motion to work toward adopting a “Home Rule Charter” – essentially a local Constitution – via a municipal election:

- The City establishes a Charter Commission to draft the charter, forming the Commission either through a vote of residents or by the Mayor choosing the Commission members through a community meeting.
- Once the charter is drafted, the City must notify residents, set a charter election on a State-approved date, and mail residents a copy of the charter 30 days prior to the election date.
- The proposed charter is adopted if approved by a majority of those voting, and once the City submits an order to the State recognizing the charter’s adoption.
- The Mayor must also certify and send an authenticated copy of the adopted charter to the Texas Secretary of State.
- A new municipal governing body, if required by the charter, can be elected at the same election as the charter.

### HOME RULE ADVANTAGES

Both cities and their residents gain various inherent powers upon the transition to Home Rule. An inherent power is one that is possessed automatically without it being specifically granted by the State. Some of the most important inherent powers are:

- **Municipal Organization.** Counties and General Law cities have an administrative structure that is determined by State law. Home rule cities define their organization at the discretion of their voters, based on local preferences. The Home Rule Charter can establish a simple administrative framework or a more complex one, provide for the election or appointment of key administrative officials, and so on. Additionally, the charter can provide for the creation of any boards or commissions that local voters deem necessary to make the city function most effectively.
- **Annexation.** Perhaps the most important Home Rule right is the power to annex adjacent, unincorporated areas (where they exist) into the city without the permission of the persons residing in such areas. This enables the City to guide the development of surrounding land, and to maintain a strong economic base by extending its boundaries to bring in new taxable properties and other resources (e.g., sales tax revenue, fees, etc.) necessary to fund the City’s services. In 1999, the Texas Legislature made significant changes to the annexation enabling legislation. Cities now must prepare and present a three-year annexation plan prior to initiating annexation of areas containing 100 or more tracts of land where each tract has one or more residential dwellings. The three-year plans are intended to provide notice to property owners and service providers in the subject area well in advance of annexation; to compile a thorough inventory of services already or to be provided in the area; to negotiate as needed with property owners within the area regarding provision of services; and, to participate in mediation to resolve disputes over provision of services.
- **Initiative, Referendum and Recall.** Initiative, referendum and recall are inherent Home Rule powers exclusive to local voters to address unique issues or circumstances, subject to any parameters provided by the Home Rule Charter. Initiative is a procedure through which voters may initiate local legislation by direct ballot box action on new ordinances that have wide support in the community – and also a way to circumvent the City Council should Council refuse to act. Referendum is a procedure under which voters can rescind unpopular existing ordinances through a referendum election if the Council does not act on its own to repeal. Recall is the process through which voters can remove members of the City Council before the expiration of their terms based on stated grounds for their removal, but, again, within certain parameters to avoid abuse of this mechanism.
- **Charter Amendments.** Local voters can also force action on potential amendments to the City Charter. Citizens can make the City Council call an election on a proposed charter amendment through a petition process. Voter-initiated charter amendments, if adopted, can change almost all aspects of local government.

<sup>1</sup> Local Government in Texas (Chapter One). Texas Municipal League. <http://www.tml.org/pdf/texts/HRChapter1.pdf>  
<sup>2</sup> Mueller, Laura and Scott Houston. “Alphabet Soup: Type of Texas Cities.” Texas Municipal League Legal Department.



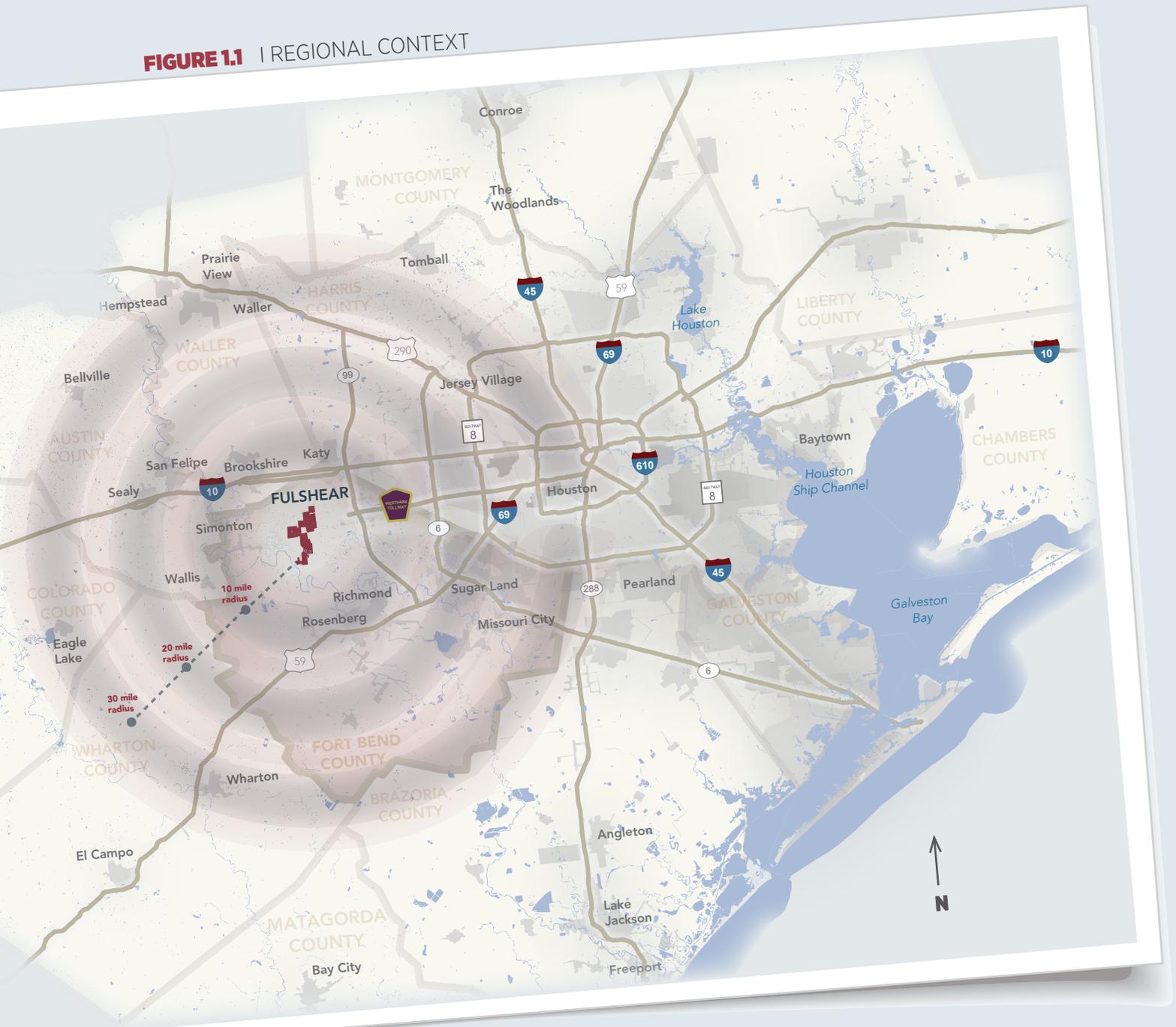
## LIMITATIONS ON HOME RULE POWERS !

Although Home Rule cities have these added powers, they are still subject to restrictions imposed by State and Federal laws. As outlined by the Texas Municipal League, some of these are:

- All cities are prohibited from taking certain actions (e.g., the Texas Election Code allows municipal elections only on days expressly prescribed by the code).
- A Home Rule city cannot act on any subject that has already been pre-empted by the State (e.g., the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code sets the business hours of retail liquor stores, so a local ordinance cannot change these times).
- When a charter provision conflicts with any State law, the State law always prevails.

Some state-imposed limitations on Home Rule cities can be reduced by local action. For example, the Texas Constitution authorizes a city with a population of 5,000 or more to impose property taxes at a specified maximum rate, but a Home Rule charter may set a lower local ceiling.

**FIGURE 1.1** | REGIONAL CONTEXT





## LOCATION AND CONTEXT

### Something Big and New Rising on Houston's Western Horizon

As illustrated in **Figure 1.1, Regional Context**, Fulshear is located in northwest Fort Bend County, Texas, centered at the crossroads of FM 359 and FM 1093. The community is 35 miles due west of downtown Houston, with four major highway corridors in between – Loop 610, Sam Houston Tollway/Beltway 8, SH 6, and the Grand Parkway/SH 99. The Westpark Tollway links Fulshear residents and businesses to all of these regional highways and brings commuters and visitors almost to Fulshear's doorstep, from where the Tollway originates at Loop 610 near the Uptown/Galleria area, to where it currently terminates at the Grand Parkway. A pending extension will put the new Tollway terminus just within Fulshear's eastern City limits, to the west of FM 723.

At the time of this Comprehensive Plan Fulshear was literally at the interface of suburban and still largely rural portions of the region on the west side of Houston. To one side of Fulshear, closer to Houston, are other rapidly growing cities like Katy, Richmond, Rosenberg, Sugar Land and Missouri City. To the west are still relatively small cities and rural centers such as Brookshire, Sealy, Simonton, Wallis and Eagle Lake. Prior to its current growth wave and back to the mid 1800s, Fulshear was primarily a farm and ranch community with a small commercial district. In more recent years with the growth of Houston and the other nearby communities to the east, Fulshear residents had access to new retail, service and entertainment opportunities within easy driving distance, especially within Katy.

Fulshear is just east and north of the Brazos River as it flows toward the Gulf of Mexico from northwest to southeast across Fort Bend County. This places Fulshear at an interesting and scenic transition point on the area landscape, where the flat coastal plain begins to give way to gently rolling terrain, plus low lands toward the Brazos – with all of this geographic diversity encompassed within Fulshear's City limits and extensive extraterritorial jurisdiction. The combination of Fulshear's own demographics and its proximity to the "big city," all amid a semi-rural ambiance, makes the community's recently adopted motto a natural: "Where small town meets urban sophistication."

### Fulshear 2010 Snapshot

Amid the growth wave of the last decade, which was only minimally slowed by the nationwide economic recession of the late 2000s, Census 2010 captured the population size and characteristics of Fulshear at a particular point in time (Spring 2010). While many key aspects of local demographics remain generally the same or are being further reinforced by growth (e.g., relatively high educational attainment and median income), the basic quantity of people both within the incorporated city and in the broader ETJ area has continued to increase at a heady pace in the years since 2010. These recent and longer-term growth trends are explored in greater detail in *Chapter 2, Growth Capacity and Management*.

The oversized page at the end of this plan Introduction section, titled 2010 Census Snapshot, compiles important statistics from the most recent decennial Census, which makes them directly comparable with the same Census results for other communities across Texas and around the nation. More in-depth information





## Historical Context

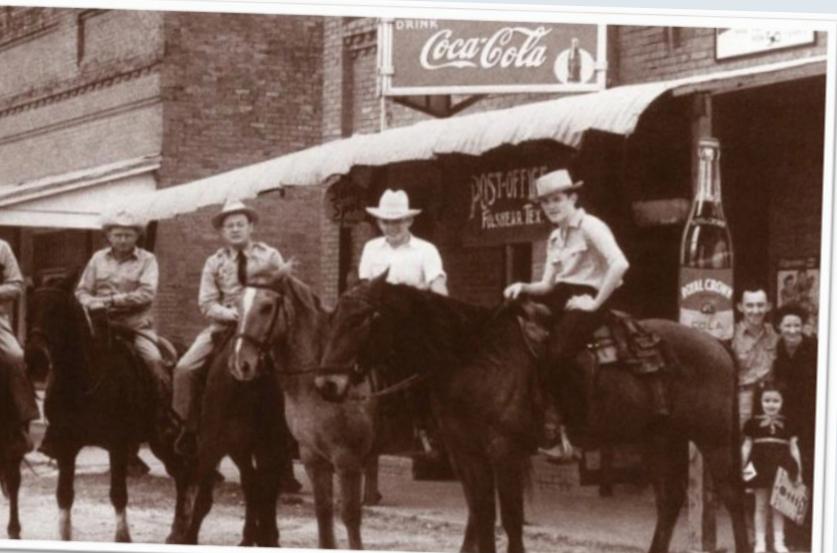
- 1824** Fulshear was established on July 16 of this year by a land grant from Mexico to Churchill Fulshear, one of Stephen F. Austin's original "Old Three Hundred." A small agricultural community developed around the Fulshear Plantation.
- 1888** Churchill Fulshear, Jr., granted the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railway a right-of-way through his land, which encouraged more settlers to move to the area.
- 1890** The town of Fulshear was laid out, platted, and granted a post office.
- 1893** The first Fulshear school district was established.
- 1894** The First United Methodist Church was established.
- 1910** A fire destroyed a block of businesses located downtown.
- 1933** The Fulshear plantation house was torn down, and the city population fell from 300 to 100 residents at the onset of the Great Depression.
- 1948** All Fulshear schools, including two schools for black students, one for Hispanics, and one for white students, were merged into the Lamar Consolidated Independent School District.
- 1963** The Fulshear Fire Department was founded and the first fire station was built downtown.
- 1977** Fulshear was incorporated as a Village, with a population of just over 400 residents.
- 1979** Huggins Elementary School was built.
- 1990s** The significant growth potential of the Fulshear area begins to emerge with the westward growth of the overall Houston metropolitan area (with Fulshear having 557 residents as of Census 1990).

- 1991** Cinco Ranch, a significant master-planned community to the east of Fulshear, began developing and brought many new home owners to the area, followed by new retail and services.
- 1994** The first 19.5-mile portion of the Grand Parkway (SH 99) was constructed from US 59 South to just north of IH 10 West.
- 2000** Fulshear records a Census 2000 population of 716, which is only 159 residents more than in 1990, but marks the start of a phenomenal growth wave to come.
- 2001** The Energy Corridor District was created, encompassing 1,700 acres along and in the vicinity of IH 10 West, foreshadowing the substantial growth and concentration of energy-related employment in west Houston.
- 2004** City of Fulshear adopted a new Thoroughfare Plan and new Subdivision Regulations to replace earlier versions from 1983.
- 2005** Fort Bend County completed its six-mile extension of the Westpark Tollway from FM 1464 to west of the Grand Parkway (SH 99).
- 2008** Weston Lakes, a residential community west of Fulshear, incorporated as a City.
- 2010-11** Infrastructure improvements to the water and sanitary sewer systems in Fulshear opened approximately 400 acres for development.
- 2011** Beauti-Fulshear Program was initiated to bring together community volunteers to help citizens needing assistance with property maintenance and code compliance issues.

Bond was approved to fund the construction of three new schools in Fulshear, including a Churchill Fulshear High School projected to open for the 2016-2017 school year.

The Fulshear Town Center Management District was created "to promote, develop, encourage, and maintain employment, commerce, transportation, housing, tourism, recreation, the arts, entertainment, economic development, safety, and the public welfare in the district."

- 2012** City of Fulshear adopted zoning regulations for the first time.
- 2013** Fort Bend County voters approved a \$184.9 million mobility bond referendum to improve roadways across the county, including multiple projects in and around Fulshear.





on Fulshear and vicinity is available from the City's economic development professionals and other area development agencies and chambers of commerce. The Snapshot here highlights community indicators that are most relevant to the physical planning issues addressed by this Comprehensive Plan.

### A CONSISTENT VISION

Previous community planning efforts in Fulshear resulted in broad statements of the long-term vision and desires of residents for their community, most of which still apply based on early and ongoing input to this comprehensive planning effort:

 The City of Fulshear is a place where community, businesses and civic leaders are partners in building a city that strives to preserve and enhance our history, small town character and natural environment while providing opportunities for growth in population and employment.

#### *Visioning Report (2009)*

 Fulshear is a small, rural town with a vibrant history based on growing cotton and rice and raising racehorses. The bucolic setting and friendly community provide Fulshear with an idyllic small-town feel that is becoming increasingly attractive to outsiders. The town square is a key location and central part of daily life for the city's residents, and further growth in the area is desired. Although future development is encouraged, it is important to Fulshear's citizens that the town's historic past and values are maintained. Setting goals for the city will help the vision reach fulfillment.

#### *Comprehensive Plan (2008-09 draft)*

 In an effort to ensure that future development within the Fulshear city limits and the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction occurs in a safe, orderly and healthy pattern, developers should conform to the following guidelines:

- » Small town character should be preserved through acknowledgment and preservation of the rural and small town history of Fulshear in new development.
- » The density of new construction should not dramatically exceed that which currently exists in Fulshear; an emphasis should be placed on larger lot development, though a mix of development densities may be considered appropriate.

- » Development patterns should encourage sustainable economic development, but while preserving the rural and open space character of Fulshear.
- » Signage should be low-key and limited.
- » Adequate recreational facilities and linkages through hike and bike trails and parks are required.
- » Development of a town square is encouraged.
- » Infrastructure should be unobtrusive, attractive and in keeping with the small town character.

#### *Future Vision Report (2002, adopted as City's first Comprehensive Plan in 2003)*





## What Fulshear Residents Had to Say

The following is a sampling of comments from informal small-group sessions and other public events early in this comprehensive planning process. They especially demonstrate concern for Fulshear's character, identity and appearance in the years ahead, as well as the "pros and cons" of growth. Not surprisingly, they also indicate areas where views and philosophies differ.

"We need to stay a **small town** near the big city."

"**Growth** will hopefully enhance my customer base and opportunities."

"We need **access** – more ways to get here."

"We need more **community areas**, like an amphitheater would offer."

"No apartments or subsidized housing."

"No 'big box' stores."

"I would love to have a **residential** community that maintains a **unique business community**."

"Fulshear needs its own **identity**. Some development nearby is all new and too superficial. Fulshear should have a **sophisticated country look**, like Cross Creek Ranch has."

"I'm concerned about a cohesive look for buildings. Some new business developments near our city look cheap and not upscale. Sugar Land has a very nice look with a standard for business and signs. Sugar Land looks good!"

"I'm open to offices and small shopping to bring in revenue. But I don't want more strip malls, or a 'brickland' where everything looks the same."

"With strip centers coming this way, we need to emphasize **character** like you see in country towns and town squares."

"I'm for strong planning of growth."

"Yes, we need **quality development**, but I don't want to live in Massachusetts. We need to be careful on telling people what they can and cannot do. This is independent Texas."

"Zoning should be done reasonably and with common sense."

"I have no interest in a toll road straight through town."

"Fulshear needs to become a destination. We need to maintain a **small-town feel that attracts tourists**."

"I would love to bring friends and family to Fulshear's **old town charm** with cute 'mom and pop' stores and restaurants."

"Cross Creek Ranch and Fulshear Creek Crossing have a beautiful and welcoming appearance."

"Fulshear **Town Center** was well done. The bus barn was not."

"I don't want a LaCenterra here. I can travel to shop. But I would like some local shopping to not drive as far for groceries and basics. **'Small box' stores**."

"I'd like to see Fulshear look more like Sugar Land over Katy, Richmond or Rosenberg."

"Avoid 'tin-can' buildings. How do we make our city more charming?"

"Please keep Fulshear pretty!"

"I want to have a town known for something – a specific identity. People are drawn to **uniqueness**."

"Look at places where everything is **connected**, all designed around paths."

"I'm afraid of what is going to fill in on undeveloped properties."



"We should move industrial activity to the north side."

"Dekker's is a good example of development – a welcome addition."

"We need a **balance of development** and architectural restrictions/guidelines. Appearance is important."

"No one is going to use METRO. We use cars."

"I want a **walkable** community."

"I'm concerned that a new large park will attract outsiders."

"I support the **Fulshear Trace jogging/horse trail concept**. We need to get people off Bois D'Arc – it's too dangerous."

"We can't keep building without more roads. I don't want people associating Fulshear with traffic."

"Need to pave parking lots."

"Our town should be **pro-active** and stop being reactive."



**Your greatest concerns about Fulshear growing and changing?**

- » Traffic
- » Loss of privacy
- » Look of Fulshear in the future
- » Lack of road capacity
- » Safety
- » Loss of city's identity

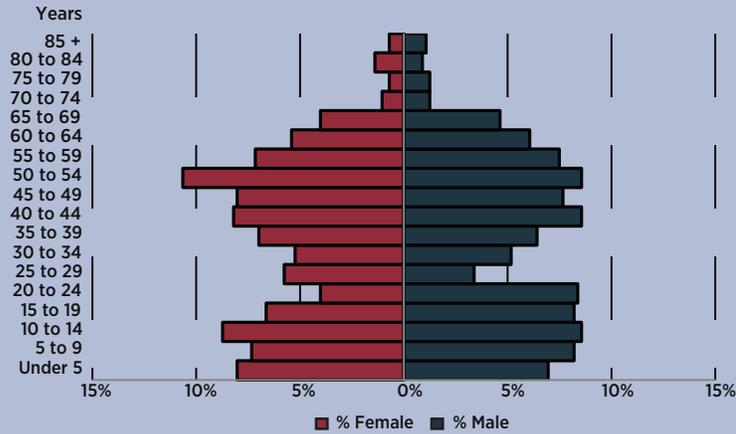
**In what ways will growth and change be beneficial to you and your community?**

- » A closer grocery store!
- » Higher tax base (commercial)
- » Shop and dine in Fulshear



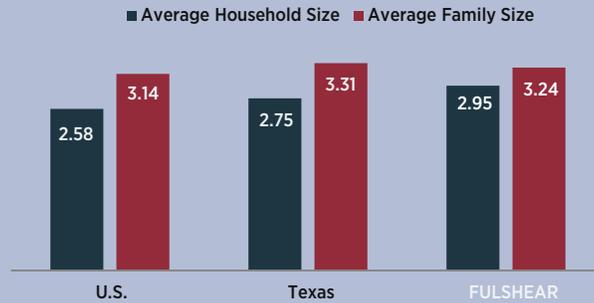
## Population Age Breakout

Fulshear has a median age of 38.2 years. The largest population age groups in Fulshear are between the ages of 35-59 years (44%) and 5-19 years (18%) indicating that Fulshear is comprised of mainly working-age adults and families. This data also shows that nearly half of Fulshear's population is in their prime income-earning years which explain the relatively high income level in the community. Also shown in the population age chart is the rather low percentage (4%) of elderly residents who are over 70 years old. Source: U.S. Census Bureau



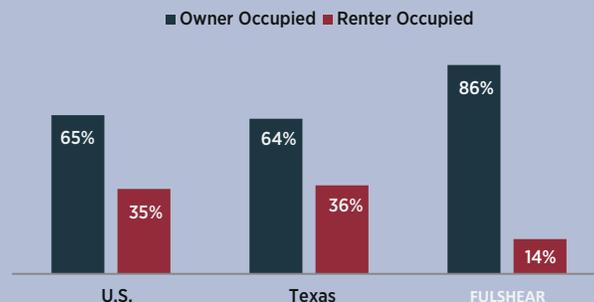
## Household and Family Size

Fulshear has the highest average household size as well as highest average family size compared to Texas and the U.S. While average household size is the more commonly used statistic, the comparison of both average household size and average family size better explains the size of households and how it influences housing demand in a community. Fulshear's relatively high household and family size illustrates that the community is largely comprised of families and larger households at this point in its growth as a suburban community. Fulshear's attraction of larger families combined with relatively high incomes is driving the demand for single-family housing relative to multifamily rental construction in the area. Source: U.S. Census Bureau



## Housing Tenure

Fulshear has an overwhelming majority of owner-occupied houses (86%) compared to renter-occupied houses (14%) which reflects that current residents living in Fulshear are more often seeking single-family housing versus multi-family rental housing. In addition, roughly 22% of Fulshear's residents in 2010 lived elsewhere in 2009. Of this percentage of new residents, 17% moved from within Fort Bend County, 4.6% moved from another county in Texas, and the remaining new residents moved to Fulshear from outside of Texas. Source: U.S. Census Bureau



**FULSHEAR** is a city located in northwestern portion of the Houston-Sugar Land area. The 2010 U.S. Census reported a population of 10,000. The city covers 8.2 square miles at the time. The Fulshear (ETJ) area was 37.11 square miles, the largest among General Law cities in Texas. Fulshear was founded in 1864 by a land grant given to Churchville, an agricultural community but first experienced rapid growth with access to the San Antonio and Arkansas Rivers. Fulshear remained a vibrant agricultural community which caused Fulshear's trade to decline. It was not until the 1970s that Fulshear experienced growth as a result of Houston's sprawl and the development of Planned Communities in the vicinity. Since 2000, Fulshear's growth has been driven by access from major transportation improvements including the Tollway and Grand Parkway (State Highway 60) development activity in the area, its proximity to new hospitals and medical facilities along with the construction of new campuses in the area by several Independent School Districts.

This demographic summary provides a snapshot of Fulshear's in-city population in 2010. A substantial population base was emerging in 2010, continued rapid growth within the city, and a focus on light on the composition of the current population. Infrastructure and amenities Fulshear offers to its residents as it continues to grow and develop.



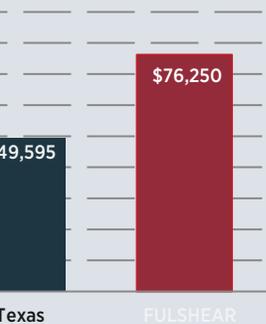
## Median Household Income

Fulshear has a significantly higher median household income than both Texas and the U.S. Fulshear's median household income is higher than the nation and state. The high median income for Fulshear drives the large number of single-family homes that are the most common housing type. The high earning potential of Fulshear's residents is a result of the population's high education level. Source: U.S. Census Bureau



est Fort Bend County and in the  
Land-Baytown metropolitan area.  
ation of 1,134 within city limits that  
e associated extraterritorial jurisdic-  
making Fulshear's ETJ one of the  
exas. Fulshear was established in  
ll Fulshear. The city started as a small  
ienced growth when right-of-way  
as Pass railway was granted in  
t town until the onset of the Depres-  
diminish and its population to drop.  
r's population began to grow again  
e development of high quality Master  
Fulshear was incorporated in 1977.  
radily continued due to enhanced  
rovements including the Westpark  
hwy 99), widespread residential  
proximity to the Energy Corridor and  
ong Interstate 10, and ongoing  
Katy and Lamar Consolidated

a snapshot in time of the characteris-  
2010, recognizing that an even more  
ging in the City's ETJ, along with  
y limits. These key indicators shed  
t community, as well as the housing,  
will need in coming years to support  
nd transition to a Home Rule city.

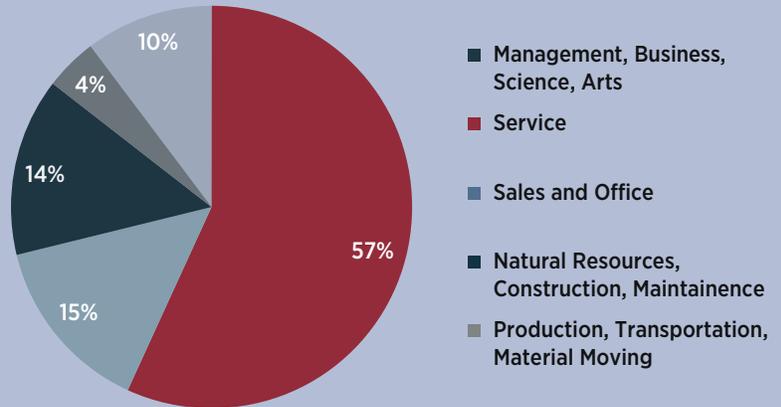


## Median Household Income

Median household income compared to  
median family income is roughly 34%  
relatively high median household  
amount of owned, single-family  
housing type found in Fulshear. The  
residents can be attributed to the

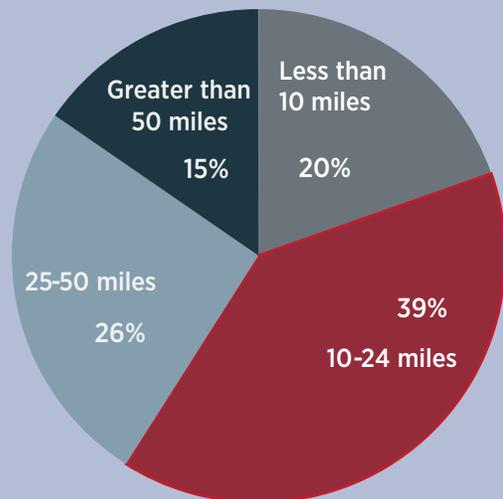
## Occupations

The majority of employed residents in Fulshear have Management, Business, Science, and Arts related occupations (57%). The next most common occupations are Service (15%) and Sales and Office (14%) related occupations. Of those employed in 2010, 5% were self-employed, with another 20% of Fulshear's residents working in occupations within the public sector.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau



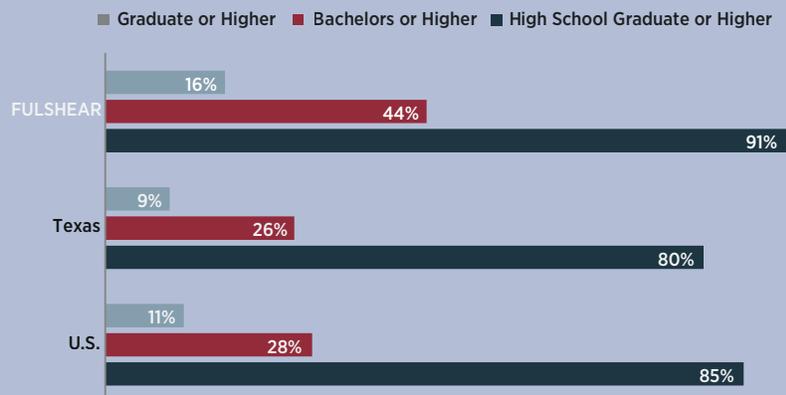
## Commute Distance

The majority of employed Fulshear residents (40%) live 10-24 miles away from their work, with another 26% of residents driving between 25-50 miles for their respective jobs. This data illustrates that Fulshear is largely a "bedroom community" at this stage of its growth and development. In addition, the data suggests that residents are willing to have longer commutes in exchange for the various benefits of living in Fulshear.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau



## Education

Fulshear is a highly educated community, especially when compared to Texas and the U.S. In particular, 44% of Fulshear's population over age 25 has at least a Bachelor degree, with 16% of this group also having a Graduate, Professional, or higher degree. The large percentage of highly educated Fulshear residents can be directly related to the relatively high household income in the community.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau





# Fulshear Comprehensive Plan

RESPECTING OUR **PAST**. SHAPING OUR **FUTURE**.

# 2

## Growth Capacity and Management

The focus of this plan section is the City's intent and policy regarding how growth and new development will be accommodated consistent with other fiscal and community considerations. A prime consideration is efficient use of land, along with existing and planned investments in transportation and utility infrastructure, to achieve and maintain a desired community form and character. Current and projected infrastructure capacities and "planning level" improvement needs are also evaluated through this chapter, along with the status and outlook for public safety services.

One thing is certain - Fulshear leaders and residents cannot say they did not see the City's current growth wave coming. Especially after initial construction of the Grand Parkway and Westpark Tollway enhanced access to the area, and with Cinco Ranch and other nearby master-planned developments building out methodically to the east. The challenge now for Fulshear is to provide the utility infrastructure capacity needed to serve this growth, knowing that some amount will come about from private development through the mechanisms for this available under Texas statutes. Municipal government will especially need to focus on expanding public safety capacities to keep pace with ever-increasing demands for police and fire services.

The City also has essential and strategic reasons to continue considering prudent enlargement of its geographic jurisdiction. This can occur through planned annexations once Fulshear completes the transition to Home Rule City status, and through ongoing consideration of land owner petitions to place their property within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) voluntarily.



## Context

The following points and background information provide context for the key growth capacity and management issues identified in this plan element, and the action strategies recommended to manage or resolve them.

### WESTWARD GROWTH OF HOUSTON METROPOLITAN AREA

The series of recent and historical aerial images below illustrates the progression of population growth and land development outward toward Fulshear in recent years. This includes the significant growth of the City of Katy and west Houston during this time, especially around the Westpark Tollway/FM 1093 and the Grand Parkway/SH 99. Key drivers of area growth have included:

- The enormous vibrancy and level of investment in the Energy Corridor along IH-10 in recent years, amid a U.S. and international energy boom. This has generated even greater employment and relocation opportunities for high-skill technical professionals who fall within the very home buyer demographics that have boosted Fulshear's overall education and income levels.
- Significant and concurrent growth in the medical sector, even farther west along IH-10, as various Texas Medical Center institutions began a "suburbanization" initiative to place new hospitals and related medical services closer to rapidly growing areas of the region. As with the energy sector, this has placed another key group of high-earning professionals within easy commuting distance of the home choices and semi-rural ambiance available in Fulshear.
- Initial construction and further upgrading of key regional highways in recent years has also greatly enhanced the accessibility of Fulshear. This includes the Westpark Tollway (with its pending extension into eastern Fulshear), the Grand Parkway/SH 99 (including current upgrades both north and south from Westpark, direct connectors to IH-10, and opening of the new Parkway segment north from IH-10 to US 290), and extensive reconstruction of both IH-10 (from West Loop 610) and US 59 (from the Sam Houston Tollway/Beltway 8).

### POPULATION CONTEXT

Population projections are an important component of a long-range planning process. They help to determine and quantify the demands that will be placed on public facilities and services based on the potential pace and scale of the community's physical growth. Projections reflect local, regional and even national and international trends and offer a basis to prepare for the future. However, forecasting population changes can be challenging, particularly for the long term, because it is often difficult to account for all circumstances that may arise. Therefore, it will be important for the City to monitor population and economic growth continually to account for both short- and longer-term shifts that can influence development activity and trends in the City and larger region.

Demographers caution that population projections become trickier as the geographic area gets smaller, making city-level population the most difficult to forecast. This is because population change within a city is strongly influenced by less predictable factors such as housing prices, availability of vacant land to develop, and annexation of additional territory, which may already have existing residents and results in an instant increase in the city-wide total.

Adding to the forecasting challenge in Fulshear is the sheer rate of growth in recent years, which means typical trend extrapolation methods cannot be applied. Instead, working with City officials who interact regularly with the area development community, round-number estimates were compiled for **Figure 2.1, Fulshear Area Population Potential**. This figure illustrates the growth that is already "in the pipeline" from active major developments, and the anticipated further growth that could come from pending developments and other large properties where development concepts are already under consideration.

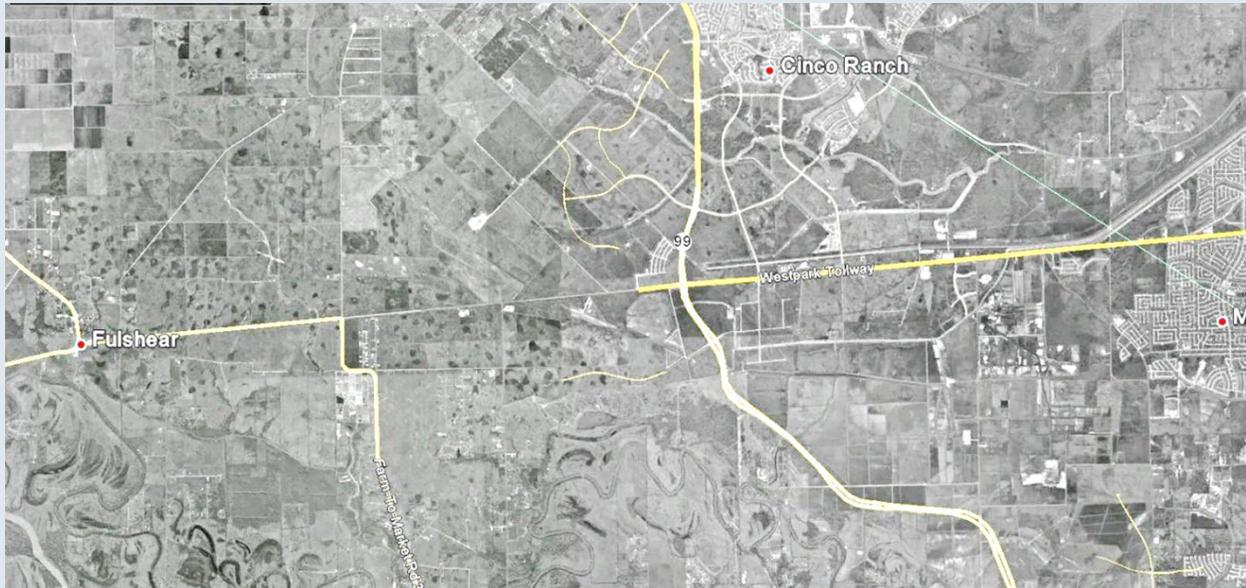
Just accounting for the existing significant developments in the City limits and ETJ, these alone are expected to result in some 50,000 residents upon completion (including within Cross Creek Ranch, Firethorne, Tamarron Lakes, Fulbrook on Fulshear Creek, and Churchill Farms). Another series of projects in the pre-development phase are expected to accommodate roughly 16,000 residents. Then, when potential development on other large tracts in the area is factored in, this leads to another 50,000-70,000 persons. Furthermore, while it is not within the City's jurisdiction, the potential Twinwood development immediately northwest and west of Fulshear's current ETJ could add tens of thousands of more people to the Fulshear-Simonton equation.



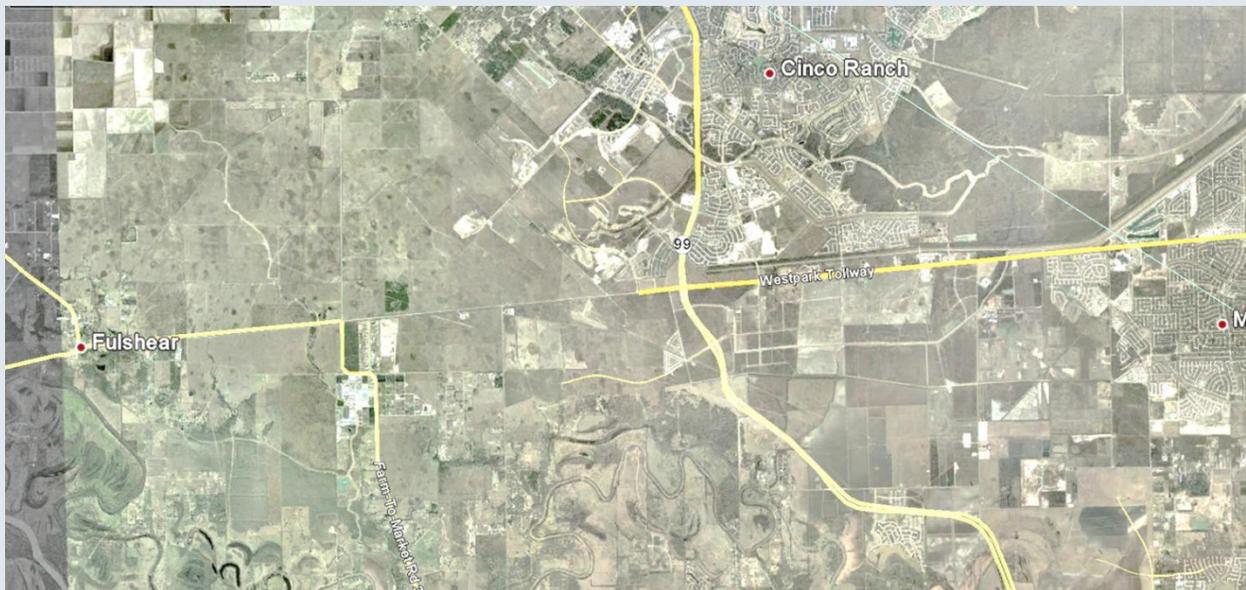
## Expanded City Jurisdiction

In recently attaining the 5,000 population mark, the City of Fulshear also automatically expanded its statutory ETJ to a full one mile beyond the current City limits, versus the earlier one-half mile ETJ as a General Law City. Additionally, even prior to this change, Fulshear already had a larger ETJ than the maximum provided by statute through ETJ additions that occurred through voluntary land owner petitions to the City. The newer expanded ETJ is displayed on **Figure 3.2, Major Thoroughfare Plan**, in the *Mobility* section of this plan, and on **Figure 5.1, Future Land Use and Character**, in the *Land Use and Character* section.

### January 1995



### January 2002

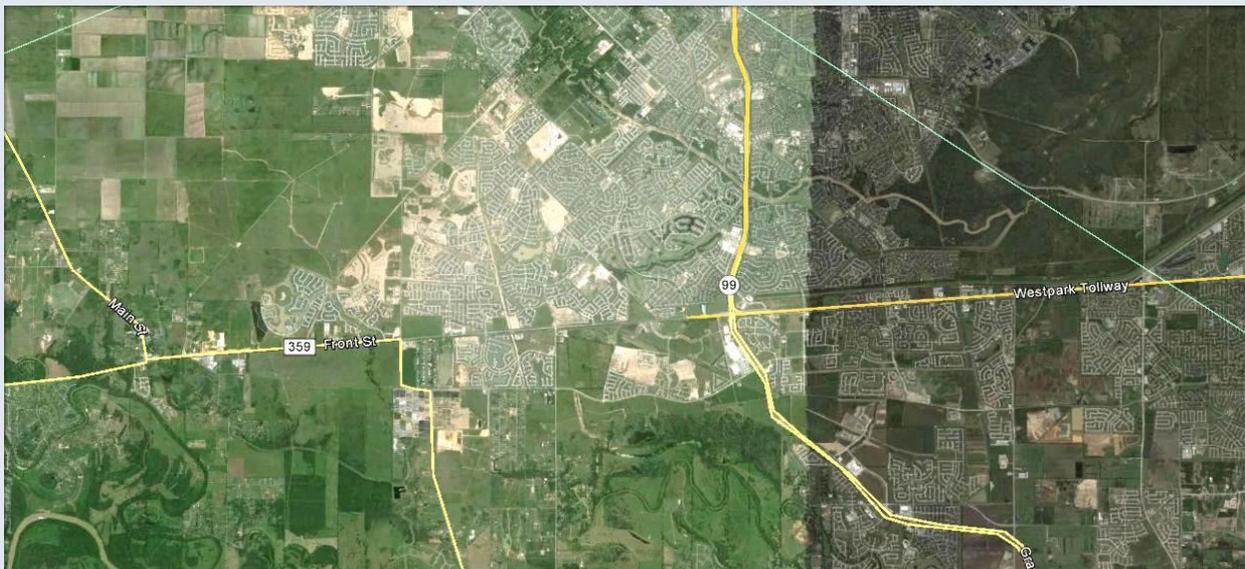




January 2009



October 2013



SOURCE: Google Earth, recent and historical online aerial images.



**Therefore, it is assumed for this Comprehensive Plan that Fulshear must prepare for a total area population in the future approaching 120,000 persons, and possibly reaching to near 140,000 depending on ultimate development plans and densities.** Whatever the numbers, it is wise for cities to think in terms of a range of potential growth rather than an absolute number given the uncertainty of any small-area forecast that extends beyond a few years. Of course, the timing of these future population milestones will depend on economic and housing market conditions that will determine the pace of construction and initiation of further development. How much of this expected population ultimately resides within the City limits or ETJ will also depend on annexation activity by the City in the coming years.

Interestingly, the explosive nature of Fulshear's recent and ongoing growth is reflected in population projections from other sources that already fall far short of actual trends. This includes a projection by the Texas Water Development Board, released in October 2013, that suggested Fulshear would not pass the 15,000 population mark until 2050, and would reach only about 17,500 persons by 2070. An earlier mid-2000s projection from the Houston-Galveston Area Council had predicted that Fulshear would be approaching 11,000 residents in 2035. Based on a Census 2000 count for Fulshear of 716 persons, the incorporated City population had grown by roughly 600 percent when it reached 5,000 persons in late 2013 – with 340 percent of that growth occurring just in the three years since Census 2010 when Fulshear had 1,134 residents.

Even City officials have had to adjust their sights in recent years in this highly fluid situation. Early in this comprehensive planning process it was thought that the 5,000 threshold for Home Rule City status might not occur until early in the 2020s, then revised to late in the 2010s, before it was pinpointed for accomplishment in 2013-2014 given the accelerating pace of local housing starts in the post-recession period. The City is able to monitor its actual growth fairly effectively by tracking the number of residential trash collection accounts and then multiplying by an assumed average household size for the area (3.16 persons per household).

## UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE CONTEXT

### WATER SYSTEM

The City of Fulshear municipal water system operates under Public Water System (PWS) Identification Number 0620001 in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). The TCEQ authorizes public utilities and private water systems to operate and provide water and/or sanitary sewer service within defined boundaries under Certificates of Convenience and Necessity (CCNs). The City does not currently have a CCN.

The CCN obligates the water or sewer retail public utility to provide continuous and adequate service to every customer who requests service in the specified area. Municipalities and districts normally are not required to have a CCN, however some of them do. A municipality or district may not provide services within an area for which another utility holds a CCN unless the City or district has a CCN itself to provide services to that area. The geographic area that the City of Fulshear is permitted to serve is delineated by its current incorporated limits.

Within its service area the City served more than 1,000 customers through a service connection as of late 2012. Per TCEQ records, the City had some 400 such connections at the time. The current service area for the City's water distribution system encompasses approximately 6.5 square miles. Fulshear provides water and sewer service to single-family residential, institutional, and commercial developments.

### Water Supply

The City of Fulshear obtains water only from groundwater sources. Groundwater from the Chicot sand formations of the Gulf Coast aquifers makes up the City of Fulshear's water supply. The City owns and maintains two deep water wells. The "raw" groundwater is disinfected with chlorine gas prior to entering the ground storage tank.

The total water production rate for the City is 370 gallons per minute (gpm) or 0.53 million gallons per day (mgd). Existing water well capacities are 120 gpm at Well No. 1 and 250 gpm at Well No. 2, both of which are located north of Huggins Drive behind Huggins Elementary School.

### Ground Storage

Ground storage within the system is maintained at the well site located north of Huggins Drive. The City currently has one welded steel ground storage tank, with a volume of 30,000 gallons.



### High-Service Pumping Capacity

High-service pumps take suction from a ground storage tank at atmospheric pressure and discharge into the existing distribution system. The City currently owns and operates one high-service pump station. This station is at the same location as the ground storage tank. The pump station has a minimum of two pumps of the same discharge capacity. The City has a total high-service pump capacity of 360 gallons per minute (gpm) or 0.504 mgd.

### Elevated Storage

One elevated storage tank is currently part of the distribution system. The purpose of such tanks is three-fold: (1) to maintain pressure on the system, (2) to provide equalizing storage as system demands change, and (3) to provide emergency storage for firefighting or periods of power outage. The TCEQ defines elevated storage as water that is stored 80 feet above the highest connection. The single current storage tank is located at Well No. 1 behind Huggins Elementary School. This tank has a total volume of 129,000 gallons. It is a standpipe form, which is a large cylinder structure into which water is pumped to produce a desired pressure due to the height of the water surface in the pipe.

### Distribution System

Fulshear's distribution system consists mainly of ductile iron and PVC pipelines that are two inches or larger in size, with appurtenant fittings, valves, and fire hydrants. The distribution system delivers treated water from the previously described groundwater sources to the end users, including for fire protection purposes. The City's distribution system has one pressure plane. A pressure plane is an area defined in the distribution system that is usually isolated from the other areas with valves, and that operates with an elevated tank which has a set overflow elevation that is different than the adjacent system. The pressure planes are designed so the water pressures in the area are within acceptable limits of high pressure and the minimum pressure requirement of 35 pounds per square inch as set by TCEQ.

The City currently does not experience pressure below minimum criteria. However, it is recommended that the City make fire flow capacity improvements to protect its customers from fires. Without fire flow tests at existing hydrants, the locations of the improvements cannot be determined. It is recommended that the City develop a hydraulic computer model of the water distribution system to better determine which areas of town have low fire flows. Fire flow usually varies by classification

per city ordinances (i.e., 750 gpm for residential areas; 1,000 gpm for commercial areas; 1,500 gpm for industrial areas). It is also recommended that the City implement a meter change-out program to overcome loss of revenue from old meters that do not register the full amount of water flow.

### Distribution System Growth

In evaluating the distribution system for growth, the existing water demands must first be analyzed. The City is required to meter flow from each of its water sources. It is important to note that these numbers are from the meter located on the well site prior to entering distribution and not the residential meters. Every water system has distribution system losses due to leaks, inaccuracies in meters, system flushing, overflows, etc., meaning that the monthly water consumed will be less than the monthly water produced.

The average day demand per TCEQ is 0.055 mgd. Average daily water demands represent annual water use divided by 365 days. This value is considered the base demand for estimating the minimum daily, maximum daily and peak hour demands for distribution system analyses. System-wide, on a per connection basis, the average day demand is 0.095 gpm per connection.

The maximum daily demand is defined as the maximum water usage in any 24-hour period during the year. This demand would be expected to occur during the summer months when outdoor water uses are at their peak. Peak day projections are needed to size water producing plants or wells and pumping facilities. In the absence of verified historical data, the maximum daily demand is average daily demand multiplied by 2.4 which equals 0.132 mgd. The City currently has a production capacity of 0.53 mgd. Therefore, the City's current water production facilities have additional capacity for growth. On a per connection basis, the maximum daily demand is 0.22 gpm per connection.

The peak hour demand is defined as the rate at which water is used during the hours of peak usage in a given year. The demand normally occurs in the late afternoons and the early evening hours of the summer months. Since elevated storage tanks are normally drafted during the peak hour demand, it is not feasible to determine accurately or maintain records of the peak hour requirements of the system. However, the TCEQ defines peak hourly demand to be 1.25 times the maximum daily demand (prorated to an hourly rate) if a public water supply meets the Commission's minimum requirement for elevated storage capacity, and 1.85 times



the maximum daily demand (prorated to an hourly rate) if the system fails to meet the Commission's minimum elevated storage capacity requirement. The City meets the minimum requirement for elevated storage so the calculated peak hour is 2.295 mgd. On a per connection basis, the peak hour demand is 0.284 gpm per connection.

The TCEQ basis for evaluating water distribution systems is based on connection count. Summarized in **Table 2.1, Minimum Water Connection Analysis**, are these criteria on a per connection basis.

The City's distribution system has the potential to serve a maximum 600 connections under current TCEQ criteria. Assuming three people per connection, the population served could be 1,800 before capital improvements would be required at the pump stations. This requirement increases to 2.0 gpm per connection or the ability to meet peak hour demands with the largest pump out of service if the elevated credit decreases below 200 gallons per connection (648 connections). As discussed in the elevated storage section, the TCEQ only credits water that is stored 80 feet above the highest connection. Overall the elevation of Fulshear and its ETJ is around 140 feet above mean sea level. However, areas approximately 2.5 miles north of the current standpipe elevations increase to 150 feet above mean sea level.

Limiting factors in water distribution system growth will include:

- Supply.** Several factors will impede the City's ability to provide water service into its ETJ. The first is the Fort Bend County Subsidence District. The subsidence district has mandated a groundwater reduction plan be implemented for all users of groundwater that consume more than 10 million gallons per year. This includes Fulshear. The governing authority set up by the Texas Legislature to meet the Subsidence District's rules is the North Fort Bend Water Authority. This Authority was created so a single entity could acquire, develop and deliver a long-term supply of potable surface water to water users within the Authority's boundaries. The Authority does not treat water. It only provides a plan, engineering and construction so that Fulshear can meet 85 to 95 percent of its future water needs with surface water from the City of Houston, with the remainder obtained from groundwater wells. The Authority has projected future water demand, and this is compared with the master plan's future population and water demand projections in the following section.
- Other Water Service Providers.** Rapid growth in Fort Bend County has led to creation of numerous municipal utility districts (MUDs). A MUD is a political subdivision of the State of Texas authorized by the TCEQ to provide water, sanitary sewer, drainage and other services within the MUD boundaries. Multiple MUDs surround and some even encroach into Fulshear's City limits. These MUDs currently provide or

**TABLE 2.1** | MINIMUM WATER CONNECTION ANALYSIS

Criteria	City of Fulshear	TCEQ Minimum Criteria	TCEQ Minimum Number of Connections
<b>Water Production (gpm)</b>	370	0.6 gpm per connection	617
<b>Total Storage (Gallons)</b>	159,000	200 gallons per connection	795
<b>High-Service Pumping (gpm)<sup>1</sup></b>	360	Two high-service pumps with a minimum combined capacity of 0.6 gpm per connection are required at each pump station or pressure plane	600
<b>Elevated Storage (Gallons)</b>	129,000	100 gallons per connection	1,290

<sup>1</sup>When system maintains 200 gallons of elevated storage per connection minimum requirement is 0.6.



will eventually make water and sewer service available to their residents and do not require these services from the City of Fulshear. The City has the right to purchase a MUD, incorporate its area, and bring it into the City's system. However, such purchases can be costly, and most likely the surrounding MUDs have debt that must be purchased as well. In addition to the MUDs, other entities have petitioned the TCEQ and been approved to provide water and sewer service through a CCN as described previously. Likewise, these CCN holders currently provide water and sewer service to existing customers. Cedar Point is a public water system operated by Aqua Tex that is currently certificated to provide water and sewer service within the Fulbrook development and to the southernmost portion of Weston Lakes (Riverwood Forest). Any expansion of City services into and around this area would most likely be met with protest from this public water system.

City officials estimated in late 2013 that about one-quarter of residential dwellings in the City limits (approximately 300-400 homes) were not on City water service.

## SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

### Wastewater Collection Service Area



The City's wastewater system currently serves approximately 400 customers. The main system components include one wastewater treatment plant, three major lift stations, some minor lift stations, and a collection system consisting of six-inch through 21-inch diameter vitrified clay, cast iron, and concrete sewer lines.

Manholes are generally spaced at intervals of 300 to 350 feet, at junctions of two or more sewers, and at changes in sewer alignment and grade. The average manhole depth in the system is approximately eight feet. Older manhole construction is predominantly brick and mortar. The use of precast concrete manholes has been the standard of construction since the 1970s. Manhole covers are constructed of cast iron and are tight fitting, but not waterproof. Older manhole covers generally have two "pick" holes per cover for lifting. Manhole covers installed since the 1970s have no openings and are equipped with a recessed pick bar for lifting.

The City owns and operates the necessary excavating, cleaning, rodding and pumping equipment to perform "as needed" sewer line repairs. The operation and maintenance program involves the repair of slipped or open pipe joints, rodding of stopped lines, and routine preventative maintenance work including line cleaning in problem areas.

The most efficient and cost-effective means of collecting and transporting wastewater is through the use of gravity-flow sewer lines. Due to their nature, gravity sewer lines must be routed to follow the natural surface drainage pattern of the area they are to serve. The two main natural drainage patterns or watersheds in Fulshear are the Union Chapel Branch located on the southwest side of the city, and the Fulshear Lake watershed located on the east side of the city.

The City of Fulshear has not completed a detailed study of its wastewater collection system. It is recommended that one be done to determine future peak flows, capacity deficiencies in trunk mains, and lift station improvement needs.

### Wastewater Treatment

The City of Fulshear is authorized under Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) permit #WQ0013314001 to discharge treated wastewater into receiving waters of the State of Texas. The TPDES program now has federal regulatory authority over discharges of pollutants to Texas surface water, with the exception of discharges associated with oil, gas and geothermal exploration and development activities.

The City's wastewater treatment plant is designed and authorized to treat an average daily flow of 0.100 mgd and a two hour peak flow of 278 gpm or 0.400 mgd. The daily average flow is defined as the arithmetic average of all determinations of the daily flow within a period of one calendar month. The two hour peak flow is the maximum flow sustained for a two hour period during the period of daily discharge. The treated effluent from the plant is discharged into Union Chapel Branch, thence to Bessies Creek, and then flows into the Brazos River. The City is authorized to dispose of its effluent within the water quality parameters stated in its discharge permit. The permitted levels are: 20 milligrams per liter (mg/l) of 5 day biological oxygen demand (BOD5); 20 mg/l of total suspended solids (TSS); and an e coli limit of 126 per 100 ml. In addition, the effluent may contain a minimum residual of 1.0 mg/l and a maximum limit of 4.0 mg/l.

Along with the permitted levels of constituents a plant may discharge, the TCEQ identifies percentage levels or "trigger levels" at which the permittee must take action to increase plant capacity. TCEQ rules require that when a permittee reaches 75 percent of its permitted flow for a period of three consecutive months, the permittee must begin engineering design and financial planning for plant expansion. When the permittee reaches 90 percent of its permitted flow for a consecutive three-month period, the permittee must commence construction of the needed expansion.



Data from late 2009 through 2012, as reported to TCEQ by the City, showed that flows to the wastewater treatment plant were not approaching the 75 percent mark for the daily average flow. A few high readings corresponded with a high monthly rain total, which could indicate some problems with inflow during rain events. Overall, the City's plant is not overloaded hydraulically and is capable of treating additional wastewater assuming the influent quality (i.e., organic loading or strength of the wastewater) remains constant.

### System Extensions

Within the last few years the City completed a significant extension of water and sanitary sewer lines eastward along FM 1093 to open up more land for development and support economic development objectives.

## PUBLIC SAFETY CONTEXT

### FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)

The Fulshear Simonton Fire Department (FSFD) was established in 1963 and provides fire prevention and protection services to the Fulshear area, as well as to Simonton, Weston Lakes, and areas of northwest Fort Bend County, as well as outlying areas of Katy and Richmond. Emergency Medical Services are provided in the area by Fort Bend County EMS. FSFD assists Fort Bend County EMS as first responders.

FSFD has two stations in the Fulshear area, and four stations in all (Station 2 at Simonton City Hall, and Station

3 on Fulshear Gaston Road in Richmond). The two local stations include:

- **Station 1** at 30626 Fifth Street in downtown Fulshear.
- **Station 4** at 2944 FM 1463 at Crossover Road, near the Firethorne development (built by MUD 151 and opened in May 2013).

FSFD has evolved its staffing from all volunteer to a current combination of 29 part-time firefighters (from other fire departments) and 13 volunteers. The department has "24/7" staffing, with seven firefighters on duty daily. FSFD intends to expand its staffing as needed and finances allow, with volunteers always to be accepted as an additional resource.

The department coordinates its dispatch and communications with Fort Bend County Emergency Services District (ESD) No. 4. FSFD responded to 1,520 calls for service during 2013, with approximately 40 percent addressed from Station 1 in downtown Fulshear. About 20 percent of all call responses are fire related. The department's current goal is to arrive at the scene of 90 percent of all calls within 10 minutes, anywhere within its district. The current average response time is 7.43 minutes, with 19 percent of responses taking greater than 10 minutes.

More information on the department's fire apparatus and other features and services is available on the FSFD website ([www.fsfid.org](http://www.fsfid.org)). All current FSFD vehicles are less than 15 years old.

FSFD is in the process of establishing a strategic plan to address ever-increasing service demands. It is also using this high-growth period in the area to expand its infrastructure and capabilities. A particular challenge for the department is obtaining information on new developments, and assisting citizens who move into the area without much thought about available fire protection until the service is needed.

FSFD's facility, staffing, communications and other attributes have enabled it to earn an Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification of 6/9, with the ratings falling on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is best. The first number in the rating, 6, applies to structures that are within 1,000 feet of a fire hydrant and five road miles of a fire station. The second number, 9, is for structures that are located more than the 1,000-foot distance from a fire hydrant, but still within five road miles of a fire station.

### ISO Rating

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) collects information on public fire protection and analyzes the data using a Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS). ISO assigns a Public Protection Classification (PPC) from 1 to 10. Class 1 represents the best public protection, and Class 10 indicates less than the minimum recognized protection.

By classifying a community's ability to suppress fires, ISO helps communities evaluate their public fire protection services. The program provides an objective, nationwide standard that helps fire departments in planning and budgeting for facilities, equipment and training. Most importantly, by helping communities to secure lower fire insurance premiums based on better citizen and property protection, the PPC program provides incentives and rewards for communities that choose to improve their firefighting capabilities and services.



## POLICE SERVICES

The City of Fulshear re-established a municipal Police Department in 2008, which at that time consisted of a Police Chief and several reserve officers. The Department achieved full staffing late in 2011, meaning it could be responsive to the needs of the community throughout the 24-hour day. As of Spring 2014, the Department had a Police Chief, two sergeants, and 11 officers, most of which were full time.

The Fulshear Police Department (FPD) currently operates from the same location as Fulshear City Hall. Police coverage of the City limits and surrounding areas is attained through coordination with the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, Fort Bend County Precinct 3 Constable's Office, and the police departments of the cities of Katy, Rosenberg and Sugar Land. In particular, FPD regularly assists the Sheriff's Office with calls in progress until Sheriff personnel arrive at the scene.

The Sheriff's Office provides dispatching for FPD. On average, FPD currently responds to an in progress call within about 4.5 minutes. The Department intends to work toward a three-minute average response time in the years ahead by evolving to a district policing approach as further increases in staff and other resources allow. In the meantime – and at least into the near future – FPD faces the challenge of inadequate connectivity of the existing local roadway network to enable more rapid response to various locations.

FPD aims to deploy one officer per 1,500 residents on each 12-hour shift. The Department changed to two versus three shifts per day during 2013 to optimize its staffing allocation, minimize overtime, and improve coverage, especially during peak call times. The Department also applies a Community-Oriented Policing philosophy and approach to leverage its personnel resources. This involves purposeful coordination and routine communication between officers and citizens to anticipate crime problems and be more effective in preventing and resolving incidents. Other key partners include civic organizations, businesses, elected officials, and the media. FPD has also embraced social media as another way to strengthen this community connection, educate residents on crime trends, dispel rumors with factual information, and receive and address citizen feedback. Additionally, "National Night Out" is especially popular in Fulshear, and indicative of local community spirit.

Through a combination of experienced police leadership, increased staffing, added patrol vehicles, and ongoing investments in technology, the City of Fulshear and its Police Department are able to cite a minimal crime rate in Fulshear compared to other nearby communities. For example, the number of home burglaries remains low, although thefts from construction sites have required special attention given the extent of construction activity in the area. City budget support for continuing vehicle and equipment acquisition has also enhanced officer safety and helped to expedite police investigations.

As FPD looks ahead to the phenomenal growth projected for this unique community, its leadership is assessing police staffing models and approaches used in other area cities and across the nation. Key considerations include:

- The nature of the community (i.e., "bedroom" communities with many outbound commuters versus cities that gain a much larger daytime population);
- The extent of school campuses, employment centers, and other concentrations of population that can both generate and attract criminal behavior;
- The extent of pass-through traffic within the city; and
- Other factors that contribute to the likely prevalence of criminal activity.

Just within the last few years, the annual call volume to which FPD must respond nearly doubled from 2,463 calls in 2011 to 4,667 calls in 2013. FPD also completed 260 investigations in 2013, up from 173 in 2012. And the number of FPD arrests reached 116 during 2013 compared to 68 a year earlier. The Department does not keep any of these detainees locally, and under state law must transport individuals charged with certain violations to the Sheriff's Department.

Based on its evaluation of police staffing strategies, rather than adopting a generic officer-to-population ratio, FPD focuses on:

- Trends in the volume, location and types of calls for police response;
- The response time to calls received;
- Upticks in certain indicator crimes (e.g., vandalism, vehicle break-ins);
- Changing demographics over time of both residents and visitors to the community;
- Maintaining high police visibility around the city, including through enforcement of traffic laws, which also enables officers to pinpoint other types of violations and individuals of concern; and
- Whether citizens and business owners generally feel safe.



The bottom line for FPD is to stay proactive versus reactive with its various programs and prevention efforts. This means minimizing opportunities for crime and addressing all crime issues rapidly and effectively, knowing that the incidence of crime will generally increase wherever more people are present. Along with the rate of growth in population and call volumes, FPD staffing decisions will be driven by monitoring of when response to calls is taking away from officer attention to preventive activities. Another FPD priority is to eventually have every officer certified in crime prevention.

Expected challenges for FPD in the years ahead, aside from the obvious implications of rapid and substantial population growth, include:

- Annexation of additional territory into the city, which requires immediate extension of FPD coverage and call response to an enlarged service area (and with the possibility of pre-annexation police coverage in fringe areas depending on agreements negotiated with property owners in the ETJ).
- Multiple new school campuses and the increased daytime and youth population this will bring (with Katy Independent School District providing police coverage for its schools, and the Rosenberg Police Department currently covering Lamar Consolidated ISD schools).
- Increased retail development in and around the city, and the customer volume this will draw.
- Introduction of faster and more direct freeway access, with the westward extension of the Westpark Tollway and eventual access to IH-10 via Fulshear Parkway, which can facilitate criminal “getaways.”
- Assuming responsibility for its own dispatching at some future point, especially given increasing demand on the Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office, which will require preparation for the associated financial implications.
- Planning for future facility and space needs, which is an overall issue for Fulshear City government and not just its Police Department.

In preparation for both the opportunities and challenges ahead, FPD uses a strategic planning approach through which priority issues and needs and necessary actions may be considered in immediate (one-year), near-term (three-year) and longer-term (five-year) timeframes. For example, an expanding jurisdiction area will put even more demands on police vehicles and shorten their useful life such that replacement vehicles must be purchased more frequently.

## KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The following key issues and considerations related to Fulshear’s growth status and outlook emerged through early community outreach efforts and discussions with City officials and staff and other stakeholders.

- The need to coordinate plans and expectations for land use, transportation and utility infrastructure through this Comprehensive Plan and other local and regional mechanisms.
- The continued interest of City leaders to gain some amount of direct frontage along IH-10 in the future, which will likely depend on potential ETJ negotiations with the cities of Houston and Katy, or on land owner petitions for voluntary ETJ inclusion that favor Fulshear over the other cities.
- Recognition of developer interest and planning for eventual, potential large-scale “employment center” development concepts in areas northwest and west of Fulshear that have closer proximity to IH-10 and/or are well positioned relative to the possible north-south alignment of the 36-A highway project.
- The need to ensure basic water supply for Fulshear’s residents and economy over the long term given increasing pressures on statewide and regional water resources from continued strong population growth in Texas and the Houston metropolitan area, plus with greater reliance on surface water versus ground water in the future through conversion plans of the North Fort Bend Water Authority.
- Recognition of the lesser development potential and densities possible in south Fulshear toward the Brazos River, especially with updated federal floodplain mapping for Fort Bend County, without significant structural interventions that do not appear likely in the near term.
- The need for preparedness on the City’s part to assume direct municipal responsibility for and operation of infrastructure, facilities and services initially provided by private development, but that will transfer to the City upon eventual annexation, preferably under the terms of previously executed strategic partnership and/or development agreements to ensure as seamless a private-to-public transition as possible.
- The need to monitor economic development potentials and successes in other nearby communities (e.g., Katy, Rosenberg) that can have implications for Fulshear’s growth pace and coordinated road and infrastructure improvements (e.g., Cane Island Parkway in Katy).



- Appreciation of the long-term maintenance costs and responsibilities that will come with more extensive utility infrastructure systems, especially with various facilities built or expanded within a narrow timeframe in response to near-term growth pressures.

## FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

### Guiding Principles

A “guiding principle” expresses a basic value or operating policy. Such principles provide a framework for setting goals, establishing action priorities, and evaluating strategies and outcomes. Below are five guiding principles that provided the overall context for this Growth Capacity and Management element of the Fulshear Comprehensive Plan.

- GP 1** The City will remain focused on the **long-term financial implications** for municipal government of ongoing growth trends and emerging development patterns, especially with regard to tax base balance and expansion.
- GP 2** The City will continue its partnering approach to **coordinated public/private investment** in essential mobility and utility infrastructure, and in recreational and other community amenities, for the benefit of all Fulshear residents.
- GP 3** The City will continue to monitor opportunities to weave **green spaces and elements** into the community’s growing and redeveloping areas to meet the need for more parks, trails and preserved open spaces as desired by residents.
- GP 4** The City will ensure that land development steers clear of **floodplain areas** unless there is compliance with stringent floodplain management and low-impact development practices.
- GP 5** The City will maintain strong relationships with area school district leadership, recognizing that **quality public schools** and safe and attractive campuses are essential to community confidence and pride, and for continuing to draw new families to the city.

### Goals

A “goal” is a statement of a desired outcome (“end”) toward which efforts are directed, as expressed by more specific objectives and action priorities (“means”). Below are three goals agreed upon as the focus for this Growth Capacity and Management element of the Fulshear Comprehensive Plan:

- Goal 1** A growth guidance and management approach that fosters a **fiscally responsible pattern of development** for the City’s long-term financial health.
- Goal 2** A growth trend and pattern in which new development and any significant redevelopment is focused where **adequate public services and utility capacity** are already in place or projected for improvement.
- Goal 3** A commitment to **sustained expansion and upgrading of police and fire capabilities** to maintain levels of service and responsiveness commensurate with projected growth.

## ACTION STRATEGIES

This key section highlights a series of potential actions for responding to the strategic issues and community needs identified in this Comprehensive Plan element. In particular, five initiatives are highlighted that emerged as top-priority initiatives, with specific steps outlined for working toward their near-term accomplishment. These steps are organized by the type of action required, using five categories that represent the main ways that comprehensive plans are implemented:

- Capital investments
- Programs and initiatives
- Regulations and standards
- Partnerships and coordination
- Further study and planning (especially as required to qualify for external funding opportunities)

While some action items are relatively straightforward to pursue, other possibilities in this section may remain just that – only concepts and considerations that the City and/or community may not be ready to pursue until later in the horizon of this Comprehensive Plan. They represent action options that are available to Fulshear as a Texas municipality and as acted on by other communities. However, it is recognized that they may not be feasible in Fulshear for various reasons such as potential cost, complexity, and/or degree of community support, as well as the capacity of City government to carry out certain initiatives given available staffing and other resources. More definitive choices will ultimately be made through City Council priority setting, the City’s annual budget process, and ongoing community input.



### 1. New Wastewater Treatment Plant

Both to increase basic treatment capacity, and also to remove an undesirable public utility activity from the downtown area of Fulshear, the City intends to work toward siting and construction of a new wastewater treatment plant that will better position the community for its ongoing growth in the years ahead.

### 2. More Elevated Water Storage

An essential next step for improving the City's water system is to construct additional elevated water storage capacity. This will help to overcome water pressure issues that are a key concern of residents and other water customers.

### 3. Bois D'Arc Lane Fire Protection

To expand firefighting capabilities in areas around Bois D'Arc Lane, the City intends to extend water lines to the area. This will enhance the ability of firefighters to prevent loss of life and property in fire incidents, and should also directly benefit residents in terms of property insurance costs.

### 4. Jurisdiction Expansion

City officials remain focused on continued expansion of Fulshear's City limits and ETJ for economic and growth guidance reasons. The City will gain new annexation capabilities through its Home Rule status, and also retains the ability to accept additional area into its ETJ through voluntary land owner petitions. This latter course, in particular, could enable the City to achieve its long-held goal of eventually extending its jurisdiction all the way northward to IH-10 to improve its chances of a diversified tax base through greater economic development opportunities.

### 5. Bois D'Arc Drainage Study

City officials intend to conduct a storm drainage study for the watershed area around Bois D'Arc Lane. This reflects recognition of existing drainage inadequacies and periodic flooding episodes already experienced in the area. Such a study will also enable consideration of broader storm drainage needs and implications from the community's current growth boom, and related roadway and other infrastructure improvements in the Bois D'Arc vicinity.

### Other Potential Initiatives

Through the comprehensive planning process, a series of other potential initiatives related to growth capacity and management were identified and discussed, but ultimately considered secondary to the top five priorities

above. These other initiatives are listed below for ongoing consideration and potential elevation as next priorities to pursue through future annual reviews and updates to the Comprehensive Plan. Such re-prioritization may occur based on new grant programs for which the City is eligible, a land donation offered to the City, a unique partnership opportunity that could advance a particular project, or other factors that may justify re-focusing resources and effort to where tangible results become possible.

The following four initiatives garnered the most interest after the top five priority projects:

#### ***Municipal Building or Complex***

- Begin planning for new municipal facilities of adequate size and in an appropriate location to provide exceptional service and the visibility and physical profile fitting for the scale of community Fulshear will be in the future.
- Assess options for co-locating multiple related functions in a single unified municipal complex, including a City Hall, Municipal Court and public safety services.
- Continue to explore potential public/private partnerships that could lead to incorporation of municipal facilities into an accessible and attractive "Town Center" component within one of the area's master-planned developments.

#### ***Expanded Community Center***

- Plan for expansion and upgrading of the City's existing Irene Stern Community Center, potentially with the involvement of other public or private partners, given the scale of public events now hosted periodically within the community, and the higher expectations of users for quality event space with modern features and technology.
- Also explore the potential for new public gathering space as part of a public/private "Town Center" development elsewhere in the city.

#### ***Downtown Storm Drainage Study***

- Along with the storm drainage study anticipated for the Bois D'Arc Lane vicinity, plan to fund a targeted study of drainage conditions and improvement needs in and around the downtown area.
- Ensure the awareness and involvement of homeowners and businesses that will directly benefit from, and possibly be affected by, any significant structural improvements which the study may recommend.



- Coordinate this study effort with overall planning for FM 359/Main Street improvements, as well as the broader and ongoing enhancement of downtown Fulshear.

### **Master Drainage Plan**

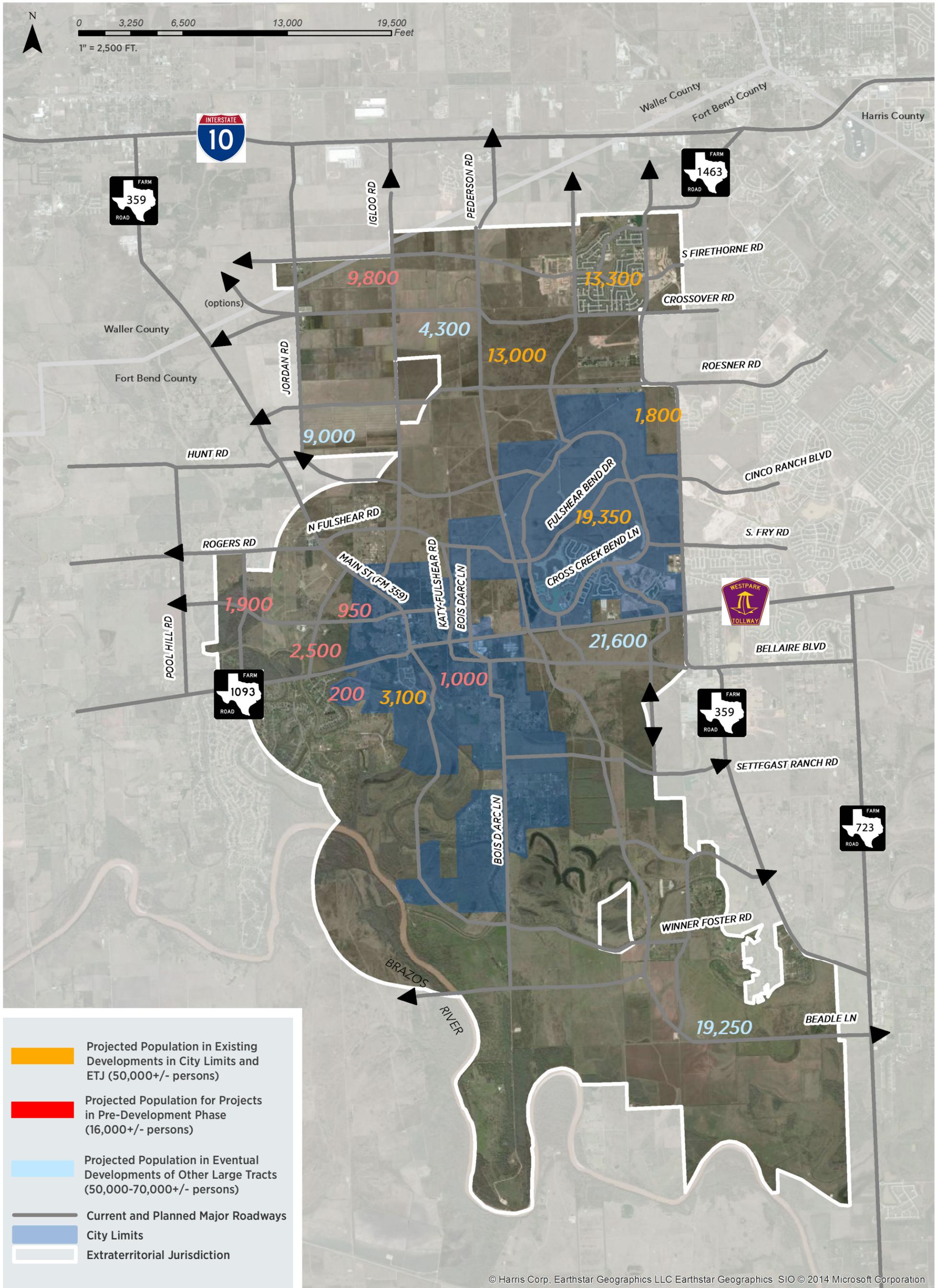
- Building on initial special-area studies cited above for downtown and the Bois D'Arc Lane vicinity, work toward eventual preparation and adoption of a city-wide Master Drainage Plan for an overall assessment and understanding of priority issues and improvement needs, and their likely timing and cost implications.
- Along with other specialized master plans for water, wastewater, transportation, and parks and recreation, utilize the Master Drainage Plan as a key input to the City's multi-year capital improvements programming to identify specific projects, costs and necessary phasing well in advance for effective budgeting.

Below are other ideas and possibilities that might not be near-term priorities, but could be potential items on the community's longer-term action agenda.

- **Invest in more sophisticated tools for fiscal impact analysis**, as Fulshear's size and the complexity of municipal finances continue to increase, so that City management can better assess the financial implications of alternate growth scenarios, significant development proposals, and major public facility and infrastructure decisions.
- **Continue to utilize available growth management tools for Texas cities**, including special districts and other mechanisms authorized by Texas statutes for financing public improvements, coordinating public and private planning and investments, and enhancing targeted areas of the community (e.g., utility and other improvement districts, municipal management districts, tax increment reinvestment zones, strategic partnership agreements, development agreements, etc.).
- **Provide for cluster and conservation development approaches** in the City's development regulations, without the need for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) zone change and approval process, to provide developers and land planners flexibility to reduce lot sizes below typical minimum standards and thereby focus the proposed development footprint on only a portion of the site, especially on constrained sites. (This can also be an important tool for preserving agricultural activity amid development pressures

and rising land prices/taxes by enabling a rural property owner to gain greater return on his or her land by devoting a portion to housing or other non agricultural development while keeping much of the property in agricultural use – and with appropriate buffering standards to protect both land uses.)

- **Engage and educate area land owners** on the direct benefits of and logistics for establishing conservation easements on their property (with support from area land trusts as appropriate), which is a cost-effective way for local government to encourage preservation of large, contiguous areas of undeveloped land for long-term environmental and community benefit.
- **Complete timely zoning of newly annexed areas** to expedite the planning and zoning process and clarify City expectations for future land use for both public and private decision-makers.
- **Promote “green building” and management practices** in the Fulshear area to reap the public benefits of less water use (and increased capture and re-use), reduced wastewater and solid waste generation (and increased recycling), and energy efficiency that can be achieved through appropriate building code updates, partnerships with the development and building community, and drawing upon the National Green Building Program (of the National Association of Home Builders) and other governmental and non-profit resources.
- **Consider adding “dark sky” protections to the City's development regulations**, as adopted by various Texas and U.S. cities for both subdivision street lighting and required illumination of non-residential sites, to reduce glare and lighting spillover that detracts from a rural character in less developed areas of the community – and incorporate the same lighting design practices into public projects. (Resource information is available through the International Dark-Sky Association, IDA, and the Illuminating Engineering Society, IES, which has produced a model lighting ordinance also to promote energy conservation.)



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**Figure 2.1**  
Fulshear Area Potential Population

NOTE: Projected population figures compiled by City of Fulshear based on interactions with area property owners/developers.

DISCLAIMER: This graphic representation depicts generalized areas for informational and long-range planning purposes only. The illustration may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property and other boundaries. Data is not guaranteed for specific accuracy or completeness and may be subject to revision at any time without notification.



# Fulshear Comprehensive Plan

RESPECTING OUR **PAST**. SHAPING OUR **FUTURE**.

# 3

## Mobility

This element of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on long-range transportation needs in and around Fulshear. This involves the preservation of rights-of-way for thoroughfare system development, as well as coordinating improvements and initiatives for all other modes of transportation. As in any urbanizing city, Fulshear must have an adequate street network to collect, distribute, and convey traffic within and through the community. Other focus areas include providing for more widespread implementation of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, ensuring the safe and efficient movement of goods, and planning for eventual public transportation when needed and feasible.

At the time of this Comprehensive Plan, the area street system still reflected a small town situation with reliance on state highways (mostly two-lane Farm-to-Market roads) for most cross-town circulation, and with few other options for driving within the city to reach local destinations. This meant that through and local traffic were both being accommodated on the same limited road network. With the pace of population growth in and around Fulshear, travel demand was clearly growing much faster than available roadway capacity, leading to traffic congestion and safety concerns for all modes of transportation.



Developing an adequate grid of major arterial streets for the long term is a key priority of this Mobility section, both to accommodate basic traffic movement needs that will come with growth, and to optimize emergency access to all parts of the city. City leaders are especially aware of these needs given lessons learned from past development in the area that failed to continue the orderly westward extension of the Houston metropolitan arterial network, which only puts further strain on other nearby travel routes. A continuing “wild card” for local officials and residents, over the horizon of this Comprehensive Plan, is where, when and how any future westward extension of the Westpark Tollway may occur.

## Context

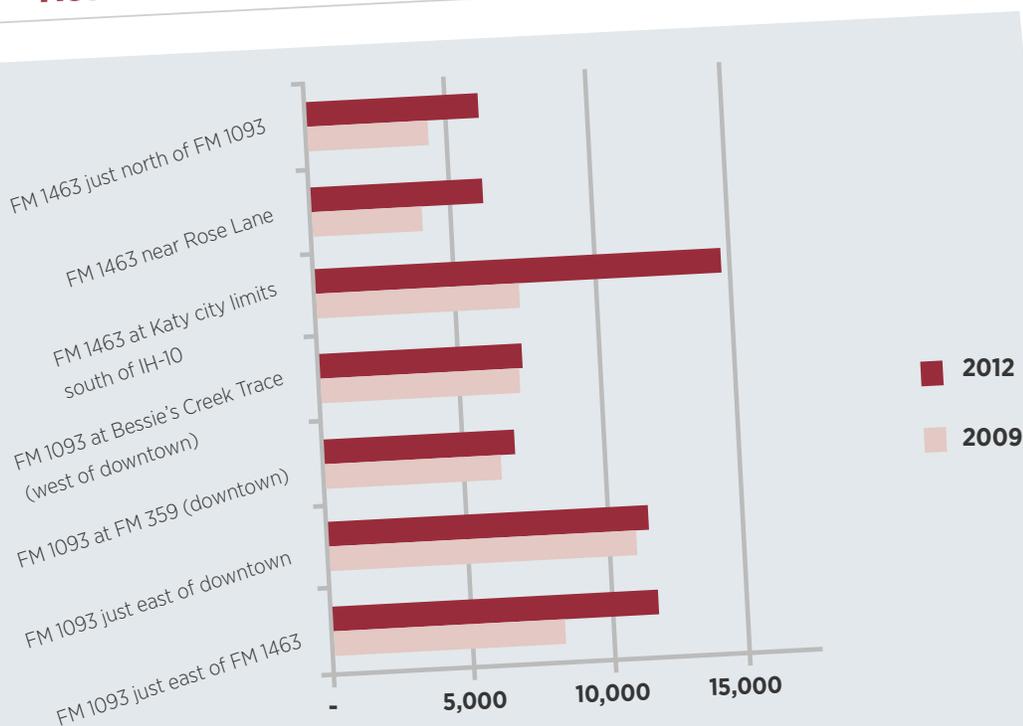
The following points and background information provide context for the key mobility issues identified in this plan element, and the action strategies recommended to manage or resolve them.

- **Area Traffic Increase.** Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) counts available from the Texas Department of Transportation enable consideration of traffic trends over time. As displayed in **Figure 3.1, Change in Daily Traffic Volume, 2009-2012**, counts at seven area locations from as recently as 2009 and 2012 show significant traffic increases at several points north and east of the city, including: a 97 percent increase on FM 1463 just south of IH-10, coming out of Katy; a 55 percent increase on FM 1463 near Rose Lane (south of Firethorne); a 41 percent increase on FM 1463 just north of its intersection with FM 1093; and another 41 percent increase just east of the same intersection but on FM 1093. Traffic volume projections to 2035 show that FM 1093 to the west of the pending Fulshear Parkway could be carrying 50,000 vehicles per day at that point, which is equivalent to the current traffic load on FM 1093 at SH 6.
- **Fort Bend County Mobility Bond.** Fort Bend County voters in November 2013 approved, by a three-to-one margin, a \$184.9 million bond package to fund mobility improvements across the county. Precinct Three, in which Fulshear is located, will receive the largest share of funds from the mobility bond. Projects most directly beneficial to Fulshear include:
  - » **Fulshear Parkway.** The mobility bond provides \$4.5 million toward the \$47 million cost of implementing the Parkway concept between IH-10 and FM 1093, in partnership with the area development community.
  - » **Huggins Drive.** The mobility bond covers the \$2.5 million cost of a new east-west road link between FM 359/Main Street and Katy Fulshear Road.
  - » **Katy Fulshear Road.** The mobility bond provides \$3.3 million to construct a four-lane concrete boulevard between FM 1093 and Huggins Drive.
  - » **FM 1463.** The mobility bond contributes \$1.6 million toward the reconstruction and expansion of FM 1463 from a two-lane to four-lane roadway between IH-10 and Spring Green.
  - » **Cane Island Boulevard.** The mobility bond provides \$6.8 million to construct a new connection from FM 1463 to a new overpass interchange on IH-10 associated with the Cane Island Parkway project in the City of Katy. The project will also involve a new bridge and related storm drainage improvements at Willow Creek.
  - » **Crossover Road.** An allocation of \$2.65 million will support a new road connection between FM 1463 and Katy Flewellen Drive.
  - » **SH 36-A Potential.** The mobility bond allocates \$500,000 for a study, under the auspices of the 36-A Coalition, to determine an alignment for a new highway segment between IH-10 and US 59 to the west of Fulshear.
- **Fulshear Parkway Momentum.** Plans for this largely privately-led initiative coalesced in recent years with cooperative alignment planning and roadway design among area property owners/developers, State-level creation of special improvement districts along the corridor to facilitate financing, and dedication of supportive public funding through the recently passed Fort Bend County mobility bond referendum, which allotted \$4.5 million for the northern portion of the Parkway project from FM 1093 to IH-10. The overall alignment has evolved in the meantime, and the currently envisioned route is reflected on the City’s Major Thoroughfare Plan map that is a part of this plan section.



- METRO Right-of-Way Sale.** A significant development for Fulshear just prior to finalization of this Comprehensive Plan was the sale by METRO of its dormant rail right-of-way (ROW) corridor through the city and Fort Bend County to the Fort Bend County Toll Road Authority. This move will expedite the planned extension of the Westpark Tollway into Fulshear (projected for 2017 completion), following an initial extension to FM 723, as discussed elsewhere in this plan section. METRO had owned the overall 58-mile, 100-foot-wide ROW along the Westpark corridor and beyond to Eagle Lake since 1992, and was now relinquishing some 40 miles in Fort Bend. METRO commuter buses will be able to utilize the extended Tollway, but earlier visions of west side commuter rail are likely foreclosed – a vision that even METRO officials saw as a longshot at the time. METRO had previously sold other portions of its ROW for toll road construction, and even the Westpark extension will not require the ROW width. Equally significant is that the ROW sale finally has re-opened access to various properties abutting FM 1093 in Fulshear, which had been greatly restricted for years from installing driveway connections across the ROW.
- FM 1093 Improvements.** In conjunction with the Westpark Tollway extension, FM1093 will be improved to a four-lane roadway, with two travel lanes in each direction and a large median area in between. This median space would be adequate to accommodate further westward extension of the Tollway if and when that becomes needed and feasible. Then the FM 1093 lanes on either side would function as frontage roads along the limited-access Tollway.
- Local Street Rehabilitation.** In conjunction with its 2012-13 annual budget, the City initiated its first-ever, multi-year street Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to target funds for the repair and upgrading of the community’s oldest streets. The City initially estimated \$1.6 million in total spending on the initiative, and avoidance of any new debt through the use of available and reserve funds. Significant cost savings were achieved by pursuing these improvements with the Fort Bend County Road and Bridge Department, which requires the City to pay only material costs and not labor. All streets in Old Town and along Bois D’Arc Lane will be addressed through the four-year effort.

**FIGURE 3.1** | CHANGE IN DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUME 2009-2012



SOURCE: Texas Department of Transportation, Houston District, Traffic Maps of Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) at selected locations, <http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/transportation-planning/maps/traffic.html>



- **Highway 36-A Outlook.** A Highway 36-A Coalition is now advocating this project, which would involve a four-lane roadway going 100+ miles from Freeport to the Waller/Prairie View vicinity along US 290. The potential alignment is currently envisioned to pass just west of Fulshear toward Simonton. A potential railroad component is also in the mix, to provide a direct rail link between Freeport and new intermodal freight facilities planned on the west side of Rosenberg. An initial feasibility study is the next step, funded through the Texas Department of Transportation and the Houston-Galveston Area Council, plus an allocation from the recently approved Fort Bend County mobility bond referendum. The potential new roadway is also touted as a reliever to SH 288, and another superior hurricane evacuation route from Brazoria County coastal areas. Environmental advocates are concerned about the potential “Prairie Parkway” construction through the Katy Prairie north of IH-10 in Waller County.

#### KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The following key issues and considerations related to Fulshear’s mobility status and outlook emerged through early community outreach efforts and discussions with City officials and staff, as well as with various other stakeholders for the update of the City’s Major Thoroughfare Plan.

- The need for predictability of future transportation improvements in the Fulshear area through adoption of an updated Major Thoroughfare Plan for the city and surrounding planning area.
- Given the pace of growth and extent of land development activity in the area, the related need to identify and preserve critical alignments for future roadways before the “window” closes on such opportunities.
- The need to coordinate plans and expectations for land use, transportation and utility infrastructure through this Comprehensive Plan and other local and regional mechanisms.
- The need to work toward an adequate area street network to advance various fundamental mobility objectives, including:
  - » **Connectivity** (within the local street network and to the regional highway system).
  - » **Continuity** (i.e., an adequate array of north-south and east-west arterials that extend across and beyond the city).
- » **Multiple routes and travel options** to avoid traffic overload on certain roadways.
- » **Emergency access.**
- » **Appropriate spacing of major roadways** for effective signalization of key intersections.
- » **Grade separation** needs at key locations to maintain traffic flow and enhance safety.
- » **Designing roadways in context with their surroundings**, to maintain desired community character and to minimize effects on valued natural resources.
- Just as Fulshear nearly suffered from failure to extend the Houston major street system further westward into the City (e.g., Fry Road, Cinco Ranch Boulevard), the need to anticipate future growth to the west of Fulshear and plan for good connectivity for the years ahead.
- Recognition of constraints to north-south connectivity on the south side of Fulshear given necessary crossing of the Brazos River, extensive floodplain in the river vicinity, and homeowner interest in maintaining a relatively rural setting in this area.
- The need to plan for traffic circulation and access needs in the vicinity of significant traffic generators, including the pending secondary school campuses to be built in Fulshear.
- The longstanding need to overcome land access and development constraints imposed by the METRO rail right-of-way along the FM 1093 corridor (which has recently been accomplished as discussed in the Context section above).
- The uncertain future for further westward extension of the Westpark Tollway beyond the current plans to extend the Tollway’s reach into the eastern City limits of Fulshear.
- The need for ongoing coordination with private land owners and the area development community given the extent of private commitment to major mobility improvements (i.e., Fulshear Parkway) and involvement in advocacy efforts at the County, region and State levels.
- Appreciation of the long-term maintenance costs and responsibilities that will come with a more extensive local street network, especially with various facilities built or expanded within a narrow timeframe in response to near-term growth pressures.



## MAJOR THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The City's long-term street network plan, as displayed in **Figure 3.2, Major Thoroughfare Plan**, is designed to address current and anticipate future travel needs in and around Fulshear. Similar to the Future Land Use and Character Plan in *Chapter 5, Land Use and Character*, which is intended to guide land use and development patterns over the next several decades, the Major Thoroughfare Plan represents a long-term vision for the community's surface transportation system.

Some of the proposed arterial and collector streets identified in Figure 3.2, particularly in the outlying portions of the planning area, may not be needed or fully constructed for some years. Nonetheless, the purpose of the Major Thoroughfare Plan is to preserve the rights-of-way needed for future transportation corridors so that, if and when land development occurs, adequate and continuous corridors for appropriately sized and designed transportation facilities will be available. The City's current standards for street rights-of-way are summarized in **Table 3.1, Street Right-of-Way Standards**.

Future thoroughfare development must achieve continuity and connectivity for the overall system to be functionally effective. This requires that the City's plans, development ordinances, and approval procedures stipulate applicable standards so as to avoid discontinuous and irregular street patterns. This is particularly significant in fringe and outlying areas, where the City is likely to annex land to accommodate its future growth. In such areas land development can occur in a non-contiguous manner, resulting in uncoordinated street layouts and lost opportunities for sound thoroughfare system development.

**TABLE 3.1** | STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY STANDARDS

Street Classification	Minimum Width for Rights-of-Way
Major Street	100-120 ft <sup>1</sup>
Secondary Street	70 ft <sup>1</sup>
Residential Street	60 ft <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Per Fort Bend County Subdivision Regulations, Section 5-Design Criteria (City Subdivision Ordinance specifies that County design standards apply in the absence of City standards).

<sup>2</sup> Per City of Fulshear Subdivision Ordinance, Section 7-Design Standards. Potential reduction to minimum 50 ft under certain circumstances with Planning and Zoning Commission approval. Minimum 50 feet required for a circular cul-de-sac turnaround at the end of a residential street.

It is also vital that the City continue to coordinate its transportation planning with Fort Bend and Waller counties, the Fort Bend County Toll Road Authority, the Houston-Galveston Area Council, and the Texas Department of Transportation. Beyond such advance planning, there must be a continued commitment and diligence in the coordinated review and approval of proposed subdivisions and other land development to ensure that it occurs in an orderly manner in the context of current and future transportation infrastructure.

The remainder of this section describes planning principles and general design guidance for the thoroughfare types used on Figure 3.2.

### TOLLWAY

The Tollway designation appears in only one location in Figure 3.2 as it is intended to reflect pending construction of a Westpark Tollway segment on the east side of the City, along the current alignment of FM 1093. Like any freeway, a tollway is designed as a "limited access" facility, and often with even longer stretches between entry and exit points. The Westpark Tollway extension into Fulshear will have grade separations (i.e., overpasses of other roads) at FM 1463/FM 359 and at Cross Creek Ranch Boulevard. The Tollway extension will also have frontage roads on both sides, especially for the continued accommodation of traffic on FM 1093 given the Tollway placement on this pre-existing alignment.

As noted on Figure 3.2, any future extension of the Westpark Tollway, beyond the pending construction of an extension to a point just west of Cross Creek Ranch Boulevard, will depend upon area development trends and associated traffic growth, as well as funding availability. Additionally, the potential alignment of any further extension will be subject to detailed planning and design.

### PARKWAY

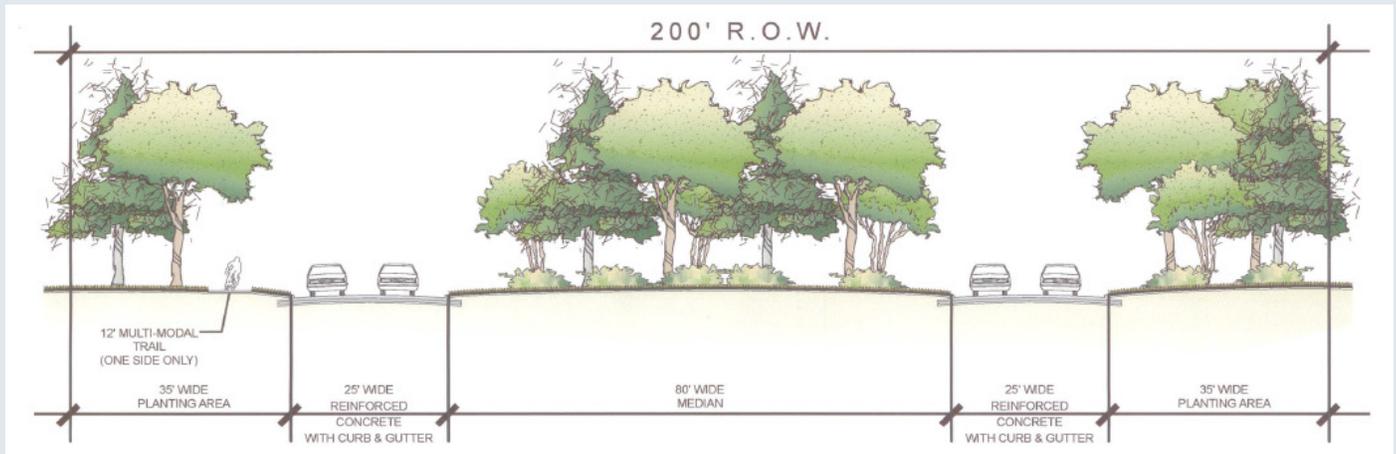
The Parkway designation indicates a roadway somewhere in the range between a freeway and an arterial roadway in terms of its length and continuity, links to other major regional highways and arterials, traffic-carrying capacity, and relatively high profile within the community. The "park" aspect also reflects significant attention to quality design and a high bar for aesthetics in terms of extensive landscaping and other focal points and design elements.

In this case the designation is specifically meant to accommodate the Fulshear Parkway concept, which is now moving forward as a largely private-driven

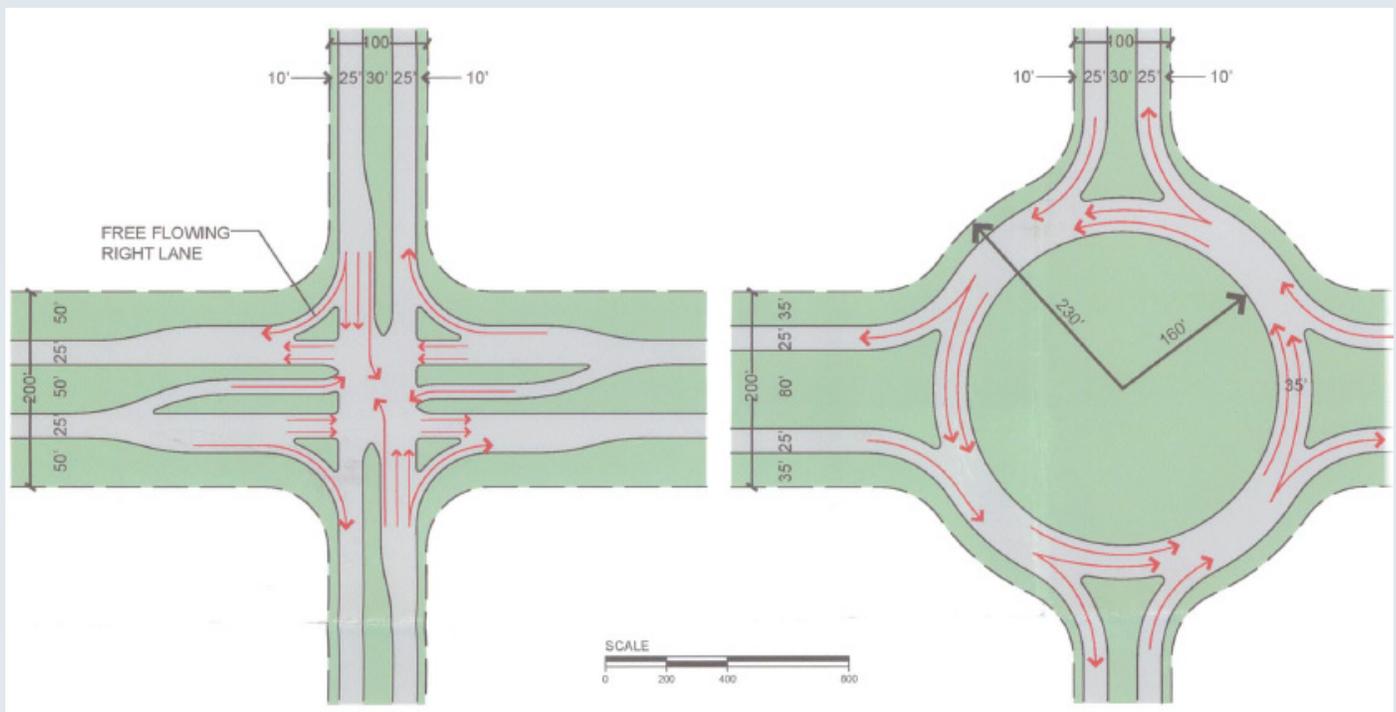


**FIGURE 3.3** | FULSHEAR PARKWAY DESIGN APPROACH

### Parkway Cross Section



### Parkway Intersection Concepts



SOURCE: Fulshear Parkway Conceptual Plan poster, Kerry R. Gilbert & Associates, January 2011.



improvement to serve various large master-planned developments in central and north Fulshear. The Parkway is intended to introduce direct access to IH-10 on the north, and eventually improve north-south circulation and connectivity of Fulshear to central Fort Bend County. Also indicated on Figure 3.2 is an east-west portion of Parkway in the northwest portion of the extraterritorial jurisdiction, which is largely conceptual but in anticipation of a possible SH 36-A corridor in that vicinity, along with possibilities for eventual “employment center” development northwest of Fulshear toward IH-10, and other associated development to the west.

As displayed in **Figures 3.3 and 3.4, Fulshear Parkway Design Approach and Illustrative Parkway Design**, respectively, concept plans and renderings for Fulshear Parkway indicate a sizeable 200-foot right-of-way to accommodate extensive landscape elements appropriate to the area plus wide, meandering trails for bicycle/pedestrian use well away from vehicle lanes. Even larger rights-of-way are planned at key locations along the Parkway alignment for incorporation of roundabouts rather than traditional intersection designs. As stated on a Fulshear Parkway Conceptual Plan poster produced through a land owner/developer consortium, the intersection designs planned for the parkway “have proven to be effective in facilitating high volumes of traffic while discouraging regional truck and cargo traffic.” Experience elsewhere has shown that roundabouts enhance traffic flow, reduce vehicle points of contact, and reduce injury and fatality crashes. Limited driveway access along the Parkway is also planned to ensure good traffic flow and improve safety.

### PRINCIPAL AND MINOR ARTERIAL STREETS

Arterial streets form an interconnecting network for broad movement of traffic. Although they usually represent only five to 10 percent of the total roadway network, arterials typically accommodate between 30 and 40 percent of an area’s travel volume. Since traffic movement, not land access, is the primary function of arterials, access management is essential to avoid traffic congestion and delays caused by turning movements for vehicles entering and exiting driveways. Likewise, intersections of arterials with other public streets and private access drives should be designed to limit speed differentials between turning vehicles and other traffic to no more than 10 to 15 miles per hour. Signalized intersection spacing should be far enough to allow a variety of signal cycle lengths and timing plans that can be adjusted to meet changes in traffic volumes and maintain traffic progression.

- The maximum distance between streets intersecting with arterial streets should be 1,600 feet; the minimum distance should be 800 feet.
- Access to high-intensity land uses should be limited by way of cross- and joint-access agreements and use of marginal access or reverse frontage roads.
- Local streets should not access principal arterial roadways. Rather, they should access a collector roadway to preserve the design capacity of the arterial street.
- Residential driveway access should not be allowed onto an arterial street.
- Acceleration and deceleration lanes should be provided at all intersections to facilitate safe turning movements, as warranted by traffic impact studies.
- Pedestrian crossing improvements should be limited to signalized intersection locations. Such improvements may include crosswalk delineation via reflective paint, pavement texturing, or in-pavement LED lighting, as well as Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements, pedestrian and bicycle-actuated traffic signals, pavement markings, and signage.

### COLLECTOR STREETS

Subdivision street layout plans and commercial and industrial districts must include collector streets to ensure efficient traffic ingress/egress and circulation. Since collectors generally carry higher traffic volumes than local streets, they require a wider roadway cross section and added lanes at intersections with arterial streets to provide adequate capacity for both through-

**FIGURE 3.4** | ILLUSTRATIVE PARKWAY DESIGN





traffic and turning movements. However, since speeds are slower and more turn movements are expected on collectors versus arterials, a higher speed differential and much closer intersection/access spacing can be used on collectors than on arterials.

- Minor collector streets, as applicable, should be determined by a development plan or a local circulation plan prepared by the subdivider and approved by the City.
- Collector roadways should not be designated as truck routes unless special precautions are taken with respect to design (e.g., curb return radii, minimum tangent lengths between reverse curves, construction specifications, etc.) and the abutting land uses.
- Collectors should extend continuously between arterial streets and should cross creeks, drainage channels, and other barriers, where feasible, to provide adequate system continuity.
- Traffic calming techniques should be used to slow traffic along continuous sections of collector roadways.
- Sidewalks should be located on both sides of all collector streets.

### LOCAL STREETS

Local streets allow direct property access within residential and non-residential areas. Through traffic and excessive speeds should be discouraged by using appropriate geometric designs, traffic control devices, and traffic calming techniques. Local streets typically comprise about 65 to 80 percent of the total street system.

Road paving in Fulshear



- Performance standards should apply to local residential streets so that the required right-of-way width, pavement width, parking lanes, curb width, parkways, sidewalks and other design elements are determined by the type of access, number of dwelling units served, and the average frontages of the residential lots. In this way, the right-of-way and street design are directly tied to development density and likely traffic volumes.
- Traffic calming techniques should be used to slow traffic, particularly in the vicinity of schools, parks, and public facilities and other gathering places.

### FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

#### Guiding Principles

A “guiding principle” expresses a basic value or operating policy. Such principles provide a framework for setting goals, establishing action priorities, and evaluating strategies and outcomes. Below are six guiding principles that provided the overall context for this Mobility element of the Fulshear Comprehensive Plan.

- GP 1** The City’s mobility system will be designed and developed to **complement the intended development character** for various areas of the city, whether Rural, Suburban or Urban.
- GP 2** The City’s mobility system will emphasize **safety**, especially for those on foot or bike, as well as those traveling by vehicle.
- GP 3** The City will maintain active and close relationships with all levels of government and public agencies that administer transportation dollars to ensure that Fulshear receives its **“fair share” of funding and improvements** given the area’s phenomenal growth trend.
- GP 4** The City will **protect investments in area road capacity** through access management controls, effective signalization and use of technology, and other measures that serve to maintain free-flowing traffic.
- GP 5** The City and other partners will continue to provide **wayfinding** signage and prompts at key locations as another way to welcome and accommodate visitors to Fulshear, and to ensure efficient travel to local destinations.
- GP 6** The City’s mobility system will likely not include a significant public transit component for some time, but **future transit opportunities** will not be foreclosed through other actions and decisions in the interim.



## Goals

A “goal” is a statement of a desired outcome (“end”) toward which efforts are directed, as expressed by more specific objectives and action priorities (“means”). Below are five goals agreed upon as the focus for this Mobility element of the Fulshear Comprehensive Plan:

- Goal 1** A mobility system that provides **connectivity and options** for getting to destinations in and around the community, and to enable better emergency response.
- Goal 2** A mobility system that supports **local economic development and tax base growth** through the City’s own investments in transportation infrastructure, plus those it gains through advocacy with other public agencies that administer transportation funding.
- Goal 3** A mobility system that is designed to enhance Fulshear’s positive **image and aesthetics**.
- Goal 4** A mobility system that is recognized as among the City’s most powerful **growth guidance** tools, together with public utility infrastructure investments and extensions.
- Goal 5** A mobility system that accommodates **all modes of travel**, including vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle – and public transit if and when feasible.

## ACTION STRATEGIES

This key section highlights a series of potential actions for responding to the strategic issues and community needs identified in this Comprehensive Plan element. In particular, three initiatives are highlighted that emerged as top-priority initiatives, with specific steps outlined for working toward their near-term accomplishment. These steps are organized by the type of action required, using five categories that represent the main ways that comprehensive plans are implemented:

- Capital investments
- Programs and initiatives
- Regulations and standards
- Partnerships and coordination
- Further study and planning (especially as required to qualify for external funding opportunities)

While some action items are relatively straightforward to pursue, other possibilities in this section may remain just that – only concepts and considerations that the City and/or community may not be ready to pursue

until later in the horizon of this Comprehensive Plan. They represent action options that are available to Fulshear as a Texas municipality and as acted on by other communities. However, it is recognized that they may not be feasible in Fulshear for various reasons such as potential cost, complexity, and/or degree of community support, as well as the capacity of City government to carry out certain initiatives given available staffing and other resources. More definitive choices will ultimately be made through City Council priority setting, the City’s annual budget process, and ongoing community input.

### 1. Expand FM 1093.

Despite delays and evolving plans, this priority initiative was moving forward at the time of this Comprehensive Plan. Improvements on the east side of the city will come through the Westpark Tollway extension, which will include multi-lane surface roads on either side of the Tollway improvement to convey FM 1093 traffic. Then, westward from a point near Cross Creek Ranch Boulevard, the FM 1093 cross section will include a substantial median area between the east-west travel lanes, which will allow for significant green space and a sense of openness through the heart of this once-rural community.

### 2. Rehabilitate Local Streets.

As in any growing community, where many new streets are being constructed, some amount of resources must also be devoted to ongoing maintenance and rehabilitation of existing local streets. This is especially important where road upgrades will also address longstanding issues such as inadequate storm drainage or unsafe conditions for pedestrians. Basic street repairs and resurfacing, together with other public investments, can also help to stabilize areas already declining or at risk of disinvestment, blighted conditions, and declining property values. The City of Fulshear has a head-start on this initiative through its adoption in Fall 2012 of a first-time street Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), in which projects were prioritized based on severity of street degradation.

### 3. Improve Bois D’Arc Lane.

During the long-range planning process, Fulshear officials and residents all expressed concern with the basic condition and safety of Bois D’Arc Lane. While this street remains relatively less traveled than some other major streets in the city, its volume of use is sufficient to pose a problem for residents in the area who travel it every day, and for others who select this route as a “back



way” to/from FM 723 and Rosenberg. Additionally, the intact rural character of this lane has only increased its popularity with long-distance cyclists in recent years. As with priority Action 2 above, inadequate drainage along Bois D’Arc is another reason for near-term action.

### **Other Potential Initiatives**

Through the comprehensive planning process, a series of other potential initiatives related to mobility were identified and discussed, but ultimately considered secondary to the top three priorities above. These other initiatives are listed below for ongoing consideration and potential elevation as next priorities to pursue through future annual reviews and updates to the Comprehensive Plan. Such re-prioritization may occur based on new grant programs for which the City is eligible, a land donation offered to the City, a unique partnership opportunity that could advance a particular project, or other factors that may justify re-focusing resources and effort to where tangible results become possible.

The following three initiatives garnered the most interest after the top three priority projects:

#### ***Reconstruct FM 359/Main Street***

- Install pedestrian improvements.
- Address storm drainage issues at the same time.
- Incorporate further streetscape elements that reinforce the intended Urban character and pedestrian orientation of downtown.

#### ***Introduce More Medians and Esplanades***

- Incorporate medians in all new arterial street construction, and whenever other major roadways that never had them are the subject of major reconstruction.
- Take advantage of this new streetscape opportunity, especially to optimize use of native plant materials that need limited irrigation and will be drought resistant.
- Pursue partnerships and direct volunteer interest toward periodic “housekeeping” and basic maintenance of median landscaping.

#### ***Install Decorative Street Lighting***

- Adopt a uniform standard for decorative street lighting along major roads in the city, coordinated with other image-setting design elements and treatments in the public realm that reinforce Fulshear’s “sophisticated country” branding.

Below are other ideas and possibilities that might not be near-term priorities, but could be potential items on the community’s longer-term action agenda.

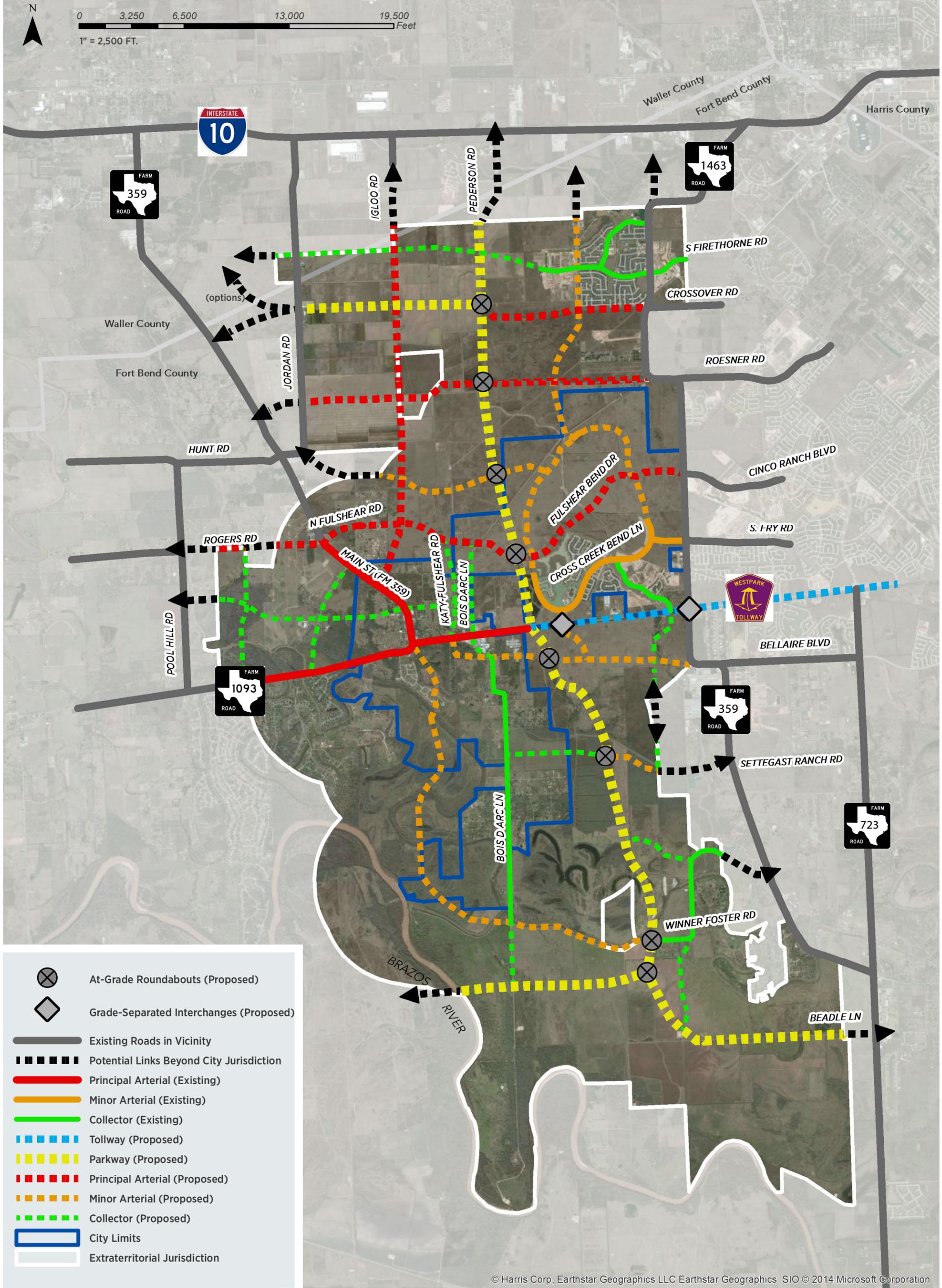
- Pursue a special area-wide mobility study for the Katy-Fulshear area as the Houston-Galveston Area Council has funded and carried out in various other strategic subareas of the region.
- Adopt access management regulations for major roadways that are under local jurisdiction, and to complement Texas Department of Transportation standards that apply along State highways.
- Adopt street system layout and design standards that apply traffic calming principles in original construction, to avoid costly and disruptive retrofitting of problem streets later.
- Explore corridor design standards to set minimum standards for site and building design and building materials on properties that front along key roadway corridors in the city.
- Partner with Katy and Lamar Consolidated ISDs to plan for likely campus-area traffic and safety issues that will come with pending construction of major high and middle school campuses in Fulshear, and the pick-up/drop-off queuing activity seen at most elementary campuses.
- Pursue funding opportunities and partnerships related to regional air quality management and trip reduction efforts, including for measures such as park-and-ride, vanpools, ride-sharing, flexible work hours, and telecommuting.

### **Other Practices to Consider**

In addition to the collection of very specific and somewhat broader action strategies outlined above, below are other activities and practices that Fulshear should consider in the years ahead when updating plans, preparing annual budgets, and prioritizing capital improvements:

#### ***Transportation System Management (TSM) Strategies***

Area leaders and stakeholders must already begin thinking ahead to a future point when both physical and financial constraints may make further increases to roadway capacity difficult. That is when sound stewardship of existing available capacity becomes critical, which often involves a mix of strategies (e.g., targeted widenings and other improvements at key intersections, regulation of access along constrained corridors, effective use of traffic impact studies to identify and mitigate the effects of ongoing land development, educational and partnership initiatives to encourage trip reduction, etc.).



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**Figure 3.1**  
Major Thoroughfare Plan

**NOTE:** The Thoroughfare Plan shows general alignments for existing and planned roadways. The Plan is a guide for general transportation planning and right-of-way preservation and acquisition. While the Plan alignments indicate planned roadway extensions, connections and improvements, actual alignments are subject to change based upon design and implementation considerations.

Any future extension of the Westpark Tollway, beyond the pending construction of an extension to a point just west of Cross Creek Ranch Boulevard, will depend upon area development trends and associated traffic growth, as well as funding availability. Additionally, the potential alignment of any further extension will be subject to detailed planning and design.

The City of Fulshear has no jurisdiction over roadway planning and alignments outside its ETJ.

Adopted 05.06.2014





# Fulshear Comprehensive Plan

RESPECTING OUR **PAST**. SHAPING OUR **FUTURE**.

# 4

## Parks and Amenities

Parks, open space, and recreation facilities are an essential part of a healthy and sustainable community, offering relaxation and exercise outside of the home and work, and beyond school activities. Much like streets, utilities, and police and fire protection, parks are integral parts of any municipality—and often among the public services most valued by residents.

With Fulshear undergoing a rate of growth and transition of land unprecedented in its history, it is more important than ever to maintain and enhance existing parks, increase the quantity and quality of developed recreational acreage, and capitalize on natural features and assets of the local landscape as growth and development proceed. This will benefit not only current residents, but also those who will make Fulshear their home in the decades ahead.

A full-service park and recreation system encourages outdoor activity, participation in athletic programs, and community gatherings. Beyond leisure activities, parks and open spaces also provide relief from an intense urban environment, serve environmental functions such as flood control and habitat protection, and enhance community character. All of which help to attract further economic development and tax base expansion, making further recreational offerings and upgrades possible.



## Park System Evaluation

Two essential steps in park and recreation system planning are: (1) classification of existing and future desired park types; and (2) consideration of recognized standards for the appropriate quantity of parkland in a community, which may then be customized based on local factors and priorities.

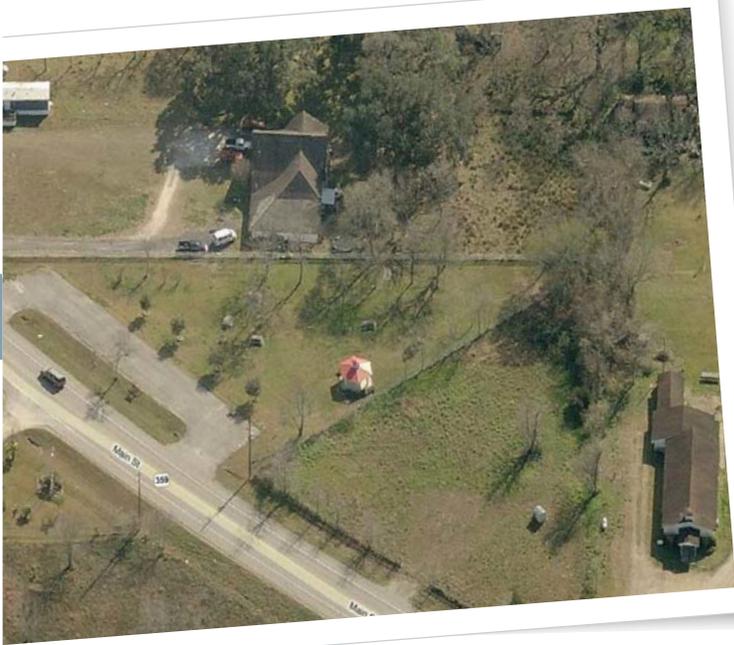
### PARK CLASSIFICATION

Most communities engaged in planning for a future park and recreation system aim for a diverse mix of facility types and sizes. Varied amenities and offerings are usually needed to satisfy the wide-ranging interests of residents (and visitors), to ensure adequate access and equal opportunity for all persons, and ultimately, to encourage use by all population groups. The following park classifications are typically used — though not necessarily present today or desired for the future in every city:

- Mini/Pocket Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Regional Parks
- School Parks
- Linear Parks
- Special Use Facilities

Summarized in **Table 4.1, Park Classifications**, are the typical characteristics of and standards for each park type. Based on this guidance, the two existing City of Fulshear parks could be classified as follows:

View of Frances Smart Park (Looking South)



1. **Frances Smart Park** (along FM 359 north of downtown): **Mini/Pocket Park** due to limited size (0.84 acre) and facilities and its location along a highway versus within a neighborhood area.
2. **Irene Stern Park and Community Center** (6920 Katy-Fulshear Road): **Community Park** as it is effectively serving this function in the interim despite its limited size (1.34 acres), and given its potential for ongoing enhancement and community utilization with expanded acreage.

### PARKLAND STANDARDS

Quantitative standards derived from publications of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provide a starting point for evaluating local park acreage needs. These standards are expressed in terms of acres of parkland per 1,000 persons. The NRPA's guidance is based on national surveys of U.S. municipalities of all sizes and in all geographic regions.

While a standards-based approach is helpful in determining potentially appropriate quantities, each community has unique context and issues that must be considered when setting objectives and priorities for the number and type of parks and recreation facilities for a citywide system. Supplementing a standards-based approach with a community-based approach requires consideration of factors such as:

- Demographic characteristics such as age and gender, racial composition and ethnic origin, and income;
- Local participation in both public and private recreation programs and organizations;
- Usage of individual facilities;
- Local climatic conditions such as average temperature and average rainfall;
- Natural assets and environmentally sensitive lands in the area; and
- The availability of nearby state parks or county, regional and special use parks.

While the Park Classification section above outlined seven park types, standards-based assessment focuses on the three key types that are the foundation of a community park system: (1) Pocket/Mini Parks; (2) Neighborhood Parks; and (3) Community Parks. The standards in Table 4.1 indicate that these three types, taken together, should provide 6.25-10.50 acres of parkland for each 1,000 residents in a community. Highlighted in **Table 4.2, Current and Future Parkland Needs**, are the current deficits in parkland acreage (given a 2011 City-estimated population of some 2,700 residents based on water meter counts and an assumption of 3.18 persons

**TABLE 4.1 | PARK CLASSIFICATIONS****Mini / Pocket Parks***Example Characteristics and Features*

Specialized facilities that address unique, limited or isolated recreational or public space needs (and/or the needs of a specific population group). Often found in higher-density areas or in conjunction with unique attractions/developments.

**SERVICE AREA**

Development in close proximity

**DESIRABLE SIZE**

1 acre (or less) minimum

**DESIRABLE QUANTITY**

0.25-0.50 acre per 1,000 residents

- Sitting areas/benches
- Landscaping
- Pedestrian-level lighting
- Bicycle racks
- Educational signage/kiosks
- Performance stage/area
- Public art
- Water fountain

**Neighborhood Parks**

Small parks that serve neighborhood residents within walking distance, with facilities for both active use (e.g., playgrounds, sports) and passive use (e.g., walking, picnicking, open space).

**SERVICE AREA**

Primarily serves neighborhood residents within 1/4-1/2 mile

**DESIRABLE SIZE**

10-15 acres minimum (varies based on nearby population and density, property availability, method and timing of acquisition, and intended use)

**DESIRABLE QUANTITY**

1-2 acres per 1,000 residents

- Centrally located within a residential neighborhood for convenient and safe access
- Evenly distributed across city (one-mile separation)
- Sometimes joint school/city facilities (similar scale)
- Active and passive facilities suitable to the neighborhood served
- Facilities and activities to promote healthy living

**Community Parks**

Larger parks that still serve nearby residents but also draw others from elsewhere in the community for a wider range of facilities and activities.

**SERVICE AREA**

Primarily serves residents within 1-2 miles, but available to all residents

**DESIRABLE SIZE**

25 acres minimum

**DESIRABLE QUANTITY**

5-8 acres per 1,000 residents

- Located for visibility and convenient access by residents nearby and from farther distances (often near a major arterial street)
- Evenly distributed across city (two-mile separation)
- Large-scale athletic fields and court complexes for active recreation and sports leagues (plus swimming pools, walking/jogging paths, exercise stations, open play areas, playgrounds)
- Lighting for evening use
- Outdoor spaces and other facilities such as community centers for passive recreation and leisure activities (picnic areas, bird watching, strolling)
- Nature features
- Restrooms
- Adequate on- and off-street parking

**Regional Parks**

Facilities designed to accommodate large numbers of visitors from across the city and the broader region, especially to provide access to natural amenities for fishing, boating, camping, nature observation, and conservation activities, etc.

**SERVICE AREA**

Citywide and surrounding region

**DESIRABLE SIZE**

No standard (200 acres minimum)

**DESIRABLE QUANTITY**

No standard (5-10 acres per 1,000 residents)

- Located for visibility and convenient access by many visitors (often near an expressway and/or major arterial street)
- Often acquired and designed to preserve special natural or cultural resource areas (and, therefore, often buffered from nearby urban development)
- Specific features and facilities vary widely based on location and region served, but typically include a wide range of active and passive recreation, including unique activities (e.g., model aircraft flying)
- May include facilities for hosting regional special events (fairs, concerts, exhibitions)



**TABLE 4.1 | PARK CLASSIFICATIONS (CONT.)**

<b>School Parks</b>		<i>Example Characteristics and Features</i>	
Property owned or leased by the City, in conjunction with an adjacent ISD-owned site, that provides for joint public recreational use (or made available for such use if not secured by ownership/lease or informal City-ISD agreement).	<p><b>SERVICE AREA</b> Primarily serves neighborhood residents within 1/4-1/2 mile</p> <p><b>DESIRABLE SIZE</b> No standard</p> <p><b>DESIRABLE QUANTITY</b> No standard</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Contributes to public open space and recreational needs, typically with facilities (and location) like a Neighborhood Park</li> <li>● Often supplements sports fields and/or play areas and facilities associated with the school campus</li> <li>● Ideally available for public use beyond school hours</li> <li>● In some cities, City component secured through coordinated land dedication (or other City acquisition) when campus sites are set aside as part of proposed developments</li> <li>● Various arrangements of sharing costs and maintenance needs</li> </ul>	
<b>Linear Parks</b>			
Linear land acquisitions that provide for continuous trails and pathways (for bicycling, hiking, walking, jogging, skating, and — in some cases — horseback riding).	<p><b>SERVICE AREA</b> Citywide or in a particular area of the community, but may also draw regional interest</p> <p><b>DESIRABLE SIZE</b> No standard (1/2-mile minimum segment)</p> <p><b>DESIRABLE QUANTITY</b> No standard recommended (sufficient to accommodate expected use and provide adequate distance)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Often follow a linear natural feature (stream) or public rights-of-way or easements (plus Rails-to-Trails)</li> <li>● Commonly used to link park sites within the system</li> <li>● May also serve a mobility and connectivity function in addition to recreation (e.g., work commute, school access, civic facilities, retail areas, neighborhood links), especially if routed under or over busy streets</li> <li>● Opportunity for regional pathways through coordination among adjacent cities and other agencies/entities</li> </ul>	
<b>Special Use Facilities</b>			
Facilities that serve the entire community or broader area for specialized recreational or leisure activities (e.g., performance venue).	<p><b>SERVICE AREA</b> Available to all persons (may draw visitation from long distances depending on nature and scale)</p> <p><b>DESIRABLE SIZE</b> No standard</p> <p><b>DESIRABLE QUANTITY</b> No standard</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Unique additions to a traditional parks and recreation system (e.g., civic center, amphitheater, water park, museum, arboretum, professional sports stadium or amateur tournament complex)</li> <li>● Typically emphasize one or two specific uses (e.g., golf) versus a mix of active and passive facilities</li> </ul>	

**TABLE 4.2 | CURRENT AND FUTURE PARKLAND NEEDS**

Park Classification	Recommended Acreage per 1,000	Existing Acreage <sup>1</sup>	2011 Target <sup>2</sup> (2,700 pop)	2011 Status	2014 Target <sup>2</sup> (5,000 pop)	New Acreage Needed	2025 Target <sup>2</sup> (25,000 pop)	New Acreage Needed
<b>Mini/ Pocket</b>	0.25-0.50	0.84	1.03	-0.19	1.90	+1.06	9.50	+8.66
<b>Neighborhood</b>	1-2	--	4.05	-4.05	7.50	+7.50	37.50	+37.50
<b>Community</b>	5-8	1.34	17.55	-16.21	32.50	+31.16	162.50	+161.16
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>6.25-10.50</b>	<b>2.18</b>	<b>22.63</b>	<b>-20.45</b>	<b>41.90</b>	<b>+39.72</b>	<b>209.50</b>	<b>+207.32</b>

<sup>1</sup> Based on 0.84 acre at Frances Smart Park and 1.34 acres at Irene Stern Park, for an existing total of 2.18 acres.

<sup>2</sup> Based on midpoint of recommended acreage range.



per household), as well as potential acreage targets at several growth milestones projected for 2014 and 2025 (depending on development pace and City annexations).

## Needs Assessment

### SERVICE AREA EVALUATION

A standards-based approach assesses parkland acreage needs relative to population, using nationally recognized quantitative standards as a benchmark. A geographic evaluation is also essential to determine how well the existing and future park system will serve the city's residents. Park sites should be distributed across the city's jurisdiction and located strategically so they are conveniently accessible to all populated areas. While a city's park inventory may have plenty of land from an acreage standpoint, a service area evaluation illustrates whether there is sufficient geographic coverage and where new or enlarged parks are needed to address any under-served areas.

The service area evaluation involves drawing a service area buffer around each neighborhood and community park site. The larger the park, the larger the associated service area. A ¼-mile primary service area is applied to each neighborhood park. Each community park has a one-mile primary service area.

Taken together, the one-mile service areas of all community parks should encompass nearly all existing neighborhoods and areas planned for future residential development. Neighborhood parks usually have more targeted locations to serve particular residential developments and other population concentrations. However, they should still have a relatively even distribution across the community to ensure that most all residents can enjoy basic park amenities in fairly close proximity to home. In areas where population is more dispersed, a well located community park must also fulfill the neighborhood park function.

### EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREAS

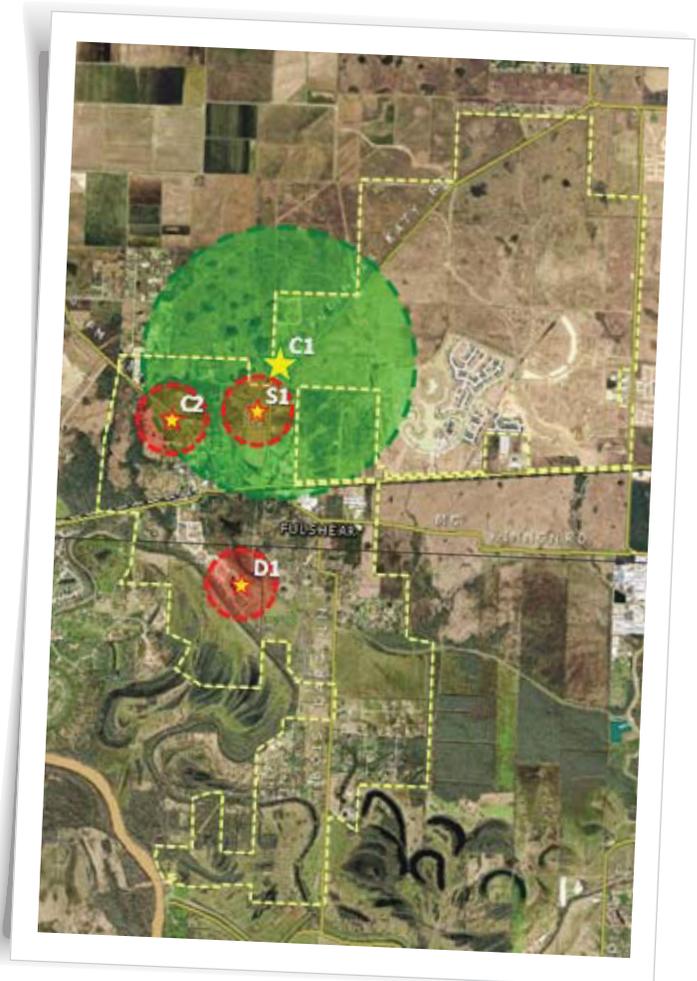
As shown in **Figure 4.1, Existing Park Service Areas**, inside the city there is one City-owned park that provides community park coverage (Irene Stern Park, C1) and another that offers a neighborhood park level of service (Frances Smart Park, C2). Play area and open space at Huggins Elementary School (S1) supplements the City sites. Initial recreational facilities within the Fulshear Creek Crossing development (D1) provide additional neighborhood-level amenities. The Flewellen Creek greenway within Cross Creek Ranch is not highlighted here (as technically not a community or neighborhood park), but it provides considerable benefits as a linear

recreational feature that many residents can access. The various small corner parks within Cross Creek Ranch are also not included in this assessment as they function more as mini/pocket parks given their size and playground focus.

The existing park coverage in Figure 4.1 is mostly focused around the original town site and historical populated area of Fulshear. The balance of Fulshear's established population is in less densely developed areas to the west of downtown and especially to the south of FM 1093 along Bois D'Arc Lane and toward the Brazos River.

### FUTURE PARK SERVICE AREAS

The projected future recreational facility coverage is displayed in **Figure 4.2, Future Park Service Areas**. This illustrates that, even without additional City park development in the northeast part of Fulshear, planned community-scale parks (D2 and D3) and new school campuses (S3-S6) within the full build-out of Cross Creek Ranch will satisfy many needs. Additionally, the new Lamar Consolidated ISD school complex (S2), which



**FIGURE 4.1** | EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREAS



includes a new Fulshear High School campus (anticipated to open in 2016-17), will add significant new recreational facilities at the very center of the community.

However, these and other newly developing areas will still need additional municipal park investment in conjunction with the more targeted recreational amenities that private developments typically offer, plus whatever school fields and facilities may be available for public use. A community park in south Fulshear also appears to be a future need, along with the possibility of dedicated public access along the Brazos River in coordination with countywide river recreation and greenway initiatives.

## Framework for Action

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**A** “guiding principle” expresses a basic value or operating policy. Such principles provide a framework for setting goals, establishing action priorities, and evaluating strategies and outcomes.

Below are four guiding principles that provided the overall context for this Parks & Amenities element of the Fulshear Comprehensive Plan.

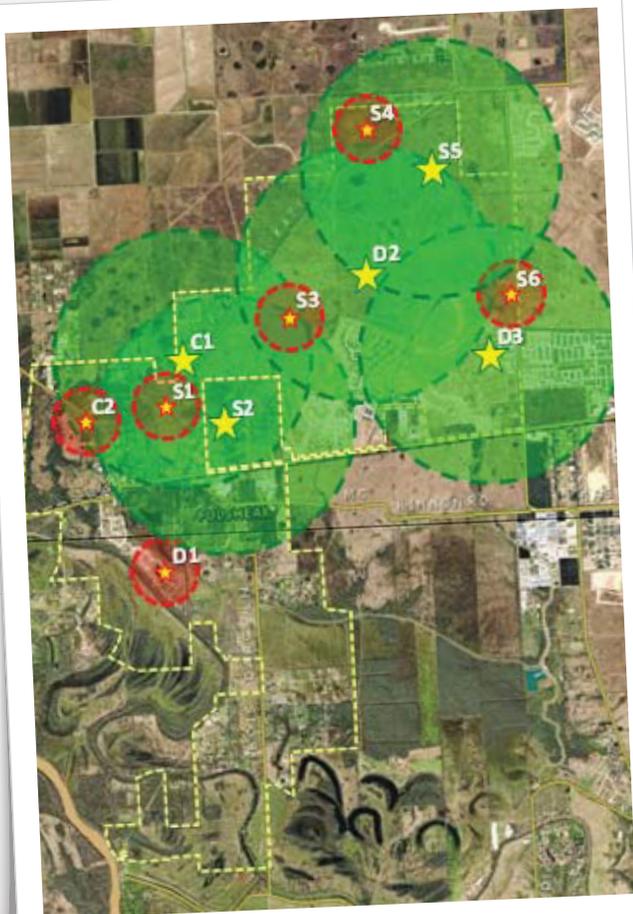
- GP 1:** The City will emphasize **cooperative efforts** with its many public, private and non-profit partners (e.g., for potential cost-sharing, land acquisition/dedication, grant pursuits, joint projects/facilities, maintenance, etc.).
- GP 2:** The City will design its park and recreation system with **multiple community objectives** in mind, including floodplain protection, buffering between incompatible land uses, historic preservation, and a positive community image.
- GP 3:** The City will develop a park and recreation system that is **sustainable** financially and also demonstrates community commitment to environmental stewardship.
- GP 4:** The City’s park and recreation system will reflect **community pride and expectations of quality**, both in new facilities and ongoing maintenance of older sites.

### GOALS

A “goal” is a statement of a desired outcome (“end”) toward which efforts are directed, as expressed by more specific objectives and action priorities (“means”). Below are five goals agreed upon as the focus for this Parks & Amenities element of the Fulshear Comprehensive Plan:

- Goal 1:** A park and recreation system that supports **healthy lifestyles** with various ways for all ages to stay active and fit.
- Goal 2:** A park and recreation system that promotes a **sense of community** by providing attractive and comfortable gathering places for athletic pursuits, special events and shared enjoyment of the area’s natural assets.
- Goal 3:** A park and recreation system that provides **quiet places** to connect with nature and the area’s rural heritage.
- Goal 4:** A park and recreation system that contributes to a **more connected community** through trail networks, greenways and other off-street links between neighborhoods and popular destinations.
- Goal 5:** A park and recreation system that **keeps pace with Fulshear’s expected rapid growth** through ongoing City investment in new and improved sites and facilities.

**FIGURE 4.2** | FUTURE PARK SERVICE AREAS





## Action Strategies

This key section highlights a series of potential actions for responding to the strategic issues and community needs identified in this Comprehensive Plan element. In particular, three initiatives are highlighted that emerged as top-priority initiatives, with specific steps outlined for working toward their near-term accomplishment. These steps are organized by the type of action required, using five categories that represent the main ways that comprehensive plans are implemented:

- Capital investments
- Programs and initiatives
- Regulations and standards
- Partnerships and coordination
- Further study and planning (especially as required to qualify for external funding opportunities)

While some action items are relatively straightforward to pursue, other possibilities in this section may remain just that — only concepts and considerations that the City and/or community may not be ready to pursue until later in the horizon of this Comprehensive Plan. They represent action options that are available to Fulshear as a Texas municipality and as acted on by other communities. However, it is recognized that they may not be feasible in Fulshear for various reasons such as potential cost, complexity, and/or degree of community support, as well as the capacity of City government to carry out certain initiatives given available staffing and other resources. More definitive choices will ultimately be made through City Council priority setting, the City's annual budget process, and ongoing community input.

### 1. Bike Loop

The idea here is to expand on the Flewellen Creek greenway in Cross Creek Ranch, with bikeway alignments generally along creeks north and south of FM 1093. The desire is that this lead to a continuous bikeway loop in the center of the city as illustrated in **Figure 4.3, Central Bike Loop Concept**. Other bikeway segments from this central loop could provide links to various community destinations (e.g., downtown, schools, parks, etc.). Longer-distance bike routes could also tie into and radiate outward from the central loop.

### FURTHER STUDY AND PLANNING

- Complete a **preliminary study** to investigate potential alignments and connections, opportunities and constraints, design and cost considerations (including surfacing options and appropriate design

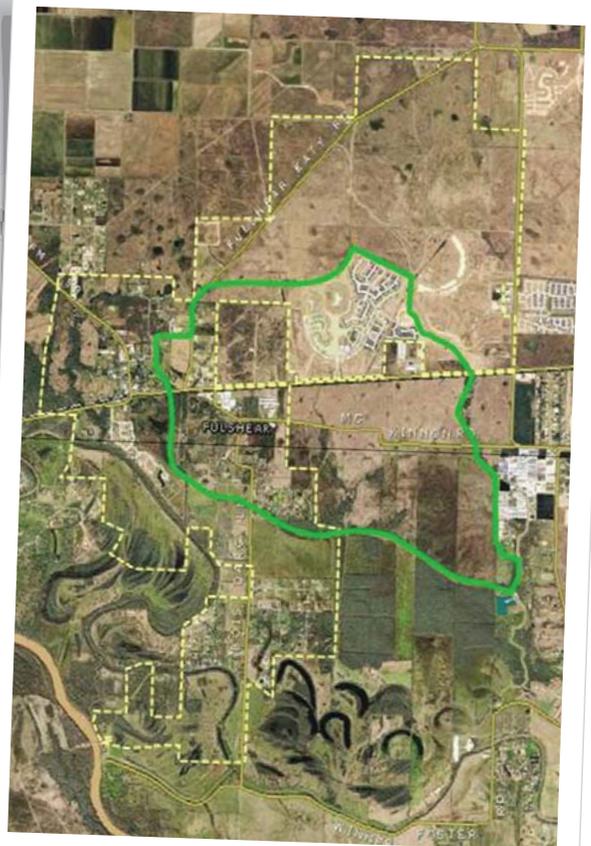
for multiple uses), grant/partnership options, successful examples in the region and elsewhere, and next steps toward an initial design phase.

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Fund **preliminary design** for a starter segment on the eventual central loop, to demonstrate the larger project potential and build community support and momentum for phased extensions toward the longer-term loop objective.

**FIGURE 4.3** | CENTRAL BIKE LOOP CONCEPT

In this highly conceptual representation, the green line illustrates the vision for a continuous, off-street bike loop in the center of a much larger Fulshear community anticipated in the decades ahead. By following area creeks and other potential alignments, such a loop could link residents to key destinations (e.g., schools, parks, downtown). Also, other bikeway segments could radiate outward from it, including to future public access point along the Brazos River.





## REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

- Explore the possibility of acquiring **linear land dedications**, through parkland dedication provisions in the City's subdivision regulations, to reserve corridors for future segments of the central bike loop based on a defined plan and alignment for the overall project.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

- Establish partnerships with **private land owners and developments** for potential cost-sharing, land donations/swaps, direct construction involvement, in-kind support, or other possible roles in assisting the community to accomplish this priority initiative.
- Reach out to **utilities and pipeline companies** that might allow use of easements or corridors in the area for bikeway segments, designed in accordance with access and safety standards for such property.
- Seek the input and support of **area cycling interests and conservation organizations** that can provide suggestions for design and amenities, regional trail/bikeway connections, and multi-objective planning for both recreational opportunities and natural resource protection, as well as strategies and experience gained elsewhere for generating financial and in-kind support.
- Coordinate with **Fort Bend County and other potential public agency partners** for possible support at the construction phase. Also coordinate with the County and Texas Department of Transportation, as needed, where bikeway segments will cross or potentially transition to on- or near-street sections in conjunction with major roads and highways.

## PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

- Pursue **grant funding** for which this type of project may be eligible, through the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department Recreation Grants program, other state and federal agencies, foundations, or other unique sources
- Prepare to design **public information materials** (maps/brochures) to promote bikeway awareness and use, especially as a way to reach various community destinations other than by car.
- Through the partnership-building efforts above, also work toward a formal **"adopt-a-bikeway" program** for enlisting businesses and organizations to commit to assist the City with ongoing bikeway upkeep and cleanliness.

## 2. Downtown Park/Plaza Space

In recent years, Downtown has served as a community gathering place, especially for special events and parades, along with its collection of local eateries and shopping. The desire here is to secure a dedicated space as the focal point for such events, and which would also serve as a public pocket park or plaza in general. Vacant properties have been used for such purposes, but land swaps or other options may enable the City to control a property and proceed with public improvements and programming to further support this special role for Downtown as Fulshear continues to grow.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

- Explore the **entire range of land acquisition possibilities**, from direct purchase to long-term leasing arrangements, dedications, donations, joint ownership, and so on. It may be that public and/or private partners would be more successful in this effort, and then could convey a preferred site to the City.
- Inventory **how other Texas cities have raised grass-roots funds and built community support** for downtown parks and public spaces, including through sponsorships and recognitions that can be incorporated into the design (e.g., brick pavers, wall tiles, etc., that identify donor families, individuals, companies and organizations).

## FURTHER STUDY AND PLANNING

- Consider applying for a future round of **Livable Center study** funding that is periodically available through the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Among its objectives, this H-GAC initiative is intended to strengthen downtowns and town centers in outlying areas. In this way, areas impacted by traffic and other adverse effects of suburban sprawl can have places where people can park their cars, walk safely to various destinations, and stay a while — and maybe even live there someday if a mixed-use setting emerges over time. These studies have enabled other small cities in the region to work with H-GAC staff and multi-discipline consultant teams to assess market position and viability, preliminary design options and considerations, and likely improvement costs, while also providing a forum for community participation and review.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Budget for a **multi-year commitment of funds** toward phased land acquisition, design and construction and improvements to the Downtown park/plaza space once a viable and securable site is identified.



## PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

- Emulate the highly successful public activity spaces incorporated into other Texas downtowns and master-planned “town centers,” especially by **programming for continual events and activities** and reasons for residents to gather and visitors to stay a while in Downtown Fulshear. This would build on the many successful community festivities that Fulshear already accommodates in its Downtown, but with a recognized location and dedicated space where people are comfortable. Even better if designed to maintain an appropriate historical look and feel, and to offset parking and other impervious surfaces with generous landscaping and attractive streetscapes.

### 3. Community-Scale Park

As highlighted in this Comprehensive Plan element, a pressing need for Fulshear is to develop a park in the “Community” classification. Essentially, this means a larger park (25 acres minimum) that draws residents from elsewhere in the community while still serving those who live nearby (within 1-2 miles), for a wider range of facilities and activities than a “Neighborhood” park offers.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

- Given the agreed-upon approach of focusing on expansion of Irene Stern Park as the path toward a first Community park in Fulshear, **explore options for public acquisition** of abutting property, potential land donations or dedications, lease-to-own arrangements, or other possible avenues for building on the public investments already made at Irene Stern Park.
- Take advantage of opportunities to **learn from the design, construction and programming successes at other large, multi-use parks** in the area. Potential models mentioned by Parks and Recreation Commission members and other Fulshear residents included Seabourne Park in Rosenberg and Mary Jo Peckham Park in Katy.

## FURTHER STUDY AND PLANNING

- Proceed with more **detailed planning and conceptual design** for a Community scale park, especially to incorporate desired elements that could be transferable to other sites or rearranged on a potential enlarged footprint for Irene Stern Park depending on the results of the land acquisition efforts above. Through the comprehensive planning process, an athletics focus was identified as the

uppermost need, especially fields for youth sports such as baseball/softball and soccer, plus courts and facilities for various other recreational interests (e.g., tennis, sand volleyball, etc.). Another design priority is to create an additional gathering place for all Fulshear citizens, while recognizing that residents who do not live in master-planned developments are most in need of public recreational amenities.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Budget for a **multi-year commitment of funds** toward phased land acquisition, design and construction and improvements to an eventual Community scale park. This should include potential participation by the Fulshear 4A and 4B economic development corporations in financing such significant investments for the community’s long-term growth and enhancement.

## PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

- Prepare to design **public information materials** (maps/brochures) to promote awareness and use of the Community Park by all ages and interests in Fulshear.

### Expanding Scope of Irene Stern Park

View of Irene Stern Park, at center of aerial image, amid significant undeveloped acreage. A key action strategy in this plan element is to work toward a Community-scale park by exploring opportunities to secure additional property around this existing park site.





- Work toward a formal “adopt-a-park”/“adopt-a-trail” program for enlisting businesses and organizations to commit to assist the City with ongoing maintenance of and enhancements to its signature park. In general, all Fulshear residents should be encouraged and engaged to participate in volunteer efforts to enhance City park facilities through programs such as Keep Fulshear Beautiful.

### Other Potential Initiatives

Through the comprehensive planning process, a series of other potential initiatives related to parks and amenities were identified and discussed, but ultimately considered secondary to the top three priorities above. These other

initiatives are listed below for ongoing consideration and potential elevation as next priorities to pursue through future annual reviews and updates to the Comprehensive Plan. Such re-prioritization may occur based on new grant programs for which the City is eligible, a land donation offered to the City, a unique partnership opportunity that could advance a particular project, or other factors that may justify re-focusing resources and effort to where tangible results become possible.

The following five initiatives garnered the most interest after the top three priority projects:

#### NATURE CENTER TYPE FACILITY

- Incorporate a wildlife/habitat/conservation focus (with the water quality basin at Cross Creek Ranch and swampy areas off of Bois D'Arc mentioned as possibilities to explore).
- Design for passive versus active recreation (observation, walking, education).
- Reach out to large ranch properties and land trusts, especially to highlight the tax benefits of conservation easements on private lands.
- Address public access issues if near-term opportunities are more on private versus public sites.

#### MULTI-PURPOSE USE OF FLOODPLAIN / DETENTION AREAS

- Design for recreational activities and improvements that are appropriate to areas that will flood or hold water periodically (with various good examples around the Houston metropolitan area plus other U.S. regions subject to intensive storms).
- Coordinate with Fort Bend County, Harris County Flood Control, area drainage and levee districts, and other entities with experience in this area, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the extensive properties they manage in Harris County that include special recreational areas.

#### JOINT CITY-SCHOOL OPPORTUNITY

- Coordinate with Katy Independent School District (ISD), and especially with Lamar Consolidated ISD given its significant campus design and school construction activities in the years ahead, to explore opportunities for co-location and/or joint use and management of certain recreation sites. This typically includes the need to work out respective roles and responsibilities, including potential cost sharing and maintenance needs, plus the issue of evening and weekend public access to outdoor play areas and fields.

### Seabourne Park Model in Rosenberg

Located within the City of Rosenberg, Seabourne Park is a 240-acre site designed, in part, as a stormwater collection facility, but also with natural and developed parkland features for public use and enjoyment. The natural parkland amenities include a fishing lake as well as a network of walking trails. The developed parkland features include bird habitat viewing areas and an extensive athletic complex. Seabourne's sport complex includes sports fields, an indoor recreation center, an activity lake with paddle boats, and a performance amphitheater. Seabourne Park is a prime example of a community park that serves Rosenberg's residents by providing a range of both active and passive recreation opportunities while also fulfilling key environmental functions such as flood control and habitat protection.

Source: City of Rosenberg



- Additionally, several Fulshear residents also mentioned, and were interested in pursuing, potential joint-use opportunities with area churches.

### PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITIES

- Residents expressed interest in public art installations as part of City park improvements and on other public land at appropriate roadway and intersection locations, as seen in other communities. The desire is for area organizations to take a leading role in fostering art across the community as part of implementing the vision for local parks and amenities in this plan element.

### COMMUNITY GARDENS

- Community gardens have long been popular and successful as an interim or ongoing use of vacant lots or permanently dedicated sites within urban neighborhoods. They are increasingly becoming part of the landscape in more suburban communities as well, sometimes as another feature of a City park,

Source: Arts Council of Brazos Valley



### Coordinated Public Art Initiative

In furtherance of its mission of “Making the arts accessible to all residents and visitors of the Brazos Valley,” the nonprofit Arts Council of Brazos Valley coordinates with the cities of Bryan and College Station on the funding, placement, maintenance and promotion of public art along highway corridors that will ensure both visibility and motorist safety.

The City of College Station has allocated General Fund dollars in support of its “Art in Public Places” program, and revenue from the hotel/motel occupancy tax is another potential source of public funding support as the tax is intended, in part, to help promote local tourism and visitation. The City’s Parks and Recreation Director serves as the liaison for this and all cooperative arts initiatives with the Arts Council. Both cities also incorporate public art at their own facilities, such as a prominent sculpture placed outside College Station’s public library, which was

the first permanent piece of public art in the area when installed in 1999. Other art locations include local parks, the Bryan Municipal Building, other City facilities (police department, fire station, utilities office), municipal airport, the Arts Council’s own Arts Center facility, a high school campus, downtown Bryan (in front of the historic Carnegie Library and the restored La Salle Hotel), and at several business sites plus high-profile intersections and streetscape areas, including the “gateway” plaza that marks the city limits between the two cities.

Promotional efforts are focused around an interactive “Art Map” on the Arts Council website (<http://acbv.org/art-in-the-brazos-valley/art-map/>). Users can quickly see all area locations with public art pieces, and then click on each location to bring up the name of the work, artist/sculptor, installation date, specific address, and brief notes on the piece and artist. All of this information is also compiled in an “Art Map List” with color photos of each piece (<http://acbv.org/art-in-the-brazos-valley/art-map-list/>).



on other public land, or on a private site that allows for public access. Some residents expressed interest in exploring this possibility for Fulshear, especially as another way to bring different ages and people together.

### Fort Bend Green

Fort Bend Green was established in 2007 as a nonprofit seeking to promote and facilitate public-private partnerships to plan, develop, and preserve green space throughout Fort Bend County. During the time of the City of Fulshear's Comprehensive Plan development, Fort Bend Green was facilitating two significant green space and recreation initiatives: (1) a Recreation Master Plan for the Brazos River Corridor; and (2) a Brazos River Canoe Trail.

The Recreation Master Plan received grant support through the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Parks Service. The Master Plan is aimed at identifying recreation and conservation opportunities across Fort Bend County and collaborating with local communities to create a unified, regional green space and recreation network.

Through direct collaboration with Fort Bend County, Fort Bend Green is focusing on development of a canoe trail along the Brazos River as part of connecting more than 600 miles of greenway and recreation trails around the Greater Houston area.

Below are other ideas and possibilities that rounded out the parks and amenities discussion but did not draw broad support as priorities to pursue in the near term. However, some of these were likely considered routine City functions (e.g., upgrades to existing parks) or ongoing possibilities to continue working toward with other entities that are more in the lead (e.g., Brazos River access and trail destination).

- **Upgrades to existing parks.** A potential early priority, as discussed by the City's newly-established Parks and Recreation Commission, is to install restrooms at Irene Stern Park. Another priority for Stern, to increase resident awareness and park utilization, is to install directional signage, especially on FM 1093. Other upgrades discussed could apply to any current or future park, including: basic clean-up and maintenance (fences, etc.); lighting improvements (and potential solar-powered lighting); potential extension of water service at some point to allow for drinking fountains, water recreation (e.g., splash pads), etc.; and installation of exercise loop trails around all park perimeters, where appropriate.
- **Fishing pond.** The desire here is to monitor potential opportunity sites with a pond or water feature that may become available, either in conjunction with a private property owner or development or with a public project, to install minimal improvements in support of a classic, low-key fishing spot, especially for kids and parents to enjoy.
- **Park in south Fulshear off Bois D'Arc.** With no current City park coverage south of FM 1093, and with low-density population currently in the area, the City should explore opportunities to establish a public park site in keeping with the area's character, but of benefit to those who live in the area — and not a burden in terms of traffic, noise, security concerns, litter, etc. Public ownership is also a way for the City to help preserve some of the rural character of this area of Fulshear, potentially in conjunction with donated or preserved private land.
- **Brazos River access and trail destination.** The City of Fulshear continues to monitor and support broader efforts in Fort Bend County to expand recreational opportunities and public access along the Brazos River, and accomplish other major recreation and open space initiatives through Fort Bend Green and other partners. In fact, the City hosted one of three public workshops in the County in January 2013, at the Irene Stern Center (along with Sugar Land and the George Observatory at Brazos Bend State Park), for obtaining public and stakeholder input into a Brazos River Recreation Master Plan. With its extent



Source: Fort Bend Green (Canoeing on the Brazos River)



of Brazos River shoreline in the City limits and ETJ, Fulshear should ultimately have one or more access points along a Brazos River Paddling Trail. Fulshear can also be a key partner in a multi-jurisdictional approach to establishing and expanding a Brazos River greenway across the county.

- **Heritage park.** Some communities have a “heritage” park in their local park inventory, sometimes associated with a historical site or a property to which historical structures have been moved and restored. If this historic preservation function is not as pressing, then it may just be a park that includes a landmark old tree or a popular creek or lake associated with the original townsite. These concepts were of interest, but did not draw significant support when considered against other near-term park and recreation needs in Fulshear.
- **Multi-purpose recreation/events facility.** This concept was seen as a longer-term objective for Fulshear, with the Irene Stern Center fulfilling this function in the meantime, and with opportunity for phased improvements there. More importantly, outdoor recreation options and programming were emphasized as the more immediate priorities versus activities that require indoor classrooms or meeting/event space, especially considering the design, construction and maintenance costs for a new flex facility intended to serve multiple needs, and of superior quality for long-term community use.
- **Biking amenities/support.** The suggestion here is to embrace, better manage, and capitalize on the long-distance and recreational biking activity that already affects the community regularly. In other communities this includes provision of rest-stop facilities that are appropriately located, aesthetically designed, and well maintained; recruiting and supporting targeted service businesses (e.g., bike repair, quick snacks and refreshments, etc.); public assembly space for the start/finish of competitions, charity events, etc.; and wayfinding signage to direct bicyclists to the best and safest routes for navigating through the community.
- **Programming coordination.** As noted above under Joint City-School Opportunities, there is interest in pursuing other potential partnerships for joint use of facilities and/or coordinated programming or program support besides with local school districts. This could involve area churches or organizations such as YMCA, Boys/Girls Clubs, and other non-profits groups.
- **Skate park.** While skate parks are popular in many communities, siting them appropriately can be challenging because of “NIMBY” (“Not in My Backyard”) concerns about noise, security, etc. The discussion on this concept was to focus on providing more safe and healthy activities for Fulshear youth in general, and not narrow this effort to one particular type of facility.
- **Water park/facility.** Water parks and indoor/outdoor aquatic facilities are another popular trend in public recreation. They come in all sizes and designs, from the very basic to the most lavish, depending on community interest and backing — plus potential external funding support. As with “destination” facilities below, some cities have pursued water parks as a tourism and economic development venture. As for Fulshear, even a community pool or natatorium is considered a longer-term project, although splash pads or similar smaller-scale water recreation elements could be one featured amenity within larger parks. Finally, Fulshear officials are somewhat leery of a significant aquatic facility investment given lessons learned in other cities in terms of feasibility (including overly optimistic utilization and revenue forecasts) and financial sustainability (especially to cover ongoing operation and maintenance costs), controversy over fee structures for residents and non-residents, and liability issues.
- **“Destination” facility.** Various cities in Texas and elsewhere have chosen to develop a significant facility or complex of athletic fields geared toward hosting events (e.g., sports tournaments, large reunions, etc.), sometimes with a Recreational Vehicle park component or near hotels and restaurants. This is done with a definite eye toward tourism and tax base enhancement, along with the availability of these facilities for local residents. This was not seen as a priority for Fulshear any time soon given other basic park and recreation needs, plus some expressed concern about purposely drawing significant activity, visitation and traffic to the community.
- **Dog park.** Cross Creek Ranch is already constructing a dog park location for its residents. This is a popular new type of park improvement across the nation, especially in more urbanized areas where space for dog walking and play is more limited.



### Other Practices to Consider

In addition to the collection of very specific and somewhat broader action strategies outlined above, below are other activities and practices that Fulshear should consider in the years ahead when updating plans, preparing annual budgets, and prioritizing capital improvements:

#### PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

As a next step, beyond this Comprehensive Plan, in formalizing its parks and recreation planning and prioritization of investments, the City should eventually develop and adopt a full-fledged Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan as is common practice for larger and many small- and medium-sized cities. A complete master plan enables more in-depth inventories and evaluation of existing facilities and future needs; more extensive community outreach and involvement in setting priorities, plus interaction with more potential partner agencies and organizations; and wider-ranging exploration of possible local and external funding options and unique financing arrangements. Most importantly, priority projects can be fleshed out in greater detail, including preferred design concepts and features, and the likely upfront and ongoing cost implications of various options. All of which provides an even more compelling basis for successful grant applications, as well as supporting the City's own capital planning and budgeting processes.

#### PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR

When the City population and extent of public parkland and facilities is considered significant enough to warrant it, prepare for the hiring of a professional Parks and Recreation Director, especially one with experience in park and facility design, construction and management, and success in grant pursuits and partnership building.

#### PARKLAND DEDICATION AND FEE PAYMENT IN LIEU OF DEDICATION

For a relatively small City, but one facing significant residential development, Fulshear is fortunate to already have adopted parkland dedication requirements — and provisions for fee payment in lieu of land dedication, when appropriate — within its subdivision regulations. The following items are offered as considerations for the City's ongoing administration of this key municipal tool for ensuring adequate parkland as growth occurs:

- **Regularly revisit the per-dwelling-unit fee amount** to ensure that the resulting fee revenue will be roughly equivalent to the value of land dedication, based on prevailing land costs in the area. Otherwise, knowledgeable applicants will consistently choose the fee-in-lieu option given the relative cost advantage. And, the City will not accumulate sufficient revenues for an effective land acquisition program, not to mention having the necessary resources to then move ahead with park development.
- **Consider adding an automatic escalator clause** for adjusting the fee-in-lieu amount over time, which could be tied to the local rate of inflation or another measurable indicator. To remain effective, the fee amount must keep up with increasing land costs in the area, as well as the rising costs of parkland development and improvements. Elected officials in too many cities with parkland dedication requirements defer increases in local park fees due to economic or political considerations. This leaves their cities with inadequate revenue to accomplish planned park system improvements and keep pace with the added demands of new land development.
- Consider moving away from a uniform fee amount to a **fee that varies by park zone** if differences in land values across the community are significant enough to undermine the effective functioning of the dedication/fee-in-lieu mechanism as described in the previous two items (i.e., making fee payment more attractive than land dedication, and setting fees too low relative to costs). The same principle applies where land values happen to be higher in some ETJ areas than inside the city, meaning that a uniform and too-low fee can add further to the attractiveness of developing in the ETJ versus in the City limits.
- Consider expanding on and making more specific the **suitability criteria for parkland dedication** that are currently included in the subdivision regulations. Land suitability standards ensure that the City is not presented with “leftover” pieces for dedication that are inappropriate for practical and cost-effective park development, public use, and/or maintenance based on their relative inaccessibility, topography/slope, drainage conditions, etc.
- In addition to dedication/fee-in-lieu provisions to ensure adequate neighborhood and regional parks, consider adding provisions for **linear/corridor land dedications** to support trail network expansion in conjunction with new development. This would be appropriate when the City has an adopted trails and/or greenways master plan, which would then function similar to a Thoroughfare Plan by providing the basis for land dedications to implement the plan as growth occurs.



# Fulshear Comprehensive Plan

RESPECTING OUR **PAST**. SHAPING OUR **FUTURE**.

# 5

## Land Use and Character

This plan section establishes the necessary policy guidance to enable the City to plan effectively for future development and redevelopment. Sound land use planning is essential to ensure that the community is prepared not only to serve anticipated public infrastructure needs, but also to create and maintain a desired community character.

The topics of land use and community character are integrated with all other components of the Comprehensive Plan. For instance, the transportation network provides access to land, which influences the type and density of development. The provision or lack of utilities can also dictate the location, amount and timing of development. Similarly, proximity to parks and public facilities promotes public health and safety at specific locations and, as a result, affects the development potential of an area. Site design and development character shape community aesthetics and, thus, the perceptions held by area residents and those considering investment in the city.



Perhaps the most significant land use and character issue that framed this long-range planning effort was the undeniable transition of Fulshear from a largely rural to an increasingly suburbanized community. Both long-time residents and those drawn to the area more recently by its “small town” look and feel questioned what land use pattern, intensities and mix the future holds – what will be Fulshear’s character in the years ahead? Many wish to maintain some of the earlier atmosphere, especially by preserving some amount of green and relatively natural open space even as the recreation needs of a burgeoning population must be met with larger, multi-purpose community parks.

For City officials responsible for overseeing the community’s “bottom line,” they know that Fulshear must achieve some amount of retail, office and light industrial development – and, preferably some higher-quality mixed-use projects – rather than an overwhelmingly residential use pattern. This will ensure a more balanced tax base over the long term, particularly for the sake of Fulshear homeowners who will otherwise bear the burden of helping to finance essential public services plus other community amenities they clearly desire.

## Context

The following points and background information provide context for the key land use and character issues identified in this plan element, and the action strategies recommended to manage or resolve them.

- **Hottest Ground for Residential Construction in the Nation.** During the preparation of this Comprehensive Plan, master-planned communities and other developing properties in and around Fulshear were bringing new single-family homes to market at the most rapid pace of any area in the U.S. As highlighted in the Growth Capacity and Management section, this post-recession construction boom propelled Fulshear toward the 5,000 population mark – and eligibility for Home Rule City status – much faster than previously expected, not to mention the extent of new population added just beyond the City limits.
- **Pending School Construction Wave.** Given the remarkable pace of residential development in and around Fulshear, both Katy and Lamar Consolidated Independent School Districts have construction plans for multiple new campuses. Perhaps most significant is a cluster of LCISD schools to be built just north of FM 1093 and east of Katy-Fulshear Road, near where the district already sited a satellite bus facility along

FM 1093. This superblock will include a new Fulshear High School (projected for completion in 2016), plus a junior high school immediately north and a sixth-grade facility just south of the high school. Farther east, within the Cross Creek Ranch development, are reserved sites for a future Katy ISD elementary school along FM 1463 and a high school campus more within the northeastern interior of Cross Creek Ranch. Along with Katy ISD’s existing Wolman Elementary campus within the Firethorne development, in Fulshear’s northern ETJ, another site farther west within Firethorne is set aside for a future LCISD elementary campus.

- **Multiple Town Center Possibilities.** Along with continued interest in enhancing downtown Fulshear, the Cross Creek Ranch development plan calls for the eventual establishment of a mixed-use center near FM 1093. In the meantime, another master-planned development proposal has emerged to the south of FM 1093 that also incorporates a mixed-use Town Center concept in the vicinity of Bois D’Arc Lane.
- **Zoning Protection.** Amid concerns about “worst case” land use scenarios in the absence of zoning regulations in Fulshear, the City Council in May 2012 adopted a first-ever zoning ordinance. While the regulations are relatively basic and limited in scope, they served the desired purpose of establishing control over the permissible locations – if any – for the most sensitive land uses, including industrial, multi-family and manufactured housing, and sexually-oriented businesses (allowed only within an Industrial district). Additionally, an “R1” Residential Acreage zoning district is intended to maintain the longstanding rural character in the vicinity of Bois D’Arc Lane through a one-acre minimum lot size for single-family dwellings.

## KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The following key issues and considerations related to Fulshear’s land use status and outlook emerged through early community outreach efforts and discussions with City officials and staff and other stakeholders.

- As noted in the introduction to this plan section, the concern among City officials about the long-term tax base outlook for Fulshear if largely residential development continues to predominate and locks the city into a “bedroom community” scenario for many years to come.
- The desire among residents for local grocery shopping options, which is now coming to fruition through the first grocery store development in Fulshear along FM 1463 in Cross Creek Ranch.



- Concerns expressed by some Fulshear residents, especially those owning property and homes in the Bois D'Arc area, that the scope and nature of ongoing development in and around the city will irrevocably alter the community's rural flavor and "small-town feel."
- As indicated by the many design-related comments from Fulshear residents captured in the Introduction section to this plan, the strong desire for high-quality non-residential development that is compatible with Fulshear's traditional character, and that brings additional niche retail and unique restaurants rather than typical chain establishments.
- Amid the city's rapid growth trend, the desire for both a large, multi-purpose community park in Fulshear, as well as areas devoted to open space preservation and "passive" recreation, as covered in more detail within the Parks and Amenities section of this plan.
- The desire for more extensive wayfinding signage across the community to ease navigation to local destinations for both residents and visitors.

#### FUTURE LAND USE AND CHARACTER PLAN

A character-based approach to community planning looks beyond the basic use of land (residential, commercial, industrial, public/institutional) to consider the placement and design of buildings and the associated planning of sites, as well as of entire neighborhoods and districts. Whether new development or redevelopment, and whether private or public construction, the pattern of land use – including its intensity, appearance, and physical arrangement on the landscape – will determine its character and contribute to the image of the entire community over the long term.

On the community character spectrum, the three main character types are Rural, Suburban and Urban. These are common terms that should bring immediate images to mind as one thinks of traveling from the outskirts of a typical community to the city center. Over the years, and particularly since the advent of widespread automobile ownership in the 1920s-1930s, sizable portions of many communities have developed in an "Auto Urban" pattern, which falls in the range between Urban and Suburban.

Community character accounts for the physical traits one can see in an area which contribute to its "look and feel." A character-based approach focuses especially on development intensity, which encompasses the density and layout of residential development; the scale and form of non-residential development; and the amount of building and pavement coverage (impervious cover) relative to the extent of open space and natural vegetation

or landscaping. How the automobile is accommodated is a key factor in distinguishing character types, including street design, parking, and the resulting arrangement of buildings on sites.

It is this combination of basic land use and the characteristics of the use that more accurately determines the real compatibility and quality of development, as opposed to land use alone. Aesthetic enhancements such as the design of buildings, landscaping and screening, sign control, and site amenities also contribute to enhanced community character.

#### LAND USE AND CHARACTER DESIGNATIONS

A future land use map is intended to show the general pattern of uses anticipated and/or desired in and around the community in the years ahead. The map indicates the type of use that is expected to predominate in an area based on what is already on the ground and will likely remain or possibly evolve over time, as well as projected new development. Additionally, it is recognized that other complementary uses will also remain or emerge in each area of the city along with the predominant use types.

Specific locations are not yet known in some cases, such as for future public facilities (e.g., schools, fire stations, parks, etc.), as well as places of worship, that often locate in or near primarily residential areas. Some uses are highly market-driven, with their timing and particular location dictated by the extent and pace of other types of development. This includes the typical trend of retail uses following residential "rooftops" – and typically locating at key roadway intersections. Plus the eventual emergence of multi-family development, the location and extent of which can be difficult to predict ahead of housing market trends and cycles, and developer interest in whether, where and when to bring this product to market.

The remainder of this section describes the land use and community character categories used on **Figure 5.1, Future Land Use and Character:**

- Rural
- Estate Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Manufactured Homes
- Suburban Commercial
- General Commercial
- Urban Mixed Use
- Industrial



## Future Land Use Planning Versus Zoning



The City's development ordinances are among the primary tools for implementing this policy document. The zoning regulations, in particular, play a significant role in establishing and protecting the physical character of the community. These regulations delineate land use districts and the types of uses permitted within them, together with minimum site area and maximum building height requirements and standards for parking, landscaping and signage. As a result, the zoning regulations, together with the City's subdivision regulations where applicable, largely direct development outcomes. This is important since it provides a regulatory context in which local land use decisions may be made to foster a prosperous economy, a sustainable environment, and a high quality of life for residents.

Although this Land Use and Character section and associated future land use map provide only general planning guidance, their role is especially relevant since it can lead to updates and rewrites of the zoning regulations and district map. It is only through the official zoning map and the ongoing zoning administration process that binding, legally enforceable decisions are made about property uses and compatibility on a case-by-case basis. Adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, including the Future Land Use and Character map, does not mean that the City's zoning approach or mapping will automatically change. This is partly because there is a timing aspect to zoning, meaning that a future land use plan generally indicates ultimate desired outcomes while a zoning map may reflect interim situations or existing, stable land uses that are not expected to change in the near future.

The side-by-side comparison below highlights the distinct purposes and uses of a future land use map relative to a zoning map.

### Future Land Use and Character Map

### Zoning Map

#### PURPOSE



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Outlook for the future use of land and the character of development in the community</li> <li>» Macro level – generalized development patterns</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Basis for applying different land use regulations and development standards in different areas of the community (“zones”)</li> <li>» Micro level – site-specific focus</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

#### USE



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Guidance for the City's zoning map and related decisions (zone change requests, variance applications, etc.)</li> <li>» Baseline for monitoring consistency of actions and decisions with this Comprehensive Plan</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Regulating development as it is proposed – or as sites are positioned for the future with appropriate zoning (by the owner or the City)</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

#### INPUTS & CONSIDERATIONS



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Existing land use in the City</li> <li>» Elevation of area character (Urban, Suburban, Rural) as a core planning focus along with basic land use (residential, commercial, industrial, public/institutional)</li> <li>» The locational aspects of community planning priorities involving economic development, housing, infrastructure, parks and recreation, public facilities, etc.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Comprehensive Plan and future land use map for general guidance</li> <li>» Protecting existing neighborhoods from incompatible redevelopment or infill, and rural and resource areas from urban encroachment</li> <li>» Zoning decisions that differ substantially from the general development pattern depicted on the future land use map should indicate the need for some map adjustments the next time this plan is revised</li> </ul> |
|--|--|



Other land use designations could be added to the map over time and through future updates, especially as the City may eventually incorporate areas that are envisioned for master-planned business parks or other, more specialized development types.

### **Rural**

The Rural character category consists of lands that are sparsely developed, with mainly agricultural and very low-density residential as the primary uses. This category provides its residents with the choice of seclusion within the countryside, and away from a more developed setting. For this reason, it is unusual to find rural character within the City limits, except in areas that have been annexed for eventual development, or to preserve rural character through the protections afforded by agricultural zoning. Floodplain areas may also retain their rural character over the long term given their unsuitability for any intensive land development. Areas in Fulshear's southernmost extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), near the Brazos River and its associated floodplain, are indicated as Rural on Figure 5.1.

### **Estate Residential**

This designation is for areas that, due to public service limitations or a prevailing Rural character, should have limited development activity. Such areas provide a transition between Rural and Suburban development patterns and intensities. Estate lots typically range from one to three acres, which provides substantial openness and separation between individual dwellings. Areas around the southern portion of Bois D'Arc Lane exhibit a typical Estate Residential pattern.

### **Suburban Residential**

Suburban Residential development involves lot sizes that are large enough to where yard space and landscaping are still more visually dominant relative to the structures and paved surfaces on each lot. This often translates to deeper front yards and greater side and rear separation between dwellings than seen in smaller-lot subdivisions. Alternatively, Suburban character can be achieved through subdivisions designed with common open space or water features around which home lots are clustered, especially where natural elements on the pre-development site are preserved as development amenities and focal points. In both scenarios winding street layouts can also contribute to the Suburban atmosphere relative to subdivisions with relatively straight streets or grid layouts. The Fulbrook development, like other master-planned developments in the area, provides a local example of Suburban Residential character.

### **Multi-Family Residential**

This use designation involves areas devoted primarily to attached housing types, including structures with multiple units. Site design and open space standards may be applied to offset the relative density of this residential type, to ensure adequate recreational space on the site for residents, and to provide buffering and screening between this and less intensive residential uses. This use category can also provide a transition from primarily residential to mainly non-residential areas. Multi-family residential use is planned for a later phase of the Cross Creek Ranch development, as one local example.

### **Manufactured Housing**

This designation recognizes areas where mobile and manufactured homes may have been clustered in the past, and are likely to continue into the future. In Fulshear's case, as elsewhere, zoning regulations restrict the location of this housing type to such areas going forward. The corresponding "Manufactured Housing (MH)" district in the zoning regulations is also meant to accommodate Manufactured Home "parks," where units are typically leased or placed on a site only temporarily; and Manufactured Home "subdivisions," in which lots are sold that are "specifically designed for manufactured housing units which will be permanently affixed to the ground by permanent foundations and connected to public utility services in a like manner as conventionally on-site constructed homes." Some manufactured homes are located within the original townsite area of Fulshear.

### **Suburban Commercial**

Commercial development achieves greater compatibility with nearby Suburban residential development when it, likewise, exhibits greater emphasis on "greening" and landscaping of sites relative to highly auto-oriented "strip development" outcomes often seen along major roadways in cities. This emphasis on the Suburban portion of the character spectrum is especially important for smaller-scale commercial sites often found at the entries to or edges of Suburban residential neighborhoods. Within Fulshear, this designation is especially appropriate at key locations along the future Fulshear Parkway given the design approach anticipated for commercial sites along this image-setting new corridor through the city.

### **General Commercial**

While most residents would prefer Suburban character for nearly all non-residential development in their community, the reality is that auto-oriented commercial development has become commonplace across the nation since the mid-20th Century. This more typical



development character is evident wherever roads, driveways, and surface parking areas exceed the “footprint” of the building(s) on the site as a percent of total ground cover. The dominance of buildings and surface parking relative to landscaped or unimproved areas is what distinguishes auto-oriented development from Suburban development character, placing it closer to the Urban end of the character spectrum. In Fulshear, as elsewhere, development standards addressing site coverage, landscaping, signs and building design can help to diminish auto-oriented elements and shift the development character closer – but not completely – toward Suburban character. Existing commercial development in Fulshear has aspects of both auto-oriented and Suburban character, but the extent of building and pavement coverage on a site is the ultimate determinant.

### ***Urban Mixed Use***

Urban character areas are where pedestrian orientation takes precedence over accommodation of the automobile. In traditional downtowns and urban cores that developed in this way, most buildings are located on or near their front property lines, leaving small or non-existent front yards. Side yards may also become irrelevant where buildings are attached side-by-side and create a continuous row of structures along the street edge, generally unbroken by stand-alone parking lots or front yard parking areas as seen in other character areas. All of these factors usually make it the most intensively developed part of the city, which also reinforces its pedestrian orientation by concentrating people and diverse activities in the most walkable area of the community. Only a couple of blockfaces fronting on either side of Main Street in downtown Fulshear exhibit a true Urban character. But the potential exists to expand on this development form, which has clearly been a draw for downtown among both residents and visitors.

### ***Industrial***

The Industrial category accommodates uses that are “intensive” in terms of how activities such as light industry and especially heavy industry can affect other nearby properties. This can include factors such as noise, vibration, light/glare, odor, truck traffic, and hours of operation. Depending on the standards applied through development regulations, an industrial area can allow for a wide range of uses, from office/warehouse to wholesale, product assembly, and manufacturing. Some communities aim for a higher-quality and more aesthetic

business or industrial “park” environment, with specific standards for building arrangement and orientation, building materials and design, extensive landscaping, and especially full screening of loading and outdoor activity/storage areas, if such external activity is even permitted. A “campus” feel may be further reinforced by private or public streetscape and design enhancements, including special signage at industrial area entries and key intersections, unified lighting design, water features, etc. Only one area in central Fulshear, along FM 1093, is currently zoned for industrial use.

## **LAND USE POLICIES**

The written policy statements in this section are intended as a supplement to the Future Land Use and Character map, which provides only a visual depiction of desired land use patterns and sound development practices. City officials and staff should use these statements as a guide and reference, particularly when making decisions regarding proposed development activity in the City limits and ETJ, and/or changes in zoning classifications within the city. The Guiding Principles in the next section also provide similar indication of the community’s land use priorities and tolerances.

### **General**

1. Land uses should not detract from the enjoyment or value of neighboring properties.
2. Potential negative land use effects (noise, odor, dust, excessive light, traffic, etc.) should be considered in development review/approval and mitigated.
3. Adequate transportation access and circulation should be provided for uses that generate large numbers of trips. Pedestrian and bicycle access should be addressed where appropriate.
4. Well-planned mixed-use projects are encouraged where compatible with nearby development.
5. Floodplain areas should not be encroached upon by future development unless there is compliance with stringent floodplain management practices. These areas should be used for parks or recreational or related purposes, or for agricultural uses.
6. Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected, including wildlife habitat areas.



### Residential

1. Residential areas should not be located next to industrial areas.
2. Residential and commercial areas may be adjacent if separated by a buffer.
3. Schools, parks and community facilities should be located close to or within residential neighborhoods.
4. Houses should have direct access to local residential streets but not to arterial streets.
5. Houses should not be adjacent to major highways.
6. New residential development should be buffered from arterial streets.
7. Residential developments should include adequate area for parks and recreation facilities, schools and places of worship.

### Retail / Office

1. Neighborhood retail and service uses should be located at intersections of arterial or collector streets or at the edge of logical neighborhood areas unless appropriately placed within a planned development.
2. Retail development should be clustered throughout the city and convenient to residential areas.
3. Buffers should separate retail/office uses and residential areas.
4. Downtown should be a major focus for office, retail and service activities, particularly through adaptive re-use of existing structures or redevelopment of vacant properties and sites with heavy commercial or industrial uses.
5. Office and professional uses should be compatible with nearby residential areas and other uses through appropriate building height limitations and adequate buffering and landscaping.
6. Low-intensity office and professional uses should provide a transition between more intense uses and residential areas.

### Heavy Commercial

1. Commercial uses with more intensive operational or traffic characteristics should be located away from most residential areas.
2. Heavy commercial development should be concentrated in nodes at intersections and along major thoroughfares that are designed and constructed to accommodate higher traffic volumes.

3. Buffers should separate heavy commercial uses from any adjacent residential areas, especially where the commercial use involves visible display or outdoor storage of merchandise or materials.

### Industrial

1. Industrial development should not be directly adjacent to residential areas.
2. Industrial uses should be located in dedicated industrial development areas.
3. Industrial development should be separated from other uses by buffers.
4. Industrial development should have good access to major streets and highways.
5. Industrial development involving trucking operations should have good access to truck routes, designated hazardous material routes, and railroads.

### Parks and Open Space

1. Parks should be evenly distributed throughout the city and include larger community parks and smaller neighborhood parks.
2. Pedestrian connections should be provided between parks, schools, residential areas, and employment centers.
3. Parks are a desirable use for floodplain areas.
4. Parks and open space should be used to buffer incompatible land uses.
5. Natural features should be used as buffers or preserved open space between or around developed areas.

### Community Facilities

1. Community facilities should be located in easily accessible areas within the community.
2. Community facilities, depending on their scale and level of activity, should be located adjacent to major streets to accommodate traffic.
3. Community facilities should be well buffered from nearby residential areas.
4. Downtown should continue to be enhanced as a preferred location for civic, cultural, entertainment and tourism activities.



## Rural

### DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- Agricultural uses
- Residential homesteads
- Planned development to accommodate conservation and cluster designs
- Parks and public spaces, especially involving nature preserves and passive recreation areas

### CHARACTERISTICS

- Rural character from wide open landscapes, with minimal sense of enclosure and views to the horizon unbroken by buildings in most places.
- Scattered residential development on relatively large acreages, resulting in very high open space ratios and very low site coverage.
- Typically no centralized water or sanitary sewer service available. Also much greater reliance on natural drainage systems, except where altered significantly by agricultural operations.
- Potential for conservation developments that further concentrate the overall development footprint through cluster designs, with increased open space set-aside to maintain the overall Rural character and buffer adjacent properties. May also make alternative community wastewater treatment methods feasible to eliminate the need for individual on-site septic systems.



## Estate Residential

### DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- Detached residential dwellings
- Parks and public spaces
- Public/institutional uses

### CHARACTERISTICS

- As with Rural character areas, encompasses environments where the landscape is visually dominant over structures.
- Typical lot sizes of one acre or larger, especially where required by public health regulations to allow for both individual water wells and on-site septic systems on properties where centralized water and/or wastewater service is not available or feasible.
- One-acre lots are usually adequate in wooded areas to achieve visual screening of homes from streets and adjacent dwellings. Three- to five-acre lots may be needed to achieve and maintain Estate character in more open areas with less vegetation.



## Suburban Residential

### DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- Detached residential dwellings
- Planned developments that integrate other housing types (e.g., attached residential), with increased open space to preserve an overall Suburban character
- Golf course subdivisions
- Parks and public spaces
- Public/institutional uses

### CHARACTERISTICS

- Less noticeable accommodation of the automobile compared to more intensive auto-oriented residential areas, especially where driveways are on the side of homes rather than occupying a portion of the front yard space, and where garages are situated to the side or rear of the dwelling.
- Can establish development options that allow for smaller lot sizes in exchange for greater open space, with the additional open space devoted to maintaining the Suburban character and buffering adjacent properties and roads.





## Multifamily Residential

### DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- Multi-unit attached residential in concentrated developments, whether for rent (apartments) or ownership (condominiums, townhomes)
- Parks and public spaces
- Public/institutional uses

### CHARACTERISTICS

- Auto-oriented character typically, but can be softened by perimeter and on-site landscaping, minimum spacing between buildings, site coverage limits, and on-site recreation or open space criteria. Compatibility within or near a Suburban character area will require even greater openness and landscaping, and possibly even building design standards to match the look of single-family detached dwellings.
- May be limited to two or three stories outside of Urban character areas.
- Height and/or setback regulated near less intensive residential uses for compatibility.
- Encouraged near transit routes.

## Manufactured Homes

### DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- Manufactured homes
- Other housing types as permitted by zoning regulations
- Parks and public spaces
- Public/institutional uses

### CHARACTERISTICS

- Auto-oriented character typically given the need for internal streets or circulation routes and individual pad sites with driveways and parking area. But, as with multifamily development, this can be softened by perimeter and on-site landscaping, minimum spacing between units, site coverage limits, and on-site recreation or open space criteria.
- Sometimes located and functioning like an accessory use on a residential property, where a mobile or manufactured home unit was previously sited on a lot along with a principal, site-built dwelling.

## Suburban Commercial

### DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- Range of commercial retail and service uses, at varying scales and intensities depending on the site
- Office (both large and/or multi-story buildings and small-scale office uses depending on the site)
- Planned development to accommodate custom site designs or mixing of uses in a Suburban character setting
- Parks and public spaces
- Public/institutional uses

### CHARACTERISTICS

- Suburban character primarily from reduced site coverage relative to most commercial development.
- Especially at key community entries and along high-profile corridors, may also involve other criteria to yield less intensive and more attractive development outcomes relative to auto-oriented areas, including higher standards for landscaping (along street frontages and within parking areas), signs, and building design.
- May exclude some auto-oriented uses that, by their very nature, cannot achieve a Suburban character.
- Near residential properties and areas, the permitted scale and intensity of non-residential uses should be limited to ensure compatibility (including adequate buffering/screening, criteria for placement and orientation of buildings and parking areas, height limits, and residential-in-appearance architectural standards).
- More opportunity for natural and/or swale drainage (and storm water retention/absorption) versus concentrated storm water conveyance in auto-oriented areas.



## General Commercial

### DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- “Strip” commercial centers along major roadways, with a range of uses, including those on high-profile “pad” sites along the roadway frontage
- “Big-box” commercial stores (e.g., grocery, appliances, clothing, etc.)
- Restaurant chains including various “fast food” and casual dining establishments
- Automobile service-related enterprises (e.g., gas stations, automobile service/repair, car washes)
- Offices
- Hotels and motels
- Mixed-use developments, including attached housing types (e.g., townhomes, multi-family)
- Parks and public spaces
- Public/institutional uses

### CHARACTERISTICS

- Significant portions of development sites devoted to vehicular access drives, circulation routes, surface parking, and loading/delivery areas, making pavement the most prominent visual feature.
- Buildings typically set back toward rear of site to accommodate expansive parking areas in front, closest to passing traffic.
- Less emphasis on architectural design in many cases, with building façades often lacking articulation.
- Development desire to maximize signage (number, size) to capitalize on site visibility to passing traffic.
- Often not conducive for access or on-site circulation by pedestrians or cyclists.



## Urban Mixed Use

### DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- Mixed uses, on single sites and within individual structures
- Residential space above commercial or office uses
- Live/work units
- Attached residential types (e.g., townhomes, brownstones)
- Commercial retail and services
- Office
- Entertainment
- Parks and public spaces
- Public/institutional uses
- Parking structures and limited public or commercial surface parking areas

### CHARACTERISTICS

- Streets and other public spaces framed by buildings with zero/minimal front setbacks, creating “architectural enclosure” versus the progressively more open feel in other character areas (auto-oriented, Suburban, Rural).
- Multi-story structures encouraged.
- Greatest site coverage.
- Mostly on-street parking and minimal surface parking (until the Urban character begins to give way to Auto-Oriented site design).
- Streetscape enhancements in public ways usually emphasized given limited area for private landscaping relative to other character areas.
- May exclude some auto-oriented uses that, by their very nature, cannot achieve an Urban character.
- Public/institutional uses designed to match Urban character.
- Alleys and rear-access garages can reinforce Urban character on blocks with attached or detached residential dwellings.
- Most conducive area of a city for pedestrian activity and interaction, with public plazas and pocket parks providing green space amid the Urban environment, and a place to gather and host community events.
- Often the only place where structured parking may make sense and be financially viable.





## Industrial

### DEVELOPMENT TYPES

- Light and/or heavy industrial uses
- Office uses accessory to a primary industrial use
- Heavy commercial (i.e., retail sales involving larger merchandise or vehicles, often with significant outdoor display areas, such as a large home improvements store or lumber supply yard)
- Public/institutional uses, including those with an industrial nature (e.g., public works yards, vehicle fleet/service facilities)
- The sole permissible location for sexually-oriented businesses under some local regulations, including in Fulshear

### CHARACTERISTICS

- Typically auto-oriented character, although master-planned industrial park developments may feature more open space and landscaping, regulated signage, screening, building design standards, etc.
- Outdoor activity and storage, which should be screened where visible from public ways and residential areas.
- May involve significant truck traffic or direct rail service.
- On-site use of large-scale moving equipment in some cases.
- Potential for environmental impacts that may affect the proximity and type of adjacent uses, including particulate emissions, noise, vibrations, smells, etc., plus the risk of fire or explosion depending on the materials handled or processed.
- Certain intensive publicly-owned uses (e.g., public works facilities, fleet maintenance, treatment plants, fire training) are best sited within Industrial areas.



### FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

#### Guiding Principles

A “guiding principle” expresses a basic value or operating policy. Such principles provide a framework for setting goals, establishing action priorities, and evaluating strategies and outcomes. Below are seven guiding principles that provided the overall context for this Land Use and Character element of the Fulshear Comprehensive Plan.

- GP 1** The City will aim to achieve development patterns that provide appropriate **transitions and buffering** between differing land use intensities.
- GP 2** The City will ensure that new development on vacant and “infill” parcels demonstrates **compatibility with existing adjacent uses** and the prevailing character of the area.

**GP 3** The City will promote development of **varied housing options** in appropriate locations within Fulshear over time, as market conditions mature, to ensure available and affordable living opportunities for residents at all “life cycle” stages.

**GP 4** The City will continue its aggressive economic development efforts to foster a **balanced tax base** that relies less and less on residential taxpayers to fund essential public services.

**GP 5** The City will ensure that **areas of historic value** within the community are maintained and enhanced in accordance with good preservation practices and development standards.

**GP 6** The City will ensure that any **multi-family residential use or locations for new manufactured housing** are developed at a density, scale and design that is compatible with surrounding uses, available utilities and roadway capacity.



**GP 7** The City will protect the **natural beauty and landscape** of Fulshear, and enhance the character and attractiveness of the community and its neighborhoods, districts, entries and corridors.

### Goals

A “goal” is a statement of a desired outcome (“end”) toward which efforts are directed, as expressed by more specific objectives and action priorities (“means”). Below are three goals agreed upon as the focus for this Land Use and Character element of the Fulshear Comprehensive Plan:

**Goal 1** An approach to and philosophy of development in Fulshear, through continued close partnerships between the private and public sectors, that advances the community’s core desire for **urban sophistication and quality amid a small-town atmosphere**.

**Goal 2** A **balanced mix of land use** to provide Fulshear residents with a variety of residential options, local shopping and services, leisure and entertainment opportunities, and active and passive recreational amenities, in a pattern that reinforces desired community character and image.

**Goal 3** A long-term development pattern that increasingly opens up **opportunities for high-value investments other than predominantly residential use**, to ensure a strong and sustainable tax base to support necessary and desired public investments.

### ACTION STRATEGIES

This key section highlights a series of potential actions for responding to the strategic issues and community needs identified in this Comprehensive Plan element. In particular, three initiatives are highlighted that emerged as top-priority initiatives, with specific steps outlined for working toward their near-term accomplishment. These steps are organized by the type of action required, using five categories that represent the main ways that comprehensive plans are implemented:

- Capital investments
- Programs and initiatives
- Regulations and standards
- Partnerships and coordination
- Further study and planning (especially as required to qualify for external funding opportunities)

While some action items are relatively straightforward to pursue, other possibilities in this section may remain just that – only concepts and considerations that the City and/or community may not be ready to pursue until later in the horizon of this Comprehensive Plan. They represent action options that are available to Fulshear as a Texas municipality and as acted on by other communities. However, it is recognized that they may not be feasible in Fulshear for various reasons such as potential cost, complexity, and/or degree of community support, as well as the capacity of City government to carry out certain initiatives given available staffing and other resources. More definitive choices will ultimately be made through City Council priority setting, the City’s annual budget process, and ongoing community input.

### 1. Upgraded Development Regulations.

With the completion of this new Comprehensive Plan, and following the adoption of first-ever zoning in Fulshear during 2012, the community needs to consider aspects of its development regulations where the bar should be set higher if fundamental goals and principles expressed in this plan are to be attained. Discussions on this topic among City officials led to identification of several priority items:

- » Prepare a strategic assessment and proposed approach for transitioning the City’s current stand-alone development ordinances into a Unified Development Code, as done in various other Texas and U.S. cities in recent years, to improve the development review and approval process and better coordinate various types of development standards.
- » Explore options for ensuring desired preservation of open space within developments, especially through zoning incentives that reward achievement of target ratios for open space set-asides.
- » Increase the City’s capacity to enforce and upgrade existing development and building standards, including through appointment of a Code Review Board, and the hiring of a code enforcement/inspection officer.
- » Ensure the “user friendliness” of the City’s development regulations, process and customer interactions, including through creation of a development guidebook (including development checklists, process diagrams, new application forms, and “how to” brochures and online guidance), and by accomplishing online access to the City’s codified municipal ordinances.



## 2. Geographic Information System (GIS).

During the preparation of this Comprehensive Plan, the City took the first steps toward a modern electronic mapping system, through the activities of its planning consultant in coordination with Fort Bend County's GIS personnel. City officials aim to invest in this essential technology in the years ahead, following the model of many other predecessor cities that use this tool daily to evaluate and monitor community planning issues across all aspects of City government, from parcel-level land use and zoning to road and utility infrastructure, park and recreation assets, and effective responsiveness of public safety personnel.

## 3. Higher Education Presence.

With Texas university systems increasingly exploring new and innovative ways to fulfill their missions and deliver their core services cost effectively, the City of Fulshear also sees opportunities to introduce a higher education presence to the community. In the near term this especially will involve nurturing relationships with key contacts at local, regional and other institutions of higher learning. The City must also assess how best to achieve this vision in terms of locations within Fulshear that have the potential to satisfy university expectations, including accessibility, utility infrastructure capacity, technology needs, and high visibility.

### Other Potential Initiatives

Through the comprehensive planning process, a series of other potential initiatives related to land use and character were identified and discussed, but ultimately considered secondary to the top three priorities above. These other initiatives are listed below for ongoing consideration and potential elevation as next priorities to pursue through future annual reviews and updates to the Comprehensive Plan. Such re-prioritization may occur based on new grant programs for which the City is eligible, a land donation offered to the City, a unique partnership opportunity that could advance a particular project, or other factors that may justify re-focusing resources and effort to where tangible results become possible.

The following two initiatives garnered the most interest after the top three priority projects:

### More Entry Monuments

- Design and construct additional "Welcome to Fulshear" entry monuments.
- Identify additional strategic locations to place these monuments.
- Pursue additional public/private partnerships for gaining access to preferred road-side locations, and for potential cost-sharing and long-term maintenance.

### Wayfinding and Promotional Signage

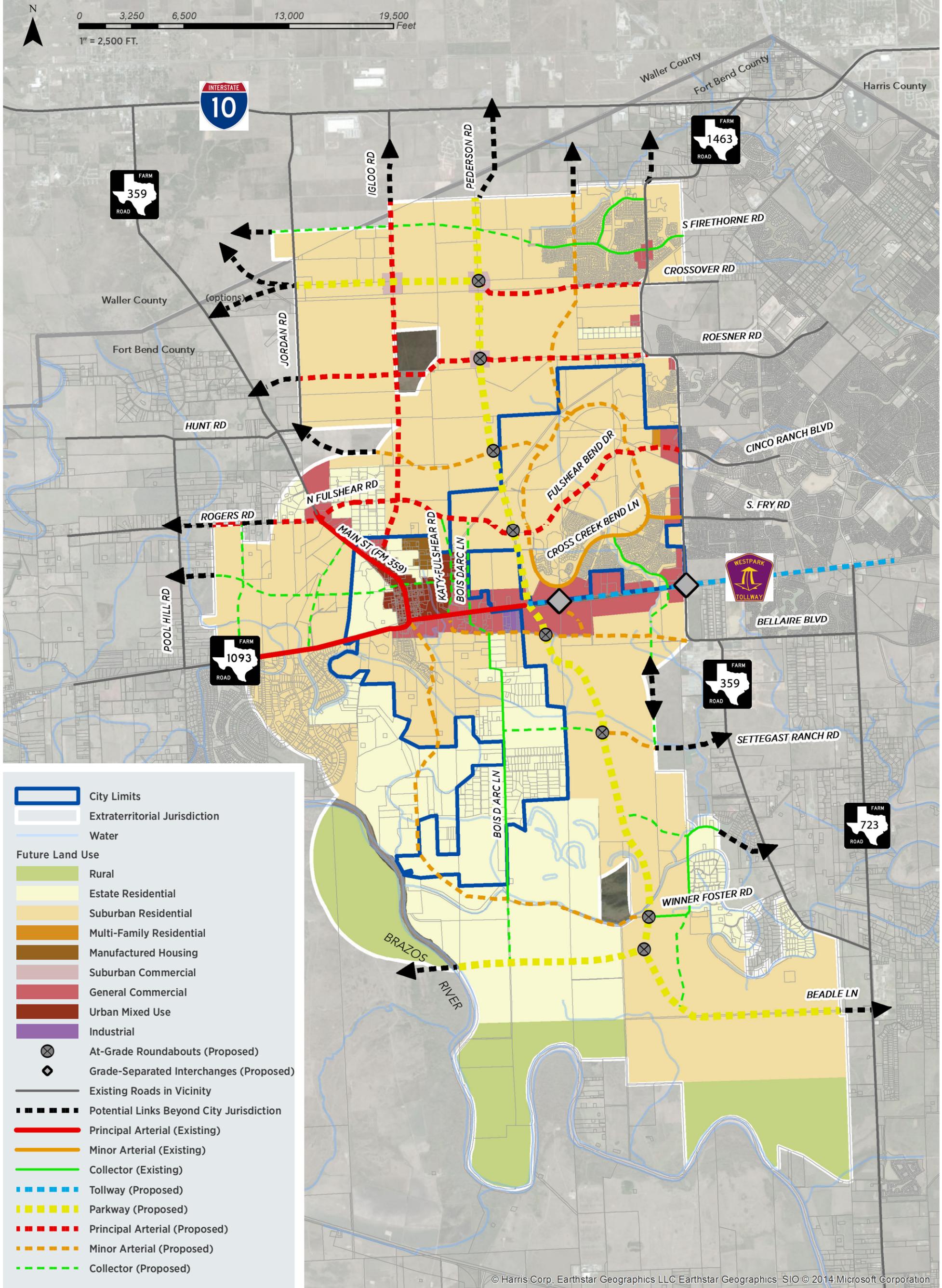
- Design and construct branded wayfinding signage, expanding on the initial signage installations accomplished in recent years, to help residents and visitors navigate their way to local destinations, and to raise the community's profile with passersby.
- Also install well-designed signs to raise resident and visitor awareness of local special events and activities.

Below are other ideas and possibilities that might not be near-term priorities, but could be potential items on the community's longer-term action agenda.

- **Proceed with special area planning**, in follow-up to this city-wide planning effort, to focus on key corridors and areas within the community that might have particular challenges or opportunities involving economic development, urban design, bicycle/pedestrian circulation, public facilities planning, or housing diversification within the context of mixed-use development potential.
- **Continue outreach to and coordination with investors and developers** to gauge potential for office or light industrial activity in the Fulshear area, for purposes of tax base enhancement, as well as local employment opportunities.

Design concept of Churchill Fulshear Junior High School





**Figure 5.1**  
Future Land Use and Character

**NOTE:** A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries.

**DISCLAIMER:** This graphic representation depicts generalized areas for informational and long-range planning purposes only. The illustration may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property and other boundaries. Data is not guaranteed for specific accuracy or completeness and may be subject to revision at any time without notification.





# Fulshear Comprehensive Plan

RESPECTING OUR **PAST**. SHAPING OUR **FUTURE**.

# 6

## Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan should be a “living document” that is responsive to ongoing change. That is, a document that is frequently referred to for guidance in community decision-making. Its assumptions, guiding principles, goals and action strategies must also be revisited periodically to ensure that the plan is providing clear and reliable direction on a range of matters, including land development issues and public investments in infrastructure and services.

Implementation is not just about a list of action items. It is a challenging process that will require the commitment of the City’s elected and appointed officials, staff, residents, business owners, major institutions, other levels of government, and other organizations and individuals who will serve as champions of the plan and its particular direction and strategies. Among its purposes, this final plan chapter highlights specific roles, responsibilities, and methods of implementation to execute priority plan recommendations. Equally important are formalized procedures for the ongoing monitoring and reporting of successes achieved, difficulties encountered, and new opportunities and challenges that have emerged since plan adoption. This is in addition to any other change in circumstances, which may require rethinking of plan priorities. Scheduled plan evaluations and updates, as described later in this section, will help maintain its relevance and credibility as an overarching policy guide.

ADOPTED May 6, 2014



## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION METHODS

### Five Ways of Moving Toward Action

Plan implementation generally occurs in five ways:

- Programs
- Capital Projects
- Regulation
- Partnerships
- More focused plans/studies



#### Programs

Programs involve the routine activities of City departments and staff, as well as special projects and initiatives they may also undertake. As part of Comprehensive Plan implementation this may include initiating new or adjusting existing City programs; expanding community outreach efforts; or providing specialized training to accomplish a priority objective more promptly and/or effectively.



#### Capital Projects

Cities use a Capital Improvements Program, or “CIP,” as a multi-year plan to identify and budget for “big ticket” projects, especially those that must be phased and/or coordinated with other initiatives. This may include street infrastructure; water, wastewater, and drainage improvements; parks, trails, and recreation facility construction and upgrades; construction of public buildings; and purchase of land, vehicles or major equipment. Anticipating and adequately budgeting for major capital projects will be essential to implementing this plan. Likewise, decisions regarding the prioritization of proposed capital improvements should reflect the direction and priorities of this plan.



#### Development Regulations and Standards

Given that private investment decisions account for a vast majority of the City’s physical form, land development regulations and engineering standards are fundamental for plan implementation. Consequently, zoning and subdivision regulations and associated development criteria and technical engineering standards are the basic keys to ensuring that the form, character, and quality of development reflect the City’s planning objectives. These codes should advance the community’s desire for quality development outcomes while recognizing economic factors. They should not delay or interfere unnecessarily with appropriate new development or redevelopment that is consistent with plan principles and directives.



#### Partnerships

Some community initiatives identified in this plan cannot be accomplished by City government on its own. They may require direct coordination, intergovernmental agreements, or funding support from other public entities or levels of government. Additionally, the unique role of potential private and non-profit partners to advance the community’s action agenda should not be underestimated. This may occur through cooperative efforts, volunteer activities and in-kind services (which can count toward the local match requirements for various grant opportunities), and from public/private financing of community improvements.

### Why this Final Plan Section is Important for Fulshear

- Emphasizes the importance of not only creating a plan, but translating it into real action and tangible, beneficial results.
- Adds a short-term strategic perspective and component to what is otherwise intended as a guide to Fulshear’s long-term enhancement over the next 20 years.
- Provides a prioritized Action Agenda of items for the City and other plan implementation partners to focus on during the next several years after plan adoption.
- Underscores the need to keep the plan fresh and relevant through annual review and reporting procedures and periodic updates.
- Advocates ongoing community engagement as the plan is implemented.



### **More Focused Plans/Studies**

Various areas of City governance require in-depth studies and more targeted planning work at a “finer grain” level of detail than is appropriate for comprehensive planning purposes. As such, some parts of this plan will be implemented only after some additional planning or special study to clarify next steps and associated costs and considerations.

### **PLAN ADMINISTRATION**

During the development of this plan, representatives of government, business, community groups, and others came together to inform the planning process. These community leaders – and new ones that will emerge over the horizon of this plan – must maintain their commitment to the ongoing implementation and updating of the plan’s guiding principles, priorities, and strategic recommendations.

#### **Education**

Comprehensive plans are relatively general in nature, but they are still complex policy documents that account for interrelationships among various policy choices. As such, educating decision-makers and administrators about plan implementation is an important first step after plan adoption. As the principal groups that will implement the plan, the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, and City department heads should all be “on the same page” with regard to priorities, responsibilities, and interpretations.

Consequently, an education initiative should be undertaken immediately after plan adoption, which should include:

- A discussion of the individual roles and responsibilities of the Council, Commission (and other advisory bodies), and individual staff members;
- A thorough overview of the entire Comprehensive Plan, with emphasis on the parts of the plan that relate to each individual group;
- Implementation tasking and priority setting, which should lead to each group establishing a one year and three-year implementation agenda;
- Facilitation of a mock meeting in which the use of the plan and its policies and recommendations is illustrated; and
- An in-depth question and answer session, with support from the City Attorney and other key staff.

#### **Definition of Roles**

As the community’s elected officials, the City Council should assume the lead role in implementation of this plan. The key responsibilities of the City Council are to decide and establish priorities, set timeframes by which actions will be initiated and completed, and determine the budget to be made available for implementation efforts. In conjunction with the Mayor, Council members must also help to ensure effective coordination among the various groups that are responsible for carrying out the plan’s recommendations.



#### **City Council**

The City Council will take the lead in the following general areas:

- Adopting and amending the plan, after recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Commission;
- Acting as a “champion” of the plan;
- Establishing the overall action priorities and timeframes by which action items in the plan will be initiated and completed;
- Considering and approving the funding commitments that will be required;
- Adopting new or amended land development regulations to implement the plan;
- Approving intergovernmental and development agreements that implement the plan;
- Offering final approval of projects and activities and their associated costs during the budget process, keeping in mind the need for consistency with the plan and its policies; and
- Providing policy direction to the Planning and Zoning Commission, other appointed City boards and commissions, and City staff.



### Planning and Zoning Commission

The Planning and Zoning Commission will take the lead in the following general areas:

- Hosting the education initiative previously described;
- Periodically obtaining public input to keep the plan up to date, using a variety of community outreach and citizen and stakeholder involvement methods;
- Ensuring that recommendations forwarded to the City Council are reflective of the plan goals, policies, and recommendations; and
- After holding one or more public hearings to discuss new or evolving community issues and needs, making recommendations to the City Council regarding plan updates and plan amendments.

### City Staff

City staff will take the lead in the following general areas:

- Managing day-to-day implementation of the plan, including coordination through an interdepartmental plan implementation committee;
- Supporting and carrying out capital improvement planning efforts;
- Managing the drafting of new or amended land development regulations;

- Conducting studies and developing additional plans (including management of consultant efforts, as necessary);
- Reviewing applications for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan as required by the City's land development regulations;
- Negotiating the specifics of intergovernmental and development agreements;
- Administering collaborative programs and ensuring open channels of communication with various private, public, and non-profit implementation partners; and
- Maintaining an inventory of potential plan amendments, as suggested by City staff and others, for consideration during annual and periodic plan review and update processes.

### ACTION AGENDA

The vision and goals in this Comprehensive Plan will ultimately be attained through a multitude of specific actions. Many of the action initiatives highlighted in this chapter cut across – and are supported by – multiple elements within the plan. Compiled in **Table 6.1, Priority Action Agenda**, is a prioritized list of action recommendations derived from the various plan elements. The table does not include every strategic recommendation found throughout this plan. Instead, it details a shorter “to do” list of priority action items, their potential timing, and who is responsible for initiating, administering, and participating in the implementation process.

Additionally, action items have been categorized regarding those actions that will involve capital improvements; actions that require changes in policies, regulations, standards and operations; and those actions that require additional studies and programmatic support. Most capital projects will also require, to varying degrees, additional feasibility analysis, construction documentation, specifications and detailed cost estimates.

Table 6.1 provides a starting point for determining immediate, near-term, and longer-term task priorities. This is an important first step toward plan implementation and should occur in conjunction with the City's annual budget process, during Capital Improvements Program (CIP) preparation, and in support of departmental work planning. Then, once the necessary funding is committed and roles are defined, the City staff member designated as the Comprehensive Plan Administrator should initiate a first year work program in conjunction with City management, other departments, and other public and private implementation partners.





The near-term action priorities should be revisited by City officials and staff annually to recognize accomplishments, highlight areas where further attention and effort are needed, and determine whether some items have moved up or down on the priority list given changing circumstances and emerging needs. It should be kept in mind that early implementation of certain items, while perhaps not the uppermost priorities, may be expedited by the availability of related grant opportunities, by a State or Federal mandate, or by the eagerness of one or more partners to pursue an initiative with the City. On the other hand, some high-priority items may prove difficult to tackle in the near term due to budget constraints, the lack of an obvious lead entity or individual to carry the initiative forward, or by the community's readiness to take on a potentially controversial new program.

Progress on the near-term items, in particular, should be the focus of the first annual review and report a year after Comprehensive Plan adoption, as described later in this chapter. Then, similar to multi-year capital improvements programming, the entire action agenda list in Table 6.1 – and all other action items dispersed throughout the plan chapters – should be revisited annually to decide if any additional items are ready to move into the next near-term action timeframe, and what the priority should be.

### PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESS

The Comprehensive Plan is meant to be a flexible document allowing for adjustment to changing conditions over time. Shifts in political, economic, physical, technological, and social conditions, and other unforeseen circumstances, may influence and change the priorities and fiscal outlook of the community. As the city evolves, new issues will emerge while others will no longer be as relevant. Some action statements will be found impractical or outdated while other plausible solutions will arise. To ensure that it continues to reflect the overall goals of the community and remains relevant and resourceful over time, the plan must be revisited on a regular basis to confirm that the plan elements are still on point and the associated guiding principles, priorities, and strategic recommendations are still appropriate.

Revisions to the Comprehensive Plan are two-fold, with minor plan amendments occurring at least every other year, and more significant updates and modifications occurring every five years. Minor amendments could include revisions to certain elements of the plan as a result of the adoption of another specialized plan or interim changes to the Future Land Use and Character

Plan. Major updates will involve reviewing the base conditions and anticipated growth trends; re-evaluating the findings of this plan – and formulating new ones as necessary; and adding, revising, or removing strategic recommendations in the plan based on implementation progress.

### Annual Progress Report

The Planning and Zoning Commission, with the assistance of staff, should prepare an annual progress report for presentation to the Mayor and City Council. This ensures that the plan is consistently reviewed and that any needed modifications or clarifications are identified for the bi-annual minor plan amendment process. Ongoing monitoring of consistency between the plan and the City's implementing regulations should be an essential part of this effort.

The Annual Progress Report should include and highlight:

- Significant actions and accomplishments during the past year, including the status of implementation for each programmed task in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Obstacles or problems in the implementation of the plan, including those encountered in administering the land use and mobility aspects, as well as any other policies of the plan;
- Proposed amendments that have come forward during the course of the year, which may include revisions to the individual plan maps or other recommendations or text changes; and
- Recommendations for needed actions, programs, and procedures to be developed and implemented in the coming year, including recommendation of projects to be included in the City's proposed CIP, other programs/projects to be funded, and priority coordination needs with public and private implementation partners.

### Bi-Annual Amendment Process

Plan amendments should occur on at least a bi-annual (every two year) basis, allowing for proposed changes to be considered concurrently so that the cumulative effects may be understood. When considering a plan amendment, the City should ensure the proposed amendment is consistent with the goals and policies set forth in the plan regarding character protection, development compatibility, infrastructure availability, and other community priorities. Careful consideration should also be given to guard against site-specific plan changes that could negatively impact adjacent areas



**TABLE 6.1 | PRIORITY ACTION AGENDA**

Action	Timeframe			Involved Entities
	1-3 Years	3+ Years	Ongoing and Long Term	
<b>Actions that Involve Capital Improvements</b> 				
Extend waterlines to provide fire protection to the area around Bois D'Arc Lane	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> </ul>
Provide additional elevated storage to resolve water pressure issues	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> </ul>
Construct a new wastewater treatment plant (WWTP)	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> </ul>
Rehabilitate local streets including surface repair, overlays, drainage improvements, etc.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> </ul>
Expand FM 1093	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● METRO</li> <li>● Texas Dept of Transportation</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> </ul>
Plan and leverage funding to improve Bois D'Arc Lane	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> </ul>
Form public-private partnerships for land acquisition and park development and maintenance	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Fort Bend Green</li> <li>● Houston Wilderness</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Develop a local rodeo arena	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Design and construct additional "Welcome to Fulshear" entry monuments		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>



Action	Timeframe			Involved Entities
	1-3 Years	3+ Years	Ongoing and Long Term	
<b>Actions that Involve Capital Improvements</b> 				
Design and construct branded wayfinding signage and signs to notice local special events and activities		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Extend waterlines along FM 359 north toward I-10		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> </ul>
Begin planning for a Municipal Building or Complex to include City Hall, Municipal Court, and Public Safety Services		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● Potential private partners if some facilities integrated into development projects</li> </ul>
Reconstruct FM 359/Main Street and install pedestrian improvements			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● Texas Dept of Transportation</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Construct medians and esplanades in each of the arterial streets and highways and landscape them with native, xeriscape plant materials			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● Keep Fulshear Beautiful</li> <li>● Texas Dept of Transportation</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Install a decorative standard of street light poles and mast arms			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● CenterPoint Energy</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Invest in major recreation facilities, (e.g., shelters, centers, pool or splash pad, courts, and ball fields)			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Design and develop multi-use parks that include a diversity of park facilities, improvements and activities			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● Texas Parks &amp; Wildlife Dept</li> <li>● Fort Bend Green</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>



Action	Timeframe			Involved Entities
	1-3 Years	3+ Years	Ongoing and Long Term	
<b>Actions that Involve Capital Improvements</b> 				
Develop a citywide trail and bikeway system, including expansion of the creek trails			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● Texas Parks &amp; Wildlife Dept</li> <li>● Fort Bend Green</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Cycling clubs/advocates</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Acquire prairielands, woodlands, and wetlands for use as a public nature reserve (e.g., Winner Foster Road Preserve)			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● Texas Parks &amp; Wildlife Dept</li> <li>● Fort Bend Green</li> <li>● Houston Wilderness</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Land trusts/conservancies</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Improve the local cemeteries			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Expand the community center			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
<b>Actions that Require Changes in Policies, Regulations or Operations</b> 				
Encourage through zoning incentives minimum ratios for open space set-asides	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> </ul>
Appoint a Code Review Board	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> </ul>
Hire a code enforcement/inspection officer	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> </ul>
Create a development guidebook including development checklists, flow diagrams, new application forms, and “how to” pamphlets	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> </ul>



Action	Timeframe			Involved Entities
	1-3 Years	3+ Years	Ongoing and Long Term	
<b>Actions that Require Changes in Policies, Regulations or Operations</b> 				
Codify the municipal ordinances online	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> </ul>
Implement a parcel-based geographic information system (GIS)	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● Greater Fort Bend EDC</li> <li>● Houston-Galveston Area Council</li> </ul>
Form partnerships with institutions of higher learning	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Texas university systems</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● Central Fort Bend Chamber Alliance</li> <li>● Greater Fort Bend EDC</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Expand the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) and the City's local authorities through voluntary landowner petitions and concurrent with the Home Rule Charter	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● Other area cities</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> </ul>
Continue to support and grow the Scarecrow Festival, St. Patrick's Day, and other local events and activities	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Assume responsibility for water/sewer billings versus current outsourcing		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> </ul>
Preserve locally significant and/or National Register historic structures, (e.g., Rail Switch House)			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● Fort Bend County Historical Commission</li> <li>● Texas Historical Commission</li> <li>● Fort Bend Historical Society</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Coordinate with the Fulshear Arts Council to form a Downtown Arts District			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● Fulshear Arts Council</li> <li>● Houston Arts Alliance</li> <li>● Texas Commission on the Arts</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>



Action	Timeframe			Involved Entities
	1-3 Years	3+ Years	Ongoing and Long Term	
<b>Actions that Require Additional Studies/Planning</b> 				
Conduct a storm drainage study for the watershed area around Bois D'Arc Lane	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Prepare an Illustrative Review and Strategic Approach for creating a Unified Development Code	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● Land owner/developer input</li> </ul>
Conduct a storm drainage study downtown			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Prepare a citywide master drainage plan			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>
Begin planning for the development and construction of a destination facility to attract tourists and economic development (e.g., museum and/or living history center, event center, waterpark, athletic tournament facilities, birding and/or interpretive center, etc.)			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● City of Fulshear</li> <li>● City of Fulshear EDCs</li> <li>● Fort Bend County</li> <li>● Central Fort Bend Chamber Alliance</li> <li>● Greater Fort Bend EDC</li> <li>● Fort Bend County Historical Commission</li> <li>● Texas Historical Commission</li> <li>● Fort Bend Historical Society</li> <li>● Texas Parks &amp; Wildlife Dept (including Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail program)</li> <li>● Fort Bend Green</li> <li>● Houston Wilderness</li> <li>● Outdoor Nature Club of Houston</li> <li>● Houston Audubon Society</li> <li>● Texas Ornithological Society</li> <li>● Sports associations/leagues</li> <li>● Land owners/developers</li> <li>● Water park developers/operators</li> <li>● Potential public/private partners</li> </ul>

NOTE: The content of Table 6.1 was derived from a joint workshop of the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, and staff management team during 2013, as they considered immediate needs plus potential 3-5 year action items. Key considerations were the extent of likely budgetary obligation, and the City's administrative capacities to carry out the prioritized tasks. Action items that require substantial capital expenditures were generally placed in the long-term column, while those that are either under way or achievable by staff - or with consultant assistance - were assigned to the near-term period.



and uses or detract from the overall character of the area. Factors that should be considered in deciding on a proposed plan amendment include:

- Consistency with the guiding principles, priorities, and strategic recommendations set forth in the plan;
- Adherence with the Future Land Use and Character Plan;
- Compatibility with the surrounding area;
- Impacts on infrastructure provision including water, wastewater, drainage, and the transportation network;
- Impacts on the City's ability to provide, fund and maintain services;
- Impacts on environmentally sensitive and natural areas; and
- Whether the proposed amendment contributes to the overall direction and character of the community as captured in the plan vision and guiding principles (and ongoing public input).

#### Five-Year Update / Evaluation and Appraisal Report

An evaluation and appraisal report should be prepared every five years. This report should be prepared by City staff with input from City departments, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and other boards and commissions. The report process involves evaluating the existing plan and assessing how successful it has been in achieving the community's goals. The purpose of the report is to identify the successes and shortcomings of the plan, look at what has changed over the last five years, and make recommendations on how the plan should be modified in light of those changes.

The report should review baseline conditions and assumptions about trends and growth indicators. It should also evaluate implementation potential and/or obstacles related to any unmet strategic recommendations. The evaluation report and process should result in an amended Comprehensive Plan, including identification of new or revised information that may lead to updated guiding principles, priorities, and/or strategic recommendations.

More specifically, the report should identify and evaluate the following:

1. **Summary of major actions and interim plan amendments** undertaken over the last five years.
2. **Major issues** in the community and how these issues have changed over time.

### 3. Changes in the assumptions, trends, and base studies data, including the following:

- » The rate at which growth and development is occurring relative to the projections put forward in the plan.
- » Shifts in demographics and other growth trends.
- » City-wide attitudes, and whether apparent shifts, if significant, necessitate amendments to the stated principles or recommendations of the plan.
- » Other changes in political, social, economic, technological, or environmental conditions that indicate a need for plan amendments.

### 4. Ability of the plan to continue to support progress toward achieving the community's goals. The following should be evaluated and revised as needed:

- » Individual statements or sections of the plan must be reviewed and rewritten, as necessary, to ensure that the plan provides sufficient information and direction to achieve the intended outcome.
- » Conflicts between principles and recommendations that have been discovered in the implementation and administration of the plan must be pointed out and resolved.
- » The Action Agenda must be reviewed and major accomplishments highlighted. Those not completed by the specified timeframe should be re-evaluated to ensure their continued relevance and/or to revise them appropriately.
- » As conditions change, the timeframes for implementing the individual actions of the plan should be re-evaluated where necessary. Some actions may emerge as a higher priority given new or changed circumstances while others may become less important to achieving the goals and development objectives of the community.
- » Based upon organizational, programmatic, and procedural factors, as well as the status of previously assigned tasks, the implementation task assignments must be reviewed and altered, as needed, to ensure timely accomplishment of the plan's strategic recommendations.
- » Changes in laws, procedures and missions may impact the ability of the community to achieve its goals. The plan review must assess these changes and their impacts on the success of implementation, leading to any suggested revisions in strategies or priorities.



### Ongoing Community Outreach and Engagement

All review and updates processes related to the Comprehensive Plan should emphasize and incorporate ongoing public input. The annual and continual plan evaluation and reporting process should also incorporate specific performance measures and quantitative indicators that can be compiled and communicated both internally and to elected officials and citizens in a “report card” fashion.

Examples might include:

- » Acres of new development (plus number of residential units and square footage of commercial and industrial space) approved and constructed in conformance with this plan and related City codes.
- » Various measures of service capacity (gallons, acre-feet, etc.) added to the city’s major utility infrastructure systems – and the number of dollars allocated to fund the necessary capital projects.
- » New and expanded businesses and associated tax revenue gains through economic development initiatives.
- » Miles of new road, plus bike and pedestrian improvements, added to the city’s transportation system to increase mobility options.
- » Acres of parkland and open space added to the city’s inventory, and miles of trail developed or improved.
- » Indicators of the benefits of redeveloped sites and structures (appraised value, increased property and/or sales tax revenue, new residential units, and retail and office spaces in urban mixed-use settings, etc.) as envisioned through this plan.
- » The estimated dollar value of operating cost savings from reduced energy and water use, heating/cooling, etc., from green building practices and related conservation efforts in new and existing City facilities.
- » The numbers of residents and other stakeholders engaged through City-sponsored education and outreach events related to Comprehensive Plan implementation and periodic review and updating, as outlined in this chapter.



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