

TABLE of CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY V

CHAPTER 1 - PLANNING PROCESS 1

 Comprehensive Plan 1

 Zoning Ordinance 1

 Subdivision Regulations 2

 Role of the Planning and Zoning Commission 2

 Role of the City Council 2

 Role of the Board of Adjustment 3

 The Basis of Decision-Making 3

 Rezoning Requests..... 3

CHAPTER 2 - ISSUES AND PLANNING POLICIES 5

 Issues Focus Session and Planning Policy Charrette 5

 Summary of Issues Statement, Goals, Objectives and Policy Steps 6

 Future Land Use Issues 6

Long Range Future Land Use..... 6

Community Vision – What Texarkana Can Become as a Community 7

User Friendly Process: Partner with the Private Sector 8

Major Street Plan..... 9

Redevelopment/Infill of Vacant Lots..... 10

Expand Use of Bringle Lake 11

 Economic Development Issues 11

Attract Industry 11

Make Downtown Vibrant 12

Improve Entertainment Offerings 13

Local Road Development..... 14

Encourage Participation of Minority Groups..... 14

 Quality Of Life Issues 15

Expand Recreational/Cultural/Leisure Facilities and Opportunities..... 15

Foster Communication with the Community 15

Expand Focus on Education 16

CHAPTER 3 - PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITES..... 17

 Existing Conditions..... 17

 Water Utilities..... 17

 Wastewater Utilities..... 18

 Texarkana Water Utilities Office..... 18

 Utility Financing 18

 Utility Services 19

 Member City Services 19

 South Regional Wastewater Facilities 19

 North Texarkana Wastewater Facilities..... 19

 Texarkana Reservoir 20

 Planned Improvements..... 20

 Improvements to Current Infrastructure 20

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Table of Contents

Serving Newly Annexed Territory.....	20
Texarkana Water Utilities Office Pledge	21
Sewer and Water Line Map	22
CHAPTER 4 - ROADWAY NETWORK.....	23
Roadway Network.....	23
Roadway Classification System.....	23
Local Roadways.....	24
Collector Roadways	24
Arterial Roadways	24
Highways/Expressways/Freeways	25
Roadway Classifications.....	25
Roadway Improvements	25
Access Control.....	25
Transportation Plan—Functional Classification Map.....	26
Intersection Spacing.....	30
Additional Driveway Spacing Requirements.....	30
Corner Clearance	31
Texarkana Area Frontage Road Executive Summary	32
Conclusions.....	32
Recommendations.....	33
Cost Estimates.....	33
CHAPTER 5 - FUTURE LAND USE	35
Land Use and Planning Principles	35
Land Use Externalities.....	35
Transportation Access.....	35
Neighborhood Design	36
Municipal Services and Natural Features	37
Municipal Utilities and the Capacity to Serve Growth	37
Parks and Recreation.....	38
Parks and Open Space Plan Map	40
Texarkana Parks and Recreation Projects Planned.....	41
<i>Park Classifications</i>	41
<i>Texarkana Park Facilities</i>	43
<i>Park Recommendations</i>	44
Future Development Patterns.....	44
Probable Residential Development Pattern - Near-Term	45
City Of Texarkana Future Land Use Plan Map Legend - Explanation	46
General Recommendations for Future Land Use Development	47
Recommendation—Residential Land Use.....	47
Future Land Use Plan Map	48
Recommendation—Alternative Housing Strategies	49
Opportunities Area Map.....	50
Recommendation—Urban Design	51
Recommendation—Downtown Design Guidelines	53
Recommendations—Annexation Issues	55
Recommendations—Housing Action Agenda.....	55

Recommendation—Neighborhood Stabilization/Housing Infill 56

Recommendation—Residential Development Guidelines..... 60

Recommendations—Commercial Development..... 63

Recommendation—Public Safety 64

Recommendation—Texarkana Beautification..... 65

Recommendation—Downtown and Office/Institutional Development Standards 66

Recommendation—Public Facilities 66

Recommendation—Strip Commercial Design Guidelines 67

Natural Features Map..... 68

 Site Appropriateness--*Retail Strip Centers*..... 69

 Building Arrangement 69

 Access 70

 Circulation and Parking 70

 Building Elements..... 71

 Service Facilities..... 72

 Utilities/Mechanical/Outdoor Storage 73

 Buffers and Screens 73

 Landscaping 74

APPENDIX A: OPPORTUNITY AREAS..... A-1

APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHICS ANALYSIS B-1

APPENDIX C: AWARENESS WALK SUMMARIES C-1

TABLES

Table 4.1 - Texarkana, Texas 2000 to 2009 Projects 27

Table 4.2 - Texarkana, Texas 2010 to 2025 Projects..... 27

Table 4.3 - Texarkana, Arkansas 2000 to 2009 Projects..... 28

Table 4.4 - Texarkana, Arkansas 2010 to 2025 Projects..... 28

Table 4.5 - Minimum Intersection Spacing Standards..... 30

Table 4.6 - Suggested Maximum Driveway Guidelines for Principal Arterial Roads..... 31

Table 5.1 - Texarkana Water Utilities Office Near-Term Projects Planned for Annexed Areas..... 38

Table 5.2 - Parks and Open Space Guidelines 42

Table 5.3 - Projected Density of Residential Development in the City of Texarkana..... 45

FIGURES

Figure 1—Corner Clearance Guidelines..... 31

MAPS

Sewer and Water Line Map 22

Transportation Plan—Functional Transportation Map (Texarkana Urban Transportation Study)..... 26

Parks and Open Space Plan Map 40

Future Land Use Plan Map 48

Opportunity Areas Map 50

Natural Features Map..... 68

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Texarkana has established and maintained public improvements that support a full service regional center community in East Texas. Local sales tax revenue, the maintenance of urban infrastructure and the City’s strategic location on I-30 and Highway 59 have helped build Texarkana as a regional center of commerce. The City has the opportunity to build on this heritage as it plans for growth, inside the City with “infill” development, and outside the City in the “planning areas.” The Comprehensive Plan calls for the City to regulate growth in the areas based on the ability to provide services within identified growth corridors.

The City has the opportunity to begin using the Comprehensive Plan as policy document to guide land use decisions. By utilizing land use regulations in accordance with the plan, the City can ensure compatible and appropriate land uses next to one another, such as along the developing sections of Cowhorn Creek Road and Moores Lane. This represents the beginning of plan implementation. Infill development within long-standing commercial and residential corridors, such as along State Line Avenue, the Beverly neighborhood, and downtown, must be designed to “fit-in,” as well. Design guidelines are provided for evaluating proposals in Strip Commercial developments along with standards for Downtown and Office/Institutional developments. These guidelines provide ways to implement policy recommendations of the plan, such as maintaining the traffic carrying capacity of major thoroughfares.

In a similar way, the plan positions the City to be responsive to construction and development needs due to improvements of Highway 151 and I-30 and extension of public services to the north, northwest and southwest. Additionally, the plan will allow the City to help coordinate the comprehensive development and preservation of the Bringle Lake area.

At the same time, the City must focus on the stabilization of neighborhoods and the enforcement of City codes. Incentive programs such as the Weed and Seed Program and Habitat for Humanity can be utilized to help enhance neighborhoods and create a sense of ownership. Increased enforcement of City codes can also be a catalyst for private investment, due to residents seeing the City taking an interest in their neighborhood. The plan objectives call for increased communication between the City and its neighborhoods. Sensitive—yet effective—code enforcement presents an opportunity to communicate.

Establishing land use policies, positioning the City to respond to future development and the revitalization of downtown and older neighborhoods are the key goals defined in the Comprehensive Plan. The framework has been laid out in the Comprehensive Plan in term of the “action steps” needed to be taken to implement the desires of the Texarkana community. Now, the successful implementation of the plan will require cooperation and coordination between the public and private sectors within the region.

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**CHAPTER 1
PLANNING PROCESS**

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A Comprehensive Plan is an official public document adopted by the Texarkana Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council as a policy guide to decisions about the physical development of the community. It indicates in general how the citizens of the community want the City to develop in the next 20 to 30 years.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a rational and comprehensive guide for development that fosters economic growth, and encourages compatible and high quality land development. To understand the planning needs of the entire community, it is important to review the planning and zoning process for which the City of Texarkana is responsible. The Texarkana Comprehensive Plan is the policy basis for zoning, subdivision regulation, annexation and related land development and regulatory actions.

ZONING ORDINANCE

A Zoning Ordinance is a legislative tool used for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. It delineates the boundaries for land use districts to regulate:

- use;
- density of population;
- lot coverage; and
- bulk of structures.

Zoning Ordinance must be adopted in accordance with a Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the Zoning Ordinance is to:

- (1) lessen congestion in the streets;
- (2) secure safety from fire, panic, and other dangers;
- (3) promote health and the general welfare;
- (4) provide adequate light and air;
- (5) prevent the overcrowding of land;
- (6) avoid undue concentration of population; or
- (7) facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewers, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

According to the Texas Civil Statutes, Zoning Ordinance must be uniform for each class or kind of building in a district, but the regulations may vary from district to district. The regulations shall be adopted with reasonable consideration, among other things, for the character of each district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses, with a view of conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land in the municipality.

A majority of the governing body of a municipality may adopt or amend a Comprehensive Plan at any time, after public hearing. The policies of a Comprehensive Plan may only be implemented by ordinances duly adopted by the municipality and shall not constitute land use or Zoning Ordinance or establish zoning district boundaries.

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 1 - Planning Process

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Subdivision regulations are another legislative tool to implement the Comprehensive Plan by guiding the subdivision and development of land. Subdivision regulations provide coordination of otherwise unrelated plans as well as internal design of individual sites. The general purposes of the subdivision regulations are to:

- protect and promote the public health, safety, convenience, comfort and general welfare;
- guide the future growth and development;
- provide for the proper location and width of streets, roads, building lines, open space and recreation and to avoid congestion of population;
- protect and conserve the value of land, buildings and improvements and to minimize conflicts among the uses of land and buildings;
- establish reasonable standards of design for subdivision in order to further the orderly layout and use of land; and
- ensure that public facilities, including roads, water, sewer and drainage facilities, are adequate to serve the needs of proposed subdivisions.

A municipality may delegate to an employee of the municipality the ability to approve:

- (1) amending plats; or
- (2) minor plats involving four or fewer lots fronting on an existing street and not requiring the creation of any new street or the extension of municipal facilities.

The designated employee may, for any reason, elect to present the plat to the municipal Planning and Zoning Commission or governing body, or both, to approve the plat. The employee shall not disapprove the plat and shall be required to refer any plat he refuses to approve to the Planning and Zoning Commission within the time period specified for plat review.

ROLE OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

1. Adopt a plan for the physical development of the incorporated areas, the ETJ and the future growth areas of Texarkana.
 - Before adopting or amending the Comprehensive Plan hold a public hearing.
 - After adoption, certify a copy of the adopted plan to the City Council and City Clerk.
 - Record a copy in the Office of the County Recorder of Deeds office.
2. Advisory body to the City Council.
 - Hold a public hearing to obtain public opinion regarding each rezoning application, special use permit application and proposed text amendment.
 - Adopt a recommendation to the City Council on each rezoning application, special use permit application and proposed text amendment.
3. Approve or disapprove both preliminary plats and final plats.

ROLE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

1. Enact and amend the zoning ordinance and zoning district map after considering the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation.

2. Amend the subdivision regulations after considering the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation. This responsibility includes approving subdivision plats.
3. Accept or reject dedications of easements, rights-of-way and public lands on subdivision final plats after having been approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
4. Approve engineering plans for construction of public improvements.
5. Approve financial guarantees or financing mechanisms to ensure construction of all public improvements within subdivision plats.

ROLE OF THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Any of the following persons may appeal to the Board of Adjustment a decision made by an administrative official:

1. A person aggrieved by the decision; or
2. Any officer, department, board, or bureau of the municipality affected by the decision.

The appellant must file with the board and the official from whom the appeal is taken a notice of appeal specifying the grounds for the appeal. The appeal must be filed within a reasonable time as determined by the rules of the Board. On receiving the notice, the official from whom the appeal is taken shall immediately transmit to the board all the papers constituting the record of the action that is appealed.

An appeal stays all proceedings in furtherance of the action that is appealed unless the official from whom the appeal is taken certifies in writing to the board facts supporting the official's opinion that a stay would cause imminent peril to life or property. In that case, the proceedings may be stayed only by a restraining order granted by the board or a court of record on application, after notice to the official, if due cause is shown.

The board shall set a reasonable time for the appeal hearing and shall give public notice of the hearing and due notice to the parties in interest. A party may appear at the appeal hearing in person or by agent or attorney. The board shall decide the appeal within a reasonable time.

THE BASIS OF DECISION-MAKING

As with other "police powers," the exercise of zoning and subdivision regulations is subject to certain legal limitations. One of the most important of these limitations requires that zoning and subdivision regulations cannot be applied in an "arbitrary or capricious" manner. Decisions regarding zoning and subdivision issues cannot be fixed or arrived at through an exercise of will or by caprice, without consideration or adjustment with reference to principles, circumstances, or significance.

Rezoning Requests

Zoning text amendments are recommended in Appendix C of the Comprehensive Plan. The following procedures should be implemented by the City when processing rezoning requests.

Before making any recommendation or decision on a zoning request, the Planning and Zoning Commission must first hold a public hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to allow both sides to express

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 1 - Planning Process

their views on the issue and to discuss all relevant factors. Although the hearing is a valuable mechanism for gauging the community's attitudes toward development and for establishing the facts of each case, it is important that decisions not be based solely on the opinions of the largest or most vocal group of participants. Instead, zoning decisions must be based on the best interests of the entire community, and not just the interests of a particular property owner or neighboring property owners. In addition, the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City should try to distinguish between facts and opinions at a public hearing. Unsubstantiated assertions ("This project would reduce the value of my property by 75 percent") or generalizations ("People who live in apartments always drive fast cars and race up and down the streets") should be analyzed for their validity. Even "expert witnesses" should be pressed to give as factual a basis as possible for their judgments.

Second, zoning decisions should include consideration of long-range community goals as well as short-range needs. The recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan should be the primary source for this information. Because of its importance in the zoning process, the Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed by the Texarkana Planning and Zoning Commission on a regular basis and amended as necessary to ensure that it remains current.

Third, it is important to zone based on land use issues, not the issues affecting the individual applicant. An error frequently made is approval of a rezoning to accommodate an applicant's personal circumstances without consideration of land use conditions and characteristics. Such a rezoning is rarely in the public interest and, if challenged, can be held to be invalid. Instead, decisions should be based on whether the land is appropriate for the proposed zoning district. Appropriate matters that should be considered for each rezoning application include:

1. The character of the neighborhood;
2. The zoning and uses of properties nearby;
3. The suitability of the subject property for the uses to which it has been restricted;
4. The extent to which removal of the restrictions (or change of zone) will detrimentally affect nearby property;
5. The length of time the property has remained vacant as zoned;
6. The relative gain to the public health, safety and welfare by not rezoning the property as compared to the hardship imposed on the property owner;
7. The adequacy of public utilities and other needed public services; and
8. Compliance with the Comprehensive Plan.

When considering a rezoning application all of the uses which the proposed zoning district permits should be considered rather than just the use the applicant proposes, since a change in ownership or in market conditions could easily result in a change of the proposed use.

CHAPTER 2 ISSUES AND PLANNING POLICIES

ISSUES FOCUS SESSION AND PLANNING POLICY CHARRETTE

The City of Texarkana, Texas Comprehensive Plan was initiated during the fall of 1999 in a multi-step process. The planning consultants met with members of the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission and City Staff to discuss planning issues in general and agree upon a planning process. The consultants then held “key-person interviews” with representatives of the public and private sectors, including the city administration, the school district and the business community. The consultants then held further discussion with an appointed Steering Committee consisting of representatives of local organizations from the public and private sectors, along with members of the city council, Planning and Zoning Commission and city staff.

To date, the public involvement/consensus building process has involved two public workshops:

- A “Focus Session” to identify the most critical issues facing Texarkana in the coming years: near-term (1-5 years) and longer term (up to 20 years); and
- A “Policy Planning Charrette” to further address the identified issues and form “Action Steps” for the issues.

The city held a Focus Session on April 4, 2000 in the Collins Building at Ferguson Park. The purpose of the Focus Session was to provide an opportunity for residents of Texarkana to identify and prioritize issues that are critical to the future of the community in the 20-year time frame of the Comprehensive Plan. Key community leaders were invited and the Focus Session was open to the public. More than 25 residents of the community and city staff participated.

The process for identifying issues at the workshop was a structured idea sharing process. Participants were paired to identify the issues most important to themselves and the community. These issues were categorized into one of the following groupings:

1. **Future Land Use:** Issues relating to the location, type, design, density and quantity of land uses and infrastructure within Texarkana.
2. **Economic/Development:** Issues relating to business and industrial growth in Texarkana, funding and budgetary items, taxation and the fiscal status of the city.
3. **Quality of Life:** Issues that influence the quality of the Texarkana community as a place to live and work.

Following the identification and categorization of key issues, participants were asked to choose one of the above topics and form “break-out” groups. Participants of these breakout groups further discussed and refined the issues that had been identified. As a conclusion to the discussion, participants of all three groups voted on the categorized issues and ranked them on priority of importance.

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 2 - Issues and Planning Policies



Residents of Texarkana taking part in the Visioning Charrette.

Information from the Focus Session was used as a basis for the follow-up “Policy Planning Charrette” workshop held on May 2, 2000. Participants collaborated all evening in study groups with detailed “Workbooks” to develop community policies and “action steps” that address the critical issues facing Texarkana during the policy-planning workshop. Participants also addressed issues graphically by transferring ideas to maps of different areas of the city. The issues were discussed in terms of both the near-term (the immediate five-year period) and long-term plans (up to twenty years in the future).

The following goal statements and planning objectives are based on a summary of the ideas expressed at the planning charrette session. The key issues identified are presented with a column entitled “Policy Step” which allows Texarkana to express ideas and suggestions in an action agenda. The plan allows the city to formulate goal statements and policy objectives, then policy steps to take in an action agenda.

For each issue and goals/objectives statement, a policy step will identify the entity or group—public or private—that is the appropriate agent for action to implement the plan objectives.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES STATEMENT, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICY STEPS

Future Land Use Issues

Long Range Future Land Use

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Goal: Guide development to achieve the community desired vision for the future of Texarkana through the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and its projection of future land uses.	
Define retail-commercial and mixed-use districts on the Future Land Use map where intense land uses are appropriate, such as along major roads.	<i>Planning and Zoning Commission City Council City Staff</i>
Target industrial park development in strategic locations.	<i>Planning and Zoning Commission City Council Chamber of Commerce</i>

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 2 - Issues and Planning Policies

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Encourage Office Park development by defining office districts.	<i>Planning and Zoning Commission City Council Chamber of Commerce</i>
Resolve existing land uses conflicts between residential neighborhoods and commercial areas.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission</i>
Minimize future land use conflicts by implementing zoning policies.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Target future development in strategic locations based upon direction of growth and ability to serve with public utilities.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>

Community Vision – What Texarkana Can Become as a Community

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
<i>Goal: Maintain and enhance the sense of community in Texarkana through a defined community “Vision.”</i>	
Work toward an overall community “vision” that includes beautification.	<i>Planning and Zoning Commission City Council City Staff</i>
Determine community open space needs, including land for passive and active recreation, and require dedication of open space as a percent of gross acreage to be developed.	<i>Parks and Rec. Dept. Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Foster pedestrian-oriented development by requiring developer improvements of sidewalks and neighborhood parks, or fees or dedications of land in lieu of improvements.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Create pedestrian-oriented improvements through public investments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-street at grade bike lanes striped for easy identification; • Off street bike trails linking major destination within the community; and • Clearly designated pedestrian street crossings, signalized where appropriate on major streets. 	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Foster strong relationship between college, community and city, working together to accommodate future growth and expansion as a positive element of the community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City and college promote a program to bring in a larger student population; 	<i>Texas A&M, Texarkana Officials Planning and Zoning Commission</i>

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 2 - Issues and Planning Policies

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement more successful redevelopment, including conversion of buildings to dorms; • Maintain “new appearance”; • Plan for growth—expand the technology school; and • Accommodate growth. 	<i>City Council</i>
Provide more diversity in entertainment opportunities.	<i>Chamber of Commerce & B.O.N.D.</i>
Update the sign ordinance to implement the beautification objectives of the plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize impact of signs by limiting size and number; • Define sign districts where high visibility is warranted, such as the I-30 corridor; • Base fees on signage scale so that large, higher impact signs pay higher fees; • Coordinate with Arkansas to remove older non-compliant signage along State Line Avenue through amortization. 	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission</i>
Support development and redevelopment in Downtown Texarkana: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the strengths of Downtown; and • Minimize the negative aspect of Downtown. 	<i>B.O.N.D</i>

User Friendly Process: Partner with the Private Sector

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
<i>Goal: Develop clear, concise regulations and cooperative programs that are conducive to effective partnerships aimed at accomplishing common objectives.</i>	
Evaluate regulations and administrative procedures to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether they are “user friendly;” • Clarify processes and responsibilities; • Initiate appropriate changes; and • Maintain changes through the code reviser committee. 	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission</i>
Take proactive approach to cooperation and coordination with surrounding communities.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Strategically target development based on land use policies.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission</i>
Build Texarkana as a distribution hub to Dallas/Little Rock/Shreveport.	<i>Chamber of Commerce</i>
Communicate planning patterns and procedures to the development community.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission</i>

Major Street Plan

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
<i>Goal: Develop and implement a major street plan to ensure adequate circulation and connectivity in the future and to support and direct projected development patterns.</i>	
Share costs of road construction with the development community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require rights-of-way dedication at time of subdivision or expansion of existing development. • Pass on cost of road improvements to developers based upon impact and need for additional roadway. • Improve or build roads prior to development if necessary, then recoup a fair share of the costs from the private investors. 	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council Development Community</i>
Support construction of an I-30 Highway bypass.	<i>Elected Officials</i>
Develop bikeways and sidewalk networks for alternative transportation and recreation.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission Parks and Rec. Dept.</i>
Develop access from State Line Avenue west to 2148 and from 2148 east to State Line Avenue with adequate interchanges, U-turns and bridges.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Complete one-way road improvements with appropriate turn around lanes and through connections.	<i>City Staff</i>
Increase interconnectivity of major streets within the community.	<i>City Staff</i>
Beautify and soften major roadways with landscaping. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape and beautify intersections, medians, on State Line Avenue and construct triangles that are not gravel, or concrete. • Make State Line Avenue a boulevard with a planting median down middle. 	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Lobby at the State level to ensure emphasis on priority projects and establish clear intent and desire.	<i>Elected Officials</i>

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 2 - Issues and Planning Policies

Redevelopment/Infill of Vacant Lots

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Goal: Encourage reinvestment in existing neighborhoods to help ensure long term success and viability within the community.	
Target infill development in strategic locations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacant parcels throughout the city; and • Downtown. 	<i>Chamber of Commerce B.O.N.D. City Staff</i>
Develop and promote infill and redevelopment incentives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish enterprise zones to encourage infill business development. • Partner with local lending agencies to provide low interest loans. • Seek state and federal grants. 	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission Chamber of Commerce</i>
Allow yard area exceptions for existing legal lots of record that are nonconforming because of changes in regulations.	<i>City Staff Board of Adjustments</i>
Adopt infill development guidelines to ensure quality and compatibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown infill guidelines; • Manufactured housing guidelines (standards to ensure single-family character); and • Commercial development guidelines. 	<i>B.O.N.D City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Foster cultural development throughout the city by establishing library branches with computer ties to the main library.	<i>City Library City Staff</i>
Define a theatre, arts and entertainment district to attract visitors and tourists.	<i>Chamber of Commerce B.O.N.D.</i>

Expand Use of Bringle Lake

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Goal: Pro-actively support economic development at Bringle Lake to offset cost of public recreation development and natural feature preservation.	
Develop plan for lake development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain portions for public recreation, including golf course, tennis courts, pavilion, boat ramp, fishing pier, walking trails, bike trails, soccer, baseball, and softball fields. Allow remainder to be developed privately, but emphasize retention of natural character through inclusion of open spaces and pocket parks and preservation of vegetation. 	<i>Parks and Rec. Dept. Audubon Society Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Maintain naturally sensitive areas, such as wetlands and natural trails.	<i>Parks and Rec. Dept. Audubon Society Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>

Economic Development Issues

Attract Industry

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Goal: Actively promote industrial development in appropriate corridors, districts and parks.	
Require industry to develop within defined districts that can be supported by adequate infrastructure and urban improvements.	<i>Planning and Zoning Commission City Council City Staff</i>
Target industry that provides higher wages such as industries involved in telecommunications or other high-tech operations.	<i>Chamber of Commerce</i>
Capitalize on niche markets and correlation between industries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry that provide services or products to support other existing industries; and High skill industries to complement support industries. 	<i>Chamber of Commerce</i>
Provide tax incentives to draw and retain industry including tax abatement of industries.	<i>City Council</i>
Promote diversity of education in the Texarkana area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with the colleges and vo-tech schools to fill voids. 	<i>Texas A&M, Texarkana Texarkana Community College Vocational Schools</i>

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 2 - Issues and Planning Policies

Make Downtown Vibrant

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Goal: Preserve the historical and cultural significance of downtown by focusing on public improvements that will encourage private investment.	
Identify regional niches and develop strategies to attract business.	<i>Chamber of Commerce City Staff</i>
Develop reasonable expectations and benchmarks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make larger investments in smaller areas to create greater, more visible impacts. • Use smaller successes as incubators for larger investments. 	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission</i>
Build on the history and cultural aspects of downtown.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission</i>
Provide greater development flexibility in downtown by allowing and accommodating mixed-use development concepts in downtown.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission</i>
Budget for more periodic maintenance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep streets swept; and • Clean up major thoroughfares. 	<i>City Staff City Council</i>
Identify and capitalize on strengths. Strengths include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School district moving toward downtown; • Some strong retail still there; and • Railroad provides boundary for downtown. Minimize weaknesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception that downtown is not conducive to retail-commercial; • Nothing to draw people at night; • Jails create incompatible land use; and • Lack of an entertainment/cultural district. 	<i>Chamber of Commerce B.O.N.D.</i>
Work to identify redevelopment opportunities that can be actively marketed.	<i>Chamber of Commerce City Staff</i>
Create regulations that ensure compatible development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines specifying minimum standards and considerations; and • Define uses which will and will not be permitted. 	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City council</i>

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Identify key stakeholders and potential investors and begin communication that will lead to strategic partnerships.	<i>Local Business Leader Chamber of Commerce City Staff</i>
Review regulations, procedures and staffing and evaluate effectiveness in supporting and accommodating downtown development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add teams to assist development; • Waive some fees e.g. permit lists; • Clarify rules of development; and • Make it easier to develop retail/office space. 	<i>Planning and Zoning Commission City Council Chamber of Commerce B.O.N.D.</i>
Provide financial incentives to invest in Downtown including tax reductions, low interest loans, etc.	<i>City Council B.O.N.D.</i>

Improve Entertainment Offerings

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
<i>Goal: Attract entertainment to the community that will both meet local needs and capitalize on Texarkana’s function as a regional center.</i>	
Encourage a variety entertainment as a means of attracting tourism and meeting the needs of the community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dinner theatre; • Convention Center; • Bringle Lake plans; • Bringle Lake Golf Course; • Pro hockey or Baseball; and • Activities such as antique shows and car shows. 	<i>B.O.N.D. Parks and Rec. Dept.</i>
Develop recreation and family entertainment activities at Bringle Lake to meet community needs.	<i>Parks and Rec. Dept.</i>

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 2 - Issues and Planning Policies

Local Road Development

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Goal: Develop a complete system of local roads to provide safe, convenient and efficient transportation within Texarkana.	
Complete the loop highway system.	<i>City Staff City Council</i>
Ensure interconnectivity through implementation of a major street plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop stronger east-west connections through town; and • Improve major streets in the I-30 corridor to create opportunities for business development and to resolve traffic conflicts at interstate interchanges. 	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Develop a complete system of frontage roads and access roads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to I-30; • Turnarounds; and • Implement the Texarkana Area Frontage Road Study. 	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Update the sign ordinance to implement the beautification objectives of the plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize impact of signs by limiting size and number; • Define sign districts where high visibility is warranted, such as the I-30 corridor; • Base fees on signage scale so that large, higher impact signs pay higher fees; and • Coordinate with Arkansas to remove older non-compliant signage along State Line Avenue through amortization. 	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission</i>

Encourage Participation of Minority Groups

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Goal: Foster development by minorities and development within minority neighborhoods to help ensure the long-term vitality of minority citizens in Texarkana.	
Partner with local agencies to encourage minority employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get industry involved with skills training; and • Promote college and vo-tech training. 	<i>City Staff Local Business Leader</i>
Foster infill and redevelopment in minority neighborhoods by promoting incentives for such development.	<i>City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>

Quality Of Life Issues

Expand Recreational/Cultural/Leisure Facilities and Opportunities

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Goal: Establish strategic partnerships and update regulations to acquire needed land and funding for facility and program development.	
Fill recreational voids through new facility and program development.	<i>Parks and Rec. Dept. Audubon Society</i>
Develop drainage areas and creeks as a trail system for hike/bike ways separate from vehicles.	<i>Parks and Rec. Dept. City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Develop a Teen Center to provide needed activities and gathering place.	<i>Parks and Rec. Dept. City Staff Planning and Zoning Commission City Council</i>
Clean up Wright-Patman Lake to provide additional recreation opportunities.	<i>City Council State Dept. of Natural Resources</i>

Foster Communication with the Community

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Goal: Promote civic pride and communication through cooperative efforts between public and private organizations.	
Work with existing programs to advertise and promote activities.	<i>City Staff Chamber of Commerce B.O.N.D.</i>
Foster community pride and unity through community programs such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community clean up drive block parties to highlight all cultures in town. • Stage in park for outdoor plays and music, talent show, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, Ball teams, Mexican, American communities. <u>Underserved</u> – find interests, language barrier. • TECAP (all to share vision), encourage understanding, the “big picture” where each project and person fits in. Know goal, where you would like to be. • Promote community at the Texas/Arkansas game. 	<i>Parks and Rec. Dept. City Staff</i>
Develop an inner-city school district leadership development program.	<i>School District</i>
Form a program aimed at bringing community groups together to foster better communication, such as a Mayors breakfast: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • city council, • community groups, • TECAP, etc. 	<i>City Staff Elected Officials</i>

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 2 - Issues and Planning Policies

Expand Focus on Education

Issue Goal Statement/Objectives	Policy Step
Goal: Identify and implement programs that are in demand or need of expansion.	
Invest in needed educational improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• More vocational programs for job training;• Refurbishing schools in the TISD; and• New health clinic with a school.	<i>City Council School District</i>
Create Sr. Citizens Service in neighborhoods, taking the services into the community.	<i>City Staff</i>
Support a 4-year college.	<i>Elected Officials Entire Community</i>

**CHAPTER 3
PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITES**

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Water Utilities

The Texarkana, Texas and Texarkana, Arkansas cities are served by a single municipal water utility, co-owned and operated by the two cities. There are two water treatment plants, Wright-Patman Water Treatment Plant and Millwood Water Treatment Plant.

Wright-Patman Water Treatment Plant with 18 million gallons per day (mgd) capacity is located in the western part of Texarkana, Texas and treats water from Wright-Patman Lake. The Texarkana Water Utility owns all of the water rights from the potential 45 mgd from Lake Wright-Patman, located ten miles southwest of Texarkana on the Sulphur River.

The Millwood Water Treatment Plant with 15 mgd capacity is located 20 miles north of Texarkana and draws water from Millwood Lake. Millwood Lake is located on the Little River in Arkansas, and is a reservoir under the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers. Water from the Millwood Plant is conveyed to Texarkana through a 42" transmission main routed south along the State Line Avenue.

Both treatment plants are conventional coagulation, alum addition, and settling and filtration treatment for surface water. The entire water system is served by a single pressure zone.

The water utility has recently finished construction of a new, 13-mile long, 30" water line on the north side of the City from the State Line Avenue to the west edge of the distribution system. This provides a looped connection to assure reliability of service to the northwest part of the City. This loop needs to be extended on to the south in the future to assure service to the southwest part of the City.

The northeast part of the City is served by 24" and 16" water mains that loop the north and east sides of the system. The southeast part of the City needs additional pipelines to complete connection of the loop to that part of the City.

The water utility supplies water to a number of smaller Cities through a pipeline routed 60 miles toward the west along US Highway 82. The pipeline size varies in size with approximately 16 miles of 30", 10 miles of 16", and the rest 10" and 8" diameter pipe. As growth in demand continues along this line it is anticipated that a parallel line will be needed.

The Distribution system has seven elevated storage tanks. Nine million gallons of below ground storage is available at Wright-Patman, and 3.25 million gallons of below ground storage is available at the Millwood Water Treatment Plant.

Wastewater Utilities

There are three major wastewater treatment plants that serve the Texarkana metropolitan area: the South Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant, the Wagner Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the McKinney Bayou Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The South Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant has a design capacity of 16.5 mgd. Its treatment process is a combination trickling filter and activated sludge plant. The treatment plant is located in the southern part of the City on the Texas side of the State Line Avenue. It generally treats wastewater from the area south of I-30 and east of US Highway 59. The South Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant was constructed in 1988.

The 2.0 mgd Wagner Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant is located on the west side of the metropolitan area. The wastewater treatment plant is an activated sludge type plant and was constructed in 1989. It generally serves the area north of I-30 and west of US Highway 59 including the cities of Lake Villa and Nash. This part of the City is expected to develop in the future and is expected to expand to an ultimate of 3.0 mgd in the future.

The McKinney Bayou Wastewater Treatment Plant has a design capacity of 1.0 mgd and is located in the northeast part of the metropolitan area on the Arkansas side of the State Line Avenue. It went into operation recently in 1999. It is an activated sludge plant and generally serves the area east of the State Line Avenue and north of Interstate Highway 30.

The topography of the Texarkana metropolitan area is generally flat and consequently the wastewater collection system contains 35 to 40 lift stations to convey the wastewater to the respective treatment plants.

TEXARKANA WATER UTILITIES OFFICE

Utility Financing

Since 1948 the City of Texarkana, Texas and the City of Texarkana, Arkansas have operated their water and sewer utilities as a combined system via a jointly operated department called Texarkana Water Utilities (the “Utility”). Each City’s portion of the Utility maintains separate books and records and is subject to separate audits in connection with or as a part of the audits required of each city under its own state laws. A portion of the Utility facilities and equipment is jointly owned by Texarkana, Texas (hereafter referred to as “City of Texarkana”) and Texarkana, Arkansas. Some of the facilities and equipment are owned by one city but subject to capital lease agreements with the other city. Authority for joint operation of the Utility is derived from a 1948 contract entered into between both cities as subsequently amended in 1962, 1982, and 1985.

The Utility is accounted for as an Enterprise Fund by each city. Enterprise Funds are used to account for operations (a) that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises where the intent of the governing body is that the costs (expenses including depreciation) of providing goods or services to the general public on a continuing basis be financed or recovered primarily through user charges; or (b) where the governing body has decided that periodic determination of revenues earned, expenses incurred, and/or net income is appropriate for capital maintenance, public policy, management control, accountability, or other purposes.

Utility Services

The “Texarkana Water Utilities Operations” include the accounts of the Texarkana Water Utilities System, the Texarkana, Arkansas Water Utilities System and the Lake Texarkana Water Supply Corporation. The International Paper (IP) funds are accounted for and managed by the Texarkana Water Utilities. The IP systems are not part of the joint system known as the Texarkana Water Utilities. However, the City of Texarkana issued bonds in 1971 and 1977 for construction and expansion of the IP water and sewer facilities pursuant to contracts between the city and International Paper Company in March of 1970 and October of 1976. The Utility operates certain water intake and distribution facilities and performs supervision, engineering, accounting, and other services necessary for proper administration of the IP contracts.

Member City Services

Lake Texarkana Water Supply Corporation is a nonprofit corporation which was organized under provision of the Texas Nonprofit Corporation Act for the purpose of furnishing a water supply to towns, cities, private corporations, individuals and military camps and bases in the area of Bowie, Morris, Cass, and Red River counties, Texas. In addition to Texarkana, Texas and Texarkana, Arkansas, seven other cities participate in the corporation as “Member Cities.” As of September 1999, seven other customers had wholesale water purchase contracts for water to be supplied from the system.

To finance the construction of this area-wide supply and distributions system, Lake Texarkana Water Supply Corporation received a grant of \$3,000,000 from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and sold \$8,400,000 of its bonds. These bonds mature in varying amounts from June 1, 1972 to June 1, 2001.

South Regional Wastewater Facilities

A wastewater agreement between the two cities provides that the City of Texarkana, Texas will process the wastewater from the City of Texarkana, Arkansas and charge them the same amount per one thousand gallons as computed to be the cost to the City of Texarkana, Texas for wastewater treatment. The calculation of cost for retail customers billed on the City Rate Ordinance is based on the metered retail water sales of each city to the total retail water sales for both cities. The contract wastewater treatment cost to the cities is based on metered wastewater treated in combination with the retail customers for each city to the total for both cities.

North Texarkana Wastewater Facilities

A wastewater agreement between the two cities relates to the operation and maintenance of a wastewater treatment facility, known as the North Texarkana Wastewater Facilities (the facilities), and related transmission lines located within the City of Texarkana, Arkansas to be used for the collection and treatment of a portion of the two cities’ wastewater. The agreement provides that the City of Texarkana, Arkansas will process a portion of the wastewater from the City of Texarkana, Texas and charge the same amount per one thousand gallons as computed to be the cost to the City of Texarkana, Arkansas for wastewater treatment. The calculation of cost for retail customers billed is based on the metered retail water sales of each city, whose wastewater is treated in the facilities, to the total retail water sales for both cities, whose wastewater is being treated in the facilities.

Texarkana Reservoir

In 1953 the Cities of Texarkana, Texas and Texarkana, Arkansas entered into a contract with the US Government for the right to withdraw up to 13 million gallons of water per day from Texarkana Reservoir. The term of the agreement is for fifty years from the effective date. Annual payments of \$7,000 are required.

In 1968 the City of Texarkana, Texas entered into two agreements with the US Government for water rights in the Texarkana Reservoir. The first agreement provides for the reallocation of an additional 120,000 acre-feet of water storage in the Texarkana Reservoir to the City of Texarkana, Texas after the completion of Cooper Reservoir. This space will become available to Texarkana, Texas effective with the latter of 1) the date Cooper Reservoir becomes operative for storage of water for flood control or 2) the date of completion of modification to Texarkana Reservoir which is required to affect the conversion of storage space therein from flood control use to municipal and industrial water supply use. The term of contract is for as long as the Government continues to operate Texarkana Reservoir.

The second contract is for the purpose of providing the City of Texarkana, Texas an additional water supply until Cooper Reservoir is completed and modifications are made to Texarkana Reservoir to convert additional storage to municipal and industrial use. This contract provides for 84 million gallons per day in addition to the 132 million gallons provided in the 1953 contract.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

The water utilities office emphasizes two main objectives in planning for future improvements:

- Improvement of current infrastructure, primarily by replacing undersized (2”) water lines; and
- Serving the newly annexed areas of Texarkana.

Improvements to Current Infrastructure

There are approximately fifteen (15) miles of two inch (2”) water mains in Texarkana, Texas and there are approximately sixteen (16) miles in Texarkana, Arkansas. The Water Utilities Office has added an infrastructure fee on the Texarkana, Texas water bills that is going towards the replacement of old water mains. This project is ongoing for the near-term, and is in conjunction with other maintenance programs, such as the inflow and infiltration (I & I) improvement program.

Serving Newly Annexed Territory

The other primary investment in water and sewer service by the Water Utilities Office is to serve the newly annexed areas of Texarkana. The planned improvements are presented in Table 5.1 in Chapter 5.

TEXARKANA WATER UTILITIES OFFICE PLEDGE

We provide services vital to the health and safety of Texarkana citizens and our customers, the City's efforts toward economic development, environmental protection, and enhancement of quality of life. These services include water supply, treatment, and distribution; and wastewater collection and treatment. We are a city-owned company providing regional services and we work in support of these goals.

We strive to provide excellent response to the needs of our customers at a fair and reasonable cost through our operations, customer service, maintenance, and support functions. Our products consistently meet higher quality standards than those set by local, state and federal regulatory agencies.

We look toward the future. We realize that the systems we operate and maintain must meet the needs of future generations, and we plan our efforts accordingly. Our programs are focused on meeting future needs in the most cost-effective manner. Because we function in a world where technology and regulations are constantly changing, we realize that we can be effective only to the degree that we are open to new ideas and challenges.

SEWER AND WATER LINE MAP

CHAPTER 4 ROADWAY NETWORK

ROADWAY NETWORK

The Roadway Network consists of various highways and roadways within the City of Texarkana and the bi-state metropolitan area. Ensuring safe and efficient traffic movement is key to the success of near and long term development. This Chapter includes a discussion of the general principles and considerations necessary to implement such a system. The roadway classification system, access control standards and guidelines are cited which establish the functional hierarchy of the roadways, minimum distances for intersections and driveways along arterial and collector roads.

Individual roads and streets do not serve trips independently, rather, most trips involve movement through a network of roadways. A functional classification system of roadways provides a method for channeling traffic in a logical, efficient and safe manner.

Roadway Classification System

The existing road and highway network is classified by function. Roads and highways are grouped into classes or systems according to the service they provide. The factors that identify roadway classifications include:

- the level of through-traffic movement; and
- access to adjacent land or individual properties.

Roadways are not classified by the amount of traffic they carry; however, higher traffic volumes are usually consistent with upper level roadway classifications, as discussed below. The functional classification for roadways employs a hierarchical structure to identify the operation of all roadways within a transportation system. The hierarchy of road types in descending order are:

- Freeways/Expressways
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Residential Collector

Lower level roadways, such as local roads, provide more direct access to property than do higher level roadways, such as arterial roadways.

Roadway classifications dictate the design standards for the construction of a roadway. The function of a roadway, traffic volume and adjacent land use determine the type of roadway that should support daily traffic activity. The American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) has developed general roadway design standards in "A Policy of Geometric Design and Highways and Streets." The ability to improve an existing roadway by constructing additional lanes or other improvements to AASHTO standards, however, may be constrained by the existing development in growth areas. The standards summarized below for arterial, collector, and local roadways also reflect locally adopted standards.

Local Roadways

Local roadways provide direct access to private property. The ideal traffic volume for local roadways is less than 1,500 vehicles per day. The recommended width for a local roadway is 28 feet. The minimum right-of-way is 50 feet. Local roadways serving residential areas should be constructed with an enclosed storm water system. On-street parking is usually permitted. However, in order to meet fire codes, which require a 20-foot path for equipment, parking may be limited to one side of the roadway.

Collector Roadways

Residential collector roadways are further classified in the *Texarkana Urban Transportation Study* as major collector roadways (three-lane). The two-lane collector roadway functions to collect traffic in residential neighborhoods. Because traffic volumes on two-lane collector roadways may range between 1,500 and 5,000 vehicles per day, residential properties abutting the collector road may not be as desirable as those abutting a local road. The road width should accommodate two 16-foot lanes and curb and gutter for a width of 36 feet. To accommodate sidewalks and street lighting, a minimum right-of-way of 60 feet is needed. Depending on local conditions such as traffic volumes, up to an 80 foot right-of-way may be warranted. Parking and private access to the collector should be discouraged. If needed, parking should be allowed on one side only.

A three-lane collector roadway section is appropriate for collecting traffic in commercial land use areas, such as a business park or shopping center where traffic demand is expected to range between 1,500 and 12,000 vehicles per day. This road section includes two 12-foot through lanes, and can be widened by adding one 12-foot center left turn lane. The recommended road width for a three-lane collector including curb and gutter is 40 feet. Sidewalks should be provided on both sides. The right-of-way width to allow for the roadway, sidewalks and street lighting should be 80 feet. On-street parking should be prohibited.

Arterial Roadways

Arterial roadways are further classified in the Texarkana transportation study into minor arterial roadways (four-lane) and principal arterial roadways (five-lane). Minor arterial roadways are appropriate for carrying traffic through primarily residential areas without directly accessing any of the properties. A minor arterial road section includes four 12-foot through lanes and should provide an additional left-turn bay at all signalized intersections and any major intersections. A minimum travel width of 52 feet and right-of-way width of 100 feet are recommended. Sidewalks should be provided on both sides. Only public roads should be allowed to access a four-lane arterial road and road spacing should be related to design speed as per a five or six-lane roadway. The ideal range for traffic volume on a four-lane arterial roadway is between 12,000 and 25,000 vehicles per day.

Principal arterial roadways serve major activity centers and carry a high proportion of traffic on a limited number of roadway miles. A road section includes two 12-foot through lanes in each direction and between a 12-foot and 16-foot center two-way left-turn lane. A minimum road width of 65 feet and right-of-way of 100 feet are recommended. Traffic volumes on this type of roadway range between 25,000 and 35,000 vehicles per day.

Highways/Expressways/Freeways

Highways, such as the loop highway, are primary arterial roadways that are fully or partially access controlled. These routes are typically the highest traveled corridors, serve major activity centers and carry the major portion of trips entering or leaving the City.

Roadway Classifications

The roadway classifications described above are applicable to the major roadways in the City and the projected growth areas. These roadways are classified based on their function that corresponds with the description of the roadway classifications. The “Transportation Plan—Functional Classification Map” on the following page is from the *Texarkana Urban Transportation Study* and is reproduced in the Texarkana Comprehensive Plan as adopted to date. Several major project decisions are under study at this time, such as the ultimate alignment of the I-30 Bypass.

Roadway Improvements

In the following tables are listed the plan improvements to major roadways in the City and in Texarkana, Arkansas. Tables 4.1 and 4.3 show projects in each city during the near-term period to 2009, and Tables 4.2 and 4.4 show the longer-term projects to 2025, as currently planned in the *Texarkana Urban Transportation Study*.

Access Control

Just as the design of a roadway helps to move traffic efficiently, controlling access to the roadway system can help do the same. The governing body of a municipality may by ordinance extend to the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of the municipality the application of municipal ordinances adopted under the subdivision regulations relating to access to public roads. The lack of an adequate access control policy or plan increases the probability of having traffic hazards and increased traffic congestion. Traffic hazards and traffic congestion reduce the capacity of the roadway to accommodate the traffic volumes for which it is designed. Traffic congestion and traffic hazards increase the pressure to widen roadways, which requires additional public funds.

Roadway capacity can be increased or decreased in a number of ways. The method utilized most frequently to increase capacity is to widen a road to provide additional travel lanes. In some instances, however, it is not feasible to add additional travel lanes due to land uses on either side of existing roadways. In these instances, other methods of increasing roadway capacity may be more appropriate. Other methods include constructing intersection improvements, turn bays, restricting road and driveway access or providing traffic signal timing improvements. Conversely, road capacity can be decreased by adding cross roads, driveways, traffic signals, or other traffic control devices. By developing an access control policy, road capacity can be maintained to efficiently accommodate future development.

The “Regulations for Access Driveways to State Highways” published by the Texas Department of Transportation is a regulatory guide for the design and installation of driveways that access state highways. It provides minimum and maximum widths, curve radii, grades, etc. for driveway design. The city has adopted it for their driveway regulations also. The city’s adoption refers to the revised edition of August 1986, or any revisions thereafter.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN—FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION MAP

TABLE 4.1 - TEXARKANA, TEXAS 2000 TO 2009 PROJECTS

Map Ref. #	Project Description	Length (MI.)	-Federal \$-	-State \$-	-Local \$-	Ranking
101	Gibson Lane from I-30 to the North 0.4 Miles – Upgrade Existing 2 Lanes	0.40	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 765,000	1
102	Gibson Lane from FM 559 to the West 0.45 Miles - Add Left Turn Lane	0.45	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 1,165,600	2
103	S. State Line Avenue from Euclid to US 71 (Loop) – 2 Lane to 4 Lane w/Shoulders	1.42	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 1,781,250	3
104	Moores Lane from FM 559 to Gin Road – Add Left Turn Lane	0.40	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 1,155,000	4
105	Morris Lane from FM 1397 to Cowhorn – New Facility (2 Lanes w/LTL)	0.57	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 1,470,000	5
106	Knotty Pine from Knotty Pine to Stonegate – New Facility (2 Lanes w/LTL)	0.05	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 116,400	6
107	Morris Lane from Cowhorn to Robin – New Facility (2 Lanes w/LTL)	0.76	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 2,507,350	7
108	College Dr. from SH 93 to FM 559 – 2 Lanes to 5 Lane	0.45	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 1,363,000	8
Total 2000 to 2009 Projects =			\$ –	\$ –	\$ 10,323,600	
Expecting Funding =					\$ 10,400,000	
Remaining Funding =					\$ 76,400	

Source: Texarkana Urban Transportation Study, October 1999

TABLE 4.2 - TEXARKANA, TEXAS 2010 TO 2025 PROJECTS

Map Ref. #	Project Description	Length (MI.)	-Federal \$-	-State \$-	-Local \$-	Ranking
109	Kevin Lane from Fortune to Sandlin – New Facility (2 Lane w/Curb & Gut)	0.17	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 405,000	9
110	Gin Road from FM 559 to F M 1297 - Add Left Turn Lane	0.91	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 2,712,000	10 or 11
111	Airline Drive from FM 559 to North end of Airline – Add Left Turn Lane	0.60	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 1,323,000	10 or 11
112	Cooper Lane from FM 989 to FM 2828 – Add Left Turn Lane	1.10	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 2,390,300	12
113	Idalou from Airline to East end of Idalou – Add Left Turn Lane	0.25	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 546,000	13
114	Skyline Avenue from Loop 14 to State Line Avenue – Add Left Turn Lane	0.58	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 1,626,750	14
115	24 th Street from Idalou to Existing Skyline – New Facility (2 Lane w/LT)	0.07	\$ –	\$ –	\$ 224,000	15
Total 2010 to 2025 Projects =			\$ –	\$ –	\$ 9,227,050	
Expecting Funding =					\$ 16,726,400	
Remaining Funding =					\$ 7,499,350	

Source: Texarkana Urban Transportation Study, October 1999

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 4 - Roadway Network

TABLE 4.3 - TEXARKANA, ARKANSAS 2000 TO 2009 PROJECTS

Map Ref. #	Job Ref. #	Project Description	-Federal \$-	-State \$-	-Local \$-	-Total \$-	Ranking
Expected Funding =			\$ 1,532,000	\$ -	\$ 4,230,800	\$ 5,762,800	
229	030101***	Jefferson Avenue from IH 30 to Hwy 296-New 2 Lane Facility	\$ 1,232,000	\$ -	\$ 528,000	\$ 1,760,000	1
301		Oats Street from East 19 th to Hwy 196-Widen to 3 Lanes	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	2
302		Hwy 245 W. Side Frontage Road from Tennessee to Hwy 82	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	3
231	030201	State Line Avenue Ave-Courthouse to the RR Depot-Enhancements	\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ 75,000,000	\$ 375,000	20*
Remaining Funding =			\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,127,800	\$ 1,127,800	

Source: Texarkana Urban Transportation Study, October 1999

TABLE 4.4 - TEXARKANA, ARKANSAS 2010 TO 2025 PROJECTS

Map Ref. #	Job Ref. #	Project Description	-Federal \$-	-State \$-	-Local \$-	-Total \$-	Ranking
Expected Funding =			\$ 2,640,000	\$ -	\$ 7,897,000	\$ 10,537,000	
303		Old Post Road from Jim Walter to Hwy 237 - Widen	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 1,200,000	4
304		Line Ferry Road from Euclid to Hwy 245 - Widen to 3 Lanes	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,400,000	\$ 1,400,000	5
305		Hwy 245 West Frontage Road from Hwy 71 to Hwy 196	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 1,300,000	6
306		Hasting Crossing Road from Tennessee to Hwy 71 - Widen	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 1,200,000	7
307		Hwy 245 East Frontage Road from Hwy 71 to Hwy 196	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,600,000	\$ 1,600,000	8
230	030100	McDonald Ln - Jefferson Avenue to Sammy Ln - New 2 Lane Road	\$ 2,640,000	\$ -	\$ 660,000	\$ 3,300,000	13**
Remaining Funding =			\$ -	\$ -	\$ 537,000	\$ 537,000	

Source: Texarkana Urban Transportation Study, October 1999

Specific design characteristics associated with each functional classification depend on factors such as projected traffic volumes and local access control policies. Higher traffic volumes such as those exceeding 20,000 vehicles per day warrant construction of a four or five lane arterial road. Traffic volumes of 10,000 or 15,000 vehicles per day can be accommodated by a four-lane arterial road or by a two-lane arterial road which includes turn bays, good signal and intersection spacing, and private driveway access control. In many cases, a well-built two-lane arterial road, with turn lanes added, can function as well as a four-lane road at less cost.

Acceptable traffic volumes on a major arterial roadway can range as high as 25,000-35,000 vehicles per day. However, excessive curb cuts and mid-block turning movements can reduce capacity. The center turn lane is appropriate because of frequent entrances into higher traffic generation land uses such as business parks and retail centers. A median can be constructed in locations where left-turns should be prohibited and on-street parking should not be allowed. For design speeds greater than 35 mph, or for peak hour right turn-in traffic volumes exceeding 100 vehicles, it is recommended that a right turn lane be constructed along the arterial roadway approaching the curb cut.

Highway 151 and other arterial roads provide regional access as well as access to abutting properties. Therefore, it is critical that a sound access control policy be followed as development occurs on property directly abutting the highway. Access control for arterial and collector streets parallel to the Highway and throughout the City of Texarkana must be traffic controlled as well, for efficient movement of local traffic as residential and commercial growth occurs.

As future development occurs, minor roadway improvements may be necessary to prevent traffic congestion from increased traffic movements accessing arterial roads. Such improvements may consist of turn bays, restricting road and driveway access, or providing traffic control devices on local arterial roads and access roads. The need for these improvements must be carefully balanced against the need to allow for the efficient movement of traffic through the City. Therefore, the carrying capacity of the major roadways must be protected by limiting the number of cross roads, driveways, traffic signals, or other stop controls.

Physical obstructions and influence on traffic caused by the presence and use of access driveways to property along the highways make it necessary that they be controlled. Reasonable rules and regulations governing the construction and maintenance of private access driveways have been established by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and are published in the "Regulations for Access Driveways to State Highways."

The regulations manual states, "The purpose of these rules and regulations is not to set up unreasonable restrictions as to access to abutting property, but to accomplish a coordinated development between the highway and the abutting property which it serves. With the increased volume of traffic on our highways, it is essential that entrances and/or exits of adequate design be provided for abutting properties, especially commercial properties, in order that ingress and egress may be as safe as possible to the traveling public, and to those who patronize the roadside commercial establishments."

Locations of access driveways shall be selected to provide maximum safety for highway traffic and for users of the driveway. Access driveways shall be restricted for a sufficient distance from the intersection to preserve the normal and safe movement of traffic through it.

Private Driveway Widths: The width shall not exceed twenty-four feet measured at right angles to the centerline of the driveway, except as increased by permissible radii.

Commercial Driveway Widths: The width of commercial access driveways shall not exceed forty-five feet measured at right angles to the centerline of the driveway, except as increased by permissible radii.

Intersection Spacing

More controls are needed than driveway access limitations. Adequate distance between intersections is essential for the safe and efficient flow of traffic. Appropriately spaced intersections provide through-motorists an opportunity to respond to traffic entering the street from a side street. Table 4.5 shows the recommended minimum standards for spacing intersections, determined by through-traffic speed.

TABLE 4.5 - MINIMUM INTERSECTION SPACING STANDARDS

Through-Traffic Speed	Minimum Intersection Spacing
30 mph	210 feet
35 mph	300 feet
40 mph	420 feet
45+ mph	550 feet

Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers

Additional Driveway Spacing Requirements

Like a street, private driveways create an intersection with a public street. Conflicts and potential congestion occur at all intersections - public and private. Methods to reduce conflict include:

- Separating the conflicts by reducing the number of driveways and intersections;
- Limiting certain maneuvers such as left turns; and
- Separating conflicts by providing turn lanes.

No access drives should be located within the operations area of an intersection. Driver conflicts need to be spaced in order to eliminate overlaps between through traffic and right turns. It is recommended that new driveway locations on Principal Arterial Roads in Texarkana comply with the minimum corner clearance criteria indicated in Table 4.6. This is an augmentation to the regulations in the adopted access control manual published by TxDOT. Proper spacing of driveways on major roads permits adequate storage and stacking of automobiles on the public street. This distance may have to be increased in cases with high volumes to ensure that driveways do not interfere with the operation of turning lanes at intersections.

TABLE 4.6 - SUGGESTED MAXIMUM DRIVEWAY GUIDELINES FOR PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL ROADS

Maximum Number of Driveways	Driveway Spacing	
	Undivided Principal Arterial Streets Length of Lot Frontage	Divided Principal Arterial Streets Length of Lot Frontage
1	0-399 feet	0-529 feet
2	400 - 899 feet	530 - 1199 feet
3	900-1,399 feet	1200 - 1859 feet
4	1,400-1,899 feet ¹	1860 - 2525 feet ²

Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Manual

Notes:

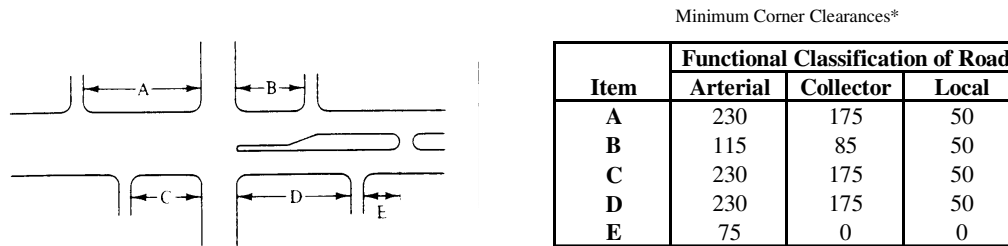
¹ For each 500 feet above 1899 feet, one additional driveway is permitted.

² For each 665 feet above 2525 feet, one additional driveway is permitted.

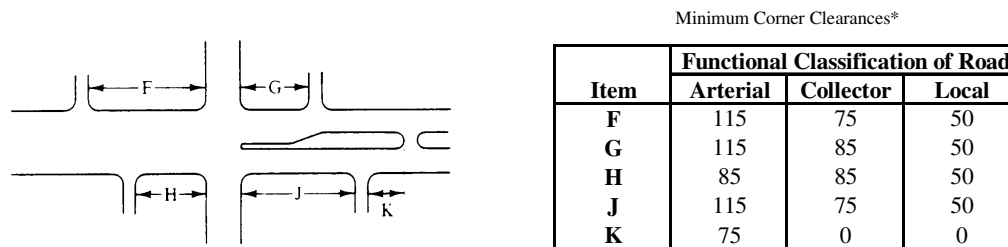
Corner Clearance

Specific minimum corner clearance guidelines are listed in Figure 1. These guidelines can be used to regulate new commercial developments located along arterial or collector streets.

FIGURE 1 - CORNER CLEARANCE GUIDELINES



(a) Signalized intersection control



(b) Non-signalized intersection control

TEXARKANA AREA FRONTAGE ROAD EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study provides the engineering justification for converting the non-continuous two-way frontage road system in the Texarkana study area to continuous one-way operation. The study is based on Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) research reports 288 and 402. These studies developed traffic volume based warrants for use by planning engineers in determining when it is appropriate to convert from two-way to one-way frontage road operations. Traffic volume data was collected at nine interchanges in the Texarkana study area. This data was analyzed against the warrants developed by TTI. Analysis of the data demonstrated that all of the interchanges meet at least one of the warranting conditions. Conclusions, recommendations and cost estimates follow:

Conclusions

The following conclusions are based on the traffic volume based warrant analysis and the associated discussions presented.

1. Failure to address the current traffic congestion problem will adversely impact many facets of the quality of life in the Texarkana area. Travel time and delay will increase, as will driver frustration, red light running and crash incidents.
2. Traffic volumes will continue to increase at key interchanges in the IH 30 corridor due to planned commercial development. These locations include FM 559 (Richmond Road) with the development of a new retail center with outlets such as Home Depot, Target and several restaurants adjacent to Movies 12 Theatre, FM 989 (Kings Highway) with the development of a new retail center in the northwest corner, FM 1397 (Summerhill Road) with the construction of Century Bank and an adjacent office building, and Jefferson Avenue with the planned construction of a Wal-Mart Super Center in the northwest corner.
3. The decision of businesses to locate in the Texarkana area could be impacted because access and a good transportation network are essential to the success of businesses.
4. The transportation system in the Texarkana area would operate more efficiently and safely with continuous one-way frontage roads.
5. Operations at FM 559 (Richmond Road) and FM 1397 (Summerhill Road) will continue to degrade unless the number of signalized intersections within each interchange is reduced.
6. As development continues north of IH 30 the type of operational problems that exist at FM 559 (Richmond Road) and FM 1397 (Summerhill Road) will develop at FM 989 (Kings Highway), Jefferson Avenue and SH 245 as traffic volumes increase and it becomes necessary to signalize these interchanges.
7. All of the interchanges in the IH 30 corridor from FM 989 (Kings Highway) to SH 245 and the US 59/US 82 interchanges met the warrants for conversion to one-way frontage road operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations will improve the flow and circuitry of traffic throughout the transportation network; improve safety; reduce congestion and delay; meet driver expectations; and promote development of abutting property. The following recommendations should be implemented as soon as funding can be secured:

1. Provide turnarounds at FM 989 (Kings Highway), east side only, FM 559 (Richmond Road), FM 1397 (Summerhill Road) and Jefferson Avenue, west side only.
2. Fill in the gaps in the existing frontage road system FM 989 (Kings Highway) to US 59, FM 1397 (Summerhill Road) to US 71 (State Line Avenue) and Jefferson Avenue to SH 245.
3. Convert from two-way to one-way frontage road operations from the east side of FM 989 (Kings Highway) to the west side of Jefferson Avenue in the IH 30 corridor and from US 82/US 59 to IH 30.
4. Extend Trinity Boulevard to SH 245 and operate as two-way frontage road.
5. Construct south frontage road from Jefferson Avenue to SH 245.
6. Convert to one-way operation between Jefferson Avenue to SH 245.
7. Convert the existing two-way frontage roads along SH 245 from IH 30 to Arkansas Boulevard To one-way operations when warranted by traffic conditions.

It is also recommended that a separate origin—destination study be conducted in order to address the issue of travel time under one-way operation versus two-way operation. The results of such a study could be used to inform and educate the public on this issue and would be useful during the design process.

Cost Estimates

Cost estimates were developed for all of the projects necessary to convert from two-way to one-way frontage roads in the Texarkana area. Six turnaround structures would be required: one on the east side of FM 989 (Kings Highway), two at both FM 559 (Richmond Road) and FM 1397 (Summerhill Road), and one on the west side of Jefferson Avenue. The \$7.5 million cost estimate for constructing these facilities is dependent upon the structural design of the existing crossover structures. The \$1.1 million estimate for the north frontage road between US 59 and FM 989 and the \$1.525 million estimate for the south frontage road in this section were obtained from the Texarkana Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) 2000-2025. The Texarkana MTP 2000-2025 also indicated that conversion of the frontage roads between US 59 and State Line Avenue would cost \$5,775,000. This estimate includes conversion of the frontage roads from US82/US 59 to IH 30 and the completion of the north and south frontage roads from FM 1397 (Summerhill Road) to State Line Avenue. It is estimated that the south frontage road between Jefferson Avenue and SH 245 would cost \$1.5 million while the north frontage road in this area would cost \$600,000. The total cost estimate for converting the frontage road system to one-way operation is \$19.5.

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CHAPTER 5 FUTURE LAND USE

LAND USE AND PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The City of Texarkana has been applying incremental public policy in response to growth—in the public interest—but not in a comprehensive way. Commercial development, for example, has been developed responsibly on a site-by-site basis, but not on the basis of a comprehensive land use policy. In order for the entire Texarkana community to attain the objectives of the new Texarkana Comprehensive Plan, it is helpful to restate the dynamics of urban development. Without such an understanding, local efforts cannot promote community goals as effectively. The Comprehensive Plan will be developed with the land planning principles presented in this section.

Land Use Externalities

Certain basic planning issues are relevant to sound public policy. Externalities or the impact of a given parcel of land on its neighboring properties, must be considered. For example, a residential district that abuts expanding commercial districts—whether on Richmond Road or New Boston Road, or on the newly extended Summerhill Road—can experience negative externalities if the business uses are not carefully planned. The residential district has less value than a similar district integrated within a residential neighborhood, buffered from the neighboring mixed-use district.

In effect, the land use incompatibility creates a cost imposed by the commercial owners on the residential owners. The best way to minimize these external costs is to a) interrelate the multiple land uses in a planned mixed-use development and screen it from residential districts or, b) separate incompatible land uses with more extensive buffers and similar details of effective urban design. These planning principles help create compatible transitions between residential and commercial areas.

Areas of Texarkana that are vulnerable to the “externalities” of change and in need of careful land use planning include existing single-family residential areas near vacant, commercial land. Redevelopment of mixed-use commercial uses at the edges of commercial districts, for example, must be carefully considered. Characteristics that most people seek in a residential area—quiet, serenity and stability—can be protected by implementing site plan review recommendations as the comprehensive plan is implemented.

Commercial districts can be made compatible with sensitive screening and other mitigating design features. Positive externalities can develop, as well, by clustering commercial uses as well-designed centers. A concentrated shopping district along major streets, such as on Richmond Road or Texas Boulevard, will be more successful and attract customers from a wider market area than would a string of commercial uses dispersed along the local roadway in commercial strips. It would fit with the adjacent residential neighborhood better and would create fewer curb cuts and traffic conflicts with businesses.

Transportation Access

Clustering retail-commercial uses where arterial roads intersect benefits the commercial use while protecting the capacity of major roads to carry traffic, in addition to protecting nearby residential districts from intrusive development. The governing body by ordinance may extend to the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of Texarkana the application of municipal ordinances relating to access to public roads, as provided in subdivision regulations. Proper access control includes limitation on curb cuts, widths of

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 5 - Future Land Use

driveway and related design issues. The planning principles for Texarkana in the Comprehensive Plan are relevant to redevelopment, as well, as it occurs on arterial streets, such as New Boston Road, M. L. King Boulevard and Summerhill Road. The City must protect not only existing development but also certain “urban systems.” Growth along major arterial roads must be carefully planned to allow the major thoroughfare to continue carrying traffic. Development along the arterial roads must be designed to minimize conflicts.

Access within Texarkana to the regional highway network is important for a) convenience of residents and b) continued growth of commercial and industrial districts along frontage roads. The viability of the local arterial street system to carry future traffic is critical. Development of local arterial street corridors from the interstate is critical to future growth of Texarkana and must be done in a planned way. The Texarkana Urban Transportation Study shows the “Future Road Corridors” where needed improvements must be made to accommodate growth.

Standards for clustering of retail and office use help channel traffic efficiently onto arterial streets. Clusters of retail-commercial activity create discrete retail “destinations.” Retail districts also create opportunities for the joint use of parking facilities. Commercial design standards become a tool for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. To support commercial and industrial growth, the Major Thoroughfare Plan must be followed to create efficient access to internal land areas from the regional highway network.

Neighborhood Design

Good urban design can help new developments relate to adjacent developments to form strong neighborhoods. The land use pattern of a neighborhood plays a major role in determining its strengths and weaknesses.

The current Texarkana pattern of parks and schools in the historic neighborhoods meets basic planning standards. They were developed in a traditional grid street pattern, which today is called a “neo-traditional” pattern. Proposed locations for parks, which will serve growth areas of Texarkana should be planned in areas shown on the Parks and Open Space Plan Map. Such public improvements are needed in the long term to serve the recreational and cultural needs of future residential districts. A linear park system should be considered as extensions of the park system where practicable, perhaps along abandoned rail rights-of-way where possible.

Such improvements are all part of good neighborhood design—even in furtherance of citywide beautification efforts as called for during the Texarkana public meetings. The Cowhorn Creek corridor, for example, provides a way of linking into residential growth corridors north of I-30. Such improvements will create alternative transportation corridors to the schools and parks for bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Unfortunately, the box culverts under I-30 provide no access for linear parks; and the overpass has no pedestrian lane or sidewalk.

School and park siting to serve residential neighborhoods should be based on a standard of from 2,500 to 5,000 people for cost-effective services. Convenience shopping, as well, requires a minimum number of people to support business activity. As residential growth becomes denser through new development and redevelopment of land, the importance of the planning process becomes clear. Land should be reserved and financing in place to add public amenities in certain areas over time.

Municipal Services and Natural Features

In addition to public land use policy, the physical features of the land affect future development. The broadest, most extensive floodplain in the area is in the floodplain basin that flows to Lake Bringle. Other major creeks flow from the high point of central Texarkana.

The City and the Texarkana Water Utilities Office must plan for development according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations affecting floodplains to meet federal guidelines; and based on drainage basins to meet sound engineering guidelines. To accommodate the projected future land uses the City must assess its ability to serve existing and additional growth. Once this ability to serve has been assessed, the desire for and appropriateness of a specific use can be weighed against the ability to serve such a use and need for improvements based upon the projected impact of the use. This is especially important when assessing the planned “Opportunity Areas” outside the City’s boundaries, as discussed in the next section.

Municipal Utilities and the Capacity to Serve Growth

In order to determine what type of land uses should be projected for future growth areas, an assessment must be made of the ability of the existing utility infrastructure to serve the additional growth. The desire to allow for a specific land use must be weighed against the ability of the City and the regional utilities office to serve. The need for improvements will be based upon the impact of the projected use on existing utility systems. The Sewer and Water Line Map illustrates the general layout of existing utility systems (sanitary sewer and water) and shows the ability of the Texarkana systems to serve the future growth areas. The following should be considered when assessing impact of projected land uses on improvements to the system:

- What is the capacity of the existing system?
- How much capacity is available for additional growth?
- Can the existing lines handle additional capacity and if so how much?
- How will connections to existing lines be made?
- What are the limitations of physical constraints such as ridgelines?
- What are existing and currently projected uses?
- How will high water users impact the system?

The Texarkana Water Utilities Office has projected principal projects for improvement in the near-term period of 5 years as shown in Table 5.1

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 5 - Future Land Use

**TABLE 5.1 - TEXARKANA WATER UTILITIES OFFICE
NEAR-TERM PROJECTS PLANNED FOR ANNEXED AREAS**

Fiscal Year	Description	Total
Year 1 (Summer 2000/FY 2001)	Area 1 Water Mains-Big Oak, Myrtle Springs (FM 989), Jones Lane, Lionel, Ellen Circle, Prestige, Sleepy Hollow, Forest Grove & Chaparral.	\$394,958
Year 2 (FY 2001/2002)	Area 3 Water Mains-Shilling's Lane, Highpoint Dr. & Chartwell Lane (Dogwood Lane)	\$96,915
	Area 1 Sewer Mains (Partial-Richmond Road, Myrtle Springs (FM 989), Jones Lane, South ½ of Big Oak & South ½ of Scott Wright Road	<u>\$228,615</u> \$325,525
Year 3 (FY 2002/2003)	Area 1 Sewer Mains (Remainder) – Prestige, Lionel, Ellen Circle, North ½ of Big Oak & North ½ of Scott Wright Road	\$325,525
Year 4 (FY2003/2004)	Area 2 Sewer Mains-Pine Creek Pl., Woodland Pl., Highcrest Pl., Dogwood Lake Dr., Lakeridge Dr., Lakeridge Ln., Lakeridge Pl., Lakeview Dr. & Lakeview Pl.	\$153,219
	Area 3 Sewer mains-Shilling's Lane, Summerhill Road, Hickory Hills Dr., Highpoint Dr., Shilling Pl. & Chartwell Lane (Dogwood Lane)	<u>\$143,612</u> \$296,831
GRAND TOTAL		\$1,342,839

PARKS AND RECREATION

One of the most visible measures of the quality of life in a community is the park system. Parks and recreational facilities provide opportunities for exercise and relaxation as well as a visual and psychic break from the routine of daily life. The City of Texarkana maintains the area's public parklands. A benchmark or standard needs to be applied to identify existing deficiencies and/or surplus of available facilities.

The *Parks and Open Space Plan* map has been created based on the adopted City of Texarkana "Parks, Open Spaces, Recreation Facilities and Recreation Services Master Plan," of 1994 and the "Update to the 1994 Master Plan." The plan provides the framework and action plan for new park sites, as shown on the above-referenced map. The plan also provides for development of new and existing parks and of recreation programs. The objective of the plan is to provide a more extensive and balanced recreational program through a systematic process.

In order to determine the deficiencies and surpluses of existing facilities within the City of Texarkana the minimum standards for recreational activities set forth by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) were used in association with the City of Texarkana owns parameters. This standard gives a baseline benchmark by which to compare a City's population to the number of facilities available. It is important to note that the NRPA standards are just that, a baseline, and each comparison must be made in the context of each individual community and its specific nature and makeup.

The first step in analyzing the adequacy of a park system is to review the type, size and location of existing park land. Different types of parks serve different functions in the community and each type has its own requirement for size, location and equipment. In general, there are three basic types of parks. These three types are community parks, neighborhood parks and linear parks. The following is a detailed description of the function of each:

Neighborhood Park: A neighborhood park provides both active and passive recreation for all participants. The intent is to serve an area or neighborhood with a population of 4,000 to 6,000 persons. Ideally, neighborhood parks should provide a wide range of recreational opportunities, including ball diamonds, hard-surfaced courts (i.e. tennis, basketball), volleyball, play areas and other such facilities. Not all of the park, however, must be fully developed. A part may be left as a natural area where users are free to use their imaginations and creativity in pursuit of recreational activities. As neighborhood parks are intended to serve all participants, provisions should be made for older citizens as well as the physically or mentally disabled users.

A neighborhood park should serve a one-mile radius and should be a minimum of six acres in size and ideally should be eight or more acres in size. In order to determine the appropriate size for a particular neighborhood park, one to two acres of park land area should be provided for each 1,000 population.

Community Park: A community park provides separated facilities for quiet and active play areas for use by all age groups. All-day usage, planned recreational programs of competitive sports, passive entertainment, large group gatherings, and individual usage are characteristics of community parks. Typical facilities included in community parks are lighted and unlighted ball diamonds lighted tennis courts, comfort stations, swimming pools, areas for lawn games, multi-purpose areas, wooded areas, shelter houses for picnicking with adjoining space for play apparatus for preschool children, and open areas of natural landscape away from City noises and traffic hazards. Other facilities often included are arboretums and flower gardens, bicycling and hiking trails, band shells and/or out-door theaters and zoos.

A community park should serve several neighborhoods within a three-mile radius. A minimum of 40 acres should be provided in a community park with a recommended size of 80 acres being more appropriate. In order to determine the appropriate size for a community park, five to eight acres of parkland should be provided for each 1,000 population.

Regional Parks: Bringle Lake provides the large space for a regional park, which is under development planning at this time. The regional park should encompass hundreds of acres and mix active and passive recreation in a planned way.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PLAN MAP

Texarkana Parks and Recreation Projects Planned

A master park plan commissioned in 1994 concluded that the City of Texarkana has a wide variety of facilities and programs to offer its citizens. The 1994 plan was updated in 1998 to identify the following park and recreation goals and objectives, in prioritized order:

1. Development of regional park on Bringle Lake property.
2. Development of public golf course at city owned Bringle Lake.
3. Construction of softball/soccer practice fields at various locations.
4. Acquisition of 20 to 25 acres of property in North Texarkana (Pleasant Grove) area for future park development.
5. Construction/development of Community Park in North Texarkana, Texas (Pleasant Grove) area.

Parks and Open Space Plan Map

The following section of the Comprehensive Plan describes the park classification scheme, classifies the community's park facilities and offers policy recommendations consistent with the above listed goals and objectives.

Park Classifications

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has developed a classification scheme based on the service areas and functions of the park or open space. The categories identified include:

- Play lots;
- Neighborhood park;
- Community park;
- Regional or Metro park;
- Linear park, Urban Greenspace; and
- Special use area.

The park facilities utilized by the Texarkana community will be discussed in terms parks and opens space guidelines, adopted from of the NRPA classification scheme and the City of Texarkana parameters as detailed in Table 5.2.

TABLE 5.2 - PARKS AND OPEN SPACE GUIDELINES

Park Category	Function	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres / 1,000 Pop.	Desirable Site Characteristics
Play lots	Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population; or specific group such as tots or senior citizens.	Less than ¼-mile radius.	1.0 acre or less	3.0 acres	Within neighborhoods and in close proximity to apartment complexes, townhouse developments or housing for the elderly.
Neighborhood Park/Playground	Area for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, crafts playground apparatus area, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc.	¼ to ½-mile radius to serve a population up to 5,000, such as in a neighborhood.	3.0 to 12.0 acres	7.0 acres	Suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood population, geographically centered with safe walking and bike access. May be developed as a school-park facility.
Community Park	Area of diverse environmental qualities. May include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes or large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending upon site suitability and community need.	Several neighborhoods. 1 to 2 mile radius	25+ acres	8.0 to 10.0 acres	May include natural features, such as water bodies and areas suited for intense development. Easily accessible to the community served.
Regional/Metro-politan Park	Area of natural or ornamental qualities for outdoor recreation, such as picnicking, boating, fishing, swimming, camping and trail uses; may include play areas.	Communities within 1 hour driving time.	200+ acres	12.0 to 18.0 acres	Contiguous to or encompassing natural resources.

Park Category	Function	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres / 1,000 Pop.	Desirable Site Characteristics
Linear Park	Area developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel, such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, canoeing and pleasure driving. May include active play areas and can link one or more of the above categories of parks.	No applicable standard	Sufficient width to protect the resource and provide maximum use.	Variable	Built or natural corridors, such as utility rights-of-way, bluff liens, vegetation patterns, and roads that link other components of the recreation system or community facilities, such as school, libraries, commercial areas, and other park areas.
Special Use	Areas for specialized or single purpose recreational activities, such as golf courses, nature centers, marinas, zoos, conservatories, arboreta, display gardens, arenas, outdoor theaters, gun ranges, or downhill ski areas, or areas that preserve, maintain, and interpret buildings, sites, and objects of archeological significance. Also plazas or squares in or near commercial centers, boulevards, parkways.	No applicable standard	Sufficient size to protect the resource and provide maximum use.	Variable depending on desired size.	Accessible to communities and/or tourists and tourist amenities.

Source: National Recreation and Park Association, Colorado Springs, Colorado, City of Texarkana Parks, Open Space, Recreation Facilities and Recreation Services Master Plan, August 1994.

Texarkana Park Facilities

Mini Parks. Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population; or specific groups. Mini parks provided to Texarkana residents include:

Grandview 1 acre

Neighborhood Parks. An area for recreational activities, such as field games, court games and playgrounds. Texarkana area neighborhood parks include:

Beverly Park 5.0 acres
 Ferguson Park 3.0
 Findley Park 5.0
 Earnest F. Bell Park 3.0
 Scott Joplin Park 7.0
 Southwest Park 8.0

Community Parks. Usually an area of diverse environmental qualities that may include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes. The area may also have a natural quality suitable for outdoor recreation activities such as walking. Community parks in and around Texarkana include:

Spring Lake Park 75 acres
 Karrh Park 2.0
 Grady T. Wallace Park 75

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 5 - Future Land Use

Regional/Metropolitan Park. Area of natural or ornamental qualities for outdoor recreation serving communities within one hour driving time. Such parks may include sports facilities or play areas. The regional park near Texarkana is the Bringle Lake. Bringle Lake has proposed limited recreational use, in the near future, to include a boat ramp and limited picnic facilities.

Linear Park. Areas developed for one or more modes of recreational travel such as biking or hiking. Linear parks may connect one or more of the other park areas. Spring Lake offers a walking/jogging trail a round the lake and is a candidate for linkages among the parks to be utilized by the Texarkana community, given its location in a high-activity area. Additionally, Grady T. Wallace Parks has hike/bike trails intertwined around the park, lake and ball fields.

Special Use Park. Areas for specialized or single purpose recreational activities such as golf courses, outdoor theaters, zoos or gardens. Includes areas that preserve, maintain or interpret buildings or other sites of architectural or archeological significance. Special use areas in Texarkana include Perot Theater a performing arts center, which has been recently restored and renovated.

Park Recommendations

Based on the locations and the number of facilities currently enjoyed by the Texarkana community, it appears that the City south of I-30 is well served, except for a few needs, such as a neighborhood park in or around the Central Business District (CBD). However, as residential development continues in growth areas north of I-30, new recreational facilities should be planned to serve at the neighborhood level.

As the City continues to grow, particularly north of I-30, the demand for areas that are accessible by foot or bike will increase. Neighborhood parks, in large part, serve a segment of the community that would find crossing a barrier such as Interstate Highways (I-30) undesirable or extremely prohibitive. These areas also function to encourage or enhance a neighborhood identity and cohesiveness that can sometimes be slow to develop in newer subdivisions. The *Parks and Recreation Map* indicates the approximate areas suitable for future park development. Two such areas are, the Pleasant Grove area and the Moores Lane/Summerhill Road Area. However, it should be kept in mind that as residential development continues to move north, towards Bringle Lake, the future lake facilities will act as a neighborhood park for the surrounding area.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The Comprehensive Plan has established three key objectives as the highest ranked priorities during the goal setting process:

- Serve newly annexed growth areas with urban utilities, as planned by the Water Utilities Office;
- Coordination of land use planning between the city and other partners, including the private sector; and
- Stabilization of existing neighborhoods through community involvement and support of private investment.

To achieve the growth and zoning/land use objectives, the city must implement proper land use planning principles and secure city-county coordination. The city of Texarkana must continue planning on the basis of watersheds, for example. The “Opportunity Areas” north, northwest, south, and southwest areas of the city form the logical geographic area for extending services.

Probable Residential Development Pattern - Near-Term

The most probable development pattern for the city of Texarkana is a low-to-moderate-density development pattern. The low-to moderate-density residential pattern is summarized in Table 5.3. The scenario is presented as an ultimate build-out pattern of urban development in the City, either on vacant parcels and platted lots as infill housing, or on newly subdivided land. The pattern represents a gross density of 3.3 to 4-units per acre on average for residential development. The development scenario is based on the population projections that indicate population growth.

TABLE 5.3 - PROJECTED DENSITY OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY OF TEXARKANA

Density Patterns	1.0 Unit Per 3 Acres	2.8 UNITS PER ACRE	10.0 Units Per Acre	Population/Acre at 2.54 Persons/Unit
Low Density	40%	60%	0%	4.6
Low/Moderate Density	5%	80%	14%	8.3
Higher Density	0%	20%	890%	20.3

Source: Bucher, Willis & Ratliff Corporation

For planning purposes the planning growth areas are expected to experience urban growth in up to four square miles of land during the next 20 years, applying the 3.0 multiplier to account for market inefficiencies. The multiplier is applied because of the dispersed nature of development at the “urban fringe.” Residential development is expected to spread in three patterns:

- In low-to moderate-densities north, northwest and southwest of Texarkana served by municipal utilities in newly annexed areas;
- In low-density areas north and northwest of the city with municipal sewer or on-site systems; and
- Incrementally on infill lots currently platted and served by sewer in the city.

The Future Land Use Plan Map illustrates the adopted land use plan policy. The residential developments are presented in the development patterns noted above, and grouped in compatible districts. The map becomes a policy guide for future zoning amendments, capital improvement programming and related plans.

The Land Use Categories of the map legend correspond generally to zoning district classifications of the city of Texarkana Zoning Ordinance. There are three categories, however, that relate to development patterns more than land usage: the Mixed-Use Development, Long-term Development Areas and “Opportunity Areas.”

Mixed-Use Development. The City of Texarkana may permit mixed-uses in certain districts shown as Lavender on the Future Land Use Plan map. In the “Mixed-Use Development” the city would allow certain types of retail- and office-commercial land uses to mix with institutional and residential uses in the same district classification. The mixed-use category is intended to indicate that the private sector should be allowed discretion when seeking a higher intensity zoning district classification.

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 5 - Future Land Use

Opportunity Areas. By establishing the Opportunity Areas (OA's), the city will have the chance to focus on issues of a specific neighborhood or potential development. The nineteen OA's that have been evaluated represent a wide range of issues. Areas for residential, commercial, and industrial development have been identified and site concerns and opportunities have been noted. Other areas identify mixed-use development opportunities, either existing developments or based upon location. While many of the OA's were identified as areas of development or redevelopment, Area 9 was designated as a means to protect an existing residential neighborhood from additional commercial encroachment.

A description sheet for each of the nineteen OA's is included in Appendix A:

Long-term Development Areas. The city has the capacity to extend infrastructure to serve future development that should occur beyond the 15-20 year time frame of the comprehensive plan. . The plan indicates "Long-term, Low Density Development" where municipal sanitary sewer services are not planned for extension in the time period of the plan. These are lands on the outer fringe of the Urban Service Area on the Future Land Use Plan map. Two development patterns should be allowed:

- sell-offs in the Long-term Residential Areas at densities of approximately one non-farm residence per 5- to 10-acres; and
- large lot residential development at densities of one dwelling per 5-acres, with a demonstrated ability to accommodate future urban services.

CITY OF TEXARKANA FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP LEGEND - EXPLANATION

The "Future Land Use Plan" map is developed based on the following legend:

Low-Density Residential	Residential development at densities of 2.5 to 4.0 units per acre.
Higher-Density Residential	Residential development at more than 4.0 units per acre.
Office/Institutional District	Institutional uses for primarily government and educational purposes. Service-commercial, office-commercial and semi-public institutional uses, such as medical office complex; limited light industrial uses within a unified district with design standards to assure compatibility with the service-commercial and office uses; limited retail on conditions to support office uses.
Mixed-Use Development District	Commercial or retail, housing, industrial, and office or medical development with design standards to assure transition to and protection of the adjacent property, based on site plan review approval.
Retail	Retail business uses, including shopping centers and isolated retail establishments.

Industrial	Industrial assembly, and warehousing, including intensive land uses such as manufacturing or mining and quarrying land as permitted by the zoning ordinance.
Parks and Recreation	Park land and active recreation linkages from one park to another park.
Long-term Development	Agricultural lands and low-density development where higher densities are not appropriate, or where flood plain limits development; or where pleased development should preclude near-term activity.
Central Business District	Downtown area.
Opportunities Areas (on the “Opportunities Area Map”)	Development or redevelopment areas where the City has the opportunity to focus on specific site improvement issues. The OA’s challenge the City to cooperate with private sector initiatives or take public initiative to improve specific districts.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE LAND USE DEVELOPMENT

Based on the goals and objectives of the plan, the existing land use patterns of the city and the future land use issues of the plan, the following recommendations should be followed in implementing the future land use plan, the intent of which is illustrated on the “Future Land Use” map.

Recommendation—Residential Land Use

Encourage redevelopment and development in the Opportunity Areas of Texarkana.

- Prepare for higher-density development in and adjacent to future business districts in growth areas, such as:
 - The southwest quadrant of the intersection of I-30 and Highway 151.
 - North of I-30 west of Kings Highway.
- Amend zoning ordinance to expressly require site plan review procedure in all multifamily and non-resident districts;
- Update screening and landscape standards to ensure compatibility between higher-density and existing low-density residential districts, as well as between residential and non-residential districts;
- Update landscape requirements for off-street parking screening; and
- Adopt design standards for reviewing multifamily development which address:
 - Site appropriateness,
 - Building arrangement,
 - Access,
 - Parking and circulation,
 - Service facilities,
 - Outdoor storage,
 - Buffers from neighboring land uses, and
 - Signage and lighting.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP

Recommendation—Alternative Housing Strategies

In order to increase the city’s housing stock, new strategies must be pursued. To significantly improve the city’s housing stock, public and private strategies must be aggressively pursued. These endeavors are the critical components of a comprehensive multi-year effort Texarkana should undertake to impact the quantity and quality of the city’s housing stock.

Specific strategies recommended are as follows:

- **Annex Vacant Developable Land** - The City of Texarkana should become pro-active with annexation to overcome being “land locked.” A targeted public information effort that directly solicits landowners surrounding the city should be developed towards property owners on the potential benefits of annexation. By increasing the amount of potential developable land for future residential use, more residential development options will be created.
- **Install and Help Finance Infrastructure to Support New Development** - Extending new infrastructure for housing must be looked at as investment and part of the city’s economic development efforts. Policies should be considered which offer up front assistance to residential developers including benefit districts and discounting the cost to induce residential subdivisions based on the number of units to be built and the expected new taxes that will be paid by new homeowners.
- **Initiate Contractor Training** - It is difficult to find enough trained construction personnel, especially carpenters, plumbers and electricians in the Texarkana area. This condition may be affecting the limited level of new construction activity occurring in Texarkana. Expansion of locally offered educational and training programs should be encouraged by Texarkana High School and Texas A&M, Texarkana.
- **Encourage “Manufactured and Modular Housing”** - Housing built “off site” is a reasonable approach to overcome the shortage of local contractors. There is an increasing consumer acceptance of this form of housing. An effort to identify these companies in the region and invite them to see Texarkana’s opportunities and accommodate them through the building permit process should be pursued.
- **Establish a Local Incentive Program for In-fill Residential Development** - In addition to the potential establishment of a Neighborhood Revitalization District, other incentives should be considered by the city to encourage home expansion, renovation and improvements. These may include such savings as waiving local permit and inspection fees, offering a short-term discount on any increase to a home-owners municipal utility rates and discounting other city charges to demonstrate a strong public policy that housing investment is encouraged and supported.

OPPORTUNITIES AREA MAP

Recommendation—Urban Design

Create good urban design along commercial thoroughfare corridors by linking developments with common and consistent design patterns to promote orderly commercial development.

- Amend commercial district regulations to expressly require site plan review of all commercial development and to establish design standards;
- Cluster commercial centers, particularly community centers, at the arterial roads that connect to the highway interchange, such as along I-30 and Highway 151;
- Coordinate major thoroughfare improvements in the Major Street Plan with patterns of commercial growth so that streets can accommodate increased traffic volumes, in particular on future north/south streets on the east and west sides of the city;
- Create strong continuous corridor edges using either consistent building setbacks or continuous sequences of plant materials, street light standards and compatible signage;
- Minimize curb cuts and median breaks by requiring adjacent commercial uses to design internal connections between parking lots to minimize street traffic and curb cuts;
- Require all commercial developments to be pedestrian-oriented with clearly identified walkways between parking lots and buildings;
- Lighting for businesses and parking lots should be low glare and designed so as not to shine directly into adjacent residential areas;
- Where possible, encourage the location of developments internally to site, maintaining a solid vegetated edge along thoroughfare frontage;
- Require substantial vegetated buffering and screening of distracting and unsightly development elements;
- Require substantial vegetated buffering and screening between incompatible land uses;
- Require parking lots to be planted with street landscaping as well as appropriate number of shade trees (one tree for every five to ten parking spaces is recommended); and
- Require commercial and industrial developers to maintain trees and plants they have installed as landscaping.

When regulating new commercial development on arterial roads such as Richmond or New Boston Streets, protect the capacity of the road to carry arterial traffic.

- Businesses should be clustered in developments to allow for the preservation of turning movement capacity;
- Use the site plan review process to promote clustering development for maintaining design standards and preserving traffic capacity;
- Orient and align buildings and developments with a sensitivity to the existing cluster development along the corridor and to establish a sense of design; and
- Encourage the design of residential and office park internal traffic circulation to make parking more efficient.

Design Issues. Quality of new development is a critical concern if the city to foster attractive mixed-use development in the arterial road corridors. Important factors to be considered include:

- Building orientation/setbacks--An increasing number of jurisdictions require primary entrances of buildings to front on the major thoroughfare in an area to avoid haphazard site development patterns. All developments in the corridor should be required to face the local arterial road. Also, special minimum/maximum setback standards should be considered to avoid inconsistent building placement along arterial road corridors.
- Parking location--Some jurisdictions limit the amount of parking in front of primary facade to avoid the appearance of seas of parking along a main thoroughfare.
- Building facade treatment--Standards should be adopted requiring that the facades of all buildings receive some treatment to avoid long expanses of blank walls. Rear/side walls should also have some detailing.
- Building materials--To ensure high-quality building materials compatible with a mixed-use development area, the city should consider forbidding certain materials, such as corrugated metal facades.
- Landscape requirements--Perimeter and parking lot landscaping requirements need to be improved. For example, trees should be required to be planted along the front of businesses on arterial roads and in parking lot planting islands.
- Signage controls--All signs along arterials should be ground-mounted monument signage limited in size. Off-premise signs (billboards) should not be allowed in the district. Each site with multiple uses should develop a master site plan for review during the site planning process.
- Service facilities/loading areas--The city should adopt special standards for placement and screening of trash receptacles, loading areas, and other service facilities.

Recommendation—Downtown Design Guidelines

In the Downtown, “Central Business District,” no building shall be erected that does not meet the following minimum standards:

- A. Careful consideration of durable materials, proportions, and shapes, emphasizing the importance of roofs as integral and embracing elements of the over-all design, is particularly important. Roof mounted equipment, including ventilators and satellite dishes shall be screened from view (100% opacity) or isolated so as not to be visible from ground level of any adjacent public thoroughfare or residentially-zoned area, up to a maximum of three hundred feet (300’) away. The appearance of roof screens shall be coordinated with the building to maintain a unified appearance.
- B. All electrical and mechanical equipment located adjacent to the building and visible from any adjacent public thoroughfare or a residentially-zoned area shall be screened from view (100% opacity), up to a maximum of three hundred feet (300’) away. The use of parapets is encouraged. Such screens and enclosures shall be treated as integral elements of the building’s appearance.
- C. For new construction and the extent possible for redevelopment, all telephone and cable television lines, electrical services and distribution lines shall be placed underground, except that this provision shall not include meters, electric and telephone service pedestals, transformers, three-phase feeder lines, subtransmission and transmission lines (34.5kv and above), electrical substations and such other facilities as the utility may deem necessary to install utilizing “overhead” type construction.
- D. The form and proportion of new buildings or redevelopment shall be consistent or compatible with the scale, form and proportion of existing development in the downtown.
- E. Pedestrian Access: Pedestrian access shall be an integral part of the overall design of each commercial development. The pedestrian access should provide not only safe and convenient access to and from off-street parking areas but should also connect with abutting properties and developments so as to create an alternative means of transportation for residents of the downtown:
 - 1. Sidewalks at least 5 feet in width shall be provided along all sides of a lot that abut a dedicated public or private street. A continuous internal pedestrian sidewalk shall be provided from the perimeter public sidewalk to the principal customer entrance(s). This internal sidewalk shall feature landscaping, benches, and other such materials and facilities for no less than 50 percent of its length.
 - 2. Sidewalks shall be provided along the full length of the building along any facade featuring a customer entrance and along any facade abutting public parking areas. Such sidewalks shall be located at the building facade to provide continuous edges; and shall incorporate planting areas for landscaping along the street.
 - 3. Internal pedestrian sidewalks shall be distinguished from driving surfaces through the use of special pavers, bricks, or scored concrete to enhance pedestrian safety and the attractiveness of the sidewalks.

CITY of TEXARKANA, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 5 - Future Land Use

- F. Architectural design should create visual interest through the use of different textures, complementary colors, shadow lines and contrasting shapes indigenous to the downtown. The use of walls in a single color, with little detailing or completely blank, is strongly discouraged.
- G. Monotony of design in single or multiple building projects shall be avoided. Variation of detail, form, and siting shall be used to provide visual interest.
- H. Loading docks, trash enclosures, outdoor storage and similar facilities and functions shall be incorporated into the overall design of the building and the landscaping so that the visual and acoustic impacts of these functions are reduced to as great an extent as possible and are out of view from adjacent properties and public streets.
- I. Building facades that are 100 feet or greater in length shall incorporate recesses and projections along at least 20 percent of the length of the building facade, reflecting the archetype of the downtown. Windows, awnings, and arcades must total at least 60 of the facade length abutting any public street.
- J. When a building facade 100 feet or greater in length abuts a residential district, an earth berm of at least six feet in height shall be installed between the building facade and the abutting residential district. The earth berm shall be landscaped with evergreen trees at intervals of at least 20 feet on center, or in clusters.
- K. Minimum Exterior Building Material Standards: A minimum of 50 percent of each exterior wall shall consist of one or more of the following materials:
 - 1. Masonry: Masonry construction shall include all masonry construction which is composed of solid cavity faced or veneered-wall construction, or similar materials.
 - a. Stone material used for masonry construction may consist of granite, sandstone, slate, limestone, marble, or other hard and durable all-weather stone. Ashlar, cut stone, and dimensioned stone construction techniques are acceptable.
 - b. Brick material used for masonry construction shall be composed of hard fired (kiln fired) all-weather common brick or other all-weather facing brick.
 - c. Stucco or approved gypsum concrete/plaster materials.
 - 2. Glass Walls: Glass walls shall include glass curtain walls or glass block construction. A glass curtain wall shall be defined as an exterior wall that carries no floor or roof loads and which may consist of a combination of metal, glass, and other surfacing material supported in a metal framework.
 - 3. Wood other than exposed plywood paneling.

Recommendations—Annexation Issues

Future annexations should be planned to avoid straining municipal resources. To most efficiently utilize current infrastructure investments, further annexations should be undertaken as part of the new Texarkana five-year capital improvement program (CIP) process; and the CIP should be coordinated with the Water Utilities Office.

Strategically plan annexations in the near-term.

- Services to annexed areas should be planned as part of the five years CIP within “Future Urban Service Area” in the Growth Areas in response to private urban pressures.
- Annexation should be planned for short-term development in Growth Areas where the City can most cost-effectively serve growth.
- Near-term annexation should be targeted where annexation would add an area with short-term development potential that can be easily serviced by existing infrastructure.

Recommendations—Housing Action Agenda

In order to effect the City’s neighborhood stabilization efforts, new strategies must be pursued. To significantly replace the lost housing stock—and meet the objectives—public and private strategies must be aggressively pursued. These endeavors are the critical components of a comprehensive multi-year effort Texarkana should undertake to impact the quantity and quality of the City’s housing stock.

Initiate strategies in partnership with the private sector to further a pro-active housing action agenda:

- Pursue Infill Development on Vacant Developable Land - The City of Texarkana should become pro-active with infill development. A targeted public information effort that directly solicits landowners of vacant lots should be implemented.
- Continue Housing Demolition - The City’s efforts to demolish dilapidated housing should be actively continued and even accelerated, if possible. After demolition, the vacant ground should be marketed for a discounted price to encourage in-fill residential development or offered to adjacent owner-occupants to expand their homes, if the two lots are substandard in size.
- Establish a Local Incentive Program for In-fill Residential Development - In addition to the potential establishment of a Neighborhood Service District under Texas statutes, other incentives should be considered by the City to encourage home expansion, renovation and improvements. These may include such savings as waiving local permit and inspection fees, offering a short-term discount on any increase to a home-owners municipal utility rates and discounting other City charges to demonstrate a strong public policy that housing investment is encouraged and supported.
- Partner with local realtors and lenders to lower interest rates and fees, based on grant funds for low-to moderate-income homeowners to secure the home finance debt.
- Partner with local businesses and community groups to start more neighborhood gardens on vacant lots.

Recommendation—Neighborhood Stabilization/Housing Infill

The Comprehensive Plan focus session emphasized the need to invest in existing neighborhoods. The primary strategy options provided are:

- Promote compatible development patterns and activities.
- Create flexible yet effective zoning ordinances.
- Encourage and enforce property maintenance.
- Increase investment in public infrastructure.
- Create new and utilize existing financing opportunities.
- Promote the use of the Weed and Seed Program.

Toward a strategic neighborhood infill and stabilization plan, the following planning and development practices have been compiled for Texarkana to consider.

Liveable Neighborhoods Task Force

A Housing Task Force has been implemented by numerous cities whereby a target neighborhood is addressed. Following similar principles, the City of Texarkana can document code enforcement deficiencies, delinquent property taxes and crime in certain districts. The following mechanism may be implemented in cooperation with neighborhood residents and property owners:

- Absentee Landlord Task Force efforts implemented with letters sent to investor-owners.
- Rental licensing implemented in order to track ownership.
- Land banking implemented to assemble parcels into a single tract large enough to encourage redevelopment.
- Crime watches set up.

Neighborhood Stabilization and Redevelopment Audits

A periodic “Stabilization and Redevelopment Audit” may be conducted in neighborhoods to determine the areas, if any, where a preponderance of conditions exist to warrant establishing a formal redevelopment program. The audit would help Texarkana select target areas for programs. The higher the number of factors present, the more immediate and aggressive a redevelopment strategy is warranted. Some of these factors are quantifiable while others are subjective. However, almost all of them can be applied to either commercial or residential areas of the City, with the exception of retail sales.

In order for City officials to ascertain when conditions for redevelopment exist, a combination of the following 15 factors need to be present in the area under evaluation. These conditions, or factors, may be categorized into three major areas:

- Ownership factors,
- Economic factors, and
- Community factors.

More specifically, these factors include:

Applicable Factor	Impact on Commercial	Impact on Residential
A. Ownership Factors:		
1) High Vacancy Rate	Yes	Yes
2) Extended Vacancy Period	Yes	Yes
3) Deed Restrictions	Yes	Yes
4) Ownership Changes	Yes	Yes
5) Non-owner Occupied Housing	–	Yes
B. Economic Factors		
6) Retail Sales Decline	Yes	–
7) Property Value Decline	Yes	Yes
8) Lack of Renovation Remodeling Activity	Yes	Yes
9) Economic Obsolescence	Yes	Yes
10) Tax Delinquency/Bankruptcy	Yes	Yes
C. Community Factors:		
11) Lack of Property Maintenance	Yes	Yes
12) Land Use Obsolescence	Yes	Yes
13) Physical Obsolescence	Yes	Yes
14) Environmental Concerns	Yes	–
15) Safety Concerns	Yes	Yes

The factors may be inventoried initially to set a benchmark of conditions in each neighborhood. The factors are then updated periodically, such as semi-annually, to track changes in conditions.

Financing Opportunities

The City should consider coordinating with a local bank to provide low-interest loans to assist in financing home improvements. One example of such a program operates as follows:

The Neighborhood Improvement Program is titled Growing Together, providing low interest loans for home improvements. This is a public/private partnership between the City and a local bank. Eligible home improvements include: painting, siding, fence repair, deck repair or replacement, screened porch repair, replacement of garage doors, replacement of storm doors, replacement of storm windows, roofing, driveway, sidewalks, shutters/ awnings, guttering, repair of windows, retaining walls, porch repair.

The City appropriated money, in this case \$50,000, toward the interest on home improvement loans for local residents, bringing down the interest rates to a low six percent. For a particular home improvement project to be approved, the improvement must be visual and be of beneficial impact to the neighborhood, including siding, porches, landscaping, driveways and sidewalks. The loan does not cover any interior improvements that are not visible from the street or sidewalk. The reason for doing this is to promote the property improvements by providing a visual display of neighborhood investment, hopefully encouraging more homeowners to make improvements to their properties. Should the City of Texarkana seek a TDHCA grant, then the city would need only to appropriate a local match of the granted funds.

Infill and Redevelopment Activities

The City of Texarkana may consider establishing a Local Development Corporation, create a public/private partnership and a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district to remove deteriorated housing and construct a senior assisted living center.

This City may create a TIF district to remove deteriorating housing and create a commercial center. Other strategies are summarized below:

Renovation of Existing Multifamily Housing for Reuse

Developers have succeeded in renovating multifamily housing complexes at lower costs than new construction. In one such example, a real estate company acquired 20- to 30-year old multifamily housing complexes for renovation at a cost of \$10,000 to \$15,000 per unit. Initial acquisition is between \$40,000 and \$50,000 per unit. The result is an investment of \$50,000 to \$65,000 per unit, compared to new construction costs of \$50,000 to \$75,000 per unit.

The rental rehab has been accompanied by a rent increase of \$100 to \$150 per month per unit. The attractive rate of return has created a supply of capital. Capital is the constraint to any private investment venture. The internal rate of return on the project is 15% to 20%, which is a relatively high yield; therefore, the investments retain their value.

Pre-occupancy Programs

Some communities have implemented proactive programs to assist owners or tenants in securing timely and problem-free occupancy of their newly completed buildings or structures. The goal of the program is to provide a framework within which the owner or tenant and the City can work as partners to transition smoothly from the construction phase of a project to occupancy with the least amount of disruption to all involved. Developers meet in a pre-occupancy meeting with the City staff members relevant to a project, including inspections, engineering and other plan examiners. The City upon conclusion of the meeting will provide a summary of items to be addressed before occupancy.

Property Maintenance Incentives

Some communities are finding success in encouraging property maintenance and reducing court case loads by implementing property maintenance incentives focused on clear communication of violations and actions to be taken. One such City has adopted a code enforcement policy called “Hot Docket” to work with residents in complying with City codes.

The intent of “Hot Docket” is to reduce the number of violations that must go to municipal court. This program was developed in response to non-voluntary compliance with the City’s property maintenance program. The purpose of the program is to create a procedure that promotes quick voluntary compliance with violation notices. Code enforcement officers work with property owners by providing courtesy notices and numerous opportunities for property owners to comply with the property maintenance program. The approach allows the City to resolve non-code items that affect neighborhoods, such as getting houses painted.

Accelerated Court Case Work

Some cities have increased code compliance by addressing offenders through an expedited code enforcement program. Once such City accomplished this goal through ambitious changes in their code enforcement program. They have increased the number of code enforcement officers, reduced the amount of time for property maintenance corrections, and coordinated the process with the police department and municipal court.

The City historically had been relatively lenient with compliance of violation notices. The original compliance period was between 30 and 60 days, extensions for compliance were often granted and some violations were never followed-through. The new policy requires 14 days for compliance before the violation notice is forwarded to the municipal court.

The City adopted the concept that noncompliance with property maintenance ordinances is a misdemeanor; further, that noncompliance is a continuing violation as long as the repairs or improvements are not made. The City was able to work with the municipal judge and prosecutor to ensure quick and responsive enforcement of property maintenance code violations.

The City is initiating a unique process of coordinating the efforts of the police department with code enforcement activity. The main reason for this program is that the two departments are the primary City staff that are out in the community on a daily basis and that cooperative training is a benefit to both departments. Code enforcement personnel are trained in identifying housing conditions that reflect illegal operations. Similarly, police are trained in property maintenance ordinances.

Neighborhood Preservation Program Staffing

Larger cities, especially those with older neighborhoods, have found success in proactive programs aimed at empowering citizens to maintain their neighborhoods and resolve problems through neighborhood associations. One such City has established a special City division that works with neighborhood associations in property maintenance and other issues. The City has created a Neighborhood Preservation Section within an existing Planning Department. The purpose of the agency is to provide assistance to property owners in maintaining a high level of safety, property value, maintenance and encourage preservation and stabilization of older neighborhoods.

The Neighborhood Preservation Section is divided into two areas: the Neighborhood Inspections Area and the Neighborhood Planning Area. The Neighborhood Inspections Area staff conduct inspections to ensure code and ordinance compliance and to assist with public education. They have prepared brochures on compliance with property maintenance codes.

The Neighborhood Conservation Program, operated by the Neighborhood Planning Area, is designed to help older areas organize neighborhood groups to take on the responsibility of improving their neighborhood. The program assists the neighborhood organizations in addressing property maintenance and other issues related to residential areas.

Neighborhood Redevelopment

In some areas a multitude of conditions exist that suggest that the existing residential land uses no longer meet community needs. Housing may be deteriorated beyond a point of repair, or land use patterns may have changed. In these areas neighborhood redevelopment may be an appropriate alternative. In some instances, cities have utilized TIF within a TIF District to remove deteriorating housing and create a commercial center.

In one example, the site was previously a neighborhood with slowly deteriorating housing. The infrastructure and homes in this neighborhood were not appealing to new home buyers, nor to existing residents. The project involved purchasing lots from almost 100 property owners and establishing a TIF District. Property owners were offered what was termed a “cooperation bonus,” amounting to \$1,000 for every year the homeowner lived at that residence, up to 30 years, as well as a moving allowance. Renters were also offered compensation for moving costs.

The 436,000 square foot commercial project has now been completed. Major retail companies have located in the development helping stabilize development in surrounding neighborhoods. Although the project resulted in the loss of moderately priced housing, the deteriorating conditions of the neighborhood and the desire to provide reinvestment in the City indicates a commitment to the community toward growth and improvement.

Recommendation—Residential Development Guidelines

Good urban design can help new developments relate to adjacent developments to form strong neighborhoods. The land use pattern of a neighborhood plays a major role in determining its strengths and weaknesses. The current Texarkana pattern of neighborhoods meets traditional planning standards. Most older neighborhoods are linked in the traditional grid street pattern, which today is called a “neo-traditional” pattern. Neo-traditional concepts should continue to steer new and infill development in Texarkana and the Texarkana Growth Areas.

Residential land use in Texarkana should be driven by a strong emphasis on the implementation and enforcement of the Texarkana Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, while exploring innovative regulatory approaches in response to private sector development needs. The following section contains guidelines based on neo-traditional planning principles for new and infill development.

Encourage the development of logical, interconnected street grids, and avoid “jigsaw” street systems.

Interconnected, grid-like street systems allow for a more dispersed traffic pattern because there are multiple routes to move from one place to another within the City. A grid configuration of streets helps to minimize peak hour traffic flows. In addition, these interconnected systems are more comprehensible and, thus, easier for visitors and residents alike to find their way around the City. On the contrary, “jigsaw” street systems, with no apparent repetition or order, can be disorienting and tend to funnel traffic to collector-type roads, even for short distance travel. This situation contributes to unnecessarily heavy traffic on main roads at peak traffic periods. It should be noted that a grid street pattern does not necessarily require all streets to be straight. The design of the roadway system should work with the land. The basic goal for the City’s overall road layout is a system of north-south roads that regularly intersect with east-west roads.

Place stoplights on posts at the street corners – not on arms over the street – to reduce visual clutter.

Long arms hanging over streets add to the visual clutter of intersections creating an automobile rather than pedestrian scale to the area. Post stoplights bring the motorists' eyes down to the street level, where they can be more aware of pedestrian traffic.

Encourage the development of tree-lined streets.

Texarkana should encourage the planting of street trees as part of an ambitious street tree program for new development. Street trees provide shade for streets and sidewalks, help moderate temperatures, improve aesthetics, and generally encourage pedestrian use of sidewalks. Street trees also maintain a ceiling or canopy that further imbue a pedestrian scale to the streetscape.

Require retention of existing landscaping, primarily through preservation of mature trees and existing vegetation.

Trees, shrubs, flowers, and other elements of the surrounding environment of a housing area greatly contribute to the quality of life within that area. Shade, wind breaks, beautification, and attraction of songbirds and other wildlife are all benefits of substantial plant communities within housing areas. By far the easiest way to capture these benefits for the residents of a housing area is to preserve the existing vegetation of a site as it is developed, rather than relying on newly planted materials to grow and mature, slowly recreating an environment which already existed in many cases.

Require grass or planting strips between curbs and sidewalks.

Providing "green space" between the back of the street curb and the sidewalk provides a buffer between vehicles and pedestrians. This space provides safety for pedestrians on the sidewalks and creates an area suitable for street-tree plantings and other streetscape improvements. When locating improvements, including planting materials, preservation of clear lines of sight within the sight triangles of intersections and drives must be considered.

Encourage a diversity of housing façade styles and colors in new or infill developments.

Repetitive or redundant façade styles within residential developments tend to diminish the visual interest and perception of quality in an area. Providing several façade styles allows for more individual expression of interest and taste.

Encourage front porches on new houses.

Front porches allow homeowners to comfortably spend more time near the front yard and street. This creates a greater opportunity to know ones neighbors, maintain a casual surveillance of the area, and thereby maintain a safe residential neighborhood. This also reinforces a neighborhood ambiance.

Require sidewalks on at least one side of residential streets.

One of the most significant elements of neighborhood atmosphere and function is that residents can easily walk to other places within the neighborhood and Texarkana community. By requiring sidewalks, pedestrian use is indicated as a priority in the community because of a prominent, safe, and accessible system. Cul-de-sacs may be exempted from sidewalk requirements if they do not exceed maximum length requirements.

Promote the creation of deep lots for more green space.

Deep residential lots allow for more green space within a residential community by providing room for more backyard shade trees, landscaping, and in instances where existing vegetation is nearby, more beneficial wildlife habitat. Houses should not be allowed to be pulled back off of the streets because of deeper lots as this diminishes the small-town pedestrian quality of the street environment. Yard setback requirements should also specify a “build-to” line.

Require visually appealing, points of beautification within subdivisions.

The development of points of beautification within new subdivisions can enhance the perception of neighborhood, a characteristic that is important in the development and maintenance of small-town atmosphere. Beautification areas maintained by a neighborhood association should be encouraged particularly at entrances. Subdivision identification monument signs are also optional.

Adopt residential fence specifications to control type of fencing used in residential areas.

Fences help individual property owners establish a clearly defined space around their homes, which is an important element in developing a sense of security in a residential area. Most fencing types should be allowed in residential areas. Privacy fences prohibit visual access to property and makes casual surveillance by law enforcement and neighbors more difficult. Therefore, they should be limited to no more than 8'-0" in height. Visual surveillance is an important part of creating a safe neighborhood environment.

De-emphasize garages and carports extending out from house fronts.

Garages which extend out from the front of a house create an emphasis on the automobile system of a neighborhood, diminish the effects of inviting front doors and porches, and are simply less attractive than the house itself. All of these effects break down the pedestrian oriented quality which is sought for new residential areas in Texarkana. A maximum percentage of street façade devoted to garage area should be established as a control measure for visual quality.

Design new subdivisions in order to minimize initial and future public and private costs.

Clarify and enforce policies and regulations to assure that public improvements are paid for by private development rather than the City-at-large. Implement the utility extension policies of the Comprehensive Plan through the designation of “Urban Service Areas.”

Limit sprawl by using the new CIP to phase development, thereby discouraging premature extension of utilities and services.

Identify areas of the City’s future growth or “Urban Service Areas” where there are private sector pressures for urban growth, or where growth pressures are projected to occur during the planning period. Encourage development and extension of City services in those areas.

Recommendations—Commercial Development

Create good urban design in the Downtown and office, institutional and commercial districts by linking developments with common and consistent design patterns to promote orderly commercial development.

- Amend commercial district regulations to expressly require site plan review of all commercial development and to meet establish design standards.
- Coordinate major thoroughfare improvements with patterns of commercial growth so that streets can accommodate increased traffic volumes.
- Create strong continuous corridor edges using either consistent building setbacks or continuous sequences of plant materials, street light standards and compatible signage.
- Minimize curb cuts and median breaks by requiring adjacent commercial uses to design internal connections between parking lots to minimize street traffic and curb cuts, by implementing the street access standards.
- Require all commercial developments to be pedestrian-oriented, particularly in the Downtown, with clearly identified walkways between parking lots and buildings.
- Lighting for businesses and parking lots should be low glare and designed so as not to shine directly into adjacent residential areas.
- Require substantial screening and vegetated buffering of distracting and unsightly development elements.
- Require substantial screening and vegetated buffering between incompatible land uses.
- Require off-street parking to be planted with street landscaping as well as appropriate number of shade trees (one tree for every five to ten parking spaces is recommended).
- Require commercial and industrial developers to maintain trees and plants they have installed as landscaping.

When regulating new commercial development on arterial roads from Highway 151, protect the capacity of the road to carry arterial traffic.

- Businesses should be clustered in developments to allow for the preservation of turning movement capacity.
- Use the site plan review process to promote clustering development for maintaining design standards and preserving traffic capacity.
- Orient and align buildings and developments with sensitivity to the existing cluster development along the corridor and to establish a sense of design. And
- Encourage the design of residential and office park internal traffic circulation to make parking more efficient.

Recommendation—Public Safety

Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Principles

Crime Prevention Through Environment Design (CPTED) is a set of site planning principles which—when properly applied—can help reduce crime. As part of a new site plan review process CPTED (pronounced “sep-ted”) theories contend that architects, City planners, landscape architects and interior designers, and law enforcement can create a climate of safety in a community, right from the start of site planning and development approval. CPTED’s goal is to prevent crime through designing a physical environment that positively influences human behavior -- people who use the areas regularly perceive it as safe, and would-be criminals see the area as a highly risky place to commit crimes.

CPTED’s Basic Principles are summarized as follows:

- **Territoriality:** People protect territory that they feel is their own and have a certain respect for the territory of others. Fences, pavement treatments, art, signs, good maintenance, and landscaping are some physical ways to express ownership. Identifying intruders is much easier in a well-defined space.
- **Natural Surveillance:** Criminals don’t want to be seen. Placing physical features, activities, and people in ways that maximize the ability to see what’s going on discourages crime. Barriers, such as bushes, sheds, or shadows, make it difficult to observe activity. Landscaping and lighting can be planned to promote natural surveillance from inside a home or building and from the outside by neighbors or people passing by. Maximizing the natural surveillance capability of such “gatekeepers” as parking lot attendants and hotel desk clerks is important.
- **Activity Support:** Encouraging legitimate activity in public spaces helps discourage crime. A basketball court in a public park or community center will provide recreation for youth, while making strangers more obvious and increasing active natural surveillance and the feeling of ownership. Any activity that gets people out and working together -- a clean-up day, a block party, a Neighborhood Watch group, a civic meeting -- helps prevent crime.

- **Access Control:** Properly located entrances, exits, fencing, landscaping, and lighting can direct both foot and automobile traffic in ways that discourage crime. Access control can be as simple as a neighbor on the front porch or a front office. Other strategies include closing streets to through traffic or introducing neighborhood-based parking stickers.

These principles are blended in the planning or remodeling of public areas that range from parks and streets to office buildings to housing developments. Some jurisdictions have incorporated these principles into more comprehensive approaches. One way to involve CPTED principles in community development of renovation projects is through a three-step review process.

- **Designation:** What is the intended use of the area? What behavior is allowed?
- **Definition:** What are the physical limits of the area? What are the borders between this area and public spaces? Is it clear which activities are allowed where? What risks can be anticipated and planned for?
- **Design:** Does the physical environment support the intended use safely and efficiently?

Recommendation—Texarkana Beautification

Adopt a Master Streetscape Plan as a Contribution to the General Marketing of the Community and Quality of Life in Texarkana

- To enhance and improve the visual appearance of the City a master streetscape plan along local arterial road corridors should be developed. Such a program should include trees, street lighting, enhanced traffic signals, storm water drainage, curbs and gutters, etc. Anytime visible public investment is made in a commercial area, new private investment considers an area more favorably. Targeted commercial recruitment will be more successful where there is strong evidence of public investment.

Require detailed site planning standards for retail-commercial and multifamily residential developments.

- Require that each principal building have a clearly defined, highly visible customer entrance with features such as canopies or porticos, arcades, arches, wing walls, and integral planters.
- Require loading docks, trash collection, outdoor storage and similar facilities and functions to be incorporated into the overall design of the building and the landscaping so that the visual and acoustic impacts of these functions are fully contained and out of view from adjacent properties and public streets. Prohibit the use of screening materials that are different from or inferior to the principal materials of the building and landscape. No delivery, loading, trash removal, or similar operations should be permitted between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., except in special circumstances and where steps are taken to reduce noise impacts.
- Require each retail establishment to contribute to the establishment or enhancement of the community and public spaces by providing at least two community amenities such as an outdoor patio/seating area, water feature, clock tower, or pedestrian plaza with benches.

- Require sidewalks at least 5 feet in width be provided along all sides of the lot that abut a public or private street and that a continuous internal pedestrian walkway be provided from the perimeter public sidewalk to the principal customer entrance. This internal walkway must feature landscaping, benches, and other such materials/facilities for no less than 50 percent of its length.
- Require that sidewalks be provided along the full length of the building along any facade featuring a customer entrance and along any facade abutting public parking areas. Such sidewalks shall be located at least six feet from the facade of the building to provide planting beds for foundation landscaping.
- Require that internal pedestrian walkways provide a weather protection feature such as an awning within 30 feet of all customer entrances.
- Require the internal pedestrian walkways be distinguished from driving surfaces through the use of special pavers, bricks, or scored concrete to enhance pedestrian safety and the attractiveness of the walkways.

Recommendation—Downtown and Office/Institutional Development Standards

Implement appropriate site development criteria for the Downtown area, incorporating the goals and recommendations for achieving site-specific urban design based on the historic characteristics of the City core.

- Use the site plan review process to ensure that commercial developments allow the preservation of historic elements of style and; and
- Orient and align buildings and developments with sensitivity to the existing street front property line and setback.

Recommendation—Public Facilities

Research and Consider Adoption of an “Adequate Public Facilities” Policy Relating to Road Improvements, Public Utilities and Other Capital Improvements in the newly annexed Areas of Texarkana.

- Establish fees for developer contributions as part of an “Adequate Facilities” policy relating to arterial streets, public utilities and related development improvements on unplatted lots in Texarkana.
- Restrict development approval where public facilities need to be extended based on the readiness of the public to invest.
- Refer to the Natural Features Map when conducting the new Site Plan Review process.

Examine alternative means of funding major road improvements, for example, an impact fee for engineering and construction, rights-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, bridge construction, and other improvements associated with major road development.

Recommendation—Strip Commercial Design Guidelines

The commercial strip centers serve as districts for commercial activity and focal points. These guidelines are intended to accomplish the following:

- Provide for the proper sizing and location of new retail zoning requests and developments;
- Improve on- and off-site vehicular and pedestrian circulation and safety;
- Allow commercial strip centers to develop on arterial streets while at the same time preserving the capacity of the arterial street to carry City-wide traffic; and
- Improve the visual character and identity of retail centers, strip centers, and major transportation corridors.

These guidelines are intended to supplement the City of Texarkana’s proposed new site plan review process. Each of the nine design elements or sections includes a statement of purpose and a listing of key issues. The applicant will be expected to address these issues by a) complying with the guidelines for each section; or b) proposing alternative solutions that specifically address the identified issues.

The guidelines should be officially coordinated with adopted zoning and subdivision regulation amendments; however, the process is intended to remain flexible. The applicant is encouraged to propose innovative alternatives that accomplish the stated purpose of the guidelines.

The guidelines will be used by staff in its initial discussions with the applicant as he prepares his submission. Upon receipt of a zoning case, concept plan, or site plan, the staff will evaluate the request based on its compliance with guidelines or upon how effectively it addresses the intent of each section through alternative solutions. The applicant shall clearly show how he addressed the key issue(s) with supportive information and data.

When an applicable zoning case, circulation plan, land use plan, preliminary site plan, or site plan is presented to Planning and Zoning Commission, the staff’s recommended action will be included. Staff’s recommendation will be based on its determination of the proposal’s conformance to the guidelines and/or its effectiveness in meeting the purposes and issues of the various design elements.

NATURAL FEATURES MAP

Site Appropriateness--Retail Strip Centers.

Purpose: In order for the retail centers to best serve as corner neighborhood shopping centers, certain parameters need to be addressed. These include:

- appropriate site location;
- efficient site shape and size; and
- site accessibility.

Guidelines:

- Retail centers should typically be located at the corner of two major thoroughfares.
- Sites for neighborhood commercial centers should be generally 6 to 10 acres to accommodate 30,000 - 100,000 SF of retail space including serving a 1/4 mile radius for 1 or 2 “anchor” stores. Community centers should be planned for a larger site.
- Sites should generally be accessible from major thoroughfares at median breaks and located along at-grade intersections.
- Sites should be accessed from local streets that are segregated from the street system of residentially zoned land.
- Topography and drainage should be addressed with regard to corner shopping locations.

Building Arrangement

Purpose: Proper arrangement of buildings on a site provides for efficient and viable long term use. Key issues include:

- storefront visibility and accessibility;
- relationship of buildings to each other;
- orientation to thoroughfares;
- compatibility with surrounding land uses; and
- re-use of buildings and adaptability for new tenants

Guidelines:

- Storefronts should generally be visible from main circulation aisles unless a “mall” or courtyard approach is used.
- Pad sites, generally defined as free standing structures of less than 5000 SF of floor area, should be limited to one per 5 acres of land area.
- Buildings should be arranged to reduce visibility of service areas from streets, customer parking areas and adjacent properties.
- Bay depth of buildings should be sized to accommodate a variety of potential uses.

Chapter 5 - Future Land Use

- Two-story buildings should generally not be placed adjacent to single- or two-family residential districts, nor between the main building(s) of a center and streets.
- Buildings should be grouped along one side lot line, with one end at the front yard building setback, and with the front setback landscaped, providing a 10' setback for all paved off-street parking.

Access

Purpose: Safe and efficient access to the corner shopping center or commercial strip minimizes potential vehicular and pedestrian conflicts. The key issues include:

- location of median breaks along major thoroughfares;
- number and location of entry drives;
- design of entry drives; and
- traffic visibility.

Guidelines:

- Driveways should typically be spaced with a minimum of 125 feet from the intersections of major thoroughfares unless a one-way traffic flow is used. All other driveway and median openings should adhere to the Driveway Access Standards of the Comprehensive Plan.
- The ingress side of the main entrance drive should be the largest radius allowed by ordinance for better access into the site, particularly at major centers, such as clustered near the Loop highway.
- Driveways should maintain an appropriate sight distance triangle at all perimeter entrances.
- Main entrance drives should generally be located at median breaks providing left turn access to and from the site. Continuation left-turn lanes should be broken with medians at major intersections.
- Main entrance drives should connect to a “straightaway” aisle that does not dead end or require an immediate turn to approach the main building.
- Aisles intersecting with entrance drives should be spaced a minimum of 20 feet from the entrance line to provide for smooth turning movements.

Circulation and Parking

Purpose: Proper circulation and parking systems minimize confusion and facilitate safe and easy pedestrian and vehicular movement within the corner shopping center. The key issues include:

- traffic aisle alignment;
- traffic speed and safety;
- parking location and layout;
- service area parking and circulation;
- customer pick-up areas;

- drive-through building circulation; and
- pedestrian circulation and safety.

Guidelines:

- Provide a 10' setback from street-side property lines for all off-street parking drives and spaces.
- Main drive aisles should generally be free of parking when adjacent to large anchor tenants of 30,000 SF of floor area or more.
- The direction of traffic flow should be identified.
- Long circulation aisles (generally in excess of 500') should be off-set (typically 45 degrees or more) to prevent excessive speed.
- Lanes should be provided for drive-through facilities, including stacking space, that are physically separated from other circulation and parking aisles.
- Parking aisles should be oriented toward anchor stores to minimize the number of parking lanes crossed by pedestrians.
- Typically provide right angle intersections (80 to 100 degrees) with no more than 2 traffic lanes crossing at any interior intersection.
- Parking should be arranged to provide readily accessible spaces for each establishment.
- The parking layout should maximize the amount of parking in front of the building and minimize the amount behind.
- Separate service vehicle circulation from customer circulation routes.
- Allow for all tenants to be accessed from within the development through cross-access agreements.
- Customer pick-up areas should be provided at “anchor” stores.
- Pad sites shall be required to obtain mutual access and parking agreements within the remaining retail center. This shall be required in order to enhance safe on-site circulation and provide access to left-turn lanes.

Building Elements

Purpose: In order to create a positive overall development character, all structures (including separate pad site structures) at shopping centers should have an attractive and uniform architectural treatment. The key issues include:

- consistency of design between structures;
- materials standards; and
- rear facade treatment.

Guidelines:

- Facade design plan of entire project should be submitted with site plan review.
- Facades and roof lines facing streets or main parking areas should be consistent throughout the development in design, color and materials.
- Roof lines, overhangs, and the front fascia should be extended to the rear of the building(s).
- High quality, low maintenance building materials are recommended.
- Signage located on the buildings should be consistent in size, location and material throughout the project.
- Rear facades should be of finished quality and should be of color and materials that blend with the remainder of the building(s).

Service Facilities

Purpose: Service areas should be appropriately located and designed to efficiently and inconspicuously serve the corner shopping center development without disrupting on-site circulation or adjacent land uses while maintaining visibility for security purposes. The key issues include:

- location of service areas;
- visibility of service areas; and
- treatment of pad site service areas
- location of trash containers.

Guidelines:

- Service facilities should generally be located in a central area to be used by several retail establishments.
- Service and docking facilities should be separate from main circulation and parking functions.
- Trash containers should be located in appropriately screened central service areas, and not visible from the public street.
- All dumpsters should be screened on all sides exposed to street view. All dumpsters should be shown on the approved site plan and whenever possible shall be clustered.
- Service areas should be easily accessible by service vehicles.
- Pad site service areas should be screened from the remainder of the development and physically separated from the circulation aisles and parking areas serving the remainder of the site.
- Pad site service areas should typically be screened by an extension of the building.

- Service facilities should be screened from the remainder of the project, adjacent land uses and major thoroughfares. Extended wing walls from the building may be used to screen service areas. When used, these walls may be of solid construction if lighted on both sides, or a minimum of 30% of open construction if lighted on only one side. A combination of landscaping and screening walls may also be used.

Utilities/Mechanical/Outdoor Storage

Purpose: The location and treatment of utilities, mechanical functions and outdoor storage areas should be managed and coordinated to achieve physical and visual order within the shopping center development. The key issues include:

- location of facilities; and
- visual impact of utilities.

Guidelines:

- Typically, utilities should be underground from right-of-way to building to reduce visual clutter.
- Locate utility metering within a designated service area.
- Locate mechanical equipment in the designated service area and screen from the project and adjacent land uses.
- Limited outdoor storage will only be permitted in designated service areas that are screened from the remainder of the project, adjacent land uses and streets.
- Utility conduit and boxes should be painted to match building color.
- Roof mounted mechanical units shall be screened from view with a parapet wall, mansard roof, or other architectural extension, equal in height to the unit(s) except when that distance exceeds five feet. In this case, an additional setback will be required at a ratio of two feet horizontal for each additional foot of vertical height above five feet.

Buffers and Screens

Purpose: Proper use of buffers and screens will lessen the differences between land uses and diminish the visual impact of undesirable elements. The key issues include:

- unified character;
- high quality construction;
- longevity of system;
- disparity between land uses; and
- visibility of undesirable elements.

Guidelines:

- Architectural screens should be an extension of the development’s architectural treatment and consistent in color and design. The development of an office business park where there is high interstate visibility, affords a chance to create an attractive “front door” appearance.
- Screening should be constructed of low maintenance, high quality materials that are consistent with the building facade material.
- Screening walls should conform to the City of Texarkana’s zoning ordinance requirements for landscaping.
- Painted or coated screening walls should be avoided.
- Landscape screens (typically 18” to 26” in height) should be provided between all parking areas and streets with the exception of those areas where plant materials would block sight lines at driveway intersections.
- Landscape screens may include a combination of plant massing, earth berming and walls.
- A 10-15 foot wide landscape buffer should be provided to separate the retail use from residential land uses. A masonry wall or combination wall and landscaping may be substituted for this buffer.

Landscaping

Purpose: The location and design of landscaped areas, entrances and edges should effectively reinforce development’s character and quality, identify its entry points and break the massiveness of a center’s parking area. The key issues include:

- unified development image and character;
- parkway treatment;
- identifiable entrances;
- visual dominance of parking area; and
- existing mature trees.

Guidelines:

- Landscaped planting plan of the entire project should be submitted with site plan review.
- Approximately 15% of the area between the main building face and the front property lines should be of a permeable landscaped surface. (Secondary buildings located between the main building and the front property line should not be included in the area calculation.)
- Landscape areas should generally consist of a combination of trees, shrubs and ground cover.
- Use landscape areas for transition and integration between pad sites and surrounding land uses.
- Minimum 4” caliper trees are recommended.

- Artificial plants are prohibited.
- Preserve existing mature trees where possible.
- Special landscape treatment should be employed to highlight and identify entrances.
- Landscape areas should be regularly spaced in parking lots to break up massiveness of pavement. Minimum one tree per ten parking places.
- Mechanical irrigation systems are typically required to ensure maintenance of plant materials.
- Landscaping should be used in conjunction with screening walls when multi-story buildings abut an adjacent property where topography lessens the effect of a wall alone. Where a building exceeds 15 feet in height, 4" caliper trees shall be required, spaced every 30 feet along the wall or spaced every 50 feet apart if an irrigation system is provided.