



Hillsboro TEXAS

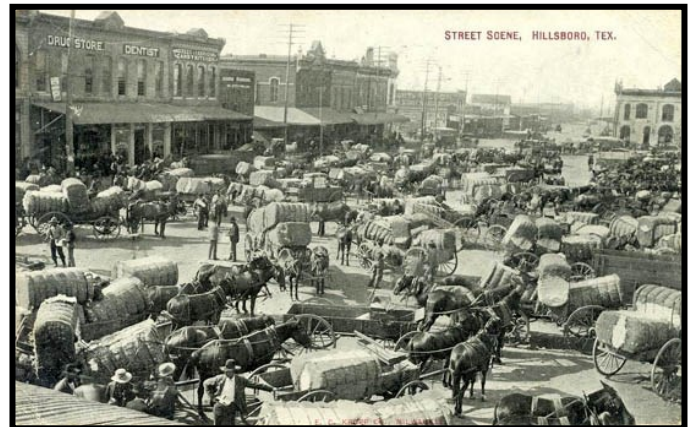
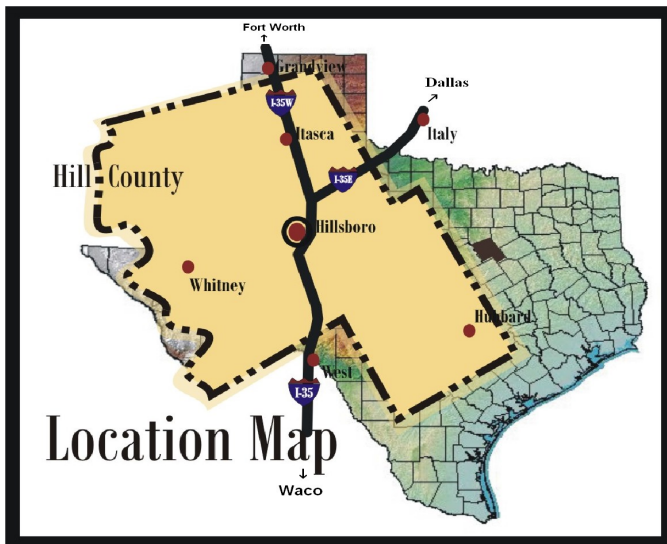
COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN & THOROUGHFARE PLAN

December 2008

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

The City of Hillsboro is strategically located at the confluence of I-35W and I-35E, approximately fifty (50) miles south of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. Interstate 35 is called the NAFTA (North America Free Trade Agreement) Freeway, since it is the primary trucking corridor linking Mexico and Central America to the United States and Canada. Hillsboro is approximately 33 miles north of Waco and 133 miles north of Austin. Hillsboro is centrally located in Hill County and serves as the county seat

fire and police station was constructed, and some city streets were paved. In 1911 Hillsboro changed from a General Law to a City Charter.



In 1962 Hillsboro adopted the council-manager form of government. That year the junior college was reactivated as Hill Junior College, and in 1964 the Confederate Research Center, and the Hill Junior College Press were established. By 1970 the population was 7,224, and Hillsboro had 210 businesses and twenty-one industries. In the 1970s the courthouse-square buildings were renovated, and throughout the 1980s they were featured on a Heritage League Tour, held at the same time as the city's art festival. In 1993 the Hill County Courthouse, which was built in 1890, was gutted by fire on New Years Day. The courthouse was rebuilt and again stands as the center point of historic downtown Hillsboro.

When Hill County was established in 1853 three options were presented for the location of the county seat, and a location near the center of the county was selected. The 260-acres were donated by Thomas M. Steiner, John Carruthers and Jonathan Newby, and the town was called Hillsborough in honor of Dr. George W. Hill, a surgeon from Tennessee. In 1836 Hill established a trading post with the Indians near Spring Hill in Navarro County, from which Hill County was established. Hill served as Secretary of War and in the Congress of the Republic of Texas.

In 1853 Hillsborough, Texas was incorporated. The railroad arrived in 1881. The Katy shops built in Hillsboro brought jobs to the community and remained there until 1930. In 1888 the post office changed the spelling of the town name to Hillsboro. By 1890 Hillsboro had a population of 2,000, six churches, a new courthouse, three banks, a cotton compress, several cotton gins, a flour mill, stores, an opera house, and two weekly newspapers, the Mirror and the Reflector. By 1900 the population was 5,000, and in 1903 the Trinity and Brazos Valley Railway began serving the town. In 1909 a new city hall with an attached



LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Texas Local Government Code (Tx LGC) authorizes the adoption of a comprehensive plan in Chapter 213 “for the purpose of promoting the sound development of municipalities and promoting public health, safety and welfare,” and that “zoning regulations must be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan.” The state statutes give further guidance by specifying that land use decisions be designed 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; and, (7) facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewers, schools, parks and other public requirements.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The 1994 Comprehensive Plan recorded the latest Census as counting 7,072 persons within the corporate limits of Hillsboro. It was suspected, at that time that figure under-represented the actual population. However, historic data has been sporadic for Hillsboro, often showing alternating gains and losses in population between the Census periods.

The 2000 Census figure supported the suspicion Hillsboro was facing a trending growth in population. The US Census counted 8,232 persons in 2000, which was near the population reported in the 1950 US Census. In the seven years since the 2000 US Census building permits have indeed indicated continued growth in population for Hillsboro with an estimated 9,064 persons counted for 2007.

Two trend lines were developed to estimate future population for the next twenty years. A rapid growth line was developed using historic data from 1970 to 2007. As shown in the population chart, this data includes a period of little growth in addition to the rapid growth shown between 1990 and 2007. Utilizing this data, the growth in population to 2030 fits a smooth decreasing curve and provides an estimate of 10,437 persons at that time.

Considering the cyclic slump in the economy that is currently being forecasted, a trend line was developed using all the data from 1950 to 2007. Utilizing this data a trend line reflecting a lower rate of growth was developed. Note that the trend line still projects an increase in population but at a reduced rate. Using

this lesser average annual rate data, the 2030 population is estimated to be 9,368.

CITIZEN'S INPUT

The 2003 Goals and Policies generated by the City of Hillsboro Community Action Teams (CAT) were reviewed. The formats of the goals varied from team to team and the scopes also varied. Some goal statements were general and some were very specific. The CAT goals related to the physical development aspects of the city were compared to the Goals, Objectives and Policies that were a part of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan. Based upon input at the meeting February 10, 2004, the 2003 CAT Goals, and the 1994 Comprehensive Plan Goals the following consolidated goals were prepared. Every effort has been made to incorporate the intent of all of the CAT Goals with the broad range of concerns from the Comprehensive Plan.

GOAL 1, COMMUNITY CHARACTER: PRESERVE THE SMALL TOWN/COUNTY SEAT CHARACTER OF HILLSBORO

Objective A: Preserve and promote the historical integrity of the City:

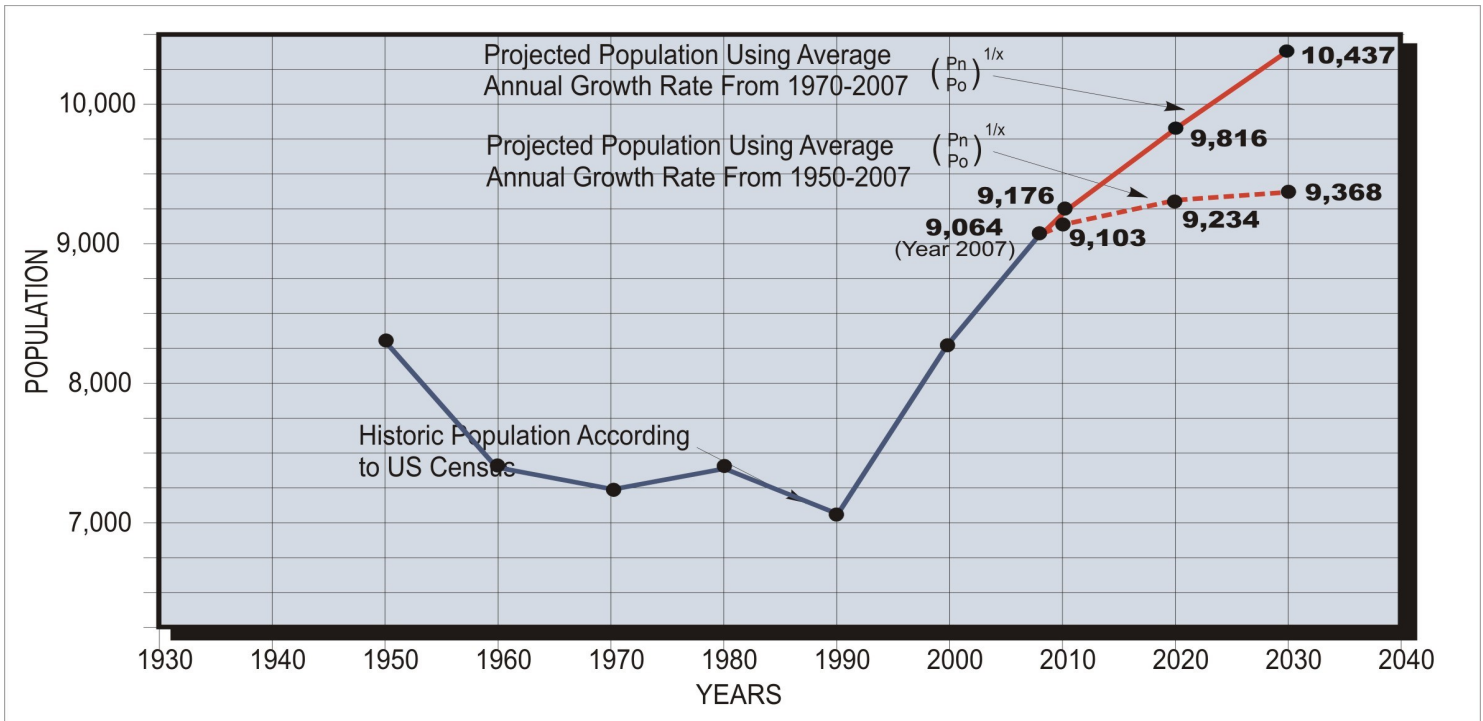
- Coordinate implementation efforts for historical preservation with historical preservation groups in Hillsboro.
- Define and establish historic areas and districts using the existing inventory of historic assets.
- Utilize historic architectural features in the construction and/or restoration of community facilities buildings whenever possible.

Objective B: Encourage the continued restoration and development of the Central Business District (CBD) and the courthouse square:

- Continue to seek funding to enhance the attractiveness of the urban streetscape in the CBD.
- Adopt an amortization schedule to remove nonconforming uses that are not compatible with established commercial land uses in the CBD.

Objective C: Improve the aesthetics and visual appearance of Hillsboro:

- Promote beautification projects within the City
- Prepare and implement a plan for public landscaping throughout the City.
- Create entry features (landscaping, signage, etc.) at the access points to Hillsboro.



- Develop neighborhood improvement projects.
- Increase code enforcement efforts and establish a citywide program for trash and litter control.

Objective D: Promote neighborhood cohesiveness by providing avenues of communication:

- Organize and establish neighborhood gatherings such as block parties.
- Use Crime Stoppers meetings to promote communication between neighborhoods and between neighborhoods and the City.

GOAL 2, COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING: ADOPT AND UPDATE PLANS AND ORDINANCES TO GUIDE THE FUTURE GROWTH OF HILLSBORO USING ACCEPTED PLANNING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

Objective A: Review and update planning ordinances and maps to reflect current conditions in the city and encourage appropriate future development.

- Update the Existing Land Use Map.
- Update the Hillsboro Comprehensive Plan (Land Use Plan) to identify future residential, commercial and industrial areas and address major land use concerns including manufactured housing.
- Adopt a new Zoning Ordinance to implement the Comprehensive Plan.
- Adopt a Master Thoroughfare Plan based on the principles of functional classification and design.
- Adopt an on-going Planning Program to continually monitor growth and address development and redevelopment concerns

Objective B: Embrace “Smart Growth” principles to revitalize existing areas of the City.

- Provide incentives to promote development by establishing a land bank program, a historic district, and downtown residential development.
- Identify 300 lots for residential infill development

Objective C: Review and adjust applicable fee schedules and fines within the jurisdiction of the City of Hillsboro.

Objective D: Promote long range planning for commercial and industrial land uses.

- Encourage heavy commercial and industrial uses to develop adjacent to I-35 and encourage restricted access to that roadway.

GOAL 3, INFRASTRUCTURE: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE OF HILLSBORO

Objective A: Establish a long term budgeting process for infrastructure capital improvement expenditures.

- Compile department heads’ anticipated capital improvements needs for the next five years and the next ten years.
- Adopt a short term and long term Capital Improvement Plan for the City of Hillsboro.

Objective B: Actively participate and prepare for State and regional highway planning and infrastructure development.

- Coordinate with the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) on highway improvements and development in and around Hillsboro.
- Establish regional cooperation agreements for infrastructure needs.

Objective C: Upgrade the Master Thoroughfare Plan (MTP) and aggressively pursue street improvements to implement the plan.

- Construct one north/south and one east/west street within the next three (3) years.
- Construct two additional north/south streets and two additional east/west streets within seven (7) years
- Adopt improved paving construction standards for new development and reconstruction of existing streets.
- Adopt improved street maintenance standards and improved paving construction standards for reconstruction of existing streets.
- Use procedures and standards for installing or repairing utilities under new streets that will not hurt the integrity of the new streets.

- Improve coordination with non-city owned utility companies minimizing paving cuts and preserve the integrity of public streets.

GOAL 4, PARKS AND RECREATION: EXPAND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS TO BETTER SERVE RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF HILLSBORO

Objective A: Develop a Parks and Recreation Department for children, youths, and adults.

- Hire a Parks Director and staff to plan recreation programs and facilities for both indoor and outdoor activities.
- Prepare and implement a Park Master Plan to identify and meet indoor and outdoor facilities needs.
- Build and staff a community activity center/aquatic center.
- Improve and enhance Katy Lake as a tourist attraction.
- Convert the old tennis courts into a skate park facility.
- Coordinate with Hill College and HISD to allow high school students to use Hill College tennis court facilities
- Encourage cooperation between the City and public school system to allow joint use of facilities whenever feasible and agreeable to all parties.
- Require park dedication and park development fees for new development.
- Seek grants and community support for parks and recreation improvements.

GOAL 5, COMMUNITY SAFETY: IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN COMMUNITY SAFETY IN HILLSBORO.

Objective A: Strengthen, improve and maintain the public safety departments.

- Develop an implementation plan for Hillsboro Fire Rescue to meet National Fire Protection Association, Texas Commission on Fire Protection, and Texas Department of Health for equipment, personnel, training and facilities.
- Develop an implementation plan for the Police Department to meet Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Official Standards and Education requirements for equipment, personnel, training and facilities.
- Pursue grant funds to assist in meeting public safety needs.

Objective B: Improve public safety through better emergency management planning.

- Develop City of Hillsboro emergency management plan according to State and Federal guidelines.
- Develop programs to train volunteers in Fire/Emergency Medical Services and Police Departments.

Objective C: Improve long range planning and maintenance of City utilities.

- Hire a qualified and experienced public works director
- Prepare and adopt sewer and water master plans for the City of Hillsboro
- Establish a good working relationship with non-city owned utility companies to make sure the integrity of the City streets and utilities are maintained
- Set a timetable for extension of water and sewer facilities to the east side of I-35.
- Inspect and maintain drainage structures as needed
- Develop standards and procedures for maintenance of utilities, especially in cases that require paving repair.

GOAL 6, COMMUNITY FACILITIES:

Objective A: Prepare and implement a coordinated community facilities plan with anticipated sequencing of buildings for future needs.

- Incorporate input from representatives of appropriate City agencies, County, and school district regarding the development of future community facilities and public buildings
- Encourage coordinated efforts with public and private owned utility franchises operating within the City.

Objective B: Plan for adequate staffing and timely renovation or replacement of public facilities.

- Formulate plans and a definite projection for the replacement of the Police Station
- Proceed with a feasibility study for conversion of the old Junior High building into office space for City of Hillsboro administrative offices.
- Plan for airport improvements, including the extension of the runway to over 5,000 feet.
- Plan for new animal control facilities with grants or other funding sources.

GOAL 7, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: PROVIDE ECONOMIC INCENTIVES TO PROMOTE QUALITY DEVELOPMENT IN HILLSBORO.

Objective A: Provide infrastructure incentives to promote quality commercial, residential and industrial development.

- Establish enterprise zones.
- Establish freeport status for warehousing and distribution.

Objective B: Promote a positive economic climate that will benefit the community, promote stability and diversification, and is environmentally sound.

- Encourage growth and development of a wide variety of housing types and price ranges in appropriate areas to meet the needs of all citizens.
- Encourage development and expansion of existing industrial users/employers and attract major industrial users/employers that will improve the economic base of Hillsboro.

LAND USE PRINCIPLES

A number of factors must be considered when planning for the future development of a city. The primary factor is a clear image of the type of city that the residents of Hillsboro want at **the** point of ultimate development. The *Future Land Use Plan Map* shows how the City plans to use land in the future. This Plan is based upon input from the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council during this planning process, with input from citizens during the development process.

Physical elements, such as major roadways, railroads, the floodplain, and flood-prone areas, also have an impact upon a city's development. These physical features can be either naturally formed or man-made, and can serve as barriers to growth.

Urban Design Elements

The term "urban design" refers to the planning of development in a comprehensive manner in order to achieve a unified, functional, efficient, and aesthetically pleasing physical setting. Urban design consists of a number of elements that are accepted by planning professionals as desirable and necessary for the orderly growth and development of an area. They enable planners to effectively create the desired form of the City. The urban design elements that have been applied in the City of Hillsboro's Comprehensive Land Use Plan are described in the following pages of this brochure. The urban design elements are applicable to future development and should also be applied to existing development whenever possible.

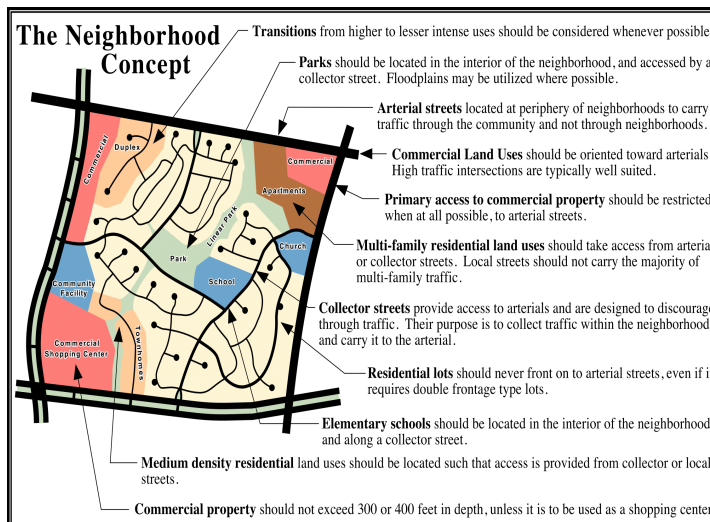
It is important to note that the residential concepts provided herein are usually applied to developments that have much higher densities than is projected in the goals of Hillsboro. But, this does not alter the application of these principles for planning for future growth. The intent of this plan is to guide the City to maintain and encourage residential and nonresidential development that provides high value and excellent quality of life for the residents of the City.

Neighborhood Concept

The **neighborhood concept** is one of the oldest and most widely used and

accepted practices in urban land use planning. This concept helps create quality spaces in which people may live.

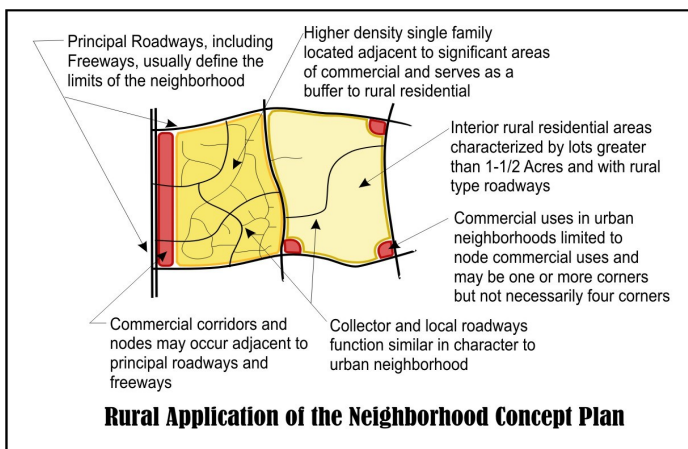
The concept places primary emphasis on creating neighborhoods that are buffered from the impacts of elements outside the neighborhood system. By using a transition of land use intensity, the most sensitive element of a neighborhood, residential use, is protected from the effects of intense commercial use.



The neighborhood concept recognizes that the foundation of a neighborhood is its streets. Streets serve two primary purposes in neighborhood systems: to facilitate the movement of people and goods, and to serve as physical boundaries between adjacent land uses or neighborhoods. Streets should be designed and located so as to accomplish their purpose of efficient traffic service, while discouraging through traffic in neighborhoods. Curvilinear street patterns are encouraged. In addition, a high priority is placed on connectivity of subdivisions to insure appropriate traffic circulation. This concept of connectivity also includes pedestrian traffic.

Rural Neighborhood Concept

The **Rural Neighborhood Concept**, as illustrated in *Rural Application of the Neighborhood Concept*, functions to maintain the character of some areas located in the City's perimeter and extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). This concept is a variation of the Neighborhood Concept as applied to urban areas. Its primary emphasis is placed on large-lot residential areas (lots 1-1/2 acres or greater) and locating urban land uses in a manner that protects sensitive, residential areas from the effects of urban development. Limited neighborhood commercial services within rural, residential areas are located only at the intersection of major arterials. All other urbanized development is located in

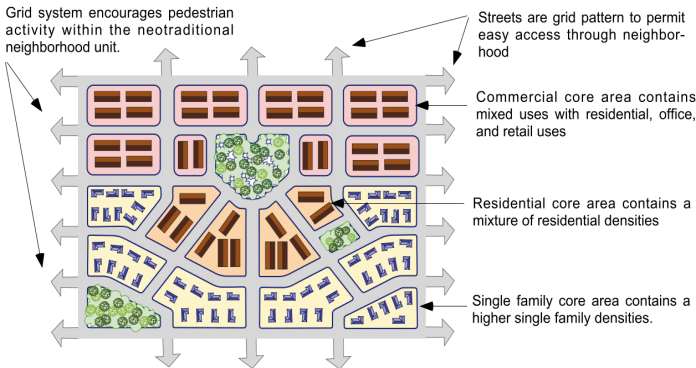


distinct, separate zones along arterial roads that will not threaten the nature of rural neighborhoods.

Additionally, rural design features differ from those in urban areas by ensuring that development maintains the rural, natural character of the County. For instance, drainage channels should be natural as opposed to lined with concrete, and buffers should consist primarily of open space and natural vegetation as opposed to walls or other hardscape materials.

New Urbanism or Neo-Traditional Development

In the last few years, an emphasis has been placed on land development that increased the density of uses in order to conserve on utilities and natural resources. This emphasis has been called “smart growth.” Its objective is to provide quality living, recreation, shopping, and work spaces that are located in close proximity to each other.



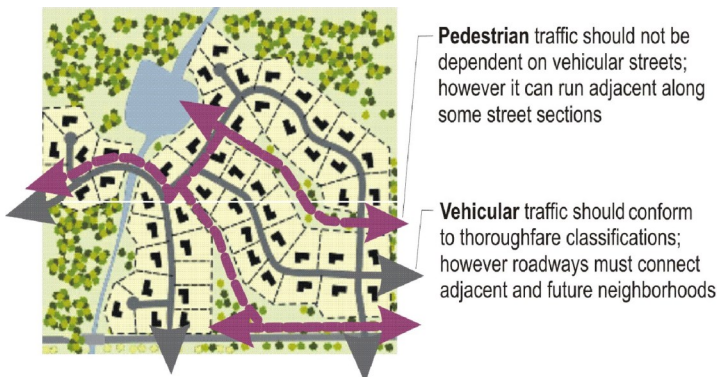
New Urbanism / Neotraditional Neighborhood Concept

Smart growth includes the planning concepts of New Urbanism, or Neo-traditional, development. The primary characteristics of the New Urbanism/Neo-Traditional concept as summarized by the Congress of New Urbanism (www.cnu.org) are:

- Connectivity**
- Mixed Use**
- Mixed Housing**
- Quality Architecture and Urban Design**
- Smart Transportation**
- Sustainability**

Pedestrian and Vehicular Connectivity

It is an established fact that the purpose of residential neighborhoods is for dwelling and recreation. As such, neighborhoods should be pedestrian oriented. Contemporary designs for residential neighborhoods have emphasized the circulation of vehicle traffic to, through, and around the neighborhood. Most residents do not use their vehicle inside the neighborhood. Circulation through the neighborhood by the residents of the neighborhood is preferred to occur on foot or by other modes of transportation, such as bicycles, in-line skates, and in some



cases golf-carts. Unfortunately, the development community has emphasized the construction of streets and minimized the provision of circulation systems for pedestrians. The well-designed neighborhood should include the appropriate circulation of both vehicle and pedestrian interests. It is also critical to note that streets are designed for vehicles, not pedestrians. Therefore, the reliance on a ribbon of concrete adjacent to the street as a pedestrian pathway is the least desirable manner of providing pedestrian circulation facilities. Each subdivision should be designed such that a separate pedestrian circulation system and a vehicular circulation system are provided. The two systems may coincide occasionally, but the vehicular roadways must not be the sole evidence of pedestrian circulation.

Commercial Development Forms

Commercial development, because of its infrastructure needs, intensity, and traffic volume, is a critical land use to the urban form of a community. Elements such as building orientation, lot depth, land use intensity, and location should be planned so that commercial development becomes an asset to the community rather than an eyesore.

“Strip commercial” is a common, but undesirable, type of commercial development. The primary characteristics of strip commercial are:

- *Shallow lots;*
- *Numerous small parcels ;*
- *Numerous curb cuts for entrances;*
- *Numerous small buildings with no architectural unity;*
- *Minimal (or no) landscaping;;*
- *Limited parking usually restricted to the front setback area or along the street; and*
- *The lack of landscaping or other buffers.*

To avoid this type of undesirable development in the future, commercial developments in Hillsboro should be required to incorporate the elements of the commercial node and commercial corridor models into their design plans, as should redevelopment of older areas.

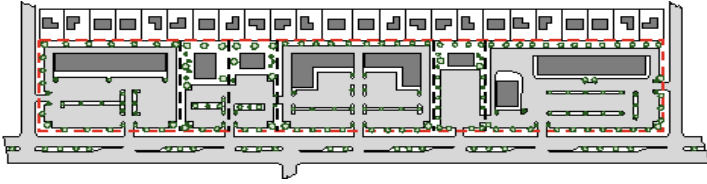
Commercial Corridors

The commercial corridor development form emphasizes the location of commercial uses along an arterial. This development form is characterized by high intensity commercial use located near the intersections of major arterials, with less intense commercial uses located along the arterial between intersections. To create cohesiveness among a variety of commercial uses, development guidelines should require uniform signage, shared driveways, and landscaping along the thoroughfare in commercial corridor developments.

The following are the primary elements of commercial corridors:

- *Depth should be restricted to not more than 300 feet and not less than 150 feet.*
- *Parking lot interiors and perimeters should be landscaped to screen automobiles and break-up large areas of pavement.*
- *Access to commercial property should not encroach into residential neighborhoods. Primary access is directly from arterial streets.*
- *Buffering between single family and commercial uses may consist of landscaping, and/or solid walls. In addition, dumpsters and mechanical equipment areas should be screened.*

- Corridor development should orient traffic toward arterial streets and discourage entry to residential neighborhoods.

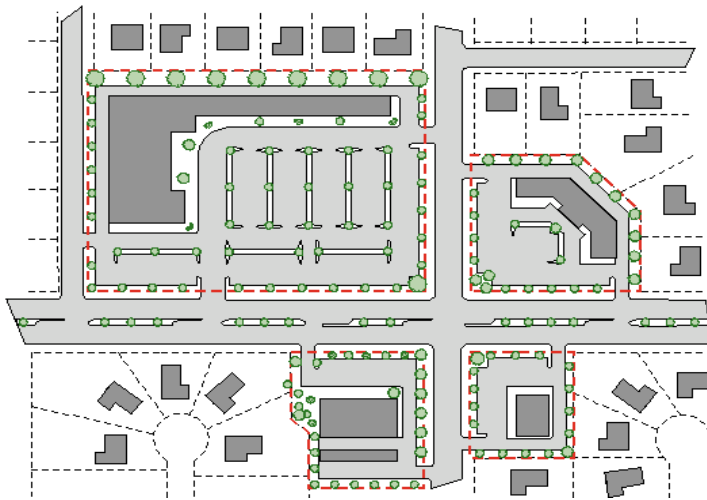


Commercial Nodes

The commercial node development form consists of commercial land use that generally develops around intersections of major thoroughfares and around intersections of collector streets with arterial streets. A distinguishing characteristic of nodal development is that the commercial activity is directed toward the intersection, and does not extend along the intersecting streets. The size of a commercial node is generally not limited, but is determined by the type of commercial use at a particular location. These physical elements may serve as barriers to contain intense land uses.

The following are the primary elements of commercial node development:

- Parking lot interiors and perimeters should be landscaped to screen automobiles and break up large areas of pavement.
- Unlike Commercial Corridors, Commercial Nodes should not be restricted to 300 feet or less in depth. The commercial activity should determine the depth.
- Buffering between single family and commercial uses may consist of landscaping.



Edges and Transitions

Well-defined edges and gradual transitions of land use are important to the function of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Edges are boundaries of land uses that clearly indicate the beginning and termination of a land use type, while transitions are land uses that serve as a buffer zone between uses of differing intensities. Edges are generally recognized as physical elements, such as creeks/floodplains, interstate freeways, or thoroughfares. These physical elements may serve as barriers to contain intense land uses.

Screening Walls and Buffers: When conflicting land uses must be located next to one another, a means must be provided to soften the impact of the more intense use. This can be accomplished by providing screening walls or

landscape buffer areas between the incompatible uses. Buffering is recommended in transition areas between varying intensities of land uses, for example: Between single family neighborhoods and higher density residential areas, between residential areas of any density and housing or industrial areas, sometimes between commercial areas and industrial areas, or in any other type of transition between potentially conflicting land uses in which it is considered to be appropriate. Transitional areas are intended to provide for mixing of uses and allow for certain uses while protecting the integrity of other types of uses. Locations which see a growing demand for mixed uses should be reviewed and re-evaluated periodically to determine if it is necessary to designate it as a transitional area.

Screening Walls: It is recommended that screening walls consist of solid masonry materials, combined with landscaping. In some cases, wood fences may be recommended. Screening walls that are adjacent to public roadways should always be combined with a variety of landscaping materials.

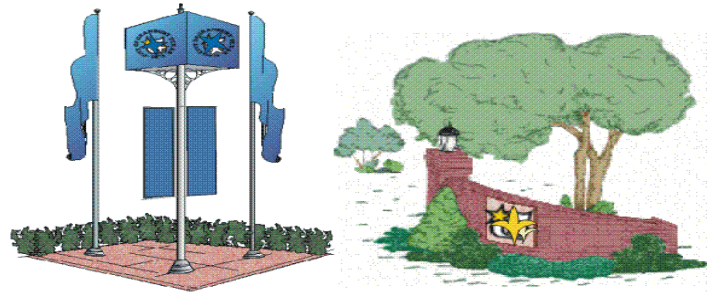
Landscape Buffers: Incompatible land uses may also be effectively screened with the use of landscaping material. There may be occasions when a six-foot screening wall, while limiting access, does not provide adequate characteristics to buffer against sound or visual effects from adjacent property. In such cases, it is recommended that long lived trees appropriate to this region of Texas, at least three inches in diameter at the time of planting, be placed along the screening wall at intervals that will provide full coverage year round at ultimate tree growth. If sufficient land exists, berms may also be used.

Focal Points and Entry Statements

Focal points and entry statements are design elements that are used to draw attention to significant areas of the City. Focal points are intended to make a statement about the community and to establish a City theme by using such elements as uniform signage and the City logo. Other elements that may be incorporated could be a combination of landscaping, decorative pavers, banners, signage, street furniture, and statuary. These elements can create interest in a particular location, and establish a community theme throughout the City.

Focal points are used at locations where characteristics unique to Hillsboro are evident such as in an area where the amount of traffic and visibility are high.

Entry statements are special treatments applied where significant amounts of traffic enter the City. They are intended to communicate that one has entered the City.



Focal Points and Entry Statements

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The **Future Land Use Plan** map illustrates the future pattern of land use for the City of Hillsboro as summarized below.

Residential Land Use: Although the zoning ordinance may permit a variety of residential districts, the Comprehensive Land Use Plan presents single family residential as the predominant use. Higher densities of residential consisting of zero lot line, two-family, town homes, and multi-family are contained within the Medium Density and High Density Residential category. Higher residential density is promoted and appropriate at the locations indicated on the map and upon site

specific application on individual properties. Uses other than single family may be permitted by specific approval of each project for areas not indicated as medium density and high density contingent on the development satisfying the parameters as detailed in the Land Use Principles section. This flexibility will permit zero lot line and higher density development as provided for in this text.

Single Family Land Use: Historically, the City of Hillsboro developed in an era that encouraged smaller lots, sometimes as narrow as twenty-five foot. At the turn of the 20th Century the concept was that the property owner would purchase any combination of lots as was necessary and build over the property line. Many in the older part of town have been sold off under metes and bounds descriptions and any uniformity of lot width and size has been lost. However, generally the density has remained between four and five units per acre. In addition there are a number of large acre lots, which has evolved for two reasons. First, many developments in the past have depended on septic systems and the area for the larger lot has been necessary for the system to function properly. Secondly, the residents have expressed a preference for the rural, country atmosphere that large lot development provides

Rapidly expanding urban areas in Dallas/Ft. Worth and Waco are placing exceedingly greater pressure on the community to meet the needs of the residential development market, which insists on greater lot yields consisting of lot sizes 9,000 to 15,000 square feet. As a response to the market demand, the City of Hillsboro has committed to assure that each residential development emphasizes value and quality regardless of the size of the lot. In addition, provision has been made in the form of the Planned Development district for innovation in single family products when such product provides the appropriate amenities that compensate for the reduction in lot size. The Comprehensive Plan provides for this wide variety of single family development within the scope of the Low Density Residential category shown on the *Future Land Use Plan* map.

Medium and High Density Land Use: Sound planning principles dictate that a healthy community encourage a mixture of residential uses of varying densities. Residential land uses other than large lot residential serve their own special purpose. They provide buffers in the form of residential uses between more intense non-residential uses, having the densest residential uses located near the non-residential use and decreasing the density as distance is gained from the non-residential use. In addition, some properties are better suited, because of topographical features, size, or geographic location, to be used for moderate and high density use. The medium and high density categories on the *Future Land Use Plan* map located a limited area for these uses, generally being in the vicinity of Hill College and on US Highways 77 & 81.

In addition, it is very important to note that higher density does not equate to decreased value and quality. As future residential densities increase, so must the amenities located within the developments. Future residential development of densities smaller than 5,000 square foot lots will require exceedingly greater application of features that increase the value and quality of the development.

Commercial and Industrial Land Use: Outside of public and quasi-public uses, non-residential uses in Hillsboro are generally limited to commercial type uses. The zoning ordinance provides for clean industrial type uses located in the northern reaches of the City, with Spur 579 providing the principle thoroughfare serving the industrial uses.

Commercial uses are generally limited to the downtown district and corridor type commercial focused along the principle arterials, US Highways 77 & 81,

SH 22, and I-35. The Downtown District and the I-35 Mall area are commercial nodes. However, they do not exhibit the classical nodal characteristics because of their unique purposes. The Downtown District is a historical setting developed primarily along zero lot line criteria. As a result no on-site landscaping or parking requirements apply.

Because of the intensity of vehicular traffic along I-35 and US Hwy 77 & 81, the entire length of the roadways are planned corridor commercial uses. The corridors are proposed to generally consist of 300 feet on either side of the right-of-way line. Distances greater than 300 feet run the risk of having out-parcels divided off in the rear, which will be removed from visibility and access to the property along the highway. This does not mean that commercial property that exceeds the 300 foot depth is not permitted; upon presentation of specific plans, developments greater than the 300 foot distance will certainly be considered where appropriate.

Public and Quasi-Public Land Use: These uses consist primarily of governmental uses, with the predominate use being locations for schools. Hillsboro has a significant number of schools scattered throughout the City. Normally, schools should not be planned along a principle arterial in this density. The schools in Hillsboro are one of its most valued features. However, future schools should be placed at locations other than on major arterials.

In addition, City facilities are limited. City Hall, the police station and a fire station are all located in the central portion of the City in the original Hillsboro platted area. In addition, the US Post Office is also located in the center city area. However, public services in the downtown area are dominated by the county courthouse. It is important for the redevelopment of the original town area that activity continue to bring residents into the old part of town. Plans for redevelopment of that area should include public facilities remaining in that area.

Parks and Recreation: Areas dedicated for passive and active recreation are a critical part of the community dynamic. Any effort considering the long range use of land should also include an analysis of the existing and future park plan goals.

There are generally two types of parks: active parks and passive parks. Active parks contain regulation designed play areas such as ball fields, basketball and tennis courts, swimming pools, and other types of particular sports. These active parks usually are dedicated primarily to competitive, organized sports or have paid employees maintaining and administering the activities. Passive parks consist of simple green areas with minimum or no facilities other than designated walk paths to parks with ball fields and basketball courts used for unorganized "pick-up" games. Playgrounds with pavilions and rest benches are usually a central feature of passive parks. In order to have a well balanced parks system, both types of parks should be planned and accessible to all residents of the community.

As the City is developed, it is critical that land area for neighborhood parks be dedicated as development occurs. To this end, the Park Plan has located neighborhood park facilities throughout the City, as shown on the park plan map. In addition to these neighborhood facilities, linear parks along the designated floodplains and special use parks should be provided as appropriate. Flood plain areas are well suited for passive parks and linear trails and should be located therein. Subdivisions should also incorporate pedestrian pathways to encourage pedestrian circulation throughout the neighborhood as well as linkages to the developing park systems.

Transitional Use: In locations where varying intensities of land use adjoin, an area of transitional use may be necessary. While allowing for certain uses from one classification, the existing uses from another classification can be protected while also remaining compatible with the neighboring locations and uses. This can occur in residential areas along arterial streets where the potential for business use could exist. Areas of transitional use could also occur where other uses (residential, commercial, industrial, or public and quasi-public) adjoin. Where a transitional use occurs, the use of appropriate screening walls and landscape buffer requirements are recommended to protect areas of less intense use from areas of more intense use, and should be used to coordinate and guide the establishment of development regulations.

THOROUGHFARE PLAN

Transportation planning is an integral part of the City of Hillsboro Comprehensive Land Use Plan. As the City changes, the thoroughfare system must be capable of handling traffic movement in a safe and efficient manner. The City of Hillsboro's Thoroughfare Plan is coordinated with the Future Land Use Plan and provides the tools to develop a transportation system that can accommodate the needs of existing and future land use.

The primary form of transportation in Hillsboro is the automobile. For this reason, the transportation element of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan is focused on a system of public roadways designed to expedite traffic movement and enhance

safety.

Thoroughfares located in the City of Hillsboro are relatively simple in scope and include a simplified combination of the Functional Classification System that includes Principal and Minor Arterials, Collector roadways, and local residential streets. Local roadways are typically not included in the overall Thoroughfare Plan; however, upon experiencing added growth in the community, these roads should be re-evaluated periodically to be included as collector roadways.

Functional Classification

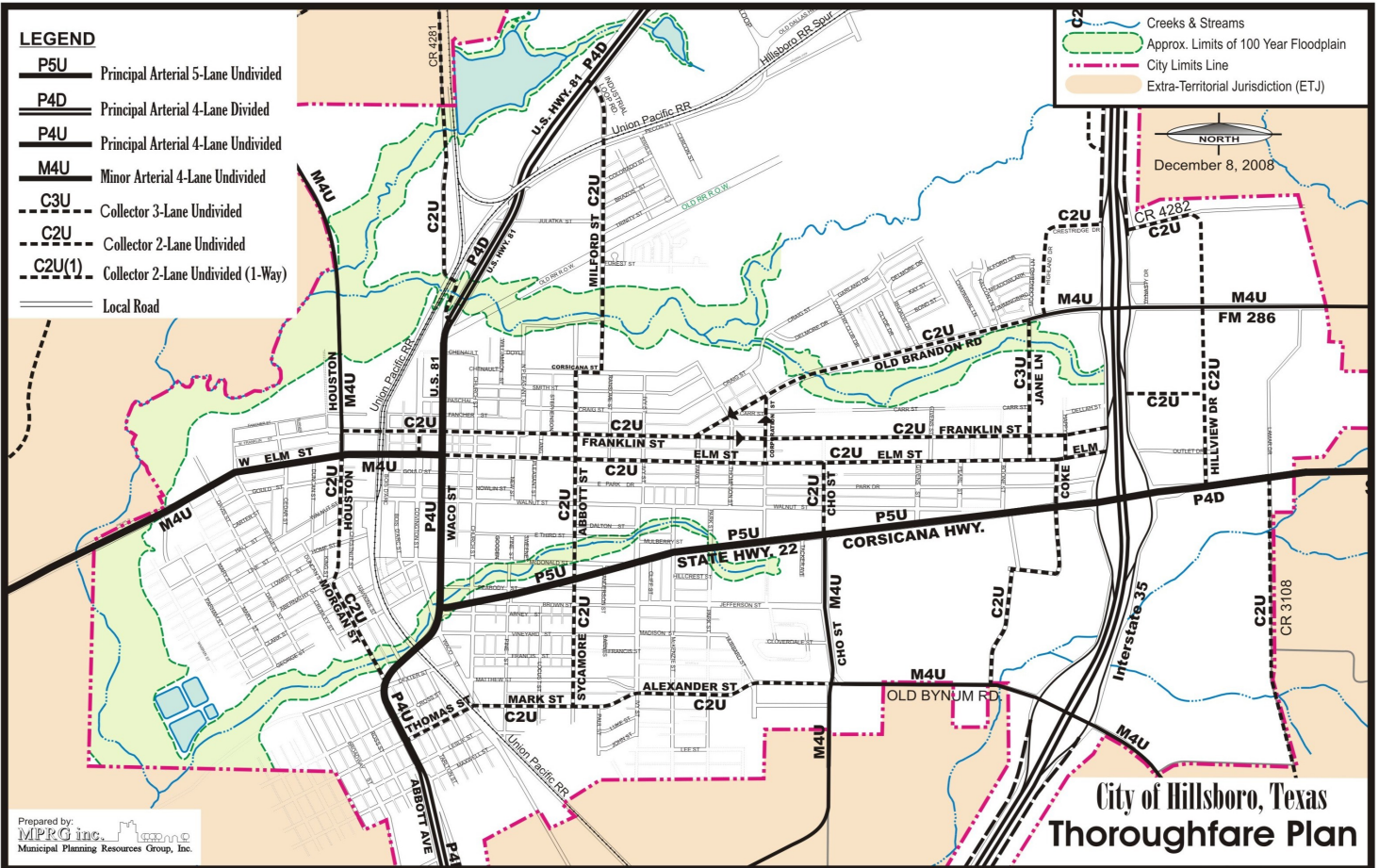
The roadway classification system is intended to categorize streets by function for the purpose of clarifying administrative and fiscal responsibility. A complete circulation system provides separate facilities for the movement, transition, distribution, collection, access, and termination of trips. The hierarchy of the functional classification system ranges as follows: Principal Arterials, Minor Arterials, Collectors, and Local Streets.

Streets located within municipalities generally are various sizes, and have different numbers of vehicle traffic lanes and design requirements. This Plan has categorized Hillsboro's streets according to the Standard Street Classification System used by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

Freeway: This is the most intense thoroughfare as it relates to traffic volume. It is a controlled access freeway system. Currently the only thoroughfare of this magnitude impacting the City is Interstate Highway 35. This thoroughfare is a north/south freeway that bisects the nation from virtually the southern border with Mexico and the northern Canadian border. I-35 was approved by the Texas State Highway Commission in 1962 and has proven to be an essential element to the economic vitality of the nation. It has been unofficially designated as the NAFTA highway because of its obvious connection of both the Northern and Southern US borders.

Summary of Hillsboro Street Classification

Street Classification	Designation	Plan Classification
Freeway	FW	Controlled Access Multiple Lane
Principal Arterial Street	P5U	Primary Arterial 5-Lane Undivided
Principal Arterial Street	P4D	Primary Arterial 4-Lane Divided
Principal Arterial Street	P4U	Primary Arterial 4-Lane Undivided
Minor Arterial Street	M4U	Minor Arterial 4-Lane Undivided
Collector Street	C3U	Collector 3-Lane Undivided
Collector Street	C2U	Collector 2-Lane Undivided
Collector Street	C2U(1)	Collector 2-Lane Undivided (1-Way)
Local Residential Street	R2U	Residential Two Lane Undivided



I-35 is a controlled access thoroughfare with frontage roads and grade separated interchanges. Accordingly, land uses proposed along its right-of-way are uses utilizing high volumes of vehicle traffic. It is unlikely that the entire length of roadway will develop as non-residential uses, but it is certainly more compatible with the traffic volume than residential uses. Residential uses may occur adjacent to Interstate highways; however, visual screening and sound buffering treatments should be incorporated into any residential development.

Principle 5-Lane Undivided Thoroughfare: These roadways typically carry the highest traffic volumes or are used heavily for industrial traffic. A center continuous turn lane is provided for left turns. Each of the five lanes should provide a minimum of 12 feet in width and have adequate right-of-way to insert deceleration and acceleration lanes as well as left turn lanes at the intersections. A portion of Corsicana Hwy (SH 22) is the only 5-Lane arterial within the corporate limits of the City. It runs from Corporation St. to I-35.

Principle 4-Lane Divided Thoroughfare: US Hwy 77 & 81 and a portion of Corsicana Hwy (S.H. 22) serve the City of Hillsboro as principle 4-Lane divided thoroughfares. It becomes a controlled turn arterial with a grass median. In this vicinity are located several schools and the left turn lanes carefully control turning movement across the North and South bound lanes. At the present most of the development occurs on the East right-of-way. However, as development occurs on the West, more care will be required in locating new signal lights as well as providing median cuts. Commercial development off of this section of roadway will need to incorporate shared drive and cross access easements in order to minimize the number of driveways. Right-of-way needs for these arterials typically require 120 feet of width to accommodate the travel lanes, turn lanes, and median.

Principal 4-Lane Undivided Thoroughfare: These arterials carry significant traffic through the City. As such the right-of-way needs still require 100 feet to provide for the turning requirements at intersections. Under critical situations where rights-of-way are difficult to acquire, at least 80 feet is necessary. These roadways are Waco St through the downtown area and Abbott Ave from Corsicana Hwy to the divided section of that roadway.

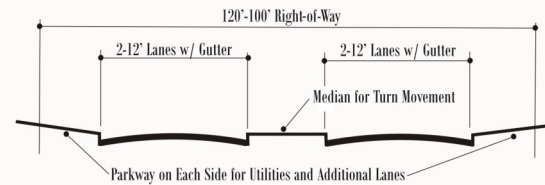
Minor 4-Lane Undivided Thoroughfare: Minor arterials usually carry traffic similar to the principal arterials. The primary difference is that they usually do not extend through the community. They often either intersect with another arterial and terminate at that intersection or they may decrease in size and volume through the course of their route. The lanes are 12 feet in width and these roadways typically require a minimum of 80 feet of right-of-way in width. This width may vary according to turning volume needs along the roadway. Roads located in Hillsboro of this classification include sections of Houston St, W. Elm St, Cho St, Old Bynum Rd and Old Brandon Rd.

Collector 3-Lane Thoroughfare: Collector thoroughfares extend short distances across the City and intersect with principal and minor arterials. Their purpose is to collect traffic from the interior of neighborhoods and deliver it to the arterials so the traffic may be distributed across or through the city. Three-lane collectors are typically located along roadways that have significant traffic volume by lack right-of-way width to function as a minor arterial. Often the third drive lane is a continuous left turn lane, which is used to prevent traffic from stopping while waiting for a vehicle to turn left. The right-of-way needs for collector roadways is typically between 60 feet to 80 feet, depending on the volume of traffic and the turning needs.

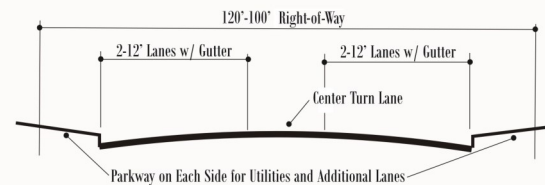
Collector 2-Lane Thoroughfare: This is the smallest roadway in the thoroughfare system. Its purpose in Hillsboro is to function as a less intense minor arterial and move volumes of traffic from neighborhood to neighborhood. However, its primary purpose is to relieve the traffic from local roads and feed the arterials. The rights-of-way of these streets may be between 60 feet and 80 feet in width. The additional width permits wider shoulders that may be used for parking or additional lanes if needed. The major collector roadways are shown on the Thoroughfare Map. However, collectors may be required within the neighborhood to collect and

funnel internal vehicular traffic to arterial roadways. Therefore, a collector roadway is more a product of function than location on the thoroughfare map. In addition, commercial roadways that are planned to carry significant truck and commercial traffic may also be designated as being collectors, depending on the nature of each individual development. Examples of these streets include sections of Houston St, Elm St, Morgan St, Thomas St, Mark St, Cho St, Franklin St, Milford Rd, and Hillview Dr.

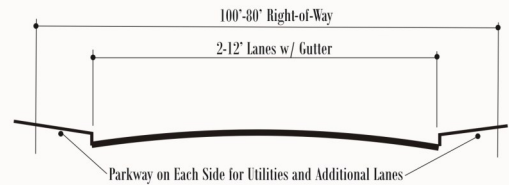
Local Street: Local streets provide access to residential property and feed the collector street system. Local roads typically carry volumes of less than 1,000



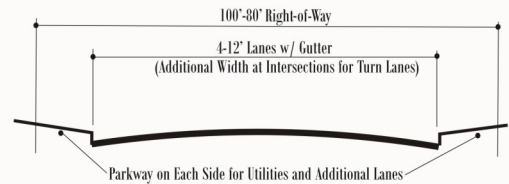
Principal 4-Lane Divided Arterial



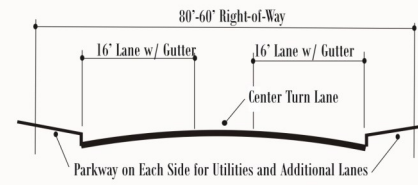
Principal 5-Lane Undivided Arterial



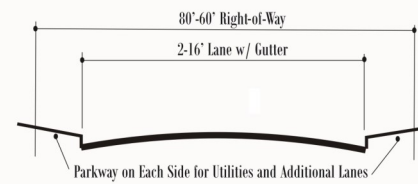
Principal 4-Lane Undivided Arterial



Minor 4-Lane Undivided Arterial



Collector 3-Lane Undivided Street



Collector 2-Lane Undivided Street

vehicles per day. They are no more than two lanes and should be designed to discourage any kind of through-traffic, either through a curvilinear arrangement, the incorporation of loops and cul-de-sacs, or both.

PARK PLAN

The City of Hillsboro has recently adopted a city wide Park Plan. The Park Plan has established park districts that will provide for specific park needs for that neighborhood. In addition, the Park Plan has proposed approaching the park needs of the City of Hillsboro by planning for renovation and improvements to existing parks and providing for the location of new park facilities. The 2006 Park Plan is incorporated in this Comprehensive Plan .

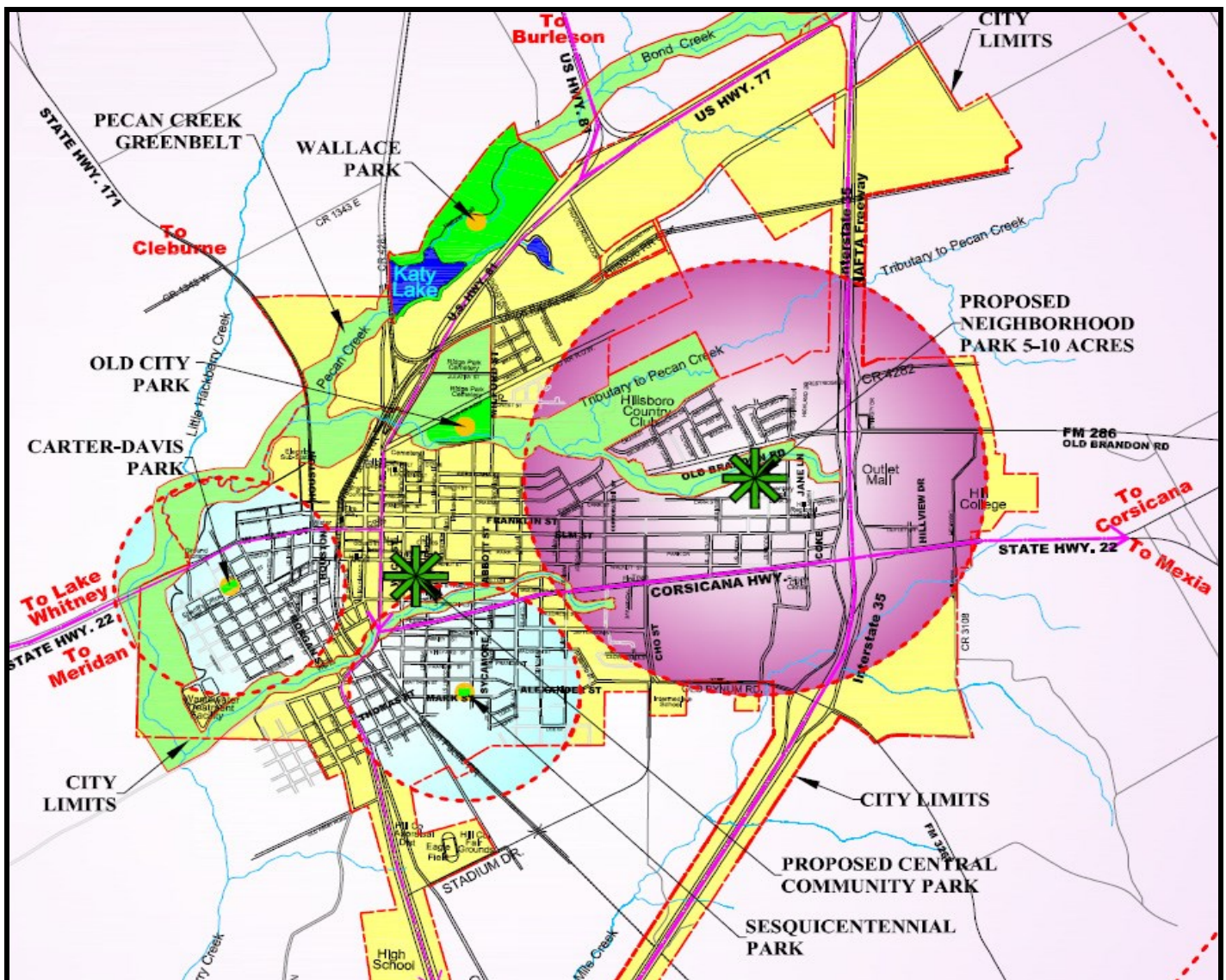
Currently, the Hillsboro park network has approximately 72 acres of developed park land. This figure represents parks and open space owned and maintained by city forces. When compared to the existing population in the service area, the resultant level of service of developed park land is 7.9 acres for every 1,000 residents.

The Parks and Open Space Master Plan, prepared in 2006, outlines park projects which add approximately 50 acres of developed park land to the overall system. If all of the projects outlined in this plan are implemented

within the ten year planning period, based on the projected population of 10,020, the level of service in the year 2016 will be 12 acres of developed park land for every 1,000 residents. Therefore, if the entire outlined plan is implemented, the existing level of service will be increased by 66% over the next ten years. More importantly, the addition of an aquatic center, indoor recreation center and upgrades in the existing parks will help create a first class park network for residents of the entire Hillsboro region.

The Park Plan is to be utilized as a flexible tool which should be reviewed annually and updated very two years to continue to reflect the unique recreational needs of the area. The city should take advantage of any unforeseen opportunities not identified in the plan that may arise, such as donations of land and/or facilities as long as the actions meet the intent of the goals, objectives and recommendations of the plan.

With the proposed additions to the park system outlined in the plan, will come additional personnel, maintenance and operational needs in order to best utilize, manage, and care for both the new facilities and those that exist today. The citizens survey indicated that having well maintained, quality parks is more important than having a lot of poorly maintained parks. The proposed improvements contained in the plan will enhance the quality of life in the region and help ensure that the City of Hillsboro is able to keep pace with the growing recreational needs of its citizens. The resulting benefits include increased quality of life, tourism potential, economic value, increasing property values, and pride in the residents of the area.



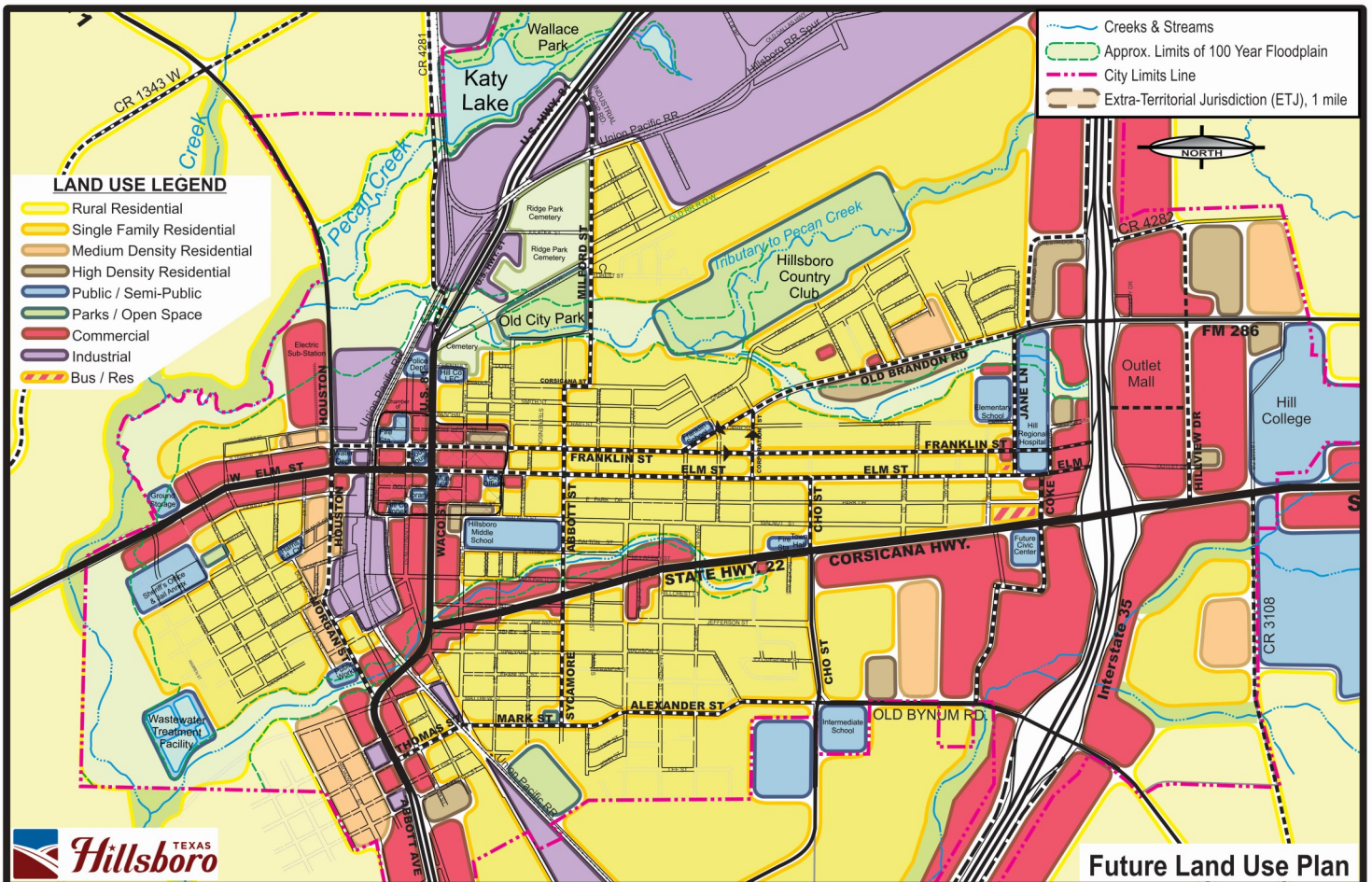
HERITAGE PLAN

Hillsboro has a rich heritage that is present in much of its existing structures both residential and commercial. The historical emphasis for the commercial structures is located primarily in the downtown area and the blocks immediately adjacent to the downtown. Similar to most Texas county seat towns, the courthouse is the focal point of historic commercial structures.

As would be expected the majority of the historic structures are located in the original town site area. This area is generally recognized as being south of the flood plain, north of Walnut St, east of Corporate St, and east of the railroad, as shown in the Future Land Use inset below. These limits should be more specifically refined as regulations and districts are established.



There are numerous residential structures with historic significance located throughout the City including churches and homes built in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Styles featured are two story Victorian, Queen Anne, and Four Square with Craftsman and Jerkin Cottages intermingled. Design standards should be considered for the exterior surfaces of these residential structures. Initially, attention should focus on porches, windows & doors, accessory features (gingerbread), construction material, and paint color.



The style of the structures in the Downtown area are a mixture of one-part and two part commercial structures. The original structures were brick; however, alternative exterior covers have been added through the years. Generally, it is recommended that aluminum and wood exterior coverings eventually be removed. Future construction should mirror the construction style of the original structures.



Two-Part Commercial Building

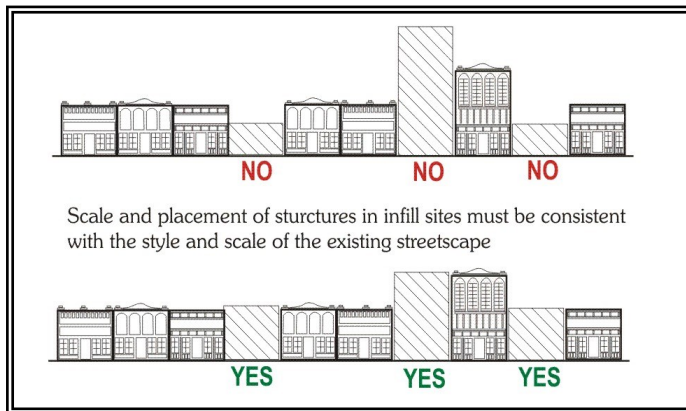
The historic interests in the City should determine, with the City government, the nature and focus of historical efforts within the City. The City should continue their proactive measures in establishing regulations that preserve and

encourage the rural heritage of the City. The City established an historic preservation ordinance along with zoning criteria to enforce historic preservation efforts, and should continue with refining design guidelines and designation areas. These measures will protect areas established for future alterations and construction of structures located within any established historic designated area.



One-Part Commercial Building

When we consider scale and placement for structures in the Hillsboro downtown area it is important that we realize that a reasonable rule of thumb is to maintain the consistency of the existing structures. Currently, the majority of structures are a mix of single story and two story. All of the two story structures are of a Two-Part Commercial Block style. Therefore, any future structure should be of a similar style. However, even then, it would be uncharacteristic to construct any two story mid-block. Most of the Two-Part Commercial Block structures are located on the corners. Scale of structure in relation of adjoining structures is critical in the aesthetic character of the downtown streetscape. Structures exceeding the height of the existing two-story buildings should be discouraged. An illustration pertaining to the relationship of sizes of structures placed in infill sites is provided as follows.

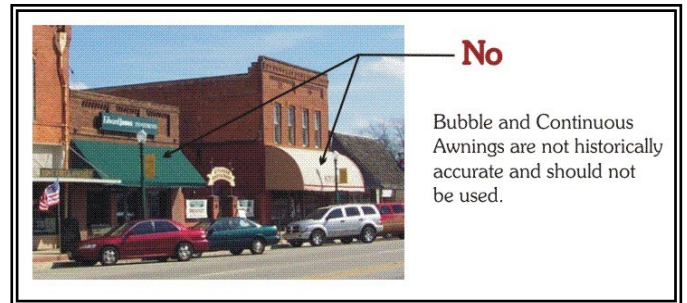


A number of design elements should be accounted for to assure the heritage of Hillsboro be preserved in the downtown area. Features such as signs, awnings, store fronts, and street furniture and streetscape, should reflect the character of the downtown area.

Signage: Signs should avoid clutter and be limited according to size and number of signs. Sandwich signs for menu boards and hanging signs from eaves and awnings should be uniform and not obstructive. Signs along the walkway should be pedestrian oriented.

Parking: Head-in parking along the street should be encouraged. This does not prohibit additional parking in the rear of the structures or lots that are within walking distance of the downtown area. Even the location of parking spaces should encourage pedestrian activity.

Awnings and Canopies: Awnings and canopies have always added both a design feature as well as a functional element to the front of commercial buildings. Whereas the 'bubble' style of awnings is functional and appropriate at some locations, they are not appropriate for the Heritage area. Awnings and canopies that are historically significant are 'rolled' awnings or 'flat' canopies. Awnings and canopies should be made of canvas or metal, which are characteristic of historic commercial buildings. In addition, the placement of awnings should relate to each individual window and not extend continuously across the face of the building incorporating all the windows under one awning



In order to provide for the regulatory tools necessary to preserve any historic area, a number of tools must be developed. The City of Hillsboro is in the process of developing these even as the Comprehensive Plan is being prepared. These tools include the following:

- Identification and establishment of a historical district.
- Adoption of zoning regulations in the historical district.
- Formation of a Historical Preservation Committee for commercial and residential structures.
- Preparation of a Historical Design Guideline for Commercial and Residential structures.
- Preparation and adoption of a Historic Preservation Ordinance.

IMPLEMENTATION

A critical component of the planning process is the implementation, or execution, of the plans that have been developed. If implementation measures are not included in the Comprehensive Planning process, these goals may never be realized.

A number of methods may be used to implement the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The City may wish to use some or all of the following measures:

- **Ordinance Application;**
- **Official Map Maintenance;**
- **Checklists, Forms, and Applications Revision; and**
- **The Planning Program**

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan is usually implemented by utilizing a combination of the above methods. One method may adequately implement one portion of the Plan, or a number of methods may be required. The following text addresses the different implementation methods and provides a description of how they are recommended to be used in the implementation of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Application of the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan provides guidance for future development in three primary ways.

First, all planning and zoning decisions should be made with regard to the growth Goals and Objectives developed by the citizens during the initial stages of the planning process. If a proposed development is in accordance with the Goals and Objectives, it should be seriously considered for approval. If the proposed development is in conflict with the Goals and Objectives, it should be revised in order to reflect the stated land use desires of the citizens.

Second, the Comprehensive Plan has provided a description of applicable planning principles for Hillsboro, which are provided in this document. They include the neighborhood concept, nodal and corridor commercial development forms, the establishment of edges, the development of entry features and focal points, and the use of transitional land uses, buffering, and screening techniques. These principles should be considered by City officials when making decisions affecting growth and development in the City. The neighborhood concept and commercial development forms should be employed when determining the placement of land uses and infrastructure in future developments. Edges, transitional uses, buffering, and screening techniques will be beneficial when considering the compatibility of adjacent land uses and their effects on one another. Focal points and entry features will help to define the community identity of Hillsboro.

Finally, planning and zoning decisions should be made in agreement with the *Comprehensive Plan* map. This map is provided in this document. The *Comprehensive Plan* map provides a general picture of how land uses may be arranged to reflect the growth goals and objectives of the City. It is important to note that this map does not serve the same purpose as the City's zoning map. The *Comprehensive Plan* map is not law. It does not dictate exact boundaries of land uses. Therefore, it should be considered to be somewhat flexible. Changes other than those literally shown on the map can be made with the assurance that they are not in conflict with the *Comprehensive Plan* if they are in agreement with the growth goals and objectives and the planning principles provided in this text document.

Adopted Policies

Adopted policies are often credited with a great amount of authority. The staff and officials of many municipalities consider adopted policies as only one step short of law. Generally, official policies provide the City staff and the City Council with specific guidelines regarding development issues. The purpose of the goals and design approaches contained in this document is to give the City staff and elected officials direction so that official policies may be developed. The following policies are examples of those, which may be adopted by the City regarding development issues. While this is not an exhaustive accounting of possible development policies, it is recommended that the following policies be adopted in order to provide guidelines to assist the staff and appointed and elected officials in following through with the adopted Goals and Objectives of the City.

Conformance With the Plan: The City has established a policy requiring development to conform to the *Comprehensive Plan*. All zoning and platting requests are measured for compatibility with the Plan. Staff reports written on platting and zoning issues include commentary on the conformance with the request to the Plan, and non-conformance with the Plan may be sufficient grounds for denial or a negative recommendation of the request.

Maintenance of the Plan: The effectiveness of the Plan should continue to be monitored annually. Monitoring allows the City to measure progress of plan implementation. It also serves as an indication of changing conditions and trends, which may suggest the need for revisions to the Plan. Items to be addressed in the annual staff review should include conformance with current

development trends, number of zoning requests granted that did not conform to the Plan, and recommendations of the Plan that are being implemented or have been implemented. The result of the report will be to recommend that the Plan be maintained in either its current condition for another year or that it be revised to comply with current development goals and objectives being observed by the City.

Cooperation With Other Governmental Entities: The City should continue to maintain an open channel between governmental entities, advising them of Hillsboro's plans, and should remain cognizant of their plans. If conflicts arise between Hillsboro and another agency, the City staff should communicate these conflicts to the City leaders and work toward minimum negative impact on all participants affected.

Update Materials: The City staff should refine and update applications, checklists, and procedures to insure that development controls are adequate to retain long-term property values and quality of life.

Enforcement of Ordinances and Regulations: The City should enforce current ordinances and regulations and adopt new ordinances and regulations that will better assist in controlling signage refuse, nuisance, animal control, clean up and removal of junk, elimination of dilapidated and unsafe buildings, and other code enforcement issues.

City Initiated Re-zoning: The City may choose to review existing zoning. If deemed appropriate, the City may initiate re-zoning of areas that do not conform to the general guidelines for development or reflect the proposed land uses according to the updated *Comprehensive Plan* map.

Development Located Within the ETJ: Market forces are encouraging development within the extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of the City. As the City continues to grow, it is highly likely that much of the ETJ area will need to be incorporated into the corporate limits of the City. It is therefore critical that the development standards be refined with an amended Subdivision Ordinance to safeguard areas where the City cannot provide utilities through Certificates of Convenience and Necessity (CCN). The City should establish strict guidelines that require any new subdivision located within the ETJ to construct all public improvements in accordance with the City's standards of design used for subdivisions developed within the corporate limits.

Annexation of Areas in Proximity: In order to apply development standards to land that will likely be located within the corporate limits of the City within a "reasonable" period of time, land that is proposed for development within close proximity to the City of Hillsboro should be required to petition for annexation. At such time that the City can satisfy all of the requirements of State law for annexation of property, the petitioned land may then be annexed into the City. This area of proximity should be that area defined in the paragraph above.

Consideration of Thoroughfares: The City is in the practice of considering the Thoroughfare Plan when making land use decisions that may be affected by traffic. The City should periodically review the Thoroughfare Plan to evaluate its consistency with current growth philosophies.

Public Involvement: The *Comprehensive Plan* is a tool to be used by the City. The application of this tool may be better facilitated if the development community also realizes that it is a document which must be respected. The City should continue their policy that compliance with the *Comprehensive Plan* is a necessary development regulation of the City, in addition to compliance with the Subdivision Regulations Ordinance and the Zoning Ordinance. The City should keep sufficient copies of the Plan on hand to be distributed to the general public in the same manner as the Subdivision Regulations Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance.

Develop and Adopt a Planning Program: Establishment of a sound Planning Program is the most effective method to implement a *Comprehensive Plan*. The Planning Program should be updated as needed to implement the

Comprehensive Plan, and ensure that development occurs in a coordinated manner.

Ordinance Application

Ordinances are recognized as municipal law and are binding as such. Two documents, which are adopted in ordinance form and should be continually maintained, are the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Regulations Ordinance. These serve as the primary implementation tools for the Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning Ordinance: The basic purpose of the Zoning Ordinance is to carry out the land use policies and recommendations, which are contained in the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, the Zoning Ordinance classifies and regulates the use of land, buildings, and structures within the corporate limits of the City. The ordinance is divided into two elements, which are dependent upon one another: the zoning text and the zoning map. The zoning text tells how the land may be used. The zoning map indicates where it may be used in the manner described in the zoning text.

Subdivision Regulations: Subdivisions may be required to comply with the general layout of streets, placement of corridors and arterials, and the general urban form principles as provided in the Comprehensive Plan. Each plat should be reviewed by the planning staff and addressed by City Council regarding this compliance. Noncompliance with the Plan may constitute a position contrary to the public health, welfare, and general safety of the residents of the community. Language in the Subdivision Regulations should be reviewed to confirm that compliance with the Comprehensive Plan is required. In addition, the Subdivision Regulations should be updated to include recent changes in state law, which have occurred.

Annexation Program

The land area included in the Comprehensive Plan extends beyond the current corporate City limits. As development occurs within the City, it is apparent that additional land area will be added to Hillsboro. The City of Hillsboro is a "Home Rule" municipality. This status permits the City to expand its corporate limits in order to manage the Comprehensive Plan and realize the growth goals and objectives developed by the community. Home rule status permits the municipality to add to its land area without the consent of the property owners being annexed into the corporate limits. By state law, the City has an obligation to establish an appropriate plan to provide certain services to those areas taken into the City limits. These services must be provided within a certain period of time.

State law also permits the City to annex land area at a certain annual rate. If the City has not annexed property in several years, the rate may accumulate up to thirty percent of the City's total land area in one year.

An annexation policy should be adopted that guides the City in its acquisition of annexed area. We recommend that the City adopt an annexation policy that requires the satisfaction of one of five thresholds for determining whether or not to annex new land. These thresholds are as follows:

Service Potential: The cost associated with providing police, fire, and infrastructure service should be carefully considered prior to annexing additional land area. Areas that contain no services at all may be more cost effective to bring into the City than those areas that have existing systems that are deficient or below the standards currently required by the City.

Defensive Annexation: Areas that are critical to the Comprehensive Plan and demonstrate a high potential for development should be considered for annexation. The out-parcels that are totally surrounded by corporate limits should take priority as annexation occurs.

Boundary Adjustments: The City should determine areas along the perimeter of the existing corporate limits that may be included so that the form and shape of the City may be more uniform. This threshold is the least important, but should be considered as opportunities present themselves to clean up the boundaries.

Marginal Inhabitants: Municipalities should concentrate on annexing areas that have a marginal level of habitation. Heavily inhabited areas may present development problems that are more of a liability than a benefit. Numerous septic systems and poorly designed and maintained roadways can represent a significant capital commitment for a City to inherit. However, the general character of Hillsboro is that all of its land area is virtually undeveloped. Therefore, areas that are undeveloped but located near existing development corridors should have a high priority for annexation.

Annexation of Roadways: The City should be aware of the needs of future thoroughfares. Annexation along selected major thoroughfares may be necessary to ensure that appropriate right-of-way is available for future lanes of traffic. In addition, thoroughfares provide the primary access for emergency vehicles into areas of the community. It may be prudent to evaluate these access lanes as they pertain to the City's overall emergency action plans.

The City should conduct an analysis of the current ETJ area using the above thresholds. If it is determined that areas are suitable for annexation, the City should prepare an annexation program to bring the identified areas into the corporate limits of the City on a voluntary petition basis at this time or involuntary as permitted by state law.

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