



GALVESTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A Shared Vision for Galveston Island

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Prepared by

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With the Assistance of

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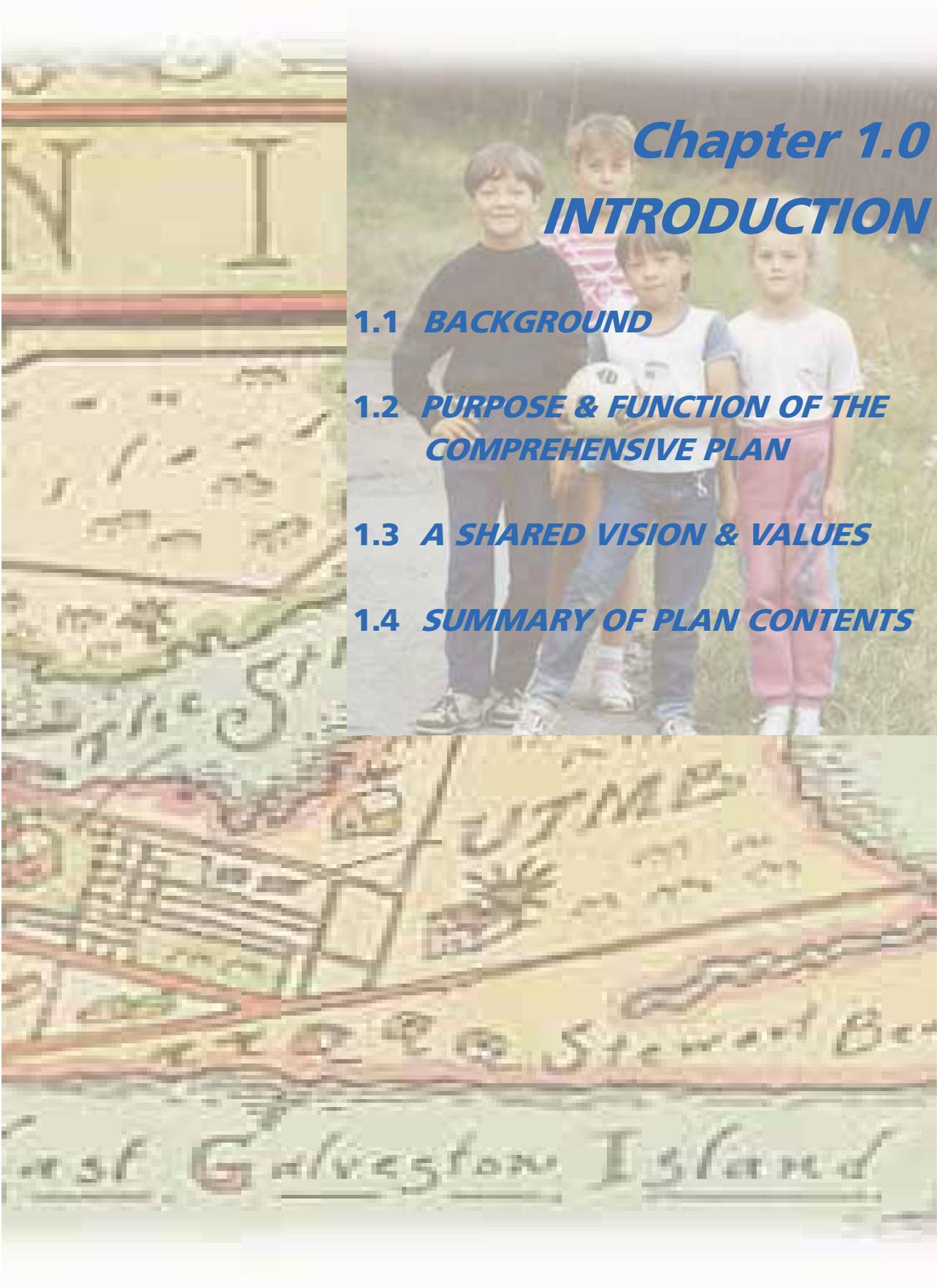
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Chapter 1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 BACKGROUND

1.2 PURPOSE & FUNCTION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1.3 A SHARED VISION & VALUES

1.4 SUMMARY OF PLAN CONTENTS



1.1 Background

This Comprehensive Plan is the culmination of a planning process initiated by the Galveston City Council in the Fall of 1999. To guide the process of plan development, City Council appointed a Citizen's Steering Committee to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan was crafted to reflect the vision, values, aspirations and priorities of citizens of Galveston. This committee, in turn, created four subcommittees to focus on key strategic directions pertaining to *Economic Development, Housing and Neighborhoods, Community Character, and Parks*. To secure the necessary level of public input, the Steering Committee, City Council, City staff, and their consultants conducted an extensive outreach effort which included interviews with a broad array of citizens and community leaders, citizen opinion surveys, public workshops, and countless committee and subcommittee meetings to draft and refine the goals, objectives, strategies, and actions of the Galveston Comprehensive Plan.

1.2 Purpose & Function of the Comprehensive Plan



The Plan was crafted to reflect, and achieve, the vision of Galveston's citizens for the future of the community.

- **The Plan is a Guide for the Management of Change**

Communities change, as do families, businesses, institutions, and natural systems. Retaining conditions in Galveston just as they are now is no more feasible than turning back the clock to a prior era. However, while change itself may be inevitable, the community can and should positively influence its direction and rate. The act of planning, in essence, reflects a decision not to accept "the inevitable", but rather to influence and guide change to produce a future for Galveston that gives citizens what they want: the kind of community where they want to live, work and raise their children. This is an important paradigm -- to understand the essential role of the Comprehensive Plan as a guide for the management of change, through which we solve problems, anticipate and protect the community against future threats, and seize opportunities to make Galveston Island better.

- **The Plan is a Reflection of Community Vision and Values**

The core motivation of the Comprehensive Plan is to respond to citizens' core motivations for a desirable quality of life, for prosperity and security, and for a community character that values the heritage, diversity, and the unique character of Galveston Island.

1.0 Introduction

- **The Plan is the Foundation for All City Policies, Strategies, and Actions**

The Galveston Comprehensive Plan is only as valid as the vision which inspires and motivates it, and as the policies, strategies, and actions that will carry it out. It is necessary, but not sufficient, to point the City in the right direction. In order for the City to achieve effective implementation, the Plan must be used to guide day-to-day operations with new coordinating mechanisms that ensure the plan's policies and strategies are followed in all City activities, ranging from rezonings and code enforcement, to priorities set in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

- **The Plan is the Community's "To Do" List**

Comprehensive plans often fall short due to their failure to identify in detail actions, timetables, responsibilities and resources needed. To exert an effective influence on the future of the community, the Galveston Comprehensive Plan has been crafted as a continuum: from *Vision*, to *Goals and Objectives*, to *Strategies*, to concrete *Actions*. In adopting the Comprehensive Plan, the City Council and City administration commit to "staying the course," i.e., to consistently apply the Comprehensive Plan not only as a policy guide, but also as the community's 20-year "to do" list.



The Comprehensive Plan should be thought of as the community's 20-year "to do" list.

1.3 A Shared Vision & Values

The following summarizes our community's **shared vision** for the future of Galveston. The Comprehensive Plan has been constructed upon the foundation of **aspirations and values** reflected in this collective vision.

A SHARED VISION...

Galveston has a strong sense of civic pride and belonging.

Because long-term planning is the standard on the island, we are positive about our future; our city and its citizens have the ability to realize their full potential. Galveston citizens have common goals and a shared vision of the future.

Galveston enjoys a diversity of cultures and an atmosphere of trust.

All cultures work together to reach common goals and the spirit of the community grows. Different groups, be they ethnic, religious, political, economic or other, understand and value each other's needs and interests.



Galveston is a city of great cultural attractions and recreational activities.

Galveston is a beautiful place to live, visit, work and do business.

Galveston is a city with well-maintained infrastructure, great cultural attractions and recreational activities. It's neighborhoods, beaches, parks and esplanades are revitalized, safe and beautiful.

Galveston's citizens have positive relationships with city, state and federal governmental agencies.

Our sound educational system, skilled work force, increasing tax base and financial solvency are the basis of Galveston's quality reputation.

Galveston is a city of possibilities.

...and SHARED VALUES

Long-term planning

Quality planning that includes a shared vision of our future direction.

Enhancement of Island aesthetics

Respect Galveston's heritage, encourage preservation of historic resources and enhance Galveston's beaches, parks and roadways.

A strong tax base

Diversify and expand the employment and tax base and promote the creation of well-paying jobs. Provide active support to help grow prosperous and stable minority-owned businesses.

A better future for children

Provide a quality education and personal skill development for all children. Create opportunities for them to serve their community to improve the quality of life.

Strong neighborhoods

Economic development is impossible without successful, attractive, safe and liveable neighborhoods. Neighborhoods and businesses work together to achieve economic development while also enhancing the neighborhoods' quality of life.

Collaboration and accountability

Create opportunities and make it easy for people to participate in decisions that impact their daily lives. Work together towards win-win solutions, enhancing the spirit of our community.



The Plan aims to provide a better future for children in the community.

1.0 Introduction

Value our diversity

Respect, strengthen, utilize and celebrate diversity! Encourage people to appreciate who they really are, help them to develop their full potential and utilize their unique talents, skills and creative ideas.

1.4 Summary of Plan Contents

Following this introduction, Chapter 2.0, *Socio-Economic Factors*, presents population and economic trends and their associated implications for the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The most significant finding in this chapter is that, according to the 2000 Census, Galveston has lost some 3.1% of its population since 1990, continuing the long-term trend toward a declining population. This fact should serve to underscore the mandate to improve the City's housing stock and attract new middle-income housing, in new development as well as in rehabilitation and reuse of the City's large inventory of residential units in historic neighborhoods.

The core of the Comprehensive Plan is presented in Chapter 3.0, *Plan Elements*. Three of these elements, *Housing and Neighborhoods*, *Economic Development* and *Community Character* reflect key strategic directions which emerged from community input and from the work of the Citizens Steering Committee and related subcommittees. These elements call for bold new initiatives to preserve and revitalize neighborhoods, expand middle income housing, promote economic diversification and improve community aesthetics, particularly at key gateways and corridors such as Seawall Boulevard and Broadway Boulevard.

In addition, a *Land Use Element* is presented to indicate ways in which zoning and development regulations need to be adjusted to facilitate strategic initiatives in the other elements, to eliminate obsolescence and land use conflicts, and to address pressing issues of public safety such as concern over the ability to evacuate west end residents. However, it must be noted that the goals, objectives, and strategies contained in the *Land Use Element* do not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries.

Finally, a *Historic Preservation Element* is provided as a means of establishing a new mandate for leadership by the City of Galveston, in coordinating and supporting the important work of many in the community to preserve Galveston's rich historic heritage.



Galveston is a community that values and celebrates diversity.

Although not included in this document, a *Parks Element* was created as a focal effort of the Comprehensive Plan process, to meet specific guidelines that will qualify Galveston for a higher level of grant funding. This stand-alone document focuses on the need to make more effective use of existing parks for the recreational enjoyment of residents, and to promote greater operational effectiveness in providing park and recreation facilities and services.

Chapter 4.0, *Other Plan Considerations*, references the need to address key infrastructure issues such as the City's need to implement initiatives for transportation improvements, particularly those related to hurricane evacuation. In addition, this element references recent plans for water and wastewater system improvements, and points out the critical need to address the community's serious drainage problem – an issue which has not received significant attention for several decades. Increased development will be encouraged if priorities are established by the City for implementing the 2000 City of Galveston Mobility Study and other needed infrastructure improvements.

Last but not least, Chapter 5.0, *Plan Implementation*, sets out a framework to ensure that the vision of the Comprehensive Plan is realized. Sections included in this chapter provide recommendations for a protocol for compliance, monitoring and updating the plan; a conceptual *Capital Improvement Program*; a staged *Action Plan*; and opportunities for the City to generate the *funding* necessary to fully implement the Comprehensive Plan.



Chapter 2.0 SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

2.1 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

2.2 ECONOMIC TRENDS

2.3 SUMMARY OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ISSUES





2.1 Population Projections

While part of one of the fastest growing areas in the State of Texas, the City of Galveston has actually been losing population over the past four decades. Further, the City's population shows the following characteristics, as compared to the Houston-Galveston region as a whole: a predominance of senior citizens; lower income levels; and a minority community with higher rates of unemployment and poverty. Also, Galveston's housing stock is generally older and has a higher vacancy level than the surrounding region.

2.1.1 Population Growth

Galveston's population boom ended with the great hurricane of 1900. After several attempts at a comeback, the City's population began a gradual decline after 1960. Galveston lost population between 1960-1970 and 1980-1990, and had negligible growth between 1970-1980. Some growth occurred during the 1990s, but the City has yet to recover fully back to its 1960 population level. The City's negative or modest growth rates contrast those of Galveston County, which has seen consistent growth during the same 40-year period, with growth rates above 10% for each decade. Thus, while the City still remains an important regional employment center (see Section 2.2), it has not been keeping pace in terms of its resident population base.

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (**HGAC**) projected that the City would experience positive population growth in the 1990's and 2000's, going from 59,067 in 1990 to 64,519 by 1999, and to 67,685 by 2005 ¹. However, the recently released 2000 Census figures reveal that Galveston actually incurred a 3.1% population loss between 1990 and 2000, whereas Galveston County grew faster than projected (Table 2.1.1). This highlights the fact that the City is not effectively competing for a share of the region's population growth.

Based on long-term trends, it is unlikely that HGAC's projection of a 20,000-person growth for the City of Galveston through the year 2020 will be achieved. Whether the City is able to reverse these trends, and attract new residents, depends largely on the City's ability to develop attractive middle-income housing opportunities and neighborhood conditions which can effectively compete in the regional market.

Table 2.1.1: Population Growth, Historic and Projected Rates

Year	City of Galveston		Galveston County	
	Total	Growth	Total	Growth
1960	67,175		140,364	
1970	61,809	-8%	169,812	21%
1980	61,902	0%	195,940	15%
1990	59,067	-5%	217,399	11%
2000	57,247	-3%	250,158	15%
2005	[67,685]	[5%]		
2010	[70,851]	[10%]		
2015	[74,017]	[4%]		
2020	[77,183]	[9%]		

Source: US Bureau of the Census and HGAC

¹ Population projections by HGAC were prepared prior to the release of the 2000 Census data.

2.0 Socio-Economic Factors

The West End of the island has unique hurricane evacuation and sensitive environmental issues; however, residential development can occur provided that appropriate development practices are applied. Galveston's ability to attract and retain residents may also hinge on its ability to improve and retain the large inventory of older homes in the City's many historic neighborhoods, and to encourage infill housing whenever possible (see Section 2.2).

2.1.2 Age Structure

The population of the City of Galveston is characterized by the relative predominance of its cohorts above the age of 50. Compared to the Houston-Galveston-Brazoria Census Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA)², the City has a higher percentage of its population in all cohort groups above the age of 50. Further, there is a larger population in the 22 to 29 age groups. In all other age groups, Galveston shows somewhat lower shares. This is illustrated in the population comparison bar chart to the left (Fig. 2.1.1).

The relative size of the population cohorts above 50 may be the sign of the City's importance as a retirement community, as well as a local aging population that has not been replaced through natural increase by new families during the last decades. The relative importance of the 22-29 age group is probably due to special features of the employment base (see section 2.2).

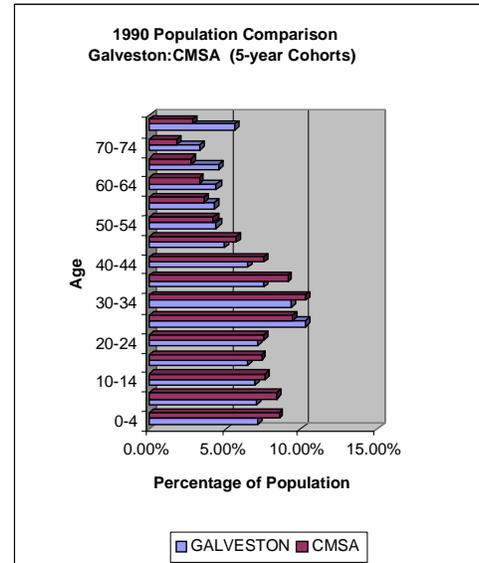
2.1.3 Ethnicity

Galveston is a highly diverse community. Compared to the CMSA as a whole, the City of Galveston has a higher percentage of minority populations. More than half of the City's population is of minority origin, predominately African American and Hispanic. The CMSA as a whole has a proportionately smaller minority population. Figures 2.12, left, illustrates ethnicity for the City.

2.1.4 Income and Poverty

The differences in median household income between the City of Galveston and the CMSA are quite dramatic (Table 2.1.2). In 1998, the median household income for the CMSA was \$42,193, while for Galveston it was \$23,361. Also, while

**Figure 2.1.1:
Age Structure, 1990**



**Figure 2.1.2:
Ethnic Makeup, 1990**

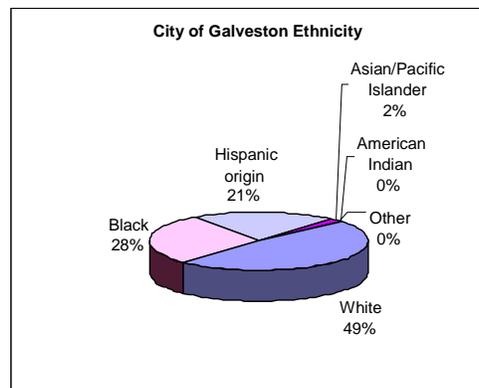
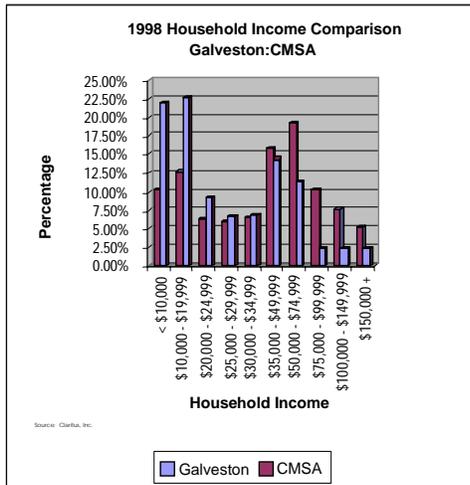


Table 2.1.2: Galveston Median Household Income, 1989-1998

	City of Galveston		CMSA	
	Median Household Income	Growth	Median Household Income	Growth
1998	\$23,361		\$42,193	
1989 (1990 Census)	\$20,850		\$31,509	
% Change 89-98		12%		33.9%

² The Houston-Galveston-Brazoria CMSA is composed of eight counties, including Galveston County.

Figure 2.1.3: Median Household Income Distribution, 1998

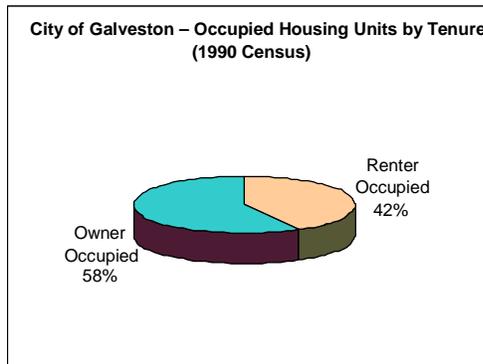


the median household income for the region rose by 33.9% during the 1990's, Galveston's median household income increased only by 12%.

In terms of its income distribution, Galveston presents a much higher concentration of households in the lower annual income brackets (below \$35,000), and a smaller share of its population in all income brackets above that amount, as illustrated in Figure 2.1.3.

Most of the lower income households are distributed among the minority population. While 15% of the City's white population lived under the poverty level in 1990, the corresponding percentage for the African American and Hispanic populations was 41% and 29%, respectively. This is lower than the same data for the Houston-Galveston-Brazoria Census Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA) as a whole, which reflects that 28% of African American and 26% Hispanic populations were below the poverty line.

Figure 2.1.4: Housing Occupancy, 1990



2.1.5 Housing

According to the 1990 Census, Galveston's housing stock is relatively aged, with 52% of the City's total housing having been built before 1960 and 26% before 1940. The percentage of renter population is also high: 55% of the population in 1990 lived in a rented property. In the same year, 21% of the total housing was also vacant (i.e., unoccupied). Of these vacancies, 38% classified as seasonal properties. However, a significant number of the vacancies may be related to abandoned properties, unserviceable (i.e., not ready for service or unusable) structures, and/or excess housing supply.

2.2 Economic Trends

The City of Galveston's economy is characterized by a predominance of jobs in the retail and service sectors, a large in-commuting population, and an important tourism industry.

Despite a loss in population during the 1990s, Galveston has generally benefited from the overall growth in the economy of the State of Texas during the same timeframe. Markets expanded for all kinds of products, goods, and services. In particular, growth in the high technology sector has increased the demand for high-skilled workers and brought, with these new skills, changes in lifestyles.

Galveston, with its strong service sector and recognized public institutions, is poised to become a prime location for

2.0 Socio-Economic Factors

employment opportunities, and to provide a highly educated workforce that can attract and retain businesses. Yet some hurdles must first be overcome, including the need to strengthen and expand the local stock of quality affordable/middle-income housing and to upgrade the City's public infrastructure and services to adequately serve increased demand and service expectations.

2.2.1 Employment Structure

According to the 1990 census, the City of Galveston had an employed population of 25,889. This figure actually represents only about 60% of the total number of the employees who work in the City, since it does not include people who work in the City, but live somewhere else.

According to research conducted by the Galveston Economic Development Partnership (**GEDP**), the City currently provides employment for as many as 43,000 people, as can be seen in Table 2.2.1. Most of the in-commuting population resides within Galveston County on the mainland in other cities such as League City, Friendswood, and Texas City, and master planned communities such as Clear Lake, South Shore Harbor, and Silver Lake. The commuting population is characterized as being primarily the middle-income, white-collar employees who are underrepresented by the City's resident population.

There appears to be very little commuting in the opposite direction (out-commuting). According to the 1990 census, 80% of Galveston's 25,889 employed residents lived in the City. Therefore, Galveston may be seen as playing the role of a "downtown" for Galveston County, with all the problems such a role typically entails: a relatively small proportion of middle-class; an imbalance between jobs and residents; and a declining, underutilized housing stock.

The major employers in the City consist of large, well-known institutions and companies, public agencies and tourism related businesses. The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston (**UTMB**) is by far the largest employer, averaging approximately 13,000 jobs. The American National Insurance Company (**ANICO**) is another large employer in the City, with 1,700 employees. City, County and School District offices account for most of the City's public administration jobs. The City's ten largest employers, which are listed in Table 2.2.2, account for a total of 52% of the estimated 43,000 jobs currently provided in the City.

Table 2.2.1:

	Resident	Commuting	Total
Employed Population	25,800 (60%)	17,200 (40%)	43,000 (100%)

Source: Galveston Economic Development

Table 2.2.2:

Rank By Size	Name	Employees (FT & PT)
1	The University of Texas Medical Branch	13,684
2	Galveston Independent School District	1,710
3	American National Insurance Company	1,700
4	Galveston County	1,200
5	Moody Gardens	1,077
6	Fertitta Hospitality, Inc.	800
7	City of Galveston	755
8	Gulf Coast Center	557
9	Newpark Marine Fabricators, Inc.	450
10	Grand Heritage Hotels	430

Source: Insight Research Corporation, "Economic Profile, Galveston Texas".
Prepared for the Galveston Economic Development Partnership, March 2000.

Both UTMB and ANICO figure among the largest employers of the CMSA – # 5 and # 117, respectively, according to the Greater Houston Partnership. In the case of UTMB, however, most of the employees do not work on the Island on a permanent basis and are only nominally part of the Galveston campus.

**Table 2.2.3:
Employment by Industry, 16+ Years,
CMSA and City of Galveston, 1990**

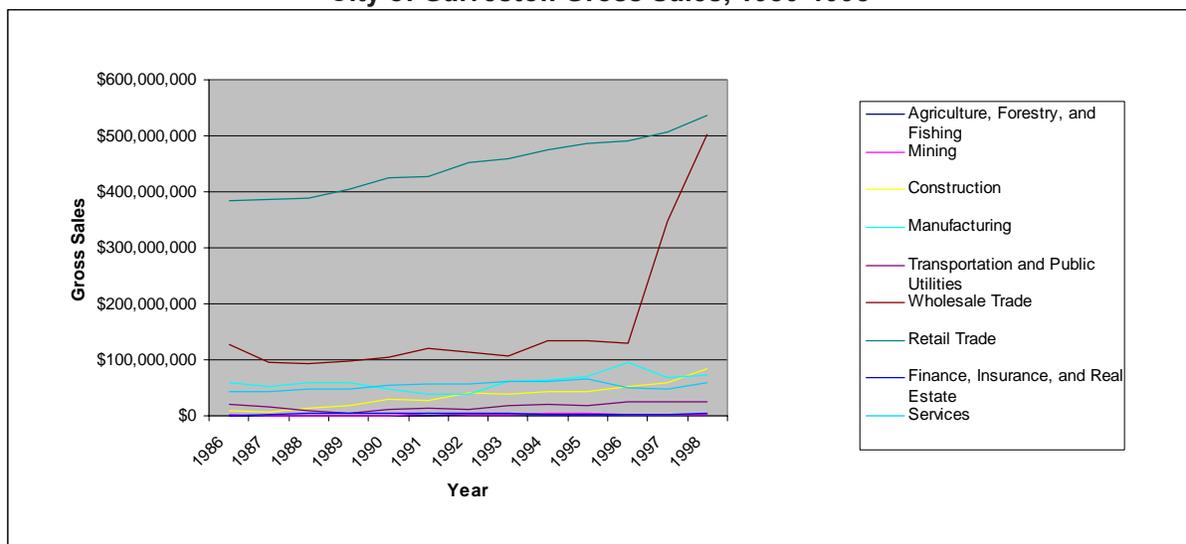
1990 Industry- Employed Pop.	Houston CMSA		City of Galveston	
	No. of Employees	Percent	No. of Employees	Percent
Agriculture/Forestry/ Fisheries	22,802	1%	397	2%
Mining	60,442	3%	254	1%
Construction	151,822	8%	1,402	5%
Manufacturing	253,886	14%	1,498	6%
Transportation, Com. And Public Util.	144,919	8%	1,396	5%
Wholesale Trade	105,975	6%	681	3%
Retail Trade	297,408	17%	4,306	17%
Finance/Insurance/ Real Estate	126,433	7%	1,938	7%
Services	580,159	32%	12,860	50%
Public Administration	56,662	3%	1,157	4%
TOTAL	1,800,508	100%	25,889	100%

According to UTMB, of its 13,000 full- and part-time employees, about 2,800 work at facilities off the Island. Of the remaining 10,200 employees who actually work in Galveston, approximately 44% commute from the mainland. As a result, employment figures for the City are skewed by high percentages of in-commuting employees.

Employment within the industrial sector generally follows the same pattern suggested by the list of top employers (Table 2.2.3). Of the City's working residents, almost two-thirds (73.7%) work in only three sectors: retail, services, and finance/insurance/real estate. Compared to the CMSA as a whole, the City has a significantly higher percentage of its workforce in the service sector, with comparable or significantly lower proportions in the other sectors. The City's resident workforce is markedly skewed towards service industries, retail and public administration.

In terms of actual sales volumes, the retail and wholesale trade sectors are clearly dominant in the City's economy. From 1986 to 1998, gross sales from retail and wholesale activity accounted for 73%-81% of total gross sales for the City (Figure 2.2.1).

**Figure 2.2.1:
City of Galveston Gross Sales, 1986-1998**



Source: State of Texas Comptroller's Office

2.0 Socio-Economic Factors

Wholesale trade was concentrated among 62 establishments in 1986, but only among 47 by 1998, although the industry's sales increased consistently through the same period. Wholesale trade activity is probably related to businesses located at and/or exporting from the Port of Galveston. In the case of retail activity, there is likely a link to tourism. According to the Texas Department of Economic Development (TDED), 41.5% of all travel spending generated in 1997 in the Galveston-Texas City Major Statistical Area (MSA) corresponded to retail sales (in eating and drinking establishments, food stores, and other retail). This amounted to \$241 million, which would account for 48% of total retail sales for Galveston in that year.

2.2.2 The Impact of Tourism

Tourism generated 9 million trips to Galveston in 1997/1998 according to TDED; for the Galveston Convention and Visitor's Bureau (GCVB) the figure for 1997 was 7 million trips. According to research conducted by TDED, leisure accounted for 84% of all trips; the remaining percentage corresponded to business trips, with a 10% related specifically to "Group Meetings" (conventions, seminars, and training activities).

Seventy percent (70%) of the leisure trips consisted of couples or adults with children; only 36% of the visitors stayed overnight. According to TDED, the majority (73%) of visitors arrived by private automobile from other Texas destinations, with approximately one-third coming from Houston and one-fifth from Dallas-Fort Worth. By comparison, GCVB identifies 44% of trips as originating from Houston and 30% from other Texas destinations. It is clear that the Houston area is the single most important source of tourism for the island. The proximity of Houston to the City of Galveston may help to account for the low percentage of visitors that stay overnight.

The summer months of June and July are considered the high season on the island, with hotel occupancy rates being at their highest. In 1999, for example, hotel occupancy was 37.9% in the first quarter, with an increase in the second and third quarters to 58.1% and 63.9%, respectively, with a drop in the fourth quarter to 29.8%. According to the GCVB, there were 45 active hotels at the end of 1999, with a total of 4,371 rooms.

The estimated impact of tourism on employment varies depending on the source: 13,205 by GCVB, 8,600 by GEDP and 7,320 by TDED. These numbers would correspond to 31%, 20%, and 17% of the total Galveston workforce,

respectively. (It should be noted that the TDED figure is for the Galveston-Texas City MSA. The percentages are of the total 43,000 jobs in the City.)

2.2.3 Opportunities for Economic Development

Some key institutions and sectors are consistently cited by the sources consulted as being key to the City's economic development opportunities: UTMB, Texas A&M University at Galveston (**TAMUG**), the Port of Galveston and potential commercial and residential development.

Galveston 2000, a strategic plan released by the Galveston Chamber of Commerce in July 1998, focuses on the following opportunities:

- Develop technology transfer programs tied to UTMB and TAMUG.
- Develop new office park and middle-class residential projects.
- Develop Galveston as a service center for the offshore oil drilling industry in the Gulf of Mexico. This would mainly make use of the Galveston Port area and the airport (for helicopter flights). This service industry currently operates mainly from the Louisiana coast.
- Expand the Historic Strand District and retail opportunities in order to stimulate more tourism.

A strategic plan for the Port of Galveston, released in June 1998, identifies the following opportunities:

- Expansion of port activity and intensified use of currently underutilized and idle port facilities.
- Promotion of the port area as a maritime and offshore research and development center.
- Expansion of the cruise terminal, combined with a new residential, retail, and office complex on port land.

Some of the initiatives listed above are ongoing or have been implemented. The GEDP advises that there are new agreements for establishing and expanding companies that serve the offshore drilling industry. Agreements with new cruise lines have been secured and a second terminal has been completed. New resort development is being contemplated for the east and west ends of the island.

2.0 Socio-Economic Factors

As for economic development opportunities associated with Galveston's higher education institutions, the *UTMB Strategic Plan 2001-2005* indicates that UTMB has no plans for significant short-term growth in student population or faculty jobs. Instead, UTMB will continue to focus on the reorganization and renewal of its existing physical plant, and on strengthening patient care functions around its clinical core. TAMUG's short-term growth projections are also modest, reflecting an anticipated increase in the student population from the current 1,300 to 1,500 students in the next 2-3 years. This could potentially increase the number of faculty jobs by 15. (TAMUG currently provides 430 jobs.) While modest, it is anticipated that this growth will require some expansion of the current campus facilities, which, according to TAMUG, might only be accommodated through the future expansion and/or relocation of Seawolf Parkway.



UTMB, the single largest employer in Galveston, plans to strengthen its patient care functions around a clinical "quadrangle" on the east side of campus.

2.3 Summary of Comprehensive Plan Issues

The results of the socio-economic analysis have clear implications for the Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, and policies. The following demographic and economic characteristics have been considered in the development of the Comprehensive Plan:

Demographic Characteristics

1. The City's population has a high proportion of seniors whose special needs for housing, services, recreation and transportation should be taken into account by policies being developed to deal with these issues.
2. The City has a relatively low proportion of middle-income families with children, in comparison to the CMSA as a whole. The attraction and/or retention of this age/income bracket may imply a need to bring additional attention to policies encouraging a full range of housing opportunities and schools.
3. The aged and underutilized housing stock of the City presents a challenge as well as an opportunity for urban revitalization and population growth.
4. The City has a relatively high proportion of seasonal housing, in comparison to the CMSA as a whole.
5. The City has important challenges in terms of low-income households, unemployment, and education, especially among its minority population.

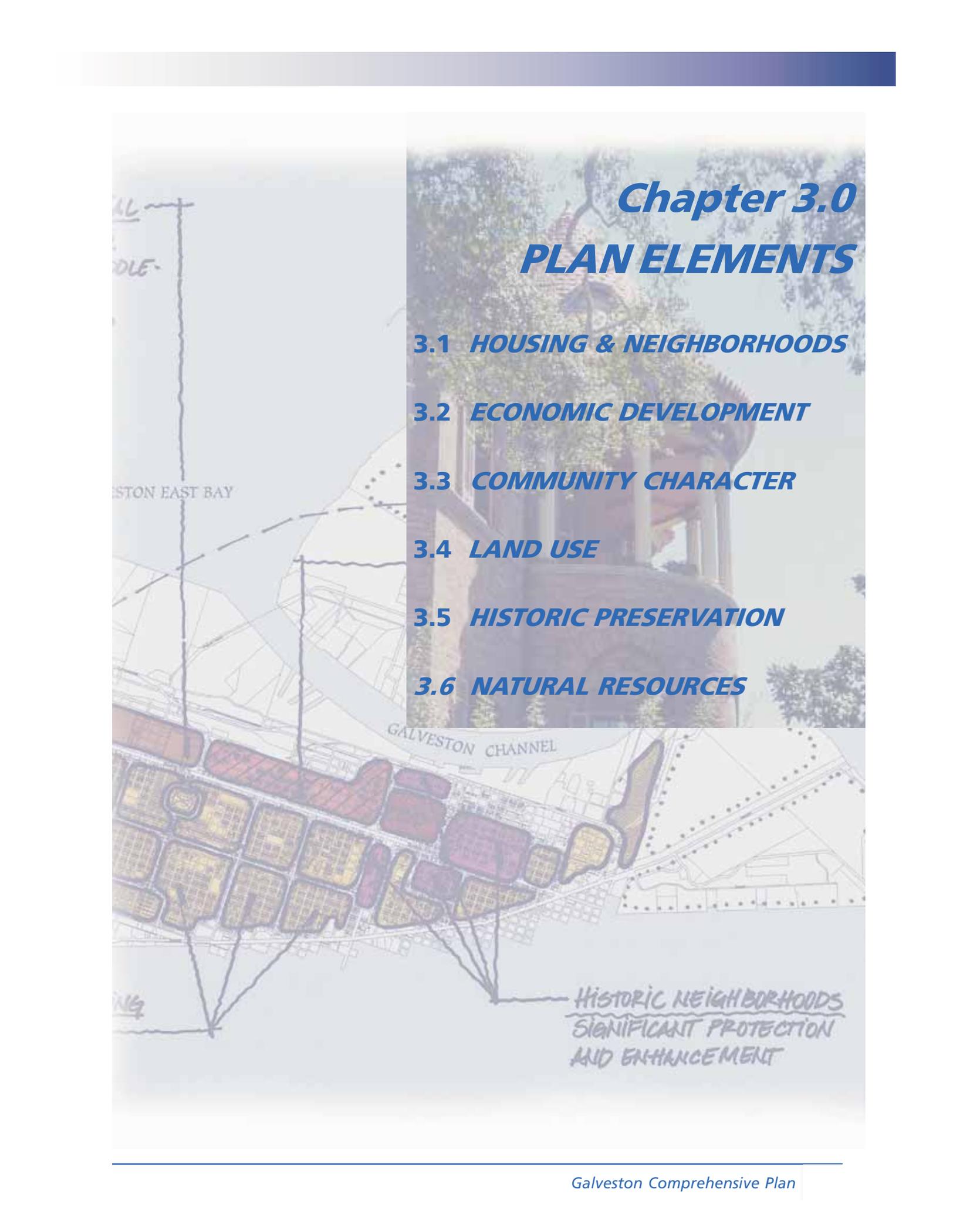
Economic Characteristics

1. All expansion of port activity will require important land use changes in the Port and surrounding areas. The

proposed mixed-use development around the cruise terminal implies a new tourist and residential concentration for the City. Pedestrian and vehicular connectivity to the Strand District should be examined in order to benefit from a potential synergy of activities between these two areas. Most expansion plans of port facilities generally would require construction of new parking areas. Financing issues are also considered to be a major issue.

2. A more intensive use of the airport for services to the offshore drilling industry will require a careful study of impacts to surrounding areas. In addition, consideration should be given to the best regulatory framework for future development around the airport.
3. While the creation of new jobs is important, significant economic benefit may also be realized from attracting the large in-commuting population to become residents of the City. The development of middle-income housing would be a key element of such a strategy. Housing could be provided not only through development of new residential projects, but also through the renovation and/or re-occupation of the City's considerable vacant housing stock. Most of the studies reviewed focus on the former strategy, proposing new master-planned developments as the only solution, and not taking into account the possibilities associated with reviving the existing housing stock. This approach would result in an intensified inner-city/suburban differentiation for the City, which would do little to invigorate the City's declining housing stock. The same argument applies to the development of new office and corporate facilities, which tend to be addressed in the form of new, outlying office parks. Affordable/available housing issues, especially as they relate to the population of students and tourism industry workers, should also be considered on an island-wide basis.
4. Economic development strategies should consider labor force education and training opportunities to help integrate the City's unemployed and low income population.
5. Consideration should be given to developing more intensive opportunities for tourism during off-season times of the year (for example, non-Texan "snow birds") and to improving the urban environments geared toward tourists. In spite of a large visitor population, the City's main tourist areas do not facilitate pedestrian access or character as well as they might. The Seawall currently has a character resembling a highway commercial strip geared to the automobile rather than a pedestrian friendly waterfront. Visual and physical connections between the Strand District and the Port area could also be improved.





Chapter 3.0 PLAN ELEMENTS

3.1 HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

3.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

3.3 COMMUNITY CHARACTER

3.4 LAND USE

3.5 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

3.6 NATURAL RESOURCES

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DLE-

STON EAST BAY

GALVESTON CHANNEL

ING

**HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS
SIGNIFICANT PROTECTION
AND ENHANCEMENT**



3.1 Housing & Neighborhoods

Overview



Private initiatives, extensive reinvestment, and reuse are bringing new life to older, historic neighborhoods.



The City intends to assume its proper leadership role in promoting the preservation of Galveston's historic structures and its housing stock in general.

The provision of quality housing to meet diverse needs, strengthen neighborhoods, and enhance community character is one of the Galveston's greatest challenges. Among the City's older, historic neighborhoods is a substantial inventory of housing, highly varied in condition and occupancy. Deterioration and overcrowding is in evidence, due in part to lack of investment by absentee landlords.

Conversely, extensive reinvestment is also occurring, bringing new life to older, historic neighborhoods. Much of this positive momentum has come from the initiatives of the Galveston Historical Foundation (**GHF**), Galveston Housing Authority (**GHA**), Galveston Community Development Corporation (**GCDC**) and the many neighborhood groups and individuals committed to reclaiming the City's neighborhoods and older housing stock. However, the City should take a more active role, not only in supporting these efforts, but also by assuming its proper leadership role in guiding and integrating them. In establishing a Historic Preservation Officer (**HPO**) position within the Planning and Community Development Department, the City is beginning to expand its leadership role in promoting the preservation of Galveston's large inventory of historic structures, which represent a large proportion of the City's overall housing stock. While the City needs new and infill housing development, its highest priority must remain the preservation of and reinvestment in its inventory of older structures, including those in designated historic districts.

The community's disproportionate number of renters remains a major impediment to building strong, stable neighborhoods, and must be reversed by encouraging homeownership. The City should also continue to marshal all available state and federal resources, as well as local corporate and institutional funding sources, to rebuild public housing and offer new housing choices to low-moderate income households in mixed-income neighborhoods.

In order to prosper economically, the City must maintain and improve quality of life in its existing neighborhoods and expand the supply of middle-income family housing. With limited suitable land resources, this may be only possible through redevelopment and infill. Outside the urbanized area, at the West End and the East End Flats, new housing development should occur in unique planned developments which retain open space and scenic natural resources, while accommodating a diversity of housing needs.

3.1 Housing & Neighborhoods

Goals, Objectives & Strategies

GOAL

EXPAND THE AVAILABILITY OF QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF A DIVERSE POPULATION, BUILD STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER.

OBJECTIVE HN-1

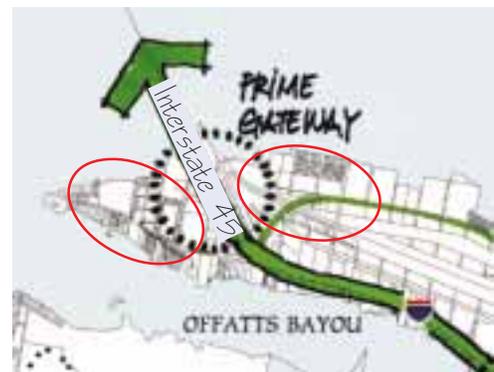
EXPAND THE SUPPLY OF MIDDLE-INCOME HOUSING.

Housing suitable for middle-income families and competitive with “suburban” subdivisions on the mainland is in short supply on Galveston Island. This limited capacity to house middle-income employees in local industry, in turn, limits the City’s ability to compete for economic growth and achieve greater socioeconomic balance. Because the area protected behind the seawall is largely “built-out,” opportunities for new middle-income housing exist primarily in the form of potential infill within established residential areas, as well as redevelopment of underutilized properties. Outside the urbanized area, on the West and East ends, new housing development should occur in unique planned developments which retain open space and scenic natural resources, while accommodating a diversity of housing needs.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HN-1.1 Infill Development

“Infill” development refers to the development of vacant parcels within areas that are largely developed and served by existing roads and infrastructure. Because such development also reinforces existing neighborhoods and supports existing commercial uses, it is a particularly beneficial form of development and urban reinvestment. Several established middle-income neighborhoods include substantial “infill potential” associated with a fragmented pattern of individual vacant lots. The City should create incentives for the introduction of new single-family homes into these neighborhoods, which include older residential areas located near the Island’s I-45 Causeway entrance. Likewise, the City should encourage, through regulatory or financial incentives, small subdivisions on larger properties comprising a block or more of land, primarily in the area near the municipal golf course and Scholes Airport. Initially such incentives may be relatively “passive” in nature, including expedited development review, waivers of permit fees, and potentially short-term abatement of property taxes



Infill development should be encouraged in neighborhoods around the Island’s I-45 Causeway entrance.

for new homeowners and developers in these areas. If necessary, more dramatic actions may be warranted, including capital improvements to infrastructure systems and neighborhood amenities, as well as land assembly of larger developable parcels for sale to willing housing developers and homebuilders.

HN-1.2 Municipal Golf Course Reconfiguration

By reconfiguring the existing municipal golf course, it may be possible to create compatible housing sites, as well as to provide amenities to improve the golf experience. While earlier concepts suggested the possible relocation and redevelopment of the present golf course for housing development, a decision has been made to retain the golf course in its present location. Feasibility studies should be conducted to identify opportunities to incorporate compatible housing sites around a reconfigured golf course, and to provide additional golf amenities. Such studies should also identify financial returns from the sale of housing sites, as well as additional property tax revenue to offset costs associated with reconfiguring and improving the golf course, and with providing the roads and infrastructure necessary to support residential development.

HN-1.3 North Broadway Redevelopment

Located along the northern edge of the Broadway corridor lies a substantial area of obsolescent industrial and heavy commercial uses which may be better suited for new, higher density “urban” housing. Market rate housing in this area would likely appeal to young professionals, empty nesters and others who may prefer quality townhouse and apartment dwellings in an urban setting, over suburban single-family homes. The introduction of this expanded middle-income population, together with revitalization of the existing housing stock in the area north of Broadway, between 59th and 25th streets, will aid in the creation of a mixed-income urban neighborhood, spur redevelopment along Broadway and support the growth of downtown office and institutional employment.

HN-1.4 West End/East End Development Strategy

While the best and most immediate opportunities to introduce additional middle-income housing are infill and redevelopment within the present urbanized area, the lands just west of the seawall, beyond the urbanized area, and the East End Flats represent longer range opportunities. Such areas presently accommodate little economic use, and are reasonably well-located with respect to the jobs, services, and facilities within the urbanized area. Affordable middle-income “planned developments” are highly desirable in these two areas, perhaps some in association with a reconfigured

3.1 Housing & Neighborhoods

municipal golf course. The City should take the initiative in demonstrating the feasibility of such development, and as necessary provide incentives and catalysts for development through actions such as investments in infrastructure, golf course reconfiguration, and direct developer solicitation and selection.

OBJECTIVE HN-2

GUIDE REINVESTMENT TO REVITALIZE AND ENHANCE THE LIVABILITY OF URBAN AND HISTORIC DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOODS.

One of the prominent characteristics of Galveston Island is its substantial housing stock in urban and designated historic district neighborhoods. Not only does this represent a large percentage of the community's housing inventory, it also comprises the urban fabric and the socioeconomic and ethnic diversity of the community. Within this area, decline as well as revitalization are in evidence simultaneously. Reinvestment in the form of rehabilitation and reuse of older homes adds stability to these neighborhoods while expanding homeownership. Conversely, many structures, divided into overcrowded apartment units, are poorly maintained and some are unfit for habitation. Continued housing stock deterioration is likely (as is growing neighborhood instability) if enforcement of the City's codes is not significantly stepped up. In contrast, an aggressive code enforcement effort, coupled with investments in neighborhood amenities, will build up resident and investor confidence, increasing the momentum of neighborhood revitalization.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HN-2.1 Blight Removal/Aggressive Code Enforcement

The City's limited resources to enforce building, health and occupancy codes have allowed the erosion of the housing stock and have discouraged wider-spread reinvestment. The City should mount an aggressive and strategically targeted code enforcement effort to remove blight, protect historic structures, and reverse disinvestment trends. Habitable structures must be brought up to minimum code standards, while dilapidated structures should be removed when determined necessary. In addition, the City should intervene to curb the phenomenon of "demolition by neglect" (see HP 5-3.1, 5-3.2). These initiatives should be considered an essential "investment" for which a direct return can be expected, in the form of accelerating private investment and a strengthened tax base, as investor confidence in these neighborhoods grows.



A significant share of the City's housing inventory is in older urban neighborhoods, many of which are also designated as special historic districts.



In some of these same neighborhoods, many older houses are poorly maintained, even unfit for habitation, and contribute to neighborhood decline.

HN-2.2 Homeownership / Investment Incentives

In a “carrot and stick” approach to neighborhood stabilization and reinvestment, positive financial incentives should be provided to encourage investment in infill and restored structures, as well as conversions of rental property to homeownership. These incentives should include tax abatement, particularly for infill development; as well as direct financial assistance to first time homeowners. For tax delinquent structures and vacant lots, the City should institute a program similar to New Orleans’ “Tax Sale”, whereby such delinquent properties are made available for infill development by the City to willing “urban pioneers,” at a nominal cost.

HN-2.3 Development Guidelines for Compatible Infill

While the City should actively encourage infill residential development in its urban neighborhoods, it must also insist that such development be complimentary and consistent with the character and scale of the surrounding neighborhood. Development guidelines should include adjustment of zoned densities to preclude the introduction of higher-density, large-lot multifamily development in areas with an established single family character. Design guidelines should be crafted to ensure that infill structures complement the character of existing historic structures in site placement, scale, materials and architectural features. Such guidelines may include an adaptation of some portion of the *Design Guidelines for the Historic Districts of Galveston*, applied within the City’s designated historic districts (see HP-2.2, LU-1.1.2).

HN-2.4 Neighborhood Amenities Program

The removal of blighting influences through code enforcement, coupled with incentives for reinvestment, will be necessary, but not sufficient, to promote neighborhood stabilization and renewal. A quality neighborhood environment comprised of safe, walkable, well-lit and tree-shaded local streets and sidewalks will also be necessary. The City should strategically target investments in sidewalks, street trees, street lights and other neighborhood amenities in areas where such improvements will produce the greatest “return” in the form of resident quality of life and investor confidence.

HN-2.5 Financial Tools and Incentives

The City of Galveston should make full use of all available local, state and federal financial resources and incentives in support of, and reinvestment in, older and historic neighborhoods. From federal funding sources, the incentives available include tax credits for historic preservation and affordable housing, as well as Community Development Block

3.1 Housing & Neighborhoods

Grant (CDBG) funds for capital improvements such as the Neighborhood Amenities Program, or to provide a revolving fund and low-interest loan program for qualified rehabilitation efforts.

In addition, the State of Texas provides for several types of tax relief aimed at encouraging rehabilitation of historic structures: property tax abatement, which decreases or delays taxes for a fixed time period; property tax credit which decreases the tax bill in proportion to the renovation investment; and property tax exemption which avoids increased assessments due to property improvements (see HP-5.1 and HP-5.2).

The City's present tax exemption program encourages rehabilitation of commercial structures within designated historic districts. The City should consider extending this exemption (along with tax credits or tax abatements) to apply to historic residential properties, particularly those in designated historic or proposed conservation districts.

Other financial tools and incentives that the City should consider include the following:

- *Tax Relief for Qualified Renovation and Infill Residential Development*, including property tax abatements, property tax credits, and property tax exemptions
- *Tax Reinvestment/Tax Increment Financing*, to make available funds for capital improvements and other efforts to support revitalization in specified districts.
- *Expansion of the City's Receivership Program* to recycle abandoned or tax-delinquent properties.
- *Revolving/Low-Interest Loan Programs* for use in qualified housing renovation efforts.

OBJECTIVE HN-3

EXPAND HOUSING CHOICE FOR LOW-MODERATE INCOME HOUSEHOLDS IN A MANNER WHICH STRENGTHENS NEIGHBORHOODS, LIMITS RELIANCE ON PUBLIC AND SUBSIDIZED HOUSING, AND REDUCES CONCENTRATIONS OF POVERTY.

While Objective HN-2 deals with the broad challenge of neighborhood stabilization and reinvestment, this objective focuses on the specific housing needs of Galveston's many low-moderate income households. The recent efforts of the Galveston Housing Authority to pursue major federal investment through HOPE VI and related initiatives, seeks to reduce dependence on and the social impacts of public housing, consistent with the federal "welfare to work" initiative. A key to the effectiveness of this initiative is effective partnerships with private and non-profit housing providers

to create housing opportunities which promote self-reliance and pride in community. Federal and state funding sources should continue to be aggressively pursued, while expanding partnerships with community development corporations (CDC's), neighborhood housing partnerships, and charitable initiatives such as Habitat for Humanity.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HN-3.1 Aggressive Pursuit of Federal Housing and Redevelopment Funding (HOPE VI)

Success in winning HOPE VI and other federal housing and redevelopment grants is often decided by the degree of local commitment demonstrated, both in the form of local matching dollars and in the array of public, private, and institutional sector partners. The City must demonstrate its full support of the effort and aid in achieving broad institutional and corporate participation.

HN-3.2 Public / Private Partnerships

One approach to achieving broad community support is to create alliances with non-profits for specific housing development opportunities. One potential vehicle is the receivership program, through which the City may make available vacant, blighted or tax-delinquent properties to non-profit housing providers for the creation of sound infill housing. In addition, the City should expand its partnership with the Galveston Historical Foundation in crafting new neighborhood plans, and strengthen its relationship with the Galveston Alliance of Island Neighborhoods (**GAIN**).

HN-3.3 Assistance to First Time Homebuyers

It is critically important to reverse the traditional imbalance of home renters to homeowners. The City should take an active role in complementing the efforts of the Housing Authority and non-profits to enable qualified low-moderate income families to purchase their own homes. Through the receivership program and the creation of a subsidized loan pool or loan guarantees for first time home purchases, the City will accelerate neighborhood reinvestment and grow the local tax base, while aiding disadvantaged families in moving toward self-sufficiency.

3.1 Housing & Neighborhoods

OBJECTIVE HN-4

ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSING SUITED TO THE NEEDS OF SPECIAL POPULATION GROUPS AND TO THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF GALVESTON ISLAND, OUTSIDE THE URBAN CORE.

Although the bulk of the community's housing stock remains in the virtually "built-out" urban area, much of the island's housing growth is occurring outside of the core area, at the island's West End. While such development helps to expand the community's tax base and its supply of quality housing, the West End has limitations on its ability to accommodate development and population growth. Consistent with the ability to provide for public safety and property protection for present and future residents, and consistent with the protection of dunes, wetlands and scenic open space, housing development in this area should be permitted, under the principles of planned conservation development, to continue to meet the needs of households which tend to be higher income, seasonal and less dependent on local employment. Development should occur here in a manner which builds community identity by providing linkages to adjacent subdivisions where feasible. Such developments should continue to protect the island's scenic wetlands and wildlife habitats so as to retain the natural resources and scenic beauty of the West End, in perpetuity. These, as well as other characteristics of the area, such as its low-lying topography, warrant unique development guidelines and incentives.

In addition to tailoring housing development in outlying areas to specific site characteristics, the City should encourage new forms of housing, including life care communities to compete for the burgeoning retirement market. Also, "New Urbanism" development should be encouraged for those attracted to a more compact, "neighborly" alternative to conventional subdivision development.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HN-4.1 Issues Determining West End Residential Densities

The unique characteristics of the West End require a development framework that promotes the protection of open space and the scenic natural environment, as well as attention to safe hurricane evacuation. Future development could be affected by hurricane evacuation clearance times, street improvements, and sewer system expansion. Consequently, development densities should be maintained at or below present zoned densities of no more than four (4) dwellings per acre, except in high-acreage, planned communities. (See LU-1.3)



Much of Galveston's housing growth is occurring outside its urban core, particularly in the island's West End.



Low-lying topography makes the west end particularly vulnerable to the threat of flooding associated with hurricanes.

Due to ongoing concerns about hurricane evacuation and flooding on FM 3005, a holding capacity analysis must be conducted as soon as possible and thereafter updated every five years. The city will evaluate and consider taking action to support improvements to FM 3005 based on the Texas Department of Transportation study to be completed in 2002.

Presently, FM 3005 is a raised, 4-lane divided road for 10 miles from the west end of the seawall to Jamaica Beach. For another 10 miles, from Jamaica Beach to Pointe San Luis, it is a wide 2-lane road with full-size paved shoulders. From Pointe San Luis to San Luis Pass, which is approximately 2.2 miles, FM 3005 is again a raised, 4-lane divided road. Stewart Road runs parallel and inland from FM 3005 at the state park to 57th Street. A majority of the population on the West End is east of Jamaica Beach, directly off of the 4-lane FM 3005 or the 2-lane Stewart Road. The eastern portion of FM 3005 was widened to 4 lanes in the late 1970s.

New development must be served by the appropriate municipal services, and the use of septic systems for sanitary waste should not be encouraged. To help accomplish this goal, means of public financing, such as MUDS, public improvement districts, and tax increment reinvestment zones should be developed for situations where the city is financially unable to provide municipal services.

Additional residential development, other than detached single-family homes or developments determined to be vested, should only be approved if storm water and sewage treatment requirements can be met without posing a risk to water quality.

West End development will continue to be guided by city, state and federal regulations regarding beach setbacks and wetland impacts.

HN-4.2 West End Planned Conservation Development and Neighborhood/Village Centers

Development on Galveston's West End requires a framework that promotes the protection of open space and the scenic natural environment, as well as attention to safe hurricane evacuation.

Within such framework, all new development in the West End should require generous open space dedications while encouraging a mix of uses. Except for village and neighborhood squares and parks, open spaces should be aggregated and interconnected, providing view corridors to the

3.1 Housing & Neighborhoods

beach and bay, where possible. Additional incentives are given for dedicating land as scenic areas and natural preserves. This general concept shall be referred to in this document as “Planned Conservation Development.”

Because the West End accommodates complex wetland systems and wildlife habitats, open space retained by individual developments should be connected to maximize their value as linked greenways and habitat corridors.

To encourage planned conservation development, the incentives, as described in LU - 1.3.1 Table 1, shall be formally adopted for dedicating greater amounts of useable open space. Strategies 1.3.1 and 1.3.2 in the Land Use Element describe in more detail modifications to development regulations to encourage retention of greater proportions of open space.

Because West End residents reside well beyond a “neighborhood service radius” of public facilities and commercial centers in the urban core, it will be advantageous to provide limited commercial uses to meet local convenience needs, thereby avoiding unnecessary auto trips. Clustering such development in one or more “neighborhood/village center” and discouraging “strip” commercial development will contribute to reinforce community identity and protect the scenic visual character along the east-west corridor.

HN-4.3 Beach Renourishment and Dune Protection

The shoreline of Galveston Island is subject to continual erosion and scouring, particularly during storm conditions. As demonstrated by the Heinz Center’s study of coastal hazards, an ongoing beach renourishment program is essential to ensure the long-term protection of the beach and West End development. Appropriate types and locations of dredged materials must be specified to be consistent with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers criteria. However, such renourishment efforts should be coupled with additional efforts to protect Gulf-front beaches by rebuilding a continuous natural dune system that will provide a reservoir of sand available for “natural” renourishment. Where dunes have been eliminated or eroded, they should be recreated by use of sand fencing or other means to provide for sand accumulation; and by installing natural dune vegetation where existing dunes can be stabilized. Likewise, the effectiveness of the natural protection afforded by a dune system can be further enhanced by additional restrictions on the proximity of new beachfront development to these protective coastal dune/vegetation systems. Such additional coastal setbacks should be incorporated into zoning for areas presently undeveloped and/or unplatted.



Planned conservation development subdivisions typically preserve 30 percent or more of the site area for open space.



Renourishment efforts need to be reinforced through additional protective measures.



New planned residential developments should be encouraged in the West End, the East End Flats and similar undeveloped areas in the center of Galveston Island.



The City needs to support the expansion of a downtown housing market, as well as associated retail and entertainment components.

HN-4.4 East End Flats / Beachtown Development

In contrast to the far west end, where development is ongoing despite a number of natural constraints, residential development has yet to occur in other outlying areas, namely the East End Flats and the central part of the island. Although constrained by wetlands, low elevations, and lack of infrastructure, these areas represent significant opportunities for new planned residential developments.

At minimum, the City should maintain contact with major property owners, monitor development proposals, and be prepared to offer assistance in regulatory adjustments, as well as potential direct investments that may act as development catalysts. Although Pelican Island had been considered a candidate for a large planned community surrounding a public golf course, recent acquisition of much of the island for port-related industrial development may preclude this opportunity. However, the East End Flats and similarly underutilized lands remain candidates that should be investigated.

HN-4.5 Downtown Housing

Downtown Galveston has seen a resurgence in adaptive reuse for loft conversions and other forms of urban housing serving students and staff at educational and medical institutions. This population growth is expanding market support for downtown retail and entertainment uses and should be encouraged to continue; as well as to move towards middle- and upper-income infill development of townhouse and condominium apartments. The City can help to support and accelerate such development through regulatory adjustments, including density bonuses for mixed-use developments which incorporate residential components, and to provide waivers of required off-street parking where public parking is available, and where joint use of parking among complimentary (office/residential) uses is possible.

OBJECTIVE HN-5

CREATE NEW ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES TO MOBILIZE CITY HOUSING EFFORTS AND CREATE EXPANDED COMMUNITY HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS.

As noted, present City resources have been insufficient to mount a significant effort in areas of code enforcement and housing and neighborhood revitalization in general. By contrast, ongoing activities of the Housing Authority, private housing investors, charitable organizations, and historic preservation activists to promote investments in housing and neighborhood revitalization have produced discernible positive results. This momentum of neighborhood reinvestment will further accelerate if the City expands its

3.1 Housing & Neighborhoods

capabilities to enforce codes and invest in streetscape and other neighborhood amenities. This will require rebudgeting and new City organizational structures. Simultaneous with internal restructuring, the City should join forces with other private and public entities to establish a shared agenda and active partnerships to promote housing development, redevelopment, and neighborhood revitalization.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HN-5.1 City Departmental Structure

Utilizing outside management expertise as necessary, the City should examine and adjust its departmental structure and budgeting to consolidate and expand resources in the areas of code enforcement, public works, parks and recreation, and development permitting. This consolidated structure should have a defined housing and neighborhood “mission statement”, coordinated team leadership, and a blight removal action plan with defined responsibilities and performance benchmarks for enforcing codes, removing blighted structures, acquiring delinquent properties, and investing in neighborhood amenities.

HN-5.2 Institutional and Public-Private Partnerships

The City should expand its partnership with the Housing Authority, neighborhood and historic district organizations, and non-profits, such as Habitat for Humanity, to promote a shared agenda for action in housing and neighborhood revitalization. The City should consider a relationship with a nationally prominent urban housing advocate, such as the Enterprise Foundation, to be the catalyst and to assist in strategic planning for neighborhood revitalization and in executing, site-specific redevelopment projects, including but not limited to those identified herein.

Overview

The City of Galveston recognizes local government has a crucial role and responsibility in making the direct investments in the community that are necessary to grow, strengthen, and diversify the local economy. The City also needs to be proactive in creating partnerships with private interests and local institutions to promote redevelopment and encourage more locally-employed households to live on Galveston Island. This may be achieved by increasing the supply of middle-income housing and supporting new initiatives to enhance the quality of public education.



Maintaining and reinvesting in the City's heritage can bring tremendous economic benefits.

Although much of the emphasis of the *Economic Development Element* is on securing businesses, investment, and jobs, the City also recognizes the tremendous economic benefits of maintaining and reinvesting in the City's heritage. The benefits of historic preservation extend to job creation, enhanced tourism, and an expanded property tax base, as well as an improved quality of life in the City's many older neighborhoods. Both the *Historic Preservation* and the *Housing and Neighborhood Elements* point to the need for the City to further expand its leadership role in promoting the preservation of historic buildings, commercial districts and neighborhoods.

Pursuing all of these initiatives will require significantly expanded financial resources. To meet the challenge, the City must overcome its fiscal limitations and develop broadened revenue sources. Galveston citizens must understand the need for, and support, these new City investment initiatives. At a minimum, consideration should be given to such concepts as a possible elimination of the tax cap; greater use of general obligation and/or revenue bonds, with associated steps to enhance the City's bond rating; new structures for revenue allocation, such as tax reinvestment or tax increment financing; and creative uses of City assets, including its land holdings.

Goals, Objectives & Strategies

GOAL

DIVERSIFY AND EXPAND THE ECONOMY, CREATE QUALITY JOBS, PROMOTE THE FISCAL HEALTH OF THE CITY, AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN GALVESTON.

3.2 Economic Development

OBJECTIVE ED-1

REINVEST, REDEVELOP, AND IMPROVE GALVESTON TO ENHANCE ITS COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND ENCOURAGE PRIVATE INVESTMENT.

Although in recent decades the City has neglected needed reinvestment, it is presently engaged in substantial efforts to rebuild basic infrastructure. Additional strategic investments will be necessary to set the stage for private investment, with minimum standards for streets and utilities and an adequate provision of parking in key areas, as well as new initiatives in code enforcement to curb blight and obsolescence and to upgrade the character and image of the City.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

ED-1.1 Implement actions to enable the City to meet its long-term financial needs

- Adopt and maintain balanced annual City budgets.
- Diversify the City's revenue sources.
- Consider elimination of the tax cap as a means of generating needed revenues.
- Improve the City's general obligation bond rating.

ED-1.2 Carry out Citywide improvements necessary to support economic development initiatives

- Identify and plan for necessary infrastructure improvements, particularly as related to stormwater drainage and traffic/transportation.
- Identify necessary city beautification improvements (see Community Character Goals and Objectives).
- Develop a capital improvement program tied to reasonable funding expectations.

ED-1.3 Facilitate development of middle-income housing (see Housing and Neighborhoods Goals and Objectives)

As identified in the *Housing and Neighborhoods Element*, the ability of Galveston to attract economic growth is hampered by the lack of affordable, competitive middle-income housing. The City has an important role to play in ensuring that the supply of middle-income housing is expanded. Specific actions to implement this strategy may include coordinating with developers to minimize and remove regulatory and other types of impediments, and creating partnerships with the private sector to identify, pursue, or, as necessary, create specific development and redevelopment opportunities. In addition, planned conservation development should be supported and encouraged as a viable means to



Actions aimed at enabling the City to meet long-term financial needs include adopting and maintaining a balanced annual budget.



The City will support educational programs that meet the needs of the local and regional market.

achieve an increase in the stock of new, middle-income housing on the undeveloped east and west end areas of the island.

ED-1.4 Improve the Galveston public schools

- Foster a routine working relationship with the Galveston Independent School District to facilitate long-range planning for schools.
- Assist the School District in implementing improvements.
- Support educational programs that teach students skills, which will be in demand in the workplace – particularly in the businesses and industries present on Galveston Island.

OBJECTIVE ED-2

FOCUS TACTICAL INITIATIVES TO GROW TRADITIONAL STRENGTHS IN TOURISM, PORT, INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND HIGHER EDUCATION, AND DEVELOP NEW STRENGTHS IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH.

The economy of Galveston Island should be strengthened and diversified by improving the competitive strength of traditional mainstays of the local economy, while developing new strengths by capitalizing on its assets of regional location, and its institutional and human resources. These include efforts in:

- **Tourism**, with an enhanced image, a redeveloped Seawall, a greater array of activities and amenities and a new convention center, to compete at a higher level for quality family tourism and greater business visitation.
- **Industrial Activities related to the Oil/Gas Industry at both the Port and Airport**, including effective use of properties adjacent to the port and airport, diversification as a cruise port and a complementary relationship with the Port of Houston.
- **Higher Education**, with efforts to support the enhancement and strategic repositioning of UTMB, TAMUG and Galveston College (GC).
- **Research, Technology and Information-Based Businesses**, taking advantage of the presence of major institutions and the specialized knowledge they bring to Galveston Island.

3.2 Economic Development

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

ED-2.1 Expand Galveston's attraction as a quality tourist destination

- Improve the quality of beaches and enhance beachfront amenities.
- Enhance the Seawall Corridor.
- Revitalize the Central Business District/Strand (see Objective 4 below).
- Facilitate development of additional hotels in key tourist areas.
- Facilitate development of a new convention center.
- Facilitate the continued development of a cruise port at the Port of Galveston.
- Sensitively utilize the natural resources of the Island to support increased eco-tourism, including birding.
- Develop new quality visitor attractions.
- Continue to host quality events that draw visitors to the island.
- Develop an upgraded intermodal transportation system (see Objective 5 below).
- Guide tourism expansion and diversification through implementation of a Tourism Plan.
- Expand second-home communities, retirement communities, and other compatible tourist developments on the east and west ends.

ED-2.2 Enhance Galveston Island as the premier support center for the offshore oil/gas industry in the Gulf of Mexico

- Formulate a plan to develop the Port of Galveston and the Scholes Airport as the major center of support, service, and distribution for the offshore oil industry.
- Redevelop and improve facilities at the Port of Galveston so that it can effectively accommodate the water-based needs of the offshore oil industry.
- Redevelop and improve facilities at Scholes Airport so that it can safely and efficiently accommodate the air traffic demands of the offshore oil industry.
- Make available the full-range of industrial development sites needed by the offshore oil industry utilizing land at the Port of Galveston and Scholes Airport.

ED-2.3 Expand Galveston's position as a center for higher education, particularly for medical and maritime training and research

- Establish cooperative working partnerships with UTMB, TAMUG, and GC.



Improvements to the Seawall Corridor will help enhance Galveston's attraction as a quality tourist destination.



Port and airport facilities should be redeveloped and improved to better accommodate water-based needs of the offshore oil industry.



A non-profit corporation could promote technology transfer from research done at UTMB and TAMUG.

- Develop and implement short- and long-term strategies that will enable these higher education institutions to accomplish mutual and complimentary goals.
- Provide the support services and amenities needed by UTMB, TAMUG, and GC to retain their competitive advantage.
- Integrate plans for development of facilities at UTMB TAMUG, and GC so that they are compatible with adjoining residential neighborhoods.

ED-2.4 Establish Galveston as a center for technology transfer incubator businesses

- Explore the feasibility of establishing a non-profit corporation to promote the technology transfer of commercial applications from the research done at UTMB and TAMUG.
- Facilitate development of facilities needed to support research and development projects.
- Explore opportunities to work with the Johnson Space Center/NASA for the development of space-related technology industries.

ED-2.5 Establish Galveston as a center for new entrepreneurial information technology businesses

- Develop and implement a strategy to encourage entrepreneurial development of information technology businesses by local talent.
- Create a Galveston Island organization to bring together information technology entrepreneurs from the local area and from the Galveston region.
- Facilitate development of facilities that could support new start-up technology transfer businesses.

OBJECTIVE ED-3

PROVIDE DIRECT CITY SUPPORT TO EXISTING AND NEW BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES.

There are a number of ways in which the City can support institutional and private sector investment to create new jobs and opportunities that will grow the City's tax base and improve its fiscal health. These range from basic city responsibilities such as expediting development permitting, enforcing codes to remove blighted conditions, and providing basic infrastructure services. The City should make available the budget resources to meet these "minimum" responsibilities, and go beyond them to enhance the City's character, image and its commitment to a high quality of life.

3.2 Economic Development

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

ED-3.1 Support existing businesses and industries through infrastructure improvements, code enforcement, and beautification activities

As described more extensively in the Housing and Neighborhoods, Community Character, and Historic Preservation Elements, the City of Galveston needs to expand its current initiative to provide basic infrastructure services to include new initiatives in code enforcement, blight removal and enhancement of the visual character of the island. Such investments, by improving quality of life and enhancing civic pride, will greatly improve the likelihood that institutions, businesses, and development interests will be willing to make major investments in the community.

ED-3.2 Support development of new businesses and industries at well-located industrial sites through infrastructure funding initiatives

The City should strategically focus infrastructure investments in close proximity to sites and locations that are underutilized and where new private investment is likely to take place if properly encouraged and supported by the City.

ED-3.3 Facilitate the development approval and permitting process for new and expanding businesses

Particularly for businesses and industries that will diversify the economy, the City should simplify the process associated with development review and permitting.

OBJECTIVE ED-4

PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT WITHIN KEY DISTRICTS AND CORRIDORS

The City is highly structured in its pattern of land use – a pattern derived from the historic influence of the Port of Galveston, various historic commercial, industrial and residential districts, major vehicular corridors, and the protection afforded by the Seawall. Key opportunities exist for commercial development and redevelopment within these districts and corridors which will strengthen land use relationships, provide room for growth, and produce more efficient patterns of uses serving residents, visitors, local businesses and institutions. In some areas, commercial uses serving residents exist intermingled with tourist-oriented or heavy commercial uses. Other areas must serve multiple functions. One example is downtown, which functions as a



The City will seek to streamline the development review and permitting process for new and expanding businesses.



Downtown Galveston and the Strand District present key opportunities for continued revitalization and enhancement.

center for office employment, higher education, specialty retail and entertainment, and Port-related industrial activity. Similarly, Broadway, as the City's principal traffic artery, accommodates a wide array of uses and businesses in an environment that does not always reflect a consistent, positive image for the community. The City should reinforce, restructure, and intensify the pattern of development among its key districts and corridors to create development opportunities, enhance community character, and improve functional efficiency.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

ED-4.1 Revitalize historic Downtown Galveston and the Strand District

- Expand the critical mass of office development.
- Expand and upgrade commercial and retail uses.
- Introduce entertainment and specialty retail uses.

ED-4.2 Enhance neighborhood retail uses that provide essential goods and services needed by local residents

- Expand existing neighborhood retail centers.
- Develop new neighborhood retail centers.
- Appropriately change zoning for non-residential structures to be utilized as neighborhood service.

ED-4.3 Revitalize the Broadway Corridor

- Identify the desired land use mix and adjust permitted uses accordingly.
- Promote redevelopment of suitable land uses.
- Attract new uses that will better serve the needs of residents and visitors.

ED-4.4 Redevelop and revitalize the Seawall Corridor

- Identify the desired land use mix and adjust permitted uses accordingly.
- Promote redevelopment of suitable land uses, as outlined in the Seawall Development Guidelines.

ED-4.5 Redevelop the area around the I-45 entrance to Galveston Island to create a character suitable for the main community entry

Strategically located near the Broadway vehicular entrance to Galveston Island are several major development opportunities, the most significant of which is the site of the former Galvez Mall. This and other obsolete or vacant sites represent major opportunities to accommodate major new

3.2 Economic Development

commercial activities, including “big box” retail establishments as well as new forms of higher density residential development. The City should take a proactive role in promoting these redevelopment initiatives along with landscape and other aesthetic enhancements to the Island’s entrance.

ED-4.6 Promote the development of the southern portion of the East End Flats for middle-income housing

Due to its proximity to the industrial and downtown business core of Galveston, the East End Flats represent an excellent opportunity to expand the supply of middle-income housing to accommodate the growing employment base. The City should encourage the development of the southern one-third of this property for middle-income housing specifically targeted to meeting the housing needs of those employed in the urban core of the island.

ED-4.7 Encourage West End planned communities

The City also should encourage planned residential communities on the West End by establishing a process to facilitate their development.

OBJECTIVE ED-5

COORDINATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN UPGRADED INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES.

With greater numbers of workers, students, tourists and residents, plus greater activity in and out of the port and airport, additional demand on the City’s transportation system will increase problems of congestion and traffic conflicts. The City should take an active role in coordinating planned roadway improvements with the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) to address the access and parking needs of existing and prospective major employers. Additionally, the City should seek to link all modes of transportation with appropriate multimodal opportunities and actively promote transit and other alternatives to vehicular circulation.



Transportation system improvements, including an enhanced transit system, should support economic development initiatives.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

ED-5.1 Identify transportation system needs to support economic development initiatives

- Improve roadway capacity and operations, including FM 3005.
- Expand parking in areas of concentrated employment.
- Establish a regional transit system to move tourists,

business visitors, and residents to and from regional destinations.

- Enhance Galveston's transit system to move tourists, business visitors, and residents among local destinations.
- Promote expanded use of Scholes Airport.

ED-5.2 Identify financing options from federal, state and local sources for transportation improvements

ED-5.3 Develop and implement plans for transportation system improvements if and when funding is available



The City will work cooperatively with higher education institutions to expand and improve their educational programs at all levels.

OBJECTIVE ED-6

PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT OF A QUALITY WORK FORCE THAT WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS.

One of the City's key assets in promoting growth and diversification of the local economy is its people; those who live, work, teach and study in Galveston. Second only to affordable quality housing and neighborhoods, in attracting people to want to live and work on Galveston Island, is the quality of elementary, secondary education and higher and continuing adult education. Likewise, the availability of a trained, motivated workforce with appropriate technical skills is a key factor in investment and locational decisions by private industry. While the City is not an education provider, it should enter into new partnerships with such providers at all educational levels.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

ED-6.1 Work cooperatively with the Galveston Independent School District to strengthen the Galveston public schools

ED-6.2 Support Galveston College as the community's "life-long learning center"

ED-6.3 Work cooperatively with UTMB, TAMUG, and GC to continuously improve their undergraduate and graduate level programs

3.2 Economic Development

OBJECTIVE ED-7

COORDINATE AND PROVIDE LEADERSHIP IN PROMOTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS RECRUITMENT THROUGH KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT.

In order for the City to improve its effectiveness in recruiting new businesses, residents, and related investment, it must have certain basic requirements in place: available developable sites; structures available for adaptive reuse; sufficient access and utilities; and a regulatory system that not only permits, but actively facilitates desired new investment. Further, the City must make available to prospective businesses, residents, and investors key information regarding opportunities for relocation to Galveston. The City should pursue an initiative in “knowledge management”, marshalling and making available user-friendly data on available development sites and structures and the full array of supporting services and facilities. This includes existing and planned infrastructure and transportation services, zoning and permitting procedures, available incentives, work force educational and training opportunities, as well as information concerning the “quality of life” advantages of Galveston Island.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

ED-7.1 Create a centralized information storehouse for use in recruitment with up-to-date information on available building sites and structures, zoning requirements, transportation and infrastructure, and other services and incentives

ED-7.2 Accelerate development and expansion of the City website to incorporate and make available the Knowledge Management data base to prospective businesses and residents considering relocation to the Houston-Galveston corridor

OBJECTIVE ED-8

PROMOTE AND MAINTAIN GALVESTON AS A LEADER IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WITH AN ACCESSIBLE FIBER OPTIC NETWORK.

The availability of suitable development sites and structures, with adequate access and utilities, and a user-friendly regulatory system, are necessary, but no longer sufficient to attract quality businesses and their owners and employees to locate and invest in Galveston. To compete effectively, an advanced Information Technology (IT) infrastructure system



Businesses today expect high-speed communications infrastructure to be in place, including wireless access and satellite transmission capability.

should be in place, or at minimum, readily available to provide an “added value” for those considering locating in Galveston. This IT infrastructure should comprise a high-speed fiber optic network providing connectivity for voice, video, and data services, to be available throughout the City, but particularly in the downtown and industrial areas adjacent the port, airport, educational campuses, and elsewhere where business expansion is best suited.

Galveston’s present IT infrastructure consists of a few core vendors holding franchises, who provide service to specific customers on request through leased lines or by dial-up access. This approach in which service is provided reactively, and often non-competitively, produces a fragmented system and places Galveston in a poor competitive position to attract businesses who increasingly expect an IT system to be in place. Such businesses will expect prospective development sites to have in place high-speed connectivity systems including wireless access, satellite transmission capability and alternative connectivity paths from Galveston Island. This infrastructure should provide a broad range of services including bandwidths for data transmission on private network segments, virtual private network access, and cable television linked to development sites with wireless or underground fiber optic systems. Vendors should be encouraged to provide “bundled” services with “dry” fiber connectivity between facilities and major communications centers on and off the island, two-way video, reliable voice communications, and associated voice services.

While it is most critical to provide these services to prospective development sites, such services should also be made available to the homes of the owners, managers and employees of these new businesses through an integrated system available island-wide. Until such time as an integrated system can be implemented island-wide, vendors should be encouraged to pursue opportunities to link existing and planned incremental service expansions to move toward wider, more efficient service delivery networks.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

ED-8.1 **Develop long-term 2-, 5-, and 10-year plans for a comprehensive IT infrastructure initiative.**

ED-8.2 **Develop a working committee for IT infrastructure development to pursue network**

3.2 *Economic Development*

expansion opportunities including:

- Challenge existing IT providers to upgrade systems to meet current and future needs.
- Negotiate with new providers to explore IT infrastructure partnership opportunities.
- Review building projects to identify opportunities to expand existing or planned network services linked to the projects of others.

Overview

An essential attribute of Galveston is its special community character and sense of place. As defined by residents, Galveston's distinctive character encompasses both physical and social aspects of the island community. Maintaining Galveston's special community character while not impacting existing businesses presents a fundamental challenge for the future.

The central purpose of the strategies and actions contained in the Comprehensive Plan is to manage growth and change so that Galveston will continue to have a special community character, while improving its quality of life for all residents. This will involve preserving the best of the past and present while developing new, creative responses to the challenges of the future.

All of the Comprehensive Plan elements are designed to work together to support the improvement in community character. The following objectives define strategies and actions required to enhance Galveston's community character.

Goals, Objectives & Strategies

GOAL

PROMOTE AN ISLAND-WIDE APPRECIATION FOR AESTHETICS IN ALL REVITALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT THAT ENHANCES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CIVIC PRIDE AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL GALVESTONIANS.

OBJECTIVE CC-1

ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WEST END OF THE ISLAND WITH A FOCUS ON THE ENVIRONMENT, AESTHETICS AND ECONOMICS.

The West End has unique, sensitive environmental issues and helps to establish the image for the island. Development in this environment raises *strong* concerns for the wildlife habitat in the region and how to support its protection; but at the same time, it creates opportunities for public education and innovation in development. Residential development can occur on this side of the island provided that appropriate development practices, such as planned conservation development, are applied. Development incentives should, among other things, encourage the creation of a series of uniquely planned mixed-use centers featuring a resort



Residential development can occur on the West End provided that appropriate development practices are applied.

3.3 Community Character

atmosphere, served by an attractive island boulevard, surrounded by traditional neighborhoods, recreational amenities, scenic areas and natural preserves.

In addition, designated commercial centers, sized to support residential development in the area, are considered important on this side of the island. Further, land use and design controls are needed along FM 3005 to ensure quality development and to preserve the special natural character. The following identifies the actions needed to support community character goals for the West End.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

CC-1.1 Planned Conservation Development

Planned conservation development is a practice of sensitive land subdivision that supports the existing natural ecosystem. On Galveston's West End, this type of development should require generous open space dedications while encouraging a mix of uses. Except for village and neighborhood squares and parks, open spaces should be aggregated and interconnected, providing view corridors to the beach and bay, where possible. Additional incentives are given for dedicating land as **permanent** scenic areas and natural preserves.



Local convenience needs of West End residents and visitors will be met in designated "commercial centers" appropriately sited, sized, and designed.

CC-1.2 Land Use Controls

Controls should be implemented to allow only land uses that are appropriate to this end of the island. The appropriate land uses include the following general types: residential, planned conservation development, neighborhood/village centers, designated commercial centers, ecotourism, environmental preserve, beach access to the Gulf, golf courses, resort and retirement developments and related facilities.

CC-1.3 West End Designated Commercial Centers

The West End should have designated commercial centers. This commercial land use should be sited and sized to most effectively support resident and tourist demands. Generally, the new commercial centers should be located along FM 3005 and Stewart Road and comply with design guidelines to help the development integrate into the natural environment.

CC-1.4 FM 3005 Corridor

FM 3005 shall have design controls to promote quality development and provide aesthetic relationships between the sensitive environment and any structures. Site improvements such as surface parking, landscaping and signage are allowed

within the current city setbacks. Setbacks for development on the West End will be referred to the West End Land Use Policy Committee.

OBJECTIVE CC-2

GUIDE PUBLIC REINVESTMENT TO REVITALIZE AND BEAUTIFY URBAN AND HISTORIC DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOODS

The urban core or east island is the beautiful historic environment of the City. This is also the place where intense tourist-oriented development occurs, and where a concentration of residential neighborhoods exists. The community must protect the elements that reinforce its historic places and neighborhoods. Quality maintenance of properties must occur to support neighborhood reinvestment, at the historic East End, as well as island-wide. Pedestrian amenities need to be developed to aid the mobility of visitors and residents. The ability to safely stroll on a good network of sidewalks, while viewing the many wonderful sights of Galveston, clearly will support and attract long-term reinvestment on the island. The following identifies the actions needed to support this objective.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

CC-2.1 Blight Removal / Aggressive Code Enforcement

As its first priority, the City should mount an aggressive and strategically-targeted code enforcement effort to remove blight and protect historic structures and the character of historic neighborhoods. Habitable structures must be brought up to minimum code standards. This initiative should be considered an essential “investment” for which a direct “return” can be expected, in the form of accelerating private investment and a strengthened tax base as investor confidence in these neighborhoods grows.

CC-2.2 ADA Improvements

The City should start a program of public infrastructure to improve and bring up to standard pedestrian sidewalks, street crossings and handicap accessibility. As a part of this program the City must aggressively target state and federal funding sources. Also, partnerships with other organizations should be developed to share improvement costs and promote relationship-building.

3.3 Community Character

CC-2.3 Neighborhood Amenities Program

The removal of blighting influences through code enforcement, coupled with incentives for reinvestment, will be vital but not fully sufficient to promote neighborhood stabilization and renewal. A quality neighborhood environment comprised of safe, walkable, well-lit, tree-shaded local streets and sidewalks will also be necessary. The City should strategically target investments in sidewalks, street trees, street lights and other neighborhood amenities in areas where such improvements will produce the greatest “return” in the form of resident quality of life and investor confidence.

CC-2.4 Wayfinding Signage Program

The City needs to establish a master plan to identify a wayfinding network for visitors and tourists on the island, while deflecting through-traffic from residential neighborhood streets. This network should be unified for all attractions and eliminate the need for individual signage. The network should be designed around color-coding elements and providing clear directional information. Appropriate sign locations should be coordinated with the respective neighborhood associations.

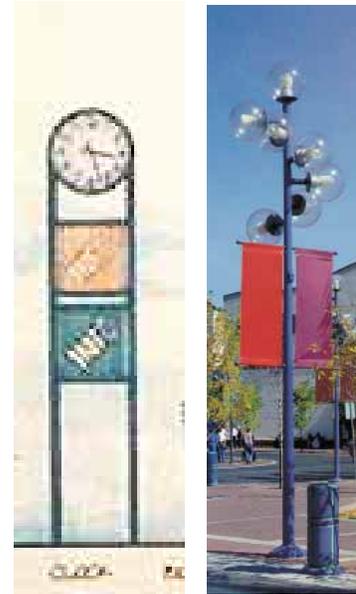
CC-2.5 Gateway Treatments

Gateway treatments should be established which provide upgraded development controls at significant intersections and portals. In additional phases, gateway structures can be designed and built that give presence to a district, entrance, or significant place.

CC-2.6 Financial Tools and Incentives

The City of Galveston should make full use of all available local, state and federal financial resources and incentives in support of and investment in community character enhancement initiatives. From federal funding sources, the incentives available include tax credits for historic preservation and affordable housing, as well as Community Development Block Grant (**CDBG**) funds for capital improvements such as the Neighborhood Amenities Program, or to provide a revolving fund and low-interest loan program for qualified rehabilitation efforts.

In addition, the State of Texas provides for several types of tax relief aimed at encouraging rehabilitation of historic structures: property tax abatement, which decreases or delays taxes for a fixed time period; property tax credit which decreases the tax bill in proportion to the renovation investment; and property tax exemption which avoids increased assessments due to property improvements (see HP-5.1 and HP-5.2).



A unified wayfinding signage network for visitors and tourists can be designed around color-coding elements.



Distinct gateway treatments give a unique presence to a district, entrance, or significant place.

The City's present tax exemption program encourages rehabilitation of commercial structures within designated historic districts. The City should consider extending this exemption (along with tax credits or tax abatements) to apply to historic residential properties, particularly those in designated historic or conservation districts.

Other financial tools and incentives which the City should consider include the following:

- *Tax Relief for Qualified Renovation and Infill Residential Development*, including property tax abatements, property tax credits, and property tax exemptions.
- *Tax Reinvestment/Tax Increment Financing*, to make available funds for capital improvements and other efforts to support revitalization in specified districts.
- *Expansion of the City's Receivership Program* to recycle abandoned or tax-delinquent properties.

OBJECTIVE CC-3

ENHANCE THE SEAWALL CORRIDOR AS A KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE TO THE CITY

Strolling along beachfront promenades is among the most popular activities in coastal resort communities, both for tourists and residents alike. Galveston is no exception, as everybody that visits or lives in Galveston enjoys the Seawall area. Coastal communities also often accommodate major tourist-oriented uses such as motels, restaurants, shops, and entertainment along a waterfront highway corridor. The most successful of these communities take special care to ensure that the visual character, as well as the degree of comfort and convenience afforded to pedestrians and beach users, is continually maintained and enhanced. However, Seawall Boulevard, as Galveston's principal scenic activity corridor and the focus of the local tourist economy, has significant room for improvement in the enhancement of its aesthetic character and the degree of comfort it affords to pedestrians and beach users. Greater care should be taken to guide appropriate, complimentary land uses and to better coordinate the design of commercial facades and site landscaping to promote a consistent image as a family-friendly, scenic tourist destination.



Historically, the Seawall has been the City's main tourist activity corridor.

Seawall Boulevard is one of the most important community character elements in the City, and it is a priority for enhancement. The *Seawall Plan*, developed in 1998, proposed significant improvements and amenities, including: restrooms, lighting, showers, beach renourishment, and other basic requirements for a safe and enjoyable beach recreation

3.3 Community Character

experience. These proposed improvements should move forward and should be expanded with even greater emphasis on the establishment of a visually memorable design theme. Land use controls must support the important role this corridor plays in the island character by discouraging local-serving businesses which detract from the Seawall experience, such as gas stations, heavy commercial uses, and major shopping centers. Land use controls should also mandate design characteristics to promote the Seawall as a memorable scenic environment, one which builds community pride and enhances the competitive position of Galveston for quality, family-oriented tourism. The following identifies the actions needed to support the Seawall enhancement objective.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

CC-3.1 Streetscape/Pedestrian Improvements

Streetscape and pedestrian improvements need to be designed and implemented for the 10.6-mile long Seawall Boulevard corridor. The design elements should include special pedestrian paving, pedestrian lighting, benches, landscaping, trash receptacles, special signage, and vending stations. A design theme must be developed for the entire family of features. Parking controls should be planned as a part of the plan. Potential funding sources for the improvements include the following: TIF District, Special Taxing District, Public/Private Partnership and Parking District Revenues.

- Pilot Project – A pilot streetscape/pedestrian improvement project should be programmed to promote the entire redevelopment. This initial construction effort should be ½ mile in length and provide a complete cross-section of pedestrian amenities.

CC-3.2 Land Use and Development Controls

Controls should be implemented that allow only land uses that are appropriate to this corridor of the island. Recommended land uses should include retail, commercial, hotel, residential, civic, and public spaces. These land uses must not have surface parking within their front yard area. Parking is encouraged to be located in the rear and sides of these properties along this corridor.

CC-3.3 Design Guidelines

The *Seawall Development Guidelines* should be revised, as necessary, to ensure that appropriate recommendations are included regarding the following issues: surface parking, signage, façade massing and character, lighting, pedestrian linkages and circulation, and residential compatibility.



All elements of the Seawall Blvd. streetscape project must be designed following a unified “theme”.



Front yard surface parking should be restricted for development permitted along Seawall Blvd.

CC-3.4 Seawall Plan Implementation

The implementation of the *Seawall Plan* should move forward as one of the City's highest priority action items. This major investment will require boldness in developing adequate funding sources. Such sources may include, but are not limited to, parking fees and Seawall corridor assessments or other participation by corridor merchants who will directly benefit from these investments.

OBJECTIVE CC-4

ENHANCE BROADWAY AS A KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE AND HISTORIC LINKAGE TO THE PAST FOR THE COMMUNITY.

Broadway provides the first image of Galveston to citizens and tourists. It should welcome visitors and present a segment of the rich heritage this island community has to offer. Commercial development should occur on this corridor in a manner that will support the overall message of quality, history, and vitality. The following identifies strategies and actions needed to guide the reinvestment of this community asset:

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

CC-4.1 Encourage Commercial Redevelopment

Encourage commercial redevelopment along the westernmost segment of Broadway up to approximately 61st Street. This area should be planned as a new commercial area to provide the commercial development desired by medium-income residents, who are a focus of the plan.

CC-4.2 Encourage Residential Redevelopment

Encourage residential redevelopment along the central segment of north Broadway from approximately 61st Street to 40th Street. This strategy contemplates the redevelopment of the existing warehouse and shipping structures in the area as new middle-income housing, which is a focus of the comprehensive plan. Supporting retail land uses for these new neighborhoods will also be included within the area.

CC-4.3 Streetscape/Pedestrian Improvements

Streetscape and pedestrian improvements should be designed and implemented for the Broadway corridor. The design elements should include special pedestrian paving, pedestrian lighting, benches, landscaping, trash receptacles and special signage. A design theme must be developed for the entire family of features. Parking controls should be planned as a part of the plan. Funding sources for the improvements include the following range: TIF District, Special Taxing District, and public/private partnerships.



Design elements for Broadway should include, among others, pedestrian lighting and special Central Business District signage.

3.3 Community Character

OBJECTIVE 5

ENHANCE 61ST STREET AS A VITAL COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR FOR THE CITY OF GALVESTON

The character of 61st Street is unique to the island. This corridor, currently a commercial focus for visitors and residents, is developed along rather standard suburban patterns with large areas of surface parking and pole signage. A series of actions need to be implemented on this corridor to reinforce the unique character of Galveston and help support quality reinvestment over the long term. The following identifies the actions needed to support the 61st Street enhancement objective.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

CC-5.1 Development Code Modifications

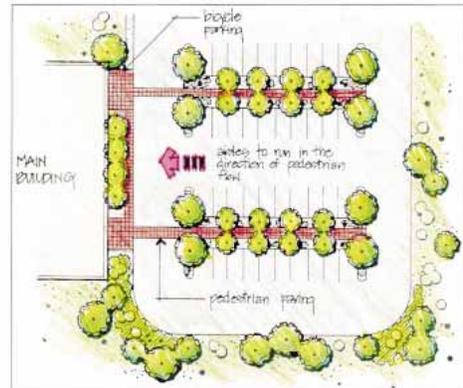
Development controls should be adjusted to support high-quality commercial and retail development. In particular, these controls should provide guidance regarding surface parking areas, pole signage, cross-access vehicular circulation, landscaping requirements (buffers, screens, etc.), lighting, residential compatibility, and pedestrian circulation.

CC-5.2 Land Use Controls

Controls should be implemented to allow only land uses that are appropriate to this corridor. The recommended land uses should be of the following general types: commercial, retail, office, civic, and public park. Relationship standards should be developed for adjacencies between land uses.

CC-5.3 Streetscape/Pedestrian Improvements

Streetscape and pedestrian improvements should be designed and implemented for the 61st Street corridor. The design elements should include: special pedestrian paving, pedestrian lighting, benches, landscaping, trash receptacles, and special signage. A design theme must be developed for the entire family of features. Parking controls should also be included as a part of the plan. Funding sources for the improvements include the following range: TIF District, Special Taxing District, and public/private partnerships.



Development standards need to be crafted to guide surface parking, cross-access, and pedestrian circulation.

Overview

The purpose of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan is twofold: first, to identify the intended pattern and character of residential, commercial, industrial and supporting land uses; and second, to identify the need for adjustments to zoning, subdivision regulations, and development review requirements necessary to achieve the desired pattern and quality of development. However, the Land Use Element does not, in itself, constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries. Furthermore, and unlike the other Comprehensive Plan elements which reflect specific needs and aspirations of the Galveston community, the Land Use Element is a necessary means to achieve the expectations described in these other elements, rather than being an end in itself.

Unlike relatively young mainland communities which experience significant growth potential and pressures, and often have few growth limits or “form-givers”, the land use patterns on Galveston Island are historically well-established, with severe development limitations. These limitations include many environmental and public safety factors common to barrier island communities, as well as set patterns in the urbanized core and historic neighborhoods; linear patterns of commercial and industrial use along major roads and waterfront corridors; and concentrations of activity in the Central Business District (**CBD**) and the areas surrounding the Port and Airport. The land area of the urbanized core, well served by roads and infrastructure and protected behind the Seawall, is nearly entirely built out. In this area, land use issues focus on stabilization and revitalization of residential, commercial and industrial areas, as well as targeted redevelopment to remove blight and introduce needed new activities and amenities. Significant actions are needed on the City’s part to ensure the long-term stabilization of older neighborhoods and retention of the City’s inventory of older structures. The Land Use Element supports these efforts by calling for revisions to zoning and development standards in order to protect neighborhoods from development that may be incompatible or out-of-scale, and to maintain the integrity of the City’s historic neighborhoods.

By contrast, the largely undeveloped area west of the Seawall is constrained by protected wetlands, dunes, limited roadway/ sewer systems and hurricane evacuation of present and future populations. In the preceding 1988 Galveston Comprehensive Plan, these threats were measured to calculate a maximum “holding capacity” for the West End. The need exists for the City to undertake a new holding



Some of the undeveloped areas on the West End contain wildlife habitats, wetlands and dunes.

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capacity analysis of the West End, as well as a hurricane evacuation study, so as to properly manage and accommodate continued population growth.

While the West End of Galveston Island contains wetlands, dunes and areas of low-lying topography, development may occur if undertaken in a responsible manner within city, state and federal guidelines. In addition, there is an issue of the appropriate community character for the West End.

Planned conservation development requires a development framework that promotes the protection of open space and the scenic natural environment, as well as attention to safe hurricane evacuation. Future development could be affected by hurricane evacuation clearance times, street improvements and expansion of the sewer system.

Expressed community desires are to retain the scenic, unspoiled character of the West End, which may suggest additional regulatory measures to limit excessive or strip commercial development, land encourage “planned conservation developments” that retain generous amounts of scenic, useable open space and greenways.

Goals, Objectives & Strategies

GOAL

PROVIDE FOR A BALANCE OF LAND USES AND ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS TO SUPPORT SOUND ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER, PROMOTE FUNCTIONAL EFFICIENCY, AND PROTECT PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

1. RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

OBJECTIVE LU-1.1

PROTECT, STABILIZE AND REVITALIZE EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS.

While there is a need to develop a wider range of new housing, particularly for middle-income families, the largest proportion of the City’s housing stock is in the existing older neighborhoods of the urban core. The City has no higher priority than to protect this housing stock and maintain and improve neighborhood quality of life. The City cannot afford to permit further erosion of its



The City’s highest priority is to protect and maintain its large existing housing stock (Photo credit: R. Mihovil).

housing stock due to blight, neglectful maintenance by absentee landlords, or the impacts of commercial encroachments and excessive cut-through traffic. Coupled with incentives for reinvestment and home ownership, as described in the Housing and Neighborhoods Element, the strategy to protect this housing stock is three-fold: targeted, aggressive code enforcement guided by new neighborhood plans, guidelines for compatible infill, and restrictions on commercial encroachments in established neighborhoods.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

LU-1.1.1 Targeted Blight Removal / Code Enforcement

The City's limited resources to enforce building, health, and occupancy codes have allowed the erosion of the housing stock and have discouraged wider-spread reinvestment. The City should initiate a strategically targeted "war on blight" to focus code enforcement activity where it is likely to have the greatest immediate benefit in accelerating home ownership and renovation efforts. As part of the recommended revisions to the City's Neighborhood Plans, the City (working in close coordination with neighborhood and civic organization partners) should identify priority areas for targeted code enforcement focused on areas with the greatest recent or anticipated future reinvestment activity.

In addition to expanding and strategically focusing its code enforcement efforts, the City should intervene to reduce the extent of properties suffering from "demolition by neglect," particularly in the City's Special Historic Districts (see HP-3.1, HP-3.2, HN-2.1).

LU-1.1.2 Development Guidelines for Compatible Infill

While the City should actively encourage infill residential development in its urban neighborhoods, it must insist that such development be complimentary and consistent with the character and scale of the surrounding neighborhood. Development guidelines should include adjustments to zoned densities to preclude the introduction of higher-density, large-lot multifamily development in areas with an established single-family character, particularly in areas zoned General Residence (**GR**) which permit large multifamily development by Specific Use Permit. Design guidelines should also be applied to ensure that infill structures complement the character of existing historic structures in site placement, scale, materials and architectural features.

At present, the Landmark Commission applies the *Design Guidelines for the Historic Districts of Galveston* in reviewing proposals for exterior improvements to historic structures

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located within the City's Designated Local Historic Districts. However, the majority of the City's historic structures actually lie outside the boundaries of the established districts, and are therefore afforded less protection. To broaden the City's effectiveness in protecting the character of historic structures and neighborhoods, the Landmark Commission should pursue updating and expanding its guidelines as a priority in 2002, along with a review of compliance requirements. Likewise, the City should consider the application of some portion of these guidelines to structures lying outside of historic district designations (see HP-3.1).

LU-1.1.3 Prohibit Commercial Intrusions

Throughout Galveston, the edges of commercial districts that line the City's major traffic corridors often disrupt and destabilize adjacent neighborhoods, particularly where commercial rezonings encroach into neighborhoods and where unscreened rear service yards and parking lots create undesirable edge conditions. The City should modify its development standards to strengthen landscape screening for all such commercial edge conditions. In areas such as the Teichman Road neighborhood, the introduction of commercial uses should be avoided when such uses are determined to generate traffic, excess parking, signage, noise, and lighting into established residential neighborhoods. Rezoning of properties from residential to commercial use should only be approved upon demonstration of adequate impact minimization or appropriate mitigation, including: reduced hours of commercial operation, landscape buffering requirements, and prohibition of commercial signage and excessive lighting.

LU-1.1.4 Protect Neighborhoods from Excessive Cut-Through Traffic

Among the older neighborhoods in Galveston's urban core, the intensification of through-traffic is creating safety concerns, contributing noise, and otherwise compromising quality of life. The City should take a leadership role in reducing these factors by directing through-traffic away from neighborhoods, by careful placement of directional and orientation signage, by designation of "no truck" zones, and by using traffic calming methods to slow traffic speeds in neighborhood areas. In future revisions of both the *Five-Year Mobility Plan* and the *Thoroughfare Plan*, the City should provide leadership in carefully addressing neighborhood traffic impacts.

LU-1.1.5 Additional "District" Designations

At present, the greatest degree of protection to Galveston's stock of historic housing exists within the three residential



The City will design and launch an aggressive code enforcement strategy to bring habitable structures up to minimum standards and remove uninhabitable structures.

Designated Local Historic Districts. Outside the boundaries of these districts, the bulk of the City's older housing lacks such protection. To increase the City's effectiveness in curbing the deterioration of older housing stock, the following three additional "district" classifications should be considered:



Appropriate character transitions must be provided between districts to protect stable areas from negative impacts and intrusions.

- **Local Historic District Designations**

As part of the process of developing new neighborhood plans, the City should explore opportunities to designate additional Local Historic Districts, for the purpose of maintaining the housing stock and promoting neighborhood stability, through the application of design and development standards (see HP-2.1).

- **Neighborhood Conservation Districts**

For those older neighborhoods that are not suitable for Local Historic District designation, or where residents choose not to pursue the highest level of protection afforded by such designation, an alternative designation of Neighborhood Conservation District may be appropriate. This may be the case in lower income areas or where the demolition, deterioration, or inappropriate infill have altered the overall historic integrity of the area. Such a designation would likely be applied as a zoning overlay district for the implementation of development standards for density, scale, site placement, and limited design review for renovations and infill development, as noted in LU-1.1.2 above (see HP-4.1).

- **Buffer Districts**

Although the present Zoning Standards contains a "Buffer District" designation, it is applied in a limited manner to a portion of Broadway frontage adjacent to the East End Historic District. Because inappropriate development at the edges of historic districts can exert adverse impacts on such districts, the City should consider expanding the Buffer District designation through a zoning overlay to apply to defined "edges" adjacent to all historic districts and neighborhood conservation districts. Such additional controls would seek to avoid development out of scale or character, as well as to restrict truck traffic and heavy vehicular through-traffic (see HP-4.3).

LU-1.1.6 Downzoning

In order to enact guidelines for more compatible infill, and to preclude commercial intrusions into established neighborhoods (as noted in LU-1.1.2 and LU-1.1.3 above), it may be necessary to change underlying zoning designations. In many cases, neighborhoods that remain single-family in orientation nevertheless permit multi-family or commercial

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development, as well as development out of scale with surrounding patterns. As identified in the process to create new neighborhood plans, it may be necessary to change basic zoning district designations to limit uses and densities, to reflect and maintain existing development patterns (see HP-4.2).

OBJECTIVE LU-1.2

EXPAND THE SUPPLY OF MIDDLE INCOME HOUSING.

Among the City's highest priorities is to increase the availability of middle-income family housing, allowing more of those working on Galveston Island to also live here and removing a major obstacle to recruiting new businesses to the island. Recognizing that the primary impediment is the lack of land suitable for development of new subdivisions, the need is to create opportunities for such development. This can be done in three ways: by encouraging infill development on single lots and in small subdivisions, by redeveloping new market-rate, high-density "urban" housing, and by creating larger reservoirs of quality housing near jobs and services in the urban core surrounding the present municipal golf course and the East End Flats.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

LU-1.2.1 Infill Development

Infill development refers to the development of vacant parcels within areas that are largely developed and served by existing roads and infrastructure. Because such development also reinforces existing neighborhoods and supports existing commercial uses, it is a particularly beneficial form of development and urban reinvestment. Several established middle-income neighborhoods include substantial "infill potential" associated with a fragmented pattern of individual vacant lots or deteriorated structures. The City should create incentives for the introduction of new single-family homes, particularly in the older areas that surround the Harborside Drive/I-45 Causeway island entrance. Likewise, the City should encourage, through regulatory or financial incentives, small subdivisions on larger properties comprised of a block or more of land, primarily in the area near the municipal golf course and Scholes Airport. Initially, such incentives may include expedited development review, waivers of permit fees, and potentially, short-term abatement of property taxes for new homeowners and developers in these areas. If necessary, more dramatic actions may be warranted, including capital improvements to infrastructure systems and neighborhood amenities as well as land assembly of larger developable parcels for sale to willing housing developers and homebuilders.



The City will explore the potential for new housing sites in conjunction with a reconfigured, upgraded municipal golf course.

LU-1.2.2 Golf Course Reconfiguration

By reconfiguring the existing municipal golf course, it may be possible to create compatible housing sites, as well as to provide amenities to improve the golf experience. While earlier concepts suggested the possible relocation and redevelopment of the present golf course for housing development, the final decision has been in favor of retaining this land use in its present location. Still, a substantial number of dwelling units may be possible, depending on the efficiency of subdivision lot layouts. Feasibility studies should be conducted to identify opportunities to incorporate compatible housing sites around a reconfigured golf course, and to provide additional golf amenities. Such studies should also identify financial returns from the sale of housing sites, as well as additional property tax revenue to offset costs associated with reconfiguring and improving the golf course, and providing the roads and infrastructure necessary to support residential development.

LU-1.2.3 North Broadway Redevelopment

Located along the northern edge of the Broadway corridor lies a substantial area of obsolescent industrial and heavy commercial uses which may be better suited for new, higher density urban housing or adaptive reuse of industrial buildings. Market-rate housing here would likely appeal to young professionals, empty nesters, and others who may prefer quality townhouse, condominium or apartment/loft dwellings in an urban setting over suburban single-family homes. The introduction of this expanded middle-income population would aid in the creation of a mixed-income urban neighborhoods, protect existing neighborhoods, spur redevelopment along Broadway, and support the growth of downtown office and institutional employment. The City should assemble a package of incentives for such development, including density bonuses, flexibility for mixed uses, as well as assistance in land assembly, utility upgrading, and potentially short-term tax abatement.

LU-1.2.4 West End/East End Flats Development Strategy

While the best and most immediate opportunities to introduce additional middle-income housing are infill and redevelopment within the presently urbanized area, the lands just beyond this area and the Seawall, both on the West End and at the East End Flats, represent longer-range opportunities. Such areas presently accommodate little economic use, and are reasonably well-located with respect to the jobs, services and facilities within the urbanized area. Affordable, middle-income “planned developments” are highly desirable in the mid-island

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area, perhaps in association with a reconfigured municipal golf course. However, some of the sites, particularly those in the East End, are highly constrained by low-lying topography, wetlands, and utility limitations. The City should take the initiative in demonstrating the feasibility of such development, and provide incentives and catalysts for it as necessary through investments in infrastructure, golf course reconfiguration, and direct developer solicitation and selection.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS WHICH ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AND SUBJECT TO POTENTIAL STORM DAMAGE

While the entire West End of Galveston Island (that portion of Galveston Island westward of 8-Mile Road) contains wetlands, dunes and areas of low-lying topography, development may occur if undertaken in a responsible manner within city, state and federal guidelines.

The 1988 Comprehensive Plan estimated a limited “Holding Capacity” of the West End. The City must undertake a new Holding Capacity analysis to identify potential inundation areas and evaluate potential alternatives for hurricane evacuation, including the elevation of FM 3005.

The West End of the island can become the model for the Texas Gulf Coast, balancing its development opportunities with the interests of existing residents, businesses, tourists, and protection of the natural environment, particularly ecologically sensitive lands. Every effort should be made to contain visual blight, haphazard development, and “coastal sprawl.”

Development incentives for the West End should, among other things, encourage the creation of a series of unique planned mixed-use centers featuring a resort atmosphere, served by an attractive “island boulevard,” surrounded by traditional neighborhoods, recreational amenities, scenic areas and natural preserves.

For Planned Conservation Development to be successful, the City of Galveston must initiate strategies immediately for assessing public safety (police, fire, evacuation routes), natural resources, infrastructure (water, sewer, drainage, roads), and FM 3005 elevations in tandem with its Capital Improvement Plan for annual reviews.



Improvements are critical where low-lying roads and evacuation routes may be threatened by potential breaching during a hurricane event.



It is critical that a new “holding capacity” analysis is completed for the West End.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS**LU-1.3.1 Maintain sustainable West End residential densities to protect West End wetlands, dunes and open space and to ensure safe hurricane evacuation.**

The unique characteristics of the West End require a development framework that promotes the protection of open space and the scenic natural environment, as well as attention to safe hurricane evacuation. Future development could be affected by hurricane evacuation clearance times, street improvements, and sewer system expansion. Holding capacity analyses should be recalculated immediately and updated every five years. New development must be served by the appropriate municipal services, and the use of septic systems for sanitary waste should not be encouraged. To help accomplish this goal, means of public financing, such as MUDS, public improvement districts, and tax increment reinvestment zones should be developed for situations where the city is financially unable to provide municipal services.

FM 3005 must be analyzed for adequate elevations to ensure safe passageway as indicated in the 1988 Comprehensive Plan. The City must address alternative solutions including solicitation of the TXDOT for necessary funding. Likewise the West End sewer master plan should move toward implementation.

Additional residential development, other than detached single-family homes or developments determined to be vested, should only be approved if storm water and sewage treatment requirements can be met without posing a risk to water quality.

West End development is also guided by city, state and federal regulations regarding beach setbacks and wetland impacts.

The unique characteristics of the West End also require a development framework that promotes the protection of open space and the scenic natural environment. Within such framework, all new development in the West End should require generous open space dedications while encouraging a mix of uses. Except for village and neighborhood squares and parks, open spaces should be aggregated and interconnected, providing view corridors to the beach and bay, where possible. Additional incentives should be given for dedicating land as part of the development, by plat or other approved method, as permanent scenic areas and natural preserves, to be determined by the West End Land Use Policy Committee. This general concept shall be referred to in this document as “Planned Conservation Development.”



Inadequate stormwater and wastewater treatment standards and systems could threaten water quality in the west end.

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Conventional non-planned development will still be permitted at gross densities up to 4 residential units per developable acre (excluding beaches, dunes and non-mitigated wetlands), provided that a minimum of 30 percent of the tract is set aside as useable open space or conservation areas. In addition, incentives are given for increasing open space beyond the minimum. To encourage a more efficient pattern of development and mix of uses, three categories of planned development are specified for this area, to include special provisions:

- ◆ Conventional Planned Developments must be at least 25 acres, may contain a variety of land uses, and are subject to the requirements and review procedures specified in the existing City of Galveston Zoning Standards. Mixed-Use Centers are a special case of Conventional Planned Developments, and must be at least 10 acres.
- ◆ Traditional Neighborhood Developments must be at least 50 acres, and are subject to the requirements and procedures contained in the City of Galveston's existing Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance.
- ◆ Traditional Village Developments are larger developments, limited to tracts of at least 200 acres, that may contain several TNDs as well as one Village Center.

Further, these designations will provide substantial flexibility to incorporate mixed uses within compact centers and to accommodate a variety of housing types and scales. Incentives are also created for commercial, civic, and higher density residential uses to occur in master-planned Neighborhood and Village centers, where there is a mix of uses and a pedestrian-oriented atmosphere.

Allowable residential development types will include detached single-family homes, clustered homes, townhomes and condominiums. Building heights will be governed by density requirements and compatibility with adjacent uses.

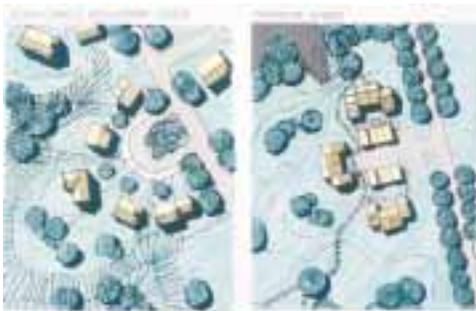
The above-described provisions will be implemented through the application of new West End development standards, which include development character and building-type specifications for each classification of allowable development. The key aspects of these standards are summarized in Table 1 (Page 66).

LU-1.3.2 Encourage Other Means to Further Protect Dunes, Wetlands, Scenic Open Space and Community Character in West Island

Because the area west of the Seawall accommodates complex wetland systems and wildlife habitats, open space retained by individual developments should be linked to maximize their value as



Under the West End development standards, future conventional planned developments are limited to sites no less than 25 acres in area.



Allowable residential types in the West End will include single-family homes and townhouses, as well as mid- and high-rise construction in TNDs and TVDs.

linked greenways and habitat corridors. These greenways should be connected by trails, where possible, linking existing parks and natural areas, including the state park and Gulf beaches. To ensure that open space designations correspond to the areas of greatest value for wildlife habitats and for scenic and recreational enhancements, the development review process should require identification of wetlands, habitat areas, native vegetation, areas of unique scenic value and open space linkage opportunities.

The replenishment and protection of the beaches and dunes should be of the highest priority. A comprehensive beach access plan shall be adopted and implemented in accordance with local and state laws. While erosion of barrier island beaches is a natural phenomenon, with gradual alterations to the beach profile to be expected, beachfront development can exacerbate the threat by compromising the integrity and protective functions of the dune system, as well as, to coastal development; therefore, the City should consider increasing the existing Gulf-front setbacks for new development.

The threat that beach erosion poses to West End development is such to justify an accelerated renourishment program, recommended herein. Further the City should strengthen the provisions of its Coastal Development Ordinance to more actively promote dune stabilization and reconstruction, using such techniques as native dune vegetation plantings, sand fencing, or other approved techniques to accelerate the rate of dune

Table 1: Generalized West End Development Standards

TYPE	MINIMUM ACREAGE	MAXIMUM DENSITY	MINIMUM USABLE OPEN SPACE
Non-planned Residential Development	None	4 du/ac	30 percent
Conventional Planned Development	25	6 du/ac	20 percent
Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)	50	6 du/ac	20 percent
• Neighborhood Center (within a TND)	10	8 du/ac	10 percent
Traditional Village Development (TVD)	200	6 du/ac	20 percent
• Village Center (within a TVD)	20	12 du/ac	10 percent

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accretion and growth. In addition, the City should aggressively pursue full certification of the Coastal Development Ordinance.

To retain the scenic quality of the West End, strip commercial development should be avoided by encouraging compact “neighborhood/village centers” linked by pedestrian, bicycle and greenway trails.

LU -1.3.3 General regulations for Planned Conservation Development on the West End

Property on the West End will be developed according to the regulations outlined below, unless the tract is large enough to qualify as a Planned Development. Minimum areas for Planned Developments are 25 acres for a Conventional Planned Development, 50 acres for a Traditional Neighborhood Development, or 200 acres for a Traditional Village Development. Planned Developments are encouraged, but not required, for tracts large enough to qualify.

1. General Regulations for non-Planned Developments

A. Density: Up to 4 residential units per acre, gross. Density is based on the developable area, which excludes beaches, dunes and non-mitigated wetlands, but includes the required open space.

B. Minimum Required Open Space: 30% of the tract area; useable open space or conservation areas. Useable open space may include dedicated: squares, plazas, parks, linear parks, pedestrian-bikeways, buffer zones, common areas, view corridors, golf courses, sports fields, and recreation centers.

C. Development Character: The density and open space limits outlined above are designed to encourage the type of single-family detached development typical to current West End development. Greater open space requirements encourage clustered townhouse and condominium development as opposed to single-family detached homes.

D. Building Types: One-family detached housing and one-family attached housing are permitted (townhouses/condominiums).

E. Designated Commercial Centers: Commercial, civic, and higher density residential uses are permitted in designated commercial centers, which are located in the areas specified in LU-2.1.4 or in other locations consistent with a West Island Land Development Policy, to be developed by the West Island Land Use Policy Development Committee. (See LU-1.3.3)

F. FM 3005 Redesign: FM 3005 should be rebuilt to facilitate hurricane evacuation and redesigned as a traditional Galveston Boulevard (inspired by Broadway Boulevard and 25th Street), with safe pedestrian crossings, and biking, jogging, and walking paths within the right-of-way. Utility poles



Planned conservation developments have higher densities and incorporate large amounts of scenic open space and protected natural areas.

should be relocated or utilities should be placed underground. Setbacks should be sufficient for attractive landscaping; however, buildings fronting on FM 3005 in the Village and Neighborhood Centers should conform to current setbacks.

G. Utilities: Utilities should be located underground or in rear easements.

2. Planned Developments

All Planned Developments, and TND's and TVD's only as specially noted in items G and H, are subject to the following provisions:

A. Density: Up to 6 residential units per acre gross, based on the developable area.

B. Allowable Density Increases: The number of dwelling units may be increased by dedicating additional open space. For each acre of open space above the required minimum, an additional 6 dwelling units may be added to the allowable number.

C. Open Space: 20% of the tract area, minimum. In Planned Developments, one acre per 4 acres of unmitigated wetlands, excluding tidal areas, may be counted toward the minimum open space requirement, provided it totals no more than 80% of the required open space.

D. Conservation Areas and Natural Preserves: If the open space in a development is left substantially contiguous and undisturbed, and is dedicated as a conservation area or natural preserve, an additional density increase is granted. For each acre of such open space above the required minimum, an allowable increase of 8 units is permitted. Prior to development, land which is part of a larger tract may be dedicated as a conservation area or a natural preserve, and such dedication shall also be used in the future calculation of allowable density for the remaining tract, if requested.

E. Utilities: All utilities shall be underground or in rear easements.

F. Planned Developments should be linked internally by an identified pedestrian circulation network.

G. Special Provisions for Traditional Neighborhood Developments: Incentives are given to create denser, mixed-use centers within Traditional Neighborhood Developments, as summarized in the preceding table on Page 66. In general, these developments shall follow the principles and regulations contained in the City of Galveston's existing Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance. TNDs can contain a mix of community-serving uses and residential housing types, and be linked to the rest of the development by a pedestrian circulation network.

H. Neighborhood or Village Centers: Neighborhood or Village Centers must be located within a tract large enough to qualify as a TND (50 acres min.) or TVD (200 acres min.),



Height limitations will be governed by the standards of Planned Conservation Development.

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respectively. That portion of the tract designated as a Neighborhood or Village Center may also increase its density in exchange for additional open space in accordance with the provisions above. Neighborhood and Village Centers may not occupy more than 25% of the total tract area.

LU 1.3.4 West End Land Use Policy Development

To address specific items that are not presently addressed in this plan, such as future commercial land use sites, possible impacts of the holding capacity analysis and its updates, beach nourishment, wetlands protection, and the redesign of FM 3005, City Council shall appoint a West End Land Use Policy Committee. This group will have diverse representation, including a representative of each of the following groups: small land owner, large land owner, economic development interests, single-family homeowners, homeowner associations, builders, a Planning Commission representative and a Planning Department representative. The City Council person representing the West End shall serve as an ex-officio member. Such committee shall be appointed following approval of this plan for a specific term to formulate recommendations for ordinances to effectuate this plan and future amendments to this plan. City Council may thereafter reactivate the committee as needed to assist in the resolution of West End development issues.

2. COMMERCIAL LAND USE

OBJECTIVE LU-2.1

PROMOTE REVITALIZATION, ENHANCEMENT AND A COMPLIMENTARY MIX OF USES ALONG THE CITY'S MAJOR CORRIDORS

One's perception of the character of Galveston is largely determined by what is seen driving along the City's major roadways. Therefore, it is important that the appearance of development along these roadways be such that it reflects favorably on the unique characteristics of each corridor, while contributing to the overall character and visual quality of the community.

While the quantity of commercial development along these roadways makes a major contribution to the local tax base, it also contributes to the traffic problems experienced on Galveston Island. In addition, commercial zoning designations along Galveston's three principal corridors (Broadway Boulevard, Seawall Boulevard, and 61st Street) remain too permissive with regard to the range of uses permitted and too modest with regard to expectations for development quality

and aesthetics. As a result of these conditions, commercial development along these corridors tends to be highly fragmented, with little reference to the markets being served, the synergy of related uses, the edges of nearby neighborhoods, or the net impact on the character of the City.

As commercial redevelopment occurs incrementally, the pattern of commercial use should be made more rational and efficient, and the visual quality of the corridors should be enhanced. Rather than creating a multitude of new, special-purpose commercial zoning districts, it is recommended that underlying zoning be retained but fine-tuned to the unique characteristics along each corridor. These overlay provisions will narrow the present, overly-broad range of permitted uses and business types. Commercial footprint size limitations should also be considered to avoid the introduction of “big box” development where it could be disruptive, such as in areas close to existing residential neighborhoods, and to instead guide such development to where it is ideally suited – most significantly, at the site of the former Galvez Mall.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

LU-2.1.1 Adjust Permitted Uses and Development Standards Along Broadway Boulevard

Broadway Boulevard is not only the City’s longest commercial highway corridor: it also is the corridor that creates one’s first impression of Galveston. It contains the largest amount and most varied array of commercial businesses. An overlay district has been in effect since 1991, which sets higher standards for the design of corridor development, specifically pertaining to landscaping, setbacks, signage, and lighting. However, the broad range of uses permitted by present zoning is unaffected by the overlay.

The predominant zoning designation from the island entrance to the CBD is Commercial (C), a permissive category which has contributed to the proliferation of gas stations, convenience stores, used car lots, auto parts and muffler shops and other relatively low-intensity, auto-oriented uses. Due in part to the age and lack of recent investment in some of these businesses, many portions of the corridor are showing evidence of obsolescence and neglect. The present overlay, focusing on design and buffering at the edges of new commercial developments, will have little effect upon this predominant pattern and character of largely auto-oriented and aging businesses. Commercial redevelopment along the Broadway Boulevard corridor is necessary and

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inevitable, based on factors of property value and competitive market demand. The City can do little to directly influence these market forces over such a long corridor and involving several hundred businesses. However, the City can and should adjust the range of permitted uses to ensure that the commercial mix incrementally improves as redevelopment takes place. Specifically, it is recommended that the range of uses permitted along Broadway Boulevard be adjusted (narrowed) in specific corridor segments, based on factors such as the needs of nearby residents, proximity to the island entrance, the CBD, historic districts and other factors to which the range of uses should respond appropriately.

LU-2.1.2 Adjust Permitted Uses and Development Standards Along Seawall Boulevard

Successful coastal tourist-oriented communities typically have a principal beachfront corridor, along which are lined hotels, restaurants, entertainment, shops, and services oriented to the needs of beach visitors. Such corridors represent the tourist destination, as they become a major focus of pedestrian activity, with strolling and people-watching aesthetics of the road and pedestrian amenities, but it will not be sufficient to enable Seawall Boulevard to achieve its potential as the City's liveliest, most scenic and memorable pedestrian and vehicular corridors. Therefore, two other significant initiatives should be introduced to enhance and more productively develop Seawall Boulevard: first, apply more careful *controls over the range of permitted uses*; and, second, *expect greater attention to design* to improve the visual quality of private development along the corridor. Although Seawall Boulevard accommodates several of the community's best hotels, restaurants, and entertainment amenities, it also has uses that are inappropriate to the character of this area. Under the present Retail (R) zoning designation, a broad range of local-serving uses are permitted by right, or by Specific Use Permit, including major ("big box") grocery, hardware and variety stores, as well as smaller businesses such as appliances, plumbing and TV and shoe repair shops. Other uses are also permitted which detract from the image and character of the City's premier waterfront corridor. Such uses include gas stations, used car lots, auto repair, muffler shops, and mini warehouses. These uses draw residents and excess traffic into an area that is already highly congested during the peak tourist season. In addition, they do not contribute to pedestrian activity, nor do they enhance the visitor experience or support the mix of uses that do "belong" along the Seawall corridor.

In addition to the need to limit the range of permitted uses and businesses, the aesthetics of development along the



Limiting the range of permitted uses along Seawall Boulevard is a key strategy to enhancing the character of the beachfront corridor.



The City should adopt development and design standards to improve the visual quality of the Seawall Blvd. corridor.

corridor requires attention. Present development along Seawall Boulevard represents some of the best, as well as many of the unfortunate, examples of site and building façade design. To complement the major public investment in Seawall Boulevard, property owners should be expected to adhere to reasonable design guidelines, and to providing greater consistency and quality in the use of materials, colors and landscaping, and in the application of urban design principles appropriate for a special, memorable beachfront corridor. The additional use, development, and design guidelines should be put in place immediately in the form of a Seawall Boulevard Overlay District to modify the requirements of the Retail (R) zoning district. These districts should apply to all properties with frontage on Seawall Boulevard and those within a defined proximity. The creation of such an overlay district need not wait, nor be contingent upon, the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

LU-2.1.3 Adjust Permitted Uses and Development Standards Along 61st Street

This important connector road, linking Broadway Boulevard and Seawall Boulevard, is ideally situated to serve the basic convenience shopping needs of Galveston residents. A major issue along this corridor is the need to improve circulation through better traffic system management techniques, including careful placement of curb cuts and better connections between, and location of, parking areas. Additionally, as this corridor experiences redevelopment of its older, less competitive shopping centers, care must be taken to ensure that the land use mix remains focused on meeting local resident needs, with development scaled to control traffic congestion. To address these concerns, a 61st Street Overlay District is recommended to adjust (narrow) the range of uses permitted by the underlying Commercial (C) and Retail (R) zoning districts, and to impose limits on commercial building footprints, to avoid the impacts which could occur with the introduction of “big box” commercial uses.

LU-2.1.4 Restrict Strip Commercial Development, Create Designated Commercial Centers, and Design and Apply Special Development Standards Along Roadway Corridors on the West End

Because West End residents reside well beyond the normal “service radius” of public facilities and commercial centers in the urban core, it is advantageous to encourage commercial uses necessary to meet local convenience needs.

West End traffic can be reduced by connecting the proposed commercial centers to pedestrian and bicycle facilities along FM 3005 and Stewart Road, and by designing such centers

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to be pedestrian-friendly. By clustering such development in Traditional Neighborhood Centers and Traditional Village Centers, as well as at designated commercial centers at locations on Stewart Road and FM 3005, and by restricting “strip” commercial development, community identity is reinforced and the scenic visual character along the east-west corridor is further protected. In addition, a scenic corridor buffer should be encouraged, particularly along the northern edge, with the setback area planted with a palette of landscape materials typically found on the island. The West End Land Use Policy Committee, appointed by City Council, will determine locations for possible designated commercial centers, in the vicinity of but not limited to the following locations:

- 7-Mile Road/FM 3005 intersection
- 10-Mile Road (Pean Road)/ FM 3005 intersection (or to coincide with future bridge/causeway to mainland)
- FM 3005 west of Jamaica Beach
- Sea Isle Subdivision
- FM 3005 west of Bermuda Beach
- Pointe San Luis
- 12 Mile Road/Pirates Beach
- Corresponding sites on Stewart Road/FM3005 to be discussed by policy committee

OBJECTIVE LU-2.2

PROMOTE THE REDEVELOPMENT OF OBSOLESCECENT COMMERCIAL USES.

Although many of the commercial businesses along the City’s major corridors are showing signs of age and obsolescence, the vacant commercial site with the greatest potential for redevelopment is the former Galvez Mall. Ideally situated along I-45 at the island entrance, and away from existing neighborhoods, this is an ideal location for the introduction of a center to accommodate several “big box” retailers.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

LU-2.2.1 Redevelop “Big Box” Retail at the Island Entrance (Galvez Mall Site)

The potential for the development of a “big box” retail center at the former Galvez Mall site is a circumstance where the interests of the City likely correspond to the interests of the property owner, prospective developers, and local shoppers. Not only will such development meet a local need for such uses, it will also provide a strong boost to the local tax base



Strip commercial development, such as exists along 61st Street and other local roadway corridors, should be discouraged in the West End.



The former Galvez Mall, ideally located at the entrance to Galveston Island, is an appropriate location for “big-box” retailers.

and place the traffic which such a center will generate at the City's point of greatest accessibility and traffic capacity. At this location, patrons residing off the island will gain convenient use of the center, thus adding to its market support, but without loading additional traffic onto the local road network.

Actions by the City may be limited to remaining receptive to, and cooperative with, the needs of prospective developers regarding the approval process and utility connections. However, taking a more proactive stance, the City should also review and adjust, if necessary, future road and access plans contained in the *Five-Year Mobility Plan* to further facilitate access to the proposed center. Because of its prominent location, such center is likely to become a landmark or "gateway" to Galveston Island. Consequently the City, while offering all reasonable assistance, should also set high standards for the design character of the center, particularly the amount and quality of landscaping along site edges, driveway entrances and within parking areas.

3. INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

OBJECTIVE LU-3.1

PROMOTE INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION ASSOCIATED WITH THE PORT OF GALVESTON

Historically the backbone of the local economy, the Port of Galveston is geared for expansion. This will occur particularly through a growing presence on Pelican Island and increased attraction for cruise line business, enabling cruise passengers to add their support to retail and entertainment activities along the downtown waterfront and Strand. The City should actively partner with the Port in planning and accommodating this beneficial expansion.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

LU-3.1.1 Prepare Wharves Area Specific Plan

It may be useful for the City to review its development regulations, as well as the adequacy of vehicular and pedestrian access, utilities, and parking, to serve Port expansion both at Pelican Island and along its wharves. In particular, the environment surrounding the cruise ship docks should be examined to identify opportunities for ensuring convenient and pleasant access to local businesses, as well as creating an engaging, memorable experience for cruise passengers as they discover what Galveston has to offer. Such investigation could be in the form of one of the several "specific plans" identified below.

Key issues to be addressed in the Specific Plan include

3.4 Land Use

access, environmental factors, and compatibility among existing and proposed uses. Access concerns include the need to eventually replace the Pelican Island Bridge, with provisions for future rail access, and the relocation of Seawolf Parkway to unify the TAMUG campus, improving safety for students, faculty, and visitors. Additional issues include the need to expand sewer capacity on the island, and the mitigation of potential environmental hazards derived from heavy industrial operations.

OBJECTIVE LU-3.2 PROMOTE COMPATIBLE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AT SCHOLES AIRPORT

Galveston's Scholes Airport is a major, though underutilized, Galveston asset. Although it serves only the general aviation needs of businesses and residents, it has become a major hub of activity for air links and businesses in support of the offshore oil/gas industry. Because the airport also controls excess property, the City is able to accommodate these and other revenue producing businesses. However, the airport lies in close proximity to the City's (and one of the region's) premier attractions, Moody Gardens. Although development of airport property is beneficial to the local economy, the property has thus far developed in a largely opportunistic manner, leading to its present, somewhat fragmented pattern of uses. Outbuildings, storage yards, and parking lots have become prevalent -- all with an appearance of visual clutter and confusing circulation patterns.

The initiation of a new airport master plan process could be an opportunity to take a fresh look at the creation of a more orderly, efficient pattern of use and circulation, with greater attention to the character of airport development. The process should address the basic issues of airport operations, runway extensions, circulation and parking, as well as the highest and best use of excess airport property. The airport master plan should recognize that it is a special functional district that should be developed as would other employment and activity centers. Quality standards should be included in the master plan for roadway and parking design, and for the siting and design of industrial buildings and grounds. As an affected neighbor, Moody Gardens should participate in the planning process, particularly regarding issues of access management, roadway design, orientation signage, and other factors that influence the quality of the environment and the visitor experience.

Another opportunity for the airport is to secure passenger service from commuter airlines. Other coastal communities,



Moody Gardens, located in proximity to Scholes Airport, should have an active participation in the airport master plan update process.



Introducing commuter air service at the Scholes Airport could contribute in expanding quality recreational and business tourism.

such as Hilton Head Island and Myrtle Beach, have experienced significant growth in quality tourism with the introduction of commuter air service. This service is particularly beneficial in competing for higher-spending resort visitors, and it may be even more critical in marketing the planned convention center.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

LU-3.2.1 Update Airport Master Plan

As described above, the anticipated airport master plan should be crafted to design and manage the airport and grounds, not only as a transportation hub, but also as an employment district, Moody Gardens' neighbor, and an important part of the activity mix and the visitor experience of Galveston.



The first step in supporting the diversification of the industrial base will involve identifying industrial sites appropriate for redevelopment.

OBJECTIVE LU-3.3

ENCOURAGE REDEVELOPMENT OF TRANSITIONAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS

A focus of the comprehensive plan is the need for economic diversification and new well-paying jobs (particularly in the technology, medical and information-based sectors), as well as support functions for the region's oil/gas and space-related industries. This expected growth in new industries coincides with a decline in traditional wharf-related heavy industries. Although Pelican Island may open up new opportunities for industrial growth related to the Port, Galveston has little land appropriate for technology office/research/industrial parks similar to those developing in many mainland communities. Consequently, Galveston must rely largely on the transformation and redevelopment of its existing inventory of industrial land.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

LU-3.3.1 Adjust Permitted Uses and Development Standards Along Harborside Drive

Although Harborside Drive does not accommodate the magnitude of development or traffic that exists along the three principal corridors of Broadway Boulevard, Seawall Boulevard and 61st Street, this corridor along Galveston's "working waterfront" is an essential part of the City's history and identity. It also remains an important traffic artery, particularly for industrial truck traffic and alternative access into Downtown. As this area gradually transforms and diversifies from its historic function as a wharf-related industrial corridor, it is



The City should coordinate and plan with the Port of Galveston the expansion of uses and facilities to serve water-related activities.

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important to maintain consistency with the corridor's historic scale and character. While creative and complimentary new uses and adaptive reuse of older structures for non-wharf related industrial, as well as office, residential, and retail/entertainment uses are to be encouraged, the area will likely retain its heavy industrial use orientation through the Plan horizon. Therefore, the primary purpose of additional development standards along this extended corridor is to improve the visual character of an area in which the predominant views are of industrial operations, materials and machinery storage, and an otherwise bleak industrial character. A "special character" overlay district is appropriate here to fine-tune and strengthen aesthetic standards related to corridor landscaping, buffers, walls, fencing, and other screening devices. Basic guidelines for building materials, massing, and the placement and screening of outdoor industrial operations and storage should also be adopted.



The plan for the Wharves area should seek to achieve an engaging experience for cruise passengers.

LU-3.3.2 Identify Industrial Redevelopment Targets

Although Galveston has a history of industrial activity related primarily to its Port and wharves, there is growing interest and opportunity to diversify the industrial base with clean, technology-oriented uses. As described in the Economic Development Element, the introduction of such uses requires appropriate sites to be identified and actively promoted. Likewise, an Information Technology (IT) infrastructure system, comprised of fiber optic and other networks, must be made more widely available. The City can take a leadership role in this recruitment effort, starting with the identification of appropriate industrial redevelopment target sites. Criteria for site identification includes vacant sites and buildings capable of adaptive re-use and of sufficient size, adequately served by utilities, including information network service.

4. SPECIAL DISTRICTS

OBJECTIVE LU-4.1

PROMOTE AND PLAN FOR THE CONTINUED INTENSIFICATION AND DIVERSIFICATION OF ACTIVITY IN THE DOWNTOWN, CBD AND STRAND.

Downtown Galveston's CBD, its shopping and entertainment areas, historic Strand, wharves, medical, educational, governmental, and cultural activities, are all experiencing a rebirth and encouraging level of reinvestment. Great opportunities exist to expand downtown housing into converted lofts and infill multifamily development. Further growth of UTMB, and the addition of cruise passengers at the port, will add to this momentum and increase support to retail and entertainment activities.



Downtown is experiencing a rebirth as evidenced by increased levels of activity and reinvestment.



To support the current momentum of downtown activity, the City can and should plan to provide a unique and enjoyable pedestrian environment.

Growing the critical mass of office uses can further reinforce downtown as the City's business and civic center. All the various components of the downtown activity have unique requirements for parking, access, and infrastructure, as well as specific timetables for their growth. While the City cannot directly plan the growth for each of these entities, the City can and should plan to accommodate their growth. Such planning should adjust the CBD's edge and permitted use definitions; provide appropriate, flexible development guidelines; a well-designed street pattern with wayfinding signage; an adequate, convenient, shared parking system serving multiple uses; and, a pedestrian environment that makes visiting, working, living, and shopping in Galveston's historic downtown a unique and enjoyable experience.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

LU-4.1.1 Create An Integrated CBD Plan (Strand, Port, Cruise Wharf, UTMB)

Each activity subarea in and around the City's Central Business District has unique characteristics, requiring separate, focused plans. The need for individual area plans is reflected throughout several sections of the Comprehensive Plan, which outline strategies for area or sector planning for various areas. However, it is also critical to coordinate, and ultimately to integrate, these individual efforts into an overall CBD plan. An integrated CBD plan will provide overall direction and consistency of efforts to achieve the Comprehensive Plan's objective of strengthening the role and function of downtown as the City's multifunctional, round-the-clock center of activity.

OBJECTIVE LU-4.2

UPDATE AND REVISE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS.

Galveston's Neighborhood Plans are now 15 years old and no longer reflect present housing conditions, trends and needs for revitalization, enforcement and improvements to streets, sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting. These plans should be updated and refocused in order to target necessary code enforcement activities, identify needed incentives for adaptive reuse and homeownership, and coordinate with the efforts of neighborhood organizations and applicable civic groups.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

LU-4.2.1 Document Reinvestment Trends and Plans

The first step in the neighborhood planning process will

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document changes that have occurred in Galveston's neighborhoods and its housing stock over the past fifteen years. Trends in reinvestment (including restoration and rehabilitation) and deterioration should be documented and interpreted, using building and demolition permit data, code violation records, rental occupancy records, and information from the Galveston Historical Foundation (GHF) and the Galveston Housing Authority (GHA).

LU-4.2.2 Document Investment Indicators

This step will use investment indicators to identify and prioritize neighborhoods, and subareas within neighborhoods, which will become candidate targets for various blight eradication and reinvestment activities. The target areas are likely to include those where reinvestment is beginning to occur, and where remedial intervention in code enforcement and investments in neighborhood amenities will have the greatest beneficial effect in accelerating the revitalization of older neighborhoods.

LU-4.2.3 Update/ Revise Neighborhood Plans

In addition to targeting City efforts in code enforcement and in capital improvements to sidewalks, landscaping and street lighting, neighborhood plans should identify design guidelines for infill development, which may vary from neighborhood to neighborhood. In addition, neighborhood plans should integrate the plans of the Housing Authority, particularly its HOPE VI initiatives, as well as other community initiatives.

OBJECTIVE LU-4.3

PREPARE SPECIFIC PLANS FOR FOCAL AREAS WITH UNIQUE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS.

This Comprehensive Plan serves to set an agenda and identify priorities for citywide action on several broad fronts: diversifying and strengthening the local economy and tax base; improving parks and community character; maintaining and expanding the housing stock; and improving neighborhood quality of life. However, the Comprehensive Plan will be only as effective as the efforts made for implementation. Implementation planning has a narrower focus and a finer grain of specificity than the comprehensive plan. In some states, such as California, the adoption of comprehensive plans, leads to the creation of "specific plans", which will carry out the intent of the comprehensive plan, but at more site-specific scales of individual neighborhoods, activity districts and corridors.



Implementation plans for focal areas such as the Wharves are critical to the success of the Comprehensive Plan.



Evidence of new development and reinvestment in certain areas will be used in neighborhood planning to prioritize revitalization initiatives.

Galveston has some catching up to do in providing for basic needs such as building roads and utility systems; enforcing codes and providing for public safety associated with the threat of hurricanes; making decisions on how and where to invest in the community; and planning for its future. Galveston does not have a particularly strong track record in implementing past plans, including its most recent *1988 Comprehensive Plan*. However, this current Comprehensive Plan presents challenges the community cannot afford to ignore by putting the plan product “on the shelf”. As important as the adoption of the comprehensive plan is, one of its functions is to ensure that planning is an ongoing, and not a one-time, activity. To achieve the objectives set out herein requires that the momentum of the citizen-led planning process be carried forward into the creation of *Specific Plans*, to guide and induce the actions which the City agrees to accomplish by adopting the plan.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

LU-4.3.1 Prepare Specific Plans for the Following Focus Areas:

- Downtown/Central Business District/Strand
- Wharves
- Municipal Golf Course (reconfiguration)
- New Middle-Income Residential Areas (West End and East End potential development site identification and feasibility)
- Pelican Island
- Established Galveston Neighborhoods (plan updates)
- Industrial Redevelopment Sites (Identification of target sites)
- FM 3005 capacity analysis, evacuation route analysis, infrastructure and transportation (West Bay crossing)
- Airport (Master Plan update)
- Historic Preservation Plan
- West End development plan, to be developed by the West End Land Use Policy Committee.

3.5 Historic Preservation

Overview

Preservation is a strong economic development tool and has proven effective in many communities for revitalization, heritage, tourism, and community building. The City of Galveston has one of the largest intact collections of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century buildings found in any American city. The significance of the City's historic resources is best demonstrated by the extensive number of buildings and districts that have been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The City is distinguished by having two National Historic Landmark Districts – of which there are very few in the United States – including the **Strand/Mechanic National Historic Landmark District** and the **East End National Historic Landmark District** (both established in 1971). In addition, there are 61 individual properties that have been nominated to the National Register and an additional National Register Historic District. The large number of National Register properties that have already been documented are only a portion of the potentially significant structures. Neighborhood surveys have identified another 600 properties as potentially significant. In total, at least 16,000 of Galveston's 30,000 houses are over fifty years old, meeting the age threshold preservationists apply for considering structures historically significant.

For over a hundred years, Galveston's residents and business leaders have recognized the importance of preserving the City's many cultural and historic resources. Through the continued efforts of these concerned citizens -- first organized in 1871 as the Galveston Historical Society, and, subsequently, as the Galveston Historical Foundation (GHF) -- a number of historic preservation projects have had a major positive economic impact on the City. These projects began in 1954, when the Galveston Historical Society reincorporated as GHF and expanded its original manuscript and paper collecting mission to include, among other goals, the preservation of the City's historically significant structures. Since that time, the successful preservation efforts of GHF and a number of other local non-profit groups have collectively created one of the most effective local historic preservation programs in the country.

In the late 1960's, the first Citywide comprehensive architectural and historical inventory of properties was completed, leading to the designation of the **Strand/Mechanic and East End Historic Districts** by the mid 1970's. In 1972, efforts to revitalize the Strand moved forward when GHF received financial support from the Moody and Kempner Foundations to establish a revolving fund for the preservation



The Strand/Mechanic, one of Galveston's treasured historic areas, is designated a National Historic Landmark District.



The Galveston Historical Foundation has successfully been working to preserve the City's heritage since 1871.

and development of buildings on the Strand. In 1976, residential rehabilitation efforts were extended to include the creation of the ***Silk Stocking Historic District*** and, in 1994, to the ***Lost Bayou Historic District***.

Complementing the activities of preservation groups, the City took a number of significant steps. In 1971, the City adopted an ordinance to allow the creation of local historic districts and the Neighborhood Historic District Review Board. The East End Historic District became the first local historic district in Galveston the same year. In the early 1980s, the City dedicated one cent of the hotel/motel bed tax to the Arts and Historic Preservation Commission and established tax reinvestment zones throughout the City. The City consistently used a portion of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and federal revenue sharing monies to fund streetscaping and economic development in the Strand and obtained a number of Development Action Grants for special projects. To accomplish this, the City worked cooperatively with the Moody Foundation, which provided many of the matching funds required as a condition of obtaining several grants.

In 1980, the City adopted a set of Design Guidelines to assist landowners and the Historic Review Board with administering the City's historic preservation regulations. The Strand/Mechanic Historic District became the first commercial historic district in Galveston in 1988, and the Strand/Mechanic Review Board was also established. In 1999, the City consolidated its two review boards to create the Landmark Commission, which oversees the protection of structures within both commercial and residential local historic districts through administration of the Special Historical District Regulations found in Section 29-80 of the City of Galveston Zoning Standards. This same year, the Special Historical District Regulations and the Design Guidelines were updated to reflect the City of Galveston's increased support for historic preservation. In addition, the Landmark Commission recommended designation of local landmark status for the protection of structures outside of locally designated historic districts.

Galveston's historic preservation successes have had a powerful positive economic impact on the City. A recent study revealed a number of major conclusions regarding the economic impacts of historic preservation efforts in Texas, including the City of Galveston and other Texas communities with historic preservation projects¹:

¹ Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers University and the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas. 1999. "Historic Preservation at Work for the Texas Economy."

3.5 Historic Preservation

- Historical designations improve property values
- Incentives for historic properties attract reinvestment
- Historic building rehabilitation rebuilds communities
- Preservation of historic properties creates jobs
- Texas' heritage attracts tourists
- History museums draw tourists and economic vitality to communities

The National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) has conducted a study of the impacts of historic preservation activities in Galveston, further substantiating these conclusions:²

- Job Creation and Sales Tax Revenue
From 1971 to 1991, 786 renovation projects occurred in the Strand/Mechanic, East End and Silk Stocking Historic Districts. These projects created 1,165 construction jobs, 86 manufacturing jobs, and 874 induced jobs. The construction and manufacturing/sales jobs produced an estimated \$44.1 million in salary and wage income. Fiscal benefits to the City of Galveston resulted from sales tax revenues of \$274,943 earned on the sale of construction materials and workers' purchases of taxable items, and from building permit fee revenues of \$63,727.
- Increased Property Values
Between 1975 and 1991, the average sales price for a residence in the East End Historic District (established in 1971) increased by 440 percent and by 165 percent in the Silk Stocking Historic District (established in 1976). By comparison, prices in the nearby San Jacinto neighborhood (not within an historic district) increased by an average of only 80 percent over the same period.
- Tourism Benefits
From July 1989 through June 1990, approximately 180,000 people visited the Strand Visitors' Center; an additional 100,000 visitors attended the Dickens on the Strand Festival; 5,500 participated in the historic homes tour; and 66,000 went to performances at the Grand Opera House. It is estimated that these visitors spent \$18 million while visiting Galveston. When the secondary multiplier effect is considered, the total reaches \$29.1 million in sales.



Preservation of historic properties creates jobs, and draws tourists and economic vitality to the community.



The 1824 Grand Opera House, one of Galveston's top tourist attractions.

² National Trust for Historic Preservation, Government Finance Research Center. 1996. "The Economic Benefits of Preserving Character – A Case Study from Galveston, Texas."

Since the completion of the NTHP report, these trends have continued in the City of Galveston, emphasizing the positive effects of historic preservation on the community. An updated of the report may be warranted to provide further documentation of preservation-related economic benefits.

In the future, as the City faces new challenges to further preservation and revitalization in the Strand and as it seeks to enhance the preservation successes in its historic neighborhoods, it must address a number of significant historic preservation issues and needs:

- The City must act in a consistent coordinated fashion to promote and preserve its historic resources.
- The City should expand its preservation efforts, as appropriate, to protect historic resources throughout the City.
- Blighted conditions must be reduced.
- Broader protection of the city's historic neighborhoods should be pursued through the use of additional historic preservation tools.
- Incentives are needed to encourage voluntary actions by private property owners to preserve historic properties.
- Preservation requires effective partnering by public, private, and non-profit organizations.
- Public education is needed to enhance local appreciation of the need for and benefits from preserving historic resources.
- Attracting middle-income households to Galveston's historic neighborhoods will provide a source of capital investment needed to rehabilitate historic homes.



Incentives are needed to encourage voluntary actions by private property owners.

Goals, Objectives & Strategies

GOAL

PROMOTE PUBLIC APPRECIATION OF THE ISLAND'S HERITAGE AND ENCOURAGE THE PRESERVATION AND REVITALIZATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES FOR THE EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF ALL RESIDENTS OF THE COMMUNITY.

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OBJECTIVE HP-1

RECOGNIZE THE INHERENT VALUE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION AT ALL LEVELS OF CITY GOVERNMENT AND FUNCTIONS.

Preservation has been used in many communities – Charleston, Savannah, Santa Fe and San Antonio for example – as a means to improve quality of life. While Galveston has experienced a high degree of success as a result of the rehabilitation of the Strand and the East End community, considerable benefit remains to be achieved by using historic preservation initiatives as a tool to create safer, healthier, more livable communities. To accomplish this, the City must take an aggressive role in historic preservation, leading by example through its actions and by raising the historic preservation expectations and standards throughout the general community.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HP-1.1 Elected Officials and City Boards

The City's historic preservation ethic must begin with the Mayor and City Council and filter down to all City Boards and Departments. The importance of historic preservation must be a routine part of decision making at all levels of government. Historic preservation should be a "tenet of doing business" to which all City boards and departments are sensitive. In the eyes of the public, authority for historic preservation must clearly rest with the City. Primary responsibility for marketing historic preservation and setting the preservation mandate and agenda lies with the City's leaders.

HP-1.2 Landmark Commission

The Landmark Commission is the City's administrative board charged with a wide array of historic preservation functions. The Commission is principally responsible for administering the City's Locally Designated Historic District Regulations. Secondly, it is responsible for conducting surveys, recommending historic district designations, educating the public concerning historic preservation, identifying preservation funding sources, and generally coordinating the preservation functions of the City's departments and boards. As such the Landmark Commission is essential to the City's historic preservation program and must be recognized for the important function that it provides in enhancing the City's quality of life. The City must support the Landmark Commission so that it is able to efficiently and effectively accomplish its mission. City staff must be made available to assist with and support the Commission's efforts – both

technically and in terms of administrative support. Commission members must receive training as needed to address the complex set of preservation issues facing Galveston. City departments and boards should be kept abreast of the policies and actions of the Landmark Commission and seek to act in a mutually supportive fashion.

HP-1.3 Historic Preservation Officer

To maintain the focus and momentum needed to sustain the City's historic preservation program, it is essential that the City maintain the full-time staff position recently created in the Planning Department for a Historic Preservation Officer (HPO). A historic preservation professional should fill this position, charged with directing the City's efforts to achieve its historic preservation goals, supporting the Landmark Commission, completing long-range historic preservation planning, ensuring code enforcement in the Locally Designated Historic Districts, contributing to neighborhood planning efforts, and coordinating special projects with the City's historic preservation partners.

HP-1.4 Certified Local Government Status

Galveston had, until recently, been ineligible to receive federal Historic Preservation Funds and Certified Local Government Grants from the Texas Historical Commission because it had not applied for "Certified Local Government" (CLG) status. The National Historic Preservation Act established a nationwide program of financial and technical assistance to preserve historic properties. A local government can participate directly in this program when the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) certifies that the local government has established its own historic preservation commission and a program meeting state and federal standards. A local government that receives such certification is qualified to receive grant funds from the SHPO that are set aside to fund local historic preservation projects. These funds come from the Historic Preservation Fund, a federal grants program appropriated by Congress and administered by the National Park Service.

The City applied for, and has received, CLG status from the SHPO. Grant applications should begin as soon as possible. Applications for grants under this program are due by the end of September each year.

HP-1.5 Historic Preservation Plan

Preservation in Galveston will be accomplished more effectively over the long-term through a coordinated historic preservation program, developed and implemented through a joint effort of the City, its historic preservation, economic

3.5 Historic Preservation

development, and tourism partners (including GEDP, the Park Board of Trustees, etc.), and private citizens. These partnerships are key to transforming historic preservation into a more market-driven activity, particularly within the tourism-oriented economy of Galveston. Additionally, a comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan is needed to guide this effort, setting clear policies and procedures regarding the community's historic resources. A typical preservation plan includes several essential components:

- a statement of goals;
- a definition of historic character to be preserved;
- a summary of past and current preservation efforts;
- an explanation of the legal basis for historic preservation in the community;
- a statement regarding the relationship between historic preservation and the community's educational system and programs; and
- an agenda for specific future actions based upon specific preservation goals and policies, including a identification of funding sources, a timetable for implementation, and assignment of implementation responsibilities

Funding to support development of a preservation plan is available from the Texas Historical Commission for communities having CLG status.

HP-1.6 Neighborhood Plans

Effective neighborhood planning is important to the success of the City's historic preservation program. The new round of Neighborhood Plans – called for in the Comprehensive Plan – will provide a forum for developing specific action plans that will address neighborhood issues. Many of the actions will directly relate to historic preservation issues. Preservation of historic resources is generally facilitated through adoption of specific neighborhood plans because such plans typically:

- facilitate maintenance and upgrading of neighborhoods;
- encourage appropriate development of vacant and underused lots;
- seek to lessen adverse impacts of incompatible uses; and
- encourage property owners and residents to generally improve the neighborhood



The Historic Preservation Plan must define the historic character that the City wants to preserve.

HP-1.7 Code Enforcement

To protect its historic neighborhoods, the City must have consistent and predictable code enforcement. (*This is discussed more fully in a subsequent section, HP-3.1*).

HP-1.8 CDBG and HOME Funds for Improvements in Historic Districts

The federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership programs provide grants to the City of Galveston each year that finance housing, community development, and social service activities for low and moderate income families and neighborhoods. Over the past four years, grants from these two programs provided 99 percent of the \$5.6 million used by the City for housing and neighborhood services. Expenditures of these funds are guided by a Strategic Plan and Priorities presented in the City's three-year *Consolidated Plan* and one-year *Consolidated Action Plan*. The program is administered by the City Grants and Housing Department.

The City clearly recognizes the need to maximize the funding secured under these two programs. They provide needed social benefits, as well as support the City's historic preservation efforts by improving neighborhoods and housing conditions. The City Grants and Housing Department should generally coordinate on a regular basis with the HPO and Planning Department to ensure that the actions of each department are mutually consistent and supportive. Specific coordination should occur as needed when the *Consolidated Plan* and one-year Action Plans are being completed. When funds are expended in historic neighborhoods for streetscape improvements, the design of improvements should be historically appropriate – including to the extent possible period street lighting, signage, and sidewalks.

HP-1.9 City Review of Permit Applications Affecting Historic Areas

Among some members of the general public there is a perception that the review of applications before the Landmark Commission is somewhat onerous, complicated, and requires an inordinate amount of time. To remedy this situation, every effort possible should be made to make the application process more "user friendly," streamlining the process so that projects can move more quickly. This will help to reduce public sentiment that the Special Historic District designation places an unfair burden on property owners.

3.5 Historic Preservation

HP-1.10 Maintenance of Historic Buildings Owned by the City

The City of Galveston owns a number of buildings that are historic, including, among others, City Hall (which is noted on the National Register of Historic Places), and Ashton Villa. If the City is to be the proponent of historic preservation – calling for citizens to do the right thing to preserve and maintain their historic properties, – it is essential that it lead by example. Every effort possible should be made by the City to implement appropriate treatments – preservation, rehabilitation, restoration or reconstruction – for the historic buildings that it owns. In particular, the City should have a policy that prohibits deferred maintenance of City-owned historic buildings.

HP-1.11 Landmark Designation of City-Owned Buildings

The City of Galveston owns a number of historically significant buildings. Several may be significant enough to warrant designation as a Galveston Landmark. This designation would afford special protection to these structures requiring review of all proposed improvements by the Landmark Commission, and demonstrate the City's support of historic preservation efforts.

HP-1.12 Street, Sidewalk and Utility Maintenance

Actions by City departments to maintain streets, sidewalks and utility rights-of-way should be sensitive to their historic preservation implications. Routine coordination should occur between department heads and the HPO to review maintenance policies and functions. Supervisors and city work crews should be sensitive to the possible impact their actions may have on the historic character of the neighborhoods where they are working. They should also be aware of the positive impact their actions bring when they help to clean-up, beautify, and promote public safety in historic neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVE HP-2

ENHANCE AND EXPAND, IF DETERMINED APPROPRIATE, THE USE OF LOCALLY DESIGNATED HISTORIC DISTRICTS TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE CITY'S CULTURAL HERITAGE AND HISTORIC RESOURCES.

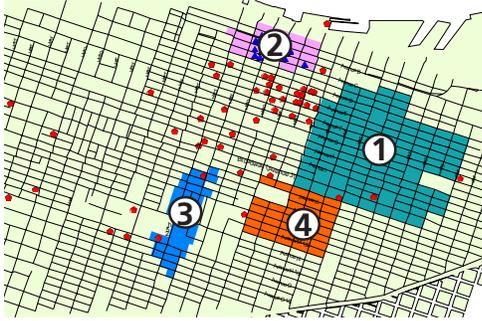
The City currently has achieved Historic District designation for four local areas (as shown on the map at right):

1. The East End National Historic Landmark District;
2. The Strand National Historic Landmark District;



Ashton Villa is one of the most significant structures in the inventory of City-owned historic buildings.

3. The Silk Stocking National Historic District; and
4. The Lost Bayou Historic District



Locally Designated Historic Districts protect only a small percentage of the City's more than 16,000 potentially significant historic structures and neighborhoods.

These historic districts provide special protection to only a small number of the more than 16,000 potentially historic buildings and many older neighborhoods. Presently, in order for an area to be granted a Local Historic District designation, more than fifty percent of the property owners must support designation. A few neighborhoods have considered the potential benefits of Local Historic District designation and may seek such in the future. Other neighborhoods, for a variety of reasons, have rejected designation for the time being. There are many neighborhoods that have yet to be comprehensively evaluated.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HP-2.1 Citywide Survey of Historic Properties

While the City of Galveston has been actively engaged in historic preservation activities for many years, it has not yet completed a systematic citywide survey of all potential historically significant buildings in the City. As a condition of its designation as a CLG (see Action HP-1.4 above), the City is required to maintain a system for surveying and inventorying historic properties. The first step in complying with this requirement will be completion of a citywide survey, once funding is available.

HP-2.2 Local Historic District Designations

In the future, the City should systematically examine the potential for additional Local Historic District Designation throughout Galveston. This should appropriately occur in the next few years as each of the new Neighborhood Plans are completed. During the course of preparing the Comprehensive Plan a number of historic district additions have been suggested, such as a Factory District, and expansion to the East End and Strand/Mechanic Districts.

In general, receptivity to the idea of a Locally Designated Historic District is dependent upon the neighborhood's perceived value of the additional regulations afforded by the designation. Public education is needed to market the historic designation, focusing upon the positive impacts of designation on property values, the stability afforded by the additional code enforcement and special regulations, and the general enhancement of quality of life in the neighborhood that will evolve over time.

3.5 Historic Preservation

HP-2.3 Historic District Design Guidelines

The *Design Guidelines for the Historic Districts of Galveston* provide guidance to owners of historic properties to assist with planning exterior work on historic buildings. The Landmarks Commission uses the *Design Guidelines* to provide a benchmark against which to review applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for exterior modifications to Galveston Landmark and structures within the City's Locally Designated Historic Districts.

Through time, as the Design Guidelines are used by property owners and the Landmark Commission, it is important that they be reviewed and revised as appropriate. The Landmark Commission has identified revision to the Guidelines as one of their 2002 goals. A number of possible modifications have already been suggested, such as reconsidering the pre-approved paint colors for The Strand/Mechanic District, adding guidelines pertaining to outbuildings, expanding guidelines for the Strand/Mechanic District, and generally making the guidelines more specific. A major consideration is the perceived need to be more aggressive about requiring existing businesses to comply with new regulations after a specified period of time.

To address the evolving needs for the Design Guidelines, the City should complete the 2002 revisions to the Design Guidelines and plan to review and revise them on a regular periodic basis every two to five (2-5) years after that time.

OBJECTIVE 3

PROTECT THE CITY'S HISTORIC RESOURCES AND NEIGHBORHOODS THROUGH ACTIVITIES THAT WILL REDUCE BLIGHTED CONDITIONS.

The historic preservation community in Galveston has consistently identified blighted conditions and deterioration of historic structures as major threats to the City's historic neighborhoods. A number of conditions exist that contribute to blight. The majority of homes in Galveston are wood structures susceptible to termite and moisture damage and require constant high levels of maintenance. In 1990, approximately 10,000 homes in the City were considered substandard.³ The City has a high percentage of absentee landlords, many of who do not adequately maintain properties – in 1990, almost 65 percent of homes were occupied by renters.⁴ Many of the City's residents are poor and must struggle to find financial resources to maintain their homes – approximately two-thirds of the City's residents were moderate-income or below in 1990.⁵



The Design Guidelines provide guidance to conduct exterior work on historic properties and structures within the City's historic districts..

³ US Bureau of the Census. 1990.

⁴ US Bureau of the Census. 1990

⁵ US Bureau of the Census. 1990

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS



The success of the City's code enforcement efforts is currently hampered both by inadequate staffing and the large number of absentee landlords.

HP-3.1 Code Enforcement

To protect its historic neighborhoods, the City must have consistent and predictable code enforcement. Property owners must be made aware that if buildings are not maintained the City will bring legal action, as needed, to force repairs. While the City is generally doing an adequate job of code enforcement, this effort is being hampered by inadequate staffing, making it impossible for code enforcement officers to keep up with the work load. Enforcement is also hampered by the large number of absentee landlords, many of whom live outside of Galveston County and the Houston Metropolitan Area. Currently, the City is unable to serve papers upon violators outside of the Houston Area. To address this problem, the City must step up its code enforcement actions, hire additional code enforcement officers to handle the work load, and pursue options for bringing legal actions against a wider range of absentee landlords.

Other important code enforcement issues related to historic preservation that the City must address include enforcement of regulations pertaining to signage (particularly on The Strand), placement of tables and outdoor furniture on sidewalks in the Strand/Mechanic district, the location of satellite dishes, and parking in front, side and rear yards.

HP-3.2 Demolition by Neglect

Demolition by neglect occurs when a property owner fails to adequately maintain a building and it deteriorates to the point that rehabilitation is no longer practicable. The City considers that when a building is judged by a structural engineer to be 80 percent deteriorated, it is no longer practicable to attempt rehabilitation. In those instances the structure is typically condemned and torn down. For some property owners, there is a deliberate decision to let a property deteriorate, rather than make the necessary investment in repairs, either because there is no perceived market for the property or because the owner believes that ultimately it will be more financially advantageous to demolish the building. In some instances, property owners are still not aware of the City's demolition policies in historic areas and do not realize the burden they will face when making application for a demolition permit.

Citywide, this deliberate demolition by neglect is a direct threat to the integrity of the historic fabric of the community. The City should develop a strategy for addressing this issue, including clear public policy setting forth the City's position regarding demolition by neglect. All property owners of historic

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buildings (50 years or older) must be made aware of the City's policies. Current procedure requires that deteriorated structures be reviewed by the Building Standards Commission and, when applicable, the Landmark Commission. Beyond that, the challenge faced by the City is to catch properties that are not being maintained, well before they deteriorate to the 80 percent point. This will enable intervention for rehabilitation possible, without the need for major reinvestment that, in many instances, is likely to be beyond the financial resources of the property owner or considered a reasonable burden on the property owner. Once a property is identified as deteriorating, the City should enter into a dialogue and negotiation process with the property owner designed to assist with evaluating and implementing rehabilitation options. A number of rehabilitation options should be explored, depending upon the situation, such as the use of CDBG funds, low interest loans, grants through the City and its historic preservation partners, or sale of the property to a party interested in the rehabilitation of the structure.

HP-3.3 Coping with Contamination

Major concerns regarding potential contaminants in Galveston's older homes include lead-based paint, lead in drinking water, and building materials that contain asbestos, primarily asbestos shingles. Increasingly, these concerns must be addressed as part of any rehabilitation project. The primary concern is for the protection of human health during and after the treatment and/or removal of contaminants. A major adverse effect on the efforts to preserve the City's historic properties is the cost of addressing contamination concerns. Secondly, are the challenges of educating homeowners regarding the health risks, ensuring that contractors in the City who are involved in abatement have the knowledge and skills to do so safely, and ensuring that the City adequately inspects construction sites for proper procedures.

To adequately protect public health, the City must ensure that its activities involving the rehabilitation of older buildings are conducted in accordance with best management practices. This requires the City to have staff assigned to ensure that all relevant laws and regulations regarding contaminants in older buildings are adhered to as part of city functions as well as during all private construction activities. The City should consider creation of a special program to promote public awareness and appreciation for the hazards in older buildings. Following examples from other cities where similar conditions exist – such as Charleston – the City should consider sponsoring workshops for the public and contractors



A variety of rehabilitation options should be made available to owners of properties that have been identified as deteriorating.



The Paint Partnership Program, administered by the Galveston Historical Foundation, is supported through the City's CDBG funds, as well as volunteer work.

about lead poisoning and preventive measures, develop and distribute educational materials to homeowners, set up a speakers bureau, and assist contractors with developing the skills and capabilities to handle contaminants. The City should apply for a Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control Grant or a Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Grant. The City should also ensure that the activities of the Paint Partnership Program – supported through the City's CDBG Funds, which are administered by the Galveston Historical Foundation – are carried out with full knowledge of the most current, and safest, technology.

OBJECTIVE 4

CONSIDER THE USE OF ADDITIONAL PRESERVATION TOOLS TO FURTHER PROTECT THE CITY'S HISTORIC RESOURCES.

The City of Galveston currently relies upon its Locally Designated Historic District Regulations in Section 29-80 of the Zoning Standards as its primary tool for historic preservation. While this is effectively protecting the City's four Locally Designated Historic Districts, this technique has no effect in preserving the character of many of the City's neighborhoods that for one or more reasons are not now, and may never, be designated as Local Historic Districts. To better address the range of conditions and preservation needs in the City, consideration should be given to a number of additional preservation tools that will promote protection of historic resources that are not located within Locally Designated Historic Districts.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HP-4.1 Neighborhood Conservation Districts

Significant historic resources characterize most of the City's older neighborhoods. These neighborhoods often have a distinct character and local identity recognized and appreciated by residents. Many of these neighborhoods, while historically and architecturally significant, are not presently suitable for designation as Locally Designated Historic Districts. Reasons vary as to why designation is not appropriate at this time. Some areas have not reached fifty years of age, the standard guideline for historic significance. Others have been altered by demolition, deterioration, and/or infill that compromises overall historic integrity. Some are dominated by low income residents whose needs would not be well served by creation of a traditional historic district.

For these neighborhoods the City should consider designation of Neighborhood Conservation Districts. The

3.5 Historic Preservation

purpose of this designation would be to preserve neighborhood character and to protect neighborhoods from inappropriate change. This tool should be applied as an overlay district. Policies and regulations applicable to the districts would pertain to demolitions and new construction – considering the appropriateness of building height, scale, setback, and materials. Some type of design review should be used, but need not include binding review of exterior architectural alterations. The specific regulatory components of individual overlay districts would evolve from the goals and policies of the applicable Neighborhood Plans. Provisions of the Neighborhood Conservation Districts should be administered by the City’s Landmark Commission.

HP-4.2 Down-Zoning

Existing zoning regulations in many of the City’s historic neighborhoods often allow new development that is inconsistent with historic preservation goals. In some residential historic districts, a wide range of commercial and industrial uses are permitted that are in direct contradiction to the stated historic and neighborhood preservation goals of the City. In addition, the intensity of permitted development as determined by the area and bulk standards would permit development that is out-of-scale and incompatible with the desired character of historic districts.

Through down-zoning the City can address these incompatibilities. In this context, “down-zoning” refers to a limit on the type of uses permitted – restricting new infill development to single and low density multi-family residential uses, and limited neighborhood serving commercial activities. The City should explore this option during development of the new round of Neighborhood Plans, exploring with residents the impacts of current zoning and the down-zoning options that are available. Once a decision to down-zone is reached, it could be implemented by changing the zone classification of specific parcels, by restricting permitted uses in residential areas, by revising area and bulk standards, and/or by decreasing the allowable density within a given district.

HP-4.3 Buffer Districts

Land use activities in areas adjacent to the City’s Locally Designated Historic Districts and residential neighborhoods have the potential to adversely affect historic and neighborhood residential character. The City recognized the potential for adverse impacts of commercial uses on adjacent areas when it designated a Buffer District along a portion of the Broadway frontage in the vicinity of the East End Historic District. The goal of the Buffer District, as



Down-zoning --adjustments in the range of allowed uses in specific zoning districts-- can address development incompatibilities which occur under current zoning regulations.

explicitly stated in the Zoning Standards, is to promote development of commercial uses that are compatible with historic neighboring residential uses.

The need to buffer historic neighborhoods in the City extends beyond the current Buffer District designation. The City should consider extending some type of regulatory controls adjacent to all of its Special Historic Districts, as well as to neighborhoods that may become Neighborhood Conservation or Historic Districts in the future. In addition, further clarification should be made as to the types of permitted uses within these buffer areas. There is also concern regarding traffic control where these buffer areas include major north south travel corridors. Consideration should be given to more strict enforcement of speed limits, clear identification of truck routes, and restrictions on truck traffic on roads not designated as truck routes. Candidate corridors for buffer district designation include 21st Street, 19th Street, 16th Street, 14th Street, and Broadway from 11th to 6th Street.



The City needs to foster private participation and investment in preservation by providing incentives to property owners.

OBJECTIVE 5

ENCOURAGE ACTIONS BY PROPERTY OWNERS THAT WILL HELP THE CITY TO ACCOMPLISH ITS HISTORIC PRESERVATION GOALS.

Private participation and investment in preservation is critical to the City's historic preservation program. Many owners of historic properties balk at the perceived costs and burden of rehabilitation of their historic buildings, especially when subject to the review requirements and design guidelines that are applicable in the City's Locally Designated Historic Districts. Through incentives that are financially attractive to property owners it is possible to foster private participation and investment in preservation. Owners who may otherwise not be active or interested in preservation, may be encouraged to rehabilitate their properties when incentives are available.

Incentive programs are widely recognized to have three important purposes:

- To generate systematic rehabilitation of historic buildings.
- To enable rehabilitation projects to better compete with new construction.
- To compensate owners who may be significantly burdened by local historic preservation regulations.

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STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HP-5.1 Tax Relief Program for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties

There are three basic forms of tax relief: tax abatements, tax credits, and tax exemptions:

- Property Tax Abatements decrease or delay the taxes due on a given property over a fixed period of time.
- Property Tax Credits allow for a decrease in the tax bill, typically equal to some or all of the increased value of a property that occurs as a result of rehabilitation or a percentage of the money spent on rehabilitation.
- Property Tax Exemptions (also called tax freezes) maintain the same pre- and post-rehabilitation assessment so that the owner pays no increase in taxes following improvements.

In Texas, all three forms of tax relief are available to local governments as a means of providing incentives for rehabilitation of historic buildings.

In 1999, the City adopted a tax exemption program to encourage rehabilitation of large-scale (10,000 square feet) historic commercial structures that are designated as a Galveston Landmark or are contributing structures in a Galveston Special Historic District.

The City should consider extending the current tax exemption option – or some type of tax abatement or tax credit incentive – to residential properties that are rehabilitated or undergo major maintenance/repairs. The duration of the benefit should be for a minimum of five years, but preferably ten years. In implementing this incentive, the community must understand the extent to which the short-term loss in tax revenue will be offset by the general improvement of the surrounding area that will ultimately increase property values.

HP-5.2 Historic Preservation Revolving Fund and Low Interest Loan Program

The City should consider creation of a Historic Preservation Revolving Fund. Communities similar to Galveston – with extensive inventories of historically significant buildings – have had tremendous success using this historic preservation tool. A Historic Preservation Revolving Fund provides two important functions. By providing a pool of capital, the Revolving Fund enables a local government to purchase distressed or threatened historic properties – sometimes on

an emergency basis – and to resell them to a sympathetic buyer with protective covenants and restrictions. Revolving funds also enable local government to offer a low-interest loan program to private investors for rehabilitation and repair of historic buildings. It is a “revolving” fund by definition, as loans made from the capital are returned to the fund to be reused for other similar historic preservation projects. Funding sources include Community Development Block Grant money, general funds, and interest from repaid loans. Typically, low-interest loans are provided on a matching basis in which the property owner’s investment is matched dollar-for-dollar by local government money.

HP-5.3 Sales Tax Abatement

Refund or exemption of sales tax paid on construction materials is an incentive that some communities, such as Wichita, Kansas, have found effective in facilitating home repairs and renovations. A similar incentive may be used in Galveston to make rehabilitation of historic buildings financially attractive to property owners. This could effectively reduce the cost of construction materials by the percentage of sales tax.



The City and its preservation partners must continue to work together to accomplish historic preservation goals.

OBJECTIVE 6

WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH THE CITY’S PRESERVATION PARTNERS TO ACCOMPLISH ITS HISTORIC PRESERVATION GOALS.

Past historic preservation successes in Galveston have been the result of the efforts of individuals, philanthropic organizations, private organizations in the City, and aesthetic regulations designed to preserve historic character. The most important tools for success – particularly for the revitalization of The Strand – have been direct public and private sector expenditures for streetscaping and for individual projects and programs designed to bring visitors to The Strand, federal tax credits, and the revolving fund created by GHF with foundation and bank supports.⁶ In the future, the City and its preservation partners must continue to work together to address the many historic preservation needs in the City.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HP-6.1 Galveston Historical Foundation

For almost fifty years the Galveston Historical Foundation has been the City’s primary non-profit engaged in preserving, rehabilitating, and restoring the City’s historic properties.

⁶ National Trust for Historic Preservation, Government Finance Research Center. 1996. “The Economic Benefits of Preserving Character – A Case Study from Galveston, Texas.”

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GHF has been a national leader in the use of innovative historic preservation tools. It has been a major player in rehabilitation of The Strand, holds deed restrictions on historic buildings, is actively involved in planning to preserve historic neighborhoods, operates several historic museums and venues, sponsors the highly successful Dickens on The Strand and Historic Homes Tour, is involved in community education, and administers a community-wide paint program.

GHF recognizes that the three principal historic preservation challenges facing the City are a need for incentives to promote voluntary preservation activity, removal of blighted conditions, and public education to enhance appreciation of the City's heritage and the economic benefits of historic preservation. In the future, the City of Galveston should expand its coordination with GHF, relying upon the Historic Preservation Officer as the main point of contact. GHF should participate in development of the Historic Preservation Plan, and other initiatives identified in the Comprehensive Plan that are related to historic preservation.

HP-6.2 Galveston County Historical Commission

The Galveston County Historical Commission (GCHC) provides a number of important historic preservation functions throughout the County. The City and GCHC should coordinate routinely to mutually support one another's activities as they relate to the City of Galveston. The City should work with the GCHC to help with development of a Heritage Trail through the County and City, and should assist GCHC with developing information on the City's historic preservation activities that can be placed on the new GCHC website now under development. In addition, the City and GCHC should develop documentation needed to secure a City of Galveston Marker from the Texas Historical Commission.

HP-6.3 Neighborhood Association Partnerships

Neighborhood organizations offer a powerful opportunity to assist the City with achieving its historic preservation goals. In the past, the City has had a Neighborhood Partnership Program in which City staff and neighborhood representatives met regularly to discuss issues. Following each meeting staff would pursue solutions to the issues identified and neighborhood representatives would report back to residents. This led to accountability and getting of lot of issues resolved. The City should consider instituting a similar program as a means of neighborhood enhancement. Currently, the Galveston Alliance of Island Neighborhoods (**GAIN**) serves as a liaison between the City and the neighborhoods.



Among other important functions, Galveston Historical Foundation owns and operates a number of historic museums and venues.



The City, East End Historical District Association, and UTMB must work cooperatively to minimize the potential for negative impacts of land development activities in the East End area.

HP-6.4 University of Texas Medical Branch

The University of Texas Medical Branch is a major landowner whose management and development activities have the potential to impact the adjacent East End National Historic Landmark District. It is imperative that the City and the University work cooperatively to enhance mutual communication of needs, recognizing the important role that the University plays in the City's economy as well as the importance of historic preservation to the welfare and stability of the East End Neighborhood community. Action is needed immediately to work with the University regarding its expansion needs and the various options for mitigating potential adverse effects on historic resources.



Promoting public awareness and understanding of the City's cultural history is key to preserving its heritage.

OBJECTIVE 7

PROMOTE PUBLIC AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE CULTURAL HISTORY AND IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVING THE ISLAND'S HERITAGE TO THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE COMMUNITY.

In general there is a perceived need to get information out to the public – and in particular to the owners of historic properties – regarding the City's historic preservation programs, the availability of rehabilitation funding, and historic preservation regulations. Many of the City's residents and business owners are unaware of the economic benefits of historic preservation. Many have the misperception that historic preservation and economic development are incompatible. Lack of public appreciation of Galveston's historic character contributes in part to the blight that threatens many of the City's historic areas. There is a particular need to increase minority and ethnic participation in the City's historic preservation efforts.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HP-7.1 Public Awareness of Applicable Historic Preservation Regulations and Design Guidelines

A focused public education effort is needed to ensure that owners of properties that have been designated as Galveston Landmarks or within a Locally Designated Historic District are aware of the benefits of the designation as well as the requirements that are placed upon them as property owners. It is not uncommon for the typical owner in newer historic districts to have a misperception that there is an unfair and harsh set of regulations in historic districts. The City has experienced many situations in which an owner violates existing regulations, and then claims ignorance when the City takes an enforcement action. Past experience supports a

3.5 Historic Preservation

conclusion that it takes many years to establish public understanding of historic preservation regulations in new historic districts. Numerous public education techniques are available to this challenge and should be implemented as part of the City's Historic Preservation Program. When developing the Historic Preservation Plan, the City can evaluate the options and select those that it feels it can effectively implement.

HP-7.2 Historic Preservation Public Relations Program

The City should consider developing a Public Relations Program to build public support for historic preservation. Preservationists in both the public and non-profit communities are well aware that building public support for historic preservation is generally a challenge. Through an effective public relations program, it is possible to promote goodwill and productive relationships needed to generate community support and awareness of the value of historic preservation. Good public relations require planning and is most successful through implementation of a carefully constructed, ongoing, public relations campaign involving a variety of techniques. These activities should flow from a Public Relations Plan that establishes goals, identifies the actions needed, assigns responsibilities, and establishes timetables for implementation.

OBJECTIVE 8

INCREASE THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF GALVESTON'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS AS PLACES WHERE PEOPLE WILL CHOOSE TO LIVE AND RAISE FAMILIES.

The most effective means of accomplishing Galveston's preservation goals is to attract middle class families to the City's historic neighborhoods. This group offers the potential for investment needed to rehabilitate many of the City's older deteriorated homes. Presently there is a problem with attracting middle-class families, caused by a number of conditions in the City, as well as housing preferences for traditional suburban style homes on slab, few of which may still be constructed within the City due to flood elevation requirements.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

HP-8.1 Performance of Local Public Schools

Improvements in the performance and perception of Galveston's public schools that serve the older residential neighborhoods is necessary to increase middle class interest

in buying homes in historic areas. Realtors consistently indicate that homebuyers are looking for “Recognized Schools” and typically gravitate to the City’s neighborhoods where high levels of school performance have occurred in recent years.

HP-8.2 Enhanced Public Safety

Middle class buyers are reluctant to purchase homes in the City’s older neighborhoods in part because of the perceived public safety risks. These risks result from a number of factors. The broader issue is one of reducing blight and deterioration, increasing the sense of pride in the community, and promoting home ownership, particularly among lower income families. Secondly, there is a need to increase police surveillance, promote community policing and neighborhood watch programs, deal with issues related to the transient population, and create a more safe street environment through lighting and general cleanup of vacant lots and buildings.



The City needs to promote neighborhood beautification and support neighborhood groups and non-profit organization efforts in this regard.

HP-8.3 Neighborhood Beautification

Enhancing the character of the City’s historic neighborhoods will attract middle class homebuyers. The City needs to promote neighborhood beautification through streetscape enhancements, litter cleanup, assisting neighborhood groups with sponsoring periodic cleanups, and support for activities of the non-profit group Clean Galveston.

HP-8.4 Absentee Landowners

Many of Galveston’s older neighborhoods have a high percentage of absentee landowners whose properties are either rented or remain vacant for long periods. In general, when a property is owned by an absentee landlord it is more likely to suffer from poor maintenance. Tenants frequently do not have the sense of neighborhood pride and commitment to caring for property as homeowners. As a result, wherever there is a high degree of absentee landowners, the neighborhood typically suffers.

The City needs to identify the various factors that contribute to absentee landowner issues and then systematically begin to work on solutions to each. Many are quite complicated, such as clouded titles, resulting from handing down property from generation to generation with multiple heirs. Currently the City is unable to serve papers to absentee landowners outside of the Galveston County and Houston Metropolitan Area. Many absentee owners purchased properties at very low prices and do not have the financial resources for rehabilitation, so instead leave the structure vacant or rent it very cheaply to low income tenants.

3.5 *Historic Preservation*

HP-8.5 Encouraging Developers and Middle Income Families to Undertake Appropriate Infill Development

Considerable benefit would occur in older neighborhoods if the City can attract developers and middle income families to build new homes on vacant lots. This type of development activity currently occurs at a very modest rate, due to the expense of building custom homes in today's market. The City should explore various options to address this challenge. One option is for the City to assemble a number of lots and offer them for sale to a developer as a package, to build several compatible middle income_market rate homes simultaneously. This would enable certain economies of scale not possible when building one house at a time. Another option, is to market historic Galveston to larger developers in the Houston area who have the capital – and perhaps a commitment to historic preservation – to support a specialized approach to development of housing units on scattered sites in the City's historic neighborhoods.

Overview



Barrier islands such as Galveston help to mitigate the impacts of storms and ocean waves on the mainland.

Galveston Island is one of about 300 barrier islands lining the coastlines of the United States. Barrier islands are long and narrow, and are separated from the mainland by either open water, as in the case of Galveston, or by wetlands. Barrier islands -- formed mostly by accretion -- typically support important, highly interrelated ecological systems which may include scrub, low-lying grasslands, beach dunes, and wetland habitats. These habitats, particularly tidal marsh wetland areas, are critical to the survival of many native and migratory land and marine species.

Wetland areas in barrier islands perform other critical functions as well: for instance, filtering sediment and pollutants off the water draining from upland areas to help maintain water quality. Barrier islands also act as a natural buffer for coastal and mainland areas, protecting these from the full force of ocean waves, winds, and storms, and often providing secluded bodies of water that serve as harbors and ports.



Galveston's natural resources must be protected and wisely managed to ensure long-term sustainability of many of the island's key economic activities.

In addition to sharing the above characteristics, Galveston Island offers residents and visitors important cultural benefits derived from its unique barrier island features and resources, including opportunities for recreation, scientific knowledge and education, economic development, and aesthetic enjoyment. Because Galveston's tourism, fisheries, and other key commercial and industrial activities are directly and indirectly tied to the health and wealth of its natural resources, such resources must be protected and carefully managed (and, when necessary and appropriate, restored) to ensure their sustainability.

Goals, Objectives & Strategies

GOAL

PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE SENSITIVE NATURAL RESOURCES OF GALVESTON ISLAND, THE GALVESTON BAY ESTUARY, AND THE GULF OF MEXICO.

OBJECTIVE NR-1.

MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE WATER QUALITY OF GALVESTON BAY IN ORDER TO SUPPORT A HEALTHY ECOSYSTEM AND MINIMIZE RISK TO HUMAN HEALTH

Water draining from Galveston Island largely discharges to Lower Galveston Bay and West Bay. Water quality management efforts of the past two decades have greatly

3.6 Natural Resources

improved the condition of these waters, focusing upon the elimination of point sources of pollution that had seriously impacted bay waters in the 1960s and 1970s. In recent years, dissolved oxygen levels have increased and there has generally been a decreasing trend for nutrients. Ambient levels of mercury and copper, while lower than twenty years ago, have remained elevated. In addition, failing septic systems are a significant non-point source (NPS) of water quality contamination throughout the region causing contamination by fecal coliform bacteria and nutrients. As a result, waters of the West Bay and Lower Bay are classified as “water quality limited” and do not support the State’s designated uses for Oyster Water Use and Aquatic Life. This restricts or prohibits growing and harvesting of oysters in a number of areas.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

NR-1.1 Reduce Non-Point Source Contamination of Bay Tributaries and Near-Shore Waters

Non-point source contamination of water occurs when rainfall transports contaminants on the surface of the land into adjacent water bodies. It also occurs when groundwater is contaminated by pollutants carried by water percolating through the soil, such as wastewater in a septic system. The Galveston Bay Estuary Program has documented that over half of the sediment, phosphorus, fecal coliform bacteria and oxygen demanding substances contaminating bay waters originate from non-point sources found in the local watershed.⁷ NPS loads are creating notable problems in urbanized bayous and enclosed areas with poor circulation throughout the Bay Estuary. About half of the bay has been closed to oystering due to low dissolved oxygen and high concentrations of fecal coliform and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons that bioaccumulate in seafood.

Texas manages water pollution from NPS primarily through voluntary actions, leaving implementation of best management practices to control non-point source contamination to local governments, businesses, and landowners. As part of a local effort to reduce NPS contamination, there are a number of actions that the City of Galveston should take:

- Develop City Staff knowledge and understanding of NPS management programs sponsored by the Coastal Coordination Council, the Joint Storm Water Task Force, and the Galveston Bay Estuary Program.



NPS contamination of waters may occur as a result of runoff and percolation associated with land development activities.

⁷ TNRCC. 1995. *The Galveston Bay Plan*.

- Develop and implement a strategy for the City to actively participate in regional water quality management planning activities.
- Participate in the Texas Watch program, which trains volunteer monitors and promotes non-point source pollution education activities.
- In coordination with the Galveston Bay Program, develop local non-point source management strategies.
- Pursue grants to perform pilot projects with the TNRCC and the Galveston Bay Estuary Program to develop non-point source best management practices for Galveston Island.
- Complete a Stormwater Management Plan for the City of Galveston.
- Maintain and seek funding for a program for routine inspection and maintenance of the City's existing stormwater management systems.
- Adopt a Stormwater Management Ordinance for new development that requires pretreatment of stormwater prior to discharge off-site.
- Implement a system of incentives that will encourage environmentally sensitive site planning. New development should be encouraged that will:
 - retain buffers along rural and urban waterways and drainage swales,
 - retain natural open space, and
 - reduce impervious cover.

NR-1.2 Promote Implementation of Measures to Improve Wastewater Treatment in On-Site Disposal Systems (OSDS)

In many areas of Galveston Island wastewater disposal is accomplished using on-site disposal systems (**OSDS**). On-site wastewater systems are considered an acceptable means of waste disposal when properly located, installed, and maintained. Unfortunately, many areas of Galveston Island are not suitable for OSDS due to poor soil conditions and a high groundwater table. Failing OSDS systems are identified as a significant non-point source of water quality contamination in the bay tributaries and near shore waters. Site specific sampling along the Galveston Island shoreline in the West Bay has indicated low dissolved oxygen levels and the presence of fecal coliforms in the vicinity of Isla Del Sol and Sea Isle, due to a combination of poor circulation and poorly functioning septic systems.

3.6 Natural Resources

The City of Galveston should take a number of actions that will help to reduce water quality contamination as a result of on-site wastewater disposal:

- Extend central sewer service (at the homeowners or developers cost) where practicable to existing developed areas that currently rely upon on-site disposal for wastewater treatment and disposal.
- Consider a moratorium on the use of on-site disposal systems for new residential units (exclusive of new residences on previously platted lots).
- Work with Galveston County to implement a program requiring routine maintenance of on-site disposal systems, including provisions for periodic inspections and reporting.
- Work with Galveston County to initiate requirements that owners of failing on-site disposal systems make repairs in accordance with applicable design guidelines.
- Work with the state and county to identify innovative waste disposal systems that could be used for marginally suitable home sites in rural areas of the Island.
- Work with Galveston County to require septic system certification and upgrades (if necessary) upon sale or transfer of a property.



On-site disposal systems are used in many areas of Galveston Island where central wastewater disposal systems are not available.

NR-1.3 Reduce Water Quality Impacts of Recreational Boating

Water quality in the vicinity of marinas and marina maintenance facilities is affected by general marina operations as well as by discharges from vessels docked in marina slips, particularly when live-aboards⁸ are present. Metal corrosion and oxidation represents an additional source of metal contamination due to the widespread use of zinc to protect boat hulls. Bilge waste is a source of oils, coolants, lubricants and cleaners. Many boaters discharge raw sewage from marine heads directly in the waters of Galveston Bay, causing potential problems with nutrients and bacteria. Where people are living on vessels, as many as 100 gallons of sewage may be discharged raw per boat per day.



Pollutants from recreational boating have significant impacts on the quality of water in Galveston Bay.

Several actions would help to reduce the degradation of water quality in and around marinas from boat sewage and introduction of dockside wastes:

⁸ A live-aboard is any vessel used solely or represented as a place of legal residence.

- Require marinas and dockside operations to implement washdown controls and containment measures.
- Require all marinas (with more than ten slips) to have pump-out facilities for marine toilets, or other such measures that provide an equal or better level of water quality protection.
- Implement an enforcement program designed to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations pertaining to adequate spillage prevention, containment, and clean-up of fuel or hazardous material at marina sites and fueling facilities.



Gulf beaches must be maintained and protected by a combination of coordinated strategies and activities.

OBJECTIVE NR-2

PROTECT THE INTEGRITY AND FUNCTION OF GALVESTON ISLAND'S BEACHES AND DUNES

Galveston Island's beaches and dunes are sensitive natural resources with a number of well-recognized values to the community. Beaches and dunes are an integral part of the coastal landscape, lending beauty to the shoreline. As natural coastal barriers, sand dunes help to prevent or delay inland flooding, and resulting property damage during storms – particularly hurricanes, by absorbing the force of winds, high waves, and storm surge. By holding sand, dunes function as a source of sand needed for natural beach renourishment after storms.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

NR-2.1 Definition of the Dune Protection Line

The Heinz Center's *Evaluation of Erosion Hazards* project assessed the severe impacts of coastal erosion on the environment and economy of Galveston Island and other coastal communities around the nation. The City of Galveston recognizes that the protection and enhancement of the dune system represents its best opportunity to stabilize the Gulf shoreline, outside of the construction of major man-made structures such as groins and seawalls. To this end, the City has taken action to preserve its beaches and dunes through adoption of regulations in Section 29-90 of the City of Galveston Zoning Standards. These regulations establish standards for the protection of sand dunes for the expressed purpose of protecting the public health, safety, and welfare, by minimizing losses due to flood, storm, waves, and shoreline erosion. The standards are in compliance with the minimum standards of the State of Texas pertaining to beaches and dunes as mandated through the Texas Open Beaches Act and the Dune Protection Act.



Standards for development and for dune protection are essential to minimize loss due to flooding, storms, and erosion.

3.6 Natural Resources

Section 29-90 requires special permits for all construction activities affecting beaches and dunes. The primary requirements are as follows:

- A Beachfront Construction Certificate is required for construction of any structure or structural alteration within the land adjacent to and landward of public beaches and lying in the area: (a) either up to the first public road generally parallel to the public beach or to any closer public road not parallel to the beach, or (b) the area up to 1,000 feet of mean high tide, whichever distance is greater.
- A Dune Protection Permit is required for construction of any structure or structural alteration in the area seaward of the Dune Protection Line. The Dune Protection Line is defined as a line located twenty-five (25) feet landward of the north toe of the Critical Dune Area. The Critical Dune Area extends 1,000 feet landward from mean high tide or to the landward limit of the area encompassing the coppice mound, foredune ridge, and primary dune area. It includes all dune structures, swales, sandflats and marshes within a dune complex that are essential to the protection public beaches, submerged land, and state-owned land and coastal public lands, from nuisance, erosion, storm surge, and high wind and waves.

Protecting dune vegetation and dune stability should remain a priority of the Coastal Development Ordinance. This suggests that the City should reconsider its current Dune Protection Line – which is designated at twenty-five (25) feet landward of the north toe. The City of Galveston should review its current setback and consider increasing if it is deemed appropriate for new development.

NR-2.2 Vehicles on Beaches and Dunes

Driving on dunes and beaches where vehicles are not permitted, in violation of the City's existing ordinances, is a constant problem. In most cases it is impossible to apprehend violators because by the time an incident is reported and enforcement officers arrive on the scene, the vehicles have left the area. To increase the level of compliance, the City will have to step up enforcement. The City should implement a program of intensive periodic enforcement on a random basis to encourage public awareness of regulations and to build public confidence that violators will be arrested and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.



Vehicles can impact the health of the beach ecosystem.

NR-2.3 Fires on the Beach

Fires on the Island's beaches and in the dunes have increased in recent years, as the number of homes and people visiting the West End beaches has grown. This has an adverse impact on beach aesthetics, is a hazard to dune vegetation, and interrupts the normal recycling of organic material in the beach ecosystem. The City should consider its current policies regarding fires on the beach and evaluate the options available, ranging from prohibition of all fires, to designating certain stretches of beach as suitable for fires and others as "fire-free".



The City should prepare a Beach Access Plan and a Bay Access Plan to ensure appropriate public access to, and protection of, the island's shoreline resources.

NR-2.4 Beach and Bay Access Plans

Access to the Island's beaches and shoreline is provided to the public at a number of points along the Gulf shoreline along the Seawall and at Appfel Park, Dellanera, Seawolf Park, Beach Pocket Parks 1, 2 and 3, and a number of pull-offs on the far West End. To better plan for and provide beach access facilities to ensure public access, the City should prepare a Beach Access Plan and Bay Access Plan. These plans should estimate the existing capacity of and need for various types of public access facilities, including:

- public access points to the beach or shoreline through public lands,
- public access points to the beach or shoreline through private lands,
- parking facilities for beach or shoreline access,
- pedestrian access,
- vehicular access,
- ADA access,
- marinas,
- boat ramps,
- public docks,
- fishing piers, and
- traditional shoreline fishing areas

Following completion of the Plans, the City should adopt a set of regulations that will:

- implement recommendations of the Beach Access Plan and Bay Access Plan.
- provide for the enforcement of public access to beaches, and.
- specify standards for transportation and parking facilities for beach and shoreline access.

3.6 Natural Resources

NR-2.5 Dune Management and Restoration Plan

The City should prepare and implement a Dune Management and Restoration Plan. This Plan should provide a management framework to bring about the long-term restoration and protection of dune vegetation. By restoring dune vegetation, there will be a greater opportunity for the dunes to trap and hold sand, thus reestablishing the natural barrier island defenses against coastal erosion forces. The Dune Management and Restoration Plan should document the existing condition of the Island's dunes and provide a long-term strategy for their restoration, that addresses appropriate uses, planting specifications, and treatments for walkover structures and fencing. The Plan should also include a strategy for working with private property owners to accomplish desired dune restoration and management goals. Most important, it should address the potential for joint public/private financing of dune restoration.

OBJECTIVE 3

PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE WETLANDS OF GALVESTON ISLAND.

The freshwater and coastal wetlands of Galveston Island provide a number of natural functions vital to the health of the Galveston Bay Estuary. They absorb stormwater runoff, providing flood control by holding water and releasing it slowly to the Bay. While runoff is stored in wetlands, suspended solids settle out of the water and pollutants are filtered and trapped in bottom sediments, resulting in enhanced quality once runoff reaches near shore waters. Wetlands provide vital habitat for many species of plants, fish, birds, and wildlife and are an important source of nutrients and organic matter, which becomes food for organisms throughout the estuary.

Wetland loss is a major threat to the Galveston Bay Estuary. Throughout the Estuary between the 1950s and 1990s, there was a net decrease of approximately 19 percent of the total vegetated wetlands.⁸ Losses on Galveston Island have been the result of man-induced subsidence and related sea level rise, erosion, filling, and dredge-and-fill activities. On Galveston Island, subsidence – caused by the excessive withdrawal of subsurface fluids, principally groundwater – has ranged from one- to two-feet since the early 1950s.⁹

A number of actions should be taken by the City of Galveston in order to preserve and protect its wetlands in the future. These actions should focus on expanding and enhancing staff capabilities; more effective enforcement of existing wetland regulations; and instituting a process for considering protective buffers adjacent to all wetlands to be determined



The Dune Management and Restoration Plan will provide a framework to facilitate and promote the long-term restoration and protection of dune vegetation.



Wetlands perform a number of natural functions of vital importance to the health of the Galveston Bay Estuary.

⁸ TNRCC. 1995. *The Galveston Bay Plan*.

⁹ TNRCC. 1995. *The Galveston Bay Plan*.

by the West End Land Use Policy Committee. Actions that could be taken by the City to protect wetlands are discussed below under Objective 5.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

NR-3.1 City Participation of Corps Review of Section 404 Permit Applications

Development activities in Texas wetlands are regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (**USACOE**) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (**EPA**) in accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The Corps has primary responsibility for issuing permits, after notice and opportunity for a public hearing, to mitigate wetlands. In issuing permits, the Corps also considers comments received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and state and local resource agencies.

In the past, the City of Galveston has not actively participated in permit application reviews. In the future, the City should become more actively involved in the permitting process as early as possible, preferably before the mitigation site has been selected and the design completed. When permit applications are circulated to state and local agencies, the City should be sure to review each carefully and respond with comments. Currently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers notifies the City of Galveston and area property owners of potential wetland development.

NR-3.2 Enforcement of Existing Wetland Protection Regulations

The Corps, as the permitting agency, has primary responsibility for enforcing the terms of permits for filling wetlands and for investigating the majority of enforcement cases involving unpermitted discharges as well as for all Corps-issued permit violations. Anyone in violation of the Section 404 program, either by conducting an unauthorized activity or by violating permit conditions, is subject to civil or criminal action or both. The City is not involved with permitting (except for providing comment) or enforcement of permits.

To ensure that wetlands are preserved and protected, the City of Galveston should improve communication with the Corps during the permitting process, and maintain this communication subsequently, to facilitate and assist enforcement.

3.6 Natural Resources

NR-3.3 Mitigation of Wetland Impacts

The Galveston District of the Corps currently allows applicants for Section 404 permits to mitigate wetland impacts off of Galveston Island. The City shall encourage on-island wetland mitigation for all new developments. The City also should encourage that mitigation occur within the drainage basin where the permitted action occurs on a voluntary basis. To facilitate on-island mitigation, the City could develop a data base to coordinate with the Corps and the Galveston Bay Estuary Program to identify, in advance, potential mitigation sites on the Island.

The City should also consider facilitating and creating incentives for on-island wetlands mitigation, with preference for mitigation within the same or neighboring watersheds.

NR-3.4 Wetland Buffer Areas

Many communities provide protection to wetland resources by establishing a protective buffer along the perimeter of wetlands. The public purpose served is to protect wetlands from direct disturbance and to provide an opportunity for filtration of stormwater runoff prior to entering the wetland system. Land development activities involving placement of impervious surfaces and on-site wastewater disposal systems (OSWDS) are prohibited within the buffer.

The City currently does not require applicants for new development to provide a protective buffer adjacent to wetlands. Consistent with its objective to preserve and protect wetlands, the City should consider establishing such a requirement that will create wetland buffers consistent with current city building setbacks. Buffer parameters should be examined on a case by case scenario. Typically, buffers extend 10 to 100 feet from the wetland edge. These parameters must include setback and landscaping inclusion. The West End Land Use Policy Committee should consider, with recommendations, the creation of buffer integrations. Within this buffer, impervious surfaces and OSWDS would be prohibited, but other uses, such as landscaping, fencing and recreational areas, would be allowed.

OBJECTIVE 4

PROTECT GALVESTON ISLAND'S BEACHES AND WETLANDS FROM COASTAL EROSION.

Addressing shore and beach erosion – and funding for the control projects – has been a challenge to government agencies in the coastal communities of Texas for many years. Historical data indicate that Galveston's beaches rotate



A buffer along the perimeter of wetlands can protect these from direct disturbance due to development.



Galveston's beaches are subject to natural erosion and accretion cycles, as well as to major storm impacts (Photo credit: Texas General Land Office website at <http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/photos>).



Damage caused by 1998's Tropical Storm Frances and other recent storms has stirred up local interest in the issue of coastal erosion control (Photo credit: Bill Seitz, from the Heinz Center's **Evaluation of Coastal Hazards** website at http://www.heinzctr.org/erosion/Communities/Galveston_TX/photos).

through erosion cycles and accretion cycles, which each lasts ten or more years. Most of the shoreline of West Island from the end of the Seawall to San Luis Pass is in an erosion process. The rates of erosion vary from a few feet per year to in excess of ten feet per year (short-term erosion). The long-term littoral sand supply is not known, raising questions as to whether sand that is eroded away will be replaced naturally.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

NR-4.1 Intergovernmental Coordination

As a result of damage caused by recent coastal storms – most notably Tropical Storm Frances in 1998 – there has been increased local interest in finding environmentally sustainable and affordable approaches to coastal erosion control. Following Tropical Storm Frances, the Galveston County Beach Erosion Task Force was formed, with representation from the following entities and communities: Galveston County, the City of Galveston, the Park Board of Trustees, and Jamaica Beach, as well as Bolivar and other small Galveston County cities. This group has been effective in providing a coordinated forum for better understanding the coastal erosion challenge, identifying and evaluating alternative erosion control measures, and seeking potential sources of funding for beach renourishment and erosion control projects.

It is essential that the City of Galveston continue to maintain an active role in the Galveston County Beach Erosion Task Force. This offers a forum for addressing a number of major issues of vital economic and quality of life concerns to the City. The complexity of the issues – both technical and financial – can best be addressed by a coordinated effort. Realistically, the City must work cooperatively with its partners to determine the preferable treatments and potential funding sources.

The City should maintain a position, in its work with the Erosion Task Force, that beach and shoreline issues be addressed on both the Gulf beaches and along the Bay shorelines.

3.6 Natural Resources

NR-4.2 Beach and Shoreline Renourishment

In recent years, a number of techniques have been used to control erosion and renourish beaches and shorelines on Galveston Island, with varying degrees of success. In general, beach renourishment has emerged as the preferred means of stemming beach erosion. Galveston Island must be the first choice for any dredged material that yields beach quality sand. The City should support the continued use of beach renourishment techniques in all areas of beach and shoreline erosion, including natural beaches and shorelines as well as the beach in front of the seawall.

The City should identify and use suitable locally available material for renourishment whenever possible. In the future, the City must coordinate with USACOE so that all possible sources of suitable material generated by Corps projects can be made available for beach renourishment. Beach quality sand is needed on the Gulf side of the Island. Lower quality clean sand is suitable for renourishment on the bay side of the Island. Dredged material is a good source of sand when it is demonstrated that the material is of suitable quality. Whenever possible, spoil from construction projects should also be used for renourishment, particularly from public projects such as infrastructure construction.

GEOTUBE shoreline protection projects are a partial and temporary solution to a problem that demands but defies a perfect solution. Combined with continual sand renourishment, GEOTUBE shoreline protection projects offer a solution to the vexing problem of erosion.

NR-4.3 Local Funding for Beach and Shoreline Stabilization

Current USACOE estimates indicate that \$4 million to \$8 million is needed per year to implement a long-term effective beach and shoreline stabilization program. While much of this money is likely to come from federal and state sources, a local match or contribution will be needed for most projects.

The City of Galveston currently does not have a dedicated source of funding to provide the local dollars needed. Lacking a permanent source of local funds, the comprehensive stabilization program cannot be implemented, leaving only the option of minor repairs, which some feel could actually exacerbate the problems. As a result, the City needs to evaluate options for a permanent source of local funds to enable its participation in federal and state erosion control projects.

OBJECTIVE 5

PRESERVE AND PROTECT GALVESTON ISLAND'S SENSITIVE NATURAL RESOURCES BY FACILITATING CREATION OF A NETWORK OF PERMANENTLY PROTECTED OPEN SPACE.

As new development occurs on Galveston Island – particularly in the West End – the existing rural character will disappear and sensitive natural resources will be directly and indirectly threatened. In order to retain a sense of rural character and to protect the Island's sensitive natural resources from encroachment, the City could consider implementing a voluntary, incentive-based Open Space Preservation Program. This program should identify lands that could be permanently protected as open space. First, the City should identify the areas that the community would like to protect in order to preserve natural functions, to protect the character of the Island, and to protect the Galveston Bay Estuary. Secondly, once these lands have been identified, the City should then move forward with a planned conservation strategy, using a variety of preservation tools. These preservation tools could include a combination of land purchase, incentives and regulations.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

NR-5.1 Identification of an Open Space Network

The first step in developing the Open Space Preservation Program should be identification of the open space resources to be protected. These should include sensitive natural resources important to the Island's ecosystem and to the Estuary. It should also include important linkages and buffers adjacent to existing sensitive resource areas and public parks.

A three-step identification process is needed:

Step 1: Map resources on the Island that should be protected, including but not limited to the following:

- freshwater wetlands
- bird rookery areas
- dunes
- beaches
- live oak mottes
- wooded areas
- major views from public roads and parks
- protective buffers



Wetland and bird rookery areas are among resources that need to be mapped as part of the Open Space Preservation Program.

3.6 Natural Resources

Step 2: Prepare a Future Open Space Network Map, including the following:

- Existing Protected Areas (public land / land with perpetual conservation easements)
- Primary Conservation Areas
- Secondary Conservation Areas

Step 3: Prepare a map showing Priority Sites for Open Space Acquisition, showing:

- High Priority Sites
- Medium Priority Sites
- Low Priority Sites

NR-5.2 City Open Space Acquisition Program

The ideal means of preserving open space is to buy it outright. Unfortunately, the time for buying land on Galveston Island at affordable prices ended many years ago. Today, it is safe to assume that the City cannot afford to purchase the sensitive natural resource areas that should be protected. It is therefore essential that the City identify its priorities for acquisition very realistically, evaluate the methods available to purchase land, and explore funding options to acquire land or development rights to land.

Public funding sources – federal, state and local – to acquire open space are quite limited in the City of Galveston. There are few federal funding programs available, and those that do exist typically require local matching funds. Funding sources from the State of Texas are currently quite limited. Texas does not have a statewide conservation program, as in some states where there are substantial dollars available on an annual basis for land conservation. This may change in the next few years, if the “Texas Our Texas Heritage Program” is funded. To qualify for this program the City will need to have clearly established open space goals and plans. Local support for open space acquisition and purchase of development rights could come from general obligation bonds, sales taxes, and/or other dedicated taxes. Ideally, the City of Galveston should encourage public/private partnerships to maximize open space. Bonds are desirable as they offer a method of long-term funding for a long-term program. A less costly alternative to the City would be to include open space acquisition as an expense item in the annual budget, although this option requires annual reauthorization and does not constitute a clear commitment to the program.

NR-5.3 Preservation of Open Space through Planned Conservation Development

All new development in the West End should require generous open space dedications while encouraging a mix of uses. This would be facilitated through the use of planned conservation development, which encourages open space to be aggregated and interconnected, providing view corridors to the beach and bay, where possible. Additional incentives are given for dedicating land as scenic areas and natural preserves.

In the context of planned conservation development, an open space system can be created as land development occurs. Beginning with a plan for a Future Open Space Network, each new development proposed has the option to utilize planned conservation design techniques, including preservation of specific open space components identified in the community's open space plan. As adjoining lands are converted from rural land to residential development areas, contiguous components of the open space system could be preserved, where feasible, and an interconnected network of natural and recreational lands may emerge.

Open space can most successfully be retained and protected if the city actively promotes planned conservation development for larger tracts and proactively seeks developers who embrace this philosophy.

Land developers can be encouraged to dedicate acreage, in addition to other open space, to the Future Open Space network, by receiving incentives such as a density increase of 6 to 8 units per acre above permitted densities for every acre dedicated. (See LU 1.3.3)

There are a number of options for management of open space in planned conservation developments: a homeowner association; one or more individual landowners; the City of Galveston; or a non-profit land trust.

NR-5.4 Working with Non-Profit Preservation Partners

To accomplish its open space goals, it is critical for the City to establish and maintain a cooperative working relationship with one or more non-profit organizations that are involved in land conservation on the island or in the region. There are a number of reasons why the City should consider working with such non-profits to preserve open space. First of all, non-profits can bring speed, flexibility and creativity to negotiations with landowners, while being perceived as

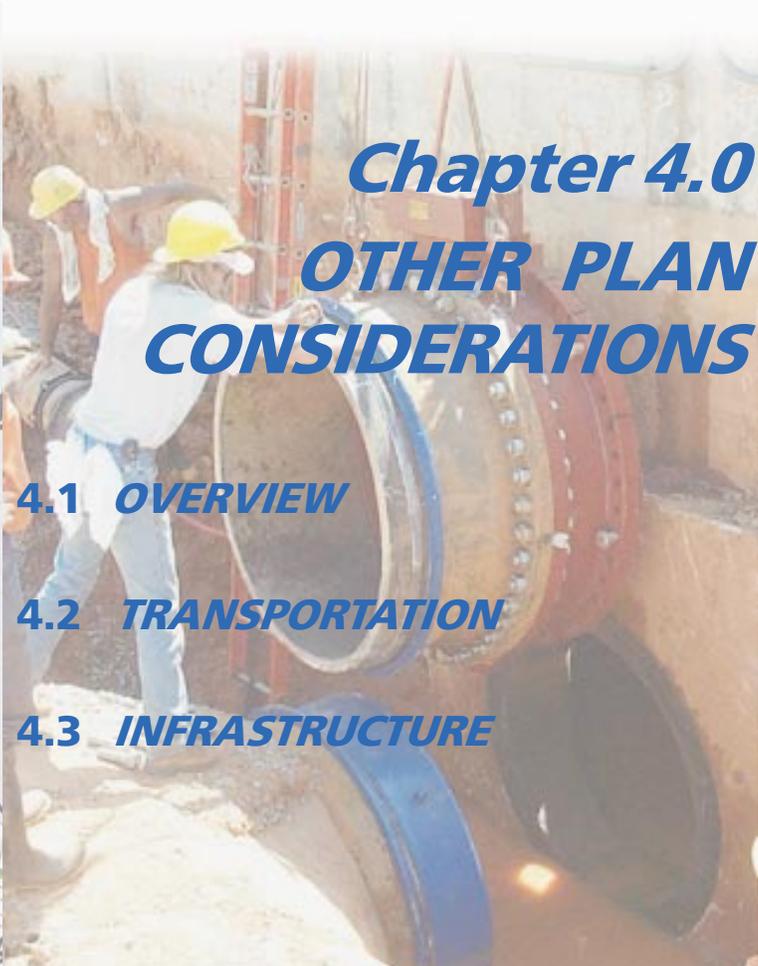
3.6 Natural Resources

friendly negotiating participants without the stigma of government. Non-profits also provide vehicles for donors to make gifts of land or cash to facilitate an acquisition. Finally, non-profits can provide manpower to accomplish preservation, such as drumming up public support for projects, launching a successful campaign for acquisition funds, or maintaining preserved properties.

Several non-profit organizations could become the City's partners in open space preservation, depending upon the resources involved. Scenic Galveston is a potential partner that has experienced considerable recent success in protecting and managing natural habitat areas in the John M. O'Quinn I-45 Estuarial Corridor. The Nature Conservancy of Texas could perhaps have a conservation interest in lands that are important habitat areas, or that buffer such areas, such as critical habitat or important bird nesting or wintering grounds. The Trust for Public Land – which has protected over 18,000 acres of land in Texas – works with landowners, government agencies and community groups to create open space systems.



The City should partner with non-profit organizations to protect important habitat areas.

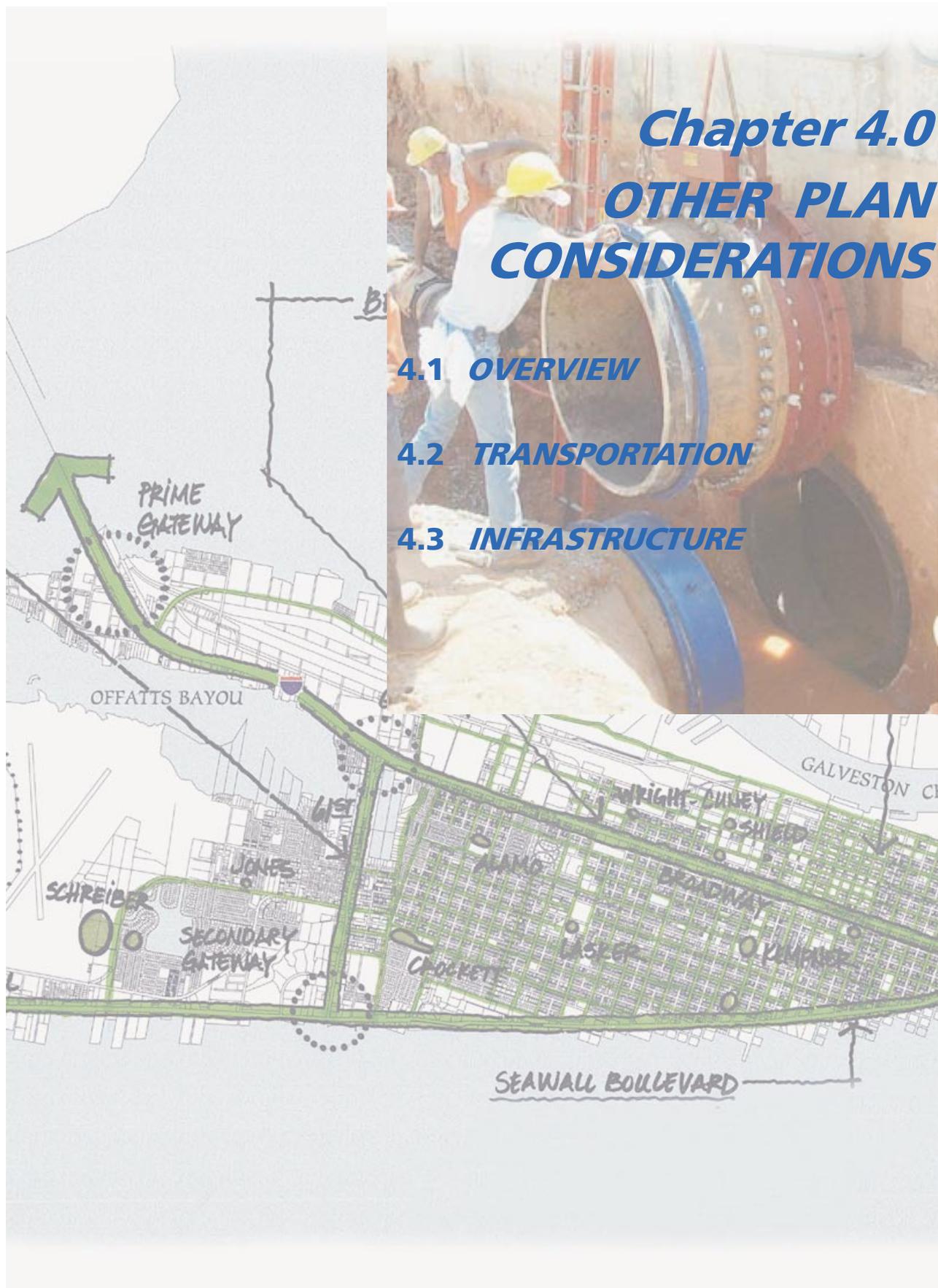


Chapter 4.0 OTHER PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 OVERVIEW

4.2 TRANSPORTATION

4.3 INFRASTRUCTURE





4.0 Other Plan Considerations

4.1 Overview

The Comprehensive Plan outlines a variety of policies and strategies which, when implemented, will have a direct or indirect impact on the transportation, water, wastewater, and stormwater systems and service needs of Galveston Island. However, various plans and programs already exist that attempt to address the City's mobility and infrastructure issues and needs. Some of the existing plans have been adopted into law, while others remain non-compulsory, relegated to recommendations rather than policy. In addition, standards and regulations are in place for the City of Galveston, which may not be compatible with the intent of strategies and actions proposed by the Comprehensive Plan. Ideally, however, these various planning and regulatory instruments should not be at odds, but rather should support and complement one another.

To ensure that this is the case, the Comprehensive Plan process called for the review and analysis of past and current plans, studies, regulations, and standards in relation to the policies, strategies, and actions recommended in the various elements of the Comprehensive Plan -- in particular those contained in the Land Use Element.

The objective of this task was to determine the extent to which existing plans, programs, and regulations are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The first step in achieving this objective was to develop an understanding of the recommendations and initiatives put forth by such existing plans and programs, as well as of the current regulatory framework within which implementation would occur. The results of this review and analysis are summarized in the following sections. Key issues that could affect the Plan are identified.

4.2 Transportation

Sources Reviewed

The following documents were reviewed for this task. A brief summary of each document is offered.

1. ***“Galveston Island: A Comprehensive Plan Based on Coastal Zone Management Principles”***: This plan document, an update of the 1973 Plan, was completed between 1986 and 1988 by CH2M Hill with Carter & Burgess, Inc., and adopted by the City of Galveston in 1988.

4.0 Other Plan Considerations

The document (henceforth referred to as the *1988 Comprehensive Plan*) is divided into eight (8) sections, including the executive summary. Sections numbered 1 through 5 comprise the background and analysis components of the Plan. These sections examine various past and present factors (e.g., historic, geographic, natural, social, etc.) which have an influence on the timing, location, intensity, and character of development in Galveston Island.

Section 3 carries the analysis further, anticipating future socio-economic and land development trends, based on the demographic and economic profile of the community and the resulting land use pattern. In addition, using the data compiled in the other four sections, Section 5 analyzes the potential population and development which the urban and natural environments of the island can support. The analysis focuses on subareas of the island located west of the Galveston Airport.

Section 6 outlines the strategic direction for future development in the City, translated into seven goals, with their related objectives and policies. The goals deal with the following aspects:

- Economic development
- Land use
- Special districts, projects, and planning programs
- Natural environment
- Storm hazard protection
- Traffic
- City services and community facilities

Finally, Section 7 provides the framework for implementation of the *1988 Comprehensive Plan* recommendations. A variety of processes and tools are described, including: the adoption and administration of land use laws; the need for intergovernmental coordination, as well as public/private sector partnerships and cooperation; and, financial structures and funding.

2. Galveston Five-Year Mobility Plan: The Mobility Plan was completed by the Goodman Corporation in April of 1999, in association with The Sharpe Group. An update was completed in April of 2000. This plan is the product of a collective effort by a steering committee comprised of representatives from public agencies and a variety of organizations and community groups. While not adopted, the *Five-Year Mobility Plan* is intended to define, and provide the tools to implement, a vision for transportation systems and services for Galveston Island. The plan starts by

identifying the key issues which influence mobility on Galveston Island, and proceeds to match each issue group with a series of project recommendations, representing options for meeting the mobility needs of Galveston. The candidate projects were subsequently prioritized and tested against cost/benefit effectiveness, compatibility, and redundancy criteria. Projects that passed all three tests were included in the 5-year schedule, with steps required for completion. The 2000 update process revised the 5-year plan, modifying some projects (or components of projects) and removing others, with the input of the Galveston Alliance of Island Neighborhoods (**GAIN**). The contents of the plan are explored in more detail in the next section.

3. City of Galveston Zoning Standards: Prepared by the Department of Planning and adopted by the City of Galveston in 1991, the standards are a codification of the City's zoning ordinances. The standards are grouped into articles and "divisions" which deal with specific subjects. Relevant sections reviewed include those pertaining to vehicle parking regulations under Division 4.

Summary of Analysis

1. 1988 Galveston Comprehensive Plan

The transportation-related goal of the *1988 Comprehensive Plan* was to develop a thoroughfare system that provided for the safe and efficient movement of goods and people. A number of the policies in that plan were guided by the analysis and recommendations of the *1985 Galveston County Regional Mobility Plan*. Additional studies were recommended to address the need to improve, replace, or relocate FM 3005, and to provide an additional accessways to the mainland from Galveston Island.

Although the Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1988, implementation has ranged from erratic to nonexistent. As a result, the conditions related to many of the key mobility issues identified in the plan have worsened over time, while new ones have emerged due to changed conditions. For the issues that remain relevant, the related goals, objectives, and policies of the *1988 Comprehensive Plan* have been taken into consideration in crafting the present plan. These issues, all of which are greatly interrelated, include:

- **ACCESSIBILITY:** Because Galveston is an island, ease of access to and from the mainland is a matter of critical concern for residents, commuters, and visitors.

4.0 Other Plan Considerations

Four alternative ways on and off of Galveston Island exist, including the I-45 Causeway and Railroad Causeway, the San Luis Pass Bridge, and the Bolivar Ferry. However, neither the San Luis Pass Bridge nor the ferry provide direct access to the mainland. Instead, the San Luis Pass Bridge is a toll road, connecting the west end of Galveston Island to Surfside, while the ferry carries passengers and vehicles from the east end to the Bolivar Peninsula. Currently, then, the only direct connection between Galveston and the mainland is through I-45 and the parallel railroad causeway.

The *1988 Comprehensive Plan* (p. IV-6) describes a number of roadway improvements that were proposed in the *1985 Regional Mobility Plan* to increase island accessibility. Such improvements include: the addition of a second, four-lane causeway to the mainland from the 8-Mile Road Crossing (scheduled for the 1985-1990 timeframe); the addition of main lanes to the I-45 Causeway; the construction of a parallel causeway structure; and interchange improvements at SH-6/SH-146 and Port Industrial Boulevard (all scheduled for the 1990-1995 timeframe). To date, however, implementation of these important recommendations --which the *1988 Comprehensive Plan* supported-- is still under study.

- **STORM EVACUATION:** During hurricane conditions, barrier islands may be subject to washovers and related damage and loss of life resulting from tidal storm surge. Because of this hazard, Galveston Island is classified as an evacuation zone by the National Weather Service.

Galveston's storm evacuation issues are related to the capacity of the thoroughfare system to allow the population to safely and efficiently evacuate to the mainland. Several factors play a role in hindering evacuation, including: a limited number of evacuation/escape routes to the mainland; the narrow, elongated configuration of the island, which accommodates few and long major east-west access roads; seasonal population and traffic load changes (further discussed in the next section); and, the potential for flooding, particularly on certain roads. The best example of how these factors can interact to impact evacuation efforts is FM 3005. This is the only roadway connection and primary evacuation route linking the west end area to the rest of the City and to I-45. The 2-lane road's traffic capacity is subject to significant fluctuations in vehicular loads due to seasonal visitors and increasing residential development in the area. In addition, the low elevation

and near-shore location of the road makes it highly prone to hurricane-related flooding.

Most of the projects described in the previous section to increase island access would contribute to improve evacuation times from Galveston Island. In addition, the *1988 Comprehensive Plan*, as well as the *1985 Regional Mobility Plan* recommended relocating FM 3005 to the interior of the island as a 4-lane divided road to reduce the risk of flooding and to improve road capacity. As mentioned previously, these recommendations have not been implemented.

- **ROADWAY CAPACITY:** Galveston's roads typically experience heavy daily traffic from residents and commuters, but they also are subject to significant load increases from visitor traffic during the summer months, weekends, and holidays. Facing growing development pressures, providing a safe, efficient thoroughfare system to adequately serve the daily, seasonal, and emergency needs of Galveston Island becomes a priority of the *1988 Comprehensive Plan*.

The 1988 Plan indicates that major level of service/capacity deficiencies were identified by the *1985 Regional Mobility Plan* on the following Galveston roadways: Seawall Boulevard, Broadway Boulevard, 53rd Street, 61st Street, and Stewart Road. Level of service (**LOS**) for portions of these roads ranged from E to F --not taking into account seasonal traffic. The *1985 Regional Mobility Plan* also determined the need for additional daily traffic capacity on I-45.

In addition to capacity added through the improvements mentioned above under the accessibility issue, the *1985 Regional Mobility Plan* recommends the following improvement projects to add roadway capacity over the 1985-2000 plan timeframe:

- Broadway Boulevard/US-75 to new 5-lane arterial from 5th Street to Apffel Park Road.
- Port Industrial Boulevard upgraded to 4-lane arterial from 28th Street to 12th Street, with drainage and utility modifications.
- 2nd Street to new 4-lane arterial, extended south of Seawall Boulevard.
- 61st Street, flyover to outbound I-45.

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- Stewart Road from 75th Street to Galveston Island State Park, widen to four (4) lanes with new alignment near Sweetwater Lake.
- Heards Lane, from 69th Street to 56th Street, widen to 4 lanes with median.
- Pelican Island Causeway from Broadway Boulevard to Pelican Island, widen to four (4) lanes.
- Seawall Boulevard from 61st Street to 2nd Street, remove street parking and widen to six (6) lanes.

The majority of these projects have yet to be implemented, with the result that traffic capacity deficiencies have exacerbated as traffic loads increased, particularly on key arterial roads such as Seawall Boulevard, Broadway Boulevard, 61st Street, and Stewart Road.

The *1988 Comprehensive Plan* also examined traffic issues as related to the “holding capacity” of the West End. The character and combination of distinct natural and man-made conditions in this area, including extreme differences in off-season and in-season traffic on FM 3005, create some unique problems in dealing with traffic issues. The holding capacity analysis found that an acceptable level of service could be achieved during non-summer months by widening FM 3005 to four (4) lanes. Although the LOS could still degrade to the high E range during season, particularly on weekends and holidays, the *1985 Regional Mobility Plan* recommended that FM 3005 be four-laned as a divided road, and relocated to the interior of the island. As previously mentioned, the road relocation was aimed at improving storm evacuation performance. As many other enhancements recommended in the *1988 Comprehensive Plan*, this one has not been carried out.

2. Galveston Five-Year Mobility Plan

While no specific mention is made of either the *1988 Comprehensive Plan* policies or of the *1985 Regional Mobility Plan* recommendations, the *1999-2000 Five-Year Mobility Plan* recognizes that most of the mobility challenges facing Galveston Island today are not new but have existed for many years. Increasing demand compounds the problems that are otherwise typical in an

aging transportation infrastructure system, while the City's limited financial capacity has hindered efforts to implement improvements. The Mobility Plan identifies, in its final section, the local sources of revenue that would be most directly impacted by implementation of the plan's recommendations. Overall, it is estimated that the City's share of the funding requirements amount to approximately \$9 million --out of the total of \$170 million in proposed improvements.

Along with the problems related to shortage of funding on the City's part, the necessity to comply with the Plan's recommendations is limited by the fact that this document is not currently adopted into law or rule. Implementation of the Plan is, therefore, not required; yet several projects are proceed because they are funded entirely through non-local sources. Such is the case of the proposed I-45 Galveston replacement causeway and Harborside Drive and 61st Street flyovers (see below), which are being studied by TxDOT as part of its IH-45 South Corridor project, under which the projects would be funded. A similar case is the potential SH-87 bridge to provide access between Galveston Island and Bolivar Peninsula, currently also under consideration by TxDOT.

The Mobility Plan identifies sixteen mobility issues, which in turn are grouped into five issue sets or classifications. Because most improvements outlined in the 1986 Comprehensive Plan have not been carried out, many of the candidate projects presented by the Mobility Plan echo, to some extent, those earlier recommendations. This is the case in the following areas:

- **GALVESTON ISLAND ACCESS**

The key issues in this group include congestion on the I-45 causeway and dispersal of causeway traffic at the Galveston Island end; island evacuation issues; and queuing at Bolivar Ferry. These four issues are inextricably linked, and candidate projects for alleviating these problems clearly reflect their interconnection.

The limited number and relative inconvenience of other access alternatives, combined with significant increases in traffic volumes over the past 15 years, are the main causes of the first problem. As previously stated, Galveston Island currently has only one major vehicular accessway to and from the mainland, the I-45 causeway. The other three options, including railroad service, the San Luis Pass Toll Bridge road,

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and the Bolivar Ferry have low-percentage performances compared to the I-45 causeway, which carries about 85% of all traffic in and out of Galveston. Inadequate traffic dispersal capacity at the island's three major entrance arteries (Broadway Boulevard, Harborside Drive, and 61st Street) only contribute to intensify congestion problems on the causeway, which has been measured to operate at LOS E almost on a daily basis.

The Mobility Plan's candidate projects for improved island access range from, but are not limited to, a replacement causeway to improve traffic capacity on I-45; to expanded transit options, including bus and rail service to reduce vehicular traffic volumes on the causeway; to operational and configurational improvements at Broadway Boulevard, Harborside Drive, and 61st Street to improve traffic dispersal at the Galveston Island entrance; to provision of a second causeway to the mainland and completion of flooding improvements on Harborside Drive and FM 3005 to expand the number of escape options and reduce evacuation times. Of the candidate project proposed to address access issues, the Five-Year Mobility Plan identified the following as Tier One projects (i.e., those projects which scored highest when evaluated against criteria of benefits, cost-effectiveness, and compatibility):

- Rehabilitation and replacement of I-45 causeway.
 - Flyovers at Harborside Drive and 61st Street.
 - TSM improvements on Broadway Boulevard.
 - Flooding improvements on Harborside Drive and FM 3005.
-
- **EAST-WEST ACCESS**

Galveston's barrier island configuration -- long and narrow -- accommodates but comparatively few east-west arterials, which additionally often run the length of extensive areas of, or even the entire, island, as is the case of FM 3005. According to the Mobility Plan, significant segments of most of the island's major east-west arterials, including Broadway Boulevard, Harborside Drive, Seawall Boulevard, and FM 3005, operate at levels of service ranging between D and F. Other east-west arterials which serve residents and employees in the City's urban core (including Avenues O, P, and S) also experience severe levels of congestion during daily peak periods. Public safety

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problems are also a concern on these roads, as well as at the location referred to as “Dead Man’s Curve” on Stewart Road.

The Mobility Plan explores eight potential projects to address this mobility issue and related concerns. A number of them involve application of Transportation System Management (TSM) improvements, which are intended to optimize east-west traffic flows by reducing the level of congestion without increasing capacity, while as increasing safety and reducing accident rates.

The proposed TSM improvements, including upgraded signals, changeable message signs operated in a closed loop system, turn lanes, restriping, traffic monitoring, and real-time control operations, would apply in condition-based combinations on the following roads:

- Harborside Drive (in conjunction with the I-45 flyover project described in the previous section)
- Broadway Boulevard
- Portions of Seawall Boulevard and FM 3005 (from 61st to 89th Streets)
- Avenues O, P, and S

In addition, the Mobility Plan considers an extension of the trolley service to the east (to UTMB or even Stewart Beach in season) and/or west (to Jones Drive via 57th Street or to Moody Gardens, via 81st Street). This expansion would help to link all of Galveston’s major urban attractions, and reduce vehicular traffic volumes between such destinations.

The final candidate project is a proposal to replace and realign “Dead Man’s Curve” to improve safety at this location.

All of the candidate projects in this category but the Stewart Road realignment are identified as Tier One projects in the *Five-Year Mobility Plan*.

- **NORTH-SOUTH ACCESS**
Unlike east-west arterials, north-south arterials on Galveston Island tend to be short and widely spaced, providing no alternate routes into many neighborhoods, as well as to and from many of the island’s attractions.

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The most critical north-south arterial is 61st Street. At its intersection with I-45 and Central City Boulevard, this roadway operates at LOS E or F. The level of service could deteriorate further as development in the Moody Gardens areas continues.

The candidate projects considered under this category include: TSM improvements to 61st Street (in conjunction with the flyover project discussed in a previous section); TSM improvements to 53rd Street; TSM improvements on 45th, 39th, and 33rd Streets to facilitate access between Seawall Boulevard and Broadway Boulevard; and extension of 61st Street from Broadway Boulevard to Harborside Drive. In addition, the Plan considers the impact of projects that could support additional development on Pelican Island. Such potential projects include a new bridge from Bolivar Peninsula, currently under study by TxDOT, and the provision of a new, improved autobridge from Galveston Island.

All of the candidate projects described above are included in the Tier One of the *Five-Year Mobility Plan*.

In addition to the above clear-cut access issues that were also previously touched upon in the *1988 Comprehensive Plan*, the Mobility Plan examines a number of issues that have arisen or become concerns mostly since the previous Comprehensive Plan was completed. These issues include:

- **ACTIVITY CENTER IMPROVEMENTS**
As a tourist-oriented town and an employment center for the surrounding area, Galveston contains a number of significant traffic generators -- each with its own unique mobility characteristics and problems. The following issues are identified in the Mobility Plan: UTMB ingress and egress; Moody Gardens access; downtown circulation and parking.

Concerns related to the quality of the pedestrian environment are also addressed within this group of issues. A clear pattern of pedestrian circulation, the provision of amenities that will support pedestrian traffic, and the use of transit to get around downtown are identified as needs under this heading.

Candidate projects for improving mobility in and around Galveston's activity centers include:

UTMB

Transportation System Management improvements to streets serving UTMB, including upgrading signals at Market and 6th, 8th, and 9th Streets; and additional signals at 14th and 18th Streets with Harborside Drive; extension and realignment of 6th Street to provide a new north-south arterial through the UTMB campus (ongoing); transit transfer terminal at UTMB (related to the extension of the trolley from UTMB).

Moody Gardens

Widening of 81st Street south of Jones Drive to five lanes plus complementary TSM improvements; widening of Stewart Road between 61st and 75th Streets to five lanes, plus TSM improvements; and a new transit terminal at Moody Gardens as part of the proposed “Tourist Transit” system that would link Moody Gardens to The Strand, Stewart Beach, Beach Central, and other attractions.

Downtown

Potential proposals for this area comprise TSM, parking, and circulation improvements, including some directional, configuration, and parking modifications; a new transit terminal on The Strand, also as part of the “Tourist Transit” project; and, under a separate issue heading, a downtown streetscape improvement project to include a wayfinding signage system, landscape, hardscape, pedestrian amenities (benches, lighting, etc.), and ADA compliance. The area proposed for this improvement includes The Strand, Mechanic, and Market Streets between 19th and 25th Streets.

Of the candidate projects considered in this topic, the following are placed in Tier One of the Mobility Plan:

- TSM improvements around UTMB
 - Realignment of 6th Street
 - Transit terminals at UTMB, The Strand, and Moody Gardens
 - TSM parking and circulation Improvements in downtown
 - Downtown streetscape
- OTHER ISSUES
Under this subject, the *Five-Year Mobility Plan* discusses issues related to underutilization of transit service and alternative transportation modes by visitors. The discussion of potential projects ranges

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from the above mentioned “Tourist Transit” shuttle bus system to link major visitor attractions; upgrades and additions to the Island Transit coach fleet; an electric bus service demonstration; use of ITS technologies; railroad improvements for expanded passenger and freight service; hike and bike projects; to infrastructure and street repairs.

With the exception of the railroad improvements and hike and bike trails, all the projects in this category made it into Tier One of the Mobility Plan.

Relationship Between Previous Plans’ Recommendations and the 2001 Galveston Comprehensive Plan Policy Framework

The development of the 2001 *Galveston Comprehensive Plan* has been guided by a “vision” conceived through the work of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, as well as extensive public involvement. To facilitate the task of translating the vision into goals, objectives, and strategies, the Committee was broken up into three subcommittees that focused on specific elements or areas of concern. Although a separate element was not developed to address transportation issues, many of the Plan’s initiatives provide opportunities to achieve a balance between land use and transportation. Greater efficiency in land use patterns, pedestrian-oriented enhancements, cost-effective transportation alternatives, and traditional traffic capacity enhancements are only a few examples of the types of recommendations offered by the Plan that contribute to achieve this balance.

This Comprehensive Plan does not specifically replicate any of the proposals of the *Five-Year Mobility Plan*. However, it does attempt to weave fundamental notions put forth in the Mobility Plan into its policy framework, based on their relevance to the achievement of the Plan’s vision and goals. In a similar fashion, it is anticipated that the Mobility Plan will be adjusted, through future updates, to appropriately reflect and support implementation of the priorities of the Comprehensive Plan.

Below is a synopsis of the strategies and actions delineated in the elements of the Comprehensive Plan, which directly speak to such issues – by recommending actions to alter the timing, configuration, or intensity of future development -- will have a bearing on the mobility needs of Galveston Island. Some of the actions overlap

from element to element (for specific language, refer to the various elements in Chapter 3).

Housing & Neighborhoods

- ***HN-2.4:*** Deals with the need for investment in pedestrian-friendly enhancements to the street environment.
- ***HN-4.1:*** Recommends consideration of reductions in residential densities for the West End area, with the intent of maintaining safe hurricane evacuation clearance times. It also stresses the importance of periodically updating the West End holding capacity assessment in order to ascertain the need for additional traffic capacity enhancements or additional growth controls.
- ***HN-4.2:*** Recommends “clustered neighborhood centers” at specific locations in the West End. By serving neighborhood retail needs at fewer, concentrated locations, such centers should contribute to reduce the number and length of automobile trips across the island.

Economic Development

- ***ED-2.1:*** Proposes a number of actions aimed at expanding Galveston’s attraction as a quality tourist destination. Among these actions, upgrading the intermodal transportation system is a top priority. This recommendation is further explored as one of the Plan’s objectives later in the Economic Development element (see below).
- ***ED-5.1:*** Recommends specific steps directed to identifying transportation system deficiencies that need to be resolved in order to support the Plan’s economic development initiatives. The actions include: (a) assessing roadway capacity and operational improvement needs; (b) expanding parking supply in areas of concentrated employment; (c) developing a regional transit system to facilitate the regional movement of leisure and business visitors as well as residents; (d) developing a local transit system to facilitate movement of leisure and business visitors as well as residents; and, (e) promoting the expanded use of Scholes Airport.

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- **ED-5.2:** After identifying system deficiencies and needed improvements, financing options must be explored from among available federal, state, and local sources.
- **ED-5.3:** Specific plans to implement the above identified improvements need to be developed, dependent upon funding.

Community Character

- **CC-1.2:** Recommends adjustments to the permitted land uses in the West End area. This adjustment may have a positive impact on mobility by controlling the intensity and location of future developments.
- **CC-2.5:** Suggests the need for a comprehensive wayfinding signage program to visually identify and connect key visitor attractions on Galveston Island.
- **CC-3.1:** Recommends implementation of a program of streetscape and pedestrian improvements along the Seawall Boulevard corridor, including parking controls.
- **CC-4.1 and CC-4.2:** Together these two strategies will change the pattern of land use and intensity of development along Broadway Boulevard. This, in turn, will have consequences on circulation and parking needs along this important corridor.

Land Use

- **LU-1.1.4:** Recommends the reduction of the impacts of through-traffic on neighborhoods, particularly truck traffic. Suggested considerations include placement of orientation and directional signage, designation of “no-truck” zones, and traffic calming measures. In addition, the Plan advises that future revisions of the Five-Year Mobility Plan and Thoroughfare Plan should more thoroughly address the impacts of neighborhood traffic.
- **LU-1.3.1:** See HN-4.1 above. In this element, the strategy is more specific about addressing hurricane evacuation time and LOS issues related to traffic on FM 3005, urging actions such as updating the holding capacity analysis of the *1988 Comprehensive Plan*; implementing flood improvements on FM 3005; and, imposing growth management measures, including

reduced density allocations or, if necessary, a development moratorium.

- **LU-2.1.3:** See CC-5.1 above. Issues along the 61st Street corridor include the need to improve traffic circulation with better traffic-system management techniques.
- **LU-2.1.4:** See HN-4.2 above. In addition to recommending specific locations for compact “neighborhood centers” on the West End, this strategy suggests pedestrian and bicycle-friendly connections to reduce automobile trips.
- **LU-2.2.1:** Outlines the benefits of redeveloping the former Galvez Mall site at the island entrance into a “big box” center. Among such benefits is the fact that this strategic location provides greater accessibility to off-island patrons, who would increase the center’s market base without adding traffic onto the local road network. However, as part of the strategy to support such redevelopment, the City should adjust, as necessary, future road and access plans contained in the Five-Year Mobility Plan to facilitate access to this site.
- **LU-3.1.1:** Recommends the preparation of a specific plan for Pelican Island and the Wharves area. As part of this plan, it is recommended that vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns, parking facilities, and access management be reviewed and improved as necessary to support expanded services at the Port.
- **LU-3.2.1:** As part of an update of the Scholes Airport Master Plan, this strategy recommends that access management, roadway design, circulation, and parking issues be reviewed and improved in the context of a larger planning area that needs to include Moody Gardens.
- **LU-4.1.1:** Recommends the preparation of an integrated CBD Plan. Key issues to be reviewed in the plan should include parking, access, streetscape, and a wayfinding signage program.

3. City of Galveston Zoning Standards

The City’s *Code of Zoning Ordinances*, originally adopted in 1991, does not currently contain regulations that are

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directly and specifically related to the mobility issues described in the previous sections. However, at a minimum, Division 4 is expected to be affected by the 2001 *Galveston Comprehensive Plan* policies. This division, *Area Requirements*, contains the regulations pertaining to vehicle parking provided in association with private development. Other amendments to the zoning standards are likely to be needed to comply with the directives of the Plan.

Below is a synopsis of the mobility-related strategies and actions delineated in the elements of the Comprehensive Plan which will have an impact on zoning and development standards of Galveston Island. Some of the actions overlap from element to element (for specific language, refer to the various elements in Chapter 3).

Housing & Neighborhoods

- **HN-4.4:** The focus of this strategy is to support and accelerate expansion of the downtown housing and retail markets. To do so, however, it is suggested that regulatory incentives be provided to encourage mixed-use development --among them reduced on-site parking, where appropriate.
- **HN-4.2:** Recommends regulatory support for “clustered neighborhood centers” at specific locations in the West End. By serving neighborhood retail needs at fewer, concentrated locations, these centers should contribute to reducing the number and length of automobile trips.

Community Character

- **CC-3.1:** Recommends implementation of a program of streetscape and pedestrian improvements along Seawall Boulevard, including parking controls.
- **CC-3.2:** Related to CC-3.1, recommended adjustments in land use along Seawall Boulevard include restrictions on front yard surface parking.
- **CC-4.3:** Recommends implementation of a program of streetscape and pedestrian improvements along Broadway Boulevard, including parking controls.
- **CC-5.1:** Development control modifications are suggested to support high-quality and retail

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development along 61st Street. Such modifications would include regulations for surface parking, cross-access vehicular circulation, and pedestrian circulation.

- **CC-5.2:** Recommends implementation of a program of streetscape and pedestrian improvements along 61st Street, including parking controls.

Land Use

- **LU-2.1.4:** See HN-4.2 above. Both strategies recommend specific locations for “neighborhood centers” in the West End. Both also suggest the need for pedestrian and bicycle-friendly connections, as well as prohibitions on traffic-oriented commercial land uses as ways to reduce automobile trips.

Historic Preservation

- **HP-4.2:** Recommends downzoning in appropriate areas to control intensity of development, which in turn affects traffic demand.
- **HP-4.3:** The City should consider extending buffer district designations to areas adjacent to all of its Locally Designated Historic Districts, as well as to neighborhoods that may become Neighborhood Conservation Districts in the future. There is also concern regarding traffic control, clear identification of truck routes, and restrictions of truck traffic on roads not designated as truck routes.

4.3 Infrastructure

Sources Reviewed

The following documents were reviewed for this task:

1. “Galveston Island: A Comprehensive Plan Based on Coastal Zone Management Principles” (1988 Comprehensive Plan): See background information on this document under 4.2, Transportation.

2. Water Distribution System Master Plan: Prepared for the City of Galveston Municipal Utility Department by Dannenbaum Engineering Corporation. The Master Plan was completed in July, 1999.

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3. Wastewater Master Plan: Prepared for the City of Galveston Municipal Utility Department by Dannenbaum Engineering Corporation. This document was also completed in July, 1999.

4. Sanitary Sewer Plan for Unserved Areas (West End, Harborside Drive, 52nd-77th Streets, Pelican Island and Beachtown): This document, prepared by Claunch & Miller, Inc., is dated October, 2000.

Galveston's existing *Stormwater Management Plan*, approximately four decades old, was not reviewed due to its outdated status. The Natural Resources Element of the 2001 *Galveston Comprehensive Plan* emphasizes the critical importance of completing a new stormwater management plan. This plan would implement stormwater management standards and best management practices in the shortest possible timeframe.

Summary of Analysis

1. 1988 Galveston Comprehensive Plan

At the time of the previous planning effort, about one-third of the land area in the City had access to municipal sanitary sewer service. In addition, no master plan existed that addressed the potential annexation of the West End.

Package plant treatment had recently come on-line for certain developed areas on the West End, with the first plan located at Pointe San Luis, and the other at Terramar/Isla del Sol. Both plants were operating under capacity; however, numerous development approvals created concern that both plants would reach capacity sooner than anticipated. In addition, a number of subdivisions, such as Sea Isle, were served by septic systems, increasing the risk of environmental deterioration.

The *1988 Comprehensive Plan* recommended the City of Galveston complete a Master Sewer Plan, hookups be designed into new development as feasible, and performance standards be established.

Reference is also made, in the policy framework, to the urgency of adopting strict stormwater management measures that reduce pollution, protect resources, and minimize flood risks and erosion.

Water supply was deemed to be adequate and expected to continue so until at least the year 2000. The 2001 *Galveston Comprehensive Plan* picks up many of the

1988 *Comprehensive Plan* recommendations and translates them into strategies and actions in the Natural Resources Element of the Plan (refer to Chapter 3.0). At a minimum, the City has completed the preparation of a master plan for both the waster distribution and the wastewater systems. A review of the contents of these documents follows.

2. Water Distribution System Master Plan

This plan aims at assisting “persons in decision-making positions to visualize the present status of conditions in” the water distribution system; to provide “adequate information to make informed decisions about that system”; and to make recommendations for improvements to the system which will provide for current and future service requirements and demands. The plan considers system issues for Galveston and Pelican Island, based on estimated populations. It is noted that Galveston Island presents unique population and demand characteristics due to daily and seasonal variations in the numbers of users and the nature of their water use (i.e., permanent residents v. commuters, v. seasonal residents, v. visitors).

In the short term, recommended improvements seek to address current water distribution system deficiencies by increasing capacity and improving flows and distribution. These projects include the following:

Critical/Short Term

- Change from direct pumping to indirect pumping system to increase efficiency and meet demand.
- Installation of pressure control valves at various locations, particularly to adequately address water pressure and flows to the increasingly developed west island area.
- Construction of a new 16” water line from 7-Mile Road to 10-Mile Road, in conjunction with:
- Construction of a new 1.0 MG elevated storage tank at 10-Mile Road to transfer and serve adequate water flows to west island residents.
- Construction of a new 20” water line from 30th Street Pump Station to UTMB elevated water storage tank to increase efficiency and provide an interim source of water supply to the east end until outdated water lines in that area are replaced.
- New 16” water line from 10-Mile Road to Jamaica Beach Booster Pump Station, to move water west on the island and help increase pressure and water volume in that area.

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- New 2.0 MG ground storage tank at Jamaica Beach Pump Station, to increase storage and service reliability on the western end of Galveston Island.
- New 12" water line from Jamaica Beach Pump Station to Sunbird Beach Subdivision, to increase pressure and water volume in the vicinity, while offering duplicity of system supply to the area in case of line damage or down time.
- New 1.0 MG elevated storage tank and booster pump station at Sunbird Beach

Most of these projects focus on providing additional system capacity and increasing efficiency of service to the West End. Currently, this area is served by a single service pumping station and a 3.0-million gallon ground storage tank. An elevated storage tank also at this location has not been in service for at least the past five years.

The recommended critical improvements have a total estimated capital cost of \$22.5 million. The plan recommends a 5-year Capital Improvements Program to implement these projects, and a water rate increase or revenue bond issue to meet the funding requirements for these critical projects.

Long-term projects contemplated by the Master Plan aim at meeting future service requirements and demands. The recommended improvements include:

Long Term

- Systematic replacement of old water lines, some of them original, which have exceeded their useful life and limit system capacity and efficiency (the Master Plan points to the UTMB area as in particular need of upgrading).
- Pump station upgrades at the 30th Street Booster Pump Station and the 59th Street Booster Pump Station, both of which date back 40 to 50 years.
- New 24" water line to Pelican Island.
- 16" water line from Pelican Island to Marine Drive to increase water pressure and circulation to Pelican Island during peak hours and to UTMB during non-peak hours.
- New 8" water line from Broome Road to Homrighaus Road and 8" from Avenue M to Anderson and Sportman to improve service to the Anderson Ways residential area.
- New 12" water line from Sunbird Beach to San Luis Point.

In addition to these long-term projects, the Master Plan suggests that a new 0.5 MG elevated storage tank should be built on Pelican Island sometime in the future, to provide a reliable source of water and pressure for Pelican Island's major water users (TAMU and Newpark Shipyard).

The recommended long-term improvements have a total estimated capital cost of \$40 million, to be implemented over a 10+ year period, and after the critical improvements are in place. The Master Plan recommends a second water rate increase, five (5) years after the first one, to fund a portion of the improvements. Revenue bonds are also recommended to meet the funding requirements for these important projects.

3. Wastewater Master Plan

Developed with the aim of providing the City of Galveston with a "versatile tool to both improve the present conditions of the sanitary sewer system and prepare for future service requirements," the *Wastewater System Master Plan* for the urban areas of Galveston looks at the present and projected populations of Galveston Island (through 2050) and projects wastewater flows accordingly. The analysis takes into consideration extreme seasonal variations in flow related to peaks in visitor demand.

The current system is based on three wastewater treatment plant service areas:

- The **Main Plant** service area encompasses the area east of 57th Street and English Bayou, and north of Offats Bayou to 69th Street. This is the oldest part of the city. The current service area is made up of two sectors, Downtown and the East End. The Main Plant is currently overloaded and has no expansion capability. As a result, the Master Plan recommends the construction of a new, East Regional Treatment Plant to serve a subarea of the current Main Plant service area. In this manner, both plants can adequately accommodate current loads while reserving capacity for future growth.
- The **Airport Plant** service area is bound on the west by 57th Street, on the north by Offats Bayou to Spanish Grant and out to Teichman Road. In the areas to the west of the airport, which remain sparsely developed, wastewater is pumped via force main to the existing collection system. Identified as MUD 1 and 29, service to these western areas is handled by a separate plant located near Eckert Bayou. This plant is only 5 years

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old and is in good condition, with usage up to about 20% of capacity. Because these areas could soon be annexed by the City, the Master Plan considers them functionally as part of the Airport Plant service area. The Airport Plant itself is nearing capacity and will require expansion to accommodate future development.

- The **Terramar Plant** service area goes from Jamaica Beach to San Luis Pass. Based on the current pattern of development and anticipating some changes that could limit continued development at the current pace and/or intensity, it is estimated that Terramar Plant has adequate capacity to serve all the residents de West Island.

The estimated capital cost of all improvements proposed by the *Wastewater Master Plan* reaches approximately \$26 million.

4. Sanitary Sewer Plan for Unserved Areas

The “unserved areas” encompass portions of the West End, including several subdivisions, Harborside Drive from 52nd to 77th Streets, Pelican Island, and Beachtown. Proposed improvements to provide sanitary sewer service to these areas are described in the Master Plan. The total estimated capital cost of these improvements nears \$37 million.

Relationship Between Previous Plans’ Recommendations and the 2001 Galveston Comprehensive Plan Policy Framework

The 2001 *Galveston Comprehensive Plan* has not dealt separately with infrastructure issues. References to these issues are found, however, in the policy framework of the Plan, in particular throughout the Natural Resources Element (Chapter 3).

The actions proposed by the Water Distribution, Wastewater, and Sanitary Sewer Plans are complimentary and compatible with the policies proposed in the plan. The plans themselves represent progress toward implementation of the following policies contained in the 2001 *Galveston Comprehensive Plan*:

- **NR-1.1:** This strategy deals with reduction of non-point source (NPS) contamination. A series of actions are proposed to reduce NPS, including completion

4.0 Other Plan Considerations

of a stormwater management plan for the City; a routine inspection program of the City's existing stormwater management systems; and adoption of stormwater management standards for new development

- **NR-1.2:** This strategy encourages implementation of measures to improve wastewater treatment in on-site disposal systems (OSDS). Actions recommended are consistent with those proposed by the *Sanitary Sewer Plan for Unserved Areas*, including, most significantly, extending the central sewer service to existing suitable developed areas that currently rely upon OSDS, implementing a program requiring routine maintenance of OSDS.





Chapter 5.0 ***PLAN*** ***IMPLEMENTATION***

5.1 OVERVIEW

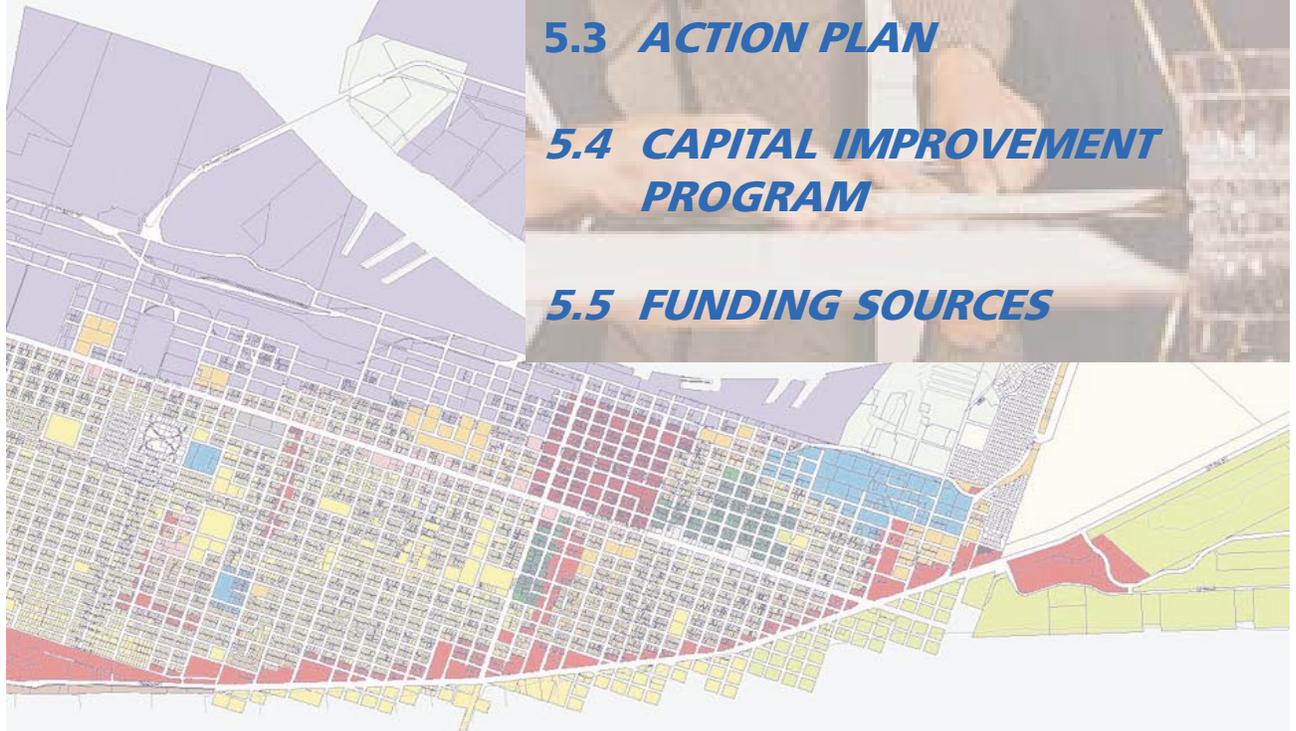
5.2 PLAN ADOPTION, COMPLIANCE, MONITORING & UP-DATING

5.3 ACTION PLAN

5.4 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

5.5 FUNDING SOURCES

VESTON EAST BAY





5.1 Overview

Comprehensive Plans are turned into reality by concerted, consistent attention to implementation. This requires that the City administration, departments and present and future City Councils accept and use the Comprehensive Plan as the basis for all policies and actions, consistent with the strategic directions defined herein. The City of Galveston's last comprehensive plan, prepared some 15 years ago, identified many of the same issues addressed herein. Since its preparation however, it has had little impact in guiding City policies and actions. Even on key issues of public concern, such as the serious threat to public safety associated with West End hurricane evacuation, little has been done. Likewise, the City's present Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is not presently structured to reflect Comprehensive Plan policies or strategies, nor does it provide assurance that necessary improvements beyond the next fiscal year will be scheduled or funded. In short, the City of Galveston is not fully mobilized to implement a Comprehensive Plan. If the City is to exert the necessary leadership in addressing problems and seizing opportunities, it must create the necessary internal organization, secure the necessary resources and commit to 'staying the course' set out by the policies, strategies, and actions incorporated in this document.

The key elements of the Comprehensive Plan, comprised of Housing and Neighborhoods, Economic Development, Community Character, Land Use, Historic Preservation, and Natural Resources -- as well as the stand-alone Parks & Open Space Element -- all call for specific strategies and actions to bring about the positive change envisioned by residents for Galveston's future, and articulated by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The strategies and actions range from revised development standards and regulations, to bold initiatives in code enforcement, redevelopment, and historic preservation, to major capital investments to rebuild the Seawall Boulevard corridor and other key capital investments. It is readily apparent that the City lacks the resources needed to implement all of these strategies simultaneously. While the Plan calls upon the City to aggressively pursue revenue enhancement, it is only prudent to establish a highly focused and realistic implementation program. This program sets priorities regarding the sequence in which the strategies and actions contained in the Plan are to be carried out. It also incorporates a process and protocol for ensuring the compliance of City actions and policies to the Comprehensive Plan, as well as for monitoring implementation progress and incorporating plan revisions and updates.

5.0 Plan Implementation

This chapter describes an implementation program for the Comprehensive Plan, comprised of the following elements:

- An **action plan** that identifies short-term (0-2 years), mid-term (2-5 years), and long-term (5-10 years) priorities for implementation;
- A protocol for **adopting, monitoring, and updating** the plan, indicating how it is to be used, tracked, updated and revised to ensure that the City “stays the course” in implementing the plan;
- A **capital improvement program**, outlining a method by which the City should plan and prioritize needed investments, beyond those identified for the coming fiscal year; and
- An inventory of **funding sources** including opportunities for revenue enhancement to provide the resources the City must secure to meet the needs identified herein.

5.2 Plan Adoption, Compliance, Monitoring, and Updating

Texas law provides basic guidance to municipalities for developing and maintaining Comprehensive Plans. Chapter 219 of the *Local Government Code* grants powers to municipalities for promoting sound development and public health, safety and welfare. The statute indicates that a municipality may define the content and design of a Comprehensive Plan and states that the plan may include the following:

- Provisions on land use, transportation and public facilities.
- A coordinated set of plans, or one single plan.
- Policies to guide the establishment of development regulations.

A Texas municipality has considerable flexibility to define the relationship between the Comprehensive Plan and its development regulations and to determining the consistency required between a plan and development regulations. However, Chapter 211.004 requires that zoning regulations (including rezonings) must be adopted in accordance with a Comprehensive Plan. Further, Chapter 212.010 requires that the approval of development plats also needs to conform to a Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan may also contain the land use assumptions required by municipalities to impose impact fees (see Chapter 395, Subchapter C).

Chapter 219 establishes that adoption and amendment of a Comprehensive Plan may follow a public hearing and consideration by a Planning Commission. However, it also provides that a municipality may establish its own procedures for adopting and amending a Comprehensive Plan. Consequently, the City of Galveston should take advantage of this provision by including policies in the Comprehensive Plan that deal with adoption, compliance, monitoring, and updating of the Comprehensive Plan.

If a Comprehensive Plan is to have value and usefulness over time, it is important to develop ways of monitoring its effectiveness and approaches for keeping it current as new information becomes available and circumstances change. The Plan should not be adopted with the thought that it will, without care and maintenance, provide a tool to guide growth, development change for more than 3-5 years. This supports the notion that planning is an on-going process. A Comprehensive Plan is not an end in itself. Without the evaluation and feedback loop, a Plan can soon become irrelevant: it needs to be able to respond to changing needs and conditions.

The following is a recommended framework for the City's policies on monitoring and update to be included as part of the Comprehensive Plan:

- Within three months of Comprehensive Plan adoption, the City shall establish specific provisions for compliance with, and amendments to, the Comprehensive Plan, which shall incorporate or modify the following provisions:
- **Plan Compliance:**
 - (a) Establish a timeframe to enact revisions to the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and associated development standards to be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, not to exceed one (1) year from plan adoption.
 - (b) Establish provisions for the review of all rezonings and plats to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
 - (c) Establish provisions to expand and modify the Capital Improvement Program to reflect policies, strategies, and priorities established in the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Plan Monitoring**
 - (a) At the anniversary of plan adoption the Department of Community Planning and Development shall submit to the Planning Commission and City Council, an annual report indicating actions taken, and progress

5.0 Plan Implementation

made toward plan implementation, along with requests for plan amendments due to altered circumstances or in response to citizen requests, proposed rezonings, or plats.

- (b) Develop indicators and benchmarks as part of an overall Plan monitoring program, to evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Plan.
- (c) Include in the annual report a review of current conditions and trends that may affect or be affected by plan policies, including planned or anticipated development, improvements to transportation and infrastructure systems, changes in federal or state regulations or programs, key issues pertaining to public health and safety, and opportunities for public-private partnerships.

- **Plan Amendments:**

- (a) Package proposed plan amendments annually for review by the Planning Commission, and forward their recommendation for adoption of plan amendments to City Council, with requirements for public notice and one (1) or more public hearings.
- (b) Plan amendments may include corrections of errors, clarifications of intent, modifications to goals, objectives, strategies and actions; or modifications to accommodate rezonings which are contrary to the Comprehensive Plan.
- (c) Amendments should not be made without an analysis of immediate needs and consideration of the long-term effects. In considering amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, the City should be guided by the following:
 - the need for the proposed change;
 - the effect of the proposed change on the need for city services and facilities;
 - the implications, if any, that the amendment may have for other parts of the plan; and
 - the impact of the proposed change on the ability of the City to achieve the goals, objectives and policies expressed in the Plan, or in other City policies, programs or interests.

- **Public Involvement Process & Need for Coordination**

- (a) Include policies to provide a process for monitoring implementation progress and adopting plan amendments, including an on-going role for a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

- (b) Consider the statutory requirement to hold one (1) public hearing for plan amendments as a minimum.
 - (c) Maintain a two-way dialogue with the public, developers, groups, associations, and agencies on an on-going basis throughout the year, in order to monitor the effectiveness of the Plan.
 - (d) Before amendments are considered for adoption, all facets of the community should be provided with effective ways for participating, and should be encouraged to get involved in the decision-making process.
 - (e) A few suggested approaches to facilitate community involvement include:
 - Coordinating with other agencies and groups conducting planning activities that may have a relationship to the Comprehensive Plan and the City's efforts in making public policy decisions regarding future land use and development.
 - All City Departments should have an opportunity to affect change in the policies of the comprehensive plan, thereby ensuring that the Plan provides a corporate framework for decision-making.
 - Encouraging ongoing citizen input into changes in the needs of the community through questionnaires and opportunities for written input.
 - Hosting or/and attending neighborhood level meetings.
- **Plan Review and Updating:**
 - (a) Initiate Comprehensive Plan review and updating every five (5) years, including:
 - Creation of a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.
 - Updating of data documenting conditions and trends.
 - Evaluation and appraisal of Comprehensive Plan effectiveness and implementation efforts.
 - Revision of goals, objectives, policies, and actions to reflect changing circumstances, emerging needs and opportunities, and expressed citizen priorities..

5.0 Plan Implementation

5.3 Action Plan

Tables 2 and 5 present an *Action Plan* for implementing new Comprehensive Plan initiatives. Table 2 classifies the actions according to time frame and type of action. Table 5 (large format located at the end of this chapter) provides a summary schedule, referenced to the plan elements. The three action types are defined as follows:

Program: Entails detailed, focal area-level planning to implement concepts contained in the Comprehensive Plan.

Regulation: Involves revising development standards and zoning regulations. Numerous individual recommendations for ordinance changes are presented in the various Plan elements. In addition, legal issues pertaining to the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations are presented in a companion technical document.

Capital Investments: requires significant financial commitment to a capital project or projects.

On-going programs or projects that do not require a significant new commitment of resources by the City are not included in the table.

The *Action Plan* is not intended to be a definitive prescription; rather, it is suggested as a framework to guide decision-making, so the process remains focused upon the policies and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan. While the Comprehensive Plan incorporates reasonable flexibility, the degree of success in implementing the Plan will be a reflection of the City's ability to consistently act in accordance with the *Action Plan*.

The *Action Plan*, however, does not preclude certain actions from being implemented earlier than shown if the time and resources are available to address them. In addition, the *Action Plan* anticipates that most plan initiatives involving capital investments will be subject to the availability of funding

Table 2. Action Plan – New Comprehensive Plan Initiatives

High-Priority/Short-Term Actions (0-2 years)		
Ref. No.	Strategy/Action	Type
HN-1.1, HN-2.3, HN-4.2, HN-4.3, HN-4.4, HN-4.5, ED-3.3, ED-4.2, CC-1.1, CC-1.2, CC-1.3, CC-2.6, CC-3.2, CC-3.3, CC-5.1, CC-5.2, LU-1.1.2, LU-1.1.3, LU-1.3.1, LU-1.3.2, LU-2.1.1, LU-2.1.2, LU-2.1.3, LU-2.1.4, LU-3.3.1, HP-1.9, HP-2.2, NR-2.1, NR-2.3, NR-3.4, NR-5.3	<p>ORDINANCE MODIFICATIONS</p> <p>Complete necessary modifications to City code, zoning/land development regulations & corresponding maps, to facilitate implementation of Comprehensive Plan initiatives, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regulatory incentives for infill development ● Development review process simplification/improvement ● Simplification of review process for permit applications in historic areas ● Guidelines/standards for design & development of infill development ● Regulatory incentives & standards for development of conservation subdivisions ● Standards to protect the scenic/visual quality the FM 3005 corridor ● Standards to minimize the impacts of commercial development & commercial rezonings ● Gateway treatments and “gateway-area” development standards ● Adjusted standards & regulations for mixed-use and residential development in Downtown Galveston ● Adjusted permitted uses & standards for compact neighborhood centers at Plan-specified locations ● Overlay districts for key roadway corridors (Broadway, Seawall Blvd., Harborside Drive, and 61st Street) ● Strengthened Beach & Dune Management Plan standards ● Updated Design Guidelines for the Historic Districts ● Increased Dune Protection Line (setback) ● Strengthened guidelines/controls for fires on the beach ● Standards for protective wetland buffer areas. 	Regulation
HN-1.1 <i>Links:</i> HN-2.2, HN-2.3, HN-2.5, HN-4.5, ED-1.3, LU-1.2.1	<p>INFILL DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>Develop & implement financial incentive program to encourage infill development.</p>	Program
HN-2.1, LU-1.1.1 <i>Links:</i> ED-3.1, CC-2.1, HP-1.7, HP-3.1, NR-2.2	<p>CODE ENFORCEMENT</p> <p>Identify & strategically target priority areas for code enforcement efforts.</p>	Program
HN-2.2 <i>Links:</i> HN-1.1, HN-2.5, HN-3.3, ED-1.3, HP-1.8	<p>FINANCIAL TOOLS/HOMEOWNERSHIP INVESTMENT</p> <p>Develop plan & financial structure for homeownership program (tax abatement, tax credits, loan guarantees or subsidized loan pools for first-time homebuyers, etc.).</p>	Program
HN-2.4 <i>Links:</i> HN-2.2, HN-2.5, HN-3.2, HP-1.11	<p>NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES</p> <p>Develop plan & funding source for targeted neighborhood amenity investment program.</p>	Program
HN-2.5 <i>Links:</i> HN-1.1, HN-2.1, HN-2.2, HN-3.2	<p>FINANCIAL TOOLS/RECEIVERSHIP PROGRAM</p> <p>Develop plan & financial structure for receivership program to “recycle” abandoned or tax delinquent properties.</p>	Program
HN-2.5 <i>Links:</i> HN-1.1, HN-2.2, HN-3.1, ED-1.2, ED-5.2, CC-2.7, HP-1.8	<p>FINANCIAL TOOLS/FUNDING SOURCES</p> <p>Identify candidate funding sources among available local, state & federal opportunities (CDBG, HOPE VI, TEA-21, etc.) to support plan initiatives. Develop and implement strategy to pursue at least one candidate grant per year, as appropriate.</p>	Program
HN-3.2, HN-5.2 <i>Links:</i> HN-1.1, HN-2.5, HN-3.1, HN-4.5, ED-1.3, ED-4.6, CC-4.2, PR-7.1.3	<p>PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS</p> <p>Identify project opportunities for public & private/non-profit agency partnerships in the areas of housing, streetscape improvements, ADA compliance, and parks & recreation facilities/programs.</p>	Program

5.0 Plan Implementation

Table 2. Action Plan – New Comprehensive Plan Initiatives (cont'd.)

High-Priority/Short-Term Actions (0-2 years)		
Ref. No.	Strategy/Action	Type
HN-5.1	CITY DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURE Complete review and modification of City's departmental & budgeting structures.	Program
ED-1.1	CITY FINANCIAL STRATEGY Develop & implement long-term overall financial strategy for the City.	Program
ED-1.2 <i>Links:</i> HN-2.5, ED-1.1, CC-3.1, CC-4.3, CC-5.3, HP-1.11	INFRASTRUCTURE & BEAUTIFICATION IMPROVEMENTS Identify infrastructure and city beautification improvements necessary to support economic development initiatives.	Program
ED-1.4 <i>Links:</i> ED-1.3	PUBLIC SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS Establish coordination mechanisms to assist GISD with long-range planning and improvements for Galveston's public schools.	Program
ED-2.1 <i>Links:</i> ED-4.4, CC-3.1 to CC-3.4	SEAWALL BEACHFRONT ENHANCEMENTS Initiate implementation of 1998 Seawall Beachfront Plan recommendations.	Capital/ Regulation
ED-2.1 <i>Links:</i> ED-4.1	CBD/STRAND REVITALIZATION Develop revitalization plan for Historic Downtown Galveston and the Strand District.	Program
ED-2.1 <i>Links:</i> ED-5.1 to ED-5.3	TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS Develop plan and funding source to upgrade intermodal transportation system.	Program
ED-2.1	TOURISM EXPANSION Develop Tourism Plan to coordinate tourism expansion.	Program
ED-2.2	PORT AND AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS Formulate redevelopment plans for Port of Galveston & Galveston International Airport.	Program
CC-3.1 <i>Links:</i> ED-2.1	SEAWALL BLVD. IMPROVEMENTS Develop plan and funding source for Seawall Boulevard streetscape/pedestrian improvements, then proceed with construction of one ½-mile "pilot" or demonstration project..	Program/ Capital
PR-7.1.4 <i>Links:</i> PR-7.2.2	PRIORITIZATION OF PARKS/RECREATION PROJECTS Coordinate capital improvements programming for prioritized parks and recreation projects.	Program
PR-7.2.1	PARKS /RECREATION FACILITIES INVENTORY Prepare inventory evaluation of parks & recreation facilities, establish repair maintenance schedule and explore outsourcing.	Program
PR-7.2.2	PARKS DEPARTMENT BUDGET Prepare parks department budget.	Program
PR-7.2.3	PARKS FACILITY ENHANCEMENTS Initiate implementation of Parks Plan recommendations for current facility enhancement and upgrade.	Capital
LU-1.3.1	FM 3005 FLOODING IMPROVEMENTS Implement recommended FM 3005 flooding improvements (5-Year Mobility Plan).	Program/ Capital
LU-1.3.1	SANITARY SEWER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION Initiate implementation of Sanitary Sewer Plan for Unserved Areas Plan (West End).	Program/ Capital
LU-4.2.3 <i>Links:</i> LU-4.3.1, HP-1.6, HP-2.1	NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN UPDATES Complete update/revision of at least one neighborhood plan.	Program
HP-1.3	HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER Ensure that funding is set aside to maintain the Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) as a full-time position within the City's Planning Department.	Program

Table 2. Action Plan – New Comprehensive Plan Initiatives (cont’d.)

High-Priority/Short-Term Actions (0-2 years)		
Ref. No.	Strategy/Action	Type
HP-1.4	CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT STATUS Secure Certified Local Government (CLG) status.	Program
HP-1.5 <i>Links: HP-1.4</i>	HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN Upon local government certification, pursue funding from THC to develop Historic Preservation Plan.	Program
HP-1.5 <i>Links: HP-1.4</i>	HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN Work jointly with the City’s historic preservation partners to develop a Historic Preservation Plan.	Program
HP-1.10	MAINTENANCE OF CITY-OWNED HISTORIC BUILDINGS Prohibit deferred maintenance of City-owned historic buildings.	Program/ Regulation
HP-1.11	STREET, SIDEWALK & UTILITY MAINTENANCE Establish mechanisms for routine coordination between the HPO and City Department heads to review maintenance policies and functions.	Program
HP-2.1 <i>Links: LU-4.2.3</i>	SPECIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATIONS Concurrently with neighborhood plan updates, initiate evaluation of potential historic district additions.	Program
HP-6.2	GALVESTON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION Work with GCHC to develop a Heritage Trail and to secure a City of Galveston Marker from the Texas Historical Commission.	Program
HP-6.3 <i>Links: LU-4.2.3, HP-2.1</i>	NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM Reestablish the Neighborhood Partnership Program.	Program
HP-7.1, HP-7.2	PUBLIC AWARENESS/PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM Develop a Historic Preservation Public Awareness/Public Relations Plan to create support for historic preservation and educate property owners about the benefits and obligations that accompany historic designations.	Program
NR-1.1	REDUCTION OF NON-POINT SOURCE CONTAMINATION Develop and implement a strategy to actively participate in regional water quality management planning and education activities, including Texas Watch program.	Program
NR-1.1	REDUCTION OF NON-POINT SOURCE CONTAMINATION Develop local non-point source management strategies in coordination with Galveston Bay Program.	Program
NR-1.1	REDUCTION OF NON-POINT SOURCE CONTAMINATION Begin pursuing grants to perform pilot projects with TNRCC and GBEP to develop non-point source best management practices.	Program
NR-1.2 <i>Links: LU-1.3.1</i>	IMPROVEMENT OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT IN OSDS Consider a moratorium on the use of OSDS for new residential units.	Program
NR-1.2 <i>Links: LU-1.3.1</i>	IMPROVEMENT OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT IN OSDS Work with Galveston County to identify innovative waste disposal systems.	Program
NR-3.1 <i>Links: NR-3.2</i>	PARTICIPATION IN USACOE/EPA 404 PERMIT APPLICATION REVIEW Develop and implement strategy to increase City participation in 404 permit application review process.	Program
NR-4.1 <i>Links: HN-4.3, NR-4.2, NR-4.3</i>	EROSION TASK FORCE Increase City participation in Erosion Task Force to ensure adequate research and evaluation of Galveston’s beach and shoreline erosion issues.	Program
NR-5.1 <i>Links: HN-4.2, LU-1.3.2, NR-5.2, NR-5.3</i>	OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PROGRAM Prepare Future Open Space Network Plan.	Program

5.0 Plan Implementation

Table 2. Action Plan – New Comprehensive Plan Initiatives (cont'd.)

Mid-Term Actions (2-5 years)		
Ref. No.	Strategy/Action	Type
HN-2.4, CC-2.3 <i>Links:</i> HN-2.2, HP-1.8, HP-1.11	NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES Implement targeted neighborhood amenity investment program	Capital
HN-2.5 <i>Links:</i> HP-1.8	FINANCIAL TOOLS/FUNDING SOURCES Continue implementation of strategy to pursue at least one grant per year, as appropriate, to fund plan initiatives.	Program
HN-4.3 <i>Links:</i> NR-4.1 NR 4.2, NR-4.3	BEACH AND SHORELINE RENOURISHMENT Identify funding for and implement beach renourishment program.	Program/ Capital
HN-4.4	EAST END FLATS/MID ISLAND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY Develop a strategy for development of the East End Flats/Mid Island areas.	Program
ED-1.1	CITY FINANCIAL STRATEGY Continue implementation of City's long-term financial strategy.	Program
ED-1.2 <i>Links:</i> HN-2.5, ED-3.1, ED-3.2, HP-1.11	INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS Implement infrastructure improvements identified in the 0-2 year timeframe.	Capital
ED-1.2 <i>Links:</i> HN-2.5, ED-3.1, CC-3.1, CC-4.3, CC-5.3, HP-1.8, HP-1.11	BEAUTIFICATION IMPROVEMENTS Implement city beautification improvements identified in the 0-2 year timeframe.	Capital
ED-2.1 <i>Links:</i> ED-4.1	CBD/STRAND REVITALIZATION Implement Historic Downtown Galveston and Strand District Revitalization Plan developed in the 0-2 year timeframe.	Program
ED-2.1 <i>Links:</i> ED-5.1 through ED-5.3	TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS Initiate implementation of planned upgrades to intermodal transportation system.	Program
ED-2.1	TOURISM EXPANSION Implement Tourism Plan developed in 0-2 year timeframe.	Program/ Capital
ED-2.2	PORT AND AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS Implement redevelopment and facility improvement plans for Port of Galveston and Galveston International Airport.	Program/ Capital
ED-2.3, ED-6.2 <i>Links:</i> ED-2.4, ED-6.3	HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS Establish cooperative partnerships and planning coordination mechanisms with Galveston College, UTMB & TAMUG.	Program
ED-4.3 <i>Links:</i> LU-2.1.1	BROADWAY CORRIDOR REVITALIZATION Promote revitalization and redevelopment of suitable land uses along Broadway Corridor.	Program
ED-4.5, CC-2.6, LU-2.2.1	ISLAND ENTRANCE REDEVELOPMENT Implement Galveston Island entrance gateway treatment and Galvez Mall site access enhancements for Galveston Island entrance to facilitate redevelopment opportunities.	Capital/ Program
ED-7.1 <i>Links:</i> ED-7.2	KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT DATABASE Create "knowledge management" database.	Program/ Capital
ED-7.2	INFORMATION SHARING Incorporate knowledge management database into the City's website and make available for public information.	Program/ Capital
ED-8.1	IT INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN Develop a long-term (2-, 5-, and 10-year) plan for a comprehensive IT infrastructure initiative.	Program

Table 2. Action Plan – New Comprehensive Plan Initiatives (cont'd.)

Mid-Term Actions (2-5 years)		
Ref. No.	Strategy/Action	Type
ED-8.2 <i>Links: LU-3.3.2</i>	IT INFRASTRUCTURE WORKING COMMITTEE Develop a working committee for IT infrastructure development to focus on targeted industrial redevelopment candidates identified in the 0-2 year timeframe.	Program
CC-2.5	WAYFINDING SIGNAGE PROGRAM Develop and implement a wayfinding signage program for Galveston's attractions.	Program/ Capital
CC-3.1 <i>Links: ED-1.2</i>	SEAWALL BLVD. IMPROVEMENTS Implement Seawall Blvd. Streetscape/pedestrian improvement plan developed in the 0-2 year timeframe.	Capital
PR-7.1.5	REALLOCATION OF NON-PARKS-&REC FUNCTIONS Reallocate responsibilities for non-parks-&recreation property maintenance.	Program
PR-7.2.4	EXISTING PARK ENHANCEMENTS Add facilities to existing parks (walking trails, courts, restrooms, picnic areas, etc.), as necessary and appropriate.	Capital
PR-7.2.5	SPORTS FIELD LAND ACQUISITION Prepare feasibility study and acquire lands for additional sports field/master sports complex.	Program/ Capital
PR-7.2.6, PR-7.2.6	PARK & OPEN SPACE LAND ACQUISITION Begin acquisition of land for additional parks and open space.	Program/ Capital
LU-1.2.2 <i>Links: HN-1.1</i>	GOLF COURSE RECONFIGURATION Conduct feasibility studies to identify opportunities for incorporation of compatible housing sites around a reconfigured golf course, and to provide additional golf amenities.	Program
LU-1.3.1 <i>Links: NR-1.2</i>	SANITARY SEWER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION Continue implementation of Sanitary Sewer Plan for Unreserved Areas	Program/ Capital
LU-3.1.1 <i>Links: LU-4.3.1</i>	PELICAN ISLAND/WHARVES SPECIFIC PLAN Prepare Pelican Island/Wharves Specific Plan	Program
LU-3.2.1 <i>Links: LU-4.3.1</i>	AIRPORT MASTER PLAN Update Airport Master Plan	Program
LU-3.3.2 <i>Links: ED-8.1, ED-8.2, LU-4.3.1</i>	INDUSTRIAL SITE REDEVELOPMENT SPECIFIC PLAN Prepare Specific Plan for industrial redevelopment target site identification	Program
LU-4.1.1 <i>Links: LU-4.3.1</i>	INTEGRATED CBD PLAN Prepare integrated CBD Plan	Program
LU-4.2.3 <i>Links: LU-4.3.1, HP-1.6</i>	NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN UPDATES Initiate update/revision of additional neighborhood plans	Program
LU-4.3.1 <i>Links: LU-1.3.1</i>	WEST END HOLDING CAPACITY Update West End holding capacity analysis in order to assess the need, if any, for additional growth management and/or system capacity enhancement measures	Program
HP-1.5 <i>Links: HP-1.4</i>	HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN Implement Historic Preservation Plan	Program
HP-2.1 <i>Links: LU-4.2.3</i>	SPECIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATIONS As appropriate, undertake the designation of additional Special Historic Districts.	Program
HP-4.1, HP-4.3	NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICTS/BUFFER DISTRICTS Establish standards and regulations for Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts and Buffer Districts.	Program/ Regulation
HP-7.1, HP-7.2	PUBLIC AWARENESS/PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM Implement Historic Preservation Public Awareness/Public Relations Program developed in the 0-2 year timeframe.	Program

5.0 Plan Implementation

Table 2. Action Plan – New Comprehensive Plan Initiatives (cont'd.)

Mid-Term Actions (2-5 years)		
Ref. No.	Strategy/Action	Type
NR-1.1	REDUCTION OF NON-POINT SOURCE CONTAMINATION Complete a Stormwater Management Plan.	Program
NR-1.1	REDUCTION OF NON-POINT SOURCE CONTAMINATION Adopt a Stormwater Management Ordinance for new development, requiring on-site pre-treatment.	Regulation
NR-1.1	REDUCTION OF NON-POINT SOURCE CONTAMINATION Implement incentives for environmentally sensitive planning.	Program/ Regulation
NR-1.2 <i>Links: LU-1.3.1</i>	IMPROVEMENT OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT IN OSDS Work with Galveston County to implement routine maintenance and inspection program of OSDS.	Program
NR-1.2 <i>Links: LU-1.3.1</i>	IMPROVEMENT OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT IN OSDS Work with Galveston County to initiate requirements for repair and/or upgrade of OSDS.	Regulation
NR-1.2 <i>Links: LU-1.3.1</i>	IMPROVEMENT OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT IN OSDS Work with Galveston County to require septic system certification and upgrades (as necessary) upon sale or transfer of property.	Regulation
NR-1.3	REDUCTION OF RECREATIONAL BOATING IMPACTS Require marinas and dockside operations to implement washdown controls and containment measures.	Program/ Regulation
NR-1.3	REDUCTION OF RECREATIONAL BOATING IMPACTS Require all marinas with more than 10 slips to have pump-out facilities or equivalent protective measures.	Program/ Regulation
NR-1.3	REDUCTION OF RECREATIONAL BOATING IMPACTS Implement an enforcement program to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations regarding spillage prevention, containment and clean-up at marina sites and fueling facilities.	Program
NR-2.4	BEACH AND BAY ACCESS Prepare a Beach and Bay Access Plan and regulations.	Program/ Regulation
NR-2.5	BEACH MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION PLAN Update Beach Management and Restoration Plan.	Program
NR-3.3	MITIGATION OF WETLAND IMPACTS Coordinate with USACOE to change requirements for wetland impact mitigation.	Regulation
NR-5.1	OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PROGRAM Pursue and/or allocate funding to implement Open Space Network Plan priority acquisition list.	Program

Table 2. Action Plan – New Comprehensive Plan Initiatives (cont'd.)

Long-Term Actions (5-10 years)		
Ref. No.	Strategy/Action	Type
HN-1.4 <i>Links:</i> ED-4.6, LU-1.2.4	EAST END FLATS/MID ISLAND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY Implement Mid Island/East End Flats Development Strategy developed in the 2-5 year timeframe.	Program/ Capital
HN-2.5 <i>Links:</i> HP-1.8	FINANCIAL TOOLS/FUNDING SOURCES Continue implementation of strategy to pursue at least one grant per year, as appropriate, to fund plan initiatives.	Program
ED-2.1 <i>Links:</i> ED-5.3	TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS Complete improvements to intermodal transportation system.	Capital
ED-2.4 <i>Links:</i> ED-2.5, ED-8.1, ED-8.2	TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER Identify and pursue opportunities to collaborate with Johnson Space Center & NASA to develop space-related technology industries.	Program
ED-2.5 <i>Links:</i> ED-2.4, ED-8.1, ED-8.2	IT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Develop and implement a strategy to encourage development of new information technology businesses.	Program
ED-2.5 <i>Links:</i> ED-2.4, ED-8.1, ED-8.2	IT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Create/ provide support for a local/regional IT business organization.	Program
ED-8.1	IT INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN Implement IT Infrastructure Improvement Plan developed in the 2-5 year timeframe.	Program/ Capital
PR-7.2.6, PR-7.2.6	PARK & OPEN SPACE LAND ACQUISITION Continue acquisition of land for additional parks and open space.	Program/ Capital
LU-1.3.1 <i>Links:</i> NR-1.2	SANITARY SEWER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION Complete implementation of Sanitary Sewer Plan for Unserved Areas.	Capital
LU-3.1.1 <i>Links:</i> LU-4.3.1	PELICAN ISLAND/WHARVES SPECIFIC PLAN Implement Pelican Island/Wharves Specific Plan developed in the 2-5 year timeframe.	Program/ Capital
LU-3.2.1 <i>Links:</i> LU-4.3.1	AIRPORT MASTER PLAN Implement Airport Master Plan updated in the 2-5 year timeframe.	Program/ Capital
LU-3.3.2 <i>Links:</i> ED-8.1, ED-8.2, LU-4.3.1	INDUSTRIAL SITE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN Implement Industrial Site Redevelopment Plan developed in the 2-5 year timeframe.	Program/ Capital
LU-4.1.1 <i>Links:</i> LU-4.3.1	INTEGRATED CBD PLAN Implement Integrated CBD Plan developed in the 2-5 year timeframe.	Program/ Capital
LU-4.2.3 <i>Links:</i> LU-4.3.1, HP-1.6	NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN UPDATES Complete update/revision of all neighborhood plans.	Program
LU-4.3.1 <i>Links:</i> LU-1.3.1	WEST END HOLDING CAPACITY Update West End holding capacity analysis to assess the need for additional growth management and/or system capacity enhancement measures.	Program
HP-2.1 <i>Links:</i> LU-4.2.3	SPECIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATIONS As appropriate, undertake the designation of additional Special Historic Districts.	Program
HP-2.2	HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES Complete first 5 th -year update of Design Guidelines for the Historic Districts of Galveston, as appropriate.	Regulation
NR-5.1	OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PROGRAM Continue implementation of Open Space Network Plan priority acquisition list.	Program

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5.4 Capital Improvement Program

A Capital Improvement Program (**CIP**) is one of the key methods available for implementing a municipal Comprehensive Plan. A CIP is a multi-year schedule of prioritized public physical improvements to be undertaken by the City. These improvements typically consist of major, infrequent expenditures, such as the construction of new infrastructure or the rehabilitation or repair of existing facilities, and are kept separate from the operating budget of the municipality, which, by contrast, may include routine maintenance and replacement efforts. CIPs are planning documents, since they define the infrastructure priorities that guide and support the growth of the City. Consequently, they should be a direct reflection of the policies, strategies, and actions called for in the Comprehensive Plan.

Currently, the City of Galveston's CIP is a five-year schedule of proposed improvements prepared by a committee of senior staff, reviewed by the Planning Commission, and submitted to City Council for adoption. The CIP is revised every year. Since not all improvements listed in the CIP have funding identified, only first-year projects with funding are usually included in the City's budget. Consequently, because items beyond the next year do not have committed funding, the CIP functions more as a "wish list" than as a formal planning document.

The City's CIP improvements are prioritized using three types of criteria:

1. Public health and safety, legal mandate issues, protection of existing facilities, potential for economic development, and impact on the operating budget.
2. Population served, relation to the adopted plan, intensity of use, and scheduling issues.
3. Available financing, special need, energy consumption, timelines, and public support.

This ranking system places more importance on maintenance, conservation, and economic development than on consistency with strategic objectives set in the Comprehensive Plan.

In order to effectively implement the Comprehensive Plan, the CIP process should be modified as follows:

- **Indicate anticipated funding sources for all items in the CIP, including those extending through the 5-year horizon of the CIP.**
- **Ensure the CIP assigns priorities to capital projects consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.**

To assist in the coordination between the CIP and the Comprehensive Plan, it may be useful to array CIP projects by Plan element. By organizing proposed capital improvement projects within the policy structure provided by the plan, progress in implementing the plan can be regularly monitored. The conceptual CIP template provided below (Table 2) depicts this approach to organizing CIP projects.

Beyond the CIP evaluation, selection, and ranking processes, the most urgent matter affecting the viability of a CIP program is the availability of funding sources. The next section focuses on financing sources and approaches to address this issue.

Table 2 - Conceptual CIP Template

Projects	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<u>Land Use</u>					
Project 1	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project 2	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project 3	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<u>Parks & Recreation</u>					
Project 1	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project 2	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project 3	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<u>Housing & Neighborhoods</u>					
Project 1		\$	\$	\$	\$
Project 2	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project 3	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<u>Economic Dev.</u>					
Project 1	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project 2	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project 3	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<u>Community Character</u>					
Project 1	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project 2	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Project 3	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

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5.5 Funding Sources

In recent years, the City's CIPs have indicated funding for improvements consisting of a combination of general fund revenues, user fees, revenue bonds, and state and federal grants. By focusing on qualifying and competing for all available grants, the City can make measurable strides in revenue enhancement, with relatively modest efforts. For example, immediate opportunities exist to expand grant revenues from Texas Parks and Wildlife for park and recreation improvements and from the Texas Historical Commission for historic preservation efforts.

Both user fees and revenue bonds are funding methods applicable to revenue-producing improvements such as utilities, or certain municipal facilities, such as parking garages or golf courses. These types of improvements are often the easiest to fund, since they can be largely self-financing. The use of general fund revenues for making capital improvements (either directly or through indebtedness) presents a bigger challenge, however, because these funds also sustain the operating budget and depend on the more traditional revenue sources, such as property and sales taxes.

Currently, two-thirds of Galveston's revenue is provided by property and sales taxes. The ability of the City to see an increase in revenue from these sources is dependent upon several variables. First, these revenues will increase to the degree to which the City may attract new private investment in residential, commercial and industrial development or renovation efforts. Second, sales tax revenues may be increased if the property tax cap is altered.

The City currently charges a two-percent sales tax, the maximum amount allowed by the State of Texas. Of this two-percent, one-half a percent (25%) consists of a 4B economic development sales tax, which is used for funding infrastructure improvements through an Industrial Development Corporation. Another half-percent (25%) is used for property tax relief through a property tax cap, with the remaining one-percent (50%) allocated to the general fund. As long as the property tax cap is in place, the City will not be able to tap into a full one-fourth of its sales tax revenue for the purpose of funding new expenses. While *ad valorem* property tax reduction can benefit economic development, if strategically targeted as an incentive for new investment, the use of one-quarter of the City's sales tax revenue to maintain the property

tax cap severely limits the City's ability to make investments necessary to sustain sound economic growth. Consequently, it is recommended that the City consider eliminating the property tax cap.

The one-half percent "4B" tax is currently used for the following purposes:

- Beach renourishment project of the Park Board of Trustees (25%)
- Streets and drainage improvements (25%)
- Sanitary sewer improvements (50%)

The beach renourishment project is being funded through 15-year bonds. Once the bonds have been retired, that portion of the 4B tax used for this project can only be renewed and extended if approved in a voter referendum. The City should plan for the renewal of this part of the 4B tax in order to maintain this source of revenue.

Given the inability of existing funding sources to support the needed level of investment, the City should actively pursue a range of additional funding sources. Two useful financing tools, impact fees and special districts, are discussed below. In addition, an inventory of other local, State, and Federal funding sources is included in the following section.

Impact Fees

Impact fees are payments required from a builder or developer to provide public services to new development or redevelopment. These fees are calculated as the proportional share of the capital cost of the required major off-site facilities (water, wastewater, drainage, roads). Impact fees are regulated under Chapter 395 of the Texas Local Government Code.

The advantages and disadvantages of impact fees should be carefully considered before implementation. Impact fees in Texas (and generally in most other states) can only be used for financing construction of the infrastructure required to serve new development. They cannot be used for financing the repair, operation, or maintenance of existing or new facilities, or for upgrading existing substandard facilities. This has made impact fees the tool of choice for new, fast-growing communities with considerable development pressures and vacant land. For older, more stable communities that are not planning significant development or redevelopment, impact fees may be less useful, because the infrastructure required

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for new development or redevelopment may represent only a small proportion of its total infrastructure improvement needs. If the majority of the infrastructure needs related to repairing and replacement of existing infrastructure, impact fees may not be helpful.

Another consideration is that, since impact fees add to development costs, which are then passed onto consumers, higher housing costs may further reduce the City's ability to attract new middle-income families. Likewise, impact fees may be perceived by developers as a disincentive that adds to development costs, reduces profits, or imposes an additional degree of difficulty in competing in the regional housing market. Conversely, however, a decision to not impose impact fees, where new development may necessitate substantial public investments, is often considered a "subsidy" for new development and new households, borne by existing taxpayers.

If one of the objectives of the City is to attract new home buyers, impact fees may undermine this objective by making new housing more expensive in the City and affecting the competitiveness of its housing market within the overall region. Consequently, the City may consider it more appropriate to focus instead on infrastructure financing tools that work as incentives or subsidies (such as special districts, analyzed below), rather than as an added cost to development.

Special Districts

Special Districts created under the Texas Local Government Code can finance infrastructure improvements within a defined area through revenues produced by the District itself. Some Special Districts depend on special assessments or fees charged to the District's property owners, and require extensive property owner support. This is the case in Public Improvement Districts (**PID**) and Municipal Management Districts (see Chapters 372 and 375, respectively, of the Texas Local Government Code). In defined areas, where major public improvements are likely to directly benefit those property owners and businesses, it may be prudent to recapture some portion of the public cost by special assessments to property and/or business owners within the district. One example of this situation is Seawall Boulevard, where proposed corridor improvements might make such designation appropriate.

Other types of districts make use of future municipal

revenues generated by increasing property values and associated assessments, rather than by assessing property owners additional tax rates or fees. This is the case in Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (**TIRZ**) (see Chapter 311 of the Texas Tax Code), which have become popular nationwide as a financial incentive mechanism for redevelopment. In a TIRZ, the increment in property tax revenue captured after a set date is used, for a defined period of time (e.g., 20-30 years), to finance public improvements in a given area. As an economic development tool, they constitute an incentive for developers to improve the competitiveness of a city, by creating prime commercial and residential markets.

Chapter 378 of the Texas Local Government Code allows cities to designate a specific area as a Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (**NEZ**) for the purpose of promoting economic development. Once the zone is created by the city, property owners can enter into contracts for, among other things, the rebate of property or sales taxes. This new tool may be useful in promoting the renovation or redevelopment of aging retail, particularly along Broadway Boulevard.

The City of Galveston should consider utilizing one of more of these types of Special Districts as a means to encourage development and assisting in financing capital improvements.

Additional Funding Sources

This section summarizes additional local, State and Federal funding which should be investigated to expand city revenues necessary to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Table 4 - Funding Opportunities to Implement Comprehensive Plan Initiatives

Comprehensive Plan Elements and Recommended Actions (Examples)	Potential Funding Sources
<p>Land Use FM 3005 Flooding Improvements Sanitary Sewer Plan Implementation Island Entrance Redevelopment Golf Course Relocation Pelican Island/Wharves Plan Industrial Site Redevelopment Plan Integrated CBD Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones • Public Improvement Districts • Municipal Management Districts • 4A & 4B Sales Tax • Federal Transportation & Economic Development Grants • Impact Fees • Venue Project Tax • User Fees • Public/Private Partnerships.

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Table 4 - Funding Opportunities to Implement Comprehensive Plan Initiatives (cont'd.)

<p>Parks & Recreation Parks Facility Enhancements Existing Park Enhancements Parks and Open Space Land Acquisition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General fund • Federal Parks and Recreation & Environmental Grants • User Fees
<p>Housing & Neighborhoods Neighborhood Amenities Beach Renourishment East End Flats/Mid Island Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Housing grants • Impact Fees • See also Economic Development funding sources below
<p>Economic Development Seawall Beachfront Enhancements Infrastructure Improvements Beautification Improvements Tourism Expansion Port and Airport Improvements Island Entrance Redevelopment Knowledge Management Database Information Sharing Transportation Improvements IT Infrastructure Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones • Public Improvement Districts • Municipal Management Districts • 4A & 4B Sales Tax • Municipal Economic Development Grants and Loans • Neighborhood Empowerment Zones • Federal Transportation & Economic Development Grants • Venue Project Tax • User Fees • Public/Private Partnerships
<p>Community Character Seawall Boulevard Improvements Neighborhood Amenities Island Entrance Redevelopment Wayfinding Signage Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Economic Development, above.

State and Local Funding Sources for Capital Improvement Projects and Economic Development:

While many of the funding sources identified below will require additional investigative effort, some sources, in the form of grants, are immediately available. Two priority targets are grants from Texas Parks and Wildlife, for park and recreation improvements, and from the Texas Historical Commission, for historic preservation efforts. To ensure that the City applies for and secures all available grant sources, the City should consolidate its grant application efforts, with leadership from staff with specialized skills and training in grant funding.

Enterprise Zones (EZs):

An area of a City designated by the State of Texas that complies with its criteria of economically distressed zone. Enterprise zones are eligible for a number of financial incentives to businesses within the zone. Specific businesses can also be designated as “enterprise projects”, which allows

for additional tax benefits. The program is administered by the Texas Department of Economic Development.

Exactions:

Required in-kind contributions of facilities constructed by developers and dedicated to the City (e.g., neighborhood parks).

General Obligation Bonds:

Bonds for which the taxing power (general revenue) of the issuing City is pledged to paying the interest and principal to retire the debt.

Impact Fees:

Payments required from a builder or developer, calculated as the proportional share of the capital cost of the major off-site facilities (water, wastewater, drainage, or road infrastructure) required to serve that new development. In the State of Texas, the adoption of impact fees requires a detailed process, which includes the appointment of an advisory committee, the conducting of public hearings, and the drafting of a land use assumptions study, a capital improvement plan, and an impact fee ordinance. The fees cannot be used for the repair, operation, or maintenance of existing or new facilities or for upgrading existing substandard facilities. Impact fees are regulated by Chapter 395 of the Texas Local Government Code.

Municipal Management District:

A defined area where a majority of property owners have agreed to self-imposed property taxes, special assessments, impact fees, or other charges for the purpose of financing facilities, infrastructure, and services beyond those already provided. Municipal Management Districts are regulated in Chapter 375 of the Texas Local Government Code.

Municipal Economic Development Grants and Loans:

Money or resources offered by a city after making a determination that doing so promotes economic development and stimulates business and commercial activity. They are regulated under Chapter 380 of the Texas Local Government Code.

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Neighborhood Empowerment Zones:

A zone in which a city is allowed to contract to abate and/or refund all or a portion of taxes, including sales taxes, if the city makes findings that the zone will promote economic development. The zones are regulated under Chapter 378 of the Texas Local Government Code.

Public Improvement District (PID):

A project area where a special assessment is levied and collected by the City from the area's property owners for the purposes of financing public improvements, safety services, or business-related services. The statute authorizing the creation of a PID is found in Chapter 372 of the Local Government Code.

Public/Private Partnerships (P3):

Any of a number of different types of business relationships between a City and a private entity for purpose of designing, financing, building, owning, or operating a municipal facility or service. P3 can range from outsourcing of certain services by public utilities to complete asset transfer ("privatization"). P3 include different forms of procuring a project for which funds have been secured (e.g., the "design-build" delivery method) or for projects that also require private financing (e.g., the "lease-purchase" delivery method). P3 usually refer to improvements that produce revenues, such as public utilities or housing projects.

Revenue Bonds:

Bonds financed through service charges or fees of the project they fund, rather than through the general revenue of the issuing City. Revenue bonds are frequently used for projects such as water or sewer facilities that produce revenues.

Section 4A Economic Development Sales Tax:

A sales tax of not more than one-half of one percent used for funding business airports, port-related facilities, manufacturing and recycling facilities, distribution or small warehouse facilities, or the development of closed or realigned military bases. The 4A tax has to be approved by City voters and is subject to the local sales tax cap. The funds are managed by a development corporation. A 4A sales tax can be voted together

with a property tax relief sales tax. The tax is regulated under the Texas Development Corporation Act.

Section 4B Economic Development Sales Tax: A sales tax of not more than one-half of one percent used for funding the projects allowed for the 4A sales tax or any of the following: athletic facilities, parks and other public space improvements, tourism and entertainment facilities, commercial facilities, transportation and infrastructure improvements, or affordable housing. The 4A tax has to be approved by City voters and is subject to the local sales tax cap. The funds are managed by a development corporation. The tax is regulated under the Texas Development Corporation Act.

Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ):

A defined area slated for redevelopment where all or portions of the increments in property tax revenues captured after a certain date are used, for a defined period of time, to finance specific public improvements in that area. TIRZ are created by the City Council and managed by a board. TIRZ are regulated under the Chapter 311 of the Texas Tax Code.

Texas Historical Commission Grants (PRIORITY)

As indicated in the Historic Preservation Element Galveston is currently ineligible to receive federal funds through grants provided through the Texas Historical Commission. However, the City's current initiatives in historic preservation will lead to its designation by the state historic preservation officer as a "certified local government", enabling Galveston to receive Certified Local Government Grants funded through the National Historic Preservation Act.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Grants (PRIORITY)

A primary motivation in preparing a separate Galveston Parks Plan is to qualify for greater levels of funding for park improvements from Texas Parks and Wildlife. Although the City has made some use of such funding including the recent soccer complex, greater attention to grantsmanship skills and coordination should produce substantial additional revenues from this source.

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User Fees:

Fees charged to the users of a facility or service, where payment depends on the frequency or degree of actual use. User fees can include entrance fees for parks and other recreation facilities, sewer or water fees, tolls for roads and bridges, or parking fees.

Venue Project Tax:

In the State of Texas, a tax used to fund a sports facility, convention center, tourist development area, and other economic development projects. Venue taxes can consist of any of the following: (1) A short-term motor vehicle rental tax; (2) an admissions tax on venue tickets; (3) an event parking tax at the venue; (4) an additional hotel occupancy tax; (5) a facility use tax; or (6) a special motor vehicle tax authorized in certain cities. The venue tax has to be approved by City voters and is subject to the local sales tax cap. Venue Project Taxes are regulated under Chapter 334 of the Texas Local Government Code and Section 321.508 of the Texas Tax Code.

Selected Federal Funding Sources

The following list profiles selected Federal funding programs that might assist the City of Galveston in financing capital improvement projects envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan. Some of the funds are administered by State or regional agencies; others are provided directly to local governments or local government units. The programs are of a general nature, addressing housing, economic development, environmental, and infrastructure projects. Additional programs exist that target specific populations, such as the homeless, persons with HIV/AIDS, frail elderly, and people with disabilities.

The funding for these programs varies by fiscal year; programs may also be canceled from one year to the next. The corresponding agencies should be contacted for detailed information.

More comprehensive lists of Federal funding programs can be found in the *Federal Programs Guide*, available at the Community Empowerment Board website (www.ceb.hud.gov/ceb) (www.ceb.hud.gov/ceb), and in the National Livability Resource Center at the Livable Communities website (www.livablecommunities.gov).

Housing and Neighborhoods

Capital Fund Program (CFP):

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Units of Government Funded: Public housing agencies.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Funds development, financing, and modernization of public housing projects. Also includes vacancy reduction; demolition and replacement of buildings; resident relocation; programs to improve economic self-sufficiency, participation, and security of residents; and homeownership activities.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Units of Government Funded: Metropolitan cities (population >50,000), urban counties (population > 200,000), and States (for distribution to non-entitled communities).

Funded Improvements / Activities: Funds the construction of public facilities and infrastructure; public services for youth, seniors, or the disabled; crime reduction initiatives; homeless and housing services; direct and technical assistance to for-profit businesses. CDBG entitlements provide the overall framework for the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program, the Economic Development Initiative (EDI), and the Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI).

Economic Development Initiative (EDI):

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Units of Government Funded: Units of general local government that are eligible public entities under the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program.

Funded Improvements / Activities: EDI funds are used to enhance the security of Section 108 loans or improve the viability of projects financed through Section 108. EDI grant funds and 108 proceeds must be used together to support the same eligible project.

HOME Investment Partnership:

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban

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Development

Units of Government Funded: States and units of local government.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides funds for tenant-based assistance, housing rehabilitation, and new construction assistance for affordable housing for low-income persons.

HOPE VI Demolition/Revitalization Programs:

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Units of Government Funded: Public housing agencies.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides funds for the demolition, rehabilitation, reconfiguration, or replacement of obsolete public housing projects.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit:

Agency: US Department of Treasury

Units of Government Funded: Owners of residential rental buildings in low-income housing.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides a tax credit over a period of ten years for projects involving the construction or substantial renovation of low-income rental housing projects.

Neighborhood Initiatives Grant:

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Units of Government Funded: State and local governments, non-profit and for-profit agencies, and academic institutions.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Grants for a wide variety of community and housing activities – neighborhood revitalization, affordable housing, economic development, and community services.

Section 108 Loan Guarantees:

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Units of Government Funded: CDBG entitlement recipients.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Constitutes the loan guarantee portion of the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). Eligible activities include CDBG activities, land acquisitions, economic development projects, property rehabilitations, public facilities, and other activities that provide decent housing, a suitable

living environment, and expanding economic opportunities for persons of low and moderate income.

Parks and Recreation

Recreational Trails Program:

Agency: US Department of Transportation

Units of Government Funded: Units of local governments, state agencies, Indian tribal governments and Federal agencies through State transportation Recreational Trails Program Agencies.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides funds for maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails; development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages; purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment; construction of new recreational trails; acquisition of easements or property for recreational trails or corridors; and educational programs.

Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program:

Agency: US Department of the Interior

Units of Government Funded: Local communities.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides matching grants for the rehabilitation of critically needed recreation areas and facilities and the development of improved recreation programs and services.

Economic Development

Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI):

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Units of Government Funded: Units of general local government that are eligible public entities under the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program.

Funded Improvements / Activities: BEDI funds are used to enhance the security of Section 108 loans or improve the viability of the project financed through Section 108. EDI grant funds and 108 proceeds must be used together to support the same eligible project. Funds are used to finance redevelopment of brownfield sites.

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Coastal Zone Management Program:

Agency: US Department of Commerce

Units of Government Funded: States and territory coastal zone management agencies.

Funded Improvements / Activities: The program is a partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and coastal states and localities to manage growth and development in the nation's coastal zones. Eligible activities include management plans, waterfront revitalization projects, mitigation of coastal hazards, development of local plans and ordinances, purchase of open space for public access and resource protection, development of coastal recreational facilities, and coastal ordinance implementation.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG):

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Units of Government Funded: Metropolitan cities (population >50,000), urban counties (population > 200,000), and States (for distribution to non-entitled communities).

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides funds for construction of public facilities and infrastructure; public services for youth, seniors, or the disabled; crime reduction initiatives; homeless and housing services; direct and technical assistance to for-profit businesses. CDBG entitlements provide the overall framework for the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program, the Economic Development Initiative (EDI), and the Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI).

Economic Development Initiative (EDI):

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Units of Government Funded: Units of general local government that are eligible public entities under the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program.

Funded Improvements / Activities: EDI funds are used to enhance the security of Section 108 loans or improve the viability of the projects financed through Section 108. EDI grant funds and 108 proceeds must be used together to support the same eligible project.

Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities Program:

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban Development (for urban zones)

Units of Government Funded: Areas nominated by local governments and States.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Funds can be used for a wide variety of programs, services, and activities directed at revitalizing distressed communities. Funds are used for projects consistent with a strategic plan, which is submitted as part of application process.

Historic Preservation Tax Incentives:

Agency: US Department of the Interior

Units of Government Funded: Owners of buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places or buildings located in certain historic districts.

Funded Improvements / Activities: The program rewards private investment by providing a 20-percent tax credit for rehabilitating historic buildings for income-producing purposes.

Public Works and Economic Development Program:

Agency: US Department of Commerce

Units of Government Funded: Economic development districts, states, cities, and other political subdivisions and agencies.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides funds for upgrading, revitalizing, or expanding the physical infrastructure (e.g., water and sewer systems, access roads, rail spurs, ports) of cities in decline for the purpose of attracting new industry, encouraging business expansion, diversifying local economies, and generating and retaining private sector investment.

Section 108 Loan Guarantees:

Agency: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Units of Government Funded: CDBG entitlement recipients.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Constitutes the loan guarantee portion of the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). Eligible activities include CDBG activities, land acquisitions, economic development projects, property rehabilitations, public facilities, and other activities that provide decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanding economic

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opportunities for persons of low and moderate income.

Short Term Planning Grants to States, Sub-State Planning Regions and Urban Areas:

Agency: US Department of Commerce

Units of Government Funded: States, cities, and other political subdivisions and agencies.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides grants to support new economic development planning, policy making and implementation efforts, and to establish comprehensive economic development planning processes cooperatively with state, state political subdivisions, and regional economic development districts.

Transportation Enhancements:

Agency: US Department of Transportation

Units of Government Funded: State transportation agencies and metropolitan planning organizations.

Funded Improvements / Activities: The program funds a variety of transportation-related projects that enhance and strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of transportation systems.

Environment

Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment Initiative:

Agency: US Environmental Protection Agency

Units of Government Funded: States and local governments; Federally recognized Native American tribes.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides funds for property assessment and development of cleanup and reuse strategies for brownfields, and revolving loan funds for cleanup activities.

Brownfields Revitalization Initiative:

Agency: US Department of Transportation

Units of Government Funded: States and metropolitan planning organizations.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Allows the use of existing transportation program funds for brownfield redevelopment projects related to transportation.

Coastal Zone Management Program:

Agency: US Department of Commerce

Units of Government Funded: States and territory coastal zone management agencies.

Funded Improvements / Activities: The program is a partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and coastal states and localities to manage growth and development in the nation's coastal zones. Eligible activities include management plans, waterfront revitalization projects, mitigation of coastal hazards, development of local plans and ordinances, purchase of open space for public access and resource protection, development of coastal recreational facilities, and coastal ordinance implementation.

Environmental Cleanup Cost “Brownfields” Tax Deduction:

Agency: US Department of Treasury

Units of Government Funded: Individuals and businesses that own a business-oriented, contaminated site in a “targeted area” complying with certain demographic characteristics.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Allows site owners to deduct certain cleanup costs in the year they are paid.

Innovative Community Partnership Program:

Agency: US Environmental Protection Agency

Units of Government Funded: State, county, regional, and local agencies, and non-profit and other organizations.

Funded Improvements/Activities: Planning, community involvement, training, and information activities that seek to improve the environmental problems of a community and make it a better place to live. Areas of priority consideration are: restoration and protection of community watersheds and airsheds; integrated community planning for environmental results; and environmentally responsible redevelopment and revitalization.

Transit and Transportation

Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways:

Agency: US Department of Transportation

Units of Government Funded: State transportation agencies and metropolitan planning organizations.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides funds

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for bicycle and pedestrian projects, on- or off-road, serving a transportation function.

Livable Communities:

Agency: US Department of Transportation

Units of Government Funded: Transit operators, metropolitan planning organizations, city and county government, planning agencies and other bodies with authority to plan or construct transit.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Assists communities in planning and designing community-oriented and well-designed transit systems. Activities include planning pedestrian walkways and transit-oriented development; assessing environmental, social, economic, land use, and urban design impacts of projects; feasibility studies of transit projects; technical assistance; participation by community organizations and businesses; evaluating best practices and developing innovative urban design, land use, and zoning practices.

Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program:

Agency: US Department of Transportation

Units of Government Funded: State and local governments, government sponsored authorities and corporations, railroads and joint ventures that include at least one railroad.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides direct loans and loan guarantees for the acquisition, improvement, or rehabilitation of intermodal or rail equipment facilities, refinancing outstanding debt incurred for these purposes, or development or establishment of new intermodal or railroad facilities.

Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot:

Agency: US Department of Transportation

Units of Government Funded: States, metropolitan planning organizations, city and county governments, planning agencies, and other public bodies.

Funded Improvements / Activities: Provides funds for planning or building any project currently eligible for funding under the Federal highway or transit programs; other activities that look at the relationship among transportation, communities, and system preservation.

Transportation Enhancements:

Agency: US Department of Transportation

Units of Government Funded: State transportation agencies and metropolitan planning organizations.

Funded Improvements / Activities: The program funds a variety of transportation-related projects that enhance and strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of transportation system.

Table 5. Action Plan – Summary Schedule

	High Priority/Short-Term Actions (0-2 years)	Mid-Term Actions (2-5 years)	Long-Term Actions (5-10 years)
Housing & Neighborhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete necessary zoning/land development ordinance & map modifications • Develop & implement financial incentive program for infill development • Identify & strategically target priority areas for code enforcement effort • Develop plan & financial structure for homeownership program • Develop plan & funding source for targeted neighborhood amenity investment program • Develop plan & financial structure for receivership program • Identify federal, state and/or local candidate sources for funding of Comp Plan initiatives. Develop and implement strategy to pursue at least one candidate grant per year, as appropriate. • Identify project opportunities for public & private/non-profit agency partnerships • Complete review and modification of City's departmental and budgeting structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement targeted neighborhood amenity investment program • Continue pursuing at least one grant per year, as appropriate, to fund plan initiatives. • Implement beach renourishment program • Develop a strategy for development of the East End Flats/Mid Island areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue pursuing at least one grant per year, as appropriate, to fund plan initiatives. • Implement Mid Island/East End Flats Development Strategy
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete necessary zoning/land development ordinance & map modifications • Identify & strategically target priority areas for code enforcement effort • Develop plan & funding source for targeted neighborhood amenity investment program • Identify federal, state and/or local candidate sources for funding of Comp Plan initiatives. Develop and implement strategy to pursue at least one candidate grant per year, as appropriate. • Develop & implement long-term overall financial strategy for the City • Identify infrastructure and city beautification improvements necessary to support economic development initiatives • Establish coordination mechanisms to assist GISD with long-range planning and improvements for Galveston's public schools • Initiate implementation of 1998 Seawall Beachfront Plan recommendations • Develop revitalization plan for Historic Downtown Galveston and the Strand District • Develop plan and funding source to upgrade intermodal transportation system • Develop Tourism Plan to coordinate tourism expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement targeted neighborhood amenity investment program • Continue implementation of strategy to pursue at least one grant per year, as appropriate, to fund plan initiatives. • Continue implementation of City's long-term financial strategy • Implement identified infrastructure improvements • Implement identified city beautification improvements • Implement Historic Downtown Galveston and Strand District Revitalization Plan • Initiate implementation of planned upgrades to intermodal transportation system • Implement Tourism Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue implementation of strategy to pursue at least one grant per year, as appropriate, to fund plan initiatives. • Complete improvements to intermodal transportation system

Table 5. Action Plan – Summary Schedule (Cont'd.)

	High Priority/Short-Term Actions	Mid-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions
	(0-2 years)	(2-5 years)	(5-10 years)
Economic Development (cont'd.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulate redevelopment and facility improvement plans for Port of Galveston and Galveston International Airport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement redevelopment and facility improvement plans for Port of Galveston and Galveston International Airport Establish cooperative working partnerships and planning coordination mechanisms with Galveston College, UTMB & TAMUG Promote revitalization and redevelopment of suitable land uses along Broadway Corridor Implement gateway treatment for Galveston Island entrance. Adjust, as necessary, the Five-Year Mobility Plan to enhance access to Galvez Mall site in order to facilitate redevelopment opportunities Create a “knowledge management” database of available building sites and structures, zoning requirements, transportation, infrastructure, and other services Incorporate knowledge management database into the City’s website and make available for public information Develop a long-term (2-, 5-, and 10-year) plan for a comprehensive IT infrastructure initiative Develop a working committee for IT infrastructure development to pursue network expansion opportunities, focusing on targeted industrial redevelopment candidates identified in the 0-2 year timeframe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and pursue opportunities to collaborate with Johnson Space Center & NASA to develop space-related technology industries Develop and implement a strategy to encourage local entrepreneurs to develop new information technology businesses Create/ provide support for a local/regional IT business organization Implement IT Infrastructure Improvement Plan
Community Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete necessary zoning/land development ordinance & map modifications Identify & strategically target priority areas for code enforcement effort Develop plan & funding source for targeted neighborhood amenity investment program Identify federal, state and/or local candidate sources for funding of Comp Plan initiatives. Develop and implement strategy to pursue at least one candidate grant per year, as appropriate. Initiate implementation of 1998 Seawall Beachfront Plan recommendations Develop plan and funding source for Seawall Boulevard streetscape/pedestrian improvements, then proceed with construction of one ½-mile “pilot” or demonstration project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue implementation of strategy to pursue at least one grant per year, as appropriate, to fund plan initiatives. Implement Seawall Blvd. Streetscape/pedestrian improvement plan developed in the 0-2 year timeframe Implement gateway treatment for Galveston Island entrance. Adjust, as necessary, the Five-Year Mobility Plan to enhance access to Galvez Mall site in order to facilitate redevelopment opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue implementation of strategy to pursue at least one grant per year, as appropriate, to fund plan initiatives.

Table 5. Action Plan – Summary Schedule (Cont'd.)

	High Priority/Short-Term Actions	Mid-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions
	(0-2 years)	(2-5 years)	(5-10 years)
Community Character (cont'd.)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a wayfinding signage program for Galveston's attractions 	
Parks & Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate capital improvements programming for prioritized parks and recreation projects Prepare inventory evaluation of parks & recreation facilities, establish repair maintenance schedule and explore outsourcing Prepare parks department budget Initiate implementation of Parks Plan recommendations for current facility enhancement and upgrade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reallocate responsibilities for non-parks and recreation property maintenance Add facilities to existing parks (walking trails, courts, restrooms, picnic areas, etc.), as necessary and appropriate Prepare feasibility study and acquire lands for additional sports field/master sports complex Begin acquisition of land for additional parks and open space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue acquisition of land for additional parks and open space
Land Use and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete necessary zoning/land development ordinance & map modifications Identify & strategically target priority areas for code enforcement effort Implement recommended FM 3005 flooding improvements (5-Year Mobility Plan) Initiate implementation of Sanitary Sewer Plan for Unreserved Areas Plan (West End) Complete update/revision of at least one neighborhood plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue implementation of Sanitary Sewer Plan for Unreserved Areas Implement gateway treatment for Galveston Island entrance. Adjust 5-Year Mobility Plan to enhance access to Galvez Mall site in order to facilitate redevelopment opportunities Identify and study opportunities for incorporation both of compatible housing around a reconfigured golf course, and of additional golf amenities. Prepare Pelican Island/Wharves Specific Plan Update Airport Master Plan Prepare Specific Plan for industrial redevelopment target site identification Prepare integrated CBD Plan Initiate update/revision of additional neighborhood plans Update West End holding capacity analysis in order to assess the need, if any, for additional growth management and/or system capacity enhancement measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete implementation of Sanitary Sewer Plan for Unreserved Areas Implement Pelican Island/Wharves Specific Plan Implement Airport Master Plan Implement Industrial Redevelopment Target Site Specific Plan Implement Integrated CBD Plan Complete update/revision of all neighborhood plans Update West End holding capacity analysis in order to assess the need, if any, for additional growth management and/or system capacity enhancement measures
Historic Preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Design Guidelines for Historic Districts Identify & strategically target priority areas for code enforcement effort 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete first 5th-year update of Design Guidelines for Historic Districts

Table 5. Action Plan – Summary Schedule (Cont'd)

High Priority/Short-Term Actions		Mid-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions
	(0-2 years)	(2-5 years)	(5-10 years)
Historic Preservation (cont'd.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify federal, state and/or local candidate sources for funding of improvements in Historic Districts (CDBG, HOME). Ensure implementation of a coordination strategy between City's Grants and Housing Depts., HPO, and the Planning Department. Complete Citywide survey of historic properties Ensure that funding is set aside to maintain HPO as a full-time position within the Planning Department Secure Certified Local Government (CLG) status Pursue funding from THC to develop a Historic Preservation Plan (subject to local government certification) Pursue partnerships for and develop Historic Preservation Plan (subject to funding) Prohibit deferred maintenance of City-owned historic buildings Reestablish the Neighborhood Partnership Program Develop Historic Preservation Public Awareness/Public Relations Plan Work with GCHC to develop a Heritage Trail and to secure a marker from the Texas Historical Commission Initiate evaluation of potential historic district designations in conjunction with neighborhood planning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Historic Preservation Plan Implement Historic Preservation Public Awareness/Public Relations Plan Based on evaluation initiated in the 0-2 year timeframe, undertake Special Historic District designation process for suitable candidate areas Establish Neighborhood Conservation Districts and buffer areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As appropriate, undertake the designation of additional candidates for Special Historic District
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement strategy for participation in regional water quality management planning & education activities, including Texas Watch program Develop local non-point source management strategies in coordination with Galveston Bay program Pursue grant funding for pilot projects with TNRCC and GBEP to develop non-point source BMPs Evaluate the need for a moratorium on the use of OSDS for new residential units With Galveston County, study potential alternatives in waste disposal systems for marginally suitable home sites Develop and implement strategy to increase the City's participation in reviewing 404 permit applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and begin implementation of a Stormwater Management Plan Adopt a Stormwater Management Ordinance requiring pre-treatment for new development Implement incentives for environmentally sensitive planning Work with Galveston County to implement routine maintenance and inspection program of existing OSDS Work with Galveston County to initiate requirements for repair and/or upgrade of existing OSDS Work with Galveston County to require septic system certification and upgrades upon sale or transfer of property 	

Table 5. Action Plan – Summary Schedule (Cont'd.)

	High Priority/Short-Term Actions	Mid-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions
	(0-2 years)	(2-5 years)	(5-10 years)
Natural Resources (cont'd.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase City participation in the Erosion Task Force. • Increase Dune Protection Line (setback) • Strengthen guidelines/controls for fires on the beach • Develop standards for protective wetland buffer areas • Prepare Future Open Space Network Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue and/or allocate funding to implement Open Space Network Plan priority acquisition list • Implement requirements that marinas and dockside operations to implement washdown controls and containment measures • Implement requirements that all marinas with more than 10 slips to have pump-out facilities or protective measures deemed equivalent • Implement an enforcement program to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations re: spillage, prevention, containment, and clean-up • Prepare a Beach and Bay Access Plan and regulations • Update the Beach Management and Restoration Plan and regulations • Coordinate with USACOE to change requirements for wetland impact mitigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue implementation of Open Space Network Plan priority acquisition list

