

# City of Galveston Thoroughfare Plan

Galveston Planning & Development Regulations

**ADOPTED**  
**DECEMBER 13, 2012**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Overview**

The City of Galveston Thoroughfare Plan, adopted December 13, 2012 as an addendum to the 2011 Comprehensive Plan, provides a foundation for the City’s ongoing efforts to improve mobility, access, and circulation on Galveston Island. The Thoroughfare Plan includes a statement of purpose, a review of the plan’s relationship to the Comprehensive Plan, a review of important resources and references, a list and map indicating locally-determined designations of functional classifications for streets in the City’s thoroughfare network, and a list and map describing planned improvements to existing thoroughfares and the general location of new thoroughfares recommended to address access and circulation challenges.

### **1.2. Thoroughfare Plan Purpose**

An up-to-date Thoroughfare Plan offers a number of important benefits to local and regional decision-makers, property and business owners, residents, and individuals and entities interested in investing in the Island’s future. The Thoroughfare Plan provides the following:

- › a single source of City information regarding the Island’s existing thoroughfare network and planned improvements;
- › a foundation for on going coordination among local, regional, and state transportation agencies and authorities;
- › a tool to ensure City-defined projects remain eligible for consideration for funding;
- › a resource to inform decision-making by private land owners, developers, residents, local and regional planners, and local officials; and
- › a tool to assist in the preservation of adequate rights-of-way in locations where improved or new thoroughfares are planned.

### **1.3. Relationship to Comprehensive Plan**

Completion of the Thoroughfare Plan is the first step toward meeting broad objectives identified in the Comprehensive Plan. Comprehensive Plan Objective T-4 calls for the City to “improve internal city organization, policies, and planning to provide better transportation opportunities” and subsequent sections call for the review of transportation problems and recommendations, the development of a functional classification system for roadways, and the identification of potential new roadway corridors and connections.

The Comprehensive Plan also calls for a number of actions beyond the scope of the Thoroughfare Plan, including the development of plans to address multimodal travel, public/private funding of improvements, implementation of Intelligent Transportation

System projects, and preparation of plans to manage special event traffic. These topics, and others important to the future operation and improvement of the City’s transportation system, may be addressed in future planning efforts.

#### 1.4. Planning Resources

The Thoroughfare Plan builds on information presented in a number of important local and regional planning studies and reports. A review of plans and reports used as references in the preparation of the Plan follows.

##### **Galveston County Roadway Development Plan**

In 2000, Galveston County prepared a Galveston County Roadway Development Plan, which included a map and a series of tables identifying short-, medium-, and long-range projects for the County. The plan included a number of projects in the City of Galveston, including many of those described in the City’s 1999 Mobility Plan.

##### **Galveston Five-Year Mobility Plan Update**

In 2004, the City completed a review and update of its five-year Mobility Plan, which was first completed in 1999. The 2004 updated plan includes an overview of improvements completed between 1999 and 2004 and information regarding a range of specific mobility topics, including evacuation, major activity centers, passenger rail, port activities, and airport improvements. The plan includes a list of prioritized projects identified and reviewed during the planning process by the plan’s steering committee, comprised of members from the City of Galveston, the Port of Galveston, Galveston County, the Galveston Economic Development Partnership, and private and institutional agencies. The 2004 updated plan includes a list of candidate projects that the steering committee categorized into two categories: “Tier 1” (higher-priority) and “Tier 2” (lower-priority). The plan also identifies potential funding sources and is intended to serve as a template for project planning and implementation.

##### **H-GAC Regional Plans and Programs**

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), acting as the region’s Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), is responsible for transportation planning in the Houston region; a responsibility which includes completion of the long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and short-range Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). H-GAC is also responsible for gathering information from local officials to compile a Regional Thoroughfare Plan that identifies existing thoroughfares and routes for future facilities. A review of these three plans follows:

- › **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).** In October 2007, H-GAC’s Transportation Policy Council adopted the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (2035 RTP). To better reflect the lowered revenues anticipated for transportation expenditures, an updated plan was adopted in October 2010. The 2035 RTP Update includes a

series of projects, grouped into three timeframes (long-range, short-range, and imminent for construction). H-GAC is currently preparing the 2040 RTP, with an anticipated completion date of February 2014.

- › **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).** The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a fiscally-constrained financial plan of transportation projects approved to receive federal funding over a four-year period. The Transportation Policy Council approved the FY 2011-2014 TIP in June 2010. Projects that were included in the FY 2011-2014 TIP have been authorized for implementation and have met all the requirements for project readiness including reliable cost estimates, financial commitments, and substantial right-of-way acquisition.
- › **Regional Thoroughfare Plan.** Prepared by H-GAC in conjunction with local officials, the Regional Thoroughfare Plan provides a long-term vision of the major street network needed to meet the region’s future travel needs. The plan includes the existing and future road network and classifies major streets by access to adjacent land use, mobility for through traffic, and context. The plan helps determine roadway improvements and connections that provide travel route alternatives to reduce congestion. H-GAC is currently updating the Regional Thoroughfare Plan. City and county officials are reviewing the draft maps and providing comments to H-GAC. The plan will be used to guide roadway functional classification designations and advise the transportation planning process undertaken as part of the RTP update process. Inclusion of a local thoroughfare or potential project on the Regional Thoroughfare Plan is the first step toward incorporation of a planned improvement into the RTP and TIP.

## 2. EXISTING THOROUGHFARE NETWORK

The City has prepared a Roadway Functional Classifications Map and Table (Exhibits A and B of this report) defining streets that comprise the City’s thoroughfare network. For streets identified in the map and table, the City has assigned functional classifications to indicate the street’s general functional characteristics. This assignment of classifications is based on the review of available information regarding current function and designations used in plans and reports prepared by TxDOT and H-GAC.

Exhibits A and B highlight all streets that serve a function beyond that of simply providing local access to individual properties. Consequently, a number of low volume/low travel speed streets that serve as neighborhood collectors are designated as thoroughfares, as are the Island’s major roadways that connect important destinations and support cross-Island and regional travel.

As indicated on the map and table, the following functional classifications have been applied:

- › **Freeway.** Freeways are divided arterial highways designed with full control of access and grade separations at all intersections. Freeways provide movement of high volumes of traffic at relatively high speeds. This system carries most of the

trips entering and leaving the urban area, as well as most of the through movements bypassing the central city. These roadways provide the highest level of mobility and are intended to carry the greatest amount of traffic at the highest speeds. Accordingly, freeway mainlanes provide no direct access to property and access to the freeway mainlanes is provided only at interchanges and ramps.

- › **Arterials.** Arterials provide the next highest level of mobility and are intended to carry substantial amounts of traffic over relatively long distances and at relatively high speeds. Access is usually limited to intersections and major driveways. Arterial streets serve as a link between major activity centers within the urban area. Direct property access may be provided but must be carefully managed to preserve arterial mobility and avoid creating unsafe and congested traffic operations.
- › **Collectors.** Collectors provide lesser mobility and are intended to carry lower volumes of traffic at lower travel speeds. As most trips on collectors are shorter distance local trips, these streets can safely provide a higher amount of property access. The primary function of a collector street is to intercept traffic from intersecting local streets and provide a direct route to an arterial street or other collector street.

The assignment of functional classifications provides the basis for future planning, design, engineering and funding decisions. Locally designated functional classifications are factored into decisions regarding roadway design and geometrics, signalization and signage, and other potential improvements. The designations also affect eligibility for funding—improvements to roadways classified as freeways, arterials, or collectors by the City may be eligible for funding through state and regional programs, but improvements to roads classified as local typically are not eligible for such funds.

### 3. PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

The City has also prepared an updated list of planned improvements designed to address long-standing access, circulation, evacuation, congestion, and condition issues as well as advance the community's economic development and livability goals. Projects on the list, drawn from previous plans prepared by the City, County, and H-GAC, are identified by type as follows:

- › **New Facilities.** New facility projects include major investments to address issues such as access to the West End and congestion along the 61st St corridor. To move such projects forward and seek support for more detailed design and engineering, the City will likely need to complete additional feasibility studies and cost-and-benefit analyses.
- › **Capacity Improvements.** Capacity improvement projects are those designed to address deficiencies along existing roadways or travel corridors, including capacity deficiencies at I-45 interchanges with Harborside Dr and 61st St and access to Pelican Island and the Port of Galveston.

- › **Traffic System Management.** Traffic System Management (TSM) projects are those designed to address roadway congestion through signalization, signage, intersection, access management, and other improvements. Projects listed include traffic signal system improvement along Harborside, Seawall, and 61st St as well as an item calling for a study of signalization of north-south streets connecting Broadway and Seawall Blvds.
- › **Mitigation.** The project list and map also includes two projects designed to address flooding and the potential for storm related damage to FM 3005 and Harborside Dr.

The list of planned projects is included in Table 1 below. A map indicating the location of projects is included as Exhibit C.

**TABLE 1: THOROUGHFARE PLAN – PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS**

PROJECT	TYPE	JURISDICTION	DESCRIPTION
1 61 <sup>st</sup> St (I-45 to Seawall Blvd)	TSM	TxDOT	Improve signalization and access management to address congestion.
2 61st St/I-45 Flyover	Capacity	TxDOT	Increase capacity, address 61st St congestion, and improve access to West End.
3 61st St Extension (Harborside Dr to Broadway Blvd)	New Facility	TxDOT	Create connection between Harborside Dr and Broadway Blvd. Feasibility study completed in 2005.
4 Ave H Extension (59th St to 61st St)	New Facility	Local	Extend Ave H to 61st St and address environmental issues. Preliminary studies completed.
5 Stewart Rd (7 1/2 Mile Rd to FM 3005)	Capacity	Local	Extend improvements west to FM 3005 at 13 Mile Rd.
6 7 Mile Rd (Stewart Rd to fm 3005)	Capacity	Local	Improve connections to FM 3005
7 Pelican Island Causeway Bridge	Capacity	Local	Improve access to Pelican Island and Port of Galveston.
8 81st St (Hope Blvd to Seawall Blvd) or 83rd St (Airport Rd to Seawall Blvd)	Capacity	Local	Improve access to tourist destinations.
9 Harborside Dr/I-45 Flyover	Capacity	TxDOT	Increase capacity and address congestion.
10 53rd/51st Connector (Broadway Blvd to Causeway)	Capacity	Local	Improve connection between Pelican Island Causeway Bridge and Broadway Blvd.
11 Harborside Dr Flood Mitigation	Mitigation	TxDOT	Address flooding and improve as evacuation route.
12 FM 3005 Elevation and Flood Mitigation (Seawall to San Luis Pass)	Mitigation	TxDOT	Increase resilience and improve as evacuation route.

14	Offats Bayou Crossing (I-45 to Seawall Blvd)	New Facility	Local	Increase capacity, relieve 61st congestion, and improve access to West End.
15	West End Bridge (I-45 to 8 Mile Rd to FM 3005)	New Facility	Local	Increase capacity, relieve 61st congestion, and improve access to West End.
16	Harborside Dr (I-45 to Ferry Rd)	TSM	TxDOT	Improve signalization to address congestion.
17	Ave S/Stewart Rd	TSM	Local	Improve signalization to address congestion.
18	Broadway Blvd to Seawall Blvd Connectors (33rd, 39th, 45th, & 53rd Sts)	TSM	Local	Improve signalization to address congestion and mitigate impact on neighborhoods.
19	Seawall Blvd TSM (61st St to 82nd St)	TSM	TxDOT	Improve signalization and signage to address congestion.
20	Heards Ln (61st St to 73rd St)	Capacity	Local	Extend Heards Lane to west as alternative to Jones. May be infeasible given recent construction at Moody Gardens.
21	41st St at Harborside Dr	Capacity	Local	Galveston Wharves Project to increase capacity.
22	Pelican Island/Mainland Causeway and Bridge	New Facility	TBD	New causeway and bridge to provide alternative access from Mainland to Galveston Port.
23	Bluewater Highway San Luis Pass Bridge Improvement and Elevation to Surfside with Connection to SH 288	Mitigation	TxDOT	Increase resilience and improve as evacuation route.

The general location and alignment of all but two projects on the planned improvements list are highlighted on the map. The projects not shown include the Bluewater Highway San Luis Pass Bridge Improvement and Elevation project and the Pelican Island/Mainland Causeway and Bridge project. The Bluewater Highway project is not shown as it extends to the west of the city limits from the San Luis Pass Bridge to Surfside and SH 288. The Pelican Island/Mainland Causeway and Bridge was excluded due to the lack of information regarding a preferred conceptual alignment. As preliminary feasibility studies and conceptual alignment plans are completed, the map will be updated to indicate local preferences for an alignment.

It also is important to note that the list and map focus on new roadway facilities and improvements to thoroughfares with higher level functional classifications. Plans for improvements to the local street network, local and regional transit service, and the Island's bicycle and pedestrian network are addressed in related planning documents, including the City's Five-Year Mobility Plan, plans and designs prepared for specific locations or corridors, and the City's capital improvement program.

#### 4. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLANS

The planned improvement table and map provide the basis for the City's annual review of proposed projects and the preparation of plans and proposals for inclusion in the Regional Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Plan, and the Regional Thoroughfare Plan. Annually, the City will evaluate projects on the list and map, make revisions as necessary to address changing circumstances and priorities, and complete updates as new data is available and plans drafted through subsequent planning efforts that provide additional information.

In addition, the City recognizes that classifications or locations of planned thoroughfares may change based on future conditions and that further design and engineering may result in project alignments and geometric designs different than those shown on the map. As more detailed studies of planned improvements are conducted when funding might become available, the City may evaluate alternative alignments, while considering future social, economic, environmental, and engineering aspects of the project.

**EXHIBIT A: ROADWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION MAP**

**EXHIBIT B: ROADWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION TABLE**

## GALVESTON THOROUGHFARE PLAN – ROADWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION TABLE

DIRECTION	STREET	ALIAS	WEST/SOUTH END	EAST/NORTH END	CITY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION
N/S	2nd St	Ferry Rd; SH 87	Seawall Blvd	Terminus	Arterial
N/S	4th St	Holiday Dr	Seawall Blvd	Albacore Ave	Collector
N/S	6th St	University Blvd	Broadway Blvd	Harborside Dr	Collector
N/S	8th St	St Marys Blvd	Broadway Blvd	Market St	Collector
N/S	14th St	Christopher Columbus Blvd	Seawall Blvd	Harborside Dr	Collector
N/S	19th St	--	Seawall Blvd	Harborside Dr	Collector
N/S	21st St	Moody Ave	Seawall Blvd	Harborside Dr	Collector
N/S	23rd St	Tremont St	Seawall Blvd	Harborside Dr	Collector
N/S	25th St	Rosenberg St	Seawall Blvd	Harborside Dr	Collector
N/S	27th St	--	Seawall Blvd	Santa Fe	Collector
N/S	29th St	Martin Luther King Blvd	Seawall Blvd	Harborside Dr	Collector
N/S	33rd St	--	Seawall Blvd	Harborside Dr	Collector
N/S	37th St	--	Seawall Blvd	Harborside Dr	Collector
N/S	39th St	Mike Gaido Blvd	Seawall Blvd	Broadway Blvd	Collector
N/S	45th St	--	Seawall Blvd	Broadway Blvd	Collector
N/S	51st St	--	Broadway Blvd	Pelican Island Causeway	Collector
N/S	53rd St	Mary Moody Northern Blvd	Seawall Blvd	Broadway Blvd	Collector
N/S	57th St	Saladia St	Seawall Blvd	Heards Lane	Collector
N/S	61st St	SPUR 342	Seawall Blvd	Broadway Blvd	Arterial
N/S	Central City Blvd	--	Seawall Blvd	61st St	Collector
N/S	69th St	--	Seawall Blvd	Stewart Rd	Collector
N/S	Hope Blvd	--	Jones Dr	Lockheed Dr	Collector
N/S	81st St	--	Seawall Blvd	Jones Dr	Collector
N/S	99th St	--	Steward Rd	Evia Main	Collector
N/S	7 Mile Rd	--	FM 3005	Stewart Rd	Collector

DIRECTION	STREET	ALIAS	WEST/SOUTH END	EAST/NORTH END	CITY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION
N/S	Pabst Rd	--	FM 3005	Stewart Rd	Collector
N/S	12 Mile Rd	--	FM 3005	Terminus	Collector
N/S	13 Mile Rd	--	FM 3005	Stewart Rd	Collector
E/W	I-45	Gulf Freeway	City Limits	Broadway Blvd	Freeway
E/W	Seawolf Pkwy	--	Pelican Island Causeway	Seawolf Park	Arterial
E/W	Port Industrial Rd	Old Port Industrial Rd	Harborside Dr	Harborside Dr	Collector
E/W	Harborside Dr	SH 275	I-45	Ferry Rd	Arterial
E/W	Teichman Rd	FM 188	Blume Dr	I-45	Collector
E/W	Ave B	The Strand	Rosenberg Ave	13th St	Collector
E/W	Ave D	Market St	33rd St	Ferry Rd	Collector
E/W	Ave E	Postoffice St	25th St	Ferry Rd	Collector
E/W	Ave F	Church St	25th St	Ferry Rd	Collector
E/W	Ave H	Ball St	46th St	25th St	Collector
E/W	Ave J	Broadway Blvd	I-45	Seawall Blvd	Arterial
E/W	Ave O	--	53rd St	15th St	Collector
E/W	Ave P	Bernardo De Galvez Ave	53rd St	19th St	Collector
E/W	Ave P 1/2	Heards Ln	73rd St	Saladia Dr	Collector
E/W	Ave Q	--	Saladia St	25th St	Collector
E/W	Ave S	--	57th St	Seawall Blvd	Collector
E/W	Jones Dr	--	81st St	68th St	Collector
E/W	Stewart Rd	--	FM 3005	57th St	Collector
E/W	Ave U	--	57th St	39th St	Collector
E/W	Seawall Blvd	FM 3005	West end of Seawall	Boddecker Rd	Arterial
E/W	Termini-San Luis Pass Rd	FM 3005	San Luis Pass	West End of Seawall	Arterial

**EXHIBIT C: THOROUGHFARE MAP**