City of Rockport

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2025 - 6:00 PM
ROCKPORT SERVICE CENTER
2751 STATE HIGHWAY 35 BYPASS
ROCKPORT, TEXAS 78382

Notice is hereby given that the Rockport Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a Regular Meeting on Monday, March 17, 2025, at 6:00 PM. The meeting will be held in person at the Training Room of the Rockport Service Center, 2751 State Highway 35 Bypass, Rockport, Texas. The live stream link to view the meeting is https://rockporttx.portal.civicclerk.com/ .

Public participation is valued and citizens wishing to express their views on agenda items can electronically submit a citizen participation form in order to register to speak by going to https://rockporttx.gov/MyAccount/?from=Url&url=%2FFormCenter%2FCitizen-Participation-Form-7%2FBoard-and-Commission-Comment-Participati-56. Using the same form, citizens can also provide written comments to the Community Planner by 4:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. The Chair will read the comments, and they will be summarized in the minutes of the meeting.

I. Opening Agenda

1. Call meeting to order. ()

II. Regular Agenda

2. Discussion, consideration, and action regarding updating the Future Land Use Map and Comprehensive Master Plan. ()

3. Adjourn ()

CERTIFICATION

I certify that the above notice of the meeting was posted on the bulletin board at the Rockport Service Center, 2751 State Highway 35 Bypass, Rockport, Texas on March 13, 2025, at 2:30 pm and on the City's website at www.cityofrockport.com. I further certify that the following news media were properly notified of this meeting as stated above: The Rockport Pilot and Corpus Christi Caller Times.

Carey Dietrich
Director Building & Development

Section 10.01. Organization.

(1) There is hereby established a Planning and Zoning Commission which shall consist of seven (7) members who shall be appointed by the City Council for overlapping three (3) year terms. Each member shall be a qualified City voter. Any vacancy occurring during the unexpired term of a member shall be filled by the City Council for the remainder of the unexpired term. The Commission shall elect from its members a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary to serve for one (1) year beginning in July of the year elected. The Commission shall meet at least once each month when practicable. The Council should strive to balance Commission membership to represent best each Ward and all major areas.

Section 10.02. Duties and Powers.

(1) The Commission shall be responsible to act as an advisory board to the City Council. The Commission shall:

(a) Review all current and proposed ordinances and amendments pertaining to planning, zoning, platting and subdividing property and make recommendations to the City Council for action to be taken.

(b) Make, amend, extend and add to the Comprehensive Plan for the physical development of the City.

(c) Submit annually to the City Manager, not less than one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the beginning of the budget year, an annual update to any Capital Improvement Program as developed from the Comprehensive Plan regarding land use issues. The update may identify new or additional capital improvements as well as revisions of the project priorities by year.

(d) Keep public records of its findings and determinations.

(2) The Commission shall have full power to:

(a) Exercise the authority of the Zoning Commission as provided by State law, this Charter and City ordinances.

(b) Administer rules and recommendations pertaining to subdivisions and to platting in territories within the City limits and its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Section 10.03. The Comprehensive Plan.

(1) The Comprehensive Plan for the physical development of the City including its ETJ shall contain the Commission's recommendations for the growth, development and beautification of the City. The Commission may recommend approval to the City Council the Comprehensive Plan as a whole or in parts and with any amendment thereto.

Section 10.04. Procedure.

(1) All rules and regulations recommended for approval by the Planning & Zoning Commission for the Comprehensive Plan shall be forwarded to the City Manager who shall submit them

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to the Council with his recommendations if any. The Council may adopt or reject any such rules or regulations. If any rules or regulations should be rejected, the Planning & Zoning Commission may modify them and submit such modified rules and regulations to the City Manager. The City Manager shall again forward such changes to the Council. The adoption of the Plan or of any such part or amendment shall be by ordinance, but before adoption of the Plan or any such part or amendment, the City Council and the Commission shall hold at least one (1) joint public hearing on the proposed action.

Section 10.05. Legal Effect of the Comprehensive Plan.

(1) Following adoption by the Council of the Comprehensive Plan, it shall serve as a guide to all future Council action concerning land use and development regulations and expenditures for capital improvements. Any proposal, which deviates from the Comprehensive Plan, shall not be authorized until and unless the location and extent thereof shall have been submitted to and accepted by the Commission. In case of disapproval, the Commission shall communicate its reasons to the Council, which shall have the power to overrule such disapproval and upon such overruling, the Council or the appropriate office, department or agency shall have authority to proceed. The failure of the Commission to act within thirty (30) days after the date of official submission to the Commission shall be deemed accepted, unless a longer period is granted by the Council or submitting official.

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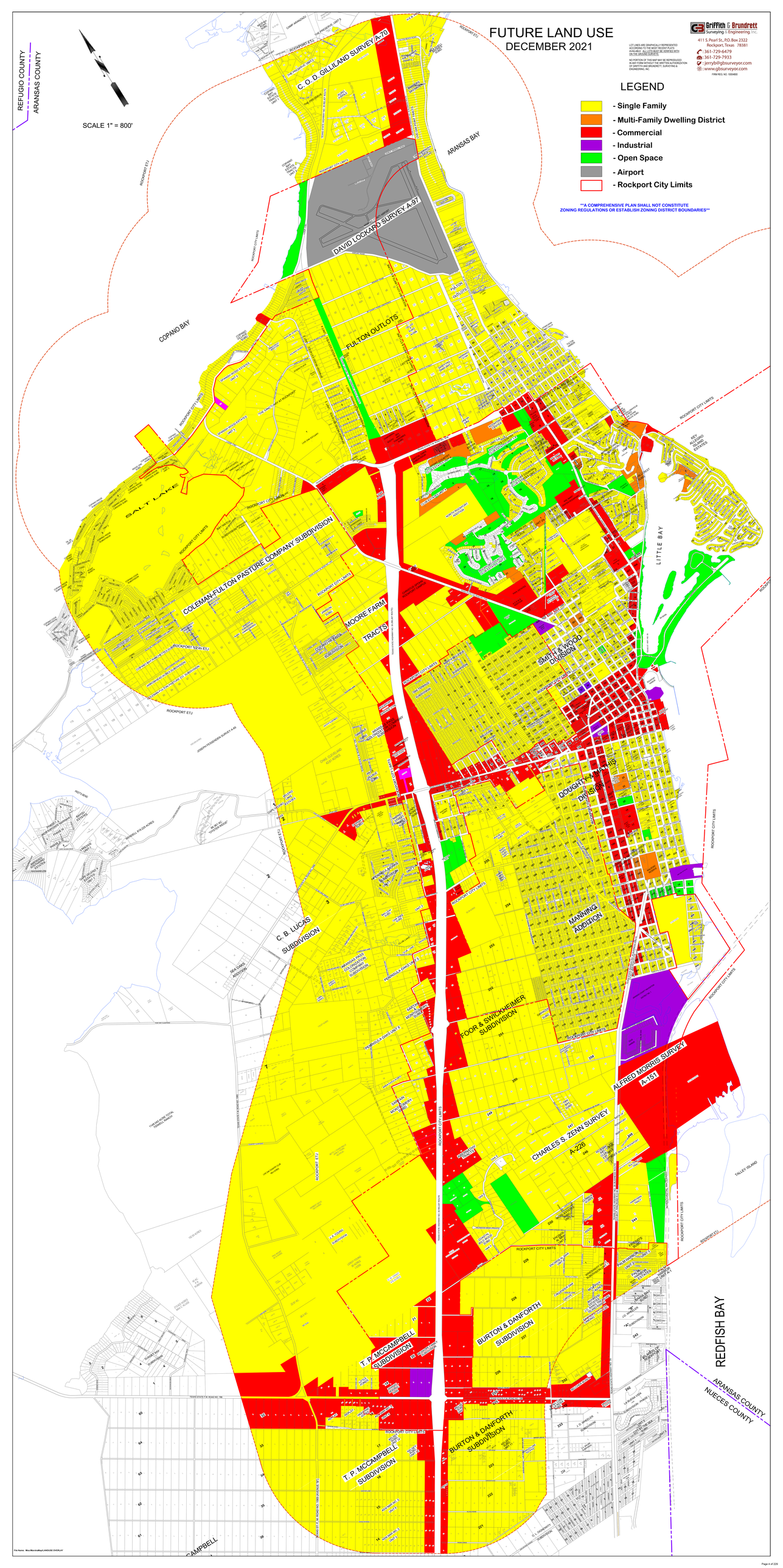
FUTURE LAND USE
DECEMBER 2021
Griffith & Brundrett
Surveying & Engineering, Inc.
411 S. Pearl St., P.O. Box 2322
Rockport, Texas 78381
: 361-729-6479
: 361-729-7933
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: www.gbsurveyor.com
FIRM REG. NO. 10004800
LOT LINES ARE GRAPHICALLY REPRESENTED ACCORDING TO THE MOST RECENT PLATS AVAILABLE. ALL LOTS MUST BE VERIFIED WITH ON THE GROUND SURVEYS
NO PORTION OF THIS MAP MAY BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION OF GRIFFITH AND BRUNDRETT, SURVEYING & ENGINEERING, INC.
LEGEND
- Single Family
- Multi-Family Dwelling District
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Open Space
- Airport
- Rockport City Limits
A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SHALL NOT CONSTITUTE ZONING REGULATIONS OR ESTABLISH ZONING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES
SCALE 1" = 800'
REFUGIO COUNTY
ARANSAS COUNTY
ARANSAS BAY
COPANO BAY
LITTLE BAY
REDFISH BAY
ARANSAS COUNTY
NUECES COUNTY
C. O. D. GILLILAND SURVEY A-70
DAVID LOCKARD SURVEY A-97
FULTON OUTLOTS
SALT LAKE
COLEMAN-FULTON PASTURE COMPANY SUBDIVISION
MOORE FARM TRACTS
SMITH & WOOD DIVISION
DOUGHTY & HARRIS DIVISION
MANNING ADDITION
C. B. LUCAS SUBDIVISION
FOOR & SWICKHEIMER SUBDIVISION
ALFRED MORRIS SURVEY A-151
CHARLES S. ZENN SURVEY A-226
BURTON & DANFORTH SUBDIVISION
T. P. MCCAMPBELL SUBDIVISION
ROCKPORT CITY LIMITS
ROCKPORT ETJ

ROCKPORT STRONG

CITY OF ROCKPORT

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2022 -2042

CITY OF ROCKPORT
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2022-2042

INTRODUCTION

The City of Rockport is a resilient community dedicated to sustainable growth and attracting businesses to the area. Rockport is a charming town that offers a close-knit community feel and is a popular tourist destination for marine recreation, fairs, and exhibitions throughout the year. Founded in 1871, the City of Rockport aims to continue growing economically and sustainably. The Comprehensive Plan 2022-2042 is designed to guide the city of Rockport for its future growth.

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

Planning for the future is essential for responsible growth. The city should be a safe and pleasant place for people to reside in. We want to mold our cities into a place that provides economic opportunities and treats all its citizens fairly. The Rockport Comprehensive Plan provides a vision of growth for the City of Rockport and identifies strategies to accomplish them.

The plan is a road map between community aspirations and implementation. All of the suggestions for future projects & actions laid out in the plan are intended to be pursued by the city staff to enact in the real-world. Certain projects could have a direct impact on individual neighborhoods or a broader impact on the whole community. However, the Comprehensive Plan is not a zoning regulation, and it does not affect existing approved zoning. It provides guidance for making changes or developing new regulations based on the identified vision, goals and objectives.

THE FISCAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS FOR PLANNING

There are many decisions to consider when designing a responsible plan for future growth. There must be a plan for fiscal sustainability as well as a plan for community involvement and a vision that is well articulated. The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Rockport serves this purpose by:

- Encouraging fiscally sound decisions;
- Seek input from the residents of Rockport;
- To provide consideration for the preservation of the character of the City of Rockport and what decisions best fit its needs.

PLANNING PROCESS

Rockport Comprehensive Plan 2022-2042 provides a guide for the future growth of the city. This document was developed and prepared by Texas Target Communities(TxTC) at Texas A&M University in partnership with the City of Rockport, Texas Sea Grant, Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi, Texas A&M University - School of Law and Texas Tech University. A citizen committee also guided development of the document and came from various community interests and backgrounds such as history, the arts, downtown, business, minority, and environment. The plan also integrates input from attendees to four public meetings on August 16, 2018; November 15, 2018, March 7, 2018, and April 25, 2019. The plan integrates recommendations from six other plans that involve the city: City of Rockport Comprehensive Plan (1999), A Vision for Rockport: A Master Plan for the Heritage District and Downtown Rockport (2006), Rockport Heritage District Zoning Overlay Code (2014), Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan and Report (2018), Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan (2017), Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Floodplain Management Plan (2017).

AGREEMENT BETWEEN CITY AND TxTC

In the summer of 2018, one year after Hurricane Harvey, the City of Rockport and Texas Target Communities partnered to create a task force to represent the community. The task force played an integral role in the planning process, contributing to the thoughts, desires, and opinions of community members - as well as their enthusiasm about Rockport's future. The result of this collaboration is the City of Rockport Comprehensive Plan 2022-2042 which is the official policy guide for the community's growth over the next twenty years.

BACKGROUND OF TxTC

The Texas Target Communities program was initiated in 1993 by the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning at Texas A&M University. This program selects small communities from the state of Texas and provide residents with valuable assistance in planning. At the same time, it serves as a "real world" learning laboratory for graduate students. Students can gain valuable planning experience while the targeted community receives the assistance it needs to can make a positive difference in the quality of urban life for its residents. Communities are chosen for participation in the program based on demonstrated need and their commitment to the planning process.

HOW TO USE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Rockport Comprehensive Plan 2022-2042 is a fully-developed planning document that can provide guidance for a variety of urban development activities. As such, it may be used to:

- Communicate the overarching vision;
- Guide development approvals by representatives such as elected officials and the planning board;
- Serve as a basis for land-use regulations such as zoning, subdivision regulations, building codes, etc.;
- Inform and support capital improvement plans.

THE STRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

The guiding principles for this planning process were Rockport's vision statement and its corresponding goals, which were crafted by the task force. The goals focus on factors of growth and development including public participation, development considerations, transportation, community facilities, economic development, parks, and housing and social vulnerability. Next, three alternative scenarios were developed as possible strategies Rockport could adapt to meet its goals. The task force expressed strong support for some of the key characteristics from two scenarios, which were then combined to form the preferred Future Land Use Plan.

Chapter 1 presents the background and history of Rockport and its residents and Chapter 2 tells the story of its vision. Chapters 3 through 8 of this document outline the goals, objectives, and policies of the preferred Plan. Each chapter explores the issues and opportunities of each plan component that will serve as the building blocks for it to be implemented. All the issues and threats are addressed with recommendations and proposed solutions, which are supported by maps and other analytical tools. Finally, Chapter 9 outlines the policies, timeline of actions, funding sources, and responsible parties. Additionally, this chapter includes funding programs and resources for implementing the recommendations of this plan.

Special thanks to the team for their contribution and time to work on this project:

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J.D. Villa, Mayor Pro Tem

Rusty Day/Michael Saski, Ward 1

Warren Hassinger/Bob Cunningham, Ward 3

Barbara Gurtner, Ward 4

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

KEY WORDS

Accessory Dwelling Units	AUDs
Annual Average Daily Traffic	AADT
Community Rating System	CRS
Conditional Use Permit District	CUP
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design	CPTED
Diameter at Breast Height	DBH
Endangered Species Act	ESA
Extraterritorial Jurisdiction	ETJ
Green Infrastructure	GI
Green Infrastructure Flexible MOdel	GIFMod
Green Infrastructure Wizard	GIWiz
Hotel Occupancy Tax	HOT
Intelligent Transportation System	ITS
Low Impact Development	LID
Multi-family Housing	MF
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration	NOAA
National Stormwater Calculator	SWC
Neighborhood Electric Vehicle	NEV
North American Industry Classification System	NAICS
Opportunity Zone	OZ
Planned Unit Development District	PUD
Recreational Vehicle	RV
Rockport Heritage District Zoning Overlay Code	RHDZO
Rockport Heritage District	RHD
Single-family Housing	SF
Stormwater Management Model	SWMM
Tax Increment Financing	TIF
Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone	TIRZ
Transfer of Development Rights	TDR
Transportation Demand Management	TDM
Visualizing Ecosystems for Land Management Assessment Model	VELMA
Watershed Management Optimization Support Tool	WMOST

NETWORK OF PLANS & OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS

A Vision for Rockport: Master Plan for the Heritage District & Downtown Rockport	HDMP
Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan and Report	LTRP
Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Floodplain Management Plan	MFMP
Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan	MHMP
Hazard Mitigation Action Plan	HMAP
Plan Integration for Resilience Scorecard	PIRS
Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan for The Coastal Bend	RCTPTCB
Rockport Heritage Zoning Overlay Code	HDZO
Recovery Planning Assistance Team Report - American Planning Association	RPAT
State of Community Report	SOC

ACTION LEADERS

Aransas County	AC
Aransas Pathways	AP
Aransas County Appraisal District	ACAD
Aransas County Health Department	ACHD
Aransas County Historical Society	ACHS
Aransas County ISD	ACISD
Aransas County Long Term Recovery Team	ACLTRT
Aransas County Navigation District	ACND
Aransas County Independent School District	AISD
Agri-Life Extension Office	ALEO
Aransas National Wildlife Refuge	ANWR
Aransas Pathways	AP
Bay Education Center	BEC
Building and Development Department	BD
Zoning Board of Adjustments	BOA
Businesses and Stakeholders	BUS
City Council	CC
City Engineer	CE
City Manager	CM
Comprehensive Plan Task Force	CPTF
City Staff	CS
Downtown Heritage Task Force	DTF
Economic Development Corporation	EDC
Environmental Protection Agency	EPA
Federal Emergency Management Agency	FEMA
Fair Housing Board	FHA
Finance Department	FI
The City of Fulton	FLTN
Fulton Mansion	FM
Human Resources Department	HR
US Department of Housing and Urban Development	HUD
Keep Aransas County Beautiful	KACB
Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design	LEED
Long Term Recovery	LTR
Municipal Court	MC
Parks Board	PB
Parks and Leisure Department	PL
Property Owner	PO
Public Works Department	PW
Planning & Zoning Commission	P&Z
Rockport Center for the Arts	RCA
Rockport Cultural Arts District	RCAD
Rockport Community Members	RCM
Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce	R-FCC
Rockport Police Department	RPD
Rockport Volunteer Fire Department	RVFD
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	TCEQ
Texas Department of Housing & Community Affairs	TDHCA
Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation	TSAHC
Tree and Landscape Committee	TLC
Texas Maritime Museum	TMM
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department	TPWD
Texas Sea Grant	TSG

Texas Water Development Board	TWDB
The State of Texas	TX
Texas Department of Transportation	TxDOT
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary	UCGA
United States	US
Utilities	UT
YMCA Development Committee	YMCA

OTHER DEPARTMENTS, ORGANIZATIONS, PARTNERS, & PROGRAMS

All Children Begin Learning in a Christian Environment Learning Center	ABC
American Planning Association	APA
Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program	CBBEP
Community Development Institute	CDI
Community Planning Assistance Team	CPAT
Fish & Wildlife Service	FWS
Friends of Aransas & Matagorda Island	FAMI
Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety	IBHS
Institute for Sustainable Communities	IfSC
Insurance Services Organization	ISO
International Ecotourism Society	TIES
Keep America Beautiful	KAB
Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve	NERR
National Flood Insurance Program	NFIP
National Resources Conservation Service	NRCS
Regional Transportation Authority	RTA
Rural Economic Assistance League	REAL
San Patricio Municipal Water District	SPMWD
Science On a Sphere©	SOS
Small Business Administration	SBA
System-Wide Monitoring Program	SWMP
System-Wide Monitoring Program	SWMP
Texas A&M University	TAMU
Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi	TAMU-CC
Texas General Land Office	GLO
Texas Main Street Program	TMSP
Texas Rural Leadership Program	TRLP
Texas Target Communities	TxTC
Texas Tech University	TTU
Texas Workforce Commission	TWC
Urban Land Institute	ULI
US Department of Agriculture	USDA
University of Texas	UT
University of Texas Marine Science Institute	UTMSI

FUNDING SOURCES & PROGRAMS

Bicycle Friendly Program	BFC
Building Neighborhood Capacity Program	BNCP
Capital Improvement Program	CIP
Coastal Bend Disaster Recovery Group	CB-DRG
Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery	CDBG-DR
Community Development Block Grant Program for Rural Texas	TxCDBG
Community Development Block Grants	CDBG
Community Disaster Loan	CDL
Community Outdoor Outreach Program	CO-OP
Flood Mitigation Assistance	FMA
Governor's Community Achievement Awards	GCAA
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	HMGP
Highway Safety Improvement Program	HSIP
Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program	HRSP
Housing Preservation Grants	HPG
Landowner Incentive Program	LIP
Low-income Housing Tax Credit	LIHTC
Museum Assessment Program	MAP
Neighborhood Stabilization Program	NSP
Rebuild Texas Fund	RTF
Recreational Trails Program	RTP
Smart Growth Implementation Assistance	SGIA
State Water Implementation Fund for Texas	SWIFT
Surface Transportation Block Grants Program	STBG
Texas Water Development Fund	DFund
Texas Windstorm Insurance Association	TWIA
Walk Friendly Community	WFC

1 INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

Rockport, Texas, the county seat of Aransas County, is a charming town located in the Texas Coastal Bend Region. Rockport is adjacent to the Town of Fulton, and together, they are referred to as the Rockport-Fulton community. The city is about 30 miles northeast of Corpus Christi and about 160 miles southeast of San Antonio. Much like its neighboring cities, the city's unique geography and location make Rockport ideal for outdoor activities such as boating, fishing, and bird watching. It lies on the Live Oak Peninsula and takes up a total of 15 square miles and sits just seven feet above sea level. The population of Rockport has been steadily growing over the last several decades and is currently estimated to be around 10,000 people. The city may be small in size, but it has a lot to offer. Figure 1.1 shows the location of Rockport in Aransas County within the state of Texas.

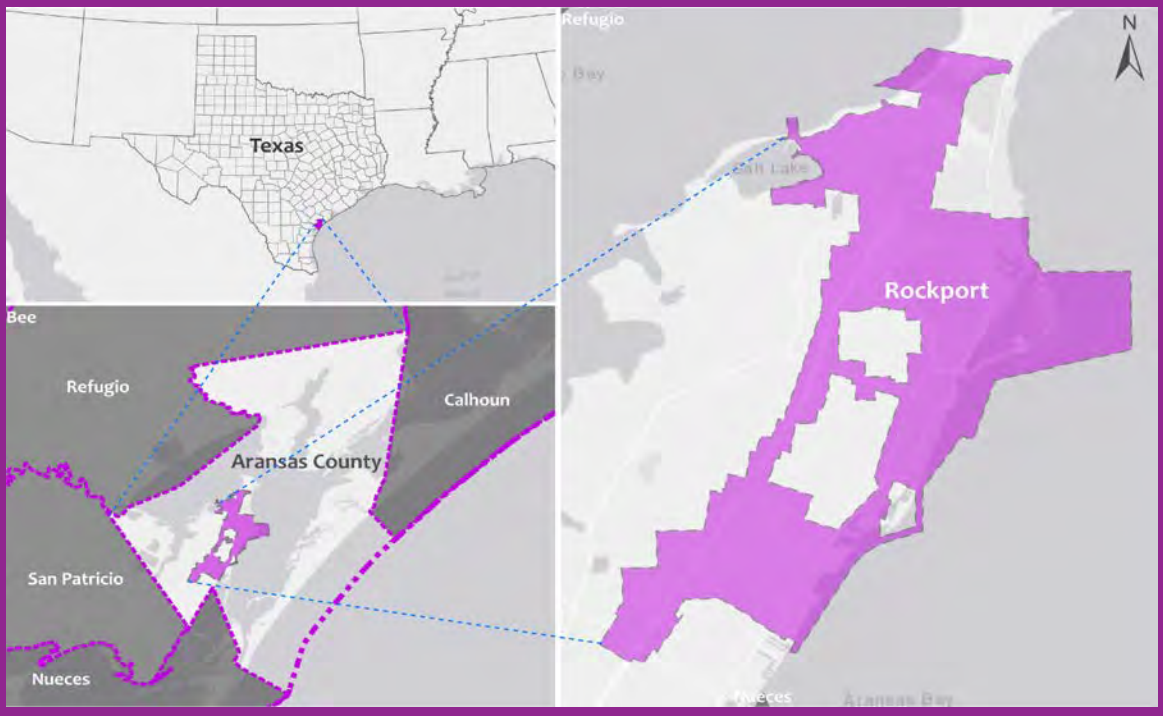

Figure 1.1: Location of Rockport, TX

HURRICANE HARVEY IMPACT

Due to its coastal location, the City of Rockport is susceptible to hurricanes and flooding. In 2017, the city was hit by Hurricane Harvey and has since focused on recovering, rebuilding, and planning for resilience. Harvey made landfall as a major hurricane at an intensity of a Category 4 storm with winds exceeding 130 mph. The hurricane made landfall on the barrier island of San Jose then made its way near Rockport and Fulton. Rockport undertook extensive damages; FEMA records indicate more than 1,500 structures were damaged. Although much of the damage across the peninsula was due to high-speed winds and rain, the northwest side of the peninsula also saw damage due to storm surge coming from Copano Bay.

Figure 1.2: Governor Greg Abbott's visit to Rockport after Hurricane Harvey in August of 2017
Source: The Rockport Pilot [1]

Nearly three years later, Rockport is still recovering from the damages. The Chamber of Commerce says that about 80% of businesses have reopened since Harvey. According to city officials, Rockport's population is down 20% since Harvey made landfall. The city is working on rebuilding and recovering housing and businesses to bring back the residents who are still displaced. In June 2018, Texas General Land Office awarded Rockport with $6.5 million in federal recovery money that the city will use to tackle this issue.

Figure 1.3: Historical Photo of the S.A. & A.P. Depot
Source: The History Center for Aransas County

HISTORY

Rockport's history has been impacted by storms, war, and economic highs and lows. The city was founded in 1867 after the Civil War, but it was not incorporated as a city until May 2, 1871, after the Special Act of the Texas Charter. The economy relied on the cattle industry which played an important factor in establishing Rockport's prominence. However, after the establishment of the San Antonio and Aransas Pass railroad into the city, the cattle industry declined. With the establishment of railroads, Rockport began to expand, and new development brought an influx of new residents and businesses.

Rockport's first Chamber of Commerce was established in 1912 after a significant economic decline. In the midst of regaining its economy, Rockport was hit by a hurricane in 1919. The city took no time in rebuilding, and along with the reconstruction, the City of Rockport developed the shrimping industry that was responsible for the 1940's economic boom. As it continued to grow, the city focused on preserving its wildlife and culture. The community maintains their wildlife refuges, hosts countless festivals and programs that represent the area's culture, and preserves historical sites. In efforts to build their community, the city became recognized as one with a coastal charm that attracts tourists to enjoy fishing, swimming, bird watching, wildlife refuges, and festivals held in historic sites.

Local Historical Groups

Aransas County Historical Commission: "The purpose of the Commission is to serve as the governing and coordination body for preservation of Aransas County's historic cultural resources consistent with the statewide preservation plan of the Texas Historical Commission, including the protection, recording, interpretation and acquisition of prehistoric and historic structures/sites. The Aransas County Historical Commission will also promote to the public an appreciation of local and state history." http://www.aransascountytx.gov/historiccomm/

Aransas County Historical Society: In 1985, the Society was founded with the goal of identifying, protecting, recording, and interpreting historic and prehistoric information and artifacts related to the unique environment of the county. They work to make the history of Aransas County accessible to the public and encourage the appreciation of history in the area.
(http://achs1985.org)

Fulton Mansion State Historic Site: Visitors to the Fulton Mansion can get a glimpse into late 1800s life of an affluent Texas family. The site is operated by the Texas Historical Commission, but is currently out of operation due to Hurricane Harvey.
(https://www.thc.texas.gov/historic-sites/fulton-mansion-state-historic-site)

The History Center for Aransas County: The Center works to preserve, showcase, and celebrate the history of Aransas County through public exhibits, workshops, and celebrations.
(https://www.thehistorycenterforaransascounty.org)

The Texas Maritime Museum: The Museum first opened its doors in 1989 with the goal of exciting and educating the public about the history and artifacts of Texas Maritime. It provides a variety of programs for all ages through the collection, preservation, and interpretation of historical items, recounty maritime history, and different exhibits to spark public interest.
(https://www.texasmaritimemuseum.org)

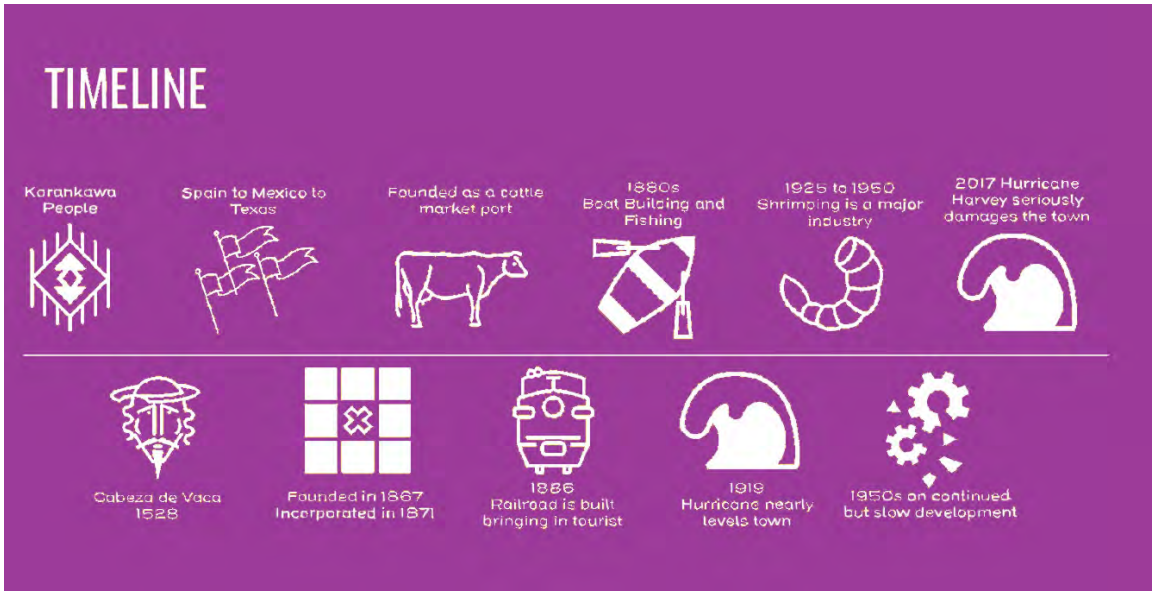

Figure 1.4: Timeline of Rockport's History
Source: Texas A& M University Landscape Architecture Student Presentation

POPULATION DENSITY

Rockport is a well-established coastal community. As of 2016, the population density was 728 people per square mile which is 15.01% increase from the population density of 633 people per square mile in 2010. Rockport has a higher population density in comparison to the rest of Aransas County and the State. Other major cities affecting the demographic patterns of Rockport are Fulton, Aransas Pass, and Corpus Christi.

POPULATION GROWTH

Historically, the population growth for Rockport has been slower than the county's population growth. The growth rate for the city has been irregular throughout history. In the 1940's and the 1990's, Rockport saw their largest growth 51.7% and 45.3% respectively. The only two decades of population decline happened in the two decades directly preceding the greatest growth years. The 1930's saw a decrease of 26.2%, while the 1980's population decreased by 5%. The population growth comparison concerning the county is illustrated in Figure 1.5.

GENDER AND AGE DISTRIBUTION

The female-to-male ratio has been increasing continually in Rockport. According to the 2010 Census, 51.73% of the population was female while males made up 48.27%.

The age distribution for 2010 reflects the same patterns seen by the County. The population distribution for 2016 are slightly lopsided for certain age groups; this is most notable in females aged 50 to 54. Observing the population from the data, it can be concluded that the young to early middle age working class, i.e., 25 to 34 years of age, has a lesser population in 2016 when compared to 2010. There is a sharp increase in the group corresponding to people between the ages of 50 to 54 years, especially males (Figure 1.4).

RACE DISTRIBUTION

Race distribution is used to help understand the culture and roots of a given population. It also helps in ensuring representation, equitable access, and appropriate distribution of resources within the community. The racial composition of Rockport in the 2000's indicates the pop-

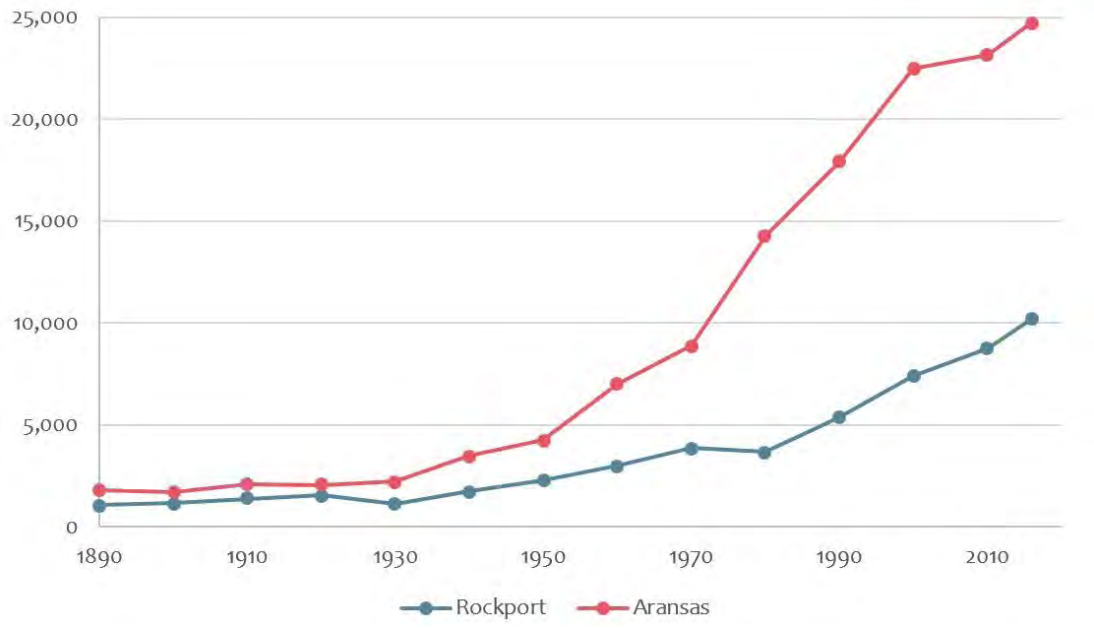

Figure 1.5: Population Growth Comparison
Source: Texas Almanac, Forstall, and U.S. Census Bureau

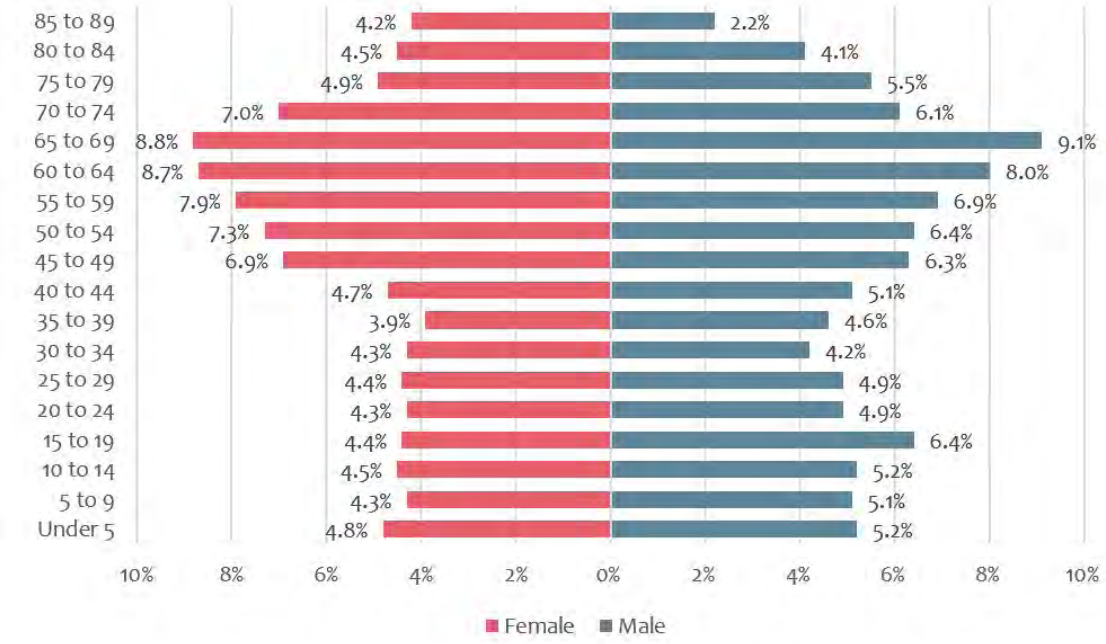

Figure 1.4: Age-Sex Pyramid (2010)
Source: U.S Census Bureau, Table QT-P1[4]

ulation was comprised mostly of people who identified as White alone (74.03%). The second largest racial group identified was the Hispanic or Latino population (19.50%), followed by Asians (3.60%). Other racial groups were present in small shares of the total population (Figure 1.5).

Since 2010, the Hispanic and Black or African American shares of the total population have increased. None of the other represented groups increased to the extent that each of these did.

The most recent data shows the White population still makes up the majority of the population with 67.05%, while the Hispanic population has grown considerably to 24.58% (Figure 1.5). The recent shift suggests that the community is diversifying and therefore needs to look into how to actively involve all community members as stakeholders for future planning processes.

Figure 1.7 Rockport residents celebrating their new home after being destroyed by Hurricane Harvey
Source: The Rockport Pilot [1]

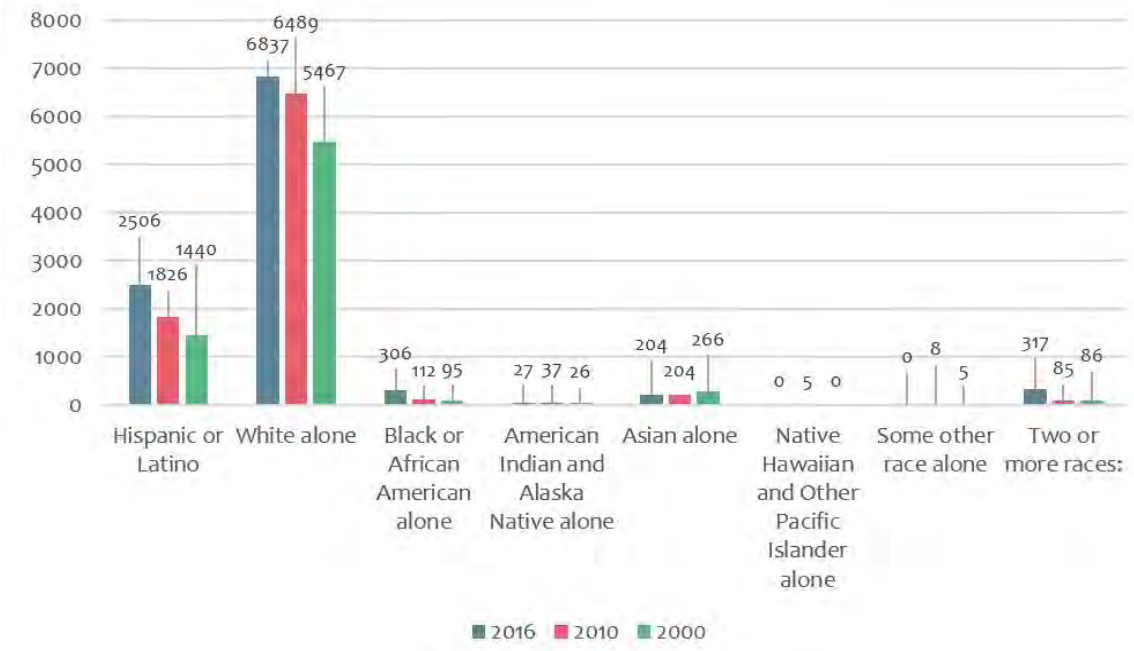

Figure 1.5: Race Distribution
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table P004[5] , Table P9[6], and Table B03002[7]

PROJECTIONS

The Texas State Demographer's Office publishes population projections based on different scenarios. The smallest geographic area for which these projections are available are counties. With Rockport being the largest city in the county it is expected to follow similar trends to the county. The Zero Migration Scenario "assumes that in-migration and out-migration are equal (no net migration)," resulting in growth only through natural causes (births and deaths). This scenario creates the lowest population projection. The 100% Migration Scenario assumes the trends that occurred throughout the 2000 to 2010 decade will continue

Table 1.1. Published Population Projections

Year	Texas Water Development Board		Texas State Demographer's Office (Aransas County)		
	Rockport	Aransas	No Migration	0.5 Migration	1.0 Migration
2010	8,766	23,158	-	-	-
2020	9,260	24,463	22,926	24,550	26,041
2030	9,460	24,991	22,325	25,123	27,558
2040	9,440	24,937	21,732	25,096	27,296
2050	9,503	25,102	21,648	25,204	26,276

Source: Texas Water Development Board[8] ,[9]and Texas State Demographer[10]

in future decades. This scenario has the highest projection estimates but is unlikely as the period from 2000 to 2010 saw rapid growth in many areas of the State. It is unlikely that these trends will remain the same in future decades mostly due to natural disasters and the impact Hurricane Harvey had on the community. The Texas Water Development Board publishes population projections at the city level. The 2016 population of Rockport is an estimated 10,197 people. In Table1.1, the Board forecasts that there will be 9,260 people in the city by the year of 2020. As previously stated, the estimated population is higher than their projection, meaning that there would have to be a significant decline in population to reach the projection and this is unlikely to happen.

For all the following sections regarding projections, the 2016 estimated population is taken as the base unless otherwise stated. The following subsections attempt to inform how the projections appear across age, gender, race, and geography.

EDUCATION

In 2016, the student population of Rockport was 3,394 students, which is 17.62% of the total population as seen in Table 1.2.

A large share of the population aged 25 and above in Rockport has attained some level of college or are high school graduates; 35.4% of the population has acquired an associate's degree or higher levels of education (Figure 1.6).

Table 1.2: School Enrollment

Subject	Total	Percentage
Population 3 years and over enrolled in school	1797	100.0%
Nursery school, preschool	105	5.8%
Kindergarten to 12th grade	1337	74.4%
College, undergraduate	345	19.2
Graduate, professional school	10	0.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table S1401[11]

Figure 1.9 Rockport-Fulton High School football game in October 2018
Source: The Rockport Pilot[1]

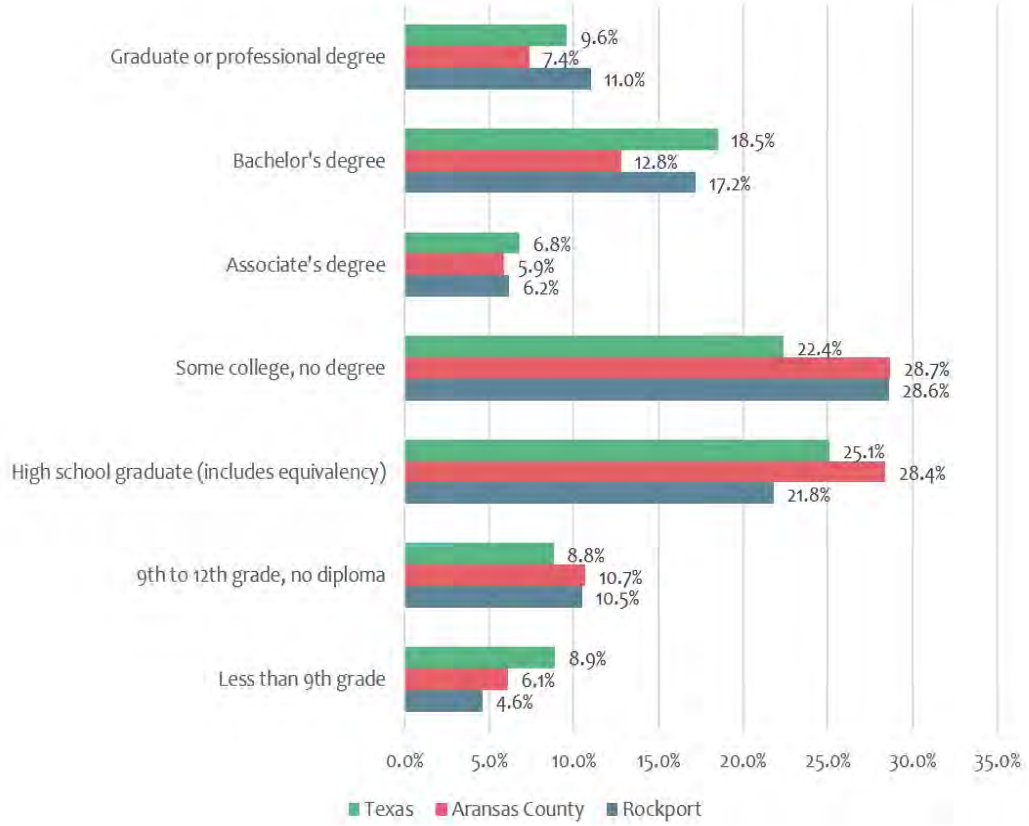

Figure 1.6: Educational Attainment 25 years old and Over
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table S1501[12]

POVERTY

Analyzing poverty helps to increase understanding of the socio-economic standing of a community. About 16.3% of the population is identified as living in conditions of poverty in Rockport. The Census Bureau provides data using ratios that compare the income levels of people or families with their poverty threshold:

- A household income above 100% of their poverty threshold is considered "above the poverty level."
- Income above 100% but below 125% of poverty is considered "near poverty."
- Households with incomes at or below 100% are considered "in poverty."
- Household incomes below 50% of their poverty threshold are considered to be in "severe" or "deep poverty."

Poverty is seen to be lacking the means to fulfill the basic needs of your family. About 8% (809 people) of the total population in Rockport are suffering from deep poverty.

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[12]United States Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016, Table S1501, Educational Attainment, https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_5YR/S1501/0400000US48|0500000US48007|1600000US4862804

2 PLAN PROCESS

GETTING STARTED

Participatory planning is the foundation of Rockport's Comprehensive Plan. Because the plan impacts every member of the community, it was essential for the city to actively involve the whole community at every stage. Active participation ensures that residents are not only informed and understand the plan, but also influence actions that will shape the future of their city. Authentic public participation allows the community to identify and express needs and desires in an open constructive format. Throughout the planning process, stakeholders worked to create a community vision, define goals, and develop principles and action steps. The purpose of this chapter is to thoroughly explain the participatory planning process, which utilized the seven-phased inclusive plan-making process (Masterson et al. 2014) as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Comprehensive Plan Making Process

UNDERSTANDING ROCKPORT

As a first step, the planning team collected information for a State of Community Report (SOC) from May to July 2019. This report gathers data from a wide variety of sources to identify current conditions, trends, and patterns. It includes an assessment of population characteristics, economic conditions, land use, transportation, housing conditions, community facilities, and environmental conditions.

The first community meeting was held in Rockport Service Center on August 16, 2018. Community members reviewed and verified the SOC as a fact base for the plan while also expressing concern that the SOC did not accurately represent the community at its' current status after Hurricane Harvey. Further, the attendees participated in an exercise discussing the community's wishlist. This meeting initiated the process of combining local wisdom and technical knowledge to plan for the future of Rockport.

KICK-OFF MEETING

The Comprehensive Plan Kickoff Meeting took place on August 16, 2018. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the planning team to the community, explain the planning process, and present the State of Community Report.

In this meeting, the attendees participated in several activities to generate things they need and desire for the community. Because this was a meeting that was open to the public, the team was able to gain a lot of information about Rockport and what the community desired. Participants included Historical Society members, business owners, Rockport citizens, government officials, and those with a desire to see their community improved. The Wish List Activity gathered information about what the community wanted in regards to safety, jobs, neighborhood issues, necessities, transportation and amenities.

The partners involved in the planning process include the following:

- Texas Sea Grant
- Texas Rural Leadership Program
- Texas A&M University College of
- Architecture
- Texas A&M University School of Law: natural resource law students developed a natural resource policy guidebook
- Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi's Master of Public Administration: students conducted a youth survey asking local high school students for input in the Comprehensive Plan
- Texas Tech University: landscape architecture students designed green infrastructure projects
- American Planning Association

Figure 2.2: Wish List Activity at the Kickoff Meeting.

Figure 2.3: Task Force members participating in a community asset activity

ASSEMBLING THE TASK FORCE

City staff reached out to community members to assemble a planning task force. The task force represents various communities within the greater community, guides the development of the plan by representing the hopes and desires of Rockport residents and acts as a conduit for information and communication with the community. The goals of the task force are:

- To establish and affirm a community-wide vision for the future of the city,
- To identify community assets, strengths, and opportunities for expansion or growth
- To determine goals and priorities for the topics within the comprehensive plan: Growth and development, economic development, community facilities and infrastructure, transportation, parks and recreation, and housing.

PREPARING THE TASK FORCE

Interested committee members were invited to the first task force meeting on September 20, 2018. Each task force member introduced themselves, explained their connection to Rockport and expressed their priorities and interests. TTC presented the planning process and laid out the roles and responsibilities of the committee. The members committed to participating in scheduled meetings to guide the development of the plan. Further, they agreed upon the following ground rules for effective discussions during these meetings:

- Explore alternative viewpoints.
- Share all relevant information.
- Use specific examples and agree on what important words mean.
- Combine advocacy and inquiry - express your points of view, share your reasoning and intent and invite others to inquire into your comments.
- Jointly agree on next steps and ways to test disagreements.
- Discuss undiscussable issues that are relevant to the group's tasks but that the group members believe they cannot discuss openly in the group without some negative consequences.

To prepare the task force for the year-long planning process, TTC partnered with the Texas Rural Leadership Program (TRLP) at Texas A&M. Craig Rotter from TRLP led the conversation on leadership, appreciative inquiry, and assets. Instead of focusing on weaknesses and deficiencies, the task force was encouraged to focus on strengths and potentials. Members were instructed to write down community assets under seven different categories seen in Figure 2.4.

A follow-up meeting was held on October 15, 2018 to build on the community wishlist and the identified assets. Three emerging topics, including Diverse Culture and Art, Responsible Growth, and Coastal Charm, were highlighted in the discussions. The task force split up into groups to identify assets associated with each topic. Additionally, the task force recognized the need to address issues of diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and affordability in the future planning process.

Figure 2.4 Planning Process Categories
Source: Developed from Texas Rural Leadership Program Presentation on September 20, 2018

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INCLUSION

Many task force members expressed concern over the lack of representation of some community groups. Five task force members volunteered to be a part of the inclusion subcommittee to brainstorm strategies and outreach methods for including as many diverse voices as possible. The committee met on October 19, 2018 and identified underrepresented and underserved communities within the community. The most highlighted faction included the youth population, Vietnamese population, Hispanic population, and religious-affiliated groups. The committee brainstormed engagement strategies and delegated tasks to reach these groups. These strategies were used for each of the public meetings.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

As part of the efforts to be more inclusionary, many different avenues were explored to get the word out. The local media, including television stations and the newspaper, posted press releases to announce each public meeting, and community pages on social media were effective in this day and age of technology.

Alternatively, locally stationed Texas A&M staff took outreach a step further and passed out flyers, in English and Spanish, to popular public areas in order to capture a diverse representation of Rockport residents. Academic institutions, government offices, senior living communities, and religious institutions were all targeted for flyer distribution.

Table 2.1 Emerging Themes in Rockport

	Diverse Culture and Art	Responsible Growth	Coastal Charm
Focus	Strengthening the existing art and culture in Rockport	Growing responsibly to create resilient future	Protecting the natural resources in Rockport
Assets	• Churches and faith based organizations • Historical center and society • Civic organizations • Downtown/heritage district • Festivals • Tourism • Sense of community	• Strong building codes • Long-term recovery plan • Aransas County Navigation District • Proximity to other cities • Existing tree ordinance • Engaged citizens	• Wildlife • Wetlands • Texas Maritime Museum • Environmental organizations • Aransas pathways • Fishing community • Park • Live Oak Trees

Figure 2.5: Culture and Art feedback and questions activity

Figure 2.6: Responsible Growth feedback and questions activity

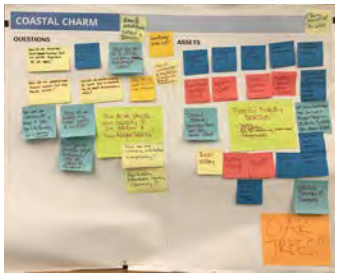


Figure 2.7: Coastal Charm feedback and questions activity

Figure 2.8: Public meetings flyer in Spanish

Figure 2.9: Community members at the public meeting

Recognizing that not everyone can make it to a public meeting to voice their opinion, a wide range of tools were used to solicit feedback. Online surveys, as well as paper surveys were distributed in various locations. Informational materials and comment boxes were placed at the Rockport Service Center to provide multiple opportunities for engagement. Some task force members went door-to-door to bring in more folks to the planning process.

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

The public meeting held in the Rockport High School on November 2018 received around 100 attendees. The objective of the meeting was to understand the community's values and establish a vision. Participants split up into groups to discuss the different topics, which were generated based on previous public meeting discussions.

The meeting participants were asked to review the existing vision statement created by the city in 2017. The planning team wanted public input to revise the statement so that a new vision statement that reflects the current conditions, needs, and wishes of the community could be crafted.

"Rockport is a friendly, culturally diverse and economically vibrant community that embraces the arts and humanities and preserves the best of small town life on the water, including health, beauty, comfort, and safety."

Table 2.2 Comprehensive Planning Meeting Schedule

	Meeting	Objectives	Meeting Activities
08/16/18	Public Kickoff Meeting @ Rockport Service Center	• Introduce Texas Target Communities • Explain planning process • Present State of Community (SOC) report	Mapping - Show us where you live;Post It notes - What makes you proud to be a Rockport resident? Poster - Wishlist for your home, necessities, accessibility, activities
09/20/18	Task Force Meeting @ Rockport Service Center	• Explain the role of the Task Force and ground rules • Introduce Texas Rural Leadership Program	Document assets in the community
10/15/18	Task Force Meeting @ Rockport Service Center	• Introduce and explain plan themes	Poster sessions to document assets and questions regarding each theme
11/11/18	Comprehensive Planning Themes Public Meeting @ Rockport-Fulton High School	• Summarize what has been done so far • Explain community vision • Present themes and input already gathered	Poster & Mapping sessions to establish a comprehensive list of community wants and potential locations
01/09-10/19	Task Force Downtown Focus Meeting @ Rockport Service Center	• Explain university courses/ student involvement for spring semester • Present themes and highlights from public meeting • Explain APA-CPAT project	Discuss and document main downtown issues. Stakeholders include Diane Probst, Downtown Merchants, Navigation District, Cultural Arts District
01/24-25/19	TAMU-DFW Law class meetings @ Rockport Service Center	• Gather community information on issues	Interview stakeholders: City Building and Development Director, County Long Term Recovery Team, Navigation District Director, Permitting Manager, County Engineer, Local Resident
02/07/19	Task Force Transportation Focus Meeting @ Rockport Service Center	• Review previous Mayor's Vision Statement, receive feedback • Introduce Transportation Class and students' objectives	Discuss and map focus areas and mark issues and opportunities on printed maps for various transportation mode
03/07/19	Scenarios Public Meeting @ Aquarium Education Center	• Present overview of Vision Statement, Planning Scenarios and Draft Transportation Plan	Document public feedback on an scenarios and transportation map
04/25/19	Booth @Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce Business Expo.	• Discuss the Comprehensive Plan focus areas and the elements of each focus area	Explain the planning process and the reccomendations
04/25/19	Draft Comprehensive Plan Public Meeting @ Aransas County Navigation District Offices	• Explain most supported Planning Scenario • Poster presentation of the Comprehensive Plan focus areas and the elements of each focus area	Participants respond to the final recommendations, providing comments and feedback for each focus area
06/16/19	Implementation Actions Discussion @ Rockport Service Center	• Discuss implementation table • Discuss Future Land Use Map	Discuss the implementation steps, responsible parties and timeline

New strategies were piloted during this meeting, including setting up a kids corner for children to interact with and learn while their parents participated in the public meeting activities. Approximately 10 children accompanied their parents to the community meeting on November 11, 2018. The focus for their activity was to engage the younger population and ask them what they like about where they live and what they want. Drawings made by the children at this meeting are seen in Figure 2.10.

Figure 2.10: Drawings made by children of their desires for the community

Figure 2.11: Culture and Art Feedback

Figure 2.12: Coastal Charm Feedback

INVOLVING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

A major theme throughout the Comprehensive Plan update was the idea of inclusion. The task force felt it was really important to include as many different people as possible so the plan could be representative of the whole community and not just a few. A graduate level Public Administration class from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi wanted to take that idea further and incorporate high school students into the planning process as part of their civic engagement research project. The Public Administration class looked into public engagement by surveying 150 high school students at Rockport-Fulton High School. In February of 2019, students from a Public Administration Capstone Course at Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi visited an advanced level high school U.S. Economics and Government class to elicit feedback about student's perceptions of Rockport and concerns for their future. The high school students were asked the following questions to gather information about what is important to the younger populations:

1. What do you value most about Rockport?
2. What is your favorite thing about Rockport?
3. What improvements would you like to see in Rockport?
4. What would keep you in Rockport?
5. What are some specific concerns you have for the future of Rockport?
6. In your opinion is Rockport an inclusive environment?

Themes from student survey:

- Small community
- Family
- Entertainment
- Environment
- Economic issues

Traits of Rockport:

- Selflessness
- Support
- Small-town community

The high school students were given a hand-out questionnaire as well as posed the questions verbally. An audio recorder was used to capture the students' answers; however, the most helpful feedback came from the hand-outs. The students most valued Rockport's sense of community and natural resources. The positive aspects of the community were the small-town community feel and the willingness to support one another during times of need. They expressed the need to improve job opportunities, affordable housing, and sources of entertainment for younger populations. Many students expressed their desire for recognition within the community, they want their voices to be heard. The students were well-informed and actively engaged in the conversation. Their feedback was enlightening, well thought out, and carefully considered while putting the plan together.

"My favorite thing about the Rockport community is that it's strong and grows stronger when times get hard."

– Rockport-Fulton High School Student

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

While students in the Plan Implementation course were focused on the aspects of the comprehensive plan, the transportation class considered thoroughfare planning, functional classifications, traffic analysis, public works considerations, and transportation funding opportunities. After building the foundation of values and creating a vision to guide future planning, additional meetings were held to explore specific topic areas of the plan. On February 7, 2019, the task force were invited to discuss transportation issues and opportunities to understand the local needs and context. The task force mapped points of interest, service gaps, and dangerous intersections in the transportation network. Ultimately the work the students created is included in the Transportation chapter of the comprehensive plan, providing a much deeper dive into transportation aspects for the city to consider as they develop and grow.

EXPLORING LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

In August of 2018, Dr. Melissa Currie, a professor of the TTU Regional Planning Studio at Texas Tech University, reached out to Amanda Torres to discuss the impacts of Hurricane Harvey on the community and what this meant for regional trends and potential for growth. On October 5, 2018, students from the Texas Tech Regional Planning Studio visited Rockport with the goal of creating Low Impact Design guidelines for the city to address stormwater drainage and flooding issues.

Low Impact Development (LID) is a principle of design with the goal of decreasing "ecological destruction" during development. The purpose of this principle is to provide as many opportunities as possible for water to be soaked up into the ground to reduce the chances of flooding and drainage issues.

The LID plan proposes several examples for the intersection of water management and the environment and public engagement. It focuses on environmental elements that include protecting habitat, preservation of wetlands, and maintain a healthy coastal system. They identified several opportunities for community growth, including the implementation of a living shoreline, stormwater management via existing wetlands, the proposition of constructed wetlands, identification of potential areas for growth, and a focus on ecotourism. Some of the recommendations from the LID plan has been included in the Development Consideration Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

DOWNTOWN ROCKPORT[1]

Downtown Rockport is the city's cultural, historic, and economic hub. This area was drastically impacted by the hurricane and is the focus of many recovery efforts. However, this particular area already had issues with frequent flooding long before Harvey made landfall. Issues and needs of the area were discussed during the meeting on January 9, 2019. A Community Planning Assistance Team (CPAT - which is later referred to as RPAT) conducted a preliminary site visit and attended this meeting to explain their goals and plans for downtown revitalization, resilience, and recovery. The focus of CPAT's study is the heart of downtown, the Austin Street Corridor.

Rockport is the recipient of one of the APA Foundation's 2018 Disaster Recovery Grants for a Recovery Planning Assistance Team to create a more resilient Downtown Rockport. It supports the post-Hurricane Harvey recovery and combines efforts with this Comprehensive Plan.

[1] American Planning Association (2018) Creating Great communities for All: Rockport, Texas. Retrieved October 31, 2018, from https://www.planning.org/communityassistance/teams/rockport/

To capitalize on existing knowledge base, many community groups were a part of the January 9-10 and May 20-24 meetings, including:

- City Staff
- City Council and Mayor Rios
- Planning Commission
- Retired City Staff
- Consulting City Engineer
- Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown Merchants
- Center for the Arts
- Navigation District
- Texas Sea Grant
- Local Realtor
- Texas A&M University

During this meeting, the community's downtown merchants discussed their wants and needs, what fits and what doesn't fit. The merchants expressed their desire for overall beautification of downtown and the flooding issue. They want to see vacant lots cleaned up, green spaces maintained, and improved lighting. After walking through the city and gathering data and information from residents, the team presented three key concepts or focus areas for downtown improvement.

- **Flood Mitigation and Resilience:** In acknowledging Rockport's risk of coastal flooding as the primary flood type risk due to its location, they discussed opportunities in reducing threats, community assets, and what is at risk.
- **Economic Resilience:** The team saw several opportunities for economic impact - development of businesses, land, and workforce, collaboration, and flood mitigation.
- **Downtown Design and Vitality:** Several themes emerged during discussion and data gathering - connecting places, enhancing the experience, understanding Rockport's heritage, telling the story through marketing, signage and wayfinding, and celebrating the arts.

INVESTIGATING LEGAL TOOLS

Many of Texas' coastal communities have little to no capacity for planning, risk assessment and, mitigation, and very rarely have the financial means to hire consultants. Rockport is no exception to this, as a community of close to 10,000 people recently reeling from a devastating storm. The legal needs of communities have increased since Hurricane Harvey, but providing legal assistance was not a service offered by Texas Target Communities. As part of a new partnership between TTC and Texas A&M School of Law, a capstone class focused on Natural Resources Systems visited Rockport to understand how the community is exploring legal tools, policies, and related mechanisms that could help avoid or minimize the negative effects of natural hazards. The course comprised of seven law students and resulted in a guide about *Legal Mechanisms for Mitigating Flood Impacts in Texas Coastal Communities*. The guide outlined natural hazards the community deals with, defines land use tools, and provided case studies.

On January 24, 2019, law students spent the day in Rockport meeting with municipal representatives and other community stakeholders while also visiting vulnerable sites. They assessed existing local, state, and national rules and regulations and investigated legal tools and mechanisms used by other similarly situated communities. They sought to gain an understanding of the scope of these tools and mechanisms and the extent to which they can be utilized; and formulated alternative and model ordinances and other legal mechanisms that could be considered by decision-makers in the region.

DESIGNING THE LANDSCAPE

On March 1st, students from an undergraduate landscape architecture class visited the City of Rockport and met with stakeholders from Aransas County Navigation District, Center for the Arts, Cultural Arts District, and Keep Aransas County Beautiful. The goal of the 3rd year studio class was to create urban design strategies for the downtown area.

It is unusual for so many different courses to come together in one community, but the timing could not have been more perfect. Each course offered a different perspective on what it means to achieve whole community resilience and have added invaluable knowledge and suggestions to make this comprehensive plan even better.

SCENARIO PLANNING

In March 2019, the planning team presented three scenarios representing various concepts. Each of the scenarios took into consideration each focus area discussed in the Comprehensive Plan. The three scenarios presented were Business as Usual, Coastal Buzz, and Growing Outward. Participants went up to each poster, placing sticker dots along oppose-support spectrums for each scenario. This activity allowed residents to consider different scenarios and decided which were most or least favored by the community. These scenarios and the Future Land Use Plan are fully described in Chapter 3.

Business as Usual: Showed the way future development in Rockport would look by using the current standards.

Coastal Buzz: Showed development primarily in or near downtown.Some elements were added from this scenario in the future land use map

Growing Outward: Showed development primarily along the Bypass, while incorporating other areas into the city. Some elements were added from this scenario in the future land use map.

Figure 2.13: Planning team presentation of Scenario Planning at the meeting on March 7, 2019

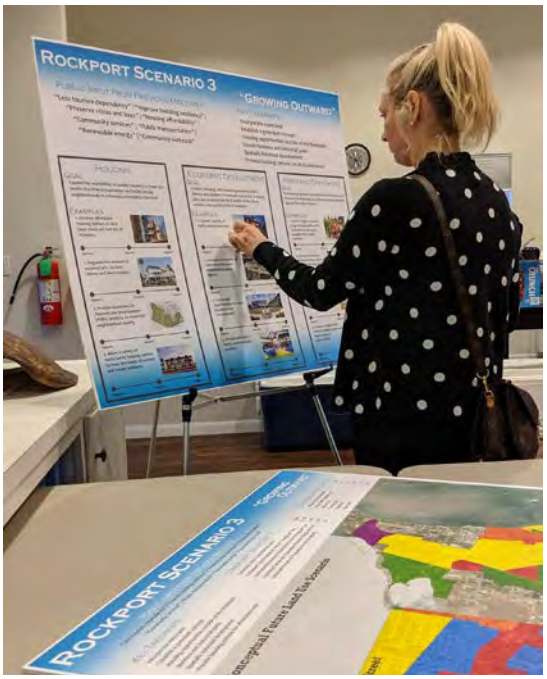


Figure 2.14: Scenario Meeting activity

PLAN INTEGRATION FOR RESILIENCE

As the comprehensive plan development process entered its final stage, an additional technical analysis was performed in an effort to further reduce vulnerability to hazards and build a more resilient Rockport. The Plan Integration for Resilience Scorecard (PIRS) method of 'spatial plan evaluation', developed by a team of researchers at Texas A&M University's Institute for Sustainable Communities (IfSC), can help enhance community resilience by helping coordinate planning efforts and integrate hazard mitigation throughout a community's 'network of plans' -- the collection of documents that guide its development and management.

Rockport's draft comprehensive plan was evaluated, along with other city- and county-level documents that influence planning and management in the community, to understand how the policies and guidance are likely to affect vulnerability to flooding. The results were recorded in the scorecard and subsequently used to suggest 'adjustments' that might improve coordination among the plans toward reducing vulnerability and strengthening resilience. This effort was guided by the 2019 version of the Plan Integration for Resilience Scorecard Guidebook, which may be found online at:

http://mitigationguide.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Guidebook-2019.03-Update-v1.pdf.

The following maps visualize the resilience principles of policies across different districts.

Figure 2.15: Plan Integration for Resilience Scorecard

The following "Network of Plans" in Rockport were evaluated in the process:

- **LTRP** — Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan and Report (2018)
- **MHMP** — Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan (2017)
- **MFMP** — Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Floodplain Management Plan (2017)
- **HDMP** — A Vision for Rockport: Master Plan for the Heritage District & Downtown Rockport (2006)
- **HDZO** — Rockport Heritage District Zoning Overlay Code (2014 update)
- **RPAT** — Recovery Planning Assistance Team Report (2019)

Throughout the plan, the icons (seen above) indicate alignment with policy best practices across the "network of plans."

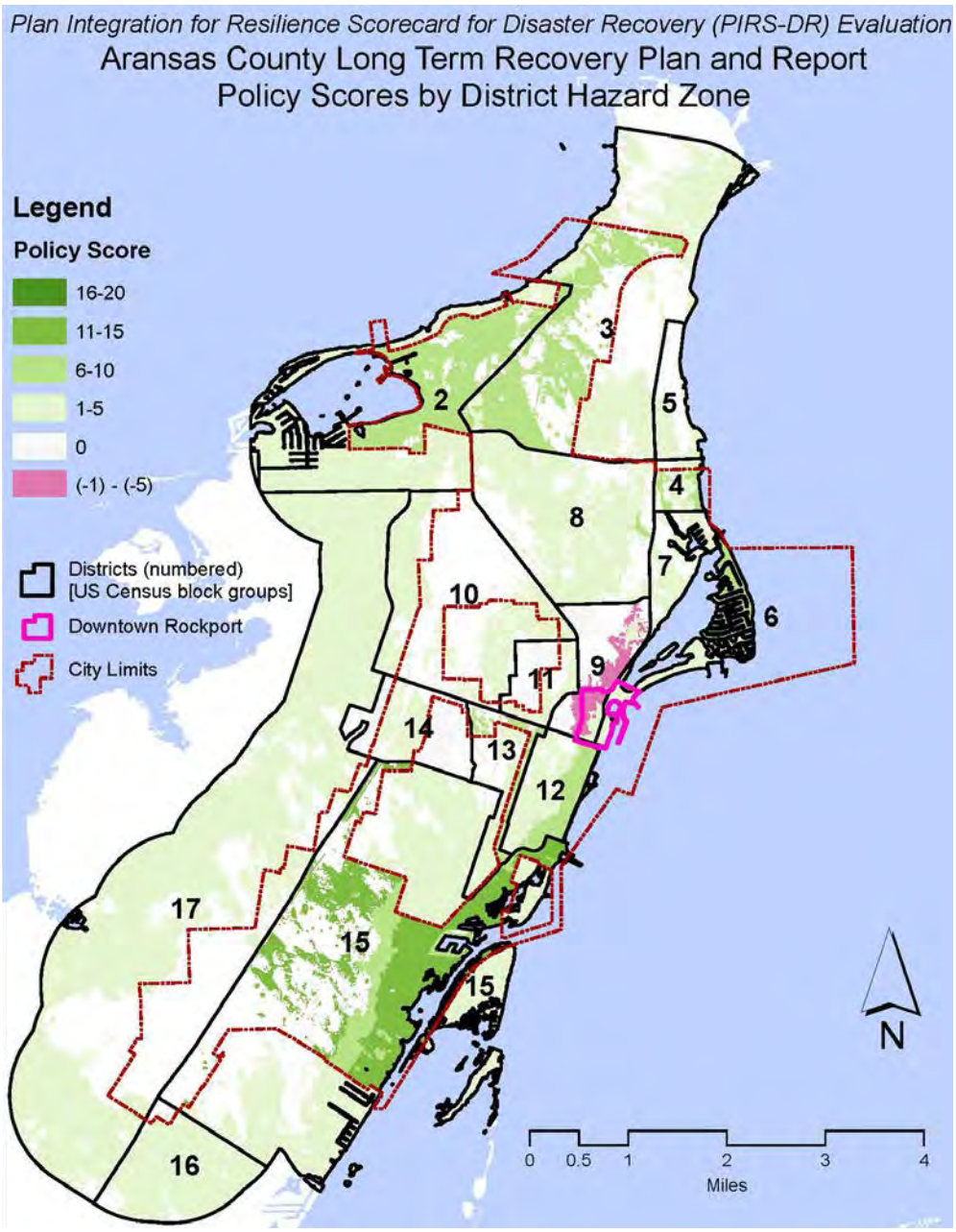


Figure 2.16: Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan and Report Policy Scores by District Hazard Zones

To align with development and reconstruction during recovery from Hurricane Harvey, the planning team evaluated the LTRP. For the most part, the LTRP has policies that reduce vulnerability to hazards. Policies within the downtown district (district 9) should be adjusted or reconsidered within the LTRP to ensure long-term recovery efforts infuse floodproofing and other principles of resilience. The following policies are best practices within the LTRP:

- Provide needed infrastructure in key areas (eg. drainage improvements in Heritage District) to encourage redevelopment. (LTRP 50)
- Little Bay Restoration- Little Bay receives storm water runoff from 11 storm drain inlets and Tule Creek. The proposed project will reduce the threat of coastal erosion and flooding to new and existing businesses and infrastructure. (LTRP 99)
- Fulton Beach Road Restoration- This project proposes construction of up to 4 miles of breakwaters by creating a "Living Breakwater Reef" system at the convergence of Copano Bay with Aransas Bay. (LTRP 100)

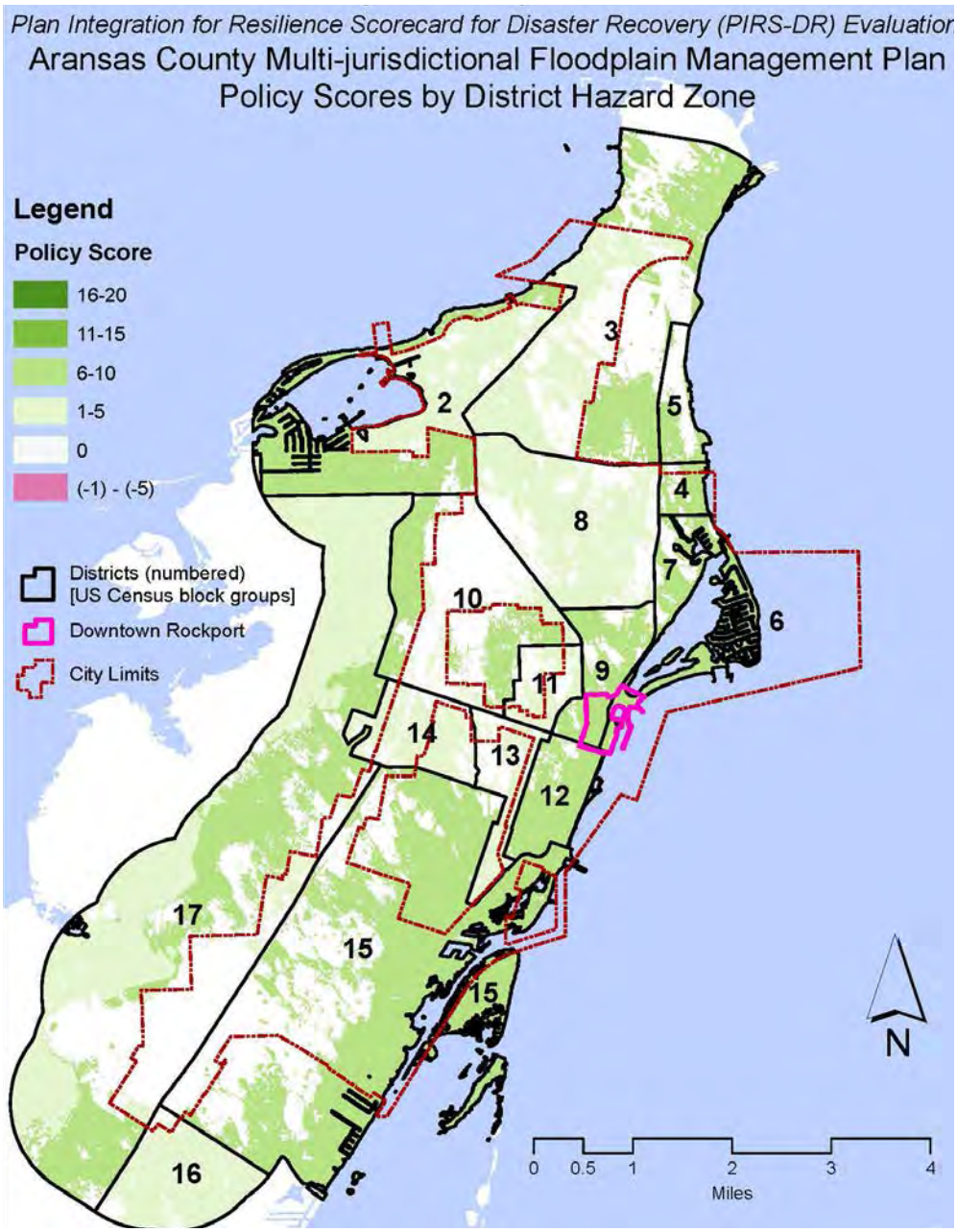


Figure 2.17: Aransas County Multi-jurisdictional Floodplain Management Plan Policy Scores by District Hazard Zone

The hazard mitigation plan and floodplain management plan are two obvious plans the city should align with to reduce disaster vulnerability. These plans has policies focused on resilience throughout. Some best practice policies within the MHMP and MFMP include:

- Review and update zoning regulations to reduce population density in areas vulnerable to hazards (MHMP 17-44)
- Design and conduct an engineering study to address flooding in downtown Rockport (MHMP 17-40)
- Create a countywide wetlands preservation plan (MHMP 17-5)
- Incorporate higher floodplain management standards into City of Rockport comprehensive plan update. (MFMP 62)
- Evaluate list of repetitive loss properties for opportunities to partner with property owners regarding potential mitigation actions. (MFMP 64)
- Evaluate areas in the floodplain viable for open space preservation. (MFMP 65)

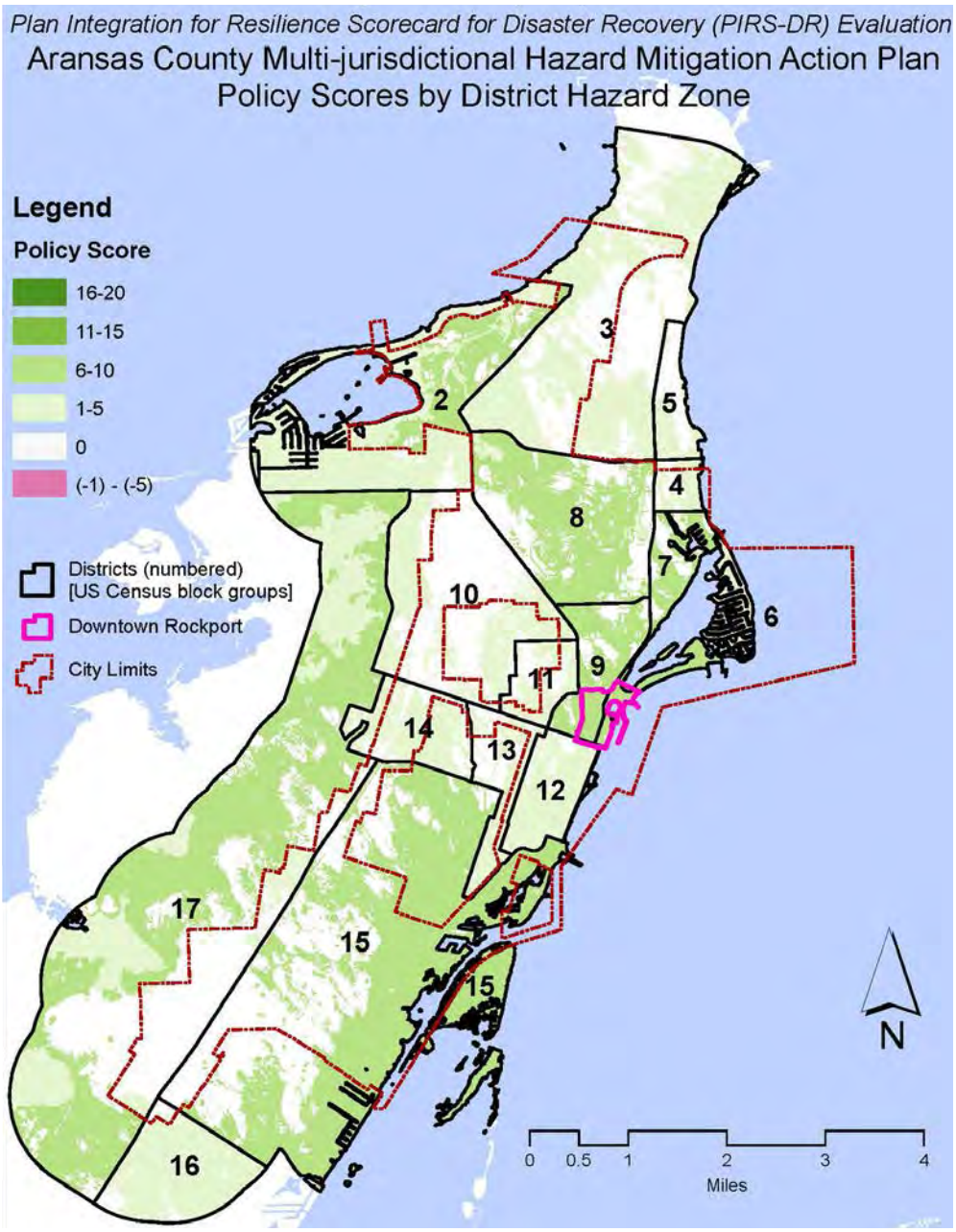


Figure 2.19: Aransas County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan Policy Scores by District Hazard Zone

The HDMP and HDZO focus policies around the Heritage District and downtown. Because of this, many policies within the documents may in fact exacerbate disaster vulnerability. The planning team recommends adjusting policies to ensure resilience principles are embedded throughout. The following are policies which demonstrate best practices of resilience within the HDMP and HDZO:

- Replace bulkhead at Heritage District (HDMP)
- Dry Floodproofing: Within the Waterfront and Austin Corridor overlay districts, entrances located on the building's primary facade shall be at the sidewalk level. Dry Floodproofing shall be the preferred method used to protect the space inside the building below the Base Floor Elevation. (HDZO)

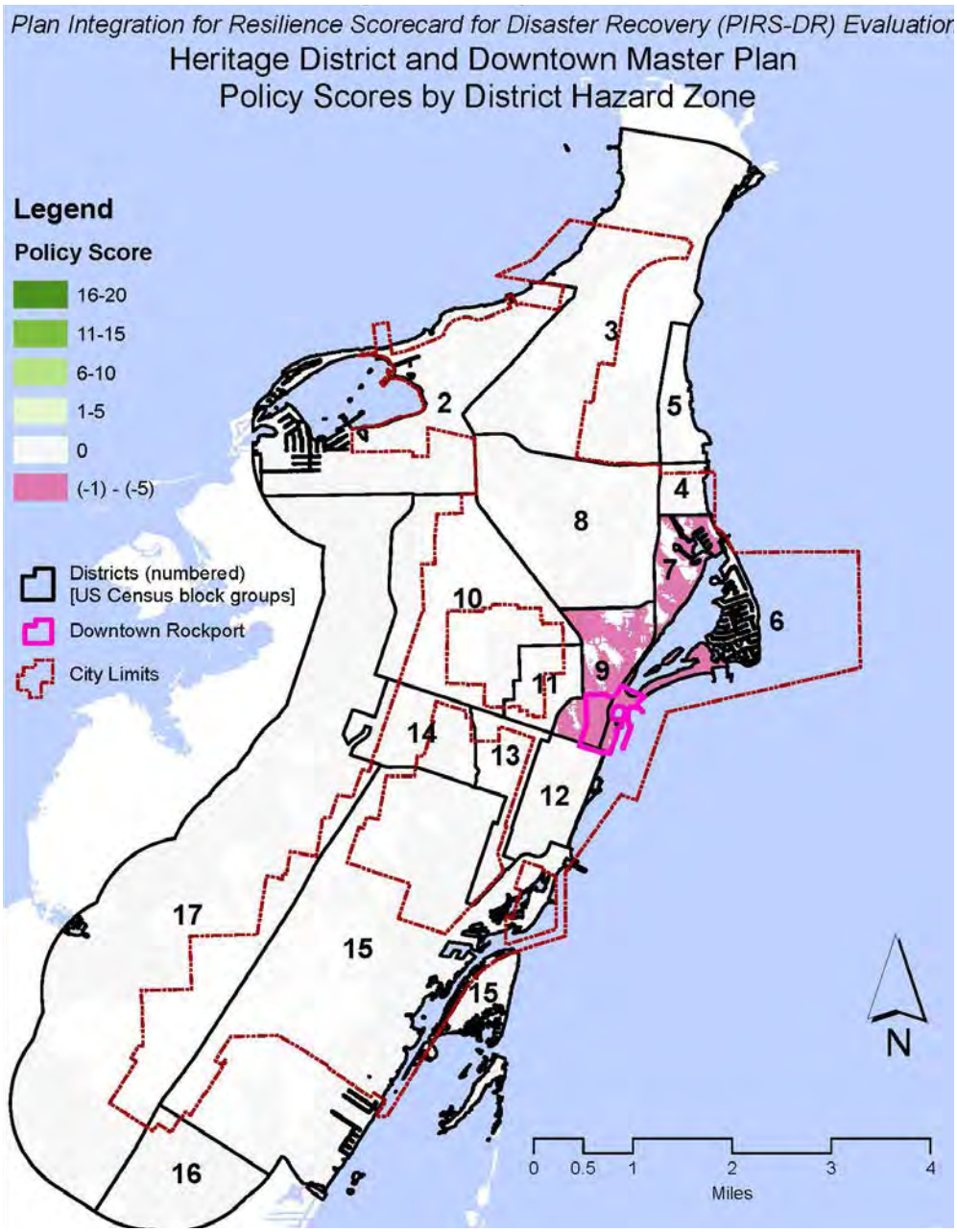


Figure 2.20: Heritage District and Downtown Master Plan Policy Scores by District Hazard Zone

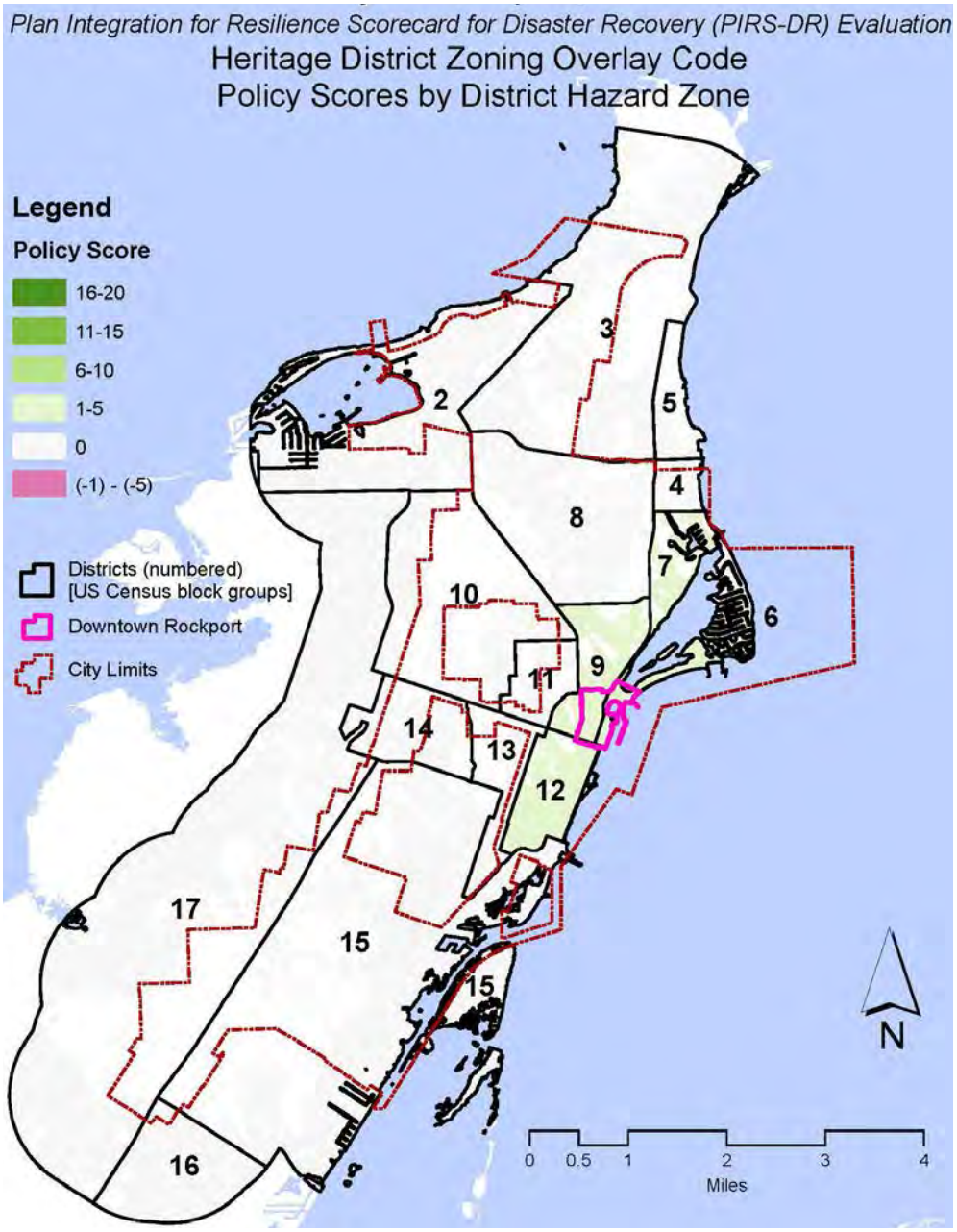


Figure 2.21: Heritage District Overlay Code Policy Scores by District Hazard Zone

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

During several planning workshops of visioning and strategizing, residents identified plan themes, and developed goals that aim to address their present needs and provide sustainable benefits for the future growth of the city. Each topic area has goals and objectives that work together to transform Rockport into a stronger, more connected community.

The following themes are the guiding principles for the plan:

Inclusive Community

- Create a sense of belonging/community outreach
- Increase representation of marginalized populations
- Partnerships between elderly and youth
- Youth and multi-family programs/activities and participatory planning

Responsible Growth

- Building resilience
- Fortified Standards
- Infrastructure
- Renewable energy

Connected Rockport

- Recreational mobility options
- Medical facilities and senior care facilities
- Housing affordability
- Maintain small town feel with Mom & Pop shops

Strong Economy

- Increase diversity of economy
- Strong workforce
- Promote tourism

Diverse Culture and Art

- Arts and entertainment for all
- Night life for youth, young adults, and families
- Activities for residents and visitors of all ages

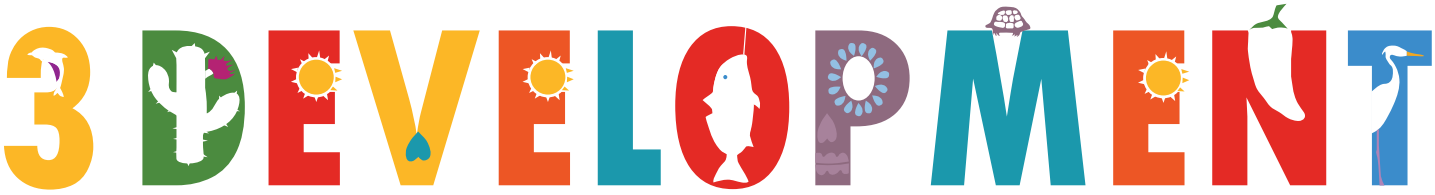
Coastal Charm

- Promote conservation and protection of natural resources and environment, including the flora and fauna
- Affordable activities and spaces for public engagement with the water

Table 2.3 The following are goals that will serve the public interest of the city

Goal 3.1 Achieve a more inclusive land use plan and comprehensive zoning ordinance by providing land uses that preserve the integrity of Rockport's Community Character	
Goal 3.2 Guide the future growth of the city according to the community's vision	
Goal 3.3 Establish development regulations to reduce hazard exposure within the city	
Goal 4.1. Expand the Availability of Quality Housing to Meet the Needs of a Diverse Population &; Build Strong Neighborhoods to Enhance Community Character	
Goal 4.2. Build Resilient Homes, Maintain Safe Neighborhoods, and Enhance Community Character	
Goal 5.1 Provide Safe and Efficient Roadway network	
Goal 5.2 Develop an annual maintenance and inventory for the transportation system	
Goal 5.3 Implement Complete Street policies in the multi-modal network to enhance safety and connectivity	
Goal 6.1 Develop a diverse and resilient economy	
Goal 6.2 Establish strategies and programs to foster a skilled workforce.	
Goal 6.3 Support existing economic assets	
Goal 7.1 Preserve & Protect the Threatened Animals and Sensitive Natural Resources of Live Oak Peninsula, the Little Bay Estuary, Aransas Bay & Gulf of Mexico	
Goal 7.2 Prepare the City for Disasters that Could Adversely Affect the Health, Safety, & General Welfare of Residents & Visitors	
Goal 7.3 Maximize environmental and economic benefits of ecotourism industry.	
Goal 8.1 Ensure that All Infrastructure Elements meet existing & projected demands in a manner that will minimize environmental impacts	
Goal 8.2 Promote the peninsula's heritage and encourage the preservation and revitalization of the historic resources for the educational, cultural and economic benefit of all	

The following Chapters describe the existing conditions, recommendations, goals and objectives for development, transportation, economy, housing, and community facilities.


3 DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW

Land use planning is central to creating an efficient, equitable, safe, and sustainable community. The City of Rockport aims to enhance development and land use practices to better respond to growing challenges posed by extreme weather events and a changing climate. Rockport is committed to protecting the properties and lives of the residents and seeks to explore strategies that could help avoid or minimize the negative impacts of hazards on the community.

This chapter describes the community's vision for the future of Rockport and guides the future development by explaining land-use policies and development priorities. The chapter articulates how and where development may occur. However, this plan doesn't establish zoning regulations or district boundaries.

The future land use map provides guidance for rezoning decisions and updates to development regulations regarding the community's future growth and character. It is not a zoning map. It is a conceptual map, depicting the community vision and future planning objectives.

"A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries."

EXISTING LAND USE

Land use planning involves the arrangement of land to ensure the compatibility of different land uses. The existing land use inventory, which classifies different types of land use activities, is an important means of identifying current conditions and trends.

Zoning is one of the most common land use regulations used to control and direct the development of property within the city limits. The City of Rockport adopted its first zoning ordinances in 1996 as an effort to reduce traffic congestion, increase safety against fire and other dangers, promote health and public welfare, provide adequate light and air, and prevent the overcrowding of land. It also works to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewer, schools, parks, and other public requirements. Since then, these ordinances have been updated periodically. The current code of ordinances was updated in October 2018. The Rockport Heritage District Zoning Overlay Code was adopted in February 2012.

The current zoning ordinance contains fourteen districts that fall into general categories of residential, commercial, and industrial district (see Table 3.1). Table 3.1 shows the breakdown of the zoning categories which coordinates with a zoning map (Figure 3.1). While the particular zone does not directly define the land use of that lot, it does play a major role in the current land use that is seen in Rockport. Table 3.2 shows the current land use based on the zoning map (Figure 3.2) and Aransas County Appraisal District parcel data.

Table 3.1: City of Rockport Zoning Districts

Zoning Districts	Definition	Area (acres)
Residential		
R-1	1st Single-Family Dwelling District	6830.3
R-2	2nd Single Family Dwelling District	511.3
R-2B	Zero Lot Line Single-Family District	17.3
R-2M	Manufactured Housing District	122.7
R-3	Duplex Dwelling District	9.1
R-4	1st Multi-Family Dwelling District	19.4
R-5	2nd Multi-Family Dwelling District	166.0
R-6	Hotel/Motel District	132.4
R-7	Residential and Office District	18.4
Commercial/ Business		
B-1	General Business District	946.5
B-2	Central Business District	9.2
Industrial		
I-1	Light Industrial District	174.7
I-2	Heavy Industrial District	61.7
Others		
P.U.D	Planned Unit Development District	104.5
C.U.P	Conditional Use Permit District	157.7

Table 3.2: City of Rockport Existing Land Use

Category	Area (Acres)
Single Family	2345.49
Manufactured Homes	54.17
Multi-Family	39.96
Commercial	394.19
Public/Institutional	122.80
Hotel/Motel	29.39
Industrial	10.53
RV Parks	46.53
Open Space	159.60
Undeveloped Land	2333.82

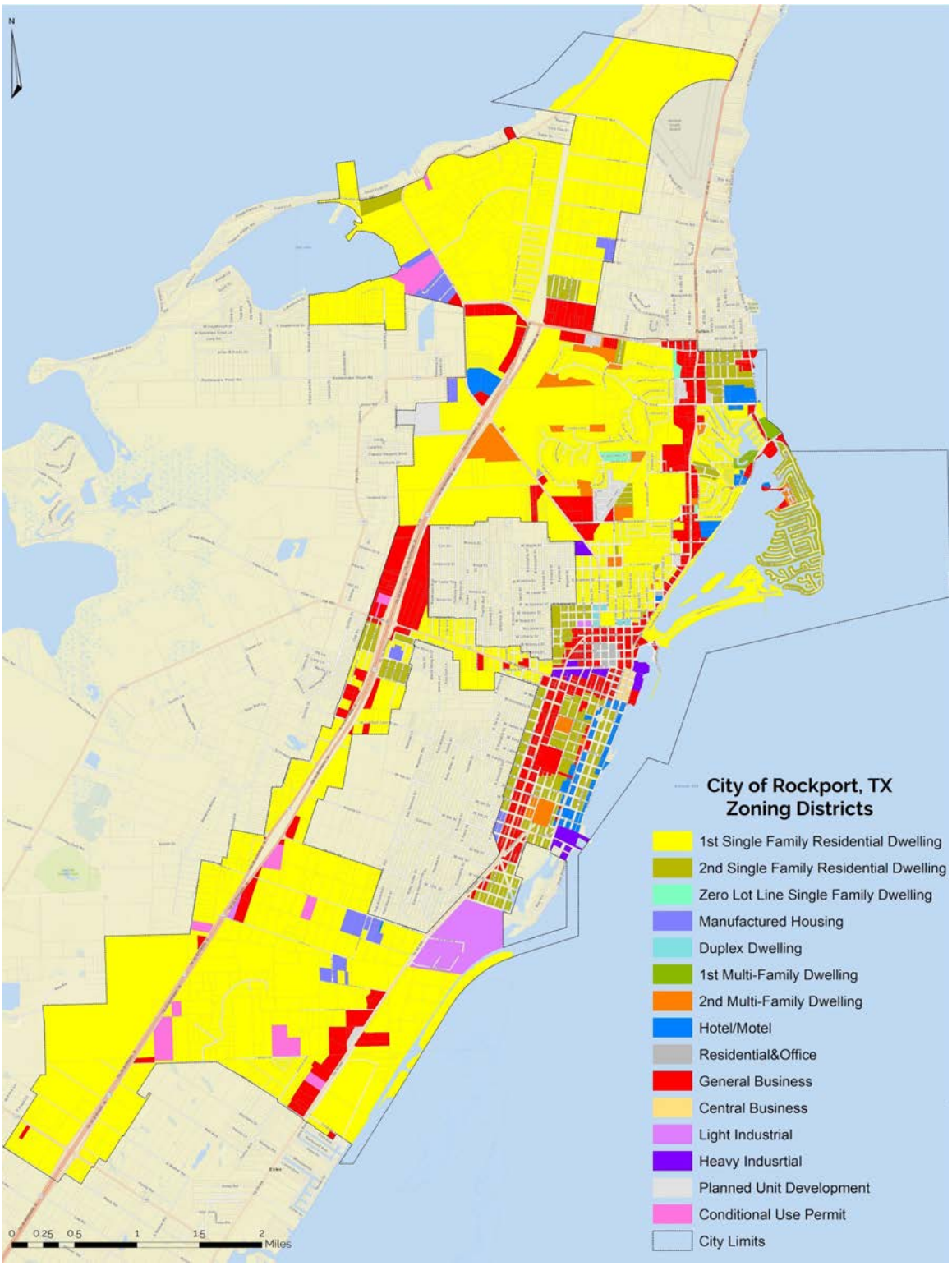


Figure 3.1: Zoning Districts in Rockport

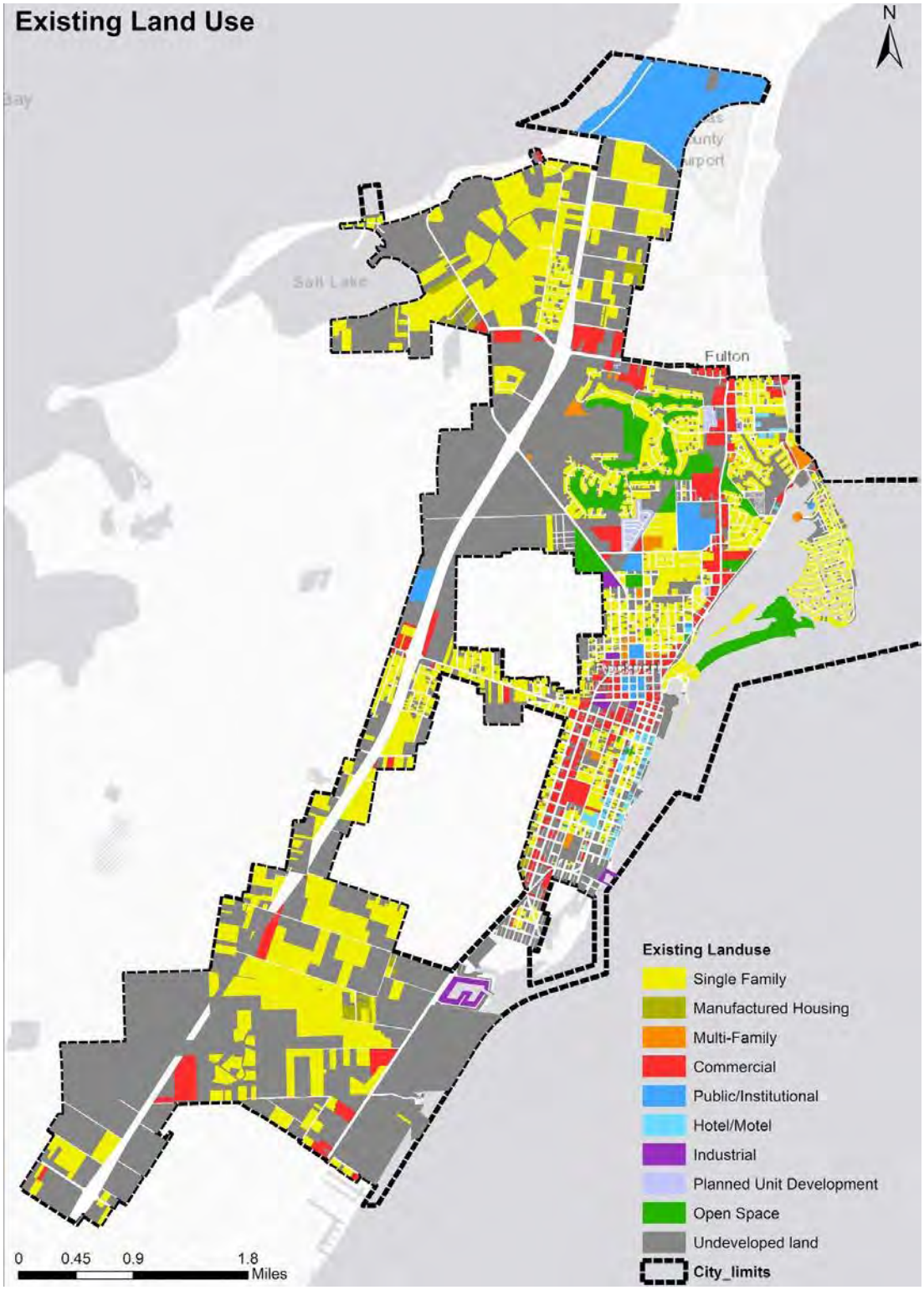


Figure 3.2: Land Use Map

SCENARIO PLANNING

To better plan for the future, scenario planning is used to envision possible outcomes by considering the full range of emerging conditions and uncertainties. The goal is to identify elements that are preferred and needed for the development of the community. This process began by reviewing current patterns, projected forecasts, and influential factors to develop three plausible potential futures.

SCENARIO 1- "BUSINESS AS USUAL"

The "Business as Usual" scenario represents how the City of Rockport will develop and grow if existing regulations do not change in the next 30 years. This scenario focuses on preserving the existing development pattern and scenario shows the development according to the current policies, regulations, and practices.

Key Takeaways

- Reflects the current land use practices in Rockport by enforcing the existing land use regulations.
- Increases single family residential development, but lacks a range of housing options.
- Expands commercial and residential development along Highway 35 Bypass.
- Increases commercial development around the downtown area.
- Preserves existing neighborhoods, as there are no major changes to current development patterns.
- Increases buildings in the floodplain.
- Increases impervious land cover and loss of existing wetlands.

SCENARIO 2- "COASTAL BUZZ"

The "Coastal Buzz" scenario represents how growth may occur if development is centered around the Downtown Heritage District in the next 30 years. This scenario will likely affect the tourism industry in Rockport as the focus is to provide more economic opportunities related to tourism and recreation with the goal of creating a "Coastal Charm City."

Key Takeaways

- Increases density in the downtown area where the majority of economic growth will occur.
- Increase residential development in the Downtown Heritage District, and lower density in areas outside the downtown district.
- Conserves more open space due to limited development on the currently vacant land and increased infill/redevelopment.
- Increases development in the floodplain, increasing the need to protect the Downtown Heritage District and future coastal development.

SCENARIO 3- "GROWING OUTWARD"

The "Growing Outward" scenario focuses on development around the Highway 35 Bypass. This scenario represents a more "resilient Rockport" by driving development away from the coastline of the city and bringing more inland development. The purpose of this scenario is to allow the Bypass to drive development in the city and to create a safer and more resilient community. This scenario also shows what the city could look like if the un-annexed areas in the center of the city were to be annexed and incorporated in the future.

Key Takeaways

- Directs development inland and away from the floodplain.
- Encourages design standards to incorporate a "small town feel".
- Increases parks and open space around the city near the edges of the peninsula, to provide more mitigation and protection efforts from coastal hazards and flooding.
- Protects wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Increases commercial development along major corridors.

Each of the three scenarios prioritizes different community values and embraces a unique overall feel. These scenarios were presented to Rockport residents at a public meeting for feedback and altered to produce the final future land use map.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Sustainable growth and responsible development are important to the residents, which begin with protection from natural disasters. Because Rockport is susceptible to hazards and sea level rise, the community hopes to see measures taken to protect community facilities, homes, and residents. The community supports the preservation of open space and wetlands for stormwater mitigation. It is important to the community to restore and rebuild Rockport to be more sustainable and resilient through building codes and ordinances, sea level consideration, and over all community protection.

Figure 3.3: Single-family residence
Picture Courtesy: Emily Tedford

Figure 3.4: Multi-family residences
Picture Courtesy: Emily Tedford

RECOMMENDATIONS

FUTURE LAND USE

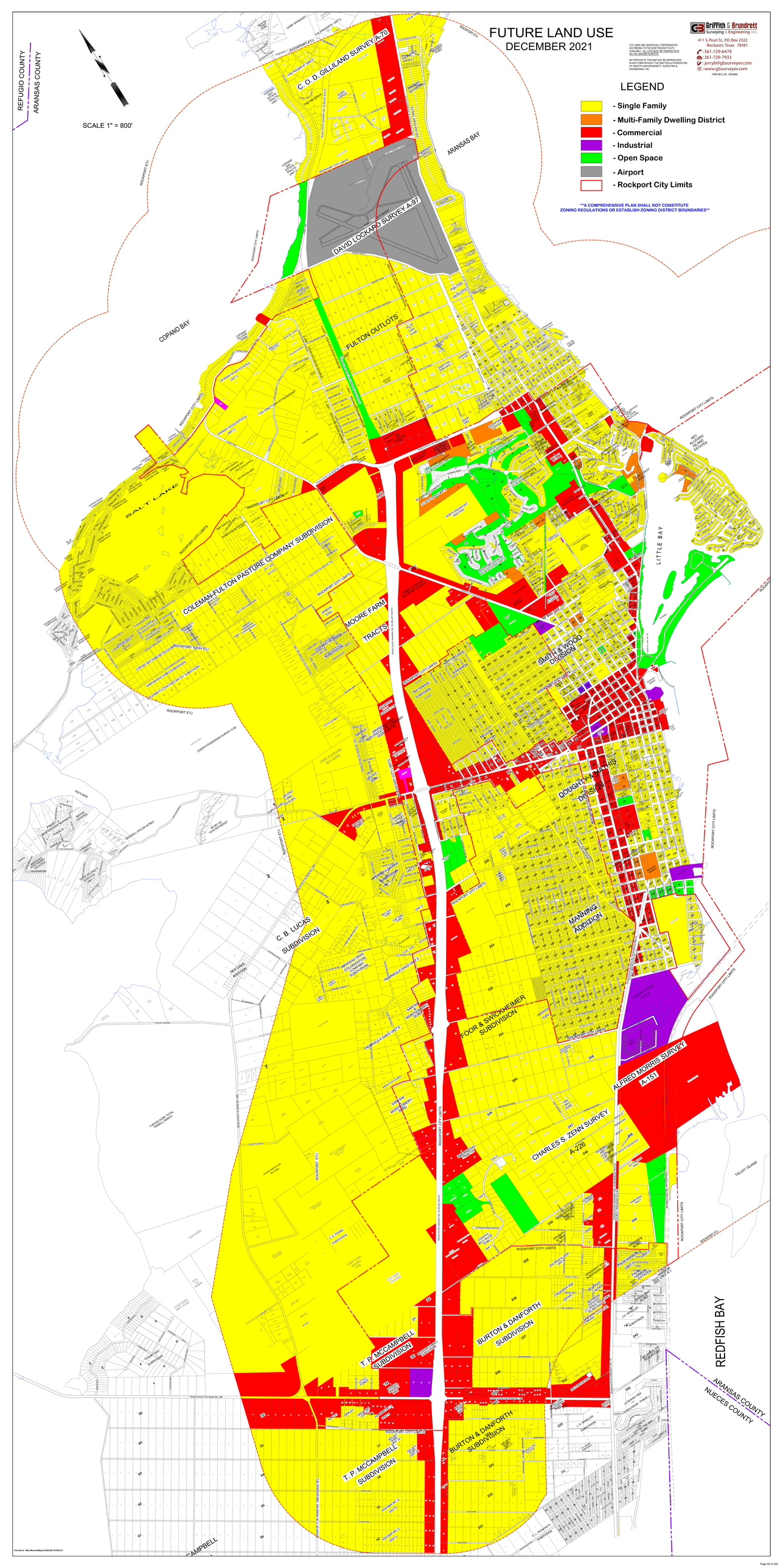
Because this Comprehensive Plan is meant to be oriented toward the future of Rockport, future land use provides a visual guide to the future development and growth of the city. Future land use bring together elements of the comprehensive plan such as economic development, housing, community facilities, environment, and transportation.

The future land use map (Figure 3.8) was developed based on the feedback that was received during the scenario planning public meetings and other public feedback period. The goal is to provide accommodations to suit the needs of the current and future citizens of Rockport. The information in this chapter captures the city's policies regarding how and where Rockport will grow and change for years to come. This community vision is conceptualized in a future land use map with different districts. However, the future land use map is not a zoning map and doesn't establish the zoning district boundaries.

Figure 3.5: Commercial development

Figure 3.6: Industrial Facility

Figure 3.7: Open space


FUTURE LAND USE
DECEMBER 2021
Griffith & Brundrett
Surveying & Engineering, Inc.
411 S. Pearl St., P.O. Box 2322
Rockport, Texas 78381
: 361-729-6479
: 361-729-7933
: jerryb@gbsurveyor.com
: www.gbsurveyor.com
FIRM REG. NO. 10094800
LOT LINES ARE GRAPHICALLY REPRESENTED ACCORDING TO THE MOST RECENT PLATS AVAILABLE. ALL LOTS MUST BE VERIFIED WITH ON THE GROUND SURVEYS.
NO PORTION OF THIS MAP MAY BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION OF GRIFFITH AND BRUNDRETT, SURVEYING & ENGINEERING, INC.
LEGEND
- Single Family
- Multi-Family Dwelling District
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Open Space
- Airport
- Rockport City Limits
A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SHALL NOT CONSTITUTE ZONING REGULATIONS OR ESTABLISH ZONING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES
SCALE 1" = 800'
REFUGIO COUNTY
ARANSAS COUNTY
ARANSAS BAY
COPANO BAY
LITTLE BAY
REDFISH BAY
ARANSAS COUNTY
NUECES COUNTY
TALLEY ISLAND
SALT LAKE
C. O. D. GILLILAND SURVEY A-70
DAVID LOCKARD SURVEY A-97
FULTON OUTLOTS
COLEMAN-FULTON PASTURE COMPANY SUBDIVISION
MOORE FARM TRACTS
SMITH & WOOD DIVISION
DOUGHTY & HARRIS DIVISION
MANNING ADDITION
C. B. LUCAS SUBDIVISION
FOOR & SWICKHEIMER SUBDIVISION
ALFRED MORRIS SURVEY A-151
CHARLES S. ZENN SURVEY A-226
BURTON & DANFORTH SUBDIVISION
T. P. MCCAMPBELL SUBDIVISION
ROCKPORT CITY LIMITS
ROCKPORT ETJ

Land Districts

Single Family Residential

A location where the lots contain a stand-alone structure with its own lot intended for one family.

Multi-Family Residential

A location where the lots contain multiple separate housing units for residential use. It can contain one or several buildings, usually an apartment or condominium.

Commercial

A location that is intended for use by for-profit businesses. Examples of this kind of use are office complexes or shopping malls.

Industrial

A type of land use intended for warehouse, industrial, storage use.

Open Space

Any open piece of land that is undeveloped and accessible to the public.

RV PARKS

Due to its brand as a popular tourist destination and proximity to large industries to the south of the city, Rockport is an attractive city to develop recreational vehicle (RV) parks. The development of RV parks are regulated as a Conditional Use within the City zoning ordinance. Conditions outlined within this section dictate very basic regulations for a park. Community members have expressed concern about the locations where these parks have chosen to develop, the landscape and screening required of the parks, and the availability of adequate utilities at these locations. These expressed elements of concerns can be incorporated into the current ordinance to strengthen requirements and have these reflect community vision.

The plan also suggests considering adding provisions for RV Parks specifically in the "Multi-Family Residential," and "Commercial" areas, while not fully providing an entitlement to place an RV Park anywhere in those land districts but rather adding a caveat to allow RVPark where appropriate based on existing sur-rounding development and land uses.

CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS

The City may explore conservation subdivision and environmental corridor district to protect environmentally sensitive areas. It is recommended that the City consider doing a corridor study for Highway 35 Bypass and develop an environmental corridor district. Similarly, the City may also consider a conservation subdivision. The difference between traditional subdivisions and conservation subdivisions is seen in Figure 3.13. Conservation subdivisions are residential subdivisions with design techniques that reserve at least half of the buildable land area to "undivided, permanently protected open space." Conservation subdivision design helps communities protect vulnerable natural and cultural areas without reducing residential densities. These designs secure more land for wildlife habitats, filter and retain storm-water runoff, and maintain the natural environment. Developers can link open space areas to the adjacent subdivisions, creating a network of environmental corridors.

There are several steps that must be taken in or-der to implement these designs. First, the com-munity must identify the features and resources it wants to protect from future development to maximize environmental benefits. Community members have expressed a desire to protect the floodplain, wetlands, live oak trees, and ground-water recharge areas.

Based on the conservation priorities, the zoning and subdivision regulations must be updated to specify permissible locations for conservation subdivisions and set standards for the new de-velopment in regards to percentage of the land that is being protected, lot sizes, frontage de-signs, setbacks, and street widths. Additionally, the regulations need to specify the methods for protecting the open spaces, maintenance and ownership. Lastly, the City needs to promote the benefits of conservation subdivision design

and the process of implementing it. Education and assistance to developers and community members not only increase the chances of conservation designs but also help support the community's vision for development and land conservation.

ANNEXATION

Annexation is a land use management tool authorized by state law that cities can utilize to regulate properties within an area that is adjacent in a certain radius from its city limits called the "extraterritorial jurisdiction" or ETJ. The Texas Local Government Code defines the location of the extraterritorial jurisdiction of a municipality dependent on its population. Because Rockport is a city with a population between 5,000 to 24,999 inhabitants, its ETJ radius is one mile. The 2017 and 2019 Texas Legislative Sessions have modified the rules dictating how municipalities can annex per Chapter 43 of the Texas Local Government Code. The city will need to be cognizant of the changes that occurred in these sessions, along with any legislation that will be passed in future sessions.

The City of Rockport most recently annexed land in 2016 and 2017, incorporating land along Market Street (FM 1069), Pearl Street (FM 2165), and State Highway 35 Bypass. These series of annexations have left two areas surrounded by the city limits that have yet to be incorporated into the city. At time of publication, there are no plans to annex any further within the extraterritorial jurisdiction. Once annexed, the city zoning ordinance requires that any newly annexed land gets zoned into the most restrictive, least dense zoning category which is R-1 1st Single-Family Dwelling District. The most recent annexation has caused staff to consider re-evaluating that policy to one that would better consider the land uses existing in a proposed annexation area.

DOWNTOWN HERITAGE DISTRICT

The downtown areas of cities often define the heart and character of an entire community. Streets are lined with historic buildings of yesteryear, and citizens want to preserve the area's cultural significance. Some cities choose to go through the process of getting their downtown areas designated for its cultural and/or historic significance. Such designations include Cultural Arts Districts or Main Street Program through the state, or the National Register of Historic Places. In 2016, downtown Rockport was designated as a State Cultural Arts District by the Texas Commission on the Arts.

A downtown heritage district is an area of a city that contains older buildings which are considered to be valuable because of the history or the architecture of the buildings but may not have yet gone through the process of being recognized as historically significant by a state or federal agency. These areas receive legal protection from certain kinds of development. Cities often develop a set of development standards and restrictions to maintain character and history.

The City of Rockport adopted the 2006 Downtown Master Plan to enhance, revitalize, and diversify businesses in Downtown Rockport. The vision was for Downtown to be a destination point, be charming and friendly, walkable, have thriving businesses and economy, and have an unobstructed waterfront view. The master plan serves as the foundation for the planning and decisions of the downtown and heritage districts. The goals and expectations of development in the Downtown and Heritage District later became the basis for the 2014 Rockport Heritage District Zoning Overlay Code (RHDZO). The primary purpose for the RHDZO is to implement the Design Goals noted in the 2006 Master Plan. Buildings and structures should reflect the coastal heritage of the peninsula with unique style and character through awnings and landscaping, signage, murals and art, and other unique design characteristics.

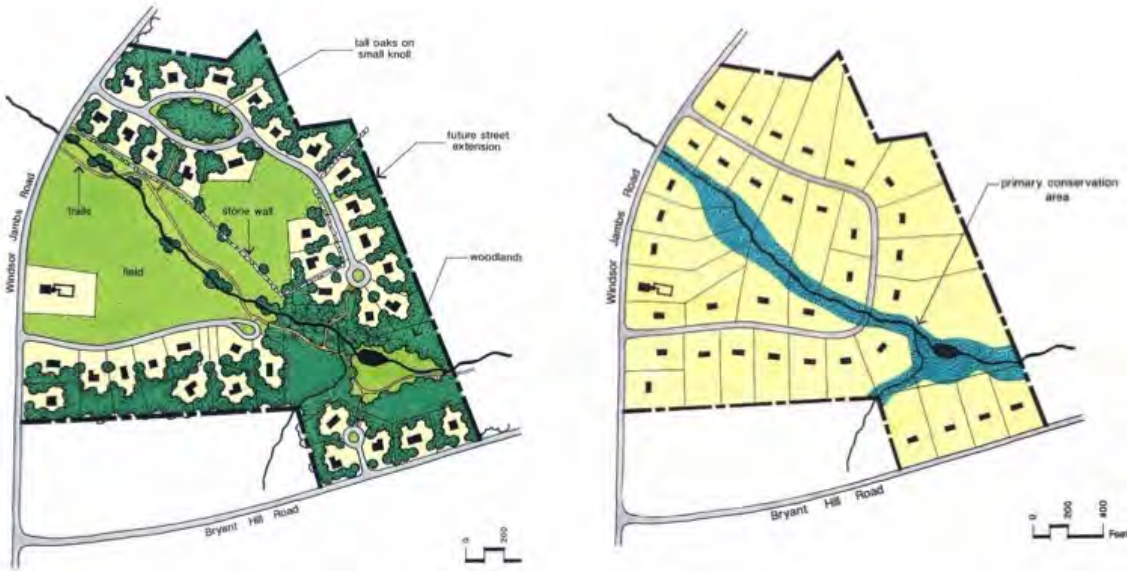


Figure 3.9: Conservation Design
Source: Randall Arendt

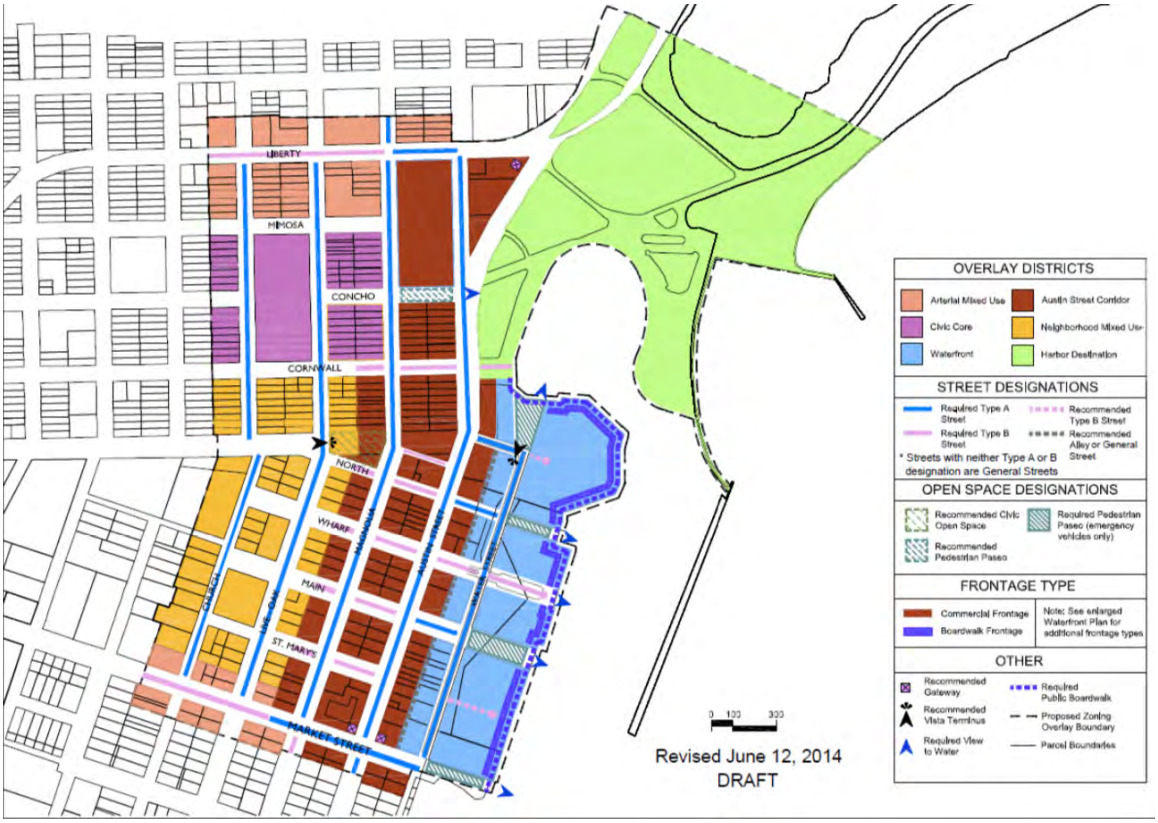


Figure 3.10: Downtown Heritage District Overlay
Source: Rockport Heritage District Overlay Code

Specific codes and standards for development were established in the RHDZO that promote public welfare, enhance implementation, promote walkable development, and promote the goals and objectives of the city's Comprehensive Plan and 2006 Heritage District Master Plan. Character districts within the Rockport Heritage District (RHD) enables development standards for functional and aesthetic design that reflect the vision of each area.

RHD's Character Districts (Figure 3.10):

- Austin Street Corridor
- Waterfront District
- Neighborhood District
- Arterial District
- Civic Core District
- Harbor Destination

Another important purpose of the RHDZO is to encourage historic preservation. Revitalization is a high priority, but it is vital to protect and promote the character and history of Rockport. RHD revitalization will help in supporting economic development through job creation and making the area more appealing for future investors and visitors. Like other parts of municipal regulatory authority, the 2019 state legislative session curtailed how cities can regulate what types of building materials can be used on the facades of structures. This is a major element with the RHDZO and may require staff to make subsequent amendments to the code in order to be compliant with the state's ruling.

In May 2019, a Community Planning Assistance Team with the American Planning Association conducted a week-long site visit and made recommendations specific to downtown Rockport. Recommendations fell under three categories—flood mitigation and resilience, economic resilience, and downtown design and vitality. A full definitive report of the team's recommendations should be released in February 2020.

RPAT

PLAN INTEGRATION

TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

Texas Main Street Program (TMSP) was created by the Texas Historical Commission 1980 with the goal of revitalizing and improving economic health of historic resources with the help of local communities. Their mission is "to provide technical expertise, education, resources and support to designated Main Street communities. Utilizing our individual and collective skills, we could guide our desig-nated programs in effectively preserving and revitalizing their historic downtowns and commercial neighborhood districts in accord with the National Main Street Four Point Approach™ of organization, design, economic vitality and promotion." Their approach to downtown revitalization is four fold:

- Organization
- Promotion
- Design
- Economic Vitality

There are 88 official Texas Main Street communities across texas with populations ranging from less than 2,000 to more than 300,000. These communities have been able to improve their economies, add more jobs, and improve their overall environment.

DESIGN GUIDELINE

The adopted Design Guidelines in the previous Comprehensive Plan have been valuable to Rockport citizens and the City to guide new development in the community. The plan recommends reviewing and updating the Design Guidelines to match the current needs of the community.

RPAT

PLAN INTEGRATION

URBAN LAND INSTITUTE (ULI) PRINCIPLES FOR REBUILDING DOWNTOWN

1. *Great Streets Need Great Champions.* Someone to initiate the process, fight to ensure it is done right, and follow through to completion. The champion can be a group or an individual.
2. *It Takes Vision.* The vision must be shared and face the tough questions up front, making sure everyone understands the realities of the situation, and setting goals that are attainable.
3. *Think Residential.* Successful retail depends on successful residential neighborhoods.
4. *Honor the Pedestrian.* The first goal for a neighborhood shopping street should be to satisfy the aspirations and enhance the lifestyles of a neighborhood's residents. And, cautions the ULI, don't let traffic engineers rule the streets.
5. *Parking is Power.* Recognize that parking needs will usually be less along neighborhood shopping streets than in suburban shopping centers. Set lower parking requirements.
6. *Merchandise and Lease Proactively.* To achieve higher sales, rents, and land values, landlords along the street need to band together and work with the public sector to merchandise and lease their street in a coordinated and mutually supportive way.
7. *Make it Happen.* Communities should be willing to use both carrots and sticks to convince landowners, developers, and retailers that the revitalization efforts are in their interests.
8. *Be Clean, Safe and Friendly.* If a neighborhood shopping street is clean, safe, and friendly, customers will be drawn to their favorite shops even though the street as a whole may still be in transition.
9. *Extend Day into Night.* Identify, plan for, and tap multiple markets to generate income throughout the day and into the night.
10. *Manage for Change.* Rebuilding a neighborhood retail street is a long reinvestment process and market realities will undoubtedly continue to change throughout the ongoing life of the street. One-shot or formulaic projects will fail.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

The city's building codes and ordinances guide and regulate construction in floodplains. The Special Flood Hazard Area is the zone that FEMA designates as the 100-year floodplain or, an area that has a 1% chance of flooding annually (Zones A and AE). The coastal edges of the east and west sides of the Live Oak Peninsula are in the "A" or "AE" zone. The 500-year floodplain designation can better be explained as an area having a 2% chance of flooding annually (Zones B and X). The central portion of the peninsula is in the "B and X" and "C and X" zones which are the areas with minimal flood risk. Figure 3.11 displays the Flood Hazard Areas within and around the City of Rockport.

To help reduce the impact of flooding of private and public structures, Rockport is participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The purpose of the program is to provide affordable flood insurance to property owners while encouraging communities to utilize flood mitigation strategies, such as adopting minimum building and development standards. In order to participate in the program, the city is required to enforce the adopted floodplain regulations based on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

The City adopted a freeboard requirement in 2016 as a way to alleviate risk of flood waters invading homes. The freeboard is the distance from the lowest livable floor of a property to the base flood elevation. Rockport requires at least 18 inches of freeboard. Many of the structures that were 50% or more damaged by Hurricane Harvey are now required to come into compliance with new floodplain regulations. Elevating a structure to this higher freeboard standard reduces risk of future flooding and reduces the cost of flood insurance as outlined in the National Flood Insurance Program.

As part of this effort to inspire communities to make themselves less vulnerable, the Community Rating System (CRS) was introduced to encourage communities to exceed the minimum NFIP requirements in exchange for monetary incentives. The CRS uses a class rating system from 1 to 9 with the goal being to reach a lower class rating for maximum incentives. Currently the City of Rockport is at a class 7 but is actively looking to incorporate activities that would help achieve a higher class rating. The CRS Coordinator's Manual identifies six categories of floodplain management activities that can increase a community's resilience to flooding and improve their overall score.

CRS Activity Categories are as follows:

- Preventive
- Property Protection
- Natural Resource Protection
- Emergency Services
- Structural Projects
- Public Information

The CRS recognizes, encourages, and rewards community and state activities that go beyond the minimum standards required by the NFIP.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Aransas County adopted the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan (HMAP) in October 2017. The county-wide plan focuses on reducing future losses by analyzing hazard risk and identifying mitigation strategies. The plan establishes five overall goals and lists mitigation actions for each jurisdiction. For effective integration of hazard mitigation in local planning, the comprehensive plan aims to align with the goals and actions of the HMAP.

HMAP goals for Aransas County are:

- Protect public health and safety.
- Protect new and existing properties.
- Build and support partnerships to enhance mitigation to continuously become less vulnerable to hazards.
- Leverage outside funds for investment in hazards mitigation.
- Increase the understanding of residents for the need for mitigation and steps they can take to protect people and properties.

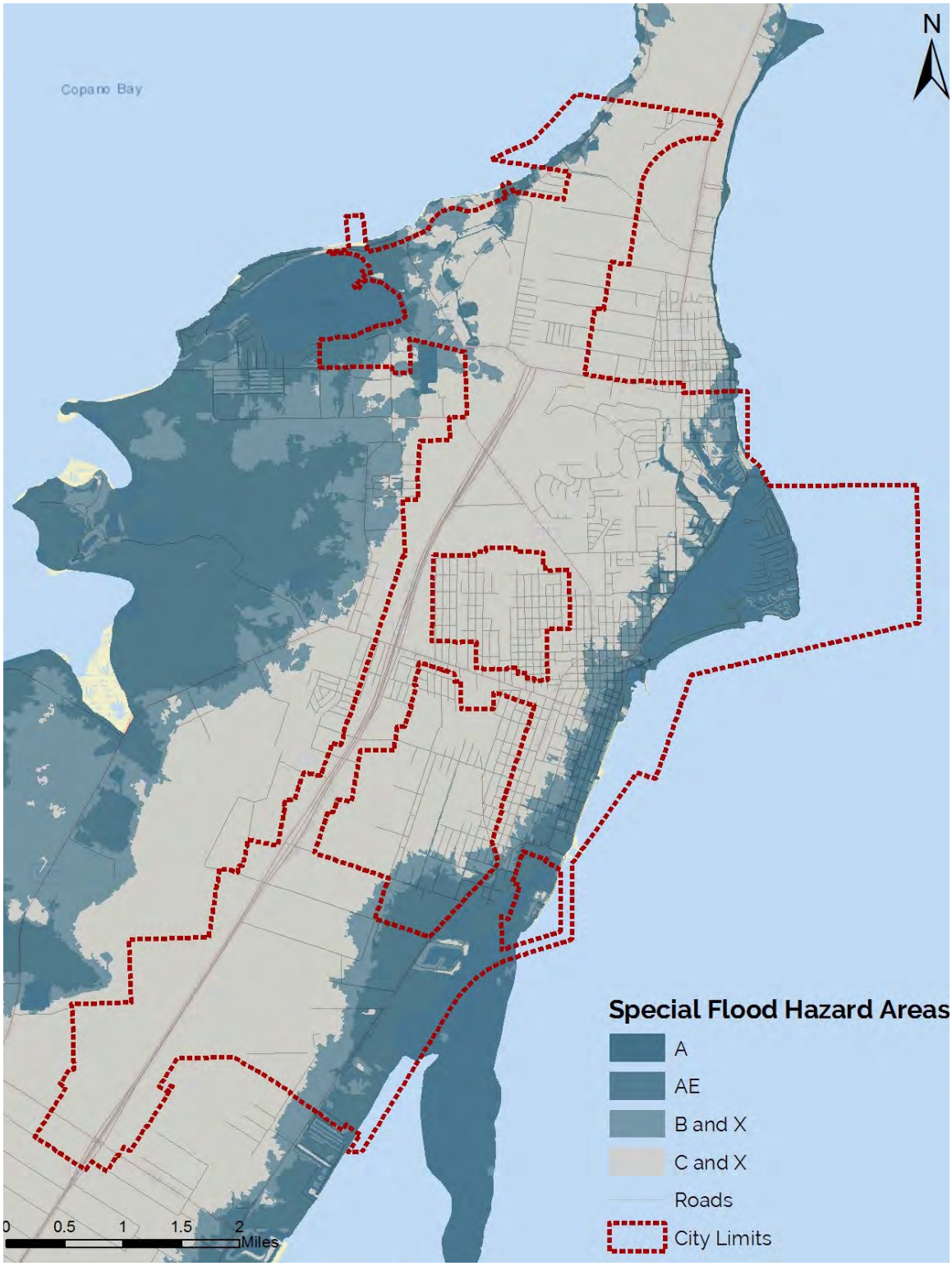


Figure 3.11: Special Flood Hazard Areas in Rockport

HIGH TIDE FLOODING

High tide flooding, often referred to as "nuisance" flooding, occurs at high tide on a calm, sunny day causing costly public inconvenience. Coastal communities are at a greater risk of nuisance flooding because of rising sea levels, land subsidence, and loss of natural barriers. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the number of high-tide flood days is expected to increase and hit record highs in the coming years. NOAA projections indicate up to 15 high-tide flood days in 2030 in Rockport.

The NOAA Inundation Dashboard is an online tool coastal communities and decision makers can use to prepare for and manage flood events. It includes real-time water level information, 48-hour forecasts of water levels, storm surge and historic flooding information.

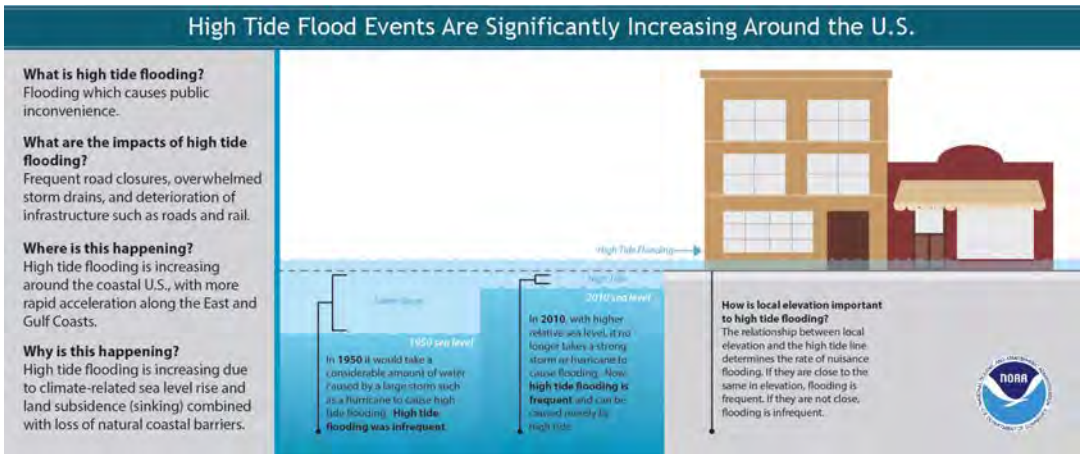


Figure 3.12: High Tide Flood Events
Source: oceanservice.noaa.gov

GUIDELINES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT

As Rockport continues to recover and grow, the preservation of natural landscapes becomes increasingly important. The city is exploring Green Infrastructure (GI) and Low Impact Development (LID) practices to mitigate the effects of future disruptions. Green infrastructure includes measures that mimic natural processes to store, reuse, or reduce stormwater. Low Impact Development is land development that mimics natural processes for managing stormwater on site while still achieving water protection goals. The focus on GI and LID is an intentional strategy to address local flooding and drainage issues.

The following guidelines have been developed for new development and redevelopment of underused areas.

Avoid new development in flood-prone areas and within floodplains.

Floodplains allow for overflow of water bodies when extreme rain events occur and provide an impoundment area while water levels recede. The city will avoid any new development in these areas to protect lives and properties. Parks, recreational, or sports uses with minimal structures are compatible with floodplains.Reduce

Impervious Land Cover

To avoid flooding and preserve water quality, it is recommended that a limit is placed on the amount of impervious cover on land. Impervious cover is any surface that cannot absorb and

filter water, like roofs and roadways. When roadways and parking lots are constructed, especially in areas that have lower elevation, it becomes increasingly difficult to mitigate water collection and runoff. For this reason, it is important to preserve existing green spaces or develop new ones in the form of parks and nature areas. Reducing the amount of impervious surface is a key strategy in LID for managing stormwater. This can be achieved by:

- Paving less, reducing lane widths and reducing impervious footprints
- Make use of existing infrastructure by redeveloping infill sites or greyfields

Consider fill restriction

Fill is earthen material, like gravel, dirt, or sand, which is brought in during development to level or elevate the land. Fill can cause issues in the floodplain because it can reduce its holding capacity, which further increases the risk of flooding in existing development. One way to reduce flood risk is to implement a zero net fill requirement in which new fill is offset by removing existing fill from another area of the floodplain. Additionally, a "no-rise" requirement can help with flood risk by ensuring that fill does not reduce floodplain carrying capacity.

Manage water where it falls

Flooding is often the result of increased runoff from large amounts of impervious surfaces and upstream development. To mitigate urban flooding and the impacts of stormwater runoff, the city should consider design strategies at several scales:

Design for small rain events (first ½" of rainfall or first flush)

- Direct downspouts to planter boxes, vegetated areas, rain gardens, etc.
- Direct runoff from paved areas to planted/vegetated areas
- Encourage xeric landscape design
- Plant trees along streets and in medians

Design for moderate rain events (1/2 to 1-1/2" of rainfall)

- Retain natural landscapes where possible

Design for large rain events (1-1/2" to 3" of rainfall)

- Use larger bio retention areas and rain gardens
- Vegetated swales with long flow paths to maximize the time runoff is conveyed through the swale

Design for extreme events (3" or more of rainfall)

- Combined flood measures – i.e. the "sponge city" approach
- Protect and restore riparian buffers along rivers, streams, wetlands, and coastlines
- Protect and restore wetlands, both those naturally occurring and "constructed."
- Increase vegetative cover in urban, suburban, or rural/agricultural areas.
- Increase the urban canopy by planting street trees and rwequiring all new development to comply with landscape requirements

MAPPING TOOL

The Texas Sustainable Coastal Initiative developed tools to allows users to query data and make maps based on different development scenarios and help communities make future decisions on sustainable growth while balancing other priorities. Users are able to answer the research questions on where growth will occur along the coast and the impact of such growth. The tool includes three Internet-based decision support systems that help users identify critical issues. Each of the three atlases listed below provide information about environmental degradation, natural hazard risks, and changes in land use patterns.

1. Texas Atlas
2. Texas Coastal Communities Atlas
3. Hurricane Evacuation Study

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT ACT

The Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (H.R. 7279) was enacted in January 2019 (WIIA) to promote green infrastructure to meet water quality standards. The Federal Water Pollution Control Act, also known as the Clean Water Act (CWA), was amended to permit local communities to develop a plan integrating wastewater and stormwater management to reduce economic burdens and protect water quality. Communities now have the freedom to develop an Integrated Plan (IP) that can be incorporated into their CWA permit. The Act permits the implementation of green infrastructure and projects to naturally reclaim, recycle, or reuse water by planting trees and restoring wetlands, rather than building a new water treatment plant.

Site-Level Techniques for Implementing GI and LID

The City of Rockport can encourage scalable techniques for implementing GI and LID on new sites or the redevelopment or existing sites. The practice of dispersed, small site applications addresses most rain events with an emphasis on managing the initial surface runoff of a rainstorm.

Paving Applications

- Porous pavements – a system used for surface paving that includes a subsurface gravel infiltration bed. The porous paving material (asphalt, concrete, or pavers) allows water to infiltrate through it and continue down through the gravel bed. This option can be used to detain runoff, thus saving land, and is particularly useful in urban redevelopment projects.

- Selective curb treatment – eliminating curbs along the edges of paved areas or roads allows runoff to be directed into adjacent bioswales or rain gardens to provide water for vegetation. Alternatively, flat (ribbon) curb edges or curb cuts can be used to accomplish the same purpose.

Landscape Application

- Bioretention Areas – also called rain gardens – are shallow depressions that capture runoff. They are planted with a variety of trees, shrubs, and perennials that mimic upper canopy, middle story, and ground floor conditions. Native or native-adapted plants that are able to withstand both drought and flood conditions and that possess the ability to form a dense root layer to cleanse pollutants from runoff should be chosen. Rain gardens can be used in residential lawns, in medians, along roadways, or in other areas adjacent to impervious surfaces.

- Bioswales – used to convey runoff from paved areas to retention ponds. The use of bioswales to connect a series of rain gardens creates a green network effective at reducing the quantity and velocity of runoff, increasing the time runoff is in a swale to allow for greater infiltration, and enhancing water quality.

- Subsurface infiltration beds – a uniformly open-graded aggregate bed under a vegetated or paved surface. Provide for storage and infiltration of runoff and are especially useful for athletic fields and parking areas. May be sloped in hilly or terraced areas.

- Tree trenches – a linear feature typically found along streets and sidewalks where runoff can be directed. These planted strips promote the health of street trees, especially when combined with structural soils designed to allow tree roots to penetrate more deeply than the compacted subsurface found beneath pavement.

- Street Bump-Outs – an extension of curbs that creates a widened landscape space to capture street runoff. Most effective when used at intersections, which increases their size and ability to handle more water. Can be used in a retrofitting strategy for "greening" urban areas and traffic calming.

LOW IMPACT DESIGN SUGGESTIONS

Several groups of Texas A&M and Texas Tech students worked in their classes to create design and infrastructure presentations with suggestions for Rockport. The goal for these presentations were to help with the community's resilience, diversity, accessibility, and sustainability. The figures below show some of the street design suggestions that would not only beautify Downtown Rockport, but also increase resilience. Some of these suggestions focus on several downtown streets (Austin St., Magnolia St., and Wharf St.). They include the addition of bike lanes and sidewalks, redesigning street slopes to direct water and improve drainage, implementing bioswale features and permeable land cover, and improving beautification with pavers and plant features.

LID Techniques
Bioswale
Porous Pavers
Stores
Sidewalk
Bioswale
Parking
Street
Trench Drain
Street
Parking
Bioswale
Sidewalk
Stores
Austin Street
Plant List
Water Oak
Bushy Bluestem
Spider Lily
Paige Kolupski

Homes/ Business'
Sidewalk
Street
Bike Lane
Sidewalk
Magnolia Street
Plant List
Gulf Muhly
Water Oak
Spider Lily
Paige Kolupski

Plant List
Water Oak
Texas Sabal Palm
Turks Cap
Trumpet Vine
Bldg.
Sidewalk
Planter
Street (East bound)
Median
Street (West bound)
Planter
Sidewalk
Bldg.
Wharf Street
Michael Finley

RESOURCE: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE MODELING TOOLKIT

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) put together the Green Infrastructure Modeling Toolkit of cost effective and resilient tools to help communities green infrastructure implementation make decisions for stormwater management.

Storm Water Management Model (SWMM)

SWMM software is used for large-scale planning, analysis, and design related to water runoff, sewer systems, and other drainage systems. It helps users determine the effectiveness of managing runoff.

National Stormwater Calculator (SWC)

SWC software application allows users to estimate annual stormwater runoff amounts from specific U.S. locations on the basis of soil conditions, land cover, and rainfall records. Site developers can use SWC to determine how well stormwater retention target can be met with and without green infrastructure.

Green Infrastructure Wizard (GIWiz)

GIWiz is an interactive online application that gives users customized reports with EPA tools and resources based on the community's objective. The user can find tools and resources for community specific projects, and ideas. There is also an option to explore different categories and attributes to help the user find exactly what they want.

Watershed Management Optimization Support Tool (WMOST)

WMOST is a software that helps facilitate integrated water management by allowing water resource managers and city planners screen a wide range of practices for cost-effectiveness and environmental and economic stability.

Visualizing Ecosystems for Land Management Assessment (VELMA) Model

Regional planners and land managers can use VELMA to assess the effectiveness of natural and engineered green infrastructure management practices (riparian buffers, cover crops, and constructed wetlands).

Green Infrastructure Flexible Model (GIFMod)

GIFMod is a tool used to evaluate urban stormwater and agricultural green infrastructure practices. Users can build models of green infrastructure practices to make predictions about hydraulic and water quality performance under different weather scenarios.

PLAN INTEGRATION

RPAT

TAX ABATEMENTS

Provide tax abatement for property owners undertaking flood improvements. A tax increment reinvestment zone (TIRZ) would be used to encourage new development and growth through funding of critical infrastructure needs within the district and the waterfront. The TIRZ should mirror the boundary of the overall Heritage District including the waterfront to ensure that growth from areas likely to develop sooner can be captured to fund necessary infrastructure.

PLAN INTEGRATION

RPAT

STORMWATER MITIGATION

Short Term Recommendations

1. Create rain gardens and bioswales within higher and lower areas of Austin and Magnolia Streets.
    - Encourage private property owners to incorporate green infrastructure if possible.
2. Examine the two conveyance pipes to the bay in this area using a camera system to verify pipes (following Hurricane Harvey) remain fully functional.
    - If any segments are not fully functional, request a study to determine the feasibility of bringing the system into full performance.
3. Examine and test areas of the drainage system for accumulation of sand and silt and verify that the outlet points into the bay are clear and free of growth.
    - If there is any accumulation, a city street sweeper may be used periodically to clear accumulation between periodic vacuuming of the system.
4. Examine the functionality of backflow prevention devices on outlet points for the stormwater drains into the bay.

Long Term Recommendations

1. Examine the drainage system prior to future development.
    - New development requests could be conditioned for floodplain management purposes through the land development approval process to ensure the functionality of conveyance systems with respect to potential added impacts that may be mitigated by an applicant.
    - This would be supported through the city's planning process to ensure the floodplain management program meets the needs of new development within the Special Flood Hazard Area and to ensure new development does not aggravate the current flooding conditions.
2. Review repetitive-loss properties to identify potential acquisitions that may be made to assist in reducing flooding within the sub-basin (Austin Street and the Heritage District).

PLAN INTEGRATION

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POTENTIAL MITIGATION

For merchants or property owners with structures that cannot be structurally retrofitted pursuant to code, a second possible course of action is the potential to dry floodproof for a lesser amount of flood protection. One example includes small shields placed at doorways to minimize flooding into the building following a concurrent heavy rain event and high tide. The team recommends the city work with downtown merchants to hire a structural engineer to identify the best manner to install smaller systems to work effectively with the older structures.

- Solar energy and other renewable energy alternatives,
- Infrastructure improvements on Austin and Magnolia Streets that account for sea-level rise,
- Retrofitting and/or updating drainage, sewage, and electric to accommodate redevelopment and new development.

PLAN INTEGRATION

RPAT

A GREEN VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

Consistent with the city's comprehensive plan, considerations for a more resilient future in the long term may include the following with reconstruction and new development:

- Solar energy and other renewable energy alternatives,
- Infrastructure improvements on Austin and Magnolia Streets that account for sea-level rise
- Retrofitting and/or updating drainage, sewage and electric to accommodate redevelopment and new development.

The city and the Navigation District are looking to further promote and develop a walkway that will share not only new development, but also allow for foot traffic to experience the bay while also having access to Austin Street and areas to the east and west. To the east is the existing park, Festival Grounds, beach, and a host of other areas of interactions. To the west is a small shoreline that is currently experiencing erosion and is uninviting. The team witnessed the inundation of the road continuing further west along the shore during the wind-driven high tide. There are considerations for mitigating erosion that may be in addition to those already discussed with merchants, the community through the planning process, and government entities such as the planning commission and city staff.

The boardwalk could be designed to incorporate points of interest with a living shoreline, especially around any existing or future stormwater discharge areas. Strategically placed gathering points should allow access from the boardwalk to Austin Street. A living shoreline may include sea grasses, reefs, and different formations or connections with the bay and the Austin Street area. The shoreline may also serve to provide small habitats and should be designed to assist with stormwater runoff water quality. In addition to illustrating the relationship to natural systems, it will serve as a parallel priority in mitigating erosion for supporting stormwater and future infrastructure along the shore.

Integrating bioswales and rain gardens will help control loose soil and sedimentation in downtown Rockport.

Strategic placement will greatly assist with mitigation, but also contributes to the overall aesthetics of Austin Street and the Heritage District.

Market Street ends at Water Street, which is also the entry to the Navigation District's sea wall. The sea wall helps protect the Navigation District's property, including the marina. As an area of erosion, riprap is in place, which is not the most inviting, but many still come there to enjoy views of the bay. The area needs protection due to a drainage outfall. This is another good area for a living shoreline, as discussed above. A natural area that filters stormwater runoff and acts as an erosion control system could also serve as an observation area to view the water, experience sunrises, and enjoy wildlife. A launch for kayaks and canoes may also be possible.

Consult the full CPAT report for specific design recommendations.

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4 HOUSING

OVERVIEW

As Rockport continues to grow, emphasis is placed on improving current housing options and development of new housing. For individual neighborhoods to thrive, there must be quality housing options to meet the needs of diverse populations, lifestyles, and income levels. This chapter examines existing housing types, values, affordability, and household characteristics. Additionally, the chapter describes recommendations to expand quality housing, meet the needs of the community, and maintain a safe environment for all.

CONDITIONS BEFORE THE STORM

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Rockport is made up of a diverse range of people that require different types of housing structures, prices, neighborhood facilities, and infrastructure. In 2016, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that 3,857 households lived in Rockport. Of total households, 59.58% are married-couple households, while 57.60% and 50.14% are in Aransas County and Texas respectively. In addition, this city contains 158 male-led households, 269 female-led households; 949 households are individuals living alone, and 183 other households are individuals not living alone, but not related (Figure 4.1). These percentages indicate a lower number of single parents in Rockport than Texas and Aransas County.[1]

HOUSING TYPES

Rockport and the surrounding coastal areas are known for secondary/vacation homes, mobile/manufactured homes, and RV parks due to the availability of year-round recreational activities. An estimated 65.08% (4,238 out of 6,512) of homes in Rockport are "single family" (i.e. 1-unit, detached structures) which will include some of the secondary/vacation units (Figure 10). Other secondary/vacation units will be included in "multi-family" structures. Rockport has a higher percentage of mobile housing units than Texas.[2] Figure 4.2 exhibits and compares housing unit types against the County and the State.

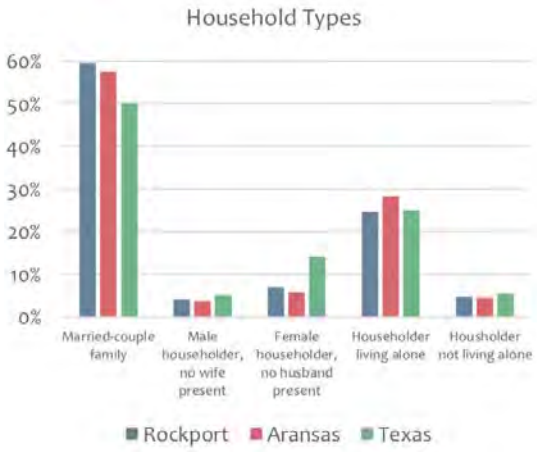

Figure 4.1: Household Types
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

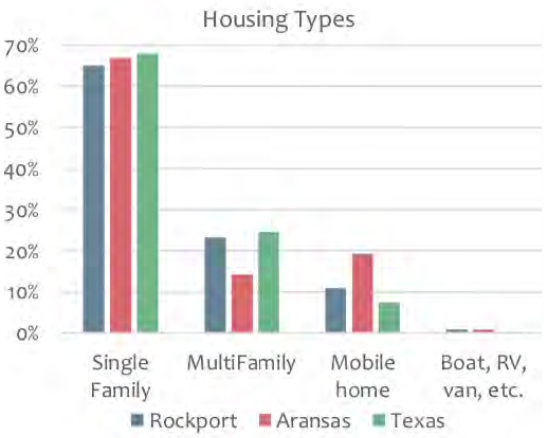

Figure 4.2: Housing Types
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 4.3: Single Family Home in Rockport, TX
Source: www.zillow.com

Figure 4.4: Oaks Garden Apartments in Rockport
Source: www.apartments.com

Figure 4.5: Circle W RV Ranch in Rockport,
Source: www.tripadvisor.com

RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

The size of housing units is determined by the different residential districts, which are designated on the city's zoning map. In Rockport, single family districts with low density have a minimum living area of 800 square feet. The minimum living area size for other single family districts is 600 square feet; the minimum living area size for multi-family districts is 500 square feet per unit. The maximum height for buildings is 35 feet, with only one multi-family district allowance for 45 feet. The size and height of buildings will be significant if the city considers amending the zoning map to provide for a greater variety of housing types.

Housing density shows the number of dwelling units situated on a particular lot or district. Higher density provides easier access to public transportation and community facilities like shops and neighborhood parks, while lower density allows single family homes to sit on larger lots, putting more distance between homes. Most residential districts are zoned to have a minimum lot size of 7000 square feet, but two districts are zoned for lower density. Lot sizes and density will also be important when considering changes to the zoning map and increasing the variety of housing types.

OCCUPANCY VS. VACANCY

Vacancy status assists in determining housing demand and is used to create a comprehensive overview of the housing market. In 2016, the vacancy rate of housing units in Rockport was 40.8% (up from 32.4% in 2010) which is comparable to the County but is about 30% higher than the State (Figure 4.7).[3] Figure 4.8 shows recreational and seasonal housing represents the majority of vacant housing (over 65%). While it is understandable that a coastal community like Rockport would have a significant number of recreational and seasonal units, the continuing development of these units drives up housing and land prices and challenges the development of affordable units for year-round residents.

HOUSING PRICES AND AFFORDABILITY

The comparison of household income to housing costs determines housing affordability. According to the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a household paying 30% or more of its income for housing cost is categorized as living in an unaffordable home. In the U.S., renter-occupied housing units commonly cost 30% or more of the total income

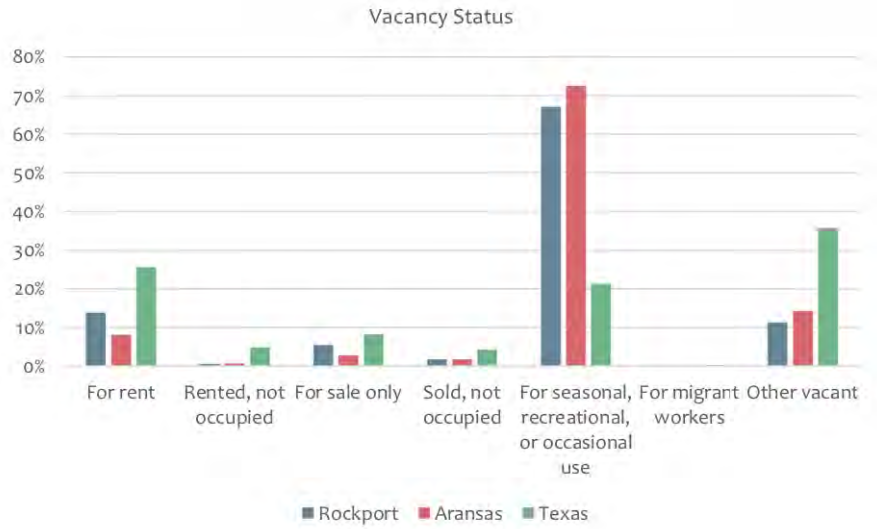

Figure 4.6: Vacancy Status
Source: U.S Census Bureau

of the household. A large portion of US households earning less than $20,000 annually, pay 30% or more of their income for housing fees (84.29% for owners and 86.52% for renters).

In Rockport, for households with annual income of $20,000 to $49,999, renter-occupied households experience more housing cost burden than owners (Figure 4.9 and Figure 4.10). Thus, offering more affordable rental units, in addition to owned units, can mitigate economic pressure and improve the quality of life of residents.[4]

There are five apartment complexes in Rockport that set rent based on income of the tenant, giving low-income residents the opportunity to spend a fixed 30% of their income on rent.[5]

- Fifty Oaks Apartments
- Saltgrass Landing
- Linden Oaks (Retirement Community)
- Bay of Aransas Gardens
- Sea Mist Townhomes

SPECIAL HOUSING

It is important to have housing for residents who have special circumstances, such as the elderly and people with long term health care needs. There is an interest in nursing homes, adult day cares, and rehabilitation centers because most of the Rockport population falls between the ages of 45-54 and 65-84. Within Rockport, there are 3 nursing, rehabilitation, and/or retirement centers: Gulf Pointe Plaza, Gulf Pointe Village, and Rockport Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (formerly Oak Crest Nursing and Rehab). Rockport Coastal Care Center Inc. was destroyed during Hurricane Harvey and will not reopen.

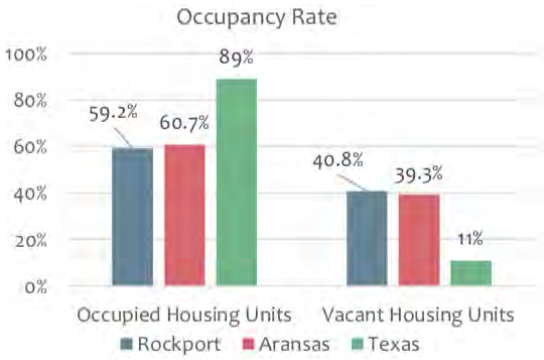

Figure 4.7: Occupancy Rates
Source: U.S Census Bureau

Figure 4.8: Owner Occupied Housing Cost
Source: U.S Census Bureau

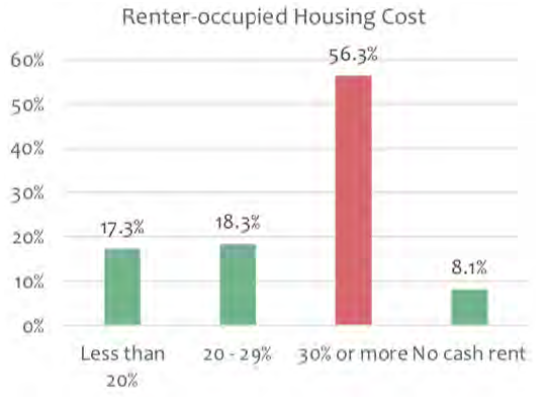

Figure 4.9: Renter Occupied Housing Cost
Source: U.S Census Bureau

HAZARD IMPACTS

Rockport, like many communities in Texas, suffered a great deal of devastation because of Hurricane Harvey. As a result, 94% of homes in Rockport experienced some level of damage while 30% of homes were destroyed entirely. According to FEMA statistics, 780,000 Texans were forced to evacuate their homes. Nearly 42,000 of evacuees went to stay in nearly 700 different temporary shelters. Many people could not return home after the hurricane due to the costs associated with repairing or rebuilding their homes, or due to the lack of alternate housing. This can be referred to as displacement. Often when people are forced to take up new housing and jobs in a different community, their temporary displacement becomes permanent. Rockport lost nearly 20% of its population due to displacement. The pre-existing condition in Rockport - a lack of affordable and low-income housing, including rental units - was exacerbated by Harvey for two reasons. Many of these housing units were the hardest hit during the storm, and they are less profitable to rebuild after the storm.[6]

The availability of affordable or "workforce" housing greatly impacts other conditions in Rockport. The city's economy has been largely dependent on the tourism industry, restaurants, and retail shops. When the workforce that supports these businesses cannot return to their homes, and thus their jobs, the economy of the whole city slows down and suffers. Many businesses have not been able to operate regular business hours, and some have not been able to reopen, since the storm. Similarly, when there are less residents living in a community, there is less contribution to the tax base and governmental operations suffer (e.g. schools, the police force, and the public works/building department). In order for the city at large to sustain itself and grow in the aftermath of Harvey, Rockport must provide a variety of housing that accommodates all incomes and household types.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

For Rockport to continue growing, it is important to provide adequate and affordable housing for its diverse residents from all walks of life. The lack of affordable housing is a major concern for residents. Citizens want more diverse housing options for everyone, from families with children to single adults to senior citizens. It is important to residents to encourage a welcoming and respectful atmosphere for people of different cultures and ethnicities. The public desires to have more support resources for the underserved such as women's shelters and/or homeless shelters.

Additionally, residents care about promoting workforce housing with strong building standards to withstand natural hazards. Since Hurricane Harvey destroyed many homes in Rockport, the local government is facing population reduction and issues of homelessness. Therefore, promoting housing affordability is a priority in the revitalization of Rockport. Improving building resistance against storm surge, strong winds and flooding, is also important to reduce the risk and prevent losses for future development.

Figure 4.10: Aerial photo of the damage sustained of the Salt Grass Landing Apartments
Source: Courtney Sacco and Matt Woolbright[7]

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXPAND HOUSING VARIETY

In order to provide housing for a variety of income levels, the construction of single family homes can be supported by different means. To utilize current land, public infrastructure, and vacant lots efficiently, the language in the existing ordinances should be amended to allow for smaller homes on infill lots and accessory dwelling units. Partnerships with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Coastal Bend Disaster Recovery Group and other non-profit and faith-based organizations need to be continued. Additionally, the city can increase housing density in undeveloped or redeveloping areas by providing financial incentives for developers, such as tax abatements and waived permit fees. To assess future employee housing needs and create partnerships for housing developments, the city can reach out to companies that are expanding in communities south of Rockport.

Expanding housing opportunities for low- and middle-income households will strengthen neighborhoods and meet future demands. Said expansions should provide more flexible housing options with small lots, duplexes, and multi-family units. However, in order to accomplish this flexibility, the city needs to amend its land use and zoning maps, specifically adding inclusionary zoning. Further incentives can be provided to developers in order to encourage the construction of affordable housing units in new developments. Rockport can continue to apply for and prioritize state and federal funding for repairs, rebuilds, and maintenance to workforce and low income housing, in coordination with the Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan. By partnering with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) and the Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC), Rockport can also hold public meetings to educate low income residents about homeownership programs (such as My First Texas Home) and home buying tips.

PLAN INTEGRATION HDMP

INFILL

Encourage potential infill and/or redevelopment tracts [residential, commercial]

PLAN INTEGRATION LTRP

HOUSING VARIETY

Pursue housing in Downtown.

To the extent possible, small scale developments such as duplexes, triplexes, and quad-plexes should be used to replace mobile homes and RV parks that have been used as permanent housing.

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) is a state agency that is responsible for homeownership, affordable rental housing, community and energy assistance programs, and activities in primarily low-income communities.

Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC) gives down payment assistance to homeowners, provides assistance to developers to build affordable housing, and helps prevent foreclosure.

RESILIENT HOMES, SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS AND ENHANCED COMMUNITY CHARACTER

In light of the impacts of Hurricane Harvey, resilient building standards will be integral to Rockport's housing plan. A new focus should be placed on educating and encouraging homeowners, contractors, and builders to use stronger building codes, such as the latest International Building Codes. Rockport should continue to partner with Smart Home America's for Lunch-N-Learns to educate people on FORTIFIED standards as well. Minimum building codes, including freeboard elevation, need to be enforced during rebuilds, renovations, and new construction. Furthermore, flood mitigation techniques need to be taught to homeowners, specifically to protect their property without adversely affecting their neighbors.

The city plans to create new avenues to improve conditions on household and neighborhood levels. By researching and establishing building maintenance codes, the city can provide minimum requirements for equipment, light, ventilation, heating, sanitation and hazard safety. To further improve existing neighborhoods, events like "Neighborhood Makeover" can provide opportunities for residents, city staff and volunteers to clean up and maintain the overall character of their neighborhoods. Efforts for neighborhood improvements can be coordinated with and conducted through the Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan.

PLAN INTEGRATION

LTRP

MITIGATION

The community intends to very actively pursue floodproofing and mitigation for residential and commercial properties.

FORTIFIED STANDARDS[8]

FORTIFIED is a building method created by the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IIBHS) that strengthens homes and businesses against severe weather which reduces the risk of property damage and financial loss. These standards are stronger than most building codes and are cost effective, consistent and well-defined. There are three levels to the FORTIFIED standards: Bronze, Silver and Gold

- Bronze Level helps homes withstand wind and keep water out by keeping the roof securely attached.
- Silver Level includes the Bronze Level improvements in addition to strengthening of all openings, windows, doors, etc.
- Gold Level adds to Bronze and Silver requirements, ensuring the structure is tied together. It provides a continuous load path connections which keeps the roof connected to the walls, walls connected to the floor and the entire home tied to the foundation.

Not only do the FORTIFIED Standards protect structures and keep them standing strong, but they also increase the value of homes and businesses. These standards have been scientifically tested and widely accepted on national, state and local levels. It is important to keep in mind that these methods can be applied during new construction or in phases as home- and business-owners remodel their structures.

CASE STUDY - COTTAGE HOUSING ORDINANCE: KIRKLAND, WA[11]

Kirkland is an affluent, lakefront suburb outside Seattle. It is similar to Rockport in that it has a small-town feel and appreciation for quality of life. Changes in demographics and a slowing real estate market have caused cities like Kirkland to come up with ways to increase housing supply and offer residents more housing options. Kirkland's solution is a Cottage Housing Ordinance which promotes affordable housing by encouraging smaller homes.

Cottage housing is a grouping of small, single-family homes that are clustered around a common area. These homes provide the privacy and benefits of single-family housing along with the lower cost and maintenance of other housing options. The arrangement of cottages encourages a strong sense of community within the development.

Danielson Grove is featured in the demonstration program and well-received by focus groups, citizens and developers. Danielson Grove is known for its architecture, design and green building standards. The cottages are modestly sized, with one to one-and-a-half stories and 1-3 bedrooms, but the open floor plans and windows cause the interior to look bigger. This development holds 16 homes on private lots and one communal outdoor space. The exteriors of the cottages have distinguishable design features that provide character to the development, but fit in with surrounding areas.

To ensure affordability and opportunity for all income levels, a certain number of homes must be economically accessible to households earning 82-100% of the county's median income. The cottages give first time home-owners, singles and empty-nesters the opportunity to purchase homes when fewer single-family options exist.

Figure 4.12: A view of a cottage housing community
Source: Ericksen Cottages, Bainbridge Island, WA

CASE STUDY: INFILL WORKFORCE HOUSING - BOULDER, CO[12]

Boulder, Colorado is a desirable place to live and work, based on its location and job opportunities. However, the city is severely lacking in affordable housing. In 2014, the median home value was above $530,000 which is unaffordable for low-, moderate-, or even moderately high income households. According to city data, only 41% of Boulder's workforce actually lives within city limits. The 2010 Comprehensive Plan for Boulder Valley expressed the need for a creative solution to solve this housing issue with a limited amount of land available for construction.

In 2011, Thistle Communities, a nonprofit housing developer, and for-profit Allison Management joined together to acquire a vacant piece of land which became Yarmouth Way. Initially, this land was zoned for a community services building, but when those plans did not progress, the partners were able to step in and acquire the land. Yarmouth Way provides different housing types with varying sizes, including attached townhomes, duplexes, and single-family detached homes. This housing development consists of 25 units with 10 affordably priced homes and 15 market-rate units to expand homeownership opportunities to local families and meets the income limits established by Boulder's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.

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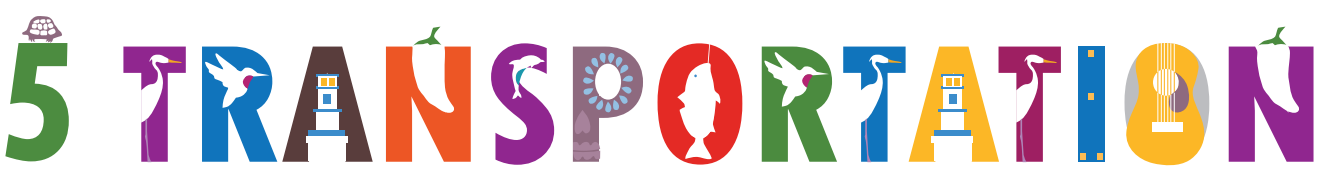
5 TRANSPORTATION

OVERVIEW

The City of Rockport encompasses a State Highway (SH) 35 and a county airport. SH 35 passes through the center of the city, carrying the main thoroughfare traffic. Passenger vehicles commuting to Corpus Christi or Houston compose a large volume of traffic.

While there is heavy auto-dependence, many residents and visitors prefer walking to nearby destinations. The ecotourism industry and environmentally minded setting of the community facilitate multi-modal connectivity. This chapter provides existing transportation conditions along with recommendations to enhance transportation services for residents and visitors of Rockport. The transportation plan focuses on developing a sustainable system by which all modes of travel benefits. The recommendations include strategies for promoting biking, walking, and public transit. This chapter highlights areas of concern, and presents innovative ideas for enhancing the existing conditions.

CONDITIONS BEFORE THE STORM

The transportation system analysis includes traffic volume and related data analysis, alternate modes, and identification of a thoroughfare plan. Studying these elements provides solutions to challenges in the transportation system. This section provides information on annual average daily traffic, crash frequency and severity, the existing thoroughfare plan, and the existing bicycle lanes and sidewalks.

ROADWAY NETWORK

The City of Rockport transportation network encompasses local streets in a grid pattern and major roads used for higher mobility to other parts of the city, as well as commuting to surrounding cities. SH 35, FM 2165, and FM 3036 improve mobility throughout the community (see Figure 5.3). There is no clear classification of roads to date. Therefore, the future thoroughfare plan identifies classifications of the roads. The City should follow the standards of these classifications.

MODES OF COMMUTE

Most trips made by Rockport residents are made by automobile, 81.5% of residents drive alone, while 5.2% carpool and 0.4% use motorcycles, bicycles, or other means. In comparison, this indicates a slightly higher percentage of individuals to neither Aransas County nor Texas State who drive alone, carpool, or use a taxicab. Commuters in Rockport have an average travel time of 15.5 minutes.

ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC

It is crucial to identify transportation issues to satisfy the needs of the growing community in Rockport. Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) data for 2018 was provided by TxDOT. Figure 5.6 shows these traffic volumes. It shows that the traffic volume on SH 35 and part of Business SH 35 are highest among all roadways in Rockport. With this relatively high AADT, the major part of SH 35 and part of Business SH 35 from Prairie Road to Corpus Christi Street are critical roads in Rockport. High volume roads always require more maintenance. The north part of SH 35, which is away from the city limits, has an AADT of 300 to 600. The south part of Business SH 35 starts from Corpus Christi Street to further south and falls into the 300 to 600 AADT range. Figure 5.6 also shows Market Street, Church Street, and conjunction of SH 35 and Business SH 35 which have 100 to 300 AADT (TxDOT, 2018).

Figure 5.1: Austin St., Rockport, Tx
Picture Courtesy: Richard Amore

Figure 5.2: Copano Bay Bridge
Source: static.tti.tamu.edu

Figure 5.3: Roadways in Rockport

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The traditional classification model provides a list of design standards and a base from which we can evaluate current conditions and future improvements and expansions. This method has also been adopted by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), and therefore it is often required when applying for federal grants. The classification is defined by the following hierarchy:

- Principal arterial (freeway and other): Movement-focused (high mobility, limited access)
- Minor arterial: Connects principal arterials (moderate mobility, limited access)
- Collectors: Connects local streets to arterials (moderate mobility, moderate access)
- Local roads and streets: Access-focused (limited mobility, high access)

PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL

The main goal of principal arterial roads is to provide connection between all freeways crossing the County and lower-level roads. Roads classified as principal arterial are characterized by their high traffic volume and speed. They are responsible for carrying a major part of the traffic that enters and exits the County, including special freight.

MINOR ARTERIAL

Minor arterial roads are also responsible for carrying a large portion of traffic and providing connection between freeways and lower level roads. Roadways classified in this category are different from major arterial mostly because they are designed to support local traffic and land access. Yet, due to their high levels of speed and traffic volume, minor arterials should not allow direct access to local neighborhoods and highly dense regions.

MAJOR COLLECTOR

Major collector roadways are responsible for taking traffic from local roads and connecting them to arterial roads. They are supportive of traffic circulation and land access, especially in more rural environments. Hence, major collectors operate at medium speeds and are highly signalized.

MINOR COLLECTOR

Minor collectors provide the same function as major collectors, with more emphasis on access and generally with lower speed levels. Minor collectors are also shorter in length and have intersections more closely spaced.

LOCAL ROADS

Local roads are responsible for connecting traffic to their final destination. They offer the lowest level of mobility and provide direct access to adjacent land. Due to their design characteristics, local roads should carry no through traffic movement nor should they be used for bus routes.

Figure 5.4: SH 35 - Principal Arterial
Source: Google maps

Figure 5.5: West Market St. - Major Collector-
Source: Google maps

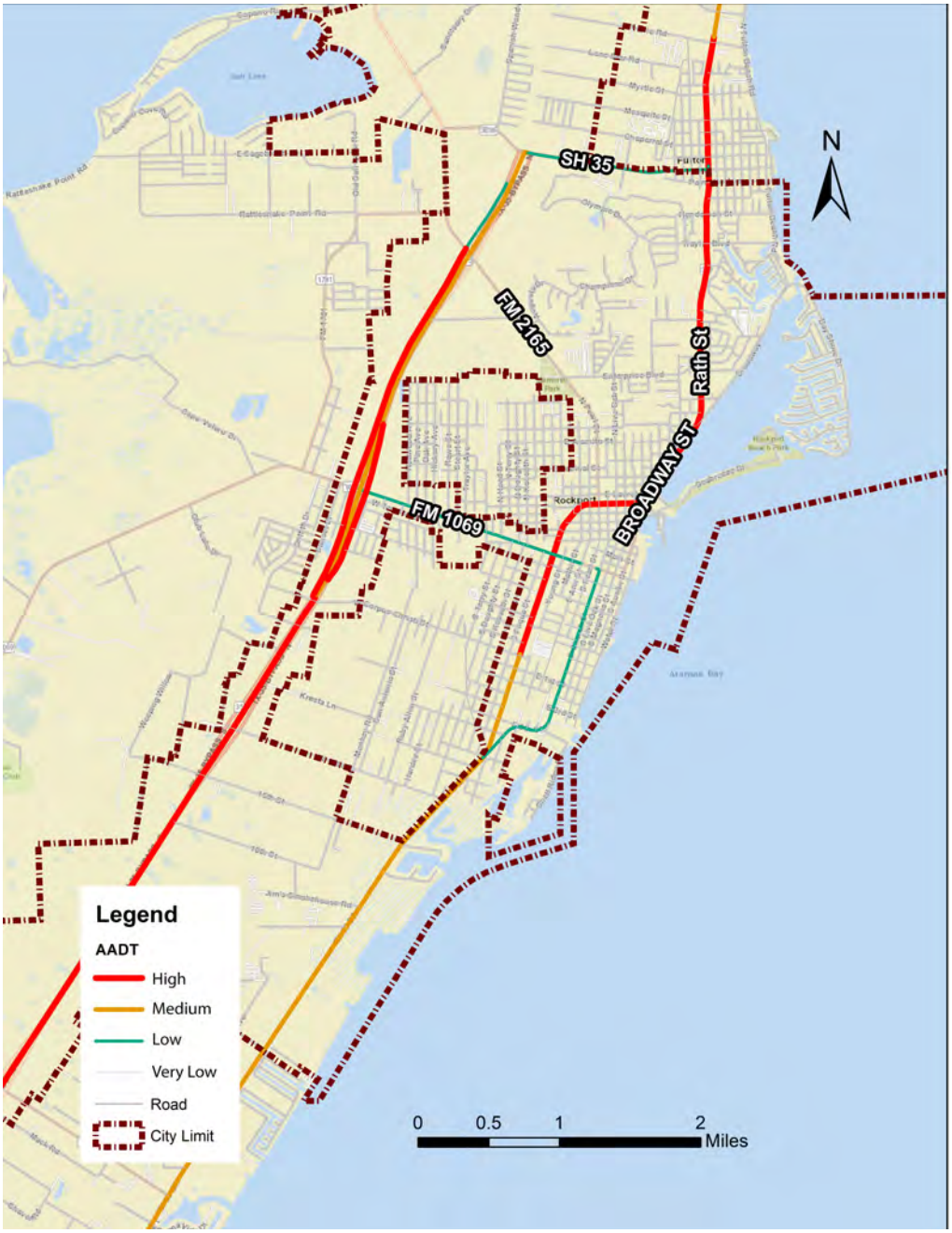

Figure 5.6: Rockport AADT

CRASH FREQUENCY

This analysis investigates the number of crashes in Rockport from 2015 to 2018. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) collects data every year on crash rates. Between 2015 and 2018, Rockport experienced, on average, 165.25 crashes on its roadways. In comparison to the neighboring cities, Fulton had an average of 17 crashes, Corpus Christi had 7,470.25, and Aransas Pass had 134. Corpus Christi is much bigger with a higher population and visitor rate, so it is expected that there would be more crashes. Figure 5.7 "heatmap" identifies six different colors: white, yellow, orange, red, purple, and blue. White represents no crashes during that time period and the blue areas represent the highest crash frequency in the city. The north part of Business SH 35, intersection of N. Pearl Street and E. Liberty Street in the downtown area and the turning point of SH 35, which intersects with FM 3036 have relatively higher number of crashes in Rockport. The frequency of the crashes is correlated with volumes and the complexity of the geometric characteristics of the roads. However, further analysis that considers the severity of the crash, the number of crashes per million vehicles and comparison with other similar intersections is required.[1]

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

Highways

The transportation network in Rockport contains one state highway, farm-to-market roads, park roads, and arterials (Figure 5.8). State Highway 35 runs along the center of the city—it also serves as the main collector of traffic. On the north section of Rockport, the state highway becomes a bridge that connects the Live Oak Peninsula to the Lamar Peninsula.

Railroads

There are no railroads that pass directly through the City of Rockport. However, a branch of the Union Pacific Railroad passes through Aransas Pass, just beyond the south of the Rockport city limits.

Airports

The City of Rockport contains one airport within its city limits. The following airports are available to Rockport residents (Figure 5.9):

- Aransas County Airport: a public and general aviation airport. Located on the northside of Rockport, approximately 12-minute drive away from the center of Rockport.
- Corpus Christi International Airport: commercial service, primary, and non-hub airport located in Corpus Christi. Approximately 40-minute drive from Rockport.
- Kalt Ranch Airport: private use airport. Approximately 24-minute drive from the center of Rockport.
- Hunt Airport: Privately owned, public use airport in Portland. Approximately 29-minute drive from Rockport.
- Mustang Beach Airport: city-operated facility located in Port Aransas. Approximately 54-minute drive from Rockport.
- McCampbell-Porter Airport: county-owned, public use airport in Ingleside. Approximately 20-minute drive from Rockport.

Sea Ports

The City of Rockport has two harbors: Rockport Harbor-located near Downtown Rockport, and Cove Harbor. The Rockport Harbor offers public restroom facilities, private transit, laundry facilities, numerous hotels/motels, and restaurants within walking distance. The harbor offers other attractions such as the Aquarium at Rockport Harbor, Maritime Museum, Rockport Center for the Arts, Rockport/Fulton Chamber of Commerce, and Women's Club of Rockport.[2]

Cove Harbor offers restroom facilities, cleaning stations, reclamation station and boat ramps. It is located on the south of the city and the banks of Aransas Bay.

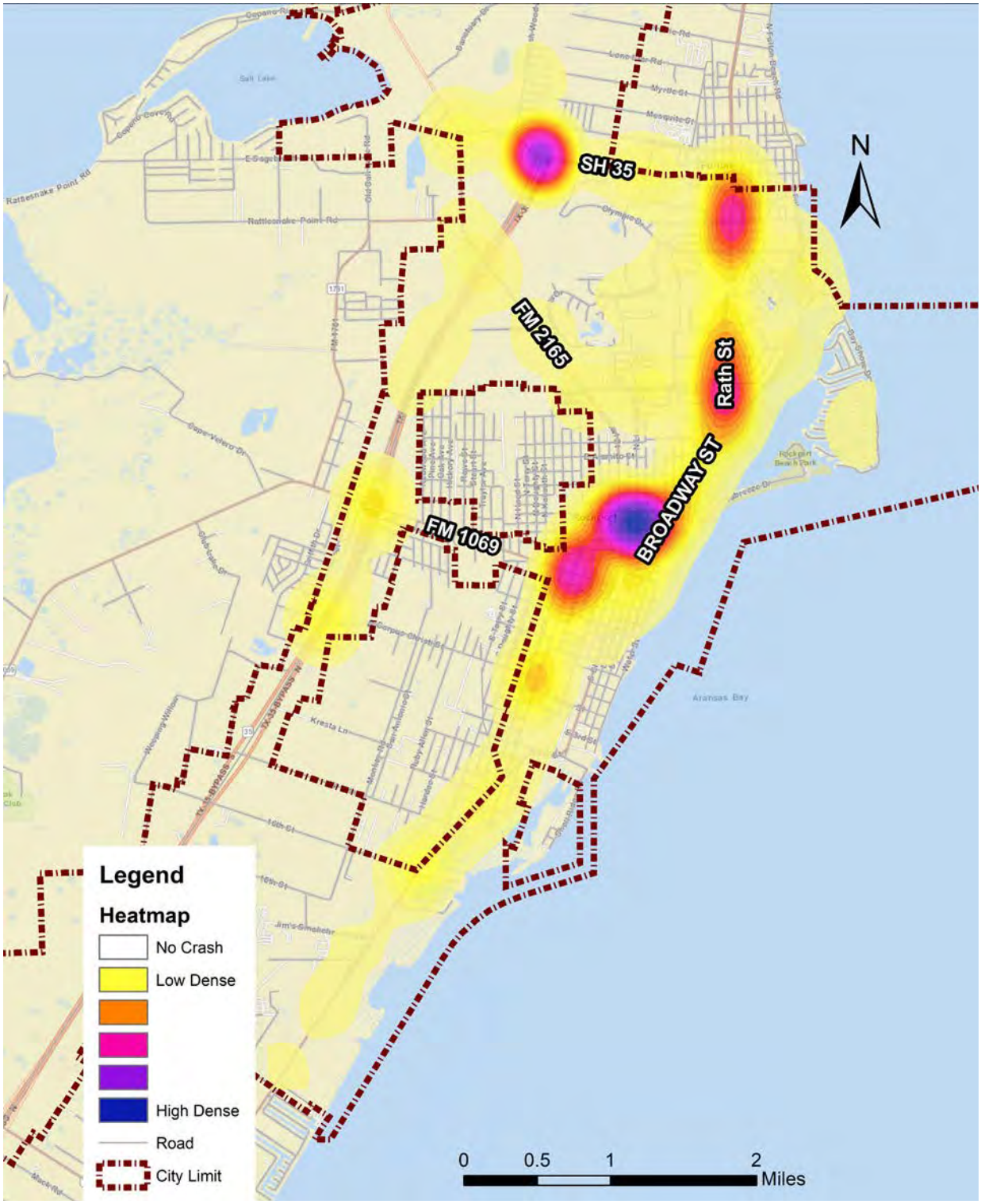

Figure 5.7: Crash Frequency Heatmap

Figure 5.8: Transportation Map of the City

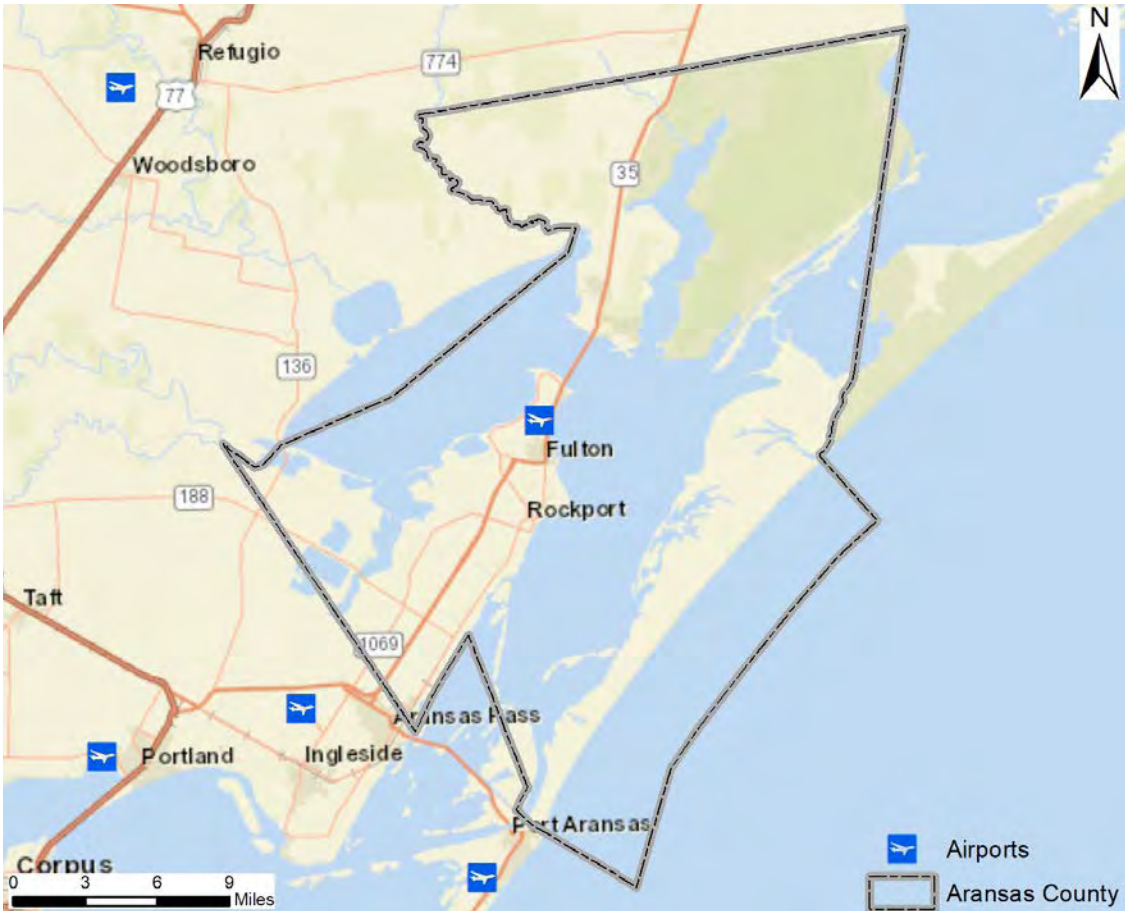

Figure 5.9: Airports near Rockport

PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEMS

The City of Rockport does not possess its own public transportation system. However, the following services are available through adjacent municipalities, Aransas County, and the Region:

- Fulton Trolley: Air-conditioned trolley that visits local businesses in the Town of Fulton and Downtown Rockport.
- Valley Transit Bus: full-service bus company serving South Central Texas and Northern Mexico with more than 50 daily schedules, as well as connections to nationwide travel on Greyhound Lines. This bus line makes two stops per day in Rockport, once in the North and once in the South.
- Jordan & Jordan Bus Charters: Charter Bus Company. Provides itineraries, travelers insurance, and tours to its customers.
- Aransas County Public Transportation: A local curb-to-curb service within the Rockport-Fulton area to Corpus Christi and Portland. Services are available to the public from 8am – 5pm Monday through Friday.
- Taxi Companies: Gulf Coast Taxi & Shuttle Service and City Cab (24-hour) provide service in Rockport and surrounding areas.

Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan

The Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan for The Coastal Bend (RCTPTCB) was approved on February 15, 2017 by the stakeholder steering committee of the planning region 20. The plan aims at collaborating effort involving dozens of stakeholders from all 11 counties of the Coastal Bend. The participating counties comprise Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Duval, Jim Wells, Kennedy, Kleberg, Live Oak, Nueces, Refugio, and San Patricio. The plan provides a detailed analysis of resources, needs, gaps, explores integration with other plans, identifies methods for sustaining implementation, provides vision, goals, and objects and concludes with ongoing performance measurements.[3] The plan's mission statement is "equal access to public transportation".[4]

The goals for the RCTPTCB for improving equal access are:

1. Establish and maintain strategic, efficient, and integrated transportation services.
2. Provide a variety of transportation services to improve mobility and options for riders.
3. Pursue long-term financial resources to provide affordable transportation services.
4. Extend operating hours and days of the week.
5. Improve public awareness of available services.
6. Coordinate for residents' mobility needs to destinations outside the region.

Transportation for Health Services

Rural Economic Assistance League (R.E.A.L) is a non-profit organization with a mission to provide safe, caring, and quality community-centered services for the elderly, people with disabilities, and the public. It serves 11 southern counties in Texas, including Aransas, and provides transportation services to people who need medical related visits, day-care, job interviews, and child care.[5]

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Access to safe and affordable transportation is important to the success of a city. While many people commute via their own vehicles, there is also a need for public transportation to frequently accessed places. Feedback shows the public's desire to have more options for transportation and connections between parking and walkways.

Accessible public transportation is important for handicapped residents and visitors to medical facilities as well as parks and shops. There is a specific need for transport to and from medical facilities between Rockport and Corpus Christi; residents recommend a bus line between Rockport and Corpus Christi for medical services.

Safety is of prime focus for the transportation system of Rockport. Residents desire connected parking with walkways and areas where kids can safely bike, blade, and skateboard.

CHALLENGES

This section explores the challenges raised by residents and the task force members. To increase safety of motorists, task force members identified the intersections and nodes with higher perceived risks. In Figure 5.12, these spots are identified, further explanation is provided in Table 5.1. For many of these nodes, a proper road design is a potential solution. The intersection of FM 3036 with SH 35 is one candidate for road design improvements and alignment.

Figure 5.10: North Wood Street

Figure 5.11: Eighteenth Street

Table 5.1: Description of risk areas identified by the community

ID	Description	Suggestion
1	Hazardous traffic node	Roundabout
2	Unclear and hazardous node	Traffic control devices and improved road design
3	Turning left and right is hazardous	Traffic control device
4	Hazardous for cyclists and pedestrians	Traffic control device
5	Hazardous traffic node	Improved road alignment
6	Hazardous traffic node	Traffic control device or roundabout
7	Confusing node	Traffic control device or roundabout
8	Intersection of SH 35 with Bypass road is hazardous	Traffic control device
9	Hazardous intersection	Traffic control device
10	Quality of annexed road	Maintenance
11	Design Issue	Traffic control devices and improved road design

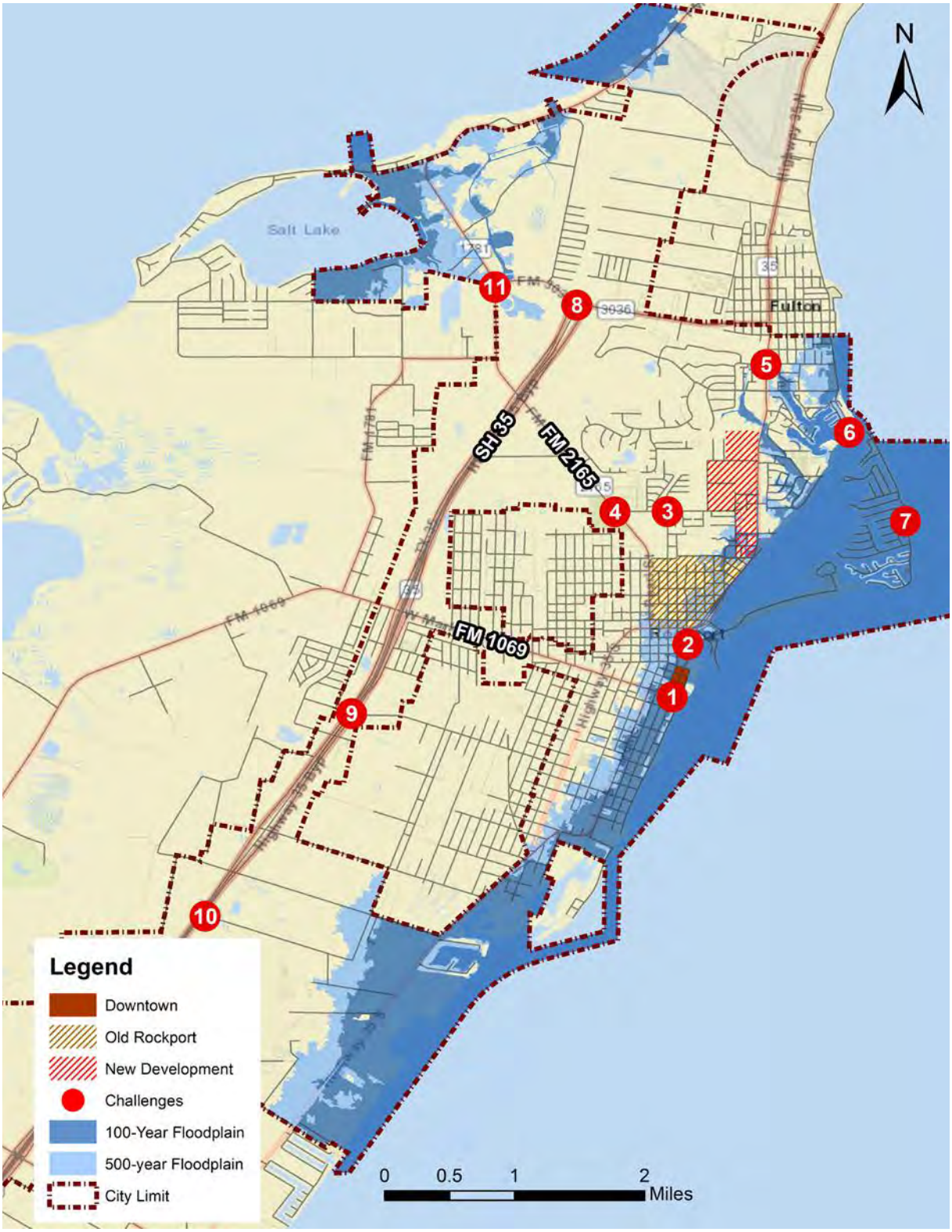

Figure 5.12: Community Identified High Risk Traffic Nodes

RECOMMENDATIONS

With the population projected to increase by only approximately 240 persons by 2050, the traffic volume is expected to remain about the same. In compliance with public demand and the desired future, the plan recommends thoroughfare plan, expansion of sidewalks and bicycle routes, and a regional approach to serve the public transportation needs of the community.

SAFE AND EFFICIENT ROADWAY NETWORK

To maintain and enhance public safety, Rockport needs to redesign critical roads and intersections to mitigate geometric and operational improvements. The City should maintain regular communication with TxDOT, the county transportation agencies and local transportation stakeholders to update project needs and progress.

In areas of the city where crash severity is high, speed, traffic, and crash studies need to be conducted to analyze traffic flow, issues, and promote the safety of travelers. Some things to implement near residential areas and community facilities are low-speed zones, speed bumps, chicanes, and diversions. Additionally, the city needs to provide adequate lighting, visibility, and wayfinding signage along major thoroughfares adjacent to commercial developments and public facilities. To ensure quality and standard of the roads that get annexed, the City needs to coordinate street design standards with the County. Functional classification of roads need to be updated based on the future thoroughfare plan.

FUTURE THOROUGHFARE PLAN

Thoroughfare planning plays a crucial role in public safety since it defines standards for road width, sidewalks, bicycle paths, and speed. It includes functional classification of roads. The TxDOT functional classification of roads shows how different routes contribute to mobility and accessibility. The thoroughfare plan for Rockport encompasses minor arterial, major collector, minor collector, and local roads. The arterial roads provides good mobility and is expected to have a good level of service. Collectors and local routes improve accessibility to publicly-used areas. Shared lanes and sidewalks cannot be a part of arterial roads. Collectors need moderate rate of movement and accessibility. Adopting a multi- modal connection helps to reduce the traffic volume. Similarly, local roads need lower speed limits and adequate side-walk space. Figure 5.16 shows the recommended thoroughfare plan in Rockport based on the TxDOT statewide planning map. SH 35 and Business SH 35 are two minor arterials. Market Street, Pearl Street, Church Street, FM 1069, SH-188, and a few others are major collectors. 12th Street, 10th Street, and a few others are classified as minor collectors.

All the improvements to the existing roads and new construction should ensure multimodal connectivity. Figure 5.15, 5.16, 5.17. illustrate the cross sections required for roadway based on its functional classification of minor arterial and major and minor collector.

Figure 5.14: Proposed Thoroughfare plan

Figure 5.15: Minor Arterial Cross Section

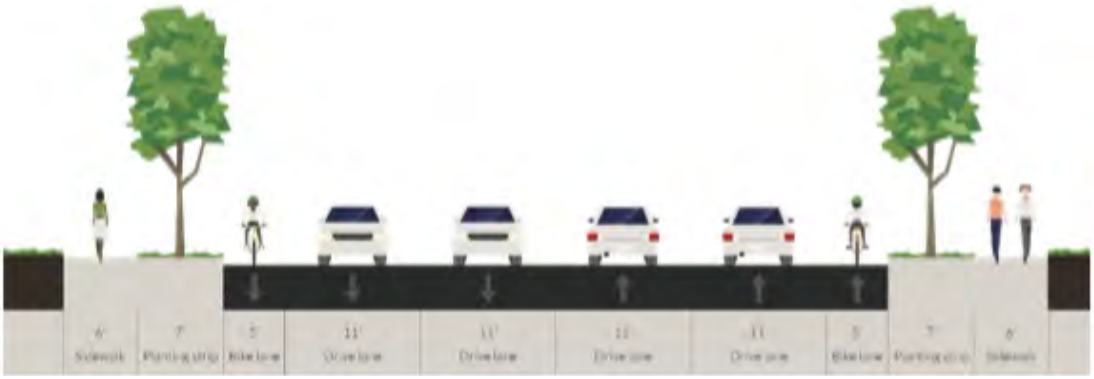

Figure 5.16: Major Collector Cross Section

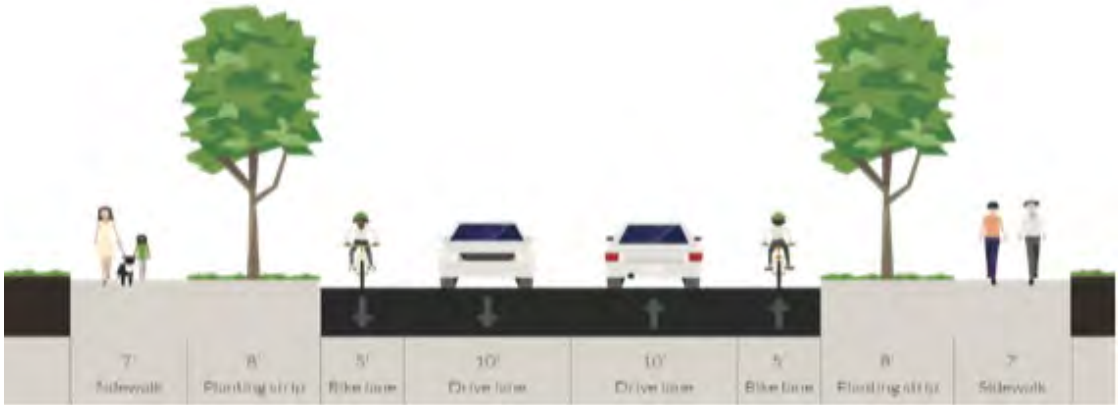

Figure 5.17: Minor Collector Cross Section

MAINTENANCE AND NETWORK INVENTORY

The City of Rockport should continue updating and utilizing its road maintenance schedule. The schedule should have an annually updated inventory of all the existing transportation facilities including, travelway, roadside, shoulders, sidewalks, bike lanes, drainage facilities, lighting, and traffic control devices. Funds need to be budgeted to continue updating and implementing the street maintenance schedule for conducting repairs and rehabilitation of roadways.

Historically, the city has worked with the city engineer to rate the streets in three categories based on needs for maintenance, repair and reconstruction. Streets with base failure require a cost benefit analysis to determine reconstruction needs.

The existing maintenance schedule can be expanded further by documenting the information collected about roads and other

facilities in the format of Table 5.2 and Table 5.3 respectively. Based on the existing condition and available funding, the priority of the maintenance schedule and the method to perform the maintenance can be chosen. Table 5.4 shows sample estimated costs and characteristics for selected materials. This type of data can inform maintenance decisions. Further, the City can use the travel way, roadside and traffic control and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) devices maintenance categories shown in Table 5.5, Table 5.6 and Table 5.7 respectively.

Table 5.2: Format for Road Evaluation

Road Name	Functional Class	Paving Materials	Length (ft.)	Width (ft.)	Area (Sq. ft)	Ownership	Estimated Repair Cost ($)	Total Maintenance Cost ($)
Name	Minor Arterial	Asphalt	100	10	1000.0	TxDOT	0.0	0.0

Table 5.3: Format for Road Evaluation

Facility Name	Location	Current Condition	Estimated Repair Cost	Total Maintenance Cost
Road Sign	Intersection of FM3036	Left turn sign needs repair	0.0	0.0

Table 5.4: Sample Estimated Cost and Characteristics of Materials

Material	Estimated Cost	Pros	Cons	Cost Source
Asphalt Paving	$3-$4 per sq.ft ($3.5/sq. ft can be used)	• Even Surface • Long Lifespan • Sleek Appearance • Lasts 12-35 years	• Needs frequent seal coating to prevent cracks and pot holes • Costly • Requires maintenance once in every 2-5 years • Cracks and holes should be repaired as soon as possible • Gets damaged during extreme hot conditions	https://www.homeadvisor.com/cost/outdoor-living/install-asphalt-paving/
Chip Seal Pavement	$15,000 per mile ($2.84 per sq.ft can be used)	• Best alternative for asphalt • Rapid installment • Relatively durable • Easy maintenance • Competitive pricing	• Forms ruts and sink holes • Hard to maintain the appearance and smoothness • Creates lightweight dust, debris and dirt which can be carried by air flow • Neighborhood needs frequent cleaning to remove dust • Not very feasible for bicycle riding and walking	https://www.homeadvisor.com/cost/outdoor

Table 5.5: Travel Way Maintenance Categories

Routine Maintenance	Preventive Maintenance	Major Maintenance
Pavement related work involving restoration of pavement serviceability which involves recondition, rebuild, level up and overlay of the pavement surface. This includes, but not limited to; pavement repair, crack seal, bituminous level ups with light overlays to restore rideability (Overlays not to exveed total average depth of 2"), additional base to restore ridability and seal costs.	Pavement related work performed to prevent major deterioration of the pavement. Work normally includes, but not llimited to bituminous level ups to restore rideabililty, light overlays (Overlays not to exceed total average depth of 2") seal coats, crack sealing, and micro-surfacing. Preparatory works Milling, repairs or level-ups may also be performed under preventive maintenance.	Pavement related work to strengthen the pavement for existing and future traffic. Work includes restoration of pavement serviceability of roadway. This includes but is not limited to: recondition and stabilize base and subgrade, add base, level up, overlays and seal coats. Pavement widening can be considered as major maintenance if its performed to solve a maintenance issue.

Table 5.6: Roadside Maintenance Categories

Routine Maintenance	Preventive Maintenance	Major Maintenance
All work to maintain sides of roadway including but not limited to: maintenance and operation of picnic spots, rest areas, removal of litter, mowing, trees, and bush trimming, repair and upgrade guard rails and extrude terminals, repair slides and side slopes, placing topsoil, sod, shrubs, etc., to re-establish proper grade and vegetative cover, landscaping, removal or treatment of roadside hazards, installation and maintenance of environmental protection devices, and mitigation of spills/ hazardous materials.	None	None

Table 5.7: Traffic Control ITS Devices Maintenance

Routine Maintenance	Preventive Maintenance	Major Maintenance
Installation, repair and replacement of signs, delineators, illumination, signals, and related appurternances; installation and replacement of stripping, pavement graphics, raised pavement markings rumble strips; maintenance of traffic control cabinets and the corresponding appurtenances.	Replacement of raised pavement markings, pavement graphics, striping, and rumble strips may be performed in conjunction with a resurfacing operation.	Installation of new signal systems to upgrade outdated signal designs.

COMPLETE STREET POLICIES IN THE MULTI-MODAL NETWORK

Complete Street policies are one way for the city to ensure safe access to alternate modes of transportation. Residents of Rockport requested for safer sidewalks and bicycle routes for seniors and children. Rockport should look into grants that fund sidewalks and other multi-modal transportation paths such as the TxDOT Safe Route to School grant. Further, the city should require developers to build sidewalks as part of new development.

The city should ensure that the multimodal network is maintained by annually updating the maintenance schedule. Appropriate signage and painted lines on the roadways can help assist travelers and pedestrians and reduce conflicts. Provision of adequate sidewalks and crosswalks improves pedestrian mobility and safety. Figure 5.18 shows the recommended sidewalks that connect downtown to other activity centers and publicly-used facilities in the community.

HIKE AND BIKE PATHS

For a popular tourist destination like Rockport, tourists might rely on bikes to reach their destinations. In such cases, providing more bicycle paths is beneficial to visitors as well as residents, resulting in a more accessibility and safety. To expand the hiking and biking facilities in Rockport, the city should work with Aransas Pathways and other partners to develop a hiking and biking trail master plan. Aransas Pathways has identified different levels of easements for pedestrians and cyclists.The trails and bicycle paths should be developed with adequate signage. The recommended bicycle paths are according to the public feedback and the existing paths as identified by the Aransas Pathways (Figure 5.19). Rockport residents also expressed the desire to expand the golf cart usage. However, golf carts can only be used in areas permitted by the state law and city ordinance.

COMPLETE STREETS

Complete Streets are designed to ensure the safety and convenience for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities. The provision of sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike paths are part of Complete Street policies. According to the 2010 Future of Transportation National Survey, 66% of Americans want more transportation options because they want the freedom to choose how they get around. These projects do not have to be accomplished all at once, but they can be accomplished along with routine maintenance.

Complete Streets help ensure the safety and accessibility of those who no longer drive and rely on the opportunity to walk or bike to their destinations safely. Due to the higher percentage of aging populations in Rockport, it is important for the city to provide adequate sidewalks and secured bike lanes. According to surveys, 47% of older Americans feel it is unsafe for them to cross major streets near their home. Complete Street policies ensure that streets are planned, designed, constructed, and maintained to provide safe and convenient access.

ECOTOURISM

The thriving ecotourism industry of Rockport demands a multi-modal transportation network. Therefore, more bike routes, bus stops, sidewalks and golf cart routes fulfill residents' and visitors' desires. Having multi-modal connectivity will increase accessibility to public spaces as well as promoting equity in serving the community. This improvement can invite more visitors to the city and increase revenues.

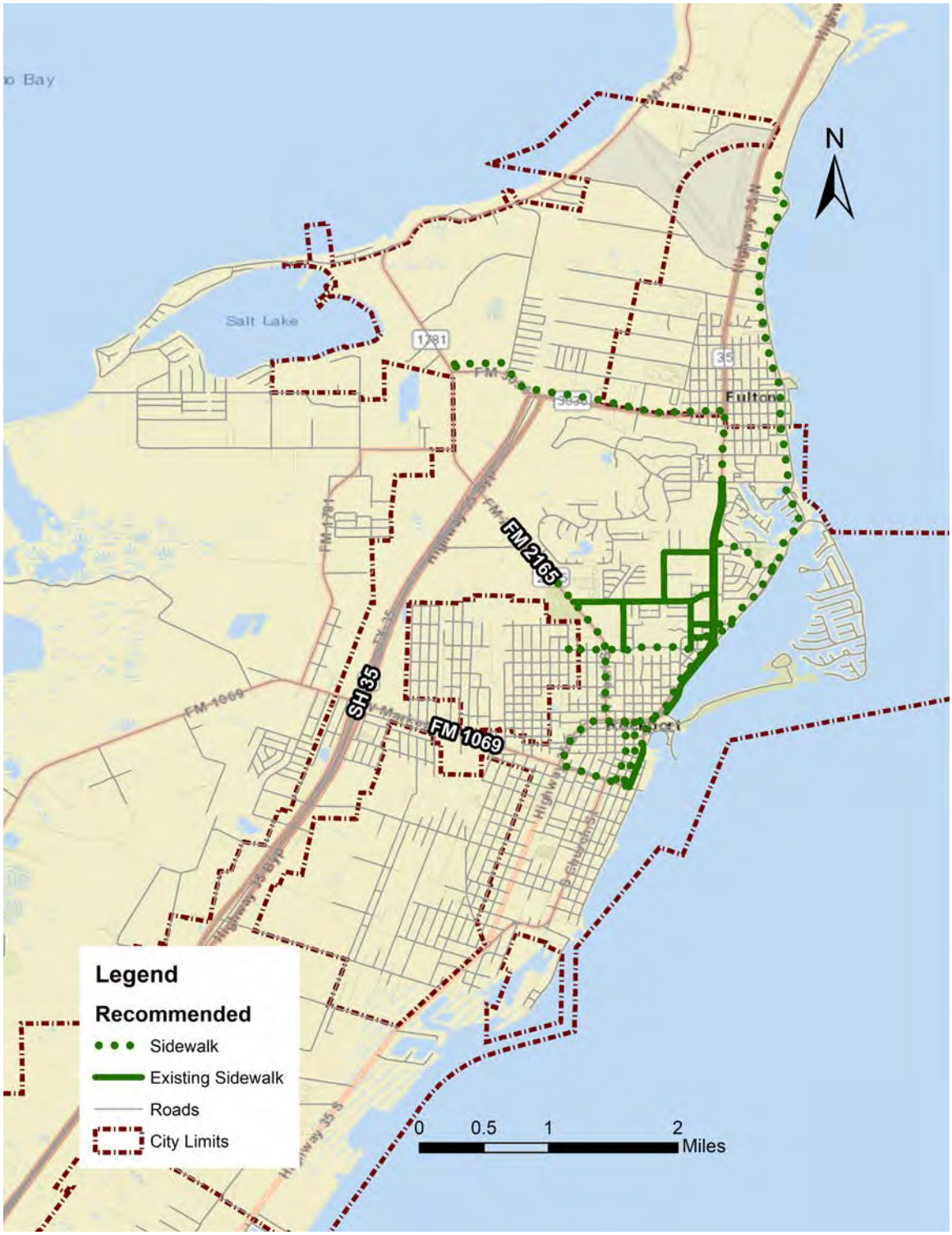

Figure 5.18: Recommended Sidewalks

Figure 5.19: Recommended Bicycle Paths

REQUIREMENTS OF OPERATING GOLF CARTS AND NEV - *CITY ORDINANCE ARTICLE VI*

Golf carts and neighborhood electric vehicles (NEV) are permitted within city limits, but drivers must be aware of certain laws and restrictions in order to ensure the safety of drivers and pedestrians. Drivers of golf carts and NEVs must comply with state and local laws.

Permitted areas of operation within city limits are in master planned communities and neighborhoods, public or private beaches, and roadways for which the speed limit does not exceed 35 miles per hour. Golf carts and NEVs are only permitted for use during the daytime and not more than two miles from the location it is usually parked and for transportation to or from a golf course.

Operation of these slower moving vehicles are prohibited on the State Highway System including Farm to Market Roads, regardless of the speed limit. Additionally, golf carts and NEVs are not to be driven on sidewalks or hike and bike trails within the corporate boundaries of the city.

The city has set up certain requirements for the operation of these vehicles. Golf carts and NEVs are subject to yearly state inspection, like any other motor vehicle, and the inspection sticker must be attached to the rear of the vehicle. As with any other motor vehicle, operators must be covered by insurance and have a valid driver's licence. The city added additional requirements to ensure safety. The vehicle must have:

- Headlamps
- Tail lamps
- Reflectors
- Parking brake
- Mirrors
- Turn signals
- A "slow moving vehicle" reflective triangle attached to the rear
- Seat belts
- A flag on a six-foot pole attached to the rear of the vehicle
- All equipment must be verified and inspected by the Rockport Police Department

These requirements and expectations have been implemented to ensure public safety and create an accessible environment for all residents and visitors.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

During community meetings, residents raised the need for public transportation to improve accessibility. The City of Rockport should evalu-ate a more robust, regional approach to serve the public transportation needs of the community. Rockport should consider a trans-portation service that operates weekends and special events.

The task force members have identified bus routes close to publicly used centers such as churches, schools, downtown, and some com-mercial uses, which can be implemented in the future. The recommended timeline for imple-mentation of public transportation is by 10 to 15 years. Figure 5.20 represents the suggested bus route.

CASE STUDY - SHARED-USE STREETS: 2ND STREET - LONG BEACH, CA[6]

Long Beach is a coastal city in Southern California. It is a popular tourist destination due to its proximity to the ocean and access to restaurants and other amenities. 2nd Street is a Major Ar-terial street for the city, specifically the Belmont Shore. In the past, cyclists rode their bikes on the sidewalks rather than in the street because this street lacked the space for an adequate bike lane. 2nd Street was a four-lane roadway divided by a median with parking lanes along the curbs. In 2009, as part of the Bike Long Beach project, the City began plans for implementing sharrow bicycle markings in the outer travel lanes to increase accessibility and safety for cyclists and draw attention to drivers. After the three day construction, they saw a steady increase in cyclist use of the shared lanes.

During a three-day 2010 Usage Report, they reported an increase of over 400 more cyclists using the green lanes and a decrease of over 100 cyclists using the sidewalks. In the first 12 months af-ter the green lanes' inception, the facility usage doubled. However, studies have found that the increased cyclists have not caused increased traffic congestion.

The implementation of the green lanes, "Bikes in Lane" signs, and decorative bike racks have encouraged more cyclists to commute in this area due to cyclist awareness and safety. It is im-portant to recognize the key benefits of this street. Local businesses have reported that they have seen an increase in consumers coming by bicycle after implementation of the shared lanes. Additionally, the increase in cyclists will provide for a healthier environment and community.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (RTA)

The RTA provides transportation services for Corpus Christi and the surrounding areas of Rob-stown/Calallen, Downtown/North Beach, and Flour Bluff/Padre Island on the "B". The Corpus Christi RTA will soon provide transportation for residents in Aransas Pass and Ingleside to their workplaces in Port Aransas. The new stops will be located near HEB stores in Aransas Pass and Ingleside and will cost just 75 cents to ride the "B".

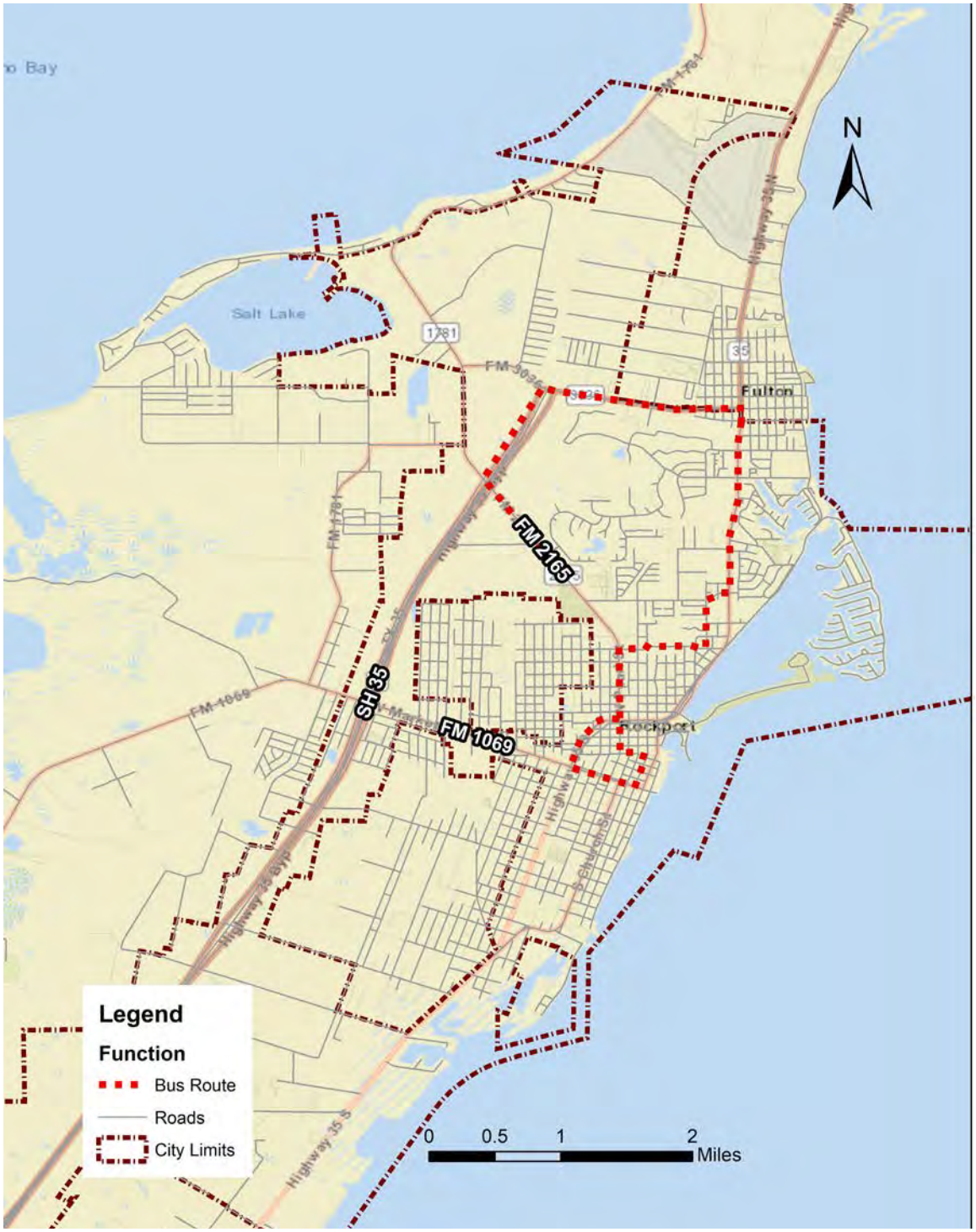

Figure 5.20: Suggested Bus Routes

TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Transportation demand management (TDM) is a set of strategies to encourage residents to use all the transportation options to maximize traveler choices. TDM strategies include providing information and incentives to increase ridesharing, walking, and biking. The city should consider encouraging ride-sharing programs, and providing informational resources on the city website and through other marketing materials.

To minimize excessive traffic and allow more consumer parking availability, incentivize businesses to encourage employees to use alternative transportation options. Rockport can develop recommended shared-lanes to promote public accessibility and provide a more convenient connection to Fulton. The city should consider learning about initiating quarterly bicycle and pedestrian counts, using the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation project methodology to assist with planning improvements and inform funding requests.

RPAT

PLAN INTEGRATION

SIDEWALKS, BIKE LANES, AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Sidewalks are the most fundamental element of the walking network. They provide a dedicated space for pedestrian travel that is safe, comfortable, and accessible. The City should consider providing sidewalks and bike lanes for the entire community. The RPAT team recommends improving and expanding sidewalks in Rockport including:

- **Austin Street:** Expand and fill in the gaps of sidewalks north along Austin Street along the east and west side of the street, fronting Veteran's Park, connecting to the former HEB grocery site, and to the Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce.
- **East Concho Street**: Expand sidewalks along both sides of the street to connect to the future city hall and courthouse site (downtown anchor site) to Austin Street.
- **Veterans Memorial Drive/Seabreeze Drive:** Expand and fill in the voids for sidewalks along both sides of the street, connect the Chamber, Veterans Park, the Festival Grounds, and Rockport Beach to Austin Street and downtown.
- **Bike Lanes:** Provide on-street bicycle lanes along Austin Street connecting to the Festival Grounds, Veterans Park, Rockport Beach, and to the Aransas Pathways biking trails.

Rockport may want to consider a bike sharing program to encourage the use of bike lanes, decrease motor vehicle traffic, and provide more recreation options. Many different models exist. The city should conduct research to select the appropriate model and company.

- Conduct a pedestrian/bicycle plan (scoping study) to identify gaps, destinations, alignments, and costs of the bicycle and pedestrian infra-structure improvements. This plan should be expanded to include the entire community.
- Systematically construct sidewalks and bike lanes, first filling in the gaps, and then expanding sidewalks and bike lanes to connect the entire community. RPAT recommendations include connection in Austin street to connect the downtown to the beach and city hall/courthouse property.

TRAFFIC CALMING AND INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

- Restripe crosswalk stripes to improve visibility of crosswalk. Add public art murals on crosswalks.
- Implement intersection improvements, including crosswalk treatments, improved bulb-outs, including brick pavers/stamped concrete, raised intersections, street trees, and lighting. Intersection and crosswalk improvements should be made in close coordination with new public or private development (i.e. the opening of the Arts Center).

PLAN INTEGRATION

RPAT

STREET TREES AND LANDSCAPING

- Develop a Tree Master Plan to use as a framework to help guide tree planting within public and private property. A tree inventory of the community would be a useful project to begin the master plan effort.
- Provide strategic tree plantings along major roads, at key intersections, on vacant lots, and along the streetscape to provide shade, visual appeal, and help capture stormwater. Planting trees is possible through using urban forestry best practices and close coordi-nation with underground utilities and Rockport's public works department.

The city should consult an arborist or other landscaping professional to understand tree and plant selection that helps reduce the need for and costs of maintenance.

IMPROVE LIGHTING

- Encourage (and financially support/incentivize) businesses to leave porch/facade lights and window display lights on in the evening hours.
- Provide mini-grants to businesses to add building facade and awning lighting to illuminate the sidewalks at night.
- Incorporate pedestrian scale lighting into future streetscape engineering and design plans along the Austin Street corridor.
- Construct pedestrian scale lighting along the east and west sides of Austin Street along the sidewalks connecting to Veterans Memorial Park and Market Street.

RESILIENCE AND GREEN STREETS

- Develop a Tree Master Plan and GI Plan to use as a framework to help guide tree planting within public and private property.
- Retrofit bulb-outs and provide strategic live oak tree plantings along major roads at key intersections, on vacant lots, and along the streetscape to provide shade, visual appeal, and help absorb stormwater.

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6 ECONOMY

OVERVIEW

Collectively speaking, Rockport's economy took a big hit due to Hurricane Harvey. However, the economy is recovering with a promising future for development. Economic development should capitalize on the city's historic strengths and cultural identity, including tourism and the arts. The local government plays an important role in attracting business investments, maintaining and expanding the city's labor force, and helping the local economy thrive.

This chapter begins with the economic characteristics of the city in relation to the county and state, in order to get a better understanding of the conditions before Hurricane Harvey. The economic analysis describes local industries, employment, and income. The impacts of the hurricane and current conditions will also be addressed. Finally, recommendations will be presented to support the future economy of Rockport.

CONDITIONS BEFORE THE STORM

ECONOMIC GROWTH

The city experienced significant economic growth over the last decade. From 2005 to 2015, the number of jobs in Rockport increased 45.18%, from 2,853 to 4,143. This growth rate is slightly higher than both Aransas County (33.23%) and Texas (25.62%).

From 2005 to 2015, the fastest growing industries were:

1. Educational Services with 261 added jobs and a 3.2% increase in the employment share;
2. Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction with 206 added jobs and a 3.6% increase in the employment share; and
3. Health Care and Social Assistance, with 141 added jobs but no change in the employment share.

Meanwhile, Rockport lost 15 jobs in Wholesale Trade, with a 0.4% decrease in the employment share, and lost 12 jobs in Transportation and Warehousing, with a 0.6% decrease in the employment share. The overall change in the number of jobs indicates that the economy in Rockport generally grew from 2005 to 2015. Table 6.1 shows changes in total number of jobs in Rockport from 2005 to 2015.

Figure 6.1: Local Business in Downtown Rockport.
Picture Courtesy: Emily Tedford

Figure 6.2: Local Business in Rockport.
Picture Courtesy: Emily Tedford

Table 6.1: Total Number of Jobs by Industry in Rockport, 2005-2015

NAIC Industry Sector	2015	2005	Absolute Change
Educational Services	546	285	261
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	332	126	206
Health Care and Social Assistance	455	314	141
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	219	96	123
Public Administration	268	156	112
Accomodation and Food Services	710	598	112
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	216	134	82
Retail Trade	683	614	69
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	124	65	59
Administration & Support, Waste Management & Remediation	95	48	47
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	27	0	27
Information	60	34	26
Manufacturing	65	40	25
Finance and Insurance	122	102	20
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	75	59	16
Construction	123	122	1
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0	0
Utilities	0	11	-11
Transportation and Warehousing	12	24	-12
Wholesale Trade	10	25	-15
Total	**4,142**	**2,853**	**1,289**

Source: OnTheMap Application, 2005, 2015

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

In 2015, the median household income in Rockport was $47,865 per year 73, a 7.6% increase from $44,487 per year in 2010. The median household income in Rockport is lower than Texas ($53,207), and the U.S. ($53,889) but higher than the median household income of Aransas County ($41,690). Table 6.2 compares family, household, and per capita incomes between Rockport, Aransas County, Texas, and the United States.

Table 6.2: Income Overview in Rockport, Aransas County, Texas, and the United States, 2015

	Rockport	Aransas County	Texas	United States
Median Family Income	59,098	51,267	62,717	66,011
Median Household Income	47,865	41,690	53,207	53,889
Per Capita Income	26,776	28,472	26,999	28,930

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015, Table DP03

UNEMPLOYMENT AND LABOR FORCE

In 2015, 46.6% (3,731) of the 8,006 Rockport residents 16 years and older were not in the labor force, yet most of these residents are of retirement age. This number is about 10% higher than the county (35.06%), state (35.27%), and nation (36.35%). Figure 6.3 shows the employment status for residents 16 years and older for Rockport in 2015.

Figure 6.3: Employment Status (Population 15 years and Older in Labor Force)
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015, Table DP03

The unemployment rate is defined as the share of the population 16 and over in the civilian labor force who are jobless. In 2015, Rockport had an unemployment rate of 6.4%, which is slightly lower than Aransas County, Texas, and the nation. Figure 6.3 compares employment statistics of individuals over 16 in the civilian labor force for Rockport, Aransas County, Texas, and the United States.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS AND INDUSTRIES

The top ten major employers, having the highest number of employees, in the Rockport-Fulton area include the Aransas County School District, retail stores (Walmart and H.E.B), government entities (the City of Rockport, Aransas County, and the State of Texas), the medical services industry (including Care Regional Medical Center, Gulf Pointe Plaza), and Wood Group (an oilfield/industrial company). T able 6.3 shows major employers in Rockport-Fulton area.

Table 6.3: Major Employers in the Rockport-Fulton Areas

Employer	Industry	Employees
Aransas County I.S.D.	Education	521
Walmart	Retail	250
Care Regional Medical Center*	Hospital	210
H.E.B.	Retail Grocer	185
Wood Group Production Services*	Oilfield & Industrial	181
Aransas County	Government	175
City of Rockport	Government	130
State of Texas	Government	107
Gulf Pointe Plaza	Health Service	93
Rockport Coastal Care Center	Health Service	75

Source: Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce

In 2015, 4,142 people held a primary job in Rockport. The industry sectors with the largest absolute number of employees were:

- Accommodation and Food Services with 710 employees (17.1% of total jobs),
- Retail Trade with 683 employees (16.5% of total jobs),
- Educational Services with 546 employees (13.2% of total jobs), and
- Health Care and Social Assistance with 455 (11% of the total jobs).

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) generates economic reports for coastal counties throughout the United States. The data focuses on six economic sectors that are dependent upon oceans, the Gulf of Mexico, or the Great Lakes, depending on where the counties are located. NOAA calls this "Ocean Economy," and the six economic sectors which are: living resources, marine construction, ship and boat building, marine transportation, offshore mineral extraction, and tourism and recreation. The ocean-related industry is significant in Rockport, providing 24% of the total share of economy and 1,539 job positions.

Employment share by industry offers an efficient way to identify local economy drivers. It provides insight into the region's workforce, the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy, and potential available job opportunities.

Rockport has a higher share of workers than both Aransas County and Texas in the following industries:

- Accommodation and Food Services,
- Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction
- Retail Trade

On the other hand, Rockport has less employment share in:

- Administration Support, Waste Management, and Remediation
- Construction
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Transportation and Warehousing
- Wholesale Trade

Figure 6.4 shows the employment share of North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industry sectors in Rockport, Aransas County, and the State of Texas in 2015.

ECOTOURISM

Ecotourism, as defined by Megan Epler Wood, the co-founder of The International Ecotourism Society, is "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people."[1] Ecotourism is not simply a visitor enjoying activities related to the natural environment; the activities must make a positive impact on both the ecology and economy of a given destination.

Although Rockport has fostered the conservation and protection of its natural resources, these actions are becoming even more fundamental in the city's ability to remain eco-friendly and sustain its economic development. Because of Rockport's coastal location and moderate climate, there are many year-round opportunities for sport fishing, kayaking, bird-watching, hiking, and camping for visitors and residents alike. Not only can these ecotourism activities help the environment through education (as discussed in the following chapter), they also provide economic benefits to Rockport's citizens. These benefits are affiliated with job opportunities and complementary businesses, such as restaurants, hotels, and stores.

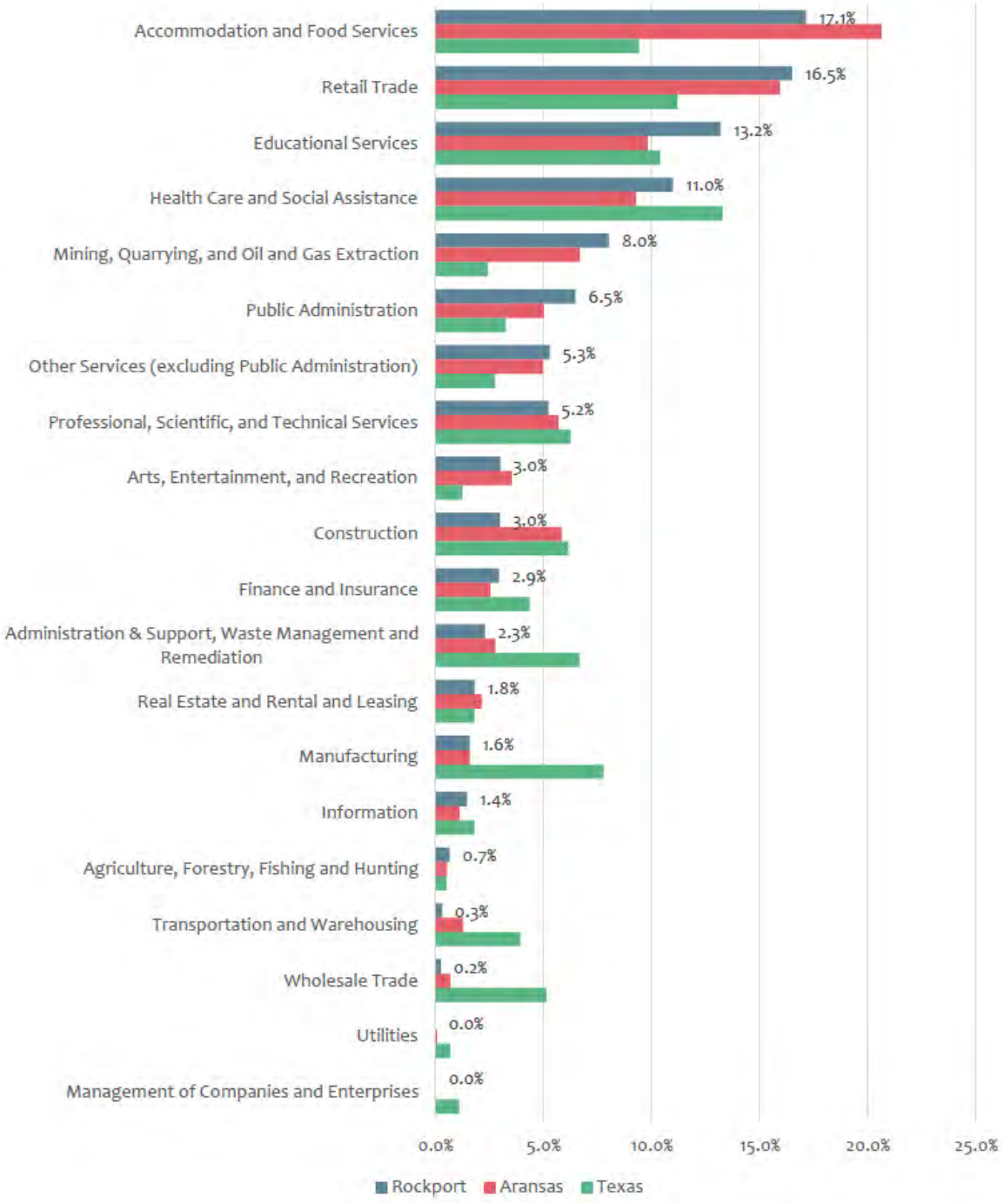

Figure 6.4: NAICS Industry Sectors by Employment Share in Rockport, Aransas County, and Texas, 2015
Source: OnTheMap Application, 2015

IMPACT OF HURRICANE HARVEY

In addition to the physical damages, Hurricane Harvey impacted the economy of the entire Texas coast through business disruptions and loss of productive activities. Business disruption and production loss could be related to displaced employees, cutbacks in the hours of operation, unusable facilities, and the interdependency of industries. Due to Rockport's housing shortage in the aftermath of the storm, many local businesses suffered from a reduced workforce and had to cutback on hours of operation. Some businesses still experience these conditions.

Also due to Rockport's dependency on the tourism industry, the city's economy was negatively impacted by the physical damage to several tourism sites. The Aquarium, the Big Blue Crab sculpture, and the Beach Bandshell were destroyed and have yet to be rebuilt. The Paws & Taws Convention Center and the Fulton Pier were heavily damaged and and torn down. The Rockport Center for the Arts building had severe damage, and eventually reopened in a new location. The Texas Maritime Museum and the Fulton Mansion had roof damage. Furthermore, the damages sustained by numerous hotels disrupted the number of tourists that could visit the city and support businesses that were not otherwise physically damaged. Because of the damage to these and other local tourist venues, Rockport estimates a loss of about $100 million annually in tourism revenue until the community is fully restored.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - "HARVEY, WE WON"

Since Hurricane Harvey struck, local businesses in Rockport have worked to rebuild and reopen with the help of many community organizations and leaders. In the past two years, the Chamber of Commerce has helped hundreds of businesses celebrate their grand re-openings.

Figure 6.5: "Harvey, We Won" ribbon cutting at the Sears re-opening, August 2019
Source: Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce

Figure 6.6: "Harvey, We Won" ribbon cutting at the Rockport Center for the Arts, August 2018

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

In order for the economy to flourish, development and the environment need to be balanced in Rockport. Local business is very important to the economy in Rockport, hence more policies that influence developing private firms or train people about professional skills should be generated. The basis of the economy, however, is tourism, so the community hopes to see more opportunities for small businesses and investments to be developed. One thing that is important to the community is the reopening of the Aquarium. It was destroyed during Hurricane Harvey and was subsequently closed. However because it was the fourth largest tourist attraction in the county, it would bring in a great deal of tourism dollars to the city.

The community wants more entertainment and activities to meet the local and tourist demand (e.g. restaurants, muti-use sports venues, shopping center). Considering the external economic situation, Rockport should encourage more local businesses and industries. There is a need for business and technical training for those outside the workforce to find work opportunities.

Figure 6.7: Downtown Rockport storefront
Picture Courtesy: Emily Tedford

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION[2,3]

In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, the Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan was developed for the county and the jurisdictions within the county. Through the groups working on that recovery plan, an Economic Development Corporation and a Local Government Corporation are in the process of being established. These two corporations will actually act as a "one stop shop" for business attraction, expansion, and retention in the region. However, each corporation has different legal responsibilities regarding donations, federal and state grants, and public-private partnerships. Many activities will build upon what the Chamber of Commerce has been doing historically for the region. Bylaws, budgets, and public meetings will be provided to ensure transparency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

DIVERSE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY

Rockport needs to support sound economic growth and promote operational efficiency. Partnerships with other local jurisdictions and the proposed Economic Development Corporation will provide a "one stop shop" for prospective businesses and provide resources for existing businesses. The city should create tax incentives and enhance infrastructure to attract target industries to the area and to assist local businesses. The city can also further its partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to pursue new economic growth strategies and maintain successful ones. To bring business to Rockport's Opportunity Zones, the city should assist collaboration between investors and entrepreneurs.

Despite the acute impacts from Hurricane Harvey, tourism and ecotourism will remain important industries for Rockport. Improvements to infrastructure, signage, and safety in key areas would encourage waterfront development and increase the use of public spaces and trail systems for tourists, Winter Texans, and year-round residents. A variety of development strategies, such as multimodal transportation, and small area plans, can serve the tourism industry while maintaining community character. The city should re-evaluate its use of Hotel Occupancy Taxes to meet current tourism needs. To maximize the presence of seasonal tourists and Winter Texans, the city should emphasize the advantages of coordinated business hours and activities in the downtown areas. Public relations campaigns (i.e. "Find Yourself in Rockport-Fulton") can also be expanded by focusing on social media and regional tourist websites.

In light of Hurricane Harvey, Rockport has realized that it needs to diversify its economy and not rely so heavily on tourism. New industry sectors that complement Rockport's existing businesses should be considered, particularly along the 35 Bypass. Because the city is also known for its cultural arts district, businesses that deal with art-handling, framing, and graphics may be suitable. Outdoor activity supply companies would be fitting, as they relate to tourism, but are not dependent on the local environment and weather conditions. Nevertheless, any new industry sector should be "clean" and not create negative impacts on the surrounding ecosystems and wildlife habitats. Other potential low impact industries involve electronics and information processing.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND INCENTIVES

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) are similar methods of using tax revenues for redevelopment. The methods start with the local government designating an area that is expected to accrue more tax revenue after redevelopment. The local government then borrows money from another entity or sells bonds to make improvements to the area (e.g. installing utilities and other infrastructure, purchasing properties, and demolishing or enhancing structures). After private development occurs in the area, and tax revenue increases to anticipated levels, the amount over the pre-development taxes pays off the loans or bonds.

Tax Abatement exempts a property owner from all or part of their property taxes as they develop/redevelop and the property value increases. The property owner and taxing entity agree on the length of contract, the conditions for improving the property, and the ultimate use of the property.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND INCENTIVES

Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT)[4] are room rental taxes required by a city, county, or state. HOT taxes are applied to rooms that are rented out for less than 30 days in hotels and motels, bed-and-breakfasts, apartments, condos, houses, etc. Two rates are paid by the customer, a state tax and a local tax. The local rate (7% in Rockport) is solely used to enhance and promote tourism venues, events, and related operations. The state rate (6% in Texas) flows directly to the Comptroller's Office, but has been returned to certain communities on occasion for similar tourism purposes.

Opportunity Zones are low income census tracts and economically-distressed communities, that are nominated by state governors and certified by the US Department of the Treasury to encourage economic development and job creation. The program offers several tax incentives for investments in an Opportunity Fund that contributes to development in the zone. The investor receives tax deferrals or exclusions, depending on how long they leave their capital gain in the fund or if they make new gains from development in the zone.

FOSTER A SKILLED WORKFORCE

As the workforce grows over time, with new or returning residents, marketing strategies and recruitment sessions should be developed to connect existing companies to potential employees. The city and the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) should identify new target industries and generate a stronger demand for workers. An assessment of the strengths and weaknesses in the existing workforce can help the city and the EDC establish professional training programs to advance local skill sets. Partnerships with the Coastal Bend Workforce Solutions, Del Mar College (in Corpus Christi), and other universities and organizations can create job fairs and seminars to encourage entrepreneurship and coach people on business trends, resumes, and interviews. Furthermore, it is important to get young people involved in the workforce, so mentorship and internship programs should be developed for high school and college students. Opportunities could be offered by the local government, nonprofits, and businesses. The City should support training and trade-specific licensing for the local unskilled workforce on building codes, including windstorm requirements.

SUPPORT EXISTING ASSETS

To retain and boost existing businesses, the city and the proposed EDC need to support small businesses. A business needs assessment should be conducted, as identified in the Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan, in order to facilitate more business re-openings and a return to normal business hours. The Heritage District Overlay Code could be reassessed and updated. The EDC and the Chamber of Commerce should arrange professional assistance for businesses to cultivate their merchandising and websites. Special events, like the Rockport Business Expo, could be organized for the downtown or cultural arts district. Additional media campaigns, building on the "Find Yourself in Rockport-Fulton" campaign, should be developed to communicate specific, current information and that small businesses are open.

RPAT

PLAN INTEGRATION

TAX INCREMENT REINVESTMENT ZONE

Rockport should assist businesses in being better prepared for future flood events and storms and more rapid recovery through development of educational resources. Rockport and downtown advocates should help to prepare area businesses for future flooding and or storm damage in advance of storms, aiming to minimize businesws interruption and/or losses and thus speeding up subsequent recovery. Informational materials should be disseminated to businesses throughout the community to help them prepare financially as well as structurally to weather-related threats. The city needs to encourage businesses to be eco-friendly and assist them in being better prepared for future flood events & storms & more rapid recovery through development of educational resources.

CASE STUDY: ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION - DOUGLAS, GA

Douglas is a small town in Coffee County, Georgia with a population of about 12,000. Up until the 1950s, the economy was driven by agriculture, but over time the Douglas-Coffee County Economic Development Authority sought to diversify. After some initial successes with the manufacturing industry, jobs declined in the early 2000s.

Cooperation among the city, county, business community, education institutions and civic leaders has been the basis for Douglas' economic development strategy. In addition to bringing in manufacturing jobs, the city has focused on small and local businesses. Leaders in the community recognized that development of small business would support a more diverse economy and provide services that could attract industrial employers as well.

In the late 1980s, a Main Street Program was initiated and aimed to preserve the heritage and improve the aesthetics of Douglas' downtown area. Through a series of grants and matching funds, storefronts were restored and improved, and a streetscape project added trees, landscaping, lighting, and sidewalks with decorative brickwork. These improvements made the downtown area a community gathering place and spurred a "Second Saturday" market for artists, farmers, and other vendors. In 2007, when the city's comprehensive plan was updated, the plan included strategies to continue improvements, a mix of businesses, and redevelop vacant lots. Between 1995 and 2012, the vacancy rate in downtown dropped from 25% to 6%.

In 2002, a new director of entrepreneur and small business development, within the Chamber of Commerce, initiated a document outlining permitting and zoning processes, tax policies, business loans, and other resources. Additionally, the Chamber began offering programs for new business owners by connecting them with experienced business owners, providing training for workplace and community leadership skills, and encouraging community members to shop locally by giving discounts.

In 2004, Douglas and Coffee County were the first community in Georgia to be recognized by the state for its strategies and commitment to support local entrepreneurs. The decisions of the city and county to improve the economic environment for businesses and consumers helped Douglas become a more welcoming place for entrepreneurs and created nearly 800 new jobs.

CASE STUDY: DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION - MOUNT MORRIS, NY

Mount Morris, New York is a small village south of Rochester in Livingston County with a population of 2,929. Historically, its economy was driven by farming, commercial agriculture, and milling. The local farms and businesses were able to ship goods directly to markets via the Genesee Valley Canal and, later, a new rail line. Yet, the village and many surrounding communities fell into decline when manufacturing jobs left the area. In the 1970s, a new expressway and competition from big box stores also drew attention away from downtown Mount Morris and left storefronts empty and falling into disrepair.

The Livingston County Development Group (LCDG) stepped in to help revitalize the economy. The group supported small businesses, encouraged entrepreneurship, and promoted downtown revitalization. LCDG began to provide instruction, technical assistance, relocation services, and a loan fund for start-ups or expansion expenses. They subsidized rent, put together a catalog of downtown businesses, and advertised the community to developers with the hopes of bringing in investments.

Greg O'Connell, a developer and a graduate of State University of New York (SUNY) - Geneseo found Mount Morris to be a significant investment opportunity. He spent over $2 million on purchasing and restoring 20 downtown buildings. He provided lower rent for businesses to help them get a head start and, in exchange, requested more dynamic downtown activities such as longer hours one night a week. Renting out second story apartments also gave O'Connell a return on his investment.

Mount Morris worked to get the whole community involved in the downtown revitalization efforts, so it took advantage of its proximity to SUNY-Geneseo. By enlisting O'Connell's alma mater, the students helped with projects related to beautification and event publicity. O'Connell created and funded the position of Main Street Manager for which a SUNY student works to coordinate advertising and social media for downtown businesses.

The efforts of O'Connell and other community leaders have brought downtown Mount Morris back to life by filling vacant storefronts with new businesses such as a cafe and bakery, a barbershop, and antiques dealer. In 2010, the village received a "Restore NY" grant to preserve and repurpose an old downtown theater building. Some business owners have been successful enough to open new establishments as well.

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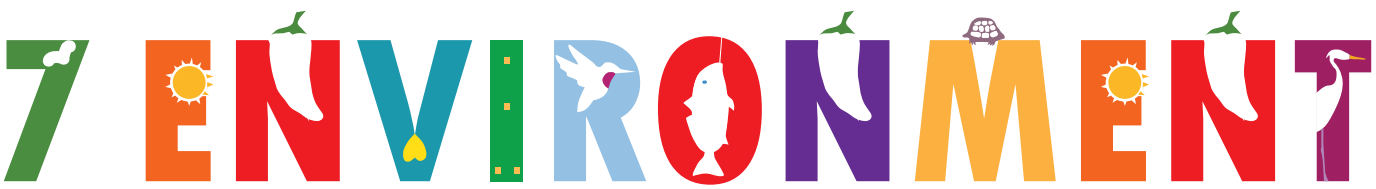
7 ENVIRONMENT

OVERVIEW

The City of Rockport resides on the Live Oak Peninsula, a mostly rural region that has very unique ecosystems that contribute to its economic development and sense of place. Rockport encompasses a total area of 15.0 square miles, of which 10.7 square miles is land and 4.3 square miles is water.[1] The abundance of coastline makes for a variety of unique coastal ecosystems that are not found anywhere else. Outdoor recreational activities are a common pastime for locals tourists.

The first industries of the region incorporated the natural environment, centering on fishing, boat building, and tourism. The generally mild weather created an ideal environment for outdoor recreation and industry. Though fishing and shrimping are no longer the main economic drivers on the Live Oak Peninsula, the water is still the focus for most residents. This region is home to the Windswept Oak, an icon for Rockport, productive wetlands and estuaries, multiple bay systems, and important critical habitats for threatened and endangered species.

It was clear through the public outreach and feedback process of the comprehensive plan update that Rockport residents rank conservation and protecting natural environmentally sensitive areas as high priorities. This also includes enhancing resilience by identifying wildlife habitat corridors, promoting mitigation options, particularly natural mitigation strategies, and encouraging disaster preparedness through public outreach and education. Numerous threatened and endangered species call this region home which alone draws in thousands of tourists every year.

Due to Rockport's location on the water and its proximity to the Gulf, the city is very susceptible to floods and tropical storms. Hurricane Harvey is the most recent disaster in 2017, but the area has had frequent confrontations with natural disasters that threaten public safety and economic security. On top of that, the region has struggled with localized water quality and drainage issues.

The following chapter will highlight the existing natural conditions in Rockport, go into detail about threats, highlight public feedback, and outline recommendations for the future.

CONDITIONS BEFORE THE STORM

WILDLIFE AND CONSERVATION

The City of Rockport is located on a peninsula surrounded by Copano Bay to the northwest and Aransas Bay to the south. Along with those essential ecosystem features, Rockport also has two bodies of water that create nooks along the shore, Little Bay and Salt Lake. Due to these naturally occurring features, the peninsula is home to a variety of habitats comprised of many different species of birds, fish, and amphibians.

Figure 7.1 Lightning Whelk
Source: photo by Jarek Tuszynski on Wikipedia

Wildlife

Aransas County is located at a pinch point, a location where species of migrating birds pass through on their journeys from north to south. Figure 7.4 displays North and South America Migration Patterns for many bird species in the Spring and Fall. As can be seen following the Central Flyway (purple), Rockport's location guarantees a variety of avian visitors every year. Rockport has been able to protect important ecosystems and provide a habitat for millions of migrating birds, such as geese, ducks, and songbirds.[2] The migrating birds bring in numerous tourists year-round, which helps boost the city's economy. Other major species in the region include, alligators, fiddler crabs, spoonbills, and sea turtles.[3] Spoonbills prefer the bays, marshes, and estuaries since these shallow waters allow for easy access to fish.[4] The Lightning Whelk, and the Texas State Shell has been found frequently and holds cultural significance. The shell was valued for its design and used for religious ceremonies and as a practical tool.[5]

Threatened and Endangered Species

Due to ecological changes, Rockport has experienced significant degradation in species richness and habitat. The greatest threats include power lines, illegal hunting, loss of land, and chemical spills. Knowledge about these species helps with future development plans to reduce and control possible negative impacts on vegetation and wildlife in the region.

In 1973, the U.S. government implemented a piece of key legislation, the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Under the ESA, species that are vulnerable to extinction are listed as either endangered or threatened. The purpose of the Act is to provide financial assistance to conservation efforts in order to help states maintain environmental programs. This legislation establishes a "framework to conserve and protect endangered and threatened species and their habitats" on an international and domestic scale. The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) keeps records of endangered and threatened species which include birds, insects, fish, reptiles, mammals, crustaceans, flowers, grasses, and trees. In Rockport, there are several species that are listed as endangered or threatened or proposed threatened by the FWS. The most well-known endangered species that nest in Aransas County is the Whooping Crane.

According to the ESA, endangered species are defined as species that are "in danger of extinction within the foreseeable future throughout all or a specific portion of its range," and threatened species are "those animals and plants likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a specific portion of its range." So far, the Piping Plover is the only animal in Aransas County that is listed Threatened. Animals within the County that are listed endangered include the following:[6]

- Northern Aplomado Falcon
- Ocelot
- Whooping Crane
- Leatherback Sea Turtle
- Atlantic Hawksbill Sea Turtle
- Golden-Cheeked Warbler
- Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle

Figure 7.2: Whooping Cranes
Source: texasstandard.org

Figure 7.3: Northern Aplomado Falcon
Source: allaboutbirds.org

Figure 7.4: North and South America Bird Migration Patterns
Source: Boreal Songbird Initiative

Critical Habitats and Disturbances

The ESA defines a Critical Habitat as a specific geographic area containing many features essential to the conservation of an endangered or threatened species that may require special management and protection.[7]

To minimize the influence of human activities, critical habitats and ecosystems are managed through conservation areas. The Aransas National Wildlife Refuge supports a diverse community of species, some of which are considered endangered or threatened. Migrating birds are attracted to the mild temperature and abundance of food the refuge has to offer during the winter.[8] The Wildlife refuge provides rehabilitation efforts for vulnerable species and are critical habitats for fostering the life of species. The Whooping Crane is one of North America's rarest birds; only three populations exist today. Therefore, the 22,500 acres of Refuge in Aransas County is imperative for their survival.[9]

Figure 7.5: Rockport Demo Bird Garden
Source: www.shinebeautifully.me

Figure 7.6: Rockport Wetlands
Source: www.shinebeautifully.me

Little Bay is a small, semi-enclosed estuary located in the center of Rockport and next to the city's fair grounds. This ecosystem is extremely valuable as it provides the city with flood protection, filters unwanted nutrients and contaminants from larger sources of water, provides a habitat for species and is a major nursery area for many commercially and recreationally important fish. However, there are many concerns regarding the health and vitality of the Bay, in order for it to continue to foster its intended environmental functions.

Figure 7.7: Little Bay Estuary, Rockport, Tx
Source: Aransas County Navigation District

Vegetation

Rockport is the largest city in Aransas County and falls into the Gulf Coast Prairie and Marsh region. This ecological region experiences oceanic impact from severe wind and rain. According to Texas Parks and Wildlife, the primary vegetation coverage of Rockport includes bushes and marshes, with some special vegetation and plants.[10] Short rooted plants, commonly found in this area and ecological region, can be found among the side of open waters. Table 7.1 provides a list of plants grown in this area.[11]

Figure 7.8: Rockport Demo Bird Garden & Tule Marsh East
Source: www.shinebeautifully.me

Table 7.1: Plant Species in Coastal Gulf Prairies

Trees	Wildflowers	Vines	Grasses	Wildflowers
American Beauty-berry	Beach Evening Primosa	Carolina Jessa-mine	Big Blue Stem	Prickly-Pear Cactus
American Elm	Cardinal Flower	Coral Honeysuckle	Bushy Bluestem	Spanish Dagger
Buttonbush	Coral Bean	Cross-Vine	Eastern Gamma Grass	
Eastern Red Cedar	Gulf Coast Penste-mon	May-Pop	Gulf Cordgrass	
Flame Leaf Sumac	Indian Paintbrush	Muscadine Grape	Inland Sea-oats	
Lantana	Lance-Leaf Core-opsis	Pipevine	Sugarcane Plume Grass	
Loblolly Pine	Meadow Pink	Trumpet Creeper		
Red Buckeye	Scarlet Sage			
Red Mulberry	Showy Evening Primrose			
Short-Leaf Pine	Spider Lily			
Shrubs	Turk's Cap			
Shumard Red Oak				
Southern Live Oak				
Sugarberry				
Water Oak				
Wax Myrtle				
Willow Oak				
Yaupon				

Source: Texas Parks and Wildlife, 2016[12]

Conservation Efforts

Throughout Aransas County, there are initiatives to protect and conserve these endangered and threatened species and their habitats. A prime example of Rockport's conservation effort is the work done to protect the Whooping Crane, in part, through the establishment of the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, which is the only known area in the United States that Whooping Cranes come to mate.

The Whooping Crane is a highly sought after by bird watchers due to its rarity; this species alone draws in tourists from around the nation and has created a market for Whooping Crane related tours and festivals. There is only one self-sustaining population that survives in the wild and spends the winter (November – March) on the Texas Gulf. Unfortunately, impacts from the changing climate are altering migratory patterns and increasing drought, putting the Whooping Crane's future generations in jeopardy. As of the 2017-2018 winter season, 505 Whooping Cranes were counted in the area, which is 16 more than what was recorded the previous year. The Whooping Crane is following a trend of improvements and it is these conservation efforts that will keep them from extinction.

Experiments, monitoring efforts, and management practices occur in this critical habitat to further understand the status of the species and prevent further population losses. Experiments, such as the one shown in the picture of decoys being placed on the reef, help to test the accuracy of the aerial counting method used to determine how many Whooping Cranes there are each migratory year.

Figure 7.9: Whooping Crane Decoys being placed on Oyster Reefs
Source: www.naturetourism.tamu.edu

A recently completed partnership project between Texas A&M Corpus Christi and the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuary Program (CBBEP) was Bacterial Source Tracking in Little Bay. This project was initiated in response to stakeholder concerns of elevated levels of enterococci in Little Bay. The main objectives were to conduct an analysis of historical data in the Bay, monitor enterococci concentrations for seven months, and determine probable sources of fecal pollution. The project recommended future Best Management Practice efforts to hopefully alleviate future events. More information can be found on the publication website for the CBBEP.[13] In 2012, the CBBEP also worked with Aransas County on Tule Lake wetland restoration efforts.

There are several other conservation organizations that serve Rockport and the surrounding areas; for example, Aransas Bird and Nature Club, International Crane Foundation and Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) through the University of Texas Marine Science Institute (UTMSI).

Wetlands

Wetlands located along the coast contain a rich abundance of wildlife and nutrients. The composition of this ecosystem provides a habitable place for numerous birds, fish, and amphibians, which is why wetlands are often referred to as the "cradle of life." Wetlands not only foster breeding and feeding areas for wildlife but can also help mitigate flooding. Wetlands have the natural ability to manage extensive rainfall by storing flood waters and reducing the speed of streamflow. This results in reduced peak flows, allowing for the rate and volume of flood waters to penetrate the soils and minimize inland effects as well as erosion. This process diminishes the strain of flood events on life and property. They mimic the absorption qualities of a sponge, therefore assessing the usefulness of wetlands is to measure their ability to naturally hold excess water and slowly release it.

The major types of wetlands include estuarine and marine, freshwater emergent, and freshwater ponds, as seen in Figure 7.9. However, as development increases and human activities become more prominent in the area, wetlands become more susceptible to harmful contaminants that ultimately impact the wildlife inhabiting the area and the quality of water for city use.

The economy of Rockport thrives on activities related to its wetlands; such as commercial fishing, shrimping, birdwatching, sport fishing, kayaking, and boating.[14] These activities provide an economic base for the city and influences tourism numbers. Water management programs, such as the one mentioned in the water demand section, helps to ensure the quality of water remains at healthy levels.

Watersheds and Aquifers

Underground aquifers provide the region with the potential to harvest groundwater. The aquifers recharge from rivers, lakes, and wetlands by seeping through its permeable layers.[17] Water conservation practices help fill out the aquifers artificially. High water demand, combined with extended periods of low precipitation and the inability of aquifers to recharge can lead to water depletion and, eventually, regional drought.[18] Communities often regulate the extraction and use of water resources for non-essential activities to conserve water and ensure availability. Rockport belongs to Groundwater Management Area 15, which consists of 13 counties.[19] Figure 7.10 shows the major aquifers in Texas and indicates that Rockport is part of the Gulf Coast Aquifer (denoted in yellow on the map).

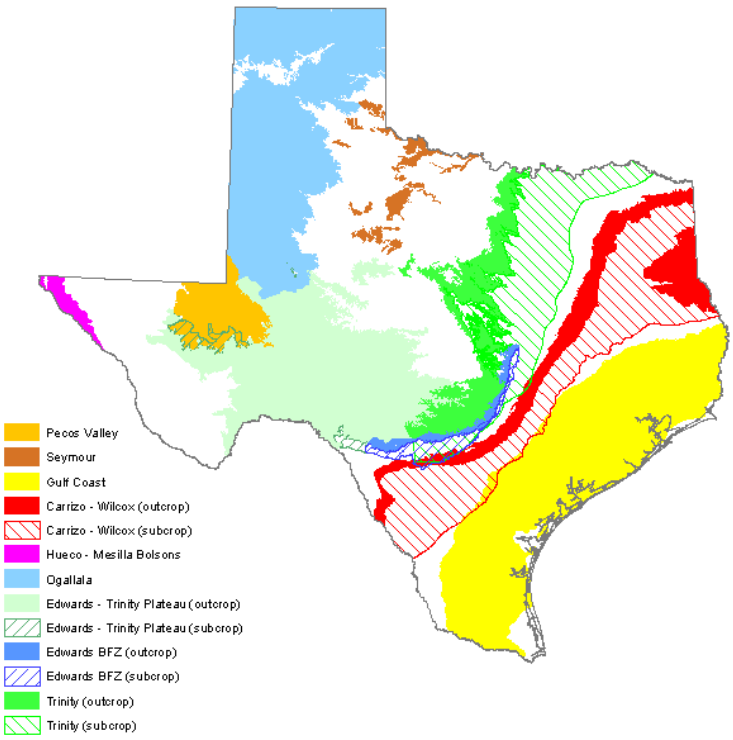

Figure 7.10: Major Aquifers of Texas
Source: Texas Water Development Board[20]

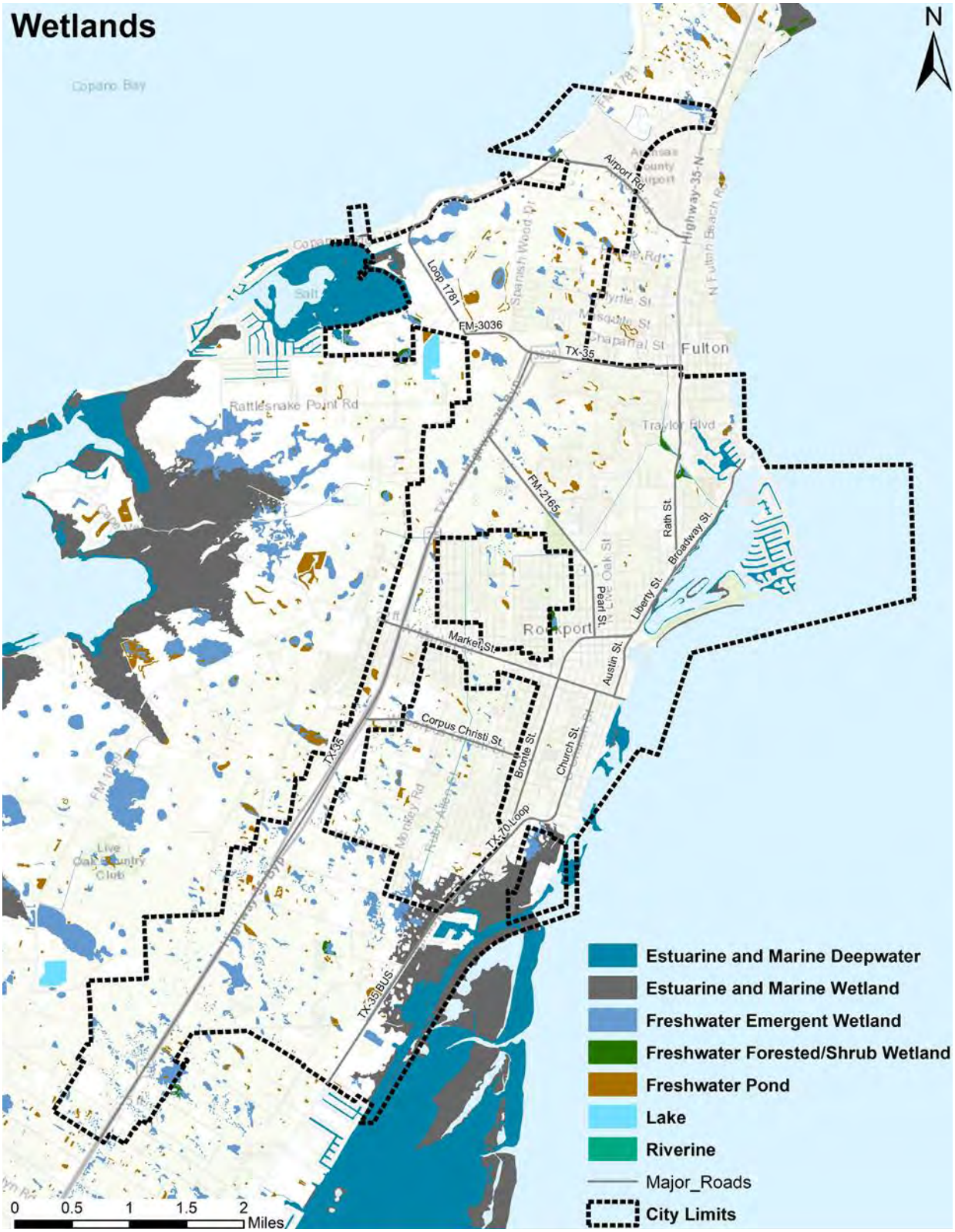

Figure 7.11: Wetland Types in Rockport, Texas
Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2018[15]

BAY EDUCATION CENTER

In 2010, the Bay Education Center (BEC), a free to the public education and outreach center, to bring awareness to the importance of wetlands and conserving natural habitats. The main purpose of the center is to highlight the ecological and economic importance of the Mission-Aransas Estuary through engaging and interactive exhibits.

The BEC is a partnership between the Aransas County Navigation District (ACND), which donated the land for the center, the City of Rockport, the Mission-Aransas NERR, the University of Texas, Marine Science Institute (UTMSI), the Texas General Land Office (GLO), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Construction of the BEC was made possible by Reserve funds received through a NOAA grant, GLO granted funds, and City funds. NOAA grants provided funding for the Visitor Center exhibits and Science On a Sphere© (SOS).

Unfortunately, The Center was damaged extensively by Hurricane Harvey and has since been closed. The Aransas County Navigation District commissioners recently approved an interlocal agreement with the UTMSI to help get the insurance money ready for repairs to begin. The agreement sets a maximum cost of $475,000 for the repairs. The Aransas County Navigation District and the University of Texas at Austin are partners in the BEC, with UT serving as the managing partner of the Mission-Aransas NERR. The BEC is set to re-open by the time the Comprehensive Plan updates are adopted.

One example of a program the BEC organized each year was the Wetlands Week for elementary students across the region. Reserve educators have presented programs for Wetlands Week at the Bay Education Center each October for the last six years. Wetlands Week was initially funded through a grant that Martha McLeod, a fifth grade science lab instructor with Fulton Learning Center, received from the Aransas County ISD Education Foundation and the support of community organizations and volunteers has allowed this valuable, annual project to continue. Additionally, the BEC is home of Bay Talks which featured lunch hour talks on Fridays about various environmental and ecosystem topics.[16]

Figure 7.12: Bay Education Center suffered damage in Hurricane Harvey
Source: missionaransas.org

Water Quality

Water quality refers to the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of water with respect to its usability for particular purposes such as drinking and recreation. Rockport and other coastal communities have access to freshwater and saltwater ecosystems. These communities rely on local aquatic ecosystem for many recreational and commercial activities such as fishing, swimming, boating, and bird watching. In order for those activities to be possible, the water quality level must be sustained. Vegetation and soil act as natural filters that remove pollutants from water, so the city focuses on maintaining the integrity of these natural flood barriers.

New development in the city and increasing amount of impervious land results in more runoff pollution affecting Little Bay. Monitoring programs have since then been conducted to try and understand the status of the Bay and its health trends over time. The Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) manages the water quality station located in Little Bay, which measures the Bay's quality based on temperature, salinity, and dissolved oxygen. The System-Wide Monitoring Program (SWMP) at the Mission-Aransas NERR is used to monitor water quality and weather indicators, biological monitoring, and mapping of Reserve habitats and watersheds. Two of their five monitoring stations are located near Rockport in Aransas Bay and Copano Bay West. Each station measures temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, depth, pH, turbidity, and chlorophyll/algal biomass. Nutrients, such as nitrates and phosphates, are monitored at the bay stations on a monthly basis and diel monthly samples are collected at the Port Aransas Ship Channel. Figure 7.14 shows the different sampling locations around Rockport.

On top of monitoring efforts, volunteers are also vital for improving the health of the ecosystem. The City of Rockport's committee for Water Quality Issues initially spearheaded an exciting new water quality monitoring project in Little Bay, Rockport, Texas. This project is designed to monitor spatial and temporal variations in salinity and turbidity, which are two of the factors known to impact seagrass growth and reproduction. Volunteers from Rockport and Port Aransas were provided training, so they can collect consistent water quality data using various types of sampling equipment around Little Bay.

The Bay itself is connected to Aransas Bay through two outlets and serves as the primary recipient of stormwater drainage for the City of Rockport from Tule Creek, at least 11 storm outfalls and runoff from the adjacent neighborhood, Key Allegro. The abundance of the seagrass community, mostly made up of Halodule wrightii, has been steadily declining. The community reached out the Mission-Aransas NERR and University of Texas Marine Science to try and find a source of this decline. Dr. Kenneth Dunton and Christopher Wilson from the University wrote up a report in 2010 of their findings and can be found on the Mission-Aransas NERR website.

The availability of water and its quality largely depends on the naturally occurring systems in the region, e.g., the watersheds and aquifers.[21] The bodies of surface water belonging to watershed regions all converge and drain to one outlet.[22] Along the coast, the rivers and streams converge into coastal basins made up of estuaries and bays. Rockport is in the Copano Bay Watershed and the Aransas Bay Watershed, while also receiving the influence of several other watersheds around it.

The Texas Water Development Board publishes the estimated water demand for all the counties and cities in Texas. Figure 7.13 illustrates the Municipal Water Demand projections from 2020-2070 for Rockport.

Rockport's population is expected to grow at a slow rate, therefore the supply of water tends to dwindle. The water demand provided by the Texas Water Development Board highlights this projection trend. Even though the city is not expecting exponential growth, there is still a demand for well-managed water resources. Rockport's treated water supply comes from the San Patricio Municipal Water District (SPMWD), who provides water to community water systems and other industrial customers.[23] The city's contract with SPMWD requires the city to follow SPMWD's plan.[24]

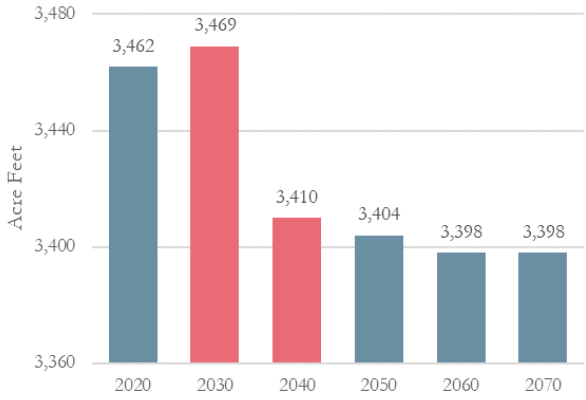

Figure 7.13: Water Demand in Rockport, Texas
Source: Texas Water Development Board, 2018[25]

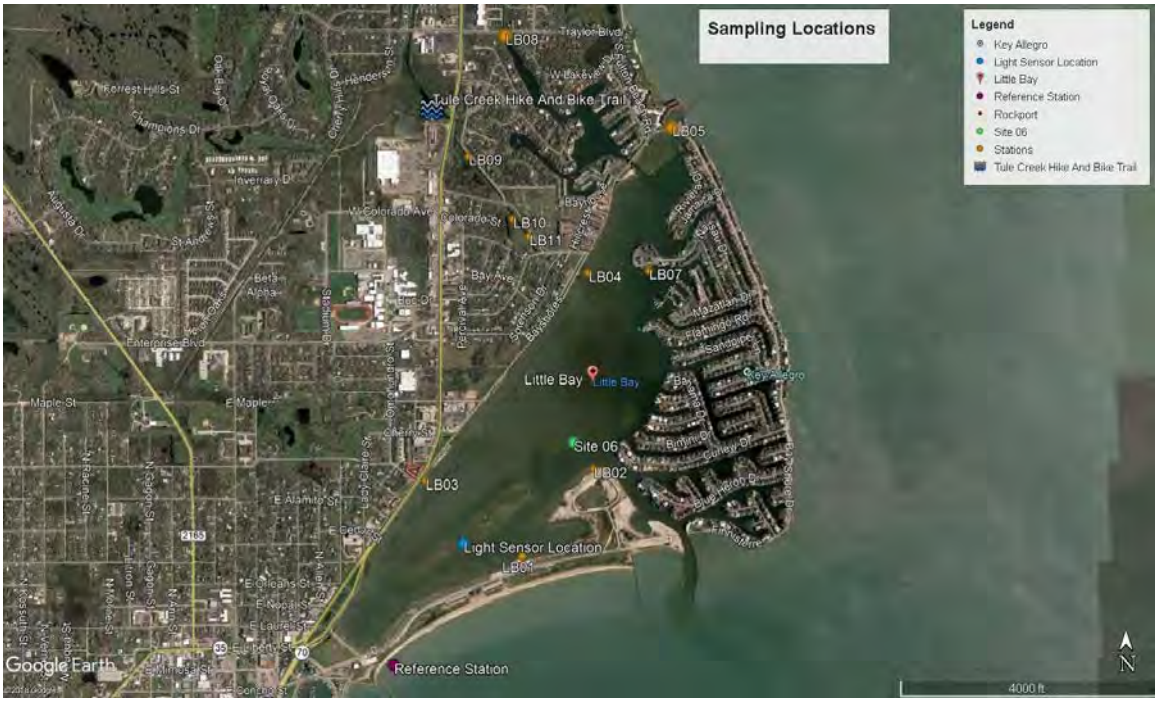

Figure 7.14: Sampling locations around Tule Creek and Little Bay
Source: Google Earth

Aransas County is particularly susceptible to a wide range of natural hazards: floods, hurricanes, drought, extreme heat, lightening, coastal erosion, hailstorms, tornadoes, and wildfires.

Not only are the homes and businesses of the citizens at risk, but also the habitats of animals. Preservation of the soil and floodplains protect the city from floods and will play an enormous role in how the city protects itself in the future. The following section highlights the breadth of hazards that affect Rockport, the different organizations that can provide assistance, and strategies for mitigation.

Hurricanes and Tropical Storms

Hurricanes and tropical storms are dangerous weather systems that create strong winds, storm surges, and large amounts of rain in a relatively short time span. In recent years, NOAA meteorologists have stated that storms are becoming more intense and are causing more extreme destruction.[26]

The Aransas County Hazard Mitigation Plan includes a map that shows the FEMA Wind Zones. Aransas County is in Wind Zone III region, which can have maximum winds of 200 mph. The majority of storms that have come within 15 miles of Rockport have been weakening storms of Category 3 or lower, with the exception of Hurricane Harvey. The most common types of storms to hit the city are tropical storms, tropical depressions, and Category 1 Hurricanes.[27] Since 1950, there has been a total of 70 tropical systems to make landfall within a 100 mile radius of the City of Rockport.[28]

The best course of action for citizens to protect their health is to evacuate. In most cases, strong infrastructure will be imperative, not only for safety, but also to avoid significant economic losses and diminishing housing infrastructure for citizens. The weakest points on a building are often the roof, windows, and entry ways. Once the wind has damaged these components, it can also drive rain into the building, causing further destruction.

Figure 7.17 displays the main areas in Rockport that were damaged by flood waters from the hurricane. The majority of the affected area is on the northwest side of the peninsula due to the arms of the hurricane pushing storm surge from the Gulf into Copano Bay. The west side of the peninsula has a lower elevation than the east side, so the impact of flooding was higher.

The evacuation routes for Rockport citizens are limited to two main routes. For Hurricane Evacuation Routes, TxDOT has designated Highway 188 (West-Bound) and Highway 35 (North-Bound). There are no hurricane shelters in the City of Rockport or Aransas County. When a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico is determined to impact the area, the city and County Emergency Operations Center will likely announce a mandatory evacuation procedure.

Figure 7.16 TxDOT Hurricane Route Sign
Source: www.txdot.gov

Figure 7.17: Damaged Structures from Hurricane Harvery Source: New York Times, 2017[135]

Coastal Erosion

Coastal erosion is an increasing threat to many cities around the world, but Rockport in particular is facing more direct exposure to the Gulf of Mexico due to tropical systems eroding the barrier islands that protect the mainland. Both Rockport and Fulton are highly vulnerable to coastal erosion and the peninsula is more likely to experience more erosion along the bay's coast-line in the future, specifically in the areas of Broadway, Water Street, and Fulton Beach Road.

The northwest side of the peninsula has many wetlands, marshes, and critical habitats as stated in the previous section. The city and surround-ing area has a large migratory bird population that can potentially be impacted. Table 7.2 identifies the types and causes of coastal erosion.

Table 7.2: Coastal Erosion Causes and Examples

Natural Impacts	
Agent	**Examples**
Erosion	Waves/Currents Storms Landslides
Sediment Re-duction	Climate Change Stream Avulsion Source Depletion
Submergence	Land Subsidence Sea-level Rise
Wetland Deteri-oration	Herbivory Freezes Fires Saltwater Intrusion
Human Impacts	
Agent	**Examples**
Transportation	Boat Wakes Altered Water Circulation
Coastal Construction	Sediment Deprivation (Bluff Retention) Coastal Structures (Jetties, Groins, Seawalls)
River Modification	Control and Diversion (Dams, Levees)
Fluid Extraction	Water, Oil, Gas, Sulfur
Climate Alteration	Global Warming and Ocean Expansion Increased Frequency and Storm Intensity
Excavation	Dredging (Canals, Pipelines, Drainage) Mineral Extraction (Sand, Shell, Heavy Mines)
Wetland De-struction	Pollutant Discharge Traffic Failed Reclamation Burning

Source: Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan - Section 11 Page 2.

Sea Level Rise and Subsidence

The Texas coast is experiencing a high rate of relative sea level rise caused by both vertical sub-sidence and eustatic sea level rise. Subsidence can be attributed to many different factors such as land compaction, aquifer drawdown, and de-clining fluid pressures in subsurface hydrocar-bon reservoirs.[26] The contributions to sea level rise range from a warming climate, leading to a warming and expanding ocean as well as melt-ing ice caps. It is understood across the country that all coastal communities should consider the future of their coastlines when contemplating new development and mitigating for natural disasters.

Floods

In recent years, localized flooding has become a significant hazard for communities like Rock-port.[31] From 1997 – 2017, there were a total of 21 flash floods reported in Rockport. The total amount of property damages that have accrued over the course of the past 20 years is $1,850,000.[32]

Other Common Hazards

Drought, extreme heat, tornadoes, hailstorms, wildfires, winter storms, and earthquakes are other types of hazards that can impact Rockport's environment. These hazards are listed in the Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan as medium to low risk events.[33] All of these hazards have the potential to affect Rockport; however, looking at the historical data, they are not as likely to affect the city on an annual basis.

For more information about these hazards please refer to the Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan dives into more detail about all the hazards mentioned including; what they are, where they can occur, the potential vulnerable populations, and economic impacts they might endure.[34]

Disaster Recovery Organizations

Within and around Aransas County there are several organizations that provide assistance to residents and businesses that have been impacted by natural disasters. Some of the organizations include:

All Hands and Hearts - Through volunteer and community engagement, this group works to help families recover from natural disasters. The group commits to working in a given area for three years. They opened two programs in Texas after Hurricane Harvey: one in Houston and one in the Coastal Bend. The volunteers that comprise this group come from all over the region, and, in the event of a disaster, they have been able to draw volunteer groups from all over the country. In addition to helping rebuild, they have training programs for people who are interested in construction.

Coastal Bend Disaster Recovery Group (CB-DRG) - This group was established in 2015 as a volunteer-based coalition to help areas and residents within the Coastal Bend counties (Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Duval, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Live Oak, Nueces, Refugio and San Patricio). The organization focuses on coordinating long-term disaster recovery through repairing and rebuilding homes, fundraising and raising awareness for current and future disasters.

In addition to these three non-governmental organizations, there are several state-level and federal organizations that can provide financial assistance and mitigation planning assistance to Texas communities and individual homeowners.

Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) - is administered by the Texas General Land Office (GLO), but the funding comes from the CDBG-DR. The GLO creates a statewide action plan after a disaster has been declared, accepts public comment on the plan and then HUD must approve the plan. CDBG-DR funds and projects generally support fair and affordable housing, infrastructure upgrades and economic development. Rockport and the surrounding area received DBG-DR funds for several projects, outlined in the Aransas County Long Term Recovery Report, after Hurricane Harvey.

Habitat for Humanity - Habitat for Humanity has had a presence in Aransas County for 17 years. They are 100% volunteer run with the exception of the Executive Director that was recently brought on with funding from a 3-year grant. The group's involvement in disaster recovery developed in the last 10 years and operates with 100% donations to help residents get into and own a home. Families and individuals in need of affordable housing can apply for homeownership and, depending on their eligibility, may be selected to participate through a Sweat Equity Program.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) - is organized by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) but is locally administered by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). Hazard Mitigation in theory is implemented before a disaster, in order to reduce the risk from hazards. However, communities can receive recovery funding if they have developed a Hazard Mitigation Plan. Rockport is included in the Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Hazard mitigation projects can be structural (e.g., levees and floodwalls) o r non-structural (e.g., protecting wetlands and land use planning).

Rebuild Texas Fund (RTF) - The Rebuild Texas Fund is a collaborative project from the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation and the OneStar Foundation, with the support of thousands of corporate and individual donors. RTF helps in the rebuilding and restoration of disaster affected cities in Texas.The funds will be fully allocated by July 2019. Rockport is using RTF to construct the Memorial Park Fitness Courts with a total project amount of $149,451.

Small Business Administration (SBA) Recovery Loan - After Aransas County was presidentially declared a "disaster area" from Hurricane Harvey, many impacted small businesses and homeowners may have become eligible for SBA loans. If their insurance policies and assistance from FEMA did not cover everything, they could apply for this loan to rebuild and recover from physical damage and economic losses.

Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) - provides financial, technical and planning assistance to communities that participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. Examples of projects are: early warning systems, relocating residents, elevating buildings and other structural flood mitigation measures. Th e TW DB website also has tips for homeowners before, during and after disasters.

Texas Windstorm Insurance Association (TWIA) - TWIA provides essential property insurance policies and services to eligible Texas properties in the gulf-coast area for windstorm and hail storm events.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Residents of Rockport aspire to maintain the city's unique environment and small-town atmosphere. The community values the protection of natural resources and wildlife for the purposes of overall conservation efforts and protection from natural disasters. Residents wish to see the extension of pathways and connections to green spaces, so that those areas can be more easily accessed and enjoyed but individuals of all socio-economic status and physical ability. Due to Rockport location on the coast and its' risk for hurricanes and floods, it is important to the community that coastal barrier protection is increased and wetlands are preserved for flood mitigation purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NATURAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION

Public feedback highlighted the need for the city to work on improving connectivity of open spaces to expand wildlife corridors and conserve natural habitats. The city should encourage public participation in the Texas Wildscapes certification program offered by the TPWD. This program restores and conserves habitats by providing expertise on the design and maintenance of habitable land for wildlife and threatened species. Additionally, the city should look into options to amend the zoning ordinance to include a conservation overlay, or other land use regulations to ensure critical habitats are protected.

To ensure the Whooping Crane's survival, wildlife protection areas are necessary. The 22,500 acres of the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge acts as a rehabilitation ground for vulnerable species and is considered a critical habitat. A critical habitat is an area that is essential for the conservation of a species and requires special management and protection. To help with the conservation and protection of Whooping Cranes, management and monitoring practices are therefore needed to combat this issue. Additionally, the city should continue working with organizations such as the Aransas Bird and Nature Club and International Crane Foundation to identify critical habitats and ecological corridors to be conserved and maintained.

The protection of natural resources, habitats, trees and plants is just as important to the city as the is preservation of animals. The Tree Ordinance needs to be reviewed and revised to ensure that it is meeting its intended goals. It should include a goal for percentage cover of canopy and language about protecting understory vegetation. The City of Rockport is focused on the protection of certain trees which add to the character and charm of the city. The Code of Ordinances Section 106-4 defines protected trees as any tree that is on private or public property and has a trunk that is six inches (18.75-inch circumference) or larger measured at Diameter at Breast Height (DBH). Clear regulations and expectations for the preservation of trees within Rockport are outlined in the city's Code of Ordinances.

PLAN INTEGRATION HDZO

TREE REQUIREMENT

Plan recommendation on the revision of the Tree Ordinance is aligned with Policy 8.2.1 street tree requirements and 8.2.5 turf and groundcover of the HDZO.

PLAN INTEGRATION RPAT

TREE MASTER PLAN AND GI PLAN

Develop a Tree Master Plan and GI Plan to use as a framework to help guide tree planting within public and private property. Provide strategic tree plantings along Austin Street, at key intersections, on vacant lots, and along the streetscape to provide shade, visual appeal, and help capture stormwater.

In addition to the protection of critical habitats, a wetland preservation plan throughout the city, especially along the bypass, could be encouraged and implemented by Environmental Services of the Public Works Department. A staff member should be designated to oversee the implementation of the plan and organize maintenance efforts with involved stakeholders. The city should create long term strategies and conservation tools such as: a conservation overlay zone, transfer and purchase of development rights, wetland banking, revitalization and restoration incentive programs. An implementation table of outlined strategies and tools should be used to organize funding sources and uphold accountability aspect.

WINDSWEPT LIVE OAK TREES

Windswept Live Oak trees are protected under the Code of Ordinances due to their uniqueness to the city. Any live Oak Tree is considered "windswept" when there is a definite south-east to north-west lean because of Rockport's southeasterly winds. These trees add to the character and beauty of the city, so specific focus and protection is needed. Such trees are not to be removed without permission from the Tree and Landscape Committee. This is of utmost importance during development and construction as clear-cutting of land or removal of trees is not allowed without specific authorization. If authorization is given to remove a tree, one of equal or greater height is to be planted as a replacement. The goal for this is to maintain the natural resources and character of the city. Another thing for the city to consider is including language about protecting understory plants in order to protect the trunk of the tree and maintain biodiversity. The concrete language in the Tree Ordinance is very important for the protection of trees that are not designated for removal, especially those Windswept Live Oaks, during development.

Figure 7.18: Windswept Oaks
Picture Courtesy: Kate de Gennaro

All bay systems within Rockport need to be monitored and protected from runoff pollution and unwanted nutrients that would otherwise disturb the ecosystems natural state. Continue to support the efforts of the Mission-Aransas NERR's program Little Bay Report Card to monitor and compare water quality in Little Bay. The Mission-Aransas NERR wanted to continue to monitor the bay and compare its health with other bays so they established a report card aspect to measure water quality through temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, turbidity and chlorophyll. The measurements are compared with Aransas Bay as a control as it is generally regarded as a "healthy" bay with good water quality and healthy habitats. Educational seminars and volunteer programs that cover techniques to reduce impact on water quality, review signs of poor water quality and steps to prevent illness should be provided. The city needs to ensure compliance with governmental regulations on wastewater disposal and runoff contaminants and implement an enforcement program to maintain healthy water quality.

To enhance the management of flood waters and quality of water, the city should increase the use of green infrastructure practices throughout the city. Rockport should encourage public-private partnerships to help with funding sources, the design and functionality of projects, as well as implementation. The Housing and Urban Development Federal Department's Community Development Block grant could also be a source of funding for green infrastructure projects. Building incentives can be provided to encourage developers to incorporate low impact design techniques throughout their projects and consider using strategies to manage rainwater onsite to reduce negative side effects of runoff. Developers should also be incentivized to promote the connection of identified ecological corridors and avoid building in those areas.

Water retention methods need to be supported and managed throughout the city. The planning team recommends that Rockport amends the code of ordinances to include a land use tool, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), to ensure wetlands ability to function and retain water. Sending areas should be established and outlined in the conservation management plan in places that have been identified as environmentally sensitive areas, critical habitats and wetlands providing flood mitigation functions. The lands need to be managed and protected properly so that the environmentally sensitive areas are preserved. The city needs to utilize tools such as a conservation easement or mitigation banking program so that conservation goals are achieved.

Directly coordinate with the Aransas County Navigation District to come up with strategies to strengthen the coastal shoreline to protect Rockport's residents and infrastructure from powerful storm surge. Coastal erosion can be mitigated through the construction of an artificial reef and marsh vegetation plantings; both will provide protection, filtration services and stabilization. Strengthening the coastal shoreline will protect Rockport's residents and infrastructure from powerful storm surge.

The Fulton Beach Road Project is a good model for future shoreline stabilization projects in Rockport. The city should continue striving to protect their shores by reaching out to nonprofits and advocacy groups for voluntary aid to help construct the artificial reef. Another example to use in the design and implementation of the erosion protection projects is the project along Shell Ridge Road, which is being funded by FEMA 404 mitigation dollars. The city should continue reaching out to nonprofits and advocacy groups for voluntary aid. Funding for construction and implementation can come from sources such as the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant, the Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant Program for Disaster Recovery, and RESTORE Act Buckets. Regular community meetings conducted by local emergency managers and mitigation experts need to be held regularly to cover disaster preparedness and recovery efforts. The city's media methods and other marketing tools should be utilized and enhanced to promote educational meetings, seminars, tool sets etc. and encourage citizen engagement and outreach.

WETLAND MITIGATION

Wetland Mitigation is the practice of offsetting unavoidable impacts to aquatic resources at one site by restoring and/or enhancing wetlands on another site in the same or adjacent watershed.[35] The Wetland Mitigation Banking Program came out of the 2014 Farm Bill and can be a great strategy for conserving essential habitat. This approach uses a market-based system to restore/enhance wetlands in one place to compensate for unavoidable impacts to wetlands in another place. The process requires the replacement of all lost wetland functions, values and acres. Wetland Banking has been used in Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, North & South Dakota and Ohio.[36]

MHMP

PLAN INTEGRATION

MITIGATION

Evaluate best mitigation solution (i.e. buyouts, reconstruction) for repetitive loss properties. Evaluate list of repetitive loss properties for opportunities to partner with property owners regarding potential mitigation actions.

LIVING SHORELINE: REEFS IN LITTLE BAY

The Aransas County Navigation District acquired a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers in July of 2012 to construct a living shoreline in Little Bay. The project consisted of 28 constructed reefs using a crushed concrete base and reclaimed oyster shells on top for new oysters to attach to. The reefs occupied 4.3 acres and extends 1.2 miles along the western shoreline of the bay. The construction of the reefs wrapped up in September 2015 and a quantitative survey was conducted on the reefs productivity in November 2017, right after Harvey. The goal of the project was to establish a population of five oysters per square foot of reef surface. When the team went back in November 2017 it was found that the average oyster population was 12 live oysters per square foot and ranged in size from one to six inches. The survey showed that there was not a significant impact on the reef from Hurricane Harvey, most likely due to the direction of the prevailing winds and lack of storm surge on the gulf side.

Figure 7.19: Little Bay Oyster reef, marsh restoration project
Picture Courtesy: Mike Probst

Community awareness and preparedness is very important in regard to natural disasters. Local advocacy groups and non-profit organizations can help to improve community education. Rockport should work with the official long-term disaster recovery operator in the region, the Coastal Bend Disaster Recovery Group, to provide community workshops. Meetings should be considerate of residents' other obligations, so that everyone has the ability to attend. Social media outlets and other marketing tools should be used to promote educational meetings, seminars, tool sets etc. and encourage citizen engagement and outreach.

In the event of new development, every effort should be made to avoid developing in flood-prone areas and within floodplains. When left undeveloped these regions can provide priceless benefits that protect life and property. Along with this the city should implement a limit on impervious surfaces. They can do this by making use of existing infrastructure and redevelop infill sites or greyfields.

Rockport recently implemented FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) which should continue to be utilized by residents and business owners. City officials should be in coordination with CRS Specialists, so they can assist community officials with the implementation of activities that earn premium discounts. CRS accreditation as determined by FEMA and the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) should be maintained. The city should examine new CRS activities frequently to add to the existing program. Additionally, the planning team suggests that the city evaluate the best mitigation solution (i.e. buyouts, reconstruction, etc.) for repetitive loss properties. Further, the city should evaluate a list of repetitive loss properties for opportunities to partner with property owners regarding potential mitigation actions.

MAXIMIZE BENEFITS OF ECOTOURISM INDUSTRY

The planning team encourages the protection of assets related to ecotourism and the assistance of businesses and tourist attractions to evaluate ecological footprint. Rockport should work with the chamber of commerce and environmental groups to educate local businesses on the importance of environmentally-friendly practices, such as recycling, water and energy conservation, and reducing the use of plastics.

Environmental education programs are an important part of the protection of the environment while encouraging a thriving ecotourism industry. The city needs to enhance community education programs for ecologically conscious tourism and lifestyles.

Because of Rockport's geography and topography, it is often a destination for vacationers. The city has a thriving ecotourism industry due to its many offerings of outdoor recreation. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people and involves interpretation and education."[29] The goal of ecotourism is to maximize environmental and economic benefits while minimizing ecological damage and disruption.

Texas Parks and Wildlife has a specific focus on nature-based tourism. Nature-based tourism comes in many forms. Whether it is kayaking through canals and marshes or biking and walking through nature trails and wildlife reserves, tourists can experience nature through low-impact, ecologically sound activities.

In Rockport there are many environmentally conscious tours that visitors and locals alike can enjoy. Rockport Kayak, for example, offers Kayak eco-tours where guests can get an up-close-and-personal view of many different marine animals without disturbing their habitats. Aransas Pathways was created out of a desire to maintain natural areas around the county and encourage residents and visitors to experience all that Rockport and Fulton have to offer from birding and historical tours to kayaking and hiking. They have continually invested in clean-up efforts and seek funding to expand and connect the existing trail network. The city should continue working with Aransas Pathways to maintain the natural environment.The key to a successful ecotourism industry and an environmentally sustainable community is education. By educating the community on conservation through raising awareness, communities can reduce the impact of tourism on their local ecosystem and increase environmental and economic benefits.

Flood-related education in coastal communities is becoming increasingly important. For coastal cities like Rockport, it is especially important to educate the community on the causes of flooding and the impact individuals have on the environment with the goal of helping them make environmentally conscious decisions. An environmentally-minded community and flourishing ecotourism industry helps protect the ecosystem which, in turn, protects the community from floods.

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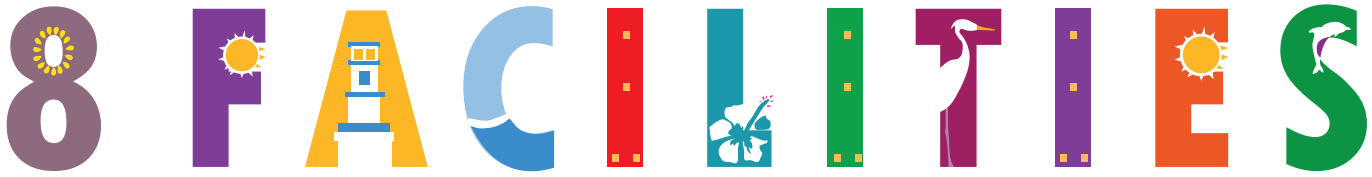
8 FACILITIES

OVERVIEW

The City of Rockport aims to maintain excellent quality of life by providing for residents' and visitors' basic needs, recreational areas, and a safe environment. As the city grows and attracts new residents and businesses, the services and facilities will play a major part in the success and further development of Rockport. This chapter provides an inventory of the current community and governmental facilities.

The existing facilities are followed by in-depth recommendations for the existing and future community facility demands through the promotion and preservation of the historic resources and cultural identity of the city.

CONDITIONS BEFORE THE STORM

SCHOOLS

Aransas County Independent School District serves five communities including Rockport and consists of 5 public schools and one private school. Public schools include Rockport-Fulton High School, Rockport-Fulton Middle School, Fulton Learning Center, Little Bay Primary School, and Live Oak Learning Center. All schools in Rockport, except Little Bay Primary School and Live Oak 1-3 Learning Center, met the standards of Texas Education Agency for Accountability Rating in 2017.[1]

The private and learning centers in Rockport include:

- Sacred Heart Elementary School: Pre-Kinder, Kindergarten, and First through fifth grades. The school was founded in 1981 and has a total body of 153 students.
- All Children Begin Learning in a Christian Environment (ABC) Learning Center: The non-profit corporation organized in 1976 for the purpose of providing educational programs for preschool age children within a Christian environment in preparation for public/private school.

Table 8.1 shows Rockport public schools by student enrollment and Accountability Rating in 2017 and Figure 8.2 shows the location of the public and private schools in Rockport.

There are two Community Development Institute (CDI) Head Start locations within the City of Rockport. Head Start is a federal program that provides tools to enhance social, emotional, language and literacy development to low-income children up to the age of five. The CDI Head Start Rockport serves low- income disadvantaged, pre-school children and their families.[2] There are two CDI Head Start Rockport locations within the City of Rockport.

The Aransas County ISD Education Foundation is a nonprofit organization[3] committed to advancing education excellence in Aransas County, including the schools located within Rockport city limits.[4] The foundation has supported over $1 million in funds to the Rockport community through scholarships, grants, and an endowment.[5] The funds are used to enhance the educational programs in campuses throughout the county. This program has been an asset to the community's education and has assisted in making Aransas County the progressive educational leader within the Coastal Bend.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

It is important that all residents have convenient access to health clinics, acute care, and emergency services. The following are the regional and local medical services that are available to Rockport residents. Prior to the hurricane, Allegiance Ambulance, Code3ER, Rockport Urgent Care Center, and Care Regional Medical Center in Aransas Pass provided emergency and urgent care for Aransas County.

Table 8.1 Public Schools by Student Enrollment and Accountability Rating in Rockport, TX, 2017

School Name	Grade Span	Students	Accountability Rating 2017
Little Bay Primary School	EE-PK	343	Improvement Required
Live Oak 1-3 Learning Center	1-3	788	Improvement Required
Fulton 4-5 Learning Center	4-5	492	Met Standard
Rockport- Fulton Middle School	6-8	777	Met Standard
Rockport-Fulton High School	9-12	987	Met Standard

Source: Texas Education Agency, Accountability Rating, 2017

Figure 8.1: Rockport Public Schools

Regional Medical Services

Christus Spohn Health System provides medical services throughout the Coastal Bend. The sys-tem consists of six hospital campuses, six family health centers, and a variety of other services. Christus Spohn does not have any facilities in Rockport; however, there is one Family Medi-cine location in Portland.

Care Regional Medical Center is located in Aransas Pass and provides a variety of emer-gency to specialty services. It has 75 beds, 80 physicians, and 200 employees. This structure serviced the entire peninsula, about 90,000 peo-ple,[7] but was severely damaged in the storm and has since been closed with no concrete plans for reopening. This has left a significant void in the community further exacerbating poor access to health care services.

The Coastal Plains Community MHMR is lo-cated in Portland, Texas about 20 miles south of Rockport. The facility provides mental health services and programs for those with intellec-tual and developmental disabilities. There are two mental health clinics in Rockport, Aransas County Mental Health Clinic and the Rockport Clinic Youth and Family Service Center.

Allegiance Ambulance provides three vehicles for EMS and 911 calls in Aransas County.

Rockport Medical Services

Rockport Urgent Care is managed by Twin Fountains Medical Center. In addition to ur-gent care, it offers basic services such as physi-cals, x-rays, pediatrics, and vaccinations/immu-nizations. The center closed indefinitely on May 29, 2019.

Rockport has three facilities that serve as nursing homes, adult day care centers, and rehabilitation units: Gulf Pointe Plaza, Rockport Coastal Care Center Inc., and Oak Crest Nursing Center.

Four companies provide hospice and home health services: AIM Hospice, Cornerstone Home Health, Harbor Hospice, and Sea Crest Home Health. Table 8.2 shows medical facilities available in Rockport.

GOVERNMENTAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Governmental facilities in the City of Rockport include the city hall, which, as of the completion of this Comprehensive Plan, has been demolished, Rockport Service Center, a public library, Aransas County Appraisal District and the county courthouse. In 1956, the Woman's Club of Aransas County established the Aransas Public Library. Before Hurricane Harvey, Aransas County Courthouse was located in the south region of Rockport since 1956.[8]

After Hurricane Harvey, some government facilities were left in a bad shape and had to relocate. Currently the courthouse is located in a strip mall at the corner of Henderson St. and Highway 35, but construction for the new location is underway on or within a short distance of where the old courthouse stood. This new location will be known as The Downtown Anchor Project and will soon be home to the courthouse and city hall complex. The Anchor Project is a joint venture between the City of Rockport and Aransas County and it is a major step toward recovery and reconstruction of the government facilities that were lost to the hurricane. The new facility will include the Aransas County Courthouse, Rockport City Hall, and public meeting spaces. The estimated cost of the project is around $16.4 million for the county and $8.4 million for the city.

In addition to the devastation of the courthouse many other government facilities experienced damage and a slow down in services. The Aransas County Appraisal District and Rockport City Hall also sustained damage. Rockport Post Offices took a hit and operated with reduced services following the storm.

Table 8.2: Rockport Medical Facilities

Medical Facilities	Type
Rockport Urgent Care	Emergency care facilties
Coastal Medical Clinic	Medical clinic and lab
Medical Beaches	Medical clinic and lab
Corpus Christi Heart Clinic	Rockport Medical Clinic
MCCI Medical Gulf Side	Medical Clinic
Health Care Professional Equipment Services	Medical Clinic
Liugao Health	Medical Clinic
Rockport Physical Medicine PA	Medical Clinic
Premier Sleep Disorder Center	Medical Clinic
Rockport Pediatrics	Medical Clinic
Diabetes Cardiovascular of Rockport, PLCC	Medical Office
Humpal Physical Therapy	Physical Therapists
Interna Medicine Associates	Hospitalist
Live Oak Family Medicine	Primary/Family Medical Clinic

To keep its residents safe, the city has a police department and fire department that is comprised of four fire stations. The Rockport Volunteer Fire Department is a nonprofit organization that serves Rockport and consists of four fire stations. Since 1855, the Fire Department has served as an organization independent from the City of Rockport; however, the department receives annual funding through the city's "General Fund." The stations comply with the Texas Commission on Fire Safety Protection and financial procedures. The organization is provided funding through the City of Rockport's General Fund, Aransas County, and the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assessment Program.

The organization is made up of approximately 50 volunteers who do an impressive job with providing aid for the community. The city encourages residents to volunteer if they are willing and able to go through the mandatory training and assist this organization.

The City of Rockport adopted the 2018 edition of the International Fire Code, which prohib-its the burning of brush, trash, or other rubbish within the city limits without the expressed per-mission of the Fire Marshal.

The R ockport P olice D epartment c onducts a variety of monitoring activities throughout the community including motor, tactical bike patrols and water safety. The department includes a "Criminal Investigation Division" which reviews and investigates reports of felony and misdemeanor criminal acts. This department also prepares for cases for prosecution with the U.S. District, County and City Attorneys' offices. Rockport's critical facilities can be seen in Figure 8.2.

Figure 8.2: Map of Critical Facilities in Rockport, TX

WATER, WASTEWATER, AND PUBLIC WORKS

Rockport's Public Works department is in charge of maintaining the streets, infrastructure, drainage, natural gas, environmental services, building maintenance, and water storage and distribution. The San Patricio Municipal Water District (SPMWD) was created in 1951 by the Texas Legislature. San Patricio purchases and treats untreated water from the City of Corpus Christi. The City of Rockport then purchases this water supply from the SPMWD.[9] The Rockport Public Works Water Storage and Distribution Department services maintains over 9,000 water connections and over 100 miles of waterlines.[10] The department maintains two pump stations, four ground water storage tanks, one wastewater treatment plant, and three elevated tower storage tanks.

The wastewater collection and treatment department maintains over 4,000 sanitary sewer connections and over 60 miles of sanitary sewer lines. The department performs daily inspections, cleaning, and maintenance of 40 sanitary sewer lift stations.[11]

The City of Rockport has a Master Drainage Plan that includes a prioritized list of drainage improvement projects. Following Hurricanes Ike and Dolly, the city received $2 million dollars in disaster relief funds to complete two of the Master Drainage Plan projects that helped to ensure water is flushed offshore rather than being allowed to sit in developed areas.[12] After Hurricane Harvey, Aransas County completed a Long Term Recovery Plan with assistance from Texas Sea Grant and prioritized a number of drainage improvement projects to alleviate flooding in different regions of the County.

PARKS

Rockport has twelve parks totaling an area of about 200 acres which includes (Figure 8.3):

- Publicly-owned local, state, and national parks
- School parks with a joint-use agreement with the local government
- Privately-owned parks managed for full public use.

The City of Rockport maintains several city parks, school parks, and sport fields. The Community Aquatic Park is collectively funded by the City of Rockport, Town of Fulton, and Aransas County. The Aquatic Park consists of a skate park, a multipurpose, a competition, and a recreational pool that are accessible year-round. The pools offers eight lanes in a 25-yard pool with a diving area, a whale-shaped children's pool with slides and a bathhouse. Adjacent to the Aquatic Park is a skate park, playground, and two nature trails.

Memorial Park is Rockport's largest park totaling over 100 acres, including recreational facilities, athletic fields, exercise stations, birding sites, a dog park, and picnic facilities. Additionally, the Park includes 1.65 miles of paved Hike and Bike trails and a ¾ mile Nature trail with interpretive signs and rest benches.[13]

Recently, the Memorial Park Ball Fields underwent renovations after the hurricane destroyed the old playing fields. The renovations concluded in March 2019. The city continues to push efforts to better the community and ensure allocation of resources from the city Annual Budget.

Figure 8.3: Existing Parks, Schools, and Facilities in Rockport, TX
Source: City of Rockport

Other city parks include the Tule Creek Hike and Bike Trail, Compass Rose Park, Zachary Taylor Arboretum Park, Mathis Park, Bent Oaks Rookery Park, Spencer Park, Magnolia Park, Tule Park, Pride Park, Wetland Pod/Demo Garden, and Water Street Hike and Bike Trail.

Rockport Beach is a major attraction for residents and tourists alike. The land adjacent to Aransas Bay offers a lot of activities for people to enjoy such as fishing, birding, a pavilion that can be rented out and a 800' fishing pier to name a few.

Aransas County and the Cities of Rockport and Fulton have many unique and beautiful natural resources anyone can enjoy. Aransas Pathways works to maintain the natural environment and provides opportunities for birding, tours, kayaking, and hiking.

Goose Island State Park is located north of the city near the community of Lamar and comprises of an island and mainland park containing some of the oldest trees in the region. Texas Parks and Wildlife maintain the park and, though they do not recommend swimming due to the terrain, concrete bulkhead and oyster reef restoration activity, there are plenty of ways to enjoy the space including hiking, camping, fishing, boating and birding. The state park is tucked away in a neighborhood but still comprises of 101 campsites with water and electricity, restroom and shower facilities, a 1,620-foot long fishing pier, a regular boat launch, a kayak/canoe launch and a fish cleaning station.[14]

Figure 8.4: Memorial Park
Source: www.tripadvisor.com

Figure 8.5: Memorial Park trails
Source: www.tripadvisor.com

Figure 8.6: Compass Rose Park
Source: www.rockport-fulton.org

Figure 8.7: Zachary Taylor Arboretum Park
Source: www.tripadvisor.com

Rockport Cultural Arts District

Located in Downtown Rockport, the Cultural Arts District is home to many galleries, restaurants and shops that reflect the culture and values of the city. The purpose of this area is not only to enhance the economy of Rockport, but also enhance public spaces and to preserve and encourage cultural understanding and appreciation.

Throughout the year, residents and visitors can count on a full schedule of cultural and arts events in and around the Cultural Arts District, from art camps for kids to open markets, and festivals.

The Rockport Center for the Arts (RCA)

The Center is a hub for the Arts in the beautiful coastal Rockport-Fulton area, and 2019 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Center in Rockport. The original location was severely damaged by Hurricane Harvey, but the new temporary facility is now open. After Harvey, the community joined together to rebuild and get the Center back up and running. Less than a month after the hurricane, the youth programs were back and just two months later, RCA hosted its annual Film Festival. Because of the damage sustained during the hurricane, Rockport is planning to rebuild and expand the RCA facilities.

RCA has a goal of encouraging cultural tourism in Rockport, so throughout the year, the RCA hosts 10 exhibits a year featuring both local and visiting artists, events, workshops and classes for all ages, sculpture garden, and much more.

Rockport Art Loop

The Rockport Art Loop was initiated in 2019 as the newest cultural activity in Rockport. Nine Saturdays a year, the Austin Street corridor features seven simultaneous gallery openings to give residents and visitors the opportunity to walk around and experience as many galleries as they desire.

In addition to the RCA, participating Art Loop Galleries include:

- Anita Diebel Studio
- Yellow Rose Gallery
- The Gallery at Latitude 28° 02' Restaurant
- Coast Modern
- Wind Way Gallery
- The Gallery Collection at Maison
- Estelle Stair Gallery
- John Martell Photography
- Stan Irvin Unique Clay Works

Figure 8.8: Rockport Center for the Arts
Pic Courtesy: Emily Tedford

Figure 8.9: Public Art in the Downtown
Picture Courtesy: Emily Tedford

Rockport Art Festival

What began as a way to stimulate the arts economy has grown to become a major summertime event with over 120 artists presenting their work to the over 10,000 festival attendees. In addition to artist presentations, visitors can enjoy the gift shop, the kids' tent, and a big, central tent which houses food, drinks, live music, and air conditioning to give attendees a break from the Texas summer heat. Proceeds from the Art Festival go back to the RCA in order to continue providing its year-round free and low cost programs.

Art Educator Days

Every year, RCA hosts art educators from across South and Central Texas to come together and learn new ideas and strategies for their classrooms. They are able to collaborate and learn from one another to develop new skills, exchange lesson plans, and build relationships with others in their field.

Rockport Clay Expo

The annual Clay Expo takes place every February and hosts dozens of potters to exhibit and sell their work. Attendees can visit with the artists and learn about their work during an hourly demonstration. In addition, each artist donates a piece of their pottery for a Silent Auction.

Rockport Film Festival

The Film Festival takes place during the first weekend in November each year. It begins with a Red Carpet Event the Thursday before and screens films all day Friday and Saturday. The Festival has six categories of independent films that are made by filmmakers from the U.S. and abroad: documentary feature, fiction feature, documentary short, fiction short, animated short, and student film. The Rockport Film Festival provides residents and visitors with a unique and innovative event during what is typically an off-season for tourism.

Figure 8.10: Rites of Spring by Kent Ulberg
Source: Rockport Art Center

Figure 8.11: Spirit Columns by Jesus Bautista Moroles
Source: Rockport Art Center

Classes & Workshops

RCA offers hands-on classes and workshops in many mediums, from painting and drawing to jewelry and metalwork and mediums that are not typically seen in Rockport.

Artist-In-Residence Program - The program invites artists to Rockport for a month long stay to get out of their normal environments and obligations. RCA has had artists from Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Kentucky, California, and Holland. The visiting artist exhibits their work in the RCA's main gallery, and teaches free workshops for high schoolers and the community.

Penny Redmon Visiting Lecturer Series - The Series began in 2016 and brings up to four artists from outside the community to the RCA. Visiting artists present their work through public talks and hands-on workshops for members. The program promotes highly accomplished artists and introduce the community to their style and media.

Sculpture Garden

The Sculpture Garden was opened in 2000 after the dedication of its first permanent sculpture by Kent Ullberg, Rites of Spring. Since then, the garden has expanded to include works from many other local and visiting artists. Before he passed unexpectedly in 2015, Jesus Bautista Moroles lived and worked in Rockport. Three of his massive, granite sculptures are located in the sculpture alongside dozens of others. While some of the sculptures sustained damage during Hurricane Harvey, none were lost. In August 2018, a complete beautification of the Garden was completed for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Throughout the year, the Rockport community is host to a variety of events. Several of the events are described below and are just the beginning of the fun that brings the community together year after year.

C.A.D Kite Festival

Every spring, the Rockport Cultural Arts District hosts the annual Kite Festival at the festival grounds. This event features professional kite-flying demonstrations, kiteboarders in the ski basin, food vendors, and live music. The Festival is a great, family-friendly event for residents and visitors alike to come and enjoy the springtime weather and have fun.

Crawfish Boil

To celebrate Memorial Day and support great local cause, the Coastal Bend Troop Support, Inc. hosts the annual Crawfish Boil as a tribute to Active Military and local Veterans and raise money for care packages. It hosts many different vendors, auctions, and drawings to benefit the organization.

THE ROCKPORT PILOT

Figure 8.12: Office of the Rockport Pilot
Pic Courtesy: Emily Tedford

Although it has been restructured and renamed a number of times, The Rockport Pilot newspaper has been Rockport and Fulton's source for news since 1868.

Festival of Food and Wine

The Festival of Food and Wine is an annual event hosted by the Texas Maritime Museum that brings wine, food, and fun together for an exciting event. The Festival provides over 75 varieties of wine, craft beer, local cuisine, vendors, and live music.

Gospel Music Festival

The Gospel Music Festival began back in 1994 as a concert hosted by "Rockport's Gospel Force" police quartet. It has since grown to a full weekend festival. Because of Hurricane Harvey, the 2018 festival was cancelled, but they were able to come back in 2019 and are planning for the upcoming year. The family-friendly festival takes place at First Baptist Church and welcomes everyone to attend. They bring in music artists from all over the country to perform.

Market Days

On the third Saturday and Sunday of every month, the Rockport-Fulton Market is open for artists, crafters, and resellers to come together and sell their products. During Market Days, visitors and residents come to shop, enjoy the live music, and have some great food.

Nautical Flea Market

In 2019, The Rockport Yacht Club hosted its 19th Annual Nautical Flea Market. The Market offers a wide variety of nautical-themed items for sale. Vendors bring many handmade and used nautical items relating to fishing, sailing, powerboating, and more. This event is an homage to Rockport's seafaring history and has been very popular over the years. In addition to the many vendor booths, the Market also provides several food trucks for guests to enjoy.

Whooping Crane Strut

The Whooping Crane Strut has taken place every year for the past 31 years which includes a 2-mile walk, a 5k run, and a 10k run. The funds raised by the races go to the Friends of Aransas and Matagorda Island (FAMI) "Water for Wildlife" fund to provide fresh water for Whooping Cranes and other wildlife on the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge.

Figure 8.13: Kite Demonstration at the Festival
Source: Rockport Chamber of Commerce

Figure 8.14: Vendors and shoppers at a Rockport-Fulton Market Day
Source: fultonmarketdays.com

Figure 8.15: Whooping Crane Strut mascot Super Whooper
Source: Aransas National Wildlife Refuge

HURRICANE HARVEY IMPACT

Hurricane Harvey spared no mercy on Rockport's community facilities. Over 1,000 of Rockport's structures were destroyed by the hurricane, 2,261 were majorly damaged, and 3,000 were minimally damaged. Such destruction requires the city to put together a plan to rebuild and restore those structures, so the city can get up and running again. As of April 2019, about 93% of Rockport's businesses, churches and organizations, and facilities are open, with more slated to open in the coming months and years.

Some of the educational facilities were impacted by Hurricane Harvey which caused a decrease in student enrollment by as much as 500 students or about 15%. Overall, Aransas County ISD facilities sustained more than $55 million in damages. The damage from the hurricane lead to the permanent closure of Little Bay Primary School. The property has been sold to the Rockport Land Trust.

Figure 8.16: Hurricane Harvey's destruction of the Heritage District
Picture Courtesy: Kate de Gennaro

Figure 8.17: The Aquarium at Rockport Harbor after Hurricane Harvey
Picture Courtesy: Kate de Gennaro

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The City of Rockport and other stakeholders have over $50 million in public projects on the following projects.

Rockport Beach Pavilions

The beach pavillions experienced a great deal of damage from the hurricane. and have since been renovated and are now open for the public.

Additionally, Rockport Beach is undergoing a makeover. Cabanas and barbecue pits are being replaced and more palapas are being added along the beach. A children's playground is being donated by the Lions Club along with benches. More sand is being added to the beach for visitors and residents to enjoy.

Figure 8.18: Rockport Beach Pavilions
Source: www.tripadvisor.com

Rockport Center for the Arts

The plan for the expansion of the Center for the Arts will include a main arts building with classrooms, exhibit spaces, multipurpose rooms, and a kitchen. The second building will be dedicated to performance and cinematic arts and a convention space for business meetings. This dedicated center will be designed to uphold Rockport's character to draw in visitors and residents alike.

This expansion is projected to bring in an estimated 114,500 visitors a year. The project was funded through an Economic Development Administration Grant.

Figure 8.19: RCA Renovation
Source: Dykema Architects.INC

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Aquarium at Rockport Harbor

The Aquarium is being rebuilt with the funding by insurance proceeds and federal public assistance dollars. This is an important project as the Aquarium is a big part of Rockport's tourism industry and provides activities for low income families.

Figure 8.20: Aquarium at Rockport Harbor
Source: mnkcusa.blogspot.com

Downtown Anchor Project

The Downtown Anchor Project will be the governmental hub of Rockport and will house City Hall, the Courthouse, and public meeting spaces. The new site will be next to the location of the former Aransas County Courthouse and county jail and offices.

Figure 8.21: Downtown Anchor Project Layout
Source: www.virtualbx.com

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

As Rockport continues to grow, residents will require and desire places for recreational activities. Parks provide quality-of-life and can impact whether residents and businesses move to a community. Residents that participated in the public outreach meetings, identified the need for many different types of community facilities and engagement programs to fit the makeup of the families and individuals that live here. For example, Rockport lacks entertainment facilities for all ages and income levels since the local movie theater shut its doors in 2017. Many residents commented on the need for public restrooms in more heavily trafficked public areas. They desire things like an amphitheater for concerts, arcades, trampoline parks, a movie theater and a bowling alley. The Rockport Aquarium is of primary concern for the community as it is a center for education and tourism. Currently, the Aquarium is closed, but the desire to see it rebuilt and open once again is strong.

Public feedback shows that there is a community-wide desire for multi-use facilities or a community center to house youth and kids programs and other community events.

Residents indicated the maintenance and preservation of Rockport's history, charm and culture as a high priority. They expressed the desire for investment in arts and cultural centers. They suggest different ideas for events like arts and writers festivals and murals/public art displays in the heritage district.

RECOMMENDATIONS

EFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Investments in public parks and spaces to increase the number of recreational facilities will better meet the needs of future and current residents. The city should leverage funding for park maintenance and green infrastructure projects. It is recommended that the city adopts a trail dedication ordinance that requires land dedication (or fee-in-lieu) for trails, parks, and improvements. This ordinance needs to require developers to dedicate and construct trails or to invest in public spaces. The planning team recommends that the city identifies possible corridors to further expand and connect the existing trail network in Rockport. For example, the land at the crossroad of Bypass 35 and 3036 could be acquired and turned into a trail.

Utility easements are recommended to connect parks and open spaces (Aransas Pathways) throughout Rockport by developing an implementation plan that encourages utility and drainage easements.

The city needs to increase the number of public facilities to meet the needs of current and future residents of all ages. The planning team recommends that the city collaborates with Aransas County ISD to provide neighborhood parks by considering keeping school playgrounds open after hours for the use of residents in neighborhoods near schools. The city should also partner with the Nature Conservancy to identify parkland and open space in the floodplain that can be suitable and acquired for wildlife habitat, floodplain mitigation, or wetland banking. It is encouraged to have public offices and activity centers near residential areas in the downtown and bypass areas to promote convenience and accessibility. A partnership with the Parks & Leisure Services Board is recommended to recognize recreational opportunities in Rockport.

Rockport should enforce strict building codes on community facilities and civic buildings. Further, the city should continue to complete capital improvement projects that have been identified to build resilience.

MFMP

PLAN INTEGRATION

OPEN SPACE IN FLOODPLAIN

Evaluate areas in the floodplain viable for open space preservation

HDMP

PLAN INTEGRATION

RESILIENT FACILITIES

Ensure for community facilities and civic buildings are fortified and enforce building to strict building codes.

MFMP

PLAN INTEGRATION

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

- Fund drainage projects that were modeled in the 2016 Drainage Master Plan Modeling Report
- Design and conduct an engineering study to address flooding in downtown Rockport
- Repair outfalls of pump station that pump into Aransas Bay
- Build City Hall to withstand future flood events
- Little Bay Hydraulic Restoration - remove sediment from the bay and use it for nourishment and habitat restoration projects.

PROMOTE AND PROTECT THE HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF ROCKPORT

During the outreach portion of the comprehensive plan update, emphasis from community members was placed on the city's need to maintain historical and cultural heritage of the region to preserve its unique character and to encourage community members in prioritizing conservation in the future. The city should continue supporting and promoting events and workshops about the culture and history of Rockport. The city can promote its history and culture through an agritourism plan that highlights the significant impacts from the civil war, the cattle industry and the presence of the chamber of commerce. Aransas Pathways would be an ideal organization to collaborate with on this effort.

Work with entities such as 4-H club, Agrilife Extension, and the Aransas County Independent School District to increase the amount of education and related programs for the youth to engage them in community development at a young age. Based on feedback, the planning team suggests establishing a systematic approach to identifying and focusing resources to further foster education and youth programs. For example, the city's Environmental Services program can assist in facilitating education and engagement activities with the natural environment to educate local youth on the importance of the environments' place in the community. During a public meeting at the Agrilife extension office in May, resident participants expressed the importance of Agrilife in fostering youth education and outreach and feel that this organizations' contribution to the community is invaluable, and in order to ensure their services continue, the organization should seek out more collaborative opportunities with the city, county and independent school district. These programs can take place at a centrally located, easily accessible public community facility. A preferable location for the center will be near the high school and middle school.

Improvements, promotion, and economic restructuring in Rockport is important for downtown heritage revitalization. The city should explore the possibility of using tax increment financing or other funding mechanisms in the historic downtown to redevelop and bring new life into the area.

As a community that reveres the arts and its natural beauty, art and beautification in the parks, open spaces, and Historical Downtown is highly recommended. The Cultural Arts District and the Center for the Arts can help in the establishment of a public art grant program that encourages public art installations and strategic placemaking activities throughout the city.

Encourage residents to help with park beautification through volunteer programs that also include a socialization aspect. This can achieve the goal of enhancing the parks while also building community support and gathering their input on what they want to see in public spaces and parks. Local businesses and groups can get involved with the creation of an "adopt-a-park" model, mirrored after the "adopt-a-highway" model, and market to local businesses to get buy-in for beautification initiatives.

To attract future investments and visitors, the city needs to enhance and maintain the character and resilience of the community. The city should create a Branding/Wayfinding Design Manual and signs to execute common character elements for public facilities, beach facilities, parks, and private sector buildings as old ones are rebuilt and new ones are constructed. Strong relationships, city beautification and the community's sense of place can be maintained and enhanced through programs like "Keep Aransas County Beautiful" and "Aransas Pathways" and organizations like Texas A&M Agrilife County Extension. Evaluate and amend the Heritage District Zoning Overlay Code with the goal of preserving and enhancing the strip. Various funding sources can be explored and considered for infrastructure and community improvements of historic and cultural assets.

CASE STUDY: PUBLIC RESTROOMS IN THE DOWNTOWN

The Portland Loo was first installed in the Old Town Chinatown neighborhood of Portland in 2008. Since then, dozens of free-standing restrooms have been installed around Portland, addressing the problem of public safety in public restrooms.

The modern and durable design is easily maintained and sustainably built. Its design discourages criminal activity by coating the walls with a graffiti proof coating. The slats on the walls provide privacy for users while allowing law enforcement to monitor activity. The free-standing stalls are built with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards by placing them in visible areas with open sight lines.

These facilities are installed in areas that are heavily trafficked in order to provide service to a variety of people from shoppers to beach goers and special event attendees. The walls can even be wrapped in vinyl to show artwork or advertisements.

Other cities around the country are following suit, and several Texas cities are giving the Portland Loo a shot. In 2017, Galveston installed their first Portland Loo as part of the city's beautification project. San Antonio installed their second Portland Loo in 2018 after the city saw improvements in criminal activity and public sanitation. In Austin, some temporary public restrooms are being tested before installing Portland's model.

Support resources for public restrooms can be found through the World Toilet Organization (WTO) and PHLUSH (Public Hygiene Lets Us Stay Human).

Figure 8.22: The Portland Loo
Source: portlandloo.com

PLAN INTEGRATION

RPAT

AMENITIES AND BEAUTIFICATION

Activate Austin Street daily by providing movable tables, chairs, and umbrellas. Moveable furniture provides maximum flexibility by allowing users to sit alone, in groups, in sun or in shade. If there are concerns of theft, chairs and tables can be secured with long locked cables that still allow portability within a certain distance. Ideally, the tables and chairs would only be secured overnight to ensure maximum flexibility.

Develop and provide public restrooms in any public park improvements, marina and waterfront development, and public buildings downtown. Explore creative mechanism to develop public restrooms downtown to serve visitors and residents alike

Consider setting aside funding for public artwork and programming. Explore developing a one percent-for-art-ordinance in Rockport. A "one percent for the arts" program specifies that one percent of eligible city capital improvement project and private development funds be set aside for the commission, purchase, and installation of artworks, including art related events and creative placemaking in the Cultural Arts District and Downtown Rockport.

CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY AND PARK BEAUTIFICATION

Given the community's desire for the arts and youth involvement, the city can put forth a volunteer program dedicated to art installations and murals around Rockport. Great examples of such programs can be seen in Seattle, Washington and in San Francisco, California.

Urban Artwork is a non-profit organization that was founded in Seattle with the mission to "create public art that empowers the young people and transform communities." The program was started as an effort to clean up the trash and graffiti in the industrial zone with the help of at risk-youth volunteers as a strategy to keep them out of trouble. Today the program has had a big impact in its community and provides an after school mural program, summer youth program, young curators program, and a mural intern/apprentice program. The programs not only teach the youth about art, but also instill in them a sense of responsibility by allowing them to plan, build solid relationships, and earn money for the time they spend creating large scale public art pieces.

The program in San Francisco is called Precita Eyes Muralists. The organization is "committed to enriching communities through collaborative murals that celebrate culture, unity, history, and nature." The individuals that run the organization focus on collaboration and dedication to developing the individuality of each community with which they work. The organization not only produces murals, but also provides educational programs and festivals and gets involved in other programs such as community gardens.

Both programs are great examples of volunteer programs that can assist in beautifying the city and assisting in the maintenance of parks and public spaces. By working off of the efforts of Agrilife County Extension agents and their 4H program, the city can pilot a volunteer program that can engage the youth and the rest of the community in the arts and the history of Rockport.

POCKET PARKS

Downtown areas often have vacant lots that can decrease appeal. Pocket parks are a small-scale solution for open or unused spaces, providing an opportunity for community beautification and recreation. These parks are not usually larger than ¼ of an acre in urban areas surrounded by buildings or houses. They provide safe, inviting spaces for community members for small event space, play areas for kids, relaxing and meeting friends, or even taking lunch breaks during work. Open spaces can be filled with programming that enhance social and economic income (Ex. Food Truck Park).

Over the last decade, Austin, Texas has seen new pocket parks popping up or being revitalized throughout the city. Now, there are 20 parks that provide quaint neighborhood getaways rather than citywide attractions. In the pocket parks, residents and visitors can take advantage of the small-scale green space, picnic areas, splash pads, play spaces for kids, and sport courts. Renovation and construction projects of the pocket parks are planned by the city's Parks Department and with input from community members. Community involvement and neighborhood improvements have made Austin's many pocket parks into popular tourist and resident destinations.

During Rockport's meeting with the CPAT Team in May of 2019, the planning team presented different ideas for downtown design and vitality improvements. With the goal of creating linkages and gathering spaces and enhancing the experience of Downtown Rockport. Based off of Texas A&M Landscape Architecture student presentations, the CPAT team suggested the implementation of pocket parks within Downtown Rockport in the unused open spaces in the area to fulfill needs for social meeting areas, public art showcases, environmental learning opportunities, and play spaces for children. In their presentation, they provided example illustrations, generated by a Texas A&M Landscape Architecture student, of locations and what the pocket parks can look like in Downtown Rockport.

Figure 8.24: Mock-up of Rockport Park
Source: www.nrpa.org

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9 IMPLEMENTATION

PRIORITIZE & IMPLEMENT

Rockport's vision statement is: ***"Rockport is a friendly, culturally diverse, and economically vibrant community that respects its history and embraces the arts and humanities while preserving the best of small town life on the water, including health, beauty, comfort and safety."*** The Comprehensive Plan and its goals, objectives, and action items are a reflection of that vision. In order to fulfill that promise to the community, implementation must be a thoughtful, organized process. These strategies and policies are meant to align with the needs, opportunities, and existing initiatives.

The items in this chapter are not just a list of 'to-dos', they are an outline for the process that requires various leaders and coordination within the community to achieve the goals and objectives to make the community the best it can be.

The Comprehensive Plan is meant to be a 'living document' that is visited regularly. The Implementation Table specifies recommended policy changes, goals, objectives and actions, along with an annotated timeline with responsible parties involved. It also identifies potential opportunities to finance implementation of actions or projects, outlining potential grant opportunities. Comprehensive Plans are living documents that need ongoing evaluation and monitoring to ensure the relevance and effectiveness for the city.

PLAN MAINTENANCE

Stakeholders and those responsible for certain action items should continue to ensure that their action items are being fulfilled in order to continue to be an asset to the community's needs. The city can amend the Comprehensive Plan in order to respond to changes in conditions or needs of the community, to improve or clarify content, or to incorporate other documents or plans. To help evaluate Rockport's progress, an agreed upon time frame is needed. The Implementation Table contains information regarding the suggested time frame for each of the Action Steps, separated into four categories:

1. Short-term: 0 - 5 years
2. Medium-term: 5 - 10 years
3. Long-term: 10 - 20 years
4. Continuous ("On-going")

ACTION TYPE

Capital Project Program: The Capital Project Action Type means there will be a significant investment in order to achieve the action item. These are projects that help maintain or improve a city asset. Capital projects should be included in the capital improvement program (CIP) and should include infrastructure, drainage improvements, parks facilities, public buildings, etc.

Regulation or Standard: Regulations or standards refer to the local policies that can be adopted as a part of development regulations and other County and City standards.

Partnership or Collaboration: Action steps that require additional partners or coordination with other agencies, organizations, or companies. Developing relationships with other partners within the community and surrounding communities will yield more connections and resilience.

More Targeted Planning: This Action Type refers to actions that are related to additional studies, plans, reports, etc. Typically these studies are needed for a more detailed analysis of conditions or more specific solutions.

ACTION LEADERS

To achieve the goal of building a better Rockport community, the following is a list of presumable action leaders corresponding to certain action items. This would help Rockport authorities to maintain transparency and create consistency across all associated departments and organizations.

Entities are classified as follows:

AC: Aransas County

AP: Aransas Pathways

ACAD: Aransas County Appraisal District

ACHD: Aransas County Health Department

ACHS: Aransas County Historical Society

ACISD: Aransas County ISD

ACLTRT: Aransas County Long Term Recovery Team

ACND: Aransas County Navigation District

AISD: Aransas County Independent School District

ALEO: Agri-Life Extension Office

ANWR: Aransas National Wildlife Refuge

AP: Aransas Pathways

BD: Building and Development Department

BOA: Zoning Board of Adjustments

BUS: Businesses and Stakeholders

CC: City Council

CE: City Engineer

CM: City Manager

CPTF: Comprehensive Plan Task Force

CS: City Staff

DTF: Downtown Heritage Task Force

EDC: Economic Development Corporation

EM: Emergency Manager

EPA: Environmental Protection Agency

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency

FHA: Fair Housing Board

FI: Finance Department

FLTN: The City of Fulton

FM: Fulton Mansion

HR: Human Resources Department

HUD: Housing and Urban Development

KACB: Keep Aransas County Beautiful

LEED: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

LTR: Long Term Recovery

MC: Municipal Court

PB: Parks Board

PL: Parks and Leisure Department

PO: Property Owner

PW: Public Works Department

P&Z: Planning & Zoning Commission

RCA: Rockport Center for the Arts

RCAD: Rockport Cultural Arts District

RCM: Rockport Community Members

R-FCC: Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce

RPD: Rockport Police Department

RVFD: Rockport Volunteer Fire Department

TCEQ: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

TDHCA: Texas Department of Housing & Community Affairs

TSAHC: Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation

TLC: Tree and Landscape Committee

TMM: Texas Maritime Museum

TPWD: Texas Parks & Wildlife

TSG: Texas Sea Grant

TWDB: Texas Water Development Board

TX: The State of Texas

TxDOT: Texas Department of Transportation

UCGA: U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

UT: Utilities

YMCA: YMCA Development Committee

PLAN INTEGRATION FOR RESILIENCE SCORECARD

To ensure the comprehensive plan integrates with other planning documents that influence development, the following "network of plans" indicate the policies that are aligned across plans, as described in Chapter 2. Within the implementation table, the city can discern the relevance and applicability of policies. The acronyms for the "network of plans" include:

- Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan and Report (2018): LTRP
- Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan (2017): MHMP
- Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Floodplain Management Plan (2017): MFMP
- A Vision for Rockport: A Master Plan for the Heritage District and Downtown Rockport (2006): HDMP
- Rockport Heritage District Zoning Overlay Code (2014 update): HDZO
- Recovery Planning Assistance Team: RPAT

Development Consideration

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Goal 3.1 Achieve a more inclusive land use plan and comprehensive zoning ordinance by providing land uses that preserve the integrity of Rockport's Community Character															
Objective 3.1.1. Provide for a Balance of Land Uses & Associated Regulations to Enhance Quality of Life	Action 3.1.1.1. Consider revisions to the Zoning Ordinance in accordance with the recommendations indicated in this plan.			X						X			CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	In-House
	Action 3.1.1.2. Monitor and report the plan progress to City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission annually.			X							X		CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	In-House
	Action 3.1.1.3. Conduct a thorough review and potential revision of the plan every 5 years.			X							X		CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM; Consultant	City Budgeted Funds; Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
	Action 3.1.1.4. Encourage development in areas that are served by existing municipal services and infrastructure and outside the Special Flood Hazard Area.			X						X		X	CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Distressed Cities Technical Assistance, Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program, Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities
	Action 3.1.1.5 Consider adoption of the preferred land use scenario as to help grow Rockport to the desired place over the next several decades.			X						X			CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	In-House
	Action 3.1.1.6 Consider updates to the ordi-nances pertaining to RV Park.			X						X		X	CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	In-House
	Action 3.1.1.6 Consider updates to the existing design guidelines.			X						X		X	CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	In-House

Development Consideration

Objective	Action	Notes	Timeframe				Action Type					Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
			Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning			
Goal 3.2 Guide the future growth of the city according to the community's vision															
Objective 3.2.1. Develop land use regulations for the implementation of the future land use map.	Action 3.2.1.1 Explore the option of creating a conservation subdivision and environmental corridors to protect environmentally sensitive areas.	MFMP; MHMP			X					X		X	CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	In-House; Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Distressed Cities Technical Assistance, Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program, WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase I Grants, Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities, The Conservation Fund
	Action 3.2.1.2 Provide Infrastructure and Financial Assistance (through Development Agreements) to Target Areas for Private Developers building SF and MF Housing (some of this may be geared towards homeowners, through developer or builder-initiated programs)	LTRP					X				X	X	CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM; EDC	Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BCNP), Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Multi-Family Housing Loan Guarantees
	Action 3.2.1.3 Examine the drainage system prior to future development.			X						X		X	CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	In-House
	Action 3.2.1.3 Consider developing a corridor plan for Highway 35 Bypass.			X						X		X	CS: PW; CC	CPTF; RCM	In-House

Development Consideration

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Objective 3.2.2. Develop an annexation plan to annex properties based on the future expansion needs of the city and the prospects of development within the city's extraterritorial jurisdiction.	Action 3.2.2.1 Re-evaluate zoning policy for newly annexed lands.				X					X		X	CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	In-House
	Action 3.2.2.2 Zone newly annexed land into the most restrictive, least dense zoning category, R-1 1st Single-Family Dwelling District.				X					X			CS; CC; P&Z		In-House
Objective 3.2.3. Develop a plan for the increased development and protection of the Heritage District.	Action 3.2.3.1. Consider amending the Heritage District Zoning Overlay Code (HDZO to preserve and enhance the area	HDZO			X				X	X			CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Cool & Connected Program, Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund, Texas Main Street Program
	Action 3.2.3.2 Consider developing a partnership with the Texas Main Street Program.	RPAT			X						X		CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund, Keep America Beautiful's Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund, Texas Main Street Program
	Action 3.2.3.3 Follow the codes and development standards and restric-tions within the HDZO to maintain the character and history of the downtown district.	HDZO		X						X			CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program, Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program (HRSP)

Development Consideration

Objective	Action	Notes	Timeframe				Action Type					Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
			Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning			
	Action 3.2.3.4 Consider Urban Land Institute principles for rebuilding downtown	RPAT					X		X	X			CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM	Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program
	Action 3.2.3.5 Consider the recommendations from the RPAT team regarding flood mitigation and resilience, economic resilience, and downtown design and vitality.	RPAT				X			X	X		X	CS; CC; P&Z	CPTF; RCM; RCAD; BUS; COC	NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
Objective 3.2.3. Continue to promote the Tourism industry, while also carefully maintaining the cultural Heritage	Action 3.2.3.1. Utilize a variety of development incentives that promote the tourism industry, yet maintain the community character within Rockport and the surrounding areas.					X				X		X	CS; R-FCC	CC; CPTF; RCM	Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Cool & Connected Program, Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund
Goal 3.3 Establish development regulations to reduce hazard exposure within the city.															
Objective 3.3.1. Actively persue floodproofing and hazard mitigation for residential and commercial properties.	Action 3.3.1.1 Continue participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and enforce adopted floodplain regulations based on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps.	MHMP MFMP		X					X	X	X		CS; CC		Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program

Development Consideration

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 3.3.1.2 Continue implementing the freeboard requirements to alleviate further risk of flood damage to homes and businesses.	MHMP; MFMP		X						X			CS; CC		NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program, Distressed Cities Technical Assistance
	Action 3.3.1.3 Incorporate activities outlined in the CRS Coordinator's Manual that would help achieve a higher class rating.	MHMP; MFMP					X		X	X			CS; CC		NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program, Distressed Cities Technical Assistance
	Action 3.3.1.4 Ensure the city is following the guidelines set in the Aransas County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan.	MHMP		X						X			CS; CC		NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program
	Action 3.3.1.5 Utilize the Inundation Dashboard created by NOAA to prepare for and manage flood events.				X					X			CS; CC		NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program
	Action 3.3.1.6 Review repetitive-loss properties to identify potential acquisitions that may be made to assist in reducing flooding within the sub-basin (Austin Street and the Heritage District).	RPAT				X						X	CS; CC		Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program

Development Consideration

Objective	Action	Notes	Timeframe			Action Type					Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
			Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning			
	Action 3.3.1.7 Consider tax abatement for property owners undertaking flood improvements.	RPAT			X				X				CS; CC		Housing Preservation & Revitalization Demonstration Loans & Grants, Single Family Home Repairs (Section 504)
	Action 3.3.1.8 Consider using the solar energy and other renewable energy alternatives, infrastructure improvements on Austin and Magnolia Streets that account for sea-level rise, and retrofitting and/or updating drainage, sewage and electric to accommodate redevelopment and new development.	RPAT				X		X				X	CS; PW; UT; CC		Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities
	Action 3.3.1.9 Examine the two conveyance pipes to the bay in this area using a camera system to verify pipes (following Hurricane Harvey remain fully functional	RPAT			X			X				X	CS; PW; CC		Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program
	Action 3.3.1.10 Examine and test areas of the drainage system for accumulation of sand and silt and verify that the outlet points into the bay are clear and free of growth.	RPAT			X			X				X	CS; PW; CC		Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program
	Action 3.3.1.11 Examine the functionality of backflow prevention devices on the outlet points for the stormwater drains into the bay.	RPAT			X			X				X	CS; PW; CC		WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase I Grants

Development Consideration

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 3.3.1.12 Consider a No Adverse Impact policy to City floodplain ordinance to help contain drainage on residential lots.				X				X			X	CS; PW; CC		
Objective 3.3.3. Implement low-impact development techniques to manage stormwater runoff	Action 3.3.3.1 Explore Green Infrastructure (GI) and Low Impact Development (LID) practices to mitigate the effects of future disruptions.				X							X	CS; CC		Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program, Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities
	Action 3.3.3.2 Consider rain gardens and bioswales within both the high-er and the lowest areas of Austin and Magnolia Streets.	RPAT			X			X					CS; CC	RCAD; BUS; PO	Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program, Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund
	"Action 3.3.3.3 Utilize the Green Infrastructure Modeling Toolkit provided by the EPA to help implement green infrastructure and make decisions for stormwater management."				X							X	CS; CC	PW	Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program
	Action 3.3.3.4 Consult full RPAT report for specific design recommendations on creating "A Green Vision for Downtown."	RPAT				X						X	CS; CC	PW	Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program, Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund

Housing

Objectives	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Goal 4.1 Expand the Variety of Housing to Meet the Needs of a Diverse Population and Encourage the Return of Hurricane-displaced Residents															
Objective 4.1.1 Support Single Family (SF) home construction for a variety of income levels	Action 4.1.1.1 Consider amending language in existing ordinance(s) to allow for smaller homes on infill lots (except in SFHA	HDMP; LTRP			X					X			CS		Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants, Single Family Home Repairs (Section 504)
	Action 4.1.1.2 Continue to partner with Habitat for Humanity, Coastal Bend Disaster Recovery Group, other non-profit and faith-based organizations	LTRP		X							X		CS		Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants, Single Family Home Repairs (Section 504)
	Action 4.1.1.3 Consider financial incentives for developers to increase housing density in undeveloped areas (such as tax abatements and waived permit fees (except in SFHA						X			X			CS; EDC; CC		Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants, Single Family Home Repairs (Section 504)
	Action 4.1.1.4 Reach out to companies that are expanding in communities south of Rockport to assess future employee housing needs and create partnerships for housing developments.				X						X	X	CS; EDC; CC		Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants, Single Family Home Repairs (Section 504)
Objective 4.1.2. Expand housing opportunities for low- and middle-income households	Action 4.1.2.1 Consider amending landuse/zon-ing to allow flexible housing options such as small lots, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and multi-family units in areas for redevelopment and new development				X					X			CS; P&Z; CC		Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Grants

Housing

Objectives	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 4.1.2.2 Consider implementing inclusionary zoning or financial incentives for de-velopers to build affordable housing (affordable units can be a percentage of their overall development or a sep-arate development (except in SFHA	LTRP			X					X			CS; P&Z; CC	EDC	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Grants
	Action 4.1.2.3 Identify areas that would benefit from providing greater accessibility to community facilities and amenities.	LTRP					X			X			CS; P&Z; CC		Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
	Action 4.1.2.4 Continue to apply for and prioritize state and federal funding for repairs, rebuilds, and maintenance to workforce and low income housing. Coordinate with the Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan	LTRP			X				X		X		CS; ACLTRT	TDHCA, GLO, HUD, USDA	Housing Preservation & Revitalization Demonstration Loans & Grants, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Single Family Home Repairs (Section 504), Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), Housing Preservation & Revitalization Demonstration Loans & Grants, Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Grants , Public Housing Agency's Housing Choice Voucher program

Housing

Objectives	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 4.1.2.5 Partner with Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA a nd t he Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC to hold public meetings where residents can learn about homeownership programs (such as My First Texas Home and home buying tips.				X						X		CS	TDHCA; TSAHC	Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BCNP), Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Grants,
	Action 4.1.2.6 Recognize the need to supply of per-manent workforce and affordable housing.	RPAT					X				X		CS; P&Z; CC; EDC	PO; HUD	Low Income Housing Tax Credit (4%/9%), Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), Multi-family (Rental Housing) Development Program
Goal 4.2. Build Resilient Homes, Maintain Safe Neighborhoods, and Enhance Community Character															
Objective 4.2.1. Improve building standards for all homeowners	Action 4.2.1.1 Educate/encourage homeowners, contractors, and builders to use stronger building codes, such as the latest International Building Codes. Continue to partner with SmartHomeAmerica for Lunch-N-Learns for FORTIFIED standards.	LTRP		X					X		X		CS	SmartHomeAmerica, IBHS, TDHCA	Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BCNP), Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Grants, Housing Preservation Grants (HPG), Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities
	Action 4.2.1.2 Enforce city's minimum building codes (including freeboard elevation) during rebuilds, renovations, and new construction			X						X			CS		Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Program, Housing Preservation Grants (HPG)

Housing

Objectives	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 4.2.1.3 Educate homeowners on techniques to mitigate flooding on their own property/in their yard, without adversely affecting their neighbors.			X					X		X		CS	CFMs in the area	Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)
Objective 4.2.2. Create new avenues to improve conditions on household and neighborhood levels	Action 4.2.2.1 Research and establish building maintenance codes, which provide minimum requirements for equipment, light, ventilation, heating, sanitation, and hazard safety				X					X		X	CS; CE		Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities, Housing Preservation Grants (HPG)
	Action 4.2.2.2 Facilitate "Neighborhood Makeover" events where residents, city staff, and volunteers can clean up and maintain the overall character of their neighborhoods. Coordinate with any efforts conducted through the Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan.	LTRP		X				X	X		X		CS; CE; ACLTRT		Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants & Implementation Program, Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), Community Impact Grants, Keep America Beautiful's Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund

Transportation

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Goal 5.1 Provide Safe and Efficient Roadway network															
Objective 5.1.1 Redesign critical roads and intersections to mitigate geometric and operational improvements.	Action 5.1.1.1. Maintain regular communications with city and county transportation agencies and local transportation stakeholders to update project needs list and progress.			X					X		X		CS; PW; CC	CS: PW	Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
	Action 5.1.1.2. Prioritize listed challenges and problem areas.			X						X		X	CS: PW	AC; TxDOT	INVEST 1.0 Implementation Projects, The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
	Action 5.1.1.3. Consider the need for low-speed zones, speed bumps, chicanes, and diversions in residential areas around community facilities.			X				X				X	CS: PW	AC	The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
	Action 5.1.1.4. Provide adequate lighting, visibility, and wayfinding signage along major thoroughfares adjacent to commercial developments and community facilities.				X			X				X	CS: PW	AC; TxDOT	BUILD Discretionary Grants, The National Complete Streets Coalition
	Action 5.1.1.5. Update the functional classification of roads based on the future thoroughfare plan.				X							X	CS: PW		Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
	Action 5.1.1.6 Coordinate street design standards with the County to ensure the quality and standard of the roads that get annexed.				X			X			X		CS: PW	AC	The National Complete Streets Coalition, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)

Transportation

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 5.1.1.7 Possibly implement improvements to intersections, including crosswalk treatments, improved bulb-outs, in-cluding brick pavers/stamped con-crete, raised intersections, and lighting.	RPAT					X	X					CS: PW		Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
Objective 5.1.2 Conduct speed studies where crash severity is high.	Action 5.1.2.1. Conduct traffic studies to analyze traffic flow in the city.				X				X			X	CS: PW	AC; TxDOT	The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
	Action 5.1.2.2. Conduct traffic crash studies and analysis to promote safe-ty of travelers.				X				X			X	CS: PW	COU; TxDOT	The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
Goal 5.2 Develop an annual maintenance and inventory for the transportation system															
Objective 5.2.1 Contin-ue and update existing roadway maintenance schedule annually.	Action 5.2.1.1. Budget funds to contin-ue implementing street maintenance schedule for conducting repairs and rehabilitation of roadways.			X					X		X		CS; PW; CC	AC; TxDOT	BUILD Discretionary Grants, Surface Trans-portation Block Grant Program (STBG)
	Action 5.2.1.2. Review the roadway maintenance schedule annually.				X			X				X	CS; PW	AC; TxDOT	BUILD Discretionary Grants, Surface Trans-portation Block Grant Program (STBG)
	Action 5.2.1.3. Consider requiring a traffic impact analysis for new devel-opment projects in high traffic areas				X							X	CS; PW		The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
Goal 5.3 Implement Complete Street policies in the multi-modal network to enhance safety and connectivity															
Objective 5.3.1 Provide safe multi-modal Con-nectivity.	Action 5.3.1.1. Require developers to construct secured side-walks to ensure safety and accessibil-ity and to encourage on-foot travel.				X			X					CS; PW		Walk Friendly Com-munity (WFC), Safe Routes To School, Bicy-cle Friendly Communi-ty (BFC)

Transportation

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 5.3.1.2 Consider improvements to sidewalks and bike lanes along Austin Street, first filling in the gaps, and then expanding sidewalks and bike lanes to connect downtown to the beach and city hall/courthouse property.	RPAT					X	X					CS; PW	TxDOT	Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Program, Walk Friendly Community (WFC)
	Action 5.3.1.3 Possibly improve and expand sidewalks in downtown (Austin St., East Concho St., Veterans memorial Dr./Deabreeze Dr.) and add bike lanes along Austin St.	RPAT					X	X					CS; PW	TxDOT	Walk Friendly Community (WFC), Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
	Action 5.3.1.4 Consider restriping crosswalk stripes on Austin Street to improve visibility of crosswalk. Add public art murals on crosswalks	RPAT			X			X					CS; PW	TxDOT	Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
	Action 5.3.1.5 Consider a pedestrian/bicycle plan (scoping study) for Austin Street and Downtown Rockport to identify gaps, destinations, alignments, and costs of the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements.	RPAT			X							X	CS; PW		Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Program, Walk Friendly Community (WFC), Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program
	Action 5.3.1.6 Evaluate a more robust, regional approach to serving the public transportation needs of the community						X	X				X	CS; CC	AC; TxDOT	Grants for Rural Areas to Support Public Transportation- 5311, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)

Transportation

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 5.3.1.7 Possibly provide appropriate signage and painted lines on the multi-modal network facilities to as-sist travelers and reduce conflicts.				X			X			X		AC; CC; CS	TxDOT	BUILD Discretionary Grants, The National Complete Streets Coalition
	Action 5.3.1.8 Consider grants that fund sidewalks and other multi-modal transportation paths such as the Safe Route to School grant (TxDOT)				X			X			X	X	CS; PW		Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program, Bicy-cle Friendly Commu-nity (BFC) Program, Safe Routes To School, BUILD Discretionary Grants
	Action 5.3.1.9 Require developers to build sidewalks as part of new devel-opment.			X				X			X	X	CS; PW		Walk Friendly Commu-nity (WFC)
	Action 5.3.1.10 Work with Aransas Pathways and other partners to de-velop a hiking/biking trail master plan.				X			X			X		CS; PW	AC	Recreational Trail Grants, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (15.921)
Objective 5.3.2 Iden-tify a regular mainte-nance schedule for a multi-modal network.	Action 5.3.2.1. Provide a maintenance schedule for the multi-modal net-work.				X				X			X	CS; PW		The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
	Action 5.3.2.2. Update the multi-mod-al maintenance schedule annually.				X			X				X	CS; PW	AC; TxDOT	Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
Objective 5.3.3 Reduce vehicle miles traveled through Travel Demand Management strate-gies.	Action 5.3.3.1. Consider developing ride-sharing programs and providing informational resources on the City of Rockport website and through other City marketing materials.						X	X			X	X	CS; PW	AC; BUS; R-FCC; EDC	Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabil-ities

Transportation

Objective	Action	Notes	Timeframe				Action Type				Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
			Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning			
	Action 5.3.3.2. Encourage businesses to encourage employees to use alternative transportation options.						X		X		X		CS	R-FCC; EDC; AC	Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Program, Governor's Community Achievement Awards (GCAA), Walk Friendly Community (WFC)
	Action 5.3.3.3. Consider developing recommended shared-lanes to promote public accessibility as well as connect Rock-port to Fulton.				X			X				X	CS; PW; AC	TxDOT; FLTN	Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Program, Governor's Community Achievement Awards (GCAA), Walk Friendly Community (WFC), Cool & Connected Program
	Action 5.3.3.4. Learn about initiating quarterly bicycle and pedestrian counts, using the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation project methodology to assist with planning improvements and inform funding requests.				X				X		X		CS; PW	AC; TxDOT	Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program, Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Program

Economic Development

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Goal 6.1 Develop a diverse and resilient economy															
"Objective 6.1.1. Support Sound Economic Growth & Promote Operational Efficiency"	Action 6.1.1.1. Continue to partner with other local jurisdictions and the new Economic Development Corporation to retain local businesses and provide a "one stop shop" for prospective businesses.				X				X		X	X	CS; EDC; AC	BUS	In-House; Strong Cities, Strong Communities Visioning Challenge
	Action 6.1.1.2. Consider economic development incentives to amplify existing businesses, and attract new busi-nesses/industries (e.g. tax increment inancing, tax abatement, inrastruc-ture expansion).				X			X		X		X	CS; EDC; COC	CC; AC; ACND; FLTN	In-House; Community Advantage Program, Rural Business Development Grants, Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)
	Action 6.1.1.3. Continue to support and partner with the Chamber of Commerce on their economic development activities.			X							X		CS	EDC; COC	In-House; Rural Business Development Grants
	Action 6.1.1.4. Assist businesses in be-ing better prepared or uture lood events and storms and more rapid recovery through development of ed-ucational resources.	HDMP; RPAT			X				X	X			CS	EDC; COC	Tax Increment Financing
		RPAT		X					X	X		X	CS	EDC; COC; BUS	In-House; Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program
	Action 6.1.1.5. Support eco-friendly businesses by encouraging reduction of water and energy consumption, recycling, and using less plastics.	RPAT		X					X	X		X	CS	EDC; COC; BUS	REAP Grants
	Action 6.1.1.6. Encourage infill com-mercial development in downtown.			X					X			X	CS	EDC; COC; BUS	In-House; Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

Economic Development

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 6.1.1.7. Encourage city center im-provements by developing Rockport Harbor Boardwalk, Marina and re-lated boat traffic improvements; ex-ploring marine-related projects; and maintaining infrastructure					X		X					CS; ACND; PW; UT	EDC; R-FCC; RCAD; BUS; PO	Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program; Private Investment
Objective 6.1.2 Continue to promote the tourism industry (including eco-tourism) in Rockport	Action 6.1.2.1. Prioritize capital improvement projects (e.g. infrastructure, signage, safety that benefit waterfront development, trail systems, public spaces and activities.					X		X				X	CS; PW UT	EDC; R-FCC; RCAD; BUS; PO	Capital Improvement Program Funds; Private Investment; Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
	Action 6.1.2.2. Utilize a variety of development strategies that serve the tourism industry, yet maintain the community character within Rockport and the surrounding areas (e.g. small area plans, multi-modal transportation).				X							X	CS; P&Z; CC	EDC; R-FCC	Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Cool & Connected Program
	Action 6.1.2.3. Emphasize the need for downtown businesses to coordinate hours/activities to maximize the presence of seasonal tourists and Winter Texans.				X				X	X			CS	EDC; R-FCC	
	Action 6.1.2.4. Expand on existing public relations campaigns (i.e. "Find Yourself in Rockport-Fulton"); focus on social media and regional tourist websites				X				X				CS; RCAD	EDC; R-FCC	In-House; Community Advantage Program, Skills Development Fund, Skills for Small Business
				X					X		X		CS; R-FCC		Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)

Economic Development

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Objective 6.1.3. Consider new industry sectors that are suitable to Rockport's character and conditions, particularly along the 35 Bypass	Action 6.1.3.1. Focus on new industries (e.g. outdoor activity supply companies, graphic designers, art handlers) that coordinate with Rockport's existing businesses.				X						X	X	CS; EDC	R-FCC	Community Advantage Program, Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG), Small Business Administration Loan programs
	Action 6.1.3.2. Establish industries that minimize environmental impacts (e.g. electronic engineering, computer science, information processing).						X			X	X	X	CS; EDC	R-FCC; BUS	Community Advantage Program, Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG), Small Business Administration Loan programs
Objective 6.1.4 Improve lighting and environment in the downtown district to attract visitors and improve visibility and ensure safety.	Action 6.1.4.1 Encourage businesses to leave porch/facade lights and window display lights on in the evening hours.	RPAT			X						X		CS; BUS	RCAD; R-FCC; EDC	Tax Increment Financing, Cool & Connected Program
	Action 6.1.4.2 Provide mini-grants to businesses to add building facade and awning lighting to illuminate the side-walks at night.	RPAT			X			X			X		CS; RCAD	R-FCC; EDC; BUS	Tax Increment Financing, Cool & Connected Program
	Action 6.1.4.3 Incorporate pedestrian scale lighting into future streetscape engineering and design plans along the Austin Street corridor.	RPAT					X	X					CS; PW	RCAD; R-FCC; EDC	Cool & Connected Program
	Action 6.1.4.4 Consider pedestrian scale lighting alongthe east and west sides of Austin Street along the sidewalks connecting to Veterans Memo-rial Park and Market Street.						X	X					CS; PW	RCAD; R-FCC; EDC	Tax Increment Financing, Cool & Connected Program

Economic Development

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 6.1.4.5 Consider providing strategic live oak tree plant-ings along Austin Street, at key inter-sections, on vacant lots, and along the streetscape to provide shade, visual appeal, and help absorb storm-water.	RPAT					X	X					CS; PW; PARKS	RCAD; R-FCC; EDC	Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
	Action 6.1.4.6 Work with downtown merchants to hire a structural engi-neer to identify the best manner to install smaller systems to work effec-tively with the older structures.	RPAT			X			X			X	X	CS; PW	RCAD; BUS; PO	Community Develop-ment Block Grants (CDBG) , Tax Incre-ment Financing, Cool & Connected Program
Goal 6.2 Establish strategies and programs to foster a skilled workforce.															
Objective 6.2.1 Support workforce recruitment	Action 6.2.1.1. Work with Economic Development Corporation to identify target industries that would generate a demand for workforce members.				X						X	X	CS; EDC; ACISD	R-FCC; BUS	In-House; Texas Work-force Commission's Skill Development Program
	Action 6.2.1.2. Encourage mark-eting strategies and recruitment sessions to connect existing com-panies to new or returning workers.			X					X			X	CS; EDC; R-FCC		In-House; Community Advantage Program, Skills for Small Busi-ness, Jobs & Education for Texans (JET) Grant Program
Objective 6.2.2 Address workforce needs and development by offer-ing professional train-ings	Action 6.2.2.1. Assess strengths and weaknesses in existing workforce and develop professional training programs to advance skill sets.				X				X		X	X	CS; EDC	R-FCC; BUS	In-House; High De-mand Job Training Program, Jobs & Edu-cation for Texans (JET) Grant Program, Skills for Small Business

Economic Development

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 6.2.2.2. Partner with local agencies or universities to establish a program to facilitate entrepreneurship.					X			X		X		CS; EDC; R-FCC	TAMUCC	In-House; Texas Workforce Commission's Skill Development Program
	Action 6.2.2.3. Partner with the Coastal Bend Workforce Solutions (CBWS), Del Mar College (in Corpus Christi - DMC), Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi (TAMUCC) and other organizations to boost readiness of the local workforce with resume and interview workshops, job fairs and trend awareness.			X					X		X		CS; EDC; R-FCC	CBWS; DMC; TAMUCC	Jobs & Education for Texans (JET) Grant Program
	Action 6.2.2.4. Consider mentorship programs for high school students by providing internship opportunities with the local government, nonprof-its, and businesses				X				X		X		CS; EDC; ACISD		The Aransas County ISD Education Foundation
	Action 6.2.2.45 Encourage training and trade-specific licensing for the lo-cal unskilled workforce on building codes, including windstorm require-ments.				X				X		X	X	CS; EDC; ACISD		

Economic Development

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Goal 6.3 Support existing economic assets.															
Objective 6.3.1. Support small business retention and expansion	Action 6.3.1.1. Consider a business needs assessment to facilitate more business re-openings. Coordinate with efforts from the Aransas County Long Term Recovery Plan.			X							X		CS; R-FCC	COC; BUS; TAMUCC	Community Advantage Program, Skills for Small Business
	Action 6.3.1.2. May reassess and update the Heritage District Overlay Code	LTRP; HDZO			X				X	X			CS; CC; P&Z		In-House; Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
	Action 6.3.1.3. Connect small businesses with professional assistance to help cultivate business merchandising, websites, and special events.			X						X	X		CS; R-FCC	EDC; BUS	Community Advantage Program, Skills for Small Business, Small Business Administration Loan programs
	Action 6.3.1.4. May Collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce for "open for business" messaging and commu-nicate specific, current information. Media campaigns should build on the "Find Yourself in Rockport-Fulton" campaign.				X						X		CS;R-FCC	BUS; FLTN; AC	Strong Cities, Strong Communities Visioning Challenge, Skills for Small Business

Environment

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Goal 7.1 Preserve & Protect the Threatened Animals and Sensitive Natural Resources of Live Oak Peninsula, the Little Bay Estuary, Aransas Bay & Gulf of Mexico															
Objective 7.1.1. Improve the connectivity of open spaces to expand wildlife corridors and conserve natural habi-tats.	Action 7.1.1.1. Encourage participation in the Texas Wildscapes certi ication program offered by the TPWD on the design and maintenance of habitable land for wildlife and threatened spe-cies.				X				X				CS; PR; CC	TPWD; AC; FLTN	In-House; Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund/ Section 6 Grants, The Conservation Fund
	Action 7.1.1.2. Look into options to amend the zoning ordinance to in-clude a conservation overlay, or other land use regulations to ensure critical habitats are protected. Get advice from residents on areas of concerns. Prioritize those in SFHA.	MFMP			X					X			CS; PR; P&Z; CC		In-House; Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund/ Section 6 Grants, The Conservation Fund
	Action 7.1.1.3. Work with wildlife spe-cialists and environmental organiza-tions/non-pro its such as, the Interna-tional Crane Foundation of Rockport, the Aransas Bird and Nature Club, and Aransas First to identify critical habi-tats and ecological corridors to be conserved and maintained (prioritiz-ing those in SFHA).				X						X	X	CS; PR	TPWD; TNC; AC; FLTN; ACND	Cooperative Endan-gered Species Conser-vation Fund/Section 6 Grants, The Conserva-tion Fund
	Action 7.1.1.4. Consider updating the tree ordinance to include a goal for % cover of canopy and include language about protecting under-story vegeta-tion. (how to calculate percentage of canopy and/or open space).	HDZO			X				X	X		X	CS; CC; TLC	PR	Community & Re-covery Tree Planting Grants
	Action 7.1.1.5 Consider developing a Tree Master Plan and GI Plan to use as a frame-work to help guide tree planting with-in public and private property.	RPAT				X			X	X		X	CS; CC; TLC	PR; PW	Community & Re-covery Tree Planting Grants

Environment

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Objective 7.1.2. Encourage wetland preservation throughout the city, especially along the bypass.	Action 7.1.2.1 Designate a staff member of the Environment Services of the Public Works Department to oversee the implementation of the conservation management plan.						X		X				CS; CC; PW	PR; TPWD; AC; FLTN; RCM	Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund/Section 6 Grants, Resilient Communities Program, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (15.921), The Conservation Fund
	Action 7.1.2.2. Consider conservation overlay zone, wetland buffers, set backs, transfer and purchase of development rights, wetland banking, revitalization and restoration incentive programs. Prioritize areas in SFHA.	MFMP					X		X	X		X	CS; PW; CC		In-House; WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase I Grants
Objective 7.1.3. Monitor and protect all bay systems within Rockport city limits from runoff pollution and unwanted nutrients that would otherwise disturb the ecosystems natural state.	Action 7.1.3.1 Continue to partner with NGOs such as Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program and Mission-Aransas NERR's report card program to conduct regular water quality testing of Little Bay.			X				X	X			X	CS; PW; PR: CC	TPWD; AC; FLTN; RCM	Water and Environmental Programs

Environment

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 7.1.3.2. May provide educational seminars and volunteer programs that cover techniques to reduce im-pact on water quality, reviews signs of poor water quality and steps to prevent illness.	MFMP			X				X				CS; PW	TPWD; KACB; AC; FLTN; RCM; TWDB; TCEQ; EPA	In-House; Environmental Education (EE) Grants, Environmental Literacy Program
	Action 7.1.3.3. Ensure compliance with governmental regulation on wastewater disposal, runoff contaminants and nutrients, and implement an enforcement program to maintain healthy water quality.			X				X	X			X	CS; PW; CC	TPWD; KACB; AC; FLTN; RCM; TWDB; TCEQ; EPA	"In-House; Texas Water Development Fund (DFund), Water and Environmental Programs, State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT)"
Objective 7.1.4. Increase the use of green infrastructure practices throughout the city to enhance the management of flood waters and quality of water.	Action 7.1.4.1. Encourage public-private partnerships to help with funding sources, the design and functionality of projects, as well as implementation. The Housing and Urban Development Federal Department's Community Development Block grant could provide funding for green infrastructure projects. Prioritize areas in SFHA.			X			X				X		CS; PW	TPWD; KACB; RCM; TWDB; TCEQ; EPA; LEED; HUD;	Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
	Action 7.1.4.2.Consider building incentives that encourage developers to incorporate low impact design techniques throughout their projects city wide. Developers should also be incentivized to promote the connection of identified ecological corridors, hydrologically important locations winthin Rockport and ETJ and avoid building in those areas.	MFMP				X		X				X	CS; PW; CC	TPWD; KACB; RCM; TWDB; TCEQ; EPA; LEED; HUD;	Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)

Environment

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Goal 7.2 Prepare the City for Disasters that Could Adversely Affect the Health, Safety & General Welfare of Residents & Visitors															
Objective 7.2.1. Support and manage natural water retention methods throughout the city.	Action 7.2.1.1.Consider amending the city's code of ordinances to include the land use tool, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) to ensure wetlands ability to provide water retention functions.						X			X			CS; PW; CC	TPWD; KACB; RCM; TWDB; TCEQ; EPA; FEMA	Wetlands Reserve Program
	Action 7.2.1.2. Ensure that lands are managed and protected properly so that environmentally significant areas are preserved. Utilize tools such as a conservation easement or mitigation banking program so that conservation goals are achieved. Prioritize areas in the SFHA.	MFMP		X				X				X	CS; PW; CC		FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grants
Objective 7.2.2. Directly coordinate with the Aransas County Navigation District to generate strategies to strengthen the coastal shoreline to protect Rockport's residents and infrastructure from powerful storm surge.	Action 7.2.2.1. Encourage mitigation of coastal ero-sion through the construction of an artificial reef. The breakwater reef provides the coast with erosion protection, filtration services and stabilization by the implementation of marsh vegetation plantings.	MFMP					X	X				X	CS; CC; ACND	AC; FEMA; TGLO	Coastal Erosion Planning & Response Act, Coastal Management Program, Water and Environmental Programs, Wetlands Reserve Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program

Environment

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Objective 7.2.3. Partner with local advocacy groups and non-profit organizations to improve education, awareness and access to resources about natural and manmade disasters and the recovery process.	Action 7.2.3.1. Continue to hold periodic educational community meetings conducted by local emergency managers and mitigation experts that cover disaster preparedness and recovery efforts.	MFMP; MHMP		X							X	X	CS; PW; CC	TPWD; KACB; AC; R-FCC; FLTN; RCM; TWDB; TCEQ; EPA; FEMA	Environmental Education (EE) Grants, Environmental Literacy Program
	Action 7.2.3.2. Utilize and enhance the city's media methods and other marketing tools to promote educational meetings, seminars, tool sets etc. and encourage citizen engagement and outreach.	MFMP; MHMP		X								X	CS; PW; CC	COU; FLTN; ACND; AC	Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) Grants
Objective 7.2.4. Encourage the city to partner with higher education entities to maintain the CRS (FEMA's Community Rating System) for the residents and business owners of Rockport.	Action 7.2.4.1. Encourage city officials and Disaster Recovery Teams to attend free CRS informational courses (a series of webinars is offered throughout the year) to become aware of the potential program.	MFMP; MHMP				X	X		X			X	CS; PW; CC;	AC; FLTN	In-House; Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR), Public Assistance Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, Community Disaster Loan (CDL) Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program

Environment

Objective	Action	Notes	Timeframe				Action Type					Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
			Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning			
	Action 7.2.4.2. City officials should be in coordination with CRS Specialists, so that they can assist community officials with the implementation of activities that earn premium discounts.	MFMP; MHMP				X	X				X	X	CS		Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR), Public Assistance Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, Community Disaster Loan (CDL) Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program
	Action 7.2.4.3. Maintain CRS accreditation as determined by FEMA and ISO (Insurance Services Organization).	MFMP; MHMP				X					X	X	CS; PW	PO	Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR), Public Assistance Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, Community Disaster Loan (CDL) Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program
	Action 7.2.4.4. Examine new CRS activities to add to the existing activities that the City is doing.	MFMP; MHMP				X					X	X	CS	CC	Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR), Public Assistance Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, Community Disaster Loan (CDL) Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program

Environment

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 7.2.4.5. Evaluate best mitigation solution (i.e. buyouts, reconstruction) for repetitive loss properties.	MFMP; MHMP			X						X	X	CS	AC; FTLN	Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grants, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
	Action 7.2.4.6. Evaluate list of repetitive loss properties for opportunities to partner with property owners regarding potential mitigation actions.	MFMP; MHMP			X						X	X	CS	AC; FTLN	Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grants, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
Objective 7.2.5. Ensure better community compliance with the NFIP regulations by building local capacity.	Action 7.2.5.1. Set up cloud backup services for storing information aobut housing inventory in SFHAs, permit records, appraisal information, and other critical local informtin for substantial damage on properties located in SFHAs.				X					X					
	Action 7.2.5.2. Use Substantial Damage Estimator (SDE) software effectively to keep track of an inventory of structures in SFHAs and request FEMA assistance with DAs.									X					
	Action 7.2.5.3. Develop partnerships between local planning staff members and floodplain administrators (with GIS capabilities) and county tax assessor officials to develop a more streamlined market values and assist with damage assessments.			X							X		CS, CM	EM, ACAD	Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR), Public Assistance Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, Community Disaster Loan (CDL) Program, NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program

Environment

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 7.2.5.4. Evaluate current permitting, plan review, and recordkeeping process to ensure that there will be consistent, equitable, and defendable floodplain management/development records.			X						X			CS	EM	
	Action 7.2.5.5. May provide elected offi-cials with training on how to maintain a clear and realistic message about post-disaster mitigation options with community residents in ways that do not undermine substantial damage activities.				X				X				CS, EM	CC	
	Action 7.2.5.6. Could develop partnerships with non-profits, universities, exten-sion programs and other non-federal partners that have the ability to col-lect, analyze and display spatial data quickly, and that can support local mapping, planning and engagement efforts during DAs and SDD activities.				X						X		CS CS, EM	ACAD	
	Action 7.2.5.7. Ensure emergency response protocols include provisions that state that GIS community planning staff, tax assessors and floodplain management administrators are present (or have direct access to) the Emergency Operations Center during disaster.				X					X					

Environment

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 7.2.5.8. May develop mutual-aid agreements (with county govern-ments, regions, non-profit organiza-tions and other agencies and groups) that benefit DAs and SD activities, enabling disaster mitigation and re-covery.				X						X		CS	AC, FLTN, ACND	
	Action 7.2.5.9. Work with and use the FEMA and TWDB Community Assis-tance Contact as a resource to assist with compliance of the NFIP.				X						X		CS	TWDB, FEMA	
Goal 7.3 Maximize environmental and economic benefits of ecotourism industry.															
Objective 7.3.1. Pro-tect assets related to ecotourism and assist businesses and tourist attractions to evaluate ecological footprint.	Action 7.3.1.1. Work with the Cham-ber of Commerce and environmental groups to educate local businesses on the importance of environmen-tally-friendly practices, such as recy-cling, water and energy conservation, and reducing the use of plastics.				X						X		CS; PW; R-FCC	BUS; KACB	Outdoor Recreation Grants, Texas Water Development Fund (DFund), Recreation Grants, Boating Access Grants, Community Outdoor Outreach Pro-gram (CO-OP) Grants
	Action 7.3.1.2. Continue working with Aransas Pathways to maintain the natural environment.			X							X		CS; AC		Rivers, Trails and Con-servation Assistance (15.921), The Conserva-tion Fund

Environment

Objective	Action	Notes	Timeframe				Action Type					Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
			Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning			
Objective 7.3.2. Encourage environmental and flood-related education.	Action 7.3.2.1. Enhance community education programs to raise awareness about flood risks and maintaining ecologically conscious tourism and lifestyles.	MFMP			X				X				CS; ACISD		"Recreation Grants, Outdoor Recreation Grants, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program, Environmental Education (EE) Grants, Environmental Literacy Program, Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) Grants"

Community Facilities

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Goal 8.1 Ensure that All Infrastructure Elements meet existing & projected demands in a manner that will minimize environmental impacts															
Objective 8.1.1. Invest in city wide public parks and public spaces to increase the number of recreational facilities to better meet the needs of current and future residents.	Action 8.1.1.1. Partner and collaborate within different city departments to leverage funding and effort for park maintenance and green infrastructure projects, priorotizing areas in SFHA.	MFMP		X							X		CS; PW; PR	CC; CM; AC; FLTN; ACND	Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program
	Action 8.1.1.2. Consider a parkland trail dedication ordinance that requires land dedication (or fee-in-lieu) for trails, parks and improvements, pri-oritizing areas in SFHA. The ordinance should also require developers to dedicate and construct trails or to in-vest in existing public spaces.				X				X	X			CS; PW; PR	CC	Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (15.921), Recreational Trails Program (RTP), Recreational Trail Grants
	Action 8.1.1.3. Identify possible corridors to further expand and connect the existing trail network in Rockport. For example, acquiring the land at the crossroad of Bypass 35 and 3036 to turn into a trail.				X								CS; PR	AC	Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (15.921), Recreational Trails Program (RTP), Recreational Trail Grants
Objective 8.1.2. Use utility easements to connect parks and open spaces (Aransas Pathways) throughout Rockport.	Action 8.1.2.1 Consider an implementa-tion plan to use the utility and drain-age easements to connect parks and open spaces.						X	X				X	CS; PW; PR		Wetlands Reserve Program

Community Facilities

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Objective 8.1.3. Increase the amount of public facilities to meet the needs of current and future residents, including facilities for people of all ages.	Action 8.1.3.1. Collaborate with the Aransas County ISD to provide neighborhood parks by considering keeping school playgrounds open after hours for the use of residents in surrounding neighborhoods.			X			X					X	PW; PL; BD; ACISD; CS	PB; AC; CC; CM; RCA; RCM; TLC	Community Impact Grants, Local Park Grant Program
	Action 8.1.3.2. Partner with the Nature Conservancy to identify and acquire parkland and open space in the floodplain that can be suitable and acquired for wildlife habitat, floodplain mitigation or wetland banking. (MFMP: Evaluate areas in the floodplain viable for open space preservation.)	MFMP		X				X				X	CS	AC; TNC	The Conservation Fund, Wetlands Reserve Program, Water and Environmental Programs
	Action 8.1.3.3. Public offices and activities center are encouraged to be located nearby residential areas in the downtown and bypass areas, for more convenient and accessible community facilities.			X				X					CC	AC	Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program, Rural LISC - Community Facilities Fund
	Action 8.1.3.4. Work with the Parks & Leisure Services Board to recognize recreational opportunities.						X				X		CS; PR		Recreation Grants, Outdoor Recreation Grants, Local Park Grant Program
	Action 8.1.3.5. Investigate grant opportunities for property buyouts, open space preservation, or other flood mitigation measures. (65)	MFMP										X	CS		FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grants, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund

Community Facilities

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 8.3.1.6 Ensure community facilities and civic buildings are fortified and enforce building to higher building codes.	HDMP					X	X		X			CS	CC: AC	"Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund, Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program, Resilient Communities Program"
Objective 8.1.4 Complete capital improvement projects already identified by the City	Action 8.1.4.1. May fund drainage projects that were modeled in the 2016 Drain-age Master Plan Modeling Report	MFMP; MHMP					X	X					CS; PW; CC		Water and Environmental Programs
	Action 8.1.4.2. Design and conduct an engineering study to address flood-ing in downtown Rockport (17-40)	MFMP				X		X				X	CS; CE; PW	CC	Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program
	Action 8.1.4.3. Each jurisdiction should continue ongoing maintenance of drainage pipes, culverts, and swales until the county-wide master plan is approved and implementation can begin.	MFMP		X				X		X			CS; PW	AC; FLTN	Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program, Keep America Beautiful's Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund
	Action 8.1.4.4. Repair outfalls of pump station that pump into Aransas Bay	MFMP				X		X					CS; PW; CE		Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program, Keep America Beautiful's Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund

Community Facilities

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Objective 8.2.1. Maintain Historical and Cultural heritage of Rockport to keep its unique character, and to encourage community members in prioritizing preservation in the future.	Action 8.2.1.1 Continue supporting and promoting events and workshops about Rockport's history and culture.			X					X				CS; ACHS, ACHC, THC	RCAD, RCA, AC	Event Trust Funds Program, Humanities Texas Grants
	Action 8.2.1.2. Promote Rockport's history and culture through an agritourism plan that highlights the significant impacts from the civil war, the cattle industry, and the presence of the chamber of commerce.			X					X		X		CS; ACHS; ACHC; AC		Humanities Texas Grants
	Action 8.2.1.3 Partner with Aransas Pathways and Rockport Cultural Arts dstrict to promote Rockport's historical connections and culture.				X								CS; RCAD; AC		Art Works Grant, Museum Assessment Program (MAP), Humanities Texas Grants

Community Facilities

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
Objective 8.2.2. Work with entities such as 4-H club and the Aransas County Independent School District to increase the amount of education and related programs for the youth to engage them in community development at a young age	Action 8.2.2.1. Consider a systematic approach to identifying and focusing resources for education and youth programs.				X				X			X	ACISD; AgriLife		In-House; Bee Grant Program, The Aransas County ISD Education Foundation, Garden Grant Program
	Action 8.2.2.2. Encourage education and engagement programs about the environment via the City's Envi-ronmental Services department that educates youth on the role of the en-vironment in the community.				X				X		X		CS; PW; ACISD		In-House; Environmental Education (EE) Grants, Environmental Literacy Program, Event Trust Funds Program
	Action 8.2.2.3. Invest in building a multi-purpose community facility center, open to the public, that will include recreational activities. Preferable location for center will be near the major high school and middle school.					X							CS; CC		Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program, Rural LISC - Community Facilities Fund
Objective 8.2.3. Downtown Heritage Revitalization through improvements, promotion, and economic restructuring that is appropriate for Rockport.	Action 8.2.3.1 Explore the possibility of using tax increment financing or other funding mechanisms in the historic downtown to redevelop and improve the area.						X	X		X		X	CS; CC	RCAD; RCA; BUS; R-FCC; EDC; COU; ACND; ACISD	Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives, Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program (HRSP)
Objective 8.2.4. Increase of Art and Beautification in the parks, open spaces and Historical Downtown.	Action 8.2.4.1 Work with the Cultural Arts District and the Center for the Arts to establish a public art grant program that encourages public art installations and strategic placemaking activities throughout the city.				X				X				CS; RCAD; RCA		Art Works Grant

Community Facilities

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 8.2.4.2 Collaborate with volun-teer programs to engage residents in beautifying parks. Social events could be used to draw in a larger crowds and gather more feedback from the community on what they want to see for their public open spaces.			X				X					CS; PL	KACB	Keep America Beautiful's Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund, Community Impact Grants
	Action 8.2.4.3. The Rockport KRB program could create an "adopt-a-park' model and market to local busi-nesses to get buy-in for beautification initiatives. Could be mirrored after the "adopt-a-highway" model.				X			X					CS; PL		Keep America Beautiful's Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund, Community Impact Grants
	Action 8.2.4.4. Pedestrian links to Residential districts (4-2)	HDMP RPAT						X					CS; PW CC		Walk Friendly Community (WFC)
	Action 8.2.4.5. North Street Pocket Park (4-2)	HDMP RPAT			X			X					CS; PR		Local Park Grant Program
Objective 8.2.5. Enhance the sense of place and maintain community character to attract future investments and visitors.	Action 8.2.5.1. Consider a Branding/ Way-finding Design Manual to execute common themes/branding for public facilities, beach facilities, parks, and private sector buildings as they are rebuilt and newly built.				X			X			X		CS	R-FCC	Local Park Grant Program
	Action 8.2.5.2. Maintain strong relations with "Keep Aransas County Beautiful," Texas A&M Agrilife County Extension, and "Aransas Pathways" to assist in beautifying the city and enhance sense of place and link up existing trails.			X				X					CS	KACB; AgriLife; AC	Keep America Beautiful's Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund

Community Facilities

Objective	Action	Notes	Plan Integration	Timeframe: On-Going	Timeframe: Short-Term	Timeframe: Mid-Term	Timeframe: Long-Term	Action Type: Capital Project	Action Type: Program	Action Type: Regulation or Standard	Action Type: Partnership or Collaboration	Action Type: More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Other Partners	Funding
	Action 8.2.5.3. May evaluate and amend the Heritage District Zoning Overlay Code to preserve and enhance the area	RPAT				X				X			CS; P&Z; CC		HOPE VI Main Street Program, Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives, Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program,
	Action 8.2.5.4. Explore various funding sources for infrastructure and community improvements in Historic Districts and around other historic and cultural assets.			X							X	X	CS; ACHS; ACHC		Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program, Humanities Texas Grants, HOPE VI Main Street Program, Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives, Preservation Technology and Training Grants, Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program (HRSP), Rural LISC - Community Facilities Fund

FUNDING & RESOURCES

Many funding sources, both internal and external, are available to help the city accomplish its goals. Internal resources refer to taxes and fees to support the action item. External resources are numer- ous, and may also include public-private partnerships with external partners such as developers. The Funding column in the Implementation Table table provides suggestions for funding sources or grants for each action item.

CH. 3 - DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Purpose: Formula grants for local governments to carry out community and economic development activities.
- Eligibility: State allocated Limitations: Apportioned to the States by a formula

More Information: http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/

Community Disaster Loan (CDL) Program

- Grantor: FEMA
- Purpose: Provides operational funding to help local governments that have incurred a significant loss in revenue, due to major disaster.
- Eligibility: Local Governments
- Funding limitations: max loan of $5,000,000
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/176527

Cool & Connected Program

- Grantor: EPA
- Cool & Connected is a planning assistance program that helps community members develop strategies and an action plan for using broadband to create walkable, connected, economically vibrant main streets and small town neighborhoods that improve human health and the environment. Communities can combine broadband service with other local assets such as cultural and recreational amenities to attract investment and people, including young people, and diversify local economies.

More information: https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/cool-connected

Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund

- Grantor: Keep America Beautiful (KAB)
- Purpose: provides immediate and long-term support for initial and ongoing cleanup efforts and helps rebuild vital public spaces: parks, greenways, community gateways, Main Street/downtown areas, open spaces and more.
- Eligibility: KAB certified affiliates.

More Information: https://www.kab.org/resources/community-restoration-and-resiliency-fund

Disaster Relief Fund (Rural)

- Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: Cities and counties may apply following a disaster declaration or for qualifying urgent infrastructure needs.
- Eligibility: Non-entitlement cities under 50,000 in population and non-entitlement counties that have a non-metropolitan population under 200,000 and are not eligible for direct CDBG funding from HUD may apply for funding through any of the Texas CDBG programs.
- Limitations: $50,000-350,000, official disaster status declaration
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/DisasterRelief.aspx

Distressed Cities Technical Assistance

- Grantor: HUD
- Purpose: To build the administrative capacity of smaller distressed communities recently impacted by a natural disaster. The focus of this TA includes financial management, economic development, and disaster recovery planning.

- Eligibility: Eligibility is three-fold
- Distressed Community: unemployment rate of 9% or more over the past 3 years; poverty rate of 20% or more among individuals not enrolled in higher education; population decline of 5% or more between the 2010 Decennial Census and the most recent ACS 5-year Estimates
- Impacted by Natural Disaster: community in a county that experienced a Presidentially declared disaster from 2015 onward
- Population Size: less than 40,000

More Information: https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/distressed-cities/

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program

- Grantor: FEMA
- Purpose: FMA provides funding to states, territories, federally-recognized tribes and local communities for projects and planning that reduces or eliminates long-term risk of flood damage to structures insured under the NFIP. FMA funding is also available for management costs. Funding is appropriated by Congress annually.
- Eligibility: Individual homeowners, business, and private nonprofits may apply for funding through eligible subapplicants (federally-recognized tribes, state agencies, private HMGP nonprofits, tribal agencies, and local governments/communities). Generally, local communities will sponsor applications on behalf of homeowners and then submit the applications to their State. All FMA grant applications must be submitted to FEMA by a state, territory, or federally-recognized tribe.

More information: https://www.fema.gov/flood-mitigation-assistance-grant-program

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grants

- Grantor: Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
- Purpose: The Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program provides grants to assist communities in implementing measures to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to buildings, manufactured homes, and other structures insurable under the NFIP.
- Funding Limitations: The Texas Water Development Fund helps fund wastewater and flood control projects.

More information at http://www.fema.gov/flood-mitigation-assistance-grant-program

NOAA Coastal Resilience Grants Program

- Grantor: NOAA
- Purpose: funds projects that are helping coastal communities and ecosystems prepare for and recover from extreme weather events, climate hazards, and changing ocean conditions.

More Information: https://coast.noaa.gov/resilience-grant/

Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program

- Grantor: Environmental Protection Agency
- Purpose: focuses on complex or cutting-edge issues, such as stormwater management, code revision, transit-oriented development, affordable housing, infill development, corridor planning, green building, and climate change.
- Eligibility: Tribes, states, regions, local governments, as well as nonprofits that have a partnership with a government entity.
- Limitations: Applicants can submit proposals under 4 categories: community resilience to disasters, job creation, the role of manufactured homes in sustainable neighborhood design or medical and social service facilities siting.
- Deadline: Rolling

More Information: http://www2.epa.gov/smartgrowth/smart-growth-implementation-assistance

REAP Grants

- Grantor: USDA
- Purpose: Providing grants of up to $20,000, the Rural Energy for America Program helps farmers and small rural businesses obtain and install renewable energy systems. Recipients may also use the grant to make improvements to existing energy efficiency systems. Agricultural producers must demonstrate that at least half of their gross income comes from agribusiness and show they can pay for at least 75 percent of the project to qualify.
- Eligibility: Small businesses must be in an area OTHER THAN a city or town with a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants and the urbanized area of that city or town. Agricultural producers with at least 50 percent of their gross income coming from agricultural operations.

More information: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-energy-america-program-renewable-energy-systems-energy-efficiency

Urgent Need Fund (Rural)

- Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: Grants that will restore rural infrastructure whose sudden failure poses an imminent threat to life or health.

- Eligibility: Non-entitlement cities under 50,000 in population and non-entitlement counties that have a non-metropolitan population under 200,000 and are not eligible for direct CDBG funding from HUD may apply for funding through any of the Texas CDBG programs.
- Limitations: $25,000-250,000, requires assessment.
- Deadline: Applications are accepted by invitation.

More information: http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/UrgentNeedFund.aspx

WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase I Grants

- Grantor: Department of the Interior - Bureau of Reclamation
- Purpose: 50/50 cost share funding to irrigation and water districts, tribes, states and other entities with water or power delivery authority. Projects conserve and use water more efficiently; increase the production of hydropower; mitigate conflict risk in areas at a high risk of future water conflict; and accomplish other benefits that contribute to water supply reliability in the western United States. Projects are selected through a competitive process and the focus is on projects that can be completed within two or three years.
- Eligibility: an applicant eligible for funding under this FOA is a state, Indian tribes, irrigation districts, water district, or other organizations with water or power delivery authority.
- Applicants must also be located in the western United States or Territories as identified in the Reclamation Act of June 17, 1902, as amended and supplemented; specifically: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands.

More Information: https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/weeg/index.html

CH. 4 - HOUSING

Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BCNP)

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Purpose: offer training and technical assistance (TTA) to begin or sustain the process of revitalization, guided by comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plans, in concert with relevant local and state plans and planning processes.
- Eligibility: Five neighborhoods selected. Nonprofit organizations, faith-based and community organizations, institutions of higher learning, and for-profit organizations (commercial) with significant experience in supporting neighborhood and community development through training and technical assistance. For-profit organizations must agree to forgo any profit or management fee.
- Limitations: Up to $2 million

More Information: http://www.cssp.org/community/neighborhood-investment/place-based-initiatives/building-neighborhood-capacity

Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Grants

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Purpose: for intermediary organizations to assist HUD in providing technical assistance to community development corporations and community housing development organizations to carry out community development and affordable housing activities that benefit low-income families.
- Eligibility: Community development financing institutions (CDFIs)
- Limitations: $49.4 million
- Deadline: Rolling

More Information: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/hudprograms/capacitybuilding

Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities

- Grantor: Environmental Protection Agency
- Purpose: Funding for intermediary organizations who will assist HUD in providing technical assistance to communities engaged in planning efforts built around integrating housing, land use, transportation,and other issues.
- Eligibility: nonprofit organization, a local or state public agency, a for-profit organization, a nationally recognized and accredited University or College; or any combination of the aforementioned entities as a Capacity Building Team to combine their skills and offer a coordinated program.
- Limitations: $5.65 million, max amount $ 1 million. Primary support will be given to recipients of Sustainable Communities and Brownfield Area Wide Planning grants.

More Information: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/economic_resilience/capacity-building

Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Program

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Purpose: to revitalize severely distressed public and/or HUD-assisted multifamily housing in distressed neighborhoods into viable, mixed-income communities with access to well-functioning services, high quality educational programs, public transportation, and jobs.
- Eligibility:Public housing authorities (PHAs), local governments, nonprofits, tribal entities and for-profit developers that apply jointly with a public entity.
- Limitations: Public housing authorities (PHAs), local governments, nonprofits, tribal entities and for-profit developers that apply jointly with a public entity. Preferred Sustainability Applicants receive an additional two bonus points.

More Information: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/cn/grants

Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Purpose: to revitalize severely distressed public and/or HUD-assisted multifamily housing in distressed neighborhoods into viable, mixed-income communities with access to well-functioning services, high quality educational programs, public transportation, and jobs.
- Eligibility: Public housing authorities, local governments, nonprofits, and for-profit developers that apply jointly with a public entity. Preferred Sustainability Applicants receive an additional two bonus points.
- Deadlines: Annual

More Information: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/cn/planninggrants

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- Purpose: Provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. Assists urban, suburban and rural communities to improve housing and living conditions and expand economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons.
- Eligibility: States and local governments.
- Limitations: Apportioned to States and local governments by a formula
- Deadline: Annually apportioned

More Information: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs

Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG) Program for Rural Texas

- Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: develop viable communities by providing decent housing and suitable living environments, and expanding economic opportunities principally for persons of low- to moderate-income.
- Eligibility: non-entitlement cities and counties whose populations are less than 50,000 and 200,000 respectively, and are not participating or designated as eligible to participate in the entitlement portion of the federal Community Development Block Grant Program.
- Limitations: Population 50,000 city and 200,000 county.
- Deadline: Annually Apportioned.

More information: http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG).aspx

Housing Preservation Grants (HPG)

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development
- Purpose: provides grants to sponsoring organizations for the repair or rehabilitation of housing owned or occupied by low- and very-low-income rural citizens.
- Eligibility: Most State and local governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, Federally Recognized Tribes. Individual homeowners are not eligible. Rural areas and towns with 20,000 or fewer people.
- Limitations: USDA will award a total of $15,888,420 in Housing Preservation Grant Program funding for the repair and rehabilitation of rural housing units.
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: https://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/erfo/

Housing Preservation & Revitalization Demonstration Loans & Grants

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: provide affordable multi-family rental housing
- Eligibility: for very low-, low-, and moderate-income families; the elderly; and persons with disabilities.
- Deadline: Rolling

More Information: http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/housing-preservation-revitalization-demonstration-loans-grants

Low Income Housing Tax Credit (4%)

- Grantor: HUD
- Purpose: Generate equity capital for the construction and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing.
- Eligibility: Determined by state housing finance agency
- If the projects involve acquisition and substantial rehabilitation expenditures, and are funded with Tax-Exempt Bonds only qualify for 4%.
- Deadline: Rolling Application
- More information:

https://tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/housing-tax-credits-4pct/index.htm

Low Income Housing Tax Credit (9%)

- Grantor: Department of the Treasury
- Purpose: Generate equity capital for the construction and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing.
- Eligibility: Determined by state housing finance agency
- 9% LIHTC are possible if the projects are not funded by federal Tax-Exempt Bonds, and meet the other basic qualifications of LIHTC.
- Deadline: Rolling Application

More information: http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/housing-tax-credits-9pct/

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)

- Grantor: U.S. Treasury Department via the Internal Revenue Code
- Purpose: directing private capital toward the development and preservation of affordable rental housing for low-income households.
- Eligibility: Private for-profit and nonprofit developers. Tenants earning up to 60% of the area median family income (AMFI), which varies by area.
- Deadline: Rolling

More information can be found at http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/lihtc.html

Multi-family (Rental Housing) Development Program

- Grantor: provides funding to units of General Local Governments, Public Housing Authorities, nonprofits, and for-profit entities towards the new construction or rehabilitation of affordable multifamily rental developments.
- Eligibility: Development funds are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis through an application process.
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/home/index.htm

Multi-Family Housing Loan Guarantees

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: to increase the supply of moderately-priced housing in rural areas
- Eligibility: be a U.S. citizen(s) or legal resident(s), a U.S. owned corporation, a limited liability corporation (LLC) or a partnership in which the principals are U.S. citizens or permanent legal residents.
- Limitations: The maximum loan to value is 90% for for-profit entities and 97% for non-profit entities.

More Information: http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/multi-family-housing-loanguarantees

Multifamily Mortgage Revenue Bond Program

- Grantor: Texas Bond Review Board and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA)
- Purpose: issues mortgage revenue bonds to finance loans
- Eligibility: qualified nonprofit organizations and for-profit developers.
- Limitations: developers financed through this program are subject to set-aside restrictions for low-income tenants and persons with special needs, tenant services, maximum rent limitations and other requirements.

- Deadline: Rolling

More information: http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/bond/index.htm

Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Purpose: to stabilize communities that have suffered from foreclosures and abandonment by providing funds to purchase and redevelop distressed residential properties.
- Eligibility: States, territories and local governments
- Limitations: Varies

More Information: https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/nsp/

Planning Capacity Building Fund (Rural)

- Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: Grants for local public facility and housing planning activities.
- Eligibility: non-entitlement cities and counties whose populations are less than 50,000 and 200,000 respectively, and are not participating or designated as eligible to participate in the entitlement portion of the federal Community Development Block Grant Program.
- Limitations: $55,000 and competitive application process

More information: http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopment-Block-Grant(CDBG)/PlanningandCapacityBuildingFund.aspx

Public Housing Agency's Housing Choice Voucher program

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Purpose: Allows a very low-income family to receive a housing voucher. The family must pay 30% of its monthly adjusted gross income for rent and utilities.
- Eligibility: very low-income families.
- Limitations: Housing Authorities may establish local preferences for selecting applicants from its waiting list.
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/about/fact_sheet

SBA Disaster Loan Assistance (Home and Personal Property Loans)

- Grantor: U.S. Small Business Administration
- Purpose: If you are in a declared disaster area and have experienced damage to your home or personal property, you may be eligible for financial assistance from the SBA — even if you do not own a business. As a homeowner, renter and/or personal property owner, you may apply to the SBA for a loan to help you recover from a disaster.
- Eligibility: Secondary homes or vacation properties are not eligible for these loans. However, qualified rental properties may be eligible for assistance under the SBA business disaster loan program.
- Loan amount: Homeowners may apply for up to $200,000 to replace or repair their primary residence. Renters and homeowners may borrow up to $40,000 to replace or repair personal property — such as clothing, furniture, cars and appliances — damaged or destroyed in a disaster.
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/Information/HomePersonalPropertyLoans

Single Family Home Repairs (Section 504)

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) & Rural Development
- Purpose: provide loans to very-low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes or grants to elderly very-low-income homeowners to remove health and safety hazards.
- Eligibility: Rural areas with populations up to 10,000 if located in a MSA or up to 20,000 if not in an MSA.

Limitations: up to $7,500-27,500 loans and grants, 20 year repayment, very-low-income applicants or elderly persons age 62 or older.

More information: http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/single-family-housing-repairloans-

Section 202 - Supportive Housing for the Elderly

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development\
- Purpose: Provide capital advances to finance the construction, rehabilitation or acquisition of properties that will serve as supportive housing for very low-income elderly persons.
- Eligibility: Private nonprofit organizations and nonprofit consumer cooperatives
- Limitations: $371 million

More Information: http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/

Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Program

- Grantor: League of American Bicyclists.
- Purpose: The program provides a roadmap to communities to improve conditions for bicycling and offers national recognition for communities that actively support bicycling.
- Eligibility: Communities. Deadline February 5, 2020
- Information on applying to become a recognized Bicycle Friendly Community

More Information: http://bikeleague.org/bfa

BUILD Discretionary Grants

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Purpose: Provide needed infrastructure investment to better connect rural and urban communities around our nation. Eligible projects for BUILD Transportation Grants are capital projects that include, but are not limited to:
- road or bridge projects eligible under title 23, United States Code;
- public transportation projects eligible under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code;
- passenger and freight rail transportation projects;
- port infrastructure investments (including inland port infrastructure and land ports of entry); and
- intermodal projects.
- Eligibility: Eligible Applicants for BUILD Transportation grants are State, local and tribal governments, including U.S. territories, transit agencies, port authorities, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and other political subdivisions of State or local governments.

More information: https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants/about

Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities

- Grantor: Department of Transportation
- Purpose: Provides formula funding to states for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. The program aims to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation services and expand the transportation mobility options. This program supports transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities in all areas – large urbanized (over 200,000), small urbanized (50,000-200,000), and rural (under 50,000).
- Eligibility: States and designated recipients are direct recipients; eligible subrecipients include private nonprofit organizations, states or local government authorities, or operators of public transportation.
- Funding limitations: Funds are available to the states during the fiscal year of apportionment plus two additional years (total of three years).

More information: https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/enhanced-mobility-seniors-individuals-disabilities-section-5310

Governor's Community Achievement Awards (GCAA)

- Grantor: Texas Department of Transportation, Keep Texas Beautiful
- Purpose: Awarded to organizations with grassroots environmental programs. Funding comes from money set aside by TxDOT for landscaping needs. The funds are used for landscaping projects along local rights-of-way.
- Eligibility: All Texas communities

More Information: https://www.ktb.org/gcaa

Grants for Rural Areas to Support Public Transportation- 5311

- Grantor: Department of Transportation
- Purpose: The Formula Grants for Rural Areas program provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000, where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. The program also provides funding for state and national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program.
- Eligibility: Designated recipients that include planning, capital, operating, job access and reverse commute projects, and the acquisition of public transportation services.
- Funding limitations: Funds are available the year appropriated plus two additional years. Funds are appropriated based on a formula that includes land area, population, revenue vehicle miles, and low-income individuals in rural areas. Must spend no less than 15 percent of its annual apportionment for development and support of intercity bus transportation.

More information: https://www.transit.dot.gov/rural-formula-grants-5311

INVEST 1.0 Implementation Projects

- Grantor: Department of Transportation
- Purpose: to evaluate the sustainability of transportation systems
- Eligibility: State DOTs, MPOs and other transportation agencies
- Limitations: Multiple awards between $25,000 to $150,000

More Information: http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/

National Scenic Byways

- Grantor: Department of Transportation
- Purpose: improvement to a scenic byway that will enhance access to an area for the purpose of recreation; development of tourist information to the public (such as biking info and maps on scenic byways).
- Eligibility: State DOTs and Indian Tribes
- Limitations: Livability is a criteria that will be used in the consideration of projects.

More Information: http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/

The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.
- Purpose: The goal is to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.
- Limitations: The HSIP requires states to develop and implement a Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). $2.407 bn

More Information: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/funding.cfm

The National Complete Streets Coalition

- Grantor: Smart Growth America
- Purpose: promoting the design and operation of road-ways to provide safe, comfortable, and convenient access for all users, from motorists to bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.

More Information: http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program

- Grantor: Department of Transportation
- Purpose: Conduct research and develop guidelines, tools and safety countermeasures to reduce pedestrian and bicycle fatalities.
- Eligibility: State/MPO allocated

More Information: http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/

Recreational Trail Grants

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Purpose: TPWD administers the National Recreational Trails Fund in Texas under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This federally funded program receives its funding from a portion of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in non-highway recreational vehicles.
- Eligibility: Funds can be spent on both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects such as the construction of new recreational trails, to improve existing trails, to develop trailheads or trailside facilities, and to acquire trail corridors.
- Limitations: The grants can be up to 80% of project cost with a maximum of $200,000 for non-motorized trail grants and currently there is not a maximum amount for motorized trail grants (call 512-389-8224 for motorized trail grant funding availability).

More information: https://tpwd.texas.gov/business/grants/recreation-grants/recreational-trails-grants;

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

- Grantor: Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Purpose: provides funds to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non motorized and motorized recreational trail uses

More Information: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/

Safe Routes To School

- Grantor: Department of Transportation
- Purpose: The Program's objectives are 1) to enable and encourage children in grades K-8, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; 2) to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and 3) to facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.
- Eligibility: Eligible applicants for infrastructure projects include state agencies and political subdivisions (a city or county within the State of Texas). Applications should present a unified solution for improving the safety of pedestrian or bicycle routes to schools within a community and may involve more than one partner.
- Funding limitations: Safe Routes to School is a 100 percent federally funded cost-reimbursement program managed through the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Traffic Operations Division (TRF). Projects are funded through a statewide competitive process with funds limited to those authorized in the SRTS program. Cost-reimbursement means that sponsors will front the cost of the project and will be reimbursed through various stages of the project. In some cases, there will be no up-front funds required from the applicant.

More information: http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot-info/ptn/programs/tasa-2017/2019-program-guide.pdf

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)

- Grantor: Department of Transportation
- Purpose: The Surface Transportation Block Grant program (STBG) provides flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance on any Federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel projects on any public road, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects, including intercity bus terminals.
- Eligibility: State, local, and tribal governments, including U.S. territories, transit agencies, port authorities, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and other political subdivisions of State or local governments.

More information: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/

Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities

- Grantor: Department of Transportation
- Purpose: provides formula funding to States for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities when the service provided is unavailable, insufficient/inappropriate to meeting these needs.
- Eligibility: States are direct recipients. Eligible sub recipients are private non-profit organizations, governmental authorities where no non-profit organizations are available to provide service and governmental authorities approve to coordinate services
- Limitations: State allocated

More Information: http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/

Walk Friendly Community (WFC)

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.
- Purpose: helps to promote safe walking environments in cities.
- Eligibility: Individual cities and towns. Applications due June 15 and December 15.
- Limitations: By applying will receive specific suggestions and resources on how to make needed changes for pedestrian safety.

More Information: http://walkfriendly.org/

CH. 6 - ECONOMY

Community Advantage Program

- Grantor: U.S. Small Business Administration
- Purpose: Loans are primarily designed for newer, veteran-owned, and underserved businesses that have difficulty securing traditional financing and can benefit from management and technical assistance.
- Eligibility: small businesses
- Max loan amount: $ 250,000
- Interest rate: prime + 6%
- Terms: up to 25 years of real estate, 10 years for equipment and working capital
- Guarantee: 75 to 90%

More information: https://fitsmallbusiness.com/sba-community-advantage-loan-program/

Economically Distressed Areas Program

- Grantor: Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
- Purpose: This program provides financial assistance for water and wastewater services in economically distressed areas where present facilities are inadequate to meet residents' minimal needs. The program also includes measures to prevent future substandard development.
- Eligibility: Projects must be located in an area that was established as a residential subdivision as of June 1, 2005, median household income less than 75% of the median state household income, has an inadequate water supply or sewer services to meet minimal residential needs and a lack of financial resources to provide water supply or sewer services to satisfy those needs. All political subdivisions, including cities, counties, water districts, and nonprofit water supply corporations, are eligible to apply for funds. The applicant, or its designee, must be capable of maintaining and operating the completed system.
- Funding limitations: Financial support is in the form of grant or combination of a grant and a loan. The program does not fund ongoing operation and maintenance expenses, nor does it fund new development.
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: http://www.twdb.texas.gov/financial/programs/EDAP/

High Demand Job Training Program

- Grantor: Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)
- Purpose: to provide high-demand occupational job training in local workforce areas; to support Boards in partnering with local EDCs that use their local economic development sales taxes for high-demand job training.
- Eligibility: Local Workforce Development Board
- Limitations: one million dollars. Funds will be available through August 30, 2020.

More information: https://twc.texas.gov/high-demand-job-training-program

Jobs & Education for Texans (JET) Grant Program

- Grantor: Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)
- Purpose: provides grants to eligible educational institutions to defray the start-up costs associated with developing career and technical education programs; Supports new, emerging industries or high-demand occupations; Offers new or expanded dual credit career and technical educational opportunities in public high schools.
- Eligibility: Public community, state or technical colleges; Independent school districts (ISD) entered into a partnership with a public community, state or technical college
- Limitations: $10 million each biennium. Rolling Applications.

More information: https://twc.texas.gov/partners/jobs-education-texans-jet-grant-program

Rural Business Development Grants

- Grantor: USDA
- Purpose: The RBEG program provides grants for rural projects that finance and facilitate the development of small and emerging rural businesses help fund distance learning networks, and help fund employment related adult education programs.
- Eligibility: Rural public entities (towns, communities, State agencies, and authorities), Indian tribes and rural private non-profit corporations are eligible to apply for funding.
- Limitations: Generally grants range $10,000 up to $500,000.
- Deadline: April (annually)

More Information: http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants

Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)

- Grantor: USDA
- Purpose: promotes sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs through provision of training and technical assistance.
- Eligibility: Rural public bodies, rural nonprofit corporations, rural Indian tribes, and cooperatives with primarily rural members.
- Limitations: The maximum grant for a project serving a single state is $50,000. The maximum grant for a project serving two or more states is $150,000.

More Information: http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=kyf_grants_rd2_content.html

SBA Disaster Loan Assistance (Business Physical Disaster Loans)

- Grantor: U.S. Small Business Administration
- Purpose: If you are in a declared disaster area and have experienced damage to your business, you may be eligible for financial assistance from the SBA. Businesses of any size and most private nonprofit organizations may apply to the SBA for a loan to recover after a disaster. These loan proceeds may be used for the repair or replacement of Real property, Machinery, Equipment, Fixtures, Inventory and Leasehold improvements.
- Eligibility: A business of any size or most private nonprofit organizations that are located in a declared disaster area and has incurred damage during the disaster may apply for a loan to help replace damaged property or restore its pre-disaster condition.
- Loan amount: up to $2 million to qualified businesses or most private nonprofit organizations.

More information: https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/Information/BusinessPhysicalLoans

Skills Development Fund

Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)

- Purpose: To assist Texas public community and technical colleges to finance customized job training for their local businesses. A business, a consortium of businesses, or trade union identifies a training need, and then partners with a public Community or Technical college to fill its specific needs. Businesses work with college partners to submit proposals, develop curricula and conduct training. The Skills Development Fund pays for the training, the college administers the grant, and businesses create new jobs and improve the skills of their current workers.
- Eligibility: Businesses and trade unions must partner with an eligible applicant in order to be considered for Skills Development Fund grants. Eligible applicants are public community or technical colleges, the Texas Engineering Extension Service or a community-based organization working in partnership with one of these institutions.

More information: https://twc.texas.gov/partners/skills-development-fund

Skills for Small Business

- Grantor: Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)
- Purpose: supports businesses with fewer than 100 employees, emphasizes training for new workers, and helps upgrade the skills of incumbent workers.
- Eligibility: small businesses
- Limitations: funds tuition and fees up to $1,800 per newly hired employee and up to $900 per incumbent employee. An individual employee can participate once per 12-month period. Funding for training is for full-time employees.

More information: https://twc.texas.gov/programs/skills-small-business-program-overview

Small Business Administration Loan programs

- Grantor: U.S. Small Business Administration
- Purpose: works with lenders to provide loans to small businesses. The agency doesn't lend money directly to small business owners. Instead, it sets guidelines for loans made by its partnering lenders, community development organizations, and micro-lending institutions. General Small Business Loans, Microloan Program, Real Estate & Equipment Loans, and Disaster Loans.
- Eligibility: small businesses

More information: http://www.sba.gov/loanprograms

Strong Cities, Strong Communities Visioning Challenge

- Grantor: EDA & HUD
- Purpose: support the development and implementation of comprehensive economic development strategic plans.
- Eligibility: Cities
- Limitations: $6 million total; $1 million will be awarded to six total cities

More Information: http://www.eda.gov/challenges/sc2challenge/

Tax Increment Financing

- Grantor: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts
- Purpose: Tax increment financing is a tool that local governments can use to publicly finance needed structural improvements and enhanced infrastructure within a defined area.
- Eligibility: Only a city or county may initiate tax increment financing . Tax increment financing requires the governing body of a city to create a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ). The governing body of a city by ordinance may: designate a contiguous or noncontiguous geographic area (a) within the corporate limits of a municipality; (b) in the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the municipality, or (c) in both to be a reinvestment zone. The designation of an area that is wholly or partly located in the extraterritorial jurisdiction of a

municipality is not affected by a subsequent annexation of real property in the reinvestment zone by the municipality.
More information: https://comptroller.texas.gov/economy/local/ch311/

Texas Workforce Commission's Skill Development Program

- Grantor: Texas Workforce Commission through Texas Legislature
- Purpose: provides grants to community and technical colleges to provide customized job training programs for businesses who want to train new workers or upgrade the skills of their existing workforce.
- Eligibility: A business, a consortium of businesses, or trade union identifies a training need, and then partners with a public community or technical college.
- Limitations: Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 20, Chapter 803 and Texas Labor Code, Chapter 303.

More Information: http://www.twc.state.tx.us/partners/skills-development-fund

CH. 7 - ENVIRONMENT

Boating Access Grants

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Purpose: For the construction of public boat ramp facilities throughout Texas.
- Eligibility: Local government sponsors must make an application, provide the land, provide access to the proposed boat ramp, supply 25% of the development costs, and accept operation and maintenance responsibilities for a minimum 25-year period.
- Limitations: This grant program provides 75% matching grant funds. These funds are allocated annually through the federal Sport Fish Restoration Act.
- Deadlines: October 1, 2020

More information: https://tpwd.texas.gov/business/grants/recreation-grants/boating-access

Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Purpose: to help cities, counties, and States recover from Presidentially declared disasters, especially in low-income areas, subject to availability of supplemental appropriations. It serves to address job losses, impacts on tax revenues, and impact to business.
- Eligibility: cities, counties and States.
- Limitations: $4.383 billion for Texas
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg-dr/

Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) Grants

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Purpose: The CO-OP grant helps to introduce under-served populations to the services, programs, and sites of Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.
- Eligibility: Grants are awarded to non-profit organizations, schools, municipalities, counties, cities, and other tax-exempt groups.
- Limitations: This is not a land acquisition or construction grant; this is only for programs.
- Deadline: December 4, 2020

More information: https://tpwd.texas.gov/business/grants/recreation-grants/community-outdoor-outreach-program-co-op-grants

Community & Recovery Tree Planting Grants

- Grantor: Keep America Beautiful (KAB)
- Purpose: reducing levels of carbon dioxide (CO2) and greenhouse gas emissions through strategic plantings; emphasizing the importance of native trees; or planting fruit trees to produce fruit for local consumption, planting trees that have a greater likelihood of withstanding disasters (e.g., roots hold soil and prevent erosion, lessen runoff to mitigate flooding).
- Eligibility: KAB certified affiliates.
- Limitations: $5,000
- Deadline: October 22, 2020

More Information: https://www.kab.org/resources/community-grants

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund/Section 6 Grants

- Grantor: Fish & Wildlife Service
- Purpose: provides grants to states and territories to participate in a wide array of voluntary conservation projects for candidate, proposed, and listed species. The program provides funding to states and territories for species and habitat conservation actions on non-federal lands.
- Eligibility: States and territories must contribute a minimum non-federal match of 25 percent of the estimated program costs of approved projects, or 10 percent when two or more states or territories implement a joint project. A state or territory must currently have, or enter into a cooperative agreement with the Secretary of the Interior to receive grants. Most states and territories have entered into these agreements for both plant and animal species.

More information: https://www.fws.gov/endangered/grants/

Environmental Education (EE) Grants

- Grantor: EPA
- Purpose: To support environmental education projects that promote environmental awareness and stewardship and help provide people with the skills to take responsible actions to protect the environment. The grant program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques.
- Eligibility: Applicants must represent one of the following types of organizations to be eligible for an environmental education grant:
  - local education agency
  - state education or environmental agency
  - college or university
  - non-profit organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
  - noncommercial educational broadcasting entity
  - tribal education agency (which includes schools and community colleges controlled by an Indian tribe, band, or nation and which are recognized as eligible for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians and which are not administered by the Bureau of Indian Education.)
  - Applicant organizations must be located in the United States or territories and the majority of the educational activities must take place in the United States; or in the United States and Canada or Mexico; or in the U.S. Territories.

More Information: https://www.epa.gov/education/environmental-education-ee-grants

Environmental Literacy Program

- Grantor: NOAA
- Purpose: A competitive funding opportunity for projects designed to build environmental literacy of K-12 students and the public so they are knowledgeable of the ways in which their community can become more resilient to extreme weather and/or other environmental hazards, and become involved in achieving that resilience.

More Information: https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/elp/grants

FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grants

- Grantor: Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
- Purpose: The Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program provides grants to assist communities in implementing measures to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to buildings, manufactured homes, and other structures insurable under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Eligibility: Political subdivision (including any Indian or authorized tribal or native organization) that has zoning and building code jurisdiction over a particular area having special flood hazards and is participating in the NFIP.
- Funding Limitations: FEMA may contribute up to 75 percent of the total eligible costs. At least 25 percent of the total eligible costs must be provided by a nonfederal source.

More information at http://www.fema.gov/flood-mitigation-assistance-grant-program

Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)
- Purpose: The program offers project cost-sharing for projects that positively impact the valuable riparian areas and watershed in Texas. Projects showing the greatest benefit to targeted watersheds will receive priority as do projects offering long-term protection, long-term monitoring and greater than the required minimum landowner contribution.
- Eligibility: Eligible parties include private, non-federal landowners wishing to enact good conservation practices on their lands in targeted eco-regions. Targeted eco-regions may change from year to year.
- Funding limitations: Contracts will require a minimum of 25% landowner contribution (in-kind labor, materials, monetary, etc.).
- Deadline: Rolling application

More information: http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/private/lip

Public Assistance Grant Program

- Grantor: FEMA
- Purpose: to support communities' recovery from major disasters by providing them with grant assistance for debris removal, life-saving emergency protective measures, and restoring public infrastructure.
- Eligibility: Local Governments, states, tribes, territories and certain private nonprofit organization
- Limitations: The federal share of assistance is not less than 75 percent of the eligible cost. The Recipient determines how the non-federal share (up to 25 percent) is split with the sub-recipients (i.e. eligible applicants).
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit

Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program

- Grantor: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Purpose: This program assists local governments in implementing cost-effective hazard mitigation activities that complement a comprehensive mitigation program.
- Eligibility: In order to be eligible the city must be in good standing with the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Funding Limitations: This grant should be used for hazard planning activities but cannot be used for major flood control projects, warning systems, engineering designs, feasibility studies not integral to proposed projects, generators not integral to a proposed project, phased or partial projects, flood studies or mapping, or response and communication equipment.

More information at http://www.fema.gov/pre-disaster-mitigation-grant-program

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

- Grantor: FEMA
- Purpose: provides grants to states and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures after a Major Disaster Declaration.
- Eligibility: state, territorial, and local governments, Federally-recognized tribes or tribal organizations, and certain nonprofit organizations. Individual homeowners and businesses may not apply directly to the program; however, a community may apply on their behalf.
- Deadline: The applicant must submit all HMGP sub applications to FEMA within 12 months of the date of the Presidential Major Disaster Declaration.

More information: https://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-grant-program-guide-state/local-governments

National Trails Training Partnership

- Grantor: American Trails and NTTP
- Purpose: for planning, building, designing, funding, managing, enhancing, and supporting trails, greenways, and blue ways.

More information: http://www.americantrails.org/resources/funding/

National Trails Training Partnership

- Grantor: Bureau of Land Management's Watchable Wildlife for Youth and Families
- Purpose: offers workshops and webinars on successful trail development and implementation.

More Information: http://www.americantrails.org/nttp/

Outdoor Recreation Grants

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Purpose: This grant provides 50% matching grant funds to acquire and develop parkland or to renovate existing public recreation areas.
- Eligibility: For municipalities, counties, MUDs and other local units of government with populations less than 500,000. Eligible sponsors include cities, counties, MUDs, river authorities, and other special districts.
- Limitations: Projects must be completed within three years of approval. The master plans submission deadline is at least 60 days prior to the application deadline.
- Deadline: December 4, 2020

More information: For complete information on this grant, please download the Outdoor Recreation Grant Application; http://www.nps.gov/lwcf/index.htm

Rebuild Texas Fund (RTF)

- Gantor: Michael & Susan Dell Foundation and the OneStar Foundation, with the support of thousands of corporate and individual donors.
- Purpose: Helps in the rebuilding and restoration of disaster affected cities in Texas.

More Information: https://www.rebuildtx.org/faq/

Recreation Grants

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Purpose: This grant was created to meet recreation needs. The grant provides 50% matching grant funds to eligible municipalities and counties. Funds must be used for development or acquisition of parkland.
- Eligibility: Must be a small Texas community with a population of 20,000 and under. Eligible projects include ball fields, boating, fishing, and hunting facilities, picnic facilities, playgrounds, swimming pools, trails, camping facilities, beautification, restoration, gardens, sports courts and support facilities.
- Deadline: December 4, 2020

More information: https://tpwd.texas.gov/business/grants/recreation-grants

Recreational Trail Grants

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Purpose: TPWD administers the National Recreational Trails Fund in Texas under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This federally funded program receives its funding from a portion of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in non-highway recreational vehicles.
- Eligibility: Funds can be spent on both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects such as the construction of new recreational trails, to improve existing trails, to develop trailheads or trailside facilities, and to acquire trail corridors.
- Limitations: The grants can be up to 80% of project cost with a maximum of $200,000 for non-motorized trail grants and currently there is not a maximum amount for motorized trail grants (call 512-389-8224 for motorized trail grant funding availability).

More information: https://tpwd.texas.gov/business/grants/recreation-grants/recreational-trails-grants;

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

- Grantor: Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Purpose: provides funds to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non motorized and motorized recreational trail uses

More Information: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/

Resilient Communities Program

- Grantor: Wells Fargo and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- Carrie Clingan (Director) carrie.clingan@nfwf.org
- Purpose: Grant - "Grants will be offered once a year to support priority projects in the states and communities associated with Wells Fargo operations. Additional priorities and funding guidelines may be found within the program's Request for Proposals."
- Eligibility: Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, local governments, Indian tribes.
- Funding Limitations: $200,000 to $500,000
- The ratio of matching funds offered is one criterion considered during the review process and projects that meet or exceed a 1:1 match ratio will be more competitive.
- Deadline: November 1, 2020

Websites:

1. Description of Resilient Communities Program- https://www.nfwf.org/resilientcommunities/Pages/home.aspx
2. Request for Proposal Information- https://www.nfwf.org/resilientcommunities/Pages/2019rfp.aspx

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (15.921)

- Grantor: Department of the Interior
- Purpose: will help create local, regional and state networks of parks, rivers, trails, greenways and open spaces by collaborating with community partners and National Park areas in every state.
- Eligibility: Private nonprofit organizations and Federal, State and local government agencies. Private nonprofit organizations and Federal, State and local government agencies. Not applicable. OMB Circular No. A-87 applies to this program
- Limitations: Range $3,000 to $237,000; Average $45,000.

More Information: https://www.cfda.gov/index?s=program&mode=form&tab=core&id=0eb58e82a9a678d4d621062e2ea27978

State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT)

- Grantor: Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
- Purpose: This program helps communities to develop cost-effective water supplies by providing low-interest loans, extended repayment terms, deferral of loan repayments, and incremental repurchase terms.
- Eligibility: Any political subdivision or nonprofit water supply corporation with a project included in the most recently adopted state water plan.
- Funding limitations: Financial support is in the form of a variety of loans and is available twice a year. A priority rating process applies. Grants are not available.
- Deadline: September 27, 2020

More information: http://www.twdb.texas.gov/financial/programs/SWIFT/index.asp

Texas Citizen Planner, Local Coastal Planning in the wake of Hurricane County

Funding Source(s): Coastal Management Program (CMP), Texas Agrilife Extension Service

Texas Water Development Fund (DFund)

- Grantor: Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
- Purpose: This program enables the TWDB to fund projects with multiple purposes (e.g., water and wastewater) in one loan.
- Eligibility: Political subdivisions (cities, counties, districts, and river authorities) and nonprofit water supply corporations.
- Funding limitations: Loans offered.
- Deadline: Rolling application

More information: http://www.twdb.texas.gov/financial/programs/TWDF/index.asp

Texas Windstorm Insurance Association (TWIA)

TWIA provides essential property insurance policies and services to eligible Texas properties in the gulf-coast area for windstorm and hail storm events.

The Conservation Fund

- Grantor: "A nonprofit organization that operates with an entrepreneurial culture"
- Reggie Hall (Director) rhall@conservationfund.org 703-908-5825
- Purpose: Conservation Loan - to conserve America's legacy of land and water resources
- Eligibility: Non-profit, municipal and tribal organizations in good standing
- Funding Limitations:
- Minimum Loan Amount: $200,000 (extraordinary exceptions considered).
- Interest: Contact for current rate.
- Term: Minimum of 90 days and a maximum of 3 years (extraordinary exceptions considered). If a loan is needed for less than 90 days, 90 days' worth of interest will be due at maturity.
- Payment Schedule: To be negotiated.

More information: https://www.conservationfund.org/images/resources/Conservation_Loans_Program.pdf

Wetlands Reserve Program

- Grantor: Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Purpose: Provides technical and financial support to landowners with their wetland restoration efforts. The programs aims to offer landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property.
- Eligibility: Lands that are eligible under this program include: wetlands farmed under natural conditions; farmed wetlands; prior converted cropland, farmed wetland pasture; certain lands that have the potential to become a wetland as a result of flooding; rangeland, pasture, or forest production lands where the hydrology has been significantly degraded and can be restored; riparian areas which link protected wetlands; lands adjacent to protected wetlands that contribute significantly to wetland functions and values; and wetlands previously restored under a local, state, or federal Program that need long-term protection.
- Funding limitations: For permanent easements, 100% of the easement value and 100% of the restoration costs will be funded. For 30-year easements, 75% of the easement value and up to 75% of the restoration costs are funded. For an agreement to restore wetlands without an easement, up to 75% of the restoration costs will be funded. A 30-year contract is available for tribal land and funding allocation is up to 75% of the restoration costs.

More information: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/wetlands

Water and Environmental Programs

- Grantor: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Purpose: This program provides financial assistance for drinking water, sanitary sewer, solid waste and storm drainage facilities in rural areas and cities and towns of 10,000 or less. Technical assistance and training is also available to assist rural communities with their water, wastewater, and solid waste problems.
- Eligibility: Public bodies, non-profit organizations and recognized Indian Tribes
- Funding limitations: Financial assistance is provided in various ways including direct or guaranteed loans, grants, technical assistance, research and educational materials. Different amounts of assistance exist depending on the project type and financial tool the participant is seeking.
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/all-programs/water-environmental-programs

CH. 8 - FACILITIES

Art Works Grant

- Grantor: National Endowment for the Arts
- Purpose: Project-based funding that supports public engagement with, and access to, various forms of excellent art across the nation, the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence, learning in the arts at all stages of life, and the integration of the arts into the fabric of community life
- Eligibility: Nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), U.S. organizations; units of state or local government; or federally recognized tribal communities or tribes may apply. Applicants may be arts organizations, local arts agencies, arts service organizations, local education agencies (school districts), and other organizations that can help advance the goals of the National Endowment for the Arts.
- Funding: Matching grants generally will range from $10,000 to $100,000. No grants will be made below $10,000. Grants of $100,000 or more will be made only in rare instances, and only for projects that we determine demonstrate exceptional national or regional significance and impact.

More information: https://www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/art-works/grant-program-description

The Aransas County ISD Education Foundation

- Grantor: The Education Foundation
- Purpose: To support programs that go beyond what public funds can provide in order to directly enhance students' knowledge, thinking skills, and career preparation in creative, innovative ways.

More Information: https://www.acedfoundation.org/grants-education-foundation.html

Bee Grant Program

- Grantor: Whole Kids Foundation in partnership with The Bee Cause Project
- Purpose: Allows for schools and non-profit organizations to receive support for educational bee hives, so students can observe bees up close and learn about the vital role these pollinators play in our food system.
- Eligibility: K-12 Schools or Non-Profit Organizations in U.S./Canada
- Grant Value: $2,000

More Information: https://www.wholekidsfoundation.org/programs/honey-bee-hive-grant

Community Impact Grants

- Grantor: The Home Depot Foundation
- Purpose: Grants are given in the form of The Home Depot gift cards for the purchase of tools, materials, or services and are required to be completed within six months of approval date.
- Eligibility: 501c designated organizations (recognized and in good standing with the IRS for a minimum of one year) and tax-exempt public service agencies in the U.S. that are using the power of volunteers to improve the community.

More information: https://corporate.homedepot.com/grants/community-impact-grants

Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns.
- Eligibility: public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal

governments. Towns of up to 20,000 in population.
- Limitations: Development Financing, Construction
- Deadline: Open

More information: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program

Event Trust Funds Program

- Grantor: Texas Economic Development Division
- Purpose: Event-specific trust funds created to help pay for qualified expenses associated with an event, to which both the state and applicant must contribute.
- Eligibility: A municipality, county, or non-profit local organizing committee endorsed by a Texas municipality or county which has been selected to host a qualified event, if the event location in that Texas municipality or county.
- Limitations: Applicants must contribute $1 in local tax gains for every $6.25 the state contributes to the fund.
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: https://gov.texas.gov/business/page/event-trust-funds-program

Farmers Market Promotion Program

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: to increase domestic consumption of, and access to, locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets by developing, improving, expanding, and providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to, or assisting in the development, improvement, and expansion of, domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities.
- Eligibility: June 2020 Agricultural businesses, Agricultural cooperatives, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) networks, CSA associations, Economic development corporations, Local governments, Nonprofit corporations, Producer networks, Producer associations, Public benefit corporations, Regional farmers' market authorities and Tribal governments

More Information: https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmpp

Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives

- Grantor: National Park Services
- Purpose: encourage private sector investment in the rehabilitation and re-use of historic buildings. The community revitalization program is one of the nation's most successful and cost-effective community revitalization programs.
- Limitations: a 20% tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of certified historic structures; a 10% tax credit for the rehabilitation of non-historic, non-residential buildings built before 1936.

More information: http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm

Garden Grant Program

- Grantor: Whole Kids Foundation
- Purpose: Turn outdoor spaces into powerful hands-on learning gardens that connect kids with food, spark their curiosity and support classroom curriculum.
- Eligibility: K-12 Schools or Non-Profit Organizations in U.S./Canada
- Grant Value: $2,000

More Information: https://www.wholekidsfoundation.org/programs/school-gardens-grant

Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program (HRSP)

- Grantor: National Parks Service
- Purpose: supports the rehabilitation of historic properties and fosters economic development of rural communities. This program funds physical preservation projects for historic sites, including architectural and engineering services through subgrants to communities determined rural by the US Bureau of the Census.
- Eligibility: Eligible properties must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places or determined eligible for listing at the National, State, or local level of significance and located within rural (non-urban) communities with populations less than 50,000. States, Tribes, Certified Local Governments, and non-profits will apply for funding that will in turn be subgranted to rural communities in their jurisdictions.

More information: https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1623/historic-revitalization-subgrant-program.htm

HOPE VI Main Street Program

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Purpose: Small community grants to assist with downtown revitalization of a historic or traditional central business district by replacing

unused commercial space with affordable housing units.
- Eligibility: Local governments with populations of 50,000 or less that currently have less than 100 public housing units
- Limitations: $500,000, max grant $500,000 (only one awardee)
- Deadline: July 30. 2020

More Information: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/hope6/grants/mainstreet

Humanities Texas Grants

- Grantor: Humanities Texas
- Purpose: Enable communities throughout the state to develop programs of local interest promoting heritage, culture, and education. To support a wide range of public programs: lectures, panel discussions, and conferences; teacher institutes; reading- and film-discussion groups; interpretive exhibits; television and radio programming; film production; and interactive multimedia programming.
- Eligibility: Nonprofit organizations and state and local governmental entities
- More Information: https://www.humanitiestexas.org/grants
- Keep America Beautiful's Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund
- Grantor: Keep America Beautiful
- Purpose: Benefits Keep America Beautiful Affiliates that serve communities directly affected by natural and environmental disasters. The fund provides immediate and long-term support for initial and ongoing cleanup efforts and helps rebuild vital public spaces: parks, greenways, community gateways, Main Street/downtown areas, open spaces and more.
- Eligibility: Must be a Keep America Beautiful Affiliate
- Deadline: Rolling

More information: https://www.kab.org/resources/community-grants

Local Historic Property Tax Incentives

- Grantor: U.S. Department of the Interior
- According to the Texas Property Code Section 11.24, "Historic Sites grants the governing body of a taxing unit the authority to exempt from taxation part or all of the assessed value of a structure and the land necessary for access to the structure if the structure is a Recorded Texas Historical Landmark or designated as historically significant and in need of tax relief to encourage its preservation." Thus, communities that do not currently have historic tax incentives programs should consider adopting them as permitted by Texas law.

Local Park Grant Program

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife
- Purpose: The Local Park Grant Program consists of 5 individual programs that assist local units of government with the acquisition and/or development of public recreation areas and facilities throughout the State of Texas. The Program provides 50% matching grants on a reimbursement basis to eligible applicants. Once funded, all grant assisted sites must be dedicated as parkland in perpetuity, properly maintained and open to the public.
- Eligibility: Eligible applicants include political subdivisions of the State of Texas legally responsible for providing public recreation services to their citizens. This includes cities, counties, river authorities, municipal utility districts, and other special districts.

More information: https://tpwd.texas.gov/business/grants/recreation-grants/about-local-parks-grants

Museum Assessment Program (MAP)

- Grantor: American Alliance of Museums & Institute of Museum and Library Services
- Purpose: Help museums assess their strengths and weaknesses, and plan for the future. A MAP assessment requires members of the museum staff and governing authority to complete a self-study. After completion of the self-study, a site visit is conducted by one or more museum professionals, who tour the museum and meet with staff, governing officials, and volunteers. The reviewers work with the museum and MAP staff to produce a report evaluating the museum's operations, making recommendations, and suggesting resources.

More information: https://www.aam-us.org/programs/accreditation-excellence-programs/museum-assessment-program-map/

Preservation Technology and Training Grants

- Grantor: U.S. Department of the Interior
- Purpose: provides funding for innovative research that develops new technologies or adapt existing technologies to preserve cultural resources. Grant recipients undertake innovative research and produce technical reports which respond to national needs in the field of historic preservation.
- Eligibility: federal agencies, states, tribes, local governments, and non-profit organizations.
- Funding Limitation: Up to $30,000

More information: https://www.ncptt.nps.gov/grants/preservation-technology-and-training-grants/

Rural LISC - Community Facilities Fund

- Grantor: National Center for Mobility Management
- Purpose: to provide capital to help develop and improve essential community facilities in rural areas. Rural LISC utilizes this fund to provide permanent and construction-to-permanent financing for rural community facilities, including health care centers, hospitals, educational facilities, and other nonprofit and public facilities in rural communities with populations under 20,000.
- Eligibility: Nonprofits or public entities
- Limitations: $100,000 - $8,000,000.
- Deadline: Assigned every two years. 2021

More information: https://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/challenge-2019/

ADDITIONAL GLO/FEMA FUNDING SOURCES

2015 Floods State Mitigation Competition

- Allocation: $46M | Min: $3M - Max: $10M
- Eligibility: 2015 Counties | Cities, Counties, Tribes, COGs

2016 Floods State Mitigation Competition

- Allocation: $1.5M | Min: $3M - Max: $10M
- Eligibility: 2016 Counties | Cities, Counties, Tribes, COGs

Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition

- Allocation: $2.14B | Min: $3M - Max: $100M
- Purpose: provide funds for mitigation projects to address risk in the Hurricane Harvey impacted areas.
- Eligibility: Harvey Counties | Cities, Counties, Tribes, COGs, State, S.P. Districts

Regional Mitigation Program (COG MODs)

- Allocation: $500M | Min: $1M - Max: Determined by Local MOD
- Purpose: councils of government (COG) impacted by Hurricane Harvey will develop a method of distribution (MOD) to allocate funds to local units of government and Indian tribes.
- Eligibility: Harvey Counties | Cities, Counties, Tribes

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP): Supplemental

- Allocation: $170M | Max: $170M
- Grantor: Texas Division of Emergency Management
- Purpose: Provide funds CDBG-MIT eligible HMGP projects submitted to TDEM after Hurricane Harvey but, due to program oversubscription, remain unfunded.
- Eligibility: Harvey Counties | FEMA HMGP Eligible Applicants

Coastal Resiliency Program

- Allocation: $100M | Max: $60M
- Purpose: Funds Tier 1 projects identified in the Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan that mitigate coastal risks through green and gray infrastructure and nonstructural measures.
- Eligibility: Harvey Counties | Cities, Counties, State, NGOs, Districts Authorities

Housing Oversubscription Supplemental

- Allocation: $400M | Max: See Action Plan
- Purpose: Addresses oversubscription in the Hurricane Harvey Homeowner Assistance Program of eligible applicants that have been waitlisted. Hurricane Harvey damage homes will be reconstructed with mitigation measures, such as elevation.
- Eligibility: Harvey Counties | State Run

Resilient Home Program

- Allocation: $100M | Max: See Action Plan
- Purpose: Reconstruct Hurricane Harvey damaged single-family homes with homes that meet additional resilience and mitigation standards. Waitlisted homeowners in the oversubscribed Hurricane Harvey Homeowner Assistance Program will be eligible.
- Eligible: Harvey Counties | State Run

Hazard Mitigation Plans

- Allocation: $30M | Max: $300,000
- Grantor: General Land Office (GLO) & TDEM
- Purpose: a GLO partnership with TDEM will contribute to the development of an enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan and fund the development of Local Hazard Mitigation Action Plans (LHMAP) for entities located in the CDBG-MIT eligible counties.
- Eligibility: 2015,2016 Harvey Counties | TDEM, HMGP Eligible Entities

Resilient Communities Program

- Allocation: $100M | Max: $300,000
- Purpose: funds for the development, adoption, and implementation of resilient building codes, flood damage prevention ordinances, zoning ordinances, land use and comprehensive plans, and public service activities for cities, counties and Indian tribes located in the CDBG-MIT eligible counties.
- Eligibility: 2015,2016 Harvey Counties | Cities, Counties, Tribes, COGs

Regional and State Planning

- Allocation: $214.9M
- Grantor: GLO
- Purpose: provides funding for regional and state planning studies and tools that work to reduce risk and impacts of future disasters.
- Eligibility: 2015,2016 Harvey Counties

More information: https://recovery.texas.gov/local-government/programs/local-regional-state-planning/index.html

Flood Protection Grant Program

- Grantor: State's Research and Planning Fund
- Purpose: Provides up to 50% state financial assistance to political subdivisions to conduct feasibility studies for an entire watershed to evaluate both structural and nonstructural solutions to flood hazards within the watershed, planning for or implementation of Flood Early Warning System(s); or planning for or implementing a Flood Response Plan.

More information: http://www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/grant/index.asp

For more information on these funding sources, visit: https://www.glo.texas.gov/the-glo/news/press-releases/2019/december/texas-glo-hosting-public-hearings-for-4-billion-in-mitigation-funds.html