



P O R T A R A N S A S 2 0 2 3
C O M P R E H E N S I V E P L A N

Adopted April 20, 2023

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RESOLUTION NO. 2023-R24

A RESOLUTION OF THE PORT ARANSAS CITY COUNCIL ADOPTING THE 2023 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; MOVING FORWARD WITH OUR PAST.

WHEREAS, the City Charter requires the Planning and Zoning commission not less than every five (5) years, review and recommend to Council amendments (if necessary) to the Master Plan (Comprehensive plan) of the city; and

WHEREAS, on November 21, 2021 the City Council approved Resolution 2021-R53 entering into an agreement for professional services with Freese and Nichols, Inc (Freese) to facilitate a review and update of the Comprehensive Plan and Impact Fee Schedule for the City; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan will help guide and direct the growth of the community, balancing development, and the need to grow with the existing town and its residents; and

WHEREAS, on behalf of the City, Freese conducted multiple community surveys, open house meetings and stakeholder's meetings to help prepare the final draft of the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, On April 20th, the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council held a joint public hearing on the final adoption of the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, On April 20th, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended adoption of the amended Comprehensive Plan to City Council.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PORT ARANSAS, NUECES COUNTY, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. The City Council hereby approves and adopts the 2023 Comprehensive Plan attached hereto as the "Comprehensive Plan; Moving Forward with Our Past."

SECTION 2. It is hereby officially found and determined that the meeting at which this resolution is passed is open to the public as required by law, and that public notice of the time, place and purpose of said meeting was given as required.

PASSED and APPROVED by the Port Aransas City Council, County of Nueces, State of Texas, on this 20th day of APRIL, 2023.

CITY OF PORT ARANSAS, TEXAS



Wendy Moore, Mayor

Acknowledgements

The City of Port Aransas would like to thank the many individuals who contributed to the development of this “Moving Forward with Our Past” 2023 Comprehensive Plan. Their input has been critical to the development of this Plan. The City is particularly grateful to the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, City Staff, and community members who provided valuable insight and feedback about the future of Port Aransas.

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- Jo Elyn Krueger, Place #3
- Tanya Chambers, Place #4
- David Sieloff, Place #5
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CHAPTER I: COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

This CHAPTER I: COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT provides an overview of Port Aransas' regional context, previous planning efforts, and an analysis of its current demographics and other characteristics. This information serves as a baseline for the comprehensive planning process.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Regional Relationship

The City of Port Aransas is located in Nueces County, Texas, on Mustang Island. Mustang Island is a barrier island stretching 18 miles between the Gulf of Mexico to the southeast and Corpus Christi Bay to the northwest. Port Aransas is located 20 miles east of Corpus Christi, although the driving distance is approximately 40 miles due to the Corpus Christi Bay. While the entire Corpus Christi region attracts tourists from across the state and country, Port Aransas is a particularly popular destination.

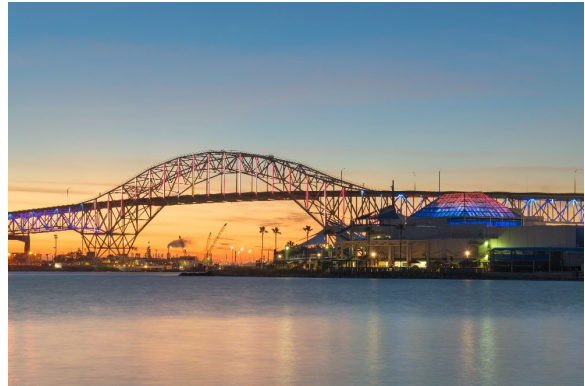
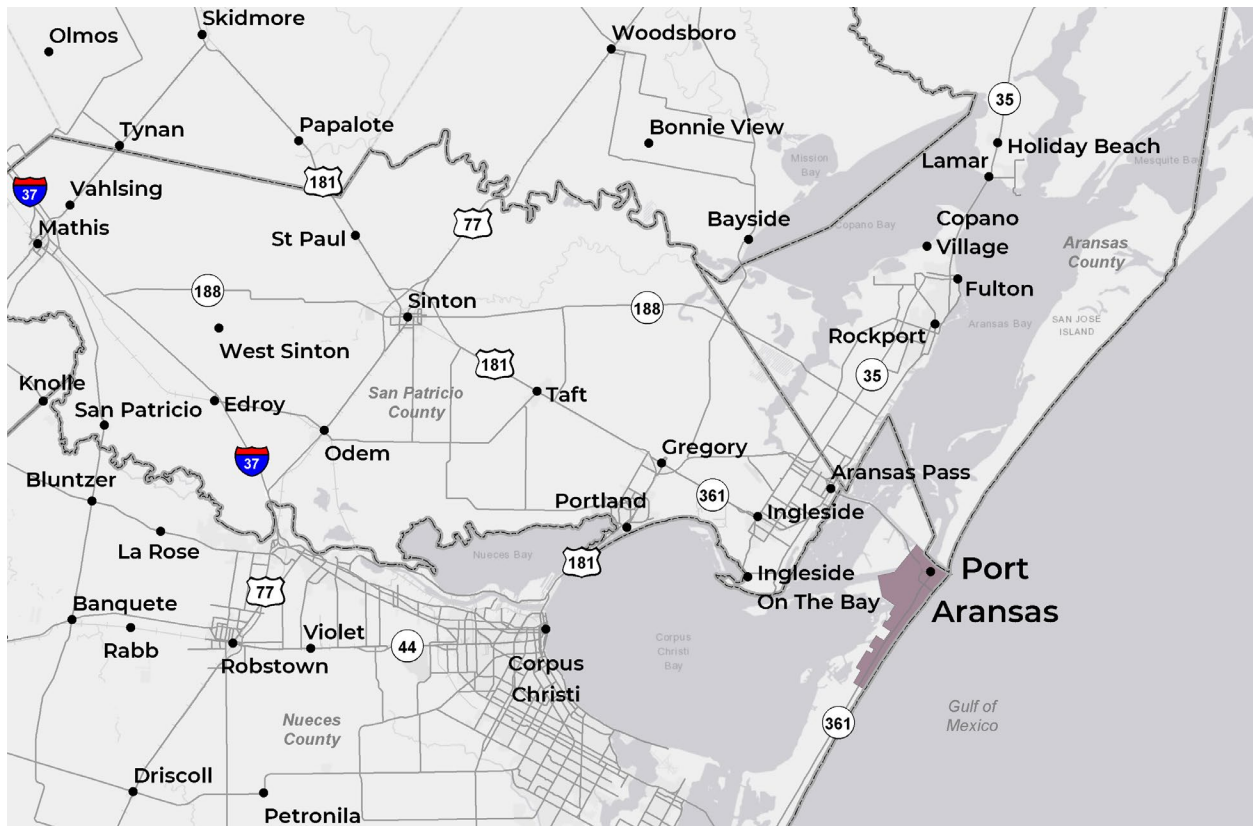


Figure 1. Port Aransas' Relationship to the Region



Growth in the Region

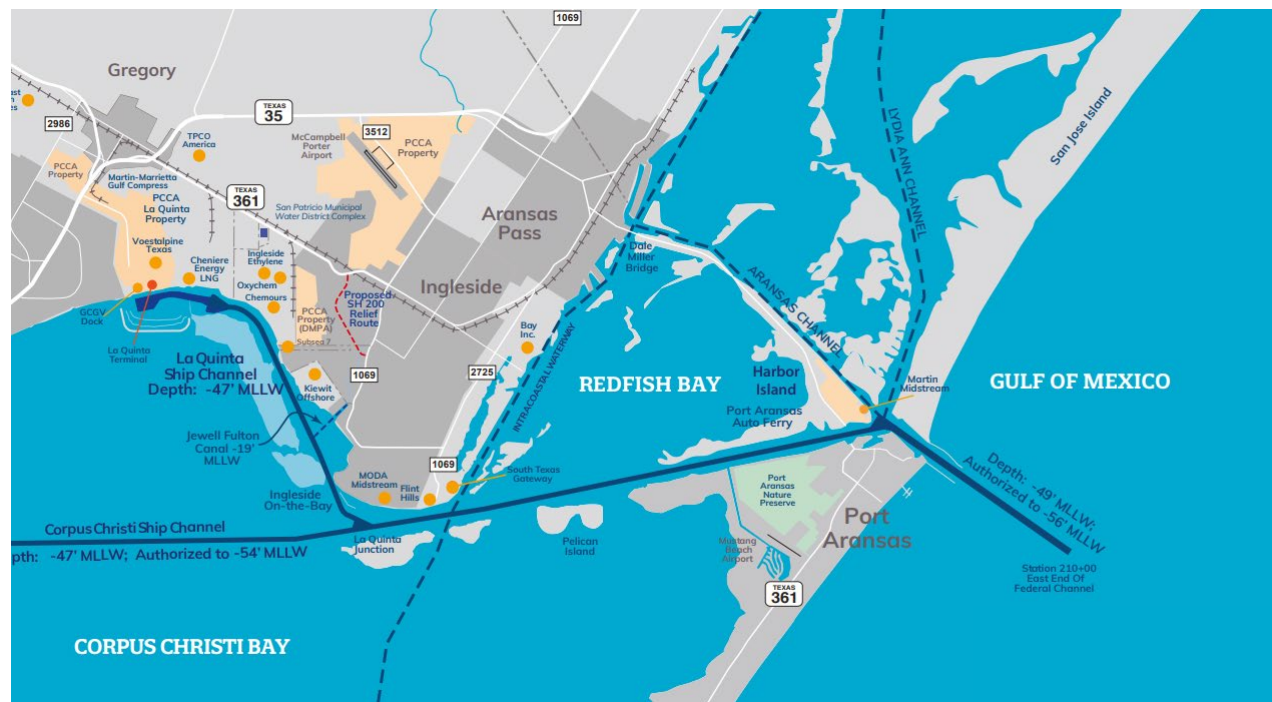
The greater Corpus Christi region is experiencing tremendous economic growth, particularly in the oil and gas industry. Exxon, Cheniere, Moda Midstream, Koch, and others have increased investments and developments substantially within the last five years, expanding economic benefits within the region.

The Port of Corpus Christi reports that it is the largest U.S. port by total revenue tonnage, creates a \$19 billion economic impact for Texas, and provides 98,000 port-related jobs in the Coastal Bend region. The Port is in the process of deepening the channel to allow for larger cargo vessels; the Port Aransas portion of the deepening process has already been completed to a depth of 54'. Operations are

anticipated to increase once the deepening occurs within the Corpus Christi Bay and Inner Harbor.

While this development brings economic and employment opportunities to the region, it also brings challenges, such as potential environmental impacts, health and safety concerns, negative impacts on the shoreline aesthetics, and strains on local infrastructure networks. Port Aransas' economy is dominated by tourism, which is largely dependent on the protection of its natural resources and shoreline. These disparate benefits and impacts of the industrial development for Port Aransas compared to the surrounding region are important to consider through this planning process.

Figure 2. Map of the Corpus Christi Channel Near Port Aransas



Source: Port of Corpus Christi 2019-2020 Annual Report

Our History

Experts believe the islands along the Texas coast began life as a submerged sand bar about 4,500 years ago.

The island was first called Wild Horse Island, then Mustang because of the wild horses called "Mestenos", brought to the island by the Spaniards in the 1800s.

The first known human occupants of the island were the Karankawa Indians. Spanish explorer Cabeza de Vaca was probably the first European to meet the Karankawa in 1528.

Jean Lafitte and his band of buccaneers spent a lot of time on neighboring islands as well as Mustang Island in the 1820s. Legend has it that somewhere on the island is a Spanish dagger with a silver spike driven through the hilt marking the spot where Lafitte buried a chest of gold and jewels.

As the natural pass attracted more and more commerce and updated charts were needed, there appeared an 1833 map which noted the location of what would become Port Aransas, but was then called Sand Point. The pass was given the name Aranzazu, which later became Aransas.

During the 1846-48 Mexican War, a small fort was built on Mustang Island to guard the entrance to Aransas Bay. It was used until after the Civil War.

In the 1850s, regular steamship service ran between Mustang Island and New Orleans. The first deep draught steamship went through the Pass in 1859. Mercer Docks was destroyed during the 1875 Storm, thus ending the service.

The town of Mustang Island was called Ropesville by the early 1890s but changed its name to Tarpon by 1899 because of the large numbers of the fish being caught in its waters. The population at that time was about 250. Citizens began calling their town Port Aransas about 1910. The storm of 1919 virtually wiped out the town except for a few structures.

Since that time, Port Aransas has transformed from a small fishing village to a top tourism destination. Additionally, the City has been affected by several hurricanes, most notably Hurricane Harvey in 2017, which caused major damage or destruction to homes, businesses, and infrastructure. The community has largely rebuilt, and tourism levels have returned to peak levels.

Existing Planning Documents

The City has a strong history of proactive planning for its future. This section provides a high-level summary of the most relevant plans in place at the time of this comprehensive plan's development.

Future Land Use Plan

In August 2006, the City adopted a Future Land Use Map (FLUM), which is intended to guide future development decisions such as rezonings and capital improvement investments, and to inform land use assumptions for the impact fee program.

The Port Aransas Nature Preserve and undevelopable wetlands make up a large portion of the planning area, concentrated on the northwestern side of the island. Office/retail and commercial uses were designated along the main corridors (e.g., Alister Street, Cut-Off Road, W. Cotter Avenue, and Avenue G).

Much of the area at the south end of Port Aransas along SH 361 is designated on the FLUM as high-density residential or as a Planned Unit Development (PUD) for residential, golf, marina, and other coastal tourism uses.

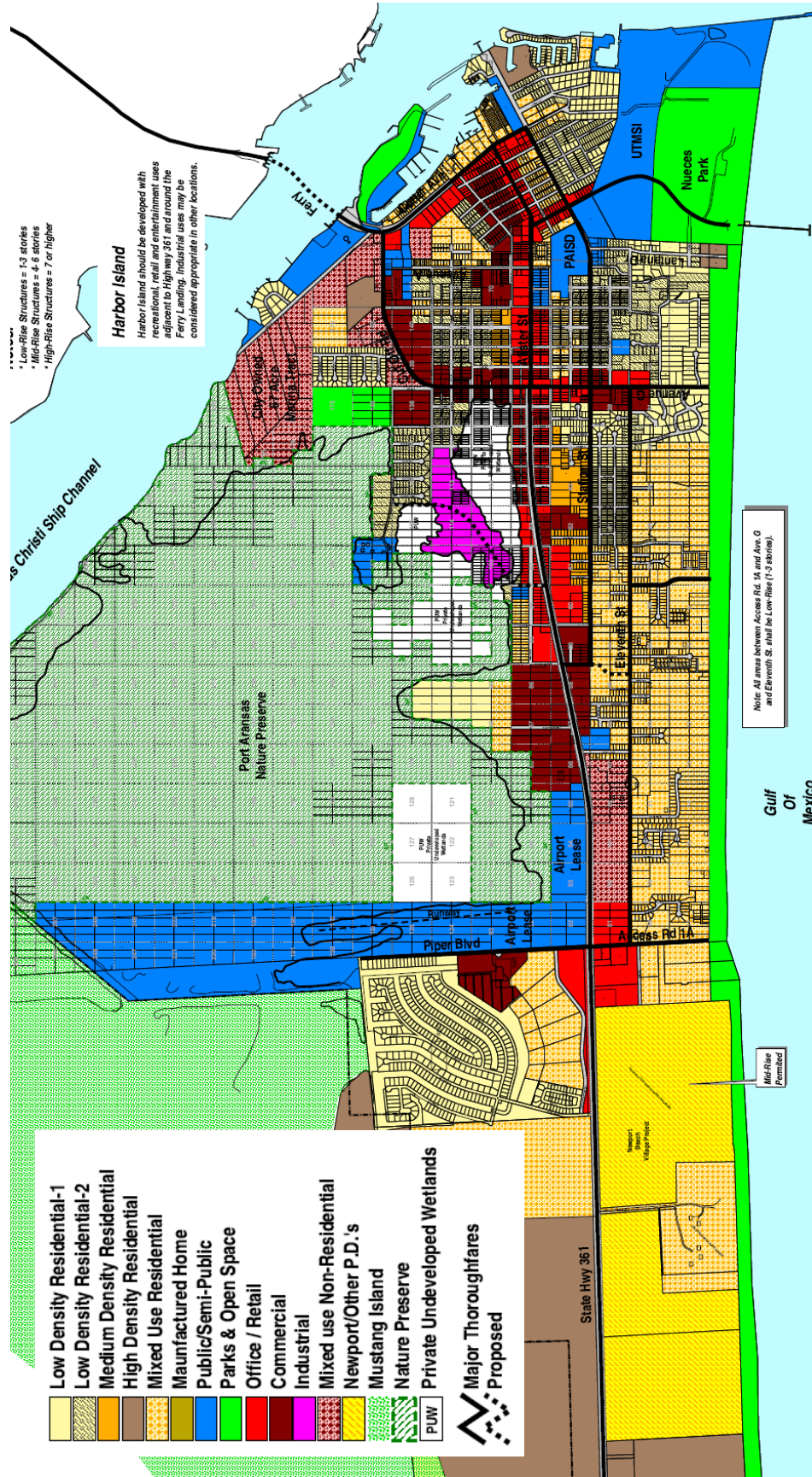
A variety of residential densities were designated mostly along SH 361 and in smaller areas closer to the core of the City.

The FLUM also indicated areas for low-rise (1-3 stories), mid-rise (4-6 stories), and high-rise (7+ stories) residential structures. The shoreline between Avenue G and Access Road 1A required low-rise development.

The FLUM also identified two types of mixed-use development – primarily residential (multifamily units above retail) and primarily nonresidential (a combination of various nonresidential uses in one building or site). Residential mixed-use areas were designated along much of the shoreline and near the Harbor, with nonresidential mixed-use near the airport and between the Harbor and nature preserve.

The Future Land Use Plan also included a set of guiding principles and policies to inform future growth and development.

Figure 3. Excerpt of the 2006 Future Land Use Map



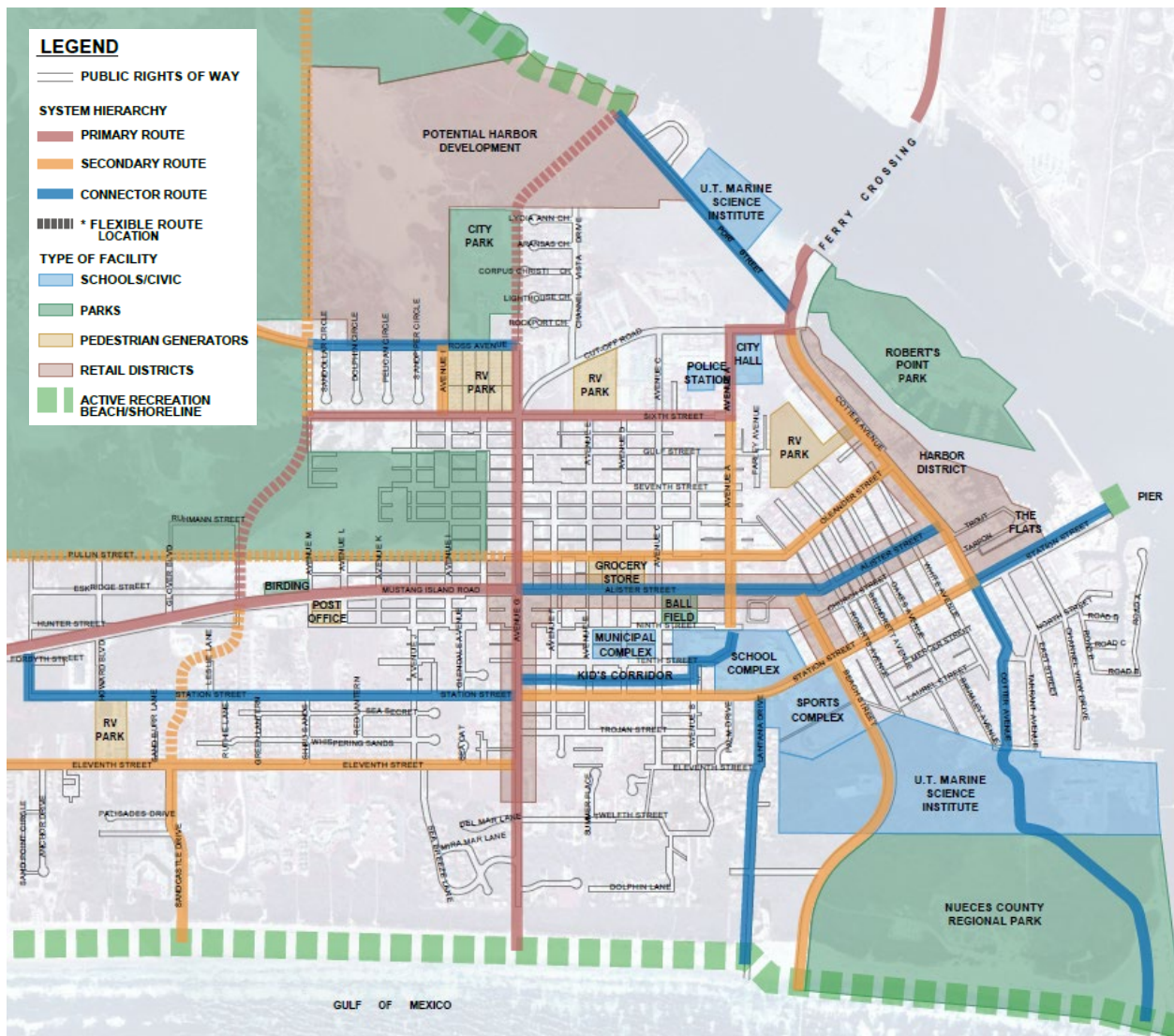
Source: Dunkin Sefko & Associates, Inc.

Pedestrian/Bicycle Mobility Plan

In 2005, the City developed a map to identify planned pedestrian and bicycle routes throughout the community, classified as primary, secondary, and connector route facilities. The routes aim to connect key destinations, such as the school and sports complexes, City Hall, active recreation areas, and popular tourism destinations.



Figure 4. Pedestrian/Bicycle Mobility Plan



Source: Hall/Bargainer

Transportation Map and Plan

In 2007, the City developed a transportation map to establish functional classifications (e.g., major arterial, collector street) for existing roadways and to identify future connections or improvements. This plan also served as the basis upon which the roadway impact fee program was developed.

Following the preparation of the map, the City then adopted a transportation plan in April 2008, identifying goals, issues, and policies to guide the mobility network in and around Port Aransas. The plan identified the following goals for each mode of transportation:

Roadway Goal: Develop and maintain a safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation system that provides convenient choices for accessing destinations throughout Port Aransas and the immediate region, including a range of well-integrated transit, pedestrian, and bicycle linkages.

Transit Goal: Support short- and long-term transit planning and implementation that will develop an economical transit system that links neighborhoods (within our City limits and outside) with employment, shopping, schools, and services.

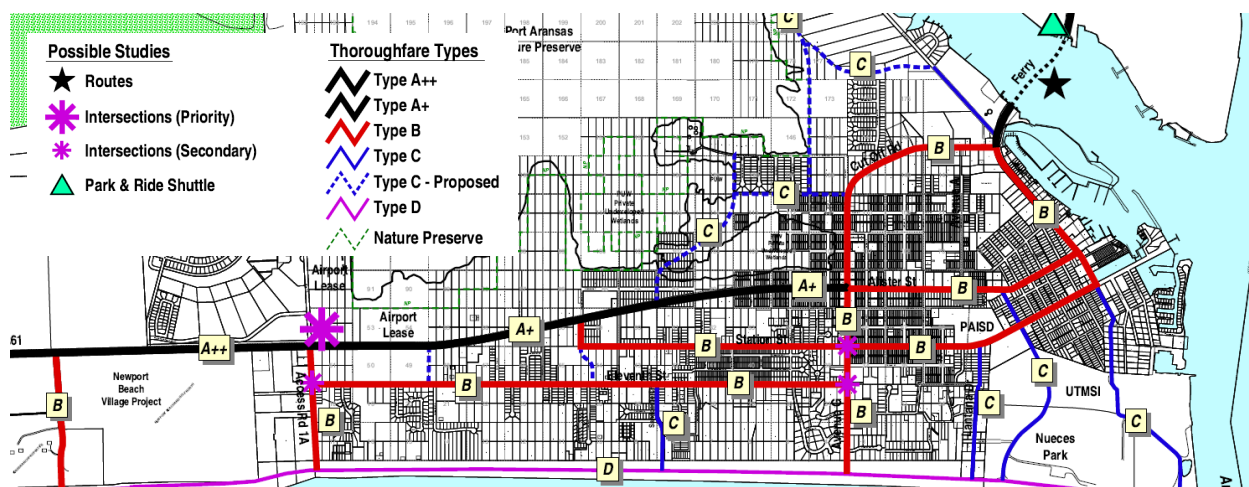
Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Goal: Identify safe mobility alternatives for pedestrian and bicycle traffic within the City of Port Aransas (from the 2005 Pedestrian/Bicycle Mobility Plan).

Parking Goal: Conduct a full review of the City's current parking requirements.

Airport Goal: Promote aviation and foster economic development by strategically planning, developing and operating the safest and most effective airport system for the City of Port Aransas.

Ferry Goal: Strive to make the ferry operate as efficiently as possible and to meet the present and future demands of the City.

Figure 5. Excerpt from the 2007 Transportation Map



Source: Dunkin Sefko & Associates, Inc.

Parks & Open Space Master Plan

In November 2022, the City adopted a Parks & Open Space Master Plan, which was developed with a 10-year planning horizon. The plan includes five goals and 116 actions to achieve the community's recreational objectives.

The plan's goals are as follows:

Resident & Visitor Needs

The Port Aransas Parks System provides recreational spaces and amenities that meet the needs of the local residents, contributing to a strong sense of community and bolstering the experiences of visitors.

Safe & Connected

The Port Aransas Parks System knits the community together, providing safe and vibrant connections to the city's local destinations and resources.

Environmental Stewardship

The Port Aransas Parks System is a steward of the environment, with parks, trails, and recreational amenities designed to promote the preservation of existing habitats, resources, and local ecosystems services.

Design for an Active Life Cycle

The Port Aransas Parks System creates space for all ages, stages, and capabilities, through inclusive design best practices and recreational and cultural programming opportunities.

Resilient Design

The Port Aransas Parks System considers and incorporates the natural and built environment into its design to enhance the resilience of all public spaces, parks, and recreational facilities to withstand future natural and man-made hazards and cascading events.

The plan also included the following list of "top ten recommendations", which are expanded upon in the plan:

1. Roberts point park renovations
2. Multi-purpose parks offices & recreation facility
3. Parkland dedication ordinance improvements
4. Community center neighborhood park
5. New nature park & paddling access
6. Wayfinding & interpretive signage
7. Enhance parks & trails connections
8. Expand & update aquatics facilities
9. New parkland for neighborhood parks & flood mitigation
10. Expand surf rescue services

Economic Plan 2007-2012

In 2007, the City developed a five-year strategic plan to guide economic efforts. The plan establishes the following policies in summary:

Focusing Government: Limit debt, keep taxes low, supplement reserves, spend efficiently, and maintain reserves.

Creating New Opportunities and Choices for People: Keep taxes low, attract skilled workers, listen to citizens/businesses, and cooperate with the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Corporation.

Investing for Sustainable Growth: Continue a legislative presence, promote a healthier natural environment and sustainable economic growth, and build modern infrastructure.

Freeing Businesses to Grow and Succeed: Keep business expenses low, reduce administrative burden on businesses, ensure fair regulations to support competition, generate a five-year financial plan, and be open to trade and investment.

Stormwater Management Report, Plan, and Ordinances

In June 2020, in conjunction with the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program and the Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) at the University of Texas Marine Science Institute (UTMSI), the City commissioned the development of a Stormwater Management Report that served as a preliminary investigation into sustainable drainage codification.

As a follow-up effort, in April 2021 and in conjunction with the same partner agencies, the City commissioned the development of a Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) that seeks to reduce non-point source pollution into local waters, reduce flooding from improper drainage and high tides, and inform local citizens of the value of coastal resources. This document identifies 10 best management practices and 20 proposed ordinance revisions to achieve progress toward the goals over a five-year period.

POPULATION TRENDS

Population Changes

Historical Trends

As shown in Figure 6, the Port Aransas population has grown steadily over previous decades. The City experienced a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 1.82% between 1970 and 2021, identical to the rate of growth for the State of Texas over a similar period, and higher than the Coastal Bend Region (including the following counties: Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Duval, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Live Oak, Nueces, Refugio, and San Patricio). While recent local population estimates vary, this plan uses the most recent 2021 ACS estimate of 3,058 for planning purposes.

Recent Population Estimates

3,058

2021 American Community Survey

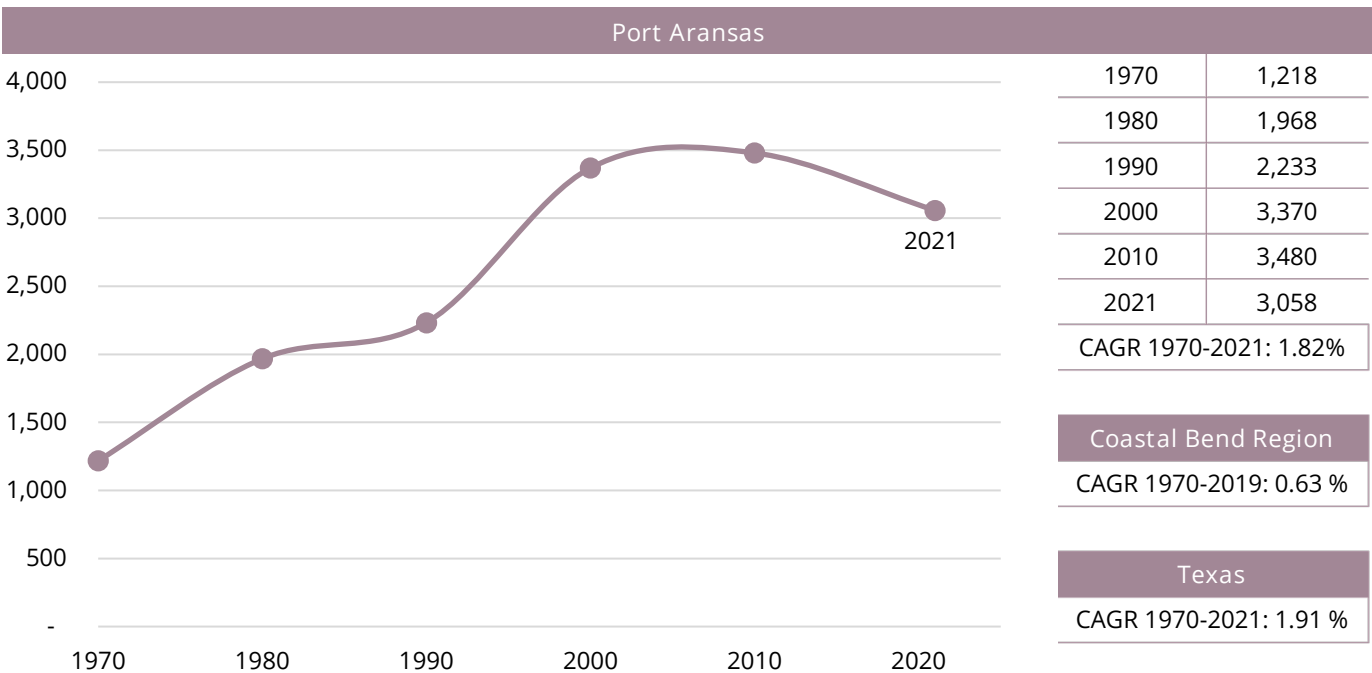
2,904

2020 Decennial Census

4,203

2020 American Community Survey

Figure 6. Local and Regional Population Trends Comparison (1970-2021)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Seasonal Trends and Tourism

Port Aransas is a popular destination for visitors and seasonal owners. While the City operates as a small town in the off-season, the tourism booms from spring to fall drastically increase the population by tens of thousands. No official figure exists; however, an often-cited estimate is a summer population of 60,000.

Decennial census counts occur on April 1 every 10 years, which does not capture the peak season. The American Community Survey (ACS) data is collected at various periods over a one-, three-, or five-year timeframe, so the date of collection is inconsistent and may not be accurate for a tourism destination. Also, because the census is intended for participation in the location in which the respondent lives and sleeps "most of the time", visitors aren't counted. For these reasons and others, estimating a seasonal peak population can be difficult.

A general estimate can be quickly calculated based on the number of housing units,

number of hotel rooms, and anticipated occupancy. There are 4,758 housing units in Port Aransas (ACS 2020) and the average persons per household is typically 2.12 (2021 Esri). Assuming that most (86 percent) housing units are occupied at peak season, and a higher average persons per household (6.00) to account for more families and large groups on vacation, the population in Port Aransas housing units would be about 24,500.

In addition, Port Aransas is home to 38 hotels, ranging in size from several rooms to several hundred rooms. Assuming an average size of about 100 rooms per hotel and about 3.00 guests per room, an additional 11,400 visitors would be accommodated by hotels.

Based on these generalized assumptions, the overnight population would be approximately 35,900. The daytime population could feasibly reach or exceed the 60,000 estimate when considering visitors from nearby communities and housing/hotel accommodations for visitors throughout the region.



Source: Texas SandFest

While the tourism industry brings challenges such as traffic congestion, housing affordability, and other nuisances, it generates a substantial amount of revenue for the City. This revenue helps to fund City services and offsets the need for increased

taxes for residents. The following data is from Travel Texas, a program from the State of Texas' Economic Development & Tourism Office (source: Dean Runyan Associates).

Figure 7. 2019 Travel Impacts on the Port Aransas Economy

Direct Travel Spending

Purchases by travelers during their trip, including lodging taxes and other applicable local and state taxes, paid by the travelers at the point of sale.

\$245.9M

+65.0% since previous year

Direct Employment

Employment associated with the below earnings; this includes both full- and part-time positions of wage and salary workers and proprietors averaged annually. Employment includes the CARES act support, data limitations prevent disaggregation. Figures represent an annual average employment level.

3.4K jobs

+59.7% since previous year

Direct Earnings

The earnings (wage and salary disbursements, earned benefits and proprietor income) of employees and owners of businesses that are attributable to travel expenditures. Earnings includes CARES act support, data limitations prevent disaggregation.

\$89.7M

+62.0% since previous year

Direct Tax Receipts

Tax receipts collected by state, counties and municipalities, as levied on applicable travel-related purchases, including lodging, food and beverage service, retail goods and motor fuel.

\$21.1M (36.8% Local and 63.2% State)

+65.3% since previous year

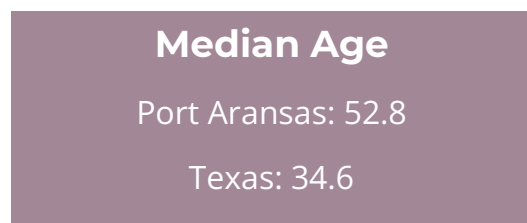
Community Characteristics

Age Distribution

Age trends within the population can indicate needed services such as hospitals, parks, schools, and community centers. Age distribution can also determine the housing types desirable to specific age groups.

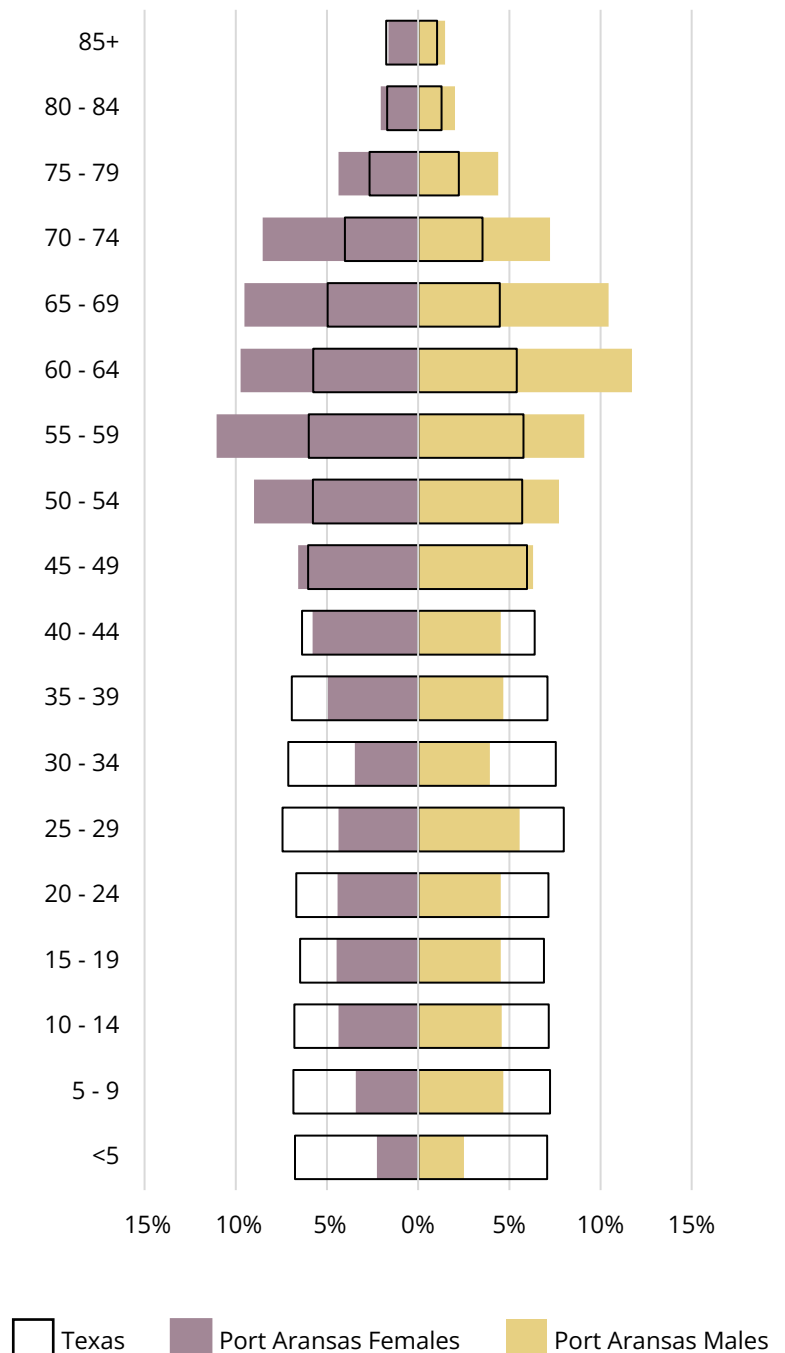
Figure 8 depicts the current age distribution by sex within Port Aransas compared to the State of Texas. As shown, the Port Aransas population skews older, particularly in the 50- to 79-year-old age groups. As expected, the percentage of residents 16 years and older in the labor force is lower – 60.5% in Port Aransas compared to 63.3% in Texas – likely due to a higher rate of retired residents (2021 Esri).

Figure 9. Median Age



Source: 2021 Esri

Figure 8. Age Distribution Comparison (2021)



Source: 2021 Esri

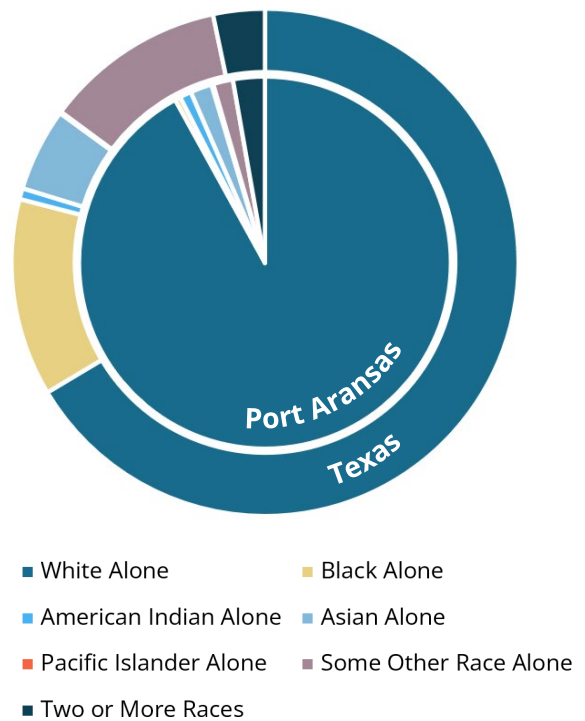
Racial and Ethnic Diversity

Race and ethnicity are factors that help explain a community's identity. Race is associated with biological factors, such as facial features or hair color, and ethnicity is related to cultural factors, such as language and traditions.

The largest racial group in Port Aransas is those who identify as "White Alone", composing 92% of the population; the next closest group is "Two or more races" at 3%. Eleven percent of Port Aransas residents identified as "Hispanic or Latino", compared to 40% statewide.

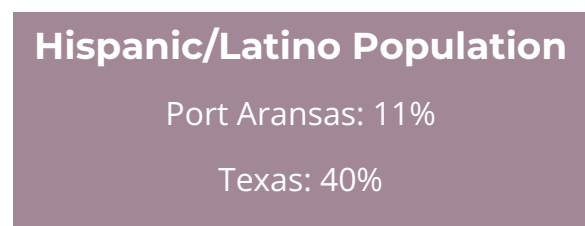
As shown in Figure 10 and Figure 11, the existing population in Port Aransas is less racially and ethnically diverse when compared to the State of Texas. However, Port Aransas has become more diverse since 2010, decreasing in "White Alone" population by two percentage points and increasing in Hispanic population by three percentage points (U.S. Census Bureau).

Figure 10. Racial Distribution Comparison



Source: 2021 Esri

Figure 11. Ethnic Distribution



Source: 2021 Esri

Household Income

Income is an indicator of buying power and is important to understand when identifying the kinds of goods and services needed and desired in the community.

As shown in Figure 12 and Figure 13, both the median and average household incomes in Port Aransas are lower compared to the state. Port Aransas has a higher per capita income, which differs from the average household income largely due to the smaller household size.

Figure 12. Income Comparison

	Port Aransas	Texas
Median Household Income	\$56,888	\$63,524
Average Household Income	\$79,686	\$90,115
Per Capita Income	\$37,780	\$32,007

Source: 2021 Esri

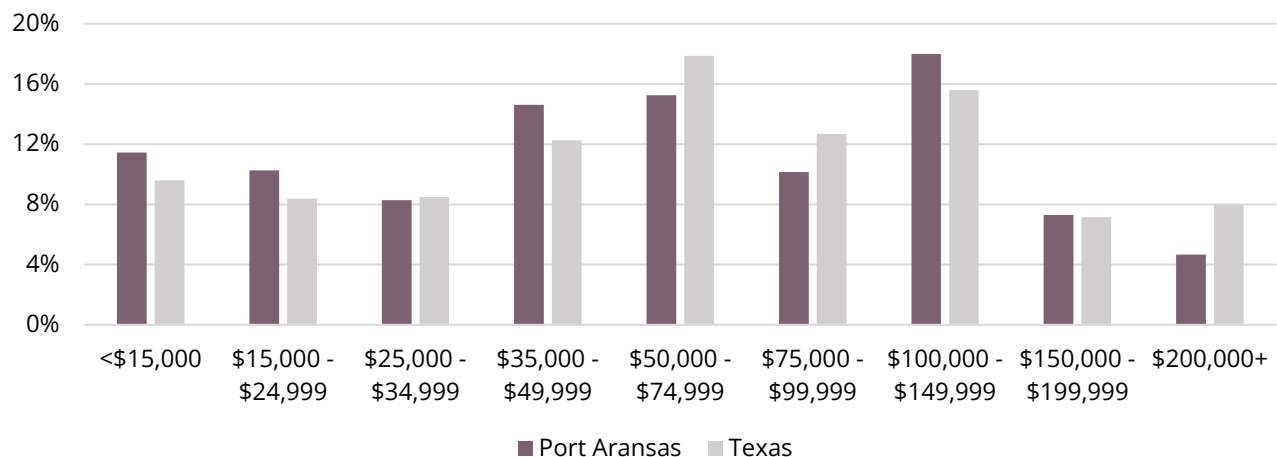
Key Terms

Median = Half of all households earn more than the median and half earn less. Using the median reduces the impacts of extreme outliers.

Average = All income is combined and then divided by the number of households in the City.

Per Capita = All income is combined and then divided by the number of people in the City.

Figure 13. Median Household Income



Source: 2021 Esri

Housing Characteristics

Housing Costs

As shown in Figure 14, home values in Port Aransas exceed the statewide values, with 38% concentrated in the \$300,000-399,999 range. Very few homes (11%) are valued at less than \$250,000.

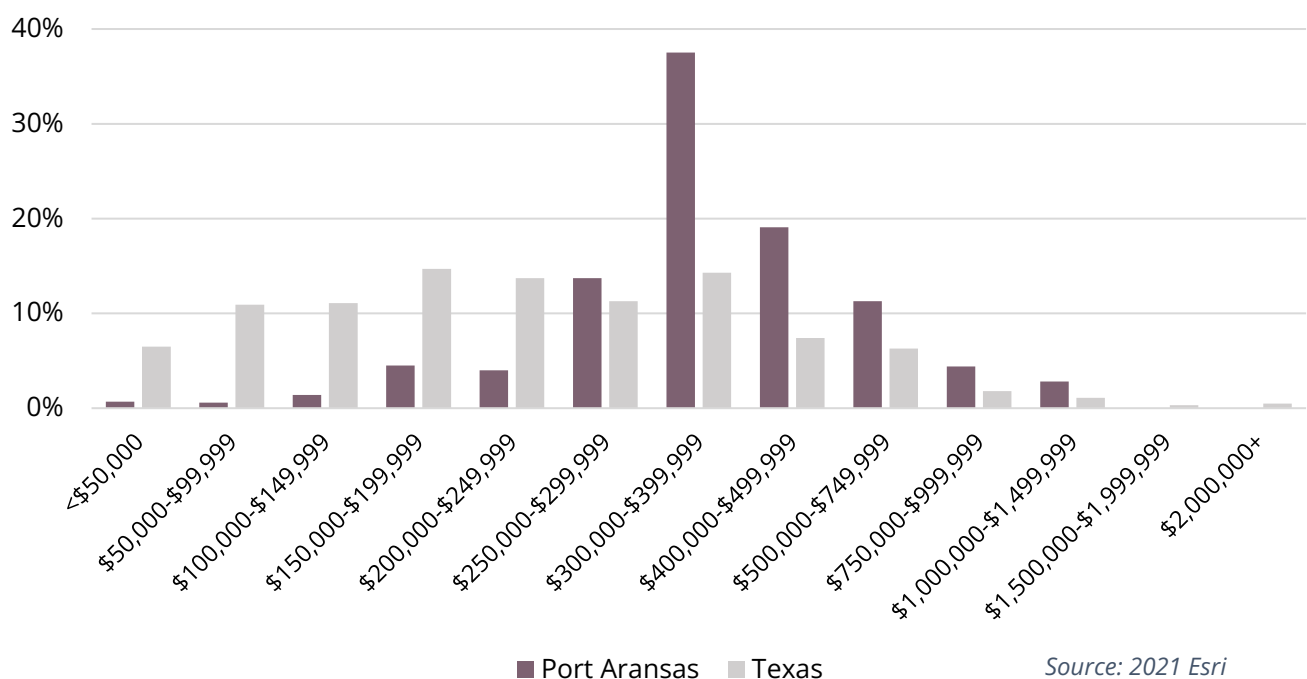
Households paying more than 30 percent of their income towards housing costs are considered "cost burdened". The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines housing affordability as the ability to pay less than 30 percent of household income on housing costs. Using this standard, the percentage of residents who pay 30 percent or less of their income toward housing costs indicates residents who are in housing that is

46% of Port Aransas homeowners and 55% of renters are considered "cost burdened"

affordable for their income level. Paying greater than 30 percent of household income on housing costs indicates households taking on a burdensome housing cost.

Nearly 46% of Port Aransas households with a mortgage pay more than 30% of their income toward housing costs, compared to 27% statewide (2021 Esri). Similarly, 55% of renters pay more than 30%, compared to 48% statewide.

Figure 14. Home Value (Owner-Occupied Units)



Housing Type and Occupancy

About half (51%) of Port Aransas' housing units are traditional detached single-family homes, compared to almost two-thirds of units statewide. Port Aransas has a notably higher percentage of structures with 50 or more units – 19% of units compared to 5% statewide.

As shown in Figure 15, only 44% of Port Aransas' housing units are regularly occupied, compared to 91% statewide. Of the vacant units, 59% are used for seasonal/occasional purposes, typically as vacation homes or short-term rentals. Only 9% are available for rent and 3% for sale.

Figure 15. Housing Occupancy Characteristics

Characteristic	Port Aransas	Texas
Average Household Size	2.12	2.77
Occupied Housing Units	44%	91%
Owner Occupied Units	30%	57%
Renter Occupied Units	14%	33%
Vacant Housing Units	56%	10%
For rent	9%	26%
Rented, not occupied	0.4%	5%
For sale only	3%	8%
Sold, not occupied	0.9%	4%
Seasonal/occasional	59%	20%
For migrant workers	0.0%	0.3%
Other	27%	38%

Source: 2016-2020 ACS; 2021 Esri

Figure 16. Housing Type by Units

Housing Units in Structure	Port Aransas	Texas
1 unit, detached	51%	65%
1 unit, attached	3%	3%
2 units	1%	2%
3 or 4 units	6%	3%
5 to 9 units	3%	5%
10 to 19 units	6%	6%
20 to 49 units	7%	4%
50 or more units	19%	5%
Mobile home	5%	7%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.2%	0.2%

Source: 2016-2020 ACS

Census Terminology

1-unit, detached = Traditional single-family home

1-unit, attached = Duplexes or townhomes that share a ground-to-roof wall

2 or more units = Units that are not separated by a ground-to-roof wall (e.g., stacked units, triplex, quadplex, traditional apartments)

As a tourism destination, determining the various year-round populations in the City can be a challenge. Using a variety of sources, this plan assumes the following occupancy characteristics:

- According to the Census, Port Aransas has 4,758 dwelling units (2020 ACS).
- Only about 900 homeowners have claimed a homestead exemption for a dwelling located in Port Aransas (shown in Figure 17).
- The City estimates that approximately 2,700 short-term rental units operate in the City as of August 2022 (shown in Figure 18).
- The remaining units (about 1,150) are likely long-term rental units or second homes.

The homesteaded properties are mostly located north of Beach Access Road 1-A and west of Eleventh Street, or in the Island Moorings or Mustang Royale developments

Short-term rentals are mostly located north of Beach Access Road 1-A and east of Eleventh Street, or in the Palmilla Beach, Royal Sands, or Cinnamon Shore developments.

Figure 17. Homestead Exemptions

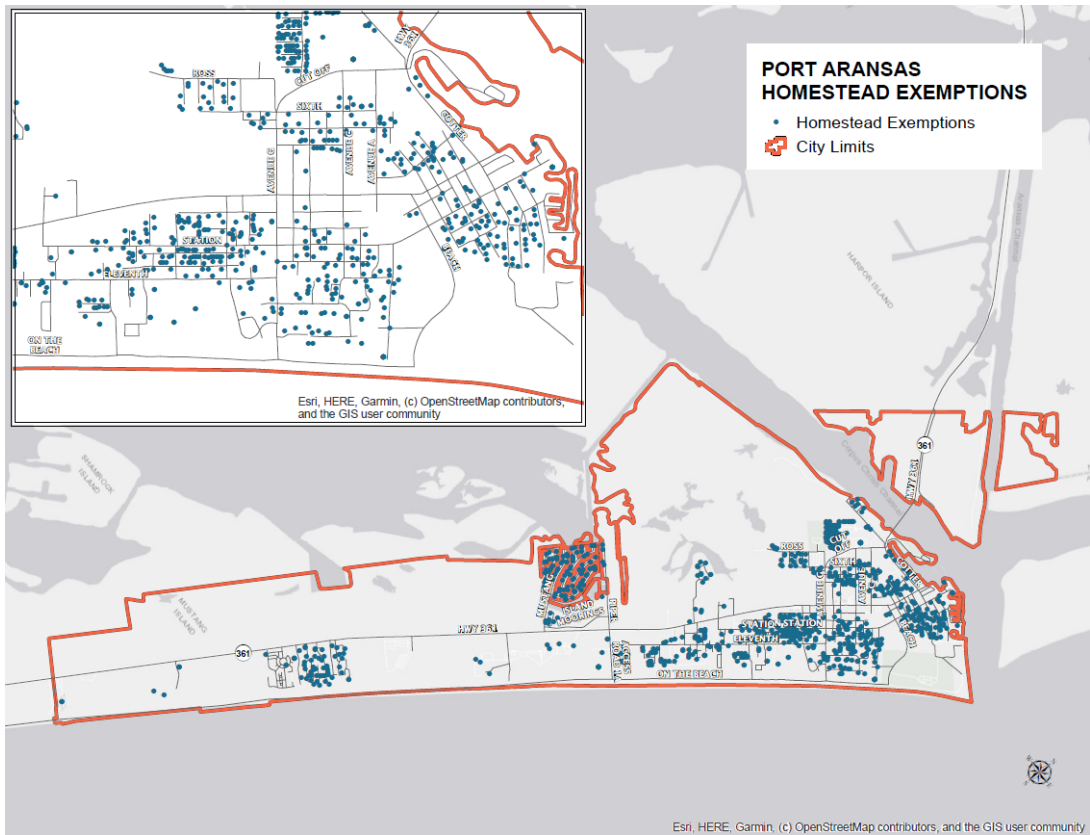
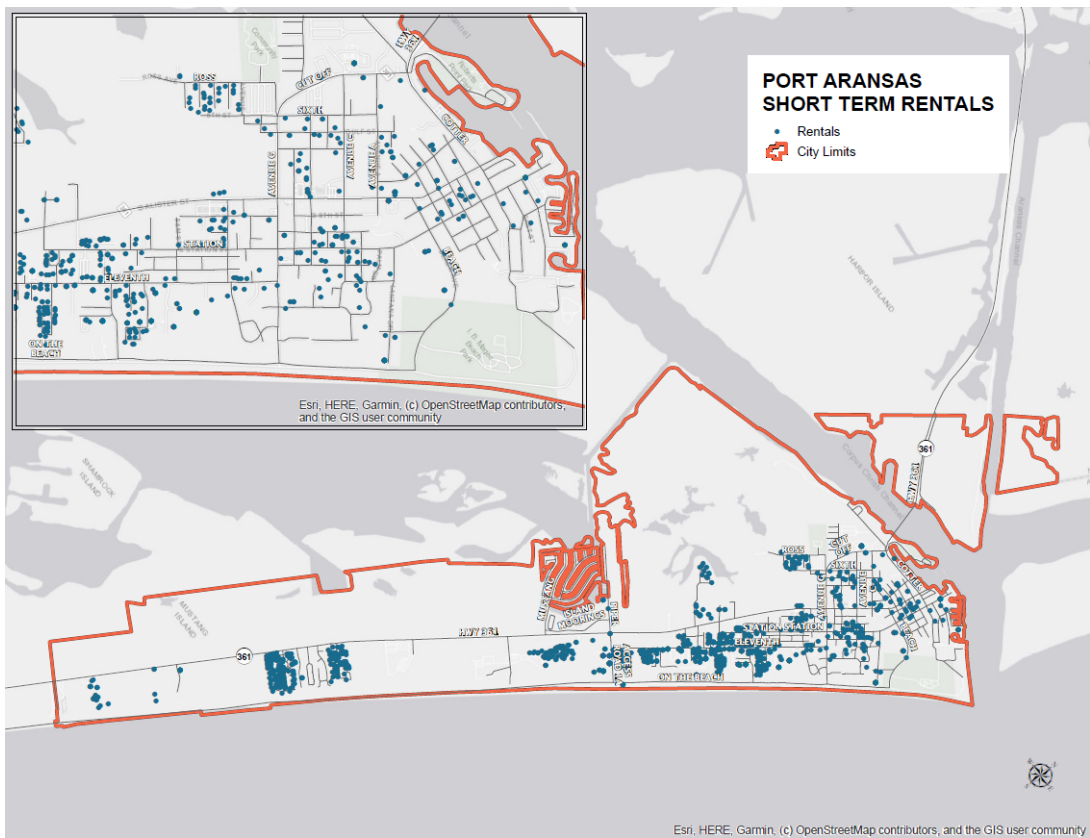


Figure 18. Short Term Rentals



What are your desired PRIORITIES for the City?

fix Cut-off / 6th St
Ross Intersection
- BAD for pedestrians

get a handle on STR problems

a balanced and fair city council

Environment

Protect our waterways

Grow sustainably

Be able to raise our family here - need better infrastructure

Keep out Port of Corpus

stop trying to fight growth, it's has & will happen choose to manage & plan

Managed responsible growth.

Sidewalks Citywide

Safe crossing areas station & Ave G (school kids)

Wheel chair Accessibility → Sidewalks, curbs, Ross Ave

enforce current STR ordinances *
Prior to creating new ones

YES! ENFORCEMENT OF PROPERTY CLEANUP!

50 50 Ratio STR between Residents

Golf cart safety + control
- none on cut off Rd

- Fair + affordable long term housing.

off-leash dog area on Beach

friendly signage wider 361.

That ↑ YES ↑ NO

Property Tax payers should have a voice even if they don't live here

Emergency Services

communication opportunities

Equal representation
Everyone matters.
Infrastructure.
Sustainability

Slow down growth - stop deleting open space

CHAPTER II:

VISIONING

This plan is the result of a process designed to encourage community participation early and continuing through the process. This CHAPTER II: VISIONING outlines the engagement process, guiding principles, and goals that guided the plan's development.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

This comprehensive planning process occurred over a 14-month period between February 2022 and April 2023. The process included extensive community engagement throughout the course of the project. The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) served as a steering committee to help prepare and refine plan recommendations. The community actively participated in three in-person Open House events, each of which was accompanied by a virtual alternative. A summary of the community engagements is outlined below; full details for each engagement can be found in the Appendix.

Engagement By The Numbers

- Approximately 125 attendees at 3 Open House events
- Nearly 300 comments received online
- 7 CPAC meetings

PLAN FOUNDATION

Feb. 22, 2022 | CPAC Meeting #1: Kickoff and issue identification

Feb. 23, 2022 (Online Feb. 10-28) | Open House #1: Community visioning

Feb. 24, 2022 | CPAC Meeting #2: Goals and guiding principles discussion

May 18, 2022 | CPAC Meeting #3: Draft goals discussion

July 28, 2022 | CPAC Meeting #4: Draft concepts and actions discussion

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Sept. 19, 2022 | CPAC Meeting #5: Review draft Land Use, Housing & Character chapter

Sept. 20, 2022 | Open House #2: Feedback on draft goals, concepts, and actions

Oct. 26, 2022 | CPAC Meeting #6: Review draft Transportation, Facilities & Services chapter

PLAN REFINEMENT

Dec. 12, 2022 | CPAC Meeting #7: Review complete draft plan

Feb. 28, 2023 (Online Feb. 28-Mar. 14) | Open House #3: Feedback on complete draft plan

Mar. 23, 2023 | Joint Workshop

Apr. 20, 2023 | Joint Public Hearing

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Five guiding principles emerged from the community input process, as stated below. These principles, along with the established goals, were used to guide the Plan's development. Each recommendation within this Plan relates to one or more of these principles. CHAPTER V: ACTION PLAN includes suggested performance measures to help track progress for each principle.

Enhance the quality of life for residents



Protect the natural environment



Build upon the family-oriented lifestyle



Ensure responsible tourism



Support the local businesses



PLAN GOALS

The plan's goals were developed based on the community's input and a review of existing issues facing Port Aransas. The goals are organized by plan chapter, and each chapter includes detailed actions to help the City achieve the goal.

LAND USE, HOUSING & CHARACTER GOALS

- Goal LHC 1: Protect and promote our natural resources.
- Goal LHC 2: Build upon the local identity and conserve the historic charm.
- Goal LHC 3: Plan for new commercial, entertainment, and cultural opportunities.
- Goal LHC 4: Ensure a positive image of the community.
- Goal LHC 5: Ensure compatibility between tourism activity and residential life.
- Goal LHC 6: Promote low-impact development strategies.
- Goal LHC 7: Effectively manage and leverage short-term rentals.
- Goal LHC 8: Plan for quality neighborhoods.
- Goal LHC 9: Proactively support attainable workforce housing options.

TRANSPORTATION, FACILITIES & SERVICES GOALS

- Goal TFS 1: Plan for future facilities and services to support the City's operations and growth.
- Goal TFS 2: Promote public safety in the community.
- Goal TFS 3: Improve network connectivity and mobility.
- Goal TFS 4: Support active transportation options.
- Goal TFS 5: Plan for roadway design improvements.

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CHAPTER III:

LAND USE, HOUSING & CHARACTER

Many factors contribute to how land is developed in a city, such as physical factors like coastlines, wetlands, and roadways. Other factors include zoning, development restrictions, and existing development or development plans. Using this information as a baseline for future development, this chapter provides goals and actions related to future land use planning, housing and neighborhood considerations, and preserving and enhancing the existing unique character of Port Aransas.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Physical Features

Natural and Municipal Constraints

Port Aransas' natural features play a major role in the quality of life enjoyed by residents and visitors – the beaches, wildlife, bay, and ocean, and preserved natural areas. These features also affect development in a range of ways and should be considered by this plan.

The City's island location establishes firm boundaries along the shorelines. As Port Aransas is bordered by Corpus Christi to the south and Aransas Pass to the northwest, expansion of the existing City limits is unlikely. The Corpus Christi Channel also creates a natural barrier, dividing most of the City of Port Aransas from Harbor Island. TxDOT operates a ferry crossing to connect SH 361 across the channel, which can create significant traffic congestion and wait times during peak season.

Most of the island is located within the 100-year floodplain (Zone AE), meaning that the area has a 1 percent chance of flooding each year. Some higher portions of the island (generally located between Cotter Avenue, Alister Street, and Beach Access Road 1A) are located within the 500-year floodplain (Zone X), meaning that the area has a 0.2 percent chance of flooding each year. Development and property insurance requirements within the floodplains are regulated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The extensive presence of wetlands, particularly on the northwest side of the island, largely limits expansion into presently undeveloped areas. Wetlands improve water quality, help protect against flood damage, provide recreational opportunities, and provide ecological habitat. Wetlands are regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, with strict standards in place to restrict development.

While the Nature Preserve is a major asset to the community in terms of natural beauty, habitat, recreation, and wetlands, it does prevent development in the northwestern portion of the island.

Along the shoreline, sand dunes help to protect against storm surges and coastal flooding, as well as to provide ecological habitat. Sand dunes can also shift over time, depending on the direction and strength of wind. The dunes and associated vegetation are protected by the Texas Natural Resource Code and Texas Administrative Code.

Constructed Constraints

The primary constructed constraint that can affect land use planning, walkability, and other elements of this plan is the SH 361/Alister Street corridor, which physically divides the City with a heavily traveled roadway. Additionally, the Mustang Beach Airport could potentially have noise and density impacts on surrounding development.

[illegible]

Existing Land Use

This section provides an analysis of the existing land use patterns present in Port Aransas today. A city's current development patterns strongly affect future development patterns. While some level of infill and redevelopment is anticipated over time, the Future Land Use Map is largely based on these current patterns.

As shown in Figure 21, the largest existing designation is vacant land, constituting 33 percent of the City's area; however, about one-third of this remaining vacant land is located within the floodplain and is unlikely to develop in the long term. The Nature Preserve is the next largest category, constituting about 1,354 acres. Residential uses constitute about 11 percent of total acreage, primarily as Single Family development.

Figure 21. Existing Land Use Acreage

Existing Land Use	Acres	%
Single Family	609	9%
Townhome	33	0.5%
Multifamily	126	2%
Manufactured Home	11	0.2%
Office	21	0.3%
Retail Commercial	318	5%
Industrial	382	6%
Public/Semi-Public	148	2%
Parks and Recreation	654	9%
Nature Preserve	1,354	20%
Private Wetlands	512	7%
Right-of-Way	450	7%
Vacant	2,276	33%
Total	6,895	100%

Figure 20. Existing Land Use Percentages

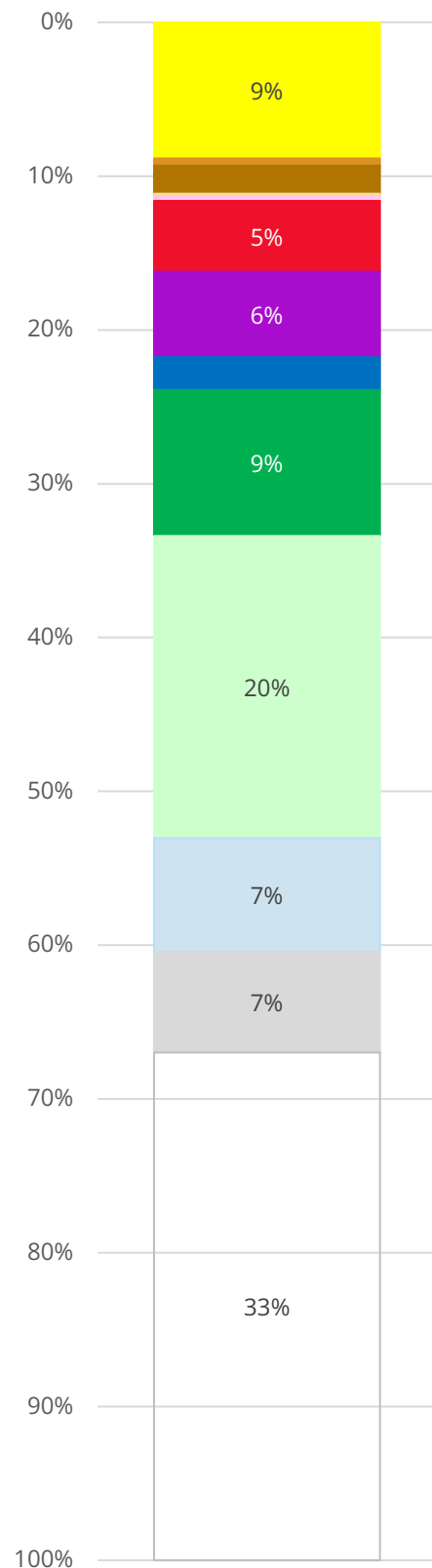
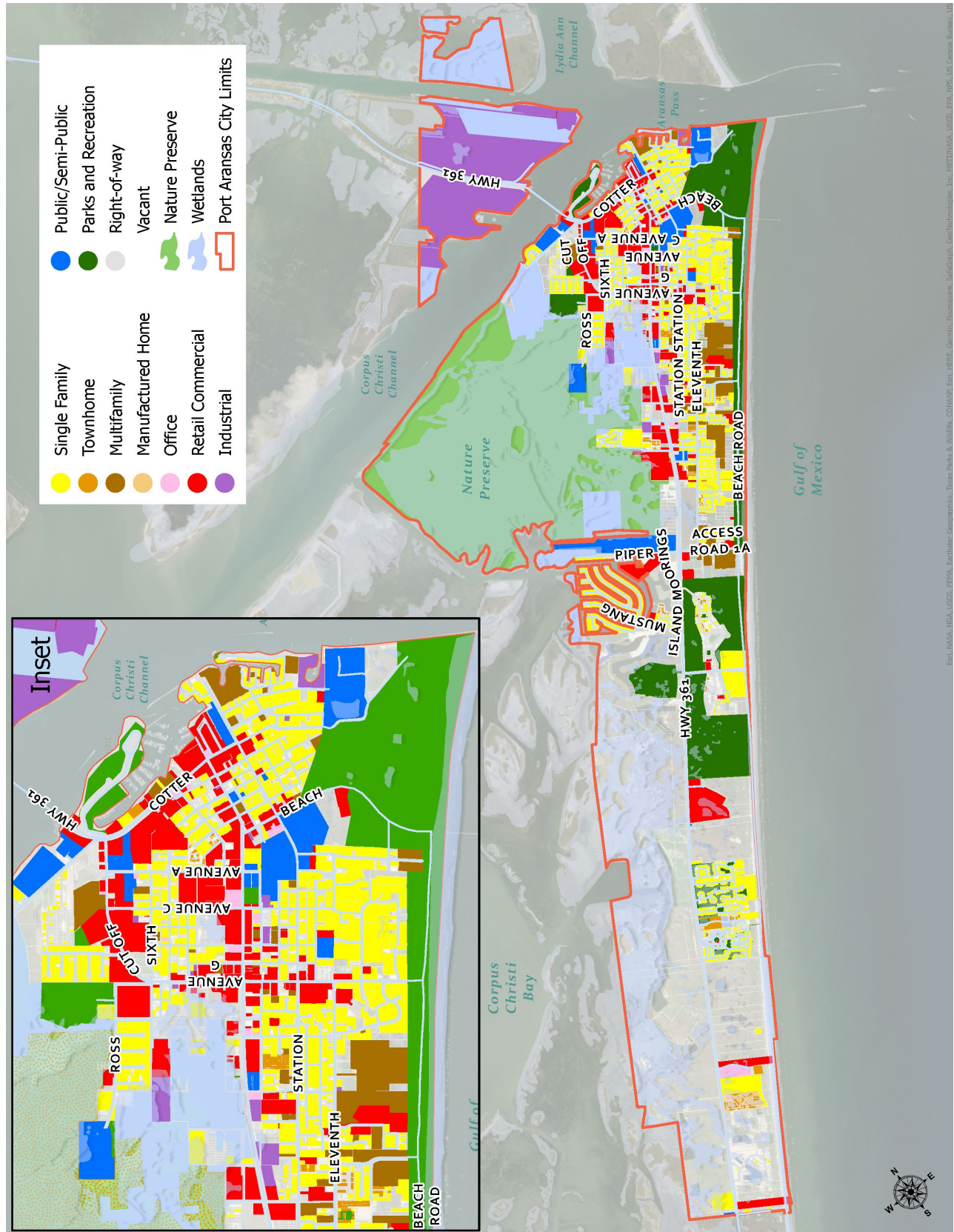


Figure 22. Existing Land Use Map



FUTURE LAND USE & GROWTH

Future Land Use Map

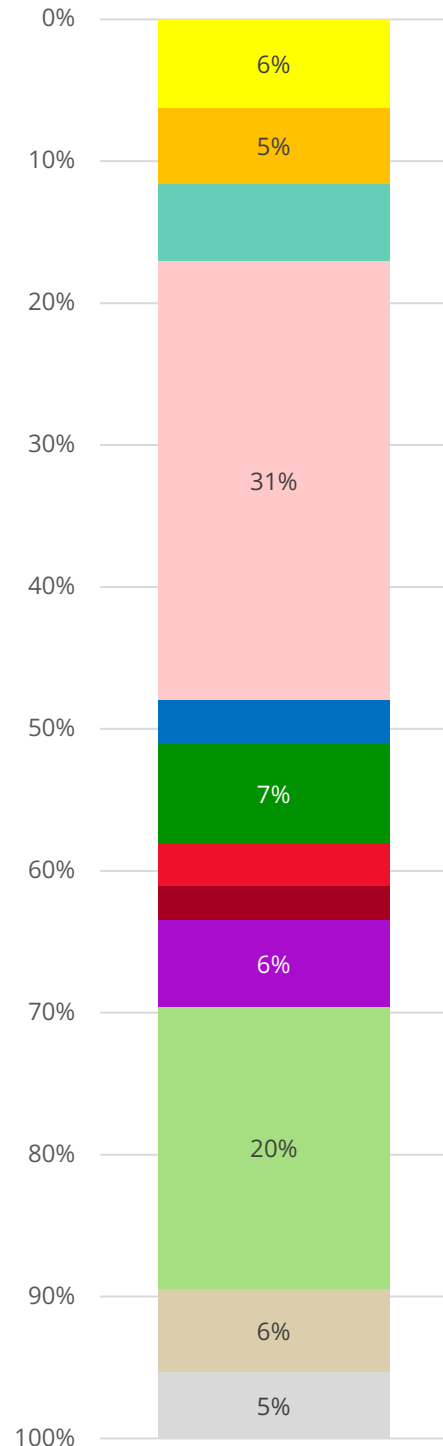
The Future Land Use (FLU) map is a graphic representation of the recommended land use pattern in the City. It is intended to guide future land use decisions and infrastructure planning as development and redevelopment occur. The map is a long-range vision and not necessarily the land uses that exist today.

The FLU map provides guidance and helps to inform development decisions; however, it is not the City's zoning map, which regulates the use of land. The FLU map is also not the endpoint of discussions, but rather an important element to evaluate along with other site- or conditions-specific considerations.

Figure 24. Future Land Use Acreages

Future Land Use	Acres	%
Low Density Residential	431	6%
Mixed-Density Residential	369	5%
Mixed Use	373	5%
Resort/Tourism	2,136	31%
Public/Semi-Public	212	3%
Parks and Open Space	484	7%
Office/Retail	208	3%
Commercial	167	2%
Industrial	418	6%
Nature Preserve	1,375	20%
Private Wetlands	401	6%
Right-of-Way	322	5%
Total	6,895	100%

Figure 23. Future Land Use Percentages



Land Uses

- Office/Retail
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Nature Preserve
- Private Wetlands
- Wetlands
- Port Aransas City Limits
- Low Density Residential
- Mixed-Density Neighborhoods
- Mixed Use
- Resort/Tourism
- Public/Semi-Public
- Parks and Open Space

Inset Map Labels: SH 36, MARINA, MIXED USE, COCKER, BEACH, LANTANA, AVENUE A, AVENUE C, AVENUE G, STATION, ELEVENTH, SAND CASTLE, BEACH ROAD.

Main Map Labels: SH 36, MARINA, MIXED USE, COCKER, BEACH, LANTANA, AVENUE A, AVENUE C, AVENUE G, STATION, ELEVENTH, SAND CASTLE, BEACH ROAD, ACCESS ROAD 1, ISLAND MOORINGS, PIPER, MUSTANG, ROSS, SIXTH, AVENUE D, AVENUE E, ARANZAS PASS, LYDIA ANN CHANNEL, CORPUS CHRISTI BAY, GULF OF MEXICO.

Note: A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries

Future Land Use Categories

FLU Category	Description
Low-Density Residential	The predominant land use in this category is detached, single-family homes. Limited nonresidential uses may be present, such as schools, places of worship, parks, or other public facilities. Lot sizes typically range between 5,000 and 10,000 square feet, with approximately 6 dwelling units per acre. This category generally corresponds to the R-1 and R-2 zoning districts.
Mixed-Density Neighborhoods	This category represents traditional development that blends residential densities, ranging from detached single-family homes on smaller lots to duplexes, townhomes, and smaller scale multi-family apartments or condos. This category provides for "missing middle" housing densities and supports workforce housing options. Limited amounts of small-scale retail, commercial, and office uses are appropriate to serve the nearby residents. Lot sizes typically range between 3,000 and 8,000 square feet, with approximately 12 dwelling units per acre. This category generally corresponds to the TR-1 and TR-2 zoning districts.
Resort/Tourism	This category is generally located south of Beach Access Road 1-A, providing ample area for higher density, tourism-oriented development. Appropriate land uses include detached single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes, and multi-family apartments or condos including high-rise developments. A range of 16 to 24 dwelling units is anticipated in these areas.
Mixed Use	Mixed use development typically refers to residential units (apartments or condos) above a retail or office development; however, in some cases the differing uses may be adjacent to one another. By square footage, about one-third to one-quarter is occupied by nonresidential uses and the remainder by residential uses. A range of 16 to 24 dwelling units is anticipated in these areas.
Public/Semi-Public	These uses typically include governmental, educational, faith-based, or other community-service facilities. This category reflects the existing public/semi-public locations, as these developments are typically allowed in and compatible with any category or district.

FLU Category	Description
Parks and Open Space	This category designates existing and planned parks and open space areas that serve the community. These areas may include active recreation, passive open space, and the shoreline.
Office/Retail	This category may include a variety of businesses that serve the local community, such as retail stores, restaurants, offices, and limited light commercial uses such as groceries, banks, gas stations, and dry cleaners. These developments are small in scale and generally compatible adjacent to residential development.
Commercial	These uses include light and heavy commercial activities, flex-space, smaller scale warehousing and storage operations, and related uses.
Industrial	The Industrial category provides areas for industrial, heavy commercial, and supporting office/warehouse uses. These areas may include outside storage and some levels of noise or other nuisances. This land is primarily used for the Harbor Island port activity.
Nature Preserve	The Port Aransas Nature Preserve is a 1,200-acre area that is protected to preserve the native landscape, habitat, wildlife, and ecology. This preserve is intended to remain indefinitely, with limited improvements, such as trails and trailheads.
Private Wetlands	These areas are privately owned wetlands that are generally considered to be undevelopable and anticipated to remain as natural wetlands indefinitely.

Population Projections and Capacity

Figure 26 shows the City's population projections through 2040 based on three different growth scenarios ranging from 2.00 percent to 2.50 percent. For planning purposes, a growth rate of 2.25 percent is recommended. This rate is slightly higher than the 1970-2021 compound annual growth rate (1.82 percent) based on an increase in residential building permits. This rate would result in a population of nearly 4,700 full-time residents in 2040.

Figure 27 outlines the typical process for estimating future additional population – that is, the population that could be accommodated by the Future Land Use Map assumptions in addition to the existing population.

Port Aransas has a high percentage of residential units used for seasonal homes or short-term rentals, which is subject to fluctuation due to many external factors such as the economy, climate, and legislative actions. These changes create challenges when estimating future capacity.

Figure 28 includes two potential scenarios for estimating capacity – one that estimates build-out during the off-season and another that estimates build-out during the summer peak. This estimate is useful to inform the City of its potential population at various points throughout the year.

Figure 26. Population Projections

Year	Projected Growth Rates		
	2.00%	2.25%	2.50%
2021	3,058	3,058	3,058
2022	3,119	3,127	3,134
2023	3,182	3,197	3,213
2024	3,245	3,269	3,293
2025	3,310	3,343	3,375
2030	3,655	3,736	3,819
2035	4,035	4,176	4,321
2040	4,455	4,667	4,889

Figure 27. Process for Estimating Future Additional Population

$$\begin{array}{l}
 \text{Number of future developable acres by} \\
 \text{Future Land Use category} \\
 \times \\
 \text{Estimated dwelling units per acre} \\
 \times \\
 \text{Occupancy rate} \\
 \times \\
 \text{Number of persons per household} \\
 = \\
 \text{Future additional population}
 \end{array}$$

Based on the City's current full-time occupancy rates, the City could accommodate nearly 18,000 full-time residents at ultimate build-out. Using the peak season occupancy and persons per household rates, nearly 90,000 residents (or visitors in residential units) could be accommodated.

It is also important to note that this analysis is based on currently vacant land and planned densities; it does not account for infrastructure demands, access, or potential changes in tourism.

As a general estimate, approximately 3,000 dwellings are currently entitled through a building permit or as part of a PUD. These units are included in the "Future Dwellings" calculation.

Figure 28. Ultimate Capacity Projections

Off-Season								
Vacant Future Land Use	Acres	ROW/ Wetlands	Dwellings Per Acre	Future Dwellings	Occupied Units ⁽¹⁾	Future Households	Persons Per Household ⁽¹⁾	Future Population
Low Density Res.	74	20%	6	356	41.7%	148	2.12	315
Mixed-Density Res.	110	25%	12	986	41.7%	411	2.12	871
Mixed Use	169	35%	20	2,202	41.7%	918	2.12	1,947
Resort/Tourism	1,633	60%	20	13,061	41.7%	5,446	2.12	11,546
Total Additional				16,605		6,924		14,679
Existing Population ⁽⁴⁾								3,058
Ultimate Capacity								17,737

Peak Season								
Vacant Future Land Use	Acres	ROW/ Wetlands	Dwellings Per Acre	Future Dwellings	Occupied Units ⁽²⁾	Future Households	Persons Per Household ⁽³⁾	Future Population
Low Density Res.	74	20%	6	356	86.0%	306	6.00	1,837
Mixed-Density Res.	110	25%	12	986	86.0%	848	6.00	5,086
Mixed Use	169	35%	20	2,202	86.0%	1,894	6.00	11,363
Resort/Tourism	1,633	60%	20	13,061	86.0%	11,232	6.00	67,394
Total Additional				16,605		14,280		85,680
Existing Population ⁽⁴⁾								3,058
Ultimate Capacity								88,738

⁽¹⁾ Source: 2016-2020 ACS Port Aransas Data

⁽²⁾ Source: Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce Data

⁽³⁾ Source: City general estimate

⁽⁴⁾ Source: 2021 ACS Estimate

LHC GOALS & ACTIONS

This section includes goals and recommended actions related to the Land Use, Housing & Character chapter. These goals and actions are summarized in CHAPTER V: ACTION PLAN, along with implementation timelines and mechanisms for each action.

Goal LHC 1: Protect and promote our natural resources.

LHC 1.a. Update the 2005 Nature Preserve Plan to align with current conditions and to continue to protect this important local resource.

The Port Aransas Nature Preserve is a 1,200-acre area located in the northwestern portion of the island. The preserve was acquired in 2004 through a joint effort between the City, the Port Aransas Independent School District, the University of Texas Marine Science Institute, and several citizens. The preserve is protected through the City's Code of Ordinances (Sec. 18-240), which establishes

general rules, prohibited activities, and the Nature Preserve Technical Advisory Board's duties and regulations.

The Nature Preserve Plan was developed in 2005 to identify planned trails, trailheads, and recreation areas. Since that time, many of the plan's recommendations have been implemented; however, Hurricane Harvey destroyed many of the improvements in 2017. The City should consider updating the Nature Preserve Plan to reflect current conditions, plan for any future trails or other compatible amenities, and evaluate whether any additional environmental protections are appropriate.

Figure 29. Nature Preserve Pavilion



LHC 1.b. Update the 1995 Coastal Management Plan and consider the development of a Natural Resource Protection Plan.

The City's 1995 Coastal Management Plan establishes protections for the beachfront and adjacent dunes. The City should plan for an update to this plan in the near future to reflect existing conditions and to evaluate whether additional protections may be needed.

While most wetlands and dunes are already protected by federal laws, evaluate whether additional provisions may be appropriate to further protect these critical features. Consider whether this Coastal Management Plan should be incorporated into a broader Natural Resource Protection Plan that encompasses all of Port Aransas' natural features. Consider whether additional study would be appropriate to identify existing wetlands that have not yet been identified.

LHC 1.c. Continue to monitor and communicate with industrial users in the region.

Regional practices such as water desalination, dredging, hazardous materials dumping, port-related maneuvering and operational activity, and oil spills can have a major detrimental effect on Port Aransas' natural environment, quality of life, and economic development. The City should work with these users to explore solutions that protect the natural environment whenever possible.

LHC 1.d. Continue to promote Port Aransas as an ecotourism destination.

With resources such as the Nature Preserve, the University of Texas Marine Science Institute, and the Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center, Port Aransas is well-positioned to attract tourism featuring these unique assets. The City should continue to coordinate with the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce to support the ecotourism strategy.

LHC 1.e. Continue to explore potential additional funding sources to support natural resources.

Many state and federal funding sources are available for the protection or restoration of natural resources, such as wetlands, wildlife habitat, shorelines, and water quality. Consider whether a grant writer position would be a benefit to the community to continually identify potential funding sources on a regular basis. Alternatively, consider whether the position could be shared with another entity (e.g., the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce or the County) or whether this responsibility could fit within an existing City Staff position.

LHC 1.f. Review the existing lighting regulations and implement a “Dark Sky” program to protect the night sky.

Light pollution has a detrimental impact on many types of wildlife – particularly sea turtles, whose hatchlings can be confused by bright lights and move toward urbanized areas rather than toward the ocean. Light pollution can also impact an area’s quality of life by reducing the visibility of the night sky and by disrupting natural circadian rhythms as well as bird migration patterns. Dark Sky principles include only using fully shaded light fixtures, avoiding excessive amounts of lighting, placing lighting fixtures at appropriate heights, and using motion-activated lighting, among other strategies. The City should review its existing outdoor lighting regulations to consider whether updated provisions are appropriate to protect the night sky. The City should also consider a public awareness campaign to inform local residents, business owners, and visitors of the benefits of limiting light pollution.

Goal LHC 2: Build upon the local identity and conserve the historic charm.

LHC 2.a. Plan for a Town Square that serves as a focal point and central gathering place for the community.

The City recently purchased a large parcel along Alister Street, between Brown Avenue and Oaks Avenue, with the vision to establish this area as a centralized green space, possibly with a gazebo and/or public parking. This parcel provides an exciting opportunity for formalized public space in the town's core.

As the City plans for the programming of this site, conducting visioning and input activities may be helpful in identifying the community's priorities for its Town Square.

Additionally, the City could work with surrounding property owners to identify potential opportunities for partnerships or capital improvements to the area. These additional enhancements beyond the plaza could help establish the Town Square as the central focal point of Port Aransas.

Figure 30. Proposed Town Square Site



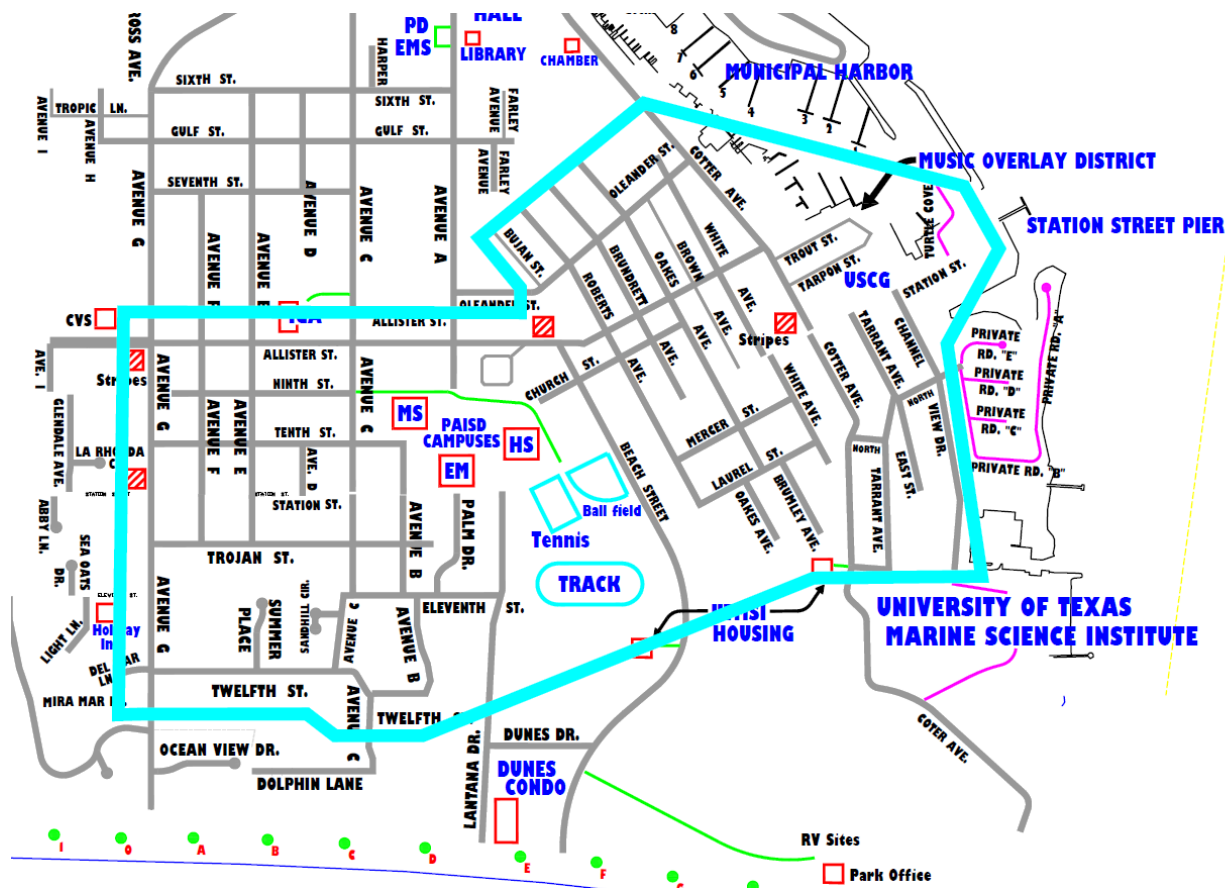
LHC 2.b. Preserve and expand the character of the Old Town area by ensuring compatible development.

Old Town Port Aransas is the “heart” of the community, with several historic or locally significant landmarks, such as the Tarpon Inn, the Chapel on the Dunes, and the Port Aransas Museum. The Port Aransas Preservation and Historical Society (PAPHS) proposed a boundary to officially define the Old Town area, which was adopted by City Council. PAPHS is working to preserve these assets on a voluntary basis and to provide a ceramic tile marker to identify each site.

The City should consider establishing regulations to further protect and enhance the character of the area as future development occurs. For example:

- Review appropriate land uses in Old Town. While this area is envisioned to continue including a variety of land use types, uses like outdoor commercial storage may not be appropriate, particularly in areas visible from a roadway or a residential property.

Figure 31. Old Town Boundary



- Evaluate the current building setback, lot coverage, and height requirements. Limit building heights to two stories; consider whether three stories may be appropriate for larger lots in some locations, with increased side yard setbacks and limited upper floor square footage.
- Incentivize building and site design that promotes the fishing village or coastal aesthetic (e.g., cottage/bungalow style, building materials, color scheme, front porches). Incentives could include density bonuses or reduced setbacks.

The City should ensure regular coordination between the PAPHS and the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce to maximize resources and align planning efforts. These groups should work together to preserve and enhance Old Town as an asset to the community and tourist destination. Other opportunities could include communitywide workshops to educate property owners on the benefits of preservation, techniques, and awareness of other resources.

Goal LHC 3: Plan for new commercial, entertainment, and cultural opportunities.

LHC 3.a. Plan for mixed-use nodes along SH 361 to create additional areas of activity and services.

A mixed-use node refers to a concentrated area of retail, commercial, and residential development at one or more corners of an intersection. The Future Land Use Map proposes several mixed-use nodes in the southern portion of the City. The purpose of

these nodes is to create walkable centers of development, rather than traditional auto-centric strip center development. Additionally, establishing these areas to the south will help to lessen congestion in the northern part of the City, as residents and visitors can access the goods and services nearby.

Figure 32. Local Example of Mixed-Use Development



LHC 3.b. Plan for the development of a new marina.

The City currently owns a 67-acre tract of land between the Nature Preserve and the ferry landing, which has been considered for a future marina location. Nearby Dennis Dryer Municipal Harbor is a 25-acre marina operated by the City; however, the boat slips are typically fully occupied. A second marina would support the community's position as a fishing village, serve as an alternative to the existing marina, and provide a unique destination in the town.

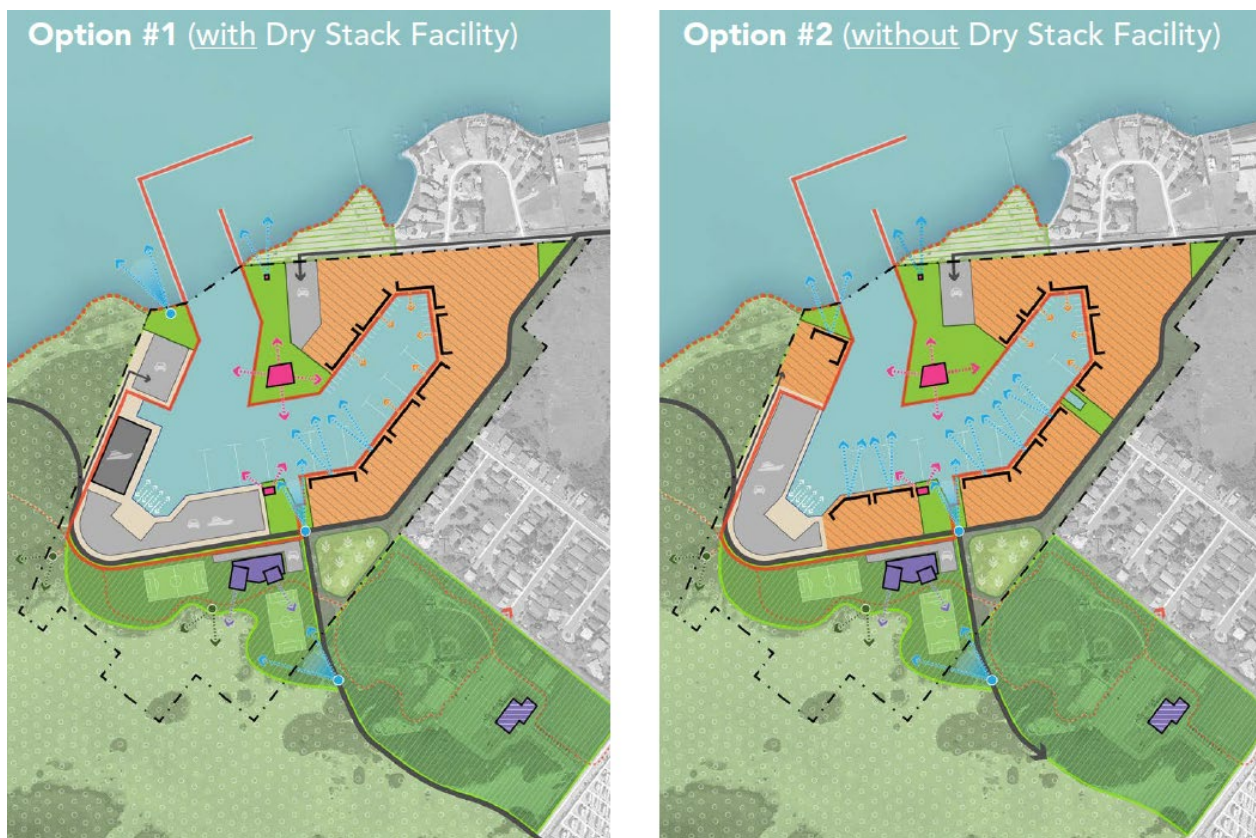
In 2014, the City commissioned a study to complete an analysis of comparable and competitive marinas and to assess the

potential market demand for additional marina capacity. This study confirmed the market demand for storage of larger (i.e., 40' and over) boats; however, expansions of marina capacity across the region could negatively affect demand in Port Aransas.

In 2015, the City's Waterfront Development Study furthered this vision with a plan for the site and surrounding areas. This study focused on the following planning and design principles:

- Improve public access to water
- Facilitate existing marina's needs and services

Figure 33. Proposed Development Options for the Future Marina



Source: Waterfront Development Study

- Enhance recreational resources for citizens
- Connect and strengthen access to adjacent public amenities
- Provide amenities for everyone
- Establish a relationship between existing and new marina

The City should move forward with the seven next steps recommended in the study:

1. Boundary and topographic study;
2. Market study to identify program for commercial marina amenity leases;
3. Detailed master plan (program accommodation and adjacencies, 2D/3D design, site sections, site amenities and landscape concepts, pedestrian/vehicular circulation, illustrative site plan and renderings);
4. Phasing strategy;
5. Financial analysis (public/private partnership and finance strategies);
6. Begin Army Corps of Engineers permit for Avenue I extension; and
7. Begin jetty design.

The marina is anticipated to include boating supply and support services, retail and entertainment options, and potentially affordable workforce housing. As the marina site is adjacent to the Nature Preserve, intentional compatibility controls should be considered to limit impacts on the natural area.

LHC 3.c. Evaluate whether a food truck park would be appropriate in Port Aransas.

During the first community open house event, public comments were overwhelmingly supportive of the establishment of a food truck park. The City should consider code amendments needed to allow such a facility. The facility should include amenities and utilities needed to support the park (e.g., electricity, water, restrooms, waste receptacles, shaded seating pavilions).



LHC 3.d. Evaluate grant opportunities to expand cultural amenities and attract artists to the area.

The Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) is an organization that helps communities build their local art and cultural environment. The TCA granted more than \$11.6 million to nonprofits and governments in 121 Texas cities in 2021.

As noted on the commission's website, "[...TCA] can designate cultural districts in cities across Texas. Cultural districts are special zones that harness the power of cultural resources to stimulate economic development and community vitality. These districts can become focal points for generating businesses, attracting tourists, stimulating cultural development, and fostering civic pride.

Cultural districts can be part of creative placemaking or placekeeping efforts. It's important to remember that TCA cultural district designation is most likely to be awarded to a district that is already defined in terms of leadership, geographic boundaries, branding, and current assets."

TCA identifies the following as potential goals of designated cultural districts:

- Attracting artists and cultural enterprises to the community;
- Encouraging business and job development;
- Addressing specific needs of a community;
- Establishing tourism destinations;
- Preserving and reusing historic buildings;
- Enhancing property values; and
- Fostering local cultural development.

The City should work with its local partners to consider joining the Cultural Districts Designation Program and regularly pursue grants for various funding opportunities.

Goal LHC 4: Ensure a positive image of the community.

LHC 4.a. Identify locations for additional enhanced gateways with signage, landscaping, art, and other features at entry points into the City and into special areas (e.g., Old Town).

Marking distinctive entryways into the City and into special areas helps to build a positive identity for the community. The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce has recently installed entryway signage and landscaping at the southern entryway into the City, as shown in Figure 34.

The City and Tourism Bureau should continue to develop a signing and branding plan, identifying specific locations, features, and themes for the various signage. The branding should emphasize the local assets and history.

Figure 34. Entryway Signage at Southern Gateway



LHC 4.b. Enhance the landscaping along the City's corridors.

Review the landscaping ordinance (Chapter 16 Planning and Development, Article IV of the code of ordinances) and entry corridor requirements to consider enhanced requirements, particularly along key corridors. For entry corridors, the current landscape ordinance states that all required landscaping must be placed in the yard adjacent to the corridor. (For reference, "entry corridors" include SH 361/Alister Street between the southern City limits and Cotter Avenue; Cotter Avenue between Alister Street and Cut-Off Road; and Cut-Off Road/Avenue G between Cotter Road and Alister Street.)

Many residents supported the use of palm trees along corridors, creating a desirable streetscape and helping to screen overhead utility lines. Identify locations along key corridors with available right-of-way where the City could plant trees. Consider establishing a program where property owners can request a tree be planted in their front yard or in the adjacent right-of-way.

Additionally, review the current requirements to establish a required plant list (rather than recommended) that incorporates native, compatible non-native, and low water consumption plants. Consider prohibiting the list of intrusive/invasive plants, rather than allowing them with no point value.

LHC 4.c. Review the existing commercial signage requirements to reduce visual clutter along the City’s corridors.

Commercial signage can create visual clutter along a streetscape. The City should consider reviewing Chapter 19 (Signs) within the code of ordinances to require or encourage shared multi-tenant signs when possible, and to require lower monument signs that create a more attractive streetscape. Additionally, Chapter 19 should be reviewed to remove references to a sign’s content (e.g., “holiday decoration signs” or “real estate signs”) and instead focus on the time, place, and manner of a sign’s display (e.g., “temporary sign” or “pole sign”), in accordance with the Reed v. Gilbert legal ruling regarding content neutrality.

LHC 4.d. Implement programs to reduce litter along the beach and throughout the community.

While the beaches and neighborhoods remain litter-free much of the year, the community expressed interest in a program intended to address litter on a recurring basis. Within the neighborhoods, the City could consider organizing volunteer community clean-up events by working with local HOAs and nonprofit groups. Along the beach, an incentive program could be considered (e.g., “Adopt A Bucket”) to offer discounts or coupons at local businesses in exchange for collected litter.

LHC 4.e. Plan for improved beachfront maintenance and facilities south of Access Road 1-A to serve the increasing intensity of development.

North of Access Road 1-A, a variety of beachfront amenities are available, such as restrooms, showers, and trash receptacles. South of Access Road 1-A, however, such amenities are less prevalent. As development density continues to increase in the southern portion of the City, ensure that the planned maintenance and facilities are kept to a quality consistent with the City’s north end.

Goal LHC 5: Ensure compatibility between tourism activity and residential life.

LHC 5.a. Evaluate options for new or expanded user fees to ensure that future growth and seasonal tourism pay for their own demands.

Providing adequate infrastructure and services is a challenge for small cities that experience large seasonal tourism peaks. Most municipal infrastructure is funded by tax dollars, meaning the burden of maintaining this infrastructure is borne by the property owners and residents. User fees, such as impact fees (which the City already has in place), help to ensure that everyone who uses the services pays their fair share. The City should evaluate other potential user fees to help offset the cost burden from its residents to include its visitors as well.

A notable example of this is the permit for parking or camping on the beach, which is currently \$12 per year. The City should evaluate whether this fee is adequate to cover the City's cost of administering the program, beach clean-up efforts, and providing amenities such as road maintenance, restrooms, showers, and trash receptacles.

LHC 5.b. Continue building the visitor education campaign to promote knowledge and understanding of the local laws and conduct expectations.

Another tourism-related challenge that the City faces is the conduct of some visitors. While many visitors are respectful of the local atmosphere and neighborhoods, some can create nuisances, such as loud noise, litter,

and illegal parking. Also, safety issues, such as obeying traffic laws while on golf carts, can be a common issue. Many tourists may not initially consider their impacts on the local community.

The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce has established an award-winning campaign to encourage visitors to "Respect Our Island Home". The campaign specifically addresses parking, litter, golf carts, politeness, noise, leashing pets, beach rules, and beach safety tips. The City should continue to work with the Tourism Bureau to build and expand this campaign.

Goal LHC 6: Promote low-impact development strategies.

LHC 6.a. Implement the best practices and ordinance amendments recommended in the City's adopted Stormwater Management Plan and recommendations that will be included in the upcoming Drainage Master Plan.

In 2021, the City adopted a Stormwater Management Plan, which recommended 10 best practices and 20 various ordinance amendments. Examples of such recommendations include:

- Review dumping practices,
- Incentivize sustainable renovations,
- Preserve sensitive areas,
- Add detention requirements, increase the design storm,
- Update the flood damage prevention ordinance,
- Pollution prevention and control, and
- Allow density transfers, among others.

In conjunction with this comprehensive plan, the City is also developing a drainage master plan, which is anticipated to include related recommendations.

Continue to proactively implement these measures, which will include amendments to the development code, new internal programs and policies, and new development requirements.

LHC 6.b. Review the current development ordinance requirements related to site development.

In addition to those specifically outlined by the Stormwater Management Plan, review the development code for site development requirements for potential improvements in terms of providing quality, consistent development, and stormwater/flood protections. Examples may include overall lot coverage, buffers for key corridors, setbacks, raised structures, and permeable surfaces.

LHC 6.c. Continue to plan for disaster mitigation and recovery needs and continue coordination with Nueces County on the in-progress FEMA Multi-Jurisdictional Mitigation Plan.

Nueces County is in the process of updating its Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan, which was most recently updated in 2017. The County has recently been conducting public meetings regarding the updated plan in the summer and fall of 2022.

The plan's jurisdiction includes the Cities of Port Aransas, Agua Dulce, Bishop, Corpus Christi, Driscoll, Petronila, and Robstown; the Port of Corpus Christi; and unincorporated

Nueces County. The 2017 plan evaluated threats and identified mitigation strategies related to the following types of events: hurricanes and tropical storms, floods, droughts, windstorms, extreme heat, lightning, coastal erosion, tornadoes, hailstorms, expansive soils, dam and levee failures, land subsidence, wildfire, winter storms.

The City should continue to be involved in the plan's current and future updates, along with proactively working with its regional partners to prepare for the assessed hazards.

Goal LHC 7: Effectively manage and leverage short-term rentals.

LHC 7.a. Review the current short-term rental ordinance and nuisance regulations for potential amendments to improve neighborhood compatibility.

Short-term rentals (STRs) are common in Port Aransas, occupying more than half of all dwelling units in the City. Tourists may opt to stay in STRs rather than hotels for a variety of reasons, such as affordability, location, and accommodating larger groups or families. STRs often cause challenges for local housing stock, as they reduce the available housing supply, increase housing costs, and limit the amount of long-term rental units. Additionally, many residents report negative experiences with loud noise, illegal parking, large parties, and other nuisances.

In 2016 (and most recently amended in March 2022), the City adopted standards to regulate STRs in the City. The following is a brief summary of the existing requirements:

- New STRs are prohibited in the R-1 zoning district.
- The STR must be registered with the City.
- A local contact person must be available 24 hours a day with their contact information posted outside of the unit.
- The maximum occupancy is limited by the number of bedrooms – two persons per bedroom plus four additional persons (or six additional persons for larger dwellings).
- A tenant information sheet must be provided inside the unit with information regarding the occupancy limit, parking regulations, noise regulations, and trash collection.

The City should continue to review the current STR ordinance, along with current enforcement practices, to identify potential improvements. Additionally, the City should review its general nuisance provisions, particularly in relation to issues related to STRs (e.g., noise, litter). Monitoring changes in state case law will also be important, as bills have been proposed in each recent legislative session to restrict cities' abilities to limit or regulate STRs.

LHC 7.b. Consider additional off-street parking for STRs.

One of the most frequent complaints about the impacts of STRs on neighborhoods is excessive and often illegal parking. Off-street parking requirements are based on the type of dwelling and no additional parking is required for STRs.

While the City could consider increasing the amount of required off-street parking for STRs, proposed legislative bills mentioned in LHC 7.a have suggested prohibiting cities from requiring more parking for an STR than is required for the dwelling type. Additionally, this would only be applicable to the new STRs and would not address many of the current issues.

An alternative would be to establish a designated lot or lots where cars in excess of the provided off-street spaces can park overnight for an extended period (e.g., up to a week). This could be achieved through a free or paid public lot, unused private spaces that are rented to guests, and/or a park-and-ride lot at Harbor Island. Providing an alternative parking option coupled with proactive code enforcement is critical to addressing this issue.

LHC 7.c. Continue to strengthen the City's STR code enforcement efforts.

Proactive enforcement of existing regulations is one of the most critical elements of effectively managing STRs. The City should have adequate standards for STRs and for nuisances in general, as noted in LHC 7.a. STR and nuisance ordinances will not have the intended effect without proactive, consistent enforcement.

In addition to the practical benefits, enforcement of existing regulations may have legal benefits as well. In a recent case (*Zaatari v. City of Austin*, 2019), the Texas Third Court of Appeals declared the City of Austin's STR ordinance unconstitutional, largely related to its requirement the operator must primarily live on-site. The Court noted that the record did not indicate that requiring on-site residency would address the City's issues with STRs:

- For the four years prior to the on-site requirement's enactment, the City had not issued any citations to operators or guests. (Note: The City had issued 10 notices of violations due to overcrowding, failure to remove trash bins from the curb, and debris in the yard; none for parking or noise issues.)
- The City had not instituted proceedings to remove an STR permit in response to complaints about parties.
- The City acknowledged that STRs have fewer 311 and 911 calls, and that the City receives fewer complaints from

neighbors compared to typical single-family homes.

- The City's nuisance ordinances already address the concerns related to STRs.

The City should evaluate the existing STR registration fees in relation to the administration and enforcement costs. Consider whether the registration fees could be earmarked to fund STR enforcement efforts.

Goal LHC 8: Plan for quality neighborhoods.

LHC 8.a. Consider creating a Residential Infill Overlay (RIO) district to promote and protect the livability of residential neighborhoods.

Port Aransas' well-established, older neighborhoods have a small-scale character and charm that is distinct from the newer, higher-intensity developments. This district would generally apply to all residential areas north of Access Road 1-A and to the Island Moorings development.

The City should establish protections to prevent incompatible development (e.g., "McMansions") by requiring consistent setbacks, building heights, and overall building scale that is aligned with the existing development. Evaluating the permitted uses to limit nonresidential uses would also support compatible development.

Additionally, other quality of life approaches should be evaluated in this area, such as establishing and advertising signs for an overnight Neighborhood Quiet Zone between designated hours, or possibly limiting the

percentage of dwellings that can be used for short-term rentals.

LHC 8.b. Require the installation of sidewalks in new neighborhoods and plan for retrofits in existing neighborhoods to support walkability.

Few neighborhoods in Port Aransas currently have sidewalks installed. The City's subdivision regulations require that sidewalks be installed on at least one side of all major and collector streets. To support walkability in new neighborhoods, consider amending the code to require sidewalks on both sides of major and collector streets and one side of local streets.

Additionally, the City should consider conducting a citywide sidewalk inventory to identify where sidewalks do and do not exist. Prioritize key areas (e.g., popular destinations, areas with children and seniors) missing sidewalks that would be appropriate for sidewalk installation in conjunction with roadway repairs or reconstruction.

LHC 8.c. Consider guidelines that encourage a range of lot sizes and home types within a single development to provide a variety of housing choices.

The largest remaining undeveloped areas are to the south; however, development plans for many of these sites have already been established, leaving limited space for additional developments. Most developments in the southern portion of the City have occurred through the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process, where an applicant proposes alternative zoning standards that result in an innovative and/or

better-quality development. The City should consider establishing policy guidance that encourages or requires these developments to incorporate variety in lot sizes and dwelling types. This variety helps to avoid monotony and supports a range of income levels, stages of life, and lifestyles.

LHC 8.d. Consider guidelines that encourage “Complete Neighborhoods” with safe and convenient pedestrian access to goods, services, and activities.

“Complete neighborhoods” offer a mix of housing types and land uses, affordable housing and transportation options, and access to healthy food, schools, retail, employment, community services, and parks and recreation options. As new neighborhoods are developed (often through the PUD process as mentioned in LHC 8.c), ensure that walkability and a variety of uses is prioritized. In addition to improving the quality of life for the neighborhood's residents, this approach will also reduce traffic volumes both locally and throughout the City.

LHC 8.e. Implement the Parks & Open Space Master Plan recommendations related to new parks and trails.

As noted on page 9, the City recently adopted a new Parks & Open Space Master Plan. The City should pursue the 116 actions outlined in the plan, focusing on actions to help achieve the identified top ten priorities. The plan also identifies recommended actions by implementation timeline: 1, 2, 3 to 5, and 6 to 10 year timeframes. Proactively track the implementation of these actions, which will include amendments to the development

code, capital improvements, and additional study.

Goal LHC 9: Proactively support attainable workforce housing options.

LHC 9.a. Expand the existing Public Facilities Corporation program to support workforce housing opportunities.

A Public Facilities Corporation (PFC) is a nonprofit corporation created by a governmental entity that has the authority to issue bonds or apply for grants that can be used for a variety of purposes, including purchasing, constructing, or rehabilitating public facilities. Such facilities can be used for

a variety of public functions, including offices, schools, affordable housing, senior housing, and more.

The Port Aransas PFC partnered with the Palladium apartment complex to build 183 affordable workforce housing units, which is now often fully leased. According to the agreement, 10 percent of the units are rented at market rates while the remaining are below-market rates that are calculated based on the Nueces County area median income level.

The City should evaluate options to expand this effort to support local workforce housing options and consider whether additional partners could be beneficial.

Figure 35. Palladium Apartment Complex



LHC 9.b. Explore potential local and regional partnerships and tax assistance programs to support the creation of new housing options that are affordable for the local workforce.

Finding affordable housing can be a challenge for much of Port Aransas' workforce, including teachers, public employees, and much of the service industry. Rising property values and a limited supply of for-sale or long-term rental units exacerbate this issue, particularly in an island community with limited transportation routes.

The City should work with its local and regional partners (e.g., the County, the Port Aransas Independent School District, Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce, major local employers) to evaluate partnership opportunities to develop a shared option for affordable workforce housing.

LHC 9.c. Consider a program for local property tax relief for owner-occupied and long-term rentals to offset rising property values and help residents stay in their homes over time.

Evaluate options, such as an increased homestead exemption, to enable homeowners to stay in their homes despite rising property values and resulting taxes. Consider an incentive program for landlords who commit to renting only to long-term tenants.

LHC 9.d. Consider a requirement for affordable housing contributions for larger residential developments.

Some cities that struggle with maintaining affordable workforce housing establish a requirement that larger developments agree to sell a small percentage of the constructed units to the City at market rate (or a reduced rate in exchange for other incentives). The City then sells or rents those units to members of the local workforce at a reduced rate to support affordable housing options. The City should consider whether this approach could be appropriate for Port Aransas.

LHC 9.e. Review the zoning ordinance for alternative housing types that could support senior or workforce housing.

In support of providing a variety of housing options, evaluate the zoning ordinance for alternative housing provisions that can accommodate workforce or senior housing needs. Examples of such alternatives could include zero-lot-line patio homes or co-living spaces with private quarters and shared cooking facilities.



CHAPTER IV:

TRANSPORTATION, FACILITIES & SERVICES

A city's public infrastructure and services greatly influence its residents' quality of life, such as the ease of moving through town, the types of transportation options, the public safety services, and educational and cultural amenities that are available to the community. This chapter provides goals and actions related to transportation and mobility, public facilities, and public services.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing Facilities and Services

City Hall & Civic Center

710 W. Ave. A

City Hall houses offices for most administrative positions, including the City Manager, Development Services, Finance, and several other departments. City Hall shares the structure with the Civic Center, which includes an auditorium of approximately 9,500 square feet that frequently hosts community events. City Hall also serves as the Municipal Court.

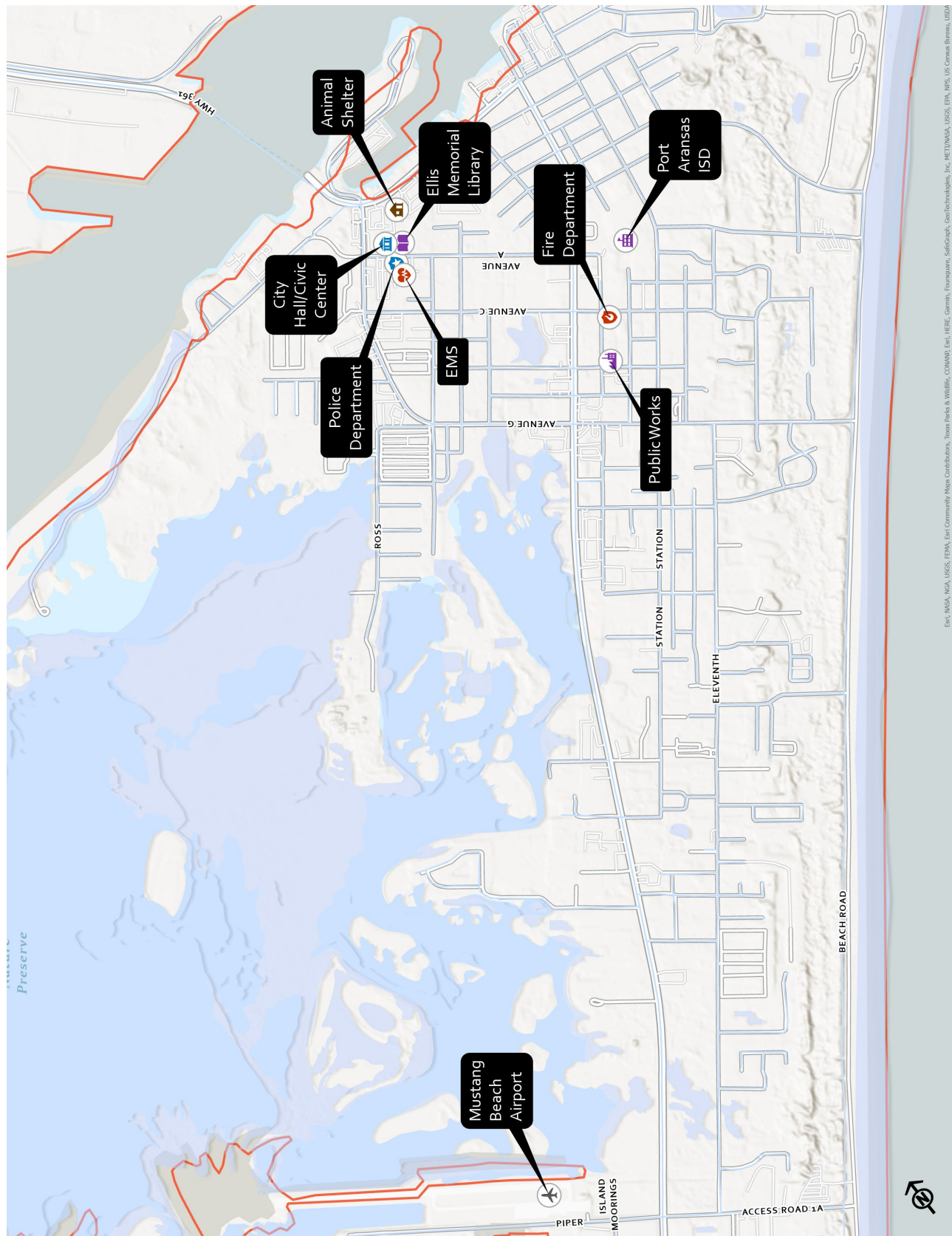
Ellis Memorial Library

700 W. Ave. A

The William “Bill” R. Ellis Memorial Library is located adjacent to City Hall. The library currently employs four full-time positions. A planned 2017 expansion of services was paused due to Hurricane Harvey; the updates were completed in 2020. The library offers fiction books, nonfiction books, audiobooks, movies, magazine and newspaper subscriptions, Texas and local history publications, and young adult and children’s collections.



Figure 36. Existing Public Facilities Map



Public Works

415 S. 9th St.

The City's Public Works Department is responsible for street maintenance, drainage infrastructure, beach maintenance, the Mustang Beach Airport, the solid waste collection station, and other general services.



A new facility is planned to accommodate Public Works, EMS, and the Fire Department, as the three entities' structures were heavily damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Harvey. The new location will be in the western half of the block bound by Avenues C and E and Ninth and Tenth Streets. Groundbreaking is planned for early 2023.

Figure 37. Future Public Works and Fire Department/EMS Location



Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

705 W. Ave. A

The EMS team currently consists of 10 full-time paramedics and EMTs supplemented by additional part-time employees. The EMS department responds to approximately 1,300 calls per year. The fleet includes three ambulances (two of which are staffed 24/7), and one EMS Command vehicle. EMS is currently housed in portable buildings.



Fire Department

202 E. Ave. C

The Fire Department currently includes 20 members: 1 chief, 1 assistant fire chief, 1 fire marshal, 3 fire captains, and 14 firefighters. The department responded to 169 calls in 2021, which is typical for most years. All positions are currently volunteers with limited stipends; however, the City does plan to eventually transition to a paid department after the new facility is completed. The Fire Department is currently housed in portable buildings.



Police Department

705 W. Ave. A

The Police Department currently includes 33 members: 1 chief of police, 2 command staff, 2 criminal investigators, 17 patrol officers/sergeants, 1 K-9 unit, 7 communications dispatchers, 2 parking enforcement, and 1 records clerk. During special events and peak tourist season, additional staff is brought in from other agencies, such as the Texas Department of Public Safety, the County, or the Texas Game Wardens, among others. Most special events are now required to provide their own safety and security measures, which also helps to relieve the burden on the local Police Department; however, peak times like spring break can be a challenge.



Animal Shelter

409 W. Cotter Ave.

The City's animal shelter accommodates up to 25 animals at a time, and offers free adoptions with spaying, neutering, microchipping, and vaccinations. The City has budgeted \$280,000 for upgrades to the nearly 40-year-old building. Renovations are anticipated to include major reconstruction of the building's interior, expansion of office space, and addition of an intake room and reception area.



Mustang Beach Airport

130 Piper Blvd.

The airport is a City-operated facility with a 3,500-foot lighted, newly repaved asphalt runway and taxi-way. The airport is staffed part-time by an airport manager. Currently, the airport's hangars can accommodate 10 aircraft. The airport accommodates an average of 64 takeoffs and landings per week, 90 percent of which is transient general aviation and 10 percent is local general aviation. The City is currently conducting a survey on possible new hangar additions and desirable features/services. The airport is also used for emergency response access.



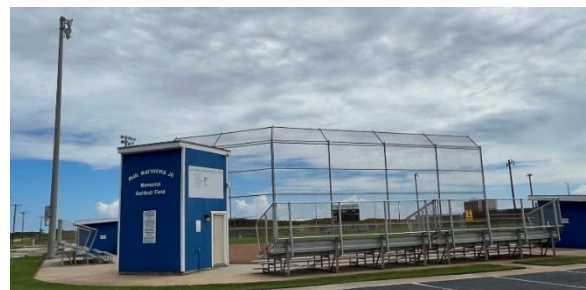
Source: 2023 South Jetty Newspaper

Port Aransas ISD

100 S. Station St.

The City is served by the Port Aransas Independent School District (PAISD), which includes three schools: H. G. Olsen Elementary School, Brundrett Middle School, and Port Aransas High School. The district's enrollment was 524 students in the 2021-2022 school year. PAISD earned an "A" rating from the Texas Education Agency in 2022.

PAISD recently completed the new 5,000-square-foot Marlin Innovation Lab, which features equipment and instruction for engineering, welding, construction, and other skilled trades. The district is currently in the process of updating the aging HVAC infrastructure. In the future, a new facility may be needed to accommodate a central kitchen and cafeteria, along with an auditorium for fine arts programs and events.



Existing Transportation Network

Currently, the City of Port Aransas relies heavily on an auto-oriented transportation system to provide mobility and access for its residents. While the use of other modes is prevalent, particularly golf carts, the current environment caters to the automobile. Since a large segment of the population is over 50 years of age, an emphasis on transportation for those with mobility restrictions should be considered to support an independent lifestyle into older age.

Continued demographic and population growth trends increase demand on major access points in/out of Port Aransas. This is particularly concerning in terms of rapid response to medical emergencies and hurricane evacuations. Additionally, since external agencies are responsible for funding, planning, and maintaining these entry points, it complicates decisions the City must make when considering future transportation improvements.

Roadway Network

The existing transportation network is comprised of few major roadways, with SH 361 being the only north-south thoroughfare and acts as the “spine” for the roadway network, connecting Port Aransas to Corpus Christi to the south and the ferry terminal to the north. Within Port Aransas, a series of minor arterials and collector class streets provide for connectivity and circulation. Minor arterials include Cut Off Road, E/W Cotter Avenue, Alister Street, Station Street, Eleventh Street, Avenue G, and Beach Access Roads 1 and 1A. Collector roadways include Avenue A, Beach Street, Lantana Drive, Sandcastle Drive, Sixth Avenue, and Avenue C (proposed). The Port Aransas Beach Road is a unique roadway class in itself and provides direct access and circulation along Port Aransas beaches.

Roadway conditions vary across the network and sidewalks are present on most arterials and collectors, although they are not continuous across the entire network. Roadway drainage is a combination of gutter system on most arterials and collectors, with open ditch drainage on many local roads and sections of SH 361.



TxDOT Ferry Services

TxDOT operates a ferry service from Harbor Island to the Ferry Landing at Port Aransas 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The current operating fleet consists of six ferries and can hold up to 20 passenger vehicles. Larger vehicles are eligible to ride the ferry, provided their weight does not exceed the ferry's carrying capacity.

Each ride is free and takes approximately 10 minutes; however, wait times can take longer than an hour during peak seasonal periods. Weather conditions and tide conditions may limit boarding and operations, especially during weather events.



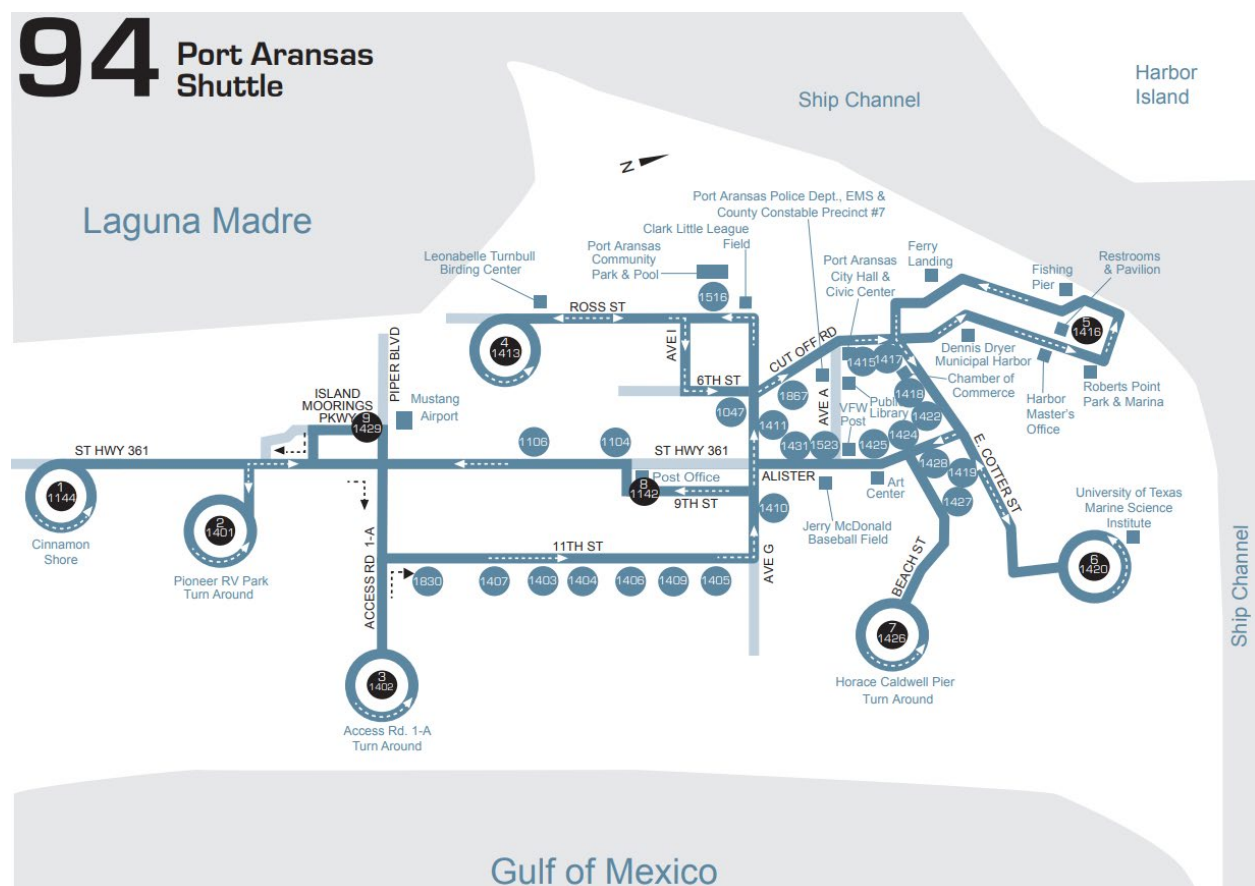
Corpus Christi Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA)

The CCRTA runs several transit routes providing transportation service within Port Aransas as well as to Corpus Christi and adjacent communities. The current fare is \$0.25 per ride.

- Operates the B-Express that has daily service to Port Aransas from Corpus Christi (route 95/95X) via the ferry.
- The Padre Island Connection runs north up SH 361 to Port Aransas
- Within Port Aransas, riders can choose route #94, the Port Aransas shuttle.
- Route 90 Flexi-B Route, an on-demand shuttle service.



Figure 38. Port Aransas Shuttle Route Map



Source: Corpus Christi Regional Transit Authority

Emergency Response

For the most part, emergency response is handled by local police, fire, and EMS services. Major emergency or multi-casualty response is assisted via SH361, immediate access ferry transportation, and as necessary, air flight from Mustang Beach Airport. Protocols for immediate ferry access were established long ago with TxDOT. Emergency evacuation is facilitated through State, FEMA, and local police/fire coordination via SH361 and ferry services. As needed, mobile fuel trucks are staged throughout immediate area evacuation routes.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Network

In 2005, the City of Port Aransas created a Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan, including a map of bicycle and pedestrian routes throughout the community. These routes were given a hierarchical classification to connect to key destinations with Port Aransas. The Port Aransas Nature Preserve also has a trail network. The plan is currently under evaluation and update as part of the Master Parks and Trails Plan.



Golf Carts

Within the City of Port Aransas, golf carts are widely used as an alternative mode of transportation. Numerous local companies provide golf carts for rent.

Article VII of the City Code of Ordinances (Section 23-300) regulates the use and operation of golf carts and neighborhood electric vehicles (NEV) in the city. As many as 4,000 golf carts are registered within the City.

State law regarding the use and operations of bikes, mopeds, golf carts, and other low-powered vehicles is defined in Chapter 551 of the Texas Transportation Code. Generally, road-ready golf carts and NEVs are not permitted on SH 361, public sidewalks or walkways, and specific public areas (schools, parks, playgrounds, etc.). Some of the more recent models are outfitted with interior lighting and stereo speakers, for which there are no regulations for noise. Article IX of the City Code regulates Motor Assisted Scooters, which are generally prohibited in the City.



Transportation Issues and Needs

An assessment of the current conditions and consultation with key stakeholders identified the following issues. A graphic of issues and needs is shown in Figure 39.

- Port Aransas is susceptible to major weather events; evacuation and network resiliency are increasingly important, yet the current transportation network contains only limited connections for access and egress.
- There is no comprehensive parking program for Port Aransas.
- There are few, if any, mid-block crossing points for pedestrians or other non-auto traffic.
- Existing developments along SH 361 limit development potential of parallel roadways that could alleviate demand on SH 361.
- Transportation services as a whole need to support seasonal demand and travel patterns.
- While the CCRTA has transit routes within the city, there is no regular coordination with CCRTA to review service provision and update transit services to support accessibility to community amenities as well as, future development.
- Port Aransas does not currently participate in the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO), which qualifies other cities in the region for federal highway or transit assistance.
- The 2005 Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan and 2011 Parks and Trails Plan identified corridors for the expansion of its trail system and is actively implementing sidewalk improvements along Eleventh Street, Avenues A and C, and Beach Street. However, the current plan needs to be updated to identify additional network improvements and enhance safety. This plan is currently in the process of an update as part of the Parks and Trails Master Plan.
- Ferry services have limited capacity during peak periods of demand and wait times are excessive during peak demand. Service is designed for passenger cars and trucks, which limits use for pedestrians, heavy-load vehicles, and recreational vehicles.

Figure 39. Transportation Issues and Needs



THOROUGHFARE PLAN

This Thoroughfare Plan is intended to identify goals and provide actions to alleviate current transportation issues, such as congestion and connectivity.

This chapter is intended to serve as a guide for transportation decisions within the City, act as a statement of public policy, and identify the general location, alignment, design, and right-of-way needs for the continued development of the roadway system. Goals and actions were developed based on previous transportation planning efforts, available transportation data, transportation planning analysis, and with the collaboration and cooperation of key stakeholders and input from the City Staff, public, and CPAC members.

This Plan should be referred to when considering a wide range of decisions related to both transportation and land use.

Therefore, the ultimate objective of this Plan is to create a more balanced transportation system within Port Aransas that provides for the safe mobility of residents, considers both current and future needs, enhances connectivity and mobility options, and promotes a more livable community.

This Plan also focuses on modal options, building on the original 2008 Transportation Plan in developing a sub-network that provides circulation and connectivity within the City, and identifies actions to address parking, safety, and access/egress to the mainland.



Functional Street Classification

The functional classification of streets is used to identify the hierarchy, function, and dimensions of a facility. Streets and highways are grouped into classes based on facility characteristics, such as geometric design, speed, traffic capacity, and access to adjacent lands. Functions range from providing mobility for through-traffic and major traffic flows, to providing access to specific properties. Functional class can be updated over time if surrounding land uses change significantly. Major advantages of a functional street hierarchy include the preservation of residential neighborhoods, long-term stability in land use patterns and value of commercial properties, fewer traffic accidents, and a decreased proportion of urban land devoted to streets.

The Port Aransas Thoroughfare Plan consists of all the major roadways identified by their

assigned functional classification. This classification sets the required right-of-way to be acquired or preserved to accommodate future traffic demand in the region. Where multi-modal elements are needed, alternative thoroughfare design elements may be implemented through retrofit or redesign, as needed.

Major Arterials

Major arterials are designed to allow large volumes of traffic to operate at a high level of mobility. A major arterial is designed for longer distance trips and provides access to major activity centers and regional trips. There should be a limited number of driveways directly accessing major arterials and should only connect to other major arterials or freeways. Typically, on-street parking should not be allowed on a major arterial. SH 361/N. Alister Street is an example of a major arterial.

Figure 40. Major Arterial Example (SH 361)



Minor Arterials

Minor arterials connect traffic from collectors to primary arterials. They are designed to accommodate moderate traffic volumes at relatively low speeds and often extend to a larger geographic area. If right-of-way and/or level-of-service are adequate, minor arterials may accommodate on-street parking. Station Street and Eleventh Street are examples of Minor Arterials.

Figure 41. Example of a Minor Arterial



Collectors

Roadways designated as collectors are designed for short trips and low speeds. They serve primarily to connect trips to higher functional class facilities and to move traffic between neighborhoods and different areas within the community. These types of thoroughfares carry moderate volumes of traffic and have lower speeds to accommodate access to adjacent properties. The number of lanes can range from two to four depending on the current and future demands and the potential development. Center turn lanes may be incorporated on major collectors, but raised medians are rarely found on these types of streets. Lantana Drive, Avenue G, and E. Cotter Avenue are examples of collectors.

Figure 42. Example of a Collector Street



Local Streets

Local streets are typically not designated on a Thoroughfare Plan because as new development occurs, local streets are typically preserved and built by the developer. Local streets are focused on providing access to homes in residential neighborhoods where speeds are less than 30 miles per hour (mph), and traffic volumes are the lowest. In most cases, lane striping is not implemented, and on-street parking is permitted, depending on the surrounding land uses and building types.

Figure 43. Example of a Local Street



Beach Road

This roadway class is unique to Port Aransas and provides direct access to and circulation along local beaches. Free and pay parking areas are provided, and speeds are set at 15 mph.

Figure 44. Example of Beach Road



Functional Classification, Land Access, and Mode of Transport

As illustrated in Figure 46, roadway classification, land access, and mode of transport (mobility) are highly interrelated. Local streets focus more on access to adjacent land uses and are more amenable to alternative forms of transportation, such as transit, bicycling, and pedestrians. Priority for mobility over land use access occurs as functional classes transition from local roads to collectors and arterials. At the top end of mobility are freeways and tollways, which exclusively focus on mobility rather than land access, do not support cycling or pedestrian activity, and only support express transit services.

Typical Roadway Characteristics by Functional Classification

All functional classes have general characteristics, such as spacing, capacity, speed, required right-of-way, and specific design criteria to delineate how each facility should be utilized. Figure 45 sets out current characteristics defined for each type of functional class of roadway.

Figure 46. Access vs. Mobility by Functional Class

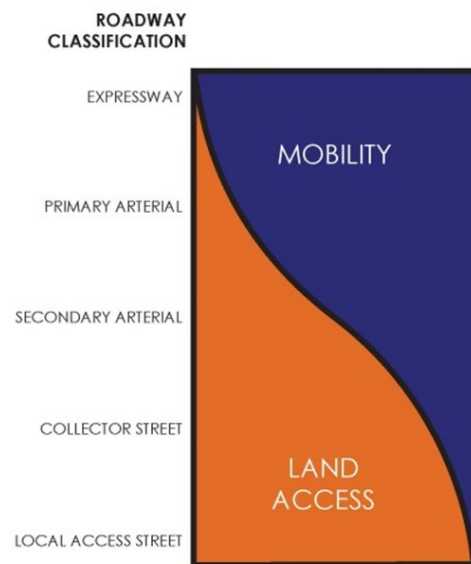


Figure 45. Roadway Characteristics by Functional Class

Attributes	Highway	Major Arterial	Minor Arterial	Collector	Local
Roadway Spacing	2-10 miles	1-2 miles	0.25-1 mile	0.1-0.25 miles	200-500 feet
Facility Length	15+ miles	5-15 miles	1-5 miles	0.25-1 mile	<0.25 mile
Traffic Volume (vehicles/day)	100,000+	35,000-80,000	10,000-35,000	1,000-10,000	<1,000
Right-of-Way (feet)	300-500	100-120	70-100	60-70	50-60
Number of Lanes	Main + Frontage Roads	4 to 6	3 to 5	2 to 4	2
Median	Yes	Typical	Optional	Not Typical	No
Speed Limit (mph)	55-75	35-55	30-45	25-35	30 Max.

Thoroughfare Design Standards

Versatility is a strength in any policy document because it gives policymakers the flexibility to address unforeseen issues that may arise during the implementation phase. To provide flexibility in the Thoroughfare Plan, new thoroughfare design standards are recommended to accommodate a variety of land uses adjacent to both urban and rural rights-of-way, including potential future developments. The various design controls, criteria, and elements presented in this section should be used to design each roadway to accommodate the expected traffic volume and provide consistency in traffic operations.

There are established roadway design standards that are utilized by communities across the United States; these standards are based on decades of research and field experience. Guidelines for these revised design standards came from a variety of sources, including:

- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, latest edition.
- Transportation Research Board, Highway Capacity Manual, latest edition.
- Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, latest edition.

Design Criteria

Sidewalks

Sidewalks are typically installed within the public right-of-way or in an easement. New sidewalks should be a minimum of 5 feet in width and accessible to persons with mobility impairments in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Pedestrian street crossings should be provided with accessible ramps. Crosswalks should be marked across arterial streets.

Lane Widths

Driving lane widths are generally between 11 feet to 12 feet, but not less than 10 feet in width. For higher speed, higher capacity major arterial roadways, 12-foot-wide travel lanes are preferred.

Right-of-Way (ROW) Width

Right-of-way width is generally determined by the pavement section required to perform the function and carry the traffic for which the thoroughfare is designed to accommodate, plus provisions beyond the pavement for sidewalks, utility locations, drainage, and safety areas.

Medians

Median width varies on right-of-way limitations, future roadway expansion, and related factors. Typically, 16-foot-wide raised medians are used in urban areas, which permits the construction of 12-foot left-turn lanes for channelization while leaving 4 feet for a buffer between oncoming traffic.

Parkways

Parkways are the area between the edge of the roadway and the edge of the street right-of-way, and in urban areas cover a wide range of widths with minimums of approximately 8 feet. Parkways can contribute to the capacity and efficiency of a roadway by providing a clear zone for needed roadway edge utilities and provisions. Sidewalks and utilities are typically situated within the parkway of a thoroughfare, typically with a 3-foot-wide green space buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway.

Current Design Standards

Previous design standards for the City of Port Aransas from the 2008 Thoroughfare Plan and the 1988 Design Specifications were evaluated and used to ensure consistency of the revised design standards. Figure 47 and Figure 48 reveal previous design standards for comparison. Note that the thoroughfare design standards differ significantly.

Figure 48. 1988 Design Standards

Street Type	Min. ROW Width
Primary Arterial	80'
Secondary Arterial	60'
Collector	50'
Minor	50'

Figure 47. 2008 Thoroughfare Plan Design Standards

Street Type	Min. ROW Width	Lanes	Parkway	Median
Type A++ Major Arterial	160'	6 @ 12'	10' + ditch	22' (ditch)
Type A+ Major Arterial	120'	2 @ 24'	28'	16'
Type B Secondary Arterial	60'	2 @ 12'	7'/15'	14' (Turn Lane)
Type C Collector	50'	27' Travelway	11.5'	None
Type D Beach Road	N/A			

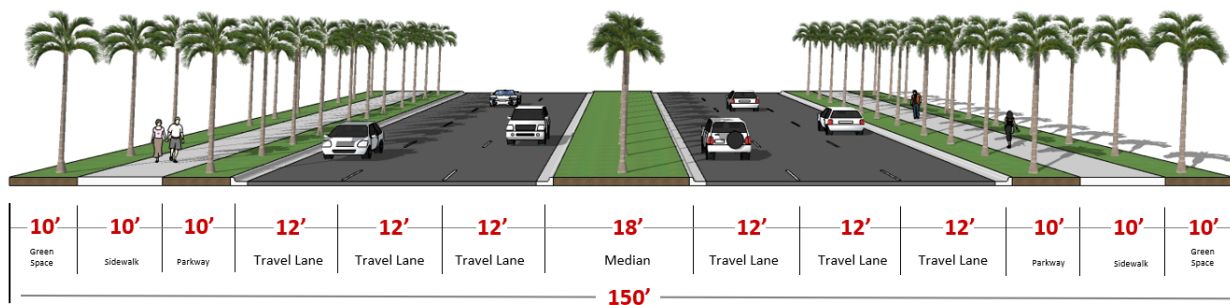
Proposed Thoroughfare Design Standards

Based on a review of existing and previous designs, the following roadway thoroughfare design standards are proposed. The 2022 Port Aransas Thoroughfare Plan Map is shown in Figure 50.

Figure 49. Recommended Thoroughfare Design Standards

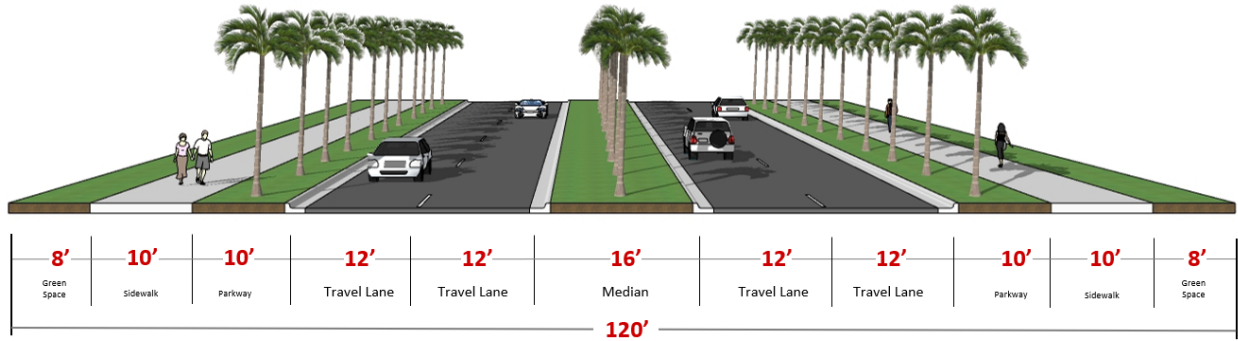
Street Type	Min. ROW Width	Lanes	Parkway	Median	On Street Parking	Speed (mph)
SH 361	150'	2 @ 36'	Varies	22'	None	45+
Major Arterial	120'	2 @ 24'	64'	16'	None	40
Minor Arterial	65'	2 @ 12'	38'	14' (TWLTL)	None	35
Collector	50'	2 @ 13'	26'	None	Varies	30
Beach Road	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes	15

TWLTL = Two-way left-turn lanes

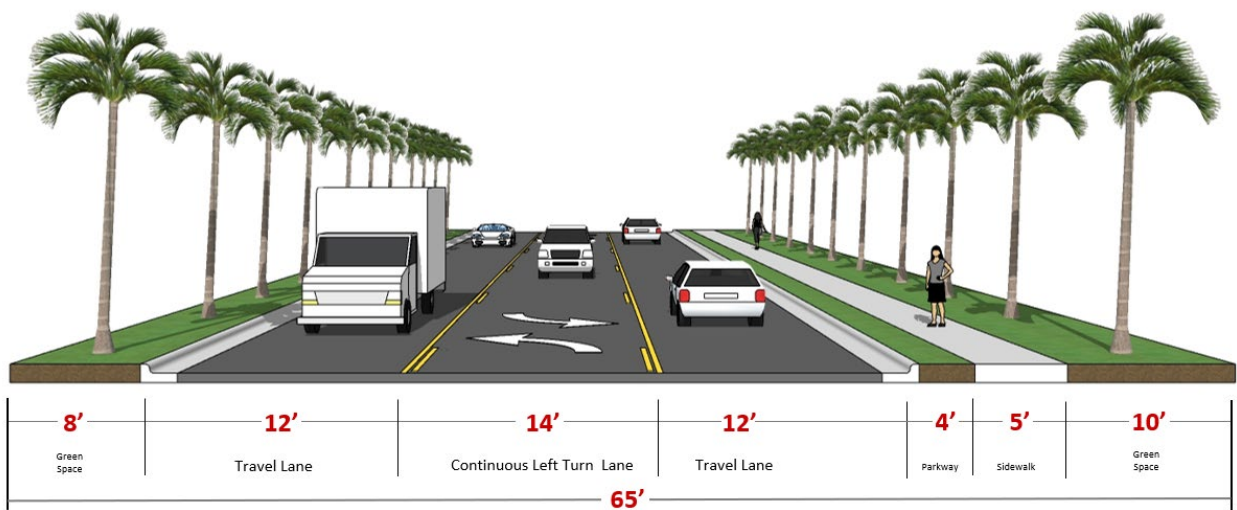


SH 361 – 6 Lanes, 150' ROW, 12' Lanes with 18' Median

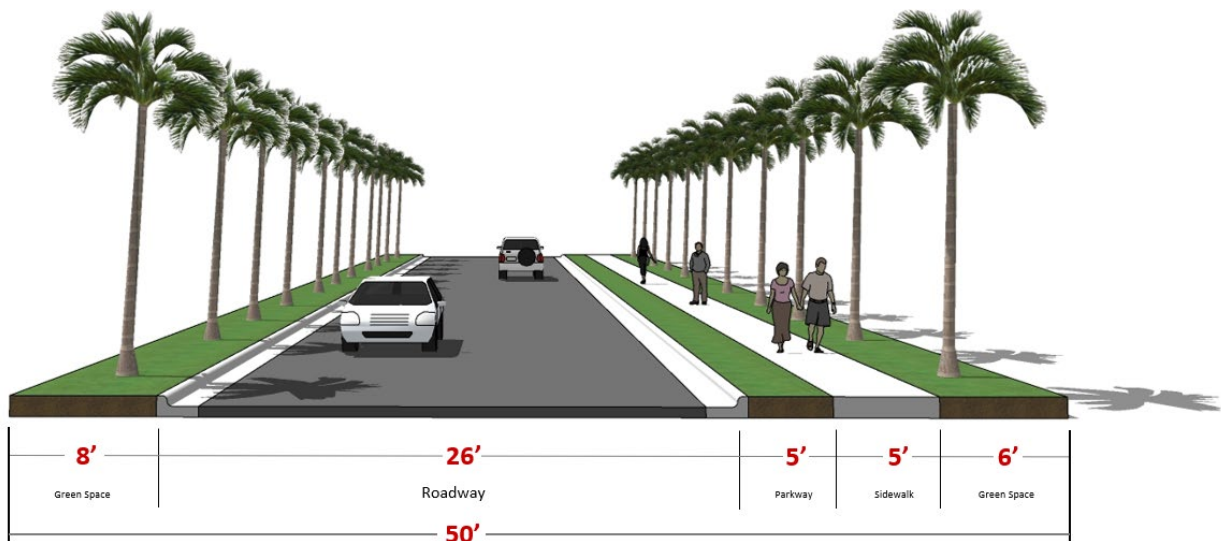
*Note: Deceleration lanes are not depicted on the section image but recommended with developments implemented along the corridor.



Major Arterial – 4 Lanes, 120' ROW, 12' Lanes with 16' Median



Minor Arterial – 3 Lanes, 65' ROW, 12' Lanes with 14' Center Turn Lane



Collector – 2 Lanes, 50' ROW, 13' Lanes

Figure 50. Thoroughfare Plan Map



Recommended Improvements

Proposed improvements include improvements to the active transportation network with revised bike and pedestrian corridors to connect to City amenities and major attractions, additional turn lanes at Avenue G and SH 361, new circulator routes, slip lanes along SH 361 to the south, potential traffic signal locations, proposed pedestrian-oriented ferry services, and additional parking facilities. Corridor improvements and potential signalized intersections along SH 361 will require further study and coordination with TxDOT. Locations identified are general in nature. Figure 52 illustrates these proposed improvements.

Figure 52 identifies specific Bike and Pedestrian Corridors aimed at connecting key amenities within the City. These corridors are aimed at serving bicycle, pedestrian, and golf cart traffic through either off-street shared-use paths (e.g., SH 361) or on-street striping, sharrows, and signage (e.g., Avenue C). An emphasis should be made to promoting these corridors for such traffic.

These corridors were collaboratively defined by the Comprehensive Plan and the Master Parks and Trails Plan planning teams to promote a cohesive approach for active (bike and pedestrian) transportation both on-street and trails network traversing the City.

Figure 51. Example of a Bike/Ped Corridor



Figure 52. Proposed Transportation Improvements



TFS GOALS & ACTIONS

This section includes goals and recommended actions related to the Transportation, Facilities & Services chapter. These goals and actions are summarized in CHAPTER V: ACTION PLAN, along with implementation timelines and mechanisms for each action.

Goal TFS 1: Plan for future facilities and services to support the City's operations and growth.

TFS 1.a. Evaluate alternatives for a new or expanded City Hall/Civic Center.

The City's staffing needs have outgrown the current City Hall facility, with some departments housed in other buildings. While the Civic Center's auditorium provides a convenient gathering space, it is limited in terms of features such as a permanent stage, modern audio/visual equipment, and smaller meeting rooms.

Consider whether the existing facility could be upgraded/expanded or whether a new location would be more feasible. Evaluate the demand and potential partnership opportunities for a larger conference center. Additionally, consider whether the public library could be incorporated into the same structure. It is recommended that any potential new location should remain in the core area of Port Aransas. Coordinate with the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce regarding participation in appropriate studies and implementation efforts.

TFS 1.b. Conduct a more detailed public needs assessment.

While this plan provides a high-level assessment of many of the City's existing facilities, the City should consider conducting a more detailed assessment to evaluate and identify 1) maintenance and upkeep needs for existing facilities/services, 2) expansion of existing facilities/services needed to keep up with growth, and 3) evaluate whether new types of facilities/services will be needed to serve the growing community.

TFS 1.c. Evaluate options to improve high-speed internet and cell service, particularly during peak season.

Access to high-speed internet has become even more critical since the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly with many adults now working remotely. Nearly 88 percent of Port Aransas households have a broadband internet subscription at home (2020 American Community Survey); however, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines "broadband" as speeds of 25 megabits per second for downloads and 3 megabits for uploads, which is insufficient for modern needs like videoconferencing or streaming on multiple devices.

The City should consider initiatives to increase access to faster internet speeds. Some cities have opted to establish their own municipal broadband utility while others choose to partner with local providers to ensure high-speed access.

“Cell on Wheels” (COW) infrastructure is portable by truck and often used to support cellular service during special events or disasters. The City should investigate COW systems to serve the community during peak season and to serve as a backup in case permanent cell towers are disrupted by a disaster or other event.

TFS 1.d. Conduct regular coordination meetings between the City and NWCID #4.

The Nueces County Water Control & Improvement District #4 (NWCID #4) provides water and wastewater services to Port Aransas. The City should continue to meet with the district on a regular basis to discuss planned developments, existing infrastructure capacity, and potential capacity risks.

TFS 1.e. Conduct regular coordination meetings between the City and PAISD.

As noted previously, the Port Aransas Independent School District serves the local community. The City and PAISD should continue to maintain regular communications regarding City and district needs that may align or facilities that could be shared (e.g., recreational facilities, meeting venues, library operations, training programs). Other coordination items commonly include

bike/pedestrian safety near the school, traffic queuing, and future facility siting.

Goal TFS 2: Promote public safety in the community.

TFS 2.a. Continue to evaluate options to address the community’s public safety needs.

As discussed in CHAPTER I: COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT, the daily population swells by 15 to 20 times the base population during peak season, resulting in a major increase in local public safety issues. Public safety services are typically funded primarily by property taxes, meaning that the residents fund the service while the visitors cause the increased demand.

Chapter 351 of the Texas Tax Code authorizes cities to collect Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT); however, the funds can only be used for defined tourism-related purposes, which explicitly excludes “general revenue purposes or general governmental operations of a municipality”. The City should continue to investigate the feasibility of legislation to expand authorized spending purposes.

The City should also evaluate nearer-term solutions to respond to the increased need for services. One example to consider is an increased annual registration fee for short-term rentals to help subsidize the cost of providing public safety services to seasonal visitors.

Additionally, the City should explore other options to respond to the peak in public safety demands. Conducting public safety

workshops with local business owners to provide resources and tips before peak season can help ensure that employees know how to best respond or who to call in common situations.

Another option to address the fluctuations in demand could be to establish a program to utilize summer interns from criminal justice college programs to issue citations for non-violent offenses.

TFS 2.b. Continue to develop a strategy to support a paid Fire Department.

As previously noted, the City intends to establish a paid Fire Department in the coming years, following the completion of the new Fire Department location. Continue to develop a strategy for funding, staffing, training, and operating the department.

TFS 2.c. Continue efforts to expand the existing EMS and Public Works facilities.

As previously noted, a new facility is planned to house the Fire Department, EMS, and Public Works Department near Avenue C and Ninth Street. Groundbreaking is anticipated for early 2023. Continue to plan for the construction and occupation of the new facility.

TFS 2.d. Evaluate the demand for medical services and/or an urgent care center.

Numerous public comments have suggested a demand for medical services in Port Aransas, as the nearest hospital is in Corpus Christi and the nearest urgent care is on Padre Island, with travel times of greater than 45

minutes (exclusive of peak season). The regional access and connectivity issues facing Port Aransas, combined with the influx of summertime tourists, and an older permanent resident population, raise a concern about major healthcare incidents. To support local public health, the City and the Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce should communicate with regional healthcare providers to better understand their criteria and process for siting future facilities. Identify potential incentives to encourage such a facility (e.g., land donation or tax abatements), and consider potential sites that are centrally located within Port Aransas to efficiently serve the entire community.

It is important to note that many emergency response measures are already in place including an emergency center lane SH 361, immediate ferry access for emergencies, and air flight transport from Mustang Beach Airport. Additional plans are in place between State, FEMA, and local officials for staged mobile fueling sites to address incapacitated vehicles. Solutions should be expanded to publicly accessible electric charging stations for the continued rise in electric vehicles, as well as mobile solutions in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Goal TFS 3: Improve network connectivity and mobility.

TFS 3.a. Improve network connectivity and reduce congestion.

Identify key congestion points and identify low-cost/high-impact solutions (e.g., turn lanes at intersections, reduction in the number of curb-cuts and driveways through the use of cross-access easements and coordinated drive openings) to reduce congestion and improve traffic circulation.

Implement focused policy if constructing intersection improvements at arterial/arterial intersections and, where feasible, at arterial/collector intersections. Operational analyses of key intersections should be conducted prior to capital improvements programming and prioritization. Consider the use of alternative intersection designs as opportunities arise.

Identify improvements on the City's major road to enhance local traffic movement . Resident input identified the desire for reduced speeds on SH 361, other connectivity between Eleventh Street and SH 361, identifying a potential paralleling street to Alister to support neighborhood circulation, enhancing accessibility to ferry landing staging, and four-way stops at key locations along Eleventh Street for pedestrian crossing to/from beach access corridors.

Given the severity of accidents that have occurred on SH 361, potential adjustments to speed postings should be considered subject to a speed zoning study with TxDOT. Noted desires include speed posting reductions to

45 mph from the southern City limits to Access Road 1A, 35 mph from Access Road 1A to Avenue G, as well as all neighborhood streets to 25 mph. A formal study should be conducted for speed zoning studies and a request for such study made by the City to TxDOT for SH 361.

The Thoroughfare Plan currently identifies a connection between Eleventh Street and SH 361 near the end of Station Street. Given the large amount of new development along Eleventh Street (e.g., Sea Isle and Mango K), it would be ideal to identify other potential connections to reduce pressures at Avenue G and Access Road 1A. Potential locations include a location that aligns with the (planned) Sixth Street Extension and midway between Station Street and Access Road 1A. Such connections should be made only if not too disruptive to existing residential development and with the ability to connect with SH 361 without compromising corridor operations.

Recent improvements to staging for the Ferry Landing from Avenue A have increased the efficiency of this operation. The introduction of signage to optimally guide motorists to the staging area could help to enhance routing to the staging area. Care should be taken to not encourage traffic on Avenues A and C, as these corridors are local streets envisioned for active use with bike/pedestrian and golf carts separate from the major road network.

A pedestrian and operations study on Eleventh Street should be conducted prior to the implementation of an all-way stop for traffic control. The area of study should

include Avenue G; additional potential locations include Avenue J, Sandcastle, and Sea Isle Drive. Operations at Station Street and Avenue G should also be evaluated. Additionally, a pedestrian analysis and review of striped crosswalks should also be conducted to determine operational needs and potent introduction of flashing or Hawkeye activated crossings.

To address development in the southern sector of the City, consider the use of slip roads along SH 361 to improve throughflow traffic and access/egress from adjacent land uses. Ensure that improvements complement and support adjacent land uses and are coordinated with key future intersections. To initiate dialogue of this concept, initiate a Developers Roundtable Meeting with adjacent landowners, TxDOT, the City, and other local leaders to discuss benefits for coordinated corridor planning. Follow-on meetings quarterly could maintain synergy between key stakeholders on other specific mobility improvements. At a minimum, efforts should be undertaken to consolidate and manage the number of curb-cuts and driveways on SH 361 and Alister through the use of cross-access easements and coordinated drive openings.

With continued regional development of the island, proactive coordination with TxDOT and the City of Corpus Christi should be maintained to actively discuss regionally beneficial solutions to continued growth and development demands. With the increase in the number of vehicular accidents system wide, consider conducting comprehensive speed zone studies on key corridors throughout the city, particularly SH 361 and

Eleventh Street, to address traffic and pedestrian safety.

The Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) serves as the agency clearinghouse for distribution of federal funds for transportation investments. Investigate the potential for the City to join the CCMPO to engage in regionally beneficial mobility and transportation safety improvements.

TFS 3.b. Assess and redevelop transit services.

Reimagine existing transit services in Port Aransas. Conduct a comprehensive transit study to determine current operations and existing ridership, identify target markets, and develop solutions for either public or private transit operations. Future transit plans should investigate current routing, fixed route service between remote parking and key City amenities and attractions, and on-demand routing for purpose needs, events, or other special generators. Efforts should be made to further implement changes in the transit system routing and stop locations through social media and other engagement mechanisms.

TFS 3.c. Allocate future right-of-way to enhance existing connections and facilitate new mobility corridors.

A key principle of thoroughfare plans is to ensure adequate roadway capacity to accommodate future growth. This can be achieved by either adding capacity (additional lanes) or by creating new connections to provide additional paths for traffic as well as access to major attractions, roadways, or

intermodal terminals (harbors, airports, ferry terminals). Future allocations can also be multi-modal and include new paths for pedestrians, cyclists or low-speed motorized e-bikes or other eco-friendly micro-mobility solutions). Storage for bicycle and micro-mobility solutions should also be considered. Mobility solutions should be coordinated with other agency and City planning initiatives such as the Parks & Open Space Master Plan.

A sidewalk gap analysis should be conducted to identify needed improvements for promoting active/bike-ped corridors, as described in LHC 8.b. The safety of Port Aransas students should also be considered with Safe Routes to School and connections to other City amenities. The updated Parks and Trails Plan should also be considered when identifying coordinated improvements.

TFS 3.d. Develop a comprehensive parking strategy.

On-street parking adjacent to short-term rentals and activity centers in Port Aransas continues to be problematic. A parking management program would reassess the existing parking programs and provide new strategies to manage the parking fee structure equitably and efficiently for all users. Proposed solutions may include parking decals or placards, ticket kiosks, mobile parking applications, signage, and enforcement. Additional parking facilities could reduce travel within Port Aransas and generate income to support other transportation programs. A resident sticker program to prioritize parking for local residents is also recommended.

Identify locations for potential parking facilities, including City-owned properties, areas off Tarpon Street, near the PAISD softball fields, the civic center, and/or public private partnerships for short-term parking.

TFS 3.e. Construct park-and-ride facilities.

The current ferry services experience significant delays during peak periods in the summer, with an hour or longer wait times. Port Aransas and/or TxDOT should consider developing a park-and-ride lot on City lands east of the Northern Ferry Terminal to provide more options for walk-on passengers and reduce vehicle demand to the island as well as an option for multi-day island guests and special event traffic. A passenger-only ferry service, with connections at Roberts Point Park or the Municipal Boat Harbor either publicly or privately operated, could also be considered for commuting local employees and/or other day trips.

TFS 3.f. Implement an asset management program.

Asset management is a process designed to reduce roadway and bridge life-cycle costs while maintaining fiscal transparency and an acceptable level of risk and quality of service. Asset management provides fact-based solutions to justify capital investments and ensures a cost-effective and sustainable level of roadway performance throughout its network. Port Aransas should develop an asset management program to survey existing pavement conditions and develop a long-range maintenance plan to keep pavements in acceptable condition.

Goal TFS 4: Support active transportation options.

TFS 4.a. Support active transportation initiatives.

Promote bicycle and pedestrian alternatives on select corridors, focused on golf carts/NEVs, multi-purpose lanes/paths, and pedestrian connections to/from amenities within the City. Continue to consider strategies to regulate golf cart usage through pricing or other mechanisms.

Ensure that all new roadway investments provide opportunities for active transportation. Identify and develop a system of corridors for active transportation use. Ensure that adjacent land uses and proposed developments support active transportation. Prioritize safety for users with sidewalks and adequate space for crosswalks. Where appropriate, consider all-direction, pedestrian scramble intersections at select locations.

Explore crosswalks for further study at Avenue G at Station Street, Channel Vista at Cut-Off Road (to leverage an existing easement along the south side of the mobile home park to connect with Sixth Street), and where other bike/ped corridors are proposed.

Mobility and intersection enhancement solutions should be coordinated with other City planning initiatives, such as the Parks & Open Space Master Plan.

TFS 4.b. Investigate opportunities for enhanced island access for the workforce.

Ensuring adequate access to Port Aransas for its workforce is key to the City's economic vitality and future growth. Strategies to increase access may include priority ferry access, passenger ferry, employee RV parking, employee on-demand shuttle services, pedestrian ferries, and employee designated parking.



Goal TFS 5: Plan for roadway design improvements.

TFS 5.a. Update the City's roadway design standards regularly.

Update roadway design standards on a regular basis. Re-evaluate the existing thoroughfare designs based on the existing context of the surrounding neighborhood. In the past, roadway designs focused on the needs of the user without considering the adjacent community needs. Port Aransas should prioritize the needs of its residents and urban design when considering thoroughfare improvements, with an emphasis on safety and circulation over added capacity.

A coordinated signage program should also be considered to navigate motorists throughout the community as well as provide advance directions to key city amenities. The Port Aransas Tourism Bureau & Chamber of Commerce recently prepared a gateway and signage program that could be reviewed for possible application citywide.

TFS 5.b. Promote linkages that benefit the local economy.

Ensure that proposed roadway improvements will have a positive impact on the local economy. Construct slip roads along SH 361 to improve access/egress to adjacent land uses. Cross access easements limiting the number of curb cuts should be considered. Construct turning lanes at Avenue G and SH 361 to reduce congestion.

Redesign transportation services to provide linkages between major activity centers, such as between the beaches, marina, and old town center. Provide connections to the new marina via Port Street or other additional connections. Consider implementing a wayfinding program to support existing gateway and signage programs, improving connections to major tourist destinations and encouraging placemaking.

TFS 5.c. Support local evacuation plans.

Port Aransas currently has coordinated plans for addressing emergency evacuation with state and FEMA offices. As regional roadway facilities are expanded, contingency planning should be adjusted to address transportation network enhancements. Continue to support initiatives that improve island evacuation along SH 361. Consider the use of emerging technologies to support efficient evacuation to the mainland.

TFS 5.d. Use parking fees as a funding mechanism for new attractions and transportation services.

User fees are often an effective and transparent way to fund transportation improvements and services, as the public directly sees the results of expenditures. Added benefits are that visitors are seen as paying their share for transportation services and improvement, which provides long-term benefits for local residents. Examples of this include but are not limited to shuttle services, parking facilities and enforcement, additional police services, bike/ped network additions, roadway maintenance, and intersection improvements.

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CHAPTER IV:

ACTION PLAN

This part of the plan describes the steps that the City can take to help make the community's vision a reality. This chapter includes a "to-do" list of the plan's recommendations and information on performance measures that can be used to track the City's progress toward achieving its goals.

IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

A successful community is one that establishes a clear vision for its future and identifies the steps necessary to achieve that vision. This section summarizes the plan's goals and actions that address the vision and guiding principles established herein. Furthermore, this section has been structured into a coordinated action program so that Port Aransas' leaders, staff, and other decision-makers can easily identify the steps necessary to achieve the vision for the City described within this plan.

Phased Implementation

It is crucial to understand that most cities cannot afford to complete all desired tasks at once; therefore, it is important to identify the top priorities that are most critical for achieving the City's vision. Many of these recommendations will take several years to complete, but this plan will help Port Aransas to identify attainable, short-term steps and allocate resources and funding in future budgets for more extensive projects.

Methods of Implementation

To be successful, the City must utilize this plan constantly and consistently, and it must be integrated into ongoing governmental practices and programs. The recommendations and actions included herein should be referenced to make decisions related to the timing and availability of infrastructure improvements; proposed

development applications; expansion of public facilities, services, and programs; and annual capital budgeting, among other considerations.

There are two methods of plan implementation: proactive and reactive methods. To successfully implement the plan and fully realize its benefits, both methods must be used in an effective manner.

Examples of proactive methods include:

- Developing a CIP and expending funds to finance public improvements to meet strategies outlined in the plan;
- Updating the development codes; and
- Establishing programs and partnerships.

Examples of reactive methods include:

- Considering a rezoning request;
- Development application review; and
- Responding to requests in accordance with stated policies.

Plan Updates

Over the course of its 20-year planning horizon, the comprehensive plan is meant to be a living document that allows flexibility for political, economic, physical, technological, and social conditions, as well as any other unforeseen circumstances, that may ultimately influence and/or change the priorities and perspective of the community. The plan should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that its elements are still relevant, appropriate, and applicable.

Annual Progress Reporting

Once the plan is adopted, City staff should prepare a yearly progress report for presentation to the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council. This practice will make certain that the plan is consistently reviewed, and any necessary changes or clarifications are identified. It is also important to provide ongoing monitoring between the plan and the City's implementing regulations to maintain consistency among all documents.

Minor Amendments

Minor amendments can be proposed at any time, such as revisions to the Future Land Use Plan concurrently with any rezoning that is not in compliance with the Plan. Minor amendments can be addressed by the City as they come up or may be documented and compiled for a more thorough evaluation via an annual review process. This is also when the results of other plans or studies may be incorporated into this plan.

Major Updates

More significant plan revisions and updates should occur every five to ten years. Major updates involve reviewing the current conditions and projected growth trends; reevaluating the recommendations of the plan (and formulating new ones as necessary), and adding to, modifying, or removing recommendations in the plan based on their implementation progress.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The following implementation matrix is intended to serve as a summary of the plan's recommended actions and provide the City with a "to-do" list for implementing the plan. This matrix also aligns the goals and actions with the plan's Guiding Principles.

Legend for Approximate Cost Ranges

\$ = <\$100,000

\$\$ = \$100,000-\$500,000

\$\$\$ = \$500,000+

Mechanism Types

Code Amendment

Investment

Plan or Study

Policy or Program

Using the Matrix

Timeline for Initiation

Primary Implementation Method(s)

Estimated Cost Range

Plan Goal	Goals and Actions	Timeline for Initiation			Primary Implementation Method(s)	Estimated Cost Range
		0-5 Years	6-10 Years	10+ Years		
	Goal LHC 1: Protect and promote our natural resources.					
Applicable Guiding Principle(s)	Guiding Principles: Protect the natural environment Enhance the quality of life for residents Ensure responsible tourism					
Actions	LHC 1.a. Update the 2005 Nature Preserve Plan to align with current conditions and to continue to protect this important local resource.	●			Plan or Study	\$
	LHC 1.b. Update the 1995 Coastal Management Plan and consider the development of a Natural Resource Protection Plan.	●			Plan or Study	\$\$

Goals and Actions	0-5 Years	6-10 Years	10+ Years	Mechanism	Approx. Cost
Goal LHC 1: Protect and promote our natural resources.					
Guiding Principles: Protect the natural environment Enhance the quality of life for residents Ensure responsible tourism					
LHC 1.a. Update the 2005 Nature Preserve Plan to align with current conditions and to continue to protect this important local resource.	●			Plan or Study	\$
LHC 1.b. Update the 1995 Coastal Management Plan and consider the development of a Natural Resource Protection Plan.	●			Plan or Study	\$\$
LHC 1.c. Continue to monitor and communicate with industrial users in the region.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$
LHC 1.d. Continue to promote Port Aransas as an ecotourism destination.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$
LHC 1.e. Continue to explore potential additional funding sources to support natural resources.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$
LHC 1.f. Review the existing lighting regulations and implement a "Dark Sky" program to protect the night sky.	●			Code Amendment	\$
Goal LHC 2: Build upon the local identity and conserve the historic charm.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Build upon the family-oriented lifestyle					
LHC 2.a. Plan for a Town Square that serves as a focal point and central gathering place for the community.	●			Plan or Study / Investment	\$\$\$
LHC 2.b. Preserve and expand the character of the Old Town area by ensuring compatible development.	●	●	●	Code Amendment / Policy or Program	\$
Goal LHC 3: Plan for new commercial, entertainment, and cultural opportunities.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Support the local businesses					
LHC 3.a. Plan for mixed-use nodes along SH 361 to create additional areas of activity and services.	●	●		Code Amendment	\$
LHC 3.b. Plan for the development of a new marina.	●	●		Plan or Study / Investment	\$\$\$
LHC 3.c. Evaluate whether a food truck park would be appropriate in Port Aransas.	●			Plan or Study / Code Amendment	\$
LHC 3.d. Evaluate grant opportunities to expand cultural amenities and attract artists to the area.	●			Policy or Program	\$

Goals and Actions	0-5 Years	6-10 Years	10+ Years	Mechanism	Approx. Cost
Goal LHC 4: Ensure a positive image of the community.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Protect the natural environment Ensure responsible tourism					
LHC 4.a. Identify locations for additional enhanced gateways with signage, landscaping, art, and other features at entry points into the City and into special areas (e.g., Old Town).	●			Plan or Study / Investment	\$\$\$
LHC 4.b. Enhance the landscaping along the City's corridors.	●	●		Code Amendment / Investment	\$\$
LHC 4.c. Review the existing commercial signage requirements to reduce visual clutter along the City's corridors.	●			Code Amendment	\$
LHC 4.d. Implement programs to reduce litter along the beach and throughout the community.	●			Policy or Program	\$
LHC 4.e. Plan for improved beachfront maintenance and facilities south of Access Road 1-A to serve the increasing intensity of development.		●	●	Plan or Study	\$\$
Goal LHC 5: Ensure compatibility between tourism activity and residential life.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Ensure responsible tourism					
LHC 5.a. Evaluate options for new or expanded user fees to ensure that future growth and seasonal tourism pay for their own demands.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$
LHC 5.b. Continue building the visitor education campaign to promote knowledge and understanding of the local laws and conduct expectations.	●			Policy or Program	\$
Goal LHC 6: Promote low-impact development strategies.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Protect the natural environment					
LHC 6.a. Implement the best practices and ordinance amendments recommended in the City's adopted Stormwater Management Plan and recommendations that will be included in the upcoming Drainage Master Plan.	●			Code Amendment	\$
LHC 6.b. Review the current development ordinance requirements related to site development.	●			Code Amendment	\$
LHC 6.c. Continue to plan for disaster mitigation and recovery needs and continue coordination with Nueces County on the in-progress FEMA Multi-Jurisdictional Mitigation Plan.	●	●	●	Plan or Study / Policy or Program	\$

Goals and Actions	0-5 Years	6-10 Years	10+ Years	Mechanism	Approx. Cost
Goal LHC 7: Effectively manage and leverage short-term rentals.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Ensure responsible tourism					
LHC 7.a. Review the current short-term rental ordinance and nuisance regulations for potential amendments to improve neighborhood compatibility.	●			Code Amendment	\$
LHC 7.b. Consider additional off-street parking for STRs.	●			Code Amendment / Investment	\$\$-\$
LHC 7.c. Continue to strengthen the City's STR code enforcement efforts.	●			Policy or Program	\$
Goal LHC 8: Plan for quality neighborhoods.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Build upon the family-oriented lifestyle					
LHC 8.a. Consider creating a Residential Infill Overlay (RIO) district to promote and protect the livability of residential neighborhoods.	●			Code Amendment	\$
LHC 8.b. Require the installation of sidewalks in new neighborhoods and plan for retrofits in existing neighborhoods to support walkability.	●			Code Amendment	\$
LHC 8.c. Consider guidelines that encourage a range of lot sizes and home types within a single development to provide a variety of housing choices.	●			Code Amendment	\$
LHC 8.d. Consider guidelines that encourage "Complete Neighborhoods" with safe and convenient pedestrian access to goods, services, and activities.	●			Code Amendment	\$
LHC 8.e. Implement the Parks & Open Space Master Plan recommendations related to new parks and trails.	●	●	●	Code Amendment / Investment	\$\$\$-\$
Goal LHC 9: Proactively support attainable workforce housing options.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Support the local businesses					
LHC 9.a. Expand the existing Public Facilities Corporation program to support workforce housing opportunities.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$\$\$\$-\$
LHC 9.b. Explore potential local and regional partnerships and tax assistance programs to support the creation of new housing options that are affordable for the local workforce.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$\$\$\$-\$
LHC 9.c. Consider a program for local property tax relief for owner-occupied and long-term rentals to offset rising property values and help residents stay in their homes over time.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$\$\$\$-\$
LHC 9.d. Consider a requirement for affordable housing contributions for larger residential developments.	●			Policy or Program	\$\$\$\$-\$
LHC 9.e. Review the zoning ordinance for alternative housing types that could support senior or workforce housing.	●			Code Amendment	\$

Goals and Actions	0-5 Years	6-10 Years	10+ Years	Mechanism	Approx. Cost
Goal TFS 1: Plan for future facilities and services to support the City's operations and growth.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents					
TFS 1.a. Evaluate alternatives for a new or expanded City Hall/Civic Center.		●		Plan or Study / Investment	\$-\$\$\$
TFS 1.b. Conduct a more detailed public needs assessment.		●		Plan or Study	\$
TFS 1.c. Evaluate options to improve high-speed internet and cell service, particularly during peak season.	●			Plan or Study	\$
TFS 1.d. Conduct regular coordination meetings between the City and NWCID #4.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$
TFS 1.e. Conduct regular coordination meetings between the City and PAISD.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$
Goal TFS 2: Promote public safety in the community.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Build upon the family-oriented lifestyle					
TFS 2.a. Continue to evaluate options to address the community's public safety needs.	●	●	●	Plan or Study	\$-\$\$\$
TFS 2.b. Continue to develop a strategy to support a paid Fire Department.	●			Plan or Study	\$-\$\$\$
TFS 2.c. Continue efforts to expand the existing EMS and Public Works facilities.	●			Investment	\$\$\$
TFS 2.d. Evaluate the demand for medical services and/or an urgent care center.	●			Plan or Study	\$-\$\$\$
Goal TFS 3: Improve network connectivity and mobility.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Protect the natural environment Build upon the family-oriented lifestyle					
TFS 3.a. Improve network connectivity and reduce congestion.	●	●	●	Plan or Study / Investment	\$-\$\$\$
TFS 3.b. Assess and redevelop transit services.	●	●		Plan or Study	\$-\$\$
TFS 3.c. Allocate future right-of-way to enhance existing connections and facilitate new mobility corridors.	●	●	●	Code Amendment / Investment	\$\$\$-\$\$\$
TFS 3.d. Develop a comprehensive parking strategy.	●			Plan or Study	\$\$
TFS 3.e. Construct park-and-ride facilities.	●	●		Investment	\$\$\$
TFS 3.f. Implement an asset management program.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$\$

Goals and Actions	0-5 Years	6-10 Years	10+ Years	Mechanism	Approx. Cost
Goal TFS 4: Support active transportation options.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Build upon the family-oriented lifestyle Support the local businesses					
TFS 4.a. Support active transportation initiatives.	●	●		Policy or Program / Investment	\$-\$\$
TFS 4.b. Investigate opportunities for enhanced island access for the workforce.	●			Plan or Study	\$-\$\$
Goal TFS 5: Plan for roadway design improvements.					
Guiding Principles: Enhance the quality of life for residents Ensure responsible tourism Support the local businesses					
TFS 5.a. Update the City's roadway design standards regularly.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$
TFS 5.b. Promote linkages that benefit the local economy.	●	●	●	Code Amendment / Investment	\$-\$\$\$
TFS 5.c. Support local evacuation plans.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$
TFS 5.d. Use parking fees as a funding mechanism for new attractions and transportation services.	●	●	●	Policy or Program	\$-\$\$

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

In addition to completing the actions outlined in the implementation matrix, the City should monitor its efforts and success related to the guiding principles. The following performance measures are suggested to indicate whether the City is moving closer to the community's desired future.

Enhance the quality of life for residents

- Percentage of households paying more than 30% of their income toward housing costs
- Local property tax rate
- Code violation compliance time
- Percentage of short-term rental units that receive complaints annually

Protect the natural environment

- Funding dollars obtained annually for protection of natural resources
- Coordination meetings with regional partners regarding environmental protections and hazard mitigation planning
- Quantity of litter collected through incentive program

Build upon the family-oriented lifestyle

- Miles of sidewalks, trails, and/or bike lanes
- Acres of parkland per 1,000 full-time residents
- Travel time to nearest emergency medical facility

Ensure responsible tourism

- Crime rate, number of complaints filed, and number of citations issued during peak season
- Visitor experience and/or resident sentiment surveys

Support the local businesses

- Number of businesses in the City
- Commute times
- Inflow/outflow of local workforce