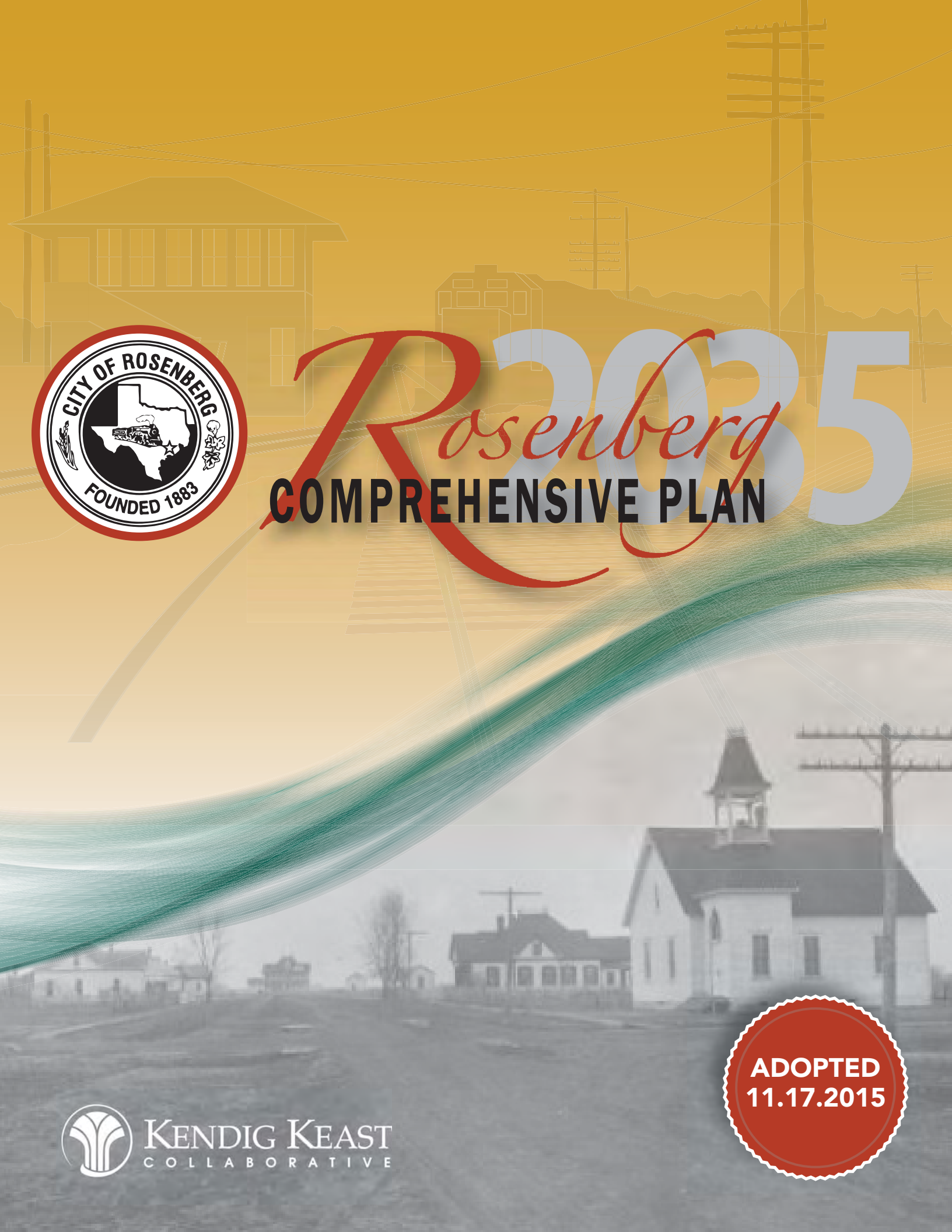

Rosenberg 2035
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED
11.17.2015

KENDIG KEAST
COLLABORATIVE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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SPECIAL THANKS

We especially wish to thank those who contributed to the development of the Rosenberg Comprehensive Plan; specifically those participants who took part in the listening sessions, community workshop & online discussion forum.

Rosenberg texas

2035

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Rosenberg 2035 texas
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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1 PLANNING CONTEXT

IN GENERAL

The City of Rosenberg, Texas, has established a consistent record in engaging in the exercise of planning. Rosenberg has initiated, or otherwise participated in, planning efforts to guide public decisions relating to multiple topics including: population growth, transportation priorities, park development, community design, organizational efficiency, and more. Whether undertaken solely by the City, or in partnership with other organizations and government jurisdictions, the potential for overlap, redundancy or contradiction increases with every planning effort. "Planning fatigue" in a community frequently takes hold. A desire for tangible results trumps the desire for further talk – for further engagement.

It is in full recognition of the signs of planning fatigue that Rosenberg elected to draft its first comprehensive plan since 1995. How could attitudes about the value of this planning exercise be different? Through a simple shift in emphasis. Participants in the Rosenberg comprehensive planning process recognized early on that – although the act of "planning" itself is singularly important – viewing their community's potential for growth and prosperity through a "comprehensive" lens would ensure better coordination of people, opinions and plans.

The Rosenberg Comprehensive Plan is...

...of large scope: Unlike previous subject-specific planning efforts, Rosenberg's comprehensive plan considers multiple topics such as: land use and land development patterns, annexation history, transportation networks, infrastructure capacities, public services, community design and character, housing and neighborhoods, and more to provide a holistic understandin of how each of these specialized subjects relate and influence one another.

...involving much: The comprehensive planning process provides linkages between prior plan documents – covering different topics and prepared at different times. The Rosenberg's comprehensive plan ties these documents and interests together – balancing competing opinions on how the City should develop to create a uniform and singular community action plan that informs all other plans and many city functions.

...inclusive: The comprehensive planning process involved many different stakeholder groups with different interests and preferences. Rosenberg's comprehensive plan represents the City's best effort to develop community consensus on the City's development vision.

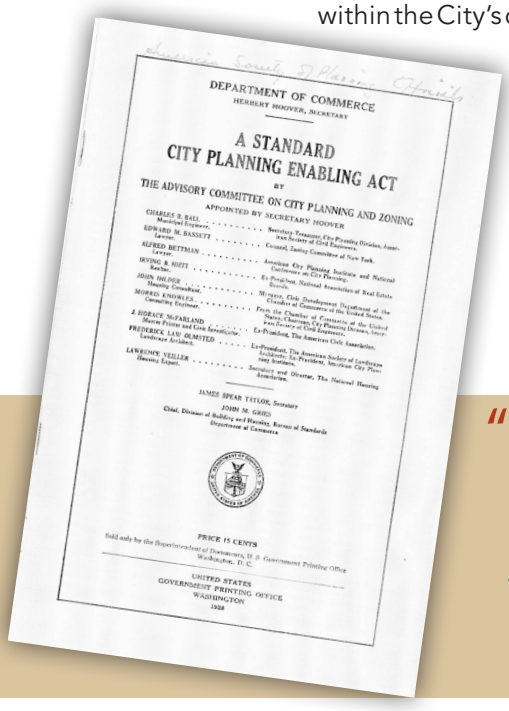
com•pre•hen•sive (kom'pri hen' siv), adj. 1. of large scope; covering or involving much; inclusive.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Comprehensive planning refers to an all-inclusive approach and process to addressing the complexities of future growth and change within a community. The final product of this process is a comprehensive plan document, which is official in nature, in that it is adopted by resolution by the local government. The document is then used as a policy guide regarding decisions about the development and enhancement of the community. Comprehensive plans are sometimes referred to as land-use plans, because in many cases they are dealing with spatial issues related to the appropriate uses of land. Comprehensive plans are prepared to address a range of compatibility issues between various uses of land, such as the management of parks and the preservation of natural resources, identification and preservation of historically significant lands and structures, and adequate planning for infrastructure needs. In other instances, comprehensive plans are utilized to address issues related to the schools, transportation, housing, and public facilities.

Use of this Plan

It is important to understand the function of a comprehensive plan relative to Rosenberg's development regulations, such as its development standards, subdivision regulations sign ordinance, etc. The comprehensive plan establishes overall policy for future land use, roads, utilities infrastructure, and other aspects of community growth, development and enhancement. The comprehensive plan is a tool, or guide – not a regulatory document. It will be up to City officials to use allowable regulatory tools outlined within the City's code of ordinances, or otherwise authorized by state statute, to establish performance measures for specific land uses, the layout of new streets and utilities infrastructure, and building and site development standards. The comprehensive plan's policy decisions will also be carried out through:


DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
HERBERT HOOVER, SECRETARY

A STANDARD
CITY PLANNING ENABLING ACT
BY
THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CITY PLANNING AND ZONING
APPOINTED BY SECRETARY HOOVER

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IRVING B. HIGHT, Realtor.
JOHN IHLDER, Housing Consultant.
MORRIS KNOWLES, Consulting Engineer.
J. HORACE McFARLAND, Master Printer and Civic Iconoclast.
FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED, Landscape Architect.
LAWRENCE VEILLER, Housing Expert.

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JOHN M. GRIES, Chief, Division of Building and Housing, Bureau of Standards, Department of Commerce

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1928

- *Targeted programs and expenditures prioritized through the City's annual budget process, including routine, but essential functions such as code enforcement;*
- *Major public improvements and land acquisitions financed through the City's capital improvements program and related bond initiatives;*
- *New and amended City ordinances and regulations closely linked to comprehensive plan objectives (and associated review and approval procedures in the case of building and land development matters);*
- *Departmental work plans and staffing in key areas;*
- *Support for ongoing planning and studies that will further clarify needs and strategies, including the City Council's own strategic planning;*
- *The pursuit of external grant funding to supplement local budgets and/or expedite certain projects;*
- *Initiatives pursued in conjunction with other public and private partners to leverage resources and achieve successes neither could accomplish alone.*

Despite these many avenues for action, a comprehensive plan should not be considered a "cure all" for every tough problem a community faces. On the one hand, such plans tend to focus on the responsibilities of City government in the physical planning arena, where cities normally have a more direct and extensive role than in other areas that residents value, such as education, social services, arts and culture. Of necessity, comprehensive plans, as vision and policy documents, also must remain relatively general and conceptual. The resulting plan may not touch on every challenge before the community, but it is meant to set a tone and motivate concerted efforts to move the community forward in coming years.

> *"It shall be the function and duty of the commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the commission's judgment, bear relation to the planning of such municipality."*
>
> *(A Standard Planning Enabling Act, 1928)*

PLAN ORGANIZATION

Planning Authority

Comprehensive plans and planning processes - although adapted to address the particular issues, needs and attitudes of the participating communities - have changed little since the United States Department of Commerce published A Standard City Planning Enabling Act (SCPEA) in 1928. Although not a binding document, the SCPEA provided guidance for local governments on how to establish a planning commission and develop a "master plan" for the community. Such a plan should include:

> *"...the commission's recommendations for the development of said territory, including among other things, the general location, character and extent of streets, viaducts, subways, bridges, waterways, waterfronts, boulevards, parkways, playgrounds, squares, parks, aviation fields, and other public ways, grounds and open spaces, the general location of public buildings and other public property, and the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals whether publicly or privately owned or operated for water, light, sanitation, transportation, communication power, and other public services;..."*

SCPEA further established the master plan's authority over land use and zoning. Much adaptation has occurred since the 1928 publication of SCPEA, but the contents of the Rosenberg Comprehensive Plan illustrate a consistency with the historic general intent of a community comprehensive plan.

Unlike some other states, municipalities in Texas are not mandated to prepare and maintain local comprehensive or master plans. Still, Section 213 of the Texas Local Government Code states that, "The governing body of a municipality may adopt a comprehensive plan for the long-range development of the municipality." The Code also cites basic reasons for long-range, community planning by stating that, "The powers granted under this chapter are for the purposes of promoting sound development of municipalities and promoting public health, safety, and welfare."

The Code also gives Texas municipalities the freedom to "define the content and design" of their plans, although Section 213 suggests that a master plan may:

- *Include, but is not limited to, provisions on land use, transportation, and public facilities;*
- *Consist of a single plan or a coordinated set of plans organized by subject and geographic area; and*
- *Be used to coordinate and guide the establishment of development regulations.*

Even given these parameters, it is not unusual for communities that are engaged in the comprehensive planning process to incorporate a "comprehensive" list of defined topics for which the results of individual review and analysis are consolidated into an integrated work program. Examples of stand-alone comprehensive plan topics have included, but not been limited to, the following: population, housing, economic development, hazard mitigation, natural resources, environmental management, cultural resources, community facilities, transportation, land use, and more.

Rosenberg 2035 Plan Elements

Rosenberg's comprehensive plan (hereafter, "*Rosenberg 2035*") is organized into four chapters according to general themes, which inherently overlap and cross-reference one another. The chapters have been structured so that the topics and themes discussed within each are consolidated into a coordinated long-term growth and development program for the City. *Rosenberg 2035* provides the City with both a set of long-term growth and development, goals and policies. In conjuction with ashort-term work program for immediate implementation.

Chapter 1, Planning Context

Chapter 1, *Planning Context*, sets the context for Rosenberg's long-range growth management program by presenting the purpose and function of the comprehensive plan; documenting community participation; and identifying key issues of opportunity or concern. This chapter includes a demographic profile, which illustrates pertinent demographic and socioeconomic trends that will guide future decision-making. Rosenberg's future population projections are compared to varying growth patterns and scenarios. Guiding principles are introduced that provide direction for the final growth management program and implementation program.

Chapter 2, Transportation

Chapter 2, *Transportation*, provides a framework for the orderly development and improvement of the City's transportation system, considering facilities for motorized transportation and non-motorized active transportation (e.g., pedestrian and bicycle circulation), existing and future public transportation needs, freight movement in or through the community (i.e., truck traffic, railroad and air corridors), and other associated needs.

This chapter includes an updated *Major Thoroughfare Plan* which categorizes the existing and planned street network according to functional classification, and according to differing context areas within the municipal limits. The content of the *Major Thoroughfare Plan* is tied to and greatly dependent upon the Growth Management Program, detailed in Chapter 3, *Land Development & Character*.

Chapter 2 also identifies priority transportation system improvement needs as an input to the implementation program contained within Chapter 4, *Implementation*.

Chapter 3, Land Development & Character

Chapter 3, *Land Development and Character*, assesses the community's long-range development outlook and establishes guidance for making policy decisions about the compatibility and appropriateness of individual developments within the context of the larger community. Other considerations include City capabilities for preserving valued areas and lands, protecting the integrity of neighborhoods, and safeguarding and enhancing community image.

A key component of this chapter is the inclusion of a *Growth Management Program*, which not only projects future development patterns by simple land use, but also by "character area." The Growth Management Program also measures the form and function which varying land uses should take depending on their geographic location and linkages to Rosenberg's variable districts, corridors and neighborhoods. The *Growth Management Program* identifies other "areas of special concern" which are in need of major investment or redevelopment, or otherwise require special considerations in order to maintain or support unique characteristics.

Chapter 4, Implementation

Chapter 4, *Implementation*, identifies how the recommended policies and principles of the *Rosenberg 2035* will be implemented, with empahsis on the highest-priority initiatives that will be incorporated into the City's work program. This chapter further outlines the organizational structure necessary to implement the Plan, including methods, roles, and responsibilities, and specific implementation strategies.

Additionally, Chapter 4 establishes a process for periodic evaluation and appraisal of the plan to ensure it is kept relevant through needed updates. This plan element also outlines crucial procedures for monitoring and revisiting plan policies and action priorities every year. Necessary adjustments can then be made based on implementation successes and challenges and ongoing changes in physical, economic and social conditions in the community and the region.

PLANNING PROCESS

Past Planning Efforts

Since completion of its last comprehensive plan in 1995, Rosenberg has actively participated in, or otherwise been a party to, no fewer than eight plans and studies. These various planning exercises are listed in **Figure 1.1, *Planning Efforts in Rosenberg***.

As already discussed in the introductory section of this Plan, Rosenberg's repeated involvement in these past area or topic specific planning initiatives risks creating contradictions in local development goals, initiatives, and actions. Another pitfall is that many of these past efforts were in the form of "studies," in which Rosenberg was often only one of many interested parties, was frequently not the initiating jurisdiction, and often did not officially adopt the resulting study document as City policy.

Rosenberg 2035 differs from most of the past planning initiatives listed in **Figure 1.1** not only because it considers a broader range of topics in a more holistic manner, but because effort has been made to incorporate the most transferable recommendations from these preceding plan and study documents into the recommendations and implementation program of the Plan.

FIGURE 1.1: PLANNING EFFORTS IN ROSENBERG

PLAN/STUDY	TOPIC(S)	YEAR
Rosenberg Comprehensive Plan	Growth/ Development	1995
Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update	Parks	2007
Rosenberg Development Corporation Action Plan	Economic Development	2008
Fort Bend County Sub-Regional Planning Initiative	Transportation	2008
Sidewalk Plan	Transportation	2009
Rosenberg Transit and Pedestrian Study	Transportation	2010
Major Thorougfare Plan	Transportation	2011
US 90A Access Management Study	Transportation	2014
Downtown Rosenberg Livable Centers Initiative	Economic Development	2015[1]

Source: City of Rosenberg.
[1] Pending.

TO ANTICIPATE COMMUNITY NEEDS AND DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE; AND TO CULTIVATE AN ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH LEADERSHIP, INNOVATION, AND COOPERATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

(2035 Vision Statement)

STATE OF THE CITY OF ROSENBERG, FEBRUARY, 2015

Community Leadership

Rosenberg City leaders and citizen stakeholders were integral to preparing a comprehensive plan that establishes a coordinated community-wide growth and development program. Their perspectives helped to frame the issues, and identify the enduring strengths of the community, which are the tangible and intangible qualities of place that resonate with local residents and attract people to move to or invest in Rosenberg.

Community input also helped to identify opportunities and resources that can improve community character and promote growth; as well as weaknesses that can detract from the community's quality of life or economic wellbeing. The issues articulated early on set the trajectory of the Comprehensive Plan update with respect to the development pattern the City hopes to promote and support.

Engagement with elected and appointed city leaders, as well as city staff, began in late September, 2014, as part of an initial round of outreach activities. Meetings involving the Mayor, City Council, and City department heads, were held to orient community leaders to the comprehensive planning process. Thees meetings served as an opportunity to obtain early input, and to set the direction and establish priorities for the planning effort.

Concurrently, a series of one-hour "listening sessions" were convened to provide a forum which acknowledged community leaders. Participants included residents, business and property owners, public officials, representatives from the development community, neighborhood and community organizations, and others. They were able come together and discuss their hopes, concerns and priorities for the City's future.

Finally, the Rosenberg Planning Commission was selected to serve as a comprehensive plan advisory committee (CPAC). In their role as CPAC, the Planning Commission was charged with convening a series of workshop meetings throughout the planning process to review individual plan elements and facilitate discussion and debate on all plan concepts, policy recommendations, and proposed action items. Serving as the CPAC was a logical responsibility for the Planning Commission assume, as both City Charter and state statute authorize the body, to play significant roles in the development and recommendation of local government comprehensive plans.

Rosenberg's Citizens

Community input opportunity in *Rosenberg 2035* was not limited to elected and appointed City leadership, or key stakeholder groups. Rosenberg's citizens framed the initial direction of the planning process through their participation in a "kick-off" community workshop held on Thursday, October 9, 2014. At the workshop, citizens were provided with a plan overview and offered the opportunity to identify the City's key strengths and assets around which a community action plan could be built. Their participation provided the initial feedback which was necessary to begin updating the *Major Thoroughfare Plan* and formulating the direction of the *Growth Management Program*. Contact information of attendees was recorded at the workshop. Throughout the comprehensive planning process this list of contact information was used to provide digital updates of plan progress to all interested parties and to provide access to interim documents.

Citizen input was also collected from October through December, 2014, via questions and discussion facilitated on an on-line discussion forum. Four series of questions were posted on the web site during its three month active window, as a means to solicit responses and general dialogue on growth management, transportation, and land use and character topics. Key themes voiced by Rosenberg's citizens are recorded on page 1.6.

ROSENBERG'S CITIZENS AND STAKEHOLDERS THEMES

Through the public input opportunities offered to Rosenberg's citizens and key stakeholder groups during the early stages of the Rosenberg comprehensive planning process (see page 1.5), several common themes emerged to help frame the Plan's initial guiding principles (see page 1.25), and subsequent analysis of the primary Plan elements.

Land Development

- There should be increased commercial options to support residential growth.
- Performance standards should be incorporated into development regulations in order to protect natural resources.
- Redevelopment should not necessarily be limited to high-end construction.
- A large "catalytic" project needed to generate renewed interest in downtown investment.

Transportation

- Truck traffic should be routed out of downtown.
- Traffic congestion problems can inhibit Rosenberg's long-term growth potential.
- There is a greater amount of street connectivity necessary to disperse traffic.
- Streets and sidewalks in the downtown area remain in poor condition.
- Pedestrian interconnectivity must be promoted throughout the community.
- Traffic speeds in existing neighborhoods should be reduced.
- Public transit options should be expanded.
- Efforts to further develop freight rail should be supported.
- Some thoroughfares can't be widened and need other techniques employed to move traffic.
- I-69 forms a physical and psychological division within the community.

Growth Management

- As the City grows, there is a need for additional green/open space providing community linkages.
- There should be incentives to promote infill development.
- Concurrency requirements should be incorporated into land development regulations.
- Annexation decisions should be based on a fiscal impact analysis, and growth sequencing strategy.
- Water conservation should be a component of new development.
- Environmental resources should be protected.

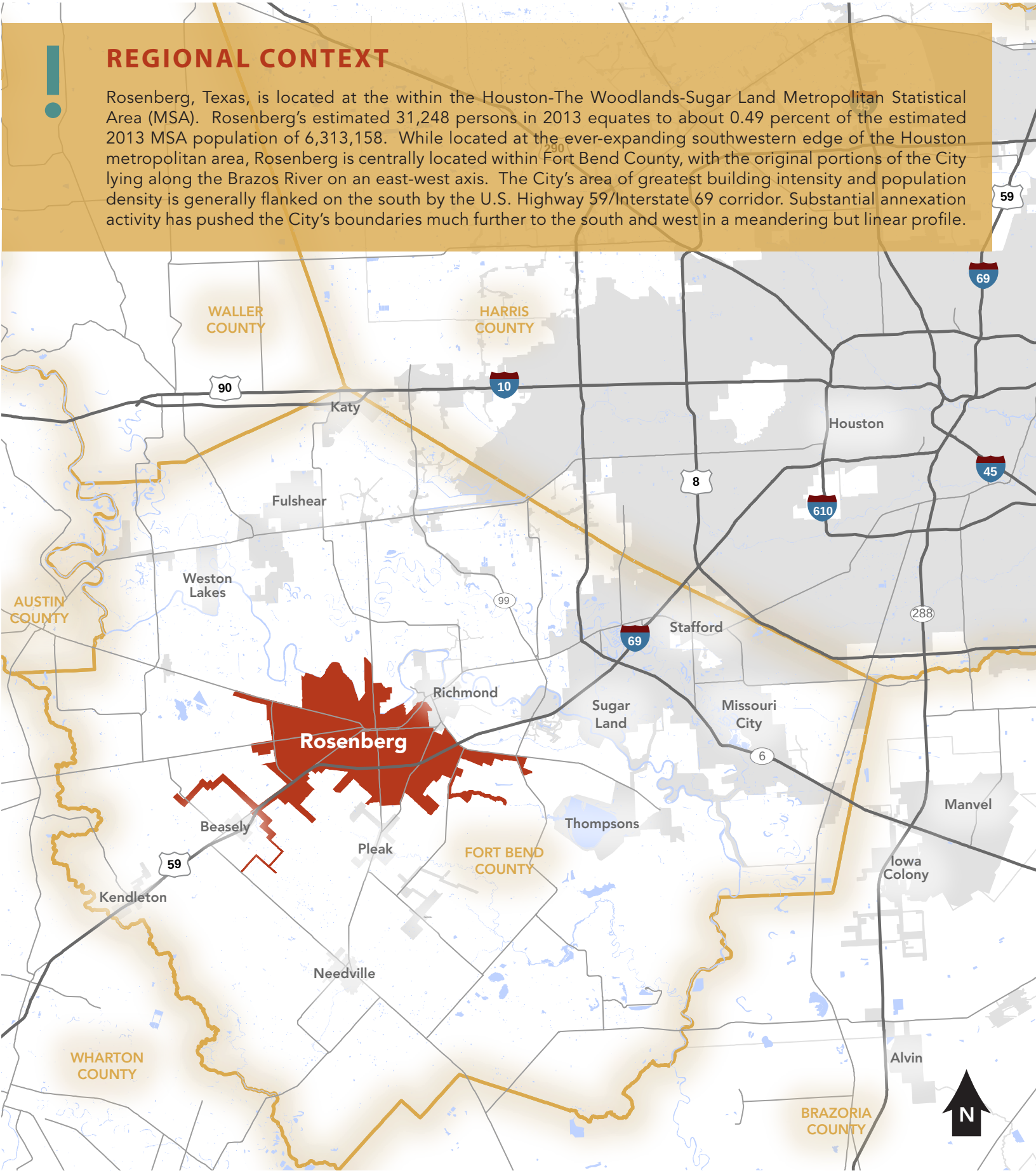
Community Character

- There is a lack of identity and spatial relationship between subdivisions in newer areas.
- There are two Rosenbergs. There is no unifying connection between the older portions of the city and new development.
- There is a general need to beautify the community from public street, to private property, to buildings.
- Much the housing stock in Rosenberg's old neighborhoods is in bad condition.
- Nuisance codes should be adopted to abate slum conditions and blight.
- The historic character of downtown should be accentuated.

Stakeholder groups and the general public were invited to the Rosenberg Civic Center in order to participate in the *Rosenberg 2035* ***planning process. Facilities such as the Civic Center offer the community flexibility in attracting events and activities to the City. The future location of other public facilitates could be tied to redevelopment efforts in specific City districts, and serve as the anchor which provides a critical mass necessary to generate surrounding private reinvestment.*** *Photo: FortBendTX.com*

REGIONAL CONTEXT

Rosenberg, Texas, is located at the within the Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Rosenberg's estimated 31,248 persons in 2013 equates to about 0.49 percent of the estimated 2013 MSA population of 6,313,158. While located at the ever-expanding southwestern edge of the Houston metropolitan area, Rosenberg is centrally located within Fort Bend County, with the original portions of the City lying along the Brazos River on an east-west axis. The City's area of greatest building intensity and population density is generally flanked on the south by the U.S. Highway 59/Interstate 69 corridor. Substantial annexation activity has pushed the City's boundaries much further to the south and west in a meandering but linear profile.



Historical Context.

Once located in the heart of a thriving agricultural region where the growth of sugar cane was gradually replaced by cotton farming, the agricultural economy of Rosenberg and the intermingled portions of unincorporated Fort Bend County has steadily given way to increasing amounts of residential development and urban sprawl. Rosenberg's future has now become inescapably tied to the metropolitan economy of greater Houston. The City's challenge is to grow in a manner that preserves a unique identity and sustains long-term fiscal health. The other option being, to become imperceptibly interwoven into a larger wave of development - leaving the City with little character with which to distinguish itself as a place that is more desirable for quality investment than are its neighbors.

The vast expanses that framed Rosenberg in its formative years (above) remain a characteristic of much of the land which Rosenberg has recently annexed. In spite of its gradual absorption into the Houston urbanized area, over 62 percent of Rosenberg's land remains vacant or in agricultural use. *Photo: Fort Bend Museum*

Rosenberg's location at the junction of two major railroads has fueled the City's gradual growth over many decades. The possible construction of a new rail line to Freeport (TX) and trans-loading facility in the Rosenberg area, position the City as an important freight logistics hub of the future. *Photo: Fort Bend Museum*

Rosenberg Timeline

1823	The Rosenberg area was settled by Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred
1880	The Rosenberg Junction was formed when the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railroad was constructed south of Richmond and crossed the Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio Railroad track
1881	Rosenberg Post Office was established
1889	The first school was constructed
1902	City incorporation
1912	First power plant was constructed
1914	First volunteer fire department was started
1919	Liberty Theatre was built
1920's	Oil and sulfur were discovered in the area
1922	First hospital was constructed
1927	City's first department store was built on the corner of 3rd Street and Avenue H
1930	Main Street (3rd Street) was paved
1940	Fred Blase's Drive-In and Leonard's Drive-In were constructed
1945	Population reaches 3,457 with 128 businesses
1946	Lamar Consolidated Independent School District was formed
1956	Population reaches 6,210 with 234 businesses
1960	Population reaches 9,698
1970	Population reaches 12,098
1980	Population reaches 17,995
2002	Grand opening of the Rosenberg Railroad Museum
2010	Population reaches 30,618

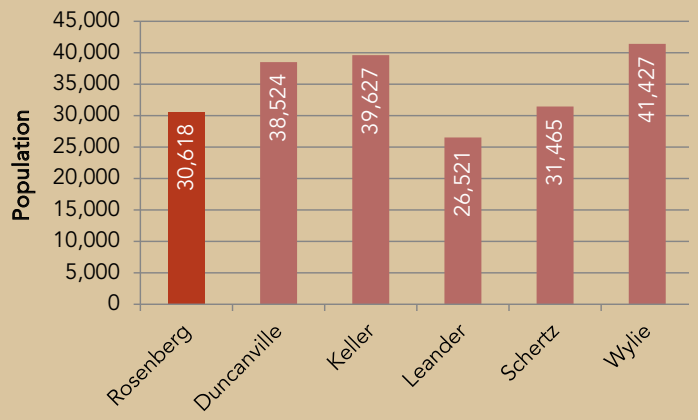
Demographic Profile.

When drafting public policy focused on improving the lives of people, decisions must rely on data that answer who these people are, where and how they live, and how their lives are changing. Demographic and related data that answer these questions are essential to policymakers and development planners across nearly every sector of society. Demographics provide a snapshot pertaining to the current statistical characteristics of a given population, such as its size, composition and spatial distribution, as well as the process through which populations change. Planners study demographic trends to determine historical changes in a population over time, in order to help fulfill the needs of their constituency and plan for change as accurately as possible.

Information pertaining to the City of Rosenberg's general characteristics, and economic and housing statistics has been compiled on pages 1.10 through 1.13 to present a "demographic profile" of the City. The data was obtained from the 2010 U.S. Census, and the Census Bureau's American Community Survey files, and provides a basic overview of Rosenberg's demographic composition. These data sets were presented to stakeholders and the general public at initial Plan meetings and workshops, and helped to generate initial public debate, and frame subsequent plan activities and analysis.

Roughly 200 annual permits for new single-family construction were issued in 2011, 2012, and 2013 within the Rosenberg municipal limits (example above). While new development is welcomed in Rosenberg, there is interest in managing building design and quality. *Photo: Kendig Keast Collaborative.*

FIGURE 1.2: ROSENBERG COMPARISON COMMUNITIES



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Comparison Communities.

The majority of the figures contained within the demographic profile compare Rosenberg's general characteristics, and select economic and housing data sets, with those of five other Texas municipalities. The inclusion of these "comparison communities" with Rosenberg, Fort Bend County, and the state of Texas as a whole, provides Rosenberg leaders and citizens with a broader perspective of how to interpret localized economic and housing measures relative to other similar cities and towns. Within the comprehensive planning process, such knowledge provides a more nuanced "snapshot" of where Rosenberg's strengths and weaknesses may lie, rather than simply comparing local data with larger geographic areas (e.g. state. nation).

The five Texas municipalities which were included into *Rosenberg 2035* as so-called comparison communities are: Duncanville, Keller, Leander, Schertz, and Wylie (see **Figure 1.2, *Rosenberg Comparison Communities***). The inclusion of these communities into the Plan does not infer a desire on behalf of comprehensive planning participants to model Rosenberg's future growth and development patterns on these five municipalities in any way. They are not intended to be "aspirational" examples for Rosenberg. The determination of viable comparison communities for Rosenberg's demographic profile exercise was based on two simple factors: **A)** They have similar population sizes to Rosenberg; and, **B)** They are located on the edge of, and are being absorbed by, large metropolitan area growth (Austin, Dallas, and San Antonio).

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

FIGURE 1.3: MEDIAN AGE AND AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

The City of Rosenberg has the youngest median age (30.7) amongst all comparison communities – combined with a fairly large household size. Both figures are contrary to state and national trends which suggest an aging population and smaller household sizes. The combination of low median age and large household sizes in Rosenberg suggests that many households within the City include a high number of dependents, although a comparison of housing units and population change between 2000 and 2010 suggests that Rosenberg's household size is gradually declining. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 (DP-1)*

	Median Age	Average Household Size
State of Texas	33.6	2.75
Fort Bend County	35.0	3.09
Rosenberg, TX	**30.7**	**3.00**
Duncanville, TX	35.4	2.89
Keller, TX	39.9	2.91
Leander, TX	31.4	3.10
Schertz, TX	37.8	2.75
Wylie, TX	31.7	3.12

FIGURE 1.4: RACE AND ETHNICITY

Rosenberg's racial mix is largely consistent with that of Fort Bend County – with roughly two-thirds of Census respondents indicating that they are white. Almost 21% of Census respondents identified themselves as "Some other race" which is defined by the Census Bureau as:

> *"all other responses not included in the "White," "Black or African American," "American Indian or Alaska Native," "Asian," and "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander" race categories. Respondents reporting entries such as multiracial, mixed, interracial, or a Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish group (for example, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or Spanish) in response to the race question are included in this category."*

A tendency to respond to the question of race as "some other race" illustrates a common misunderstanding between the concepts of race and ethnicity. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 (DP-1)*

Race	Texas	Fort Bend County	Rosenberg
White	70.4%	50.6%	**61.1%**
Black or African American	11.8%	21.5%	**13.4%**
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.7%	0.4%	**0.6%**
Asian	3.8%	17.0%	**1%**
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.0%	**0.1%**
Some Other Race	10.5%	7.6%	**20.9%**
Two or More Races	2.7%	2.9%	**3%**

FIGURE 1.5: HISPANIC/ LATINO DESCENT

Over 60 percent of Rosenberg's residents are ethnically Hispanic. Compared to similar communities, and the state of Texas as a whole, Rosenberg's concentration of Hispanic population is extremely high. This concentration grew significantly between 2000 and 2010 with a 5.3 percent increase in the proportion of the City's Hispanic population during this time. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 (DP-1)*

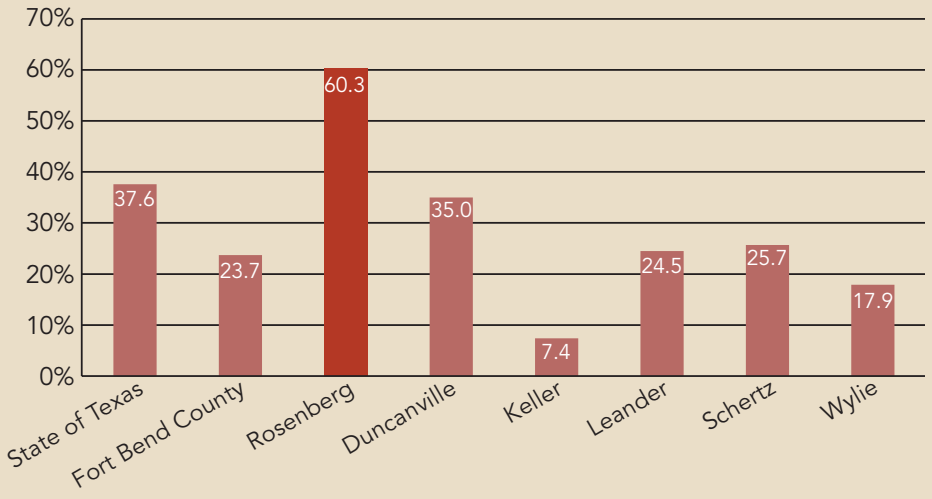


FIGURE 1.6: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

More than seven out of ten residents (71.9%) in Rosenberg have received a high school diploma or higher, which is the lowest rate of educational attainment when compared with similar communities. The percentage of Rosenberg's residents aged 25 or older who have received a bachelor's degree or higher is less than half that of the nearest comparison community. *Source: 2008-2012 ACS 5-Year (S1501)*

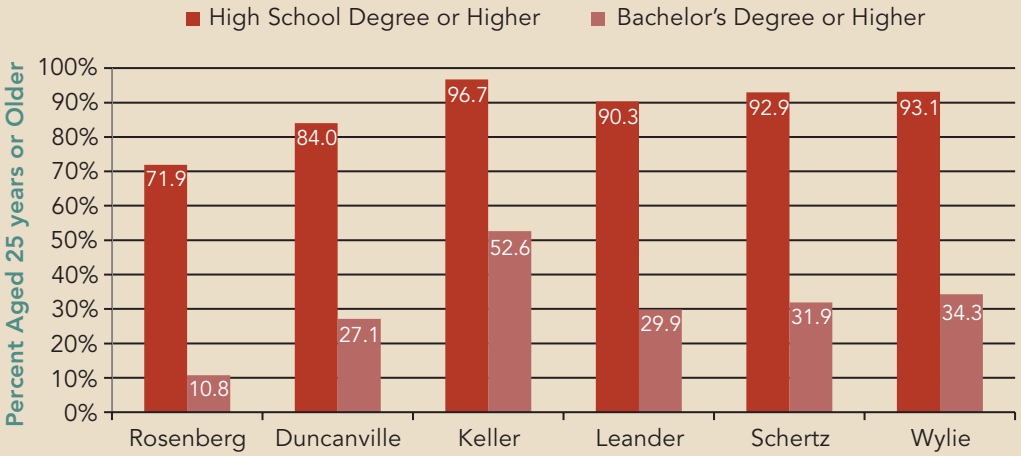
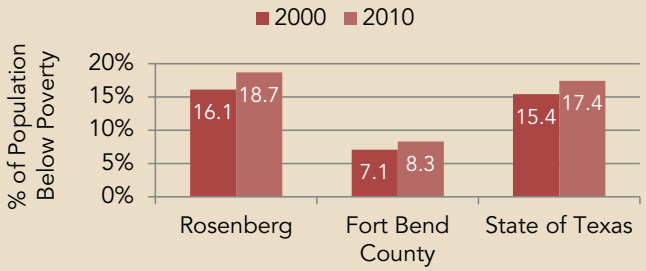


FIGURE 1.7: POVERTY LEVELS

The percentage of Rosenberg citizens living below the poverty level is significantly higher compared to county and state levels. From 2000 to 2010, the poverty level in Rosenberg increased at a rate of 16.1 percent – outpacing the increase in the poverty rate in the state of Texas but still under that of Fort Bend County. *Source: 2008-2012 ACS 5-Year (DP03)*



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

FIGURE 1.8: HOUSING TYPE

Rosenberg offers a variety of housing types. The most predominate type of housing is detached single-family homes at 59.1 percent of all City dwelling units. Multi-family dwelling units comprise 27.5 percent of all dwelling units in Rosenberg. Rosenberg's share of multi-family dwelling units and mobile homes as a proportion of all housing types exceeds those of comparison communities. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 ACS (DP04)*

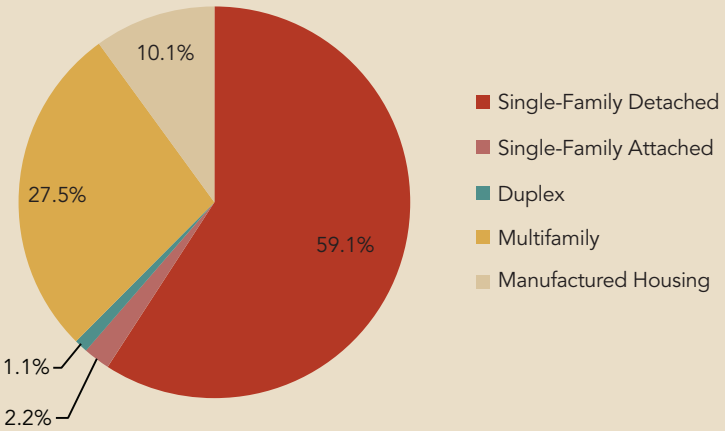


FIGURE 1.9: COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a cost-burdened household is defined as when the monthly cost of housing exceeds 30 percent of the monthly household income. In Rosenberg, 38.4 percent of households with a mortgage payment, and 15.6 percent of households without a mortgage payment, are considered to be cost-burdened. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 ACS (B25077)*

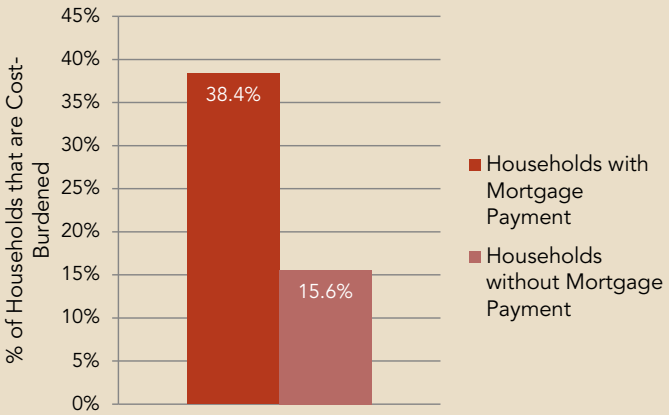


FIGURE 1.10: HOUSING TENURE

At 40.6% of all housing units, Rosenberg has the highest proportion of renter-occupied units when compared to other similar communities. Likewise, Rosenberg contains the greatest percentage of vacant units (9.0%) of the six communities evaluated in the demographic profile. Cumulatively, these figures reduce Rosenberg's share of owner-occupied units as a measure of housing tenure. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 SF1 and SF2*

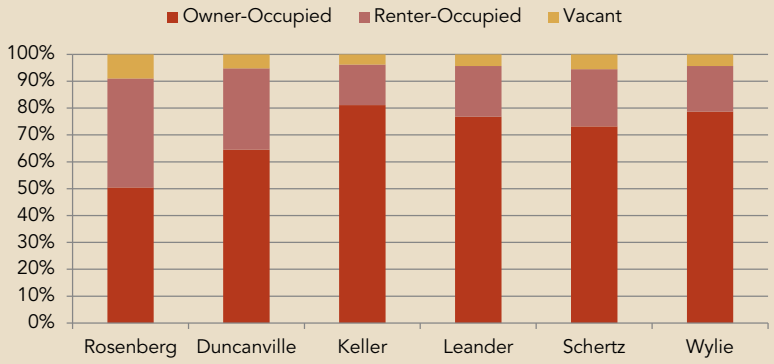
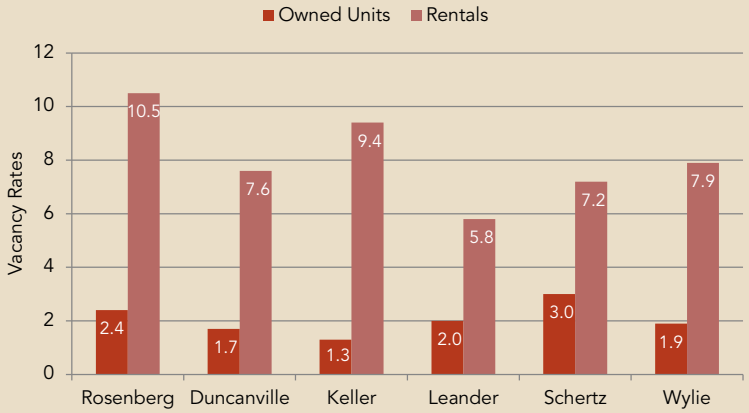


FIGURE 1.11: VACANCY RATES

Rosenberg's vacancy rate for rental dwelling units is noticeably high at 10.5%. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) indicates that a "healthy" rental vacancy rate is around 5%. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 SF1 and SF2*



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FIGURE 1.12: EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The largest employer industries in Rosenberg are Education and Health (includes educational services, health care, and social assistance industries) and Trade (includes retail and wholesale trades). The relatively even distribution of Rosenberg's employment by industry sector is not unusual for a growing community that is generating the need for a greater amount of service sector jobs. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 ACS*

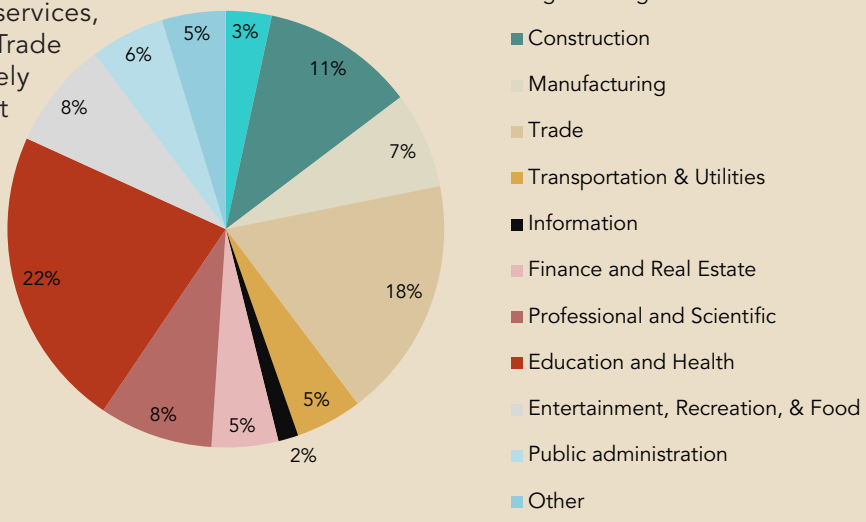


FIGURE 1.13: UNEMPLOYMENT

Less than five out of 100 people (4.3%) were unemployed in Rosenberg, Texas as of September 2014. Compared to similar communities, this falls in the middle range. Conversely, Rosenberg's unemployed percentage is lower than both the State and County percentages. *Source: Texas Workforce Commission Labor Market Information*

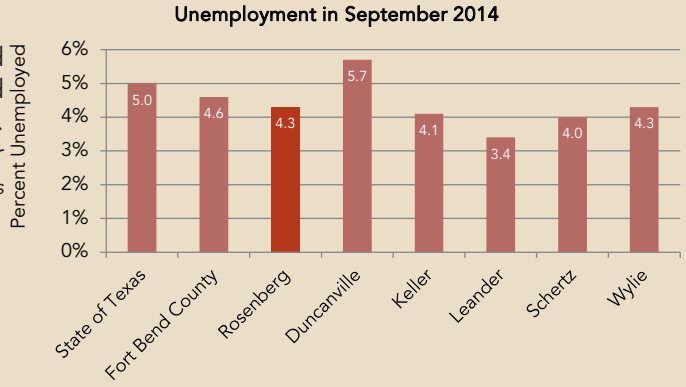


FIGURE 1.14: COMMUTE TIMES

The median commute time for citizens living in Rosenberg is less than half an hour (25.9 minutes). Compared to similar communities, this is on the lower range of commute times – but is similar to the statewide average. Commute times in this range are not unusual for communities in metropolitan areas that are "exporting" much of their labor to surrounding jurisdictions. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 ACS*

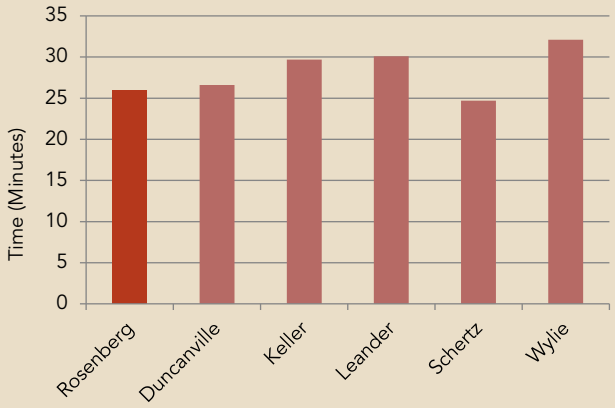
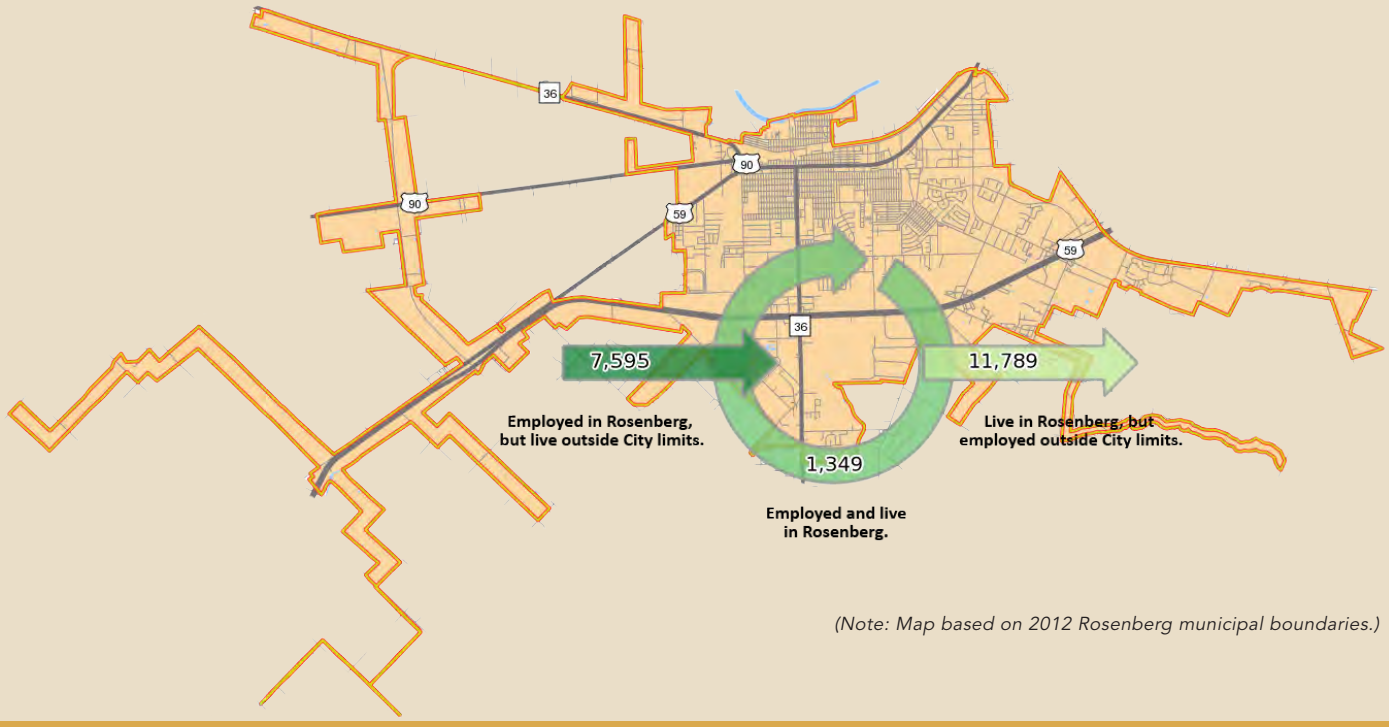


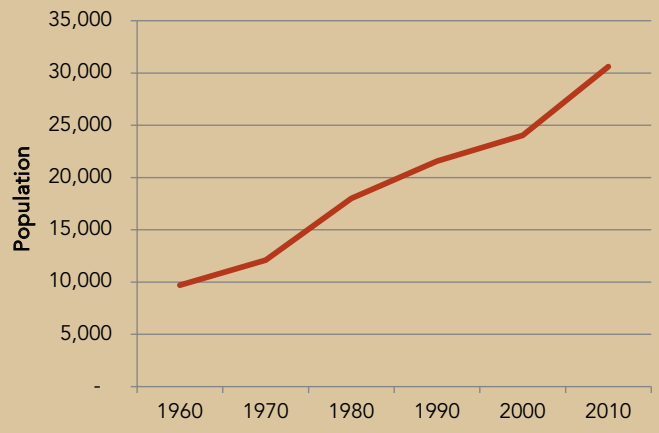
FIGURE 1.15: JOB LOCATIONS

Rapid residential growth in Rosenberg has not yet been accompanied by substantial commercial and industrial growth. As of 2012, the majority of Rosenberg residents continue to commute to other areas of metropolitan Houston for employment. *Source: U.S. Census 2010.*



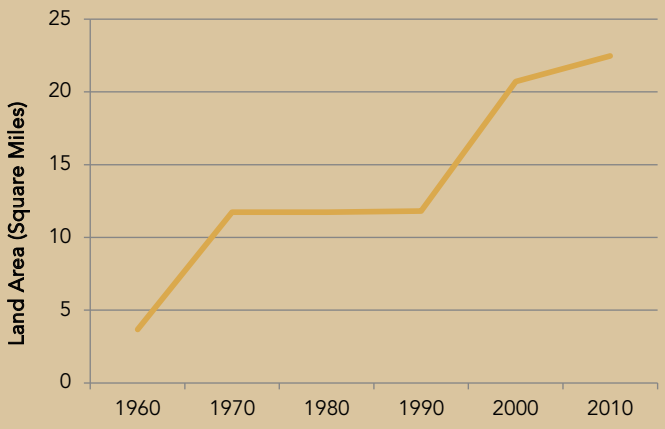
(Note: Map based on 2012 Rosenberg municipal boundaries.)

FIGURE 1.16: ROSENBERG HISTORIC POPULATION GROWTH



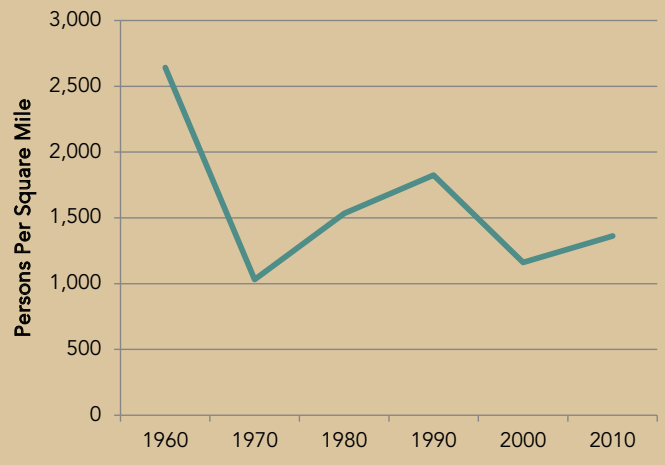
Source: US Census Bureau

FIGURE 1.17: ROSENBERG ANNEXATION HISTORY



Source: City of Rosenberg.

FIGURE 1.18: ROSENBERG RESIDENTIAL DENSITY



Source: Calculations by Kendig Keast Collaborative

GROWTH CONTEXT

Historic Development Patterns.

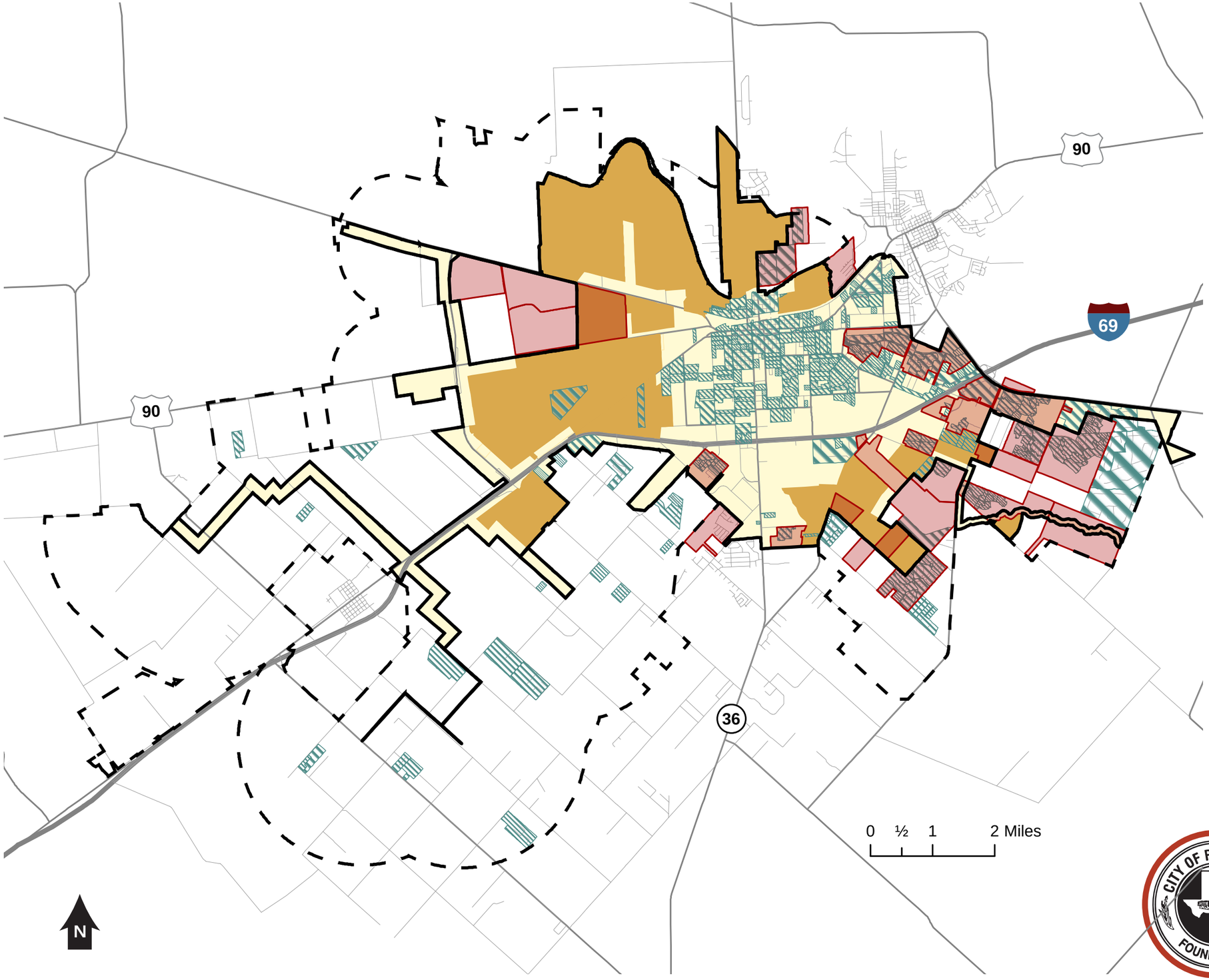
Since its incorporation in 1902, Rosenberg's history was characterized by sustained but modest growth due to an obscure location and an agrarian economy that did not require an extensive labor force. While the economic factors sustaining Rosenberg from within did not change over time, external growth pressures have changed Rosenberg dramatically over the last few decades. **Figure 1.16, *Rosenberg Historic Population Growth,*** illustrates that between 1960 and 2010, Rosenberg's growth rate was no less than 11.4 percent in any 10 year period, while increasing by 48.7 percent in a single decade. These rapid increases in the rate of Rosenberg's population growth are a predictable result of the City's gradual integration into the booming Houston metropolitan area.

Rosenberg has however not merely been absorbing new residents. It has gradually been increasing its physical footprint through annexation in order to pro-actively boost population. Since 1960, Rosenberg has annexed over 21,512.86 acres of land, increasing its land area by 913.6 percent from its 1960 size (see **Figure 1.17, *Rosenberg Annexation History)***. The result has been that while the City has expanded its footprint through annexation, its overall population density has actually decreased by over 48 percent from 2,643 to 1,362 people per square mile (see **Figure 1.18, *Rosenberg Residential Density***). From a purely fiscal standpoint, this type of development pattern means that Rosenberg's expanded water and sewer networks are serving fewer individuals per linear foot than they did five decades ago.

Current Development Patterns.

Data provided by the City of Rosenberg confirms that more recent development activity continues to mimic the City's preferred development patterns of the last several decades. **Map 1.1, *Rosenberg Current Development Patterns,*** illustrates that between 2011 and 2013, the City of Rosenberg annexed an additional 9,473 acres, increasing the City's land area since 2010 by over 39.8 percent. Acreage annexed by Rosenberg between 2011 and 2013 alone exceeds the City's total annexed acreage during the decade of 2000-2010 by 8.4 times. Comparing these acreages to U.S. Census Bureau estimates of Rosenberg's 2013 population, the City's total population density has continued to decrease by 17.3 percent.

MAP 1.1: ROSENBERG CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS



LEGEND

- Municipal Limits
- Annexed Land (2011 - 2013)
- Municipal Utility Districts
- Subdivisions
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

CITY OF ROSENBERG FOUNDED 1883

Rosenberg 2035 texas

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Rosenberg 2035 texas
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The figures presented in this section of the Plan only tell part of the story. Assuming that annexation stopped today, what is Rosenberg's true growth potential? Of recently annexed property, how much developable acreage remains? What has been the City's absorption rate of new subdivision lots and residential building permits? How many municipal utility district projects in the City's ETJ area are currently under construction and will be annexed in the future? All of these questions will be addressed in the subsequent section of this Plan. Nonetheless, while Rosenberg's recent development figures may reflect an historic laissez-fare attitude toward growth management and land development, the *Rosenberg 2035* process has provided a timely opportunity to consider the long-term viability of the City's unconstrained growth model.

FIGURE 1.19: ROSENBERG EXISTING LAND USE (2014)

LAND USE	CITY		ETJ	
	Acres	Percent of Total	Acres	Percent of Total
Agricultural/Vacant	13,498	63.0	37,359	86.2
Residential - Single Family	2,822	13.2	3,790	8.7
Residential - Mobile Home	407	1.9	904	2.1
Residential - Multi-family	157	0.7	0	0.0
Park	435	2.0	0	0.0
Public/Institutional	1,599	7.5	337	0.8
Commercial	1,888	8.8	443	1.0
Utilities	218	1.0	183	0.4
Industrial	405	1.9	348	0.8
TOTAL	**21,429**	**100.0**	**43,365**	**100.0**

Source: Fort Bend Central Appraisal District (Categories consolidated by Kendig Keast Collaborative)

Population Projections.

Population projections are always an important component to a long-range planning process. They help determine and quantify the demands and capacities that are expected of public facilities and services based on the potential pace and scale of a community's physical growth. Projections reflect local, regional, and even national and international trends, and offer a basis to prepare for the future. However, forecasting population changes can be challenging, particularly for the long-term, because it is often difficult to account for all circumstances that may arise.

While great care has been taken to apply a population forecasting methodology that provides Rosenberg with a reasonable expectation of future populations, there will always be unforeseen variables that will necessitate the revision of prior methodologies and the subsequent recalculation of population projections. Correspondingly, demographers caution that population projections become trickier as the geographic area being measured becomes smaller, making city-level population the most difficult to forecast. Population change within a city is strongly influenced by less predictable factors such as housing prices, availability of vacant land to develop, and annexation of additional territory, which may already have existing residents and results in an instant increase in the City-wide total. All of these factors have been considered in generating a population projection for Rosenberg.

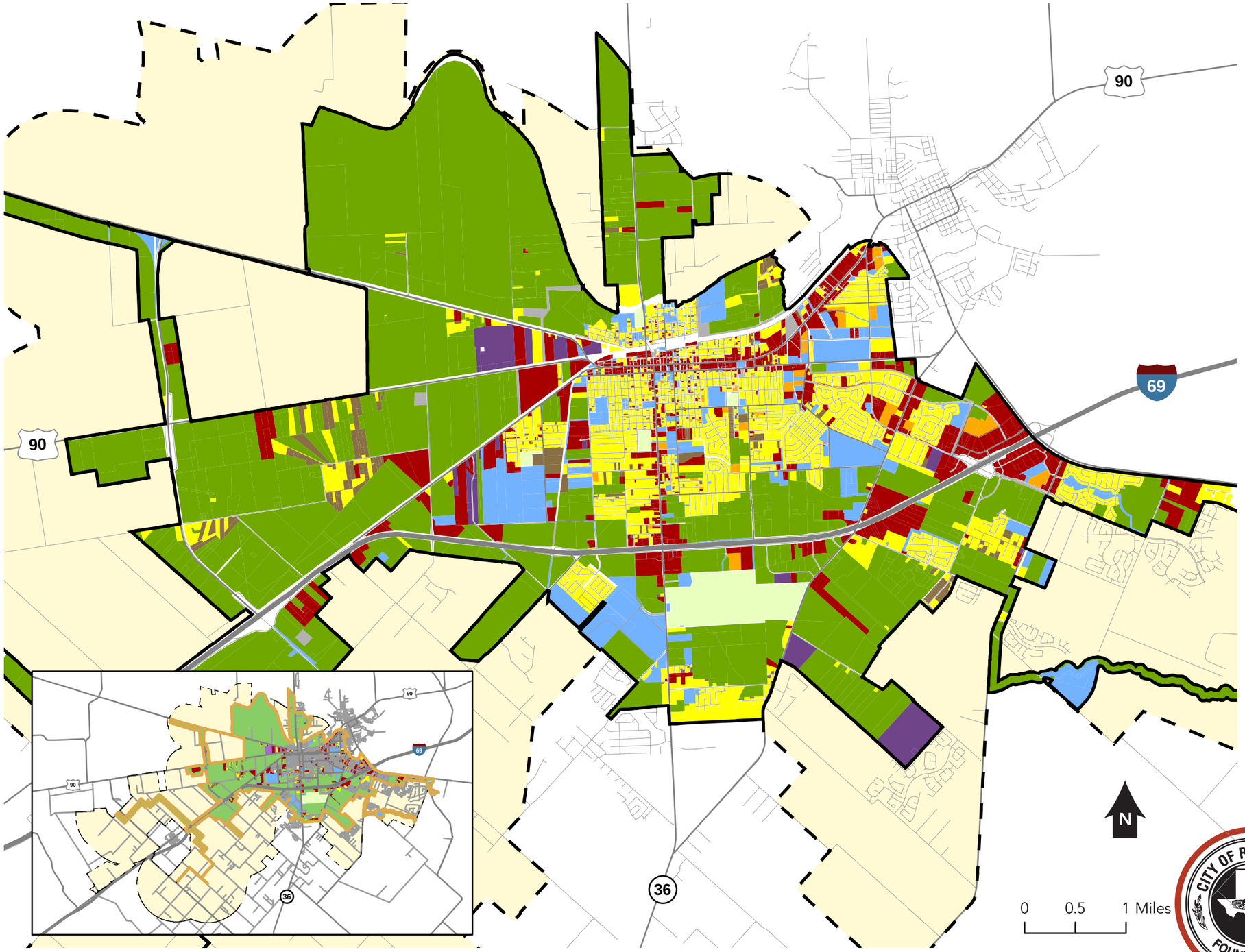
In the context of this plan, current land use and the availability of land are not currently inhibiting factors in adding new population in Rosenberg. Not only does Rosenberg not currently regulate land use, **Figure 1.19**, and, **Map 1.2** (both entitled: ***Rosenberg Existing Land Use*** illustrate a vast supply of agricultural and vacant land that far exceeds the acreage converted over the last 10 to 15 years for other land uses.

Rosenberg 20 Year Population Projection.

To establish an initial understanding for how officials, stakeholders, and citizens viewed recent growth trends in Rosenberg, and in determining their preferred patterns of future growth, it was first necessary to examine projected population growth patterns. Chapter 1 includes two sets of preliminary population growth projections relating to Rosenberg and extending to the year 2035:

- ***Standard Projections:*** *Existing state data sets are compared to reveal high, low, and mid-point population growth potential in Rosenberg. These data sets do not account for annexation activities; nor, do they anticipate changes in general municipal growth management policies.*
- ***Refined Preliminary Projections:*** *Local land use, annexation, and development data was compiled to generate a preliminary population projection which accounts for recent localized growth trends. Use of this historic data to generate a more customized City growth projection relies on the assumption that past local policies on growth and development will continue to be promulgated going forward.*

MAP 1.2: ROSENBERG EXISTING LAND USE (2014)



LEGEND

- Municipal Limits
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Agricultural/Vacant
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park
- Public/Institutional
- Residential - Mobile Home
- Residential - Multi-family
- Residential - Single-family
- Utilities

CITY OF ROSENBERG FOUNDED 1883

Rosenberg 2035 texas COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Rosenberg texas 2035
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The preliminary population projections provided in Chapter 1 are illustrative only, and have been utilized to generate initial discussion on the degree and manner to which Rosenberg will manage growth within the municipal limits, and its extraterritorial jurisdiction, over the course of the next 20-plus years.

Standard Projections.

Standard data sources and projection models were used to generate a traditional population estimate for Rosenberg through the year 2035. The results of these models are illustrated in **Figure 1.20, *Standard Population Projections***. **Figure 1.20** incorporates the following:

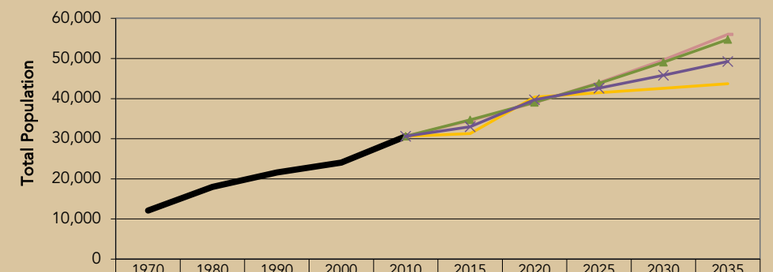
- ***Texas State Data Center Step Down Model.*** *This step-down model extrapolates Rosenberg's growth rate from the Texas State Data Center's population projections for Fort Bend County. The model was developed under the assumption of net migration rates to Rosenberg at one-half of those during the decade of 2000 to 2010.*
- ***Texas State Data Center Exponential Growth Model.*** *Like the step down model, this model also extrapolates Rosenberg's growth rate from the Texas State Data Center's population projections for Fort Bend County. Exponential growth models assume a constant rate of growth over a period of time. Therefore each period of growth, building on the number of residents at the end of the prior growth period, results in an absolute number that greater in each subsequent period.*
- ***Texas Water Development Board Model.*** *This projection is derived from the Texas Water Development Board estimates – adjusted to account for the 2010 Census updates. No additional calculations were performed.*
- ***Midpoint Projection.*** *This model represents a growth rate that increases evenly and proportionally between the high and low projections. This hypothetical model considers the average range of error between other data sources.*

Using traditional population projection tools, the City of Rosenberg's population is anticipated to grow between 13,643 and 28,681 people between 2015 and the year 2035. This represents a growth rate of between 43.6 percent and 83 percent during the 20 year period. Although these absolute numbers and rates of growth may be considered substantial by most any community, they were perceived by planning participants to be conservative in light of the scale of growth occurring on the fringes of the Houston metropolitan area before and during Rosenberg's comprehensive planning process.

Residential Development Potential.

One need only to review Rosenberg's historical growth in land area, as represented in **Figure 1-16, *Rosenberg Historic Population Growth*** (page 14), to know that population projection models based solely on standard data sources may not sufficient or accurately represent Rosenberg's probable population growth. Using annexation, building permit, subdivision, and municipal utility district data provided by the City of Rosenberg, as well as land use data provided by the Fort Bend Central Appraisal District, a refined population projection methodology was generated in order to offer an alternative view of Rosenberg's residential development potential. The refined population projection methodology was utilized to generate initial discussion among comprehensive planning participants to better understand local attitudes about

FIGURE 1.20: STANDARD POPULATION PROJECTIONS



	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Historical Data	12,098	17,995	21,577	24,043	30,618					
Texas Water Development Board					30,618	31,285	40,384	41,458	42,560	43,728
Exponential Growth					30,618	34,552	38,991	44,001	49,654	56,033
County Step Down					30,618	34,699	39,042	43,805	49,076	54,751
Midpoint Projection					30,618	32,992	39,713	42,631	45,818	49,240

current development patterns in Rosenberg, as well as preferred parameters of future growth.

The methodology to generate a refined view of Rosenberg's residential population potential considered the following:

- ***Gross Acreage of Subdivisions.*** *The gross acreage of subdivisions approved since 2000 was compared to Fort Bend County Assessor parcel data and aerial photography to determine the acreage which has since been platted.*
- ***Net Acreage of Platted Subdivisions.*** *Rights-of-way, common area, environmental lands, and open space was extracted from the gross acreage of randomly selected platted subdivisions to derive a percentage of the site reserved for residential land.*
- ***Development Density.*** *Net subdivision acreage was divided by the number of lots to determine development density.*
- ***Absorption Rate.*** *The net acreage and development density of Rosenberg's approved and platted subdivisions was applied to unplatted subdivision acreage.*
- ***Absorption Rate Projection.*** *The absorption rate of lots in residential subdivisions approved since 2000 (17.5 years) was replicated to extend to 2035.*
- ***Household Size.*** *Annual residential dwellings were converted to residents using the figure of 2.44 persons per household - based on the average household size for residents moving to the City between 2000 and 2010.*

Using the methodology presented herein, Rosenberg's residential development potential between 2015 and 2035 may be as high as 40,944 new residents. This amounts to an 123 percent population increase between 2015 and 2035, and is substantially larger than those projections generated using State data sources and presented in **Figure 1.20, *Rosenberg Historic Population Growth***. While at first glance, such a figure seems impossibly high, there are recent precedents for such an assertive figure within the metropolitan Houston area.

It is important to note that the model used to project Rosenberg's residential development potential can be further refined on an annual basis as the City collects additional data regarding ongoing trends. In addition to the items listed in the methodology presented within this Section, revised residential development potential figures may consider the following:

- ***Absorption Rate (Building Permits).*** *Rosenberg's average rate of permits for the construction of new residences and placement of new mobile homes from 2011 through 2013 was calculated at 198 dwelling units per year. These numbers are significantly lower than the absorption rate that considers gross and net developable subdivision acreage.*

- ***Land Use.*** *The model herein assumes no constraints on land use that will be dedicated to new residential development. With over 13,382 acres of land in 2014 classified as agricultural or vacant within the municipal limits (37,359 in the ETJ) space to accommodate the potential residential build-out herein - as well as other land uses - will not be inhibited based on current growth trends.*

- ***Annexation.*** *The model assumes current City boundaries. A modification to this assumption may be warranted based on the City's adoption of a formal annexation policy.*

- ***ETJ Area.*** *Projected growth in the ETJ area is not modeled herein. Therefore, an expected expansion of the City's ETJ area after the City surpasses a population of 50,000 is not factored herein.*

ROSENBERG RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL.

Current rates of subdivision approval, absorption of new residential lots, density, and household size suggest that standard population projections for Rosenberg (**Figure 1.20**) may be conservative.

2015 - 2035 POTENTIAL:

New Residential Acres: 5199

New Dwelling Units: 16,880

New Residents: 40,994

(Figures by Kendig Keast Collaborative)

There is no disagreement that Rosenberg will continue to grow in the coming decades. What remains in question is whether or not the rate of growth projected herein is desirable and inevitable. Rosenberg's answer to this question is contained in Chapter 3, *Land Development & Character*. All three of these assumptions reflected a continuation of Rosenberg's recent growth management policies. The subsequent steps in the *Rosenberg 2035* planning process generated a *Growth Management Program* that more clearly and accurately defines Rosenberg's desired growth and development policies over the next twenty years.

PLANNING FOR GROWTH.

Conventional Growth Management Methods.

Within the current context of substantial and sustained population growth, it is prudent for Rosenberg to consider ways in which it can exert influence over the direction, timing, pattern, mix and quality of new development within the City limits – growth that will require the provision of public utilities and services in a cost-efficient manner; and that in turn, may be catalytic in attracting businesses and people to the area.

It is currently within the City's capacity to exercise the following tools to manage growth:

- ***Long-range Planning***. *Refers to the process of identifying, analyzing and documenting locations in the City that are targeted for the gradual expansion of its urbanized area, in contrast with areas that are less conducive for intensive development because of environmental or other identifiable constraints (e.g., terrain, wetlands,, historic sites, etc.), existing patterns of use and ownership, or service provision constraints.*
- ***Annexation***. *This process brings key growth areas and areas intended for limited development into the City limits well before any significant development activity begins, and so appropriate land use and development standards may be established early on. Annexation is a mechanism to expand the City's tax base, especially to incorporate the pool of tax and fee payers who benefit from municipal infrastructure and services. Consequently, the City assumes responsibility for providing services to newly annexed areas, in the form of expanded utilities infrastructure and police and fire protection, among other services.*
- ***Subdivision and Development Regulations***. *Can be used to carry out growth strategies, particularly in terms of the quality of new development or redevelopment. Clear infrastructure standards in the regulations, and associated City specifications and criteria, shall establish minimum improvements required of private development.*
- ***Development Agreements***. *Where appropriate, development agreements may require that development in the City's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) must comply with certain aspects of the regulations that apply to similar development within City limits, prior to their annexation into the City (§212.172). Development agreements can be negotiated with private interests that request extension of the City's utility infrastructure to fringe and/or ETJ locations, especially to clarify the timing of future planned improvements and any conditions in exchange for the City's infrastructure and service commitments. They can also be used to establish levels of participation in public-private cost-sharing arrangements for infrastructure improvements, as well as reimbursement provisions for infrastructure oversizing or other special circumstances.*
- ***Impact Fees***. *Are assessed on new residential and nonresidential development to provide dedicated funding for particular capital improvements that are specifically needed to serve the new development (as authorized by Texas state law for water, sanitary sewer, drainage, and roads).*
- ***Multi-year Capital Improvements Programming***. *Establishes the City's intentions for extending its primary arterial streets, trunk water mains, and wastewater collection lines to targeted growth areas.*
- ***Joint Powers Agreements (JPA)***. *Are a means for the City and other units of government to coordinate on the provision of infrastructure, as well as public services and administrative functions, as regulated in Chapter 163 of the Texas Utilities Code.*
- ***Adequate Facilities Ordinances***. *Require that approvals for projects are contingent upon evidence that public facilities have adequate capacity for the proposed development. When facilities are found to be inadequate, development is postponed or developers may contribute funds to improve facilities.*
- ***City-county Coordination***. *Facilitates synchronization of development policies and procedures in Fort Bend County and helps to improve regulatory enforcement in the City's ETJ.*
- ***Zoning***. *Is the land use regulatory concept under which a municipality establishes rules for the use and development of land. A zoning structure consists of two separate components. The first is the text of the ordinance, which establishes specific development regulations that will be applicable to structures and property within the community. The second component is the zoning map, which allocates the various zoning districts geographically within the community. In adopting zoning a city establishes a series of districts, and within each district, sets forth the uses to which structures or land may be placed. Section 211.004 of the Texas Local Government Code specifically requires that zoning regulations must be adopted in conformance with a comprehensive plan.*
- ***Urban Growth Boundary / Urban Service Limit***. *May be established around a community within which the local government plans to provide public services and facilities; and, beyond which urban development is discouraged or prohibited. Boundaries are usually set to accommodate growth over 10 to 20 years and are intended to provide more efficient services and to protect rural land and natural resources.*
- ***Designated Development Area***. *Is similar to an urban growth boundary in that certain areas within a community are designated according to their existing*

or intended built environment: such as urbanized, urbanizing, future urban and/or rural. Within each of these areas, different policies for future development apply. These contextual development areas are used to encourage or direct development into urbanized or urbanizing areas, as opposed to areas intended to remain rural.

A key to Rosenberg's long-term viability is "concurrency" - only accepting development that can support necessary off-site capacity improvements of existing City infrastructure. *(Photo: Neel-Schaffer, Inc.)*

PATTERNS OF GROWTH

Several conditions and factors will influence how and where physical growth and development occurs within a municipality, and in proximate surrounding areas. Over time, obvious patterns of development emerge - along transportation corridors, at crossroads, adjacent to water bodies, etc. Sometimes growth is logical and contiguous, following an already established development pattern. Other times, growth is haphazard and scattered, the result of economic influences, like the availability of inexpensive land or access to a utility trunk line.

Five scenarios are presented on pages 1.21 through 1.23 which illustrate patterns of growth that can occur in Rosenberg. The degree to which any one of these five hypothetical growth patterns may come to fruition in Rosenberg is influenced by a variable mix of private market forces, public policies, investments, and regulation. Although Rosenberg has identified its preferred land use policies through the comprehensive planning process, any of the alternative growth patterns highlighted on the next pages may occur without the consistent adherence of future Mayors and City Councils to the City's adopted *Growth Management Program* contained in Chapter 3, *Land Development & Character*.

FIGURE 1.21: SCATTERED DEVELOPMENT

Often referred to as "leapfrog" development, this form represents the unconstrained pattern of random development, in which development skips over empty land to build in a remote location. Leapfrogging often occurs in areas where there are few land use regulations or development standards that properly assign infrastructure costs to the developer. In other cases, developers attempt to move beyond City boundaries to either avoid municipal land use and development regulations; or to ensure some degree of predictability regarding adjacent future development.

- City Limits
- ETJ
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Parks
- Existing Development
- Scattered Development

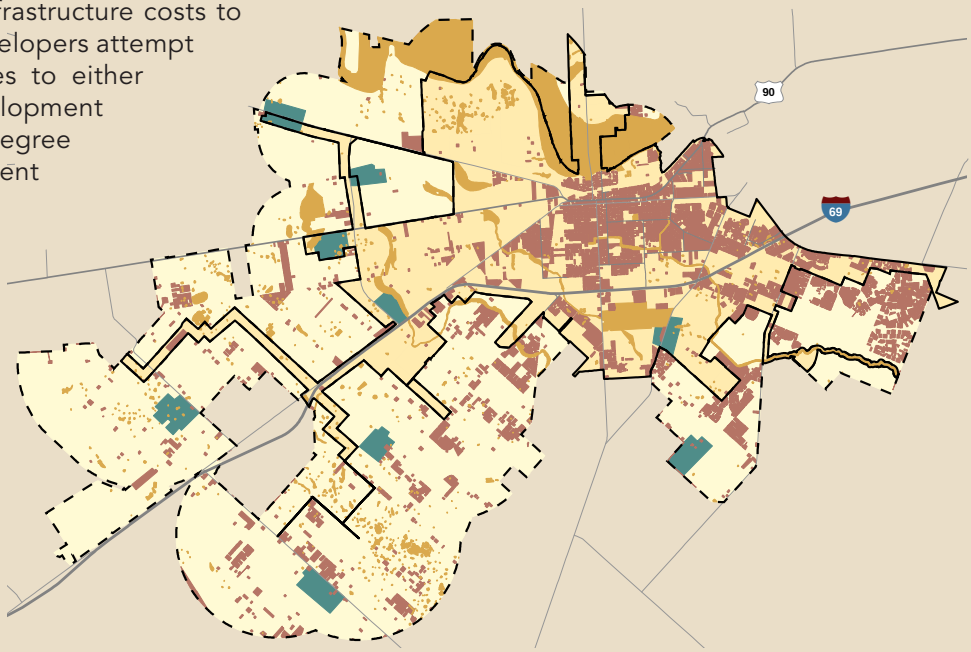


FIGURE 1.22: CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

Clustering is a form of contiguous development that results in better land utilization by preserving natural assets while still allowing some degree of development on smaller, constrained building sites. In the best examples, natural features are preserved and incorporated as development focal points and amenities, thereby adding value for both the developer and homeowners over time, especially when homes and/or other uses are arranged and oriented to take advantage of open space views. By setting aside natural areas, ponds, and open space, cluster designs are also effective at reducing both storm water runoff and water quality impairment. Better drainage practices that restores the natural hydrological patterns of a site can reduce site infrastructure costs, and more compact development generally requires less linear feet of streets, water and sewer lines, sidewalks, utilities, and other infrastructure components.

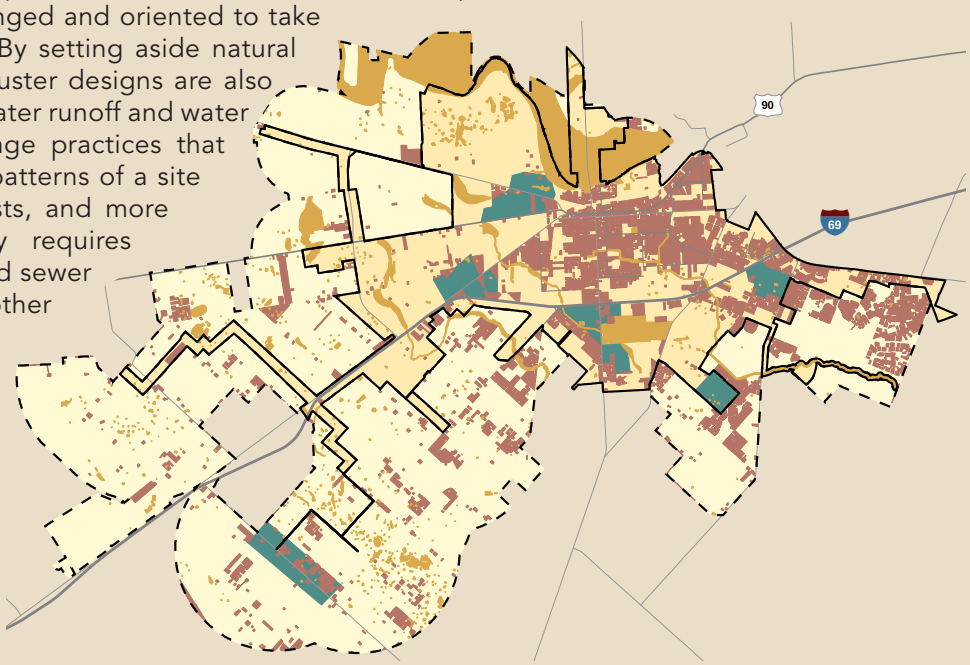


FIGURE 1.23: CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT

This common form of development occurs along major highways, taking advantage of the access afforded by an existing highway and its accompanying utility services. Corridor development, if developed to a standard that is compatible with the community, provides infrastructure cost savings and contiguous growth patterns. Care must be taken to manage the intensity and quality of development and avoid overbuilding, which can place undue stress on the roadways and infrastructure and result in clutter.

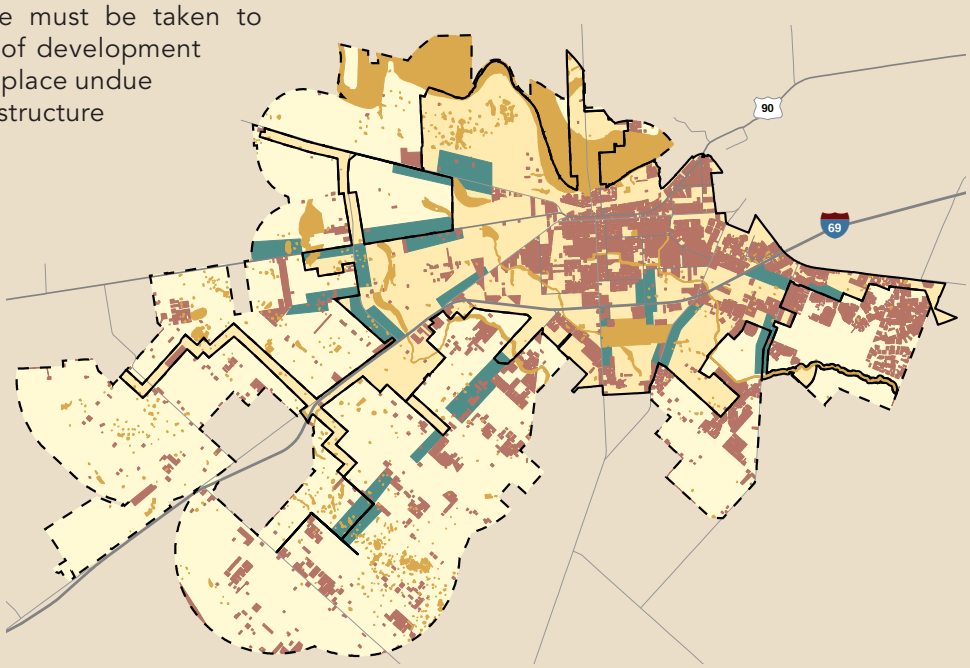


FIGURE 1.24: CONTIGUOUS DEVELOPMENT

This form of new development provides for gradual outward growth adjacent or in very close proximity to existing development. When carefully planned, this development form is highly efficient and the least obtrusive to existing neighborhoods or businesses. Under real-world circumstances, perfectly staged contiguous development rarely occurs - especially in Texas, given state laws. Land ownership patterns or natural features usually result in small amounts of short-distance skipping, occasional leapfrogging, or checkerboard patterns of development.

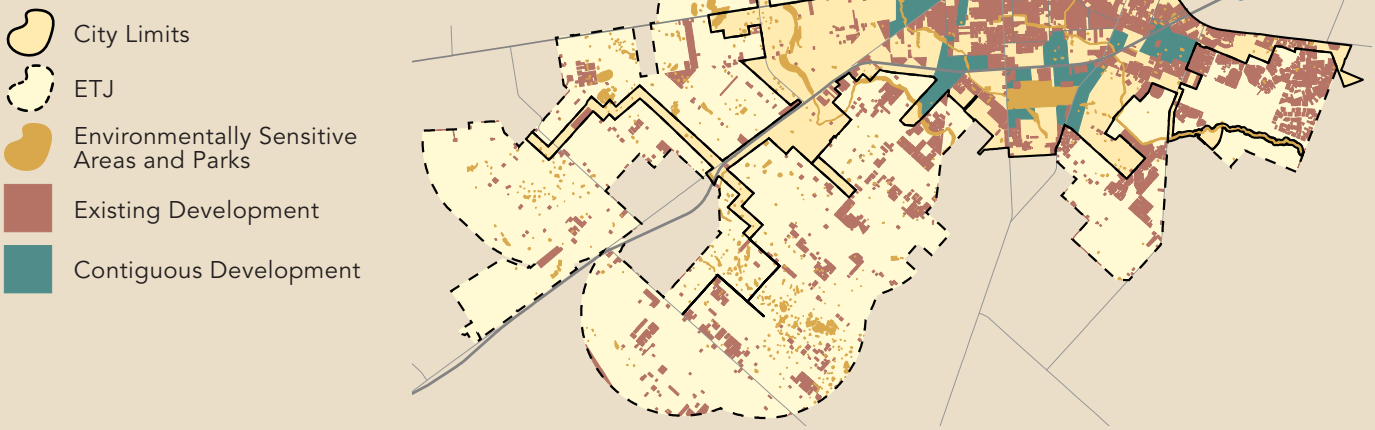
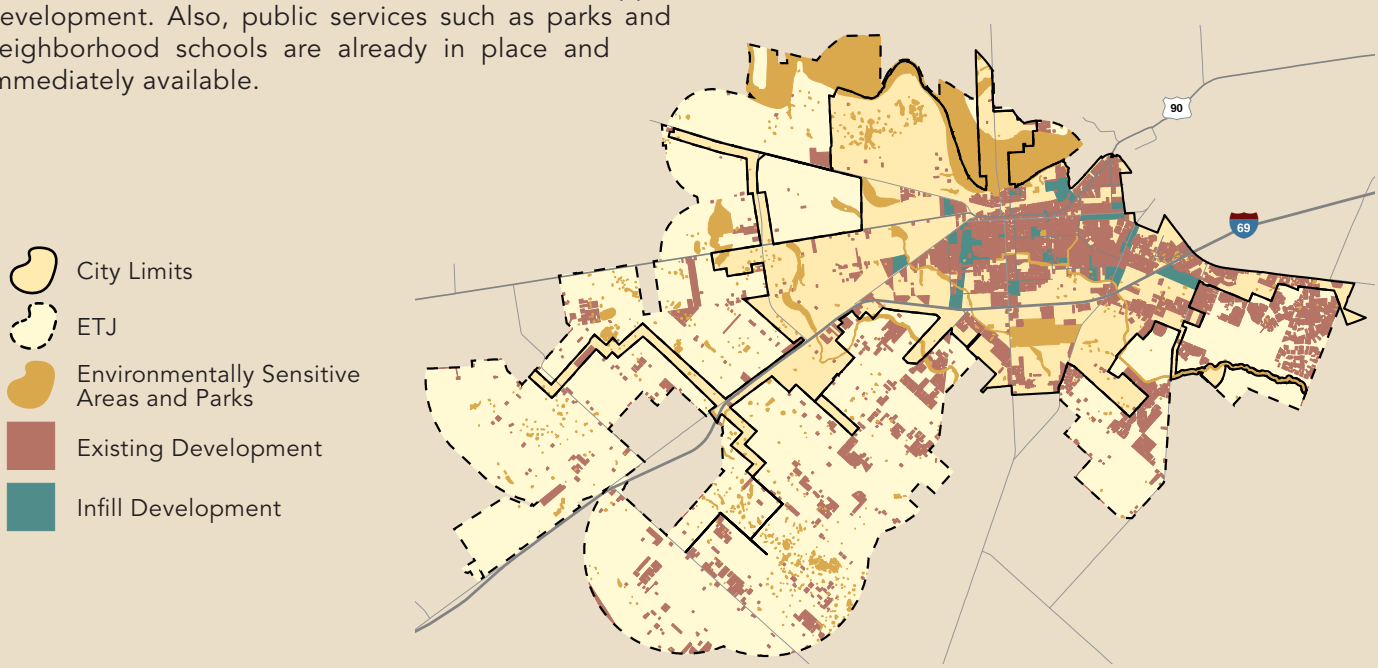


FIGURE 1.25: INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT

Infill development is a highly desirable form of development, which occurs when leftover land gets developed - often years after development has passed by. The advantages of infill development are that significant investments in additional infrastructure are rarely needed to support infill development. Also, public services such as parks and neighborhood schools are already in place and immediately available.



Consequences of Poor Growth Management

The term "sprawl" refers to the reduction of rural land due to the inefficient increase of the total size of the land area of a city and its suburbs over a particular period of time. Sprawl is a spatial development pattern or condition that occurs when large tracts of land are devoted to a single use (single-use zoning); where individual buildings take-up increasingly large portions of land (low-density zoning); and the only way to navigate from one area to another is by automobile (auto-dependency). Urban sprawl and car-dependent development patterns result in another land use symptom related to employment: "job sprawl."Job sprawl is defined as low-density, geographically spread-out patterns of employment, where the majority of jobs in a given area are located outside of a city's Central Business District (CBD), and increasingly in the suburban periphery. This pattern of development is compounded as an area grows. The pace of land consumption in a metropolitan area such as Houston, creates even greater distances between homes, work, and areas of recreation or shopping. As a pattern of land development, sprawl consumes precious landscape resources, requires substantial amounts of utilities and transportation infrastructure and, as a consequence, is very costly to both construct and maintain.

Unmanaged physical growth can have several negative consequences, including:

- *Erosion of a defined community edge, thereby blurring its boundaries and contributing to a general loss of community character, identity and sense of place;*
- *Degradation of environmental resources, such as floodplains, wetlands, and mature tree canopy;*
- *Overwhelmed utilities and transportation infrastructure (e.g., roads, water and wastewater systems);*
- *A lack of coordinated planning between individual developments, which can lead to unexpected shifts in traffic patterns, which causes congestion and environmental impacts as development occurs in an uncoordinated fashion before adequate road infrastructure is in place; and*
- *Inefficient provision of public services, such as police and fire protection, the dedication and maintenance of parks and open space, and the delivery of health care and education.*

These consequences, if left unchecked, can significantly erode the quality of life and economic well-being within a community.

Preserving Choices: Essential Principles of Growth Management.

Many communities across the country are embracing growth management programs which employ policies and development techniques that concentrate growth in compact and walkable urban centers. Advocates of such robust growth management programs assert that they are better able to control the cost of public services and infrastructure by avoiding sprawl - in favor of development that is compact, transit-oriented, walkable, and bicycle-friendly. Neighborhood schools; complete streets comfortably accommodating motor vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians; and, mixed-use development with a range of housing choices are typical products of this recent embrace of traditional urban design principles.

When communities choose to manage growth, they are better positioned to create new neighborhoods and maintain existing ones that are attractive, convenient and safe. They can protect the environment while stimulating economic growth. Most of all, they can create more choices for residents, workers, visitors, children, families, single people, and older adults—choices regarding where to live, how to get around, and how to interact with the people around them. The Smart Growth Network (SGN) has developed 10 essential growth management principles, which, when applied, can help to create livable communities that retain their value over time. The principles include:

- *Encouraging community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions;*
- *Preserving open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas;*
- *Mixing land uses;*
- *Taking advantage of compact building design;*
- *Creating a range of housing opportunities and choices;*
- *Creating walkable neighborhoods;*
- *Fostering distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place;*
- *Strengthening and directing development towards existing communities;*
- *Providing a variety of transportation choices; and*
- *Making development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.*

Many of the principles introduced in this section relate to the guiding principles established by Rosenberg's planning stakeholders (see page 1.25). Applied over the long-term, smart growth principles can add value to Rosenberg because they are fiscally responsible. Compact development patterns reduce the length and size of public infrastructure networks – and thus, public obligations. More water and sewer taps in

a confined area mean greater revenues, and the expedient retirement of municipal debt. A smaller infrastructure network also means less to maintain. Fewer maintenance obligations allow a community to focus on enhancing key community facilities and amenities. Desirable amenities help private property in an area retain value. These and other subtle correlations between the application of smart-growth principles, and long-term community resiliency and value, legitimize the value of creating a community-wide land use and development policy.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

While there exist across all jurisdictions consistent community benefits for engaging in a comprehensive planning process, the motivations for initiating such an exercise can be as numerous and diverse as each participating city, town or county.

The four chapters of *Rosenberg 2035* provide a framework for what topics must be evaluated in order to plan for City growth patterns that are coordinated and fiscally sound. Identifying these standard topics does not however, provide the citizens of Rosenberg with answers to "how" the City will promote growth and development patterns that are consistent with Plan goals, strategies and actions. How will we know that growth patterns reflect the principles we value as a community? How should new infrastructure investments be prioritized? How will we redevelop our neighborhoods in an aesthetically pleasing and functionally efficient manner?

To answer the question of "How" Rosenberg achieves its preferred vision of growth and development, stakeholders began the comprehensive planning process by identifying a series of "Guiding Principles" which inform Plan goals, strategies and actions. Guiding principles have been approved by stakeholders for the overarching topics evaluated in Chapters 2 and 3 of the Plan. Throughout the comprehensive planning process, these principles were revisited by planning participants to frame and define the character that would be most beneficial to Rosenberg's future. Continual reference to the guiding principles provided the public with direction and motivation for formulating plan goals, strategies and actions.

ROSENBERG 2035: GUIDING PRINCIPLES.

The following statements of principle delineate the manner by which Rosenberg will implement its preferred vision of growth and development over the next 20 years.

COMMUNITY GROWTH

Principle: Promote growth that revitalizes areas of existing development.

Principle: Prioritize infrastructure investments that are concurrent with new development.

Principle: Incentivize development that is in harmony with natural resources.

Principle: Tie land area growth to defined fiscal parameters.

LAND USE AND CHARACTER

Principle: Preserve and expand unique community characteristics.

Principle: Enhance corridor, district, and neighborhood aesthetics.

Principle: Promote building and site design that is energy efficient.

Principle: Mitigate environmental impacts of intensive land uses and sudden growth trends.

TRANSPORTATION

Principle: Develop a transportation network that provides local interconnectivity and accessibility.

Principle: Design street systems that are context sensitive.

Principle: Provide for transportation choices.

Principle: Mitigate traffic patterns that are incompatible with neighborhoods and activity centers.

IMPLEMENTATION

Principle: Assume accountability for implementation of comprehensive plan strategies.

Principle: Monitor implementation results and measure citizen satisfaction.

Principle: Promote citizen participation in the land use and development process.