

CITY OF SIMONTON

Townhall Meeting

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - 2023



Vision Statement

Years from now, Simonton will be a strong-knit quiet, rural, family-friendly community with preserved historic assets, protected natural areas, attractive downtown, safe circulation for all, and high-quality new development that results in a resilient and unique Simonton and provides a variety of business opportunities.



Guiding Principles

Character

- Promote Simonton's unique identity that embraces and builds on the rural equestrian character defined by large lots, natural vegetation, creeks, and river.
 - Preserve and reuse older buildings.
 - Celebrate community history and traditional events (Round up rodeo).
 - Adopt noise and light guidelines to preserve the rural character.
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Downtown

- Pursue a vibrant downtown that offers desirable economic opportunities while supporting locally owned shops.
 - Create a walkable, pedestrian friendly downtown that incorporates building and streetscape design to create a unique identity and a sense of place.
 - Connect downtown to surrounding neighborhoods and provide opportunities to walk and bike to downtown.
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Land Use and Growth

- Promote high quality development that is compatible with the rural character, avoids sprawl and strip development, and prevents nuisances.
 - Plan for regional growth in collaboration with planned development such as Twinwood and incorporate their anticipated growth into the City's Comprehensive Plan.
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Housing and Neighborhoods

- Encourage single family housing that is compatible with the existing rural character and small-town feel.
 - Discourage large, multistory, high density apartment complexes, in favor of smaller multifamily and diverse housing types.
 - Encourage neighborhoods with high quality development and amenities for the residents.
 - Provide housing diversity and encourage accessory dwelling units and clustered cottage housing.
 - Provide housing in mixed use situations (residential over commercial) in downtown.
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Open Space and Recreation

- Protect environmental features including the tree canopy, open space and wetlands.
- Create community connections to the river and enhance recreational opportunities.
- Enhance community gathering places and strengthen connections to existing parks.

Guiding Principles

Infrastructure

- Plan for infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate future growth and identify locations for capital improvements that protect the City's character.
 - Seek financial support to aid development of new infrastructure and public facilities.
 - Prepare a capital improvement plan that addresses road repair; identify fund and grant opportunities.
 - Incorporate the improvements proposed by planned developments, such as Twinwood, in the city-wide infrastructure plan.
 - Incorporate specific improvements already planned for and/or programmed by the city or the county.
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Mobility

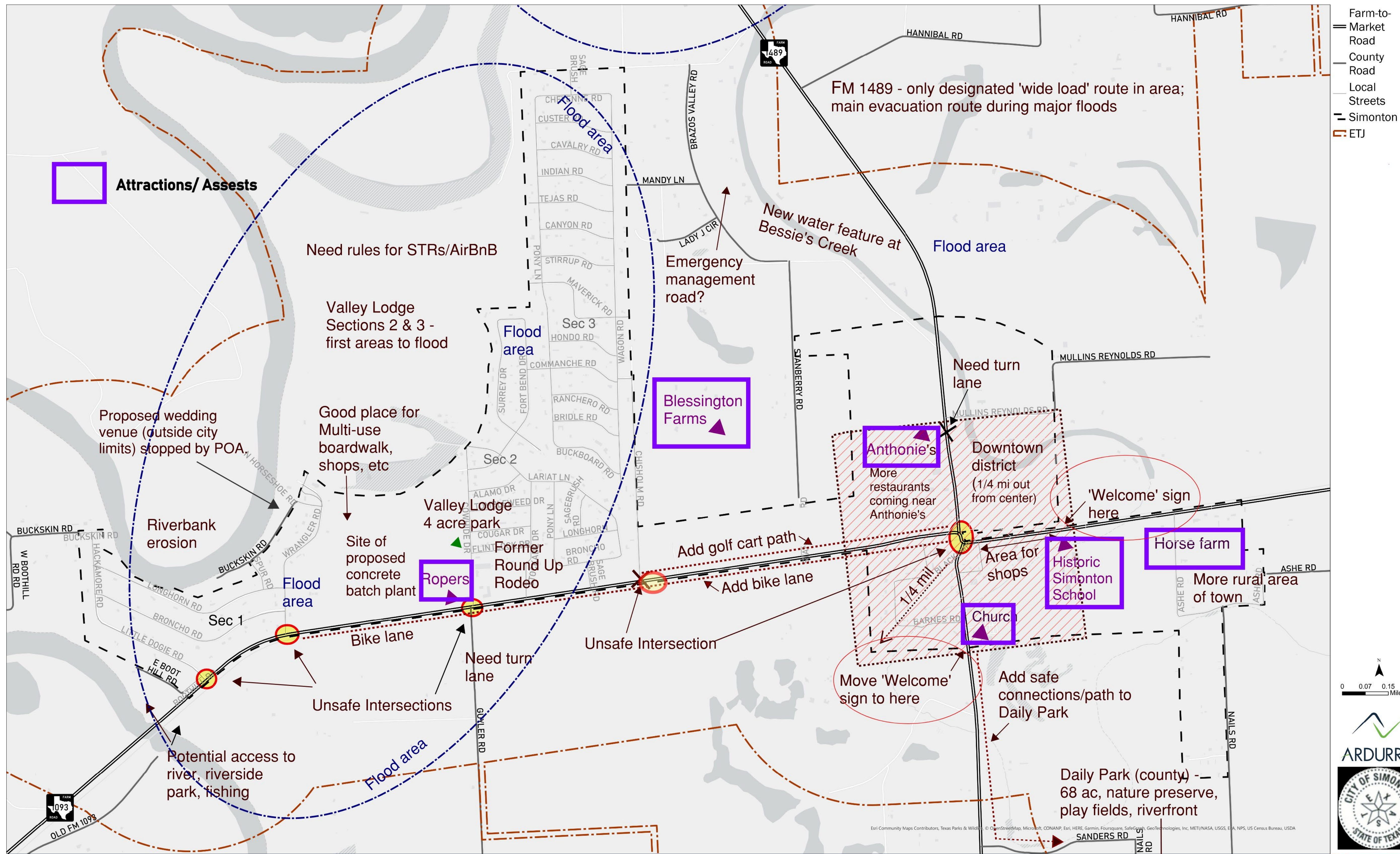
- Establish safe and multimodal connections between residential, recreational, downtown, and other activity areas.
 - Address conflicts with traffic and commercial trucks= on FM 1093 and FM 1489.
 - Evaluate measures to combat traffic generated by growth due to the tollway expansion.
 - Work with County and TxDOT to finalize intersection improvements for FM 1093 at FM 1489.
 - Enhance safety for all modes of traffic on FM 1093:
 - Provide turn lanes at major intersections along FM 1093.
 - Provide dedicated pedestrian and bike lanes along FM 1093 west of FM 1489 and along FM 1489 south of the northern city limit and leading to Daily Park.
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Resiliency & Sustainability

- Seek innovative measures to address flood hazards and protect homes and properties.
 - Incorporate flood control with all new and existing developments to prevent future damage.
 - Plan for emergency management and evacuation routes. Address street flooding and ensure safe access during flooding.
 - Ensure accessibility to all infrastructure, especially to the pump stations during a flooding event.
 - Collaborate with US Army Corp of Engineers to undertake improvements to Brazos River.
 - Coordinate with the county, federal, state agencies, and the Drainage District on flood improvements. .
 - Evaluate the impact of growth under current guidelines and address compliance with subsidence district to prevent future penalties.
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Economic Development

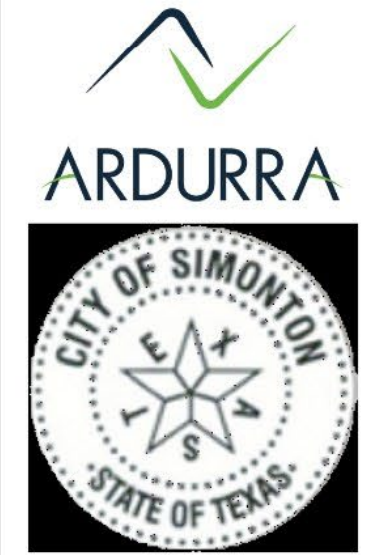
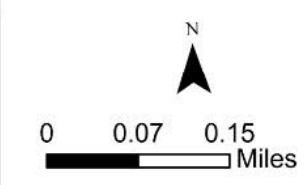
- Examine implications of existing and future patterns of growth on tax revenues.
- Encourage diversity in tax base to reduce reliance and future burden on residential properties.
- Address the importance of the tax rate as a means to protect growth.
- Address impact of flooding on property values and tax revenues.



Summary of Input from CPAC 2

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - 2023

- Farm-to-Market Road
- County Road
- Local Streets
- Simonton
- ETJ



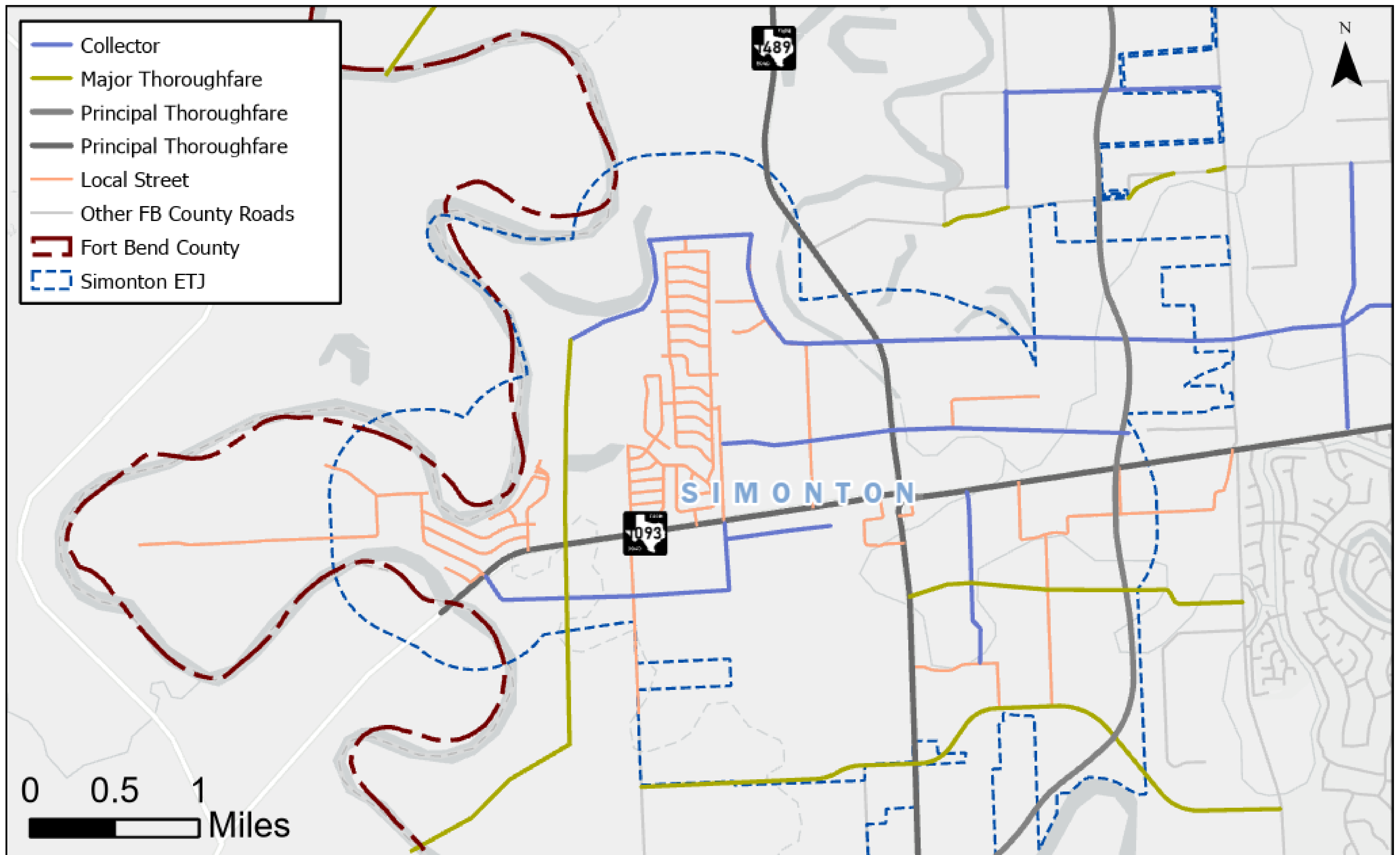
Existing Character Areas



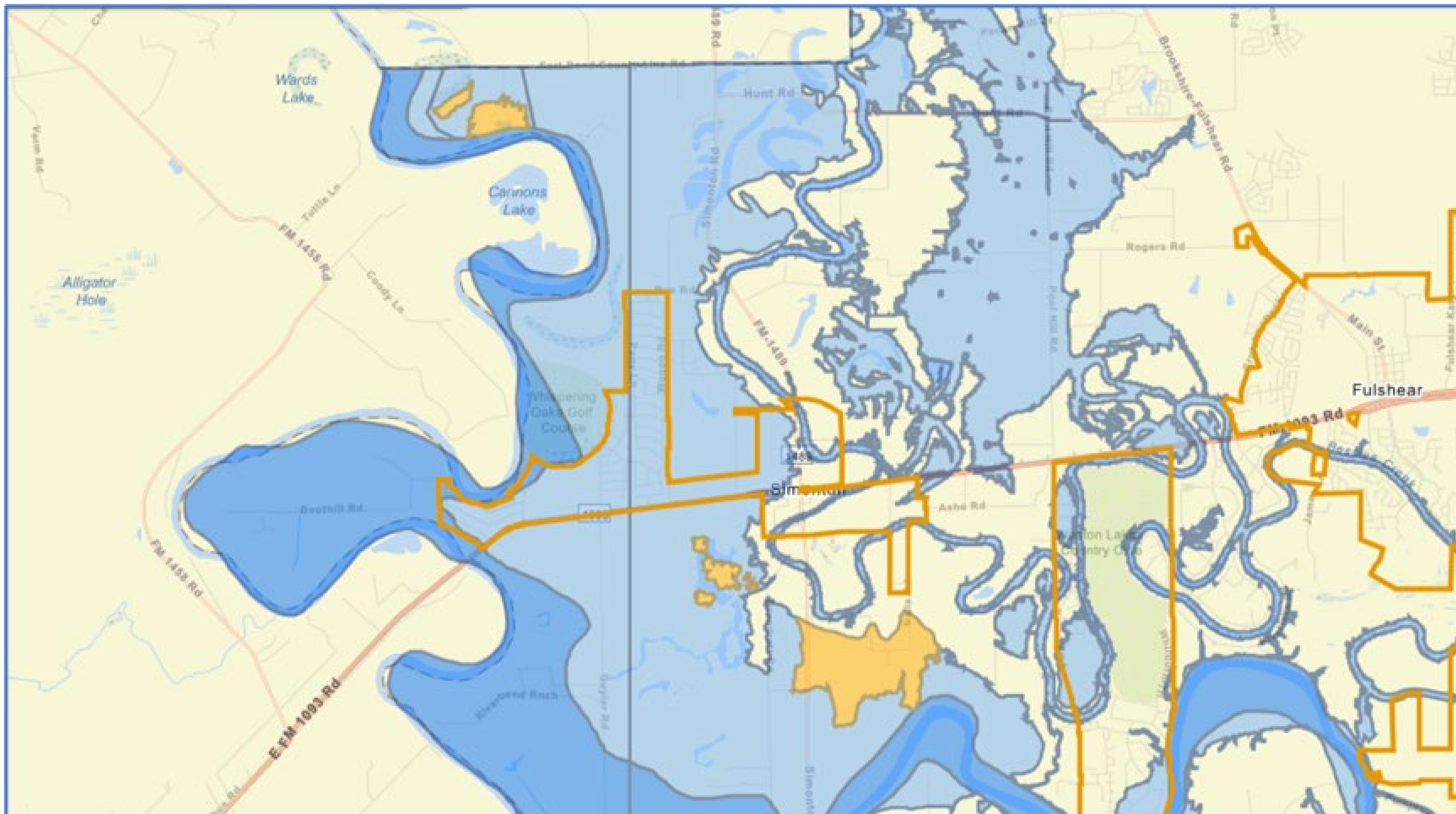
- Rural/Agricultural (10 acres and above)
- Low Density Residential (2.5-10 acres)
- Suburban Residential (0.5-2.5 acre)
- Light Industrial/ Commercial
- Downtown Core - public, cultural, retail, mixed residential
- Corridors (rural character, except in downtown)
- Open Space, Brazos River, Bessie's Creek

Texas Parks & Wildlife, CONAND, FERN, Garmin, Foursquare, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, MNTI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA

Proposed Roads, Classified by Type



FEMA Flood Hazard Zone



Implementation Plan

LAND USE	Action	Timing	Entities	Priority
Consider adoption of a zoning ordinance.	Adopt a Zoning Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	21
Adopt a Future Land Use Map	Adopt Comprehensive Plan	In progress	City	n/a

HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS	Action	Timing	Entities	Priority
Housing				
Adopt enhanced multifamily development standards.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	16
Adopt requirements for Short-Term Rentals	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	14
Reduce minimum lot size in downtown to allow smaller dwelling units on small lots.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	8
Allow 'missing middle' medium-density housing types in appropriate locations.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	6
Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) on all single-family lots, with restrictions.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	4
Subdivision Standards				
Strengthen subdivision design standards.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City, County	15
Adopt Planned Development standards to encourage innovative developments.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City, County	15
Adopt Conservation Development Alternative to protect natural open space.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City, County	4
Neighborhood Protection				
Implement a robust code enforcement program to address unsafe or unsightly conditions.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	21
Pursue funding to assist in remediating-of blighted structures.	Apply for grants	Ongoing	City, State, Federal	11
Strengthen property maintenance codes and consider a property inspection program.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	10

COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS	Action	Timing	Entities	Priority
Highlight and preserve downtown's historic character and sense of place.				
Adopt Building Design Standards for building height, transparency, facades.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	18
Adopt Site Design Standards for setbacks, walkways, parking location, outdoor activities.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	15
Identify historic resources and encourage preservation and adaptive reuse.	Conduct a historic resource inventory	Short-term: 1-2 years	City, County Historical Commission	13
Adopt International Existing Building Code to facilitate reuse of older buildings.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	9
Highlight gateways to downtown on FM 1489 and FM 1039 with signage, landscaping and art.	Prepare a Gateway beautification plan	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, Keep Simonton Beautiful	8
Consider downtown-specific sign standards.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City, Keep Simonton Beautiful	6
Install comprehensive streetscape improvements with wide sidewalks, street trees, lighting, and benches.	Prepare a Downtown Plan	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	4

Implementation Plan (cont'd)

COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS	Action	Timing	Entities	Priority
Bring people downtown – daytime, evenings, and weekends.				
Encourage patios, outdoor seating and wider sidewalks.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	9
Encourage a mix of retail, dining and office uses, as well as residential uses above ground floor.	Amend Code/Adopt Zoning	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	8
Organize and encourage special events in downtown.	City initiative	Ongoing	City, Chamber	7
Allow small residential lots and multifamily housing in downtown	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	4
Provide bike racks downtown.	Prepare a Downtown Plan	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	4
Improve Corridors, Nonresidential and Multifamily Uses				
Require wide buffer strips with trees in front of commercial development to maintain the existing rural appearance of thoroughfares.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	15
Adopt fencing requirements (e.g., white picket) to preserve and encourage Simonton's character.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	10
Adopt specific building and site design standards for corridors, neighborhood services and for nonresidential and multifamily uses.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	9
Protect scenic character and natural beauty of Simonton.				
Adopt a tree protection ordinance to protect desirable existing trees	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	12
Adopt landscaping requirements for new development, including street tree, parking lot trees, and landscape buffers.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	12
Adopt sign regulations to prevent visual blight and protect Simonton's character.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	12
Minimize negative impacts of parking and driveways.				
Allow alternatives to impermeable pavement for parking areas.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	15
Require planting of parking lot trees to provide shade and reduce heat.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	9
Minimize curb cuts and driveway widths.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	8
Provide a community, shared parking area in downtown.	Prepare a Downtown Plan/CIP	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	6
Maximize on-street parking and allow it to help meet minimum parking requirements.	Prepare a Downtown Plan/CIP/ Coordinate with businesses	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	3
Require on-site parking to be placed at rear or sides of buildings.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	2
Provide flexibility to waive or reduce parking requirements to preserve trees and other natural features.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	2
Reduce or eliminate parking requirements for downtown businesses and encourage shared parking arrangements.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	0

Implementation Plan (cont'd)

MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION	Action	Timing	Entities	Priority
Establish safe and multimodal connections between activity areas.				
Adopt standards for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity for all new commercial and multifamily development.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	8
Provide a dedicated pedestrian and bike path connecting Valley Lodge to downtown and connecting downtown to Daily Park.	Capital Improvement	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, TxDOT, County	6
Ensure that mobility options meet the needs of all residents.				
Adopt Complete Streets cross-sections for all streets for multimodal circulation.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	10
Work with TxDOT to ensure that all TxDOT improvements include sidewalks and bike paths.	Policy/Coordination	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, TxDOT	9
Provide for safe school bus shelters for children.	Policy/Coordination/Grants	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, County, School District	5
Improve safety for all modes of traffic on FM 1093 and FM 1489.				
Work with Fort Bend County and TxDOT to finalize intersection improvements at FM 1093 and FM 1489.	Policy/Coordination	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, TxDOT, County	21
Prioritize road maintenance and pursue additional funds.	Capital Improvement	Ongoing	City	20
Address conflicts with truck traffic on FM 1093 and FM 1489.	Policy/Coordination	Ongoing	City, TxDOT, County	18
Provide turn lanes at critical intersections along FM 1093.	Capital Improvement	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, TxDOT, County	16
Monitor critical intersections on FM 1093 and consider proactive improvements in coordination with TxDOT and County.	Conduct annual evaluation	Ongoing	City, TxDOT, County	14
Provide enhanced crosswalks at the intersection of FM 1093 and FM 1489.	Capital Improvement	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, TxDOT, County	10
INFRASTRUCTURE & DRAINAGE				
Plan for floodplain mitigation with engineering and planning studies.	Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation Plan	Ongoing	City, County	24
Prepare a Master Drainage Plan for drainage facilities that protect both existing development and new communities.	Prepare a Drainage Master Plan	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	20
Identify appropriate locations for capital improvements that protect and enhance the City's character.	Prepare Infrastructure Master Plan	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	20
Adopt impact fees for water, wastewater, and drainage for new development as a source of funding.	Review and adopt a new fee structure	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	19
Prepare design and construction standards for all new infrastructure, including water, wastewater, and drainage systems to ensure that all areas of the city meet same infrastructure standards.	Review and update design and construction standards	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	15
Prepare an Infrastructure Master Plan that addresses water and wastewater infrastructure needs for the City and ETJ, and incorporate Twinwood and planned improvements.	Prepare Infrastructure Master Plan	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	13
Make regular updates to the city's fee schedule.	Ongoing	Ongoing	City	13
Seek financial support to aid development of new infrastructure and public facilities.	Policy/Grants	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	10
Allow existing residents the option to remain on well and septic.	Amend Code/Policy	Ongoing	City	10
Consider Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs) to provide infrastructure for new communities.	City Policy	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	9
Require curb and gutter infrastructure for new development, except where an open ditch system is appropriate to preserve and enhance the rural character.	Amend Subdivision Code	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	1

Implementation Plan (cont'd)

RESILIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY	Action	Timing	Entities	Priority
Update the Hazard Mitigation Plan for the City and ETJ as needed, including educating the community.	Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation Plan	Ongoing	City, County	18
Implement erosion countermeasures, such as those discussed in the Huitt-Zollars Brazos River Simonton Cutoff project, in riverbank areas susceptible to erosion.	Capital Improvement/Coordination	Long-term: 6-10 years	City, County, State	15
Mitigate heat island effects caused by development by integrating sustainable strategies, such as limiting paved areas and increasing shade, especially along streets, sidewalks, trails and parking areas.	Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	14
Collaborate with US Army Corp of Engineers, the Brazos River Authority and Fort Bend County to undertake improvements to Brazos River.	Policy/Coordination	Long-term: 6-10 years	City, County, State, Federal	12
Coordinate with the county, federal, state agencies, and the Drainage District on flood improvements.	Policy/Coordination	Ongoing	City, County, State, Federal	12
Conduct studies to understand species of interest in the area and take caution to not disrupt the habitat of threatened and endangered species through development.	Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation Plan	Long-term: 6-10 years	City, County	9
Perform a wetland study to identify wetlands in the City and surrounding areas that are being developed, differentiating regulated wetlands and non-regulated wetlands.	Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation Plan	Long-term: 6-10 years	City, County	9
Incorporate resiliency and sustainability measures in all land use and infrastructure decisions, including all Master Plans.	Policy/Amend Code	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	8
Incorporate externalities, both negative and positive, into the lifecycle cost analysis of projects to ensure they are providing positive value both today, and in the future.	Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation Plan	Ongoing	City	5
Investigate the feasibility of requiring Envision or LEED certified public and private projects for developments over a determined construction value.	Policy	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	5
Coordinate with the Brazos River Authority regarding the Allen's Creek Reservoir project as a potential water supply for new development.	Policy/Coordination	Long-term: 6-10 years	City, County, State	-1

PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES	Action	Timing	Entities	Priority
Parks, Trails and Open Space				
Review park dedication requirements for new subdivisions to ensure they are adequate and have connectivity.	Amend Subdivision Code	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	17
Develop a 'pocket park' or public plaza downtown for community gatherings and events.	Capital improvement	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	12
Explore safe ways to access the Brazos River for active and passive recreation, such as fishing, birdwatching, trails, an open space greenway and scenic viewpoints.	Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan	Long-term: 6-10 years	City, County	10
Plan a comprehensive system of shared use paths for safe walking and biking to connect all areas of the city and to provide residents with recreational opportunities as well as safer circulation.	Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	6
Trees				
Adopt a tree preservation ordinance to protect desirable trees and mitigate for trees that are removed.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	17
Require planting of shade trees along streets, trails and in parking areas to beautify city and mitigate heat.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	16
Restrict tree clearance for development purposes prior to issuance of all development permits.	Amend Code	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	15
Encourage tree-planting community events (ex. Trees for Houston)	City Initiative	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, Keep Simonton Beautiful	14

Implementation Plan (cont'd)

PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES	Action	Timing	Entities	Priority
Cultural Activities & Facilities				
Consider reviving the "Round-up Rodeo" and working with local farms and businesses to support festivals, such as Blessington Farms' Fall Festival.	City Initiative	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, Chamber, Keep Simonton Beautiful	17
Explore opportunities to activate downtown and organize events in downtown.	City Initiative	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, Chamber, Keep Simonton Beautiful	15
Develop a Community Center for residents.	Capital Improvement	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	13
Prepare a strategic plan to address tourism opportunities.	Prepare an Arts and Cultural Plan	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, Chamber, Keep Simonton Beautiful	11
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT				
Maintain a good working relationship with Twinwood to allow opportunities to meet specific city needs or interests not addressed in the development agreement.	Foster public-private partnership	Ongoing	City, Chamber	24
Review the city's development processes to ensure they are clear, concise, reasonable and appropriate.	Prepare a development handbook and streamline procedures	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	22
Adopt a formal set of economic development priorities and goals to guide city decision-making.	Prepare an Economic Development Strategic Plan	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	18
Consider using economic development resources to shape and manage growth through public-private partnerships, development agreements, and infrastructure planning.	City Initiative	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	17
Identify properties at risk of removing themselves from the ETJ and cultivate relationships with property owners to help ensure the property develops to the city's benefit.	Foster public-private partnership	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City, Chamber, County	14
Support targeted infrastructure investments to give the city greater control over the nature and quality of development.	City Initiative	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	12
Consider development incentives and assistance for local businesses.	Policy	Mid-term: 3-5 years	City	9