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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024



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City of Simonton Comprehensive Plan 2024

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Mayor and City Council

Laurie Boudreaux, Mayor
Courtney Cox, Mayor Pro Tem
Burns Turner, Council Member
Faith Haley, Council Member
Justin Boudreau, Council Member
Kelli Matula, Council Member

Simonton City Staff

Abbie Ferguson, Media Support
Craig Kalkomey, City Engineer
Erica Molina, Former City Secretary
Janie Willman, Interim City Secretary
Jennifer Jones Ward, Former City Manager
Julie Watt, Finance Specialist
Justin Pruitt, City Attorney

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

Andrew Perry
Angela King
Barb Minton
Brian Jordan
Burns Turner
Chad Norvell
CJ Aber
David Long
Dwayne Grigar
Glenn Plowman
Jeff Cannon
Justin Boudreau
Mandi Bronsell
Stacey Gootee
Susan LaDart
Synda Frost
Vincent Morales

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this Simonton Comprehensive Plan 2024 is to articulate a long-range vision for the community that will guide city staff, developers, residents, and businesses for the next decades. The new Comprehensive Plan contains goals and guidelines for the city's growth, based on a community engagement process, along with practical and effective implementation strategies to achieve that vision.

For over a century, Simonton has maintained its bucolic, rural character despite its location less than 40 miles from downtown Houston in one of the fastest growing counties in the country.

Although an incorporated city since 1979, Simonton – with its wide open spaces, cattle pastures and horse farms, hardwood trees and winding creeks – still feels like country, far away from the urban sprawl. Most residents live on properties larger than an acre and the only public facility is City Hall and Fire Station – there are no public parks, schools, community centers, or libraries in the city.

This plan addresses key questions such as:

- Where does the community want to be in next 5, 10, 20 years?
- What will the city look like if it takes no action now? Will that be in line with the community's vision?
- What road map will help the community reach its vision?



Executive Summary

However, the suburban development that has been steadily sprawling westward through Fort Bend County is now close by, and at the current rate of growth, will reach Simonton in the next decade.

The population of Fulshear, Simonton's next door neighbor, exploded from only 1,100 in 2010 to over 17,000 ten years later. Fulshear's growing pains are a warning of what could happen to Simonton if the city isn't ready. The City's decision to prepare a Strategic Plan in 2020, followed by development of this Comprehensive Plan, is therefore smart and timely.

The purpose of this Comprehensive Plan is to look at where the city is today, determine where the community wants to be in 10-20 years, and identify practical strategies to help it get there. The Comprehensive Plan examines Simonton's housing, neighborhoods, land uses, infrastructure, mobility, and cultural resources to identify assets to protect and recommend actions to mitigate the negative impacts of growth.

Implementation of the plan will help the city navigate through some of the development constraints inherent in its location. The Brazos River – out of sight from most parts of the city – has nonetheless made its presence felt. Over 75% of the city is in a flood hazard zone, and severe flooding over the years, most recently in 2016 and 2017, have caused substantial damage to homes. Another constraint is the current lack of municipal infrastructure other than roads. Simonton has no city utilities, including water and wastewater systems. New development must either obtain permits for well and septic (minimum lot size of an acre) or provide a Municipal Utility District.

Twinwood, the major landowner both within the city and the ETJ, will play an oversized role in how Simonton grows. The City entered into three development agreements with Twinwood in 2015, which establish the requirements for development for Twinwood's properties in downtown Simonton, as well as large portions of the city's ETJ. Although Twinwood's development plans are largely conceptual at the moment, the City must keep in mind that potential.

Simonton will also be impacted by transportation decisions made by Fort Bend County and TxDOT. Two planned highways – SH 36A between Simonton and Fulshear, and the Westpark Tollway extension west to Fulshear (and potentially someday running through the heart of Simonton) – will attract new housing and commercial development, as well as congestion, once completed.

Growth and change in Simonton are inevitable, but by being proactive, the city has the chance to shape that growth in the best possible manner, in line with the community's desire to maintain Simonton's peaceful, country atmosphere and lifestyle as much as possible.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION & AUTHORITY

- 1.1 What is a Comprehensive Plan?
- 1.2 How was this Comprehensive Plan Prepared?
- 1.3 How to Use the Comprehensive Plan.....
- 1.4 Authority for the Plan
- 1.5 Why Do This Now?.....
- 1.6 Plan Outline
- 1.7 Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- 1.8 Existing Planning Documents and Ordinances.....
- 1.9 Community Engagement.....

1. Introduction & Authority

1.1 What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan (Plan) is a document that guides a city's future policy decisions and investments for land use, housing, neighborhoods, parks, infrastructure, transportation and mobility, economic development, community facilities and public services.

The Texas Local Government Code (LGC) allows a governing body to adopt a long-range plan for the development of the municipality, based on the community's goals and objectives as determined through the planning process.

The plan establishes the community's vision of the City, as determined through a robust public engagement process, and makes recommendations for future actions based on that vision.

Unlike a zoning ordinance, which controls the types of land uses and development allowed in a specific area, the Comprehensive Plan is not regulatory. The plan instead offers a 'roadmap' to achieving the vision of the city by guiding decision-making on issues such as public and private land development, economic development, public spending, tax policy, character preservation, infrastructure improvements, and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods. The recommendations of the plan are enforceable only to the extent that the city adopts or amends policies and regulations to implement them.

The **Comprehensive Plan** is a:

- **Vision** statement of the future city that the community wants to become.
- Statement of overall **policy objectives** for growth management, carrying capacity, and service delivery.
- **Long-range** plan to guide physical & economic development over the next 20-30 years.
- Action-oriented, practical **implementation** strategy.
- Decision-making **guide**.
- **Foundation** for future regulations, such as zoning.

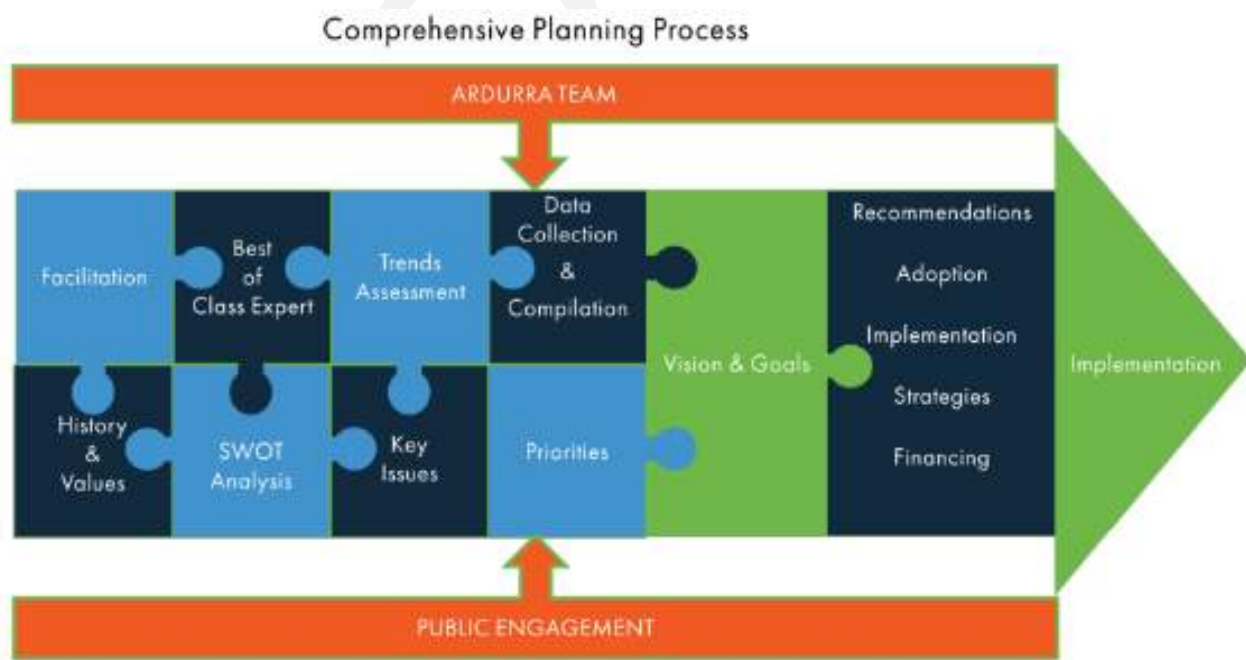
1. Introduction & Authority

1.2 How was this Comprehensive Plan Prepared?

The Comprehensive Plan was created through a scheduled process with detailed methods to determine the community’s goals and vision and develop the best possible recommendations to accomplish that vision.

The first step was to assess Simonton existing conditions, beginning with a ‘deep dive’ to understand the context. A review of existing planning documents was completed, and areas of concern were identified based on public input. Then, current data – population and demographics; current land uses; floodplains; economic and market conditions; infrastructure and capital improvements – were gathered for a full analysis.

Next, formulating the vision and recommendations for Simonton’s ideal future began with a step-by-step method. This was done by coordinating with the City to design the best planning process with a realistic schedule. A Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) was formed of citizens and other stakeholders to help guide the overall process, provide information about the community, and give feedback along the way. The CPAC participated in a series of workshop where they reviewed findings and recommendations and provided their input. Additionally, key stakeholders and agencies were interviewed one-on-one to gather additional input. A policy framework to support future land use decisions and potential zoning was formulated based on this process. Constant communication with the City and regular community updates via website postings were provided throughout the process.



1. Introduction & Authority

1.3 How to Use the Comprehensive Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan provides policy and planning guidance for the City’s future growth. The plan is intended to serve as a reference for all decisions regarding development projects, zoning amendments, and capital improvements (public and private) to ensure that projects help, rather than hinder, the city to achieve the plan’s vision.

The Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide to where and how development happens. It shapes future growth in a manner that will complement and protect the values of the existing community. It sets a foundation for future regulations and guidelines affecting development in the City and the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ).

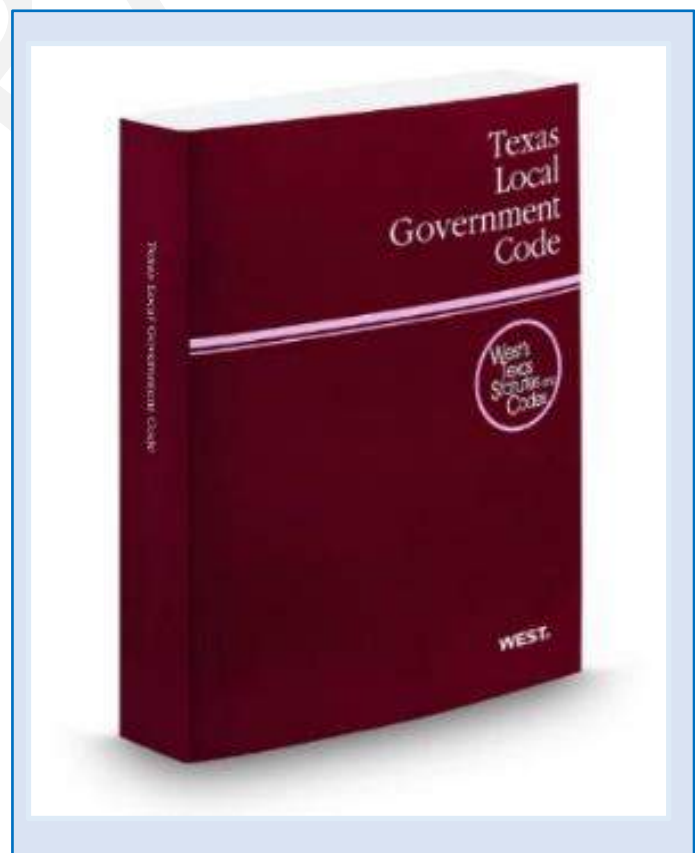
The intent of this new Comprehensive Plan for the City of Simonton is to articulate a long-range vision for the community that will guide city staff, developers, residents, and businesses for the next decades. It contains clear, detailed goals and guidelines for the city’s growth, based on a robust community engagement process, along with practical and effective implementation strategies to achieve that vision.

1.4 Authority for the Plan

In the State of Texas, cities are granted legal authority to prepare a Comprehensive Plan by Chapter 213 of the Texas Local Government Code (LGC). This chapter allows the governing body of a community to “adopt a Comprehensive Plan for the long-range development of the municipality.”

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is for “promoting sound development of municipalities and promoting public health, safety, and welfare.” Chapter 213 allows the city to “define the content and design of a Comprehensive Plan.” Basic recommendations for comprehensive planning are to address land use, transportation and public facilities, but plans may include a wide variety of other issues determined by the community.

It is important to note that a comprehensive plan is NOT a zoning ordinance, but rather is intended as a tool to guide future development, infrastructure and land use decisions.



1. Introduction & Authority

1.5 Why Do This Now?

This Comprehensive Plan is **the first plan for the City of Simonton.**

Simonton is ripe for development due to strong regional growth and booming economic development along the I-10 and I-69 corridors. Simonton's rural character, availability of land, equestrian facilities, and connectivity to SH 36, I-69, and I-10 from FM 1093 and FM 1489, make it a desirable location for development.

These strengths can also be a threat. Uncontrolled development can erode the city's character and have adverse impacts on traffic, quality of life and agricultural activity. The recently proposed concrete batch plant in the middle of the city demonstrates the urgent need for the community to take proactive measures to achieve the community's desired outcomes. Increasing congestion, including commercial truck traffic, on FM 1093 and FM 1489 poses safety concerns for local traffic. In addition, the city's location in the Brazos River floodway and 100-year floodplain and repeated recent flood events requires innovative, practical solutions to safeguard lives and investments.

Simonton has taken positive steps to address these challenges by strengthening its development ordinances and adopting a Strategic Plan in 2020. This next step will help to frame the recommendations of the Strategic Plan into policies and actionable steps to guide future decisions on regulations, funding, and the built environment. The Comprehensive Plan will also serve as a foundation for zoning, if and when the City is ready to take that step.



2016 Floods, Simonton
Source- Geoff Graham

Preparing a **vision** for the community.

Creating great **communities** and places.

Guiding the **future** development of the community.

1. Introduction & Authority

1.6 Plan Outline

In general, a Comprehensive Plan analyses current conditions and expected growth, foresees potential challenges, recommends polices for future development, and includes clear implementation steps.

A Comprehensive Plan typically includes the following sections:

- Future Land Uses
- Community Image & Character
- Infrastructure & Utility Analysis
- Parks, Trails, and Community Facilities
- Economic Development
- Housing & Neighborhood Character
- Multimodal Circulation & Connectivity
- Implementation Strategy

Future Land Uses

Includes a map demonstrating where various uses, such as industrial, residential, and commercial uses, should be located throughout the city.

Community Image & Character

Articulates the vision, identifies elements to create a sense of place, foster a strong community fabric, and celebrate history and culture.

Parks, Trails and Community Facilities

Includes preservation of open space and natural elements, and active and passive outdoor recreational uses, including public and private spaces that provide options for an active lifestyle and/or communal events.

Economic Development

Provides a foundation of the city's economic development efforts as well as the regional growth projections impacting Simonton.

Housing & Neighborhood Character

Reviews existing neighborhoods and housing to identify measure to preserve neighborhood character and direct growth.

Multimodal Circulation & Connectivity

Provides as a guide for road networks, pedestrian and bicycle paths with recommendations for future improvements.

Infrastructure & Utility Analysis

Identifies development constraints like floodplains, environmental resources, and availability of utilities which determines how and where growth will be like in the future.

1. Introduction & Authority

1.7 Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

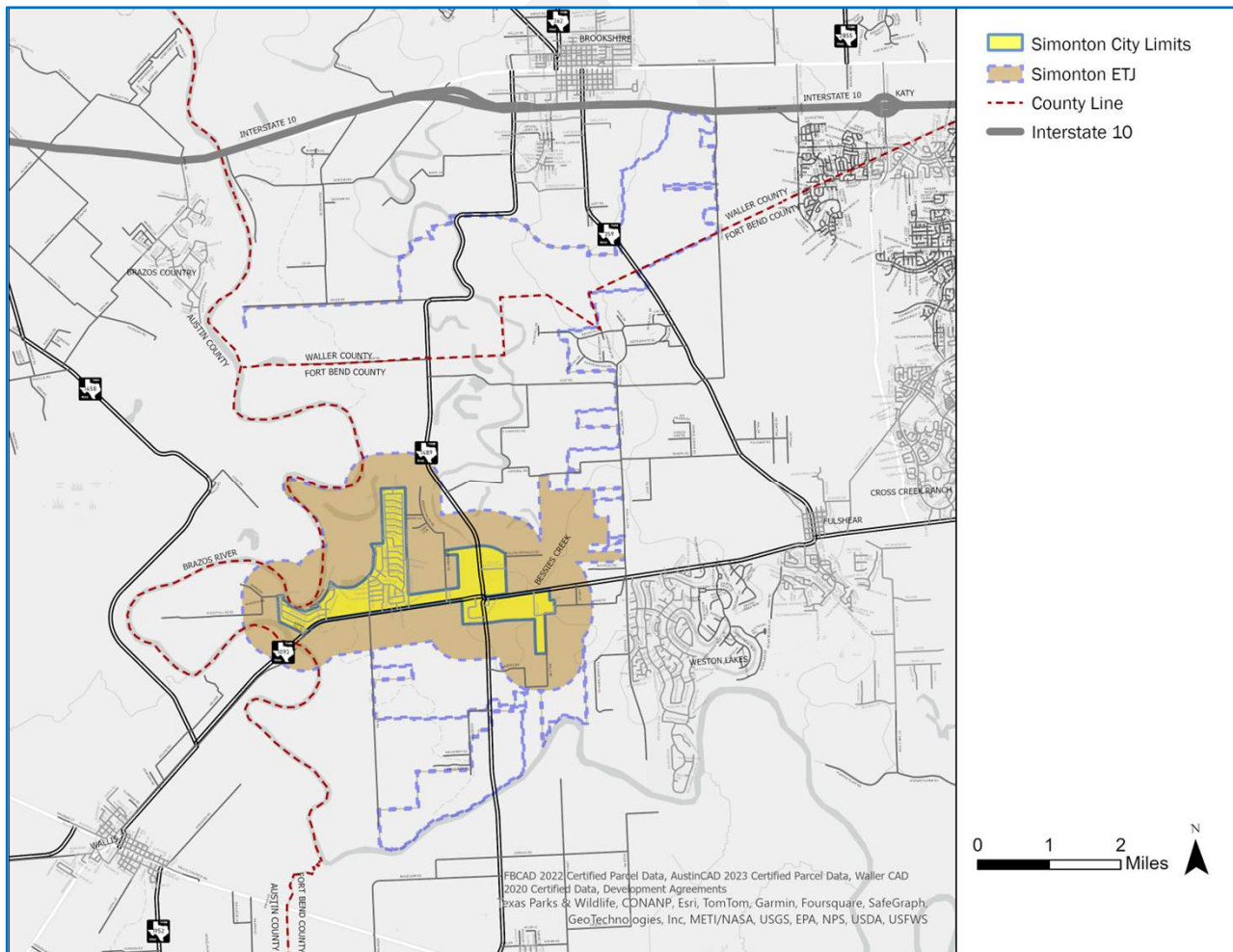
A city's **Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)** is a designated buffer area surrounding the city, located just outside of the city limits. In 1963, the Texas legislature gave municipalities limited authority over their ETJ in order to ensure orderly growth and planning for future service boundaries.

For cities of under 5,000 residents, such as Simonton, the ETJ provided by the state legislature consists of the area within one-half mile of the city boundaries. Simonton's ETJ covers approximately 1,500 acres, mostly undeveloped land.

Land within a city's ETJ is subject to the city's platting and subdivision regulations, including infrastructure standards.

A number of state laws have been passed recently that impact the city's authority over land uses decisions within the City as well as the ETJ. It will be important for the City to track these changes and strategize accordingly.

Figure 1A: Simonton City Limits and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction



1. Introduction & Authority

1.8 Existing Planning Documents and Ordinances

This Comprehensive Plan is one of the first formal planning efforts undertaken by the City of Simonton. The only prior planning document is the City of Simonton Report and Strategic Plan, adopted in February 2020. The city relies heavily on plans and regulations implemented by other overlapping jurisdictions, such as Fort Bend County.

The city does have development-related ordinances, including floodplain management requirements, in their current code.

○ **City of Simonton Report and Strategic Plan**

The City of Simonton City Council and Economic Development Corporation Board prepared a Strategic Plan that was adopted on February 4, 2020. The elements of this plan served as a guide for the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan. The plan is summarized below and the entire document is attached as Appendix 4.

Vision Elements

- A safe community.
- Maintain high property values.
- Open and public spaces available to the citizens.
- Maintain the lower density we currently enjoy.
- An attractive community
 - No billboards.
 - Well-kept properties.
 - Nice buildings and places.
 - Community events.
- Beautification of the city – landscapes, parks, etc.
- Sustainable small businesses (no “big box” retail, no concrete jungles)
- Look different than other suburban neighbors.
- Identify and establish desirable architectural standards.
- Maintain the small-town character of Simonton.
 - Family oriented.
 - Friendly.
 - Loving in times of need.
- Remain consistent with the rural character of the area.

1. Introduction & Authority

Mission Elements

- Host community events.
- Maintain a professional and knowledgeable staff.
- Be efficient in planning and providing operations and projects.
- Establish regulations to meet the vision.
- Be good stewards of the citizens funds.
- Provide safety and security to the citizens.
- Promote the community.

City of Simonton Strategic Areas of Emphasis

- Enable Growth and Revitalization
Strategic Statement:
The City of Simonton will promote quality growth following the established Master Plan.
- Enhanced Communications
Strategic Statement:
The City of Simonton will build relationships through communication, technology & training.
- Maintain a Well Managed City
Strategic Statement:
The City of Simonton will operate in a transparent, efficient, accountable and responsive manner by preparing the organization and the staff for the future, focusing on core services, attracting and retaining the best employees and wise stewardship of financial resources.
- Quality of Life
Strategic Statement:
The City of Simonton will elevate the community's image through visual enhancement and creating a sustainable future.

1. Introduction & Authority

1.9. Community Engagement

It is vital to include people in the decisions that impact their lives.

To ensure meaningful and inclusive participation and to reach underrepresented groups, the Comprehensive Plan process employed a customized approach, developed in partnership with City officials and staff, that included both traditional and cutting-edge communication strategies, as well as bilingual communications as needed.

Community Engagement Methods

City Council Workshop & Updates

- June 5, 2023
- December 19, 2023

Advisory Committee Meetings

- June 5, 2023
- August 7, 2023
- November 13, 2023
- February 29, 2024

Stakeholder Meetings

- Scheduled throughout process

Website Information

- Updated throughout process

Community Online Survey Portal

Social Media Postings

Town Hall Meeting



Source: Simonton, Texas (simontontexas.gov)

1. Introduction & Authority

A meaningful engagement process with all Simonton residents and stakeholders was a key component in the development of this Comprehensive Plan. This was achieved through a robust and inclusive public outreach strategy.

The outreach included the 'Three Es' strategy of public involvement: Engage, Educate, and Empower.





CHAPTER 2

VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

2.1 Vision Statement.....

2.2 Guiding Principles

2. Vision & Guiding Principles



2.1. Vision Statement

The Vision Statement reflects the aspirations and desires of the community and articulates how the community wants the city to look like physically, socially, and environmentally in the future. The Vision Statement guides the policies and recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan for the 10-year planning horizon.

Drafting a Vision Statement was a collaborative and iterative effort between the city and the community; it was an opportunity for the entire community to consider and define what it wants the city to be in the future and how to get there. Once established, the Vision Statement and Guiding Principles were referenced by each element of the Comprehensive Plan to demonstrate how the recommendations for each element achieves the Vision.

Input from the city leadership and Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee was crucial to gathering the desires of the community and to ensuring that the Vision Statement captures the elements that were important to the Simonton community.

VISION STATEMENT

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

2. Vision & Guiding Principles

2.2 Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles represent the most prominent themes voiced by community members and provide a community and value-based framework for the Vision. These guiding principles captured community's values and aspirations and served as a foundation for the policies and actions for each element in the Comprehensive Plan.

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.

Housing and Neighborhoods

- Encourage new housing development that is compatible with Simonton's rural character and small-town feel.
- Provide housing options to meet the needs of diverse household sizes and incomes.
- Discourage large, multistory, high density apartment complexes, in favor of smaller multifamily and diverse housing types.
- Address abandoned, damaged, and dilapidated structures.

Community Character

- Promote Simonton's unique identity and rural equestrian character defined by large lots, natural vegetation, creeks, and river.
- Preserve and reuse older buildings.
- Celebrate community history and traditional events.
- Adopt noise and light guidelines to preserve the rural character.
- Protect the city's mature tree canopy.
- Ensure that new development is compatible with the existing rural character.

Downtown

- Highlight and preserve downtown's historic character and sense of place.
- Pursue a vibrant downtown that offers economic opportunity and supports locally owned businesses.
- Create a walkable, pedestrian-friendly downtown through building, site and streetscape design.
- Connect downtown to surrounding neighborhoods with opportunities to safely walk and bike to downtown.

2. Vision & Guiding Principles

2.2 Guiding Principles (Contd.)

Corridors

- Ensure that new commercial development is compatible with the town's rural character.
- Avoid strip-mall type commercial development fronted by large parking lots.
- Ensure that development along corridors is safely accessible by residents on foot and bicycle as well as vehicles.

Citywide

- Protect scenic character and natural beauty of Simonton.
- Prioritize people and safety over cars.
- Improve Connectivity and Circulation by linking downtown to surrounding areas and make it safe to walk and bike to downtown from other parts of the city.
- Modify parking standards to reduce negative environmental, safety and aesthetic impacts.

Mobility

- Establish safe and multimodal connections between residential, recreational, downtown, and other activity areas.
- Ensure that mobility options meet the needs of all residents, including seniors, children, families and people with disabilities.
- Improve safety for all modes of traffic on FM 1093 and FM 1489.
- Evaluate measures to combat traffic generated by population growth.
- Coordinate with Twinwood to address increased traffic.

Infrastructure

- Plan for sustainable growth to protect the city's quality of life.
- Plan and invest in infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate growth.
- Identify appropriate locations for capital improvements that protect and enhance the City's character.
- Allow existing uses to continue on well and septic, with the option to tie into future municipal water and wastewater infrastructure.

2. Vision & Guiding Principles

2.2 Guiding Principles (Contd.)

Resiliency & Sustainability

- Seek innovative measures to address flood hazards to protect homes and properties.
- Incorporate flood control with all new and existing developments to prevent future damage.
- Incorporate resiliency and sustainability measures in all land use and infrastructure decisions.
- 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.
- Coordinate with 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.

Parks and Open Space

- 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.
- Provide safe paths or trails for walking and biking within the city and to Daily Park.

Economic Development

- Examine implications of existing and future patterns of growth on tax revenues.
- Encourage diversity in the city's 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.



CHAPTER 3 COMMUNITY PROFILE

- 3.1 Community History.....
- 3.2 Milestones of City Growth
- 3.3 Demographics
- 3.4 Regional Context
- 3.5 Schools

3. Community Profile

A Comprehensive Plan shapes the development of a community, and in doing so, impacts the lives of residents.

To ensure that the plan is well-conceived, it must be grounded not just in public input but also in data, particularly the city's demographic profile, which portrays the characteristics and needs of residents. The community's historical context and an analysis of current social and economic trends also help predict future demographics and community needs and therefore can improve policy decisions by the city.

Location

Though only 38 miles from Houston and less than 10 miles from I-10, Simonton feels distinctly rural.

The city's residents are spread out over two square miles on the east side of the Brazos River. Houses and businesses on large tracts are surrounded by open fields and pastures with cattle and horses. Mature shade trees, creeks and oxbow lakes dot the area.

The 1920s Berkman General Store building marks the historic city center at the intersection of FM 1489 and FM 1093. These two-lane farm-to-market roads connect Simonton to nearby towns – 5 miles east to Fulshear; 7 miles southwest to Wallis; 10 miles north to Brookshire; and 16 miles southeast to Rosenberg.

Simonton has two distinct parts: the small city core, or downtown, and Valley Lodge, a large subdivision a mile to the west that stretches to the Brazos River.



Simonton School, c. 1926; Source: The Portal to Texas History



Berkman General Store, c. 1970s; Source: The Portal to Texas History



Potato farming, Fort Bend County, c. 1909; Source: Library of Congress

3. Community Profile

3.1 Community History

Around 1850, the Simonton family established a large plantation in the area, tended by enslaved persons.

After the Civil War, farming and ranching continued to be the main economic activity in the area, boosted by arrival of the first railroad in the 1888. A school and post office soon followed. By the early 20th century, the community had two general stores, a cotton gin and several dozen residents. Simonton was known mainly for potato farming, cotton farming, and cattle ranching up through the 1950s.

Around 1960, over 800 acres between FM 1489 and the Brazos River were developed into what is now known as Valley Lodge. Large lots, typically an acre or more in size and crisscrossed by bridle paths, were marketed as a haven for equestrians. The community also had a club house and golf course. At one time, up to 90% of residents were horse-owners.

The Round Up Rodeo, opened in 1963, held weekly indoor rodeos and dances that drew people from around the region. In 1979, Simonton made the news when Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping's visited the Simonton Rodeo on a state visit.

That same year, the City of Simonton was incorporated, in part to avoid annexation by rapidly growing City of Houston.

With its setting next to the Brazos River, Simonton has always been prone to flooding. However, increasingly frequent regional floods have severely impacted the community, which is almost entirely located in a floodplain. In the last several decades, major flood events have occurred in Oct 1991 (100 homes flooded), Dec 1995 (125 homes flooded, \$2.5 million in damage); May 2016; and August 2017 (Hurricane Harvey).

The Round Up Rodeo closed in the 1990s, as did the Country Club and golf course, and today significantly fewer residents have horses. Simonton still retains its rural farming and ranching atmosphere, even though the main land use these days is single family homes.



3. Community Profile

3.2 Milestones of City Growth

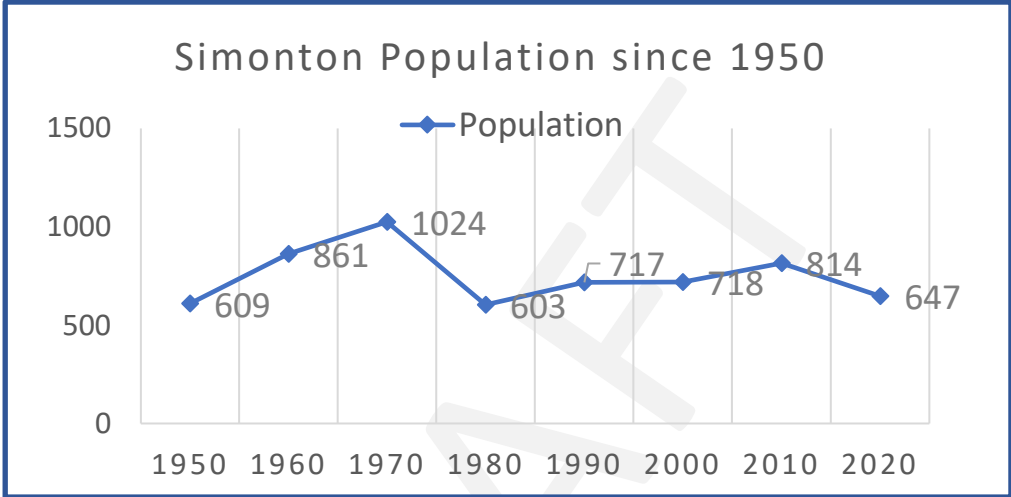
- 1850 – Simonton family established plantation
- 1888 – San Antonio & Aransas Pass Railway built
- 1889 – Prison farm established
- 1893 – First school opened
- 1894 – Post office opened
- 1905 – First potato farm established (Spencer & Mullins Brothers)
- 1906 – Prison Farm closed
- 1910 – Spencer & Mullins Brothers shipped potatoes throughout the U.S. by rail
- 1913 – Major Flood
- 1914 – Two general stores, a cotton gin, and 50 residents
- 1925 – Population reached 100
- 1953 – Railroad depot closed
- 1960 – Valley Lodge platted as new ‘western’ community
- 1963 – Round Up Rodeo opened
- 1979 – Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping attended the Rodeo
- 1979 – City of Simonton incorporated
- 1991 – Brazos River Flood
- 1995 – Brazos River Flood
- 2016 – May Flood
- 2017 – Hurricane Harvey



3. Community Profile

3.3 Demographics

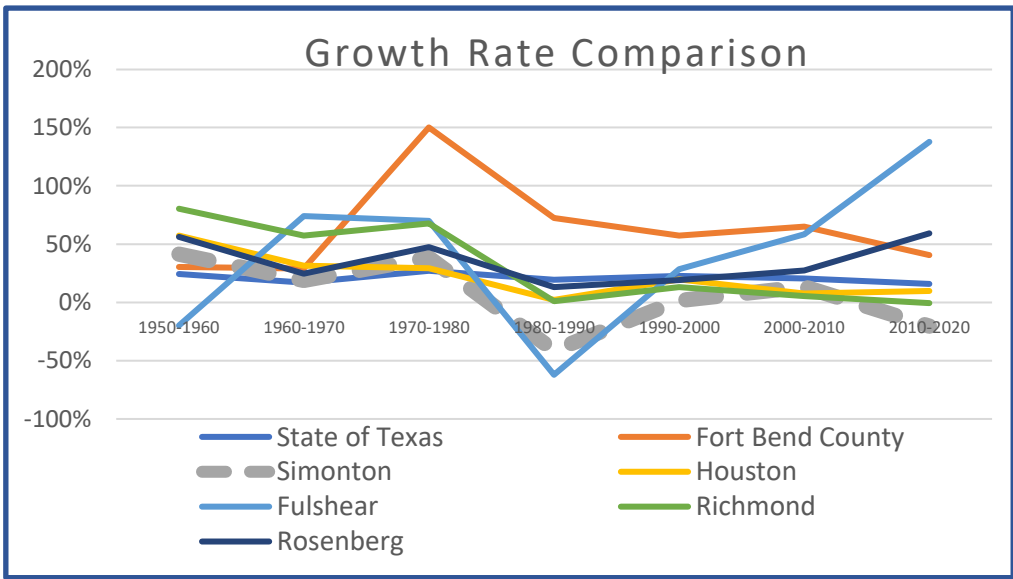
Population Trends



Source: U.S. Census

Apart from 1970, when the Census counted over 1000 residents in Simonton, the city’s population has been stable. In 1950, the population was 609; the 2020 Census found, it was almost the same.

The census indicates that Simonton has had a negative growth rate in recent years, most likely caused by the repeated flooding between 2010 and 2020 and damage to properties. The population of Simonton is believed to have increased since 2020 due to returning and new residents. **The American Community Survey in 2022 estimates the city’s population as 856.** Neighboring Fulshear’s growth rate skyrocketed during the same period and it is anticipated that some of that growth will reach Simonton in the next 10 years.

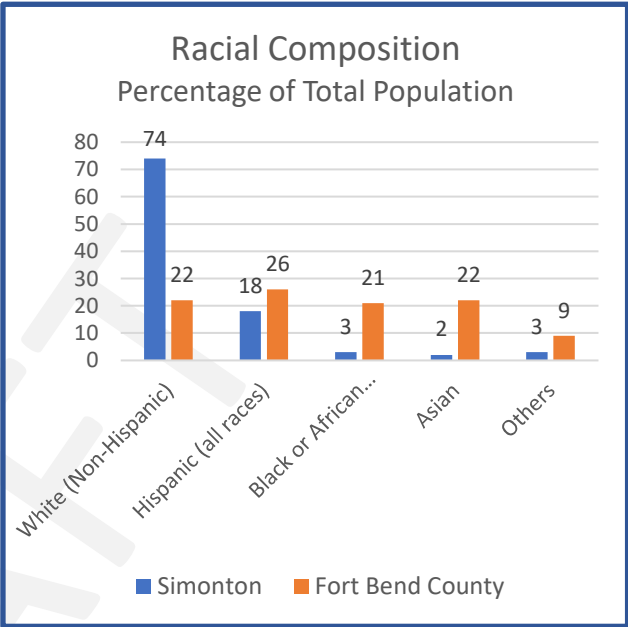


Source: U.S. Census

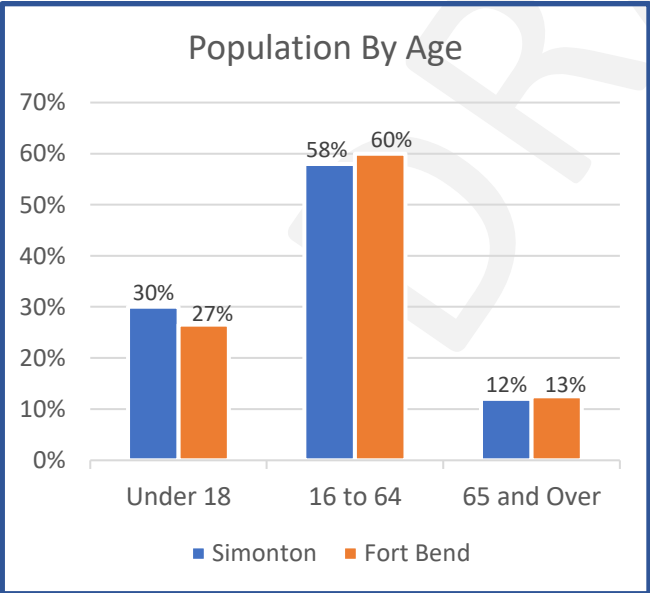
3. Community Profile

Race and Ethnicity

Simonton’s racial mix is less diverse than Fort Bend County overall, with a population that is approximately **74% White** and **18% Hispanic**, compared to 22% and 26% in the county. Simonton has a significantly lower percentage of Black and Asian residents than the county overall.



Source: U.S. Census



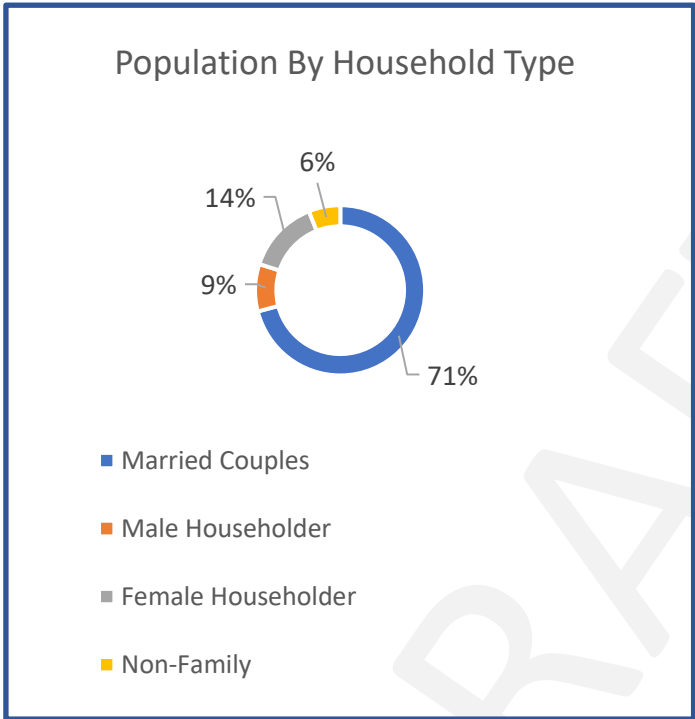
Source: U.S. Census

Age

In 2020, the median age was 35.8. Approximately 58% of Simonton’s people are adults under the age of 65. 30% are children, and 12% are seniors. Unlike race and ethnicity, the age distribution in Simonton is similar to the larger county.

3. Community Profile

Household Type & Marital Status

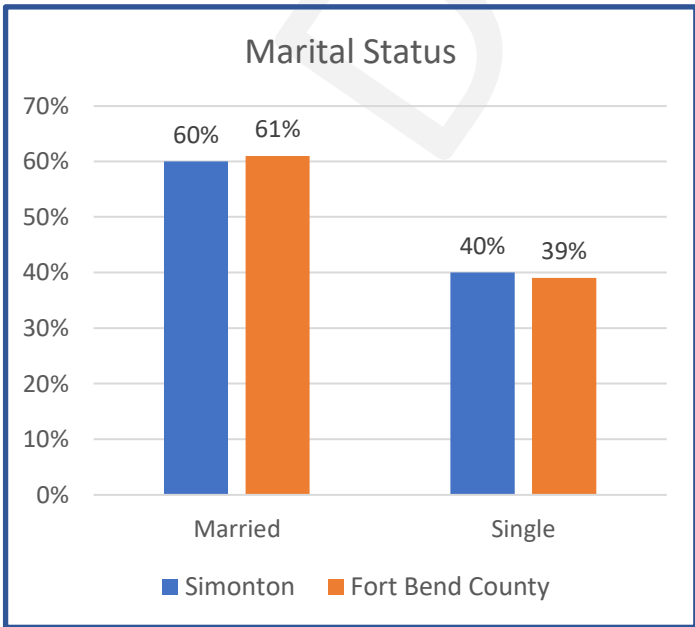


Source: U.S. Census

Household Type & Marital Status

Simonton had 235 households in the 2020 Census. Of these, 71% are headed by a married couple. The average household size is 3.6 persons per household.

Sixty percent of residents are married, whereas 40% are single. Marital status in Simonton is on par with the county overall.

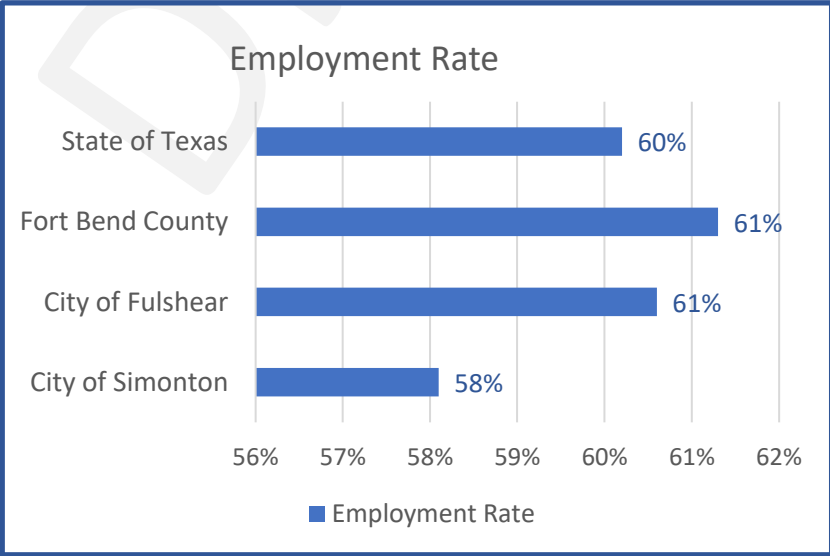
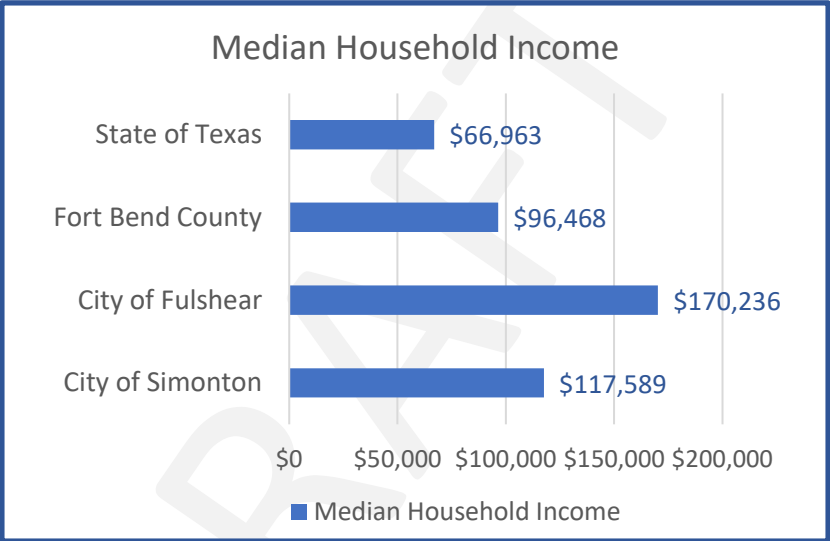


Source: U.S. Census

3. Community Profile

Income & Employment

In 2020, Median Household Income in Simonton was \$117,589, which is roughly 81% higher than the Texas state median income of \$64,963. Approximately 22% of households in Simonton are classed as high-income households, making more than \$200,000 per year.



Source: 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

3. Community Profile

3.4 Regional Context

Simonton is within the Houston-Sugar Land-Bayton metropolitan area. There is a population of about 7,340,118 in the Houston-Sugar Land-Bayton metro area (CensusReporter). There is an average 2.7 persons per household and 61% of the households are married (Census Reporter). Downtown, Houston is about 40 miles from Simonton and Houston alone is the second largest growing city in the nation- adding 125,000 residents alone in 2022, according to the Greater Houston Partnership. The region has a diverse economy filled with various skills of labor in every industry.

Simonton’s location in the greater Houston metro area, and specifically in western Fort Bend County, places it directly in the path of growth.

The Houston-Galveston region leads the state in growth, with about one million new residents added every decade since 1980. The region is likely to add another four million residents by 2040.

Fort Bend County is one of the fastest growing counties in the U.S. The county’s 2020 population of almost 900,000 is projected to grow another 25% by 2035, and to nearly double by 2050.

Simonton’s growth has been stagnant to date, but with urban development now reaching into rural areas of Fort Bend County, Simonton’s growth rate will almost certainly increase in the next decades.



H-GAC serves: 13 counties, 105 cities, & MPO for 8-county metro area (Source: HGAC Forecast Workshop Presentation)

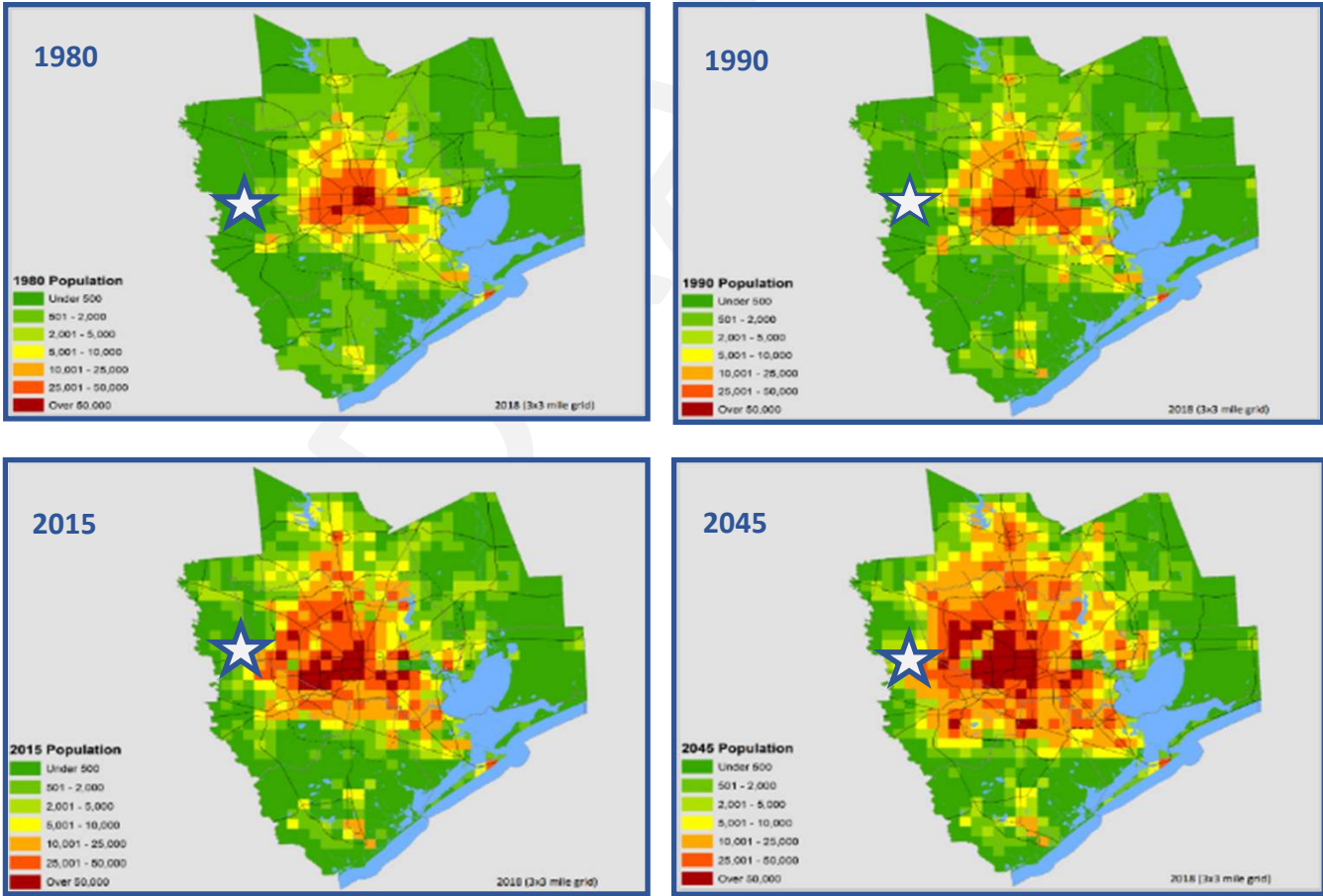
3. Community Profile

The maps below illustrate how Fort Bend County’s rapid growth since 1980 is now reaching into the western edges of the county.

The population of Fulshear, just five miles away from Simonton, grew from 1,100 to almost 17,000 in just 10 years.

Based on this historical pattern of growth, Simonton likely faces a much higher rate of growth in the near future. Any large tract of land available in Simonton or its ETJ is ripe for new residential development.

Regional Population Growth since 1980



3. Community Profile

3.5 Schools

The City of Simonton is located within the Lamar Consolidated Independent School District, which covers approximately half of Fort Bend County and is one of the fastest growing school districts in the state.

Currently, the roughly 200 school-aged children in Simonton are zoned to the following schools:

- Morgan Elementary, EE-Grade 5, 32720 FM 1093.
- Roberts Middle School, Grade 6, 9230 Charger Way.
- Leaman Junior High, Grades 7-8, 9320 Bois Darc.
- Fulshear High School, Grades 9-12, 9302 Bois Darc.

Morgan Elementary is located approximately 3 miles from Simonton; the remaining schools are located 6 miles away in central Fulshear.

According to Lamar CISD's 2024 Demographic report, the district is forecast to add 3,700-4,200 new homes annually for the next several years, with an expected 48,000 new homes within the next decade – many of them in Fulshear. By the 2028-29 school year, the district's total enrollment is forecast to be over 55,000.

The school district is frequently building and opening new schools to accommodate its surging student population. Morgan Elementary is already past capacity, so Simonton's elementary-aged kids may be rezoned to another school in the near future. Although the housing growth hasn't yet physically touched Simonton, it's only a matter of time.

Simonton also has one private elementary school, Simonton Christian Academy, which is affiliated with the Simonton Community Church.

Fletcher Morgan Jr. Elementary School





CHAPTER 4 LAND USE & GROWTH

4.1 Existing Conditions
4.2 Guiding Principles
4.3 Recommendations

4. Land Use & Growth

Existing land use in Simonton is roughly split between large-lot, single-family residential and open space/agricultural uses, which includes orchards, tree farms, cattle pastures, and equestrian facilities. As the county’s spreading development reaches Simonton, land will increasingly be developed for commercial, retail, office, restaurant, and multifamily uses, as well as single-family on suburban-sized lots.

Even without a zoning ordinance to control the location of various land uses, the city can improve the quality and appearance of new development through stringent standards for site layout, setbacks, building size, signs, parking location, tree protection, landscaping and buffers. Without such measures, new development is likely to mimic the strip commercial, oversized parking lots, and high-density multifamily seen elsewhere in the county. Strategic infrastructure improvements and positive working relationships with large landowners like Twinwood will also help the city shape future uses.

4.1 Existing Conditions

The City of Simonton is just over 2 square miles in size and has a large Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), which is a half-mile strip surrounding the city.

Almost half of the land area (41%) within the city limits is classified as ‘undeveloped,’ which includes land use for agriculture. The remainder of the city’s land area is developed mainly with single-family houses on large lots of an acre or more.

The city also has a handful of nonresidential uses – two restaurants, a hair salon, a professional photography studio, a dog groomer, several veterinarians, a large plant nursery, equestrian facilities, and several light industrial uses, most located in the downtown area or along FM 1093 and FM 1489. The only school in the community is a private school operated by Simonton Community Church, which along with a small Buddhist center in Valley Lodge, are the only religious institutions in Simonton.

Simonton’s City Hall and the U.S. post office, both on FM 1093, are the only civic facilities in the city. Simonton does not have a public school, park, or library – residents must leave the community to access these services. Police and fire emergency service are provided by Fort Bend County or shared with Fulshear.

In 2022, the City was able to stop a proposed concrete batching plant from opening on FM 1039 next to Valley Lodge. The lack of zoning in the City continues to leave it vulnerable to unwanted uses, however.



4. Land Use & Growth

Existing Land Use Map

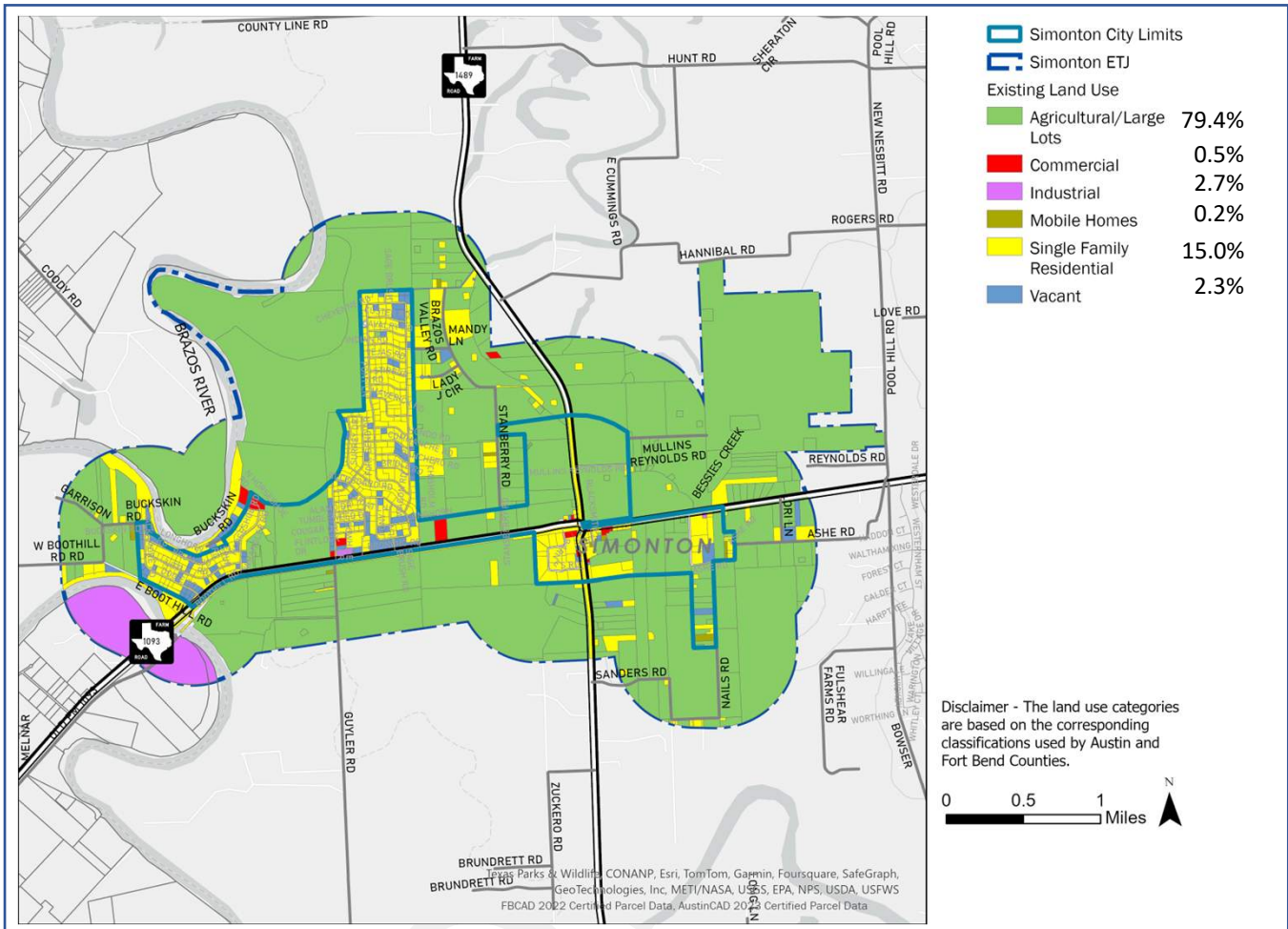


Figure 4A: Existing Land Use Map

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

The half-mile zone around Simonton’s city boundary (see Figure 4A above) is the city’s Extraterritorial Jurisdiction, or ETJ. Although this land is not part of the city, certain sections of the city’s regulations still apply, including the subdivision code and sign regulations. This give the City some control over how land will be developed, including lot sizes and infrastructure requirements.

Almost 80% of Simonton’s Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) is undeveloped.

However, a significant portion of the ETJ is subject to several Development Agreements between the City of Simonton and Twinwood, which establish the rules that will apply to development on those lands.

4. Land Use & Growth

Existing Lot Sizes

The minimum size for new lots is essentially dictated by county requirements for private well and septic systems. Lots in Valley Lodge are deed restricted to a minimum one acre. Smaller lots are located within the city limits, while properties in the ETJ are generally over 7.5 acres.

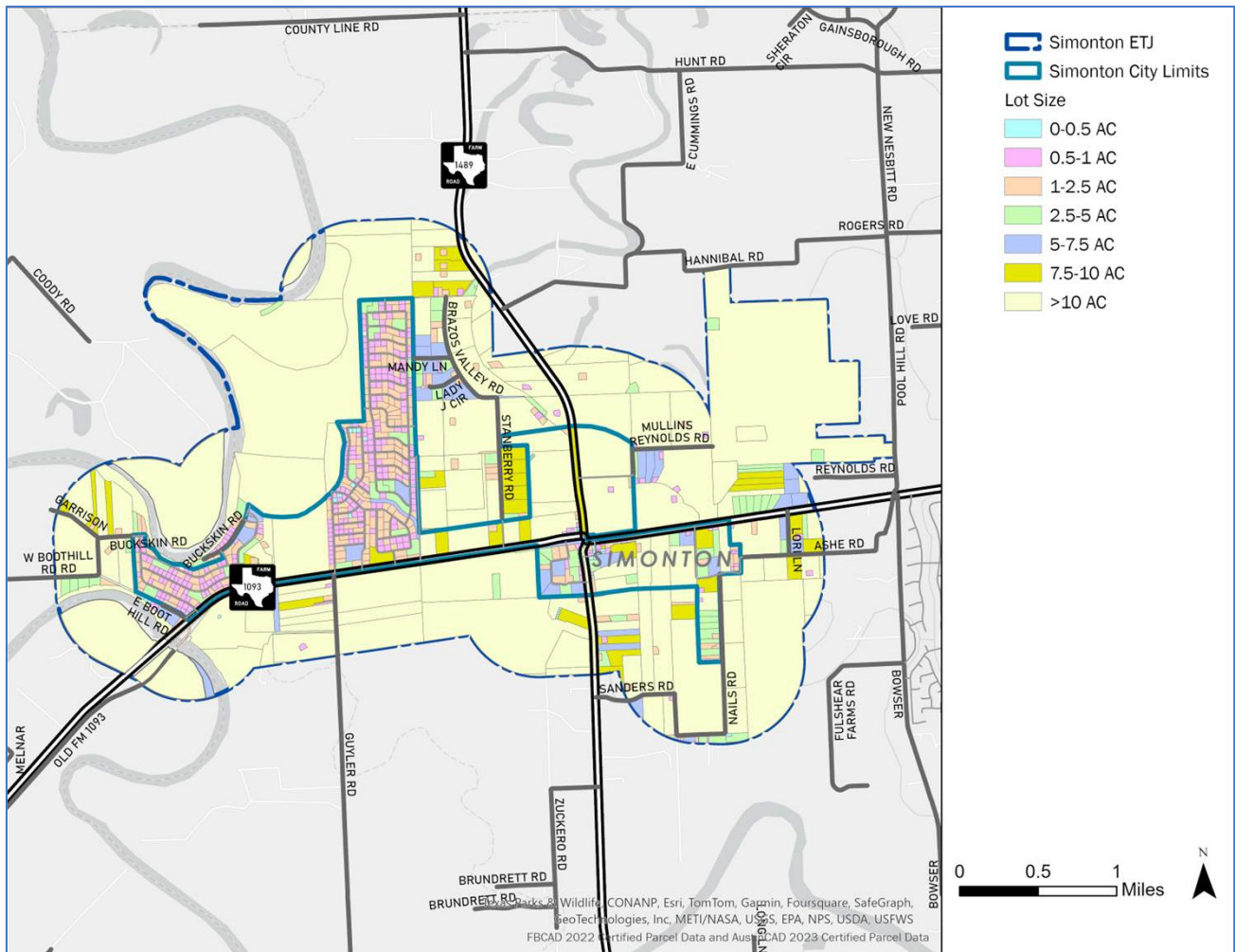


Figure 4B: Existing Lot Sizes

4. Land Use & Growth

Development Agreements – Twinwood, Inc.

In 2015, the City of Simonton entered into three development agreements with Twinwood US, Inc and partners (Twinwood) covering several large tracts of land both inside the city limits and in the city’s extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

1. Development Agreement between Twinwood, US, Inc. and the City for ETJ Development
2. Development Agreement between Twinwood, US, Inc., and Woods Road & I-10 Investments, Inc. and the City for properties to be annexed into ETJ
2. Development Agreement between Twinwood US, Inc., and CBDS Investments, Inc. and the City for New Simonton Village located within the City Limits

The three development agreements revolve around a mixed-use master-planned community of single-family homes, multifamily residences, medium and high density residential, a ‘town center’ type of shopping center, commercial and institutional lands, and recreational facilities with parks and other open spaces.

The agreements stipulate that a “General Plan for the Property” would guide the development. The General Plan is not subject to approval by the City and would reflect compliance with the requirements set forth in the agreements. The General Plan has not been developed as of 2024.

City of Simonton and Twinwood Development Agreements			
	Acreage	Parties to Agreement	Location
Agreement 1	471 Acres	Twinwood, Inc	Simonton ETJ
Agreement 2	2,491 Acres	Twinwood, Woods Road & I-10 Investments	ETJ Annexation
Agreement 3	273 Acres	Twinwood, CBDS Investments	Downtown Simonton

Figure 4C: Twinwood Development Agreements

4. Land Use & Growth

The maps below shows the area encompassed by each Twinwood development agreements in the context of the city and ETJ boundaries. The Twinwood agreements extend beyond the ETJ limits and include streets.

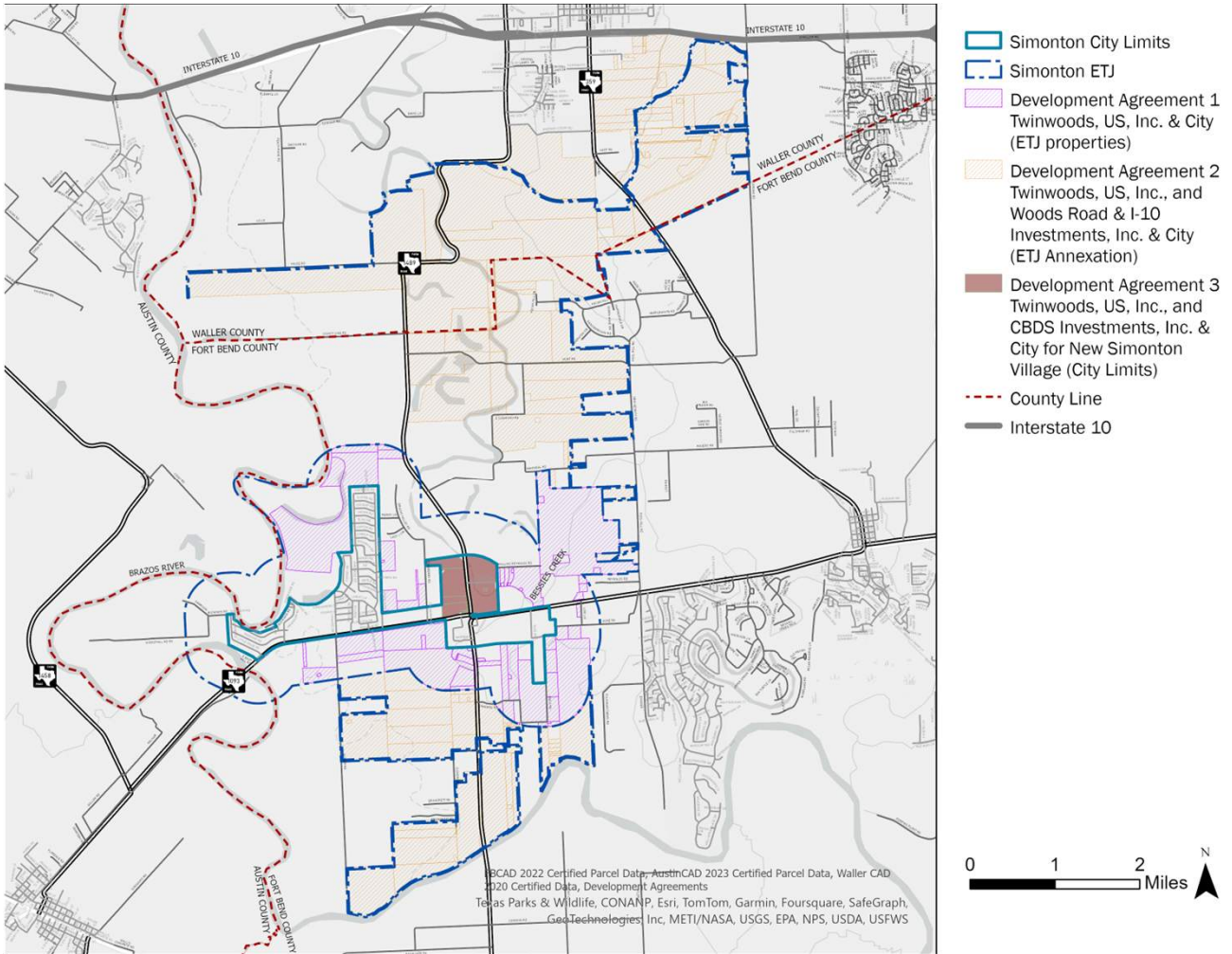


Figure 4D: Twinwood Location Map

4. Land Use & Growth

The maps below shows the area encompassed by each Twinwood development agreements.

Agreement One – Simonton ETJ

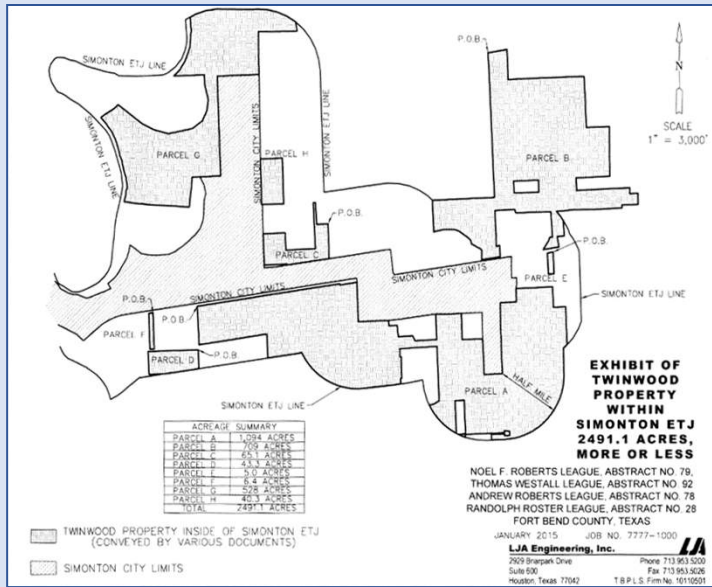


Figure 4E

Agreement Two – outside of ETJ

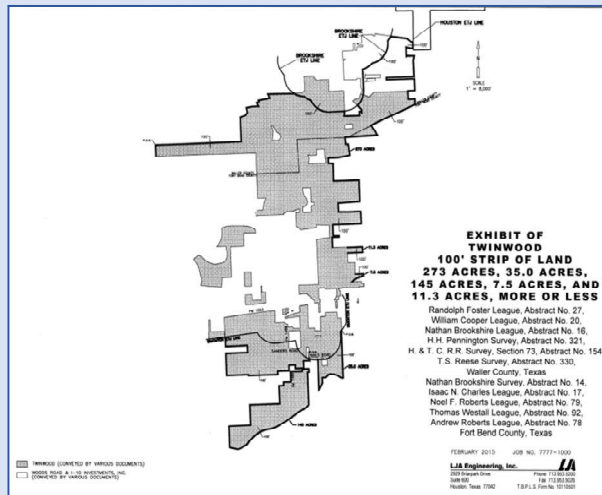


Figure 4F

Agreement Three – Simonton Village

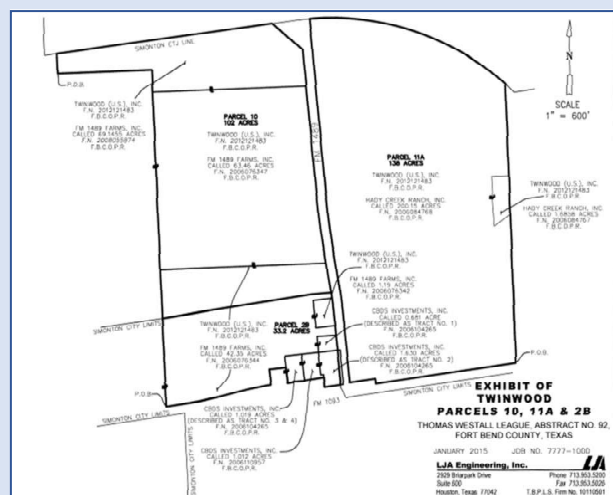


Figure 4G

4. Land Use & Growth

The Twinwood development agreements stipulate that all the county and state requirements will be followed unless otherwise mentioned in the agreement. The area covered by the agreements is exempt from City of Simonton approvals and permits, and requires only county review and approvals. A number of platting concessions are included in the agreement, including an exemption from replatting for restricted reserves; a sidewalk exemption for residential lots over one acre; ability for the developer to apply exclusive development ordinances and be exempt from other city land use regulations, policies, and guidelines; no density requirements; an exemption from updated building codes unless approved by the city councils of 3 out of the 4 cities – Simonton, Fulshear, Brookshire, Katy; and an exemption from city approval of traffic studies (subject to approval by County or TxDOT)

The agreement grants the following variances from county and city requirements:

Twinwood Development - Variances		
Subject	Current Requirements	Approved Variance
Minimum right-of-way width		
Minor Collector Street	60 feet	50 feet
Residential Street	60 feet	50 feet
Pavement widths between back of curbs		
Major streets	44 feet to 64 feet	28 feet to 64 feet
Secondary streets	38 feet to 44 feet	36 feet to 44 feet
Residential streets	28 feet to 32 feet	28 feet to 32 feet
Building Setbacks		
Front	40 feet; except cul-de-sac lots which may be 35 feet	25 feet; except cul-de-sac lots which may be 20 feet
Side	15 feet on each side	5 feet on each side
Corner lots	20 feet on street side; 15 feet on inner lot line	10 feet on street side; 5 feet on inner lot line
		Townhouse products, or other specialty products, may have a zero front and side setbacks
Minimum lot size		
Single Family	One-half acre or 21,780 square feet.	3,300 square feet.
		Townhouse products, or other specialty products-2,420 square feet.

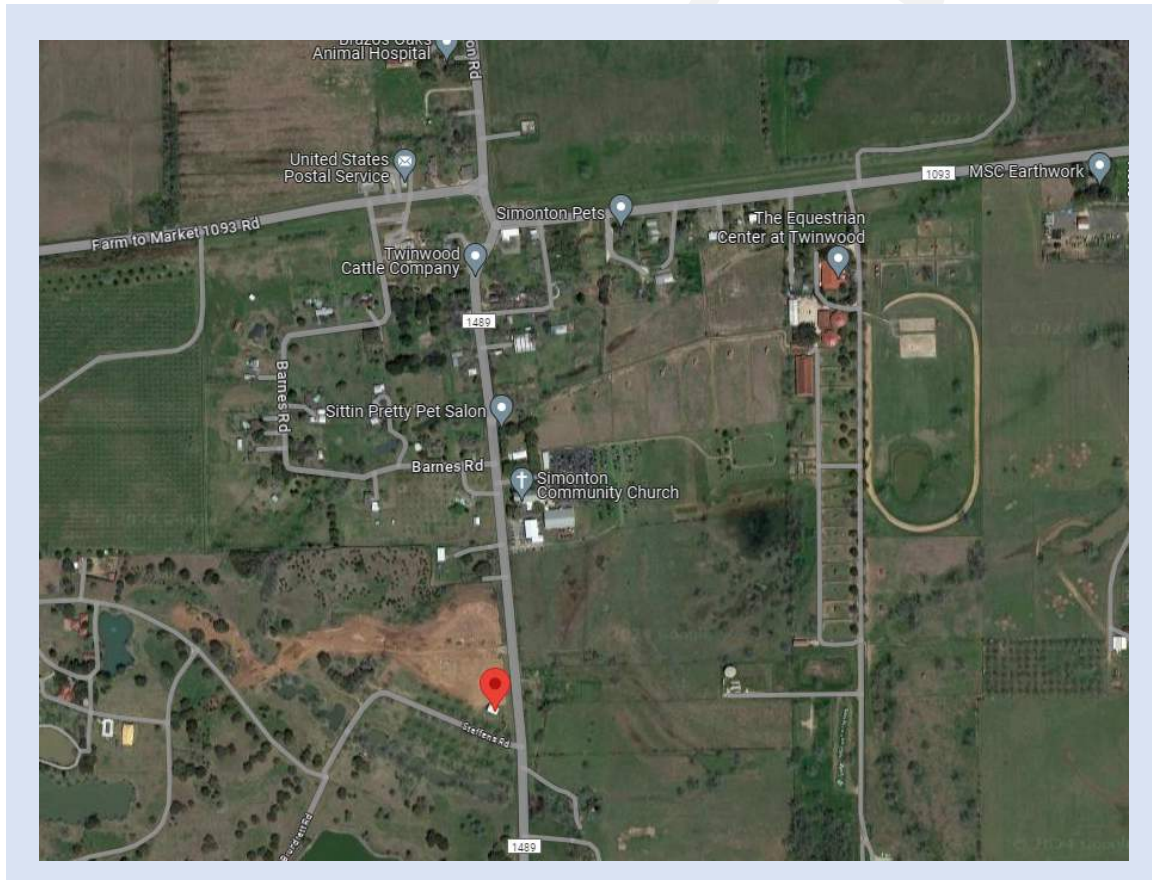
Figure 4H: Twinwood Variances

4. Land Use & Growth

Impact of Twinwood Agreements

The impact of the development by Twinwood within the city and in the area around the corporate limits of Simonton will be substantial. The area encompassed by Twinwood is more than twice the size of the city. There are no densities specified in the agreements. However, based on the average population density of Fort Bend County, and of its biggest city Sugar Land, Twinwood's land has the potential to accommodate over 4,000 single-family homes.

Mixed-use development will be an asset to the City of Simonton if designed in a manner that meets the vision of the residents and stakeholders and is fiscally sound. Without a General Plan prepared for the development or submitted to the City, the impact of the development is difficult to evaluate.



4.2 Guiding Principles

- Promote high quality development that is compatible with the rural character, avoids sprawl and strip development, and prevents nuisances.
- Encourage new housing compatible with the City's rural character and small-town feel while also meeting different housing needs.
- Protect Simonton's large lot, rural neighborhoods from intrusion by incompatible uses or densities.
- Identify appropriate locations in the City and ETJ for denser residential uses, such as townhouses, apartment complexes or small-lot single family homes.
- Discourage large, multistory, high density apartment complexes, in favor of smaller multifamily and 'missing middle' infill.
- Plan for regional growth in collaboration with Twinwood and incorporate their anticipated development.

4.3 Recommendations

- Consider adoption of a zoning ordinance.
- Adopt a Future Land Use Map that identifies appropriate locations for various land uses, such as large-lot residential, low density residential, neighborhood services, mixed use, industrial, agriculture, and open space. The following land use categories are recommended based on Simonton's existing land uses, development pattern, infrastructure and natural features:
 - **RR** Agricultural/Rural Residential (5 acre +)
 - **LR** Low Density Residential (1-5 ac)
 - **NS** Neighborhood Services
 - **DT** Downtown Mixed Use
 - **MU** Mixed Use Corridors*
 - **P** Parks & Open Space
 - **SR** Suburban Residential (0.5-1 acre)*
- Adopt development standards tailored to those specific areas using tools such as overlay districts, subdivision standards, and site design standards tied to the adjacent street type.

** As Planned Development only.*

4. Land Use & Growth

Future Land Use Map

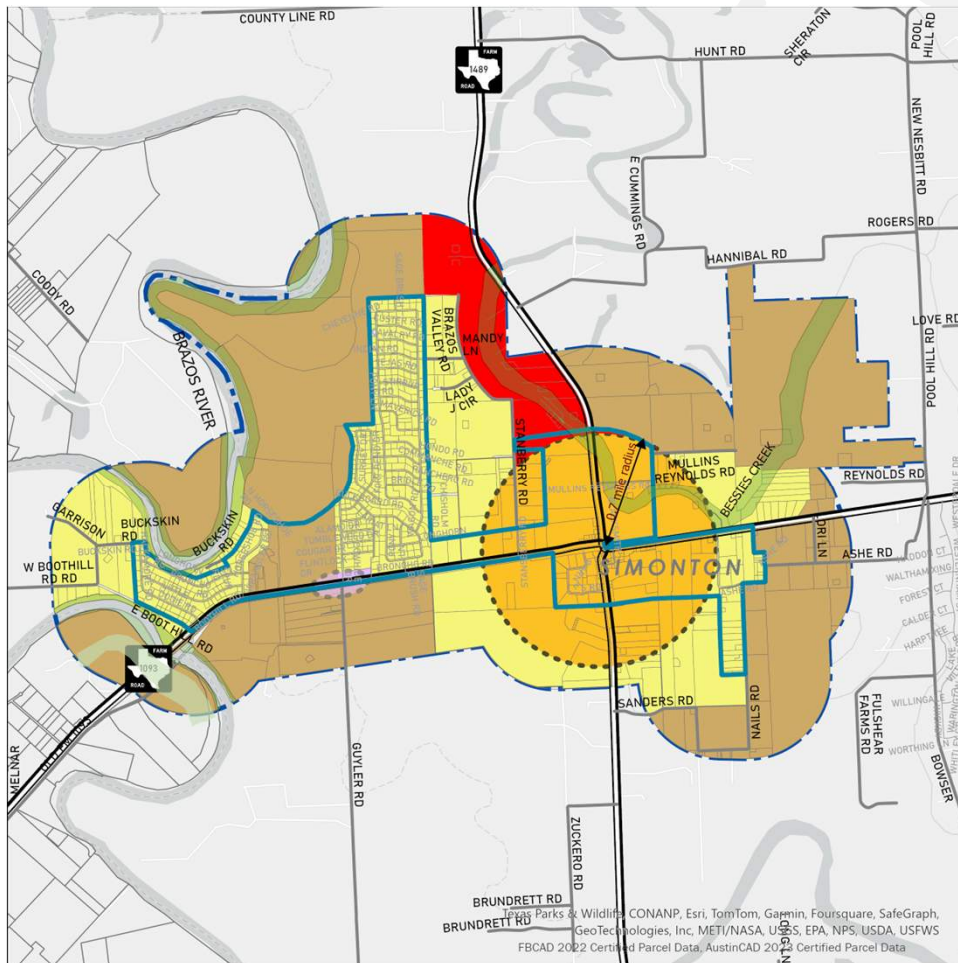
Land Use affects traffic flow, property values, economic development, service costs and aesthetics.

The **Future Land Use Map** shows desired land uses and provides legal support for any future Zoning Map adopted by the City. The Future Land Use Map also guides decision making to help the City achieve its vision. The Future Land Use Map addresses existing uses and the vision articulated by the residents.

Land Use Categories

- RR** Rural Residential (5 acre +)
- LR** Low Density Residential (1-5 ac)
- SR** Suburban Residential (0.5-1 acre)*
- DT** Downtown Mixed Use
- MU** Mixed Use Corridor*
- NS** Neighborhood Services
- P** Parks & Open Space

* As Planned Development only



- Simonton City Limits
- Simonton ETJ
- Future Land Use**
- Mixed Use Corridor (MU)
- Neighborhood Services (NS)
- Low Density Residential (LR)
- Rural Residential (RR)
- Downtown Mixed Use (DT)
- Open Space

Approximate Downtown Extents



Figure 41: Future Land Use Map

Proposed Land Use Categories

- **RR Rural Residential (5 acre +)**

Lot sizes are larger than 5 acres; agricultural uses such as farmland, orchards, pastures; detached single-family dwellings; paved roads; unpaved stabilized driveways; sidewalks may or may not be present; agricultural activities; compatible institutional and public/semi public uses; amenities, open space in new subdivisions; accessory dwelling units permitted.

- **LR Low Density Residential (1-5 ac)**

Lot sizes ranging from 1-5 acres; detached single-family dwellings; paved roads, driveways, unpaved stabilized driveways; sidewalks may or may not be present; agricultural activities; compatible institutional and public/semi-public uses; amenities, open space in new subdivisions; accessory dwelling units permitted.

- **SR Suburban Residential (0.5-1 acre)***

Lot sizes ranging from 0.5-1 acre; detached single-family dwellings; paved roads, paved driveways; sidewalks may or may not be present; agricultural activities; compatible institutional, public/semi-public uses; amenities, open space in new subdivisions; accessory dwelling units permitted. Permitted as planned development only.

- **DT Downtown Mixed Use**

Mixed uses, office, retail, restaurants, entertainment; buildings fronting on streets with little to no front or side setbacks; pedestrian-oriented with building awnings, covered walkways and other amenities; street trees, lighting, sign standards, outdoor spaces, public plazas that promote social interaction; parking located to side and rear or on-street. Development oriented towards to Bessie's Creek that highlights natural landscape features. Medium-density residential with both detached and attached housing (single-family, duplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, zero lot line patio homes, cottage clustered housing, accessory dwelling units) integrated with retail and commercial uses; compact walkable development pattern using existing streets & infrastructure. Public and semi-public uses, religious uses, community facilities, social organizations, government offices, educational facilities.

- **MU Mixed Use Corridor***

Retail, office and institutional uses integrated with residential uses; good connectivity with sidewalks, walking distance to neighborhoods and to downtown; density limits; generally limited to two-stories; excludes more intense commercial development, such as gas stations, auto repair, and other uses generally incompatible with residential uses. Permitted as planned development only.

- **NS Neighborhood Services**

Small-scale commercial areas to serve the convenience and needs of the immediate neighborhood; restricted uses compatible with residential character and environment; location at intersection of two collectors or streets of higher classification, limited to two acres at each corner; residential uses may be incorporated as part of an integrated development.

- **P Parks & Open Space**

Active and passive outdoor recreational uses, can be in natural state or cultivated landscape.



CHAPTER 5 HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

- 5.1 Existing Conditions
- 5.2 Guiding Principles
- 5.3 Recommendations

5. Housing & Neighborhoods

The Comprehensive Plan assesses the city’s existing housing stock, condition and needs, and identifies strategies to ensure that new housing and neighborhoods add value to the community as the city grows.

Almost all existing housing in Simonton is single-family, mostly on lots of one or more acres. New housing developments will likely propose much smaller lots sizes, however.

Stronger subdivision standards, neighborhood code enforcement programs, and medium-density infill housing in appropriate locations, such as downtown, can help protect existing neighborhoods and ensure that new residential development fits in with Simonton’s unique feel and character.

5.1 Existing Conditions

The City of Simonton contains two distinct areas or neighborhoods – downtown, which is the original rural townsite at the crossroads of FM 1489 and FM 1093, and the Valley Lodge subdivision located approximately a mile west of this older section. The remainder of the city is primarily undeveloped or agricultural land, although single-family homesteads are scattered throughout, particularly in the section south of FM 1093.

The downtown neighborhood contains a mix of uses typical of a rural village – small businesses and services, a church and cemetery, a restaurant, and single-family homes of varying ages. City Hall and the post office are also located here.

Valley Lodge is almost entirely residential and is where most of the city’s current residents live. The earliest section of Valley Lodge, Section One, is located at the far western edge of the city adjacent to the Brazos River. Sections Two and Three are north of FM 1489.

When it was established, Valley Lodge was marketed as a ‘western’ equestrian-oriented community with community bridle paths and large lots suitable for keeping horses. Fewer owners today keep horses, but the community still retains an equestrian flavor. Valley Lodge is protected by deed restrictions that limit the community to single-family residences on lots at least an acre in size, although some nonresidential uses have crept in over the years.

Figure 5A: Housing Data, Simonton

City of Simonton Select Housing Data		
Total housing units	308	
Single-family	286	92.9%
Multifamily	2	0.7%
Manufactured Home	20	6.5%
Year Built		
Before 1970	49	27.7%
After 1970	259	72.3%
Median Year Built	1979	
Median Home Value	\$238,500	

5. Housing & Neighborhoods

Existing Housing Stock

According to the 2020 Census, Simonton has 308 housing units, all of them single-family homes, except for two multifamily units and 20 manufactured homes (counted separately from single-family). Almost three-quarters of the houses in Simonton were built in the last 50 years, and the median home value was approximately \$238,500 in 2020. The 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) indicated a higher median home value of over \$300,000.

Simonton's housing units are overwhelmingly owner-occupied, according to the ACS. The percentage of renters in Simonton is only 13%, which is one-third of the regional and state-wide rate.

The homes in Valley Lodge were mostly constructed after 1970, whereas the housing stock elsewhere in Simonton displays a broader range of age and type, from modest early 20th century bungalows to larger brick ranch-style homes, with older homes generally located closer to the downtown core.

Flood Effects

The condition of the homes in Simonton is standard. However, the city's flooding issues are a major challenge to maintenance and development of a resilient and sustainable housing stock.

The repeated flood events have caused significant damage to hundreds of homes in Simonton, including severe floods in 1991, which affected 100 homes, and in 1994, which flooded 125 homes and caused approximately \$2.5 million dollars in damage. Water pumps partially funded through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program helped avert severe damage from a 2015 flood event, but the 2016 Memorial Day flood impacted 224 homes in the city and led to a mandatory evacuation. Hurricane Harvey in 2017 damaged 241 homes in Simonton.

Some residents have chosen to move away rather than rebuild, leaving a number of vacant structures behind. Depressed property values in the wake of the floods, however, have also attracted new families, many of them Hispanic with children.

To prevent further flood losses, Simonton participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and requires new homes, as well as existing homes being substantially improved, to be elevated at least 2 feet above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) in the floodplain. As a result, all new homes must be constructed on pier and beam, with the first floor sometimes 5-8 feet above ground level.



WEATHER

'Devastating' flooding soaks town of Simonton

—

Simonton Mayor Louis Boudreaux took an airboat tour of the town Wednesday for the first time since the flooding began.

HOMES DAMAGED BY FLOODING ALONG BRAZOS RIVER 81° 6:07 **KHOU11**

HURRICANE SEASON PREPS | HURRICANE CENTRAL | RAIN CHANCES INCREASING

Author: Lauren Tostenson
Published: 6:23 PM CDT June 1, 2016
Updated: 6:23 PM CDT June 1, 2016

5. Housing & Neighborhoods

Other Constraints

The City of Simonton does not have a municipal water or wastewater system, so homes must rely on private water wells and septic tanks. Based on Fort Bend County's standards, a minimum lot size of one acre is required for new residential well and septic systems.

Despite the increasing market demand in the area, the lack of a city-wide water and wastewater system or a comprehensive drainage plan, effectively limits new housing development to large lots.

*A minimum lot size of **one acre** is required for new well and septic systems in Fort Bend County.*

Housing Trends

Decreasing Lot Sizes

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median size nationwide of new residential lots in 2018 was 8,982 square feet, or about one-fifth of an acre. This is an 18% decrease in size from the 2009 median new lot size of 10,994 square feet, or one-fourth of an acre.

Why are larger lots going away?

- Price and preference are key factors influencing this trend.
- Land makes up roughly one-fourth of the sale price of a single-family home, meaning a smaller lot can dramatically reduce how much someone pays for a new place to live.

Most residents in Simonton live on lots of at least an acre in size and are protective of their community's rural character and open space. Housing developers however will likely seek to build new subdivisions with small lots in order to maximize profits and meet the demand of homebuyers for lower prices.

Smaller Households

Another important trend nationwide is smaller households. Although Simonton's average household size of 3.5 persons is larger than average and families with children make up a large percentage of Simonton's households, census data indicates that a shift in demographics may create a need for housing that allows residents to age in place, accommodate multigenerational housing, and attract young professionals.

40 percent of all buyers said they'd be willing to settle for a smaller lot in order to afford a new home.

5. Housing & Neighborhoods

Development and Subdivision Standards

Even without zoning, a city's development regulations and subdivision standards can play an important role in shaping the community. Development standards can set limits on built elements, such as building size, height, and placement on a property. Texas law allows cities to regulate land subdivision not only inside the city limits, but also in the city's ETJ. Subdivision regulations can specify required lot sizes, housing density, infrastructure requirements, streets and sidewalks, landscaping and community open space.

Simonton's subdivision regulations are in Chapter 26 of the Code of Ordinances.

Sec. 26-1. - Findings and purpose.

- (1) To preserve and protect the public health, safety, and general welfare, and to preserve and protect property values and quality of life within the city's jurisdiction.
- (2) To ensure that adequate public facilities and services are available concurrent with development and will have a sufficient capacity to serve the proposed development.
- (3) To provide for adequate light, air and privacy, to secure safety from fire, flood, and other dangers, and to prevent overcrowding of the land and undue congestion of population.
- (4) To protect the character and the social and economic stability of all parts of the municipality and to encourage the orderly and beneficial development of the community through appropriate growth management techniques, to ensure proper open space separation of urban areas, to protect environmentally critical areas and areas premature for urban development.
- (5) To guide public and private policy and action in order to provide adequate and efficient transportation, water, sewer, schools, parks, playgrounds, recreation, and other public requirements and facilities.
- (6) To establish reasonable standards of design and procedures for subdivisions and resubdivisions in order to further the orderly layout and use of land, and to ensure proper legal descriptions and monumenting of subdivided land.
- (7) To preserve the natural beauty and topography of the municipality and extra territorial jurisdiction and to ensure appropriate development with regard to these natural features

5. Housing & Neighborhoods

Conservation Development

Conservation or Cluster Development is a type of land subdivision in which residential lots are clustered together on a portion of a site to allow the remainder of the land to be preserved for other purposes, usually as open space or for agricultural use.

Clustering allows developers to attain the overall allowable density on a site—getting the most development potential out of the land – while preserving some of the rural character.

Some of the advantages of Conservation Developments include:

- Preservation of unique or sensitive natural resources such as groundwater, floodplains, wetlands, streams, steep slopes, woodlands, and wildlife habitats.
- Preservation of important historic and archaeological sites.
- Clustering of houses and structures on less environmentally sensitive soils to reduce the amount of infrastructure, including paved surfaces and utility easements, necessary for residential development.
- Promotion of interconnected greenways and corridors throughout the community.
- Street designs which reduce traffic speeds and reliance on major arteries.
- Promotion of landscaped walking trails and bike paths both within the subdivision and connected to neighboring communities, businesses, and facilities to reduce reliance on automobiles.
- Conservation of scenic views and a reduction in perceived density by maximizing the number of houses with direct access to and views of open space.



Conservation Development

5. Housing & Neighborhoods

'Missing Middle' Housing

The community has expressed a clear desire to prevent construction of high-density multifamily projects in the city, which are incompatible with the low-density, low-rise character of the city.

Housing types such as duplexes, fourplexes, accessory units and 'cottage' housing, however, would fit in well with downtown Simonton's 'small-town' character, while adding more vibrancy to downtown and providing housing units for smaller households, such as young adults, seniors and empty nesters who no longer want the responsibility of a large home on an acre lot but don't want to leave the community. These types of units are often referred to as the 'missing middle.'

Duplex



Source: Opticos Design, missingmiddlehousing.com

Fourplex



Bungalow Court or 'Cottage' Cluster



Source: Opticos Design, missingmiddlehousing.com

Cottage Cluster



5. Housing & Neighborhoods

Subdivision Standards

Development requirements for new subdivisions can improve the quality of new neighborhoods and ensure that they integrate well with the existing city. Some examples of subdivision standards that can be implemented include the following:

- Lot diversity – requiring larger subdivisions to provide lots of different sizes.
- Trees – preservation of existing trees and required planting of new trees
- Usable open space – active and passive recreation areas, in addition to parkland dedication.
- Better connectivity – multiple access points into neighborhood to reduce congestion, including safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connections.
- Façade materials – combination of materials such as brick, stone, and stucco.
- Landscaping – minimum standards for trees and shrubs for entry areas, common areas, trails, individual lots, buffers in dedicated easements; native or drought-resistant plantings.
- Fencing – specific standards for fences visible from peripheral streets, such as masonry or split rail fences.
- Detention – wet ponds with fountains and landscaping.
- Community facilities – swimming pool, playgrounds, tot lots, athletic courts.
- Signage - entry and other signs
- Decorative street lighting.



Entry sign and landscaping



Playscapes, community centers



Decorative lighting



Pedestrian & bike access



Trails and landscaping



Detention landscaping



Native plantings



Landscaped buffers along streets

5. Housing & Neighborhoods

5.2 Guiding Principles

- Promote Simonton's unique identity and rural equestrian character defined by large lots, natural vegetation, creeks, and river.
- Encourage new housing development that is compatible with Simonton's rural character and small-town feel.
- Provide housing options to meet the needs of diverse household sizes and incomes.
- Discourage large, multistory, high-density apartment complexes, in favor of smaller multifamily and diverse housing types.
- Address abandoned, damaged, and dilapidated structures.



5. Housing & Neighborhoods

5.3 Recommendations

Provide housing options to meet the needs of diverse household sizes and incomes.

- Protect large lot single-family uses while providing alternative housing options where appropriate.
- Relax the minimum lot size requirements for downtown to allow smaller dwelling units on smaller lots.
- Allow diverse housing types, including duplexes, fourplexes, small apartment complexes, townhouses, patio homes, and cottage housing in appropriate locations as an alternative to large, dense multifamily complexes.
- Adopt enhanced multifamily development standards, such as restricted building heights, minimum landscaping and buffering requirements, and screening of parking areas – to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas.
- Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) on all single-family lots, with appropriate limits on size and location.
- Adopt requirements for Short-Term Rentals to address potential adverse impacts to neighboring properties.



Encourage new housing development that is compatible with Simonton's rural character and small-town feel.

- Adopt Planned Development standards to allow flexibility for innovative designs that meet the goals of the community.
- Adopt a Conservation or Cluster Development Alternative to allow compact, clustered lots to preserve natural open space, sensitive areas, or agricultural land on the rest of the tract.
- Adopt enhanced subdivision design standards, such as increased open space, multimodal connections, tree and landscaping requirements, landscape buffers, fencing requirements or other standards as listed in this chapter.

Address abandoned, damaged, and dilapidated structures.

- Implement a robust code enforcement program to address abandoned or substandard structures, overgrown lots, and other unsafe or unsightly conditions.
- Strengthen property maintenance codes as needed and consider a property inspection program.
- Pursue funding to assist in removal of blighted structures.



CHAPTER 6 COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

6.1 Existing Conditions

6.2 Guiding Principles

6.3 Recommendations

6. Community Character & Development Standards

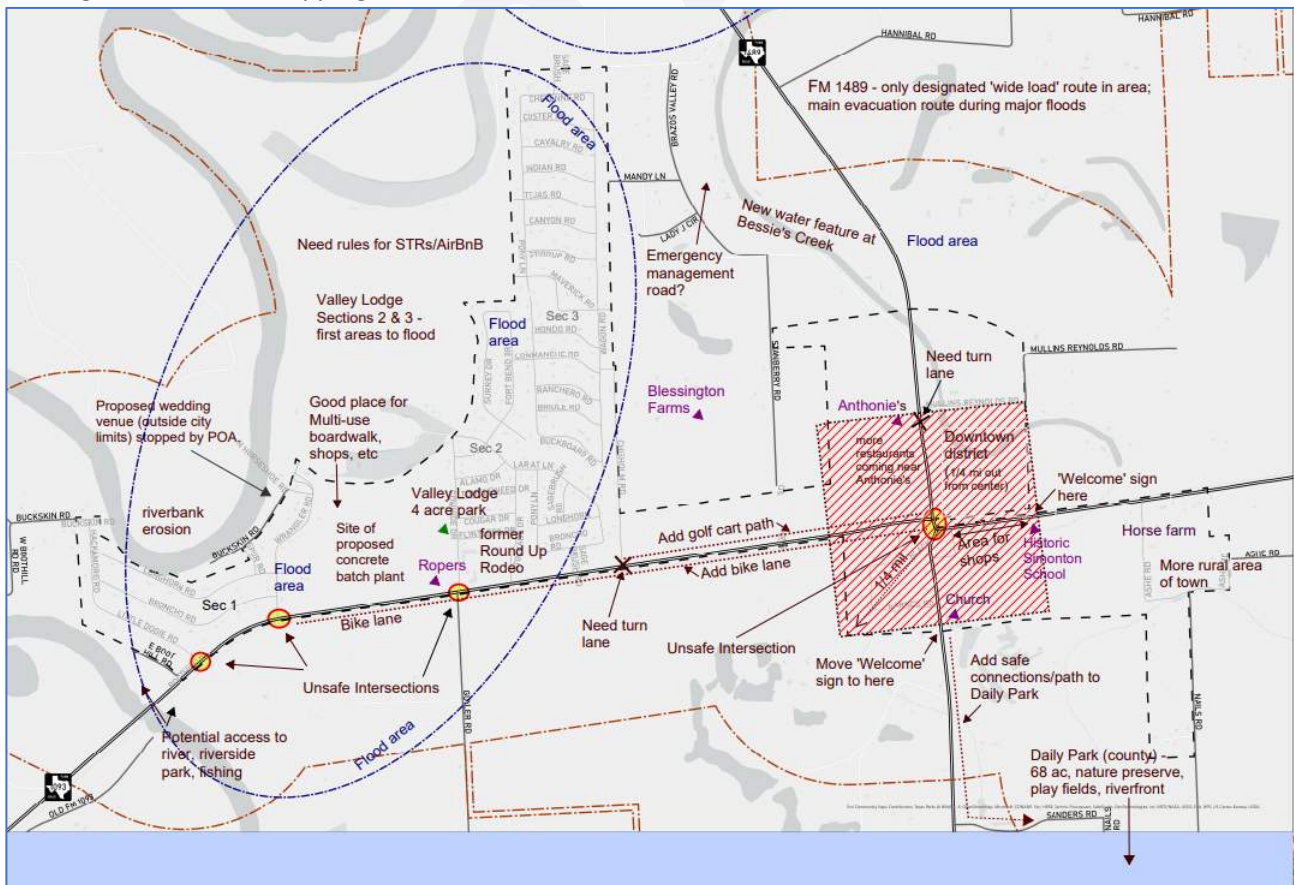
Simonton's character has been shaped by its history, deep agricultural roots, and location next to the Brazos River. Downtown contains a cluster of homes and nonresidential uses, but the remainder of the city is primarily homes on large lots, interspersed with agricultural uses, wetlands and creeks. The hardwood tree canopy, two lane roads, white fencing, and open ditch drainage system further reinforce the city's 'country' feel. Adopting building and site development standards and tree protection requirements, creating overlay districts in appropriate locations, and making strategic capital improvements will all help the city to protect and maintain this unique character.

6.1. Existing Conditions

Simonton's unique identity, defined by residents as "small town feel and charm," stems from its rural character of large lots, natural vegetation, creeks, and river. The city has a historic core located around the intersection of FM 1093 at FM 1489, which contains the historic Simonton School and the former Berkman Grocery, both built in the 1920s, and Simonton Community Church.

Figure 6A below summarizes the input received from the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee in one of the comprehensive plan workshops, and identifies important community sites, issues of concern, desired improvements, and areas of distinct character that have emerged over the years due to the natural features, road network, and regional connectivity.

Figure 6A: CPAC Mapping Exercise



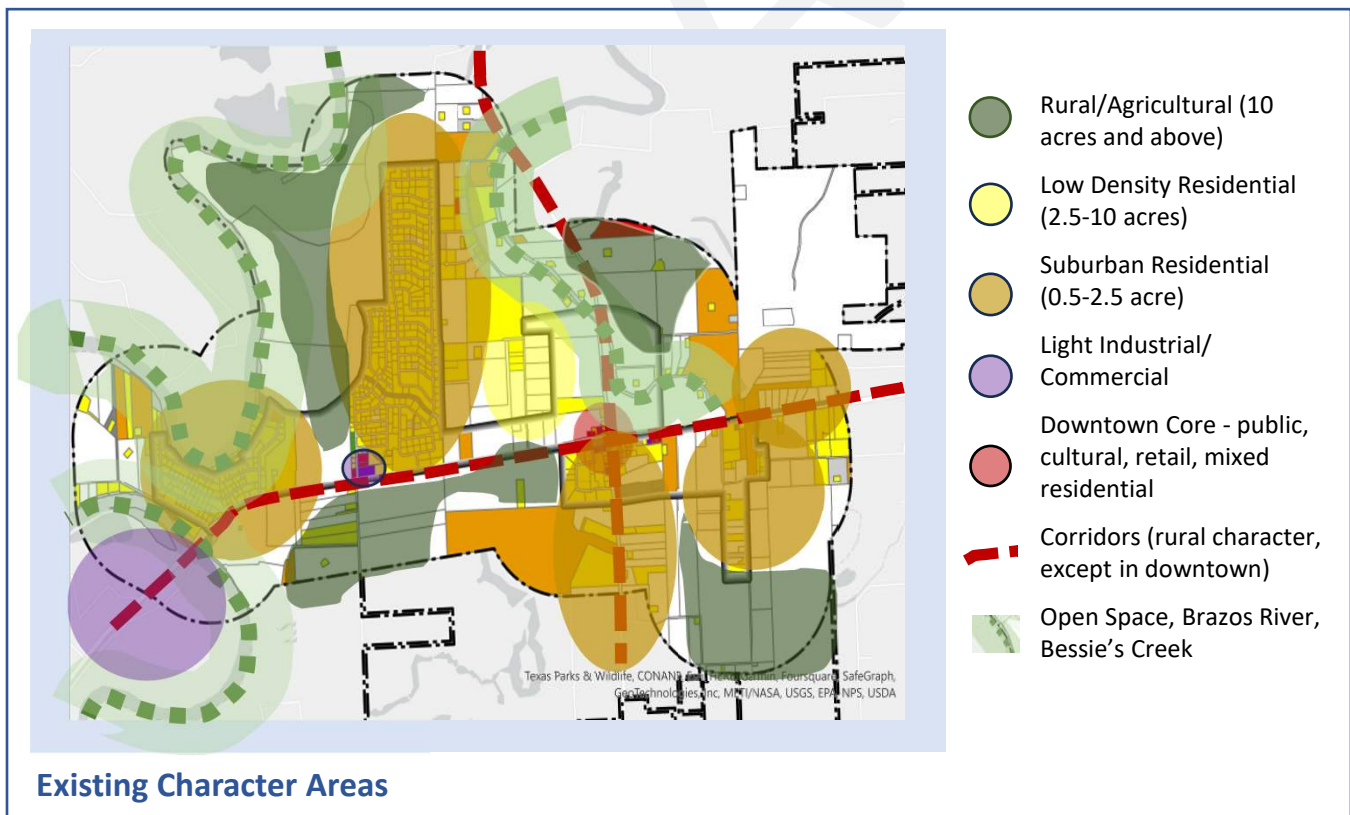
6. Community Character & Development Standards

Existing Character Areas

Based on the input from CPAC, field observations and historic analysis, the following “character” areas can be identified in Simonton:

- **Rural Residential & Agricultural** – Rural, large parcels containing predominantly single-family homes, stables, and agriculture uses on lots over 10 acres.
- **Low-Density Residential** – Single-family detached homes on lots 2.5 to 10 acres in size.
- **Suburban Residential** - Single-family detached homes on lots 0.5 to 2.5 acres in size.
- **Downtown Core** – Small, historic, mostly one-story buildings, cultural/religious uses, city hall, and commercial buildings, some built close to the street.
- **Corridors**- Land along FM 1093 at FM 1489, the city’s two major thoroughfares.
- **Industrial/commercial** – Intersection of FM 1093 and Wrangler Road and the quarry on FM 1093, west of the river.
- **Open Space & Parks** – Open space along the Brazos River and Bessie’s Creek.

Figure 6B: Existing Character Areas



6. Community Character & Development Standards

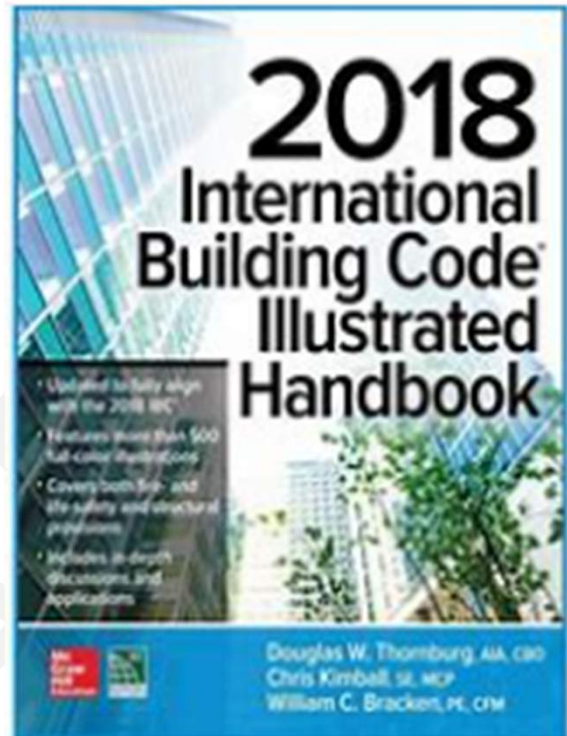
Most development requirements in the City of Simonton are derived from the International Building Code and the Federal Emergency Management Agency floodplain regulations. These building standards are intended to ensure minimum public health and life safety, and do not address aesthetics, character or quality of life.

Simonton currently does not have zoning.

A zoning code is a set of standards establishing areas or ‘zones’ in the city and determining the allowed **uses** in each zone. Uses are generally divided into categories of residential (e.g., single-family, multifamily, high to low density), commercial, parks & open space, government and institutional (e.g., schools, libraries, churches), and industrial. A mix of uses may be allowed in a specific zoning district, depending on the city’s code.

Zoning codes also specify the applicable development standards in each zone, including rules for lot sizes, building height, building setbacks, fences, signage, landscaping, parking, trash enclosures, screening, lighting, sidewalks, and community open space.

Zoning is one of the most effective tools for achieving the goals and objectives in a community's comprehensive plan. Development standards and subdivision requirements can be adopted and implemented even without zoning, however, although without a zoning code, some planning goals may not be attainable.



“Local planning and zoning regulation directs the design and development of buildings, neighborhoods, and cities. These regulations are contained in a zoning ordinance, which typically determines the height, width, and architectural features of development under its jurisdiction.”

<https://www.cato.org/policy-analysis/zoning-land-use-planning-housing-affordability>

6. Community Character & Development Standards

Development Regulations

Many communities adopt development standards to enhance local character, strengthen established neighborhoods, shape new districts, and protect and leverage the value of the built environment.

Development regulations can be as minimal as building setback requirements to more comprehensive standards that control building design, protect aesthetic character and help create vibrant and appealing places to live and work.

By blending public and private objectives for community design, appearance, and function, development codes can help to better direct the quality and character of development in Simonton.

Simonton's existing development-related regulations are found in the following codified sections of the City's Code of Ordinances.

City of Simonton Code of Ordinances Development-related provisions

Sec. 8-19 - International codes adopted [*building construction and fire safety*].

Sec. 8-29 - Landscaping requirements.

Sec. 8-30 - Miscellaneous regulations.

- Height & Area
- Percentage of lot landscaped
- Facade requirements (50% masonry)
- Fences, trash container screening
- Swimming pools

Sec. 8-190 - Specific standards. (Flood hazard areas)

- Floor elevation (24" above BFE)

Sec. 8-193 - Floodways

Chapter 16 - Manufactured Housing/RVs/Mobile Homes

Chapter 26 - Subdivisions

- Sec. 26-6. - Parkland dedication
- Sec. 26-7. - Design standards for streets and lots
(lot size ½ acre; lot width 100' etc.)
- Sidewalks standards

Truck traffic prohibition on streets

6. Community Character & Development Standards

Code Evaluation

Even for cities without zoning, development standards can be effective tools for regulating development. Development regulations incorporated into the city's codes can shape many aspects of the built environment, short of determining the allowed uses for a specific property. A good set of development codes can also guide future annexations and development agreements.

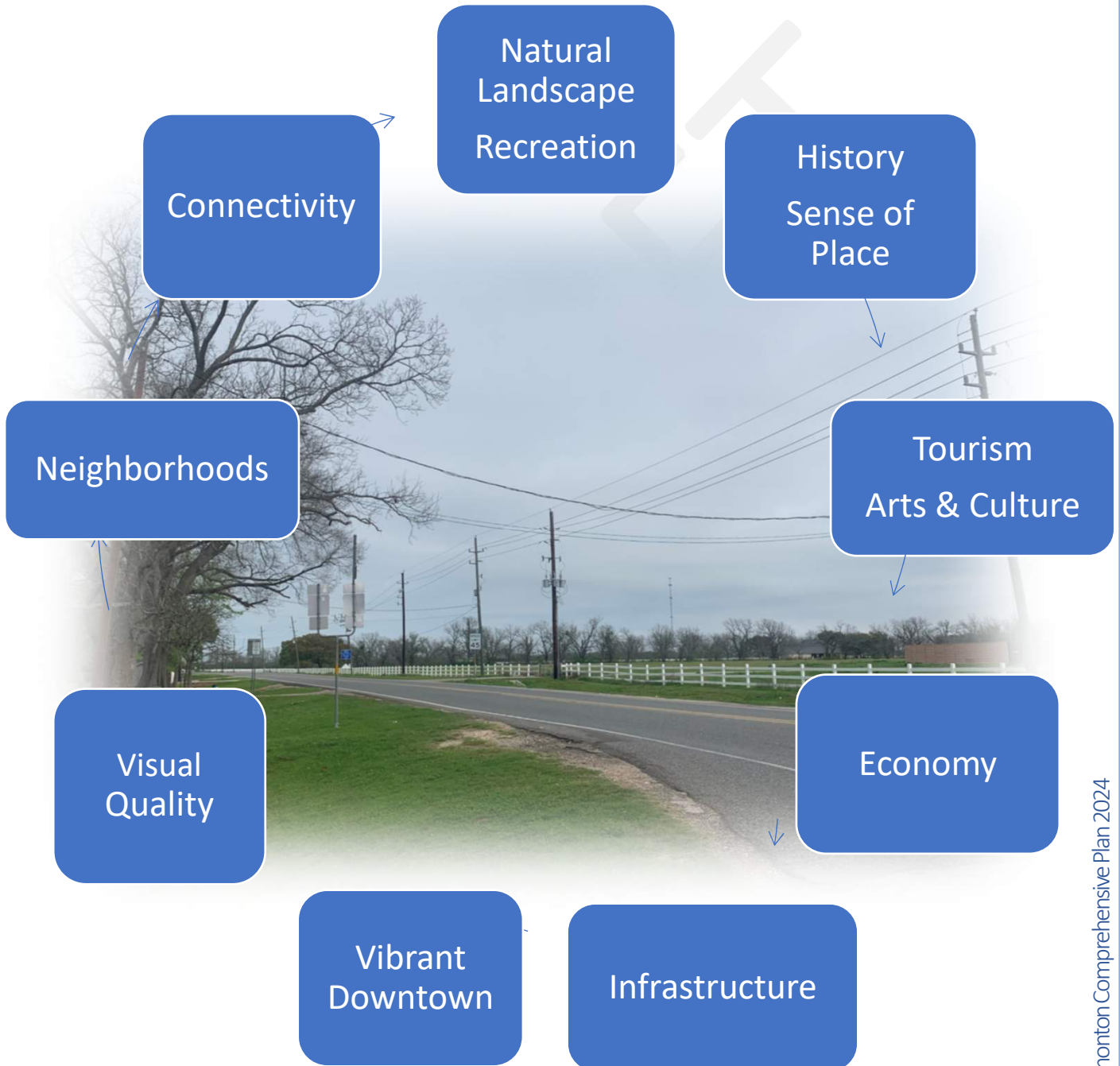
Simonton's existing codes provide a good foundation for the city, but a preliminary review of the code found opportunities to amend or add to the current provisions to ensure that future development meets the vision of the Comprehensive Plan.

Development code amendments in conjunction with an improved subdivision code will greatly benefit the city.

- Development standards are powerful tools, even without zoning.
- They guide future annexations and development agreements.
- Simonton has a good foundation in place.
- Addition of modified and new standards is needed.

6. Community Character & Development Standards

Amending the city's existing code to add specific requirements as identified in this plan, can serve as an effective short-term measure until the City adopts zoning regulations.



6. Community Character & Development Standards

6.2 Guiding Principles

Community Character

- Promote Simonton's unique identity and rural equestrian character of large lots, natural vegetation, creeks, and river.
- Preserve and reuse older buildings.
- Celebrate community history and traditional events.
- Adopt noise and light guidelines to preserve the rural character.
- Protect the city's mature tree canopy.
- Ensure that new development is compatible with the existing rural character.

Downtown

- Highlight and preserve downtown's historic character and sense of place.
- Pursue a vibrant downtown that offers economic opportunity and supports locally owned businesses.
- Create a walkable, pedestrian friendly downtown through building, site and streetscape design.
- Connect downtown to surrounding neighborhoods with opportunities to safely walk and bike to downtown.

Corridors and Neighborhood Commercial

- Ensure that new commercial development is compatible with the town's rural character.
- Avoid strip-mall type commercial development fronted by large parking lots.
- Ensure that development along corridors is safely accessible by residents on foot and bicycle as well as vehicles.

Citywide

- Protect scenic character and natural beauty of Simonton
- Prioritize people and safety over cars.
- Improve Connectivity and Circulation by linking downtown to surrounding areas and make it safe to walk and bike to downtown from other parts of the city.
- Modify parking standards to reduce negative environmental, safety and aesthetic impacts

6. Community Character & Development Standards

6.3 Recommendations

Downtown

Highlight and preserve downtown's historic character and sense of place.

- Identify historic resources and encourage preservation and adaptive reuse.
- Create a public plaza or pocket park near the center of downtown for community gatherings, celebrations and socializing.
- Highlight gateways to downtown on FM 1489 and FM 1039 with signage, landscaping and art.
- Install comprehensive streetscape improvements, including wide sidewalks, street trees, lighting, and benches in the public right-of-way.
- Consider downtown-specific sign standards.
- Adopt International Existing Building Code to facilitate reuse of older buildings.
- Build on Simonton's ranching and equestrian history for community 'branding.'
- Integrate Bessies Creek as part of the Downtown development with opportunities for outdoor recreation and activities.



Fredericksburg Downtown

Source: <https://www.google.com>



Example of a gateway entrance



Downtown location at the intersection on FM 1489 and FM 1039

6. Community Character & Development Standards

Recommendations (cont'd)

Downtown

Encourage a mix of uses to bring people downtown daytime, evenings, and weekend.

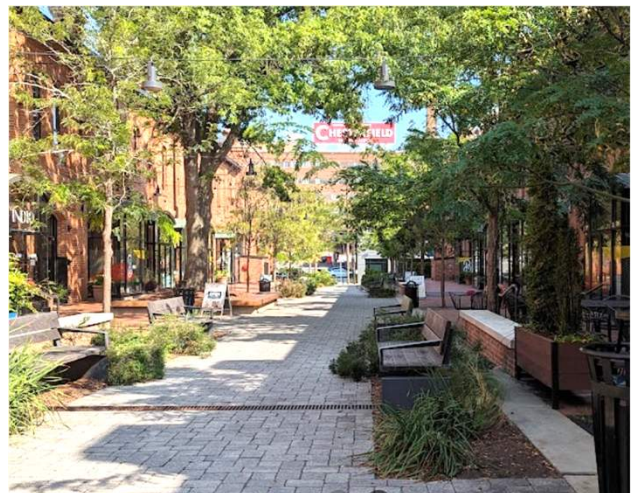
- Encourage a mix of retail, dining and office uses, as well as opportunities for residential use above ground floor level.
- Amend development regulations to allow small residential lots and multifamily housing downtown to provide options for smaller households and bring more life to downtown.
- Encourage patios and outdoor dining and ensure that sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate outdoor seating and displays as well as pedestrians.
- Program special events in downtown.
- Consider development incentives and assistance for local businesses.



Walkable streetscape with decorative lighting and signage - Brenham



Norton Commons, Louisville, Kentucky
Source: <https://www.google.com> -



Walkable downtown – Brightleaf Square, NC

6. Community Character & Development Standards

Recommendations (cont'd)

Downtown

Adopt building and site design standards to ensure that new development is compatible with downtown's historic, rural village character.

Building Design Standards

- Adopt a building height limit of two-three stories to maintain scale of downtown.
- Locate main building entrances to face the street and connect to the sidewalk.
- Adopt transparency (window) minimum requirements for ground floor non-residential uses.
- Encourage awnings and canopies to provide shade to pedestrians.



A walkable downtown – Brightleaf Square, Durham NC

Site Design Standards

- Build new buildings close to the street, with little to no setback. Reduce building setback requirements downtown to encourage a traditional development pattern with buildings close to sidewalk.
- Prohibit parking lots in front of buildings. Allow off-street parking at side or rear of lot only.
- Ensure wide sidewalks to accommodate outdoor seating as well as pedestrians.
- Outdoor Storage - Require screening from public view with a fence, landscaping or a combination of both. Restrict from locating in front yard. Allow only on paved areas and with adequate drainage.
- Outdoor Displays and Activities - Allow adjacent to the building only. Restrict location in parking lots and other yards.



Screening with masonry fence and landscaping

6. Community Character & Development Standards

Recommendations (cont'd)

Mixed Use Corridor and Neighborhood Services

Adopt design standards for Corridor and Neighborhood Services that protect trees and natural features, provide enhanced landscaping, minimize parking lot visibility, and provide safe connections for pedestrians and bicycles.

Recommended standards include:

- Limit parking in front of buildings near the street. Encourage off-street parking at side or rear of lot only.
- Adopt transparency requirements for ground floor commercial and office uses.
- Require primary entrances to be located on the street-facing side of the buildings.
- Require pedestrian walkways to connect the sidewalk to the building entrance and require marked pedestrian paths through all parking lots.
- Adopt fencing requirements (white picket) to preserve and encourage Simonton's character.
- Consider requiring wide buffer strips with tree plantings in front of commercial development to maintain the existing rural appearance of the thoroughfares.

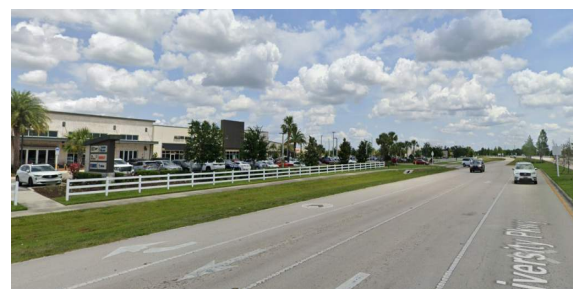


Neighborhood-oriented commercial use

Monument sign with landscaping



Pedestrian connectivity



Development with white fences and rural character

6. Community Character & Development Standards

Recommendations (cont'd)

Citywide

Improve Connectivity and Circulation

- Provide bike racks in downtown and other appropriate locations.
- Ensure high-visibility crosswalks at the intersection of FM 1093 and FM 1489 to safely connect the four corners of downtown for pedestrians and bicycles.
- Adopt minimum standards for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity for all commercial and multifamily development.



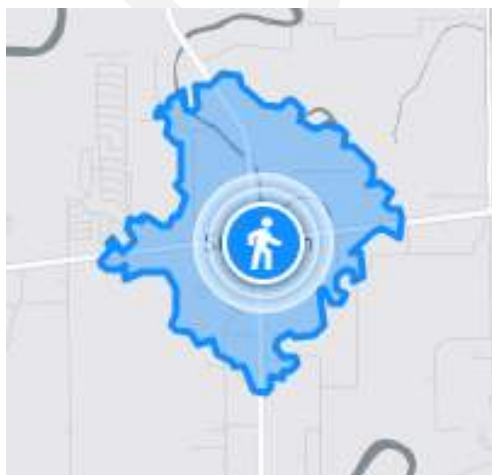
Bike racks

Protect scenic character and natural beauty of Simonton

- Adopt a tree protection ordinance to protect desirable existing trees.
- Adopt landscaping requirements, including street trees, landscape buffers along street and adjacent to residential uses, shrubs to screen parking lots, parking lot trees planted in islands.
- Adopt sign regulations that control size, type and location of signage to prevent visual blight and protect Simonton's rural character.
- Consider adopting a municipal 'dark sky' ordinance to reduce light pollution and protect the city's nighttime character.

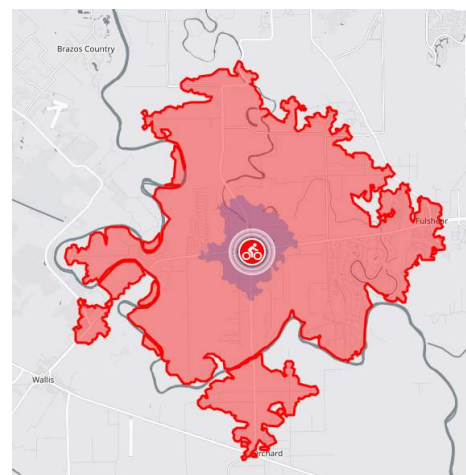


Pedestrian friendly cross-walks



Pedestrian connectivity: Map shows 15-min walk shed from downtown

Source: app.traveltime.com



Bike connectivity: Map shows 30-min bike shed from downtown Simonton

6. Community Character & Development Standards

Recommendations (cont'd)

Citywide

Modify parking standards to reduce negative environmental, safety and aesthetic impacts

- Provide a community, shared parking area for downtown businesses instead of requiring off-street parking for each development.
- Maximize on-street parking. Allow on-street parking, both parallel and angle-in spaces, wherever sufficient right-of-way exists.
- Allow reduced or no parking requirements for downtown businesses and encourage shared parking arrangements to reduce amount of pavement.
- Locate on-site parking at the rear or side of buildings instead of between the building and street.
- Adopt parking lot landscaping standards to require shade trees throughout parking areas to reduce heat effects.
- Minimize curb cuts and curb cut widths for driveways.
- Allow alternatives to impermeable pavement for parking areas to reduce flood and heat impacts.
- Provide flexibility to waive or reduce parking requirements in order to preserve trees and other natural features.



Parking lot screening



Parking lot islands with trees and shrubs



Tree preservation in new development



CHAPTER 7

MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION

- 7.1 Master Thoroughfare Plan
- 7.2 Existing Conditions
- 7.3 Findings
- 7.4 Guiding Principles.....
- 7.5 Recommendations.....

7. Mobility & Transportation



The Mobility Plan serves as a guide for decision-making related to the city's transportation and mobility network, and includes recommendations for new roads, intersection improvements, sidewalks and crosswalks, and active multimodal transportation. Safe and efficient movement for pedestrians, bicycles, golf carts, public transit and commercial vehicles, in addition to passenger cars and trucks, is essential for a healthy community.

As Simonton grows, the capacity and connectivity of the transportation and mobility network will greatly affect residents' quality of life. This chapter includes the Master Thoroughfare Plan.

7.1 Master Thoroughfare Plan

The Master Thoroughfare Plan (MTP) is a roadmap for the City of Simonton's future transportation and mobility infrastructure to ensure that the city's transportation network is able to accommodate growth and support economic development while maintaining a high level of safety and efficiency for all users.

The scope of a Master Thoroughfare Plan includes the following elements:

- **Identification of transportation and mobility needs.** The plan identifies the city's existing transportation infrastructure and projects future needs based on anticipated growth.
- **Roadway network improvements.** The plan outlines recommended improvements to the city's road network, including new roads, widening of existing roads, and improvements to intersections and other roadway features.
- **Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.** The plan addresses pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, including sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use trails.
- **Transit and alternative transportation.** The plan may include provisions for transit infrastructure, such as bus routes or transit hubs, as well as alternative transportation options and demand management strategies, such as ride-sharing or carpooling programs.
- **Implementation strategies.** The plan includes strategies for implementing mobility improvements, including timelines, funding sources, and coordination with other planning efforts, such as land use and economic development planning.

7. Mobility & Transportation

Identification of Transportation Needs

Transportation and mobility in Simonton are characterized by the people's access to and from larger urban areas in Fort Bend, Waller, and Harris counties, as well as the ability of large trucks carrying freight to pass through Simonton towards other destinations. The ability of Simonton's road network to carry people and goods depends on the capacity of FM 1093 and FM 1489 to handle future demand.

With the population of Simonton and the ETJ expected to rise, the following needs have been identified:

- Provide safe and continuous connections for people and goods to access more populated, built-up areas like Fulshear, Katy, and Houston.
- Keep the capacities of FM 1093 and FM 1489 in line with growing demands.
- Provide residents easier connections to neighboring communities.
- Create active transportation connections.
- Improve connectivity within the city and ETJ for non-motorized modes of mobility.

Goals and Objectives

The following transportation goals are identified for the future mobility in Simonton:

- Make roads in the city and ETJ safer for all users.
- Provide reliable connections between Simonton and nearby communities.
- Provide trails, bike lanes, and sidewalks.
- Maintain the road network to meet the growing demands of the city and surrounding area.

These goals above are designed to provide access, safety, and alternative modes of transportation for everyone in Simonton.

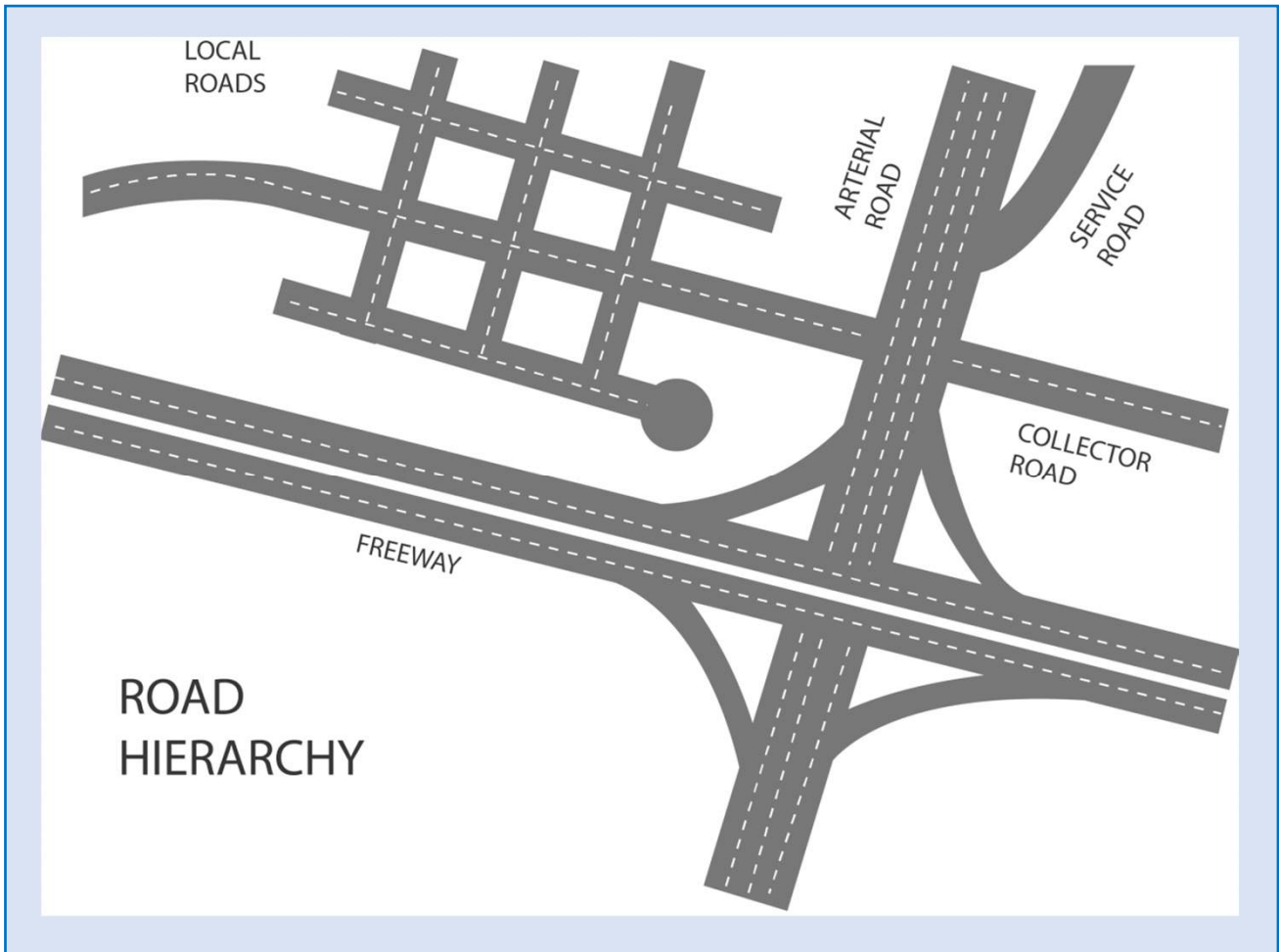
7. Mobility & Transportation

Road Classification

The MTP establishes a systematic hierarchy of roads in the community, which typically involves the following road classifications:

Local Roads → Collector Roads → Arterial Roads → Freeways

Figure 7A: Road Hierarchy

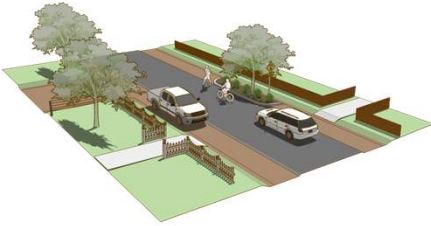
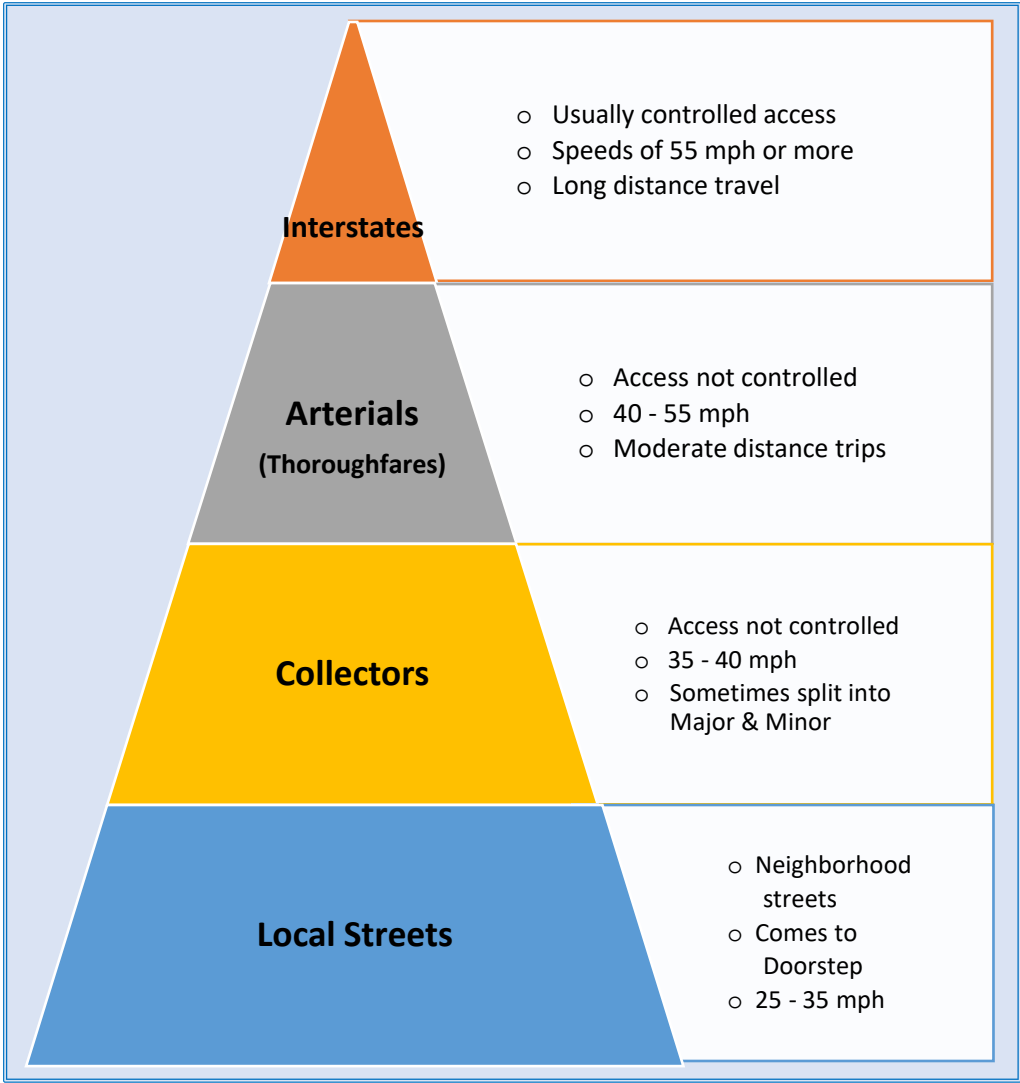


The Thoroughfare Plan includes recommended street cross-sections for each type of roadway. These cross sections are based on the anticipated volumes of traffic, safety considerations, aesthetic enhancements desired by the community, and accommodation of multimodal traffic, such as bikes, pedestrians, golf carts, and horses.

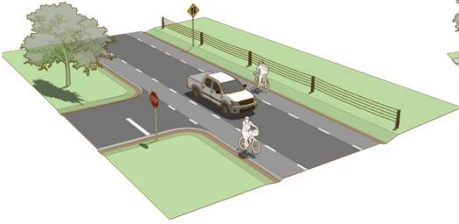
7. Mobility & Transportation

Figure 7B explains the characteristics of some commonly used road classifications.

Figure 7B: Road Classifications



Local Streets



Minor Collector



Major Collector

7. Mobility & Transportation

What is Mobility?

Transportation and mobility are interrelated, but slightly different concepts. Transportation refers to the moving of people and goods. Mobility is the ability of people to safely get to where they want or need to be. If the only option is to drive, anyone without a car or unable to drive does not have mobility. Drivers stuck in traffic gridlock don't have mobility, either. To truly have mobility, people must have options that meet their respective needs, whether that is driving, walking, cycling, or riding public transit.

Complete Streets

Complete Streets are streets designed to support mobility and safety for everyone – pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, motorists, and commercial vehicles. The Complete Streets concept encompasses many approaches to planning, designing, and operating roads and rights-of-way, keeping all users in mind for a safer and more efficient transportation network.

Complete Streets approaches vary based on community context, and may address elements such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, bus lanes, transit stops, medians, pedestrian crossing signals, curb extensions, modified vehicle travel lanes, streetscape, and landscape treatments. Complete Streets policies have been shown to reduce vehicle-related crashes and risks to pedestrians and bicyclists. [Source: [Complete Streets | US Department of Transportation](#)]

Why is this important?

Pedestrian deaths have been climbing in the U.S. since 2010, in large part because of unsafe infrastructure and American preference for SUVs. In 2022, more than **7,500** pedestrians were killed by drivers, the highest number since 1981. Millions more were injured. Improvements in vehicle safety over the years have failed to account for the safety of those *outside* of the vehicle.

A Complete Street is safe, and feels safe, for all users. – U.S. DOT

Transportation is something you do and mobility is something you have.

Source: [Transport or Mobility | Forum for the Future](#)

Mobility is having transportation options, and the quality of those options. So in short, mobility is access....

Without mobility, transportation is meaningless. Improving people's mobility should be the goal of any transportation project.

Source: [Mobility Lab](#)

Mobility Lab is an Arlington County transportation research initiative in Virginia.

7. Mobility & Transportation

7.2 Existing Conditions

Road Network

The City of Simonton is intersected by two TxDOT Farm-to-Market roads – FM 1093 and FM 1489. FM 1093 runs east-west throughout the city limits, and FM 1489, also called Simonton Road, runs north-south through the city and connects Simonton to I-10 ten miles to the north. These two roads are classified as rural two-lane highways. All other roads in Simonton are classified as ‘local’ streets. The local streets act as collectors that bring traffic from homes and other neighborhood locations to one of the two FM roads, and vice-versa.

Both FM 1093 and FM 1489 have a single undivided roadbed with one lane per direction and continuous shoulders throughout the city. The intersection of these two roads is currently controlled by stop signs, although plans are under development to install a ‘dog bone’ roundabout to improve safety and circulation. TxDOT has a long term plan to widen FM 1093 from two lanes to a divided six lane road. The segment between FM 1489 and FM 359 will first be expanded to four lanes.

Other important roads within the study area include Wrangler Road, Cowhide Drive and Chisolm Trail, which provide access to Valley Lodge from FM 1093.

Simonton no longer has rail lines passing through it. The former railroad right-of-way parallel to FM 1093 is now owned by the Fort Bend County Toll Road Authority, and may be used in the future to extend the Westpark Tollway west of Fulshear. As a result, the only means of transportation in the area is through road networks, making road safety and maintenance crucial for the town's mobility.

Figure 7C: Existing Road Network



7. Mobility & Transportation

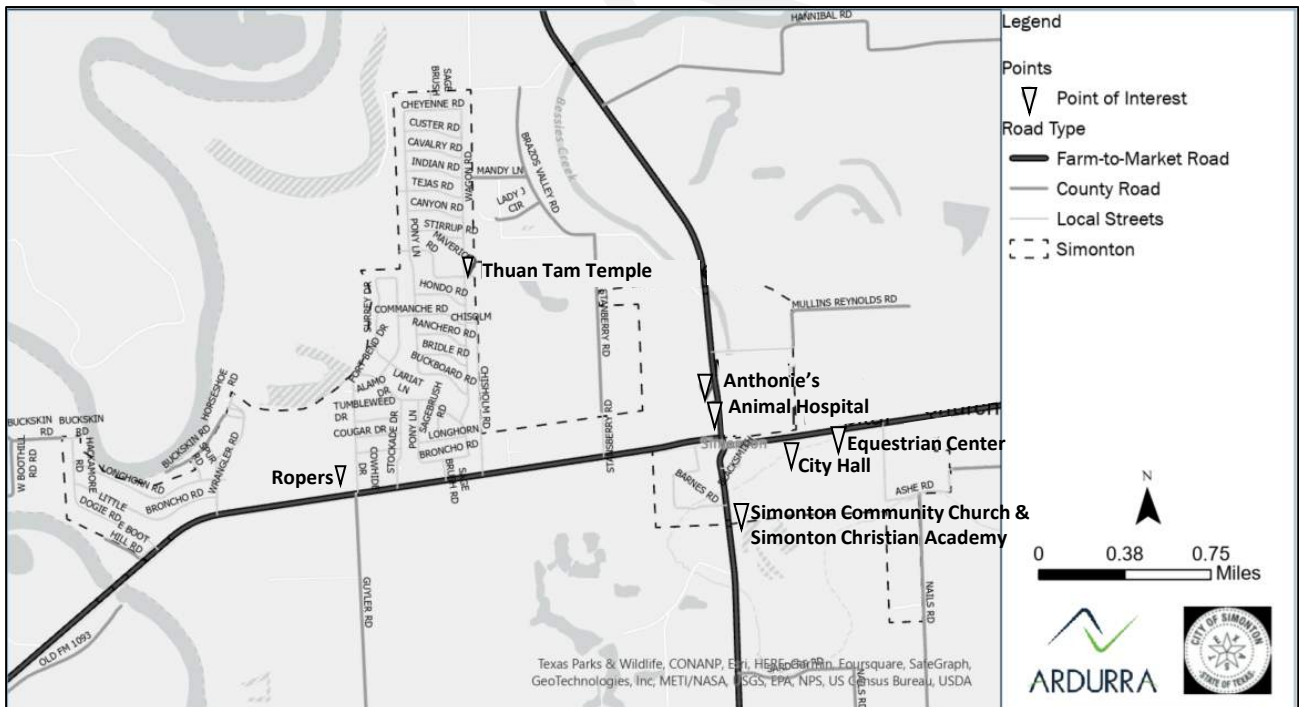
Traffic Attractors and Generators

Simonton does not have any major traffic attractors or generators. However, the city has several civic, commercial and religious institutions that are attractors:

- Antonie’s Market Grill: Simonton Rd./FM 1489, north of FM 1093
- Brazos Oaks Animal Hospital: Simonton Rd./FM 1489, north of FM 1093
- Simonton City Hall: FM 1093
- The Equestrian Center at Twinwood: FM 1093
- Simonton Community Church and Simonton Christian Academy: Simonton Rd./FM 1489, south of FM 1093
- Thuan Tam Temple: Wagon Road

While the Brazos River flows at the edge of the city, the city has no designated public parks or other natural traffic generators. Figure 7D displays the locations of these trip generators and attractors.

Figure 7D: Traffic Attractors & Generators



7. Mobility & Transportation

Combining the volume of traffic, the percentage of trucks, and other variables such as the number of lanes and speed of traffic, the estimated Level of Service across the entire study area is A. Although the density of traffic is higher along the throughways, the traffic volume is low enough to avoid any significant impediment.

*Level of Service, or **LOS**, refers to a road's quality of traffic flow, graded from **A** (free flow) to **F** (traffic jam).*

Crashes and Traffic Safety

Interestingly, the accident data collected for Simonton reveals a relatively lower frequency of accidents compared to neighboring towns. This indicates that the city's road infrastructure and traffic management measures have been relatively effective in ensuring safer travel conditions. The lower accident rate is a positive sign for the City's residents and visitors, highlighting the importance of ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance road safety initiatives.

Between 2018 and 2022, a total of 20 crashes occurred in the study area, with most happening in 2022 (6 out of 20). Since 2018, 70% of all crashes took place after the COVID-19 pandemic. Out of the 20 crashes, three involved a commercial vehicle, presumably a truck; all commercial vehicle crashes occurred on FM 1093, as did 80% of all crashes.

As FM 1093 is a two-lane road, lane changes were the most common cause of crashes (5 out of 16 crashes on FM 1093). In combination with other factors, faulty lane changing was a contributing factor to another 8 out of the 20 crashes. Speeding only accounted for 10% of the crashes, whereas alcohol-induced driving impairment caused 20%. Unexpectedly, 25% of the crashes involved "Faulty or Evasive Action" or "Fleeing or Evading Police" showing the presence of causes outside the purview of engineering solutions.



7. Mobility & Transportation

- **20** crashes occurred between 2018 and 2022.
- **3** crashes involved commercial vehicles.
- **Unsafe lane changing** was the leading cause on FM 1093, which is two-lane road.

As expected in crashes involving illegal lane changing on FM 1093, nine crashes involved a single vehicle going straight, two were head-on collisions, one crash involved vehicles colliding at an angle, and one was a sideswipe.

Of the crashes not on FM 1093 (i.e., Ashe Rd, and Broncho Rd), only one was a two-vehicle crash; the other three involved a single vehicle only.

Two crashes resulted in the vehicle overturning, eight involved two vehicles colliding, and 10 involved a vehicle crashing into an object.

Eight crashes caused some injury, two of which were serious, but there have been no fatalities in the last five years.

Figure 7F below shows the density of traffic crashes.

Figure 7F: Road Crashes, 2018-2022



7. Mobility & Transportation

Other Projects and Plans

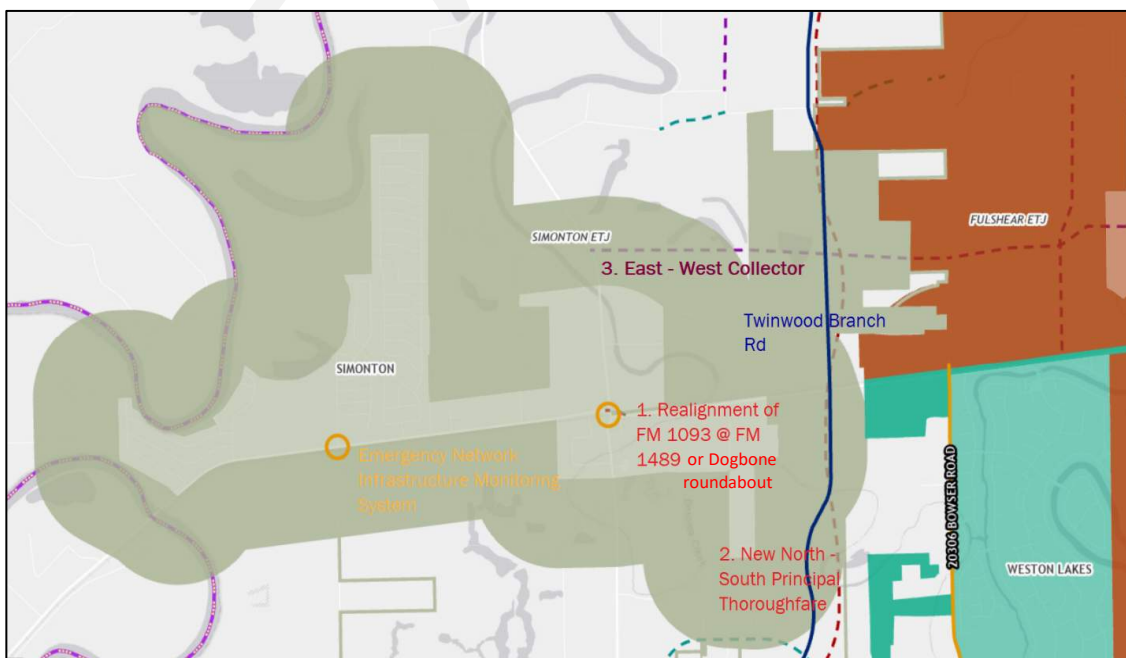
As part of the *Emergency Network Infrastructure Monitoring System*, proposed in 2020, two intersections – FM 1093 and FM 1489 and FM 1093 at Cowhide Drive – have been selected as part of the expansion of wireless traffic signal communication and flood monitoring systems using a high-site communications network.

Another proposed project in Simonton’s ETJ is the proposed Twinwood Branch Road, a two-lane asphalt road and drainage improvement project that would start from FM 1489 south of Simonton to near the intersection of Woods Road and Hartwell Drive northwest of the city.

According to the *2017 Fort Bend County Thoroughfare Plan*, three other proposed roads/road segments could impact traffic in Simonton and the ETJ. See *Figure 7G*. These projects are:

- Realignment of the intersection of FM 1093 and FM 1489 – replacement of the currently offset intersection (the roads intersect twice in two separate T junctions) with one intersection by realigning the east leg of FM 1093 by constructing a tangential curve. This project is likely to be replaced with an alternative design to convert the current intersection to a dogbone-type roundabout. See *Figure 7N*.
- New North-South Principal Thoroughfare – Running nearly congruent with the alignment of Twinwood Branch Road, this Principal Thoroughfare would run through Simonton’s ETJ area connecting FM 1489 at the northern end of Orchard’s ETJ with Woods Road in Waller County.
- New East-West Collector – A new collector running from FM 1489 (north of Mullins Rd) to Charger Way in Fulshear via Lou Waters Pkwy. This road would intersect the new North-South Principal Thoroughfare inside Simonton’s ETJ.

Figure 7G: Proposed Road Projects



7. Mobility & Transportation

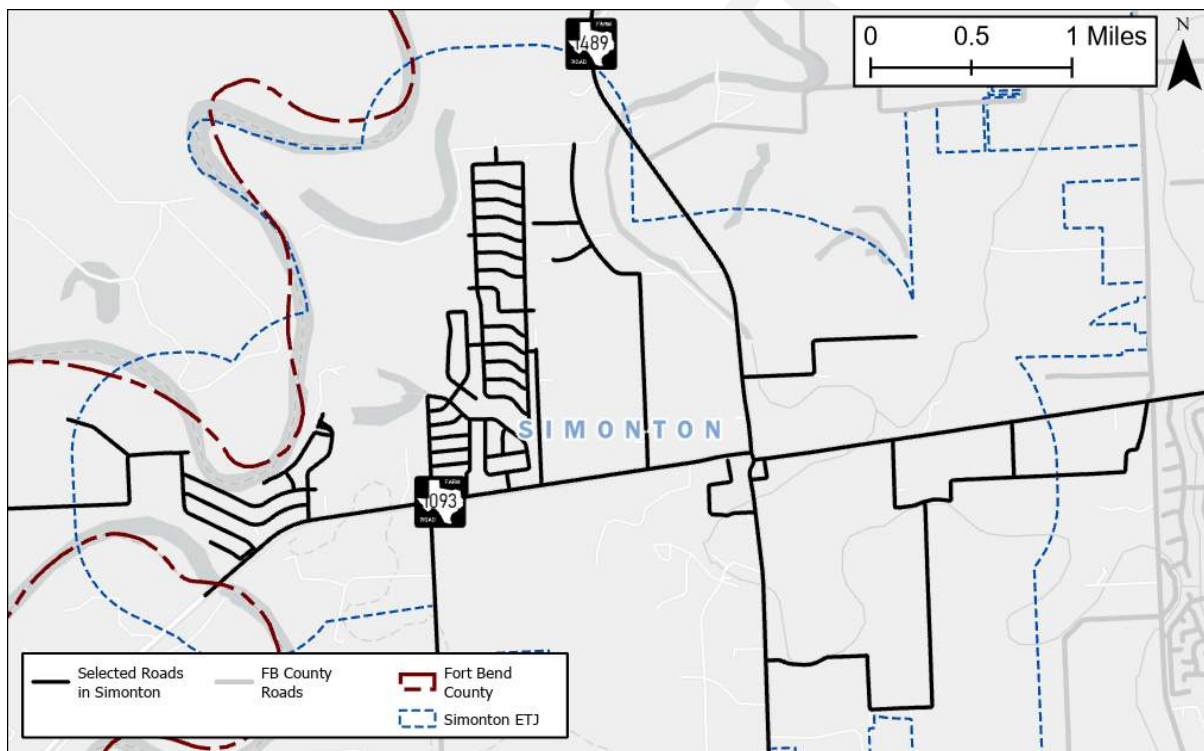
7.3 Findings

Methodology

Selection of Roads for Analysis

All roads within one mile of the city boundary of Simonton were included in the analysis of transportation mobility in the larger ETJ area. Only those roads in Fort Bend County were included. Ninety-five unique road segments were identified, per TxDOT's Roadway inventory. All the selected roads are included in *Figure 7H*.

Figure 7H: Selected Roads for Analysis



Method of Analysis

Data from TxDOT's Roadway inventory was used to assess the existing conditions of roads in Simonton and its ETJ. Daily Service volumes were estimated for all roads by using the following variables:

- Design Hourly Volume (DHV)
- Percentage of traffic in Peak Hour (K Factor)
- Percentage of traffic in peak direction (D Factor)
- Percentage of trucks in the mix of traffic (Truck Percentage)

7. Mobility & Transportation

By comparing the values so generated against values available from the Simplified Highway Capacity Calculation Method for the Highway Performance Management System^[1], a Level of Service was assigned to each road segment. The tables from FHWA provide the maximum volume of traffic that can be accommodated for a given Level of Service. *Figure 7I* shows an example of the tables which are available from FHWA.

Figure 7I: Select Table from FHWA showing Service Volumes

Table 17. Rural two-lane highways generalized service volume table.

Speed Limit	Terrain	Truck Pct.	Level of Service—B Service Volume	Level of Service—C Service Volume	Level of Service—D Service Volume
45	Flat	0	3,600	8,700	13,900
45	Flat	2	3,500	8,700	13,900
45	Flat	4	3,500	8,700	13,900
45	Flat	6	3,500	8,700	13,900
45	Flat	8	3,400	8,600	13,900
45	Flat	10	3,400	8,600	13,900
45	Rolling	0	3,600	8,700	13,900
45	Rolling	2	3,500	8,600	13,900
45	Rolling	4	3,400	8,500	13,900
45	Rolling	6	3,300	8,400	13,900
45	Rolling	8	3,300	8,200	13,900
45	Rolling	10	3,200	8,100	13,900
45	Mountainous	0	3,600	8,700	13,900
45	Mountainous	2	3,200	7,700	12,300
45	Mountainous	4	2,800	7,000	11,100
45	Mountainous	6	2,600	6,300	10,100
45	Mountainous	8	2,400	5,800	9,300

^[1] <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/pubs/pl18003/chap04.cfm>

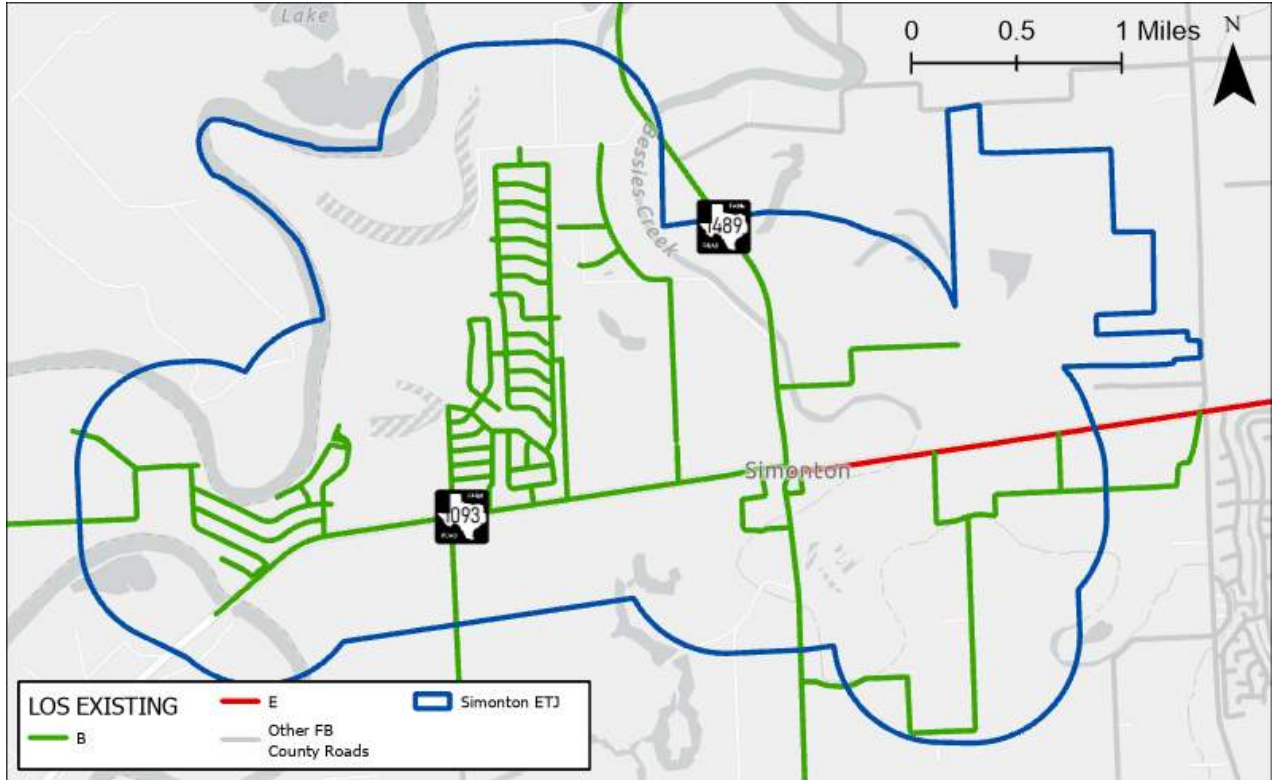
Result and Discussion

Level of Service under existing conditions is shown in *Figure 7J*. Only the road segment on FM 1093 east of FM 1489 has a LOS of E. On this stretch of FM 1093, the daily service volume is 25,100 vehicles per day, which is higher than the maximum allowed for LOS D (24,200). An LOS of E on this stretch is a result of the high number of vehicles (large underlying Design Hourly Volume) and not because of high truck percentages (high K-factor).

Further, it is reasonable to expect congestion on this stretch of FM 1093 with the knowledge that all economic centers and trips from Simonton are made eastwards to other cities in Fort Bend and Harris counties. As a result, traffic turning east from FM 1489, as well as that coming from western counties, concentrates on FM 1093 in this stretch. All other roads have an LOS of B. On all the local streets, the service volume was less than 1,000 vehicles per day.

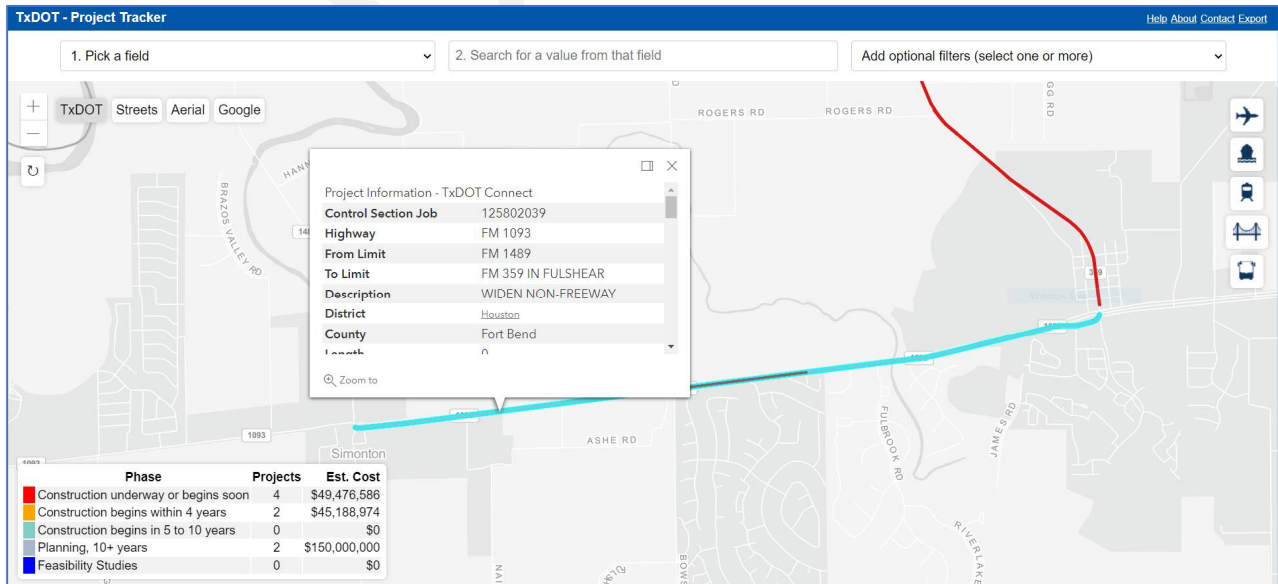
7. Mobility & Transportation

Figure 7J: Existing Level of Service



In the next 5-10 years, TxDOT plans to expand the section of FM 1093 located between FM 359 and FM 1489, which reports an LOS of E. See Figure 7K.

Figure 7K: Expansion of FM 1093 (FM 1489-FM 359)



Source: TxDOT Project Tracker

7. Mobility & Transportation

Network Changes in Future

This study also estimates the future conditions of roads in the Simonton area. This section lists all known road network changes in the city and the ETJ, with assumptions made for the purpose of estimating road conditions in the future. *Figure 7L* shows the changes and assumptions made for the future conditions. Since Fort Bend County has already determined to construct these roads, they are included in the evaluation of future conditions.

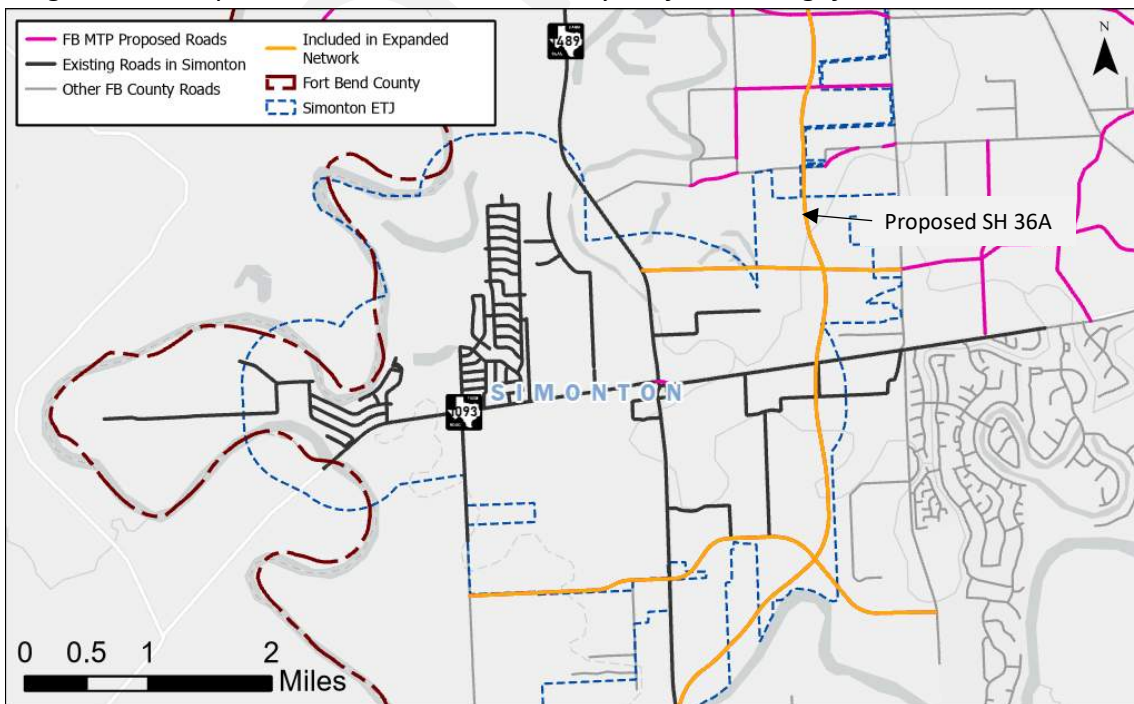
Figure 7L: Future Changes to Road Network

Change	Source	Applied As
Inclusion of New Roads	Fort Bend County Master Thoroughfare Plan	Inclusion of three roads as part of the future road network
Expansion of FM 1093 east of FM 1489	TxDOT Project Tracker	Increase number of lanes from 2 to 6.

In other assumptions made for the future road network, all additional traffic is assumed to flow through non-local roads.

The expanded road network is shown in *Figure 7M*. Three roads selected to be included in the future network are shown in orange, others in pink. One of the new roads added is the future SH 36A, which is a new highway proposed to run between Rosenberg and Hempstead. TxDOT is currently preparing the Environmental Impact Statement for SH 36A. Since the proposed highway is included in Fort Bend County's Master Thoroughfare Plan, it was also included in this analysis.

Figure 7M: Proposed Roads, Fort Bend County Major Thoroughfare Plan



7. Mobility & Transportation

No information is available at this time for the expansion of Westpark Tollway, which is therefore not included in this analysis. Revisions to this report should be made when such information becomes available.

A key road improvement is proposed for Simonton at the FM 1093 and FM 1489 intersection. The existing stop signs will be replaced with a modified roundabout or 'dog bone' roundabout. This project aims to improve circulation at the intersection and make it safer by reducing vehicle speeds. The design does not increase capacity of the roadways and therefore is unlikely to impact calculations for this study. Since the design has not yet been approved by TxDOT, no further discussion is included in this report. See *Figure 7N* for the proposed improvements.

Figure 7N: Proposed Intersection Improvements at FM 1489 and FM 1093



7. Mobility & Transportation

Future Traffic Estimation: Background Growth and Development Traffic

Background traffic growth is expected to be 1% per year from 2023 until 2045. Using TxDOT’s estimation of future traffic, which is available for 2042 as part of 2022’s Roadway Inventory database, the values from the Roadway Inventory were grown for 3 years at 1% per year to provide values for background growth. For all local roads, the growth in traffic was negligible. One reason for this is that local roads serve as last-mile connections and do not experience through traffic, just traffic that has destinations along them. Therefore, even once the land around them is fully developed, local roads do not experience any growth in traffic.

Further, the estimates of future traffic caused by development of empty lands are based on the proposed Future Land Use Map.

Based on this information, *Figure 70* provides information about future trips, which were calculated from ITE’s Trip Generation Manual (11th Edition). Agricultural land is not expected to generate any new trips. For other land uses, the following categories of growth were used:

- Low Density Residential: 210 – Single Family Detached Housing
- Neighborhood Services: 820 – Shopping Center
- Downtown: 231 – Mid-Rise Residential with 1st-Floor Commercial
- Mixed Use Corridor: 231 – Mid-Rise Residential with 1st Floor Commercial

Figure 70: Future Trip Generation

Land Use	Land Area (ac)	Conversion Factor	Input	Total Trips		
				Weekday	AM Peak	PM Peak
Low-density Residential	2,349	0.75	1,762 DU	16,616	1,233	1,656
Neighborhood Services	10.5	0.4	183,000 sq. ft. GLA	10,642	242	872
Downtown	1,762	0.4	30,702 DU	108,075 ²	10,746	9,825
Mixed Use Corridor	271	0.4	4,722 DU	16,621 ²	1,653	1,511

² Total Daily Trips were estimated by multiplying PM Peak Trips by 11, since Total Daily Trips were not readily available from ITE’s Trip Generation Manual.

7. Mobility & Transportation

As a next step, the Vehicle-Miles Travelled by all these new trips were transferred to the future road network (non-highway only). Average distance travelled was estimated using Version 8 of the Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics data available through the US Census. *Figure 7P* shows the average distance that vehicles travel daily from home to work, and vice versa.

Figure 7P: Average Distance Travelled in Simonton

Distance Travelled	Home to Work	Work to Home
0 – 10 miles	7%	15%
10 – 25 miles	29.3%	39.4%
25 – 50 miles	43.3%	26.8%
More than 50 miles	20.3%	19.2%
Average Distance	31.9 miles	27.3 miles

On average, trips from new residential developments will travel 31.9 mi. while those for new commercial will travel 27.3 mi. An average of the two, or 29.6 mi., is used for mixed-use development. These values were used to convert trips into additional VMT due to new development. The resulting total additional VMT is 4,506,990 vehicle-miles, although some of this VMT will be travelled on roads outside of the study area.

Within Simonton, the farthest distance from the ETJ boundary is about 3 miles. Hence, only a proportional amount of additional VMT will be seen on Simonton and ETJ streets. This leaves 457,300 vehicle-miles in the study area.

Also, 9% of the additional VMT is allocated to local roads (not analyzed in this study). Although, as noted previously, local streets experience only marginal increases in traffic due to area growth, they might someday connect points of interest due to construction of new local roads in Twinwood’s developments or for other unforeseen reasons. [Under existing conditions, too, 9% of all VMT is from local streets.]

The final additional VMT that must be distributed is 414,900 vehicle-miles, which is added to the two FM roads and to the proposed SH 36A in the Fort Bend County Major Thoroughfare Plan. In *Figure 7M*, roads that will carry additional VMT are shown in bright orange. This additional VMT is distributed to individual road segments based on their length.

Finally, future traffic is calculated from the sum of background growth and additional VMT. This value, when converted to service volumes, is used to estimate the Level of Service for future conditions. *Figure 7Q* shows the process stated so far graphically.

7. Mobility & Transportation

Figure 7Q: Process for Estimating Future Level of Service

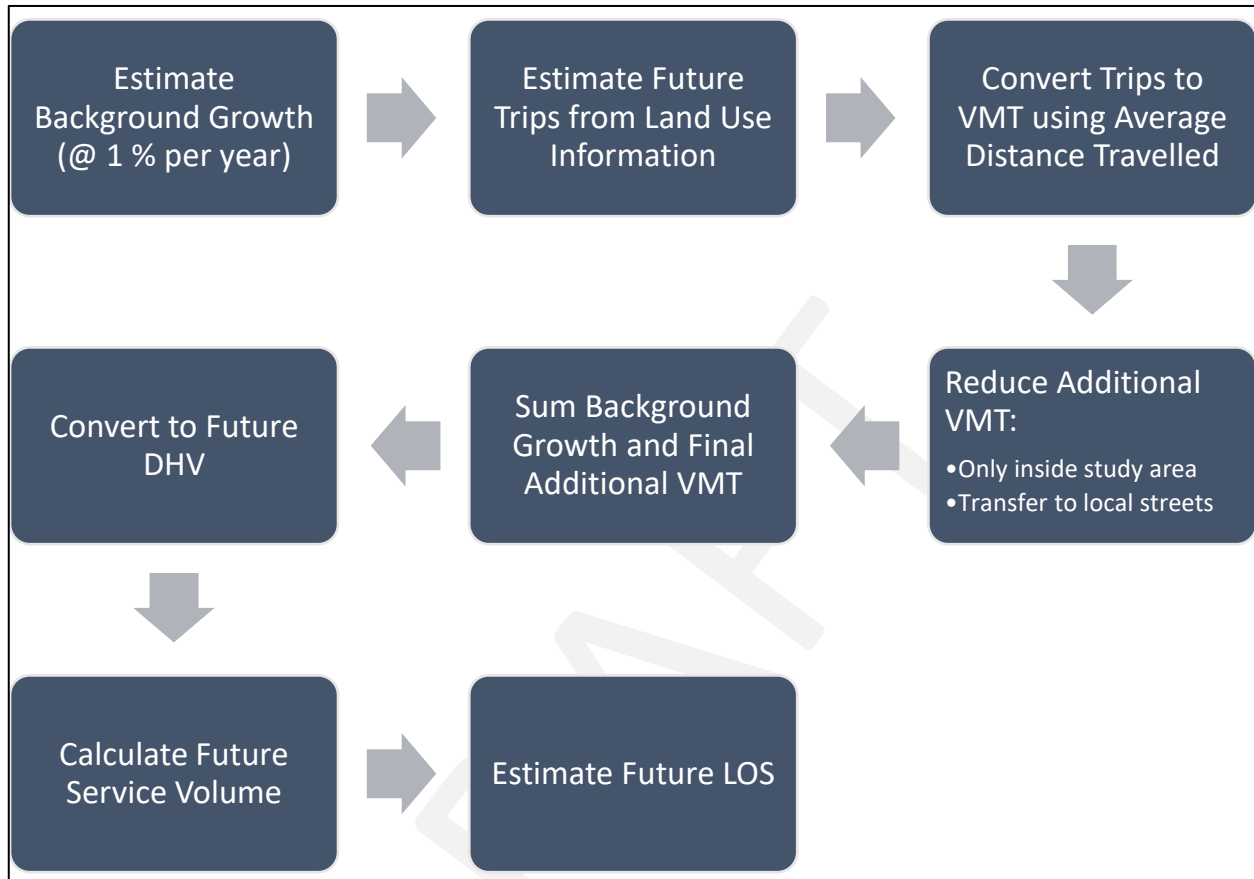
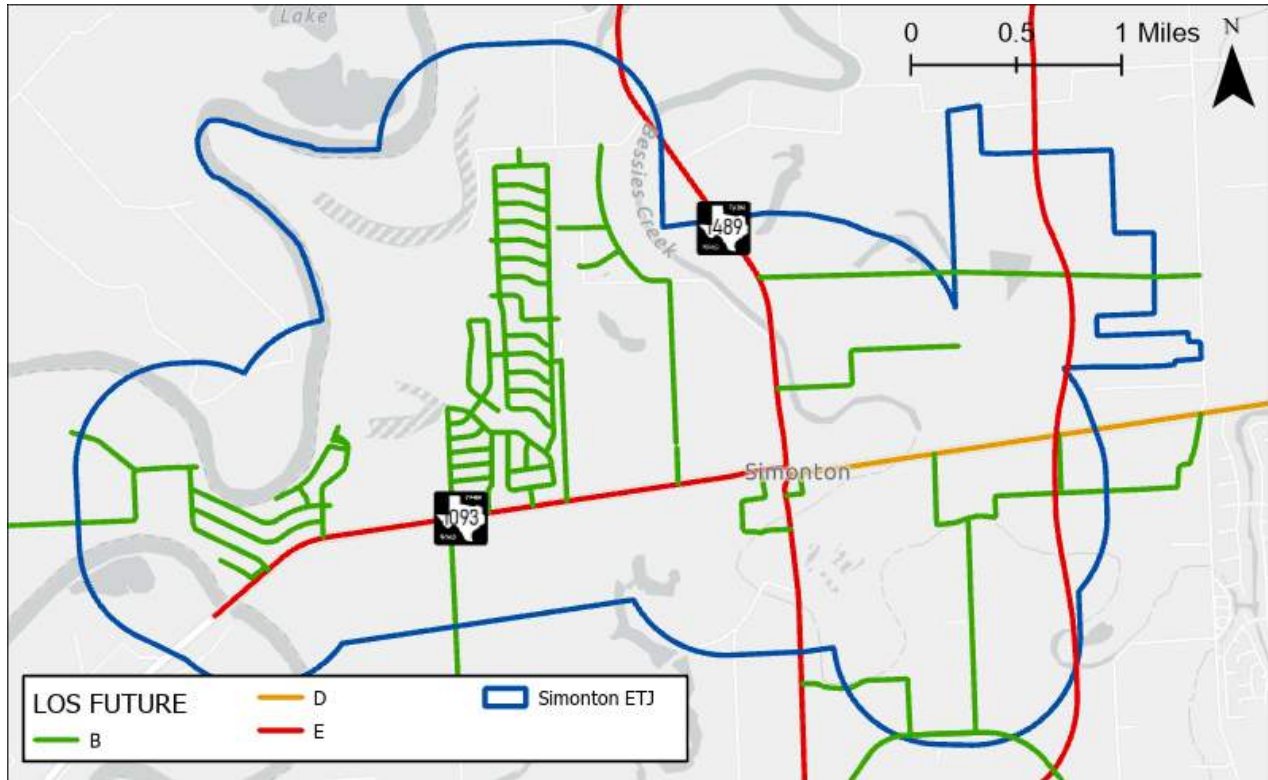


Figure 7R shows the output of the process in terms of future Level of Service. It can be seen that all the FM roads, and the proposed SH 36 (from the Fort Bend County Major Thoroughfare Plan) deteriorate to a Level of Service of E. The only exception to this is FM 1093 east of FM 1489 which is expanded to a six-lane road, thereby making it a multi-lane rural highway.

7. Mobility & Transportation

Figure 7R: Future Conditions Level of Service (2045)



In the absence of any new connections (other than those mentioned in *Table 7L*), traffic is expected to be attracted to the proposed SH 36A. Proposed SH 36A will have a high volume of freight vehicles, since it will be carrying traffic from the Port of Freeport.

The proposed SH 36A alignment is also expected to carry a large chunk of the future traffic since it is a long road that joins several other important roads and connects to I-10 in Waller County. For all these factors combined, it is expected to function at an Level of Services of E.

Roadway Network Improvements

As *Figure 7R* shows, road conditions in the future (2045) are expected to be unacceptable (below an LOS of D) despite connections proposed by the Fort Bent County Thoroughfare Plan. Therefore, this study proposes new connections. Under the current plans, all east-west and north-south traffic must be carried by the two FM roads, which are the only connections through Simonton. Therefore, new alternative routes are proposed in *Figure 7S*.

All 'proposed connections' shown in *Figure 7S* are merely representations and should not be read to convey the ultimate alignment. Road alignments will be determined in the future through a Route and Alignment Study, depending on anticipated growth.

7. Mobility & Transportation

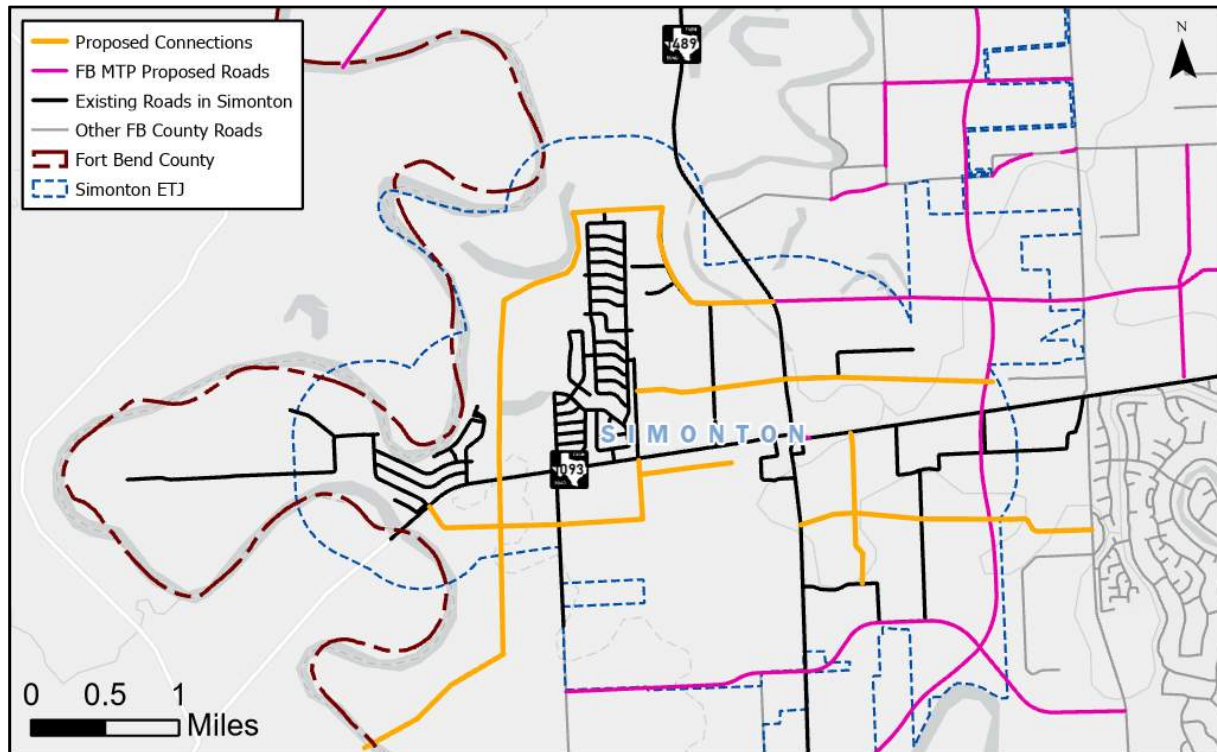


Figure 7S: Proposed Future Connections

Fort Bend County recently opened a regional park on Nails Rd. immediately south of Simonton. To connect residents to the park, a **ten-foot wide** shared-use path is recommended along Simonton Rd. All new proposed roads will have sidewalks built into their right-of-way. A shared use path or SUP, sometimes called a ‘trail,’ is an exclusive right-of-way with low interference from crossing traffic and/or motor vehicles. SUPs allow for all users: bicyclists, wheelchair users, and pedestrians.

Transit and Park & Ride

No scheduled transit services are available in Simonton. Fort Bend County provides Demand Response Services (curb-to-curb), which must be scheduled between one day and one month in advance. The county also provides Commuter Park and Ride Services to two destinations in Houston from three Park and Ride locations in Fort Bend County – two in Sugar Land, and one in Rosenberg. As the population of Simonton and the ETJ grows, proposals can be made to introduce a Park and Ride service between Simonton and neighboring areas. Specific locations of such services would be determined in the future when development creates new population clusters, especially in downtown Simonton.

Recommendations

This study proposes that all roads in the Simonton ETJ be classified into four categories – local, collector, major thoroughfare, and principal thoroughfare – per the classification used in the Fort Bend County Thoroughfare Plan. *Figure 7T* shows a map of the Simonton ETJ area along with all roads shown in *Figure 7S* classified into these four categories.

7. Mobility & Transportation

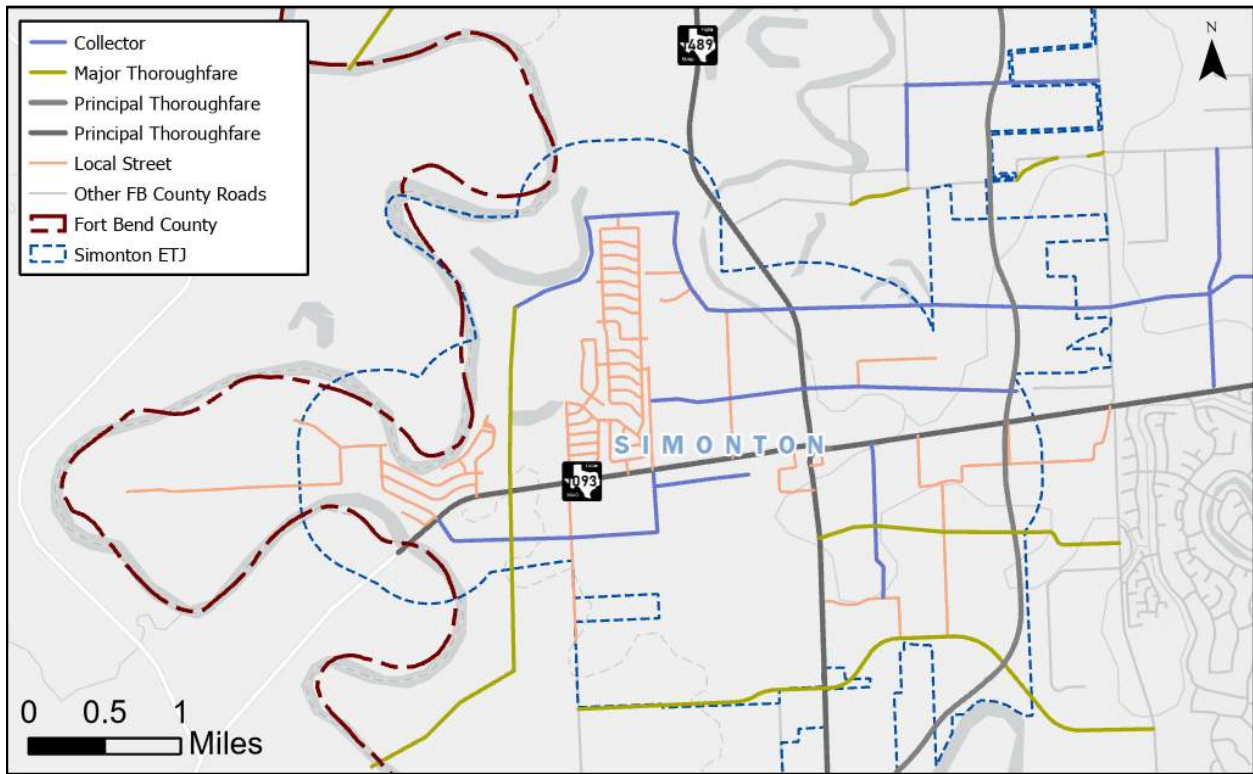


Figure 7T: Proposed Roads, Classified by Type

As can be seen from Figure 7T, only new collectors and major thoroughfares were added as part of this study. The development of future local streets and principal thoroughfares is left out for the following reasons:

- Development of local streets is generally an outcome of subdivision design, and as such, local streets may be developed by the City of Simonton, Fort Bend County, Twinwood, or other property developers.
- The densification of any tract of land through the development of local streets is a function of urban design to provide connections to specific facilities.
- Principal Thoroughfares will be developed by converting major thoroughfares, or by constructing new roads according to the needs of the future, and in consultation with neighboring communities, cities, and counties.

Figure 7U provides proposed cross-sections for the four types of roads. All cross-sections include sidewalks at least five feet wide on both sides of the streets to ensure the needs of active transportation for walking, rolling and biking users.

7. Mobility & Transportation

Proposed Road Cross-sections

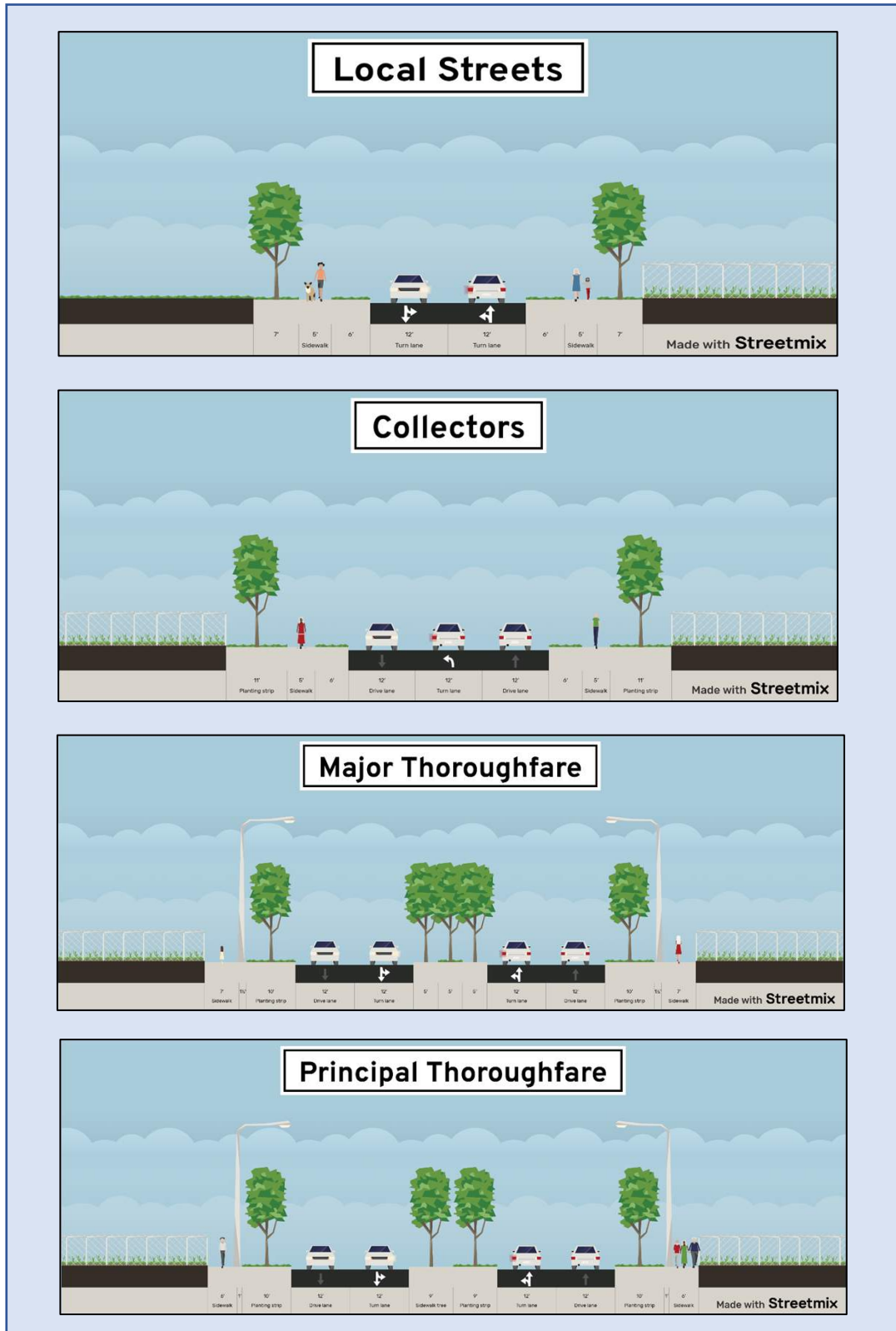


Figure 7U: Proposed Road Cross Section

7. Mobility & Transportation

Study Implementation Strategies

In order to implement the proposals made in this study, the following points are suggested:

- **Traffic Monitoring:** The city must build a robust monitoring system that collects information about traffic counts, parking needs, etc. on roads in Simonton so that the needs of a changing area can be documented. This includes determining how many trucks pass through the city and whether truck parking needs increase in the future.
- **Community Engagement:** A system to collect continuous feedback from the public, and all stakeholders should be created so that the development of infrastructure in Simonton reflects the needs of the public.
- **Infrastructure Maintenance and Improvement:** The city can undertake Road Safety Audits, or other means to monitor the condition of roads and drainage facilities in Simonton.
- **Traffic Demand Management (TDM):** TDM strategies include biking and pedestrian facilities for short commutes, park and rise facilities for long commutes, and other means to reduce demand of traffic, without affecting the mobility of people. Such strategies will become important in the future as Simonton grows.

7. Mobility & Transportation

7.2 Guiding Principles

- Establish safe and multimodal connections between residential, recreational, downtown, and other activity areas.
- Ensure that mobility options meet the needs of all residents, including seniors, children, families and people with disabilities.
- Improve safety for all modes of traffic on FM 1093 and FM 1489.
- Evaluate measures to combat traffic generated by population growth.
- Coordinate with Twinwood to address increased traffic.

7.3 Recommendations

Establish safe and multimodal connections between residential, recreational, downtown, and other activity areas.

- Provide a dedicated pedestrian and bike path along FM 1093 connecting Valley Lodge to Downtown and on FM 1489 connecting Downtown to Daily Park.
- Adopt standards for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity for all new commercial and multifamily development.

Ensure that mobility options meet the needs of all residents, including seniors, children, families and people with disabilities.

- Adopt Complete Streets cross sections for all street types that consider the needs of pedestrians, bicycles, wheelchairs and golf carts in addition to vehicles.
- Work with TxDOT to ensure that all TxDOT improvements include sidewalks and bike paths.
- Provide for safe school bus shelters for children.

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.
- Provide enhanced crosswalks at the intersection of FM 1093 and FM 1489.
- Provide turn lanes at critical intersections along FM 1093.
- Monitor critical hot spots, including FM 1093 at Ashe Road and Bronco Road, and consider proactive improvements in coordination with TxDOT and County.
- Address conflicts with truck traffic on FM 1093 and FM 1489.
- Prepare a capital improvement plan that addresses road repair, and identify funding and grant opportunities.



CHAPTER 8

INFRASTRUCTURE & DRAINAGE

8.1 Existing Conditions

8.2 Guiding Principles

8.3 Recommendations

8. Infrastructure & Drainage

The Comprehensive Plan assesses existing infrastructure and provides guidance for meeting future infrastructure needs for the growing community. Simonton relies on private wells and septic systems, but new development, particularly on lots smaller than an acre, will require piped systems for water and wastewater.

Drainage is of crucial importance as well, as three-quarters of Simonton is a floodplain. The addition of impervious cover – such as roads, parking lots, and buildings – will worsen drainage and flooding problems unless mitigated appropriately through improved stormwater detention and drainage systems.

The Comprehensive Plan serves as a decision-making guide related to the provision of new water and wastewater networks and facilities, drainage improvements, flood mitigation and other capital improvements.

8.1. Existing Conditions

A city's infrastructure includes systems for drainage, water and wastewater, utilities and roads. Where and how the city grows is determined not only by market forces, but also by development constraints such as the availability of this infrastructure. Without a water and wastewater system, public or private, new development in the city is constrained to large lots that can meet lot area requirements for private wells and septic systems. As the city grows, new residential uses will require municipal water, wastewater and drainage facilities.

“The property should contain at least one (1) acre for a well and septic system. If the property is smaller than one acre and was platted or subdivided before 1988, a professional design must be obtained from a Professional Engineer or Registered Sanitarian.”



Well permits are approved by the Fort Bend Subsidence District

Source: Fort Bend County

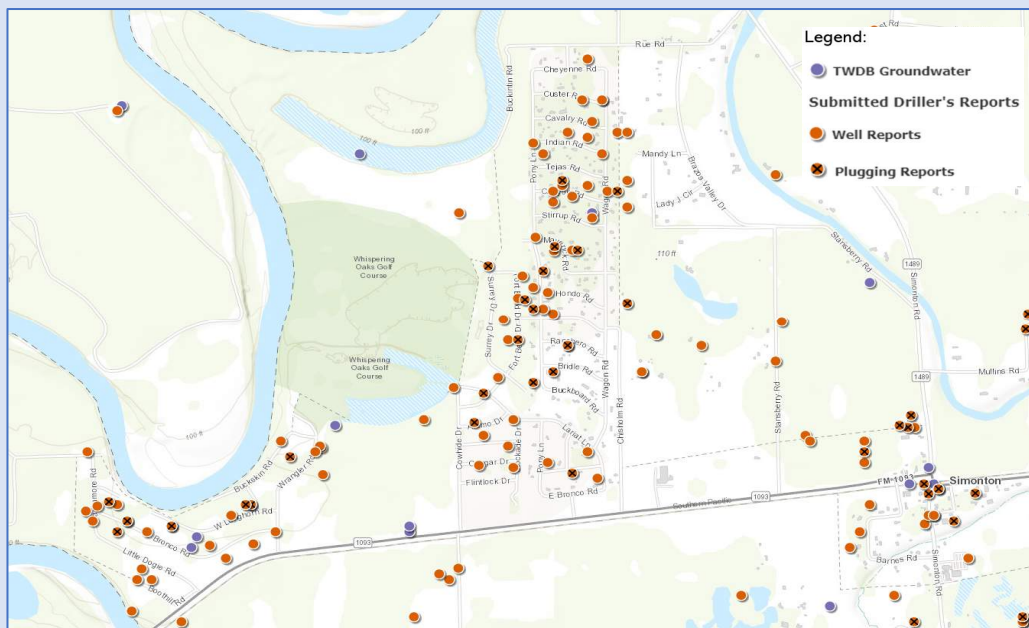
8. Infrastructure & Drainage

Water and Wastewater

As a rural community, the City of Simonton does not currently have municipal water or wastewater infrastructure. Instead, water is supplied by private wells and wastewater is treated by private septic tanks on individual properties.

Fort Bend County regulations and permitting govern the installation of both wells and septic systems. In general, a minimum of one acre is required for a well and septic tank, although properties smaller than one acre may obtain permission for a new well or septic system if they were platted prior to 1988.

Figure 8A: Groundwater Wells



Source: Texas Water Development Board

Water Supply

With no municipal water service, residents must rely on wells for water. All new wells require approval from the Fort Bend Subsidence District.

Water wells can present several challenges. First, availability of water is dependent on ground water levels at the well location. Wells depend on electricity to produce water, and well water must be treated. Furthermore, a new water well can cost anywhere from \$3,500 to \$15,000, depending on the required depth of the well. Because of these limitations, reliance on water wells can limit sustainable and resilient growth.

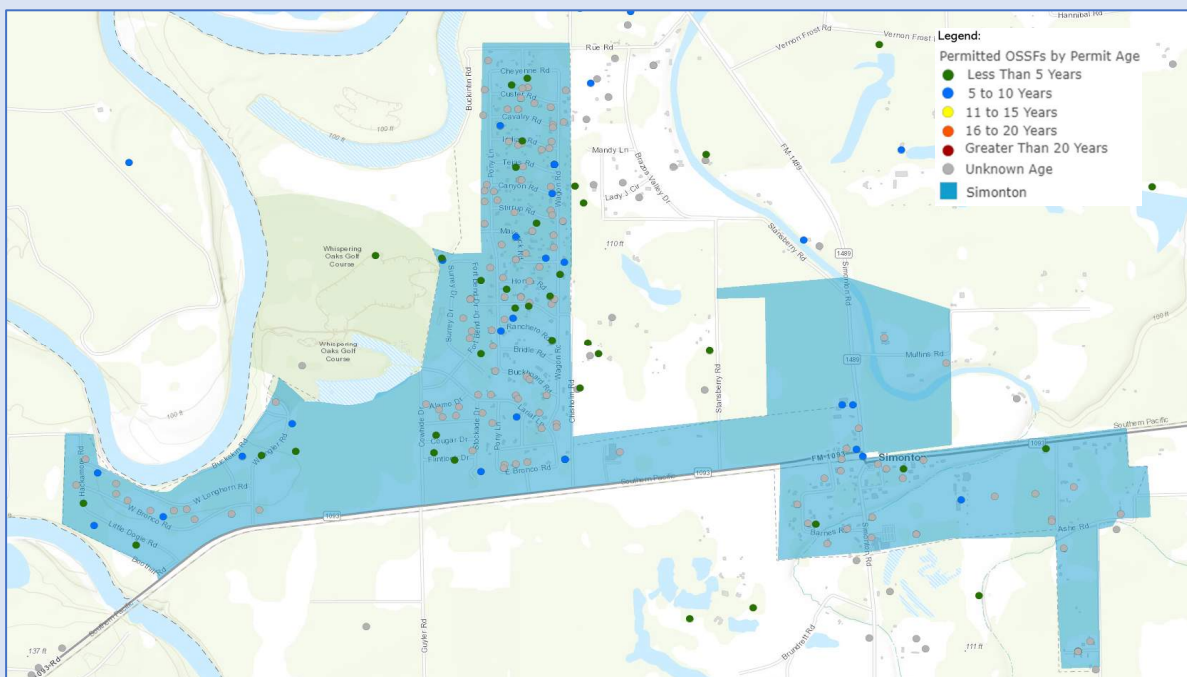
Twinwood operates its own water supply system. Extra capacity in the Twinwood system could potentially be available for other development. However, connectivity to this system may present challenges, such as location of development and future capacity requirements.

8. Infrastructure & Drainage

Wastewater

City residents currently rely on on-site sewage facilities (OSSF), or septic systems, to treat and dispose of wastewater. While septic tanks can provide a simple solution in rural areas, they are expensive, costing anywhere from \$10,000 to \$25,000 to install. With some tanks holding 1000 gallons, septic systems may require substantial space. They also require maintenance and may experience progressive failure, which adds further costs. Permitted On-Site Sewage Facilities in Simonton are shown in Figure 8B.

Figure 8B: Permitted Septic Systems



Source: HGAC

Twinwood Inc. owns a large portion of the land inside Simonton’s ETJ. Twinwood has some wastewater facilities to serve their properties, and may be willing to sell service to surrounding development or communities, although this could be hampered by development location and future capacity requirements.

Without a water and wastewater system, public or private, new development in the city is constrained to large lots.

Other utilities

Electric service in the City is provided by CenterPoint. Individual property owners who want gas for cooking or heating must purchase a gas supply from private providers and keep in on-site storage tanks. As the city grows, upgrades and changes to each utility system will be expected.

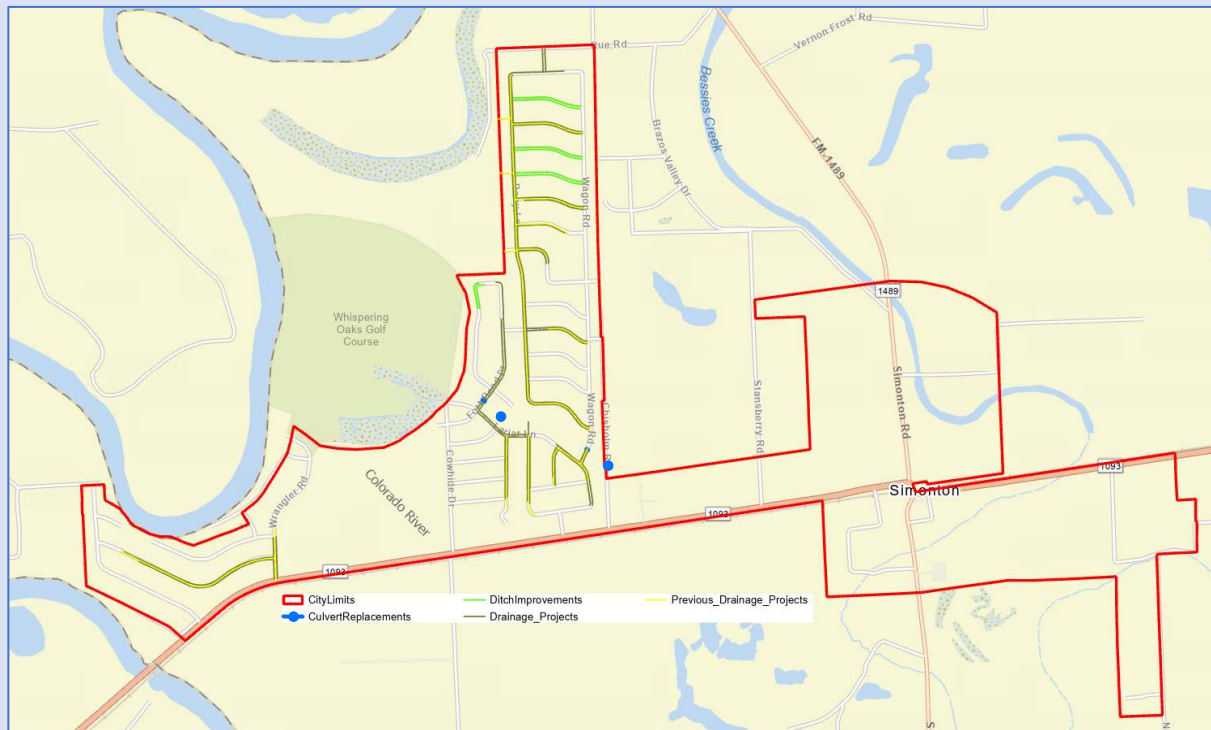
8. Infrastructure & Drainage

Drainage

The City's drainage system consists of open roadside ditches, roadway culverts and driveway culverts. The rainfall runoff collected by the roadside ditches is discharged to the Brazos River. The roadside ditches have shallow depth, however, and do not have the capacity to effectively convey runoff during a larger rainfall event.

While roadside ditches are commonly used in rural areas due to their simplicity, they are prone to siltation, erosion and contamination from runoff containing potential contaminants and soils. Roadside ditches also require frequent maintenance, including waste disposal, excavation and reshaping.

Figure 8C: Potential Drainage Improvements



Source: LJA GIS

- Increased residential land uses in the area will require municipal water, wastewater and drainage facilities.
- Sustainable and resilient infrastructure will protect existing residents and their properties, while accommodating growth in a safe and efficient way that complies with environmental regulations.

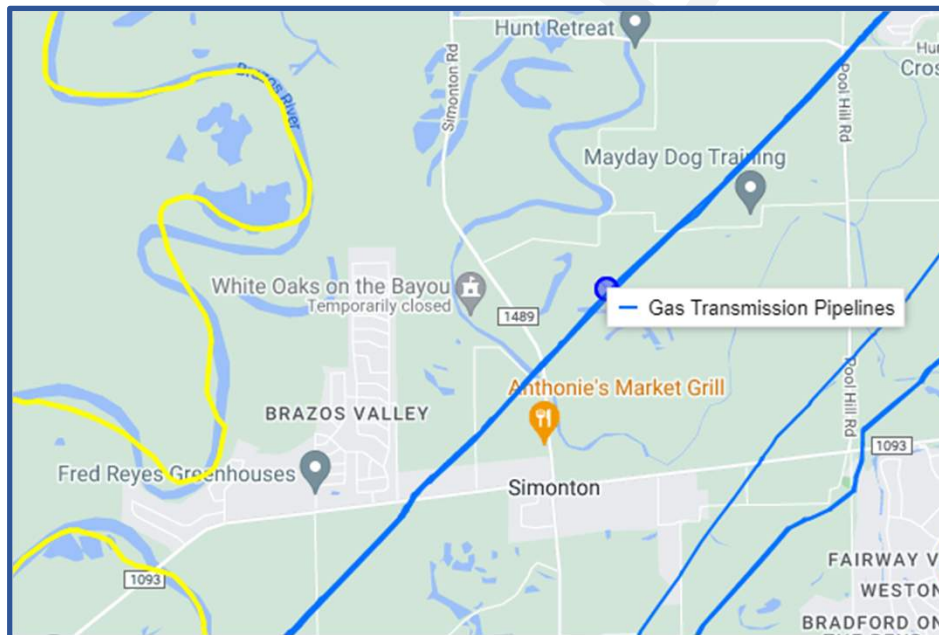
8. Infrastructure & Drainage

Gas Transmission Lines

A 24-inch diameter high pressure gas transmission pipeline owned by the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co. traverses the City of Simonton. Permits and approvals from the pipeline owner and relevant jurisdictions may be needed for development close to the pipeline. Properties adjacent to pipelines may be required to have large setbacks for building construction. Utility conflicts with gas pipelines may require additional design or relocation for developments, adding costs. Design constraints vary depending on pipeline owners. In addition, pipeline leaks and contamination of soil are potential risks.

The City should develop an emergency evacuation plan to prepare for potential incidents involving pipelines.

Figure 8D: Gas Transmission Lines



Source: National Pipeline Mapping System

8. Infrastructure & Drainage

City Services

Because of the City of Simonton’s small size, many services typically provided by municipalities are instead provided by Fort Bend County or via city contracts with private providers. There are no public schools, parks, or libraries inside the city limits. The only civic facility is City Hall on FM 1093.

Figure 8E: Services & Providers

SERVICES	PROVIDER
City Secretary, Finance, Human Resources	City
Communications, Code Enforcement, Economic Development, Engineering and Capital Projects, Permits and Inspections, Planning and Development	City/Contract
Convention and Visitors Bureau	N/A
Emergency Management	Fort Bend County/Mayor
Animal Services and Shelter, EMS, Fire Department, Fire Marshal, Fleet, Health, Municipal Court, Office of Emergency Management, Parks & Recreation, Library, Public Works	Fort Bend County
Phone/Cable/Internet	Private
Police	Fort Bend County Sheriff Department
Streets and Drainage	Fort Bend County/TXDOT/City
Electric Service	CenterPoint/Reliant
Trash Collection & Recycling Service	City Contract with Private Provider
Other	Gas Transmission Lines (Multiple Owners)

Emergency Services

The City of Simonton has an interlocal agreement with Fort Bend County Office of Emergency Management to help in times of high water events and river flooding, and other emergencies as well. The city also has an Emergency Operations Committee, made up of volunteers, to assist in times of need.

The City receives fire protection from the Fulshear-Simonton Fire Department. The Fire Department’s new Central Station is located on FM 1093 at Ashe Rd., approximately two miles east of FM 1489.

8. Infrastructure & Drainage

8.2 Guiding Principles

- Plan for sustainable growth to protect the city's quality of life.
- Plan and invest in infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate growth.
- Identify appropriate locations for capital improvements that protect and enhance the City's character.
- Allow existing uses to continue on well and septic, with the option to tie into future municipal water and wastewater infrastructure.

8.3 Recommendations

General

- Prepare an Infrastructure Master Plan for the City and ETJ to:
 - Assess current conditions.
 - Address existing and future demands based on the area's growth capacity.
 - Identify options for providing service to future development in city and ETJ, including water treatment and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, and lift stations.
 - Develop and create individual master drainage plan, master water infrastructure plan and master wastewater plan for future growth.
- Adopt impact fees for water, wastewater, and drainage as a source of funding.
- Make regular updates to the city's fee schedule.
- Prepare design and construction standards to ensure that all areas of the city meet same infrastructure standards. Review and update construction standards and specifications periodically to incorporate emerging technologies.
- 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 by the county.
- Seek financial support to aid development of new infrastructure and public facilities.
- Consider Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs) to provide infrastructure for new communities.

8. Infrastructure & Drainage

Water and Wastewater

- Ensure that the Infrastructure Master Plan addresses the following system components for new communities:

Water Supply

- Identified water source (surface water or groundwater).
- Water treatment plant for drinking water.
- Trunk lines along community streets.
- Service lines for new homes.

Wastewater

- Analysis of wastewater capacity requirements for future treatment plant and pipe systems.
- Identification of site for a wastewater treatment plant and lift stations.
- Trunk lines along highways and collector streets.
- Service lines for new homes.
- Provide the option for existing residents on well and septic to tie into the new water and wastewater system.
- Require all new water and wastewater infrastructure to follow established design standards such as those found in the Fort Bend County Engineering Design Manual.

Drainage

- Create a Master Drainage Plan to plan for drainage facilities that protect both existing development and new communities.
- Require curb and gutter infrastructure for new development, except where an open ditch system is appropriate to preserve and enhance the rural character.
- Plan for flood mitigation for both new and existing development. Possible strategies include:
 - Construct regional detention basins.
 - Add new channels for stormwater storage before outfall to the Brazos River.
- Ensure that all new drainage systems follow established design standards such as those in the Fort Bend County Engineering Design Manual.



CHAPTER 9

RESILIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY

- 9.1 Existing Conditions.....
- 9.2 Guiding Principles.....
- 9.3 Recommendations

9. Resiliency & Sustainability

The Comprehensive Plan looks at at known or potential environmental hazards and threats to the city, such as flooding, extreme heat and environmental pollution, and identifies measures to improve the community’s ability to withstand, recover from, and adapt to these challenges.

Because of its location in coastal Texas adjacent to the Brazos River, Simonton is particularly susceptible to major flooding, hurricanes, and extreme heat, but adopting recommended mitigation strategies, improving local infrastructure, and educating residents about best practices can all improve the community’s ability to thrive despite these threats.

9.1 Existing Conditions

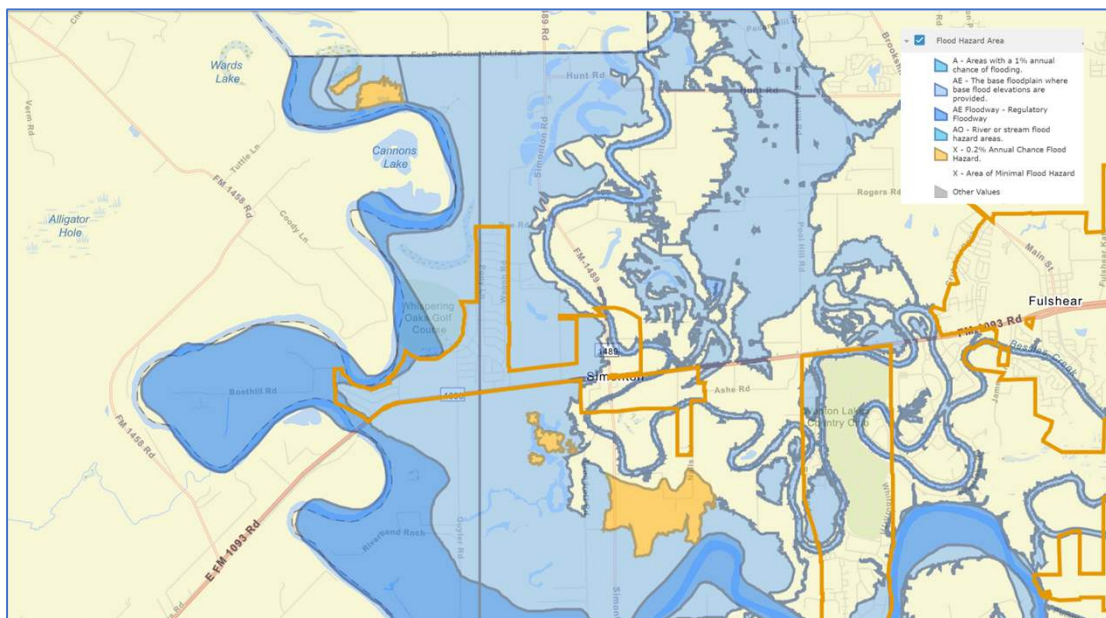
Floodplain

The City of Simonton sits next to the Brazos River, the largest river in Texas. Like other rivers that flow through the Texas Coastal Plain on the way to the Gulf of Mexico, the Brazos River periodically overflows its banks and inundates adjacent lands. The rich soils left behind are what first attracted immigrant planters to the area in the 19th century. The repeated flooding has been devastating, however, for homes and businesses.

As shown in the map below, the majority of the city is in Zone AE (light blue), commonly referred to as the 100-year floodplain, with a 1% annual chance of flooding. A significant portion of Valley Lodge Section 1 is in the Brazos River floodway. Only the oldest part of Simonton close to FM 1489 and FM 1093 is not designated as a flood hazard area.

- Approximately 75% of the City is 100-year floodplain.
- A smaller portion (~3%) is in the Brazos River floodway.
- Repeated flooding over the years has caused significant property damage in the community.
- New construction in flood areas must be elevated or floodproofed and show no adverse impact on flood levels.

Figure 9A: FEMA Flood Hazard Zones



Source: Federal Emergency management Agency

9. Resiliency & Sustainability

Floodplain Development

According to Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) prepared by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), approximately 75% of the City is in the 100-year floodplain (1% annual risk of flooding) and 3% is in the floodway of the Brazos River. When flood maps are updated for Fort Bend County, virtually all properties in Simonton are expected to be placed within the 100-year floodplain.

Both the floodplain and floodway are considered Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA), where new development is strictly regulated to protect life and mitigate property losses. Although development is allowed in Special Flood Hazard Areas, new homes must be elevated above predicted flood levels and nonresidential construction must be elevated or floodproofed. Furthermore, new development cannot itself contribute to flooding – all new ‘fill,’ which includes structures, pavement and dirt, must be offset or ‘mitigated.’

The City of Simonton requires a floodplain permit as well as a building permit for all new construction. New homes must be elevated at least 24 inches above Base Flood Elevation, and an engineer must certify that any grading or addition of fill dirt will not adversely affect adjacent properties.

Simonton residents barred from rebuilding flooded homes

By Greg Groogan, FOX 26 News | Published July 1, 2016 | News | FOX 26 Houston | [➔](#)

FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps

- FIRM Panels provide a means of regulating development in flood-prone communities and can serve as a tool to develop with resiliency and prevention in mind.
- FIRM Panels only depict low-chance, large magnitude floods. Flooding experienced by communities more frequently may reflect a much more dire risk of flooding.
- FIRM Panels are updated on a slow timeline and may not reflect recent development and its impacts.
- Models used to create these maps are done at a large scale and may not reflect the nuances of each smaller community.
- Communities can develop local, more-current hydraulic models to better assess local topographic conditions and on-going development, and identify impacts from smaller, more frequent flood events.
- Localized hydraulic modeling can help a community anticipate frequent flooding and develop a plan to mitigate potential damages with anticipated development and growth.
- Development in a floodplain not only affects potential flooding in that area, but also impacts property both upstream and downstream.
- Anticipating and managing these impacts is important to consider as communities grow.

9. Resiliency & Sustainability

Recent Flood Events

9B: Flooding during Hurricane Harvey



The City of Simonton has experienced several significant flood events in the last decade. Flooding in May 2016 impacted 250 homes and caused a mandatory evacuation in some areas.

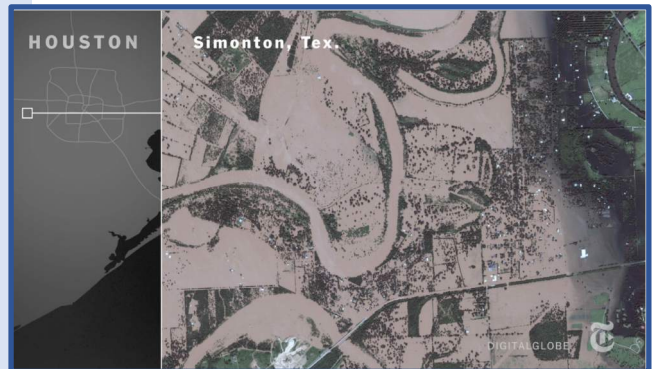
Hurricane Harvey in August 2017, the most destructive recent flood event, dropped approximately 60 inches of rainfall over four days. The Brazos River overflowed its banks, flooding **approximately 80% of the City**.

City of Simonton installed a Levee and Pump Flood Protection System along the Brazos River to protect the area from future flooding events.

Hurricane Harvey was year's costliest U.S. disaster at \$125 billion in damages

Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria combined with devastating Western wildfires and other natural catastrophes to make 2017 the most expensive year on record for disasters, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported Monday.

<https://www.texastribune.org/2018/01/08/hurricane-harvey-was-years-costliest-us-disaster-125-billion-damages/>



Source: H-GAC

Any improvements or mitigation strategies that result in modification to mapped floodplain boundaries requires the community to go through **FEMA's Map Revision Process**, which can be expensive and time-consuming.

The City should explore options that will protect entire neighborhoods by removing them from floodplain boundaries.

Avenues for Mitigation

- Every river and floodplain is unique and brings its own set of considerations and challenges when assessing mitigation of flooding.
- Two-dimensional Hydraulic Models can be developed as a tool for communities to assess local, developing conditions, provide insight to the key flood-prone areas, and allow for targeted mitigation strategies.
- Potential Mitigation Strategies
 - Any improvements or mitigation strategies that result in modification to mapped floodplain boundaries will require the community to go through FEMA's Map Revision Process (\$\$\$)
 - Levees
 - Can protect entire communities by removing them from floodplain. However, flood waters will need to go somewhere else and could harm neighboring communities.
 - Are challenging to permit.
 - Require a FEMA Map Revision Process.
 - Overflow/Relief Channels
 - Can alleviate flood risk by providing additional flow paths for flood waters. If a community is experiencing lower magnitude, more frequent flooding, these types of channels can greatly support mitigation of flood damage.
 - Magnitude of risk alleviation varies from site to site.
 - Though elevations of flooding may decrease, extents of flooding may increase.
 - FEMA Map Revision Process will be required.

9. Resiliency & Sustainability

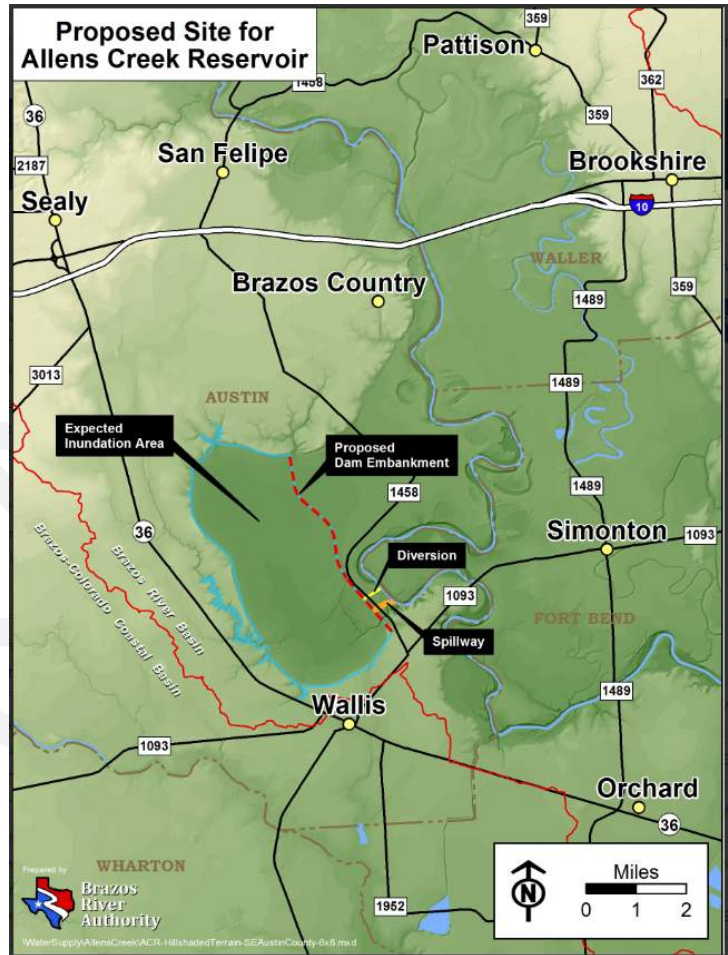
Allen's Creek Reservoir Project

The Brazos River Authority is planning a new reservoir, to be called Allen's Creek Reservoir, to the west of Simonton. This reservoir will serve as a water supply to the Brazos River basin. The project is currently in a permitting and design phase, with the permitting process expected to take 5-10 years. Construction on the project is expected to begin in 2030 at the latest.

The water to be held in the Allen's Creek Reservoir is intended to address the expected rise in surface water demand in the Lower Brazos basin, caused by projected population growth. In addition, the reservoir is designed to decrease reliance on groundwater pumping, a factor linked to land subsidence in the lower Brazos River basin. The reservoir is expected to provide 100,000 acre-feet of water per year, which will serve around 260,000 families.

The City of Simonton should coordinate with the Brazos River Authority to discuss the impacts of this project to the area. The reservoir may be a potential water supply source and could help reduce flooding in the area.

Figure 9C: Proposed Allens Creek Reservoir



Source: Brazos River Authority

9. Resiliency & Sustainability

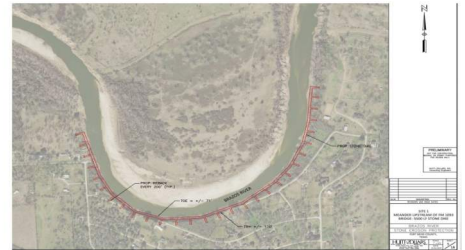
The Brazos River Simonton Cutoff Project



Proposed Improvements – Sites 1 and 2



Proposed Improvements Site 1 – Upstream Meander of Simonton Cutoff (RS)



Proposed Improvements Site 2 – Downstream Meander of Simonton Cutoff (RS)



- This study, performed by Huitt-Zollars, began in 2020 and was completed in 2022.
- The Brazos River meanders in two locations in Simonton. The riverbank in these two locations is anticipated to erode without intervention.
- To mitigate and prevent shifting of the river alignment, erosion countermeasures (riprap) are proposed in areas most susceptible to erosion.
- In the maps shown, the red and blue lines give two projections for possible erosion limits and shifting of river alignment by 2048 if no improvements are made.



9. Resiliency & Sustainability

The Brazos River Simonton Cutoff Project



- The recommended improvements for this project include placing riprap along the riverbanks to protect them from erosion, as shown below:



USACE-ERDC
(2014)



USACE-ERDC
(2018)

- While these improvements can help prevent extreme flooding, it is recommended that the City identifies other areas where erosion can be protected against.

9. Resiliency & Sustainability

Wetlands

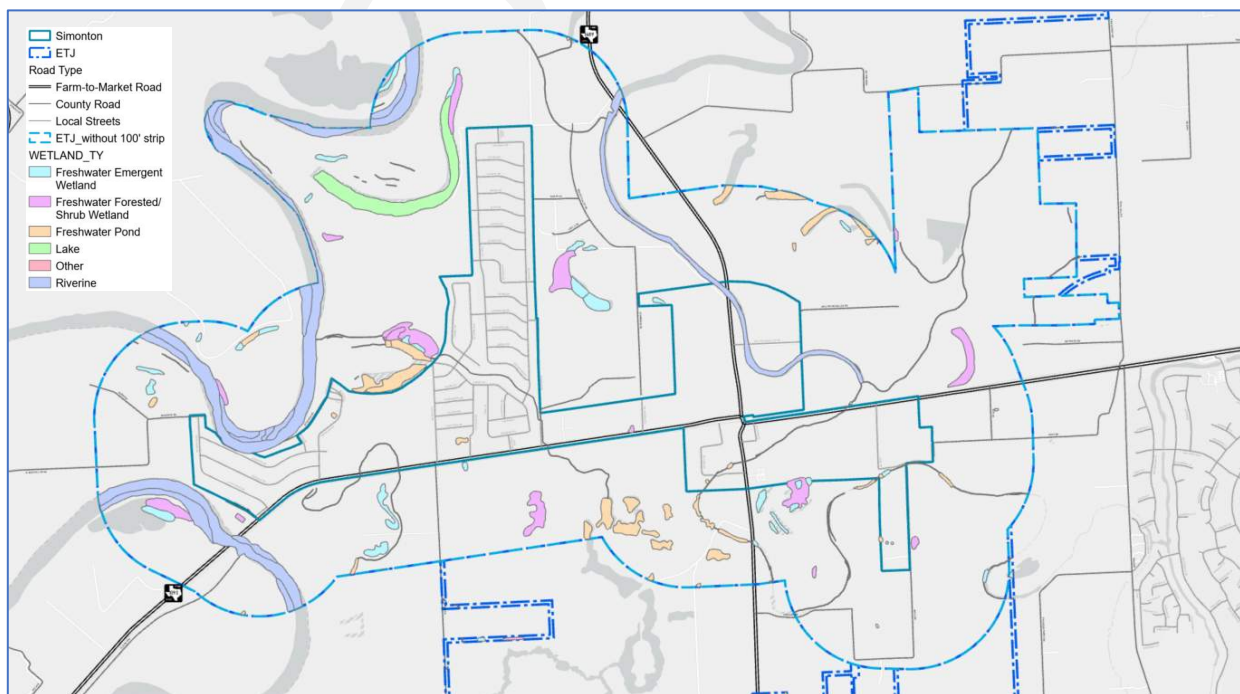
Wetlands are defined as areas of land that are saturated and hold water, such as rivers, marshes and swamps. Wetlands can be regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and may present challenges for development. Where wetlands are regulated, additional permits and coordination is required to build near wetlands or to remove wetlands. Regulations may differ depending on wetland types and locations.



Wetlands play an important role in the ecosystem. Wetlands help improve water quality, provide habitat for fish and wildlife, and most important for Simonton, act as a natural sponge to trap and store floodwaters, which helps to reduce flood levels.

Figure shows the types of wetland found in the City of Simonton and its ETJ. There are approximately 575 acres of wetlands present in the area.

Figure 9D: Wetlands in Simonton



Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – National Wetlands Inventory

9. Resiliency & Sustainability

Species of Interest

Maintaining environmental equilibrium with local species is crucial for sustainable development, as disruptions to ecosystems and climate affect the availability of resources and essential conditions such as clean air and water. The presence of endangered or threatened species serves as an indicator of potential imbalances that may affect construction projects and trigger cascading effects, including economic impacts.

Conservation classifications for local species distinguish the risk levels faced by different species. *Endangered* species are at significant risk of extinction and receive the strongest legal safeguards. *Threatened* species are likely to become endangered without intervention, prompting protective measures. *Candidate* species are under consideration for official listing, and though not yet classified, they often benefit from conservation efforts. *Rare* species, while not necessarily threatened or endangered, have limited populations or distributions, prompting conservation actions to ensure their survival and prevent future endangerment. Each term reflects varying degrees of vulnerability and the need for tailored conservation strategies.

The following are species of interest in the Brazos River Basin:

Endangered Species

- Smalleye Shiner (*photo, lower right*)
- Sharpnose Shiner
- Golden-cheeked Warbler
- Houston Toad

Threatened Species

- Bracted Twistflower
- Alligator Snapping Turtle

Candidate and Rare Species

- Texas Fawnsfoot
- Western Chicken Turtle

Bracted Twistflower



Courtesy of Bill and Dolphia Bransford, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

Alligator Snapping Turtle



Photo courtesy of Sabine River Authority

Houston Toad



© Chase A. Fountain / TPWD

Smalleye Shiner



Photo By Chad Thomas, Texas State University - San Marcos

Source for all photos: Brazos River Authority

9. Resiliency & Sustainability

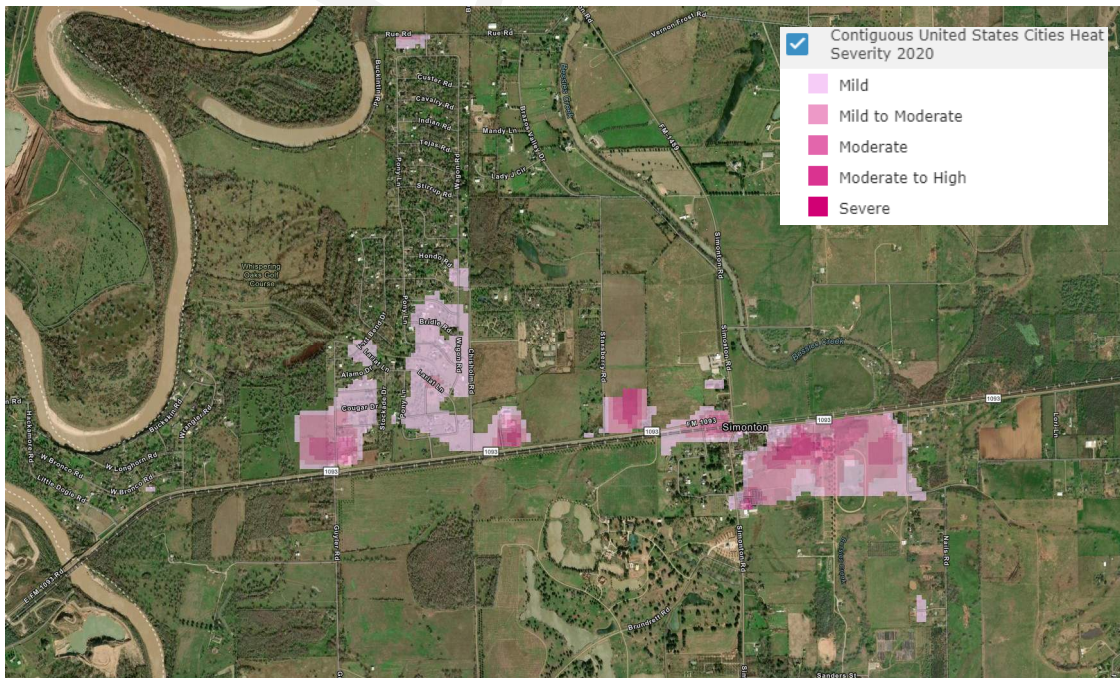
Heat Islands and Land Cover

The Heat Island Effect is a phenomenon characterized by increased temperatures in urban or developed areas compared to the surrounding rural landscapes. This temperature disparity arises from a combination of human activities, alterations to land surfaces, and the concentration of materials that absorb and retain heat. The localized warming effect is particularly pronounced in densely populated areas where buildings, pavement, and other heat-absorbing structures contribute to elevated temperatures. As a result, heat islands can have various environmental implications, including heightened energy consumption, compromised air quality, and challenges for urban planning to mitigate the impact of rising temperatures on both the environment and the well-being of residents. The map above shows variation in degrees of severe heat in areas of Simonton.

The Heat Island Effect should be taken into consideration when planning for future development. Strategies that have been established by LEED and Envision to reduce the urban heat island effect should be incorporated into plans. These strategies include green infrastructure such as bioswales and rain gardens, shading or SRI (Solar Reflectance Index) requirements and LID (Low-Impact Development) drainage design.

Planting trees, particularly along paved streets, can help mitigate heat: shaded surfaces may be 20-45 degrees cooler than the peak temperatures of unshaded surfaces.

Figure 9E: Heat Severity in Simonton



Source: ArcGIS Online- The Trust for Public Land

9. Resiliency & Sustainability

WHY IT'S HOTTER IN THE CITY

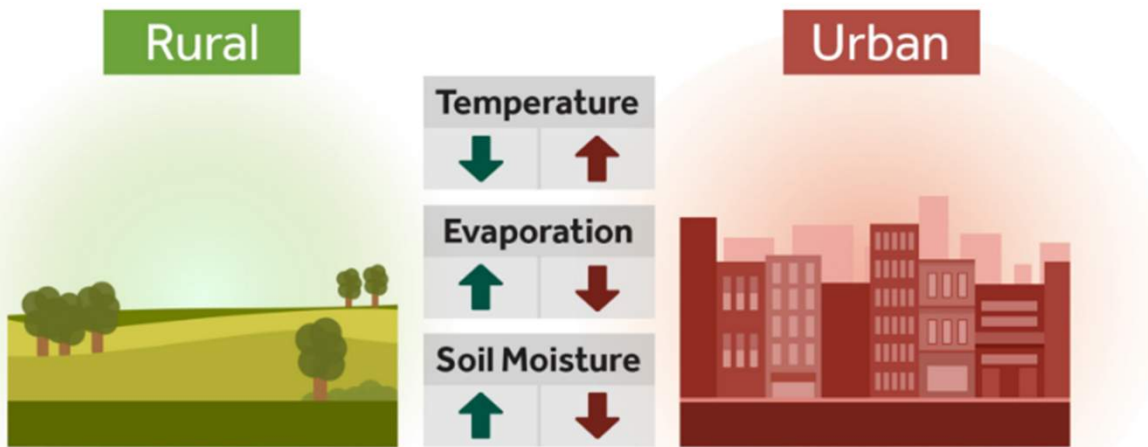
By mid-summer of 2021, communities across the United States had already sweltered through record-shattering heat events. Urban heat islands can exacerbate the impact of these heat waves, compromising health and comfort, and often creating dangerous conditions for many vulnerable populations.

A number of the reasons why urban areas get hotter were included as components in our heat intensity index:

There are more human-created heat emissions. Population density matters. [Heat emissions](#) come from all the activities of city life: transportation, machinery and appliances, industrial facilities, and the heating and cooling of buildings. During a heat wave, air conditioning from urban buildings [can add 20%](#) more heat to the outside air, compared to regular summer weather.

Less vegetation means reduced evaporative cooling. Partially through a process called [evapotranspiration](#), plants help cool the air. Leaves absorb some of the heat energy from the air, causing evaporation of water

Graphic 1: Impermeable surfaces and less vegetation add to the heat island effect.



Graphic 2: Heat Island temperature profile. Temperature varies depending on land use



From: *Hot Zones: Urban Heat Islands* (2021 report by Climate Central)

9. Resiliency & Sustainability

Envision and LEED

Envision and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) are established certification programs that help planners and engineers create resilient designs. In general, LEED is geared towards sustainable buildings, while Envision is for sustainable infrastructure. Both systems should be integrated early in the design stage and considered throughout the life of a project.

The Envision Sustainable Infrastructure Rating System rates projects across several elements, granting projects different levels of awards based on several factors. These categories include:

Quality of Life	Natural World
Leadership	Climate and Risk
Resource Allocation	Infrastructure

LEED certification is a point system based on several factors, including:

Location and Transportation	Indoor Environmental Quality
Water Efficiency	Innovation
Energy and Atmosphere	Regional Priority
Materials and Resources	

The City of Simonton should consider implementing Envision and LEED requirements for large capital improvement projects or private developments to encourage and implement sustainable design. These requirements may raise the initial capital cost, but lower the lifecycle costs of large budgeted projects.

Resilience and Sustainability for Water, Wastewater and Storm Water infrastructure

Water Distribution Infrastructure

- Understand the long-term availability of water giving changing groundwater and surface water volumes and demands on those volumes
- Understand the potential impact of water sourcing on the surrounding environment, especially species which have a critical habitat in the area

Wastewater Infrastructure

- Substantial flood protection may be required for plant and lift stations given they will be in proximity to their outfall

Stormwater Infrastructure

- Resilience in stormwater directly relates to water, and wastewater resilience
- Strategies may differ from public to private infrastructure due to desired project goals from private developers or local regulations
- Coordinate with the Brazos River authority to understand the impact of the Allens Creek Reservoir

9.2 Guiding Principles

- Seek innovative measures to address flood hazards to protect homes and properties.
- Incorporate flood control with all new and existing developments to prevent future damage.
- Incorporate resiliency and sustainability measures in all land use and infrastructure decisions.
- 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.
- Coordinate with 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.

9. Resiliency & Sustainability

9.3 Recommendations

- Maintain a Hazard Mitigation Plan for the City and ETJ to address all hazards to which City is susceptible, including wildfires, flooding, extreme heat and drought, hazardous materials, and hurricanes.
- Incorporate hazard mitigation (resiliency) in all Master Plans.
- Investigate the feasibility of requiring Envision or LEED certified public and private projects for developments over a determined construction value.
- Implement erosion countermeasures, such as those discussed in the Huitt-Zollars Brazos River Simonton Cutoff project, in riverbank areas susceptible to erosion.
- Coordinate with the Brazos River Authority regarding the Allen's Creek Reservoir project as a potential water supply for new development.
- Collaborate with US Army Corp of Engineers, the Brazos River Authority and Fort Bend County to undertake improvements to Brazos River.
- Mitigate heat island effects by integrating sustainable strategies, such as limiting paved areas and increasing shade, especially along streets, sidewalks, trails and parking areas, to mitigate increased heat due to development.
- 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.
- Perform a wetland study to identify wetlands in the City and surrounding areas that are being developed, differentiating regulated wetlands and non-regulated wetlands.
- Given the intrinsically connected nature of Simonton's water resources, and the relatively small number of assets requiring analysis, consider a one water approach where all water resources are modeled together. This may help control overall consulting costs and provide a more connected insight into the water resources of the city.
- 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.



CHAPTER 10

PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

10.1 Existing Condition.....

10.2 Guiding Principles.....

10.3 Recommendations.....

10. Parks & Cultural Activities

Parks, open space and trails enhance a city’s quality of life and the well-being of its residents. As the population grows, Simonton’s agricultural land and natural open spaces are in danger of redevelopment for new housing and commercial businesses, increasing the need for the city and other governmental entities to provide parks, open space, and recreational trails.

A well-designed system of public open spaces, parks and a trail network for pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders will help maintain the city’s quality of life, protect environmentally sensitive lands, promote a sense of community belonging, improve property values and the local tax base, foster a desirable business environment, and attract visitors.

10.1 Existing Conditions

Parks, Trails, and Open Space

The City of Simonton does not currently own or operate any public parks or recreational areas. Valley Lodge’s four-acre private park on Cowhide Drive serves as the de facto community gathering site, where residents celebrate events like July 4th and New Year’s Eve. The park features a playground and small shelter but is otherwise unimproved.

In 2018, Fort Bend County dedicated Abe and Lizzie Daily Park, a new regional park just south of Simonton at Sanders Street and Nails Road. The park is named for the parents of Dr. Harold Daily, a Simonton native, who donated 68 of the park’s approximately 120 acres. The park improvements are still under construction, but when completed, Daily Park will have multiple sports fields (cricket, soccer, disc golf, and baseball), a covered pavilion with restrooms and concessions, and a nature preserve along the Brazos River. The park improvements will cost roughly \$4.5 million, approved as part of the county’s 2023 parks bond election.



Daily Park Entrance and Pavilion, May 2023. Photos courtesy of Fort Bend County Parks/Facebook

The entrance to Daily Park at 4026 Nails Road is only 2 miles from downtown Simonton, providing an opportunity for a shared use walking and biking path next to FM 1489 to connect the city to the park. Because FM 1489 has no sidewalks, there is currently no safe route to Daily Park other than by vehicle.

10. Parks & Cultural Activities

PROPOSED 2023 PARKS BOND ELECTION PROJECTS				
Precinct	Park Name	Description of Project	Location Area	Estimated Cost
1	Freedom Park	Convert (4) grass baseball fields to turf fields. Improve playground and add (2) fabric shade structures with picnic tables and sidewalks. Also, construct pickle ball courts.	Houston	\$1,972,000.00
1	Freedom Park Trails (Contribution)	Construction contribution to Harris County (25% of total construction cost).	Houston	\$1,000,000.00
1	Harlem Road Park	Construct additional parking for Pickle Ball Courts. Purchase additional land (3) acres on the southside of the park for additional parking and detention. Install (2) entrance gates.	Richmond	\$1,516,500.00
1	Daily Park	Construct cricket field, soccer field and disc golf course. Construct multi use building with concession, restrooms, pavilion and storage. Add new playground and lights for (4) baseball fields and parking lot. Install new septic/well.	Simonton	\$4,480,500.00
		Purchase (3) acre tract of land. Construct dog park to include		

Brazos River

Although the Brazos River forms the western boundary of Simonton, the city is largely disconnected from its riverfront. The city has no public access points or scenic viewpoints, and both passive and active recreational opportunities are impeded by the river's unstable banks, which are highly susceptible to erosion. Nonetheless, if safety can be addressed, the river offers the potential for fishing, kayaking, birdwatching, scenic views and other outdoors activities.

Simonton contains many environmentally sensitive areas, including oxbox lakes, wetlands, and creeks, most notably Bessie's Creek, which could be suitable for future park space, boardwalk trails, or as preserved natural areas. Acquiring these for public use would provide recreational opportunities and preserve these natural features for community access.

Trees

Simonton's rural character is created in part by the many trees that blanket the city. The city and ETJ contain numerous pecan orchards and live oak tree farms, in addition to the many trees on pasture land and residential acreage.

Trees provide many benefits in addition to beautifying the city. They help clean the air, store carbon, filter groundwater, prevent soil erosion, provide wildlife habitat and food, capture rainwater and reduce stormwater runoff, provide much needed shade, screen unsightly development, enhance property values, and help reduce energy bills.

Even so, developers will frequently scrape a lot to prepare for new construction, even in cases where trees could potentially be preserved with an alternative design. Cities can help protect trees through strategies such as requiring a permit for tree removal, prohibiting removal of desirable or significant trees, and requiring planting of new trees when existing trees cannot reasonably be retained.

10. Parks & Cultural Activities

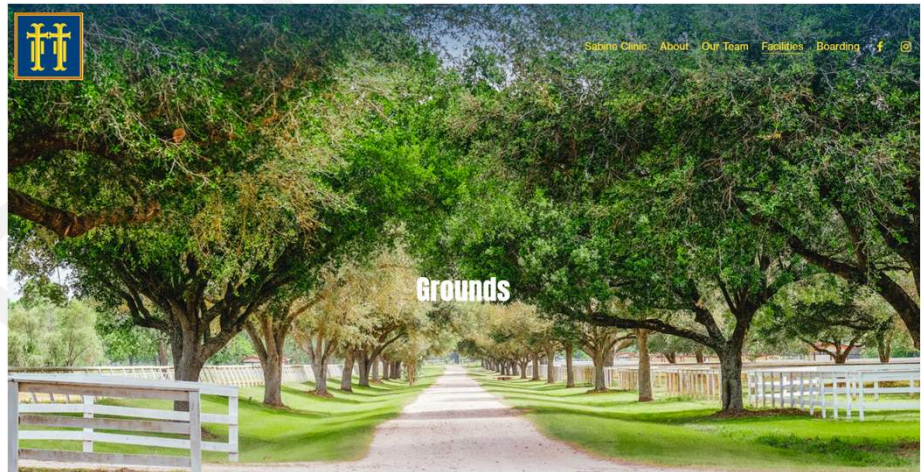
Minimum tree requirements for new development, including the planting of street trees and parking lot trees, can also help improve the overall environment and aesthetics of the city. The city can also adopt a list of approved tree species to ensure that required plantings are appropriate for the climate and location.

For public land, including rights-of-way and medians, the city can implement a planting and maintenance program to enhance the tree cover on public land.

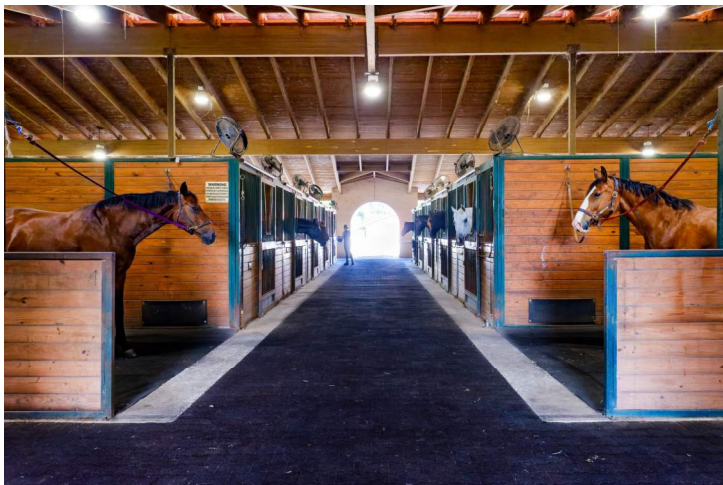
Equestrian Facilities

Simonton is noted for its many equestrian facilities, such as the Equestrian Center at Twinwood, a 130-acre horse dressage, boarding and training facility on FM 1093. The Valley Lodge subdivision was once marketed to residents with horses. The white open fences that line Twinwood's properties in Simonton are further reminiscent of Kentucky horse farms.

The community's long association with horses could be promoted as a tourism opportunity. Adding trails for trail riding would help preserve the city's equestrian character, provide recreational space for riders, and attract visitors.



Source: *The Equestrian Center at Twinwood* [Grounds — The Equestrian Center at Twinwood](#)



[The Main Barn — The Equestrian Center at Twinwood](#)

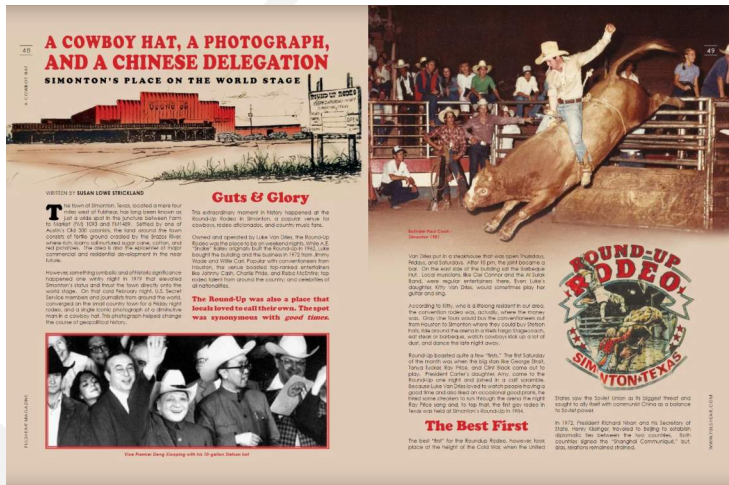
10. Parks & Cultural Activities

Cultural Activities and Civic Facilities

Simonton was once well-known for its weekly indoor ‘Round-Up Rodeo’ which took place on FM 1093 in Valley Lodge and attracted visitors from around the area. The rodeo also attracted high profile visitors, such as Deng Xiaoping of China and Jimmy Carter. Even though the rodeo closed for good in the late 1990s, many people still associate Simonton with the weekly rodeo. The building now houses BenchMark Wireline, which manufactures wireline equipment.



Former Round Up Rodeo, now BenchMark Wireless



Source: Fulshear Magazine Vol 3 No 1

Keep Simonton Beautiful

Keep Simonton Beautiful is a local group that is actively working to promote community events, such as markets and home tours, and support local vendors in Simonton.

"Keep Simonton Beautiful is dedicated to doing just that! Through our Round Up Markets, Christmas Home Tour and other community events, we are able to do projects around town to Keep Simonton Beautiful!"

From Keep Simonton Beautiful Facebook page

KEEP SIMONTON BEAUTIFUL PRESENTS THEIR ANNUAL
Spring Round Up
 SATURDAY, APRIL 20TH FROM 10AM-4PM
 Featuring local civic organizations
 Belle's Buds Animal Rescue, Lions Club, Simonton Christian Academy and Fort Bend County Wildlife ?
 & artisan vendors
 Support your local vendors by shopping with us for their great range of handmade creations, vintage goods, and gifts.
 Located at 9114 FM 1489
 (Just south of Anthonies Market Grid)

Civic Facilities

Simonton’s only municipal facility is City Hall on FM 1093. The city does not have a public library or park facilities. The 2021 Strategic Plan indicates a desire for a new community center for residents. A community center could provide meeting space for community groups, classroom space, and a location for a variety of community events. If located downtown, the community center would attract residents and visitors to downtown and provide support for revitalization efforts.

10. Parks & Cultural Activities

Historic Buildings

Simonton has several historic buildings and homes that contribute to the city's character.

Simonton School

The most prominent is the 1926 Simonton School on FM 1093, which is a Recorded State of Texas Landmark. The two-story white stucco building, designed by a noted Houston architect, was the town's school for white students. The school had an auditorium on the second story and also hosted community functions.

The building, which has since been painted red, is now privately owned and houses a photography studio. Its two-story stucco façade is the most visible landmark as one enters the community from Fulshear.

H. Berkman & Co. Grocery Store

The former Berkman Grocery Store sits at the city's main intersection. The structure was built in the 1920s during Simonton's early 20th century agricultural boom. Today the building contains offices and a hair salon.

Simonton Community Church

Another long-time landmark is Simonton Community Church. The first church building was constructed in 1941, and although the church campus has been expanded with numerous additional buildings over the years, the original still stands at the gateway into town from the south.

Simonton's downtown also has a number of homes built in the early 20th century, some of which now house nonresidential uses. Although these original buildings are all relatively modest, they remind both residents and visitors of the community's rich history.



Photo by James Hulse, August 4, 2021, courtesy of [HMdb.org](https://www.hmdb.org)



Source: *Simonton Community Church website*

10. Parks & Cultural Activities

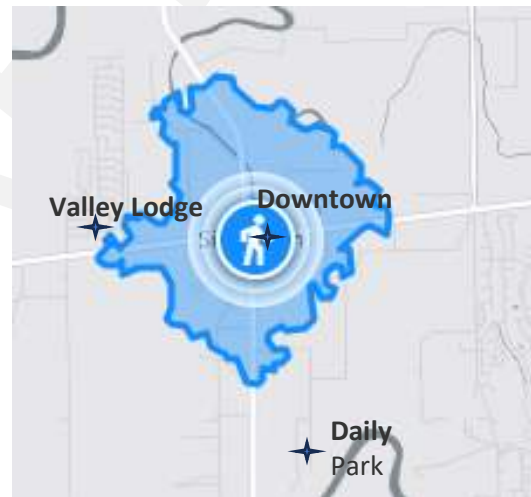
10.2. Guiding Principles

- 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.
- Provide safe paths or trails for walking and biking within the city and to Daily Park.

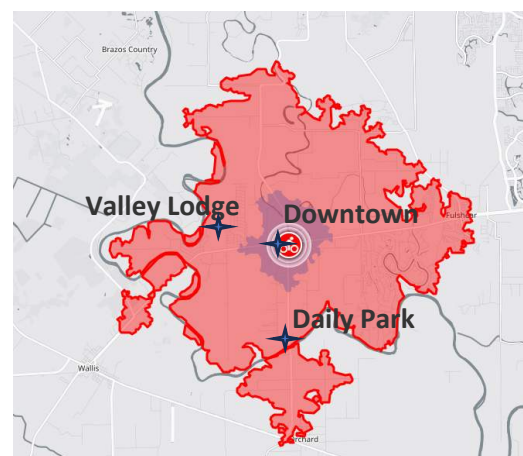
10.3. Recommendations

Parks, Trails and Open Space

- Plan a comprehensive system of shared use paths for safe walking and biking throughout the city to connect all areas of the city and to provide residents with recreational opportunities as well as safer circulation. Priorities should, at the minimum, include the following paths:
 - Connection between Valley Lodge and Downtown along FM 1093.
 - Connection from Downtown to Daily Park.
- Consider providing paths for trail riding to provide recreational opportunities and help maintain Simonton's character.
- Develop a 'pocket park' or public plaza downtown for community gatherings and events.
- Provide safe and accessible linkages to all park facilities.
- Promote conservation and environmental stewardship in the city.
- Explore safe ways to access the Brazos River for active and passive recreation, such as fishing, birdwatching, trails for (walkers, bikes, horses, and others), and scenic viewpoints.
- Develop an open space greenway along Brazos River.
- Review park dedication requirements for new subdivisions to ensure they are adequate and have connectivity.



Map showing a 15-minute walk shed from downtown



Map showing a 30-minute bike shed from downtown

Source: app.traveltime.com

10. Parks & Cultural Activities

10.3. Recommendations (cont'd)

Trees

- Adopt a tree preservation ordinance to protect desirable trees and mitigate for trees that are removed, through replacement plantings or fees in lieu of planting.
- Prepare a tree survey of the community to identify significant or 'heritage' trees.
- Require planting of shade trees along streets, trails and in parking areas to beautify city and mitigate heat.
- Restrict tree clearance for development purposes prior to issuance of all development permits.
- Encourage tree-planting community events (e.g., Trees for Houston) and programs to plant and maintain new trees.

Cultural Activities & Facilities

- Prepare a strategic plan to address tourism opportunities.
- Explore opportunities to activate downtown and organize events in downtown.
- Consider reviving the "Round-up Rodeo" and working with local farms and businesses to support festivals, such as Blessington Farms' Fall Festival.
- Develop a Community Center for residents.
- Document historic buildings and resources for possible tourism opportunities or public exhibits.



CHAPTER 11

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

11.1 Existing Conditions

11.2 Guiding Principles

11.3 Recommendations.....

11. Economic Development

The Comprehensive Plan provides a foundation for the city's economic development efforts.

Simonton's economy has been driven by agriculture since its founding, but the spread of suburban residential development throughout the county will lead to growth in nonresidential uses, such as retail, offices and medical services, to meet the needs of the growing population.

The extension of the Westpark Tollway along FM 1093 and the proposed alignment of Highway 36A between Simonton and Fulhsear will drive further changes to the city's economy through new residential and commercial development and increased pass-through traffic.

The City's ability to work with developers to shape residential development will have long-term impacts on the city's financial future and commercial development.

The city should consider how to utilize its limited economic development resources to attract and leverage investment from other governmental entities, like the county and state, for road and infrastructure projects and development of public facilities to serve the expanding community.

11.1 Existing Conditions

One outcome of a comprehensive plan is to provide a foundation for the city's economic development efforts and the creation of an economic development plan. The comprehensive plan sets the stage for those efforts by assessing demographics and base industries and employers to guide development and enhance the economic vitality of the city.

With the City of Simonton in the path of growth, the city's economic development efforts will build upon the comprehensive plan to shape development through input on regulation, infrastructure planning and development, coordination with property owners, businesses and members of the real estate community. In the near term, projects will likely focus on development agreements for new residential communities, which will bring the population growth that attracts new businesses and services.

“The main goal of **economic development** is **improving** the economic well being of a community through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, tax base **enhancements** and quality of life. As there is no single definition for economic development, there is no single strategy, policy, or program for achieving successful economic development. Communities differ in their geographic and political strengths and weaknesses. Each community, therefore, will have a **unique** set of challenges for economic development.”

Source: IEDC Reference Guide

11. Economic Development

“Simonton will be significantly impacted...”

Like all nearby communities, Simonton and its ETJ will be significantly impacted by regional growth patterns and trends, changing state legislation, property owner preferences and goals, and preexisting agreements.

The city benefits from having both Type A and Type B economic development corporations, which it may use as a means of shaping growth and development through direct investment in infrastructure, support of strategic city CIP elements, and direct agreements with parties targeted by the economic development program. Determining the appropriate missions, visions and roles for the two economic development corporations will be a key follow-up step to this plan. The recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan should anticipate their guidance and impact on the city’s economic development program.

The State of Texas continues to attract new residents and capital investment. It is reported that, at present, **more than 1,000 people move to Texas per day**. Houston’s metropolitan area currently has a population of approximately 7.3 million people. The Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) projects that the population in the Houston metro area will exceed 9.6 million people by 2040. During that same timeframe, the population of **Fort Bend County is projected to grow** to over 1.7 million people, and to further grow to over 2.5 million residents by 2050.

Simonton’s next-door neighbor, Fulshear, is the fastest-growing small town in the nation, according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Population and Housing Unit Estimates Program. This once-rural town on the edge of the Houston metropolitan area has grown more than ten-fold in population between 2010 to 2020, from 1,170 to over 17,000 residents.

Simonton’s future is clear: **it is not about whether growth will come, but how the city can shape that growth**. Simonton is going to experience dramatic changes. Population growth in and around the city will accelerate, which will drive need for new infrastructure and city services. The city will need to manage its finances to prepare for expanded capital improvement projects. To ensure the city can fund needed improvements as well as meet the needs for city services, the city will need to manage its property tax rate.

In managing growth, the city will be impacted by several factors:

- Market Environment
- Public Environment
- Existing Development Agreements

“Simonton’s neighbor, Fulshear, is the fastest-growing small town in America...” U.S. Census Bureau

11. Economic Development

Market Environment

The Market Environment consists of the private sector of property owners, residents, investors, developers, and businesses. Their collective view of a community influences growth patterns. Simonton is viewed as in the natural path of growth and development of the Houston area's continued westward expansion. The market, from both a development and potential resident point of view, is focused on new residential expansion on and around FM 1093. Some new strip retail development has already been popping up in the area.

The old adage is that **retail follows rooftops**. As the population in and around Simonton grows, it is reasonable to expect new supporting retail and services locating in proximity to this new market. Initial development will likely be smaller strip-type retail, gas and convenience items, followed by more established retail. Larger master-planned developments will organize the location of commercial uses to maximize the impact on the community and the return for the developer. As Simonton is not on a major roadway, warehouse, manufacturing and other commercial employment users are unlikely to lead development.

In short, Simonton will be greatly impacted by the Market Environment, and is also significantly limited by it. In 2015, the City of Simonton entered into several development agreements with Twinwood, Inc. Twinwood's property holdings covered by these agreements are enormous, containing a significant amount of the developable land area of Simonton and the ETJ. These agreements impose significant obligations and limitations on the City, which will be further detailed in the Existing Agreement's section.

Factors Influencing Development & Growth

- I-10 Corridor: tremendous growth in warehouse and distribution facilities
- SH 36A, FM 1489 and FM 1093
- Twinwood and its related companies
- Growth trends moving west from Fulshear
 - Residential growth continues to expand westward
 - Commercial development following roof tops
 - Changes in retail marketplace
- Fort Bend County Transportation and Mobility Projects
- Westpark Tollway Expansion
- Changes in development requirements (i.e. Atlas 14)
- Access to utilities
- Proximity to other development

11. Economic Development

Public Environment

The Public Environment consists of the public policy, regulations, laws, programs, elements that affect growth. This includes the Federal, State, County and local governmental bodies.

One of the most important current trends is at the state level. **In recent legislative sessions, the State of Texas has passed new laws that remove or limit the authority of local governments.**

Counties, school districts and cities have all been impacted. The result is that local governments now have less ability to control land uses or to enact provisions addressing use and aesthetics in their city, as well as the funding of public services desired by the residents. These limitations will require an even more thoughtful and well-planned approach to managing the city and the economic development program restrictions on development and land use.

Fort Bend County will also impact growth in Simonton. As the county grows, the Fort Bend County Commissioners Court has expanded its investment in transportation and regional infrastructure. As population and development grows, the need for infrastructure will increase. Though many larger private developments will provide for their own infrastructure, there will be an increased need for transportation connectivity, green space and recreation, and coordinated water, sewer, and drainage conveyance systems and capacity. It will be incumbent upon the city to maintain its relationship with Fort Bend Commissioners Court and its precinct commissioner.

Fort Bend County Toll Road Authority (FBCTRA). The continued extension of the Westpark Tollway on FM 1093 is anticipated to ultimately impact Simonton. At present, FBCTRA is working to extend the toll road further westward on FM 1093 to Texas Heritage Parkway and preliminary design to FM 359. Although no extension to Simonton is currently planned, FBCTRA owns the former railroad right-of-way along FM 1093 through the entirety of Simonton, and could extend the toll road in the future.

SH 36 expansion. The planned expansion of State Highway 36 from the Port of Freeport to US 290 is in process. At present, TXDoT is currently working on segments south of US 59. The Highway 36 Coalition, which was established to advocate for regional stakeholders, continues to promote the location of a route. It is understood that Twinwood has dedicated land for this connection. Though the final path of the roadway expansion is not set, the expansion is certain to impact Simonton.

11. Economic Development

Existing Local Businesses and Services

Notable Local Businesses

- Antonie’s Market Grill
- Benchmark Wireline
- Blessington Farms
- Brazos Boat and RV Storage
- Brazos Oaks Animal Hospital
- Fred Reyes Greenhouses
- Fulshear Simonton Parking Storage
- Keep Calm Hair Salon
- Off the Road Again Mobile RV repair
- Professional Body Needs
- Republic Fire Bowls
- Ropers Country Store and Café
- Simonton Community Church
- Simonton Pets
- Sittin Pretty Pet Salon
- The Equestrian Center at Twinwood
- Twinwood Farms
- USPS



11. Economic Development

SIMONTON VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF SIMONTON, TEXAS, TWINWOOD US, INC., AND CBDS INVESTMENTS, INC.

This Development Agreement (the "Agreement") is made and entered into as of the 26th day of February, 2015 (the "Effective Date"), by and between the CITY OF SIMONTON, TEXAS (the "City"), a general law municipality in Fort Bend County, Texas, acting by and through its governing body, the City Council of the City; TWINWOOD US, INC., a Texas corporation, and CBDS INVESTMENTS, INC., a Texas corporation (collectively, the "Developer"). The City and the Developer are collectively referred to as the "Parties."

RECITALS

The Developer owns or will own in the near future approximately 273.2 acres of land in Fort Bend County, Texas, located partially in the City's corporate limits and partially within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction, and described in Exhibit A (the "Property"). A vicinity map of the Property is attached as Exhibit A-1;

The Developer desires to develop a high-quality master-planned community on the Property (herein defined); however, the development of the Property requires an agreement providing for long-term certainty in regulatory requirements and development standards by the City regarding the Property;

Development Agreements

Development agreements are contractual agreements between a local jurisdiction and a private developer for a tract of land that establishes what will be built on the property. The developer typically agrees to certain requirements or restrictions on the development, in exchange for services, tax incentives or other concessions from the local government.

When a city enters into a development agreement, it has ideally crafted a balance between the benefits it receives and the concessions it provides. Development agreements can be beneficial from the city's perspective because it may provide contractual authority to accomplish city goals where the city has no regulatory authority. On the other hand, development agreements can also limit a city's authority and control over a tract of land.

Twinwood

In 2015, the City of Simonton entered into three development agreements with Twinwood, which owns most of the undeveloped land both inside the city limits and in the ETJ. As part of these agreements, the City is responsible to provide engineering and inspection services for all Twinwood construction projects in the city and ETJ.

11. Economic Development

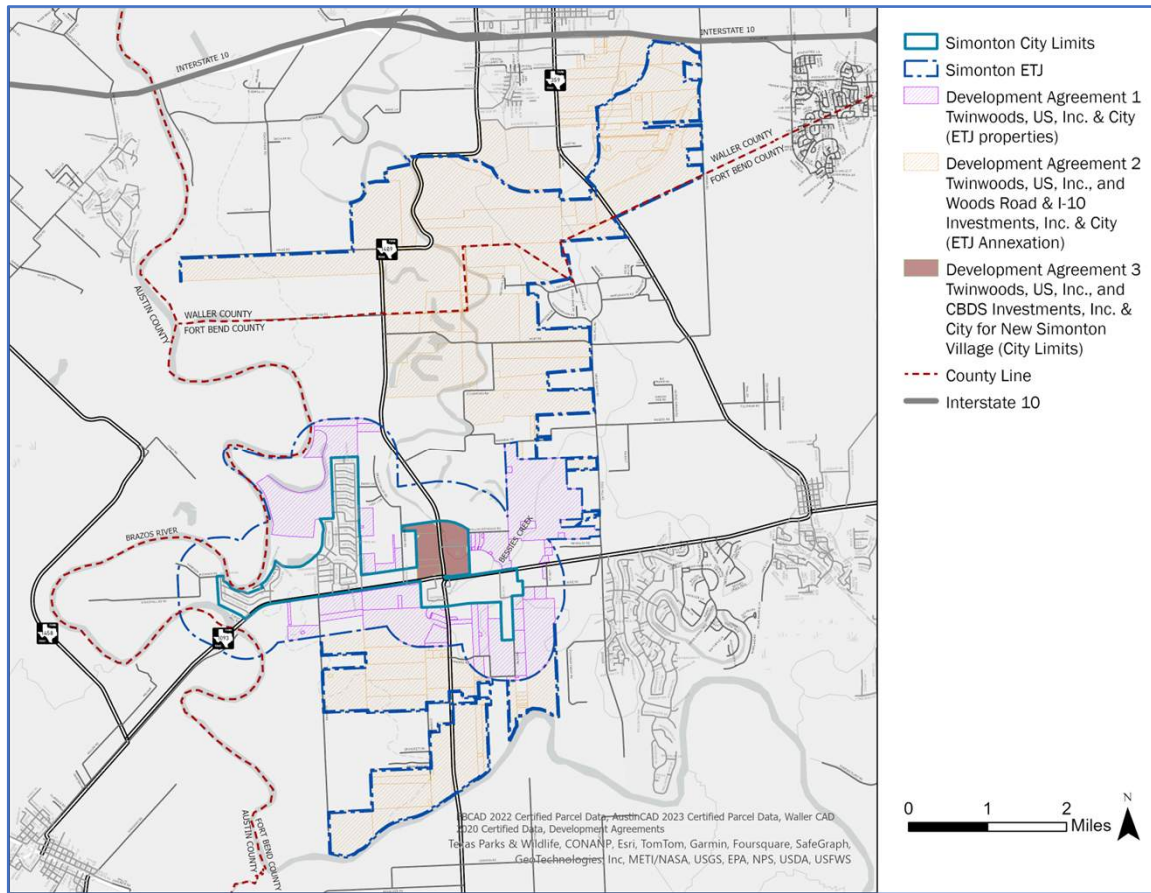


Figure 11A: Twinwood Development Agreements

The three Development Agreements between Twinwood and the City of Simonton are summarized below:

Agreement 1: Property Currently Within the ETJ

This Development Agreement covers land owned by Twinwood that is currently within the City's ETJ. Through this agreement, the City agrees to not attempt to annex the property into the city limits and to allow Twinwood to develop the land without undue City intervention. Through this agreement, the City consents to the creation of MUDs and other special districts that would allow Twinwood to provide municipal services within the development.

This agreement has no financial impact or benefit to the City of Simonton, as well as no obligation for Simonton to provide any services.

Twinwood agrees to require construction inspections for commercial and residential projects within area covered by the agreement. Further, Twinwood agrees to provide electronic documents to the City regarding construction documents and confirming the inspections of such residential and commercial construction in the ETJ.

11. Economic Development

Agreement 2: Property NOT Currently Within the ETJ

This agreement establishes a one-hundred-foot-wide ETJ boundary on the northern and eastern boundaries of the developer's property that would serve to prevent the property to the west and south of the boundary from being annexed by any other city. This benefits Simonton because it ensures that no other city can wrap around the existing city limits.

Other than establishing the ETJ boundary, the City of Simonton will have no control within this area and agrees to not attempt to annex any other aspect of it. As a result, most of the land covered by the agreement, between Simonton and Brookshire, is expected to remain unincorporated throughout the term of the agreement.

I-10 at Woods Road: Waller County Municipal Utility District 2

Among their holdings, Twinwood owns approximately 420 acres that is generally located at the intersection of I-10 and Woods Road. The property is served by Waller County Municipal Utility District 2 (WC MUD 2).

Municipal water and sewer for the area will be provided by a Municipal Utility District (MUD) just like any other subdivision created in an unincorporated area.

The area is expected to someday become a major state-of-the-art mixed-use commercial, educational, and residential center. As a result it should become a significant sales tax generator.

Through this development agreement, the City of Simonton agree to bring WC MUD 2 into Simonton's ETJ. Simonton and Twinwood agree to enter into a 'Strategic Partnership Agreement' (SPA) and subsequently, each party agrees to a 'Limited Purpose Annexation' (LPA) of WC MUD 2.

Through the LPA, both the City of Simonton and WC MUD 2 will share the two cents of sales tax revenue generated within the development. As a result, Simonton might someday derive considerable revenue that can be used to further offset the cost of future municipal infrastructure and provide other benefits for Simonton residents. There is no city obligation to provide municipal services to this area.

Twinwood has agreed to provide electronic documents to the City regarding construction documents and confirming the inspections of such residential and commercial construction in the non-ETJ area.

11. Economic Development

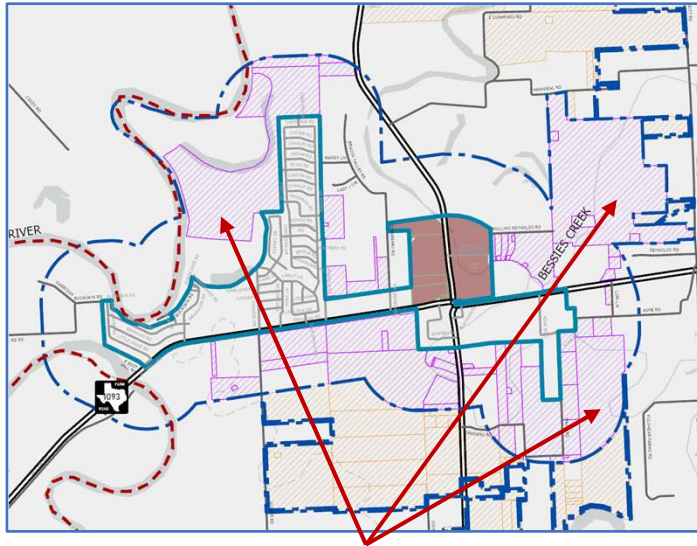


Figure 11B: Agreement 1 - ETJ

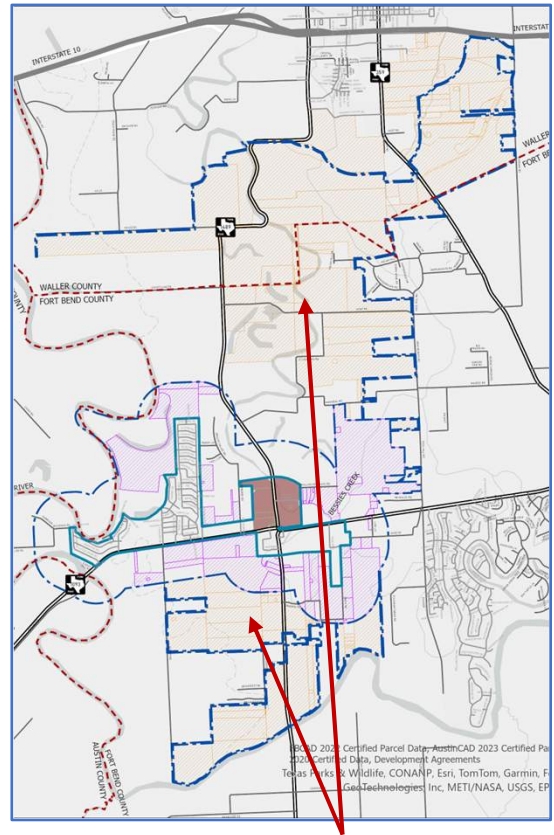


Figure 11C: Agreement 2 - Outside of ETJ

Agreement 3: Simonton Village

The Simonton Village Development Agreement applies to a proposed 273 acre, mixed-use development that would be located directly across FM 1093 from Simonton City Hall, and running west across FM 1489 to approximately 1/4 mile west of the Simonton post office.

This project has the potential to add significantly to the population of Simonton and to create a new commercial center in the city. Further, it has the potential to bring significant new revenue to the City of Simonton in the form of sales tax and ad valorem taxes. Other benefits to the city include the provision of water and sewer service to downtown.

As presented to Simonton City Council by Twinwood, development depends on economics and timing. Simonton Village could potentially include the following types of uses:

- A "Town Center" type of shopping center
- Medium- to high-density residential housing, including apartments

11. Economic Development

This land currently provides little property tax benefit to the City of Simonton. This agreement converts this area into higher value property. The area has the potential to generate significant ad valorem and sales tax revenue to the City of Simonton with minimal obligation for services by the City.

Key Issues

- The agreement requires City consent to the creation of a Municipal Management District (MMD) that will build the necessary municipal infrastructure and provide services for the area.
- The City can approve the Board of Directors for the MMD.
- The City will provide police protection for this area.
- The City has no obligation to provide other municipal services.

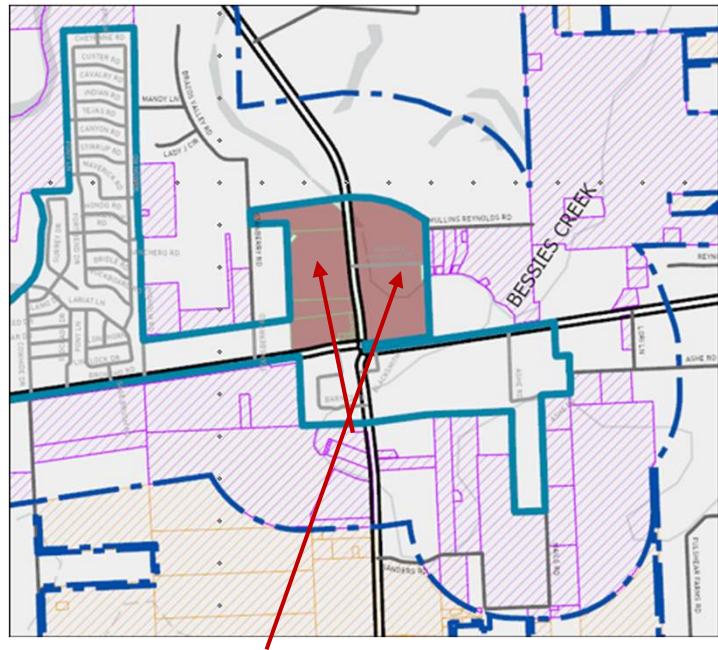


Figure 11D: Agreement 3 - Simonton Village

The City of Simonton agrees to share one-half of the two-cents of sales tax revenue that would be generated within the district back to the MMD. The City further agrees to cap the ad valorem tax at 15 cents per hundred valuation and rebate any amount collected over that to the MMD.

Sales Tax and Ad Valorem Tax rebated to the MMD must be spent on a legal municipal purpose, such as water, sewer, roads, parks, sidewalks, police, fire, or EMS, and may include entertainment venues, etc. Generally speaking, in this type of arrangement, the MMD would use the funds to reimburse the property owner or developer for their up-front development costs.

Building codes will be enforced in the MMD and building inspections will be made through either a mutually-agreeable inspection service or by the City if such services are sufficient to expeditiously accommodate the volume of permits required.

11. Economic Development

11.2 Guiding Principles

- Examine implications of existing and future patterns of growth on tax revenues.
- Encourage diversity in the city's 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.

11.3. Recommendations

- Adopt a formal set of economic development priorities and goals to guide city decision-making when evaluating proposed projects and agreements.
- Support targeted infrastructure investments through economic development corporations to give the city greater control over the nature and quality of development.
- Consider using economic development resources to shape and manage growth through public-private-partnerships, development agreements, and infrastructure planning.
- Review the city's development processes to ensure they are clear and concise, as well as reasonable and appropriate for the desired outcomes.
- Adopt Zoning.
- Identify properties at risk of removing themselves from the ETJ, and prioritize by the potential impact on the city. Cultivate relationships with key property owners in the ETJ to help ensure the property develops to the city's benefit.
- Maintain a good working relationship with Twinwood to allow opportunities to meet specific city needs or interests not addressed in the development agreement.



CHAPTER 12

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

12. Implementation Plan

Effective implementation is the difference in having a good plan on paper and having a great community on the ground.

The Implementation Plan is an essential component of any Comprehensive Plan. It ensures that the ideas and policies articulated in the plan become reality. This Implementation Plan identifies the key actions that need to be undertaken (the 'what'), responsible entities ('who'), community priorities and timeline ('when'), and available resources (how').

Action Types

Implementation occurs through many actions:

- *Regulation*: includes reviewing or updating existing regulations or developing new ordinances to address new issues.
- *Coordination*: involves working with other agencies or groups to implement goals.
- *CIP*: includes any capital investments or physical improvements.
- *Program*: utilizing existing programs, processes or work plans.
- *Development*: goals that can be implemented through the development process.
- *Plan/study*: recommendations to develop new plans or update existing plans.

Timing

The actions listed in the Implementation Plan are assigned a time frame for implementation. These time frames represent ideal targets that are subject to prioritization over time as the city reacts to changing situations.

- *Short-term*: 1-2 years
- *Mid-term*: 3-5 years
- *Long-term*: 6-10 years
- *Ongoing*: tasks complete through existing programs or as the need arise.

Funding Sources

Implementation steps can be funded through various sources such as the City's general funds, federal grants (Community Development Block Grants, Disaster Recovery Grants, Safe Routes to School, Safe Streets for All), state grants, and others. Actual project completion may involve other funding sources. The city should actively seek external funding sources and explore public-private partnerships to implement the actions.

Prioritization

The implementation actions have been prioritized based on input from CPAC. Members were asked to mark each item as High (green dot), Medium (yellow), or Low (red) priority, with the final score for the action tabulated based on the number of green (3 pts), yellow (2 points), and red (1 point) dots it received.

12. Implementation Plan

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 spaces.	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

12. Implementation Plan

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 trees, 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

12. Implementation Plan

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

12. Implementation Plan

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 or 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 Allens 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

12. Implementation Plan

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 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 guide city decision-making.	Prepare an Economic Development Strategic Plan	Short-term: 1-2 years	City	18
Consider using economic development resources to show 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



13. APPENDIX

- A. Community Online Input.....
- B. CPAC Meeting Materials.....
- C. Summary of CPAC, Stakeholder and Community Input
- D. Stakeholder Interviews.....
- E. Strategic Report and Plan.....

A. Community Online Input

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A. Community Online Input

Community input was received through an online questionnaire beginning in June 2023 (first hosted directly on city website, later accessed through SurveyMonkey). Responses were received from 23 community members.

SurveyMonkey questionnaire

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – 2023

CITIZEN INPUT

Strengths
What do you like most of Simonton? What are you proud of? What made you choose Simonton?

Concerns
What do you not like about Simonton? What are some of the issues that you worry about?

Priorities/Needs
What are important issues that the Comprehensive Plan needs to address? Please rank in the order of importance, 1 being the least important and 5 being the most important. It will be an interactive tool that will let them rank like below.

<p>1 5 Preservation of rural character</p> <p>1 5 More parks and better connectivity to existing parks around the city</p> <p>1 5 Recreational opportunities and access to the river</p> <p>1 5 Development of area around Bessie's Creek</p> <p>1 5 Preservation of historic buildings and assets</p> <p>1 5 More public places to socialize</p> <p>1 5 More events and festivals</p> <p>1 5 Enhancing entry ways</p> <p>1 5 Attractive buildings and high quality commercial</p> <p>1 5 Smaller boutique stores</p> <p>1 5 Big box stores and strip centers</p>	<p>1 5 Attracting new businesses and employment</p> <p>1 5 More places to shop</p> <p>1 5 Diverse housing options, including multifamily and town homes</p> <p>1 5 Single family residential development with amenities</p> <p>1 5 Enhancing public safety</p> <p>1 5 Keeping the city and properties clean</p> <p>1 5 Lighting ordinances to preserve the night skys</p> <p>1 5 Better walking opportunities/sidewalks</p> <p>1 5 Bike paths/bike lanes along streets</p> <p>1 5 Traffic and roadway safety</p> <p>1 5 Truck traffic on city streets</p>
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Vision
If you came back to Simonton in 10 years, what would you like to see? Please share the top words or phrases you would use to describe what you want the city to be by 2040.

What are some cities that you would like Simonton to be like in the future?

Other Thoughts
Please add any other areas that you would like to be addressed or any other thoughts you may have.

Community Online Input Received

Strengths <i>What do you like most of Simonton? What are you proud of? What made you choose Simonton?</i>
Small town feel, Friendly neighbors, No traffic
We are a lovely low key country community. We are located in a prime spot to get where you need to be pretty quickly.
Small. Strong sense of community.
Planning ahead, not waiting to be reactive. Rural beauty / significant green spaces. Historic or significant locations still potentially available. Ex. Vernon Frost property/ former sale barn, Simonton school house, Valley Lodge country club
Simonton has a wonderful, colorful history. This is a wonderful strength in and of itself. Seeing development favor historic looking buildings and keeping green space and old growth trees.
Our city staff and a awesome Mayor to lead this city as we grow. Erica, Jennifer, Laurie. Our new social communication. Keep Simonton Beautiful! Emergency Management
Some neighbors are very helpful!
Our amazing City staff first and foremost. History as a quiet country town. We still have open spaces. We have the opportunity to protect that! We have what many people want let's not change that!
Strengths would be our open land. Agriculture, people love to drive past cows, hay bales, wild flowers, etc. Hopefully we can keep a lot of that. AND keep our growth just in the downtown area.
Community is strong even with the political diversity
The neighborhood togetherness the majority of the time
Strong sense of community.
small community where you know everyone! trees, lots of trees! Brazos River, Bessie's Creek - maybe in the future create canoeing/kayaking and riding/biking trails to enhance the usage of these 2 tributaries?
Lots of horses
An area with much beauty...trees, rolling hills, streams, rivers and lakes. Simonton is where I grew up over 60 years ago. Not much has changed in our rural life other than once upon a time one could ride a horse from Simonton to Fulshear going freely through others' properties (as long as you closed the gate!).
The beauty, the openness, free of businesses, the trees.
I like that we have remained a largely agricultural community. I like the untouched feel of it.
Simonton has a great opportunity to grow, especially along the river and the Bessie's Creek area.

13. Appendix

Vision

If you came back to Simonton in 10 years, what would you like to see? Please share the top words or phrases you would use to describe what you want the city to be by 2040.

Safe city
 Neighborhood oriented
 Quality development that brings in tax dollars

I would like to see a cool retail development along Bessie's Creek, with some great entertainment and dining options

A vibrant place to live and work where people want to be.

Rural, small town feel but with planned and zoned community and commercial areas.
 Self-sufficient - City and individuals.
 Build activities that make a name for Simonton - example, the Simonton Round Up was internationally known.
 Return FFA, 4H, and other ag-based education and events to Simonton

Would like to see several planned developments, maybe townhouses or over 50 community, home built on 1/2 to 1 acre or larger. Sidewalks, bike path, no neon or bright light signs. A town center, with new city hall/community center and well thought out shops.

Minimum 2 acre homes since we're in the wet lands. Open fencing community for homes!
 Country style shopping centers with local owners. Less chain or big box stores.

To be an amazing thriving area that keeps the focus on country living. Businesses are good we need to be particular on what and how they are built! Remember our history as a livestock community and build on that. That's why people move here we need to keep it that way as much as possible!

My vision is to have people drive thru Simonton and say 'that's a cute town' just by looking at the buildings. Pretty country style buildings, nothing bright and neon. Def old classic country vibes.

I will love that the country feeling community and city stay strong.

To have a nice, bigger park and have a nice shopping area like the Centerra in Katy

A quaint destination location with small local shops. Something like a boardwalk where folks like to come and hang out for shopping and dining or meeting for cocktails.

Growing with a town center that keeps the architecture in line with a small town that is updated, upgraded like the Sugar Land Town Center. Quaint, fun and engaging. Also, would love to see some continued white vinyl fencing along 1093 and 1489.

artsy businesses, lots of trees

Simonton's 10-year vision is a roadmap that intertwines technology, mobility, energy, land use, and local arts, entertainment, restaurant and sporting scenes to create a vibrant and sustainable city. Through the strategic integration of these elements, Simonton will pioneer advancements in urban living, offering its residents a high quality of life, efficient transportation, renewable energy sources, responsible land development, and diverse cultural activities. By embracing this visionary path, Simonton sets itself on a trajectory to become a model city where technology and people harmoniously coexist and thrive.

The same small town that it has always been. Would love to see the rodeo come back.

I would like to see boutique shops, a local butcher, coffee and sandwich shop, a rodeo/sports venue (appropriately and aesthetically in line with our core values).

I think Simonton will be a nice, clean town in 10 years.

13. Appendix

Concerns

What do you not like about Simonton? What are some of the issues that you worry about?

Increasing truck traffic. Unmanaged growth

placement of industrial businesses. Aesthetics ~ maintaining a small town feel and charm

Lack of infrastructure for growth.

Want us to be 'Sugar Land' and not 'Stafford' who mis-handled the growth that is obviously coming.

I feel it's unnecessary at this time

Low income households reducing the quality of life for others/ neighborhoods.

Mobility over the long term.

The 36A corridor passing through- if not planned well can be a detriment.

Loss of rural land use and atmosphere.

Mobility for future growth and current residents. No cookie cutter developments or apartments.

City Ordinances enforcer!

Remain a opening fencing community!

Dark skies.

Preserve our nature, native grasses.

Too many people moving into our neighborhood with 'farm type animals' and not making proper preparations for them

Every week there are multiple gunshots after drinking and loud music. Sheriffs don't care. No one cares. This is still a neighborhood. Good people move out. No one cares.

I think there should be a mandate that every house has three RVs parked in front of it also. That would be a nice finishing touch.

We currently have no zoning for new developments. We want new developments but there needs to be strict rules and guidelines. We can't just allow businesses and neighborhoods to come in and do what they want. The city needs to retain control of what and how new things get built. Where they build. Must take into consideration the long term effect of things. We do NOT want to become a mini Fulshear. Overcrowded, bad traffic and just a free for all on what gets approved for building

We don't want Dollar Generals, Public Storage or big box stores filling up these fields.

Hope there are no room for big corporations

Not able to keep the property if taxes continue to climb.

Growth, mobility and ability to drive the growth to focus on the needs of the community.

People entitled not to follow the laws for the city of Simonton and too entitled not to follow the deed restrictions for the POA in Brazos Valley/Valley Lodge.

Speeding, cars and trucks. Semi- trucks.

That it will be overrun by roads and master planned subdivisions, no more open space.

The City of Simonton is TINY compared to the ETJ. What is the percentage of the City as compared to the total ETJ (in terms of total land mass). Of the ETJ, what is the percentage of ownership of Twinwood vs other owners? Eventually isn't Twinwood (largest owner of ETJ), not the current city limits that will set the tone for Simonton at large? How closely will Twinwood work with the City of Simonton as we grow and develop?

That the current city council will not approve what the people want.

Priorities/Needs

What are important issues that the Comprehensive Plan needs to address?

Preserve the rural character
Passive recreational opportunities along Brazos River

Mobility, Community Center, Sales Tax Revenue

Plan for growth rather than react after it's here.
The small town vibe to be maintained even as we grow.

Don't feel this is a need at all.

Long term mobility planning.
Ability to be a wired area- connectivity for today and high capacity in the future.
Municipal Water access for new growth.

Public green spaces, focused on kids and adult interests. Adequate/appropriate zoning and development incentives to encourage the type of business that will keep Simonton a unique and attractive community

DSL fiber lines.
Dark skies!
Larger City Hall.

Better flood prevention. We lived here for 16 years before our home flooded. Surprisingly, the new home next door to us caused us to flood. powers that be say not the reason. If that's true, why did that home get the last dirt pad permit? All home after that one required to be pier and beam. Local government seems to not really care even though we've asked numerous times for solutions. Have waited almost a year from visit where we were told 'we will research some solutions'

Need to be focused on keeping our open spaces and dark skies. Need restrictions on building any industrial business. Subdivisions need to be restricted to minimum 1 acre lots. We need additional nature focused development.

This town needs to add some boutiques, cafes, upscale country vibes similar to Round Top or Bellville Tx.

Home and pops shops, local small business

Need to drive about 12 miles to get to a major store and to get to a fast food restaurant, like McDonald's, Whataburger etc

Safe intersection at the crossroads of 1093 and 1489.
Ensuring proper zoning that is cohesive to the people and animals that live in this small community.
Ensure industrial type plants are not allowed in or near the city.
Ensure all health, safety and environmental issues are in place as growth moves this direction.

Education! All those who feel entitled to do what they want NEED to be educated to the consequences. Such as: If we do not get zoning and ordinances in place we will become a dumping ground for all the undesirable businesses!

Aspirational Cities
<i>What are some cities that you would like Simonton to be like in the future?</i>
Gruene
Snowmass and Aspen Colorado. We have watched these two cultural cities grow and develop over the last 40 years. They have thriving arts, entertainment, restaurant and sporting scenes focusing on local culture. They have experienced significant growth in the last 10 years and are experiencing growth pains; especially in land use, mobility and maintaining the local culture. As Simonton develops, we too will experience these growth pains unless carefully planned.
I like the sugarland town center or la centerra feel.
San Antonio, TX with riverwalk along Bessie's Creek or Brazos River. Viera in Florida is another nice town.

Other Thoughts
Proactive city administration and council
Make sure the City is working with Twinwood and not in any adversarial relationship or even perceived negativity in the community with them. Help others embrace the growth.
Have you thought about trying to be zoned to Brazos ISD? What would that require rather than Lamar?
Overcome the divisive behavior of a few to set us on a path to control our future, not be subject to outsiders imposing control
Development is coming, there is no stopping it. Ensuring a good partnership and development plan with Twinwood is necessary.
I love Simonton!
I know how important it is to have this plan on place.
To have their own Police Department
We are a community that binds together during tough times, we used to have such a love and respect for each other. I would love to see that again, without a disaster!!! Remember the Golden Rule? Do unto others that you would want to be done to you! Think Good, Speak Good and Do Good! And watch our community grow with love and honor!
Simonton will grow and develop. We are a hidden gem at the far corner of one of the fastest growing counties in the States. We need leadership in all areas to embrace that change and proactively influence a positive outcome for all.
Fiber optics, better internet, better trash/recycle service
I just want to keep the junk out.
Surrounded by river, stream and pond, Simonton will be the most beautiful city in Texas in 10 years.

13. Appendix

Priorities/Needs

What are important issues that the Comprehensive Plan needs to address?

Please rank importance: **1 = least important** and **5 = most important**

Poll in SurveyMonkey only

Preservation of rural character	5	5	4	5	5	1	4
More parks and connectivity to existing parks	4	3	5	4	5	4	4
Recreational opportunities along the river	3	2	4	4	2	5	5
Development of Bessie's Creek area		1	4	2	4	5	5
Preservation of historic buildings and assets	5	3	2	5	5	5	4
More public places, events, and festivals	2	3	5	4	5	4	4
Enhancing City entry ways		3	4	4	3	4	4
High quality commercial		5	2	1	5	5	5
Smaller boutique stores		3	5	1	5	2	3
Big box stores and strip centers		1	1	1	1	4	3
Attracting new businesses and employment		3	3	1	4	5	5
More places to shop		2	4	1	3	5	5
Diverse housing options, including multifamily and town homes		2	2	1	2	2	3
Single family residential development with amenities		3	4	2	2	5	5
Enhancing public safety		3	4	4	4	5	5
Keeping the city and properties clean		4	4	4	5	5	5
Lighting ordinances to preserve the night sky		4	4	5	5	3	3
Better walking/ biking opportunities, and sidewalks		3	5	4	3	4	4
Traffic and roadway safety		4	4	4	5	5	5
Truck traffic on City streets		4	2	1	5	2	2

B. CPAC Meeting Materials

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B. CPAC Meeting Materials

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC)

The Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC) included members of the community assembled to engage and share their input on ideas for the Simonton Comprehensive Plan. Input and guidance from the CPAC was gathered at four meetings between June 2023 and Feb 2024. See *Acknowledgments* for the list of members.

CPAC #1 – June 5, 2023





SIMONTON
Texas
EST. 1830

CITY OF SIMONTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

City Council Workshop and Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Meeting 1

City Hall, 35011 FM 1093
Mon, June 5, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Work Session (1 hour)
 - a. Attendee Introductions
 - b. Comprehensive Plan - purpose and elements
 - c. Planning Process - steps, activities, roles and responsibilities
 - d. Proposed Work Schedule
 - e. Public Engagement Process
 - f. Input from City leaders - goals, concerns, and priorities for the city
2. Bus Tour of the City (1 hour)

A possible quorum of Simonton City Council could be in attendance.

Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities attending this meeting will be available. If you plan to attend this public meeting and you have a disability that requires special arrangements at the meeting, please contact City Secretary at 281.533.9809.



City of Simonton
City Council Workshop & CPAC Meeting 1
June 5, 2023

NO.	NAME	NO.	NAME
1	Justin Boudreau	18	Brian Jordan
2	Craig Kalkmeyer	19	Also in attendance:
3	Jacey Gortez	20	Laurie Boudreaux, Mayor
4	Jeff Cannon	21	Jennifer Ward, City Manager
5	Susan LaDart	22	Lata Krishnarao, Consultant
6	Angelabking	23	Diana DuCroz, Consultant
7	Quincy Cox	24	Joe Esch, EDC Consultant
8	[Signature]	25	
9	[Signature]	26	
10	[Signature]	27	
11	[Signature]	28	
12	[Signature]	29	
13	[Signature]	30	
14	[Signature]	31	
15	[Signature]	32	
16	[Signature]	33	
17	[Signature]	34	

CPAC #1 – June 5, 2023

Discussion with CPAC

Local character – want to protect or encourage

- Want to keep Simonton 'quaint,' with independent shops, restaurants, boutiques.
- Aspirational cities:
 - Wallis – like how it's reviving itself.
 - Georgetown – great place on weekends, soda shops, pizza shops, something for everybody, all ages, lots of people walking around, good family environment.
 - Salado is another good example.
- Want Simonton to stay 'high-end' area
- Like the white fences along Twinwoods properties.
- Important to protect quality of life.
- Dark skies ordinance – want to consider adopting a city 'dark skies' ordinance; Rosenberg has one; Fort Bend County's ordinance went away about 5 years ago, was complicated to administer.
- Historic school next to City Hall – great job restoring the school, was a restaurant but is now a photo studio/private residence.
- Simonton Community Church - historic church building, has expanded; private church school is only school in city.

Don't want:

- No big box stores
- No bright lights
- Losing trees
- No strip malls/bars
- No spread out retail along roads - concern
- Don't want all the apartments like Fulshear has, new households are overwhelming the schools.
- Fulshear – growth happened too fast, city wasn't prepared, they had problems hiring staff fast enough to process all the permits.

Commercial uses

- MSC Earthworks – former residence converted to business office; the large trees in front are beautiful; would like outdoor storage/equipment to be screened, don't care for the parking in front; city's biggest taxpayer, good business owner, very helpful to city.
- The new vet next to Anthony's is also in a former residence. Helps to maintain the character of the city.

New businesses – most recent proposals not what city wants to see

- Budget chain stores – some residents want Dollar General to open store in Simonton; others don't because of history of poor landscaping compliance, litter, high employee turnover, police issues, negative reflection on community. Might be okay in a multi-tenant shopping center with responsible property management instead of a stand-alone property.
- 24-hour poker houses – city gets frequent inquiries about opening these – not the type of development residents want to see there.

CPAC #1 – June 5, 2023

- Proposed concrete plant – example of lack of regulations; city was able to stop it, although it meant foregoing hundreds of thousands in tax revenue for the city. Quality of life more important.
- Several gas stations interested in opening at the proposed concrete plant site.

ETJ/ City split – taxation issues

- Blessington Farms is in ETJ - Sales tax goes to county, city gets only a tiny %
- Antonie's is inside city limits.

Traffic and circulation

- Concern that development happens before adequate infrastructure is in place – narrow bridge on road to Wallis, two-lane roads, truck traffic
- I-10 construction has increased truck traffic on FM roads, truckers looking for alternate route.
- Two construction materials plants nearby, also generate a lot of truck traffic.
- Need a turn lane for places like Antonie's – one car waiting to turn can hold up all the cars behind it.
- Constable no longer approving permits for organized bike rides because of potential for blocking traffic.
- TxDOT wanted to build a six-lane flyover above FM 1489 /1093 intersection, but City was able to get it changed to a roundabout (not finalized), 'dog bone'
- No bike path – have to ride on roads
- TxDOT should be able to include bike lane when they build roads, they don't take much space.

Available land

- City size is 2 sq. mi., not counting ETJ. Most of the undeveloped land is Twinwoods land.
- Available land with road frontage – about 250-300 acres.


Recreation/Open Space/Amenities

- New 100 acres county park south of city limits – park is still developing, would like better connectivity to park. Close enough to bike to, but have to share narrow roads.
- Park – highlight relationship, events
- Bessie's Creek – lots of potential, but privately owned.

Other

- Would like high speed internet
- Nalls Road – vacant land (non-revenue generating business)
- Seem to have most under control – timing
- Need specific plan for developable land
- Partner with Twinwood
- Property at Blacksmith St. and FM 1489 – sewage seepage in the yard into street – environmental health & safety issue

CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023



CITY OF SIMONTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Meeting 2


City Hall, 35011 FM 1093
Monday, August 7, 2023, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Update
 - a. CPAC 1 - Summary
 - b. Website update (<https://www.simontontexas.gov/page/cpac.home>)
 - c. Tasks completed
2. Designate a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson
3. Preliminary Findings
 - a. Community Character and Land Use
 - b. Mobility and Transportation
 - c. Infrastructure and Resiliency
 - d. Economic Development
4. Visioning
5. Conclusion

A possible quorum of Simonton City Council could be in attendance.

Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities attending this meeting will be available. If you plan to attend this public meeting and you have a disability that requires special arrangements at the meeting, please contact City Secretary at 281.533.9809.



City Secretary



City of Simonton
CPAC Meeting 2
Aug 7, 2023

NO.	NAME
1	CHAD Nowell
2	Brenton Merton
3	Craig Kalkang
4	Kelli Makula
5	Angela King
6	Kristi Smith
7	Susan LaDart
8	BURNS TURNER
9	Aravind Nimma
10	Andrew Perry
11	RAGHU VETURI
12	Faith Haley
13	

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - 2023

Laurie Boudreaux, Mayor Diana DuCroz, Consultant
Lata Krishnarao, Consultant Joe Esch, EDC Consultant

Minutes

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Meeting #2

CITY OF SIMONTON

August 7, 2023

This is a true and correct copy of the Minutes of Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Meeting of the City of Simonton held on August 7, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

- 1 Presentation by Ardurra Engineering
 - a. Update
 - b. Designation of Chair and Vice-Chair
 - i. Susan LaDart was designated as Chair
 - ii. Angela King was designated as Vice-Chair
 - c. Preliminary Findings
 - d. Visioning
 - e. Conclusion

Respectfully submitted,

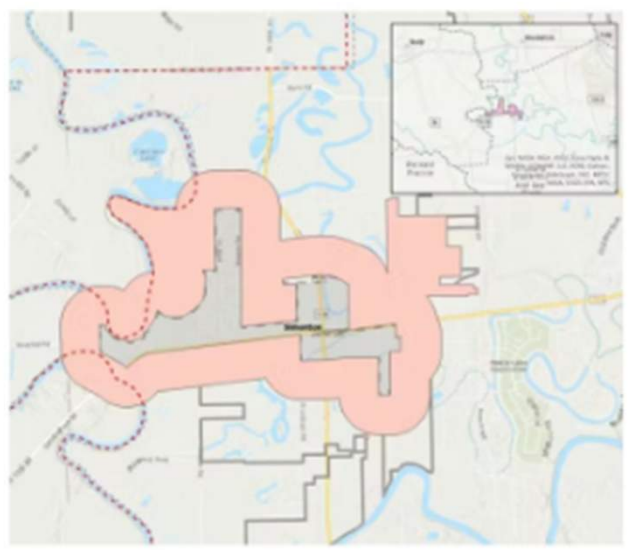
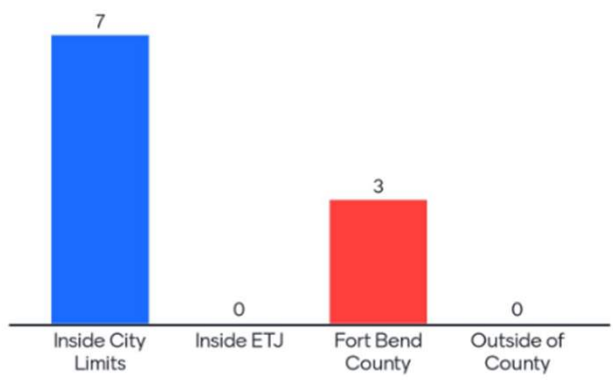
Mayor

Interim City Administrator

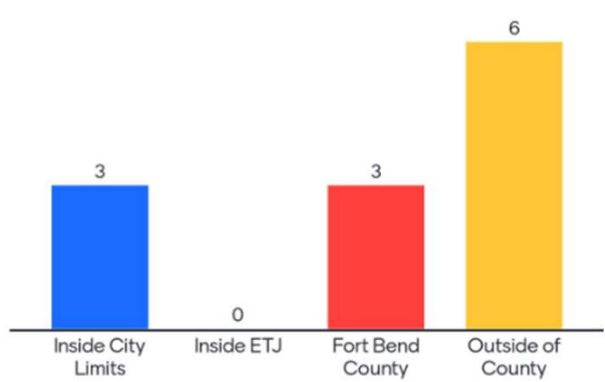
CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023

CPAC – SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

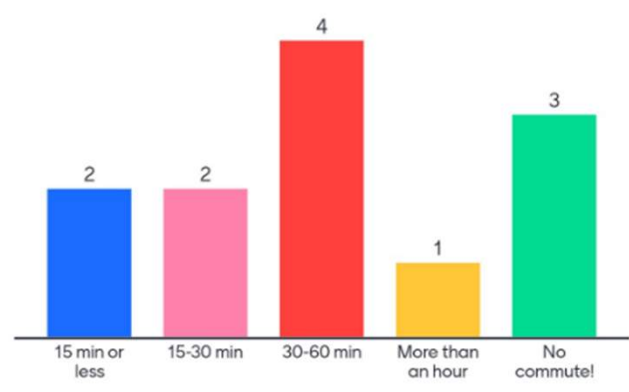
Where do you live?



Where do you work?



How long is your commute?



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023

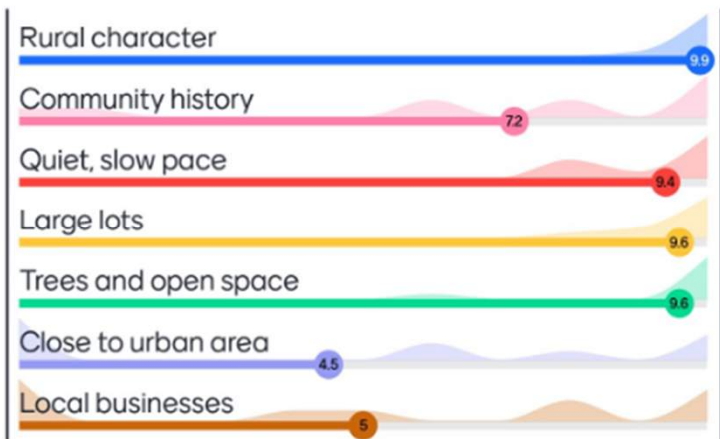
CPAC Poll – SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Strengths (existing)

Strengths (existing) -

Protect our wet lands

Neighborhoods with neighbors who care about life like we used to have.

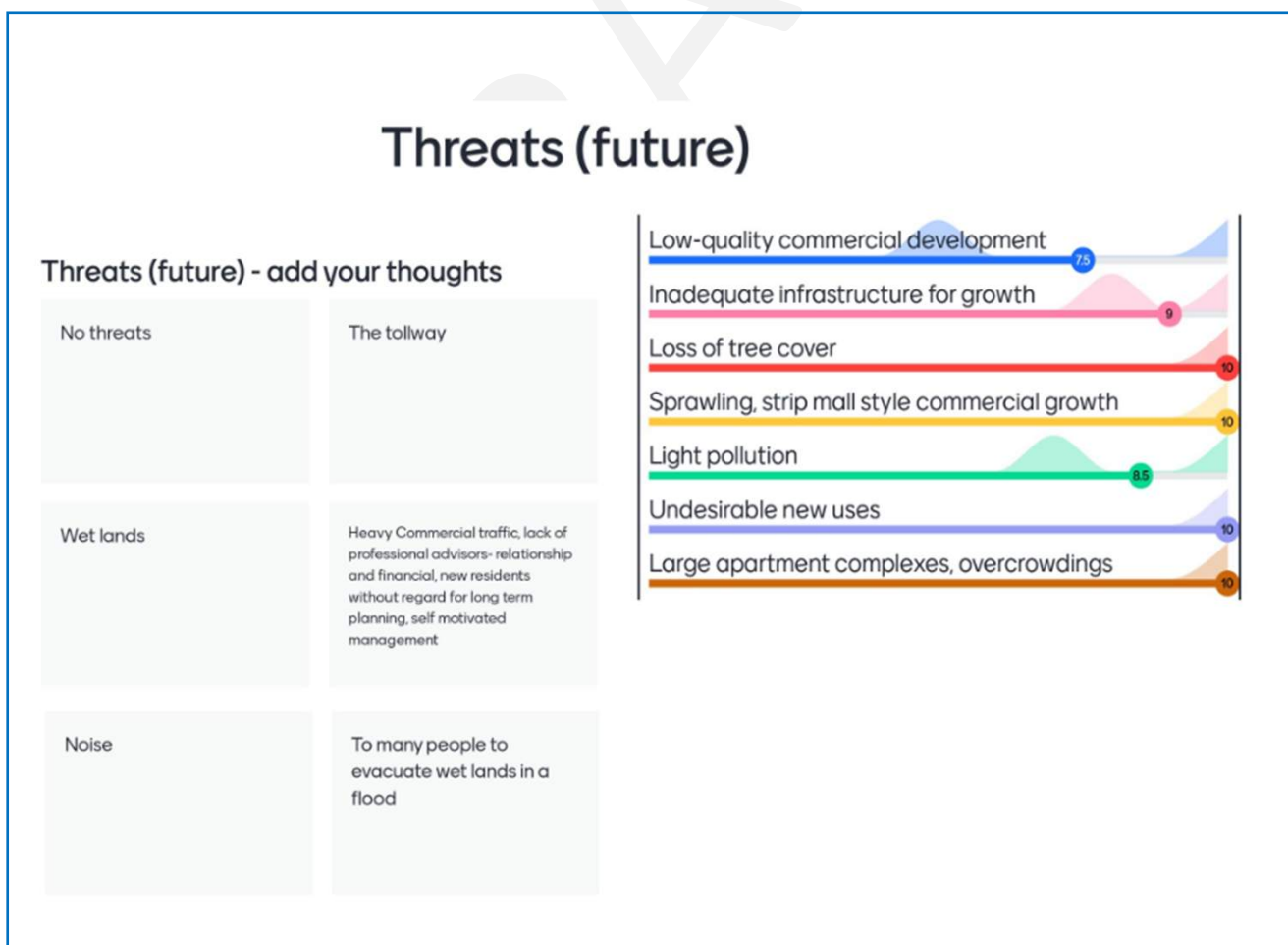
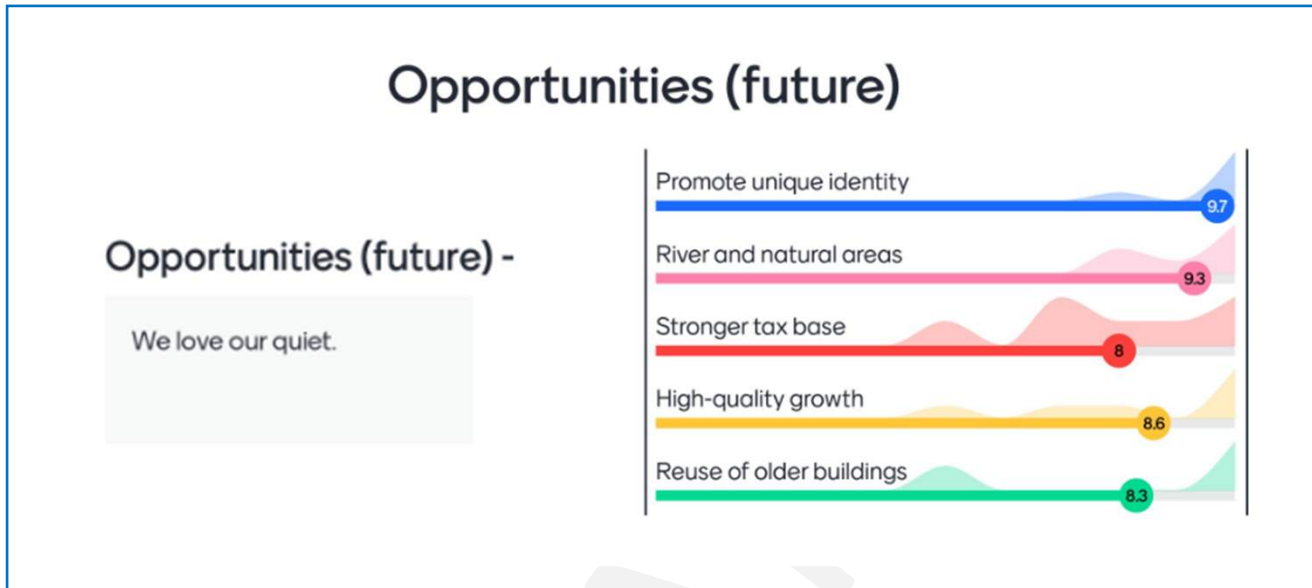


Weaknesses (existing)



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023

CPAC Poll – SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023

CPAC Poll – SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

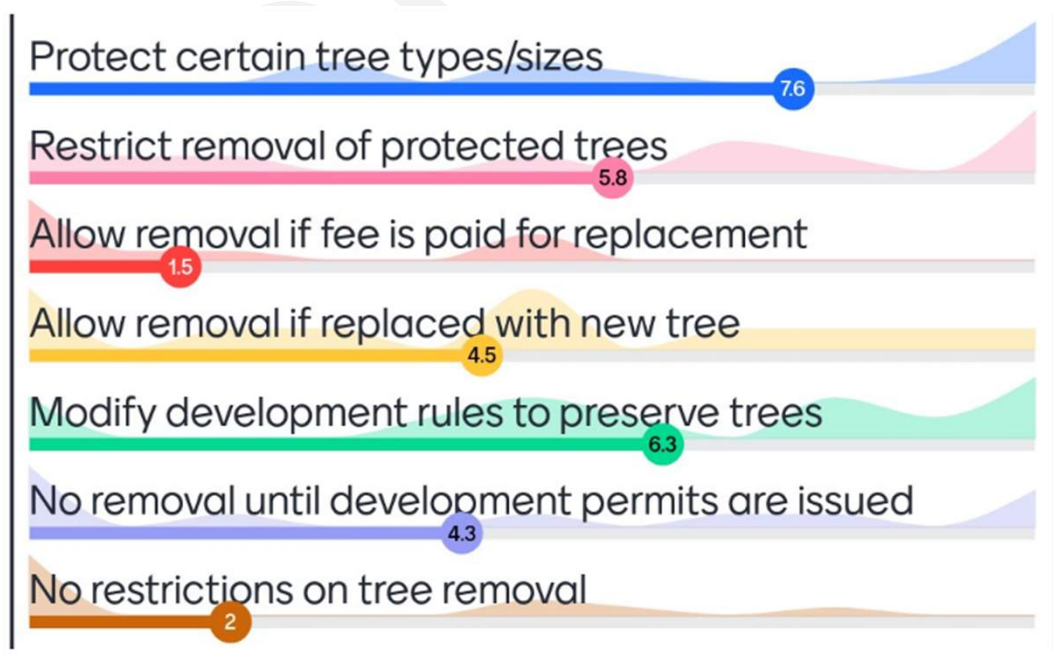
Vision for Simonton



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023

CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Tree Preservation



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
 CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Commercial Site Design



No landscaping, wide setback



Landscaping, sidewalks, parking in front

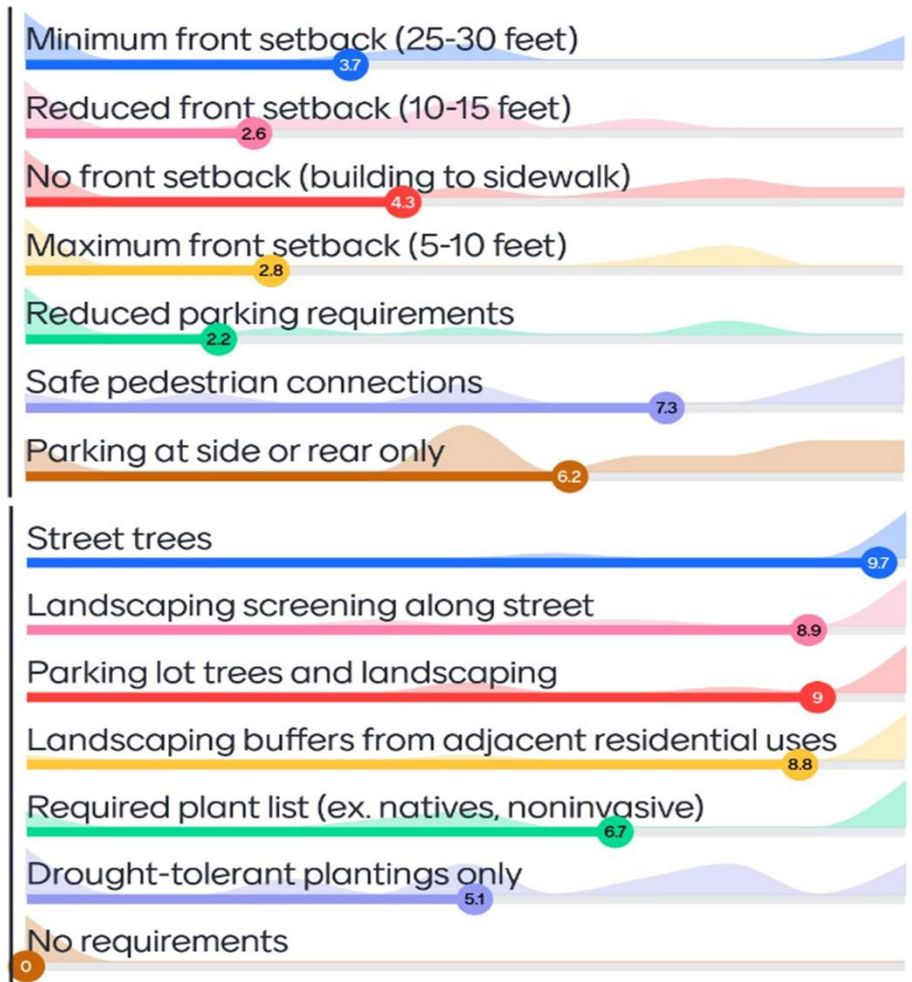


Reduced setback, parking at side or rear



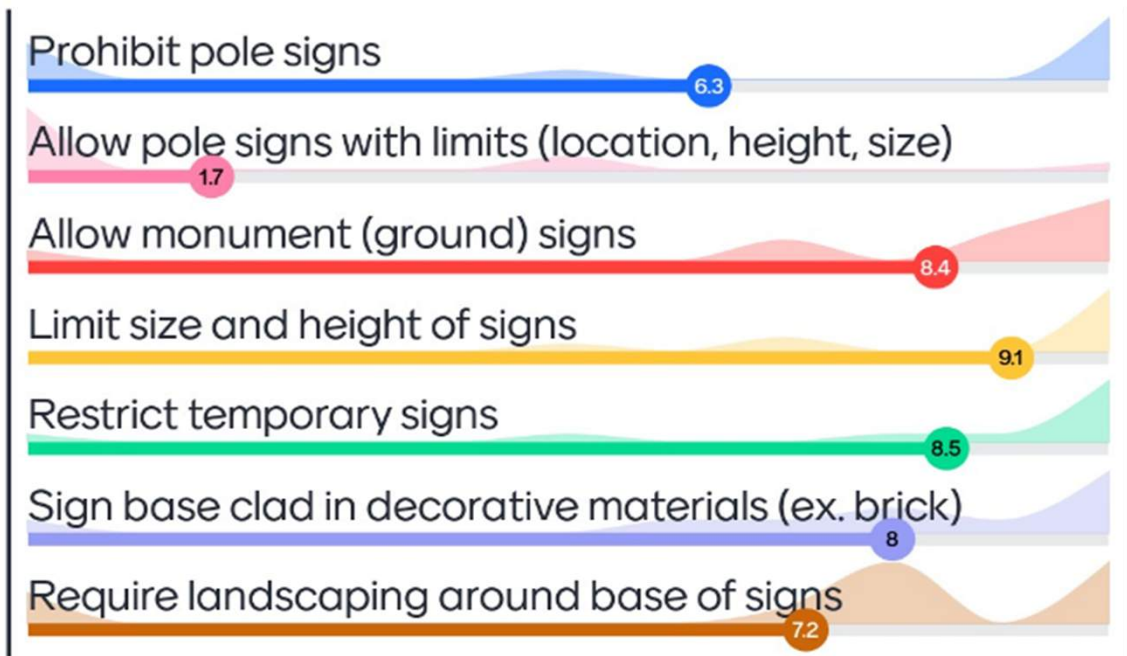
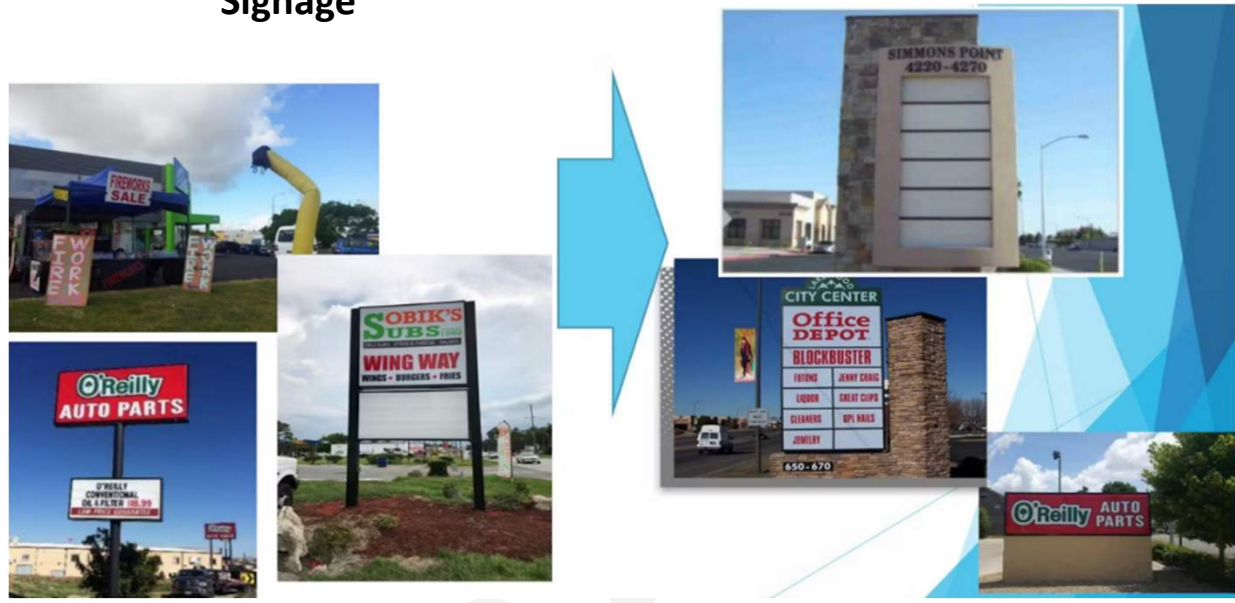
Buildings oriented to street, no setback

- Improve visual character of the areas along major corridors
- Positively affect the perception that visitors have of the City
- Enhance the economic value of the community



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
 CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Signage



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023

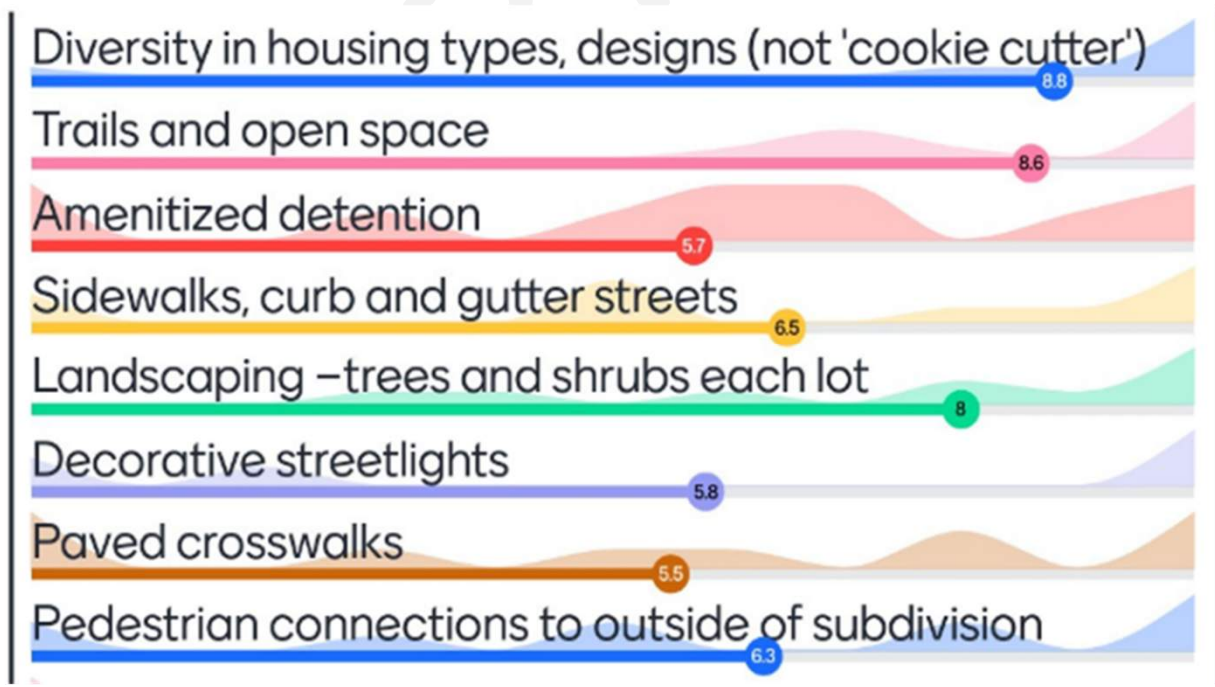
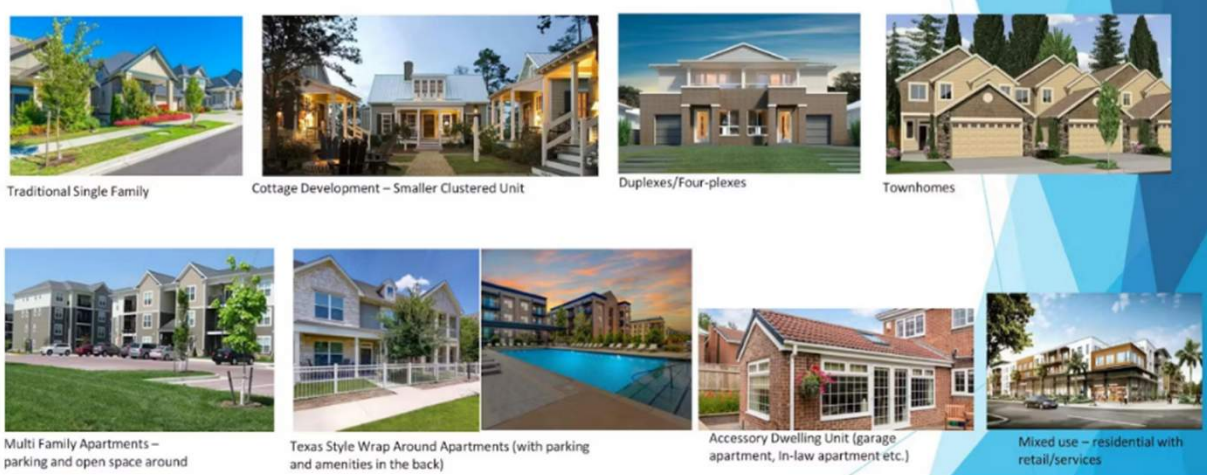
CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Building Design



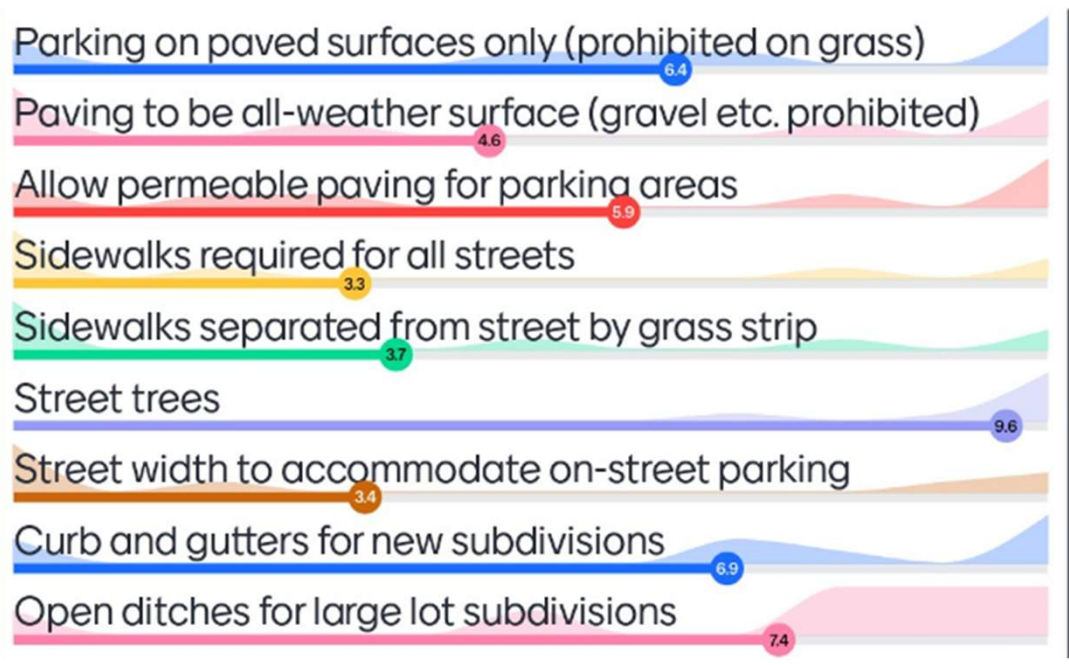
CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
 CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Housing Types



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
 CPAC Poll – Development Standards

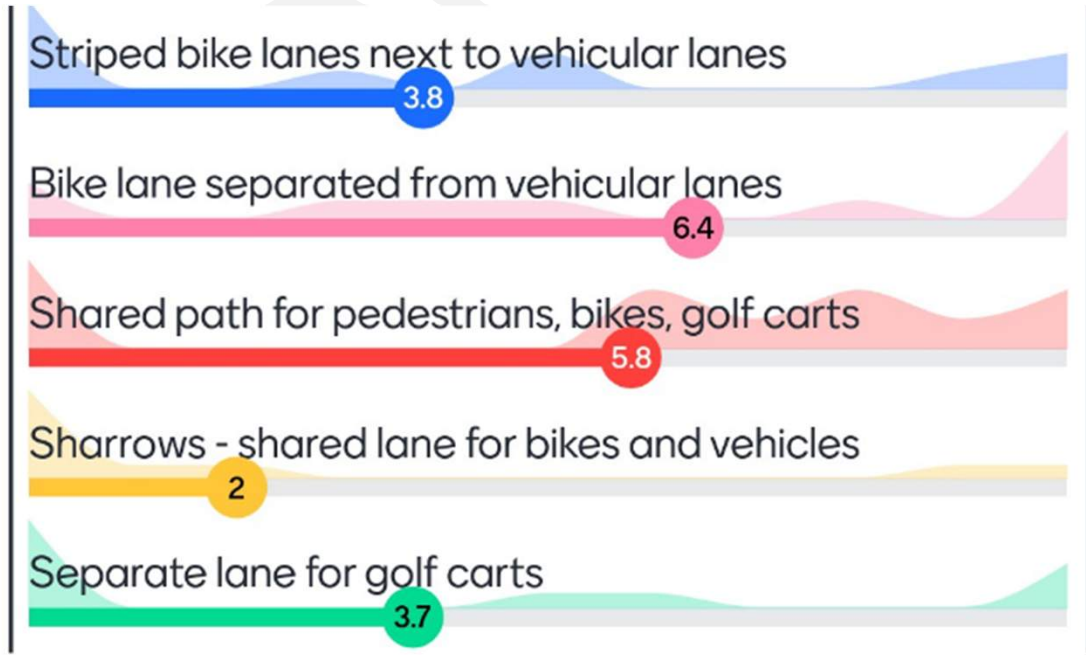
Streets & Sidewalks



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
 CPAC Poll – Development Standards

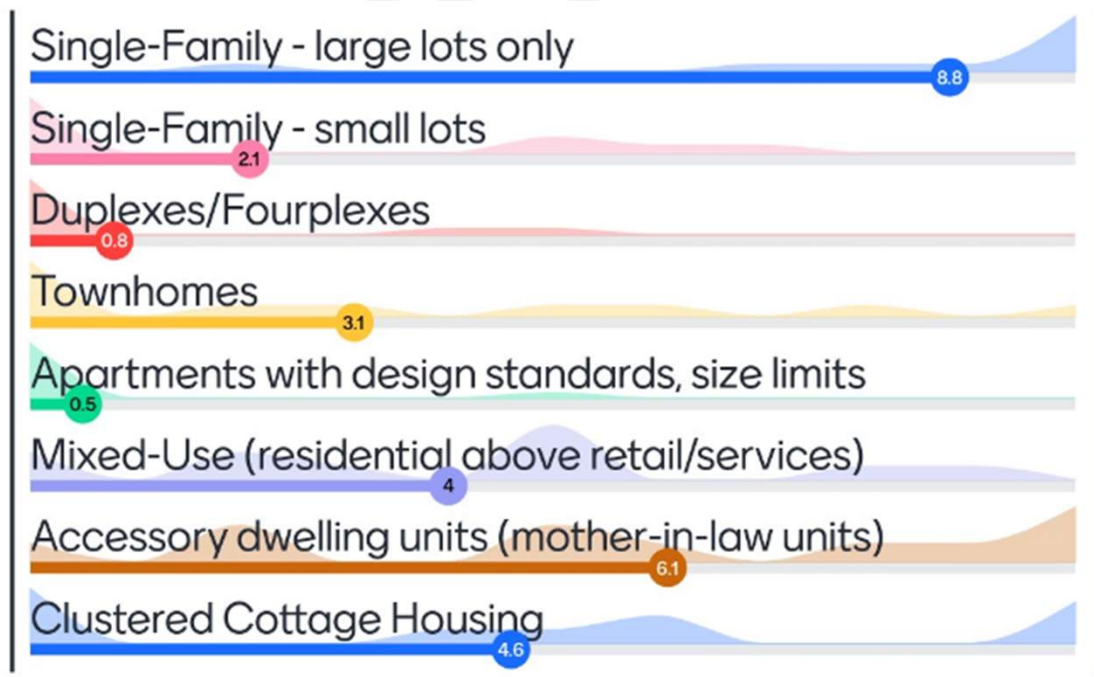
Multimodal Streets

- 1. Sharrow – Lanes shared by vehicular traffic and bikes with separate sidewalks for pedestrians
- 2. Bollards or other low elements separating bike lanes from vehicular lanes with a separate sidewalk for pedestrians
- 3. Shared walk and bike lanes separated from vehicular lanes by medians and landscaping
- 4. Striped bike lanes along vehicular lanes with a separate sidewalk for pedestrians
- 5. Bike and pedestrian lanes separated from vehicular lanes by landscaped medians
- 6. Golf carts, bike and pedestrian lanes separated from vehicular lanes by landscaped medians
- 7. Pedestrian lanes separated from vehicular lanes with separate lane for golf carts



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
 CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Subdivision Standards



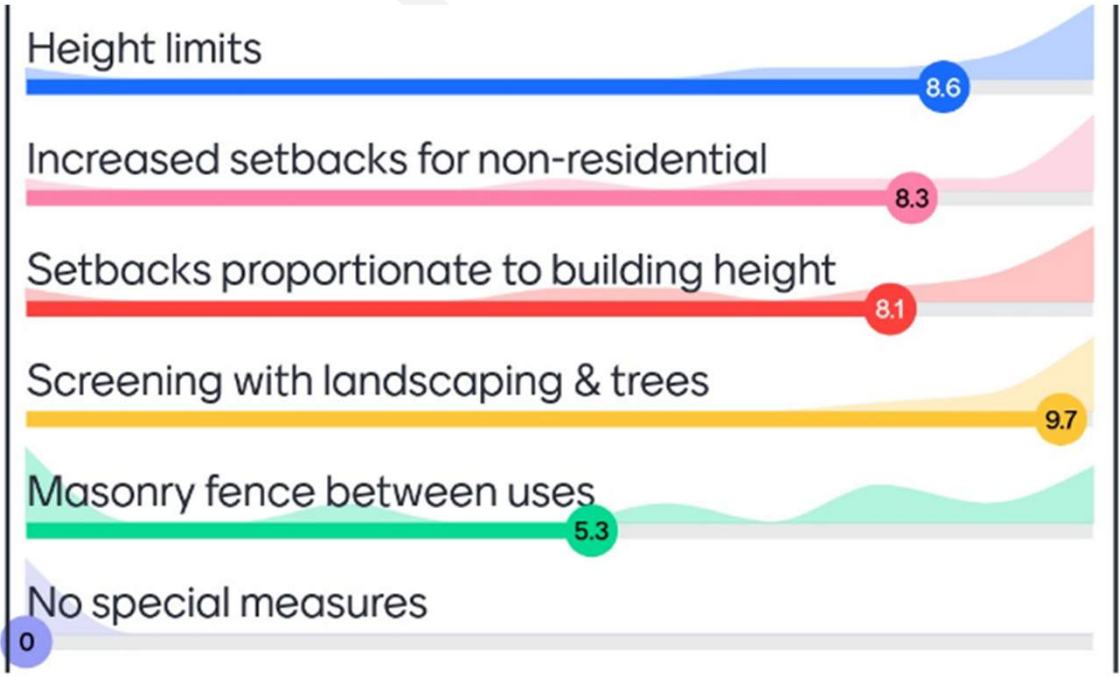
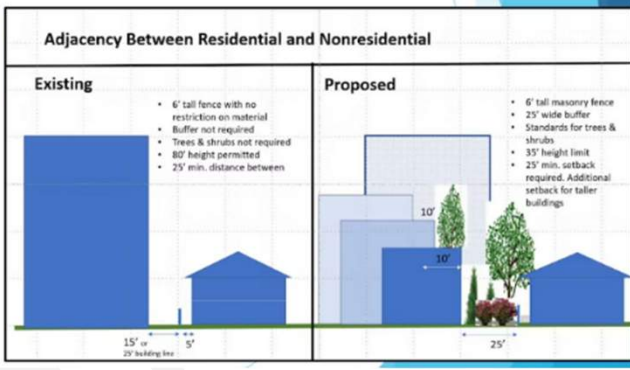
CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
 CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Adjacency Standards

Adjacency Issues



- i. Setbacks
- ii. Buffers
- iii. Building heights

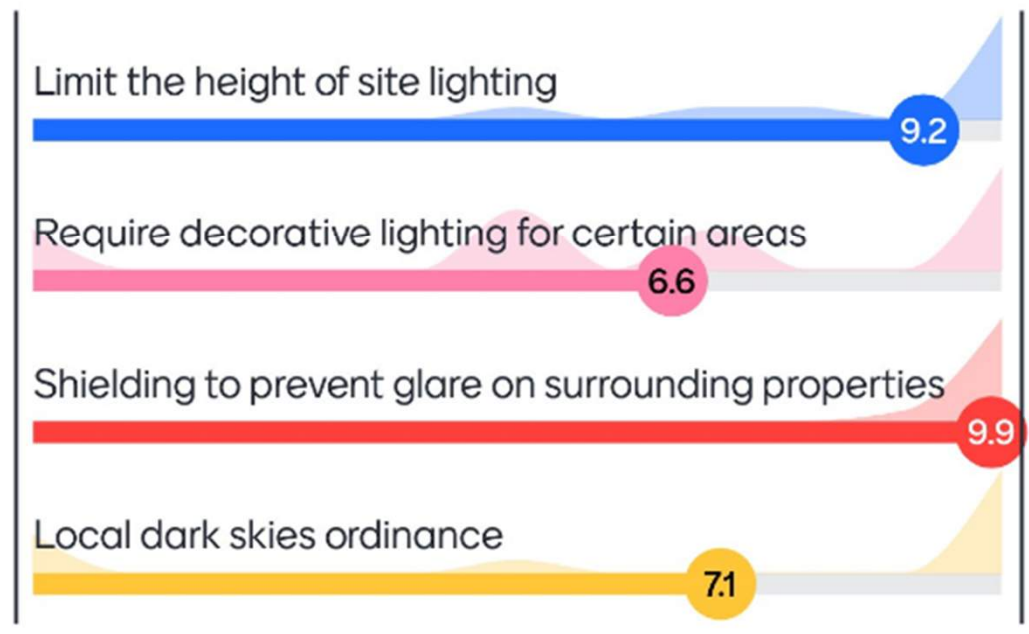


CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Lighting

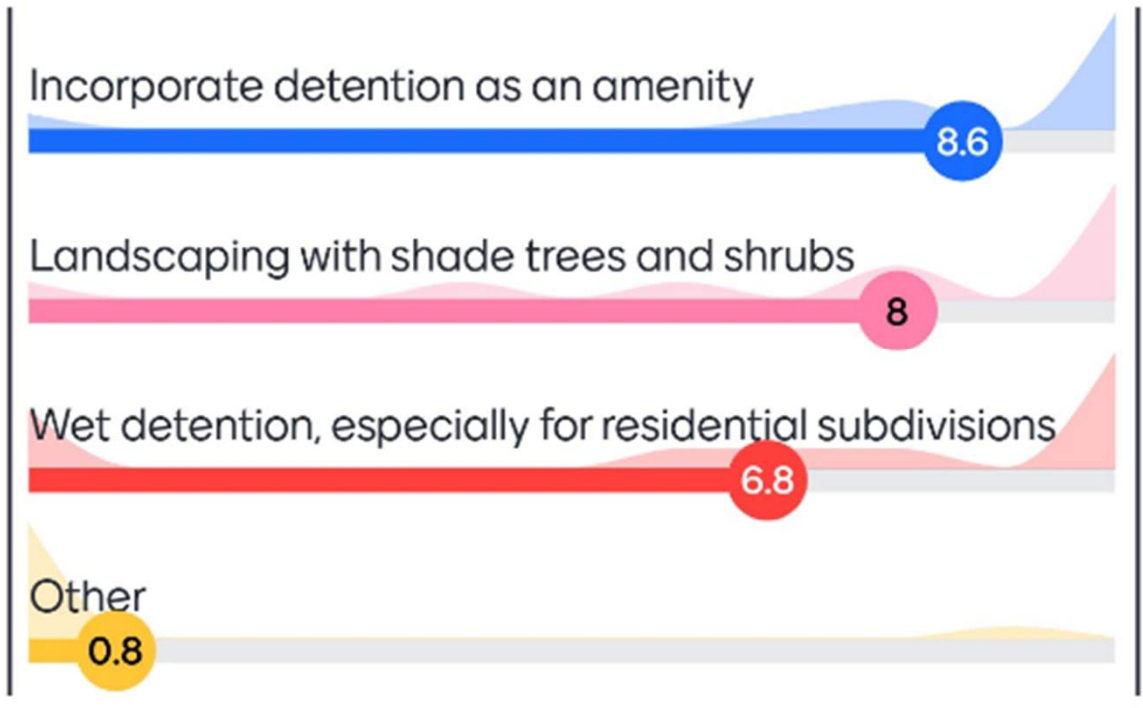


Which of the following standards would you support for outdoor lighting?



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
CPAC Poll – Development Standards

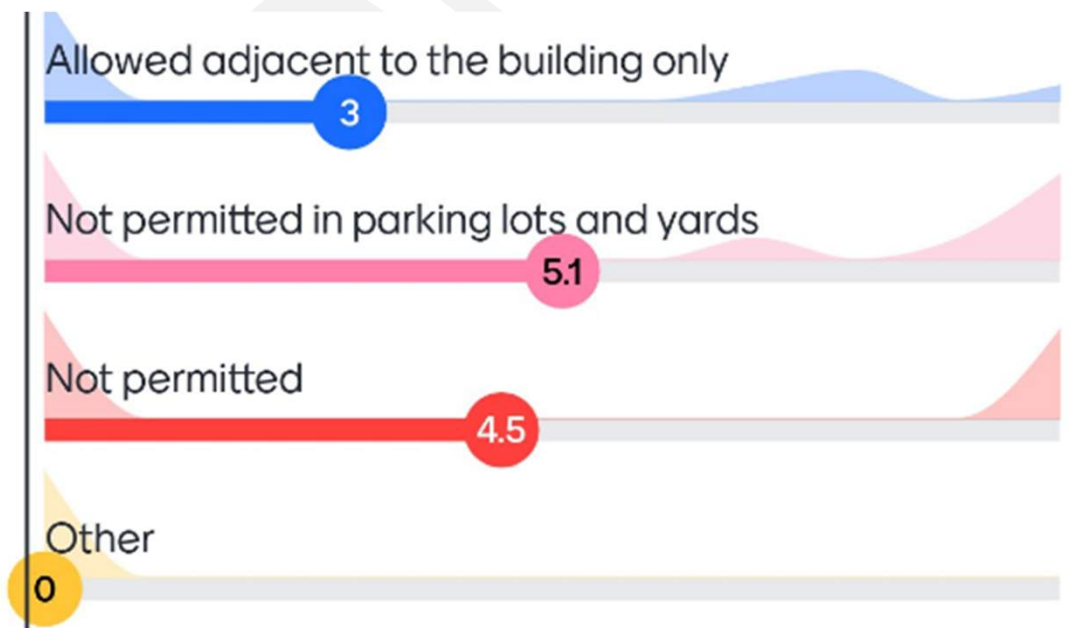
Detention Facilities



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023

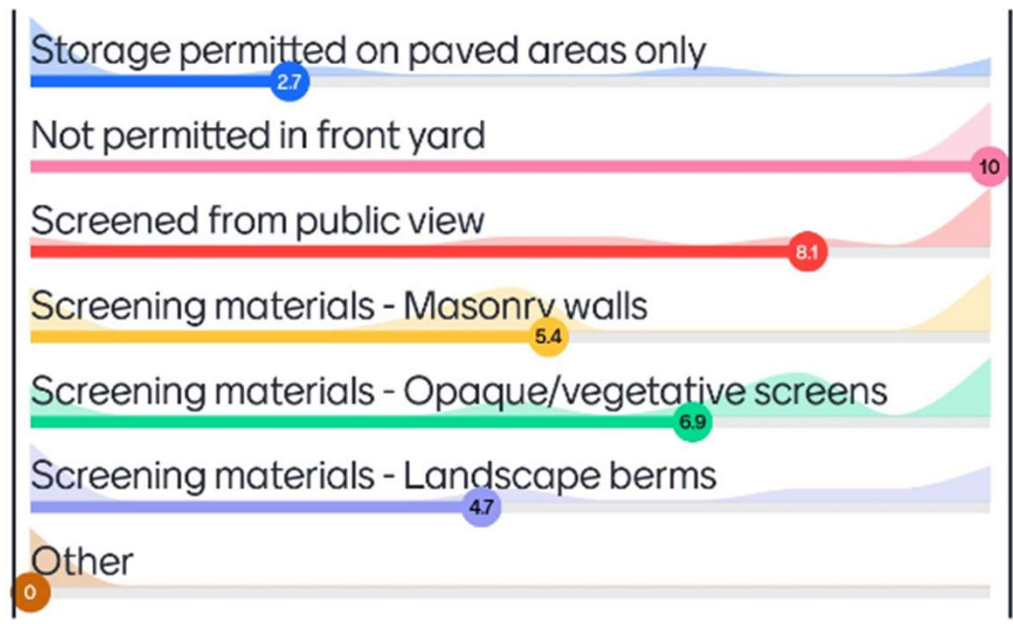
CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Outdoor Activities and Uses



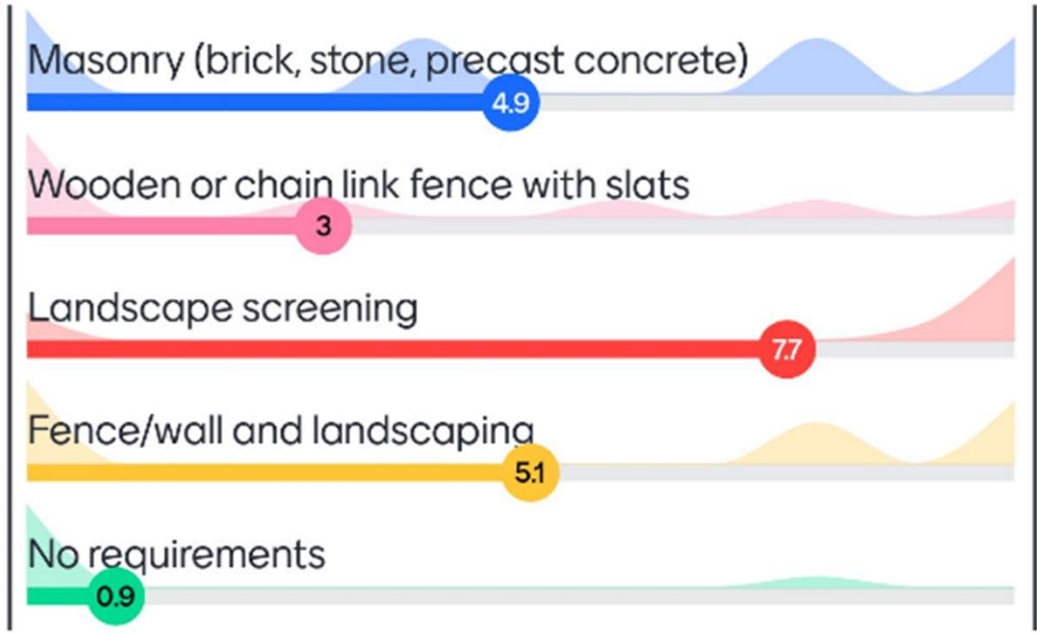
CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
 CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Outdoor Storage



CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
 CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Dumpster Screening

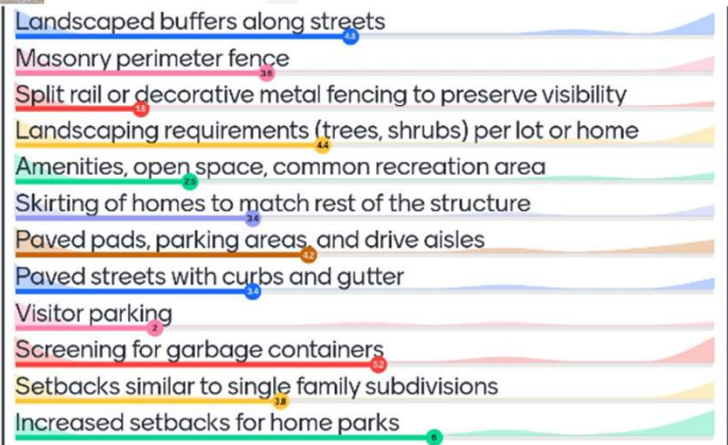


CPAC #2 – August 7, 2023
 CPAC Poll – Development Standards

Mobile Home



Manufactured Home Parks



RV Parks



RV Parks



CPAC #3 – November 13, 2023



CITY OF SIMONTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Meeting 3
 City Hall, 35011 FM 1093, Simonton, Texas 77476
 Monday, November 13, 2023, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Update (5 min.)
 - a. Project status
 - b. Website update (<https://www.simontontexas.gov/page/cpac.home>)
2. Draft vision and guiding principles (15 min.)
 - a. Summary of findings
 - b. Preliminary recommendations and input
 - c. CPAC Exercise
3. Comprehensive Plan elements (90 min.)
 - a. Summary of findings
 - b. Preliminary recommendations and input
 - c. CPAC Exercise
4. Next steps (10 min.)

I, the undersigned, Interim City Secretary of the City of Simonton, do hereby certify that on November 2, by 5 p.m., I posted a true and correct copy of the above and following notice of the CPAC (Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee) – 3 Meeting of the City of Simonton to be held on November 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Simonton City Hall, which posting was done not less than three (3) full days prior to the date fixed for said meeting. A possible quorum of Simonton City Council could be in attendance.

Janie Willman
 Janie Willman, Interim City Secretary

Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities attending this meeting will be available. If you plan to attend this public meeting and you have a disability that requires special arrangements at the meeting, please contact the City Secretary at 281.533.9809.

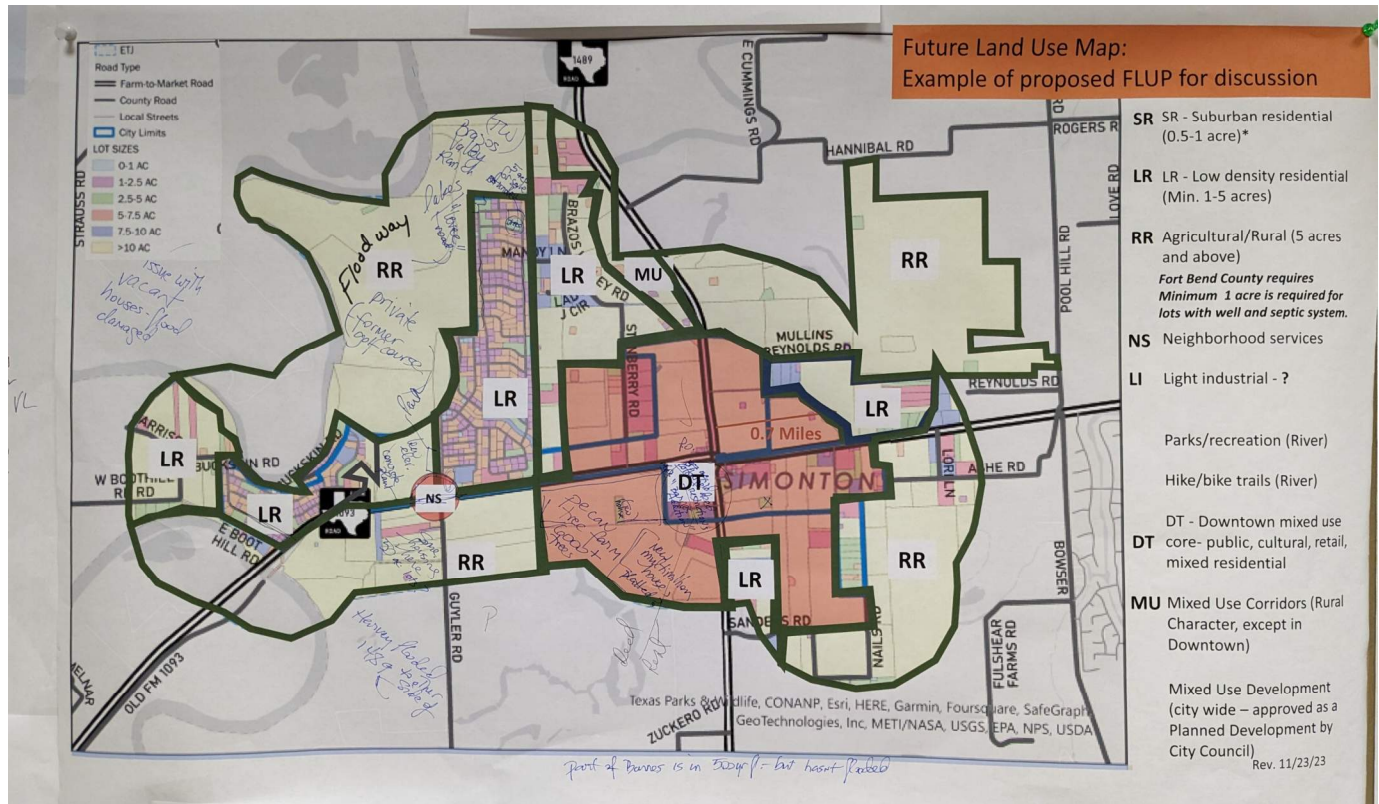


Simonton Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee
 CPAC # 3 Meeting
 November 13, 2023
 Attendance

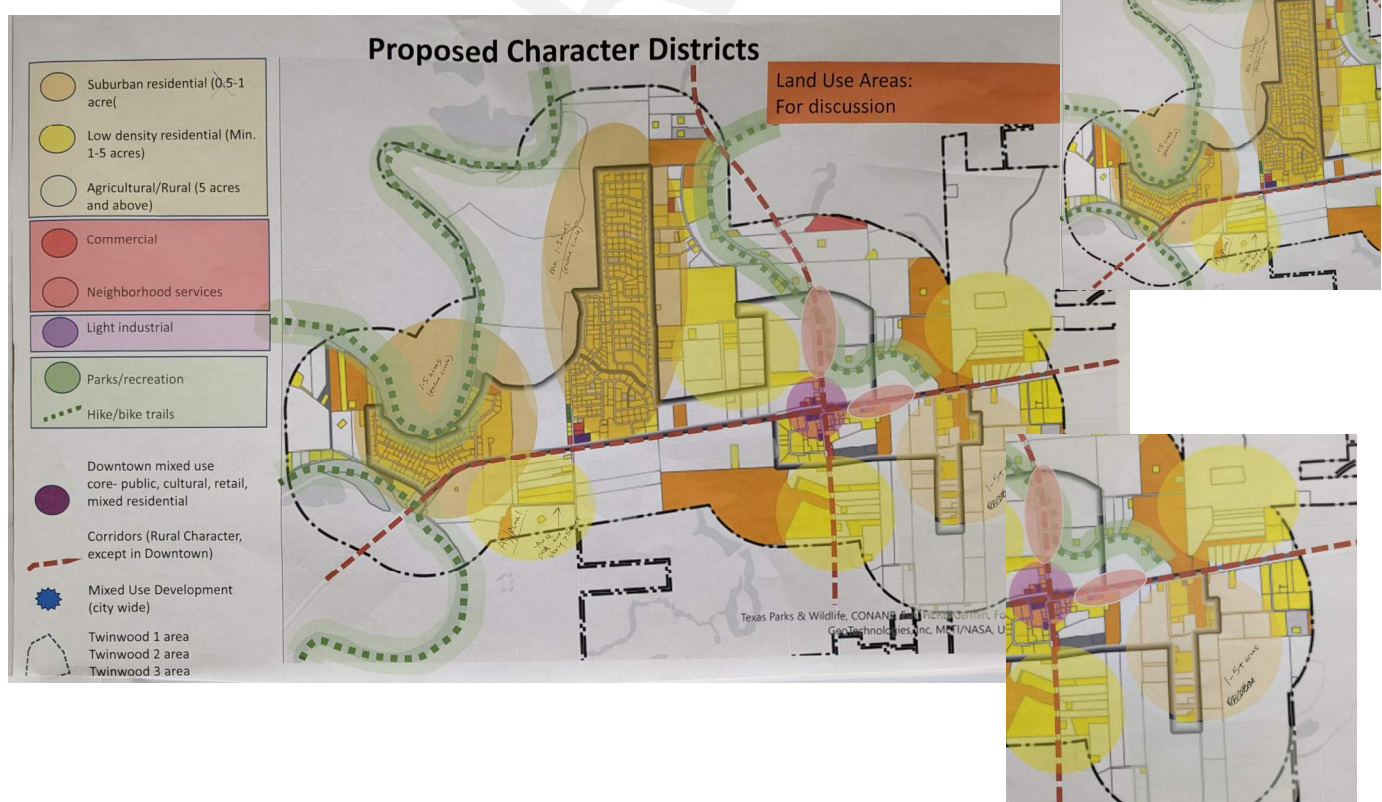
Name	Initials
Abbie Ferguson	
Andrew Perry	AP
Angela King	AK
Barbara Minton	BM
Brian Jordan	BJ
Burns Turner	BT
Chad Norvell	CN
CJ Aber	CA
Craig Kalkomey	CK
David Long	DL
Diana DuCroz	DD
Dwayne Grigar	DG
Glenn Plowman	GP
Janie Willman	JW
Jeff Cannon	JC
Joe Esch	JE
Julie Watts	JW
Justin Boudreau	JB
Justin Pruitt	JP
Lata Krishnarao	LK
Laurie Boudreaux	LB
Mandi Bronsell	MB
Mindi Snyder	MS
Stacey Gootee	SG
Susan LaDart	SL
Synda Frost	SF
Vincent Morales	VM

13. Appendix

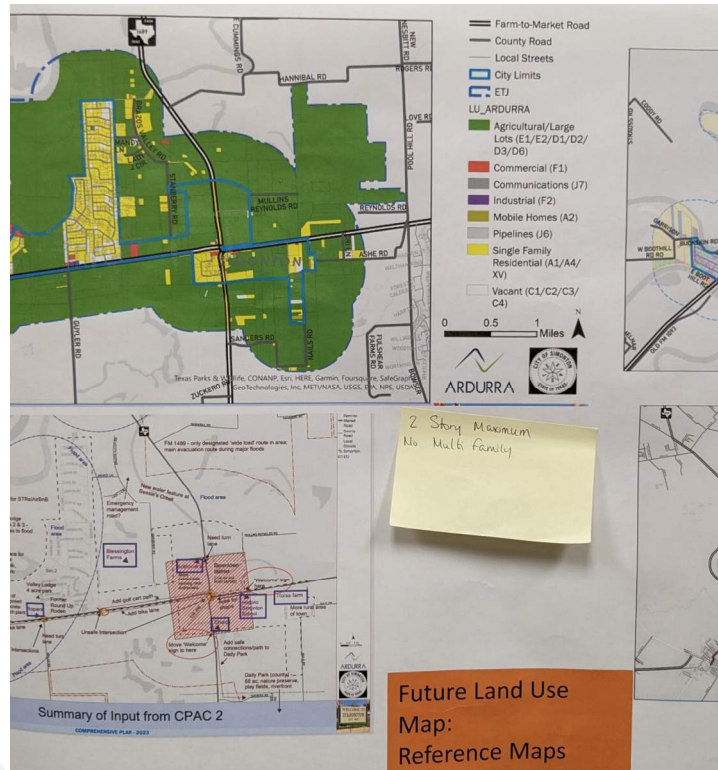
CPAC #3 – November 13, 2023



CPAC Input – Future Land Use Map



CPAC #3 – November 13, 2023



Character Districts (for discussion)

Rural Residential/Agricultural

- Rural, large parcels containing predominantly single-family homes, stables, and agriculture uses. Minimum lot size over five acres. The ETJ is included in this category.

Low-Density Residential

- Single family detached homes on a lot size of minimum one acre.

Suburban Residential

- Parcels containing predominantly single-family homes, developed as part of a planned development or unified development. Minimum lot size half acre.

Downtown

- Small, mostly one to two story buildings, historic buildings, church, school and cemetery, city hall, post office and commercial buildings, including some built close to the street. Mix of uses – some large-lot residential, office & services. Examples - veterinarian, hair salon, pet grooming, Twinwood offices, restaurant (Anthony's).

Mixed Use Corridors

- Mixed Use/Commercial Corridor – Mixed, residential and nonresidential uses that benefit from the location on a major thoroughfare and truck route; high site and building design standards to ensure high-quality development and rural character; auto oriented but with safe pedestrian and bicycle connections from nearby residential areas. Examples - land along FM 1093 at FM 1489, the two major thoroughfares that cross the city.

MINIMUM SQ Footage
for Homes

Light Industrial

- More intense commercial uses, including storage and warehousing facilities, uses with outdoor operations and storage; business parks with unified campus-style development for multiple business and office tenants; buffering from adjacent non-industrial uses with appropriate setbacks, fencing, screening. Example - at the intersection of FM 1093 and Wrangler Road.

Open Space & Parks

- Active and passive outdoor recreational and open space along the Brazos River.
- Example: 'Hike & bike' trail to connect residential neighborhoods on west side (Valley Lodge) with downtown and to connect downtown to Daily Park 2 miles south.

Mixed Use Development

- A development that blends multiple uses, such as residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, outdoor open space, or entertainment, into one integrated development (physically and functionally), with walkways and multimodal connections.

Neighborhood Services

- Small-scale commercial areas to serve the convenience and needs of the immediate neighborhood; restricted to uses compatible with residential character and environment; location at intersection of two collectors or streets of higher classification and limited to two acres at each corner; residential uses may be incorporated as part of an integrated development; district excludes more intense commercial development, such as gas stations, auto repair, and other uses generally incompatible with residential uses.

Twinwood Development

- A planned mixed use development (Development Agreement) of approximately 3000 acres in Simonton and ETJ.

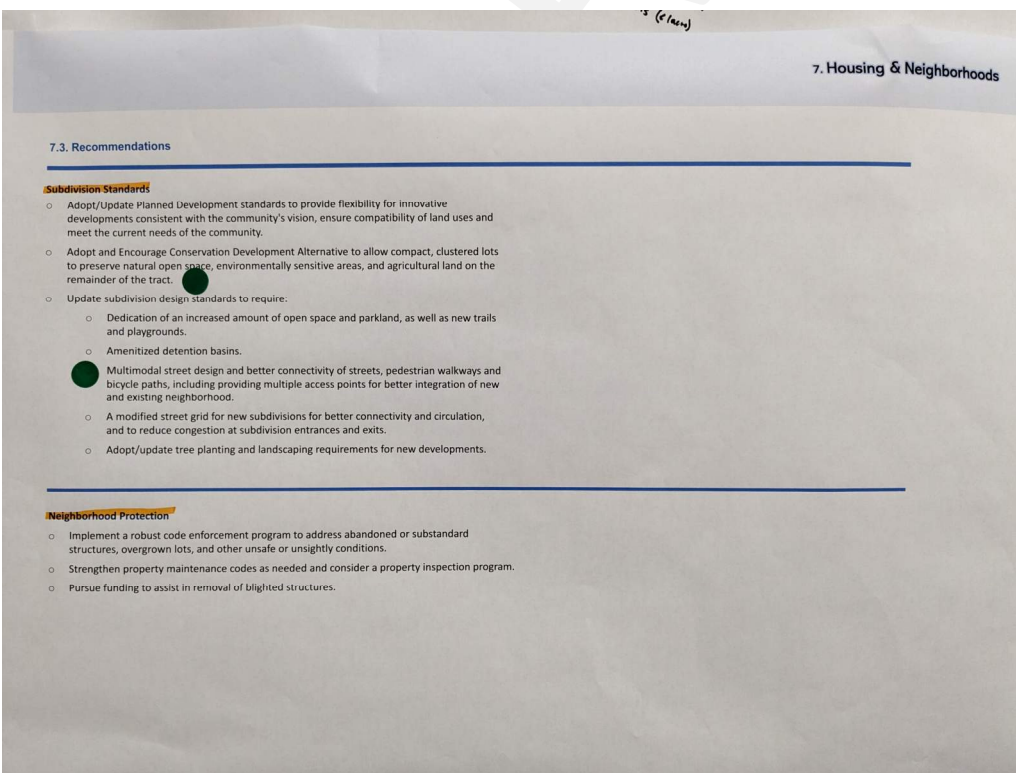
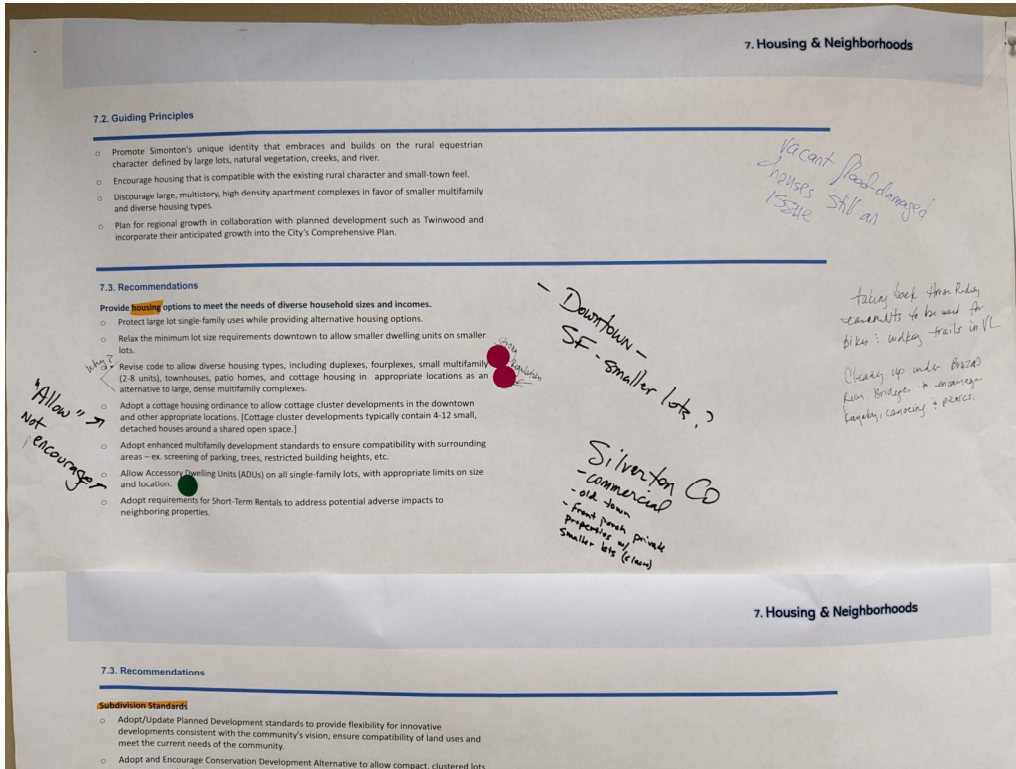


Norton Commons, Louisville, Kentucky
Source: <https://www.google.com>

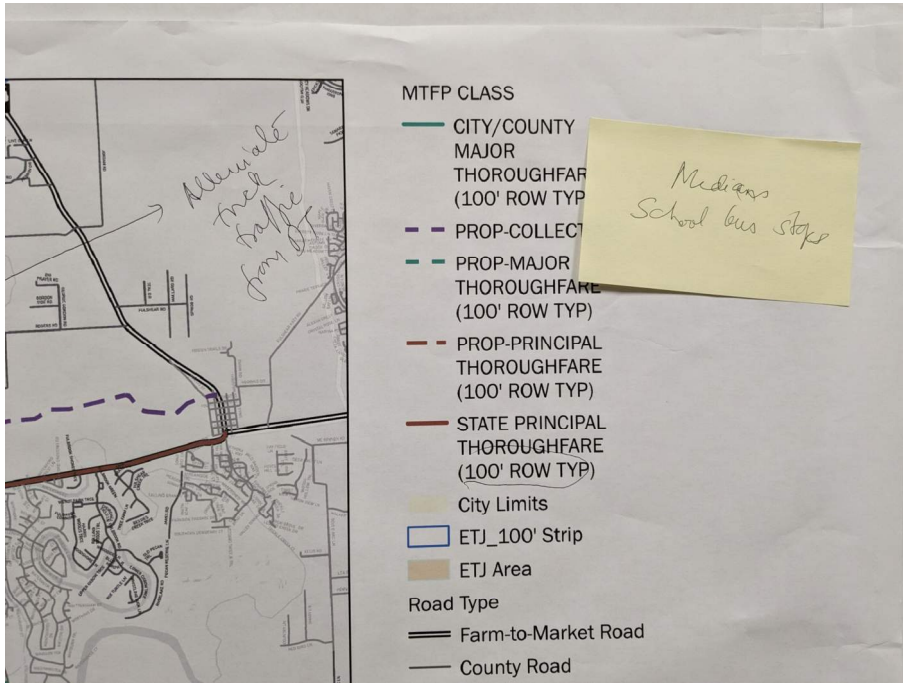


Source: <https://www.google.com> - Fredericksburg
Rev. 11/23/23

CPAC #3 – November 13, 2023



CPAC #3 – November 13, 2023



8.4. Recommendations

Adopt building and site design standards to ensure that new development is compatible with downtown's historic, rural village character:

Building Design Standards

- Adopt a building height limit of two-three stories to maintain scale of downtown.
- Locate main building entrances to face the street and connect to the sidewalk.
- Adopt transparency (window) minimum requirements for ground floor non-residential uses.
- Encourage awnings and canopies to provide shade to pedestrians.

Site Design Standards

- Build new buildings close to the street, with little to no setback. Reduce building setback requirements downtown to encourage a traditional development pattern with buildings close to sidewalk.
- Prohibit parking lots in front of buildings. Allow off-street parking at side or rear of lot only.
- Ensure wide sidewalks to accommodate outdoor seating and displays as well as pedestrians.

Connectivity

- Prioritize people and safety over cars.
- Provide bike racks (hitching posts) downtown.
- Link downtown to surrounding areas and make it safe to walk and bike to downtown from other parts of the city.
- Ensure high visibility crosswalks at the intersection of FM 1093 and FM 1489 to safely connect the four corners of downtown for pedestrians and bicycles.

8.3. 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.

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.

8.4. Recommendations

Highlight and preserve downtown's historic character and sense of place.

- Identify historic resources and encourage preservation and adaptive reuse.
- Relax building code requirements (adopt Int'l Existing Building Code) to facilitate reuse of older buildings.
- Build on Simonton's ranching and equestrian history for 'branding'.
- Enhance gateway entrances to downtown on FM 1489 and FM 1039 with signage, landscaping and art.
- Consider downtown-specific sign standards.
- Install comprehensive streetscape improvements with wide sidewalks, street trees, lighting, and benches in the public right-of-way.

Encourage a mix of uses to bring people downtown around the clock.

- Encourage a mix of retail, dining and office uses, as well as opportunities for residential use above ground floor level.
- Amend development regulations to allow small residential lots and multifamily housing downtown to provide options for smaller households and bring life to downtown.
- Encourage patios and outdoor dining and ensure that sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate outdoor seating and displays as well as pedestrians.
- Create a public plaza or pocket park near the center of downtown for community gatherings, celebrations and socializing.
- Program special events in downtown.
- Consider development incentives and assistance for local businesses.

Instead of relaxing building code specify for older building reuse/upgrade

CPAC #3 – November 13, 2023

8. Community Character & Development Standards

8.4. Recommendations

Parking

- Provide a community, shared parking area for downtown businesses instead of requiring off-street parking for each development.
- Maximize on-street parking. Allow on-street parking, both parallel and angle-in spaces, wherever sufficient right-of-way exists.
- Allow reduced or no parking requirements for downtown businesses and encourage shared parking arrangements to reduce amount of pavement.
- Locate on-site parking at the rear or side of buildings instead of between the building and street.
- Adopt parking lot landscaping standards to require shade trees throughout parking areas.
- Minimize curb cuts and curb cut widths for driveways.
- Allow alternatives to impermeable pavement for parking areas to reduce flood and heat impacts.
- Provide flexibility to waive or reduce parking requirements in order to preserve trees and other natural features.
- Require planting of parking lot trees to provide shade and reduce heat effects.

Corridors and Neighborhood Commercial

- Adopt Building and Site Design Standards for Corridors and Neighborhood Commercial Nodes that protect trees and natural features, provide enhanced landscaping, minimize parking lot visibility, and provide safe connections for pedestrians and bicycles.
 - Adopt a tree protection ordinance to protect desirable existing trees. *Yes!*
 - Adopt landscaping requirements, including a minimum number of trees, for commercial uses. *Yes!*
 - Limit parking in front of buildings near the street. Encourage off-street parking at side or rear of lot only.
 - Adopt transparency requirements for ground floor commercial and office uses.
 - Require primary entrances to be located on the street-facing side of the buildings.
 - Require pedestrian walkways to connect the sidewalk to the building entrance and require marked pedestrian paths through all parking lots.
 - Adopt sign regulations that control size, type and location of all commercial signs to prevent visual blight and protect Simonton's rural character. *Yes!*

12. Parks

12.2. Guiding Principles

- 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.

12.3. Recommendations

Parks, Open Space, and Recreation

- Plan a comprehensive system of trails and paths throughout the city to connect all areas of the city with safe walking and biking routes, including the following:
 - Connect Valley Lodge to Downtown along 1093
 - Connect Downtown to Dally Park.
- Develop a "pocket park" or public plaza downtown for community gatherings and events.
- Provide safe and accessible linkages to all park facilities.
- Promote conservation and environmental stewardship in the city.
- Explore safe ways to access the Brazos River for active and passive recreation (fishing, trails, viewpoint)
- Develop an open space greenway along Brazos River. [Explore public – private partnership and innovative measures]
- Review park dedication requirements for new subdivisions to ensure they are adequate and have connectivity etc.

Trees

- Adopt a tree preservation ordinance to protect desirable trees and mitigate for trees that are removed.
- Require planting of shade trees along streets, trails and in parking areas to beautify city and mitigate heat.
- Restrict tree clearance for development purposes prior to issuance of all development permits.
- Encourage tree-planting community events (ex. Trees for Houston)

Cultural Activities

- Prepare a strategic plan to address tourism opportunities.
- Explore opportunities to activate downtown and organize events in downtown.
- Consider reviving the "Round-up Rodeo", and working with local farms and businesses to support festival such as Blessington Farms Fall Festival.

CPAC #3 – November 13, 2023

11. Resiliency

11.3 Guiding Principles

- 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. *Authority & County*
- 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.

11.4 Recommendations

- Prepare a Hazard Mitigation Plan for the City and ETJ to address all hazards to which City is susceptible (wildfires, flooding, extreme heat and drought, hazardous materials, hurricane damage etc.)
 - Incorporate resiliency and sustainability measures in all land use and infrastructure decisions.
 - Incorporate hazard mitigation (resiliency) in all Master Plans.
 - Implement erosion countermeasures, such as those discussed in the Huitt-Zollars Brazos River Simonton Cutoff project, in riverbank areas susceptible to erosion.
 - Mitigate 'heat island' effects by limiting paved areas as much as possible and adopting measures to increase shade, especially along streets, sidewalks, trails and parking areas.
- Need to Add the Education of this to the Residents*

10.3.2 Water Recommendations

- Plan new water distribution facilities to support new communities in the Simonton area, with the following system components:
 - Identified water source (surface water or groundwater).
 - Water treatment plant for drinking water.
 - Trunk lines along community streets.
 - Service lines for new homes.
 - While existing residents may or may not be required to tie-in to the new water system, it is recommended that the option is given. Allow existing users currently on well and septic the option to tie into new water system.
- Not Feasible*

10.3.3 Wastewater Recommendations

- Develop a master drainage plan, master water infrastructure plan, and master wastewater plan for future growth, including:
 - Identification of site for a wastewater treatment plant and lift stations.
 - Trunk lines along highways and collector streets.
 - Service lines for new homes.
 - Extensive engineering analysis will be required to determine wastewater capacity requirements for both the treatment plant and pipe systems. Determine wastewater capacity requirements for future treatment plant and pipe systems.
 - Consider the creation of MUDs (Municipal Utility Districts) for construction of infrastructure for new communities.
- NOT REQUIRED FOR EXISTING HOMES*

10.2. Guiding Principles

- Plan for infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate future growth.
- Identify appropriate locations for capital improvements that protect and enhance 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 funding and grant opportunities.
- Incorporate the improvements proposed by planned development such as Twinwood in the city-wide infrastructure plan.
- Incorporate specific improvements already planned for and/or programmed by the city or by the county.

10.3. Recommendations

- Prepare an Infrastructure Master Plan for the City and ETJ to:
 - Assess current conditions.
 - Address existing and future demands based on the future growth capacity of the area.
 - Identify options to provide service to future development in city and ETJ (water distribution, WTP and wastewater collection, lift station, WWTP).
- Update impact fees for water, wastewater, drainage as a source of funding.
- Make regular updates to the city's fee schedule. *Educate the existing community for the*
- Prepare design and construction standards and ensure that all areas of the city meet same infrastructure standards. Review and update construction standards and specifications periodically to incorporate emerging technologies.

10.3.1 Drainage Improvement Recommendations

- Plan for new drainage facilities to support new communities.
- Require curb and gutter in new communities rather than open ditch systems where appropriate. Where appropriate develop open-ditch systems to preserve and enhance the "rural" character.
- Due to the proximity to the Brazos River, much of the Simonton area resides in the floodplain. Floodplain mitigation must be thoroughly planned out in new communities. This will require extensive engineering studies and planning. Some possible strategies:
 - Substantially raise the level of natural ground for planned communities.
 - Construct regional detention basins.
 - Add new channels for stormwater storage before outfall to the Brazos River.

CPAC #4 – February 29, 2024



CITY OF SIMONTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Meeting 4

City of Simonton
City Hall, 35011 FM 1093
Simonton, Texas 77476
Thursday, February 29, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

AGENDA

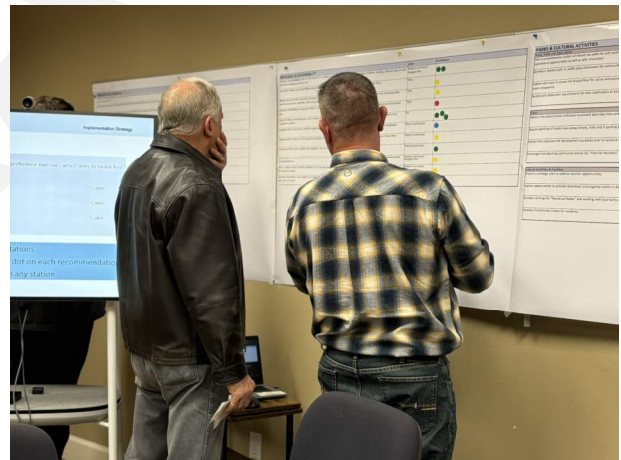
1. Call to Order
2. Update (10 min.)
 - a. Project status
 - b. Website update (<https://www.simontontexas.gov/page/cpac.home>)
3. Draft report overview (5 min.)
4. Throughfare Plan (25 min.)
 - a. Presentation
 - b. Discussion
5. Summary of recommendations & input received (20 min.)
6. Implementation strategy (30 min.)
 - a. CPAC Exercise
7. Next steps (10 min.)
8. Discussion/Input (10 min.)
9. Adjournment

A possible quorum of Simonton City Council could be in attendance.

I, the undersigned, Interim City Secretary of the City of Simonton, do hereby certify that on February 23, 2024 by 5:00 p.m. I posted a true and correct copy of the above and following notice of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Meeting of the City of Simonton to be held on February 29, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Simonton City Hall, which posting was done not less than three (3) full days prior to the date fixed for said meeting.

Janie Willman
Janie Willman, Interim City Secretary

Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities attending this meeting will be available. If you plan to attend this public meeting and you have a disability that requires special arrangements at the meeting, please contact City Secretary at 281.533.9809.



City of Simonton
CPAC Meeting 4
February 29, 2024

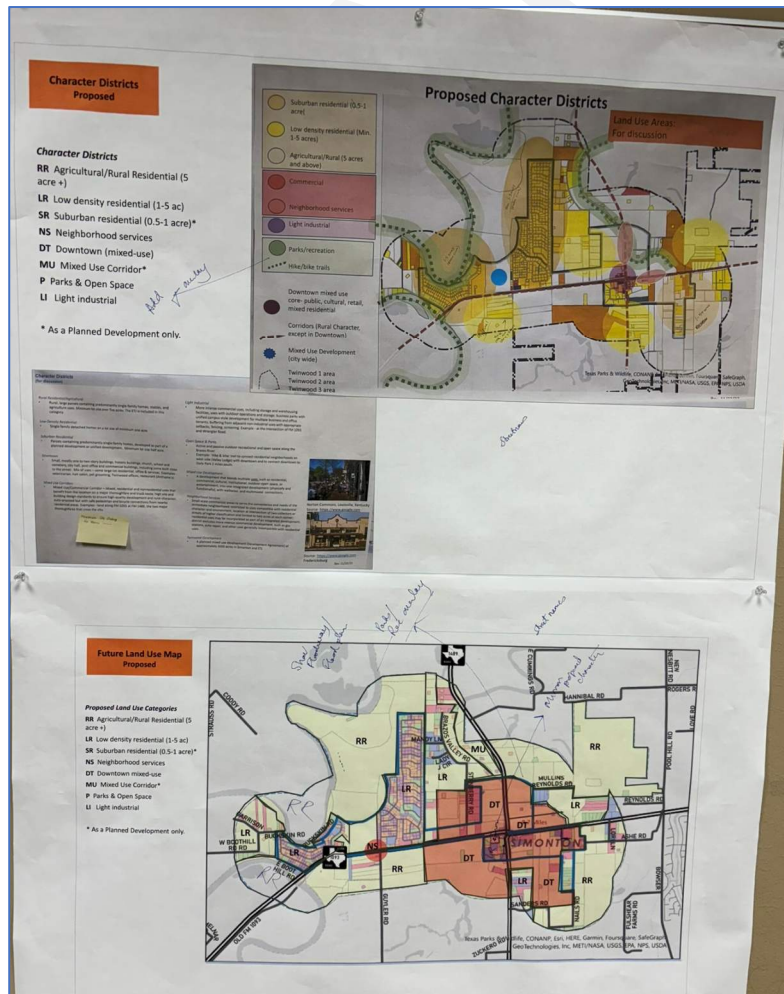
NO.	NAME
1	Synda Frost
2	Bautina Martin
3	Brian TURNER
4	Brian Jordan
5	Justin Boudreau
6	Janie Willman
7	Laurie Boudreaux
8	Andy Perry
9	
10	Lata Krishnarao Diana DuCroz
11	Krishna Radhakrishnan Joe Esch
12	
13	

CPAC #4 – February 29, 2024

Land Use & Economic Development

LAND USE / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Zoning code	Prioritization
Land Use Consider adoption of a zoning ordinance.		
Economic Development		
Adopt a formal set of economic development priorities and goals to guide city decision-making when evaluating proposed projects and agreements.	Policy	●●●●●●●●
Consider using economic development resources to shape and manage growth through public-private partnerships, development agreements, and infrastructure planning.	Policy	●●●●●●●●
Support targeted infrastructure investments through economic development corporations to give the city greater control over the nature and quality of development.	Policy	●●●●●●●●
Review the city's development processes to ensure they are clear and concise, as well as reasonable and appropriate for the desired outcomes.	Development Handbook	●●●●●●●●
Identify properties at risk of removing themselves from the ETJ. Prioritize by the potential impact on the city. Cultivate relationships with key property owners to help ensure the property develops to the city's benefit.	Policy	●●●●●●●●
Consider development incentives and assistance for local businesses.	Policy	●●●●●●●●
Maintain a good working relationship with Twinwood to allow opportunities to meet specific city needs or interests not addressed in the development agreement.	Policy	●●●●●●●●

Future Land Use Map



Replace with better pictures

CPAC #4 – February 29, 2024

Housing & Neighborhoods

HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS	Action	Prioritization
Adopt enhanced multifamily development standards to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas – e.g. restricted building heights, screening of parking, minimum requirements for trees and shrubs.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Reduce the minimum lot size requirements in downtown to allow smaller dwelling units on smaller lots.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Allow 'missing middle' or medium-density housing types, such as duplexes, fourplexes, small apartment complexes, townhouses, patio homes, and cottage cluster housing in appropriate locations.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) on all single-family lots, with appropriate limits on size and location.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Adopt requirements for Short-Term Rentals (STRs) to address potential adverse impacts to neighboring properties.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Subdivision Standards		
Adopt a Conservation Development Alternative, also known as Cluster Development, for subdivisions to allow compact, clustered lots to preserve open space, agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas on the rest of the tract.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Adopt Planned Development standards to provide flexibility for innovative developments and to ensure compatibility of land uses.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Adopt subdivision design standards, such as open space, landscaping and fencing, as desired by the community to enhance quality of new subdivisions and to guide future development agreements.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Neighborhood Protection		
Implement a robust code enforcement program to address abandoned or substandard structures, overgrown lots, and other unsafe or unsightly conditions.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Strengthen property maintenance codes as needed and consider a property inspection program.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Pursue funding to assist in removal of blighted structures.	Policy/Funding	●●●●●●●●

Community Character & Development Standards

COMMUNITY CHARACTER & DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS	Action	Prioritization
Identify historic resources and encourage preservation and adaptive reuse.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Install comprehensive street improvements, such as wide sidewalks, street trees, lighting, and benches in downtown.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Adopt Building Design Standards, such as height limit (e.g., 2-3 stories), front entrance location, transparency, and awnings, to ensure compatibility with downtown's historic, village character.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Adopt Site Design Standards, such as reduced or no front setback, buildings close to street and sidewalk, parking at side or rear, and outdoor seating, for a better pedestrian environment.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Highlight gateways to downtown on FM 1489 and FM 1039 with signage, landscaping and art.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Consider downtown-specific sign standards. Build on Simonton's ranching and equestrian history for community 'branding.'	Code	●●●●●●●●
Adopt International Existing Building Code to facilitate reuse of older buildings.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Bring residents and visitors downtown – daytime, evening, and weekends.		
Encourage a mix of retail, dining and office uses, as well as opportunities for residential use above ground floor level.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Amend development regulations to allow small residential lots and multifamily housing downtown to provide options for smaller households and bring more life to downtown.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Encourage patios and outdoor dining and ensure that sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate outdoor seating and displays as well as pedestrians.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Program special events in downtown.	Code/Policy	●●●●●●●●
Provide bike racks downtown.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Corridors, Nonresidential and Multifamily Uses		
Adopt specific building and site design standards for corridors and for nonresidential and multifamily uses.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Adopt fencing requirements (white picket) to preserve and encourage Simonton's character.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Requiring wide buffer strips with trees in front of commercial development to maintain the existing rural appearance of the thoroughfares.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Protect scenic character and natural beauty of Simonton		
Adopt a tree protection ordinance to protect desirable existing trees.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Adopt landscaping requirements for new development, including street trees, landscape buffers, shrubs to screen parking lots, and parking lot trees.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Adopt sign regulations that control size, type and location of all commercial signs to prevent visual blight and protect Simonton's rural character.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Parking and driveways		
Provide a community, shared parking area for downtown businesses instead of requiring off-street parking for each development.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Maximize on-street parking. Allow on-street parking, both parallel and angle in spaces, wherever sufficient right-of-way exists.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Allow reduced or no parking requirements for downtown businesses and encourage shared parking arrangements to reduce amount of pavement.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Require on-side parking at the rear or side of buildings instead of between the building and street.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Require planting of parking lot trees to provide shade and reduce heat effects.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Require curbside curbs and curb cut widths for drivers.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Allow alternatives to impermeable pavement for parking areas to reduce flood and heat impacts.	Code	●●●●●●●●
Provide flexibility to waive or reduce parking requirements in order to preserve trees and other natural features.	Code	●●●●●●●●

Replace with better pictures

CPAC #4 – February 29, 2024

Mobility

MOBILITY		
Establish safe and multimodal connections between residential, recreational, downtown, and other activity areas.	Action	Prioritization
Provide a dedicated pedestrian and bike path along FM 1093 connecting Valley Lodge to Downtown and on FM 1489 connecting Downtown to Daily Park.	Capital Improvement	
Adopt standards for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity for all new commercial and multifamily development.	Code	●●●●●
Ensure that mobility options meet the needs of all residents, including seniors, children, families and people with disabilities.	Code	●●●●●
Adopt Complete Streets cross sections for all street types that consider the needs of pedestrians, bicycles, wheelchairs and golf carts in addition to vehicles.	Code	●●●●●
Work with TxDOT to ensure that all TxDOT improvements include sidewalks and bike paths.	Policy	●●●●●
Provide for safe school bus shelters for children.	Policy/Grant	●●●●●
Improve safety for all modes of traffic on FM 1093 and FM 1489.	Policy/Grant	●●●●●
Work with Fort Bend County and TxDOT to finalize intersection improvements at FM 1093 and FM 1489.	Policy/Coordination	●●●●●
Provide enhanced crosswalks at the intersection of FM 1093 and FM 1489.	Capital Improvement	●●●●●
Provide turn lanes at critical intersections along FM 1093.	Capital Improvement	●●●●●
Monitor critical hot spots, including FM 1093 at Ashe Road and Bronco Road, and consider proactive improvements in coordination with TxDOT and County.	Policy	●●●●●
Address conflicts with truck traffic on FM 1093 and FM 1489.	Policy/Coordination	●●●●●
Prioritize road maintenance and pursue additional funds.	CIP	●●●●●

Parks & Cultural Activities

PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES		
Parks, Trails and Open Space	Action	Prioritization
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, Open Space and Cultural Arts Master Plan	●●●●●
Develop a 'pocket park' or public plaza downtown for community gatherings and events.	Capital Improvement	●●●●●
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 and Open Space Master Plan	●●●●●
Review park dedication requirements for new subdivisions to ensure they are adequate and have connectivity.	Code	●●●●●
Trees		
Adopt a tree preservation ordinance to protect desirable trees and mitigate for trees that are removed.	Code	●●●●●
Require planting of shade trees along streets, trails and in parking areas to beautify city and mitigate heat.	Code	●●●●●
Restrict tree clearance for development purposes prior to issuance of all development permits.	Code	●●●●●
Encourage tree-planting community events (ex. Trees for Houston)	Policy/Program	●●●●●
Cultural Activities & Facilities		
Prepare a strategic plan to address tourism opportunities.	Parks, Open Space and Cultural Arts Master Plan	●●●●●
Explore opportunities to activate downtown and organize events in downtown.	Policy/Program	●●●●●
Consider reviving the "Round-up Rodeo" and working with local farms and businesses to support festivals, such as Blessington Farms' Fall Festival.	Policy/Program	●●●●●
Develop a Community Center for residents.	Policy/Program	●●●●●

Replace with better pictures

**C. Summary of CPAC, Stakeholder and
Community Input**

DRAFT

C. Summary of CPAC, Stakeholder and Community Input

Traffic and Circulation

- Concern that development happens before adequate infrastructure is in place – narrow bridge on road to Wallis, two-lane roads, truck traffic
- I-10 construction has increased truck traffic on FM roads, truckers looking for alternate route.
- Two construction materials plants nearby, also generate a lot of truck traffic.
- Need a turn lane for places like Antoine's – one car waiting to turn can hold up all the cars behind it.
- Constable no longer approving permits for organized bike rides because of potential for blocking traffic.
- TxDOT wanted to build a six-lane flyover above FM 1489 /1093 intersection, but City was able to get it changed to a roundabout (not finalized), 'dog bone'
- No bike path – have to ride on roads
- TxDOT should be able to include bike lane when they build roads, they don't take much space.
- Bus stops currently at unsafe locations and all dark in the mornings.
- Current migration has increased the number of school kids in the last two years.
- Intersection proposed by TX DOT (1093 & 1489) is not a done deal. City was being responsible and offered to pay whatever they could to improve that intersection. It is a short-term solution, but it is needed to make the city safer.
- There are turn lanes required also for school buses.
- Erosion of road is another major issue. County is working on an erosion control project which has been discontinued or is silent at present.
- HGAC had proposed a bike and pedestrian trail connectivity, but the city had opted out of it. The bike and ped trail was planned to go across private property. Some of the streets are two feet below flood elevation. And the city is responsible for maintenance. Hike and bike trail goes through Fulshear, Wallace, Eagle Lake. They used an old toll road authority easement that was abandoned. Simonton is a pinch point, and the trail would have to cut through Valley Lodge.
- Roadway maintenance – City maintains the city roads. County maintains county roads. TxDOT maintains TxDOT roads.
- TXDOT plans – got ourselves invited, able to suggest changes. Do not have a long-term mobility plan.

Housing

- 2-story maximum
- No multifamily
- Minimum square footage for homes

Summary of CPAC, Stakeholder and Community Input – Contd.

Recreation/Open Space/Amenities

- New 100 acres county park south of city limits – park is still developing, would like better connectivity to park. Close enough to bike to but have to share narrow roads.
- Park – highlight relationship, events
- Bessie's Creek – lots of potential, but privately owned.
- Create community connections to the river and enhance recreational opportunities.
- Adopt a tree preservation ordinance to protect desirable trees and mitigate for trees that are removed.

Infrastructure

- Twinwood has its own operations.
- People that are on well and septic do not want to connect (not disturbed).
- Not opposed to utilities for new development being planned. Need to address.
- Min. requirements for sewer and well follow FB County.
- Floodplain mitigation strategies:
- Opposed to planned communities to substantially raise the level of natural ground.
- Support construction of regional detention basins.
- Educate community about fee schedules.

New Businesses – most recent proposals not what city wants to see

- Budget chain stores – some residents want Dollar General to open store in Simonton; others don't because of history of poor landscaping compliance, litter, high employee turnover, police issues, negative reflection on community. Might be okay in a multi-tenant shopping center with responsible property management instead of a stand-alone property.
- 24-hour poker houses – city gets frequent inquiries about opening these
- Proposed concrete plant – example of lack of regulations; city was able to stop it, although it meant foregoing hundreds of thousands in tax revenue for the city. Quality of life more important.
- Several gas stations interested in opening at the proposed concrete plant site.

ETJ/ City Split – taxation issues

- Blessington Farms is in ETJ - Sales tax goes to county, city gets only a tiny %.
- Antonie's is inside city limits.

Available Land

- City size is 2 sq. mi., not counting ETJ. Most of the undeveloped land is Twinwood's land.
- Available land with road frontage – about 250-300 acres.

Other

- Would like high speed internet
- Nalls Road – vacant land (non-revenue generating business)
- Seem to have most under control – timing
- Need specific plan for developable land
- Partner with Twinwood
- Property at Blacksmith St. and FM 1489 – sewage seepage in the yard into street – environmental health & safety issue

D. Stakeholder Interviews

DRAFT

D. Stakeholder Interviews

Why is Comprehensive Plan important?

- Simonton's small today, sandwiched between growth areas, planning important.
- Need to address – what can or cannot be controlled.
- Determine what people would like to see. What environment should it be, input from the community.
- High town connectivity.

What amenities are important?

- Desperately need control over zoning to keep Simonton from becoming unplanned. E.g. prevent home next to car repair shop, cars parked in front.
- If growth is controlled better now, it will prevent gentrification later.
- Housing – Currently people see acreage sites/agriculture/country. Need a growth that provides a combination/other alternatives, but does not give the feel of Fulshear (new Texas Highway – row of apartments)
- Growth that plans for future, unlike Fulshear, which did not consider police, water, sewage, infrastructure etc.
- Do not want to see a city overrun with transient people.
- Options can be included, especially multifamily – even a duplex/condo. (Hesitancy about options.) Important to have housing to cater to medical professionals who work in medical center in Katy (may not want to mow a lawn), but not look like inside Houston, mixed.

Twinwood

- South of FM 1093 – first Twinwood development – more than million-dollar houses, $\frac{3}{4}$ acres – nice, gated area.
- Twinwood – agreement, not read it in 10 years. Includes very minimal building standards, approvals to Simonton for record keeping, maintain integrity of buildings.
- No limit on multifamily.
- Glenn Plowman, Twinwood President – reach out to him and invite him to share his recent plans, to small group, council, board. They have indicated that they want to work with the City.

County-City coordination

- County is terrible about sharing information. Engineer – have to rely on him and call the commissioner. Not good at sharing information up front.
- Good relationships with departments – interlocal agreements – road and bridge, sheriff's departments.

County-City coordination – cont'd

- TXDOT plans – got ourselves invited, able to suggest changes. Do not have a long-term mobility plan
- Intersection plan allows to navigate the intersection – but does not address the future.
- Mobility good for Simonton.

Infrastructure

- Twinwood has its own operations.
- People that are on well and septic do not want to connect (not disturbed).
- Not opposed to new development being planned.
- Min. requirements for sewer and well follow Fort Bend County.

Taxes

- Future growth – definitely a concern – since we have a council drastically reducing ad-valorem tax rate. Do not know how we grow while providing desired services.
- Finance with reserve or take on debt.
- Have the ability to take debt - not concerned, managing within means.
- Paying for services.
- Economic Dev Tax – EDC A and B.
- EDC not active after COVID.

Services provided

- County - Control, Debris removal, health

Communications

- Interim City Secretary – Janie Willman.
- Facebook and Instagram.

Growth potential

- Map available unrestricted land.
- Valley Lodge – use restrictions in Valley Lodge, single family – min. 1 acre lot. No businesses, home occupations allowed. Businesses got in anyway. Car repair place in the middle of the neighborhood. Enforcement an issue.

Growth issues

- Zoning is important. City Council's major challenge is that they are not acknowledging that growth is going to happen. And without zoning there won't be any control on what type of growth happens.
- Notable subdivisions/developments – Glenwood, Orchid Estate, Acres Manor.
- Fort Bend County fastest growing county in the US.
- Due to decrease in home values post-Harvey, there was an increase in lower-income people coming into the city. Historically the city was middle income. The reduction in home values will lead to a decrease in taxes.
- Tax rate increase is not revenue based, will insulate the city. City will have no option but to increase the taxes.

Flooding

- Post-flooding houses sold for below market rate, decreased taxes. The city has experienced slow growth. Slow growth has been influenced by a low tax rate of \$0.22. Tax rate is important to protect growth.
- Some houses after flooding have been selling over market. However, others are not selling at all. 15-to-20-year cycle for flooding. Two major floods one in 1990s and one recently with Harvey.
- City has to spend money to repair roads and then file for FEMA reimbursement. Lack of reserves and this is not budgeted.
- Have interlocal agreement with county to collect debris after flooding.
- Contact Craig Kalkomey (City Engineer) for erosion project information.

Riverfront

- Development challenged by the type of soil (gumbo soil, erosion, timber logs). Lack of law enforcement. TXDOT and county toll road authority take care of the riverfront.
- Huitt Zollars has completed a study of the river – it's called the River Study.
- People do not have access if there is no road or erosion.
- River is a great opportunity. Allen's Reservoir project. Brazos River Authority. The city does not have any water. Not enough water in the river (capacity) to sell water.

City/County relationship

- Important to maintain good relations with the county.
- Involvement in regional agencies is important to have a voice. For example, address transportation issues, such as access to the river etc.

Twinwood

- Twinwood Development agreement allows rental units. There is no provision to stop them from taking over and selling out. Does not restrict multifamily development
- 50% of sales tax reimbursed. 16% of taxes to pay for private water bills. City has to put the bill for repairs of streets infrastructure. 196 acres in the city between 1498 and 1093.
- Glenn Plowman is Twinwood president, need to interview him regarding future plans.
- Need to identify Glenwood boundaries on the comprehensive plan map and address it.

Permitting and Review

- Permitting processes not efficient.
- Residential plans approved by BV. Not a comprehensive review.
- LJA reviews plats and general codes.
- Public works – who takes care of this???
- Masonry standards exist but not enforced. A number of codes not imposed.
- A quarterly review of codes was mandated.

Traffic

- Bus stops currently at unsafe locations and all dark in the mornings.
- Current migration has increased the number of school kids in the last two years.
- Intersection proposed by TX DOT (1093 & 1489) is not a done deal. City was being responsible and offered to pay whatever they could to improve that intersection. It is a short-term solution, but it is needed to make the city safer.
- There are turn lanes required also for school buses.
- Erosion of road is another major issue. County is working on an erosion control project which has been discontinued or is silent at present.
- HGAC had proposed a bike and pedestrian trail connectivity, but the city opted out of it. The bike and ped trail was planned to go across private property. Some of the streets are two feet below flood elevation. And the city is responsible for maintenance. Hike and bike trail goes through Fulshear, Wallis, Eagle Lake. They used an old toll road authority easement that was abandoned. Simonton is a pinch point, and the trail would have to cut through Valley Lodge.
- Roadway maintenance – City maintains the city roads. County maintains county roads.

Utilities

- Well, septic require half acre for private well and septic systems. Process - meet TCEQ requirements. Need approval from the county.
- Texas Pride is the garbage collection company.
- Fulshear was in a similar situation 20 years ago with private water and septic. Currently they have issues. The subsidence district had warned the city and legally forced the city to pay for damages. The city had to include piped water and sewer in their capital outlay program.
- Another mistake made in Fulshear was not planning for growth, which led to the wastewater plant being right in the middle of an esplanade. The comp plan needs to look at the big picture and future growth. Plan for future facilities.

Misc.

- Liked Bradford pears and rose planted subdivisions.

Critical flooding challenges

- Impassable streets during normal storm events? Have not really had a lot of roads that have gone under water. Lot of roads above homes. Maybe small ditches that get overwhelmed.
- Access to pump stations - county pumps from low areas

Infrastructure Initiatives

- Ongoing regrading of roadside ditches (outside of river).
- Countywide – outside of disaster assistance.
- Buyouts of flooded properties. Another flood will see another set of property buyouts.
- County/HGAC -Brazos River Section 1 of Valley Lodge subdivision.
- CDBG Mitigation – for GLO review. HUD money through CDBG – led by county and HGAC – 20 million.
- Water leaves the area pretty quickly. First two phases addressed the main issues.
- CIP projects.
- New HGAC call for projects that are shovel ready.
- City has a CIP for roadway and drainage and roadway.
- Consulting engineers helped the city to undertake road improvements. Conducted a door to door survey.

Emergency Access/Evacuation Routes

- Evacuation Route – part of the city impacted by floods, FM 1093 is the only way in and out. If under water, evacuation needs to be called. Brazos – Richmond Flood Gauge – 48-49. It goes under water after the homes area flooding. No hurricane evacuation, but rain fall impacted.
- Fort Bend County emergency routes pass through county, but 1093 not on the corridor. Proposed alignment of 36A – will be a hurricane evaluation route.
- Twinwood dedicated 14 miles of property to align 36A.

Wastewater and Water Infrastructure

- Not real challenges with reliance on septic systems. Mostly aerobic systems but some leach fields. Homes have water wells. Shallow wells may be a problem with the drought. Not here. Water wells contaminated during floods 2016-2017. City ran water samples.
- Septic – clay soil may crack lines.
- 99% of town is on well and septic. Twinwood Simonton Management District – main user Antonie’s restaurant. City has talked about capacity - extend to downtown and other areas. Facilities could potentially be upgraded. Twinwood open to working with the City.
- Several people in Valley Lodge would like water services.
- Simonton immune from subsidence – Subsidence District has legal authority over public system, Simonton has none. Area will be hit with groundwater reduction. Entire county will have that. Private wells in residences may have not been documented. Twinwood will get hit hard. They will have to use other water sources
- Wells – below the threshold of subsidence district.
- BenchMark Wireline – may be hit. Ropers Café below the threshold of subsidence.
- Twinwood densities – no overall plan. Everything they see is 1 acre to 4 acre lots. Not sure what methodology was followed for infrastructure. Plan was to get the land and figure it out. May have some thoughts but from infrastructure it has been more open-ended – especially because of floodplain.
- Small commercial sites can develop with well and septic, unless adjacent to management district.
- Map of Management District – currently growth in around the Management District. FM 1093 corridor between Simonton and Weston Lakes in Fulshear and north on FM 1459. Center of development 1093/1459 intersection. TxDOT improvements are the quickest catalysts for development. Areas within a mile and half of each other completely differ in intensity and character.
- Floodplain, lack of utilities – preserve character.
- County does permitting.
- Majority of the land is under Twinwood’s name. Parcel data will give an idea of land owned by them.

- City or county CIPs planned for the next 5-10 years - none. More reactive. Maybe road and a bridge.
- Large commercial complexes hard to built with well and septic.
- Tract in the floodplain – no fill allowed in the flood plain ordinance. Built on pier and beam. (Homes in Valley Lodge). Therefore, difficult for commercial. When the city has been approached for variances, they have not been open to that. Concrete Plant may be a unique design. Any tract in the floodplain -there is no fill allowed. Commercial business can build but need to floodproof their building. FEMA allows that. However, not many commercial will knowingly keep the building below the flood plain elevation. Only one in Brazoria County that tried to flood proof.

Traffic/Truck Traffic

- Good concept to loop for trucks to get them away from downtown. Fewer 18 wheelers on FM 1489. Rare on FM 1093. More pp 36 to I-10.
- Intersection improvements – conceptual layout. Dog bone/roundabout
- No major developments – in city limits and ETJ – no permit applications yet. Some in design/active development – 1400 acres Twinwood estates.
- Twinwood Parkway

E. Strategic Report and Plan

DRAFT



Report
and
Strategic Plan

Adopted
February 4, 2020

Prepared and Facilitated
By
Ron Cox Consulting



REPORT AND STRATEGIC PLAN CITY COUNCIL/EDC BOARDs/STAFF PLANNING SESSION

CITY OF SIMONTON

September 28, 2019

Introduction

On September 28, 2019, the Simonton Mayor and City Council (City Council includes the Mayor) and Boards of Directors of the two Simonton Economic Development Corporations (4A and 4B) and staff met for a planning session. The purpose of this meeting was twofold.

- Prepare a governance philosophy for the City Council, EDC Board members and staff. Included in that is identifying key elements of the vision for Simonton.
- Utilizing a SWOT Analysis approach, draft a strategic plan for the city.

The City Council, EDC Board members and staff present for the session freely worked together, and their work was exemplary in all respects. Ron Cox facilitated the process.

Governance

The City Council and EDC members established the basics of their governance model. The City Council and EDC members participated in discussions about their role, together and their leadership responsibilities. The elements of a strong governance model are having and following clear vision and mission, establishing leadership and communications philosophies, and identifying the expectations.

The key elements of the Governance Philosophy are leadership, communication, and understanding and defining expectations. These define how the team will function together. Visioning and planning are the key elements that define what the strategies and goals are for the City of Simonton and what they will be to ensure the vision is ultimately attained.

Governance Model

The governance model first begins with leadership. Each member of the City Council and EDCs were asked to provide input into how they will lead, communicate and a were asked to define expectations for themselves and staff.

The City Council and EDC members were asked why they serve on the positions they hold. They answered as follows.

Why do you serve?

- Want Simonton to grow in a positive manner.
- To maintain the country feel of the community.
- To have a say in our future.
- Wanted an opportunity to give back and pay forward.
- Wanted to be a part of volunteering in the community.
- To get better internet service.
- To influence better mobility.
- To be in a position to guide change – particularly the growth that is coming.
- To be certain our voice is heard among the developers.
- To be a part of the unique opportunity to create and shape our city for the future.

What attributes to you bring to the group?

- Knowing the experiences and needs of a younger family.
- Knowing the experiences and needs of a commuter.
- Ability to promote the city.
- Bring expertise of working in a corporate environment.
- Vitality.
- Being proactive and being able to see the big picture.
- Being a cost-accountant.
- Ability to identify and make changes that other may fear.
- Looking at issues from outside the normal comfort zone (outside the box).
- Ability to be diplomatic with the “powers that be” acting as a buffer and liaison.
- Perspective of a small business-person.
- Compassion but persistent.

The participants were asked to establish the basis for how they will lead in the community.

The City Council and EDC Boards will lead ...

- By example
 - Working toward continuous improvement.
 - Showing compassion.
 - Showing understanding.
 - Educating themselves and others.
 - Communicating.
- Offering tools to educate themselves and others.
- With facts...not feelings.
- By connecting one-on-one with others.
- Being a mediator.
- Accepting responsibility for all citizens.
- Make the best decision for the whole community, not just individuals.
- By moving forward.
- With level-headed openness.
- Continually looking for new opportunities.
- By not taking your own authority too seriously.
- Listening and understanding.

The City Council and EDC Boards will communicate by ...

- Over educate others – over and over.
- Anticipate issues and inform others.
- Coordinate between Council and EDC Boards by...
 - Through staff at EDC meetings.
 - Board members communicate upstream to Council.
 - Regular meeting between Mayor and Board Chairs.
 - Regular meetings between Boards and Council.
 - Gaining a clear understanding about how the Boards and Council fit together as one unit.
 - Regular reports of relevant activities from Council to Boards.
 - Regular reports of relevant activities from Boards to Council.

The City Council and EDC Boards expect the following of each other ...

- Be present and engaged.
- Negotiate (not demand) items with each other.
- Do the job you are elected/appointed to do.
- Be invested in your respective role and group.
- Follow up.
- Be a willing worker.

- Be objective for the city as a whole.
- Educate yourself.
- Take and give constructive criticism.
- Listen to each other, educate, be respectful.
- Take the “I” and “you” out of the conversation.
- Emphasize the issue; don’t get personal.

The City Council and EDC Boards expect the following of the staff ...

- Communication and regular reports to the Council and Boards on relevant matters.
- Be engaged in the city and community.
- Come prepared and assist the Council and Boards in being prepared.
- Follow up.
- Assist in educating the Council and Boards in the laws under which they are governed and their respective roles.
- Hold staff responsible for providing what is needed.
- Provide regular performance reviews of staff.

The staff expects the following of the City Council and EDC Boards (as defined by the Council and EDC Board members) ...

- Review the material and be prepared at the meetings.
- Be an advocate for the decisions made (not an antagonist).
- Put their own time and effort into these things
 - Participate.
 - Work.
 - Educate.
 - Read.
 - Research.
- Be involved.
- Be active.
- Have a positive attitude about your duties.
- Have an open line of communication.
- Follow the rules – don’t put the city at risk.

Vision and Mission

The City Council discussed the elements of the vision they have for Simonton. The vision has been defined by the community, per the Comprehensive Plan. The Mayor and City Council identified the key elements of their vision for the City. This list will be consolidated into a series of key bullet items. From those key items, the Vision Statement will be reviewed.

Vision Statement

The City does not currently have an adopted Vision Statement. The discussion of the Vision Elements will form the basis of a Vision Statement. During the staff follow up session, the staff prepared the following draft for Council consideration.

Vision Elements

These elements are presented in no particular order of priority.

- A safe community.
- Maintaining high property values.
- Having open and public spaces available to the citizens.
- Maintaining the lower density population we currently enjoy.
- Having an attractive community
 - No billboards.
 - Well-kept properties.
 - Nice buildings and places.
 - Community events.
- Providing beautification to the city – landscapes, parks, etc.
- Sustainable small businesses (no “big boxes” retail, no concrete jungles)
- Look different than other suburban neighbors.
- Identify and establish desirable architectural standards.
- Maintain the small-town character of Simonton.
 - Family oriented.
 - Friendly.
 - Loving in times of need.
- Remain consistent with the rural character of the area.

City Mission Statement

Likewise, the city does not have an adopted Mission statement. The discussion of the Mission Elements will form the basis of a Mission Statement. During the staff follow up session, the staff prepared the following draft for Council consideration.

Mission Elements.

The elements of the City’s Mission were identified as follows.

- Host community events.
- Maintain a professional and knowledgeable staff.
- Be efficient in planning and providing operations and projects.
- Establish regulations to meet the vision.

- Be good stewards of the citizens funds.
- Provide safety and security to the citizens.
- Promote the community.

EDC Mission Statement

And finally, neither the 4A nor 4B Corporations has Mission Statements. These remain for another day. With the reconfiguration of these boards with a new contractor, these will be discussed and evaluated.

Strategic Planning

The facilitator led the participants in a SWOT analysis, identifying and discussing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the City of Simonton, both organizationally and in the community. The weaknesses then were divided into common themes – Areas of Emphasis. Then opportunities – strategies and goals – were identified to overcome the weaknesses. Finally, threats were identified that if not identified nor anticipated may get in the way of accomplishing the strategies and goals.

The participants were divided into two groups. Each group focused on strengths and weaknesses as follows. The groups focused on both organizational and community strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths

Group 1

- Strong sense of community.
- Citizens willingness to serve and willingness to help.
- Strategic location.
- Underdeveloped – community in its infancy for growth.
- Excellent staff.
- A knowledgeable community.
- Good school district that meets the needs of all children, including those with special needs.
- A safe place to live.
- Strong fire and EMS services from ESD.
- Clean, well taken care of, open spaces.

Group 2

- The people.
- Available green space.
- Natural beauty of the area.
- The Community Church.
- Excellent schools.
- The area is a “fresh pallet” for growth.

- Location.
- Available space for growth.
- Good mobility (for now).
- A development partner in Twinwood.
- Historical legacy.
- Current attractions.
- Commercial business that currently exist.
- The artistic draw of the community.
- No city debt.

Weaknesses

Group 1

- No Community Center.
- The Brazos River.
- Repetitive flooding.
- No WiFi.
- No diversity in tax base.
- Local POA is not actively engaged at this time.
- Lack of code enforcement.
- No roads to handle additional traffic as growth comes along.
- No city police department.
- No local postal service.
- Lack of available land (other than that owned by Twinwood).
- Vacant homes remaining from flooding

Group 2

- Lack of commercial tax base.
- Few restaurants.
- Few stores – gas and retail.
- Few services that provide revenue to the city.
- The Brazos River.
- Little to no emergency management equipment or storage facilities.
- Reputation to flood.
- No infrastructure – water, sewer, internet or cable.
- No community center for people to gather.
- Little to no city owned property.
- No zoning
- Lack of funds to hire needed consultants.
- Too much reliance on Twinwood developers.
- No land use plan.
- Need for additional city employees.
- Lack of planning for transportation needs.

Areas of Emphasis

Reviewing the weaknesses presented resulted in the identification of four areas of emphasis.

- **Enable Growth and Revitalization**
- **Enhance Communication**
- **Maintain a Well Managed City**
- **Enhance Quality of Life**

Weaknesses Rearranged

The weaknesses identified above, were then rearranged (in a summarized fashion) to be within one of the areas of emphasis.

- **Enable Growth and Revitalization**
 - Lack of commercial tax base.
 - Overly relying on Twinwood for development opportunity.
 - No zoning.
 - No land use plan.
 - Lack of available land outside of Twinwood.
 - Need for a post office.
 - Lack of planning for transportation needs.
- **Enhance Communication**
 - No Wi-Fi.
- **Maintain a Well Managed City**
 - Few services that provide revenue to the city.
 - No city infrastructure.
 - Little to no city owned property.
 - Lack of funds to hire needed consultants.
 - Little to no emergency management equipment or storage facilities.
 - Need for additional code enforcement.
 - No city police department.
 - Need for additional city employees.
 - Vacant homes from flooding.
- **Enhance Quality of Life**
 - Inactive POA in city.
 - The Brazos River.
 - Repetitive flooding.
 - No community center.
 - Few restaurants.
 - Few stores - gas and retail.

Opportunities – Strategies and Goals

- **#1 Enable Growth and Revitalization**

Strategic Statement: *The City of Simonton will promote quality growth following the established Master Plan.*

- 1.1 Establish an economic development plan to expand the tax base.
- 1.2 Establish a Traffic Management Plan
 - 1.2.1 Establish a partnership with TxDOT to anticipate and plan for future traffic needs due to growth.
- 1.3 Create a marketing plan for both Development Corporation Boards focusing on attracting new businesses to the community.

- **#2 Enhance Communications**

Strategic Statement: *The City of Simonton will build relationships through communication, technology & training.*

- 2.1 Establish a plan for establishing and maintaining community messaging and engagement.
- 2.2 Hire contract person as a communications person for the City.

- **#3 Maintain a Well Managed City**

Strategic Statement: *The City of Simonton will operate in a transparent, efficient, accountable and responsive manner by preparing the organization and the staff for the future, focusing on core services, attracting and retaining the best employees and wise stewardship of financial resources.*

- 3.1 Take steps to establish a and improve infrastructure for the City
 - 3.1.2 Establish a Wi-Fi network.
 - 3.1.3 Determine the feasibility of providing a water and wastewater utility for the City.
- 3.2 Continue to establish and nurture a partnership with Twinwood Development developers.
 - 3.2.1 Initiate efforts to discuss and renegotiate the terms of Agreements to assist in securing a better revenue position for services to be provided.
 - 3.2.2 Discuss, understand and assist in a Twinwood land use plan that meets the needs of the City as well as the development.
- 3.3 Develop and implement a plan for safe and accessible storage of emergency management equipment.
- 3.4 Establish a staffing plan that will include the addition of growing positions and interns.
- 3.5 Develop a Comprehensive Plan for the City
 - 3.5.1 Coordinate with Twinwood Developer to understand and possibly incorporate developer land use plan.
- 3.6 Establish proper land use regulations for the City including but not limited to zoning, subdivision regulations, architectural, lighting and landscaping controls.

- 3.7 Establish a comprehensive code enforcement program
 - 3.7.1 Address vacant and possibly abandoned flooded houses.
 - 3.7.2 Assist in flood mitigation for homeowners where feasible.
 - 3.7.3 Address general code enforcement issues in neighborhoods and businesses.
- **#4 Quality of Life**

Strategic Statement: *The City of Simonton will elevate the community's image through visual enhancement and creating a sustainable future.*

 - 4.1 Establish a plan for the construction of a Community Center.
 - 4.1.1 Identify and contact corporate sponsors for possible partnerships for funding a community center.
 - 4.1.2 Identify and acquire a grant writer to seek possible grants for a community center.

Threats

Finally, the full group identified threats to accomplishing the goals and strategies that have been identified.

- Complacency.
- A weather event (flooding).
- Lack of funds to accomplish the task.
- Non-cooperative elected officials at higher levels of government.
- Fear of the unknown.

City Staff Implementation Sessions

January 9, 2020

On January 9, 2020 the facilitator met with the City Administrator and Executive Staff to review the outcomes of the planning session and to determine next steps for the development of the implementation plan.

Action Plan Process. The staff reviewed a template to be used to develop the implementation portion of the planning process. The implementation plan is included in this document. A presentation to the City Council is scheduled for January 21, 2020.

Reporting

Finally, staff established reporting protocols. These protocols serve the purpose of keeping the staff on schedule with the implementation of strategies, keeping the City Administrator informed and providing regular reports to the City Council on the status of the implementation of the adopted strategies. This provides for long term accountability toward the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Reporting Protocols

- **City Council and EDC**
 - Receives periodic updates regarding various projects related to the strategic plan.
 - Receives formal status reports, including a semi-annual report from staff to the City Council and EDC members where appropriate.

- **City Administrator**
 - City Administrator receives regular updates from staff at regular staff meetings on progress of assignments.

City Council Approval

February 4, 2020

On February 4, 2020, the City Council reviewed their work as well as the work of the staff since the workshop in July. The EDC members reviewed the Economic Development strategies and adopted their portion of the plan. The facilitator presented the Governance Model created at the September 28, 2019 session. Emphasis was on the City Council and staff working together as a team on a continuing basis, and for each member of the team to understand their respective roles, both at the City Council and staff levels.

In addition, the Strategic Plan was reviewed and presented for adoption.

Conclusion

The Mayor, City Council, EDC Board members and staff of the City of Simonton worked through a governance and planning process that allowed the City Council and EDC members to create a governance model and identify and expand strategies for moving the city forward. The process brought the staff leadership, EDC Board members and City Council closer together as a team and developed an implementation process to ensure the strategies are addressed and accomplished over time.



Strategic Plan 2019-20

**City Council/EDC Boards Planning Session
September 28, 2019**

**Adopted
February 4, 2020**

**Prepared and Facilitated
By
Ron Cox Consulting**

Vision Statement

TBD

ADOPTED

Vision Elements

- **A safe community.**
- **Maintaining high property values.**
- **Having open and public spaces available to the citizens.**
- **Maintaining the lower density, we currently enjoy.**
- **Having an attractive community**
 - **No billboards.**
 - **Well-kept properties.**
 - **Nice buildings and places.**
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- **Providing beautification to the city – landscapes, parks, etc.**
- **Sustainable small businesses (no “big boxes” retail, no concrete jungles)**
- **Look different than other suburban neighbors.**
- **Identify and establish desirable architectural standards.**
- **Maintain the small-town character of Simonton.**
 - **Family oriented.**
 - **Friendly.**
 - **Loving in times of need.**
- **Remain consistent with the rural character of the area.**

Mission Statements

City

TBD

EDC

TBD

Mission Elements

- **Host community events.**
- **Maintain a professional and knowledgeable staff.**
- **Be efficient in planning and providing operations and projects.**
- **Establish regulations to meet the vision.**
- **Be good stewards of the citizens funds.**
- **Provide safety and security to the citizens.**
- **Promote the community.**

Guiding Principles

TBD

ADOPTED

City of Simonton

City Council and EDC

Leadership Philosophy

The City Council and EDC Boards of the City of Simonton will lead by...

- **By example**
 - **Working toward continuous improvement.**
 - **Showing compassion.**
 - **Showing understanding.**
 - **Educating themselves and others.**
 - **Communicating.**
- **Offering tools to educate themselves and others.**
- **With facts...not feelings.**
- **By connecting one-on-one with others.**
- **Being a mediator.**
- **Accepting responsibility for all citizens.**
- **Make the best decision for the whole community, not just individuals.**
- **By moving forward.**
- **With level-headed openness.**
- **Continually looking for new opportunities.**
- **By not taking your own authority too seriously.**
- **Listening and understanding.**

City of Simonton

City Council and EDC

Communication Philosophy

The City Council and EDC Boards of the City of Simonton will communicate by...

- **Over educate others – over and over.**
- **Anticipate issues and inform others.**
- **Coordinate between Council and EDC Boards by...**
 - **Through staff at EDC meetings.**
 - **Board members communicate upstream to Council.**
 - **Regular meeting between Mayor and Board Chairs.**
 - **Regular meetings between Boards and Council.**
 - **Gaining a clear understanding about how the Boards and Council fit together as one unit.**
 - **Regular reports of relevant activities from Council to Boards.**
 - **Regular reports of relevant activities from Boards to Council.**

City of Simonton

City Council and EDC

Expectations

City Council and EDC Board members expect the following of each other...

- **Be present and engaged.**
- **Negotiate (not demand) items with each other.**
- **Do the job you are elected/appointed to do.**
- **Be invested in your respective role and group.**
- **Follow up.**
- **Be a willing worker.**
- **Be objective for the city as a whole.**
- **Educate yourself.**
- **Take and give constructive criticism.**
- **Listen to each other, educate, be respectful.**
- **Take the “I” and “you” out of the conversation.**
- **Emphasize the issue; don’t get personal.**

City of Simonton

City Council and EDC Boards

Staff Expectations

The City Council and EDC Boards expect the following of the staff ...

- **Communication and regular reports to the Council and Boards on relevant matters.**
- **Be engaged in the city and community.**
- **Come prepared and assist the Council and Boards in being prepared.**
- **Follow up.**
- **Assist in educating the Council and Boards in the laws under which they are governed and their respective roles.**
- **Hold staff responsible for providing what is needed.**
- **Provide regular performance reviews of staff.**

The staff expects the following of the City Council and EDC Boards (as defined by the Council and EDC Board members) ...

- **Review the material and be prepared at the meetings.**
- **Be an advocate for the decisions made (not an antagonist).**
- **Put their own time and effort into these things**
 - **Participate.**
 - **Work.**
 - **Educate.**
 - **Read.**
 - **Research.**
- **Be involved.**
- **Be active.**
- **Have a positive attitude about your duties.**
- **Have an open line of communication.**
- **Follow the rules – don't put the city at risk.**

City of Simonton

Strategic

Areas of Emphasis

- **Enable Growth and Revitalization**

Strategic Statement: The City of Simonton will promote quality growth following the established Master Plan.

- **Enhanced Communications**

- *Strategic Statement: The City of Simonton will build relationships through communication, technology & training.*

- **Maintain a Well Managed City**

- *Strategic Statement: The City of Simonton will operate in a transparent, efficient, accountable and responsive manner by preparing the organization and the staff for the future, focusing on core services, attracting and retaining the best employees and wise stewardship of financial resources.*

- **Quality of Life**

- *Strategic Statement: The City of Simonton will elevate the community's image through visual enhancement and creating a sustainable future.*

City of Simonton 2019-20 Strategic and Action Plan

Vision Element #1 Enable Growth and Revitalization

Strategic Statement: *The City of Simonton will promote quality growth following the established Master Plan.*

Strategic Initiatives	Goals	Action Steps	Timeline
1.1 Establish an economic development plan to expand the tax base.		Seek and hire an ED Consultant	FY 20
		Work with the ED Consultant for both Type A and Type B Corporations to determine scopes and develop a written plan.	FY20
		Establish relationship for joint planning effort with Twinwood Development.	FY 21
		Prepare RFP scope for ED Plans for both corporations	FY21
1.2 Establish a Traffic Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.2.1 Establish a partnership with TxDOT to anticipate and plan for future traffic needs due to growth. 	Establish quarterly contact meetings with regional TxDOT project engineer.	FY 20
		Establish a transportation plan.	FY 22
1.3 Create a marketing plan for both Development Corporation Boards focusing on attracting new businesses to the community.		Work with Board of Directors of both Boards to create a marketing plan as a regional relocation business guide.	FY 20

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Vision Element #2 Enhance Communications

- **Strategic Statement:** *The City of Simonton will build relationships through communication, technology & training.*

Strategic Initiatives		Goals	Action Steps	Timeline
2.1 Establish a plan for establishing and maintaining community messaging and engagement.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize the Nixel messaging system more fully. • Use the system to outreach and engage citizens in providing needed information. • Utilize other messaging systems as needed, including Facebook and Instagram. 	<p style="text-align: center;">FY 20</p>
2.2 Hire contract person as a communications person for the City.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the need for a communications person. 	<p style="text-align: center;">FY 21</p>

Vision Element #3 Maintain A Well Managed City

- **Strategic Statement:** *The City of Simonton will operate in a transparent, efficient, accountable and responsive manner by preparing the organization and the staff for the future, focusing on core services, attracting and retaining the best employees and wise stewardship of financial resources.*

Strategic Initiatives	Goals	Action Steps	Timeline
3.1 Take steps to establish and improve infrastructure for the City	3.1.2 Establish a Wi-Fi network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine providers in the area who can provide fiber optic. • Develop a cost basis for the network. • Determine the best way to implement. 	FY 20
	3.1.3 Determine the feasibility of providing a water and wastewater utility for the City.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Twinwood Development Agreement to determine the relationship of capacity with new wastewater treatment plan. • Establish plan for use and operation Twinwood owned system. 	FY 21
3.2 Continue to establish and nurture a partnership with Twinwood Development developers.	3.2.1 Initiate efforts to discuss and renegotiate the terms of Agreements to assist in securing a better revenue position for services to be provided.		FY 21
	3.2.2 Discuss, understand and assist in a Twinwood land use plan that meets the needs of the City as well as the development.		FY 21
3.3 Develop and implement a plan for safe and accessible storage of emergency management equipment.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify storage solutions including expansion of City Hall. • Plan and design expansion • Construct the expansion 	FY 20FY 21FY 21

Strategic Initiatives		Goals	Action Steps	Timeline
3.4 Establish a staffing plan that will include the addition of interns.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review opportunities in area graduate schools for internships. • Determine if funding is needed. • Determine feasibility and budget. 	FY 21
3.5 Develop a Comprehensive Plan for the City		3.5.1 Coordinate with Twinwood Developer to understand and possibly incorporate developer land use plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with Twinwood. • Establish a scope for and RFP for a planning consultant. • Identify and hire planning consultant to complete the plan. 	FY 21 FY22 FY 23
3.6 Establish proper land use regulations for the City including but not limited to zoning, subdivision regulations, architectural, lighting and landscaping controls.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint the City Council as a Zoning Commission • Prepare and adopt a Zoning Ordinance • Establish a Planning Commission • Based on Comprehensive Plan, prepare Subdivision Ordinance and update Zoning Ordinance. 	FY 20 FY 20 FY 21 FY 22
3.7 Establish a comprehensive code enforcement program		<p>3.7.1 Address vacant and possibly abandoned flooded houses.</p> <p>3.7.2 Assist in flood mitigation for homeowners where feasible.</p> <p>3.7.3 Address general code enforcement issues in neighborhoods and businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and recommend appropriate codes for enforcement purposes. • Adopt and implement codes through new accounting system. • Determine optimum way to enforce through personnel or contract. • Full implementation of code enforcement program. 	FY 21 FY 22 FY 22 FY 23

Vision Element # 4 Quality of Life

- **Strategic Statement:** *The City of Simonton will elevate the community's image through visual enhancement and creating a sustainable future.*

Strategic Initiatives		Goals	Action Steps	Timeline
4.1 Establish a plan for the construction of a Community Center.		4.1.1 Identify and contact corporate sponsors for possible partnerships for funding a community center. 4.1.2 Identify and acquire a grant writer to seek possible grants for a community center.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a needs assessment and report to City Council. 	FY 23