Victoria 2025

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Remembering the Past, Preparing for the Future

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Introduction

Preparing Victoria for the 21st Century

Victoria is preparing for the future. This document represents the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Victoria. The Plan provides the Mayor and City Council, the Planning Commission, City management and staff, property owners, residents and other stakeholders with a long-range guide for the future growth of Victoria and its surrounding area. It does not impose another layer of regulations, but rather builds on what Victoria already has. It brings existing plans together and organizes and streamlines existing programs in an effort to maximize "customer" satisfaction, the customer being citizens of Victoria.

"Comprehensive Planning is a process by which a community assesses what it has, expresses what it wants, decides how to achieve its wants, and, finally, implements what it wants."

A Guide to Urban Planning in Texas Communities

The City Council commissioned a comprehensive plan to help position the community for the future while maintaining Victoria's unique quality of life and environment. They realize that to protect the quality of life, yet maintain economic viability, the city must grow in a conscious, proactive and planned manner based on a collective vision. The Comprehensive Plan establishes a positive, sensible direction for the development of Victoria over a twenty-year time period. In putting together this plan, the city addresses the needs and desires of its citizens and helps guide activities, improvements and development for the next two decades. This comprehensive plan looks at where the city has been, where it is, where it wants to go, and how it plans to get there. Adopted in accordance with Section 219.002 of the Texas Local Government Code, the Comprehensive Plan provides the legal basis for Victoria's subdivision regulations as well as other development-related regulations.

1.1 Why Plan?

Cities plan for the same reason all prudent organizations do – to ensure their future viability. Planning is a system used to apply resources, solve problems, and capitalize on opportunities. It is a means to achieve objectives and progress toward goals. A comprehensive plan is a tool that allows a city to anticipate changes and to guide those changes in a cost effective, orderly manner that is consistent with the desires of the community. It is not considered an end product, but an important first step in an ongoing process of rational, balanced and creative decision-making regarding the future.

A well thought out plan analyzes future trends and guides growth to areas where it is most suitable. It anticipates additional demands placed on public infrastructure by growth, eliminating overburdened infrastructure. It provides predictability to developers by showing them where development would best be placed, and where future infrastructure will be built.

Finally, planning helps to define and promote a community's image and personality. A plan developed by the citizens can serve as a community consensus regarding the long-range vision of the city. This is the most important reason of all to plan. In a constantly changing world, a plan allows the people to determine a vision of what the community wants to be and how it wants to look in the future.

The comprehensive plan is not cast in stone. Revisions will be made when warranted and the plan will be formally updated. The plan will be continually monitored to track the extent to which the plan has been implemented and to determine if plan implementation causes the desired results. This process will protect the plan from misuse, keep the plan a living document, protect the will of the citizens, and allow change to the plan where the proposed amendment meets the intent of the plan.

1.2 The Process

On July 5, 2000 the City Council passed Resolution No. 2000-102R authorizing the development of a long-range comprehensive plan in accordance with a work program titled "*Establishing the Comprehensive Planning Process for Victoria, Texas*." The work program was prepared by the Planning Department staff and facilitators Dr. Robert Larsen and his associate James Vaughan, who are professors at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos.

Citizen involvement is the cornerstone of the comprehensive planning process. It incorporates the community's values in terms of quality of life, character and scale of development, urban form, aesthetic appeal, and how development should be integrated into the existing and future city fabric. To further this end, the City Council established the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The Steering Committee structure was made up of 19 members designed to represent the diverse interests, needs, ideas and concerns of the citizens of Victoria. These selected citizens represent all the stakeholders in the future of the city.

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee developing visions and goals.

Victoria's Comprehensive Plan is based on meetings, surveys, interviews, and focus group sessions held by the Steering Committee, Planning Commission, city staff, facilitators and other involved participants. The organization of the comprehensive planning process is graphically represented in the Organizational Chart below.

Comprehensive Planning Process for the City of Victoria

The Steering Committee was involved in an extensive thorough process of identifying issues, developing, visions, establishing goals and objectives, discussing alternatives and solutions, and helping determine needs and priorities for Victoria. Each committee member was responsible for distributing copies of the Comprehensive Plan Survey. The survey was designed to assist in identifying issues important to citizens. Survey topics included:

- Quality of life
- Housing
- Economic development
- Demographics
- Community vision

Survey respondents consistently indicated a high degree of appreciation for the "small town" atmosphere of Victoria, indicating it is big enough to "get things you need" yet still affords its citizens a more pleasant pace of life compared to bigger cities. The details of the survey are discussed in Chapter Two of this plan.

In addition to the Comprehensive Plan Survey, Planning Department staff and the Steering Committee hosted a citizen participation campaign, "*The Future: Every Voice*

Matters", on Saturday, December 9, 2000 at the Victoria Mall. Over 200 people participated and "voted" on whether they agreed or disagreed with preliminary vision statements derived from steering committee meetings. Findings from the survey and citizen participation campaign formed the basis for the preparation of this plan.

Citizens decide what is important at *"The Future: Every Voice Matters"* Campaign in Victoria Mall.

Armed with survey findings and citizen input, the Steering Committee set about directing the preparation of each chapter of the plan. As a draft chapter was prepared it was forwarded to the Planning Commission for their review and comment. This process was followed for each chapter until the entire plan had been reviewed and amended as necessary.


Citizens browse the displays at the Open House

Following Planning Commission review of the plan, the final citizen participation phase of the plan was launched with a community-wide Open House on September 20, 2001. In order to further increase citizen involvement in the plan, the Planning Department staff went out into the community and gave a series of presentations to various civic groups and neighborhood associations. In all over 600 citizens participated in the events.

The Planning Commission performed a key role in making the decisions and choices that shaped the plan into its final form. In addition, they are responsible for administering the plan once it has been adopted by City Council. City department heads contributed ideas and information specific to their department, and the city administration's support was invaluable throughout the entire planning process.


Planning Director, John Kaminski, speaks to a capacity crowd at the Comprehensive Plan Open House.

CHAPTER 1

Community Profile

A City Steeped in Texas History

1.1 Geographic Location

Nestled beside the meandering Guadalupe River, the City of Victoria is located at the convergence of U.S. Highways 59, 77 and 87 in Victoria County. It is the largest city in the central coastal region known as the Golden Crescent, a group of seven Texas counties including Calhoun, Dewitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, and Lavaca. Major Texas metropolitan areas of Houston (124 miles), San Antonio (114 miles), Austin (122 miles), and Corpus Christi (85 miles) are within a two-hour drive. In addition, it is just 30 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico. Accessible by three U.S. highways, rail, commercial air, and a barge canal connected to the Gulf Intracosatal Waterway, it offers tremendous growth potential for manufacturing and distribution facilities as well as recreational and cultural opportunities.

Victoria lies about 105 feet above sea level. Located on the South-central Texas Coastal Plain, the area enjoys moderate temperatures and mild weather conditions throughout the year. At a latitude of 28 degrees above the equator, the area climate is comparable to Orlando, Florida. Annual precipitation averages 36 inches per year with a mean annual temperature of 71 degrees. The surrounding countryside is flat with a majority of the land being utilized for grazing and cultivation.

1.2 History, Past and Present

Victoria is one of the state's oldest, most historic cities. In fact it could be argued that Texas history really began in Victoria County. It's unique history began when French nobleman Rene Cavalier, Sieur de LaSalle established the short-lived Fort St. Louis, which was abandoned in 1690. The town was established in 1824 when the Republic of Mexico approved Don Martín De León's request for a large

land grant on the lower Guadalupe River. The land grant detailed a capital city, "Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Jesus Victoria", shortened by colonists to "Guadalupe Victoria". De León's city plan included a one square mile grid designed with 256 blocks and sited in a north-northeast orientation along the eastern bank of the Guadalupe River. The original townsite was laid out in accordance with his knowledge of European and Mexican cities, setting aside land for a central plaza, schools, churches, and trade. It was the only successful land grant in Texas bearing a Spanish surname, and Victoria County was the only place in Texas where all six flags actually flew.

Victoria's initial population was comprised of 41 families granted permission to settle the colony. Each family received one league of land and a town lot. By 1834 about 300 people were living in the municipality, which was governed by the Council of Ten Friends from 1824 to 1828 and by four alcaldes from 1828 to 1836. Guadalupe Victoria contributed volunteers, supplies, and arms to the Texas cause against Santa Anna. Its superior defensive position on the banks of the Guadalupe induced Sam Houston to order James Fannin to retreat there from Goliad in 1836. However, Fannin was defeated at the Battle of Coleto, and the town was occupied by the Mexican army until the Texas victory at San Jacinto. Soon thereafter, the Mexican residents were ostracized; they fled, and their town, resettled by Anglos, became known as Victoria. Victoria was incorporated under the Republic of Texas in 1837.

Main Street - 1870

Victoria continued to grow as a trade center, especially as Indianola became a major seaport for both goods and thousands of immigrants who settled in the area. By 1860 Victoria had 1,986 residents (including 521 slaves), a variety of stores, a weekly newspaper, and a courthouse. The town had become a major junction between Lavaca Bay ports, San Antonio, Austin, and northern Mexico. After the Civil War, a variety of settlers - Americans, Germans, Italians, and Mexicans - had transformed the essential character of the town. This was the beginning of the great cattle ranches and the presence of prominent families such as the Welders and O'Connors.

The San Antonio and Mexican Gulf Railroad reached Victoria in 1861, and the line became part of the Gulf, Western Texas and Pacific Railway in 1871. The New York, Texas and Mexican Railway reached the city during the 1880s. John W. Mackay and Daniel E. Hungerford collaborated with Italian count Joseph Telfener to prove that a line from Rosenberg to Victoria could be a profitable venture. Italian laborers immigrated to Texas and, on July 4, 1882, completed the railroad. In 1888 local businessmen established a mule-drawn streetcar system that operated until 1894. The four cars were named for popular ladies of the city.

County Judge J. L. Dupree sponsored the community's first highway in 1889. It ran about three miles, from the Guadalupe River bridge to Goldman Hill, southwest of Victoria, where the Refugio, Goliad, and Mission Valley traffic merged. In 1917 a

$100,000 bond issue inaugurated the era of "hard-top" streets, and Uvalde Rock Asphalt Company received a contract to improve fifty-three blocks of downtown Victoria roadways.

The city's first lighting network consisted of oil lamps attended by A. Musselman, who continued after the advent of electricity to superintend the new "chained lightning." In 1890 the Victoria Light, Power, and Ice Company contracted with the city fathers for forty bulbs of thirty-two candlepower. After 1925 Central Power and Light supplied the city's electrical energy.

The change from river water to wells began with the standpipe, a Victoria landmark constructed in 1884 and located on De Leon Plaza. This 105-foot tower leaned enough to encourage wagers on its destiny. The $89,000 bond issue that financed the standpipe also provided for a pumping station to push untreated river water into the reservoir tower. In 1907-08 an additional bond commitment converted the water system to artesian wells.

Standpipe Water Tower - 1886

Victoria was the birthplace of Longhorn cattle. Ranching was the area's first major enterprise and the one that ensured Victoria's early success. The county had 42,993 beef cattle by 1880 and 75,495 by 1900. One of the first meat-packing plants was established here in 1869, and dipping tanks and silos were introduced. During the 1880s changes occurred that reflected a general transition in the state from pioneer ranching and trail driving to market production. Many ranchers shifted their interests to financial institutions and commerce, which in turn supported a transformation of the cattle industry.

By 1900 three banks served the area - the Henry and Abraham Levi mercantile and banking establishment, the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank, and the First National Bank. The Levi enterprise became Levi Bank and Trust in 1910 and Victoria Bank and Trust in 1923. The Farmers' and Merchants' Bank was chartered in 1894. The First National Bank was organized in 1899 and became the First Victoria National Bank shortly before it took over the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank in 1914.

Some of Victoria's commercial ventures were unique in both state and national business annals. The Texas Continental Meat Company, established in 1883, was a harbinger of new techniques. Combining prairie grass, cattle, railroads, and business acumen, Continental pioneered in the slaughtering and packing of beef, swine, sheep, and poultry. The company used the first refrigerator cars and manufactured the first oleomargarine and gelatin from animal fats. The second Kraft-Phoenix Cheese Corporation plant to be built in Texas, established in the city in 1934, took advantage of local dairy farming.

The Victoria Advocate, the state's second oldest existing newspaper, first appeared in 1846 and by 1897 was publishing a daily edition. Many of the paper's early owners or editors took seriously the masthead motto advocating new business, city services,

fair associations, and other innovations. John Stilwell Munn, editor in the 1880s, coined the city's first epithet - City of Roses - to express civic pride in the town's gardens.

By the turn of the century, Victoria began to attract attention as a promising community with elegant homes and commercial buildings. Architectural style became an obvious indication of change, as stone and brick replaced cypress lumber. This facet of the turn-of-the-century transition has been largely obliterated by later structures, but examples do remain, such as those designed by Jules Carl Leffland. Older buildings, such as the homes of William L. Callender and Alexander H. Phillips and the first courthouse, of 1849 (demolished in 1892), represented the earlier era.

The decade of 1910 to 1920 was a critical time in Victoria's development. During those years the county's population increased 21.9 percent to 18,271, while the city's population rose by 62.2 percent to 5,957. The shift in population from rural to urban was a culmination of events that began during the 1880s, when immigration, devastating hurricanes (which drove Lavaca Bay residents inland), improved transportation facilities, and social amenities attracted a population base for subsequent growth.

Main Street - 1924

During World War II and afterwards Victoria became one of the fastest-growing cities in Texas. The city hosted Aloe Air-Field from 1942 to 1946 and Foster Army Air-Field beginning in 1942. In 1958 Foster Field became the Victoria Regional Airport. Petrochemical industries contributed to an increased prosperity, and the city's population grew from 16,126 in 1950 to 33,047 in 1960 and to 41,439 in 1970. By 1980 it had reached 55,076. Today, the city has a symphony orchestra, a community theater, a fine arts association, a nationally recognized Bach Festival, numerous historic homes, museums, and libraries, superior medical facilities, a branch of the University of Houston that complements Victoria College, and the Texas Zoo, the only zoo in the world that exclusively features native Texas wildlife.

In reviewing the regions' history, Victoria has been especially susceptible to periods of stagnation, the boom and bust business cycles. Booms resulted from its crossroads location, agriculture, cattle, oil, banking, medical facilities, the military presence, the barge canal, and the petrochemical industry. Busts resulted from drought, the decline in cattle and oil prices, the closing of Foster Field and industrial plant layoffs.

The last forty years has witnessed a trend from Victoria's old, internal leadership cadre of a small number of families to external forces of leadership. What was once "paternalistic" leadership that did a good job of taking care of Victoria has given way to the outside influence of multinational corporations and global economic forces. Victoria has survived past cycles because it is conservative to the point of resisting

change. However, while it takes longer for Victoria to feel the downtrends in the national economy, it also takes longer for it to recover. The question must be asked, "Is insulation causing Victoria to lag economically compared to other high growth areas in Texas?" If so, how do we respond?

1.3 Historical Population

Historical U.S. Census population figures and growth rates for the City of Victoria and Victoria County for years 1900 through 2000 are displayed in Table 1.1. The city's percentage of total population in the county has grown from 29.3% in 1900 to 72.07% for 2000. Unlike some other rapidly growing counties in Texas the city's share of total population in the county has held relatively steady since 1960, but did drop by 2% from 1990 to 2000 (See Figure 1.1).

High growth rates for the city are obvious in the different economic boom eras (See Table 1.1 and Figure 1.2):

1910 – 1920 Cattle and agribusiness
1930 – 1940 Oil
1950 – 1960 Military, petrochemicals, banking

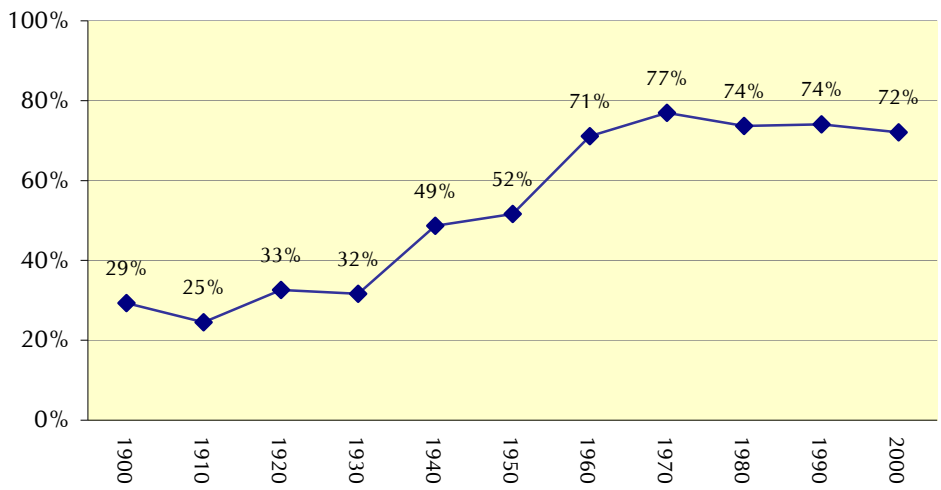
However, recent growth rates are lower than the state as a whole (See Figure 1.3). Comparing historical population with other similarly sized cites in Texas reveals that Victoria has similar growth rates and has been in the "middle of the pack" until the last decade, when its growth rate became lower than others (See Figure 1.4).

Table 1.1 Historical Population, City of Victoria and Victoria County

	City of Victoria			Victoria County	
Year	**Population**	**Percent Change**	**Percent of County**	**Population**	**Percent Change**
1900	4,010		29.32%	9,668	
1910	3,673	-8.40%	24.50%	11,317	17.06%
1920	**5,957**	**62.18%**	**32.60%**	**12,314**	**8.81%**
1930	7,421	24.58%	31.62%	16,050	30.34%
1940	**11,566**	**55.86%**	**48.72%**	**12,175**	**-24.14%**
1950	16,126	39.43%	51.62%	15,115	24.15%
1960	**33,047**	**104.93%**	**71.12%**	**13,420**	**-11.21%**
1970	41,349	25.12%	76.91%	12,417	-7.47%
1980	50,695	22.60%	73.68%	18,112	45.86%
1990	55,076	8.64%	74.07%	19,285	6.48%
2000	60,603	10.04%	72.07%	23,485	21.78%

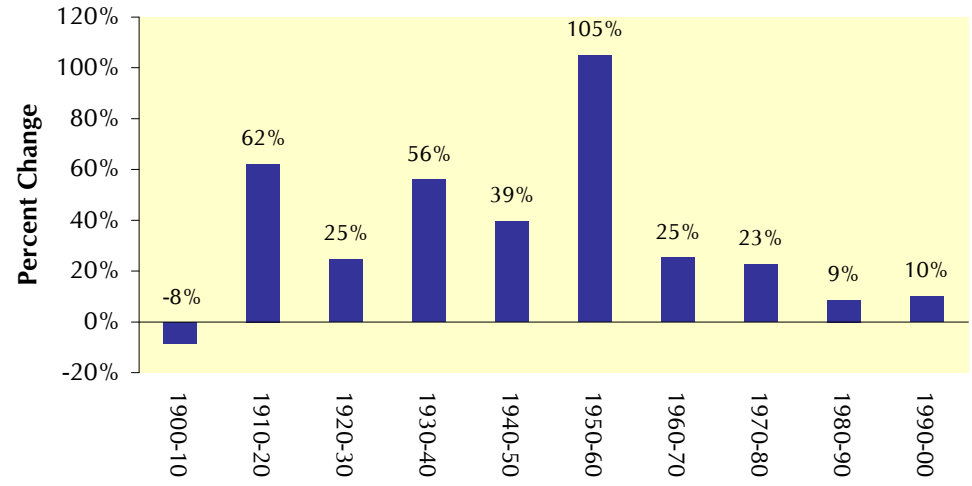
Source: U.S. Census: 1900 – 2000
* Major growth periods, which coincide with economic boom eras, are highlighted in color.

FIGURE 1.1
City's Historical Percentage of County Population



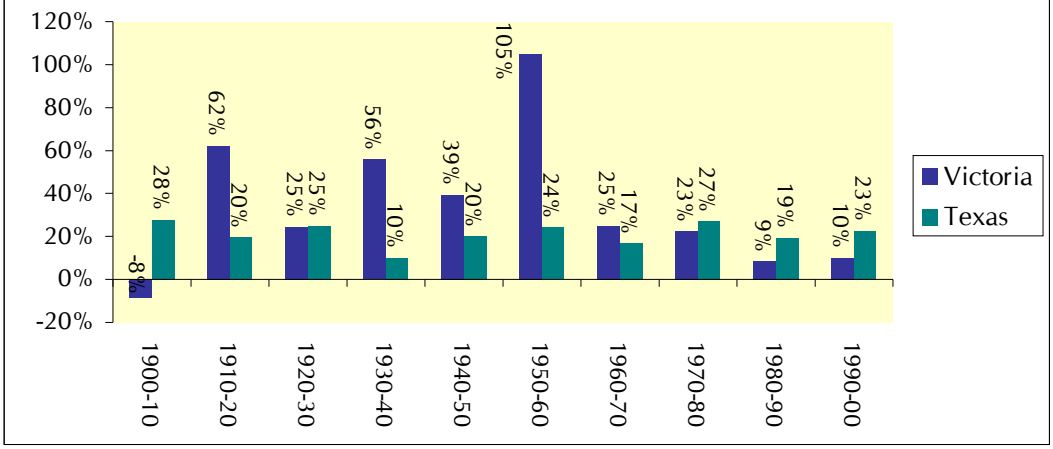
Source: U.S. Census: 1900 – 2000

FIGURE 1.2
Historical Growth Rates for the City of Victoria



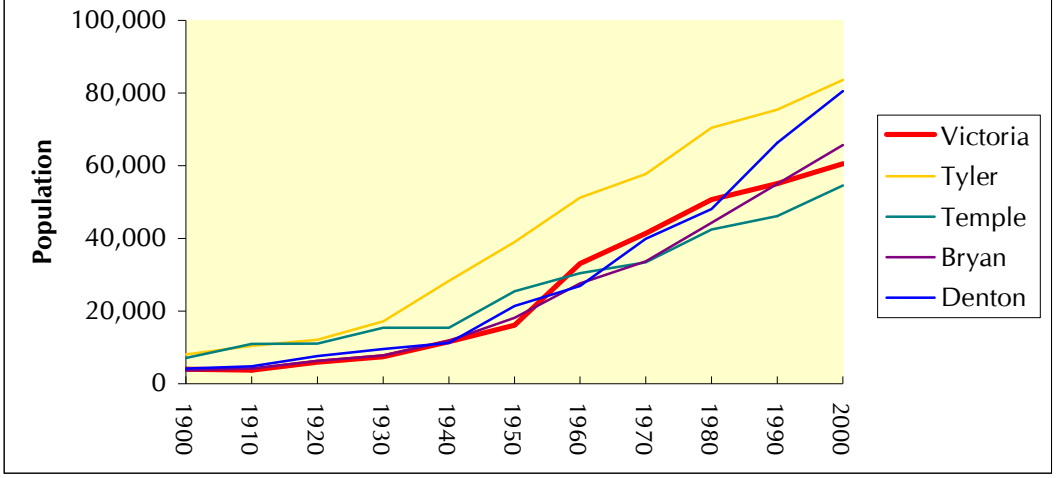
Source: U.S. Census: 1900 – 2000

FIGURE 1.3
Comparing Victoria's Population Growth Rates with State



Source: U.S. Census: 1900 – 2000

FIGURE 1.4
Comparing Victoria's Population with Other Texas Cities



Source: U.S. Census: 1900 – 2000

1.4 Population Projections

Population growth is difficult to accurately predict. Many factors affect the amount and timing of growth, including local, regional and national economics, job markets, interest rates and other dynamics. Population projections attempt to predict future changes in total population and composition of population due to migration, fertility (births) and mortality (deaths).

There are a variety of population projections based on different models and patterns of migration, but some of the most accessible are the Texas State Data Center's (TSDC) cohort-component projections. Cohorts are categories of the population (age, sex and ethnic groups) tracked over time. The TSDC provides four alternative sets of projections based on differing assumptions for the State and each County. The four projection scenarios used by the TSDC utilize the same set of fertility and mortality assumptions but different net migration assumptions. The four scenarios are described below:

- Zero Migration (Scenario 0.0) – Assumes that in-migration and out-migration are equal, resulting in growth only though natural increase (births and deaths).
- One-half Migration (Scenario 0.5) – Assumes rates of net migration one-half of those of the 1990s.
- Full Migration (Scenario 1.0) – Assumes that the net migration rate of the 1990s will continue into the future.
- 2000-04 Migration (Scenario 2000-04) – Assumes that the net migration rate of the period between 2000 and 2004 will continue into the future.

The TSDC population projections for Victoria County are provided in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 TSDC Population Projections for Victoria County

Year	Scenario 0.0	Scenario 0.5	Scenario 1.1	Scenario 2000-04
2000 Census	84,088	84,088	84,088	84,088
2005	88,229	89,106	89,837	87,189
2010	92,217	94,193	95,665	89,928
2015	96,191	99,455	101,773	92,408
2020	99,514	104,236	107,437	93,892
2025	102,343	108,495	112,482	94,405

Source: Texas State Data Center, 2000 Population Projections for Counties

In addition to its population projection program, the TSDC prepares annual population estimates for Counties and Cities. TSDC's estimate for Victoria County on July 1, 2005 is 85,455, which is significantly below all four 2005 projection scenarios. The 2005 estimate for the City of Victoria is 61,321. Rather than using the TSDC projections, which are clearly high, the Planning Department will use the July 1, 2005 estimate as the new base year for projecting future population.

The TSDC's Zero Migration Scenario (Scenario 0.0) assumes that in-migration and out-migration are equal, resulting in zero net migration. In this scenario, growth would only occur through natural increase, based on birth and death rates. The Zero Migration Scenario projected that Victoria County's population would grow from 84,088 in 2000 to 88,229 in 2005; a growth rate of 4.92%. The 2005 estimate of 85,455 indicates a growth rate of only 1.80%. Therefore, it would appear that that Victoria experienced a period of out-migration between 2000 and 2005.

The TSCD suggests that the One-half Migration Scenario (Scenario 0.5) is the most appropriate scenario in most counties for long-range planning purposes. This scenario assumes that the rate of in-migration will be one-half of the rate experienced in the 1990's. As noted above, the trend between 2000 and 2005 indicates a period of out-migration. The Planning Department does not expect the recent trend of out-migration to continue long-term. It is anticipated that ongoing economic development efforts will result in job creation, which will ultimately lead to a shift back to net in-migration.

The projections prepared by the Planning Department use the TSDC 2005 Victoria County Population Estimate of 85,455 as the base year. The growth rates from the TSDC Zero Migration Scenario are used to project growth between 2005 and 2010. The longer term projections for 2015, 2020 and 2025 are based on the One-half Migration Scenario growth rates. The resulting projections for Victoria County are displayed in Table 1.3.

The County population projections can be used to derive projections for the City of Victoria. Approximately 72% of Victoria County residents live within the City of Victoria. This percentage has hovered between 71% and 76% since 1960, with an average of 73.57%. There has been a slight downward trend since 1970. These projections assume that the City's portion of total County population will average 72%. The resulting city population projections are provided in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Population Projections for Victoria County and the City of Victoria

Year	Victoria County	City of Victoria
2005 Estimate	85,455	61,231
2010	89,318	64,309
2015	94,310	67,904
2020	98,847	71,170
2025	102,890	74,080

Sources: Texas State Data Center, 2005
City of Victoria Planning Department, 2010-2025

It should be remembered that population projections are predictions of future change based upon past patterns. These patterns may or may not continue and future conditions cannot be guaranteed. The objective in making these projections is to have forecasts that are as realistic as possible for planning purposes. As with any projections, they should be reviewed periodically and updated to reflect new information and changing conditions.

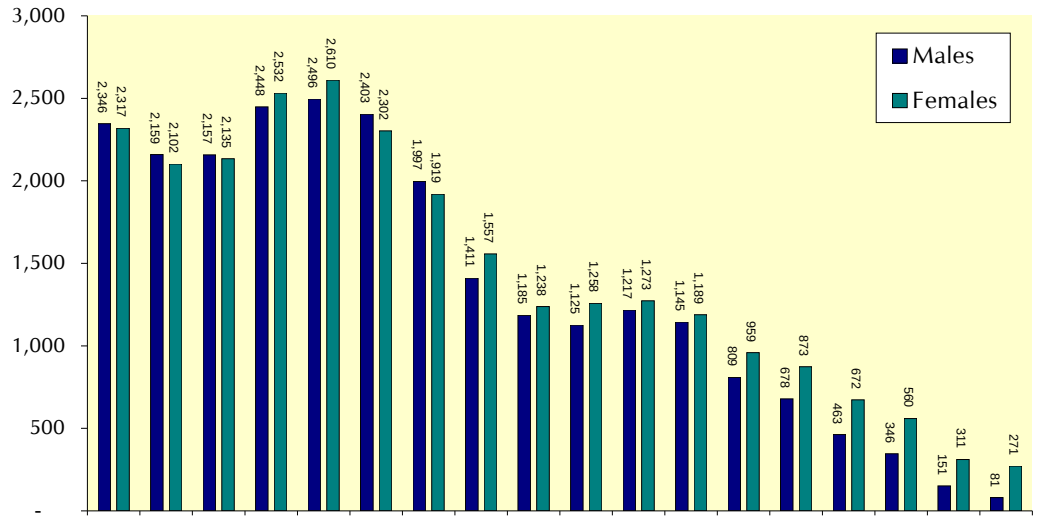
1.5 Age and Gender Composition

The age and gender composition of the City Victoria for 1980, 1990 and 2000 are displayed in Figures 1.6, 1.7 and 1.8. The number of individuals in the 65+ age cohort has increased from 8.7% of the total in 1980 to 12.6% in 2000. A higher proportion of elderly persons will impact community services and facilities in the future. The number of individuals under 19 years of age has decreased from 35.9%

of the total in 1980, to 33.1% in 1990, and to 31.8% in 2000. A lower proportion of younger persons will also impact community services and facilities in the future. The number of individuals in the 20 to 29 age cohort has also decreased from 19.4% in 1980, to 14.7% in 1990, and to 13.2% in 2000. It will be important to see if the 2010 Census indicates a continuing downward trend for this age group cohort. The number of individuals in the 30 to 44 age cohort, economically the most productive years, has fluctuated over the same time period from 18.4% in 1980, to23.4% in 1990, and back down to 21.4% in 2000. The 45 to 64 cohort, another economically important cohort has slightly increased over the past three decades: 17.7% in 1980, 17.4 % in 1990, and 21.0% in 2000.

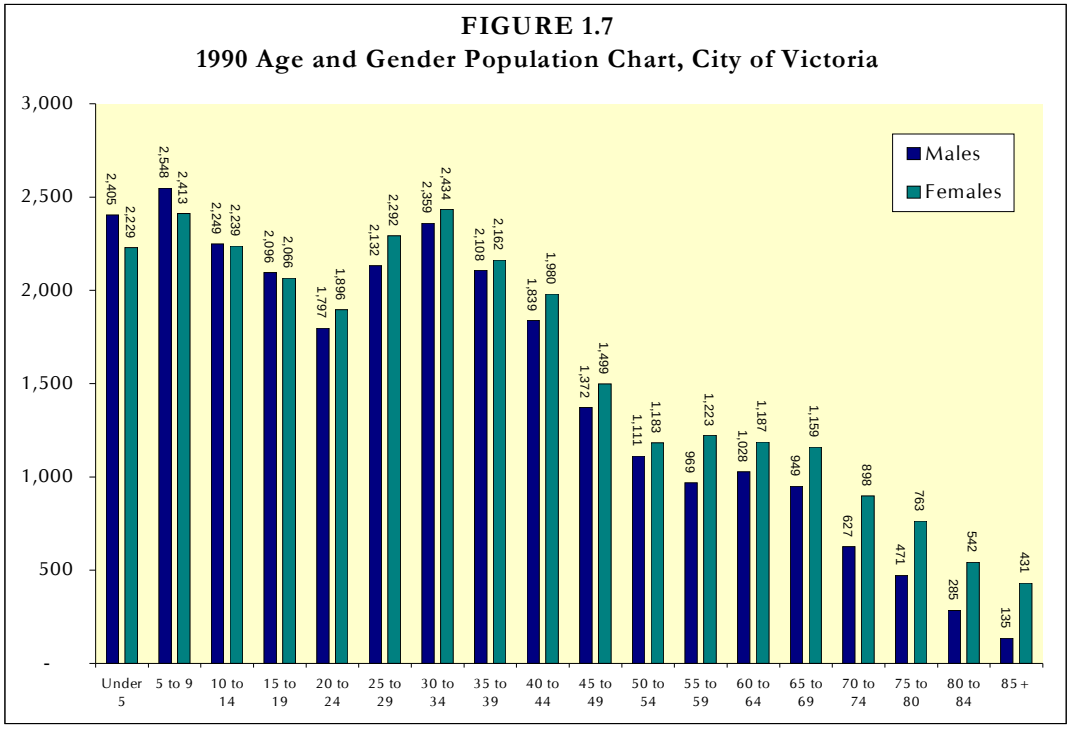
FIGURE 1.6

1980 Age and Gender Population Chart, City of Victoria



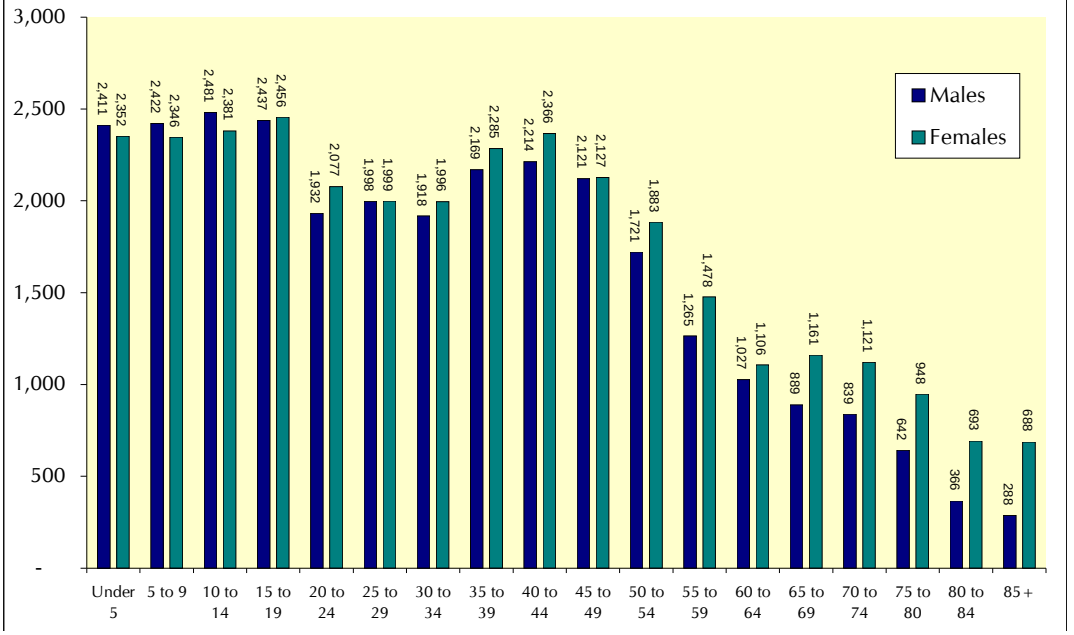
Source: U.S. Census, 1980

FIGURE 1.7
1990 Age and Gender Population Chart, City of Victoria



Source: U.S. Census, 1990

FIGURE 1.8
2000 Age and Gender Population Chart, City of Victoria

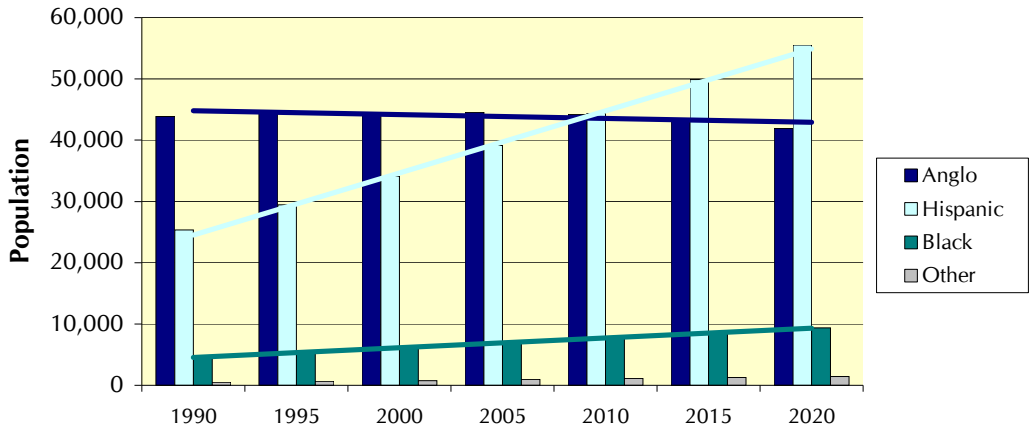


Source: U.S. Census, 2000

1.6 Ethnic Composition

Figure 1.9 illustrates the race/ethnic composition of Victoria County's population in the 1990 Census and projected up to the year 2020. Historically the majority of the county's population has been Anglo (white), but the trend lines in Figure 1.9 show that by the year 2010 there should be a higher percentage of Hispanic origin persons than Anglo persons in the county – 45.6% compared to 45.3%. Over the next twenty years the percentage of Black persons in the county population should increase slightly, from 7.0% in 2000 to 8.7% in 2020. During this same time period the percentage of Anglo persons in the county population should decrease from 52.2% in 2000 to 45.3% in 2020.

FIGURE 1.9
Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity, Victoria County



Source: Texas State Data Center, 2000 Population Projections for Counties

1.7 Household Composition

The U.S. Census Bureau classifies household types as:

One person, male or female householder
Married couple, with children
Married couple, no children
Male householder, with children
Male householder, no children
Female householder, with children
Female householder, no children

Types of households are shown in Table 1.4. In Table 1.5 "Persons per Household Over Time" for both the city and county, illustrates the nation-wide trend towards smaller households. Of interest is the fact that household size has generally been larger in the county than in the city, which in turn has been slightly larger than in the state as a whole.

Table 1.4 Household Type, City of Victoria & Victoria County

Household Type	CITY		COUNTY	
	Number of HHs	Percent of HHs	Number of HHs	Percent of HHs
1 Person				
Male householder	2,159	9.8%	649	8.2%
Female householder	3,271	14.8%	645	8.1%
2 or more persons				
Married couple with children	5,412	24.4%	2,641	33.3%
Married couple no children	6,184	27.9%	2,822	35.5%
Male householder with children	549	2.5%	176	2.2%
Male householder no children	453	2.0%	154	1.9%
Female householder with children	2,033	9.2%	375	4.7%
Female householder with no children	1,125	5.1%	277	3.5%
Non-family households	943	4.3%	203	2.6%
Total	22,129		7,942	

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 1.5 Persons per Household for County of Victoria, City of Victoria, State of Texas, and U.S.A.

Year	Persons per HH County of Victoria	Persons per HH City of Victoria	Persons per HH State of Texas	Persons per HH USA
1950	3.50	3.30	3.40	3.37
1960	3.59	3.52	3.46	3.33
1970	3.42	3.38	3.17	3.14
1980	3.11	2.91	2.81	2.76
1990	2.99	2.78	2.73	2.63
2000	2.75	2.68	2.74	2.59

Source: U.S. Census, 1950 – 2000

1.8 Education

Victoria Independent School District serves students in the City of Victoria and much of the county. The Diocese of Victoria operates two elementary schools and one high school. In addition, there are several other private and parochial schools serving the area.

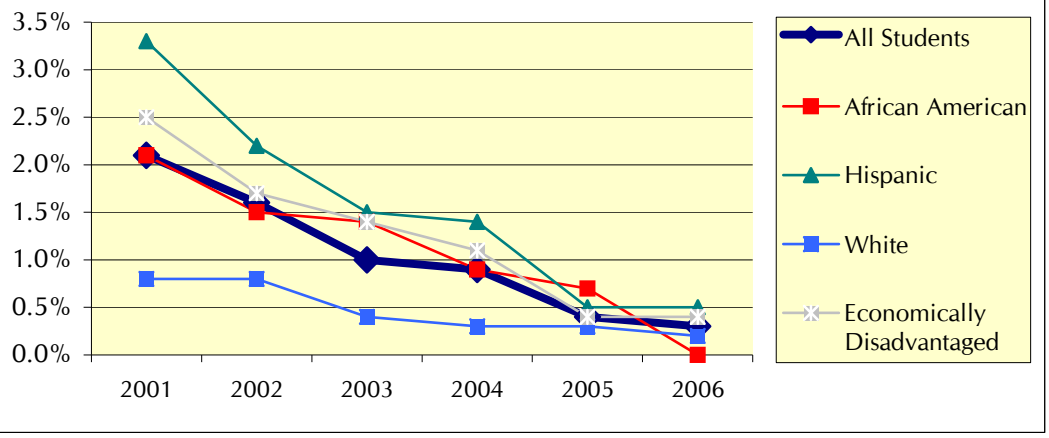
Since the Victoria ISD serves the City of Victoria, selected statistics for this district are presented and analyzed. As of the 2005-06 school year there were 13,972 students enrolled in Victoria ISD with a student-teacher ratio of 14.7, below the statewide student-teacher ratio of 14.9. The District had two "exemplary" campuses as rated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA):

William Wood Elementary
Mission Valley Elementary

The District adopted a tax rate of 1.554, and total certified property value for 2005-06 was $3,332,877,713. The average adopted statewide tax rate in 2005-06 was 1.569. Total revenue per student was $5,775 with 40% of the total coming from the state, 59% from local and other revenues, and 1% from the federal government. Taxable value per student is $237,824 compared to the statewide average taxable value per student of $274,818.

Over the past 6 years the district's annual dropout rate has steadily declined (See Figure 1.10). In fact the change in the dropout rate from 2001-06 for all students is minus 1.8%, twice the 0% change for the state as a whole. The improving dropout rates are especially dramatic for Hispanic students, minus 2.8% compared to the statewide change of 0.1%. This is important since the district's percentage of Hispanic students is increasing (See Table 1.6).

FIGURE 1.10
Annual Dropout Rates, Grades 7-12 - Victoria ISD



Source: Texas Education Agency, Selected AEIS District Data, A Multiyear History

Table 1.6 Ethnic Composition of Victoria ISD 2001-2006 in Percentages

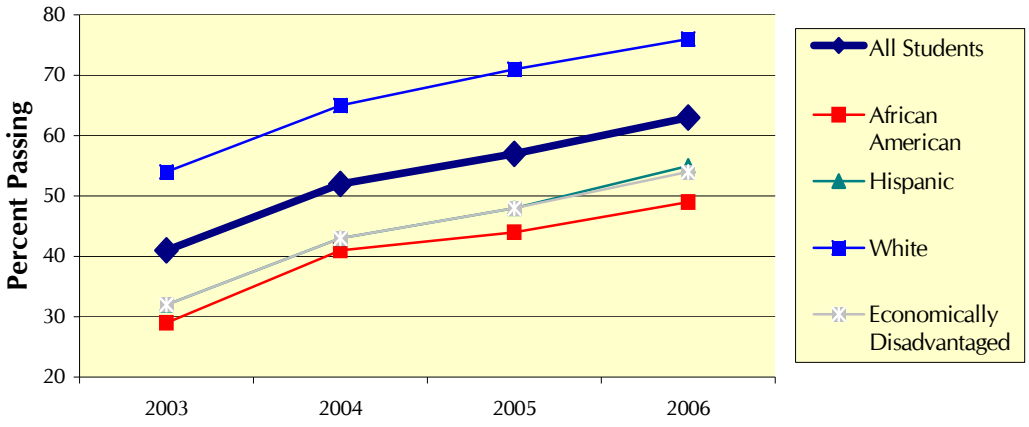
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
African American	8.4	8.9	8.6	8.4	8.4	8.9
Hispanic	50.4	50.8	51.5	53.0	54.0	54.5
White	40.1	39.1	38.7	37.4	36.3	35.2
Economically Disadvantaged	49.8	51.2	46.6	53.0	56.2	61.1

Source: Texas Education Agency, Selected AEIS District Data, A Multiyear History

The TAAS was replaced by the TAKS for the 2003-04 school year. Scores have steadily improved over this time period as can be seen in Figure 1.11. The change for all students was plus 22%, higher than the state average change of plus 20%. Out of the class of 2005 almost 45% of the students took college admission tests with approximately 27.5% at or above the criterion score of 1110 for the SAT I and 24 for the ACT. For the state of Texas as a whole 65.5% of students took these exams with 27.4% scoring above the designated criterion. The mean composite score was

996 on the SAT I and 20.9 on the ACT, better than the statewide composite scores of 992 and 20.0 respectively. While the Steering Committee noted that there is a perception that Victoria is not known for good schools, some of the above data seem to belie that notion. In several important categories, the Victoria ISD exceeds statewide averages.

FIGURE 1.11
TAKS, All Tests - Victoria ISD



Source: Texas Education Agency, Selected AEIS District Data, A Multiyear History

The educational enrollment of persons 3 years and older and the educational attainment of all persons 25 years and older in Victoria County in 2000 are presented in Table 1.7. The percentage of persons with less than a 9th grade education or 9th to 12th grade education without a diploma is 23.8 percent, slightly lower than the state average of 24.4 percent.

Table 1.7 Educational Enrollment and Attainment, 2000 – Victoria County

	Victoria County		Texas
	2000	%	%
Enrolled in Preschool	1,623	6.7%	6.6%
Enrolled in K-12	18,552	76.9%	73.3%
Enrolled in College	3,966	16.4%	20.2%
Less than 9th Grade	5,823	11.2%	11.5%
9th to 12th – No Diploma	6,529	12.6%	12.9%
HS Graduate	15,120	29.1%	24.8%
Some College, No degree	12,814	24.6%	22.4%
Associate's Degree	3,253	6.3%	5.2%
Bachelor's Degree	5,700	10.9%	15.6%
Graduate or Professional	2,746	5.3%	7.6%

Source: U.S. Census. Enrolled numbers are based on all persons 3 years of age or older. Attainment numbers are based on all persons 25 years of age and older.

1.9 Higher Education

Victoria College, founded in 1925, is a regionally accredited public two year community college with a Fall-2006 enrollment of 4,037 degree-seeking undergraduates. Fall enrollment has grown from 2,939 in 1985 to 4,037 in 2006--a 37% increase, and is projected to reach 4,175 in 2010 and 4,279 in 2015. Service-area population grew 11% from 1990 to 2000, and is projected to continue to grow about 1.5% per year through 2010. The Service Area is defined by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as the Golden Crescent Region including parts of Refugio County.

In 2006 the most popular declared majors were:

- **Academic** (University Transfer): Interdisciplinary Studies, Business Administration, Education, Psychology and Accounting
- **Allied Health**: Associate Degree in Nursing, Vocational Nursing, Respiratory Care, Emergency Medical Technology, and Medical Laboratory Technology
- **Workforce Development & Education**: Business Management, Process Technology, Emergency Medical Service, Firefighting, and Computer Information Systems.

Since 1990-91, Victoria College has awarded 270 Associate of Arts Degrees, 706 Associate of Science Degrees, 1,285 Associate of Applied Science Degrees, 8 Advanced Skills Certificates, 190 Certificates of General Studies, and 1,663 Workforce Certificates. In addition, the college offers a variety of non-credit continuing education courses and programs designed to meet the needs of the community -- from customized education and training designed to enable interested businesses, industries or individuals to improve their technical or professional competencies, to lifelong learning activities that are more avocational or recreational in focus.

The University of Houston at Victoria, founded in 1973, is a public upper-division university with a Fall-2005 enrollment of 1,188 undergraduates and 1,262 graduate students. The university offers degree programs in specified areas of the arts and sciences, business administration and education. Approved degree programs include:

- **Division of Arts and Sciences**
  Applied Arts and Sciences, Biology, Communication, Computer Information Systems, Computer Science, Criminal Justice, Humanities - English and History, Interdisciplinary Studies, Mathematical Sciences, and Psychology
- **Division of Business Administration**
  Business Administration, Accounting, Management, Business Teacher Certification
- **Division of Education & Human Development**
  Administration and Supervision, General Administration, Instructional Supervision, Mid-management, Superintendency, Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Diagnostician, Elementary Education, Reading, Secondary Education, Secondary Math Education, Special Education,

School Counseling, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Elementary Teacher Certification.

The university shares facilities and some services with The Victoria College and also works with Bee County College, Wharton County Junior College and Houston Community College.

1.10 Conclusion

The City of Victoria is steeped in rich Texas history, yet little is being done to capitalize on this major resource. Tabular data exhibits Victoria's susceptibility to strong cyclical growth and development, with boom-and-bust economies being the norm rather than the exception. Victoria's history reveals that this highly fluctuating "up-and-down" economy reflects the city's shifting dependence on singular types of industry rather than a diversified economy.

Although typical citizen perceptions are that the quality of local public education and economic well-being lags behind the State of Texas and other similar-class cities, none of the education and economic indicators support such conclusions. Rather, Victoria enjoys good personal salaries comparable to the State and area sister cities, coupled with a low cost-of-living index. This is truly an admirable and enviable combination, which must be furthered, enhanced and strengthened as Victoria proceeds into the new millennium.

CHAPTER 2

Community Vision

2.1 Definitions

The Victoria 2025 Comprehensive Plan is organized into a hierarchy, with the broad community issues, visions and overall community goals at the top. Each individual element of the plan began with the identification of pertinent issues which lead to a vision statement that is consistent with the overall vision of the community. This is followed by a set of goals, objectives, and policy or action statements. To understand how the plan works, the following definitions are helpful:

Comprehensive Plan

- guides future development
- is based on long-term goals and objectives
- is the result of study and analysis of existing physical, economic, environmental and social conditions and is a projection of possible future conditions
- serves as a guide for
    - making land use changes
    - preparing and implementing ordinances
    - preparing capital improvement programs
    - the rate, timing and location of future growth
    - more responsive, efficient government
- has a planning horizon of twenty years, usually broken into five year increments

Issue

- a topic for discussion, e.g. *"Should we promote economic development in Victoria?*
- a problem to be considered, e.g. *"Job growth in Victoria is lagging behind that in other similar Texas cities"*
- issue discussion/selection is the "first step" in developing visions, goals and objectives
- Some of the key issues identified by the Steering Committee came from considerations of such questions as:
    - Where has Victoria been in the past?
    - If we do nothing, what are we currently about and where are we headed?
    - Where should we be headed?
    - What is our vision of Victoria in 2020?
    - How do we achieve Victoria's vision?

Vision Statement

- is a broad statement of how the community views itself as it moves into the 21st century
- is an ideal and unique image of the future based on community values

Goals

- are broad statements that give the "big picture" of what the community wants for its future
- provide general direction
- are not necessarily achievable or measurable, but a target we make progress towards

Objectives

- are statements that describe a specific future condition to be attained within a stated time period
- are achievable, measurable steps toward achieving goals
- are time-based, emphasizing the results of actions for a specific period of time
- require the expenditure of effort/resources to achieve

Actions

- are the methods used to achieve outcomes from goals and objectives
- reflect the best use of budgetary and other resources

Policy

- is an adopted course of action or rule of conduct to be used in striving toward established goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan
- may be general statements that apply to goals
- may be specific statements that apply to the achievement of objectives
- represents the will of the people translated into decision-oriented statements
- helps guide the legislative body in evaluating a new project or proposed change

2.2 Citizen Input

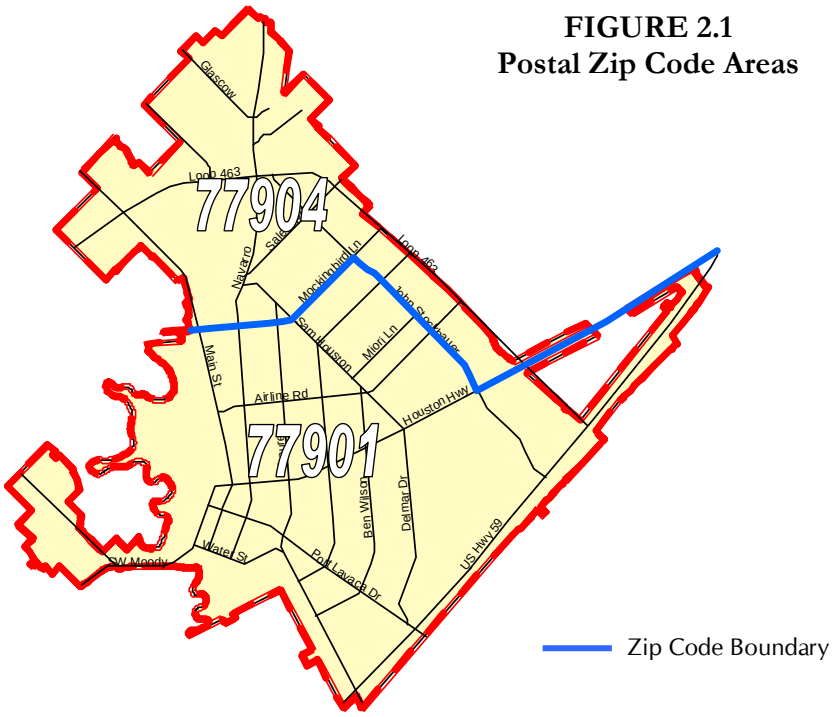
The future vision for Victoria is based upon assets and challenges facing the city which were identified by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, the Comprehensive Plan Survey, the Victoria Mall "storefront event" held on December 12, 2000, and other public hearings. Each member of the Steering Committee was responsible for distributing copies of the survey to the different stakeholder groups they represent. Approximately 60 percent of the surveys were returned and analyzed. Highlights of the final survey results are:

Demographics

Most respondents live in the City of Victoria (84%), with practically equal numbers living in the 77901 and 77904 zip codes. Three out of four respondents have lived in

Victoria longer than ten years, work in the city, and commute less than ten miles to work. Half of the respondents have a Bachelor's degree or higher, three out of four have annual household incomes of $40,000 or greater, and three out of four are 35 years of age or older.

FIGURE 2.1
Postal Zip Code Areas



Quality of Life

The entire response base is almost evenly split (51% to 48%) on whether or not there is a sense of community pride in Victoria, but there is a major difference on this issue between zip codes. Fifty six per cent of those living in zip code 77901 feel there is <u>not</u> a sense of community pride, whereas fifty six percent of those living in zip code 77904 feel there <u>is</u> a sense of community pride. Similarly, more males tend to feel a sense of pride compared to females (55% to 45%).

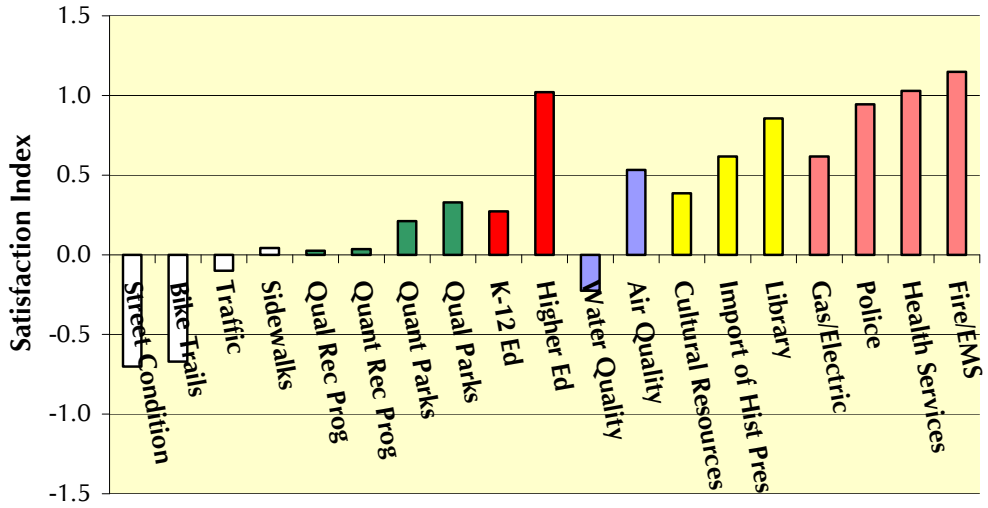
Almost three out of four respondents rate Victoria's appearance as average, with most of the remainder rating it as poor. There is not much difference in this result based on location of residence, gender or ethnicity.

Only twenty three percent of the entire response base feel the ideal population of Victoria should be 100,000 or more, with the rest feeling it should be less than 100,000. This result is consistent between the two major zip code areas.

A "satisfaction index" measures to what degree respondents are satisfied or dissatisfied with certain aspects of the quality of life in Victoria. An index of +2.000 indicates the highest possible degree of satisfaction, and an index of –2.000 indicates the greatest possible degree of dissatisfaction. For the entire response base this index is +0.335 with citizens being most satisfied with city services such as the

library, police, fire and EMS, and with the quality and availability of health services and higher education (Please see Figure 2.2).

FIGURE 2.2
Quality of Life Satisfaction
Entire Response Base (n=240, Ave= +0.335)



Categories are: Street Conditions; Availability of Bike Trails; Traffic Conditions; Availability of Sidewalks; Quality of Recreational Programs; Quantity of Recreational Programs; Quantity of Parks; Quality of Parks; Quality of K-12 Public Education; Quality of Higher Education Opportunities; Water Quality; Air Quality; Availability of Cultural Resources Such as Museums, Theater, Symphony Etc.; Importance of Historical Preservation; Library Services; Gas and Electric Service; Police Service; Availability of Health Services; and Fire/EMS Service.

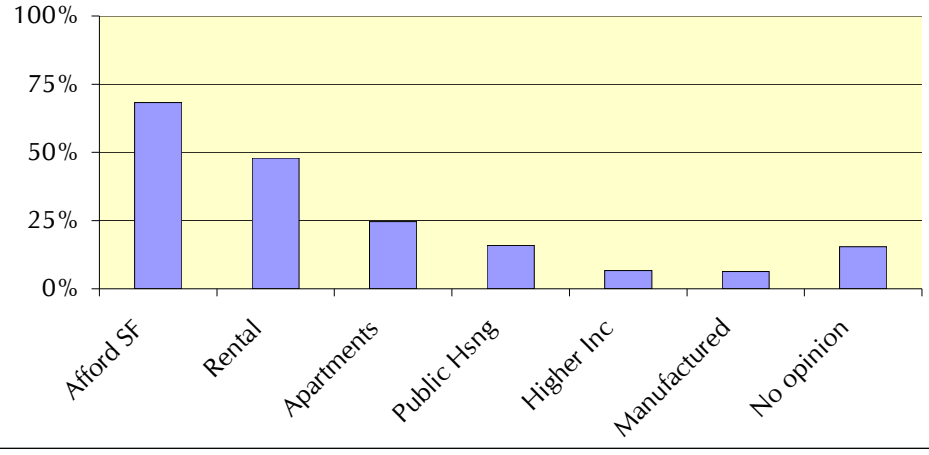
The greatest degree of dissatisfaction is with the condition of Victoria's streets, the lack of bicycle trails as a transportation alternative, and the quality of water. Zip code 77904 has a higher satisfaction index than zip code 77901 (+0.392 compared to +0.260). Males are more satisfied than females (+0.408 compared to +0.270), and White respondents are more satisfied than Hispanic or African-American respondents (+0.485 compared to +0.049 and –0.049 respectively).

Housing

Most respondents own their homes (69%). Residents in the 77904 zip code have a much higher rate of ownership than residents in the 77901 zip code (78% to 59% respectively). The general feeling in both areas of town is that the price of housing in Victoria is "about average."

The overall housing satisfaction index in Victoria is slightly negative (- 0.305) with the negative rating more pronounced in the 77901 zip code area (- 0.398). The lowest ratings were given to the quality of low income housing, the quality of affordable rental housing, and the availability of affordable rental housing. Most respondents, regardless of zip code or age, agree that affordable single family housing and rental housing are the most needed types of housing in Victoria (Please see Figure 2.3).

FIGURE 2.3
What Type of Housing Is Most Needed in Victoria?
Entire Response Base (n=240)



Categories are: Affordable Single Family Housing; Rental Housing; Apartments; Public Housing; Higher Income Housing; and Manufactured Housing.

Economic and Job Opportunity

The overwhelming majority of respondents in both zip code areas (93% and 92%) agree that Victoria needs more job opportunities. A slightly lower majority of respondents (69% in zip code 77901 and 73% in zip code 77904) feel that Victoria does not invest enough in its economic future. An even lower majority of respondents (53% in zip code 77901 and 59% in zip code 77904) agree that the city should provide public funding for job creation. There is no difference between age groups on this last issue. The most favored types of desired job opportunities are light manufacturing, high tech, and distribution.

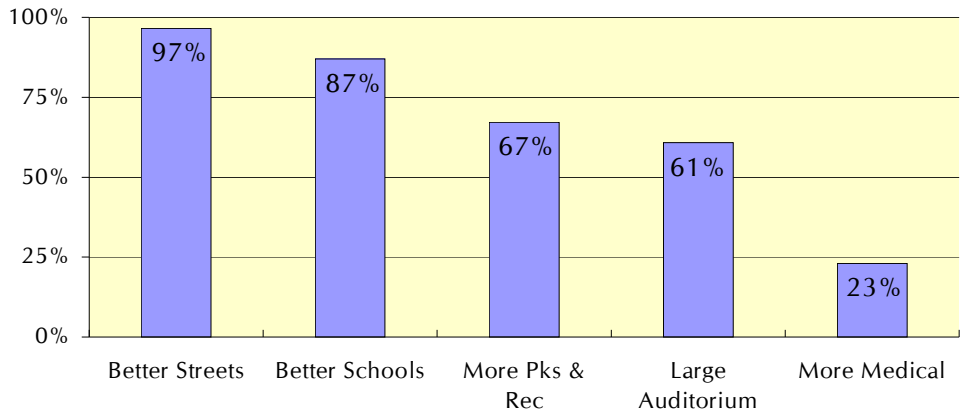
Expressed Needs

The greatest needs for Victoria are better streets, better schools and more parks and recreation, with better streets standing out as the most critical need (Please see Figure 2.4). Respondents younger than 35 years of age felt more of a need for better schools and more parks and recreation than did respondents 35 years of age or older. This same pattern holds true supporting the use of public funds for streets, schools and parks. The overwhelming majority of all respondents feel public funds are best used for streets and sewer/water services. More residents of the 77901 zip code area and younger residents favor spending public funds on parks and recreation than do residents of the 77904 zip code area or older residents. If a respondent shops outside of Victoria the most prevalent reason for doing so is price.

Responses to open-ended questions in the survey reveal that most citizens appreciate quiet neighborhoods with friendly neighbors and easy access to work, shopping, and school. They generally dislike the quality of streets and the lack of sidewalks. Almost three out of four agree with the perception that "there is nothing to do" in Victoria, especially for the youth of Victoria. The overwhelming reasons why people like living in Victoria are assets associated with its size: a small town atmosphere where the pace of life is not too hectic. Things people would like to change about

Victoria are the quality of the streets, have more things to do such as cultural activities, night life and festivals, clean up/beautify Victoria, and take better advantage of the city's historic assets.

FIGURE 2.4
Expressed Opinions on What Victoria Needs
(non-respondents excluded, n=240)



Categories are: Better Streets; Better Public Schools; More Parks and Recreational Opportunities; Large Capacity Auditorium; and More Medical Facilities.

2.3 Victoria's Assets and Challenges

While Victoria is blessed with many assets, several challenges must be overcome in its future. The following list identifies those key assets and challenges as discussed by the Steering Committee as well as those identified by citizen input from the Comprehensive Plan Survey and the "storefront event" in December 2000.

Assets:
Existing industry
Medical industry including facilities
Victoria Economic Development Corporation (VEDC) – Victoria Partnership
Minimal traffic congestion
Moderate climate
Transportation: highways, airport, rail, port, canal, intercoastal waterway
I-69 Highway potential
Location as an advantage: there is tremendous potential for growth
Improving education system
Higher education institutions
Low crime rate
Low cost of living
Small town quality of life
Sense of community
Cultural diversity

The river is a source of drinking water as well as an undeveloped asset
Parks and recreational opportunities
City-owned reservoirs give the city control over its water supply
Potential for improving downtown and capitalizing on a wealth of historic resources
Cooperative relationship between different government entities

Challenges:
Economy not diversified enough
Lack of adequate, educated work force
Lower economic growth rate
Lower population growth rate
No convenient linkage or immediate access to the interstate highway system
Limited air transportation connectivity
Location in state as a disadvantage: South of I-10 is lagging
Aging infrastructure: water, sewer, road network, etc.
Education ranking: outcomes and perception
Lack of social and professional opportunities for young people
Complacency – public meetings poorly attended
Need more involvement by all ethnic groups within the community
Conservative atmosphere: resistant to change
Lack of available land for development in preferred growth areas of city
Lack of improved drainage capacity in growth areas
Flooding
Air quality issues
River poses growth challenges, affects direction of development
Keeping traffic problems minimal
Maintain positive relationship between different government entities
Inequality of development regulations between the city and county.
Lack of affordable housing
Inequality in tax appraisal evaluations

2.4 Community Visions and Goals

The issues and findings listed for each plan element were determined from Steering Committee meetings, the Comprehensive Plan Survey results, citizen input from the "Storefront Event", and other public meetings.

Land Development
Issues and Steering Committee/Citizen Input Findings
1. If we don't direct growth there will be negative consequences (sprawl, strip commercial development, traffic congestion, inefficient city services, etc.). Most citizens do not want uncontrolled growth.
2. The city needs to promote economic expansion to enhance the community's tax base and facilitate expanded employment opportunities. However, growth should be planned and managed in an effort to preserve Victoria's character (sense of community, family-oriented values, historic significance, etc.).

3. We want Victoria to maintain its small-town feel.
4. We need to encourage in-fill development and discourage sprawl and leap-frog development.
5. We must promote downtown revitalization and protect our historic resources.
6. Victoria's neighborhoods need to be protected from encroachment by incompatible land uses and developments.
7. We need planning tools that are proactive.
8. We need to determine the "right amount" of management/regulation.

VISION 2025

Victoria is a community with "small-town" conveniences offering "big-city" opportunities.

Goal 1: Establish orderly land development patterns.

Goal 2: Preserve and enhance the integrity, compatibility, value and vitality of existing and new neighborhoods.

Goal 3: Designate adequate land areas for industrial parks and other major commercial/industrial developments to facilitate expanded employment opportunities and enhance the tax base.

Goal 4: Promote land development that enhances Victoria's sense of community.

Goal 5: Establish an annexation program that adds to the economic stability of the city, and protects and enhances its quality of life and economic resources.

Transportation

Issues and Steering Committee/Citizen Input Findings

1. The lack of an Interstate is a current challenge.
2. However, Victoria's connectivity via State and US Highways, rail, barge canal and airport are assets.
3. We have relatively little traffic congestion. This asset needs to be maintained as Victoria grows.
4. We need expanded airport service.
5. We need better public transportation – a fixed route bus system on a regular schedule.
6. Be prepared to capitalize on I-69 – build continuous frontage roads along the entire length of US 59 through Victoria.
7. Improve the quality of streets in Victoria.

VISION 2025

Victoria offers safe, convenient accessibility within the city, region and state via all modes of transportation.

Goal 1: Establish a roadway network that accommodates the safe and efficient flow of traffic in, through and around Victoria.

Goal 2: Expand regional accessibility via improved highway, rail, air, and barge canal modes of transportation.

Goal 3: Provide alternative transportation options including public transportation, hike/bike networks, and pedestrian circulation.

Goal 4: Develop transportation strategies that will reduce dependence on the automobile and continue to ensure the city's clean air quality.

Housing

Issues and Steering Committee/Citizen Input Findings

1. We need a variety of housing types and price ranges to accommodate growth, including stick-built, manufactured, low-income and multi-family.
2. All areas of Victoria should have safe, quiet neighborhoods with sound, affordable housing.
3. Low-income housing is generally perceived as being of poor quality, both single family and multi-family.
4. We need to improve the quality and increase the amount of low-income housing.
5. Habitat for Humanity has had a positive impact.
6. Medium income housing market is expanding, supply is tight.
7. Higher income housing is adequate – available areas still being developed.
8. Manage the location of manufactured housing.
9. Work on establishing better neighborhood organizations.
10. Promote neighborhood-based development.
11. Promote in-fill and downtown housing.
12. Use infrastructure (Capital Improvements Programming) to help direct residential growth.

Goal 1: Facilitate open communication and cooperation among property owners, developers, city staff and others involved in all aspects of housing in Victoria.

Goal 2: Promote a variety of housing types and neighborhoods to meet Victoria's future housing needs.

Goal 3: Improve the safety, appearance and livability of existing neighborhoods.

Goal 4: Promote entry-level and low- and moderate-income housing options in Victoria.

Goal 5: Recognize and manage manufactured housing as a viable alternative for housing.

Infrastructure

Issues and Steering Committee/Citizen Input Findings

1. We want infrastructure that works.
2. We want to use Capital Improvements Programming (CIP) to manage growth.
3. An adequate quantity of water for major manufacturing expansion is a concern.
4. Citizens consider Victoria's water quality to be below average.
5. Some areas of town feel they need more attention and investment related to utilities.
6. Flooding is a problem.
7. There is a lack of improved drainage capacity in growth areas.

VISION 2025

Victoria has technologically advanced, cost effective infrastructure (i.e. water, sewer, streets, drainage, & communications).

Goal 1: Improve the condition of existing streets and ensure that future roadways are built to last.

Goal 2: Provide storm drainage systems that minimize public harm and property damage due to flooding.

Goal 3: Maintain and improve existing water and sanitary sewer systems.

Goal 4: Provide for improved water quality and quantity.

Goal 5: Coordinate infrastructure improvements to serve future development.

Parks and Recreation

Issues and Steering Committee/Citizen Input Findings

1. We need more recreational opportunities.
2. Youths especially need more recreational opportunities.
3. We need more recreation areas.
4. We need hike and bike trails.
5. We need a water/amusement park.
6. We need a sports complex.
7. We need more neighborhood parks.
8. Entice tournaments and sporting events to Victoria.
9. Many citizens feel Victoria needs an amphitheater or large capacity auditorium.

VISION 2025

Victoria has improved park facilities and expanded recreational opportunities.

Goal 1: Revitalize existing parks.

Goal 2: Develop recreational opportunities that attract tourism.

Goal 3: Ensure adequate quantity and equal distribution of parks, open space, and recreation facilities.

Goal 4: Develop natural greenbelts with trail systems to provide pedestrian and biking linkages for neighborhoods, schools, parks and other destinations.

Goal 5: Develop additional recreational opportunities.

Community Services

Issues and Steering Committee/Citizen Input Findings

1. Maintain the level of police, fire and EMS services.
2. We have a relatively low crime rate.
3. Community policing and police zone meetings are very positive.
4. Some neighborhoods want more police presence.
5. We need more activities/programs for youth.
6. Do we maintain current type of solid waste service or explore alternatives?
7. Expand recycling programs.
8. Citizens generally give high ratings to library services.
9. We need a large capacity arena/auditorium.

VISION 2025

Victoria has quality municipal services and facilities making Victoria a safe, healthy, and enjoyable place to live.

Goal 1: Maintain high standards of fire and emergency medical services.

Goal 2: Maintain low crime rate and high level of police services.

Goal 3: Provide library services that meet the diverse information needs for all citizens of Victoria County.

Goal 4: Provide an efficient municipal solid waste management system.

Goal 5: Meet the demand for additional public meeting space and activities requiring a large capacity convention center/arena.

Downtown Victoria and Historic Preservation

Issues and Steering Committee/Citizen Input Findings

1. Identify historical items that can be a tourism base.
2. Preserve, enhance, take advantage of the historical significance of Victoria.
3. Victoria is viewed as a charming city with a rich history.
4. Victoria should have its own identity.
5. Develop incentives to encourage downtown development as a work, housing, and cultural

VISION 2025

Victoria is a vibrant, attractive, well preserved historic, cultural and entertainment center.

center – a place where there is day-to-day activity of all kinds.
6. Accommodate downtown parking needs.
7. The old homes in Victoria are a plus.
8. Locating mobile homes next to downtown historic homes is an appearance problem.
9. We need a community theater in the downtown area for concerts/performances.
10. Victoria can be a viable alternative for snowbirds.
11. Key into heritage and regional tourism opportunities.

Goal 1: Revitalize downtown Victoria as a balanced work, housing, cultural and entertainment center - a place where there is day-to-day activity.

Goal 2: Use Victoria's rich history and its downtown as one of the legs in building the local economy.

Goal 3: Preserve and enhance Victoria's historic buildings and resources.

Economic Opportunity

Issues and Steering Committee/Citizen Input Findings

1. We need more job opportunities.
2. Become more self-sufficient.
3. Improve and diversify the economic base.
4. Offer incentives to encourage industrial and economic development.
5. We need built-up space in 60,000 to 100,000 sq. ft. range for quick development opportunities.
6. Attract finished product type industries that use locally available products (e.g. plastics).
7. Emphasize "Shop Victoria."
8. We need a more progressive attitude towards tax abatements.
9. Provide more basic job-skills training.
10. Continue to improve technical skills training.
11. Support the Career Development School and Victoria Vocational Tech School.
12. Enhance the quality of life in Victoria by helping people get entry level jobs, promoting better paying jobs, and developing a broader economic base.
13. Retain job opportunities at the manufacturing plants outside the city.
14. Use the 4b tax for "pure" economic development.

Goal 1: Increase emphasis on retaining and expanding local businesses and industries.

Goal 2: Diversify and expand Victoria's economy through the expansion of light industry and other businesses.

Goal 3: Improve the quality and quantity of the present and future labor supplies in the Victoria region.

Goal 4: Foster a positive attitude toward growth and development among local government and business groups.

Goal 5: Ensure that existing infrastructure is in good condition and plan for future infrastructure needs that will accommodate prospective business and industrial growth.

Goal 6: Provide a business environment that will enhance the community's overall quality of life and promote economic development.

Community Image

Issues and Steering Committee/Citizen Input Findings

1. Victoria is cleaner than most towns.
2. Most citizens surveyed rate Victoria's appearance as "average."
3. Encourage the community to take responsibility for actions such as littering.
4. There are aesthetic factors of a compact city.
5. Existing streets generally have poor aesthetics.
6. While most homes and yards are well-maintained, some are junky and/or weedy.
7. Enforce property standards: clean up vacant lots, tear down or restore abandoned buildings.
8. Beautify city entrances: they need more greenery, need to be more "dramatic."
9. We need less high wire clutter and more underground utilities.
10. Promote environmental awareness.

Goal 1: Enhance the appearance of the city by blending future development with its physical environment.

Goal 2: Establish a strong sense of community identity.

Goal 3: Instill pride in the community by encouraging citizens to take responsibility for their actions in the upkeep and appearance of private and public property.

Implementation

Goal: The City of Victoria will be accountable to its citizens for implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

CHAPTER 3

Land Development

Preserving Victoria's Character

The Comprehensive Plan Survey identified living in a small town atmosphere as one of Victoria's most cherished and unique qualities. People enjoy living in Victoria because of their proximity to work, shopping, and school. Many survey respondents described their neighbors as friendly and family-oriented. They felt that Victoria is a place where people care for each other, and where the pace of life is not as hectic as it is in bigger cities. The way Victoria grows, or how land is developed in the future, will to a great extent determine whether these qualities are to be nurtured or whether they will be lost.

VISION 2025

Victoria is a community with "small-town" conveniences offering "big-city" opportunities.

Victoria has historically taken a conservative approach to planning and land use management. It remains the second largest city in the State of Texas (Houston being the largest) that does not utilize zoning laws. However, over the past 10-15 years, the city has implemented several other forms of development regulation. While these and other ordinances address certain specific land development issues, the city lacks the ability to adequately manage the direction of growth. This was one of the key issues identified by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. Based on hours of Steering Committee discussion and input received from the Comprehensive Plan Survey, there are concerns about the consequences of unmanaged growth. There is a strong desire to maintain Victoria's character and sense of community. This is not to say, however, that the community is prepared to embrace the concept of traditional zoning. The intent of the Steering Committee was to find a correct balance. This plan identifies methods to establish orderly land development patterns without discouraging economic opportunity. It seeks to preserve existing residential neighborhoods while permitting flexibility for new development, allowing market forces to be the primary driving force that determines future land uses.

The Land Development chapter will help determine the future form and character of the community, and will seek to achieve the vision of big city opportunities in a small town atmosphere. This chapter is intended to be a resource guide that identifies current patterns of land development in Victoria, and indicates areas best suited for future growth. It is here that citizens articulate what they want the city to look like, how and where it will develop and how it will function in the future. The land development vision and the plan outlined in this chapter to help achieve that vision are unique, chosen specifically for Victoria. For our city to look, feel and function as

we want it to, it is very important that Victoria has the ability to implement its land development goals, objectives and desires.

3.1 Historic/Existing Land Use

It is important to identify historic and current land uses and consider the limiting physical characteristics that shape the city in terms of type, scale, density and location of the land uses. By identifying existing patterns together with current and proposed infrastructure improvements, we can identify alternative patterns of desired future land development.

Historic Annexation, Land Development and Growth Patterns

As mentioned in Chapter One, the original city plan was a one-mile grid (640 acres) with a central plaza and mixed uses. The city developed along the east bank of the Guadalupe River and to the high ground to the north and east where the topography was favorable for development. Throughout its history, the primary barriers to the city's physical growth have been the large floodplain along the Guadalupe River as well as other drainage ways in the area (see Figure 6.4 in Chapter 6). Scattered oil and natural gas fields and major railroads have also placed some constraints on development in the area.

Table 3.1 provides information on Victoria's annexation history. Figure 3.1 illustrates historic land development and growth patterns.

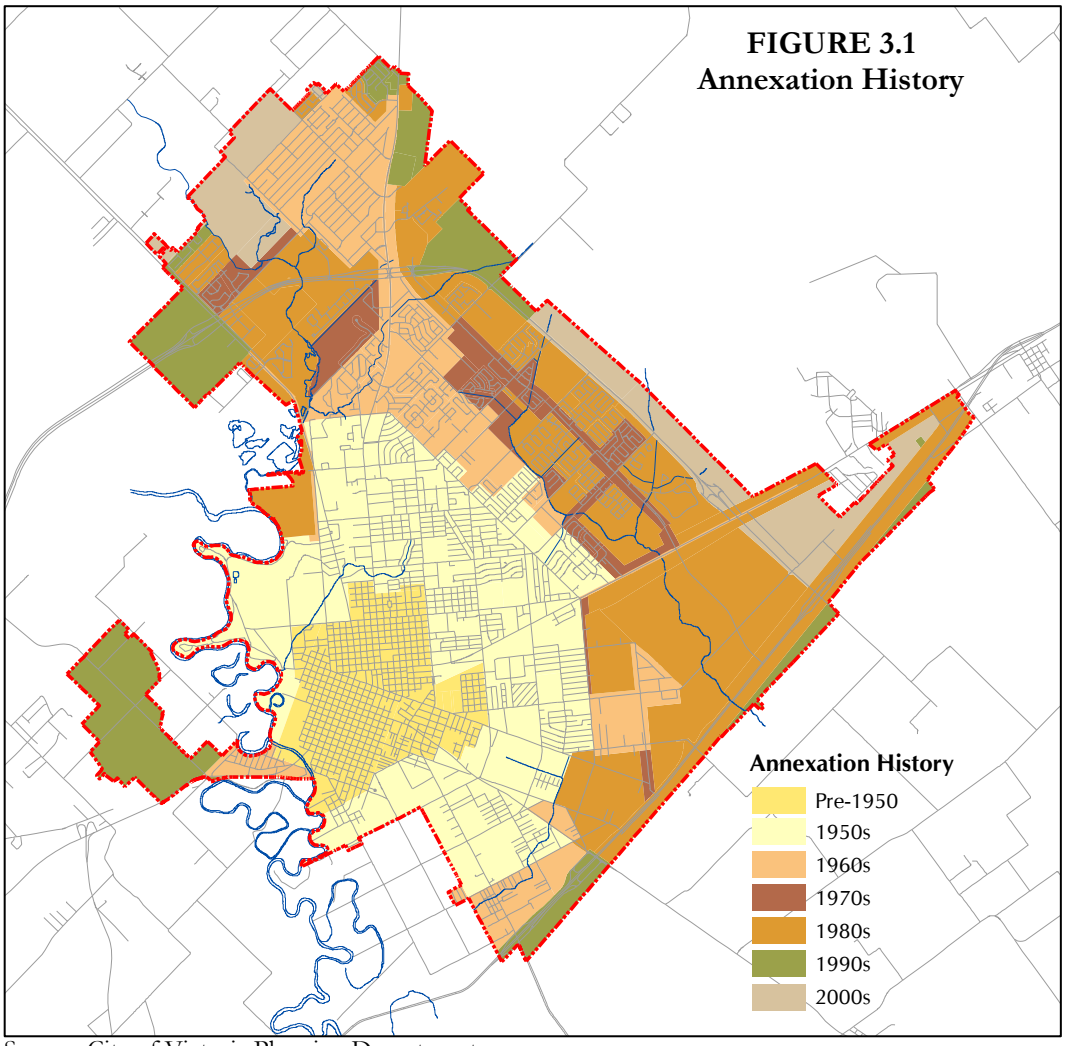
Table 3.1 Annexation History

Year	Acreage of Incorporated Limits	Amount of Increase (Acres)	Percentage Change
1950	2,013	- -	- -
1960	7,274	5,261	261%
1970	10,599	3,325	46%
1980	12,019	1,420	13%
1990	18,551	6,532	54%
2000	20,493	1,941	10%
2007	22,640	2,147	10%

Source: City of Victoria Planning Department

The development of the City of Victoria remained compact from the time of its original settlement through 1950, when the northern limits had extended to just beyond Red River Street and the eastern edge of the city was Ben Jordan Street. During the 1950s, a decade when the city's population more than doubled from 16,126 to 33,047, the corporate boundaries expanded by more than 2½ times. By 1960 the city had grown to slightly beyond Sam Houston Drive to the north and northeast, and the eastern boundary reached Delmar Drive. Growth had also occurred toward the southeast as far as Pleasant Green Drive. While the geographic expansion of the 1950s was remarkable, the overall form of the city remained balanced. City limits were extended in relatively equal distances (approximately one

and a half miles) toward the north, northeast, east and southeast, with the river blocking significant expansion to the west and south.



Source: City of Victoria Planning Department

A relatively orderly growth pattern continued in the early and mid-1960s, with the annexation of areas north and northwest of Sam Houston Drive, including Castle Hills and surrounding areas, Emerald Hills and Broad Acres. By 1969 the city limits had extended southeast to US Hwy 59 (Loop 175 at the time), toward the east to Lone Tree Acres, and west across the river to the Greens Addition. In addition, the city had annexed a three-mile strip along US Hwy 77 North (N. Navarro Street) to incorporate the rural subdivisions in the Northcrest/Highland Estates area. This annexation marked the beginning of a period of relative sprawl and strip annexations.

Some contiguous areas were incorporated during the 1970s, including the Victoria Country Club and areas northeast of Castle Hills Subdivision (Shenandoah and surrounding tracts). However, the remaining annexations in this decade were less compact. Strips were incorporated along Houston Highway from Tanglewood to John Stockbauer Drive, Airline Road from Tanglewood to John Stockbauer Drive

and the Cimarron Subdivision, and John Stockbauer Drive from Houston Highway to Salem Road. These annexations created large, unincorporated enclaves of undeveloped land. In addition, a narrow strip was annexed from Northcrest along Clark School Road to reach Woodway Subdivision. Although the amount of land incorporated in the 1970s was much less than in previous decades, the new annexations required considerable increases in municipal services.

Victoria annexed more acreage in the 1980s than in any other decade in the city's history. These expansions included all the remaining land between Houston Highway, Loop 463 and US Hwy 59, and strips along US 59 and Houston Highway to the east. The remaining tracts on the northeast side of town along both sides of the John Stockbauer Drive corridor were incorporated, as well as the Victoria Mall area. City limits were also expanded toward the northwest to include the land between the Victoria Country Club and Woodway, and the Tropical Acres Subdivision northwest of Woodway.

The Bridle Ridge and Wal-Mart/Sams developments were incorporated in the early to mid-1990s. By 1999 the city limits was extended to included the surface water reservoirs located west of the Guadalupe River, an area in the vicinity of US 87 and Loop 463, a tract northwest of Tropical Acres (Lake Forest Subdivision), the area north of Loop 463 between the Victoria Mall and Salem Road, and tracts along the southeast side of US Hwy 59.

Historic and Existing Land Use

Table 3.2 and Figure 3.2 indicate the distribution of land uses in the City of Victoria in 1970 and 2000. In both years the highest percentage of developed acreage was devoted to residential uses, and the vast majority of residential acreage was devoted to single family uses: 88% in 1970 and 90% in 2000. In 1970, duplex and multi-family housing accounted for approximately 10% of residential acreage and mobile homes accounted for only one percent.

Table 3.2 Distribution of Land Uses, 1970 and 2000

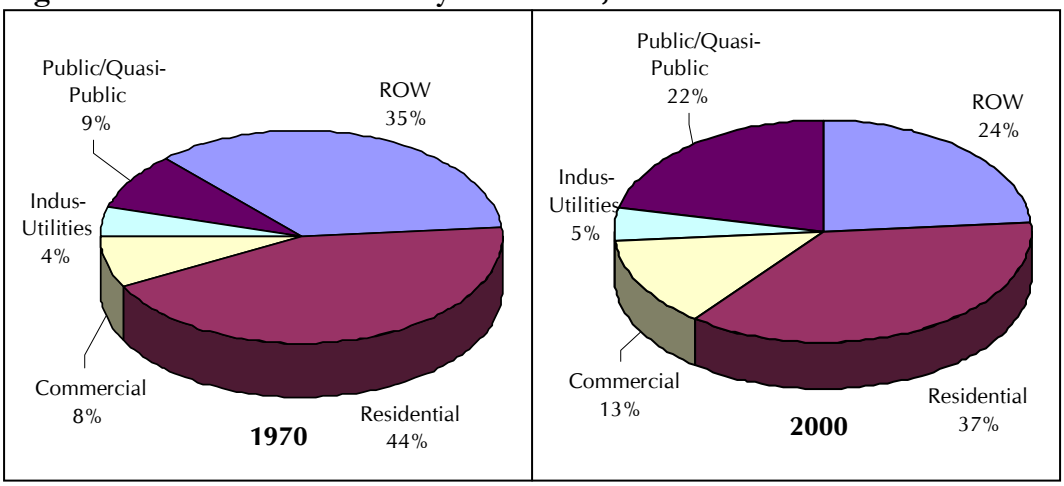
Land Use Category	1970		2000		% Change	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Total %	Ave An*
Residential	2,368	43.6	5,242	36.9	+121%	+4.0%
Commercial	427	7.9	1,831	12.9	+329%	+11.0%
Industrial	241	4.4	687	4.8	+185%	+6.2%
ROW	1,918	35.3	3,362	23.7	+75%	+3.3%
Public/Quasi Public	480	8.8	3,079	21.7	+541%	+18.0%
Total Developed	5,436	51.3	14,202	69.3	+161%	+5.4%
Vacant, Undeveloped	5,163	48.7	6,291	30.7	+31%	+1.0%
Total Area	10,599		20,493		+98%	+3.3%

Sources: *Victoria Comprehensive Plan Report No. 1,* prepared by Carter & Burgess, Inc.; *2000 Land Use Survey*, prepared by City of Victoria Department of Planning. *'Ave An' is the average annual change.

In 2000 there were 22,129 occupied dwelling units in Victoria on 5,242 acres, or 4.22 dwelling units per developed residential acre. The percentage of developed acreage devoted to single family dwellings changed very little between 1970 and 2000. However, multi-family/group home acreage decreased from about 10% in 1970 to

less than 7% in 2000, and manufactured home acreage increased from one percent in 1970 to over four percent in 2000 (see Table 3.3).

Figure 3.2 Land Uses in the City of Victoria, 1970 and 2000



While population increased 46% from 1970 to 2000, developed area increased 161%, three-and-a-half times greater than the rate of population growth. For the same 30-year period, commercial and public/quasi-public uses showed the largest increases. The increase in commercial land use can be attributed to Victoria's emergence as a regional retail center, with the development of the Victoria Mall and other major retailers (Wal-Mart SuperCenter, Sam's, Target, Lowe's, Home Depot, etc.). The significant increase in land devoted to public/quasi-public use is somewhat misleading. The change is partially due to the annexation of the Victoria Country Club, the development of Colony Creek Country Club and several large churches, and expansions to the Victoria College/UHV campus and city facilities (Community Center grounds, Riverside Park RV and nature areas, etc.). In addition, the areas recently acquired by the city for surface water storage and the Lone Tree Creek drainage basin (a total of nearly 900 acres) are classified as public open space.

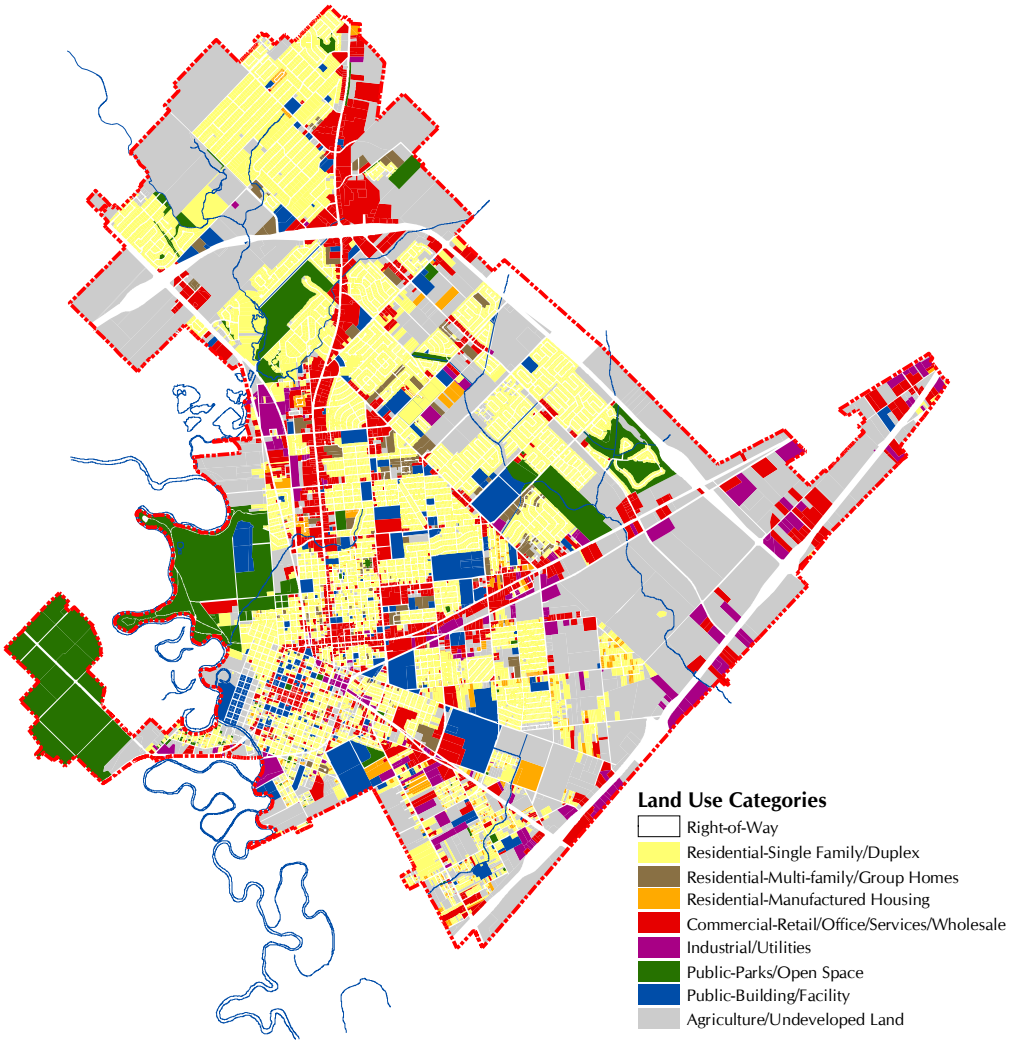
Table 3.3 Land Use Characteristics for the City of Victoria in 2000

Land Use Characteristic		%
Occupied Dwelling Units	22,129 units	
Total Residential Acres	5,242 acres	
Occupied Dwelling Units per Residential Acre	4.22	
Single Family/Duplex	4,691 acres	89.5%
Multi-family/Group Homes	337 acres	6.4%
Manufactured	214 acres	4.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, Table DP-1; *2000 Land Use Survey*, prepared by City of Victoria Department of Planning.

Victoria exhibits land consumptive patterns similar to those of most other cities in Texas and the U.S. As in the past, in the year 2000 residential uses account for the largest portion of land use within the city limits: 26% of total area or 37% of developed area. Rights-of-way (ROW) are the second largest consumers of land: 16% of total area or 24% of developed area (see Figures 3.2 and 3.3).

FIGURE 3.3
2000 Land Use Distribution



The Impacts of Historic Land Development Patterns

As discussed in the introduction, Victoria has developed without a comprehensive approach to manage and direct growth. The lack of direction in the city's growth patterns has contributed to the emergence of several issues and concerns that negatively impact its citizens, economy and urban environment. Based on survey findings, public input, and discussion, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee identified the following list of land development issues and concerns:

1. If we don't direct growth there will be negative consequences (sprawl, strip commercial development, traffic congestion, inefficient city services, etc.). The majority of citizens do not want uncontrolled growth.
2. The city needs to promote economic expansion to enhance the community's tax base and facilitate expanded employment opportunities. However, growth

should be planned and managed in an effort to preserve Victoria's character (sense of community, family-oriented values, historic significance, etc.).
3. We want Victoria to maintain its small-town feel.
4. We need to encourage in-fill development and discourage sprawl and leap-frog development.
5. We must promote downtown revitalization and protect our historic resources.
6. Victoria's neighborhoods need to be protected from encroachment by incompatible land uses and developments.
7. We need planning tools that are proactive.
8. We need to determine the "right amount" of management/regulation.

These issues and concerns are expanded upon in the following sections.

The Impacts of Unstructured Growth

Victoria's development in the past forty to fifty years has lacked focus. There has been no concept of urban design and no sense of cohesiveness. Unstructured growth such as strip commercial development and sprawl affects the look, feel and efficiency of a community. Commercial strips in most cities are considered ugly and without any personality or "sense of place." As these strips reach further out and expand the edges of the city, older strip centers and stand-alone commercial buildings are vacated by businesses moving to these newer locations. Although the older centers are eventually adapted and re-used, their property values level off or even decrease. As a result property taxes and sales tax revenues in these older areas decline. Residential areas do not escape the impacts of sprawl either. As the focus of new development continues to spread outward, older neighborhoods deteriorate resulting in a decline in quality of life and property values.

Vacant Commercial – Laurent and Airline Road

The costs of sprawl can be measured in real dollars. Taxes and fees must cover the costs of an expanding infrastructure such as longer sewer mains, water lines and roadways. Limited city resources are stretched to maintain fire, police and emergency medical services that cost more in a spread-out city. The community must pay for more fire stations and police patrols, or response times will inevitably suffer. Street and other infrastructure maintenance dollars must also be spread out over more area. Once the initial construction of expanded infrastructure is completed with limited city resources, the community is then faced with the long-term maintenance of such facilities. The cost/benefit question will always remain.

Strip development and sprawl also bring about increased traffic congestion and decreased air quality, which are two issues that have become increasingly significant in Victoria.

The Need to Guide the Direction of Future Land Development

We cannot continue doing the same things and expect different results. If the city wants to guide the direction of future development, a more proactive approach must

be adopted. Rather than reacting to development trends, the city should proactively participate in guiding those trends. Capital investments in infrastructure (streets, water, sewer, drainage, etc.) must be coordinated to encourage the development of in-fill sites and preferred growth areas. Urban design standards should be developed to lessen the negative impacts of commercial development on major transportation corridors (This concept is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 11, Community Image). These and other ideas are also addressed in Section 3.3 of this chapter.

The Need to Protect the Integrity of Residential Neighborhoods

The building blocks of vibrant communities are healthy neighborhoods. The Comprehensive Plan Survey revealed that most people in Victoria appreciate their neighborhoods, and have strong feelings of "being at home" and neighborliness. A home is the largest single expenditure and investment made by the typical family. This investment needs a high level of protection. Incompatible land uses can easily destroy a neighborhood's integrity, negatively impacting property values and quality of life, introducing excessive noise, light, or traffic into the area. Concerns regarding neighborhood encroachment are becoming more common. Examples of incompatibility include placement of manufactured homes in established neighborhoods of site-built homes; encroachment by commercial development on the edges of neighborhoods (retail centers, motels, etc.); and the conversion of single family homes to nonresidential uses.

Incompatible Land Uses

The protection of residential neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible land uses is currently left up to the enforcement of private covenants and deed restrictions. Unfortunately, deed restrictions are often not a very effective land use regulation tool. Private deed restrictions fall short of offering long term, consistent citywide protection needed in Victoria. Covenants and restrictions are not comprehensive in nature, generally applying only to limited time periods and only in some subdivisions. Some of the weaknesses of private restrictions are discussed below.

- Not Everyone is Protected by Deed Restrictions. Private restrictions are recorded by the developer when the subdivision plat is recorded. They only apply to lots located within that subdivision. Also, some subdivisions are protected by deed restrictions and some are not – its up to the developer. Most newer neighborhoods have deed restrictions. However, deed restrictions are often written with expiration clauses, expiring after a 10 to 20 year period. Some have to be renewed by the homeowners every 10 to 20 years, and others have automatic renewal clauses. Deed restrictions in many older subdivisions have expired. Other residential areas were developed without deed restrictions. For those neighborhoods that have active deed restrictions, properties located within the interior of the subdivision are provided the highest level of protection. Homes located on the fringes of a subdivision have less protection because adjacent properties located just outside the subdivision boundaries are not covered by the restrictions.

- Enforcement Limitations. Deed restrictions are enforced through private party actions. Property owners typically must file suit against alleged violators in order to enforce the restrictions. The city has no authority to intervene in the enforcement process. Deed restrictions can be effective in subdivisions that have active homeowners associations. However, there are relatively few active homeowners associations in Victoria. Inconsistent enforcement is another problem. If restrictions are not consistently applied, they can become unenforceable.

The Steering Committee recognized threats to residential neighborhoods as a real problem in Victoria and placed a high priority on their protection. Neighborhood protection is an integral part of maintaining and enhancing Victoria's sense of community and family-oriented atmosphere.

Substandard Development in the ETJ

Substandard development in the extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) has resulted in increased costs to the city for facilities and services that could have been avoided if initial development standards had been higher in the first place. The prime example of this issue in Victoria is the Northcrest/Highland Estates area north of Loop 463 and west of Navarro Street. This area developed outside the city limits in the 1950s and '60s as a series of rural subdivisions. Several hundred one-half acre and larger home-sites were developed with private water wells and septic systems, 20-24 foot wide strip-paved streets with open ditches, no street lights, no sidewalks and inadequate drainage systems. Since the area was annexed in 1969, the city has spent millions of dollars to extend water and sanitary sewer services, improve drainage and install street lighting. Now, more than thirty years after its annexation, the city spent an additional $8.7 million dollars in the 2000 General Obligation Bond Program to correct drainage problems in this area.

Rural Subdivision Improvements

Even if a city avoids leap-frog development and promotes contiguous in-fill development, its physical area must inevitably expand as population increases. By exercising higher development standards in the ETJ, Victoria can promote quality development, enhance property values and avoid costly road upgrades and other infrastructure retrofit expenses when it annexes land.

Manufactured Housing in Historic District

Historic Resources

Preservation and adaptive reuse of historic resources, neighborhoods and buildings are essential to maintaining Victoria's sense of community and identity. Past development patterns have not taken advantage of these resources, and in

fact have threatened their viability. Many of Victoria's historic structures have been eliminated to make way for new development. The value and character of others have been diminished by the encroachment of incompatible development (e.g. manufactured homes placed in the midst of historic districts). Yet many of Victoria's citizens recognize our strong sense of history and want to nurture it. As such, an entire chapter of this plan is devoted to historic preservation and downtown revitalization (see Chapter 9).

3.2 Future Land Development

Growth Shapers

The direction of the city's future development will be affected by a number of factors that facilitate growth, including the availability of adequate transportation access, water and sanitary sewer service, and drainage capacity. These infrastructure improvements must serve developable tracts of land with willing sellers. In addition, there are other market forces at work that will influence which areas will be most desirable for new development. Some of these factors may include school locations, conveniently located shopping opportunities, medical, recreational, police, fire and other services, as well as proximity to other high quality developments.

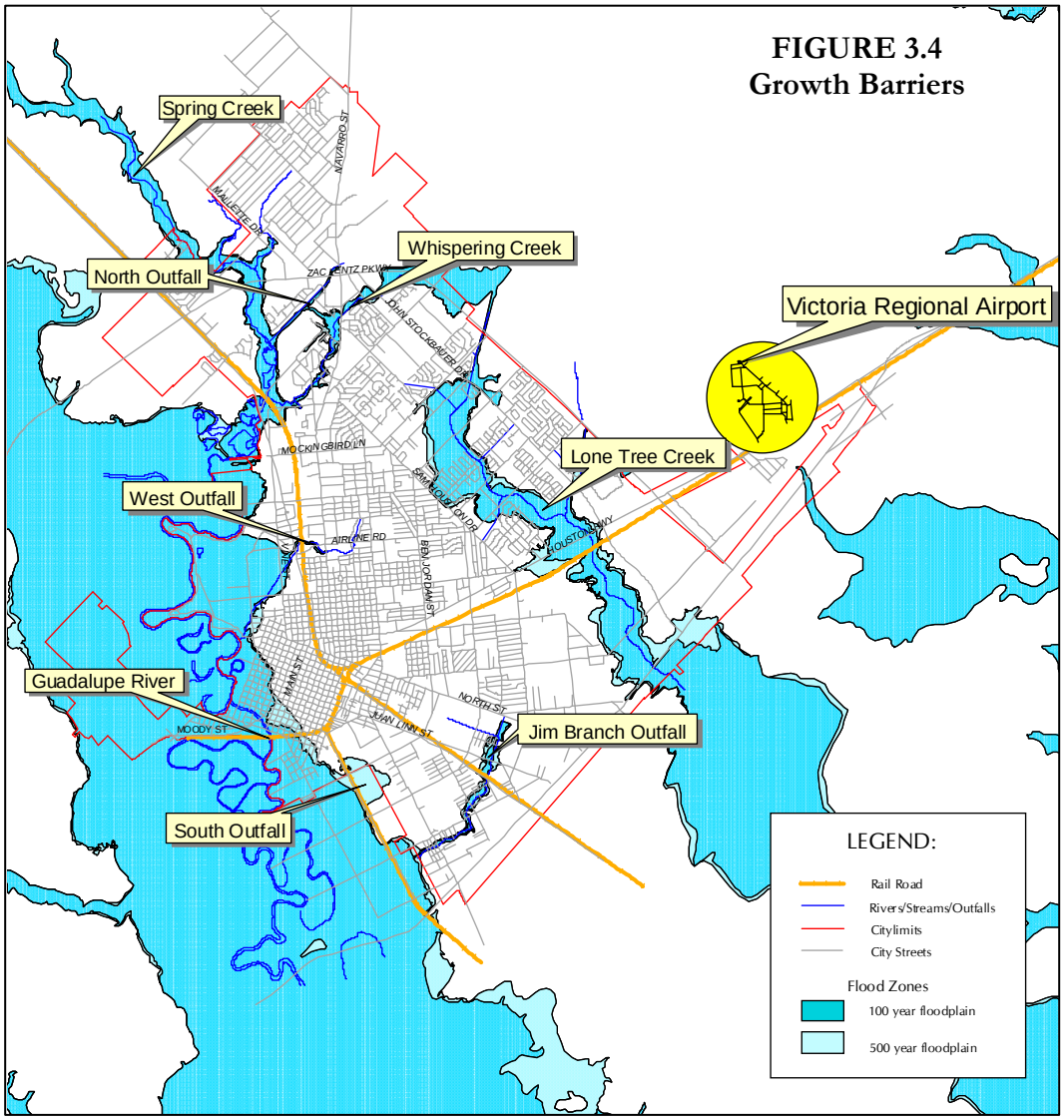
While the city cannot, and should not, control market forces, it can affect the direction of growth by carefully extending infrastructure to appropriate locations in an orderly, planned manner. If the city wants to discourage sprawl and haphazard growth, then planned future transportation, utility and drainage system expansions should be provided to those prime areas that will lead to a more compact and efficient urban form. Everyone benefits from managed growth.

Growth Barriers

The direction of future growth will also be influenced by various physical, economic and individual barriers to growth. Some examples of growth barriers are identified below:

- Guadalupe River – The Guadalupe River, defining the city's western boundary, is the most obvious barrier to growth in Victoria. The river's floodplain is two to three miles wide in the Victoria area. The expense of serving areas west of the river with water and sanitary sewer has made it impractical for Victoria to grow in that direction. The only area served with city utilities west of the Guadalupe is a small section near downtown (the Greens Addition).
- Creeks and Drainage Outfalls – In addition to the Guadalupe River, there are seven local watersheds. These natural streams and man-made drainage outfalls and their associated floodplains define additional land development barriers throughout the city. While the limiting aspects of certain creek and drainage outfalls are being mitigated through engineering work, some will always remain.
- Topography – Victoria has extremely flat terrain. In some areas this lack of topographic relief creates drainage difficulties inhibiting development, even in areas that are not in designated floodplains.

- Railroads – Rail corridors can act as positive growth shapers, providing a necessary mode of transportation for industrial, shipping and wholesale interests. However, they also create impediments to new development. Railroads can hinder the orderly extension of roadways. They can affect response times for emergency vehicles, and pose safety threats related to the transport of hazardous materials. In addition, the noise generated by rail traffic is a nuisance to nearby land uses. These noise, traffic and safety issues make rail corridors incompatible with residential uses.



- Victoria Regional Airport – As with railroads, areas near an airport are more appropriate for commercial or industrial development. Airports generate noise and traffic that can become nuisances for residential neighborhoods. Victoria's growth has historically moved to the northeast, in the direction of the Victoria Regional Airport. The developed edge of the city (Loop 463) is approximately two miles from the airport. While there is potential for

additional growth in this direction, that development potential will become limited as it nears the airport.

- Ownership Patterns – Patterns of land ownership can be an overlooked inhibitor to new development. For example, large tracts of developable land owned by unwilling sellers can result in underutilized infrastructure, forcing leap-frog development to occur. Land that has been divided into many small tracts under separate ownership can also make it difficult for developers to assemble adequate land necessary for development.

Figure 3.4 identifies several growth barriers, including rivers, streams and floodplains, railroads and the Victoria Regional Airport.

Potential Growth Areas

There are a number of recent capital improvement projects, along with new projects in various stages of planning and construction, that will help determine the direction of future development in Victoria. The purpose of this section is to analyze these new capital improvements, along with the growth barriers described above, to identify potential growth areas. The following is a description of several potential growth areas and a discussion of each area's opportunities and limitations for future development. Much of this information is taken from a Land Development Study, completed by the Planning Department in March 2007. The 2007 Land Development Study includes an inventory of vacant land in and around the city, and an assessment of the availability of infrastructure to serve undeveloped areas. Several potential growth areas are identified by number in Figure 3.5.

1. US 87/Loop 463 – The area located on the west side of US 87 in the vicinity of Loop 463 was annexed by the city in late-1999. This 436-acre annexation, which extended the city limits approximately 4,000 feet to the west along both sides of Loop 463, is served by oversized water and sanitary sewer extensions. The area has transportation access from US 87 and Loop 463, and is not impacted by the floodplain. The land drains to the west toward the Guadalupe River, so there are no drainage outfall capacity restrictions. In early-2008, VISD purchased 96 acres on the west side of US 87, just north of Loop 463, for the construction of the new west high school and middle school campus. The city will participate in the cost of extending oversized water and sanitary sewer mains around the perimeter of the campus, to US 87. The campus will be served by an extension of Tropical Drive, which will provide access to additional developable property adjacent to the campus. The new High School and Middle School are scheduled to open in 2010. The city has plans to continue the extension of utilities further north along US 87 to facilitate the annexation of additional land. Land ownership patterns could be an inhibitor in this area, as most tracts are relatively narrow and very deep, extending from US 87 to the river.
2. Ball Airport Area – The 2000 Bond program included several projects to correct drainage problems in the Northcrest/Highland Estates area. In addition to correcting existing problems, drainage work in this area created capacity for new development north of Ball Airport Road. The property is served by Glascow Street, Ball Airport Road and Mallette Drive. The city

annexed the 215 acre Ball Airport site in 2007. VISD purchased land on Mallette Drive along the southwest end of the Ball Airport property for the development of a new elementary school, which is scheduled to open in 2009. The city will widen Mallette Drive and improve water and sanitary sewer capacity in this vicinity to facilitate school construction. These improvements will also enhance the development potential of the Ball Airport area.

3. Mallette Drive Area – The city annexed approximately 400 acres between Mallette Drive and Spring Creek in 2007. This is a prime location for residential development. Street and utility improvements associated with the Ball Airport elementary school site will enhance this area as well. Spring Creek provides a drainage outfall. Mallette Drive will provide adequate access for some additional development. However, the area will not realize its full development potential until Ball Airport Road is extended across the property from Nursery Drive to Mallette.

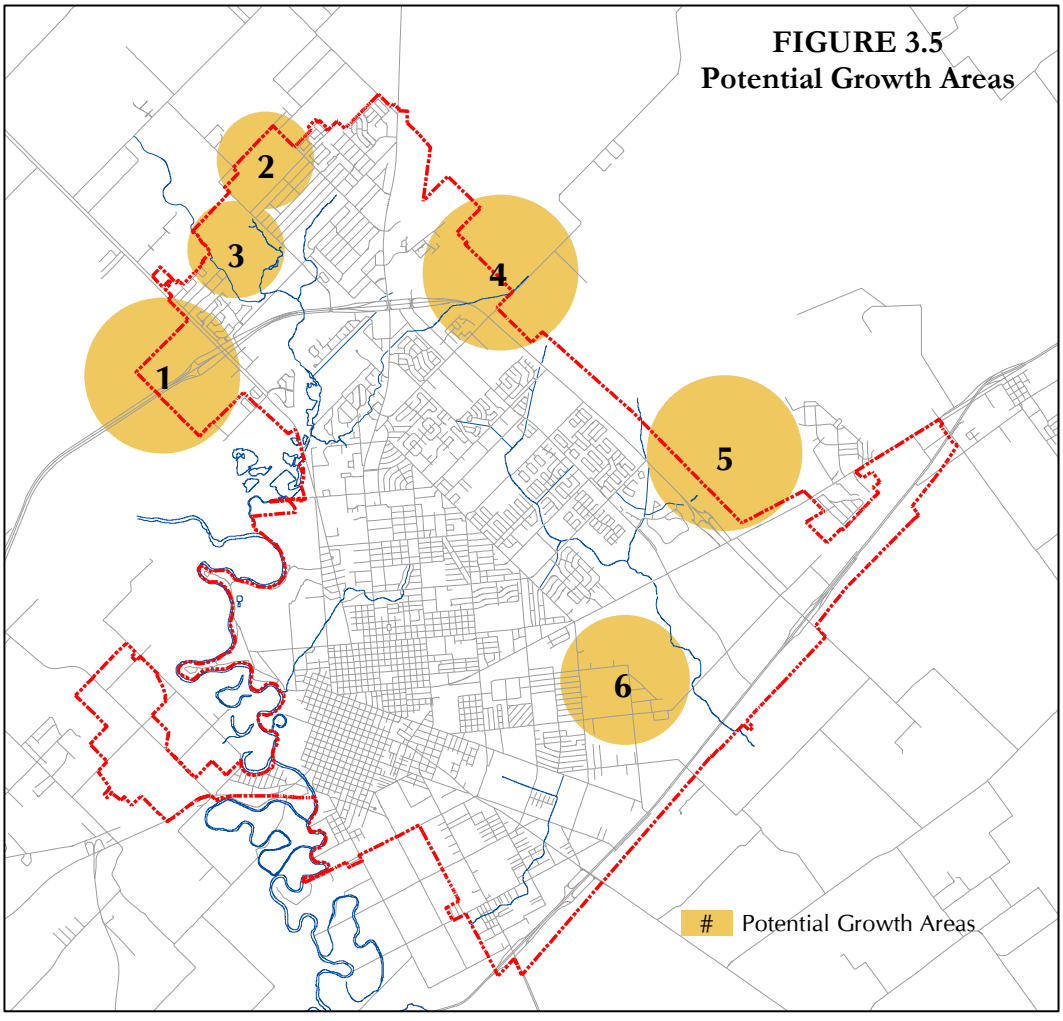


FIGURE 3.5
Potential Growth Areas

4. Salem Road/Loop 463 – Approximately 300 acres were annexed in 1999 on the north side of Loop 463, between the Victoria Mall and Salem Road. A portion of the site near the intersection of Loop 463 and Salem Road is

affected by the Whispering Creek floodplain. The portion of this area fronting Zac Lentz Parkway will have access limitations until a frontage road is constructed. However, the Home Depot site was developed in 2003, and there is additional potential for development in the area. A future extension of Glascow Street to Salem Road, as shown on the Thoroughfare Master Plan, would significantly improve development potential in this area.

5. Loop 463 East – The area located in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Loop 463 and Houston Highway has good access. The property owners are interested in selling and/or developing the area. Water and sewer mains were extended in late-2001 across Loop 463 at Airline Road, and across Houston Highway northeast of Loop 463. Additional frontage was annexed in 2007, and utilities will be extended across the Loop at Mockingbird and Ben Jordan. The flat terrain in this area presents some challenges for drainage and sanitary sewer service. The highway frontage portions of the property can be served in the short-term. However, development of the deeper portions of the property will require creative drainage solutions, sanitary sewer lift stations and/or other major infrastructure improvements.
6. In-Fill Areas South of Houston Highway – There are large tracts of land located south of Houston Highway that have good transportation access, and existing water, sewer and drainage capacity. These infrastructure elements are currently underutilized. The city should find and use incentives to encourage in-fill development in these areas.

Preferred Industrial Areas

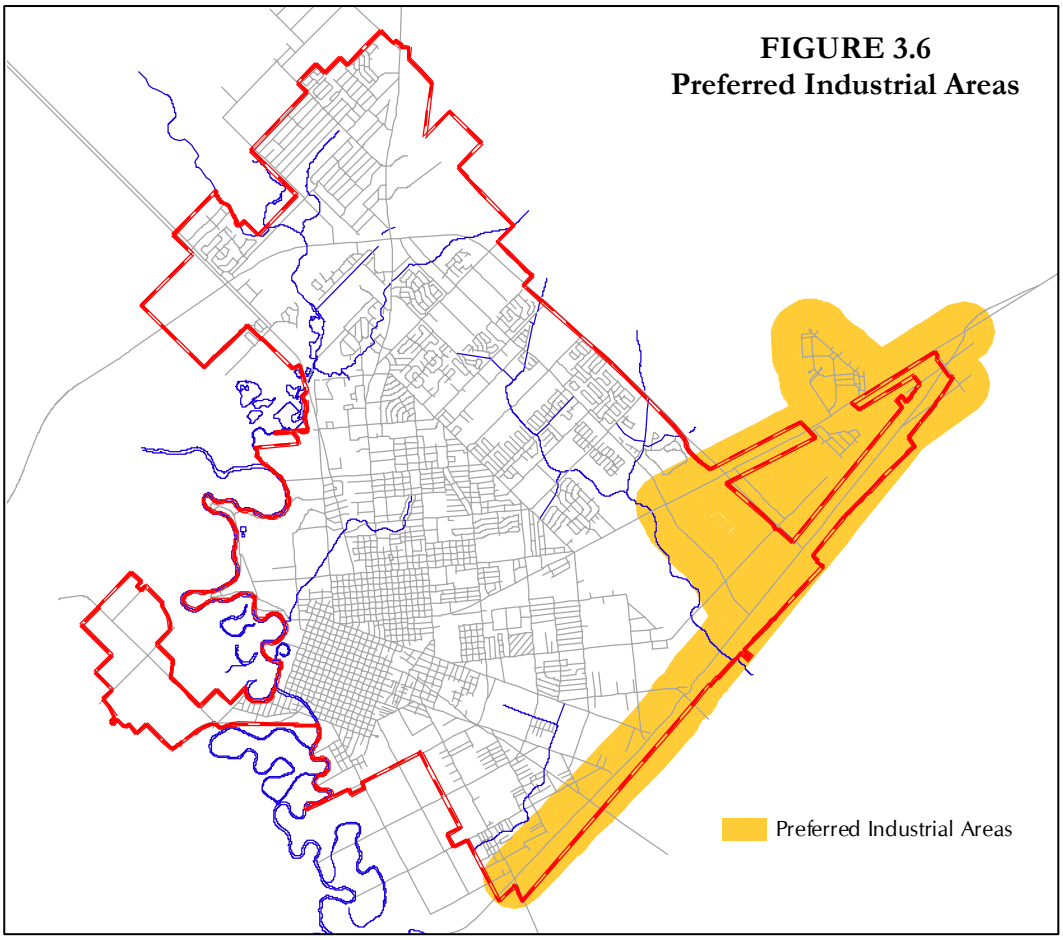
The Victoria Economic Development Corporation (VEDC), in its June 2000 Strategic Plan, identifies the need to develop industrial parks and sites with the infrastructure and environment necessary to attract private investment. The city has endorsed the VEDC Plan, and has made economic development a high priority. This commitment is evidenced by development of the Lone Tree Business Center and inclusion of a chapter on Economic Opportunity (Chapter 10) in this plan.

The Lone Tree Business Center is a new 320 acre industrial park. Located within a state designated Enterprise Zone, the site is between US Highway 59, Loop 463, US 59 Business and John Stockbauer Drive. Newly constructed water, sanitary sewer and storm water drainage are on site adjacent to Lone Tree Road, a four-lane divided boulevard.

Lone Tree Business Center

In addition to the Lone Tree Business Center, there is a significant amount of vacant land in Victoria that is available for industrial development. These areas are appropriately located in close proximity to major highway and rail corridors and the Victoria Regional Airport. The city should work in partnership with VEDC, Victoria County and other appropriate entities to encourage and facilitate industrial development in

these locations. Figure 3.6 shows areas that have been identified as preferred industrial development sites.



3.3 Land Development Concepts & Tools

The following planning tools have been selected by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee as sound procedures to address the issues and concerns related to past and current land development patterns.

Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

A capital improvements program is used to determine the timed allocation of public investments in major public facilities deemed necessary to accommodate existing development, new and proposed growth. The scheduling of projects involving major city expenditures is based on studies of fiscal resources available and needed specific improvements to be constructed for a five-year period into the future. It is a balancing of assessed needs with the availability of city resources to meet those demands. A CIP provides decision-makers with a way to set priorities among different improvements. It also can be used to encourage in-fill development and increase property values and tax revenues when and where capital improvements are constructed. A CIP is a "rolling plan" for infrastructure improvements and

development. While it is a three-to-five-year expenditure plan, each year it is reviewed to insure priorities for spending remain the same. When coupled with a Comprehensive Plan, a CIP is a powerful tool that fits with and reflects stated long term goals and objectives for the physical development of the city.

Smart Growth, In-fill and Leap-frog Development

Communities across America are concerned about the impacts of sprawl. These impacts include the neglect and deterioration of older neighborhoods, increased traffic congestion and air pollution, rising property tax rates to maintain expanding infrastructure, unaffordable housing and the loss of a sense of community. Victoria has not experienced the explosive population growth that has led to large-scale sprawl in many communities. However, the impacts of sprawl and unstructured growth are becoming apparent. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee identified these impacts as potential threats to our future quality of life and sense of community.

Many cities are employing "Smart Growth" policies in an effort to combat sprawl. "Smart Growth" can be a confusing term because each community is different and can have its own definition. In Victoria we must define Smart Growth as it applies to our unique set of circumstances. Smart Growth is not a slow-growth or no-growth initiative. The goal of Smart Growth for Victoria is to establish orderly land development patterns and to protect a sense of community while facilitating development and economic opportunity. Smart Growth includes the efficient use of tax dollars and city resources through fiscally responsible infrastructure improvements. It encourages in-fill development and the creation of pedestrian-friendly communities where people can walk to the store, the park, the school, and even to work if they want. Smart Growth concepts encourage development that accommodates people as well as the automobile.

Several Smart Growth concepts are listed below:

- Maintain and enhance existing infrastructure to accommodate in-fill development.
- Establish incentives for in-fill development and the efficient utilization of existing infrastructure.
- Adopt flexible land development codes that encourage innovative site designs that are conducive to in-fill, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and redevelopment.
- Provide Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) assistance in financing homes built in older neighborhoods, and an economic development program that promotes the use of commercial and industrial space already built.

Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

The ETJ of a city is the contiguous unincorporated land adjacent to its corporate limits that is not within another city's ETJ. The size of a city's ETJ typically varies according to its population, usually ranging from one-half mile for communities with less than 5,000 persons, to five miles for cities greater than 100,000 in population. Victoria currently has a three and a half-mile ETJ. Cities are authorized to enforce

their subdivision regulations within their ETJ as a means of ensuring that cities will not have to assume maintenance responsibilities for substandard infrastructure in areas that are annexed. As previously discussed in this chapter, Victoria has experienced problems with substandard ETJ development. For many years, rural subdivisions were allowed to develop under county design standards. Several relatively recent developments are located less than one-half mile from the current city limits. The city will eventually inherit these costly problems.

House Bill 1445, passed by the Texas Legislature in 2001, required the city and county to execute an agreement that designates which entity is authorized to regulate the subdivision of land within the ETJ. The City and County of Victoria executed an interlocal agreement in 2002 that gives the city sole authority to regulate and approve subdivision plats in the ETJ. At the same time, the city adopted new ETJ subdivision development standards. While these new requirements are an improvement over the former county standards, the ETJ street standards are still weaker than city street standards. The city should continue to strengthen its ETJ subdivision requirements.

Annexation

Annexation is the process by which a city extends its corporate limits together with the city's municipal services, regulations, voting privileges and taxing authority. A city can only annex land within its extra-territorial jurisdiction. Cities must expand their corporate limits to help manage land development in new growth areas, to ensure orderly extension of public infrastructure and services, to expand their tax base and to protect and enhance property values. Annexation is also a means of ensuring that residents and businesses outside a city's corporate limits who benefit from access to the city's facilities and services share the tax burden associated with constructing and maintaining those facilities and services.

Careful annexation is critical to the long-term well being of Victoria and needs to be carried out in accordance with an established plan and policies and not on an ad hoc basis. Because of the fiscal implications of annexation, the costs of providing municipal services must be estimated and weighed against the anticipated revenues of areas proposed for annexation. Victoria should systematically look at areas for possible annexation over the next five years to stay ahead of growth. Annexation should be tied to the city's Capital Improvements Program to coordinate utility improvements with the physical growth of the city.

Neighborhood Protection

From a land development perspective, it is important to have a simple, straightforward approach to planning that protects residents and their investments in homes and property from incompatible land uses. Also it is essential that the chosen approach not discourage new development and economic expansion. A land development management tool that recognizes real estate investment and promotes and accommodates economic development is critical to Victoria's future. Victoria needs an ordinance that regulates the location and use of buildings, density of development, the percentage of a lot that may be occupied by a building or covered by impervious materials, and the height and size of buildings. Currently much of this

is done under the Subdivision and Development Ordinance. However, a major weakness in the ordinance is its inability to prevent incompatible land uses in established neighborhoods. This has given rise to conflicting, incompatible land uses that often results in the depression of land values and quality of life in Victoria.

A neighborhood protection ordinance, adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan, should be designed to shape change into orderly patterns, maintain an attractive community, prevent nuisances and maintain/enhance property values. The sum total of real property values in a city increases with orderly rather than haphazard development. A well-crafted development ordinance preserves and enhances the property tax base, which is one of Victoria's economic opportunity goals. It also minimizes conflicts caused by incompatible land uses being too close to one another, such as manufactured housing in a site-built or historical neighborhood, encroachment by commercial development on the edges of neighborhoods (retail centers, motels, etc.), and the conversion of single family homes to nonresidential uses. In its analysis of land development tools, the Comprehensive Plan Steering identified the adoption of a neighborhood protection ordinance as a very high priority for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Historic Preservation

Historic preservation, addressed in Chapter 211 of Texas Local Government Code, basically enables a municipality to regulate the construction, reconstruction, alteration or razing of buildings in designated areas of historical, cultural or architectural significance. As mentioned in Chapter 9, the City Council of Victoria has already designated the Original Townsite and Victoria Heights as historic districts. Additional protection is needed to preserve these historic districts as well as others that have not been recognized.

Through tools such as a neighborhood protection ordinance, the city preserves the historic character and prevents incompatible development from occurring within historic districts. Since development is currently mixed uses, a neighborhood protection ordinance would classify most of the downtown area as either mixed use or mixed residential. By using a special district, called a Historic Overlay District, placed on top of the neighborhood protection ordinance, the city can provide greater protection and compatibility standards for development and redevelopment within the historic districts. Additionally, infill development in the downtown area could be encouraged by allowing garage apartments and cottage lots with appropriate parking and design standards.

3.4 Summary

After a year of discussion and introspection the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was firmly committed to change, to helping guide growth and development, to planning for Victoria's future. Committee members carefully selected planning tools appropriate for Victoria and recommend their adoption by the City Council and their use by Planning Commission, city staff, developers and citizens. We must have proactive tools to aggressively pursue implementation of the

goals and objectives listed in this chapter to achieve our vision and make Victoria the best that it can be.

3.5 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Establish orderly land development patterns.

- Objective 1.1: Encourage in-fill development by providing incentives.
- Objective 1.2: Develop appropriate mechanisms to encourage growth consistent with the city's ability to effectively manage such growth.
- Objective 1.3: Manage the geographic direction of growth through the provision of municipal services in areas appropriate for development.
- Objective 1.4: Manage growth in the extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ).
- Objective 1.5: Achieve a balance between private property rights and a level of land development tools that is acceptable to the citizens of Victoria.

Goal 2: Preserve and enhance the integrity, compatibility, value and vitality of existing and new neighborhoods.

- Objective 2.1: Identify and adopt proactive land development tools.
- Objective 2.2: Protect private property in existing residential neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible land uses.
- Objective 2.3: Preserve and protect our historic neighborhoods.

Goal 3: Designate adequate land areas for industrial parks and other major commercial/industrial developments to facilitate expanded employment opportunities and enhance the tax base.

- Objective 3.1: Identify those areas prime for industrial development.
- Objective 3.2: In cooperation with the VEDC, coordinate the provision of adequate utilities/infrastructure and transportation access for industrial development.

Goal 4: Promote land development that enhances Victoria's sense of community.

- Objective 4.1: Support Smart Growth principles.
- Objective 4.2: Encourage innovative and creative residential development designs.
- Objective 4.3: Promote flexible land development standards that accommodate innovative land development projects.
- Objective 4.4: Encourage neighborhood revitalization.

Goal 5: Establish an annexation program that adds to the economic stability of the city, and protects and enhances its quality of life and economic resources.

Objective 5.1: Plan to annex areas prior to development, thus managing the type, quality, and location of development in areas currently outside the city limits.

Objective 5.2: Pursue a systematic annexation process to promote orderly growth and the provision of municipal services to preserve the city's fiscal position while encouraging economic development.

CHAPTER 4

Transportation

Improving Victoria's Accessibility

Actual or perceived traffic congestion can be a deterrent to economic growth. When traffic moves freely, people generally speak positively about the city. The Comprehensive Plan Survey, conducted in October 2000, indicated that respondents thought that there was minimal traffic congestion in Victoria. When respondents were asked to list three reasons why they liked living in Victoria, one of the most popular reasons was that it takes less than 20 minutes to get anywhere in town. These findings are important – the citizens of Victoria appreciate the relative ease of getting around town, and they do not want to lose this quality as the city grows.

VISION 2025

Victoria offers safe, convenient accessibility within the city, region and state via all modes of transportation.

A balanced transportation system should offer residents access to both work and non-work related destinations. Transportation options should include pedestrian, bicycle and automobile facilities along with air, rail and water connectivity. This chapter describes the structure for providing a sound transportation system, while implementing timely and orderly improvements to safely move people, goods and services within Victoria and throughout the region. The community can achieve safe and efficient local and regional transportation by striving toward the goals set forth in this chapter and by bringing together various transportation plans that have been developed for the different modes of transportation.

4.1 Metropolitan Planning Organization

The Victoria Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is made up of representatives from the City of Victoria and Victoria County who are charged with overseeing the expenditure of federal, state and local dollars on improvements to the various modes of transportation in our area. A MPO is federally required for any urbanized area with a population of 50,000 or greater. Federal and State transportation dollars can not be expended in these areas without a MPO in place.

2030 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

In February of 2005, the Victoria MPO adopted its 2030 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). As stated previously, the MPO is charged with overseeing the expenditure of transportation-related dollars, and they accomplish this through the development of a long-range transportation plan, the MTP. By law the

MTP is required to have a forecast year of at least 20 years and lists all short, medium and long-range transportation improvements that will utilize federal, state and local transportation dollars. The Victoria 2030 MTP has a base year of 1996 and a forecast year of 2030 and lists projects for pedestrians, highways, public transportation, air and other transportation modes. The MTP outlines existing conditions for all these modes of transportation and provides a suggested implementation schedule. The MTP is required to be financially constrained and must be updated every five years. Federal and State transportation dollars can not be expended in an Urban area of 50,000 population or greater without a current MTP.

Transportation Improvement Programs

The Victoria MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a 4-year list of proposed transportation improvements within Victoria County that are funded by federal and state transportation dollars. The TIP specifies the type of project, project limits, proposed year for the letting of contracts and the source of funding. While the TIP covers 4-years, it must be updated every 2 years. Currently, the MPO uses the Fiscal Years (FY) 2006-2008 TIP, but is in the process of approving the FY 2008-2011 TIP. The fiscal year of the TIP follows the State fiscal year, which begins September 1, and ends August 31. All projects within an area's TIP must come from an adopted Metropolitan Transportation Plan such as the Victoria 2030 MTP.

Thoroughfare Master Plan

The Thoroughfare Master Plan was completed by Wilbur Smith Associates and adopted by City Council in November of 1998 and amended on November 15, 1999. In its simplest form the Plan is a map of a complete build-out of the city and county's current roadway system. It shows the proposed extension of existing roadways, the general location of proposed roadways, and classifies them by function to determine the right-of-way (ROW) and ultimate design standards for the facility (see Figure 4.1). The plan is primarily implemented through the city's subdivision and development process. As property is developed, landowners are required to dedicate and preserve ROW along existing and proposed roadways.

4.2 Existing Roadway Network

The existing roadway network serves as the backbone of the transportation system for Victoria and interacts with all other modes of transportation. The purpose of this section is to provide a brief description of the existing roadway network and how the City of Victoria inventories this system. As seen from the Thoroughfare Master Plan (see Figure 4.1) and described in the 2030 MTP, there currently exists a good urban and rural roadway network made up of expressways, primary arterials, secondary arterials, collectors and local streets.

Expressways/Freeways

An expressway or freeway provides for rapid and efficient movement of large volumes of through traffic between regions and across an urban area. Typically these facilities have multiple lanes and are divided for safety. It is not the purpose of an expressway/ freeway to provide direct access to abutting property. US Highway

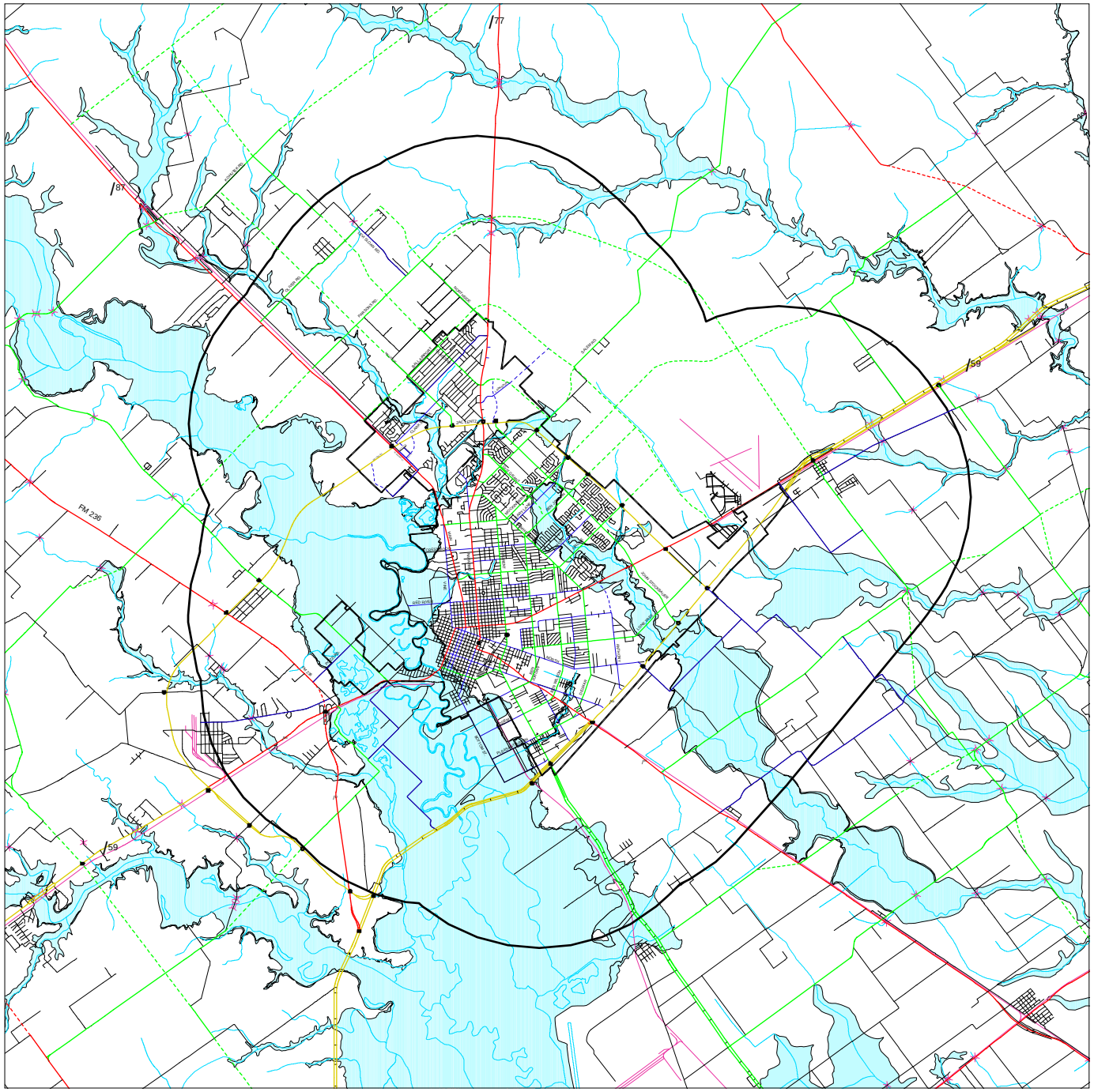


Figure 4.1
Thoroughfare Master Plan

Amended November 15, 1999
Ordinance No. 99-34

Victoria, Texas

LEGEND

- Freeway/Expressway (Existing)
- Freeway/Expressway (Proposed)
- Primary Arterial (Existing)
- Primary Arterial (Proposed)
- Secondary Arterial (Existing)
- Secondary Arterial (Proposed)
- Collector Streets (Existing)
- Collector Streets (Proposed)
- Local Streets
- ETJ
- Railroads
- City Boundary
- Grade Separations (Existing)
- Grade Separations (Proposed)

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59 and Zac Lentz Parkway (US 77 & LP 463) are Victoria's best examples of expressways/freeways. US 59 connects Victoria with Houston to the east as a 4-lane divided facility and carried approximately 28,000 vehicles per day in 2005. US 59 connects with Laredo to the west as a 4-lane divided facility to the Victoria County Line and carried approximately 11,000 vehicles per day in 2005.

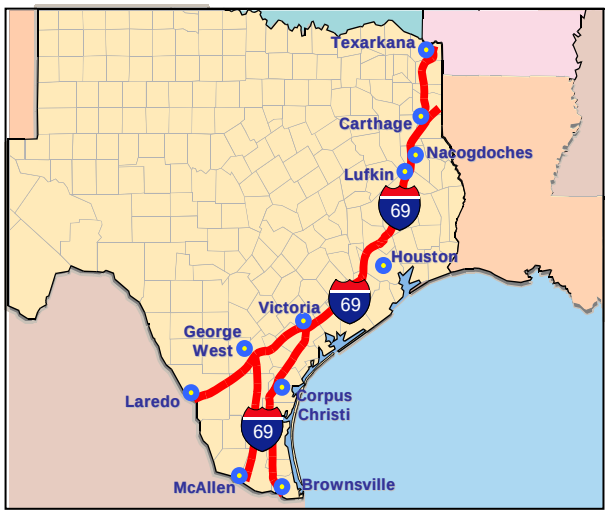
Zac Lentz Parkway (US 77 / LP 463) serves as a by-pass around Victoria and connects to US 59 on the east and west sides of Victoria. Zac Lentz Parkway is classified as an expressway / freeway and since 2001 has begun to look and feel like an urban freeway. In 2001, TxDOT began the project that has transformed the former 2-lane roadway between US 87 and Salem Road into a full 8-lane urban freeway. Instead of at-grade crossings, overpasses now exist a John Stockbauer, Navarro (US 77 / US 77B), Mallette, Briggs Blvd and US 87. In December of 2006, the project began that will add 2 additional lanes to Zac Lentz Parkway making it a 4-lane divided facility from Salem Road to US 59B. This project, along with a proposed overpass at Salem Road, will greatly enhance the circulation of traffic around the north and northeast side of Victoria, provide for much safer access to arterials such as Mockingbird, Ben Jordan & Airline, and provide better access to private property.

New overpass at Zac Lentz Parkway and US 87.

From US 87 west to US 59, Zac Lentz Parkway has been re-designated as US 77 and is still a 2-lane roadway. However, with overpasses and frontage roads constructed at the Upper (FM 236) and Lower (FM 1685) Mission Valley Roads, traffic circulation and safety has been greatly improved to the west side of Victoria. There are plans to extend the current freeway section of Zac Lentz Parkway from US 87 west to the Lower Mission Valley Road. This will allow for an additional Guadalupe River crossing and create more capacity to handle increasing traffic volumes along the west side of Zac Lentz Parkway. Traffic volumes in 2005 varied along Zac Lentz with 11,800 vehicles per day near Salem Road; over 19,000 vehicles per day between Navarro and US 87; 8,500 vehicles per day between US 87 and FM 1685; and 5,500 vehicles per day between FM 236 and US 59.

I-69 Corridor

Designated by Congress as a high priority corridor in the 1990s, Interstate 69, when completed, will be the most direct interstate linking the industrial centers of Mexico, the United States, and Canada. The 1,600-mile corridor traverses nine states. In 2001, 80% of US trade with Mexico and 67% of the U.S. trade with Canada was delivered by truck. The I-69 Corridor accounts for over 63% of the nation's truck-borne trade with Canada and Mexico. It has the nation's busiest border crossings on both the Canadian and Mexican borders. The Texas border between Laredo and the Lower Rio Grande Valley accounts for over 49% of the nation's truck-borne trade with Mexico. Seventeen of the Nation's top 25 seaports, 13 inland waterway ports and 15 of the nation's top 25 air cargo airports are directly served by I-69.



The proposed I-69 corridor currently is shown as US 59 from Texarkana to Laredo, and branching off on US 77 at Victoria and US 281 at George West. US 77 would provide access to the International Border crossing at Brownsville and US 281 would provide access to the crossing at McAllen. I-69 (Texas Segment) is approximately 1,000 miles in length (following the current US 59 corridor). The environmental and design process for I-69 began in 2000. Tier I Environmental Studies for I-69 began in 2002, and are scheduled to be complete by the end of 2007. Upon completion of the Tier I studies, Tier II studies will be initiated to produce the actual design and alignment of I-69.

Primary Arterials

Primary arterials move large volumes of traffic between major traffic generators and land use concentrations across the community, and they also serve as connections to other urbanized areas. A secondary function of a primary arterial is to provide direct access to abutting property. Primary arterials in Victoria must have 120' of ROW, which in turn provides for an ultimate roadway section of a 6-lane divided facility with a 96' pavement width. The primary arterials within Victoria County along with 2005 traffic volumes are as follows (shown in **red** on Figure 4.1):

- US 87 (Main Street, Port Lavaca Highway – Averages 16,000 vehicles per day from Zac Lentz Parkway to Rio Grande)
- US 77/US 77B (Navarro – Averages 34,000 vehicles per day from Zac Lentz Parkway to Airline and 20,000 from Airline to Rio Grande)
- US 59 Business (Houston Highway, Rio Grande, Moody – Averages 19,000 vehicles per day from Loop 463 west to Navarro and 20,000 from Navarro west to FM 236)
- FM 236 (Upper Mission Valley Road – Averages 5,800 vehicles per day from Loop 463 south to US 59B)

Secondary Arterials

Secondary Arterials typically serve as connections between local/collector streets and primary arterials and move large volumes of traffic over shorter distances within the community. Direct access to abutting property is a secondary function. These facilities typically must have 90' of ROW for an ultimate roadway section of a 4-lane divided facility with a 64' pavement width. The following are the secondary arterials within Victoria and Victoria County (shown in **green** on Figure 4.1):

- Airline
- Ball Airport
- Ben Jordan

- Ben Wilson
- Delmar
- Glascow
- Guy Grant
- John Stockbauer
- N. Laurent/ South Laurent (SH 185)
- Lone Tree
- Lower Mission Valley Road (FM 1685)
- Mallette
- Mockingbird Lane
- Northside Road
- Pleasant Green Drive
- Salem Road (FM 1315)
- Sam Houston
- Water Street

Collector Streets

Collector Streets provide for the transition from higher speeds and traffic volumes to lower speeds and traffic volumes accessing abutting land uses. Collector streets typically connect residential areas, parks, churches, etc., with arterial streets and move traffic over shorter distances than a secondary arterial. These facilities typically require 75' of ROW, which provides for an ultimate 4-lane roadway section with a 48' pavement width. The following are collector streets within Victoria (shown in **purple** on Figure 4.1):

- Anthony Road
- Bottom Street
- Bridge Street (Rio Grande to Water)
- Briggs Blvd
- Callis Street
- Colorado Street (Vine to Ben Jordan)
- Conti Lane
- Country Club Drive (Navarro to Spring Creek Road)
- Crestwood Drive
- Edinburgh Street
- Juan Linn Street
- Larkspur Street
- Leary Lane
- Loma Vista Ave (Laurent to Ben Jordan)
- Lova Drive
- Main Street (Rio Grande to Water)
- Medical Drive
- Mesquite Lane (Navarro to Laurent)
- Miori Lane

- Navarro Street (Goodwin to Bottom Street)
- Nimitz Street (Lone Tree Road to Wildwood)
- North Street
- Nursery Drive
- Odem Street
- Pleasant Green Drive (Bottom Street to SH 185)
- Red River Street
- Rio Grande Street (Profit Drive to Anthony Road)
- Vine Street
- Wildwood Street (Nimitz to Profit Drive)

Local Streets

Local streets are all the remaining roads within Victoria and Victoria County and function to provide access to abutting property and to distribute traffic to collectors and arterial streets. Local streets must have a 60' ROW width and a pavement width of 37'. Additionally, City Code offers a reduced pavement width option for proposed local streets with less than 500 vehicles per day.

4.3 Air Transportation

The Victoria Regional Airport is a commercial service airport that serves an area population of approximately 179,000. The airport is located on the city's east side with access from Business US 59. The facility was constructed in 1941 by the military and operated as Foster Air Force Base until 1961, when ownership was transferred to Victoria County. Commercial air service is provided to Victoria, Jackson, Goliad, Lavaca, De Witt, Refugio and Calhoun counties. The Airport is owned, operated, and staffed by Victoria County. Staffing consists of twenty employees who are responsible for day-to-day operations to include Administration, Maintenance/ Operations, Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting, and Flightline operations. A five-member Airport Commission appointed by Victoria County Commissioners Court works with Airport Management to ensure the Airport is operated with the highest of standards.

Air service is provided by Colgan Air, a Continental Connection with two daily non-stop flights from Victoria to Bush Intercontinental Airport with connections to anywhere in the world Continental Airlines operates. These flights are conducted onboard 34-seat aircraft with lavatories and flight attendant services.

The Airport sits on approximately 1,800 acres that includes the Air Operations Area, industrial park, and passenger terminal. The Air Operations Area consists of four active runways with adjoining taxiways, large parking apron with aircraft hangars and a fire station. Victoria Regional Airport's primary runway is 9,001 x 150ft, making it

one of the longest runways in the area. This runway has a precision instrument landing system, giving the airport accessibility in poor weather conditions. The industrial park is home to several local and national businesses and is currently undergoing an extensive project to improve dated infrastructure. The modern commercial passenger terminal gives air travelers convenient access to the air transportation system. Conveniences include free parking, restaurant and rental cars. A new passenger loading ramp was added in 2006 to provide easy aircraft passenger loading and unloading.

In late 2006 Victoria Regional Airport received word that it would be eligible for the Federal Aviation Administration Contract Tower Program. Being eligible for this program paved the way for the renovation of the Airport's 1950`s era Airport Traffic Control Tower. Work on the tower began in early 2007. Upon completion, the tower will house office space, state of the art equipment, and employ four to five Air Traffic Controllers. The Federal Aviation Administration will be responsible for staffing the tower and Victoria Regional Airport will provide maintenance and upkeep on the building. Having a control tower will provide an added level of safety for airport users, and allow for increased economic benefits to the airport.

In 2006, the airport generated the following traffic:

- Enplaned Passengers: 9,113
- Operations: 31,087 flights
- Freight: 290 tons

4.4 Water Transportation

The Port of Victoria oversees the operations of both the Victoria County Navigation District and the Westside Calhoun County Navigation District. The major feature of the Port of Victoria is the Barge Canal and turning basin. The barge canal was completed in 1965 and extends from the Pickering turning basin located south of Victoria near SH 185 and FM 1432, to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW), a distance of approximately 35 miles. The existing sea level channel has a depth of 12 feet, a bottom width of 125 feet, a minimum vertical clearance of 51 feet, and a horizontal clearance of 75 feet. The Port of Victoria provides a direct connection, via the Victoria Barge Canal, to the GIWW, to the entire 14,000-mile Inland Waterway System, and all of the deep-water ports on the Gulf Coast. Deep-water transit connections are located at Point Comfort, approximately 84 miles away, via the Victoria barge canal and the GIWW. The depth of the harbor at Point Comfort is 36 feet, which also has liquid cargo handling facilities.

The Port of Victoria turning basin area is situated on over 400 acres and is served by rail and four-lane divided highways. Port Dock No. 1 is a 350-foot transit dock. A new lighting system allows for 24-hour cargo operations. There are 20 mooring sites, 17,000 square feet of shed space and over 3 acres of improved ground storage areas available. A 7,300 square foot office and storage building is ready for occupancy. Port Dock No. 2 is an 800-foot string pier available for docking sites and barge repair. Major products transferred are liquid and dry bulk and general and project cargos.

The activity at the Port's barge canal during 2004 is listed as follows:

- Total Barges Inbound: 2,870
- Total Barges Outbound: 2,841
- Total Number of Barges: 5,711
- Chemicals: 2,045,878 s/t
- Farm Products: 477,789 s/t
- Sand and Gravel: 2,764,532 s/t
- Total Tonnage: 5,288,199
- Rail Traffic: 228,205 Barrels of Crude

The Port has an Industrial Park located within a Free Trade Zone and a Texas Enterprise Zone. The Port has the ability to "build to suit" and tailor a package specific to customer facility and transportation needs.

On January 26, 2005, the Farmers Co-Op of El Campo Agricultural Export Center was dedicated at the Port of Victoria's Industrial Park. Through this partnership, the Farmer's Co-OP is able to export agricultural products such as cotton, milo, rice and other grains throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico by barge and rail and now offers the Co-Op the access to overseas markets.

- The facility features an automated 50,000 bu/hr loading system that auto-weighs and samples outbound grain as it is moved from bin to transport. A truck can be unloaded in about 2 minutes.
- The facility has the ability to utilize trucks, trains or barges for shipping grain. Rail loading capacity is 50 cars.
- The facility's strategic location and transportation flexibility opens new markets for local crops. This greatly increases the marketing ability of the Agricultural Export Center.
- 50,000 tons of grain is expected to move through the new location in its first year.

The Victoria Barge Canal serves the region by providing an economical means for transporting farm products and construction materials and by providing a good location for such industries as Invista/Du Pont, Equistar, Air Liquide, Innovene, Seadrift Coke, Dow, the Fordyce Company and UAP (a division of Con Agra). By

offering access to all modes of transportation, the Port of Victoria helps to generate $1.2 billion in business revenue and contributes to over 9,000 jobs.

4.5 Rail Transportation

When Victoria was making a name for itself based on farming, ranching and oil, rail played a large role in the day-to-day life of Victorians. Today, rail plays a more indirect role in our lives. Freight travels through Victoria to the heart of the Golden Crescent region, the petrochemical plants, the Barge Canal, the deep-water port at Point Comfort and the coal-fired Coleto Creek power plant. The local economy relies on the convenience of shipping and receiving by rail.

Union Pacific (UP) Railroad owns and operates all of the rail lines in Victoria County with the exception of the former Southern Pacific line that extends east from John Stockbauer to the Colorado River in Wharton County. This section of rail line has not been in service since 1991. It was purchased by Tex-Mex/Kansas City Southern who intends to re-open the line. Two other rail companies, the Tex-Mex/Kansas City Southern (KCS) and Burlington Northern Sante Fe (BNSF), have rights to operate on the UP rail lines.

Although the region relies on rail for shipping and receiving materials and goods, trains can quite often be a detriment to auto and truck circulation. The average speed of trains through town is only 10 mph while the average length of the trains is

7,000 feet. The resulting wait time at railroad crossings is approximately 8 minutes and there are 60 at-grade railroad crossings within the City of Victoria and on average 10 – 12 trains per day. At times, the downtown area is almost cut off from emergency access by rail traffic. There are six grade-separated crossings within the city:

New Rail Grade Separation
South Navarro (US 87)

- South Laurent Street (SH-185)
- Spring Creek Drive
- US 59 Business
- US 59
- South Navarro (US 87)
- Zac Lentz Parkway (US 77)

The grade separations at Navarro Street (US 87) and Zac Lentz Parkway are the two most recent improvements. The Navarro Street under-pass was a partnership with the TxDOT and has been a great improvement to access and more importantly to emergency response times. Prior to construction of the Navarro Underpass, portions of downtown were literally cut-off due to train traffic which greatly impeded emergency response times and traffic circulation.

4.6 Public Transportation

In July of 1997, LKC Consulting Services, Inc., in conjunction with the Victoria Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) completed a Transit Feasibility Study. The study was designed to identify if a need for public transportation services existed in the City of Victoria and to develop an effective operations plan. The study established that there was a need for public transportation services and a two-phased implementation plan was designed to best serve the area. Phase I was the implementation of a Demand-Response System to establish usage and ridership. If Phase I was successful, then the Demand-Response System would be transitioned to a 4 or 5 Fixed-Route System with a complimentary paratransit service.

In January of 1999, the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC) through an agreement with the City of Victoria began the operation of a public transportation system called "Victoria Transit". Currently, the GCRPC administers two public transportation services: Victoria Transit (in the city limits of Victoria), and R-TRANSIT (in rural Victoria County).

In January 1999, Victoria Transit began as an "On Call" Demand-Response service that provided curb-to-curb service but required 24-hour advance notice for the service. Due to an increase in ridership and a request from citizens to have a more reliable system that they can schedule daily trips with, Victoria Transit began transitioning to a "Fixed-Route" Service.

Victoria Transit started the "Fixed Route" service in March of 2002. The system operates Monday through Friday from 7:00am to 6:00pm. Victoria Transit provides 3 types of services; Fixed-Route service with stops along 4 designated routes; curb-to-curb Demand-Response service within the city limits for the Handicapped/ Disabled which requires 24-hour advance notice; and a Medical Transport Service which provides curb-to-curb service exclusively for medical related trips. The service fleet is made up of 15 agency owned 20 passenger Type III vehicles that are ADA accessible. From July of 2006 to June of 2007 Victoria Transit accounted for 243,335 riders. That is approximately 20,277 riders per month and an average daily ridership of 965 (based on 21 operating days for each month).

Type III Vehicle

R-TRANSIT is one of 42 rural transit contractors in the State of Texas and provides transportation services to the rural residents in the seven county region. R-TRANSIT operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The transit program utilizes a demand response system, which requires 24-hour advance notice. Service is available within each county and to other counties in the region. Services are subcontracted with six local service providers.

R TRANSIT
Rural Public Transportation

Through applications and funding agreements with TxDOT and the Federal Transit Administration, Victoria Transit and R-Transit receive federal and state funding for general operations and capital equipment purchases. These funds must also be supported by local funds, which can come from a variety of sources.

4.7 Alternative Transportation

Walking and biking can be practical alternatives to driving, especially for short trips, and can contribute greatly to the quality of life. In the Quality of Life section of the Comprehensive Plan Survey, citizens indicated a desire for these options. Pedestrian and bike improvements to intersections and sidewalks can improve access and safety for people who choose to use this mode of transportation. Support of alternative modes of transportation can help relieve congestion, provide recreational opportunities, and reduce vehicle emissions.

Sidewalk Systems

The city has made an effort for several years to improve the sidewalk system. Most of these improvements have been focused around schools and filling in gaps along thoroughfares. A continuous sidewalk system is important. It provides for safe, pedestrian access within neighborhoods and connections to schools and nearby businesses.

New Sidewalk through the Botanical Gardens

In 2001, the City of Victoria received a TxDOT Transportation Enhancement Grant to complete a major sidewalk and pathway project. The project included the completion of sidewalks along the north side of Mockingbird Lane from Laurent Street to Main Street; a sidewalk along the east side of Vine Street from Main Street to McCright Drive and the west side of Vine Street from McCright Drive to Red River, and a pathway along the West Outfall from Vine Street to Red River. This project installed over 15,000 linear feet of new sidewalks and pathways, and created a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists to Riverside Park.

Hike & Bike Trails

Sidewalks are a great benefit and provide an alternative mode of transportation. However, they often are not conducive to recreational activities and exercise. Long sections of sidewalk typically are adjacent to busy streets. A hike and bike trail is typically removed from an arterial corridor and usually only conflicts with an arterial street at perpendicular intersections.

In 2006, the City of Victoria recognized an opportunity to develop the first major hike and bike trail in Victoria. Construction of the Lone Tree Creek Channel Improvement Project is scheduled to begin in the Fall of 2007. This major drainage project will involve the excavation and reshaping of approximately 8,700 linear feet of Lone Tree Creek from Airline Road, north to Greenway Subdivision, terminating at John Stockbauer Drive.

The Lone Tree Creek Channel Improvement Project was expanded to include a trail element. The project will provide for the construction of a 10' wide pathway along the east side of Lone Tree Creek, from Airline Road to John Stockbauer Drive. The entire length of the pathway is approximately 8,700 linear feet. The project includes landscaping, water lines for irrigation and drinking water, pedestrian lighting, benches, bike racks, emergency call boxes and a pedestrian bridge to provide access to the trail for those living on the west side of the creek. The Lone Tree Creek drainage area also provides opportunities for future trail extensions.

4.8 Air Quality

Air pollution is a problem facing most urban areas. Ozone is a colorless, odorless gas that occurs both in the upper atmosphere and at ground level. The ozone that occurs in the upper atmosphere (stratosphere) protects the earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation. Ground level ozone is formed when pollutants react chemically with sunlight.

Ground-level ozone forms readily in the atmosphere during hot summer weather, but it is not emitted directly into the air. It is formed by the reaction of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's) and Nitrogen Oxides (NOX) in the presence of sunlight. VOC's come from things that evaporate like gasoline, paint fumes, lighter fluid and consumer products. NOX is emitted from motor vehicles, power plants and other sources of combustion like gas-powered lawn equipment. High accumulations of ground level ozone can be harmful to health in a number of ways, including irritation of the respiratory system, aggravation of asthma, and can cause headaches, nausea and eye irritation.

In 1990 Victoria County was classified as a non-attainment area for ozone under the Federal Clean Air Act. However, after three years of clean monitoring data, Victoria was reclassified as a near non-attainment area on March 7, 1995. This means that Victoria is close to exceeding the federal air quality limit for ozone. In order to qualify as an ozone attainment area, a region may not exceed maximum air pollution levels on more than three days during any three-year monitoring period. Failure to comply with air quality standards could result in the loss of federal transportation funds and restrictions on the growth of businesses in the region. The city and county have taken a proactive approach by developing air quality strategies that will continue to ensure the area's air quality.

Air Victoria Team traveled to Washington, DC to receive the 2003 Clean Air Excellence Award for Public Outreach/Education from the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Victoria area receives funding from the Texas Legislature to address air quality issues related to ozone through the 'Near Non-Attainment Areas' program. Victoria utilizes this funding for its Technical Air Quality Studies and its Public Outreach/ Education Program. The technical studies performed consist of air quality monitoring; photo-

chemical modeling; mobile monitoring and various other efforts. These technical studies are the foundation for air quality planning efforts in the area and would be used as the basis for a State Implementation Plan (SIP) should the area become re-designated as non-attainment in the future. The public outreach/ education portion of the program has become and continues to be the success of the Air Quality Program. This was highlighted by "Air Victoria" receiving the 2003 Clean Air Excellence Award for public outreach/education from the Environmental Protection Agency.

4.9 Future Projects

Capital Improvement Projects

The City of Victoria uses a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to schedule major infrastructure projects. The CIP process analyzes the city's capital facilities needs and priorities, and balances those priorities with available and anticipated financial resources. The CIP identifies the following transportation-related projects for funding and implementation between 2008 and 2010:

- Lone Tree Road from North Street to Delmar Drive – Complete reconstruction of the roadway. The project began in January of 2007 and its completion date is estimated to be January of 2009.
- Laurent Street Reconstruction Phase I – Complete Reconstruction of Laurent Street from US 59B (Houston Hwy/ Rio Grande) to Airline Road. Construction is scheduled to begin in late-2007, with completion expected in June of 2009.
- Laurent Street Reconstruction Phase II – Complete Reconstruction of Laurent Street from Airline Road to Sam Houston Drive. The project is expected to begin construction in January of 2010 and be completed by January of 2012.
- Sam Houston Drive – Reclaim/overlay of Sam Houston Drive between Laurent Street to Houston Hwy. Construction is scheduled for FY 2008/2009.
- Lone Tree Creek Hike & Bike Trail – Construct a 10' pathway along the east side of Lone Tree Creek from Airline Road to John Stockbauer in conjunction with the Lone Tree Creek Drainage Improvements. Construction is scheduled to begin in late-2007.

State Funded Projects

- Loop 463 (Zac Lentz Pkwy) from Salem Road to US 59B (Houston Highway) – construct 2 additional lanes to create a 4-lane divided facility. Construction began in October 2006 with completion expected in the Spring of 2008.
- Loop 463 at Salem Road - construct a grade separation. Anticipated letting date for this project is December of 2008.
- US 77 (Zac Lentz Pkwy) from US 87 to FM 1685 – upgrade roadway to create a 4-lane divided facility. This will require an additional river bridge and relief structures. Anticipated letting date for this project is January 2011.
- US 77 (Zac Lentz Pkwy) from FM 236 to US 59B/ US 59 – construct 2 additional lanes to create a 4-lane divided facility. Anticipated letting date for this project is January 2013.

- US 59 from FM 446 to US 59B – construct 2 additional lanes to create a 4-lane divided facility. Anticipated letting date for this project is January 2013.

Both US 77 projects along with the US 59 project mentioned above will complete a 4-lane loop around the City of Victoria. These projects will greatly enhance traffic circulation around and through Victoria and allow for future growth in the area.

4.10 Summary

Much like the various support systems of the human body, a well-maintained and balanced transportation system can provide for a healthy, stable and strong Victoria. A good transportation system should support the vital functions of a city by circulating people and goods around the community with minimal delays, a choice of travel modes, and without degrading the air quality or the environment. By maintaining and providing timely upgrades to the existing roadway network, Victoria can continue to benefit from a safe and efficient means of transportation. Much like an athlete that goes through rigorous training to perform better, Victoria must work at bringing the various modes of transportation together. By providing better connectivity to the barge canal, rail, the airport and public transportation, Victoria can make itself stronger and more competitive economically. Without that connectivity and without providing alternatives modes of transportation such as public transportation, hike/bike facilities and sidewalks, Victoria can lose the vitality and accessibility that contributes to its quality of life and end up competing in the consolation bracket instead of forging to the front. A coordinated circulation system that provides several transportation alternatives can work better, cost less and improve the city's environment as well as its attractiveness to businesses. A well-maintained and thought out transportation system is not only needed to attract business, it is also needed to provide a safe and pleasing experience for the citizens of Victoria and for those that travel through our city.

4.11 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Establish a roadway Network that accommodates the safe and efficient flow of traffic in, through and around Victoria.

- Objective 1.1: Ensure timely upgrades to current street and highway facilities.
- Objective 1.2: Work more closely with the Victoria MPO, TxDOT, and the general public to provide a more coordinated approach to project planning in Victoria and Victoria County.
- Objective 1.3: Reduce conflicts between train and automobile/truck traffic in Victoria.
- Objective 1.4: Ensure that future thoroughfares are developed in a manner that is aesthetically acceptable.

Goal 2: Expand regional accessibility via improved highway, rail, air and barge canal modes of transportation.

Objective 2.1: Support the location of I-69 through Victoria.

Objective 2.2: Work more closely with the MPO to provide a multi-modal approach to project planning for highways, rail, airport, and barge canal improvements.

Objective 2.3: Support additional barge canal improvements.

Objective 2.4: Support a 4-lane facility connection to I-10.

Goal 3: Provide alternative transportation options including public transportation, hike/bike networks and pedestrian circulation.

Objective 3.1: Continue supporting the operation of Victoria Transit and the various public transportation services that it provides.

Objective 3.2: Continue supporting the implementation of Bike/Pedestrian pathways that would connect various parks and green belts throughout Victoria.

Goal 4: Develop transportation strategies that will reduce dependence on the automobile and continue to ensure the city's clean air quality.

Objective 4.1: Increase awareness of and encourage the use of alternative transportation options.

CHAPTER 5

Housing

Victoria's Housing Market

The provision of adequate housing for all residents is an essential component of building strong neighborhoods. The vision for housing in Victoria addresses the quality and livability of the neighborhoods where we live. Our neighborhoods should be safe, convenient, attractive, and affordable. Some neighborhoods are safe but not convenient. Others are convenient but not affordable. Too many affordable neighborhoods are not safe. Careful planning can bring all of these elements together.

VISION 2025

Victoria has safe and quiet neighborhoods with a variety of affordable housing.

This chapter looks at the factors that affect the housing market in the City of Victoria. It takes into account the city's population and housing supply, the characteristics of families and individuals that occupy the housing units in our community, as well as the physical condition and affordability of the housing stock. Finally, it provides projections of housing needs in the years 2010 and 2020.

The City of Victoria is actively engaged in housing activities. Current efforts are targeted at preserving and improving the city's housing stock, increasing the supply of quality affordable housing and expanding homeownership opportunities. Through its Community Development Program, Victoria has developed the 2005-2010 Consolidated Plan & Strategy to provide guidance to the city in achieving the housing goals. Adopted by City Council on August 2, 2005, this strategic plan should be referenced for specific action steps related to low and moderate-income housing.

5.1 Population and Housing Supply

According to population figures derived from the Texas State Data Center, the population of the City of Victoria's grew 10.0% from 55,076 in 1990 to 60,603 in 2000. The net gain in housing from 1990 to 2000 was 2,389 units or 11.0%. Accordingly, the rate of growth in housing units was 1.0% more than the rate of population growth over the period 1990 to 2000.

Table 5.1 provides a comparison of the existing housing stock in 1990 and in 2000. The numbers are based on U.S. Census data. The data are shown by housing types; single-family, multi-family, and manufactured housing.

Table 5.1 Housing Units by Type, 1990 - 2000

Type	Number of Units		% Change 1990-2000	% of Housing Stock (2000)
	1990	2000		
Single-family	15,261	16,929	10.9	70.0
Manufactured Homes	1,111	1,259	13.3	5.2
Multi-family	5,421	5,994	10.6	24.8
Total	21,793	24,182	11.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Total building permits for new construction have increased steadily since 1990. The number of annual single-family construction permits grew from 107 in 1990 to 156 by the end of 2006. The Census shows that single-family units make up 70% of the total housing units in the city, whereas, manufactured homes make up a little over 5% of the total units, and multi-family dwellings comprise the remaining 25%. Manufactured homes experienced the greatest amount of growth at 13.3% over the same ten-year period (manufactured homes include mobile homes, single-wide and double-wide manufactured homes, and modular homes).

5.2 Occupancy

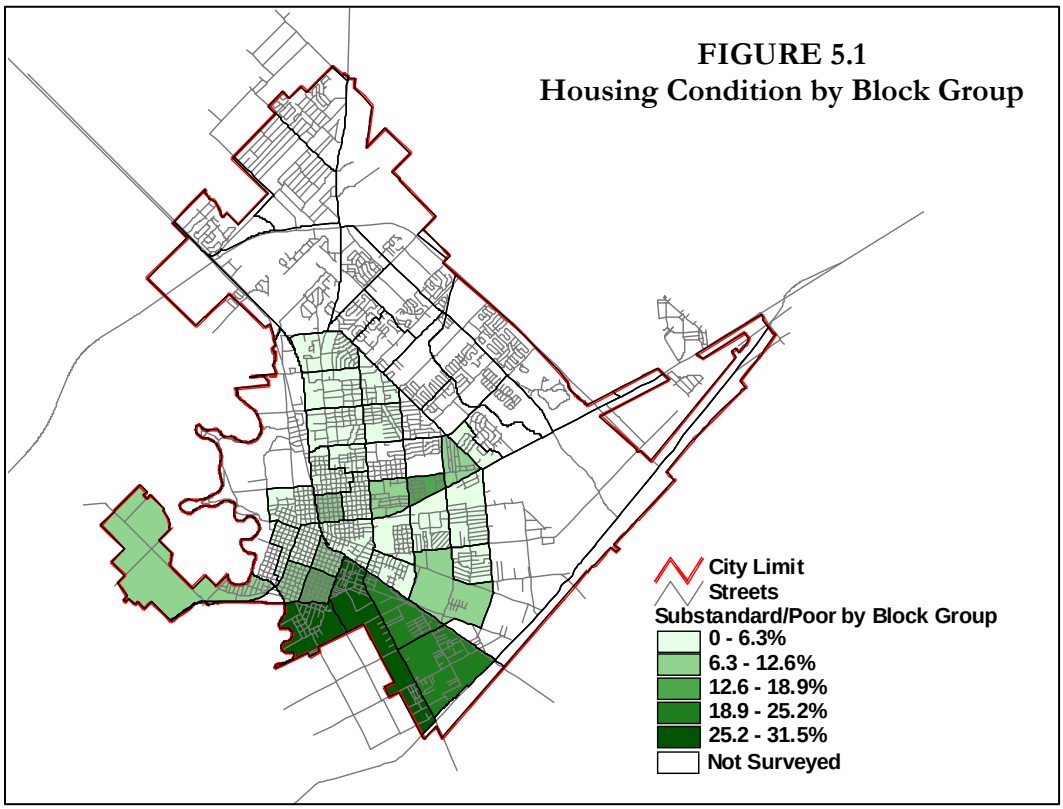
The occupancy rate for housing in Victoria was approximately 94% in 1980. In 1990 the occupancy rate declined to 91%. According to the 2000 Census, the occupancy rate remained fairly constant from the previous decade at 91.5%. There was a total of 24,192 housing units, of this total, 2,063 were vacant. 11.3 percent of rental units were vacant, while only 1.4% of homeowner units were vacant. Apartment/multi-family units account for a large share of the vacancy rate with an average occupancy of 90.6%.

5.3 Housing Conditions

In 1999, the City of Victoria contracted with the University of Houston-Victoria Regional Outreach Center to conduct a windshield survey of the physical condition of housing in the low and moderate-income areas of the city. The purpose of this survey was to define the need for housing rehabilitation in areas that are eligible for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding.

The housing condition study was done in two stages, focusing first on those census block groups classified by HUD standards as low and moderate-income and secondly on block groups which may become classified as such in the near future. Figure 5.1 displays the percentage of homes rated as uninhabitable or poor condition by census block groups. This map shows a higher percentage of low physical condition ratings in the southern census block groups of the city. The poor housing conditions suggest a need for housing rehabilitation in low and moderate-income areas. Several of the block groups have a housing stock that are 20 to 40 percent uninhabitable or in poor condition. Several more fall into the 5 to 20 percent ranges.

According to the 2000 Census, 29.2% of all housing units in Victoria were built prior to 1960. Older homes with greater repair needs tend to be concentrated in neighborhoods with lower incomes.



5.4 Homeownership

The breakdown of owner- and renter-occupied units in 2000 is shown in Table 5.2, along with a comparison to the state and national figures. The table shows that Victoria is only slightly behind the ownership rate for Texas, but more than five percentage points behind the national rate. As is the case throughout the county, mortgage lenders in the City of Victoria have moved toward offering a larger number of low down payment products and more flexible underwriting standards. Public programs have also increased homeownership opportunities for low and moderate-income families and individuals. These trends along with more active outreach and innovation have led to increased access to homeownership.

Table 5.2 Owner vs. Renter Occupied Housing, 2000

Occupancy	Victoria	Texas	U.S.
Owner Occupied	13,461 (60.8%)	63.8%	66.2%
Renter Occupied	8,668 (39.2%)	36.2%	33.8%
Total	22,129 (100%)		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

While overall the percentage of homeowners in Victoria for 2000 was 60.8%, the rates of ownership for specific ethnic groups vary. Table 5.3 shows percentages of homeowners within different ethnic categories for the City of Victoria, and compares them to the rates for Texas.

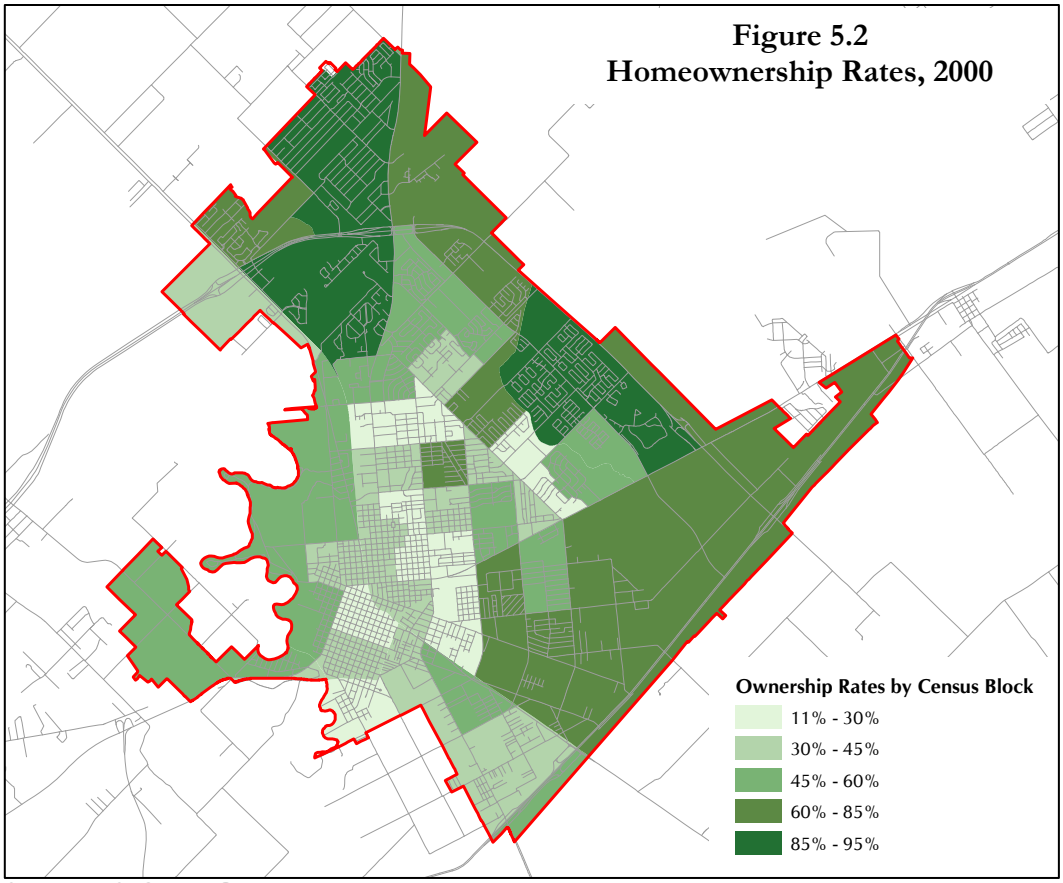
Table 5.3 Homeownership Rates by Race-Ethnicity, 2000

Race-Ethnicity	Victoria	Texas
White, not Hispanic	68.9	70.8
Hispanic	51.6	56.1
Black, not Hispanic	45.1	46.5
Other, not Hispanic	47.7	53.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Homeownership rates are three percent lower in Victoria than the state as a whole. African-Americans were just over one percent lower. The rate of ownership among Whites is approximately two percent lower in Victoria than Texas overall, while Hispanics are more than 4.5% less at the local level.

Finally, Figure 5.2 shows the homeownership rates by census tract for the City of Victoria based on census data available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Census tract 1.00 has the lowest homeownership rate for any of the census tracts at 38.9%, nearly three percentage points lower than the next lowest rate of 40.7 % for census tract 5.01. Tract 3.02 is identified with the lowest rate of occupancy. This could be related to the condition of housing, proximity to the 100-year floodplain and the overall living environment in this area of the city, making it an area where people are not willing to purchase homes. However, it is possible that many of the families living in this area can not afford to purchase a home or that there are fewer homes available for sale.

5.5 Housing Affordability

According to the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University, Victoria's median house price in 2006 was $109,500, an increase of slightly more than 29% over the 2000 figure of $84,700. In Texas this period saw an overall increase of 28% in median house price, from $111,900 to $143,000. Victoria's housing is even more affordable when compared to other Texas cities (Please see Table 5.4).

New Housing Development in Victoria

During the forth quarter of 2006, 58% of the households in Victoria could afford the median-priced home. The Real Estate Center calculates on a quarterly basis the ratio of median household income ($51,200 for a family of four in Victoria) to the income needed to buy the median-priced home in the city. Table 5.4 shows this ratio, the Texas Housing Affordability Index (THAI), for the forth quarter of 2006 for all households and for first-time homebuyers. A THAI of 1.00 would indicate that the median family income is just enough to qualify for a loan sufficient to purchase the median-priced home. For purposes of comparison, the same figures are included for other Texas cities, as well as the state overall.

Table 5.4 Housing Affordability, 2006

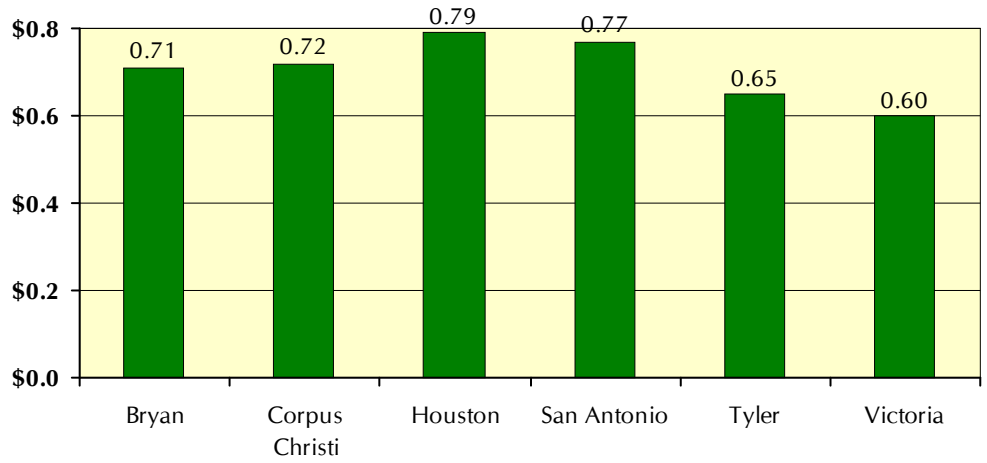
	2006 Median Sales Price	THAI (All Households)	THAI (First-time Homebuyers)
Victoria	**$109,500**	**1.90**	**1.25**
Bryan-College Station	135,100	1.57	0.90
Corpus Christi	130,600	1.54	1.06
Houston	148,700	1.67	1.05
San Antonio	140,100	1.50	1.01
Tyler	108,900	1.97	1.17
Texas	143,000	1.54	1.05

Source: Texas A&M Real Estate Center.

Victoria's THAI ratio of 1.90 for all households indicates that housing at the median level is quite affordable for a family with the median income. While the THAI ratio for first-time homebuyers is less than that for all households, it is still a quarter of a point higher than 1.00, which indicates that a median-priced home is also affordable for these families. Compared to the other cities in the table, the housing market in Victoria is quite affordable.

Apartment prices in 2006 were also more reasonable in Victoria in contrast to other Texas cities (Please see Figure 5.3). According to Apartment MarketData Research Services, the average rent for a one bedroom apartment was $436.00 and $542.00 for a two bedroom. While these statistics indicate that it is generally less expensive to rent an apartment in Victoria than in other areas of the State, the city still a lacks an adequate supply of affordable rental housing. The 2000 Census found that one out of every eight renter households pays more than half of their total income for rent.

FIGURE 5.3
Average Apartment Rent (Per Sq.Ft.), 2006



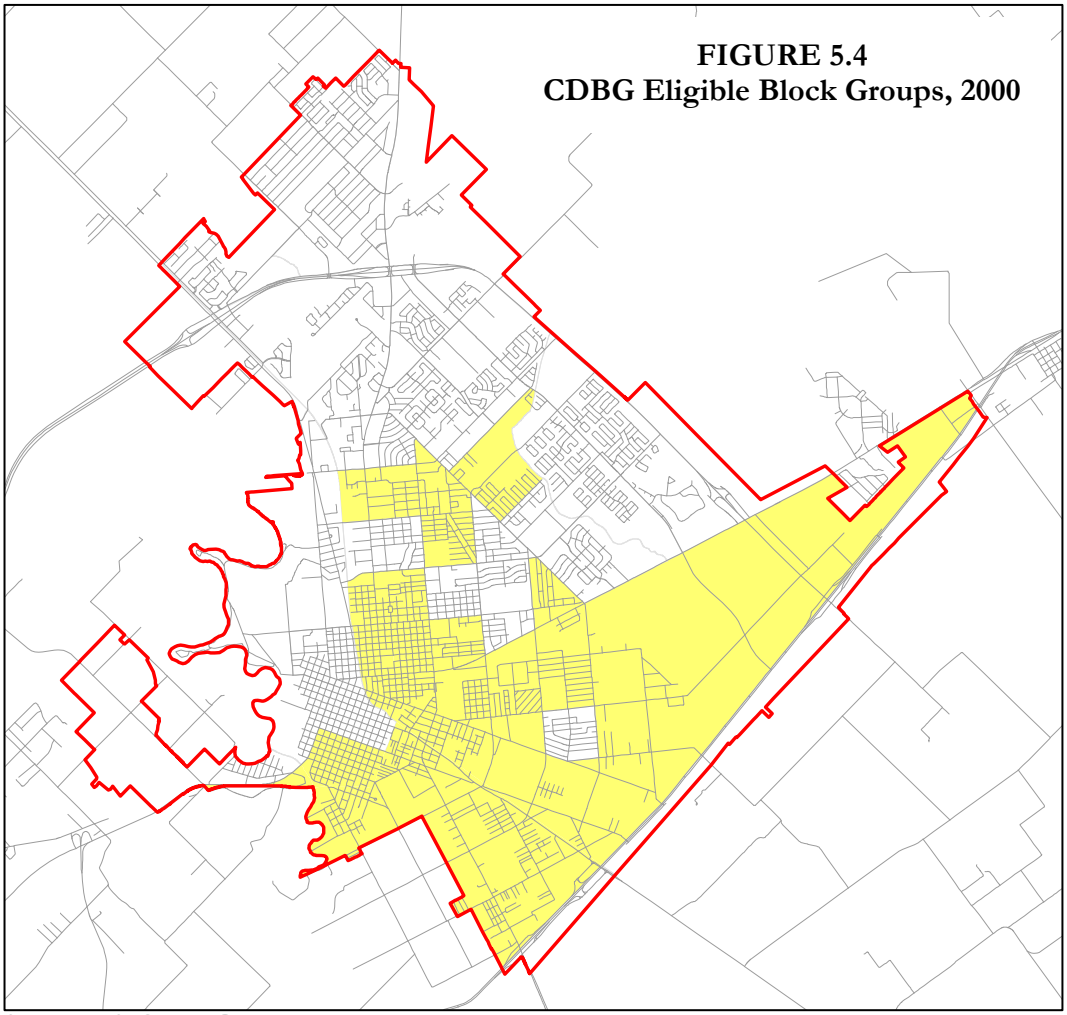
Source: 2006 Apartment MarketData Research Services, LLC.

5.6 Housing Programs

Funding for the city's housing initiatives comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. All cities over 50,000 in population are classified as CDBG entitlement cities. Each entitlement city receives a grant allocated annually by HUD on a formula basis. CDBG funds may be spent on families or individuals whose household income is at least 80% or lower than the area median income (AMI). Each year, HUD updates the AMI figures for each CDBG grantee. In 2006, the median income for a family of four in the City of Victoria was $51,200.

CDBG funds can also be used in census block groups in the city in which at least 51% of the households are at 80% of AMI or below. Figure 5.4 shows the census block groups in our community that are classified as low and moderate income, and therefore eligible for CDBG assistance. Any CDBG spending must be directed toward at least one of three goals defined by HUD; decent housing, suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunity.

FIGURE 5.4
CDBG Eligible Block Groups, 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

In the 1999-2000 program year (PY), 77% of CDBG funds, $747,600 of the $977,000 total budget, were directed towards the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to buy out 167 properties located in the 100-year floodplain or floodway. In the 2000-01 program year only $215,000, or 22%, of the city's CDBG budget was being used for affordable housing initiatives including the Mortgage Assistance Program and the Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program. Since the 2000-01 program year, a majority of the annual CDBG budget has moved away from supplementing the public works budget for street and drainage improvements in CDBG eligible areas. Table 5.5 below shows the history of CDBG allocations from the 1999-2000 program year through the 2006-2007 program year.

Table 5.5 History of CDBG Allocations

Category	PY 99-00	PY 00-01	PY 01-02	PY 02-03	PY 03-04	PY 04-05	PY 05-06	PY 06-07
Administration	19%	19%	11%	19%	19%	19%	18%	17%
Affordable Housing	77%*	22%	50%	68%	73%	74%	80%	75%
Code Enforcement	4%	3%	6%	9%	4%	3%	2%	8%
Parks & Recreation	0%	6%	22%	4%	4%	4%	0%	0%
Pubic Service Agencies	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Public Works	0%	50%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

*$747,600 of $977,000 total budgeted for flood-housing buyout program.
Source: City of Victoria Planning Department

By maintaining the emphasis of the CDBG budget on housing, the City of Victoria can more effectively address the community's need for programs that will increase and improve the affordable housing options in our community. Current and possible future housing programs that can be funded through the CDBG program are described below.

Mortgage Assistance Program. The Mortgage Assistance Program is designed to assist low and moderate-income families who qualify for a mortgage, but lack the cash funds for a down payment to purchase a home. Assistance is provided to first-time homebuyers in the form of a grant not to exceed $1,500. The grant can be used to cover financing costs and/or up to 50% of the down payment. From the 1993-1994 program year through the 2006-2007 program year the City of Victoria provided mortgage assistance to over 600 families.

Owner-Occupied Home Rehabilitation. The Owner-Occupied Home Rehabilitation Program provides a grant to low-income home owners in an amount not to exceed $20,000. The assistance may be used for the repair or replacement of major systems such as roofing, foundation, electrical, plumbing, and heating systems, as well as exterior paint and abatement of lead-based paint hazards. The City of Victoria contracts with the Community Action Committee of Victoria to administer this program. Recipients of assistance provide sweat equity by also working on the house. For example, they may provide labor for painting the interior with paint supplied by the loan. From the initial 1992-1993 program year through the 2006-2007 program year, the City of Victoria provided rehabilitation assistance to a total of 168 families.


Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Project

Land Acquisition Program. In addition to the Mortgage Assistance Program and the Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program, the City of Victoria administers a land acquisition program. This program acquires land suitable for housing and

Habitat for Humanity - Nelson Avenue Project

makes it available for new affordable housing construction. In recent years, lots acquired through this program have been transferred to Habitat for Humanity to create new affordable housing. Thus far, Habitat for Humanity has built three homes in the Will Rogers/Queen City neighborhood, twelve on Nelson Avenue and four on Ozark Street. Two more are under construction on Callis Street. This type of partnership is very effective in making new affordable housing available for low-income families.

New Housing Initiative. The New Housing Initiative is a unique city partnership with financial institutions and for-profit housing builders. The city used a combination of CDBG and local funds to develop a new 55 lot subdivision called "Swan Crossing". The single-family subdivision was created to promote affordable entry-level housing. By using a variety of incentives, such as low-cost land and closing cost assistance the program creates new affordable housing for Victoria residents and further expands homeownership. The first home was dedicated in April 2007.

First Home in Swan Crossing

Target Neighborhood Program. A major aspect of the city's CDBG program is the target-neighborhood concept. This approach to CDBG spending focuses on improving the overall living environment in specific low income neighborhoods. In 1998, a two-year plan was developed to target the investment of CDBG and general revenue funds to the Will Rogers/Queen City neighborhood. Along with park, street, and infrastructure improvements, the city focuses code enforcement and the owner-occupied home rehabilitation program in the target neighborhood. The city has since partnered with three additional neighborhoods; Silver City, Mayfair/ Meadowview and Slotnick. The newest target neighborhood, East Side, was selected and began in 2007.

Target Neighborhood Program

Other possibilities exist for public programs that will increase the availability of affordable housing in the City of Victoria. One opportunity could be the use of infill housing. Infill development can take advantage of existing infrastructure; provide higher densities in locations where transportation is

already in place; and integrate new housing into the fabric of the community. Finally, the city can continue to pursue other sources of funding for housing programs such as the Federal Home Loan Bank and HOME program funds available from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA).

5.7 Future Housing Needs

Population growth will determine the demand for housing in the future of our community. Table 5.6 shows the population for the City of Victoria in 1990 and 2000 along with projections for 2010, 2020 and 2025.

Table 5.6 City of Victoria Population Estimate, 1990-2025

Year	Population	% Increase
1990	55,076	-
2000	60,603	10.0%
2010	64,309	6.1%
2020	71,170	10.6%
2025	74,080	4.1%

Source: City of Victoria Planning Department

Based on these population projections, and the number of persons in each type of housing unit, we can project future housing needs for our community. The housing unit projections in the following table are based on a constant occupancy rate of 94%, a continuing increase in the percentage of manufactured homes, and a continually slow decline in the average number of persons per household. Table 5.7 displays the number of units by type for 1990 and 2000 as well as projections for 2010, 2020 and 2025.

Table 5.7 City of Victoria Projected Housing Need, 1990-2025

	1990	2000	2010	2020	2025
Single-family	15,261	16,929	17,939	19,888	20,703
Manufactured	1,111	1,259	1,486	1,829	1,903
Multi-family	5,421	5,994	6,202	6,858	7,139
Total Units	**21,793**	**24,182**	**25,627**	**28,575**	**29,745**
% Increase in Total	-	11.0%	6.0%	11.5%	4.1%

Source: City of Victoria Planning Department

These projections show an increase of 5,563 or 23.0% in total housing units from 2000 to 2025. This represents an annual increase of 0.92%, 0.18% less than the rate of growth for housing between 1990 and 2000. Over the period 2000 to 2025, the growth in single-family housing units will be 22.3%, for multi-family units 19.1%, and for manufactured housing 51.1%. By 2025, manufactured housing is expected to account for 6.4% of the city's housing units. Future housing opportunities must meet the needs of the population for all income levels.

5.8 Summary

The Comprehensive Plan Survey, conducted in October 2000, indicated that 53% of respondents thought the price of housing in Victoria was about average, while 23% felt that it was too expensive. A larger majority (68%) agrees that affordable single family housing and rental housing are the most needed types of housing.

For residents, revitalized neighborhoods mean better places to live and more choices about where to live. While housing in Victoria is relatively affordable when compared to other Texas cities, there are still great housing needs yet to be fulfilled. The quality of life experienced by residents is directly related to their environment, the neighborhoods in which we live. If we are to maintain and improve the quality of life in Victoria, we must strive to maintain and continually improve our neighborhoods.

5.9 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Facilitate open communication and cooperation among property owners, developers, city staff and others involved in all aspects of housing in Victoria.

- Objective 1.1: Maintain communication between the city and the housing development community.
- Objective 1.2: Maintain a customer-friendly and flexible attitude among city staff when considering housing development plans.

Goal 2: Promote a variety of housing types and neighborhoods to meet Victoria's future housing needs.

- Objective 2.1: Support housing opportunities and choices for a range of household types, family size and incomes.
- Objective 2.2: Continue to facilitate the development of housing to meet the needs of the disabled, elderly and other special needs populations.
- Objective 2.3: Encourage residential uses on the second story of buildings in the Downtown area.

Goal 3: Improve the safety, appearance and livability of existing neighborhoods.

- Objective 3.1: Preserve existing neighborhood integrity and create livable neighborhood environments.
- Objective 3.2: Achieve an acceptable level of property maintenance.
- Objective 3.3: Encourage the rehabilitation or replacement of substandard housing.

Goal 4: Promote entry-level and low- and moderate-income housing options in Victoria.

Objective 4.1: Support the construction of entry-level and low- and moderate-income housing.

Objective 4.2: Encourage the development of in-fill lots and/or lots contiguous to existing housing for new housing construction.

Objective 4.3: Promote opportunities for homeownership for as many people as possible.

Goal 5: Recognize and manage manufactured housing as a viable alternative for housing.

Objective 5.1: Regulate the location and appearance of manufactured homes.

Objective 5.2: Encourage the placement of manufactured housing units in manufactured home subdivisions and parks.

CHAPTER 6

Infrastructure

Victoria's Vital Systems

Sound infrastructure is a basic necessity for the very existence of Victoria as well its future growth and development. The City of Victoria provides and maintains water, sanitary sewer, streets and drainage infrastructure systems. These systems require substantial financial outlays. Expansions to the city's infrastructure must be carefully planned to meet the demands of growth, and be timed in accordance with the city's financial capacities. Likewise, as the infrastructure ages, the timely maintenance, replacement and improvement of existing systems present additional challenges.

VISION 2025

Victoria has technologically advanced, cost effective infrastructure (i.e. water, sewer, streets, drainage, & communications).

The Comprehensive Plan Survey, completed in 2000, revealed that residents expressed the greatest degree of dissatisfaction with the city's infrastructure system, especially with the condition of Victoria's streets and the quality of water. The City of Victoria faces many challenges as it seeks to manage and develop the infrastructure system. The primary challenge is to ensure that the infrastructure system is shaped by design rather than happenstance. This chapter takes into account the various infrastructure needs, the adequacy of current systems, and provides projections for the community in the year 2020.

6.1 Streets

The City of Victoria maintains over 307 miles of streets. The maintenance of a quality street system is a fundamental issue in Victoria. The 2000 Comprehensive Plan Survey asked citizens to express their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction concerning various community services in Victoria. Of the 19 services rated in the survey, citizens indicated the highest level of dissatisfaction with the condition of streets. The survey also asked respondents to answer open-ended questions. In response to the question "What do you dislike about your neighborhood?" the most common answer was the condition of streets. When respondents were asked to list three things they would most like to change about Victoria, the most common response was to improve the condition of streets.

City Street Inventory

The City of Victoria's Engineering Department initiated a Street Inventory in 1994. The condition of city streets is rated annually using visual inspection criteria, and the

rate of deterioration from one year to the next (or percentage of change in condition) is measured and documented. This inspection process and the resulting measures of deterioration enable the Engineering Department to schedule preventative maintenance such as seal coats and hot mix overlays, and to identify streets for reconstruction projects.

The Street Inventory lists all city streets in alphabetical order and by worst-to-best based on the rating condition, and includes tables of the percentage of change in rating from year to year. In addition to these condition ratings, the inventory also indicates pavement types and widths, and whether streets have curbs, gutters, sidewalks, streetlights, right-of-way constraints and the functional classification of the street, e.g. local, collector, arterial, etc.

Street With "Very Poor" Rating

Table 6.1 identifies the five rating categories and the percentage of streets in each category based on the 2005 Street Inventory. The map in Figure 6.1 provides an overall picture of the condition of Victoria's streets.

Table 6.1 Street Inventory Rating

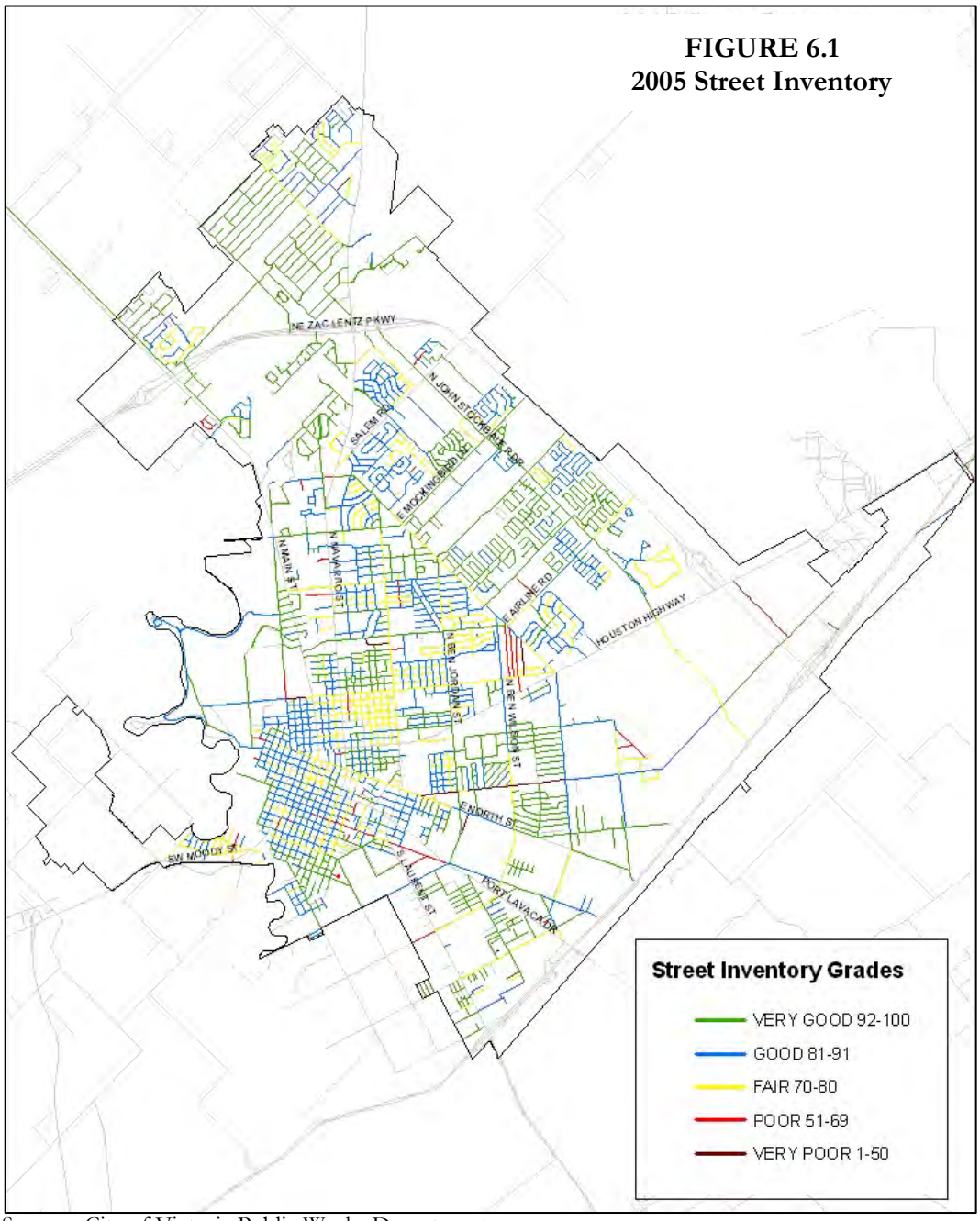
Rate	Condition	Maintenance Schedule	% of Total Streets
100-92	Very Good	No maintenance required.	42%
91-81	Good	Minor cracks requiring crack sealing; cosmetic deterioration of curbs and joints; weed kill necessary.	37%
80-70	Fair	Major cracks with significant surface deterioration; alligator cracking with minor potholes and subgrade deterioration; requires spot base repair and surface repair such as seal coating.	18%
69-51	Poor	Significant potholes; complete surface deterioration; misaligned curb and pavement; requires major base and surface repairs and realignment of riding surface using asphalt overlay.	3%
50-0	Very Poor	Complete pavement system failure; exhibits bad riding quality, numerous potholes, pavement heaving, water ponding; a high annual maintenance record; total reconstruction recommended.	1%

Source: City of Victoria Public Works Department

Addressing the Street Condition Problem

The poor street conditions in Victoria are a result of inadequate minimum pavement standards and years of deferred maintenance. However, steps have been taken to address these problems. City Council increased the annual street maintenance budget from approximately $500,000 in FY 1994 to $1.7 million in FY 2001. Street maintenance funding levels have averaged nearly $1.9 million since FY 2001. This increased investment in street maintenance has had a noticeable impact on overall

pavement conditions. Figure 6.2 illustrates street condition ratings from 1994 to 2005.

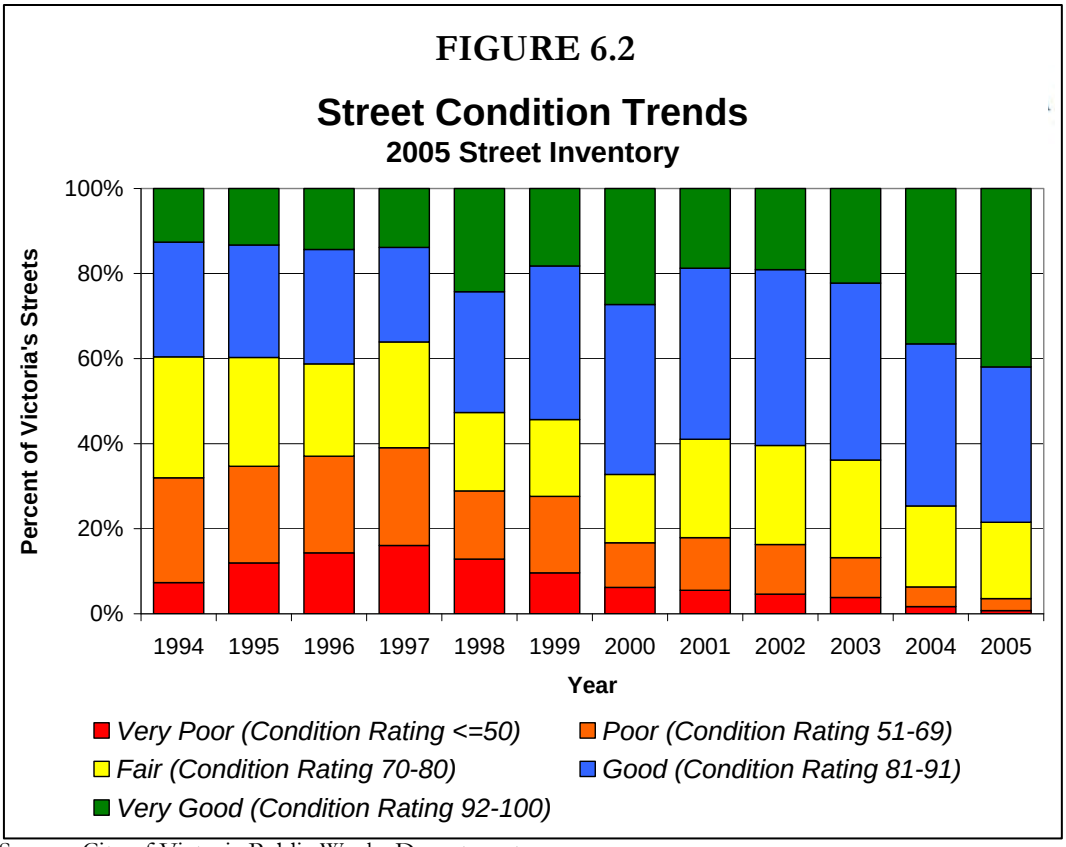


Source: City of Victoria Public Works Department

Increased maintenance alone will not solve the long-term problem of poor street conditions. The key to good streets is their being built to last in the first place. The city addressed many of its citizens' concerns regarding street construction standards with the adoption of new Standards for Public Works Construction and Street Sections in February 2002. The new pavement standards include options for both asphalt and concrete sections. These upgraded street sections have improved the long-term maintenance concerns that have stressed the city's ability to adequately

fund street rehabilitation needs. In addition to the new private development standards, the city has improved its own street construction cross-sections. Recent street reconstruction and widening projects have been constructed with continuously reinforced concrete pavement. Examples of these new streets include Miori Lane, Guy Grant Blvd, Sam Houston Drive, Ben Jordan Street, Glascow Street, LaSalle Crossing and Lone Tree Road. The rural street standard

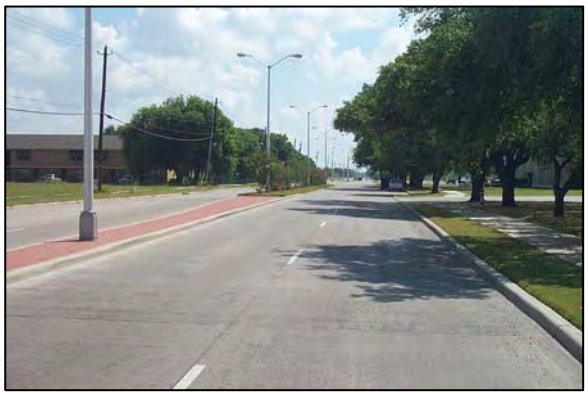
FIGURE 6.2



Source: City of Victoria Public Works Department

Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

The city's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) process is a rolling three-year program that is reviewed on an annual basis. Projects that are included for consideration in the CIP are identified by City Council, staff, VEDC, engineering studies and long-term strategic planning initiatives. Projects are ranked and prioritized by City Council, and then scheduled for implementation based on the availability and timing of various funding sources. Major capital improvements are funded by a variety of sources, including General Obligation debt, ½ Cent Sales Tax Revenues and Revenue Bond debt. Table 6.2 provides a list of street-related projects included in the 2007 CIP. The projects are shown on a map in Figure 6.4.



Miori Lane

Table 6.2 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) - Streets

Project	Description	Cost Estimate	Estimated Start Date
Lone Tree Road Reconstruction	Reconstruct Lone Tree Road from North Street to Delmar Drive as a 4-lane concrete street, and replace all water and sanitary sewer mains.	$13,629,061	3rd Quarter of 2006
Laurent Street Reconstruction Phase I	Reconstruct Laurent Street from Rio Grande (US 59 Business) to Airline Road as a 4-lane concrete street, replace all water and sanitary sewer mains, and 4 new traffic signals.	$16,675,000	1st Quarter of 2007
Laurent Street Reconstruction Phase II	Reconstruct Laurent Street from Airline Road to Sam Houston Drive as a 4-lane concrete street, replace all water and sanitary sewer mains, storm sewer, street lighting and signal improvements.	$15,682,200	FY 2010
Sam Houston Drive	Reconstruct Sam Houston from Laurent Street to Miori Lane as a 4-lane concrete street, replace water and sanitary sewer mains and traffic signals.	$22,478,458	FY 2010

6.2 Drainage

Storm drainage is a major issue in Victoria. Situated on the banks of the Guadalupe River, the city is subject to major regional flood events. In October 1998, Victoria experienced a record-breaking flood that severely impacted the city. The Guadalupe River crested in Victoria at a record flood level of 34 feet (flood stage is 21 feet), surpassing the previous 1936 record by three feet. The flood damaged a total of 919 structures. This number included 813 residential structures and 106 nonresidential (commercial, governmental, churches, etc.) structures.

Wheeler Street – October 1998 Flood

Localized flooding is an additional concern. In addition to the Guadalupe River, the city has seven major watersheds and seven major tributaries, covering 100 square miles of drainage area. The system includes 40 miles of open channels and 60 miles of closed drainage systems.

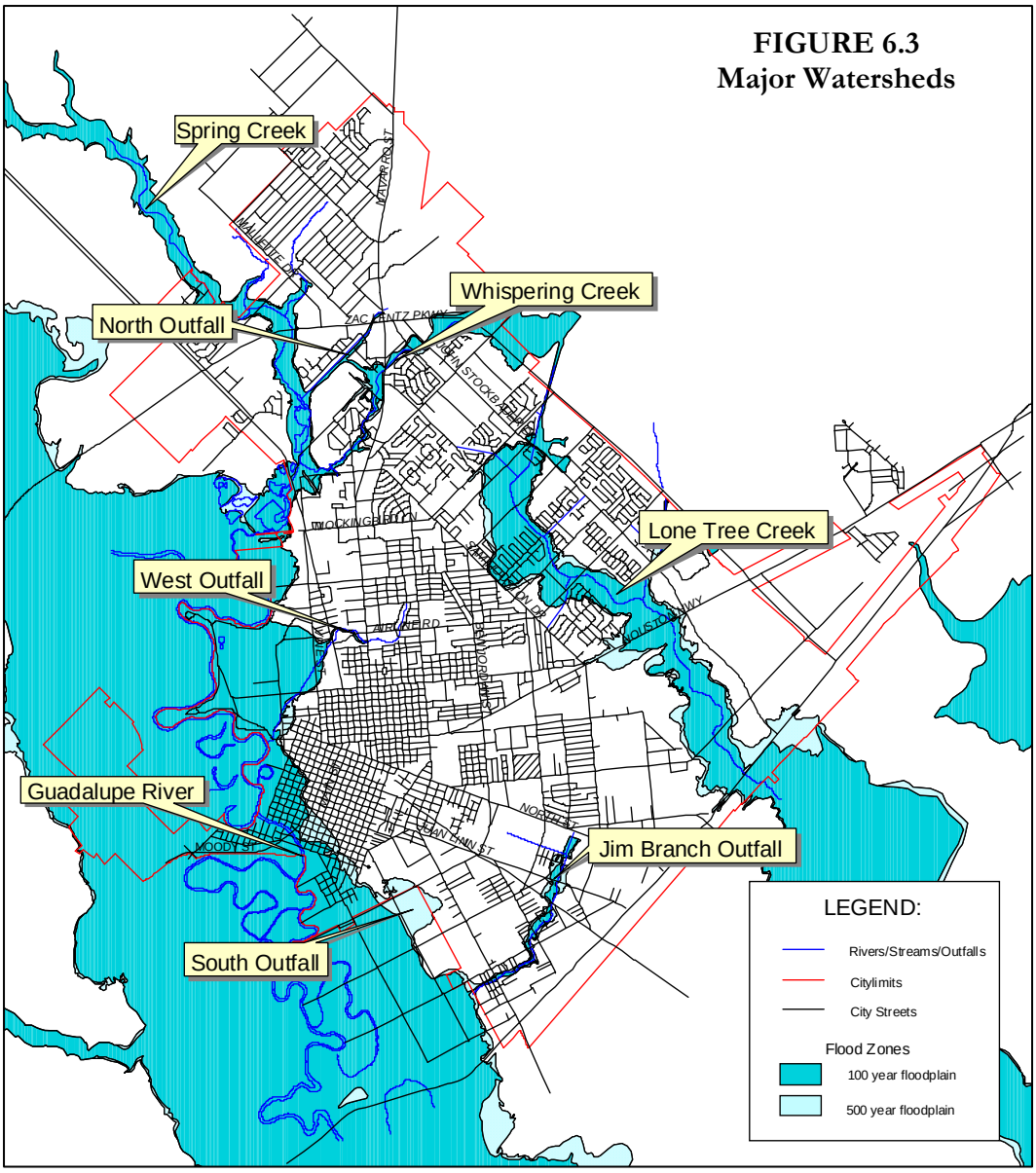
The seven local watersheds are listed below, and are shown on Figure 6.3.

- Jim Branch Outfall
- Lone Tree Creek
- North Outfall
- South Outfall
- Spring Creek
- West Outfall
- Whispering Creek

Drainage Master Plan

The Victoria City Council adopted a new Drainage Master Plan and Storm Drainage Design Manual in July of 2007. The purpose of the plan is to provide the city with

the tools necessary to design, prioritize and implement drainage improvements, correct chronic drainage problems, ensure appropriate drainage design when new development occurs, and properly manage development in floodplain areas.



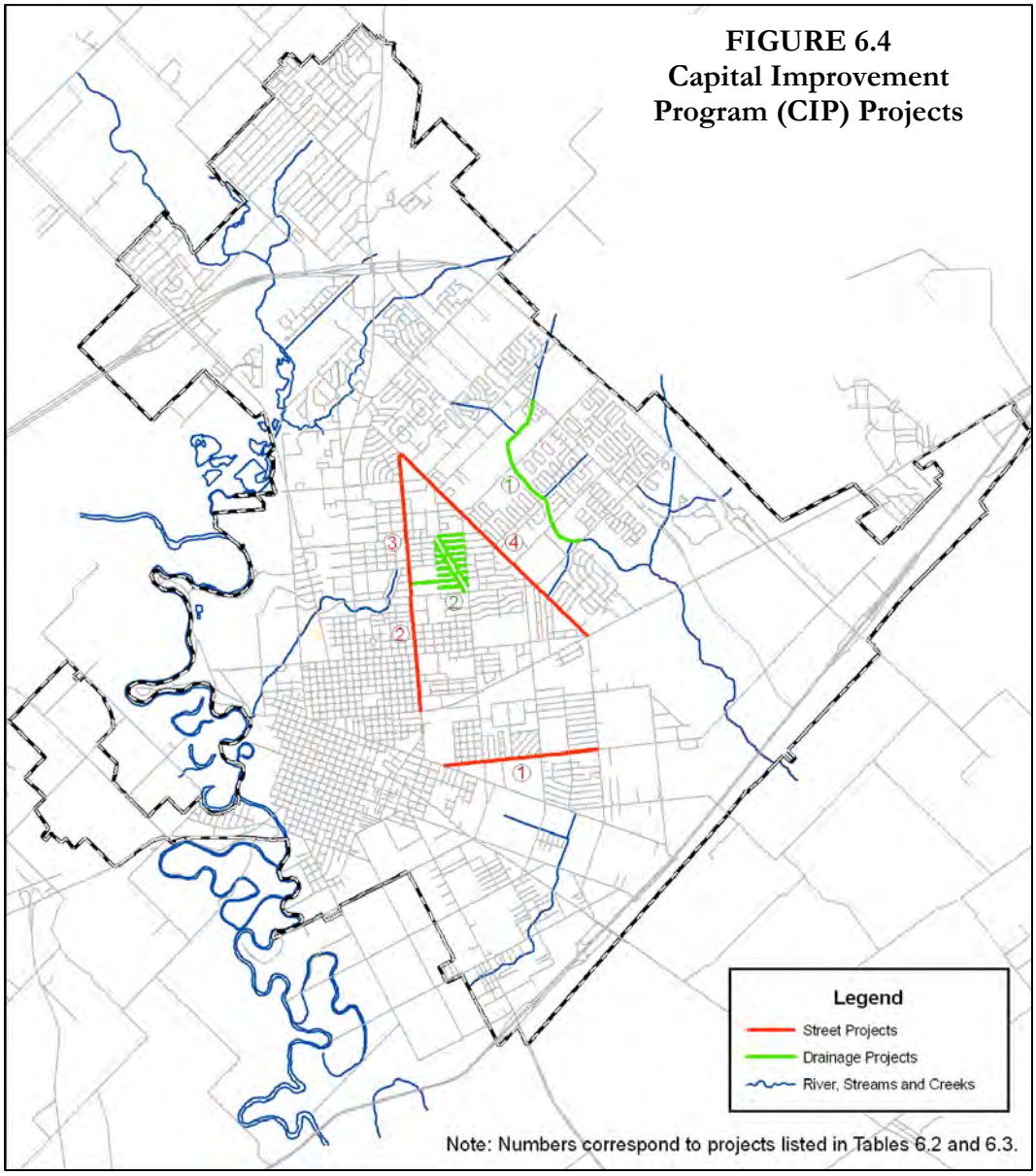
More specifically, the goals of the plan are to:

- Develop Conceptual Improvements to:
  - Have no increase in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Floodplain Elevation
  - If possible, reduce the FEMA Floodplain Elevation
  - Correct chronic drainage problems
  - Open up currently un-developable property for new development
- Be Flexible and Dynamic
  - Provide computer models for all drainage basins

- Update models as development occurs
- Prepare for EPA Stormwater Regulations

The elements of the Drainage Master Plan include:

- The modeling of hydrologic and hydraulic conditions to be used in the design of drainage improvements
- A revised Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance (FEMA Floodplain Development Ordinance)
- A revised Drainage Design Manual
- A maintenance plan
- Financial strategies for the implementation of drainage improvements
- An implementation strategy
- A Final Storm Drainage Master Plan Report



Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

The Drainage Master Plan provides a prioritized list of needed drainage improvements in each of the city's drainage basins. Although the plan was not officially adopted until 2007, the draft plan was used to prioritize and design major drainage projects for inclusion in the 2000 Capital Improvement Program. Several significant drainage projects were funded by the 2000 Bond Program and completed between 2000 and 2007, including the excavation of the Lone Tree Creek Detention Regional Facility, Northcrest Area Drainage Improvements and West Outfall Improvements Phase I. Additional projects that are funded in the current CIP are listed in Table 6.3 and shown on the map in Figure 6.4.

Table 6.3 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) - Drainage

	Project	Cost Estimate	Estimated Start Date
1	Lone Tree Creek Channel Improvements – Improve the Lone Tree Creek Channel from Airline Road to John Stockbauer Drive. Widen and reshape channel, install additional box culverts at Airline and Ben Jordan.	$8,450,044	4th Quarter 2007
2	West Outfall Drainage, Phase II (Woodlawn Area) – drainage improvements, water and sanitary sewer line replacement, reclaim/overlay of street in Woodlawn Subdivision.	$8,580,713	In Progress

EPA/TCEQ Storm Water Regulations

Polluted storm water is often carried by municipal storm water systems and ultimately discharged into local rivers and streams without treatment. In 1990, the EPA developed rules establishing the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, which is intended to address this water pollution issue. Under this program the city is required to reduce the discharge of pollutants, protect water quality, and satisfy the appropriate water quality requirements of the Clean Water Act.

The EPA subsequently transferred regulatory authority of the national program to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). The Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, or TPDES, program must include the development and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP's) and measurable goals for the following six minimum measures:

- Public education and outreach
- Public involvement/participation
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination
- Construction site storm water runoff control
- Post-construction runoff control, and
- Pollution prevention/good housekeeping for municipal operations

The program requires cities to implement programs and practices to control storm water runoff. In January 2008 the city adopted a five-year Storm Water Management Plan to address the requirements of the TPDES program.

6.3 Water Service

Prior to July 2001, the City of Victoria water source was groundwater from the Gulf Coast Aquifer. The city utilized 15 water wells with the ability to withdraw approximately 24,000 acre-feet of water annually. Pumping plants had a maximum pumping capacity of 25 million gallons per day.

Surface Water Treatment Plant

In July 2001, the city completed construction of a new surface water treatment plant and switched from groundwater to surface water from the Guadalupe River. The new plant was put in operation in the summer of 2001. With the new surface water plant, the city now has three sources from which to draw water. The primary source is surface water. The city can withdraw 20,000 acre feet of water from the Guadalupe River through a permit issued by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Secondly, the city has obtained an additional supply of 10,000 acre feet of water stored in off-channel reservoirs located on 640 acres of annexed land west of the Guadalupe River. Finally, the city will retain the ability to use its groundwater supply.

The city has also purchased an additional 4,926 acre/feet of senior Guadalupe River water rights to firm up and extend its water source. This additional water should provide an ample water source for the city to at least 2085 based on current population projections.

Since completion of the new surface water system, the city pumps raw water from the Guadalupe River into the off-channel reservoirs. The water from the reservoirs is then pumped to the surface water treatment plant, treated, and stored in clearwells, from where it will be pumped into the distribution system. The surface water treatment plant is a conventional plant with rapid mixing, flocculation, sedimentation and filtration. Chemical feed facilities provide for coagulation, disinfection, pH adjustment, stabilization of the water, taste and odor control and fluoridation. Other facilities include treated water clearwells, treated water pump stations, sludge lagoons and a recycle lagoon.

The city's primary goals in the transition from groundwater to surface water were to ensure an adequate supply of potable water for the future and to improve the quality of the drinking water. Water quality received a very negative rating in the original Comprehensive Plan Survey, however, since converting to surface water, water quality complaints have been reduced by approximately 65% - 75%.

Overall, the Surface Water Treatment Plant and its associated projects represent an investment of over $37 million. This includes the plant itself, a river pump station, a

raw water pump station, raw water pipelines, a new 1 million gallon elevated storage tower (Tower #6) on Nursery Road, and pipelines needed to deliver treated water to Water Plant #3, Tower #6, and other points in the distribution system. Unlike many other cities, Victoria has been able to proactively address its long-term water needs before it became a crisis.

Water Demand

Current average water consumption in Victoria is approximately 10 million gallons per day with a peak demand of approximately 18 million gallons per day. Table 6.4 provides future demand projections for the City of Victoria water system.

Table 6.4 Future Water Demand in Million Gallons/Day (MGD)

Year	Average Water Demand (MGD)	Peak Water Demand (MGD)
2001	9.73	17.84
2010	10.70	21.40
2020	11.90	23.80
2030	12.80	25.60
2040	13.60	27.20

The Surface Water Treatment Plant was originally designed to have a capacity of 21 million gallons per day. During construction, the TCEQ changed its rating system for evaluating plant capacity and, as a result, the plant's actual capacity was reduced to 18.5 MGD. Recently, city staff performed testing to determine the actual treatment capacity of the plant and submitted the results of that testing to the TCEQ for review. Following that review, the TCEQ increased the treatment capacity of the basins at the plant to 25.2 MGD. City staff is now submitting a revised disinfection study to the TCEQ that incorporates and implements the new 25.2 MGD rating. Additionally, city staff is evaluating all of the plant support systems to determine if any upgrades are required to any of the equipment so that 25.2 MGD can be treated. Following this work, the city anticipates that the entire plant will be rated at 25.2 MGD. Based on these projections, the plant is tentatively scheduled for expansion in the year 2025 to a capacity of 37.8 MGD.

Water Wells

Before the transition to surface water, 15 active water wells provided the city's groundwater source. The 15 water wells are listed below:

- Well #12 1109 E. Pine Street
- Well #14 3209 N. Ben Jordan
- Well #15 1701 E. Airline Road
- Well #16 2506 E. Airline Road
- Well #17 902 Sam Houston
- Well #18 810 E. Ash Street
- Well #19 409 Young
- Well #20 2505 E. Red River
- Well #21 602 W. Red River
- Well #22 901 N. George
- Well #23 4008 N. Nimitz
- Well #24 6301 Dairy Road
- Well #25 2300 N. Louis
- Well #26 1902 N. DeLeon
- Well #27 2100 Salem Road

After the transition to surface water, wells #12, #18, #22, #24 and #27 (those in blue text) were abandoned. The remaining wells will be used as a back-up water supply, providing an additional 11.5 MGD of water. Wells #19 and #21 are piped directly to the Surface Water Treatment Plant, while the remaining wells are connected to Water Plant #3.

Treatment System

Prior to the conversion to surface water, the city operated four water plants:

- Plant #1 1201 W. Stayton Ave
- Plant #2 1109 E. Pine Street
- Plant #3 3209 N. Ben Jordan Street
- Plant #4 6301 Dairy Road

Upon completing the Surface Water Supply Project and converting to surface water, the city closed Water Plants #1, #2 and #4. Plant #3, located at Ben Jordan Street and Airline Road, remains in operation. The new Surface Water Treatment Plant is located at 2902 Bluff Street, adjacent to Riverside Park.

Water Tower #6

Water Storage

The water system includes ground storage and elevated storage facilities. Ground storage facilities store treated water for delivery to the distribution system. Elevated water towers store water in above-ground tanks, providing the water pressure needed to distribute water to customers and to provide adequate fire protection. Existing water storage capacities and projected needs are shown in Tables 6.5.and 6.6.

Distribution System

The city's water distribution system includes approximately 400 miles of water mains. The Utilities Department maintains the distribution system, performing routine maintenance and repairs to water mains, valves, meters and fire hydrants, and installing new services.

As the water system ages, the need to replace older, deteriorating lines is a significant issue. The Utilities Department has an annual budget of approximately $500,000 for water main replacement. In addition to the water main replacements included in the proposed bond projects, the Utilities Department has identified approximately seven miles of water mains that are in need of short-term replacement, at a total estimated cost of $8.81 million.

Table 6.5 Ground Storage Capacities

Storage Facility	Location	Current Capacity (Million Gallons)
Water Plant #3	Ben Jordan St. & Airline Road	5.5
Surface Water Treatment Plant	Bluff Street	4.5
Water Plant #4	Dairy Road	1.0
Total		11.0

Table 6.6 Elevated Storage Capacities

Storage Facility	Location	Current Capacity (Million Gallons)
Water Tower #1	500 N. West Street	1
Water Tower #3	100 E. Mockingbird Lane	0.5
Water Tower #4	8700 N. Navarro Street	0.5
Water Tower #5	3800 Mockingbird Lane	1
Water Tower #6	8292 Nursery Road	1
Total		4.0

Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

The city's 2007 Capital Improvements Program includes several major water main replacement projects. The King Subdivision Improvements and Downtown Utility Replacement Program will be funded by Revenue Bonds. The utility extensions to serve annexed areas are funded in the Utilities Department budget. These projects are described in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7 Budgeted CIP Projects including Water Main Replacements

	Project Description	Estimated Cost	Estimated Start Date
1	King Subdivision Utility Improvement Project – Replacement of 12,600 feet of 8″ and 3,300 feet of 12″ water line in the King Subdivision, which is bounded by N. Navarro St., Rio Grande St., S. Laurent St. and North St.	$1,580,300	10/1/07
2	Downtown Water and Sanitary Sewer Line Replacement Program, Phase II, Projects #6 & #8- Replacement of 4,750 feet of 2″ thru 8″ water line with 8″ PVC water line. Lines will be replaced in Water, Liberty, and Main Streets.	$1,142,905	1/1/08
3	Downtown Water and Sanitary Sewer Line Replacement Program, Phase I, Projects #1 & #2- Replacement of 5,800 feet of 2″ thru 8″ water line with 8″ PVC water line. Lines will be replaced in Glass St., and in Main St from Commercial St. to Juan Linn St.	$1,637,506	7/1/08
3	Downtown Water and Sanitary Sewer Line Replacement Program, Phase I, Projects #3 & #4- Replacement of 6,400 feet of 2″ thru 12″ water line with 8″ and 12″ PVC water lines. Lines will be replaced in Juan Linn St., William St., Constitution St., and Forrest St.	$2,149,418	11/1/08
4	Downtown Water and Sanitary Sewer Line Replacement Program, Phase I, Projects #5 & #6- Replacement of 7,500 feet of 6″ thru 12″ water line with 8″ and 12″ PVC water line. Lines will be replaced in DeLeon St., Commercial St., Liberty St. and Juan Linn St.	$2,308,539	1/1/10
5	12″ Water Line Extension in Mallette Dr. across Ball Airport Road to serve an area annexed in 2007	$62,410	1/5/09
6	16″ Water Line Extension in Mockingbird Dr. across Loop 463 to serve an area annexed in 2007	$137,620	12/1/08
7	16″ Water Line Extension along the West High School campus property line	$782,550	1/5/09
8	16″ Water Line extension in US Hwy 87 to serve future annexation properties in the area.	$557,000	6/2/09

Water Distribution System Master Plan

The city's Water Master Plan was updated in 2003. This update, however, has not been formally adopted by the City Council as its companion document, the Wastewater Master Plan, is currently being updated. When the Wastewater Master

Plan is complete, city staff plans to submit both of these updated documents to the City Council for review and adoption.

6.4 Wastewater Service

The wastewater system is responsible for providing effective collection, transmission and treatment of wastewater generated in Victoria.

Wastewater Treatment Plants

There are two wastewater treatment plants in Victoria. The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) operates both plants under contract for the City of Victoria.

The City of Victoria Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant is located on the north side of US Hwy 59, east of the Guadalupe River. The plant has a treatment capacity of 9.6 million gallons per day (MGD). The Willow Street Wastewater Treatment Plant is located at 1509 Willow Street. The Willow Street plant has a capacity of 2.5 MGD. The city's current total wastewater treatment capacity is 12.1 MGD. Table 6.8 provides projected wastewater flows in relation to existing treatment capacity.

The permits issued by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for the operation of wastewater treatment facilities establish criteria for minimum treatment plant capacity. Based on current and projected plant flows, Victoria's wastewater treatment plant capacity will need to be expanded by 2015. Current plans for expansion include constructing a new 4.4 MGD wastewater treatment facility with a peak flow capacity of 15 MGD by 2015. Following this construction, the 2.5 MGD Willow Street facility is scheduled to be decommissioned

Table 6.8 Projected Wastewater Treatment Demand

Year	Projected (Maximum Month) Total Wastewater Flow (MGD)	Current Treatment System Capacity MGD
2001	8.9	12.1
2010	9.7	12.1
2020	10.9	12.1
2030	12.6	12.1

Treatment Process

The Victoria Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant is an activated sludge process plant, operated in the complete mix mode. Treatment units include a lift station, bar screens, grit chambers, aeration basins, secondary clarifiers, a sludge holding tank, belt filter press, chlorine contact basins and dechlorination chamber. Digested and dewatered sludge generated from the plant is hauled to the city's landfill for disposal.

The Willow Street Wastewater Treatment Plant is a trickling filter type facility. Treatment units include a lift station, bar screen, primary clarifier, first stage trickling filter, intermediate clarifier, second stage trickling filter, final clarifier, anaerobic digester, sludge drying beds, chlorine contact chamber and dechlorination chamber.

Sludge generated from the plant is hauled to the Victoria Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant to be digested and dewatered. The sludge is then hauled to the landfill for disposal.

Both plants are in compliance with the parameters established by the TNRCC for wastewater effluent.

Water Reuse

The city does not currently have plans for the reuse of treated wastewater effluent. Many cities utilize treated effluent for the irrigation of golf courses and other similar areas. While water reuse options may be investigated in the future, there are several issues that indicate it may not be feasible in Victoria in the short-term: 1) the distance between the Regional Plant and existing golf courses and other appropriate users, 2) regulations pertaining to the city's surface water permit and the need to return water into the river, and 3) the high chloride content of the effluent, which would require mixing with treated water before it could be used for irrigation.

Collection system

The sanitary sewer collection system consists of approximately 350 miles of mains. The Utilities Department maintains the collection system, performing routine maintenance and repairs to sanitary sewer mains and manholes, and installing new services.

As the sanitary sewer system ages, the need to replace older, deteriorating lines is a significant issue. The Utilities Department has an annual budget of approximately $500,000 for wastewater main replacement. In addition to the wastewater collection mains that are scheduled to be replaced with the previously discussed bond projects, the Utilities Department has identified approximately 6.2 miles of sanitary sewer mains that are in need of short-term replacement, at an estimated cost of $6.1 million. These projects are included below.

Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

The city's 2007 Capital Improvements Program includes several major sanitary sewer main replacement projects. The King Subdivision Improvements and Downtown Utility Replacement Program will be funded by Revenue Bonds. The utility extensions to serve annexed areas are funded in the Utilities Department budget. These projects are described in Table 6.9.

Lift Stations

Because of topography, the entire sanitary sewer collection system cannot be served by gravity flow to the treatment plants. Lift stations are necessary to pump wastewater from one drainage basin to gravity sewer mains in another drainage basin

for delivery to the treatment facilities. The city currently operates 15 sewer lift stations:

- 4104 Houston Hwy
- 3608 E. Juan Linn
- 202 W. Lingo Lane
- 5500 N. Navarro Street
- 2201 E. Airline Road
- 3303 E. North Street
- 4501 Lone Tree Road
- 1008 SW Moody Street
- 6600 US Hwy 59
- 1604 W. Red River
- 6505 N. Navarro Street
- 9000 Zac Lentz Parkway (Loop 463)
- US Hwy 59 Mercado Lift Station
- 6100 Nursery Drive
- Victoria Regional Airport Lift Station

The lift stations at 1206 Mockingbird, 910 E. Hiller and 507 W. Church were abandoned upon completion of the Vine Street Diversion Sewer Project and other sanitary sewer improvements associated with the Sanitary Sewer Overflow Management Program.

Table 6.9 Budgeted CIP Projects including Sanitary Sewer Main Replacements/Rehabilitation

	Project Description	Estimated Cost	Estimated Start Date
1	King Subdivision Utility Improvement Project – Replacement/rehabilitation of feet 13,215 feet of 8" and12" sanitary sewer line in the King Subdivision, which is bounded by N. Navarro St., Rio Grande St., S. Laurent St. and North St.	$1,879,995	10/1/07
2	Downtown Water and Sanitary Sewer Line Replacement Program, Phase II, Projects #6 & #8- Replacement/rehabilitation of 5,900 feet of 8" and 12" sanitary sewer line. Lines will be replaced in Water, Liberty, and Main Streets.	$1,096,017	1/1/08
3	Downtown Water and Sanitary Sewer Line Replacement Program, Phase I, Projects #1 & #2- Replacement/rehabilitation of 3,950 feet of 6" thru 12" sanitary sewer line. Lines will be replaced in Glass St., and in Main St from Commercial St. to Juan Linn St.	$821,673	7/1/08
4	Downtown Water and Sanitary Sewer Line Replacement Program, Phase I, Projects #3 & #4- Replacement/rehabilitation of 9,850 feet of 6" thru 10" sanitary sewer line. Lines will be replaced in Juan Linn St., William St., Constitution St., and Forrest St.	$2,290,424	11/1/08
5	18" Sanitary Sewer Line Replacement in Mallette Dr. from Ball Airport to Briggs Blvd. and an 12" extension in Mallette Dr. across Ball Airport Road to serve an area annexed in 2007.	$1,561,356	1/5/09
6	18" Sanitary Sewer Line Extension in Mockingbird Dr. across Loop 463 to serve an area annexed in 2007	$91,748	12/1/08
7	24" Sanitary Sewer Line Extension along the West High School campus property line	$782,550	1/5/09
8	24" Sanitary Sewer Line extension in US Hwy 87 to serve future annexation properties in the area.	$593,500	6/2/09

Wastewater Collection System Master Plan

The city's Sanitary Sewer Master Plan is currently being updated. Once it is complete, both the Water and Sanitary Sewer Master Plan will be presented to the City Council for review and adoption.

6.5 Water and Wastewater Extension Policy

Water and wastewater services are either extended by the city or by developers. The city extends water and wastewater mains to serve newly annexed areas and areas where new highways and streets are constructed. However, development sometimes occurs in an area that is not yet served by water and/or sanitary sewer mains. When a developer chooses to construct a subdivision in a location that is not adequately served by water and/or sewer, the developer is responsible for the full cost of extending the mains necessary to serve the development. This policy seems to work well for new subdivisions and other major developments, particularly for development within or adjacent to the city's corporate limits. Such developments are not feasible without city utilities, and the associated costs are usually reasonable in the scope of a major development.

In some cases, the developer is required to extend oversized water and wastewater mains. For example, if a subdivision requires the extension of an 8" water main (typically the minimum requirement), but the Water Master Plan calls for a 12" main to serve a larger area, the developer is required to install a 12" main. The developer may then enter an Oversize Reimbursement Agreement and receive reimbursement from the city for the cost of over-sizing the main (the cost difference between the 8" main and the 12" main). The reimbursement is paid by the city over a five-year period.

Another issue related to water/sewer extensions is the city's mandatory connection policy. Any person who constructs a new building or develops property within ¾ mile of an existing city water or sanitary sewer main is required to extend and connect to the city systems. This requirement applies whether or not the development is located within the city limits. The regulation is same whether the development is a new subdivision (as discussed above), a major manufacturing plant or a single family residence. The application of this policy has led to various complications, including a number of variance requests. While such extensions may be feasible for a major development, the extension of 8" water and sewer mains up to ¾ mile for a single home site or small commercial site may be impractical.

There are other issues of fairness associated with these policies. If a person extends ¾ of a mile water and sewer main to a new development, he pays the full cost of the extensions. Another person whose property abuts the new facilities can then connect to those lines at no cost other than the minimal tap fees. The same is true if the city extends water and sanitary sewer for new development. There is no process for applying a pro-rata share of the cost to future developments. It could be argued that these policies discourage sprawl by penalizing people who choose to develop in areas where services are not available. However, the policies may also encourage leap-frog

development. It is recommended that the water and sewer extension policies be reviewed, and that other options be considered.

6.6 Utility Placement

In an effort to improve community appearance and image, many communities require all public and franchised utilities to be installed underground. The proliferation of utility poles and lines along public rights-of-way results in cluttered and unattractive transportation corridors. There are also safety considerations and service interruptions associated with major storm events, such as hurricanes. The City of Victoria's Subdivision Ordinance requires utilities to be installed underground throughout all new subdivisions. Economic and legal limitations make it extremely difficult to eliminate overhead utilities along existing transportation corridors. However, this issue should be considered when new arterial streets are extended and existing arterials and collectors are widened or reconstructed.

6.7 Summary

The City of Victoria's ability to maintain, improve and expand its infrastructure is vitally important to the community's future. Significant progress is being made. The city has invested approximately $300 million in capital improvements in the last 10 years. These infrastructure improvements include a new water plant, major sanitary sewer improvements, the reconstruction of several arterial streets, and significant drainage improvements in several outfalls. These $300 million in capital improvements have been accomplished without increasing property tax rates, and by increasing water and sewer rates only to the average level of cities of similar size in Texas.

Although progress is being made, significant challenges remain. Infrastructure needs will continue to exceed available resource levels. Growth will place additional demands on the city's vital systems. Most of the capital investment made in the last 10 years has focused on repairing and maintaining existing infrastructure. Anticipated growth will necessitate the extension of new streets and related facilities. Dollars spent on new expansion will take away from the limited resources available to maintain infrastructure systems. The need to balance existing and future needs will require the continued use of an effective Capital Improvements Program.

6.8 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Improve the condition of existing streets and ensure that future roadways are built to last.

Objective 1.1: Place a high priority on street maintenance in the budgeting and capital improvements processes.

Objective 1.2: Improve city street standards and specifications to provide for better-built city streets, which will minimize maintenance costs and extend the life of the street.

Goal 2: Provide storm drainage systems that minimize public harm and property damage due to flooding.

Objective 2.1: Correct existing drainage problems and deficiencies that may pose threats to public safety and the value of public and private property.

Objective 2.2: Improve drainage capacity in designated growth areas.

Objective 2.3: Prevent additional drainage problems in the future.

Objective 2.4: Protect the water quality of streams and rivers from storm water runoff.

Goal 3: Maintain and improve existing water and sanitary sewer systems.

Objective 3.1: Use a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to plan for the timely replacement of old, deteriorated water distribution and sanitary sewer collection mains.

Goal 4: Provide for improved water quality and quantity.

Objective 4.1: Acquire additional water rights.

Objective 4.2: Implement an aggressive water conservation program.

Objective 4.3: Maintain high water quality.

Goal 5: Coordinate infrastructure improvements to serve future development.

Objective 5.1: Plan for the orderly, coordinated extension and expansion of infrastructure facilities to serve future growth.

Objective 5.2: Encourage development in areas that are or can be efficiently served with public infrastructure.

CHAPTER 7

Parks and Recreation

Victoria's Natural Beauty

Parks and open space are essential elements in any urban environment. They enhance the quality of life while providing public space for recreation and relaxation. Victoria's unique setting along the banks of the Guadalupe River creates a valuable framework for parks and trails. The city's park system provides a range of park types and facilities designed to serve the various needs of its residents, young and old alike. The Comprehensive Plan Survey, conducted in October 2000, indicated that 67% of respondents thought that Victoria needed more parks and recreational opportunities, and over half (56%) thought the need was critical enough to provide additional public funding for parks.

VISION 2025

Victoria has improved park facilities and expanded recreational opportunities.

The City of Victoria Parks and Recreation Department faces many challenges as it seeks to manage and develop the city's park and recreation opportunities. The primary challenge is to ensure that the park system is shaped by design rather than happenstance. This chapter takes into account the various recreation needs of our residents, as well as the adequacy of the current facilities. Finally, it provides projections of park and open space needs for our community by the year 2025.

7.1 Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan

The Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan was approved by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in January 2007. This plan was developed by the Parks Commission to guide the development of the park system and assist in identifying and meeting the park and recreation needs of the city and its citizens. The plan allows city staff, the Parks Commission, and City Council to anticipate and respond to demands and opportunities rather than merely reacting to circumstances. The parks master plan should be updated at least once every five years.

7.2 Facilities Inventory

Victoria's park and open space system contains 15 public parks within its boundaries, totaling over 716 acres of open space, recreation areas, picnic areas, and playgrounds. Table 7.1 is an inventory of existing public parkland.

Table 7.1 Public Park Inventory

	Park	Size (Acres)	Type/Classification
1	Boulevard Park	1.40	Neighborhood
2	Brownson Park	0.90	Neighborhood
3	Community Center Park	73.17	Community
4	De Leon Plaza	1.77	Special Use
5	Ethel Lee Tracy Park	30.5	Community
6	Greenbelt Park	12.87	Greenbelt
7	Hopkins Park	11.58	Neighborhood
8	Martin Luther King, Jr. Park	1.72	Neighborhood
9	Meadowlane Park	1.20	Neighborhood
10	Memorial Square	1.20	Special Use
11	Pine Street Community Park	3.30	Neighborhood
12	Queen City Park	2.11	Neighborhood
13	Riverside Park	565.08	Regional
14	Ted B. Reed Park	8.00	Neighborhood
15	Will Rogers Park	1.90	Neighborhood
Total		**716.70**	

Source: City of Victoria Parks & Recreation Department

The park system is divided into five (5) classifications: neighborhood, community, regional, greenbelt, and special use, based on the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards. These classifications and standards assist the city in evaluating the current system and in planning for future parks.

Neighborhood Park

Neighborhood parks typically are 15 acres or less and serve adjacent residential areas within walking or biking distance (½ mile radius). Facilities include play equipment, picnic areas, multi-purpose fields and courts for sports such as basketball and tennis. NRPA recommends that a city have 1.25 to 2 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 people.

Ted B. Reed Park - Salem Road

Community Park

Community parks tend to serve many neighborhoods within a 2-mile radius and provide many of the same types of facilities as neighborhood parks with the addition of athletic complexes, large swimming pools, community centers, and nature preserves. Community parks are usually 30-100 acres in size. NRPA recommends an average of 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 population.

Regional Park

Regional parks serve the entire city and surrounding region and are normally 200 acres in size or larger. The park is usually located in an area of unique natural beauty, such as Riverside Park.

Greenbelt Park

Greenbelts are linear parks which can be located along drainage ways and streets. The greenbelt serves multiple functions: linking together neighborhoods, parks, schools and other points of interest, serving as an alternative transportation corridor, and providing a buffer between different land uses. A multi-purpose trail system is typically included for walking, jogging and biking.

Special Use Park

Special use parks are areas of special interest such as a cemetery or downtown plaza. These parks provide space for informal public gatherings and amenities such as outdoor furnishings and plantings. Examples of a special use park in Victoria are De Leon Plaza and Memorial Square.

Figure 7.1 shows the distribution of parks within the city. A majority of public parkland is concentrated in the central and southern portions of the community.

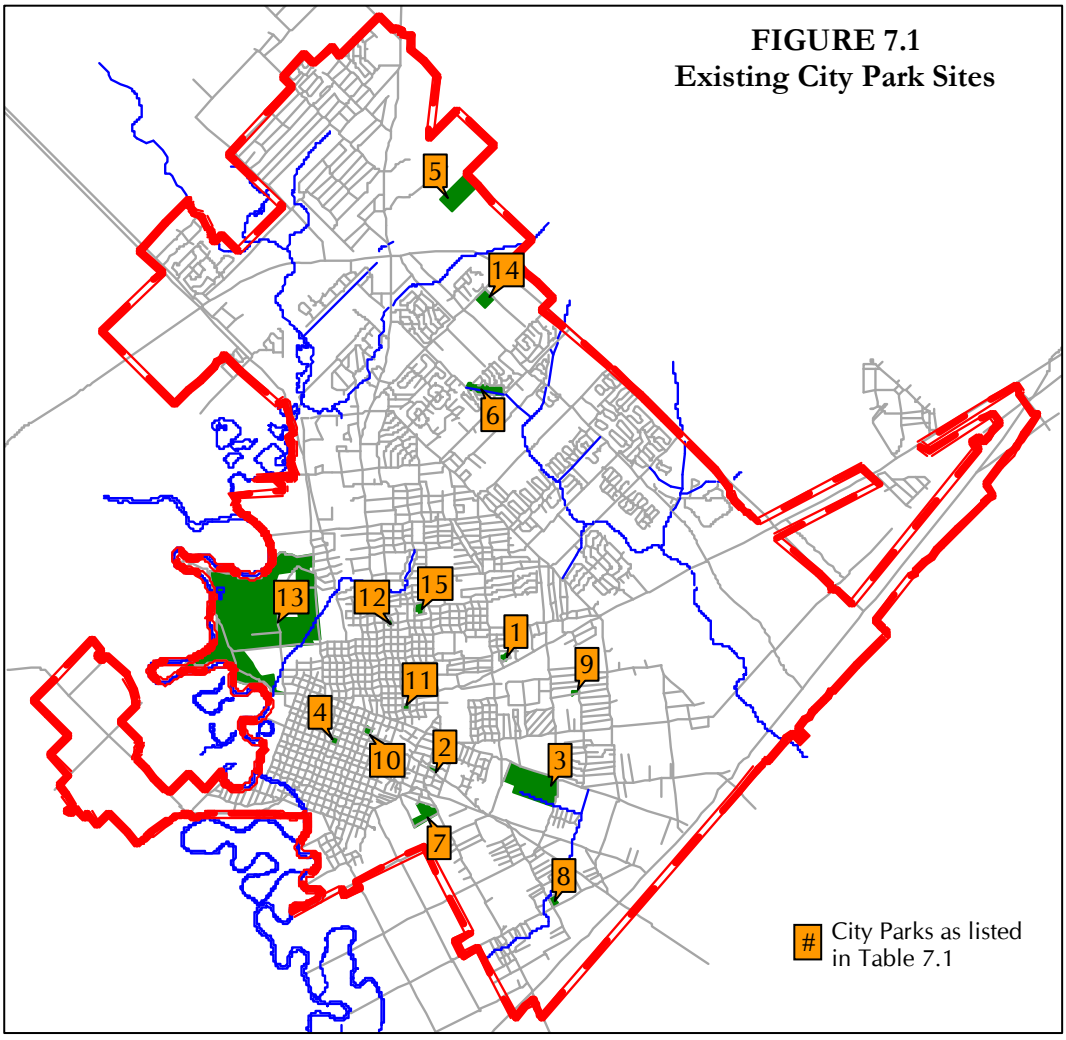
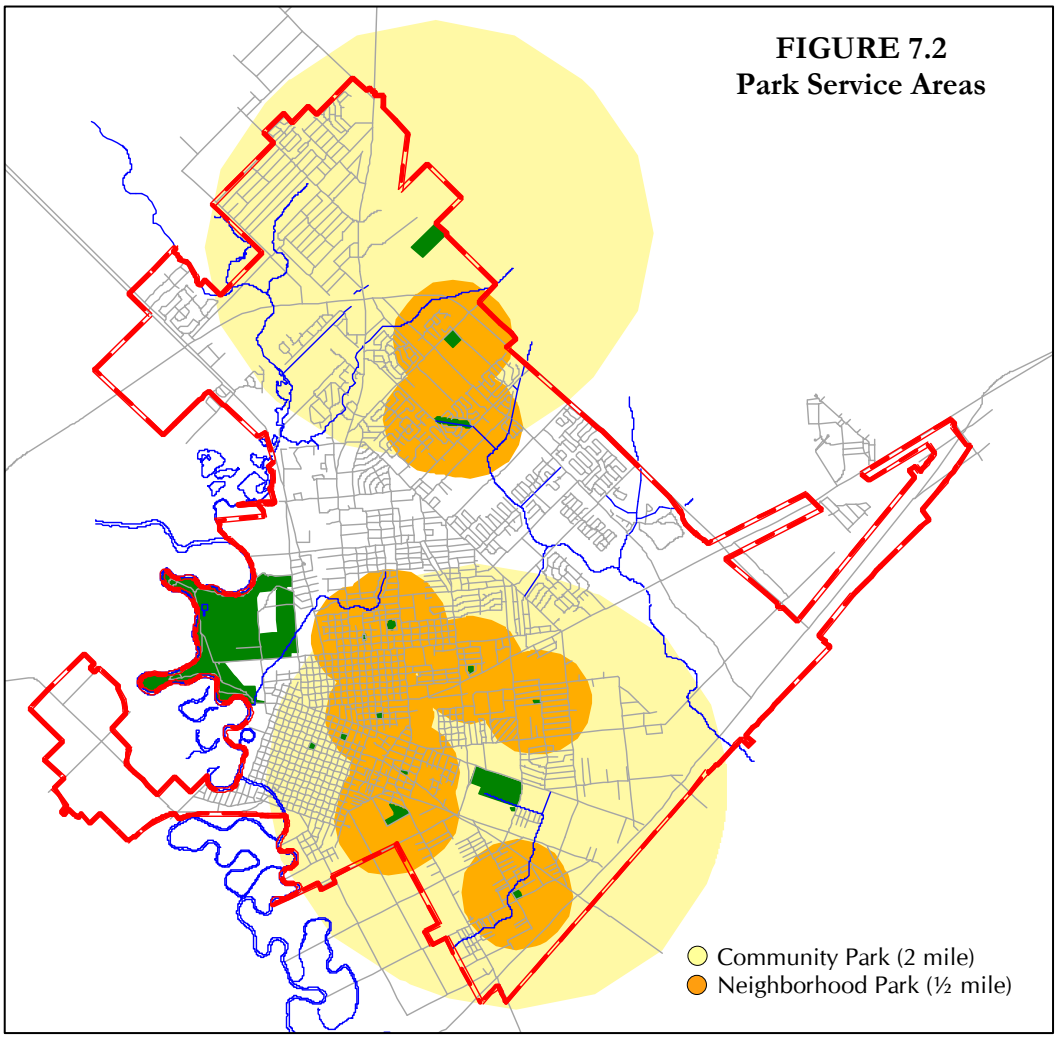


Figure 7.2 shows the various service areas for Victoria's community parks and neighborhood parks. Since De Leon Plaza and Memorial Square are considered special use parks, they do not have a specific service area. Riverside Park is a

regional park and serves the entire region. As shown in Figure 7.2, large portions of the city are currently not served by community or neighborhood parks. Steps should be taken to address the current service gap and to ensure that parks serve future growth areas.

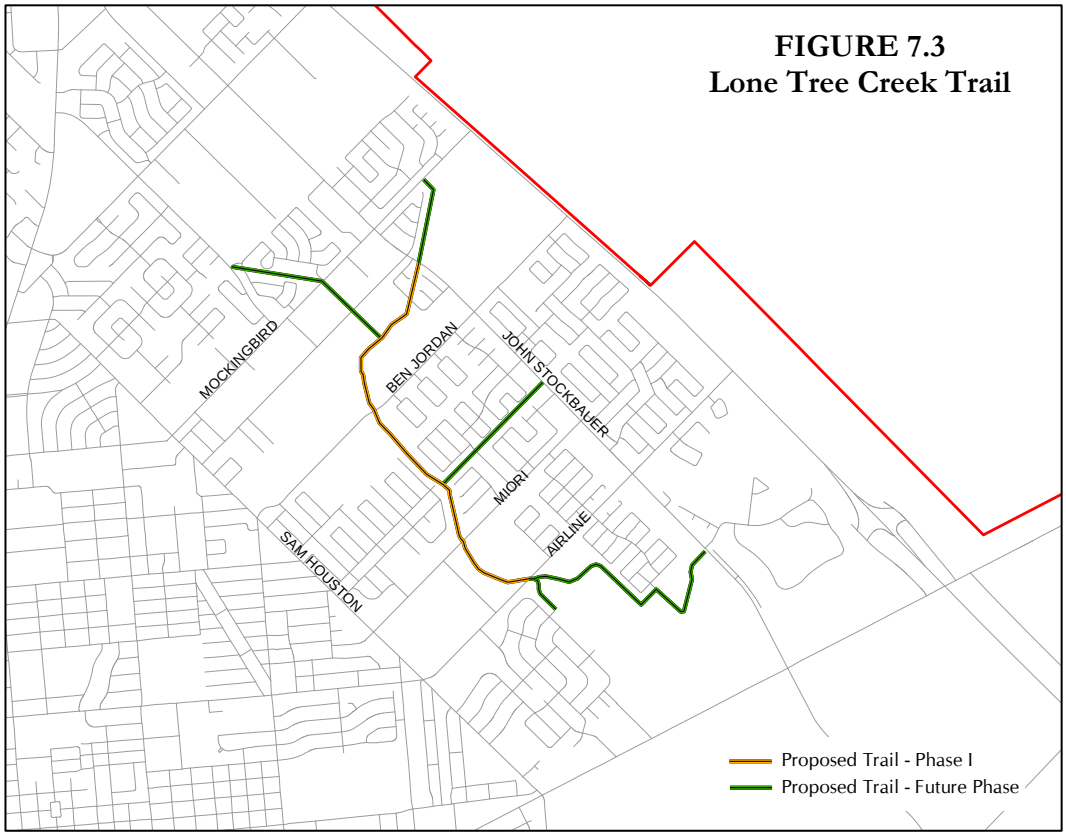


7.3 Hike and Bike Trails

Tremendous potential exists in Victoria for providing greenbelts and trails. The Comprehensive Plan Survey identified a need for hike and bike trails and improved pedestrian circulation. A developed trails system would provide recreational opportunities within the city, connecting neighborhoods, schools and other services, and providing links between parks. Studies show that trails and other greenbelts have a positive impact on adjacent property values.

Natural and man-made drainage ways currently branch out across Victoria. These existing drainage ways can serve as the base for a trail system. Lone Tree Creek is one of those natural drainage facilities that stretches across a large section of northeastern Victoria. While extensive improvements are under construction to

widen this drainage channel, the city is taking the opportunity to add a 10-foot wide pathway on the east side of the creek from Airline Road to John Stockbauer Drive (See Figure 7.3). The 1.6 mile trail will include a pedestrian bridge to provide trail access for those living on the west side of the creek. The Lone Tree Creek Trail project is a significant step toward addressing the need for improved pedestrian and cycling opportunities. Over 17,200 residents live within one-half mile of the trail.



A hike and bike trail master plan should be developed to delineate appropriate trail expansions for the Lone Tree Creek Trail, additional trail locations and provide for their implementation. Finally, the city should coordinate the design of future streets and bridges to allow uninterrupted pedestrian and bicycle travel under or adjacent to vehicular routes. This can be accomplished by providing adequate headroom between the path and support structure where bridges are used or by using box culverts large enough for pedestrians and cyclists.

7.4 Youth Sports Complex

Sports activities have always been an important part of Victoria culture. Competitive baseball dates back to the 1950s and 1960s at Riverside Stadium with the Rosebuds, a semi-pro baseball team. Little League has been in Riverside Park for nearly fifty years. The Girls Softball Association has been organized for over 20 years in Riverside Park as well. These fields are showing their age and more are needed to accommodate the number of youth interested in baseball and softball.

Victorians have been talking about new baseball and softball facilities for twenty years. In 2000 the Youth Sports Alliance was formed to discuss opportunities for baseball, softball, soccer and others with the goal of working together to provide youth sports activities. This group was the start of the movement for the Youth Sports Complex. The Parks and Recreation Commission embraced the idea and was directed to study the options and make a recommendation to City Council.

In May 2006, voters approved a bond election to construct a new Youth Sports Complex. The facility will have seven baseball fields and five softball fields. Each will have one championship field. Other facilities include a concession/ restroom area, covered bleachers, practice areas, a skate park, and a maintenance facility. When completed in the Spring of 2008 not only will Little League and Girls Softball be playing at the complex, but the VISD Girls Softball Program and University of Houston-Victoria Lady Jaguars will be calling the complex home as well. Future plans for the complex also include a sand volleyball court and a bicycle dirt track.

7.5 Tourism and Economic Development

Victoria's parks are attractions for both residents and visitors alike. As Victoria strives to diversify its economy, these facilities and attractions can play an important role in the local economy. According to a recent study by John L. Crompton, "*Measuring the Economic Impact*", the economic role of parks may take the form of attracting tourists, attracting businesses, attracting retirees, and enhancing real estate values.

Attracting Tourists
The major factor considered by tourists when deciding on which communities to visit, is the availability of different attractions. In most cities, those attractions are dominated by facilities and services provided by the park and recreation department and their non-profit partners (parks, events, festivals, athletic tournaments, museums, historical sites, cultural performances, etc.). Without such attractions, there is little opportunity for tourism.

Attracting Businesses
The viability of businesses in the highly recruited technology, research and development, company headquarters, and service sectors, is dependent on their ability to attract and retain highly educated professional employees. The deciding factor of where these individuals choose to live is often the quality of life in the geographic vicinity of the business. No matter how quality of life is defined, park and recreation opportunities are consistently a major component.

Attracting Retirees
A new clean growth industry in America today is the increasing number of relatively affluent, active retirees. Their decision as to where to locate is substantially governed by two factors: climate and recreational opportunities.

Enhancing Real Estate Values

People are prepared to pay more to live close to natural park areas. The enhanced value of these properties results in higher property tax revenues for the city. Findings from "*The Impact of Parks and Open Space on Property Values and the Property Tax Base*" by John L. Crompton suggest that residential property abutting, fronting or within 500 feet of a park area have up to 20% higher property values than similar property located away from parks.

Memorial Square

The economic impact of tourist attractions and sport tournaments can not be ignored. Efforts to attract additional visitors to the area such as "Winter Texans" can also bolster local sales tax revenues. For example, a softball tournament which requires an overnight stay typically generates $100 per day per team member. A typical community festival, single day event, has an average per capita expenditure by out-of-town visitors of $25. (Source: John Crompton, *Measuring the Economic Impact*)

Heritage Park Development

Victoria is the current home of the Fort St. Louis Public Archeology Laboratory. Visitors can see the methods used to recover, clean, and document artifacts from Fort St. Louis and the excavation of LaSalle's ship the *Belle* as well as some of the artifacts themselves. Fort St. Louis was the first European colony in Texas. French explorer Robert Cavalier, Sieur de LaSalle established the fort in 1685. In 1689, LaSalle left the fort and Indians killed the remaining settlers. Approximately four months after the fort was attacked, a Spanish expedition arrived to find the abandoned fort. They built a presidio on the site and claimed the territory for Spain. Since 1999, a team of archeologists sponsored by the Texas Historical Commission has been excavating the site, which is located in Victoria County. A large number of artifacts have been recovered both from this site and from the wreckage of LaSalle's ship.

Fort St. Louis
ARCHEOLOGICAL PROJECT

The success of this archeological project has generated significant local interest in developing replicas of both Fort St. Louis and the Mission Nuestra Senora del Espiritu Santo del Zuniga as tourist attractions for the city. Riverside Park has been identified as the appropriate location for both replicas. A partnership of interested organizations and individuals is being developed to see the project into reality.

7.6 Riverside Park

Riverside Park is the city's largest park and quite possibly one of the city's greatest untapped resources. Much discussion in this plan has been devoted to economic development and the role that tourism plays in the economy. Riverside

Park in particular has great potential with the Texas Zoo, Botanical Gardens, Riverside Stadium, nature trails, golf course, RV park facilities and of course the Guadalupe River. The potential of recreating the historic Fort St. Louis and the Spanish mission could serve as additional attractions to the park.

Riverside Park

The Steering Committee noted several improvements that would make the park more attractive and accessible. Specifically, clearing brush along the riverbanks to provide scenic vistas of the river and improving access and signage to the park from Red River and Main Streets. In 2007 the Victoria Riverside Paddling Trail was launched in cooperation with the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority and the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. Opportunities exist to expand the paddling trail and provide additional services such as canoe and kayak rental.

Riverside Stadium

A major facility in Riverside Park is Riverside Stadium. The stadium was home to the "Rosebuds", a minor league baseball team in Victoria during the 1950s and 1960s. It is the only baseball stadium in Victoria and is currently used by Victoria ISD for all of its home games. Basically untouched since its construction, the stadium still has its original grand stand and wood bleachers. A major renovation of the stadium is underway to accommodate additional use by the new University of Houston-Victoria Jaguars baseball team. Continued preservation of this important local landmark should be supported.

7.7 Future Needs

The adequacy of existing park facilities can be determined by comparing the needs of present and projected populations with national standards. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends providing 1.25 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 population and 5 acres of community parkland per 1,000 population. These standards represent minimum objectives to be achieved. They should be used as a guide rather than a rule. Local interest and recreation trends should influence the standard adopted by Victoria.

The City of Victoria currently provides an average of 0.56 acres of neighborhood parks and 1.71 acres of community parks per 1,000 population. It is recommended that the city provide at least the minimum standard to meet citizens' expectation of a high level of service, and provide opportunities to encourage visitors and tourism. The estimated population for Victoria in 2025 is 74,080. Therefore, approximately

93 acres in neighborhood parkland and 370 acres in community parkland will be required. An overall increase of 327 acres above the existing facilities will be needed to meet park and open space needs in the future.


Rose Garden at Riverside Park

In conjunction with the acquisition of new parks, the city should continue the revitalization of its existing parks. Revitalization ensures all residents have access to adequate and inviting facilities. Park facilities should utilize existing natural features to the maximum extent possible. Besides significant natural features, other means to entice residents to visit park facilities include planted trees and landscaping, comfortable areas to rest, and connected pathways. Park use can also be increased through the creation of a connected system of transportation options including sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes.

7.8 Parkland Acquisition

Parkland can be obtained by three methods. First, the city may purchase land to be used as recreational space. Alternatively, parkland can be donated as a gift, or obtained as a dedication to the city by developers as a requirement of the subdivision process. Currently, the city does not have a park dedication requirement or other process by which to obtain parkland. It must be recognized that transportation, drainage and community image objectives can also be achieved through park and open-space acquisition. The city should develop and adopt standards and location criteria for future parklands to ensure adequate distribution and maintenance of park facilities that will assist in achieving the multiple objectives mentioned in this chapter.

7.9 Summary

Parks and recreation revitalize the city and enrich the lives of city residents, neighborhoods, and the City of Victoria as a whole. Victoria has the opportunity to develop an enviable park system with its abundance of natural features, rich historical heritage and potential for links throughout the city. Victoria must seek innovative solutions to meet the needs of a growing and diverse population while preserving natural resources. The City of Victoria is not the sole provider of recreational services. Many other entities overlap with the city's efforts. Coordination and cooperation with other recreation providers will continue to be important and should receive greater emphasis in the future.

The city's commitment to provide adequate parks and recreation facilities is demonstrated by the implementation of the Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan. This Plan compliments the goal and objectives outlined in this chapter.

Using citizen input, it assesses community needs, evaluates priorities, and establishes implementation plans.

7.10 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Revitalize existing parks.

- Objective 1.1: Provide a high level of maintenance.
- Objective 1.2: Beautify existing park facilities.
- Objective 1.3: Facilitate community and neighborhood involvement and communication in the planning and improvement of park facilities.

Goal 2: Develop recreational opportunities that attract tourism.

- Objective 2.1: Build a replica of Fort St. Louis and Mission Nuestra Senora del Espiritu Santo de Zuniga.
- Objective 2.2: Promote heritage type festivals (one large festival).
- Objective 2.3: Promote "Winter Texan" attractions.
- Objective 2.4: Maintain Riverside RV Park and campground facilities.
- Objective 2.5: Continue to promote recreational development along the Guadalupe River.
- Objective 2.6: Promote eco-tourism (bird watching, wildlife, nature trails).
- Objective 2.7: Support ongoing renovation of Riverside Stadium.

Goal 3: Ensure adequate quantity and equal distribution of parks, open space, and recreation facilities.

- Objective 3.1: Facilitate regular communication between the Parks Commission, Planning Commission and City Council to discuss matters of mutual interest.
- Objective 3.2: Coordinate the provision of recreational facilities with other providers (e.g. VISD schools, county and developers).
- Objective 3.3: Develop and adopt minimum standards for the development and location of future parks.
- Objective 3.4: Increase parkland to achieve National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines and meet the citizens' needs.

Goal 4: Develop natural greenbelts with trail systems to provide pedestrian and biking linkages for neighborhoods, schools, parks and other destinations.

- Objective 4.1: Prepare and adopt a hike and bike trail master plan.
- Objective 4.2: Expand the Lone Tree Creek Hike and Bike Trail.
- Objective 4.3: Explore opportunities along Victoria's other natural and man-made drainage systems to provide pedestrian ways that will link the entire park system.

Goal 5: Develop additional recreational opportunities.

- Objective 5.1: Expand recreational programs and facilities to meet anticipated needs.
- Objective 5.2: Implement additional phases of the youth sports complex.
- Objective 5.3: Encourage regional sport tournaments.
- Objective 5.4: Expand the Riverside Paddling Trail.
- Objective 5.5: Encourage senior citizen activities and programs.
- Objective 5.6: Develop a children's water playground.

CHAPTER 8

Community Services

Providing Quality Services

The City of Victoria provides a complete range of services to its citizens and businesses. These services and facilities include fire and police protection, emergency medical service (EMS), the library, solid waste and recycling, and the community center. They serve purposes ranging from health and safety to general well-being. Effective community services and facilities are major components of Victoria's physical, social and economic fabric. They help define the city's identity and contribute to its quality of life and economic prosperity. The Quality of Life portion of the Comprehensive Plan Survey revealed that citizens are most satisfied with the level of fire and police protection, EMS services and the library.

VISION 2025

Victoria has quality municipal services and facilities making Victoria a safe, healthy, and enjoyable place to live.

The city must continue to be prepared to meet the community service and facility expectations of a growing population in an orderly, cost-effective manner. The need for city services depends on multiple factors, including population density and distribution, expected growth, and local income. Also, the capacity of existing services plays an important role. This chapter provides the background needed to understand the level of service currently enjoyed by Victoria citizens, details about current programs, the adequacy of current facilities, and suggested methods for achieving goals for the future. Finally, it provides projections of needs for our community in the year 2025.

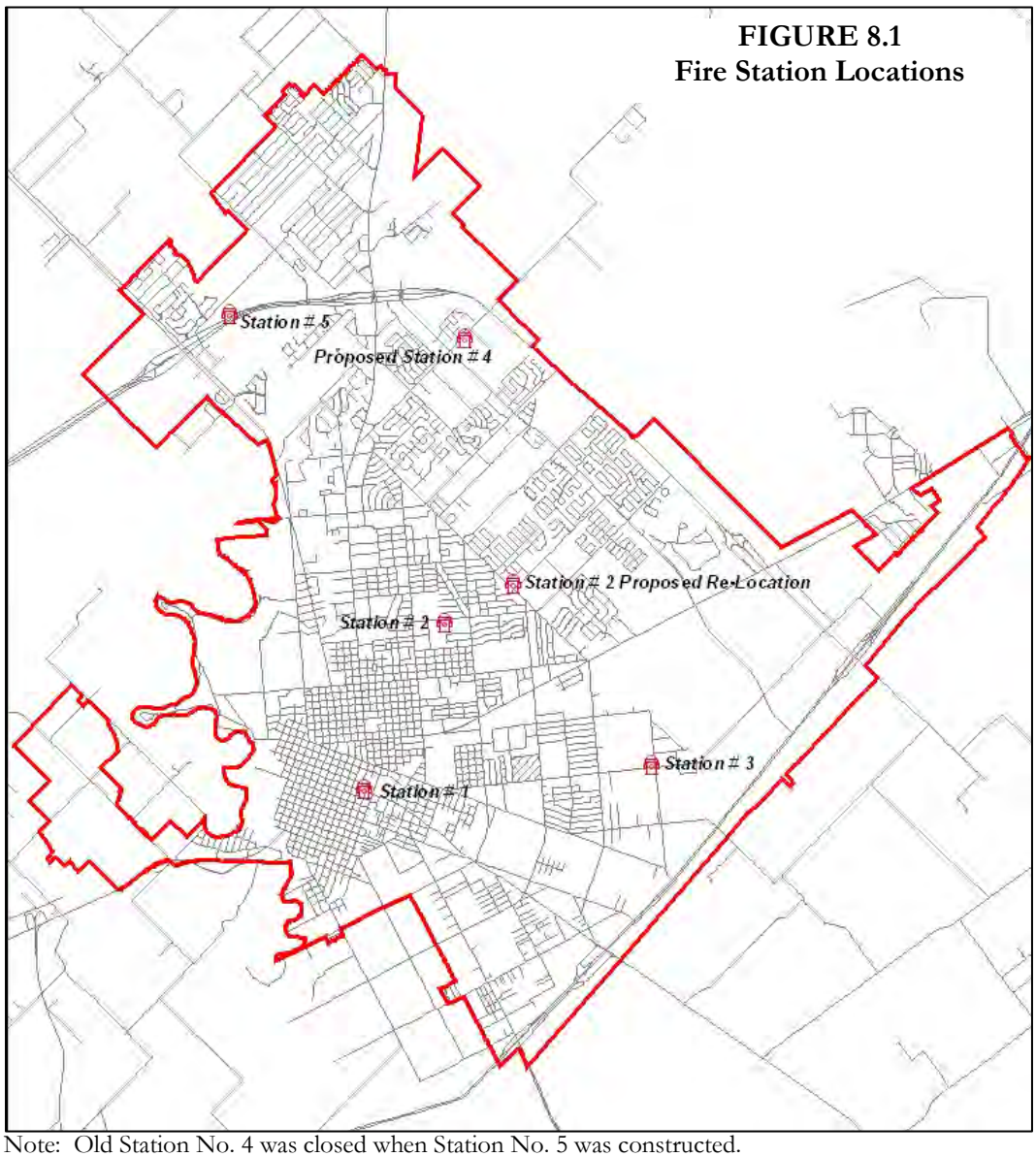
8.1 Fire and Emergency Medical Services

The Victoria Fire Department is responsible for providing fire, rescue, emergency medical, hazardous materials response services, and public safety education for the citizens of the City and County of Victoria. Their service area includes approximately 900 square miles and over 85,000 people. The Fire Department's mission is to provide our community with the highest quality of emergency services, public safety education, and municipal code enforcement. We will achieve this mission by developing a positive and productive work environment filled with a team of professionals that are self-disciplined, highly trained, and motivated to serve the community in a caring and compassionate manner. The members of the Victoria Fire Department have a shared vision of creating an organization that is recognized

for exceeding the needs of the community and setting the standard of excellence in emergency services.

The department is divided into three divisions: Life Safety, Operations, and Administrative Services. Staff includes 108 paid personnel; of these 102 are divided among 3 shifts which work 24 hours on duty and 48 hours off duty. The minimum staffing for each shift is 26 which includes staffing for 4 engine companies, 1 ladder company, 1 tanker truck/ladder company, 1 brush truck, and 4 mobile intensive care ambulances.

FIGURE 8.1
Fire Station Locations



Note: Old Station No. 4 was closed when Station No. 5 was constructed.

Victoria presently has four fire stations in strategic locations around town as illustrated in Figure 8.1. The city is divided into service districts and each fire station is assigned primary responsibility for responding to calls in that district. The ideal service response, as established by the State Insurance Services Office (ISO), is a 1½

Elevation of Future Fire Station No. 4

driving mile distance for each pumper from each fire station to an emergency. This service response criterion generally allows for a target response time of less than six minutes. Currently, portions of central and northeast Victoria are greater than 1½ driving miles from the nearest fire station. Some areas have overlapping coverage. The city opened Fire Station 4 in Ted B. Reed Park in late Summer 2008 and, funds permitting, will relocate Fire Station 2 to recently purchase property on Miori Lane near Sam Houston Drive.

Current response time goals for the department are as follows:

- Basic Life Support (BLS) – Five minutes (300 seconds) or less for the arrival of a BLS unit at 90% of all emergency medical incidents in the city.
- Advanced Life Support (ALS) – Nine minutes (540 seconds) or less for the arrival of an ALS unit at 90% of all emergency medical incidents in the city.
- Engine Company – Four minutes (240 seconds) or less for the arrival of the first arriving engine company at a fire suppression incident and/or eight minutes (480 seconds) or less for the deployment of a full alarm assignment at 90% of all fire suppression incidents in the city.

During the year 2006, the department responded to nearly 7,200 incidents, approximately 20% of these incidents were outside the city limits. Table 8.1 shows the number of responses for vehicles in each fire station and the number of incidents for each year.

Table 8.1 Fire Department Activity, 2002-2006

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Vehicle Responses					
Station No. 1	3,893	3,910	3,492	3,620	3,738
Station No. 2	3,954	4,070	3,955	3,895	3,843
Station No. 3	2,135	2,191	1,966	2,010	1,918
Station No. 5	2,588	2,691	2,515	2,606	2,745
Total	12,570	12,862	11,928	12,131	12,244
Incidents	7,090	7,478	6,816	7,101	7,190

Source: Victoria Fire Department

ISO Rating

The adequacy of fire and emergency medical services is primarily measured by the response time. The ISO calculates ratings every ten years and assigns a rating from one to ten, with one being the best. The Victoria Fire Department has earned a Class 4 fire insurance rating. To strive for the best possible rating, the department is constantly monitoring new residential and commercial development. It is anticipated that, after the opening of Fire Station 4 and the relocation of Fire Station 2 to Miori Lane, the city's ISO rating will improve from a Class 4 to a Class 2.

Future Needs

Physical expansion of the city is the determining factor in planning for future fire facilities. The continued growth of Victoria will require additional fire stations in areas presently outside the city limits. Failure to provide these facilities would likely result in a higher fire insurance rating, which would increase premiums that residents pay for coverage.

In addition to the facility requirements of the department, there is the need for trained staff and good equipment. Staffing with the required number of fire fighters, as well as up-to-date equipment and trucks, will continue to be the most demanding and costly challenge to the department. Costs of construction, equipment and operation of a station are high and budgetary planning should be made far in advance of the needs.

8.2 Police Services

Safety is vital to the development of a vibrant and enjoyable place to live. Effective delivery of police services affects all aspects of the community. Employers and individuals frequently consider a community's level of crime in their selection process for relocation and development. The Victoria Police Department provides police protection to residents within the city limits. Persons living outside the city rely on the Victoria County Sheriff's Office for their service. All of the data found in this chapter relates to law enforcement and crimes occurring within the city limits.

The Police Department is the largest single department in the city and has the largest budget of any other city department. The department is divided into three divisions: Patrol, Investigations and Support Services. The Patrol Divisions include four Patrol Platoons and the Traffic Safety Unit. Investigations is comprised of Detectives assigned to the investigation of assault crimes; Property crimes; juvenile related crimes; vice and narcotics; the Crime Scene Unit; and the School Resource Officers. The Support Services Divisions includes Community Services, Records, 911, and Equipment/Inventory. In the Police Department Administration is the Office of the Police Chief, Deputy Chief and Professional Services (Personnel and Training). The entire department staff includes approximately 107 commissioned personnel and 39 civilian personnel. The department headquarters are located in the City Hall complex at 306 S. Bridge Street. The department maintains one sub-station in Victoria Mall at 7802 N. Navarro. The Community Services section is also located at the Victoria Mall sub-station enabling greater visibility and more person-to-person partnerships. The Department maintains a high level of professionalism, excellence, and competence

through its dedication to enhancing the quality of life of the citizens of Victoria through providing effective, efficient, professional and compassionate police service to all persons who require or need assistance.

Crime Rate

Victoria uses Class I offenses as a measure of crime in the community. The following offenses are considered Class I offenses: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft. In Victoria, as in most cities, theft makes up the largest percentage of Class I offenses and the violent crimes have the smallest percentage (see Table 8.2). Over the last 10 years (2000-2007), Victoria has seen an overall average reduction in the Class I crime rate of about 6.22%.

Table 8.2 Class I Crimes, 2000-2007

Crime Category	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Murder	2	4	2	6	8	9	2	3
Rape	37	32	36	31	44	50	21	25
Robbery	76	90	58	92	110	110	70	64
Aggravated Assault	240	208	213	286	361	333	347	350
Burglary	674	687	838	863	858	668	719	824
Theft	2,331	2,125	2,727	3,213	3,420	2,991	2,434	2,292
Motor Vehicle Theft	126	163	152	177	189	193	144	145
Total	**3,486**	**3,309**	**4,026**	**4,668**	**4,990**	**4,354**	**3,478**	**3,703**
% Change	**+5.35%**	**-17.80%**	**-13.75%**	**-6.45%**	**+14.61%**	**+16.17%**	**+1.22%**	**+9.75%**
Calls for Police Assistance	76,060	75,513	82,402	81,170	94,610	75,756	68,755	68,867

Source: Victoria Police Department

Crime Prevention Programs

The department consistently works to foster close partnerships with the community to address issues and to effectively solve problems. It coordinates a wide variety of proactive programs designed to educate the public in areas of crime prevention, personal safety, and school education. The programs include:

- Civilian Police Academy offers citizens an opportunity to experience law enforcement work in a positive and uniquely interactive way. Through the academy, citizens are exposed to hands-on police work including the criminal justice system, traffic law, simulated building searches, simulated traffic stops, and a search and handcuffing exercise.
- The Crime Stoppers program provides citizens with an anonymous way to provide police with information about unsolved crimes. Callers may receive a cash reward up to $1,000, if their information leads to an arrest and Grand Jury indictment.

- H.E.A.T. (Help End Auto Theft) is a voluntary statewide vehicle registration program designed as a theft deterrent. The program allows law enforcement officers anywhere in Texas to stop a registered vehicle between 1:00am and 5:00am and to verify vehicle ownership by the driver.

- Other programs offered are theft, burglary, and robbery prevention, shoplifting prevention, neighborhood watch, personal safety, home and business security surveys, traffic and driving safety, senior safety, identity theft, bicycle safety, and child fingerprinting, and many others.

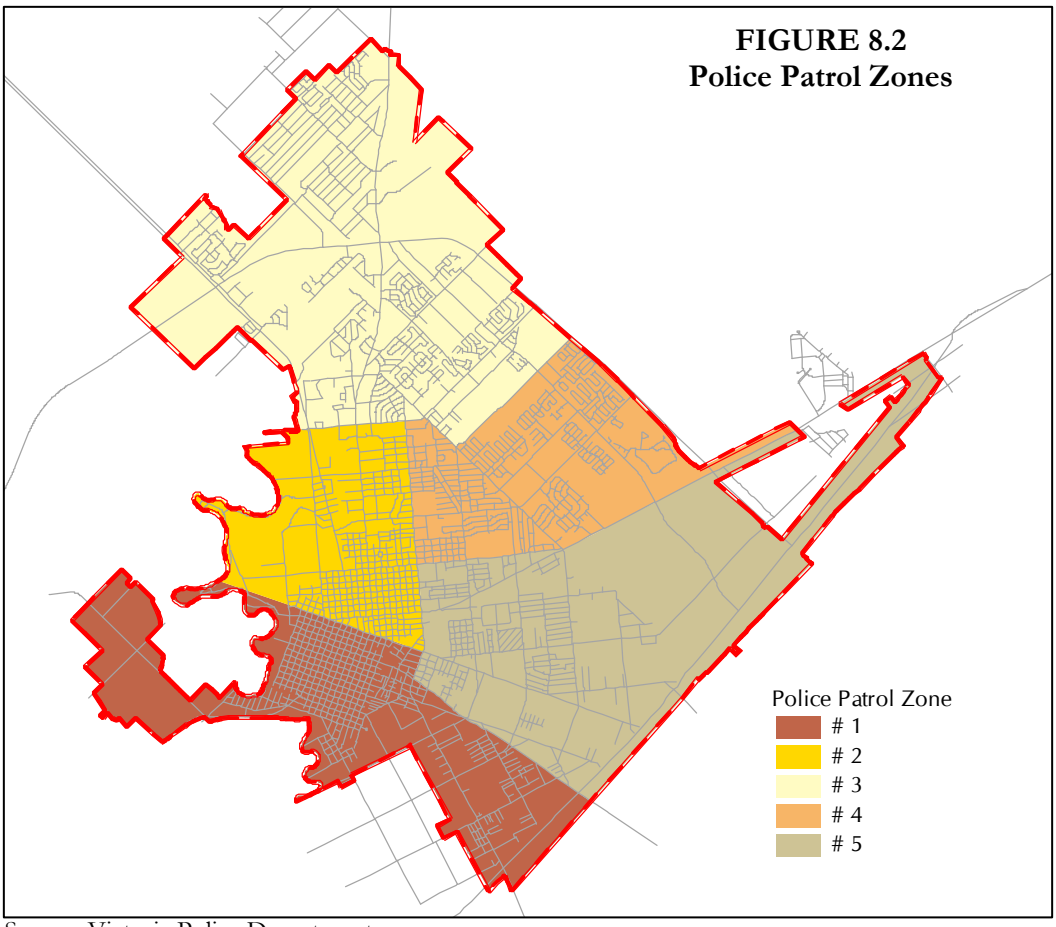
Auto Theft Investigator

The police department has a specially trained auto theft investigator who is charged with deterring the theft of vehicles. The investigator has recently acquired the ability to etch the VIN of the vehicle to glass, set up a bait vehicle with tracking abilities to catch perspective car thieves.

Police Patrol Zones

The city is divided into five police patrol zones which are designed to accomplish the following (see Figure 8.2):

FIGURE 8.2
Police Patrol Zones



Source: Victoria Police Department

- Equalize workload between zones to provide equal time to patrol, traffic enforcement and self-initiated problem solving;
- Divide zones so that heavily populated, heavily used arterials are the borders of each zone fostering overlapping patrol patterns;
- Reduce travel time from any one location to any other location within the same zone.

School Resource Officers

In cooperation with the Victoria Independent School District, the department assigns six officers to work full-time at the District's three middle schools, two high schools and alternative school. These officers are specially trained in educational settings and assist the enforcement efforts within the community while causing the least disruption to the educational process.

Future Needs

Future staffing needs can be determined based on national standards, current staffing and population projections. National standards call for a ratio from 1.8 to 2.0 police officers per 1,000 citizens. The Victoria Police Department has historically had 1.7 officers for every 1,000 citizens. Table 8.3 shows that in order to maintain the current ratio, the department will need about 7 additional employees every five years to meet the city's need for police services. Since population projections may vary, the need for more staffing in the future could be less or greater than presented in the table.

Table 8.3 Projected Police Needs

Year	Population	Officers (1.70/1000 residents)	Civilians (0.70/1000 residents)	Total Projected Personnel
2000	60,603	103	42	145
2005	61,231	104	43	147
2010	64,309	109	45	154
2015	67,904	115	47	162
2020	71,170	120	49	169
2025	74,080	125	51	176

Source: Victoria Police Department. Year 2000 figures are actual counts, not projections.

Maintaining a full staff level is vital to the continued success of the department. The city will need to be vigilant in the recruitment and retention of experienced personnel. A pay scale that keeps up with other area law enforcement agencies and inflation must be a high priority.

8.3 Library Services

The Victoria Public Library serves the entire city and county meeting the diverse information needs through excellence in collections, facilities and reference services. The Library consists of one library located downtown at 302 N. Main Street. Constructed in 1975, the 33,000 square foot facility includes both children's

and adult collection areas, an area devoted to local history/genealogy, as well as a computer lab where classes are taught.

Victoria Public Library

Organized by members of the Bronte Club, the Library went public on May 12, 1899 with 515 volumes. The City of Victoria assumed ownership of the library in 1971, and took over its administration from the Bronte Club. Since 1974 the city and county have shared funding for the library. The County owns the building and the city administers its operation. All staff members are city employees and the director reports to the city manager. A Library Advisory Board provides oversight and makes recommendations regarding library policy. The Board is made up of eleven members appointed by the City, County, Friends of the Library and the Bronte Club.

Programs

The library staff coordinates a wide variety of programs. Services are provided for all age groups ranging from children's story times to adult literacy and Internet usage. In addition to offering regular story times, the children's staff provides specialized programs during the year, such as the Valentine's workshop. Every summer the Summer Reading Program brings in many children. The Library also offers adult programming on a regular basis. Basic computer and Internet classes are available in the computer lab.

Collections

The Library focuses on maintaining a collection of high interest and current materials along with an emphasis on personal investing and genealogy sources. Table 8.4 shows collection variations over recent years. The decrease during 2008 is due to a concerted weeding needed to accommodate the decreased shelving available in the new floor plan. Patrons can also view over 1,700 titles in electronic format in their homes.

Table 8.4 Library Collections

Fiscal Year	Volumes
2003	139,040
2004	141,709
2005	142,319
2006	145,318
2007	148,764
2008 (incomplete year)	137,262

Source: Victoria Public Library

Table 8.5 shows the total number of times (transactions) material has been checked out from the library. The reduction in circulation can be partially attributed to the age of the collection as well as to increased electronic use patterns.

Table 8.5 Library Circulation

Fiscal Year	Transactions
2003	270,156
2004	288,451
2005	285,435
2006	279,679
2007	276,357
2008(projection)	280,000

Source: Victoria Public Library

Technology

Technology has had a great influence on the distribution of information and resources. Understanding the important role of information technology and resource sharing, the Library uses automation to create links to many other libraries so Victorians have access to a wealth of information beyond that available at our facility. The Library has 25 full time Internet access workstations, 6 PAC stations, and a computer lab with 10 Internet access workstations which can also be used for Internet access when classes are not being conducted. For users who choose to bring their own computers the Library offers wireless access. The Library also has a web site, www.victoria.lib.tx.us. The Library is striving to maximize services that may be accessed from home computers.

Future Needs

By standard measures of library space needs the Victoria Public Library is currently too small for the population served and the collections housed. Standard planning criteria used by library building consultants indicate a minimum of 0.75 square feet per capita with 1.00 square foot per capita preferred. A national library planning consultant was retained in 1999 to formulate a facilities plan for Victoria Public Library. The plan, which was based on current practice at the time, called for a central library and a branch system. Although the principal consultant in his recommendation for a branch on the north side of town stated that his philosophy was to build fewer, but much larger branches. His decision to recommend a north side location was based on a thorough review of City of Victoria demographic studies and distance considerations.

Since that time the city management has decided to address the existing building first. The 33,000 square foot building at 302 North Main Street is currently being renovated with no increase of square footage. A larger building (45,000-50,000 square feet) on the north side of Victoria would address space shortages for service as well as population shifts within the community. A plan such as this which emphasizes larger free standing units versus a central library and smaller, somewhat dependent branches has worked well in Plano and Carrolton and is planned for Denton and McKinney, growing communities noted for the quality of their library service.

8.4 Solid Waste and Recycling

The Solid Waste Department is responsible for the collection the city's residential solid waste and operation of the city's recycling efforts. The department consists of 38 Solid Waste employees with 15 garbage trucks and five Recycling employees with four trucks for brush and bulk items. The city contracts with Waste Management of Southeast Texas to collect commercial waste.

Residential waste is currently collected biweekly on Monday/Thursday and Tuesday/Friday by city crews and equipment. The current operation is a manual collection system, using 3-person crews and rear-load trucks. The manual system with twice-per-week collection provides an excellent level of service, but this service comes at a high price. The residential collection fee is $13.75 per month, and the actual cost of collection is $19.50 per residential customer. The operation has been highly subsidized by landfill revenues.

The city retained the consulting firm of R. W. Beck, Inc. in 2006 to review the solid waste collection system. The analysis determined that the most efficient and effective option is to convert to a fully automated system, utilizing carts and a weekly collection.

Aside from the high cost of manual collection, there are several other reasons for moving to an automated system. A severe labor shortage is making it difficult to fill the collection crews. The lack of laborers often causes collection routes to fall behind, resulting in inconsistent pickup schedules. Another significant issue is crew injuries and increasing workers' compensation claims. Solid Waste laborers lift approximately 6 tons (12,000 pounds) of garbage every day. Implementation of the automated collection system will begin in 2008, and will be phased in over the year.

In 2007, the city generated 26,138 tons of waste from residential uses (see Table 8.6).

Table 8.6 Solid Waste Collection

Fiscal Year	Quantity (tons)
2003	27,608
2004	27,634
2005	26,981
2006	26,884
2007	26,138

Source: City of Victoria Solid Waste Department

Landfill

Once collected, all municipal waste is transferred to the city-owned landfill located in Bloomington, Texas. The landfill is currently operated by Republic Waste, Inc. The

Victoria landfill is the disposal site for the seven counties of the Golden Crescent Region. The landfill has a projected life span of approximately 28 years (2035). In 2005, over 150,000 tons of waste was deposited into the landfill.

Recycling/Waste Diversion

The city is working to minimize the amount of waste that must be disposed of in the landfill by providing recycling programs and the operation of a brush disposal site. The city operates two drop-off recycling centers, one located at 124 Huvar Street and the other at 1103 Pine Street. The Huvar Street Center is operated Tuesdays and Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:00 am to 2:00 p.m. The Pine Street Center is open on Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:00 am to 2:00 p.m. Both Centers accept aluminum cans, paper products, plastic, automobile batteries and motor oil.

The city coordinates a newspaper recycling competition program with the public and private schools located in Victoria County. This program has been highly successful in changing citizens' habits and should be supported along with additional public education campaigns. Although recycling volumes have increased slightly, the potential exists for much higher levels of recycling in the city. Beyond increasing the public awareness of recycling more should be done to provide citizens with greater opportunities to recycle. Users of the Recycling Centers have expressed an interest in the city implementing a curbside recycling program.

Brush and Yard Waste

The City of Victoria collects large brush by quadrant on a four week rotating basis. While the trucks will pick up any brush observed during the week they are working a quadrant, it is recommended that customers notify the Environmental Services Department of the need for pick up. The city has contracted with Texas Landfill Management, Inc. to develop and operate a composting site at the Victoria Landfill that will combine wood wastes with wastewater sludge to produce a marketable compost. The city has closed the brush site at the Airport and now only accepts waste at the new site.

Future Needs

With the assistance of R. W. Beck, Inc., the city completed a thorough analysis of its solid waste collection and disposal services. Efforts are being made to reduce the amount of municipal solid waste and maximize the efficiency of waste collection. Implementation of an automated collection system for residential waste began in 2008, and will be phased in over the next year. The city will strive to achieve a balance between customer service and efficiency.

8.5 Arena/Convention Center

Current Facility

Located at 2905 E. North Street, the Victoria Community Center is the only publicly owned, multi-purpose facility in the city. Constructed in the 1960's the center originally had 12,700 square feet. It was later expanded in the 1970's with a 40,000 square foot covered rodeo arena, a 7,300 square foot annex and more recently remodeled with the addition of a portico and larger restroom facilities. The facility has 20,000 square feet of space for exhibitions, conferences, and training seminars which can comfortably accommodate up to 1,985 people (1,500 seating capacity).

Victoria Community Center

Future Considerations

There has been much discussion and debate over the need for a larger multi-purpose convention facility and an arena/auditorium with a seating capacity of approximately 5,000. As Victoria continues to grow, the demand for a more adequate and larger facility increases. The Comprehensive Plan Survey revealed 61% of the respondents believe Victoria needed a large auditorium and over half supported the use of public funding for such a project. Using local resources and talent, a comprehensive needs assessment should be conducted to determine the feasibility, appropriate location, size and potential uses for such a facility. Creative financing such as a public/private partnership, should be explored to facilitate construction.

8.6 Summary

Results from the Comprehensive Plan Survey show that overall citizens are pleased with the level of service they receive from the city. The employees that provide these services are working hard to fulfill the expectations of citizens and city officials. Their dedication is to credit for the positive survey results. Maintaining the desired level of community services and facilities will require continued implementation, review and evaluation of the effectiveness of programs outlined within this chapter.

8.7 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Maintain high standards of fire and emergency medical services.

- Objective 1.1: Provide and maintain satisfactory emergency response services to all citizens of Victoria.
- Objective 1.2: Maintain the city's Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating.
- Objective 1.3: Support the construction of new fire stations as needed.

Goal 2: Maintain low crime rate and high level of police services.

- Objective 2.1: Strive to reduce both Class I and Class II crime rates.
- Objective 2.2: Maintain police service levels with adequate staffing and equipment.
- Objective 2.3: Maintain the high level of community involvement through crime prevention programs and community policing initiatives.
- Objective 2.4: Continue cooperative relationships with Victoria ISD and other criminal justice agencies in Victoria County.

Goal 3: Provide library services that meet the diverse information needs for all citizens of Victoria County.

- Objective 3.1: Maintain timely, accurate and useful information for the public.
- Objective 3.2: Provide quality programs for children and young adults.
- Objective 3.3: Provide public access to the latest digital information and communications technology.
- Objective 3.4: Provide an additional Library facility on the north side of the city.

Goal 4: Provide an efficient municipal solid waste management system.

- Objective 4.1: Provide adequate route coverage to assure quality residential solid waste collection.
- Objective 4.2: Encourage, expand and implement conservation, recycling, and hazardous waste collection programs.
- Objective 4.3: Continue the separate collection and disposal of yard waste as a means of conserving landfill space.

Goal 5: Meet the demand for additional public meeting space and activities requiring a large capacity convention center/arena.

- Objective 5.1: Identify sources of funding for the construction of a new multi-purpose facility.
- Objective 5.2: Develop a new large capacity arena/convention center for Victoria.

CHAPTER 9

Heritage Preservation & Downtown Victoria

Preserving Victoria's Heritage

The realization of this vision will allow Victoria to become not only a center of activity for the people in our immediate community, but also a destination for visitors from throughout the Gulf Coast region and beyond. Much of the potential for achieving this vision lies in our ability to take advantage of Victoria's historical value. As mentioned in the first chapter of this Comprehensive Plan, the history of our community and the region is both unique and significant. This history should be seen as an important resource both for establishing an identity for Victoria and developing the city as a viable tourist destination.

VISION 2025

Victoria is a vibrant, attractive, well preserved historic, cultural and entertainment center.

Another important resource that can serve to enhance Victoria's identity and reinforce its potential as a regional destination is the city's downtown area. Downtown Victoria has historical significance as the original townsite of Martin De León's colony. It provides us with a rare opportunity to establish an area that will serve as a center of life in our community by encouraging multiple uses such as office space, retail, housing, and entertainment.

This chapter approaches both the historical significance of our community and the potential of downtown as assets for fulfilling the vision of Victoria as a vibrant, attractive, well preserved, historic, cultural and entertainment center. We begin with a description of the historic resources available in our community, followed by a discussion of what can be done to take advantage of our resources. The next section of the chapter focuses on the downtown area, and what can specifically be done to revitalize that area and strengthen the mix of uses, utilizing its full potential.

9.1 Historic Resources Survey

The historic resources available in our community and the region include an abundance of historically significant buildings, sites, and districts as well as organizations with an active interest in preserving and enhancing the historic value of our community. These resources and the history that they represent play a significant role in strengthening the identity of Victoria as a city steeped in Texas

history. Locally, these resources include 119 properties on the National Register of Historic Places and ninety historical markers located within Victoria County. Organizations such as Victoria Preservation Inc., the Victoria County Historical Commission, and the Victoria Regional Museum Association provide services of a historical nature to the community.

507 N. Glass Street

Victoria Preservation Inc. (VPI), along with Victoria Arts Council, the Victoria County Historical Commission, and the Texas Historical Commission funded a comprehensive survey of Victoria's historic buildings, *Historic Resources Survey of Victoria, Texas*. The efforts of these agencies resulted in an evaluation and inventory of historic structures throughout the city that was published in 1984, with a second printing in 1992.

The survey identified the historic resources in our community and evaluated each of the over 2,400 sites based on: 1) the site's contribution to local history or a broader historical pattern; 2) the uniqueness of architecture, engineering, or design of each site; and 3) the degree to which each site had maintained its original character or integrity. Based on this evaluation, each site was classified as low, medium, or high priority for preservation planning purposes. The results of this evaluation and classification are shown in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1 Priority Rating of Historic Resources Survey

PRIORITY: Criteria	**Number of Structures**
Low: typical example of a common local building form, architectural style or type, with no identified historical associations; moderate to severely altered resource with reversible modifications that exemplifies a distinctive early building type or architectural style, or that has minor historical significance.	1,309
Medium: contributes significantly to local history or broader historical patterns, but alterations have diminished the resource's integrity; significant example of architecture, engineering, or crafted design; outstanding example of a common local building form, architectural style or type; modern or recent landmark not old enough to be judged in a historical context.	709
High: contributes significantly to local history or broader historical patterns; is an outstanding or unique example of architecture, engineering, or crafted design; retains a significant portion of its original character and contextual integrity; in some cases meets criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and/or is eligible for a Texas Historical Marker.	431
Total	**2,449**

Source: Historic Resources Survey of Victoria, Texas, 1984

Beyond the identification and evaluation of historic buildings, the report notes several important observations. These observations focus on the state of the city's

507 S. De León

historical resources in general, and on the image of the Original Townsite and the downtown commercial district in particular. According to the surveyors, although a relatively large number of historic resources remain throughout the city and a few of the residential neighborhoods remain intact, many individual historic buildings have suffered from neglect and unsympathetic contextual changes. The report also notes that casual observers and visitors alike receive a negative impression of the Original Townsite based on a misleading and often conflicting modern image of the city. This image may be associated with what the report describes as an interesting, yet often incongruous mixture of development resulting from the absence of land use controls. Finally, the report characterizes the downtown business district as having a pleasing scale, but observes that historic structures and old streetscapes are conspicuously rare in highly visible areas. The report also states that the commercial viability of the downtown area is threatened by competition from suburban development as well as ambivalent attitudes toward maintaining the area's commercial appeal.

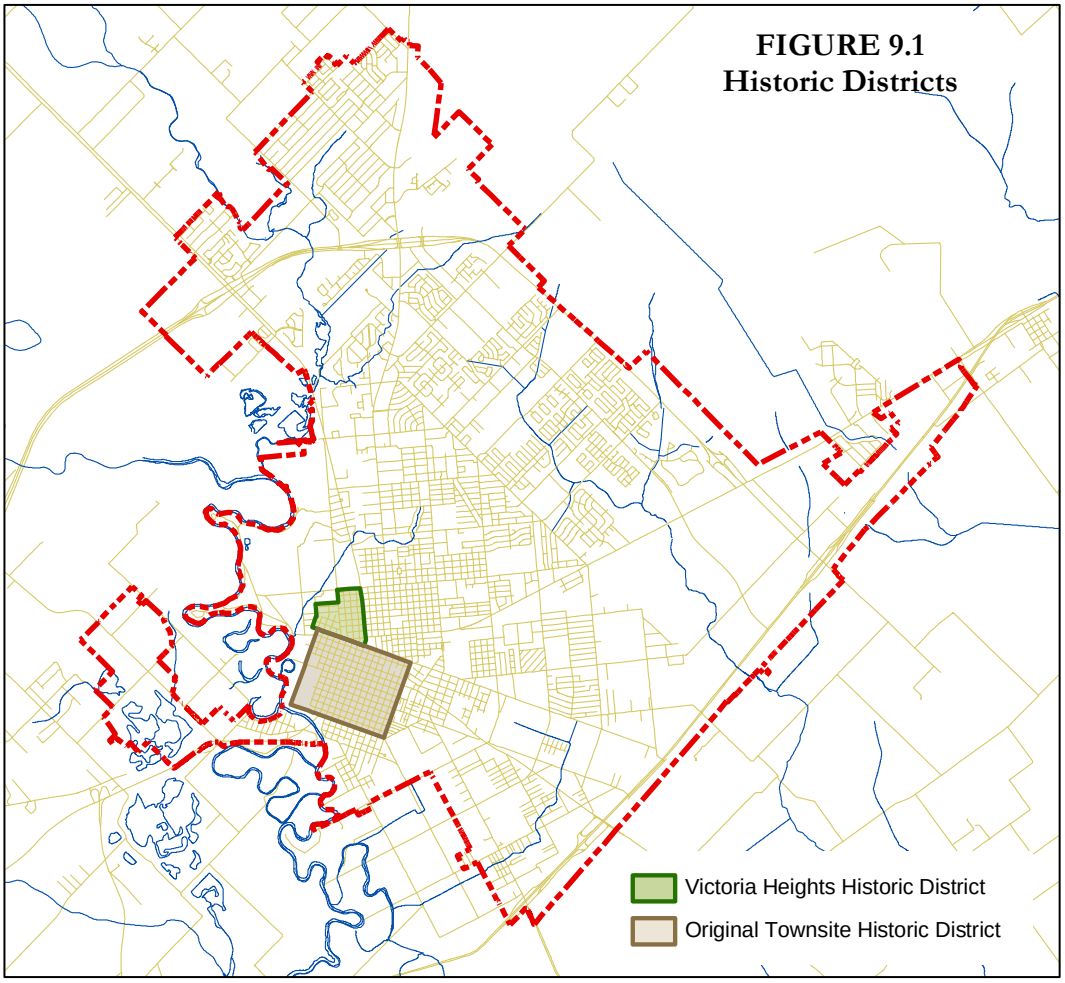
307 E. Convent

Since its formation in 1980, VPI has addressed the neglect and alteration of historic buildings through a variety of activities that increase public awareness of the value of our community's historical resources through encouragement and assistance with preservation efforts. These activities include developing a self-guided tour of historic structures, publishing books on the history of the community, offering advice and incentive programs to those who are restoring historic properties, and spearheading restoration projects such as the Patti Welder School and the 1892 County Courthouse.

9.2 Original Townsite Historic District

In 1990, the City Council established the Original Townsite Historic District. This district is congruent with the capital city of De León's colony, which was established in 1824. De León's city plan included a one square mile grid designed with 256 blocks and sited in a north-northeast orientation along the eastern bank of the Guadalupe River. The original townsite was laid out in accordance with his knowledge of European and Mexican cities, setting aside land for a central plaza, schools, churches, and trade. Today, this area is bounded by North, South, East and West Streets. Special street signs have

been erected to designate the streets within the Original Townsite Historic District. Figure 9.1 shows the Original Townsite Historic District in relation to the current boundary of the City of Victoria.



The Original Townsite Historic District is rich with evidence of the city's past. Of the seventy-six buildings and houses registered in the Victoria Preservation, Inc. *Tour of Old Victoria*, seventy-two are located within the boundaries of the Original Townsite Historic District. A majority of the Texas Historical Markers and National Register of Historic Places in Victoria County are also located within this Historic District. Other historical attractions located in the Original Townsite include the McNamara House, built in the 1870s and opened as a museum in 1961, the 1892 Victoria County Courthouse, which has been completely restored, and the Nave Art Museum. Figure 9.2 shows the sites of the historical tour that lie within the Original Townsite. The tour is self-guided with a brochure published by VPI and street signs that direct participants along the route laid out in the brochure. The brochure contains a brief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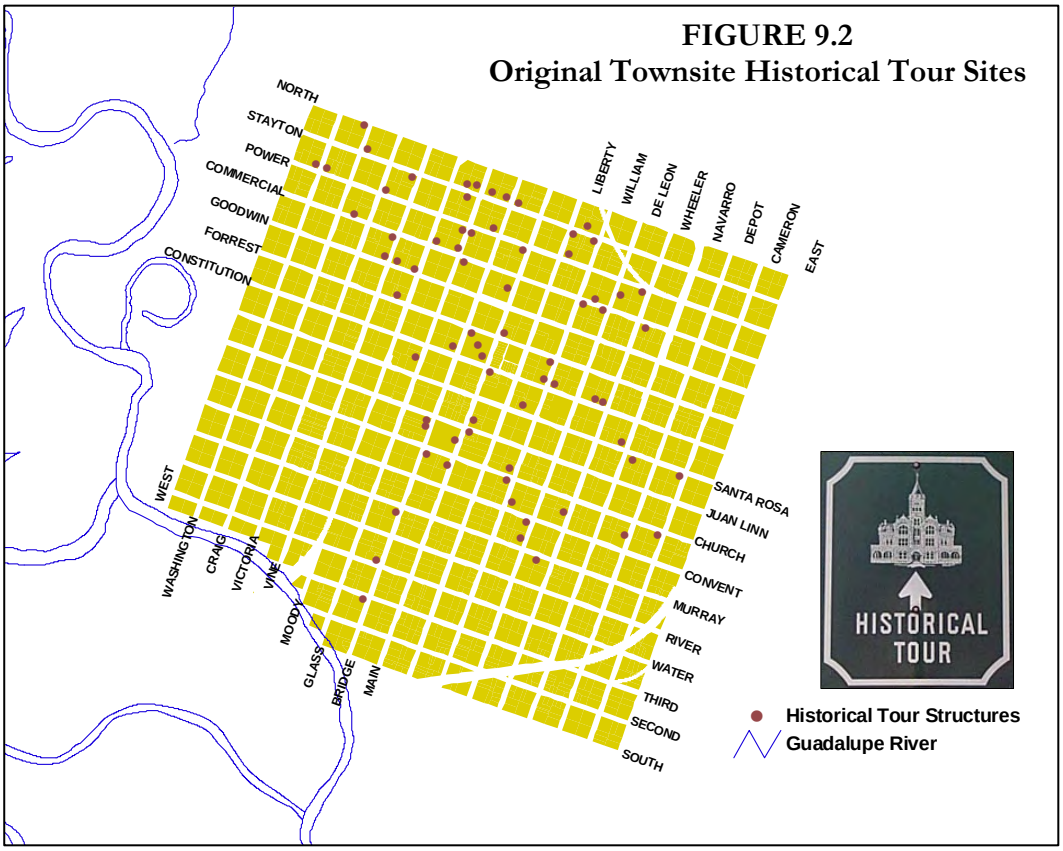
history of "Old Victoria" and descriptions of each of the seventy-six sites on the tour. *A Tour of Old Victoria* brochures are available for sale at several locations in our community, including the Victoria Chamber of Commerce, the VPI office, and the Victoria Art League.



9.3 Additional District Designations

While the Original Townsite encompasses a majority of the historic properties, there are other historic neighborhoods that need to be recognized and protected. For example, the area of the city that is bounded by Smith Street on the west, Red River Street on the north, Main Street on the west, and North Street on the south was designated as the *Victoria Heights Historic District* in April 2007 (see Figure 9.1). VPI is spearheading an effort to erect special street signs to recognize this district. Additional areas may merit protection in the future.

9.4 Historic Preservation Plan

Although many of the historic sites in Victoria have been well-maintained or restored, there are some that have fallen into disrepair. For example, the South Bridge Street Commercial District, once an active neighborhood commercial center serving Victoria's immigrant and minority population in the early 1900s, has suffered

from deterioration and neglect. One tool to counteract these negative effects is a historic preservation plan. Such a plan should be developed in order to identify strategies to preserve Victoria's abundant and unique historic resources and neighborhoods. Implementation of the historic preservation plan could include designating other historic districts, establishing a historic preservation review board, consistent design standards for each of the historic districts, and designing flexible regulations for the rehabilitation of historic properties. The plan should also include recommendations for capitalizing on these historic resources as symbols of our heritage and attractions for visitors.

South Bridge Street Commercial District

9.5 Certified Local Government Program

The Certified Local Government (CLG) Program is a partnership with local governments, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) at the state level, and the National Parks Service (NPS) at the federal level, designed to assist communities preserve their heritage. Through the CLG Program, cities and counties may receive grant assistance, technical assistance and guidance in local preservation, as well as professional recognition and access to a nation-wide preservation information network.

Nave Museum

In order to qualify for CLG status, a municipal government must adopt and enforce a preservation ordinance, establish a qualified review commission, maintain a system for surveying and inventorying historic properties, and provide for public participation in the historic preservation process. A county government can qualify for CLG status without a preservation ordinance and can utilize the county historical commission.

McNamara House

CLG communities throughout the state have realized positive economic impacts by connecting local preservation initiatives with a comprehensive community heritage tourism program. CLG funds could be utilized by Victoria to publish marketing materials such as books, pamphlets, and videos that could then be made available at a tourism information center.

9.6 Downtown Victoria

Not only is the Original Townsite identified with downtown or "Old Victoria" and steeped in the long history of our community; it is also a seat of government and business as well as historic residential neighborhoods. The area was originally envisioned as the heart of the community with land set aside for a central plaza, schools, churches, and trade. Despite the competition from suburban development mentioned in the *Survey of Historic Resources*, our downtown maintains its potential as a central symbol of Victoria's identity, a place where there is day-to-day activity of all kinds, including opportunities for work, housing, retail activity, and cultural events.

Attractions

As noted above, the historical features of the Original Townsite serve as a major attraction for the city, complete with tours of historic homes and buildings, the Nave Art Museum and the historic McNamara Home operated by the Victoria Regional Museum Association, and the county courthouse. In addition to these attractions, the Children's Discovery Museum and the Leo J. Welder Center for the Performing Arts are located in the 200 block of North Main Street. Each of these attractions serves as an anchor to bring people downtown, making it a vibrant place on a daily basis. For example, 2006-2007 data supplied by the Cultural Council of Victoria indicate that 20,500 users attended meetings, performances, pageants, workshops and other events along with over 2000 performers and presenters at the Performing Arts Center on 168 days of the year. An appropriate mix of land uses in downtown Victoria will allow us to take advantage of these attractions, so that the people who come for the museums and entertainment stay to shop, dine, or stroll throughout the downtown district. This will bring life to downtown beyond the customers and employees who frequent the businesses currently in operation.

Welder Center for the Performing Arts

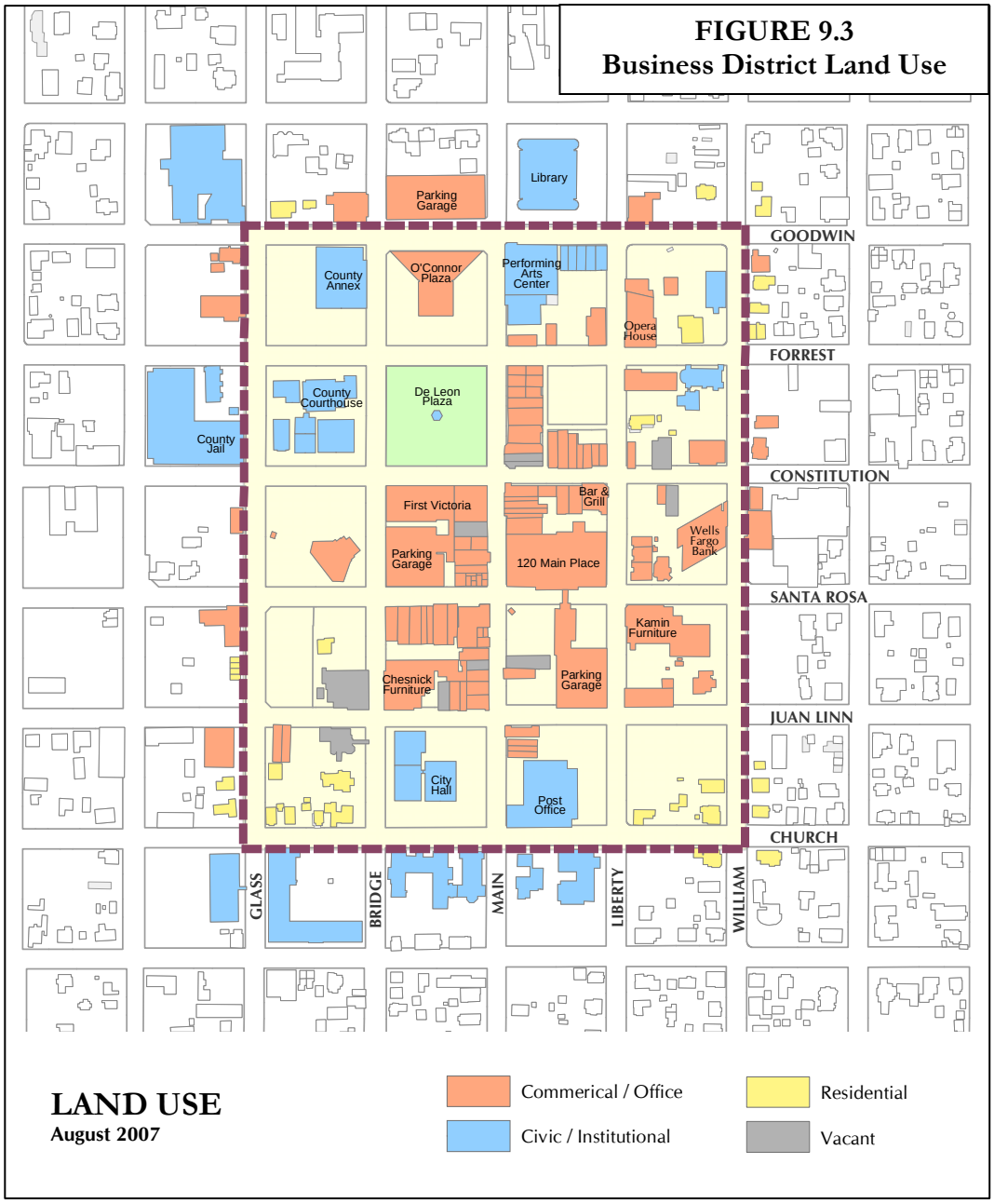
200 Block of South Main Street

Land Use

Figure 9.3 and Table 9.2 show the distribution of land use in the Downtown Business District. The district is comprised of 20 city blocks in what is generally considered the city's central business district. The concentration of commercial land-use identified with downtown extends from Goodwin Street on the north to Church Street on the south and between Glass Street on the west and William Street on the east. Two corridors serve as gateways into downtown; Moody Street from the Guadalupe River north to Goodwin Street serves as the southern corridor.

Finally, Bridge and Main Streets north from Rio Grande Street represent the northern corridor. These streets are a one-way pair with Bridge Street going north and Main Street going south through downtown.

FIGURE 9.3
Business District Land Use



This area includes administrative buildings for county and city government, as well as churches, banks, restaurants, private offices, retail, parking facilities, and limited residential uses. De León Plaza, with its bandstand and historic monuments is centrally located in this area, occupying an entire city block, which is delineated on the map in green. Office uses such as banks and law firms utilize a majority of the commercial space in the downtown business district. Retail and restaurant uses on the other hand are limited. With a few exceptions, housing in the Original Townsite

is generally located outside of the downtown business district. For the most part, the housing in this area is low-density single-family use with just a few loft apartments.

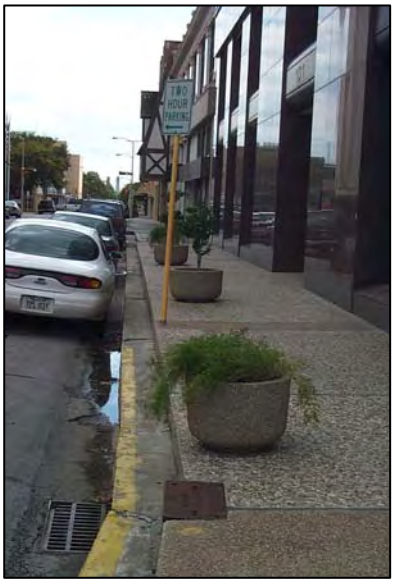
Table 9.2 Business District Land Use

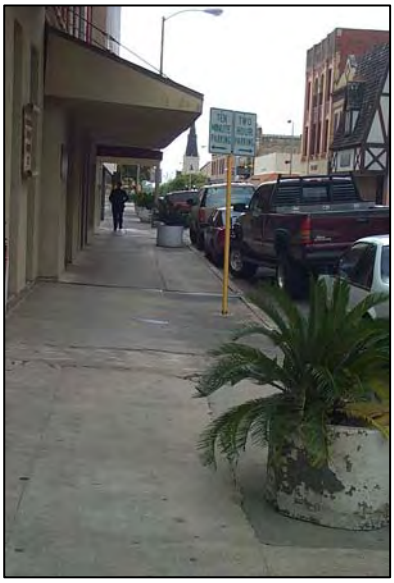
Land Use	Area (acres)	%
Residential	2.42	6.86%
Commercial/ Office	20.49	58.10%
Parks/ Open Space	1.78	5.05%
Civic/ Institutional	8.78	24.89%
Vacant	1.80	5.10%
TOTAL	**35.27**	**100.00%**

Victoria is fortunate in that there are only a handful of commercial buildings that are completely vacant. However, it is apparent that the second floors of many buildings are unoccupied or only used for storage purposes.

Physical Improvements

A variety of attractions and a mix of uses can help create a vibrant downtown in Victoria. Another leg of this effort is focusing on the physical appearance of the area. As was true at the time of the *Historic Resources Survey* in 1984, the downtown business district has for the most part retained its pleasing scale. However, in general the district lacks a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. Sidewalks in many areas are damaged or non-existent, and pedestrian crossing intersections can often be difficult. The streetscape is also missing adequate benches, lights, trash receptacles, planters and other amenities that would make the area more livable and appealing to pedestrians. An effort to improve this infrastructure and to connect the attractions in the downtown area with each other, the surrounding neighborhoods and the business district would be beneficial.





A few benches, planters and trash receptacles were placed in the area in 2005, although the number is not adequate. In addition, there are numerous mix-matched

planters scattered throughout the business district that are either empty or in disrepair. A coordinated effort to remove and replace these would be valuable. Finally, the downtown area could clearly benefit from a public restroom facility, directional signage and improved entrances.

Making downtown more attractive and pedestrian-friendly will invite people to stay and walk around, thus making it a more vibrant place. In turn this activity will be appealing to retail establishments that may consider locating in downtown Victoria. As noted above, there is a lack of retail business in the central part of the city, in part because of a perceived lack of customers. If people can be seen out and about in the business district, that perception will change.

Parking Issues

Another issue involved in making downtown a more vibrant place is a perceived lack of parking. Most of the parking problem is limited to a few blocks along Main Street. However, several private parking lots have been developed over the last few years. It is possible that this problem could be addressed by working with the owners of private parking facilities to allow some public parking, encouraging joint parking facilities, or by developing other public/private partnerships. The parking solution should be addressed in a creative manner so as to avoid and discourage the demolition of historic buildings and maximize the use of current parking facilities.


1892 Victoria County Courthouse

Downtown Merchant/ Property Owner Association

An organization is needed to bring the private sector together so that they can collectively express their concerns about downtown and develop viable solutions to the issues and obstacles highlighted in this chapter. The organization can be created, either formally or informally, and should include the stakeholders in downtown's revitalization, including merchants, property owners, residents, and government representatives. In addition to representing the private sector on downtown issues, the association could oversee development of design guidelines for rehabilitation and new construction in downtown, and generate ideas for special events and promotions. A supportive organization can become a real tool for making positive changes in Downtown Victoria.

Downtown Master Plan

In 2004, the City of Victoria hired urban design consultants, Knudson & Associates, to assist in conceptualizing the potential design for the physical improvements in the Downtown Business District. The consultants worked with a citizen committee to identify issues and develop the watercolor rendering shown below of the intersection of Main and Constitution Streets. The result of this work can provide the framework for a Downtown Master Plan. This plan should include finalizing a cohesive design for physical improvements, a strategy for dealing with parking issues,

as well as provide strategies for in-fill development and for encouraging a mix and variety of land uses.

The planned multi-million dollar downtown utility improvement program presents an excellent opportunity to implement many of the design elements shown in the concept rendering. The scale of this project will necessitate reconstruction of many of the area streets and sidewalks.

Main and Constitution Street

Preservation Incentive Program

The Downtown Preservation Incentive Program was established to preserve and enhance the unique character of properties in the downtown business district. The program provides grants of up to $5,000 per property on a 50/50 matching basis for facade restoration and the conversion of upper floors into residential lots/ apartments.

9.7 Summary

The preservation of our community's heritage can enrich the lives of residents, neighborhoods, and the City of Victoria as a whole. The wealth of historic resources in Victoria rivals any other community in Texas. Our historic fabric must be protected and preserved to ensure that it is available for future generations. These resources can also have economic benefits for Victoria. In order to realize these, we must be able to develop and market Victoria as a community steeped in Texas history.

The other aspect of becoming a vibrant, attractive, well preserved historic, cultural and entertainment center looks to the future, through the development of a downtown that has a variety of activities and is both pleasant and convenient. This future depends on the ability of downtown's stakeholders working together to identify the needs and strengths of Victoria's commercial district and to implement strategies that address those needs and capitalize on our strengths.

9.8 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Revitalize downtown Victoria as a balanced work, housing, cultural and entertainment center – a place where there is a variety of day-to-day activity.

- Objective 1.1: Develop plans for the revitalization of downtown Victoria.
- Objective 1.2: Encourage the development of an appropriate mix of uses, including opportunities for work, housing, retail activity, and cultural events.
- Objective 1.3: Address downtown parking issues.
- Objective 1.4: Combine housing objectives with historic preservation.

Goal 2: Use Victoria's rich history and its downtown as one of the legs in building the local economy.

- Objective 2.1: Encourage the county to pursue the Texas Historical Commission's Certified Local Government designation.
- Objective 2.2: Promote local and regional tourism opportunities.
- Objective 2.3: Encourage the organization of a Downtown Merchant/ Property Owner Association to coordinate downtown revitalization.
- Objective 2.4: Provide for the basic needs of tourists and visitors.

Goal 3: Preserve and enhance Victoria's historic buildings and resources.

- Objective 3.1: Identify strategies to preserve Victoria's historic structures and neighborhoods.
- Objective 3.2: Ensure that municipal codes and policies are conducive to preservation and downtown revitalization, and empower city staff to be flexible when considering restoration projects.
- Objective 3.3: Encourage the removal of false facades from historical buildings.
- Objective 3.4: Promote the Downtown Preservation Incentive Program.

CHAPTER 10

Economic Opportunity

State of Victoria's Economy

Economic growth is needed to help create job opportunities, provide a variety of goods and services, and be the foundation for a tax base that can sustain a community through business cycles. This economic development has become so important that communities can no longer afford to leave it to chance. The Comprehensive Plan Survey, conducted in October 2000, indicated that 91% of respondents thought that Victoria needed more job opportunities, and over half (56%) thought it was crucial enough to provide public funding for job creation. This chapter addresses the economic areas of business and industry, as well as institutions having an economic impact, including schools and colleges, and what steps Victoria should be taking to maximize its economic well-being in the future.

VISION 2025

Victoria's residents enjoy a robust, diverse economy that provides a high quality of life with a variety of dynamic job opportunities.

Many issues affect the ability of a city to attract new businesses, ranging from workforce availability, quality of life, taxation and development costs. The community's desire to attract industry and diversify the tax base will be a journey of continuous improvement. Challenges related to growth and development will occur in the future, and proper solutions, as well as comprehensive planning, will serve to improve the stability of the economy.

Recognizing the need for a plan of action, the community developed a Strategic Plan, "Positioning Victoria to Compete", through the Victoria Economic Development Corporation (VEDC). The plan was adopted by City Council in December of 2000. The goals and objectives of this chapter will work in concert with the VEDC Strategic Plan, which should be referenced for specific policies and action steps.

10.1 Employment

The major employment classifications in Victoria County for 2005 are listed in Table 10.1. The largest employment classifications are health care, retail trade and accommodation/food. In terms of annual payroll, health care is the largest employment classification with retail trade being the second largest ahead of manufacturing. The average payroll per manufacturing employee is more than twice as much as that for retail trade employees. Utility and mining jobs are the "best-paying" in the county. Health care, construction, finance, and food/ accommodations are other industries that employ significant numbers of people.

Almost one out of ten persons in Victoria works in the food/accommodations category; unfortunately these are the lowest paying jobs in the county with that payroll accounting for only 3.5% of the county's total payroll.

Table 10.1 Employment Distribution, Victoria County, 2005

Victoria County	# of Employees	% of Total Employees	Annual Payroll ($1,000s)	% of Total Payroll	Per Employee
Agriculture, etc.	52	0.2%	$ 805	0.1%	$ 15,481
Mining	953	3.2%	$ 47,840	5.5%	$ 50,199
Utilities	289	1.0%	17,834	2.0%	$ 61,709
Construction	2,242	7.5%	$ 71,925	8.2%	$ 32,081
Manufacturing	2,041	6.8%	$ 89,530	10.3%	$ 43,866
Wholesale Trade	1,485	5.7%	$ 48,599	7.0%	$ 28,604
Retail Trade	5,274	17.6%	$ 113,446	13.0%	$ 21,510
Transportation/Warehousing	755	2.5%	$ 27,424	3.1%	$ 36,323
Information	589	2.0%	$ 18,103	2.1%	$ 30,735
Finance, Insurance, R.E.	1,576	5.2%	$ 58,643	6.7%	$ 37,210
Scientific, Tech, Manage	1,085	3.6%	$ 44,454	5.1%	$ 40,971
Administrative	1,706	5.7%	$ 35,733	4.1 %	$ 20,945
Education	518	1.7%	$ 8,111	0.9%	$ 15,658
Health Care, Social Services	6,307	21.0%	$ 206,930	23.7%	$ 32,810
Arts, Rec., Entertainment	362	1.2%	$ 6,026	0.7%	$ 16,646
Accommodation/Food	3,016	10.0%	$ 30,865	3.5%	$ 10,234
Others	1,778	5.9%	$ 34,385	3.9%	$ 19,339
Total	30,028		$ 872,272		$ 30,957

Source: Adapted from County Business Patterns, North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Descriptions, U.S. Census Bureau: www.census.gov/epcd/cbp.

A closer look at the top classifications shows that hospitals are the leading employers in the Health category, chemical manufacturers are the leading employers in the Manufacturing classification, General Merchandisers (e.g. Wal-mart, Target, etc.) are the leading employers in the Retail classification, and restaurants are the leading employers in the food/accommodations category. Major employers of the citizens of the Victoria region include (*companies located in the City of Victoria are in bold lettering*):

- **Victoria Independent School District – 2,071 employees**
- Formosa Plastics – 1,800
- Interplast Group – 1,700 (Plastic Products)
- **Citizen Medicial Center – 1,324**
- **DeTar Healthcare System – 922**
- Dow Chemical Company - 670
- Alcoa – 650
- **Victoria County – 623**
- **City of Victoria – 617**
- Invista – 610
- **H.E.B. – 600**
- **Berry - Convalence Plastics – 500**
- **Wal-Mart Supercenter – 470**

- **University of Houston-Victoria – 461**
- **First Victoria National Bank – 425**
- **Spherion – 405**
- **Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice – 342**
- **Crossroads Home Health Service – 340**
- **StarTek – 300**
- **Exterran – 297**
- **Maverick Engineering – 290**
- **Victoria College – 256**

Table 10.2 illustrates that the rate of total employment growth for the City of Victoria has been lower than the rate of total employment growth for the Texas as a whole, but much higher than that of nearby Houston. Also, Victoria has historically had the most consistent employment growth when compared to other communities in the Golden Crescent Region. Employment in the City of Victoria increased from 29,162 in 1995 to 30,721 in 2005, up over 5% for the decade.

Table 10.2 Total Employment Comparisons, 1995-2005

City	1995	2000	2005	Ave. Annual Change
Bryan	31,756	35,743	35,254	5.6%
Corpus Christi	119,903	121,666	135,192	6.3%
Houston	900,602	974,799	919,852	1.3%
San Antonio	475,934	511,662	567,843	9.2%
Tyler	39,860	43,538	44,527	5.7%
Victoria	29,162	30,875	30,721	2.7%
State of Texas	9,011,013	9,887,039	10,677,171	8.9%

Source: Texas Workforce Commission, Civilian Labor Force Estimates, Average Annual Actual Estimates: www.twc.state.tx.us (LMI Statistics Searchpage).

The Texas Workforce Commission provides employment projections for the year 2014 for the state as a whole and for the various Workforce Development Areas (WDAs) in the State. Table 10.3 Compares the Golden Crescent projections with those for the state as a whole and the WDAs that includes the cities in Table 10.2. The Golden Crescent region has the lowest projected growth rate in annual average employment of any of the other areas, and almost 6% below the state's projection.

Table 10.3 Employment Projections for 2014

Workforce Development Areas	2004	2014	Change	Growth Rate
Brazos Valley (Bryan)	138,200	165,750	27,550	19.9%
Coastal Bend (Corpus)	242,550	288,950	46,400	19.1%
Gulf Coast (Houston)	2,583,550	3,176,650	593,100	23.0%
Alamo (San Antonio)	880,550	1,079,050	198,500	22.5%
East Texas (Tyler)	325,700	387,100	61,400	18.9%
Golden Crescent (Victoria)	89,250	102,500	13,250	14.8%
State of Texas	10,542,750	12,751,900	2,209,150	21.0%

Source: Texas Workforce Commission Labor Market Information Projections, www.twc.state.tx.us.

Table 10.4 compares the unemployment rate in the City of Victoria with the unemployment rates in Victoria County and the State of Texas. While unemployment rates for both 2000 and 2006 are slightly higher in the city than in the county, the rates for both the city and county are better than the rates for the State of Texas.

Table 10.4 Civilian Work Force & Unemployment Rates, 2000 - 2006

Civilian Work Force	City of Victoria		County of Victoria		State of Texas	
	2000	2006	2000	2006	2000	2006
Labor Force	32,759	32,579	44,075	45,103	10,448,500	11,487,496
Employed	31,490	31,239	42,464	43,224	10,032,700	10,921,673
Unemployed	1,296	1,340	1,611	1,859	415,800	565,823
Unemployment Rate	3.9%	4.1%	3.7%	4.1%	4.0%	4.9%

Source: Texas Workforce Commission, Civilian Labor Force Estimates, Average Annual Actual Estimates: www.twc.state.tx.us and Golden Crescent Labor Market Report.

10.2 Income

Per capita income and median household income for Victoria County, the State of Texas and the U.S. are shown in Table 10.5. From 1990 to 2000 Victoria County per capita incomes rose 4% while incomes for the State of Texas rose 10%. This analysis indicates that income growth in Victoria County lags behind the state as a whole. In 1990, the difference between the county and state median household income was minimal. Today, that difference in median household income has increased to 3%.

Table 10.5 Income Comparisons, 1990-2000

	Victoria County		State of Texas		U.S.	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Per Capita Income	$17,697	$18,379	$17,458	$19,293	$19,584	$21,231
Median Household Income	$26,945	$38,732	$27,016	$39,933	$30,056	$42,257

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

10.3 Cost of Living

The cost of living is considered to strongly contribute to the "quality of life" in Victoria. Indeed, while incomes are slightly lower than the state average, the cost of living indices in the Victoria Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) are also lower than other Texas MSAs (see Table 10.6). Table 10.7 shows that property tax rates are comparable to the same Texas cities.

Table 10.6 Cost of Living Comparisons, First Quarter 2007, U.S. Average=100

Indices	Bryan	Corpus Christi	Houston	San Antonio	Tyler	Victoria
Composite Index-100%	Did not participate	88.0	88.2	94.6	91.1	87.5
Grocery Items 13%		84.9	83.7	84.2	92.4	81.0
Housing 28%		79.0	73.0	83.4	83.0	74.3
Utilities 10%		91.8	104.5	88.4	98.0	81.6
Transportation 10%		94.6	97.0	107.6	91.5	89.0
Health Care 4%		92.3	102.9	100.6	94.9	104.8
Misc. Goods/Services 35%		92.9	93.1	104.9	94.6	99.7

Source: Victoria Economic Development Corporation and ACCRA, A Nonprofit Organization Promoting Excellence in Research for Community and Economic Development (www.accra.org).

Table 10.7 Comparison of Property Tax Rates (2007 Rates)

City	City	School	County	Other	Total
Bryan	0.636	1.630	0.435	0.050	2.751
Corpus Christi	0.602	1.486	0.366	0.421	2.875
Houston	0.645	1.476	0.402	0.320	2.843
San Antonio	0.579	1.580	0.314	0.380	2.852
Tyler	0.224	1.488	0.268	0.670	2.650
Victoria	**0.675**	**1.234**	**0.344**	**0.284**	**2.536**

Source: Survey of County Appraisal Districts

10.4 Educational Attainment

Whenever quality of life is discussed within the community, the quality of education is consistently mentioned as a high priority. Quality schools and an educated workforce are key ingredients to achieving the vision and goals outlined in this chapter. The Victoria Independent School District serves the city and much of the county. The Victoria area is also home to three higher educational institutions – Victoria College, University of Houston-Victoria and the Texas Vocational Schools. Table 10.8 shows Victoria's high school graduation levels rank higher than that of the state, while the percentage of residents with college degrees is slightly lower.

Table 10.8 Years of School Completed, 2000

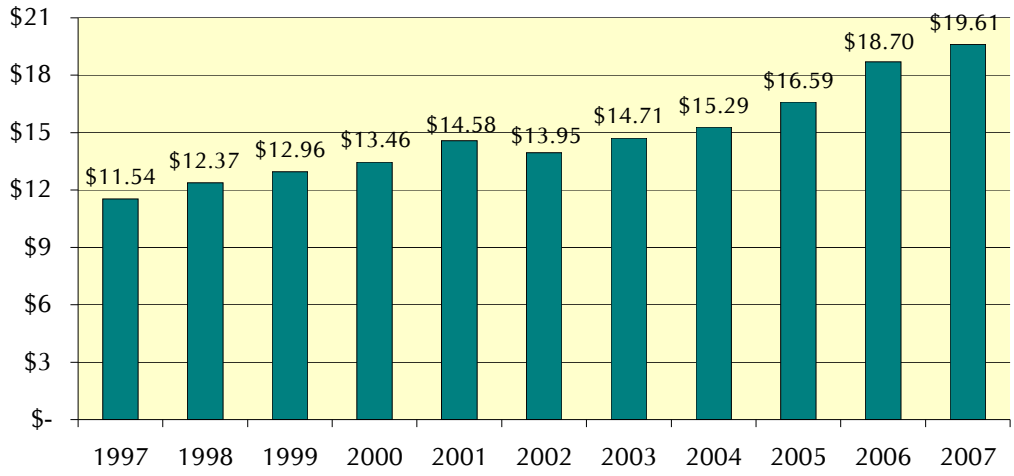
	City of Victoria	State of Texas
High school graduate	26.7%	24.8%
Some college, no degree	24.5%	22.4%
Associate degree	5.9%	5.2%
Bachelor degree	12.4%	15.6%
Graduate or professional degree	6.2%	7.6%

Source: U.S. Census. Based on all persons 25 years of age and older.

10.5 Retail Sales

Victoria enjoys healthy sales tax revenue by serving as a retail center for the Golden Crescent region. Reportable taxable sales have increased significantly over the past decade. As shown in Figure 10.1, total city sales tax rebates have almost doubled in ten years, from $9.48 million in 1996 to $18.70 million in 2006. This sector of the economy continues to thrive with the location of new "big box" retailers and restaurants in Victoria that contribute to increased tax revenue. Much of the retail development is concentrated along the Navarro/US 77 and Loop 463 corridors.

FIGURE 10.1
City Sales Tax Rebates in Millions



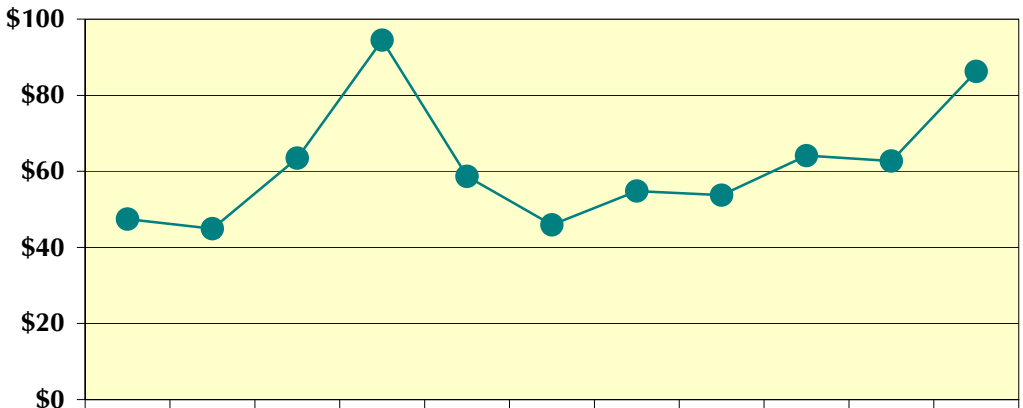
Source: State Comptroller Allocation Summary

In November 1995, voters approved an additional ½ cent sales tax, a Section 4B sales tax. The creation of the 4B sales tax has had a dramatic effect on the total sales tax rebates collected in the last decade. Revenue is dedicated to a variety of projects that promote local economic development. A nonprofit corporation, Victoria Sales Tax Development Corporation, oversees the sales tax revenue and works to promote the creation of new and expanded industry within the city.

10.6 New Construction Activity and Property Valuation

New construction activity has been robust over the past ten years (Please see Figure 10.2). The commercial and public sectors have been especially active and have been largely responsible for peak years (1999 and 2006) of increased activity. Residential construction has remained steady over the same period. As a result of Victoria's development activity, the city's total taxable property value has risen 42% in ten years - from $1,640,926,060 in 1996 to $2,339,522,271 in 2006.

FIGURE 10.2
Total Value of Building Permits in Millions



	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
totals	47.46	44.91	63.43	94.49	58.69	45.95	54.84	53.74	64.15	62.67	86.25

Source: Building Inspections Department

10.7 Summary

Victoria's history reveals the city's susceptibility to strong cyclical growth and development, with boom-and-bust cycles being the norm rather than the exception. This highly fluctuating "up-and-down" economy reflects the city's shifting dependence on singular types of industry rather than a diversified economy. However, we have unique assets to help change this situation. Citizens seem to have the perception that the quality of local public education and economic well-being lags behind the State of Texas and other similar-class cities. Yet most of the education statistics and economic indicators do not support such conclusions. Victoria enjoys relatively good personal salaries comparable to other Texas cities while at the same time enjoying a relatively low cost-of-living index when compared to other Texas cities. This is truly an admirable and enviable combination which must be furthered, enhanced and strengthened as Victoria proceeds into this new millennium.

10.8 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Increase emphasis on retaining and expanding local businesses and industries.

Objective 1.1: Be responsive to existing industries' and businesses needs as we value their presence and make changes that allow them to grow and prosper.

Objective 1.2: Ensure that development policy, plans and procedures are conducive to a favorable business environment and establish positive relations between business and government.

Objective 1.3: Enhance the ability of businesses to market their goods and services.

Goal 2: Diversify and expand Victoria's economy through the expansion of light industry and other businesses.

Objective 2.1: Recruit, expand and retain primary businesses and industries that pay an above average wage to the existing and future local work force.

Objective 2.2: Promote and encourage the development of business and industrial sites.

Goal 3: Improve the quality and quantity of the present and future labor supplies in the Victoria region.

Objective 3.1: Meet the needs of local industry for a qualified and educated work force.

Objective 3.2: Support existing workforce development programs.

Goal 4: Foster a positive attitude toward growth and development among local government and business groups.

Objective 4.1: Support a network of communication that keeps residents informed, fosters cooperation with local and regional organizations, and enables the city to respond to opportunities and challenges.

Goal 5: Ensure that existing infrastructure is in good condition and plan for future infrastructure needs that will accommodate prospective business and industrial growth.

Objective 5.1: Be prepared to have infrastructure in place when and where needed to accommodate development.

Objective 5.2 Improve Victoria's infrastructure for both short and long-term economic development opportunities.

Objective 5.3: Advocate the development and maintenance of a high quality transportation network in and to Victoria.

Goal 6: Provide a business environment that will enhance the community's overall quality of life and promote economic development.

Objective 6.1: Improve Victoria's attractiveness to targeted businesses and industries by improving cultural and recreational amenities.

Objective 6.2: Promote year-round tourism for leisure travelers, winter Texans, and tour operators by enhancing existing recreational destinations and activities.

Objective 6.3: Promote Victoria as an attractive regional center for retailing, services, health care, entertainment and education.

CHAPTER 11

Community Image

A Sense of Place

Community image relates to how citizens perceive our city and its visual characteristics. The design quality of our built environment affects Victoria's image and attractiveness to developers searching for high quality business and residential locations. An attractive community is a fundamental requirement for long term prosperity. By contrast, a haphazardly designed urban environment can be a barrier to investment and economic development.

VISION 2025

Victoria is a proud and attractive community with its own unique identity.

The Comprehensive Plan Survey, conducted in October 2000, indicated that almost three out of four respondents rate Victoria's appearance as average, with the majority of the remainder rating it as poor. This sentiment is virtually the same between zip codes and between males and females. If residents don't have a positive image of Victoria, how will visitors and potential investors rate the community when being compared to other cities in Texas?

Concern for our community image has been a catalyst for change in Victoria's recent history. In 1983, the Mayor's Committee on Community Image developed a report, *Victoria Image 2000*, to help guide the city toward the year 2000. Aggressive goals and objectives for our city's appearance were developed through a series of neighborhood meetings and compiled into a report. Over the years many of these objectives have been implemented, from the adoption of a sign ordinance, the implementation of landscaping and screening fence requirements, to the establishment of a city planning department. Nearly twenty years later, we must renew our efforts to create a sense of place with a unique identity for Victoria.

11.1 Defining Our Image

Victoria is located in a beautiful part of Texas with easy access to the Gulf Coast, close proximity to major metropolitan cities, and an abundance of natural amenities. Yet, Victoria lacks a strong identity. A good urban environment provides a positive feeling that a community cares about its surroundings, the people who live within it, those who visit, and its artistic, cultural and historic attributes. The image a city projects comes primarily from its development characteristics. Its architectural styles, uses of open space, and the appearance of transportation corridors and

individual properties, all placed within the context of each other, form the image of a community.

To accomplish the vision of being an attractive community with its own unique identity, we must first define what that identity/image should be. Do we want to continue to have an urban environment that looks virtually the same as anywhere in America or do we begin to implement a style that is "Victoria"?

Victoria Branding Project

In an effort to define Victoria's image, a Community Branding project was launched in 2007. Funded through a partnership between the city, Chamber of Commerce and numerous local businesses, the project involves extensive market research to understand Victoria's physical attributes in relation to competing communities, visitor perception as well as local perceptions and attitudes. The culmination of the research helped determine a new community-wide branding slogan and logo.

Current Gateway Sign

11.2 Gateways to the City

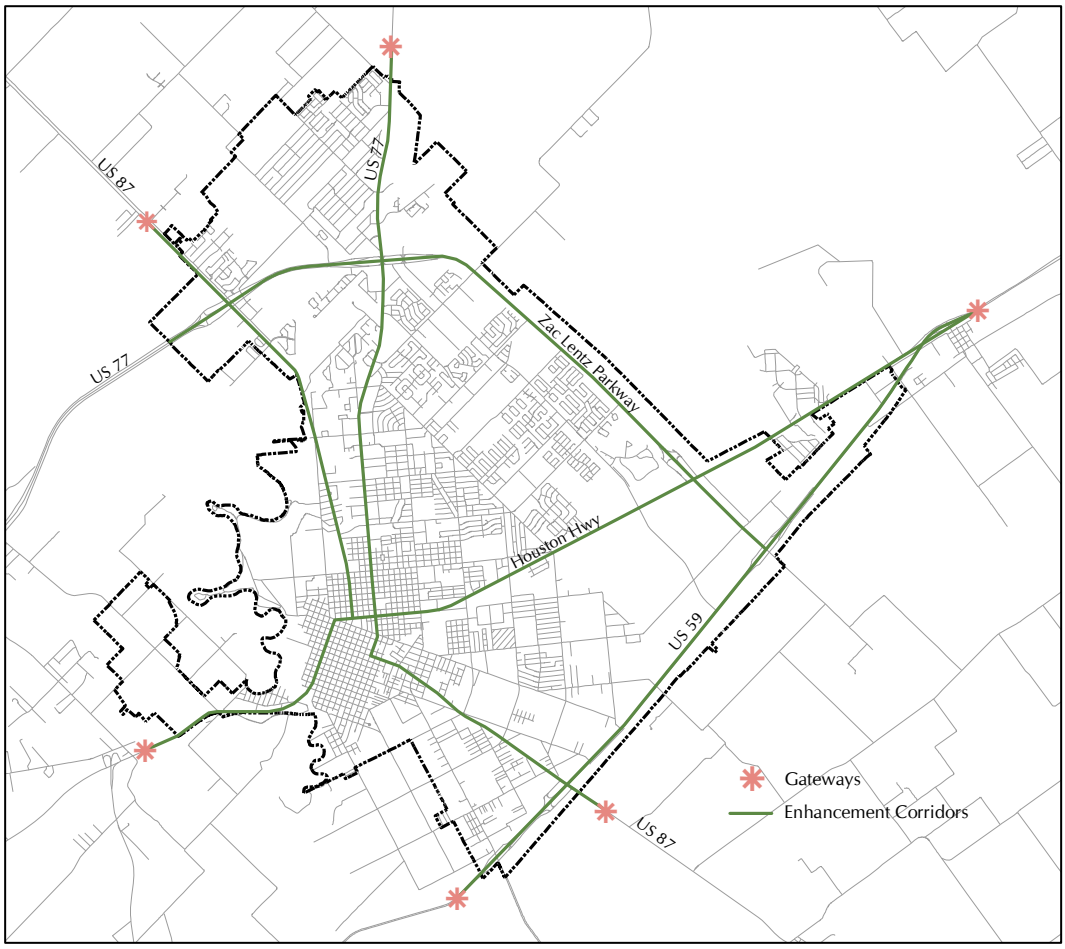
Lasting images and perceptions are often established by the first impressions created by a community. Gateways (entrances) serve as focal points for creating visual first impressions and can promote the attractiveness of the city. In addition, a gateway lets someone know they have arrived in a new place. Currently, the only identifying features at the city's entrances letting someone know they are in Victoria are the green and white city limit signs.

Main and Vine Streets

Some attempts have been made at providing entrance signs, such as the landscaped "Victoria" sign at the intersection of Main and Vine Streets. However, the location of the sign is nearly three miles inside the city limits, limiting its ability to serve as a first impression. Welcoming signs, lighting and landscaping should denote the gateways into the city and should be located on each of the major corridors in to the city. The signs should be located approximately one-half mile outside the current city limit boundary to accommodate future annexations. To promote a unified appearance a common design for the gateway signs and landscaping must be followed.

Sample Gateway Sign

Not only must the design plans provide for a good first impression, but they must also address the visual aspects of the entire corridor, including land development and other considerations which impact the image created by entering and traveling through the community. One of the goals listed in the Victoria Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan calls for enhancing the visual appearance of Victoria with particular emphasis on entrances to the city and development of design standards for corridors. Figure 11.1 shows the proposed locations for gateway signs and "enhancement corridors".



11.3 Enhancement Corridors

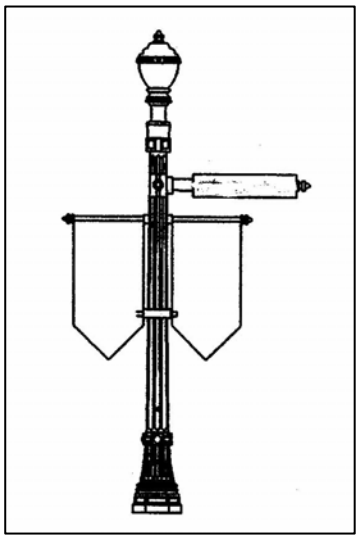
Driving in Victoria can be an unpleasant experience, not so much from traffic problems as from unattractive thoroughfares. Enhancement corridors, as shown in Figure 11.1, are the major thoroughfares in and through Victoria. The Victoria Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) should develop a Corridor Enhancement Plan that will provide a template for improving the major transportation corridors that lead into and through the city. It should include such features as bike lanes, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, median designs, and other aesthetic and engineering improvements. The appearance and function of these

corridors can benefit from improved design standards that will foster a positive community image. The following are suggested design and development guidelines.

Streetscape

Most streets in Victoria have expanded to accommodate automobile traffic, and have become less appealing to pedestrians or cyclists. Building fronts that once defined public space, such as in the downtown area, are now placed far away from the sidewalk and right-of-way; often behind asphalt-covered parking lots, with narrow sidewalks placed at the edge of high-speed thoroughfares without any buffer separating pedestrians from vehicles. How can these negative attributes be remedied and prevented? The following are design strategies that can successfully accommodate traffic within an environment that is friendly to pedestrians and cyclists.

- Improve sidewalks and require placement away from traffic lanes.
- Provide bike lanes.
- Create medians with decorative street lighting and street trees.
- Improve the appearance of street signs (see adjacent drawing)
- Place utility lines underground and consolidate traffic and directional signage.
- Work with TxDOT to design aesthetically pleasing interchanges along Loop 463 and US 59 with brick medians and landscaping.



Decorative Street Sign

Wayfinding Sign Master Plan

As part of an attractive streetscape a consistent and coordinated system of wayfinding signage needs to be established to assist visitors and residents find their way around the city. Many historical, recreational, and cultural destinations will remain hidden to potential visitors until a sign system is put in place. The signage will create an awareness of destinations and promote them with a unique, unified sign design. The signage should coordinate with the Victoria Branding Project to incorporate the established branding slogan and logo design.

Site Development and Architectural Standards

Development adjacent to Enhancement Corridors should follow higher design guidelines to create a more pleasant driving, walking, or biking experience. For the past 40 years most of the commercial development in Victoria has been generic and asphalt-dominated. This has resulted in a loss of a sense of uniqueness and place. To reverse the current trend, the city should implement stronger design guidelines to provide more pedestrian-friendly sites that integrate local character into their site and building design.

Conventional "Big Box" Store

Whispering Creek Center

To reclaim the unique character that is Victoria, the design guidelines that are adopted should encourage the integration of common design themes which complement local architecture and orient buildings onto the street to achieve a pedestrian-friendly and human-scale environment. The combination of street trees, sidewalks and unique buildings will provide residents and visitors with a warm, friendly small town feeling. The following guidelines are designed to answer residents' desire for a more attractive community.

- Eliminate the flat facades of "big-box" stores and shopping centers (25,000 square feet and larger) through the use of architectural elements such as canopies, pediments, pilasters, recesses/projections, turrets, display windows, window bays, and planters that incorporate landscaped areas and/or places for sitting. The Whispering Creek Center is good local example of this as shown in the adjacent picture. This shopping center combines architecture with sound site design and landscaping to encourage pedestrian movement throughout the center.
- Orient buildings and shopping centers onto or closer to the street and other public spaces to achieve a pedestrian-friendly environment (see photographs below).

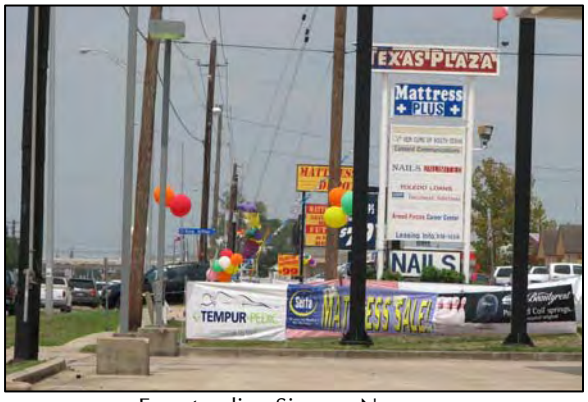
The Alternatives...

- Limit off-street parking between the building and street, encouraging placement at the rear or side of the site.
- Limit the amount of parking provided that is above and beyond the city's requirement. Most large retailers design their parking lots for peak demand, which usually occurs around the major holidays. For most of the year, vast portions of this stark sea of asphalt go unused.

- Increase landscape standards for new development, especially changing the requirements in parking lots to provide tree islands large enough for trees to survive and provide shade.
- Require that mature trees be preserved and incorporated into a site's design when possible. Adoption of a tree preservation ordinance would ensure that mature trees, such as oak and pecan trees, are not sacrificed unnecessarily.

Signs

Signs that are meant to assist customers in locating a particular business can often be more confusing than helpful. Signs can contribute to the visual clutter of the urban environment often blocking the view of business locations and even the view of other signs. Signs say a lot about a place, yet all to often a community's image is blighted by on-premise signs that are too large, too tall, too numerous or poorly located.



Freestanding Sign on Navarro

Sign standards should encourage business owners to erect less obtrusive signs that reflect an area's personality, contributing to civic pride and enhancing the visual character of the community. To promote a positive city image, the sign ordinance should be enhanced to reduce the number of signs, encourage the use of a single sign structure for all tenants in a commercial development, and set design guidelines so that signs can quickly communicate their message, compliment their surroundings and enhance the visual character of the community. A combination of good site design and improved sign standards that address location and scale, such as a monument signs, would eliminate the visual clutter that mars the view along most of our transportation corridors.

Monument Sign on Navarro

Some progress has been made toward reducing sign clutter with the adoption of Sign Ordinance amendments in 2004. These amendments included permitting and time limit requirements for banners, pennants and other promotional items. The revisions also prohibited "fence signs", limited the number of directional signs and strengthened the grandfathering and nonconforming sign provisions. However, the ordinance still does not address the use of monument signs, and a more effective method of addressing signage for large-scale developments and shopping centers.

Billboards

In recent years the city's streetscape has become littered with the proliferation of billboards. Between 1995 and 2001, 55 billboards were permitted with most of them located along major transportation corridors. As illustrated in the adjacent photograph, so many billboards results in an unattractive image for the city. In


Billboards on Rio Grande

December 2001, the city's sign ordinance was revised to increase the separation between billboards from 200 feet to 500 feet. However, even as the city strengthens its ordinance, outdoor advertising companies continue to find loopholes, and the number of billboards continues to grow. An additional 23 billboards have been permitted since the 2001 amendment. To reduce the frequency of billboards along our enhancement corridors, this ordinance needs to be further tightened in some additional areas.

A recent phenomenon has been the introduction of electronic billboards into the Victoria market. If used properly, these signs may be no more visually offensive than a typical billboard. However, the city should monitor the use of electronic signs. If they display images that flash or blink rapidly, or are not properly dimmed at night, these signs could become a nuisance and a safety concern.

Litter Control

Litter is a problem that plagues many communities. Unfortunately, Victoria is not immune to this problem. Trash and debris litter our major transportation corridors creating an unsightly atmosphere. The improved design guidelines mentioned above will be for not if our community does not clean up our streets, parks, and private property and work to prevent future litter.

The Chamber of Commerce's beautification committee recently formed a "Keep Victoria Beautiful" (KVB) affiliate to beautify and promote an attractive community. The committee, now an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, has focused on litter prevention, beautification of public areas, and educating the community to take personal responsibility for community appearance. KVB accomplishes this mission by empowering neighborhoods to make a difference through two annual neighborhood cleanups: the first weekend in April during the Great American Cleanup/ Texas Trash Off and the third weekend in October during Make a Difference Day. Through support of KVB and promoting private participation the city can maximize its resources to beautify the community.

11.4 Code Enforcement

The city currently dedicates four staff members from the Building and Environmental Inspections Department to code enforcement. These staff members are responsible for all dangerous building demolition, clean-up of weedy lots, abandoned vehicles and other housing-related code enforcement. Other portions of the city code, such as the Subdivision and Development Ordinance, are left to individual departments to enforce. This situation results in a disjointed effort among relevant departments when addressing sites with multiple code violations.

A centralized code enforcement program should be developed that will address all areas and aspects of the city code. To sufficiently address the volume of code violations, appropriate staffing and budget resources will need to be provided. In addition, city code and city policies should be revised to strengthen our ability to enforce ordinances with a minimum of city resources. A case in point is the trash and furniture left outside this apartment house in the adjacent photograph. This situation is the result of a city policy that prevents the Solid Waste Department from picking up trash when a customer does not pay their water bill.

A Local Eyesore

11.5 Summary

With guidance from the citizens, the city council, planning commission, and city staff must take an active role in shaping the appearance of the community. Applying higher development guidelines along with an aggressive code enforcement program can create a more pleasant and attractive community that will bring Victoria to the forefront of Texas cities. The goals and objectives stated in this chapter can be achieved by emphasizing good design while being developer friendly. We must be proactive and diligent if we are to preserve our heritage and small town charm. We are a great city, with a unique history and need to portray an image that strengthens these qualities.

11.6 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Enhance the appearance of the city by blending future development with its physical environment.

- Objective 1.1: Improve the attractiveness of Victoria's major transportation corridors and entrances (Gateways) to the city.
- Objective 1.2: Create site development and architectural guidelines that emphasize Victoria's character.
- Objective 1.3: Ensure the preservation of existing mature trees.
- Objective 1.4: Require new on-premise signs to follow design guidelines that enhance the visual character of the community.
- Objective 1.5: Revise the sign ordinance to stop the proliferation of billboards in Victoria.

Goal 2: Establish a strong sense of community identity.

- Objective 2.1: Provide gateway signs and landscaping to welcome residents and visitors at each of the major corridors into the city.
- Objective 2.2: Develop a streetscape design theme that is used throughout the city to create a sense of unity and identity.

Objective 2.3: Define and enhance the image of Victoria.

Goal 3: Instill pride in the community by encouraging citizens to take responsibility for their actions in the upkeep and appearance of private and public property.

Objective 3.1: Develop a centralized code enforcement program with adequate staffing and resources.

Objective 3.2: Strengthen city codes and ordinances to eliminate unsightly areas with a minimum use of city resources.

Objective 3.3: Promptly enforce city ordinances regarding property maintenance.

Objective 3.4: Support Keep Victoria Beautiful programs.

CHAPTER 12

Implementation

Getting the Job Done

Planning is an on-going process that includes several steps: setting goals and objectives, identifying issues, collecting and analyzing data, considering alternatives, preparing the plan, adopting the plan, implementation and evaluation. The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan does not signify the end of the process. Without an active implementation program, the plan is nothing more than an informative document, providing data on past and existing conditions and expressing the city's visions, goals and desires for the future. Implementation is where the ideas contained in the plan are put into action.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a guide for public officials and citizens for making decisions about the future growth and development of Victoria. This Implementation Chapter provides a framework for that decision making process. It includes specific recommendations regarding the actions, programs, projects and ordinances necessary to the achieve the visions, goals and objectives contained in each chapter of the plan.

12.1 Continuing the Planning Process

As the Comprehensive Plan is implemented it must be continually reviewed and updated to address the changing needs, circumstances and conditions of the community. The plan can only be effective if it remains relevant and up-to-date. Some of the ideas and recommendations of the plan may be determined to be infeasible. New options or solutions may emerge over time. The planning process must be flexible enough to recognize and respond to these possibilities. The Development Services Department and the Planning Commission should continually monitor the Comprehensive Plan for necessary modifications and refinements. These needed changes will be addressed in minor Annual Plan Amendments and major 5-Year Plan Updates. As the plan is updated and revised, care must be taken to ensure that the Community Visions expressed in this plan continue to be the over-riding themes. While objectives, actions and implementation methods may change; the visions must remain constant.

Annual Plan Amendments

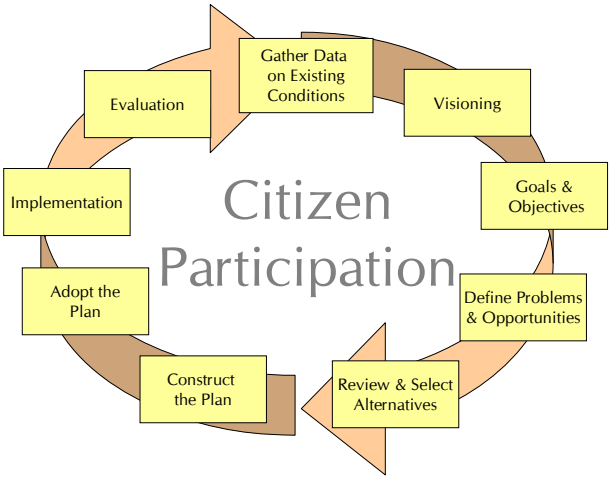
An annual plan amendment process will allow minor revisions to be made to the Comprehensive Plan on a regular basis. The Planning Staff and Planning Commission will create and maintain a list of potential plan amendments throughout

the year. Annual amendments will be adopted in a manner similar to that of the original plan, including public hearings, recommendations for approval by the Planning Commission and final approval by City Council. These amendments will be adopted and distributed as addenda to the Comprehensive Plan.

Major Plan Updates

A major update to the Comprehensive Plan should occur every five years. Major updates are necessary to respond to significant shifts in growth patterns, changes in demographics, successful implementation of elements of the plan, and new issues that may evolve. The major plan update process should be similar to that undertaken to prepare the original Comprehensive Plan. It should include a complete analysis of the existing plan, the identification of new issues and trends, up-to-date background information on current conditions, and updated goals, objectives and implementation strategies.

The Continuing Planning Process



Citizen Participation

Citizen participation is a critical element of the planning process. The citizens of Victoria actively participated in the development of this Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee invested many hours over the period of an entire year to produce a plan that reflects the desires of the community. In addition, many citizens took part in surveys, presentations to civic organizations, homeowners associations and other stakeholder groups, a community-wide open house and public hearings conducted by the Planning Commission and City Council. The public will continue to be involved in the ongoing planning process of annual amendments and major plan updates.

Annual Reports

The Director of Development Services should annually submit a report to the Planning Commission on the status of Comprehensive Plan implementation. The Annual Report should outline significant steps taken to implement the plan in the previous year and identify the accomplishments realized during that time. The report should also provide a work plan of tasks, programs and projects proposed for implementation in the coming year. The timing of the Annual Report should coincide with the city's budget planning process to allow for the timely submittal of budget recommendations. Upon review by the Planning Commission, the Annual Report should be forwarded to the City Council.

12.2 Implementing the Comprehensive Plan

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will require a commitment on the part of the City Council, appointed commissions, city management and staff members

to apply the visions, goals and objectives of the plan to their day-to-day decision-making processes. These decision-makers and advisors, along with citizens, developers and other stakeholders, must have ready access to the Comprehensive Plan, which will be made available on the city's website and in printed form. The plan should be consistently referenced in planning studies and planning staff reports for development proposals and variance requests. It should become a key tool in the development of the city's annual budget. The plan also identifies existing policies and programs that need to be reviewed, along with new policies, programs and initiatives that should be considered. This day-to-day use of the Comprehensive Plan will play a critical role in implementation. Other specific means of implementing the plan are discussed below.

Municipal Codes and Ordinances

The City of Victoria manages its everyday operations and future development through the administration and enforcement of municipal codes and ordinances. Many of the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan will be implemented through the adoption of new ordinances and the revision of existing codes.

The Subdivision and Development Ordinance is currently the primary tool available to the city for implementing the land development and growth-related elements of the Comprehensive Plan. This plan recommends several potential revisions to the ordinance. Some of the issues include the need to develop more flexible standards to encourage in-fill, innovative development projects and affordable housing, urban design standards for "big-box" retail stores, and improved landscaping and parking guidelines along major transportation corridors. It is also recommended that the city's subdivision regulations and subdivision improvement standards be applied to all new subdivisions in the ETJ. The plan also proposes updates to the sign ordinance, water and sewer extension policies, building codes as they pertain to historic preservation and restoration, and various other city codes.

Neighborhood Protection Ordinance

A key objective in the Land Development Chapter of the plan is the adoption of a neighborhood protection ordinance. The Steering Committee identified this ordinance as a critically needed tool for the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the neighborhood protection ordinance is to safeguard existing residential neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible land uses, which can negatively impact property values and quality of life. The neighborhood protection concept is a very simplified, non-intrusive form of zoning. Existing residential neighborhoods are identified on a map as residential districts. These residential areas are then protected from encroachment by commercial, industrial, multi-family and other incompatible land uses. All other areas, including commercial, industrial, multi-family, other non-residential uses, mixed-use areas and vacant/undeveloped land are designated as mixed-use districts. The ordinance would also address historic preservation by creating a Historic Overlay District, which is intended to preserve the integrity of historic areas and structures.

With a Neighborhood Protection Ordinance, new development will occur under essentially the same rules that are in effect today. The ordinance seeks to preserve

existing residential neighborhoods while permitting flexibility for new development, allowing market forces to be the primary driving force that determines future land uses.

Additional Studies and Plans

By definition, the Comprehensive Plan is broad in scope. In some cases the plan points out the need for further study or more detailed planning for a specific topic. Therefore, implementation can include the preparation of more detailed plans, including small area plans (e.g. downtown and/or neighborhood revitalization plans) and functional plans such as water and sewer master plans.

Strategic Planning

While comprehensive and strategic planning are individual management tools, they are highly interrelated parts of an integrated, continuing process. It is through the comprehensive planning process that the community has been able to identify issues and opportunities facing the community, cooperatively develop visions for the future, and collectively establish reasonable goals for Victoria's on-going development. In this Implementation Chapter we have been careful to clearly detail goals, objectives, proposed actions with responsible parties identified and a timetable for completion. Without implementation of the key features of the comprehensive plan, it can easily become nothing more than a frustrating, colorful, perhaps informative document that does little to guide the city.

It is through strategic planning that we focus on the process of how to efficiently implement the priority actions necessary to achieve the comprehensive plan's stated objectives. In summary, the comprehensive plan is broad-brushed, long-range with typically a 20-year planning horizon. It is most closely aligned with issues, visions and community goals. The strategic plan is very detailed, focusing on the strategy for implementing priority actions and achieving key objectives during a much shorter time frame of three-to-five years.

Some critical functions of the strategic planning process are to:

- ensure plan implementation by integrating the planning and annual budgeting processes
- develop the basis for a formal Capital Improvements Program;
- organize the City Council's mission around the plan's adopted visions, goals, objectives and actions;
- provide a common strategy for the Council, City Manager, Department Directors and staff that aggressively moves the city toward the realization of its visions;
- help the City Manager and department directors put programs, projects and services into meaningful priorities consistent with funding opportunities;
- enable citizens to better understand and be involved in the Council's decisions relating to the expenditure of revenues necessary to provide city services;
- indicate where policy changes are required to complete the plan;

- provide a common measurement tool for evaluating the performance of the city manager and department directors;
- develop better avenues of communication between the Council, city management, appointed commissions and the citizens—all leading to better consensus-making and more consistent, unified decision-making;
- establish achievable milestones for the city with the matching focus of resources necessary for success;
- develop monitoring functions that gauge whether the actions of the plan are having their desired effects and to ensure that each of the key elements of the plan are being accomplished in a timely manner.

Capital Improvements Programming

One of the most effective tools for implementing the Comprehensive Plan is a Capital Improvements Program, or CIP. Capital improvements include such items as streets, drainage channels/structures, water and sewer mains and systems, parks, fire stations, other public buildings (libraries, administrative offices, etc.), and even major equipment. Typically, capital improvements are relatively expensive, have a long lifespan, and are financed through the issuance of debt. Careful planning for capital improvements is necessary to ensure that major public investments are made in the right locations, at the right time, and in the right sequence.

A Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a schedule of major capital improvements, listed in order of priority, with cost estimates and their proposed means of financing. The CIP is a tool for analyzing the city's capital facility needs and priorities, and balancing those needs with available and anticipated city resources. The process includes a financial analysis, which allows the city to predict its capacity to finance capital improvements after it has paid its basic operating costs.

A CIP is typically a five-year rolling plan. The first year becomes the basis for the city's capital budget for the fiscal year. The program is updated every year. The first year (that which has already been budgeted) is eliminated, the remaining years are re-evaluated and updated to reflect any changes in cost estimates or priorities, and a new fifth year is added. The CIP process involves the City Manager, the Development Services and Finance Departments, and all department directors involved with capital projects and purchases. Since one of the primary guides for the CIP is the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission should play a role in the CIP review process prior to City Council adoption.

Developing a CIP is not an easy task, as there will always be more worthy projects than there are resources to finance them. However, when combined with a Comprehensive Plan, a CIP will be a powerful planning, budgeting and implementation tool.

12.3 Goals and Objectives for Implementation

The following goals and objectives are provided to guide the City Council, Planning Commission, city management and city staff in the implementation of the comprehensive plan.

Goal 1: The City of Victoria will be accountable to its citizens for implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 1.1: Keep the Comprehensive Plan up to date through annual amendments and major updates every five years.

Action 1.1.1: Establish an annual plan review and amendment process and schedule.

Action 1.1.2: Adopt annual plan amendments and publish and distribute them as addenda to the Comprehensive Plan.

Action 1.1.3: Develop a schedule and process for major plan updates every five years.

Objective 1.2: Encourage citizen involvement in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and the annual amendment and major update processes.

Action 1.2.1: Make the Comprehensive Plan available on the city's website.

Action 1.2.2: Publish the Comprehensive Plan in hardcopy format, and make it readily available to the public.

Action 1.2.3: Develop and implement public participation procedures for the annual amendment and five-year major update processes.

Action 1.2.4: Actively seek public input in the development of ordinances, ordinance revisions, Capital Improvements Programming, programs and additional plans necessary for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 1.3: Revise existing ordinances and adopt new ordinances necessary for the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Action 1.3.1: Prioritize necessary ordinances and revisions and develop formalized ordinance creation and amendment processes and schedules.

Action 1.3.2: Assign responsibility for developing and amending ordinances to the Planning Commission, Planning Commission subcommittees, other appropriate boards and committees, and city departments.

Objective 1.4: Develop a formal Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

Action 1.4.1: Establish a CIP process to schedule future capital expenditures and obtain City Council approval of the process.

Action 1.4.2: Appoint a CIP coordinator to compile project requests, coordinate the review of projects, and oversee the process.

Action 1.4.3: Establish a planning review by the Development Services Department and Planning Commission to ensure conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Action 1.4.4: Establish a formalized process for City Council review and adoption of the CIP.

Objective 1.5: Apply the visions, goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan to the day-to-day decision-making processes of the City Council, appointed boards and commissions, city management and city departments.

Action 1.5.1: The Director of Development Services will submit an annual report to the Planning Commission on the status of Comprehensive Plan implementation, including a work program of tasks, programs and projects proposed for implementation in the coming year.

Action 1.5.2: Develop a framework for linking the Comprehensive Plan to a shorter-range strategic planning program involving the City Council, management and individual city departments.

Action 1.5.3: Use the strategic planning process to develop annual goals, CIP priorities and annual budget recommendations.

12.4 Action Plan

Each element (Chapter) of the Comprehensive Plan concludes with a list of goals and objectives. A solid plan of action is needed to assure the implementation of those goals and objectives. The following pages contain an "Action Matrix" for each element of the Comprehensive Plan. Each matrix provides a list of the specific action steps needed to implement the goals and objectives of the plan element. The format includes columns that assign relative priority levels to each action step and the agency(s) responsible for its implementation.

Priority Levels

This Action Plan lists over 250 specific steps to be taken in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. While each action has been deemed necessary and worthy of mention, they cannot all be implemented at once. Each action statement has been assigned a relative priority level ranging from 1 (highest priority) to 5 (lowest priority) based on resource availability, staff and facilitator recommendations and final review by the Steering Committee and Planning Commission.

Responsible Agencies

The far right-hand column in the Action Matrix identifies the city departments and other agencies that are primarily responsible for implementing each action statement. It is not our intent to identify every party that may be involved in an activity, project or program; but to identify those who should ensure that action is taken. Abbreviations for the responsible agencies and departments are provided below.

Responsible Agency Abbreviations

CA	City Attorney	MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
CC	City Council	PC	Planning Commission
CH	Chamber of Commerce	PD	Police Department
CM	City Management	PK	Parks Department
CVB	Convention and Visitors Bureau	PL	Planning Department
ES	Environmental Services Department	PW	Public Works Department
FD	Fire Department	VC	Victoria County
LB	Library	VEDC	Victoria Economic Development Corporation
		VPI	Victoria Preservation Inc.

Action Matrix

CHAPTER 3

Land Development

Vision 2020: Victoria is a community with "small-town" conveniences offering "big-city" opportunities.

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Land Development Goal 1: Establish orderly land development patterns.		
Objective 1.1: Encourage in-fill development by providing incentives.		
Action 1.1.1: Place a high priority on infrastructure improvements for in-fill areas to encourage their development.	2	PL,CC
Action 1.1.2: Analyze the feasibility of providing financial incentives for in-fill development, including possible tax incentives and reduced or waived development and building permit fees.	3	PL
Action 1.1.3: Identify opportunities for public/private partnerships to assist in the provision of infrastructure improvements to serve in-fill development.	4	PL
Action 1.1.4: Offer flexibility in subdivision and development regulations for developments in in-fill areas.	1	PL,PC,CC
Action 1.1.5: Use GIS to maintain an inventory of vacant parcels, and identify infrastructure improvements necessary for the development of such areas.	2	PL
Objective 1.2: Develop appropriate mechanisms to encourage growth consistent with the city's ability to effectively manage such growth.		
Action 1.2.1: Consider the adoption of impact fees as a means of generating revenues for funding or recouping the cost of infrastructure improvements or facility expansions necessitated by new development.	3	PL,PC,CC
Action 1.2.2: If adopted, structure impact fees to encourage development adjacent to or within a specified distance of existing infrastructure.	4	PL,PC,CC
Action 1.2.3: Review existing utility extension ordinances/policies for necessary revisions and/or adopt new policies that discourage sprawl and leap-frog development patterns.	2	PL,PW
Action 1.2.4: Review the existing oversized utility reimbursement provisions of the Subdivision and Development Ordinance to ensure consistency with this plan and other proposed policies.	3	PL,PW
Objective 1.3: Manage the geographic direction of growth through the provision of municipal utilities and services in areas appropriate for development.		
Action 1.3.1: Continue to use the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to prioritize infrastructure projects that determine the direction of future growth.	1	CM,PL, CC
Objective 1.4: Manage growth in the extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ).		

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Action 1.4.1: Identify the specific issues and challenges pertaining to development in the ETJ.	1	PL
Action 1.4.2: Apply city subdivision regulations and subdivision improvement/design standards to new development in the ETJ.	1	PL,PC,CC
Action 1.4.3: Investigate the Texas Local Government Code for other regulatory authority granted to the city for managing development in the ETJ (signage, driveways, etc.).	3	PL,CA
Objective 1.5: Achieve a balance between private property rights and a level of land development tools that is acceptable to the citizens of Victoria.		
Action 1.5.1: Continue to review regulations and policies to see if any changes are warranted that would allow reasonable flexibility and exception.	2	PL,PC
Action 1.5.2: Use the Planning Commission to facilitate the involvement of citizens and the development community in the adoption of land development tools and regulations.	3	PL,PC
Land Development Goal 2: Preserve and enhance the integrity, compatibility, value and vitality of existing and new neighborhoods.		
Objective 2.1: Identify and adopt proactive land development tools.		
Action 2.1.1: Identify potential revisions to existing subdivision and development regulations that will enhance the livability and value of neighborhoods.	2	PL
Action 2.1.2: Develop new land development tools based on the findings identified in Chapter 3 of this plan.	3	PL
Objective 2.2: Protect private property in existing residential neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible land uses.		
Action 2.2.1: Draft, adopt, implement and periodically review a neighborhood protection ordinance in accordance with the recommendations of this plan.	1	PL,PC,CC
Objective 2.3: Preserve and protect our historic neighborhoods.		
Action 2.3.1: Create historic overlay districts to protect historic resources from encroachment by incompatible development.	1	PL,PC,CC, VPI
Land Development Goal 3: Designate adequate land areas for industrial parks and other major commercial/industrial developments to facilitate expanded employment opportunities and enhance the tax base.		
Objective 3.1: Identify those areas prime for industrial development.		
Action 3.1.1: Use GIS to maintain an inventory of properties that are appropriate for industrial development.	3	PL
Action 3.1.2: Share the inventory with VEDC.	3	PL,VEDC
Objective 3.2: In cooperation with the VEDC, coordinate the provision of adequate utilities/infrastructure and transportation access for industrial development.		
Action 3.2.1: Develop avenues of communication between the Planning Commission and VEDC.	2	PC,VEDC
Action 3.2.2: Provide adequate city infrastructure and services to areas that are prime for industrial development.	3	PW,CC
Land Development Goal 4: Promote land development that enhances Victoria's sense of community.		
Objective 4.1: Support Smart Growth principles.		
Action 4.1.1: Adopt flexible land development codes that encourage innovative site designs that are conducive to in-fill, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and redevelopment.	2	PL,PC
Action 4.1.2: Establish incentives for in-fill development and the efficient utilization of existing infrastructure.	3	PL,PC
Action 4.1.3: Identify and implement other methods of minimizing urban sprawl and strip commercial development.	4	PL,PC
Objective 4.2: Encourage innovative and creative residential development designs.		
Action 4.2.1: Review and consider revisions to the existing Planned Unit Development (PUD) section of the Subdivision and Development Ordinance, research other options for achieving this objective, and consider appropriate revisions to the PUD Section.	3	PL,PC
Action 4.2.2: Identify ways to encourage improved perimeter fencing and landscaping, entry features, pedestrian circulation, the preservation of mature	3	PL

trees and natural areas, and other neighborhood amenities.		
Action 4.2.3: Identify ways to encourage subdivision designs that include adequate open spaces in either private yards or common areas to partially provide for residents' open space and recreation needs.	3	PL
Objective 4.3: Promote flexible land development standards that accommodate innovative land development projects.		
Action 4.3.1: Streamline existing codes to eliminate out-dated, unnecessary steps, procedures or requirements that may discourage innovative or creative site design.	2	PL,PC
Action 4.3.2: Adopt land development codes that encourage innovative development projects.	3	PC,CC
Objective 4.4: Encourage neighborhood revitalization.		
Action 4.4.1: Continue using the Target Neighborhood concept for the allocation of CDBG funds.	1	PL,CC
Action 4.4.2: Leverage CDBG dollars in Target Neighborhoods to the maximum extent possible with city general funds, water/sewer funds, HOME grants, ½ cent sales tax funds, in-kind services from other governmental entities, private foundations, and other grants and funding sources.	2	PL,CC
Action 4.4.3: Foster partnerships with residents, business owners, schools, social service providers and other stakeholders in neighborhood revitalization efforts.	3	PL
Action 4.4.4: Empower neighborhood associations and residents to participate in revitalization through an aggressive public participation program.	4	PL
Land Development Goal 5: Establish an annexation program that adds to the economic stability of the city, and protects and enhances its quality of life and economic resources.		
Objective 5.1: Plan to annex areas prior to development, thus managing the type, quality, and location of development in areas currently outside the city limits.		
Action 5.1.1: Maintain a detailed annexation study that identifies areas for potential annexation.	2	PL
Action 5.1.2: Identify preferred growth corridors and areas of future development and establish priorities for annexation.	2	PL
Action 5.1.3: Include in the annexation study an analysis of constraints to future development, including floodplains, potential for gravity wastewater service and other limitations.	3	PL
Action 5.1.4: Coordinate annexation plans with area utility providers and the Victoria ISD.	3	PL
Objective 5.2: Pursue a systematic annexation process to promote orderly growth and the provision of municipal services to preserve the city's fiscal position while encouraging economic development.		
Action 5.2.1: Identify areas of existing development bordering the corporate limits that can be served by minor utility extensions.	2	PW,PL
Action 5.2.2: Conduct fiscal impact analyses for potential annexations to weigh the cost of extending municipal services against the projected revenues to be generated by development.	3	PL
Action 5.2.3: Oppose the creation of special purpose districts, water or wastewater utilities and municipal utility districts within the extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) unless the city determines it cannot provide the necessary services.	3	CC,CA

4 CHAPTER

Transportation

Vision 2020: Victoria offers safe, convenient accessibility within the city, region and state via all modes of transportation.

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Transportation Goal 1: Establish a roadway network that accommodates the safe and efficient flow of traffic in, through and around Victoria.		
Objective 1.1: Ensure timely upgrades to current street and highway facilities.		

Action 1.1.1: Implement the Thoroughfare Master Plan through the right-of-way dedication provisions of the Subdivision and Development Ordinance to ensure the preservation of right-of-way for roadway extensions and expansions.	1	PL,PC
Action 1.1.2: Periodically review the Thoroughfare Master Plan and amend as necessary.	3	PC,CC
Action 1.1.3: Use a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to prioritize locally funded street extensions and expansions.	1	PL,CM,CC
Action 1.1.4: Initiate timely capacity improvement projects in the form of additional lanes, divided facilities with medians, turning lanes and extensions of existing streets.	3	PW
Action 1.1.5: Acquire the necessary right-of-way and construct turning lanes where deemed necessary to improve intersection capacity and improve safety at high accident intersections.	3	PW
Objective 1.2: Work more closely with the Victoria MPO, TxDOT, and the general public to provide a more coordinated approach to project planning in Victoria and Victoria County.		
Action 1.2.1: Take advantage of the fact that the MPO is administered by the City of Victoria, and utilize the MPO as a forum for expressing the city's transportation needs and priorities to TxDOT, other entities in the region and the general public.	2	PL,CM,CC, MPO
Action 1.2.2: Identify and implement methods of increasing public participation in the transportation planning efforts of the MPO and TxDOT.	3	PL,MPO
Action 1.2.3: Regularly review and update the MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (long range transportation plan) and Transportation Improvement Program (three-year transportation project schedule) to ensure consistency with the city's priorities.	2	PL,MPO
Action 1.2.4: Develop a transportation fund that could be utilized as local match or as startup to assist in moving State and Federally funded projects forward in a more timely manner.	4	CM,CC
Objective 1.3: Reduce conflicts between train and automobile/truck traffic in Victoria.		
Action 1.3.1: Support additional railroad grade separations.	4	MPO,CC
Action 1.3.2: Coordinate with local rail companies to identify improvements that can reduce traffic delays, improve safety and alleviate the impacts of train traffic.	5	MPO,PW
Action 1.3.3: Support a rail bypass around Victoria.	3	MPO,CC
Objective 1.4: Ensure that future thoroughfares are developed in a manner that is aesthetically acceptable.		
Action 1.4.1: Develop a Corridor Enhancement Plan, which will address access management, landscaping, street lighting, sidewalks and other street enhancement issues.	2	PL,MPO
Transportation Goal 2: Expand regional accessibility via improved highway, rail, air and barge canal modes of transportation.		
Objective 2.1: Support the location of I-69 through Victoria.		
Action 2.1.1: Work closely with appropriate Federal and State agencies to implement plans for developing I-69 through Victoria.	4	MPO,CC, VC,CH
Objective 2.2: Work more closely with the MPO to provide a multi-modal approach to project planning for highways, rail, airport and barge canal improvements.		
Action 2.2.1: Support the development of an implementation plan to upgrade existing facilities to create better connectivity between highways, the airport, the barge canal / Port of Victoria and rail services.	2	MPO,PL, VC
Action 2.2.2: Seek additional sources of State and Federal funding for such improvements.	3	MPO,VC
Objective 2.3: Support additional barge canal improvements.		
Action 2.3.1: Facilitate communications between the MPO and the Port of Victoria to develop strategies for improving access and mobility to and around the Port/Barge Canal.	2	MPO
Objective 2.4: Support a 4-lane facility connection to I-10.		
Action 2.4.1: Work with County, State and Federal agencies to prioritize improvements to US Hwy 77 in order to establish a 4-lane connection to I-10.	4	MPO,VC
Transportation Goal 3: Provide alternative transportation options including public transportation, hike/bike networks and improved pedestrian circulation.		

Objective 3.1: Continue to support the operation of Victoria Transit and the various public transportation services that it provides.		
Action 3.1.1: Continue the Interlocal Agreement with the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC) to provide local match funding and in-kind services toward the implementation of the transit system.	2	CC
Action 3.1.2: Work closely with GCRPC in the planning of transit routes and stops.	2	PL,PW, MPO
Objective 3.2: Continue supporting the implementation of Bike/Pedestrian pathways that would connect various parks and green belts throughout Victoria.		
Action 3.2.1: Develop a master plan to provide for the construction of an interconnected bicycle/pedestrian system for both recreational and alternative transportation needs.	3	PK,PL,PW
Action 3.2.2: Identify potential funding sources and seek funding for bicycle/ pedestrian facilities.	3	PK,PL
Goal 4: Develop transportation strategies that will reduce dependence on the automobile and continue to ensure the city's clean air quality.		
Objective 4.1: Increase awareness of and encourage the use of alternative transportation options.		
Action 4.1.1: Work with the "Air Victoria" Committee to educate the community on air quality issues.	1	ES,CM, MPO,CH
Action 4.1.2: Work with "Air Victoria" Committee, local media and other entities to improve and expand the Ozone Action Day program.	2	ES,CM, MPO,CH
Action 4.1.3: Develop and implement a standard operating procedures manual for the City of Victoria to use on Ozone Action Days.	1	CM,ES,CH
Action 4.1.4: Work cooperatively with local industry and business to encourage employees to walk, bicycle, or share a ride.	3	MPO,CH

CHAPTER 5

Housing

Vision 2020: Victoria has safe and quiet neighborhoods with a variety of affordable housing.

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Housing Goal 1: City leadership will facilitate open communication and cooperation among property owners, developers, city staff and others involved in all aspects of housing in Victoria.		
Objective 1.1: Maintain communication between the city and the housing development community.		
Action 1.1.1: Implement proactive methods of communicating with builders and developers, including associate membership with the Builders Association of Victoria, participation in Association events and meetings, and offering presentations on building and development codes.	2	PL,PC
Action 1.1.2: Make the Comprehensive Plan readily available to the development community.	1	PL
Action 1.1.3: Maintain a current mailing list and e-mail list of builders and developers for the distribution of meeting announcements, information on proposed code amendments and plan updates, and other city activities related to housing and development.	1	PL
Action 1.1.4: Continually improve the city's website as a source of information on city plans, building codes, development regulations, and permitting and development review processes.	2	PL
Action 1.1.5: Establish public/private partnerships to accomplish housing goals.	3	PL
Objective 1.2: Maintain a customer-friendly and flexible attitude among city staff when considering housing development plans.		
Action 1.2.1: Continue the refinement of the Development Center, the Development Team and other customer service improvements.	1	CM
Action 1.2.2: In cases where codes allow for flexibility or interpretation, and life/safety matters are not involved, apply a common sense approach that does not create barriers to housing development.	2	CM

Housing Goal 2: Promote a variety of housing types and neighborhoods to meet Victoria's future housing needs.		
Objective 2.1: Support housing opportunities and choices for a range of household types, family size and incomes.		
Action 2.1.1: Revise existing codes to encourage innovative and creative housing development and redevelopment proposals.	2	PL,PC, CC
Objective 2.2: Continue to facilitate the development of housing to meet the needs of the disabled, elderly and other special needs populations.		
Action 2.2.1: Support Low Income Housing Tax Credit applications for special needs housing projects.	3	CC,PL
Action 2.2.2: Support the efforts of the Victoria Housing Authority to provide housing for the elderly, disabled and other special needs populations.	4	PL
Objective 2.3: Encourage residential uses on the second story of buildings in the Downtown area.		
Action 2.3.1: Support incentives for the development of residential uses on the upper floors of downtown buildings.	2	PL
Action 2.3.2: Revise existing codes to eliminate unnecessary barriers to the adaptation of upper floors in downtown buildings for residential use.	2	FD, PL CC
Housing Goal 3: Improve the safety, appearance and livability of existing neighborhoods.		
Objective 3.1: Preserve existing neighborhood integrity and create livable neighborhood environments.		
Action 3.1.1: Adopt and implement the Neighborhood Protection Ordinance to protect existing residential areas from encroachment by incompatible development.	1	PL,PC,CC
Action 3.1.2: Facilitate the formation of neighborhood organizations.	5	PL
Action 3.1.3: Establish a grant program for neighborhood initiated enhancement projects, such as the beautification of vacant lots, landscaping, entry treatments and other neighborhood enhancements.	4	PL
Objective 3.2: Achieve an acceptable level of property maintenance.		
Action 3.2.1: Review, update and enforce codes and ordinances related to weedy lots, junk vehicles, minimum housing standards and other aspects of property maintenance.	2	PL, CA
Action 3.2.2: Provide public information and outreach regarding property maintenance codes.	3	PL
Objective 3.3: Encourage the rehabilitation or replacement of substandard housing.		
Action 3.3.1: Review, develop and implement alternative programs to encourage housing rehabilitation.	3	PL
Action 3.3.2: Continue the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) owner-occupied housing rehabilitation program.	1	PL,CC
Housing Goal 4: Promote entry-level and low- and moderate-income housing options in Victoria.		
Objective 4.1: Support the construction of entry-level and low- to moderate-income housing.		
Action 4.1.1: Continue supporting Habitat for Humanity through land acquisition, infrastructure and site development activities.	2	CC,PL
Action 4.1.2: Utilize incentives and partnerships to encourage area builders, developers and non-profit housing providers to meet the demand for entry-level housing and low- and moderate-income housing.	3	PL
Action 4.1.3: Facilitate and coordinate grant applications for local housing-related agencies.	5	PL
Action 4.1.4: Review existing ordinances for barriers to affordable housing.	3	PL
Objective 4.2: Encourage the development of in-fill lots and/or lots contiguous to existing housing for new housing construction.		
Action 4.2.1: Use CDBG funds for the acquisition of vacant, in-fill lots to be used for the construction of new affordable housing.	2	PL,CC
Action 4.2.2: Create incentives for the development of new affordable housing on existing vacant lots.	4	PL,CC
Objective 4.3: Promote opportunities for homeownership for as many people as possible.		
Action 4.3.1: Continue the Mortgage Assistance Program for first-time homebuyers.	1	PL,CC
Action 4.3.2: Develop additional programs and incentives to encourage home ownership.	3	PL
Action 4.3.3: Ensure that first-time homebuyers have access to homeownership	4	PL

counseling.		
Housing Goal 5: Recognize and manage manufactured housing as a viable alternative for housing.		
Objective 5.1: Regulate the location and appearance of manufactured homes.		
Action 5.1.1: Establish provisions in the proposed Neighborhood Protection Ordinance relating to the appropriate and compatible locations of manufactured homes.	1	PL,PC,CC
Action 5.1.2: Adopt standards for the appearance of individual manufactured homes, including provisions for design, building materials, foundations, etc.	1	PL,PC,CC
Objective 5.2: Encourage the placement of manufactured housing units in manufactured home subdivisions and parks.		
Action 5.2.1: Review existing development standards in the Subdivision and Development Ordinance for manufactured home park and manufactured home subdivisions, and adopt amendments as necessary to ensure high quality, sustainable manufactured home development.	1	PL,PC,CC

CHAPTER 6 Infrastructure

Vision 2020: Victoria has technologically advanced, cost effective infrastructure (i.e. water, sewer, streets, drainage, & communications).

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Infrastructure Goal 1: Improve the condition of existing streets and ensure that future roadways are built to last.		
Objective 1.1: Place a high priority on street maintenance in the budgeting and capital improvements processes.		
Action 1.1.1: Use a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to prioritize future street reconstruction projects.	1	CM,PL,CC, PW
Action 1.1.2: Continue increasing the annual street maintenance budget in future fiscal years.	2	CC
Action 1.1.3: Continue to use the annual Street Inventory to determine priorities for street maintenance.	2	PW
Objective 1.2: Improve city street standards and specifications to provide for better-built city streets, which will minimize maintenance costs and extend the life of the street.		
Action 1.2.1: Implement new pavement standards and finalize other infrastructure design standards and specifications.	1	PW,CC
Infrastructure Goal 2: Provide storm drainage systems that minimize public harm and property damage due to flooding.		
Objective 2.1: Correct existing drainage problems and deficiencies that may pose threats to public safety and the value of public and private property.		
Action 2.1.1: Implement the 2000 General Obligation Bond drainage projects.	1	PW
Action 2.1.2: Place a high priority in the budgeting and capital improvements processes on the correction of existing drainage problems	2	CC
Action 2.1.3: Use the Storm Drainage Master Plan and a Capital Improvements Program to prioritize, schedule and budget for future drainage improvements.	2	PW,CC
Objective 2.2: Improve drainage capacity in designated growth areas.		
Action 2.2.1: Implement the Storm Drainage Master Plan.	1	CC
Objective 2.3: Prevent additional drainage problems in the future.		
Action 2.3.1: Implement the new Drainage Criteria Manual, as recommended by the Storm Drainage Master Plan.	1	CC
Action 2.3.2: Update the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, as recommended by the Storm Drainage Master Plan.	1	PW, PL CC
Action 2.3.3: Maintain the city's floodplain management program in accordance with the regulations and guidelines of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Flood Insurance Program.	2	PL
Action 2.3.4: Perform regular maintenance to sustain the capacity of drainage systems.	3	PW
Objective 2.4: Protect the water quality of streams and rivers from storm water runoff.		

Action 2.4.1: Implement the Storm Water Discharge Permit in accordance with the schedule and guidelines of the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program.	3	PW
Infrastructure Goal 3: Maintain and improve existing water and sanitary sewer systems.		
Objective 3.1: Use a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to plan for the timely replacement of old, deteriorated water distribution and sanitary sewer collection mains.		
Action 3.1.1: Utilize the GIS mapping and database of existing utilities as a tool to record, maintain and efficiently identify the condition of existing utilities in order to plan for future replacements.	2	PL
Action 3.1.2: Prioritize and budget appropriately for the replacement of deteriorated water and sewer mains.	3	PW
Infrastructure Goal 4: Provide for improved water quality and quantity.		
Objective 4.1: Acquire additional water rights.		
Action 4.1.1: Continually scan the available water market in an effort to identify potential opportunities to purchase additional water rights.	3	PW
Action 4.1.2: Participate in Texas Water Conservation Association activities in an effort to network with other water purveyors to identify subordination or contract opportunities for additional water rights.	4	PW
Action 4.1.3: Advise engineering and legal consultants to notify the City of Victoria of potential opportunities to acquire additional water rights.	4	PW
Action 4.1.4: Maintain a presence on the TCEQ South Texas Watermaster Oversight Committee to identify potential opportunities to acquire additional water rights.	5	PW
Objective 4.2: Implement an aggressive water conservation program.		
Action 4.2.1: Develop brochures and promotional items for distribution to water customers.	2	PW
Action 4.2.2: Implement meter replacement program.	2	PW
Action 4.2.3: Encourage use of water conserving landscaping.	3	PW
Action 4.2.4: Evaluate the possibility of implementing a water conservation plumbing retrofit program.	4	PW
Action 4.2.5: Participate in the Golden Crescent Water Utility Association's annual Water Awareness Day activities to distribute and disseminate water conservation information to the public.	5	PW
Objective 4.3: Maintain high water quality.		
Action 4.3.1: Continue to monitor water quality in the distribution system.	1	PW
Action 4.3.2: Implement a scheduled fire hydrant flushing program.	3	PW
Action 4.3.3: Continue to evaluate cost-effective treatment techniques and practices in an effort to identify opportunities to improve the quality of the water produced at the surface water treatment facility.	2	PW
Action 4.3.4: Research long-term solutions to re-occurring customer complaints regarding water quality to establish the root cause of the problem and implement action plans as required.	5	PW
Infrastructure Goal 5: Coordinate infrastructure improvements to serve future development.		
Objective 5.1: Plan for the orderly, coordinated extension and expansion of infrastructure facilities to serve future growth.		
Action 5.1.1: Implement the Water Master Plan to provide for the orderly extension of properly sized water distribution systems into areas of future development.	2	PW,PL
Action 5.1.2: Develop and implement a Sanitary Sewer Master Plan to provide for the orderly extension of properly sized wastewater collection systems into areas of future development.	2	PW,PL
Action 5.1.3: Use existing and future infrastructure master plans and the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan to develop a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) that provides for orderly infrastructure expansions.	1	CM,PL,CC, PW
Action 5.1.4: Plan for the timely expansion of water and wastewater treatment plants/facilities to meet the demands of future growth.	3	PW
Objective 5.2: Encourage development in areas that are or can be efficiently served with public infrastructure.		
Action 5.2.1: Examine the option of impact fees as a means to generate revenues for funding or recouping the cost of infrastructure improvements or	4	PW,PL,PC, CC

facility expansions necessitated by new development.		
Action 5.2.2: If adopted, structure impact fees to encourage development adjacent to or within a specified distance of existing infrastructure.	4	CC
Action 5.2.3: Review existing utility extension ordinances/policies for necessary revisions and/or adopt equitable new policies that achieve the goals and objectives of this plan.	2	PW,PL,CC

CHAPTER 7

Parks and Recreation

Vision 2020: Victoria has improved park facilities and expanded recreational opportunities.

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Parks and Recreation Goal 1: Revitalize existing parks.		
Objective 1.1: Provide a high level of park maintenance.		
Action 1.1.1: Budget adequate resources to maintain park facilities.	1	CC,PK
Action 1.1.2: Maintain recreational equipment, and replace and upgrade deteriorated or obsolete equipment.	2	PK
Objective 1.2: Beautify existing park facilities.		
Action 1.2.1: Implement a tree planting program and other beautification efforts in all existing parks.	3	PK
Objective 1.3: Facilitate community and neighborhood involvement and communication in the planning and improvement of park facilities.		
Action 1.3.1: Actively seek public input in the preparation of updates to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	1	PK
Action 1.3.2: Utilize community surveys, public meeting forums, Parks Commission meetings, the city's website and other means of obtaining public opinion regarding park facilities needs and plans.	2	PK
Action 1.3.3: Actively seek neighborhood input and involvement in areas affected by future park improvements.	2	PK
Parks and Recreation Goal 2: Develop recreational opportunities that attract tourism.		
Objective 2.1: Build a replica of Fort St. Louis and Mission Nuestra Senora del Espiritu Santo de Zuniga.		
Action 2.1.1: Facilitate a cooperative effort involving the City, County, interested citizens, Parks Commission and other agencies/organizations to develop a Heritage Park plan.	3	PK
Action 2.1.2: Provide technical assistance to Six Flags Historical Park, Inc. in preparation of grants and sources of financing for the project.	4	PK,PL
Objective 2.2: Promote heritage type festivals (one large festival).		
Action 2.2.1: Work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop plans for festivals that celebrate Victoria's rich heritage.	3	PK
Objective 2.3: Promote "Winter Texan" attractions.		
Action 2.3.1: Work with the Chamber of Commerce to market Victoria as major stop for "Winter Texans".	3	PK
Objective 2.4: Maintain Riverside RV Park and campground facilities.		
Action 2.4.1: Incorporate plans for an expansion of or improvements to the Riverside RV Park into the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	1	PK
Objective 2.5: Continue to promote recreational development along the Guadalupe River.		
Action 2.5.1: Identify recreational activities conducive to the river.	3	PK
Action 2.5.2: Maintain brush along riverbank to provide scenic vistas of the river.	3	PK
Action 2.5.3: Address the potential for increased recreational development along the Guadalupe River in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	1	PK
Objective 2.6: Promote eco-tourism (bird watching, wildlife, nature trails).		
Action 2.6.1: Work with the Convention and Visitors Bureau and Chamber of Commerce to market Victoria as an ideal location for eco-tourism activities.	5	PK
Objective 2.7: Support ongoing renovation of Riverside Stadium.		

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Action 2.7.1: Continue the public/private partnership with "Friends of Victoria Baseball" for the maintenance and preservation of Riverside Stadium.	3	PK
Parks and Recreation Goal 3: Ensure adequate quantity and equal distribution of parks, open space, and recreation facilities.		
Objective 3.1: Facilitate regular communication between the Parks Commission, Planning Commission and City Council to discuss matters of mutual interest.		
Action 3.1.1: Seek input from the Planning Commission when considering the location and development of new park facilities.	3	PK
Action 3.1.2: Seek input from the Parks Commission when developing plans that may impact existing or proposed park facilities.	3	PC
Action 3.1.3: Consider scheduling an annual work session between the Parks Commission, Planning Commission and City Council.	2	PK,PL
Objective 3.2: Coordinate the provision of recreational facilities with other providers (e.g. VISD schools, county and developers).		
Action 3.2.1: Identify opportunities to cluster multiple public functions with parks and recreation facilities.	2	PK
Objective 3.3: Develop and adopt minimum standards for the development and location of future parks.		
Action 3.3.1: Adopt a Parkland Acquisition Policy to define park standards and methods for obtaining needed parkland.	2	PK
Objective 3.4: Increase parkland to achieve National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines and meet the citizens' needs.		
Action 3.4.1: Address future parkland needs in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	1	PK
Parks and Recreation Goal 4: Develop natural greenbelts with trail systems to provide pedestrian and biking linkages for neighborhoods, schools, parks and other destinations.		
Objective 4.1: Prepare and adopt a hike and bike trail master plan.		
Action 4.1.1: Review existing plans related to hike and bike facilities, including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan and related plans.	2	PL,PK
Action 4.1.2: Develop a hike and bike master plan that achieves the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.	2	PL,PK
Action 4.1.3: Incorporate the Hike and Bike Master Plan into the Capital Improvements Program (CIP).	3	PL,PK
Objective 4.2: Expand the Lone Tree Creek Hike and Bike Trail.		
Action 4.2.1: Expand the Trail to incorporate the Lone Tree Detention Basin property between Tanglewood and Tangerine subdivisions.	3	PL,PK
Objective 4.3: Develop Victoria's other natural and man-made drainage systems to provide pedestrian ways that will link the entire park system.		
Action 4.3.1: Identify land and easements necessary to establish a unified greenbelt and trail system that achieves the recreation and transportation objectives.	3	PL,PK
Action 4.3.2: Consider adoption of an ordinance requiring the dedication of easements/rights-of-way needed to develop a greenbelt and trail system.	3	PL,PK
Parks and Recreation Goal 5: Develop additional recreational opportunities.		
Objective 5.1: Expand recreational programs and facilities to meet anticipated needs.		
Action 5.1.1: Address identified needs in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan update.	1	PK
Objective 5.2: Implement additional phases of the youth sports complex.		
Action 5.2.1: Identify needed improvements to the sports facility and develop plans for the budgeting and implementation of improvements.	2	PK
Objective 5.3: Encourage regional sport tournaments.		
Action 5.3.1: Bid for and host regular youth and adult softball/baseball tournaments.	3	PK
Objective 5.4: Expand the Riverside Paddling Trail.		
Action 5.4.1: Identify additional launch locations.	3	PK
Action 5.4.2: Provide additional services such as kayak and canoe rental.	4	PK
Objective 5.5: Encourage senior citizen activities and programs.		

Action 5.5.1: Partner with local agencies and organizations to coordinate activities and programs for senior citizens.	4	PK
Objective 5.6: Develop a children's water playground.		
Action 5.6.1: Incorporate in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	4	PK

CHAPTER 8

Community Services

Vision 2020: Victoria has quality municipal services and facilities making Victoria a safe, healthy and enjoyable place to live.

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Community Services Goal 1: Maintain high standards of fire and emergency medical services.		
Objective 1.1: Provide and maintain satisfactory emergency response services to all citizens of Victoria.		
Action 1.1.1: Achieve the emergency response time goals stated in this chapter.	1	FD
Action 1.1.2: Periodically review and evaluate Fire Department staffing needs to assure adequate personnel resources to meet the demands of growth.	2	FD
Action 1.1.3: Maintain an inventory of fire and EMS equipment, identify replacement and acquisition needs, and address major equipment purchases in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP).	2	FD,CM, CC,
Action 1.1.4: Support technology upgrades to ensure that fire and EMS personnel have access to state-of-the-art tools.	3	FD
Action 1.1.5: Increase proactive fire safety education.	4	FD
Objective 1.2: Maintain the city's Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating.		
Action 1.2.1: Monitor the city's ISO rating and identify actions needed to maintain or improve the rating.	1	FD
Objective 1.3: Support the construction of new fire stations as needed.		
Action 1.3.1: Periodically assess fire station locations and service areas.	2	FD,PL
Action 1.3.2: Utilize GIS and available modeling software to determine the optimum locations for new fire stations.	2	FD,PL
Action 1.3.3: Use the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and budgeting processes to determine the timing and funding of land acquisition, construction, equipment and staffing.	3	FD,PL,CM, CC
Community Services Goal 2: Maintain low crime rate and high level of police services.		
Objective 2.1: Strive to reduce Class I and Class II crime rates.		
Action 2.1.1: Regularly monitor the rate of Class I and Class II crimes in Victoria.	1	PD
Objective 2.2: Maintain police service levels with adequate staffing and equipment.		
Action 2.2.1: Periodically review and evaluate Police Department staffing levels to ensure an adequate ratio of police officers per 1,000 population.	2	PD
Action 2.2.2: Maintain an inventory of Police Department equipment and identify replacement needs well in advance to ensure budgeting and timely equipment purchases.	2	PD
Action 2.2.3: Support technology upgrades to ensure that police personnel have access to state-of-the-art tools.	3	PD
Objective 2.3: Maintain the high level of community involvement through crime prevention programs and community policing initiatives.		
Action 2.3.1: Continue implementing proactive crime prevention activities, including H.E.A.T., the Civilian Police Academy, Crime Stoppers and other educational and personal safety programs.	2	PD
Action 2.3.2: Continue providing opportunities for increased interaction between police officers and Victoria residents through community policing (Police Patrol Zones), zone meetings, National Night Out events and other outreach efforts.	2	PD
Objective 2.4: Continue cooperative relationships with Victoria ISD and other criminal justice agencies in Victoria County.		

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Action 2.4.1: Continue the School Resource Officer program in partnership with the Victoria ISD.	2	PD
Action 2.4.2: Explore collaborative relationships with other Victoria County agencies to provide specialized policing activities.	3	PD
Community Services Goal 3: Provide library services that meet the diverse information needs for all citizens of Victoria County.		
Objective 3.1: Maintain timely, accurate and useful information for the public.		
Action 3.1.1: Increase library materials budget in recognition of inflation and population increases.	3	LB
Action 3.1.2: Monitor usage patterns to determine changing community interests.	2	LB
Action 3.1.3: Maintain and upgrade software available in computer lab.	2	LB
Objective 3.2: Provide quality programs for children and young adults.		
Action 3.2.1: Maintain and expand programming for pre-school children.	2	LB
Action 3.2.2: Provide specialized homework assistance using computer lab.	2	LB
Objective 3.3: Provide public access to the latest digital information and communications technology.		
Action 3.3.1: Continually monitor emerging electronic formats of existing print sources to determine when quality and cost permit change.	3	LB
Objective 3.4: Provide an additional Library facility on the north side of the city.		
Action 3.4.1: Use the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and budgeting processes to determine the timing and funding of land acquisition, construction, equipment and staffing.	1	LB
Community Services Goal 4: Provide an efficient municipal solid waste management system.		
Objective 4.1: Provide adequate route coverage to assure quality residential solid waste collection.		
Action 4.1.1: Periodically review solid waste routes, and make adjustments as necessary to maintain balanced routes for efficient, quality collection services.	2	ES
Action 4.1.2: Maintain and replace rolling stock as necessary for the continuation of consistent collection services.	2	ES
Objective 4.2: Encourage, expand and implement conservation, recycling, and hazardous waste collection programs.		
Action 4.2.1: Explore possible incentives to promote greater participation in recycling.	3	ES
Action 4.2.2: Continue to support the school newspaper recycling program.	2	ES
Action 4.2.3: Continue to support hazardous waste collection programs.	2	ES
Action 4.2.4: Consider a recycling program for businesses and institutions.	4	ES
Action 4.2.5: Study the feasibility of implementing a curbside recycling program.	5	ES
Objective 4.3: Continue the separate collection and disposal of yard waste as a means of conserving landfill space.		
Action 4.3.1: Support the development and operation of a composting site at the landfill.	2	ES
Community Services Goal 5: Meet the demand for additional public meeting space and activities requiring a large capacity convention center/arena.		
Objective 5.1: Identify sources of funding for the construction of a new multi-purpose facility.		
Action 5.1.1: Actively pursue creative financing options, including public/private partnerships.	5	PK,CM, CVB
Objective 5.1: Develop a new large capacity arena/convention center for Victoria.		
Action 5.1.1: Conduct a needs assessment to determine the feasibility, appropriate size and uses of the facility.	5	PK,CM, CVB
Action 5.1.2: Consider a different location from the current community center site.	5	PK,CM, CVB
Action 5.1.3: Identify options for the re-use of existing community center facilities.	5	PK,CM, CVB

Vision 2020: Victoria is a vibrant, attractive, well preserved historic, cultural and entertainment center.

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Preservation & Downtown Goal 1: Revitalize downtown Victoria as a balanced work, housing, cultural and entertainment center – a place where there is a variety of day-to-day activity.		
Objective 1.1: Develop plans for the revitalization of downtown Victoria.		
Action 1.1.1: Prepare and adopt a Downtown Master Plan.	1	PL
Action 1.1.2: Build partnerships and develop cooperative efforts among public and private sector stakeholders to further the goals of historic preservation.	3	CM,PL
Action 1.1.3: Utilize One-half Cent Sales Tax Corporation funds and other available sources and finance tools to fund downtown revitalization programs.	3	CM,PL
Action 1.1.4: Incorporate the downtown master plan into the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) process.	2	PL,CM,CC, PW
Objective 1.2: Encourage the development of an appropriate mix of uses, including opportunities for work, housing, retail activity, and cultural events.		
Action 1.2.1: Use the Neighborhood Protection Ordinance to designate the downtown area as a mixed-use area.	1	PL
Action 1.2.2: Offer tax incentives or permit fee discounts to encourage retailing, restaurants and housing in the downtown area.	3	CM,PL
Objective 1.3: Address downtown parking issues.		
Action 1.3.1: Prepare an inventory of existing downtown parking facilities and include a parking management plan as part of the downtown master plan.	1	PL
Action 1.3.2: Develop a shared parking system where church and bank parking can be used after normal business hours.	3	PL
Objective 1.4: Combine housing objectives with historic preservation.		
Action 1.4.1: Rehabilitate residential structures of historic value in the downtown area.	4	VPI
Action 1.4.2: Build in-fill housing that is architecturally consistent with historic neighborhoods.	5	PL
Preservation & Downtown Goal 2: Use Victoria's rich history and its downtown as one of the legs in building the local economy.		
Objective 2.1: Encourage the County to pursue the Texas Historical Commission's Certified Local Government designation.		
Action 2.1.1: Prepare a historic preservation plan.	4	PL,VPI
Action 2.1.2: Assist in the preparation of an application to become a Certified Local Government.	4	PL, VPI
Objective 2.2: Promote local and regional tourism opportunities.		
Action 2.2.1: Market the downtown area as a tourism destination.	2	CH,CVB
Action 2.2.2: Locate a visitor information kiosk in the downtown area.	3	CH,CVB
Action 2.2.3: Develop a downtown walking tour.	4	CH,CVB
Action 2.2.4: Develop family-oriented festivals for downtown.	5	CH,CVB
Objective 2.3: Encourage the organization of a Downtown Merchant/Property Owner Association to coordinate downtown revitalization.		
Action 2.3.1: Participate in the formation of an association.	3	PL,CM
Objective 2.4: Provide for the basic needs of tourists and visitors.		
Action 2.4.1: Provide accessible public facilities and amenities downtown including restrooms, benches, lighting and trash receptacles.	5	PW,PK, PL
Preservation & Downtown Goal 3: Preserve and enhance Victoria's historic buildings and resources.		
Objective 3.1: Identify strategies to preserve Victoria's historic structures and neighborhoods.		
Action 3.1.1: Prepare a historic preservation plan.	2	PL
Action 3.1.2: Designate additional districts.	3	PL
Action 3.1.3: Apply additional protections for historic districts through a Neighborhood Protection Ordinance.	1	PL
Objective 3.2: Ensure that municipal codes and policies are conducive to preservation and downtown revitalization, and empower city staff to be flexible when considering restoration projects.		
Action 3.2.1: Review existing city codes and revise as necessary and	2	PL,FD

appropriate to facilitate historic preservation.		
Action 3.2.2: In cases where codes allow for flexibility or interpretation, and life/safety matters are not involved, apply a common sense approach that does not create barriers to historic preservation.	2	PL,FD
Objective 3.3: Encourage the removal of false facades from historical buildings.		
Action 3.3.1: Prepare design standards for buildings in the downtown area.	3	PL
Action 3.3.2: Utilize incentives for restoring historic buildings consistent with the downtown design standards.	2	PL
Objective 3.4: Promote the Downtown Preservation Incentive Program.		
Action 3.4.1: Request annual program funding.	1	PL

10 CHAPTER Economic Opportunity

Vision 2020: Victoria's residents enjoy a robust, diverse economy that provides a high quality of life with a variety of dynamic job opportunities.

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Economic Opportunity Goal 1: Increase emphasis on retaining and expanding local businesses and industries.		
Objective 1.1: Be responsive to existing industries' and businesses needs as we value their presence and be prepared to make changes that allow them to grow and prosper.		
Action 1.1.1: Conduct a structured business and expansion program that schedules onsite visits at least once a year to basic businesses.	1	VEDC
Action 1.1.2: Develop incentives to help local businesses grow and prosper.	1	VEDC
Objective 1.2: Ensure that development policy, plans and procedures are conducive to a favorable business environment and establish positive relations between business and government.		
Action 1.2.1: Review development policies and procedures and streamline them as necessary to facilitate timely project development.	2	PL,PC,CC
Action 1.2.2: Survey business and industry to determine what steps can be taken to help establish positive relations between business and government.	3	VEDC,CM
Objective 1.3: Enhance the ability of businesses to market their goods and services.		
Action 1.3.1: Develop a plan to promote businesses and industries that attract customers from outside the city.	1	VEDC
Economic Opportunity Goal 2: Diversify and expand Victoria's economy through the expansion of light industry and other businesses.		
Objective 2.1: Recruit, expand and retain primary businesses and industries that pay an above average wage to the existing and future local work force.		
Action 2.1.1: Target marketing to industry that will fit Victoria now and in the future and provide above average wages.	1	VEDC
Action 2.1.2: Develop a marketing plan to attract these businesses and industries to the city.	2	VEDC
Objective 2.2: Promote and encourage the development of business and industrial sites.		
Action 2.2.1: Partner with VEDC and other appropriate entities in efforts to develop the Lone Tree Business Park.	2	CC,VEDC, PL
Economic Opportunity Goal 3: Improve the quality and quantity of the present and future labor supplies in the Victoria region.		
Objective 3.1: Meet the needs of local industry for a qualified and educated work force.		
Action 3.1.1: Aggressively support the quality and success of education at all levels.	1	VEDC
Action 3.1.2: Support and promote technology based as well as technical and vocational education programs at the high school and college levels to meet the needs of local industry.	2	VEDC
Action 3.1.3: Support and promote existing education partnerships and alliances between employers and institutions.	3	VEDC
Objective 3.2: Support existing workforce development programs.		
Action 3.2.1: Work with local job creators and the Texas Workforce Solutions	2	VEDC

Center to pursue grant funding for employment training.		
Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Economic Opportunity Goal 4: Foster a positive attitude toward growth and development among local government and business groups.		
Objective 4.1: Support a network of communication that keeps residents informed, fosters cooperation with local and regional organizations, and enables the city to respond to opportunities and challenges.		
Action 4.1.1: Actively participate in the Victoria Partnership.	1	VEDC,CC, CM
Economic Opportunity Goal 5: Ensure that existing infrastructure is in good condition and plan for future infrastructure needs that will accommodate prospective business and industrial growth.		
Objective 5.1: Be prepared to have infrastructure in place when and where needed to accommodate development.		
Action 5.1.1: Implement a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to construct needed infrastructure to preferred industrial areas.	1	PL,CM,CC, PW
Objective 5.2: Improve Victoria's infrastructure for both short and long-term economic development opportunities.		
Action 5.2.1: Implement a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to upgrade existing infrastructure in all prime development areas.	1	PL,CM,CC, PW
Objective 5.3: Advocate the development and maintenance of a high quality transportation network in and to Victoria.		
Action 5.3.1: Review and update the MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Plan to ensure consistency with the city's priorities.	2	PL,VEDC, MPO
Economic Opportunity Goal 6: Provide a business environment that will enhance the community's overall quality of life and promote economic development.		
Objective 6.1: Improve Victoria's attractiveness to targeted businesses and industries by improving cultural and recreational amenities.		
Action 6.1.1: Develop a marketing and outreach program to enhance Victoria's attractiveness to prospective desirable industries as a progressive and visionary city that is planning for a better future.	2	CH, CVB
Objective 6.2: Promote year-round tourism for leisure travelers, winter Texans, and tour operators by enhancing existing recreational destinations and activities.		
Action 6.2.1: Establish a presence at state and regional travel shows.	3	CH,CVB
Action 6.2.2: Develop an advertising program that targets specific tourist groups such as "winter Texans".	4	CH,CVB
Action 6.2.3: Locate a well-designed visitor center in Victoria with easy access to US59, adequate parking and attractive landscaping.	5	CH,CVB,PL
Objective 6.3: Promote Victoria as an attractive regional center for retailing, services, health care, entertainment and education.		
Action 6.3.1: Promote retail businesses and medical facilities in Victoria.	2	CH
Action 6.3.2: Partner with Victoria College and the University of Houston at Victoria to promote student recruitment.	3	VEDC,CH
Action 6.3.3: Support the expansion of University of Houston at Victoria to a four-year institution.	2	CC,CH, VEDC

11 CHAPTER

Community Image

Vision 2020: Victoria is a proud and attractive community with its own unique identity.

Action	Priority	Responsible Agency
Community Image Goal 1: Enhance the appearance of the city by blending future development with its physical environment.		
Objective 1.1: Improve the attractiveness of Victoria's major transportation corridors and entrances (Gateways) to the city.		

Action 1.1.1: Develop and implement more stringent site development standards along major transportation corridors and entrances (Gateways) to the city.	2	PL,PC,CC
Action 1.1.2: Complete and implement a Corridor Enhancement Plan, which will provide a template for improving the major transportation corridors that lead into and through the city. It should include such features as bike lanes, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, median designs, and other aesthetic and engineering improvements.	2	PL,MPO, CC
Objective 1.2: Create site development and architectural guidelines that emphasize Victoria's character.		
Action 1.2.1: Develop design guidelines which complement local architecture and orient buildings onto the street.	3	PL
Objective 1.3: Ensure the preservation of existing mature trees.		
Action 1.3.1: Adopt a tree preservation ordinance.	2	PL,PK
Objective 1.4: Require new on-premise signs to follow design guidelines that enhance the visual character of the community.		
Action 1.4.1: Prepare sign ordinance revisions that incorporate improved guidelines intended to reduce visual clutter, address sign location and scale and enhance the visual character of the community.	1	PL
Objective 1.5: Revise the sign ordinance to stop the proliferation of billboards in Victoria.		
Action 1.5.1: Prepare ordinance revisions to provide for a greater separation distance between billboards.	1	PL
Community Image Goal 2: Establish a strong sense of community identity.		
Objective 2.1: Provide gateway signs and landscaping to welcome residents and visitors at each of the major corridors into the city.		
Action 2.1.1: Create a sign design.	2	PL,PK
Action 2.1.2: Identify placement locations and funding sources, and install signs.	3	PL,PK
Objective 2.2: Develop a streetscape design theme that is used throughout the city to create a sense of unity and identity.		
Action 2.2.1: Incorporate a streetscape design theme into the Corridor Enhancement Plan.	3	PL
Action 2.2.2: Develop and implement a Wayfinding Sign Master Plan.	3	PL
Objective 2.3: Define and enhance the image of Victoria.		
Action 2.3.1: Work closely with the Convention and Visitors Bureau to promote Victoria.	4	CC,CH
Action 2.3.2: Support the Victoria Branding Project.	2	CC,CH
Community Image Goal 3: Instill pride in the community by encouraging citizens to take responsibility for their actions in the upkeep and appearance of private and public property.		
Objective 3.1: Develop a centralized code enforcement program with adequate staffing and resources.		
Action 3.1.1: Budget adequate resources.	2	CC
Objective 3.2: Strengthen city codes and ordinances to eliminate unsightly areas with a minimum use of city resources.		
Action 3.2.1: Review city policies to ensure that they do not contribute to additional nuisances.	2	PL
Action 3.2.2: Review ordinances and revise as necessary to strengthen our enforcement mechanisms.	2	PL
Objective 3.3: Promptly enforce city ordinances regarding property maintenance.		
Action 3.3.1: Actively identify and pursue code violators.	1	PL, CA
Objective 3.4: Support Keep Victoria Beautiful programs		
Action 3.4.1: Actively promote annual neighborhood clean up campaigns.	3	PL, ES
Action 3.4.2: Continue city right-of-way clean-up efforts utilizing Victoria County jail trustees.	2	PK
Action 3.4.3: Increase enforcement of laws and ordinances pertaining to littering.	2	PD
Action 3.4.4: Develop and implement educational programs on littering that target school children.	2	CH