

# VISION 2025

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SAFE • BEAUTIFUL • INCLUSIVE

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ENVIRONMENTALLY  
RESPONSIBLE  
COMMUNITY

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DESTINATION ACTIVITY CENTERS  
GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS  
SUPERIOR MOBILITY

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OUTSTANDING CULTURAL,  
EDUCATIONAL AND  
RECREATIONAL  
OPPORTUNITIES

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REGIONAL BUSINESS  
CENTER OF EXCELLENCE



## SUGAR LAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

BALANCED DEVELOPMENT  
AND REDEVELOPMENT

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COMMUNITY TAKES  
PRIDE IN SUGAR LAND

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## ORDINANCE NO. 1851

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SUGAR LAND, TEXAS, AMENDING CHAPTERS 1 THROUGH 5, INCLUSIVE, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE CITY OF SUGAR LAND.**

WHEREAS, Chapter 213 of the Local Government Code authorizes the City to adopt a Comprehensive Plan for the long-range development of the City; and

WHEREAS, the City last updated the Comprehensive Plan in 2005; and

WHEREAS, City Council adopted Resolution 09-34, which states that Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles Document will be used as a basis for an update to the City's Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City now endeavors to incorporate its Vision 2025 goals into its Comprehensive Plan, as well as account for updated development and 2010 U.S. Census data; and

WHEREAS, the City has drafted revisions to Chapters 1 through 5 of the Comprehensive Plan that incorporate the desired changes; and

WHEREAS, the proposed revisions have been reviewed by the City's Planning and Zoning commission, as required by law; and

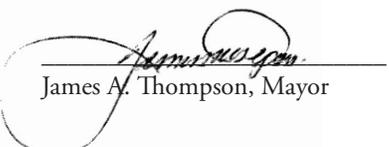
WHEREAS, a hearing was held at which the public was given an opportunity to give testimony and present written evidence as required by law; NOW, THEREFORE:

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL  
OF THE CITY OF SUGAR LAND, TEXAS:**

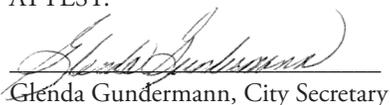
**Section 1.** That Chapters 1 through 5, inclusive, of the City of Sugar Land Comprehensive Plan are amended to read as shown on Exhibit A, attached hereto and made part of this ordinance.

APPROVED on first consideration on June 19, 2012.

ADOPTED on second consideration on July 03, 2012.

  
James A. Thompson, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Glenda Gundermann, City Secretary

Reviewed for Legal Compliance:



Attachment: Exhibit A – Chapters 1-5 Comprehensive Plan

# SUGAR LAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### CHAPTER ONE

Definition of Comprehensive Plan and Master Plans .....6

### CHAPTER TWO

History of Sugar Land’s Comprehensive Plan .....8  
A. Comprehensive Plans ..... 8  
B. Collection and Analysis of Base Information ..... 12  
C. Incorporation of All Master Plans..... 13  
D. Guiding Documents..... 15

### CHAPTER THREE

Community Profile..... 16  
A. History..... 16  
B. Environment ..... 20  
C. Demographics ..... 28  
D. Culture..... 33

### CHAPTER FOUR

Development Constraints, Opportunities, and Projections ..... 36  
A. Land Development..... 38  
B. Economic Development ..... 43  
C. Development Constraints..... 47

### CHAPTER FIVE

Vision, Goals and Objectives ..... 50  
A. Introduction..... 50  
B. Definition of Goals and Objectives..... 50  
C. Sugar Land’s Goals and Objectives ..... 51

### CHAPTER SIX

The Land Use Plan..... 62



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## FIGURES

Figure 1. Master Plan Relationships.....	7
Figure 2. Future Land Use Plan map (1993).....	9
Figure 3. Comprehensive Plan (2003), Chapter 5 Goals.....	10
Figure 4. Future Land Use Plan map (2004).....	11
Figure 5. Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles (Resolution 09-34) .....	12
Figure 6. Future Land Use Plan map (2012).....	13
Figure 7. Historic photo of the Char House at Imperial .....	17
Figure 8. Central Prison Unit .....	17
Figure 9. Levee Improvement Districts (LIDs) .....	20
Figure 10. Surface Water Treatment Plant (rendering) .....	21
Figure 11. Brazos River Park Master Plan .....	22
Figure 12. Imperial Park Recreation Center.....	23
Figure 13. Map excerpt of existing Hike and Bike Trails Network (2007) .....	23
Figure 14. Air Quality Index Levels (EPA).....	24
Figure 15. Population Growth, Sugar Land, Texas: 1960 – 2010 .....	28
Figure 16. Population Age Distribution, Sugar Land, Texas: 2010 .....	30
Figure 17. Education Attainment Comparison, Sugar Land, Texas: 2010 .....	32
Figure 18. Houston Museum of Natural Science, Sugar Land, Texas .....	33
Figure 19. Rendering of Constellation Field .....	34
Figure 20. Lake Pointe Town Center General Plan (2004, Revised 2011) .....	38
Figure 21. Telfair General Plan (2003, Revised 2011).....	39
Figure 22. Imperial Sugar / Tract 3, General Plan 2007, Revised 2012 .....	40
Figure 23. Riverstone General Plan (2003, Revised 2011) .....	41
Figure 24. Visioning Statement, 2007 Visioning Task Force .....	42
Figure 25. Occupations, Sugar Land, Texas: 2000 – 2010 .....	46
Figure 26. Sugar Land Submarkets (The Retail Coach, 2010).....	45
Figure 27. Wayside Horns .....	48

## TABLES

Table 1. Annexation Activity in Sugar Land, Texas: 2000 – 2010 .....	19
Table 2. Ozone Summary for University of Houston-Sugar Land. ....	24
Table 3. Housing Characteristics, Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010 .....	25
Table 4. Value for Owner-Occupied Housing, Sugar Land, Texas: 1990 – 2010.....	25
Table 5. Homes Associated with Homeowners Associations (HOAs).....	26
Table 6. Population and Household Characteristics, Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010 .....	29
Table 7. Age Distribution, Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010 .....	30
Table 8. Change in Ethnicity, Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010 .....	31
Table 9. Comparison of Ethnicity: 2010.....	31
Table 10. Population Estimates and Projections, Sugar Land, Texas: 1990 – 2025.....	36
Table 11. Land Use by Area, Sugar Land, Texas: 2004, 2011 .....	44
Table 12. Employment by Occupation, Sugar Land, Texas: 2010 .....	44
Table 13. Shifts in Employment by Industry Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010 .....	45



# CHAPTER 1

## Definition of Comprehensive Plan and Master Plans

The City utilizes a series of documents for policy guidance and decision making. These documents include the Comprehensive Plan, master plans, zoning regulations, guiding documents, and Council-adopted resolutions.

A comprehensive plan describes a vision for a city and guides policy decisions affecting the city’s physical development. Needs are identified by growth projections and underlying basic assumptions related to anticipated trends. A comprehensive plan prepares a municipality for future development or redevelopment of the City in its entirety, emphasizing future growth or pending redevelopment areas.

Master plans are plans developed to implement the vision and policy guidance contained in a comprehensive plan. Master plans identify strategies and initiatives for specific public needs. Master plan assumptions must be the same or similar to the base information of a comprehensive plan. Master plan amendments may impact elements of a comprehensive plan, and should be coordinated. The eight (8) official master plans for the City of Sugar Land are the Future Land Use Plan; Thoroughfare Plan; Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan; Hike and Bike Trails Master Plan; Water Master Plan; Wastewater Master Plan; Drainage Master Plan; and Municipal Facilities Master Plan.

Zoning regulations are a tool used to carry out the vision of a comprehensive plan. Chapter 211 of the Texas Local Government Code requires that zoning regulations be adopted “in accordance with a comprehensive plan and must be designed to lessen street congestion, secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers, promote health and general welfare, provide adequate light and air, prevent overcrowding of land, avoid undue concentrations of population, and facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements.” The Municipal Zoning Enabling Act adopted by the State of Texas authorizes zoning as a second part of a two-step procedure, the first step being the preparation of a comprehensive plan.

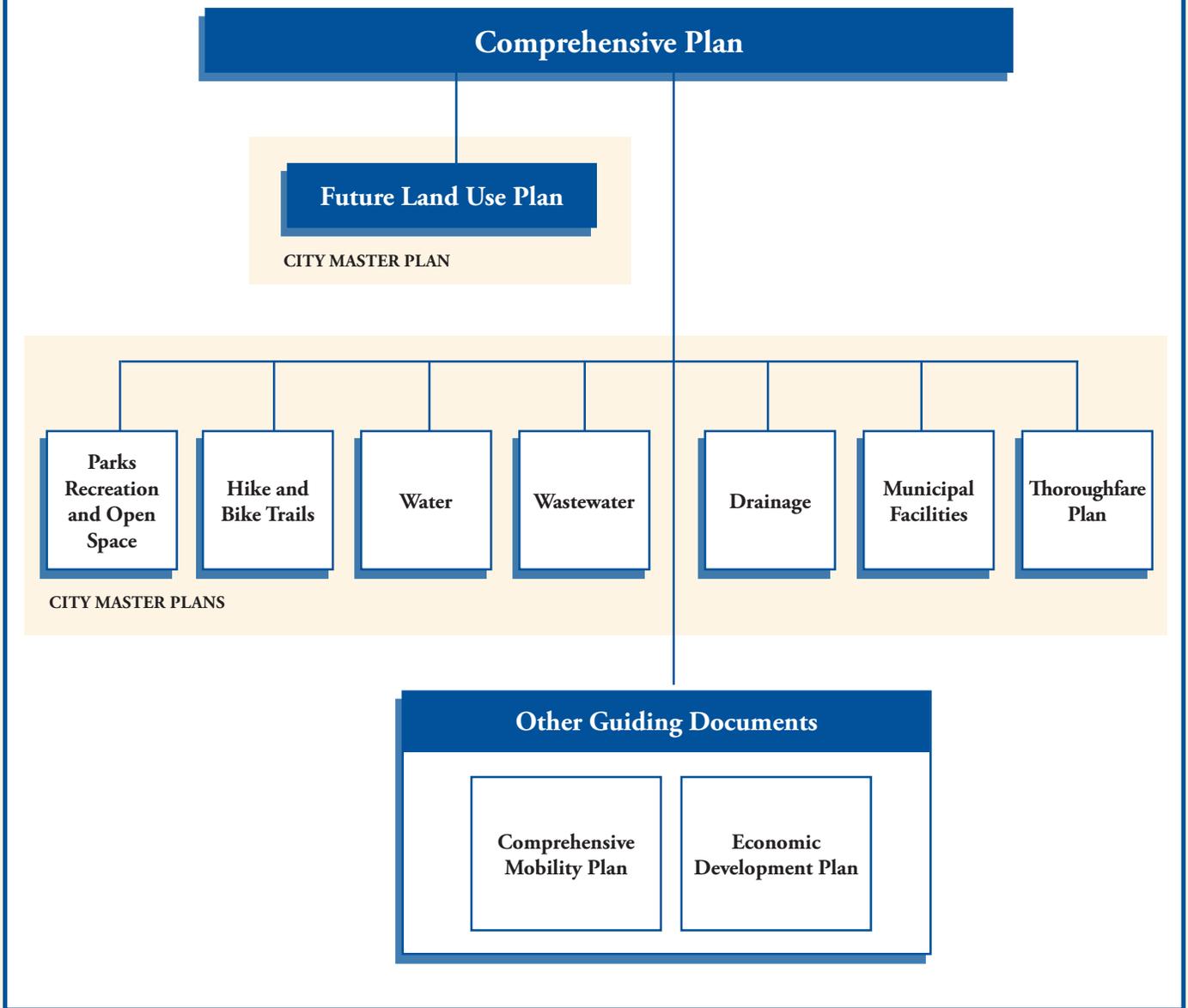
The City has two adopted “guiding documents”: the Economic Development Plan and the Comprehensive Mobility Plan. The guiding documents provide strategies and initiatives for their respective areas. From time to time, City Council may also adopt additional policy guidance by resolution. Resolutions provide additional policy direction in between updates to other planning documents.

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A comprehensive plan describes a vision for a city and guides policy decisions affecting the city’s physical development.

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# Master Plan Relationships



**Figure 1** shows the relationship between the City’s plans and guiding documents. The Comprehensive Plan is the primary visioning tool for the City and provides guidance for the creation of master plans and guiding documents. The Future Land Use Plan is a master plan in its own right and is published as a chapter within the Comprehensive Plan document. All other master plans are considered elements of the Comprehensive Plan. These plans and guiding documents are coordinated with the overall vision for the City established in the Comprehensive Plan.

**Figure 1.** Master Plan Relationships. This chart shows the relationships between the Comprehensive Plan, master plans and guiding documents.



# CHAPTER 2

## History of Sugar Land's Comprehensive Plans

### A. COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

Planning for the future growth of the City has been undertaken by city officials since the early days of Sugar Land. The City adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1963. Since then, the Comprehensive Plan has undergone several revisions to respond to a rapidly changing environment. The Comprehensive Plan has historically been updated in sections, several chapters at a time, rather than revising the document in its entirety all at once. The following is a brief history of the evolution of Sugar Land's Comprehensive Plan.

#### 1963 Comprehensive Plan

In 1963 and 1964 the first Comprehensive Plan for Sugar Land was prepared by the firm Bernard Johnson Engineers, Inc. Even though the City had a population of less than 5,000 residents at the time, this Plan included elements addressing land use, facilities, and transportation, as well as the subsequent development of administrative controls including a zoning ordinance and the City's Subdivision Regulations. The 1960s ordinance remained in effect until replaced in 1982, when City Council adopted a new zoning ordinance.

#### 1993 Comprehensive Plan

Beginning in 1987, the City initiated a new emphasis on Comprehensive Planning to address future growth and capital improvements. The studies included master plans for Parks, Thoroughfares, Water and Wastewater Facilities, Drainage, Annexation and the Municipal Airport, which the City purchased in 1990. Sugar Land experienced rapid growth in the 1980s and 1990s mostly as a result of annexations of master-planned communities. The previous Comprehensive Plan was thirty years old and creating a new Plan offered the opportunity to bring together a summary of the last thirty years of planning efforts and establish a vision into 2030. Centurion Consulting Group prepared the plan in association with Sara Jane White, AICP, Inc.

In 1993, Sugar Land adopted a new Comprehensive Plan with a land use element and goals for future growth. The 1993 Comprehensive Plan established a structure of Goals, Objectives, and Strategies.

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Sugar Land experienced rapid growth in the 1980s and 1990s mostly as a result of annexations of master-planned communities.

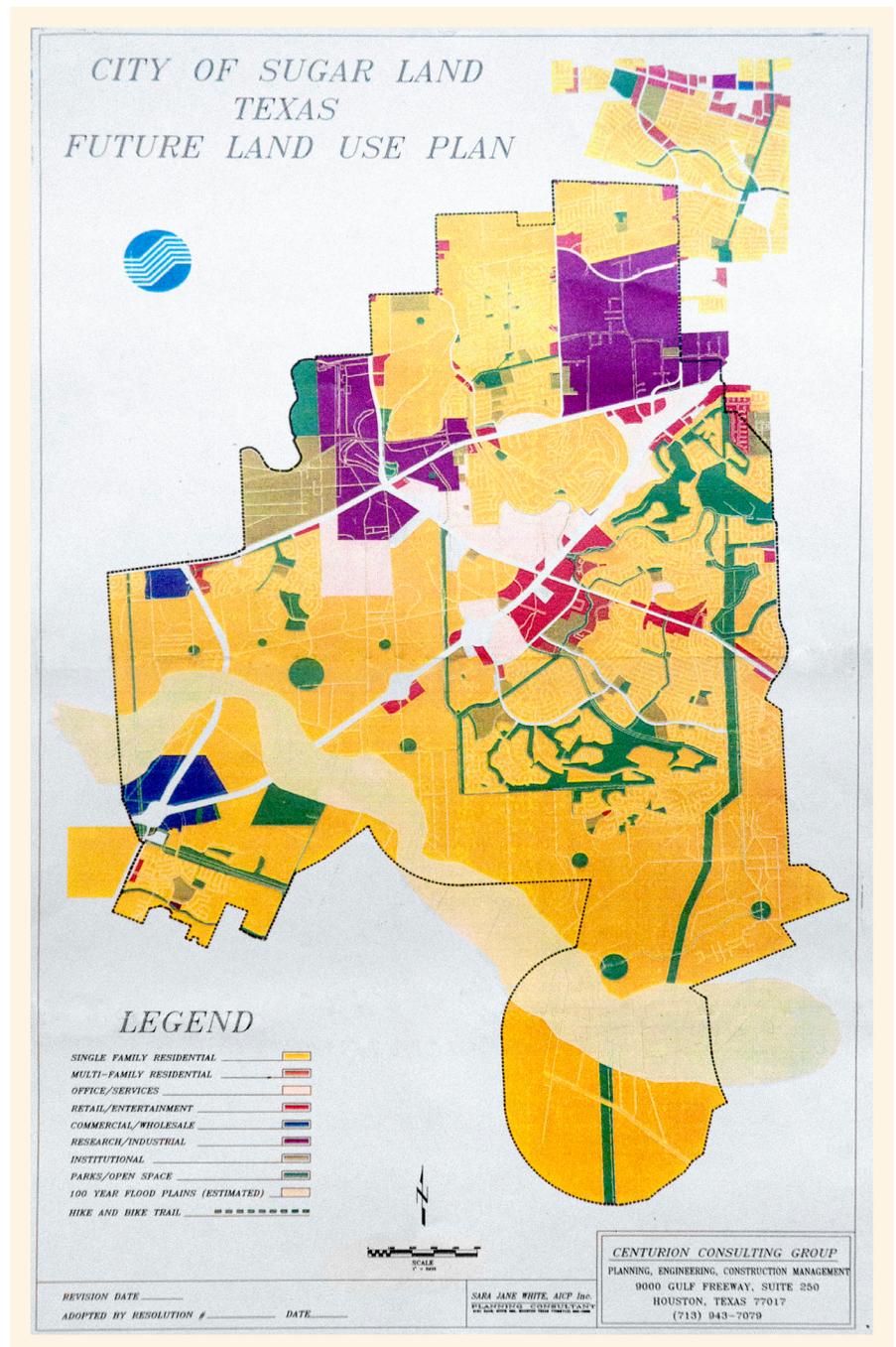
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Chapter 5 included 10 goals related to the following categories:

- Land Use
- Transportation and Mobility
- Flood and Drainage
- Water Utilities
- Airport Development
- Capital Improvements
- Historic Preservation and Downtown Activity Center
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Annexation
- Planning for the Future

The Comprehensive Plan also created a vision for land development through the adoption of the Future Land Use Plan and detailed descriptions of design guidelines for specific land uses. The 1993 Future Land Use Plan map is shown in **Figure 2**.

In September 1997, City Council adopted the first version of the City of Sugar Land Development Code, which replaced the 1982 zoning ordinance and established zoning regulations for sixteen land use types. The Development Code also established regulations for height and area, accessory and temporary uses, signs, landscaping, off-street parking, and subdivisions. Over the years, City Council adopted several amendments to the 1997 Development Code.



**Figure 2.**  
**Future Land Use Plan map (1993)**

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2003), CHAPTER 5 GOALS

**Goal One:**  
Safe and Beautiful City

**Goal Two:**  
Economically Sustainable City

**Goal Three:**  
Effective Land Use

**Goal Four:**  
Redevelopment

**Goal Five:**  
Transportation and Mobility

**Goal Six:**  
Infrastructure

**Goal Seven:**  
Annexation

**Goal Eight:**  
Airport Development

**Goal Nine:**  
Parks, Recreation, Leisure, and Open Space

**Goal Ten:**  
Cultural Arts

**Goal Eleven:**  
Historic Preservation

**Goal Twelve:**  
Community Involvement

**Goal Thirteen:**  
Planning for the Future



### 2003 Update: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

From 1990 to 2000, the City of Sugar Land experienced a 158% increase in population growth largely related to the annexation of master-planned communities including First Colony. As a result of this rapid growth, the City recognized a need to update the existing 1993 Comprehensive Plan and followed the same structure of goals, objectives and strategies. In the spring of 2001, City Council members drafted various Guiding Principles to serve as a broad agenda for the update of the Comprehensive Plan. Later that year, Council passed a resolution to establish a Steering Committee that would then create 13 goals from the Guiding Principles to better direct the universal vision of the Comprehensive Plan. For almost a year, this Steering Committee met on a weekly basis, reviewing each principle thoroughly, drafting specific goals and associated objectives and strategies to address each specific Guiding Principle, and continuously reporting the progress to the Planning and Zoning Commission and to City Council. The 2003 Comprehensive Plan goals are shown in **Figure 3**.

Council released a draft of the Goals, Strategies, and Objectives to the public in September of 2002. A Community Summit was held that October to receive public comment. In 2003, the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies were complete and City Council adopted the revision to Chapter 5 by Ordinance 1396 (02-18-2003).

### 2005 Update: The Land Use Plan

In the summer of 2003, following the approval of the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies (Chapter 5), the City began an update to its Land Use Plan (Chapter 6). In the fall of 2003, Phase I of public input process began. Throughout the summer of 2004, City staff worked to compose a Land Use Plan supported by the citizens. The final Land Use Plan map was adopted as a part of Chapter 6 of the Comprehensive Plan in November 2004. This Future Land Use Plan map is shown in **Figure 4** (page 11).

On November 1, 2005, the Comprehensive Plan update was adopted by City Council (Ordinance No. 1514). The adoption included previously adopted chapters 5 and 6. Additional amendments to Chapters 1-4 were included to update data and background information.

**Figure 3.**  
Comprehensive Plan (2003),  
Chapter 5 Goals

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City Council formally adopted the finalized version Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles via Resolution 09-34 and directed that it be used as a basis for an update to the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

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## 2012 Update: Chapters 1 - 5

In 2009, the City began a process to update its Comprehensive Plan. This process was primarily driven by City Council’s adoption of Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles. However, the update also offered the opportunity to update the Comprehensive Plan with 2010 U.S. Census data and updated information on development that had occurred since the last Comprehensive Plan update.

## Vision 2025

Recognizing the need to review the City’s long-term goals, the City initiated the creation of a new vision. In preparation for a March 2009 City Council retreat, an audit of the Comprehensive Plan’s Chapter 5 revealed that a significant amount of the objectives and strategies had been accomplished or many were in progress. City Council drafted a new vision for the City at their annual retreat. This vision was titled Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles.

In June 2009, a Community Summit was held to gain public input. Approximately 70 residents participated in three rounds of activities designed to gather input on the Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles document. Overall, the community affirmed the draft vision prepared by City Council. City Council formally adopted the finalized version of Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles via Resolution 09-34 and directed that

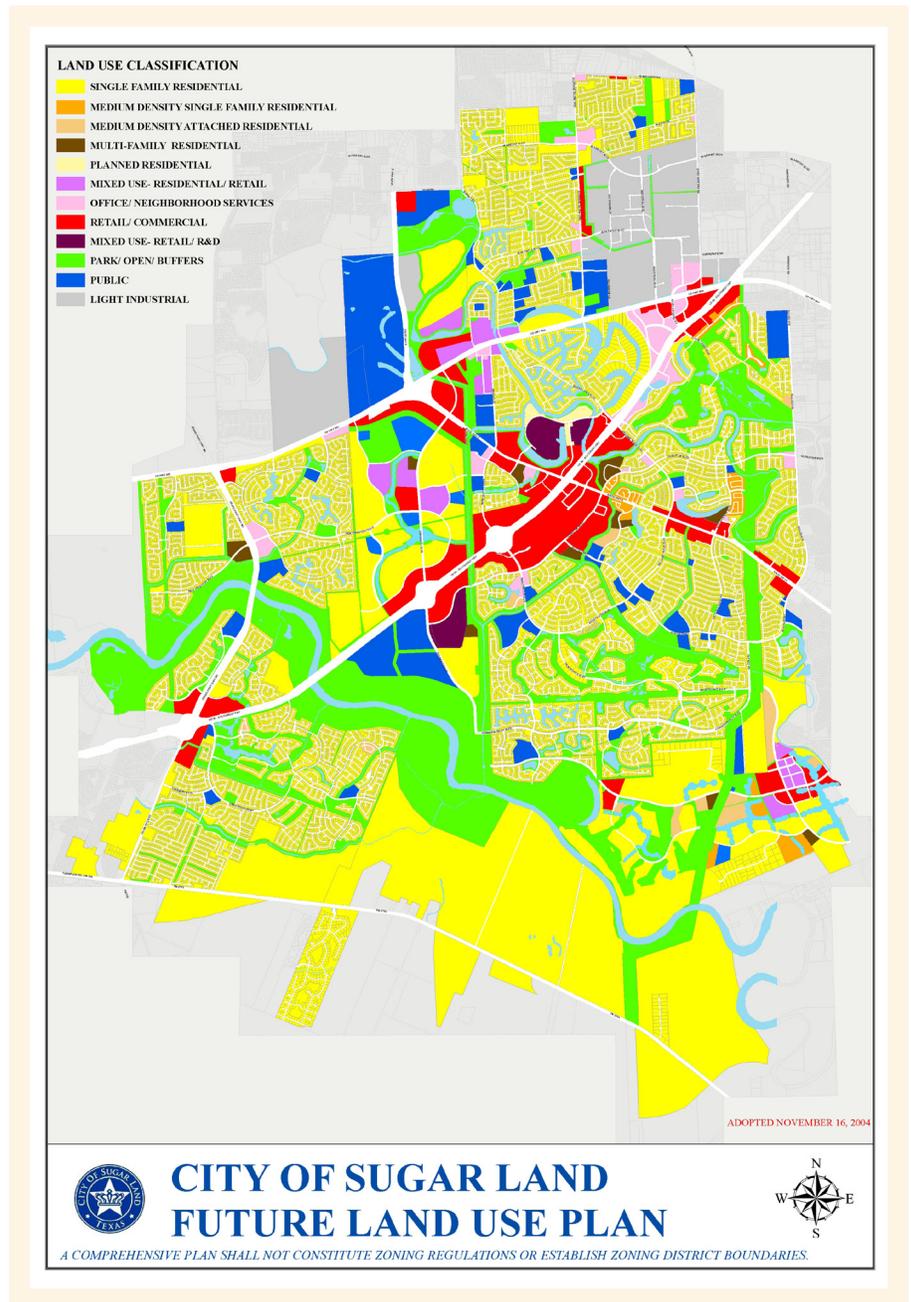


Figure 4.  
Future Land Use Plan map (2004)

Figure 5. Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles (Resolution 09-34)



Sugar Land 2025 is a **SAFE,<sup>(A)</sup> BEAUTIFUL,<sup>(B)</sup> INCLUSIVE<sup>(C)</sup>**  
and **ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITY.<sup>(D)</sup>**

Sugar Land 2025 has **DESTINATION ACTIVITY CENTERS,<sup>(E)</sup>**  
**GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS,<sup>(F)</sup> SUPERIOR MOBILITY,<sup>(G)</sup> OUTSTANDING**  
**CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES <sup>(H)</sup>**  
and is a **REGIONAL BUSINESS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.<sup>(I)</sup>**

Sugar Land 2025 has **BALANCED DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT.<sup>(J)</sup>**

The **COMMUNITY TAKES PRIDE IN SUGAR LAND.<sup>(K)</sup>**

it be used as a basis for an update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. **Figure 5** is the summary vision statement of Vision 2025 that includes 11 Principles referenced as Principles A through K.

Continuing the audit that began in 2009, City staff completed an additional review of Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles. Staff performed an audit of Vision 2025 that compared it to the Goals, Objectives and Strategies in Chapter 5 of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. The audit revealed elements of Chapter 5 that were not included in Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles. Staff ensured these elements were still relevant by compiling a list of accomplishments to establish which elements had not yet been accomplished. This process captured items from Chapter 5 that are not represented in Vision 2025 and have not yet been accomplished. These items were incorporated into Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles to create the new Chapter 5 Visions Goals and Objectives.

City Council completed a second round of review of Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles at the 2011 City Council retreat in Galveston, Texas. At the retreat, City Council identified several revisions for inclusion in the new Chapter 5.

Revisions in the 2012 update focus on informational updates to Chapters 1-4 based on new Census data, recent development activity, and expanded historical and other descriptions. The new Chapter 5 incorporates Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles with minor revisions identified in the City Council and City staff reviews as described above. Draft revisions were made available online for public review and comment starting in January 2012. Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council each held a public hearing to receive additional feedback on the draft Comprehensive Plan. Staff incorporated final revisions, and City Council adopted a redesigned, revised plan including Chapters 1 – 5 on July 3, 2012 by Ordinance 1851.

## **B. COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF BASE INFORMATION**

Collection and analysis of population data provides the base information for estimates and projections of future growth and its impacts. A detailed land use inventory is conducted annually within the City limits and in the City's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) to determine existing land use and areas for potential future development. Population

estimates are updated through monthly building permit summaries.

The land use inventory is instrumental in projecting the City’s ultimate build-out capacity in terms of population and in terms of land area. This information, in combination with existing General Plans for areas under development, assists the City in determining specific areas of growth that require additional infrastructure. Population projections are made annually to better understand trends in growth and development.

### C. INCORPORATION OF ALL MASTER PLANS

The Comprehensive Plan is the overarching document guiding more specific discipline-focused master plans. The master plans are considered components of the overall Comprehensive Plan and describe how specific areas of the Comprehensive Plan should be implemented. Incorporating other master plans therefore is an important feature of the City’s overall comprehensive planning efforts.

The City of Sugar Land has a policy that defines an official “master plan” and clarifies the master plan adoption process. The following is a list of official master plans in accordance with the City’s Master Plan Policy (PL 101):

#### Future Land Use Plan: Adopted 1993; updated in 2004 and 2012

The Future Land Use Plan map has historically been published as Chapter 6 of the Comprehensive Plan. The Future Land Use Plan map lays out the City’s preference for future development patterns and acts as a guide for land use decisions. City Council adopted an update in 2012 (Ordinance No. 1860) to include general plans approved to date and a desired land use scenario for the areas south of the Brazos River (see **Figure 6**).

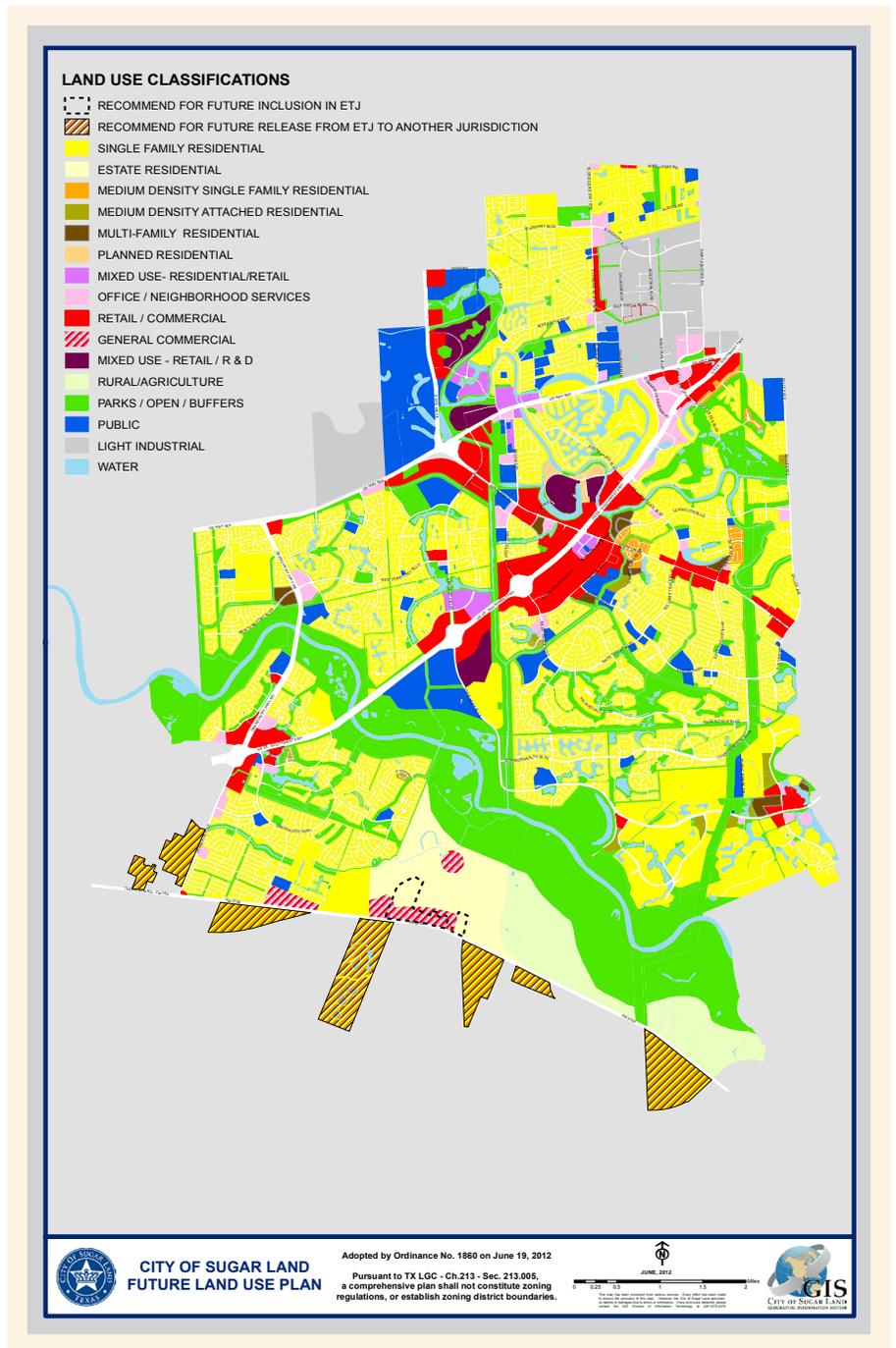


Figure 6.  
Future Land Use Plan map (2012)

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The Thoroughfare Plan identifies an ultimate roadway network to accommodate future growth and expansion of the City and its ETJ.

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### Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan: Adopted 1996; updated in 2005

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan identifies present and future needs covering a time span of five to ten years. The 2005 Plan provides direction for future land acquisition, park development and expansion, and recreation programming.

### Hike and Bike Trails Master Plan – Adopted 1998, updated in 2007

This master plan was originally approved in 1998 as the Greenbelt Trails Master Plan. The Hike and Bike Trails Master Plan identifies a connected system of routes for pedestrians and bicyclists across the City. The Plan focuses on linking portions of the City together as well as connecting neighborhoods to parks, other neighborhoods, schools, libraries, shopping areas and other areas of interest. The Hike and Bike Trails Master Plan, as part of a FY 2012 update, will be renamed the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan to broaden its focus to include non-recreational trips.

### Municipal Facilities Master Plan – Adopted 2005

The Municipal Facilities Master Plan identifies long-range requirements for City of Sugar Land facilities. The plan enables the City to provide a consistent level of service to residents while at the same time anticipating the expected population growth. The Municipal Facilities Master Plan is undergoing an update in FY 2012.

### Water Master Plan – Adopted 1995; updated in 2000 and 2007

The Water Master Plan is a guide for orderly and timely development of water facilities for the City and its ETJ. The 2007 Plan includes a Groundwater Reduction Plan (GRP), a Fort Bend Subsidence District (FBSD)-mandated reduction in groundwater withdrawals. The Water Master Plan is undergoing an update in FY 2012 to ensure adequate capacity is available for the continued growth in Telfair, Riverstone, and Imperial, projected growth in Tract 2, and areas south of the Brazos River.

### Wastewater Master Plan – Adopted 1995; updated in 2000, 2004, 2007

The Wastewater Master Plan provides a guide for the orderly and timely development of wastewater collection and treatment systems for the City and its ETJ. A 2012 update will address regional utilities south of the Brazos River in more detail.

### Thoroughfare Master Plan – Adopted 1962; updated in 1964, 1979, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2003, 2004, 2005

The Thoroughfare Plan identifies an ultimate roadway network to accommodate future growth and expansion of the City and its ETJ. The Major Roadway Plan map is a component of the Thoroughfare Master Plan and identifies all existing and future roadways within the City

and ETJ. The Thoroughfare Master Plan was amended recently (in 2003, 2004, and 2005) to adjust for new developments. The Thoroughfare Master Plan is undergoing a FY 2012 major update that includes the network south of the Brazos River, coordinates existing pedestrian and bike plans, incorporates a railroad crossings plan, and includes the latest regional data.

### Drainage Master Plan – Adopted 1990; updated in 2000 and 2007

The 2007 Drainage Master Plan is divided into two phases. Phase 1 addresses multi-jurisdictional issues and concerns in drainage planning, infrastructure development, and management within the City limits and the City’s ETJ. Phase 2 develops practical procedures for selecting, ranking and prioritizing drainage complaints to identify drainage problems in need of potential remedy, and examines priorities and funding for implementing City capital improvement program (CIP) drainage projects.

## D. GUIDING DOCUMENTS

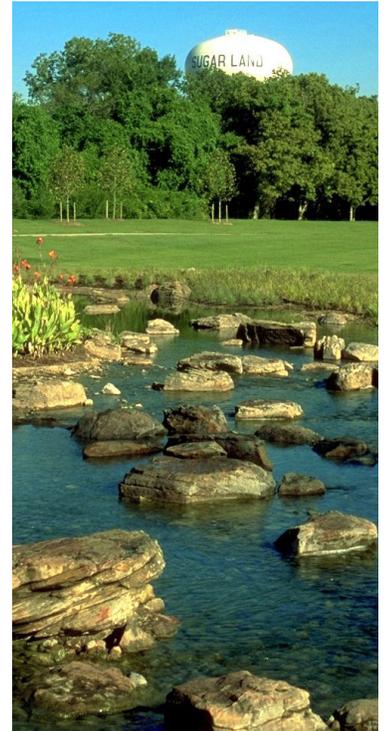
Guiding documents are strategic plans focused on how to achieve a specific component of the City’s vision. The City Council approves and adopts guiding documents, which provide policy guidance and coordinate with the Comprehensive Plan, but are not considered official master plans. The following are guiding documents for the City:

### Comprehensive Mobility Plan – Adopted in 2011

The Comprehensive Mobility Plan is an implementation plan for Vision 2025’s Principle G: Superior Mobility. The plan ensures transportation modes are coordinated with each other, determines priority level and phasing for various improvements, and includes a funding plan. The project that developed the plan included a robust public input process to develop support and understand community preferences.

### Economic Development Plan – Adopted in 2001; updated in 2011

The Sugar Land Economic Development Plan builds on the successful implementation of the 2001 Economic Development Plan. The Plan focuses on improving the local economy by building on the robust infrastructure, sites, buildings, partnerships and resources currently in place in Sugar Land. The Economic Development Plan establishes strategic direction for the Sugar Land Economic Development program based on the priorities of the City Council and Economic Development Boards.



# CHAPTER 3

## Community Profile



### A. HISTORY

In 1828, Stephen F. Austin granted land in the Sugar Land area to Samuel M. Williams, one of the land's first settlers. Williams named the property Oakland Plantation because of the variety of oak trees found there. Freight travel passing through Cuba from New York to Texas ports brought sugar cane stalks to Oakland Plantation. The conditions were perfect for growing sugar cane, which thrives in a warm climate with a flat terrain and plentiful water. Sugar cane turned into the area's major cash crop and flourished from the time of the construction of the first mill in 1843 until long after the Civil War. In 1853, Samuel M. Williams died and the mill was sold to Benjamin Franklin Terry and William Jefferson Kyle. The area was renamed Sugar Land.

Terry and Kyle directly influenced the railroad alignment from Stafford to Richmond. Plans were to run the railroad from Stafford directly to Richmond, bypassing Sugar Land entirely. Terry and Kyle bought 2,500 acres of land located in the path of a direct alignment. The bend in the railroad between Stafford and Sugar Land, is a result of this land purchase, which caused the railroad to select an alignment through Sugar Land.

### Imperial Sugar

After the Civil War, the sugar mill expanded into the sugar refining process. In 1907, I.H. Kempner and W.T. Eldridge purchased the Sugar Land plantation and refinery, and it became the Imperial Sugar Company. To ensure a successful business venture, these partners wanted to attract dependable families and a permanent workforce by providing a quality living and working environment. In an effort to create a model community, the Imperial Sugar Company provided workers with housing, a hospital, a grocery store, and an exemplary school within proximity to the factory. In 1908, Imperial Sugar Company sold land for the Central Prison Unit, which opened in 1909. Farmlands were drained and levees were built to prevent flood damage and to protect the area. Some of the original houses in Mayfield Park, The Hill, and along Brooks Street were home to Imperial workers in the 1940s and have been passed down for generations. **Figure 7** (page 17) shows Imperial's eight-story brick Char House, which stood next to the Imperial Mercantile, Imperial Drug Company, Imperial Bank and Trust, post office, and the Imperial Sugar Company executive offices.

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In an effort to create a model community, the Imperial Sugar Company provided workers with housing, a hospital, a grocery store, and an exemplary school within proximity to the factory.

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## Central State Prison

The Texas Prison System's Central State Farm was the first industrialized prison farm in the state. Central State Farm dates back to the 1870s when the original 5,235 acres of sugar plantation fields were worked by convict labor. Prisoners worked in lumber, mining and agriculture to supply the prison system with goods. Prison labor contributed to a self-sustaining prison system; no state funds were used for facilities or operations. In 1878, Imperial Mill leased prison labor from the state to work the sugar cane fields.

State legislative reforms in the 1920s led to improved conditions for prisoners and the construction of new Central State Prison Farm facilities funded by the State legislature. The main Central Prison Unit facility (**Figure 8**) was completed in 1932 and until its closure in 2011 housed approximately 1,000 prisoners. Two Camp opened in 1939 as a dormitory and today houses the Houston Museum of Natural Science, Sugar Land. (*Sources: Houston Museum of Natural Science, Texas Historical Commission*)

## Sugar Land

As Imperial's production expanded and its workforce multiplied, the company town outgrew its close structure and evolved into a suburban community. In 1959, the citizens



**Figure 7.**  
Historic Photo of the  
Char House at Imperial



**Figure 8.**  
Central Prison Unit



incorporated and founded the City of Sugar Land. Since then, the City and its surrounding area have grown to become one of the Houston area's most successful and attractive suburban communities.

On January 17, 1981, a special City election was held for the purpose of establishing a home rule municipal government. Voters approved the adoption of a home rule charter in accordance with the Constitution and statutes of the State of Texas. The type of municipal government provided by this Charter was known as a "mayor-council government," and all powers of the City were invested in a Council composed of a mayor and five council members. On August 9, 1986, a majority of the voters approved amendments to the Charter that provided for a change in the City's form of government from that of "mayor-council" to that of a "council-manager." This form of government has a city manager that is the chief administrative officer of the city. Approval of this amendment provided for the mayor to become a voting member of Council in addition to performing duties as presiding officer of the Council. The Imperial Sugar Company ceased all refining and distribution operations within the City in 2003, but the company still maintains its corporate headquarters in Sugar Land. (Source: Armstrong, R.M. *Sugar Land, Texas and the Imperial Sugar Company, 1991*)

## Annexation

Annexation is a way for cities to provide areas with municipal services and to exercise regulatory authority necessary to protect public health, safety and welfare. The City annexes both developed and undeveloped land. The City annexes developed areas on a voluntary basis working with residents of the area to be annexed when annexations makes financial sense for the City. In accordance with City Council Resolution 04-21, the voluntary annexation of developed areas is subject to the terms of a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), which is a written mutual agreement between the City and a district illustrating the City services to be offered and an annexation plan for the district. Services such as fire protection and water supply can be provided to MUDs prior to annexation and dissolution of the MUD into the City's service area.

The City of Sugar Land also annexes non-MUD areas in accordance with Resolution 07-37, which established the Annexation Review Program of non-MUD areas in the City's ETJ. Resolution 07-37 established five criteria by which the non-MUD areas are evaluated to determine priorities for annexation. The five criteria are as follows:

1. Likelihood that development of the area is imminent and could have a negative impact on the City
2. Likelihood of threats to public safety
3. Area is either completely or partially surrounded by existing City limits and potential for confusion and inefficient public service delivery are high
4. Cost of maintaining/upgrading infrastructure is reasonable and feasible if required
5. The area contains City-owned property (or future City property)

**Annexation Activity,  
Sugar Land, Texas: 2000 – 2011**

Year	Annexed Area	Acres
2000	Eldridge Lake; Portion of Tract 3	58.57
2001	Glen Laurel	38.01
2001	Brazos River Conservancy	710.02
2002	Silva Tract	41.20
2004	Tract 4 and 5	1,992.54
2004	Alston Road	39.78
2005	Tract 3	732.53
2005	MUD 113 (Avalon and Brazos Landing area)	718.01
2006	Tracts 2 & Central Prison	554.00
2007	RiverPark/MUD 1 (Limited Purpose Annexation)	833.00
2007	RiverPark/MUD 1 (Disannexation of Residential)	(683.00)
2008	TxDOT ROW at U.S. 59 & Hwy 99	20.80
2008	Greatwood MUDs (106, 108, & 109 – Limited Purpose)	333.00
2009	RiverPark/MUD 1 (Full Purpose Annexation)	833.40
2011	Non-MUD Areas: RiverPark (419.86 acres), Detention Facility (12.01 acres- Eldridge Road MUD), Riverstone (591.49 acres- floodway along Brazos River)	1,023.36

**Table 1.**  
**Annexation Activity,**  
**Sugar Land, Texas: 2000 – 2011**

Much of the growth of the City of Sugar Land in the 1980s and 1990s occurred as a result of the annexation of master-planned communities formed as municipal utility districts (MUDs). Through these annexations, the City incorporated major residential areas such as Sugar Creek and First Colony, growing from approximately 7.5 square miles to 24.5 square miles from 1980 to 2000. More recent annexations have shifted to incorporating large vacant tracts of land so that these tracts are subject to review and conformance with City standards.

The annexations of MUD 113 (Avalon and Brazos Landing), TxDOT Tracts 4 and 5, Tract 2 and Central Prison, Tract 3, and most recently the RiverPark community have expanded the City’s corporate limits to 35.1 square miles with an additional 0.51 square miles of limited-purpose annexation of commercial properties in Greatwood. The City’s extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) includes 19.3 square miles that will eventually be inside the city limits. Future growth will likely include the annexation of Greatwood, New Territory, and Riverstone. The annexation of existing MUDs in the ETJ will bring the expected City population to approximately 146,700 people. However, the annexation schedule for these areas has not been established. **Table 1** highlights the City’s recent annexation history.

## Levee Improvement Districts (LIDs)

Fort Bend County LID 2

Fort Bend County LID 7

Fort Bend County LID 10

Fort Bend County LID 11

Fort Bend County LID 14

Fort Bend County LID 15

Fort Bend County LID 17

First Colony LID 1

First Colony LID 2

Figure 9.  
Levee Improvement Districts (LIDs)



## B. ENVIRONMENT

The City of Sugar Land encompasses approximately 35.1 square miles and has the potential to expand to approximately 54.4 square miles within its ETJ areas primarily to the south and west. The City is located in northeast Fort Bend County, which was the second-fastest growing county in Texas in 2010. Sugar Land is located in the southwestern area of the Houston region with boundaries adjacent to the cities of Houston, Stafford, Missouri City, and Meadows Place.

### Drainage

Sugar Land is influenced by several major waterways including the Brazos River, Oyster Creek, and Ditch “H” (Bullhead Slough). During rain events, these major waterways can create flooding hazards. Developed areas in the southern and western parts of Sugar Land are protected from the threat of flooding from the Brazos River by a series of levee systems. Nine levee improvement districts (LIDs) exist in Sugar Land and its ETJ (See **Figure 9**). The LIDs provide flood protection and storm water management services.

Oyster Creek will provide raw water resources for a new surface water treatment plant, which will be located in the vicinity of the intersection of Burney Road at Voss Road. This plant will start operations in June 2013. Surface water is increasingly important as Sugar Land and its ETJ partners work together to reduce subsidence by decreasing the use of groundwater.

### Water

The City’s public drinking water supply meets or exceeds EPA and TCEQ standards for quality and, since the 1990s, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has rated Sugar Land’s drinking water as “superior.” The City currently draws all of its drinking water from groundwater. In 2010, the City’s average daily use of water was over 22 million gallons. In accordance with the Fort Bend Subsidence District requirements, Sugar Land adopted a Groundwater Reduction Plan in 2007 that aims to convert drinking water resources from groundwater to alternative water sources at a rate of 30% by 2013 and 60% by 2025. Construction began in 2011 on a surface water treatment plant (see **Figure 10**, page 21) that will produce nine million gallons per day (MGD) of drinking water and is expandable to treat 22 MGD using surface water from Oyster Creek. This combined with other non-potable water projects meets the projected need for groundwater reduction when the City is expected to be at full build-out. The City has secured contracts for surface water supply needs to accommodate the projected population at full build-out and into the future. Although there is adequate supply, the City is working to diversify its water supply resources to protect against the potential threat from drought.

### Wastewater

The City owns, maintains, and operates the municipal wastewater collection and treatment system within the City limits, which includes two regional wastewater treatment plants and



**Figure 10.**  
Surface Water Treatment Plant (rendering)

numerous lift stations. The North Wastewater Treatment Plant (NWWTP) is located along U.S. 59 to the west of S.H. 6 and the South Wastewater Treatment Plant (SWWTP) is located along Scenic Rivers Drive south of Commonwealth Boulevard. Wastewater for the recently annexed Riverpark subdivision is treated by the plant owned and operated by Fort Bend MUD No. 112 (New Territory) through a contract transferred to the City during annexation. Areas in the ETJ, such as New Territory, Tara Plantation, and Greatwood, are served by independently-operating wastewater collection systems and treatment plants.

In 2002, the City purchased 60 acres of land adjacent to the New Territory wastewater treatment plant in anticipation of a future expansion of the plant to meet capacity requirements for future development. Municipal Utility District 112 currently owns and manages plant operations. In 2007, the City and Municipal Utility Districts 67, 68, 69, 111, and 112 entered into a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), which outlines the New Territory wastewater treatment plant's future expansion and operation, including future connection to the City's system.

## Parks & Recreation

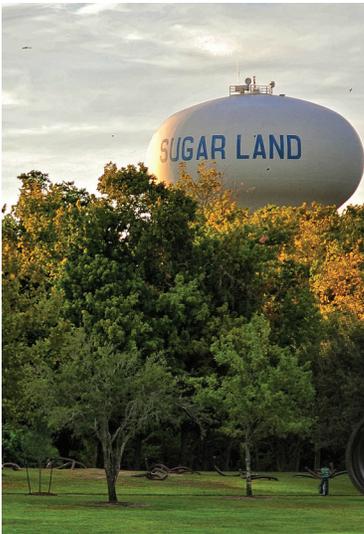
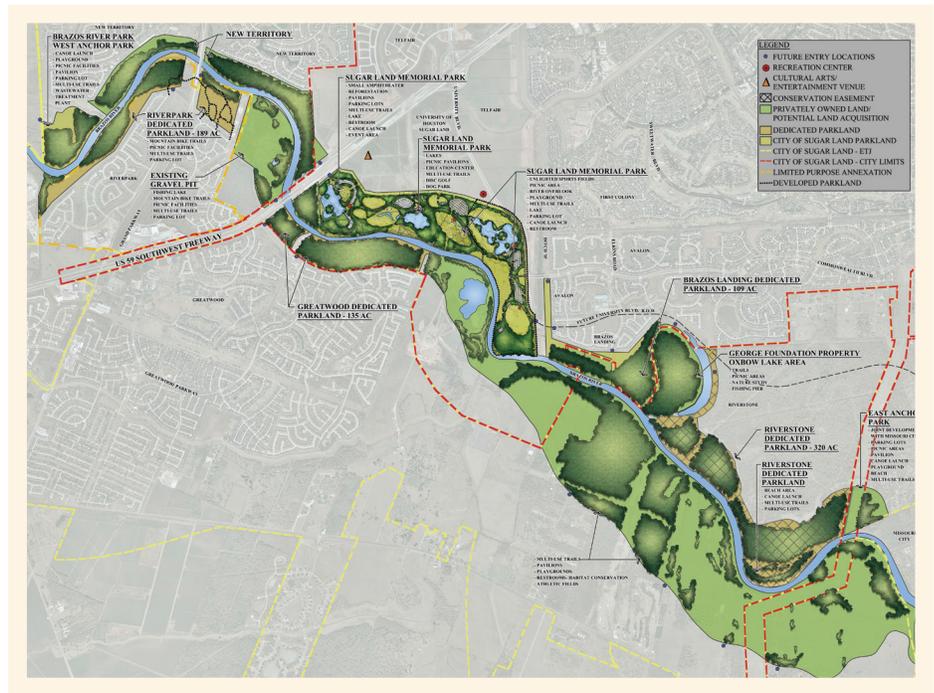
Recreation opportunities in Sugar Land are abundant, making it an attractive place for families. The City takes pride in being a healthy and active community including being recognized as the "Fittest City in Texas" six years in a row (2003–2008). The City has a park system containing 1,126 acres of dedicated parkland, featuring a wide variety of facilities. Many neighborhood parks were developed as part of master-planned communities that were later annexed into the City. Sugar Land owns and maintains local neighborhood parks, city-wide community parks, and regional parks with amenities such as baseball and soccer fields, community buildings, picnic shelters, playgrounds, tennis courts, skate park, pool, a recreation center, and trails.



The City's most significant parks are as follows:

- The **Brazos River Corridor** includes over 1,200 acres of mostly undeveloped and partially City-owned land along the river. In 2007, the City opened Memorial Park (150 acres) to the south near Commonwealth Boulevard. The Brazos River Park Master Plan (1997) will be implemented over many years and will provide park areas connected by trails along the river, including a regional festival site near U.S. 59 with facilities for large community events (see **Figure 11**).
- **Oyster Creek Park** features a three-mile hike and bike trail, rock waterfall pond, and amphitheater. The City organizes many events at Oyster Creek Park throughout the year, including the Red White & Bluefest and the Parks and Recreation Department's Summer Concert Series.

**Figure 11. Brazos River Park Master Plan**



- **Eldridge Park** is 43-acre site located near the intersection of Eldridge Road and West Airport Boulevard. Facilities include a community meeting room, a picnic pavilion, a fishing pier and pond, a playground, and soccer fields.
- **City Park**, located adjacent to The Hill and Sugar Mill neighborhoods, is a 19-acre community destination with a variety of activities including baseball fields, batting cages, a skate park, a pool, tennis and volleyball courts and community meeting rooms.
- **Duhacsek Park** is a 49-acre regional park that was donated to the City by the late Mr. Walter and Virginia Duhacsek. The homestead features pecan trees, large open spaces for group gatherings, and rental facilities for events.

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The Brazos River Park Master Plan (1997) will be implemented over many years and provide park areas connected by trails along the river including a regional festival site near U.S. 59.

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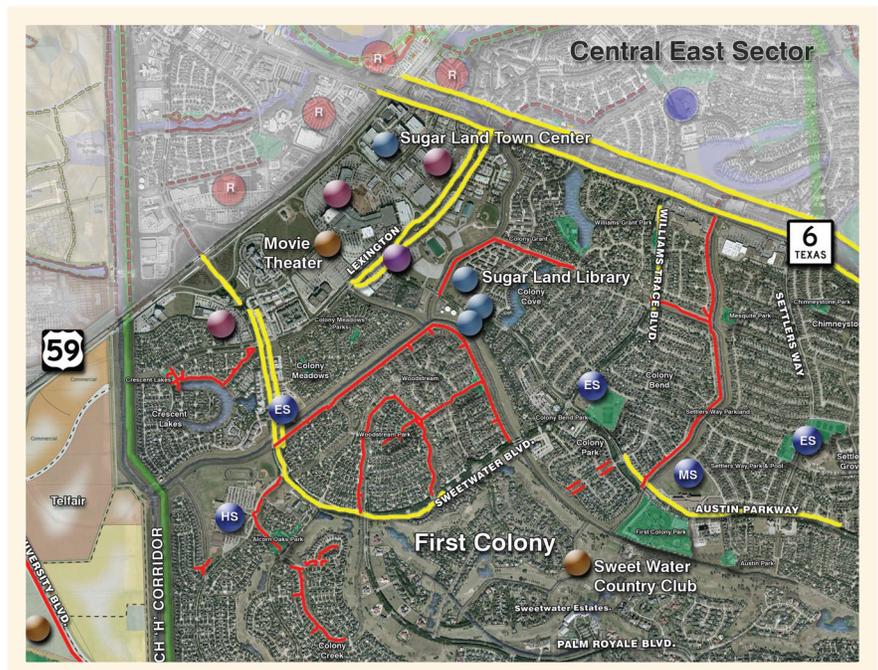
- **Imperial Park** is a 44-acre park that is home to the Sugar Land Girls Softball Association. This nine-field, fast pitch softball complex hosts many tournaments bringing players from across Texas. The site also includes a disc golf course and the Imperial Park Recreation Center (see **Figure 12**), a 17,000 square foot building with a gym, group exercise room, video gaming space, and multi-purpose rooms.

The aforementioned parks represent the City's largest park facilities. However, the City offers many other smaller neighborhood and community parks that provide recreational opportunities closer to home.

An important part of Sugar Land's parks and recreation system is its trails. Trail systems enhance recreational opportunities and provide connectivity to area destinations. Trails improve the transportation system by providing alternative ways to get to key city destinations such as schools, libraries, parks, recreation and senior centers, and pools. Additionally, trails promote a healthy lifestyle with opportunities for walking, biking, or skating. Sugar Land has significant existing trails in the form of sidewalks along roadways and levees and through parks, with many more planned. The 2007 Hike and Bike Trails Master Plan (see **Figure 13**) identifies over 50 specific trail corridors totaling over 100 miles of trails projects to improve connectivity to activity centers and parks.



**Figure 12.**  
Imperial Park Recreation Center



**Figure 13.**  
Map excerpt of existing Hike and  
Bike Trails Network (2007)



## Air Quality

Air quality significantly influences the health of a community and its natural environment. Sugar Land is part of a larger region that has been identified as having significant air quality challenges. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) works with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to monitor air quality in the Houston-Galveston-Brazoria region, which includes Fort Bend, Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery and Walker counties. The TCEQ determines area attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) in accordance with the Clean Air Act. The Houston region is currently considered a “severe ozone nonattainment area” and TCEQ created a State Implementation Plan (SIP) to bring the region into compliance by a 2019 attainment deadline. The SIP has control strategies for ozone reduction such as modifying business and industry processes and includes grants, incentives, and loans funded by federal, state and local governments.

Local air quality monitoring data suggests that air quality in Sugar Land is generally considered “good,” with a significant minority of days measuring air quality of some concern. A TCEQ air quality monitor is located at the University of Houston - Sugar Land. The monitor measures wind speed,

Figure 14. Air Quality Index Levels (EPA)

Air Quality Index Levels (EPA)		
Index Values	Air Quality Descriptors	Cautionary Statements for Ozone
0-50	Good	No health impacts are expected when air quality is in this range
51-100	Moderate	Unusually sensitive people should consider limiting prolonged outdoor exertion
101-150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion
151 to 200	Unhealthy	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid prolonged outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children should limit prolonged outdoor exertion
201 to 300	Very Unhealthy	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid prolonged outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children should limit outdoor exertion

Table 2. Ozone Summary for University of Houston-Sugar Land

Ozone Summary, University of Houston - Sugar Land <i>(measured in parts per billion (ppb))</i>			
Year	Yearly Max	Yearly Min	Yearly Average
2009	111	0	25
2010	98	0	23
2011	123	0	28
2012*	106	0	29

\*Partial year data, 01/01/12 - 06/14/12

Source: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

wind direction, relative humidity, barometric pressure, precipitation and ozone, which is a harmful air pollutant. In 2011, the local monitor indicated 24 days where ozone measured above 75 to 99 parts per billion (ppb) range, which is considered Moderate (see **Figure 14**, page 24). Additionally, two days measured in the 100 to 124 ppb range, which is considered Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups. The 2011 yearly average for ozone levels in Sugar Land is 28 ppb. Additional yearly summaries are shown in **Table 2** (page 24).

## Housing

Sugar Land is among the most desirable residential communities in the region, and continues to grow relatively rapidly. The City's land area is composed of 71% residential development, which includes 24,737 single-family homes, 781 townhomes, and 2,019 apartment units, according to the City's 2011 Land Use Inventory. New construction continues in communities like Telfair. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the City added 6,637 housing units between 2000 and 2010. The Census data also indicates that a large percentage of homes – 96.3% – are occupied. Between 2000 and 2010, the median house value increased by 46 percent, despite a decline in the national housing market (2010 U.S. Census, 2010 American Community Survey). **Table 3** shows dramatic changes in housing characteristics over the last 30 years.

A steady increase in the value of taxable property contributed to the City's ability to lower property tax rates, and Sugar Land's property tax rate was the second lowest in the state among cities with a population of 25,000 or more in 2010. Sugar Land house values displayed a marked increase as shown in **Table 4**. The percentage of homes valued at \$300,000 to \$499,999 increased by 172% between 2000 and 2010, and houses valued at \$50,000 - \$99,999 decreased by 89%.

### Housing Characteristics, Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010

	1980	1990	2000	2010
Total Housing Units	2,801	8,579	21,090	27,727
Occupied Units	2,734	8,100	20,515	26,709
Owner-occupied units	2,480	6,727	17,262	22,025
Renter-occupied units	254	1,373	3,253	4,684
Vacant Units	67	479	575	1,018
Home Owner Vacancy	N/A	3.5	1.1	1.5
Rental Vacancy	N/A	7.9	5.1	5.8
Median Housing Value	\$66,695	\$92,700	\$158,000	\$230,800*
Median Rent	\$339	\$723	\$939	\$1,330*

Source: 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 U.S. Census, \*2010 American Community Survey, 5-year estimate (provides data not available in 2010 Census)

**Table 3.**  
Housing Characteristics,  
Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010

### Value for Owner-Occupied Housing, Sugar Land, Texas: 1990 – 2010

	1990	2000	2010
Less than \$50,000	4.9%	1.5%	2.0%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	52.2%	23.9%	2.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	14.7%	21.7%	16.8%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	12.9%	20.6%	18.2%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	10.4%	21.2%	30.4%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	4.8%	8.3%	22.6%
\$500,000 or more	0.0%	2.8%	7.5%

Source: 1990, 2000 Census; 2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**Table 4.**  
Value for Owner-Occupied Housing,  
Sugar Land, Texas: 1990 – 2010

## Neighborhoods

The first neighborhoods in Sugar Land were constructed to house sugar factory employees and their families. Many of these neighborhoods still exist today. The Hill and Mayfield Park feature some of the original homes built by the Imperial Sugar Company. The Belknap-Brookside neighborhood was established in the 1920s and continued developing into the 1950s and 1960s. Today, many original Sears “kit” houses still may be found along Brooks Street. These houses were the early modular homes purchased as a kit with the plans and all the pre-cut and fitted materials required to build the home. A residential boom took place during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s with construction of master-planned communities such as Sugar Creek, Sugar Mill, and First Colony.

Sugar Land is known for its high-quality, master-planned communities, many of which were constructed before being annexed into the City. These communities typically maintain active homeowners associations (HOAs) that enforce restrictions above and beyond City regulations. The sizes of some of the City’s HOAs may be seen in **Table 5**.

Homes Associated with Homeowners Associations (HOAs)	
Homeowners Association	Lots (2010)
Ashford Lakes Community Improvement Association	461
Avalon Community Association	800
Barrington Place	1,074
Brazos Landing	248
Chimneystone	564
Colony Grant Homeowners Association	1196
Commonwealth Community Association	1133
Community Association of the Highlands	908
Covington Woods	926
First Colony Community Association	6,426
Gannoway Lakes Estates	182
Glen Laurel	717
Greenbrier Community Association	208
Imperial Woods	143
Lake Pointe Town Center	203
Oak Hollow	107
Oyster Point	117
Ragus Lakes Estates	228
RiverPark	1,173
RiverPark West	888
Settlers Park	966
Sugar Creek Homes Association	1,755
Sugar Lakes	444
Sugar Mill	1,036
Sugarwood Community Association	261
Telfair Community Association	1,796
Venetian Estates Organization	228

Source: Houston Association of Realtors, [www.har.com](http://www.har.com)

**Table 5.**  
Homes Associated with Homeowners Associations (HOAs)



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## The City of Sugar Land partners with governmental agencies and private companies to ensure residents have access to transit services.

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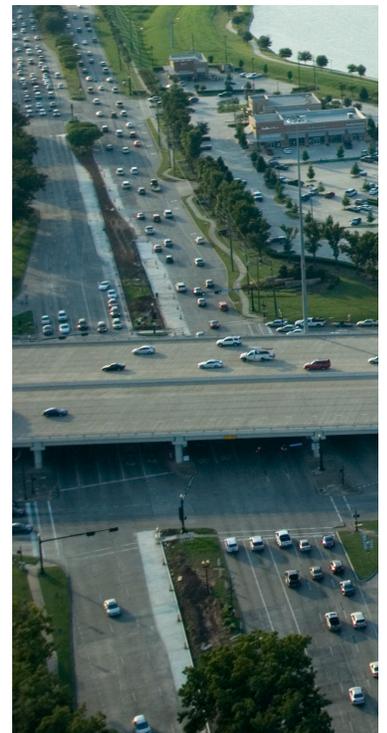
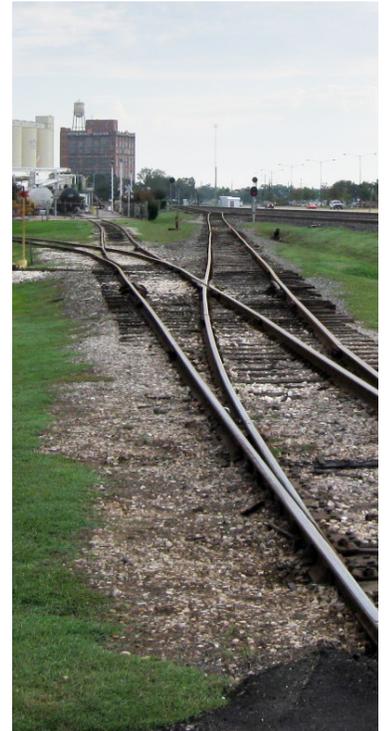
### Transportation

The City's Thoroughfare Master Plan was first developed in 1962. Over time the City has adopted a number of revisions, with the latest occurring in 2003 and amendments taking place in 2004 and 2005. The City regularly updates the Plan to keep up with growth and to adapt to differing needs and requests of the community. A 2012 update is underway and will update the Plan with a thoroughfare network through the area south of the Brazos River in the City's ETJ, a railroad crossings plan, and recommendations for accommodating bicyclists in the thoroughfare system.

The City is connected to the region by three major highways: U.S. 59 (Southwest Freeway), S.H. 6, and U.S. 90A. Between 2003 and 2009, the City partnered with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to complete major highway expansion projects on U.S. 59, U.S. 90A and S.H. 6 to improve mobility through the City and region. After 2000, as a result of population growth exceeding 50,000 people, the City took over traffic operations of state routes. The City now operates traffic signals on these major roadways in addition to the network of City roadways.

The City of Sugar Land partners with governmental agencies and private companies to ensure residents have access to transit services. Fort Bend County operates commuter bus service to employment centers in the region from two park & ride facilities in Sugar Land. Fort Bend County Express offers commuter service to Greenway Plaza, the Galleria, the Texas Medical Center and downtown (via transfer to METRO service at the West Belfort Park and Ride). Additionally, Fort Bend County operates a demand response service for Sugar Land residents for trips within Fort Bend County.

Dating back to the historic Imperial Sugar Company, Sugar Land's businesses have benefited from railway access. Today, two major Class 1 rail lines are located within the City and its ETJ: the Union Pacific "Glidden" line along U.S. 90A and the BNSF Railway line along F.M. 2759 in the City's ETJ. Union Pacific runs approximately 32 freight trains daily through Sugar Land on the Glidden line with mostly through traffic. Local service is limited to the Sugar Land Business Park and Nalco Chemical Company, although additional opportunities may exist as properties along rail lines develop. Union Pacific announced in 2011 that it intends to add a second railroad track through Sugar Land.





## C. DEMOGRAPHICS

The City of Sugar Land was incorporated in 1959 with a population just over 2,800 people and a total land area of 3.5 square miles. Today, the City spreads across 35.1 square miles and is located in the second-fastest growing county in Texas. Between 1990 and 2000, Sugar Land experienced population growth of approximately 158%. Over the next decade, the population grew 24.5% to a population of 78,817 as counted in the 2010 U.S. Census. It should be noted that some estimates, including the City’s own annual estimate from 2010, put the City’s population as high as 84,511. Based on the annexation of established Municipal Utility District (MUDs), the population of Sugar Land is expected to reach a total of 146,700 people, in the City and ETJ combined, at full build-out.

The growth of Sugar Land has been rapid partially as a result of the historical practice of annexing developed suburban areas in the 1980s and 1990s. Developers purchased large areas of vacant land for development of primarily master-planned communities, which the City later annexed. **Figure 15** shows how the City’s population grew from 1960-2010 and marks milestones, such as annexations, along the way.

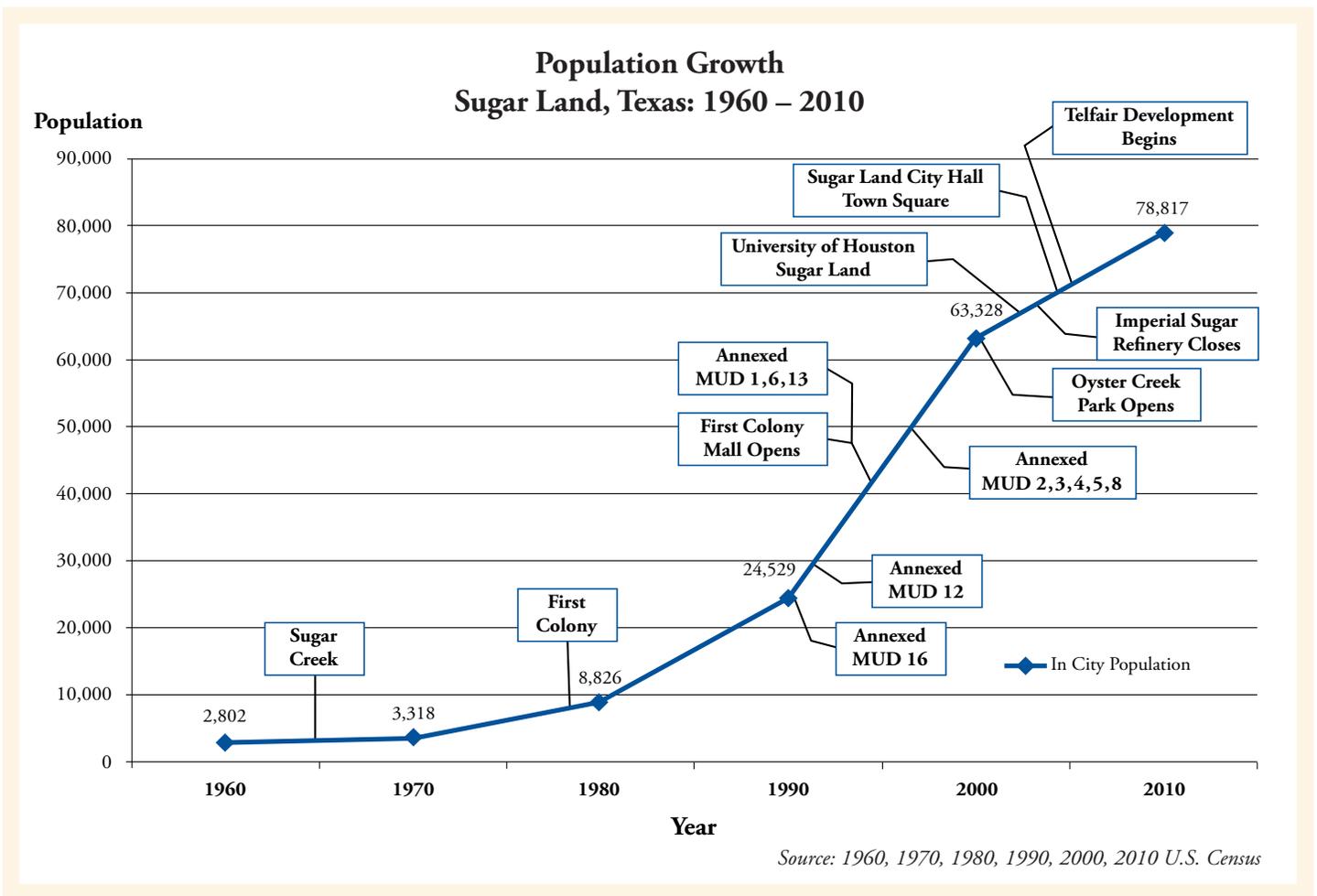


Figure 15. Population Growth, Sugar Land, Texas: 1960 – 2010

## Demographic Composition

**Table 6** shows changes in the population and household characteristics of Sugar Land from 1980 through 2010 as reported in the U.S. Census and the American Community Survey.

Sugar Land's population experienced notable changes over the last three decades. Sugar Land's average household size became smaller and the population became older. Since 1980, the median age has risen 35.5%, from 30.4 years in 1980 to 41.2 years in 2010. In the last decade, the percentage population between ages 25 to 44 years old decreased by 18.4 percentage points and the population ages 45 to 64 years old increased by 25.5% (**Table 7**, page 30). The distribution of ages by gender for 2010 is shown in **Figure 16** (page 30).

Sugar Land household incomes have risen significantly since 1980. From 2000 to 2010, the median household income rose 10.7% to \$101,611. By comparison, in 2010 the median household income for the City of Houston was \$42,962 and for Missouri City was \$81,854. Approximately 28% of Sugar Land households have an annual income of \$150,000 or more and only 5.3% of Sugar Land residents in 2010 had income below the poverty line. Sugar Land's median household income of \$101,611 ranked 15th highest in the nation, according to a 2010 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimate) of cities with populations greater than 65,000.

**Table 6. Population and Household Characteristics, Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010**

<b>Population and Household Characteristics, Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010</b>				
	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>
Total population	8,826	24,529	63,328	78,817
Total dwelling units	2,801	8,579	21,090	27,727
Persons per household	3.18	3.01	3.06	2.90
Median household income	\$27,992	\$56,571	\$91,767	\$101,611*
Median family income	\$30,123	\$60,301	\$88,639	\$113,689*
Per capita income	\$10,012	\$24,200	\$33,506	\$41,897*
Families below the poverty level	60	119	556	826*
Individuals below poverty level	267	610	2,372	3,980*
Median age	30.4	33.3	37.4	41.2
Female population	4,410	12,429	32,345	39,686
Male population	4,416	12,100	30,983	39,131
Persons under 18 years of age	2,993	7,537	19,738	21,256
Person over 65 years of age	647	1,633	4,256	8,162

Source: U.S. Census 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010: \*2010 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

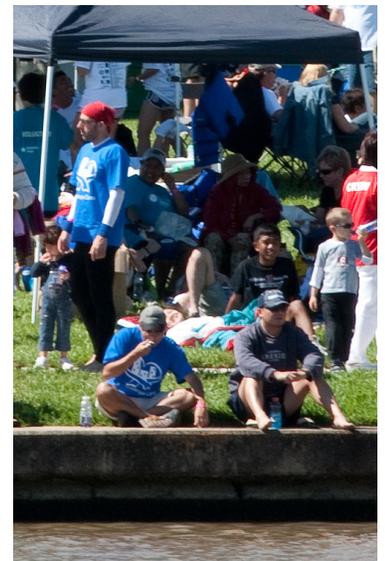


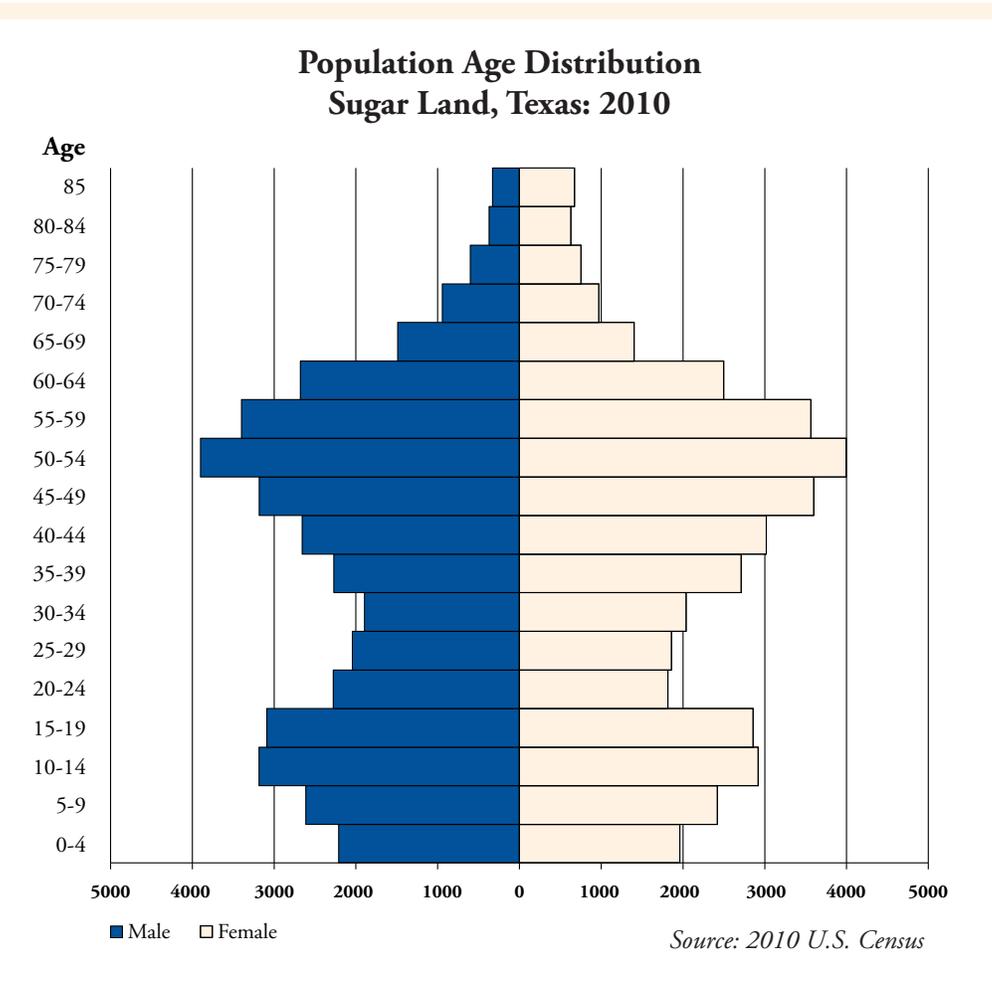
Table 7. Age Distribution, Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010



Age Distribution Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010				
	1980	1990	2000	2010
0-14 years	28.5%	26.2%	24.8%	19.4%
15-24 years	12.0%	10.4%	12.5%	12.7%
25-44 years	36.4%	38.7%	28.7%	23.5%
45-64 years	15.7%	18.0%	27.1%	34.0%
65 + years	7.3%	6.7%	6.7%	10.4%

Source: U.S. Census 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010

Figure 16. Population Age Distribution, Sugar Land, Texas: 2010



Source: 2010 U.S. Census

The ethnic composition of Sugar Land is diversifying. Between 2000 and 2010, the percentage of black, Asian, and Hispanic populations increased and the white (non-Hispanic) population decreased. The Asian population experienced the greatest growth, increasing 48% over the decade. Sugar Land has a higher percentage of Asians and a lower percentage of Hispanic and black populations than the county, state, and country. The following tables (Table 8 and Table 9) summarize Census data on the change in ethnicity in Sugar Land from 1980 through 2010 and the demographic composition of Sugar Land in comparison to national and regional percentages.

Table 8. Change in Ethnicity, Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010

Change in Ethnicity Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010				
	1980	1990	2000	2010
White (non-Hispanic)	83.3%	73.8%	60.8%	44.4%
Black	4.9%	4.9%	5.1%	7.3%
Asian	1.0%	12.6%	23.8%	35.1%
Hispanic (of any race)	10.6%	8.5%	8.0%	10.6%
American Indian	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Other	0.1%	0.0%	2.1%	2.5%

Source: 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 U.S. Census

(Note: 2010 U.S. Census included a change in data collection where Question 8 takes Hispanic out of the race category options in Question 9 and notes "Hispanic origins are not races.")

Table 9. Comparison of Ethnicity: 2010

Comparison of Ethnicity: 2010							
	White	Black	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Other
United States	63.8%	12.2%	0.7%	4.7%	0.2%	16.4%	2.1%
Texas	45.3%	11.5%	0.3%	3.8%	0.1%	37.6%	1.4%
Houston	25.6%	23.2%	0.2%	6.0%	0.0%	43.8%	1.3%
Sugar Land	44.4%	7.3%	0.2%	35.1%	0.0%	10.6%	2.4%
Fort Bend County	36.2%	21.1%	0.2%	16.9%	0.0%	23.7%	1.9%

Source: 2010 U.S. Census

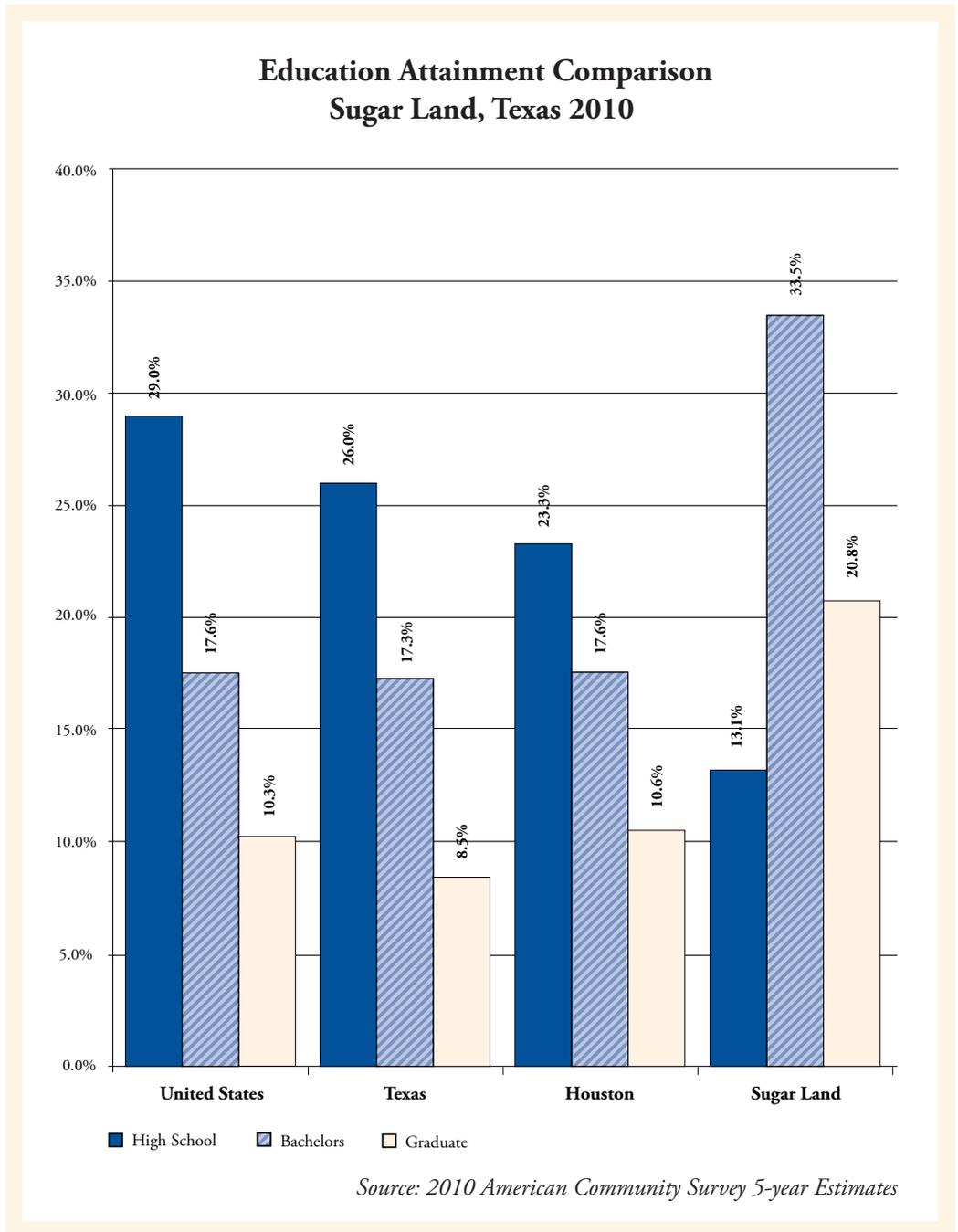




## Education Attainment

The level of education attainment is exceptionally high in Sugar Land. As reported in the 2010 American Community Survey, an estimated 54.3% percent of the population 25 years and older had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to the national average of 27.9%. With a well-educated work force, Sugar Land is an attractive location for company headquarters. **Figure 17** compares the education attainment of Sugar Land residents in 2010 with the nation, state and surrounding area.

Figure 17. Education Attainment Comparison, Sugar Land, Texas: 2010



## D. CULTURE

### Historic Preservation

Sugar Land has a rich heritage that sets it apart from other suburban cities in the region. The city's namesake sugar milling and refinery operations were continuous since the mid-1800s until 2003. When the Imperial Sugar refinery closed in 2003, many historical artifacts, documents, and photographs were available that traced the evolution of the site from its early days as a working plantation into the modern era. The Sugar Land Heritage Foundation was established in 2008 to preserve the history of the refinery site and its artifacts. The non-profit organization was made possible with support from the Kempner Fund, Cherokee Investments, Johnson Development, Imperial Sugar, the Fort Bend Museum Association and the City of Sugar Land. Sugar Land Heritage Foundation is expected to have a permanent home at the historic refinery site. Currently, the Foundation is housed in Imperial Sugar's former Engineering and Personnel Building next door to the former Char House. (Source: [www.SLHeritage.org](http://www.SLHeritage.org))

In 2009, the Houston Museum of Natural Science opened a Sugar Land branch in the restored Main Unit of the former Central State Prison Farm (see **Figure 18**). The building dates back to 1939 and housed 400 prisoners, the administrative offices, solitary confinement cells, laundry facilities for officers, a small school house, kitchen, dining room, theater and stage. Known as "Two Camp," this facility closed in 1969 and remained vacant until Newland Communities purchased the property in 2002. The preserved prison building and the museum itself contribute to enriching the cultural profile of Sugar Land.

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The Sugar Land Heritage Foundation was established in 2008 to preserve the history of the refinery site and its artifacts.

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Figure 18.  
Houston Museum of Natural Science,  
Sugar Land, Texas



## Education

The City of Sugar Land is located in the Fort Bend Independent School District (FBISD), an award-winning school system, with portions of the extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) located in Lamar Consolidated Independent School District (LCISD). Known for exceptional schools, FBISD received awards for seven Top 2011 High Schools in the Nation including Clements and Dulles high schools located in Sugar Land, 2011 National School District of Character, and 2011 Best Community for Music Education. Exemplary schools are a major draw for families moving to Sugar Land.

Sugar Land is expanding its educational opportunities. In 2001, the University of Houston opened a Sugar Land campus near the intersection of U.S. 59 and University Boulevard. The University of Houston – Sugar Land (UH-SL) campus offers junior, senior and master’s level courses for more than twenty degree programs. A partnership with Wharton County Junior College (WCJC) allows students from WCJC to transfer into the University of Houston system to complete their studies in a four-year program. By 2011, the UH-SL completed construction of two buildings in addition to a new library built in partnership with the Fort Bend County Library System.

## Culture and Entertainment

In 2008, following the work of a City Council-appointed citizen visioning task force, voters approved four ballot propositions to utilize funds from the Sugar Land Type A Corporation and venue taxes to fund the development of three specific venues: a minor league ball park, an indoor concert venue, and a festival site.

These ballot propositions enabled the City of Sugar Land to begin construction on a baseball stadium in 2011. In 2012, Constellation Field opened as the stadium for the Sugar Land Skeeters, an independent minor league division baseball team. The multipurpose ballpark (see **Figure 19**) is owned by the City of Sugar Land, operated by Opening Day Partners, and is a key destination near the historic Imperial refinery site. Seating 7,500 people at baseball games, the stadium can be expanded to 10,000 seats for concerts and other events. The stadium features 21 suites, upper level club seating, a picnic deck and extensive playground facilities.

Figure 19. Rendering of Constellation Field



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# CHAPTER 4

## Development Constraints, Opportunities, and Projections

Using the existing conditions defined in the previous chapter as a baseline, Chapter Four examines development constraints and opportunities and uses collected data to project future conditions.

### Population Projections

The population density in Sugar Land in 2010 is estimated as 3.51 persons per gross acre (ppga), which is a slight decrease from the 2005 estimate of 3.8 ppga. The developed area of the City has grown to consist of 87% of the total land area, as compared to 84% and 50% as reported in the 2005 and 1993 comprehensive plans, respectively. The average density computed on the basis of the developed area decreased slightly to 4.02 persons per developed acre (ppda) from the 4.54 ppda in 2005.

**Table 10. Population Estimates and Projections, Sugar Land, Texas: 1990 – 2025**

Population Estimates and Projections, Sugar Land, Texas: 1990 – 2025					
1990	2000	2010	2020	2025	Ultimate
24,529	63,328	78,817	95,313*	112,357*	144,559*

*Source: U.S. Census 1990, 2000, 2010, \* City of Sugar Land Population Estimates and Projections 2011*

Based on build-out projections, Sugar Land must continue to plan on achieving a balance of land uses and supporting infrastructure to accommodate development and related population growth. **Table 10** shows the past, current, and projected population growth rates for the City through 2020. Unusually high peaks in the growth rate occurred from the mid- 80s to the late- 90s due to the annexation of Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs) with existing communities.

The population projection (see **Table 10**, page 36) for 2020 assumes nearly all the 2011 City land area is developed, a base population of 78,817 as determined by the 2010 U.S. Census, the completion of almost all homes on all vacant lots as determined by the 2011 Land Use Inventory, and the annexation of Greatwood in accordance with the 2007 Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA). A SPA is a written mutual agreement between the City and a district illustrating City services and an annexation plan for the district. For 2025, the population projection assumes the conditions described above for the 2020 projection and includes the full build-out of the remaining vacant lots located within the 2011 land area of the City and the population of New Territory, which will likely be annexed into the City by that time. The ultimate build-out projection assumes the conditions described in the 2025 population projection as well as the full build-out of the 2011 ETJ areas, which include properties south of the Brazos River developed primarily as “estate lots” as identified in the 2012 Future Land Use Plan Map, Riverstone, and other scattered sites.

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## Development in the City of Sugar Land is guided by the City’s Development Code and its Subdivision Regulations.

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Between 2010 and 2020, the estimated population increase is 20.9%. With the annexation of both Greatwood and New Territory, the projected population will increase by 17.9% between 2020 and 2025. Additional population growth could occur with annexations of other MUDs in the ETJ. By policy (Resolution 04-21), the City will only annex a developed MUD under the agreed terms of a SPA entered into between the developed MUD and the City. The City has Strategic Partnership Agreements (SPAs) with all Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs) in New Territory, Greatwood, and Riverstone (within the City’s jurisdiction).

### Regulations

Development in the City is guided by the City’s Development Code and its Subdivision Regulations. Communities over 50 acres in size proposed for residential use or over 30 acres for non-residential use must follow an approved general plan. This process for larger communities has allowed the City to plan future growth. The general plan outlines the land use, circulation, and building phases of the proposed project. The general plan process also allows for the coordination with City master plans like the Thoroughfare Master Plan, Hike and Bike Trails Master Plan, and the utility master plans for Water and Wastewater. The City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission must approve the general plan before the development occurs, and the general plan serves as a guide throughout the development process. Development within the ETJ is subject to compliance with subdivision regulations, design standards, and any additional criteria established in any development agreements.

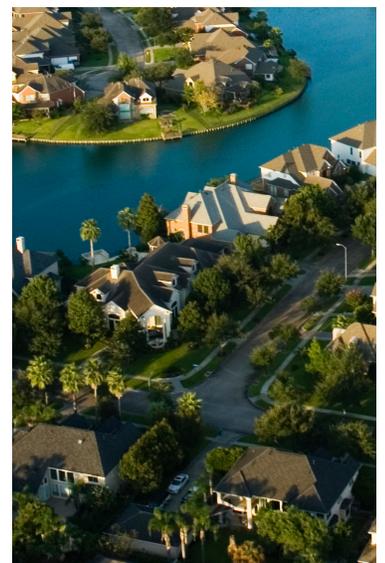
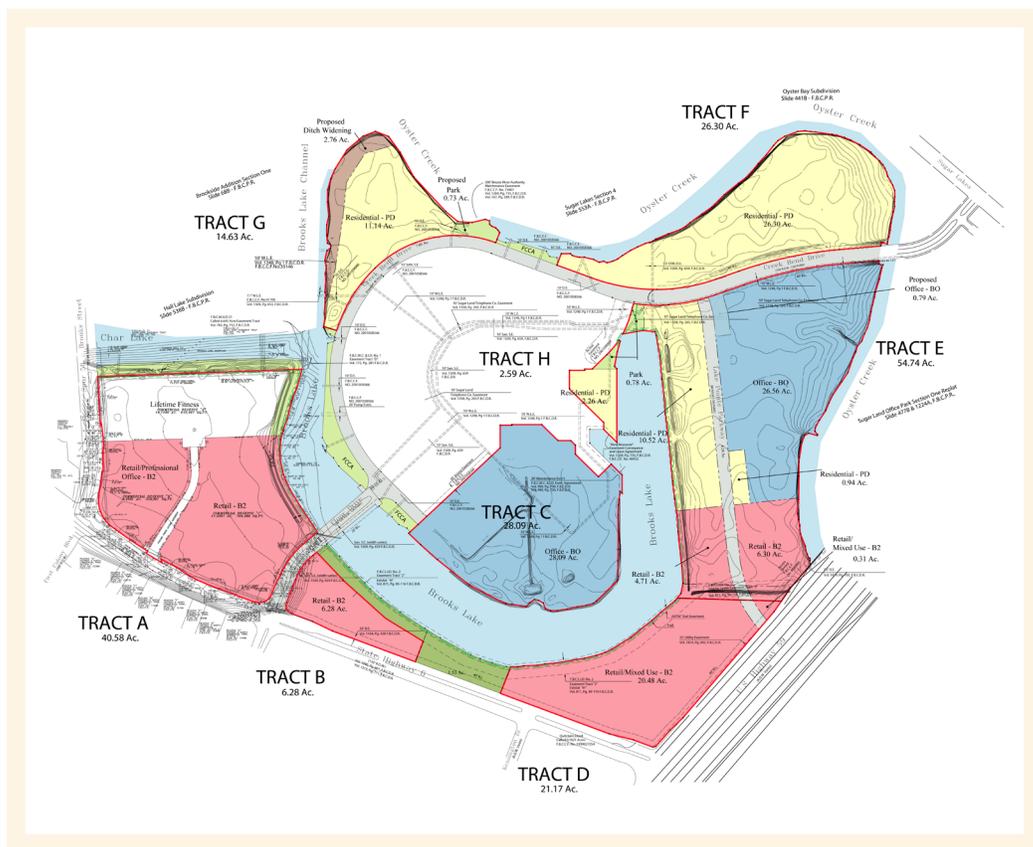


Figure 20. Lake Pointe Town Center General Plan (2004, Revised 2011)



## A. LAND DEVELOPMENT

### Major Developments

Most of the remaining larger tracts of land within the City limits are developing as master-planned communities. Lake Pointe Town Center and Telfair are currently under construction and offer a variety of housing and land uses as well as typical suburban residential development. The Imperial redevelopment projects going through the development and zoning approval process. The Central Prison Unit closed in 2011, is zoned for M-1 Restricted Industrial land uses, and provides one of the last large-scale, commercial and industrial development opportunities within the City limits. In the ETJ, the development of Riverstone is underway.

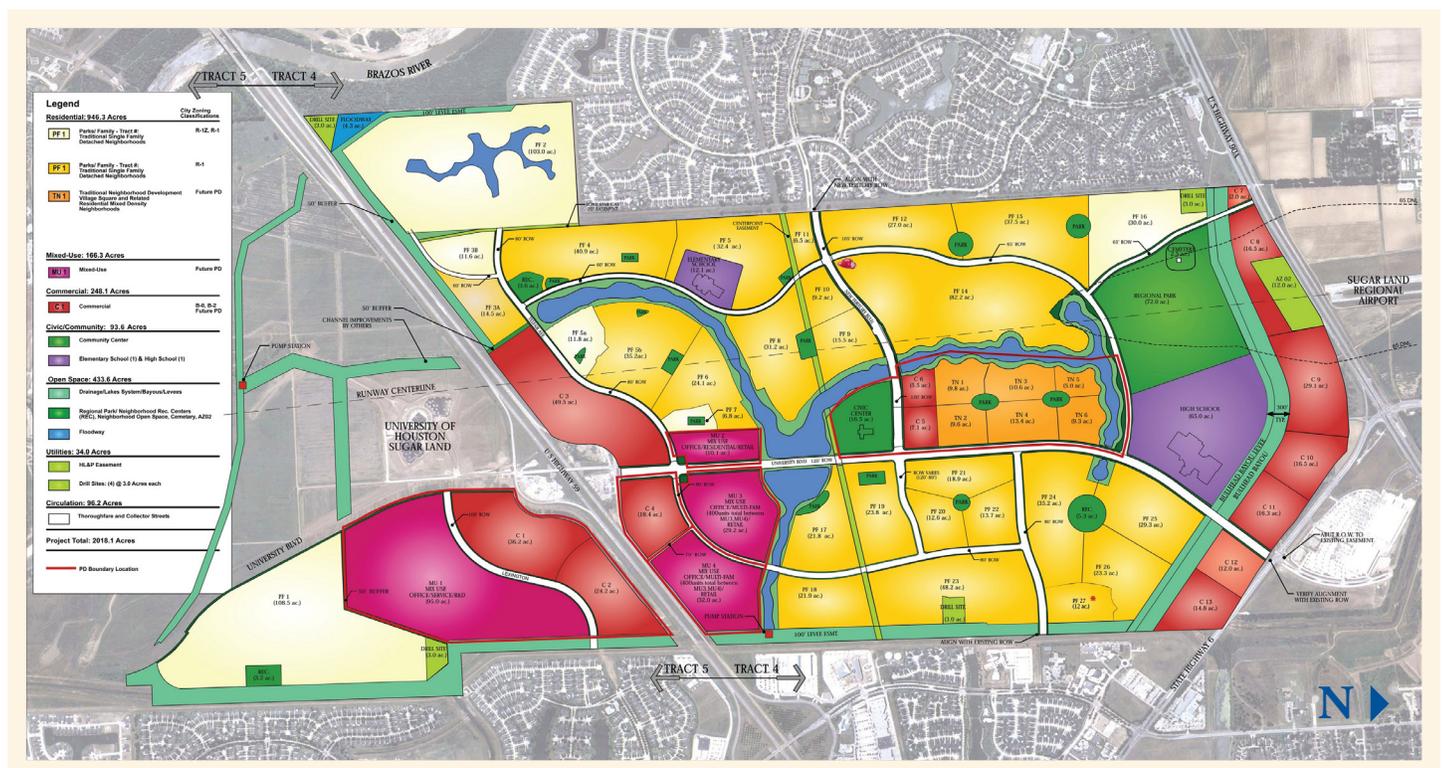
**Lake Pointe Town Center** is located northeast of U.S. 59 and State Highway 6 in an area formerly known as the Fluor campus that circles the Brooks Lake portion of Oyster Creek. Created as a custom-zoned, Planned Development of nearly 200 acres, this area includes mixed residential, office, retail, medical and recreational uses (see **Figure 20**). The area is designed as a waterfront urban village. Portions of the development are gated communities with urban densities of patio homes, villas, townhomes, and condominiums, all within close proximity to retail services, restaurants, hospital and medical offices, and business offices. Construction began in late 2005. By 2011, the majority of the acreage planned for commercial and office uses is developed with only a few remaining tracts either vacant or currently under construction.

**Telfair** (formerly State Prison Farm Tracts 4 & 5) is located to the north and south of U.S. 59 near University Boulevard. The 2,020 acres of vacant land were annexed into the City in July of 2004 in accordance with an executed development agreement between Newland Communities and the City of Sugar Land. Under the Telfair General Plan, approximately 950 acres are a mix of residential living units including traditional single-family homes, waterfront lots, and multi-family living units (see **Figure 21**). This development includes a civic center, elementary school, extensive trail and lake/detention system, retail and commercial space, the Houston Museum of Natural Science at Sugar Land, and the City's Fire Station No. 7. The development also accommodates the potential for a future high school and a future City regional park. In 2012, City Council approved Resolution 12-02 authorizing the purchase of approximately 63 acres of land for a future park. Since beginning construction in 2006, the majority of the Tract 4 area (north of U.S. 59) is complete in terms of residential development, while the commercial areas have just started to develop. Development within the residential portions of Tract 5 (south of U.S. 59) is underway.

The **Imperial / Tract 3** development contains 716 acres located north of U.S. 90A and east of S.H. 6 and includes the former Imperial Sugar Company refinery site and approximately 600 acres of state-owned property referred to as Tract 3. City Council approved a general plan in June 2007 which includes a mix of residential, commercial and office acreage, open and recreational spaces, as well as redevelopment of the refinery site into a mixed-use development including multi-family housing. In March 2010, the developer initiated the zoning process and submitted an application for a Planned Development District. In April 2012, the developer received approval on an amendment to the 2007 general plan that includes multi-family residential units near Constellation Field and a business park located centrally on Tract 3 (see **Figure 22**, page 40). Construction of the initial infrastructure including major roads is complete, and the baseball stadium opened in April 2012.



**Figure 21.**  
Telfair General Plan (2003, Revised 2011)









gathering place for residents, and Sugar Land City Hall. The development has created a vibrant community focal point and core.

In 2008, **First Colony Mall** completed an expansion. The expansion included the addition of several restaurants, retail shops, and structured parking. The ‘lifestyle’ center concept features an outdoor pedestrian corridor lined with shops and restaurants. The Mall first opened in 1996.

In addition to the aforementioned development sites, there are many smaller infill development and redevelopment sites. For example, the intersection of **U.S. 59 at Sweetwater Boulevard** is now developing. The land has been reverted from its previous use as TXDOT right-of-way and is currently developing as a mix of commercial uses including retail, restaurant, and office spaces.

The **Sugar Land Business Park** is a 902-acre deed-restricted business park that is an ideal location for a variety of office, research and development, manufacturing, high tech, and distribution applications. The area is nearly built out and the City is looking for new opportunities for more commercial office and light industrial activities.

Sugar Land features several major healthcare facilities including Memorial Hermann, St. Luke’s, and Methodist hospitals as well as a Kelsey-Seybold Clinic. Several facilities recently completed expansions. Accessory medical office buildings are developing on available sites near existing healthcare facilities.



## Visioning Task Force

In May 2007, City Council appointed a 25-member citizen task force to develop a vision statement for the largest and most central area of undeveloped land within Sugar Land in proximity to U.S. 59 at University Boulevard. The visioning task force created the vision statement, as shown in **Figure 24**, and helped identify a need for additional cultural and entertainment venues for the City. These were the cumulative result of more than a decade of citizen surveys, parks master plans,

Figure 24. Visioning Statement, 2007 Visioning Task Force



## VISIONING STATEMENT (2007)

This land presents a unique opportunity for collaboration between public & private entities to create an integrated mixed-use urban destination. The development should reflect distinctive architectural character & promote a pedestrian feel in a multi-modal environment.

It is envisioned to be a place to live, work, learn, play & visit. This should be a regional employment center with a wide variety of recreational, educational, & entertainment venues for everyone including performing & cultural arts & sports facilities, as well as a conference center with full service hotel amenities.

Nature, open space & water help define the development. The plan should also ensure connectivity to other key locations throughout the City.

City Comprehensive Plans and Economic Development plans in combination with the citizen task force. The combined input identifies five specific venues to be developed by or on behalf of the City. Specific elements identified were a professional minor league baseball stadium, indoor concert venue, festival site, full-service hotel and convention center, and a cultural arts facility.

In June 2008, City Council reconstituted the visioning task force to review proposed funding tools. The reconstituted task force recommended City Council proceed with four ballot propositions in the November 2008 election. Voters approved the ballot propositions to utilize funds from the Sugar Land Type A Corporation and venue taxes to fund the development of three specific venues: minor league ball park, indoor concert venue, and festival site.

## Development Factors

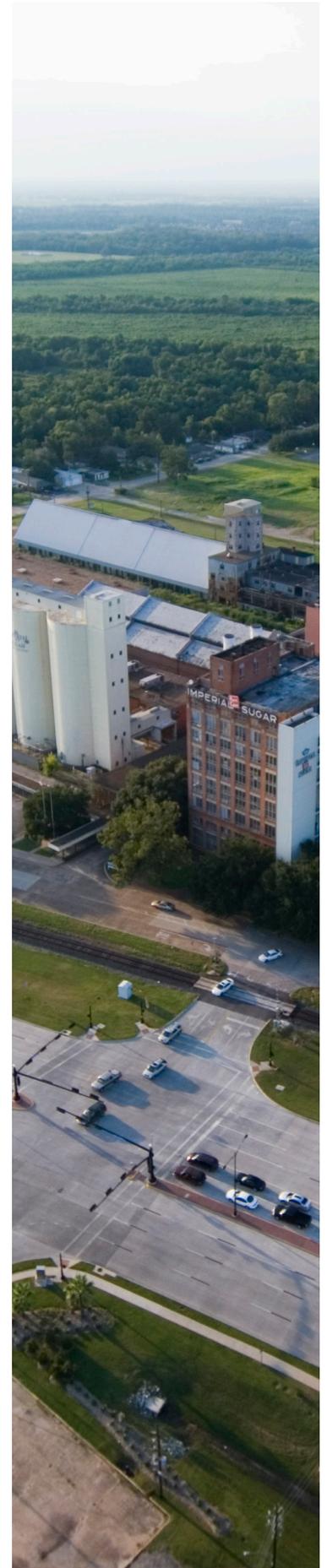
Several factors may influence the development and growth in Sugar Land in the future:

- **Development of vacant residential land** within the City limits will increase the population to 95,313 people by 2020.
- **Full build out of residential land** within the January 2012 City limits will likely occur by 2025. At full build out, population increases may require new development patterns to accommodate a larger variety of housing opportunities.
- **Redevelopment** may become more commonplace as the region becomes more densely developed. The economics of such redevelopment may drive commercial redevelopment to occur at a higher density with a mix of uses.
- **Areas south of the Brazos River** will likely experience increased development pressures because of limited development opportunities north of the River. The City's Future Land Use Plan (2012) designates this area primarily as large residential estate lots. The relatively limited access via F.M. 2759 will limit the speed and types of development feasible in this area.

## B. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of analyzing the employment of the City, and the basic industries which provide that employment, is to evaluate the present economic conditions of Sugar Land and to establish the course of action necessary to ensure the long-term economic health of the City. City Council adopted an Economic Development Plan in 2011 to identify measures necessary to improve Sugar Land's local economy. This guiding document should serve as a reference for related development programs and economic activity to promote balanced land use in support of a diverse economy within the City.

Economic development and the associated sales and property tax revenues arising from it are important because the revenue supports public goods and services, and these goods and services in turn support basic industries and commerce that drive future development. These industries and commerce provide new jobs, which in turn supports residential development. The actions the City takes to enhance its economic base are critical to a sound future.



Land Use by Area Sugar Land, Texas: 2004, 2011		
Land Use	2004	2011
Residential	74%	71%
Commercial	17%	16%
Industrial	9%	13%

Source: 2004, 2011 Land Use Inventory Survey

**Table 11.**  
Land Use by Area,  
Sugar Land, Texas: 2004, 2011

	Employment by Occupation, Sugar Land, Texas: 2010				
	United States	Texas	Houston	Fort Bend	Sugar Land
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	35.3%	33.7%	31.8%	45.7%	56.9%
Service Occupations	17.1%	16.9%	18.5%	12.4%	8.5%
Sales and office occupations	25.4%	25.7%	23.8%	26.6%	26.1%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	9.8%	11.6%	13.1%	7.1%	3.1%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	12.4%	12.1%	12.9%	8.3%	5.4%

Source: 2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**Table 12.**  
Employment by Occupation,  
Sugar Land, Texas: 2010

**Table 11** highlights the percentage of land uses in the City from 2004 to 2011. Since 2004, the land use make-up of developed land has not changed significantly. While the industrial land use category increased, the overall breakdown of the City is still predominantly residential. The total commercial and industrial land uses, which are the employment and commercial base, makes up 29% of the City's land area. While commercial land uses make up a smaller portion of the City's land area, commercial properties bring in a higher tax value than residential properties. In 2011, the residential value after exemptions was 64% even though residential properties made up 71% of City's land area. Commercial property taxes were 36% of total revenues, demonstrating that commercial properties provide more tax value than their proportion of land area (29%) in the City.

### Employment and Industry Base

While historically Sugar Land grew from a manufacturing company town, today employment by occupation is based primarily in management, business, science, and arts occupations (see **Table 12**). Sales and office occupations (26.1%) make up the second largest group of occupations for Sugar Land residents, followed by service occupations (8.5%). A larger portion of Sugar Land residents are employed in management, business, science and arts occupations than in Fort Bend County, Texas, and the U.S.

The industrial sector makes up a smaller sector of the economy and includes a wide range of industries including energy and natural resources, electronics, and biotechnology services. These high-growth industries will continue to provide Sugar Land with local employment opportunities. Sugar Land's low tax structure, high quality of life, strong workforce and business incentives have

attracted numerous high-profile regional and international corporate relocations in a variety of industries. Major companies in Sugar Land include Fairfield Nodal, Fluor Corporation, Imperial Sugar Company, Minute Maid, Nalco, Schlumberger, Tramountina USA, Inc., Bechtel Equipment, Atos, Inc. Thermo Scientific, Sunoco Logistics, and many others.

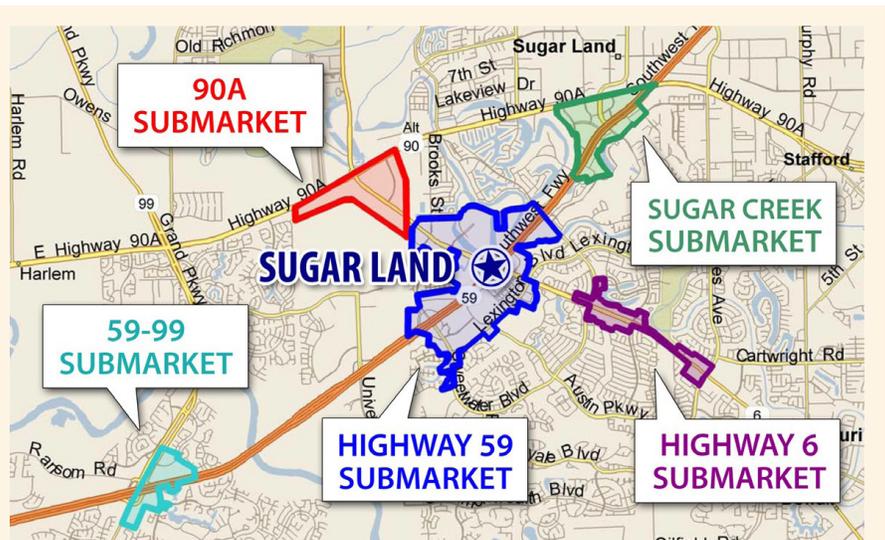
Over the last 30 years, the employment characteristics of Sugar Land residents have changed significantly. **Table 13** shows that in 1980 the largest group of residents was employed in manufacturing industries and by 2010 this shifted to educational, health, and social services. From 2000 to 2010, there was a significant increase in employment in the category of public administration and arts, entertainment, recreation and accommodation followed by professional, management, administrative services. The largest declines in occupation categories occurred in information, wholesale trade and construction industries. Employment characteristics are increasingly leaning toward professional occupations (see **Figure 25**, page 46).

Sugar Land has more than 22 million square feet of commercial real estate, including 7.4 million square feet of industrial space, according to 2011 CoStar Group data. Some industrial spaces are still available in the Sugar Land Business Park. There are over 7.4 million square feet of office space primarily located along major transportation corridors and near retail centers. There are also 7.6 million square feet of retail space in the city. According to the 2010 Commercial Development Strategy and Retail Analysis, there are five district retail submarkets in Sugar Land: Sugar Creek, 59/99, Highway 59, 90A, and Highway 6. **Figure 26** shows these submarkets, which are commercial destinations for consumers from across the region.

Shifts in Employment by Industry, Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010				
	1980	1990	2000	2010
Agriculture and Mining	7.7%	6.7%	4.5%	4.8%
Construction	9.1%	6.4%	4.7%	4.0%
Manufacturing	24.1%	11.9%	11.0%	10.3%
Wholesale Trade	5.7%	6.9%	5.4%	4.5%
Retail Trade	10.6%	12.8%	11.2%	10.7%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	6.5%	5.7%	4.2%	4.2%
Information	N/A	N/A	2.5%	1.9%
Finance, insurance, real estate, & leasing	7.9%	9.0%	8.9%	8.9%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste services	NA	3.3%	14.9%	16.9%
Educational, health, and social services	12.3%	16.7%	21.4%	21.1%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	8.5%	8.7%	4.9%	5.9%
Other	5.6%	9.4%	3.9%	3.8%
Public administration	2.0%	2.6%	2.4%	3.2%

Source: 1980, 1990, and 2000 U.S. Census; 2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

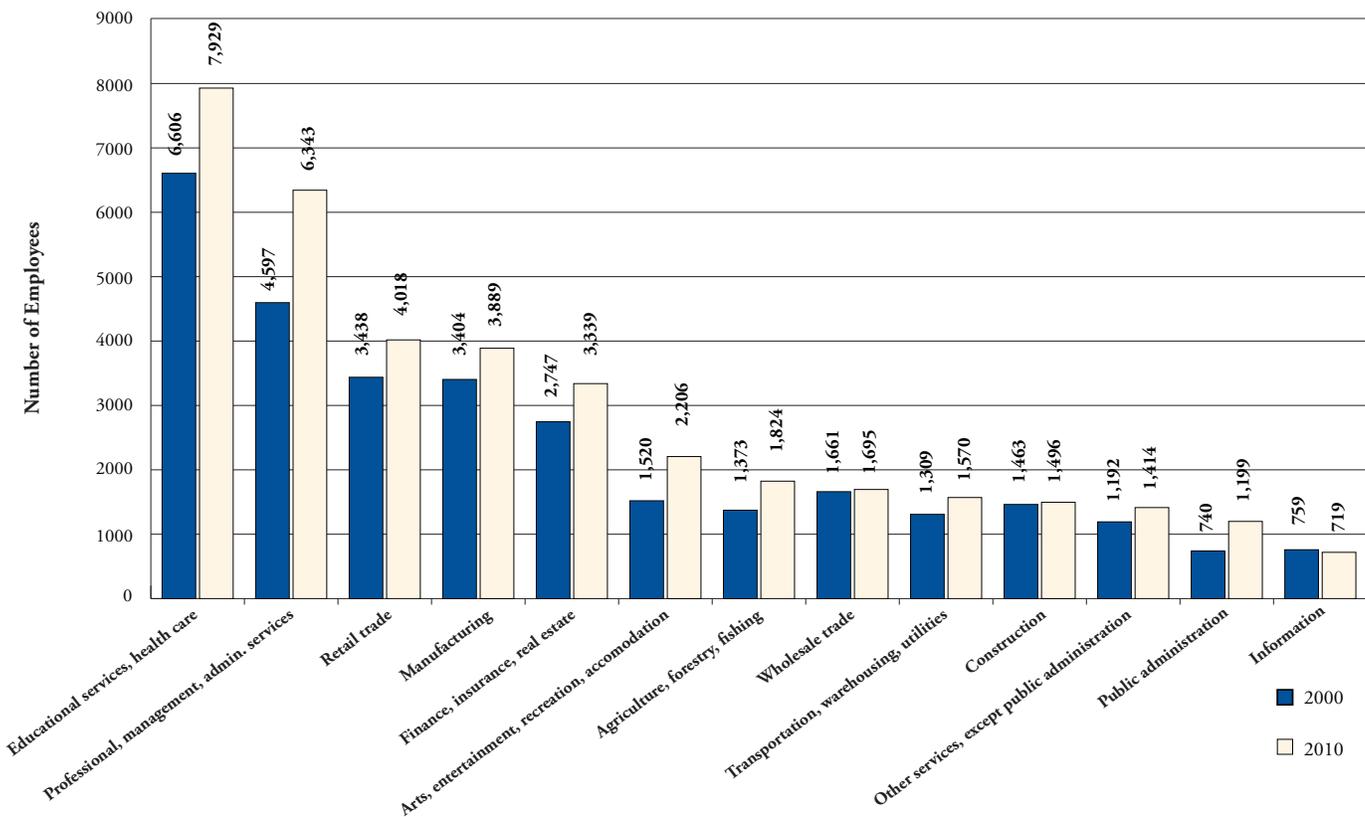
**Table 13.**  
Shifts in Employment by Industry  
(employed persons 16 years and older),  
Sugar Land, Texas: 1980 – 2010



Source: Commercial Development Strategy and Retail Analysis, The Retail Coach, 2010

**Figure 26.**  
Sugar Land Submarkets  
(The Retail Coach, 2010)

## Occupations, Sugar Land, Texas: 2000 – 2010



*Source: 2000 U.S. Census; 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*

**Figure 25.**  
Occupations,  
Sugar Land, Texas: 2000 – 2010

### Characteristics of the Economy and the City

Sugar Land is increasingly its own employment center. The attraction of a significant job base to Sugar Land represents a shift from the past when the City was often characterized as a residential community for high-income families working in the Houston area but seeking a more suburban community. Sugar Land’s income base and highly educated professional population, in combination with office and industrial site opportunities, have ensured strong economic development.

In Sugar Land, there exists a diverse and healthy business mix, ranging from a strong medical cluster, insurance and finance firms to light manufacturing and headquarter operations. New retail development within Sugar Land has increased the sales tax revenue significantly over the past 10 years. In 2001, Sugar Land’s total taxable retail sales were estimated at \$21 million. By 2011, sales tax rose to \$40 million, nearly doubling revenues from ten years previous. Unemployment in Sugar Land has typically been lower than county, regional, state, and national averages.

## Implications for the Future

The implications for future growth and development of the City as a result of the trends in employment and commerce are as follows:

- **To attract emerging businesses and residents**, the City must continue to enhance its quality of life through maintenance of its infrastructure, rational land use planning, and providing a full range of City services.
- **Educational attainment** for Sugar Land residents is significantly higher than other areas in the Houston region. Providing quality educational opportunities for all ages is important to the continual attraction of new residents and businesses.
- **Sugar Land has limited vacant land** available for additional commercial uses. To maintain a balance of land uses, the City may prioritize commercial development on vacant or undeveloped land.
- With the limitation of available land for new development, **the redevelopment of commercial and residential properties** may become more prevalent.

## C. DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

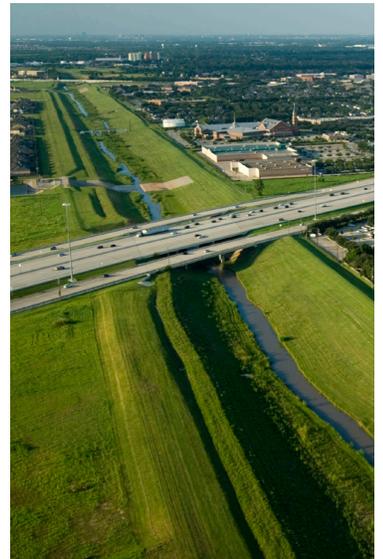
There are a number of significant manmade and natural constraints that will affect development in Sugar Land. Among these are flood plains, rivers, railroads, freeways, and the existing developments and plans of the adjoining cities. Some of these are addressed below.

### Soil Conditions

Soils in Sugar Land are similar to those found throughout the region, with a high clay content exhibiting high shrink-swell characteristics. However, this does not pose significant limitations on development if proper engineering is used to overcome the potential problems. Additionally, subsidence from the use of groundwater poses a challenge. This challenge is addressed through the City's Groundwater Reduction Plan that aims to increase use of surface water and reduce the City's dependence on groundwater.

### Traffic

The City's primary mode of transportation is the individual automobile. As the City builds out and redevelops, traffic demands will likely increase. Road capacity may present limitations to accommodating growth. The City has two plans that provide direction on how to address the growing challenges of traffic congestion. First, the Comprehensive Mobility Plan identifies improvements and programs that will contribute to providing superior mobility throughout the City. The Comprehensive Mobility Plan recommended utilizing a multi-modal approach, including improvements to roadways, transit systems, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The



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The railway is an important economic development asset for long-term job growth, but presents mobility and quality of life challenges as well.

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**Figure 27.**  
Wayside horns reduce train noise in adjacent neighborhoods.

Thoroughfare Plan also prepares the City for growth by proposing future roadways and expansions of existing roads.

### Flood Plains and River Conservation

Sugar Land lies within the Brazos River basin and a large part of the ETJ lies within the Brazos River floodway or the 100-year flood plain. Most of the developed area in the City and ETJ is reclaimed floodplain and is protected from flooding by levees. In 2004, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) initiated a nationwide Flood Map Modernization program, remapping floodways and flood plains. FEMA released the updated maps to Sugar Land in a preliminary format in 2009. The results showed a significant amount of the City and ETJ, even some areas within existing levees, were now in the 100-year flood plain. This subsequently led to a FEMA mandate for the recertification of all existing levees. The levee districts, working in coordination with the City complied with this requirement. The City has also updated and established policies on limitations on development in flood plain areas.

Oyster Creek represented a significant barrier to development prior to the formation of the Fort Bend County Drainage District by the State Legislature in 1949, which designated the Fort Bend County Commissioners Court as the District's governing body. Now, Oyster Creek is largely controlled. The City's Parks Master Plan includes plans for Oyster Creek to become a significant greenbelt and linear park.

### Railroads

The Union Pacific Railroad's "Glidden Subdivision," running parallel to U.S. 90A, provides Sugar Land with direct freight service to the Sugar Land Business Park. The railway

is an important economic development asset for long-term job growth, but presents mobility and quality of life challenges as well. AMTRAK passenger service also passes through the City. In 2004, the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) studied the feasibility of commuter rail along the U.S. 90A corridor between Houston and Rosenberg and determined that commuter rail is feasible. The City has optimized traffic signal timing along the US90A corridor to minimize delays from passing trains.

In 2008, the City completed a project with the Federal Railroad Administration, TxDOT, and Union Pacific Railroad to implement a system of “wayside horns” through the City. The system includes wayside horns at 10 crossings along U.S. 90A from Dairy Ashford through the private Nalco driveway. These stationary horns, shown in **Figure 27**, substitute for the train horns and are aimed down the roadway and blow at City-monitored volumes and durations, thus reducing train noise in adjacent neighborhoods. The City subsequently established a “quiet zone” at the S.H. 6 frontage road crossings, eliminating routine sounding of train horns at that location as well.

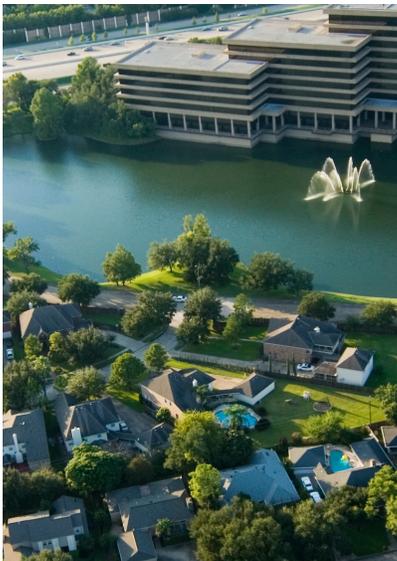
## Sugar Land Regional Airport

The Sugar Land Regional Airport is a City-owned facility serving corporate and general aviation. It enhances economic development potential for the City and its operations are entirely self-sufficient. However, the presence of the airport has impacts on nearby property as well. One impact is the need to prevent airport hazards, which include any structure or use of land which obstructs the airspace or which interferes with the landing, takeoff and flight of aircraft. Another impact is aircraft noise. Noise-sensitive land uses can include, for example, residential development, schools, hospitals, churches, and nursing homes. The City of Sugar Land Development Code contains airport zoning provisions to regulate building heights and land uses near the airport property.

The City of Sugar Land has an aviation easement for areas around the airport that may be affected by airport operations. An aviation easement grants aircrafts the right to fly, land, or take off in unobstructed airspace above a parcel of real property. The easement prohibits the property owner from installing structures that exceed a specified height and allows for noise and dust that may be generated by aircrafts. The easement is recorded on plat notes and revealed in property title searches to inform property owners of the permitted conditions and development restrictions on those properties surrounding the airport.

Resolution 12-02 authorized the City to purchase approximately 63 acres of land located in the Crossing at Telfair area for future use as a City park. This property is located within an airport aviation easement that provides notice to existing and future property owners that the Sugar Land Airport has rights over the land. Resolution 12-02 also authorized the purchase of approximately 12 acres of land zoned AZ-02, located south of U.S. 90A in the direct airport flight path. City ownership of the AZ-02-zoned property provides added protection of airport operations.





# CHAPTER 5

## Vision, Goals, and Objectives

### A. INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Plan establishes the long-term goals for the community through a vision statement and guiding goals and objectives. The City of Sugar Land’s vision statement has eleven (11) value-based goals that highlight key areas for the City’s future (Goals A – K). Each goal includes objectives that more specifically describe their intent. The following is the City’s vision statement, originally from Vision 2025 and Guiding Principles:

**Sugar Land 2025 is a SAFE,<sup>(A)</sup> BEAUTIFUL,<sup>(B)</sup> INCLUSIVE<sup>(C)</sup> and ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITY.<sup>(D)</sup>**

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**Sugar Land 2025 has DESTINATION ACTIVITY CENTERS,<sup>(E)</sup> GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS,<sup>(F)</sup> SUPERIOR MOBILITY,<sup>(G)</sup> OUTSTANDING CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES,<sup>(H)</sup> and is a REGIONAL BUSINESS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.<sup>(I)</sup>**

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**Sugar Land 2025 has BALANCED DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT.<sup>(J)</sup>**

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**The COMMUNITY TAKES PRIDE IN SUGAR LAND.<sup>(K)</sup>**

### B. DEFINITION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

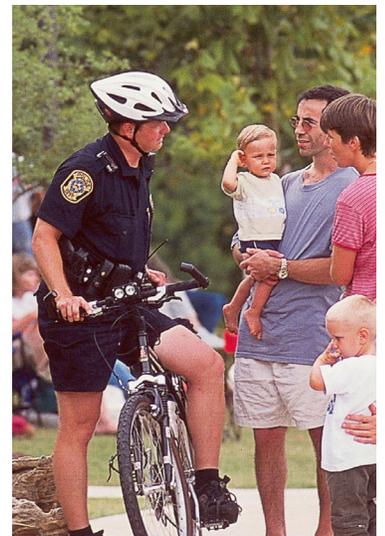
**Goals** are broad statements of a qualitative nature that provide a general vision and guide. They endure over time and are statements that allow a significant amount of flexibility in policy and actions. Because they are principally related to broad issues, goals can allow for many implementation approaches; however, goals imply a commitment to work toward this common purpose.

**Objectives** are more specific elements that together provide a description of how to achieve a goal. Objectives are still broad descriptions of a preferred outcome, but are specific enough such that they may be used to develop strategies useful for achieving their respective goal.

# Goal A: Safe Community

## Objectives

1. Safest city in the United States
2. People feeling safe, secure and comfortable at home, in the neighborhood, at the parks, in commercial areas, and throughout the community
3. Informed citizens participating in and taking responsibility for community safety and emergency preparedness
4. Rapid, professional and coordinated response to an emergency call for service
5. City prepared for all hazards, disaster and post disaster recovery including coordination with local, regional and state resources
6. Health and building codes promoting highest reasonable standards for safety
7. Adequate supply of safe drinking water meeting national and state standards



# Goal B: Beautiful Community

## Objectives

1. Attractive, well-designed and well-maintained public buildings, streetscapes incorporating gateways, public spaces and public art throughout the city
2. Attractive, well-designed and well-maintained commercial areas and buildings, including beautiful landscapes, and appropriate signage
3. Attractive, well-maintained homes
4. Clean, well-maintained, attractive lakes and waterways, both public and private



# Goal C: Inclusive Community

## Objectives

1. Celebrating America, such as: 4th of July, Veteran's Day, Memorial Day, flying the flag
2. Community respecting and celebrating the history and heritage of Sugar Land, Texas, Fort Bend County, and the United States of America
3. All family generations and cultures feeling welcome and having fun
4. Celebrating and respecting the unique international and inter-cultural community that we have become
5. Residents informed, actively involved and participating in community and civic affairs





# Goal D: Environmentally Responsible Community

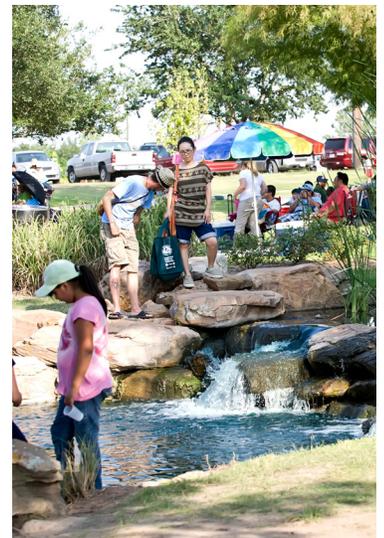
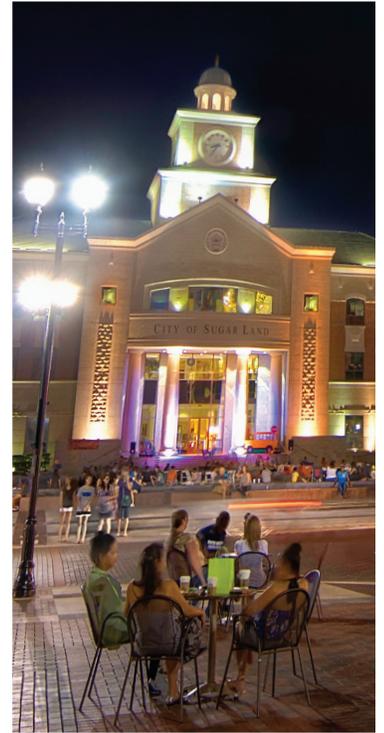
## Objectives

1. City as a leader – model for standards, processes and operations
2. Open green spaces throughout the city
3. Effective stormwater management and drainage system enhancing quality of surface water and protecting neighborhoods
4. Quality wastewater treatment system
5. Water conservation
6. Reduced energy consumption and increased use of renewable resources
7. Convenient, easy, state-of-the-art recycling system with options and incentives
8. Developments, redevelopments and buildings incorporating the concepts of environmental sustainability
9. Improved air quality
10. Reasonable approach and balance with a “return on investments” – economic and/or community benefit

# Goal E: Destination Activity Centers

## Objectives

1. Each destination activity center having positive image and reputation – a sense of place
2. Variety of unique quality features that define each destination activity center
3. Pedestrian-friendly activity centers connected by alternative transportation modes and trails
4. Major community focal points and regional destinations, such as: Town Center, Brazos River Park, Entertainment District and “Imperial” Area
5. Public open space and parks for people to gather and enjoy; neighborhood to use; and to conduct community events
6. Cultural and entertainment events making Sugar Land a regional destination





# Goal F: Great Neighborhoods

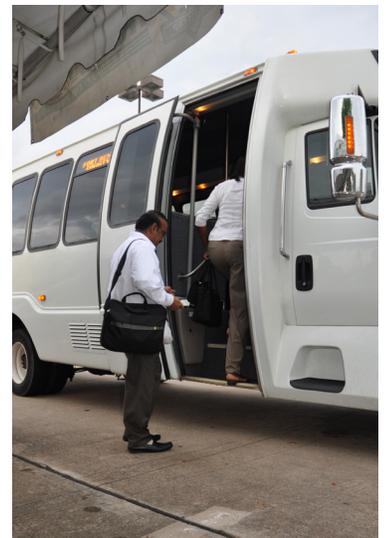
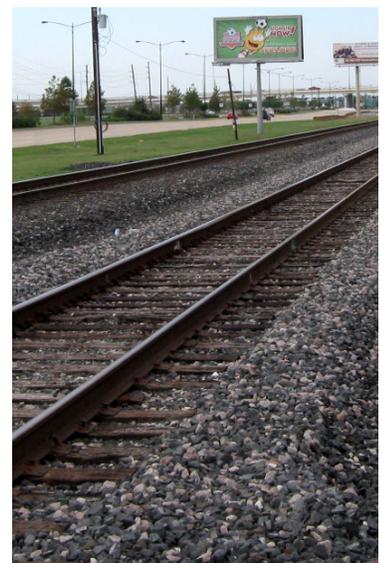
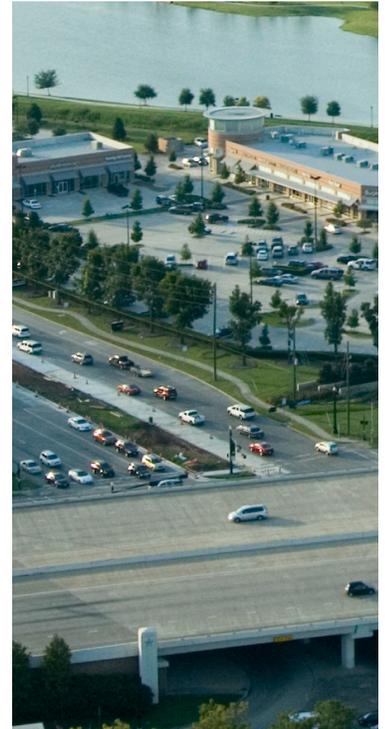
## Objectives

1. Strong neighborhood identity and pride
2. Renovated, modernized and well-maintained older housing stock
3. High percentage of owner occupied homes
4. Well-maintained, replaced and up to date neighborhood infrastructure: streets, utilities, sidewalks, street lights and drainage
5. Strong, effective home owner and neighborhood associations maintaining and investing in community common areas, streetscapes and public spaces
6. Maintaining quality neighborhoods buffered from or blended with adjacent commercial areas and non-residential land uses
7. Residents involved in and taking responsibility for making the neighborhood a great place to live and call home
8. Top quality community and neighborhood parks with active and passive areas

# Goal G: Superior Mobility

## Objectives

1. Effective traffic management facilitating predictable, acceptable travel times within Sugar Land
2. Effective intra-city public transportation system linking activity centers: trolley, electric bus, monorail
3. North/south mobility with several corridors
4. Interstate and U.S. highways efficiently moving traffic through and to/from Sugar Land (U.S. 59, Highway 6, 90A)
5. Major corporate airport for businesses and general aviation
6. Commuter transit serving to link Sugar Land to the Greater Houston Metro Area and Fort Bend County / Southwest
7. Pedestrian-friendly community with multi use trails network for bikes and pedestrians connecting neighborhoods and the community
8. Well-designed, well-maintained streets, sidewalks and multi- use trails
9. Relocation of freight rail through traffic





## Goal H: Outstanding Cultural Arts, Educational and Recreational Opportunities

### Objectives

1. Brazos River Park as a regional destination with water-based activities on the river and lakes; hike and bike trails; innovative, unique venues and activities
2. Variety of cultural art opportunities, programs and venues serving as regional destinations
3. Public art throughout the city
4. Major museums having educational significance
5. Performing Arts Center (large community and small venues) for theater, concerts and entertainment serving as a regional destination
6. Regional, family oriented, professional sports venue
7. Major university campus serving residents, non-residents, and businesses with full range of undergraduate, graduate and post graduate programs
8. Strong relationship and partnership between City of Sugar Land, schools, colleges, and universities
9. Recreational programs serving the community

# Goal I: Regional Business Center of Excellence

## Objectives

1. Targeted national and international businesses as defined in the Economic Development Plan
2. State of the art, world class infrastructure and technology to support local businesses
3. Business-friendly environment and reputation
4. Quality jobs at or above the average income in the community
5. Tract II and the Central Prison Unit property developed as major business park. Commercial areas near U.S. 59 at University Boulevard developed with a Class A office component.
6. Full service convention and conference center targeting the best second tier market
7. Major regional state-of-the-art medical and health services center serving the southwest area
8. Multiple, high-quality, full and limited service hotels for business travelers and visitors
9. Unique, “upscale” retail with upgraded products



# Goal J: Balanced Development and Redevelopment

## Objectives

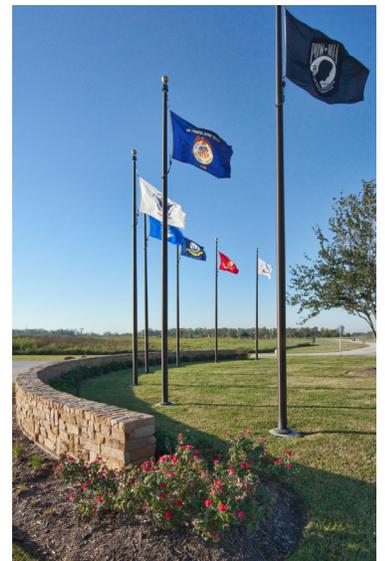
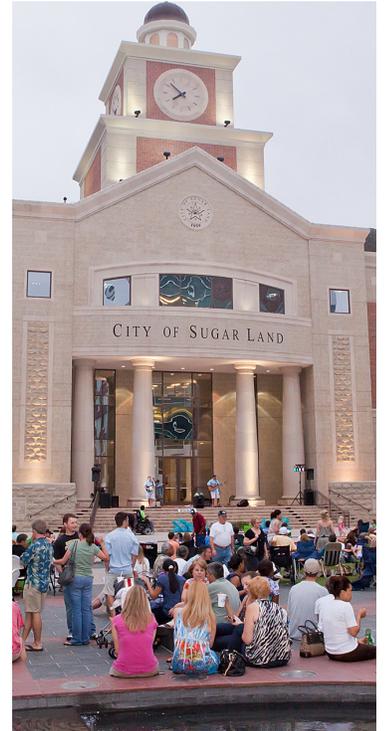
1. Balanced land use (70% residential/no less than 30% commercial, retail, office) and tax base (60% residential / 40% commercial, retail, office) within city
2. Well-designed, well-maintained city infrastructure and facilities throughout the city
3. Innovative designs meeting city's development standards and adding value to the surrounding neighborhoods
4. New developments and redevelopments consistent with city vision, comprehensive plan, policies and standards
5. Upgrading or reusing older commercial areas and commercial strip centers
6. Redevelopment uses that are appropriate for different locations and proactive city policies to assist
7. Redevelopment of historic structures into creative uses to showcase the city's history
8. High-quality and well-maintained housing stock throughout the city
9. Mixed-use developments with commercial and multi-family residential elements



# Goal K: Community Pride in Sugar Land

## Objectives

1. City working in partnership with residents, community organizations, businesses and other government entities
2. People want to live here, businesses want to invest here
3. Successful community events and celebrations bringing people together
4. Being “A Community of Excellence” and recognized as such
5. Residents engaged in civic and community affairs
6. Businesses and residents volunteering and contributing to the Sugar Land community
7. Strong community organizations, charitable organizations and institutions
8. City leadership facilitating and being a catalyst for community pride
9. City demonstrating sound financial management practices and policies including cost-effective service delivery
10. Comprehensive Plan and associated master plans guide City decision making
11. Transparent and ethical decision-making process by City officials





# CHAPTER 6

## The Land Use Plan



**NOTE: PLEASE SEE CHAPTER 6 OF THE 2005 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AVAILABLE ONLINE AT [WWW.SUGARLANDTX.GOV](http://WWW.SUGARLANDTX.GOV). CHAPTER 6 IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE 2012 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE. THIS CHAPTER WILL BE UPDATED AT A LATER DATE.**

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## CITY OF SUGAR LAND

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