

City of
Dickinson
Texas

Comprehensive Plan



ADOPTED
May 9th 2023

Implementation



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Implementation

The Dickinson Comprehensive Plan sets out a preferred vision to guide Dickinson's growth in its future. With this vision established, the community must mobilize its resources to make the vision and goals both enduring and effective. The preceding chapters of the plan discuss how to accomplish the desired goals, strategies, and actions; this chapter establishes the City's top priorities and responsibilities for advancing them to fruition. It is through the process of implementation that actions get translated into specific programs, projects, and policies.

Introduction

Following the adoption of this plan, Dickinson's elected and appointed officials and City staff will assume the primary roles of implementation and benchmarking. With this understanding, it is important that the primary administrators of this plan understand their roles in future review and decision-making, considering amendments and updates, and tracking progress to ensure the plan remains current and relevant. The ultimate plan outcomes will require a community-wide effort with support from regional stakeholders. This chapter provides guidance for the City of Dickinson during the implementation of this plan.

Roles

During the development of this Comprehensive Plan, the community's desires and input determined the vision and plan direction. In the future, the Dickinson community will continue to be called on to ensure the goals and strategies are achieved and managed. Guiding this effort begins from within the municipality and includes the City's elected and appointed officials and City staff. Each will assume a critical role, including making decisions on implementation actions, budgeting, integration of this Comprehensive Plan into refined sub-plans and master plans, codes and processes. Perhaps most important, however is the role of educating and facilitating partnerships with the citizens and community builders.

City Council

Dickinson's City Council are the stewards of this Plan's vision. Through providing strategic direction, annual budgeting considerations, and additional policy-related decision making, the City Council confirms or adjusts annual priorities of the City, including the actions identified in this Plan. The City Council is directly accountable to the citizens and stakeholders of Dickinson and are responsible for keeping the focus on the need and function of this long-term Plan, even as the plan horizon is likely to exceed their term of public service. If needed, City Council can provide specific direction to the Planning and Zoning Commission, other boards, and City staff.

Planning & Zoning Commission

The Planning & Zoning Commission is designated as an advisory board to the City Council and tasked with making recommendations related to development and redevelopment within the City. The Planning & Zoning Commission should assume an ownership role as they are the board that ensures that development is consistent with the vision, goals, objectives, actions, and policies of this Plan. Actions can include preparing a periodic progress report with the help of City staff and reviewing goals to evaluate consistency with the Plan's vision.

Additional Boards and Commissions

Various other boards and commissions are tasked with advising City Council on various topics ranging from building standards, to hazard mitigation, and public safety. The City's boards and commissions may consult the applicable sections of this Plan to ensure that their current and future activities remain consistent with overall community goals and objectives.

City Staff

As the executive branch of City government, City staff and its leadership are the technical experts primarily responsible for administering this Plan. To varying degrees, several City departments (e.g., Planning, Public Works, etc.) have long-term work programs which are vital to the success of this Plan and should ensure that their annual work programs and budgets are reflective of the vision established by the community.

In particular, the **Dickinson Planning & Development Department** will serve a primary function in the daily administration of this Plan. This includes the coordination, monitoring, education, reporting and interpretation of various plan elements. Activity can include potential amendments and ongoing updates, which represent a team effort across multiple departments to ensure consistency of plan application and consideration of a variety of impacts. The City Manager's office is also crucial in providing direction to the various departments involved in the Work Program and ensuring responsiveness to the Plan actions. The City Manager's Office will also have a direct role in ongoing education of the City Council regarding the Comprehensive Plan directives and maintaining alignment between the Council's priorities and these planning documents.

Development Process

To ensure that Dickinson's future development aligns with the vision set forth in this Plan, City staff and elected and appointed officials should use the following plan elements: goals, strategies, and actions to guide daily decision-making. There will likely be many occasions when this Plan's directives require interpretation, adaptation, and flexibility, such analysis for decisions should be thorough and strategic. These circumstances should be thoughtfully approached and evaluated based on compliance and implementation with the Plan vision, goals, strategies, and actions in The Future City Report.

Decision Making Criteria

Particularly as it pertains to physical plans such as the Future Land Use Map and Thoroughfare Plan, staff and decision-makers in the development process will make daily determinations interpreting the guiding direction and principles. During the development process, proposals will often be considered for developer and landowner agreements, planned developments, rezonings, etc. These are critical decision points to ensure planning goals are achieved, the public is informed, and processes are clear to promote investment from community builders. City staff should design the development process and analyze applications for compliance with the goals and strategies provided in The Future City Report. This process should include evaluating an application by demonstrating general compliance with and reference to individual goals, strategies, or even actions (when applicable). When approval is required to go before the Planning & Zoning Commission or City Council, City staff should prepare a report that identifies if the project complies or does not comply with the goals, strategies, and actions in the Plan. With this information, the City can ensure that elected and appointed officials make their decisions based on whether the project advances the community's vision or requires adjustment.

Plan Integration

As this Plan is put into action, an important element of its success is the funding and annual programming of implementation projects. Components include annual budgets, capital improvement program (CIP), departmental business plans, and their ongoing alignment to achieve effective outcomes.

Plan to Code Relationship

While adoption of this Plan should be seen as a big accomplishment, it is just part of the process. The next step is to translate this Plan's actions to the City's development codes and policies. While the Comprehensive Plan creates the vision for what the community wants, the code documents enable the City to enforce that vision through the Plan's implementation program. Once this Plan is adopted, the City should immediately complete an assessment of the current zoning, subdivision, and other related codes to determine what is needed to meet the vision of the new Comprehensive Plan. With this information defined, the City can then move towards updating the regulations to align with the vision of the Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, as this Plan is updated over time, the codes should be updated accordingly to reflect the changing conditions in Dickinson.

Special Area and Master Plans

The Dickinson Comprehensive Plan covers a wide variety of topics which have the potential to affect the City's existing and future plans. This includes additional plans and studies, some of which are recommended in The Future City Report. Some of these plans exist or are ongoing, such as the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Downtown City Center Master Plan. Others will require future updates and replacements, such as the water and sanitary sewer master plans, etc. Most of these plans are considered a part of the umbrella of the Comprehensive Plan, as state law anticipates that the Comprehensive Plan includes a full complement of more detailed action plans. These master plans include further refinement of cost, timing, and procedure beyond the anticipated Work Program in this chapter.

Annual Budgeting

A primary source of funding for implementation of this Plan is the City's annual budget, which is composed of various revenue sources. For implementation actions to be completed, the City must have adequate funds to complete the necessary work. It is recommended that each action taken by City Council is tied to the goals of City's Comprehensive Plan, and other relevant master plans through direct language in resolutions and ordinances.

Monitoring and Benchmarking

The City of Dickinson will monitor the Comprehensive Plan implementation activities and the corresponding effects on the community environment, community prosperity, and community livability. Monitoring activities will not only record implementation accomplishments and measures of success but will also reveal opportunities to modify and amend the Dickinson Comprehensive Plan to address changing conditions or community preferences.

Creating the vision of Dickinson, as defined in this Plan, involves actively and deliberately working toward the action steps in the implementation program. This Plan created goal statements and strategies - which culminated in specific initiatives and action steps. The Work Program is a foundation for each City department to develop their work plan, which will assist in achieving the Plan goals. In the Work Program section, page 3.10, the departments involved in each action are listed, providing guidance as to who shares accountability in the outcome.

To monitor the progress of the implementation program, each department should create measurable benchmarks and targets for their applicable actions. This involves specific performance indicators, some of which the City may have control of, and others that rely on other parties and private investment to recognize achievement. In many instances, measures of “successful” implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will be qualitative in nature and difficult to quantify. Therefore, it is recommended that the City prepare indicators and measures only for initiatives that the City organization has the ability to direct; other policy-based actions that rely on others for results may be more aspirational in nature.

While this Plan sets the tone for goals and actions, the next step for the City is to determine how to measure success of priority initiatives. High-Priority and Ongoing Actions are the immediate determinations of indicators and monitoring. Measures for these actions, which require short-term attention, should be included in the first Plan Progress Report introduced on the following pages.

Capital Improvement Program

A capital improvement program is a multi-year plan (typically annual, five-year and 10-year) that identifies upcoming capital projects for prioritization and funding. Projects include street infrastructure; water, sanitary sewer, and drainage facilities; open space, trails and recreation facility construction and upgrades; and the purchase of major equipment. Identifying and budgeting for major capital improvements will be essential towards the successful implementation of this Plan. Decisions regarding the prioritization of proposed capital improvements should take into account the policy and management directives of this Plan to ensure alignment between the two.

Plan Improvement

Through an extensive analysis of existing conditions and a thorough public engagement process, this Plan establishes and guides the community's vision for the future. Despite this, the Plan is only a snapshot in time. As the City changes, the Plan must change as needed to keep the community's vision intact. In order to remain consistent with the community's vision, implementation must be flexible and allow for adjustments to account for shifts at the local, regional, state, and national level over time. Therefore, it is recommended that this Plan be revisited on a regular and routine basis followed by warranted updates.

Periodic Plan Review

As part of the ongoing implementation process, benchmarking and monitoring should take place regularly. These reports should include, at minimum, significant actions and accomplishments during the past year and identification and recommendations for needed actions and programs to be developed and implemented in the coming year. The report should include a review of projected costs to implement the Plan, in accordance with the City Charter. The Comprehensive Plan report should be presented at a work session and regular session of the City Council.

Following adoption, it may be necessary to make minor adjustments consistent with this Plan. These may include errors, refinements of boundaries, or unexpected clean-ups. Staff should package these together to present for approval at Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council.

5-Year Update

Every five years, a broader evaluation and update should be completed. This evaluation is typically spearheaded by Planning Department staff, in addition to input from various departments and elected and appointed officials. The purpose of the update is to evaluate the original assumptions from the Plan regarding growth and development trends, emerging issues, and to determine if remaining proposed action strategies are still relevant. The five-year update should include the following:

- A summary of plan amendments and accomplishments to date;
- Changes in trends and issues since the previous plan adoption (e.g., changes in the predicted growth rate and the physical boundaries of the City; demographic composition; community attitudes; or other social, environmental, or political issues which may affect the feasibility of continued implementation);
- Conflicts between decisions made and implementation actions yet to be undertaken;
- Changes in law, procedures, or programs which will affect identified implementation actions; and
- A comprehensive re-evaluation of the Implementation Work Program.

10-Year Update

This plan sets the stage for all subsequent implementation actions during the 10-year planning horizon. That being said, conditions, population composition, and City trends and concerns change over time. In order to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan continues to provide the best and most appropriate guidance possible, the Plan should be taken through a full update process every 10 years. The 10-year update should include the following:

- Comprehensive re-evaluation of the community's vision for the future;
- Evaluation of action items from this plan that have yet to be considered;
- Re-engagement of the public;
- Reanalysis of the issues and trends related to community growth, transportation, land use, parks and recreation, public facilities and services, and infrastructure; and
- A new plan of action reflective of the refined vision of the future.

Amendment Initiation

Amendments to the Plan are typically requested by a landowner, developer, or by the City itself. Most commonly, these circumstances occur during the development entitlement phase, where staff may determine that a rezoning proposal is not consistent with the comprehensive plan and the proposal should either be altered for compliance or pursued as an amendment. Determination of a necessary amendment should be made by City staff when the proposal is incompatible with the Future Land Use Map. The process for such an amendment should follow an established process formally approved and codified by the City. The process should include public hearings so that citizens have a chance to voice their opinions. It is recommended that the City maintain the threshold for a super-majority approval for comprehensive plan amendments.

At times, the City may need to initiate the comprehensive plan amendment process. Such an action may be needed to amend the land use framework, strategies or actions due to changing circumstances, respond to state legislation or mandates, etc. Such amendments shall be consistent with the goals of this Plan and citizen input is a critical part of consideration of future adjustments. Significant amendments and updates may warrant input from the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) or citizen-led ad hoc committee. Ongoing citizen involvement and buy-in is critical to maintaining the support of the Plan as the city grows and evolves.

Work Program

As Dickinson's principal visioning document, the Dickinson Comprehensive Plan will be referenced on a continuing basis to influence City policy, planning, regulatory, and budgetary decisions. The Dickinson Comprehensive Plan likewise serves as the coordinating document between the City and its partners to ensure that the resources of the City are all allocated in a manner that reflects shared goals and objectives and supports actions that advances the community's vision of sustainability.

Successful implementation of the community's shared vision embodied in the Dickinson Comprehensive Plan is the shared responsibility of the residents, property owners, business owners, governmental agencies, civic organizations, service providers, trade groups, social advocates, and others. With a 10-year implementation period for this plan, however, it will take the leadership of the City of Dickinson to remind its residents, stakeholders, and partners that there is a role for all of them to pursue the desired outcomes of their comprehensive plan.

Timeframe

For the specific goals, strategies, and actions recommended within the Future City Report, the City and involved departments should enact benchmarking techniques and decide the priority of actions based on the following four timeframes detailed below:

1. (0-2). Actions should be initiated within the next one to two years (2023 -2025) although completion may extend across a larger timeframe. These are the City's top priorities for implementation.
2. (3-5). Actions which may be initiated within the next three to five years (2026-2030).
3. (6-10). Most of these actions are projected to be implemented in the long-term and may be further prioritized in following plan updates.
4. (Ongoing). Actions may also be ongoing where they represent a policy or practice that may be initiated without any additional formal action and should occur throughout the planning period.

Involved Departments

The City department(s) that are intended to assist implementation efforts for individual strategies and actions are listed below, although the list is not exhaustive. These departments (a few abbreviated in parentheses) include the following:

- Administration
- Chamber of Commerce
- City Manager
- Code Enforcement
- Community
- Development Services
- Engineering
- Emergency Response
- Economic Development
- Finance
- Fire
- Human Resources
- Library
- Municipal Court
- Parks and Recreation
- Permits/Building Inspection
- Planning
- Police
- Public Information
- Public Works
- Utilities

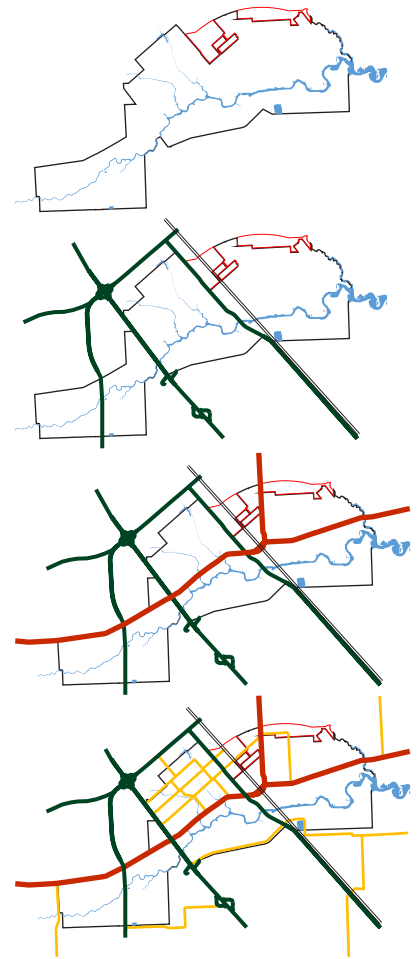
■ Guiding Principle: Destinations

What Makes a Great City?

The public realm makes a Great City. According to renowned urban planner, Alexander Garvin, amazing public spaces are characterized by:

- 1) Being open to anyone.
- 2) Having something for everyone.
- 3) Being able to attract and maintain demand.
- 4) Allowing for surrounding development and urbanization.
- 5) Being sustainable, livable environment.
- 6) Nurturing a civil society.

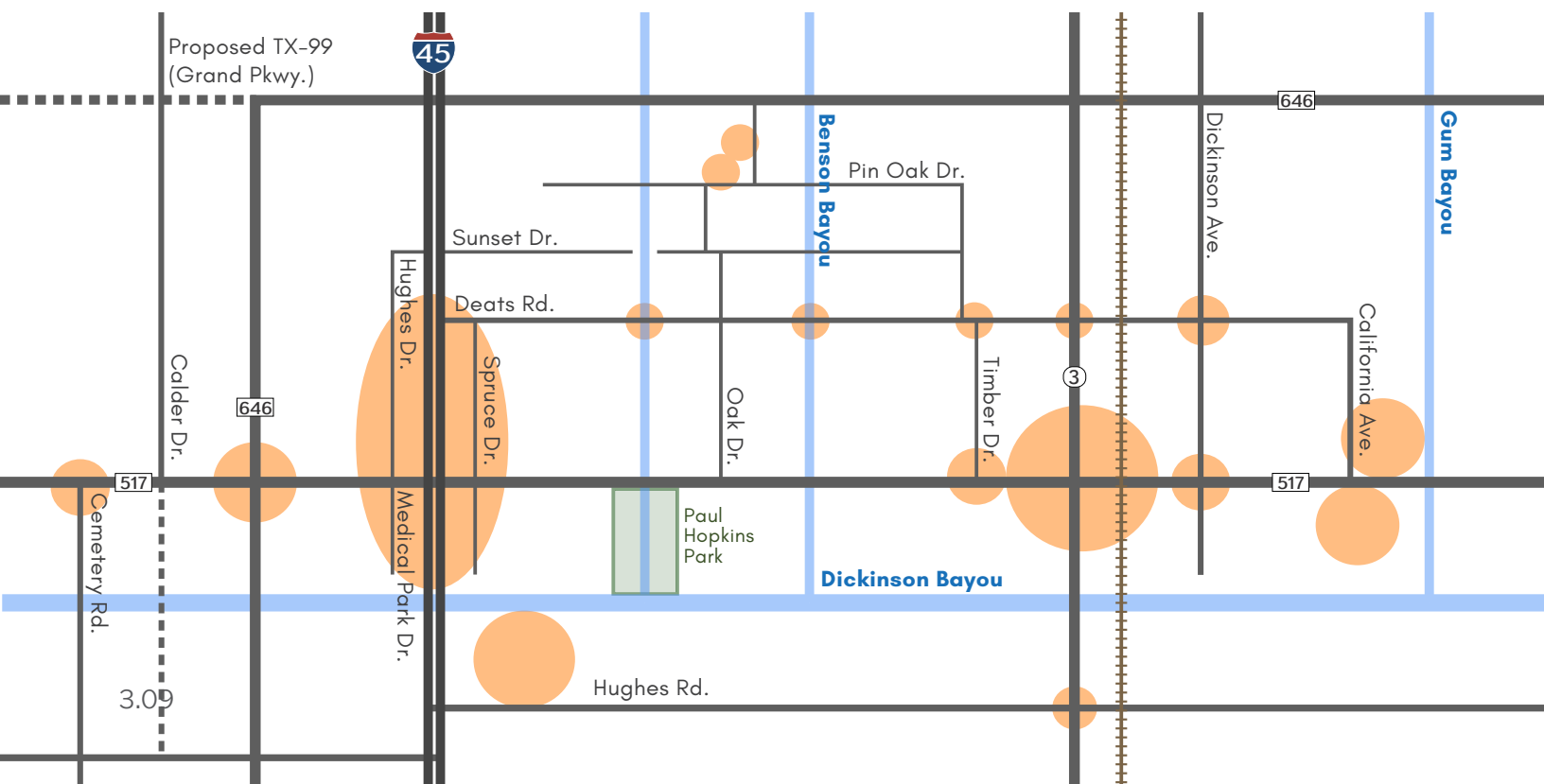
A City should ensure that residents have easy access to public spaces such as parks, plazas, retail streets, community nodes, and other spaces which facilitate social, economic, and cultural opportunities. Residents must have options of housing types and mobility options to ensure a diverse community. The travel distance between the public space (retail, parks, gathering nodes) and private space (residential) should be limited. This encourages the integration of facilities into everyday life, facilitates social opportunities, and develops a localized economy, while in-turn discouraging traffic congestion, pollution, and higher costs of infrastructure.



Organizing Elements

Dickinson is organized in a loose grid pattern, based on the Dickinson Bayou and major State and National throughfare connecting Galveston and Houston. FM517 runs parallel to Dickinson Bayou providing secondary east west connections. Points

where major throughfares and bayous intersect, can be catalyzed for strategic growth in commercial / retail, alternative housing typologies, and community gathering points.



Anatomy of Place

The key physical elements which contribute to the City of Dickinson's legibility and sense of place include paths, nodes, edges, districts, and landmarks.



PATH

Path: Paths are the channels for traveling from one destination to another. These include roads, sidewalks, waterways, transit corridors, canals, or railroads. Paths create the framework of the community on which all other components fit. Paths in Dickinson include 517 (Main Street), 646, SH3, Dickinson Avenue, the Railroad, and Dickinson Bayou



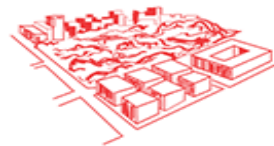
EDGE

Edge: Edges are linear elements which compose the boundaries between two places and represent a physical change in the environment. Edges are the distinct ending of one area and the beginning of another. In Dickinson, the edges are Gum Bayou to the east, Hughes Road to the south, Cemetery Road to the west, and various streets on the north.



NODE

Node: Nodes are significant destinations where concentrations of land uses, major features, or convergence of paths occur. Nodes in Dickinson include: Intersections of I-45 and 517, SH3 and 517, 517 at Cemetery Road / Calder Drive / 646, I-45 and Hughes Road



DISTRICT

District: Districts are identifiable areas within a community or city. Each has a distinct character that differentiates from other areas or districts. In Dickinson, the downtown area would qualify as a Central Business District.

Powers of Ten+

The Power of 10+ is a concept developed by the Project for Public Spaces to evaluate place-making at a range of spatial scales; the focus of which is to underscore the value of considering a city's destinations and districts from a human, experiential scale and the reasons people may want to be there. This concept recommends vibrant places have at least 10 destinations; and within each destination there must be 10 specific places; and within each place there must be at least 10 things to do, which are layered to create and build-upon accrued synergies - making a place more than the sum of its parts.

Places thrive when users have a range of reasons (10+) to be there. These might include a place to sit, playgrounds to enjoy, art to touch, music to hear, food to eat, history to experience, and people to meet. Ideally, some of these activities will be unique to that particular place, reflecting

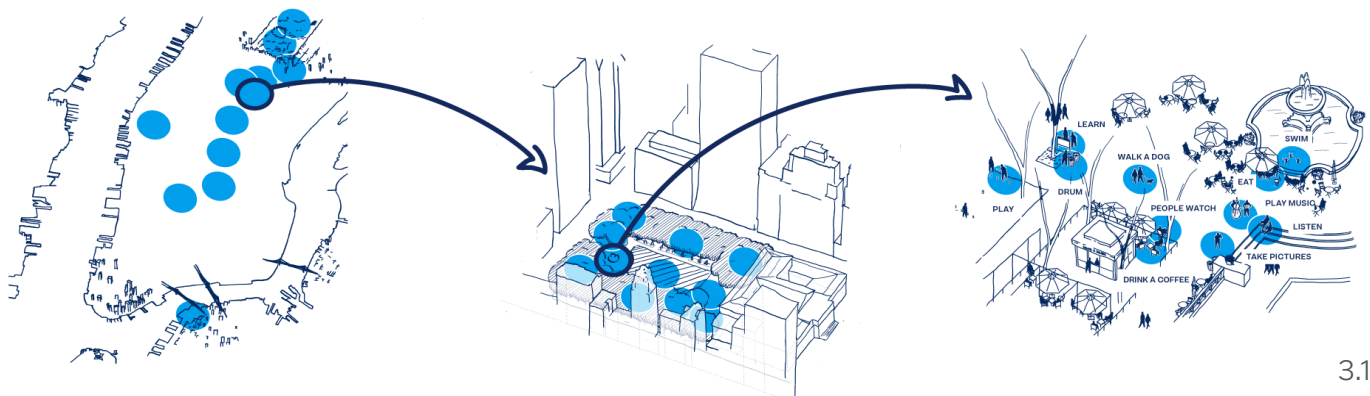


LANDMARK

Landmark: Landmarks are focal points that act as points of reference and are frequently used clues of identity. They are usually a defined physical object, such as a building, sign, store, or mountain. They may be within the city or at such a distance that for all practical purposes they symbolize a constant direction. Landmarks in Dickinson include the 1902 Dickinson Railroad Depot and the Harbour Playhouse.

the culture and history of the surrounding community. Local residents who use this space most regularly will be the best source of ideas for which uses will work best.

Further, when cities contain at least 10 of these destinations or districts, their public perception begins to shift amongs both locals and tourists, and urban centers can become better equipped for generating resilience and innovation.



■ Guiding Principle: Building Resilience

Planning for Resilience

Resiliency planning means finding an approach that is best matched to a community’s unique needs and resources. This comprehensive plan incorporates resilience against natural and human-caused hazards (the “shocks” to a community) throughout all its elements and also addresses the social, environmental, and economic “stressors” into the goals and strategies.

From a land-use perspective, resiliency planning means considering shocks and stresses throughout your community’s plans, land-use codes, zoning, development standards, incentive programs, and other plans or policies that guide and shape development. This plan incorporates sustainability goals, strategies, and recommendations to adopt sustainability standards, incorporate best-practice approaches to the management of systems needed to support the community, and prepare land use plans and regulations to maintain the health of natural systems as a primary priority.

From a social perspective, resiliency planning is applicable at the neighborhood unit level. In that, the initial response to the aftermath of any major event, such as a hurricane, should originate from within the neighborhoods as neighbors help each other to get through the difficulty at hand. Neighborhood resilience requires a strong social infrastructure, or network, to identify members who may suffer the most, or be the least resilient, to a sudden turn of events. Neighborhood resilience practice may range in application from knowing which neighbors have generators, to who will be supplying coffee in the morning, to knowing who is bed-ridden and in need of immediate medical assistance. Activities undertaken as part of resilience practice can be grouped into three broad steps: describing the system, assessing its resilience, and managing its resilience.

City Resilience Framework From the Resilient Cities Network		
Leadership & Strategy		
Promotes Leadership and Effective Management	Empowers a Broad Range of Stakeholders	Fosters Long-Term & Integrated Planning
Infrastructure & Environment		
Provides and Enhances Natural and Manmade Assets	Ensures Continuity of Critical Services and Emergency Planning	Provides Reliable Communication and Mobility
Economy & Society		
Promotes Cohesive and Engaged Communities	Ensures Social Stability, Security, and Justice	Fosters Economic Prosperity and Opportunity
Health & Wellbeing		
Ensures Public Health and Educational Services	Supports Livelihoods and Employment	Meets Basic Needs or Residents
Visit: https://resilientcitiesnetwork.org/		

All communities experience chronic stress and acute shocks, each requiring different planning and mitigation tactics to grow community resilience again such threats.

Stress VS. Shock	
<p>Stresses weaken a community on a daily or cyclical basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inequality Cost of living Climate change Transportation stress Utility infrastructure Crime and violence Food and water shortages Unemployment / Homelessness <p>Preventing stresses requires long-range planning, strategy, funding, programs, and policy.</p>	<p>Shocks are sudden events that threaten a community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flash Floods Hurricanes Disease outbreaks Terrorist-cyber attacks Heatwaves / drought Fires and utility emergencies Hazardous materials Riot /civil unrest <p>Shocks are less preventable, but can be mitigated through action plans, education, programs, and emergency policy.</p>

Resilience from Flooding

The City of Dickinson is vulnerable to natural flooding events due to its low-lying location near the Galveston Bay and Gulf Coast. Flood zones (100-year, and 500-year floodplains) within Dickinson primarily follow along the boundaries of Dickinson Bayou, and its various tributaries (Borden's Gully, Benson Bayou, Gum Bayou, and several other smaller tributaries). The City also has numerous secondary watersheds and other drainage features that transmit water across the city. Approximately 74 percent of the city is in the 100-year floodplain and approximately 90 percent of the city is within the 500-year floodplain. Planning for resilience in the face of flooding due to severe storm events can incorporate:

- Elevating structures and other housing adaptation strategies (see page X.X, Resilient Housing).
- Low impact development (LID) strategies such as micro-detention, vegetated swales, rain gardens, pervious paving, urban forest canopy, cisterns, etc.
- Regional detention.
- Stormwater diversion through channels and ditches.
- Environmental protection of wetlands and sponge zones.
- Preservation of forest canopy.
- Underground stormwater release tanks.
- Dredging of bayous to address waterflow capacities.

Resilient Economies

Economic resilience relates to a community's ability to foresee, adapt to, and leverage changing conditions to their advantage.

Resiliency has three primary attributes:

1. The ability to recover quickly from a shock;
2. The ability to withstand a shock; and
3. The ability to avoid the shock altogether.

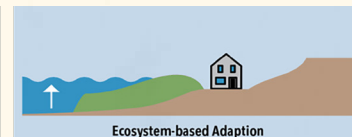
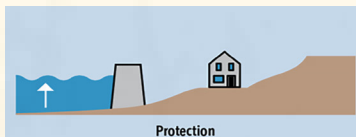
Shocks may include:

- Downturns in the national or regional economy impacting demand for local goods and spending;
- Downturns of industries critical to local economic activities; and
- External impacts such as natural or man-made disasters, a major employer closures, changing climate, etc.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 40% of small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs) never reopen after a natural disaster, and an additional 25% reopen but fail within a year. Nearly two-thirds of SMBs impacted by a fire, flood, hurricane, tornado, or earthquake no longer exist 12 months later. This highlights the need for SMBs to develop an emergency disaster plan and continuity of operations plan to reduce that risk and help the business recover faster.

Four Adaptation Actions: Living With Climate Change

PROTECTION: Hard and soft structurally defensive measures to mitigate the impacts of a changing climate.



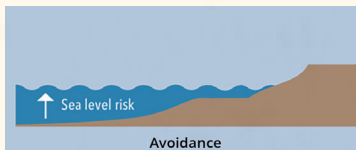
ACCOMMODATION: Altering physical design to allow a structure or land to stay in place despite changing conditions.



RETREAT: Removal of infrastructure or uses that cannot be easily protected or accommodated from a high-hazard area.



AVOIDANCE: Guiding new development away from areas that are at high risk from a changing climate.



Source: WeADAPT.org



Source: WeADAPT.org