

# GROWTH MANAGEMENT & CAPACITY

As College Station continues to expand, both in population and geographic extent, it will face opportunities and challenges associated with managing growth over a much larger area. Since the adoption of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the City’s population surpassed 100,000 people in January 2014 – just as originally projected. This milestone allows the City the option to extend its Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) from the current three and one-half miles beyond City limits to five miles. This will result in further expansion into Brazos County, Burleson County, and Grimes County.



College Station faces major investments in water and wastewater infrastructure in coming years to keep pace with increased population. Along with traffic and drainage challenges, this is but one example of the capacity considerations that must be anticipated to plan effectively for projected growth.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this chapter is to establish the necessary policy guidance and associated strategies and actions to enable the City of College Station to manage its ongoing physical growth and development in a sensible, predictable, and fiscally responsible manner. It highlights the need to encourage additional infill development, absorb more population in appropriate areas within the current City limits, pursue strategic annexations, and manage growth in the ETJ.

The preparation of this chapter involved examining College Station’s growth history, projected growth trends, and existing methods used to manage growth. The discussion then turns to options the community should consider to ensure that the benefits of growth are not offset by increased traffic congestion, loss of valued open space, or other impacts that adversely affect residents’ quality of life and the local business environment. The vision as to how College Station will grow – and manage its growth – in the future was formed by the concerns and ideas expressed by residents during community outreach events and through a series of working meetings with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee.

## BACKGROUND

Orderly growth of the City, within the current City limits and ultimately into strategic portions of the ETJ, is critical to its long-term viability. A municipality has a responsibility to its residents and taxpayers to ensure a growth pattern that makes good fiscal sense, particularly in terms of the infrastructure investments needed to keep pace with growth. Effective growth management can prevent roads, utility infrastructure, and public facilities from becoming overloaded by a scale and intensity of



In recent years, the City and Texas Department of Transportation have made substantial investments in roadway improvements to improve traffic flow within College Station. At the same time, dispersed development activity in the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction increases traffic demand and raises safety issues on minimally improved rural roads (narrow pavement width, no shoulders, basic surface, limited drainage provisions). Numerous new access driveways along rural road corridors are the most visible sign of this growth impact.

development that cannot yet be served safely and effectively. It can also serve to promote strategies identified in the Green College Station Action Plan by guiding growth and development to targeted infill areas, thereby maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the City's existing infrastructure network.

### Past Growth Pattern

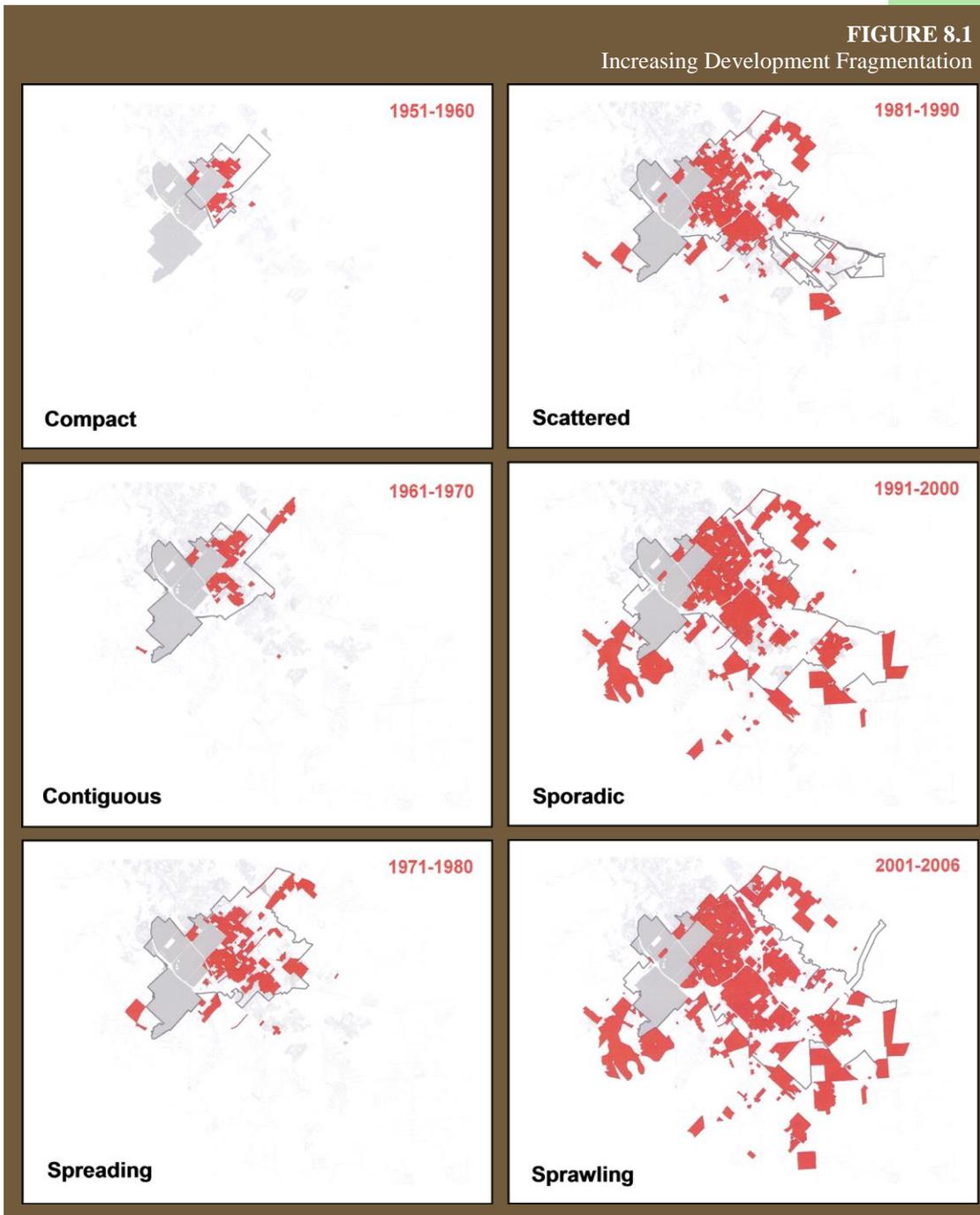
Over the last six decades, College Station has experienced rapid population growth, averaging 90% per decade. When the outliers (the 1940s at 263% growth and the 1970s at 111% growth) are excluded, the average rate of growth per decade is 42%. As the scale of the community increased, its rate of growth naturally began to moderate (41% in the 1980s and 29% in the 1990s), although the additional population and development each decade certainly remained significant.

College Station's increase in population and corresponding employment growth is a positive indicator of the City's economic competitiveness and stability. While attracting and sustaining economic development is a primary goal, the community must also consider ways to maximize the fiscal benefits associated with additional development. The physical growth pattern of the City and the efficient provision of City services are key factors in this consideration.

As displayed in **Figure 8.1, Increasing Development Fragmentation**, since the 1970s the form of development in and around College Station has become progressively scattered. This is partly due to the location of floodplains and other physical constraints. However, between 2000 and 2008, the number of platted lots in the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction averaged 16.8% of the total annual platted lots. The trend of peripheral growth is long-standing. Development began to scatter in the 1980s and has increasingly sprawled outward since. Continuation of this growth pattern will become increasingly problematic due to the challenges associated with providing cost efficient City services and infrastructure to expanding areas.

### Purpose of the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

As a Home Rule municipality (greater than 5,000 population and with its own City Charter), College Station has some authority over a larger unincorporated planning area, beyond its current City limits, that is known in Texas as the "Extraterritorial Jurisdiction," or ETJ. In Chapter 42 of the TEXAS LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE, the Texas Legislature declares it to be State policy that ETJs be created around cities so that municipal governments can "promote and protect the general health, safety, and welfare of persons residing in and adjacent to" the City limits.



## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

### Growth Management

Growth management represents a key opportunity for College Station to influence the timing, pattern, and quality of development through a variety of tools at the disposal of Texas municipalities. However, there are also State-imposed limitations that restrict the City's ability to guide growth in the ETJ and urban type development at the City's edge has been an ongoing challenge.

**What are Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs)?**

A Municipal Utility District (MUD) is a political subdivision authorized by the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to provide water, sewer, drainage, and/or other municipal services within its clearly defined boundaries. These political subdivisions are recognized as taxing entities by the State of Texas in order to raise funds within its boundaries to pay for the costs of providing the municipal services.

**How does a MUD work?**

The publicly elected Board of Directors manages and controls all of the affairs of the MUD subject to the continuing supervision of the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality. The Board establishes policies in the interest of its residents and utility customers. A MUD may adopt and enforce all necessary charges, fees and taxes in order to provide district facilities and service.

**How is a MUD created?**

A majority of property owners in the proposed district petitions the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality to create a MUD. The TCEQ evaluates the petition, holds a public hearing, and grants or denies the petition. After approval, the TCEQ appoints five temporary members to the MUD Board of Directors, until an election is called to elect permanent Board members, to confirm the MUD’s creation, and to authorize bonds and taxing authority for bond repayment.

Along with the typical cost advantages of developing in the ETJ, there is also the allure of country living in locations that are detached from other development – a real market factor that must be recognized and accommodated when identifying future growth areas. It is also important to note that recent ETJ platting activity has prepared the way for substantial numbers of residential lots regardless of future actions to manage growth.

**Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs)**

The City adopted a Municipal Utility District (MUD) policy in January 2014 to establish City Council authority over the creation, operation, and dissolution of MUDs within the City limits or it’s ETJ. MUDs can be an excellent tool used in financing, constructing, and operating quality water, wastewater, and drainage facilities because they allow the developer and future property owners to absorb the costs and pay for them over time. In March 2015, the City Council granted consent

for the first MUD in Brazos County (Brazos County MUD No.1).

MUDs can be an excellent tool for managing growth in the ETJ because they allow development to occur in a planned manner while provide a means to finance needed infrastructure. MUDs typically include a Development Agreement with the City that outlines development standards and guidelines that aren’t normally enforced in the ETJ absent an agreement.

**Sprawl**

Sprawl, by definition, is a spread-out or leap-frog development pattern which blurs the urban edge and intrudes, often in a haphazard way, upon the low intensity nature of the rural landscape. To the extent that some Extraterritorial Jurisdiction developments around College Station involve suburban and even urban intensities, the growth management challenge becomes even greater for the City. For those Extraterritorial Jurisdiction residents who chose a more remote living location, versus in city living, the erosion of rural character from dense piecemeal development impacts their investment and day-to-day quality of life.

There are several reasons why the recent pattern of growth has occurred in and around College Station, including, but not limited to, the following:

- There is a lure to greenfield development due to the ease of development approval, particularly since the City has no authority within its Extraterritorial

Jurisdiction to regulate:

- o The use of any building or property for business, industrial, residential, or other purposes;
  - o The bulk, height, or number of buildings constructed on a particular tract;
  - o The size of a building that can be constructed on a particular tract of land, including, without limitation, any restriction on the ratio of building floor space to the land square footage (floor area ratio);
  - o The number of residential units that can be built per acre of land (density);
  - o The size, type, or method of construction of a water or wastewater facility that can be constructed to serve a developed tract of land, subject to specified criteria; or,
  - o Building standards by requiring building permits and inspections.
- The City's current oversize participation ordinance allows the City to pay up to 100% of the total cost for any over-sizing of improvements that it requires in anticipation of future development. There are no stated exceptions or criteria regarding its cost effectiveness; financial feasibility; or conformance with utility master plans, the Comprehensive Plan, or other development policies.
  - There are both allowances and limitations within the Unified Development Ordinance, including:
    - o The R Rural zoning district allows a minimum lot size of two-acres and average lot size of three-acres, meaning that residences utilizing on-site sewer treatment systems are permitted. Although this district is not actively used, its availability as a zoning option could contribute to development fragmentation if this zoning were to be granted in the outlying areas of the corporate limits where adequate municipal facilities are not yet available.
    - o The Unified Development Ordinance contains a relatively large number of use-based zoning districts. Essentially, this means that a zone change is necessary to respond to a shift in the market, which adds process and delays development. This is a disincentive for development to occur within the City rather than the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction, where zoning does not apply.
    - o There are limited incentives integrated into the current ordinance to encourage certain development types. Increased density in



Under the Texas statutory framework, a City may not extend its zoning regulations to the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. Therefore, College Station has no direct means to manage the location and intensity of new development in largely rural areas unless it annexes. To do so, it must have the capacity to extend City services to such areas while meeting existing and future needs within the current City limits.

exchange for development clustering and more open space could allow a rural development environment within the City limits rather than necessitating Extraterritorial Jurisdiction development to achieve this character.

- Availability of water from other providers (Wellborn Special Utility District, Brushy Creek Water Supply Corporation, and Wickson Creek Special Utility District). This means that development has access to public water that meets the standards of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality without requiring connection to the City's utility system.
- The Brazos County Health Department's prerequisite for permitting septic systems is a minimum one-acre lot, whether there is public water available or a private well.
- Property in the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction is not subject to City ad valorem taxes. Therefore, residents and businesses outside the City limits benefit from access to municipal facilities and services, such as streets, parks, trails, libraries, and other community facilities, but do not share equitably in the tax burden associated with constructing and maintaining those facilities and services.
- Land is generally less expensive outside the City limits due primarily to the absence of public infrastructure and improvements, which equates to cheaper development and, hence, lowers development costs.
- There is an attraction to the open, rural landscape often found at the City's fringe.
- The City has granted several exceptions to its utility extension policy, providing sewer service to areas outside the City. This enabled development at suburban densities in areas that, under normal conditions, would be limited to a minimum lot size of one acre.

As displayed in **Figure 8.2, Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Platting Activity**, a significant portion of the developable land in College Station's current Extraterritorial Jurisdiction is already platted for development (in yellow) or otherwise planned for development by way of preliminary plats or master plans (in red).

This condition makes it difficult for the City to be proactive in balancing utility and public service needs of the developed core community, undeveloped acreage within the City limits, and an extensive Extraterritorial Jurisdiction that should largely be its longer-term growth area.

### Implications of Sprawl

While College Station's growth pattern has created

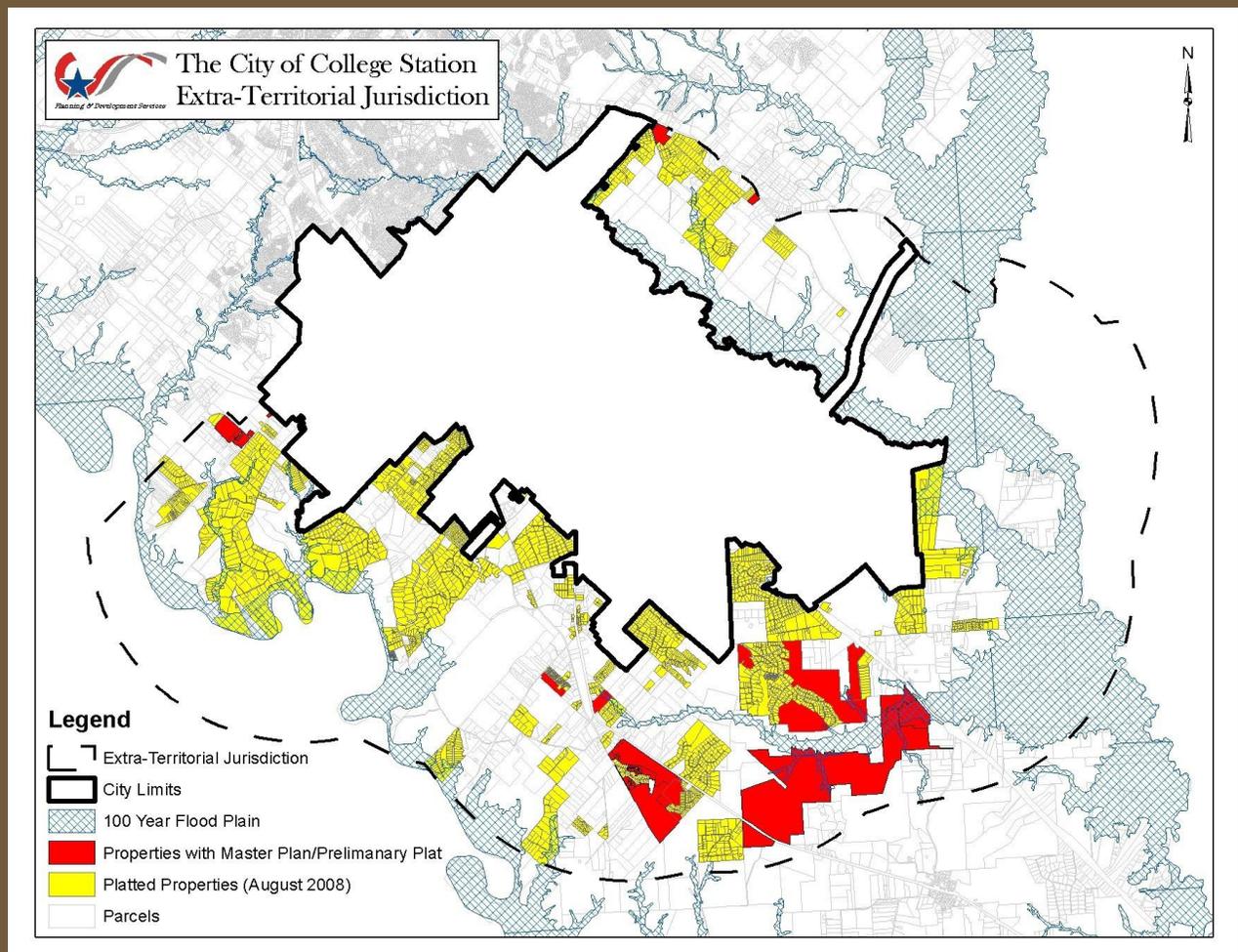


New and expanded fire stations are a very visible sign of the City's desire to invest in public safety facilities, in appropriate locations, to ensure adequate service area coverage and responsiveness as the community grows in both population and geographic size.

opportunities, without adequate foresight and preparation it may yield undesirable consequences, including:

- Erosion of a defined community edge, thereby blurring its boundaries and contributing to a loss of community identity. This can be most readily seen along each of the entrances into the community where there is a proliferation of uses extending well beyond the City limits.
- Degradation of environmental resources such as floodplains, wetlands, habitat, and vegetated areas.
- Increased demands on public infrastructure (e.g., roads, water, and wastewater systems) and services (e.g., police and fire protection, parks, libraries, and schools), in some cases, creating unsafe conditions.
- Premature shifts in traffic patterns, causing congestion and environmental impacts, as development occurs in an uncoordinated fashion before adequate transportation infrastructure is in place.

**FIGURE 8.2**  
Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Platting Activity



SOURCE: City of College Station



The desire to maintain rural character is made more challenging as urban and suburban development pressures spill into the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. This typically increases property values and associated tax burdens, may result in incompatible development in close proximity, and can lead to demands for upgraded roads, utilities, and public safety services.

- Cumulative impacts on the natural environment due to urban stormwater runoff (increased drainage volumes and velocities) and non-point source pollution of area streams and watercourses from contaminants and sediments carried by overland drainage.
- Inefficient provision of services, meaning a larger investment in infrastructure systems with fewer than the optimal number of connections/users to pay for them.
- Increased commuting times as residents have to travel relatively longer distances to reach work, places of worship, shopping, services, schools, recreation, and entertainment destinations.
- The potential for disinvestment in older areas of the community as new development continues to occur on the periphery.

### Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Strategies

There are an array of strategies for managing the pattern and timing of development in the ETJ, ranging from simply minimizing the impacts of growth without affecting the pattern to strictly controlling growth. Texas law does not provide cities with the means to entirely prevent sprawl, therefore, it is wise for College Station to consider the ways in which it can exert more influence over the direction and timing of development that it ultimately must serve. Given College Station's past development pattern and projected growth trends, the City's growth management approach, relative to the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction, should focus on the following areas:

- Use annexation in a strategic fashion.
- Expand the City's certificate of convenience and necessity as appropriate in concert with annexation activity.
- Adhere to the City's utility extension policy while working to enhance it.
- Effectively utilize the City's Municipal Utility District policy.
- Expand the thoroughfare plan.
- Expand the ETJ boundary from 3.5-miles to 5-miles.
- Strengthen the health and safety components of the subdivision regulations.

## GROWTH CAPACITY

This section provides an evaluation of the City's municipal services, and future land use assumptions in terms of their ability to accommodate the population growth expected within the next 15 years.

### Infrastructure

#### Water

Water is a key factor in an area's growth capacity and this is certainly the case for College Station. Basic water supply is a finite resource that requires sound stewardship to ensure its continued availability in support of a community's growth and public health and welfare. College Station faces some potential challenges in the future regarding its capacity to provide water supply for projected growth. Based on population projections of roughly 150,000 persons at build-out of the city's water service area, this amounts to an average daily demand of 21.4 million gallons. For comparison, the City's average day water demand in 2014 was 13.3 million gallons. This increase in water demand will require major improvements in our water infrastructure, as well as continued emphasis on water conservation.

A recent water master plan study conducted by Freese and Nichols, Inc. concluded that the City needs to build a third water tower and add three water wells to meet these future water demands. Once the three new wells are fully operational, they are projected to supply over 9,000 gallons per minute and will help the City meet future peak water demands. Depending on the density of future development and the effectiveness of our water conservation programs, the City should also look at possible alternative water supplies, which includes:

(1) additional groundwater development, (2) Brazos River diversions, (3) direct potable re-use, (4) aquifer storage and recovery, (4) desalination, and (5) additional non-potable re-use projects. For continued success in water conservation, the City will reviews its inclined block water rate structure and commercial irrigation rates, to further encourage prudent landscape irrigation. Additionally, the City is in the planning phase for the second wastewater effluent reuse project, to complement the existing system that takes treated wastewater effluent from the Carters Creek treatment plant for irrigation at the Veteran's Park and Athletic Complex.

#### Wastewater

The City's two wastewater treatment plants have a combined capacity to treat 11.5 million gallons per day (MGD). The Carters Creek Plant accounts for 9.5 MGD, and the Lick Creek Plant provides the other 2.0 MGD, which primarily serves southern College Station. The community's current average daily wastewater generation is in the 7 MGD range, and steadily increasing. As required by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the City has commenced engineering design and financial planning to expand

this treatment capacity, since it has reached 75% of permitted average daily flow for three consecutive months. The regulations further require a permittee to gain regulatory approval and begin construction to expand treatment facilities when a plant reaches 90% of permitted average daily flow for three consecutive months, which is expected to occur within the next ten years. Capital Plans are in place to stay ahead of these demands and regulations, and an updated wastewater master plan will be completed in 2016, by Freese and Nichols, Inc.

The wastewater collection system is undergoing capacity expansion as well, with one major trunk line under construction and several others planned for construction within the next five years. As College Station continues growing to the south and west, major wastewater collection infrastructure, including lift stations, will be required. These are in the engineering planning phase, and will be discussed in the annual budget process for possible inclusion in the City's Capital Improvement Plan.

### Electricity

College Station Utilities is the City's primary electric provider. Bryan Texas Utilities also serves areas inside the city limits of College Station, being certified to provide electric service to all areas annexed since 2002. College Station Utilities currently serves more than 38,900 customers via seven electrical substations located in the City with a combined capacity of 474 million volt-amperes (MVA). These seven substations currently serve a peak demand of 208 MVA. Two additional substations are currently in planning and the next substation is scheduled to be operational in 2018, increasing College Station Utilities' electrical capacity by 66 MVA. In general, the City appears to be in a good position to handle the additional electrical demands that forecasted growth would generate over the life of this Plan.

### Transportation

The other major growth capacity challenge confronting College Station involves the congestion and safety issues resulting from increased traffic on area roadways. Stresses on portions of the transportation system are already occurring at peak times and will grow worse over time unless investments are made in additional road capacity and intersection upgrades. This stress is due, in part, to the limitation of major corridors and the traffic generated by the Texas A&M University campus.

It is difficult for any community to build its way out of traffic congestion problems, certainly in the short term. With the financial burden for transportation improvements in Texas increasingly falling on local governments, College Station's available resources will only stretch so far. Alternative transportation options, such as transit, biking, and walking will need to provide an increasing amount of relief.

The City's physical development pattern can have a significant impact on future transportation needs. Outward growth and development pressure tends to spread traffic issues to rural roadways that may not be constructed to handle the increased loads. The City can maximize the use of existing infrastructure by encouraging infill development in lieu of allowing future development to occur on the periphery. Also, a more compact development pattern, with increased density and mixing of uses in appropriate locations, would tend to slow the growth in total vehicle miles traveled by generating greater transit ridership and reducing the length of many routine trips.

While transportation issues will continue to be a challenge, carefully planned growth, a thoroughfare system incorporating multi-modal transportation, and smart use of limited financial resources should place the City in a position to accommodate the transportation needs of the additional population anticipated during the life of this Plan. As discussed in Chapter 6: Transportation, if the City develops in compliance with a modified version of the Programmed-Project Option, traffic congestion should be limited to a modest increase during the life of this plan. After 2030, it is likely that congestion will grow considerably worse unless there is an even greater focus on mixed use, density, transit, and greater investments in bike and pedestrian facilities.

Following the Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Evaluation & Appraisal Report in 2014, the City retained Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. to update Chapter 6: Transportation and the associated maps, as recommended, based on new information, traffic counts, and capacity data.

## Municipal Services

### Solid Waste

The Brazos Valley Solid Waste Management Agency (BVSWMA), Inc. is a non-profit local governmental corporation formed in 2010 under a joint agreement between the City of Bryan and the City of College Station. BVSWMA, Inc. owns and operates the Twin Oaks Landfill in Anderson, Texas and the Twin Oaks Compost Facility in Bryan, Texas. BVSWMA, Inc. also owns and maintains the closed Rock Prairie Road Landfill in College Station, Texas. Twin Oaks Landfill currently accepts about 1,100 tons of solid waste per day (or about 300,000 tons per year). Twin Oaks opened in 2011 with a design capacity of 27,750,000 tons. At the start of the 2016 fiscal year, the remaining capacity was 26,500,000 tons.

Due to the City's recycling efforts, residential waste stream diversion has averaged 20% over that last five years (Fiscal Year 2011-2015) and commercial waste stream diversion has averaged 19% during the same time frame. The total waste stream diversion over the last five years averaged 19.5%. In terms of tonnage, the waste diverted from the landfill due to recycling is 25,904 tons for residential waste and 44,576 tons for

commercial waste for a total of 70,480 tons over the last five fiscal years. These waste reduction efforts were achieved through recycling, large brush collection/composting, and the City's commercial/multifamily franchise recycling program and should serve to extend the life of Twin Oaks Landfill. In terms of solid waste management, the Twin Oaks Landfill appears to be in a good position to handle the anticipated needs during the life of this Plan.

### Police

College Station's continued growth to the south is straining the Police Department's ability to consistently meet the desired response time. One-way frontage roads and a general lack of connectivity in southern College Station make timely emergency responses difficult. Implementing and maintaining the interconnections designated on the Thoroughfare Plan should help alleviate this problem.

As College Station continues to grow, the Police Department will need to continue to monitor growth trends and plan accordingly – especially in terms of satellite stations. As discussed in Chapter 7: Municipal Services and Community Facilities, it is anticipated that the Police Department will continue to add the necessary staff and facilities to serve the future population as projected by this Plan.

### Fire and Emergency Medical Services

The College Station Fire Department currently operates six stations with plans underway for a seventh. The Fire Department's call volume has increased an average annual rate of 6.24% since 2005. Assuming an annual increase of 3.14%, it is anticipated that the call volume over the next five years will increase to over 9,956 calls by 2020. College Station maintains a Fire Protection Master Plan that includes a schedule for additional personnel and facilities. The Master Plan calls for a total of 12 stations at the end of the 20-year planning horizon.

For more information concerning the Fire Department's services, facilities and future needs, please refer to Chapter 7: Municipal Services and Community Facilities. Overall, it is anticipated that the Fire Department will continue to add the necessary staff and facilities to serve the future population projected by this Plan.

State law requires municipalities to compensate the Emergency Services District (ESD) for territories annexed within their district immediately upon annexation. The amount of compensation is equal to the annexed territory's pro rata share of the ESD's bonded and other indebtedness. This requirement should be considered when considering future annexations.

### **Future Land Use**

Lastly, the growth management and capacity discussion would not be complete without an evaluation of the Future Land Use & Character map for the City. Displayed in Table 8.1, Residential Growth Capacity, are the

growth indicators based upon build-out of the land uses as designated on the Future Land Use & Character map.

It is projected that College Station will have a population of over 134,000 residents in 2030. The population as of December 2015 was estimated to be 106,465. An evaluation of residential projects currently under development and the land use scenario depicted

on Map 2.2, Future Land Use and Character, as amended in December 2015, shows that the City can accommodate an ultimate population of approximately 150,000. This estimate also includes the projected build-out population of Brazos County MUD No. 1. This represents a total population of about 16,000 more than the 2030 projection. While the uses depicted on the Future Land Use & Character map seem adequate to accommodate the growth forecasted over the next 15 years, it will be important to closely monitor growth trends moving forward. It will also be important to evaluate and react to market conditions and take any action required, including but not limited to annexation, to accommodate expected growth.

**TABLE 8.1  
Residential Growth Capacity**

Indicator	Amount of Residents	Notes
Current Population	106,465	As of December 2015
Housing Currently Under Development	9,740	Based on 2.38 PPH* and 94% occupancy rate.
In-City Development Potential from Future Land Use & Character Map	30,226	Based on 2.38 PPH* and 94% occupancy rate.
Brazos County MUD #1	3,165	Based on General Development Plan included in the Development Agreement with the City.

**ANNEXATION**

**Background**

Through annexation, the City is able to extend its land development regulations – particularly zoning – which provides an essential growth management tool to implement the Comprehensive Plan. Annexation also extends the City's ETJ, enabling it to regulate the subdivision of land over a larger area. However, Texas annexation statutes mandate stringent requirements for extending services to newly-annexed areas in a timely and adequate manner, which must be comparable to pre-existing services and service levels in similar incorporated areas.

By statute, in any given year the City may annex a quantity of acreage that is equivalent to up to 10% of its current incorporated land area. If it does not annex all of the land that is allowed, the difference rolls over to the next year. The City can make two such rollovers, meaning it can annex up to 30% of its land area in a single year. Given the amount of territory already included within College Station's corporate limits, the City has the ability to add significant acreage through annexation where desired and feasible.

### Recent State Action

Annexation powers have routinely come under attack by the State Legislature. The most recent example was House Bill 2221, introduced in the 84th Legislature. The Bill, as proposed, would have required strict voter approval of an annexation area with more than 200 residents. The ability to unilaterally annex has been a key factor in the growth and continued vitality of the City and any attempt to limit annexation authority should be resisted. The flexibility to annex has enabled cities in Texas to expand as needed to accommodate growth and share in the benefits of the resulting growth. This annexation power is the primary difference between the flourishing cities of Texas and the declining urban areas in other parts of the country. Cities that are unable to annex and capture a share of the expanding tax base can eventually lead to the deterioration of the city core, which in turn accelerates flight to the outlying areas.

### Annexation Priorities

Important considerations in prioritizing potential annexation areas include:

- Whether the area is contiguous to existing developed areas within the current City limits, which contributes to orderly growth progression – and may also involve compatibility concerns if unzoned ETJ development is out of character with nearby in City areas.
- Whether City utilities have already been extended into the area or are within close proximity and could readily and feasibly be extended as demands warrant – and whether the City prefers to be the service provider in particular areas experiencing development pressures.
- Whether the area is still largely vacant or has already developed at a rural or suburban intensity – or is destined for such development through prior platting and land planning activity (depending on market timing and ultimate owner/developer intentions).
- Whether any significant commercial development has already occurred – possibly in a haphazard, strip development fashion – which detracts from development quality and community appearance at gateway locations.
- Whether the area is constrained for significant development by floodplain or other factors, and whether there is much development potential, in general, beyond a current rural residential pattern.
- Whether current or future key transportation corridors traverse the area, making land use management along such corridors imperative to long-term traffic flow and safety.
- Whether other strategic considerations come into play in areas that might not otherwise be attractive for near term annexation, such as areas

along major corridors that serve as current or future gateways into the City, protection areas for key assets (e.g., water supply, airport), or areas that may also be attractive to other jurisdictions for potential annexation.

- Whether the area is appraised for property tax purposes as land for Agricultural use, Wildlife Management use, or Timber Land. In such cases, the City must first offer the property owner a non-annexation agreement before moving forward with the annexation process.
- Whether the State will continue to limit the City's ability to annex. Should this trend continue, it may be in the City's best interest to initiate annexation sooner rather than later.

Displayed in **Map 8.1, Potential Annexation Priorities & Phasing**, are candidate annexation areas within the College Station ETJ. The map is color-coded to indicate areas currently under non-annexation Development Agreements, areas that can be annexed by amending the City's Annexation Plan, and areas that could be annexed via the exempt process.

### Future Annexation Policy

Following the adoption of the 5-year Evaluation and Appraisal Report, an Annexation Task Force was assembled to review the City's annexation priorities and recommend amendments to this chapter. The Task Force was comprised of three City Council members and three Planning & Zoning Commissioners. The Task Force met for several months to evaluate the City's annexation strategies and priorities and provided the following recommendations:

- Move forward with an exempt annexation package.
- Utilize Non-Annexation Development Agreements in a strategic manner to reserve undeveloped or underdeveloped areas for future growth.
- Evaluate the costs and benefits of annexing areas currently under non-annexation development agreements on a case-by-case basis as they expire.
- Renew the ETJ boundary agreement with City of Bryan.
- Extend the City's ETJ from 3.5 miles to 5 miles.
- Consider amending the City's Annexation Plan to include one or more three-year annexation areas.
- Continue to monitor actions by the State Legislature to limit the City's authority to unilaterally annex property.
- Should the State continue to limit the City's authority to unilaterally annex property, pursue strategies to minimize the impacts of such action.
- Closely coordinate the City's ETJ extension with Brazos /county, Burleson County, and Grimes County. Pursue interlocal agreements to address plat review for overlapping ETJ areas as appropriate.

Insert Map 8.1

**TABLE 8.1  
Annexation Considerations**

Priorities Subarea		Reasons for Annexation											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Current Development Agreements	F				★	★			★		★		
	H	★		★	★						★		
	J			★	★						★		
	R	★			★						★		
	T	★			★			★					
	U	★			★	★		★				★	
Areas That Require a 3-Year Plan	D		★	★	★	★			★	★	★		
	E					★			★		★		
	K		★		★	★			★		★		
	M	★			★						★		
	O	★	★		★	★			★	★	★		
	P	★	★		★	★			★	★	★		
	V	★			★	★		★				★	
Exempt Annexation Status	A	★			★			★				★	
	B	★		★	★							★	★
	C	★			★	★							
	G		★		★	★			★		★		★
	I	★			★						★		
	L		★		★	★			★		★		
	N	★	★		★	★			★	★	★		
	Q	★	★		★	★			★	★	★		
	S	★			★	★		★			★		
	W	★			★	★							★

1. Provides control of gateway frontage.
  2. Provides moderate to significant revenue (property and/or sales tax).
  3. Provides undeveloped or underdeveloped area for future growth.
  4. Part or all of area qualifies for non-annexation development agreement.
  5. Area adjacent to the City on two or more sides.
  6. Preserves existing character.
  7. Protects part (or all) of area from future development.
  8. Health and life safety concerns (building and fire code enforcement, emergency response, etc.).
  9. Part of area currently served by City sanitary sewer and has the capacity to handle new development.
  10. Located within CSISD.
  11. Provides potential location for business parks.
  12. Transportation infrastructure already provided.
- SOURCE: City of College Station

## GOAL, STRATEGIES, AND ACTIONS

The overall goal for College Station's growth in the years ahead is to ensure fiscally responsible and carefully managed development aligned with growth expectations and in concert with the ability to deliver infrastructure and services in a safe, timely, and effective manner. The five strategies in this section elaborate on these themes and community priorities.

### *Strategy 1: Identify land use needs based on projected population growth.*

- **Strategic Land Use Planning.** Delineate planned growth areas and protection areas by assigning appropriate character classifications (e.g., urban and suburban versus rural) for the planning horizon, through the Future Land Use & Character map in the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Holding Area Zoning.** Ensure that the growth timing aspect of municipal zoning is employed effectively by establishing a direct link between character areas indicated on the Future Land Use & Character map and the development intensity permitted in these areas through the zoning map and Unified Development Ordinance provisions.
- **Zoning Integrity.** Guard against zoning map amendments that, cumulatively, can lead to extensive residential development in growth areas without adequate land reserves for a balance of commercial, public, and recreational uses.
- **University Coordination.** Coordinate with Texas A&M University and Blinn College concerning their projected enrollment growth and associated faculty/staff increases to plan effectively for the implications of further off campus housing demand.
- **Monitor Trends.** In conjunction with periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan, identify market shifts that could have implications for desired housing types, retail or other commercial offerings, and particular public service and recreational needs.

### *Strategy 2: Align public investments with the planned growth and development pattern.*

- **Coordinated Planning.** Ensure that the strategies and actions of this Comprehensive Plan carry through to the City's master plans. The City master plan updates should include provisions that relate directly to the City's Future Land Use & Character Plan (e.g., future utility master plans; Recreation, Park, and Open Space Master Plan; Bicycle, Pedestrian and Greenways MasterPlan).
- **Certificate of Convenience and Necessity Boundary Extensions.** Extend the City's service area for sanitary sewer (the Certificate of Convenience and Necessity boundary) into the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction in an incremental and carefully timed manner, in concert with annexation activity and defined growth management objectives.

- **Strengthen the Water/Sanitary Sewer Extension Policy.** Amend the water/sewer extension policy to require extensions to be consistent with the Future Land Use & Character Plan; the City's ongoing growth area planning; and the City's utility master plans and multi-year Capital Improvement Plan.
- **Oversize Participation.** Establish criteria to evaluate the fiscal impact and cost effectiveness of proposed over-sizing commitments by the City.
- **Capital Improvements Programming.** Expand municipal facilities consistent with growth expectations and to support the desired growth and development pattern.
- **Impact Fees.** Extend water and wastewater impact fees into new, targeted growth areas in the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. Also, consider establishing road impact fees within the City as authorized by Texas statute.
- **Traffic Impact Analysis for Single-Family Development.** Protect road capacity and safety by strengthening requirements for Traffic Impact Analyses when proposed developments exceed a designated size or projected trip generation. Provisions for analysis and potential mitigation should be extended to significant single-family residential developments as requirements in the Unified Development Ordinance currently apply only to non-residential and multi-family projects.
- **Parkland Dedication.** In follow-up to the City's extension of parkland dedication requirements into the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction, monitor the program parameters to ensure desired outcomes.
- **Interlocal Cooperation.** Pursue interlocal cooperation agreements with Brazos, Grimes, and Burleson counties; City of Bryan; Texas A&M University; Blinn College; and other service providers, as appropriate. Such agreements can address coordination of subdivision review, thoroughfare planning, floodplain management, and utility and other service provision, among other matters of mutual interest.

**Strategy 3:** *Balance the availability of and desire for new development areas with redevelopment and infill opportunities.*

- **Infrastructure Investments.** Invest in the necessary infrastructure to increase redevelopment potential for areas identified in Chapter 2: Community Character. Concentrating property development within the City makes efficient use of infrastructure and supports the City's Green College Station effort.
- **Holding Area Annexations.** Use annexation to incorporate and appropriately zone areas to protect them from premature development. This strategy can also be employed in areas where the City wishes to maintain a rural character.
- **Growth Area Targeting.** Coordinate zoning, capital improvement programming, and municipal services planning to prepare targeted

growth areas as identified on the Concept Map in Chapter 2: Community Character.

- **Zoning in Support of Redevelopment.** Together with other incentive measures, apply targeted zoning strategies to designated Redevelopment Areas identified on the Future Land Use & Character map. Options may include items such as reduced setbacks, waiver to height limitations, increased signage, increased density, reduced parking standards, and reduced impact fees. The City can also conduct City-initiated rezonings to incentivize the development of vacant or incorrectly zoned property.

**Strategy 4:** *Identify and implement growth management techniques for areas within the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction.*

- **Intergovernmental Cooperation.** Coordinate the City's regulatory strategy for rural lot sizes with efforts by the Brazos County Health Department to increase the minimum required lot size for allowing on-site sewer treatment systems from one acre to a larger size, as needed, to address public health and safety concerns.
- **Pursue Development Balance.** Consider the development of regulations and fees that help level the playing field between in-City and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction development. Ensure that Extraterritorial Jurisdiction development contributes its fair share to the long-term costs of extending public infrastructure and services to fringe areas.
- **Growth Area Annexations.** Pursue strategic annexations, if feasible from a fiscal and service provision standpoint, to extend the City's land use regulations to Extraterritorial Jurisdiction areas facing immediate and near-term development pressures. This should also include areas where City utilities have already been extended.
- **Conservation Area Annexations.** Pursue strategic annexations in areas not targeted for significant urban or suburban development in the near term. This enables the City to apply growth management measures to discourage premature and inappropriate development.
- **Voluntary Annexations.** Utilize the utility extension policy as a means to encourage landowners to agree to annexation by way of voluntary petition to protect the City's long-term interests in significant areas of the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction, such as along key transportation corridors.
- **Non-Annexation Agreements.** Target certain annexation efforts to areas where land owners maintain a TEXAS TAX CODE exemption on their property for agricultural use. In such cases, the City must offer the property owner an opportunity to enter into a non-annexation development agreement with the City in lieu of annexation. This strategy can be an effective way of assuring limited development on the property for up to 15 years.

- **Fiscal Impact Analysis.** Continue to complete thorough cost benefit analyses to evaluate all proposed annexations. Explore available fiscal impact models that provide a more robust analysis.
- **Land Conservation.** In support of the Green College Station Action Plan, protect natural resources by recruiting land trusts and conservation organizations to consider acquisition and preservation of targeted open areas.
- **Expand ETJ Boundaries.** State law provides for ETJ boundaries ranging from ½ mile to 5 miles based on the number of City's inhabitants. In January 2014, the City of College Station exceeded 100,000 inhabitants and became eligible to increase the current 3.5 mile ETJ boundary to 5 miles. The ETJ may be extended by City Council Resolution.
- **Renew ETJ Common Boundary Agreement.** The current Common Boundary Agreement with the City of Bryan did not anticipated a five-mile ETJ for either City. Before the City expands its ETJ boundary, the ETJ common boundary agreement with the City of Bryan should be renewed.

*Strategy 5: Encourage and promote the redevelopment of land that is currently occupied by obsolete or non-functioning structures.*

- **Redevelopment of Retail.** Continue to emphasize redevelopment and revitalization opportunities for large retail sites such as Post Oak Mall and the vacant former grocery-anchored retail center along South College Avenue near University Drive.
- **Parking Management.** Encourage residential, commercial and mixed development models in the City's targeted Redevelopment Areas, as identified on the Future Land Use & Character map, that focus on integration of structured parking to enable more productive use of the overall site in place of extensive surface parking.
- **Zoning in Support of Redevelopment.** Review the effectiveness of the Redevelopment District (RDD) overlay zoning. Specifically, determine whether the minimum 20-year age requirement for pre-existing development is appropriate or if the minimum age should be removed to support revitalizing all areas with high vacancy. Consider applying the RDD zoning to designated Redevelopment Areas identified on the Future Land Use & Character map to encourage market-responsive development to occur at intersections of arterials within the City limits where there are significant amounts of underutilized lands.
- **Density/Intensity Bonuses.** Use the prospect of increased development yield (retail/office square footage and/or additional residential units in mixed-use developments) to entice redevelopment projects aiming for increased development intensity.