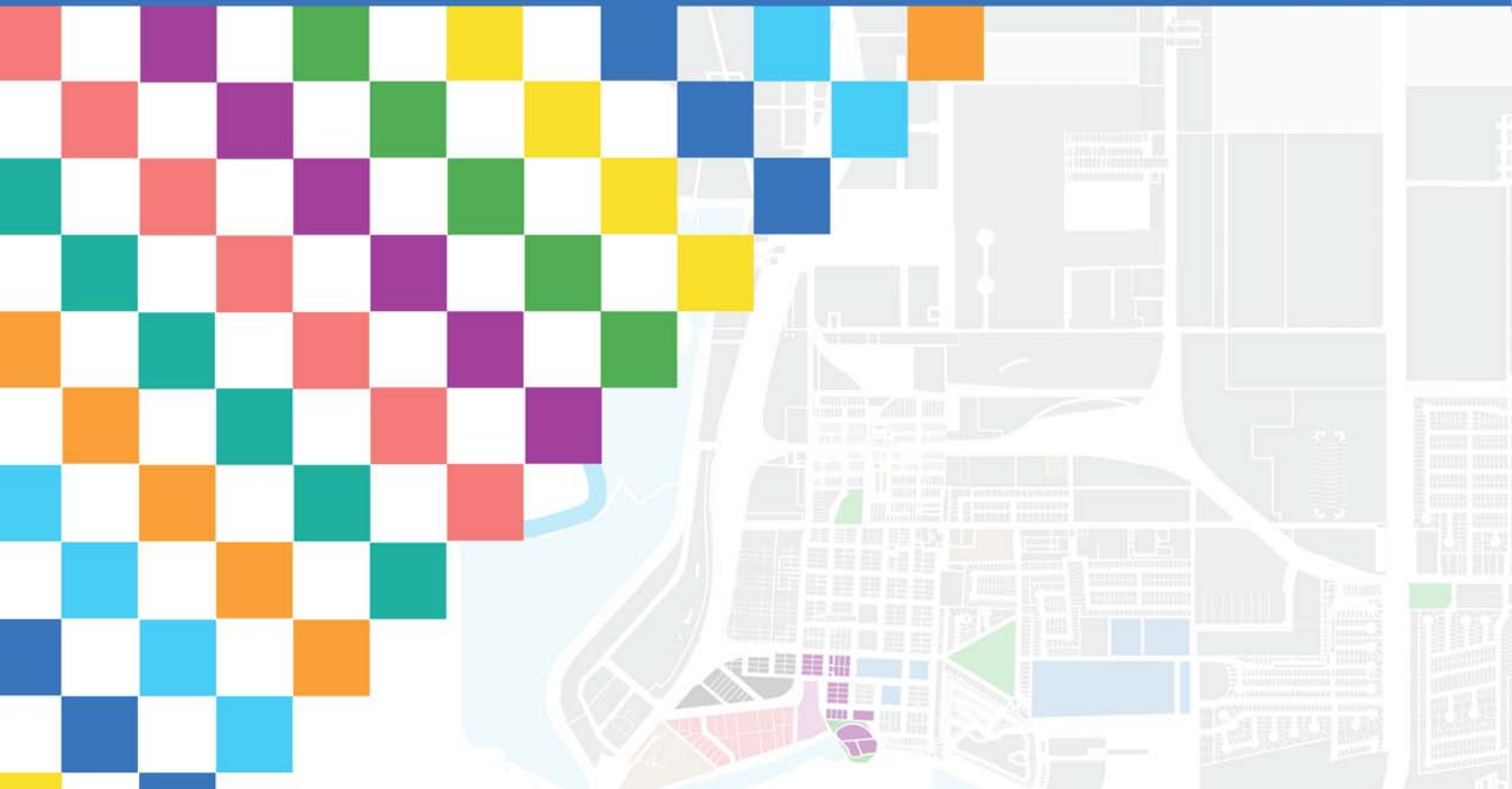




HIDALGO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2015 - 2035





Foreword

Planning Process

Hidalgo Comprehensive Plan 2035 provides a guide for the future growth of the city. This document was developed by Texas Target Communities in partnership with the City of Hidalgo.

Agreement between City and TTC

In the fall of 2014, the City of Hidalgo and Texas Target Communities partnered to create a task force to represent the community. The task force was integral to the planning process, contributing the thoughts, desires, and opinions of community members—as well as their enthusiasm about Hidalgo’s future. This eleven-month planning process ended in August 2015. The result of this collaboration is the City of Hidalgo Comprehensive Plan, which is the official policy guide for the community’s growth over the next twenty years.

Background of TTC

The Texas Target Communities program was initiated in 1993 by the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning at Texas A&M University. This program selects small cities from the state of Texas and provides the community residents with valuable assistance in planning. At the same time it serves as a “real world” learning laboratory for graduate students. Students gain valuable planning experience while the targeted community receives assistance that can make a positive difference in the quality of urban life for its residents. Cities are chosen for participation in the program based on demonstrated need and their commitment to the planning process.

Why Prepare a Comprehensive Plan and How to Use It

Comprehensive plans are “the central organizing umbrella under which other plans, regulations, and initiatives exist.”¹ They typically have long-range planning horizons between 20 and 30 years. These public documents, along with relevant zoning maps, can be used to guide, support, and justify city land use and decision-making in the future. A comprehensive plan should include the overall vision for the community, as well as a plan for the physical growth, development, and preservation of the land. Furthermore, an inclusive comprehensive plan should envision future growth in the various fields of transportation, community facilities and infrastructure, economy, parks and open spaces, natural and cultural resources, and housing.



Hidalgo Comprehensive Plan: 2035 is a fully-developed planning document that can provide guidance for a variety of urban development activities. As such, it may be used to:

- Communicate the overreaching vision;
- Guide individual development approvals by representatives such as elected officials and the planning board;
- Serve as a basis for land-use regulations such as zoning, subdivision regulations, etc.;
- Inform and support capital improvement plans.

The Development and Structure of the Plan

The guiding principles for this planning process were Hidalgo’s vision statement and its corresponding goals, which were crafted by the task force. The goals focus on factors of growth and development including: community facilities/infrastructure, economic development, transportation, housing, and social vulnerability, parks, and environment.

Next, four Alternative Scenarios were developed as possible strategies Hidalgo could adopt to meet its goals. The task force expressed strong support for some of the key characteristics from two scenarios, which were then combined to form the Preferred Future Land Use Plan. The Preferred Plan is promoted and protected in this plan, but this does not limit the range of options that developers have—the Preferred Plan actually increases development opportunities.

After Chapter 1 presents the background and history of Hidalgo and its residents and Chapter 2 tells the story of its vision, Chapters 3 through 8 of this document outline the goals, objectives, policies, timeline of actions, and responsible parties. Each chapter explores the issues and opportunities of each plan component that will serve as the building blocks for it to be implemented. All the issues and threats are addressed with recommendations and proposed solutions, which are supported with maps and other analytical tools. Finally, in Chapter 9 the funding programs can be found, along with the funding sources for implementing the recommendations of this plan.

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Executive Summary

The Future of Hidalgo

The City of Hidalgo Comprehensive Plan is the result of collaboration between the City of Hidalgo, Hidalgo community members, and Texas Target Communities (TTC) at Texas A&M University. The process began with the first planning meeting between the TTC team and the Hidalgo Task Force (composed of Hidalgo community members) in the fall of 2014. Work continued with three more meetings during the winter of 2014 and summer of 2015. These meetings were used as the basis for the development of this comprehensive plan.

The Introduction of the City of Hidalgo

Chapter 1 gives a brief overview of Hidalgo's geographic location and its people. It recounts the historic past of the city to provide background and to highlight the major turning points that helped shape the city into what it is today. It then introduces the demographic characteristics of the city, including the population trends and future projections, along with the current density, age distribution, and race/ethnicity profile. All of this information is meant to bring the reader up-to-date with the current City of Hidalgo.

The New Vision Statement: City of Hidalgo, birthplace of Hidalgo County, is a diverse, progressive, and friendly community which celebrates its heritage, traditions, and natural resources, offers high-quality options to live, learn, work, and play, and welcomes visitors with a broad range of safe, modern, and efficient services.

Participatory Planning Process and Results

Chapter 2 outlines the participatory planning process and provides a summary of the meetings that took place between TTC and the Task Force. During these public involvement meetings, the city vision and goals were established. This vision statement was used as the basis for developing this comprehensive plan. Then, in order to help guide the decisions that will enable the city to achieve the vision, goals were created which focus on the main factors of growth and development: community facilities and infrastructure, economic activities, transportation, housing, and parks and environment.

Land Use

Chapter 3 serves as a guide to keep land use in line with the vision of Hidalgo by proposing the Preferred Land Use Plan. Four land use scenarios were developed and presented to the Task Force for review. The Task Force then identified the pieces of each of the scenarios that they felt best matched Hidalgo's future, based on the community values. The Preferred Land Use Plan has three growth districts: Hidalgo Viejo district, Arena district, and Canal district. The Hidalgo Viejo district focuses on historic attractions with a cultural center. The Arena district focuses on the clustered commercial and industrial development, taking advantage of entertainment activity in the State Farm



Arena. The Canal district focuses on commercial and mixed-use development along waterfront areas by creating three Planned Unit Districts (PUD) that will maximize pedestrian and vehicular access.

Transportation

In Chapter 4, the State of Transportation Report examines the current road classification, transit services, street connectivity, available sidewalks, and biking and walking trails. It identifies several strengths and weaknesses related to Hidalgo's transportation network. For example, a notable transportation feature is the irrigation canal, which is a natural asset that can guide the future development, but also impedes east-west accessibility within Hidalgo. Other important aspects of Hidalgo's transportation system are the lack of safe road connections between public facilities and the infrastructure's inability to adequately support alternative transportation modes.

In order to improve safety, connectivity, and multimodal transportation conditions throughout the city and regionally, several recommendations are made. These include proposed road classifications, roadways and extensions, public transit, signalization, and bike and sidewalk infrastructure. They call for enhanced regional and local vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access, as well as expanded public transit. Finally, the chapter outlines the related funding sources to improve the quality of transportation infrastructure.

Community Facilities and Infrastructure

Chapter 5 addresses the current built environment of the City of Hidalgo, especially community facilities and infrastructure. Community services and infrastructure provide the utilities that help to maintain Hidalgo's quality of life. Examples include fire stations, schools, civic centers, water management, sewage and storm water management, and other services. This chapter also presents the results of a suitability analysis to decide the future location of the police stations, fire stations, schools, and libraries. The redevelopment plan for the Hidalgo Viejo Cultural Center positions the cultural complex as the main attractor for the city—one which will create a downtown area full of social and cultural activities.

Economic Development

Chapter 6 explains the economy of the City of Hidalgo. This information includes the distribution of industrial activities and analyses of the local industries, employment, unemployment, and income. It allows Hidalgo to see how their city will grow and what jobs need to grow in tandem. Currently, the City



of Hidalgo has 5,588 jobs in the city, but only 303 people both live and work in the city. And three industry categories (Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting; Health Care and Social Assistance; and Retail Trade) have been identified as potential exporters. Hidalgo already has unique and advantageous features for economic development, such as historical background, waterfront areas, and large traffic volume (up to 28,000 daily car traffic) through Highways 115 and 336. This chapter also addresses business retention, expansion of job opportunities, tourism-related business revitalization, downtown repopulation, and canal area development—all of which take advantage of unique features of the city.

Park and Environment

Chapter 7 examines the current conditions in terms of potential hazards, social vulnerability, existing natural environment, and the park system. According to this research, the irrigation canal and National Wildlife Refuge are specified as natural assets and opportunities to improve the tourism industry. Nevertheless, there is still a lack of sufficient, safe, and well-connected parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities to meet the needs of the existing and future population. This inquiry led to the proposal of new recommendations that attempt to promote water and air quality, minimize potential hazards damage to the natural and built environment, educate residents about environmental and hazard mitigation programs, enhance the use of the irrigation canal as a natural and touristic asset, create new parks and open spaces in close proximity to residential areas and schools, equip them with technology, and beautify them in harmony with local landscape.

Housing

Chapter 8 addresses existing housing costs, values, unit types, stock age, and tax revenues. According to the State of Housing report, the housing stock consists of mostly high-quality single-family homes that might not be affordable for all families. Therefore, some households are forced to either leave the city or remain burdened by excessive housing costs. On the other hand, Hidalgo has plenty of vacant lands that could be used for future construction. This information allows Hidalgo to see what housing types need to grow in which locations to support the future of the community. Therefore, the recommendations are mainly focused on the construction of sufficient housing to meet the 2035 growth projections. Simultaneously, they seek to increase the quality of life and health for current and new residents via safe construction techniques, proximity to recreational opportunities, and public transportation.



Funding Sources

Chapter 9, the final section of the plan, provides detailed descriptions of implementation strategies. It begins by briefly describing grants and other funding opportunities in the areas of transportation, community facilities, historic preservation, economic development, parks and environment, and housing. It then provides an implementation table which guides the reader in matching funding programs to action items in various chapters of this comprehensive plan. The purpose of this is to ensure that the City of Hidalgo does not miss any opportunity of acquiring the necessary funding to achieve its goals and make its aspirational vision a reality.

1 INTRODUCTION



Area Description

Hidalgo, Texas, lies on the United States-Mexico border near the southernmost tip of Texas. It has a population of approximately 13,000, most of whom are of Hispanic or Latino origin. The City of Hidalgo is located in Hidalgo County and the McAllen-Edinburg-Mission Metropolitan Statistical Area. Its neighboring U.S. cities are Pharr and McAllen. Across the Mexican border lies Reynosa, Tamaulipas, with a population of around one million.

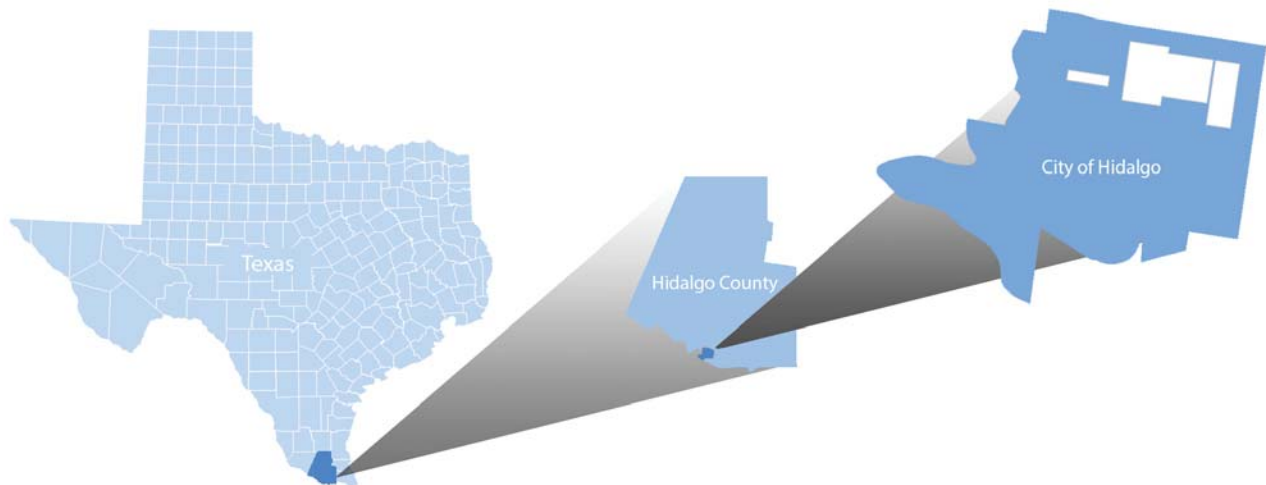


Figure 1-1 The City of Hidalgo Location

Southern Hidalgo contains Lake Texano, Lake Tropicana and Carlson Lake, and also borders the Rio Grande. Because the historic city abuts the Rio Grande to the west and south, the newer development has occurred mostly towards the east of the original town, with slight growth to the north. The original part of the city contains historic buildings such as the old Jailhouse, the Border Bank building, the historic Pumphouse, and residential structures.

The city has grown in size and amenities and now boasts the StateFarm Arena, a \$20-million multi-purpose complex.¹ Hidalgo's motto—Small City, BIG Amenities—rings true. The city hosts numerous cultural events for itself and for nearby communities.²



*Figure 1-2 The Historic Hidalgo Pumphouse*¹

History

The City of Hidalgo was first settled in 1749 by a Spanish colonist, Jose de Escandon. De Escandon founded over twenty towns and villages and is sometimes called the “father” of the lower Rio Grande Valley.³ Hidalgo continued to remain a part of colonial Spain until 1821, when the Mexican War of Independence ended and Mexico was no longer under Spanish control. In 1852 John Young settled in the area and decided to rename the town to Edinburgh. The town of Edinburgh (current-day Hidalgo) became the county seat for the newly formed Hidalgo County. By 1848 the Mexican-American War had ended and the city was annexed to the United States with the rest of Texas. In 1885 the city’s name finally changed to Hidalgo in honor of the Mexican patriot, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, a leader in the Mexican War of Independence. The town continued to remain the county seat until 1908, when it was relocated to the new town of Edinburg due to repeated flooding of the Rio Grande.

During the early years, the town’s chief economic activity was cattle raising, using the trail known as “El Camino Real” to link the town’s ranches with other settlements in the region. Hidalgo also began to focus on agriculture, first on a small scale but later growing after the Pumphouse was built in 1912. The Pumphouse allowed for larger scale agriculture to flourish by providing canal water to over 72,000 acres of land.

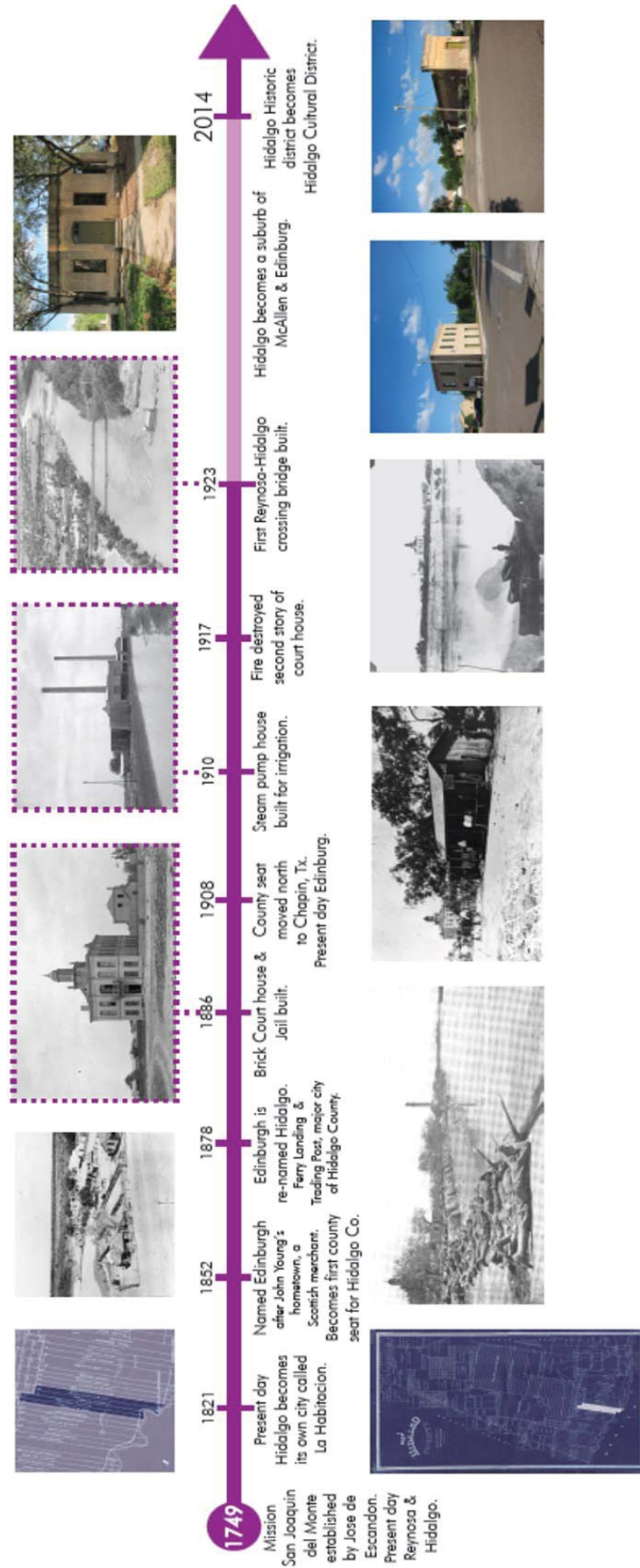


Figure 1-3 Hidalgo through the years ii



Figure 1-4 The Hidalgo County Courthouse, 1886 ⁱⁱⁱ

In 1913 the railroad arrived and connected Hidalgo to neighboring US and Mexican cities. ⁴ From 1848 until the early 20th century, Hidalgo was a trading center focused along the Rio Grande. Trade began to thrive after a bridge was built in the 1920s to connect Hidalgo with the nearby Mexican city of Reynosa. Ferry crossings and steamboat landings were also used to reach other cities.

People and Culture

In order to gain a clearer picture of social groups, Esri's Tapestry Segmentation classifies neighborhoods into 67 segments based on their socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. ⁵ Esri Tapestry Segmentation describes Hidalgo as being almost evenly split between Southwestern Families and Barrios Urbanos, which are quite similar segments. About 52% of the population is Southwestern Families, who are married couples living in single-family homes. Most of these families are younger and have children; their lifestyles are centered on their children and their family. The Barrios Urbanos makes up 48% of the population, and they also consist of family-centered married couples living in single-family homes. They are a younger generation that is rich in cultural traditions. Both groups tend to have skilled positions in manufacturing, construction, and retail services. ⁶



Figure 1-5 Recreational Activities near State Farm Arena ^{iv}

Today, the City of Hidalgo is a growing community that takes pride in its cultural heritage. It is supported by a strong local government that works to provide the city with superior amenities and economic resources. In 1995 the City of Hidalgo partnered with Texas A&M University to create its first Comprehensive Plan. In 2014 these two entities have partnered again to create an updated Hidalgo Comprehensive Plan to guide the city's future growth and development.



Demographic Information

Historical Population Trends

As seen in Table 1-1, in 1970 Hidalgo had a population of 1,289 and since then the population has been increasing steadily. In the decade from 1990 to 2000, there was a dramatic population increase in which the population doubled from 3,292 to 7,322. Figure 1-6 shows the historical growth of the City of Hidalgo with the historical growth of Hidalgo County and the state of Texas. The population growth rate of the city is higher than the county and state. However, since 2000 the population growth rate has gradually declined and the city is now growing much slower. Figure 1-7 shows the total population for each decade. The current population is 13,273 as of 2013.^{7 8}

Table 1-1: Population Trends 1970-2013

Year	Hidalgo City		Hidalgo County		Texas State	
	Pop.	% Change	Pop.	% Change	Pop.	% Change
1970	1,289		181,535		11,198,655	
1980	2,288	78%	283,323	56%	14,225,513	27%
1990	3,292	44%	383,545	35%	16,986,510	19%
2000	7,322	122%	569,463	48%	20,851,820	23%
2010	11,198	53%	774,769	36%	25,145,561	21%
2013 (est.)	13,273	19%	815,996	5%	26,448,193	5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census; 2013 ACS Estimate

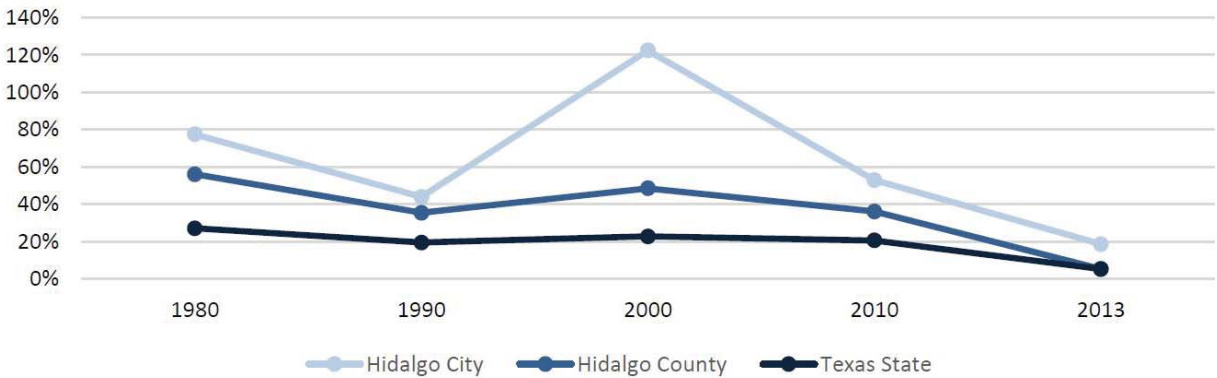


Figure 1-6 Historical Rate of Population Growth ^v

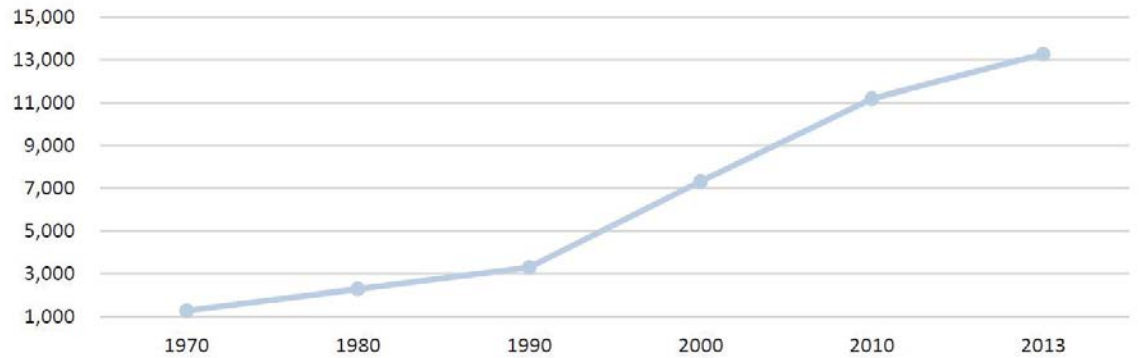


Figure 1-7 Hidalgo City Population from 1970-2013 ^{vi}

Population Projections

Figure 1-8 shows the projected population through 2035. Two scenarios were reviewed to project the population’s growth over the next two decades. Both scenarios indicate that Hidalgo will grow considerably by 2035. The low growth scenario projects that the population will reach nearly 20,089 by 2035, and the high growth scenario projects that it will hit about 23,080 by 2035. With large population growth expected over the next 20 years, it is important that the city start planning for growth early to ensure that it is the right type of growth for the city. The detailed projection process is attached in the appendix (Table A-1).

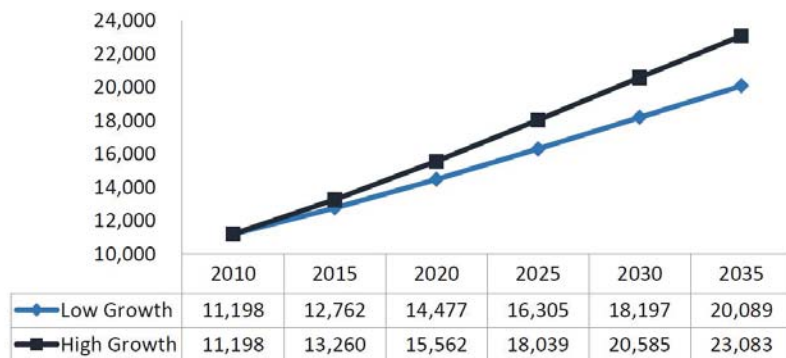


Figure 1-8 Total Population Projection through 2035



Population Density

Population density indicates where people are concentrated within the city. Figure 1-9 shows the number of people per square mile by U.S. Census Blocks. There are two clusters of population on the north side of downtown and on the northwestern side of U.S. Highway 281. Most of the area on the northeastern side of U.S. Highway 281 is unpopulated.⁹

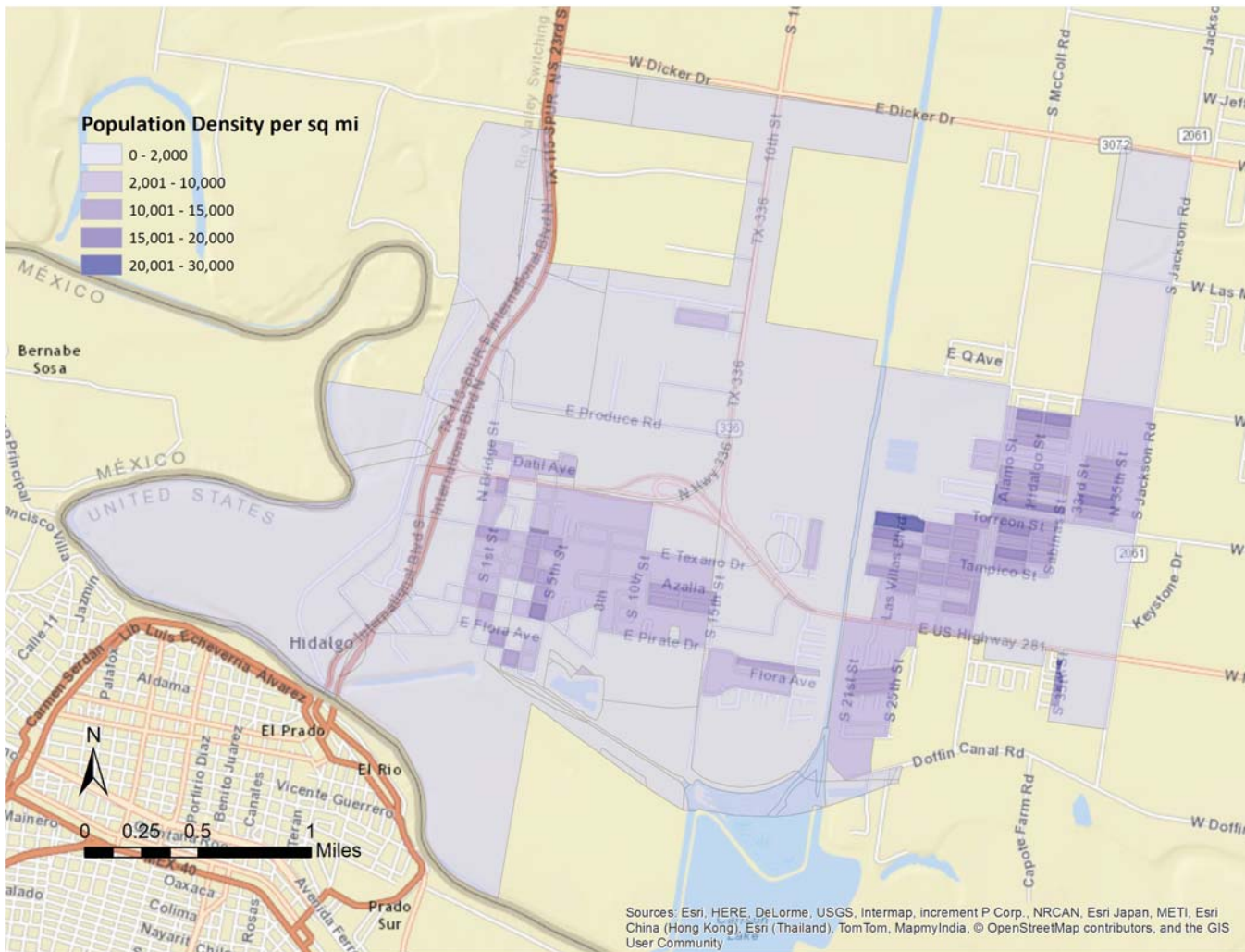


Figure 1-9 2010 Population Density^{vii}



Population Age Distribution

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2012 52.5 % of the population was between 20 and 64, and 40.0% of the population were under 20. This is roughly the same percentage working age population (20-64) as the county, but quite a lot less than the state (around 60%) (see Figure 1-10). A large proportion of Hidalgo’s population is of workforce age and made up of households with children.

The population age pyramid in Figure 1-11 shows the distribution of males and females throughout the different age cohorts. Between 2000 and 2010, all age groups increased in size. The largest age group is under 20 years old, and it has significantly increased. This is higher than state distributions and suggests a healthy number of working families with children.^{10 11}

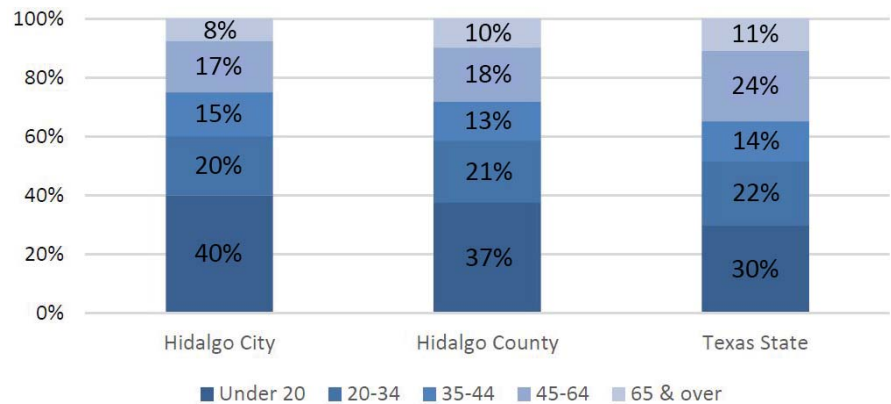


Figure 1-10 Age Distributions 2012^{viii}

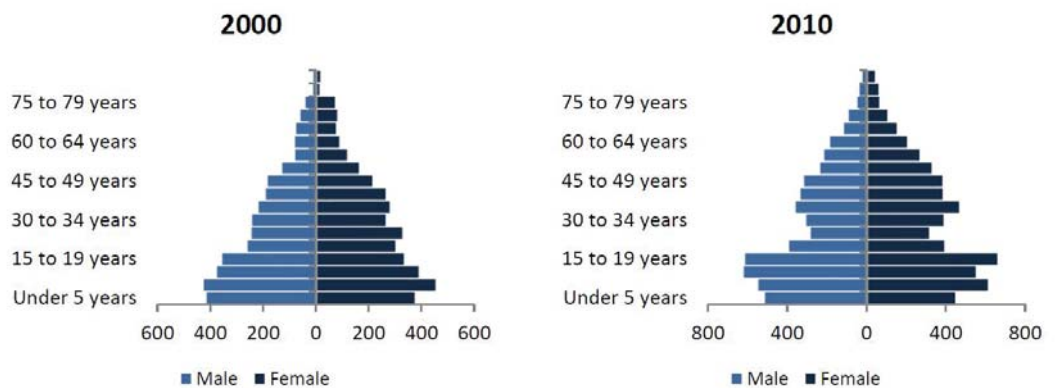


Figure 1-11 Population Pyramids^{ix}



Educational Attainment

Figure 1-12 compares the educational attainment of Hidalgo to that of the county and state. A significant portion of the population over 25 has less than a high school degree. According to 2012 Census data, 40% of the city's population have not completed high school, compared to 36% for the county and 19% for the state. The county and state have a higher percentages of individuals with at least some college education. The percentage of those who have completed at least some college is 30% for the city, 39% for the county, and 56% for the state.¹²

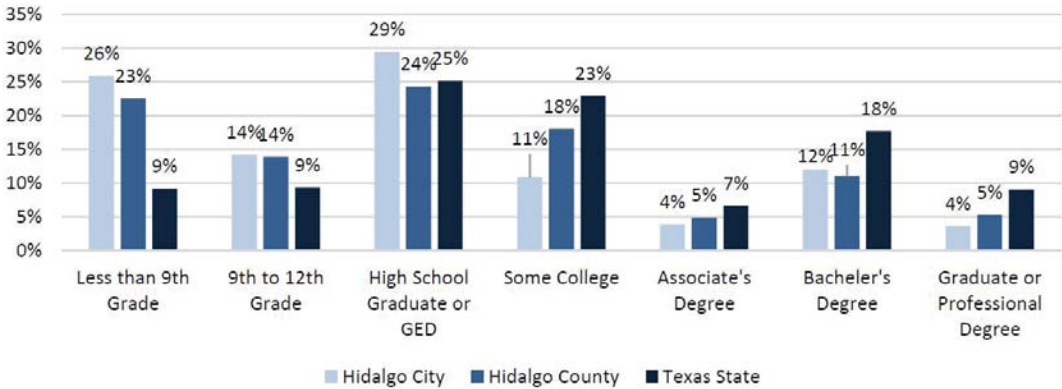


Figure 1-12 Educational Attainment 2012^x

Race and Ethnicity Profile

Figure 1-13 compares the racial makeup of the city, county, and state. According to the most recent U.S. Census data, 98% of Hidalgo's residents are of Hispanic origin, compared to the county's 91% and the state's 37%. For the city, only 2% were White alone, and less than 1% were Black or African American alone, Asian alone, or Other.¹³

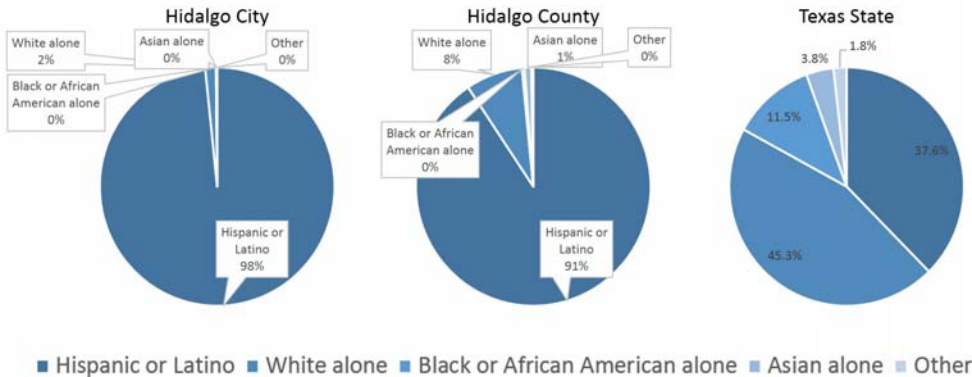


Figure 1-13 Racial Makeup^{xi}

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2 PARTICIPATORY PLANNING



Original Vision Statement: A model city built with pride, Hidalgo is safe and stable, has a beautiful environment and accessible leadership, provides outreach to its citizens, exceptional services and support to education, welcomes families and businesses, and preserves and celebrates its heritage, traditions and natural resources.

Every city has challenges and opportunities that need to be addressed by the public so that they have the chance to gain autonomy over their future. During public involvement meetings with members of the Hidalgo community, several topics, themes, and visions for the future arose. Based on this input, the city vision, goals, and objectives were established.

A vision statement is meant to encompass what the city wants to accomplish in the long term and who they want to be. It is usually a sentence or two and uses key words to describe the ideal they wish to reach—and the vision statement should dream big. To help guide the decisions that will enable the city to achieve the vision, goals are created. Hidalgo's goals focus on the main factors of growth and development: community facilities and infrastructure, economic activities, transportation, housing, and parks and open spaces. Finally, specific and measurable objectives are created. Objectives are development-related guidelines that identify tasks to complete and the means and timeframe in which these tasks should be completed.

This chapter is a summary of the visions and goals created by the Hidalgo public in order to enhance the city and community they live in. These principles are developed based on the core values and themes that have emerged from the community's visioning process. They have been used to develop alternative scenarios that represent different approaches to dealing with growth and development.

Orientation Meeting

This first meeting was held to provide an opportunity to review the previously completed State of the Community Report, to establish the purpose and roles of the task force members, and to refine the existing vision statement based on the current conditions, needs, and wishes of the city. The meeting began by determining the learning objectives, then the project background was discussed and the core team and task force team members were introduced.



Figure 2-1 Orientation meeting

Visioning

The City of Hidalgo already had an established vision statement before the comprehensive planning process began. The purpose of the first visioning meeting was to ensure that the vision statement still reflected the vision of the community, and also to flesh out what that vision was. Before the vision statement was discussed, the State of the Community Report was introduced in order to present the fact base used during the visioning process. This report shows the current demographic, environmental, and development trends, giving the core team and task force an overview of where the city started and how it is continuing to change. The student project presentation, “Revitalizing History,” also told the story of growth and change in Hidalgo, while offering a local perspective of revitalizing Hidalgo Viejo—one way the City of Hidalgo could grow. After reviewing the history and trends, the existing vision statement was provided so the group could see how or whether the vision represented their city. The core team and task force were encouraged to have an in-depth discussion to better understand the vision. They sought to ascertain who created their city vision and when it was developed. The desired outcome was to determine what—if anything—should be changed.



New Vision: City of Hidalgo, birthplace of Hidalgo County, is a diverse, progressive, and friendly community which celebrates its heritage, traditions, and natural resources, offers high-quality options to live, learn, work, and play, and welcomes visitors with a broad range of safe, modern, and efficient services.

Vision Statement Breakdown

The discussion brought to light some parts of the vision statement that participants felt did not necessarily represent Hidalgo. Further progress was made by asking questions about certain word choices and even recommending some changes based on what the group wanted for Hidalgo's future.

The group wanted to include new key words that represent Hidalgo like: tourism, friendliness, birthplace of the county, collaborative community, diverse, and progress. These words were incorporated into the new vision statement to set a foundation for how Hidalgo wants to direct future growth. Some of the current vision statement words were also questioned to determine if they were still relevant.

New Vision Statement

After a thorough analysis and discussion of the current vision statement, the group decided and agreed upon a new vision statement for Hidalgo. The new vision statement is as follows: The City of Hidalgo, birthplace of Hidalgo County, is a diverse, progressive, and friendly community which celebrates its heritage, traditions, and natural resources, offers high-quality options to live, learn, work, and play, and welcomes visitors with a broad range of safe, modern, and efficient services.

A Vision Realized

After establishing a new vision statement for the City of Hidalgo, the concrete actions and steps towards realizing and achieving this vision needed to be determined. Vision statements are achieved by reaching the goals that support them. The group was asked to define what it believed a goal was. Knowing what a goal is and how to write it out helped the task force to better create goals.

Each member had an opportunity to write their comments and thoughts in the form of a goal that could be included in Hidalgo's goals. While working on this activity, they were asked to reflect on the question: "In order for Hidalgo to live up to the vision, what needs to be in place with regard to the following Comprehensive Plan categories?"

- Transportation
- Community Facilities and Infrastructure

- Economic Development
- Parks, Recreation and Environment
- Housing

With this in mind, they were asked to also look at the previously established goals for the city and determine if they still made sense. Then the task force wrote down some goals and ideas that they felt should be a priority for the City of Hidalgo. The proposed goals for the five major sections of the Comprehensive Plan are listed in the following section.

Goals Meeting

After systematizing all of the comments and suggestions from the orientation meeting, the top goals for each category were listed. The identified list was confirmed by the task force in the second meeting.

The task force developed the following goals to help guide the city towards accomplishing the vision statement. The goals are categorized into five sections: Transportation, Community Facilities/ Infrastructure, Economic Development, Parks and Environment, and Housing.



Figure 2-2 Goals meeting



Chapter 4: Transportation

Goal: Create opportunities for alternative modes of transportation that will increase safety, flow, and connectivity within the city, while using beauty and innovation to guide development and encourage use.

Increased safe accessibility to high-opportunity destinations such as youth centers, State Farm Arena, historic downtown, parks, etc. provides citizens a variety of ways to travel to popular places within town. The task force expressed a strong desire to achieve this goal through the creation of infrastructure to support alternative modes of travel. Hidalgo is capable of maintaining multimodal transportation due to its small size, the relative nearness of destinations, and natural potential. The most recently discussed transportation features are the development of walking and biking trails and public transit within Hidalgo.

Task force Feedback

- More sidewalks
- Sidewalks on both sides of Bridge Street
- Make Bridge and Coma Streets more accessible by revitalizing sidewalks
- Increase transportation from Bridge to retail shops via city bus system trolley
- Increase public transit
- Improve major corridors like Coma Street with vegetation and signage to welcome visitors
- Beautify our entrances and exit roads, e.g., Bridge Street and the International Land Bridge



Chapter 5: Community Facilities and Infrastructure

Goal: Expand community facilities and infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future residents of Hidalgo that provide the community with safety, education, and health benefits.

The quality and condition of public facilities can be significant enough to affect the overall image of community life and values. Task force members believe that beyond simply establishing the necessary facilities to support education, youth needs, and public health, the provision of a secure and well-designed urban environment can demonstrate the community's capability to satisfy the

residents and visitors.

Hidalgo should take current and future growth into consideration in order to stay sustainable. This can be achieved through the expansion and improvement of water, sewer, and utility infrastructures.

Task force Feedback

- More lighting around school zones and along Coma and Bridge Streets
- Capitalize on existing resources and built environment
- Focus on potential areas for community facilities near the parks, City Hall, and historical district. Later, add to undeveloped areas and make both meet.
- Install a water loop system
- Use existing facilities and reconstruct historical district
- Continue to improve infrastructure

Chapter 6: Economic Development

Goal: Create economic advantages that will encourage diverse businesses to locate in Hidalgo, with a focus on underutilized areas, revitalizing the city and producing a competitive edge.

The task force voiced interest in growing the tax base of Hidalgo. They identified the historical downtown and local vacant lands as two target areas that can potentially provide increased opportunities for businesses to thrive and the local tourism industry to improve.

Task force Feedback

- Find incentives to encourage and enable businesses to boost their trade
- More restaurants and shopping plazas
- Increase economic development through heritage tourism
- Survey historic resources to promote tourism
- Advertisement: visit historical Hidalgo, TX





Chapter 7: Parks and Environment

Goal: Enhance the beauty, safety, and functionality of the parks by recreational and educational opportunities through modernized elements and connectivity.

This goal represents Hidalgo's desire to improve the condition of existing parks, in addition to developing new ones according to population projections. Task force members believe that inviting parks equipped with high technology, attractive programs, and family-friendly environments can play a major role in enhancing the quality of life in Hidalgo. Also, safe and well-connected biking and walking trails that connect parks with schools and residential neighborhoods can support equal access to parks for citizens.

Task force Feedback

- Add improvements to existing parks
- Incorporate vibrant colors in park design to attract visitors
- Add bike and pedestrian pathways
- Surface treatment to encourage walkability
- Develop safe connectors between recreation and parks with walking trails.
- Provide seating all along walking paths so it becomes a diverse environment where children and adults could interact.



Chapter 8: Housing

Goal: Increase and diversify housing options to attract and support a mixture of income levels and housing needs.

Hidalgo aims to be a desirable place to live with a larger housing supply that provides a variety of housing options for everyone, regardless of socioeconomic status. There should be housing to fit the needs of a typical single-family household, but also the needs of the millennial, the empty-nester looking to downsize, and the individual and family with below-average income.

Task force Feedback

- Affordable housing
- Increasing awareness
- Apartment complex to attract more citizens and grow our tax base

3 LAND USE



Introduction

Land use is an all-encompassing issue in comprehensive planning. It is essentially the decision of what to put where. Due to its current growth rate, Hidalgo is experiencing increased demand on its land. This chapter, along with the rest of the Comprehensive Plan, will serve as a guide to keep that demand in line with the vision of Hidalgo by proposing alternative scenarios that have different strategies for managing growth. These alternative scenarios are meant to answer questions such as how, where, and to what extent the city should develop. They are based on a thoughtful comparison of input received during community meetings as well as research on precedents, circumstances, and trends.

Current Land Use and Zoning

Land use planning regulates usage of the land in an effective way to prevent conflicts between different desired uses. Figure 3-1 shows the current land use in the City of Hidalgo. Residential areas are clustered in the southern and western parts of the city. Most of the commercial services are located along US 281 and downtown. Table 3-1 indicates the current land use types and acreage in the city. The majority of the land within the City of Hidalgo is Shrub and Brush Rangeland. The second-largest land use by area is Cropland and Pasture.

Land use planning usually includes zoning, the common form of land use regulation. The city controls the development of property via zoning regulations and restrictions. Figure 3-2 shows the current zoning. There are 10 zoning categories in the city.¹ The zoning plan, along with the existing land use patterns, should be taken into consideration when designing strategic city investments in order to ensure citywide benefits and to achieve the long-term goals.

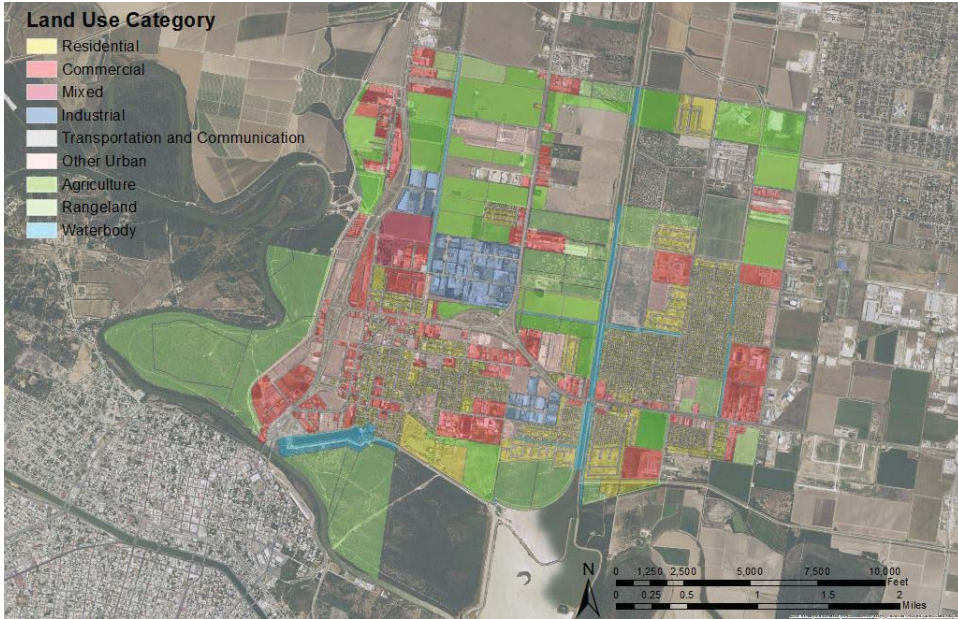


Figure 3-1 Current Land Use Map ⁱ

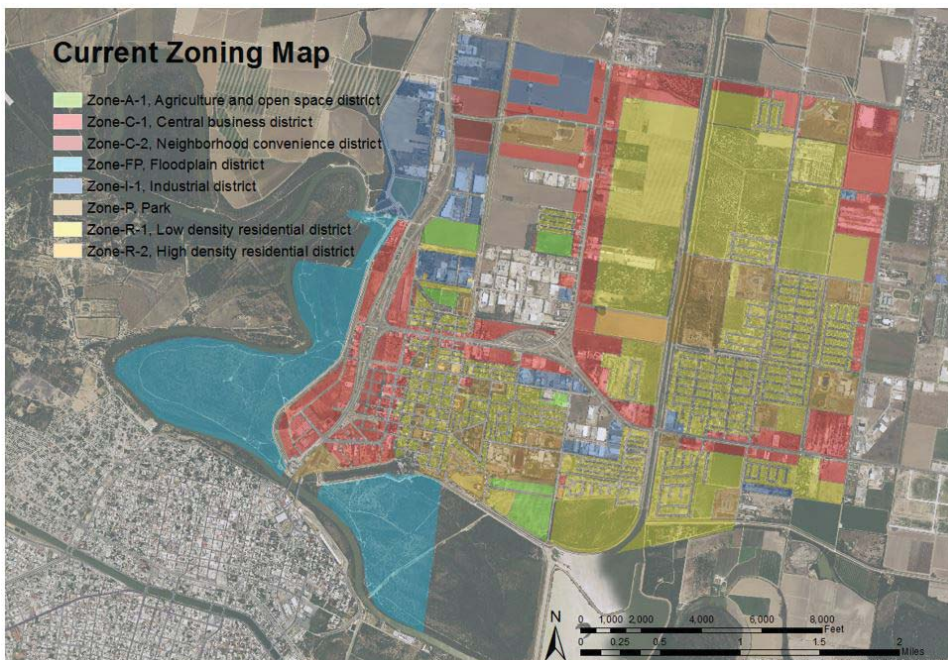


Figure 3-2 Current Zoning Map ⁱⁱ

Table 3-1: Acreage for All Land Use Types

Land Use Type	# of Acres
Residential	762.31
Commercial Services	793.2
Industrial	205.13
Park	31.78
Cropland and Pasture	1565.88
Shrub and Brush Rangeland	1738.18
Mixed Urban/ Built-Up Land	80.52
Other Urban/ Built-Up Land	316.646
Transportation/ Communication	103.21
Lake	478.43
Stream and Canal	201.34
Total	6276.626

Scenario Planning

Scenario planning is an effective way of envisioning and planning for the future, and it can also increase public engagement in the process. As uncertainty increases and the amount of available resources decreases, it becomes imperative for communities to consider the full range of emerging conditions that could affect them. Only after they have considered these potential conditions can they ensure that they adopt policies and pursue investments to respond to those changes and ultimately make the community more resilient.

In order for scenario planning to be successful, input and support from the public are needed. This can be gained through workshops, public forums, and other forms of civic engagement. Ideally, during this process the community members should receive information about the issues they are facing and give their own feedback. All stakeholders are encouraged to think about alternative development-management approaches that may be better equipped to deal with future needs.¹ For Hidalgo’s comprehensive plan, the input from the task force meetings and open house presentation were included in the discussion of the preferred growth plans and in drafting objectives for scenarios.



Four scenarios were created:

- “Heritage of Hidalgo” assumes the city will focus on historical, cultural, and natural assets
- “Status Quo” assumes that planning efforts will follow the current zoning patterns
- “Neighborhood Centers” assumes the city will focus on developing neighborhood centers in existing residential areas in the city
- “Modern Hidalgo” assumes that planning and development efforts will focus on economic development

Scenario 1 – Heritage of Hidalgo

The “Heritage of Hidalgo” scenario aims to take advantage of Hidalgo’s historic and cultural background to provide more recreational opportunities, mitigate environmental issues, and increase Hidalgo’s overall desirability and attractiveness. By investing in historic preservation and cultural events, the City of Hidalgo can expect to see an increase in property values and social connectedness, better opportunities for healthy and active living, and a stronger sense of community among its residents. Preserved historical and natural areas can also serve as natural connectors within the community, allowing people to get from one place to another without an automobile. These areas are ideal places for educating people about nature and environmental awareness, and can give rise to ecotourism opportunities, which could in turn generate revenue for the city.

Concept Plan & Key Characteristics

Use historical, cultural, and natural assets of the city to expand attractions, present a clear city identity, and encourage tourism.

- Revitalized historical downtown
- Open spaces for gathering, learning, and creating sense of community
- Natural and recreational attractions (biking and walking trails) along canals
- Multi-modal transportation infrastructure with increased safety



A ⁱⁱⁱ



B ^{iv}



C ^v



D ^{vi}



E ^{vii}

- Increased visitors from International Bridge to downtown area and State Farm Arena
- Connected nature trails and paths with linkages to downtown

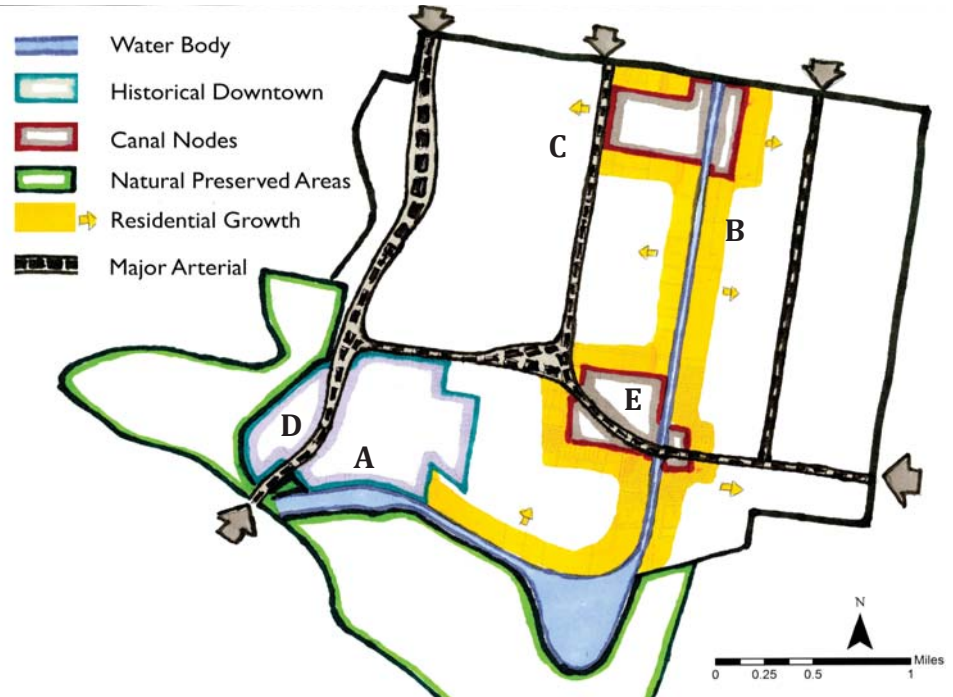


Figure 3-3 Heritage of Hidalgo Concept Map and Examples

Resulting Patterns

- Increased retail/commercial areas downtown, keeping businesses small and local
- Gradual revitalization of historical streets, including S. 1st, S. 2nd, Esperanza Avenue, Rhode Avenue
- Smaller but more frequent cultural events, using the downtown area and arena to host
- Increased walking and bicycling infrastructure (benches, lights, bike racks, lanes)
- Increased trees and landscaping along roads
- New signage for the City of Hidalgo along I-128
- Locally produced artwork to create an identity for Hidalgo and show cultural support

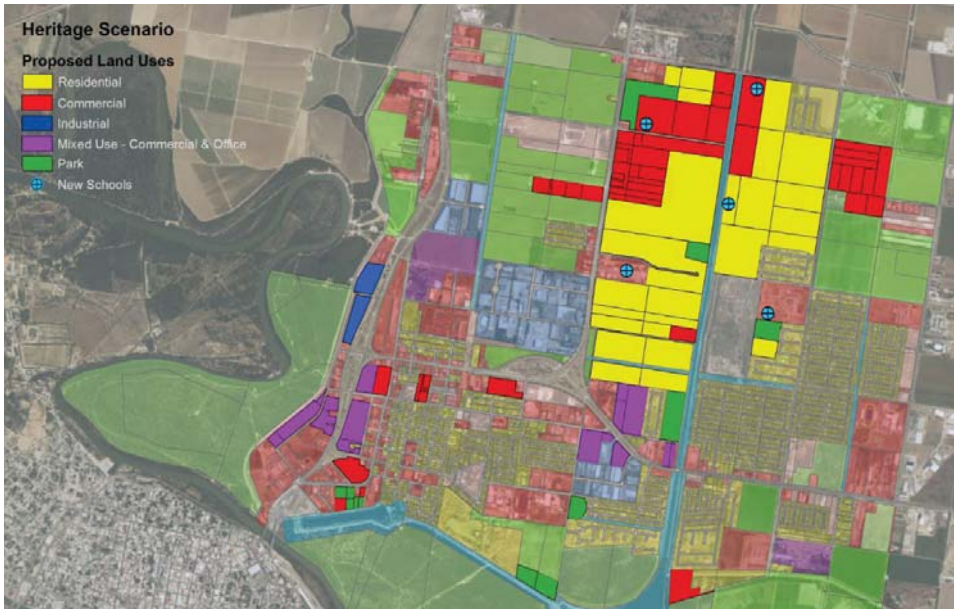


Figure 3-4 Heritage of Hidalgo Future Land Use Map

Benefits:

- Greater sense of community
- More recreational opportunities
- Increased commuters and visitors
- Increase in available jobs
- Increased tax revenue to the city
- Better bike/pedestrian connectivity
- More transit-oriented development

Potential Drawbacks:

- Limited land available for other uses
- High cost of maintaining and operating revitalizations and new developments
- Pedestrian and cyclist congestion on bike and walking trails near attractions
- High cost of transit network



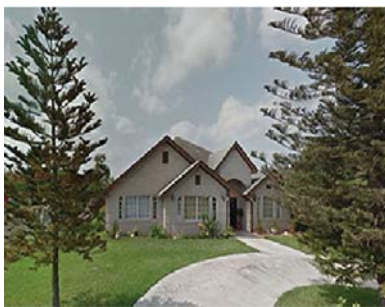
A ^{viii}



B ^{ix}



C ^x



D ^{xi}



E ^{xii}

Scenario 2 – Status Quo

The “Status Quo” scenario defines the City of Hidalgo as it would grow under its current zoning plan. The result is a much larger city with a small-town feel and a sprawling form. Indeed, the current zoning creates large clusters of specified land use areas and minimal mixing of uses. Currently, the commercial development plan focuses on the city roadsides, promoting auto-oriented development. This kind of scenario hinders residents’ abilities to use these resources due to transportation restrictions. Parks and open spaces are limited in that they do not have their own zoning category so planning for them is difficult. In addition, the current parks are neither connected to other green spaces nor easily accessible to the majority of community members.

Concept Plan & Key Characteristics

The Status Quo scenario uses the current land use plan for undeveloped areas (Agriculture, Rangeland, and Other Urban or Built-up Land category in the current land use map). The city will continue to develop based on the existing zoning ordinance.

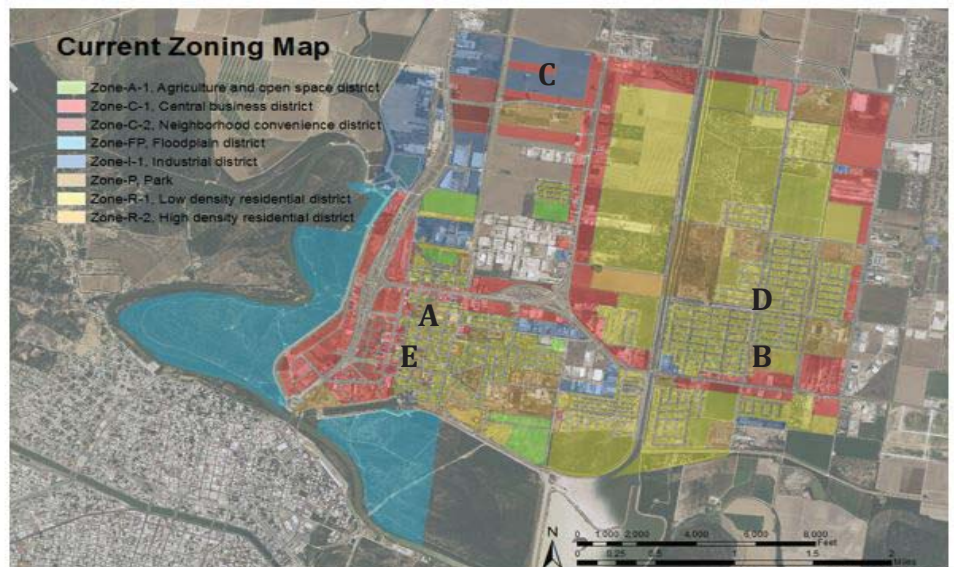


Figure 3-5 Status Quo Zoning Map and Examples



Figure 3-6 Status Quo Undeveloped Area Map

Resulting Patterns

- Sprawling residential development in and around Hidalgo
- Scattered, auto-oriented retail along highways
- Neighborhoods without retail within walking distance

Benefits:

- Consistent with current growth patterns
- Small-town feel: low density and rural atmosphere
- Low development cost

Potential Drawbacks:

- Lack of improvements in historic area
- Focus on residential development
- Auto-oriented development: inability to offer other means of transportation
- Low walkability

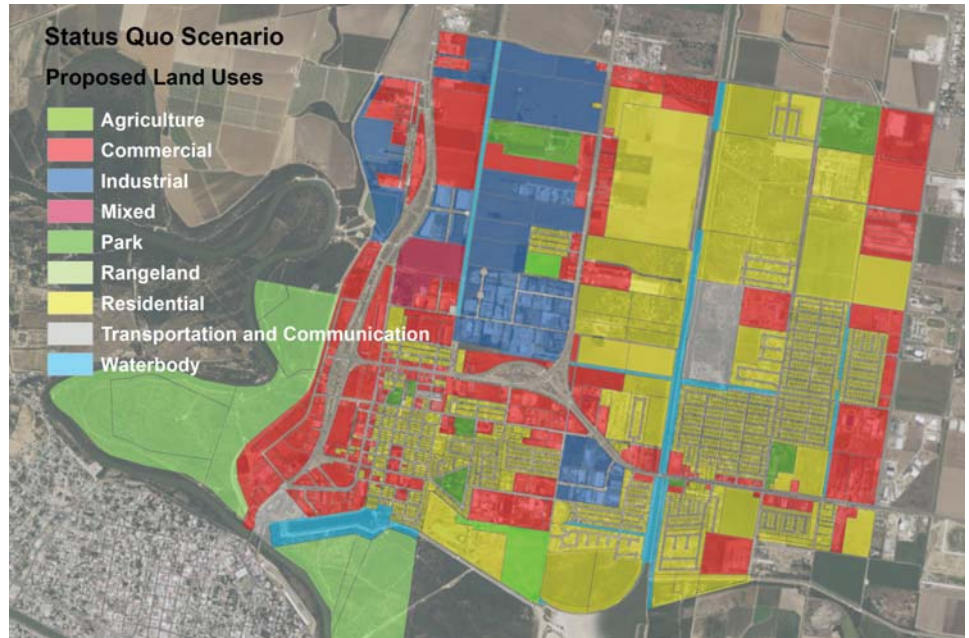


Figure 3-7 Status Quo Future Land Use Map

Scenario 3 – Neighborhood Centers

The “Neighborhood Centers” scenario recognizes Hidalgo’s potential for developing urban centers based on existing residential districts and future plans. Essentially, those areas with large clusters of residential activity show the greatest potential for fostering neighborhood centers or communities that retain Hidalgo’s current quality of life, but allow for more diverse housing opportunities and accessible destinations. Overall, these neighborhood centers will give people more flexibility when choosing a place to live, provide opportunities for active modes of transport such as walking or bicycling, and potentially attract small and local businesses such as coffee shops, diners, and bookstores.

Concept Plan & Key Characteristics

Based on existing urban areas in the city, three neighborhood centers are developed.

- Downtown as the major historical and commercial center
- High residential density, including mixed-use development with restaurants, offices, hotels, etc.



- Affordable housing options
- Pocket parks and city parks close to mixed-use residential areas and schools
- Automobile, pedestrian, and bike trails and bridges along the canal
- Bike paths and sidewalks along main corridors through neighborhood centers

Resulting Patterns

- New mixed-use developments
- Medium- and/or high-density housing
- More pedestrians and bicyclists
- New residents in their 20s and 30s

Benefits:

- Minimal land waste
- Higher density and accessibility due to mixed-use development
- Support for more active lifestyle
- Greater attraction for more local businesses
- Increase in tax revenue to the city
- Safe and well-connected neighborhoods
- Mitigation of auto-dependency

Potential Drawbacks:

- Increasing density in current residential areas
- Security issues in trails and parks
- Heavy cost of infrastructure expansions
- Increasing cost of living, depending on the amenities and services



A ^{xiii}



B ^{xiv}



C ^{xv}



D ^{xvi}



E ^{xvii}

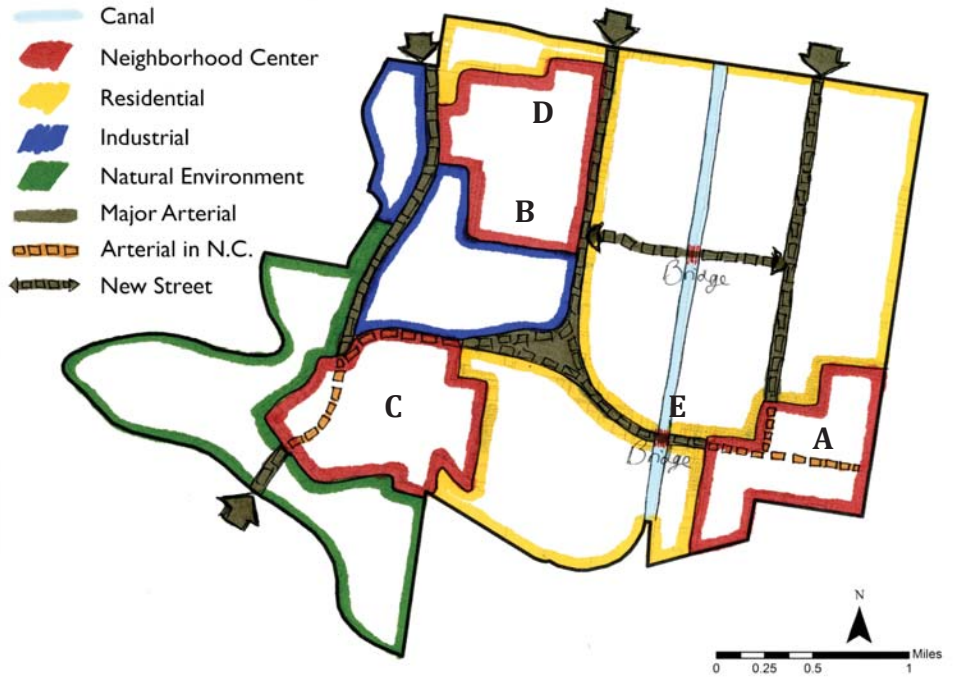


Figure 3-8 Neighborhood Centers Concept Map and Examples

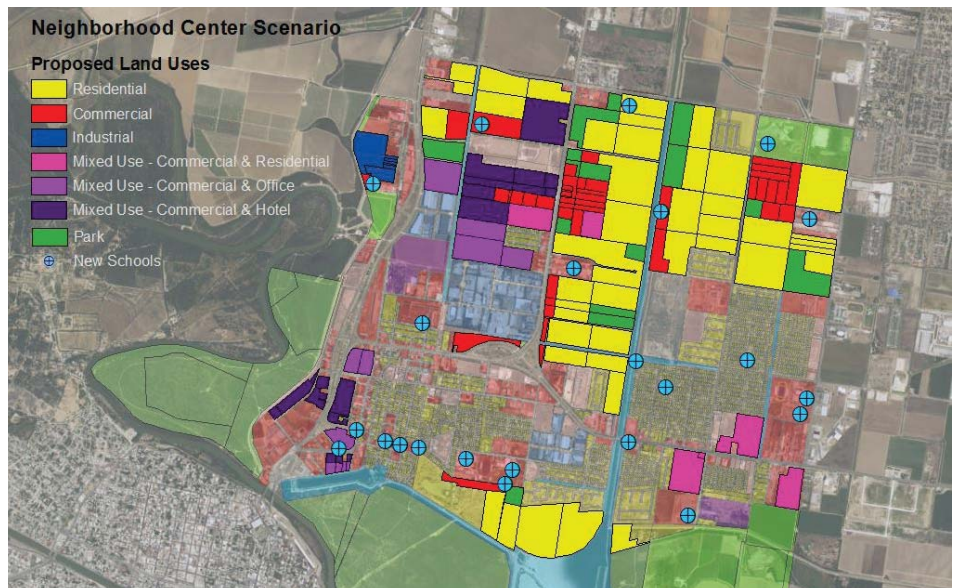


Figure 3-9 Neighborhood Centers Future Land Use Map



Scenario 4 – Modern Hidalgo

The “Modern Hidalgo” scenario strives to create a community that is suitable for economic growth. This scenario calls for a retail and restaurant area with local businesses grouped together. Clustered commercial and industrial areas bring large groups of people into Hidalgo, which can be beneficial to its economy. However, in order to become a “Modern Hidalgo,” the city would need to expand its existing facilities and infrastructure. Facilities and services that would help achieve this outcome include—but are not limited to—hotels, restaurants, parks, public transit, shopping centers, and State Farm Arena. This scenario helps Hidalgo to prepare for its expected population increase while offering planned land development options to encourage and support economic growth. In addition, watershed area development is recommended to strengthen the city identity. Providing convenient shopping and dining would also bring additional tax revenue to the city.

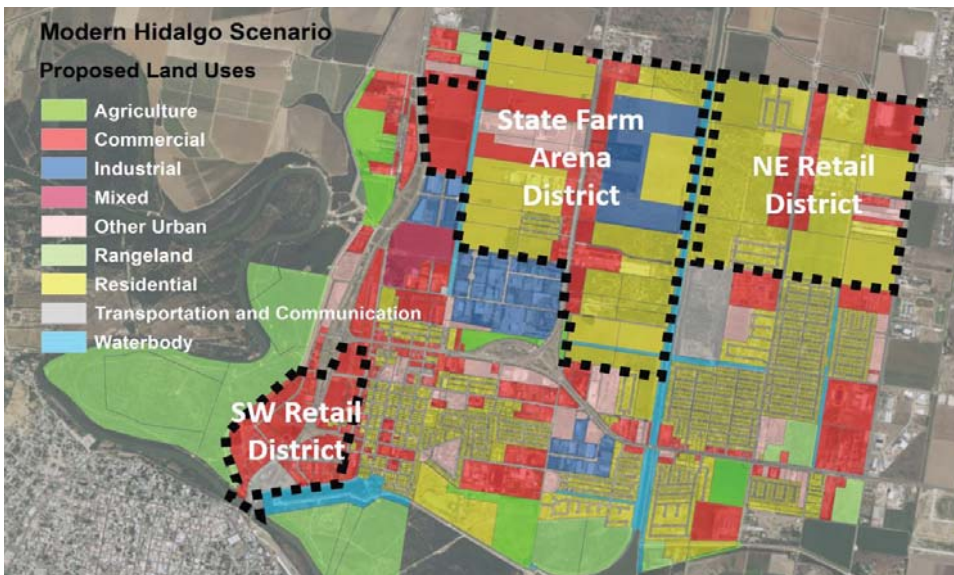


Figure 3-10 Modern Hidalgo Districts Map

Concept Plan & Key Characteristics

The “Modern Hidalgo” scenario provides economic opportunities through new retail and industrial development in the northern part of the city. There are three districts in this scenario: the State Farm Arena district, the North-East Retail district, and the South-West Retail district. The State Farm Arena district focuses on the industrial development near State Farm Arena. The North-East Retail district emphasizes commercial and residential development. A small local retail area is designed for the South-West Retail district to funnel highway traffic into the downtown area. Watershed area development is a large portion of this scenario; all districts are adjacent to the watershed area, such as canals and lakes.

Resulting Patterns

- Clustered commercial and industrial activity to maximize pedestrian and vehicular access
- Creation and expansion of small businesses with multi-story shopping area

Benefits:

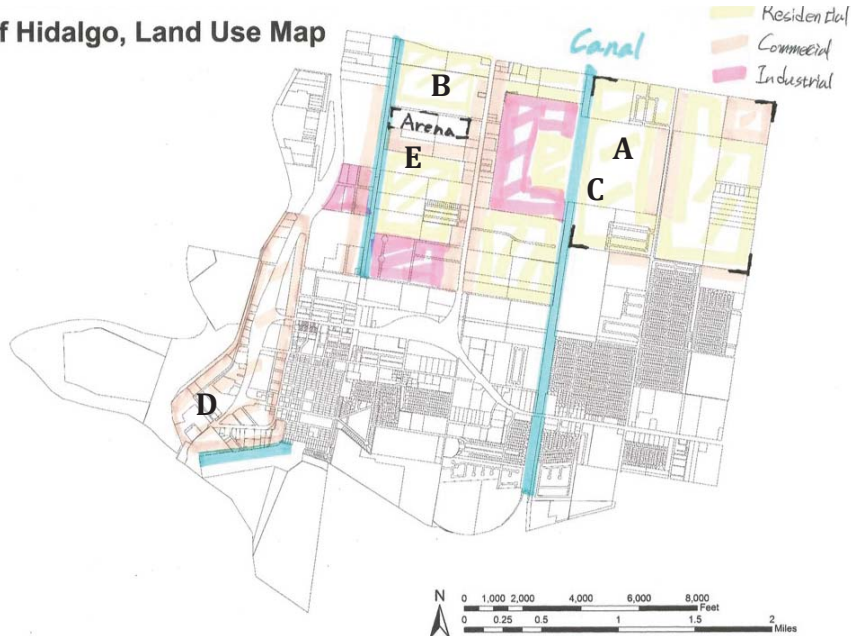
- More job opportunities
- Efficient use of existing infrastructure and natural resources (canals and State Farm Arena)
- Reduction in automobile dependency
- Focus on maximizing undeveloped area of the city

Potential Drawbacks:

- High development costs and tax burdens on residents
- Increased residential costs
- Negative effects on a small-town feel due to high-density development and watershed area development



City of Hidalgo, Land Use Map



A xviii



B xix

Figure 3-11 Modern Hidalgo Concept Map and Examples



C xx



D xxi

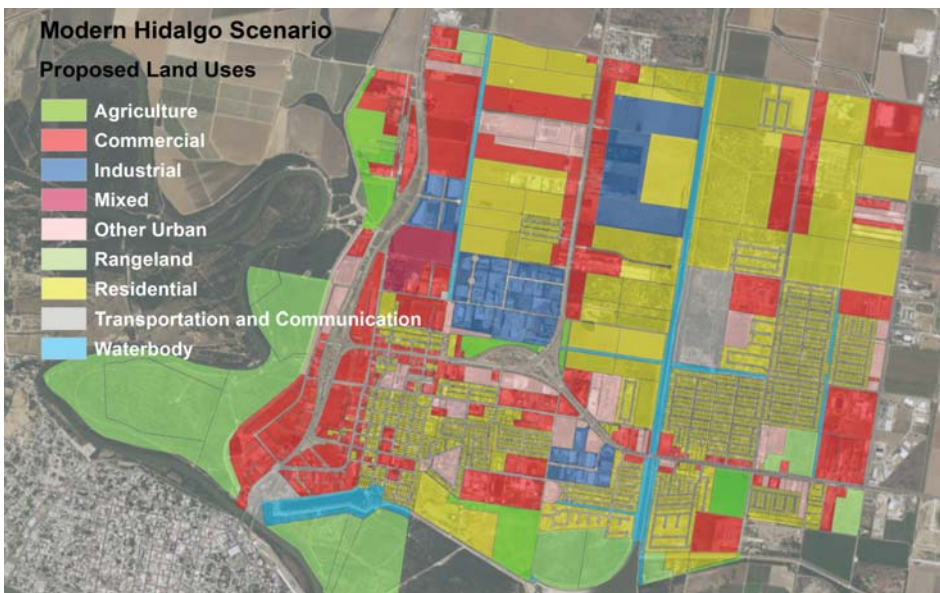


Figure 3-12 Modern Hidalgo Future Land Use Map



E xxii

Scenario Summary

The following table and graph present the characteristics of the four scenarios. The Heritage of Hidalgo scenario generates the largest amount of commercial area. The Status Quo scenario is focused on residential development, with 48% of the city as residential area. While the Neighborhood Center scenario has slightly less residential area, it has the highest population due to its high residential density. The Modern Hidalgo scenario creates the highest number of jobs.

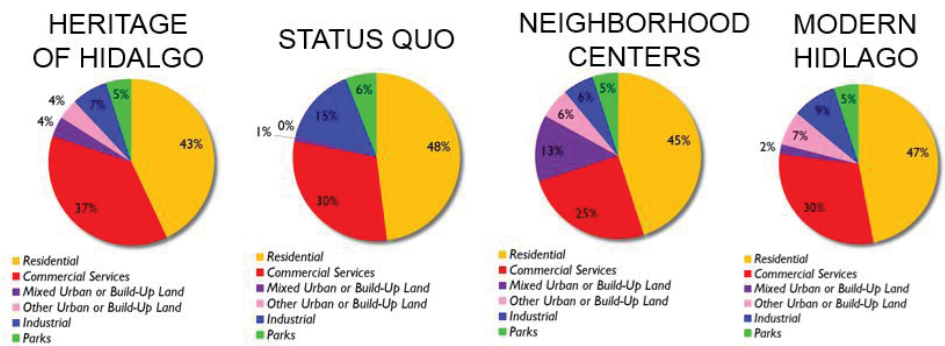


Figure 3-13 Comparing Scenarios Land Use Graph

Table 3-2: Comparing Scenarios

	Labels	HERITAGE OF HIDALGO	STATUS QUO	NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS	MODERN HIDALGO
Population*	Increased Population	+11,103	+17,589	+27,302	+16,900
	Total Population	24,376	30,862	40,575	30,173
Jobs	Increased No. of Jobs	+2,040	+2,259	+2,686	+3,612
	Total No. of Jobs	6,601	6,820	7,247	8,173
Park Area	Increased Park Area (acres)	+113.69 acres	+190.61 acres	+168.38 acres	+150.89 acres
	Future Park Area (acre/1000ppl)	4.10 acre/1000ppl	7.42 acre/1000ppl	3.27 acre/1000ppl	5.00 acre/1000ppl

*Current Population, Jobs, and Park Area (Acre/1000ppl): 13,273; 4,561; 2.90

Preferred Future Land Use Plan

The Preferred Future Land Use Plan combines favored aspects of the four scenarios to produce a plan that meets community goals more closely than any of the other scenarios alone. This Preferred Plan represents the community task force’s vision for their city. It forms the framework for the following chapters, which detail how to get to this preferred outcome in the specific areas of Transportation, Community Facilities, Economy, Parks and Environment, and Housing.

Community task force members expressed support for the suggested scenarios, especially the elements of historic preservation, creating neighborhood centers, and watershed development. There is equal focus on creating neighborhood centers that provide mixed-use opportunities, preserving historic areas and the natural environment, and creating an economic growth plan for the city. A more connected street network, new sidewalks, and a new trail system will tie the city together and enhance the availability of various modes of transportation. New residential areas will provide a place for population growth to occur. These neighborhoods will have mixed lot sizes to encourage social and economic diversity.

Table 3-3: Land Supply

Land Supply	Increased Area (acres)	Future Growth
Residential	600.50	New Population: 14,197 Total Population*: 27,470
Commercial Services	289.24	New Jobs: 2,649
Industrial	143.27	Total Jobs: 7,210
Mixed Urban or Build-up Land	78.02	5.4 Acre/1000 people
Parks	147.19	McAllen: 1.73, Edinburg: 3.1

*Current Population, Jobs, and Park Area (Acre/1000ppl): 13,273; 4,561; 2.90

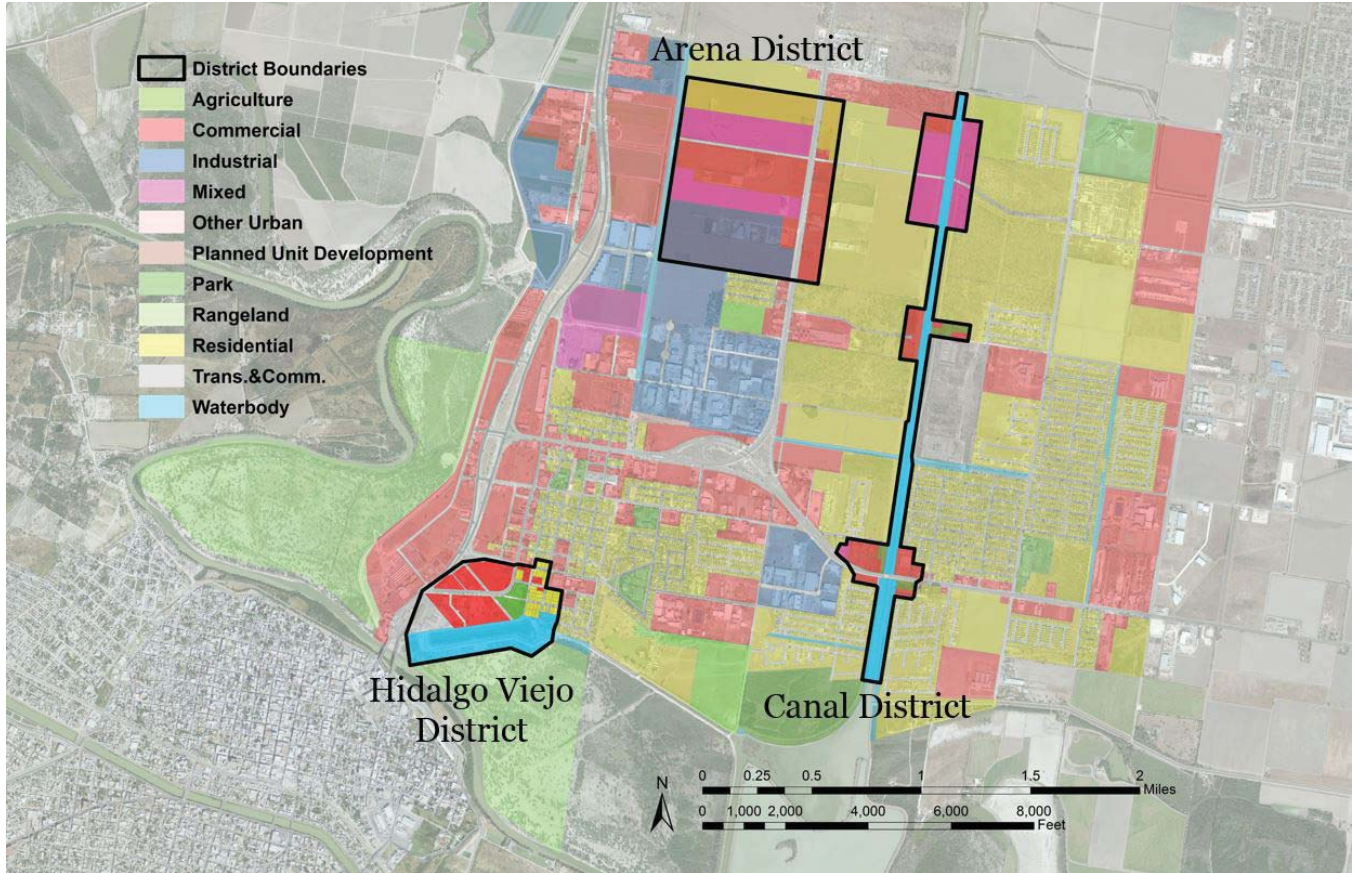
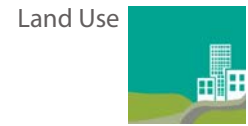
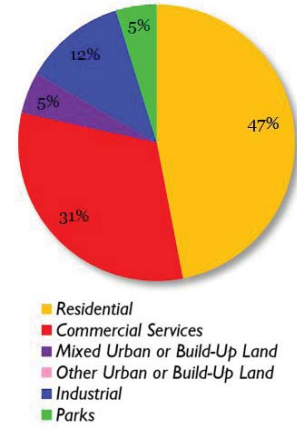


Figure 3-14 Comparing Scenarios Land Use Graph



This Preferred Plan focuses on preserving Hidalgo’s historic area and natural landscape while building a thriving city around these assets. There are three districts: Hidalgo Viejo district, Arena district, and Canal district. The Hidalgo Viejo district focuses on preserving historic attractions with commercial development. The small local retail area in the Hidalgo Viejo district is designed to funnel international traffic into the downtown area. The Arena district focuses on the clustered commercial and industrial development, taking advantage of entertainment activity in the arena. Development along the canal in the Canal district should focus on commercial and mixed-use development that will maximize pedestrian and vehicular access.



*Figure 3-15
Percentage of Developed Area*



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4 TRANSPORTATION



Introduction

This chapter of the City of Hidalgo’s comprehensive plan includes a snapshot of the current transportation conditions in the city and an analysis of its obstacles and opportunities. Recommendations on how to improve automobile mobility and multimodal transportation facilities are then offered. These elements combine to provide the city with “roadmaps” to meet its future transportation needs.

State of Transportation Report

Road Classification

The City of Hidalgo contains four road classes: major arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and local streets.

Major Arterials

Major arterials are designed to create regional accessibility and serve longer trips efficiently. They provide a high level of mobility and operating speeds. Coma Avenue is one of the major arterials in city of Hidalgo, connecting other major arterials such as International Boulevard, State Highway 336, and US Highway 281.¹

Minor Arterials

Minor arterials are designed to support major arterials at the community level by connecting them to shopping, employment, recreation, and residential neighborhoods. South Jackson Road and Dicker Road are two minor arterials located on city borders. They play significant roles in linking the community to major arterials like US Highway 281, State Highway 336, and International Boulevard. Bridge Street and Texano Drive are two other minor arterials in Hidalgo. Bridge Street has heavy traffic due to its low accessibility to surrounding streets and businesses. Also, the two-lane width worsens congestion. Texano Street is in better condition than Bridge Street in terms of accessibility. However, sight distance limitations at intersections have caused major problems in this street such as collisions.²

Collectors

Collectors are responsible for both land access and movement in Hidalgo, crossing residential, industrial, and commercial areas. However, they have limited movement within residential areas. Produce Road, Esperanza Street,



Fifth Street, Eighth Street, Ninth Street, Fifteenth Street, Judy Avenue, Patsy Avenue, Kitty Avenue, Vale Alto, Pirate Drive, and McColl Road are collectors located in the city. These collectors provide connections to local streets.³

Local Streets

Streets serving short trips with low volumes and slow speeds are classified as local streets. They provide access and movement in all land use settings. Local streets in Hidalgo are in relatively good condition due to appropriate widths, moderate traffic, and the presence of a drainage system along the east-west streets. However, some problematic issues remain, such as the lack of proper signage of dead ends and sight problems because of shrubbery and fencing. Gardenia Avenue, Flora Avenue, and Kumquat Avenue are good examples of local streets in Hidalgo City.⁴

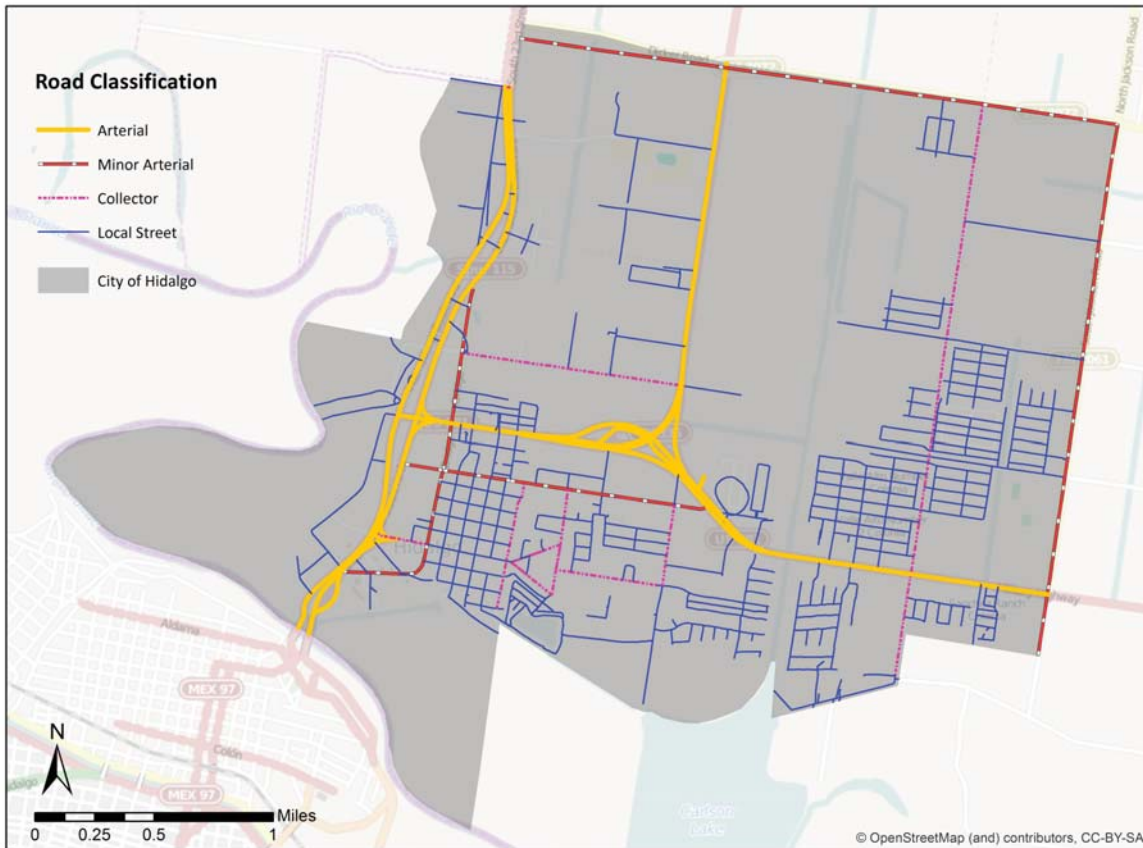


Figure 4-1 Road Classification^{i ii}



Classification	Description	Picture (Source: Google Street View)	Examples
<p>Major Arterial</p>	<p>This road class provides high level of mobility and operating speed. Major arterials serve long trips</p>	 <p>International Blvd.</p>	<p>International Blvd. TX 336 Military Hwy</p>
<p>Minor Arterial</p>	<p>Minor arterials are designed to enhance the use of major arterials by connecting them to activity centers</p>	 <p>Bridge St.</p>	<p>South Jackson Rd. Dicker Rd. Bridge St. Texano Dr.</p>
<p>Collector</p>	<p>Collectors are distributors of traffic in residential, industrial, and commercial areas. They provide connections to local streets.</p>		<p>5th St. Produce Rd. South McColl Rd. Pirate Dr.</p>
<p>Local</p>	<p>These streets are designed to prepare access and slow movement in all land use settings. They provide short trips with low volume.</p>		<p>West Las Milpas Rd. Azalia Ave. Granjeno Ave. Flores St.</p>



Transit Services

People living in Hidalgo City mostly rely on their personal automobiles. Although there is a trolley service connecting Bridge Street to Walmart, and many private bus and taxi companies, still there is no inclusive local public transit serving the citizens internally. Valley Metro—the regional transit authority—does not provide a transit route with stops in Hidalgo (see Figure 4-2). This shows the major need for the City of Hidalgo to enhance its regional connectivity.⁵



Figure 4-2 Regional Public Transit Routes ⁱⁱⁱ



Street Connectivity

Street connectivity measures how well the roadway network connects; good street connectivity provides a variety of alternative routes.⁶ More intersections equate to a higher level of connectivity, meaning shorter trip times and distances with easier access to a variety of land uses. In this section, the total accessibility of Hidalgo streets is calculated as the internal connectivity of the streets, defined by the relative proportions of intersections and culs-de-sac. The City of Hidalgo consists of 252 culs-de-sac, alleys, and dead ends and 418 intersections. Figure 4-3 shows the counts of culs-de-sac, alleys, and dead ends in each city block group, and Figure 4-4 does the same for intersections. Internal connectivity of Hidalgo is calculated using this formula:

$$\text{Internal Connectivity} = (\text{Number of Intersections}) / (\text{Number of Intersections} + \text{Number of Cul-de-sac et al.}) = 418 / (418 + 252) = 0.62$$

This calculation demonstrates that the streets in Hidalgo are 62% connected. For comparison, College Station (a small city) is 63.6% connected and a large city like Austin is 69.5% connected. Hidalgo's connectivity could thus be interpreted as representing somewhat low accessibility.

Turning our attention to the spatial distribution of connectivity in Hidalgo, Figure 4-4 shows that some southern and central parts of the city have more intersections, which indicates higher levels of connectivity. Furthermore, US 281 is the only road that provides access from east to west and vice versa. This can be observed specifically in the north of the city, where the irrigation canal has acted as a barrier, disconnecting east and west. For this reason, the connectivity needs to be improved between key areas such as the State Farm Arena in the northwest and destinations such as Walmart which are located in the northeast.

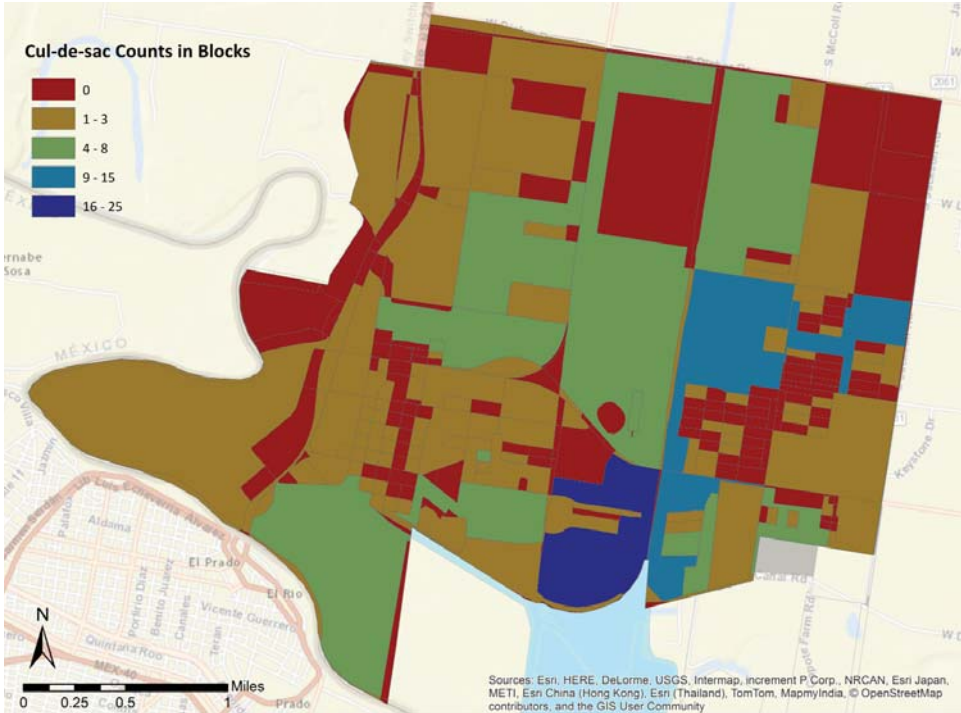


Figure 4-3 Cul-de-sac Counts in Blocks^{iv}

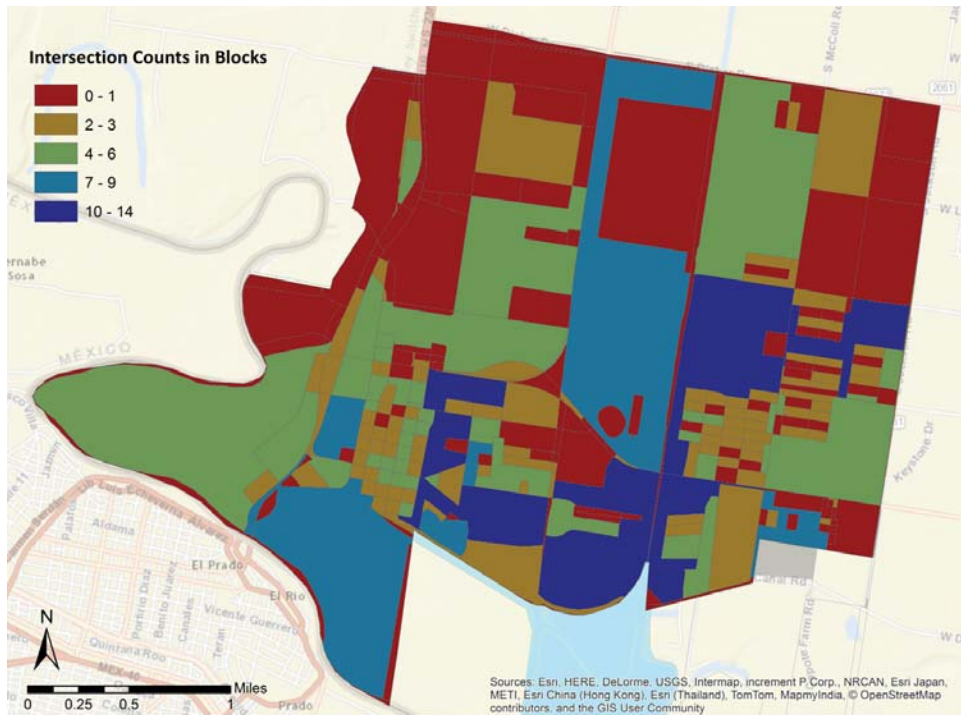


Figure 4-4 Intersection Counts in Blocks^v



Sidewalks

As Figure 4-5 shows, Hidalgo has relatively good sidewalk coverage in the southern half of the city, while the northern half has almost no sidewalks. Although most of the schools are located in southern half and thus have sidewalk accessibility, some of these sidewalks are not in acceptable condition—especially in downtown Hidalgo—and some schools on the eastern side have no sidewalks at all. In central and southern Hidalgo, schools benefit from acceptable sidewalks of 5-foot width. Sidewalk ramps are in relatively similar condition and coverage to sidewalks (see Figure 4-6).

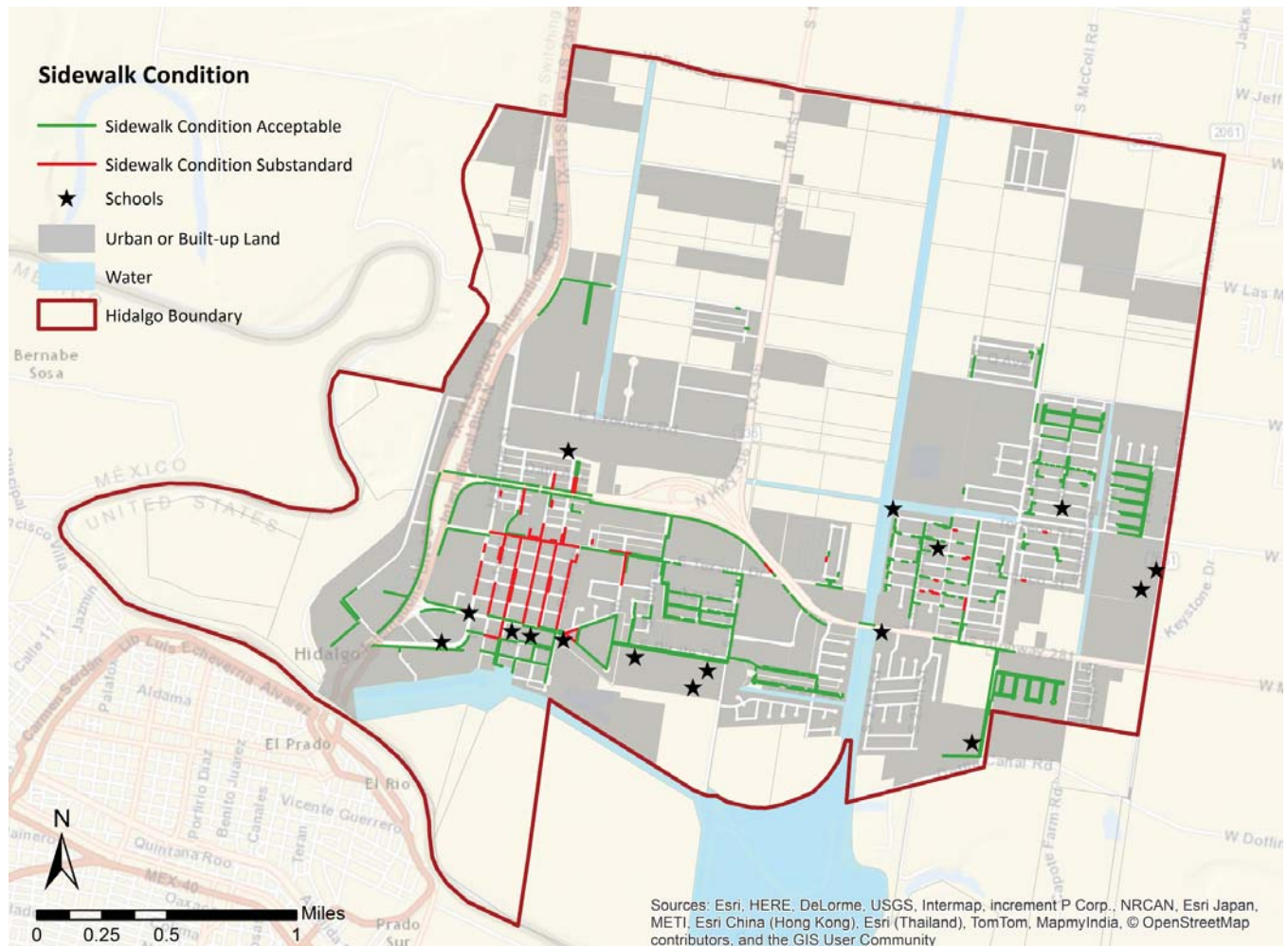


Figure 4-5 Sidewalk Condition ^{vi}

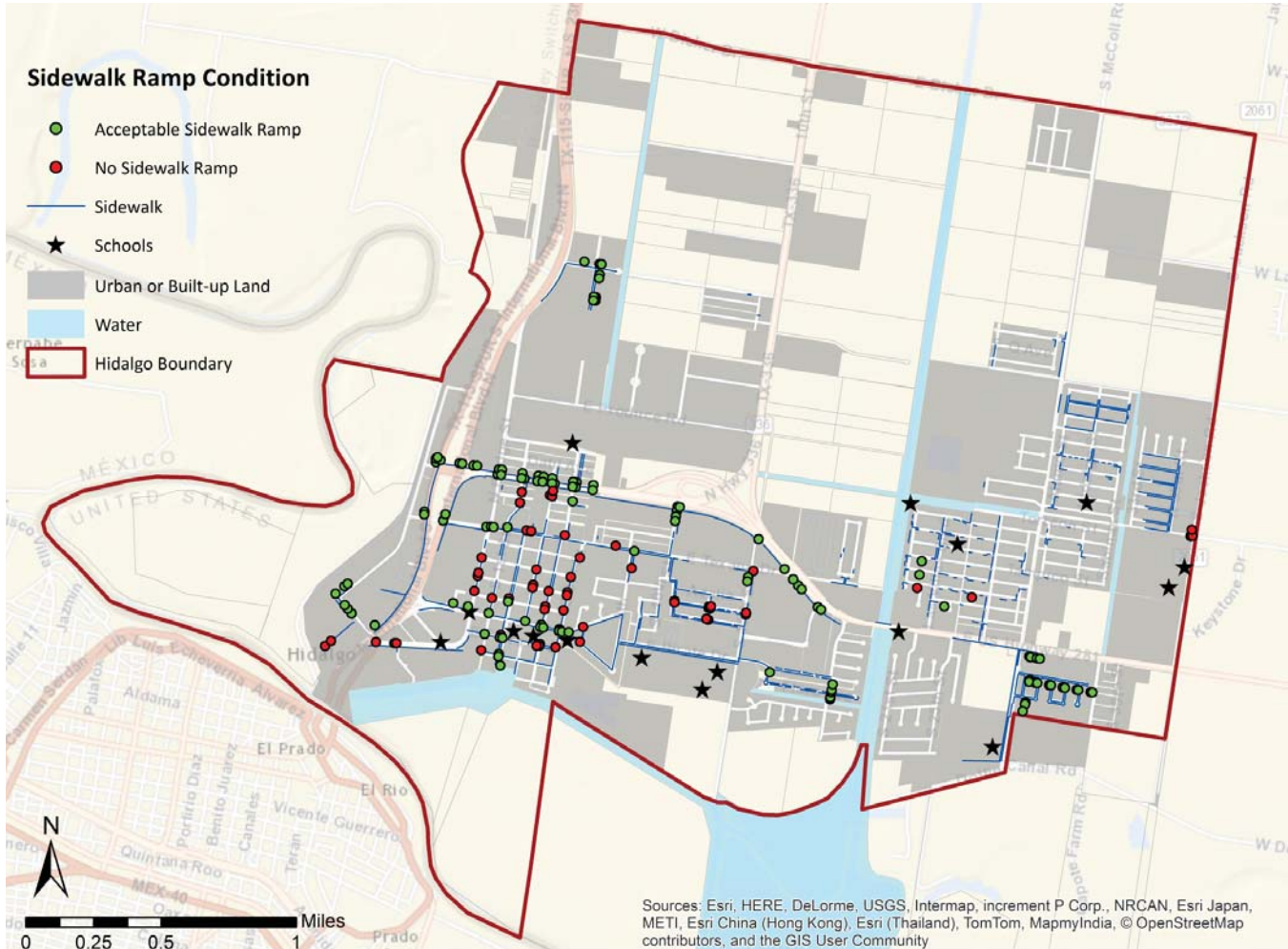


Figure 4-6 Sidewalk Ramp Condition ^{vii}



Biking and Walking Trails

As shown in Figure 4-7, the City of Hidalgo does not have sufficient walking trails inside the city, and there is just one trail along the rangelands south of the city center. However, the city benefits from bike lanes along most of the arterials.

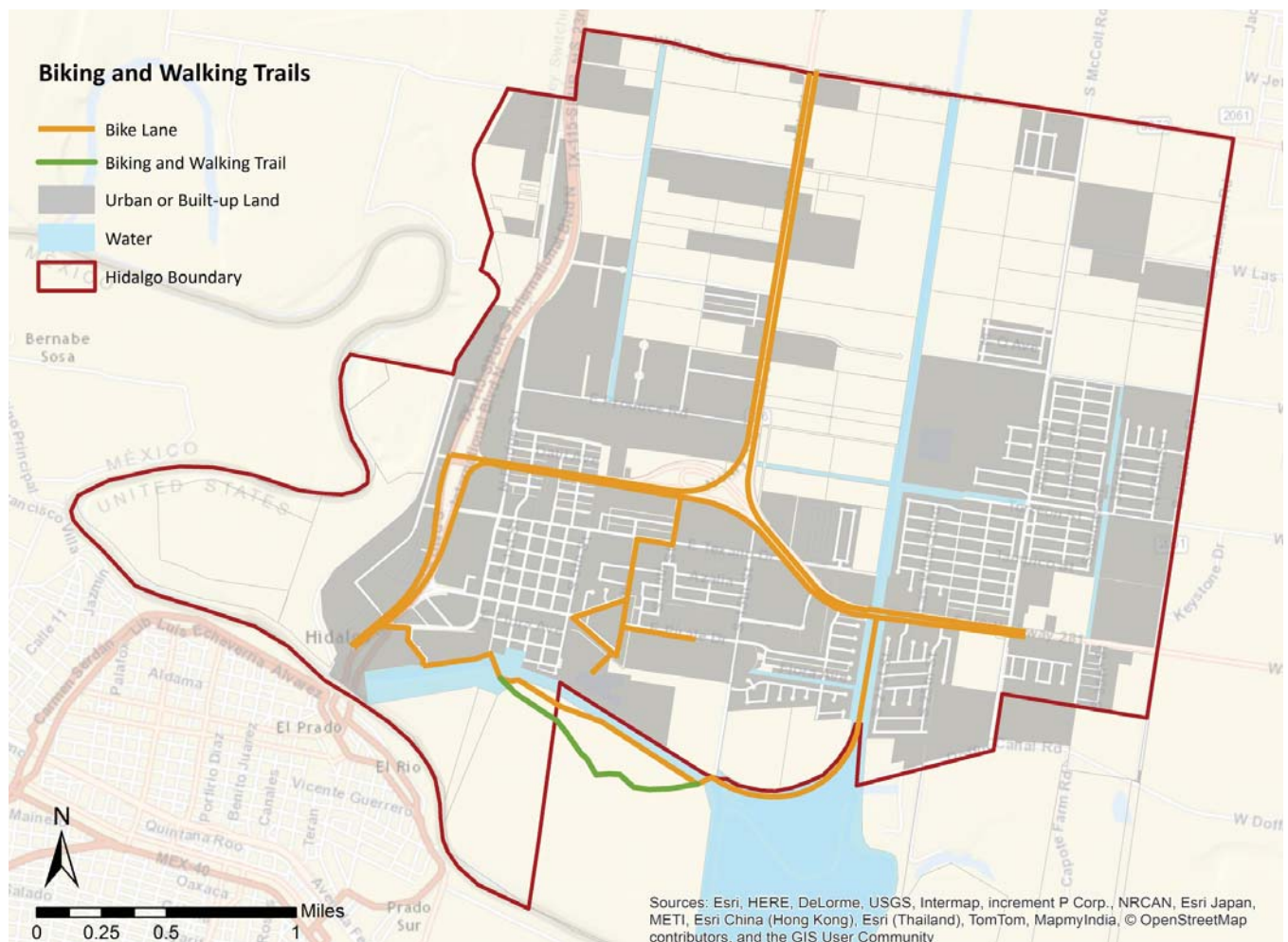


Figure 4-7 Biking and Walking Trails ^{viii}



Obstacles and Opportunities

An irrigation canal runs north-south through the City of Hidalgo, essentially splitting it into two halves. This canal could be both a major opportunity and an obstacle. It provides a natural asset throughout the city that could stimulate future development along its path, but it also impedes local accessibility within the city. That is why international travelers mostly limit their travel to the west side, where they enter from Bridge Street on the south-west and exit from North 10th Street or South 23rd Street on the west side of the canal. Military Highway plays an important role as the automobile connection between west and east, but there is still a lack of connectivity in the northern part of the city.

Furthermore, the city lacks a safe and well-connected road network between public facilities such as schools, parks, and the youth center. Other major obstacles include deteriorating roadway conditions and insufficient transportation infrastructure to meet the needs of alternative transportation modes (e.g., walking, biking, and public transit). In addition, gateways do not clearly mark the city limits and have thus created something of an issue. Therefore, they require beautification and easily recognizable forms such as visible and unique signs in order to introduce the city to visitors.

Recommendations

Automobile Mobility

Proposed Road Classifications

The City of Hidalgo has a relatively good transportation network which meets the needs of current population. Apart from a few specific streets, the city lacks traffic congestion. Nevertheless, based on the future population projections, surrounding land uses, and infrastructure opportunities, the City of Hidalgo should develop the transportation network and improve automobile mobility through the modification of current roads classification. This will ensure that the city continues to experience good transportation conditions into the future.

As mentioned in previous section, all roads are assigned a functional classification which categorizes roadways into a hierarchy that identifies their function. This function is related to their posted speed limits, annual average daily traffic, and how many lanes they have. Major arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and local streets are the four current roadway classes in Hidalgo.



The proposed functional classification does not recommend more than these four classes but considers the enhancement of some streets to higher classes to support future growth.

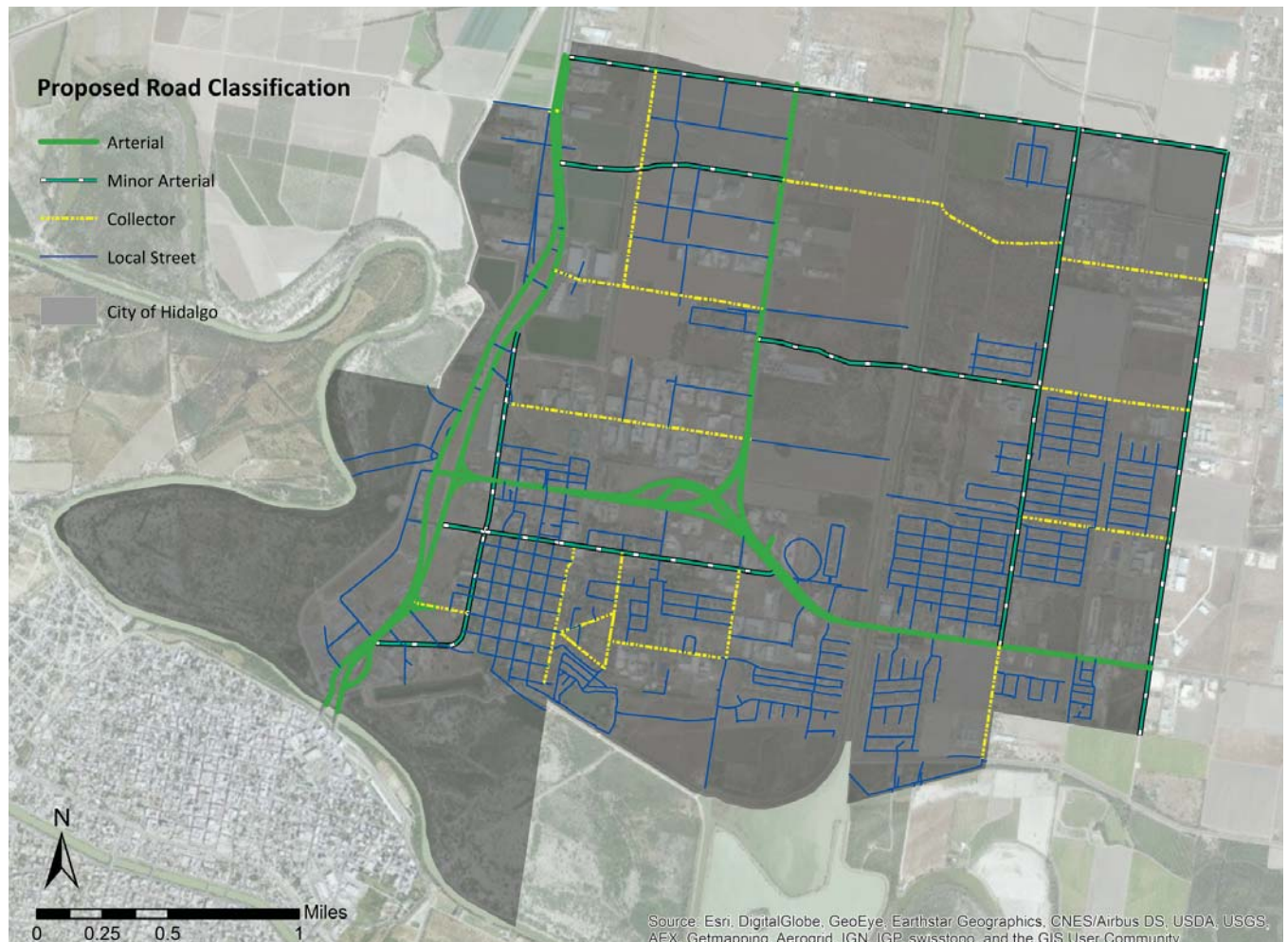


Figure 4-8 Road Classification Map

Figure 4-8 shows the proposed road classification for the city, which requires reclassification of several roadways into higher categories (with associated increases in vehicle speed and road width) in order to meet the future population needs. South McColl Road, West Las Milpas Road, West Anaya Road, and Hi Line Road are the examples that require upgrades to higher classes.



Proposed Major Arterials

Major arterials maximize automobile mobility by limiting entry and exit access points. Their speed limit is 35 to 55 miles per hour. They include 4 travel lanes with the width of 10 to 12 feet in addition to left turn lanes. Their Right-of-Way (ROW) is between 88 and 126 feet and the paved width can be between 64 and 78 feet. As shown in Figure 4-9, they are mostly equipped with standard bike and pedestrian facilities, appropriate lighting, landscape strips, and raised medians with vegetation in a boulevard design.

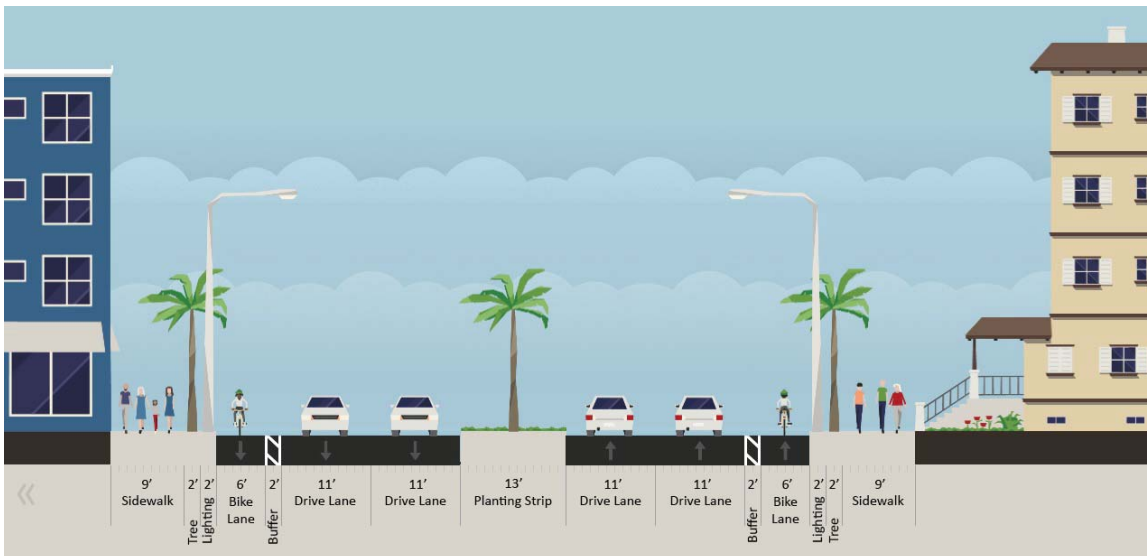


Figure 4-9 Cross Section for Major Arterial

Proposed Minor Arterials

These roads are considered to have limited access and higher speed levels in comparison with collectors. The dimensions for these roads are mostly similar to major arterials. The driving speed limit is 35 to 40 miles per hour. They can have 2 to 4 travel lanes with widths of 10 to 12 feet. Minor arterials often have left turn lanes and narrow raised medians. The ROW is between 72 and 132 feet with 48- to 94-foot paved areas. They have sidewalks, bike lanes, and planting strips.

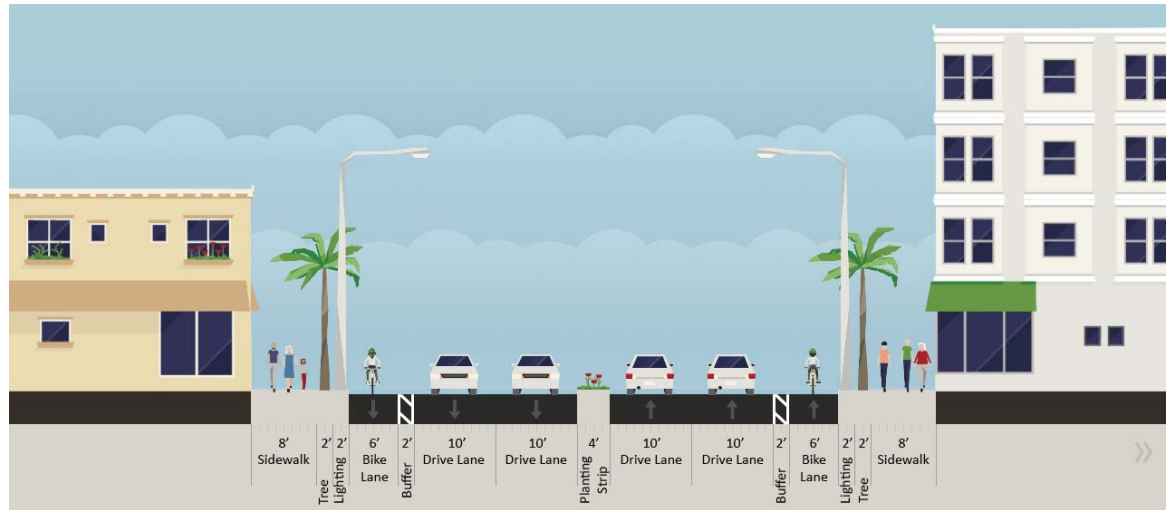


Figure 4-10 Cross Section for Minor Arterial

Proposed Collectors

Collectors connect motorists from local roads to arterials. They are the streets with lower speed limits than arterials (30 miles per hour). They have 2 driving lanes with a width of 10 to 12 feet. They mostly do not have raised medians. The ROW is between 60 and 107 feet and paved areas are 48 to 69 feet. This class is equipped with sidewalks, bike lanes, lighting, and street trees as well.

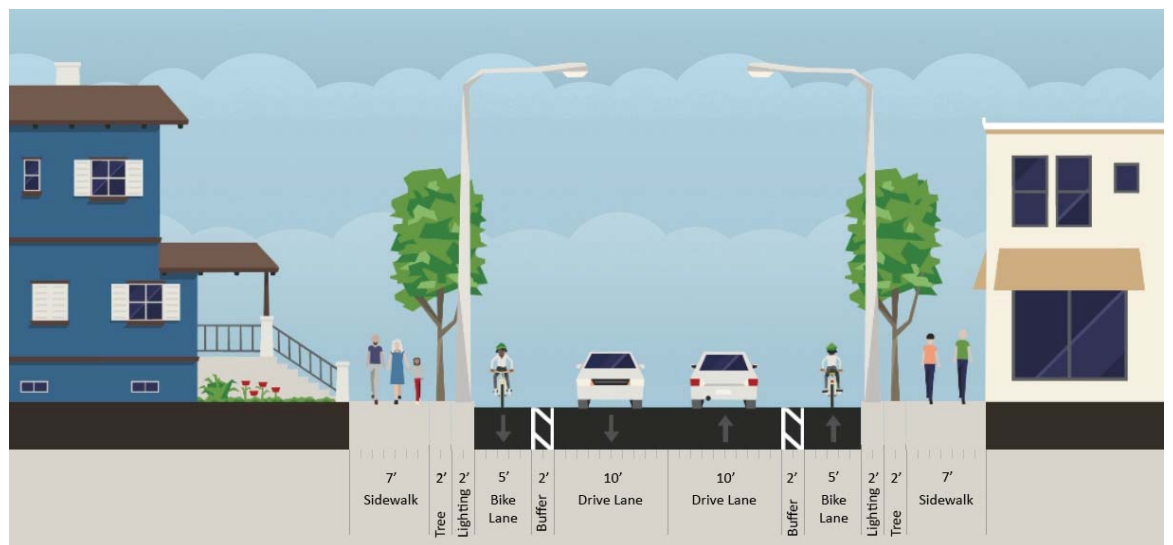


Figure 4-11 Cross Section for Collector



Proposed Local Streets

Local streets primarily serve residential areas. An ideal local street includes sidewalks to decrease conflict points between the pedestrian and automobile. These sidewalks should be equipped with proper lighting, pavement, and landscape. There are 2 drive lanes (10 to 13 feet each) or one drive lane and one parking in local streets. As shown in Figure 4-7, there is no lane being specified as a bike lane since cyclists can share lanes with automobiles. The speed limit on these streets is 25 miles per hour. The ROW is between 60 and 72 feet with the paved width of 34 to 42 feet.⁷



Figure 4-12 Cross Section for Local Street

Proposed Roadways and Extensions

Connectivity plays a major role in transportation. It provides multiple options for motorists to get from origin to destination. According to the State of Transportation Report, the City of Hidalgo has relatively low internal connectivity (62%). This is because the original access points of the city are all located south of US 281—especially in the downtown area—and there are no parallel arterials or collectors to US 281 to connect west to east. The resulting lack of connectivity in the center and north of the city causes the worst level of ser-



vice in the streets around State Farm Arena and the irrigation canal. As shown in Figure 4-13, this issue can be resolved by creating new minor arterials and collectors parallel to US 281 as well as by extending and upgrading the class of existing roads in these areas. This improves the circulation throughout the city and encourages mobility and activity in Hidalgo's future residents. People who reside in the east can benefit from easy access to the irrigation canal's recreational and natural assets. Furthermore, it provides great accessibility to the Arena District and Hidalgo Viejo. This process could build a cohesive community and be accomplished incrementally based on available funding, population projections, and planning timeline.

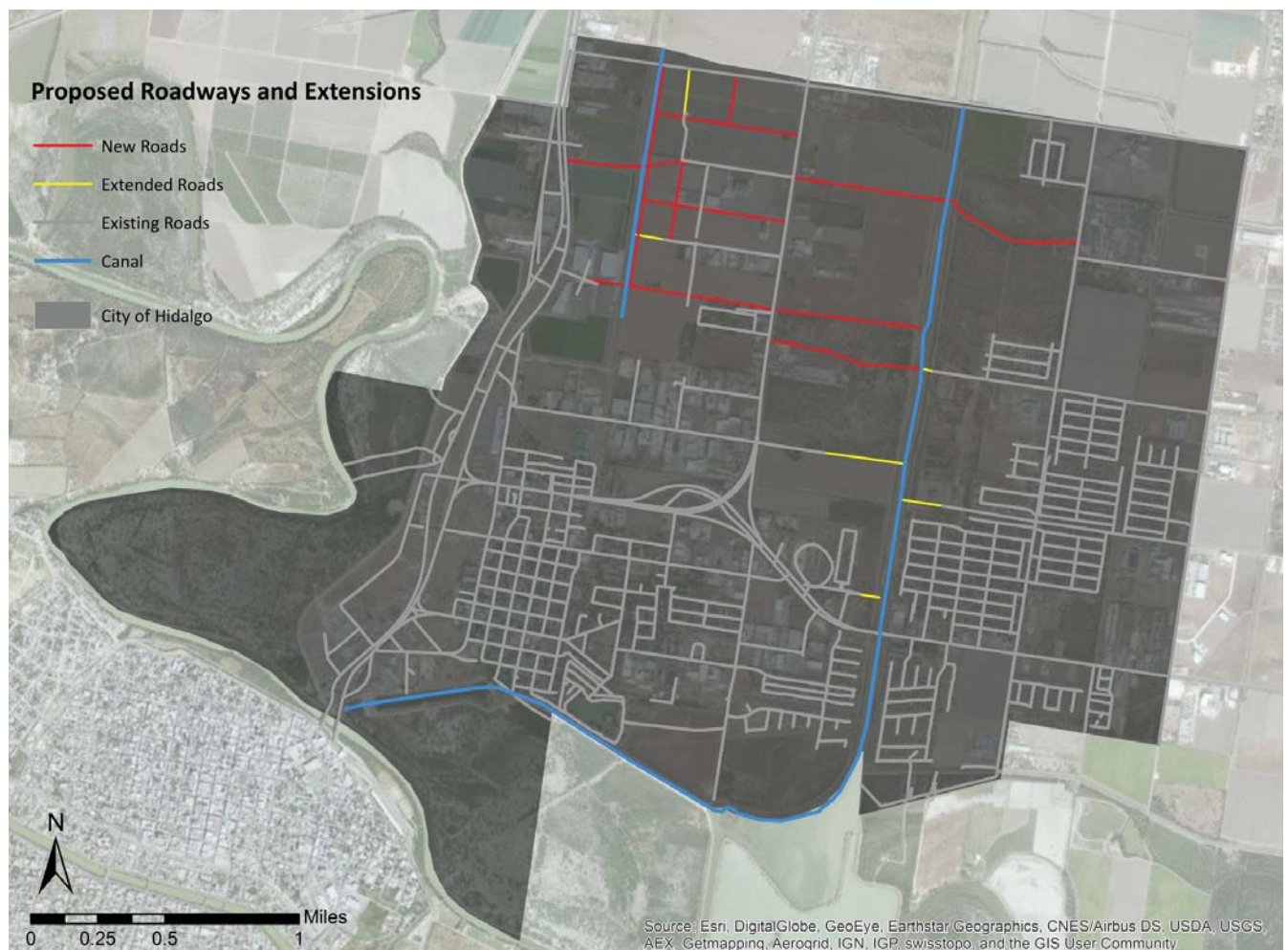


Figure 4-13 Proposed Roadways and Extensions



Multimodal Transportation Facilities

Proposed Public Transit

Although the City of Hidalgo has public transit like Greyhound buses, it is not commonly used by the residents for several reasons: it excludes a number of residents living in areas distant from downtown, it is not capable of serving the city's current and future population, the community primarily depends on the automobile for travel, and some residents are not even aware of the existence of transit service in the city.

Figure 4-16 portrays the most suitable transit routes in Historic Viejo and along the irrigation canal. The proposed transit route in the historical area can offer a comfortable transportation alternative to people who live in this area as well as tourists who do not have automobile. Also, this route connects to the proposed Canal transit route, which links downtown to the center and northern part of the city, as well as to the region. In the two following cross sections of the canal, different locations for transit lanes are proposed that can vary based on the canal shape, width, and other infrastructure conditions (see Figures 4-14 and 4-15).

Proposed Bike Lanes

The City of Hidalgo includes bike lanes, but they are mostly located along major arterials and collectors. Hidalgo needs a cohesive bike lane network that can offer a variety of well-designed routes to cyclists. Figure 4-16 indicates the best bike routes throughout the city. This comprehensive plan proposes buffered bike lanes as a high quality and safe type of bikeway in Hidalgo. These proposed bike lanes play a significant role in enhancing the connectivity of the existing bike network. They can link downtown to the State Farm Arena, irrigation canal, schools, residential blocks, as well as provide regional bike access to the Cities of Pharr and McAllen for avid cyclists. This citywide network is equipped with bike racks and bike stations near major destinations such as the birding center, State Farm Arena, and the three canal nodes.

Proposed Walking Trail

The only existing walking trail in Hidalgo is located in the south of the city starting from Carlson Lake and ending at the birding center. The irrigation canal is a natural asset capable of providing an attractive landscape and walking environment to encourage residents and visitors to walk more.

The proposed walking trail along the canal connects the current walking trail in the downtown area to the north side of the city and also potentially to the region (see Figure 4-16). Beautification and the appropriate placement



Figure 4-14 Proposed Canal Cross Section 1

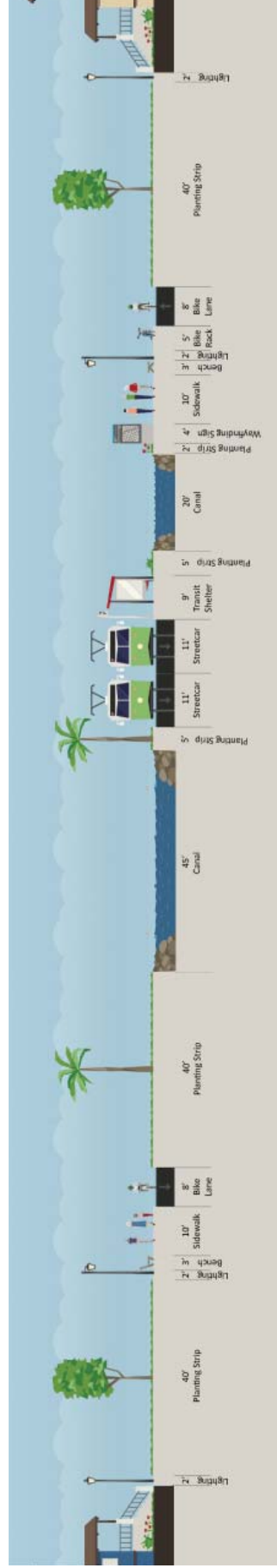


Figure 4-15 Proposed Canal Cross Section 2



of attractive land uses (e.g., parks, recreational facilities, mixed-use developments) along the canal are fundamental aspects that can encourage walking in this area.

Sidewalk Needs

For pedestrians, there are limited, discontinuous sidewalks in the City of Hidalgo. The majority of the current sidewalks are located in the downtown area and some blocks in the east. Depicted on Figure 4-17, there are three different considerations to classify and prioritize the need for future sidewalks. The areas of the city which fall under the umbrella of all three considerations are recognized as top priorities, and areas which are classified into one or none of the three considerations are designated as lower priority. The three consider-

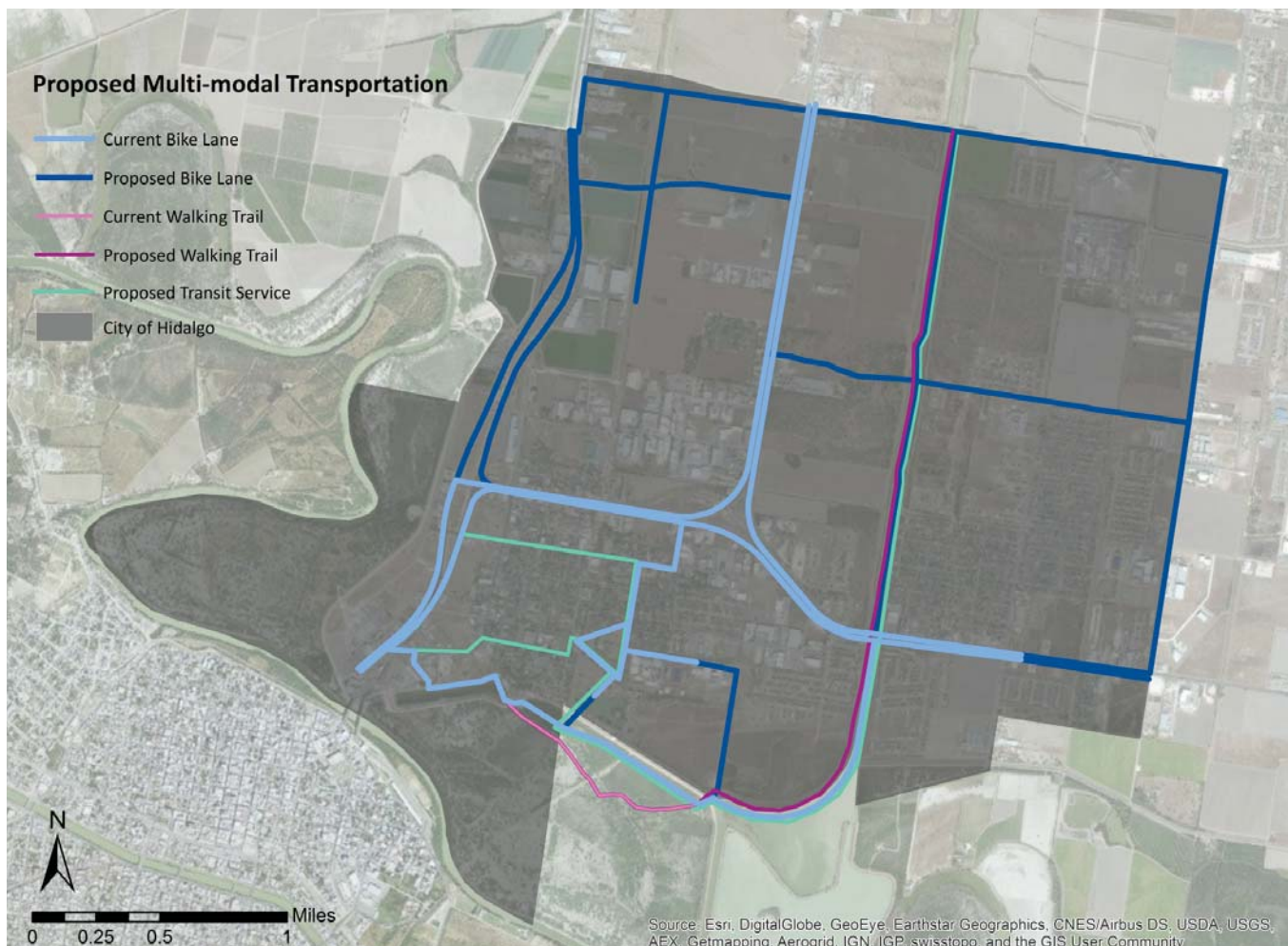


Figure 4-16 Proposed Multimodal Transportation



ations have different weights in the prioritization process.

- 1. Implementation phasing** is based on the timeline and funding of the planning process, and it has the highest weight of significance compared to the other two considerations (significance weight = 3). This category is divided into three phases: short-, medium-, and long-term. The areas which are located in Phase I are the areas that should be implemented as soon as possible (short term). Phase II includes sidewalk implementations that take place over several years (medium term), and Phase III is the last phase which lasts for the next 10 to 20 years (long term). These phases reflect Texas Target Communities analysis on how the overall sidewalk improvement effort should progress spatially over time, but they are not intended to be fully sequential—sidewalks in one phase need not be fully built out before the next phase can begin. As shown in Figure 4-17, the first phase in Hidalgo includes the areas such as downtown, the first canal node, and some residential neighborhoods in south and east which are already built but are in need of sidewalk improvement and completion. The second phase refers to areas like State Farm Arena, the second node of the canal, the industrial area, and some residential blocks that are built to some extent but still require future construction. There is almost no sidewalk in these areas, which creates a big issue for current and future populations. The last phase includes the third node of the canal and future residential areas that are planned to be built in the long run based on the population projection and future growth. Therefore, no sidewalk exists in these areas that indicates the need for sidewalk in a long run.
- 2. Proximity to Principal Thoroughfares** is another main criterion that must be considered to determine sidewalk needs (significance weight = 2). Since the majority of people are inclined to live in areas with easy access to major and minor arterials to increase their citywide accessibility, these locations have a large potential market of pedestrians residing nearby. Figure 4-17 indicates the 0.1-mile preferred buffer to live around major and minor arterials, which can identify areas with intense need of sidewalks.
- 3. Bus Stops** are the third important element in measuring sidewalk needs (significance weight = 1.5). Although residents in Hidalgo primarily depend on the automobile for travel, public transit (bus or streetcar) via Historic Viejo and Canal routes can provide a transportation alternative. As shown in Figure 4-17, the spacing for the pro-



posed bus stops in each direction is about 0.28 mile (or a 5-6 minute walk) to adequately serve the surrounding population. Public transit can be proposed as an attractive alternative mode of travel if it coordinates with the sidewalk network. An area which lacks sidewalks discourages walkers from using public transit because of the danger or inconvenience of reaching their final destination on foot without such pedestrian facilities. Thus, the quarter-mile buffer around bus stops is considered a primary area where sidewalks are needed.

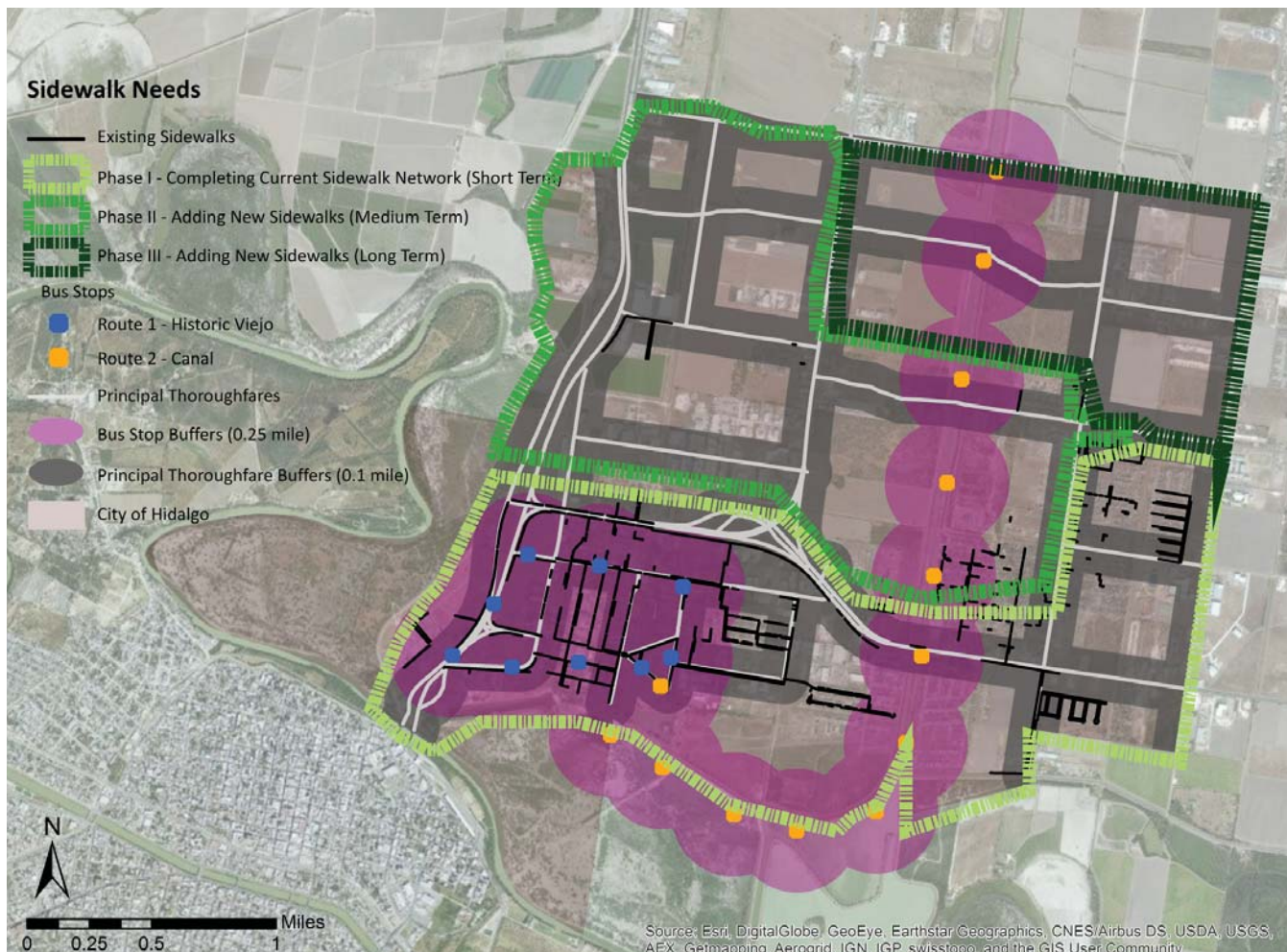


Figure 4-17 Sidewalk Needs Map



Proposed Crosswalk Signals

Figure 4-18 depicts the locations of stop signs and proposed crosswalk signals within one-quarter mile of schools. These are major areas where adding or improving pedestrian countdown and crosswalk signals should especially be constructed and upgraded. Also, the signal spacing design must follow the freeway and non-freeway standards: minimum principal signal spacing is 600 feet for freeways and 200 feet for non-freeways in urban areas (see Figure 4-18).⁸

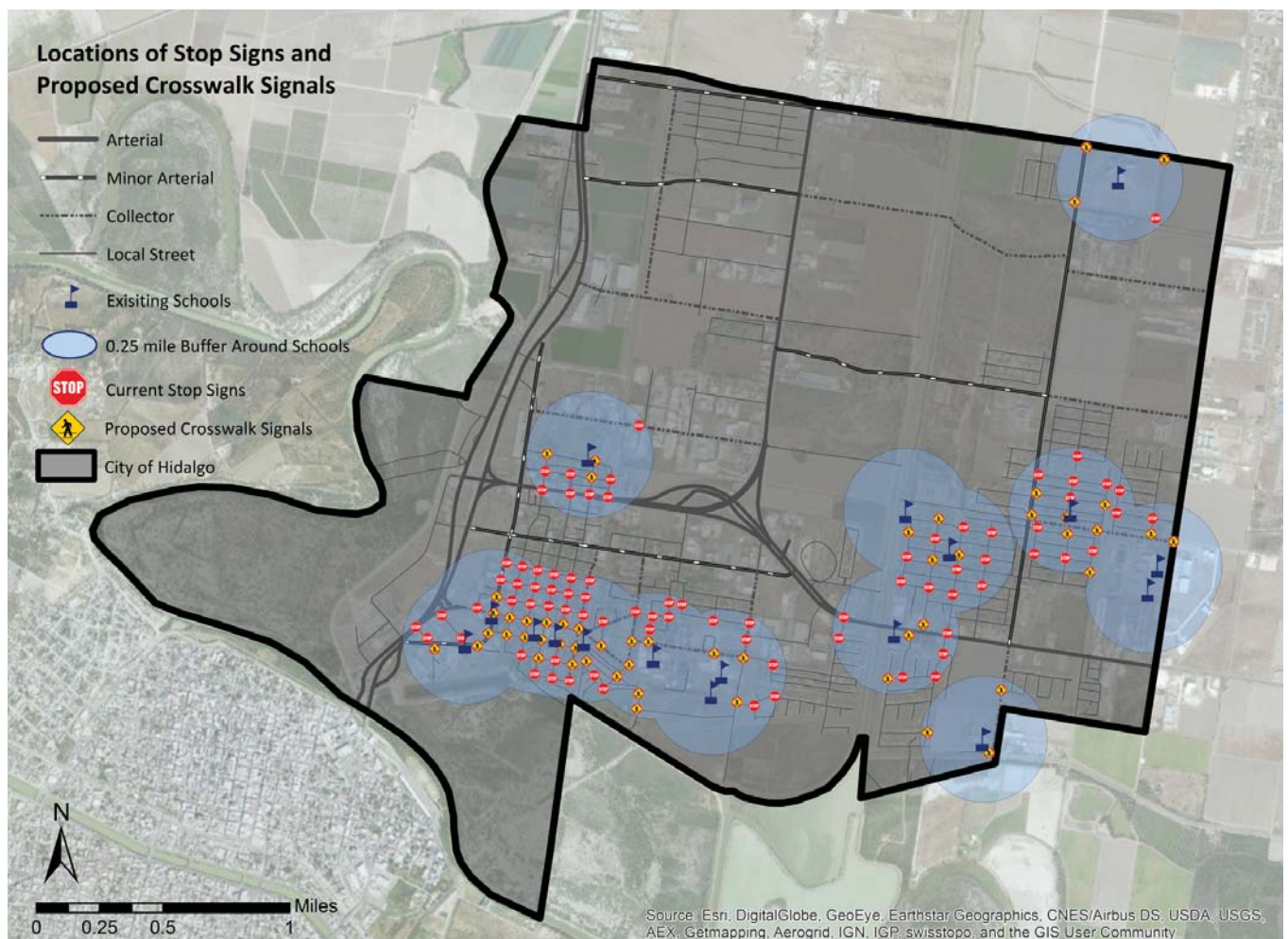


Figure 4-18 Location of Stop Signs and Proposed Crosswalk Signals



Goal, Objectives, and Actions

Objectives and Actions

Objective 4.1 Increase vehicular accessibility throughout the city.

Action 4.1.1 Adopt the Proposed Road Classification Map (Figure 4-8) and the Proposed Roadways and Extensions Map (Figure 4-13) as the thoroughfare plan.

Action 4.1.2 Update code of ordinances so that new roads are constructed in accordance with the Proposed Road Classification Map (see Figures 4-9 – 4-12).

Action 4.1.3 Relieve congestion and increase level of service at Dicker Rd., International Blvd., and S Jackson Rd.

Action 4.1.4 Build street extensions, new streets, and vehicular bridge over the canal to connect east to west and State Farm Arena.

Action 4.1.5 Construct additional roads per thoroughfare plan or the Proposed Roadways and Extensions Map (Figure 4-13) to connect TX 336 (N 10th St.) to S McColl Rd.

Action 4.1.6 Beautify and symbolize gateways on International Blvd. and intersections of Dicker Rd. with S McColl Rd. and TX 336 to welcome visitors and travelers.

Objective 4.2 Increase bicycle accessibility throughout the city.

Action 4.2.1 Update code of ordinances so that new roads and bikeways are constructed in accordance with the plan and the Proposed Multimodal Transportation Map (Figure 4-16).

Action 4.2.2 Complete bike lane network along irrigation canal, US 281, Dicker Rd., S Jackson Rd., Spur 115, and S 15th St.

Action 4.2.3 Establish bike stations every 3 miles along irrigation canal, Historic Viejo, and State Farm Arena.

Objective 4.3 Increase pedestrian accessibility in the city and regionally.

Action 4.3.1 Update code of ordinances so that new roads, walking trails, and sidewalks are constructed in accordance with the plan and the Proposed Multimodal Transportation Map (Figure 4-16).

Action 4.3.2 Enhance and prioritize the construction of pedestrian access to schools, parks, canal, and public facilities through

Goal: Create opportunities for alternative modes of transportation that will increase safety, flow, and connectivity within the city, while using beauty and innovation to guide development and encourage use.



Phased Activities

Short term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

Action	Responsible Party
4.1.1	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.1.2	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.2.1	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.3.1	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.3.2	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.3.3	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.3.7	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.4.1	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.4.4	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.

Medium term (actions to take place over several years)

Action	Responsible Party
4.1.3	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.2.2	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.3.4	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.3.8	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.4.3	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.

Long term (actions to take place in the next 10-20 years)

Action	Responsible Party
4.1.4	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.1.5	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.1.6	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.2.3	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.3.5	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.3.6	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
4.4.2	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.

standard sidewalks and walking trails per the Sidewalk Needs Map (Figure 4-17).

Action 4.3.3 Construct sidewalks in Phase 1 of the Sidewalk Needs Map (Figure 4-17) near proposed bus stops.

Action 4.3.4 Construct sidewalks in Phase 2 of the Sidewalk Needs Map (Figure 4-17) near proposed bus stops.

Action 4.3.5 Construct sidewalks in Phase 3 of the Sidewalk Needs Map (Figure 4-17) near proposed bus stops.

Action 4.3.6 Construct a bridge over the canal to enhance pedestrian and bike access from west to east and vice versa as seen in the Proposed Multimodal Transportation Map (Figure 4-16).

Action 4.3.7 Work with other cities such as McAllen and Pharr to develop a regional trail master plan, connecting the World Birding Center to other cities along the canal, as seen in Proposed Multimodal Transportation Map (Figure 4-16).

Action 4.3.8 Provide appropriate signalization along current and future roads with sidewalks, especially in school zones as seen in Location of Stop Signs and Proposed Crosswalk Signals Map (Figure 4-18).

Objective 4.4 Expand public transit network in the city and regionally and improve bike and pedestrian access to transit stops.

Action 4.4.1 Update code of ordinances so that new roads and public transit are constructed in accordance with the Preferred Plan and the Proposed Multimodal Transportation Map (Figure 4-16).

Action 4.4.2 Construct a multimodal corridor along the canal as seen in the Proposed Canal Cross Sections (Figures 4-14, 4-15) and install transit stops every 0.28 mile in each direction along irrigation canal and Historic Viejo as seen in the Sidewalk Needs Map (Figure 4-17).

Action 4.4.3 Provide bike stations in close proximity of bus stops.

Action 4.4.4 Enhance regional mobility and connectivity options through regional public transit such as provision of transit routes which link Hidalgo’s public transit to Valley Metro.



References

1. *Hidalgo: Comprehensive Plan 2010. (2010)*
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- iii. *Valley Metro System Map. (2014, 8). Retrieved from Lower Rio Grande Valley: Retrieved from State of New Jersey; Department of Transportation: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/works/studies/rt57/pdf/StreetConnectivity.pdf>*
- iv. *U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census. (2012). American Fact Finder. U.S.*
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5 COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE



Introduction

Community facilities and infrastructure are necessary to maintain the health, safety, and general welfare of city residents. These factors can be measured by looking at both the available facilities by its citizens and spatial accessibility of these facilities. Good infrastructure and facilities can attract to the community not only industries but also residents looking for a high quality lifestyle. They can also promote an active lifestyle, offer high quality health services, and provide for numerous educational opportunities.

The City of Hidalgo has a lot to offer with respect to its community facilities such as schools, police and fire stations, library, youth center, and the State Farm Arena. Some of these services may not be under the municipal government's authority but were included in this report because they affect the city.



Figure 5-1 State Farm Arenaⁱ

State of Community Facilities and Infrastructure Report

Schools

The City of Hidalgo is served by two independent school districts (ISD): Hidalgo ISD and Valley View ISD (see Figure 5-2). The city has 13 public schools, which are rated by the nonprofit GreatSchools from 1 to 10 (0 is not rated school) (see Figure 5-3).¹ Table 5-1^{2, 3} provides detailed information regarding students, staff, and class sizes in the two ISDs, in addition to a comparison with state averages. Despite the fact that there are proportionally more economically disadvantaged students in Valley View and Hidalgo ISDs than statewide, both have lower annual dropout rates, higher attendance rates, higher percentage enrollment in Texas higher education, more educational aids for staff, and smaller student-teacher ratios compared with the state. The findings indicate that both ISDs do an above average job in educating public school students. Finally, as shown in Figure 5-4, the City of Hidalgo has a lower average school rating in comparison with the Cities of Edinburg and McAllen. This demonstrates the urgency of providing advanced educational facilities.⁴

Table 5-1: Detailed Education Condition

	Hidalgo ISD	Valley View ISD	State ISD	
Student Information	All Test Participant	100%	100%	99%
	Attendance Rate (2011-12)	95.70%	96.40%	95.90%
	Annual Dropout Rate Grades 7-8 (2011-12)	0.00%	0.00%	0.30%
	Annual Dropout Rate Grades 9-12 (2011-12)	1.00%	0.40%	2.40%
	Average SAT Score Class of 2012	1262	1430	1422
	Average ACT Score Class of 2012	16.8	17.2	20.5
	Graduates Enrolled in TX Institution of Higher Education (2010-11)	62.70%	62.60%	58.30%
Staff Information	Economically Disadvantaged	88.60%	93.20%	60.40%
	Professional Staff	57.60%	58.30%	63.90%
	Educational Aids	10.50%	12.20%	9.30%
Class Size Information	Number of Students per Teacher	14.3	15.1	15.5
	Average Elementary Class Sizes	17.6	19.35	20.55
	Average Secondary Class Sizes	18.76	18.1	18.62

Source: Texas Education Agency; 2012-13 Texas Academic Performance Report

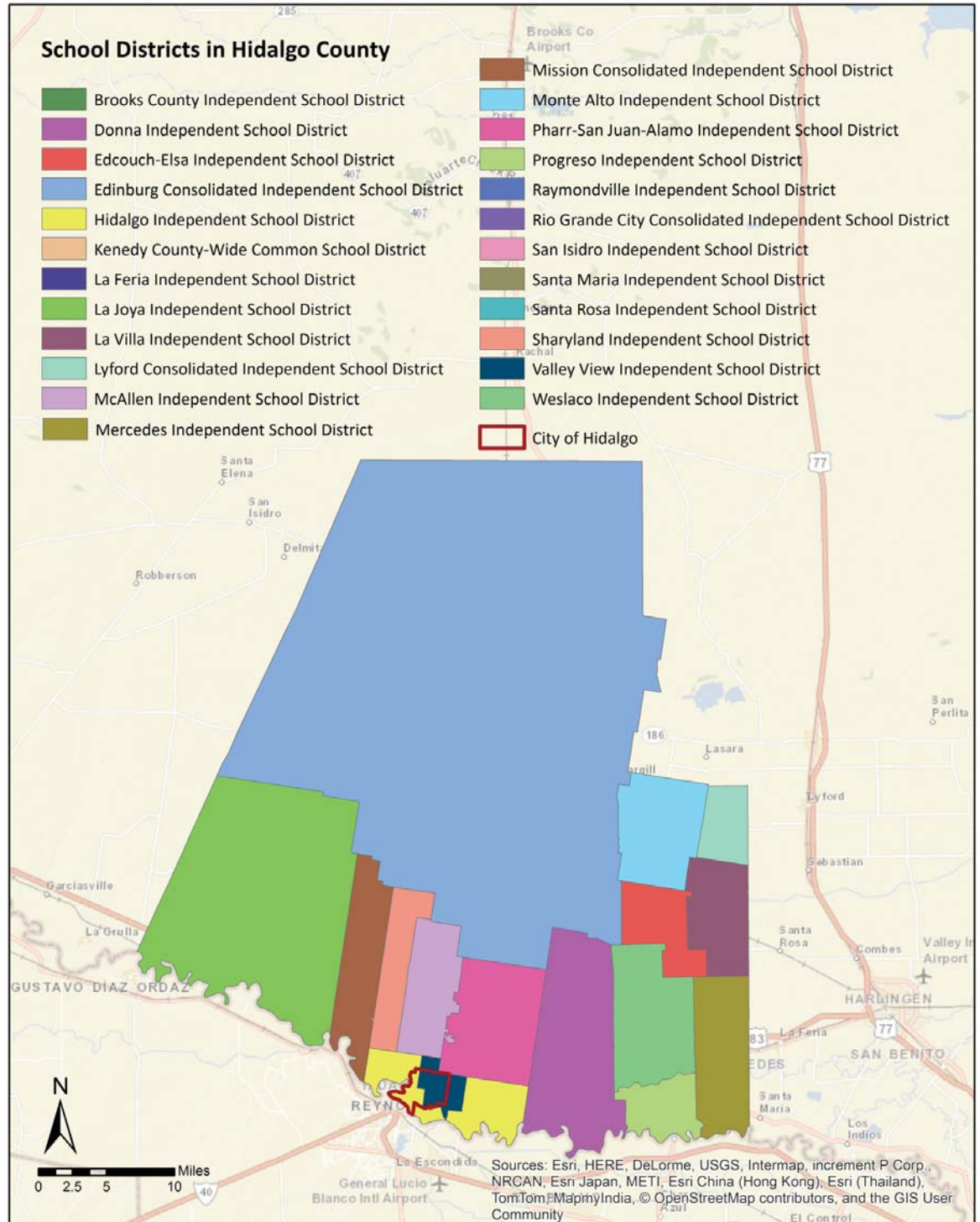


Figure 5-2 School Districts in Hidalgo County Map ⁱⁱ

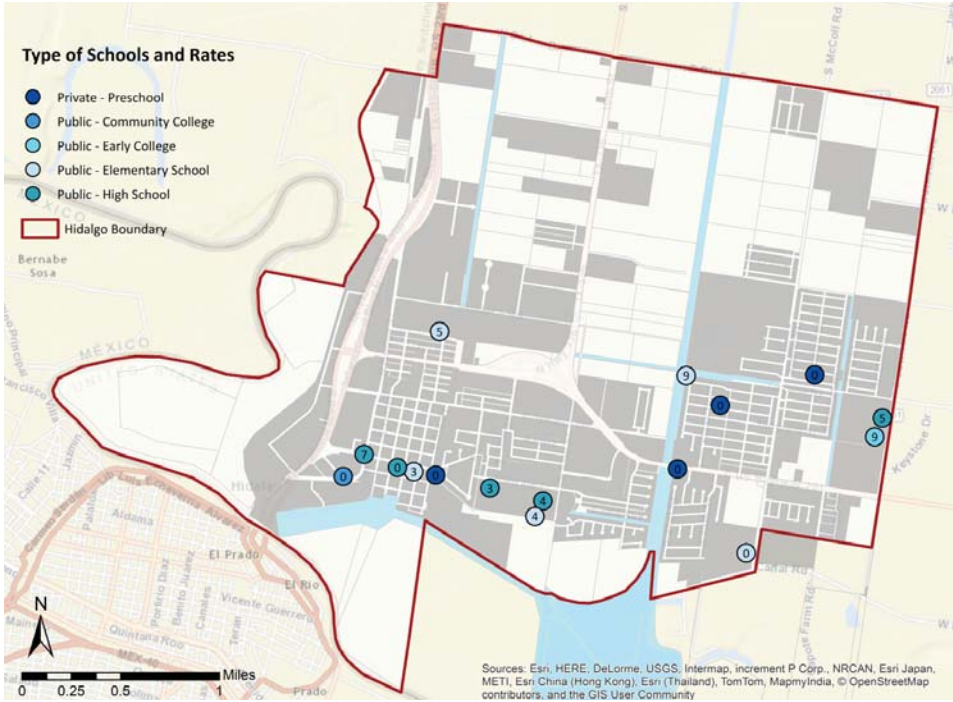


Figure 5-3 Type of Schools and Rates Map ⁱⁱⁱ

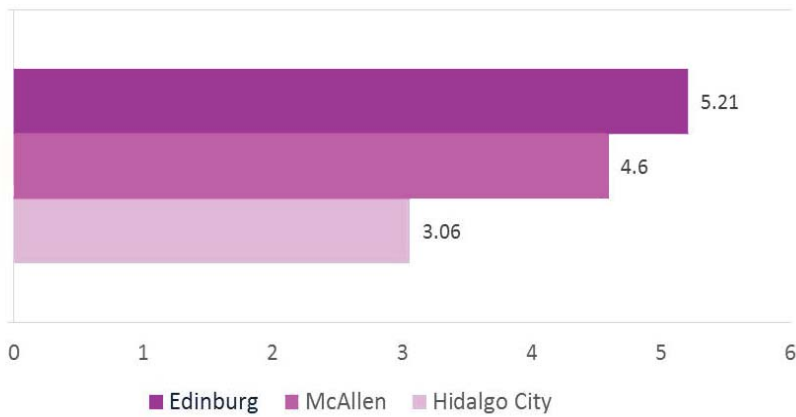


Figure 5-4 Average School Ratings ^{iv}

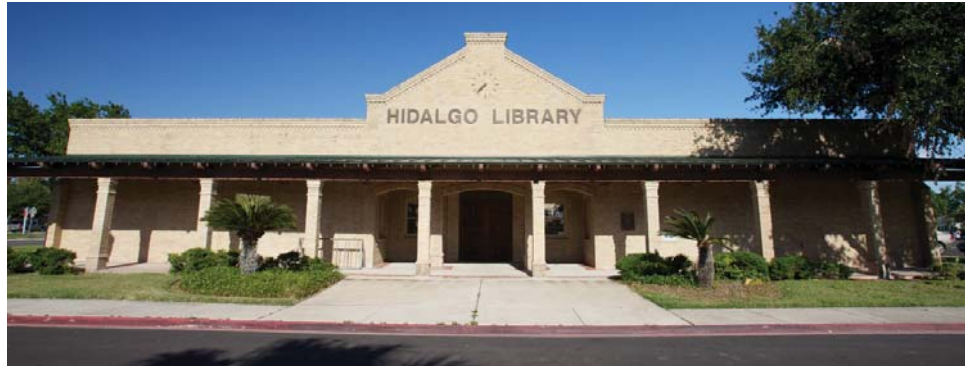


Figure 5-5 Hidalgo Library ^v

Fire Station

The fire station is located in the middle of the historic part of the City of Hidalgo. The Hidalgo Fire Department is a volunteer fire department established in 1954. The department is made up of 1 Chief, 2 Assistant Chiefs, 1 Fire Marshal/ Captain, 2 Lieutenants, and 13 Firefighters.⁵

Police Station

The police station is located in the center of the Hidalgo Historic District. It consists of 5 different departments: Patrol, Criminal Investigation, Support Services, Special Operations, and the School Resource Officer Program.⁶ The City of Hidalgo also supports the Hidalgo Police Academy, a joint operation between the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council and the Hidalgo Police Department. The police department works to protect and serve the community by creating a safe environment for the citizens.

Library

The Hidalgo Public Library houses its resources in a 10,497-square foot edifice. Opened in 1998, the library has a conference room, computer lab, and offices. It offers free programs such as English classes and computer classes to community members. The public library has served an average of approximately 1,500 patrons per month since 2009.⁷

Youth Center

The youth center offers area youths a positive environment where they can participate in educational and recreational activities and programs. Young people between the ages of 5 and 18 can get involved in indoor and outdoor



classes, as well as service projects and community athletics. The Youth Center also has a pool with public hours for recreational swimming and swimming lessons.⁸

State Farm Arena

This 6,800-seat arena is located in the northern part of the City of Hidalgo and is owned by the City of Hidalgo-Texas Municipal Facilities Corporation. Built in 2003, the \$20-million multi-purpose complex can be used for ice hockey, soccer, football, and other sporting events.⁹

Utilities

Calpine Corporation Utility provides electricity for the City of Hidalgo. The two power plants producing electricity for Hidalgo are located in Edinburg, Texas. The utility and gas pipelines cover the developed area of the city, mostly in the south and west.

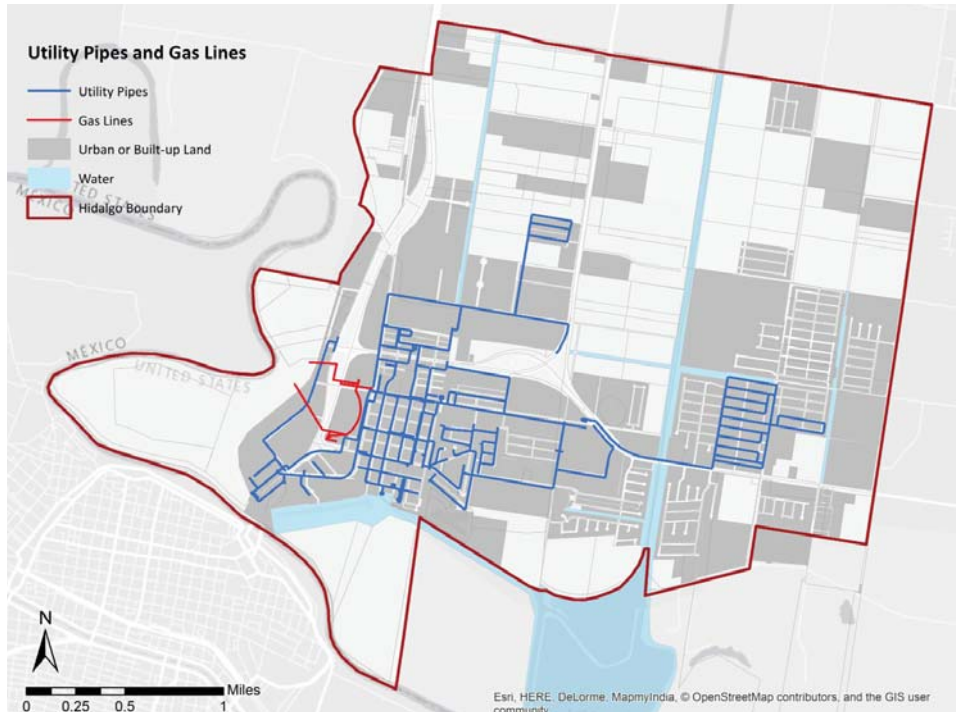


Figure 5-6 Utility Pipes and Gas Lines Map ^{vi}



Water Management

There are several water service providers for the city. Hidalgo Utilities Department is responsible for citizens' drinking water. It sources the water from the Chiocito aquifer via two wells located within the city center. Since water coming from aquifers is low quality in Hidalgo,^{10 11} other water corporations such as Hidalgo City Water Plant and Military Highway Water Supply Corporation help the city to provide citizens with superior water and perform waste water treatment.¹²

The water pipe and water hydrant network has expanded since the 1990s, and the current extent of the network is shown in Figure 5-7. These pipes distribute water to almost all residential areas. However, there are several commercial and other urban built areas which do not have direct access to water lines. Depending on the volume of water demand for a given block, water pipes have different sizes: 2" and 4" within neighborhoods and 6", 8", 10", and 12" along major and minor arterials as priority distributors.¹³

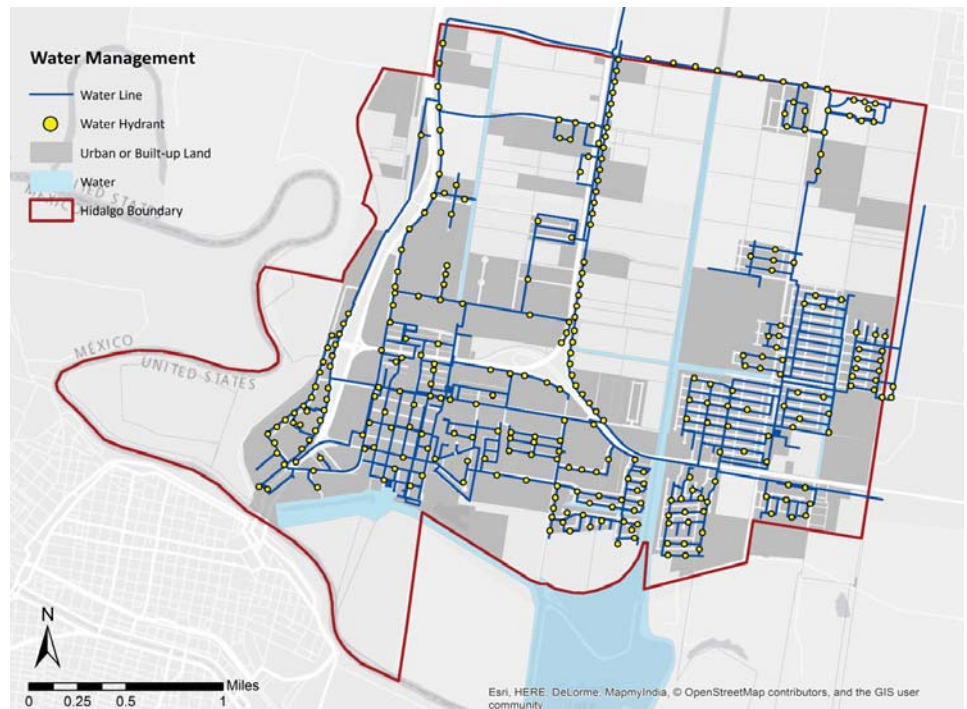


Figure 5-7 Water Management Map ^{vii}



Waste Water

In most of the cities in Hidalgo County, municipalities are responsible for utilities such as drainage systems. The City of Hidalgo Utilities Department offers disposal of waste water for the City of Hidalgo. Sewer lines in Hidalgo cover most of the southern half of the city, while many northern parts lack direct access to the sewerage network (see Figure 5-8). This indicates low levels of investment in waste water treatment in the city. There is a waste water treatment plant at the intersection of Fresno Avenue and 25th Street.¹⁴

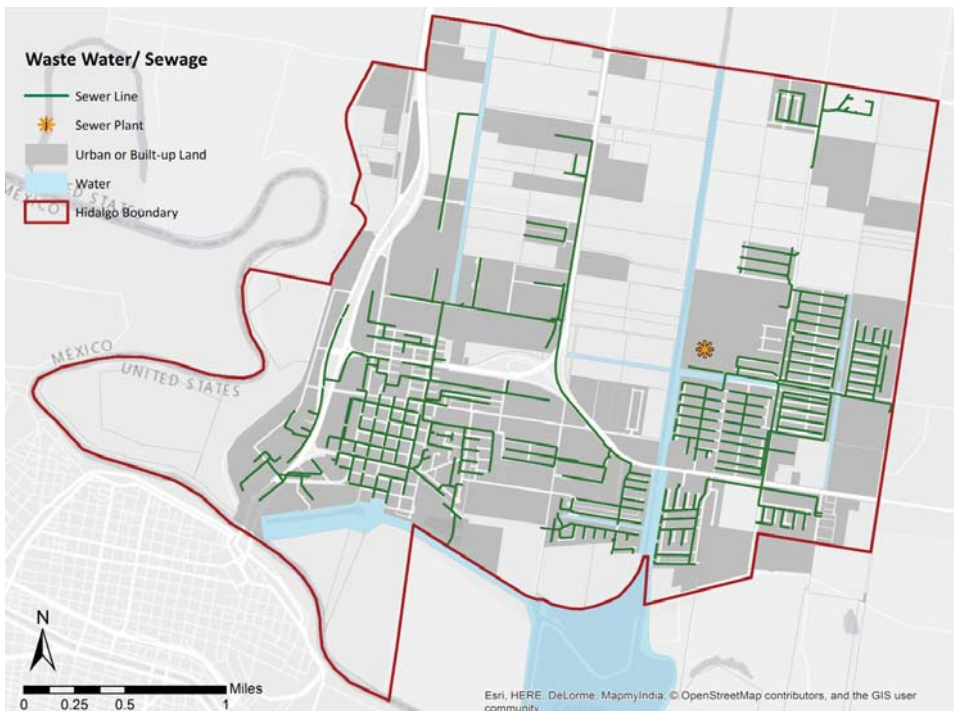


Figure 5-8 Waste Water/Sewerage Map ^{viii}



Storm water Management

The curb and gutter system directs storm water to storm water lines and then to the Rio Grande River. This system plays a significant role in hazard mitigation during floods or storms. If the capacity overflows, storm water is guided to the County ditch system through gutters and pipelines installed under the ground. These ditches then store the storm water or transmit it to the Rio Grande. Figure 5-9 shows high coverage of storm lines in the City of Hidalgo.¹⁵

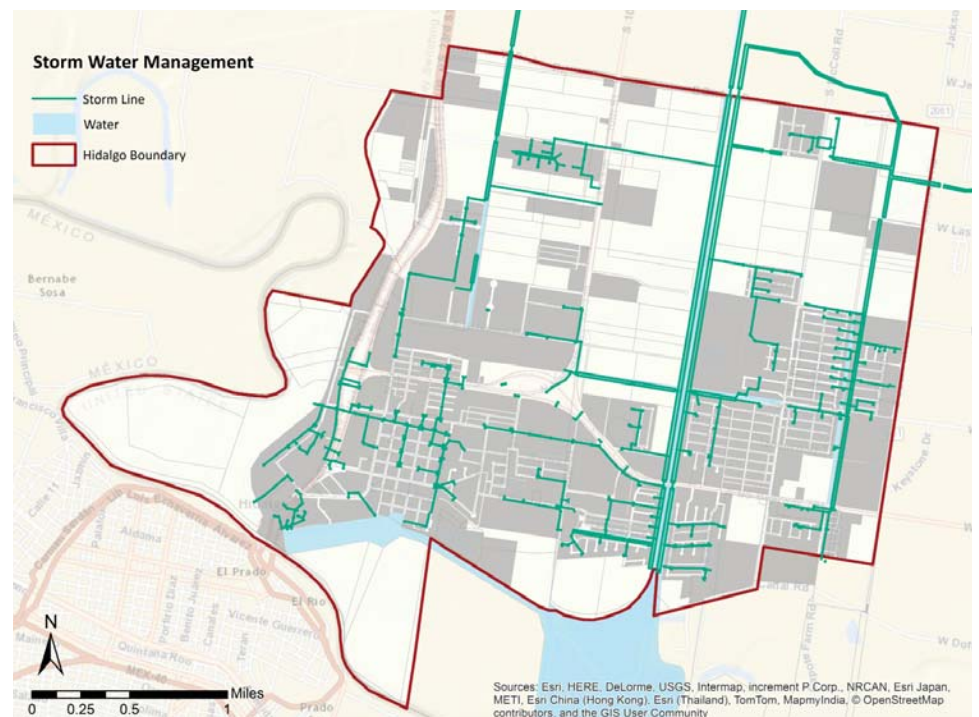


Figure 5-9 Storm water Management Map^{ix}



Obstacles and Opportunities

To serve the needs of the present and future population, the City of Hidalgo must create and enhance health, tourism, and education facilities, utility pipes, gas lines, and other infrastructure. These deficiencies must be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan to have a high-quality, safe community in the future.

At this time, the City of Hidalgo generally meets the city's potable water, waste water, and storm water infrastructure needs. Many of the vacant land parcels in Hidalgo are located near developed areas where infrastructure is already available, which makes them desirable for future development.

Obstacles

- A large influx of people is expected to come to the city, and the existing community facilities and infrastructure may not be enough to handle the rapid expansion
- Current facilities are clustered in the south-west part of the city, while new developments will be focused on the north part of the city
- The young adult population is leaving due to greater opportunities outside the city, especially for higher education or employment
- There aren't enough medical service providers

Opportunities

- The city has a lot of room for new facilities and developments
- Existing facilities are well-equipped and maintained
- Current student-teacher ratios and average class sizes are lower than the state average for the elementary level
- Events and festivals are held in the historical area and State Farm Arena



Recommendations

Future Community Facilities and Infrastructure

Building off the findings in the State of Existing Infrastructure and Community Services Report, these recommendations outline a series of future steps to take to enhance these facilities in Hidalgo. Table 5-2 shows the necessary numbers of schools, police officers, firefighters, and library space to support future population growth. According to the projection, the city needs to build about five more schools and to extend the police station, fire station, and library.

Table 5-2: Projected Future Facilities

Facilities	Total (2013)	Per capita	2020	2025	2030	2035
Population	13,273	-	15,562	18,039	20,585	23,083
Schools	8	0.00060	9.4	10.9	12.4	13.9
Students	3,516	0.26490	4,122	4,779	5,453	6,115
Police officers	43	0.00324	50	58	67	75
Firefighters	19	0.00143	22	26	29	33
Library (sq ft)	10,497	0.79085	12,307	14,266	16,280	18,255

The Future Residential Areas map based on the Preferred Future Land Use Plan (Figure 5-10) shows the new residential area is concentrated in the northern part of the city. The estimated new population in residential area A is 1,229, while B is 7,405 and C is 5,562. Therefore, the future community facilities are required in areas B and C to meet the needs of projected population. For example, the city needs 5 more schools until 2035, and Area A, B, and C should have 0.4, 2.6, 2.0 new schools, respectively.

A suitability analysis was performed to suggest the draft location of new community facilities based on proximity of existed current facilities and nearby land uses. Suitability analysis is a GIS-based process used to determine the appropriateness of a given area for a particular use. The basic premise of GIS suitability analysis is that each aspect of the land has intrinsic characteristics that are to some degree either suitable or unsuitable for the activities being planned. Suitability is calculated through multi-factor analysis of the different aspects. Table 5-3 shows the detailed description for each aspect.

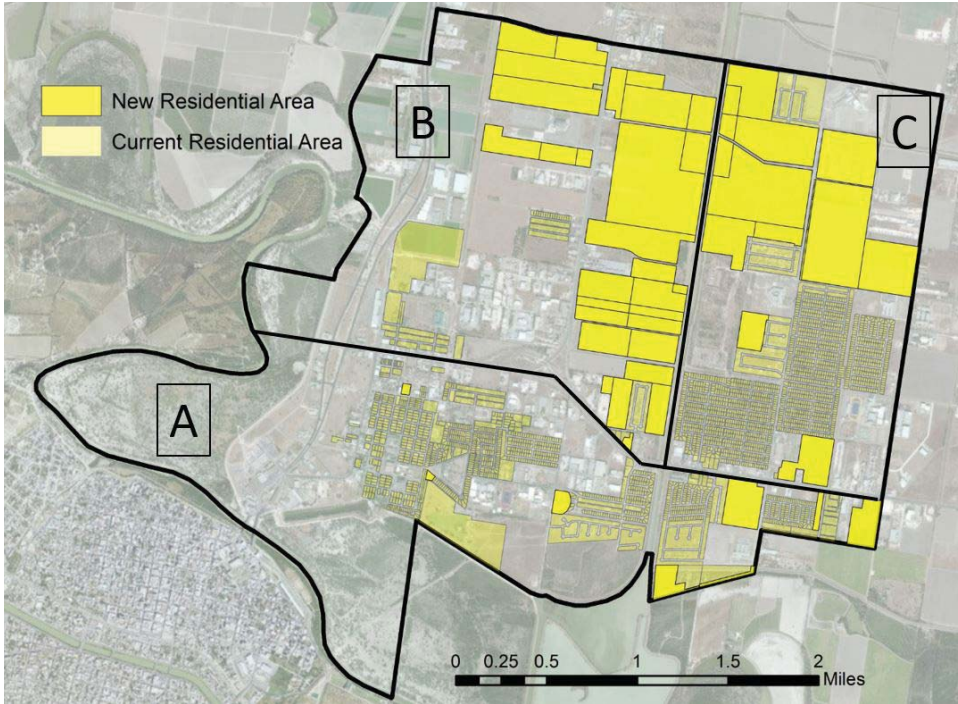


Figure 5-10 Future Residential Areas

New police and fire stations should have a good automobile accessibility and cover entire city area with current facilities, while new schools and the library should have a good auto and pedestrian accessibility from residential areas. The darker green on Figure 5-11 and 5-12 are suitable for the new police and fire stations and new school and library locations.



Table 5-3: Suitability Analysis Factors

Facilities	Factors	Calculation
New police & fire station	Distance from arterial roads	3: 0.00 mile - 0.10 mile 2: 0.10 mile - 0.25 mile 1: 0.25 mile - 0.50 mile 0: Over 0.50 mile
	Distance from the current police & fire stations	3: Over 1.00 mile 2: 0.50 mile - 1.00 mile 1: 0.25 mile - 0.50 mile 0: 0.00 mile - 0.25 mile
	New population density (New population within 0.5 mile distance / Acre)	3: Over 5 / Acre 2: 2.0 - 5.0 / Acre 1: 0.5 - 2.0 / Acre 0: Under 0.5 / Acre
	Distance from arterial roads	3: 0.00 mile - 0.10 mile 2: 0.10 mile - 0.25 mile 1: 0.25 mile - 0.50 mile 0: Over 0.50 mile
New school & library	Distance from minor arterial & collector roads	3: 0.00 mile - 0.10 mile 2: 0.10 mile - 0.25 mile 1: 0.25 mile - 0.50 mile 0: Over 0.50 mile
	Distance from the current & future residential areas	3: 0.00 mile - 0.10 mile 2: 0.10 mile - 0.25 mile 1: 0.25 mile - 0.50 mile 0: Over 0.50 mile
	New population density (New population within 0.5 mile distance / Acre)	3: Over 5 / Acre 2: 2.0 - 5.0 / Acre 1: 0.5 - 2.0 / Acre 0: Under 0.5 / Acre
	Distance from arterial roads	3: 0.00 mile - 0.10 mile 2: 0.10 mile - 0.25 mile 1: 0.25 mile - 0.50 mile 0: Over 0.50 mile

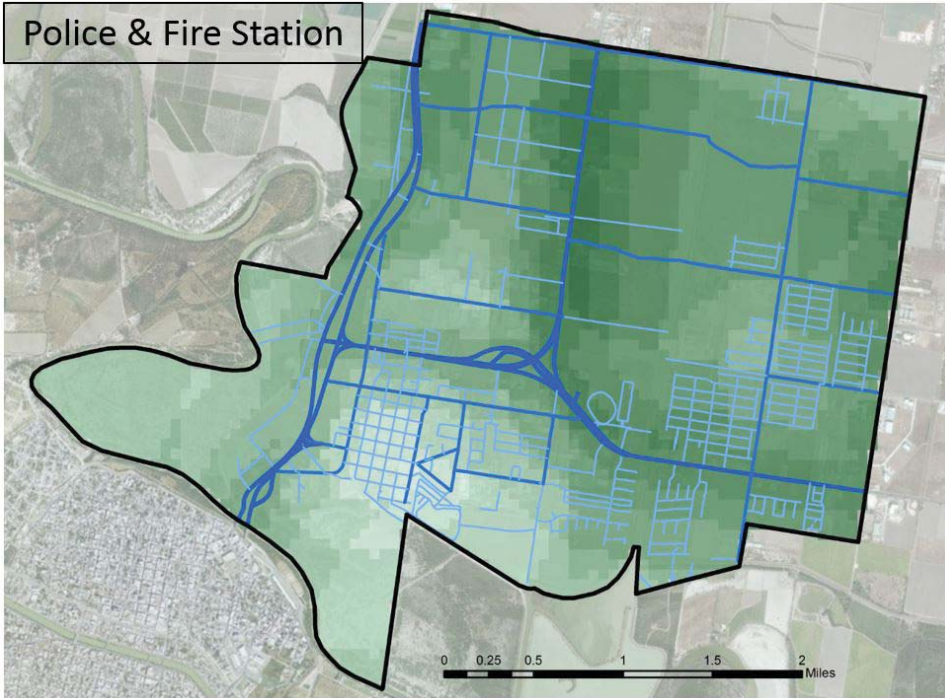


Figure 5-11 Suitability Analysis: New Police and Fire

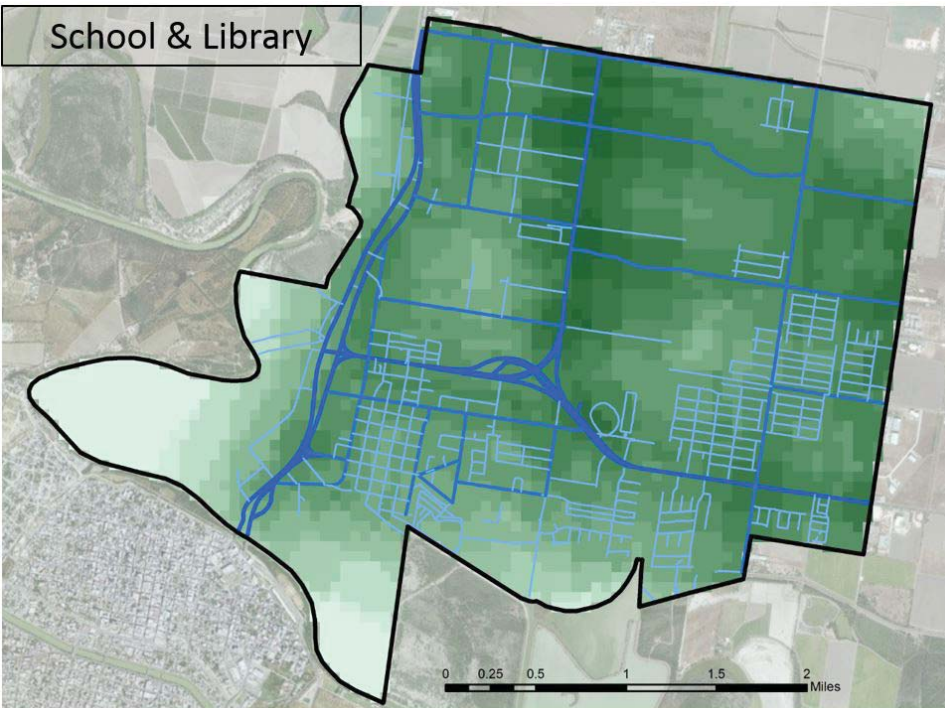


Figure 5-12 Suitability Analysis: New School and Library



Hidalgo Viejo Cultural Center

The first step of the planning project is to re-brand the Hidalgo Viejo District as “Hidalgo Viejo Cultural District,” followed by the redevelopment and master plan of adjacent empty lots (see Figure 5-13). The redevelopment will create an urban area full of social and cultural activities, including waterfront development on the North side of the irrigation canal, connected to the Historic Pumphouse. The waterfront development will have public spaces and a series of proposed commercial and retail spaces along with cultural activities such as weekend pedaling boat rentals. A large public space, or plaza, will be part of the Cultural Center.

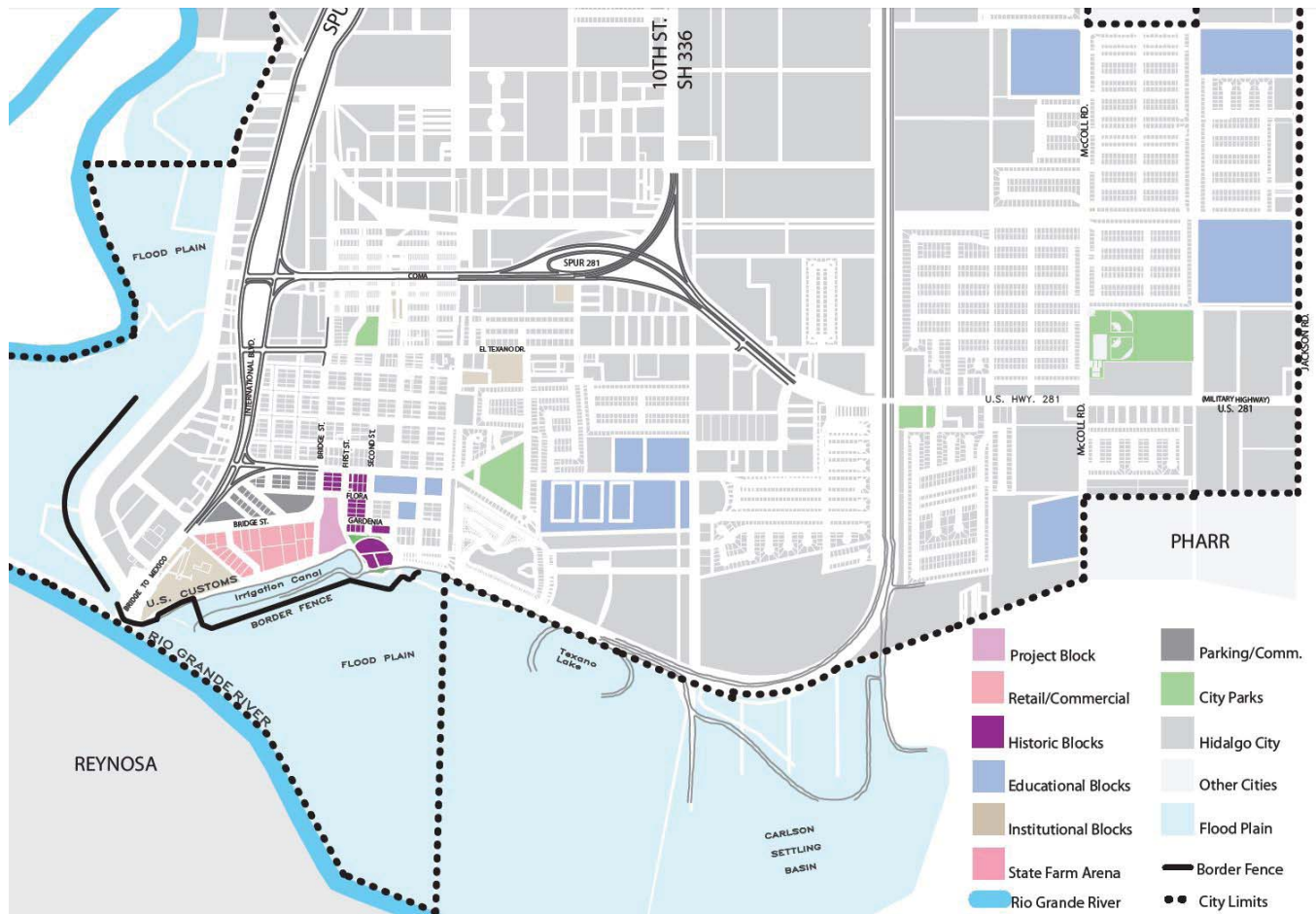


Figure 5-13 Hidalgo Viejo Cultural District



A network of pedestrian-friendly routes will integrate the historic and present amenities with the future development of public and private spaces (see Figure 5-14, 5-15, 5-16). Promenades leading to important monuments will be designed to create a sense of place and a meaningful atmospheric experience for the community and visitors.



Figure 5-14 District Accessibility and Circulation

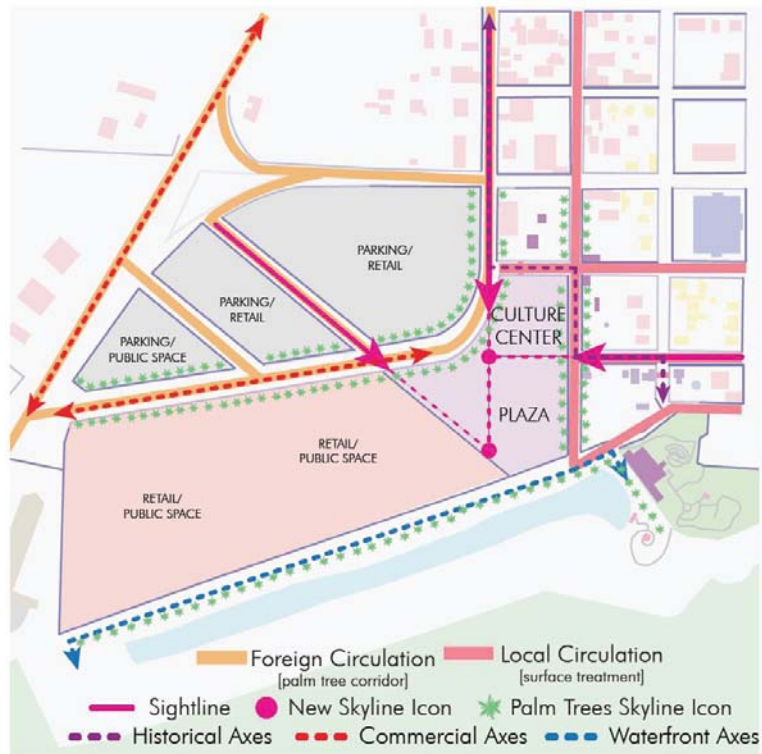


Figure 5-15 District Accessibility and Circulation

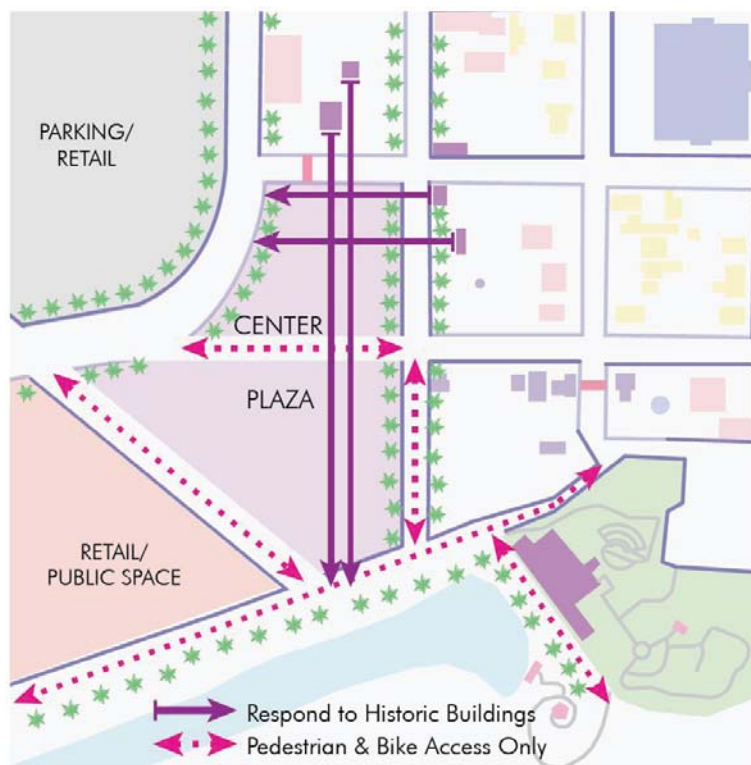


Figure 5-16 District Accessibility and Circulation Detail



The second step is to identify and re-brand the existing historical district with the new cultural meaning by integrating the Hidalgo Cultural Center (see Figure 5-17). The center will serve as the main attractor for the Historic Viejo Cultural District. It will attract the community members to be part of the revitalization process by providing the community's residents—but more importantly the local youth—with after school activities where they can develop their artistic talents.

There are seven construction phases to make the cultural complex, including 10 key buildings, an amphitheater, and a clock tower (see Table 5-4 and Figure 5-18 to 5-26):

- Phase 1 – Buildings a (support administration) and b (classroom), plaza 1
- Phase 2 – Buildings c (main administration) and d (workshop administration & tech lab), plazas 2 and 3
- Phase 3 – Buildings e (painting and drawing classroom) and f (arts and crafts classroom), plazas 4 and 5
- Phase 4 – Buildings g (multi-purpose room) and h (performance arts), plazas 6, 7, and 8
- Phase 5 – Buildings i (kitchen) and j (public restroom), herb garden, plazas 9 and 10, market
- Phase 6 – Amphitheater
- Phase 7 – Clock tower

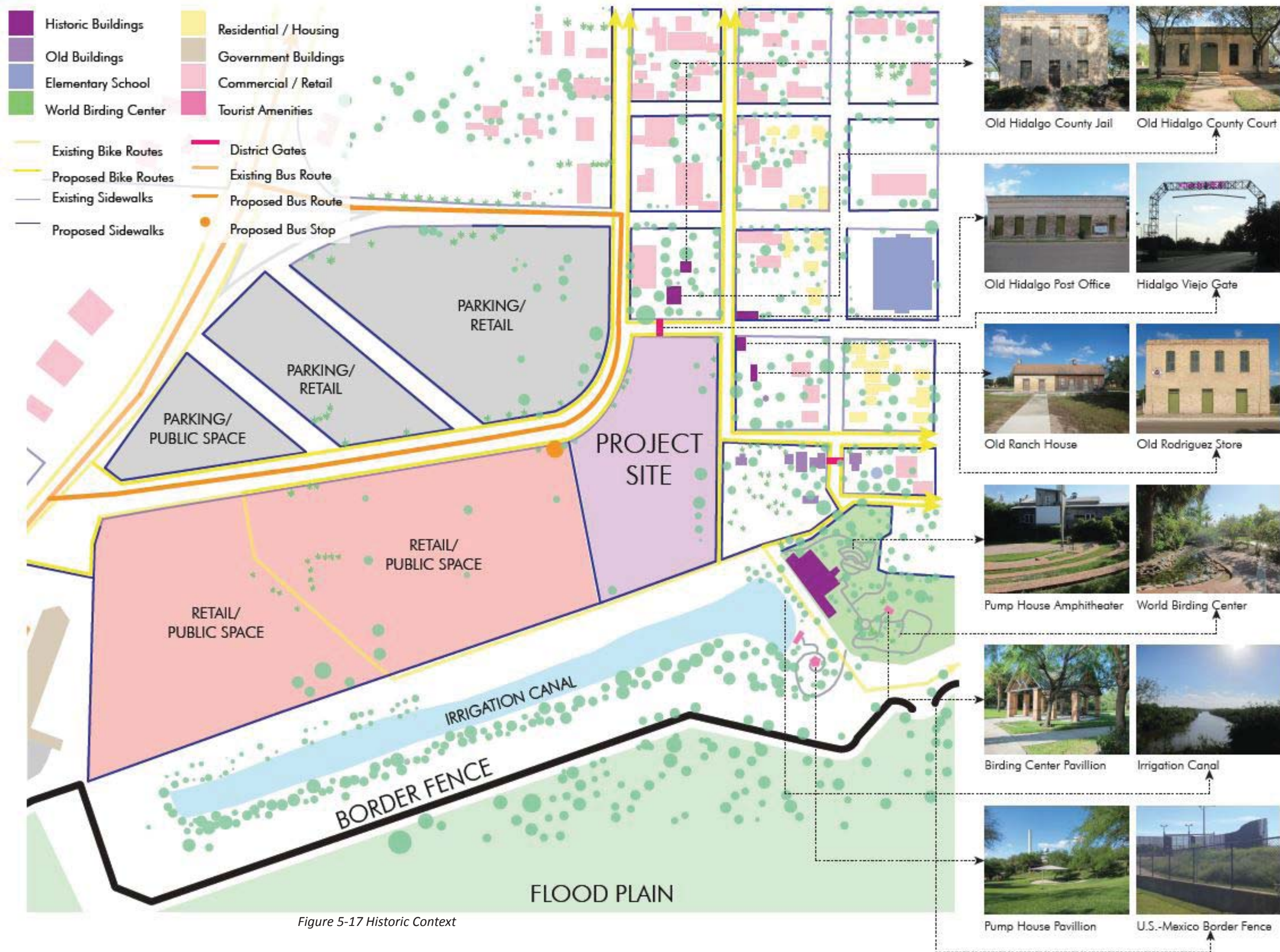


Figure 5-17 Historic Context

Table 5-4: Cultural Center Buildings

Buildings	Usage	Phase
a	support administration	1
b	classroom	1
c	main administration	2
d	workshop administration & tech lab	2
e	painting & drawing classroom	3
f	arts and crafts classroom	3
g	multi-purpose room	4
h	performance arts	4
i	kitchen	5
j	public restroom	5
Amphitheater	-	6
Clock tower	-	7

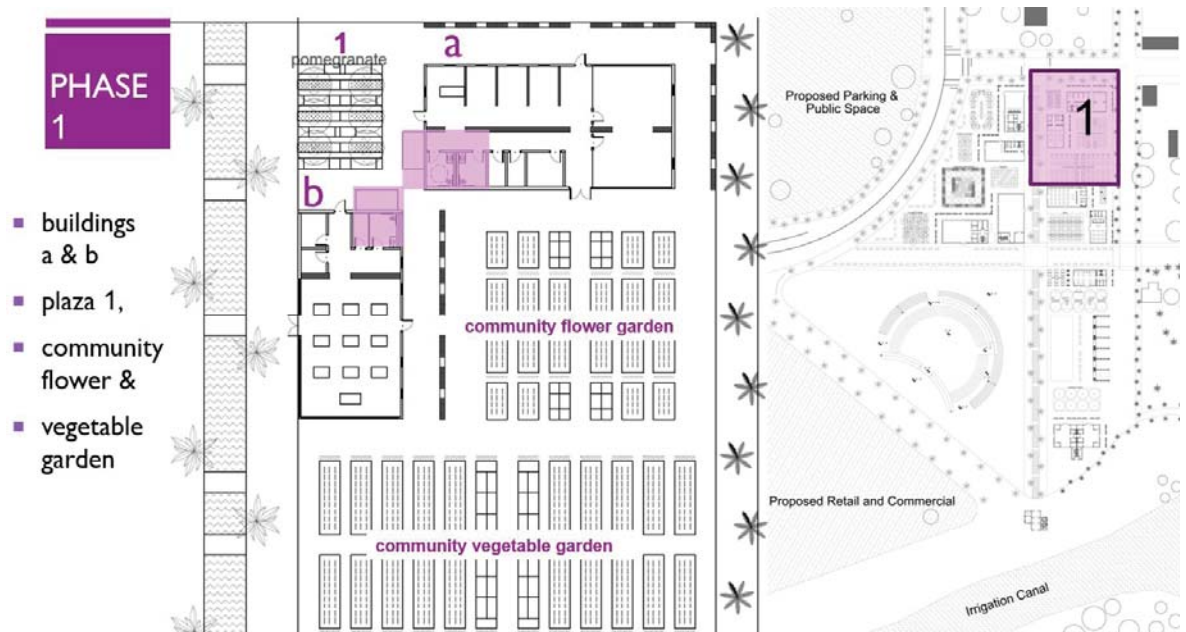


Figure 5-18 Phase 1

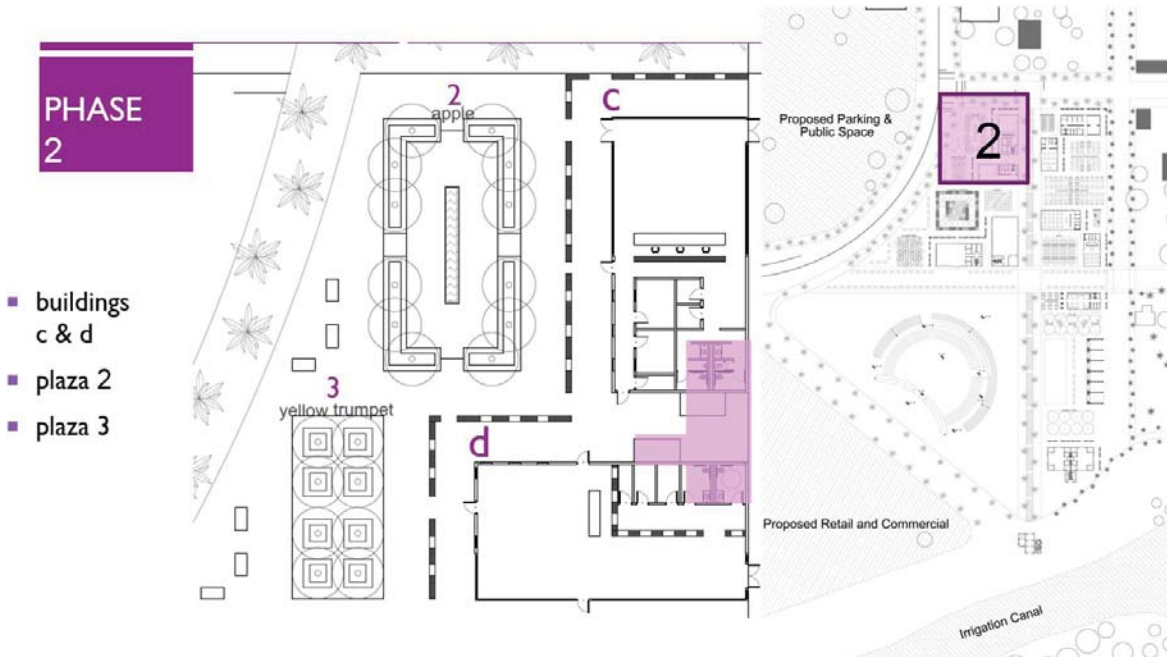


Figure 5-19 Phase 2

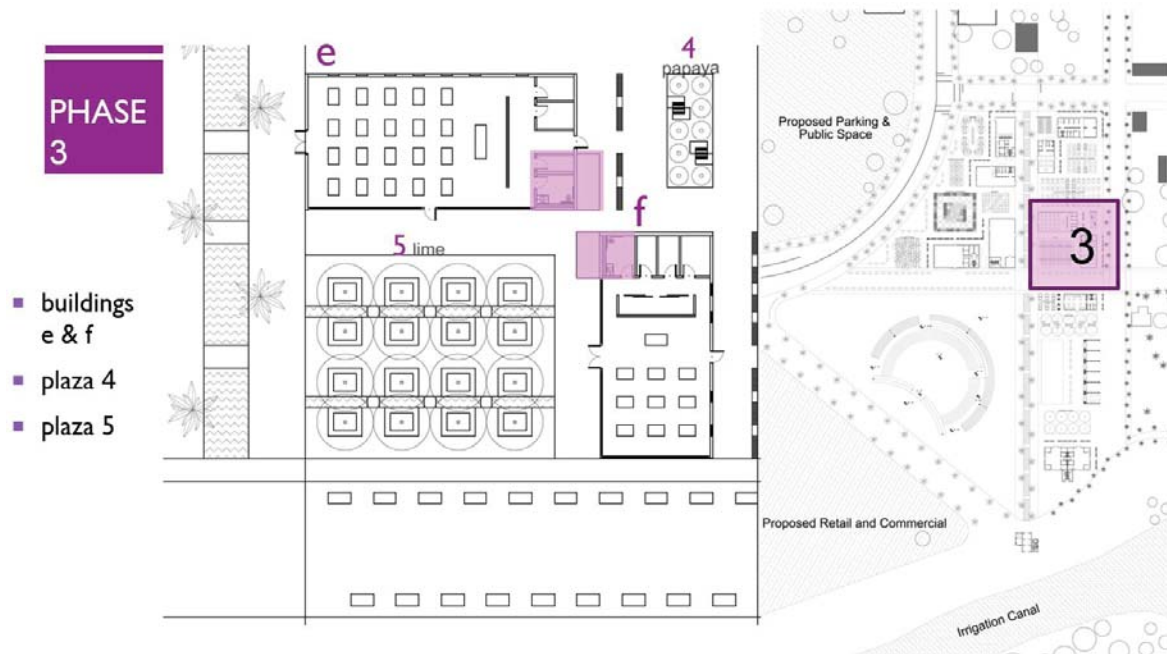


Figure 5-20 Phase 3

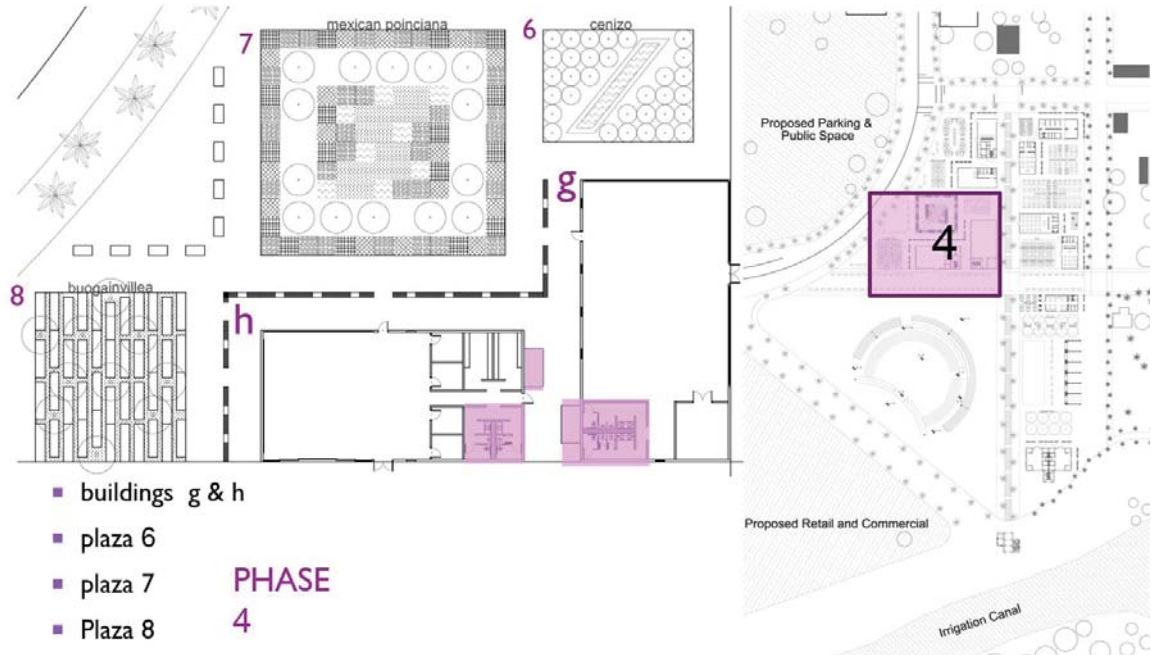


Figure 5-21 Phase 4

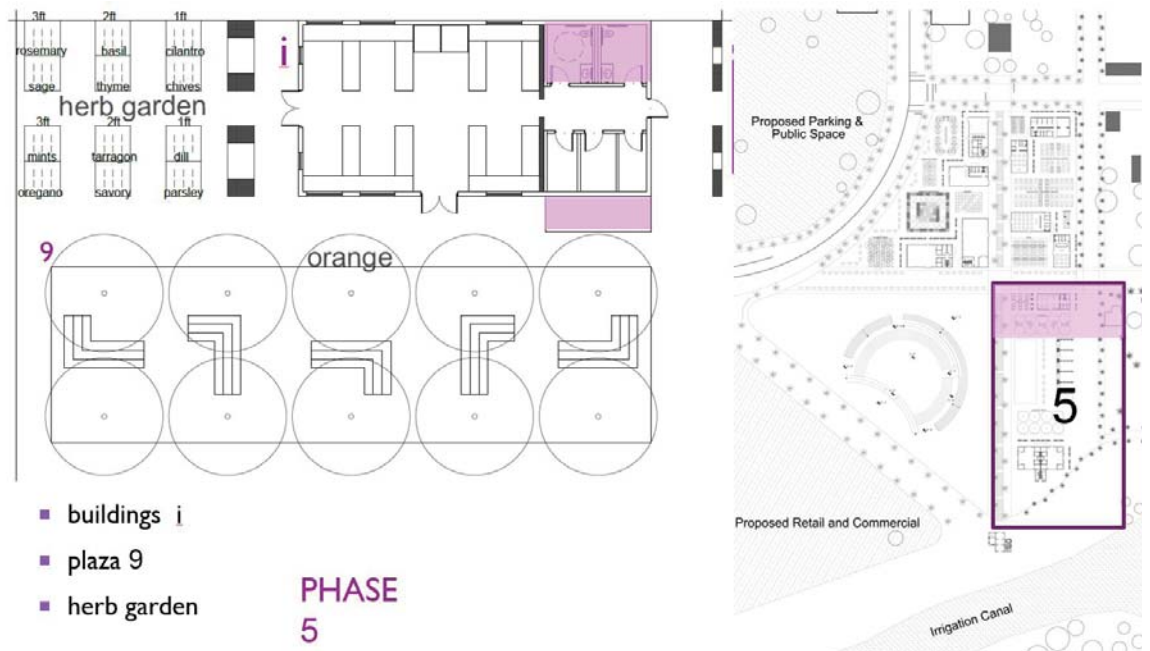


Figure 5-22 Phase 5

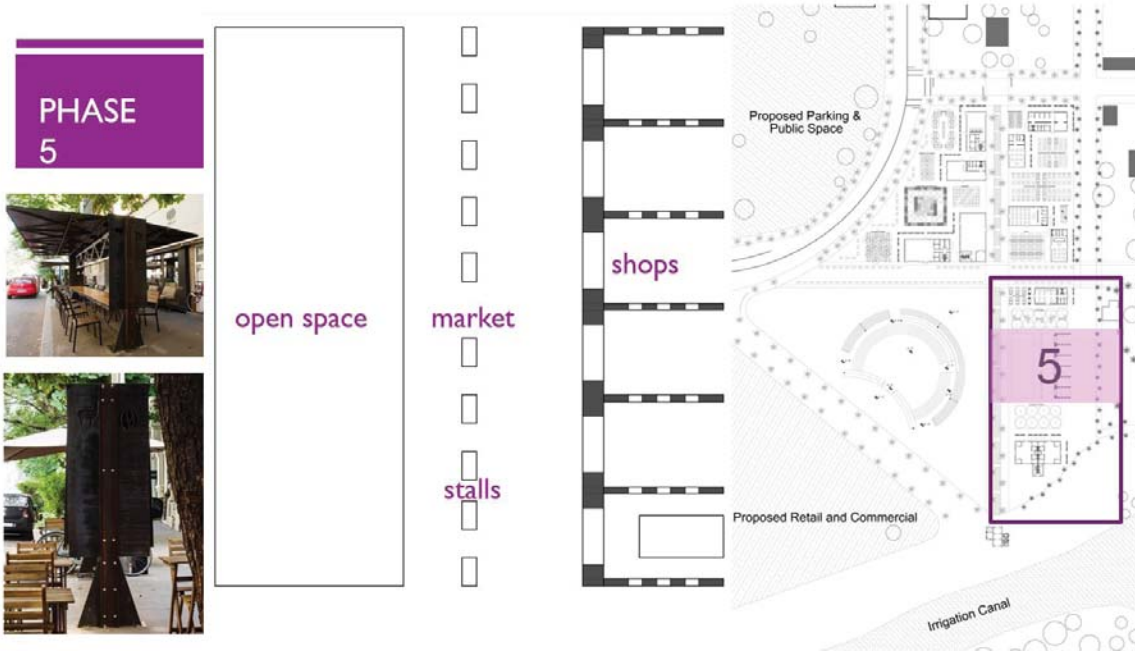


Figure 5-23 Phase 6

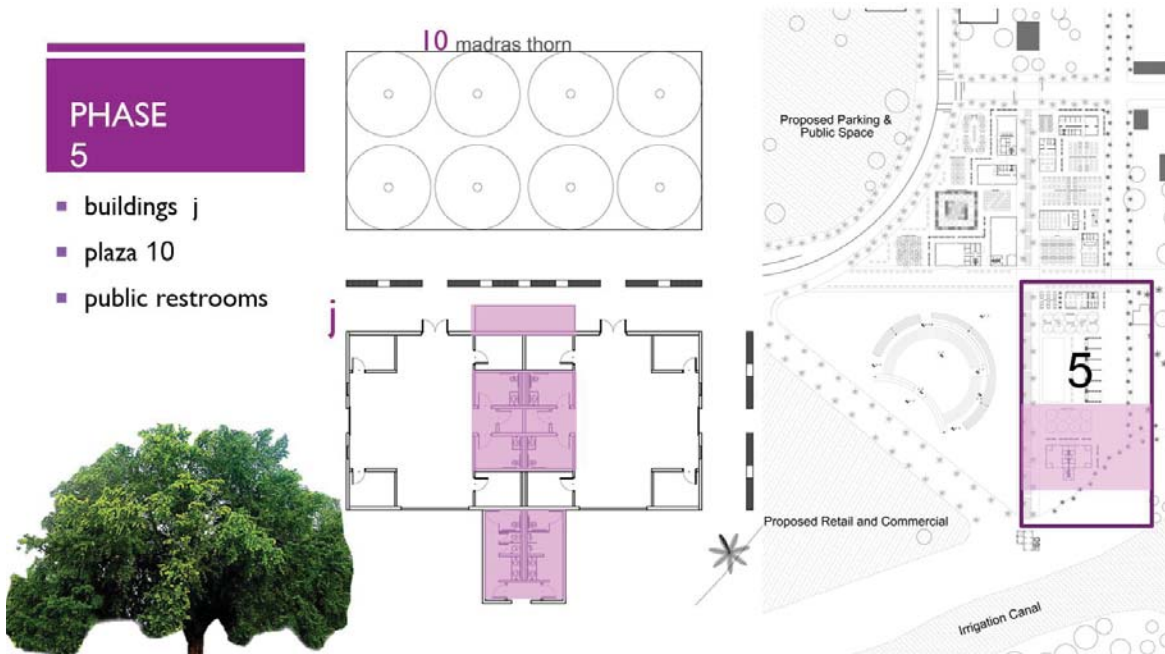


Figure 5-24 Phase 7

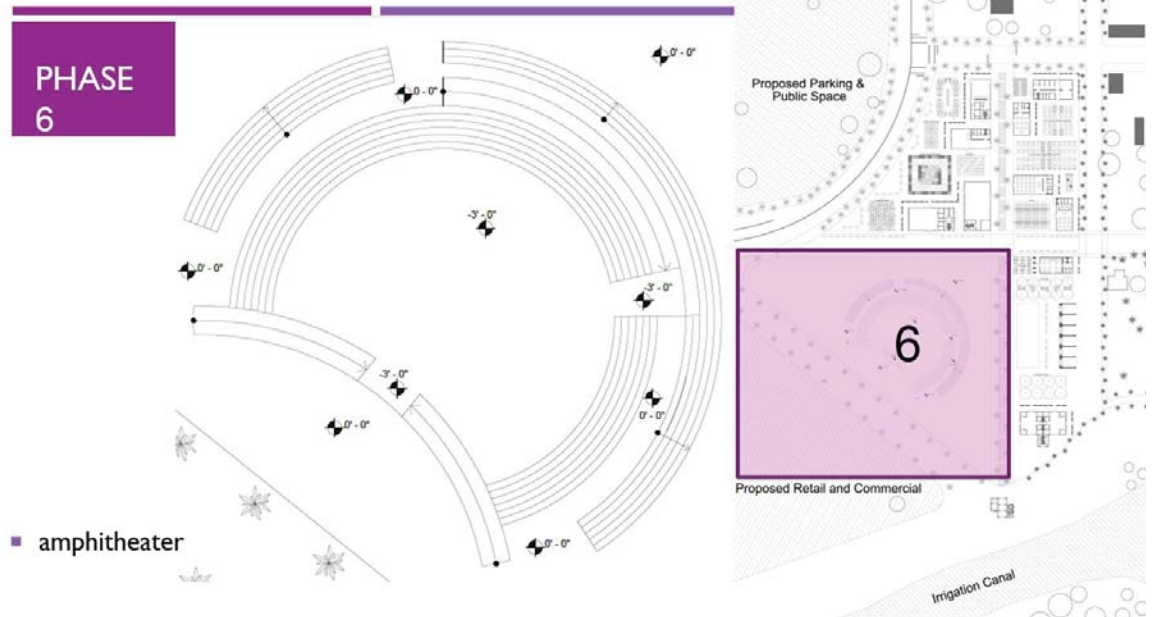


Figure 5-25 Phase 6

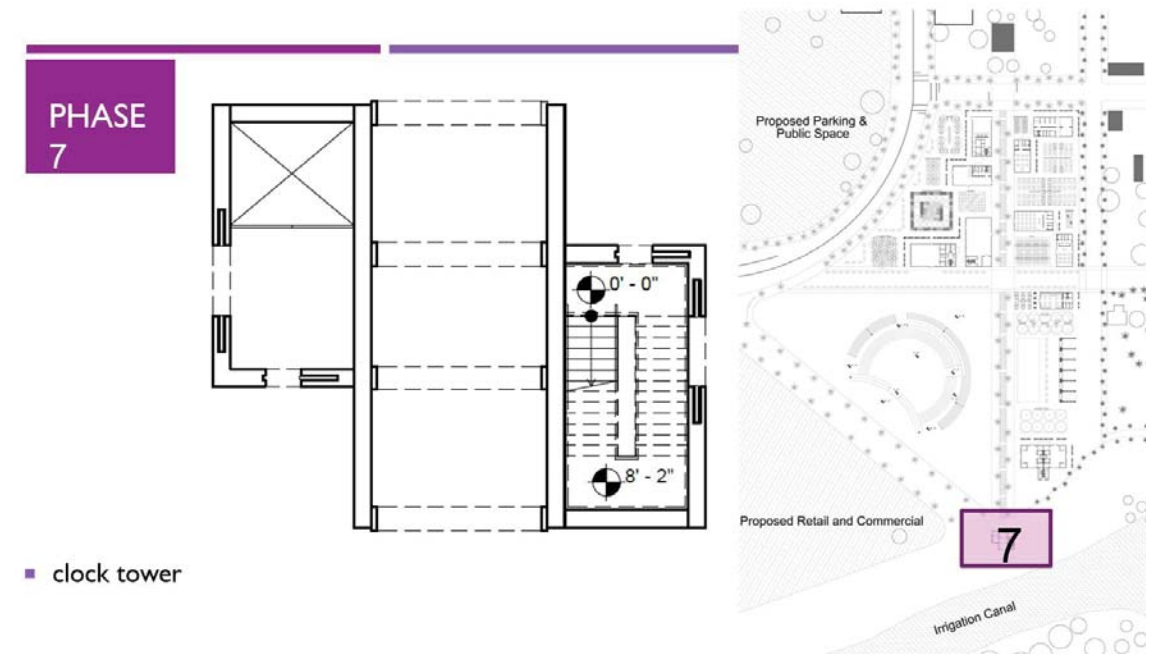


Figure 5-26 Phase 7



The facilities will include workshops for painting, sculpting, wood work, rehearsal and performing music and dance studios. Learning rooms for other cultural enrichment programs and office and meeting rooms will also be provided. The office and meeting rooms will be used by the officials in charge of overseeing the downtown revitalization process. The area is full of local heritage and historical buildings, and the idea is to restore the historical buildings to their original condition. These buildings will become a chain of regional museums. The Culture Center will become the headquarters of these small satellite cultural units and provide support to these facilities.

The Culture Center will also integrate exterior-interior polyvalent spaces. This public space will house local festivals, concerts, and weekend markets. Integrating the public space will revive the social and cultural environment once present in downtown Hidalgo (See Figures 5-27, 5-28, 5-29, 5-30).



Figure 5-27 Firework Event



Figure 5-28 Cultural Event



Figure 5-29 Plaza



Figure 5-30 Corridor

Main Characteristics:

- Public space: provide the community with polyvalent space for gathering events, such as festivals, local concerts, farmers market, and afternoon and weekend activities
- Unique city identity: create spaces that the community can identify with, e.g., community garden, Hidalgo community walk of fame, spaces to display local art, etc.
- Sense of community: involve the community by proposing an organization to oversee the revitalization process
- Sense of history: recognize particular characteristics of the Hidalgo Viejo site and reinterpret them to meet the needs of a modern community and society
- Educational opportunities: provide facilities for after school programs and other cultural and social activities to improve their abilities and talent
- Downtown icon: use the new Hidalgo Viejo Cultural Center as a symbol of the integration of the past, present, and future, but also to create a new unique identity for the revitalized area ¹⁶



Goal, Objectives, and Actions

Goal: Expand community facilities and infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future residents of Hidalgo that provide the community with safety, education, and health benefits.

Objectives and Actions

Objective 5.1 Provide a cultural center center in Hidalgo Viejo as described in Community Facilities and Infrastructure Plan Recommendations

Action 5.1.1 Identify potential partners to fund the construction, maintenance, and staffing of the cultural center within each phase of development (see Economic Development goals for further ideas)

Objective 5.2 Coordinate with the local water district to meet water and waste water needs of projected growth

Action 5.2.1 Monitor the needs assessment based on population growth

Objective 5.3 Coordinate with electricity and gas providers to meet the needs of projected population by 2035

Action 5.3.1 Monitor the needs assessment based on population growth

Action 5.3.2 Evaluate the feasibility of investing new lighting along Bridge Street

Objective 5.4 Establish public facilities for the cultural center to encourage social and educational activities by 2035

Action 5.4.1 Construct three administration buildings, three classrooms, multi-purpose room, performance arts room, kitchen, public restroom through phases described in chapter

Objective 5.5 Coordinate with agencies and local partners to improve and maintain emergency services to efficiently and effectively respond to public safety needs and serve designated land uses

Action 5.5.1 Monitor the needs assessment based on population growth

Action 5.5.2 Improve and maintain emergency medical services to allow EMS personnel to efficiently and effectively respond to public safety needs and serve designated land uses

Action 5.5.3 Identify coalitions and partnerships which provide grants and resources for hazard mitigation

Action 5.5.4 Evaluate the possibility of updating police and emergency operations center facility Action 5.5.5 Coordinate land use



plans, programs, and public facility investments between City departments, other public and jurisdictional agencies, community partners, and emergency response providers to ensure coordinated and comprehensive emergency and disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery

Phased Activities

Short term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

Action	Responsible Party
5.1.1	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
5.2.1	Public Works Dept.
5.3.1	City Manager
5.3.2	Parks/Streets/Grounds dept.
5.5.1	Police Dept.;Fire Dept.
5.5.3	Fire Dept.

Medium term (actions to take place over several years)

Action	Responsible Party
5.2.1	Public Works Dept.
5.3.1	City Manager
5.4.1	City Manager, City Council
5.5.1	Police Dept.;Fire Dept.
5.5.4	Police Dept.;Fire Dept.
5.5.5	City Manager

Long term (actions to take place in the next 10-20 years)

Action	Responsible Party
5.5.2	Police Dept.;Fire Dept.
5.5.5	City Manager



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6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The economic development section provides an overview of future population, income, employment, and tax policy characteristics of Hidalgo. The information was obtained from federal, state, and local authorities, as well as the U.S. Census Bureau and ESRI Business Analyst. This section also addresses business retention, expansion of job opportunities, tourism-related business revitalization, downtown repopulation, and canal area development.

State of Economic Development Report

This report discusses the economic characteristics of the city in relation to the county and state in order to get a better understanding of its residents. The economic analysis describes local industries, employment, and income. Understanding the economic characteristics of the City of Hidalgo is fundamental to the design and organization of the land use, infrastructure, and community service plans.

Industry Distributions

Knowing the top industries in the area can help inform the types of industries to attract to the city. As seen in Figure 6-1, the top five industries in Hidalgo County are: Public Administration, Transportation and Warehousing, Wholesale Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, and Retail Trade. These industries are the top employers and thus provide needed jobs in the area. In the next section we explore the value of industries based on their ability to export goods and inject income into the local economy.¹



Figure 6-1 Top Five Industries in Hidalgo

Analyzing Local Industries for Imports and Exports

To analyze local industries and their import and export ability, a ratio is calculated that compares the percentage of employment locally to the percentage of employment in that industry in a reference economy (usually state or nation). This ratio is called the location quotient (LQ). It divides industry sectors into ‘basic’ and ‘non-basic’, as described below.

Basic industries in a community are those that produce more goods and services than can be consumed locally, exporting the excess and bringing income into the local economy. An LQ greater than 1 indicates a basic industry and an LQ greater than 1.25 is evidence that the industry is a potential exporter. Table 6-1 lists the basic industries for Hidalgo County and their LQ value in 2013 (data is not available for the City of Hidalgo alone). The three Hidalgo County industries with the greatest potential for exporting are Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting; Health Care and Social Assistance; and Retail Trade. While these industries may not be the City of Hidalgo’s particular specialization, they do have an effect on the local economy because the surrounding area specializes in these industries.²

Table 6-1: Basic Industries (Hidalgo County)*

Industry	LQ
NAICS 11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3.32
NAICS 62 Health Care and Social Assistance	2.27
NAICS 44-45 Retail Trade	1.49

Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics

* Data is not available for city of Hidalgo City alone

Non-basic industries produce goods and services for local consumption. However, sometimes non-basic industries do not meet local demand, which necessitates importing such goods and services. When the LQ is less than 0.75, the local demand for a specific product or service is not being met within the trade area and consumers are going elsewhere to obtain it; in other words, there is business leakage.

Table 6-2 lists these industries and their 2013 LQ value for Hidalgo County. These industries present opportunities for development to meet the consumer’s needs locally within the county. The City of Hidalgo can capitalize on these non-basic industries by encouraging and incentivizing such businesses to locate in the city.³

Table 6-2: Non-Basic Industries (Hidalgo County)*

Industry	LQ
NAICS 72 Accommodation and Food Services	0.99
NAICS 61 Educational Services	0.95
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	0.92
NAICS 99 Unclassified	0.83
NAICS 22 Utilities	0.81
NAICS 56 Administrative and Waste Services	0.73
NAICS 52 Finance and Insurance	0.71
NAICS 42 Wholesale Trade	0.66
NAICS 81 Other Services, except Public Administration	0.65
NAICS 71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	0.62
NAICS 53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	0.58
NAICS 23 Construction	0.56
NAICS 51 Information	0.55
NAICS 21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0.47
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	0.38
NAICS 54 Professional and Technical Services	0.34
NAICS 55 Management of Companies and Enterprises	0.32

Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics

** Data is not available for the city of Hidalgo alone*

Table 6-3 shows 2013 LQ value for five adjacent counties: Starr, Brooks, Kennedy, Willacy, and Cameron County. The industry LQ values that are higher in adjacent counties than in Hidalgo County are highlighted in boldface in the tables. Hidalgo County may have opportunities for economic expansion in these industries.

Table 6-3: Industries (Hidalgo County)*

Industry	Starr	Brooks	Kenedy	Willacy	Cameron
NAICS 11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1.55	8.02	ND	ND	1.03
NAICS 21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0.65	5.02	ND	ND	0.02
NAICS 22 Utilities	1.31	0.82	NC	ND	0.57
NAICS 23 Construction	0.51	0.64	NC	0.40	0.49
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	0.05	NC	NC	0.10	0.59
NAICS 42 Wholesale Trade	0.17	0.05	NC	ND	0.57
NAICS 44-45 Retail Trade	1.40	1.40	ND	1.16	1.30
NAICS 54 Professional and Technical Services	0.19	ND	ND	ND	0.32
NAICS 55 Management of Companies and Enterprises	NC	NC	NC	NC	0.26
NAICS 56 Administrative and Waste Services	0.35	ND	ND	ND	1.12
NAICS 61 Educational Services	ND	NC	NC	NC	0.66
NAICS 62 Health Care and Social Assistance	ND	1.41	ND	1.05	2.29
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	0.36	0.76	ND	ND	0.91
NAICS 51 Information	0.13	ND	NC	ND	0.51
NAICS 52 Finance and Insurance	0.58	ND	NC	0.48	0.66
NAICS 53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	0.16	ND	ND	0.51	0.88
NAICS 71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	ND	ND	1.39	ND	0.76
NAICS 72 Accommodation and Food Services	ND	ND	0.44	ND	1.11
NAICS 81 Other Services, except Public Administration	0.49	0.83	0.74	ND	0.68
NAICS 99 Unclassified	NC	ND	NC	NC	0.99

Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics

* Data is not available for city of Hidalgo alone

* ND: Not Disclosable, NC: Not Calculable

Employment Inflow/Outflow

Inflow/outflow analysis is a measure to determine employment opportunities within a community. It involves examining how many people come into the City of Hidalgo each day for work, how many live and work within the city, and how many live in the city but work outside. Figure 6-2 shows the inflow and outflow of workers for the city.

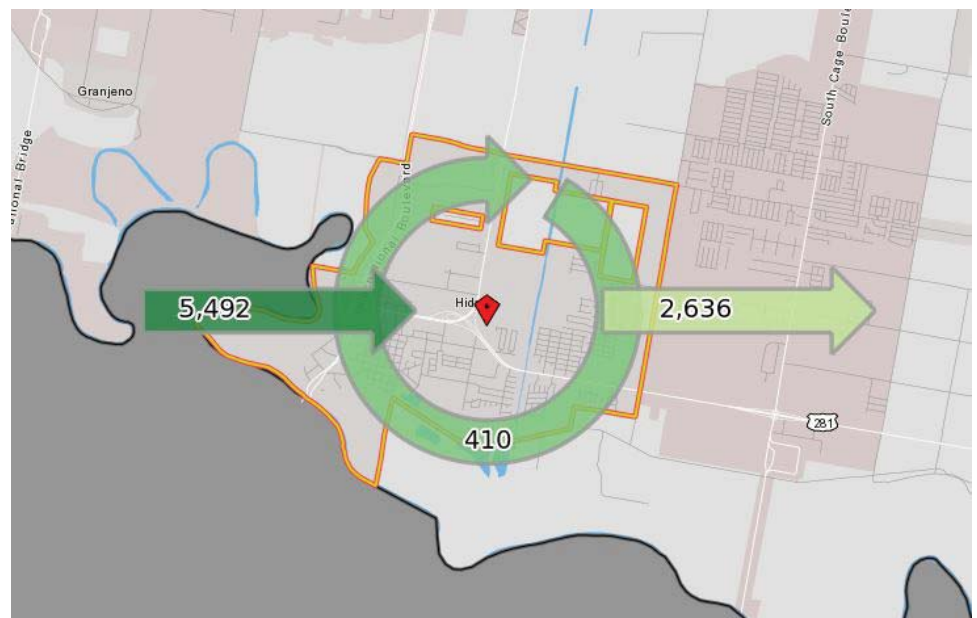


Figure 6-2 Inflow and Outflow of Workersⁱ

There are a total of 5,902 jobs in the city. Of the workers occupying these positions, 5,492 travel into Hidalgo to work each day and 410 people both live and work in the city. Meanwhile, 2,636 people live in Hidalgo but work outside the city.⁴

Income and Earnings

Figure 6-3 shows the median household income for the City of Hidalgo in 2012 compared to the county and state. The median household income for the city is \$39,500. This is \$5,800 more than the county’s median household income and \$11,200 less than the state’s.⁵ The income distribution graph is attached in the appendix (Figure A-1).

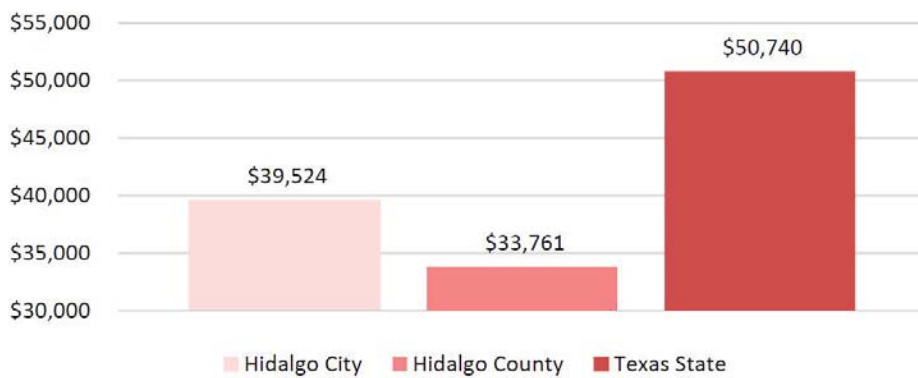


Figure 6-3 Median Household Income

The U.S. Census measures poverty by determining how much each family earns in a year and then calculating the percentage of families that earn less than the established thresholds for that year. These thresholds are also known as the poverty line. There are different income thresholds depending on the size of the family unit: larger families have higher income thresholds and smaller families or individuals have lower ones. Figure 6-4 compares Hidalgo’s family poverty rate to the county’s and state’s rates. The city’s poverty rate is 23.1%, which is lower than the county by about 7 percentage points but higher than the state by about 9 percentage points.⁶

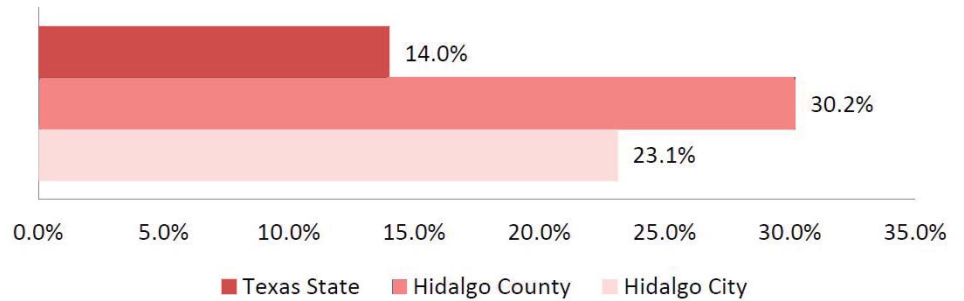


Figure 6-4 Family Poverty Rate (2012)

Unemployment

While the city of Hidalgo makes up only a small portion of Hidalgo County, the county’s economic trends affect the city’s economy. Figure 6-5 compares the unemployment rate for Hidalgo County to that of the state. The county unemployment rate trends generally followed statewide trends from 2004 to 2013. However, on average, the county unemployment rate was about 3.3% higher than the state rate, and the gap has increased since 2008.⁷

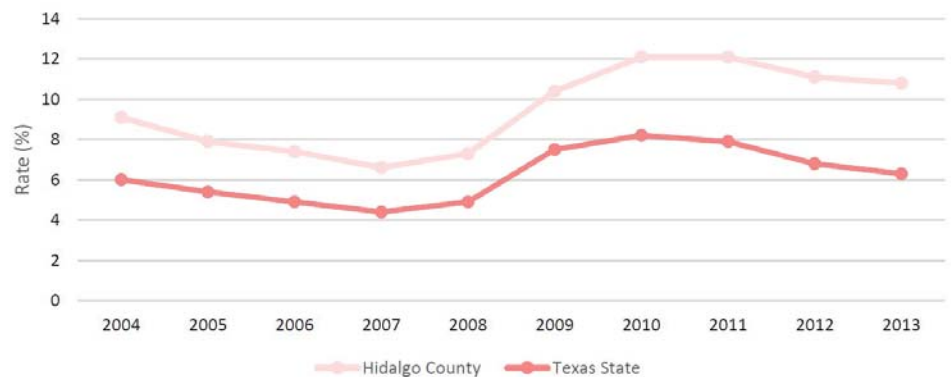
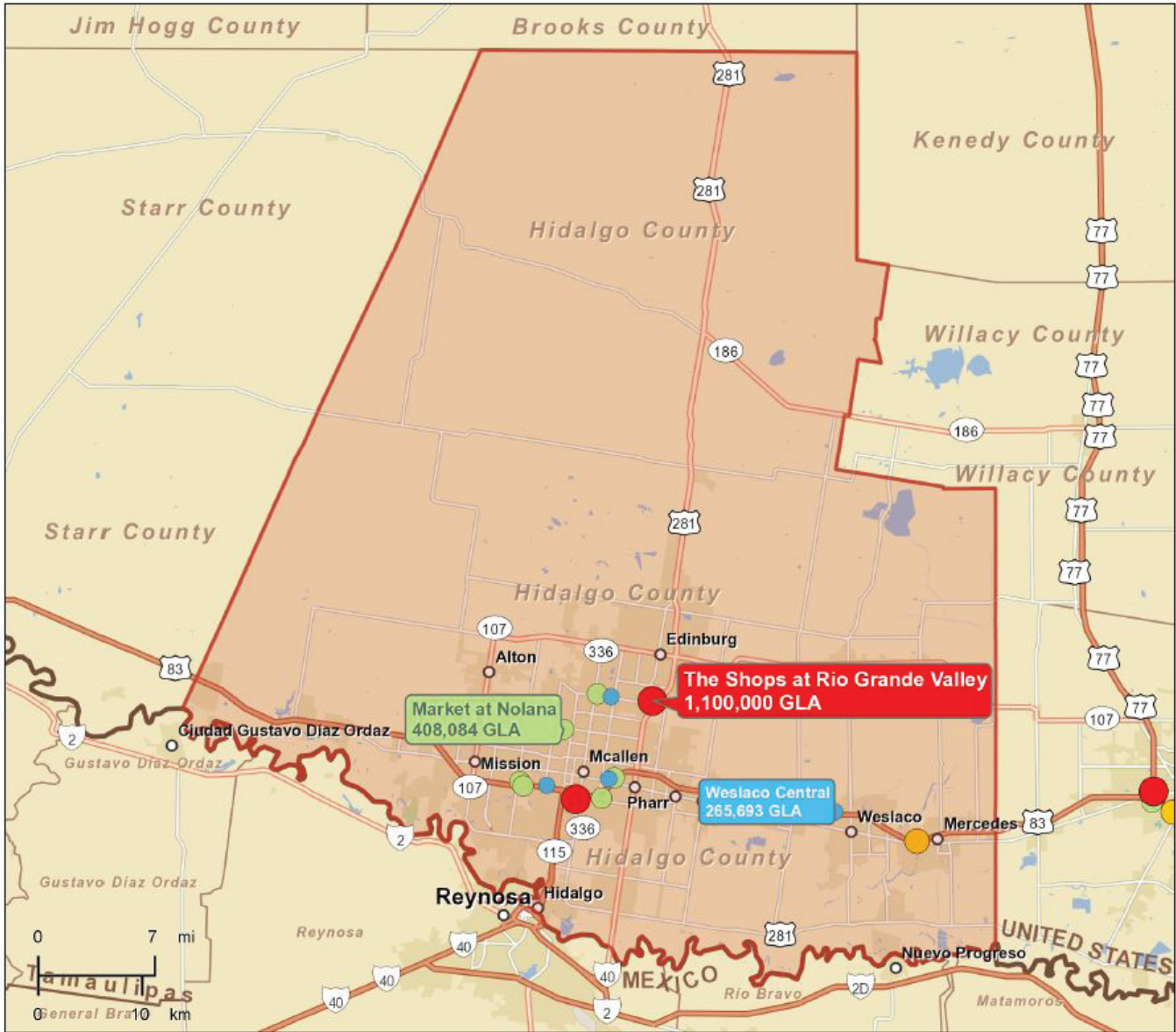


Figure 6-5 Unemployment Rate (2004-2013)

Business Environment

Figure 6-6 shows the major shopping centers in the Hidalgo County with gross leasable area greater than 200,000 sq. ft. Examples include The Shops at Rio Grande Valley in Edinburg, Market at Nolana in McAllen, and Weslaco Central in Weslaco along highways US 83 and US 281.



- Gross Leasable Area
- Less than 200,000 sq ft
 - 200,001 - 300,000
 - 300,001 - 500,000
 - 500,001 - 800,000
 - More than 800,000



Figure 6-6 Major Shopping Centers

The City of Hidalgo doesn't currently have any major shopping centers, but there is potential for future growth in this area. The map of the expected annual population growth shows higher rates in the southern and northern edges of the city from 2014 to 2019 (see Figure 6-7). Furthermore, given the large population across the border and the existing transportation connections with Mexico, there is an opportunity for commercial expansion in the downtown area if the city can funnel the crowds in that direction. For example, the average traffic volume through highways 115 and 336 is up to 25,000 and 18,700 (see Figure 6-8).

Figure 6-9 shows the Leakage/Surplus Factor. It presents a portrait of retail opportunities in the City of Hidalgo according to ESRI Business Analyst, indicating the difference between supply (Retail Sales) and demand (Retail Potential) in 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector. The range goes from total surplus (-100) to total leakage (+100). A negative value

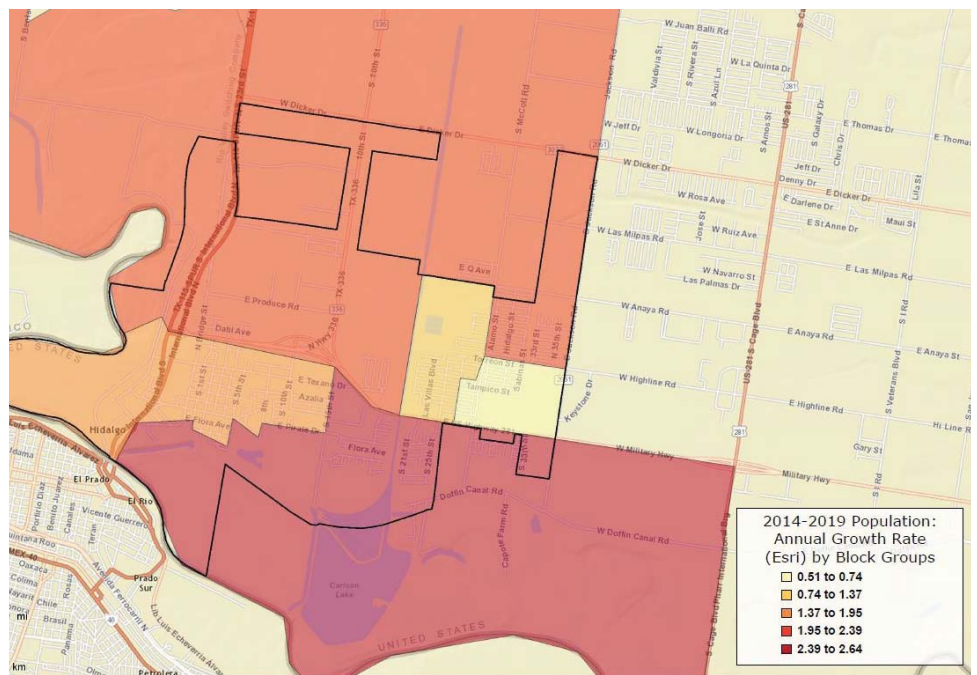
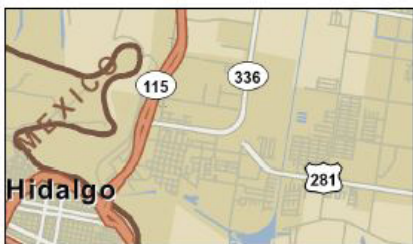
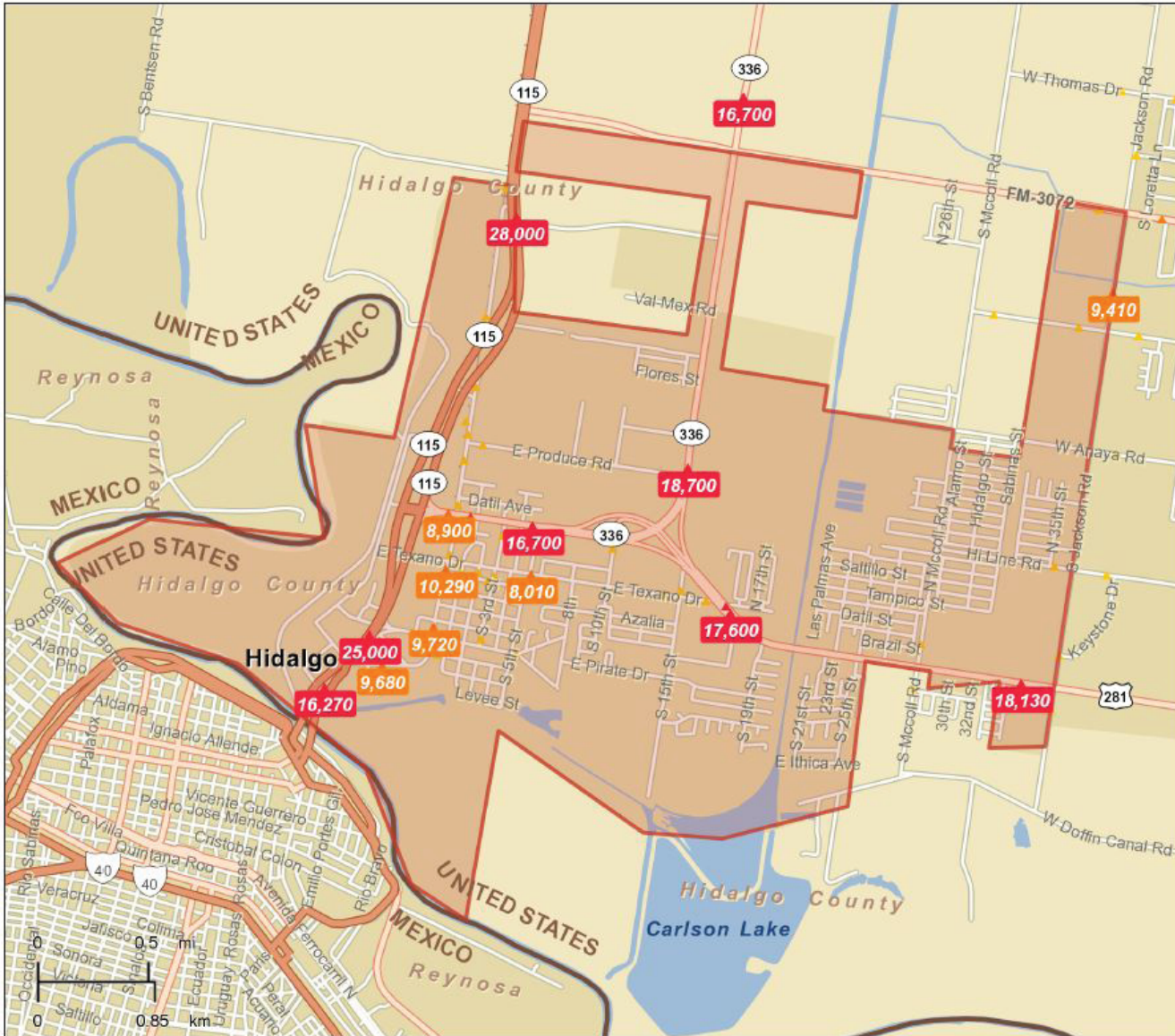


Figure 6-7 Expected Population Growth (2014-2019)



- Average Daily Traffic Volume**
- ▲ Up to 6,000 vehicles per day
 - ▲ 6,001 - 15,000
 - ▲ 15,001 - 30,000
 - ▲ 30,001 - 50,000
 - ▲ 50,001 - 100,000
 - ▲ More than 100,000 per day



Figure 6-8 Daily Traffic Count

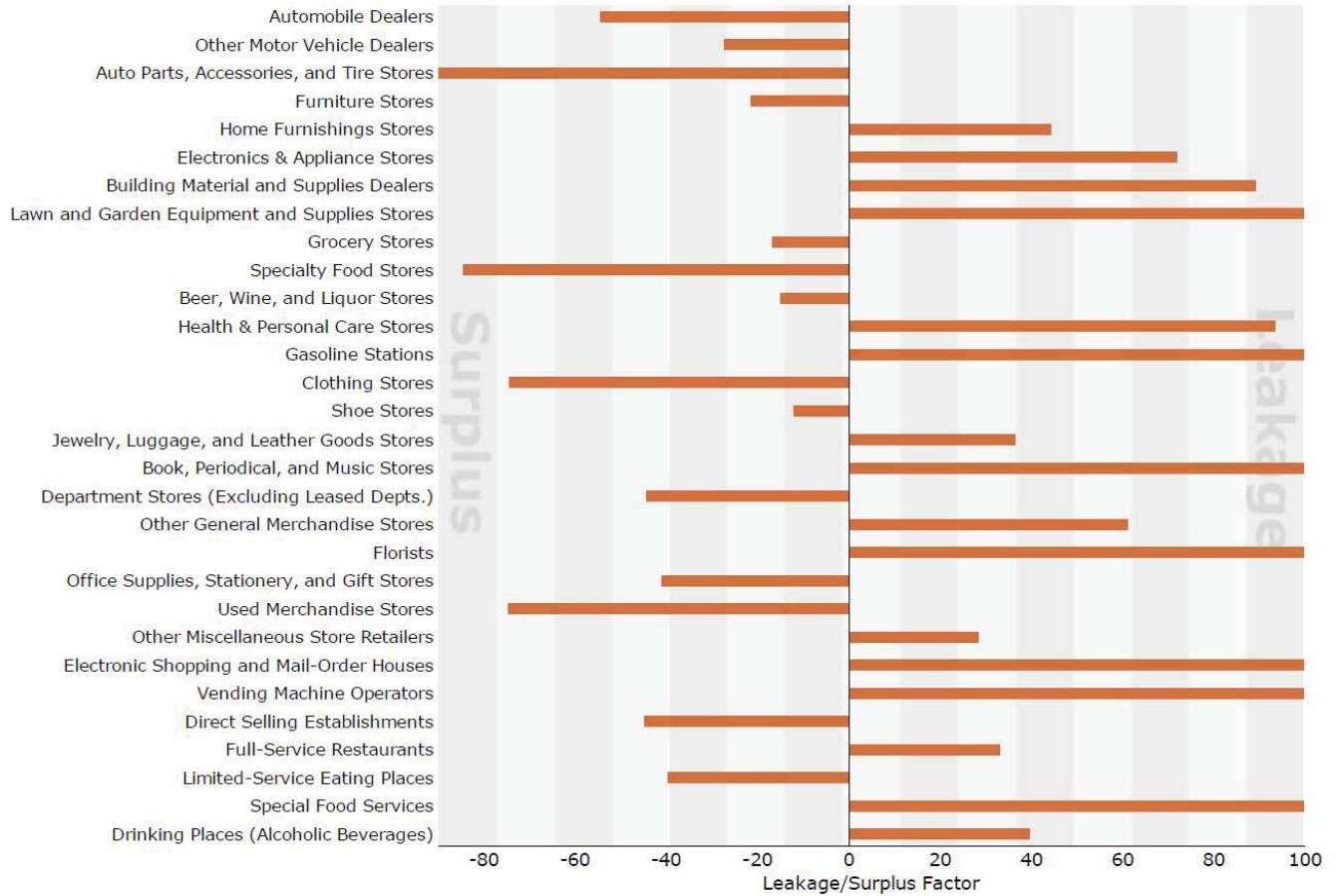


Figure 6-9 Retail MarketPlace Profile

(bars on the left side of Figure 6-9) represents a surplus of retail sales—that is, a market where customers are attracted from outside the Hidalgo trade area to spend money within the city. A positive value (right side of the figure) represents ‘leakage’ of retail opportunity to outside the trade area, signifying that Hidalgo residents must seek out these goods for purchase in other cities. The detailed supply and demand information is attached in the appendix (Table A-2).

Recommendations

The City of Hidalgo already has unique and advantageous features for economic development: a historic downtown area as a cultural icon, State Farm Arena as an industrial and commercial center, and waterfront areas with canals and lakes for unique local restaurants and retail. Finding the best usage of each feature is crucial to develop a healthy and attractive investment environment. The subsections below describe how to best capitalize on and develop these components of the economic development plan. “Hidalgo Viejo District” and “Downtown Revitalization” explain the development of cultural center and downtown revitalization process. “Current Events” describes existing events in the city and their potential expansion. “Waterfront Area Development” shows examples of residential and commercial area development along canals and lakes. Finally, “Implementation Process” explains the process for implementing programs and policies.

Hidalgo Viejo District

Hidalgo Viejo needs a major attraction which—together with the previously created amenities—will enliven the district and make it resemble the active center it once was. This attraction is the Hidalgo Viejo Cultural Center. The center’s main objective is to get the community members involved in the city’s revitalization. It will provide workshops, practice rooms, offices, and meeting spaces, in addition to offering a public space where local artists can perform, display, and sell their art to visitors. The center will also house a community-led organization which will be in charge of overseeing the process and the success of the revitalization project. Throughout the downtown area, historical buildings are being restored and adapted to become a series of museums; the Cultural Center will act as the headquarters of these museums and provide support to the facilities.

The second objective of the Community’s Cultural Center is to re-brand the historical district as a Cultural District where not only the history of Hidalgo City is celebrated, but also the culture of the community, including surrounding cities. The center will provide public space to accommodate festivals, a farmers’ market, an artisan market, and other community events. As more and more people become attracted to the district, the other goal is to propose the integration of commercial and retail activities as a waterfront development along adjacent lakes and canals.

A cultural district provides performing arts services, leisure services, and small local cultural products, such as jewelry, textiles, pottery, art and crafts. Offering these cultural amenities at a local level will not only boost the economy of the community, but will also create an ideal model for localized production of culture-based goods.

Downtown Revitalization

Financing the redevelopment of Hidalgo Viejo will involve a huge community effort and the involvement of the of the city’s government. Before all this can take place, an action plan must be developed and certain preparatory steps must be taken. Dagny Faulk, director of research in the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, provides a clear description of an eight-stage process of changes occurring in aging downtowns in his article “The Process and Practice of Downtown Revitalization.” The first stage is the establishment of a commercial, retail, and government center. Secondly, there is a decline in residential area surrounding downtown. Stage three is the decline of retail and commercial space. Stage four involves a high level of vacancies and abandonment. Stage five is the establishment of an organization to redevelop and revitalize via advocacy. Stage six is the identification of projects. Stage seven is the revitalization or redevelopment process itself. The final stage is the construction and operation of a multi-use center.⁸

Hidalgo Viejo has been at stage four/five for a few decades. Since the county seat moved to Edinburg City, the economic and cultural center shifted with it. Part of downtown is still vacant and other parts, such as the Pumphouse, have been slowly revitalized, but are still disused. The next step is to complete stage five, creating an organizational body to advocate and plan for revitalization. This stage can take the approach of developing an “urban nucleus.”⁹ The approach focuses on creating a cultural district with a strong heritage and a defined function. This can become stage six, where the objective of identifying a suitable project—the cultural district—has been achieved. The last two stages will be the actual financing, design, and construction process, and the ultimate product of the completed Cultural Center and Historical Hidalgo Viejo District.

Faulk describes the differences between large and small city downtowns and argues that suburban cities have a disadvantage compared to urban downtowns in that they can have major problems with “attracting new development, attracting people on evenings and weekends, competition from discount stores and malls, vacant space, and parking.”¹⁰ To combat these disadvantages, certain activity initiators must be implemented. In Faulk’s case studies he identifies waterfront development as an engine of economic development. Some activities generated at such development projects include restaurants, amphitheaters, overlooks, boat ramps, children’s parks, and festivals. Faulk finds that “[t]he potential benefit of the festivals is that people will come to the festivals or farmers’ markets, then patronize other downtown business.”¹¹ The City of Hidalgo already organizes two of the main festivals for the community of the Valley: The Border Fest and the Festival of Lights. If these events were to take place in Hidalgo Viejo, the new businesses and small cultural-based firms could benefit from them.

Community Events

One major event venue in Hidalgo is the State Farm Arena. This is one of the largest buildings in the area and can seat up to 6,800 persons and offer 2,200 parking spots.¹² It serves as a multi-purpose complex to host ice hockey, indoor football, indoor soccer, monster truck rallies, concerts featuring international well-known artists, and even for high school, college, and university graduations. It is home to the Rio Grande Valley Magic Southern Football League, the Rio Grande Killer Bees of the Central Hockey League, the La Fiera FC of the Major Arena Soccer League, and the Rio Grande Vipers of the NBA Development League.

The State Farm Arena also hosts the annual “Border Fest.” The Border Fest was started by the Hidalgo Chamber of Commerce in 1976 as a way to celebrate the American bicentennial, the local border culture, and the community spirit.¹³ Since then, it has become an annual event during the first weekend in March. It is a four-day celebration that has been transformed over the years into a global event that celebrates a different country and culture each year. This event attracts people of all ages, ethnicities, and tastes from all over The Valley and even reaching out to the rest of the United States, Mexico, and Canada. In 2012 festival attendance reached 89,928 people. It has been named the best festival in Texas for 9 consecutive years and the best of its kind in the world by the International Festival and Event Association in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2012. Border Fest is a non-profit celebration that uses event

proceeds to donate more than \$50,000 in scholarships to youth in the area and assist local organizations in raising money.

Another community event hosted by Hidalgo is the “Festival of Lights” during the month of December.¹⁴ During this event the streets around the City Hall are decorated with more than 2.5 million lights and 350 large displays over a 3-mile trail extending to the historic part of the town. During this month there is a main event, the Posada, or Christmas party. During this event famous bands from Mexican-American culture play for the community and the community children receive gifts and candy. This event brings thousands of people from all over the Valley and nearby Mexican border towns. Also, local artisans sell and display their art, and delicious Tex-Mex food and snacks are served at the event. The Festival of Lights is an event that involves Hidalgo Viejo—the area is decorated with lights and a road trolley takes visitors on a tour to see the 3 miles of displays and lights around the area. The tour ends a few blocks away, at the City Hall, where a Ferris wheel welcomes the public. Also, the Memorial Park offers a facility with an ice skating rink, which attracts many locals and visitors. Hidalgo Viejo has enough space and potential for all this activities and more, but at present it is only a collection of historic buildings decorated with lights. It has potential to become once again the vibrant downtown it was during the 19th century.

Waterfront Area Development

In order to develop a promotion plan for the city’s unique identity as a canal town, the city needs to encourage unique businesses and landscapes for residential areas along Canal Park through a Planned Unit Development. Figure 6-10 shows waterfront area in Hidalgo and three examples of waterfront area development. Example A is a residential area in the City of Sugar Land, Texas. They utilized lakes for the key feature of residential area design. Many artificial lakes created through the development of master-planned communities connect Oyster Creek to the Brazos River.

Example B and C are mixed-use (residential and commercial area) developments from San Antonio, Texas, and Milan, Italy. These cities made a unique atmosphere based on the canal and their distinct historical backgrounds and identities to create a healthy and attractive investment environment for local restaurants and retail.¹⁵



Figure 6-10 Waterfront Area of the City and Development Examples ^{ii iii}

Implementation Process

M. A. Burayidi is another scholar interested in these issues. In his book, *Downtowns: Revitalizing the Centers of Small Urban Communities*, he provides a series of guidelines for implementing programs and policies. He suggests using local funding so that the community is not only involved in the process, but they have a feeling of ownership and become attached to the process and the success. ¹⁶ Another recommendation he makes is to monitor the programs throughout so that they can be evaluated and modified as they develop. The last and most important implementation recommendation is to involve as many constituencies as possible in the revitalization process, such as business owners, tenants, landlords, governmental officials, workers, and residents. It is difficult to get the whole community involved and keep them motivated in a project—even more so in a long-term development process. The constituents must have a common goal to look forward to. By taking the cultural approach and creating a common objective, the community members feel like they have a shared identity and therefore are motivated to accomplish the common goal for the greater good of the community.

One of the key takeaways of Faulk’s article is the importance of having an organization dedicated to advocating in the downtown’s best interest for its successful development.¹⁷ Such an organization needs to have a place to operate from and a place to organize and host major events such as the festivals. This headquarters could become the Community’s Cultural Center (see Chapter 5, Community Facilities and Infrastructure). This center will attract tourism and encourage visitors and locals to explore the newly redeveloped Hidalgo Downtown. At the same time it will provide local artists a place where their art can be perfected and explore new talents. The center will provide areas where the local cultural goods can be displayed and create a market where they can be sold. Some examples of local cultural goods are paintings, sculptures, jewelry, textiles, pottery, music, food, and other crafts.

As mentioned before, in Hidalgo Viejo there is a collection of currently unused historic buildings. These historic structures are scattered throughout the site and most are standalone buildings. These buildings create a symbolic area boundary from which the small urban nucleus expands. The City of Hidalgo has a proposed program for some of the historic buildings, such as the Old Hidalgo County Court House, which will house a museum and offices after it is remodeled. The rest of the buildings will be part of a series of museums throughout the site. Since the existing historical buildings will not be enough to house the Community’s Cultural Center, a new building must be introduced into the historical context. The Cultural Center can act as the main headquarters for the chain of local museums and provide support to these satellite units.



Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Objectives

Objective 6.1 Revitalize Hidalgo Viejo as potential district for economic gain through the promotion of the art, history, and identity of Hidalgo and the Rio Grande Valley

Action 6.1.1 Delineate and rezone Hidalgo Viejo as a Planned Unit Development or Historic Overlay District

Action 6.1.2 Work with local partners to establish a non-profit organization whose mission is to create, cultivate, and showcase the commerce, culture, and community of Hidalgo Viejo

Action 6.1.3 Investigate possible investors in Hidalgo Viejo (for example, State Farm, Pepsi, etc.)

Action 6.1.4 Apply for a state designation of the historic and cultural values of Hidalgo Viejo, such as the Texas Commission on the Arts Cultural District Program

Action 6.1.5 Consider applying for a national historic district designation to showcase the historic and cultural characteristics of Hidalgo Viejo

Action 6.1.6 Identify local and regional community foundations. If no community foundations exist, investigate the benefits of such foundations, including the support of philanthropy by offering simple ways for donors to achieve long-term charitable goals, such as an endowment for the City of Hidalgo or Hidalgo Viejo (example, East Texas Communities Foundations)

Action 6.1.7 Encourage small and local entrepreneurship in the community by working with micro-lending groups (example: LiftFund)

Action 6.1.8 Redevelop Hidalgo Viejo based on phasing described in the Comprehensive Plan. Compatible cultural features include landmarks, museums, galleries, exhibitions, community garden, Hidalgo community walk of fame, local art, sculptures, music, theater, makerspace, farmers' markets, and public community space

Action 6.1.9 Identify coalitions and partnerships which provides grants and resources, such as Direct Loan and Grant Program

Action 6.1.10 Coordinate and partner with local school districts

Goal: Create economic advantages that will encourage diverse businesses to locate in Hidalgo, with a focus on underutilized areas, revitalizing the city and producing a competitive edge.

Phased Activities

Short term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

Action	Responsible Party
6.1.1	City Manager; City Council; Code Enforcement
6.1.2	EDC
6.1.3	EDC
6.1.9	EDC
6.2.1	City Council; Code Enforcement; State Farm Arena Dept.
6.3.1	City Manager; City Council; Code Enforcement

Medium term (actions to take place over several years)

Action	Responsible Party
6.1.6	EDC
6.1.7	EDC
6.1.10	Parks/Streets/ Grounds Dept.
6.2.2	State Farm Arena Dept.
6.2.3	State Farm Arena Dept.
6.2.4	State Farm Arena Dept.

Long term (actions to take place in the next 10-20 years)

Action	Responsible Party
6.1.4	EDC; City Manager
6.1.5	EDC; City Manager
6.1.8	EDC
6.1.11	EDC

to establish community gardens in Hidalgo Viejo. Potential programs include Texas Statewide Farm to School Initiative, Learn, Grow, Eat & GO! Program with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Action 6.1.11 Identify and encourage unique cultural attractions to the city, such as wineries, distilleries, breweries, and other communal gathering facilities. Example organizations for resources include Texas Hill Country Wineries, Texas Distilled Spirits Association, Texas Craft Brewers Guild, etc.

Objective 6.2 Establish the Arena District to spur business and commercial development by 2035

Action 6.2.1 Rezone land known as the 'Arena District' as a Planned Unit Development to encourage mixed-use development approaches, with land uses including industrial, commercial, and residential uses

Action 6.2.2 Market and hold special events at the Arena District mixed-use center

Action 6.2.3 Market office and professional land uses within the Arena District to possible developers.

Action 6.2.4 Offer incentive packages to support growing industries and encourage regional target industries and entrepreneurs

Objective 6.3 Encourage unique businesses along Canal Park (see Park and Environment Goals)

Action 6.3.1 Rezone Canal Park as a Planned Unit Development to encourage unique land uses at three specific nodes along canal



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7

PARKS AND ENVIRONMENT



Introduction

In order to better understand the full range of issues faced by the community, this chapter now assesses the hazards, socially vulnerable populations, parks, and environment unique to the City of Hidalgo.

Both man-made and natural hazard occurrences can result in devastating losses. It is important to use careful planning to reduce the potential impacts of hazards and create a safe environment for the city and its people. Many times, human development can worsen the effects of these hazards, and of particular concern is its tendency to inadvertently locate socially vulnerable community members in areas that are more prone to hazards. A comprehensive plan should identify the potential hazards and work to protect the community and its natural resources. The city can mitigate the impact of hazards via emergency management, land use planning, and development regulations.

This chapter discusses the City of Hidalgo's parks and natural environment and the way they interact with the human population. It begins by examining potential hazards (e.g., flooding, tornadoes, etc.) based on the city's location and surrounding features, as well as possible ways the city could and does mitigate the effects of these hazards. The City of Hidalgo and Hidalgo County emergency management plans are evaluated, as are the presence and distribution of socially vulnerable populations. This research provides the City of Hidalgo with the information needed to properly plan for any hazard.

The next section reviews the current conditions of the parks and the surrounding natural resources and features, such as water supply, sources of pollution, and nature preserves and habitats. Understanding the condition of area parks and Hidalgo's surrounding environment can help the city to protect the vital resources which support the community and surrounding wildlife.

By incorporating the analysis of Hidalgo's environmental situation and the input of the task force, this comprehensive plan presents several recommendations, goals, objectives, and the action plan in order to keep Hidalgo beautiful and safe, with a high degree of livability.



State of Parks and Environment Report

Hazard Exposure and Response

Hidalgo has several mechanisms in place to respond to hazard occurrences. Hidalgo County is the main responder to hazards and offers an emergency management plan for community members to follow during hazard events. In 2013, FEMA awarded Hidalgo County \$6.75 million to construct four community safe rooms that can also serve as multi-purpose community centers.¹ These safe rooms will be built at two high schools, a fire station, and a community center in the City of Pharr and will provide county residents with protection from storms and tornadoes. Within the municipality itself, the City of Hidalgo has implemented the HidalGo Connect App to allow the police department to instantly connect with the community about threats, alerts, and other important issues.²

An understanding of the surrounding environment and awareness of past hazard occurrences gives clues to possible future hazards. Due to Hidalgo's location and topography, it is at a low risk for landslides and earthquakes. There is a potential for flooding, tornados, hurricanes, and droughts and wildfires, which are discussed below.

Flooding

Flooding occurs when a normally dry area becomes temporarily overcome by mudflow or water. It can be predicted days in advance, or occur within minutes. The water flow rate and water levels can change quickly. History isn't the only determiner of potential flooding—topography, rainfall, flood-control measures, development-induced changes, and river-flow all impact the possibility of flooding.³ According to a soil survey in the 1980s, the City of Hidalgo's uplands soil consists of deep, well drained, loamy soils with some forming calcareous loamy and clayey sediments.⁴ These create slopes that can range from 0 to 5 percent.⁵ Loamy and sandy soils are ideal for cultivation and they can retain water while draining well. Therefore, they provide suitable soil which can be helpful to mitigate flooding hazard.



The map below shows the 100-year and 500-year floodplain for Hidalgo. The 100-year floodplain shows that in any given year, there is a 1% chance a flood will occur in the area delineated. On the map, land within the floodplain surrounding the southern and southeastern parts of the city has been left undeveloped and is designated as wildlife refuge. Not developing this area reduces potential property damage from floods and allows the soil to absorb flood waters. The map shows that there are no roads or buildings within the 100-year floodplain, but the majority of the city is located in the 500-year floodplain, which has a 0.2% chance of flooding in a given year.

Hidalgo County's website offers community members information on flood risk assessment of their property and resources to help them estimate the annual cost of flood insurance and locate local flood insurance agents.⁶ It is important to protect one's property before flooding occurs. This website also lists important factors to remember when creating an emergency plan.



Figure 7-1 The City of Hidalgo 100-year and 500-year floodplainⁱ



Tornadoes

Tornadoes form when winds at two different altitudes blow at different speeds, creating a horizontal rotating column of air. They can cause significant damage—from tearing down houses to uprooting trees and even carrying cars for miles.

From 1955 to 2011 there have been a total of 38 tornadoes in Hidalgo County. Most of these tornadoes occurred along Interstate 2, with the closest one hitting less than a mile outside of the City of Hidalgo.⁷ The last tornado to hit Hidalgo County was in 2011, and before that, two occurred in 2007.⁸ To this date, there have been no tornadoes within the City of Hidalgo, but with tornadoes occurring every few years nearby, the city should have safety information available for the community. Should a tornado occur, one way that the city can provide a safer environment for the community is through safer structures. Reviewing building codes and assessing current structures will help the city to better understand the current conditions of the city buildings, as well as advise homeowners of available options. FEMA encourages reinforced garage doors, secure shingle or metal roofs, maintained exterior insulation finishing system wall (EIFS), and brace gable end roof framing.⁹ The city can make sure all of its future buildings fit these standards, and try to retrofit the existing structures to make them safer as well. Another recommendation is to remove trees and other potential windborne missiles either entirely or to a safe distance away from the building. The city can help the community by keeping up with dead tree and debris removal.

A city needs to have tornado safety plan to help inform community members of what to look out for and how to prepare for these disasters. On its website Hidalgo County has information about tornados and what to do before they hit.¹⁰

Hurricanes

Hurricanes are large storms that form over warm water. They can be as large as 600 miles across and can travel as fast as 10 to 20 miles per hour, bringing large waves, strong winds, and heavy rains that can destroy homes and vehicles.¹¹ The City of Hidalgo is located about 50 miles away from the Gulf of Mexico. Even though this city is not located directly on the Gulf, it can still be impacted by hurricanes as they move inland.



As of today, the City of Hidalgo has not been directly hit by a hurricane. The two closest hurricanes occurred between 1947 and 1954, forming out of the North Atlantic and turning into tropical storms by the time they reached within 8 miles of Hidalgo. These storms only brought winds of around 40 to 50 miles per hour, and caused no more than \$280 worth of damages.¹² Wind models show that the City of Hidalgo can experience winds from 88 to 101 mph from hurricanes.¹³

The city can assist the community with hurricane safety options. Due to Hidalgo's location, most of the potential damage from hurricanes would result from heavy rains and high winds. To help prevent wind damage, the city should implement building codes similar to those discussed above in the tornado section. To address potential flood damage, the city should identify areas that are below sea level or have the potential to flood and direct development away from these areas. For buildings and homes currently located in these areas, the city can implement policies that require electrical boxes, furnaces, air conditioners, and other major appliances to be elevated above the flood level.¹⁴

Hidalgo County's website has 2014 Hurricane Preparation Guidelines to educate citizens about the importance of being safe and prepared. It informs people about evacuation routes and advises them to keep proper supplies, first aid kits, and plenty of bottled water and non-perishable foods on hand.¹⁵

Droughts and Wildfires

The City of Hidalgo experiences extremely hot and dry weather. This can be particularly problematic considering the fact that Hidalgo's lands are used for grazing and agriculture. When these lands dry out, there is an increased risk of wildfires. Most wildfires begin unnoticed, started by accidents or lightning, but they spread quickly. Wildfires burn everything in their paths, from brush to trees and even homes.

Figure 7-2 shows the number of fires that have occurred in the City of Hidalgo from 1985 to 2010. The majority of fires occurred to the west of Hidalgo, near the Mexican border. Currently, this area of land is undeveloped and contains mostly grasses, and thus the wildfires have not resulted in any recorded financial damages. It is important to put these fires out in a timely manner to avoid any chance of the fires growing and traveling toward the city. The data shows



that the majority of the fires are a result of human accident, and the number of fires occurring has decreased in recent years.

To help prevent fires, Hidalgo County has established a Fire Marshal's Office and adopted a county fire code. The county handles most of the wildfires with their emergency management plan and mitigation efforts.¹⁶ For example, they institute burn bans, send out Weather Awareness Reports, and host a disaster readiness expo every year. The City of Hidalgo has a volunteer fire department that consists of 19 volunteers and 7 vehicles.¹⁷

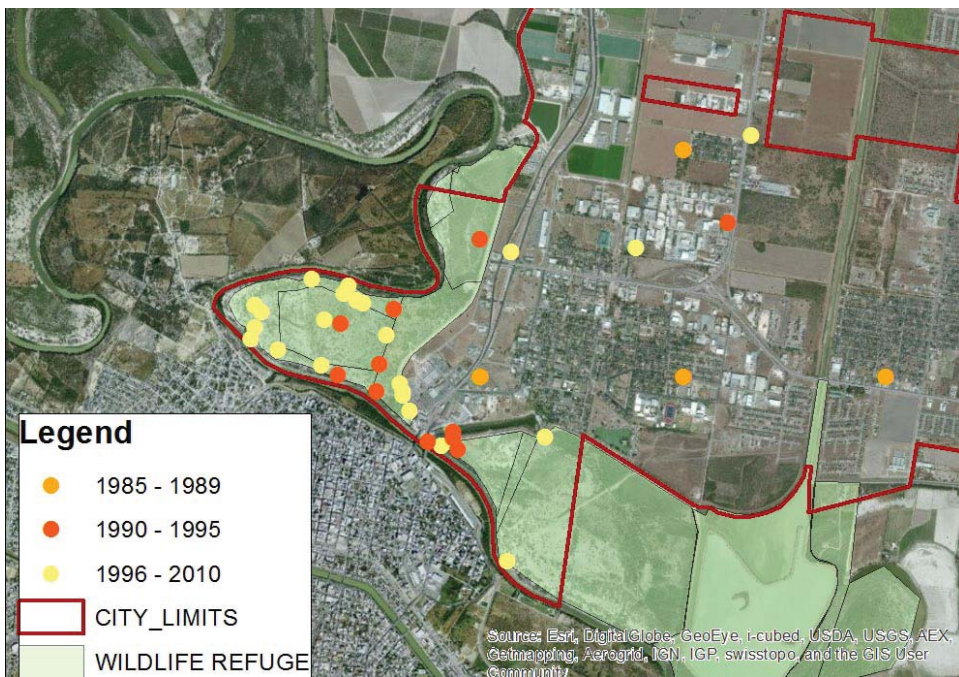


Figure 7-2 Locations of Wildfires in the City of Hidalgo, 1985-2010 ⁱⁱ



Physical Vulnerability in Hazardous Areas

When there is the possibility of an impending hazard, being able to quickly evacuate and reach safety is of prime importance. There is not a major interstate passing through Hidalgo, but there are two major highways on the north and west sides of the city that allow for access into and out of Hidalgo. These routes are important when planning for a hazard evacuation. It is also important to know where evacuation shelters are located. Currently, there are no shelters located in the City of Hidalgo—the closest ones are located in the City of McAllen and the previously mentioned planned FEMA shelters which are going to be built in a long term in the City of Pharr.

Community members should be aware of potential hazards where they live and the best way to evacuate and get to safety. It is important to note that two schools and Hidalgo's fire and police stations are located in the 500-year floodplain. These public service departments play an important role in protecting the community during hazards. As the city grows and new public service facilities are built, these departments should be sited outside the floodplain in a safe area to best serve the community.

Social Vulnerability

The City of Hidalgo is susceptible to environmental hazards which affect the community members in different ways. This is because some people are more vulnerable than others. Vulnerable community members cannot avoid or absorb disaster-related impacts the way other community members can. Most vulnerable people have some type of resource limitation: physical, economic, or social. They are often children, single mothers, or the elderly. The city should be aware of vulnerable community members and pay close attention to what resources they can offer to these people. The City of Hidalgo needs to offer resources that will help its vulnerable community members offset the impacts of a hazard and to attend to them quickly in the event of a disaster.

The Hazard Reduction and Recovery Center has created an assessment program to gauge a community's social vulnerabilities and identify areas of potential improvement. This assessment includes seventeen social vulnerability indicators, divided into 5 needs categories (see Figure 7-3). This assessment was conducted for the City of Hidalgo using data from the Texas Sustainable Coastal Initiative and the U.S. Census.¹⁸ The assessment indicates that there



are large populations under 5 years old or over 65 and below the poverty line. Poverty and unemployment rates are very high. Many households don't have access to an automobile and are reliant on public transportation to travel to and from work. In terms of shelter, a large proportion of occupied housing units are rentals or manufactured homes. There is a high proportion of single-parent households and non-English speaking members of the population. Awareness of the presence and distribution of a large number of community members that exhibit these social vulnerabilities should help guide the City of Hidalgo in determining what improvements should be made to provide for them.

According to Figure 7-3, the majority of the lands in the City of Hidalgo are rated with either low or very low social vulnerability. However, several areas in the center and south west of the city experience a high level of social vulnerability. Almost half of these high risk areas are natural preserved areas with no construction.

Child Care Needs

- Single- parent Household
- Families with Children under 5

Elder Care Needs

- Population over 65
- Population over 65 and in poverty

Transportation Needs

- Workers Using Public Transport
- Occupied Housing units without Vehicle

Housing and Shelter Needs

- Units Occupied
- Unit Renter Occupied
- Non-white Population
- Population in Group Quarters
- Housing Over 20 Years Old
- Mobile Home Units
- Population in Poverty

Civic Capacity Needs

- Occupied Units without a Telephone
- Population over 25 with less than a High School Education
- Population over 16 in Labor Force and Unemployed
- Population over 16 in Labor Force and Unemployed
- Population over 5 with Difficulty Speaking English

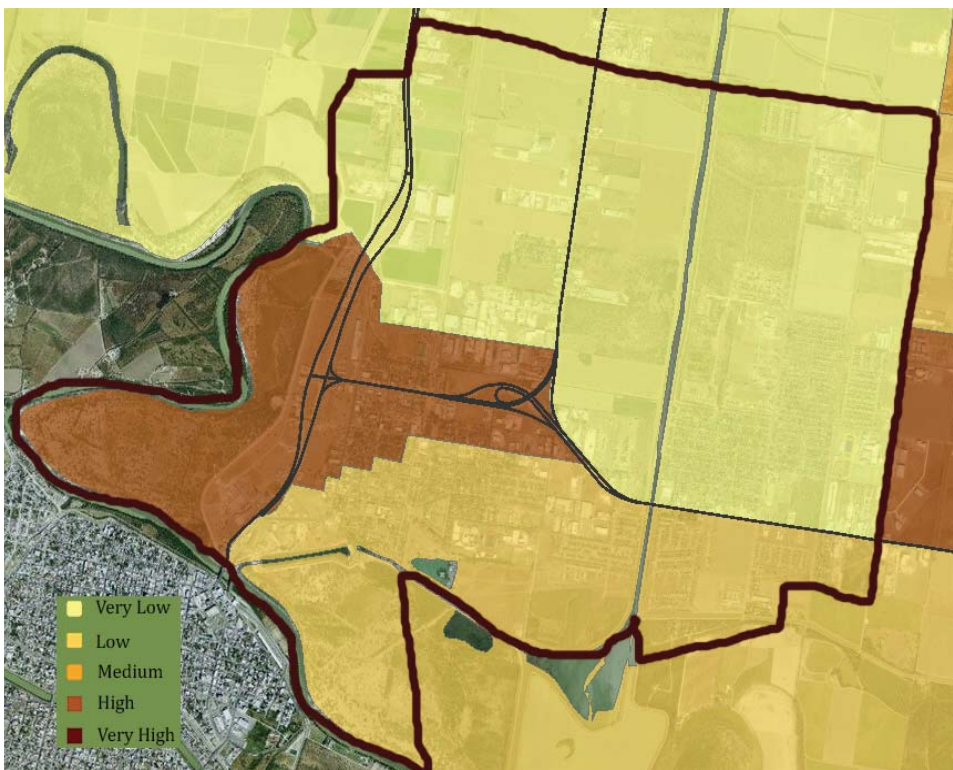


Figure 7-3 Social Vulnerability^{iv}



Parks

Hidalgo contains 2.9 acres of parks per 1000 city residents. For comparison, Austin, Houston, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi have 32.5, 22.9, 17.8, and 6.9, respectively. According to a Parks and Recreation report, the Hidalgo park-to-resident ratio demonstrates a low provision of parks.¹⁹ The existing parkland is divided into five major parks, mostly located in older parts of the city. They serve a variety of uses by providing facilities such as playgrounds, athletic courts, pools, jogging trails, shelters, and benches. Furthermore, they significantly bolster both the beautification and the socialization of the community.²⁰

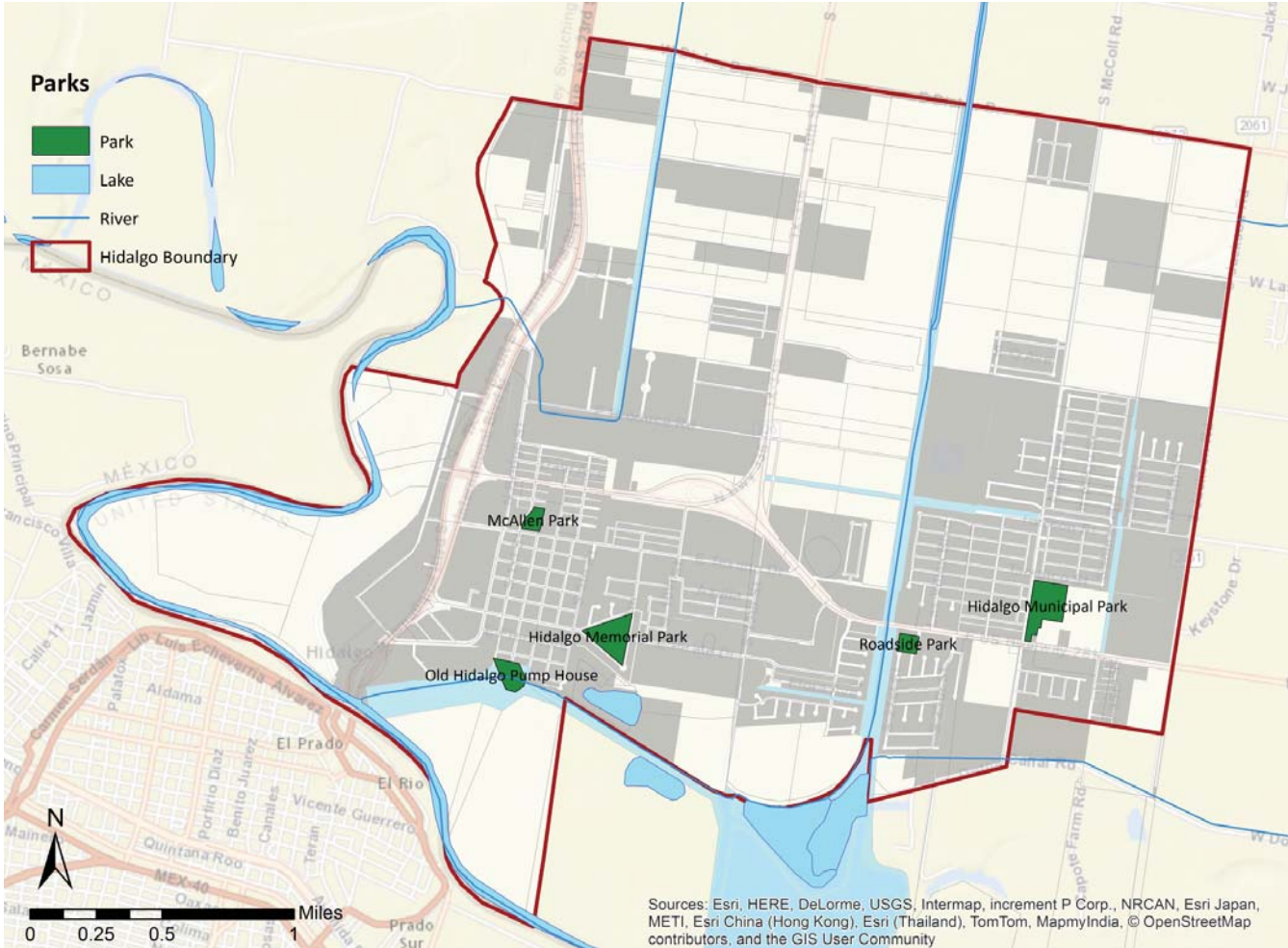


Figure 7-4 Parks v



Environment

This section focuses on the unique natural features of the Hidalgo area and the current conditions of its environment. A description of the characteristics of Hidalgo's land and water precedes the summary of the area's pollutants. The section concludes with an evaluation of the natural areas that can serve as wildlife habitats.

Watersheds

The City of Hidalgo contains portions of four different watersheds: Central Laguna Madre, Los Olmos, Lower Rio Grande, and South Laguna Madre.²¹ These watersheds all impact Hidalgo County, but the Rio Grande has the largest impact. The Rio Grande is the main water source for irrigation and agricultural use in the City of Hidalgo, as well as other cities located in eight different counties. It flows from south-central Colorado to the Gulf of Mexico and forms part of the United States–Mexico border, running a total of 1,896 miles.²² Due to its geographic location, use of the Rio Grande is subject to international treaty regulations. There are currently four dams along the Rio Grande to manage flood control, irrigation, and river flow. Increased demand from nearby growing cities and drought make water supply planning all the more important.²³

At present, there are two recurring challenges with the Rio Grande that must be managed. Rio Grande aquatic weeds have historically been an issue. These weeds grow rapidly during water shortages and their proliferation blocks sunlight, inhibits oxygen exchange, and impedes the flow of water.²⁴ In the past, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has donated \$450,000 to help control the growth of these weeds in Hidalgo and Cameron counties.²⁵

The other challenge has been water supply shortages. Hidalgo County currently suffers from frequent, severe water supply shortages. The eight counties that share the Rio Grande as a water source are expected to grow from a population of 1.7 million in 2010 to 4 million in 2060.²⁶ This population growth could lead to a shortage of 592,084 acre-feet per year, which translates to a staggering 35 percent of water demands unmet.²⁷ Despite current efforts to manage and protect the river as a water source, it is important to begin to develop long-term water supply alternatives.



Figure 7-5 Main Water Sources for the City of Hidalgo^{vi}

Hidalgo Irrigation Districts

Since the Lower Rio Grande Valley was first settled by the Spanish in the 18th century, three agricultural booms have given an agricultural character to the Valley. The canals connecting to the Lower Rio Grande have been mainly used for irrigation over the years. However, recent residential and industrial developments in the valley have caused major water leakage away from agricultural uses. In addition to the developments, the natural disasters of droughts and freezes have made many farms unprofitable. This has intensified the need for water conservation, especially in light of the fact that the recent population projection estimates 3.05 million residents in the Valley by 2050—a great number of people.²⁸

There are 28 irrigation districts in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Two of these provide water supplies for the City of Hidalgo.²⁹ The first is Hidalgo County Irrigation District No.2 (HCID2) with an approximate district area of 72,600 acres and the fourth largest water right in the Valley with 137,675 acre-feet. The second is Hidalgo County Water Improvement District No.3 (HCWID3) with



the approximate district area of 9,100 acres and a 9,753 acre-feet class A water right. According to urbanization analysis, HCID2 and HCWID3 have experienced 19% and 5% urban area expansion during 1996-2006. This transfer of water rights from agricultural to other uses has brought about a reduction in the total amount of flowing water in the distribution networks. This results in a widespread decrease in conveyance efficiency as well as financial losses and decreased agricultural productivity.³⁰ Therefore, the Lower Rio Grande Valley requires strict water supply reclamation policies to challenge the future development needs coming to the Valley.³¹

Potential Sources of Contamination

Pollutants are substances that are introduced into the environment and cause adverse effects. Polluting the city and surrounding environment can significantly impact both the land and the people in it. It is imperative to know the pollution levels in the water, soil, and air. Toxic waste pollutants can affect areas miles away from the source, which is why Hidalgo County will be the focus of this investigation into pollutant levels and sources of contamination. These levels indicate whether it is a health risk to live in this area. If there are unhealthy levels of pollution being released, the industries that are responsible for this pollution need to be identified.

Water Quality

The water quality of an area can be assessed at two different times: the first is in its natural state, before it has been treated for consumption, and the second is after it has been treated. The Central Laguna Madre, Los Olmos, Lower Rio Grande, and South Laguna Madre watersheds are assessed for quality before treatment. The Lower Rio Grande is assessed for quality after treatment, as this watershed is where the city gains most of its drinking water.

The City of Hidalgo contains the four watersheds mentioned above. Of these watersheds, South and Central Laguna Madre and the Lower Rio Grande have reported sanitary problems or do not attain water quality standards. This could be a result of some type of pollutant source.

Taking into account all of the watersheds in Hidalgo County, the Clean Water Act comparative ranking shows that surface water in Hidalgo County is among the dirtiest out of all Texas counties.³² From the four watersheds in the county,



67% of rivers, streams, and creeks are affected by pathogens and 33% are affected by low dissolved oxygen and by pesticides. The Laguna Madre and the Gulf of Mexico are 100% affected by pathogens. All of these water sources are polluted by point and nonpoint sources.³³ The pollution which comes from point sources are mostly large amounts from a single source like an industrial operation. In contrast, nonpoint sources are small amounts of contaminants coming from various sources. They are carried by rainfall runoff into streams and lakes. These contaminants are difficult to control since they are produced by daily activities.³⁴

Air Quality

The toxic air waste rankings show how Hidalgo County compares to other counties in the U.S. In 1999, Hidalgo County ranked among the worst 10% in criteria air pollutant emissions including carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, and particulate matter (PM-2.5 and PM-10). PM-2.5 emissions are made up of small particles and liquid droplets that can pass through the nose and throat to enter the lungs and cause serious health effects.³⁵ Top emissions in Hidalgo County came from the Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, Inc. in Santa Rosa, Texas.

There are three different types of air pollution sources: area, point, and mobile. Area sources are those that emit less than 10 tons of a criteria or hazardous air pollutant³⁶ per year or under 25 tons of combined pollutants, while point sources are major industrial facilities whose emissions exceed these thresholds. Mobile sources come from moving vehicles such as cars, planes, ships, and agricultural equipment.³⁷ As of 2003, there was not a toxic air pollution point source listed in the City of Hidalgo, and most of the hazardous air pollutants came from mobile sources. Unfortunately, the mobile sources in cities nearby still contribute 88% of the cumulative hazard index. Per the 2003 report on air pollutants,

- Median air quality index was good
- Maximum air quality index level was unhealthful
- Percentage of days with good air quality was moderate

In 2002, Hidalgo County ranked as average or better in terms of toxic chemical releases and associated environmental and health risks. The top hazardous air polluters listed for Hidalgo County in 2002 were Valero Refined Products Terminal in the City of Edinburg (4,500 pounds) and GE Engine Services in



the City of McAllen (1,295 pounds). These firms released production-related waste into the air, including cancer risk pollutants such as benzene and chromium, in addition to non-carcinogenic pollutants.

Despite a lack of data on recent air emissions, it can be hoped that the amount of toxic air pollutants are lessening.

Superfund Site

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, “a Superfund site is an uncontrolled or abandoned place where hazardous waste is located.”³⁸ It has been placed on the National Priorities List, which makes it eligible to participate in the federal government’s Superfund program dedicated to cleaning up toxic wastes. If left alone, these hazardous sites can contaminate people and the environment. For this reason, they need to be identified and cleaned up within a timely manner.

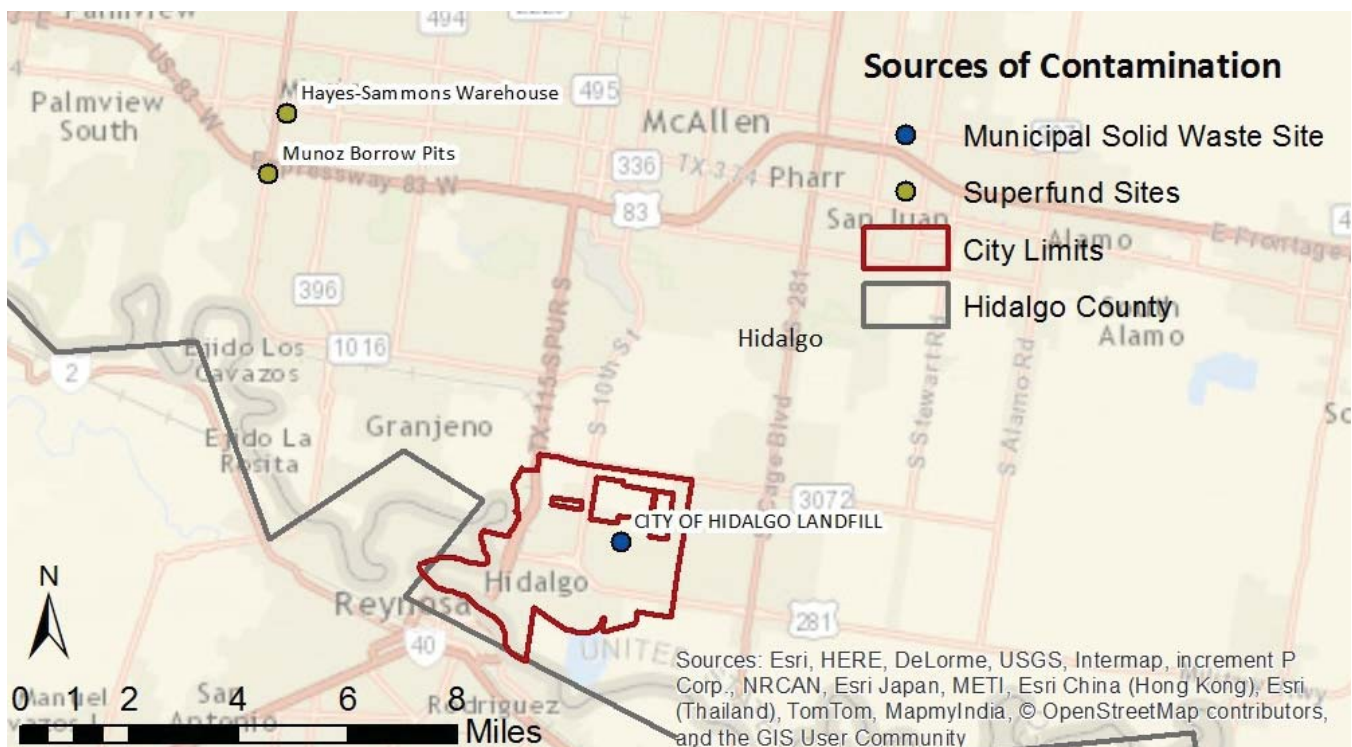


Figure 7-6 Sources of Contamination ^{vii}



In 2004, Hidalgo County ranked among the cleanest 10% of all counties in the U.S. in terms of designated Superfund sites.³⁹ In Hidalgo County, the total chemical releases into the land have decreased by 25% from 1988 to 2002.⁴⁰ The chemicals released are nickel, cobalt, and chromium.

As of 2013 there were two identified Superfund sites in Hidalgo County (Hayes-Sammons Warehouse and Munoz Borrow Pits) which can cause land pollution and contaminate the soil.⁴¹

While not a Superfund site, the only current source of land pollution within the City of Hidalgo is the city landfill. When this landfill closes, it is important to properly remove it so that it doesn't become a toxic waste site.

Nature Preserves and Habitats

Natural areas contribute to the reduction of pollution and are also home to many different types of wildlife. They confer environmental benefits and contribute to the quality of life for nearby community members by providing hiking facilities and other opportunities to observe nature. There are four main wildlife habitat areas in and around the City of Hidalgo: two wildlife refuges, a wildlife management area, and a state park. Each of these wildlife areas have different emphases pertaining to management and activities.

The Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge (Figure 7-7) was established in 1979. It follows along the Rio Grande for 275 miles, creating a wildlife corridor that is home to over 1,200 plant species and a diversity of birds and other wildlife. Since the 1930s almost 95% of the native habitat within the lower Rio Grande Valley has been cleared to make way for development or agriculture.⁴² For this reason, this Refuge was established to connect and protect the undeveloped tracts of land and to preserve the genetic integrity of the remaining species within the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

The Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge is located about 5 miles outside of the City of Hidalgo. This 2,088-acre refuge was established in 1943 to protect migratory birds, as it lays directly in the path of two major migratory routes for many bird species.⁴³ It is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



Figure 7-7 The Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge ^{viii}

Scattered across the state are 18 units of the Las Palomas Wildlife Management Areas. The Kelly unit is located between the City of Hidalgo and the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge. It is managed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife to preserve native brush, wetlands, and farmlands for white-winged dove nesting habitats. This area is open to hunting, hiking, and wildlife viewing.⁴⁴

The Bentsen Rio Grande Valley State Park is composed of 760 acres and is managed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and nearby Rio Grande Valley communities. This park is a world-class destination for bird-watching and has over 358 species recorded within the park's boundaries.⁴⁵

Recommendations

Currently, the City of Hidalgo has plenty of lands that are undeveloped or are not maintained because they have no specific land use. These areas can be used for environmental purposes—as parks or other natural areas such as wildlife habitats. Otherwise, they can be used as recreational spaces and can be redeveloped to have playgrounds or other public facilities. A few portions of undeveloped land located in the floodplain close to the border will remain completely undisturbed and maintained as naturally preserved areas.



Proposed Park System

According to the State of Park and Environment Report, limited portions of land are allocated to parks in the City of Hidalgo. The creation of parks and greenways will help to create wildlife corridors, reduce water pollution, and mitigate floods. Although the majority of the city is situated out of the 100-year floodplain, other natural areas close to the southern border are susceptible to flooding; it is recommended that they be left undeveloped. This will also allow local wildlife to remain in their natural habitat and for residents to enjoy the beauty of nature.

This comprehensive plan proposes an additional 147.19 acres of land dedicated for parks to improve the existing ratio of 2.9 acres of parks per 1000 city residents to 5.4 acre per 1000 people. Figure 7-8 shows the existing and proposed parks. The main contribution of park space will occur within Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) along the irrigation canal. This linear park is the Canal District with pedestrian and bicycle facilities, as described in Chapter 4, Transportation). The proposed parks are spread throughout the city in close proximity to residential neighborhoods and schools. Three phases of development are recommended in parallel with the pace of residential development in northern Hidalgo. As shown in Figure 7-8, 44.1% of Hidalgo is located in a quarter-mile buffer of the proposed parks, which indicates extremely high walking and biking access of residents to the parks and makes automobile access less important. Furthermore, 82.2% of the city lands are within a half-mile buffer zone from parks, which means that the majority of the population can walk to one of the proposed parks in 10 minutes or less. The 1-mile distance that is considered the standard for park buffer radius serves a staggering 97.1% of Hidalgo lands. This shows the inclusiveness of the park system and improved social equity throughout the City of Hidalgo.

All of the existing and proposed parks are connected by a network of linear parks including bike lanes and trails which will be accessible by residents and visitors and facilitate their movement from their residence to the neighborhood parks or open spaces in the city. Access is further improved by the new and improved sidewalks and bike lanes (See Chapter 4, "Transportation").

Figure 7-8 maps the linear parks along the canals with their 0.1-mile buffer of influenced areas. Phase 1 of the Canal District will connect the irrigation



canal to Hidalgo Viejo. It connects downtown parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities to the birding center, natural preserved areas in south, and Carlson Lake. Phase 2 and 3 of the Canal District is planned to connect parks to residential areas on the north side, State Farm Arena, and other nearby city attractions and accommodations.

Planting new trees and vegetation along the linear parks will provide habitats for wildlife and create connected, undisturbed green areas throughout the city. This will not only increase the different kinds of wildlife that can live in these areas, but also allow them to move around more freely. These connected areas that allow for wildlife movement are called wildlife corridors and they allow for wildlife connectivity between the north and south sides of the City of Hidalgo.

Eventually, these parks can host other cultural and social events for the community, such as festivals, farmers' markets, and petting zoos. These events will give the opportunity for residents and visitors to learn the value of nature and to enjoy the different activities offered by the city.

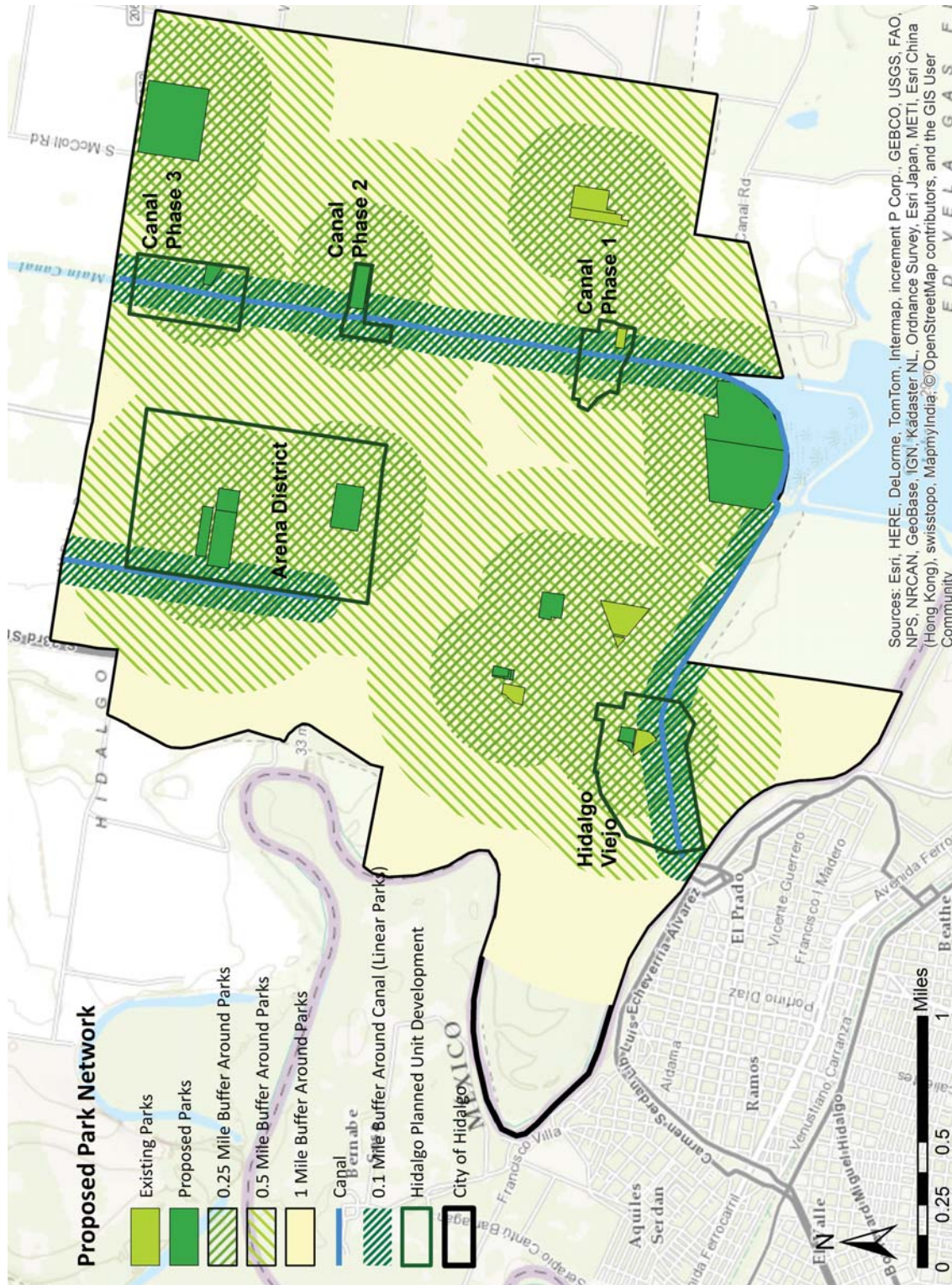


Figure 7-8 Proposed Park Network



Air and Water Quality Remediation

Pollution, both air and water, can be detrimental to a community, causing cancer and other diseases. Air pollution can be mitigated by increasing the number of trees in the city. Increasing the number of trees will result in cleaner air due to carbon sequestration, where the trees take in carbon and release oxygen. This can also enhance Hidalgo's water quality. According to the State of Park and Environment Report, three out of four Hidalgo watersheds currently do not meet water quality standards. In terms of natural and human health, it is imperative to keep the city water clean. Therefore, the City of Hidalgo needs to take immediate actions to reduce the impacts of pathogens on surface water. This can be achieved through several activities; water quality monitoring and control, preservation of key areas and their vegetation, mulching or composting clipped grasses and leaves, applying standardized fertilizers (zero-phosphorous) for gardens and agricultural use, decreasing stormwater runoff from built environments, planting new trees (native plants), and properly disposing of hazardous wastes.⁴⁶

Storm Water Management Improvements

Although the City of Hidalgo has not yet had a major hurricane, this plan proposes green program alternatives utilizing several green stormwater infrastructure tools to manage the hazard in case of storm event.

As mentioned above, the majority of Hidalgo is not located in 100-year floodplain, but as a Hidalgo resident stated, "the roads around the Hidalgo Memorial Park typically fill with water in a heavy rain event." The application of some of the following green stormwater tools to some extent could be helpful to reduce probable flooding hazard.

- 1. Storm Water Tree Trench** is a system of trees that are connected by an underground network of trenches to manage storm water runoff. Trenches are usually covered by a permeable geotextile fabric filled with gravel to navigate stormwater runoff toward a special storm drain.



Figure 7-9 Stormwater Tree Trench^{ix}

- Green Roof** is a multilayered, waterproof-drainage-vegetation system that is effective in reducing and slowing stormwater runoff.



Figure 7-10 Green Roof^x



- Rain Barrel** is a barrel structure that collects and stores stormwater runoff from rooftops, which can then be used for irrigation purposes. This system requires maintaining and emptying barrels between storms.



Figure 7-11 Rain Barrel ^{xi}

- Downspot Planter** is a planter that allows stormwater from roof gutters to be used by the plants and filters excess stormwater that overflows back into the drainage system.



Figure 7-12 Downspot Planter ^{xii}



- Pervious Paving** is a specially designed pavement system in which the surface is porous allowing water to enter an underground stone reservoir that temporarily stores runoff.



Figure 7-13 Pervious Paving ^{xiii}

- Bump-out** is a vegetated curb extension that protrudes into a street either mid-block or at an intersection. It directs stormwater into the vegetated inlet to water plants and be stored in the soil while the excess is flowed through to the next inlet.



Figure 7-14 Bump-out ^{xiv}



- Rain Garden** is a garden that is slightly lower than the surrounding ground level, designed to collect runoff from impervious surfaces.



Figure 7-15 Rain Garden ^{xv}

- Stormwater Planter** is a specialized planter installed into the sidewalk area, designed to manage street and sidewalk runoff.



Figure 7-16 Stormwater Planter ^{xvi}



9. **Stormwater Wetland** is a man-made marsh system that is engineered to serve as a temporary storage and natural filtration system for stormwater runoff.⁴⁷



Figure 7-17 Stormwater Wetland^{xvii}



Goal, Objectives, and Actions

Objectives and Actions

Objective 7.1 Promote water and air quality in Hidalgo.

Action 7.1.1 Update code of ordinances to create appropriate vegetation (native plants) along the irrigation canal, Arena district, Historic Viejo, and arterials.

Action 7.1.2 Update code of ordinances to protect and retain certain trees, especially palm trees, along major and minor arterials.

Action 7.1.3 Identify properties that do not properly dispose of dangerous industrial, commercial, and residential wastes and incentivize proper disposal.

Objective 7.2 Manage stormwater and minimize storm damage to the natural and built environments.

Action 7.2.1 Update code of ordinances to reduce stormwater runoff from built environments, use stormwater management tools such as stormwater planters in the sidewalks, stormwater tree trenches, green roofs, rain barrels, downspout planters, pervious paving, bump-outs, and rain gardens.

Action 7.2.2 Construct green infrastructure (see action above) in Hidalgo Viejo and parks.

Objective 7.3 Create pocket parks and research parks within 1 mile of residential neighborhoods and schools.

Action 7.3.1 Rezone land based on the Preferred Future Land Use Map in order to plan for future park space.

Action 7.3.2 Partner with Valley View and Hidalgo ISD on park projects.

Objective 7.4 Transform the irrigation canal into a natural asset (including natural attractions and recreational activities) and a major route to enhance citywide and regional connectivity in phases.

Action 7.4.1 Rezone the three phase Canal Park as Planned Unit Developments.

Action 7.4.2 Apply and acquire grants for each Canal Park phase.

Goal: Improve the environment and enhance the beauty, safety, and functionality of parks through recreational and educational opportunities, modernized elements, and connectivity.

Phased Activities

Short term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

Action	Responsible Party
7.1.1	City Manager; City Council; Code Enforcement
7.1.2	City Manager; City Council; Code Enforcement
7.2.1	City Manager; City Council; Code Enforcement
7.3.1	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.; City Council
7.4.1	City Manager; City Council; Code Enforcement
7.4.3	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.
7.4.4	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.
7.7.1	Parks



Medium term (actions to take place over several years)

Action	Responsible Party
7.1.3	Public Works; Code Enforcement
7.3.2	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.
7.4.2	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.
7.4.5	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.; City Council
7.5.1	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.
7.5.2	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.
7.6.1	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.
7.6.3	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.
7.7.2	Parks

Long term (actions to take place in the next 10-20 years)

Action	Responsible Party
7.2.2	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.
7.4.6	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.; City Council
7.4.7	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.; City Council
7.6.3	Parks; Streets; Grounds Dept.
7.7.3	Parks

Action 7.4.3 Develop an ordinance that places impact fees on developers that develop land near the Canal Park to contribute to funding park amenities.

Action 7.4.4 Develop a relationship with neighboring communities along the canal to discuss the positive impact of the Canal Park development if implemented regionally.

Action 7.4.5 Construct phase 1 of Canal Park that connects to Hidalgo Viejo and the World Birding Center by 2025. Appropriate uses include recreation and historical preservation.

Action 7.4.6 Construct phase 2 of Canal Park by 2030. Appropriate uses include recreation, historical preservation, and ecotourism programs.

Action 7.4.7 Construct phase 3 of Canal Park by 2035 making further connections to the Arena District. Appropriate uses include recreation, historical preservation, ecotourism programs, restaurants, and retail.

Objective 7.5 Beautify new parks in harmony with local/historical art and landscape of Hidalgo.

Action 7.5.1 Develop style guide for developers to use local materials, colors, and architectural style like arches with red/brown bricks.

Action 7.5.2 Use native plants such as palm trees along the front entry and the borders of the parks.

Objective 7.6 Establish technological capabilities within parks and public gathering areas by 2025.

Action 7.6.1 Investigate the feasibility of high-speed internet within all park systems by 2018.

Action 7.6.2 Develop partnerships to provide high speed internet in parks by 2020. Possible partnerships could include school districts and local non-profits.

Action 7.6.3 Investigate the feasibility of using solar and LED lighting to reduce city costs by 2018 and transition lighting to these formats to reduce city costs on lighting.



Objective 7.7 By the year 2035, install at least 10 educational signs in the park system to teach about nature, disaster mitigation programs, history, or environmental preservation

Action 7.7.1 Contact Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for suggestions for sign content and research methods.

Action 7.7.2 Contact area community and education organizations to enlist volunteers for committee to create educational signs. Form the committee.

Action 7.7.3 Have signs printed by a sign shop. Have sign installation days where the volunteer committee and city staff post the signs.



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8 HOUSING

Introduction

As Hidalgo grows, emphasis needs to be placed on improving the current housing options as well as new development. As new housing is developed, the city should consider the sustainability of the structure, the environment surrounding it, and the impact of the property on the community. Hidalgo will need to increase both multi-family and single-family homes in order to attract residents from different income levels. Key features include harmonized design layouts for affordable housing options with increased density and accessibility to planned unit developments and the historic viejo. This chapter examines existing home types, values, and affordability to better analyze the obstacles and opportunities in light of the input from the Hidalgo task force. The most relevant housing standards are recommended for the community.

State of Housing Report

Median Rent & Housing Value

Housing units can provide a source of revenue for the city through property taxes, whether by homeownership or rental property. Figure 8-1 compares Hidalgo’s 2012 homeowner versus renter population to the county and the state. The City of Hidalgo has a higher homeownership rate than county and state. The majority of households in the city are homeowners, with 73.1% owning a home and 26.9% renting.¹

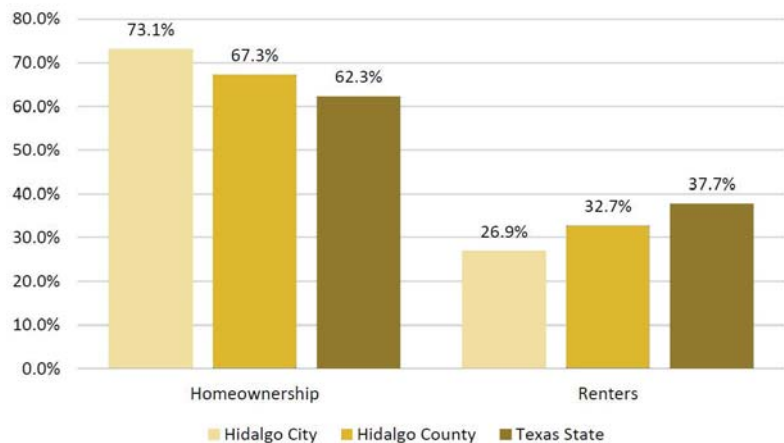


Figure 8-1 Homeownership vs. Renter 2012ⁱ

Figure 8-2 shows the median rent and median housing value for the City of Hidalgo in 2012 compared to the county and state. The city’s median rent and housing value are slightly higher than the county’s and lower than the state’s as a whole. The median rent of \$643 for the city is about \$20 more than the county and approximately \$190 less than the state. The median housing value for the city is \$88,700, which is \$8,400 higher than the county and \$40,500 lower than the state. The data implies a higher quality housing in the City of Hidalgo than in Hidalgo County overall, but housing may in turn be less affordable than in other areas in the county.²

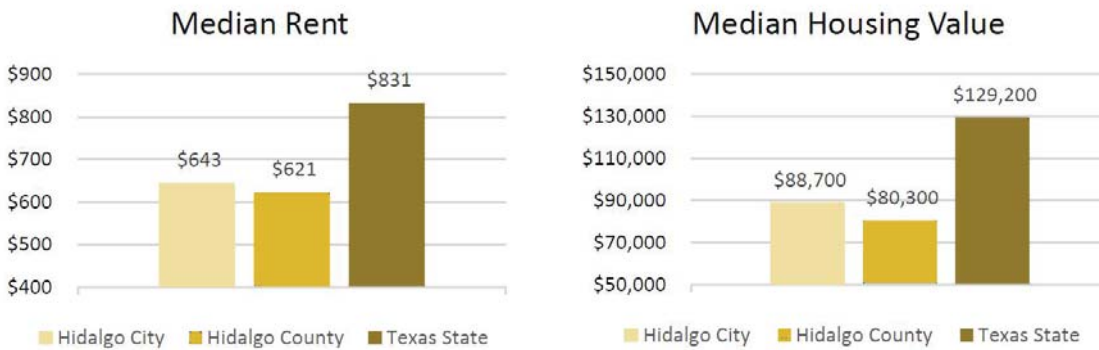


Figure 8-2 Median Rent and Housing Value 2012 ⁱⁱ

Housing Costs as a Percentage of Income

To determine the impact of rental and housing costs on the population, it is important to look at the percentage of the population’s income that is going towards housing costs. If more than 30% of a household’s income is spent on housing, they are considered house burdened. Renters in the City of Hidalgo are more house burdened than homeowners (see the dark blue bars in Figure 8-3). About 49% of the city’s renter population is house burdened, which is 8 percentage points below than the county and just 1 percentage point above the state. The proportion of home-owning households that are house burdened is about 11% in the city—a notable 38 percentage points less than that of renters.³

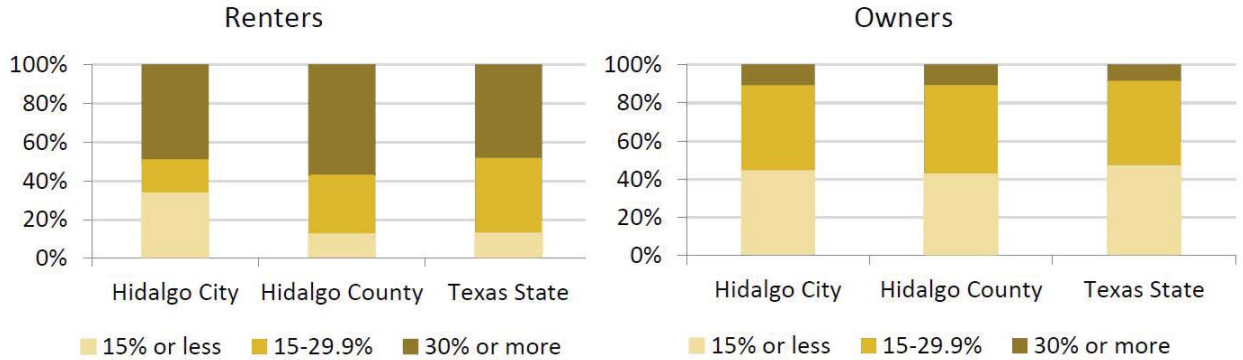


Figure 8-3 Housing Costs as Percent of Income 2012 ⁱⁱⁱ

Housing by Unit Type

The vast majority (88.2%) of homes in the City of Hidalgo are single-family homes (see Figure 8-4). This is about 20 percentage points higher than the county and state. Correspondingly, multi-family housing, especially structures with more than 5 units, is less common in the City of Hidalgo. The city also has a significantly smaller percentage of mobile homes than the county and state: 0.4% compared to 14.4% and 7.6%, respectively.⁴

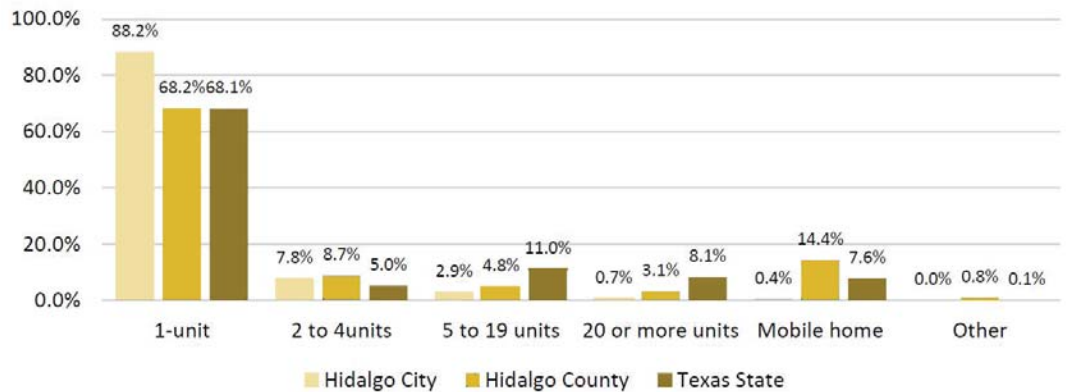


Figure 8-4 Housing by Unit Type 2012 ^{iv}

Housing Stock Age

Housing structures less than 35 years old make up about 89% of the total housing stock in the City of Hidalgo (see Figure 8-5). This number is 14 percentage points more than the county and 32 percentage points more than the state. The largest proportion (45.3%) of the housing stock in the city was built between 1980 and 1999, and a similarly large proportion (43.7%) has been built in the city since 2000.⁵ A younger housing stock can point to better quality housing for local residents.

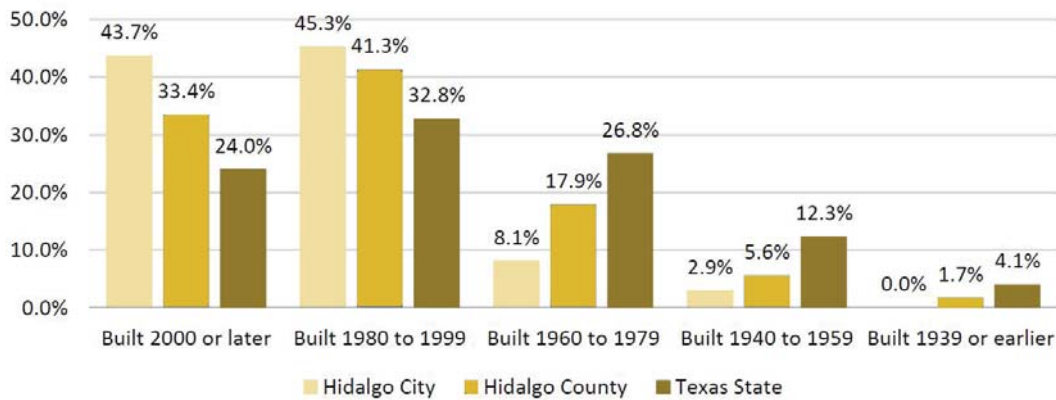


Figure 8-5 Housing Stock Age 2012 ^v

Tax Revenue

Property tax is a major source of tax revenue for the city, and setting higher rates enables the local government to support growing community infrastructure and services. On the other hand, a high property tax rate can be burdensome for homeowners and setting a lower property tax rate can attract people to live in a city. Table 8-1 shows the property tax rate by city for Hidalgo and several cities located in Hidalgo County. The City of Hidalgo’s property tax rate is 0.3514, which is the lowest property tax rate among the cities in Hidalgo County. The City of Hidalgo has two independent school districts (ISD). Hidalgo ISD tax rate is \$1.5300 and Valley View ISD tax rate is \$1.2770 per \$100 value. For comparison, San Antonio ISD rate is \$1.3576 and Dallas ISD is \$1.2800 per \$100 value.⁶

Table 8.1: Tax Rate by City

Entity	Tax Rate
City of Hidalgo	0.3514
City of Edinburg	0.6350
City of Pharr	0.6800
City of Elsa	0.9916
City of Mission	0.5288

Source: Hidalgo County Appraisal District

Having presented the housing characteristics in the State of Housing report above, this chapter now describes how this information guided the planning process and was used, along with other information, to generate the future development strategies and plan.

Obstacles and Opportunities

Hidalgo is a small city with a high proportion of young residents. According to recent census data, the population growth rate has declined since 2000. Despite this decreased growth, the socio-demographic composition is changing and the population is expected to shift towards an increase in both young families and older residents. These two groups present a challenge, as they have unique, pressing needs that must be addressed as part of the long-range plan. Since the housing stock consists of mostly high-quality single-family homes that are not affordable for families, they are forced to either leave the city or remain burdened by excessive housing costs.

Despite these obstacles, Hidalgo has plenty of vacant land that could be used to construct diverse and affordable housing options to satisfy the housing needs of residents of different income levels. Moreover, the use of Hidalgo’s unique architecture for a variety of housing options could attract the interest of future residents.



Recommendations

The City of Hidalgo needs to improve the quality of life for current and future households as well as the number of new houses for population growth. According to the State of Housing Report, the current housing units are primarily single-family homes which are mostly located near the downtown area, south, and east of the city. Also, the percentage of homeownership in Hidalgo is really high, which creates an imbalance of housing options. Therefore, Hidalgo will need to increase the number of housing options to accommodate future growth with variety of needs.

Historic Viejo

The historic viejo is an already built area in downtown Hidalgo. The city preference is to keep the current buildings. However, the city can apply to various programs for available funding to revitalize, rehabilitate, or renovate the existing buildings in order to enhance the quality of homes in terms of safety and appearance. On the other hand, there is plenty of available land in the existing neighborhoods which is suitable for infill.

The current housing units are mostly single-family homes that are occupied by the owners. Multifamily homes are typically rental homes that can offer affordable housing options to meet the wider range of housing needs based on population age and income. Thus, mixed-lot residential development is encouraged in the historic viejo neighborhoods. The residential mixed use can be combined either with commercial uses or offices. The resulting increased density complements the efficiency of public transit and other non-motorized modes of travel. Therefore, there will be easier access to existing cultural assets, parks, public/open spaces, recreational facilities, and schools. This will promote a more diverse, vibrant, and inclusive community.

Planned Unit Development (PUD)

According to the city Zoning Code, “a planned unit development (PUD) may include a combination of different dwelling types and/or a variety of land uses which complement each other and harmonize with existing and pro-



posed land uses in the vicinity.”⁷ Residential neighborhoods which are located in planned unit developments experience higher levels of amenities and maintenance with lower costs. Since PUDs are designed with higher densities than other subdivisions, homes are located closer to each other and have more convenient access to different amenities and land uses. Also, people who live in PUDs benefit from maintenance provided by the community. In other words, the city is responsible for all common area maintenance such as the enhancement of the property landscaping and appearance. This can also result in higher property values.⁸



Figure 8-6 Planned Unit Development Example 1^{vi}

We recommend the City of Hidalgo zone four planned unit developments (PUD). Three PUDs are located along the irrigation canal from north of Hidalgo to the historic viejo. The fourth PUD is recommended near the State Farm Arena. All the residential developments inside PUDs are mixed uses. The canal PUDs are mostly residential mixed with commercial uses. However, because of the proximity of the Arena to the industrial district in the west, the residential developments there are mixed with both industrial (offices) and commercial uses.



Figure 8-7 Planned Unit Development Example 2^{vii}

The residential developments in these four PUD areas are typically rental houses that are smaller in terms of lot size compared with existing and future single-family homes. In terms of look, multi-family houses must follow the unique architecture style of the city to be built in harmony with existing single-family homes as well as historical buildings. Therefore, affordability, rich design, safety, and density will encourage young professionals to choose Hidalgo’s PUDs to live in. Figures 8-6, 8-7, 8-8, 8-9 and 8-10 are several examples for planned unit developments.



Figure 8-8 Planned Unit Development Example 3^{viii}



Figure 8-9 Planned Unit Development Example 4^{ix}



Figure 8-10 Planned Unit Development Example 5^x

Other Future Neighborhoods

The majority of the multi-family homes are located in the historic viejo and the planned unit developments. The city prefers to keep single-family homes as the dominant housing type for all the other areas throughout the city. Thus, Hidalgo will increase medium- and high-income housing options in order to attract wealthier residents such as business owners and investors. This is also important because the city will gain a greater tax base from these properties.

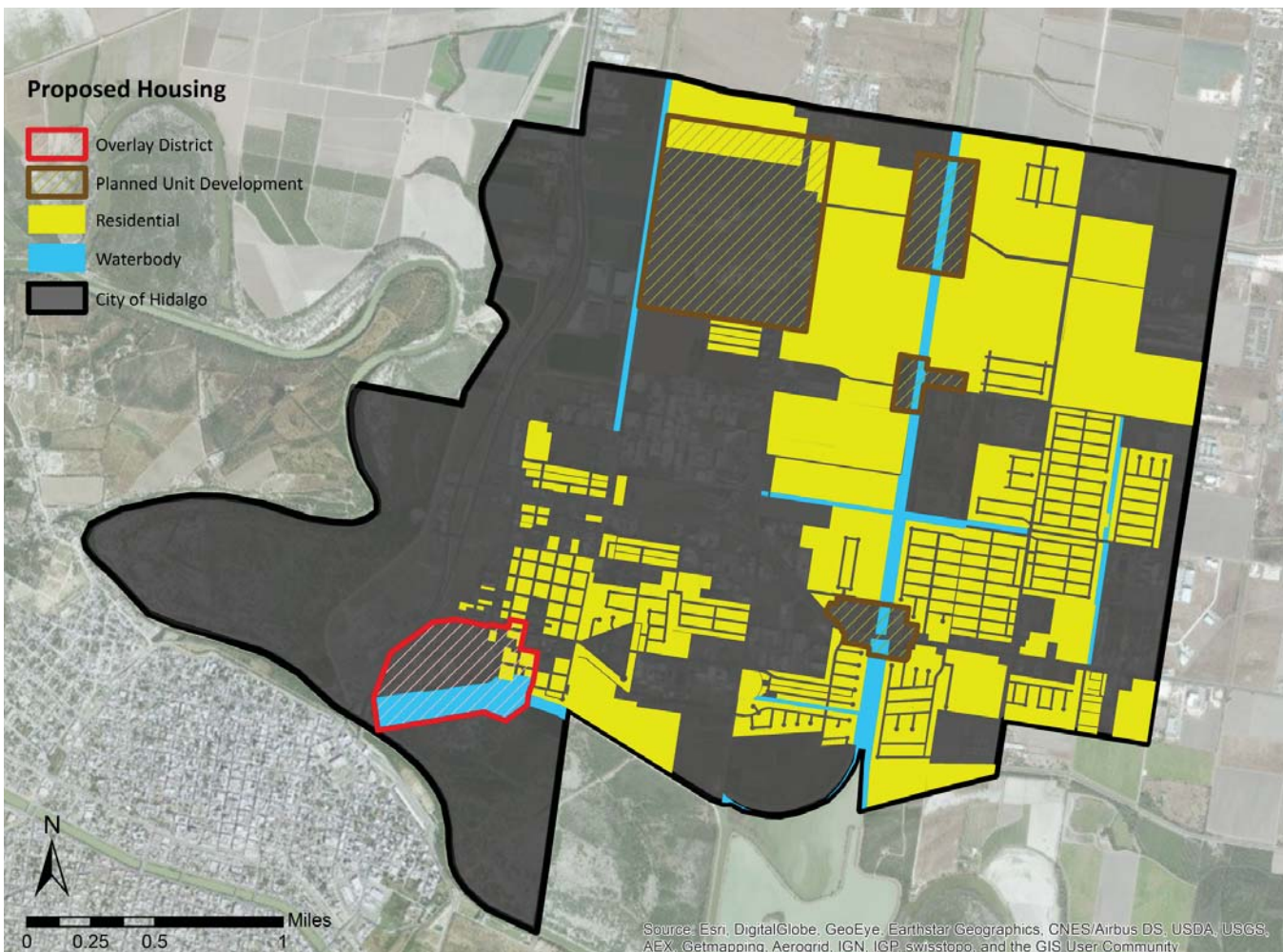


Figure 8-11 Proposed Housing Map



Goal: Increase and diversify housing options to attract and support a mixture of income levels and housing needs.

Phased Activities

Short term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

Action	Responsible Party
8.1.1	City Manager; City Council
8.1.3	City Manager; City Council
8.2.1	City Manager; City Council
8.2.2	City Manager

Medium term (actions to take place over several years)

Action	Responsible Party
8.1.2	City Manager
8.1.4	City Manager

Long term (actions to take place in the next 10-20 years)

Action	Responsible Party
8.2.3	City Manager
8.2.4	City Manager

Goal, Objectives, and Actions

Objectives and Actions

Objective 8.1 Construct sufficient housing to meet the 2035 long range growth projections (9500 additional people, or 2900 households).

Action 8.1.1 Use Preferred Future Land Use Plan as a guide for future zoning adoptions.

Action 8.1.2 Market Canal Park to developers of master planned communities to attract high quality homes.

Action 8.1.3 Amend zoning ordinance to include mixed-use development and more varied housing types, particularly in Planned Unit Developments and historic viejo.

Action 8.1.4 Identify and attract via marketing materials multi-family apartment, duplex, or mixed-use developers to increase rental property options in Hidalgo.

Objective 8.2 Increase the quality of life and health for current and new residents with safety in construction techniques, proximity to recreational opportunities, and public transportation.

Action 8.2.1 Update and adopt the City’s building code (International Residential Code and International Building Code).

Action 8.2.2 Amend Subdivision Ordinances so that 10% of new residential developments include open space. Residential developments adjacent to Canal Park will waive 10% open space requirement replaced with impact fees to construct additions to Canal Park Trail.

Action 8.2.3 Rehabilitate and reconstruct houses located in downtown area by application of available incentives grant programs.

Action 8.2.4 Increase affordable housing options by implementing various programs within the community.



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9 FUNDING SOURCES



Programs and Funding

The following are available funding and grant options the city can pursue to complete the actions, objectives, and goals.

Transportation

- **Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Program**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 - Purpose: To revitalize severely distressed public and/or HUD-assisted multi-family housing in distressed neighborhoods into viable, mixed-income communities with access to well-functioning services, high quality educational programs, public transportation, and jobs.
 - Eligibility: Public housing authorities (PHAs), local governments, nonprofits, tribal entities and for-profit developers that apply jointly with a public entity. Preferred Sustainability Applicants receive an additional two bonus points.
 - Limitations: \$110 million
 - More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>
- **Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Planning Grant**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 - Purpose: To revitalize severely distressed public and/or HUD-assisted multi-family housing in distressed neighborhoods into viable, mixed-income communities with access to well-functioning services, high quality educational programs, public transportation, and jobs.
 - Eligibility: Public housing authorities, local governments, nonprofits, and for-profit developers that apply jointly with a public entity. Preferred Sustainability Applicants receive an additional two bonus points.
 - Limitations: \$ 5 million
 - More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>
- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & Federal Highway Administration
 - Purpose: To help either the construction of bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways, or no construction projects (such as maps, bro-



chures, and public service announcements) related to safe bicycle use.

- More Information: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding

- **Federal Lands Highway Program**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & Federal Highway Administration
- Purpose: To create provisions for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Limitations: Priority for funding projects is determined by the appropriate Federal Land Agency or Tribal government.
- More Information: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding

- **Hazard Elimination and Railway-Highway Crossing programs**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & Federal Highway Administration
- Purpose: To address bicycle and pedestrian safety issues.
- Eligibility: Each State is required to implement a Hazard Elimination Program to identify and correct locations which may constitute a danger to motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.
- Limitations: Funds may be used for activities including a survey of hazardous locations and for projects on any publicly owned bicycle or pedestrian pathway or trail, or any safety-related traffic calming measure. Improvements to railway-highway crossings
- More Information: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding

- **High Priority Projects and Designated Transportation Enhancement Activities**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & Federal Highway Administration
- Purpose: To enhance numerous bicycle, pedestrian, trail, and traffic calming projects in communities throughout the country.
- More Information: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding



- **Job Access and Reverse Commute Grants**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & Federal Highway Administration
 - Purpose: To support projects, including bicycle-related services, designed to transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from employment.
 - More Information: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding
- **National Highway System**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & Federal Highway Administration
 - Purpose: To construct bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways on land adjacent to any highway on the National Highway System, including Interstate highways.
 - More Information: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding
- **National Scenic Byways**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & Federal Highway Administration
 - Purpose: To perform construction along a scenic byway of a facility for pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - More Information: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding
- **National Trails Training Partnership**
 - Grantor: American Trails and National Trails Training Partnership
 - Purpose: To plan, build, design, fund, manage, enhance, and support trails, greenways, and blue ways.
 - More information: <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/funding/>
- **Pass-Through Financing program**
 - Grantor: Texas Department of Transportation
 - Purpose: To stretch already limited tax highway dollars and to allow local communities to fund upfront costs for constructing a state highway project.



- Eligibility: Projects must be on the state highway system.
- More Information: <http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/office/innovative-finance/pass-finance.html>

- **Recreational Trail Grants**

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Purpose: To administer the National Recreational Trails Fund in Texas under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This federally funded program receives its funding from a portion of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in non-highway recreational vehicles.
- Eligibility: Funds can be spent on both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects such as the construction of new recreational trails, to improve existing trails, to develop trailheads or trailside facilities, and to acquire trail corridors.
- Limitations: The grants can be up to 80% of project cost with a maximum of \$200,000 for non-motorized trail grants and currently there is not a maximum amount for motorized trail grants (call 512-389-8224 for motorized trail grant funding availability).
- More information: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/>

- **Recreational Trails Grants**

- Grantor: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
- Purpose: To be up to 80% of project cost for new recreational trails, improvements, trailheads, trailside facilities, or acquiring trail corridors.
- More Information: <http://www.tpwd.state.Texas.us/business/grants/trpa/>

- **Recreational Trails Program**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportation & Federal Highway Administration
- Purpose: To fund all kinds of trail projects of the funds apportioned to a State.
- Limitations: 30 percent must be used for motorized trail uses, 30 percent for nonmotorized trail uses, and 40 percent for diverse trail uses.
- More Information: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding



- **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance**
 - Grantor: Department of the Interior
 - Purpose: To help create local, regional and state networks of parks, rivers, trails, greenways and open spaces by collaborating with community partners and National Park areas in every state.
 - Eligibility: Private nonprofit organizations and Federal, State and local government agencies. Private nonprofit organizations and Federal, State and local government agencies. OMB Circular No. A-87 applies to this program.
 - More Information: <https://www.cfda.gov/index?s=program&mode=form&tab=core&id=0eb58e82a9a678d4d621062e2ea27978>
- **Safe Routes to Schools**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportation
 - Purpose: To improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school.
 - More Information: <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/funding-portal>
- **Small Community Grants**
 - Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
 - Purpose: To meet recreation needs. The grant provides 50% matching grant funds to eligible municipalities and counties. Funds must be used for development or acquisition of parkland.
 - Eligibility: Must be a small Texas community with a population of 20,000 and under. Eligible projects include ball fields, boating, fishing, and hunting facilities, picnic facilities, playgrounds, swimming pools, trails, camping facilities, beautification, restoration, gardens, sports courts and support facilities.
- **State and Community Highway Safety Grants**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportation & Federal Highway Administration
 - Purpose: To improve highway safety by research, development, demonstrations and training.
 - Limitations: Pedestrian and bicyclist safety remain priority areas.
 - More information about all the above programs can be found at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#-funding



- **Surface Transportation Program (STP)**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & Federal Highway Administration
 - Purpose: To help either the construction of bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways, or no construction projects (such as maps, brochures, and public service announcements) related to safe bicycle use and walking.
 - More Information: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding
- **Sustainable Communities Initiative**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 - Purpose: To stimulate integrated regional planning that guides State, metropolitan, and local decisions to link land use, transportation, and housing policy.
 - Limitations: Competitive grants in partnership with USDOT and EPA.
 - More Information: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/hudprograms/sci>
- **Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants (renamed Investment Planning Grants in HUD FY14 Budget)**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 - Purpose: To support metropolitan and multijurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of: (1) economic competitiveness and revitalization; (2) social equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity; (3) energy use and climate change; and (4) public health and environmental impact in regional plans.
 - Eligibility: A consortium of regional partners including the metropolitan planning organization (MPO), principal city of the metropolitan statistical area (MSA), municipalities representing over 50% of the MSA, and any other organizations that represent a diverse group of stakeholders in the region.
 - Limitations: Subject to appropriations; FY10 \$100 million; FY11 \$95 million. This program has not been funded by Congress since FY11.



- More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>
- **Sustainable Communities Research Grant Program**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 - Purpose: To support cutting-edge research on issues related to sustainability, including affordable housing development and preservation, transportation-related issues, economic development and job creation, land use planning and urban design, etc.
 - Eligibility: Academic researchers
 - Limitations: \$2.5 million, max grant \$500,000
 - More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>
- **Texas Paddling Trails (TPT)**
 - Grantor: The Texas Parks and Wildlife program.
 - Purpose: To promote the development of paddling trails throughout the state. It provides assistance to community partners, promotes the trails on the TPWD website, and provides TPT kiosk design options, trail maps, and official marker signs for put-in and take-out locations.
 - More Information: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fishboat/boat/paddling-trails/>
- **The Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Program**
 - Grantor: League of American Bicyclists.
 - Purpose: To provide a roadmap to communities to improve conditions for bicycling and offers national recognition for communities that actively support bicycling.
 - Information on applying to become a recognized Bicycle Friendly Community.
 - More Information: <http://www.bikeleague.org/bfa>
- **The Federal-Aid Highway Program, Federal Lands Highway Program**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportation
 - Purpose: To assist state transportation agencies in the planning and development of an integrated, interconnected transportation system important to interstate commerce and travel. To provide aid for the repair of Federal-aid highways following disasters; to foster safe highway design; to replace or re-



habilitate deficient or obsolete bridges; and to provide for other special purposes.

- More information: <http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/>

- **The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.
- Purpose: To achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.
- Limitations: The HSIP requires states to develop and implement a Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).
- More Information: http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsip/gen_info/

- **The Job Access and Reverse Commute Program**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportation
- Purpose: To address the unique transportation challenges faced by welfare recipients and low-income persons seeking to obtain and maintain employment. Many new entry-level jobs are located in suburban areas, and low-income individuals have difficulty accessing these jobs from their inner city, urban, or rural neighborhoods. In addition, many entry level-jobs require working late at night or on weekends when conventional transit services are either reduced or non-existent.
- More information: http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13093_3550.html.

- **The National Trails Training Partnership**

- Grantor: Bureau of Land Management's Watchable Wildlife for Youth and Families
- Purpose: To offer workshops and webinars on successful trail development and implementation.
- More Information: <http://www.americantrails.org/nhttp/>

- **The Safe Riders Traffic Safety Program**

- Grantor: Texas Department of Transportation
- Purpose: To create Texas-wide child passenger safety (CPS) program dedicated to preventing deaths and reducing injuries to children due to motor vehicle crashes.
- More information: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/saferiders/>.



- **The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)**
 - Also provides an extensive database of grant opportunities for outdoor recreation, indoor recreation, small communities, outdoor outreach programs, and recreational trails.
 - Land Acquisition & Park Development Grants
 - CO-OP grants
 - Trail Grants
 - Boating access grants
 - Boat Sewage Pumpout grants
 - Landowner Incentive Program
 - Section 6 Grants
 - Section 6 Competitive Grants
 - Education and Technical Assistance Programs
 - Sportfish Restoration Program
 - More information: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/>
- **Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEAs)**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & Federal Highway Administration
 - Purpose: To provide facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, to provide safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists, and to preserve abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use thereof for pedestrian and bicycle trails).
 - More Information: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding
- **Walk Friendly Community (WFC)**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.
 - Purpose: To promote safe walking environments in cities.
 - Limitations: By applying will receive specific suggestions and resources on how to make needed changes for pedestrian safety.
 - More Information: http://www.walkfriendly.org/get_started.cfm.



Community Facilities and Infrastructure

- **Advanced Water Treatment Pilot and Demonstration Grant**
 - Grantor: Bureau of Reclamation
 - Purpose: To encourage pilot and demonstration projects that address the technical, economic and environmental viability of treating and using brackish groundwater, seawater, impaired waters or otherwise create new water supplies within a specific locale.
 - Eligibility: An eligible applicant is a state, Indian tribe, irrigation district, water district, or other organization with water or power delivery authority. Applicants must be located in the western United States or Territories as identified in the Reclamation Act of June 17, 1902, as amended and supplemented; specifically: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands.
 - Funding limitations: The grants are made available through cost-shared funding on a competitive basis. Funding is subject to availability in the fiscal budget.
 - More information: <http://www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/awtg/index.html>
- **Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)**
 - Grantor: State of Texas
 - Purpose: To provide low-interest loans that can be used for planning, design, and construction of wastewater treatment facilities, wastewater recycling and reuse facilities, collection systems, storm water pollution control, nonpoint source pollution control, and estuary management projects.
 - Eligibility: The program is open to a range of borrowers including municipalities, communities of all sizes, farmers, homeowners, small businesses, and nonprofit organizations. Project eligibility varies according to each state's program and priorities. Loans for wastewater treatment plant projects are only given to political subdivisions with the authority to own and operate a wastewater system.
 - Funding limitations: The program offers fixed and variable rate loans at subsidized interest rates. The maximum repayment period for a CWSRF loan is 30 years from the completion of project construction. Mainstream funds offer a net long-term fixed interest rate of 1.30% below market rate for equivalency loans (project adheres to federal requirements) and 0.95% for non-equivalency (project adheres to state requirements) loans. Disadvantaged community funds may be offered to eligible communities with principal forgiveness of 30%, 50%, or 70% based upon the adjusted annual median household income and the household cost factor.



- More information: <http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/financial/programs/CWS-RF/>
- **Colonia Funds (Rural)**
 - Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
 - Purpose: To be available to eligible county applicants for projects in severely distressed unincorporated areas.
 - Eligibility: The term “colonia” means any identifiable unincorporated community that is within 150 miles of the border between the United States and Mexico, except that the term does not include any standard metropolitan statistical area that has a population exceeding 1,000,000.
 - Limitations: see program website.
 - More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\)/ColoniaFunds.aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/ColoniaFunds.aspx)
- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
 - Purpose: To provide communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. The CDBG program provides annual grants on a formula basis to general units of local government and States.
 - More Information: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs
- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program for Rural Texas**
 - Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
 - Purpose: To develop viable communities by providing decent housing and suitable living environments, and expanding economic opportunities principally for persons of low- to moderate-income.
 - Eligibility: non-entitlement cities and counties whose populations are less than 50,000 and 200,000 respectively, and are not participating or designated as eligible to participate in the entitlement portion of the federal Community Development Block Grant Program.
 - Limitations: Population 50,000 city and 200,000 county.
 - More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\).aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG).aspx)



- **Community Development Fund (Rural)**

- Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: To help rural Texas cities and counties for basic infrastructure projects such as water/wastewater facilities, street improvements and drainage.
- Eligibility: non-entitlement cities and counties whose populations are less than 50,000 and 200,000 respectively, and are not participating or designated as eligible to participate in the entitlement portion of the federal Community Development Block Grant Program.
- Limitations: \$75,000-800,000, biennial basis and competition against 24 planning regions in the state.
- More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\)/CommunityDevelopment.aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/CommunityDevelopment.aspx)

- **Community Facilities Grants**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: To assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns.
- Eligibility: public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal governments. Towns of up to 20,000 in population.
- Limitations: Development Financing, Construction
- More information: <http://reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>

- **Planning Capacity Building Fund (Rural)**

- Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: To fund local public facility and housing planning activities.
- Eligibility: non-entitlement cities and counties whose populations are less than 50,000 and 200,000 respectively, and are not participating or designated as eligible to participate in the entitlement portion of the federal Community Development Block Grant Program.
- Limitations: \$55,000 and competitive application process



- More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\)/PlanningandCapacityBuildingFund.aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/PlanningandCapacityBuildingFund.aspx)
- **Regional Solid Waste Grants Program**
 - Grantor: Brazos Valley Council of Governments and Texas Commission of Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
 - Purpose: To be awarded to regional and local governments for municipal solid waste (MSW) management projects. TCEQ allocates the funds to the council of governments that provides technical and financial assistance to municipalities for MSW projects.
 - Eligibility: Local and regional governments may apply.
 - Funding limitations: Funding availability and quantities will vary every fiscal year. Applications must be made through the corresponding council of government.
 - More information: <http://www.bvcog.org/programs/solid-wastemanagement/forms-applications/>
- **Regional Water Supply and Wastewater Facilities Planning Program**
 - Grantor: Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
 - Purpose: To provide funds for studies and analyses to evaluate and determine the most feasible alternatives to meet regional water supply and wastewater facility needs, estimate the costs associated with implementing feasible regional water supply and wastewater facility alternatives, and identify institutional arrangements to provide regional water supply and wastewater services for areas in Texas. All proposed solutions must be consistent with applicable regional or statewide plans and relevant laws and regulations. A water conservation plan must be included in the proposed plan.
 - Eligibility: Political subdivisions, such as cities, counties, districts and authorities created under the Texas Constitution with the legal authority to plan, develop, and operate regional facilities are eligible applicants. Additional applicants include any interstate compact commission to which the State is a party and any nonprofit water supply corporation created and operating under Texas Civil Statutes Article 1434a.
 - Funding limitations: Funds are in the form of grants. Applicants must provide evidence of local matching funds on or before the date specified for negotiation and execution of a contract. Funds are generally limited to 50% of the total cost of the project, except that the board may supply up to 75% of the total cost to political subdivisions under certain conditions. Funds will be released only as reimbursement of costs actually incurred for approved activities. In-



kind services may be substituted for any part of the local share if certain criteria are met.

- More information: http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/assistance/financial/fin_regionalfacilityplan/regionalplanning.asp

- **Rural Broadband Program**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: To provide financing to telecommunications providers in rural areas where traditional financing is not otherwise available.
- Eligibility: Rural communities with a population of 20,000 or less
- Limitations: Interest rate set at US Treasury rate, to provide up to 80% of principal.
- More information: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/farm-bill-broadband-loans-loan-guarantees>

- **Small Towns Environment Program Fund (Rural)**

- Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: To provide assistance to communities for solving water and sewer problems utilizing self-help methods.
- Eligibility: Non-entitlement cities under 50,000 in population and non-entitlement counties that have a non-metropolitan population under 200,000 and are not eligible for direct CDBG funding from HUD may apply for funding through any of the Texas CDBG programs.
- Limitations: up to \$350,000, community participation, biannual applications
- More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\)/SmallTownsEnvironmentalProgram.aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/SmallTownsEnvironmentalProgram.aspx)

- **Sustainable Communities Initiative:**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Purpose: To stimulate integrated regional planning that guides State, metropolitan, and local decisions to link land use, transportation, and housing policy.
- Limitations: Competitive grants in partnership with USDOT and EPA
- More Information: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/hudprograms/sci>



- **Sustainable Communities Program:**
 - Grantor: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 - Purpose: To provides technical assistance to Tribal, State, regional, and local governments, in partnership with HUD and USDOT, for integrating smart growth.
 - More Information: <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sgia.htm>
- **Texas Capital Fund (Rural)**
 - Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
 - Purpose: To support rural business development, retention and expansion by providing funds for public infrastructure, real estate development, or the elimination of deteriorated conditions.
 - Eligibility: see program website.
 - More information: <http://texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/TexasCapitalFund.aspx>
- **Urgent Need Fund (Rural)**
 - Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
 - Purpose: To restore rural infrastructure whose sudden failure poses an imminent threat to life or health.
 - Eligibility: Non-entitlement cities under 50,000 in population and non-entitlement counties that have a non-metropolitan population under 200,000 and are not eligible for direct CDBG funding from HUD may apply for funding through any of the Texas CDBG programs.
 - Limitations: \$25,000-250,000, requires assessment, accepted by invitation.
 - More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\)/UrgentNeedFund.aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/UrgentNeedFund.aspx)



Hidalgo Viejo Cultural Center

- **Battlefield Preservation Fund**
 - Grantor: National Fund for Historic Preservation
 - Purpose: To preserve battlefields in the United States.
 - Eligibility: to those that have limited access to other specialized battlefield funding programs.
 - Limitations: require a one-to-one cash match.
 - More Information: <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/special-funds/#Trew>
- **Emergency/Intervention Funding**
 - Grantor: National Fund for Historic Preservation
 - Purpose: To save a historic structure during emergency situations when immediate and unanticipated work is needed.
 - Limitations: restricted to nonprofit organizations and public agencies. Emergency grants typically range from \$1,000 to \$5,000, but unlike the majority of our grant funding, a cash match is not required for intervention projects.
 - More information: <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/special-funds/#Trew>
- **Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives**
 - Grantor: National Park Services
 - Purpose: To encourage private sector investment in the rehabilitation and re-use of historic buildings. The community revitalization program is one of the nation's most successful and cost-effective community revitalization programs.
 - More information: <http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>
- **Hart Family Fund for Small Towns**
 - Grantor: National Fund for Historic Preservation
 - Purpose: To encourage preservation at the local level by providing seed money for preservation projects in small towns.
 - Eligibility: Competition.
 - Limitations: range from \$2,500 to \$10,000.



- More Information: <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/special-funds/#Trew>
- **Indoor Recreation Grants & Outdoor Recreation Grants:**
 - Grantor: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
 - Purpose: To provide 50% matching funds or construction of recreation centers, nature centers, and related buildings.
 - Limitations: Currently suspended.
 - More information: <http://www.tpwd.state.Texas.us/business/grants/trpa/>
- **Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation**
 - Grantor: National Fund for Historic Preservation
 - Purpose: To save historic environments in order to foster an appreciation of our nation's diverse cultural heritage and to preserve and revitalize the livability of the nation's communities.
 - Eligibility: Competition.
 - Limitation: range from \$2,500 to \$10,000
 - More Information: <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/special-funds/#Trew>
- **Local Historic Property Tax Incentives**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of the Interior
 - According to the Texas Property Code Section 11.24, "Historic Sites grants the governing body of a taxing unit the authority to exempt from taxation part or all of the assessed value of a structure and the land necessary for access to the structure if the structure is a Recorded Texas Historical Landmark or designated as historically significant and in need of tax relief to encourage its preservation." Thus, communities that do not currently have historic tax incentives programs should consider adopting them as permitted by Texas law.
- **Recreational Trails Grants**
 - Grantor: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
 - Purpose: To be up to 80% of project cost for new recreational trails, improvements, trailheads, trailside facilities, or acquiring trail corridors.
 - More Information: <http://www.tpwd.state.Texas.us/business/grants/trpa/>
- **The American Battlefield Protection Program**
 - Grantor: National Park Service



- Purpose: To promote the preservation of significant historic battlefields on American soil. The program's focus is primarily on land use, cultural resource and site management planning, and public education.
- More information: <http://www.nps.gov/abpp/>
- **The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors**
 - Grantor: National Fund for Historic Preservation
 - Purpose: To assist in the preservation, restoration, and interpretation of historic interiors.
 - Eligibility: Competition.
 - Limitations: range from \$2,500 to \$10,000
 - More Information: <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/special-funds/#Trew>
- **The National Trust for Historic Preservation Grant program**
 - Grantor: National Trust for Historic Preservation
 - Purpose: To save America's historic places.
 - Eligibility: Nonprofit organizations and public agencies that are members of the National Trust at the Forum or Main Street level.
 - Limitations: There are three annual deadlines: February 1, June 1, and October.
 - More information: <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/#.VAoSQPldV8F>
- **The Peter H. Brink Leadership Fund**
 - Grantor: National Fund for Historic Preservation
 - Purpose: To support the leadership and effectiveness of staff and board members of preservation organizations to fulfill their mission and to create a stronger, more effective preservation movement.
 - Limitation: reimburse travel costs and provide an honorarium for the mentor up to a maximum total of \$1,500. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year.
 - More Information: <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/special-funds/#Trew>



- **The Southwest Intervention Fund**

- Grantor: National Fund for Historic Preservation
- Purpose: To provide support for preservation planning efforts and enables prompt responses to emergency threats or opportunities in the eligible states.
- Eligibility: Southwest region, exclusively in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, West Texas and Utah.
- Limitations: Grants generally range from \$2,500 to \$10,000.
- More Information: <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/special-funds/#Trew>

- **Wetlands Reserve Program**

- Grantor: Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Purpose: To provide technical and financial support to landowners with their wetland restoration efforts. The programs aims to offer landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property.
- Eligibility: Lands that are eligible under this program include: wetlands farmed under natural conditions; farmed wetlands; prior converted cropland, farmed wetland pasture; certain lands that have the potential to become a wetland as a result of flooding; rangeland, pasture, or forest production lands where the hydrology has been significantly degraded and can be restored; riparian areas which link protected wetlands; lands adjacent to protected wetlands that contribute significantly to wetland functions and values; and wetlands previously restored under a local, state, or federal Program that need long-term protection.
- Funding limitations: For permanent easements, 100% of easement value and 100% of the restoration costs will be funded. For 30-year easements, 75% of the easement value and up to 75% of the restoration costs are funded. For an agreement to restore wetlands without an easement, up to 75% of the restoration costs will be funded. A 30-year contract is available for tribal land and funding allocation is up to 75% of the restoration costs.
- More information: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/wetlands>



Economic Development

- **Business & Industry Program**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
 - Purpose: To create jobs and stimulate rural economies by providing financial backing for rural businesses.
 - Eligibility: any area, excluding cities, with a population over 50,000.
 - Limitations: government or military employees may not own more than 20%, interest rate changes.
 - More information: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-industry-loan-guarantees>
- **Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Programs**
 - Grantor: Department of the Treasury
 - Purpose: To use federal resources to invest in CDFIs and to build their capacity to serve low-income people and communities that lack access to affordable financial products and services.
 - Eligibility: Both certified and non-certified CDFIs are eligible to apply for Technical Assistance awards. However, non-certified organizations must be able to become certified within two years after receiving a TA award.
 - Limitations: Financial Assistance Awards: \$2 million; Technical Assistance Awards: \$100,000
 - More information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>
- **Economic Development Sales Tax**
 - Grantor: Economic Development and Analysis Division
 - Purpose: To fund industrial development projects, such as business infrastructure, manufacturing and research and development.
 - Eligibility: A type B EDC can fund all projects eligible for Type A EDCs, as well as parks, museums, sports facilities, and affordable housing.
 - More information: http://www.texasahead.org/tax_programs/
- **Intermediary Relending Program**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture



- Purpose: To finance business facilities and community development projects in rural areas.
- Eligibility: Rural areas and incorporated places with populations of less than 25,000.
- Limitations: Interest rate 1% maximum term is 30 years, \$250,000 maximum loan.
- More information: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/intermediary-relending-program>
- **Planning and Local Technical Assistance Programs**
 - Grantor: U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)
 - Purpose: To help communities develop the planning and technical expertise to support communities and regions in their comprehensive, entrepreneurial, and innovation-based economic development efforts.
 - Eligibility: State governments, County governments, City or township governments, Public and State controlled institutions of higher education, Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized). Nonprofits, Private institutions of higher education and Others (see text field entitled “Additional Information on Eligibility” for clarification).
 - More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>
- **Small Business Administration Loan programs**
 - Grantor: U.S. Small Business Administration
 - Purpose: To provide General Small Business Loans, Microloan Program, Real Estate & Equipment Loans, and Disaster Loans.
 - More information: <http://www.sba.gov/loanprograms>
- **Small Business Innovation Research Program**
 - Grantor: U.S. Small Business Administration
 - Purpose: To fund the critical startup and development stages of Small Business. It targets the entrepreneurial sector.
 - Eligibility: Small businesses that are American owned and independently operated, for-profit, principle researcher employed by business and company size limited to 500 employees.
 - Limitations: Funding awarded in three phases, up to \$750,000.



- More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>
- **Strong Cities, Strong Communities Visioning Challenge**
 - Grantor: U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
 - Purpose: To support the development and implementation of comprehensive economic development strategic plans.
 - Eligibility: Cities
 - Limitations: \$6 million total; \$1 million will be awarded to six total cities.
 - More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>
- **The Texas Enterprise Zone Program**
 - Grantor: Texas Economic Development Division
 - Purpose: To fund local communities to partner with the State of Texas to promote job creation and capital investment in economically distressed areas of the state.
 - More information: http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/enterprise_zone/ez_program.html
- **The Texas Leverage Fund**
 - Grantor: Texas Economic Development
 - Purpose: To provide additional financing help to communities that have adopted an economic development sales tax. The communities may expand economic development through using and collecting future sales tax revenues.
 - More Information: <http://www.texaswideopenforbusiness.com/incentives-financing/financing/leverage-fund.php>
- **The Texas Workforce Commission's Skill Development Program**
 - Grantor: Texas Workforce Commission through Texas Legislature
 - Purpose: To provide grants to community and technical colleges to provide customized job training programs for businesses who want to train new workers or upgrade the skills of their existing workforce.
 - Eligibility: A business, consortium of businesses, or trade union identifies a training need, and then partners with a public community or technical college.



- Limitations: Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 20, Chapter 803 and Texas Labor Code, Chapter 303.
- More Information: <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/funds/skills-development-program-overview.htm>.
- **The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TA-ACCCT) Grant Program**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Labor and Department of Education
 - Purpose: To provide community colleges and other eligible institutions of higher education with funds to expand and improve their ability to deliver education and career training programs.
 - Eligibility: are suited for workers who are eligible for training under the TAA for Workers program, and prepare program participants for employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations.
 - Limitations: have to be completed in two years or less
 - More Information: <http://www.doleta.gov/taacct/>

Hazards, Social Vulnerability, Parks, and the Environment

- **Boating Access Grants**
 - Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
 - Purpose: To fund the construction of public boat ramp facilities throughout Texas.
 - Eligibility: Local government sponsors must make an application, provide the land, provide access to the proposed boat ramp, supply 25% of the development costs, and accept operation and maintenance responsibilities for a minimum 25-year period.
 - Limitations: This grant program provides 75% matching grant funds. These funds are allocated annually through the federal Sport Fish Restoration Act.
 - More information: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/>
- **Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)**
 - Grantor: State of Texas
 - Purpose: To provide low-interest loans that can be used for planning, design, and construction of wastewater treatment facilities, wastewater recycling



and reuse facilities, collection systems, storm water pollution control, non-point source pollution control, and estuary management projects.

- Eligibility: The program is open to a range of borrowers including municipalities, communities of all sizes, farmers, homeowners, small businesses, and nonprofit organizations. Project eligibility varies according to each state's program and priorities. Loans for wastewater treatment plant projects are only given to political subdivisions with the authority to own and operate a wastewater system.
- Limitations: The program offers fixed and variable rate loans at subsidized interest rates. The maximum repayment period for a CWSRF loan is 30 years from the completion of project construction. Mainstream funds offer a net long-term fixed interest rate of 1.30% below market rate for equivalency loans (project adheres to federal requirements) and 0.95% for non-equivalency (project adheres to state requirements) loans. Disadvantaged community funds may be offered to eligible communities with principal forgiveness of 30%, 50%, or 70% based upon the adjusted annual median household income and the household cost factor.
- More information: <http://www.twdb.texas.gov/financial/programs/CWSRF/>

- **Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) Grants**

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Purpose: To introduce under-served populations to the services, programs, and sites of Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.
- Eligibility: Grants are awarded to non-profit organizations, schools, municipalities, counties, cities, and other tax-exempt groups.
- Limitations: This is not a land acquisition or construction grant; this is only for programs.
- More information: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/>

- **Economically Distressed Areas Program**

- Grantor: Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
- Purpose: To provide financial assistance for water and wastewater services in economically distressed areas where present facilities are inadequate to meet residents' minimal needs. The program also includes measures to prevent future substandard development.
- Eligibility: Projects must be located in an area that was established as a residential subdivision as of June 1, 2005, has an inadequate water supply or sewer services to meet minimal residential needs and a lack of financial resources to provide water supply or sewer services to satisfy those needs. All political subdivisions, including cities, counties, water districts, and nonprofit water supply corporations, are eligible to apply for funds. The applicant, or its des-



ignee, must be capable of maintaining and operating the completed system.

- Limitations: Financial support is in the form of a grant or combination of a grant and a loan. The program does not fund ongoing operation and maintenance expenses, nor does it fund new development.
- More information: <http://www.twdb.texas.gov/financial/programs/EDAP/>
- **Emergency/Intervention Funding**
 - Grantor: National Fund for Historic Preservation
 - Purpose: To save a historic structure during emergency situations when immediate and unanticipated work is needed.
 - Limitations: restricted to nonprofit organizations and public agencies. Emergency grants typically range from \$1,000 to \$5,000, but unlike the majority of our grant funding, a cash match is not required for intervention projects.
 - More information: <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/special-funds/#Trew>
- **EPA's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund**
 - Grantor: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 - Purpose: To upgrade water treatment facilities.
 - More information: http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/dwsrf/index.cfm
- **Federal Community Development Block Grant funds**
 - Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture (on behalf of HUD)
 - Purpose: To develop viable communities by providing decent housing and suitable living environments, and expanding economic opportunities. Eliminate conditions hazardous to the public health and of an emergency nature.
 - Eligibility: 51 percent low- to moderate-income persons, which are defined as those who earn equal to or less than 80% of the area median family income, or earn equal to or less than less than 80% of the statewide non-metropolitan median family income figure.
 - More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\)/About.aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/About.aspx)



- **Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grants**
 - Grantor: Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
 - Purpose: To provide grants to assist communities in implementing measures to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to buildings, manufactured homes, and other structures insurable under the NFIP.
 - Limitations: The Texas Water Development Fund helps fund wastewater and flood control projects.
 - More information at <http://www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/grant/FMA.asp>
- **Indoor Recreation Grants**
 - Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
 - Purpose: To provide 50% matching grant funds to construct recreation centers, nature centers and other indoor recreation-related buildings.
 - Eligibility: For municipalities, counties, MUDs and other local units of government with populations less than 500,000.
 - Limitations: The master plans submission deadline is at least 60 days prior to the application deadline. Award notifications occur the following January.
 - More Information: Please download the Indoor Recreation Grant Application. <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/>
- **Outdoor Recreation-Acquisition, Development and Planning**
 - Grantor: Department of the Interior
 - Purpose: To provide financial assistance to the States and their political subdivisions for the preparation of Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans (SCORPs) and acquisition and development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities for the general public, to meet current and future needs.
 - Eligibility: For planning grants, only the State agency formally designated by the Governor or State law as responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the SCORP is eligible to apply. For acquisition and development grants, the above designated agency may apply for assistance for itself, or on behalf of other State agencies or political subdivisions, such as cities, counties, and park districts. Indian organized tribes to govern themselves and perform the functions of a general purpose unit of government qualify for assistance. Individuals, nonprofit organizations, and private organizations are not eligible.



- Limitations: Land acquisition and development grants may be used for a wide range of outdoor recreation projects, Facilities must be open to the general public and not limited to special groups. Every park or outdoor recreation area acquired or developed with assistance under this program must remain available and accessible for public outdoor recreation use forever. Development of basic rather than elaborate facilities is favored. Operation and maintenance of facilities are not eligible expenses for funding.
- More information: <https://www.cfda.gov/index?s=program&mode=form&tab=core&id=49de7517fcf9e734d2868a40aee748be>
- **Outdoor Recreation Grants**
 - Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
 - Purpose: To provide 50% matching grant funds to acquire and develop parkland or to renovate existing public recreation areas.
 - Eligibility: For municipalities, counties, MUDs and other local units of government with populations less than 500,000. Eligible sponsors include cities, counties, MUDs, river authorities, and other special districts.
 - Limitations: Projects must be completed within three years of approval. The master plans submission deadline is at least 60 days prior to the application deadline.
 - More information: For complete information on this grant, please download the Outdoor Recreation Grant Application; <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/>
- **Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program**
 - Grantor: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - Purpose: To assist local governments in implementing cost-effective hazard mitigation activities that complement a comprehensive mitigation program.
 - Eligibility: In order to be eligible the city must be in good standing with the National Flood Insurance Program.
 - Funding Limitations: This grant should be used for hazard planning activities but cannot be used for major flood control projects, warning systems, engineering designs, feasibility studies not integral to proposed projects, generators not integral to a proposed project, phased or partial projects, flood studies or mapping, or response and communication equipment.
 - More information: <http://www.fema.gov/pre-disaster-mitigation-grant-program>



- **Recreational Trail Grants**

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Purpose: To administer the National Recreational Trails Fund in Texas under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This federally funded program receives its funding from a portion of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in non-highway recreational vehicles.
- Eligibility: Funds can be spent on both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects such as the construction of new recreational trails, to improve existing trails, to develop trailheads or trailside facilities, and to acquire trail corridors.
- Limitations: The grants can be up to 80% of project cost with a maximum of \$200,000 for non-motorized trail grants and currently there is not a maximum amount for motorized trail grants (call 512-389-8224 for motorized trail grant funding availability).

More information: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/>

- **Recreational Trails Program**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportation & Federal Highway Administration
- Purpose: To be for all kinds of trail projects of the funds apportioned to a State.
- Limitations: 30 percent must be used for motorized trail uses, 30 percent for nonmotorized trail uses, and 40 percent for diverse trail uses.
- More Information: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/

- **Regional Water Supply and Wastewater Facilities Planning Program**

- Grantor: Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
- Purpose: To provide funds for studies and analyses to evaluate and determine the most feasible alternatives to meet regional water supply and wastewater facility needs, estimate the costs associated with implementing feasible regional water supply and wastewater facility alternatives, and identify institutional arrangements to provide regional water supply and wastewater services for areas in Texas. All proposed solutions must be consistent with applicable regional or statewide plans and relevant laws and regulations. A water conservation plan must be included in the proposed plan.
- Eligibility: Political subdivisions, such as cities, counties, districts and authorities created under the Texas Constitution with the legal authority to plan, develop, and operate regional facilities are eligible applicants. Additional applicants include any interstate compact commission to which the State is a



party and any nonprofit water supply corporation created and operating under Texas Civil Statutes Article 1434a.

- Funding limitations: Funds are in the form of grants. Applicants must provide evidence of local matching funds on or before the date specified for negotiation and execution of a contract. Funds are generally limited to 50% of the total cost of the project, except that the board may supply up to 75% of the total cost to political subdivisions under certain conditions. Funds will be released only as reimbursement of costs actually incurred for approved activities. In-kind services may be substituted for any part of the local share if certain criteria are met.
- More information: <http://www.twdb.texas.gov/financial/programs/RFPG/>
- **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (15.921)**
 - Grantor: Department of the Interior
 - Purpose: To help create local, regional and state networks of parks, rivers, trails, greenways and open spaces by collaborating with community partners and National Park areas in every state.
 - Eligibility: Private nonprofit organizations and Federal, State and local government agencies. OMB Circular No. A-87 applies to this program.
 - More Information: <https://www.cfda.gov/index?s=program&mode=form&tab=core&id=0eb58e82a9a678d4d621062e2ea27978>
- **Small Community Grants**
 - Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
 - Purpose: To meet recreation needs. The grant provides 50% matching grant funds to eligible municipalities and counties. Funds must be used for development or acquisition of parkland.
 - Eligibility: Must be a small Texas community with a population of 20,000 and under. Eligible projects include ball fields, boating, fishing, and hunting facilities, picnic facilities, playgrounds, swimming pools, trails, camping facilities, beautification, restoration, gardens, sports courts and support facilities.
 - More information: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/>
- **Small Towns Environment Program Fund (Rural)**
 - Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
 - Purpose: To provide assistance to communities for solving water and sewer problems utilizing self-help methods.
 - Eligibility: Non-entitlement cities under 50,000 in population and non-en-



titlement counties that have a non-metropolitan population under 200,000 and are not eligible for direct CDBG funding from HUD may apply for funding through any of the Texas CDBG programs.

- Limitations: up to \$350,000, community participation, biannual applications
- More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\)/SmallTownsEnvironmentalProgram.aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/SmallTownsEnvironmentalProgram.aspx)

- **Texas Paddling Trails (TPT)**

- Grantor: The Texas Parks and Wildlife program.
- Purpose: To promote the development of paddling trails throughout the state. It provides assistance to community partners, promotes the trails on the TPWD website, and provides TPT kiosk design options, trail maps, and official marker signs for put-in and take-out locations.

More Information: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fishboat/boat/paddling-trails/>

- **The Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program**

- Grantor: Donations
- Purpose: To give small monetary grants to schools, nature centers, and other non-profit organizations.
- More Information: <http://www.wildones.org/seeds-for-education/>

- **The National Recreation and Park Association**

- Grantor: National Recreation and Park Association
- Purpose: To fund park and recreational agencies.
- More information: www.nrpa.org/fundraising-resources

- **Wetlands Reserve Program**

- Grantor: Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Purpose: To provide technical and financial support to landowners with their wetland restoration efforts. The program aims to offer landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property.
- Eligibility: Lands that are eligible under this program include: wetlands farmed under natural conditions; farmed wetlands; prior converted cropland, farmed wetland pasture; certain lands that have the potential to become a wetland as a result of flooding; rangeland, pasture, or forest production lands where the hydrology has been significantly degraded and can be restored; riparian areas which link protected wetlands; lands adjacent to protected wet-



lands that contribute significantly to wetland functions and values; and wetlands previously restored under a local, state, or federal Program that need long-term protection.

- Funding limitations: For permanent easements, 100% of easement value and 100% of the restoration costs will be funded. For 30-year easements, 75% of the easement value and up to 75% of the restoration costs are funded. For an agreement to restore wetlands without an easement, up to 75% of the restoration costs will be funded. A 30-year contract is available for tribal land and funding allocation is up to 75% of the restoration costs.
- More information: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/wetlands>

Housing

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- Purpose: To provide communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. The CDBG program provides annual grants on a formula basis to general units of local government and States.
- More Information: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program for Rural Texas**

- Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: To develop viable communities by providing decent housing and suitable living environments, and expanding economic opportunities principally for persons of low- to moderate-income.
- Eligibility: non-entitlement cities and counties whose populations are less than 50,000 and 200,000 respectively, and are not participating or designated as eligible to participate in the entitlement portion of the federal Community Development Block Grant Program.
- Limitations: Population 50,000 city and 200,000 county.
- More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\).aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG).aspx)

- **Community Development Block Grant program**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Purpose: To develop viable communities by providing decent housing and a



suitable living environment and by expanding economic opportunities.

- Eligibility: principally for persons of low- and moderate-income.
- Limitations: The State must ensure that at least 70 percent of its CDBG grant funds are used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons over a one-, two-, or three-year time period selected by the State.
- More information can be found at http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?s-rc=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs/stateadmin

- **Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) Grants**

- Grantor: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Purpose: To introduce under-served populations to the services, programs, and sites of Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.
- Eligibility: Grants are awarded to non-profit organizations, schools, municipalities, counties, cities, and other tax-exempt groups.
- Limitations: This is not a land acquisition or construction grant; this is only for programs.
- More information: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/>

- **Community Transformation Grants (CTG) - Small Communities Program**

- Grantor: The United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)/ Center for Disease Control (CDC)
- Purpose: To reduce the rate of chronic diseases and to make improvements to the built environment in order to promote healthier lifestyles.
- Eligibility: Governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations across a variety of sectors, including transportation, housing, education, and public health
- Limitations: \$70 million
- More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>

- **Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: To buy, build, improve, or repair housing for farm laborers, including persons whose income is earned in aquaculture (fish and oyster farms) and those engaged in on-farm processing.



- Eligibility: farmers, associations of farmers, family farm corporations, Indian tribes, nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and associations of farmworkers.
- Limitations: The Program Director has the authority to approve loans to individuals of up to \$100,000, and the State Director can approve loans of up to \$400,000.
- More Information: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-Direct_Rental_Loans.html
- **Federal Community Development Block Grant funds**
 - Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
 - Purpose: To develop viable communities by providing decent housing and suitable living environments, and expanding economic opportunities. Eliminate conditions hazardous to the public health and of an emergency nature.
 - Eligibility: 51 percent low- to moderate-income persons, which are defined as those who earn equal to or less than 80% of the area median family income, or earn equal to or less than less than 80% of the statewide non-metropolitan median family income figure.
 - More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\)/About.aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/About.aspx)
- **Guaranteed Rental Housing Loans**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
 - Purpose: To increase the supply of moderately-priced housing in rural areas
 - Eligibility: be a U.S. citizen(s) or legal resident(s), a U.S. owned corporation, a limited liability corporation (LLC) or a partnership in which the principals are U.S. citizens or permanent legal residents.
 - Limitations: The maximum loan to value is 90% for for-profit entities and 97% for non-profit entities.
 - More Information: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-Direct_Rental_Loans.html
- **Homeowner's Rehabilitation Assistance Program**
 - Grantor: Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.
 - Purpose: To provide the following services: rehabilitation or reconstruction of owner-occupied housing on the same site, new construction of site-built housing on the same site to replace an existing owner occupied Manufactured Housing Unit (MHU), replacement and relocation of existing housing located



in a floodplain to a new MHU or new construction of housing on an alternative site, new construction or a new MHU to replace a housing unit that has become uninhabitable as a result of disaster or condemnation by local government, and if allowable under the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), refinance of existing mortgages meeting federal requirements.

- Eligibility: Organizations must now apply and receive HOME funds (HOME Investment Partnerships Program) under the Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) set-aside in order to be certified as a CHDO.
- More information: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/home-division/hra.htm>

- **Housing Preservation Grants**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: To repair or rehabilitate individual housing, rental properties, or co-ops owned and/or occupied by very low- and low-income rural persons. Eligibility: Very low income is defined as below 50 percent of the area median income (AMI); low income is between 50 and 80 percent of AMI. Eligible sponsors include state agencies, units of local government, Native American tribes, and nonprofit organizations.
- Limitations: competitive and are made available in areas wherever there is a concentration of need.
- More Information: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-Direct_Rental_Loans.html

- **Housing Tax Credit (HTC)**

- Grantor: U.S. Treasury Department via the Internal Revenue Code
- Purpose: To direct private capital toward the development and preservation of affordable rental housing for low-income households.
- Eligibility: Private for-profit and nonprofit developers. Tenants earning up to 60% of the area median family income (AMFI), which varies by area.
- More information can be found at <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/htc/docs/htc-overview.pdf>

- **Low Income Housing Tax Credit (4%)**

- Grantor: Department of the Treasury
- Purpose: To generate equity capital for the construction and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing.



- Eligibility: Determined by state housing finance agency.
- If the projects involve acquisition and substantial rehabilitation expenditures, and are funded with Tax-Exempt Bonds only qualify for 4%.
- Limitations: State allocated
- More information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>
- **Low Income Housing Tax Credit (9%)**
 - Grantor: Department of the Treasury
 - Purpose: To generate equity capital for the construction and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing.
 - Eligibility: Determined by state housing finance agency.
 - 9% LIHTC are possible if the projects are not funded by federal Tax-Exempt Bonds, and meet the other basic qualifications of LIHTC.
 - Limitations: State allocated
 - More information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>
- **Mix-Use Development Incentives Grant program**
 - Grantor: State Historic Preservation Office and National Park Service.
 - Purpose: To assist with the renovation and rehabilitation of commercial and residential properties within the Downtown District.
 - Eligibility: The proposed project must meet all applicable zoning requirements and all required permits (i.e. zoning, building, etc.) must have been obtained prior to payment.
 - Limitations: The grant portion of the project must be for the exterior and interior renovation of existing buildings only. The length of this program can be up to the City Council's discretion.
 - More Information: <http://www.historicdowntownmonroe.org/incentiveprograms.php?cat=49>
- **Multi-Family Housing Preservation and Revitalization (MPR) Loans and Grants**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
 - Purpose: To provide affordable multi-family rental housing.
 - Eligibility: for very low-, low-, and moderate-income families; the elderly; and



persons with disabilities.

- More Information: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HMF_MPR.html

- **Planning Capacity Building Fund (Rural)**

- Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture:
- Purpose: To fund local public facility and housing planning activities.
- Eligibility: non-entitlement cities and counties whose populations are less than 50,000 and 200,000 respectively, and are not participating or designated as eligible to participate in the entitlement portion of the federal Community Development Block Grant Program.
- Limitations: \$55,000 and competitive application process
- More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\)/PlanningandCapacityBuildingFund.aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/PlanningandCapacityBuildingFund.aspx)

- **Recreational Trails Grants**

- Grantor: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
- Purpose: To be up to 80% of project cost for new recreational trails, improvements, trailheads, trailside facilities, or acquiring trail corridors.
- More Information: <http://www.tpwd.state.Texas.us/business/grants/trpa/>

- **Rental Assistance Program**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: To provide an additional source of support for households with incomes too low to pay the the Health Care Fund for the Poor (HCFP) subsidized (basic) rent from their own resources.
- Eligibility: may be used in both existing and newly constructed HCFP Rural Rental Housing (Section 515) or Farm Labor Housing (Section 514) financed projects. Projects must be established on a nonprofit or limited profit basis.
- Limitations: Rental Assistance (RA) requests are approved by the State Director.
- More Information: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-Direct_Rental_Loans.html

- **Rental Assistance Sequestration**

- Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Purpose: To make final determinations of whether the borrower will be impacted and extent of relief needed.



- Eligibility: affected borrowers both the Sequestration and appropriations rescission reductions substantially impacted by the Rental Assistance Program.
- More Information: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-Direct_Rental_Loans.html
- **Rural Community Development Initiative**
 - Grantor: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
 - Purpose: To develop the capacity and ability of private, nonprofit community-based housing and community development organizations, and low income rural communities to improve housing, community facilities, community and economic development projects in rural areas.
 - More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>
- **Rural Rental Housing Loans**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture
 - Purpose: Rural Rental Housing Loans are direct, competitive mortgage loans made to provide affordable multifamily rental housing for very low-, low-, and moderate-income families.
 - Eligibility: Ownership - Individuals, partnerships, limited partnerships, for-profit corporations, nonprofit organizations, limited equity cooperatives, Native American tribes, and public agencies are eligible to apply. For-profit borrowers must agree to operate on a limited-profit basis (currently 8 percent on initial investment).
 - More Information: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-Direct_Rental_Loans.html
- **Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program**
 - Grantor: Environmental Protection Agency
 - Purpose: To focus on complex or cutting-edge issues, such as stormwater management, code revision, transit-oriented development, affordable housing, infill development, corridor planning, green building, and climate change.
 - Eligibility: Tribes, states, regions, local governments, as well as nonprofits that have a partnership with a government entity.
 - Limitations: Applicants can submit proposals under 4 categories: community resilience to disasters, job creation, the role of manufactured homes in sustainable neighborhood design or medical and social service facilities siting.

More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>



- **Sustainable Communities Initiative:**
 - Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 - Purpose: To stimulate integrated regional planning that guides State, metropolitan, and local decisions to link land use, transportation, and housing policy.
 - Limitations: Competitive grants in partnership with USDOT and EPA.
 - More Information: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/hudprograms/sci>
- **The Multi-family Mortgage Revenue Bond Program**
 - Grantor: Texas Bond Review Board and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA)
 - Purpose: To issue mortgage revenue bonds to finance loans.
 - Eligibility: qualified nonprofit organizations and for-profit developers.
 - Limitations: developers financed through this program are subject to set-aside restrictions for low-income tenants and persons with special needs, tenant services, maximum rent limitations and other requirements.
 - More information: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/bond/index.htm>
- **The Planning and Capacity Building Fund**
 - Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture
 - Purpose: To provide grants for local public facilities and housing planning activities.
 - Eligibility: Non-entitlement cities under 50,000 in population and non-entitlement counties that have a non-metropolitan population under 200,000 and are not eligible for direct CDBG funding from HUD may apply for funding through any of the Texas CDBG programs.
 - Limitations: Maximum grant award: \$55,000, competitive application process, applications accepted biennially, grants provided annually.
 - More information: [http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant\(CDBG\)/PlanningandCapacityBuildingFund.aspx](http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrant(CDBG)/PlanningandCapacityBuildingFund.aspx)



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Funding Title	Action	Chapter
Mix-Use Development Incentives Grant program	8.1.3	Housing
	8.1.4	
	8.2.3	
The Multifamily Mortgage Revenue Bond Program	8.1.4	Housing
	8.2.4	
	8.1.1	
Rural Rental Housing Loans	8.1.4	Housing
	8.2.4	
	8.1.1	
Guaranteed Rental Housing Loans	8.1.4	Housing
	8.2.4	
	8.1.1	
Housing Preservation Grants	8.1.4	Housing
	8.2.3	
	8.2.4	
Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants	8.1.1	Housing
	8.2.3	
	8.2.4	
Rental Assistance Program	8.1.1	Housing
	8.1.4	
	8.2.4	
Rental Assistance Sequestration	8.1.1	Housing
	8.1.4	
	8.2.4	
Multi-Family Housing Preservation and Revitalization (MPR) Loans and Grants	8.1.1	Housing
	8.1.4	
	8.2.3	
	8.2.4	



Appendix

Chapter 1 - Population Projections

The estimated populations are required for understanding community change, especially assess per-capita conditions with respect to community services. Historic population trends in the city of Hidalgo and population projections by mitigation scenario for the county of Hidalgo was used to make the low growth and high growth scenarios. Texas State Data Center has Texas Population Estimates Program and it produces population projections for state and county levels. The ratio-share technique was applied to derive city’s population projection. This approach produces a target area’s population change as a share of the population change of a larger geographic area. The share of growth method with 10 year base was selected because this method generates more reasonable projections than the other two methods; constant-share and shift-share. This method allocates the proportion of the larger areas projected growth based on the ratio of the growth between larger and smaller area during 10 year base period. The One-Half 2000-2010 Migration (0.5) Scenario and the 2000-2010 Migration (1.0) Scenario were selected for the low and high growth projection (See Table A-1).

Table A-1: Population Projections

Migrations	Years	Share of Growth		Constant Share		Shift Share	
		2010-2000	2010-1990	2010-2000	2010-1990	2010-2000	2010-1990
0.5 Scenario	2015	12,762	12,872	12,395	11,816	13,080	13,654
	2020	14,477	14,707	13,708	13,067	15,221	16,492
	2025	16,305	16,664	15,108	14,401	17,609	19,710
	2030	18,197	18,689	16,556	15,782	20,211	23,280
	2035	20,089	20,715	18,005	17,163	22,974	27,146
1.0 Scenario	2015	13,260	13,405	12,776	12,179	13,482	14,074
	2020	15,562	15,869	14,539	13,859	16,144	17,492
	2025	18,039	18,521	16,435	15,667	19,157	21,442
	2030	20,585	21,246	18,384	17,524	22,443	25,851
	2035	23,083	23,920	20,297	19,348	25,899	30,601

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, Texas State Data Center



Chapter 6 - Income and Earnings

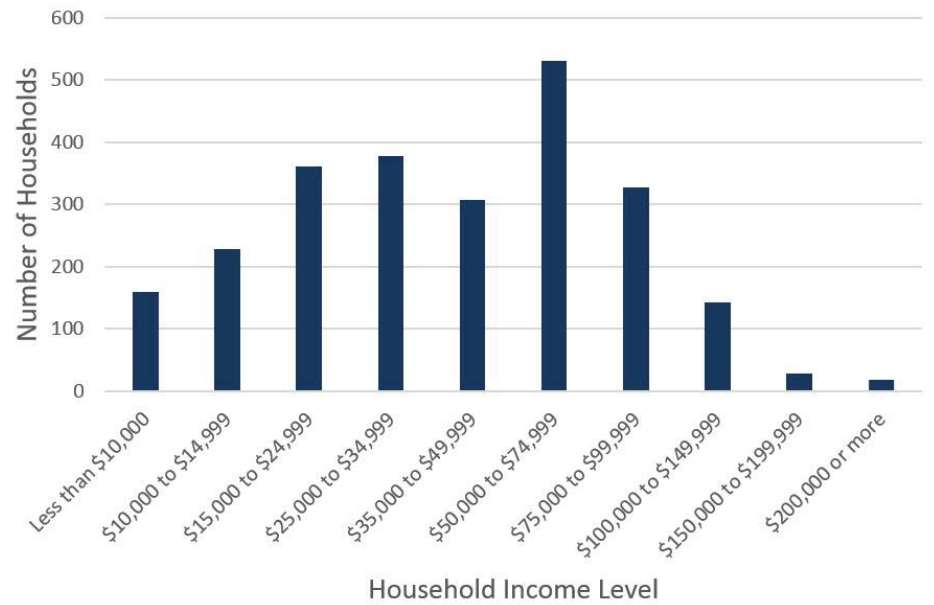


Figure A-1 Household Income Level



Chapter 6 - Business Environment

Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. ESRI uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity (See Table A-2).

Table A-2: Retail MarketPlace Profile

Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand	Supply	Retail Gap	Leakage/ Surplus Factor	No. of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45, 722	\$53,280,110	\$97,321,639	-\$44,041,529	-29.2	134
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$47,802,669	\$89,186,974	-\$41,384,305	-30.2	122
Total Food & Drink	722	\$5,477,441	\$8,134,665	-\$2,657,224	-19.5	12
Industry Group	NAICS	Demand	Supply	Retail Gap	Leakage/ Surplus Factor	No. of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$9,990,661	\$44,231,951	-\$34,241,290	-63.1	29
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$8,756,893	\$29,870,364	-\$21,113,471	-54.7	12
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$516,902	\$904,372	-\$387,470	-27.3	4
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$716,866	\$13,457,215	-\$12,740,349	-89.9	13
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$1,071,081	\$1,177,546	-\$106,465	-4.7	4
Furniture Stores	4421	\$656,572	\$1,017,961	-\$361,389	-21.6	3
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$414,509	\$159,585	\$254,924	44.4	1
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$1,302,048	\$211,933	\$1,090,115	72.0	1
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$1,479,019	\$72,253	\$1,406,766	90.7	1
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$1,306,960	\$72,253	\$1,234,707	89.5	1
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$172,059	\$0	\$172,059	100.0	0
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$8,788,901	\$15,436,078	-\$6,647,177	-27.4	29
Grocery Stores	4451	\$8,116,557	\$11,379,752	-\$3,263,195	-16.7	13
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$291,527	\$3,540,956	-\$3,249,429	-84.8	15
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$380,817	\$515,370	-\$134,553	-15.0	1
Health & Personal Care Stores	446, 4461	\$3,559,533	\$120,098	\$3,439,435	93.5	1
Gasoline Stations	447, 4471	\$5,066,485	\$0	\$5,066,485	100.0	0

Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$448	\$2,910,957	\$15,248,973	-\$12,338,016	-67.9	16
Clothing Stores	4481	\$2,113,861	\$14,583,962	-\$12,470,101	-74.7	12
Shoe Stores	4482	\$363,400	\$463,864	-\$100,464	-12.1	3
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$433,696	\$201,147	\$232,549	36.6	1
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$1,084,353	\$268,046	\$816,307	60.4	2
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$829,159	\$268,046	\$561,113	51.1	2
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$255,194	\$0	\$255,194	100.0	0
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$8,449,162	\$8,673,806	-\$224,644	-1.3	11
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$2,815,953	\$7,322,834	-\$4,506,881	-44.5	5
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$5,633,209	\$1,350,972	\$4,282,237	61.3	6
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$1,379,052	\$3,145,702	-\$1,766,650	-39.0	26
Florists	4531	\$44,972	\$0	\$44,972	100.0	0
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$306,974	\$732,917	-\$425,943	-41.0	8
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$288,068	\$2,003,275	-\$1,715,207	-74.9	11
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$739,038	\$409,510	\$329,528	28.7	7
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$2,721,417	\$600,588	\$2,120,829	63.8	2
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$2,360,312	\$0	\$2,360,312	100.0	0
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$133,304	\$0	\$133,304	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$227,801	\$600,588	-\$372,787	-45.0	2
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$5,477,441	\$8,134,665	-\$2,657,224	-19.5	12
Full-Service Restaurants	7221	\$1,999,205	\$1,000,510	\$998,695	33.3	2
Limited-Service Eating Places	7222	\$3,018,208	\$6,987,241	-\$3,969,033	-39.7	9
Special Food Services	7223	\$119,780	\$0	\$119,780	100.0	0
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$340,248	\$146,914	\$193,334	39.7	1

Source: Esri and Dun & Bradstreet.
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Glossary

Name	Definition	Chapter	
Accessibility	Design concept that allows people access to different places and services.	Chapters 2, 3, 4, 8	
Affordable housing	Housing in which occupants spend 30 percent or less of their income on housing costs.	Chapters 2, 3, 4, 6, 8	
Arterial road	High-capacity road that directs traffic from collector roads to freeways.	Chapters 4, 5, 7	
Basic industry	Provides services to individuals/firms outside the community; brings money into area from outside.	Chapter 6	
Beautification	Process of making the built environment more visually appealing.	Chapters 4, 7	
Buffer	An area of land designed or managed for the purpose of separating or providing a transition between two or more land areas whose uses may conflict or be seen as incompatible.	Chapters 4, 7	Montgomery County Planning Department. (2009). Retrieved from http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/department/glossary.shtm#m
Collector road	Directs traffic from local roads to arterial roads.	Chapters 4, 5	
Concept plan	An operation plan in an abbreviated format that would require considerable expansion or alteration to convert it into an operation plan or operation order.	Chapter 3	Chapter 2 - Glossary of Planning Terms. (n.d.). Retrieved from Contingency Wartime Planning Course (CWPC): https://fas.org/man/dod-101/usaf/docs/cwpc/GLOSS.htm
Connectivity	Design concept that permits movement within the city.	Chapters 2, 3, 4, 7	
Floodplain	Low-lying land area with an increased risk of flooding.	Chapters 7, 8	
Greenways	Incorporated designated greenspace in an urban environment.	Chapters 4, 7	
Hazard mitigation	Action taken to reduce or lessen the impact of damage from environmental disasters.	Chapters 5, 7	
House burdened	Term used to define households which spend more than 30 percent of income on housing costs.	Chapter 8	

Impervious surface	A surface that cannot be easily penetrated by water. For instance, paved surfaces are not easily penetrated by rain.	Chapter 7	Glossary. (n.d.). Retrieved from City of Shoreline Comprehensive Plan: http://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=12668
Infill	Development that takes place on vacant or underutilized parcels within an area that is already developed and has access to existing urban services.	Chapter 8	Montgomery County Planning Department. (2009). Retrieved from http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/departments/glossary.shtm#m
Level of Service (LOS)	A qualitative measurement that describes traffic conditions in terms of speed, travel time, freedom to maneuver, comfort, convenience, traffic interruptions, and safety.	Chapter 4	I-40/US 93 West Kingman TI, Feasibility Report and Environmental Studies. (n.d.). Retrieved from Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT): http://azdot.gov/docs/projects/levels-of-service-and-traffic-delay.pdf?sfvrsn=0
Local street	Has the primary function of providing access to adjacent land.	Chapter 4	Glossary of Comprehensive Plan Terms. (2002). Retrieved from Beaverton, Oregon: http://www.beavertonoregon.gov/Document-Center/Home/View/1180
Location quotient (LQ)	Way of measuring density or concentration.	Chapter 6	
Manufactured home	A transportable structure built for permanent dwellings with or without a permanent structure.	Chapters 7, 8	
Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)	Area with at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population and adjacent territory.	Chapters 1, 4, 5	
Mixed-use	Properties on which various uses, such as office, commercial, institutional and residential, are combined in a single building or on a single site with significant functional interrelationships and a coherent physical design.	Chapters 3, 4, 6, 8	Glossary of Comprehensive Plan Terms. (2002). Retrieved from Beaverton, Oregon: http://www.beavertonoregon.gov/Document-Center/Home/View/1180
Multi-family housing	Building with more than four residential units.	Chapters 4, 8	
Multimodal transportation	The combination of at least two means of transportation, e.g., automobile and bus.	Chapters 2, 4	Multimodal Transport. (n.d.). Retrieved from Log4Green: http://www.log4green.eu/index.php/topics/multimodal-transport



Non-basic industry	Provides services for individuals/firms inside the area; circulates money within the area.	Chapter 6	
Planned unit development (PUD)	A type of building development and also a regulatory process. The very essence of the PUD is its flexibility, and the PUD process typically encourages negotiation, bargaining, and persuasion.	Chapter 3	Bardach, E. (1977) <i>The Implementation Game: What Happens After a Bill Becomes a Law</i> (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
Pocket park	A small park which is accessible for everyone.	Chapters 3, 7	
Population density	Population per land area.	Chapters 1, 5	
Population projection	Estimates of total size or composition of populations in the future.	Chapters 1, 2, 4, 7	Handbook of Household Surveys. (2001). Glossary of Statistical Terms. Retrieved from Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=2088
Single-family housing	Building with one residential unit which is occupied by one household.	Chapters 1, 2, 8	Zoning Glossary. (2014). Retrieved from Department of City Planning, City of New York: http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/zone/glossary.shtml
Social vulnerability	Refers to a form of inequality in which some groups have access to resources that allow them to withstand some adversities better than other groups.	Chapter 7	
Suitability analysis	Analyzes the significance of relevant factors in order to select the potential site.	Chapter 5	
Superfund site	An uncontrolled or abandoned place where hazardous waste is located, possibly affecting local ecosystems or people.	Chapter 7	Superfund Sites Where You Live. (2014). Retrieved from United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/
Tax revenue	Refers to the income that is gained by governments through taxation.	Chapters 3, 6, 8	Tax Revenue. (2015). Retrieved from Wikipedia; The Free Encyclopedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tax_revenue



Vision statement	An aspirational description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future. It is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current and future courses of action.	Chapter 2	Business Dictionary. (2015). Retrieved from http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/vision-statement.html
Zoning	Regulatory classification of land use patterns allowed in an area.	Chapters 3, 6, 8	