

Somerville,
We're Right
on Track.

(2000)

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Somerville,



WE'RE RIGHT ON TRACK!



Introduction

SECTION

1



Section

1

INTRODUCTION

FORWARD

The Target Cities Program was initiated in 1993 by the Texas A&M Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning. The program has the dual purpose of providing the residents of a selected Texas community with valuable planning assistance, while also serving as a practical learning tool for graduate students preparing to enter the planning profession. The program is designed to allow students to utilize their diverse backgrounds and planning coursework in developing a plan to address real-life urban issues in a particular community. Cities are chosen to participate in the program based on several criteria, including demonstrated need and a commitment to the planning process. The City of Somerville was the 1999-2000 Target Cities selection.

PLANNING PROCESS AND PLAN ORGANIZATION

This document is the product of a nine-month planning process. It is organized into two parts. During the summer of 1999 the City of Somerville was selected as the Target City. Work on the project began in September. Students spent the fall semester gathering and analyzing data relevant to the formulation of the plan. These studies were compiled and reported in the *1999 State of the City Report* for Somerville. This report includes information about the City's land use, demographics, natural resources, historic resources, local economy, urban infrastructure, transportation, housing, and community facilities. During the spring semester the Comprehensive Plan, *Somerville: Vision 2020*, was formulated and compiled.

A community-visioning workshop and a citizen survey were fundamental to the development of planning goals and objectives. The survey was designed to determine the needs and desires of Somerville residents. Responses were used to guide planning policies and recommendations concerning issues important to the community.

Demographics

SECTION

2



Section

2

DEMOGRAPHICS

INTRODUCTION

This section will present demographic information for the City of Somerville. The statistics presented address relevant socioeconomic data compiled from various sources. The section is divided into eight parts; each based on specific traits of the population of the city. Several sources have been used in the development of this data. 1990 U.S. Census figures, in conjunction with 1999 U.S. Census projections were used in addition to projections from the Texas State Data Center at Texas A&M University. A local survey done by the City of Somerville was also used to help complete the data. Where possible, the local survey data was used because of its comprehensive nature. In many instances, combinations of data were used to create a complete picture of the city. The Somerville Independent School District also provided information important to this report.

POPULATION

The population of Somerville has grown at a rate of approximately 0.5 percent per year for the last twenty years. In 1990, Somerville had 1,542 residents and grew to 1,612 according to the 1999 survey. This rate of growth, while low, is well within normal limits. In order to prepare for the future, Somerville must begin to examine the effects of continued population growth. Three projection scenarios have been developed which produce three alternative sets of values for population in the city of Somerville.

Growth Scenario One

Continued 0.5 percent growth will result in 1,921 residents by the year 2020. Sustained growth at this rate would put an additional strain on available resources but the City could easily supplement those resources while maintaining existing services. It would be fair to say that this rate of growth is normal and will continue with no outside influence.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Growth Scenario Two

Proposed economic growth could help to develop a consistent growth of 1 percent per year in the City of Somerville. This growth would result in the addition of 267 residents by the year 2010 and over 650 by the year 2020. At this rate, the population would grow by over 40 percent by the year 2020. While this type of growth is within normal limits, it would require a correlating expansion of city resources and services. This type of growth is typical of cities that are attracting new businesses and industries.

Table 2.1: Estimated Population Growth Scenarios

	1990 Census	1999 Survey	2005	2010	2015	2020
Scenario 1	1542	1612	1660	1743	1830	1921
Scenario 2		1612	1708	1879	2066	2272
Scenario 3		1612	1757	2020	2323	2671

Source: United States Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census; City of Somerville Survey Data, 1999; Texas State Data Center, Texas A&M University, 1998

Growth Scenario Three

With the development of successful businesses and industry, the City of Somerville could experience dramatic population growth of over 1.5 percent per year. At this rate, the total population of the City would be over 2,650 by the year 2020. Such growth would require extensive infrastructure improvements as well as rapid development of housing, schools, and other facilities.

AGE DISTRIBUTION

In 1990, almost half of the population of Somerville was under 30 years of age while less than 30 percent was over the age of 50. A rapid growth in the number of school age children during the 1980s led to extraordinary numbers of children in Somerville schools. By 1999, these numbers had changed. The City of Somerville now has a majority population of persons between the ages of 10 - 40 years. The number of children under the age of 9 has decreased dramatically. Estimates show that the number of children under 9 years old has decreased by over 8 percent over the last nine years. This shift in population over the last decade has created a surge in the working age population of Somerville.

Table 2.2: Age Distribution

Age Group	1990 U.S. Census	1999 Texas State Data Center Estimates
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DEMOGRAPHICS

0-9 yrs.	254	170
10-19 yrs.	255	260
20-29 yrs.	200	265
30-39 yrs.	200	230
40-49 yrs.	170	225
50-59 yrs.	145	190
60-69 yrs.	130	155
70-79 yrs.	130	110
80-89 yrs.	60	105
90+ yrs.	0	2

Source: United States Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census; Texas State Data Center, Texas A&M University, 1998

Over the next 20 to 40 years, the largest portion of the population will be of working age. This poses unique issues for the City. To retain and increase this segment of the population, the City must help to develop employment opportunities in Somerville, or within reasonable commuting distances. With increased employment opportunities in and around the city, this segment of the population will grow. Corresponding growth in other segments will follow as families move to Somerville. As this population continues to grow, there will be continuous need to develop programs and services for the changing population of Somerville. Younger generations will need improvements in schools, parks, and children's services. The adult population will require enhancements of infrastructure, and housing. Older generations will continue to increase in Somerville, resulting in a strong retirement community. This segment of the population will place specialized demands on the medical, social, and housing services.

GENDER DISTRIBUTION

The City of Somerville is 52 percent female and 48 percent male. This distribution is common and within normal limits. There is no reason for this ratio to change and it is fair to say that it will remain at this level for a very long time.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

DEMOGRAPHICS

The racial and ethnic makeup of the population of Somerville has undergone minor changes in the last ten years. The 1990 Census reported that the City was 50 percent White, 29 percent Black, 20 percent Hispanic, and .8 percent Other. The Texas State Data Center estimates that the current racial and ethnic breakdown for the City is 52 percent White, 23 percent Black, 24 percent Hispanic, and less than 1 percent Other. The population of Whites and Hispanics has grown faster in the last ten years than the population of Blacks. A corresponding rise in the percentage of Whites and Hispanics can be seen in Table 2.3. As Somerville's economy develops, there will be an influx of persons from all races and ethnic groups seeking employment and housing in the city.

Figure 2.3: Race and Ethnicity

<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
Percent	52	23	24

Source: Texas State Data Center, Texas A&M University, 1998

The population growth of Somerville will be comparable to population growth among minorities throughout the United States. As the minority population of Somerville grows, the City will need to develop specialized services for this growing segment of the population. For example, there may be a need for bilingual services, especially in emergency services and education.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Forty percent of the City of Somerville has a 12th grade education or less and has never received a High School Diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED). This segment of the population will continue to have difficulties finding employment. Those with High School or Equivalency Diplomas are better able to find employment. These persons make up 35 percent of the population of the City of Somerville. Fourteen percent of the population has attended some college and eleven percent has received an associates degree or higher. With 75 percent of the population having only a high school diploma or less, there are and will continue to be limited employment opportunities available for much of the population of Somerville. Existing and future industry will require a diverse set of skills that Somerville must find a way to supply.

Table 2.5: Educational Attainment

<i>Education Level</i>	<i>Number of Persons</i>
Less Than 9th Grade	209
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	218
High School Graduate	378
Some College, No Degree	154
Associates Degree	29
Bachelors Degree	53
Graduate or Professional Degree	27

Source: Texas State Data Center, Texas A&M University, 1998

INCOME DISTRIBUTION

The median income for the City of Somerville is approximately \$22,800 per year. This is above the State median income of \$21,200. The median value is skewed by the large percentages at either end of the spectrum. Forty-two percent of the residents of Somerville have an annual income of less than \$19,000 a year in income. This is primarily due to the shortage of high paying jobs in and around the City. As shown in Table 2.4, income above \$19,500 is evenly distributed among the income ranges. Twenty percent of the residents of Somerville report that they earn over \$36,850 a year.

Figure 2.6: Income Distribution

<i>Income</i>	<i>Number of Persons</i>
Less Than \$19,500	170
\$19,00 - \$22,349	27
\$22,350 - \$25,149	20
\$26,150 - \$27,899	21
\$27,900 - \$30,153	27
\$30,154 - \$32,399	22
\$32,400 - \$34,599	17
\$34,600 - \$36,850	20
More Than \$36,850	82

Source: Texas State Data Center, Texas A&M University, 1998

Ideally, the citizens of Somerville would have higher representation at or near the median and lower representation at the fringes. This can only be accomplished by raising the income rate for those well below the median value. Which can be accomplished by training the population thereby attracting new business and industry.

Natural Resources

SECTION

3



Section

3

NATURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

The most prominent natural feature of the Somerville area is Lake Somerville, an Army Corps of Engineers flood mitigation project constructed in the 1960s. Lake Somerville is an impoundment of Yegua Creek, a major tributary of the Brazos River, and as a major recreation area plays an important part in attracting tourists and new residents to Somerville. In addition to providing recreational areas and wildlife habitat, Lake Somerville is also the source of drinking water for several urban areas, making the protection of water quality an important concern. The average precipitation ranges from 32 to 42 inches, and mean annual temperature ranges from 62 to 69 degrees farenheit. The number of frost free days ranges from 230 to 270. Somerville is home to numerous plant and animal species, adding to its recreational and residential attractiveness. This chapter will describe some of the natural features of the Somerville area, including soil type, flora and fauna, and a review of natural hazards of the area.

SOILS

Somerville is located within the Jackson Group of the Eocene series in geological study. There are several soil series found in Somerville. The existing urban area is predominantly characterized by the Rader Fine Sandy Loam soil type, although Wilson Clay Loam, Chazos Loamy Fine Sand, Shiro Loamy Fine Sand, and Burlewash Fine Sandy Loam types, among others, are also associated with Somerville. Generally, local soils are deep, moderately well drained, slowly permeable, acidic, nearly level to gently sloping soils on terraces. Clay content in control sections ranges from 28 to 35 percent in the Rader Series, and ranges from 60 to 80 inches in depth. Runoff is very slow on slopes under 1 percent for the Rader Series, though some soil series in the area are more permeable. The primary agricultural use of the soil series is pasture. An engineering survey completed in 1992 noted that several of the soil series found in Somerville present moderate limitations for building excavation and construction, primarily because of high shrink-swell rates and poor permeability. (See Table 3.1 and Map 1 for detailed analysis.)

Table 3.1: Soils Analysis

NRCS Soil Class	NRCS Map Unit	Permeability	Slope Percent	Water Holding Capacity	Depth	<u>Development Suitability</u>						Vegetation Types from Vegetation List
						Building Site Development		Recreation and Outdoor Activity		Sanitary Facilities		
						Home	Business	Golf	Parks/OS	Landfill	Sewer	
Rader Fine Sandy Loam	68	Very Slow	1 to 3	Moderate	> 60 inches	M, SS, W	M, SS, W	G, W	G, SL, W	P, SS, W	P, SS, W	3-7, 8, 12, 14, 16, 17, 22
Wilson Clay Loam	99	Very Slow	0 to 1	Moderate	> 60 inches	M, SS, W	M, SS, W	G, W	G, SL, W	P, SS, W	P, SS, W	3-7, 13-15, 22-30
Chazos Loamy Fine Sand	19	Slow	1 to 3	Moderate	> 60 inches							3-14
Shiro Loamy Fine Sand	132	Slow	1 to 5	Low	20-40 inches							3-14
Kaufman Clay	48	Very Slow		High	> 60 inches	M, SS, W	M, SS, W	G, W	G, SL, W	P, SS, W	P, SS, W	Not Available
Burlewash Fine Sandy Loam	15C	Very Slow	1 to 5	Low	20-40 Inches	M, SS, W	M, SS, W	G, W	G, SL, W	P, SS, W	P, SS, W	3-5, 7-10, 14, 15, 17
Silawa Fine Sandy Loam	79	Moderate	1 to 5	Moderate	> 6 Feet							3-13
Eufala Fine Sandy Loam	137	Very Slow		Moderate	> 60 inches	M, SS, W	M, SS, W	G, W	G, SL, W	P, SS, W	P, SS, W	1-5, 7, 18-22

Key for Development Suitability:

G = Good, M = Moderate, P = Poor

SS = High Shrink-Swell, PK = Percolates Slowly, WT = Wetness, SL = Slope

* Frequently Flooded

Source: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Caldwell, Texas. Texas Extension Office, 1999. U.S. Army Corps of Engineer, Lake Somerville Office, 1999

WATER AND AIR QUALITY

Burleson County is a participant in the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC) Office of Pollution Prevention and Recycling Clean Cities 2000 Program. A review of TNRCC enforcement records from the most recent annual Enforcement Report to the Commission showed four penalties assessed to businesses in Burleson County, totaling \$108,305. One penalty from 1997 for Air Quality violations was assessed for a total of \$11,700. Additionally, one TNRCC Industrial and Hazardous Waste Permit is currently in operation in the Somerville area. Table 3.2 summarizes penalties for the last two fiscal years.

Table 3.2: Environmental Penalty, by Business: Burleson County - 1999

<i>Firm</i>	<i>Penalty</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Fiscal Year</i>
Koppers Industries, Inc. (Somerville)	\$600	Hazardous Waste	1998
Woodlands West	\$630	Public Water Supply	1998
Centerline WS Corp	\$1.08	Public Water Supply	1998
ZTT Minerals, Inc.	\$106,000	Hazardous Waste	1998
Nagel Manufacturing	\$11,700	Air Quality	1997
TOTAL	\$120,005		

Source: Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC)

The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) Company (Somerville, TX, Facility) was issued an Industrial and Hazardous Waste Permit on February 12, 1999, for the continued operation of post-closure care and the remediation of contaminated groundwater at the facility. The facility is located on 200 acres in Burleson County and lies partially within the city limits of Somerville, Texas adjacent to Highway 36 and Burleson County.

Air Quality

Sources of Air Pollution include *Point* and *Non-Point* sources. According to the TNRCC, Point sources include industrial and nonindustrial stationary equipment or processes considered significant sources of air pollution emissions. A facility is considered to have significant

emissions if it emits about one ton or more in a calendar year. A review of current Point source pollution records from the TNRCC shows that there are 31 Point pollution sources currently located in Burleson County. Non-Point pollution sources include emissions from automobiles and other internal combustion engines. With a few exceptions nationwide, on-road mobile sources constitute the largest single source category of air pollution. Burleson County is not located in one of the 4 Texas EPA Ozone Nonattainment Areas, and the TNRCC does not currently maintain County Emission Tables for pollution, due to lack of resources and monitoring stations. As such, it can be assumed that the City of Somerville meets current EPA standards for Air Quality. As automobile traffic increases, monitoring will be necessary to ensure that Air Quality remains good. In addition, continued monitoring of Point pollution sources is vital to maintaining clean air.

Water Quality

The local aquifer is the Queen City-Sparta Aquifer, which produces a small amount of fresh to moderately saline water through lignite shale, volcanic ash, sand, sandstone and clay (1). The aquifer currently provides drinking water for the City of Somerville. The quality of aquifer water meets Texas water quality standards, though there are some local concerns with taste and odor due to the lignite in the aquifer. Water from Lake Somerville is not currently in use as a source of drinking water, due to access restrictions. According to Texas law, surface water is public property; however, the state grants water use rights for individuals. In most cases, surface waters may only be used with express permission of the state. According to the TNRCC, Section 11.134(b)(2) of the Texas Water Code the TNRCC may grant a new water right if there is unappropriated water available in the source of supply. Because river and reservoir levels rise and fall seasonally even in normal years, it can be difficult to determine what it means to have water “available.” (TNRCC, 1999). For municipalities, the TNRCC will only issue a permit if water is available on a permanent basis, if a backup supply is available. In the case of Somerville, there is an aquifer available that could serve as a backup should the City apply for a TNRCC permit. The TNRCC issues new water rights as a permit, meaning that no judicial review is necessary. Permits, once issued, can be bought and sold. In Texas, municipal water use does not carry a higher priority than industrial uses (such as irrigation), and for documented water permits, the legal doctrine of prior appropriation (“first in time is first in right”) applies. (Source: TNRCC. *Water Rights and How They Work*). As such, it is advisable that the City of Somerville pursue a water rights permit from the TNRCC as soon as possible, in order to establish the City’s rights before other potential high-volume users (i.e. the City of San Antonio) apply for permits.

NATURAL RESOURCES

In October 1999, the TNRCC released results of sampling from Lake Somerville, which showed a presence of the gasoline additive MTBE (methyl tertiary butyl ether) in the lake at a level of 1.41 parts per billion (PPB), well below the taste/odor threshold of 15 PPB and health threshold of 240 PPB. The Brazos River Authority currently monitors Lake Somerville quarterly under their basin monitoring plan. Areas of concern for the Yegua creek watershed are excess nutrients (evidenced by high algal concentrations), lead, cadmium mercury, copper, silver, and selenium. Oil production and nonpoint source pollution represent potential problems within the watershed. (Source: Brazos River Authority).

FLORA AND FAUNA

Somerville is home to many species of plants and animals. Notably, 370 species of birds are listed for the lake area, although many of these are migratory and are seen only during certain months each year. Diversity of bird life is an attraction to the Lake Somerville area that the City of Somerville should be able to take advantage of for the development of tourism and new residential settlement. The primary agricultural use of land outside of the urban area is for pasture. Bermudagrass, Pensacola bahiagrass, and dallisgrass are the dominant tame pasture plants, and post oak, blackjack oak, hickory and elm are the dominant trees. Live Oak is native to the area, and could be used for street tree applications. Some areas are farmed to cotton and grain sorghum.

Flora

31 species of trees, 30 species of woody plants, and nine identified species of grass grow in the Lake Somerville area. A lesser number of these are found within the City of Somerville. The Somerville area is categorized as post and blackjack oak savannah, with associated woody species. Table 3.3 summarizes the most common plant species in the Somerville area, categorized by association with soil type. The soil numbers are referenced to Map 1 and are consistent with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soil types.

Fauna

Somerville provides interesting opportunities for nature study. In particular, birds represent a numerous and diverse wildlife population in the area. The State of Texas has recorded 540 species of birds, 370 of which are found on or around Lake Somerville. According to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), water birds are the special attraction for birders in the area.

Table 3.3: Vegetation by Soil Type

Number	Common Name	Soil Types from the Soils Map						
		132	19	68	137*	15C	99	79
1	Post Oak				X			
2	Hickory				X			
3	Blackjack Oak	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Live Oak	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	Little Bluestem	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6	Big Bluestem	X	X	X			X	X
7	Indiangrass	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
8	Lespedezas	X	X	X		X		X
9	Tickclover	X	X			X		X
10	Snoutbeans	X	X			X		X
11	Butterflypea	X	X					X
12	Partridge Pea	X	X	X				X
13	Bundleflower	X	X	X			X	X
14	Sensitivebriar	X	X	X		X	X	
15	Neptunia					X	X	
16	Purple Top			X				
17	Uniola			X		X		
18	Brownseed Paspalum				X			
19	Western Indigo				X			
20	Sandhill Lovegrass				X			
21	Fringeleaf Paspalum				X			
22	Switchgrass			X	X		X	
23	Texas Wintergrass						X	
24	Maximilian						X	
25	Sunflower						X	
26	Engelman Daisy						X	
27	Prairie Parsley						X	
28	Scurfpea						X	
29	Wildrye						X	
30	Indian Plantain						X	

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Lake Somerville Station, 1999. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Birch Creek Park Office, 1999.. *Mesquite invades aggressively.

NATURAL RESOURCES

According to their *Birds of Lake Somerville* guidebook, the reservoir is in use by many species of ducks, herons, and egrets, as well as grebes, wood storks, and white pelicans. Numerous rare birds are recorded as they migrate through the area. Counted among them is the American Bald Eagle. While there is no formal list of mammalian wildlife available for Lake Somerville or the City of Somerville, it can be assumed that common local mammals, such as deer, opossum and raccoon, can be found in town.

NATURAL HAZARDS

Somerville, like most cities, is vulnerable to a number of hazards that threaten the health and safety of the local population and the economic activity in the area. Traditionally the major hazard to the city has been flooding. This is due to railroad construction that effectively created a water diversion structure around the city. After a major effort combining the resources of the railroad, the Corps of Engineers, the City of Somerville, and others, an improved drainage network was completed in 1997. Approval from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is pending, but is expected to reduce the assessed 100-year flood area in the city by over 50 percent. While some areas of the city remain within the floodplain, the City is now in a much better position to implement buy-out programs and other measures for removing residential development from hazardous areas. Among possible uses for floodplain areas are recreational and open spaces, which benefit local residents passively through flood hazard mitigation while providing space for nature trails, playgrounds, etc.

Hazard Identification

In order for Somerville to plan for future growth and development, it is important to accurately locate and map the extent and nature of hazards in the area. Hazard Identification, according to Deyle et al., is the “process of estimating the geographic extent of the hazard, its intensity, and its probability of occurrence”. Using geographically referenced hazards information, the City is able to incorporate hazard mitigation strategies into the Comprehensive Plan. By implementing development management tools to guide development away from hazardous areas, the city can continue to grow while also mitigating the impacts of natural disasters. Table 3.4 summarizes several hazards that threaten the City of Somerville. By far the most familiar threat to the city is that of flooding, due to the poorly drained, level soils and natural water containment structures formed by the Lake Somerville dam embankment and the railroad bed. Most recently, in 1992, floods caused widespread damage that opened a window of opportunity for the recent structural

NATURAL RESOURCES

hazard mitigation projects undertaken in the city. However, a less obvious threat is posed by the transport of hazardous materials (HAZMAT) along the railway that bisects the city. In order to properly estimate the risk posed by the railway, it is necessary to determine the types of chemicals being transported routinely by the railway. While far from a complete survey, the planning team did make note of Chlorine and Tolulene in transit through the city.

Table 3.4: Somerville Hazard Identification Matrix

<i>Agent</i>	<i>Probability</i>	<i>Effects</i>	<i>Impact</i>	<i>Exposure</i>
Severe Weather (tornado)	Low to moderate	Structural and lifeline damage	Temporary sheltering required, business interruption	Moderate — above ground utility lines, building codes new
Hazardous Materials Release (HAZMAT)	Moderate to High	Release of hazardous agents into residential or commercial area, public health impacts	Evacuation and/or In-place sheltering, contamination of groundwater	High — Railroad through city transports HAZMAT
Winter Storm (with Ice)	Moderate	Utility lifeline damage (electricity, telephone)	Business utility disruption, loss of heating	Moderate — above ground utility lines
Earthquake	Low	Structural Damage / Failure	Disruption of critical facilities / lifelines	High — buildings not structurally fit for ground shaking
Flooding	Moderate	Structural damage to homes and businesses, utility disruption	Business interruption, loss of infrastructure, sheltering required, housing assistance	Moderate — Reduced from high through mitigation project

Source: Texas Target Cities Program

A less obvious threat is posed by the transport of hazardous materials (HAZMAT) along the railway that bisects the city. In order to properly estimate the risk posed by the railway, it is necessary to determine the types of chemicals being transported routinely by the railway. While far from a complete survey, the planning team did make note of Chlorine and Tolulene in transit through the city. As an example of the risk posed by a HAZMAT release, in the case of a rail car transporting Tolulene involved in a fire, the immediate isolation of a ½ mile area around the event will be immediately necessary, as well as possible evacuation of the zone. A representative case of isolation/evacuation areas for a HAZMAT release is simulated on Map 2 (Hazard Risk) in this document.

Hazard Vulnerabilty Analysis

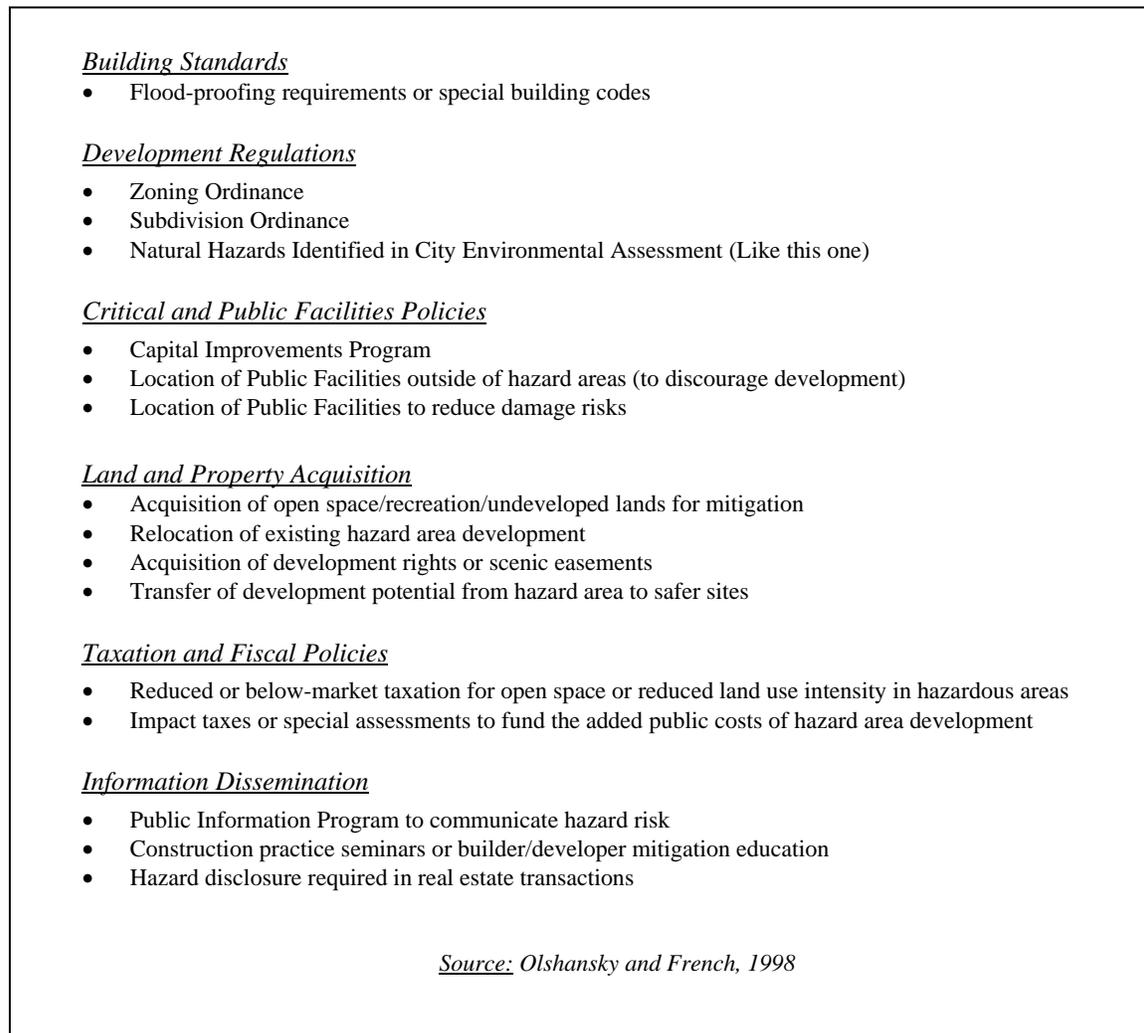
The Hazards Vulnerabilty Analysis (HVA) relates the Hazard Identification in Figure 3.4 to the built environment of the City of Somerville. This HVA is a means of categorizing and identifying threats to the Somerville area. By identifying hazards with a moderate to high risk of occurrence, the potential to cause severe disruption of city services, and which threaten the safety and welfare of residents and viability of commercial establishments, the City can prioritize hazard mitigation programs for the future. The most salient threat to the city continues to be that of flooding. Despite highly effective reduction of the flood hazard risk through structural mitigation (improvement of drainage capacity), a significant proportion of Somerville's residential structures and utility lifelines are in the 100 year floodplain. This area is shown on the attached Hazard Map (Map 2).

Hazard Mitigation Plan

The goal of including a HVA in the Comprehensive Plan is so that the City's land use decisions can be made while taking into account the threat posed by various hazards. Local governments may use a variety of structural and non-structural mitigation tools to reduce hazard risk. Olshansky and French identify six major areas of development management tools available to local governments for the reduction of hazard risk (Figure 3.1) ⁵. The planning team recommends that the City of Somerville continue to address the flood risk by initiating a series of policy and fiscal programs to guide new development away from the 100 year flood area, as well as to remove existing structures from the area. The flood areas shown on Map 2 show that, even after the improvement of drainage capacity in the area the city is still at risk of flooding. In order to plan for growth in the city that will not expose residents to losses from flooding, the City can begin by making hazard awareness a guiding principle in the decision-making process. As a part

of a zoning ordinance, a capital improvements program, and other areas of municipal control, hazards awareness can be used as a principle for selection of areas designated as 'preferred' for growth. Equally, locating utility and municipal facilities, schools, and other infrastructure away from the hazard areas can discourage growth in the hazard area. With the abundance of available land outside of the flood hazard area, this initiative would be good policy for the future growth of the city.

Figure 3.1: *Development Management Tools, Hazard Risk*



NATURAL RESOURCES

The threat posed by a hazardous material (HAZMAT) release is less readily controlled through the mechanism of development management tools. Since the railway is authorized at the state and federal levels to transport hazardous materials along its line, the City can do little to prevent HAZMAT from entering the city limits as is frequently mandated for road transport. Therefore, the City should keep in mind the potential impacts on local residents from a toxic release. In the event of a spill two possibilities, isolation or evacuation, are possible for local residents, as determined by local Emergency Management professionals (most likely the local Fire Department). Of particular concern in evacuation situations are difficult-to-evacuate facilities such as schools, hospitals, jails, and senior citizens' centers, among others. However, the City can enact ordinances and use other tools to prevent such facilities from locating in close proximity to the railway line. By keeping the most vulnerable facilities away from the hazard risk, the City can passively protect against the threat posed by HAZMAT release. Further study is needed in order to understand fully the nature of the threat to the city from hazardous material release.

SOURCES

1. *City of Somerville Planning and Capacity Building Study*. December 1992.
2. Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission, 1999.
3. *Water Rights and How They Work*. Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission.
4. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.
5. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Birch Creek State Park Office.
6. Olshansky and French, chapter 4 in Burby, Ray, Ed. *Cooperating with Nature: Confronting Natural Hazards with Land-Use Planning for Sustainable Communities*. Joseph Henry Press, Washington, D.C., 1998.

Historic Preservation

SECTION

4



Section

4

HISTORIC RESOURCES

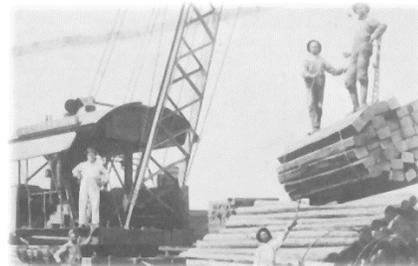
INTRODUCTION

A Brief City History

Somerville lies within a region that is rich in culture and history. The city was named for Albert Somerville, the first President of the Gulf, Colorado, and Santa Fe Railway Company. The company was backed primarily by Galveston businessmen who were seeking to build a railroad from Galveston to the interior of Texas.



In the mid 1890s, the Texas Tie and Lumber Preserving Company built a railroad tie treating plant on the east side of the train tracks in Somerville. With the coming of this industry, which for decades was the only large industrial installation in the county, Somerville began to boom.



For many years, Somerville was noted for its Harvey House. In the nineteenth century, before dining cars, travelers depended upon depot stops for food. Such food had a reputation for being bad. In 1876, an Englishman named Fred Harvey partnered with the Santa Fe Railroad to provide patrons with quality food, served in elegant style. By the turn of the century, over 40 Harvey Houses were scattered throughout the Santa Fe system. The Harvey House in Somerville was the last to be built in 1900. By 1940, all major Santa Fe trains carried dining cars, and the Harvey Houses were closed.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Prior to 1930, the railroad station was the center of attention in most small towns. Meeting the trains was a pastime, to see who was coming to town. Important news arrived at the depot first by way of telegraph wire. By the 1930s with the advent of radio, long distance telephone service, and paved highways, the depot lifestyle had disappeared.



The Somerville Dam was built to control flooding of the Yegua Creek, which in the 46 years prior to 1958, had flooded 43 times. The project was completed in 1966. Impoundment of water began in 1967 creating Lake Somerville.

The economy of the City was largely dependent upon the railroad and its related industry, the tie plant, until the construction of the Somerville Reservoir by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the 1960s. Today, Somerville is still known as a railroad town, but it is also the commercial center of a major recreational area.

HISTORIC SURVEY AND DOCUMENTATION

The historic preservation team worked with the Historic Preservation Board, City staff members, and local citizens to identify historic and culturally significant buildings and sites within the City limits.

The collected background information includes photographs, sketches and inventory forms. These were compiled for use in the historic survey. The historic survey will then be used for the development of a historic preservation plan for the City.

Main focus points include:

- Identification of historic and culturally significant buildings and sites that are recognized by the Texas Historical Commission; and
- Identification of historic features, buildings, and sites that are important to the City of Somerville.

WINDSHIELD SURVEY

This initial survey was conducted by driving around the City and videotaping streets, buildings, and sites. Possible historic sites were noted for more in-depth study.

SELECTED SURVEY

A meeting was scheduled with the Somerville Historical Society to acquire a listing and map of buildings and sites of historic significance. This information was combined with the list from the initial video, and a list from the Texas Historic Commission. The completed survey contains some 20 selected sites of historic and architectural significance.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Because citizen input is an integral part of the goals and objectives of a historic preservation plan, a Community Workshop was held in mid-October. The historic preservation surveys were displayed, and specific issues related to historic districts, historic regulations, and heritage tourism were discussed.

CONCLUSIONS

Somerville has an interesting history as a budding railroad town dating to the 1880s. The city grew with the rail and the Santa Fe Tie and Lumber Treating Plant. Since its construction, the Tie Plant has remained a mainstay of the community. Recently, the local economy has shifted from being exclusively tied to the Tie Plant, to enjoying the influx of tourism to Lake Somerville.

Unfortunately, a number of Somerville's historic structures have been lost to neglect or simply being located in the path of growth. However, this does not mean that Somerville is without significant historic structures, which speak to the town's history. Today there remains a group of commercial buildings as well as scattered houses that reflect the early prosperity of the city.

SURVEY

Historic and significant buildings, sites and features

1. First United Methodist Church of Somerville — 11th St. and Avenue D, Marker #8631

Points of interest/Marker Text: Organized 1901 by The Rev. H.G. Williams; had 29 charter members, and was in the Lyons Circuit. During first year, held prayer meetings in homes and preaching services in brush arbor lighted by members' lanterns. For weeks, evangelists operated a 'chapel car' on railroad siding. Church and Sunday school moved in the winter to the schoolhouse. First sanctuary was erected in 1903; educational building, 1958; present sanctuary was completed on the original church site and dedicated in 1966. In first 70 years, the church had 34 pastors.



Classification: Site

Ownership: Institution

Period of Construction: (1901-1940) original,
(1941-) current building

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Good

Use: Religious

Historic Registration: State

Additional Information: New building was built in 1966; original was razed.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

2. Site of the Harvey House — SH 36 North, Marker #8636

Points of interest/Marker text: Fred Harvey, a native of England, began operation of his Santa Fe Railroad dining rooms in 1876. In 1900 a Harvey House opened in Somerville, Divisional Headquarters of the Santa Fe Line. The 2-story, galleried structure was 260 ft. long and contained a dining room, guestrooms, library and reading room. The Harvey House served travelers and railroad workers in an atmosphere of elegance. It became the social center of the town and boosted the local economy. The Harvey House closed in 1940 and was dismantled in 1943.



Classification: Site

Ownership: Public

Period of Construction: (-1900) original, (1941-) current building

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Excellent

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: State

Additional Information: Currently, there are plans to erect a historic reconstruction of the Harvey House. The project is sponsored by the city with the aid of grants. The new building will be built on a site in the vicinity of the original siting of the Harvey House. The new building will be used primarily as a museum.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

3. 1903 Building — 719 Avenue B (corner of 8th Street); Former Robinson's and Reynold's Store

Points of interest: “In any small town, especially in the west, the construction of the first brick building signaled the transition from frontier to permanent status. [Some of] these buildings also faced the railroad tracks and ‘main street’ which is on SH 36.”



Classification: Building

Ownership: Private/Church

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Good

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Compared to historic photo evidence, the building has significantly changed from its original condition. The brick columns in the parapet have been lowered and the second story windows on the north wall have been filled. The existing awning is not historic, although it is at a similar height to the 1912 awning. The storefront windows have also been removed and filled in with stone work. The building has also been recently painted. Previously, the painting was limited to an advertising mural on the north wall. According to photo evidence, there was also a Circa 1912 awning on the north wall. Cast iron decorative columns and sill plate, original to the building, do remain in place.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

4. 717 Avenue B

Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Not Determinable

Condition: Good

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Painted pale yellow with red column details; apparent new storefront.

Decorative brickwork at parapet has been removed.

Original awning has been replaced and lowered.

Original building was not painted according to photographic evidence. Original cast iron columns and sill remain.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

5. Wight Insurance Agency Building — 715 Avenue B

Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Good

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Painted tan stucco on top, brick on bottom. According to historic evidence, the original building was not painted. Decorative parapet brickwork has been removed. Cast iron columns and basic form of historic storefront remains.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

6. Former Barber Shop — 713
Avenue B

Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Vacant

Condition: Good

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: One of three similar, if not identical, buildings built in the first decade of the 20th century in Somerville. Like the building to the immediate north, the parapet has been removed. This building has been stuccoed over, and the storefront modified. The cast iron columns are assumed to be behind pilasters on the current façade.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

7. Alpha Omega Building — 711
Avenue B

Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Good

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Original brick façade, weeds growing out of top ledge. Red brick with white and cream brick details. This building has remained very similar to its 1912 appearance. There has been some painting on the details. The awning has been moved to create a clerestory.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

8. Memories Building — 709 Avenue B

Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Excellent

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: With the exception of the red painted brick, most early Somerville residents would still recognize this building today. The awning has been lowered to match the neighboring building. This creates a very low awning at this point in the sidewalk.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

9. Coyote Crossing Building — 707 Avenue B

Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Good

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Beige brick, turquoise wood

trim. Concrete benches in front, stucco in frieze. Cast iron columns remain in the storefront.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

10. New Life Worship Center Building

— 705 Avenue B

Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Good

Use: Church

Historic Registration: None



Additional Information: Original storefront has been removed, except for the cast iron sill and columns. Awning has been lowered, and original transom windows have been filled in with new material, and painted.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

11. 703 Avenue B

Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Excellent

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Dark green awning, mosaic floor at entry, white marble panels on front. Green canvas awning is a new addition to the building. Restoration effort currently underway.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

12. Alford Insurance Building — 701 Avenue B

Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Good

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Brick, glass block, white siding. Vastly different from appearance in 1913. Originally a bank building with arched end bay. Brick extends full building height under metal siding.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

13. Somerville Museum and Heritage Square

— Avenue B

Points of interest: The Somerville Historical Society is a non-profit association organized in 1979 to sponsor the Somerville Museum and Heritage Square, which opened to the public in 1983. The museum was established to illustrate the life and events of the past in Somerville and the surrounding area. The exhibits display a series of items that describe the initial development of the area through to about 1950. Heritage Square is a park area on the north side of the museum. It has a covered stage for community events and is lighted with Victorian-style street lamps.



Classification: Building (2)

Ownership: Public

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Good

Use: Museum

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Renovated in 1983, rusticated brick columns.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

14. Somerville IGA — Avenue B

Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Good

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Originally was called the Look Meat Market. Reportedly was built by Oscar Wendorf of Caldwell. Oscar had no children and “adopted” Charlie Look. Charlie became his apprentice in the cattle and meat market business. The meat market was located in the Southern most part of the building.



Charlie Look was very proud of renting the wall space on the Southern end of the building to the Coca-Cola Company. He was paid \$25 per year. Look would frequently say, “Easiest money I ever made.” Remnants of Coca-Cola sign remain beneath new IGA mural.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

15. VFW Post 8578— 7th Street adjacent to train tracks

Classification: Building

Ownership: Public

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: No

Status: Vacant

Condition: Ruins

Use: Commercial/Government

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Brick shell, no doors, no windows, no roof. Free standing, red brick, tie back and flashing remnants.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

16. Yegua Center — 8th and Avenue L

Classification: Building

Ownership: Public

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Restricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Excellent

Use: Public Gathering/Gym

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Structure was rehabilitated in 1939.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

17. J.L. Wood's Undertaking Company

— 55 8th Street, Marker #8657

Points of interest/Marker text: Jebb Lee Woods (1872-1932) came to Somerville in 1900. He began working for his uncle at the Cowboy Merchant Store, where he sold coffins. In 1911 he became the town undertaker and started the first funeral parlor in the county. The practice of embalming first began in 1914 and coffins were purchased from traveling salesmen. A horse-drawn hearse was used until 1929. Woods' family descendants continued to operate the business after his death. Later known as Strickland Funeral Home, Inc., it remains a family business.



Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Good

Use: Commercial

Historic Registration: State

Additional Information: Brick/wood facade is currently being covered with vinyl siding. There are gray painted white cast iron rails and columns on front.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

18. Yegua Stadium — 8th and Avenue L

Points of interest: A rarity in high school football today, this 1939 WPA construction project was built by the citizens of Somerville for the high school. This project is still one of the most loved structures in the city.

Classification: Structure

Ownership: Public

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Used by school

Condition: Fair

Use: School Athletics

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Structure was completed in 1939, and remains largely unchanged, with the exception of the light standards. There is one large crack in the wall, and the stands have been braced from the inside.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

19. Yegua Creek — (site of marker) South of SH 36 bridge,
Marker #8658

Points of interest/Marker text: In 1690 the Spanish gave the name ‘San Francisco’ to this 62-mile Brazos River tributary; but on an 1822 map, Stephen F. Austin, ‘Father of Texas,’ marked it ‘Yegua,’ Spanish for ‘mare.’ Mustang mares and foals then grazed among the Indians on the timbered creek. In 1826, colonist John P. Coles built a mill on the stream. A measure signed in 1837 by Texas President Sam Houston made the Yegua a county boundary. Floods often devastated the area until Lake Somerville harnessed Yegua’s waters in 1967. Now a recreation area, the lake and creek benefit crops, wild life, and vacationers.



Classification: Site

Ownership: Public

Period of Construction: (-1900)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: N/A

Condition: N/A

Use: N/A

Historic Registration: State

HISTORIC RESOURCES

20. Lake Somerville —
West edge of City,
Marker #8640

Points of interest/Marker text:

First shovel of earth for the Somerville Dam was turned Sept. 22, 1962, by Lyndon



Johnson, then Vice President of United States. The dam was built to control flooding on Yegua Creek. In the 46 years prior to 1958, the Yegua flooded 43 times, costing lives, crops. Project was finished 1967.

Classification: Site

Ownership: Government

Period of Construction: (1941-)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: N/A

Condition: N/A

Use: Governmental, Recreational

Historic Registration: State

MAP 3: Historic Resources

HISTORIC RESOURCES

21. Somerville Cemetery — County Road 419

Classification: Site

Ownership: Public

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: N/A

Condition: Excellent

Use: Cemetery

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Cemetery used by the Somerville African American community.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

22. Mexican Cemetery — County Road 482

Classification: Site

Ownership: Public

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: N/A

Condition: Excellent

Use: Cemetery

Historic Registration: None

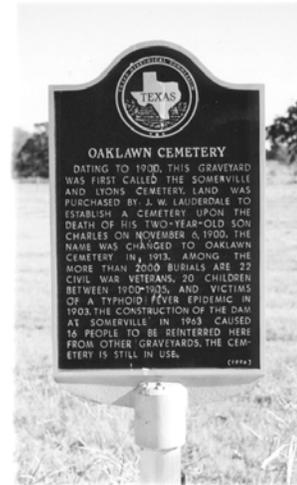
Additional Information: Cemetery used by the Somerville Hispanic community.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

23. Oaklawn Cemetery — SH 36 and CR 422, Marker #8647

Points of interest/Marker text: Dating to 1900, this graveyard was first called the Somerville and Lyons Cemetery. Land was purchased by J.W. Lauderdale to establish a cemetery upon the death of his two-year-old son Charles on November 6, 1900. The name was changed to Oaklawn Cemetery in 1913. Among the more than 2000 burials are 22 Civil War veterans, 20 children between 1900-1905, and victims of a typhoid fever epidemic in 1903. The construction of the dam at Somerville in 1963 caused 16 people to be reinterred here from other graveyards. The cemetery is still in use.



Classification: Site

Ownership: Public

Period of Construction: (-1900)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: N/A

Condition: Excellent

Use: Cemetery

Historic Registration: State

Additional Information: Cemetery used by the Somerville Anglo community.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

24. Lauderdale-Tharp House

— 9th and Avenue E

Points of interest: An early settler of Somerville, J.W. Lauderdale was one of the largest landowners in the Southern Burleson County, and also a successful farmer, stockman, and rock quarrier. He owned four quarries: Somerville;

Millican; Elgin; and Llano. From these, he furnished rock for railroad roadbeds, and for Galveston jetties. In 1900, Lauderdale bought 40 acres of land from the Santa Fe [Railroad]. On this land he built one of the finest residences in the county.



Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Restricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Excellent

Use: Residential

Historic Registration: None

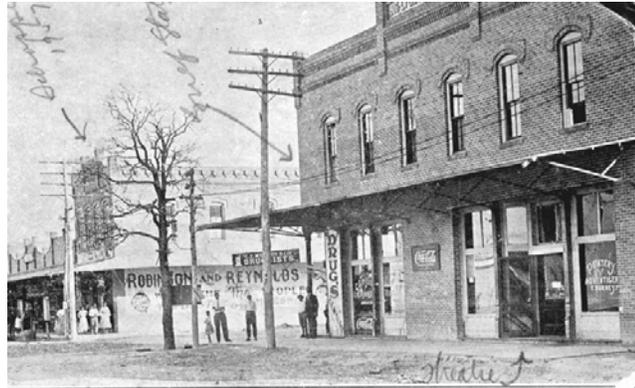
Additional Information: The Lauderdale-Tharp house has recently been rehabilitated as the result of a fire.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

25. Somerville — (site of marker)
SH 36, near city limits,
Marker #8654

Points of interest/Marker text: Located where two branches of the Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe Railway joined, town was named for Albert Somerville, first president of the



railroad. First settlers arrived after town was surveyed about 1883; the post office was permanently established in 1897. Somerville boomed in the 1890s when local citizens persuaded a railroad tie plant to locate here. Santa Fe Railroad bought the operation in 1905; this is still an important industry. Incorporated in 1913, the town has become a recreation center since Lake Somerville was created in the 1960s.

Classification: Site

Ownership: Public

Period of Construction: (-1900)

Accessible: N/A

Status: N/A

Condition: N/A

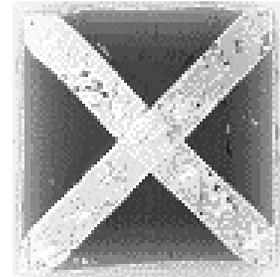
Use: N/A

Historic Registration: State

HISTORIC RESOURCES

26. Hood's Texas Brigade, 1906 Reunion — SH 36,
north city limits, Marker #8638

Points of interest/Marker text: “In 1906 Somerville hosted the annual reunion of the Hood’s Texas Brigade Association, a group established in 1872 for veterans of the celebrated Confederate unit. For two days, June 27-28, 74 veterans were honored with a celebration which included speeches, a baseball game, and a grand ball. The local events were planned under the direction of the Association’s President R.A. Brantley, Sr., and his daughter Mrs. Norton B. Wellborn, both of Somerville. Part of a tradition which ended in 1934, the reunion reflected the area's respect for the former Civil War soldiers.” At this reunion, a fund was established for the erection of a monument to the Brigade on the Capitol grounds in Austin. The memorial was dedicated in 1910.



Classification: Site

Ownership: Public

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: N/A

Status: N/A

Condition: N/A

Use: Park

Historic Registration: State

HISTORIC RESOURCES

27. Masonic Lodge — NW corner of 8th and Ave. C.

Classification: Building

Ownership: Private

Period of Construction: (1901-1940)

Accessible: Yes/Unrestricted

Status: Occupied

Condition: Good

Use: Lodge

Historic Registration: None

Additional Information: Original wood lap siding has been covered with the vinyl siding on the building now.



HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

The city of Somerville has a vast resource in its collection of historic homes. The majority of these properties are found in the older part of town, with the densest collection of preservable structures bounded by 6th and 11th Streets on the south and north, and having Avenue C and Avenue G as their east and west bounds. This is simply a sampling of the available resources, and should by no means be considered an all-inclusive boundary. One of the most notable residences in this area is the Lauderdale-Tharp House (see survey #24). This large, two-story home occupies a full block site. The wrap around porch is a common historic feature in this area. The house and 9th street, which borders the lot, are sited in such a manner as to allow viewing of the passing trains from the house, apparently from the request of Mr. Lauderdale.



Also in this zone are a number of houses that upon brief review appear to be Sears Catalog houses that have undergone some modification over time. Sears Catalog houses were sold through the Sears, Robuck, and Company Catalog between 1908 and 1940. They were delivered along with blueprints to the rail station. Then they were moved to the site for construction. Sears, Robuck and Company produced about 450 plans, and shipped the components all across the nation. These have now become very popular for preservation nationally as a representative of how America grew as a nation in the first half of the 20th century.



For the time available to this study, a full survey of the residential neighbor hoods would not have been possible, however because of the importance of historic residential neighborhoods the issue has to be addressed. Historic residences are generally more available than their commercial counterpart, but that does not mean that they are less important.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

A good collection of historic homes can often be a fine feature for any city. Considering this, it is recommended that before the City of Somerville begins razing houses, that each house be evaluated in light of the neighborhood it is located within, and the extent of the damage such destruction would cause the historic fabric of the city.



RESOURCES

1. *Draft Design Guidelines for Downtown, St. Joseph, MO*
2. *Design Guidelines for the Museum Hill Historic District, St. Joseph, MO*
3. *Revitalization Guidelines for Historic Streets, Lewisburg, WV*
4. *The Design Handbook for Buildings in Downtown, Washington, D.C.*
5. Historical information supplied was compiled from sections in *Astride the Old San Antonio Road, A Pictorial History of Bureson County* and with text from the Texas Historical Commission.

SECTION

5



Local Economy

Section

5

LOCAL ECONOMY

INTRODUCTION

In 1921, Mr. O.B. Lewis described the local economy of Somerville, Texas, in his journal. He noted five rooming houses, three meat markets, four clothing or dry goods stores, two barbershops, one bakery, and five grocery stores. In sum, there were about twenty establishments other than farming that defined the local economy¹. Since that time, both the City of Somerville and its local economy have gone through major changes in the composition and orientation of commerce in the community.

This section first reviews employment patterns, highlighting major employers, sources of employment in the city and county, wage and salary disbursements, and sales volumes for the service industry in Somerville. Secondly, personal income data is used to characterize the economic well being of local residents, with comparisons to state and national income trends. Finally, this chapter reviews the impact of tourism on the local economy.

EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS

Six major employers in Somerville contribute 272 jobs and account for roughly 20 percent of the workforce. (Table 5.1) The two largest employers, the Somerville Independent School District (SISD) and Koppers Industries, Inc., have a combined employment of 198². In addition to the six major employers, Somerville's smaller employers also contribute to the local economy by offering a variety of amenities and services such as restaurants, hardware stores, financial services, and real estate brokerage³. For example, in 1992 retail service establishments brought in \$5,346,000 dollars in sales and accounted for \$736,000 dollars in employee payroll expenditures. Wage disbursements for part and full-time work totaled \$75,279 dollars in 1994, growing to \$79,577 in 1997.

Table 5.1: Current Employers

<i>Employer</i>	<i>Number of Employees</i>
Somerville ISD	121
Koppers Industries, Inc.	77
Citizens State Bank	26
Rhode Building Systems	19
City of Somerville	19
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers	10

Source: Fisher and Adcock

County Employment Trends

On a countywide basis, employment by industry indicates that farming has historically been the major source of employment in the area. However, the role of the service industry has been steadily rising, overtaking farming as the main source of employment in 1992. Historically, a large percentage of the Burleson County workforce has been employed out of the county, with 42 percent of workers 16 years of age and older working in other counties in 1990. This workforce migration is higher than the state average and can be attributed in part to the lack of employment opportunities, as well as to Somerville’s close-proximity to other communities with varied employment opportunities. The City is located 30 miles from the Bryan/College Station Metro-Suburban Area (MSA), and other nearby employment centers, such as Austin and Houston, which also attract Somerville’s residents.

Table 5.2: Sources of Annual Employment – 1982 to 1992

<i>Source</i>	<i>1982</i>	<i>1983</i>	<i>1984</i>	<i>1985</i>	<i>1986</i>	<i>1987</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>1989</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>1992</i>
Farm	24	27.5	28	27.5	28.5	29	28	27.5	27.5	27	26
Trade	17.5	17	16.5	16	15	14.4	14	16	16.5	17	16
Goods and											
Products	27	22	20.5	21	20	19	18.5	17	16.5	17	17.2
Government	9.5	11	11.5	12	12.5	12.7	13	14	13	12.7	13.8
Services	22	22.5	23.5	23.5	24	24.9	26.6	25.5	26.5	26.3	27

Source: Community Development Group Project

Table 5.3: Employment Inside and Outside of Burleson County – 1980 and 1990

<i>County</i>	<i>Inside 1980</i>	<i>Outside 1980</i>	<i>Inside 1990</i>	<i>Outside 1990</i>
Burleson	68%	32%	58%	42%
Texas	87%	13%	83%	17%

Source: Community Development Group Project

PERSONAL INCOME

As of November 1, 1997, the median household income for Somerville was \$17,942. This is a slight increase from the 1990 average of \$17,298. Per capita income for Somerville residents declined from \$9,222 in 1990 to \$8,953 in 1997. Median family income declined from \$22,778 in 1990 to \$22,188 in 1997. Overall, personal income for Somerville residents has remained relatively unchanged during the time period 1980 to 1992⁴.

Sources for Personal Income

Table 5.4: Sources of Annual County Personal Income for Burleson County – 1982 to 1992

<i>Source</i>	<i>1982</i>	<i>1983</i>	<i>1984</i>	<i>1985</i>	<i>1986</i>	<i>1987</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>1989</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>1992</i>
Res. Adj.	-1	8	14	14	15	15.5	16	14.5	14.5	14	13.5
Gov't	6.5	7	7	7.5	9	9	8.5	8	8	7.5	8
Farm	2	0	0	.5	-2	2	-.5	3.5	4	5	5.5
Trade	28	24.5	24	21	18	17	18	17	17	17	16.5
Passive	36.5	38.5	39	42	47	45.5	48	47.7	48.5	45.5	45
Mfg.	28	22	16	15	13	11	10	9.5	8	11	11.5

Res. Adj.: Income earned by county residents working outside the county if the number is positive. The number refers to income earned by nonresidents working inside the county if it is negative.

Gov't: Governmental income.

Farm: Proprietor and wage income from farms, agriculture services, forestry, fisheries and other sources.

Trade: Transportation public utilities, wholesale trade, finance, insurance, real estate and services.

Passive: Dividends, interest, rent and transfer payments.

Mfg.: Mining, construction, and manufacturing.

Source: Community Development Group Project

LOCAL ECONOMY

Passive income or income derived from dividend, rents, and transfer payments represents between 35-50 percent of the total personal income in the county. Preliminary results indicate that this is the result of government subsidies for the farming industry in the county. Trade and Services are the next most important source of personal income in the county, with about 20 percent of the county workforce involved in this industry between 1980 and 1992. Work outside of the county (Res. Adj.) is also a major source of personal income in Burleson County, representing roughly 15 percent of total personal income².

Table 5.5: Index of Total Personal Income: County, State and National – 1982 to 1992

	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Burleson	100 %	98	100	98	108	112	108	111	120	132	141
Texas	100 %	106	115	122	125	128	135	145	158	166	180
U.S.	100 %	108	118	125	134	141	151	162	174	180	191

Source: Community Development Group Project

Comparing personal income for Burleson County to state and national trends between 1982 and 1992 reveals that area incomes are lagging by approximately 45 percent. There is a growing gap in the income of a Burleson County resident and that of the average state and national resident. Overall personal income in Burleson County has increased 40 percent since the benchmark year of 1982, while the state resident's income has increased by roughly 80 percent, and national average income has increased by over 90 percent². This suggests that the local economy is somewhat depressed.

TOURISM

Lake Somerville is a major tourism destination for groups seeking recreational activity in the State of Texas. It ranks second in the state for total fees collected and visitation hours, with \$378,415 in 1997 and 16,161,898 million visitor hours. The City of Somerville has been leasing 300-acre Welch Park, on Lake Somerville, from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for several years to take advantage of the increased funds this kind of tourism brings to the city economy⁵.

Table 5.6: Welch Park Fee Collection 1997-1999

<i>Fees</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>
Day Use	\$44,272	\$52,387	\$89,500
Camping Fee	\$7,222	\$14,059	\$30,000
Pavilion Rentals	\$580	\$905	\$2,000
Annual Permits	\$3,545	\$3,430	\$4,000

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

RESOURCES

1. *Personal Journals of Mr. O.B. Lewis*, 1921. For more information contact the Brenham Rest Home.
2. Fisher, Dennis U. and Adcock, Donna P. *Understanding Your Local Economy: Dynamics of the People and the Economy of Burleson County*. Economic Development Group, TAES, (1995).
3. City of Somerville Webpage.
4. Somerville City Hall. Mr. Lloyd Behm, City Manager.
5. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Lake Somerville project.
6. United States Census 1992

Community Image

SECTION

6



Section

6

COMMUNITY IMAGE

INTRODUCTION

This section summarizes the overall appearance of Somerville. Community image can increase the community’s appeal and value for residents and visitors. Community image is the total effect created by a city that forms its overall attractiveness and, although reactions to accessibility, car parking and other facilities may color initial views, it is the overall quality of the place that leaves the strongest and most lasting impressions.¹ By identifying community image issues, Somerville will be better able to address concerns and formulate constructive ways to further develop positive aspects of the City’s image. This section is an inventory of community image features in Somerville.

GATEWAYS

Gateways create a defined arrival point for visitors upon entrance to the city. Because of its initial impact, the gateway is a fundamental component in any city’s community image. First impressions can last a lifetime.



Currently, the three gateway entrances do not present an inviting image of the city. The sign on State Highway 36 from Lyons is in need of updating. The entrances on State Highway 36 from Brenham and FM 1361 from the northeast do not have gateway signage or landscaping.

TREES AND VEGETATION

Throughout the city trees are plentiful and provide a pleasing appearance and shade. Trees also help to reduce environmental odors. However, many trees have been allowed to grow unchecked along fence-rows and below overhead utility lines resulting in an unkempt appearance. The City should be diligent about keeping trees and vegetation maintained.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping is used to provide an aesthetically pleasing appearance to a site through the installation and maintenance of trees, shrubs, and other plants. It is often used to screen objectionable views or to unify disparate parts of a whole, such as the varied businesses along a single street. A theme can be created through the use of a unified palette of plant materials throughout a large area. Currently, the City of Somerville has no landscape ordinances. Landscape ordinances would assure the residents of Somerville a pleasing appearance in the apartment, commercial, and industrial areas of the city. Another benefit of additional landscaping is to help to reduce the scale of the roads making them more pedestrian-friendly. A high standard of design should be the City's objective. Landscapes should continue to evolve and change — not only physically but also in terms of how they are used.²

SIGNAGE

Due to the absence of ordinances regarding usage, placement, size and style, Somerville is now faced with inconsistent commercial business signs along its most visible streets. Unfortunately, this creates a disjointed appearance. Adopting signage regulations to regulate size, material, color, lighting of signs, and define sign locations in relation to traffic or adjacent uses will enable Somerville to better manage the city's community image³. This will not only improve the appearance of the streetscape, but will also help to more readily locate and identify businesses.

OVERHEAD UTILITY LINES

The existence of above ground utility lines is not in itself a problem of unsightliness. The problem is the location of the lines within the landscape. Many of the utility lines have been

located at the front of properties and along the street in residential areas. The result is a distracting appearance in residential areas; causing the visual landscape to appear cluttered by utility lines, poles, and guide wires. One solution to this problem is to require all new utilities to be located underground or at the rear of properties. Somerville could also initiate efforts to relocate existing lines to the rear of properties. Somerville has traditionally been developed with alleys at the rear of residential property. By locating the overhead utility lines at the rear of properties along the alleys, Somerville would have been able to reduce the impact the lines had on the visual landscape.



STREETS

The streets of Somerville are in various stages of maintenance and repair. They range from well-maintained streets with curb and gutter to deteriorated streets with potholes and no curb and gutter. A uniform street treatment and maintenance program instill a sense of equality in the treatment while visually unifying the city.



WEEDS

Overgrown brush and weeds detract from the overall image of a city. This is not a problem for Somerville. The City needs to remain diligent in weed removal to ensure that people living in or visiting Somerville have a sense that the city cares about its appearance.



SIDEWALKS

By making the Central Business District (CBD) more pedestrian friendly, Somerville will be able to perpetuate the image of a small-town while continuing to grow. Somerville's only existing sidewalks are those along State Highway 36 as it runs through the CBD. The sidewalk on one side of the street is in good repair but the same cannot be said about the other. The paving has



begun to buckle and could cause a fall and injury. The City needs to repair the sidewalk as soon as possible. Because sidewalks create a more inviting pedestrian environment and help to encourage neighboring, Somerville should consider installing sidewalks throughout the rest of the city, especially in the residential areas, when the issue of street improvements is addressed.

URBAN BLIGHT

Urban blight is most visible in housing deterioration and abandonment, trash strewn across vacant lots, and deteriorating commercial corridors. It mars the face of communities. While only a minor part of the visual landscape in Somerville, it does have a negative impact on the image of the city. Blighted areas exist mostly as single yards or properties in several neighborhoods within Somerville.



Concentrating on cleaning these up, whether by removing a structure or cleaning up the property, will improve the city's image as well as help give residents of a neighborhood a sense of pride in the way their street looks.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Building maintenance, especially of civic and commercial properties, is adequate. Many of the properties that appear to be in disrepair are in fact in good condition. The appearance of disrepair

is due to lack of maintenance of the lot on which they are located. This is especially true of some residential properties in Somerville.

EMPTY BUILDINGS

Other than a few small commercial properties, the vast majority of empty buildings in Somerville are abandoned houses. Current policy in Somerville is to remove the worst of these to improve the appearance of neighborhoods. Because many of these homes are historic, the City may want to investigate the value of rehabilitating these structures for resale.



THE DOWNTOWN

The downtown area is located along State Highway 36 in Somerville's Central Business District (CBD). This is the most prominent area to residents and visitors as they pass through the city on SH 36. This area is soon to be under construction for a road-widening project. With the widening of State Highway 36 the restoration of downtown building facades will become increasingly important. This restoration will convey the unique small-town character of Somerville. At present the City is considering building several prominent new civic buildings as well as a restoration project of the CBD. These projects present the City with the opportunity to establish and maintain consistent design tradition. One civic development vital to downtown Somerville is the creation of a town center to unify civic services while simultaneously creating a "sense of place" for residents and visitors.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

Many houses and commercial properties in Somerville are historically significant, as defined by the standards set forth by the Secretary of the Interior, and impart a strong sense of character to the city. Historic sites include the Mexican Cemetery, Oaklawn Cemetery, and the Yegua Center and Stadium. The City should make a concerted effort to help citizens rehabilitate historic homes and get them



listed on local, state, and national registers. Such initiatives will bolster community unity and character, as well as become an additional attraction for tourists.

UNDERUTILIZED RESOURCES

Somerville has two significant areas of underutilized resources. The first is Welch Park on Lake Somerville. The second is the abundance of open space throughout the city.

Currently at Welch Park only basic R.V hookups and restrooms are provided. These facilities should be expanded and the exploration of additional amenities should be continued. The two most significant additions under current consideration are a public golf course on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land adjacent to the city north of Welch Park and an amphitheater on the peninsula. Both improvements would increase city revenues and attract visitors.

The other significant underutilized resource within Somerville is its abundance of open space, especially those areas adjacent to the dam. This is prime recreation space that could support walking and bike trails linking the north and south parts of the city. With the creation of other greenways and parks in other parts of the city, a network could be created having a unifying effect on the city as a whole.

SUMMARY

Cleaning up some of Somerville's rough edges will do wonders for its existing community image. This means tidying up the city and imparting some regulations and/or ordinances, especially as they apply to landscaping and signage of commercial properties. Somerville should focus on developing and projecting itself as a self-sustaining city, not just an amenity to Lake Somerville. This development will come from enhanced communication between city government and residents coupled with historic, commercial, and tourism initiatives. The ultimate goal of all of these efforts is improved quality of life for residents and increased tourism.

RESOURCES

1. World wide web. University of California at Berkeley.
www.lib.berkeley.edu%2FENVI%2Furbhist.html&x=12&y=8
2. Turner, Tom. *The City as Landscape*.
3. So, Frank, S. *The Practice of Local Government Planning*. International City/County Management Association. Washington, D.C. 1998. Page 273.

Urban Infrastructure

SECTION

7



Section
7

URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

Infrastructure consists of a city's water system, the wastewater system, and the storm drainage system. It is the foundation from which a City keeps its residents healthy and comfortable. This section describes the existing conditions of the infrastructure components in the City of Somerville. The capacity and condition of current water, wastewater, and storm water systems components and their adequacy for future needs will be discussed. Existing and anticipated problems with infrastructure will also be analyzed. All of these facilities are vital to the citizens of Somerville and the City's adequate performance.

WATER SYSTEM

The City of Somerville is served by two wells extracting water from the Queen City-Sparta Aquifer formation. Static water level is located close to 115 feet below ground level. More specifics on well characteristics are shown in Table 7.1. Currently water is only drawn from well #5 leaving well #3 as a backup. Maximum pumping capacity of 260 million gallons per year meets the current total demand of 230 million gallons per year.

Water is pumped through two chlorination facilities and then into two storage tanks. Ground storage tank #1 is located in Somerville with a capacity of 210,000 gallons and ground storage tank #2 is located in the Community of Lyons outside of Somerville with a capacity of 126,000 gallons. Elevated storage, in the form of a pedestal mounted water sphere, is located off State Highway 36 on the north side of Somerville and it has a maximum capacity of 150,000 gallons. The specific location of facilities, waterlines and chlorination stations of Somerville's water system are shown on Map 4.

Table 7.1: Water Well Information

<i>Well</i>	<i>Age (years)</i>	<i>Depth (FT)</i>	<i>Capacity (GPM)</i>	<i>Dissolved Solids (PPM)</i>
# 3 Downtown	45	2,020	240	1500
# 4 Downtown*	19	2,010	250	N/A
# 5 Lyons	8	1,612	500+	338

Source: City of Somerville Planning and Capacity Building Study, 1992.

** indicates not in use*

The water storage and distribution network in Somerville utilizes three storage facilities and a grid composed of Asbestos, Iron and Polyvinyl Chloride lines. More specifics on storage facility characteristics are shown on Table 7.2. Size and capacity of the lines vary by location and age of installation. A summary of water plant and storage facilities of Somerville is shown in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Water Treatment Plant and Water Storage Facilities

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Age (years)</i>	<i>Capacity (gal.)</i>	<i>Chlorination</i>
Ground Storage Downtown	27	210,000	Yes
Ground Storage Lyons	8	126,000	Yes
Elevated Tank	11	150,000	No
2 Service Pumps	--	820 gallons per unit	N/A

Source: City of Somerville Planning and Capacity Building Study, 1992.

The water distribution system of Somerville is typical of a small municipality in terms of line size and type. Water mains vary in material type from iron/steel to asbestos cement to polyvinyl chloride and range in line size from 0.5 – 12 inches in diameter. Table 7.3 represents the water distribution system in terms of line size, material type, and total feet in length.

MAP 4 Water System

Table 7.3: Summary of Water Distribution System

<i>Main size (diameter)</i>	<i>Polyvinyl Chloride</i>	<i>Asbestos Cement</i>	<i>Iron/steel</i>	<i>Total (feet)</i>
12"	16,900 (14.10%)			16,900 (14.1%)
8"		2,550 (2.13%)		2,550 (2.13%)
6"	23,080 (19.26%)	24,440 (20.39%)	13,610 (11.36%)	61,130 (51.01%)
3"	300 (6.25%)		770 (0.64%)	1,070 (0.89%)
2"	22,000 (18.36%)		2,850 (2.38%)	24,850 (20.74%)
1-1/4"	950 (0.79%)		4,940 (4.12%)	5,890 (4.19%)
1"	600 (0.5%)			600 (0.5%)
3/4"	700 (0.58%)		5,740 (4.79%)	6,440 (5.37%)
1/2"	420 (0.35%)			420 (0.35%)
Total (feet)	64,950 (54.19%)	26,990 (22.52%)	27,910 (23.29%)	119,850 (100%)

Source: City of Somerville Planning and Capacity Building Study, 1992.

The water distribution system also includes numerous valves, hydrants, and flush valves. Somerville has 89 hydrants for fire protection. Nine of the hydrants are distributed in commercial areas while 80 are in residential neighborhoods. The City of Somerville currently provides water service to 794 users, including several outside of the city limits.

WASTEWATER SYSTEM

Somerville is served by one oxidation-ditch-design treatment plant for the treatment of wastewater. (The location of this facility is shown on Map 5) The maximum capacity for this plant is 300,000 gallons per day. Approximately 175,000 gallons are treated on a daily basis. A portion of the treated water is sold locally as gray-water for crop irrigation. The plant’s peak capacity is reached during periods of storm-water runoff due to infiltration into the sewer line system.

The wastewater collection system consists of 84,600 feet of gravity flow lines with a total of 150 manholes for cleaning and maintenance of the system lines. Sewer lines inside the city limits consist of iron, vitrified clay and polyvinyl lines. Deterioration of the iron and vitrified clay pipelines has occurred over the years. More than half of the system lines consist of vitrified clay material that is susceptible to infiltration. Infiltration of fine to medium sand particles into the system results in inefficiencies, with increased manpower and service costs.

MAP 5 Waste Water

The sewer line system uses eleven lift stations to keep sewage moving through the lines. Due to topography limitations, lift stations are required to pump the untreated waste out of low-lying areas. Ten lift stations in the system have a standardized (same type) pumping system and three of these have been renewed in the last three years. Capacity of the stations varies based on location and volumes, varying from 28 gallons per minute to 730 gallons per minute.

Domestic wastewater generation is controlled to comply with total suspended solids (TSS) values that range from 125-150 mg/l (typical for house usage), higher values close to 200 mg/l suggest non-domestic discharges are periodically reviewed. The Santa Fe Railroad tie plant operates a pre-treatment plant to stabilize its waste to comply with discharge requirements and existing terms/conditions with the city industrial waste requirements.

STORM DRAINAGE SYSTEM

The City of Somerville currently utilizes an open ditch system to manage the flow of storm-water towards two existing creeks (Thomson's Creek, Yegua Creek). The natural conditions of Somerville permit two drainage directions. Railroad tracks currently serve as a dam to retain the surface flow. This feature of Somerville expands the floodplain shown on Map 2 (Hazards), in Section 3 of this document.

Currently only small portions of the city are equipped with curb and gutter drainage systems. Stormwater drains exist in the downtown area, but due to capacity limitations of drainage facilities along State Highway 36, local flooding has occurred. Primary drainage in Somerville is toward Thomson's Creek at a maximum capacity of 800 cubic feet per second (CFS). Secondary drainage towards the south (Yegua Creek) is at 440 cubic feet per second. New improvements for drainage along State Highway 36 is increasing capacity of underground storm water drains inside downtown and other locally flooded areas. The maximum capacity for the 25-year floodplain is estimated at 1,364 CFS for the north part and 738 CFS for the south side of the City.

UTILITIES, CABLE, AND TELEPHONE SERVICES

There are several companies that provide utilities, cable, and telephone services to Somerville. Entergy services electricity for Somerville. Lone Star Gas (LXU) services the city for natural gas. Solid waste curbside pick-up is collected by Texas Commercial Waste, a private contractor

URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE

in Bryan. The City of Somerville provides service for water and sewer. Telephone services are provided by GTE. Classic Cable provides cable services to the citizens of Somerville.

Transportation

SECTION

8



Section
8

TRANSPORTATION

INTRODUCTION

This section provides an inventory of the existing transportation system for the City of Somerville. A study was conducted to develop an understanding of the City's physical, operational, traffic safety, and travel characteristics of the roadways. This assessment was based on information provided by on-site inventories, City of Somerville staff, and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). The Somerville transportation system is shown on Map 6.

The City of Somerville is bisected by State Highway 36 (SH 36) and a Burlington, Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad line. SH 36 is currently being reconstructed and widened. The railroad plays a major part in the City's employment, though it also detains traffic when trains are switching cars at the rail yard. Public transit service is currently not available in Somerville, impairing the mobility of people who are unable to drive.

THOROUGHFARES

Capacity and Condition

Somerville has no limited-access highways. The major thoroughfares are major arterials, which provide good vehicular access. Level of Service C (LOS C) should be maintained on the major thoroughfares to enhance and maintain Somerville's small-town image. LOS C is defined as free flowing traffic, with room to maneuver, never going slower than two-thirds of the posted speed limit. Somerville should be able to maintain LOS C without difficulty, as the widening of SH 36 will provide sufficient highway capacity to serve the projected future populations.

MAP 6 Streets Map

Table 8.1: Traffic Count for Selected Areas

<i>Location</i>	<i>24-Hour Traffic Count</i>
SH 36 and FM 1361	1,550
North of Intersection	10,000
South of Intersection	9,100

Source: City of Somerville

Historical traffic counts are currently unavailable.

Signalized Intersections and Signage

Traffic signals in Somerville are limited to the main traffic thoroughfares along the highway. Lesser intersections are marked with signs. Many of the signs currently marking major intersections are not up to current state standards (e.g. no major intersections have overhead signs). Street signs, as well as stop signs, are often in disrepair and many are unreadable.

LOCAL STREETS

Capacity and Condition

The City’s current transportation system primarily serves automobile travel. Local collectors provide adequate access; however, many of Somerville’s residential streets are in poor condition. Several streets are crumbling at the edges and potholes are frequent and large (see figure 8.1). Grass is encroaching on the pavement of many streets, accelerating the decline. Several mapped streets have been overgrown with grass.

Figure 8.1: Typical Neighborhood Street in Somerville



TRANSPORTATION

Curbs and Gutters

Curbs and gutters are absent along several sections of Somerville's streets. The poor condition of existing curbs and gutters contributes to the degradation of the pavement. Additionally, drainage ditches that are overgrown with grass exacerbate the problem of poor street drainage. At several street intersections, drainage gutters have sunk far below the street level and pose a threat to vehicles.

Parking

Parking in Somerville is adequate to meet demand under regular conditions. In observation during several trips to the city, sufficient empty parking spaces were found in the downtown area. The bank, city hall, and grocery store are well served by on- and off-street parking.

Environmental Conditions

Somerville's small size makes environmental impacts from automobiles negligible. For the same reason, there are no available origin-destination surveys for the city.

TRAINS

Somerville is historically a railroad town and trains still play an important role in the city today by contributing the majority of jobs in the city. Although several trains travel through the city every day, freight is not handled at the local rail yard, as the city is neither a major exporter, nor importer of items shipped by rail. The city does serve as an important switching yard, and BNSF trains headed west from Texas toward California are switched here.

Trains do cause inconvenience to the citizens of Somerville. The lengthy stops required to switch cars are a frequent impediment to through traffic. Somerville's residents complain that trains often delay local traffic for as long as fifteen minutes. These long delays can cause drivers to ignore warning signals and illegally cross the tracks. In contrast to the 15-minute train times, the engineering standards for traffic light cycles are 120 seconds, as it is known that longer cycle times encourage motorists to run lights to avoid the wait.

MAP 7 Challenges and Thoroughfares

TRANSPORTATION

Chemicals being transported via rail are also a cause for concern to the citizens of Somerville because of the potential for accidents at crossings. Since most of the city lies between the tracks and Lake Somerville, escape routes in the event of a spill are limited if vehicles are blocked by trains disabled on the tracks.

BIKEWAY

Somerville has no existing bikeway system.

TRANSIT

There is no public transportation in Somerville.

SUMMARY

Somerville currently has a fair transportation system. Street signage revisions are needed to bring the city up to state standards. Street surface repairs and curb-and-gutter additions are needed to enhance the city's appearance and improve street drainage. Problems with train intersections must be addressed as they pertain to safety and mobility.

RESOURCES

1. Gardner, Gary. *Cities Turning to Bicycles to Cut Costs, Pollution, And Crime*. Vol. 81 Public Management, 01-01-1999.

Housing

SECTION

9



Section

9

HOUSING ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

This section provides an analysis of the current housing status in Somerville. It encompasses the following sections:

- Number of Housing Units;
- Types of Housing Units;
- Age of Housing;
- Housing Units by Tenure and Value;
- Housing Conditions;
- Manufactured Home Development; and
- Supporting Regulatory Infrastructure.

One hundred percent of the household units in Somerville are designated as “rural.” The U.S. Census defines rural areas as either open country or places of fewer than 2,500 residents. This definition has remained constant since 1960. Housing units in Somerville share four dominant characteristics attributed to rural housing:

- Higher rates of homeownership and residents of the mature-age bracket;
- Predominantly single-family housing units, including rentals;
- Approximately, 18 percent of the residents reside in manufactured homes; and
- Housing is less costly and more spacious.

Somerville has a vacancy ratio that is less than 1 percent. Development of a larger housing stock is seen as vital to the growth and development of Somerville. The present decade witnessed the slowest growth in housing production for Somerville since the 1940s.

HOUSING ANALYSIS

In 1999, Somerville adopted a number of far-reaching ordinances. In brief, they represent the adoption of a building code, manufactured home regulations, guidelines for utilities, and conditions of enforcement. Collectively, they represent a bold step to provide future direction for the provision of safe and sanitary housing in Somerville.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EXISTING HOUSING

Number of Housing Units

The 1990 U. S. Census Bureau estimated there were 579 housing units occupied, 124 vacant and only 3 used for seasonal use. The total housing inventory categorizes housing units by occupancy status: occupied, vacant, and seasonal. Occupied represents owner occupied and rental units that were occupied as of June 1999. According to a survey conducted by the City of Somerville from March to June of 1999, there are 628 active households and 24 households residing in a group unit facility (Somerville Plaza). Vacant units are those that were not occupied as of June 1999. This total includes units considered to be abandoned. In November 1999, Somerville City officials indicated that there are approximately 25 housing units that are vacant due to abandonment. It is estimated that there are approximately 30 single-family units vacant. This estimation does not take into account farmhouses and ranches. Seasonal units are classified as second homes, vacation rentals, and units for migrant farm workers. This number is estimated to be between 25 to 50 housing units. The category of seasonal units for Somerville also includes citizens who, because of age, reside with other family members.

Types of Housing Units

Table 9.1 shows the distribution of the four classes of housing units in Somerville as classified by the U.S. Census. Seventy seven percent of all housing units are single-family housing units. A trend that has continued throughout the 1990s. According to the Certified State Property Tax Board Report, single-family housing rose from 79 percent in 1989 to 85 percent in 1999.

Table 9-1: Housing Units by Type, 1990

<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>
Single family	550
Multi family	20
Manufactured home	126
Other	10

Source: 1990 U.S. Census Data

The distribution of housing types between 1989 - 1999 is shown in Table 9.2. This data is taken from the Certified Appraisal Roll for the City of Somerville by the Burleson County Appraisal District. Single-family housing has long predominated in Somerville. There is a discrepancy in the number of manufactured homes recorded by the 1990 Census (126) and the Burleson County Appraisal District (72). Most apparent during the past ten years has been the decline of farm/ranch housing. This category was not clearly defined in earlier tax records as to the number

Table 9.2: Quantity of Housing Units by Type, 1989-1999

	<i>Multi-Family</i>	<i>Farm/Ranch</i>	<i>Manufactured Home</i>	<i>Single-Family</i>	<i>Government Group</i>
1989	7	87	72	611	0
1990	6	91	61	605	0
1991	6	92	65	607	0
1992	6	85	60	613	0
1993	6	79	54	618	1
1994	6	75	51	617	1
1995	6	75	48	618	1
1996	6	75	47	612	1
1997	5	81	49	617	1
1998	5	46	59	632	1
1999	5	37	72	620	1

Source: Burleson County Appraisal District, Certified Appraisal Roll Grand Totals

HOUSING ANALYSIS

of properties that served as a household residence. As of 1997, the distinction became clear. In 1993, Somerville added one group housing unit, Somerville Plaza. It is a government facility for the elderly and disabled. There are 20 one-bedroom units and 4 two-bedroom units located in this project.

The totals in Figure 9.2 document the trend of total housing units for Somerville from 1989 through 1999. The farm/ranch units from 1989 to 1997 do not provide a verifiable number of housing units. Prior to 1998, records of residential housing units associated with this category were not clearly available. These data characterizes new housing units added to the existing housing stock.

Due to their mobility, a few manufactured homes may not have been included in the count. Also, there may be homes that are no longer on the tax roll due to their decline in value. The 1990 Census shows 74 owner-occupied and 21 rental manufactured homes. In summation of this section, Table 9.3: *Total Housing Stock*, presents an estimation of the types and number of housing units currently available in Somerville. Included in this total are seasonal and vacant units.

Table 9.3: Total Housing Stock

<i>Type</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1999</i>
Single Family	611	620
Manufactured Homes	61	72
Farm/Ranch	47	37
Multi Family	6	5
Group Housing	0	1
Total	725	735

Source: Burleson County Appraisal District

Age of Housing

Ten-year construction periods for single-family housing stock are illustrated in Table 9.4. In 1990, the median year for housing structures built was 1968. The period from 1970 to 1989 saw the largest production of single-family homes in recent times. During the 1990s, only 45 new

homes were constructed. This was the lowest level of production since the 1940s. This downturn has contributed to the severe housing shortage that presently exists.

Table 9.4: Single-Family Structures Built Between 1939 and 1999

<i>Years</i>	<i>Number of Structures</i>
1990 - 1999	45
1980 - 1989	151
1970 - 1979	186
1960 - 1969	96
1950 - 1959	79
1940 - 1949	35
1939 - or earlier	159

Source: 1990 U. S. Census Bureau and Burleson County Tax Roll Records

Housing Units by Tenure and Value

Tables 9.5 and 9.6 show the number of total housing units by tenure (owner occupied and rental) in Somerville as of 1990. Owner-occupied single-family units valued at below \$60,000 accounted for 83 percent of all owner units. The median value was \$36,900 in 1990 dollars. At that same time, the median value for Caldwell, Texas, was \$51,000. For neighboring counties, Washington and Brazos, the median values were \$58,000 and \$66,800 respectively. The recorded value does not take into account any increased value resulting from room additions and remodeling.

The proportion of rental units to owner-occupied units is relatively low. In 1990, of the total housing units available those for cash rent accounted for less than 14 percent. The median gross rent was \$325 for housing units paying cash. This rental rate accounted for approximately 75 percent of all rental units.

Table 9.5: Value of Owner Occupied Units in 1990

<i>Value</i>	<i>Units</i>
Less than \$15,000	34
\$15,000 to \$19,999	37
\$20,000 to \$24,999	32
\$25,000 to \$29,999	32
\$30,000 to \$34,999	30
\$35,000 to \$39,999	34
\$40,000 to \$44,999	31
\$45,000 to \$49,999	27
\$50,000 to \$59,999	41
\$60,000 to \$74,999	26
\$75,000 to \$99,999	22
\$100,000 to \$124,999	6
\$125,000 to \$149,999	2
\$150,000 to \$174,999	2
\$175,000 to \$199,999	0

Source: 1990 U. S. Census Bureau

Table 9.6: Monthly Cost of Rental Units in 1990

<i>Rental Amount</i>	<i>Units</i>
No Cash Rent	22
\$100 to \$149	7
\$150 to \$199	4
\$200 to \$249	12
\$250 to \$299	21
\$300 to \$349	10
\$350 to \$399	10
\$400 to \$449	10
\$450 to \$499	15
\$500 to \$549	4
\$550 to \$599	2
\$600 to \$649	3
\$650 to \$699	0

Source: 1990 U. S. Census Bureau

Housing Conditions

In September 1999, the Texas Target Cities Team conducted an inventory to determine housing conditions in Somerville. This inventory consisted of a windshield survey of exterior housing conditions for classification into one of the following categories:

1. Standard: Units that have no or only minor defects that can be corrected through regular maintenance activities. Housing units that appeared to have been built within the last five years were also included in this category;
2. Deteriorating: Units that have one or more defects but which can be corrected at economically justifiable cost. These units remain structurally sound or can be upgraded if accomplished with a reasonable period of time;
3. Dilapidated: Units that have major structural problems and no longer provide a safe and suitable habitation. Rehabilitation is not economically feasible; and
4. Abandoned: Dilapidated units that appear to be unoccupied.

HOUSING ANALYSIS

The results of the housing survey are summarized in Table 9.7 and. These results are compared with a similar survey that was conducted in 1991 by a private consulting firm. Neither, the 1991 nor the 1999 survey accounted for farm/ranch housing units.

Table 9.7: Housing Conditions

<i>Condition</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Manufactured</i>	<i>Manufactured</i>	<i>Multi-</i>	<i>Multi-</i>
	<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Homes</i>	<i>Homes</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Family</i>
	1991	1999	1991	1999	1991	1999
Standard	306	335	84	59	3	4
Deteriorating	223	220	47	13	0	1
Dilapidated	29	42	1	10	0	0
Abandoned	40	23	2	8	0	0
TOTAL	598	620	134	90	3	5

Source: 1991 Data supplied by Texas Consultants. 1999 Data supplied by Target City Team, October 1999.

Manufactured Home Development

The City Council of the City of Somerville enacted *Ordinance 98-004* in 1999. This ordinance prohibits the installation of manufactured homes within city limits, with the exception of those locating in an approved and licensed manufactured home park. Resolution Number R99-005, an amendment to Ordinance (98-004) was enacted on February 9, 1999. The amendment allowed the replacement of a nonconforming manufactured home that is:

- Owner occupied on a single residential lot and not in a nonconforming manufactured home park with a new HUD (Housing and Urban Development) code manufactured home; and
- New manufactured homes must be inspected and permits obtained prior to installation. Ordinance 98-004 outlined various code requirements for a manufactured home park: site plan, density, height, spacing regulations, setbacks and screenings, traffic circulation and parking, fire safety, water and sewage, park management and other details.

HOUSING ANALYSIS

As stated earlier, there is a discrepancy between the number of manufactured homes recorded by the 1990 U.S. Census and the Burleson County Appraisal District. The tax records only account for 72 manufactured homes (tangible personal, other). According to the Target City 1999 survey, it is estimated there are at least 90 manufactured homes (occupied and vacant) in Somerville.

Presently, there are 8 manufactured home communities. All are non-conforming to the present regulations. They vary in acreage and amenities. The city council and the owners of the manufactured communities are presently discussing the time frame and conditions of conforming to Ordinance 98-004.

Supporting Regulatory Infrastructure

In order to regulate construction to protect the safety, health, and welfare of the citizens of Somerville, on January 1, 1999, the City Council enacted a wide range of building codes. Generally speaking, the codes set requirements for sanitary facilities, electrical, lighting, ventilation, building construction, building materials, fire safety, plumbing and energy conservation. According to Mayor Donald Strickland, “The codes were enacted to ensure Somerville’s growing prosperity and safe growth in modern times.”

Ordinances Adopted

The adoption of the Standard Building Code (SBC), 1997 Edition as published by the Southern Building Code Congress International is the essence of *Ordinance Number 98-006*. This is one of four model codes used in the United States. Listed below are the ordinances adopted:

1. Ordinance Number 98-006 → Standard Building Code, 1997 Edition;
2. Ordinance Number 98-007 → Standard Plumbing Code & Private Sewage Disposal Code;
3. Ordinance Number 98-008 → Standard Gas Code;
4. Ordinance Number 98-009 → Standard Mechanical Code;
5. Ordinance Number 98-010 → Standard Fire Code;
6. Ordinance Number 98-011 → National Electric Code;
7. Ordinance Number 98-012 → Standard Associated Codes and Standards; and
8. Ordinance Number 98-013 → CABO One and Two Family Dwelling Code.

SECTION

10



Community Facilities & Services

Section

10

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

Community facilities are essential for maintaining the health, safety, and welfare of citizens. Citizen well-being is reflected in the quality and availability of these facilities. The community's availability to attract and maintain industry and businesses is also dependent on the availability of community facilities

The community facilities in Somerville include, but are not limited to, City Hall, police department, fire department, post office, public schools, public library, health facilities, churches, cemeteries, museum, and banquet facilities. Each of these facilities and structures will be reviewed in this section.

CITY GOVERNMENT

City Hall

Somerville's City Hall is located at the corner of Avenue B (Hwy 36) and 8th Street. City Hall has 3 employees: the city clerk, city secretary, and city administrator. Somerville has a Mayor/Council type of municipal government. The City has a total of nineteen employees, which include part-time personnel. The employees are currently as follows:

- 4 police officers;
- 4 utility workers- water & waste;
- 1 part time judge;
- 1 full time municipal court clerk;
- 1 full time city secretary;
- 1 full time city clerk;
- 1 full time city administrator; and
- 6 part time parks employees.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Police Services

The Somerville Police Department is located at Avenue B (Hwy 36) and 9th Street. The staff consists of four full-time officers. The department uses 2 shifts a day, which consist of a 10 – 12 hour shift rotation for its officers. Reserve officers are called upon for remaining shift hours not covered by the officers. Reserve officers are certified with the Somerville agency.

There are many other agencies available to assist the Somerville Police Department. These include:

- The Burleson County Sheriff's Department;
- The Texas Department of Public Safety;
- The Texas Rangers
- The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission;
- The Texas Attorney General's Office;
- The Federal Bureau of Investigation; and
- The Immigration and Naturalization Service.



Although Somerville does not have its own 911 Emergency System, citizens are connected with the 911 Emergency System of Burleson County when they dial 911. The Burleson County 911 office then contacts the appropriate agency in Somerville to respond to the call.

The Somerville Police Department has taken an active role in community education. Officers attend Driver's Education classes to inform young drivers of new laws. This past year officers informed high school students about the new laws concerning Driving While Intoxicated (DWI). The police department does not make appearances at the schools for Drug Awareness. Drug-Awareness is accomplished through the Burleson County Task Force.

The Police Department deals with a number of cases yearly. In 1998, the department had 272 cases. These included warrant arrests, traffic violations, and public intoxication among others. The Somerville Police Department is properly qualified and staffed for its responsibilities to the community. Somerville has a population of 1,542 and four patrolmen, which equates to one patrolman for every 385.5 people. According to Table 10.1, Somerville is well above the listed norms, actually abiding by ranges of populations much larger than the city. Therefore, police

services can handle a population increase in Somerville with the current number of officers on the payroll.

Table 10.1: Mean Sworn/Uniformed Police Per Population

<i>Population Group</i>	<i>Mean Police Population</i>	<i>Population Range per One Policeman</i>
10,000 - 24,999	28	357-892
25,000 - 49,999	74	337-675
50,000 - 99,999	120	416-833
100,000 - 249,000	295	338-847

Source: Municipal Yearbook 1997 (ICMA) and Community Development Standards, 1978

Fire Services

At present fire service in Somerville is provided by 25 volunteer fire fighters. The volunteers have in-house training twice a month, meetings twice a month, and attend training sessions in several Texas cities including the Texas A&M Fire School in nearby College Station, Texas.



Communication between the volunteers and the County’s 911 system is carried out with pagers. The equipment available for fire protection includes one 1,000-gallon pumper truck, two 300-gallon grass trucks, one 750-gallon city truck, one 1,600-gallon tanker, and one rescue boat. The fire department also has a rescue truck, which holds equipment necessary for rescuing people from automobile accidents. The volunteer department receives about sixty calls a year, on average. Many of the calls are for house fires, grass fires, and car wrecks/accidents. The department boasts an excellent record.

The department provides fire education to the Somerville schools, focusing mainly on the elementary school. Students are educated on personal and family fire safety. The children also have a yearly field trip to the fire station where they learn about equipment used by firefighters

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The following table outlines fire protection standards for cities to follow. According to the table, Somerville should have at least 5 paid fireman. The city exceeds the standard number of volunteers needed and also has the required equipment. Somerville is well within the standard for the number of volunteers per population at 1 per 61.7 people.

Table 10.2: Fire Personnel and Equipment Requirements per Person

<i>Personnel and Equipment</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
Paid Firemen	1 per 1,000 persons minimum of 5
Volunteer Firemen	1 per 5,000 persons minimum of 20
Aerial Ladder Trucks	1 per 35,000 persons minimum of 1
Auto Hose Trucks	1 per 10,000 persons minimum of 1
Booster Tanks	1 per 10,000 persons minimum of 1

Source: Austin State Board of Insurance, Key Rate Schedule for Grading Cities and Towns of Texas, 1983 and Community Development Standards, 1978

COMMUNITY SERVICES

There are a few community structures and services in the City of Somerville that are for the use of its citizens. The city has a Recycling Center on FM 1361 that is open three days a week. The center collects newspaper, glass, aluminum cans, and plastic.



The city also provides a Citizen Collection Station, located next to the Recycling Center for disposal of trash and bulk materials, such as brush and old furniture. The Public Works Department also uses this site to store materials, such as gravel and patching equipment.

POST OFFICE

Somerville has one U.S. Post Office located at the corner of Avenue C and 8th Street, diagonally across from City Hall and the Fire Station. As opposed to residential mailboxes, most Somerville residents receive their mail in Post Office boxes.

MAP 8 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Somerville Independent School District (SISD) currently has an elementary school, middle school, and high school. The following table shows the number of students, teachers, and other staff members currently employed with the SISD.

Table 10.3: Somerville Student Enrollment and Staff

	<i>Elementary</i>	<i>Junior High</i>	<i>High School</i>
Students	345	187	257
Teachers	26	38	26
Administrators	1	2	1
Counselors	1	1	1
Librarians	1	1	*1
Health Officers	1	**1	**1

* The librarian at the high school is the head librarian for The SISD. ** The health officer at the junior high is shared with the high school. *Source: Somerville Independent School District, November 1999*

Somerville Elementary School

Somerville Elementary School provides several academic programs to its students. Some of these include:

- Gifted and Talented Program;
- Reading Recovery;
- Cooperative Learning;
- Fine Arts, Music, & Physical Education;
- English as a Second Language (ESL);
- Extended Day;
- Spanish classes for 4th and 5th graders; and
- Accelerated Reader Program.



Somerville Middle School

The middle school operates on a block schedule. This type of scheduling allows for a variety of activities and programs, including a morning tutorial program. There are also a variety of grant programs in place including:

- Educational Technology Planning Grant — a multi-level writing laboratory;
- TEA Innovative Grant — An after-school program for math and science;
- TAMU/NEA Teacher Education Incentive; and
- Pyramid Alliance — A science and math program.

Somerville High School

The high school offers both academic and vocational programs. The academic programs offered include an accelerated block schedule, teen learning, and cooperative learning. Teen learning was established to develop and improve the leadership and business skills of the students. The social skills component of cooperative learning reinforces and extends the skills learned in the teen learning program. Currently the high school does not offer a Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED). The vocational programs offered include:



- Welding;
- Construction Trades;
- Landscaping;
- Agricultural Metal Fabrication;
- Agricultural Mechanics;
- Horticulture;
- Apparel;
- Nutrition Food & Science;
- Parenting; and
- Home Maintenance.

Somerville Independent School District

Figures for the Somerville Independent School District (SISD) from 1997-1998 were compared to the state figures available from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). As shown by Table 10.4, attendance rates and the annual dropout rates are better in the SISD than at the state level. The student/teacher ratio in Somerville is also better than the state level. However, when comparing students in the SISD to the state in college admissions exams, the SISD scores are much lower. A smaller percentage of the SISD students also take college admissions exams. Another notable difference between the SISD and Texas overall is that the SISD has a higher teacher turnover rate.

Table 10.4: Comparison of the SISD and State of Texas Statistics

	<i>SISD</i>	<i>Texas</i>
African American	31.00%	14.40%
Hispanic	15.00%	37.90%
White	54.00%	45.00%
Asian/ Pacific Islander	0.00%	2.40%
Native American	0.00%	0.30%
Special Education	17.00%	12.00%
Bilingual/ESL	2.00%	11.90%
Career & Technology Ed.	7.00%	17.40%
Gifted & Talented	6.00%	8.00%
Attendance Rate	95.90%	95.20%
Annual Dropout Rate (96-97)	0.50%	1.60%
Percent Tested for College Admissions	55.30%	63.60%
Percent at or Above Criterion	9.50%	26.60%
SAT Mean Total Score	858	992
ACT Mean Composite Score	16.6	20.1
Number of Students per Teacher	11.8	15.3
Average Years of Teaching Experience	9.1	11.8
Percent of Teachers with Advanced Degrees	21.30%	26.00%
Teacher Turnover Rate	18.40%	13.30%
Average Teacher Salary	\$31,223	\$33,537
Total Operating Expenditure/Pupil	\$5,974	\$5,597

Source: SISD Snapshot 1997-1998, Texas Education Agency

PUBLIC LIBRARY

Somerville does not have a public library. According to the *Community Development Standards: A Municipal Guide for Land Use & Community Facilities*, a public library branch should serve at least 5,000 people. Since Somerville's population is well below this number a public library is not needed at this time.

HEALTH SERVICES

The citizens of Somerville can receive health services at the Burlison St. Joseph Somerville Clinic, located at Avenue C and 6th Street. The clinic is staffed by one nurse practitioner and is open Monday through Friday for seven hours each day. The Somerville Clinic offers general family medical services for people of all ages including blood draws, X-rays, and care for minor injuries.



In nearby Caldwell, the Burlison St. Joseph Health Center is one of the regional health facilities. The Caldwell center has thirty-seven beds. Burlison St. Joseph provides 24-hour emergency services, inpatient general medical care, X-ray, lab, and other support services. In addition to hospital-based services, Burlison St. Joseph Emergency Medical Services provides Burlison County with 24-hour ambulance coverage.

The St. Joseph Hospital and Health Center in Bryan has two hundred and twenty-three beds. This health center offers complete service for emergencies, inpatient and outpatient surgery, and critical care cases. Areas of specialty include pediatrics, women's services, and imaging.

According to the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, it is unrealistic to have one national standard for health care quality. If one standard is applied to both rural and urban areas, many rural hospitals and practices could be forced to close and rural residents forced to travel to distant sites for care. The agency is currently developing standards for rural health facilities to use. The St. Joseph Health System, however, provides services to the seven-county region, and aims to provide access to care within thirty minutes of a person's home.

CHURCHES

The City of Somerville is home to more than thirteen churches with a wide variety of denominations for a town of this size. Local denominations include Baptist, Catholic, Church of Christ, Lutheran, Presbyterian, as well as several independent churches. These facilities seem to currently meet the needs of the citizens, though one observation is the absence of synagogues in Somerville. The large numbers of churches are used as a resource at times by the city for gathering information about the community. The following is a comprehensive list of all the churches located in Somerville:

- First Baptist Church;
- First United Methodist Church;
- First Lutheran Church;
- St. Anne's Catholic Church;
- Community Chapel;
- Somerville Presbyterian Church;
- New Life Worship Center;
- Somerville Church of God;
- Second Street Baptist Church;
- Rose Chapel Church;
- A.M.E. Church;
- South End Church of Christ; and
- Church of Christ.



CEMETERIES

There are two cemeteries within the Somerville city limits and one right outside of the city limits. The two cemeteries located within the city proper are the Oaklawn Cemetery on Highway 36 and Country Road 482 and the African-American Cemetery located in the southern part of the city off of County Road 419. The third cemetery, located outside of city limits, is the Mexican Cemetery, located at the end of County Road 482, down the street from the Oaklawn Cemetery.



MUSEUM

The only museum in Somerville is the Historical Area Museum, located at the corner of Avenue B (Highway 36) and 8th Street. The museum is sponsored by the Somerville Historical Society and opened in 1983. Admission is free and it is open Saturdays from 10am – 12pm and from 1pm – 3pm, as well as by appointment.



BANQUET FACILITIES

There are four locations in Somerville available as banquet and rental facilities. These facilities include:

- the American Legion hall, located on 8th Street;
- the First Baptist Church, located on 9th Street; and
- the St. Anne's Catholic Church Fellowship Hall, located on Thornberry Drive.

The City of Somerville owns the Senior Citizen Center, located at the corner of Avenue B (Highway 36) and 9th Street, which can also be available for small parties and gatherings.

PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The City of Somerville currently has two parks it is responsible for managing, Pazdral Park and Welch Park. The parks provide recreational facilities for the citizens of Somerville and its visitors. The City owns Pazdral Park, located on Avenue E, about one half mile from Thornberry Drive. Pazdral Park is less than five acres. The park has several pieces of playground equipment, open space, a little league baseball field, bleachers, picnic tables, and an area for concessions. Pazdral Park is the only city-owned park within the city limits.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The City has managed Welch Park, leased from the Army Corps of Engineers, since 1979. Located outside of Somerville City Limits on Lake Somerville, the park covers almost 300 acres. The park is open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. year-round with day visitors paying \$3.00 per vehicle with up to four occupants, and \$0.50 per each additional occupant. Overnight camping is permitted in the park with a fee of \$8.00 per day per vehicle for up to four occupants, and \$1.00 per each additional occupant.

The park has several facilities available, but maintenance and additional facilities are needed in order to attract more visitors. Amenities currently available at the park are picnic tables, one boat ramp, barbecue pits, a covered pavilion, restrooms, and camping areas. As compared to the other parks along Lake Somerville, Welch Park has fewer facilities and amenities to offer.

Other recreational facilities available in the Somerville are owned by the Somerville Independent School District (SISD), St. Anne's Catholic Church, and the American Legion Organization. The SISD has playgrounds at the elementary school and a basketball court and football stadium near the high school and middle school. St. Anne's Catholic Church, located on Thornberry Drive and adjacent to Pazdral Park, has a little league baseball field, tennis court, basketball goals, and a small playground. These facilities are available to the parishioners of St. Anne's Catholic Church and the Somerville Little League Association during baseball season. The American Legion Hall has barbecue pits and a baseball practice field.

Table 10.5 shows the recommended acreage for parks prescribed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Park performance standards should be followed by cities in order to ensure adequate acreage is provided.

Table 10.5: Neighborhood and Community Park Acreage Standards

<i>Component</i>	<i>Use</i>	<i>Service Area</i>	<i>Desirable Size</i>	<i>Acre per 1,000 population</i>	<i>Desirable Size Characteristics</i>
Minipark	Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group, such as tots or senior citizens	Less than 1/4 mile radius	1 acre or less	0.25 to 0.5 acres	Within neighborhoods and in close proximity to apartment complexes, town house development, or housing for the elderly
Neighborhood park/playground	Area for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus area, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc.	1/4 to 1/2 mile radius to serve a population up to 5,000 (a neighborhood)	15+ acres	1.0 to 2.0 acres	Suited for intense development; easily accessible to neighborhood population — geographically centered with safe waling and bike access; may be developed as a school-park facility
Community park	Area of diverse environmental quality; may include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes, large swimming pools; may be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking; maybe any combination of the above, depending on site suitability and community need	Several neighborhoods; 1 to 2 mile radius	25+ acres	5.0 to 8.0 acres	May include natural features, such as water bodies, and areas suited for intense development; easily accessible to neighborhood served

Recommended Combined Acreage: 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 persons.

Source: Municipal Benchmarks, pg. 148, copyright 1996. Table in the book was excerpted from Roger A. Lancaster (Ed.), Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines (Alexandria, VA: National Recreation and Park Association, 1983).

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

According to the standards above, Somerville should focus on increasing the number of miniparks in the city. All residents should have access to a minipark within ¼ mile of their homes. The City also needs to provide a neighborhood park to serve its citizens within ¼ to ½ mile from their homes. Since there currently is not a need for an additional community park, Welch Park serves as a community park for the residents of Somerville.

Other recreational facilities that should be provided in the City of Somerville are basketball courts, baseball fields, soccer fields, softball fields, volleyball courts, and tennis courts. Several of the facilities in the city are property of the SISD, such as the football stadium, tennis courts, and basketball court. The City should explore ways to provide public fields and courts for the use of all citizenry in Somerville. Table 10.6 details the standards created by the National Recreation and Park Association for these types of facilities.

CONCLUSION

The City of Somerville provides diverse public services and community facilities. The police department and volunteer fire department take an active role in educating young citizens by visiting schools and raising awareness of safety issues. The recycling center allows citizens to do their part in saving the environment and encourages the reuse of materials. The public school system boasts a student/teacher ratio lower than the Texas State average. Citizens have access to the St. Joseph Health System through a clinic in Somerville, the family medicine clinic and St. Joseph Health Center in Caldwell, and the St. Joseph Regional Health Center in Bryan. All of the facilities are within a thirty-minute drive from Somerville. Numerous church denominations are represented in Somerville. Pazdral Park and Welch Park are sources of recreational activities for the City, but more attention should be given to increasing the number of sports facilities, such as volleyball and basketball courts, and soccer fields.

Overall, the services and facilities available for the citizens in the City are good for a community the size of Somerville. Those areas where the City currently falls short can be remedied to meet the minimum recommendations if the community chooses to do so.

Table 10.6: Recreational Facility and Development Standards

<i>Activity/Facility</i>	<i>Number of Units per Population</i>	<i>Service Radius</i>	<i>Location Notes</i>
Basketball	1 per 5,000	1/4 to 1/2 mile	Usually in school, recreation center, or church facility; safe walking or biking access; outdoor courts in neighborhood and community parks
Baseball - official	1 per 5,000	1/4 to 1/2 mile	Part of neighborhood complex
Little League	1 per 5,000	1/4 to 1/2 mile	Part of neighborhood complex
Soccer	1 per 10,000	1 - 2 miles	Number of units depends on popularity; youth soccer on smaller fields adjacent to schools or neighborhood parks
Softball	1 per 5,000	1/4 to 1/2 mile	Slight difference in dimensions for 16' slow pitch; may also be used for youth baseball Best in batteries of 2 - 4; located in neighborhood/community park or adjacent to school site
Tennis	1 per 2,000	1/4 to 1/2 mile	
Volleyball	1 per 5,000	1/4 to 1/2 mile	Usually in school, recreation center, or church facility; safe walking or biking access; outdoor courts in neighborhood and community parks

Source: *Municipal Benchmarks*, pg. 150-52, copyright 1996. Table in the book was excerpted from Roger A. Lancaster (Ed.), *Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines* (Alexandria, VA: National Recreation and Park Association, 1983).

SECTION

11



Land Use

Section
11

LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

Land use planning involves the allocation of land to promote the orderly growth and development of a city. Proper land use is important for the health, safety, and welfare of a community, and contributes to the economic development opportunities of that community.

The Target Cities Team completed a land use survey of Somerville in September of 1999. The following is a presentation of current land uses within the city limits. This information will aid in the planning for future land uses to avoid conflict and encourage orderly growth.

PLANNING AREAS

The city was divided into quadrants to aid in information gathering and analysis. The boundaries of these areas are shown in Map 9, and the land uses are shown on Map 10.

Area A is bounded on the northwest by Thornberry Drive, on the northeast by Avenue E, on the southeast by 7th Street, and the western boundary is the corporate city limit. The southeastern portion of this area contains the Middle and High Schools, the school stadium, the city park ball field, and residential development including a manufactured home park. The northwestern portion is undeveloped, wooded land, most of which lies within the new flood plain area (Map 2). Much of Area A is subject to drainage problems

Area B is bounded on the northwest by the corporate city limit, and on the northeast by the Santa Fe Railroad tracks. The southwestern boundary is the corporate city limit to Thornberry Drive then Avenue E to 9th Street, which is the southeastern boundary. This area is mixed residential and commercial to the south and along Highway 36, with a large area of undeveloped land to the northwest. Pazdral Park is in the south central section of this area, and is adjacent to a large church-owned parcel of land that is partially developed and part open area. These properties lie

LAND USE

within the new floodplain (Map 2). The portion of this parcel to the east of the railroad tracks is Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad property (BNSF), the rail tie treating plant (the largest industrial site in Somerville), and rail yard are located here.

Area C is bounded on the northwest by 9th Street to the corporate city limit on the northeast and southeast. The southwestern boundary is Avenue E to County Road 419, then moves east to State Highway 36 to the city limit. This area is mixed residential, commercial, and light industrial. Many of Somerville's historic buildings are located in this section along Highway 36 between 6th and 10th streets. There is a large area of undeveloped land in the southern portion of this area, which is trisected by the junction of railroad tracks. Sweet Water Creek passes through the southern portion of this parcel.

Area D is bounded on the northwest by 7th Street, on the northeast by Avenue E to County Road 419, then by State Highway 36 to the city limit. The southeastern and southwestern boundaries are the corporate city limit. This area is mixed residential and commercial, and includes the elementary school. Many of the city's historic homes are in Area D. The southeastern portion of this section is agricultural land.

LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

The following land use classifications were used during the one-site survey and analysis:

- Agricultural - pasture and crop land
- Commercial - businesses excluding industry
- Industrial - manufacturing, assembling or processing of goods
- Parks - parks and recreation areas within the city limit owned or managed by the city
- Public - schools, public buildings, churches and cemeteries
- Residential - Single Family — free standing houses
 - Medium Density — duplexes, triplexes and quadriplexes;
 - High Density — apartments;
 - Manufactured Homes — manufactured housing easily moved; and
- Vacant - land within the city limit that is non-agricultural and not built upon
- Rights-of-way - streets and public rights-of-way

MAP 9: PLANNING AREAS

LAND USE BY CLASSIFICATION

Table 11.1 below, shows the current land use in Somerville, both in terms of the number of acres for each classification, as well as a percentage of the community’s total land area.

Table 11.1: Existing Land Use by Acreage and as a Percentage of Total Land Area

<i>Land Use Classes</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Agricultural	116.21	7.58
Commercial	37.14	2.43
Industrial	98.82	6.43
Parks	15.72	1.02
Public	28.43	1.85
Residential		
Single Family	183.92	11.98
Medium Density	4.64	0.3
Manufactured Homes	33.54	2.18
Vacant Urban	1,016.70	66.23
Total	1,535.12	100

Source: Texas Target Cities Program

TRADITIONAL LAND USE

In the absence of zoning, land use patterns in Somerville have been created through the City's response to issues as they arose. The City’s adoption of the Southern Building Congress Codes and the enactment of ordinances for subdivisions, has reduced land use conflicts related to flood hazards and manufactured homes. The institution of administrative controls for nuisances has permitted the City to regulate some of the major nuisances, such as junk and abandoned vehicles in yards, overgrown lots, farm animals on residential properties, and vacant and/or deteriorating properties¹.

Transportation arteries have historically influenced growth patterns in Somerville. The city first developed along the BNSF Railroad, which was a major transportation mode. State Highway 36 is currently the major transportation artery through the community. The historic and Central Business Districts are located west of the railroad tracks and along Highway 36. Most of the commercial and industrial property in Somerville is located on or near Highway 36.

MAP 9 CURRENT LAND USE

CURRENT LAND USE

The Target Cities Team conducted a land use survey of Somerville in September of 1999. Land uses ascertained from this survey are as follows:

Agricultural

Agriculture comprises seven percent (116 acres) of land use within the city limit of Somerville. With the exception of two small centrally located parcels, agriculture is limited to the far southern area of the city.

Commercial

Two percent (37 acres) of land in Somerville is in commercial use. These commercial properties are located throughout the city with the largest parcels to the north-central side of town.

Industrial

Industrial land use accounts for approximately six percent (98.82 acres) of land use in Somerville. Industrial facilities are primarily located to the east of the railroad tracks. The largest industrial use is the Santa Fe Railroad tie treating plant, also the largest employer in Somerville. Two small light industrial sites are located on the south and far east sides of the city.

Parks

Pazdral Park is the only public park within the city limits of Somerville. The park occupies approximately six acres of land, and is located to the north of most of the city's residential development. Details of the park's amenities are discussed in the preceding section, Section 10, Community Facilities.

Public

Public land use includes public schools, public parks and recreation facilities, city government, public buildings, community services, health services, U.S. Post Office, museums, churches and cemeteries. Public land use accounts for almost two percent (28 acres) in Somerville. The location and nature of these properties are discussed in the preceding section, Section 10, Community Facilities.

Residential

Combined residential use constitutes roughly fifteen percent (221 acres) of Somerville's land use. Of this, almost twelve percent is single-family housing, two percent is manufactured homes and less than one half of one percent of land is in use for multi-family dwellings such as duplexes and apartments. Details of housing locations and conditions are discussed in Section 9, Housing Analysis.

Vacant Urban

This survey revealed that over sixty-five percent (1,016 acres) of land within the Somerville city limits falls into the category of "vacant urban" (undeveloped). Over seventy-five percent of this undeveloped property is in three large parcels. The largest parcel, approximately thirty-eight percent of the undeveloped land, lies to the northeast of the BNSF Railroad tracks, and is the site of the majority of the city's industrial development. A 216 acre parcel (roughly twenty percent) of the city's undeveloped land is located on the extreme northwest side of the community. This property is adjacent to a small cluster of houses and manufactured homes that are in poor condition. Immediately north of this site is a 35 acre commercial site with potential for light industrial use. The last of the large parcels is a 200 acre (nineteen percent of the total vacant) site on the far western edge of the city that is bounded on two sides by Thornberry Road. This property is wooded, and much of it lies within the newly defined flood plain. The remaining twenty-five percent of vacant land is scattered throughout the city in small parcels and single lots.

CONCLUSION

Land use in Somerville has been unregulated. The absence of land use regulations has contributed to chaotic development of the city. Housing is found near industrial sites, commercial properties are adjacent to residential. Somerville has no planned industrial park or designated industrial land. Industry is scattered along Highway 36 and near the railroad tracks, and this may create problems in future land use planning. The presence of vacant land within the developed areas of the city lends itself well to infilling strategies; however, conflicting land uses will be an issue in development of many of these lots.

Development patterns within the City of Somerville are changing as Lake Somerville and commuting residents become factors of increasing importance to the city. Commercial establishments are beginning to locate on the west side of the city to attract business from lake visitors. Residential development has extended far to the west of Highway 36, as commuters

LAND USE

from nearby large cities choose to live in Somerville, but do not require close proximity to the central business district. Land use controls will be critical to the orderly growth and future development of the community.

RESOURCES

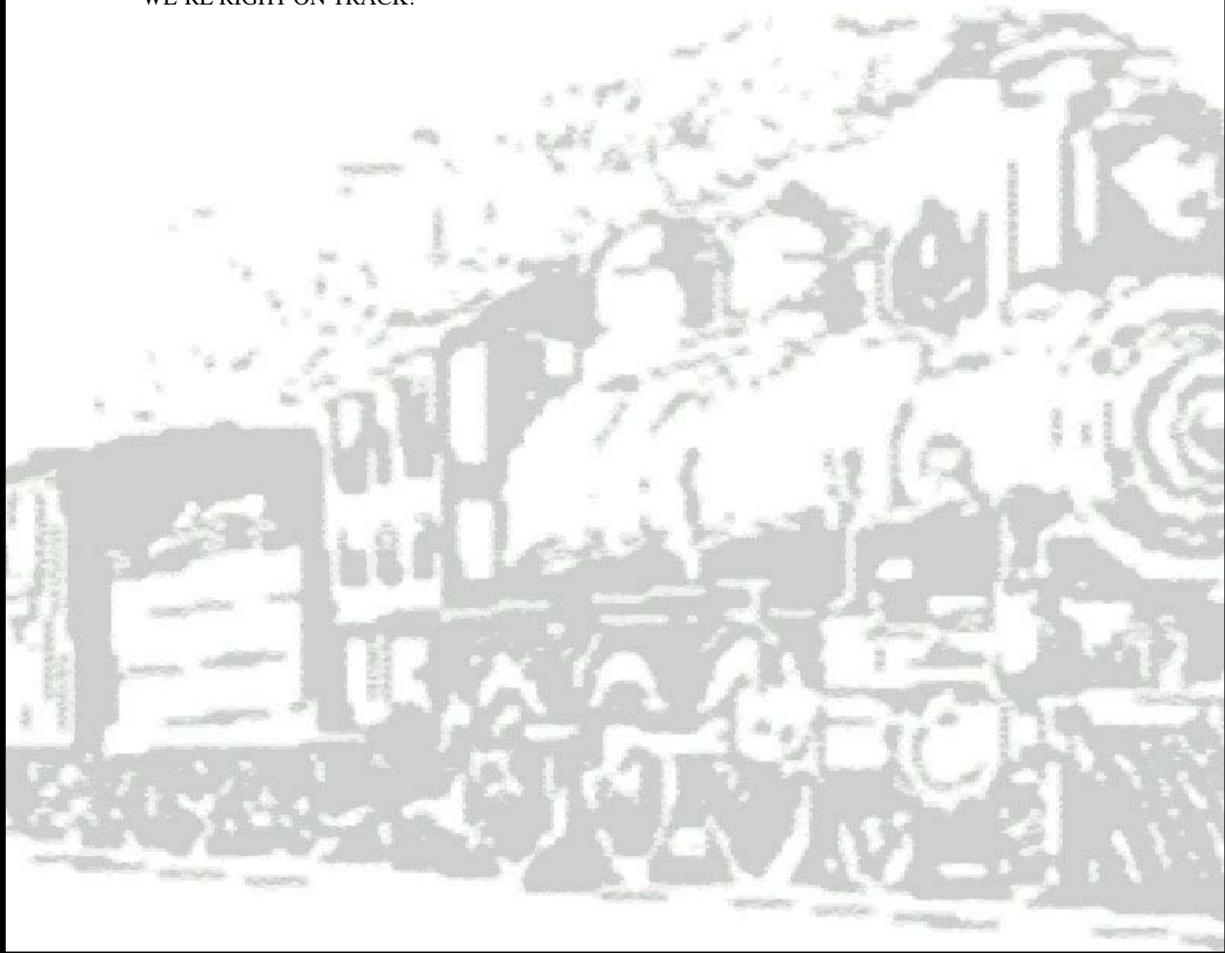
1. Pledger et al. *City of Somerville Planning and Capacity Building Study*, 1992.

VISION 2020 PLAN

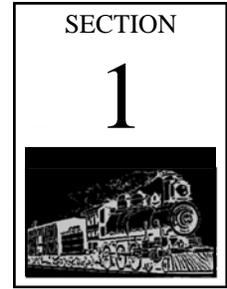
Somerville,



WE'RE RIGHT ON TRACK!



Goals



Section
1 **GOALS**

PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

A goal is an abstract idea that effort is directed towards achieving by an individual or an organization. It is an ideal future end, condition, or state related to the health, safety or general welfare of the public toward which planning and implementation measures are to be directed. Goals are general expressions of values and therefore, are abstract in nature. Consequently, a goal is generally not quantifiable, time-dependent, or suggestive of specific actions for its achievement.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- ❖ Maintain consistent population growth in Somerville and promote smart growth through consistent planning of new development.
- ❖ Develop a sustainable economy for the city of Somerville.
- ❖ Develop and maintain programs to train the people of Somerville for a competitive job market.

LAND USE

- ❖ Encourage and promote land uses in Somerville that are efficient, productive, compatible, attractive, and environmentally friendly.
- ❖ Increase park space to provide accessibility to all residents.
- ❖ Minimize the impact of flooding.
- ❖ Increase the value of Lake Somerville to residents of and visitors to the City of Somerville, while preserving the economy and the environment of the lake.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- ❖ Direct development away from the flood plain.
- ❖ Promote a clean environment in Somerville.

GOALS

- ❖ Promote public safety with regard to natural and manmade hazards in Somerville.

TRANSPORTATION

- ❖ Provide transportation resources to support current land uses and future growth.
- ❖ Increase safety along major corridors.
- ❖ Improve signage and utility of streets.
- ❖ Improve pedestrian and bicycle access and safety.
- ❖ Improve accessibility for the mobility impaired.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- ❖ Ensure a long-term water supply for the City.
- ❖ Maintain, and upgrade Somerville's storm water system.
- ❖ Maintain, and upgrade Somerville's wastewater system.
- ❖ Establish regulations for future utility placement.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- ❖ Provide a functional municipal government center.
- ❖ Increase the use of the City Recycling Center and Citizen Collection Station.
- ❖ Continue to provide adequate coverage of police, fire, and EMS to existing and new development areas in the City of Somerville.
- ❖ Support quality health services for the citizens of Somerville by providing for the specific health needs in the community.
- ❖ Develop and maintain a quality relationship with the Somerville Independent School District (SISD) in order to provide educational opportunities for all segments of the population in Somerville.
- ❖ Continue to maintain and upgrade parks under the care of the City of Somerville and promote the development of new parks and greenbelts.
- ❖ Provide quality indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities.
- ❖ Provide Somerville citizens and tourists with safe and well-maintained recreation areas.

HOUSING

- ❖ Improve the quality and affordability of housing and neighborhoods in Somerville.
- ❖ Preserve the environment and natural resources through innovative planning and design of housing.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

- ❖ Preserve and promote the history and historical resources of Somerville.
- ❖ Establish an official link between the Somerville Historic Resources Board and the City of Somerville.
- ❖ Provide on-going programs to identify the significance of historic resources within Somerville.
- ❖ Instill a sense of pride in the citizens of Somerville for their architectural history.

COMMUNITY IMAGE

- ❖ Develop welcoming, inviting, and informative gateways.
- ❖ Develop a unified street beautification program that promotes visual unity and a pedestrian scale within the city.
- ❖ Reduce visual clutter and confusion along SH 36 to promote the feeling of small-town America.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ Implement programs aimed at bringing a variety of businesses and services into Somerville to increase employment opportunities.
- ❖ Facilitate economic development by seeking new funding sources.
- ❖ Identify areas within Somerville for new development.
- ❖ Implement an ongoing Marketing/Tourism campaign.

TOURISM

- ❖ Increase revenue from Welch Park.
- ❖ Improve programming for Welch Park and the City.

GOALS

- ❖ Identify the tourism resources within the city and surrounding area, which make Somerville an attractive tourist destination.

SECTION

2



Demographics

Section
2

DEMOGRAPHICS

INTRODUCTION

This section will focus on the future population of the City of Somerville. The population of Somerville is growing and becoming more and more diverse each year. These changes will provide the City with new and unique challenges and opportunities. The City’s social and economic future is dependent on having a clear understanding of the present and future needs of the citizens of Somerville.

Population

The current population of Somerville is approximately 1,612 persons. The population has grown at an approximate rate of 0.5% per year for the last 20 years, a rate that can easily be maintained for many years to come. As Somerville works to improve all aspects of the city, the population will grow and change. Development of new industries, housing developments, and tourism will help the city to attract new residents. This influx of new residents will place increasing demands on the city’s infrastructure, education, and economic systems.

The rate of growth determines the overall needs of the city. Even at the current growth levels, the city will grow to over 1,900 residents by the year 2020. With a fast-rate of growth, approximately 1.5% per year, the population could grow to over 2,500 by the year 2020. An influx of people to the city could easily overwhelm current systems. It is important for the City to recognize that planned development of Somerville is the best way to control, and prepare for growth. (Table 2.1)

Table 2.1: Projected Population Growth, Somerville, Texas

<i>Projected Growth Rate</i>	<i>2000 Population</i>	<i>2010 Population</i>	<i>2015 Population</i>	<i>2020 Population</i>
0.5%	1660	1743	1830	1921
1.0%	1708	1879	2066	2272
1.5%	1757	2020	2323	2671

Source: 1990 Census, Texas State Data Center

AGE

Somerville is a relatively young city in terms of its population. As shown by Table 2.2, thirty-four percent of the residents are under 18 years of age. The median age is 32.

Table 2.2: Age Distribution

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of Persons</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
0-9 Years	256	17%
10-19 Years	256	17%
20-29 Years	200	13%
30-39 Years	200	13%
40-49 Years	168	11%
50-59 Years	146	9%
60-69 Years	127	8%
70-79 Years	125	8%
80-89 Years	64	4%
90 + Years	0	0%

Source: 1990 Census

These numbers represent a growing population of citizens who will, in the next 10-20 years, enter the workforce. With the limited employment opportunities in and around Somerville, the City must begin to develop programs to attract and retain business and industry. If it does not, the younger generation of citizens will begin to move away from Somerville, beginning a trend that will be difficult to reverse.

GENDER ISSUES

Currently the population of the City of Somerville is 53% female. While this is in keeping with the national average, it is important because it represents a section of the population that may be in need of specialized services. Due to limited availability of medical services in the city at present, the people of Somerville are forced to travel to nearby communities for all but the most basic of medical services. Because of their specialized medical needs, females are most often required to travel in order to receive these services. There is a need for the City of Somerville to develop medical and other specialized services for the female population of the city.

Table 3.3: Gender Distribution - Persons 18 years and older

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Average Annual Income</i>
Female	838	52%	\$8,250
Male	773	48%	\$11,056

Source: 1990 Census, 1999 Somerville Community Survey

Females in Somerville are less likely to hold full time jobs than males. The average annual income for females in Somerville is substantially lower than the average annual income for males. There are two primary reasons for this discrepancy. First, females are more likely to be the primary caregiver in the household, while males are more likely to be the primary, or only, breadwinner in the household. Secondly, the range of employment opportunities for females in Somerville is limited. Many of the jobs in Somerville are labor intensive, leaving little opportunity for employment for the females of the community. The jobs that are available to females are often lower paying, part time positions.

To help equalize the employment gender gap in Somerville, programs should be developed to educate and train the women of Somerville. The City should work to attract and develop employment opportunities that are suitable for both men and women. The development of child-care, training, and wellness programs will allow for increased employment opportunities for the women of Somerville.

DIVERSITY

Somerville has an ethnically diverse population. Currently, 52% of the population of Somerville is White, while 24% and 23% of the population is Hispanic and Black, respectively. As the population changes, the City of Somerville will develop diverse new social, economic, and religious outlooks. Cultural diversity will increase and thrive, bringing with it, new ideas and traditions. These groups may require programs that are not currently offered in Somerville. The City will need to act quickly to meet the changing housing, education, language, economic, and cultural needs of the population.

Table 2.4: Race / Ethnicity

<i>Race / Ethnicity</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
White	52%
Black	23%
Hispanic	24%

Source: Texas State Data Center

EDUCATION

Only forty percent of the population of Somerville age 18 and over has earned a high school diploma, severely limiting the number of jobs available to them. As a result, per capita income for the City of Somerville is less than half the national average. It is recommended that the City implement programs encouraging its citizens to earn high school or Graduate Equivalency Diplomas (GED). The primary benefit of an educated workforce is the increased attractiveness of the City to potential employers. Because there is a direct correlation between education and income, the City should encourage the citizens of Somerville to continue their education and training. Instituting evening GED programs would benefit those employed in full time jobs, while technical training programs and cooperative programs with local agencies and institutions of higher learning could help high school students and the unemployed to develop marketable skills.

Table 2.5: Educational Attainment - Persons age 18 and over

<i>Level of Attainment</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Less than 9 th Grade	209	20%
9 th to 12 th Grade, no diploma	218	20%
High School Graduate	378	35%
Some College, No Degree	154	14%
Associates Degree	29	3%
Bachelors Degree	53	5%
Graduate or Professional Degree	27	3%

Source: Texas State Data Center, SISD

EMPLOYMENT

Before the City can begin to attract business and tourism, the people of Somerville must be equipped to meet the needs of these organizations. The per capita income in 1989 for the City of Somerville was just over \$9000 a year. This number has risen to just under \$11,000 per year. Unemployment levels in the City of Somerville have been consistently higher than the rest of Burleson County, and the State of Texas as a whole. This is due to the lack of suitable and varied jobs within convenient commuting distance of Somerville and the lack of adequate training for the people of Somerville. As school age children mature, they realize that employment in Somerville can be hard to find, and they decide to move away. In order to prevent the emigration of the young population of Somerville, the City must develop a strategy for attracting jobs to the city. This strategy, coupled with programs for the development of education and training programs will help the City attract more jobs to Somerville, prevent the exodus of the younger population, and help stimulate Somerville’s economy.

As the population grows, the types of occupations held by the people of Somerville will change. Currently, service occupations represent 17% of the jobs in Somerville. Service occupations are typically the lowest paying types of jobs and thus are not suitable for attracting new residents to the city. With the stimulation of the local economy through new industry, tourism, and community resources, the total number of jobs in Somerville will rise. This increase will enable

the majority of Somerville residents to find employment locally. Diversification of industry is also expected as the population grows and changes.

Table 2.6: *Employment by Current Occupation Types*

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number</i>
Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations	57
Professional specialty occupations	67
Technicians and related support occupations	11
Sales occupations	53
Administrative support occupations, including clerical	45
Private household occupations	1
Protective service occupations	14
Service occupations	82
Farming, forestry, fishing occupations	14
Precision production, craft, and repair occupations	64
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	37
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	29

Source: 1990 Census

Currently, the largest employer in Somerville is the Somerville Independent School District (SISD). The development of tourism would result in a rise in the number of jobs in Construction, Transportation, Wholesale and Retail Trade, Entertainment, and Recreation services. By attracting more Manufacturing, Health Service, and other professional services, the city can help stimulate the local economy.

INFRASTRUCTURE

An increased rate of population growth will result in the need to develop infrastructure capable of handling increased population numbers. Currently, many of the streets of Somerville are in disrepair, with some streets lacking adequate paving, signage, curb and gutter, and drainage. The expansion of Highway 36 will bring increased traffic to Somerville. This increase in traffic will mean more visitors to both Lake Somerville and the city itself. While increased visitors means increased revenues from tourism and retail trade, it also means increased wear and tear on the streets of Somerville. The City should develop a maintenance plan for its streets. Current water

and sewage usage is adequately handled by existing systems. With the rate of growth for the city remaining constant, only minor changes to the existing systems will be necessary. However, if the City experiences a higher rate of growth, the development and installation of additional water delivery and sewage treatment must be planned for. In addition to the expected population growth, the infrastructure needs of local industry must be considered. Both light and heavy industry place increased demands on electric and water utilities. In order to attract additional industry, the City must be prepared to provide adequate utility services. Industry also puts an increased strain on local through streets. Heavy trucks and industrial vehicles cause buckling and deformity shortening the life span of city streets. Increased traffic and the need to develop adequate traffic controls necessitates the formation of a streets department within the City of Somerville.

Commercial development will require expanded capacity of water treatment facilities, landfills, and other public works. Further residential development in the city will require the expansion of current services to new areas. The City should begin to expand these services prior to the development of new areas to prevent disruptions and the additional costs involved of reconfiguring services. Somerville has a current daily consumption of water estimated at 284,000 GPD. This translates to 197 gallons of water used every minute. The capacity of the City's two water wells is approximately 540 GPM for the Old Well and 500 GPM for the New Well. Because the city is only using 19% of the production/provision capacity of its two wells, Somerville is able to offer incoming residents, businesses, and industries the water they need.

Natural Resources

SECTION

3



Section

3

NATURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

The area surrounding Somerville is rich in natural beauty. Situated next to one of Texas’ most beautiful lakes, Somerville’s citizens enjoy the many sporting and recreational benefits of the area. In addition, the city enjoys clean air, quiet streets, and a 'small-town' friendly atmosphere. Citizens of Somerville should think of these benefits as a 'birthright'- a valuable resource worth protecting. Imperative to Somerville's future is maintaining the city's access to these natural resources while encouraging economic development, new jobs, and growth. Far from an impossible dream, Somerville has unique opportunities for balancing growth and conservation that will enhance both the economic foundation of the city and the quality-of-life of its citizens.



Natural resources in the Somerville area include more than those resources we can put a price tag on - clean air and water, shade trees, quiet streets and open spaces are the things that make Somerville a great place to live. All of the things that nature provides for free have a value that enhances the quality of life in Somerville. In order to “grow smart,” Somerville needs to recognize how much the quality of life is enhanced by being close to nature, and to take advantage of the many benefits nature provides for free.

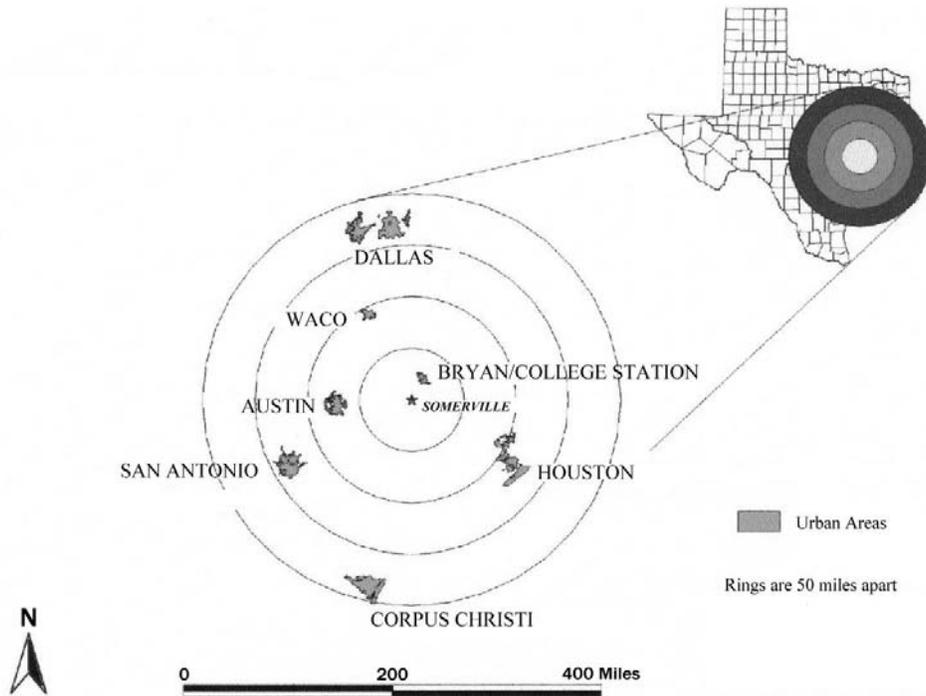
WHY PROTECTING NATURAL RESOURCES COUNTS

One of the most attractive things about Somerville is its rural, small town feel. In order to maintain and improve this atmosphere, any development must encourage the preservation of the things that make country living attractive - clean air and water, quiet, and access to nature. This is more than just a good idea for its own sake - the future of Somerville will be determined by the businesses and families who decide to make Somerville home. If the City hopes to target new businesses and residents to bring growth and jobs, maintaining natural resources is important.

Attracting new businesses

More and more, businesses are deciding to locate in a place that presents a clean, environmentally friendly image. As public opinion and the law has shifted to hold polluters accountable for their actions, businesses are eager to make sure that they make a good impression to investors and the public. Businesses seeking corporate homes today look for a clean environment that offers a quality image, the ability to expand, and access to current and future technology. This means that Somerville has a good opportunity to market itself as a 'green' place to do business. The City's location within easy reach of Houston, Austin, Dallas, and San Antonio means that big markets are within easy reach of the city, as shown in Figure 3.2. Additionally, road and rail connections provide easy transportation access. With so many positive attributes, it is important that the City evaluate carefully the kinds of businesses that it wants to attract. By accepting traditional heavy industry, the City may compromise future opportunities for bringing in other business. While it is hard for a small, growing city to be too picky about what businesses it brings in, Somerville can plan for the right businesses that will not compromise the natural resources that make the city such a great place to live. At the very minimum, traditional 'heavy' industries should be located such that they do not present an image of Somerville as an 'industrial' town. Nuisances like smoke, noise, and light pollution can also disrupt the image of Somerville as a 'green city' and make it difficult to attract a range of business types to the community.

Figure 3.1: Population Centers Around Somerville



A Great Place to Raise a Family

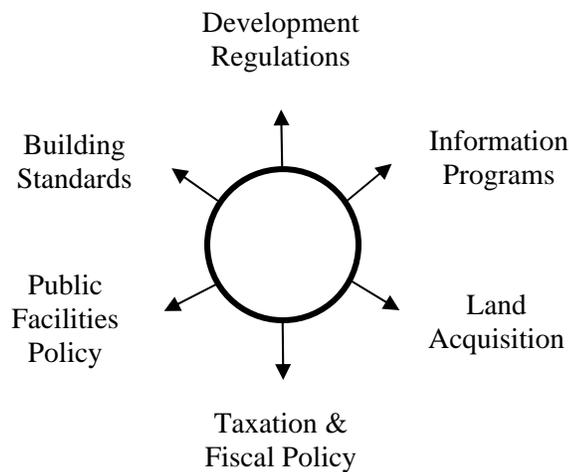
Just as businesses look for a clean, safe community in which to locate, families also value the kind of environment that Somerville provides. Given the large numbers of people in commuting distance of larger cities like Bryan-College Station, Austin, and even Houston, Somerville can realistically expect to become a bedroom community for working families. Lower taxes, good city services, and a friendly environment, coupled with clean air, water, and quiet streets, can make Somerville an ideal place to locate. In fact, Somerville should develop the theme of a 'great place to raise a family' in its marketing and promotional literature.

Particularly attractive to Somerville's growth and development are the arrival of older, retiring or vacationing families who spend the winter in Texas. Texas currently ranks among the top four states nationally in attracting winter migrants from northern states, and Somerville is just the kind of community that people escaping cold, crowded northern cities are looking for. Once the word gets out that Somerville is a clean, safe, friendly community, the city might find itself becoming a popular winter home for northern 'snowbirds'.

TOOLS FOR CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

It should be clear now that making Somerville a clean and friendly place will benefit everyone involved. In order to move toward this goal, the City should devise a strategy for making the protection of natural resources a high priority in all of its activities. The City has a variety of tools available to control growth and development for the protection of natural resources. Among these controls are building standards and development regulations, like a zoning ordinance, that guide development, information programs that educate and encourage participation in public programs, and tax policies that attract businesses that the city hopes to see move into the area. Also, the City can guide development by placing new utilities and public facilities in areas where growth is encouraged.

Figure 3.1: Development Management Tools



Source: Olshansky and French, 1998

FOCUS AREAS FOR NATURAL RESOURCES

The guidance of City policy for the protection of natural resources can be subdivided into three general areas:

- Providing for Access to Clean Water
- Maintaining a Clean Environment
- Promoting Public Safety

Providing for Access to Clean Water

Among the biggest challenges to the City is ensuring that a clean water supply is available now and for the future. Somerville is located in the middle of a region with a high growth rate, and is experiencing water shortages with greater frequency than ever before. Cities, like San Antonio less than 150 miles away, are actively engaged in identifying new water supply sources. Lake Somerville, currently not used for the water supply of a large city like San Antonio or Austin, seems destined to be tapped as a water supply due to its location central to these and other urban areas. Somerville should immediately apply for a water permit to gain first in time water rights to Lake Somerville. Though the city does not currently use lake water for its drinking supply, the future may demand that new sources of drinking water are developed, and Somerville should be first in line for the use of Lake Somerville's water. If the City waits for other cities to apply for water permits first, it could find itself waiting in line in the future for water located just next door.

Similarly, the City should continue its work to participate in a Water Conservation District. By being an active member of such a group, the City can ensure that its interests are taken into account when regional water supply is allocated.

Maintaining a Clean Environment

As has been mentioned throughout this chapter, maintaining a clean environment can make Somerville the kind of place that businesses and families hope to locate in. While Burleson County already participates in the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission's "Clean Cities 2000" program, Somerville should become more engaged in programs that provide a public recognition of the City as a clean town.

Beginning this year, Texas is initiating a new Clean Cities program through the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC). Somerville should get involved early with the program and begin to adopt strategies for controlling pollution and improving services, like recycling. Once the City has an official recognition of being a 'Clean City', this can be used in marketing materials for attracting new businesses and residents.

Promoting Public Safety

While Somerville provides many natural benefits already discussed in this chapter, there are also concerns for public safety that the Comprehensive Plan addresses. First, while the 100-year floodplain has been largely reduced through structural mitigation measures undertaken in the last few years, there is still a significant portion of the downtown area located in the floodplain. The City should address this area of concern by using building and development standards to make sure that buildings in the floodplain are of the right type and that proper precautions have been taken to minimize flood impacts. This could include minimum elevation requirements for new development. However, more long-range plans should include guiding development away from the floodplain area, through a combination of siting public utilities and facilities. Finally, the City should consider acquiring properties in the floodplain as resources permit.

The railroad poses the most easily identified point of risk to Somerville. Every day, more than 25 trains pass through community, many carrying chemicals that pose a threat to the public. Since there is little the City can do to control the type of materials moving through, every effort should be made to prepare for an accidental release of chemicals. The best way to do this is to provide public information to educate citizens about the types of chemicals that pass through the City, and explain the different actions that could be taken in the event of an accident (either evacuation or sheltering at home). By providing each home with a simple brochure explaining what to do in the event of an emergency, the City can greatly enhance its preparedness. Similarly, the City should identify all facilities considered 'difficult-to-evacuate', usually thought of as facilities like seniors centers, hospitals, jails, and schools, that require extra time and planning to evacuate. By locating these facilities as far away from the railroad as possible, the City can avoid problems associated with evacuating them.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Provide for a clean water supply in Somerville

Objectives:

- Apply immediately for a water permit to use the water in Lake Somerville in order to establish 'first in time' rights.
- Continue to pursue the creation of a local water conservation district.
- Promote adoption of water-saving devices (showers and toilets, etc.) by providing incentives for use (reduced building permit fees, water fees tied closer to usage).
- Provide public information about the kinds of water saving devices available, especially to new construction.

Goal 2: Promote a clean environment in Somerville

Objectives:

- Encourage trash pick-up programs in the city and along the lake.
- Establish yearly tire pickup recycling program.
- Provide adequate trash receptacles in the city and lakefront areas.
- Keep medians, roadsides, and vacant lots mowed and clean.
- Actively encourage a recycling program - public information campaign, incentives, bins in city facilities and schools, as well in Welch Park.
- Promote Somerville as a Green City, member of the TNRCC Clean Cities 2000 program (in Burleson County).

Goal 3: Promote Public Safety in Somerville

Objectives:

- Identify the types of chemicals being transported through the city.
- Promote a public information campaign about what to do in the event of a spill.
- Relocate difficult-to-evacuate facilities (schools, senior centers, jail) away from the RR line.
- Locate new difficult-to-evacuate facilities away from the RR line.
- Establish building standards / performance standards for safe building practices in the flood plain.
- Use the capital improvements program to provide new utility service in safe areas.
- Locate new municipal facilities away from flood plain areas.
- Acquire vulnerable property in the floodplain.

Historic Preservation

SECTION

4



Section
4

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

INTRODUCTION

Somerville has an interesting history as a budding railroad town dating to the 1880s. The city grew with the railroad and the Santa Fe Tie and Lumber Treating Plant. The plant has remained a mainstay of the community since its construction. Since 1967, with the construction of the Somerville Dam and impoundment on Yegua Creek, Somerville has seen a shift in the local economy from total dependence on the Tie Plant, to enjoying the influx of tourism from visitors to Lake Somerville. By revitalizing the downtown area, the City would be able to capitalize on the revenue of heritage tourism and several spaces for new businesses.

Unfortunately, a number of Somerville's historic structures have been lost to either neglect or being located in the path of growth. However, this does not mean that Somerville is without significant historic structures. Today, there remains a group of commercial buildings as well as scattered houses that reflect the early prosperity of the city.

It is the purpose of this section to help guide the City in its efforts to retain its historic structures as evidence of a time when Somerville was a regional center. This document provides guidance for the maintenance and treatment of the structures so that they continue to be useful in modern times, while retaining their historic character.

PHYSICAL CHARACTER

At one time Somerville's downtown was comprised of a group of commercial and railroad related buildings. The city's economy was entirely dependent on agriculture and the railroad. The latter brought in visitors from all over the region. The first brick buildings in the downtown commercial district were erected around the turn of the century. After a substantial period of growth through the early part of the twentieth century, these buildings entered a state of disrepair for various reasons. By the 1980s, the commercial center had been reduced to one block in length. Some of the remaining buildings had received contemporary updates, and had been

adapted for current uses. Along the one remaining block of downtown Somerville, numerous unifying architectural features remain in the storefronts. Though much of the architecture has been covered with modern building materials, the historic fabric remains.

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

In order to preserve integrity of design and historical significance, character-defining elements of the commercial district should not be altered. The distinguishing features include the building scale and mass, sidewalk awnings, cast iron storefronts, brick construction, and parapet designs. These are apparent in the following lists of important building features.

Rooflines:

- Unique roofline created by the design of the parapet (historic photos)
- Designs created with brickwork

Form:

- Either single or double lots
- 1-2 story buildings
- Storefronts set near the street

Awnings:

- Wide awnings (6'-8') supported by light weight frames
- Wrap around awnings on corner buildings

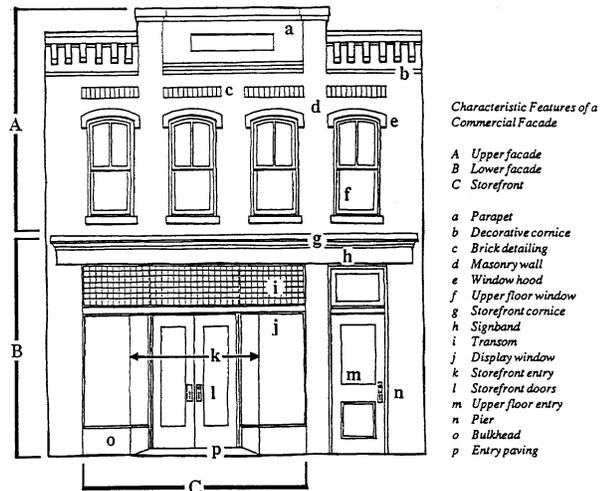
Building Materials:

- All front facades were originally brick
- Arched openings in second story windows

Storefronts:

- Painted cast iron columns mark entries
- Large display windows with bulkheads

Figure 4.1: Anatomy of Front Facade



PRESERVATION PLANNING

Purpose

A preservation plan should address the individual resources on their own as well as contributing to the greater whole. Such an approach assures consistency of action and therefore creates consistency of appearance. Planning for historic preservation would encourage protection of historic structures and promote growth and development. The first step towards protecting these valuable resources is the development of a preservation plan. This plan will “give a community a way to view and protect its historic resources overall, not just one-by-one.”¹ It provides methods for maintaining the pieces, thereby maintaining the whole. A plan provides the basis for the development of a preservation program. Some important reasons to have a plan include:

- Clearly state the program’s goals;
- Provide a guide for the interim protection of the historic resources while steps are taken to adopt a formal preservation ordinance to protect these resources;
- Provide a legal foundation and guidance.²

This plan will identify the aspects of the community that contribute to Somerville’s unique character. It will also provide guidance for in-fill within the historic areas. It contains preservation goals and establishes ways for implementation of the plan.

Education

Because community support is important to a plan’s success, programs should be implemented to educate citizens about historic resources as well as to get feedback about what is culturally important to them. Some ways to do this include:

- Public Meetings, Seminars, charettes, and festivals
- Brochures, Newsletters
- Maps, Guidebooks
- Informational Kiosks
- Signage

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Establishment of a District

An historic district is a collection of structures that are of similar design concept, location, materials and workmanship. They are also educational tools for citizens. Historic districts are valuable economic factors because they benefit the general welfare of the community.

Boundaries of historic districts are generally laid out using geographical features, such as hills or streets, or historical maps. A unique situation occurs in Somerville because of the Memory Lane Project and the reconstruction of the Harvey House. These elements require additional consideration in the mapping of the district boundaries. The proposed Downtown Somerville Historic District would include the buildings on Avenue B (Texas State Highway 36), as well as the area surrounding Memory Lane and the proposed site for the reconstructed Harvey House. (Map 11)

District Boundaries

The proposed Downtown Somerville Historic District is shown on Map 11. It would include all properties within the following boundary lines:

1. A line which runs parallel to Avenue C (Memory Lane) NW to the middle of 9th Street, and SE to the middle of 6th Street, along the back property line of the lots which front on the SW side of Avenue C;
2. A line which runs parallel to Avenue B (Texas Highway 36) EW to the middle of 9th Street, and SE to the middle of 6th Street, along the back property line of the lots which front on the NE side of Avenue B (Texas Highway 36);
3. From the NW terminus of line 1, NE to the NW terminus of line 2; and
4. From the SE terminus of line 1, NE to the SE terminus of line 2.

Pedestrians

The City should also concentrate on the creation of a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. This will increase the opportunities for historic resources to be visited.



MAP 11 Historic District

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Accessibility is vital to the creation and successful implementation of a pedestrian-friendly environment. People should be able to walk through the historic districts as well as comfortably reach surrounding areas. Some ways to do this include; planting of trees; and the inclusion of public rest areas or stopping places along the sidewalks.

Historic Preservation Review Board

After the creation of a historic preservation plan, a Historic Preservation Review Board should be created. The board's primary purpose would be to review building and revitalization plans for historic consistency. The Board would be composed of local citizens appointed by the Mayor. It is normally composed of architects, landscape architects, design experts, artists, historians, and other individuals with an interest in historic resources. This Board would administer the historic preservation guidelines. At least one member should be chosen from a list of candidates submitted by the Somerville Historical Society. The committee should have at least three members, and maintain an odd number of members. The Historic Preservation Review Board reviews each application according adopted guidelines. It may issue Certificates of Appropriateness and make recommendations on proposed changes to historic structures.

Adoption of Guidelines

The third step in the implementation of an effective historic district is the adoption of a set of design guidelines. Guidelines ensure that changes and new construction in the Historic District are appropriate. The guidelines illustrate and describe the significant components of the building, and include recommendations for their treatment. They provide accurate architectural and historical information to guide the restoration efforts of the citizens. The guidelines also provide the basis for design review decisions by the Historic Preservation Review Board. This makes it possible for a fair and unbiased evaluation of proposed changes. A sample historic preservation ordinance is included in the Appendix of this document.

Review Process

The application for a construction, alteration, or demolition permit within the historic district automatically begins with the design review process by the Historic Preservation Review Board. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required before a building permit is issued. In all cases, the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation should be followed. The following is a list of reviewable changes to the exterior of the building:

- Alterations to the exterior of historic buildings such as new doors and windows;
- Signs;
- New Construction;
- Rehabilitation of facades;
- Historic reconstruction;
- Demolition of historic structures;
- Moving historic structures;
- Major alterations to existing buildings;
- New paint schemes;
- Public sector improvements such as street lighting; and
- Major site improvements such as awnings, driveways and fences.

If the activity is considered maintenance of existing building material, a design review is not required. This would include the following:

- Repair of a previously approved design element;
- Painting in a previously approved color; and
- Interior design.

Certificate of Appropriateness

The Certificate of Appropriateness is a document issued by the Historic Preservation Review Board. In conjunction with a building permit, when one is required, a Certificate of Appropriateness signifies approval by the Historic Preservation Review Board for the proposed work to be carried out on a historic building.

Designations

City recognition is another tool that should be used to protect and highlight Somerville's historic resources. A designation identifying properties significant to the City of Somerville is an opportunity to lend credibility to the importance of a site. The added benefits for these listings include recognition of a property's significance and the possibility for tax benefits and/or preservation grants.

Preservation Ordinances

Zoning ordinances specify “where particular land uses and densities are appropriate, to keep excessive development away from historic sites.”⁴ These ordinances provide legal controls to protect resources from demolition, inappropriate changes, and additions.

THE GUIDELINES

Commercial Buildings

The commercial buildings within the Downtown Somerville Historic District have a common style. Buildings can be segmented into three components: the upper façade, the lower façade, and the storefront. Though not all buildings have a second story, all of the buildings do have elements that are described in the upper façade section, therefore, all three sections apply to all buildings. The overriding concern with the rehabilitation of historic buildings within the district is the preservation of the character of the building. The following list will aid in this effort.

Upper Façade

1. Is the cornice present as a continuous unit?
2. Are there examples of decorative brick work, such as a unique parapet or window hood?
3. Are there windows, and if so, are they in wood frames?
4. Is the brick work unpainted?

Overall Façade

1. Are most of the façade elements from figure 4.1 present on the building? Do they appear to be altered?
2. Is there evidence of alterations to the brickwork or other previously removed materials?
3. Are there layers of different materials over other materials?

Storefront

1. Is there an absence of recent materials in the storefront (aluminum framing, plywood)?
2. Are the transom windows still functional?
3. Is there a metal canopy over the sidewalk? On corner lots, does the canopy wrap around the side of the building?
4. Is there a high ceiling visible within the store?

5. Is the signage on a window, bulkhead, or pier? Is the signage of a historically appropriate construction and scale?

Evaluation of Existing Historic Character

Generally speaking, more of the questions above that can be answered with a positive response, then the more historic character the building has retained. However, negative answers do not necessarily indicate that the building does not have much historic character. Questions about original design of the building can generally be answered by researching historic photographs that show the original character of the buildings. The Historic Resources Survey includes some historic photographs of the proposed district and can be used as a reference in this research.

Rehabilitation of Historic Structures

Based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, the following general guidelines could be applied to any of the buildings in the Downtown Somerville Historic District. In following these guidelines, it is important to protect the historic building material from further damage. Also, the work must be compatible with the historic character of the building.

- Identify and, to the extent possible, retain the original materials and features of the building;
- Protect and maintain materials and features that are important to the building character to prevent further deterioration;
- Every effort should be made to repair deteriorated materials that are important to the character by means of patching, consolidation or reinforcement rather than removal and replacement of those materials;
- If a material cannot be repaired, then the selected replacement should be constructed of new or reconditioned elements of the same material and design;
- In cases where a major feature of the building character is completely missing, cannot be recovered, and there is no photographic evidence of the original appearance, the new design should be compatible in size, scale, and material of the building, yet remain clearly differentiated to not create a false historical appearance; and
- Alterations should avoid creating an appearance that is not historically correct.

Walls

The pattern of the wall surface on historic buildings is often important to the character of the building. Sometimes, the original material and pattern have been covered over by other materials, thereby obscuring the historic character. Usually, the new material, is not as durable as the original brick, and can often damage the surface beneath. Therefore, removal of these types of products often reveals problems that must be dealt with before any other rehabilitation work may begin.

- Retain, repair, maintain and protect the original masonry walls of the commercial buildings;
- Remove non-historic siding from the masonry wall, and repair any damage resulting from the installation of such siding, as well as pre-existing damage concealed by the siding;
- In situations where stucco has been applied to the masonry, care should be taken to evaluate the method of attachment of the stucco. Should the stucco be applied to a metal lath attached to furring, then removal should cause minimal damage to the structure. If the stucco was applied directly to the masonry, then a test should be done in an inconspicuous area to assess the situation; and
- Avoid the use of non-historic materials that cover the original façade or cause a reduction of the size of windows or storefronts.

Display Windows

The first impression a visitor will have of the Downtown Somerville Historic District is of the display windows. Often, this opportunity to communicate with the public is missed by owners who have reduced or completely covered the windows. This treatment can lead to an impression of a lifeless downtown. It is important that the vitality of the downtown be displayed by the buildings, as well as within the windows.

- Retain and repair the original form of the display windows containing large glass sheets. If interior and exterior treatments that have reduced or eliminated the window should be removed, with reconstructed windows of the original dimensions replaced;
- Avoid reducing the transparency of the display windows with large painted areas or with curtains. In cases where a business does not require merchandise display, a display which features some aspect of the business could be considered; and

- The use of insulated or laminated glass is acceptable for energy conservation and security. However, the use of reflective films, interior shutters, and blinds is not acceptable, unless they are proven to be historically accurate.

Bulkheads

In general, storefronts in the Downtown Somerville Historic District would have been constructed of wood. Occasionally, other materials, such as marble panels, were used. It is common for bulkheads to rest on the sidewalk; however, they then become susceptible to the vibration of passing automotive traffic. This vibration can lead to cracking and water infiltration. This type of problem is often overlooked due to its location below eye-level.

- Retain, repair, maintain, and protect bulkheads that are of original or historically significant material. Cracked marble can be removed and repaired, and in some extreme cases, the marble may be replaced; and
- Avoid the use of non-historic materials. This includes, but is not limited to, vinyl siding and aluminum-framed Masonite.

Storefront Entries

As the front door is a major part of the appearance of the storefront, it is important that the front door be given significant consideration in the rehabilitation process. Most of these doors would have originally had wood frames, later changed to metal frames with larger glass areas.

- Retain, repair, maintain, and protect storefront entries that are of original or historically significant material. If the deterioration or damage is too severe, replacements of a similar period to the original, style, size and material would be satisfactory. If no such replacement is available, then a new door of similar design, size and material would be acceptable.

Transoms

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Transom windows above the original storefronts provided additional daylight and ventilation into the interior spaces. With the popularity of electric light, and concerns about energy efficiency, ceilings were often lowered, and transoms removed or covered.

- Retain, repair, maintain, and protect transom windows;
- Rebuild missing transom windows with traditional glazing materials. Replacement glass can be obtained through salvaged items from demolitions, or suitable modern glass replacements may be used; and
- Raise the ceiling height within the display window, and make any ceiling height adjustments required to the building to make it historically accurate.

Upper Floor Windows

Originally, the upper floors of early 20th century commercial buildings were used as office space, with a substantial amount of natural lighting provided by windows. These were generally wood-frame. As these upper floors became used as storage, the maintenance of these windows was reduced. As facades were updated, these windows were usually covered up or removed completely and in-filled.

- Retain, repair, maintain, and protect existing upper floor windows;
- Remove materials covering existing windows, also remove brick in-fill and inappropriate replacements;
- Avoid the use of inappropriate energy conservation approaches. One example would be reducing the size of the opening with opaque insulating panels. Do not install reflective glass or films. If the historic windows do not provide sufficient thermal performance, one option could be the installation of interior storm windows. These do not interrupt visual impact, yet provide the additional energy efficiency most owners are seeking; and
- If a new window is required, it should match the existing windows. If all the upper windows are replacements, they should be of similar design, size, and material to the original windows.

Decorative Elements

The decorative elements of a building are often what set the building apart from the neighboring structures. These could include, but not be limited to, storefront cornices, entry paving, window hoods, and light fixtures. This could also include such functional items as signage, tie-rods, and cast iron vents.

- Retain, repair, maintain, and protect existing upper floor windows. If these elements are too severely damaged or missing, suitable replacements may be found by salvaging from demolition projects. If new elements are to be fabricated, they should be of similar design, size and style to the original material.

Parapets and Cornices

The rooflines of commercial buildings are usually hidden behind unique parapets and cornices. While the parapet is generally functional in nature, it can have an articulated form providing the building with added character. Cornices often take the form of corbeled brickwork that accents the parapet against the sky. Frequently, these features are victims of poor maintenance, and are often removed, rather than repaired.

- Retain, repair, maintain, and protect existing parapets and cornices. If these elements are severely damaged or missing, suitable replacements may be constructed, with the designs reflecting those in historic photos. If new elements are to be fabricated, they should be of similar design, size and style to the original material.

New Construction

In the case of new construction, the most important issue is that of context. The design of the in-fill (new) building(s) should be responsive to the surrounding historic district. This is achieved by following these guidelines:

- New construction should have a similar size, scale, and material to the existing building, yet be clearly differentiated from the historic buildings as to avoid a false historical appearance;
- Acknowledge the relationship with the street and sidewalk that exists in the historic district;
- Promote a pedestrian environment by providing entrances and storefronts at the ground level;

- New construction should be of a similar height to that which exists in the historic district so that the new construction does not diminish the visual impact of the historic buildings; and
- Do not design a new building as an imitation of the style of the existing structures, as this creates a false historical image.

Signage and Awnings

Commercial buildings have a need for signage. The primary purpose for this is to identify businesses to pedestrian shoppers. Due to the slower pace of the target audience, the signs may be smaller, and more detailed, with some acknowledgement of the faster paced automotive traffic.

- **Cornice Signs** — cornice signs are located on the cornice, and are generally on a broad, flat panel. This is the sign most visible to motorists. In cases of an existing stone or brick cornice sign, it should remain, uncovered. If there is no existing cornice sign, a new sign may be attached to the building. The new sign must be wooden, and may be painted. The lettering should be in a historically appropriate style, as determined by photographic investigation.
- **Wall Signs** — wall signs are signs attached flush with the wall. These signs may be attached to brick columns, below the level of the awning. If the building has no awning, then the average awning height of the neighboring building should be used.
- **Window Signs** — window signs are painted or etched on the storefront windows and are visible to motorists, and pedestrians. These signs should be limited to the name of the store, with lettering not to exceed 9” in height.
- **Awning Signs** — awning signs are attached to the awning, and hung perpendicular to the building. These signs should not exceed 6 square feet in area, and the lowest point of the sign should provide a minimum clearance of the sidewalk of 7’6”. Awnings should be installed at a historically appropriate height, as determined by historical and photographic investigation. Design, size and material of the awning should be determined by historical investigation.
- **Symbolic Signs** — signs such as a barber’s pole have associations with a particular business. These signs should be permitted, and existing signs of this nature should be preserved.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The key to organizational success, is “strong, continuous, local action.”³ To improve the chances of success, planning and organizing efforts should be integrated. Cities with long-range plans often produce the most tangible results.

- National Grants and Loans — Foundations and corporations fund activities in their areas of interest. Listings can be found in the *Taft Corporate Giving Directory* and the *Taft Foundation Reporter*. The National Trust for Historic Preservation also administers several funds that supply grants or financial assistance. They can be contacted at (202) 588-6000, for further information.
- State — The State of Texas offers funding for preservation efforts. The Main Street Program is an excellent example of this. Aimed at the revitalization of down towns, the program uses historic preservation to restore a positive image to the downtown. The program offers two kinds of assistance: architectural services; and financial aid.
- Local — Somerville should encourage the rehabilitation and restoration of historic buildings on the local level. Some ways to do this include:
 - Façade Easement Program/Revolving Loan Fund — recycling money from completed projects into loans on subsequent projects;
 - Offer City tax incentives;
 - Hold fundraising drives;
 - Assess membership dues; and
 - Organize house tours.⁵

CONCLUSION

As noted above, historic preservation should be a continuing effort aimed at protecting and promoting resources that serve as reminders of a city’s cultural and architectural history. Both the public and the private sectors should collectively play an active role in the protection of these resources.

Somerville has many historic resources. Unfortunately, many of them have not been well maintained or are in very good condition. In order to more effectively preserve them, preservation tools such as a historic preservation plan, ordinances, and a historic district should be

implemented. There is community support for historic preservation, which means that there is significant potential for the creation of a successful program in Somerville.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Promote public awareness of historic resources.

Objectives:

- Identify preservation issues that are important to the citizens and the City of Somerville.
- Educate citizens and the public about Somerville's historic resources.
- Make historic preservation information available to the public through meetings, brochures, maps, and informational kiosks.
- Support the Somerville Heritage Museum.

Goal 2: Preserve and promote the history and historical resources of Somerville.

Objectives:

- Develop a preservation plan.
- Develop guidelines and regulations regarding maintenance of resources.
- Develop preservation ordinances
- Develop a Historic District.
- Encourage the rehabilitation and renovation of historic buildings.
- Develop a historic district facade improvement program.
- Develop incentives for historic preservation.

Goal 3: Establish an official link between the Somerville Historic Preservation Board and the City of Somerville.

Objective:

- Officially recognize a Somerville Historic Preservation Board as a body that will oversee and implement the City's historic preservation plan.

Goal 4: Provide continuing programs to identify the significance of historic resources within Somerville.

Objectives:

- Promote historic resources through tourism.
- Designate pedestrian ways and bicycle paths in conjunction with historic resources.
- Create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere in order to encourage people to walk, which will increase the opportunities for historic resources to be visited.

STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The following are Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation:

1. Every reasonable effort should be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.
2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment should not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
3. All buildings, structure, and sites should be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance should be discouraged.
4. Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected.
5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure, or site should be treated with sensitivity.
6. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

7. The surface cleaning of the structures should be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials should not be undertaken.
8. Every reasonable effort should be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by, or adjacent to any project.
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties should not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.
10. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures should be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

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Economic Strategies

SECTION

5



Section

5

ECONOMIC STRATEGIES

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1999, the Texas Target Cities Team conducted a citywide survey to determine the concerns and desires of residents. The results of this survey indicated strong support for municipal policies aimed at improving local economic conditions. Specifically, residents overwhelmingly support city-government led efforts to actively promote strategies for business growth and revitalization. Table 5.1 provides a sampling of the areas where local residents have expressed their support.

Table 5.1: Citizen Support for Economic Policies Aimed at Revitalization

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Percent of Total Respondents Supporting Action</i>
Bringing new business to town is vital	89%
City's involvement to recruit new business	91%
More shops	82%
More doctors	76%
City beautification measures	69%
City assistance in paying for private development	58%
Need for industry	82%
Retail shops	80%
Convenience store	56%
More dentists	82%

Source: Somerville Survey conducted by the Texas Target Cities Program – Fall 2000

These results indicate that citizens are aware of the current problems and want municipal government to provide leadership.

This section of the Comprehensive Plan is divided into three sections. In the first, the potential sources of funding are presented. Second, the economic improvement strategies are reviewed. Finally, issues relative to the successful implementation of economic improvement strategies are discussed.

FUNDING SOURCES

In order for Somerville to implement economic revitalization efforts, it will need to identify funding sources to help provide revenues for land acquisition, construction costs, infrastructure improvements, etc. In the past, the City of Somerville has successfully sought assistance for redevelopment programs for a wide array of improvement projects. Table 5.2 lists current funding sources.

Table 5.2: Current Funding Sources for Community Redevelopment

<i>Source</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Amount</i>
U.S. DHUD - Community Development Block Grant Program	Infrastructure Improvements	\$250,000
Texas Department of Economic Development	Drainage System Improvements	\$300,000
Texas Department of Transportation	Memory Lane Projects	\$300,000
Park Grants and Donations	Small Scale Projects	\$250,000
Total		\$1,100,000

Source: City of Somerville

Federal, state, regional, and local sources for financial assistance have been reviewed and the following programs are suggested:

The Texas Leverage Fund: The Texas Leverage Fund offered by The Texas Department of Economic Development allows local communities to borrow against future sales tax revenues. Such funds may be used for local improvements. The community must first vote to create a special economic development sales tax. Then, after forming a Local Industrial Development Corporation (LIDC) the city applies for financial assistance under the terms of the program. Once the application has been approved, the community may borrow up to \$3,000,000.

The fund provides a considerable leeway for determining how to pay for the loan. Maturity dates of up to 15 years are available, as are favorable interest rates

Texas Capital Access Fund/Small Business Linked Deposit Program: These two programs are administered by the Texas Department of Economic Development. They could be used by the City of Somerville to help recruit small businesses. The programs work by providing financial institutions with an incentive to make funds available to groups that might not otherwise be eligible for traditional loans. With this capital, small business groups can afford start-up costs, or leasing of capital assets. Eligibility requirements and target groups vary between the two programs. For example, the Texas Capital Access Fund often targets small businesses with less than 100 employees. The Small Business Linked Deposit Program provides assistance for depressed areas.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department: The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department provides matching grants for communities seeking to improve recreation resources through the “Texas Recreation and Parks Account Program (TRPA)”. This matching grant program is structured so that the account provides a 50% matching reimbursement grant to eligible cities. The community must then secure a local sponsor to pay for the other half of the funds. To be eligible the city must hold at least one public hearing to determine support for the program. Once approved, the TRPA can provide three types of funds:

1. Land acquisition and development for recreational purposes;
2. Development of an existing recreation facility; and
3. Acquisitions only of lands to be used for recreational purposes.

Use of these funds cannot exceed \$500,000 dollars per project.

The Texas Target Cities Team recommends the use of this fund to acquire land within Somerville to connect a proposed hike and bike system discussed in the Transportation Section of this document. It could also be used to upgrade Welch Park. For example, new picnic tables, camp sites, and walkways would help to promote a positive experience for visitors to the park.

City Initiatives: Two strategies could be initiated by the City of Somerville to begin the process of revitalization. Somerville could take advantage of Texas law permitting the creation of development districts. Two types of districts have been identified: Public Improvement Districts, and Municipal Management Districts. Both of these programs are facilitated through the Texas Department of Economic Development. After approval by local residents the city can levy a special assessment on taxable property within a district. Both programs enable a municipality to secure revenues that otherwise would not be available for revitalization purposes. The Texas Target Cities Team recommends that the City take a proactive approach in utilizing such programs for two specific purposes. First, in an effort to revitalize the Central Business District of Somerville, the City should pursue building façade and area design improvements as well as the creation of a project the Team has titled “Caboose Alley.” Secondly, the intersection of State Highway 36 and Thornberry Drive has been identified as a key, perhaps the key intersection in Somerville. Every effort should be made to ensure that high standards for development of this intersection are maintained. The commercial and businesses properties associated with this intersection present a prominent image of Somerville. Thus, this should be first-rate development because it exemplifies the standards set for the rest of Somerville.

Other potential sources of funding including the following:

- The Texas Rural Development Council
- The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
- The United States Environmental Protection Agency
- The Livable Communities Organization

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As expressed above, it is recommended that the City of Somerville institute several projects and programs aimed at improving the economy of the community. These initiatives include the following projects and programs:

Somerville Business-Park

It is proposed that the City create a first-class Business-Park on the northeast side of SH 36. This area is perfectly suited for manufacturing and service businesses. Emphasis should be placed on the recruitment of “fabrication oriented” businesses that are clean and provide good wages. It is recommended that Somerville initiate the construction of the business-park by purchasing land

and by developing sites for specific businesses and factories. The Business-Park should include infrastructure in the form of water lines, sewer lines, and storm sewers. It should have a “campus” atmosphere with large, well-landscaped lots. The City may wish to pursue a policy of free sites and/or property tax abatement for potential businesses desiring to locate in the Business-Park.

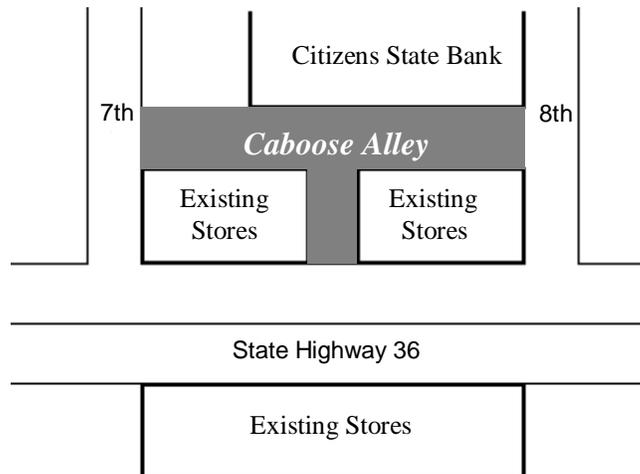
Adult/Vocational Training

The City should work with the Somerville Independent School District to create training programs aimed at increasing a skilled labor pool. Businesses and industries are unlikely to locate to Somerville with the absence of a skilled labor base. Moreover, it is important that the labor pool have the skills necessary to meet the specific needs of such businesses and industries. It is therefore imperative that the City and SISD identify specific businesses and industries to target so that they can focus their training efforts. Once this task has been accomplished the City and the School District can identify and execute educational programs to help citizens meet those skill requirements.

Revitalization of the Central Business District (CBD) and Development of Caboose Alley

As stated above, the City should initiate efforts to revitalize the image of Somerville’s CBD. These efforts should include storefront improvements, landscaping, street furniture, as well as a general fix-up and paint-up campaign. The Texas Target Cities Team recommends that City assume a leadership position in creating an area that could be named “Caboose Alley.”

Figure 5.1: Caboose Alley Concept



The Caboose Alley concept involves the modest redesign of the existing portion of the CBD located on the west side of SH 36, and the utilization of an alley between the backs of the current CBD buildings and the Citizens State Bank. (Figure 5.1) The concept calls for the creation of a pathway from the present sidewalk in front of the stores to Caboose Alley located at the rear of the stores. The Alley could be used for a variety of purposes including retail, antique sales, a street café, musical entertainment, etc. Properly designed and decorated this new space would add a whole new dimension to the Central Business District. People driving on SH 36 would be intrigued by the area and might be interested in visiting it to “see what’s going on.” The project would also double the size of the west SH 36 CBD because shop entrances could be located on both SH 36 and Caboose Alley. Finally, a large, attractive sign could be used to arch the entry to Caboose Alley from 8th and/or 7th street. Such an entry would add visual interest to the space and would encourage people driving on SH 36 to stop and shop. (Please see the design concepts in the third part of this document.)

Residential Developers Workshop

The creation of new residential subdivisions in Somerville is central and perhaps key to growth and economic development in the City. The Residential Developers Workshop is seen as a vehicle for encouraging the construction of new residential subdivisions in Somerville. Through this program, the City would organize and sponsor two or three residential developer workshops per year. The City would identify members of the residential development industry who live in the proximity (150 mile radius) of Somerville. This information is easily obtainable from organizations such as the Texas Association of Homebuilders, and other similar organizations. Select individuals from these groups would be invited to spend a weekend in Somerville. The purpose of the workshop would be to engage homebuilders in discussions concerning the future of the City and those steps that could be taken to increase the level of housing available to residents and potential residents. This program is seen as a potentially effective way to market Somerville as a community that supports new subdivision development.

The Thornberry – SH 36 Intersection and the Thornberry Drive Corridor – City Image

The image of Somerville is vitally important to its economic growth and development. Every effort must be made to ensure that the image of the City projected to the public is positive. In the future, Thornberry Drive will become the second major arterial in Somerville. Presently, it is the highway that most people take en route to Lake Somerville. Therefore, the intersection of Thornberry and SH 36 is critical, as well as Thornberry Drive itself. The City must do everything

possible to ensure that both the intersection and the thoroughfare are developed properly and protected from those elements that would create a negative image. This could be done in the following manner:

- The intersection of SH 36 and Thornberry: The City should adopt and enact a zoning ordinance to control land use surrounding the intersection. Small, individual lot development should be discouraged. Large lot, planned shopping and business centers should be located on all corners of the intersection. The location of ingress and egress drives for these centers should be carefully placed to ensure safety. At some point, Somerville should adopt a sign ordinance to control the signage at this intersection as well as the areas along either side of SH 36. This intersection is the gateway to Somerville. The “look” of this intersection will be critical to the overall image of the City.
- Thornberry Drive: Thornberry Drive is presently owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It will eventually become the property of Somerville. It should be developed as a boulevard with planted and landscaped median separating the traffic lanes. Small, individual lots each with its own ingress and egress drives should be discouraged. A proliferation of such lots along Thornberry would undermine its purpose and would negatively impact the image of the thoroughfare. Instead, planned, large lot sites should be required with businesses and shops wanting to locate on Thornberry. Access to Thornberry should be limited. Additionally, the Target Cities Team recommends that a broad, Bike/Hike trail system be located on either side of Thornberry from its intersection with SH 36 to Welch Park. As discussed above, the “look” of Thornberry Drive will be critical to the overall image of Somerville.

Municipal Building Complex – City Image:

The current municipal buildings are inadequate for the needs of the City and they are in need of updating. The Target Cities Team recommends that the City construct a new municipal building complex on the eastside of SH 36, south of the present central business district. This complex should include a new city hall, police department, and fire station. A municipality’s capital investment in itself is a strong inducement in recruiting new businesses and industries. Potential businesses are unwilling to invest in a community unless that community is willing to invest in

itself. A new municipal building complex would significantly enhance Somerville's image and it would attest to the vitality, stability, and commitment of the community.

Welch Park Enhancements:

Welch Park presently offers a variety of recreation options. With 150 acres of undeveloped land (73% of the park), this area is currently used mainly for picnicking and day use. In the tourism section of this document, strategies for redeveloping and improving the park, and recreational programming are discussed. However, several points should be mentioned regarding the economic impacts of such development. First, short-term improvements such as the addition of benches, boat slips, and camping facilities could attract visitors seeking to experience the scenic beauty of the park. Secondly, turning the area into a water-park with marinas, boardwalks, and restaurants in addition to sports fields and volleyball courts would boost the influx of visitors to the area. A new volleyball court is slated for installation for the upcoming summer season. Enhancement of Welch Park is very important to the long term economic growth of Somerville.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ECONOMIC STRATEGIES

A number of important economic development considerations must also be taken into account if the City of Somerville is to grow and prosper. For one, marketing is one of the keys to effective economic revitalization. Somerville should conduct a marketing and demand analysis to target groups for tourism. The City should identify the groups it will try to attract. Once this is accomplished, the City should commence a marketing campaign to attract tourists.

It is also recommended that the City of Somerville organize an Economic Development Council, and employ an administrative assistant to the City Manager. This individual's responsibilities could be varied. They could include locating and applying for funding, overseeing Somerville's marketing plans, and finally, ensuring that the implementation of community and economic development plans happen together. Somerville has many positive qualities that can be capitalized upon to provide a bright and prosperous future. However, the success in achieving that future will depend to a great extent on the ability of the City to provide leadership. Somerville must take the initiative if it wishes to improve the quality of life for its citizens.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Implement programs and policies aimed at bringing a variety of businesses and services into Somerville and increase employment opportunities for the city.

Objectives:

- Create a detailed plan for economic enhancement with project priority, cost, timing, and responsibilities clearly identified.
- Create and implement an annual program of events that can be held on a monthly basis.

Goal 2: Seek new funding sources to facilitate economic enhancement.

Objective:

- Actively pursue federal, state, regional, and private sector funding sources.

Goal 3: Capitalize on Lake Somerville and Welch Park

Objective:

- Improve Welch Park and increase fees collected through tourism activities.

Goal 4: Market Somerville more effectively

Objectives:

- Establish an Economic Development Council
- Employ an Administrative Assistant to direct the City's economic development program.

Community Image

SECTION

6



Section
6

COMMUNITY IMAGE

INTRODUCTION

Community image is important because, not only is it the face presented to the citizens of Somerville, it is also the face projected to visitors. Community image is the total effect created by a city that forms its overall attractiveness and, although reactions to other factors may color initial views, it is the overall community image that leaves the strongest and most lasting impressions. By identifying community image issues, Somerville can address concerns and formulate constructive ways to further develop positive aspects of the City.

SUPPORT FROM THE CITIZENS

One of the most striking results of the community survey conducted by the Texas Target Cities Team was that eighty-eight percent of the respondents were in favor of community appearance standards. This suggests that asking residents to help tidy up the city and keep their yards looking nice should elicit a positive response. More importantly is the fact that ninety-four percent of respondents feel that the appearance of Somerville is important. In fact, support is strong for most of the recommendations being made about the community image of Somerville.

GATEWAYS TO THE CITY

It is important that Somerville create physical gateways at its primary entrances. These should be landscaped entries with signs welcoming people to the City of Somerville. They should be located on both the north and south ends of Highway 36, where FM 1361 enters the City, and where the road along the top of the dam connects to Thornberry Drive. Not only should gateways be landscaped nicely, they should also incorporate the new city logo so people associate it with their memories of Somerville.

Somerville, Texas



WE'RE RIGHT ON TRACK!

Because the visual image of the city is so important, Somerville should maintain strict standards of appearance for public and private property. There is no need to dictate exactly how yards and other landscaped areas should be designed, but mowing and litter control should be enforced to help give a neat and tidy appearance to the city.

VISUAL UNITY

There are several initiatives and policies that Somerville can pursue to promote visual unity throughout the City. The easiest way is through repetition of physical elements. Streets throughout the city, both old and new, should all have curb and gutter and be kept in a good state of repair. This will not only make the city look better, it will make all of Somerville's citizens feel as if they are treated equally, irrespective of where in the city they live. Directly related to this is the installation of sidewalks throughout the city. Again, these will have a unifying effect on the city, but more importantly, will help to create a pedestrian friendly environment that encourages neighboring and hopefully a reduction of the reliance of autos for travel in town. Street trees are one of the most important elements that could be added to the City. Many of Somerville's streets are already lined with trees that provide shade, a sense of enclosure and scale reduction to the pedestrian level. The addition of new trees and the maintenance of existing trees will go a long way in promoting visual unity.

Platted streets that are actually in existence but are not being used should be vacated and closed. This would not only simplify the street pattern in some existing neighborhoods in Somerville but will help tidy the appearance as gravel and grass ways are returned to a natural state. Utility lines should be located underground, or alternatively, they should be located behind structures. This will also allow for the growth of larger street trees in front yards as they will then not interfere with overhead utility lines.

MAINTAINING THE FEELING OF SMALL TOWN AMERICA

As it grows, Somerville should preserve its historic resources including houses and original downtown buildings. This will help retain its small-town character. Compatible with this is the need to encourage on-street parking. This not only makes a small town appear vibrant and lived-in, but it also helps to reduce wider streets to the pedestrian scale. On-street parking often allows consumers to get as close as possible to their destination without having to park in huge, uninviting paved parking lots. If large parking lots are to be used, especially by businesses along Highway 36, a landscape ordinance should be developed for commercial properties that helps to disguise parking areas. Low shrubs combined with trees whose canopies begin a few feet above head level can work well in such situations. The shrubs can hide the parked cars and the trees provide shade, reduce scale, and still allow commercial properties to be seen by passers-by sitting in automobiles or walking down the street. It is also possible to hide parking areas by relocating them to the rear of commercial properties, allowing beautiful facades and landscaping to define the streetscape.

To promote pedestrian access, major road intersections should be designed with pedestrian crossings. The use of varied paving techniques in the crosswalks as well as other design elements or landscaping on the corners can aid quite well in this endeavor. Street sign design in Somerville should reflect the unique character of the community. This, coupled with historically accurate signs on historic buildings will help to promote the communal feeling of small-town America.

AN END TO VISUAL CLUTTER ON HIGHWAY 36

It will be important to develop and institute an ordinance that limits size, number, and location of business signs along SH 36. SH 36 must be cleaned-up if the image of Somerville is to be improved. Although already mentioned, the removal of utility lines crossing Highway 36 will also have the same result.

PRIDE IN THE COMMUNITY

The current program of removing abandoned and deteriorating structures should alternatively be phased into a comprehensive program of revitalization and replacement of structures. Rather than eliminating what may be important historical structures, every effort should be made to preserve and use them. Instead of creating empty lots, the city would be retaining its historic character and promoting a sense of pride within the community for its history.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

New development in Somerville should follow design guidelines that promote a sense of community pride. These design guidelines should reflect the historic character of Somerville. The development of new parks and related recreational amenities will also enhance the community image of Somerville. The creation of a new municipal government complex near the present intersection of SH 36 and 7th Street could well be the most important single element for improving the community image of Somerville. The construction of a city center that provides residents and visitors with a sense of pride and place may project Somerville as something more than just a few old buildings along State Highway 36.

The development of a new residential area that provides Somerville residents with a choice of housing types would also create a sense of pride within Somerville. It will be important to connect such a new area with the existing parts of Somerville so that all of the City's citizens, both new and old, feel as if they are one greater community and not a conglomeration of disparate parts or housing developments. This can be accomplished through the use of similar street patterns, housing styles, and greenway linkages between the old and newer parts of the city.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Develop a pleasant visual image for visitors and residents entering Somerville.

Objectives:

- Create attractive landscape gateways on each end of SH 36, FM 1361, and the connection of Thornberry Drive and the Lake Somerville Dam.
- Vacate unused rights-of-way on streets that have been platted but have not been constructed. Utilize these areas for a hike and bike trail system as well as greenway corridors.

Goal 2: Develop a consistent street beautification program that promotes visual unity and a pedestrian scale within the city.

Objective:

- Adopt and enforce a landscaping ordinance that is applicable to apartment complexes, businesses and industrial sites.

Goal 3: Establish an image along Highway 36 that promotes the feeling of small-town America.

Objectives:

- Install landscaping along key areas in the Central Business District.
- Construct a new municipal government complex.

Goal 4: Reduce visual clutter and confusion along SH 36.

Objectives:

- Adopt and implement a business sign control ordinance.
- Institute an annual pick-up, cleanup, paint-up campaign with particular emphasis for properties located along SH 36.

Goal 5: Create a sense of pride in the citizens of Somerville for their architectural history.

Objective:

- Adopt and implement a Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Urban Infrastructure

SECTION

7



Section
7

URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

The City of Somerville is currently able to provide all residents with utility services. Expansions and improvements to water quality, the sewer system, and location of electric lines are needed. Imminent issues for the future of Somerville include the relocation of electricity and phone lines from above ground to underground. Systematic renovation of waterlines, sewer lines and storm sewers will be required for future population growth and quality of life improvements.

WATER SYSTEM

The Water System of Somerville is owned and operated by the City. The system consists of two wells that extract water from the Queen City-Sparta Aquifer. As Somerville Survey 2000 suggests, water supplies currently meet demand for volume but the visual quality of the water is unacceptable to some members of the population. The City of Somerville should create an updated water map for recording repairs. Future growth will necessitate the creation of a closed network system, taking advantage of the opportunity to improve water lines as a part of the major improvements done along State Highway 36.

Problems encountered with the quality of the current water supply are lignite and carbon residues, of about 1 micron in size that create a blackish coloring. Specialized filters for extracting particles this size for



the complete water system are not viable due to the particle size and prohibitive cost. In spite of the coloration problem, water quality meets Texas standards for drinking water quality as set forth by the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). With future growth in sight, Somerville should consider improving water quality as a part of its endeavor to secure additional water resources.

The use of Lake Somerville as an additional source of water supply would also provide an improved visual quality to Somerville's water. The community presently utilizes a radial type network towards the outskirts of the City. Somerville's existing water network presents a problem because customers near the end of the system periodically get stagnant water. This situation can result in partial sedimentation and may require carefully scheduled line cleaning. With a radial gravity based system, the 89 water hydrants located throughout the city provide an excellent answer for line cleaning.

Systematic renovation of waterlines is currently in progress along Highway 36 and needs to be extended for complete renovations of the existing asbestos cement six-inch waterlines. Complete water system renovations for Somerville should be approached on an 8-year plan. Special concern should be given to primary feeding lines to and from the elevated tank to guarantee a dependable supply without service interruptions. A "Superior System"



(adequate operators and redundancy in the water system) qualification can be obtained if additional trained personnel are employed as a part of the City's utilities department.

THE WASTEWATER SYSTEM

Somerville's wastewater system is owned and operated by the City utilizing multiple lift stations and one oxidation-ditch-design treatment plant. Current capacity is sufficient to sustain new growth for at least the next five years. New technologies concerning the treatment and management of wastewater should be reviewed and implemented when feasible. Service and consistent inspections and safety standards should be continued.

Major infiltration on the existing system augments wastewater volume by close to 80 per cent and will require aggressive repairs. It is recommended that collapsed sections of the wastewater system be renewed based on the volume wastewater transported by each line relative to the lift station system. Detection of damaged sections utilizing alternative methods is crucial for

managing and scheduling emergency crews. Older or damaged sewer lines increase service costs due to larger volumes of water reaching the treatment plant and the aforementioned lift stations.

Secondly, the City should develop an updated wastewater map expanding from major improvements done on State Highway 36 throughout Somerville. The Somerville downtown area is now retrofitted for storm sewer with the expansion of State Highway 36 and also presents open channel properties that can solve excessive rain from infiltrating into the wastewater system.

The City is currently maintaining a wastewater system with lift stations that receives irregular (175,000 to 300,000 Gal/day) amounts of sewage. Additional attention should be placed on collapsed lines that could pose a potential pollution hazard for the water system. Gradual replacement of older sections should be executed over a six to ten year timeframe.

THE STORM DRAINAGE SYSTEM

Presently the City of Somerville is served by an open ditch drainage system. It is recommended that the City adopt policies and ordinances requiring all future development to provide curb and gutters. Secondly, the city should develop an updated drainage map. Constrained sections of the city lying in low areas should be drained utilizing combined open ditch and curb intakes for optimum drainage.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Maintain, renew and upgrade Somerville's water system.

Objectives:

- Create an updated water map.
- Check the water quality to ensure the safety of the supply.
- Update old lines along major axis lines for improved service.
- Conduct scheduled line cleanings to avoid sedimentation.
- Locate alternative water sources for Somerville's future needs.

Goal 2: Maintain, renew and upgrade Somerville's wastewater system.

Objectives:

- Establish an appropriate map for the improved wastewater system.
- Review surplus at specific lift stations to reduce major infiltration to the system.
- Update old lines throughout the city.
- Maintain the present level of service and sample treated water to ensure the safety of the water supply.
- Establish a method of reviewing and implementing new technologies.

Goal 3: Develop and implement a storm water drainage plan.

Objectives:

- Establish an appropriate map of the improved storm water drainage system.
- Mandate by city ordinance the provision of curb and gutter and other storm drainage infrastructure.
- Expand the service area to avoid local flooding.
- Control Sedimentation and erosion.

Transportation

SECTION

8



Section

8

TRANSPORTATION

PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

This section of the Somerville Vision 2020 Plan will discuss both short and long-term improvements needed for the transportation system in Somerville. The purpose of this section is to promote the orderly development of the transportation system as the city grows. Somerville faces many challenges in upgrading its transportation system to enhance accessibility and mobility for the future. A graphical summary of some of the challenges is shown on Map 7 (See the State of the City part of this document). A thoroughfare plan is an essential component of the transportation section and the key for accomplishing the rational development of Somerville’s transportation network. In the city, local streets are also a very important part of the transportation plan. They will require significant upgrades to meet the demands of the citizens and the growth of the city. New streets will need to be constructed and some underutilized streets removed or converted to other uses.

The Burlington Northern & Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad runs roughly north - south through the City, and presents some challenges and opportunities due to Somerville’s status as a major switching yard.

Bikeways will be a key factor in increasing mobility in Somerville, because they are cost effective, flexible, non-polluting, open to people who can’t drive, and double as recreational amenities.

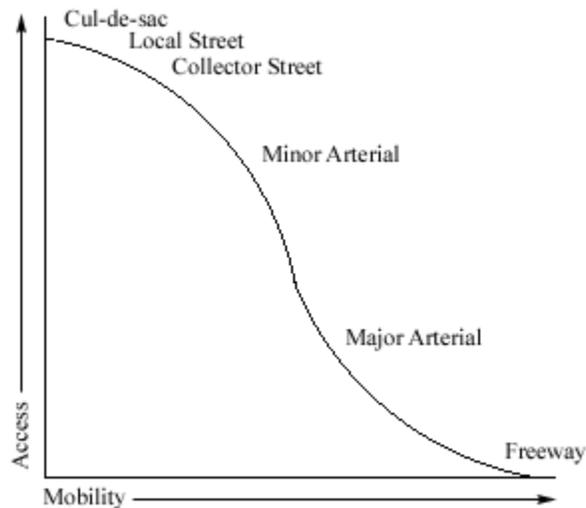
THE THOROUGHFARE PLAN

Somerville is a small city located in a predominately rural county. There is no Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) overseeing transportation planning on a regional basis. Thoroughfares and streets in Somerville are owned and/or maintained by four different entities: The State of Texas, Burleson County, the City of Somerville, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers currently owns Thornberry Drive, as well as significant right-of-way (ROW). Responsibility for State Highway 36 (SH 26) lies with the

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). Burleson County has several roads that lie partially within the city limits, these include County Roads 418, 419, 420, and 422. Other thoroughfares, which should be discussed later, are owned by the city.

The Functional Street Classification System is a method of ordering streets by the service they are intended to provide. Figure 8.1 provides a graphic representation of functional classification vs. access and movement. In Somerville, the streets are divided into four classes, locals, collectors, minor arterials, and principle arterials. Local streets provide the highest level of access to sites, but they also have the lowest average speeds and volumes. Collectors provide less access to sites and higher average speeds and volumes. The streets with the highest average speeds and volumes, but worst accessibility to adjoining land uses in Somerville are the principal and secondary arterials. No expressways or limited access highways exist in the city at this point in time and should not be necessary in the future, according to the demographic projections.

Figure 8.1: The Relationship between the Access and Mobility Functions of Streets



Source: Adapted from A Guide to Urban Planning in Texas Communities

Thoroughfares in this Plan are located to encourage economic development as well as to enhance accessibility and mobility. Connectivity is also important in thoroughfare design. The major thoroughfare in Somerville is currently SH 36, which connects the city with Caldwell, Cameron, and Temple to the northwest. To the southeast Somerville is connected with Brenham, Bellville, and Rosenberg by SH 36. Farm to Market Road 1361 (FM 1361) and 8th Street, Avenue E, and

Thornberry Drive are minor thoroughfares. All thoroughfares in Somerville should be designed to Level of Service “C” (LOS C), which is restricted flow with significant interaction between vehicles in the traffic stream and significant numbers of stopped vehicles at intersections¹. Maintaining LOS C should help Somerville to retain its small town charm. Major thoroughfares have a minimum lane width of 12 feet in accordance with standards set forth by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), and a right of way (ROW) width of 100 feet reserved for future widening if growth in traffic volume warrants expansion². All major and minor thoroughfares should be a minimum of 4 lanes with no on-street parking. Minor thoroughfares should also conform to the minimum lane width standards, although a 60 foot right of way is acceptable.

The arterials in Somerville are currently wide enough to absorb traffic conditions and maintain a reasonable level of service, but they will need to be improved to handle higher volumes of residents and tourists. SH 36 is being widened to 4 lanes by TxDOT to accommodate future traffic volumes. Thornberry Drive should be widened to support increases in traffic due to tourism and the proposed commercial center at the corner of 8th Street and Thornberry Drive. With the widening of Thornberry, a raised median with deciduous trees, a two-way bikeway, and a pedestrian trail should be installed. FM 1361/8th Street is a secondary arterial that extends from east of Somerville through the city to the lake. It needs to be widened to accommodate higher traffic volumes and a bikeway. The 8th Street widening should improve accessibility between downtown and the lake to both motorists and cyclists.

ACCESS POINTS, SPEEDS AND SPACING

To maintain mobility along the principle and secondary arterial, curb cuts should be limited and proper spacing between arterials maintained in accordance with AASHTO guidelines and standards. Curb cuts along major arterials should have, at minimum, 1 mile between them. For arterials, 1,300 feet between curb cuts is standard². Clearly these standards have not been used in Somerville, especially in the downtown area. Instead of requiring new construction to abide by existing standards, the City should instead seek to limit curb cuts (driveways) along the arterials as much as possible. Somerville should also encourage curb cuts on properties fronting both an arterial and a collector to be placed on the secondary street if possible. These curb cut recommendations are proposed to keep levels of mobility along the arterials high so that a bypass,

which is expensive and generally results in the decline of the downtown business area, should be unnecessary.

Speed along the major thoroughfares should be in the range of 45 - 55 mph, with speeds along thoroughfares dropping to 40 - 45 mph². Exceptions to the access points and speed range for major arterials should be made on SH 36 for 1/2 mile on either side of 8th Street, because of the high density of existing street intersections and curb cuts. In this special area, SH 36 should follow the guidelines pertaining to arterials, because it is the core commercial area of the city and accessibility should be more important than mobility.

Spacing between principle arterials should be from 1 to 5 miles. Between secondary arterials, a spacing of 1/8 of a mile to 3 miles is acceptable². Avenue E is a secondary arterial somewhat close to SH 36, but geographic features of Somerville (such as the floodplain which takes up a large portion of the northwest section of the town), limit the alignment options and land uses along potential alignments. All other thoroughfare alignments in the Plan conform to the recommended standards.

TRAFFIC SIGNALS & SIGNS

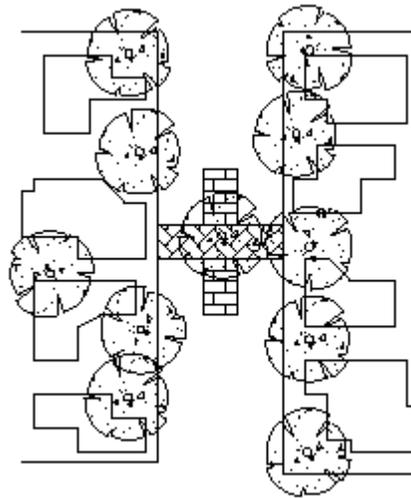
To handle expected increases in traffic along Thornberry Drive after the new commercial sections are developed as well as to facilitate bicycle and pedestrian crossing, new signals at the intersection of SH 36 and Thornberry Drive as well as 8th Street and Thornberry Drive should be necessary. The signal at SH 36 and Thornberry should be more than 2 miles from the existing signal in the downtown area, so that it will conform to generally accepted standards for signal spacing along arterials². The locations of the proposed signals are shown on Map 12, along with traffic calming devices.

TRAFFIC CALMING

Traffic calming measures come in many shapes and sizes for different applications. In Somerville, an area that can benefit from traffic calming is SH 36 in the downtown/historic district. There are two pedestrian/bicycle crossings and one pedestrian crossing in this area. An ideal method for calming traffic at these crossings is a method called an "A Center Island Narrowing". A Center Island Narrowing consists of raised islands located along the centerline of a street that narrows the travel lanes at that location³. Figure 8.2 illustrates a hypothetical Center

Island Narrowing. Advantages of this method of traffic calming include landscaping for a visual amenity and an island to act as a mid-point refuge for pedestrian crossing. Some possible disadvantages are reduced parking and driveway access, reduced pedestrian crossing width, limited visibility of pedestrian crossings due to landscaping, and bicyclists traveling perpendicular to the crossing prefer not to have travel way narrowed into the path of motor vehicles. Typical costs range from \$5,000 - \$15,000 per installation, depending on conditions³. Installation of center calming measures should coincide with Phase I of the bikeway installation plan, discussed later in this Section.

Figure 8.2: Traffic Circle Diagram



Source: Adapted from ITE website

COLLECTORS AND LOCAL STREETS

Local streets in Somerville are currently in poor condition and need to be upgraded to better serve the needs of the population. Streets classified as minor collectors should be upgraded to 42 feet of pavement with 60 feet of ROW width; local streets should have 37 feet of pavement with a 50 foot ROW width. However, several other issues including repair and upgrading of water and sewer utilities, as well as burying electric utilities need to be addressed before the streets can be improved. Traffic calming devices and bikeways should be installed concurrently with local street upgrades, as soon as possible after the utility line issues are resolved.

MAP 12 PROPOSED TRAFFIC CALMING AND BIKEWAY/PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM

TRAFFIC SIGNALS & SIGNS

Traffic control signs on local streets are faded, falling down, and generally in need of major repairs or replacement. This needs to be done as soon as possible to enhance the safety of motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Street signs are also in need of repair, and while not as high a priority as replacing traffic control signs, they are essential for improving the image of the city and improving tourist reactions to Somerville.

SURPLUS RIGHT OF WAY

Spacing for local streets should be about 300 feet, according to AASHTO standards. Street spacing can range from 1/8 to 1/2 mile for collector streets². Several local streets in Somerville violate the 300 foot guideline and can be combined into collectors, especially when lots run all the way from one street to the other. Some challenges to combining streets occur in areas where lots may be denied frontage access. Flag lots, although not recommended in general, can be used to mitigate these problems, since they should be relatively rare. Advantages to removing the streets are lowered maintenance costs and usable land. See Map 13 for the new street configuration.

NEW STREETS

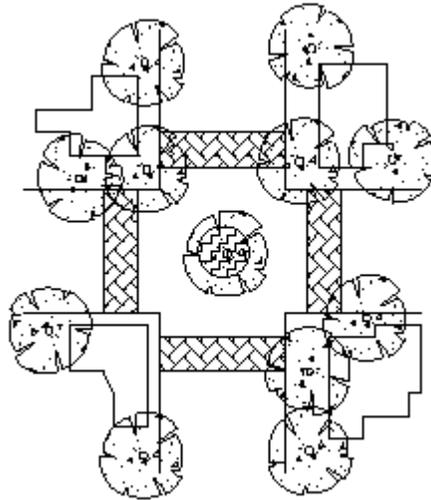
New collector streets should be added to accommodate and encourage new residential construction in the northwest and southeast sections of Somerville. The new collector streets should intersect SH 36 and Thornberry Drive in the southwest section of Somerville. Final street design should be determined by subdivision builders in accordance with the subdivision ordinance and minimum street design standards. The northwest section of the city is aimed at higher-end development. The cul-de-sacs branching off of a new collector to be built in this area are intended to discourage through traffic.

TRAFFIC CALMING

One of the most important improvements that can be made to local streets in the city is the installation of traffic calming devices in neighborhoods to promote reduced speeds and increase safety for residents. An ideal traffic calming method for Somerville is the “Neighborhood Traffic Circle”. A traffic circle consists of a raised circle in the middle of an intersection of a collector

and local street or two local streets, with one lane entering the circle from each direction. This method is ideal for neighborhoods because it is used where a limited numbers of busses and large trucks turn left. Vegetation on the traffic circles is an amenity to the neighborhood and can be coordinated with community image providing unique identity to the neighborhood. Potential impacts include a limited impact on access and a reduction in mid block speed of approximately 10%. Neighborhood Traffic Circles have been shown to reduce intersection collisions by 70% and overall collisions by 28%. However, they can also result in bicycle auto conflicts at intersections because of narrowed travel lane discussed further in the bicycle section⁴. See Figure 8.3 for an illustration of a hypothetical Neighborhood Traffic Circle. Typical costs are \$3,500 - \$15,000 per installation. Traffic calming devices shown on Map 12 are recommended locations only, in order to break up long (1,000 feet or more) sections of straight road, to discourage speeding and improve safety for neighborhood residents. Public involvement is essential to the process of planning and installing traffic calming devices.

Figure 8.3: Neighborhood Traffic Circle Diagram



Source: Adapted from ITE website

CURBS & GUTTERS

Many curbs and gutters along streets are in disrepair or missing completely along sections of the street network. They should be replaced or installed when the street network is repaired. Advantages of curb and gutter include erosion control, longer pavement life, and faster and more efficient drainage of storm water.

PARKING

Parking requirements should be included in a zoning ordinance, but a few recommendations are included in this section of the Plan because parking is inherently part of transportation. On-street parking should be encouraged in the downtown area, to eliminate or reduce the need for parking lots and promote pedestrian usage of the downtown area. In keeping with this, it is suggested that on-site parking requirements be waived in the downtown area, provided that there is ample on-street parking in front of the property. Outside of the downtown area, on-street parking should be discouraged along streets with bicycle paths, as on-street parking interferes with the comfort and safety of cyclists as well as through traffic.

TRAINS

Somerville is served by the BNSF Railroad, which has a major switchyard in the City. Several trains pass through every day, however Somerville is not a major importer or exporter of goods by rail. Its status as a major switchyard presents the city with some unique challenges.

AT-GRADE CROSSINGS

There are two at grade crossings in Somerville, one of which needs attention. The first, and most heavily trafficked, is at the intersection of FM 1361 and the BNSF line. The second is at the intersection of County Road 418. Of the two, FM 1361 is the most heavily trafficked road and should be an important link between the residential western section of the City to the proposed industrial uses in the eastern side of the City. A grade separated crossing at FM 1361 and the rail line would be ideal for increasing safety and reducing conflicts between vehicles and trains. A highway overpass would be the cheapest option for separating the traffic and trains, although geometric challenges posed by the proximity of SH 36 to FM 1361 may preclude this option.

MAP 13 STREET IMPROVEMENTS

The intersection of County Road 418 and the railroad experience far less traffic and does not connect a major origin or destination, so can safely remain an at-grade crossing.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Somerville is an important switching point for the BNSF railroad, which provides excellent access to everything west of Texas. Somerville's status as a major switching point is essential for attracting new businesses to the community. The rail line could play an important part in attracting light-industry as it is possible to ship by rail due to the number of trains passing through the city.

BIKEWAYS

Bikeways are important to improving mobility and recreational opportunities in Somerville. A bikeway network should connect the community with parks and the downtown district. Weather in Somerville is also conducive to bicycling and should contribute to heavy use of a trail network. Bikeways are a feasible, cost-effective, and sustainable transportation alternative for Somerville residents.

The bikeway network should consist of a Central Trail, running southwest along 9th Street from SH 36 to Avenue I, where it will turn southeast to 8th Street and continue southwest to Thornberry Drive where it should turn southeast and go into Welch Park. The other components of the bikeway network are 5 major loops that are connected by the Central Trail, with the exception of the North Loop that branches from the Northwest Loop. The North Loop starts at the corner of County Road 422 and Thornberry Drive, runs northeast along Thornberry, turns northwest onto a proposed new collector street, intersects Church Street and runs southwest back to County Road 422. The Northwest loop starts at the corner of 8th Street and Thornberry Drive and follows Thornberry Drive northwest. At the corner of Thornberry and Avenue E, it turns southeast until ending at the Central Trail. The Downtown Historic loop starts at the corner of 9th Street and Avenue A. It runs southeast along Avenue A to 7th Street, where it turns southwest for a block and then proceeds northwest along SH 36, terminating at the Central Trail. The South Loop begins at the corner of 9th Street and Avenue E and runs southeast along Avenue E. It then turns southwest along 2nd Street until turning northwest along Avenue I, which it follows back to the Central Trail. The Southeast loop begins at the corner of Thornberry Drive and an unnamed

street and heads northeast along 7th Street, then turns southeast onto Avenue Q which it follows until 2nd Street. It proceeds northeast until terminating at the South Loop on Avenue I.

All bikeways should be located in a dedicated bike lane along street shoulders, with the exception of the Northwest Loop, where it should be located in the median on Thornberry Drive. Map 12 shows the bikeway network, as well as the proposed locations of traffic calming devices. Table 8.2 shows phase and length information for the bikeway network.

Table 8.2: Bicycle Trail Network Lengths and Costs by Section

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Bicycle Trail</i>	<i>Length (miles)</i>
I	Central Trail	2.4
	Downtown Historic Loop	0.4
	Welch Loop	0.6
	<i>Total Phase I</i>	<i>3.4</i>
II	South Loop	1.1
III	Northwest Loop	1.2
IV	Southeast Loop	1.0

Source: Texas A&M Target Cities Program

Phase I of the Bikeways Trail Network Plan should consist of the Welch Loop around the perimeter road in Welch Park, and the Downtown Historic Loop which should be a mixed flow bicycle/pedestrian facility in downtown Somerville. Connecting the downtown to Welch Park should be the Central Trail, which should also serve as the backbone of the bicycle trail network. Phase II should consist of the South Loop which should connect the Somerville Elementary School with surrounding neighborhoods. Phase III, the Northwest Loop, should connect Pazdral Park, the floodplain (possible future parkland), and the Lake Somerville. Most of the Northwest Loop should be located in the future median on Thornberry Drive. With the completion of the Northwest Loop, a northwest-southeast bicycle trail should be in place consisting of the Northwest and South Loops. The Southeast Loop, Phase IV, should connect the southeast section of Somerville with the Central Trail and Welch Park. The final phase should be the construction of the North Loop which should connect the future residential neighborhoods with the bicycle trail network and complete the northwest-southeast bicycle trail, allowing residents easy access to the whole city via bicycle.

TRANSPORTATION

All bikeways should be constructed in accordance with state and AASHTO guidelines. Signs on the bikeways should conform to *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* standards. Six-inch solid white lane striping is necessary to ensure that local and visiting motorists are aware that the bike lanes exist and to alert bicyclists to the fact that there is a lane. Bikeway signs should also be included along the routes, for the benefit of non-local users and to alert motorists to the possible presence of bicyclists.

It should be noted that the U.S. Department of Transportation makes bicycle lane development funding available through the ISTEA program and its extending legislation TEA-21, which allow for grants for transportation system enhancements.

Law enforcement could be an innovative use of the bikeways in Somerville. Local police would benefit from the bikeways by saving money and interacting more with local residents. Bike patrols can be more effective than patrol cars. The average patrol car costs 12 cents per mile to operate, while bicycles run for less than one cent per mile⁶. A primary advantage of bicycles over cars is that a patrolman on a bicycle is able to access neighborhoods and interact with the residents easily, whereas patrol cars are isolated from the residents. This interactivity can result in increased arrest rates. The International Police Mountain Bike Association (IPMBA) estimates that more than 2,000 police departments in several countries have bicycle units. Half of these police departments saw an average jump of 24 percent in arrest rates after the implementation of bike patrols⁶.

Bikeways provide excellent accessibility to neighborhoods and destinations along them. Bicycles are one of the most flexible modes of transportation and can be taken off the bikeways to easily access adjacent destinations not directly along the bikeway. Besides being an alternative mode of transportation, bikeways are a recreational amenity. A bikeway trail system could be helpful in attracting more homeowners who are interested in outdoor recreation opportunities. To encourage use of the bikeway network businesses should be encouraged to provide racks and the city should provide racks for parking bicycles at public facilities.

TRANSIT

Somerville currently has no public transit, due mostly to its small population and lack of any county-wide transit system. Although the bikeway network should address mobility and access

TRANSPORTATION

for several groups of people who are unable to drive it will not solve transportation problems for all groups of people in Somerville.

Some type of paratransit, (door to door service within a restricted geographic area) would be ideal for the city. In this system, reservations would be called in ahead of time and riders would be picked up and dropped off at their destination. A van based at the Senior Center would most likely be the best way to address the transit problem in the Somerville, since it requires a relatively low amount of initial capital investment.

A fare should be charged to recover some of the operating and capital costs of the transit system. The exact fare should be determined by the agency implementing the system and should depend on the level of subsidy provided to the system, as well as operating and capital costs of the system. Reduced fares should be offered to disabled persons, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Other possible groups that could benefit from reduced fares include senior citizens and students.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Provide transportation resources to support current and future land uses and growth

Objectives:

- Adopt the “Functional Street Classification System” as the official street categorization system for Somerville.

Goal 2: Enhance safety along major corridors.

Objectives:

- Limit curb cuts and ingress/egress drives along SH 36.
- Widen Thornberry Drive to support increases in traffic.
- Install traffic calming devices.
- Construct a grade separated crossing at the intersection of FM 1361 and the BNSF rail line.
- Widen 8th Street between downtown and Lake Somerville to accommodate motorists and hike/bike lanes.

Goal 3: Improve signage and utility of streets.

Objectives:

- Resurface local streets and expand the right of way to 50 feet.
- Close all unused dedicated streets, and convert them to greenways and bikeway/pedestrian features.
- Adopt strict street construction standards as a part of Somerville’s residential subdivision ordinance.
- Require curb and gutter on all new streets in Somerville.
- Implement a program of curb and gutter installation on existing streets.
- Encourage on-street parking in Somerville’s Central Business District.

Goal 4: Improve pedestrian and bicycle access and safety.

Objectives:

- Implement the Bikeway/Pedestrian System as shown on Map 12.

- Discourage or prohibit on-street parking along streets that serve as parts of the bikeway/pedestrian system.
- Install six-inch solid white lane striping along Bikeway/Pedestrian lanes.

Goal 5: Improve accessibility for the mobility impaired.

- Install and support a paratransit system for the mobility impaired, and senior citizens.

REFERENCES

1. *A Guide to Urban Planning In Texas Communities*. APA Texas Educational Foundation.
2. *A Policy on the Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*. AASHTO 1990.
3. *Traffic Calming Measures - Center Island Narrowing*. <http://www.ite.org/traffic/narrow.htm>
4. *Traffic Calming Measures - Neighborhood Traffic Circle*.
<http://www.ite.org/traffic/circle.htm>
5. *Review of Planning Guidelines and Design Standards for Bicycle Facilities*. Prepared by ITE Technical Committee 6A-55
1. Gary Gardner, *Cities Turning to Bicycles to Cut Costs, Pollution, And Crime*. Vol. 81 Public Management, 01-01-1999

Housing

SECTION

9



Section
9

HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

The availability and affordability of housing is vital to maintaining a high quality of life in cities. The condition of existing residences affects the physical and mental well-being of residents. It is important that the City of Somerville assess the housing needs of its citizens and develop measures for ensuring that those needs are met. This section outlines a plan of action to guide the City of Somerville in its efforts to maintain the quality and increase the supply of housing for all residents. The areas of concern are identified and a plan for their remediation is outlined. A list of housing goals and objectives is included at the end of this section.

CAPACITY OF HOUSING DELIVERY SYSTEM

Designation of Residential Land

In order to provide an adequate supply of land for the assorted housing needs of the city, the Somerville Housing Plan has established the following ranges for single-family residential density:

- Low – less than 3 units per acre;
- Medium – more than 3 but less than 9 units per acre and;
- High – more than 9 but less than 13 units per acre.

Multi-family units and group housing are situated in medium to high-density areas. Individual units are not counted as a portion of units allocated. It is important to note that the Somerville Housing Plan includes recommendation for the development of a Manufactured Home Community, a medium density development.

Adoption of the Housing Land Use Policy will encourage future residential development. The Policy will ensure the availability of sufficient infrastructure as the housing supply grows.

Provisions for Neighborhood Revitalization

There is a strong link between neighborhood recovery and economic growth. This connection requires that the City take a proactive approach for the recovery of its existing residential areas. In doing so, the City will project the appearance of a progressive, well-maintained city which will be an added incentive for attracting new businesses. In addition to its rural designation, the City has a variety of resources immediately at its disposal for stimulating neighborhood recovery. The two most prominent are Lake Somerville and Texas A&M University.

Working together, Somerville residents, private industry, and public entities can maintain housing affordability and achieve the goal of neighborhood recovery.

Maintenance of Housing Stock

As approximately 50 percent Somerville's housing stock approaching forty years of age. Increased attention should be given to the repair and maintenance of the existing housing supply. Approximately 40 percent of existing residential structures are already showing signs of deterioration underscoring the need for maintenance programs. By year 2001, the City should formally enact measures to ensure continued maintenance of the existing housing stock beginning with the adoption of a Housing Code.

A Housing Code is needed to ensure that conditions in occupied units are safe and habitable. This Code will work in conjunction with the recently adopted Building Code, which addresses the structural soundness of the building during construction and/or remodeling. Inspections for compliance with the Housing Code will be phased in when ownership is transferred. The Housing Code will help with efforts to revitalize blighted areas.

New Housing Development

New mixed-use areas are planned in several areas of Somerville. The total development areas contain approximately 229 acres. Apartments and cluster housing are appropriate for these areas. This housing serves three main objectives:

1. To alleviate the less than 1 percent vacancy rate;
2. To promote Somerville's growth strategy; and
3. To provide tangible evidence of change and growth for residents and potential

businesses.

This housing should reflect the emerging technical innovations of the housing industry and seek to become a national showcase. The goal for the individual units of the development is to provide quality energy-efficient residential structures.

Manufactured Homes Community

By an act of Congress in 1974, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was designated as the government agency to oversee the Federal Manufactured Housing Program. Manufactured homes must now be built to the Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards (HUD Code). Manufactured Home Communities are designed to maximize the cost advantages of the factory building process while providing the amenities of traditional residential communities. The proposed Somerville community will be located in the far southern or southwestern section of the city.

HUD Code compliant manufactured homes with site-built amenities and dedicated streetscape planning supports the diversity of communities. The success of a manufactured home community is dependent on a partnership with an experienced developer with a proven commitment to quality and a dedicated marketing team. The quality and design requirements of the City, coupled with existing local architectural styles, provide the basic direction for the community. Alliances that promote the regional marketing of the community's development are encouraged.

Housing Assistance Programs

The Community Grant Supportive Initiative (CGSI), a branch of Texas A&M University's Public Policy Research Institute provides assistance for developing tools for program evaluation as well as with the writing of proposals soliciting funds from the Department of Agriculture's Rural Housing Services and HUD's Rural Housing and Economic Development programs. CGSI also partners with Texas communities to develop programs seeking national recognition for innovation. Such an alliance could help Somerville develop and implement an action plan as it strives to position itself with national programs such as the Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH).

HOUSING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Improve capacity of housing deliver system to stimulate housing demand.

Objectives:

- Objective 1: Seek alliance with experienced community-minded developers.
- Objective 2: Implement the construction of a planned unit development.
- Objective 3: Implement the construction of a manufactured home community.
- Objective 4: Enhance associations that encourage the private sector to provide an appropriate mix of housing types.
- Objective 5: Attain federal funded grants that support the leverage of private funds.

Goal 2: Upgrade provisions for neighborhood improvements.

Objectives:

- Objective 1: Create and adopt a housing code.
- Objective 2: Increase community amenities (mini parks, open plazas, increase pedestrian-oriented environment and civic art).
- Objective 3: Institute community action programs that advocate beautification and enhance Somerville's collective well-being.

Goal 3: Apply innovative planning, design technique and preserve natural systems and resources.

Objectives:

- Objective 1: Participate in PATH (Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing) National Pilot Program.
- Objective 2: Incorporate energy saving technologies in existing housing structures.
- Objective 3: Promote sustainable environmental technologies.

SECTION

10



Community Facilities & Services

Section
10

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

Although Somerville is a small city, it has several community facilities and programs beneficial to its citizens. The civic pride, interest, and support visible in the citizens of Somerville ensure the achievement of a high quality of life in the City. The municipal government and the members of the community must continue to work together to improve and enhance the quality of life by maintaining a strong commitment to the presence of excellent community facilities and park and recreation services. The following section identifies goals and objectives the City should strive to attain in order to guarantee the City's future success.

CITY GOVERNMENT

Although Somerville is not growing at a rapid pace, the City should evaluate current and future municipal government facility needs. The City should develop and maintain a twenty-year capital improvement plan designed to assess current and future facility requirements. The plan should address necessary facility, staffing, and equipment upgrades for all municipal functions over the twenty-year period.

Somerville should consider implementing a continuing education program for city staff and leadership to promote continued government merit. The program should be designed to include all areas of municipal management and services as they apply to the City of Somerville. Civic leaders and city staff members should attend various planning and public management conferences to stay current with the latest programs and techniques. The objective is to ensure that quality city services will continue to be provided to the community.

POLICE SERVICES

Currently the City meets acceptable police service standards at four policemen for the estimated Year 2000 population of 1,612. At an annual growth projection of one percent per year, four

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

policemen should be adequate in the City for the next 20 years, at a projected Year 2000 population of 2,272. Table 10.1, shows the recommended personnel and vehicles.

The standards listed in Table 10.1, in Section 10 in the State of the City Report, suggest that for the population of Somerville in 2020 at 2,272 persons, there should be between 3 – 6 sworn policemen protecting the citizens.

Crime prevention is an important issue for the citizens of Somerville. The City should develop and implement a program to increase the quality of protection services for the community. The program should request community education programs and continuing education programs for law enforcement personnel, and the start of a “Cops on Bikes” program to bring law enforcement closer to the citizens.

Table 10.1: Police Department Standards

<i>Year</i>	<i>Projected Population</i>	<i>Recommended Personnel</i> (2 per 1,000 population)	<i>Recommended Vehicles</i> (0.6 per 1,000 population)
1990	1542	3.1	0.92
2000	1612	3.2	0.97
2005	1708	3.4	1.02
2010	1879	3.75	1.13
2015	2066	4.13	1.24
2020	2272	4.5	1.36

Sources: Canter, Atkinson, & Leistriz (1985). Impact of Growth, Chelsea, WI: Lewis Publishers; Texas State Data Center, Texas A&M University, 1998.

The citizen survey distributed in February 2000 revealed strong citizen support for a citywide curfew for minors. The curfew would help keep minors off of the streets after a certain hour in the evening, eliminating noise pollution from stereo systems in cars, as well as vandalism that occurs in the evening hours.

FIRE SERVICES

According to the standards described in Table 10.2 in Section 10 of the State of the City Report, the City should have one paid fireman per 1,000 persons. The City of Somerville currently does not employ firemen. All the firemen are volunteers. According to the same standards the City has more than the minimum requirement for volunteer firemen. Currently, there is one volunteer

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

for every 61.7 persons. The City is also very well prepared for the future with the current equipment in its possession. Somerville will be well served for the next 20 years.

Table 10.2: Fire Department Standards

<i>Year</i>	<i>Projected Population</i>	<i>Recommended Personnel</i> (1.65 per 1,000 population)
1990	1542	2.5
2000	1612	2.66
2005	1708	2.8
2010	1879	3.1
2015	2066	3.4
2020	2272	3.75

Source: Canter, Atkinson, & Leistritz (1985). Impact of Growth, Chelsea, WI: Lewis Publishers; Texas State Data Center, Texas A&M University, 1998.

Table 10.2 suggests that for a population of 2,272 persons in 2020, there should be one paid fireman and a minimum of ten volunteer firemen.

Citizens in the survey expressed a great concern for the assignment of official street addresses for homes and businesses. Implementation of official street addresses will allow fire, police, and emergency services to locate homes and businesses in case of an emergency. The assignment of addresses is of great importance for the safety of the citizens and should be initiated quickly.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recycling Center and Citizen Collection Station

The survey conducted by the Texas Target Cities Team revealed that Somerville citizens think recycling is important. The City should implement a program for curbside pickup and encourage recycling in the schools. Recyclable materials may also be taken to the Recycling Center. If the City is experiencing a drop in the use of the Recycling Center, a test program for curbside pickup should be done. Curbside pickup is more convenient and the City may notice an increase in recycling by the citizens.

Learning Center

The City of Somerville currently does not have a library. The current population is not large enough to support a library at this time. However, the survey revealed a very strong interest in a library. A solution to this issue would be to organize a learning center located at the expanded

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

facilities of a new City Hall. The learning center could hold donated books and a few computers. Local volunteers could operate the center.

HEALTH SERVICES

Currently the City only has a nurse practitioner working at the Somerville Clinic. Based on a standard of 1.5 physicians per 1,000 residents, the City will need at least one physician. Somerville is located within a 30-minute drive to larger health facilities in Caldwell, Bryan, and College Station, and more extensive services can be found there. Transportation services for those without transportation should be implemented to assure the citizens are receiving adequate health care.

The survey indicated a strong interest in bringing a dentist's office to the community. Bringing more health services to the City will help those who travel to obtain more specific services they need. Having a professional in each aspect of the health field also encourages new residents to locate to Somerville since more essential services will be available locally.

Possible grants are available for the assistance in funding health services. A potential grant source is listed below.

Grant Source:

- Rural Utilities Service (RUS) grant- funds projects through its Distance Learning and Tele-medicine program. www.usda.gov/rus/dlt/dlml.htm

Eligible recipients for loans and grants from the RUS grant include rural schools, libraries, hospitals, health care clinics, and partnerships and organizations that operate educational or health care facilities in rural areas.

EDUCATION

The school system currently has a very good ratio of teachers to students. There are also several good programs at each school to complement what students are learning in the classroom. The school system, however, lacks after-school programs for all students. After-school programs will keep children occupied while parents are still at work and provide an opportunity for students to learn a skill or nurture a talent.

Currently, the Somerville Independent School District (SISD) is planning on expanding the elementary school. Each of the school buildings will soon be reaching their maximum capacity. The following table shows a comparison of the current number of students versus the capacity of each school.

Table 10.3: Comparison of Current Students vs. Maximum Capacity

<i>School</i>	<i>Current # of students</i>	<i>Maximum Capacity</i>
Elementary School	345	375-400
Junior High School	187	210-215
High School	257	260-270

Source: Somerville Independent School District, 1999

The SISD is currently proposing a bond issue in order to add two classrooms to the elementary school. The District would receive matching funds from the state. Other planned future improvements are to add a new band hall at the high school and convert the existing band hall into two or three classrooms. Another improvement would be to add a new media center and a library at the high school that would be used by both junior high and high school students. The current library at the junior high would be converted into two classrooms. The SISD hopes to begin all of these improvements as early as fall 2000.

The SISD is doing a very good job maintaining standardized student test scores at better rates than state averages. One area that is lower than state figures is college entrance exam scores and also the number of students who take college entrance exams. More programs should be initiated in the high school to encourage students to take college entrance exams and to improve scores. Another area where the system scored lower than state figures was in the teacher turnover rate and teacher salary. Incentives to improve teacher turnover should be implemented.

Opportunities for adult education should also be provided in the school district. A high school Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED) program should be offered to assist those adults who would like to receive their GED. Also of great importance is the need to offer job skills education through night courses at the high school, which are available to all persons in Somerville. Another emerging solution for those adults who cannot afford to go to college is the presence of a distance learning location. This is a good opportunity for citizens who are interested in taking college courses and for those wanting to participate in training for specialized

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

fields. Programs like these make the job force in Somerville well educated in specialized areas, and make them attractive to companies looking to relocate.

Possible grants are available for the assistance in funding education. A grant source is listed below.

Grant Source:

- Rural Utilities Service (RUS) grant- funds projects through its Distance Learning and Tele-medicine program. www.usda.gov/rus/dlt/dlml.htm

PUBLIC PARKS & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

It is important to sustain the existing parks and open spaces of Somerville and to take active steps to provide new recreational facilities for the existing core of the City and new areas to be developed. The survey completed by the citizens of the City showed that almost half (45%) of the City is not satisfied with the parks currently provided. It also showed a high support for bikeways and walking trails in the Somerville. The proposed trails can be found in the Transportation section of this document. A proposed hike and bike trail should be located along Thornberry Drive on the Eastside of the road. The location of the trail can be seen on Map 12.

The survey also showed support for more parks and recreation areas in the City. The Vision 2020 Plan proposes additional miniparks and another neighborhood park. According to Table 10.5, in the State of the City Report, *Neighborhood and Community Park Acreage Standards*, the City should provide miniparks of one acre or less within a ¼ mile radius of homes, apartment complexes, and other housing. Currently there are no miniparks in Somerville. Some of these may be created with proposed street closures in neighborhoods as suggested in the Transportation Section of this document.

Pazdral Park currently serves as the City's neighborhood park at less than five acres. National standards require 1 to 2 acres per 1,000 population. Pazdral Park meets this standard. However, neighborhood parks should be located within a ¼ to ½ mile radius of the neighborhood they serve. According to this standard, another park of this size should be located in the southernmost portion of the City and at the northernmost section of the City when new residential development occurs in these areas.

Welch Park serves as the City’s community park and as a regional park. The size of the park is large enough to serve the current population and projected population of Somerville through 2020 and beyond. Standards call for community parks to be 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 residents. The size of Welch Park currently is almost 300 acres, so it exceeds the standard for the community and the region. The survey revealed that Somerville citizens would like to enjoy a discounted park fee. The discount would help increase the use of the park. If more people use it, the increased funds would help with the revival of the park.

It is equally important to provide adequate amenities at both miniparks and neighborhood parks. The following table lists many of the amenities that can exist in miniparks, neighborhood parks, and community parks. Somerville should try to provide as many of the amenities listed below in both current parks and future parks. This is only a suggested list and other amenities may be added that are not included in this list.

Table 10.4: Listing of Typical Park Amenities

<i>Amenity</i>	<i>Parks</i>
Pools	C
Gazebos	C
Barbecue pits	C, N
Tennis courts	C
Flower beds	A
Basketball courts	C and some N
Playground	A
Picnic tables	A
Benches	A
Sprinklers/decorative fountains	C
Bike racks	A
Bathrooms	C
Shelters	C
Drinking fountain	A
Volleyball net	C
Soccer recreation field	C
Internal walking trails	C
Trash cans	A

C = Community Parks, N = Neighborhood Parks, M = Miniparks,
A = All of the Above

MAP 14: Proposed Parks

Map 14 provides the City with possible locations for new parks. The suggested locations are all on currently vacant land. The proposed locations focus on providing a new neighborhood park in the center of the existing core neighborhood area with six additional miniparks. All proposed parks would be easily accessible from the proposed trail system. The layout follows National Recreation and Park Association standards.

The citizen survey also revealed that the community would like to see more outdoor and indoor recreation programs, as well as planned activities for young people during the summer. Citizens are also unsatisfied with the number of sports fields/courts available to the community. Some proposed programs are a fine arts camp, a city carnival, and a summer camp at Welch Park. The City can add sports courts and fields at Welch Park and a basketball court, tennis court, water fountain, benches, picnic tables, and barbecue pits at Pazdral Park. The future neighborhood parks can also include a basketball court and tennis court. Miniparks are smaller, but they can include a single court for sports as well.

One problem that many cities face is how to fund their parks and recreation projects. Several grant programs exist. Below is a listing of different programs and grants and their contact information. Somerville should apply for many of these to try and receive funding from the government and other agencies to improve existing parks, fund trail systems, and to develop new parks.

For grants available from the federal government, the City should obtain a copy of the National Recreation Parks Association's (NRPA) *Guide to Select Federal Funding*. The guide contains timely grant information for several agencies to assist cities in the pursuit of financial and technical assistance. (Call the NRPA publication center at 703-858-2190 to obtain a copy. The cost is \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members.) Grant sources are listed below.

Grant sources:

- Millenium Trails Program
www.milleniumtrails.org
Office of the Secretary, S-3
United States Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590

- Heritage Trails Fund
1350 Castle Rock Road
Walnut Creek, CA 94598
Phone: 925-937-7661
Fax: 925-943-7431
Email: htrails@earthlink.net
- Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program
www.nrpa.org/infoctr/ppolicy/
Barry Tindall, Director of Public Policy
Phone: 202-887-0290
- Sustainable Development Challenge Grant (SDCG)
www.nrpa.org/infoctr/ppolicy/epafunds.htm
Nova Blazej
Phone: 415-744-2089
Email: blazej.nova.epa.gov
- Recreational Program Grants
Grants and Contracts Service Team (GCST)
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Room 3317
Switzer Building
Washington, DC 20202-2550
Phone: 202-205-8351
Fax request: 202-205-8717
- Land & Water Conservation Fund Grants Web Site
<http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/lwcf>
Recreation Grants Division
Mike Rogers
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
Phone: 202-565-1133
Email: wayne_strum@nps.gov

CONCLUSION

Somerville's community facilities will need periodic monitoring and reevaluation. Each different component, such as fire, police, health, school, parks, etc., is equally important in helping produce the desired quality of life for the citizens of Somerville.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Provide a functional municipal government center

Objective:

- Evaluate current and future municipal government facility needs and develop a ten-year plan to accommodate the required upgrades in facilities, staffing, and equipment.

Goal 2: Increase the use of the City Recycling Center and Citizen Collection Station

Objectives:

- Educate citizens about the importance of recycling through programs at the schools.
- Initiate City recognized neighborhood cleanup days on Saturdays, every three months, where dump trucks will pick up trash, bulky items, and recyclable materials to be taken to the City Recycling Center and Collection Station.
- Encourage student groups and church youth groups to collect items as a service project.

Goal 3: Provide adequate coverage of police, fire, and EMS to existing and new development areas in the City of Somerville

Objectives:

- Purchase vehicles that will be able to provide coverage and transport demands for the expected growth in population.
- Create an emergency action plan for the community so that fire, police, and EMS is prepared to react to any type of emergency or disaster most likely to occur in Somerville.
- Provide Hazard Materials Operations training for all police, fire, and EMS systems in the City of Somerville.
- Continue to encourage police, fire, and EMS systems to work together with the many agencies in surrounding cities and counties.

Goal 4: Continue to provide excellent police protection, enhancing the quality of life through the preservation of peace and safety in Somerville

Objectives:

- Continue to support the 911 system.
- Institute a uniform 911 housing numbering system for all housing units in the City limits for quick identification during an emergency.
- Initiate a “Cops on Bikes” program to patrol neighborhoods and tourist activity areas to control the number of minor offenses.
- Examine current staffing requirements in relation to the state standard number of police officers per capita, making staffing adjustments as population increases.
- Hire a secretary in the police department to answer calls and dispatch emergencies so the officer on duty can continually patrol the City.
- Develop a citizen crime watch program to lessen the number of various minor offenses.
- Continue to educate citizens by providing crime prevention and drug awareness programs.
- Develop and implement a plan to improve relations with area teenagers.
- Provide continuing training for members of the Somerville Police Department to assure their preparedness for a variety of crime-related situations.
- Develop, implement, and update five-year police protection service plans for the community

Goal 5: Continue to provide excellent fire protection through the Somerville Volunteer Fire Department, enhancing the quality of life through the preservation of peace and safety in Somerville

Objectives:

- Continue to support the 911 system.
- Institute a uniform 911 housing numbering system for all housing units in the City limits for quick identification during an emergency.
- Continue to encourage regular training to all volunteers in the fire department to ensure they are trained to deal with a variety of emergency situations.

- Continue to provide fire education to citizens through programs and visits to each of the schools.
- Examine current staffing requirements in relation to the state standard number of firemen per capita, making staffing adjustments as population increases.
- Hire a full time paid fireman for the City of Somerville who can also organize volunteers and prepare for an increase in paid personnel according to Community Development Standards.

Goal 6: Support quality health services for the citizens of Somerville by providing for the specific health needs in the community

Objectives:

- Continue to operate the current St. Joseph Somerville Clinic and coordinate services with the Texas Department of Health.
- Continue to meet the demand of patients in Somerville by providing a part time doctor in order to share the current workload of the nurse practitioner.
- Initiate a plan to provide geriatric services – provide a location for a geriatric center offering both specialized medical care and community needs for the citizens of Somerville and surrounding Burleson County.
- Educate citizens about health programs and services available at the clinic and other nearby St. Joseph facilities.
- Introduce Tele-medicine to Somerville citizens as a means to maximize convenience and health care options.

Goal 7: Provide the highest quality of education and educational opportunities to all persons living in the Somerville area in order to improve the quality of life for all current and future residents

Objectives:

- Annually review and update population and enrollment projections in accordance with short and long-term facility needs.
- Provide incentives for teachers to reduce the high turnover rate at the schools.

- Initiate a college admissions preparation course to increase the mean scores on both the SAT and ACT.
- Provide after-school programs for students of all ages where they may be tutored, be involved in art, dance, music, gymnastics, and sports.
- Initiate Career Day at the high school to expose students to several career opportunities available to them after high school and college.
- Initiate a work program for high school students where they may obtain school credit by attending classes for the first part of the day and then may work in area businesses.
- Maintain and/or upgrade technology in existing schools and continue to expose students to computers.

Goal 8: Develop and maintain a quality relationship with the Somerville Independent School District (SISD) in order to provide educational opportunities for all segments of the population in Somerville

Objectives:

- Identify means of improving the availability of library resources to Somerville residents.
- Develop and maintain a quality working relationship with the SISD Parent-Teacher Organization.
- Initiate public awareness programs concerning the educational resources and programs available in Somerville.
- Provide a night course at the high school for those without a high school diploma to prepare and receive the general equivalency diploma (GED).
- Provide job skills education through night courses at the high school available to all persons in Somerville.
- Set up a distance learning location for citizens interested in taking college courses and for those wanting to participate in training for specialized fields.
- Make school facilities available for activities and events for all citizens in Somerville.

Goal 9: Continue to maintain and upgrade the quality of existing parks under the care of the City of Somerville and promote the development of new parks and greenbelts

Objectives:

- Create a Parks and Recreation staff to oversee and organize maintenance and new recreational programs for the citizens of Somerville.
- Adopt and implement a subdivision ordinance requiring the dedication of park land or a fee in lieu.
- Acquire land areas available within the City limits and the ETJ for proposed parks and hike and bike trails.
- Create miniparks within existing neighborhoods through abandoned street right-of-ways in order to meet Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines.
- Improve and upgrade existing facilities, build a boat ramp, volleyball courts, basketball courts, and additional barbecue pits and eating areas in Welch Park to attract more visitors.
- Provide additional playing equipment and a basketball court at Pazdral Park for the use of all citizens of Somerville.
- Provide public awareness programs concerning park usage and maintenance and organize volunteer groups to assist in the clean up of parks.
- Create new parks following Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines in areas planned for new development.

Goal 10: Provide quality indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities

Objectives:

- Adopt and implement an agreement with the Somerville Independent School District (SISD) to use existing facilities and co-sponsor future park and facilities development.
- Design, construct, and maintain a community activity center that is multifunctional in order to support a variety of community and recreational needs for all citizens in Somerville.
- Provide tennis courts in existing neighborhood areas to meet Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines that will be open to all citizens of Somerville.

- Develop a relationship with a regional or national youth recreation program, and sponsor a partnership in order to develop a youth recreation program in the City.
- Organize a city-sponsored summer youth day camp that can utilize Welch Park and future recreational facilities.
- Develop a community adult recreational program.
- Develop a youth day camp for Somerville residents, church groups, and other groups seeking a camp location.

Goal 11: Provide Somerville citizens and tourists with safe and well-maintained recreation areas

Objectives

- Develop systems for the incremental addition of park facilities and equipment, such as lighting, vegetation, trash receptacles, irrigation systems, and benches.
- Develop a uniform trail sign system to guide citizens and tourists safely through hike and bike trails.

SECTION

11



Future Land Use

Section

11

FUTURE LAND USE

RECOMMENDATIONS

The most obvious problem noted in the Texas Target Cities Team’s mapping survey of Somerville was conflicting adjacent land uses. The solution to this problem lies in the adoption of a zoning ordinance, which would separate industrial, commercial, and residential land uses. The adoption of a zoning ordinance is necessary to implement the recommendations contained in this Plan.

Industrial land uses should be confined to areas east of the railroad tracks to avoid encroachment on residential areas. The railroad tracks already separate industrial property from the Central Business District and residential development. Easy access to the rail yard, and the existence of industry in this area, makes the east-side of Somerville an ideal location for an industrial center complex.

Commercial development should be restricted to areas along Highway 36, and to the intersection of Thornberry Drive and 8th Street. The City of Somerville is small enough that restricting commercial establishments to the main thoroughfare should not inconvenience residents, who will find shopping and other amenities concentrated in commercial areas within a short distance from their homes. Small businesses currently located within residential areas should be phased out over a long time frame to ensure long-term residential neighborhood stability. A zoning ordinance should restrict commercial uses to specifically designated areas.

The Vision 2020 Plan recommends residential development located primarily in the core of the city. New residential development should occur first as infilling within existing neighborhoods until all vacant properties are developed. Where possible, dilapidated structures within neighborhoods should be removed and the sites redeveloped. There is also ample room for development near infrastructure in the far northwest and far southwest sections of the city.

Mixed use development serves as a buffer between strictly commercial and strictly residential areas. Mixed uses include housing, offices, and commercial land use. Allowing mixed uses between commercial establishments along the highway and residential dwellings just off the highway will permit many small businesses to remain in an area that would otherwise be zoned residential. This mixed-use buffer will also lessen the possibility that housing will be located so near the highway as to expose residents to noise and emissions pollution.

The long-term amortization of non-conforming land uses should be undertaken to accommodate the needs of residents. While it is essential that non-conforming land uses be eliminated, this must be done in a manner that will not unduly burden residents living in or operating businesses in areas zoned for other uses. A 20-year amortization schedule is recommended.

Preservation of open space within the flood plain is necessary to protect Somerville's residents from flood hazard. It is essential that the City limit residential development within the newly defined flood plain, and that the City control development in this area to ensure it does not cause flood waters to flow into neighboring, developed parcels of land. Protection from flood plain hazards requires that only modest, low-density development be permitted within the floodplain.

Two related problems identified in the land use survey are a lack of available park space within the City, and an abundance of vacant lots within residential developments. These problems are best dealt with by having the City purchase some of these vacant parcels and establish them as pocket parks. The park space issue is addressed in the Community Facilities section of the Plan.

Land use analysis and population projections for the City of Somerville indicate that adequate land exists within the corporate city limit to accommodate growth over the next twenty years. Residential development should utilize in-filling strategies to take advantage of existing infrastructure, and to reduce the presence of vacant tracts of land within neighborhoods. The use of in-filling to keep development moderately dense will aid in reducing the cost of police and fire protection, as well as eliminating the cost of adding infrastructure to currently undeveloped areas within the corporate city limit. Additionally, creating a mix of new and old dwellings within neighborhoods will protect property values and aid in preventing neighborhood decline.

MAP 15: PLANNING AREAS

MAP 16: FUTURE LAND USE

FUTURE LAND USE

This Plan recommends annexation of two parcels of land. The first parcel separates the City from Lake Somerville along the city's western boundary. Annexing this land will provide a direct connection between the City and the lake. This connection is important to the success of the proposed hike and bike trail system. The lake connection is also an important factor in increasing tourism.

The second parcel proposed for annexation is a strip of land along the railroad track from Church Street to the current city limit. Annexation of this property will serve to protect a potentially vital northwest gateway to the City. The land lies on the east-side of the tracks and is adjacent to property proposed for industrial development. The development of this property will be subject to the need for expansion of the business park.

FUTURE LAND USE BY SPECIFIC PLANNING AREA

Please see Map 15, associated with the discussion that follows.

Planning Area A:

The majority of this parcel is a large, undeveloped tract of land between Thornberry Drive, 8th Street and Avenue E. This land lies within the newly defined floodplain. The use of this property for urban purposes is discouraged until growth pressures force its development for very low density residential, with some retail commercial along the periphery. It is recommended that as much of this property as possible be left in its natural state to reduce the impact of flooding by reducing exposure of residents to the floodplain, as well as by preserving as much permeable groundcover as possible.

Planning Area B:

This section is a diverse mix of industrial, commercial and residential properties. It is recommended that all property in this section that lies to the east of the railroad tracks be designated for business park and industrial use. Land west of the tracks to just east of Highway 36 is recommended for commercial use. A buffer of mixed use is suggested between the commercial property, and, with the exception of the church, the balance of this land is recommended for residential development only. Two small parks are needed in this section, and these parks should be connected to the hike and bike trail system.

Planning Area C:

This section is a mix of industrial, commercial, public facilities and some residential use. The proposed industrial site extends into the northeast section of this area to the north of the railroad track junction. The area south of this junction and east of the tracks is designated mixed use to County Road 419. The portion of this parcel south of County Road 419 is recommended for agricultural/residential development. Land to the east of the tracks to just west of Highway 36 is recommended for commercial and public facilities use. It is here that the city center governmental complex and the Harvey House should be located. Land in the far-western portion of this section is to be mixed use and residential. Because there is currently very little residential development here, no park space is proposed for this section.

Planning Area D:

This area is predominantly residential, with the elementary school almost central, and some mixed use on the periphery. The far southern portion of this section is planned for agricultural use. It is recommended that this property be designated agricultural/residential, with a narrow strip of mixed use development along Highway 36. The addition of three small parks is recommended for this section. The large parcel of undeveloped land in the far southern end of Planning Area D is recommended as the site for manufactured home subdivisions. The size of this parcel, and its proximity to existing infrastructure, would allow easy development of this site as a safe alternative to housing currently located near the tracks and highway.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Protect property values by encouraging and promoting efficient, productive, compatible, attractive and environmentally friendly land uses in Somerville.

Objectives:

- Encourage compatible land uses through zoning.
- Carefully evaluate all future land use proposals to avoid problems associated with noise, pollution, traffic congestion and inefficient land use.
- Create an industrial park site across the tracks from residential development to draw new industry to the City while isolating residents from any disturbances associated with industrial land uses.

Goal 2: Increase available park space to provide accessibility to all residents.

Objectives:

- Create a system of miniparks and neighborhood parks utilizing currently vacant land within existing neighborhoods.
- Dedicate land within the new floodplain to a system of hike and bike trails.
- Annex land between the southwestern city limit and Lake Somerville to take in Welch Park, which adds park space and provides access to the lake.

Goal 3: Limit the impact of flooding in the flood plain.

Objectives:

- Limit development within the floodplain to low density residential and retail commercial.
- Commit as much land within the floodplain as possible to low-impact recreational uses such as small parks and a trail system.

Goal 4: Enhance the value of Lake Somerville to residents of and visitors to the City of Somerville, while preserving the Lake's naturalness.

Objectives:

- Annex land between the southwestern city limit and Lake Somerville to take in Welch Park.
- Create a system of trails to encourage pedestrian access between downtown Somerville and the lake.

Action Agenda

SECTION

12



Section
12

ACTION AGENDA

INTRODUCTION

The Action Agenda plays an integral and important role within the comprehensive plan. The previous sections listed and detailed several projects and programs that have been deemed vital for the successful future of Somerville. An Action Agenda is a tool to facilitate and classify which projects are the most crucial by providing a timeline for the implementation of each improvement. In addition, the agenda may also serve as a guide for the budgeting and planning of Capital Improvement Programs. The citizens of Somerville, in implementing the recommendations contained in this Plan, should use the following ten-year Action Agenda.

YEAR 2000

Natural Resources

- File water rights permit for Lake Somerville with the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC).
- Develop city policy that discourages dense development in the floodplain.
- Apply to become a member of TNRCC's Clean Texas Program.

Infrastructure

- Schedule water analysis for potential threats to state waters.
- Writing pricing explanation workshop.
- Update water map.

Transportation

- Repair and replace traffic control and street signage throughout the city.

Economic Development

- Host developer's charette (three per year) to promote development and tourism.

Community

- Implement "Look'n Good!" community house clean-up program (2x per year).

YEAR 2001

Natural Resources

- Ensure Somerville is included in the goals of any water conservation district implemented by the Brazos Valley Council of Governments.
- Institute incentives that encourage citizens to use recycling center.
- Identify hazardous chemicals that are being transported through the city by rail and truck.

Infrastructure

- Establish provisions for curb and gutter.
- Establish provision for underground utilities and relocation of existing lines.
- Update storm drainage system map.

Transportation

- Remove excess streets and add traffic calming devices in neighborhoods.
- Begin acquiring right-of-way for eventual upgrade of 8th Street and Avenue E, as well as for bikeways.
- Add traffic calming within the downtown area along State Highway 36.

Economic Development

- Create Economic Development Council.

Land Use

- Adopt and implement Zoning Ordinance.
- Adopt and implement Subdivision Regulations.

Historic Resources

- Adopt and implement Historic Preservation Ordinance.
- Develop historic preservation educational programs.

Community Facilities

- Institute a uniform housing numbering system.
- Create an emergency action plan.
- Develop citizen crime watch program.
- Hire a police dispatcher.

Housing

- Begin researching for state and federal housing grants/funds

Community Image

- Design new city entrance signs for the gateway thoroughfares into Somerville

YEAR 2002

Natural Environment

- Acquire vulnerable property in the floodplain from residential owners.
- Implement policies that support waste source reduction (variable residential garbage fees).
- Implement incentives for water saving devices in new construction.

Infrastructure

- Detect and repair infiltration on the wastewater system.
- Locate collapsed wastewater sections for primary repairs.
- Update wastewater system map.

Transportation

- Continue right-of-way acquisition for future upgrades and bikeways.

Economic Development

- Implement monthly events that promote community pride and tourism.
- Construct and manage welcome kiosks at city gateway points.

Land Use

- Develop infill strategy for redevelopment of inner-city vacant land.
- Initiate annexation plans for Welch Park and the area to the north of the city.

Historic Resources

- Conduct an in-depth survey of current historic resources.
- Determine historic properties eligible for City-recognition plaques.
- Educate public about preservation issues.

Community Facilities

- Initiate “Cops on Bikes” program to patrol neighborhoods and tourist activity areas.
- Create a Parks and Recreation committee and director.
- Educate citizens about health programs and services available.
- Initiate a school credit work program for high school students.
- Provide job skills education program available to all citizens of Somerville.

Housing

- Designate and encourage a Manufactured Housing subdivision.

Community Image

- Apply with the Texas Forestry Service for grants towards planting of street trees along major thoroughfares.

YEAR 2003

Natural Environment

- In new construction, mandate use of water saving devices.
- Locate new utility and facility structures outside the floodplain to discourage rapid development in floodplain areas.

Infrastructure

- Update crucial water lines segments along 8th and 6th Streets.
- Initiate expansions on water system for new growth.

Transportation

- Begin construction of grade separation crossing at FM 1361 and BNSF.
- Secure funding for future bikeways.

Economic Development

- Focus special funds toward Welsh Park tourism improvements.
- Begin recruiting developer for residential community development and golf course.

Land Use

- Purchase small land parcels for parks.

Historic Resources

- Develop heritage tourism program.
- Develop heritage tourism marketing plan.
- Develop a tourism travel route with directional signage.

Community Facilities

- Set up distance learning location in conjunction with Texas A&M, Blinn College and Technical schools.
- Acquire available land areas within the City and Extra-territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) for proposed parks and hike and bike trails.
- Improve and upgrade existing park facilities (boat ramp, additional barbecue pits, volleyball and basketball courts, picnic tables, benches, lighting, trash receptacles, etc.).

Housing

- Recruit residential developer to build manufactured housing subdivision.
- Team up with a Texas A&M construction science class to build model homes within the City of Somerville.

Community Image

- Begin construction on Caboose Alley.
- Begin construction of Civic Complex.

YEAR 2004

Natural Environment

- Establish policies for siting new difficult-to-evacuate facilities such as schools, senior centers, and jails away from the rail line.
- Provide public education about what to do in the event of a hazardous materials release.

Infrastructure

- Provide curb and gutter throughout the historic district.
- Expand storm drainage system in local flooding propensity areas.

Transportation

- Widen curb and gutter (upgrade) along 8th Street.

Economic Development

- Begin searching for groups and other talent to perform at future amphitheater.
- Increase marketing programs to encourage population and tourism growth.

Land Use

- Develop floodplain as park and trails system.
- Prepare for annexations.

Historic Resources

- Evaluate and update Historic Preservation Plan.
- Educate Historic Review Board (on a continuous basis) about historic preservation issues.
- Evaluate and update Historic District boundaries.

Community Facilities

- Recruit part-time doctor to meet the demands of patients in Somerville.
- Create first minipark within neighborhoods.

Housing

- Start a Community Development department to help dispense funds and financing benefits for low income persons.

Community Image

- Begin construction of amphitheater.
- Initiate city codes requiring the up-keep of residential and commercial lawns.

YEAR 2005

Natural Environment

- Relocate the Senior Center away from the rail line.
- Provide at least one registered public collection center for used oil and oil filters.

Infrastructure

- Expand drainage system throughout the city for new growth.
- Update crucial wastewater lines within the historic district.
- Renew high infiltration segments of the wastewater system.

Transportation

- Begin construction of bikeways:
 - 8th Street
 - Into Welch Park
 - Downtown bikeway.

Economic Development

- Begin designing future business park.

Land Use

- Annex Welch Park.
- Annex north area for future business park.

Historic Resources

- Evaluate and update heritage tourism program.
- Evaluate and update tourism marketing plan.

Community Facilities

- Introduce tele-medicine to maximize convenience and health care options.
- Develop a community adult recreational program.
- Hire a full-time paid fireman to organize volunteers, prepare budgets and coordinate training.

Housing

- Conduct condition of housing stock survey (done every 5 years).
- Housing Codes fully enacted.

Community Image

- Begin construction of the Harvey House.

Year 2006

Natural Environment

- Organize at least one major tire collection effort per year.

Infrastructure

- Conduct a systematic renovation of asbestos cement and iron-steel lines.
- Initiate one water account check per household.

Transportation

- Complete construction of Welch Park and Downtown bikeways.
- Build the median and bikeway along Thornberry.

Economic Development

- Begin recruiting businesses for Industrial Park.
- Complete infrastructure placement in business park.

Land Use

- Create Industrial Park.

Community Facilities

- Develop uniform trail system for hike and bike trails.
- Create the third minipark within existing neighborhoods.

Housing

- Begin condemnation process of extremely dilapidated vacant homes found during the 2005 housing stock survey.

Community Image

- Initiate downtown façade improvement program.

Year 2007

Natural Environment

- Hire naturalist guides to conduct tours along hiking trails.
- Host annual bird-watching convention.

Infrastructure

- Provide for curb and gutter throughout Somerville.
- Construct retention ponds or other water holding devices to control runoff.

Transportation

- Construct an airport to meet business and tourist needs.

Economic Development

- Recruit annual conventions, conferences and club meetings.

Land Use

- Update Zoning Ordinance to meet current needs.
- Update Subdivision Regulations.

Community Facilities

- Create a partnership with a regional or national youth organization in order to develop a youth recreation program for the City of Somerville.

Housing

- Continue to search for state and federal housing grants that may help the citizens of Somerville.

Community Image

- Initiate City program to plant 10 canopy trees per year.

Year 2008

Natural Environment

- Initiate a curbside recycling program.
- Make any needed revisions to FEMA flood plain maps.

Infrastructure

- Expand wastewater treatment plant if 90 percent capacity is reached.
- Update wastewater lines as needed.

Transportation

- Upgrade Avenue E.

ACTION AGENDA

- Build remaining bikeways.

Land Use

- Modify development review process as needed.

Community Facilities

- Develop new neighborhood park for new development growth areas.

Housing

- Adopt most current housing codes.
- Hire a building inspector.

Community Image

- If plausible, initiate a sign ordinance to regulate freestanding signs.

Year 2009

Natural Environment

- Initiate annual Household Hazardous Waste collection.

Infrastructure

- Implement new methods and technologies for improved wastewater system.

Transportation

- Make repairs to streets as needed.

Economic Development

- Continue to seek businesses that will provide employment opportunities to the citizens of Somerville.

Community Facilities

- Design and construct a Community Activity Center.

Housing

- Prepare for the upcoming census year.

Community Image

- If plausible, initiate a landscaping ordinance for commercial property.

YEAR 2010

Natural Environment

- Hold annual Earth Day celebration in Welch Park.

Infrastructure

- Map projected infrastructure needs for the next 10 years. Initiate Community Improvement Program to fund such needs.

Transportation

- Add proposed traffic signals at 8th and Thornberry as well as State Highway 36 and Thornberry.

Land Use

- Establish 20-year amortization schedule to move housing away from the highway and railroad tracks.

Community Facilities

- Organize a city-sponsored summer youth day camp that can utilize Welch Park and future recreational facilities.

Housing

- Look for areas to meet future (current) housing demands. Initiate annexation process if necessary.

Community Image

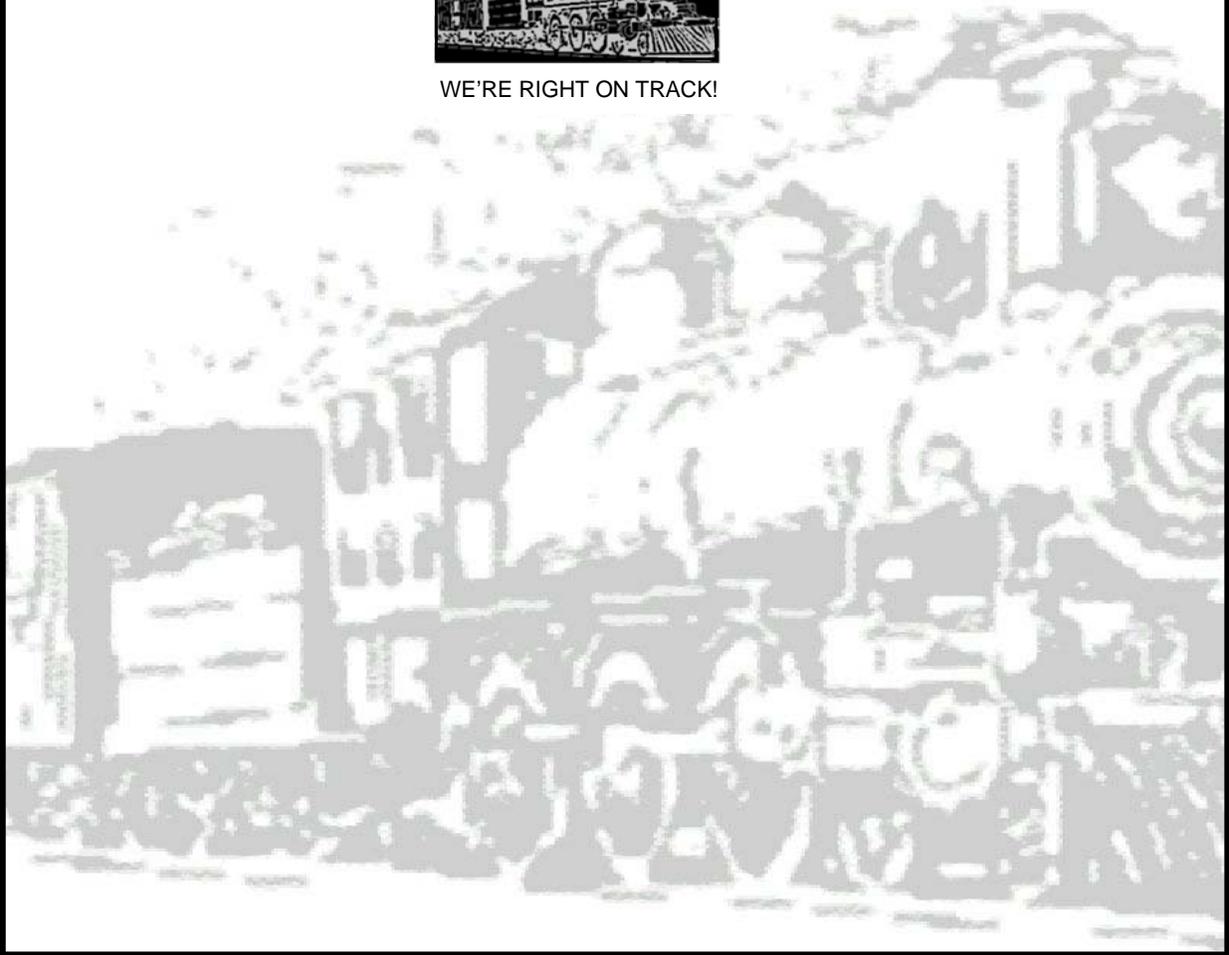
- Design uniform and decorative street signage to be used throughout the city.

ONCEPTUAL DESIGNS

Somerville,



WE'RE RIGHT ON TRACK!



Student Group 1



Architecture 306

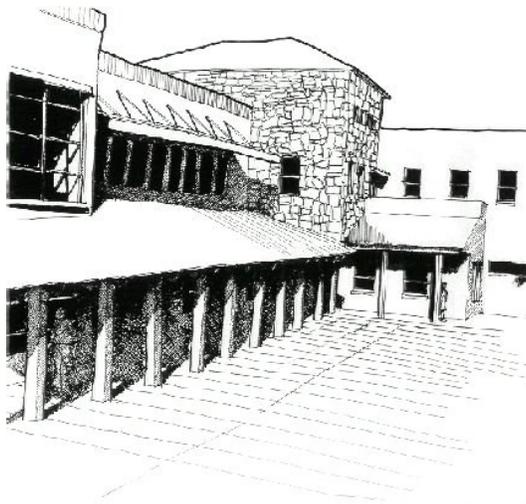
STUDENT GROUP 1 – ARCHITECTURE 306

The conceptual designs in this section were produced by undergraduate students enrolled in Architecture 306. The class was conducted under the direction of Associate Professor David Ekroth. The students worked on designs for a municipal government complex consisting of three components:

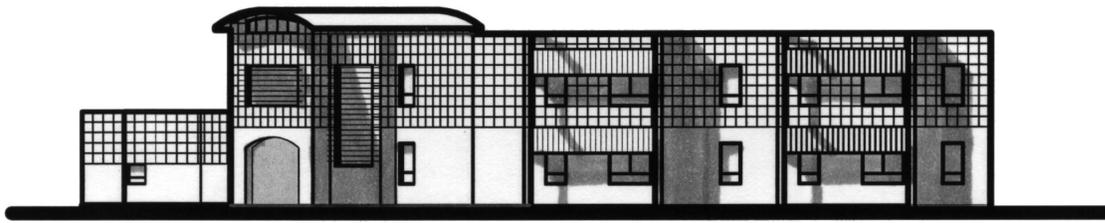
- Municipal Administration Building
- Police Department
- Fire Station

Two of the students worked on designs for a contemporary replication of a Harvey House. Harvey Houses were restaurants associated with railroads. They were very popular in the early Twentieth Century and remained viable to the 1940's. Somerville was the home to a Harvey House until the 1940's. The student designs represent a building that would not serve as a restaurant but would instead serve as a community center and a place for group meetings. Students participating in this project included the following:

Fermin Beltran
Matthew Davis
Noe Franco Jr.
Eric Geppelt
Michael Gerard
Stephen Hullinger
Yu Jun Im
Jennifer Johnson
Michael Lyssy
Travis Martinek
David Polkinghorn
Brandon Renflow
Kristopher Seale
Jeremy Tilley
Matthew West
Renee Stepp



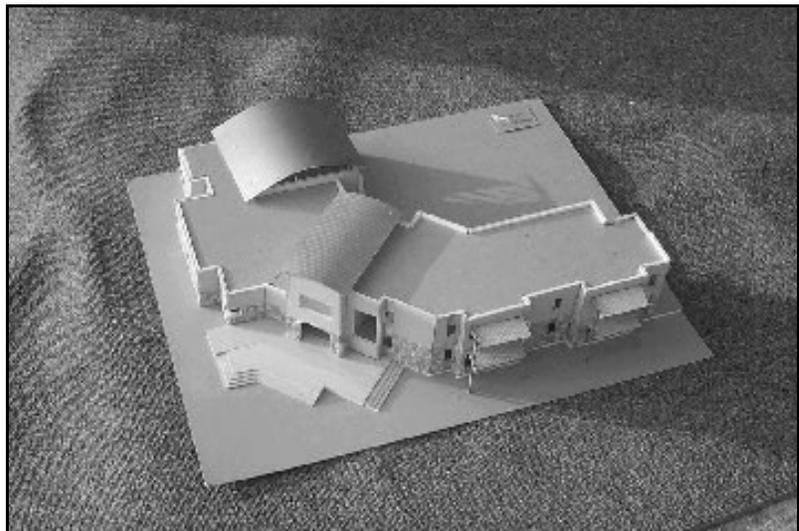
Design by Fermin Beltran



west elevation

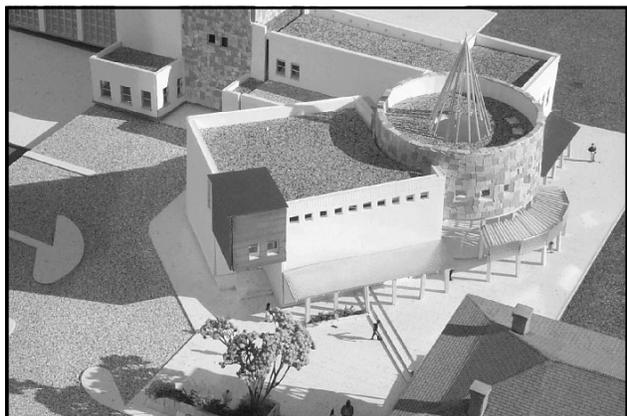
scale : 1'-0"=1/8"

Designs and model by Eric Geppelt

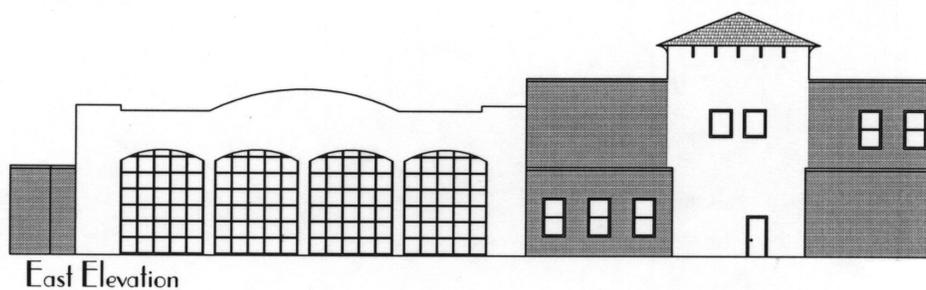


east elevation

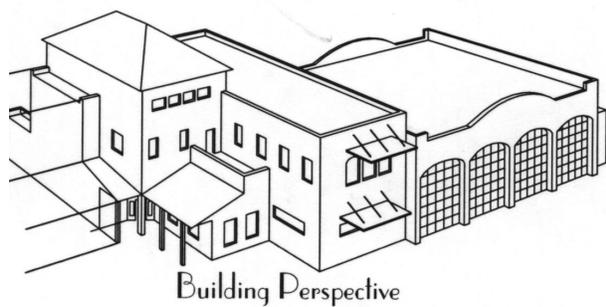
scale : 1'-0"=1/8"



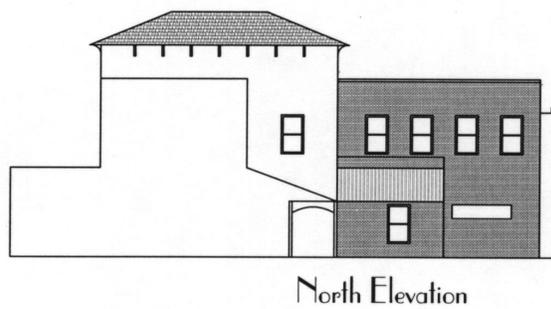
Model by Fermin Beltran



East Elevation

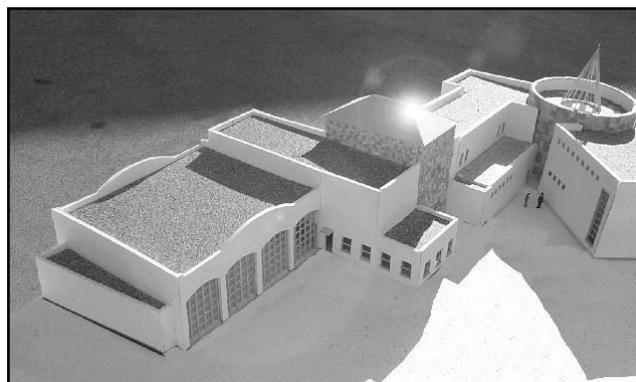


Building Perspective



North Elevation

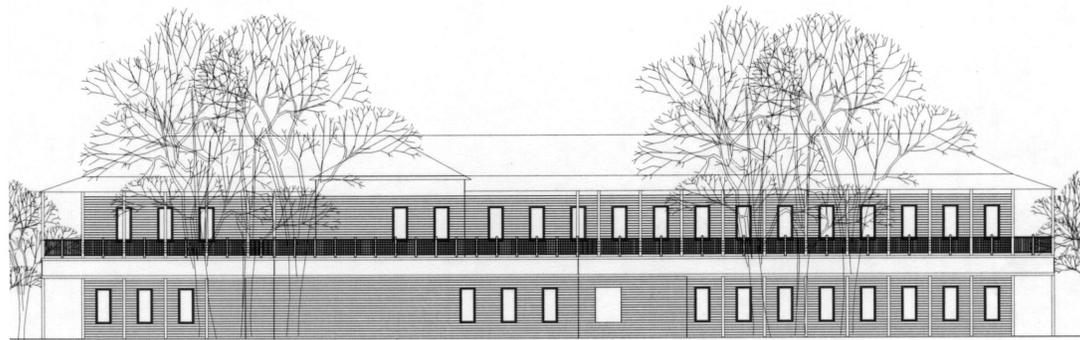
Design by David Polkinghorn





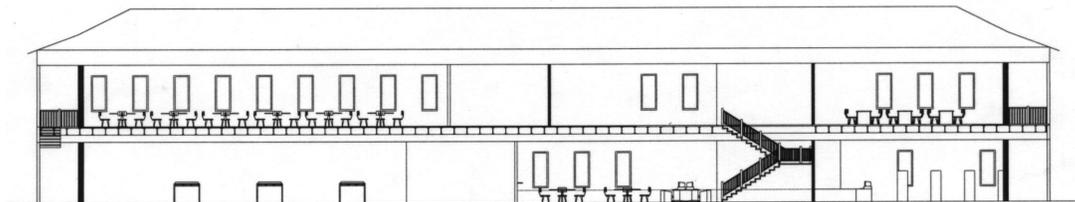
WEST ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



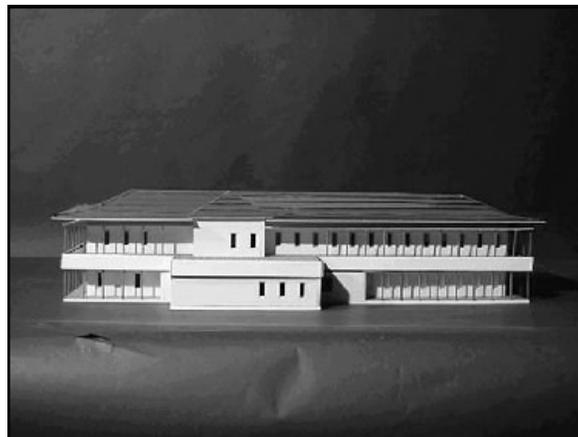
EAST ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

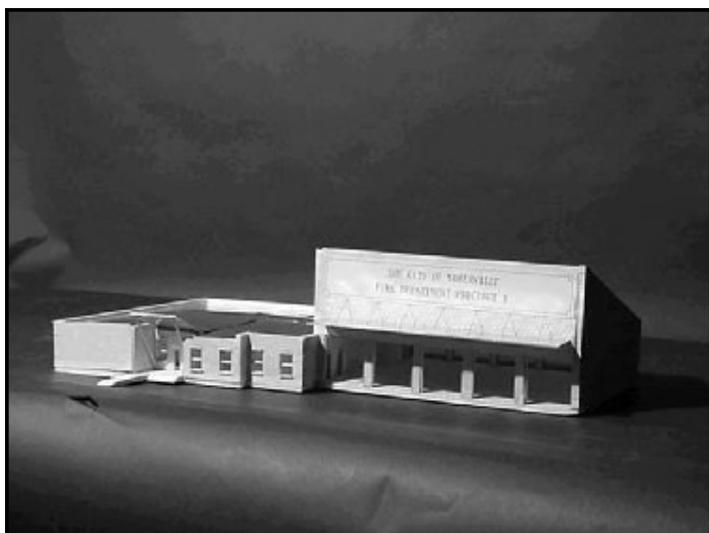
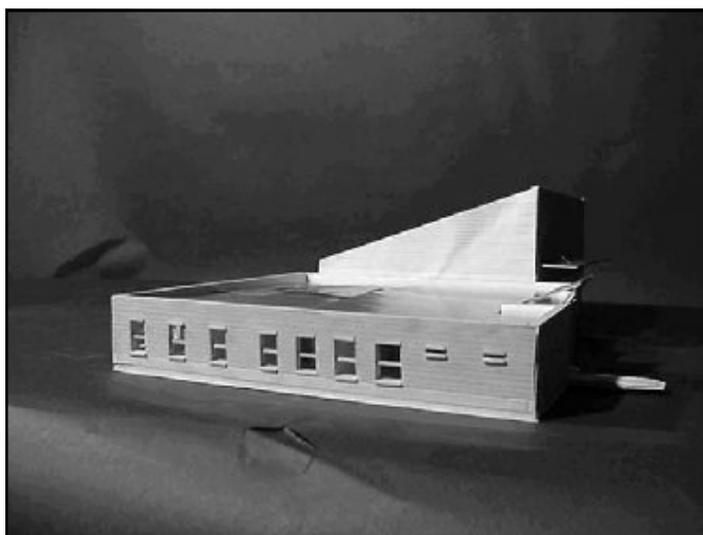


SECTION

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

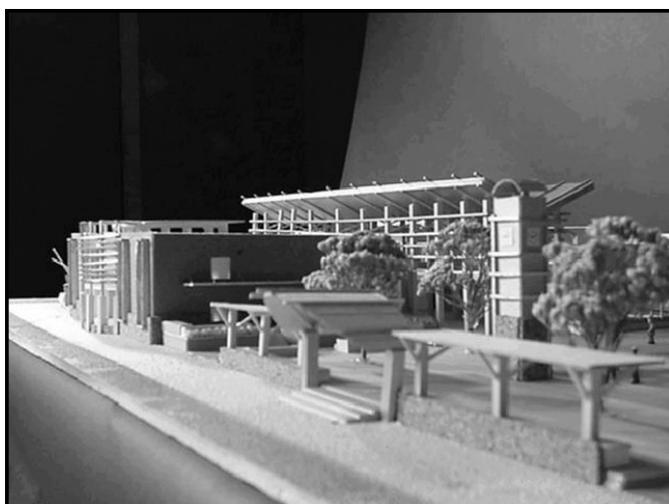
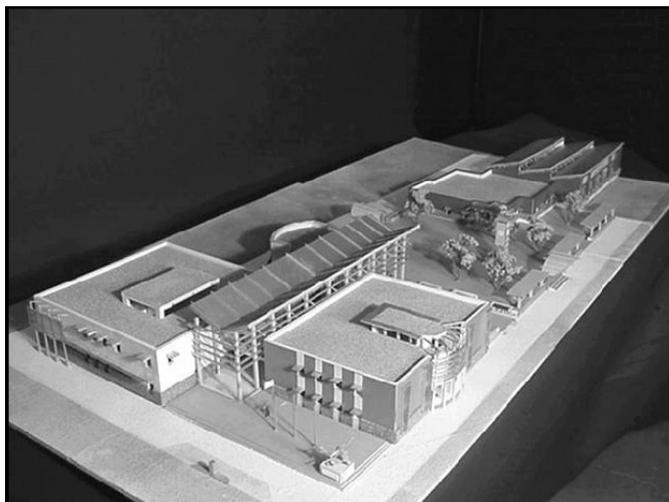


Drawings and model by Matthew West



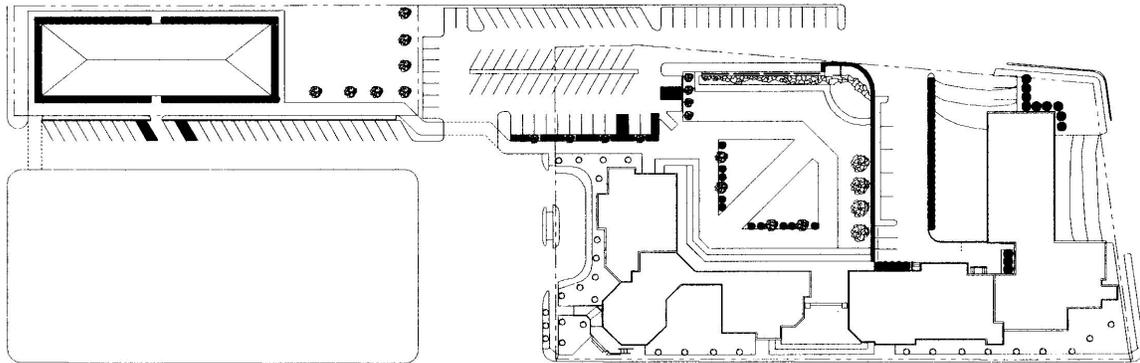
STUDENT GROUP 1 – ARCHITECTURE 306

Model by a team composed of Matthew Davis, Brandon Renfrow, and Kobey Seal

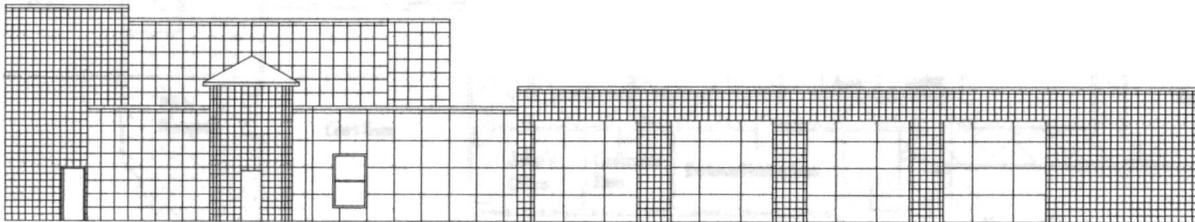




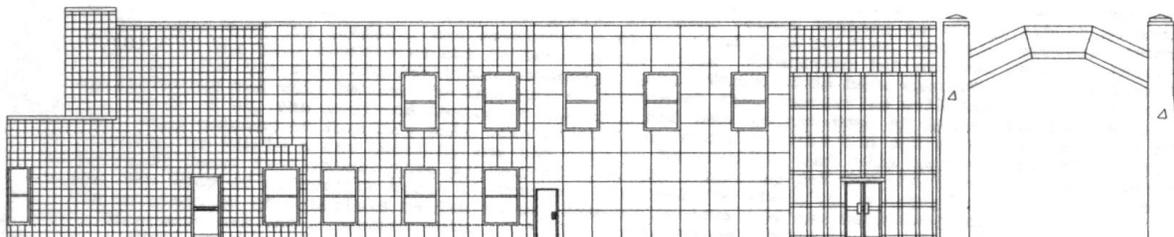
Drawings by Noe Franco, Jr.



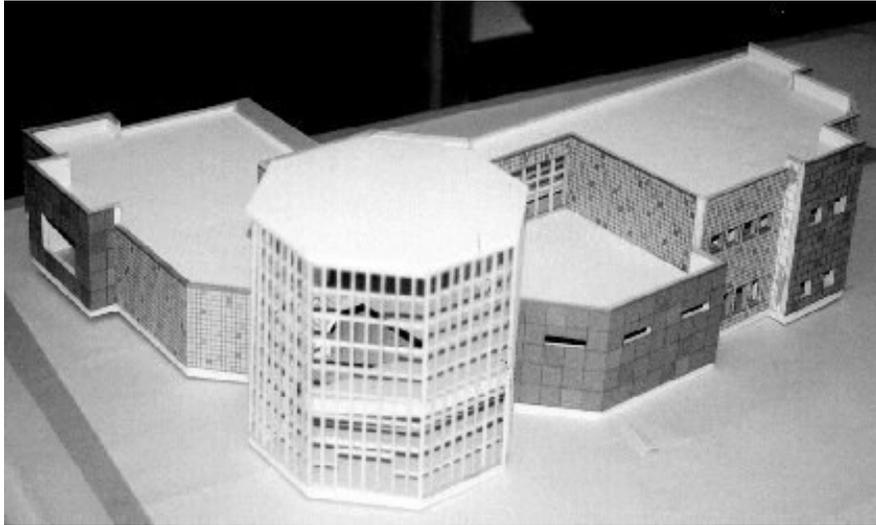
ROOF PLAN



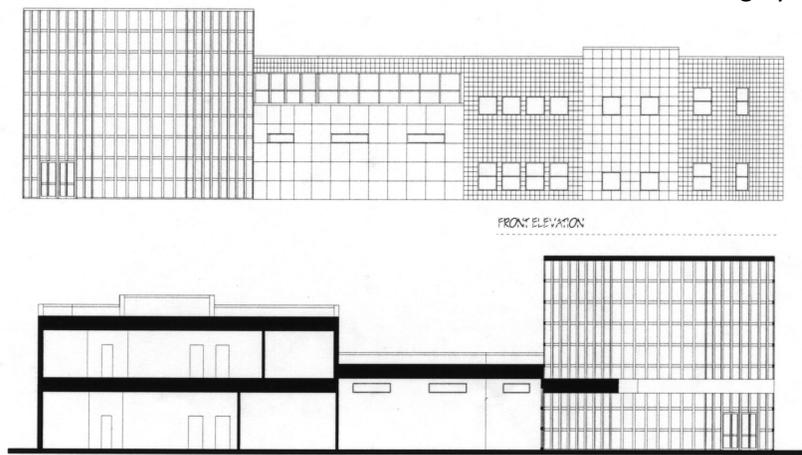
FIRE STATION ELEVATION



BACK ELEVATION

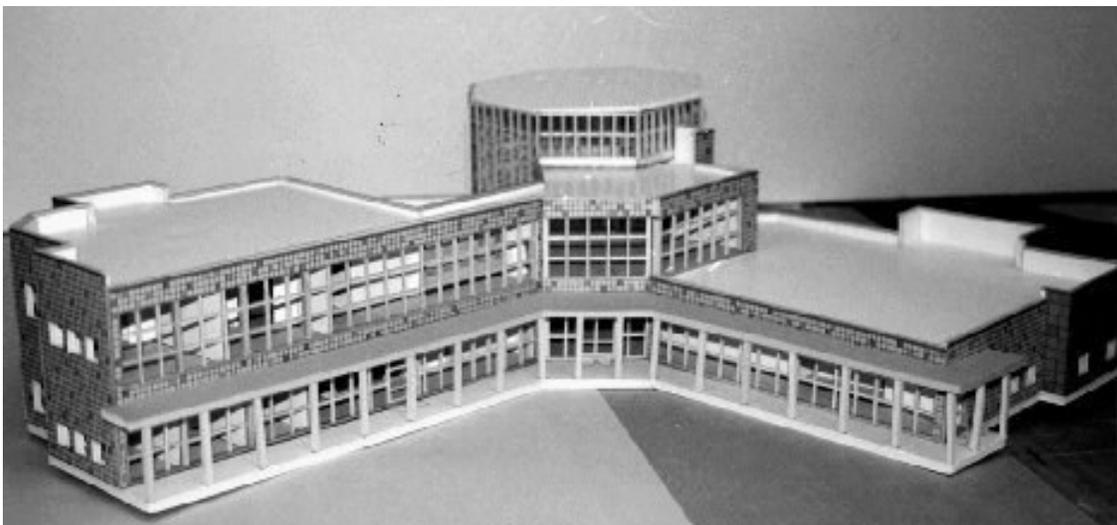


Model by Jennifer Johnson
and Noe Franco, Jr.

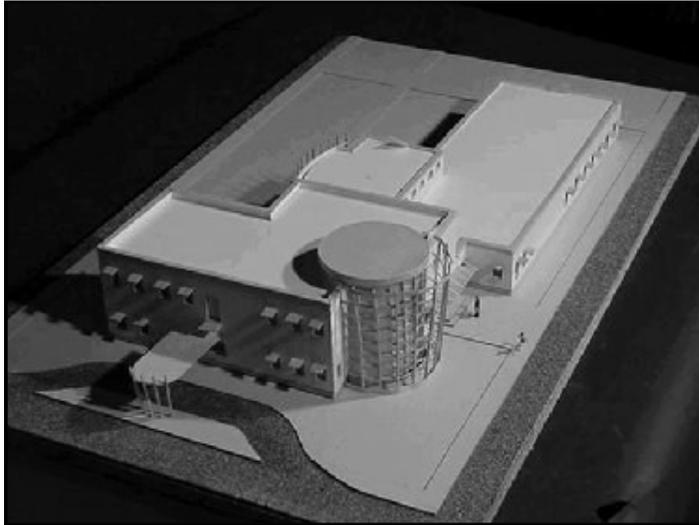


Drawing by Jennifer Johnson

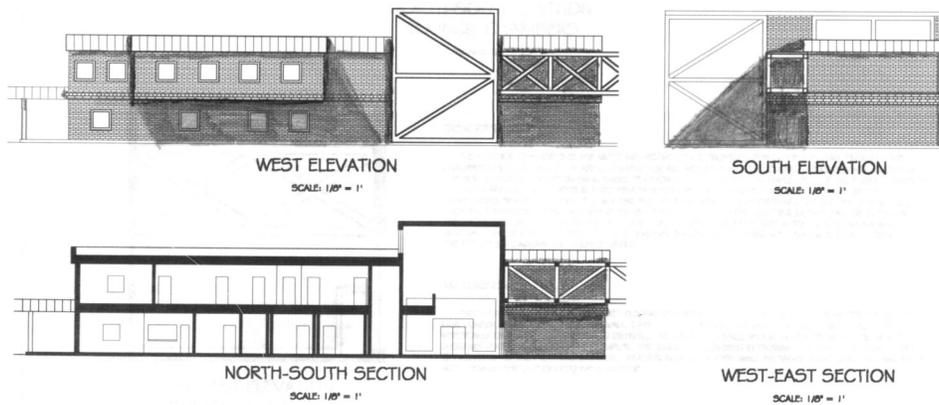
SECTION A-A



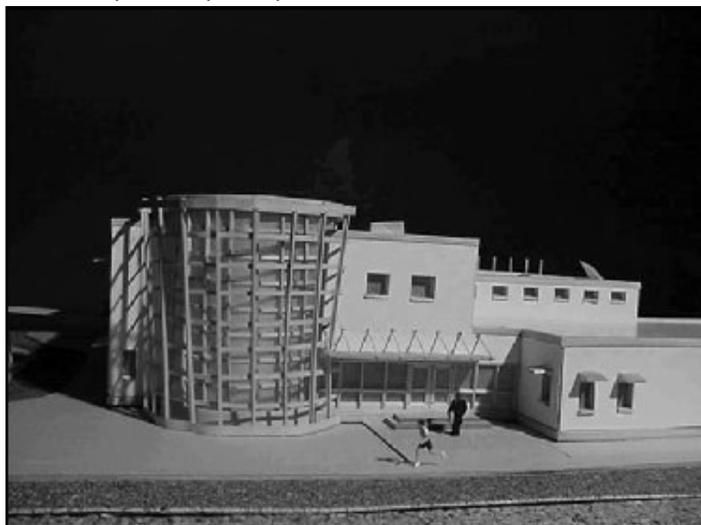
Model by Jeremy Tilley



Design by Travis Martinek



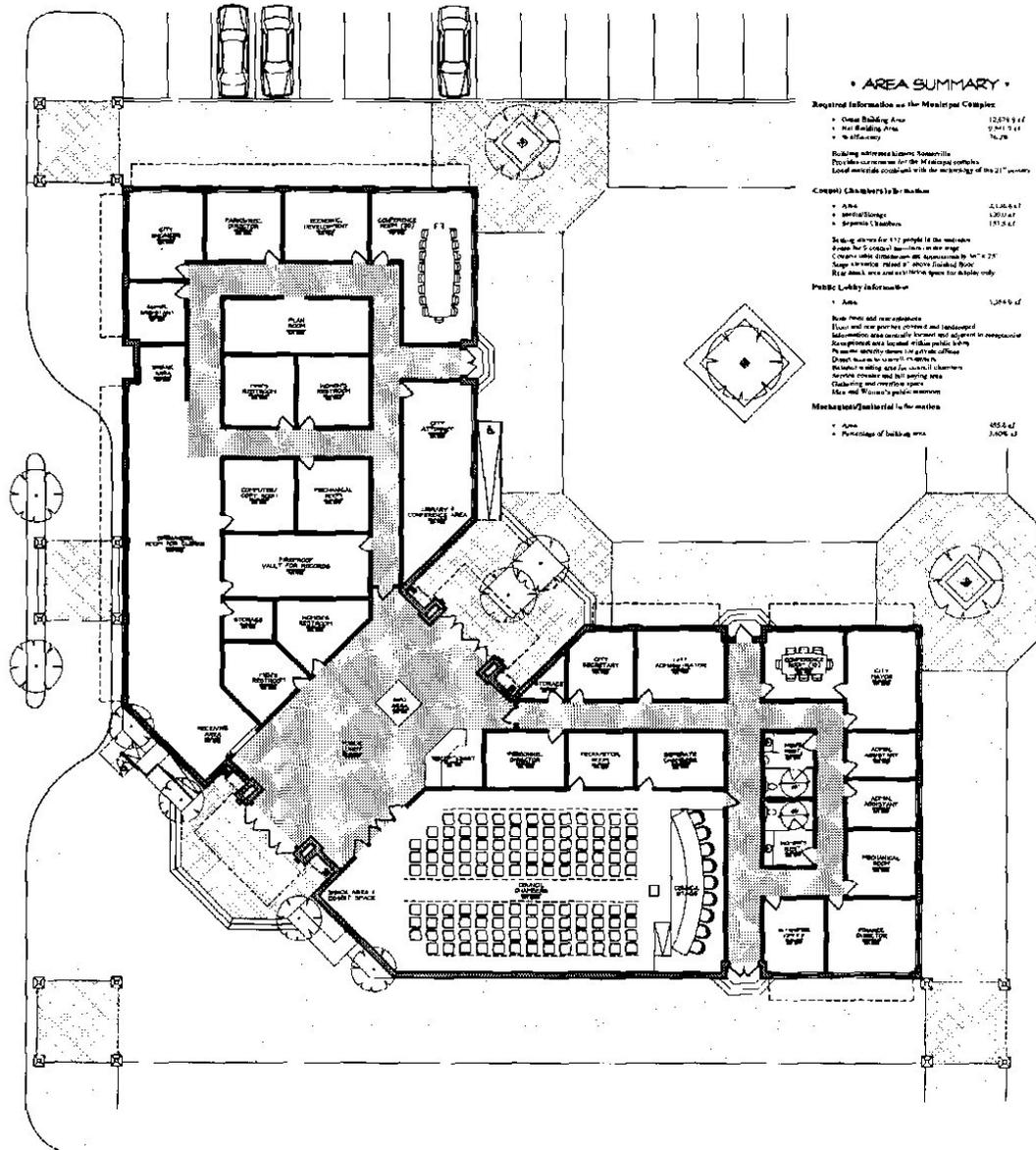
Model by Jeremy Tilley



Model by Carmen Rene Stepp



Design by Stephen R. Hullinger



Student Group 2



Landscape Architecture 221

AMPHITHEATER AND PARK DESIGN



FOR THE CITY OF SOMERVILLE

DESIGN TEAM:

LAND221 SPRING '00 CLASS

Department of Landscape Architecture
and Urban Planning
College of Architecture
Texas A&M University

PROJECT BACKGROUND

- LAND 221 IS A LANDSCAPE DESIGN STUDIO OF THIRD-YEAR STUDENTS IN BACHELOR OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM.
- THE CLASS CONSISTS OF 32 STUDENTS AND 3 INSTRUCTORS.
- THE CLASS WAS DIVIDED INTO 16 TEAMS WITH 2 MEMBERS IN EACH TEAM.
- EIGHT TEAMS FOCUSED ON THE WELCH PARK SITE WHILE THE OTHER EIGHT TEAMS ON THE THORNBERRY PARK SITE.
- THE STUDENTS HAVE SPENT 4 WEEKS ON THE PROJECT.



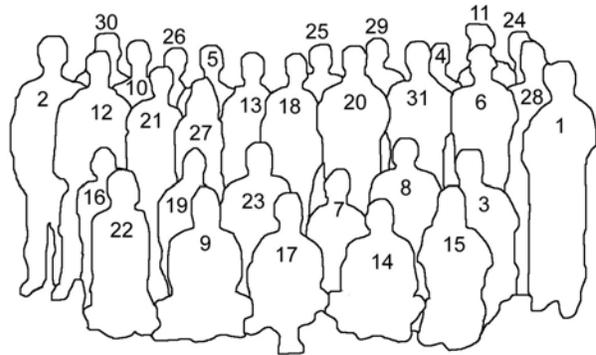
TEAM MEMBERS

INSTRUCTORS:

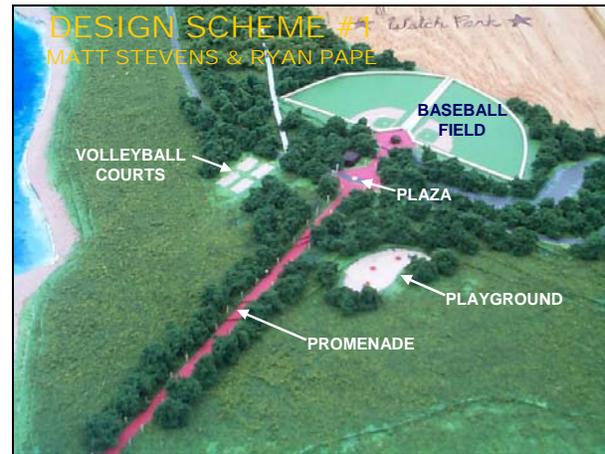
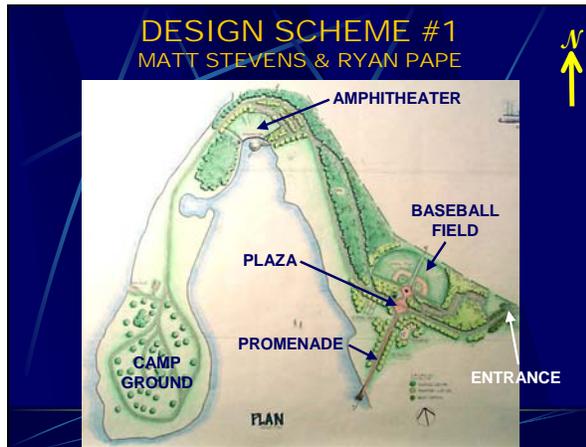
DR. CHANG-SHAN HUANG (1)
MING-HAN LI (2)
ED PESTOVIC

STUDENTS:

SAM ALLEN (3)	KRISTEN MCFADDEN (18)
BRIAN ARTHUR (4)	TARA MOODY
BRIAN BEADLE (5)	NATALIE NIGHTINGALE (19)
KYLE BIAGIOLI (6)	RYAN PAPE (20)
BROOKE BLAYLOCK (7)	SARA PARTRIDGE (21)
LAUREN CARIKER	JAMIE PEELER (22)
BEN DEBELLIS (8)	MATT STEVENS (23)
MICA DOANE (9)	LUCAS STROECH (24)
KYLE DOWNS (10)	ADAM SUTLIFF (25)
CHRIS EISEMAN (11)	MICHAEL TAYLOR (26)
MATT FOUGERAT (12)	KIEU TRAN (27)
JOHN HALL (13)	BILLY VICIC (28)
SUMMER HATFIELD (14)	BRYAN WARNE (29)
LAURA HORTON (15)	JAMES WILLIAMS (30)
NATALIE LAMB (16)	GUY WILSON
JACKIE LONDON (17)	MARC ZAK (31)

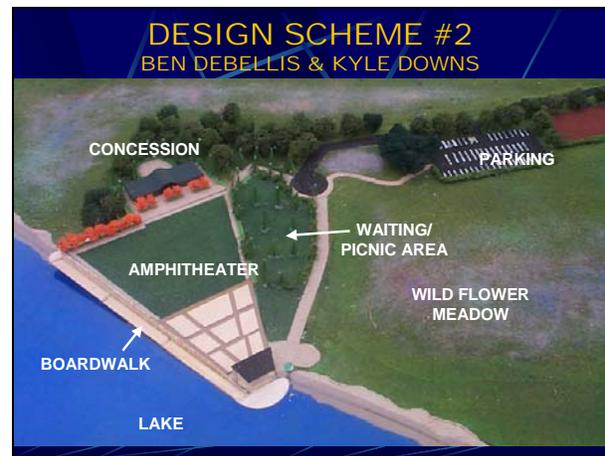


PART 1. WELCH PARK (8 DESIGN SCHEMES)



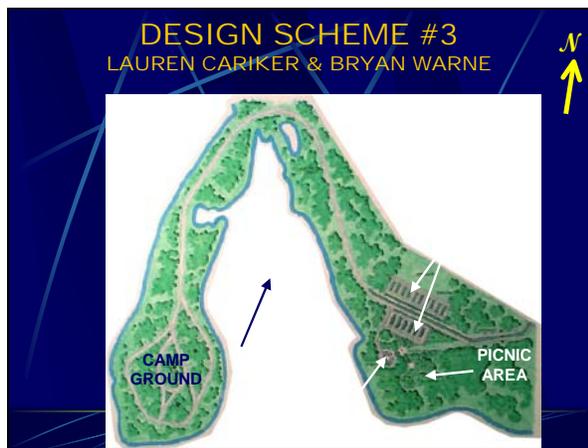
Design Scheme #1 by Matt Stevens & Ryan Pape

- A welcome place for tourists and citizens of Somerville
- An amphitheater for 1500 people
- Enhancement of the existing entrance
- A recreational area containing two baseball fields, four volleyball courts, and a playground
- The Bald Cypress promenade that can accommodate exhibition booths for art display
- Restroom facilities
- Preserving the existing camp ground



Design Scheme #2 by Ben Debellis & Kyle Downs

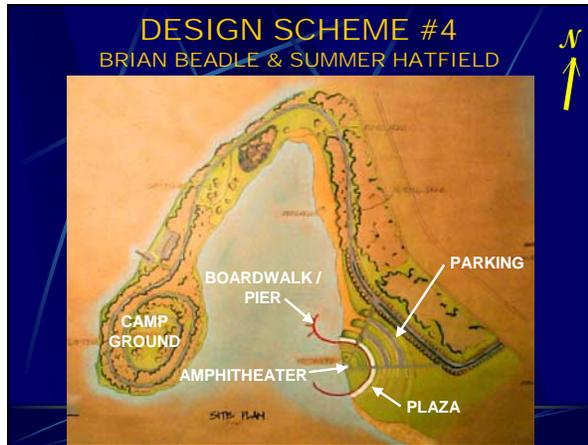
- Design goal: a natural design that attracts large numbers of people to assist and enhance the economy of Somerville
- An amphitheater for 1500 people
- A concession area inside the amphitheater
- Enhancement of entrance
- A boardwalk along the lake
- Bike trails in the existing woodland
- Renovation of the existing outcropping
- Expansion of the existing boat ramp
- 15 private camp sites
- A RV park with complete hookups



Design Scheme #3 by Lauren Cariker & Bryan Warne

- Enhancement of the nature by preserving the wooded areas, and by planting more trees
- Formal entrance followed by a boulevard that leads visitors' sight line to the amphitheater
- A clock tower plaza for private gathering and community events
- Restrooms and showers

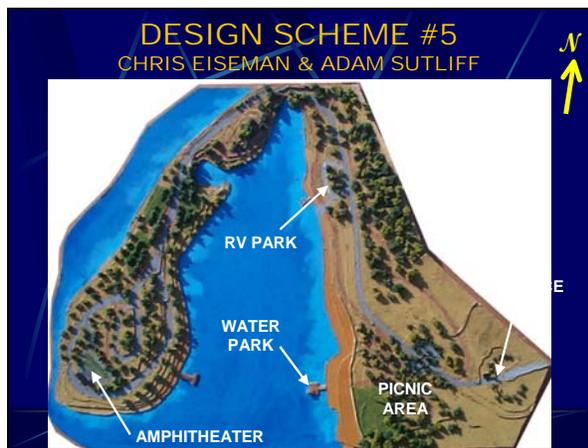
- Primitive camp sites
- A RV park



Design Scheme #4 by Summer Hatfield & Bryan Beadle

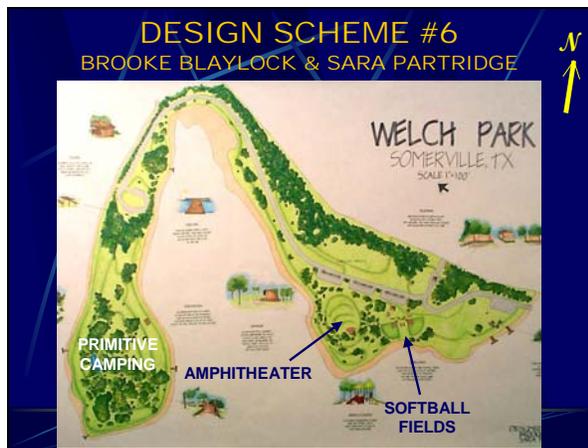
- Design goal: a memorable park for tourists and citizens of Somerville
- Transformation of the entrance to a welcome image
- An amphitheater
- Ripple-like berms that reflect the lake rippling
- Curved boardwalks and a pier that allow for fishing and boat docking

- Red brick paved boardwalks
- A plaza area next to berms for gathering
- Use of porous materials for parking lots to minimize environmental impact



Design Scheme #5 by Chris Eiseman & Adam Sutliff

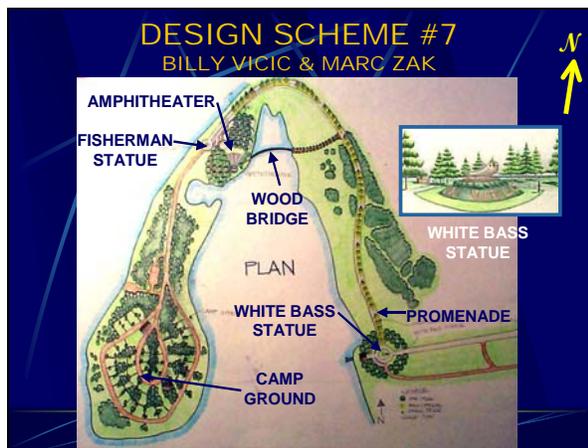
- Design goal: a natural park with a cultural amphitheater
- An amphitheater on the tip of the peninsula
- Terraced seating
- A pier for fishing and viewing to the lake
- Hike and bike trails to access the entire park
- Volleyball and beach activities
- A RV park



Design Scheme #6 by Brooke Blaylock & Sara Partridge

- Design theme: a park that provides both passive and active activities
- A welcome entrance
- An amphitheater with grass seating
- Two softball fields
- Primitive camping that secludes parking and other sport activities

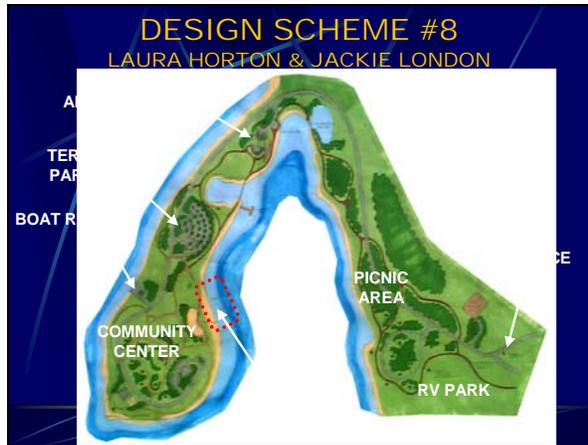
- Trails that connect all the features



Design Scheme #7 by Billy Vicic & Marc Zak

- Design goal: a park with enhanced focal points and various activities
- Entrance as a focal point
- Two sculptures: White Bass and Fisherman statues located at two transitional areas
- Promenade with bald cypress along sides
- An amphitheater (1500 people) on the existing outcropping

- A wooden bridge that connects overflow parking and the amphitheater
- Terraced parking that follows the natural contours
- Camp ground
- A RV park
- Restroom facilities

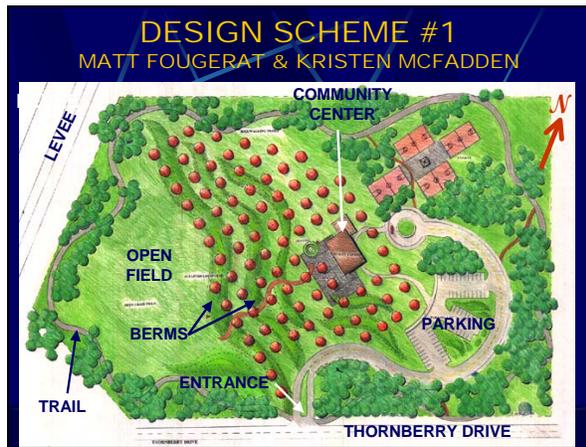


Design Scheme #8 by Laura Horton & Jackie London

- Design goal: a natural and historic park of Somerville
- Trails on the entire park
- A community center on the tip of the peninsula that offers various events for all the age groups of Somerville
- Unique pavilions with tilted roofs that provide maximum shade in the late afternoon

- Safe swim area that provides gentle slopes and prevents sudden drops.

PART 2. THORNBERRY PARK (8 DESIGN SCHEMES)



Design Scheme #1 by Matt Fougerat & Kristen McFadden

- Design goal: creating a new cultural center and an icon of Somerville for visitors and all groups of Somerville residents
- A sculptural wave field representing the lake
- An open space for field sports and free play
- Four basketball and one roller hockey courts
- Densely wooded area for meditation
- A community center for various events such as artistic display and other cultural activities



Design Scheme #2 by Brian Arthur & Kyle Biagioli

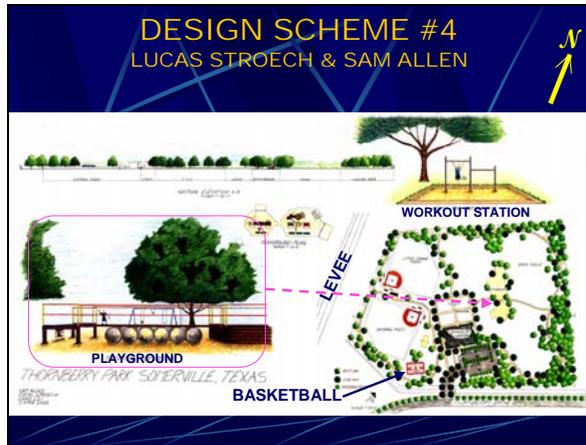
- Design goal: a multifunctional park for all kinds of sports and a place that tells the history of Somerville
- Sport complex including a soccer field, two basketball courts, two sand volleyball courts and two softball fields
- A swimming pool and a pavilion for bingo, craft show and art display
- A picnic area
- Eight workout stations along the trail with historic information of Somerville displayed



Design Scheme #3 by Natalie Nightingale & Mica Doane

- Design goal: an inviting community park with an amphitheater
- Two large ponds on both sides of the entrance
- An amphitheater with naturally terraced seating for 1500 people
- Two tennis courts, two basketball courts, one baseball field and an open field.

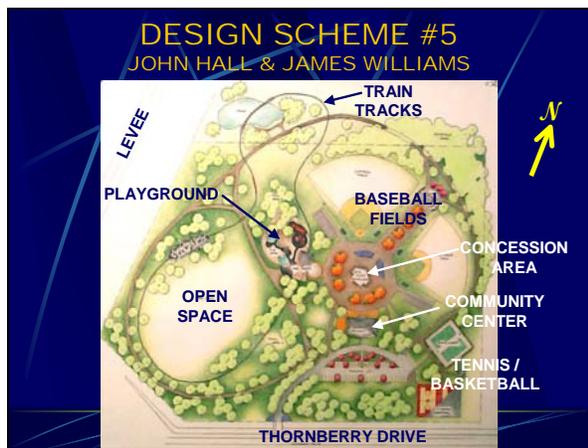
- A playground
- Pavilions throughout the park for private gathering and picnicking



Design Scheme #4 by Lucas Stroech & Sam Allen

- Design goal: a park used by all the age groups of Somerville
- Community center that has an exercise room, an indoor basketball court, and small meeting rooms
- A plaza next to the community center for various community events
- Sport complex with a softball field, a little league field, a basketball court, and a volleyball court

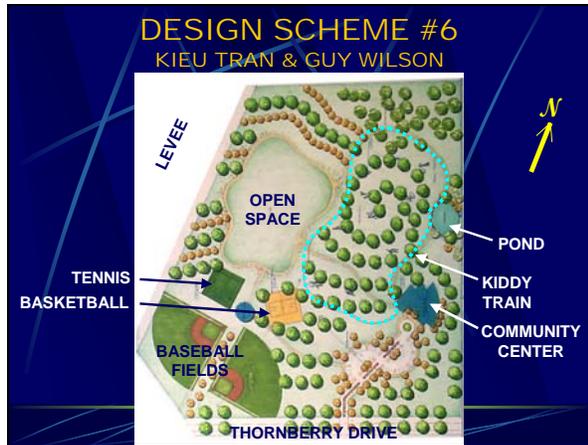
- Workout stations along walking trails
- Open free play area
- A playground with a miniature train that reflects the history of Somerville



Design Scheme #5 by John Hall & James Williams

- Design goal: a park that functions on various levels and attracts all members of the community
- A sport complex that has one little league field, one softball field, two tennis courts, and a covered basketball court
- A passive recreational area that includes two picnic areas, and an open space
- Walking/biking trails

- A concession area located at the center of the park
- Park decorated with flowering plants
- A miniature train that reflects Somerville's railroad tie industry
- A playground
- A community house that can hold various events



Design Scheme #6 by Kieu Tran & Guy Wilson

- Design theme: linking the past and present
- Design features including an existing pond, a wooded area, a field, outdoor seating and a sport area
- The existing pond represents the lake.
- The field represents farmlands.
- Drift wood and large boulders along the trails, representing the natural characteristic of Lake Somerville

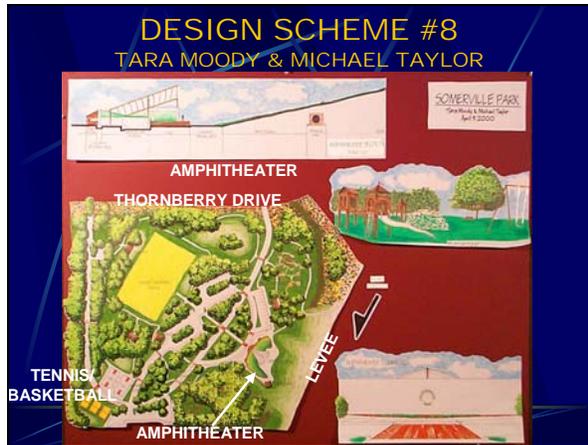
- A kiddy train that links all the design features throughout the park



Design Scheme #7 by Jamie Peeler & Natalie Lamb

- Design goal: a park that reflects Somerville's history and welcomes all citizens
- An old railroad depot that serves as a museum
- A replica of an 1800's train that allows children to climb on
- Use of railroad ties to highlight park features such as the entrance sign
- A large playground for children

- Areas for soccer, softball, basketball, volleyball, tennis and roller hockey
- Three horseshoe courts
- Exercise trails all over the park
- A community swimming pool
- A large pavilion with a performance stage for various events



Design Scheme #8 by Tara Moody & Michael Taylor

- An amphitheater that includes the levee of the lake for seating
- Three volleyball courts and two basketball courts
- A nature area for elderly to relax
- Walking trails that leads up to the top of the levee
- A recreational field that allows soccer, football and Frisbee activities
- Picnic areas

- Restroom facilities

Student Group 3



Architecture 306
&
Graduate Students

STUDENT GROUP 3 – ARCHITECTURE 306 & GRADUATE STUDENTS

The conceptual designs presented on the following pages were produced by undergraduate and graduate students working under the direction of Associate Professor Robin Abrams. The following undergraduate students were involved in this effort:

Erika Cuellar
Lauren Elford
James Haliburton
Janean Mann
Dodie Sanders
Greg Walp

Brad Derkach
Stephanie Fernandez
Alex Herold
Patrick Ohrt
Bo Steinert
Josh Williams

Chris Duke
Erin Groffman
Ryan Horne
Yaniser Orioli
Gloria Villalobos-Hernandez
Keith Wilson

The following graduate students were involved in this effort:

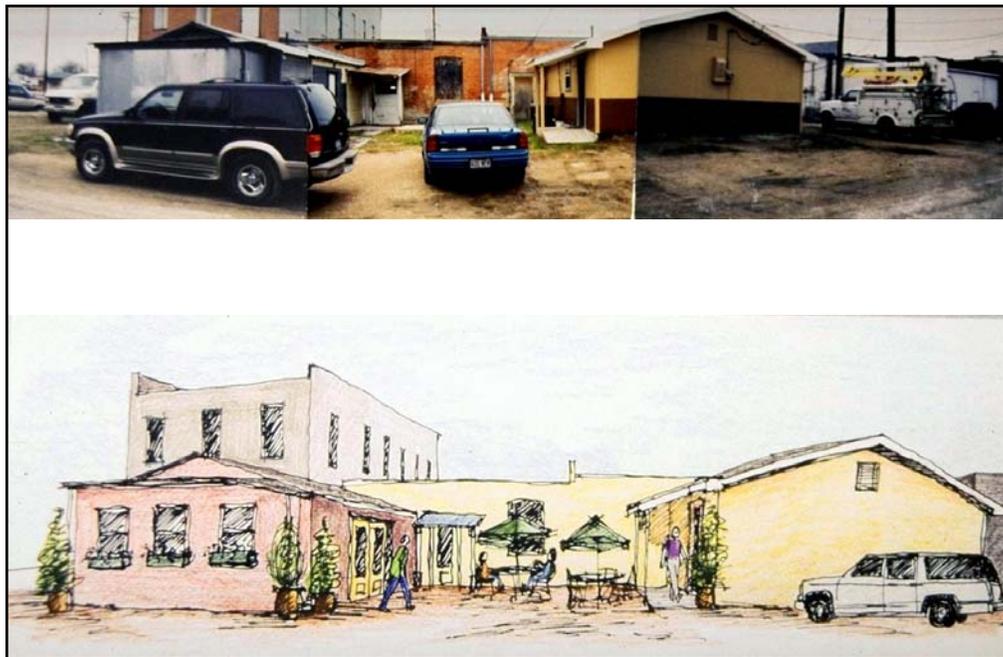
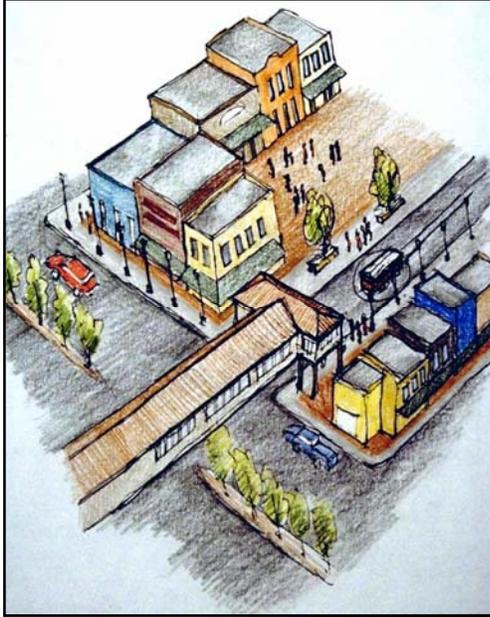
Holly Fisher
Clara Norton

Scott Marek
Tressa Orsak

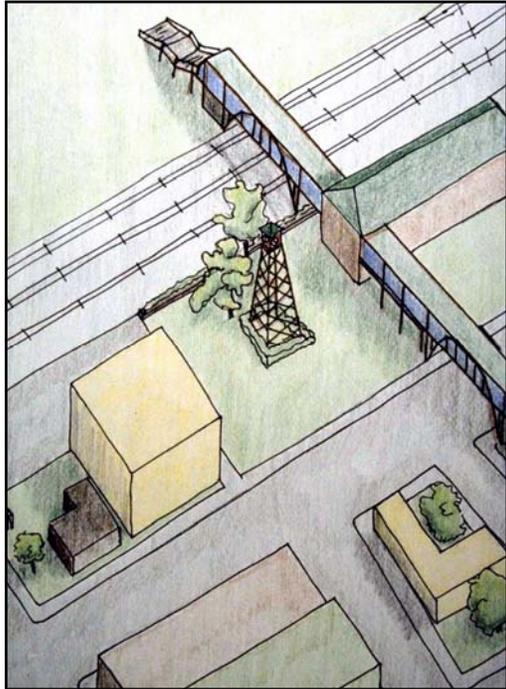
Laura Massey
Jin-Gyu Yang



STUDENT GROUP 3 – ARCHITECTURE 306 & GRADUATE STUDENTS





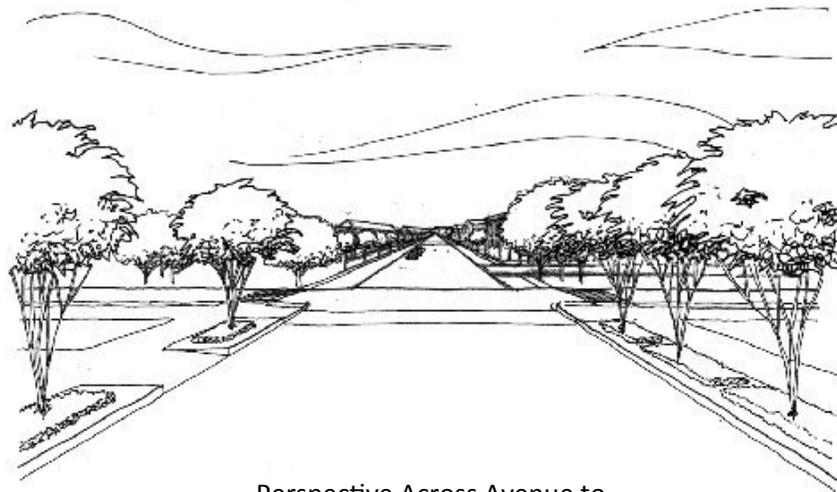
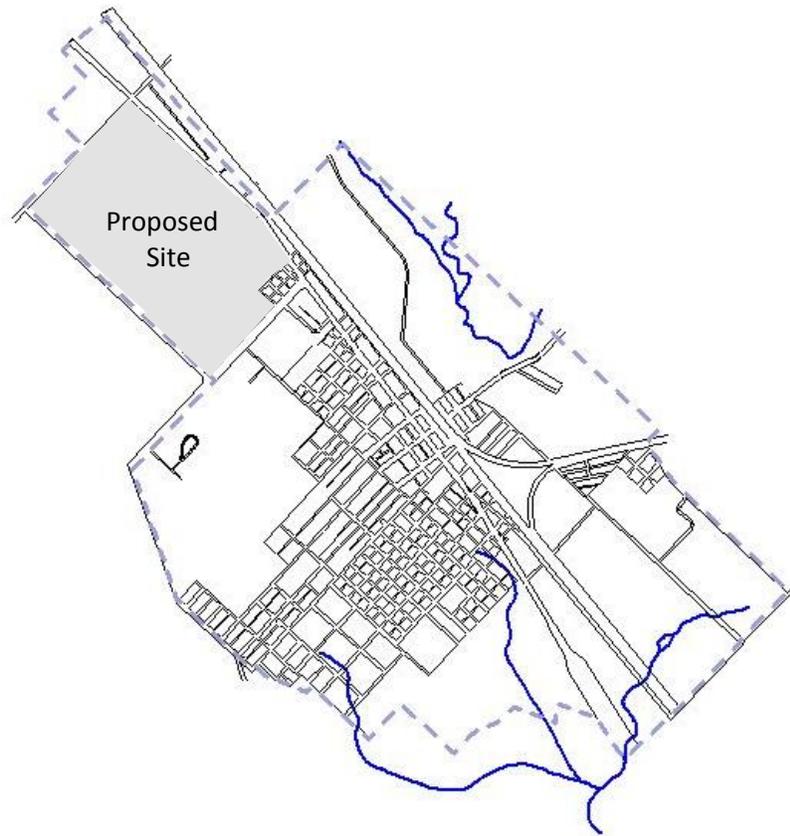


Residential Design
by
Edward Pestovic

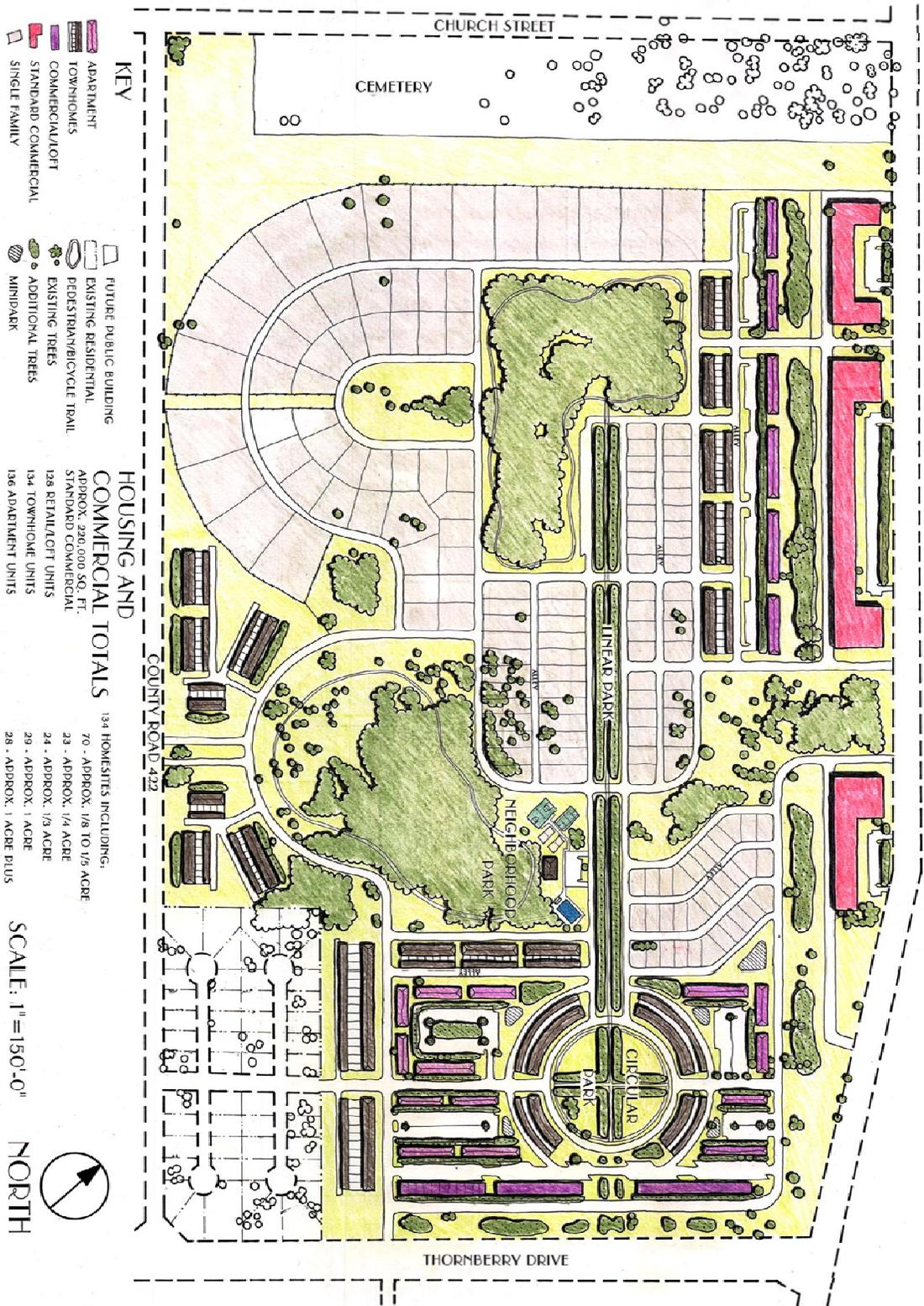


RESIDENTIAL DESIGN BY EDWARD PESTOVIC

The following designs and sketches were produced by Edward Pestovic.

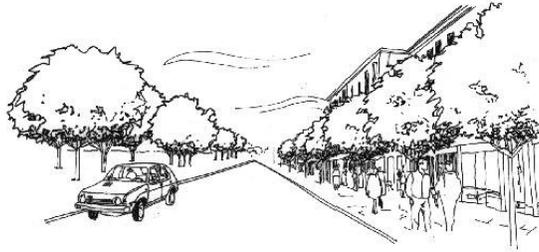


Perspective Across Avenue to
New Mixed-Use Development

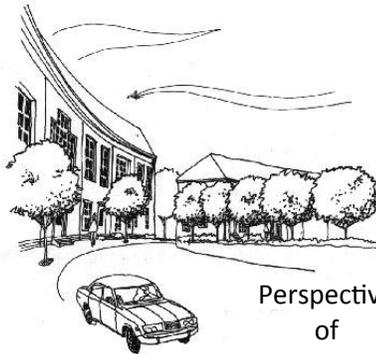




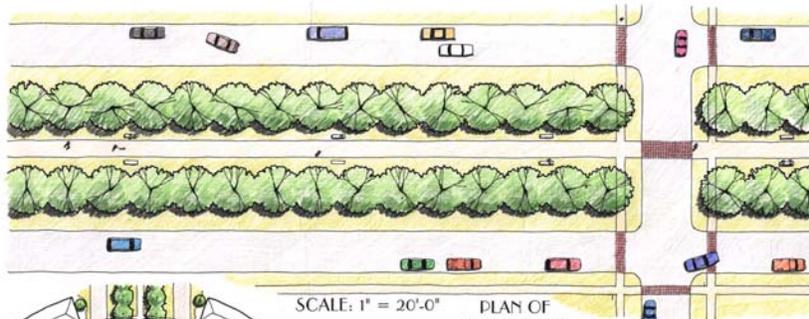
Perspective of Typical Apartments



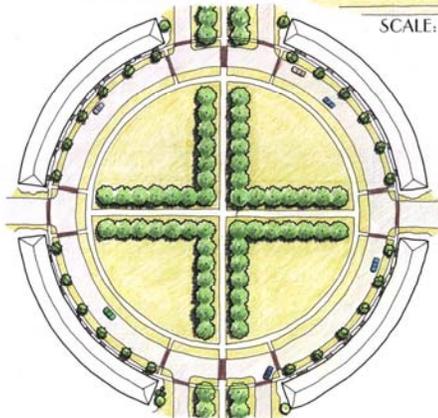
Perspective of Residential/Commercial Facing Thornberry Boulevard



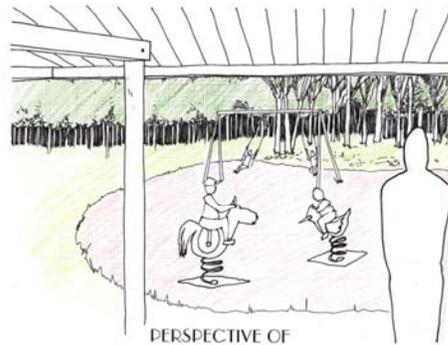
Perspective of Town Home



SCALE: 1" = 20'-0" PLAN OF LINEAR PARK



SCALE: 1" = 50'-0" PLAN OF CIRCULAR PARK



PERSPECTIVE OF NEIGHBORHOOD PARK