



# *Sunrise 2025*

*A New City Prepares  
for a Bright Future*



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# Introduction

## *A New City Prepares for a Bright Future*

The City of Bulverde is a new city preparing for the future. This document represents the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Bulverde. The Plan provides the Mayor and City Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission, City management and staff, property owners, residents, developers and other community stakeholders with a long-range guide for the future growth of the City of Bulverde and its surrounding area. It does not impose another layer of regulations, but rather provides the citizens of the City of Bulverde with the basis for building the city they envision. It recommends policies, procedures and planning tools in an effort to maximize the ability of the City of Bulverde to protect its natural assets and grow in accordance with the visions of each element of the Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is an expression of what a community wants, a vision of what it might be. It is a working document representing goals, objectives, assumptions, standards, principles and policies as agreed upon by the citizens of the community.

The City Council commissioned a comprehensive plan to help position the community for the future while protecting, maintaining and enhancing the City of Bulverde's unique quality of life and environment. They realize that to protect the high quality of life, the city must grow in a conscious, proactive and planned manner based on a collective vision. The Comprehensive Plan establishes a positive, sensible direction for the development of the City of Bulverde over a twenty-year time period. In putting together this plan, the city addresses the needs and desires of its citizens and helps guide activities, improvements and development for the next two decades. This comprehensive plan looks at where this new city has been, where it is, where it wants to go, and how it plans to get there. Adopted in accordance with Section 219.002 of the Texas Local Government Code, the Comprehensive Plan provides the legal basis for the City of Bulverde's zoning and subdivision regulations as well as other community development-related regulations and incentives.

## *Why Plan?*

Cities plan for the same reason all prudent organizations do – to ensure their future viability. Planning is a system used to apply resources, solve problems,

and capitalize on opportunities. It is a means to achieve objectives and progress toward goals. A comprehensive plan is a tool that allows a city to anticipate changes and to guide those changes in a cost effective, orderly manner that is consistent with the desires of the community. It is not considered an end product, but an important first step in an ongoing process of rational, balanced and creative decision-making regarding the future.

A well thought out plan analyzes future trends and guides growth in desirable ways and to areas where it is most suitable. The plan provides predictability, guidance and reassurance to citizens and developers alike. Planning helps to protect the attributes that attracted people to the Bulverde area in the first place, and defines and promotes a community's image and personality. A plan developed by the citizens can serve as a community consensus regarding the long-range vision of the city. This is the most important reason of all to plan. In a constantly changing world, a plan allows the people to determine a vision of what the community wants to be and how it wants to achieve that vision.

The comprehensive plan is not a static document. Revisions will be made when warranted. The plan will be continually monitored to track the extent to which it has been implemented and to determine if plan implementation results in the expected results. This process will keep the plan a living document and protect the will of the citizens.

## 1.2 The Process

On December 10, 2002 the City Council passed Resolution No. 74-02-12-10 authorizing the Mayor to execute an agreement with Robert D. Larsen, Ph.D. and James W. Vaughan, AICP to assist in the development of a long-range comprehensive plan for the City of Bulverde in accordance with a work program titled "*Establishing the Comprehensive Planning Process for Bulverde, Texas.*" Both Dr. Larsen and Mr. Vaughan are professors at Texas State University in San Marcos.

Citizen involvement, a must for effective planning, incorporates the community's values in terms of quality of life, character and scale and style of development, aesthetic appeal, and how development should be integrated into the existing and future city fabric. To further this end, the City Council established the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The Steering Committee structure was



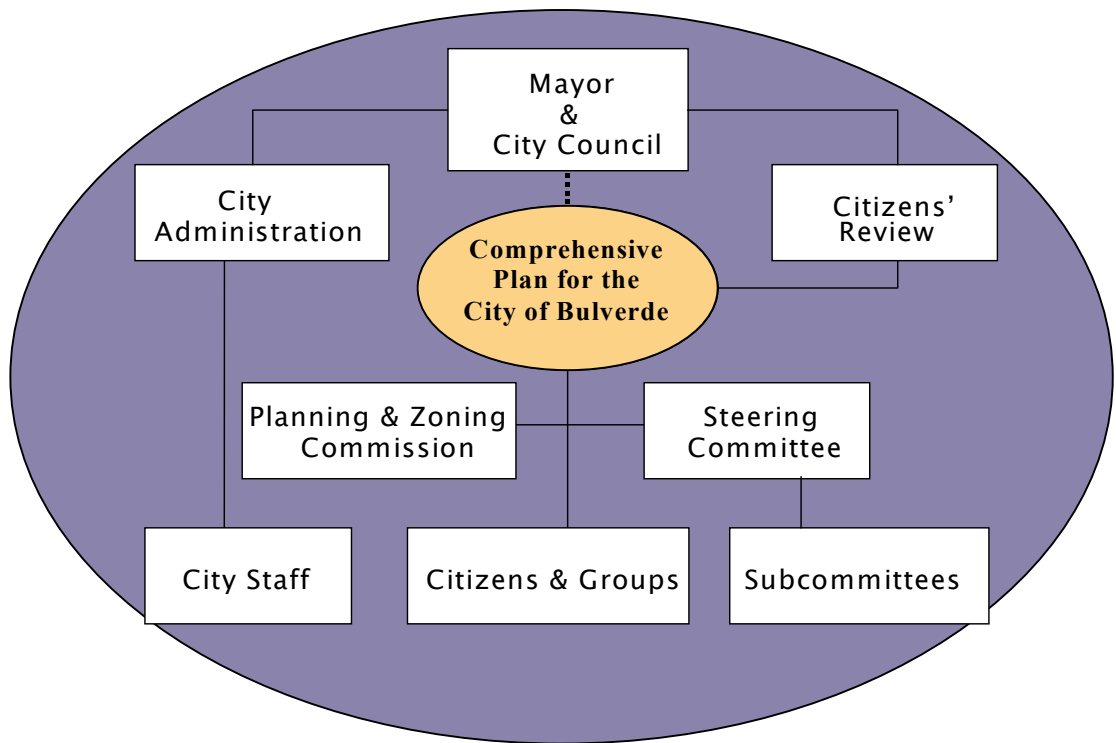
Planning participants at one of the twenty-six Steering Committee meetings

made up of 18 members designed to represent the interests, needs, ideas and concerns of all the stakeholders in the future of the City of Bulverde. The members of the Steering Committee divided up into six sub-committees to discuss and develop visions, goals and actions/objectives for different elements of the plan:

- Infrastructure/Transportation
- Public Safety
- Community Development
- Land Use/Land Development/Growth Management
- Historical/Heritage Preservation
- Economic Development

The City of Bulverde’s Comprehensive Plan is based on meetings, surveys, interviews, and other sessions held by the Steering Committee and its six subcommittees, Planning Commission, city staff, consultants and other involved participants. The organization of the comprehensive planning process is graphically represented in the Organizational Chart below.

### Comprehensive Planning Process for the City of Bulverde



The Steering Committee and its subcommittees were involved in a thorough and time-consuming process of identifying issues, developing visions, establishing goals and objectives, discussing alternatives and solutions, and helping determine needs and priorities for the City of Bulverde. Each committee member was responsible for distributing copies of the Comprehensive Plan Survey. The survey was designed to assist in identifying issues important to citizens. Survey topics included:

- Demographics
- What the City of Bulverde should be



- Priorities for managing growth
- What the Comprehensive Plan should accomplish
- The role of City Government in growth management
- The level of city services
- The quality of existing city services
- Community outreach

Survey respondents consistently indicated a high degree of appreciation for the “rural” atmosphere of the Bulverde area. The details of the survey are discussed in Chapter Two of this plan.

In addition to the Comprehensive Plan Survey, city staff, the Steering Committee and plan consultants hosted a citizen input event on Saturday, November 9, 2003 at the Bulverde/Spring Branch Library in the HEB Shopping Center. People were offered the opportunity to “vote” on whether they agreed or disagreed with preliminary vision statements derived from steering committee meetings. Findings from the survey and citizen input formed the basis for the preparation of this plan.



Charlie Cantu Jr., Bev Lemmes, Bill Krawietz, and Rhonda Zunker discussing land use planning

After analyzing survey findings and citizen input, the Steering Committee set about directing the preparation of each chapter of the plan. When a draft of each chapter was prepared, it was discussed and edited by the Steering Committee, Planning Director and Consultants. When all drafts were completed in this fashion, they were forwarded to the Planning Commission and citizens at a public hearing for their review and comment.



Planning consultants Bob Larsen and James Vaughan with Mayor Cole (center) at the planning open house

Following Planning and Zoning Commission review of the plan and public input, the final version of the plan was forwarded to the City Council.

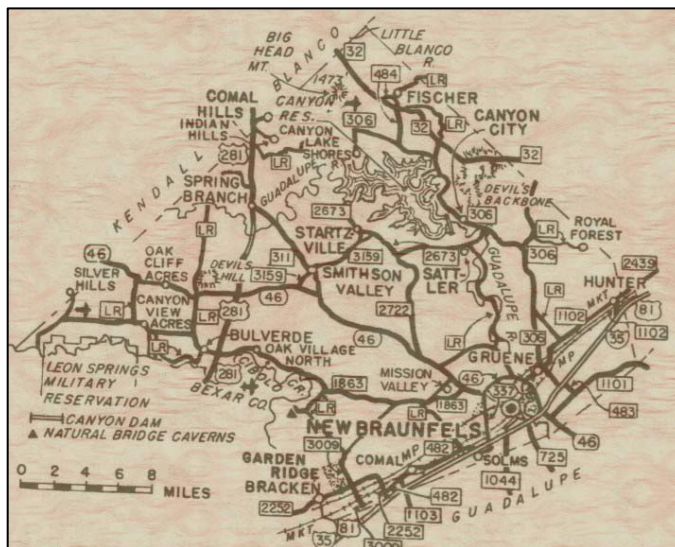
The Steering Committee performed a key role in making the decisions and choices that shaped the plan into its final form. The Planning and Zoning Commission is responsible for administering the plan once it has been adopted by City Council. City staff, fire, EMS, and library personnel contributed ideas and information specific to their responsibilities, and the city administrator’s support was invaluable throughout the entire planning process.

# Community Profile

## A New City

### 1.1 Location

Located on the scenic Cibolo Creek in Comal County and only twenty-two miles north of downtown San Antonio and nineteen miles west of New Braunfels, the City of Bulverde is the “Front Porch” to the beautiful Texas Hill Country. It is also one of the newest cities in Texas having been incorporated in 1999. The city is at the crossroads location of U.S. Highway 281, State Highway 46, and Farm/Market 1863, and is thus easily accessible to the rest of the San Antonio Metropolitan Area and other surrounding cities, including Johnson City and Austin to the north, Boerne, Comfort and Kerrville to the west, and New Braunfels and Garden Ridge to the east. It is part of the San Antonio Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) which consists of the four counties of Bexar, Wilson, Comal, and Guadalupe.



The City of Bulverde situated within Comal County

The City of Bulverde is in a picturesque place of rolling hills and valleys with clusters of majestic live oak trees. It is only a few miles from Canyon Lake, one of the premier water recreational attractions in the state, and the Honey Creek Recreational Area and Guadalupe State Park. San Antonio's famous River Walk, Sea World of Texas, Fiesta Texas, and numerous restaurants and entertainment venues are all within a short drive. With all these attractions it is no wonder that the City of Bulverde is growing rapidly and in need of comprehensive planning to protect the amenities and life style that have attracted people to it in the first place.

The City of Bulverde lies approximately 1,096 feet above mean sea level and encompasses 9.6 square miles of land in the Edwards Plateau. At a latitude of 29.75 degrees above the equator the area enjoys mild weather conditions throughout the year with an average high/low temperature in July of 92/73°F and in January of

68/41°F. The growing season is 265 days and the average number of days of sunshine per year is 300. Annual precipitation averages 30 to 33 inches per year. There are two soil types in the area:

- the Brackett-Comfort-Real which are shallow, undulating to steep soils over limestone or strongly cemented chalk, and
- in the lower elevations on stream terraces and valley fills, the Lewisville-Gruene-Krum which are nearly level to gently sloping soils over loamy, clayey and gravelly sediments.

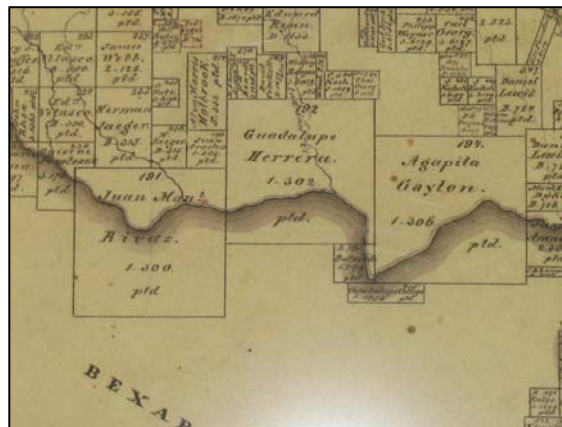
Wildlife, including deer, turkey and quail are abundant in the area.

## 1.2 History, Past and Present

The history of the Bulverde area begins over two thousand years ago. Archeological evidence indicates that Paleo-Indians lived well off the land along the Cibolo Creek where there was plentiful wild game and water. In the mid-1700's Comanches took control of the region from the Lipan Apaches and Tonkawas, bringing with them a rich vocabulary for describing geographic features such as elevation, bodies of water, and vegetation. In 1785 Spanish emissaries Pedro Vidal and Francisco Xavier Chaves noted that the Comanches understood how to use and move about the land “to avoid detection from their enemies.”

One *Tejana* and three *Tejanos* were the first families to live in the Bulverde area, as documented in the *Residents of Texas 1782 – 1806* stored in the Alamo Archives. The Spanish words *Tejano* and *Tejana* describe the citizens of the former province of Tejas, New Spain, or the Texas section of the State of *Coahuila y Tejas* in the Republic of Mexico. These names were changed to Texian by Mirabeau Lamar, the first president of the Republic of Texas.

The original *Tejana* was Guadalupe Herrera, a widow and prosperous landowner. Her accomplishments were remarkable for a woman in that era. A school in the village of Bulverde was named after her, and some of the foundation stones of the school are plainly visible off Bulverde Road near the Cave property. One of the original *Tejanos* was Juan Manuel Rivas who was granted a Bexar First Class Headright and prospered as a farmer. Another was Agapito Gaytan who was listed in the Muster Rolls of the Texas Revolution and granted 640 acres since he was a single man. The third *Tejano*, and the man whose name may be the origin of the City of Bulverde, was Luciano Bulverda whose headright was 320 acres in the Cibolo Valley. By 1845 all four surveys had been purchased by William H. Steele and Ludovic Colquhoun, most likely for speculative purposes.



Historical survey map of Bulverde area



Over the past two thousand years many roads paralleled the alignment of the Cibolo Creek. Today Farm/Market Road 1863 traces one of the more popular routes used by migrants traveling from New Braunfels to Boerne and Fredericksburg. Seventeen miles west of New Braunfels, the road traversed the upper reaches of Cibolo Creek where the valley widened.

In the years following the annexation of Texas into the United States the area was settled by German immigrants with names of Pieper, Kabelmacher, Voges, Rompel, Vogel, Koch and Wehe. The present day City of Bulverde was originally called Pieper's Settlement after one of these early settlers, August Pieper. Ben Smithson was the first settler in what is now called Smithson Valley, and was soon joined by families named Busch, Kuehn, Groencke, Gass, Spangenberg, Loeffler, Seegers, Ohlrich and Penshorn. After 1885, quite a few surveys were sold and more German immigrants moved into the area: Grosser, Saur, Simon, Georg, Doeppenschmidt and Fink.

The very first homes were constructed of hewn post oak and cedar logs. Later homes were built of mostly of quarried stone, and of the eight original homes built in this style five still remain: the Pieper, Voges, Obst, Poss and Hitzfelder homes.



The Hitzfelder Barn



Windmill and old cotton gin near  
Specht's store

There was widespread sheep and goat ranching. The primary crops were corn, oats, wheat and barley, but after the 1870s cotton became prevalent. Drought was a recurring problem, and the first record of well drilling was in 1877. Cattle rustling and horse thieving were common and called the "custom of the county" in an 1878 *Herald* article. Cattle were considered communal property and no one was convicted for rustling prior to 1878. To combat rustling, groups of ranchers organized the Germania Farmer Verein with the G brand. Around this time Gustav Schmidt built the first cotton gin in the area, but by 1915 the boll weevil had destroyed the cotton business.

The area's first store, a quarried stone structure, was established around 1873 by Henry Voges, Jr.

The original building was destroyed in 1969 by fire and Sweet's Store built on same site. The next store was built by Charles Groenke. In 1887 Friedolin's store was built. First known as the Red and White, this is presently the location of Specht's Store and Restaurant.

Between 1850 and 1890 many rock walls were built in the area. They were laid dry and shimmed with chips. In the late 1920s and through the 1930s many of these lovely stone fences were sold by ranchers for extra income. The building style that used fieldstone had become popular in the area. Also, many miles of these fences were used as fill for widening of what became Farm/Market 1863.



Old rock wall in Bulverde area

At one time six schools served the area, but in 1944 all of them were torn down for construction of a consolidated school at the corner of Bulverde-Spring Branch Road and Amman Road. After the Great Depression many of the original farmers and ranchers left the area. It was not until after World War II that San Antonians and other urbanites started moving into the area.

The present day city was formed from five separate incorporated cities requiring twenty-two elections beginning in 1996 to eventually become one united city. In 1998, Bulverde North and Bulverde West requested consolidation with Bulverde South. In 1999, Bulverde East and in 2000 Bulverde Northwest followed suit. On May 11, 1999, the Board of Alderman of Bulverde South changed the name of the city to the City of Bulverde.

### ***1.3 Population Trends***

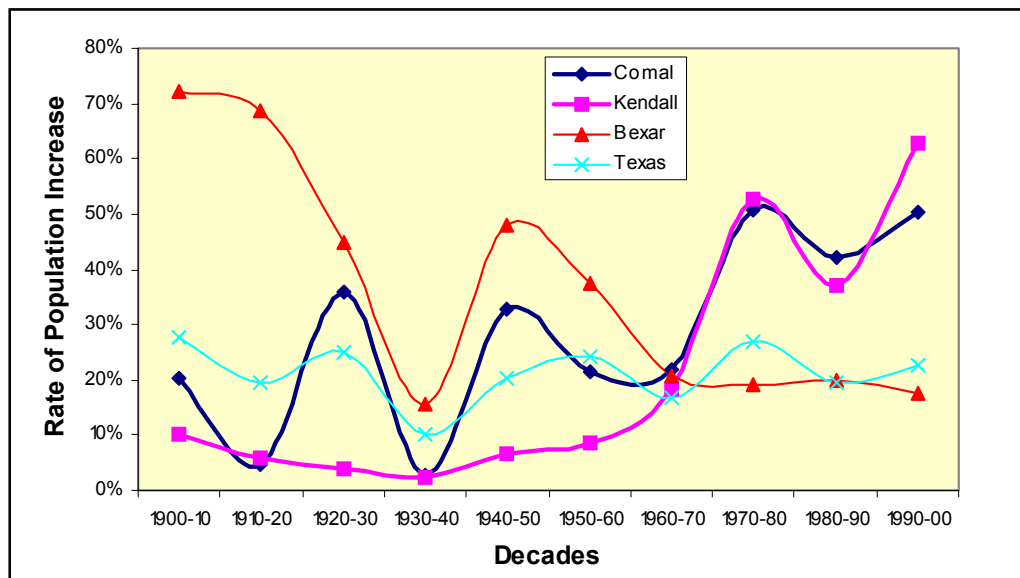
According to the U.S. Census, the 2000 total population of the incorporated city of Bulverde was 3,756 persons. However, this did not include Bulverde Northwest which was estimated to have a population of approximately 1,100. The Texas State Data Center (TSDC) estimates that the January 2002 population was 4,038, a 7.6 percent increase in two years or an average annual increase of 3.8 percent. If you apply the same growth rate to the former Bulverde Northwest, then the estimated 2002 population for the City of Bulverde was approximately 5,215. Historical U.S. Census population figures are not available for the city since it was only incorporated in 1999. However Table 1.1 displays data that indicates the growth rates of Comal, Kendall and Bexar counties, and compares them to the state of Texas. Figure 1.1 illustrates the difference in growth rates of the three counties and the state of Texas. As is evident from the table and figure, the rates of growth for the three counties and the state were all about the same in the 1960 to 1970 period. However, from 1970 onward both Comal and Kendall counties have grown at much higher rates than Bexar County and the State.

**Table 1.1. Historical Population for Comal, Kendall and Bexar Counties, and the State of Texas, 1990-2000**

Year	COMAL		KENDALL		BEXAR		TEXAS	
	Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
1900	7,008		4,103		69,422		3,048,710	
1910	8,434	20.3	4,517	10.1	119,676	72.4	3,896,542	27.8
1920	8,824	4.6	4,779	5.5	202,096	68.9	4,663,228	19.7
1930	11,984	35.8	4,970	4.0	292,533	44.7	5,824,715	24.9
1940	12,321	2.8	5,080	2.2	338,176	15.6	6,414,824	10.1
1950	16,357	32.8	5,423	6.8	500,460	48.0	7,711,194	20.2
1960	19,844	21.3	5,889	8.6	687,151	37.3	9,579,677	24.2
1970	24,165	21.8	6,964	18.3	830,460	20.9	11,196,230	16.9
1980	36,446	50.8	10,635	52.7	988,800	19.1	14,229,191	27.1
1990	51,832	42.2	14,589	37.2	1,185,394	19.9	16,986,510	19.4
2000	78,021	50.5	23,743	62.7	1,392,931	17.5	20,851,820	22.8

Source: U.S. Census: 1900 – 2000.

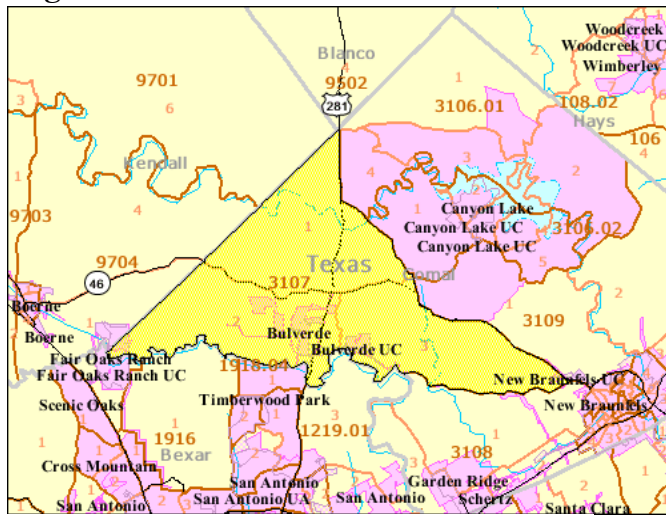
**Figure 1.1 Comparisons of Growth Rates for Comal, Kendall and Bexar Counties and Texas, 1900-2000.**



Source: U.S. Census: 1900 – 2000.



**Figure 1.2. Census Tract 3107**



Source: 2000 U.S. Census, American Fact Finder.

More recently (from 1990 to 2000) the Census Tract of which the City of Bulverde is a part has grown more rapidly than Comal County and the San Antonio MSA (see Table 1.2 and Figure 1.2). Tract 3107's percentage of total Comal County population increased from approximately twelve to seventeen percent from 1990 to 2000.

**Table 1.2. Comparison of Census Tract 3107 with Comal County**

	Census Tract 3107		Comal County		San Antonio MSA
Year	Population	% of County	Population	% of MSA	Population
2000	12,938	16.6	78,021	5.00	1,559,975*
1990	6,182	11.9	51,832	3.98	1,302,099

Source: U.S. Census; \* Minus 32,408 for Wilson County since that county was not part of the San Antonio MSA in 1990.

Breaking the data down further, Tract 3107 contains three Block Groups (BGs). Block Group 1 consists of the area north of State Highway 46 and includes Spring Branch, Honey Creek, Anhalt and the part of Guadalupe State Park in Comal County. Block Group 2 includes the area west of Highway 281 and south of Highway 46 to the Bexar and Kendall County lines. Block Group 3 includes the area east of Highway 281 to the juncture of Farm/Market 1863 and State Highway 46. Block Group 2 contains four of the original cities that now make up the City of Bulverde whereas Block Group 3 contains Oak Village North or what was Bulverde East. From 1990 to 2000, the Spring Branch area (Block Group 1) increased its percentage of the total for Census Tract 3107 while Block Group 2 (consisting of four of the five original towns) remained about the same. Block Group 3's percentage of total Tract 3107 population decreased approximately 15 percent.

**Table 1.3. Comparison of Block Groups in Census Tract 3107**

	Block Group 1		Block Group 2		Block Group 3	
Year	Population	% of Tract	Population	% of Tract	Population	% of Tract
2000	3,860	29.8 ↑	4,973	38.4	4,105	31.7 ↓
1990	1,524	24.7 ↓	2,405	38.9	2,253	36.4 ↓

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census Tables P-1.

## 1.4 Population Projections

Population projections look at future changes in total population and composition of population due to migration, fertility (births) and mortality (deaths). There are a variety of population projections based on different models and patterns of migration. Among the most accessible are those of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) and the Texas State Data Center (TSDC). Both the TWDB and TSDC use cohort-component projections for county-level projections. Cohorts are categories of the population (age, sex, and ethnic groups) tracked over time. The four projection scenarios used by TSDC utilize the same set of fertility and mortality assumptions but different net migration assumptions. Net migration assumptions for three of the scenarios are derived from 1990 to 2000 migration patterns. They are:

- Zero Migration (0.0)
- One-half Migration (0.5)
- Full Migration (1.0)
- 1990-2000 Migration.

Zero migration assumes in-migration and out-migration are equal; one-half migration assumes rates of net migration are one-half of those during the 1990s; and full-migration assumes that the net migration of the 1990s will continue into the future. TSDC population projections based on the One-half Migration scenario for the three Bulverde area counties (Comal, Kendall and Bexar) and the state of Texas are displayed in Table 1.3. The TSDC does not break their projections down by cities. While projections for the City of Bulverde cannot be accurately derived from these county projections, the city is located in Comal County and adjacent to Kendall County, two counties with projected growth rates considerably higher than those of Bexar County and the state.

**Table 1.4. TSDC Population Projections to 2025**

Year	Comal		Kendall		Bexar		Texas	
	Projected Population	% Change	Projected Population	% Change	Projected Population	% Change	Projected Population	% Change
2000	78,021		23,743		1,392,931		20,851,820	
2005	87,430	12.1	26,356	11.0	1,473,582	5.8	22,489,182	7.9
2010	97,641	11.7	29,164	10.6	1,550,393	5.2	24,178,507	7.5
2015	108,763	11.4	32,156	10.3	1,624,440	4.8	25,936,845	7.3
2020	120,670	10.9	35,254	9.9	1,691,916	4.2	27,738,378	6.9
2025	132,632	9.9	38,259	8.5	1,751,738	3.5	29,565,131	6.6

Source: Texas State Data Center, State and County Population Projections.

The Texas Water Development Board uses a share of the county's population growth between 1990 and 2000 for population projections at the sub-county level. The share-of-growth method examines the city's share of the county's population growth between 1990 and 2000, but using this full time span is not possible for the City of Bulverde. It is assumed that the area's share of the county's population growth will be the same as it was between the applicable time periods. Since the available data is limited, any projections of the future population of the City of

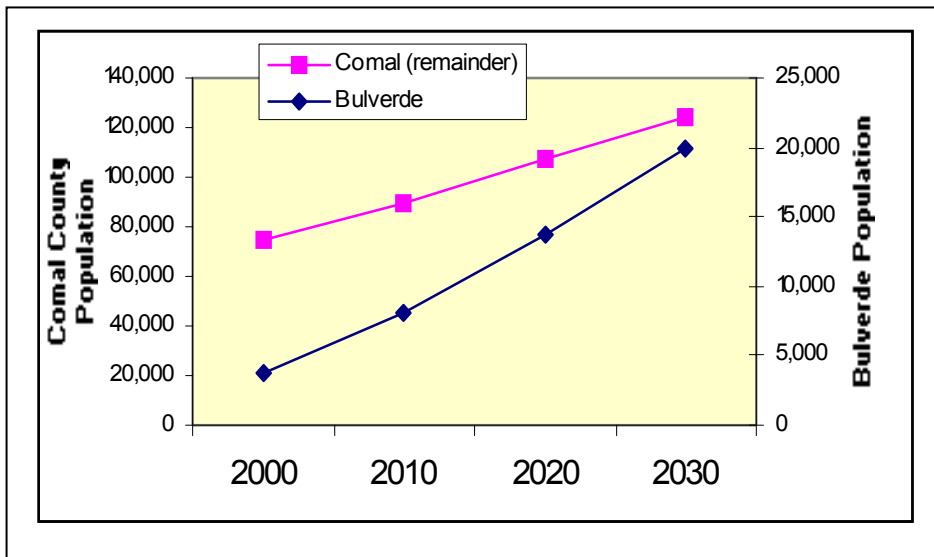
Bulverde must be taken with a grain of salt. Table 1.5 presents the TWDB population projections for the cities of Bulverde and New Braunfels as well as for Comal County. The TWDB's projections are based on the 2000 Census figure of 3,765, which does not include the former Bulverde Northwest. Even so, as is evident from the data, the population for Bulverde is projected to grow at a rate approximately two to four times faster than New Braunfels or Comal County (see Figure 1.3).

**Table 1.5. Texas Water Development Board Population Projections for the City of Bulverde, New Braunfels, and Comal County**

Year	City of Bulverde		New Braunfels		Comal County	
	Population	% Increase	Population	% Increase	Population	% Increase
2000	3,756		36,494		78,021	
2010	8,098	<b>115.6</b>	46,909	28.5	97,641	25.1
2020	13,649	<b>68.5</b>	60,186	28.3	120,670	23.6
2030	19,968	<b>46.3</b>	75,239	25.0	144,113	19.4

Source: Texas Water Development Board Population and Water Demand Data, [www.twdb.state.tx.us/data/popwaterdemand/](http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/data/popwaterdemand/).

**Figure 1.3. Projected Populations for the City of Bulverde and the Rest of Comal County**

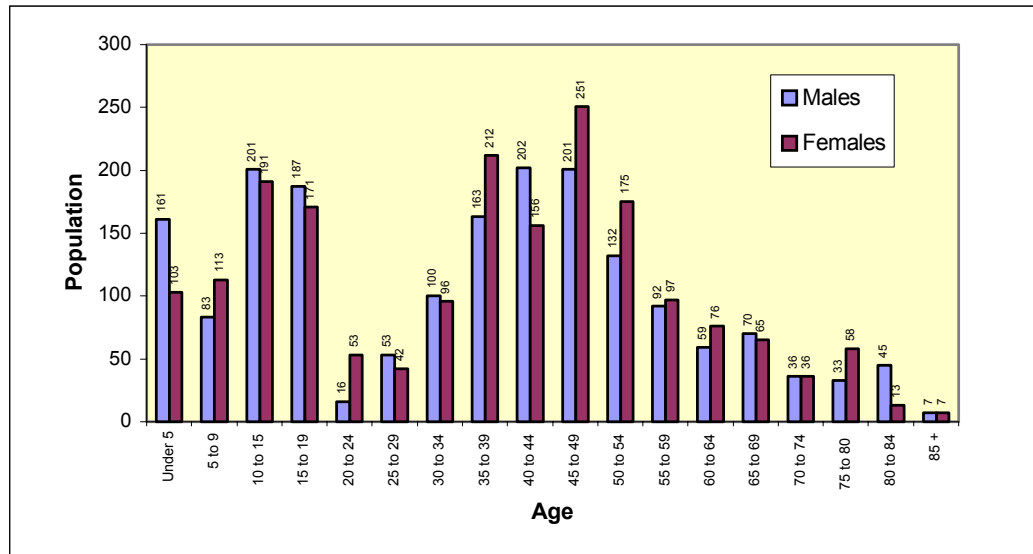


Source: Texas Water Development Board Population and Water Demand Data, [www.twdb.state.tx.us/data/popwaterdemand/](http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/data/popwaterdemand/).

## 1.5 Demographics – Age/Gender

In 2000, the median age for the citizens of the City of Bulverde was 39.8 years compared to 39.0 years for Comal County and 32.7 years for the San Antonio MSA. The age and gender composition for the City of Bulverde is displayed in Figure 1.4. The under-20 age cohort is well-represented as is the productive working age cohort, or those from 30 to 54. Interestingly, the chart does not indicate an unusually large number of persons aged 65 and over, or those of retirement age. It is obvious that once the city's youth graduate from high school, they tend to leave in search of jobs and starter type housing, neither of which are found in abundance in Bulverde.

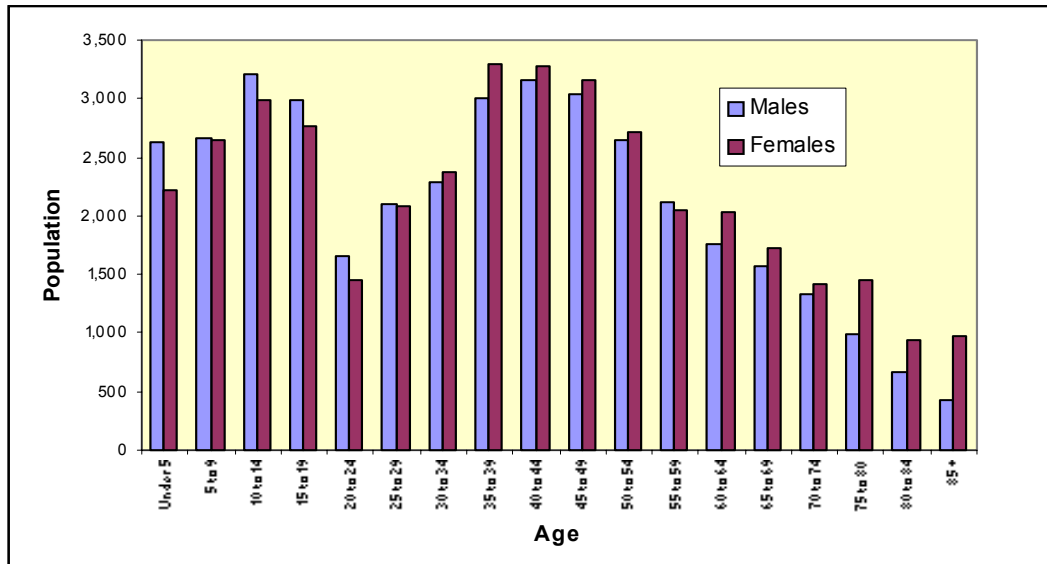
**Figure 1.4. Year 2000 Age and Gender Population Chart, City of Bulverde**



Source: 2000 U.S. Census Summary File 3, Table P-8.

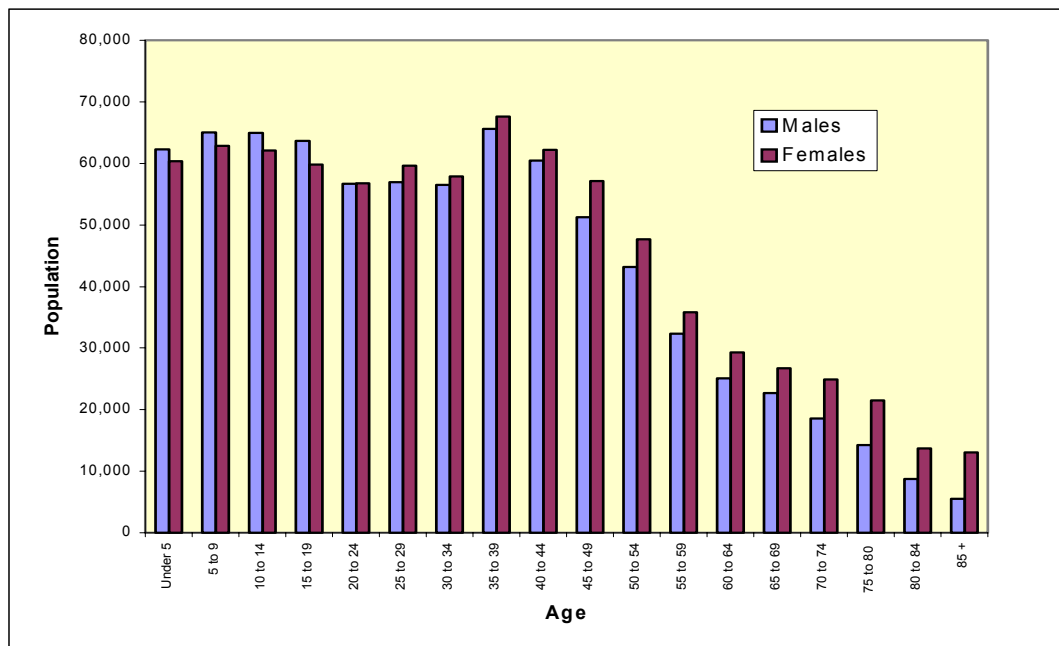
Figures 1.5 and 1.6 are age and gender population charts for Comal County and the San Antonio MSA. Comparisons with the City of Bulverde chart are revealing. The loss of 30 to 34 year old persons is not as pronounced in Comal County and is barely evident in the San Antonio MSA chart. There are a variety of employment opportunities as well as housing in all price ranges in the region, making it possible for people starting their careers and families to find entry-level employment and starter housing.

**Figure 1.5. Year 2000 Age and Gender Population Chart, Comal County**



Source: 2000 U.S. Census Summary File 3, Table P-8.

**Figure 1.6. Year 2000 Age and Gender Population Chart, San Antonio MSA**



Source: 2000 U.S. Census Summary File 3, Table P-8.

## *Demographics – Ancestry*

According to the 2000, Census more than twenty-five percent of the citizens of the City of Bulverde claimed a German ancestry. This reflects the history of the area as both Comal and Kendall County have a high percentage of persons with a German

heritage. Approximately one out of ten residents of the City of Bulverde claims an Irish ancestry (see Table 1.6).

**Table 1.6. Ancestry for People in the City of Bulverde, and Comal and Kendall Counties**

Ancestry	City of Bulverde		Comal		SA MSA	
	Persons	% of total	Persons	% of total	Persons	% of total
Total*	3,778		77,381		24,641	
German**	978	25.9	19,361	25.0	6,104	24.7
Irish	415	11.0	7,731	10.0	2,654	10.8
Italian	137	3.6	1,486	1.9	435	1.8
Polish	117	3.1	1,822	2.4	466	1.9
U.S.	307	8.1	5,710	7.4	2,026	8.2

Source: 2000 U.S. census Summary File 3, Table PCT-18. \* Total specified ancestries tallied; \*\* Includes Pennsylvania German.

### *Demographics – Ethnicity*

Almost nine out of ten residents of the City of Bulverde are of white, non-Hispanic ancestry with the rest being primarily Hispanic. The percentage white is above the percentage average for Comal County where approximately three out of four persons are of white, non-Hispanic background, and contrasts sharply with the San Antonio MSA where over fifty percent of the population is of Hispanic origin.

**Table 1.7. Ethnicity for People in the City of Bulverde, Comal County and the San Antonio MSA**

Ethnicity	City of Bulverde		Comal County		S.A. MSA	
	Persons	% of Total	Persons	% of Total	Persons	% of Total
Total	3,756		78,021		1,592,383	
White, non-Hispanic	3,302	87.9	58,179	74.6	626,073	39.3
Hispanic	374	10.0	17,633	22.6	815,980	51.2
Black	35	0.9	629	0.8	99,344	6.2
Other	45	1.2	1,580	2.0	50,986	3.2

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Summary File 3, Table PCT-18.

### *Demographics – Household Composition*

The average household size in the City of Bulverde is 2.91 persons compared to 2.64 persons for Comal County and 2.78 persons for the San Antonio MSA. The U.S. Census Bureau classifies household types as:

- One person, male or female householder
- Married couple, with children
- Married couple, no children
- Male householder, with children



Male householder, no children  
 Female householder, with children  
 Female householder, no children

Types of households in the City of Bulverde and Comal County are shown in Table 1.8. The City of Bulverde has a higher percentage of married couples (88.3%) than does Comal County (79.6%).

**Table 1.8. Household Type, City of Bulverde and Comal County**

Year	City of Bulverde		Comal County	
	No. of HHs	% of Total	No. of HHs	% of Total
1 person household	119	9.3	5,975	20.6
Male Householder	69	58.0	2,551	42.7
Female Householder	50	42.0	3,424	57.3
2 or more person household	1,156	90.7	23,099	79.4
Married couple with children	454	39.3	7,655	33.1
Married couple no children	566	49.0	10,746	46.5
Male householder with children	23	2.0	612	2.6
Male householder no children	8	1.0	415	1.8
Female householder with children	61	5.3	1,586	6.9
Female householder with no children	18	1.6	1,027	4.4
Non-family households	26	2.3	1,058	4.6
Total	1,275		29,074	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Summary File 3, Table P10.

## ***Demographics –Housing***

As can be seen from Table 1.9, over 96 percent of the housing units in the City of Bulverde were occupied in 2000, and, of those, 95 percent were owner-occupied. Compare this to Comal County where the vacancy rate was almost three times that for the City of Bulverde, and renters accounted for almost one out of four occupied housing units. Additionally, houses in the City of Bulverde have more rooms, have a much higher median value and are newer than houses in the rest of the region (see Table 1.10)

**Table 1.9. Housing Units and Tenure, City of Bulverde, Comal County and the San Antonio MSA**

	City of Bulverde		Comal		S.A. MSA	
	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total
Occupied	1,324	96.2	29,066	88.8	559,946	93.4
Owner	1,255	95.0	22,441	77.2	354,788	63.4
Renter	69	5.0	6,625	22.8	205,158	36.6
Vacant	52	3.8	3,652	11.2	39,826	6.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,376</b>		<b>32,718</b>		<b>599,772</b>	

Source: 2000 Census Summary File 3, Tables H6 and H7.

**Table 1.10. Rooms, Age, Value and Property Taxes for Housing Units in the City of Bulverde, Comal County and the san Antonio MSA**

	City of Bulverde	Comal	S.A. MSA
Median number of rooms	<b>6.9</b>	5.3	5.2
Median year built	<b>1991</b>	1983	1976
Median value	<b>\$160,900</b>	\$102,100	\$74,100
Median real estate taxes	<b>\$2,448</b>	\$1,490	\$1,431

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Summary File 3 Tables H24, H35, and H85.

### *Demographics - Working and Commuting*

Almost nine out of ten residents of the City of Bulverde commute to work in another area and the average travel time is almost 45 minutes. This time spent commuting is slightly more than the time for Comal County but twice the average time for the San Antonio MSA. This indicates that the City of Bulverde is indeed a bedroom community.

**Table 1.11. Place of Work for Workers 16 Years and Over and Travel Time to Work**

	City of Bulverde		Comal County		SA MSA	
	Workers	% of Total	Workers	% of Total	Workers	% of Total
Total Workers in Place	1,918		26,714		607,836	
Worked in place of residence	208	<b>10.8</b>	12,094	45.3	462,081	76.1
Worked outside place of residence	1,710	<b>89.2</b>	14,620	54.7	145,755	24.0
Travel Time to Work 30 minutes or more	<b>44.6</b>		43.3		22.2	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Summary File 3, Tables P27 and P31.

### *Demographics – Income*

As is evident from Table 1.12, the median income for households in the City of Bulverde is nearly fifty percent higher than the median household income in Comal County and 72 percent higher than that for the metropolitan region. Households in Bulverde also have more self-employment income and interest/dividend income than either the county or the region. The number of households with social security income is below the average for the rest of the region, and retirement income is similar to the county and MSA. There does not seem to be an unusually high percentage of retired persons in the city. Only 1.3 percent of the households in Bulverde are below the poverty level, less than one tenth the percentage for the San Antonio MSA.

**Table 1.12. Income/Poverty, City of Bulverde, Comal County and San Antonio MSA**

Income Statistics	City of Bulverde		Comal		S.A. MSA	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Median HH Income*	\$67,055		\$46,147		\$39,140	
Per Capita Income*	\$26,887		\$21,914		\$18,518	
Households with Self-employment income	279	21.9	4,453	15.3	63,908	11.4
Households with Interest, Dividend & Rental Income	619	48.5	11,691	40.2	169,219	30.2
Households with Social Security Income	255	20.0	8,666	29.8	130,442	23.3
Households with Retirement Income	260	20.4	6,453	22.2	103,625	18.5
Households below the Poverty Level	17	1.3	2,356	8.1	76,580	13.7

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Summary File 3 Tables P53, P60, P61, P62, P63 and P82. \* In 1999 dollars.

## 1.6 Education

The 2000 U.S. Census reveals that more Bulverdians have attained higher education degrees than the people in Comal County or the San Antonio MSA (see Tables 1.13 and 1.14). Almost nineteen percent have Bachelor's Degrees compared to fourteen percent for the region.

**Table 1.13. Educational Enrollment/Attainment in 2000 - Bulverde, Comal County and the San Antonio MSA**

	City of Bulverde		Comal County		S.A. MSA	
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
Total Persons 3 or Older	3,580		75,102	%	1,519,311	
Enrolled in public K-12	737	20.6	13,895	18.5	306,079	20.1
Enrolled in private K-12	131	3.7	1,444	1.9	29,749	2.0
Enrolled in college	49	1.4	1,989	2.6	80,615	5.3
Enrolled in graduate school	0	0.0	452	0.6	15,172	1.0

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Summary tape File 3, Table P-37. Enrolled based on persons 3 + years.

**Table 1.14. Educational Enrollment/Attainment in 2000 – City of Bulverde, Comal County and the San Antonio MSA**

Persons 25 or Older	2,477	%	52,549	%	977,822	%
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	48	1.9	3,764	7.2	107,838	11.0
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> – no diploma	107	4.3	4,719	9.0	114,116	11.7
HS Graduate	685	27.7	14,948	28.4	245,055	25.1
Some College, No degree	770	31.1	12,672	24.1	233,017	23.8
Associate's Degree	181	7.3	2,694	5.1	58,309	6.0
Bachelor's Degree	466	18.8	9,180	17.5	140,172	14.3
Graduate or Professional	220	8.9	4,572	8.7	79,315	8.1

Source: 2000 U.S. Census Summary File 3 Table P37. Attainment numbers are based on all persons 25 years of age or older.

The youth of the Bulverde area are served by seven schools in the Comal Independent School District (CISD) and one private school. They are:

- Rahe Primary
- Bill Brown and Bulverde Elementary
- Seay Intermediate
- Smithson Valley and Spring Branch Middle Schools
- Smithson Valley High School
- Bracken Christian School

Total enrollment in the CISD was 11,299 in 2002. All campuses are fully accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and all seven campuses that serve the City Bulverde are recognized by the TEA Academic Excellence Indicator System for outstanding performance. Over seventy percent of the Seniors at Smithson Valley High School took the SAT Exam, which is generally taken by students planning on attending college. The percent of students scoring exceptionally well on the SAT and AP exams is higher for the Comal ISD compared to the average for all Texas public schools (see table 1.15).

**Table 1.15. Selected Educational Statistics for Students in the CISD, Texas and U.S.**

	Smithson Valley	Comal ISD	State Average	U.S. Average
Mean SAT Score	987	1001	990	1019
Percent Students Taking SAT	70.3	62.2	50.0	44.0
Percent Scoring Above 1100	25.6	31.5	28.0	N/a
Percent Students Taking One or More AP Exam	N/a	14.6	14.2	N/a
Percent Students Scoring 3 or Above	N/a	58.4	53.7	N/a

*Source:* Texas Education Agency, Selected AEIS District Data.

The City of Bulverde is within a short drive of fourteen universities or colleges. These include:

- The University of Texas at Austin
- Texas State University - San Marcos
- The University of Texas at San Antonio
- St. Mary's University, the University of the Incarnate Word and Palo Alto College in San Antonio
- Schriener College in Kerrville
- Texas Lutheran University in Seguin
- Saint Edwards and Concordia College in Austin.

Community or Junior Colleges include San Antonio College, Northwest Vista and St. Phillips in San Antonio, and Austin Community College. Nearby educational opportunities are truly boundless.

## *1.7 Summary*

As evidenced by its historical beginnings, the present day City of Bulverde developed along the Cibolo and Honey Creeks in an area of exceptional beauty, and was built up by people willing to work hard and raise families under sometimes difficult conditions. The beauty of the area continues to beckon those looking for a more promising life, something that is especially important in today's fast-paced world.

The growth of the City of Bulverde as a bedroom community has been a relatively recent development. In December of 2003, the population of the City of Bulverde was declared to be over 5,000 persons, making it eligible to form a charter and become a home-rule type city with a one mile ETJ. This gives the city more powers, but also more responsibilities. The future is promising, but, with the rapid influx of new people, very challenging too. Roads, water, clean air, open space and many, many other issues will need to be addressed head-on. We have an enviable and unique combination of assets that must be protected, furthered, enhanced and strengthened with sound planning as we proceed into the twenty-first century. As a new city, we have a chance to make our dreams a reality.

## Community Vision

### 2.1 Definitions

The City of Bulverde 2025 Comprehensive Plan is organized into a hierarchy, with broad community issues, visions and overall community goals at the top. Each individual element of the plan begins with the identification of pertinent issues that reflect a vision statement consistent with the overall vision of the community. This is followed by a set of goals, objectives, and policy or action statements. To understand how the plan works, the following definitions are helpful:

#### Comprehensive Plan

- guides future development
- is based on long-term goals and objectives
- is the result of study and analysis of existing physical, economic, environmental and social conditions and is a projection of possible future conditions
- serves as a guide for
  - making land use changes
  - preparing and implementing ordinances
  - preparing capital improvement programs
  - the rate, timing and location of future growth
  - more responsive, efficient government
- has a planning horizon of twenty years, usually broken into five year increments

#### Issues

- are topics for discussion, e.g. *“Does the City of Bulverde need to promote economic growth?”*
- are problems to be considered, e.g. *“How does the City of Bulverde retain its ‘Hill Country’ ambience in the face of tremendous urban growth pressures?”*
- issues discussion/selection is the “first step” in developing visions, goals and objectives
- Some of the key issues identified by the Steering Committee came from considerations of such questions as:
  - Where has the City of Bulverde been in the past?
  - If we do not plan, what will the City of Bulverde be like in twenty years?
  - Where should we be headed?
  - What is our vision of the City of Bulverde in 2025?
  - How do we achieve the City of Bulverde’s vision?

#### Vision Statements

- are broad statements of how the community views itself as it moves into the 21<sup>st</sup> century



- are ideal and unique images of the future based on community values
- The city should have vision statements that express in a few words how the citizens see the community in 20 years. In addition, each subcommittee can decide on a vision related to its particular topic. For example, a vision statement the Public Safety Subcommittee might select could be *“The City of Bulverde has quality municipal services making it a safe, healthy, economical and enjoyable place to live.”*

### **Goals**

- are broad statements that give the “big picture” of what the community wants for its future
- provide general direction
- are not necessarily achievable nor can we always measure progress towards their completion, but rather are targets we make progress towards
- An example of a goal the Land Use/Development/Growth Management Subcommittee might decide on is *Preserve and enhance the large-lot, open space ambience of our community.”*

### **Objectives**

- are statements that describe a specific future condition to be attained within a stated time period
- are achievable, measurable steps toward achieving goals
- are time-based, emphasizing the results of actions for a specific period of time
- require the expenditure of effort/resources to achieve
- An example of an objective the Infrastructure/Transportation Subcommittee might come up with is *“Work more closely with the MPO, TxDOT and the general public to provide a coordinated approach to transportation project planning in and around the City of Bulverde.”*

### **Actions**

- are the methods used to achieve outcomes from goals and objectives
- should reflect the best use of budgetary and other resources
- An example of an action the Historical/Heritage Preservation Subcommittee might come up with is *“Prepare a list of historic sites in and around the City of Bulverde.”*

### **Policy**

- is a formally adopted course of action or rule of conduct to be used in striving toward established goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan
- may be general statements that apply to goals
- may be specific statements that apply to the achievement of objectives
- represents the will of the people translated into decision-oriented statements
- helps guide the legislative body in evaluating a new project or proposed change
- An example of a community’s policy could be to *aggressively pursue economic development to help provide jobs within the City or its ETJ for its citizens.* Or, it may be to *pursue only a selected category of industry or businesses so as to not drastically change the*

*character of the community.* Related to growth patterns and urban design, a policy could be to favor *Smart Growth*, *New Urbanism*, or traditional large-lot development.

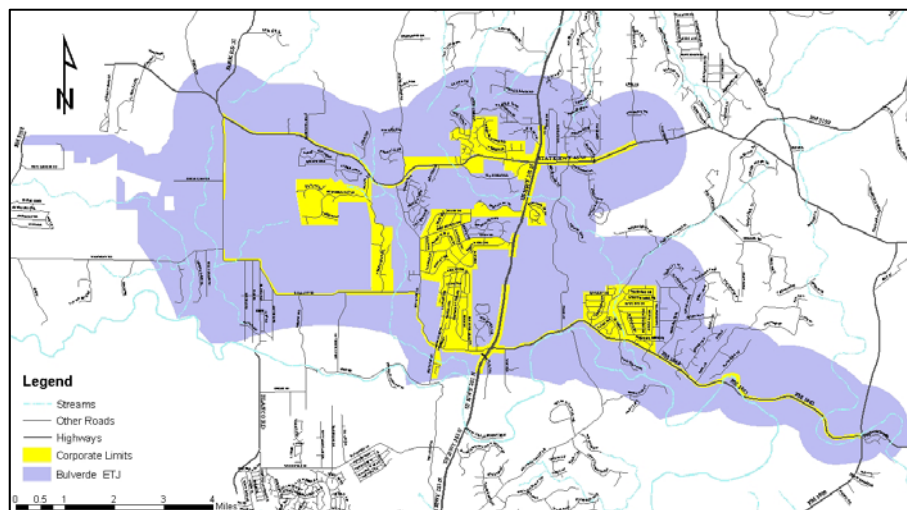
## 2.2 Citizen Input

The future vision for the City of Bulverde is based upon assets and challenges facing the city identified by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and its six primary subcommittees, the Comprehensive Plan Survey, the event at the library held on November 9, 2003, and other public hearings. Each member of the Steering Committee was responsible for distributing copies of the survey to the different stakeholder groups they represent. Also, the survey could be downloaded from the city website, [www.ci.bulverde.tx.us](http://www.ci.bulverde.tx.us), and copies were available at city hall and other locations. One-hundred-and-sixty-three surveys were completed, returned and analyzed. Highlights of the final survey results are:

### Demographics

Approximately three out of four survey respondents lived within the city limits of the City of Bulverde (74%), with the rest located in the city's extra-territorial-jurisdiction (ETJ) (13%), or outside both the city limits and the ETJ (13%). About one out of ten (9%) have lived in the Bulverde area less than one year while almost two-thirds (63%) have lived in the area for six or more years. The age groups in the survey reflect the age make-up according to the U.S. Census. Only six percent of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 34. Almost three out of four respondents (71%) work outside the Bulverde area and, of those who commute, over 40% commute more than twenty miles. Over half of the respondents (55%) have a Bachelor's degree or higher, three out of four (75%) have annual household incomes of \$50,000 or greater, with ninety-seven percent owning their homes.

**Figure 2.1. Map of the City of Bulverde's City Limits and ETJ**

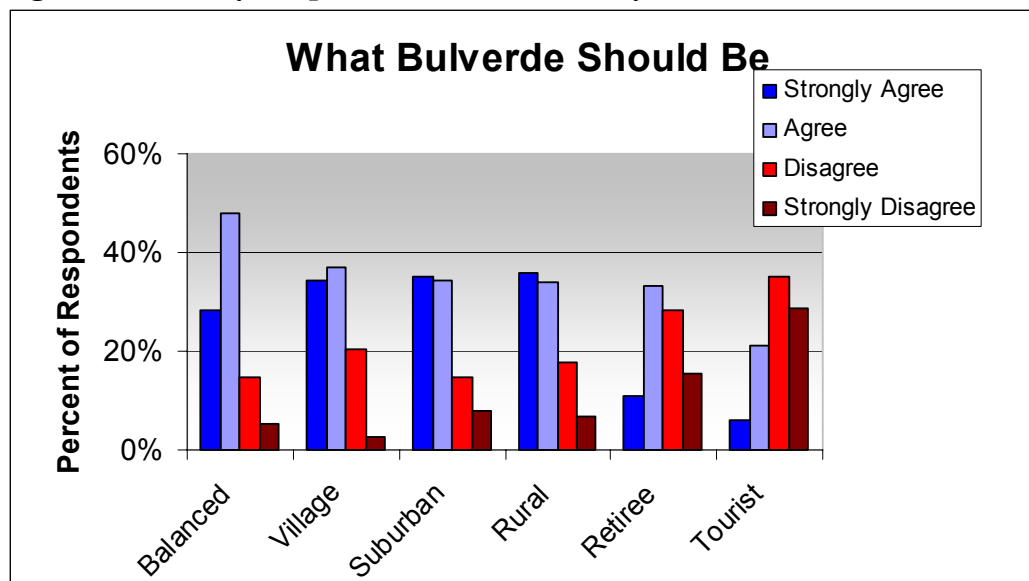


Source: City of Bulverde.

## Vision for the Future

People have different ideas about what a community should be. In the survey, citizens let us know what they envision for the future of the City of Bulverde by checking the appropriate box to indicate whether they Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or have No Opinion with different “Vision Statements.” Survey respondents overwhelmingly see the future City of Bulverde as a balanced community, or a place where people can both live and work, but in a rural, slow-paced atmosphere, and with some sort of village center. They also favor a pattern of large lots. Those surveyed are ambivalent about whether the City of Bulverde should be a retirement community, but most agree that it does not need to be a tourist destination.

Figure 2.2. Survey Responses to “What the City of Bulverde Should Be”



The majority of respondents (54%) feel that the City of Bulverde’s ideal population in the future should be between 5,000 and 15,000 persons. Sixty percent of the total number of respondents would prefer the population to be over 10,000 with the remaining 40% preferring 10,000 or less.

## Likes and Dislikes

The **most desirable things** about living in the Bulverde area include the quiet/slow-paced living, the country/rural atmosphere, the beauty and “feel” of the Hill Country, and the small town/village charm. Attributes associated with the rural style also include “twisty” two-lane roads, rock walls, clean air, open space, trees, natural vegetation, wildlife, and dark skies. Proximity to San Antonio with its “big city” conveniences and amenities is a highly attractive attribute of the area.

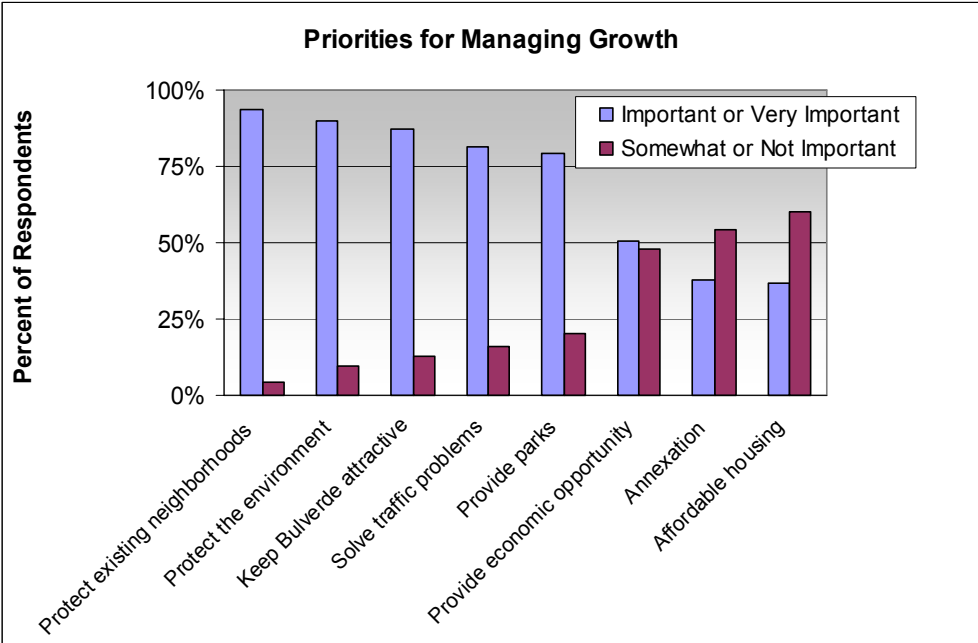
Respondents also consider their neighbors to be friendly, but at the same time like the privacy and open space afforded by large lots. Some feel there is a sense of community in the City of Bulverde, and that the city is a safe place to live with a low crime rate, good schools, a volunteer spirit and a family atmosphere. Some of those surveyed like the lack of traffic congestion, the city's low tax rate, lack of tract homes, mixture of retirees and younger people with a variety of perspectives, yard sales and the "funky" feel of the town.

The **least desirable things** about living in the Bulverde area include traffic and growth. Problems related to growth are the "invading city" coming out U.S. Highway 281, the potential for high-density development, suburban sprawl, and the destruction of trees. On the other hand the lack of choices in stores and restaurants and the distance or travel time to services and retail stores (or "civilization" as one person put it) are seen as drawbacks. Issues related to politics seem to arouse a level of discontent among some of those surveyed. These issues include the inability of city government to work together, "petty" politics and the "behavior" of City Council. Other challenges listed are the lack of a community park or play ground, no facilities for youth, and no meeting places. Related to infrastructure, some decry the lack of a reliable water source, cost of electricity and frequent black-outs. Related to the city's appearance, some note the lack of stringent property restrictions and enforcement, lack of architectural design, haphazard placement of businesses, the ugliness of the 281 corridor, litter, ugly signs, metal buildings, and trailer parks.

### **Growth Management**

Growth management is a way to shape the best possible future for the City of Bulverde. Those surveyed, indicating their priorities for successful growth management, feel very strongly that protection of existing neighborhoods and the environment, along with keeping the town attractive, are top priorities for managing future growth. Solving traffic problems and providing parks and open space are very important also. Most respondents have an opinion on growth management issues with very low percentages having "No opinion."

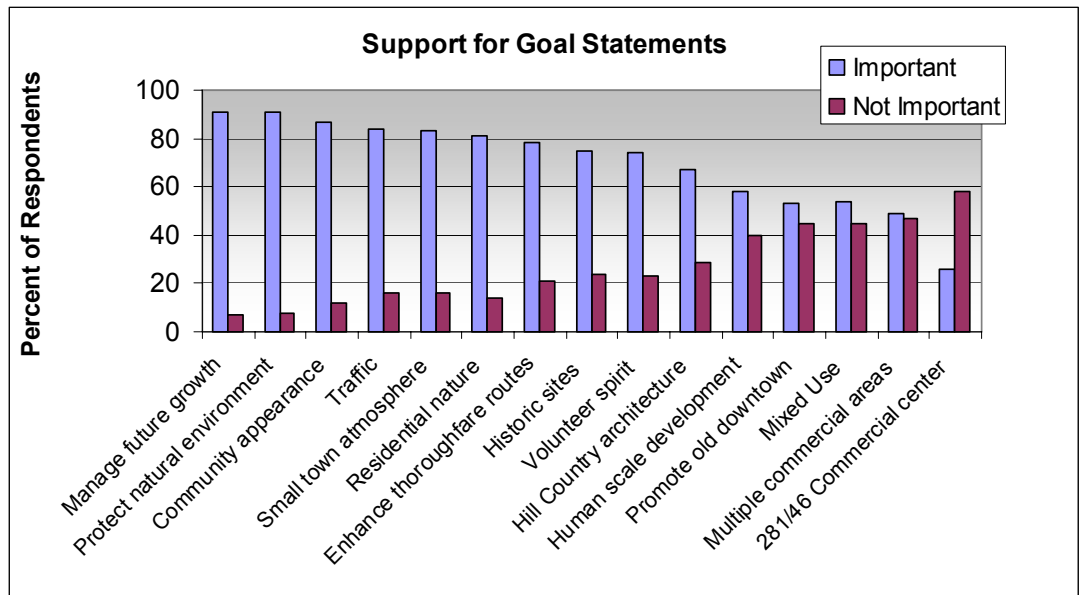
Figure 2.3. Survey Responses to What Should Be the Priorities for Managing Growth?”



**Goal Statements**

In the survey, different goal statements are ranked by their importance to the people of the Bulverde area. Again, most respondents have an opinion about goals for the comprehensive plan. Reflecting growth management priorities, those surveyed choose protecting and enhancing the natural environment and appearance of the City of Bulverde while managing future growth and development as the most important goal(s) for the comprehensive plan. Only one goal statement (promoting the 281/46 intersection as the town’s commercial center) is considered not important by a majority of respondents. Goals related to the community’s unique ambience (small town atmosphere, maintaining the existing residential nature, enhancing historical sites, encouraging Hill Country style architecture and human-scale development) all received high importance ratings.

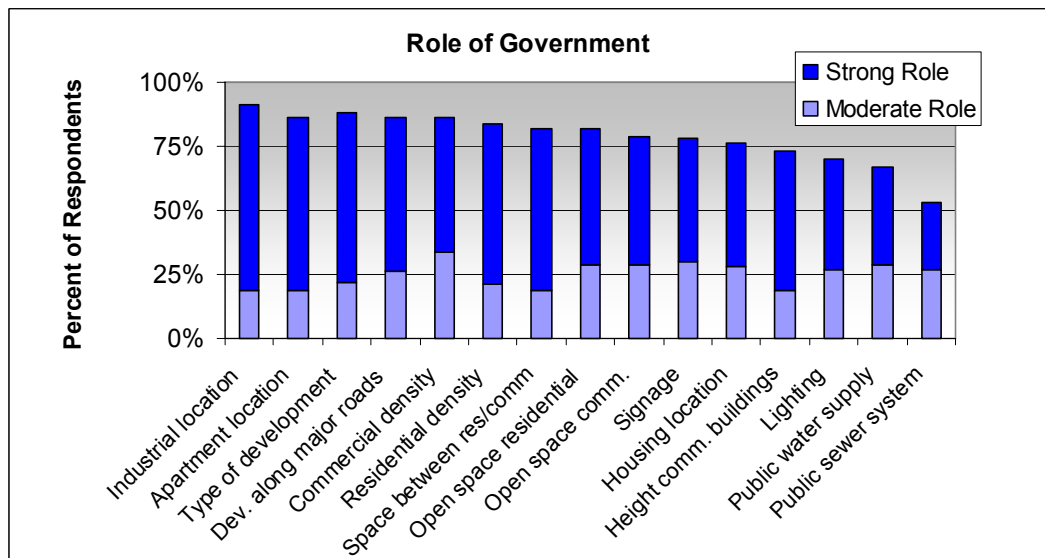
**Figure 2.4. Survey Responses for Comprehensive Plan Goal Statements**



### The Role of City Government

When it comes to managing growth, some local governments take a very active role in growth management and others have little or no active role. The vast majority of those surveyed feel that the local government and city administration should play a moderate to strong regulatory role in matters related to growth management. The strongest support is for regulating the location of more intense or dense types of land uses such as industry, multi-family (apartments), dense residential development, and all commercial development. The city should also play a strong role in requiring open space, regulating lighting and developing a publicly owned water supply system.

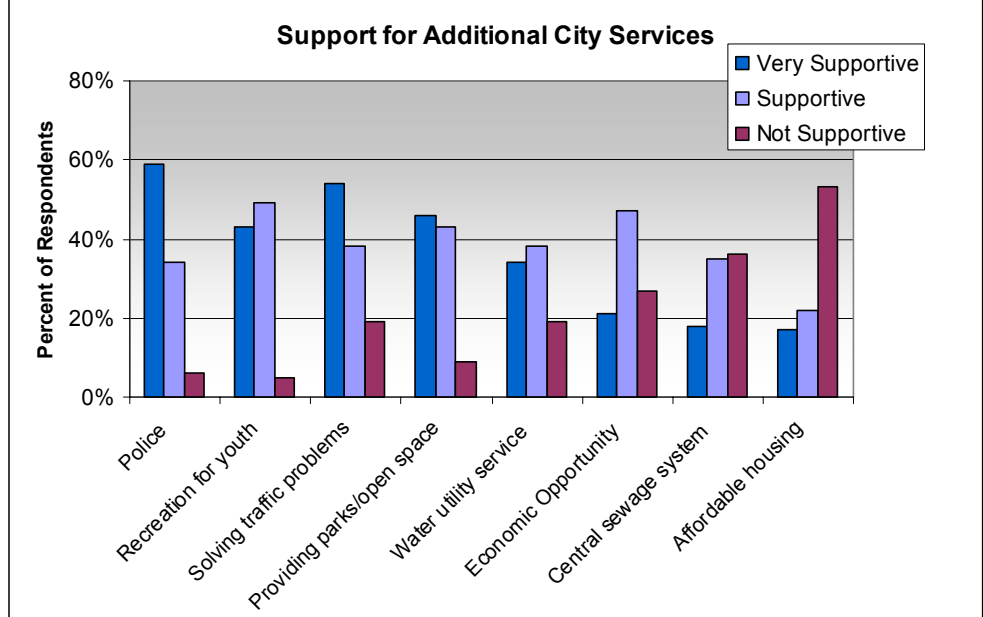
**Figure 2.5. Survey Responses to “What Should Be the Role of City Government in Growth Management?”**



City Services

Growing cities must meet the challenge of providing services. In the survey, the people indicate the level of support they have for a variety of services the city can offer. Survey respondents are very supportive of the city providing police services, recreational opportunities for youth, and parks and open space. They would also like to see the city help solve increasing traffic problems. A majority support the city providing water utility and sewer services, and promoting economic opportunity for the city’s residents. Most respondents are unsupportive or very unsupportive of promoting affordable housing.

Figure 2.6. Survey Responses of Support for Additional City Services



2.3 The City of Bulverde’s Assets and Challenges

While the City of Bulverde is blessed with many assets and strengths, there are challenges and weaknesses that must be overcome as the community grows into the future. The following list identifies key assets/strengths and challenges/weaknesses as identified and discussed by the Steering Committee and its subcommittees as well as those identified by citizen input from the Comprehensive Plan Survey and other citizen outreach efforts.

Assets/Strengths

- Slow-paced ‘rural’ community, uncluttered feel, more relaxed ‘country’ lifestyle
- Being able to go to your property and enjoy privacy afforded by large lots
- Great place to live, raise children and retire
- Location
  - beautiful Hill Country, lovely scenery, lots of green space

- crossroads area: Highway 46 and US 281 (46 is used as a San Antonio bypass between I-10 West and East)
- close to San Antonio for entertainment, medical and commercial opportunities
- near Canyon Lake and Guadalupe State Park recreation areas

Minimal traffic congestion

Village uniqueness and identity

No heavy, polluting industries

Good schools

Integrity of the people and their passion to maintain the hardy entrepreneurial spirit and heritage that made the City of Bulverde

Educated, upper middle class residents

Large lot zoning can be used as a tool to manage the pattern of development

Sense of community, communality in diverse subdivisions

Potential for improving downtown and capitalizing on a wealth of historic resources

Safety – low crime rate

### **Challenges/Weaknesses**

Voter apathy - voting locations, controlled by the county, school district and state, are too spread out

Citizen apathy

- most residents of the Bulverde area work in San Antonio and are thus more connected to that city
- being a bedroom community it is difficult to get citizens involved unless there is a crisis
- citizens are so tied up in their own lives they have little time for civic affairs

Our image to outsiders - do others perceive us as bucolic or hillbilly?

Old-timers resent newcomers

Volunteer government is not working

Infighting among different interest groups

Problems being a young city created from different communities with a focus on division rather than unity

Location in beautiful hill-country attracts developers

Water – surface water will be more costly and allow for more dense development patterns

Highway right-of-way – much of the land in the City of Bulverde is highway right-of-way and out of the control of the city

Housing is expensive

Flooding and drainage

Roads/streets/connectivity

- lack of roadways to the west (Amman Road)
- need a thoroughfare plan, five year study
- need better interconnections and alternative routes to travel

Large lots inhibit establishing a sense of community, and they can contribute to a lack of community spirit

Representatives from CISD need to be more involved in community affairs

There is no community billboard to get the word out about community issues



Tennis courts in the BLA park are not being used. No ball fields  
 The only parks we have are recreation/activity oriented  
 Need something for all age groups  
 Bulverdians generally do not support the existing community center because of lack of communication  
 Potential increases in traffic problems  
 Lack of restaurants and centrally located local businesses  
 Lack of architectural design, stringent property restrictions and enforcement

## ***2.4 The City of Bulverde's Opportunities and Threats***

The future will hold both opportunities and threats for our city. The following list identifies key opportunities and threats as identified and discussed by the Steering Committee and its subcommittees, as well as those identified by citizen input from the Comprehensive Plan Survey and other citizen outreach efforts.

### **Opportunities**

As a beautiful community, we are attractive to developers  
 There are many nice places for public park(s)  
 Downtown can be developed as a rural escape similar to Gruene and Boerne  
 The City of Bulverde can become a viable city but the present time is crucial  
 Attracting businesses that will contribute to the pleasant appearance of our city  
 Large ETJ – affords opportunity to manage growth  
 Identity – make our own river walk or economic zone, Core of Engineers damming up Cibolo Creek  
 Being located only 20 miles from San Antonio, New Braunfels and Boerne, the City of Bulverde can promote a regional center (hospital, college)  
 We can be on the cutting edge of managing growth  
 Can't stop change, but collectively need to think of reasonable and fair ways to manage change  
 There is a trend back to "community" with builders; we can incorporate this into the City of Bulverde and foster a sense of community  
 Need to look at hotels/motels and the income and taxes they bring  
 Establish road department to maintain fairly decent roads left to the City by Comal County  
 Advertise (emphasize) the ambience and natural charm of our area to perspective employees  
 Study other successful suburban towns as models for development that would stand out along the 281 corridor as a shining civic example  
 Capital improvements – parks, city hall (county can help finance by locating various department annexes there – joint venture with county)  
 We can have the best of both worlds (urban and rural)

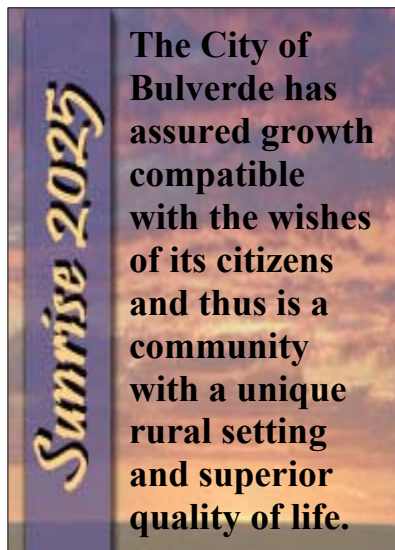
### **Threats**

Small lot development when surface water becomes available (to pay for the higher cost of such water)

Community's ambience deteriorating due to lack of code/restrictions enforcement  
 Loss of green space; uncluttered feel at risk without planning  
 The "saming" of America  
 Losing identity with citified way of life like other suburban towns or enclaves north of San Antonio  
 Highway 46 becoming the outer loop of San Antonio  
 Lack of interest by the citizens – as a result we may always have unresolved problems  
 Growing while maintaining the environment, prestige, heritage  
 Increased traffic and location of schools threaten safety of children  
 Widening Amman Road (narrow is good - widening road will lose ambience, increase speeds)  
 Unmanaged growth

## 2.5 Community Visions and Goals

The issues and findings listed for each plan element were determined from Steering Committee and its subcommittee meetings, the Comprehensive Plan Survey results, and citizen input from other public meetings.



### Land Development and Growth Management

*Issues and Steering Committee/ Subcommittee/ Citizen Input Findings*

1. The City of Bulverde is facing a transition from rural to urban.
2. Rapid population growth is having or will have an impact on the lifestyle we enjoy.
3. Rapid population growth is also impacting the community's infrastructure (roads and water) and schools.
4. Residential development is increasing and commercial development is being introduced into the area.
5. We want to retain the charm/reasons that attracted us to the area.
6. The Bulverde area is a special place facing rapid growth. If we do not manage this growth there will be negative consequences.
7. We do not want the City of Bulverde to look like a continuation of San Antonio.
8. We need to maintain the City of Bulverde's open, rural atmosphere and ensure that the natural beauty central to the community's identity is not lost.
9. The City of Bulverde's neighborhoods need to be protected from encroachment by incompatible land uses.
10. We can use our large ETJ to manage future surrounding growth.
11. Lot size is on the minds of many citizens and is viewed as a good tool to manage growth and shape how land is developed.

12. Should we consider alternative site development standards such as smart growth, new urbanism, mixed use, and 'rural by design' conservation developments?
13. Buffers and density/use gradients need to be considered as growth management tools.
14. We need to achieve the proper balance between private property rights and a level of land development tools that is acceptable to the citizens of the City of Bulverde.

**Goal 1:** Ensure that we have plans and ordinances that support and guide development consistent with the goals and objectives in the City of Bulverde Comprehensive Plan.

**Goal 2:** Manage the future growth of the City to preserve the character and uniqueness that is Bulverde as well as the integrity, compatibility and value of existing neighborhoods.

**Goal 3:** Encourage land development that enhances an aesthetically pleasing appearance for the city.

**Goal 4:** Develop an annexation strategy that enables us to manage future growth and protects and enhances the City of Bulverde's quality of life and that adds to the economic viability of the City.

## **Public Safety and Community Services**

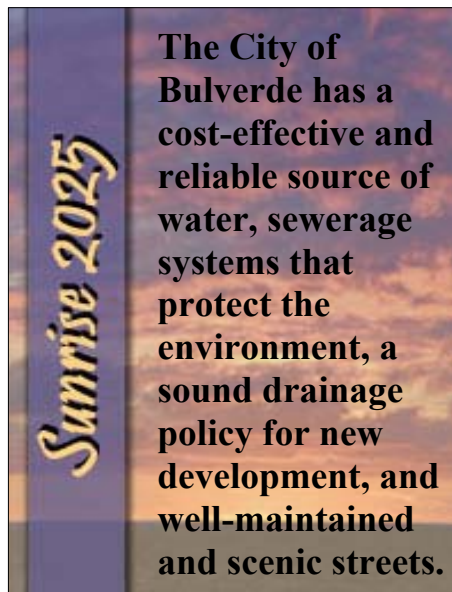
*Issues and Steering Committee/ Subcommittee/ Citizen Input Findings*

1. As the City of Bulverde grows we will need more city services and departments.
2. We must have green spaces, playgrounds, etc.
3. We have a relatively low crime rate. How do we maintain this?
4. We need more activities and programs for our youth.
5. The current system of solid waste management is working well.
6. The Bulverde area has a top-notch library.
7. What are our needs as far as building inspections and plat approvals? Do we need more staff?
8. We need a recognizable city hall that is the hub of city business.
9. People will pay taxes no matter where they live. The City of Bulverde must prove to taxpayers that they are getting 'bang-for-their-buck.'
10. No town ever created a wonderful place to live without taxing its residents. The trick is to create a town where inhabitants are so proud to be a part of something special they have less of a problem paying for that something special than residents in an area where living is not so special.



**Goal 1:** Maintain the high standards of fire and emergency medical services.

- Goal 2:** Maintain low crime rate and develop a police department with quality police services.
- Goal 3:** Promote the use of library services by the citizens of the Bulverde/Spring Branch area.
- Goal 4:** Work to assure the citizens of the City of Bulverde timely, efficient and economical solid waste services.
- Goal 5:** Meet the need for providing space for city services and meetings.
- Goal 6:** Ensure adequate and equal distribution of parks, open space and recreation facilities.
- Goal 7:** Develop additional recreational opportunities.
- Goal 8:** Review and revise as necessary an Emergency Preparedness Plan with particular attention given to periodic major flooding and the transportation of hazardous materials.
- Goal 9:** Encourage the volunteer spirit.



**Infrastructure - Streets, Drainage, Water, Sewer**  
*Issues and Steering Committee/ Subcommittee/ Citizen Input Findings*

1. Without water/wastewater infrastructure, the City of Bulverde will remain primarily a large-lot residential community.
2. With water/wastewater infrastructure the City of Bulverde can accommodate more dense types of development as well as more commercial and even light industrial land uses.
3. We can use infrastructure as a growth management tool.
4. We can retain and encourage narrower roads to maintain the city's rural ambience.
5. Even with water supplied by GBRA, will there be enough to service a larger community? How large can we grow with future available water supplies?
6. Education on water issues is important. Since we live in a semi-arid environment we need to promote water conservation.
7. Flooding is a problem in some areas and can become worse with careless development and impervious cover.
8. Street maintenance is costly. We must require developers to put in streets that will last.

9. We will need capital improvements programming (CIP) as we grow – this is good planning.

**Goal 1:** Promote a reliable source of water for future development and areas of town that can be economically retrofitted with pipelines.

**Goal 2:** To protect the environment, promote the provision of central sewerage in appropriate areas.

**Goal 3:** Address storm water drainage issues in both existing and future developments.

**Goal 4:** Maintain and improve the condition of existing city streets and ensure that future roads are built to lasting standards while preserving aesthetic integrity.

**Goal 5:** Encourage underground utilities.

**Goal 6:** Coordinate future infrastructure improvements to ensure the most economical and effective provision and maintenance of infrastructure (water, sewer, drainage, streets and communications).

### **Infrastructure - Transportation**

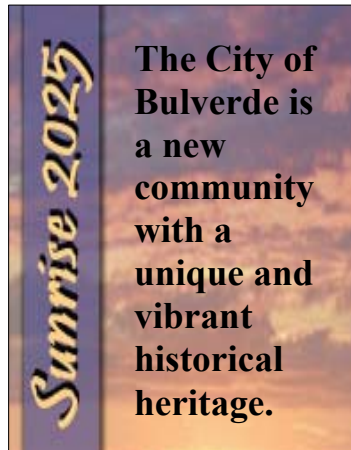
#### *Issues and Steering Committee/ Subcommittee/ Citizen Input Findings*

1. Decisions made by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will have a major impact on the transportation network in and around the City of Bulverde.
2. Much land within the city is devoted to highway right-of-way.
3. A thoroughfare master plan and road standards can be used to manage and shape future growth
4. We need to understand the role of Road Utility Districts (RUDs) and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as tools that can be used to effectuate the city's transportation goals.
5. What will the impacts of increased traffic on Highways 46 and 281 be?
6. Should the city begin actively encouraging the Highway 46 bypass as shown on the County's thoroughfare master plan?
7. What grade separations will there be along Highway 281 through the City of Bulverde?



**Goal 1:** Promote a transportation network that is safe and efficient while at the same time discourages high speeds, four-lane roads and heavy traffic within the city.

**Goal 2:** Promote transportation alternatives to the automobile such as hike/bike networks and pedestrian circulation.



### **Historical/Heritage Preservation**

*Issues and Steering Committee/ Subcommittee/ Citizen Input Findings*

1. We need to maintain our integrity in the midst of rapid growth. Growing while maintaining the heritage of the Bulverde area will be difficult.
2. We want to avoid the 'saming' of America and becoming like other suburban towns.
3. Promote the survival and growth of "Mom and Pop" businesses in Bulverde.
4. Downtown can be developed as a rural village escape similar to Gruene, Boerne or Fredericksburg.
5. We can help establish a unique identity by making our own river walk or economic zone.
6. We need to look at the potential for hotel/motel tax income.
7. A good point about the history of the Bulverde area is the hardy entrepreneurial spirit of the individuals involved.
8. Early citizens' attitudes were a desire to be free from tyranny; their values were hard work and thrift.
9. We need to maintain the City of Bulverde's open, rural atmosphere and ensure that the natural beauty central to the community's identity is not lost.

**Goal 1:** Preserve and enhance Bulverde's heritage.

**Goal 2:** Preserve and enhance historic and archeological sites and other unique aspects of the community.

**Goal 3:** Improve community communication.

**Goal 4:** Develop the City of Bulverde's historical and natural assets for the citizen's enjoyment and for potential heritage tourism.

**Goal 5:** Manage the future growth of the City of Bulverde to preserve the heritage and character of the community.



## **Economic Development**

*Issues and Steering Committee/ Subcommittee/ Citizen Input Findings*

1. Should and can the City of Bulverde establish an Economic Development Corporation (EDC)?
2. The City of Bulverde probably does not meet the demographic requirements for Community Development Block grants (CDBGs).
3. We need to investigate the possibility of establishing an economic development zone.
4. We need to look at the potential for hotel/motel tax income. Is it realistic to have a hotel here? Is tourism a viable market for the City of Bulverde? What would be the demands on area resources?
5. We need more job opportunities in the Bulverde area so people can live and work here.
6. We need to expand and diversify the economic base of the City of Bulverde.
7. Desirable businesses are looking for a variety of quality housing, good schools, adequate infrastructure (especially water), an educated work force, environmental amenities, an efficient and friendly permit processing system and city government, good transportation and stability. How does Bulverde measure up?
8. The types of businesses we want are retail, recreation, entertainment, low impact industrial and institutional (e.g. hospitals, higher education facilities, etc.)
9. We need to attract businesses that will contribute to the community's desired image and not be more roadside clutter.
10. Should Highway 281 be a higher density commercial corridor?
11. Retail should be the target that would be the first and most conducive to develop as population increases. This would be the most natural way to increase sales tax revenue and the ability of the city to fund an EDC.
12. We need to determine what types of commercial/industrial developments are realistic and where we want them. Unique and distinct niches could be developed in preplanned areas of the city.
13. Do we need to revise or add regulations addressing commercial development? How can we cure any deficiencies? Do we want 'big-box' retail?
14. How do we attract businesses we deem desirable?
15. Do local government and business groups have the requisite positive attitude toward growth and development?



**Goal 1:** Promote appropriate economic development.

**Goal 2:** Diversify and expand the tax and economic base through the promotion of desired businesses and activities.

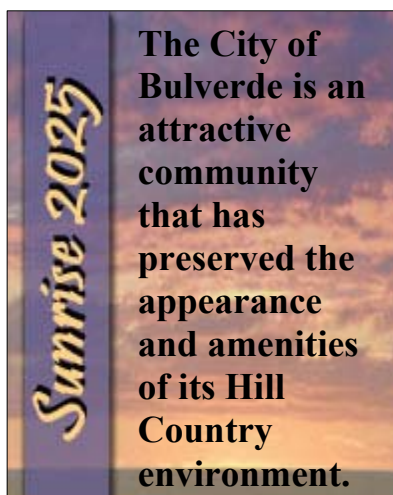
**Goal 3:** Promote the Bulverde area as an attractive center for retailing, services, health care, entertainment and education.

**Goal 4:** Involve the business community and the local Chamber of Commerce in the City of Bulverde's growth and development.

**Goal 5:** Develop the Bulverde area's historical and natural assets to take advantage of heritage tourism in the Hill Country region.

**Goal 6:** Foster a positive attitude towards growth and development among local government and business groups.

**Goal 7:** Plan for future infrastructure needs that will accommodate prospective businesses and activities.



### **Community Development**

#### *Issues and Steering Committee/Citizen Input Findings*

1. The City of Bulverde is somewhat of a bedroom community. Is that how we should/will stay? Or should it be self-sufficient?
2. We want to retain the charm/reasons that attracted us to the area. "Charm" and "reasons" include openness and the country-feel. Big box retail outlets should be discouraged or limited to certain areas.
3. Can we instill the feeling in the citizens that the City of Bulverde is indeed a viable, growing city, not just a hodge-podge of unrelated buildings and unrestrained commercial sprawl?
4. There are no simple answers about how the city should develop, nor is there one best way to develop.
5. You can not force people together but you can give them the opportunity to get together. In our planning efforts we need to remember this and think first of the people who are already here.
6. Lot size is on the minds of many citizens and is viewed as a tool to manage growth and shape how land is developed.
7. If we are to accommodate smaller lots we will need water and sewer infrastructure and require set-asides for open space, schools, etc.
8. The Bulverde area is a great place to live, raise children and retire, but not to work as there are not many job opportunities here.
9. People love to get away from the big city and we should maintain that opportunity.
10. The planning process offers us the opportunity to address lots of problems. We can be on the cutting edge of managing growth.
11. There is a trend back to 'community' with many developers and builders. How can we incorporate this trend into the City of Bulverde's growth management process? Should we promote a more cohesive, pedestrian-friendly urban form?
12. The City of Bulverde is facing rapid growth, and ways to manage this growth include having, following and enforcing a plan, using conservation easements, overlay zones, being sensitive to the amount of impervious cover and promoting a water collection system.



13. The right amount of planning and regulation is that which prevents ugly, insensitive, cheap and haphazard development.
14. Encourage the community to take responsibility for preventing and cleaning up litter.
15. It would improve the appearance of the city if we promoted underground utilities.
16. We should consider alternative site development (sustainable solutions) such as conservation development, new urbanism and smart growth.
17. We recognize that the area's schools contribute to a sense of community, offer gathering places, and as such promote neighborliness.

**Goal 1:** Preserve the natural/rural character of the city as much as possible.

**Goal 2:** Encourage an aesthetically pleasing appearance for the city.

**Goal 3:** Encourage tasteful development of all kinds including affordable housing, roads, signs, lights, buildings, parks and some higher density type development where appropriate.

**Goal 4:** Use the relaxed atmosphere of the hill-country to the City of Bulverde's advantage.

**Goal 5:** Make people feel like part of a community.

**Goal 6:** Develop an "old village center" with defined edges.

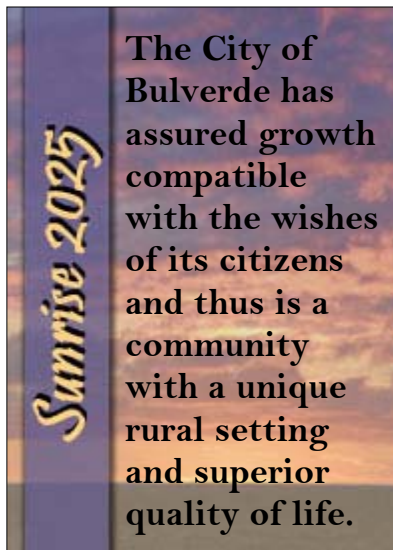
**Goal 7:** Facilitate open communication and cooperation among property owners, developers, city staff and others involved in all aspects of housing in the City of Bulverde.

# Land Use/Development & Growth Management

3

## 3.1 Preserving the City of Bulverde's Character

The Comprehensive Plan Survey identified living in a rural or country atmosphere as one of the City of Bulverde's most cherished and unique qualities. People enjoy living in Bulverde because of the open spaces, scenery, privacy and relative proximity to work, shopping, and school. Many survey respondents described their neighbors as friendly and family-oriented. They felt that the City of Bulverde is a place where people care for each other, and where the pace of life is not as hectic as it is in bigger cities. The way the City of Bulverde grows, or how land is developed in the future, will to a great extent determine whether these qualities are to be nurtured or whether they will be lost.



As a new town, the City of Bulverde does not have a long history of land use planning and growth management. However, thanks to the foresight and hard work of the founding fathers, in a very short time the city has implemented subdivision and zoning regulations, as well as other ordinances addressing signage, animal control, public safety, emergency management and exterior lighting. These ordinances address specific land development issues, and are an excellent beginning, but to achieve the vision of the citizens more tools will be needed, specifically those related to open space, design and location of more intense types of land uses. Currently, the city lacks water and wastewater infrastructure, but over time this will change. The Guadalupe Blanco River Authority (GBRA) is extending a water pipeline from Canyon Lake to the Bulverde area and the Bexar Met Water District is also installing water supply infrastructure in the area. In the near future the provision of water and wastewater infrastructure can help effectively manage the direction of growth, and thus the city can be well-served with a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).

Based on hours of Land Use/Development and Growth Management Subcommittee discussion and input received from the Comprehensive Plan Survey, there are real concerns about the consequences of unmanaged growth. The Steering Committee and subcommittee discussed the question of protecting and enhancing the assets and desirable qualities that draw people to the Bulverde area in the first place, and committee members noted the need to consider any and all land use tools that can be used in this quest. There is a strong desire to maintain the City of Bulverde's feel and appearance and strengthen its sense of community. Both zoning

and subdivision regulations can be used to manage growth, but for the City of Bulverde subdivision regulations may be more important because of the city's large extra territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Regardless, all types of zoning such as cluster, overlay and performance zoning as well as innovative subdivision regulations should be investigated to supplement and add flexibility to the large lot approach that is already in place. These include low-impact development, mixed use, new urbanism or traditional neighborhood development (TND), subdivision open space requirements, and alternative site development as outlined by GBRA's *Sustainable Solutions* workshop in 2001 and Kendall County's *Resource Stewardship Project*.

This plan identifies methods to establish desirable land uses and development patterns without inhibiting citizens' rights to seek the "highest and best use" of their property. It seeks to preserve existing residential neighborhoods and the landscape while accommodating and encouraging new development that has open spaces, environmentally friendly and aesthetically pleasing design, and infrastructure of the highest quality. This plan recognizes that market forces are the primary driving force that determines future land uses, but requiring high quality development of the type that enhances our community's natural qualities also improves the market value of our property.

The Land Use/Development and Growth Management chapter offers ideas and suggestions to help determine the future form and character of the community, and will seek to achieve the vision of community with a unique rural setting and an exceptionally high quality of life. This chapter is intended to be a resource guide that identifies current patterns of land development in the Bulverde area, and indicates areas best suited for future growth. It is here that citizens articulate what they want the city to look like, how and where it will develop and how it will function in the future. The land development vision and the plan outlined in this chapter to help achieve that vision are unique, chosen specifically for the City of Bulverde. For our city to look, feel and function as we want it to, it is very important that Bulverde has the ability to implement its land development goals, objectives and actions.

### *3.2 Coming Together*

It is also important to identify how this new city came together, and the land uses present in each of the components of the present day city. We also need to consider the limiting physical characteristics that have shaped or may shape the city in terms of type, scale, density and location of land uses. These can include topography, floodplains, soil conditions, and water availability. By identifying existing patterns together with constraints and proposed infrastructure improvements, we can more effectively assure desirable patterns of future land development.

#### **A Short History of the Formation of the City of Bulverde and Its Land Use Patterns**

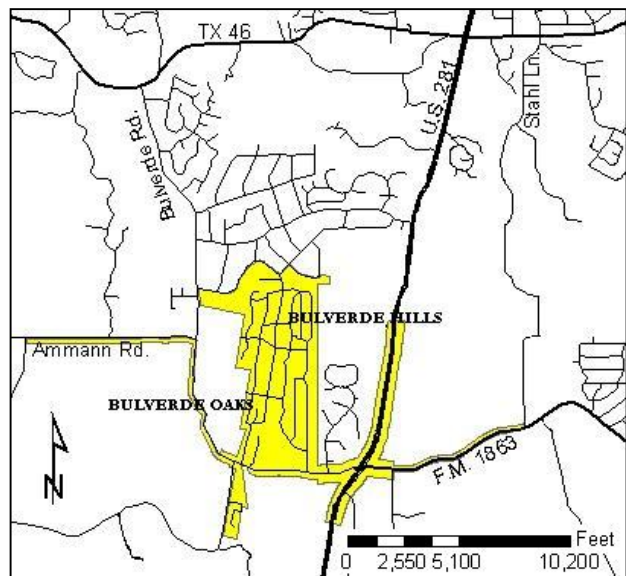
The present day city was formed from five separate incorporated cities requiring

twenty-two elections beginning in 1997 to become one united city. Volunteers studied the Texas Local Government Code and learned on the job. To incorporate you must have at least 200 people in an area no larger than two square miles. The purpose of this grass-roots effort was to block the City of San Antonio from annexing any further north into Comal and Kendall counties and swallowing-up existing subdivisions as well as undeveloped land. In 1998, Bulverde North and Bulverde West requested consolidation with Bulverde South. In 1999, Bulverde East and in 2000 Bulverde Northwest followed suit. On May 11, 1999, the Board of Aldermen of Bulverde South changed the name of the new entity to the City of Bulverde.

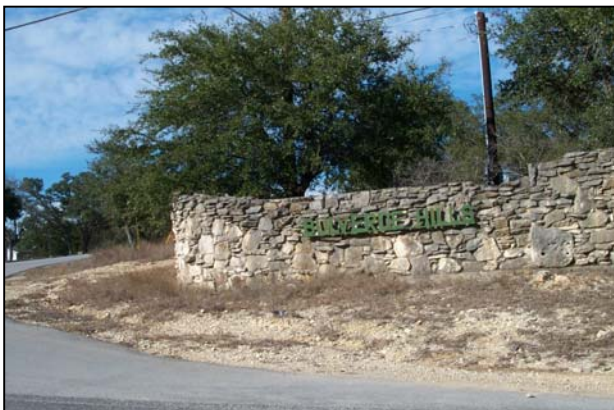
### Bulverde South

Present day Bulverde developed in the area of US Highway 281, State Highway 46, Farm/Market Road 1863, and Cibolo Creek, and began with the incorporation of Bulverde South in 1997. The mayor was Stan Blaylock. As early as 1983 there had been efforts to incorporate Bulverde Hills subdivision, a single family residential development which consisted of platted lots with an average size of three quarters of an acre. All lots are serviced by a central water system and individual septic systems. Bulverde Oaks, a smaller single family residential subdivision, joined with Bulverde Hills to incorporate as Bulverde South in 1997. Included in the new city were strips along Bulverde Road, Amman Road and Farm/Market 1863. The purpose of these strips was to form part of a

**Figure 3.1. Bulverde South**



Source: City of Bulverde.

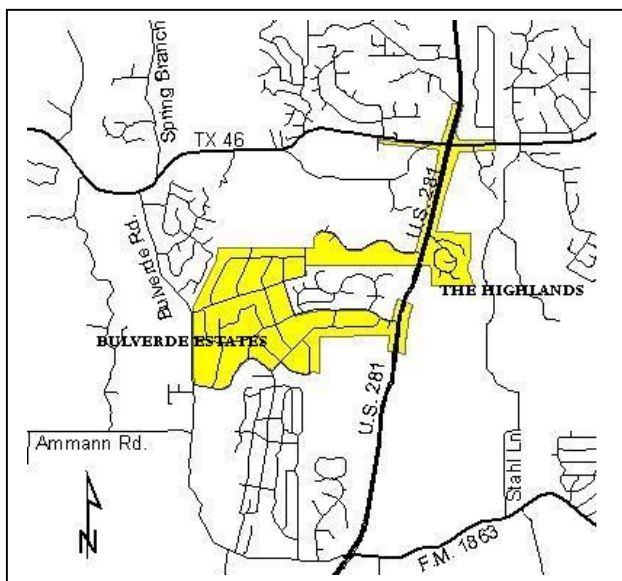


Entrance to Bulverde Hills

barrier that would keep the City of San Antonio from annexing further north into Comal County. Also included in the new city were areas along U.S. Highway 281, the purpose being to take advantage of potential sales tax revenue as commercial land uses developed along the highway.



**Figure 3.2. Bulverde North**



Source: City of Bulverde

### **Bulverde North**

Bulverde North consisted primarily of Bulverde Estates, a large lot (two to three acres on average) residential development with lots utilizing individual wells for water supply and individual septic systems for sewerage. Bob Barton was the mayor of Bulverde North. While residents of Bulverde Hills were incorporating and forming a government, so too were the residents of Bulverde Estates. They were joined by residents of the Highlands, parts of Bulverde Ranchettes and Elm Valley, also large-lot, single-family residential subdivisions,

incorporated as Bulverde North in 1997. Also included in the new city were strips of land along U.S. Highway 281 and State Highway 46, again another potential location for commercial land uses and sales tax revenues. In Texas, cities can consolidate by the smaller town voting to join the larger one, and the larger one voting to accept the smaller one. In this case, Bulverde North had a smaller population than Bulverde South, and in 1998 joined the larger city. At this point Bulverde North ceased to exist and there was a new, larger Bulverde South.



Entrance to Bulverde Estates

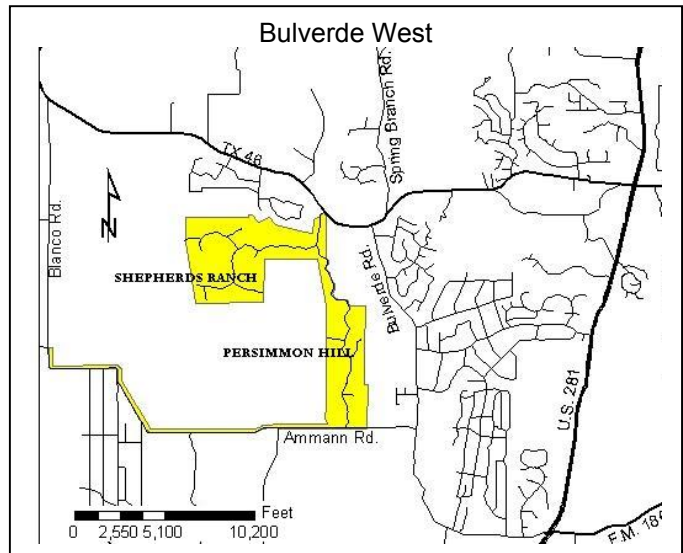


Multi-family housing in Bulverde North

### Bulverde West

In 1998, residents of Shepherds Ranch and Persimmon Hill incorporated as Bulverde West. Robert Hieronymous was the mayor. Both of these subdivisions are large-lot, single-family residential developments with each lot having its own water well and septic system. The new city included strips of land along Amman Road, picking up where Bulverde South stopped and continuing west to Blanco Road. This extended the 'blockade' approximately four miles to the west. In 1998 Bulverde West joined the larger Bulverde South.

Figure 3.3. Bulverde West



Source: City of Bulverde.



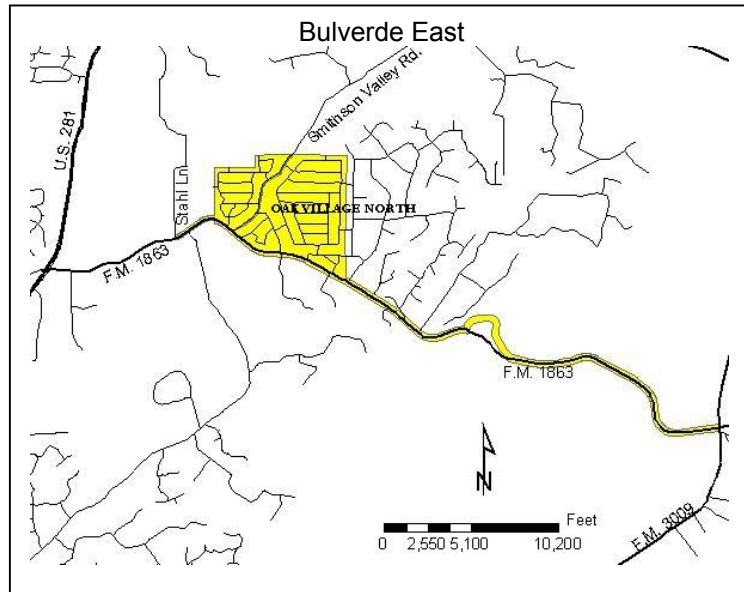
Scenes in Shepherds Ranch and Persimmon Hills

### Bulverde East

Bulverde East consisted of Oak Village North, a large-lot, single-family residential development with lots of approximately one acre average size, a central water system, and individual septic systems. The mayor was Warren Alston. Oak Village North, along with Bulverde Estates which is situated in Bulverde North, were two of the first developments in the area. Bulverde East

also included a 600 foot wide strip out Farm/Market 1863 and along parts of Cibolo Creek west all the way to Farm/Market 3009 and the extra-territorial jurisdiction of New Braunfels. Along with a strip east along Farm/Market 1863 to the city limits of Bulverde South, this completed the blockade all the way from Blanco Road in far west Comal County to territory under the control of New Braunfels in east central Comal County. In 1999, after some debate about which city was larger, Bulverde East joined with Bulverde South and the name of the combined cities was changed to the City of Bulverde.

**Figure 3.4. Bulverde East**



Source: City of Bulverde.



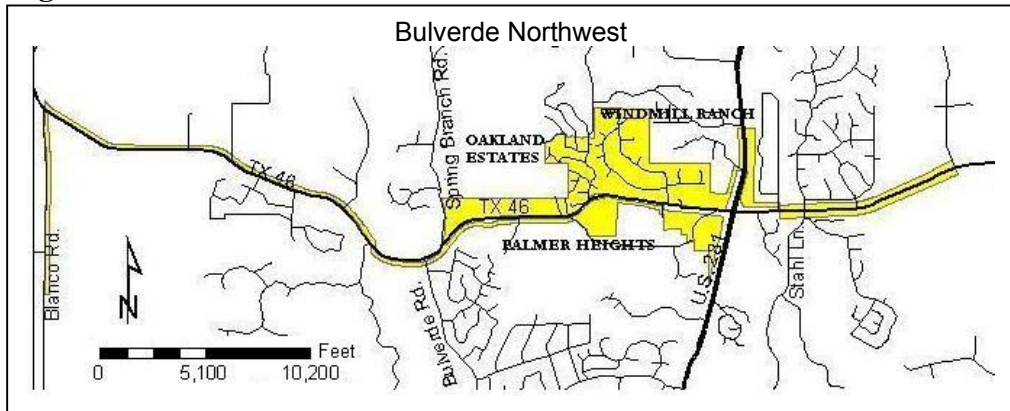
Entrance to Oak Village North



Bulverde city limits at FM 1863 and FM 3009 intersection



**Figure 3.5. Bulverde Northwest**



Source: City of Bulverde.

### **Bulverde Northwest**

In 2000, Oakland Estates, Windmill Ranch, Palmer Heights and Oakland Estates subdivision joined together to form Bulverde Northwest. The mayor was Mal McClinchie. Oakland Estates is a single-family residential subdivision that includes both site-built and



Entrance to Windmill Ranch

manufactured homes. Windmill Ranch is a large-lot single-family residential development with lots averaging five acres. Both of these subdivisions have central water systems with each lot having its own septic system. Included in this city were

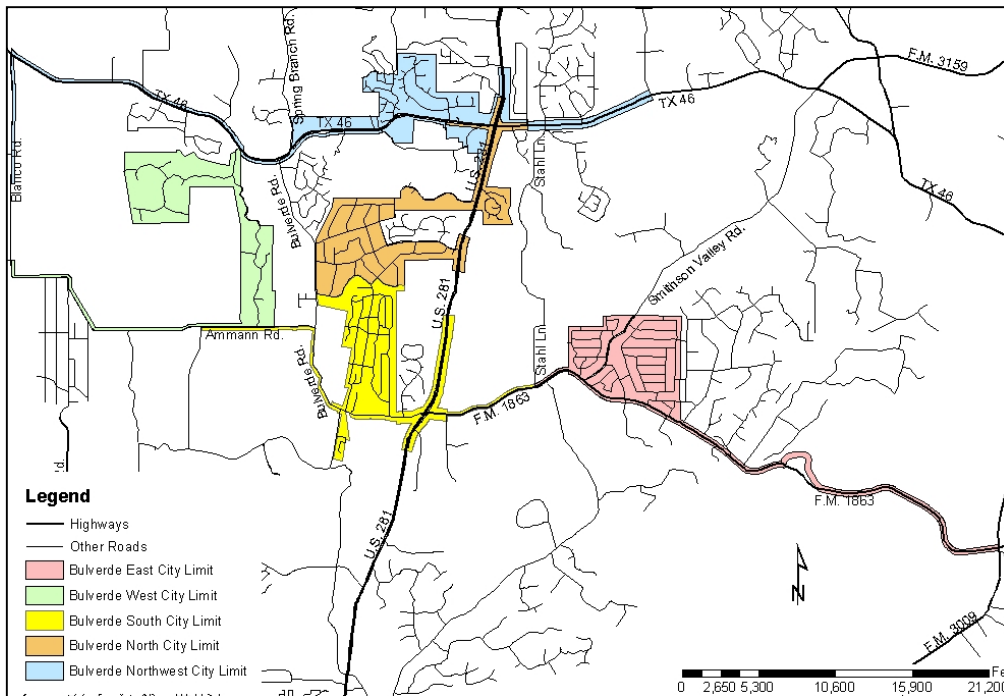


Shopping center on highway 46

strips of land to the east on State Highway 46 and to the west to Blanco Road and then south on Blanco Road one mile from the city limits of the City of Bulverde. Bulverde Northwest included the highest percentage of commercial land uses in the area with the HEB shopping center, three banks and many other retail establishments. Shortly after its incorporation, Bulverde Northwest joined with the City of Bulverde, and the city limits of the present day City of Bulverde became complete.



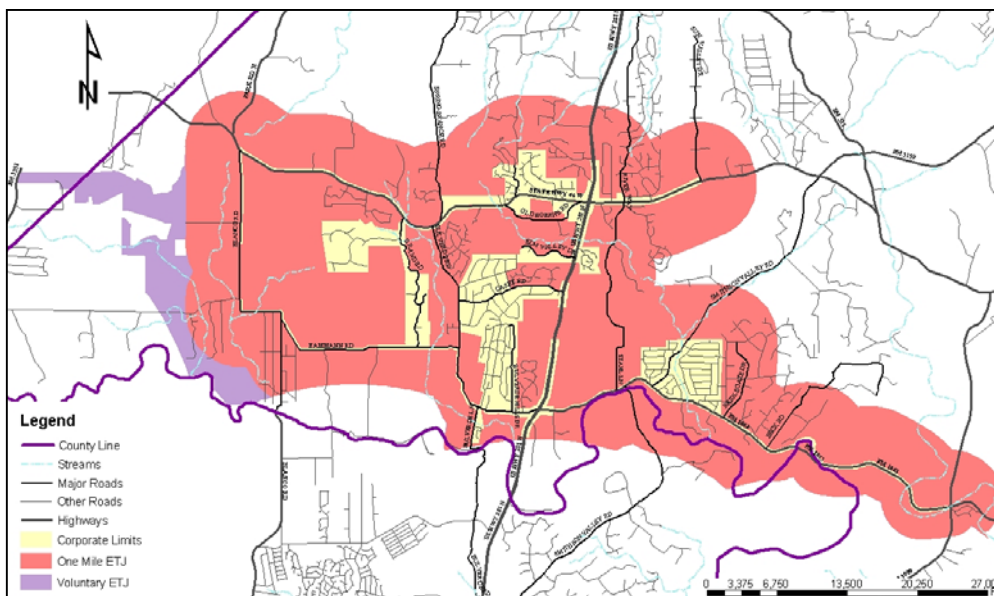
**Figure 3.6: City of Bulverde City Limits, 2004**



Source: City of Bulverde.

After the final consolidation, the city's extra territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) was extended further eastward past Farm/Market 3009 and further westward into Kendall County to Ralph Fair Road with voluntary agreements. In Texas, an owner of land contiguous to the ETJ of a city can ask to voluntarily be included in the ETJ of that city. Landowners concerned about the expanding ETJ of San Antonio did just that.

**Figure 3.7. Map of the City of Bulverde's City Limits and One Mile ETJ as of May 2004 (includes 2004 voluntary annexations)**



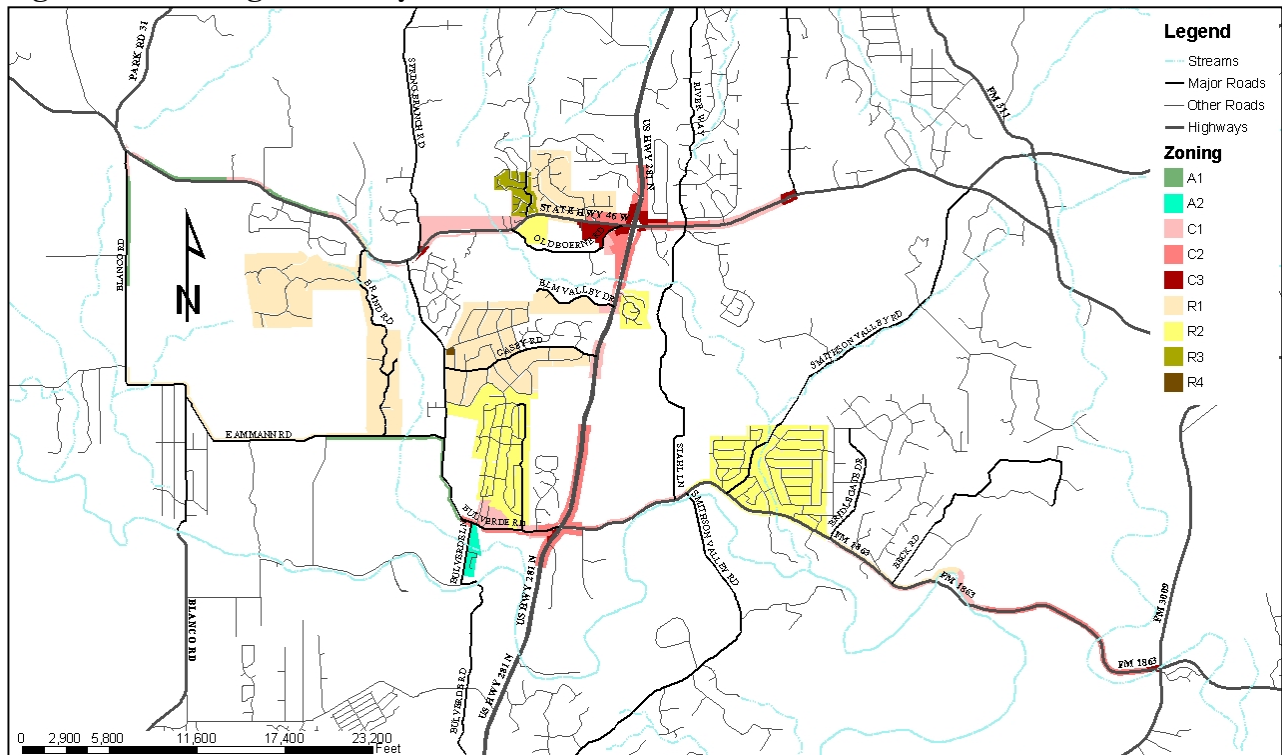
Source: City of Bulverde.

### 3.3 Existing Land Uses

#### Zoning

The zoning map of the City of Bulverde illustrates, to a certain extent, existing land uses and planned land uses in the future. When the city was zoned, city officials attempted to follow existing land uses and allowed land uses consistent with each subdivision's deed restrictions. Obviously, the highest percentage of developed and platted acreage is devoted to single family residential uses, mostly on large lots. There is one small area on Bulverde Road on the western edge of Bulverde Estates that is zoned R4, or multi-family residential. Properties in Oakland Estates are a mix of manufactured homes and other residences built on-site. The zoning ordinance also addresses tree preservation, building exteriors, off-street parking, buffering of business districts abutting residential lots, and other land use compatibility issues. Table 3.1 outlines the existing zoning categories of the City of Bulverde.

Figure 3.8: Zoning in the City of Bulverde



Source: City of Bulverde.

**Table 3.1. Existing Zoning Categories for the City of Bulverde**

District	Min. Lot Area	Min. Frontage	Front Setback	Rear Setback	Side Setback	Max Height	
R-1	4.0 ac	s/d regs	100	25	25	3/35	Single family
R-2	1.5 ac	s/d regs	50	25	25	3/35	Single family
R-3	1.5 ac	s/d regs	100	25	25	3/35	Manufactured
R-4	5.0: avg. 2 units/ac	300 feet	100	25	25	3/35	Multi-family
C-1	1.0 ac	120 feet	50	25	15	3/35	Light Commercial
C-2	1.0 ac	120 feet	50	25	15	3/35	Moderate Commercial
C-3	5.0 ac	300 feet	100	50 <sup>a</sup> , 25 <sup>b</sup>	25	3/35	Light Industrial
A-1		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Agricultural
A-2	13.0 ac	N/A	100	25	25	3/35	Airport

Source: City of Bulverde. a: if adjoining property to rear is any zoning district other than C-3; b: of adjoining property to rear is zoned C-3.

### Subdivision Regulations

The City of Bulverde's subdivision regulations define density in terms of EDUs, or equivalent dwelling units. An EDU is equivalent to the demand for services of a single family residence. Density is classified into three categories as follows:

- Low density: less than 0.17 EDUs per acre with minimum lot size of 5 acres
- Medium density: 0.17 or more but not more than 0.4 EDUs per acre with minimum lot size of 2 acres
- High density: more than 0.4 EDUs per acre with minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet for single family residential lots with an average of no more than one residence per 30,000 square feet and a minimum of 30,000 square feet for all other lots.

The subdivision regulations also address open space and public use dedication by requiring that subdivisions with at least 25 residential lots shall dedicate an area equal to or greater than 1.0 acres per one hundred single family lots. In an R-1 district, that would equal one acre of open space, parkland or public use area for 400 acres of developable lots, or a mere 0.25 percent of the subdivision's area exclusive of road right-of-way. For an R-2 district, that percentage is 0.67 of the total area.

With the requirement for residential lots of either 1.5 or 4 acres, residential development in the City of Bulverde consumes land at a greater rate than most other cities with rapidly growing suburbs in Texas and the U.S. To a great extent, the large lot requirements have been necessitated by the lack of a central source of surface water, and centralized sewerage systems necessitating the use of on-site wastewater disposal or septic systems. County health regulations require a minimum lot size of one acre for lots without a central water system, and the requirement is even higher over the Edwards Recharge Zone. However, this will change as surface water supply and possibly sewerage infrastructure become available over the coming years.

There has been a tremendous increase in commercial land uses that can be attributed to the City of Bulverde's rapid growth and favorable demographics. Currently, there



HEB shopping center on state highway 46

are four banks serving the city's residents, six restaurants and an HEB grocery store whereas ten years ago there was only one bank, two restaurants and no large grocery stores. Most of this growth has occurred in the U.S. Highway 281 and State Highway 46 area.

### *3.4 The Impacts of Growth on the City of Bulverde's Land Use Patterns*

As discussed in the introduction, the City of Bulverde has developed and is developing without a comprehensive approach to manage and direct growth. Now that the city has come together and put in place zoning and subdivision ordinances, the city must focus on the pattern, direction and type of growth. Already, several issues and concerns have arisen that negatively impact its citizens, the local economy, and the suburban/rural environment. Based on survey findings, public input, and discussion, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee identified the following list of land development issues and concerns:

1. The Bulverde area is facing a transition from rural to urban.
2. Rapid population growth is or will have an impact on the lifestyle we enjoy.
3. Rapid population growth is also impacting the community's infrastructure (roads and water) and schools.
4. Residential development is increasing and commercial development is being introduced to the area.
5. We want to retain the charm/reasons that attracted us to the area.
6. The Bulverde area is a special place facing rapid growth. If we don't manage this growth there will be negative consequences.
7. We don't want to look like a continuation of San Antonio.
8. We need to maintain the City of Bulverde's open, rural atmosphere and ensure that the natural beauty central to the community's identity is not lost.
9. The City of Bulverde's neighborhoods need to be protected from encroachment by incompatible land uses.
10. We can use our large ETJ to manage surrounding growth.
11. Lot size is on the minds of many citizens and is viewed as a tool to manage growth and shape how land is developed.
12. We should consider alternative site development standards such as smart growth, new urbanism, mixed use, and 'rural by design' conservation developments.
13. Buffers and density/use gradients need to be considered as growth management tools.

14. We need to achieve the proper balance between private property rights and a level of land development tools that is acceptable to the citizens of the City of Bulverde.

These issues and concerns are expanded upon in the following sections.

### **The Threat of Unstructured Growth**

In the face of rapid population growth and fear of being overwhelmed by the City of San Antonio, the citizens of the City of Bulverde are taking a proactive approach. They want to have at their disposal the best available tools for planning land use and managing growth. Much will depend on design and this will be addressed in Chapter 9 “Community Development”. Undoubtedly, unstructured growth such as strip commercial development and sprawl affects the look, feel and efficiency of any community. Commercial strips in most cities are considered ugly and without any personality or “sense of place.” Being a new city, the City of Bulverde has the opportunity to structure commercial growth in nodes or areas that afford convenience for shoppers and workers and have a minimal impact on existing residential uses and the appearance of the city. Will the U.S. Highway 281 corridor look like a pleasant parkway or will it have access roads with mile after mile of strip retail and commercial development that obliterates the hill-country landscape?



View along Interstate 35 North of New Braunfels

The costs of unstructured growth can be measured in real dollars. Taxes and fees must cover the costs of an expanding infrastructure such as longer water lines and roadways. Limited city resources must be stretched to maintain fire, police and emergency medical services that cost more in an unplanned community. Street and other infrastructure maintenance dollars must be spread out over more area. Once the initial construction of expanded infrastructure is completed with limited city resources, the community is then faced with the long-term maintenance of such facilities. The cost/benefit question will always remain. One strategy to address these costs is the implementation of development impact fees, or “up-front” fees charged to the developer for the impacts of their developments on a community’s infrastructure (water supply, sewerage, drainage, roads and/or parks).

Strip development and sprawl also bring about increased traffic congestion and decreased air quality, which are two issues that have become increasingly significant in the San Antonio region. Over the past few years there has been considerable coverage in the press and on the televised news of the numbers of times the area has



failed ozone counts. The implementation of regulations required by the Clean Air Act seems imminent.

### **The Need to Guide the Pattern, Look and Direction of Future Land Development**

If the city wants to guide the pattern, look and direction of future development, rather than reacting to development trends, it must proactively participate in guiding those trends. Zoning and subdivision ordinances must be able to accommodate and encourage desirable types of development, and, as the city grows, capital investments in infrastructure (streets, water, sewer, drainage, etc.) can be coordinated to encourage the development of preferred growth areas, especially for commercial land uses. Overlay districts, design guidelines and innovative planning tools discussed below should be considered to lessen the negative impacts of commercial development on major transportation corridors such as Highway 281 and State Highway 46, Farm/Market 1863 and Bulverde Road to the west of Highway 281. (These concepts are also discussed in Chapter 10, “Community Development”).

### **The Need to Protect the Integrity of Residential Neighborhoods**

The building blocks of vibrant communities are healthy neighborhoods. The Comprehensive Plan Survey revealed that most people in the City of Bulverde appreciate their neighborhoods, and have strong feelings of “being at home” and neighborliness. A home is the largest single expenditure and investment made by the



Scene in Bulverde Hills

typical family. This investment needs a high level of protection. Incompatible land uses or shoddy development can easily destroy a neighborhood’s integrity, negatively impacting property values and quality of life, introducing excessive noise, light, or traffic into the area. Examples of incompatibility include placement of commercial or industrial establishments too near established neighborhoods or in scenic areas.

### **Deed Restrictions**

The protection of residential neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible land uses is to a great extent currently left up to the enforcement of private covenants and deed restrictions in addition to the city’s zoning and subdivision ordinances. Deed restrictions can be effective in subdivisions that have active homeowners associations; even then they alone are not a very effective growth management tool since they fall short of offering long term, consistent citywide protection needed to promote an attractive, identifiable and unique environment in the rapidly growing Bulverde area. Covenants and restrictions are not comprehensive in nature, generally applying only to limited time periods and only to

lots located within a particular subdivision. For those neighborhoods that have active deed restrictions, properties located within the interior of the subdivision are provided the highest level of protection. Homes located on the fringes of a subdivision have less protection against properties located just outside the subdivision boundaries, especially if they are in the ETJ and not protected by city zoning. Deed restrictions are enforced through private party actions where property owners must file suit against alleged violators to enforce the restrictions. Cities, such as Houston, may act as a “friend-of-the-court” in such litigation, but realistically municipalities have little authority to intervene in this enforcement process. Inconsistent enforcement is another problem. If restrictions are not consistently applied, then they can become unenforceable.

### **Managing Development in the ETJ**

With the city’s current unique configuration and so much land in its ETJ, the City of Bulverde has a unique opportunity to shape its borders, size, look and feel. This already large ETJ will expand even further since the city reached a population of 5,000 in late 2003 and is now able to adopt a charter and become a home-rule type city. The city will be able to exercise subdivision and signage regulations in a very large area and avoid unmanaged development around the city proper. Such growth can result in undesirable or low-quality developments. By exercising higher development standards in the ETJ, the City of Bulverde can promote quality development, enhance property values and avoid costly road upgrades and other infrastructure retrofit expenses when it annexes land.



Johnson Ranch entrance on FM 1863

Preservation of the Hill-country landscape is essential to maintaining the City of Bulverde’s sense of community and identity. Past large-lot development patterns have resulted in a high percentage of private open space. But with the provision of more expensive surface waters, more dense development will inevitably follow, and existing city ordinances are not prepared to require adequate open spaces in these kinds of developments. Denser development patterns can make infrastructure most cost-effective.

### ***3.5 Future Land Development Challenges and Opportunities***

#### **Growth Shapers**

The direction of the city’s future development will be affected by a number of factors that encourage and facilitate growth, including the availability of adequate



transportation access, water and sanitary sewer service, and drainage capacity. These infrastructure improvements must serve developable tracts of land with willing sellers. In addition, there are other market forces at work that will influence which areas will be most desirable for new development. Some of these factors may include school locations, conveniently located shopping opportunities, medical, recreational, police, fire and other services, as well as proximity to other high quality developments.

While the city cannot, and should not, control market forces, it can affect the pattern, direction, type and timing of growth with appropriate ordinances, incentives, and by working with utility and transportation providers to encourage extension of infrastructure to appropriate locations in an orderly, planned and affordable manner. If the city wants to discourage haphazard growth, combinations of efforts are needed, and, perhaps most importantly, a collaborative attitude with all those involved in the development process needs to be the policy of city officials. This can lead to the type of urban form resulting from managed growth, a city form appreciated and desired by the residents of the City of Bulverde. Everyone can benefit from planned growth.

### **Growth Barriers**

The direction and phasing of future growth will also be influenced by various physical, economic and individual barriers to growth. For example, the floodplains associated with Cibolo Creek and its contributing streams define land development barriers throughout the city. While the limiting aspects of certain creek and drainage outfalls can be mitigated through engineering work, some will always remain. Additionally, the Bulverde area has hilly terrain that in some areas may not be suitable for commercial, institutional or light industrial development. Much land in the City of Bulverde is taken up by highway rights-of-way. These are realities that the city must grow around. Finally, patterns of land ownership can be an overlooked inhibitor to new development. For example, large tracts of developable land owned by unwilling sellers can result in leap-frog development.

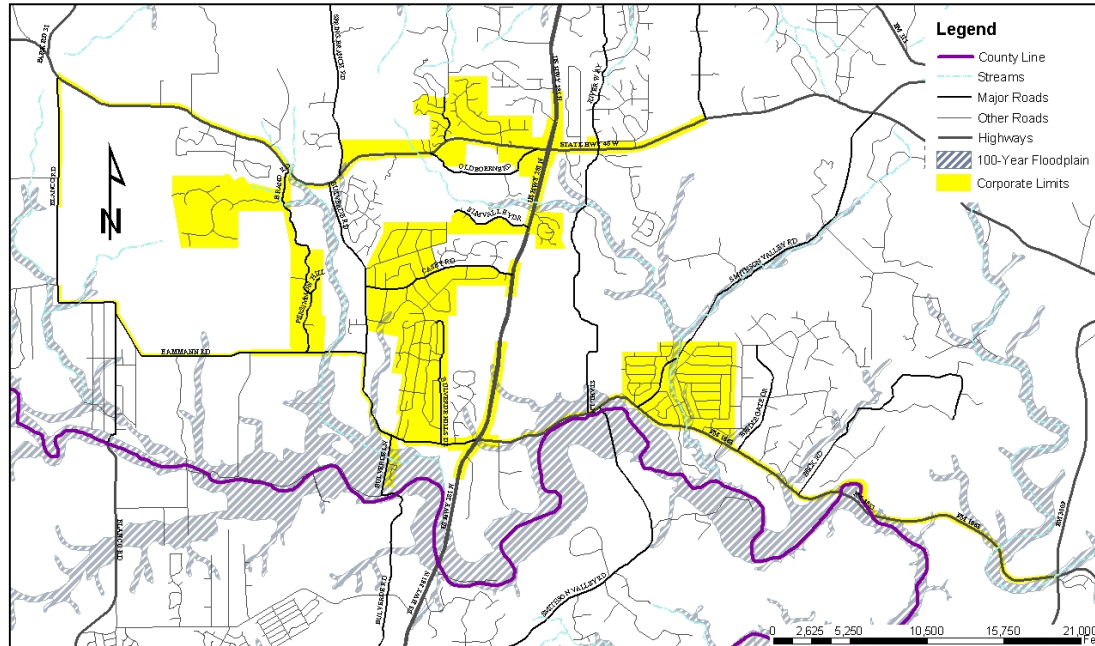


Scene along Cibolo Creek in the 100-year floodplain

Figure 3.9 identifies floodplains in the area, and it is evident that much of the land in the City of Bulverde and its ETJ lies within the 100-year floodplain. Drainage was one of the concerns on the minds of the citizens according to the Comprehensive Plan survey. Development in these areas should be avoided as much as possible, preserving them for use as parks, recreational areas, and open space. Land in the floodplain south of the “old town” area was recently purchased with funds provided

by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and is being leased to the city for a nominal fee. This will be the City of Bulverde's first public park.

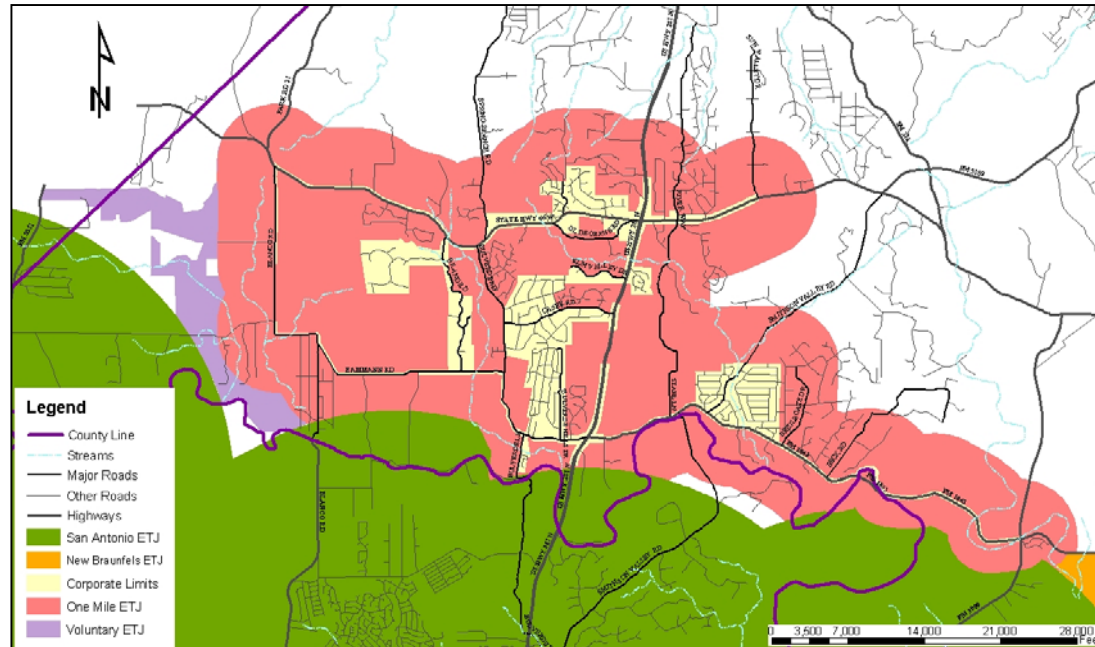
**Figure 3.9. Floodplains in the Bulverde Area**



Source: City of Bulverde.

Obvious constraints to the City of Bulverde's planning for its own growth are the ETJs of nearby cities; specifically New Braunfels and San Antonio (see Figure 3.10).

**Figure 3.10. Planning Constraints for the City of Bulverde**



Source: City of Bulverde.

### Potential Growth Areas - Preferred Commercial, Institutional or Light Industrial Areas

There are many areas for large-lot residential development, but commercial, light industrial, institutional and denser types of residential development must go where water and sewerage become available, and the land is level enough so as to minimize site preparation costs. Current work by GBRA will open up the Johnson Ranch and other areas for development that can be denser than most existing land use patterns in the Bulverde area. Institutional uses such as medical facilities or educational centers are desirable land uses that will also require surface water and central sewerage. (This will also be discussed in Chapter 5, Infrastructure, and Chapter 8, “Economic Development”).

Commercial development is already prevalent in the Highway 281/46 area. The Highway 281 corridor can potentially develop with commercial land uses, although the look and pattern of these developments should be carefully managed so as not to spoil the appearance of the City of Bulverde, resulting in the city looking like an extension of San Antonio’s strip commercial sprawl. Consideration should be given to encouraging commercial land uses at nodes and not strung out in strips along



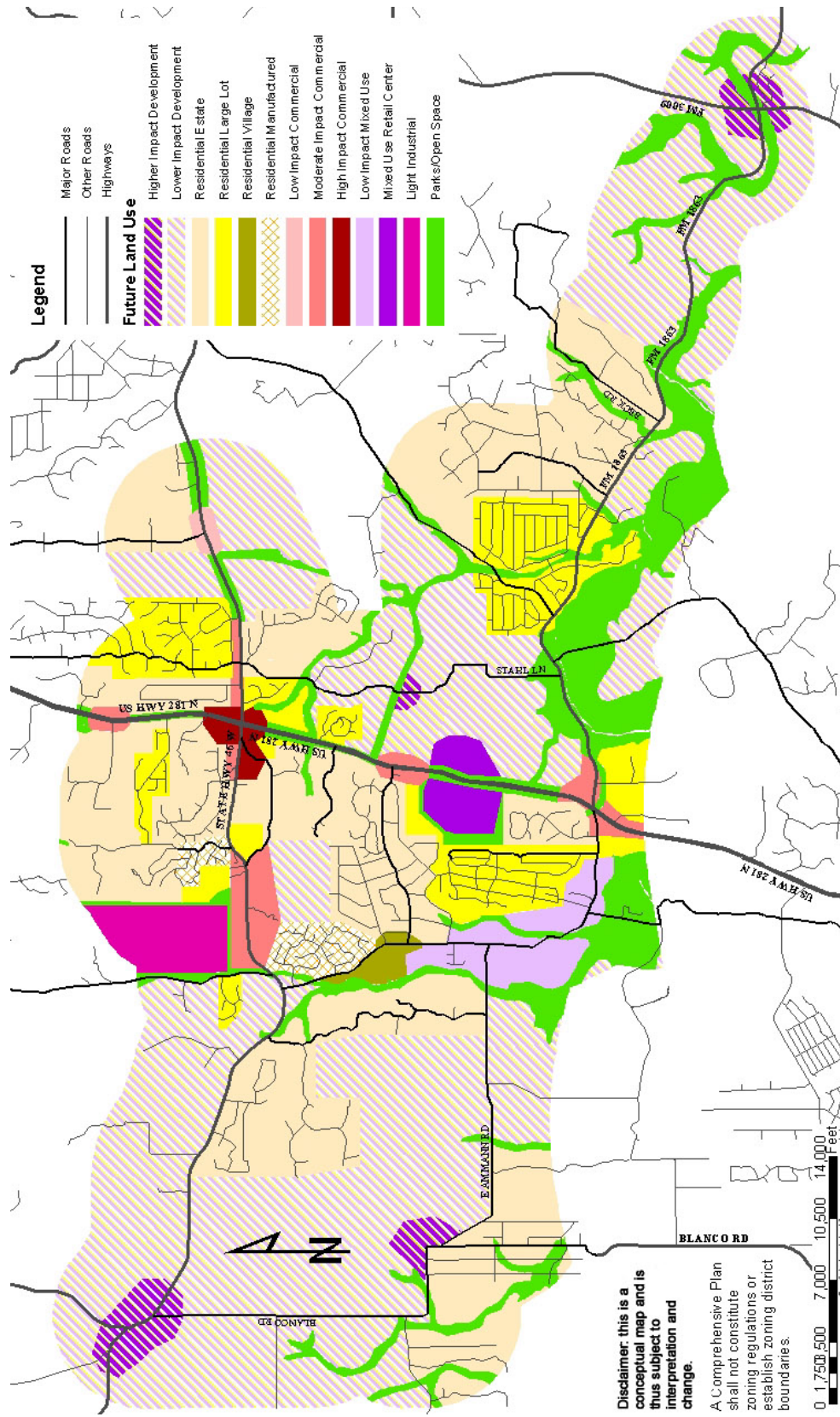
View along Highway 281 in the Bulverde area

highways as these tend to be ugly. If access roads are installed along Highway 281, strip development will be difficult to avoid. The Steering Committee believes that the area along Highway 46 west of the HEB Shopping Center is appropriate for more commercial development with buffer zones to protect existing less intensive land uses. If TxDOT widens Farm/Market 1863 or State Highway 46 to four or more lanes, growth will be encouraged in the entire area.

Figure 3.11 on the next page identifies potential land uses and areas for future development. There is a significant amount of vacant land in the Bulverde area located in close proximity to highways that is available for all kinds of development. The city should work in partnership with economic development volunteers, the Institute for Economic Development at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), developers, and concerned citizens to encourage and facilitate preferred commercial, institutional, light industrial and different patterns of residential development in these preferred locations.



Figure 3-11. Land Use Vision/Preferred Growth Patterns



### *3.6 Land Use/Development and Growth Management Concepts & Tools*

Traditional zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations can actually inhibit the ability of communities to encourage projects and implement plans that further desirable land uses and development patterns. The following planning tools have been selected by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee as potential ways to address the issues and concerns related to future land use/development and growth management in the Bulverde area. Planned land uses tend to encourage efficient and pleasing patterns of development. This comprehensive plan recognizes the value of certain planning tools that can help achieve the goals and objectives listed at the end of this chapter.

#### **Smart Growth**

People across America are concerned about the impacts of unstructured growth on their communities and lifestyle. The type, pattern and quality of development are becoming major concerns, not just the quantity of development or rate of growth. These impacts include increased traffic congestion, air pollution, rising property tax rates to maintain expanding and inefficient infrastructure, unaffordable housing, loss of a sense of community, and destruction of the very amenities that attracted people to an area in the first place. The City of Bulverde is experiencing explosive population growth that threatens its quality of life, and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee identified these and other impacts as potential threats to our future quality of life and sense of community.

Many cities are employing “Smart Growth” policies in an effort to retain and strengthen their quality of life. Smart Growth can be a confusing term because each community is different and can have its own definition. Smart Growth is not a slow-growth or no-growth initiative. For the City of Bulverde, Smart Growth must be defined as it applies to our unique set of circumstances. The goal of Smart Growth for the City of Bulverde is to establish orderly land development patterns and to protect the environment and sense of community while facilitating desirable development. Smart Growth includes the efficient use of tax dollars and city resources through timely fiscally responsible infrastructure improvements. It encourages in-fill development and the creation of pedestrian-friendly communities where people can walk to the store, the park, school, and even to work if they want. Smart Growth concepts encourage development that accommodates people as well as the automobile. Smart growth concepts include:

- flexible land development codes that encourage innovative site designs,
- pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods
- partnerships of public, private and not-for-profit sectors
- protection of open space that is ecologically sensitive, economically viable and culturally valuable
- a zoning system that enables and qualifies a variety of desirable development patterns including conservation, cluster, traditional neighborhood development and infill
- architectural, landscape and signage standards that are integrated to the zoning provisions

- a simplified development review system that replaces, whenever possible, the quasi-judicial hearing with an administrative process
- a range of options above and beyond those allowed by conventional suburban codes

Traditional zoning regulates use, which made sense in the early part of the twentieth century to make sure highly noxious and polluting industries did not locate in or near residential areas. Today, separation resulting from traditional zoning results in extreme feeder and collector roads and excessive parking requirements that chew-up greater and greater amounts of valuable land and obliterates the natural landscape. Zoning for Smart Growth can look beyond use and examine the landscape as a natural, rural to urban continuum, or “Transect.” In this scheme, different development forms are appropriate for given areas. Segregation of uses is not completely eliminated, rather it just has a reasonable place along with more emphasis on building heights, street types, building fronts and block perimeters. This approach integrates the scales and ranges of planning, water quality and environmental issues, promotes cooperative regional planning, and can help create development that is attractive, economically sustainable, environmentally sensitive, marketable and profitable. In short, it seems to be a land use planning concept particularly relevant to Bulverde’s growth issues and concerns.

### Cluster Zoning and/or “Conservation” Developments

Cluster zoning, also known as open-space development, conservation development, hamlet-style and farm village, allows residential and even commercial development while protecting an area’s environmental features. It allows for more usable open space and can thus protect the character of rural communities. The total number of

homes on a given tract of land can be the same as that allowed by traditional zoning and subdivision regulations, but there is less emphasis on minimum lot size. The same number of houses can be clustered on a smaller portion of the total available land and the



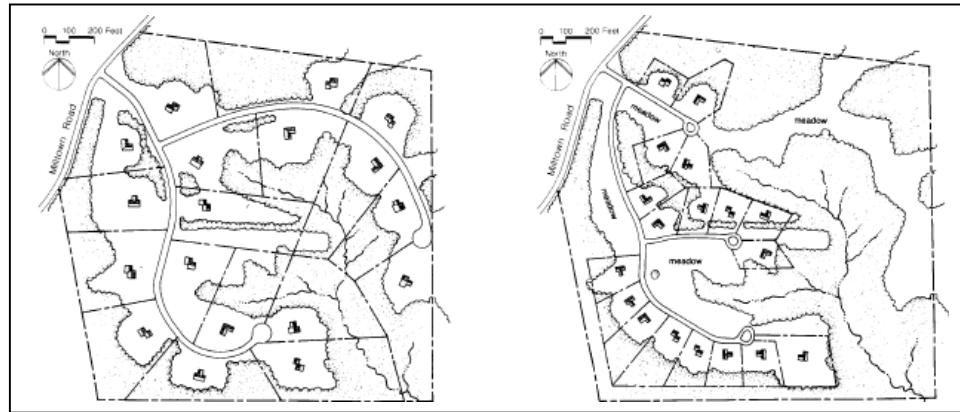
Cluster Development

Source: *Growing Greener, Conservation by Design*, Randall Arendt.

remaining land, which would have been allocated to individual home sites, is left as protected open space. As Randall Arendt puts it, “Do it backwards.” First set aside land for conservation, and then subdivide the remaining land into parcels. This allows the developer to pinpoint prime developable areas. Conventional subdivision design divides the entire site into house lots and streets, front, rear and side yards, with the only open space being undevelopable floodplains and storm water management areas. In conservation subdivisions, more than half the buildable area may be designated as undivided, permanent open space. Road frontages, lot size and

setbacks are redefined to permit the preservation of the unique characteristics of the parcel of land being developed (See Figure 3.12).

**Figure 3.12. Traditional Large-lot Subdivision and Conservation Subdivision**



*Source: Growing Greener, Conservation by Design, Randall Arendt.*

The City of Bulverde's existing zoning and subdivisions regulations would have to be updated or supplemented to allow for this type of development pattern. Overall, well-designed cluster developments can benefit the community in terms of storm water management as they generally have less impervious cover and provide more open space for water infiltration, especially important in the Edwards aquifer recharge region. Cluster development can be used in conjunction with low-impact development to address drainage issues without costly engineered infrastructure.

Subdivision regulation is the principle tool for managing growth in the extra territorial jurisdiction areas of Texas communities. It is through the subdivision review process that communities directly assure that residential development is designed in a way that promotes the community's goals such as the preservation of open space, scenery and natural areas. Preserving open space protects streams, water quality and quantity, provides habitat for plants and animals, preserves the rural atmosphere, promotes cleaner air, provides recreational areas, protects home values and reduces costs of municipal services. Over a period of years, a community that enables cluster development can develop, with minimal expenditure, an interconnected network of conservation lands and hike/bike trails with each new subdivision adding another link to an area-wide open space system.

### **Planned Unit Developments**

Planned Unit Developments (or PUDs) are similar to cluster developments but generally contain less open space and more mixed use of residential with certain types of commercial land uses. Within a PUD district, setbacks, minimum lot size and other aspects of a city's zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations need not apply. This gives the developer more freedom in laying out the subdivision, but requires more responsibility and input on the part of the Planning and Zoning Commission. PUDs can be implemented either as zoning districts or within a

community's subdivision regulations. As such, PUDs can become a useful tool for managing growth in Bulverde's ETJ.

### **Performance Zoning**

Performance zoning is another alternative to traditional land use zoning. While traditional zoning specifies allowable land uses in each district, performance zoning specifies standards of land use intensity that are acceptable in each district. The standards often relate to a site's development environment and suitability for different types of development. Performance zoning focuses on how the parcel impacts adjacent lands and public facilities, not on the use of the land, and gives more flexibility both to the municipality and to the developer, allowing more of a range of land uses, as long as their impact is not negative. This allows for more innovation and the incorporation of new technologies that may not be accommodated in more traditional zoning ordinances, and encourages more communication between the public and private sectors. Performance zoning is more effective in the preservation of natural features which is a high priority for the citizens of Bulverde according to the Comprehensive Plan Survey.

A disadvantage of performance zoning is that as a result of its flexibility it is subject to a steeper learning curve. In traditional ordinances, land uses are listed as absolutes - either allowed or not allowed. Under performance zoning uses are determined through sometimes confusing calculations of a variety of factors. This requires planning and zoning commissioners and city staff to be adept at making appropriate and fair determinations based on sometimes subjective criteria, and can lead to more legal challenges.

### **Low Impact Development**

In 2001, the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) sponsored workshops in Kendall, Comal and Hays counties, all counties experiencing rapid population growth in an environment of limited water resources. County leaders expressed concern with the potentially detrimental impact that this growth can have on water quality and quantity. Out of these meetings, the GBRA implemented the Resource Stewardship Pilot Program to promote sustainable strategies for water resource management. One such strategy is alternative site development standards that provide incentives for developers to reduce impervious cover, utilize natural pollutant removal processes and design into their developments stream buffer systems. The program also recommended consideration of an optional compact form of development that concentrates density on a portion of a site in exchange for reduced density elsewhere. The same number of homes can be built without consuming as much land. Essentially, the GBRA program recommends consideration of cluster zoning and conservation development as discussed above.

### **New Urbanism or, for the City of Bulverde, "Rural Urbanism"**

(This will also be discussed in Chapter 10, Community Development). As expressed by The Congress for the New Urbanism, "The built environment must be diverse in





Kentlands, Maryland – A New Urban Development

Source: Katarxis Academy Forum.

landscape as well as building design and arrangement as overarching themes in the layout of subdivisions. This approach combines cluster development with New Urbanism to achieve the rural “village/hamlet” feel.

use and population, must be scaled for the pedestrian, yet capable of accommodating the auto and must have a well-defined public realm supported by an architecture reflecting the ecology and culture of the region.” These principles, at least in part, may appeal to those residents of the City interested in the “ecology and culture” of their community. If we must have denser development, we should consider using new urbanist principles but in a rural context, or “rural urbanism” - focusing on using the existing

### **Capital Improvements Program (CIP)**

A capital improvements program is used to allocate investments in major public facilities and infrastructure deemed necessary to accommodate existing development, as well as new and proposed growth. The scheduling of projects involving major city expenditures is based on studies of fiscal resources available and needed specific improvements to be constructed for a five-year period into the future. It is a balancing of assessed needs with the availability of city resources to meet those needs. A CIP provides decision-makers with a way to set priorities among different projects. It also can be used to encourage phased development in preferred areas and increase property values and tax revenues when and where capital improvements are constructed. A CIP is a “rolling plan” for infrastructure improvements and development. While it is a five-year expenditure plan, each year it is reviewed to insure priorities for spending remain the same. When coupled with a Comprehensive Plan, a CIP is a powerful tool that fits with and reflects the long term goals and objectives for the physical development of a city. It also satisfies one of the legal requirements for implementing impact fees. As such, a CIP should be implemented as one of the City of Bulverde’s primary growth management tools.

### **Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)**

The extra territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of a city is the contiguous unincorporated land adjacent to its corporate limits that is not within another city's ETJ (see Figure 3.10). The size of a city's ETJ varies according to its population, ranging from one-half mile for communities with less than 5,000 persons, to five miles for cities greater than 100,000 in population. In December 2003, the City of Bulverde declared its population to be at least 5,000 persons and can now have a one-mile ETJ. Prior to December the range was one-half mile. Cities are authorized to enforce their

subdivision and signage regulations within their ETJ. This can be used to promote the kind and quality of development that the citizens of Bulverde are used to and protect existing neighborhoods. High quality development in the ETJ can be encouraged by vigorously enforcing the city's subdivision and development ordinance requirements to this area.

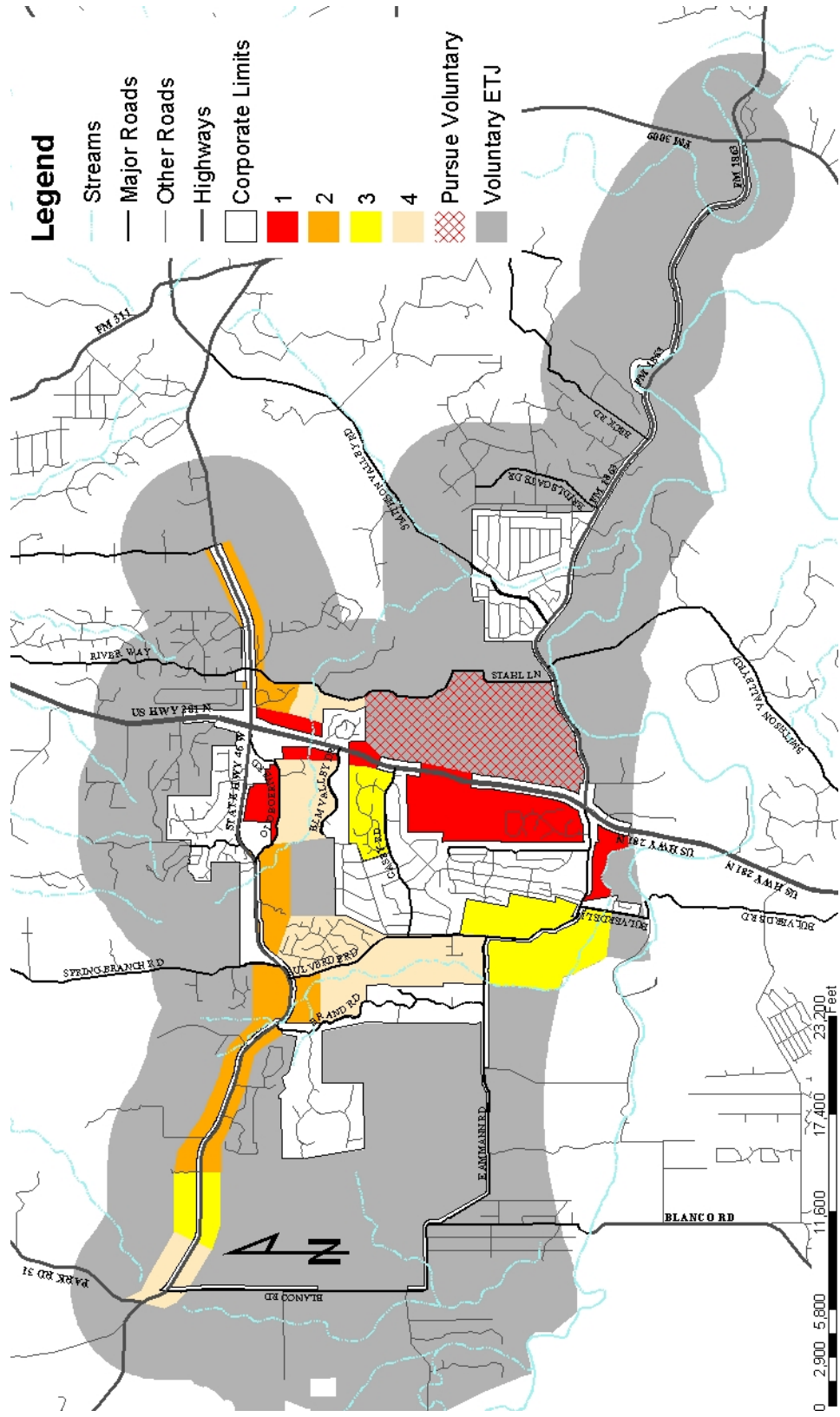
## **Annexation**

Annexation is the process by which a city extends its corporate limits together with the city's municipal services, regulations, voting privileges and taxing authority. A city can only annex land within its extra-territorial jurisdiction. Cities must expand their corporate limits to help manage land development in new growth areas, to ensure orderly extension of public infrastructure and services, to expand their tax base and to protect and enhance property values. Annexation is also a means of ensuring that residents and businesses outside a city's corporate limits who benefit from access to the city's facilities and services share the tax burden associated with constructing and maintaining those facilities and services.

Careful annexation is critical to the long-term well being of the City of Bulverde and needs to be carried out in accordance with an established plan and policies, and not on an ad hoc basis. Because of the fiscal implications of annexation, the costs of providing municipal services must be estimated and weighed against the anticipated revenues of areas proposed for annexation. The City of Bulverde should systematically look at areas for possible annexation over the next five years to stay ahead of growth. Annexation should be tied to the city's Capital Improvements Program to coordinate utility improvements with the physical growth of the city.

At a January 2004 meeting, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee agreed that priority should be given to encouraging volunteer annexations and filling in "the hole in the donut" and the area along Highway 46 west of the HEB Shopping Center. Priority areas for future annexation are illustrated in Figure 3.13 on the following page.

Figure 3.12. Priority Areas for Future Annexation



Source: City of Bulverde.

### 3.7 Summary

After a year of discussion and introspection, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was firmly committed to helping guide growth and development, to planning for the future of our new city. Committee members have examined different planning tools appropriate for the City of Bulverde and recommend their consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. After the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan an ordinance subcommittee should work with the Planning Commission and city staff to choose, adopt, implement and modify/supplement as appropriate what the City of Bulverde needs to grow into the future. Then, these carefully selected tools should be used for decision-making by the Planning Commission, city staff, developers and citizens.

From a land use/development perspective, it is important to have a clear, straightforward approach to planning that protects residents and their investments in homes and property from incompatible land uses. Also, it is essential that the chosen approach not discourage desired new development and economic expansion. A land development management policy that recognizes real estate investment and promotes and accommodates economic development is critical to the City of Bulverde's future. We must have proactive tools to aggressively pursue implementation of the goals and objectives listed below to achieve our vision and keep the City of Bulverde an exceptional and special place to call home.

### 3.8 Goals and Objectives

**Goal 1:** Ensure that we have plans and ordinances that support and guide development consistent with the goals and objectives in the City of Bulverde Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 1.1: Review existing ordinances and modify as necessary.

Objective 1.2: Enforce what we already have.

Objective 1.3: Add new ordinances as necessary to make sure the following core areas are covered:

- Public facilities including recreation
- Parks and open space
- Construction standards
- Roads
- Water and wastewater
- Property rights
- Noise and lighting
- Corridor and/or entrance standards

Objective 1.4: Work closely with the GBRA to take full advantage of the GBRA Master Plan for Water Distribution in the Bulverde Service Area.

Objective 1.5: Consider the use of impact fees as a way to manage land uses and development, generate revenues, and recoup the cost of infrastructure for new developments.

- Objective 1.6: Develop appropriate mechanisms to encourage growth consistent with the city's ability to effectively manage such growth.
- Objective 1.7: Manage growth in the extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ).
- Objective 1.8: Achieve a balance between private property rights and a level of land development tools that is acceptable to the citizens of the City of Bulverde.

**Goal 2:** Manage the future growth of the City to preserve the character and uniqueness that is the City of Bulverde, as well as the integrity, compatibility and value of existing and new neighborhoods.

- Objective 2.1: Regulate the scale and density of new developments, especially commercial, to ensure compatibility with the City of Bulverde's Comprehensive Plan.
- Objective 2.1: Establish regulations regarding the location, size and type of commercial and light industrial development.
- Objective 2.3: Implement minimum standards for open/green space and buffering that respect the natural features and surroundings of the development site.
- Objective 2.4: Encourage conservation-oriented development.
- Objective 2.5: Develop and/or refine minimum requirements for the provision of essential services and utilities in new developments.
- Objective 2.6: Establish regulations for non-site built housing.
- Objective 2.7: Establish regulations for multi-family housing.
- Objective 2.8: Identify areas and bulk regulations appropriate for more intense commercial and industrial types of land uses.
- Objective 2.9: Protect private property in existing residential neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible land uses.

**Goal 3:** Encourage land development that enhances an aesthetically pleasing appearance for the city.

- Objective 3.1: Determine how best to prevent 'hodge-podge' and/or bland development.
- Objective 3.2: Promote flexible land development standards that accommodate innovative land development projects
- Objective 3.3: Investigate whether cluster and non-traditional zoning, low-impact development, new urbanism and/or smart growth principles are applicable and useful tools for shaping the future growth of the City of Bulverde.

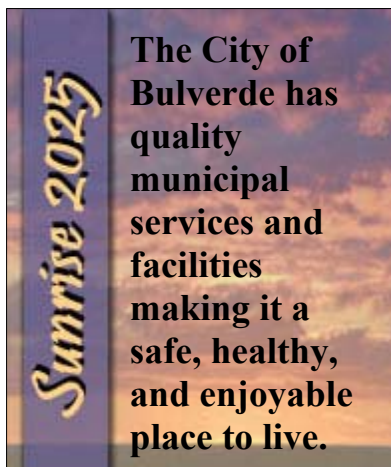
**Goal 4:** Develop an annexation strategy that enables us to manage future growth and protects and enhances the City of Bulverde's quality of life and that adds to the economic viability of the city.

- Objective 4.1: Develop an annexation policy that reflects the wishes of the existing citizens of City of Bulverde.
- Objective 4.2: Conduct a detailed study to identify those areas that should be annexed and when they should be annexed
- Objective 4.3: Annex areas prior to development to manage the type and quality of new development.
- Objective 4.4: Coordinate annexation with utility providers

## Community Services

### *Providing Quality Needed Services*

As a new community, the City of Bulverde provides a limited range of services to its citizens and businesses at this time. But as the city grows this will change. By the end of 2004, the city must have in place a police department. Currently, fire protection is provided by two fire departments. Service for most of the city is provided by the Bulverde Fire Department, and service for the part of the city north of Highway 46 is provided by the Spring Branch Fire Department. Emergency medical service (EMS) is provided by the Bulverde-Spring Branch Emergency Medical Service. Library service is provided by the Bulverde-Spring Branch Library. Residential and municipal solid waste is collected by Integrated Environmental Services, Inc. (IESI) through franchise agreement with the city. Recycling facilities are available within Comal County, but currently there is no curbside pick-up of recyclables. Finally, the city does not actively manage any parks or recreation activities, but a park site near the airport has been acquired by the City for future development.



Community services serve purposes ranging from health and safety to general well-being, and can include police and fire protection, emergency medical care, parks and recreation management, efforts at promoting housing opportunities, building inspections and plat approval, and solid waste management. Effective community services and facilities are major components of a city's physical, social and economic fabric. They help define the city's identity and contribute to its quality of life and economic prosperity.

The Comprehensive Plan Survey revealed that, when asked about what additional services the city should provide as it grows, ninety-three percent of respondents are either supportive or very supportive of the city providing police services. Ninety-two percent are either supportive or very supportive of providing recreational opportunities for the community's youth, and eighty-nine percent are either supportive or very supportive of providing parks and open space. Additionally, in the open-ended section of the survey, challenges related to community services included the lack of a community park or play ground, no facilities for youth, and no meeting places. When asked about priorities for growth management, seventy-nine percent of those surveyed agree that providing parks and open space are important or very important priorities. Survey respondents are very supportive of the city



providing police services, parks and open space, and recreational opportunities for youth, to include playgrounds and perhaps a community swimming pool. The need for an animal control facility was also mentioned in the survey.

When asked to rate the quality of services already provided by the city, a majority of respondents rate EMS, fire, police/sheriff and customer service at City Hall as excellent or good. EMS received the highest rating with sixty-five percent good or excellent responses, followed by fire (sixty-two percent), police/sheriff (fifty-five percent) and customer service at city hall (fifty-one percent). Animal control services had a slightly more positive than negative rating with forty-three percent good or excellent and thirty-nine percent fair or poor. On the negative side, financial management of city funds and assets received a fair/poor rating of forty percent compared to a good/excellent rating of thirty percent. Planning and development services (e.g. zoning and platting) also receive more negative than positive responses with forty-three percent fair/poor and twenty-eight percent good/excellent. Parks, facilities and the provision of open space receive especially poor ratings compared to other city services with an overwhelming seventy percent of respondents rating them fair or poor, and only sixteen percent good or excellent. Environmental protection (recycling, conservation, habitat protection) also receives negative ratings with sixty percent fair or poor, and twenty-five percent good or excellent. Finally, when asked if city services are accessible, a majority of respondents agree that they are (fifty-one percent to thirty-one percent with the remaining eighteen percent undecided).

The city must be prepared to meet the community service and facility expectations of a growing population in an orderly, cost-effective manner. The need for city services depends on multiple factors, including population and distribution, expected growth, local needs, and budgetary constraints. This chapter provides the background needed to understand the level of service currently enjoyed by the City of Bulverde's citizens, details about current services, the adequacy of current facilities, and suggested methods for achieving goals for the future.

#### *4.1 Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services*

The Bulverde Area Fire Department and Spring Branch Fire Department are responsible for providing fire protection, rescue service and fire safety education for the citizens of the Bulverde/Spring Branch area. Up until 2002, both the Bulverde Area and Spring Branch Fire Departments were Rural Fire Prevention Districts (RFPDs), political subdivisions established by the voters in the area for the purpose of raising money through ad valorem taxes on all real property located within the districts. A Rural Fire Prevention District had the authority to collect a voter-approved tax up to three (\$.03) cents per one-hundred dollars of property value. However, in 2003 the Texas legislature did away with these districts and replaced them with Emergency Services Districts (ESDs) which have the authority to collect up to ten (\$.10) cents per one-hundred dollars of assessed property value.

In 2002 four Rural Fire Protection Districts in the region (Bracken, Spring Branch, Canyon Lake and Bulverde Area) held elections to become ESDs and set tax rates

higher than three cents. Only the Bulverde Area Emergency Service District No. 5 was approved by the voters of the District, who recognized the need for additional services. The other three ESDs were rejected by the voters of their respective Districts. Currently the Bulverde Area ESD No. 5 (the Bulverde Area Fire Department) assesses a tax of \$.048 per one-hundred dollars of assessed property value. Emergency Services Districts can also use up to a half a cent (\$.005) sales tax for funding, but at this time neither the Bulverde Area nor Spring Branch Districts utilize this sales tax option. There are special provisions within the Texas Health and Safety Codes pertaining to different caps or limits on the tax rates that can be set depending on the county or area the district(s) are created in. Currently, the tax rate for Comal County Emergency Service District No. 1 which provides Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is \$.019334 cents per one-hundred dollars of assessed property value.

These Emergency Service Districts can have multiple purposes, but the primary ones are to protect life through the provision of emergency rescue and ambulance service as well as property from fire through fire services. The second district purpose is to conserve natural and human resources. At the present time there are 91 Emergency Services Districts throughout Texas.



Bulverde area fire station on Cougar Bend



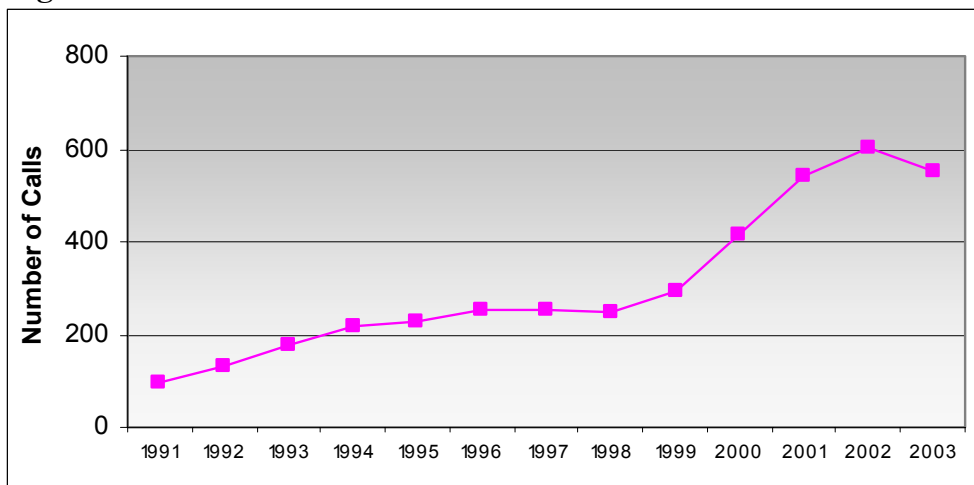
New Pumper

The Bulverde Area Fire Department, built in 1997, is located on Cougar Bend near the new city hall, and its service area encompasses approximately 92 square miles, mostly south of State Highway 46 (see figure 4.1). The Spring Branch Fire Department is responsible for fire protection in the city north of State Highway 46. Bulverde Area Fire Department staff includes a chief, and four fire- fighters on duty from Monday through Friday 24 hours a day. On Saturday there are two persons on duty from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, and on Sundays volunteers staff the facility. Fire fighting training is every Wednesday night. Equipment includes two brush trucks, two tankers, and a new 1,000 gallon pumper capable of pumping 2,000 gallons per minute. The new pumper meets 100% State Insurance Services Office (ISO) standards for equipment. The Department is in the process of buying a new "air truck" which will also meet 100% ISO standards.

According to the Bulverde Area Fire Department's hydrant map, there are thirty fire hydrants in Rim Rock Ranch, twenty-six in Saddle Ridge, twenty-three in Oak Village North, twenty-three in Bulverde Hills and five in Berry Oaks. The Chief, who came on board in 2002, noted that prior to that year these hydrants were not being tested twice a year, nor were hoses tested. Since then, inspections have increased, hoses inspected and both of the Department's pumpers are now equipped to meet ISO standards. The department is currently working on a five-year plan, and recently obtained a U.S. Forest Service grant to pay for workers' compensation. The existing radio system is old, but is the responsibility of Comal County. Needs for the future include a newer communication system and higher salaries for staff to become competitive with other Districts in the region. In 2018, the county intends to switch to a new "900" radio system. Radio costs will be approximately \$2,500 for a hand-held unit and \$4,500 for a mobile unit, and the total cost to upgrade communications could cost the fire department \$100,000.

The adequacy of fire and emergency medical services is primarily measured by the response time. The State Insurance Services Office (ISO) calculates ratings every ten years and assigns a rating from one to ten, with one being the best. The ideal service response, as established by the ISO, is a 1½ mile driving radius for each pumper from each fire station to an emergency. This service response criterion generally allows for a target response time of less than six minutes. Current average daytime response time in the City of Bulverde is 6.34 minutes. The nighttime average response time is 11.23 minutes, making the overall average 8.10 minutes. Portions of Bulverde are greater than 1½ driving miles from the nearest fire station, and most of the calls are in the U.S. Highway 281/State Highway 46 area. Currently, the Bulverde Area ESD is attempting to reach an agreement with the EMS District to keep a fire truck at their facility on U.S. Highway 281, and the EMS District keeping an ambulance at the fire station on Cougar Bend.

**Figure 4.2 Number of Bulverde Area FD Calls 1991 - 2003**



Source: Bulverde Area Fire Department.

Future station locations should be located to address these areas as well as new development when and where it occurs. The Johnson Ranch area may be an ideal

location for a new central station within the next twenty years. Failure to provide adequately located facilities would likely result in a higher fire insurance rating, which would increase premiums that residents pay for coverage. The Bulverde Area Fire Department has earned a Class 7 fire insurance rating in and around the Bulverde city limits, and a Class 9 fire insurance rating for locations over five miles away from the station house. To strive for the best possible rating, the department is constantly monitoring new residential and commercial development. The Department is not scheduled for another inspection for several more years.

**Table 4.1. Locations of Bulverde Area VFD Responses**

Location of Call	# Calls	Percent	OST	Average	Loss
City of Bulverde	233	42%	1887	8.10	\$91,000
Comal County	282	51%	2962	10.50	\$8,000
Bexar County	25	5%	258	10.32	\$300,000
HP	1	0%	26	26.00	\$300,000
Spring Branch	11	2%	185	16.82	\$0
Total	552		5318	9.63	\$699,000

*Source:* Bulverde Area Fire Department.

**Table 4.2. Bulverde Area VFD Calls, 2003**

Type of Call	# Calls	Percent
EMS	335	61%
Fire Alarm	58	11%
Hazardous Condition	25	5%
Vehicle	10	2%
False Alarm	6	1%
Mutual Aid	53	10%
C. Burn	31	6%
Structure	11	2%
Grass	17	3%
Water rescue	0	0%
Assist Public/Police Dept.	6	1%
Total	552	

*Source:* Bulverde Area Fire Department.

The calls per year for the Bulverde Area Fire Department have risen dramatically outside the city limits (See table 4.1). Of these 552 calls, 284 (or 51% of total calls) since 1991, from 97 in that year to 603 in 2002 (See Figure 4.2). During 2003 the number of calls decreased slightly, with the department responding to 552 calls, forty-two percent of them being within the City of Bulverde and the remainder were related to residential calls, 58 (11%) business, 154 (28%) roadway, and 56 (10%) educational facilities. Table 4.2 shows the number of calls broken down by type.

The department uses the National Fire Information Reporting System (NFIRS) to report this data. The NFIRS has been designed as a tool for fire departments to report and maintain computerized records of fires and other fire department incidents in a uniform manner, and was developed by the United States Fire Administration (USFA) in partnership with the National Fire Information Council (NFIC). The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 authorizes the National Fire Data Center in the United States Fire Administration to gather and analyze information on the magnitude of the nation's fire problem, as well as its detailed characteristics and trends. In order to carry out the intentions of the Act, the National Fire Data Center established the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) to help State and local governments develop fire reporting and analysis capability for their own use, and to obtain data that can be used to more accurately assess and subsequently combat the fire problem at a national level.

The Bulverde-Spring Branch EMS is located at 4201 U.S. Highway 281 just north of State Highway 46. The facility sleeps twelve and is always staffed with four full-time paramedics and two enrolled in training. Four vehicles are available for emergency response and all are MICU capable. Table 4.3 indicates that there were a total of 334 EMS calls in 2003. Of these 167 (50% of total calls) were residential types, 38 (11.4%) were business, 106 (31.7%) roadway, and 23 (6.9%) educational facility.

**Table 4.3. Bulverde Area EMS Calls 2003**

<b>Location of Call</b>	<b># Calls</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>OST</b>	<b>Average</b>
City of Bulverde	168	50.3%	1282	7.63
Comal County	166	49.7%	1815	10.93
Bexar County	0	0%	0	0
Others	0	0%	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>552</b>		<b>5318</b>	<b>9.63</b>

*Source:* Bulverde Area Fire Department.

## **Future Needs**

Physical expansion of the city is the determining factor in planning for staffing and equipment for the existing fire facility on Cougar Bend, the EMS facility on U.S. Highway 281 and any future fire and EMS facilities. The continued growth of the Bulverde area will require additional fire stations in areas presently outside the city limits, and at some point the city may need to assume responsibility for funding fire protection and emergency medical service. In addition to the facility requirements, there is the need for trained staff and good equipment. Staffing with the required number of fire fighters and paramedics as well as up-to-date equipment, trucks and ambulances will continue to be a demanding and costly challenge. Costs of construction, equipment and operation of a fire and emergency medical services are high, and budgetary planning should be made far in advance of the needs.

## ***4.2 Police Services***

Safety is vital to the development of an enjoyable place to live. Effective delivery of police services affects all aspects of the community. Employers and individuals frequently consider a community's level of crime in their selection process for relocation. Currently, the city has an inter-local agreement with the Comal County Sheriff's Office for three officers to police the City. Pressing issues at the current time include mailboxes being vandalized, kids involved in mischief, automobile accidents, and the use of high end drugs.

The Police Department will likely be the largest single department in the city eventually and have the largest budget of any other city department. The department will be located in the new city hall for a few years and then relocated when population growth and funds enable their own building.

Plans are for the City of Bulverde Police Department to have a Chief and five officers, with the Chief coming on board in the summer of 2004. Maintaining a full staff level is vital to the establishment and continued success of the department. The city will need to be vigilant in the recruitment and retention of experienced personnel. A pay scale that keeps up with other area law enforcement agencies and inflation must be a high priority.

## ***4.3 Library Services***

The Bulverde/Spring Branch Library was established in 1986 and, according to the Texas State Library, currently (2004) serves approximately 16,356 citizens in a large area including the City of Bulverde, the Spring Branch area and Northern Bexar County. It is a special purpose district (SPD), of which there are 79 in Texas, and as such can impose sales and use taxes for funding. The SPD tax is collected in addition to state tax and any other local taxes (city and county) when applicable. Currently, the Bulverde/Spring Branch Library is funded with a one half cent sales and use tax imposed within the district's boundaries.

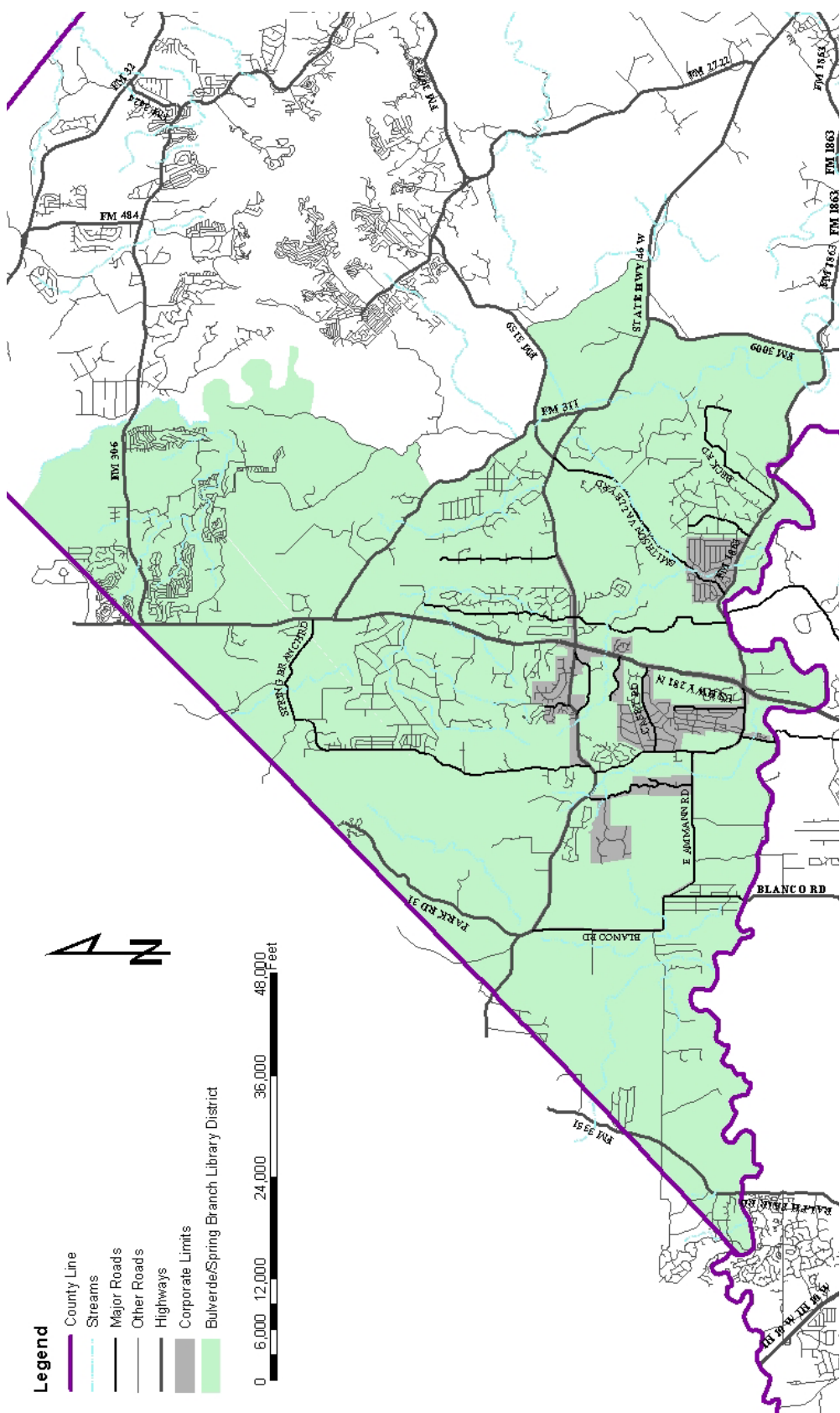


New Library located in the HEB Center

The Bulverde Area Rural Library District encompasses a large area of western Comal County, from the county line on U.S. Highway 281 continuing north to State Highway 306, east to Farm/Market Roads 3009 and 3159, and west to the Kendall County line. The City of Bulverde is located entirely within the Bulverde Area Rural Library District. The unincorporated areas of Comal County in ZIP codes 78006, 78070, and 78163 are partially located within the District (See Figure 4.3)



### Figure 4.3. Bulverde/Spring Branch Library District



*Source:* Original map provided by Bulverde Library District, modified by Bulverde Planning Department.

The library is currently located at the HEB Shopping Center on State Highway 46, just West of U.S. Highway 281. Its original location was in a rented building in “downtown” Bulverde. In 1988, it moved to two remodeled school buildings with 3,000 square feet of space located on Cougar Bend. This site currently serves as the office of the Bulverde/Spring Branch Area Chamber of Commerce and was recently purchased by Comal County. On November 14, 2002, the library moved into their present location.



Former library location in remodeled school buildings on Cougar Bend

The Library District's Board of Trustees is in the process of planning a new permanent facility to meet the growing needs for library services in the area. The Library Board is made up of five members elected by the citizens in the District. They have contracted with Providence Consulting out of Arizona to examine the costs and design elements of a new library. Currently the Board is considering two locations in the Bulverde area for a facility estimated to have approximately 26,600 square feet of usable floor space. The square footage requirements are based on district population estimates of 31,000 in 2007 and 40,000 in 2012. The estimated cost of such a facility (excluding the land) is approximately \$4,000,000. Grant opportunities are being pursued for funding the purchase of the land and construction of the facility, and at this time the Board has not voted on the Providence design as the design for the new building.

### Collections and Circulation

Table 4.4 shows collections have almost doubled over the last seven years, with a partial 2004 total of 25,738 volumes. Table 4.5 shows the circulation or total number of times (transactions) material has been checked out from the library. Circulation has increased dramatically, 287 percent since 1998. The library staff consists of a Head Librarian, four clerks (two full-time and two part-time), a part-

**Table 4.4. Library Collections – Total Volumes**

Fiscal Year	Volumes
1998	12,987
1999	15,114
2000	16,297
2001	18,325
2002	20,886
2003	24,628
Partial 2004	25,738

Source: Bulverde/Spring Branch Library.

**Table 4.5. Library Circulation**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Transactions</b>
1998	18,922
1999	22,713
2000	33,114
2001	37,786
2002	47,003
2003	73,165

*Source:* Bulverde/Spring Branch Library.

time reference and children's librarian, and one part-time story-teller. Staff coordinates a wide variety of programs. Services are provided for all age groups ranging from children's story times to adult literacy and Internet usage and include:

State and National Newspapers and Magazines

Computer usage for Adults and children including Internet access by DSL

Digital video discs, Videos, Audiocassettes, Books-on-compact discs

Large print books

Large collection of adult and children's books including current best sellers

Inter-Library Loan services

Sponsors adult book discussion groups

Sponsors yearly Summer Reading Programs

Sponsors GED and ESL Classes

Weekly pre-school story time

Librarian proctors exams for the community

Renew books, books-on-tape and books-on-CD's by telephone

### **Technology**

Technology has had a great influence on the distribution of information and resources. Understanding the important role of information technology and resource sharing, the Library uses automation to create links to many other libraries so area residents have access to a wealth of information beyond that available at our facility. The Library has 16 Internet access workstations, 6 PAC stations, and a computer lab with 10 Internet access workstations. The Library also has a web site, [www.bsb.lib.tx.us](http://www.bsb.lib.tx.us).

The Friends of the Bulverde/Spring Branch Library is a non-profit organization formed to promote public use of library services and to foster appreciation of its value as a cultural and educational asset to the community. The Friends also write grants and raise money to further equip the library with items outside of its regular budget. They have purchased T-shirts for the summer reading program, bought a color copier, installed an outside drop-box and funded many other projects. There are currently 100 members who are working very hard on a voluntary basis to ensure that the Bulverde area has the best possible library services that are widely used by all the citizens in the area.

#### ***4.4 Solid Waste and Recycling***

The City of Bulverde has one designated provider, Integrated Environmental Services Incorporated (IESI) for residential and commercial garbage collection and another designated provider, Hill Country Logistics, for low volume users. Residential waste is collected weekly Monday through Friday by crews and equipment of IESI. Twice a year large dumpsters are provided by IESI at the intersection of Farm/Market 1863 and U.S. Highway 281 for the collection of bulky items. Residents outside the city limits may arrange for service individually with providers such as Dan's Disposal, Central Texas Waste Systems (CENTEX), or Waste Management.

In the City of Bulverde, recyclables may be dropped off at the Justice of the Peace #3 Building from 8:30 to noon on Tuesdays. Materials accepted include plastic, tin and aluminum cans, clear and brown glass, newspapers, magazines, brown paper bags, corrugated cardboard and chipboard. The County operates a recycling and chipping drop-off center at 4744 State Highway 46 West. Brush, yard trimmings and limbs up to 9 inches in diameter may be dropped off, where they will be chipped and the resulting mulch made available for free to the citizens of Comal County. This waste reduction and recycling effort is funded in part, by grants from the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission and Alamo Area Council of Governments. Also, there is an annual collection program for household chemical waste. Citizens of Comal County may take used motor oil and oil filters, antifreeze, brake fluid, garden chemicals, cleaning products and paint supplies to New Braunfels Fire Station No. 2 located on Loop 337 near Interstate Highway 35. This collection effort is funded by Comal County and the cities of New Braunfels and Garden Ridge. At this time the City of Bulverde does not contribute any funds for this project.

#### ***4.5 City Hall***

Since 2001, the City of Bulverde City Hall has been located in Suite 236 of the Bulverde Market Center at 30071 U.S. Highway 281. Due to very limited space at this location, City Council meetings have been held at the Senior Citizens Center on Cougar Bend. A new facility is being built just north of the Senior Citizens Center on Cougar Bend and will have approximately 6,700 square feet of space for city offices when it is completed in the summer of 2004. The Council Chambers will accommodate many citizens in comfortable surroundings.



Temporary City Hall at Bulverde Market Center



This new facility symbolizes the coming of age of the City of Bulverde and will provide much needed office and meeting space for city services and activities.



Breaking ground for the new City Hall in December 2003.



Progress as of February 2004.



Nearly completed building, May 2004.

#### ***4.6 Parks and Recreation***

Parks and recreation can enrich the lives of city residents, neighborhoods, and the City of Bulverde as a whole. The City of Bulverde has the opportunity to develop an enviable park system with its abundance of natural features and potential for links throughout the city. Parks and open space are essential elements in any city. They enhance the quality of life while providing public space for recreation and relaxation. Many of the subdivisions in the City already have park and recreation areas within their boundaries for the enjoyment of the homeowners. The City of Bulverde currently does not provide park services but has obtained from Comal County for a token amount a ten-acre site for a community park located south of downtown on Bulverde Lane near the airport.



Site of future community park located on Bulverde Lane, looking north

The City of Bulverde's setting in the Hill-Country and along the Cibolo Creek creates a valuable framework for parks and trails. The city's future park system can provide a range of park types and facilities designed to serve the various needs of its residents, young and old alike. The Comprehensive Plan Survey indicated a strong desire for such facilities. The City of Bulverde will face many challenges as it seeks to and develop and manage the City's park and recreation opportunities. The primary challenge is to ensure that the park system is shaped by design rather than happenstance and meets the various needs of our residents for recreation and open space.

Park systems may be divided into five (5) classifications: neighborhood, community, regional, greenbelt, and special use, based on the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards.

### **Neighborhood Park**

Neighborhood parks typically are 15 acres or less and serve adjacent residential areas within walking or biking distance (½ mile radius). Facilities include play equipment, picnic areas, multi-purpose fields and courts for sports such as basketball and tennis. The NRPA recommends that a city have 1.25 to 2 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 people. To a certain extent, private parks managed by the homeowners of Bulverde area subdivisions fulfill the need for neighborhoods parks.

### **Community Park**

Community parks tend to serve several neighborhoods within a two mile radius and provide many of the same types of facilities as neighborhood parks with the addition of athletic complexes, a swimming pool, community center, and nature preserve(s). Community parks are usually 30-100 acres in size. The NRPA recommends an average of 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 population.

### **Regional Park**

Regional parks serve the entire city and surrounding region and are normally 200 acres in size or larger. The park is usually located in an area of unique natural beauty. Since Guadalupe State Park is only a short distance away, there really is no need for Bulverde to plan for a regional park.

### **Greenbelt Park**

Greenbelts are linear parks which can be located along drainage ways and streets. The greenbelt serves multiple functions: linking together neighborhoods, parks, schools and other points of interest, serving as an alternative transportation corridor, and providing a buffer between different land uses. A multi-purpose trail system is typically included for walking, jogging and biking. Tremendous potential exists in Bulverde for providing greenbelts and trails. The Comprehensive Plan Survey identified a need for hike and bike trails, , and this has been recommended in Chapter 6 - *Transportation* of this comprehensive plan. A developed trails system would provide recreational opportunities within the city, connecting neighborhoods,



schools and other services, and providing links between the proposed park on Bulverde Lane and other future parks. Studies show that trails and other greenbelts have a positive impact on adjacent property values. According to the American Greenways Program of the Conservation Fund, a particular greenbelt in Boulder, Colorado, increased aggregate property values in one neighborhood by \$5.4 million, resulting in \$500,000 in additional property tax revenues. Existing natural features should be utilized whenever possible. Existing natural drainage ways currently branch out across the Bulverde area, and can serve as the base for a trail system. As part of parks and transportation planning, a hike and bike trail master plan should be developed to delineate appropriate trail locations and provide for their implementation.

### Special Use Park

Special use parks are areas of special interest such as a cemetery or downtown plaza. These parks provide space for informal public gatherings and amenities such as outdoor furnishings and plantings.



Plans for future community park located on Bulverde Lane

People are prepared to pay more to live close to natural park areas. The enhanced value of these properties can result in higher property tax revenues for the city. Findings from *"The Impact of Parks and Open Space on Property Values and the Property Tax Base"* by John L. Crompton suggest that residential property abutting, fronting or within 500 feet of a park area have up to 20% higher property values than similar property located away from parks.

The adequacy of existing park facilities can be determined by comparing the needs of present and projected populations with national standards. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends providing 1.25 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 population and 5 acres of community parkland per 1,000 population. These standards represent minimum objectives to be achieved. They should be used as a guide rather than a rule. Local interest and recreation trends should influence the standard adopted by the City of Bulverde. The existing ten acre site on Bulverde lane is an excellent start for this new city.

Park facilities should utilize existing natural features to the maximum extent possible. Besides significant natural features, other means to entice residents to visit park facilities include planted trees and landscaping, comfortable areas to rest, and connected pathways. Parkland can be obtained by three methods. First, the city may

purchase land to be used as recreational space. Alternatively, parkland can be donated as a gift, or obtained as a dedication to the city by developers as a requirement of the subdivision process. Currently, the city does not have an effective park dedication requirement or other process by which to obtain parkland. It must be recognized that transportation, drainage and community image objectives can also be achieved through park and open-space acquisition. The city should develop and adopt standards and location criteria for future parklands to ensure adequate distribution and maintenance of park facilities in the future.

The city can help meet the needs of youth, adults and senior citizens through the provision of diverse recreation programs. Opportunities are available to improve fitness, social, and competitive skills by taking advantage of exercise and sports programs. Special events coordinated by the city can serve to instill a sense of community through various activities and citywide celebrations. Special events already in place in the City of Bulverde are the Jubilee, held annually in the old town area, and an annual festival held at the Bulverde Community Center. Summer camps or programs could also be conducted for children in kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The camp could offer a variety of field trips, arts and craft activities, and family nights to those enrolled. In addition, the city should coordinate the provision of recreational facilities with other providers (e.g. CISD schools, county and developers).

#### ***4.8 Emergency Preparedness***

As required by the Texas Disaster Relief Act of 1975, an Emergency Management Plan was adopted by ordinance in January 1999 by Bulverde South (Ordinance No. 16-99-04-27). The plan:

“seeks to mitigate the effects of a hazard, to prepare for measures to be taken which will preserve life and minimize damage, to respond during emergencies and provide necessary assistance, and to establish a recovery system in order to return the community to its normal state of affairs.”

At this time, the City has reached an inter-jurisdictional agreement with Comal County to use the Comal County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) located in New Braunfels to address disaster events. The City must go through the County to get State and Federal aid once a state of disaster has been declared. The City of Bulverde is included in the new telephone notification system operated by the County. This system notifies residents of specific areas by telephone of potential hazardous conditions that may be heading their way. The Emergency Operations Director at the Comal County EOC is concerned that the resources of small communities such as Bulverde can be overwhelmed by a disaster that does not reach the threshold size required to trigger federal aid. City officials need to address this possibility in the near future.

## ***4.9 Summary***

Results from the Comprehensive Plan Survey show that overall citizens are pleased with the level of service they receive from the city, but feel the need for the establishment of a police department, parks, recreation opportunities for youth and open space. City staff and other employees that provide community services are working hard to fulfill the expectations of citizens and city officials. Maintaining existing services and establishing the desired level of community services and facilities needed in the future will require continued implementation, review and evaluation of the effectiveness of ideas, goals and objectives outlined within this chapter.

## ***4.10 Goals and Objectives***

**Goal 1:** Maintain high standards of fire and emergency medical services.

Objective 1.1: Develop a long-range plan for fire protection.

Objective 1.2: Examine the possibility of adjusting the boundaries of the Bulverde Area ESD and the Spring Branch ESD so the City of Bulverde is served by a single fire department.

Objective 1.3: Work with the Bulverde Fire Department to help review and evaluate staffing needs to assure adequate personnel resources to meet the demands of future growth.

Objective 1.4: Initiate a quarterly report by the Fire Department on its activities and issues to the City of Bulverde City Council to help improve communications between the City and the Fire Department.

**Goal 2:** Maintain low crime rate and develop a police department with quality police services.

Objective 2.1: Develop a long-range plan for police protection.

Objective 2.2: Assess policing needs on a regular basis.

Objective 2.3: Establish a police department with adequate staffing and equipment.

Objective 2.4: Get the community more involved in crime prevention programs and community policing initiatives.

**Goal 3:** Promote the use of library services by the citizens of the Bulverde/Spring Branch area.

Objective 3.1: Initiate a quarterly report by the Bulverde/Spring Branch Library on its activities and issues to the City of Bulverde City Council to help improve communications between the City and the Library.

**Goal 4:** Work to assure the citizens of Bulverde timely, efficient and economical solid waste service.

Objective 4.1: Assist the County and other communities in the County with the hazardous waste collection event.

Objective 4.2: Establish regulations on the disposal of hazardous materials.

Objective 4.3: Work with the Bulverde Area Fire Department to set up a hazardous waste collection event for western Comal County.

**Goal 5:** Meet the need for providing space for city services and meetings.

Objective 5.1: *This goal is being met with the completion of the new City Hall on Cougar Bend.*

**Goal 6:** Ensure adequate quantity and equal distribution of parks, open space, and recreation facilities.

Objective 6.1: Develop the existing park site on Bulverde Lane.

Objective 6.2: Develop minimum standards for the development and location of future parks.

Objective 6.3: Acquire and develop parkland to meet the citizens' needs.

Objective 6.4: Develop natural greenbelts with trail systems to provide pedestrian and biking linkages for neighborhoods, schools, parks and other destinations.

Objective 6.5: Prepare and adopt a hike and bike trail master plan.

Objective 6.6: Develop the City of Bulverde's natural and man-made drainage systems for pedestrian ways, creating an open space system that will link the entire park and open space system.

**Goal 7:** Develop additional recreational opportunities.

Objective 7.1: Coordinate the provision of recreational facilities with other providers (e.g. CISD schools, county and developers).

Objective 7.2: Work to provide a range of recreational opportunities for all residents in the future.

Objective 7.3: Assure the provision of nature appreciation and wildlife habitat areas for hiking, biking, jogging, bird-watching and picnicking.

Objective 7.4: Work to reach an agreement with the Comal Independent School District for joint use of their athletic facilities.

**Goal 8:** Review and revise as necessary an Emergency Preparedness Plan with particular attention given to periodic major flooding and the transportation of hazardous materials.

**Goal 9:** Encourage the volunteer spirit.

### *The City of Bulverde's Infrastructure Needs*

Webster defines *infrastructure* as the underlying foundation or, in the case of a city, the system of public works that is a basic necessity for its very existence as well as its future growth and development. For purposes of this chapter, infrastructure includes streets, water, sanitary sewer and drainage systems. The City of Bulverde as yet does not provide and maintain water and sanitary sewer systems, but is responsible for streets and drainage infrastructure. As the City of Bulverde grows, surface water and wastewater infrastructure will become more prevalent in the area. All of these systems require substantial financial outlays. Growth and expansions to the City's infrastructure must be carefully planned to meet the demands of growth, and timed in accordance with the City's and suppliers' financial resources. Likewise, as the infrastructure ages, the timely maintenance, replacement and improvement of existing systems will present additional challenges.



The Comprehensive Plan Survey revealed that residents are concerned about street conditions, drainage, and the lack of a reliable water source. Sixty-six percent of survey respondents felt that developing a publicly owned water system was either an important or very important priority for successfully coping with growth. Fifty-three percent felt that way about developing a publicly owned sewer system. Regardless, respondents felt that city government should focus on basic health-, safety- and welfare-related issues. When asked about their level of support for the City providing specific services, ninety-one percent were either supportive or very supportive of the city solving traffic problems and seventy-three percent were either supportive or very supportive of providing water utility services. When asked to rate the quality of services already provided by the City, almost two out of three respondents (63%) felt that street maintenance was either poor or very poor. Slightly over half the respondents (53%) felt that drainage was either poor or very poor.

The City of Bulverde faces many challenges as it seeks to develop and manage an infrastructure system. The primary challenge is ensuring that the infrastructure system is shaped by sound policy and design rather than being ad hoc, and that the City takes advantage of the latest technologies and ideas to minimize cost while

maximizing results. This chapter takes into account the various infrastructure needs, the adequacy of current systems, and suggests alternative and innovative approaches to address future infrastructure needs while protecting the quality of life in Bulverde.

## 5.1 Streets

### A Roadway Policy

One of the clear findings of the public input phase of the comprehensive planning process was that the rural or “country-lane” nature of many of the city’s streets needs to be maintained. Twisty, narrower roads are considered an asset rather than a liability, and thus efforts must be made to design streets and roads within the context of this vision. This will be a challenge as roads tend to be over-engineered to accommodate fast-moving vehicles rather than fit into the character of the community. Because “vehicle-miles traveled” (VMT) continue to increase rapidly in the area, state and county road designers tend to focus on wider lanes and shoulders with straighter, flatter alignments to obtain the highest vehicular capacity for the roadway. These roadway features often clash with the aesthetics of communities like Bulverde and the narrow, tree-lined country lane.

When traffic engineers propose the replacement of an old stone bridge with a pile of concrete; when they declare that a city street must be doubled in width to be made safe; when they argue that a two-lane country road be converted to a four-lane highway, they are doing it because, at least in their view, the American Association of State Highway and Traffic Officials (AASHTO) *Green Book* dictates that it be done. Recently, new approaches in road design have emerged that focus on aesthetics and sense of place in addition to strict engineering principles. Context sensitive design (CSD) is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to road design and placement that involves all stakeholders to develop roads that fit their physical setting and preserve scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSD is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist. This innovation will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, *Transportation*.

### City Street Inventory

The City of Bulverde is responsible for maintaining over 53 miles of streets within its city limits. The maintenance of a quality street system is a fundamental infrastructure need. In 2002, \$132,737 (56 percent of the public works budget) was spent on road repair/maintenance. This compares to \$240,900 (or 80 percent) in 2001. On February 10, 2004, the City authorized The Hogan Corporation to prepare a Capital Improvements Plan which would cover proposed improvements for street and drainage improvements for the city for the next five years. Part of this plan was conducting a “windshield survey” inventory of all streets in the City and categorizing them according to the following four standards:

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. recently resurfaced (last five years) | 3. needs rehabilitating |
| 2. needs resurfacing                     | 4. needs reconstruction |



Based on the Hogan plan dated March, 2004, the life of some existing streets can be extended by resurfacing with a single course penetration surface. For other streets, the existing base and surface can be reclaimed by pulverizing the existing pavement and adding more flexible base and cement for stabilization. The plan recommended that some roads such as Bulverde Road be considered for alignment straightening, reconstruction and installation of safety features. Cost projections for each paving project are also included in the draft plan. The projected total cost for all recommended street and drainage improvements is \$3,878,345.

The city should continue to conduct a street inventory program that rates the condition of city streets on an annual or biannual basis using visual inspection criteria. The rate of deterioration from one year to the next (or percentage of change in condition) can be measured and documented. This inspection process and the resulting measures of deterioration can enable the city to schedule preventative maintenance such as seal coats, hot mix overlays, and shoulder repairs and to continuously identify streets for reconstruction projects. Table 5.1 identifies five possible rating categories that can be used in the inventorying process.

**Table 5.1. Possible Street Inventory Rating**

Rate	Condition	Maintenance Schedule
100-92	Very Good	No maintenance required.
91-81	Good	Minor cracks requiring crack sealing; cosmetic deterioration of curbs and joints; weed kill necessary.
80-70	Fair	Major cracks with significant surface deterioration; alligator cracking with minor potholes and subgrade deterioration; requires spot base repair and surface repair such as seal coating.
69-51	Poor	Significant potholes; complete surface deterioration; misaligned curb and pavement; requires major base and surface repairs and realignment of riding surface using asphalt overlay.
50-0	Very Poor	Complete pavement system failure; exhibits bad riding quality, numerous potholes, pavement heaving, water ponding; a high annual maintenance record; total reconstruction recommended.

### Street Standards

Increased maintenance alone will not solve the long-term problem of street conditions. The key to good streets is their being built to last in the first place. As new streets are added and existing streets are widened or rebuilt, they should be constructed with the best practicable pavement standards. The city's current minimum construction standards and cross-sections are outlined in the Subdivision Ordinance. Whether streets are built or reconstructed by the city, or constructed by developers and dedicated to the city, the highest possible standards are needed to

reduce the long-term cost to taxpayers for future maintenance. These standards should be reviewed on a periodic basis to assure they are up-to-date with the latest improvements in roadway construction technology.

### Street Classifications/Designs

The Subdivision Ordinance also outlines the different street classifications and designs allowable in the city. These are listed in Table 5.2. The rural road classification fits with the low-impact design principles outlined in Chapter 3 of this Plan. In this design, stormwater is slowed down and allowed to percolate into the ground. In the urban design storm water is channeled into curb and gutter along streets and then on to drainage infrastructure and creeks. Use of the rural road classification can minimize the necessity for expensive drainage infrastructure and lower the design capacities of any required drainage structures. Also, the rural design is more in keeping with the wishes of the citizens of the City of Bulverde to keep the city's country ambience. Urban roads should be reserved for traditional suburban development and compact commercial/mixed use development.

**Table 5.2. Street Geometry per the City of Bulverde Subdivision Ordinance**

	Minimum ROW	Min Pavement Width	Design Speed (mph)	Curb and Gutter
Local Rural	60'	22'	30	No
Local Urban	50'	30'	30	Yes
Collector Rural	72'	40'	40	No
Collector Urban	40'	44'	45	Yes
Minor Thoroughfare	86'	48'	50	Yes
Major Thoroughfare	120'	48'–72'	60	Yes

*Source:* City of Bulverde Subdivision Ordinance.

Consideration should be given to adding street design alternatives to the subdivision ordinance. An alley classification would enable developers to place garages facing the rear of houses, thus improving the street appearance of neighborhoods.



Houses with garage entrances off rear alley



Houses with front garages on cul-de-sac with excessively wide pavement requirements

Traffic calming measures should also be promoted to increase the livability of streets by slowing the volume and speed of traffic. There is more to controlling speed than speed limit signs and speed bumps. Speed control devices can include chicanes or staggering, gateway thresholds, narrowing or throttling, neck-downs, nubs, and speed tables or plateaus.



Throttling



Chicane or 'curvy' road in Austin



Traffic island



Speed Platform

Also, consideration should be given to lowering speeds on local streets. At 20 mph drivers can anticipate conflicts and have time to stop for pedestrians and bicyclists. According to a 1992 survey by Durkin and Pheby published in *Traffic Management and Road Safety*, the chances of a pedestrian surviving a traffic accident increase from 60% at 30 mph to 95% at 20 mph. Lowering design speeds on rural collectors and minor arterials through the heart of the community from 40 and 50 mph to 35 mph can turn no man's lands along roadsides into something more compatible with walking, cycling and a rural atmosphere.

Also in keeping with the Bulverde area's rural ambience, residential streets should be designed for the minimum required pavement width needed to support travel lanes, on-street parking, and emergency, maintenance and service vehicle access. Widths should still be based on traffic volume. Keeping all streets as narrow as possible uses less asphalt, and these narrower roads have less effect on ambient air temperatures, save development costs, help calm traffic, and result in less impervious cover that

alleviates storm water quantity and quality issues. Streets, particularly local streets, should be designed for everyday use, not the worst case scenario, the occasional service vehicle, emergency vehicle, parked car on access streets, or the 30<sup>th</sup> highest hourly traffic volume of the entire year for higher order streets. Table 5.3 lists some alternative street widths used by other communities or states. In summary, principles that can be used when considering alternative street designs and classifications include:

- Residential street right-of-way widths should reflect the minimum required width to accommodate the travel-way, sidewalks or asphalt/crushed stone jogging paths, and vegetated open channels. Utilities and storm drains (as necessary) should be located within the pavement section of the ROW whenever feasible.
- Reduce the total length of residential streets by examining alternative street layouts to find the best option for increasing the number of homes per unit length.
- Minimize residential cul-de-sacs and incorporate landscaped areas in them to reduce their impervious cover. The radius of cul-de-sacs should be the minimum required to accommodate emergency and maintenance vehicles, and alternative turnarounds should be considered.
- Use pervious materials in spillover parking areas to reduce the overall imperviousness associated with parking lots.



Standard cul-de-sac



Landscaped cul-de-sac

**Table 5.3. Alternative Residential Street Widths**

	Urban Land Institute	Bucks County, PA	Orange County, FL	Best Development Practices
Locals	22–24' (access streets)	16–26' access streets depending on lot width	18' (0–300 average daily traffic volume)	18' (access streets with parking on only one side or in parking bays)
	26–28' (subcollectors)	20–36' subcollectors depending on lot width and on-street parking policies	20' (301–800 average daily traffic volume) 22' (801–1200 average daily traffic volume)	26' (subcollectors with a striped parking lane on one side)
Collectors	24–36' minimum applies to streets with no fronting residences	20–24' depending on daily traffic – no provision for on-street parking	24' (1201–1500 average daily traffic volume) 36' (1501–3500 average daily traffic volume)	28' (with extra-wide curb lanes) 30' (with striped bike lanes on both sides) 34–36' (with striped parking lanes on both sides)

Source: *Best Development Practices* by Reid Ewing published in cooperation with the Urban Land Institute and other entities.



## ***5.2 Stormwater Management***

Many rural settlements in Texas were located near or along waterways because of the availability of water for irrigation and the flat or gently sloping lands which are easier to farm and build on. The City of Bulverde is no exception, having been located near and along the Cibolo Creek and its tributaries including West Fork, Dripping Springs, Lewis and Indian Creeks. As such, storm water drainage and flooding is a major issue in the Bulverde area. Situated on the banks of the Cibolo Creek, the city is subject to major flooding resulting from intense rain events which occur in the Texas Hill Country, especially near the Balcones escarpment. Such floods occurred as recently as October 1998 and June-July 2002. Staying dry has, and will be, a challenge for the City of Bulverde as the city grows. Minor flooding can occur in low-lying areas near the old-town center and in Oak Village North from relatively minor rain events. Currently, Lewis and Indian Creeks cause local flooding, and the Cibolo affects access on Farm/Market 1863 and to San Antonio on U.S. Highway 281. Oak Village North can be cut off from the rest of the city when the Cibolo floods. As more land is developed for residential, commercial, institutional and light industrial purposes, these problems can be exacerbated without proper planning.

### **Climate and Terrain**

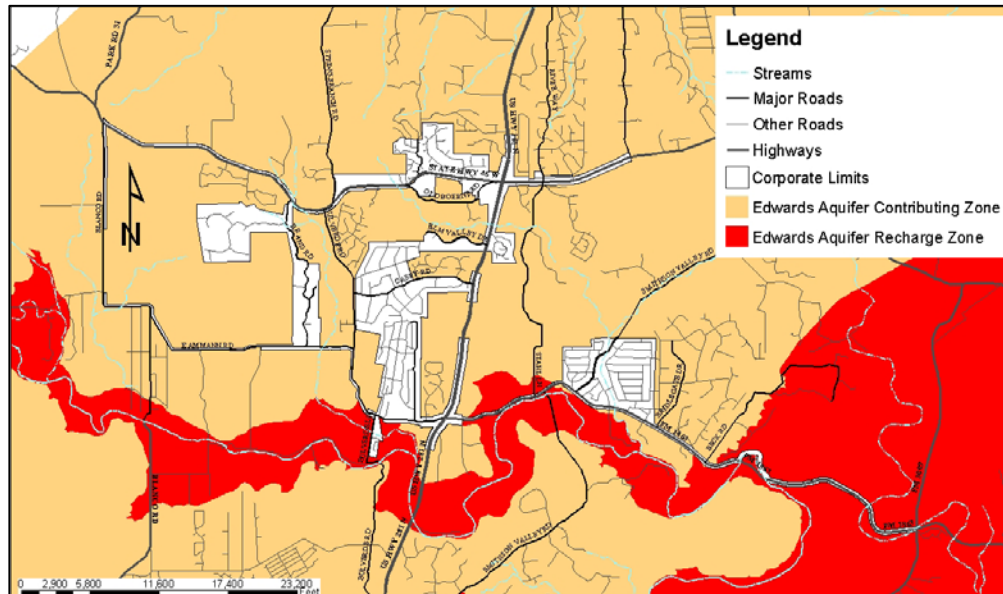
It is important to understand the physical and ecological characteristics of the region's natural environment when developing a long-range plan. Mean annual precipitation reported by the U.S. Weather Bureau for Comal County is 30.73 inches (78.1 cm). May and September have the maximum rainfall, with lows in the winter and summer. August typically has the lightest rainfall with an average of 1.83 inches, and May has the highest with an average of 3.34 inches. Thunderstorms occur an average of 39 days per year. Tropical weather disturbances during the late summer and early fall are responsible for large thunderstorms and increased rainfall.

The Balcones Escarpment is the geologic fault zone that extends across Texas in a general southwest-to-northeast trending band from the Rio Grande to the Red River. The area above the Balcones fault where the City of Bulverde is located is known as the Edwards Plateau. Much of the original tableland has been removed by erosion, and deep valleys have been cut by streams that originate on the plateau. High rolling divides, smooth tablelands remnants, steep-walled canyons and gorges are prevalent throughout the area. The Balcones Escarpment has an uplifting effect on warm, moist tropical air masses moving inland from the Gulf of Mexico, causing increased rainfall. Cold fronts moving across the state also may stall in the vicinity of the Edwards Plateau and Balcones Escarpment causing major thunderstorms. The climate and terrain conditions make the Texas Hill Country one of the most flash flood-prone areas in the country and rest of the world.

## The Edwards Aquifer

The City of Bulverde lies within the Edwards Aquifer contributing and recharge zones (see Figure 5.3). The Aquifer is divided into three main zones: the contributing

**Figure 5.3. City of Bulverde and Edwards Aquifer Recharge and Contributing Zones**



Source: City of Bulverde.

zone, the recharge zone, and the artesian zone. The contributing zone occurs on the Edwards Plateau and is approximately 4,400 square miles in area with elevations ranging between 1,000 and 2,300 feet above sea level. The contributing zone is also called the drainage area or the catchment area because the land surface ‘catches’ water from rainfall, and water runs off into streams or infiltrates into the water table aquifer of the plateau. Runoff from the land surface and spring flow then feed streams that flow over relatively impermeable limestones until they reach the recharge zone. The recharge zone is a 1,500 square mile area where highly faulted and fractured Edwards’s limestone outcrops at the land surface, allowing large quantities of water to flow into the Aquifer. Cibolo Creek forms the border between Bexar and Comal counties and contributes much of its flow to Edwards recharge. Francis T. Bryan provided one of the earliest descriptions in 1849 of what happens to streams that cross the recharge zone:

After passing the Cibolo, four miles from Misenbergs, the road becomes very good, being smooth and level. The Cibolo, where the road crosses it, is a dry ravine. About two miles above there is plenty of pure water.

It is not uncommon for the Cibolo to flow 30 feet wide and a foot deep and, in the space of a quarter mile, disappear completely into the Edwards formation.

Since 1993, the protection and use of the southern portion of the Aquifer has been overseen by the Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA) created by the Texas legislature. Their responsibilities include implementation of aquifer pumpage limits for major users, enforcement of water management practices to ensure the flow of the Comal and San Marcos springs, a comprehensive water management plan and a critical



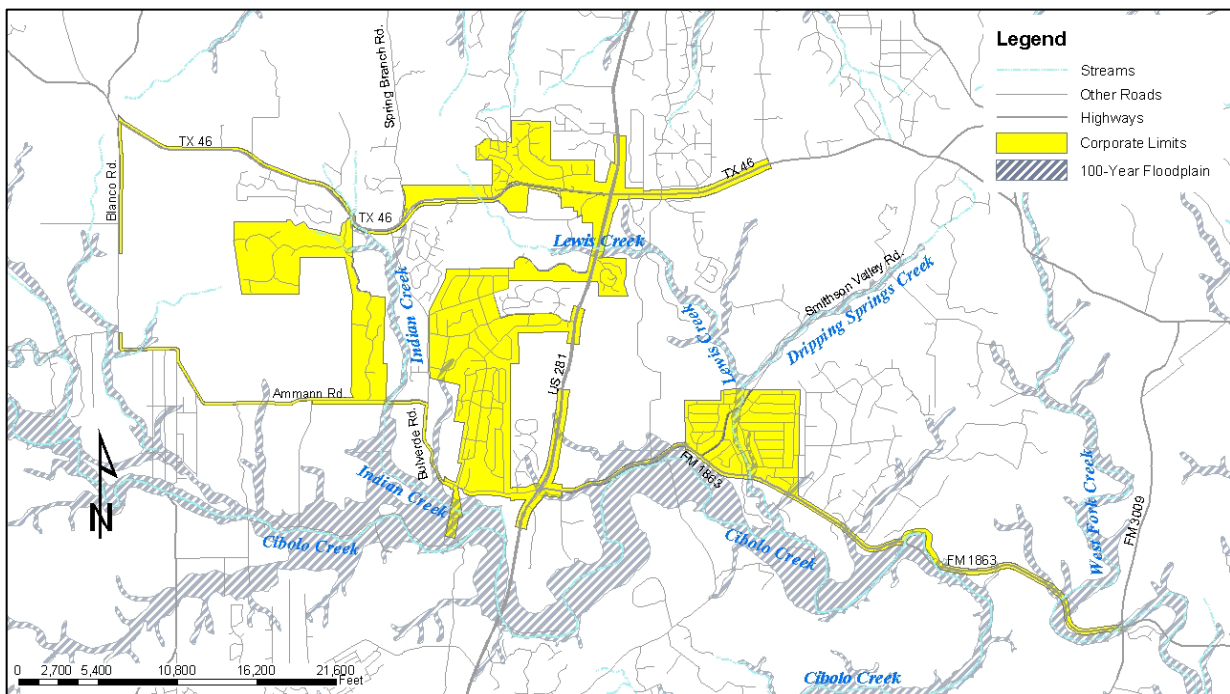
period management plan. The EAA's goal is to reduce pumpage to preserve the flow of the springs from over 500,000-acre feet to 400,000-acre feet by 2007.

### Floodplains and Floodways

There are floodplains and floodways along the Cibolo Creek and its contributing waterways in the Bulverde area. A generalized illustration of the designated areas is shown in Figure 5-4. For identification of specific floodplain areas and elevations, consult the Flood Insurance Rate Maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Management of areas within the designated floodplain areas is governed by regulations of FEMA and by the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance of the City of Bulverde. The Mayor is the designated Floodplain Administrator.

The term *floodplain* means any and all land area adjoining the channel of a river, stream, lake, watercourse, marshy area, or other drainage element, which has been or may be inundated by storm water runoff. The extent of floodplain areas is determined by the crest of a base flood having an average frequency of occurrence equal to one percent in any given year. A flood of this magnitude may occur in any year, and equal or greater floods may reoccur during the same year or in multiple years in succession. Although sometimes called the 100-year floodplain, this does not mean the chance of flooding is once in a hundred years. The *floodway* is the portion of the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be kept open in order to convey the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than one foot. Fill and obstructions that would restrict the discharge of flood waters should not be placed within designated floodway areas.

**Figure 5.4 Flood Plain and Drainage Basins in the Bulverde Area**



Source: City of Bulverde; note: flood plains are subject to change due to development and new drainage infrastructure.

## **A Drainage Policy**

In accordance with the existing Subdivision Ordinance, the Hogan Plan recommended specific drainage improvements such as enlarging culverts or installing new culverts, pipes, drainage channels or other drainage structures. The plan noted that Lewis Creek has a drainage area of approximately 13,118 acres and the city should participate in any conferences or proposed programs for the “improvement” of the creek. Such improvements could include “widening and deepening of the channel.”

While the Hogan study is a good start, at some point in the future the City of Bulverde should conduct a watershed management study to develop a full set of ordinances and support documents to implement a comprehensive stormwater management policy that integrates water quantity and quality management for the city and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Such a study should address:

- The benefits, drawbacks, design criteria and costs of drainage channel improvements to convey storm water runoff;
- Storage and retention of storm water where the conveyance approach is inadequate or not practical;
- Incorporating additional watershed management program and design requirements into the City’s Subdivision Ordinance; and
- Revenue requirements for a watershed management program for existing and future facility maintenance.

The city’s watershed management program should include techniques identified in the GBRA’s Sustainable Solutions workshops held in the region in 2001 and 2002. These techniques address stormwater issues for areas experiencing rapid growth and are concerned with the potentially detrimental impact that this growth can have on water quality and quantity. The report’s recommendations include:

- Conservation incentive program - a voluntary program to provide incentives to developers for reduction in impervious cover, natural pollutant removal processes and stream buffer systems.
- Water resource management coordination process to coordinate the activities of public and private water and waste water provision (local government entities, groundwater conservation districts, public and private water and wastewater utility providers and river authorities).
- Optional open space development design - an optional site development technique with a compact form of development that concentrates density on a portion of a site in exchange for reduced density elsewhere. The same number of homes can be built in a less land consumptive manner.

Drainage cannot continue to be managed in a "take it to the street and let it go" manner, especially in the Edwards aquifer region. Watersheds in the Bulverde area are facing development pressure which can exacerbate flood hazards. Watersheds must be managed and developed in an innovative manner to protect and preserve water resources, the natural environment, and recreational opportunities. Waterways

and their associated watersheds in the Bulverde area represent significant and irreplaceable recreational and aesthetic resources and contribute directly to the community's public health and welfare. A comprehensive means of handling stormwater drainage must be implemented, and should include minimization of runoff, infiltration, retention, detention, and channeling as a last resort. In the past stormwater management has focused on tax-supported public works, but today it is evolving towards on-site development ordinances and stormwater impact fees. The City of Bulverde, Comal and Kendall Counties, the Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) and the City of San Antonio should coordinate regional watershed management and drainage improvements to see that adequate drainage is provided as new development occurs.

Adopting appropriate development rules and regulations for the purpose of protecting watersheds will ensure the minimization of storm water runoff and the installation of adequate drainage infrastructure where necessary. The development of elevated lands increases the runoff of stormwater and causes increased amounts of runoff to flow onto adjoining lands of lower elevation. The owner of elevated land has the responsibility to prevent increased runoff from doing damage to other downstream properties. This duty will be met more easily and with less cost if low-impact and/or conservation development is promoted.

#### **Drainage Design Issues - Development Patterns, and Stormwater Quantity and Quality**

Being in such a sensitive environmental area, the City of Bulverde's drainage/stormwater strategy should include the elimination and/or reduction of pollutants within storm water runoff to limit the pollution that enters the Cibolo Creek and the Edwards aquifer. Water quality must be protected from non-point source pollution carried in urban runoff. This is especially important since the City of Bulverde lies within the Edwards aquifer contributing and recharge zones. All watersheds within the City's jurisdiction, and especially those with abrupt topography, sparse vegetation, and thin and easily disturbed soils, are potentially vulnerable to non-point source pollution and sedimentation resulting from construction activity.

Well-designed conservation/cluster developments and subdivision requirements for open space in traditional subdivisions can benefit the community in terms of storm water management. Open space provides more pervious cover for water infiltration. This helps reduce the amount of runoff leaving a property and thus decreases the chances that the new development can cause flooding problems "downstream." Although traditional subdivisions may be required to build culverts and other drainage structures, the issue of where the water goes must still be addressed. Natural areas in cluster developments can not only reduce the volume of runoff but also help clean the water during the infiltration process. Conservation developments require less grading that compacts soil and increases runoff even in areas where there is no construction or impervious cover. Road ditches in cluster developments are often grass swales instead of curb and gutter, allowing more infiltration and being less costly to the developer, and requiring less maintenance. Approaches which delay

stormwater movement or which reduce its force maximize settling and deposition of particles. Natural pollutant removal processes occur in vegetated open spaces. Filtration occurs as stormwater moves through surface vegetative layer and various soil layers. Some low-impact strategies include:

- Vegetated open channels should be used in the street ROW to convey and treat stormwater runoff.
- Provide stormwater treatment for parking lot runoff using bioretention areas, filter strips, and other practices that can be integrated into landscaping areas and traffic islands.
- Limit the amount of clearing and grading of wooded areas and natural vegetation by promoting conservation development.
- Create a variable width naturally vegetated stream buffer system along perennial streams that also encompasses critical environmental features such as the 100-year floodplain, steep slopes and wetlands.
- Buffer averaging will allow developers to narrow stream buffer width at some points providing flexibility in arranging the buffer system around existing house-lots. Density compensation can be offered to offset the loss of buildable land or house lots due to implementation of buffers.

Future land use assumptions will be needed to estimate the stormwater drainage runoff rates for the city, evaluate the performance of existing drainage improvements and recommend future drainage strategies and improvements. The city will need to evaluate the effects of a proposed development on downstream land. Future development (any construction of impervious cover, such as concrete, asphalt or rooftops) should have to be mitigated in some way, by either detention or other design alternatives.

### ***5.3 Water Service***

The Bulverde area is serviced by several water companies. Bexar Metropolitan Water Company (Bexar Met) provides water to Bulverde Hills and Oakland Estates; Diamond Water Company supplies water to Windmill Ranch and to Rim Rock Ranch northeast of Oak Village North. Other subdivisions are served by private centralized water systems. Shepherd's Ranch, Persimmon Hills, Bulverde Estates, Palmer Heights, Elm Valley, The Highlands, and Brand Ranch are served by individual private water wells.

#### **The GBRA-Bulverde Service Area**

The City of Bulverde holds the Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (Number 2001-0697-UCR) issued by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to serve the area. The City has contracted with the Guadalupe Blanco River Authority (GBRA) to build and maintain its future water system. As such GBRA will be the water purveyor for the city, providing and paying for infrastructure to be installed. The entire GBRA-Bulverde Service Area is within the GBRA's statutory boundaries, and the majority of the GBRA-Bulverde Service Area is within the San Antonio

River Basin. The GBRA-Bulverde service area covers approximately 59,600 acres and will receive up to 1,700 acre-feet of treated water from the Western Canyon Regional Water Supply System. The service area will be provided water by GBRA in conjunction with their commitment to provide water to the GBRA-Johnson Ranch Service Area (CCN No. 12977) in what is termed the Bulverde Lower East Service Area.

At a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee meeting in July 2003, David Welsch of the GBRA led a discussion of present water conditions and future plans for the provision of water in the Bulverde area. He noted that there are several types of water for a municipality. There is a firm yield which is sustainable and can last through a drought of the severity of those in 1947 and 1957. The Canyon Reservoir, built in 1956 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is the only 'firm' water supply in the Guadalupe River basin and a truly sustainable source of surface water for the City of Bulverde. Trinity Aquifer wells are not. The GBRA has a water plant at Startz Hill and raw water in a tank located there. Water does not have to be pumped once it gets in that tank. Over time water will reach Ralph-Fair Road, bringing a firm water supply to the water short area. There will be 46 miles of pipelines constructed in phases depending on growth. The 30 inch regional main will be routed down Stahl Lane to the Johnson Ranch where GBRA will also be developing a wastewater treatment plant to service the future subdivision. The pipeline will then turn west and run along the existing utility easement through the City of Bulverde to Cordillera Ranch and on into Kendall County on the way to Fair Oaks Ranch and Boerne (see Figure 5.4). According to the GBRA Master Plan, the Johnson Ranch area is a good location for a tank that would serve the City of Bulverde, and that tank should be in place by March of 2005.

Homeowners will have to pay for distribution within an existing subdivision. This will be a major challenge for existing large-lot subdivisions. However, Cordillera Ranch was platted for central water systems instead of individual wells even though centralized water was not available at the time. This sound planning means the infrastructure is already in place awaiting the provision of surface water.

## **Projections**

The 2050 population for the GBRA-Bulverde Service Area is projected to be 38,654 people with a water demand of 4,035 acre-feet per year. The Western Canyon Regional Water Supply System will provide 1,700 acre-feet of treated surface water, an amount that will meet the projected demand of the GBRA-Bulverde Service Area until the year 2030. Additional water after this period could come from development of the Trinity Aquifer, additional surface water supplies, or reclaimed water from a tertiary water treatment plant. Utilizing the Regional Water Plan data of 3.3788 people per connection the estimated connection count in 2050 is 8,071 connections. The water use per year per connection is estimated to be 162,925 gallons or 132 gallons per person per day. To reduce the per capita consumption, policies and incentives are needed to minimize water use. It should be pointed out that the GBRA's population projections are higher than those estimates in Table 1.5 in

Chapter 1. The GBRA will be able to provide surface water under existing conditions for a population of no more than 23,945.

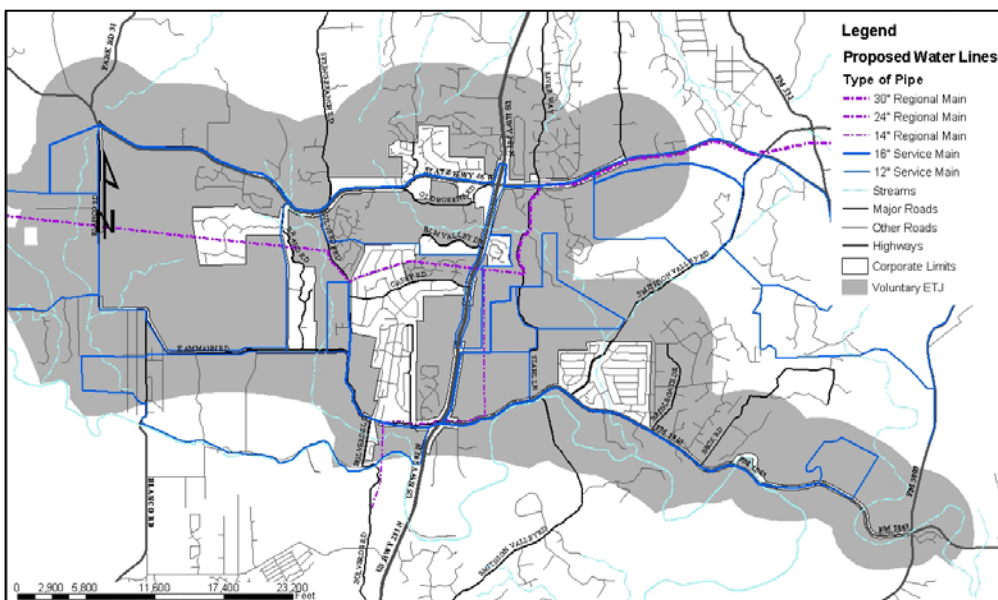
The GBRA desires the water distribution system for the GBRA-Bulverde Service Area to provide 24 hours of storage per connection, which equates to 446 gallons per connection compared to the TCEQ requirement of 300 gallons per connection. The system is designed to maintain a minimum pressure of 35 PSI at all points within the proposed distribution system at flow rates of at least 1.5 gallons per minute (GPM) per connection. The system is also designed to provide a minimum pressure of 20 PSI during fire fighting. Four delivery points and two service levels are being proposed to meet the minimum TECQ requirements. The four delivery points for the two service levels are referred to as:

- Bulverde Upper West Service Area
- Bulverde Upper East Service Area
- Bulverde Lower West Service Area, and
- Bulverde Lower East Service Area.

The west and east service areas are separated by U.S. Highway 281, and the upper and lower service areas are separated by the proposed area pressure zones of 1,500 feet and 1,325 feet. The Bulverde Lower East Service Level (where the Johnson Ranch is located) is anticipated to be the first area to develop, and thus the first elevated tank will be sited on property east of U.S. Highway 281 and adjacent to the western Canyon Region Water Supply Transmission Main.

No more than 24,000 acre feet can be diverted upstream from Canyon Lake per an agreement with Comal County. The GBRA has the rights to 16,000 acre feet of Canyon lake water, and there is not much left after Canyon Lake Water Supply takes

**Figure 5.5. City of Bulverde/GBRA Water Supply Plan**



Source: City of Bulverde.



**Table 5.4. Future Water Demand in Acre/Feet for the GBRA-Bulverde Service Area**

	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Adjusted Demand (Acre feet)	2,230	2,486	2,871	3,918	5,052	6,265
Population	11,384	13,963	17,220	23,945	31,178	38,654
New Population		2,579	5,836	12,561	19,794	27,270
Connections		763	1,727	3,718	5,858	8,071
Upper Connections		496	1,123	2,417	3,808	5,246
Lower Connections		267	605	1,301	2,050	2,825

*Source:* the GBRA Master Plan Report "Guadalupe – Blanco River Authority's Water Distribution System for the GBRA – Bulverde Service Area (December, 2002)".

their allotment. Welsch expressed concern that we are converting more land to impervious cover, and this in turn causes rapid run-off which diminishes aquifer recharge and causes sedimentation. He also noted that individual wells are a problem and some tough questions will need to be answered. Who is monitoring these wells? Which ones are going dry? Where are we going to be hardest hit first? What will be the effects of Texas' archaic 'right-of-capture' groundwater law on future groundwater use, and how and when will this law be changed for the public benefit?

#### ***5.4 Wastewater and Sewer Service***

Sewer service is addressed in Section 2.07 of the City of Bulverde Subdivision Ordinance. All subdivisions must be provided with adequate means for the "collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws." Higher density developments must be served by a central sewage collection system and treatment works.

The Subdivision Ordinance should be revised and/or supplemented to address additional wastewater considerations. When reviewing plat approval for higher density development, consideration should be given to how that development could fit into a sewer/wastewater master plan. Similar to a transportation master plan, this would enable the city to require easements for sewerage infrastructure that could build towards an environmentally sound and economically efficient sewer system for the city that could be constructed in the future.

Additionally, in conservation development wastewater and septic management can take some innovative planning. Developers should be able to install group or cluster systems, most likely located in the common open space areas of such developments. This would require changes to the current thinking that each lot has its own system.

Regardless, private septic systems in rural areas have always presented a challenge to communities since it is difficult to ensure proper wastewater treatment with these systems. The traditional practice has been to place a septic drain field on an individual homeowner's large lot. While this approach may still be proper in cluster design, some type of alternative layout or system will be required. Placing easements on the common open space can allow drain fields to be established in that area. As technologies improve, other alternatives such as mechanical systems, constructed wetlands, land application, or small community systems might be used.

Since septic systems are inevitable with large lot and some cluster developments, and since it is difficult to ensure proper wastewater treatment with these systems, the city should address the maintenance of them. An aggressive and ongoing educational program would alert homeowners to the maintenance requirements of their systems. The city could also investigate the possibility of a septic system maintenance utility district. State law may enable such an arrangement with the GBRA allowing a fee to be collected on a regular basis and resulting funds used for inspections of private systems and for pumping them out every three years. People naturally tend to forget things that are "out of sight/out of mind", but leaky or poorly maintained on-site disposal systems can cause serious health risks to the region's water supply especially since the City of Bulverde lies within the contributing and recharge zones of the Edwards aquifer.

Finally, the use of rainwater harvesting and gray water systems should be encouraged, preferably by using incentives for developers and homeowners. Capturing rainwater from roofs and using wastewater from washing machines, sinks, showers and tubs for irrigation purposes reduces demand for potable water and can lower the per capita use of the future surface water supply.

## ***5.5 Water and Wastewater Extension Policy***

**I**n the future, water and wastewater services will either be extended by the city or by developers. The city extends water and wastewater mains to serve newly annexed areas and areas where new highways and streets are constructed. Developers should be required to extend oversized water and wastewater mains. For example, if a subdivision requires the extension of an 8" water main (typically the minimum requirement), but a water master plan calls for a 12" main to serve a larger area, the developer is required to install a 12" main. The developer may then enter an Oversize Reimbursement Agreement and receive reimbursement from the city for the cost of over-sizing the main (the cost difference between the 8" main and the 12" main). Such arrangements should be covered in a Capital Improvements Plan addressing infrastructure needs over a five year period.

In the future, the city should consider a mandatory connection policy. Any person who constructs a new building or develops property within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of an existing city water or sanitary sewer main would be required to extend and connect to the city systems. This requirement applies whether or not the development is located within the city limits. The regulation would be the same whether the development is a new

subdivision (as discussed above), a major commercial development or a single family residence. While such extensions may be feasible for a major development, the extension of 8" water and sewer mains up to ¾ mile for a single home site or small commercial site may be impractical, but sites could be designed for connections at a later date.

## ***5.6 Private Utilities and Communications***

Utilities and communication systems provided by private companies are another component of the City of Bulverde's infrastructure system. Through franchise agreements electric, natural gas, telephone, and cable television services are provided to the City of Bulverde residents through the following:

- Electricity - Most of the Bulverde/Spring Branch area receives power from Pedernales Electric Cooperative. The southern part of the area receives power from San Antonio's City Public Service.
- Natural Gas/Propane - None of the area is serviced by Natural Gas pipelines. There are numerous companies in the area that provide and deliver Propane.
- Telephone – Guadalupe Valley Telephone Company furnishes local and long distance telephone service and internet access to Bulverde area customers.
- Cable Television – Time-Warner and Guadalupe Valley Telephone Cooperative.



Communications towers

### **Communications**

Telecommunication services and technologies have become essential elements of our lives. Changes in telecommunications technology and an unprecedented proliferation of telecommunications providers have changed the traditional way of carrying out our everyday functions. Increased demand for wireless communication services has prompted providers to increase the number of transmission tower sites needed to provide coverage and calling capacity. The visual impact of such facilities can mar the scenic landscape of the Bulverde area. Like other communities located in scenic areas, the City needs to consider regulating telecommunication transmission sites by imposing co-location, setback and design restrictions for new facilities. At the same time, the city must be mindful of the significance of communications in planning for the city and in building a sound economy.

## ***5.7 Utility Placement***

Community appearance is important to the residents of the Bulverde area. In an effort to maintain and improve their appearance and image, many communities

require all public and franchised utilities to be installed underground. The proliferation of utility poles and lines along public rights-of-way results in cluttered and unattractive transportation corridors. There are also safety considerations and service interruptions associated with major storm events such as flooding or high winds and tornadoes. The City of Bulverde should consider requiring all utilities to be underground within a new subdivision as well as along the perimeter of a subdivision. Likewise, this issue should be considered when new collector and arterial streets are extended, or existing collectors and arterials are widened or reconstructed. Finally, wires and cables could be placed underground rather than replacing deteriorated utility poles.

## ***5.8 Summary***

Ability to maintain, improve and expand its infrastructure is vitally important to the City of Bulverde's future. Significant changes will take place as GBRA extends water mains into the area, and the future will present challenges requiring sound decision-making. In order to keep pace with the projected growth through the next twenty years, the city must find ways to simultaneously maintain the provision of a sound infrastructure while keeping taxes competitive. Innovative ways to do this have been addressed in this chapter. The use of low-impact and conservation development can minimize the need for expensive, engineered drainage structures. Rainwater capture and graywater systems should be encouraged to reduce water demand while providing water for irrigation purposes. These challenges clearly point to the need for proper long range planning, the need for changing and supplementing existing ordinances, and the use of Capital Improvements Programming.

## ***5.9 Goals and Objectives***

**Goal 1:** Promote a reliable source of **water** for future development and areas of town that can be economically retrofitted with pipelines.

Objective 1.1: Work with GBRA on a regular basis to facilitate the proposed pipeline down Stahl Lane.

Objective 1.2: Work with GBRA to plan for future expansions of water infrastructure to appropriate areas of the City.

Objective 1.2b: Work with other suppliers of water as necessary.

Objective 1.3: Consider establishing impact fees for water infrastructure.

Objective 1.4: Establish water conservation programs to include rain water collection systems.

Objective 1.5: Promote a tiered payment scale with lower per-gallon fees for the first five or ten thousand gallons used, and higher per-gallon fees for greater amounts used.

Objective 1.5b: Determine how best to use water distribution and availability as a growth management tool.

Objective 1.5c: Address homeland security issues as they relate to any water supplies for the City of Bulverde.

**Goal 2:** To protect the **environment**, promote the provision of central **sewerage** in appropriate areas.

Objective 2.1: Work with GBRA to facilitate the proposed sewerage facility at the Johnson Ranch.

Objective 2.1b: Work with any other entities that might potentially provide sewerage services in the Bulverde area.

Objective 2.2: Promote the installation of central sewerage in new, higher density developments. Determine who will participate, to what extent and at what costs. Determine what will be the changes in flood prone areas with more impervious cover.

Objective 2.3: Develop a sewerage master plan that must be adhered to in plat review.

Objective 2.3b: Begin the process of determining future location(s) of sewage treatment plant(s), lift stations, projected costs, operation and maintenance costs, projected customer service charges.

Objective 2.4: Begin the process of establishing impact fees for sewer infrastructure.

Objective 2.5: Develop a plan for the maintenance of aging septic systems in existing subdivisions.

Objective 2.5b: Develop a policy on what to do with abandoned septic systems.

**Goal 3:** Address **stormwater drainage** issues in both existing and future developments.

Objective 3.1: Correct existing drainage problems on a priority basis and within budget constraints.

Objective 3.2: Develop a Storm Drainage Master Plan.

Objective 3.3: Strictly enforce all drainage-related rules and regulations in new developments.

Objective 3.4: Investigate the possibility of promoting “low-impact” type development in the City’s subdivision regulations.

Objective 3.4b: Promote use of pretreatment devices and other Best Management Practices to remove major contaminants from storm water before leaving the site.

Objective 3.5: Investigate whether it would be feasible to develop a drainage impact fee or similar funding for meeting infrastructure needs for new development.

Objective 3.5b: Determine the best way to delineate the flood plain; consider the use of GIS to project how the flood plain will change with increasing development.

Objective 3.5c: Develop plans for protection and enhancement of natural drainage channels and structures, i.e. (Cibolo Creek and its tributaries). Develop and/or strengthen erosion and sedimentation control standards for all construction and development.

Objective 3.5d: Regulate development within tributary watersheds that affect the 100-year flood plain to maintain the regulatory floodway and restrict filling and encroachment within the floodplain. Assure a close and positive working relationship with FEMA.

**Goal 4:** Maintain and improve the condition of existing city **streets** and ensure that future roads are built to lasting standards while preserving aesthetic integrity.

Objective 4.1: Establish a street inventory that includes condition, width and age, and update it on a regular basis.

Objective 4.2: Adopt a street maintenance policy that emphasizes quality repairs that last.

Objective 4.3: Ensure that subdivision standards require quality roads that minimize future maintenance.

Objective 4.4: Ensure that future roads and road improvements take into consideration the rural ambience of the Bulverde area and not just the rapid movement of vehicles.



Objective 4.5: Identify areas of conflict and plan for remedies. Inventory signage and determine additional needs.

Objective 4.6: Plan for a program to address road shoulder maintenance.

**Goal 5:** Encourage underground utilities.

Objective 5.1: Meet with utility providers (telephone, cable, etc.) to determine the issues involved with underground versus overhead wires/cables.

Objective 5.2: Consider revising the subdivision standards to require underground utilities within new developments.

Objective 5.3: Coordinate efforts to alleviate undue, unwanted upheavals of physical facilities that adversely affect citizens.

**Goal 6:** Coordinate future infrastructure improvements to ensure the most economical and effective provision and maintenance of infrastructure (water, sewer, drainage, streets, and communications).

Objective 6.1: Develop a Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

Objective 6.2: Use the CIP to encourage growth in areas appropriate to the proposed land use and density.

Objective 6.3: Coordinate the provision of all infrastructure facilities to best use their potential as growth-shapers and customer services.

## Transportation

A community's transportation network is critical to its citizens' quality of life. Actual or perceived traffic congestion and dangerous, noisy or ugly roads can be deterrents to people's enjoyment of their town. When traffic moves freely and safely, people generally feel positively about their community. The Comprehensive Plan Survey indicated that the residents of the Bulverde area think there are both minimal traffic congestion and "too much traffic" in the City of Bulverde. In the open-ended section of the survey, some respondents cited the lack of traffic congestion as one of the most desirable things about living in the city, while others listed "traffic" as one of the least desirable things about living in the area. Particular traffic woes include high speed traffic, traffic noise, traffic into San Antonio, dangerous roads/intersections in and around the City of Bulverde, and traffic on

State Highway 46, U.S. Highway 281 and congestion at that intersection. One person commented that the congestion on State Highway 46 west of U.S. Highway 281 is the "baggage" caused by retail and commercial development in that area. Another person noted that "we need ways to get people to drive slower, especially on Farm/Market 1863."

Approximately three out of four of those surveyed work outside the City of Bulverde and its ETJ. Of those who commute to work, over forty percent drive more than 20 miles one way. These commuters may be thinking about traffic at rush hours into and out of San Antonio when they are commenting about the negative aspects of traffic. The average daily traffic count on U.S. Highway 281 north of Loop 1604 has more than doubled from 1990 to 2000, going from approximately 24,000 vehicles to over 51,000 vehicles per day. Still, proximity to San Antonio with its "big city" conveniences and amenities is a highly attractive attribute of the Bulverde area.

**The City of Bulverde has a transportation network that enables its citizens to 'get around' safely and conveniently, but whose design standards help retain the community's rural Hill-Country ambience.**

*Sunrise 2025*

Eighty-two percent of survey respondents feel that "solving traffic problems" is an important or very important growth management priority for the City. Eighty-four percent think promoting more efficient and safe flow of traffic is an important or very important goal statement for the Comprehensive Plan. When asked what additional city services should be provided, ninety-one percent of survey respondents were either supportive or very supportive of the City solving traffic problems. When asked about the quality of existing City services, only thirty-nine percent rated the City's current performance as either excellent or good, while fifty-six percent rated it either fair or poor.

Regardless, the most desirable things about living in the Bulverde area are the quiet/slow-paced living, the country/rural atmosphere, the beauty and feel of the Hill Country, and the small town/village charm. Attributes associated with the rural lifestyle include “twisty” two-lane roads. At a January 2004 Steering Committee meeting, members commented that “winding roads” and “slower roads” contribute to more of a country atmosphere. Narrower roads mandate that traffic moves slower, and they can be used as a growth management tool. After all, wider roads can enhance undesirable or unplanned growth. The Steering Committee concluded that the City of Bulverde needs a thoroughfare plan, and Amman Road can be improved and serve as a major route to the western part of the city’s ETJ.

A balanced transportation system should offer residents access to both work and non-work related destinations, a structure of connectivity that offers choices of routes and modes of travel. Transportation options should include pedestrian, bicycle and automobile facilities along with access to nearby air transport, and perhaps someday in the future, light rail or some kind of public transportation into San Antonio. This chapter describes the policy and structure for providing a sound transportation system. The City of Bulverde can achieve safe and efficient local and regional transportation by striving toward the goals set forth in this chapter while keeping in mind there is more to a desirable transportation system than moving automobiles on four- (or more) lane highways at high rates of speed.

## ***6.1 Transportation Planning Agencies Affecting Bulverde***

### **The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and Comal County**

At a September 24, 2003 meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Gregory Malatek, an engineer from the New Braunfels office of the San Antonio District of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) spoke to committee members and other citizens about transportation planning in Comal County. The New Braunfels office does the design and construction for most of Comal County, but everything west of U.S. Highway 281 is handled by the Boerne office. Thus, Bulverde falls within two TxDOT area offices.

The New Braunfels office has been concentrating on improvements to Interstate 35 in the eastern portion of the county. However, they are now looking at other heavily traveled routes such as State highway 46, U.S. Highway 281 and Farm/Market 1863. TxDOT’s goal is to flatten curves and hills to increase the design speed and capacity of these roads. Malatek predicted that within ten years State Highway 46 from New Braunfels all the way to U.S. Highway 281 will be a four lane divided highway but with a five lane “urban section” near the three Comal ISD schools, the Bracken Christian Academy and the retail and commercial development there. Their more immediate goal is to work on acquiring right-of-way, and then proceed with environmental assessments. Currently, Pape-Dawson Engineering is doing schematics of the section of U.S. Highway 281 in Bulverde, looking into right-of-way requirements that they estimated at between 400 and 500 feet. They are also studying the need for the location of grade separations. TxDOT is also studying

ROW requirements for Farm/Market 1863, expressing a desire for a minimum ROW of 120 feet, but prefer 150 to 180 feet. The City is responsible for ten percent of right-of-way acquisition costs. The City can avoid this expense by requiring developers to dedicate this right-of-way through the subdivision process.

According to the TxDOT District Engineer, the “big question” is how far to take frontage roads along U.S. Highway 281 north of Loop 1604. The feeling within TxDOT is to take them all the way to Highway 46. Currently they are planned to go to the Comal County line.

Comal County recently developed a Transportation Master Plan with the primary goal of obtaining right-of-way for future new roadways and improvements along existing roads. The proposed State Highway 46 bypass is part of this plan. Also, the Plan envisions major improvements, straightening and widening of Blanco Road from the Comal County line to Highway 46. The proposed road would then continue on a new path north of State highway 46 in a north-easterly direction all the way to Highway 281 and County Road 311 south of the Guadalupe River. For roads under county control, the County Road Department will attempt to straighten and flatten roads whenever possible, and allow for left turn lanes for deceleration when needed. The County is looking at 80 foot rights-of-way for their standard road sections, which would have two lanes with unpaved shoulders and turn lanes as needed. Shoulders would be paved in certain situations. Roads in Comal County’s jurisdiction near the City of Bulverde that would be affected by the County’s plans are Spring Branch, Bulverde, Amman, Stahl and Smithson Valley roads.

### **Metropolitan Planning Organizations**

Today, much transportation planning is done by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). There are over 300 MPOs across the U.S.A., and most of them are part of a city, county or area council of governments. Metropolitan Planning Organizations were first required by the Federal Highway Act of 1962 to provide a "3C" transportation planning process by local, state and federal officials. An MPO is federally required for any urbanized area with a population of 50,000 or greater. Federal and State transportation dollars cannot be expended in these areas without an MPO in place. MPOs are made up of representatives from any affected government entities that are charged with overseeing the expenditure of federal, state and local dollars on improvements to the various modes of transportation in the area.

In 1963, the City of San Antonio, Bexar County and the Texas Department of Transportation agreed to establish the San Antonio-Bexar County Urban Transportation Study. In 1977, the Governor of Texas designated the Study’s Steering Committee as the official MPO for the San Antonio urbanized area. The San Antonio-Bexar County MPO, unlike many other MPOs, is an independent agency and includes only Bexar County. The MPO is charged with overseeing the expenditure of transportation-related dollars, and they accomplish this through the development of a long-range transportation plan (MTP). By law, this plan is required to have a forecast year of at least 20 years and lists all short, medium and

long-range transportation improvements that will utilize federal, state and local transportation dollars. The MTP is required to be financially constrained and must be updated every five years.

Its long range plan calls for widening U.S. Highway 281 to three lanes in each direction with frontage roads up to 2.5 miles north of Loop 1604 with estimated costs of over \$25 million dollars. This project is not included in their FY 2004-2006 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), a 3-year list of proposed transportation improvements within Bexar County that are funded by federal and state transportation dollars. Since many residents of the Bulverde area commute into San Antonio using U.S. Highway 281 and other roads, it behooves the City to keep in touch and work with the San Antonio-Bexar County MPO to make sure residents of the City of Bulverde interests are considered.

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) is the regional transportation planning group responsible for working with transportation providers in Williamson, Travis and Hays counties. CAMPO is responsible to ensure that the Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos metropolitan area's planning process is cooperative, continuing and comprehensive (the 3Cs). While this organization may not have as much direct affect on Bulverde as the San Antonio-Bexar County MPO, it would behoove the City to stay abreast of their plans and policies.

## ***6.2 A Transportation Policy***

There are those who say we currently have a transportation system only an automobile could love. The 1994 edition of the American Association of State Highway and Traffic Officials' (AASHTO) *Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets* ("the Green Book") is the most current design guide for transportation planning in the U.S.A. Use of the Green Book provides consistency in safety and operational efficiency of highways and roads throughout the nation. This consistency also provides comfort and convenience to motorists who do not have to deal with varying roadway characteristics as they travel from area to area or state to state. The AASHTO Green Book guidelines have been used as the final word in most highway design for the past 50 years. However, it was not intended to limit the ability of engineers to design for site-specific needs or opportunities. Indeed, AASHTO stresses the need for thoughtful design to mitigate traffic and resultant environmental impacts:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Member Departments of AASHTO will work through AASHTO's design standards committees with DOT and with interested parties on design criteria and a design process for NHS routes that integrate safety, environmental, scenic, historic, community and preservation concerns, and on standards which also foster access for bicycles and pedestrian traffic along with other transportation modes.

Congress has, through the Intermodal Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), aided this effort by providing flexibility to states to develop their own criteria for some projects.

As traffic increases, congestion brings angry complaints from motorists who want safe, fast, well-maintained highways. However, there is also growing demand by neighborhood groups and ordinary citizens for involvement in the transportation decision-making process. These groups often give priority to the protection of historic and natural resources, beautiful landscapes, and residential neighborhoods over high traffic capacity roadway designs.

Often, the terrain through which a highway passes constrains its design. Vehicle speed is directly related to the degree of the highway's horizontal and vertical curves. High speeds increase the time it takes for a vehicle to stop on the highway. The "stopping sight distance" is decreased by steep vertical curves or tight horizontal curves, both of which are prevalent in western Comal County. Thus, higher speeds may require significant alteration of the natural terrain to provide the flat horizontal and vertical curves necessary for a motorist's safety at high speeds. This alteration may not only remove individual items or areas of environmental importance, it also tends to smooth out the natural terrain, creating a less interesting and less aesthetic environment through which to drive.

The width of the highway right-of-way includes not only the width of the pavement itself, but it must allow for adjoining drainage facilities, roadside utilities, and a "clear zone." This zone is to remain clear of obstacles that will damage a vehicle on impact — including trees, fences, rock walls, and other elements of a scenic view. Highway designers use information in the Green Book and the *AASHTO Roadside Design Guide* to determine the appropriate width of the clear zone for highways. Most design engineers have traditionally viewed solutions that solve capacity problems as their top priority, and thus, the high-end solutions have usually won out. Despite the context-sensitive language in ISTEA, TEA-21 and the National Highway System Designation Act, the flexibility allowed by the Green Book and the option of design exceptions have been used only on a limited basis.

Context Sensitive Design (CSD), mentioned in the previous chapter, does consider the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist. But to be successful, all stakeholders must become involved to help develop roads that fit their physical setting and preserve scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources. At a workshop sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration the following principles were presented as critical to successful context sensitive design techniques:

- The project satisfies the purpose and needs as agreed to by a full range of stakeholders. This agreement is forged in the earliest phase of the project and amended as warranted as the project develops.
- The project is a safe facility for both the user and the community.
- The project is in harmony with the community, and it preserves environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, and natural resource values of the area, i.e., exhibits context sensitive design.
- The project exceeds the expectations of both designers and stakeholders and achieves a level of excellence in people's minds.



- The project involves efficient and effective use of the resources (time, budget, community) of all involved parties.
- The project is designed and built with minimal disruption to the community.
- The project is seen as having added lasting value to the community.

### ***6.3 Thoroughfare Master Plan***

The Thoroughfare Master Plan (Figure 6.1) proposed in this comprehensive plan is a result of work by the Infrastructure/Transportation subcommittee and other citizen input. In its simplest form, the Plan is a vision/map of a desirable and complete build-out of the city and county's current roadway system. It shows proposed extensions of existing roadways, the general location of proposed roadways, and classifies them by function to determine the right-of-way (ROW) and ultimate design standards for the facility. The plan is primarily implemented through the city's subdivision and development process and cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation and Comal County. As property is developed, landowners are required to dedicate and preserve ROW along existing and proposed roadways. As can be seen from Figure 6.1, a Highway 46 bypass to the north is envisioned to alleviate the congestion at the Comal ISD schools and HEB shopping center. The city, school district, county and highway department will need to work together to solve traffic problems on State Highway 46.

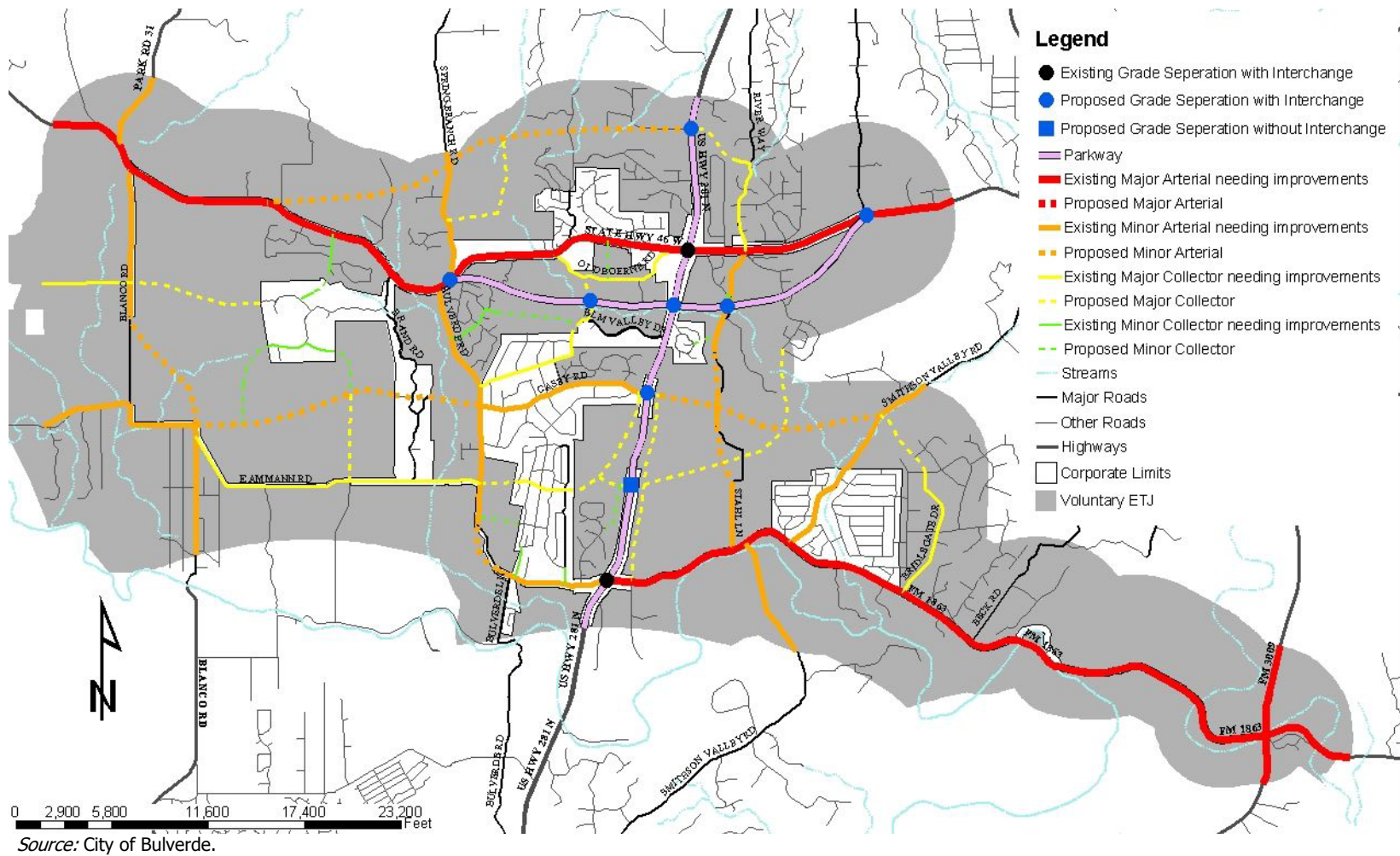
### ***6.4 Existing Roadway Network***

The existing roadway network serves as the backbone of the transportation system for the City of Bulverde. The purpose of this section is to provide a brief description of the existing roadway network and how the City of Bulverde inventories this system. As seen from the Thoroughfare Master Plan (Figure 6.1) there currently exists a good roadway network made up of an expressway, primary arterials, secondary arterials, collectors and local streets.

#### **Expressways/Freeways/Parkways**

An expressway or freeway provides for rapid and efficient movement of large volumes of through traffic between regions and across an urban area. Typically these facilities have multiple lanes and are divided for safety. It is not the purpose of an expressway/freeway to provide direct access to abutting property. U.S. Highway 281, while not meeting all the above criteria, is the closest thing to an expressway/freeway in the Bulverde area. It connects the City of Bulverde with San Antonio to the south as a 4-lane divided facility and carried approximately 20,000 vehicles per day in 1999. As mentioned above, a portion of U.S. Highway 281 north of Loop 1604 is designated for widening to three lanes in each direction and installation of service roads. In addition, there are plans for an additional grade separation somewhere in the vicinity of Casey Road.

**Figure 6.1 – City of Bulverde Thoroughfare Plan**



A parkway is a broad, landscaped thoroughfare with a park-like setting. Parkway are typically characterized by landscape features such as broad medians incorporating tree and shrub masses, spacious tree lawns and linear tree plantings flanking wide streets. The term parkway and boulevard are often used interchangeably. An expressway or freeway can be a parkway if it does not have access roads and has the scenic characteristics of most of U.S. Highway 281 through the City of Bulverde in its present condition. Basically, parkways are greener than other roadways and do not have frontage roads with all the commercial and signage clutter such as that found along Interstate Highway 35 and the portions of US. Highway 281 with access roads south of the City of Bulverde.

The Steering Committee envisions the portion of U.S. Highway 281 within the city limits of the City of Bulverde to be a parkway. Some members wondered if we cannot prevent commercial development along 281, and should actually promote it to take advantage of potential property and sales tax revenue. However the majority of the Infrastructure/Transportation Subcommittee prefers shopping nodes at intersections rather than strip retail/commercial development along frontage roads. Thus, the City should discourage the installation of frontage roads in the future along this portion of the highway.

### **Major Arterials**

Major or primary arterials move large volumes of traffic between major traffic generators and land use concentrations across the community, and they also serve as connections to other urbanized areas. A secondary function of a primary arterial is to provide direct access to abutting property such as commercial and retail establishments.



State Highway 46 west of U.S. Highway 281

According to the City of Bulverde Subdivision Ordinance, major “thoroughfares” in Bulverde must have 120 feet of Right-of-Way (ROW) and 48 to 72 feet of pavement, and be designed for 60 mph traffic. Such a speed is quite unimaginable for the section of Highway 46 near the Comal ISD schools and HEB shopping center. This reinforces the need for a Highway 46 bypass which may become more critical if Highway 46 becomes a shortcut or alternate route for vehicles on Interstate 10 that want to avoid San Antonio. If such a bypass were installed, the present Highway 46 could be converted into a parkway type thoroughfare with landscaped medians and turning lanes. In actuality, the major arterials in Bulverde have ROW widths as designated by the Texas Department of Transportation and Comal County. Currently the ROW planned for Highway 46 is 160 feet and provides for an ultimate roadway section of a 6-lane divided facility with a 96’ pavement width. The primary arterials within the

City of Bulverde along with 2003 traffic volumes are as follows (shown in **red** on Figure 6.1):

- State Highway 46
- Farm/Market 1863 east of U.S. Highway 281

### Minor Arterials

Minor or secondary Arterials typically serve as connections between local/collector streets and major arterials and move relatively large volumes of traffic over shorter distances within the community. Direct access to abutting property is a secondary function. According to the Subdivision Ordinance, these facilities typically must have 86 feet of ROW for an ultimate roadway section with 48 feet of pavement. The following are the secondary arterials within the City of Bulverde (shown in **orange** on Figure 6.1):



- Smithson Valley Road
- Stahl Lane
- Bulverde Road
- Amman Road (*shown at right*)
- Blanco Road
- Spring Branch Road
- Casey Road

### Collector Streets

Collector Streets provide for the transition from higher speeds and traffic volumes to lower speeds and traffic volumes accessing abutting land uses. Collector streets typically connect residential areas, parks, churches, etc., with arterial streets and move traffic over shorter distances than a secondary arterial. According to the Subdivision Ordinance and as outlined in Table 5.5 in Chapter 5, there can be two types of collectors in the city: *rural* with 72 feet of ROW and 40 feet of pavement, and *urban* with 72 feet of ROW and 44 feet of pavement. Consideration should be given to lowering these pavement minimums (See Section 1 in Chapter 5). The following are collector streets within the City of Bulverde (shown in **green** and **yellow** on Figure 6.1):

- Old Boerne Road
- River Way (*shown at right*)
- Bridlegate Drive
- John Charles Road
- Circle G Ranch



## Local Streets

Local streets are all the remaining roads within the City of Bulverde and function to provide access to abutting property and to distribute traffic to collectors and arterial streets. Currently local streets can be either *rural* locals with a minimum ROW of 60 feet and pavement of 22 feet, or an *urban* local with a minimum ROW width of 50 feet and minimum pavement width of 30 feet. Again, see Chapter 5 for a discussion of alternate widths for local streets.

## 6.5 Air Transportation

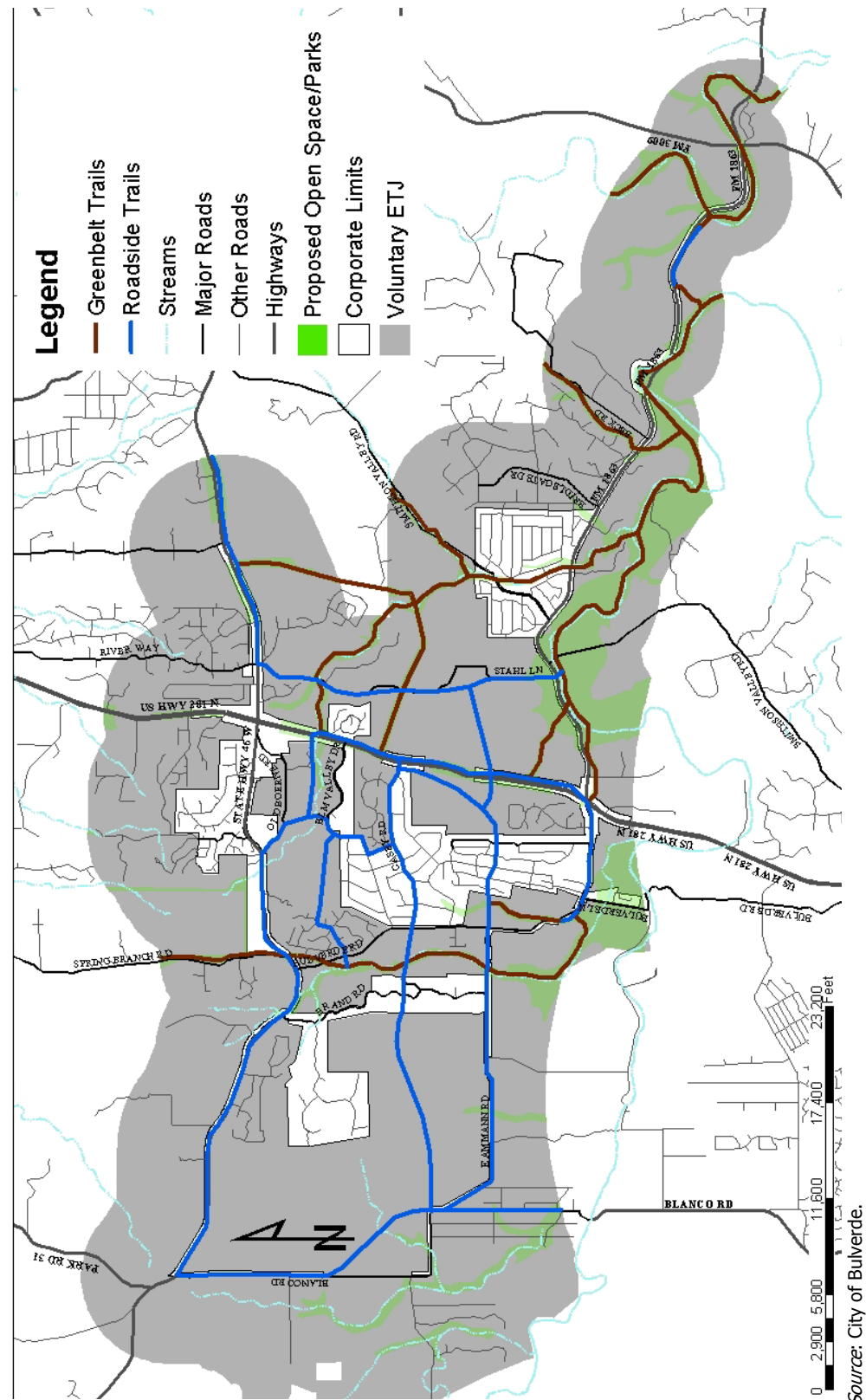
The San Antonio International Airport provides convenient air transportation for the citizens of the Bulverde area. The airport is located only twenty miles from the City of Bulverde on San Antonio's north side with direct access from US Highway 281. There are fourteen air carriers serving the San Antonio Airport: Aerolitoral, American Airlines, America West, Continental, Continental Express, Delta and Delta Connection carriers (ASA, Comair and Skywest), Mexicana, Midwest, Northwest, Southwest, and United. Airlines provide non-stop flights to 28 destinations including Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago O'Hare, Cincinnati, Dallas-Fort Worth, Dallas-Love Field, Denver, El Paso, Guadalajara, Harlingen, Houston Intercontinental, Houston Hobby, Kansas City, Las Vegas, Nevada, Los Angeles, Memphis, Mexico City, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Monterrey, Nashville, Newark, Orlando, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, St. Louis and Tampa. Air cargo service is provided by Aeroground Services Inc., Airborne, Baron Aviation, Eagle USA, Air Freight, Federal Express, Integrated Airline Services Inc., Lone Star Overnight, Prime Time LTD, and United Parcel Service. At the end of 2002 San Antonio International Airport had an average of 248 daily domestic and international departures and arrivals, a total of 3,249,469 passenger enplanements per year, and a total of 234,417 aircraft landings and take-offs during that time.

## 6.6 Alternative Transportation

Walking and biking can be practical alternatives to driving, especially for short trips, and can contribute greatly to a community's quality of life and personal well-being. Pedestrian and bike improvements to intersections, roadways and sidewalks and separate hike and bike trails can improve access and safety for people who choose to use these modes of transportation. Support of alternative modes of transportation can help relieve congestion, provide recreational opportunities, and reduce vehicle emissions thus helping to improve the region's air quality.



### Figure 6.2 City of Bulverde Hike and Bike Plan





Currently, there are no bikeways in the City, yet many cyclists enjoy the country lanes in and around the City of Bulverde. Establishing bikeways would introduce a new transportation mode within the city limits and provide safe routes for existing and future riders. Bikeways can be utilized for recreation purposes and on paved roadways to connect residential areas with work and retail areas. A network of hike and bike trails can also be established along creeks, utility easements or public land. The Comprehensive Plan prioritizes trails or “bike paths” separated from roadways. These are dedicated bikeways whereas “bike lanes” are usually a part of a road, either in place of or in addition to the shoulder. The latter are designated by signs, striping and bicycle-shaped pavement symbols.

Since July 1998, Comal County Trails (CCT), a citizens group from New Braunfels, has been working with the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service on a plan for hiking and bicycle trails in Comal County. A series of public meetings and workshops resulted in the identification of corridors that trail supporters would like to see developed for use by pedestrians and bicyclists. Most of the proposed trails would serve recreation and transportation purposes. However, several on-street routes would be intended mainly for bicycle transportation. With a grant from the National Park Service, CCT produced a brochure that includes a map of the group’s vision for the trail system. In addition to the CCT, the San Antonio Wheelmen promote bicycling and bicycle education in the region.

Sidewalk linkages are necessary for pedestrians to access schools and other destinations. The Subdivision Ordinance calls for sidewalks along urban locals, urban collectors and minor and major thoroughfares. Sidewalks can link neighborhoods with other neighborhoods, parks, shopping and employment centers. Complete sidewalks are missing around many of the schools as well as pedestrian signals and crosswalks. A network of sidewalks is necessary to encourage citizens to walk to their destination.

## ***6.7 Air Quality***

Air pollution is a problem facing most rapidly growing areas which can be alleviated by alternative transportation systems. Ozone is a colorless, odorless gas that occurs both in the upper atmosphere and at ground level. The ozone that occurs in the upper atmosphere protects the earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation. Ground level ozone is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOCs) react chemically with nitrogen oxides (NOX) in the presence of sunlight, and is more prevalent during hot summer weather. VOC's come from things that evaporate like gasoline, paint fumes, lighter fluid and consumer products. NOX is emitted from motor vehicles, power plants and other sources of combustion like gas-powered lawn equipment. High accumulations of ground level ozone can be harmful to health in a number of ways, including irritation of the respiratory system, aggravation of asthma, and can cause headaches, nausea and eye irritation.

In Texas there are several areas classified as non-attainment areas for ozone under the Federal Clean Air Act. Thus far, the San Antonio MSA has escaped such a designation. However, the area is close to exceeding the federal air quality limit for ozone. In order to qualify as an ozone attainment area, a region may not exceed maximum air pollution levels on more than three days during any three-year monitoring period. Failure to comply with air quality standards could result in the loss of federal transportation funds and restrictions on the growth of businesses in the region.

During the past several years, air quality planning in the San Antonio region has intensified since ozone concentrations have exceeded the values permitted in the 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). According to data from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), the three-year average of the fourth-highest eight-hour averaged ozone values recorded at CAMS 23 (an air monitoring station in northwest San Antonio) for 1997, 1998 and 1999 was 88 parts per billion. The three-year average of the fourth-highest eight-hour averaged ozone values recorded at CAMS 23 for 1998, 1999, and 2000 was 85 parts per billion. The three-year average for 2000, 2001, and 2002 was 88 parts per billion. All of these three-year averages are violations of the eight-hour ozone NAAQS. Areas formally designated in violation of the NAAQS and contributing to a violation are called "non-attainment areas."

Local elected officials, concerned leaders in business and industry, and other citizens committed to air quality planning have been working together to create an air quality plan for the citizens of the San Antonio region. In December 2002, the Air Improvement Resources Committee of the Alamo Area Council of Governments submitted a *Clean Air Plan* for the San Antonio Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (Bexar, Wilson, Comal and Guadalupe Counties). The EPA recommends that the MSA serve as the presumptive boundary for the 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards non-attainment areas. The Clean Air Plan was designed to enable a local approach to ozone attainment and to encourage early emission reductions that will help keep the region in attainment of the 1-hour ozone NAAQS and ensure attainment of the 8-hour ozone NAAQS, and so protect human health. Entities which are expected to endorse this Clean Air Plan are Bexar, Wilson, Comal and Guadalupe Counties, the cities of San Antonio, Floresville, Seguin and New Braunfels, the EPA and TCEQ, and the Alamo Area Council of Governments. The City of Bulverde should join with these entities in endorsing the Plan.

## **6.8 Summary**

A well-maintained and balanced transportation system can provide for a healthy, stable and pleasant City of Bulverde. A good transportation system should support the vital functions of a city by safely circulating people and goods around the community with minimal delays. It should offer a choice of travel modes without degrading the air quality or the environment. By maintaining and by providing timely upgrades to the existing roadway network, the City of Bulverde can continue to benefit from a safe and efficient means of transportation. Without that

connectivity, without context sensitive road design, and without providing alternative modes of transportation such as hike/bike facilities and sidewalks, the City of Bulverde can lose the vitality, accessibility and environment that contributes to its exceptional quality of life. A well maintained and thought out transportation system is not only needed to attract business, it is also needed to provide a safe and pleasing experience for the citizens of the City Bulverde and for those that travel through our city.

## ***6.9 Goals and Objectives***

**Goal 1:** Promote a transportation network that is safe and efficient while at the same time discourages high speeds, four-lane roads and heavy traffic within the City.

Objective 1.1: Develop a Transportation Master Plan that coordinates as well as possible with Comal County's Transportation Master Plan.

Objective 1.2: Review street and thoroughfare design standards with the intent of enabling aesthetically pleasing as well as safe roads.

Objective 1.3: Work more closely with the region's Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to ensure citizen input and coordination in future highway projects.

Objective 1.4: Work as closely as possible with TxDOT and the Comal County Road Department to ensure that their plans take into consideration the desires of the citizens of the City of Bulverde.

Objective 1.5: Investigate whether Road Utility districts (RUDs) and Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs) would be useful tools for improving the City of Bulverde's transportation network.

**Goal 2:** Support transportation alternatives to the automobile such as hike/bike networks and pedestrian circulation.

Objective 2.1: Promote carpool areas.

Objective 2.2: Work more closely with the region's MPOs to provide a multi-modal approach to project planning.

Objective 2.3: Support the implementation of Bike/Pedestrian pathways that would connect the various subdivisions throughout the City of Bulverde as well as promote the health and general well-being of the citizens of the City of Bulverde.

Objective 2.4: Develop transportation strategies that will reduce dependence on the automobile and continue to ensure the city's clean air quality.

Objective 2.5: Increase awareness of and encourage the use of alternative transportation options.

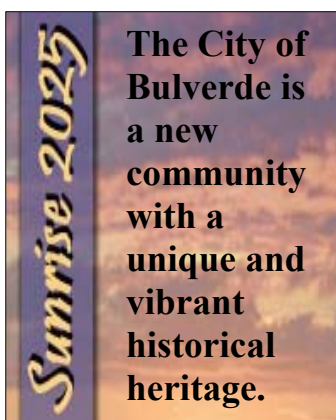
Objective 2.6: Support AACOG's Clean Air Plan for the San Antonio MSA.

Objective 2.7: Review subdivision standards and revise as necessary to encourage pedestrian/bicycle pathways/sidewalks within a development as well as their connectivity to pathways in other subdivisions.

## Historical/Heritage Preservation

### 7.1 Preserving the Bulverde Area's Heritage

The Bulverde area's historical heritage includes buildings, rock walls, windmills, and the beautiful landscape of creek-beds, hills and valleys, wildflowers, and live oak and other types of native trees. As mentioned in the first chapter of this Comprehensive Plan, the history of our community and the region is both unique and significant. This history should be seen as an important resource both for establishing an identity for the City of Bulverde and developing it as an attractive community that stands out from other suburban towns.



When asked about their vision for what the City of Bulverde should be, seventy-one percent of Comprehensive Plan survey respondents believe the City of Bulverde should be “a unique village type community with an identifiable center(s).” The City of Bulverde’s strengths mentioned in the open-ended section of the survey include the beauty and feel of the Hill Country and the small town/village charm. When asked about goal statements for the Comprehensive Plan, ninety-one percent chose “protect and enhance the natural environment,” and eighty-seven percent chose “protect and enhance the appearance of the community.” Both of these goal statements go hand-in-hand with the goal “protect and enhance historic sites” which was chosen by three out of four survey respondents. When asked to rate the quality of city services, only twenty-three percent of those surveyed thought the city was doing a good job of historic preservation.

There are many benefits to historical or heritage preservation. One is the town’s appearance - would you prefer a flat-faced modern office building or retail strip center, or an authentically restored or designed edifice; a strip mall fronted by a parking lot or a pedestrian-friendly retail district; a locally relevant restaurant or a generic fast-food building; a “McMansion” with a huge garage fronting the street or an



Spring-time in the Texas Hill-Country

early Texas-style house built with native materials such as stone, cedar, and metal roofing material?

Historical and heritage awareness creates more attractive places to live and work. The style and variety of historic places and landscapes make communities much better to look at and live in. Historic places tell a community where it came from - what previous generations achieved, what they believed, what they hoped to be. Historic landscapes are daily reminders of why we have come to love the place we call home. The beauty of the Hill Country is a treasure that only we can preserve with proactive planning. By protecting these reminders of the past, preservation also builds the present and the future, since it saves valuable resources and recalls a community's goals and dreams.



Restaurant in Fredericksburg



Restaurant in Anywhere, USA

The historical significance of our community, region and landscape, and the potential of the old-town area are assets for fulfilling the vision of Bulverde as an attractive, well preserved, historic, and culturally unique community. What have been the efforts at heritage preservation, and are there any programs available for use by our community? Just what are the Bulverde area's historical assets? What can be done to take advantage of these programs and resources? What can be done to enhance the old-town area and strengthen the mix of uses, utilizing its full potential? This Comprehensive Plan chapter attempts to address these questions and offers goals for achieving the answers.

## ***7.2 Ongoing Efforts and Programs***

Historic resources available in the Bulverde area and Comal County include historically significant buildings, sites, artifacts and landscapes as well as individuals and organizations with an active interest in preserving and enhancing the historic value of the community and region. These resources and the history that they represent play a significant role in strengthening the identity of the Bulverde area and Comal County as a region steeped in Texas history. According to the Texas Historical Atlas, resources located within Comal County include 11 National Register listed sites, seventy-four historical markers, five museums and one courthouse.



## The City of Bulverde and the Texas Heritage Travel Program

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) has a regional program, the Texas Heritage Travel Program, designed to magnify the state's heritage. On January 8, 2004 an organizational meeting was held at the River Crossing Golf Club. This meeting, hosted by the City of Bulverde, marked the beginning of an effort to bring Hill Country counties together. The owners of the club donated the use of their facilities, and the Guadalupe Valley Telephone Cooperative bought lunches for some 170 participants who came from seventeen of the nineteen counties in the region. On this very successful day, the City of Bulverde made its debut into the state's historical community.



Scenes from the January 8th Texas Heritage Trails meeting hosted by the City of Bulverde

The Heritage initiative is directed towards experiencing an area's unique heritage and culture through heritage tourism and appreciation. It does not exploit and change an area's attractions but rather highlights them for everyone's appreciation and thus helps document what makes a place special. It preserves and protects resources, develops partnerships for sustainability, and focuses on authenticity and quality, all things deemed very important in the Comprehensive Plan survey and by the Steering Committee's Historical/Heritage subcommittee.

Heritage Travel is designed to be a tool for quality economic development. As such, heritage awareness and preservation can help increase retail sales, property values and tax revenues as well as preserve the past. The Heritage initiative helps educate both residents and visitors about the area's history and traditions, and its planning protects landscapes as well as buildings - all historic, cultural and natural resources. It helps bring people together as was evidenced by so many people attending the January organizational meeting at the River Crossing Club. At their January 27<sup>th</sup>



meeting, the City of Bulverde City Council passed a resolution supporting the Texas Historical Commission's Heritage Travel program.

Currently the THC has six active trail programs: Brazos, Forest, Fort, Independence, Lakes and Plains Trails. As of the writing of this plan, efforts to organize the Hill Country Region have met with great participation from the region. The THC is currently accepting applications for four Trail Regions that include the Mountain, Pecos, Tropical and Hill Country regions. Efforts are currently underway to establish a Heritage Trails Regional Board for the Hill Country, appoint a Regional Coordinator, and conduct a historical resources inventory. The City of Bulverde is at the forefront of this effort.

### **Comal County Historical Commission**

The Comal County Commissioners Court has established the Comal County Historical Commission. It is fully sanctioned by the State of Texas and the eight member board has responsibility for all historic sites in Comal County. The City of Bulverde should consider working closely with this group to take advantage of much work already done and avoid duplicating preservation efforts.

### **Comal County Genealogy Society**

The purpose of the Comal County Genealogy Society is to create, foster and maintain interest among the citizens of Comal County in the genealogy and local history of the county and such genealogy as may be of interest to its members. The Society also seeks to preserve church, cemetery and land records, testamentary documents, diaries, manuscripts and other source materials, and to promote the exchange of ideas and collaborate in devising efficient methods of genealogical and historical research.

### **Certified Local Government Program**

The Certified Local Government (CLG) Program is a partnership with local governments, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) at the state level, and the National Parks Service (NPS) at the federal level, designed to assist communities preserve their heritage. Through the CLG Program, local governments may receive grant assistance, technical assistance and guidance in local preservation, as well as professional recognition and access to a nation-wide preservation information network. Currently Texas has forty cities and counties in the CLG program. These include Abilene, Arlington, Beaumont, Grapevine, Kingsville, Palestine, Plano, Tyler and Hays County.

In order to qualify for CLG status, a municipal government must adopt and enforce a preservation ordinance, establish a qualified review commission, maintain a system for surveying and inventorying historic properties, and provide for public participation in the historic preservation process. As evidence of the City of Bulverde's interest in historic/heritage preservation and appreciation, efforts have already been undertaken during this comprehensive planning process to develop and adopt an acceptable historic preservation ordinance.

### 7.3 Resources

One of the first steps in historical/heritage preservation efforts is to conduct a community resources inventory. An example of priority ratings of such a survey are shown in Table 7.1. These ratings are essential for characterizing an area's sites and activities. The inventory should incorporate geographic locations of historic structures, archeological sites,



Stone and cypress barn in the area

activities, historic districts, types of resources and attractions, condition of the facilities and needs to be addressed. The inventory can also include museums, memorials/monuments, parks and recreation sites, scenic drives, and natural attractions.

Local resources are as diverse as the Bowling Club, the Festival at the Community Center, and "lost" communities in the Bulverde area. For example, Mustang Hill was a Comal County community near the present-day City of Bulverde settled in the 1880s when well-drilling machinery made possible water wells for farm and ranch homes. Herrera was a school community located on the Guadalupe Herrera survey near Cibolo Creek in western Comal County. In 1945 it was consolidated with the Bulverde school district. Honey Creek was named for the large numbers of honeybees near the creek and an abundance of an unusual limestone rock formation locally known as "honeycomb rock." In 1883 Honey Creek School was built and

**Table 7.1. Priority Rating of Historic Resources Survey**

PRIORITY: Criteria	Number of Features
Low: typical example of a common local building form, architectural style or type, with no identified historical associations; moderate to severely altered resource with reversible modifications that exemplifies a distinctive early building type or architectural style, or that has minor historical significance.	
Medium: contributes significantly to local history or broader historical patterns, but alterations have diminished the resource's integrity; significant example of architecture, engineering, or crafted design; outstanding example of a common local building form, architectural style or type; modern or recent landmark not old enough to be judged in a historical context.	
High: contributes significantly to local history or broader historical patterns; is an outstanding or unique example of architecture, engineering, or crafted design; retains a significant portion of its original character and contextual integrity; in some cases meets criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and/or is eligible for a Texas Historical Marker.	
<b>Total</b>	

Source: Texas Historical Commission.



The Hitzfelder House on FM1863 at Beck Road

served the community until it was consolidated with the Bulverde school district in 1945. Ufnau was a farming and stock-raising community settled as early as 1858 and located near present-day Bulverde.

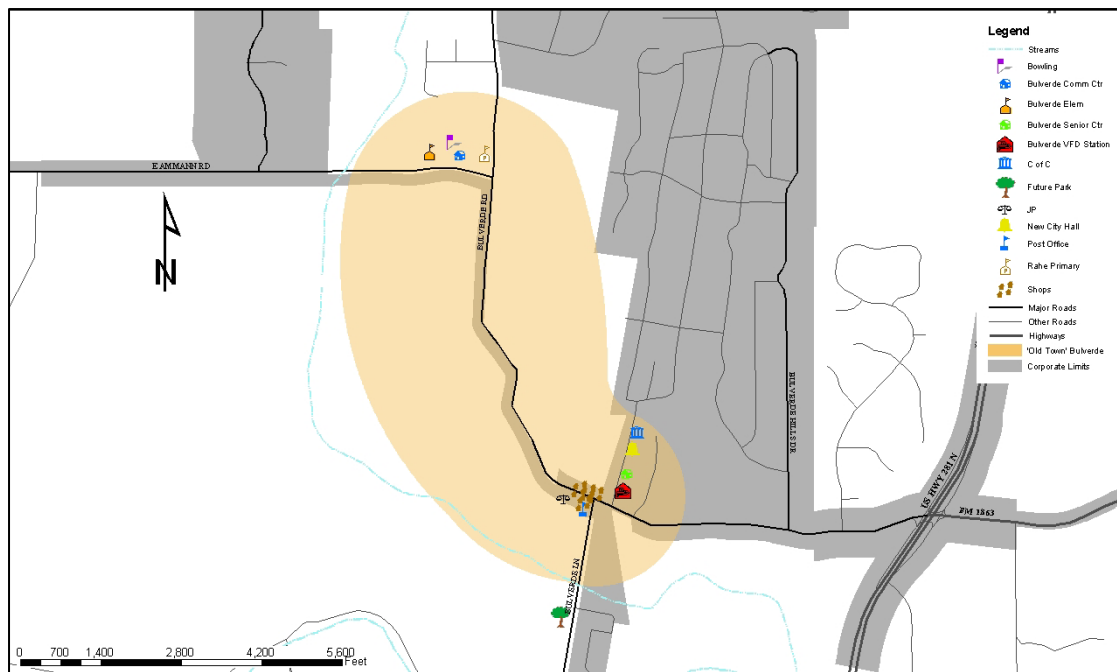
Cibolo Creek has a storied history that needs to be told. The Coahuiltecan Indians identified it as *Xoloton* and those of the Tonkawan linguistic family identified it as *Bata Coniquiyoqui*. In the late 1600's and early 1700's

Father Damian Massanet called the stream *Santa Crecencia*, while other explorers called it *San Ygnacio de Loyola* and *San Xavier*. The stream was also called *Arroyo del Cibolo* and *Río Cibolo*, and over time the term *Cibolo* gradually came to be applied to the entire area.

### The “Old-Town” Area

Another important resource that can serve to enhance the City of Bulverde's identity and reinforce its potential is the city's “old-town” area in the vicinity of Bulverde Road and Cougar Bend (See Figure 7.1). Old-town Bulverde has potential as a historically significant town-site that can be a place for citizens to gather and enjoy themselves as well as shop and dine. Community leaders and volunteers have an opportunity to help establish an area that will serve as a more relaxed and pedestrian-friendly center of activity in our city by encouraging multiple uses such as retail, entertainment and dining, government services, office space and housing, a true mixed use neighborhood. Making downtown more attractive and pedestrian-friendly will help cause people to stay and walk around, thus making it a more vibrant place. In turn this activity will be appealing to retail establishments that may consider locating in old-town Bulverde. The City should investigate the utility of establishing an historic overlay zone to facilitate this goal. Historic zoning establishes special districts and works as an overlay zone. This means that the zoning does not affect the land use restrictions set by a broader comprehensive land use plan, but instead, the historic significance overlays or is in addition to the existing use district. For example, sign standards could be different in an historical overlay zone than from the rest of the community.

**Figure 7.1. The City of Bulverde's Potential “Old-Town” Overlay Zone**



Source: City of Bulverde.

## 7.4 Historic Preservation Plan

Once historic sites are identified, they can be preserved and enhanced. At the very least they should be kept from falling into disrepair. A key tool to identify and help restore these sites is a historic preservation plan. Such a plan should be developed in order to identify strategies to preserve the Bulverde area's unique historic resources. Implementation of the historic preservation plan could include designating historic districts, establishing a historic preservation review board, consistent design standards for historic areas or districts, and designing flexible regulations and incentives for the rehabilitation of historic properties. The plan should also include recommendations for capitalizing on these historic resources as symbols of our heritage.

A historic ordinance should address critical issues that affect historic resources. These can include traffic/automobile dominance, design guidelines, surface parking lots, signage, and street amenities. Related ordinances that can promote historic preservation include tax incentives, a tree and shrub ordinance, and sign and design ordinance.

Many Texas communities use historic preservation plans to address the neglect and alteration of historic areas, buildings and the destruction of heritage landscapes with sprawling subdivisions and strip commercial development. A variety of activities can be included in the plan and used to increase public awareness of the value of a community's historical resources and encourage and assist with preservation efforts. These activities can include developing self-guided tours of historic structures/sites,

area ranches and country lanes with rural landscapes, publishing brochures on the history of the community and region, offering advice and incentive programs to those who are restoring historic properties or building structures using the historical vernacular, and spearheading restoration projects.

The preservation plan could include strategies needed to establish the old-town area as an attractive place for both locals and visitors. These strategies could begin with identifying the stakeholders in the old-town area's revitalization, including merchants, property owners, residents, customers, and government representatives, and bringing them together so that they can express their concerns and discuss them with others. An organization can then be created, either formally or informally, to oversee the continuing development of an implementation plan, and to represent the stakeholders on old-town development issues. The planning process would include conceptualizing the overall design and physical improvements for downtown, conducting a market analysis to be used as a tool in recruiting retail businesses, initiating design guidelines, and generating ideas for special events and promotions. Such a plan should also encourage a mix and variety of land uses as well as a strategy for dealing with parking issues.

## ***7.5 Summary***

The preservation of our community's heritage can enrich the lives of residents, neighborhoods, and the City of Bulverde as a whole. The historic resources in the Bulverde area and Comal/Kendall counties rival any other areas in Texas. Our historic fabric must be protected and preserved to ensure that it is available for future generations. These resources can also have aesthetic and economic benefits for the City of Bulverde.

## ***7.6 Goals and Objectives***

**Goal 1:** Preserve and enhance the Bulverde area's heritage.

Objective 1.1: Prepare a historic preservation plan.

Objective 1.2: Prepare a historic preservation ordinance.

Objective 1.3: Establish a Historic Overlay Zone with design guidelines to coordinate commercial signage.

Objective 1.4: Establish a Historical Society.

Objective 1.5: Investigate the possibility of pursuing the Texas Historical Commission's Certified Local Government designation.

Objective 1.6: Work closely with the Comal County Historical Commission and other established groups that work to preserve the history and heritage of the area.

**Goal 2:** Preserve and enhance historic and archeological sites and other unique aspects of the community.

- Objective 2.1: Identify, preserve, procure and promote historical structures, documents, artifacts, traditions, photographs and memorabilia that demonstrate the historical heritage of the City of Bulverde.
- Objective 2.2: Preserve old rock fences, windmills, etc. and encourage new building of old style rock fences, windmills, etc.

**Goal 3:** Improve communication and interaction in Bulverde.

- Objective 3.1: Install directional signs to “old town”, Spechts, Anhalt, etc.
- Objective 3.2: Install a community sign to tell about upcoming events.
- Objective 3.3: Begin a column in the newspaper that would be an old-fashioned “gossip” column.
- Objective 3.4: Set up a notice tree for schools, town activities, City Council, churches and social activities.
- Objective 3.5: Investigate the possibility of establishing a Bulverde radio station.
- Objective 3.6: Establish story-telling programs to tell the history of Bulverde (oral history).
- Objective 3.7: Establish some form of town crier, maybe [www.towncrier.com](http://www.towncrier.com).

**Goal 4:** Develop the Bulverde area’s historical and natural assets for the citizens’ enjoyment and for potential nature/heritage tourism.

- Objective 4.1: Establish the City of Bulverde as an integral part of the Texas Heritage Trails program.
- Objective 4.2: Identify old established ranches and establish a “Ranch trail.”
- Objective 4.3: Set up a committee to explore ideas of how to use Cibolo Creek, currently an untapped resource. Activities such as day camps, and arrowhead searches can point out the creek played a huge part in the settlement of this area.
- Objective 4.4: Prepare an old-town revitalization/enhancement plan and incorporate it into the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) process.
- Objective 4.5: Establish a museum, even if in small or temporary quarters. This would encourage donations of documents, photos and/or antiquities.
- Objective 4.6: Promote participation in local events such as “Jubilee”, reenactments, period dress, old settler “wagonneers”, hunters’ “black powder contests”, farmer’s markets, etc.
- Objective 4.7: Study the success of other suburban towns to get ideas on how to help us “stand out from the crowd” and not become just ‘that town’ north of San Antonio.
- Objective 4.8: Promote and preserve locally owned small businesses that serve the needs of the city.
- Objective 4.9: Involve schools in historical projects to create interest and a bond with the area’s youth.



**Goal 5:** Manage the future growth of the City of Bulverde to preserve the heritage and character of the community.

Objective 5.1: All future development should acknowledge the scale and character of the City of Bulverde.

Objective 5.2: Encourage architecture consistent with the “old hill country” style, especially in those areas that are designated historic.

Objective 5.3: Encourage walkways and bicycle paths for easy access.

Objective 5.4: Ensure that future roads and road improvements take into consideration the rural and village ambiences of Bulverde and not just the rapid movement of vehicles.

## Economic Development

### 8.1 The Bulverde Area's Economy

Economic growth is needed to help create job opportunities, provide a variety of goods and services, and be the foundation for a tax base that can sustain a community while alleviating the tax burden placed upon residential property owners. Economic development has become so important that communities can no longer afford to leave it to chance. This chapter addresses the economy of the Bulverde area as well as institutions having an economic impact, and what steps the City of Bulverde should take to maximize its economic well-being in the future.



In the summer of 2003, the Economic Development Subcommittee met and discussed the state of the City of Bulverde's economy and the possibility of forming an Economic Development Corporation (EDC) for Bulverde. The Development Corporation Act of 1979 allows municipalities to create nonprofit organizations called Development Corporations that can promote business development within the municipality and its vicinity. In 1989, the Texas Legislature amended the Act by adding Section 4A, allowing communities to levy a sales and use tax of one-eighth to one-half percent dedicated to economic development. More recently, House Bill 2912 restricted economic and community development corporations from funding retail projects. Industrial and commercial projects that create primary jobs must be the focus of an EDC's efforts. In the City of Bulverde's case, however, there is no room left for

adding a one-eighth to one-half percent sales and use tax (see Table 8.1). State law limits the collection of local sales and use tax to no more than two percent for a total sales tax rate of 8.25 percent.

**Table 8.1. Sales Tax Rate for the City of Bulverde - 2004**

Tax	Rate
State Sales tax	.06250
Bulverde City Tax	.01000
Comal County tax	.00500
Bulverde Area Library District Tax	.00500
Total	.08250

Source: Window on State Government, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

At the meeting, subcommittee members asked questions like “What do new businesses and residents look for in a community?” and “What kinds of businesses do we want to attract?” They agreed that business managers are looking for quality housing, good schools, a nearby hospital, infrastructure, an available and skilled workforce, an environmentally friendly and permit friendly government (not easy but clear), an inventory of property, a sound transportation network, and stability. As for the “target market”, they concluded that unique and distinct niches can be pursued in preplanned areas of the community, but the citizens have to be open to well-managed growth. Target industries include retail, recreation, entertainment, low impact light industrial and institutional entities. Retail is the target area that should be the first and most conducive to develop as the population increases. It is also the most natural way to increase sales tax revenues and the community’s future ability to fund the city’s budget as well as an Economic Development Corporation via the sales tax. Subcommittee members selected action items that include locating sites for potential development, surveying the available infrastructure, and determining areas where permitting can be streamlined. They also noted the advantages of working with the Institute for Economic Development at the University of Texas at San Antonio. The Institute provides technical, research, training and information assistance to local governments, EDC’s and Chambers of Commerce in central and south Texas.

Many issues affect the ability of a city to attract desirable businesses, ranging from quality of life, taxation and development costs, and workforce availability. The community’s desire to attract businesses and diversify the tax base will be an ongoing endeavor. Challenges related to growth and development will occur in the future, and proper solutions, as well as comprehensive planning, will serve to improve the stability of the economy.

## ***8.2 Employment***

The major employment classifications for the Alamo Workforce Development Area (WDA) for 2003 are listed in Table 8.2. The Alamo WDA includes Comal, Kendall and Bexar counties along with Atascosa, Bandera, Frio, Guadalupe, Karnes, Kerr, Medina and Wilson counties. The largest employment classifications are Trade-Transportation-Utilities, Local Government, and Education-Health Services. In terms of annual payroll, Trade-Transportation-Utilities is the largest employment classification with Local Government and Financial Activities being the second and third largest. The average payroll per Financial Activities employee is almost twice as much as that for Trade-Transportation-Utilities employees. Financial Activities jobs are the “best-paying” in the area. Professional and Business Services and Leisure and Hospitality are other industries that employ significant numbers of people. Slightly more than one of ten persons (10.9%) employed in the Alamo WDA work in the Leisure-Hospitality category. Unfortunately, these are the lowest paying jobs in the area with that industry category’s payroll accounting for only 5.1% of the area’s total payroll.

**Table 8.2. Quarterly Employment and Wages, Alamo Workforce Development Area, 2003**

Alamo WDA	Firms	No. of Employees	% of Total Employees	Total Wages (\$1,000s)	% of Total Payroll	Avg Weekly Wages
Natural Resources & Mining	644	5,826	0.8%	\$53,138	0.9%	\$702
Construction	3,806	43,039	5.6%	\$ 331,072	5.4%	\$ 592
Manufacturing	1,554	51,243	6.7%	\$455,192	7.4%	\$683
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	6,738	139,036	18.2%	\$991,933	16.2%	\$549
Information	470	23,509	3.1%	\$327,761	5.3%	\$1,072
Financial Activities	3,134	60,639	8.0%	\$815,743	13.3%	\$ 1,035
Professional & Business Serv	5,569	87,306	11.4%	\$ 689,905	11.2%	\$608
Education & Health Services	3,966	95,647	12.5%	\$ 698,285	11.4%	\$ 562
Leisure & Hospitality	2,961	83,636	10.9%	\$ 313,646	5.1%	\$ 288
Other Services	4,187	23,906	3.1%	\$124,043	2.0%	\$ 399
State Government	209	19,409	2.5%	\$ 161,079	2.6%	\$ 638
Local Government	417	101,492	13.3%	\$828,667	13.5%	\$ 628
Federal Government	145	29,575	3.9%	\$ 344,641	5.6%	\$ 896
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,080</b>	<b>764,852</b>		<b>\$6,138,443</b>		<b>\$617</b>

*Source:* Tracer Texas Labor Market Information, Employment and Wages – UI Covered, [www.tracer2.com](http://www.tracer2.com). Alamo Workforce Development Area includes Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Comal, Frio, Karnes, Kendall, Kerr, Guadalupe, Medina, Frio and Wilson counties.

According to the Texas Workforce Commission, the top twenty major employers in the Alamo Workforce Development Area are:

- Alamo Community College
- Bexar County Hospital District
- Citicorp Data Systems Inc.
- City Public Service Board
- Columbia HCA Healthcare Corporation
- Department of Defense
- HEB Grocery Company
- Labor Ready Central III
- North East Independent School District
- Northside Independent School District
- Postal Data Center
- San Antonio Independent School District
- City of San Antonio
- Texas Association of Counties
- USAA
- University of Texas San Antonio
- University of Texas Health Sciences Center
- VHS Acquisition Subsidiary
- Wal-Mart Associates, Inc.

Major employers in Comal County include:

- Comal Independent School District (2,000 employees)
- H E Butt Grocery Company
- Checks in the Mail
- Eden Home
- Gristmill Restaurant
- Lightning Metal Specialties
- McKenna Health Management
- Mission Valley Fabrics
- New Braunfels Independent School District
- PSP Industries
- River Gardens
- Silverleaf Vacation Club
- Symons Corporation
- Target
- Texas Industries
- The Coleman Company
- The Scooter Store
- Wal-Mart
- Waterpark Management

Table 8.3 illustrates that the rate of total employment growth for Bexar, Comal and Kendall counties as well as the Alamo and Rural Texas Workforce Development Areas, and the State of Texas. Two of the top three entities with the greatest percent increases from 1990 to 2003 are Comal and Kendall counties. For all three counties (Bexar, Comal and Kendall), employment growth outstripped population growth, especially in Kendall County.

**Table 8.3. Total Employment Comparisons, 1990-2003**

Entity	1990	2003	Percent Change Employment	Percent Change Population
Bexar County	522,805	696,491	33.2%	22.9%
Kendall County	7,257	17,771	144.9%	79.3%
Comal County	24,394	43,290	77.5%	65.0%
Alamo WDA	657,708	905,100	37.6%	
Rural Capital	167,164	305,630	82.8%	
State of Texas	8,091,627	10,335,099	27.8%	29.6%

*Source:* Tracer Texas Labor Market Information, Employment Rates and Labor Force, [www.tracer2.com](http://www.tracer2.com). Population percentages based on 1990 U.S. Census and Texas State Data Center Population Estimates for Texas Counties, January 2003.

The Texas Workforce Commission provides employment projections by industry for the year 2010 for the State as a whole and for the various Workforce Development Areas in the State. Table 8.4 gives industry category projections for the Alamo WDA and compares the percentage increases (or decreases) for each category to that for the State of Texas. In the Alamo WDA, employment growth in the Communications-Utilities category will be approximately 50 percent greater than

that for the State of Texas, while employment growth in the Government category will be less than half that growth rate for the State. Table 8.5 also compares the Alamo WDA projection for the total of all industries with those for the Capital and Rural Capital WDAs. The Alamo WDA has the highest projected growth rate in annual average employment of the other two WDAs and the State.

**Table 8.4. Alamo WDA Employment Projections by Industry 2000 - 2010**

Industry	2000 Employ	2010 Employ	Change	% Change	% Texas
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	25,240	27,020	1,780	7.1	10.3
Mining	2,850	2,670	-180	-6.3	-4.1
Construction	42,090	48,370	6,280	14.9	15.8
Manufacturing	58,220	62,760	4,540	7.8	9.6
Transportation	25,140	29,500	4,360	17.3	17.0
Communications and Utilities	19,350	23,690	4,340	22.4	15.7
Wholesale Trade	34,260	39,160	4,900	14.3	12.9
Retail Trade	155,400	182,290	26,890	17.3	15.2
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	52,970	59,930	6,960	13.1	12.2
Services	315,810	413,090	97,280	30.8	26.7
Government	68,510	73,040	4,530	6.6	15.4
<b>Total All Industries</b>	<b>858,960</b>	<b>1,026,590</b>	<b>167,300</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>17.6</b>

Source: Tracer Texas Labor Market Information, Employment Rates and Labor Force, [www.tracer2.com](http://www.tracer2.com).

**Table 8.5. Employment Projections for 2010**

Workforce Development Areas	2000	2010	Change	Growth Rate
Rural Capital <sup>a</sup>	186,190	217,920	31,730	17.0%
Capital (Travis County)	586,450	691,320	104,870	17.9%
Alamo <sup>b</sup>	858,960	1,026,590	167,630	19.5%
State of Texas	10,393,760	12,217,920	1,824,160	17.6%

Source: Texas Workforce Commission Labor Market Information Projections, [www.twc.state.tx](http://www.twc.state.tx).

a: Blanco, Llano, Burnet, Hays, Caldwell, Bastrop, Williamson, Lee; b: Karnes, Guadalupe, Comal, Kendall, Kerr, Bandera, Medina, Frio, Atascosa, Wilson.

The fastest growing industries in the Alamo WDA include:

- Commodity contracts brokers, dealers – 50%
- Computer and data processing services – 86%
- Automotive services except repair - 55%

The Texas Workforce Commission also projects growth in occupations, in addition to industries. For the Alamo Workforce Development Area, and for occupations



requiring one or two years of additional education beyond high school, the top ten occupations adding the most jobs in the next ten years and requiring an associates degree or postsecondary vocational education, include:

- registered nurses
- computer support specialists
- licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses
- automotive service technicians and mechanics
- medical records and health information technicians.

Of the top twenty-five fastest growing occupations requiring advanced education, twelve involve medical professions (e.g. respiratory therapy technicians, surgical technologists, etc.).

The fastest growing occupations percentage-wise from 2000 through 2010 include:

- Computer software engineers, applications – 108%
- Computer support specialists – 92.7%
- Computer software engineers, systems software – 92.7%
- Network and computer systems administrators – 86.4%
- Networks systems and data communications analysts – 72.3%

Occupations adding the most number of jobs include:

- customer service representatives - 6,150
- fast food preparers and serving workers - 5,550
- child care workers – 4,110
- cashiers – 3,520
- registered nurses – 3,320
- retail salespersons – 3,230

Table 8.6 compares the labor force, persons employed and the unemployment rates in the Alamo WDA to that of Comal County and the State of Texas. Again, the Alamo region and Comal County have lower unemployment rates than does the State.

**Table 8.6. Civilian Work Force & Unemployment Rates, 1990 - 2003**

Civilian Work Force	Alamo WDA		Comal County		State of Texas	
	1990	2003	1990	2003	1990	2003
Labor Force	705,773	956,567	25,791	45,504	8,620,440	11,066,977
Employed	657,708	905,100	43,290	24,394	8,091,627	10,335,099
Unemployed	48,065	51,467	1,397	2,214	528,813	731,878
Unemployment Rate	6.8%	5.4%	5.4%	4.9%	6.1%	6.6%

Source: Tracer Texas Labor Market Information, Employment Rates and Labor Force, [www.tracer2.com](http://www.tracer2.com).

### 8.3 Income

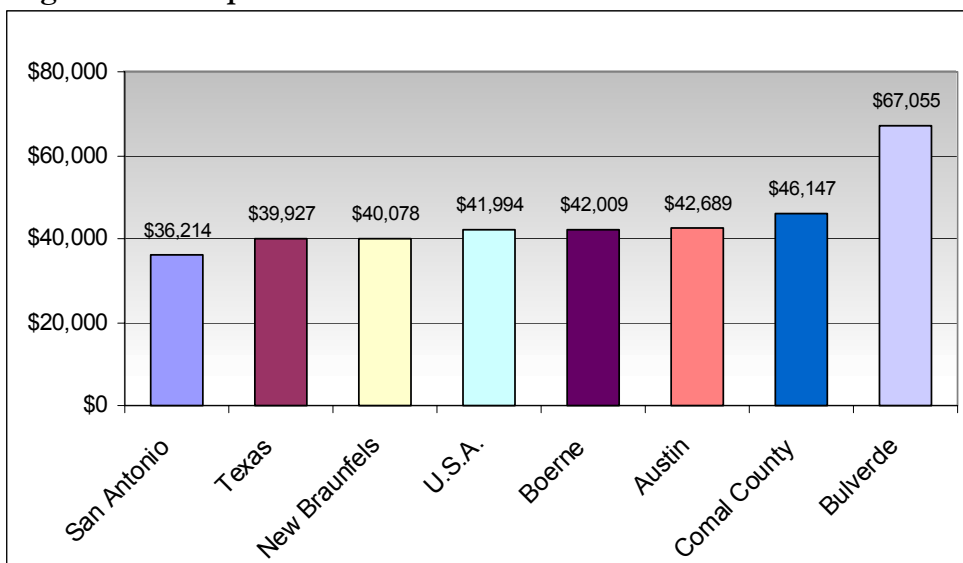
Per capita personal incomes for Comal County and nearby counties, the San Antonio and Austin Metropolitan Statistical Areas, the State of Texas and the U.S. are shown in Table 8.7. From 1990 to 2001, per capita income in Comal County rose 62.4 percent compared to 64.5 percent for the San Antonio Metropolitan Statistical Area. Travis County and the Austin-Round Rock MSA had the highest increases in the region at 80.4 percent and 74.4 percent respectively. Figure 8.1 graphically illustrates the median household incomes for the City of Bulverde and other nearby communities, counties, the State of Texas and the U.S.A. The median income for Bulverde is substantially higher than any of these other entities.

**Table 8.7. Income Comparisons, 1990-2001**

Entity	Per Capita Personal Income		Percent Change
	1990	2001	
Comal County	18,159	29,491	62.4
Kendall County	19,969	28,665	43.5
Bexar County	16,245	27,138	67.1
Guadalupe County	14,492	22,399	54.6
Travis County	19,550	35,267	80.4
San Antonio MSA	16,341	26,887	64.5
Austin MSA	18,066	31,511	74.4
Texas	17,446	28,472	63.2
United States	19,572	30,413	55.4

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Accounts Data.

**Figure 8.1. Comparisons of Median Household Incomes - 1999**



Source: 2000 U.S. Census, Summary Tape File 3, Table P53 – Median Household Income.

## 8.4 Cost of Living

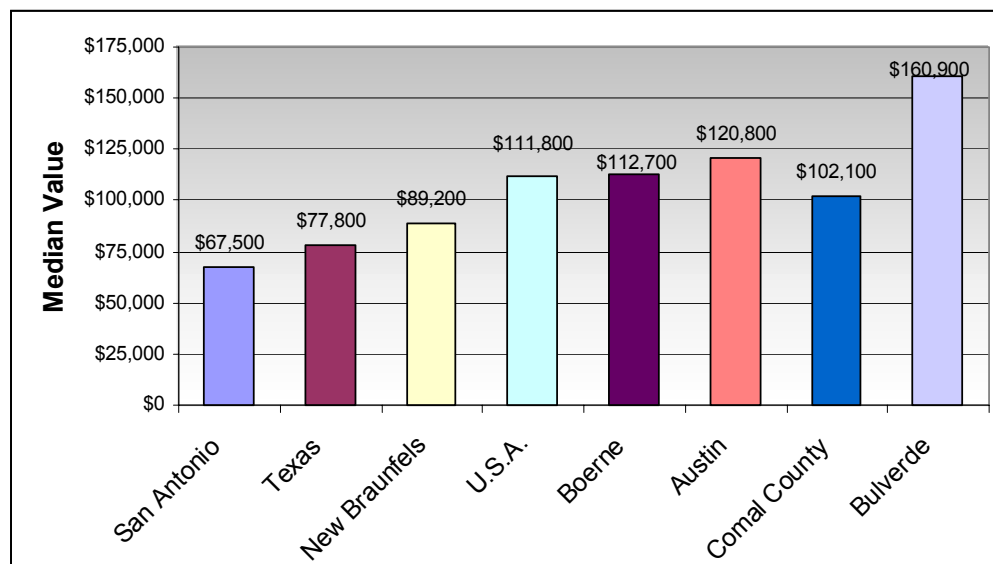
The cost of living is considered to strongly contribute to the “quality of life” in any community or region. Indeed, while incomes in Comal and Kendall Counties are slightly higher than the state average, the cost of living indices in the San Antonio Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which includes both of these counties, is lower than the index averages across all Texas metropolitan areas (see Table 8.8). For the San Antonio MSA only housing and miscellaneous goods/services are higher than the averages across all Texas MSAs. Indeed, housing is costly in the City of Bulverde as can be seen from Figure 8.2.

**Table 8.8. Cost of Living Comparisons, First Quarter 2003, U.S. Average=100**

Indices	San Antonio MSA	Austin MSA	Houston MSA	Dallas MSA	Across Texas MSAs	Percent Difference with U.S.
Composite Index-100%	91.4	96.2	95.3	98.4	93.1	-6.9%
Grocery Items 16%	88.0	93.3	92.8	98.4	90.4	-9.6%
Housing 31%	88.9	87.5	83.9	94.9	85.5	-14.5%
Utilities 8%	80.7	106.2	110.4	95.7	97.5	-2.5%
Transportation 10%	85.0	89.3	105.7	102.2	96.0	-4.0%
Health Care 5%	92.6	99.2	107.9	99.3	97.1	-2.9%
Misc. Goods/Services 30%	99.6	102.0	97.7	100.6	98.1	-1.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. *Statistical Abstract of the United States 2002*. Table 684, Pages 454-456; and BLS Consumer Price Index. “Percent Difference with U.S.” is the difference across Texas metropolitan areas with the averages for the United States.

**Figure 8.2. Median Value for Owner-Occupied Housing in Selected Cities, Comal County and the State of Texas**



Source: 2000 U.S. Census, Summary tape File 3, Table H85 – Median Value (Dollars) for All Owner-Occupied Housing Units.

Table 8.9 shows that the city, school and county property tax rates in the City of Bulverde are less than selected other cities in the area except for Boerne, which enjoys an exceptionally low school tax rate.

**Table 8.9. Comparison of City, School and County 2002 Property Tax Rates**

City	City	School	County	Total
New Braunfels	0.3711	1.8550	0.3337	2.5598
Hollywood Park	0.4179	1.7625	0.3210	2.5014
Garden Ridge	0.2489	1.8000	0.3337	2.3826
San Antonio	0.5785	1.7220	0.3210	2.6215
Boerne	0.4125	1.4300	0.3770	2.2195
<b>City of Bulverde</b>	<b>0.1487</b>	<b>1.8000</b>	<b>0.3337</b>	<b>2.2824</b>

*Source:* Survey of County Appraisal Districts.

## 8.5 Educational Attainment

Whenever quality of life is discussed within the community, the quality of education is consistently mentioned as a high priority. Quality schools and an educated workforce are key ingredients to achieving the vision and goals outlined in this chapter. Comal Independent School District serves the city and much of the surrounding county (See Section 1.5 *Education* in Chapter 1). There are numerous institutions of higher education within an hour's drive of the City of Bulverde. They include:

- University of Texas at San Antonio
- University of the Incarnate Word
- St. Mary's University
- Our Lady of the Lake University
- Trinity University
- Texas Lutheran University
- Texas State University-San Marcos
- Schreiner University in Kerrville
- University of Texas at Austin

Additionally, there are several community colleges in the region. These include:

- San Antonio College
- Northwest Vista College
- St. Philip's College
- Palo Alto College
- Austin Community College with seven locations in the Austin area
- Central Texas Vocational Training Center (not yet open)

Table 8.10 illustrates the City of Bulverde's high school graduation levels rank slightly lower than that of the state, while the percentage of residents with associate's degrees or bachelor's degrees is higher.

**Table 8.10. Years of School Completed, 2000**

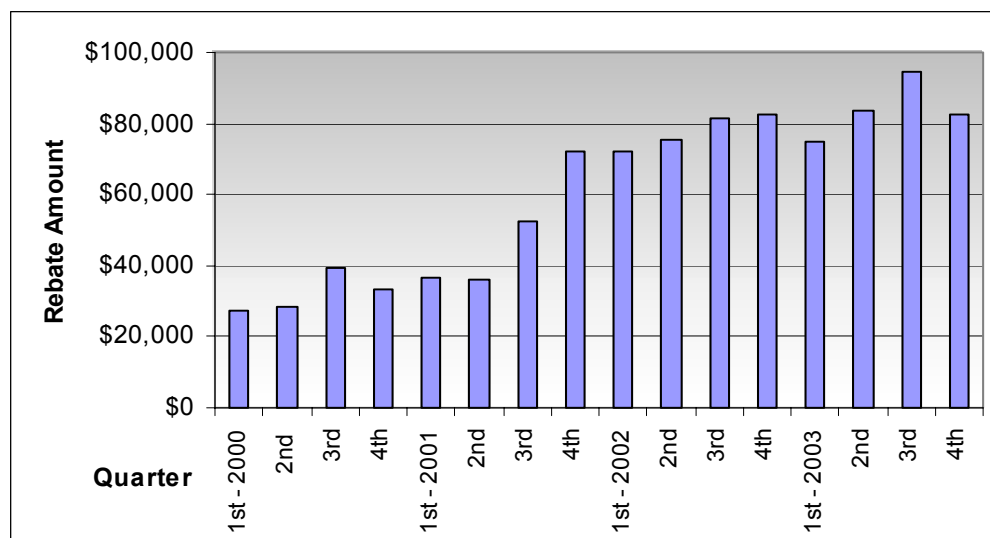
Level Attained	City of Bulverde	City of Boerne	City of Garden Ridge	City of New Braunfels	State of Texas
High school graduate	27.7%	22.8%	17.4%	30.0%	28.6%
Some college, no degree	31.1%	28.1%	23.9%	19.3%	21.1%
Associate degree	7.3%	5.0%	6.0%	4.0%	6.3%
Bachelor degree	18.8%	19.5%	27.3%	16.7%	15.5%
Graduate or professional degree	8.9%	10.0%	21.5%	7.9%	8.9%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, Summary Tape File 3, Table P37. Based on all persons 25 years of age and older.

## 8.6 Retail Sales

The City of Bulverde enjoys healthy sales tax revenue by serving as a retail center for western Comal County and the Canyon Lake region. Reportable taxable sales rebates have increased significantly over the past four years. As shown in Figure 8.3, total city sales tax rebates have more than doubled in ten years, from \$5.25 million in 1990 to \$13.46 million in 2000. This sector of the economy continues to thrive with the location of new retail establishments, restaurants and other businesses in the City of Bulverde that contribute to increased tax revenue. Much of the retail development is concentrated along State Highway 46 west of U.S. Highway 281. In November 2000, voters approved an additional ½ cent sales tax to support the Bulverde/Spring Branch library. Revenue is dedicated to a variety of projects that promote the library.

**Figure 8.3. Sales Tax Rebates for the City of Bulverde 2000 – 2003**

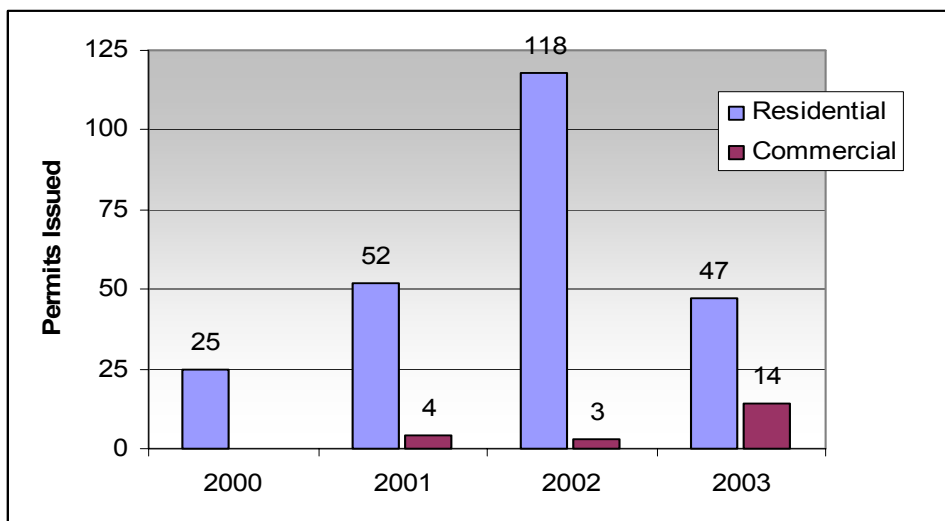


Source: City of Bulverde.

## 8.7 New Construction Activity and Property Valuation

There are only four years of new construction data based on building permits issued. Of particular interest are the dramatic drop in the number of residential permits issued in 2003 and the dramatic increase in the number of commercial building permits issued in 2003.

**Figure 8.4: Residential and Commercial Building Permits Issued 2000 - 2003**



Source: City of Bulverde.

## 8.8 Summary

The economy in the City of Bulverde is growing. City sales tax rebates have shown a steady upward trend over the past four years. Property values are high and residents of the city enjoy median household incomes substantially greater than nearby cities, Comal County and the State (see Figure 8.2). The regional economy is robust with employment projected to grow at a greater rate than the State. Future economic development strategies for the City of Bulverde should consider that many of the fastest growing occupations in the region are related to medical/health care and computer support. By planning for and managing the growth of the City of Bulverde, we can build a uniquely desirable place that will be attractive to the types of businesses and institutions that can contribute to the prosperity and attractiveness of our city.

## 8.9 Goals and Objectives

**Goal 1:** Promote appropriate economic development.

Objective 1.1: Develop a strategic economic development plan that includes goals, action items and timelines.



- Objective 1.2: Encourage balanced business and commercial development that reflects the Bulverde area's up-scale, hill country, and semi-rural ambience.
- Objective 1.3: Discourage heavy industrial development and the establishment of enterprises that are too large, produce overcrowding, excessive traffic and pollution.
- Objective 1.4: Enact ordinances to regulate allowable commercial/industrial uses.
- Objective 1.5: Determine areas and locate sites for potential development.

**Goal 2:** Diversify and expand the tax and economic base through the promotion of desired businesses and activities.

- Objective 2.1: Work to develop relationships/alliances with ED groups in the surrounding areas in order to collaboratively develop leads for Bulverde.
- Objective 2.2: Promote the attractiveness of the City of Bulverde to higher paying industries by improving cultural and recreational amenities.
- Objective 2.3: Use the Comprehensive Plan as a marketing piece to desirable business prospects.
- Objective 2.4: Tie into various incubator programs in the surrounding area to work with new business startups and market our area as a relocation option for these businesses.

**Goal 3:** Promote the City of Bulverde as an attractive center for retailing, health care, entertainment and education.

- Objective 3.1: Contact developers that have experience in our targeted businesses.
- Objective 3.2: Ensure that all future development fits into the scale and character of the City of Bulverde.
- Objective 3.3: Encourage architecture consistent with the old hill country style.
- Objective 3.4: Ensure that development policies, plans and procedures are conducive to a favorable business environment, and establish positive relations between business and government.
- Objective 3.5: Work with the Center for Economic Development at the University of Texas at San Antonio to enhance the City of Bulverde's ability to engage in economic development and sustain economic growth.

**Goal 4:** Involve the business community and the local Chamber of Commerce in the City of Bulverde's growth and development.

- Objective 4.1: Emphasize retaining and expanding local businesses. .

**Goal 5:** Develop the City of Bulverde's historical and natural assets to take advantage of heritage tourism in the Hill Country region.

Objective 5.1: Promote the small town business character and culture of the Bulverde area.

Objective 5.2: Prepare a downtown revitalization/enhancement plan and incorporate it into the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) process.

**Goal 6:** Foster a positive attitude towards growth and development among local government and business groups.

Objective 6.1: Support a network of communication that keeps residents informed, fosters cooperation with local and regional organizations, and enables the city to respond to opportunities.

Objective 6.2: Survey existing businesses to determine just what we have in the City of Bulverde and what are the wants and needs of these businesses.

Objective 6.3: Promote and preserve locally owned businesses that serve the needs of the citizens.

Objective 6.4: Determine ways the permitting process can be streamlined while remaining in compliance with regulations.

**Goal 7:** Plan for future infrastructure needs that will accommodate prospective businesses and activities.

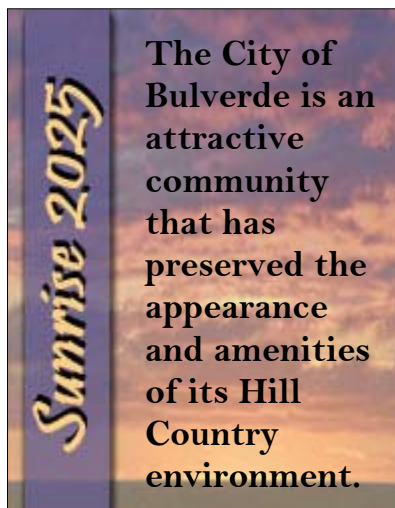
Objective 7.1: Conduct a survey of available and potential infrastructure.

Objective 7.2: Promote the development of a Capital Improvements Program that addresses the future infrastructure needs of a growing city.

## Community Development

### 9.1 Achieving a Vision

Community development relates to how citizens perceive their city, its visual characteristics, or how it is designed, if it is designed at all. The design quality of the built environment affects a city's image and attractiveness to people searching for high quality residential and business locations. An attractive and functional community is a fundamental requirement for long term quality of life.



New developments need to be integrated physically and visually with their surroundings, thus enriching the desirable qualities of a community. They need to strike a balance between the natural and man-made environment and utilize each site's intrinsic resources such as the landform, landscape and ecology. For projects to be desirable and well cared for, they must be economically viable, well-managed and maintained. This means understanding the market considerations of developers, ensuring long-term commitment from the community and local authority, selecting and using appropriate community development tools, and seeing this as part of an overall design process. By contrast, haphazard growth can destroy the amenities and visual appeal of the City of Bulverde's Hill-Country setting.

The Comprehensive Plan Survey, conducted in the summer of 2003, indicated that the most desirable things about living in the Bulverde area are the quiet/slow-paced living, the country/rural atmosphere, the beauty and "feel" of the Hill-Country, and the small town/village charm. Two lane roads, rock walls, open space, trees, natural vegetation, wildlife and dark skies are all ingredients of this atmosphere and charm; they are all unique and critical design elements that are at the core of the City of Bulverde's identity.

Nine out of ten survey respondents consider keeping the City of Bulverde attractive and preserving and protecting the environment important or very important. The same percentage feel that comprehensive plan goal statements related to community appearance, retaining the small town atmosphere and managing future growth are important or very important. Current residents have a very positive image of the City of Bulverde, and are willing to plan to maintain and enhance this image for themselves and future citizens.

But as the Steering Committee and citizens pointed out, the City of Bulverde is facing a transition from rural to urban. Rapid population growth is having an impact on the lifestyle of area residents, who understandably want to retain the amenities that attract people to the area in the first place. The City of Bulverde is a special place facing rapid growth, but there will be negative consequences if this growth is not managed. The citizens do not want the City of Bulverde to look like a continuation of San Antonio. Rather, they want to maintain the open, rural atmosphere and ensure that the natural beauty central to the community's identity is not lost.

Efforts at protecting and enhancing the quality and image of the City of Bulverde have already been made, but much more will need to be done. Community development is closely related to land use/development and growth management as discussed in Chapter 3, which outlined some alternative site development standards such as smart growth, rural urbanism, mixed use, 'rural by design' conservation developments, buffers and density/use gradients as growth management tools. This chapter focuses more on design elements and tools that affect all aspects of the community such as the look, feel and style of development - not just the pattern and direction of growth. This chapter will review and organize the planning tools already put forward in previous chapters in the context of community development and urban design. Other tools that can potentially be used to shape community development will be introduced and discussed, and finally specific goals to achieve the Community Development Vision on the previous page will be listed.

## *9.2 Good City Form - A Well-Designed Community*

For places to be used and well-loved, they must be safe, comfortable, and attractive. They also need to be distinctive and offer variety, choice and fun. Good design can reconcile the many interactive forces at work that shape a city's built form and open spaces, and it applies at every scale – the region, city, neighborhood and street. Urban design is the relationship between buildings, streets and open spaces – or all the features that make up the way a community looks and feels to its citizens and visitors. It is the nature and quality of all these elements, the relationship of one part of the town with other parts, the patterns of movement and activity which are thereby established, and finally the complex relationships between all the elements that make up the place we call home.

According to Kevin Lynch, some dimensions of good city form include:

- *Vitality* - Does the form of the community support the daily functions of its citizens?
- *Sense* - What makes the community distinct?
- *Fit* - Does the form of the community match the pattern and quantity of actions that people customarily engage in, or want to engage
- *Access* - Are residents able to safely and conveniently reach other persons, activities, resources, services and places?

- *Control* - Do local citizens make the decisions that determine their future?

Community design elements include:

- *Scale and Dimensions* – i.e. How wide are the streets? How far back are the houses/buildings set from the street? How much space is there between houses/buildings? How well does the scale of the trees match the scale of the street?
- *Texture* – i.e. How much variation is there in the design of houses/buildings? How much variation is there in the building setbacks? Are different land uses separated or mixed within a neighborhood? What elements of a house face the street (garage or front porch)? How does landscaping contribute to the street environment?
- *Linkages* - What is the structure of the street network? Where is parking located in commercial areas? Do sidewalks or paths link residential areas to commercial areas?
- *Activity* - What kinds of activities are located in the community? What kinds of open spaces does your community have? Where do you see people gathering or interacting? How does traffic impact your community?



Commercial space designed with quality in mind

### 9.3 Quality Development

Quality creates long-term value and more than pays for itself. Projects that incorporate high-quality design features are commonly believed to hold their value better and contribute to the quality of life of both the eventual users of the development and the entire community after the developer's role has ended. Quality yields the developer increased financial return – more profits, and gives him a competitive edge and faster absorption with increased public support. Quality development establishes an image, identity and sense of community for projects, and contributes substantially to the residents' perception of security, privacy and place, and long-term value. Perhaps most importantly, quality development encourages other developers new to the area to adopt higher design standards.

Quality development makes subdivisions into identifiable neighborhoods, reserves school sites within neighborhoods instead of on busy highways, and concentrates commercial development in compact centers or districts rather than in ugly and dangerous strips along freeway access roads. Quality development contributes to a sense of community and can include diverse elements such as native landscaping, balanced mix of uses, pathway systems, community newsletters, community events, uniform signage, entry features, community associations and thematic names for streets, etc. Finally, quality is defined in the vision of the community's citizens, expressed in their Comprehensive Plan, and achieved through implementation of that plan.

## **Rural Urbanism**

At a January meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Matt Bremer gave a presentation on development emphasizing a design approach that can be called *Rural Urbanism*, which combines the best of both urban and rural environments and brings together many of the elements that make up this Comprehensive Plan. We can develop the countryside and actually preserve it at the same time using context sensitive design. The slower "country life" is healthy. Narrow roads use less asphalt and mandate that traffic move slower. Slower roads go hand-in-hand with a country atmosphere.

Rural urbanism promotes thinking in terms of making communities with open spaces, a valuable asset to the citizens of the Bulverde area. The spatial relationships between open spaces, buildings, walls, etc. are crucial. This approach emphasizes the vernacular of building materials available in the Texas Hill Country (limestone, cedar, caliche, etc). Rather than use curbs and gutters for storm water collection, it emphasizes low impact development that focuses on slowing down drainage water so it can percolate into the soil, and eventually into the Edwards aquifer. With rural urbanism, the transportation network necessitated by inevitable growth is based on the person rather than solely on the automobile. The developer looks at the "lay of the land" and lays out the house lots to take advantage of the landscape and so few hardwood trees have to be removed. This is the kind of quality the citizens of the City of Bulverde want.

### *9.4 Tools for Quality Community Development*

To avoid the bland sprawl of most suburban communities, the City of Bulverde has available a vast selection of tools that can include open space requirements, phasing controls, Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), conservation easements, buffering, etc. As we select and use community development tools, it is important to remember that existing rules and regulations mostly tell developers what not to do. When they say what to do, it is in the form of minimum requirements. Why should our favorite places be planned and designed using minimum standards? Is this minimal approach capable of preventing things from getting worse as the Bulverde area continues to grow? The City of Bulverde can do better by focusing on fairly applied regulations and incentives to let developers know what we want.



To preserve and enhance the unique character that is the City of Bulverde, any additional design guidelines that are adopted should encourage and incentivize the integration of common design themes which complement local architecture and orient buildings onto the street to achieve a pedestrian-friendly and human-scale environment. There are many tools related to design and community development that the City of Bulverde can use to achieve these goals. Some have already been discussed in other chapters of this plan. Following is a review and discussion of those new tools and some new ones.

### Site Development and Architectural Standards/Design Review

Design review is simply the review and regulation of the design of buildings and their sites. Since buildings last a long time, design review can have significant long-range impacts on how a community develops. Many communities have adopted ordinances which provide for architectural design review. Like sign regulation, the standards or criteria to be applied may be included in the zoning ordinance or enacted separately. The existing zoning ordinance for the City of Bulverde addresses "Building Exteriors" in commercially zoned districts. Except for the use of glass, trim and moldings, all buildings in commercial districts "shall be composed of masonry materials, which are defined to include stone, stucco and brick." Ordinary cinder block and corrugated type metal roofing are not allowed.



Typically, a board is established to review designs in accordance with enumerated criteria including compatibility with the surrounding area, effect of allowing the design on neighboring property values, and certain stylistic features. When review is conducted by a well-qualified board, it can have a positive influence on community development. When standards incorporated in an ordinance and/or used by a review board are consistent with community preferences as expressed in a comprehensive plan, the chances that they will survive judicial scrutiny and be enforceable are greatly increased.



Typical big-box retail and well-designed Target Store

Most design guidelines are focused on commercial development. The following guidelines are designed to answer residents' desire for a more attractive community.

- A growing trend in communities across the country is the development of large retail, or "big-box", design standards. The cities of Fort Collins, Colorado, Tucson, Arizona, Easton, Maryland,

and Somerset County, New Jersey have already implemented design standards for large retail establishments. "Big-box" retail can be defined as large-scale retailers, such as Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, Kmart, or Home Depot, that occupy more than 50,000 square feet and derive their profits from high sales volumes. They may operate as stand-alone facilities, or more commonly they are located in a "power center." Power centers will usually have some common characteristic such as large rectangular single-story structures, a reliance on auto-borne traffic with large areas of parking and a no frills site plan with little unique community character, mixed-use and pedestrian amenities.



Shopping in Southlake and attractive office building in Bulverde

- Eliminate the flat facades of "big-box" stores and shopping centers through the use of architectural elements such as canopies, pediments, pilasters, recesses/ projections, turrets, display windows, window bays, and planters that incorporate landscaped areas and places for sitting.
- Orient buildings and shopping centers onto or closer to the street and other public spaces to achieve a pedestrian-friendly environment. Combine architecture with sound site design and landscaping to encourage pedestrian movement throughout the center.
- Limit off-street parking between the building and street, encouraging placement at the rear or side of the site.
- Limit or prohibit the amount of parking provided that is above and beyond the city's requirement. Most large retailers design their parking lots for peak demand, which usually occurs on only a couple of days around major holidays. For most of the year, vast portions of this stark sea of asphalt go unused.
- Increase landscape standards for new development, especially changing the requirements in parking lots to provide tree islands large enough for trees to survive and provide shade. Require pervious pavement for areas around trees, any overflow parking and possibly all parking areas.
- Require that mature trees be preserved and incorporated into a site's design when possible. This is addressed in the current zoning ordinance. Adoption of a tree preservation ordinance would ensure that mature trees, such as oak and pecan trees, are not sacrificed unnecessarily.

**Subdivision Regulations** (*discussed in Chapter 3*) can be used to positively affect the quality of community development. Conservation design preserves the open space so valuable to the citizens of Bulverde, and low-impact design standards manage storm water in way much less destructive of landscape amenities than traditional engineered approaches to drainage.

**Private Deed Covenants** (*discussed in Chapter 3*) are used extensively in the Bulverde area and afford the developer and residents a high degree of design control.

**Smart Growth** (*discussed in Chapters 3 and 5*) is an approach that encourages innovative site designs; protects open space that is culturally valuable; enables a variety of desirable development patterns including conservation, cluster, traditional neighborhood and infill; has architectural, landscape and signage standards that are integrated to the zoning provisions; and has a range of options above and beyond those allowed by conventional suburban codes.

**Zoning Methods** discussed in other chapters of this plan that can be applied to community design/development include:

- *Conservation or Cluster Developments (Chapter 3)* accommodates development while protecting the area's landscape qualities. By encouraging more usable open space, this kind of zoning thus protects the character of rural communities. A close relative in the zoning family to conservation/cluster zoning is density zoning. It offers flexibility to the city and developer in site design as long as overall density does not exceed the maximum allowed. It is also subject to a site-plan-review process.
- *Performance Zoning (Chapter 3)* allows for more innovation and flexibility in site and building design that may not be accommodated in more traditional zoning ordinances. Performance zoning is more effective in the preservation of natural features. The advantage of this kind of zoning is that performance standards are always measurable unlike subjective standards which only state a desired policy but cannot be enforced without making discretionary judgments.
- *Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) (Chapter 3)* gives the developer more design freedom when laying out a subdivision.
- *Transect Zoning (Chapter 3)* integrates the scales of planning, water quality and environmental issues and can facilitate development designs that are attractive, economically sustainable, environmentally sensitive, marketable and profitable.

**Zoning Methods** not yet discussed in this plan but that can be applied to community design/development include:

- *Aesthetic zoning* is designed to create, preserve and promote a particular architectural theme. Aesthetics has gained increasing acceptance in the courts as a legitimate reason to exercise police power.

- *Agricultural zoning* is primarily intended to retain productive agricultural or ranch lands, and is used as a means of preserving open space and preventing loss of aesthetic qualities, especially in rapidly urbanizing counties. Suitable large parcels of land are identified and designated as agricultural zones. Compatible land uses may be permitted as conditional uses such as recreation or low density residential. Regulations usually provide for a minimum building site of 20 to 30 acres.
- *Buffer areas (zones)* establish parcels of land to separate incompatible adjacent land uses such as commercial and residential. The buffer may be only 10 to 20 feet wide and include walls, fences, screen plantings, or berms to insulate adjoining properties from noise, traffic, or visual intrusions. The City of Bulverde already requires commercial uses to install a buffer area wherever property lines abut a residential district. The term may also describe any zone that separates two unlike zones, such as a professional business zone between retail commercial and single family zones.
- *Flexible zoning* – under traditional zoning a city is divided into various land use districts and only conforming or homogenous uses are permitted within each district. Some communities facing increasingly complex development problems have sought to bring more flexibility to their system of land use controls without sacrificing the traditional objectives of health, safety, and welfare. Techniques include conditional zoning, bonus and incentive zoning, floating zones, overlay zones, performance standards, PUDs and others. The intent is to widen the range of options available to developers and thereby lead to more desirable and better designs. Rather than proscribing specified uses and standards for each and every parcel of land, only policies and criteria for decision-making are established. Under most flexible techniques, public officials have discretion in their decision-making process and can negotiate with developers before final approval. Development options are broad, but once granted may be quite specific and require compliance with a site plan.
  - *Floating zones* are zoning districts described in the text of the zoning ordinance but not necessarily associated with a specific location on the map. When a project of sufficient size anywhere within restricted areas can meet certain requirements, the floating zone can be anchored to a specific area on the zoning map. This is commonly used for large-scale developments such as planned unit developments. The floating zone is somewhat similar to conditional uses – it can go somewhere on the zoning map but must meet certain guidelines as to its impact on the surrounding areas.
  - *Incentive zoning* is a tool that permits greater flexibility in the zoning process. It is a negotiation process whereby a developer is awarded “bonuses” in exchange for adding amenities or following design criteria the community feels it needs. While a typical zoning ordinance is usually restrictive and based on minimums, incentive zoning permits the restrictions to be exceeded in exchange for increased open space, dedication of a school site, a hike and bike trail, etc.
  - *Mixed-use zoning* permits a combination of several uses within a single development. While traditional zoning separates land uses, mixed-use zoning enables a loosening of the narrowly defined districts to permit appropriate mixtures. This can result in more interesting, livelier and convenient

- neighborhoods and communities. Many PUD ordinances specify permitted combinations such as various residential types and local businesses.
- Overlay zones are standards specific to certain geographic areas in the community that are in addition to any underlying zoning district's requirements. Overlay zones can be employed to deal with special physical characteristics such as architecturally cohesive historic neighborhoods and/or environmentally sensitive areas. For example, an old-town or historic business district, to preserve its appearance and avoid vast expanses of paved parking lots, can have an overlay zone that has different parking requirements than other commercial or office districts. More on-street parking is allowed and shared parking can be encouraged. The City of Bulverde can use an overlay zone to promote historic and heritage preservation in the old-town area outlined in Chapter 7 of this plan.
  - Special district zoning is similar to overlay zoning and also goes hand-in-hand with historical preservation. It can be used to preserve and enhance the appearance, design integrity and thematic architecture of an area.

### **Landscaping and tree preservation**

The existing zoning ordinance addresses tree preservation in commercially zoned districts, and states that no more than twenty percent of hardwood trees with a diameter greater than six inches and outside of the building footprint can be removed unless the owner replaces them new hardwood trees totaling the diameter of the removed tree(s). Again, city fathers should be commended for inserting this into the zoning ordinance, but there are no standards for root zones, pruning, etc. As currently written, it also does not provide for site review criteria and, being a part of the zoning ordinance, does not address tree preservation in the ETJ.



Sign at FM1863 and 3009

### *9.5 Gateways to the City*

Lasting images and perceptions are often established by the first impressions created by a community. Gateways (entrances) serve as focal points for creating visual first impressions and can promote the distinctiveness and attractiveness of the city. In addition, a gateway lets someone know they have arrived in a new place. Currently, the only identifying features at the city's entrances letting someone know they are entering the City of



Sample gateway sign

Bulverde are the green and white city limit signs. Welcoming signs, lighting and landscaping should denote the



gateways into the city and should be located on each of the major corridors in to the city. The signs should be located outside the current city limit boundaries (except for Farm/Market 1863) to accommodate future annexations. A common design for the gateway signs and landscaping must be followed to promote a unified appearance



Streets designed for vehicles only

## 9.6 Enhancement Corridors - the Streetscape

Without good planning, driving in the City of Bulverde can potentially become an unpleasant experience, not so much from traffic problems as from unattractive thoroughfares. Not only must conscious design provide for a good first impression, but it must also address the visual aspects of transportation corridors,

including land development and other considerations which impact the image created by entering and traveling through the community. One of the goals listed at the end of this chapter calls for preserving and enhancing the visual appearance of Bulverde through the development of design standards for corridors. A Corridor Plan can help avoid unsightly streets cluttered with overhead wires and chaotic signage by promoting such features as bike lanes, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, median designs, and other aesthetic and engineering improvements.



Street scenes in Southlake

One of the major indicators of sprawl is the unattractive commercial strip developments that consume large amounts of land. Overlay districts and design guidelines should be implemented to lessen the negative impacts of commercial development on major transportation corridors in the Bulverde area. Development adjacent to Enhancement Corridors should follow higher design guidelines to create a more pleasant driving, walking, or biking experience and avoid the loss of a sense of uniqueness and place.

As discussed in Chapter 6, funds may be



available for various transportation improvements such as landscaping, gate-ways, bike lanes, sidewalks, and other non-typical improvements that enhance the transportation systems. The appearance and function of these corridors can benefit from improved design standards that will foster a positive community image. The citizens of the City of Bulverde do not want their streets to become unsafe, unsightly and unnecessarily expanded to accommodate speeding automobile traffic. Building fronts that once defined public space are now placed far away from the sidewalk and right-of-way; often behind asphalt-covered parking lots, with narrow sidewalks placed at the edge of high-speed thoroughfares without any buffer separating pedestrians from vehicles. The following are design strategies that can successfully accommodate traffic within an environment that is friendly to pedestrians and cyclists.

- Improve sidewalks and require placement away from traffic lanes.
- Provide bike lanes.
- Create medians with decorative street lighting and street trees.
- Improve the appearance of street signs
- Place utility lines underground and consolidate traffic and directional signage.
- Work with TxDOT to design aesthetically pleasing roadways and interchanges.
- As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 of this plan, context sensitive design considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist and should be the approach the City of Bulverde takes to streets. Residential streets should be designed for the minimum required pavement width needed to support travel lanes, on-street parking, and emergency, maintenance and service vehicle access.
- Allow an alley classification that would enable developers to place garages facing the rear of houses thus improving the street appearance of neighborhoods. Widths should still be based on traffic volume. Context Sensitive considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist.



Signage clutter

## 9.7 Signage

Signs that are meant to assist customers in locating a particular business can often be more confusing than helpful. Signs can contribute to the visual clutter of the urban environment often blocking the view of business locations and even the view of other signs. Signs say a lot about a place, yet all too often a community's image is blighted by signs that are too large, too tall, too numerous or poorly located.

The existing sign ordinance was one of the first ordinances adopted by the City of Bulverde. This is a powerful testament showing that the citizens feel very strongly about preserving the look and feel of their city. The ordinance has been amended several times and each time typically has become more restrictive, with the exception of a banner amendment. Permanent free-standing signs must be monument-style. The special needs of the higher speed corridors are taken into consideration as there are different standards for U.S. Highway 281 and State Highway 46 than the rest of the city. The existing ordinance does not differentiate the old town or village area, however. Off-premise signs are not prohibited, but are subject to the same size requirements and have a large spacing requirement (2000 feet), which effectively eliminates the possibility of large billboards. There have been some efforts at completely prohibiting off-premise signs, but as of the writing of this plan, there is no such ordinance. Adequate staff is needed to enforce the existing ordinance.



Monument style sign

Sign standards should encourage business owners to erect less obtrusive signs that reflect an area's personality, contributing to civic pride and enhancing the visual character of the community. To promote a positive city image, the sign ordinance should be enhanced to reduce the number of signs, encourage the use of a single sign structure for all tenants in a commercial development, and set design guidelines so that signs can quickly communicate their message, compliment their surroundings and enhance the visual character of the community. A combination of good site design and good sign standards that address location and scale, such as a monument signs, eliminates the visual clutter that could mar the view along our transportation corridors.

### **Overhead Utilities**

The proliferation of utility poles and lines along public rights-of-way results in cluttered and unsightly transportation corridors. The city should require that utility lines be installed underground.

### **Litter Control**

Litter is a problem that plagues many communities. Unfortunately, the City of Bulverde is not immune to this problem. Trash and debris sometimes litter our major transportation corridors, creating an unsightly atmosphere. The improved



Utility poles and signs in the Bulverde area

design guidelines mentioned above will be for naught if our community does not clean up the streets, parks, and private property and work to prevent future litter. The committee has focused clean-up efforts on controlling and preventing litter on both private and public property.

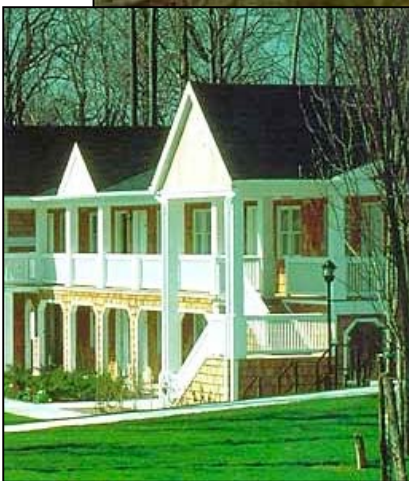


Unattractive affordable housing in Austin, Texas

### 9.8 Housing

In the Comprehensive Plan Survey, when asked to rate the importance of eight potential priorities for managing growth, “providing affordable housing” came in last, with only thirty-seven percent considering it important or very important and sixty percent considering it somewhat important or not important all. When asked to rate their support for providing eight additional city services, promoting affordable housing came in last again with fifty-four percent of survey

respondents being unsupportive or very unsupportive, and thirty-nine percent being supportive or very supportive. On the other hand, in discussions among Steering Committee members, one of the City of Bulverde’s weaknesses was said to be that “housing is expensive” (it was also argued that this was a strength.) It should be noted that survey respondents’ images of “affordable housing” are not well-defined.



Well-designed affordable housing in Greenburg, N.Y.

In the interest of space and time, the survey did not include photographs or drawings of different kinds and values of housing.

Arguably, desirable housing for all residents is an essential component of building strong neighborhoods and good communities. Neighborhoods and communities should be safe, convenient, and attractive, and there should be some housing that is relatively

affordable by an area’s standards. Careful planning and design can bring all of these elements together. Relatively affordable housing can be in the form of well-designed town homes or condominiums that don’t have to detract from the up-scale image of the area nor negatively impact the environment, prestige and heritage of the Bulverde area. Design guidelines can accomplish this.

The provision of housing in the area will be left up to the real estate market and private developers. However, the city can help promote opportunities for housing for a range of income levels and densities while strictly adhering to the character and quality of the Bulverde area, as desired by survey respondents, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and other public input. For example, the city can consider encouraging small-scale housing for senior-citizens, and “granny flats” or accessory apartments, preferably near essential goods and services. The city’s existing zoning ordinance regulates the location and size of higher density, multi-family developments as well as non-site-built housing. City leadership can facilitate open communication and cooperation among property owners, developers, city staff and others involved in all aspects of housing in the Bulverde area.

Factors that will affect the city’s housing market in the future include the city’s population growth and existing housing supply, the characteristics of families and individuals that occupy the housing units, and the price of both new and used residences. Recall from Chapter 1 that the rate of owner-occupied residences is much higher in the City of Bulverde than in surrounding areas (ninety-five percent in 2000), and the vacancy rate is much lower (only 3.8 percent) (See Table 1.8). The median value of houses in the City of Bulverde is over twice that for the San Antonio MSA (\$160,900 compared to \$74,100). Population growth in the City of Bulverde is projected to grow much more rapidly than in the City of New Braunfels or the rest of Comal County (See Table 1.1 in Chapter 1). According to the Texas Water Development Board, the population in 2020 is projected to be 13,649 and in 2030 to be 19,968. Using the average of 2.91 persons per housing unit, city residents will need a total of 4,690 housing units in the year 2020 and 6,682 housing units in the year 2030. According to the 2000 Census, there were 1,376 housing units in the city. Thus, it can be projected that there will be a need for 3,314 new housing units by 2020 and 5,306 new units by 2030 compared to the 2000 figure (See Table 4.6). These projections show an increase of 3,314 or 241% in total housing units from 2000 to 2020. This represents an annual increase of 166 units.

**Table 4.9. City of Bulverde Population and Housing Estimates**

Year	Population	Housing Units	Increase
2000		1,376	
2020	13,649	4,690	3,314
2030	19,968	6,682	5,306

*Source:* Texas Water Development Board and U.S. Census.

### *9.9 A Unified Development Code?*

Some nearby communities, such as San Antonio, New Braunfels and San Marcos, have adopted or are considering adopting a Unified Development Code (UDC). A UDC, as its name implies, unites all development-related ordinances into a single document that should be more user-friendly to citizens, municipal officials, and developers alike. It is more than a compilation of the development-related codes in a city’s planning toolbox; a UDC offers a community an opportunity to have consistency in development requirements and thereby be better able to implement the goals and pursue the vision of the comprehensive plan. A UDC for the City of



Bulverde may not be economically feasible at this point, but it is conceivable that within the next twenty years the City will need to unify all of its develop-related codes. This would afford the community the opportunity to create, emphasize, enforce and incentivize desirable community design elements and thus make “quality control” more effective. In the meantime, any new ordinances adopted by the City of Bulverde should be designed so as to be consistent with other ordinances, thus making the development of a UDC more manageable and less costly.

### *9.10 Code Enforcement*

The city needs to enforce the building codes, sign regulations and other ordinances. As the areas’ population increases, this need will become more acute and require adequate staff for enforcement. These staff members will be responsible for code issues such as clean-up of weedy lots, illegal signs, abandoned vehicles and other housing-related code enforcement. A centralized code enforcement program should eventually be developed that will address all areas and aspects of the city code. To sufficiently address the volume of code violations, appropriate staffing and budget resources will need to be provided. In addition, city code and city policies should be revised to strengthen the ability to enforce ordinances with a minimum of city resources.

### *9.11 Summary*

With guidance from the citizens, the city council, planning commission, and city staff must take an active role in shaping the appearance of the community. Applying development guidelines as outlined in this chapter can create a more pleasant and attractive community that will enable City of Bulverde an exceptional place for its citizens. The goals and objectives stated in this chapter can be achieved by choosing good design over little or no design at all. We must be proactive and diligent if we are to preserve our heritage and small town charm.

## *9.2 Goals and Objectives*

**Goal 1:** Preserve the natural/rural character of the city as much as possible.

Objective 1.1: Enforce what we already have.

Objective 1.2: Maintain the natural feel of the area.

Objective 1.3: Establish an annexation program that protects and enhances the quality of life in the City of Bulverde.

**Goal 2:** Encourage an aesthetically pleasing appearance for the city.

Objective 2.1: Determine how best to prevent hodge-podge development.

Objective 2.2: Promote city beautification.

Objective 2.3: Provide gateway signs and landscaping to welcome residents and visitors at each of the major corridors into the city.

**Goal 3:** Encourage tasteful development of all kinds including affordable housing, roads, signs, lights, buildings, parks, and some higher density type development where appropriate.

Objective 3.1: Develop a centralized code enforcement program with adequate staffing and resources.

Objective 3.2: Strengthen city codes and ordinances to eliminate unsightly areas with a minimum use of city resources.

Objective 3.3: Promptly enforce city ordinances regarding property maintenance.

Objective 3.4: Encourage private participation in beautification.

Objective 3.5: Enhance litter control programs.

**Goal 4:** Use the relaxed atmosphere of the hill-country to Bulverde's advantage.

Objective 3.1: Develop a centralized code enforcement program with adequate staffing and resources.

**Goal 5:** Make people feel like a part of a community.

Objective 5.1: Make the city more visible.

Objective 5.2: Make Bulverde's first impression unique so people will know when they enter Bulverde.

Objective 5.3: Improve the City's public relations and communication.

**Goal 6:** Develop an "old village center" with defined edges.

Objective 6.1: Make the Village of Bulverde more identifiable.

Objective 6.2: Encourage people to visit the Village of Bulverde.

**Goal 7:** Facilitate open communication and cooperation among property owners, developers, city staff and others involved in all aspects of housing in Bulverde.

Objective 7.1: Promote a customer-friendly but strict attitude among city staff when considering housing development plans.

Objective 7.2: Facilitate the development of housing to meet the needs of the disabled, elderly and other special needs populations.

Objective 7.3: Preserve existing neighborhood integrity and create livable neighborhood environments.



Planning is an on-going process that includes setting goals and objectives, identifying issues, collecting and analyzing data, considering alternatives, preparing the plan, adopting the plan, and implementing and evaluating the plan. The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is not the end of the planning process, but the beginning of achieving the vision of the citizens of the Bulverde area. Without an active implementation program, the plan is nothing more than an informative document, providing data on past and existing conditions and expressing the city's visions, goals and desires for the future. Implementation is where the ideas contained in the plan are put into action.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a guide for public officials and citizens for making decisions about the future growth and development of the City of Bulverde. This Implementation Chapter provides a framework for that decision-making process. It includes specific recommendations regarding the actions, programs, projects and ordinances necessary to achieve the visions, goals and objectives contained in each chapter of this plan.

## *10.1 Continuing the Planning Process*

As the Comprehensive Plan is implemented, it must be continually reviewed and updated to address the changing needs, circumstances and conditions of the City of Bulverde. The plan can only be effective if it remains relevant and up-to-date. Some recommendations of the plan may be determined to be infeasible, and new options or solutions may emerge over time. The planning process must be flexible enough to recognize and respond to these possibilities. The Planning and Zoning Commission should continually monitor the Comprehensive Plan for necessary modifications and refinements. Needed changes can be addressed in minor annual or biannual plan amendments and major updates every five years. As the plan is updated and revised, care must be taken to ensure that the Community Visions expressed in this plan continue to be the over-riding themes. While objectives, actions and implementation methods may change, the citizens' visions must remain constant.

### **Annual or Biannual Plan Amendments**

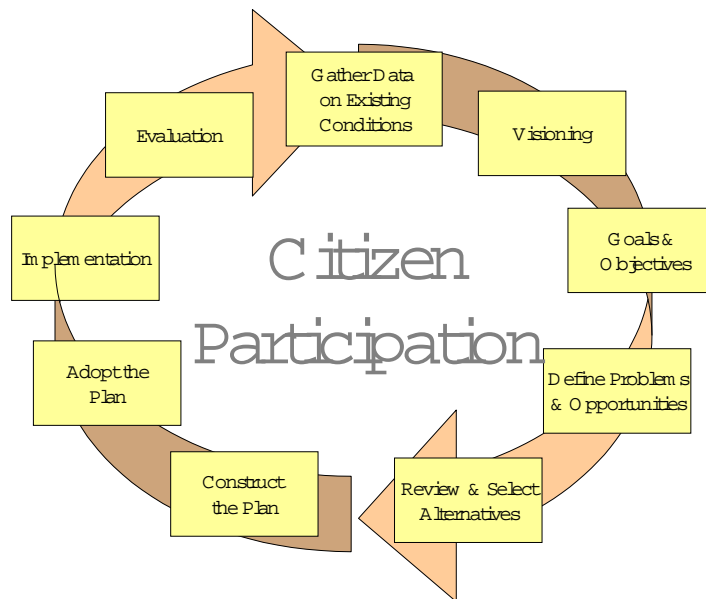
A periodic plan amendment process will allow minor revisions to be made to the Comprehensive Plan on a regular basis. City Staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission can create and maintain a list of potential plan amendments throughout the year. Amendments should be adopted in a manner similar to that of the original

plan, including public hearings, recommendations for approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission and final approval by City Council. These amendments will be adopted and distributed as addenda to the Comprehensive Plan.

### Major Plan Updates

A major update to the Comprehensive Plan should occur every five years. Major updates are necessary to respond to significant shifts in growth patterns, changes in demographics, successful implementation of elements of the plan, and new issues that may evolve. The major plan update process should be similar to that undertaken to prepare the original Comprehensive Plan. It should include a complete analysis of the existing plan, the identification of new issues and trends, up-to-date background information on current conditions, and updated goals, objectives and implementation strategies.

**Figure 10.1. The Continuing Planning Process**



### Citizen Participation

Citizen participation is a critical element of the planning process. The citizens of the Bulverde area actively participated in the development of this Comprehensive Plan. The Steering Committee invested many hours over the period of an entire year to produce a plan that reflects the desires of the community. In addition, many citizens took part in surveys, a community-wide open house and public hearings conducted by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. The public must continue to be involved in the ongoing planning process of periodic amendments and major plan updates.

## **Annual Reports**

City Staff should annually submit a report to the Planning and Zoning Commission on the status of Comprehensive Plan implementation. The Annual Report should outline significant steps taken to implement the plan in the previous year and identify the actions taken and objectives met during that time. The report should also provide a work plan of tasks, programs and projects proposed for implementation in the coming year. Following review by the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Annual Report should be forwarded to the City Council.

## ***10.2 Moving Forward - Implementing the Comprehensive Plan***

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will require a commitment on the part of the City Council, appointed commissions, and city management and staff to apply the visions, goals and objectives of the plan to their day-to-day decision-making processes. These decision-makers, advisors and public servants, along with citizens, developers and other stakeholders, must have ready access to the Comprehensive Plan that will be made available on the city's website and in printed form. The plan should be consistently referenced in planning studies and planning staff reports for development proposals and variance requests. It should become a key tool in the development of the city's annual budget. The plan also identifies existing policies and programs that need to be reviewed and possibly revised, along with new policies, programs and initiatives that should be considered. This day-to-day use of the Comprehensive Plan is the key to successful implementation.

## **Municipal Codes and Ordinances**

The City of Bulverde manages its everyday operations and future development through the administration and enforcement of municipal codes and ordinances. Many of the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan will be implemented through the revision of existing codes and the adoption of new ordinances.

The Zoning and Subdivision ordinances are currently the primary tools available to the city for implementing the community development and growth-related elements of the Comprehensive Plan. This plan recommends several potential revisions to these ordinances. Some of the issues include the need to develop more flexible standards to encourage conservation development, innovative development projects, design standards for commercial/retail land uses, and overlay districts and landscaping guidelines along major transportation corridors. The plan also proposes updates to various other city codes.

## **Additional Studies and Plans**

By definition, the Comprehensive Plan is broad in scope. In some cases the plan points out the need for further study or more detailed planning for a specific topic. Therefore, implementation can include the preparation of more detailed plans, including small area plans (e.g. the "old-town") and functional plans such as parks and transportation master plans.

## Strategic Planning

While comprehensive and strategic planning are individual management tools, they are highly interrelated parts of a complete planning process. It is through the comprehensive planning process that the community has been able to identify issues and opportunities facing it, cooperatively develop visions for the future, and collectively establish reasonable objectives for the City of Bulverde's on-going development.

Strategic planning can be used to focus on the process of how to effectively implement the priority actions necessary to achieve the comprehensive plan's goals and objectives. In summary, the comprehensive plan is broad-brushed and long-range, typically with a 20-year planning horizon. It is most closely aligned with issues, visions and community goals. Strategic plans are very detailed, focusing on the strategy for implementing priority actions and achieving key objectives during a much shorter time frame of three-to-five years.

Some critical functions of the strategic planning process are to:

- ensure plan implementation by integrating the planning and annual budgeting processes;
- develop the basis for a formal Capital Improvements Program;
- organize the City Council's mission around the plan's adopted visions, goals, objectives and actions;
- provide a common strategy for the Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, City Administration, and staff that moves the city toward the realization of its visions;
- help the City Administrator and staff put programs, projects and services into meaningful priorities consistent with funding opportunities;
- enable citizens to better understand and be involved in the Council's decisions relating to the expenditure of revenues necessary to provide city services;
- indicate where policy changes are required to implement the plan;
- develop better avenues of communication between the Council, city management, appointed commissions and the citizens - all leading to better consensus-making and consistent, unified decision-making;
- establish achievable milestones for the city with the matching focus of resources necessary for success;
- develop monitoring functions that gauge whether the actions of the plan are having their desired effects and to ensure that each of the key elements of the plan are being accomplished in a timely manner.

### *10.3 Goals and Objectives for Implementation*

The following goals and objectives are provided to guide the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, city management and staff in the implementation of the comprehensive plan.

**Goal 1:** The City of Bulverde will be accountable to its citizens for implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 1.1: Keep the Comprehensive Plan up to date through periodic amendments and major updates every five years.

Action 1.1.1: Establish a regular plan review and amendment process.

Action 1.1.2: Adopt plan amendments and publish and distribute them as addenda to the Comprehensive Plan.

Action 1.1.3: Develop a schedule and process for major plan updates every five years.

Objective 1.2: Encourage citizen involvement in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and the amendment process.

Action 1.2.1: Make the Comprehensive Plan available on the city's website.

Action 1.2.2: Publish the Comprehensive Plan in hardcopy format, and make it readily available to the public.

Action 1.2.3: Actively seek public input in the development of ordinances, ordinance revisions, Capital Improvements Programming, programs and additional plans necessary for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 1.3: Revise existing ordinances and adopt new ordinances necessary for the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Action 1.3.1: Prioritize necessary ordinances and revisions, and develop formalized ordinance creation and amendment processes and schedules.

Action 1.3.2: Assign responsibility for developing and amending ordinances to the Planning and Zoning Commission, other appropriate boards and committees, and city staff.

Objective 1.4: Develop a formal Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

Action 1.4.1: Establish a CIP process to schedule future capital expenditures and obtain City Council approval of the process.

Action 1.4.3: Establish a formalized process for City Council review and adoption of the CIP.

Objective 1.5: Apply the visions, goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan to the long-term and day-to-day decision-making processes of the City Council, appointed boards and commissions, city management and city departments.

Action 1.5.1: The City Administrator or designee will submit a biannual report to the Planning and Zoning Commission on the status of Comprehensive Plan implementa-

tion, including a work program of tasks, programs and projects proposed for implementation in the coming year.

Action 1.5.2: Develop a framework for linking the Comprehensive Plan to a shorter-range strategic planning program involving the City Council, management and city departments.

Action 1.5.3: Use the strategic planning process to develop annual goals, CIP priorities and annual budget recommendations.

Action 1.5.4: Use the strategic planning process for long-term plan implementation.

#### *10.4 Action Plan*

Each element of the Comprehensive Plan concludes with a list of goals and actions/objectives. A solid plan of action is needed to assure the implementation of these ideas. The following “Action Matrix” re-organizes the goals and actions/objectives found at the end of the chapters into a hierarchy of tasks. Each matrix provides a list of the specific action steps needed to implement the actions and achieve the goals and objectives of each plan element. The matrix includes columns that assign relative priority levels to each action step and the entity(ies) responsible for its implementation.

##### **Priority Levels**

This Action Plan lists specific steps to be taken in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. While each action has been deemed necessary and worthy of mention, they cannot all be implemented at once. Each action statement has been assigned a relative priority level ranging from 1 (highest priority) to 3 (lowest priority) based on resource availability, staff and consultant recommendations and final review by the Steering Committee and Planning and Zoning Commission.

##### **Responsible Entities**

The far right-hand column in the Action Matrix identifies the entity(s) that are primarily responsible for implementing each action statement. Not every party can be identified but an effort was made to identify those who should ensure that action is taken. It must be remembered that the citizens of Bulverde are ultimately responsible for the successful implementation of the actions listed in the matrix. Abbreviations for the responsible agencies and departments are provided below.

##### **Responsible Agency Abbreviations**

BI	Building Inspections Personnel	PZ	Planning & Zoning Commission
AT	City Attorney	PD	Police Department
CC	City Council	CO	Comal County
CH	Chamber of Commerce	PL	City Planner
CA	City Administration	UT	Utilities
FD	Fire Department	LB	Library

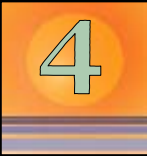


## Action Matrix

3	<b>Land Use/Development and Growth Management</b> Sunrise 2025: The City of Bulverde has assured growth compatible with the wishes of its citizens and thus is a community with a unique rural setting and superior quality of life.		
	Goals, Objectives and Actions	Priority	Responsible Entity
development consistent with the goals and objectives in the Bulverde Comprehensive Plan.			
Objective 1.1: Review existing ordinances and modify as necessary.			
Action 1.1.1: Identify potential revisions.	1	PZ, PL	
Action 1.1.2: Implement identified revisions.	2	CC	
Objective 1.2: Enforce what we already have.			
Action 1.2.1: Hire adequate staff.	1	CA	
Action 1.2.2: Revise procedures to make them more efficient.	2	BI, PZ	
Objective 1.3: Add new ordinances as necessary to make sure core areas are covered.			
Action 1.3.1: Establish committee to determine potential new ordinances and prioritize.	1	PZ	
Action 1.3.2: Have P & Z and/or Council discuss the possibility of a Unified Development Code.	2	PL	
Objective 1.4: Work closely with the GBRA to take full advantage of the GBRA Master Plan for Water Distribution in the Bulverde Service Area.			
Action 1.4.1: Have maps, tables, projections, etc. available at City Hall for developers and other interested citizens.	2	CA, PL	
Action 1.4.2: Schedule periodic meetings between city staff, Council and the GBRA.	2	CA, PL	
Objective 1.5: Consider the use of impact fees as a way to manage land uses and development, generate revenues, and recoup the cost of infrastructure for new developments.			
Action 1.5.1: Schedule a meeting with P & Z and an expert/consultant or Texas Municipal League (TML) to learn about impact fees in Texas.	1	PL	
Action 1.5.2: Adopt fees that meet legal requirements.	3	CC	
Objective 1.6: Develop appropriate mechanisms to encourage growth consistent with the city's ability to effectively manage such growth.			
Action 1.6.1: Design Ordinances, overlay zones, etc. to achieve this objective.	1	PL, PZ	
Objective 1.7: Manage growth in the extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ).			
Action 1.7.1: Identify issues specific to development in ETJ.	2	PZ, PL, CO	
Action 1.7.2: Explore the legal limits of ETJ regulations.	3	AT	
Objective 1.8: Achieve a balance between private property rights and a level of land development tools that is acceptable to the citizens of Bulverde.			
Action 1.8.1: Use the P & Z to get citizens involved in land use decisions.	2	PZ, CA	
Action 1.8.2: Conduct surveys and other outreach during ordinance review.	2	PL	

<b>Land Development Goal 2: Manage the future growth of the City to preserve the character and uniqueness that is the City of Bulverde, as well as the integrity, compatibility and value of existing and new neighborhoods.</b>		
<b>Objective 2.1: Regulate the scale and density of new developments (especially commercial) to ensure compatibility with the City of Bulverde's Comprehensive Plan.</b>		
Action 2.1.1: Develop and enact overlay zones, design standards, open space requirements, etc. as recommended in the Comprehensive Plan.	1	PL, PZ, AT, CC
Action 2.1.2: Review current regulations and revise.	1	PL, PZ, CC
<b>Objective 2.2: Establish regulations regarding the location, size and type of commercial and light industrial development.</b>		
Action 2.2.1: List tools such as FAR, bulk regulations, design standards, etc. that can be used in modified and/or new ordinances.	1	PL
Action 2.2.2: Identify areas appropriate for more intense commercial and industrial types of land uses.	2	PZ
<b>Objective 2.3: Implement minimum standards for open/green space and buffering that respect the natural features and surroundings of the development site.</b>		
Action 2.3.1: Improve existing open space requirements in the subdivision ordinance.	2	PZ
Action 2.3.2: Determine areas to acquire for linear/open space areas.	2	PZ, PL
<b>Objective 2.4: Encourage conservation-oriented development.</b>		
Action 2.4.1: Include conservation options in the city's subdivision ordinances and make them easy to use.	1	PZ, PL, CC
<b>Objective 2.5: Develop and/or refine minimum requirements for the provision of essential services and utilities in new developments.</b>		
Action 2.5.1: Review existing requirements and revise and add to as necessary.	2	PL, AT, BI
<b>Objective 2.6: Establish regulations for non-site built housing.</b>		
Action 2.6.1: Create standards that encourage better design while still being inclusive.	3	PZ, PL, AT
Action 2.6.2: Review existing location requirements in light of preferred land uses in this Comprehensive Plan.	2	PL, PZ
<b>Objective 2.7: Establish regulations for multi-family housing.</b>		
Action 2.7.1: Create standards that encourage better design while still being inclusive	3	PZ, PL, AT
Action 2.7.2: Provide infrastructure to make above standards feasible.	3	UT
Action 2.7.3: Review existing location requirements in light of preferred land uses in this Comprehensive Plan.	2	PL, PZ
<b>Objective 2.8: Protect private property in existing neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible land uses.</b>		
Action 2.8.1: This would be result of implementing the C.P.	1	Everybody
<b>Land Development Goal 3: Encourage land development that enhances an aesthetically pleasing appearance for the city.</b>		
<b>Objective 3.1: Determine how best to prevent 'hodge-podge' and/or bland development.</b>		
Action 3.1.1: Have staff gather information on how other communities have achieved this objective and present to appropriate bodies.	1	PL


<b>Objective 3.2: Promote flexible land development standards that accommodate innovative land development projects.</b>		
Action 3.2.1: Work up list of development options for innovative approaches.	2	PL, PZ
Action 3.2.2: Investigate whether low-impact development, new urbanism or smart growth principles are applicable and useful tools for shaping the future growth of the City of Bulverde.	2	PL, PZ
Action 3.2.3: Enact policies based on above objective.	2	CC
<b>Land Development Goal 4: Develop an annexation strategy that enables us to manage future growth and protects and enhances Bulverde's quality of life and that adds to the economic vitality of the city.</b>		
<b>Objective 4.1: Develop an annexation policy that reflects the wishes of the existing citizens of the City of Bulverde.</b>		
Action 4.1.1: Adopt a Home Rule Charter.	1	CC
Action 4.1.2: Enact annexation priorities and procedures as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.	2	CC
<b>Objective 4.2: Annex areas prior to development to manage the type and quality of new development.</b>		
Action 4.2.1: Conduct a detailed study to identify those areas that should be annexed and when they should be annexed.	2	PL, CA
Action 4.2.2: Coordinate annexation with utility providers.	3	CA, PL, UT, PZ

	<b>Community Services</b> Sunrise 2025: The City of Bulverde has quality municipal services and facilities making it a safe, healthy and enjoyable place to live.	
	Goals, Objectives and Actions	Priority Responsible Entity
<b>services.</b>		
<b>Objective 1.1: Develop a long-range strategy for fire protection.</b>		
Action 1.1.1: Evaluate current fire protection structure to determine if City oversight and support will help.	3	CA, FD
Action 1.1.2: Work with the Bulverde Fire Department to help review and evaluate staffing needs to assure adequate personnel resources to meet the demands of future growth.	3	CA, FD
<b>Objective 1.2: Examine the possibility of adjusting the boundaries of the Bulverde ESD and the Spring Branch ESD so the City of Bulverde is served by a single fire department.</b>		
Action 1.2.1: Work with Bulverde ESD to determine what the new boundaries could be and their fiscal and management impacts.	1	CA, FD
<b>Objective 1.3: Initiate a quarterly report by the Fire Department on its activities and issues to the Bulverde City Council to help improve communications between the City and the Fire Department.</b>		
Action 1.3.1: Meet with the Fire Chief to determine what	3	CA, FD

information would be useful and schedule a regular Council date for reports.		
<b>Community Services Goal 2: Maintain low crime rate and develop a police department with quality police services.</b>		
Objective 2.1: Develop a long range plan for police protection.		
Action 2.1.1: Continue the work already in progress.	1	CA
Objective 2.2: Assess policing needs on a regular basis.		
Action 2.2.1: Once established have the Police Chief present a monthly report to City Council.	2	CA, PD
Action 2.2.2: Determine types of crime and direct policy and resources to those problems.	3	PD
Objective 2.3: Establish a police department with adequate staffing and equipment.		
Action 2.3.1: Continue the work already in progress.	1	CA, PD
Objective 2.4: Get the community more involved in crime prevention programs and community policing initiatives.		
Action 2.4.1: Have the Police Chief attend HOA meetings and work with Neighborhood Watch and Crime Stoppers.	1	CA, PD
<b>Community Services Goal 3: Promote the use of library services by the citizens of the Bulverde/Spring Branch area.</b>		
Objective 3.1 Initiate a regular report by the Bulverde/Spring Branch Library on its activities and issues to the Bulverde City Council to help improve communications between the City and the Library.		
Action 3.1.1: Meet with the Librarian to determine what information would be useful and schedule a Council date for a report.	3	CA, LB
Action 3.1.2: Evaluate current library structure to determine if City oversight and support will help promote use of the library.	3	CA, LB
<b>Community Services Goal 4: Work to assure the citizens of Bulverde timely, efficient and economical solid waste service</b>		
Objective 4.1: Assist the County and other communities in the County with the hazardous waste collection event		
Action 4.1.1: Meet with the Comal County Emergency Operations Director to investigate what Bulverde's role could be and then take action.	2	CA, PL
Objective 4.2: Promote environmentally friendly waste disposal methods such as recycling, composting, and collection centers for certain types of waste.		
Action 4.2.1: Investigate what other cities are doing and choose a course of action.	3	CA
Action 4.2.2: Meet with IESI for ideas and suggestions.	3	CA
Objective 4.3: Work with the Bulverde Area Fire Department to set up a hazardous waste collection event for western Comal County.		
Action 4.3.1: Set up a meeting with the Fire Chief, Solid Waste provider and Emergency Operations Director.	3	CA, FD, CO
<b>Community Services Goal 5: Meet the need for providing space for city services and meetings</b>		
Objective 5.1: This goal is being met with the completion of the new City Hall on Cougar bend.		

<b>Community Services Goal 6: Ensure adequate quantity and equal distribution of parks, open space, and recreation facilities.</b>		
Objective 6.1: Develop the existing park site on Bulverde Lane.		
Action 6.1.1: Have staff begin to apply for grants for this purpose.	2	PL, CA
Objective 6.2: Develop minimum standards for the development and location of future parks.		
Action 6.2.1: Have a parks expert/consultant meet with city staff and/or the P & Z to bring them up to date on what other similar cities are doing for parks and open space.	2	CA, PL
Action 6.2.2: Enact new policies.	3	CC
Objective 6.3: Acquire and develop parkland to meet the citizens' needs.		
Action 6.3.1: Once standards are set, use existing Parks Committee to determine what land needs to be acquired and/or developed.	3	CA, PL
Objective 6.4: Develop greenbelts using natural drainage ways when possible with trail systems to provide pedestrian and biking linkages for neighborhoods, schools, parks and other destinations.		
Action 6.4.1: Prepare and adopt the hike and bike trail master plan recommended in the Comprehensive Plan.	1	CC
Action 6.4.2: Utilize the dedication procedure to acquire land for greenbelts at minimal up-front costs to the City.	2	CC, AT, PZ
<b>Community Services Goal 7: Develop additional recreational opportunities.</b>		
Objective 7.1: Coordinate the provision of recreational facilities with other providers (e.g. CISD schools, county, non-profits and developers).		
Action 7.1.1: Set up an initial meeting with appropriate representatives of different entities.	2	CA
Action 7.1.2: Reach an agreement with the Comal Independent School District for joint use of their athletic facilities.	2	CA, CC
Action 7.1.3: Conduct survey(s) to determine citizens' wants and needs.	2	PL
Objective 7.2: Work to provide a range of recreational opportunities for all residents in the future		
Action 7.2.1: Evaluate what facilities the City can afford to provide.	1	CA, PL
Action 7.2.2: Survey residents to determine their wants.	2	PL
Action 7.2.3: Explore grant opportunities.	3	PL
Objective 7.3: Assure the provision of nature appreciation and wildlife habitat areas for hiking, biking, jogging, bird-watching and picnicking.		
Action 7.3.1: Ensure that this objective is part of Parks Master Plan.	2	PZ, PL
Action 7.3.2: Ensure that there is a strong effort at public outreach.	2	PL
<b>Community Services Goal 8: Review and revise as necessary an Emergency Preparedness Plan with particular attention given to periodic major flooding and the transportation of hazardous materials.</b>		
Objective 8.1: Establish policies and procedures related to emergency Preparedness.		
Action 8.1: Meet with Emergency Operations Coordinator to review the existing plan and determine any changes needed.	1	CA, PL

<b>Community Services Goal 9: Encourage the volunteer spirit.</b>		
<b>Objective 9.1: Develop policies and procedures that help promote the volunteer spirit.</b>		
Action 9.1.1: Conduct community events to get people together.	2	CC, CA, PL
Action 9.1.2: Ensure community awareness through the press.	2	CA, PL
Action 9.1.3: Recognize volunteer efforts with press releases, Council resolutions, and in other ways.	2	CA, CC, PL
Action 9.1.4: Set up a city-wide "Volunteer Day" to get the citizens involved in different projects, such as clean-up,	2	CA


	<b>Infrastructure</b>	
	Sunrise 2025: The City of Bulverde has a cost-effective and reliable source of water, sewerage systems that protect the environment, a sound drainage policy for new development, and well-maintained and scenic streets.	
Goals, Objectives and Actions		Priority Responsible Entity
<b>of town that can be economically retrofitted with pipelines.</b>		
Objective 1.1: Work with the GBRA on a regular basis to facilitate the proposed pipeline down Stahl Lane.		
Action 1.1.1: Schedule regular meetings between City officials and GBRA staff.	2	CA, PL, UT
Action 1.1.2: Assist with ROW acquisition.	3	AT, PL, UT
Objective 1.2a: Work with GBRA to plan for future expansions of water infrastructure to appropriate areas of the City.		
Action 1.2a.1: Schedule regular meetings between City officials and GBRA staff.	1	CA, UT
Action 1.2a.2: Include GBRA in plat review.	1	PZ, PL, UT
Objective 1.2b: Work with other suppliers of water as necessary.		
Action 1.2b.1: Schedule regular meetings with representatives from other suppliers.	3	CA, UT
Objective 1.3: Consider establishing impact fees for water infrastructure.		
Action 1.3.1: Schedule a meeting or courses with the P & Z and an expert/consultant or the TML to learn about impact fees in Texas.	2	PZ, PL
Action 1.3.2: Take action to meet legal requirements.	2	PZ, AT, CC
Objective 1.4: Establish water conservation programs to include rain water collection systems.		
Action 1.4.1: Develop brochures and an area of the City web-site to encourage xeriscaping, retrofit programs, etc.	2	PL
Objective 1.5: Promote a tiered payment scale with lower per-gallon fees for the first five or ten thousand gallons used, and higher per-gallon fees for greater amounts used.		
Action 1.5.1: While this is out of the City's control, express this desire in meetings with the GBRA or resolutions.	3	UT, CA
Objective 1.6: Determine how best to use water distribution and availability as a growth management tool.		



Action 1.6.1: Use the existing Water Advisory Board to research how other similar cities are doing this.	1	CA, CC, UT
Action 1.6.2: Develop a utility tie-in requirement and use it.	2	BI, PZ, UT
Objective 1.7: Address homeland security issues as they relate to any water supplies for the City of Bulverde.		
Action 1.7.1: Have an expert/consultant meet with staff and strategize on what needs to be done.	3	CA
<b>Infrastructure Goal 2: To protect the environment, promote the provision of central sewerage in appropriate areas.</b>		
Objective 2.1: Develop a sewerage master plan that must be adhered to in plat review.		
Action 2.1.1: Begin the process of determining future location(s) of sewage treatment plant(s), lift stations, projected costs, operation and maintenance costs, and projected customer service charges.	2	PL, UT
Action 2.1.2: Begin the process of establishing impact fees for sewer infrastructure.	3	PL, UT
Action 2.1.3: Meet with the GBRA to facilitate the proposed sewerage facility at the Johnson Ranch.	1	CA, PL, UT
Action 2.1.4: Meet with any other entities that might potentially provide sewerage services in the Bulverde area.	2	CA, PL, UT
Action 2.1.5: Discuss with GBRA the possibility of a regional sewage treatment facility for western Comal County.	2	PL, CA, UT
Action 2.1.6: Formulate criteria for "appropriate areas."	2	PZ
Action 2.1.7: Utilize a CIP to help accomplish above actions.	1	CA
Objective 2.2: Develop a plan for the maintenance of aging septic systems in existing subdivisions.		
Action 2.2.1: Investigate what other areas are doing to ensure safe decentralized sewerage and then enact appropriate policies.	2	PL, BI
Action 2.2.2: Develop a policy on what to do with abandoned septic systems.	1	BI, PL
Action 2.2.3: Develop a reimbursement program for inspections.	3	CA, PL
Action 2.2.4: Develop an educational program.	2	PL
<b>Infrastructure Goal 3: Address stormwater drainage issues in both existing and future developments.</b>		
Objective 3.1: Correct existing drainage problems on a priority basis and within budget constraints.		
Action 3.1.1: Use the CIP to prioritize drainage problems and projects.	2	CA, PL
Action 3.1.2: Coordinate efforts with FEMA and the Corp of Engineers.	2	CA, PL
Objective 3.2: Develop a Storm Drainage Policy and Master Plan.		
Action 3.2.1: Promote "low-impact" type development in the City's subdivision regulations.	2	PL, PZ
Action 3.2.2: Investigate whether it would be feasible to develop a drainage impact fee or similar funding for meeting infrastructure needs for new development.	2	PL, AT
Action 3.2.3: Require the use of pretreatment devices and other Best Management Practices to remove major contaminants from storm water before leaving the site.	2	PL

Action 3.2.4: Develop plans for protection and enhancement of natural drainage channels and structures, i.e. (Cibolo Creek and its tributaries).	2	PL
<b>Objective 3.3: Strictly enforce all drainage-related rules and regulations in new developments</b>		
Action 3.3.1: Determine the best way to delineate the flood plain; use GIS to project how the flood plain will change with increasing development.	2	PL
Action 3.3.2: Regulate development within tributary watersheds that affect the 100-year flood plain to maintain the regulatory floodway, and restrict filling and encroachment within the floodplain. Assure a close and positive working relationship with FEMA.	2	PZ, PL
Action 3.3.3: Develop and/or strengthen erosion and sedimentation control standards for all construction and development.	3	PL, CA
<b>Infrastructure Goal 4: Maintain and improve the condition of existing city streets and ensure that future roads are built to lasting standards while preserving aesthetic integrity.</b>		
<b>Objective 4.1: Ensure convenience and usability of road network for use of citizens</b>		
Action 4.1.1: Identify areas of conflict and plan for remedies.	2	PL
Action 4.1.2: Inventory signage and determine additional needs.	3	PL
<b>Objective 4.2: Adopt a street maintenance policy that emphasizes quality repairs that last.</b>		
Action 4.2.1: Establish a street inventory that includes condition, width and age, and update it on a regular basis	1	PL
Action 4.2.2: Establish a program to address road shoulder maintenance	2	CA, PL
Action 4.2.3: Ensure adequate staffing for road maintenance.	2	CA
<b>Objective 4.3: Ensure that subdivision standards require quality roads that minimize future maintenance.</b>		
Action 4.3.1: Consult with experts about road standards in the city's current subdivision ordinance	3	PL
<b>Objective 4.4: Ensure that future roads and road improvements take into consideration the rural ambience of the Bulverde area and not just the rapid movement of vehicles.</b>		
Action 4.4.1: Meet with MPO and TxDot representatives to let them know what the City of Bulverde wants.	1	PL, CA
<b>Infrastructure Goal 5: Coordinate future infrastructure improvements to ensure the most economical, effective and aesthetic provision and maintenance of infrastructure (water, sewer, drainage, streets, and communications).</b>		
<b>Objective 5.1 Coordinate future infrastructure improvements to ensure the most economical and effective provision and maintenance of infrastructure (water, sewer, drainage, streets, and communications).</b>		
Action 5.1.1: Promote the use of single ditches for multiple purposes.	2	PL
Action 5.1.2: Use the CIP to encourage growth in areas appropriate to the proposed land use and density.	2	PL, PZ, CA
Action 5.1.3: Meet with utility providers (telephone, cable, etc.) to determine the issues involved with underground versus overhead wires/cables.	2	CA, PL, UT

Action 5.1.4: Revise the subdivision standards to require underground utilities within new developments.	2	PZ, CC
Action 5.1.5: Establish a policy for converting existing utilities.	2	PZ
Objective 5.2: Coordinate the provision of all infrastructure facilities to best use their potential as growth-shapers and customer services.		
Action 5.2.1: Use the CIP to encourage growth in areas appropriate to the proposed land use and density.	1	PZ, PL
Objective 5.3: Encourage underground utilities.		
Action 5.3.1: Meet with utility providers (telephone, cable, etc.) to determine the issues involved with underground versus overhead wires/cables.	2	PL, CA, UT
Action 5.3.2: Revise subdivision standards to require underground utilities within new developments.	2	PZ, CC UT

	<b>Transportation</b> Sunrise 2025: The City of Bulverde has a transportation network that enables its citizens to ‘get around’ safely and conveniently, but whose design standards help retain the community’s rural Hill-Country ambience.	
Goals, Objectives and Actions	Priority	Responsible Entity
the same time discourages high speeds, four-lane roads and heavy traffic within the City.		
Objective 1.1: Develop a Transportation Master Plan and Policy.		
Action 1.1.1: Implement the Transportation Master Plan, periodically review it, and use the CIP to prioritize projects.	1	CC, PZ, PL
Action 1.1.2: Make Comal County and TxDot aware of our plans and policies by participating in their critical committee meetings.	1	PL, CA
Action 1.1.3: Review street and thoroughfare design standards with the intent of enabling aesthetically pleasing as well as safe roads.	1	PL, PZ
Action 1.1.4: Investigate whether Community Improvement Projects (CIPs) would be useful tools for improving Bulverde’s transportation network.	3	PL, CA
Objective 1.2: Work as closely as possible with the MPOs, TxDOT and the Comal County Road Department to ensure that their plans take into consideration the desires of the citizens of Bulverde.		
Action 1.2.1: Establish periodic meetings with above entities.	2	CA
Action 1.2.2: Identify and implement ways to get the public more involved.	2	PL
Action 1.2.3: Assure city staff attends critical committee meetings of above entities.	2	CA

**Transportation Goal 2: Support transportation alternatives to the automobile such as hike/bike networks and pedestrian circulation.**

Objective 2.1. Develop transportation strategies that will reduce dependence on the automobile and continue to ensure the city's clean air quality

Action 2.1.1: Establish carpool parking areas.	3	PL
Action 2.1.2: Increase awareness of and encourage the use of alternative transportation options.	3	PL
Action 2.1.3: Pass resolution to support AACOG's Clean Air Plan for the San Antonio MSA.	2	CC
Action 2.1.4: Implement of Bike/Pedestrian pathways that would connect the various subdivisions throughout Bulverde as well as promote the health and general well-being of the citizens of the City of Bulverde	2	CC
Action 2.1.5: Review subdivision standards and revise as necessary to encourage pedestrian/bicycle pathways/sidewalks within a development as well as their connectivity to pathways in other subdivisions	1	PL, PZ, CC
Action 2.1.6: Identify funding sources.	2	CA
Action 2.1.7: Investigate the possibilities of utilizing VIA Park-and-Ride.	3	PL


7

**Heritage/Heritage Preservation**

Sunrise 2025: The City of Bulverde is a community with a unique and vibrant historical heritage.

Goals, Objectives and Actions	Priority	Responsible Agency
<b>Objective 1.1 Use and/or develop tools to preserve and enhance Bulverde's heritage.</b>		
Action 1.1.1: Prepare a historic preservation plan.	2	PL, PZ, AT
Action 1.1.2: Prepare a historic preservation ordinance.	2	AT, PL
Action 1.1.3: Establish a Historic District/Overlay Zone with design guidelines to coordinate commercial signage.	2	PZ, PL, CC
Action 1.1.4: Establish a Historical Society.	3	CC, PL
Action 1.1.5: Work closely with the Comal County Historical Commission and other established groups that work to preserve the history and heritage of the area.	3	CA, PL
Action 1.1.6: Investigate the possibility of pursuing the Texas Historical Commission's Certified Local Government designation.	2	PL
<b>Objective 1.2: Improve communication and interaction in Bulverde.</b>		
Action 1.2.1: Install directional signs to "old town", Spechts, Anhalt, etc.	2	CA
Action 1.2.2: Install a community sign to tell about upcoming events.	2	CA

Action 1.2.3: Begin a column in the newspaper that would be an old-fashioned "gossip" column.	3	CA
Action 1.2.4: Set up a notice tree for schools, town activities, City Council, churches and social activities.	2	CA
Action 1.2.5: Investigate the possibility of establishing a Bulverde area radio station.	3	PL
Action 1.2.6: Establish story-telling programs to tell the history of Bulverde (oral history).	3	PL
Action 1.2.7: Establish some form of town crier, maybe <a href="http://www.towncrier.com">www.towncrier.com</a> .	3	CA
Action 1.2.8: Develop a quarterly newsletter from city hall.	3	CA, PL
<b>Historical/Heritage Preservation Goal 2: Preserve and enhance historic and archeological sites and other unique aspects of the community.</b>		
Objective 2.1 Preserve and promote historical structures (fences, windmills, buildings, etc.), documents, artifacts, traditions, photographs and memorabilia that demonstrate the historical heritage of Bulverde.		
Action 2.1.1: Identify and procure sites as resources permit.	2	PL
Action 2.1.2: Encourage new building of old style rock fences, windmills, etc.	2	PZ, PL
Action 2.1.3: Develop a museum for historical/heritage artifacts and information.	2	CC, PL

	<b>Economic Development</b> Sunrise 2025: The City of Bulverde has a diverse economy that provides it citizens with a variety of job opportunities while maintaining our Hill Country charm.	
	Goals, Objectives and Actions	Priority Responsible Agency
Objective 1.1: Develop a strategic economic development plan that includes goals, action items and timelines.		
Action 1.1.1: Determine areas and locate sites for potential development.	1	PL, PZ
Action 1.1.2: Ensure that the City provides desired services within its abilities and budget constraints.	1	CA, UT
Objective 1.2: Encourage balanced business and commercial development that reflects Bulverde's up-scale, hill country, and semi-rural ambience.		
Action 1.2.1: Discourage heavy industrial development and the establishment of enterprises that are too large, produce overcrowding, excessive traffic and pollution.	1	PL, PZ
Action 1.2.2: Enact ordinances to regulate allowable commercial/industrial uses, especially big-box retail.	1	CC, PZ

**Economic Development Goal 2: Diversify and expand the tax and economic base through the promotion of desired businesses and activities.**

Objective 2.1: Work to develop relationships/alliances with the Chamber of Commerce, interested citizens and other civic groups in the surrounding areas in order to collaboratively develop leads for the City of Bulverde.

Action 2.1.1: Set up meeting(s) with appropriate entities and interested citizens to brainstorm on how to develop these relationships.	2	CA, PL, CC
Action 2.1.2: Enact policies to facilitate cooperative relationships.	2	CC
Action 2.1.3: Tie into various incubator programs in the surrounding area to work with new business startups and market our area as a relocation option for these businesses.	3	CA, PL, CC
Action 2.1.4: Pursue a higher education campus for the City of Bulverde.	2	CA, PL, CC

Objective 2.2: Promote the attractiveness of Bulverde to higher paying industries by improving cultural and recreational amenities.

Action 2.2.1: Implement open space, trails, and other goals of Comprehensive Plan that made other cities attractive and desirable	1	CC
Action 2.2.2: Use the Comprehensive Plan as a marketing tool to desirable business prospects.	1	PZ, PL, CA, CC

Objective 2.3: Promote Bulverde as an attractive center for retailing, health care, entertainment and education.

Action 2.3.1: Develop a marketing plan and outreach program.	2	CC, PL
Action 2.3.2: Contact developers that have experience in our targeted businesses.	3	CC, PL
Action 2.3.3: Ensure that all future development fits into the scale and character of Bulverde.	1	PZ, PL, CC
Action 2.3.4: Encourage architecture consistent with the old hill country style.	1	PZ, PL



**Community Development**

Sunrise 2025: The City of Bulverde is an attractive community that has preserved the appearance and amenities of a rural environment.

Goals, Objectives and Actions	Priority	Responsible Agency
<b>as possible.</b>		
Objective 1.1: Use the relaxed atmosphere of the Hill-country to Bulverde's advantage.		
Action 1.1.1: Tie into a marketing program as called for in Chapter 8.	2	CC
Objective 1.2: Maintain the natural feel of the area.		
Action 1.2.1: Enforce what we already have (i.e. rules, regulations and policies).	1	PZ, BI, PL
Action 1.2.2: Pass design and construction standards as	1	PZ, CC



recommended in the Comprehensive Plan.		
<b>Objective 1.3 Establish an annexation program that protects and enhances the quality of life in the City of Bulverde.</b>		
Action 1.3.1: Develop and implement an annexation plan as called for in the Comprehensive Plan.	2	PZ, CC
<b>Objective 1.4: Facilitate open communication and cooperation among property owners, developers, city staff and others involved in all aspects of housing in Bulverde</b>		
Action 1.4.1: Promote a customer-friendly but strict attitude among city staff when considering housing development plans.	2	BI, CA
Action 1.4.2: Create user-friendly information packets, etc. for newcomers and existing residents that explain the development rules, regulations and incentives in the City of Bulverde.	3	BI, PL
<b>Community Development Goal 2: Encourage an aesthetically pleasing appearance for the city.</b>		
<b>Objective 2.1: Determine how best to prevent hodge-podge or bland development</b>		
Action 2.1.1: Enact design guidelines, overlay zones, etc. as recommended in Comprehensive Plan.	1	PZ, CC
<b>Objective 2.2: Promote city beautification.</b>		
Action 2.2.1: Work with TxDot and Comal County to promote landscaping along roadways.	2	CA, PL
Action 2.2.2: Enact ROW landscaping guidelines for city parkways, arterials and collectors.	1	CC
Action 2.2.3: Provide gateway signs and landscaping to welcome residents and visitors at each of the major corridors into the city.	2	CA, PL
<b>Community Development Goal 3: Encourage tasteful development of all kinds including affordable housing, roads, signs, lights, buildings, parks, and some higher density type development where appropriate.</b>		
<b>Objective 3.1: Strengthen city codes and ordinances to eliminate unsightly areas with a minimum use of city resources.</b>		
Action 3.1.1: Evaluate and improve existing ordinances related to signage, nuisance, animal control, etc.	2	PL, PZ
<b>Objective 3.2: Enforce city ordinances regarding property maintenance in a prompt and fair way.</b>		
Action 3.2.1: Develop a centralized code enforcement program with adequate staffing and resources.	2	CA, BI
<b>Objective 3.3: Encourage private participation in beautification.</b>		
Action 3.3.1: Get the Chamber of Commerce to give out an annual beautification award to businesses that promote high architectural and design standards.	2	CC, PL
<b>Objective 3.4: Enhance litter control programs.</b>		
Action 3.4.1: Get the "Adopt a Street" program under way.	2	PL
<b>Community Development Goal 4: Make people feel like a part of a community.</b>		
<b>Objective 4.1: Make the city more visible.</b>		
Action 4.1.1: Implement the above through appropriate policies and procedures.	2	CC

Objective 4.2: Make the City of Bulverde's first impression unique so people will know when they enter Bulverde.		
Action 4.2.1: Implement the goals above.	2	CC
Objective 4.3: Improve the City's public relations and communication.		
Action 4.3.1: Refer to Historical/Heritage Objective 1.2.	2	CC, PL
<b>Community Development Goal 5: Develop an "old village center" with defined edges.</b>		
Objective 5.1: Make the Village of Bulverde more identifiable.		
Action 5.1.1: Use the new City Hall as a focal point for community activities.	1	CA, CC, PL
Action 5.1.2: Enact signage, design standards, and overlay zones called for in the Comprehensive Plan.	1	PZ, CC
Objective 5.2: Encourage people to visit the Village of Bulverde.		
Action 5.2.1: Work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop strategies that make Bulverde attractive to visitors.	3	PL, CC
Action 5.2.2: Attract appropriate businesses as stated in Chapter 8.	2	CA, CC
<b>Community Development Goal 6: Preserve existing neighborhood integrity and create livable neighborhood environments.</b>		
Objective 6.1: Facilitate the development of housing to meet the needs of the disabled, elderly and other special needs populations.		
Action 6.1.1: Look for grants from governments, non-profits and other NGOs to achieve Objective 6.1.	2	CA, PL
Action 6.1.2: Take advantage of any opportunities to educate city staff about grant opportunities.	2	CA
Action 6.1.3: Ensure more flexible codes as stated in Chapters 3 and 10.	2	PZ, PL, CC

## City of Bulverde Community and Comprehensive Plan Survey

The purpose of this survey is to find out what people in our community think about Bulverde and its future development. We need to evaluate City services, collect public opinion on growth, measure our community outreach effectiveness and evaluate the future needs of all our citizens. You do not need to identify yourself and the survey is completely anonymous. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Please take a few minutes to complete the following questions and return it to City Hall or mail to City Hall at P.O. Box 335, 78163.

*This is a chance to make your voice heard. Your response to this survey is critical to the development of Bulverde's Comprehensive Plan for its future. Please take the time to complete and return the survey by August 1<sup>st</sup>.*

### DEMOGRAPHICS

Please answer the following questions about your *background*. These questions are for statistical purposes only.

<b>Sex</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<b>Age</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 <input type="checkbox"/> 75-84 <input type="checkbox"/> 85 +	<b>What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Some high school <input type="checkbox"/> High school/GED <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational <input type="checkbox"/> Some college <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Masters Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D, M.D.
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<b>What is your ethnicity?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<b>Do you own or rent your home?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Rent	<b>How many people currently live in your household (including yourself)?</b> _____ 18 or older _____ Less than 18 years	<b>Do you have access to the Internet at your home?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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<b>How long have you lived in the Bulverde area?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 year <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 6 – 10 years <input type="checkbox"/> 10 – 20 years <input type="checkbox"/> More than 20 years	<b>Where do you live?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> In the City Limits of Bulverde <input type="checkbox"/> In Bulverde's ETJ* <input type="checkbox"/> Outside the City Limits and ETJ  Zip Code? _____ * Extra Territorial Jurisdiction	<b>Where do you work?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> In Bulverde or its ETJ <input type="checkbox"/> Elsewhere in Comal County <input type="checkbox"/> In Bexar County <input type="checkbox"/> In another county  Zip Code? _____
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<b>What is your occupation?</b>     <input type="checkbox"/> Check here if retired	<b>How far do you commute to work one way?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> work at home <input type="checkbox"/> 5 miles or less <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 miles <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 miles <input type="checkbox"/> 21-30 miles <input type="checkbox"/> 31-40 miles <input type="checkbox"/> 41-50 miles <input type="checkbox"/> more than 50 miles <input type="checkbox"/> retired	<b>What is your annual family income before taxes?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$25,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000 - \$50,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,001 – 75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$75,001 - \$100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> more than \$100,000
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## THE FUTURE OF BULVERDE

Citizens have different ideas about what a community should be. Please let us know what you think about what Bulverde should be by checking the appropriate box to indicate whether you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or have No Opinion.

<i>My Vision of Bulverde - I Believe Bulverde Should Be:</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
A slow-paced rural community					
A unique village type community with an identifiable center(s)					
A suburban/bedroom community with large residential lots					
A balanced community – a place where people can live and work					
A tourist destination community – a place for tourists to visit					
A retiree community					
Other – please specify					

**In your opinion, what would be the ideal population of Bulverde in 20 years?**

- ☐ 5,000 or less
 ☐ 10,001 – 15,000
 ☐ More than 20,000  
☐ 5,001 to 10,000
 ☐ 15,001 – 20,000

**In your opinion what is (are) the most desirable thing(s) about living in the Bulverde area?**

**In your opinion, what is (are) the least desirable thing(s) about living in the Bulverde area?**

<i>If Bulverde is to succeed in managing growth what must our priorities be?</i>	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Opinion
Annexation of surrounding areas					
Keeping the town attractive					
Protection of existing neighborhoods					
Protection of the environment					
Providing affordable housing					
Providing economic opportunity/jobs for residents					
Providing parks and open space					
Solving traffic problems					
Other (please specify)					

<b><i>How do you feel about the following goal statements for the City's Comprehensive Plan?</i></b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Maintain and/or promote a small town atmosphere					
Protect and enhance historic sites					
Protect and enhance the natural environment					
Protect and enhance the appearance of the community					
Protect and enhance the major thoroughfare routes in the community					
Encourage mixed use development – mix of retail, office and residential					
Encourage human-scale development – small buildings, sidewalks, bicycle paths, etc.					
Promote the old “downtown” as the commercial center of the town					
Promote the 281/46 area as the commercial center of the town					
Promote multiple areas for commercial activities					
Manage future growth and development					
Promote more efficient and safe flow of traffic					
Maintain the residential nature of exiting developments					
Encourage architecture that is consistent with the traditional Hill Country style					
Promote the volunteer spirit in Bulverde					
Other – please specify					

When it comes to managing growth, some local governments take a very active role in growth management and others take little or no active role. We want to know what you think the role should be for the local government and city administration.

<b><i>What should the <u>role of City Government</u> be when it comes to matters of <u>Growth Management</u>? Check the appropriate column indicating your view.</i></b>	<b>Strong Role</b>	<b>Modera te Role</b>	<b>Minimal Role</b>	<b>No Role</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Requiring open space in new residential developments					
Requiring open space in commercial developments					
Regulating the height of commercial buildings					
Regulating the type of development in certain areas					
Developing a publicly owned water supply					
Developing a publicly owned sewer system					
Regulating the density of development in new commercial areas					
Regulating where industrial areas are developed in the community					
Regulating the density of development in new residential areas					
Regulating signs in the community					
Regulating the amount of space between commercial and residential areas					
Regulating lighting in the community					
Regulating commercial or industrial development along major roadways					
Regulating where apartments and/or affordable housing are located					
Regulating where traditional housing developments are located					
Other - please specify					

<b><i>As Bulverde grows the City may need to <u>provide additional services</u>. Please indicate your level of support for the following services.</i></b>	<b>Very Supportive</b>	<b>Supportive</b>	<b>Unsupportive</b>	<b>Very Unsupportive</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Police Department					
Central sewage system					
Recreational opportunities for our youth					
Water Utility services					
Promoting affordable housing					
Promoting economic opportunity/jobs for residents					
Providing parks and open space					
Solving traffic problems					
Other - please specify					

## QUALITY OF SERVICE

<i>Rate the quality of the following services provided by the City of Bulverde</i>	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
Animal Control Services					
Boards and Commissions					
City Government (generally)					
Customer Service at City Hall					
Drainage					
Environmental Protection (recycling, conservation, habitat protection)					
Financial Management of City Funds and Assets					
Growth Management					
Historic Preservation					
Municipal Court					
Parks/ Facilities/ Open Space					
Planning and Development Services (Planning, Zoning, Platting)					
Public Safety - Police					
Public Safety - Fire					
Public Safety - EMS					
Street Maintenance					
Traffic Control (signs and signals)					
Other – please specify					

<i>Please respond to the following statements about community outreach</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Overall, I am satisfied with the information I receive from the City of Bulverde					
City government encourages my involvement with the City.					
I believe I am adequately represented in City government.					
City government and services are accessible.					
Other – please specify					

**Please check the best way(s) for the City to reach you.**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers    | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City Web Site | <input type="checkbox"/> Public meetings and forums | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletters   | <input type="checkbox"/> Flyers and brochures       |  |

**Please write any additional comments in the space below:**

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**Thank you for your participation.**