

City of Waxahachie 2007 Comprehensive Plan

CHAPTER 2: GOALS & OBJECTIVES



WELCOME TO
WAXAHACHIE
THE GINGERBREAD CITY



The Comprehensive Plan should reflect "public decision-making, which emphasizes explicit goal-choice and rational goals-means determination, so that decisions can be based on the goals people are seeking and on the most effective programs to achieve them."

Herbert J. Gans – People and Plans: Essays on Urban Problems and Solutions



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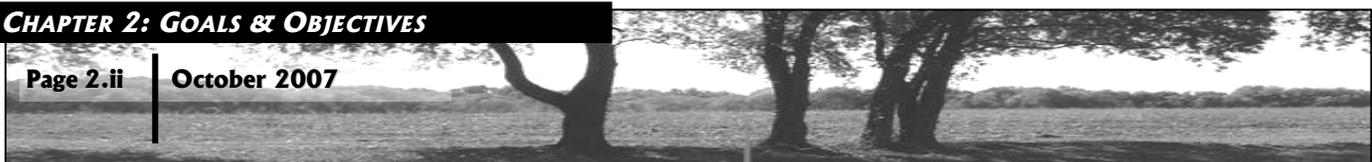
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Introduction

The *Baseline Analysis*, Chapter 1, provides a foundation for this *2007 Comprehensive Plan*. It does this generally by outlining facts about Waxahachie that should be considered, facts which pertain generally to demographics, housing and land use characteristics. This chapter also provides a foundational element for this Plan, but in a very different way. Instead of factual information, this *Goals & Objectives* chapter outlines the vision of the City that will be pursued as a result of this *Comprehensive Plan*.

What does the future hold for Waxahachie? What should the City be like in the year 2010 or 2020? These are the key questions that this chapter addresses. The vision for Waxahachie that is described within this *2007 Comprehensive Plan* will help shape and direct growth and development for the next 10 years and beyond. In order to do this effectively, this Plan should be premised upon a shared vision of the citizenry and the stakeholders of what Waxahachie should and will become as it grows, attains its anticipated build-out configuration, and becomes an increasingly mature, livable, and sustainable City.

In order to create this shared vision, numerous meetings with the Steering Committee were held. City leaders and stakeholders, such as the City Council, Downtown merchants, and local businesspersons, were asked to provide input via a Visual Character Survey (VCS) and several open-ended questions. The first section of this chapter describes the results of the VCS, and the second section describes the answers given to the open-ended questions. The third section outlines the specific goals and objectives that provide a basis for the comprehensive planning process. Finally, the fourth section brings all of this input together in a culminating Vision Statement; this is an encompassing statement that describes the overriding needs and desires of Waxahachie's citizens, leaders, and stakeholders that were stated throughout the chapter of what Waxahachie should ultimately be in the future.



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The Visual Character Survey (VCS)

A Visual Character Survey (VCS) is a technique where respondents are asked to score a series of photographs (images) based on their preferences with regard to what they find to be visually preferable. The images illustrate various aspects of the developed environment. Although it is not necessarily scientific, the VCS is an effective method of receiving attitudinal, aesthetic-based input, since the survey allows respondents the ability to view real-world examples of developed areas and elements.

The Visual Character Survey that was developed specifically for Waxahachie was primarily the result of issues identified by the Steering Committee toward the beginning of the comprehensive planning process. The various subjects presented in the VCS were the following:

- ❖ Building materials (nonresidential);
- ❖ Duplex development;
- ❖ Entryway features;
- ❖ Landscaping;
- ❖ Mixed use development;
- ❖ Multiple-family development;
- ❖ Open space in relation to development;
- ❖ Public spaces;
- ❖ Retail development;
- ❖ Signage
- ❖ Sidewalk integration;
- ❖ Single-family development;
- ❖ Single-family zero-lot-line development;
- ❖ Street design;
- ❖ Townhome development; and
- ❖ Transit and transit-oriented development.

Respondents were asked to rate 150 images that related to these subjects according to the following scale shown in *Figure 2-1*.

Figure 2-1: Visual Character Survey (VCS) Scoring Scale

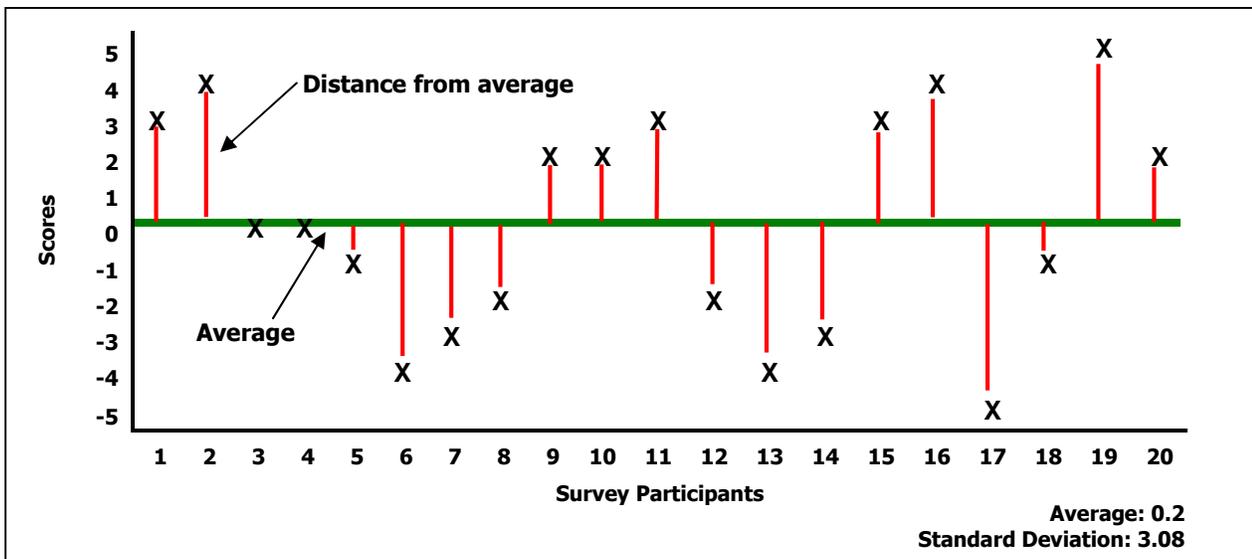
-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5
<i>highly</i>	<i>strongly</i>	<i>somewhat</i>	<i>somewhat</i>	<i>NEUTRAL</i>	<i>somewhat</i>	<i>strongly</i>	<i>highly</i>			
<i>INAPPROPRIATE</i>						<i>APPROPRIATE</i>				

Respondents were asked to consider several questions about each image as they rated them:

- ❖ Do I like or dislike the image?
- ❖ By what value [or rating] do I like or dislike it?
- ❖ Is it appropriate or inappropriate for Waxahachie?

In evaluating the results of the VCS, two primary statistics are used. First is the average score of each image. Second is the standard deviation (abbreviated as "S. Deviation") that resulted from the scoring of each image. Standard deviation is a measure of how widely values are dispersed from the average value (the mean),²⁻¹ or in other words, how tightly various values are clustered around the average in a set of data.²⁻² The figure below graphically depicts the concept of high standard deviation. In the case of the VCS images, standard deviation can be described as a measurement of the consistency or inconsistency in individual responses to a specific image.

Figure 2-2: Example Image Illustrating High Standard Deviation in Relation to VCS Scoring



Following are the cumulative results of the VCS, which was taken by 38 individuals from numerous civic-related groups, including the Steering Committee, Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council, Downtown Merchants, City staff members, City residents, and real estate professionals. Overall high and low scoring images are shown first, followed by the highest and lowest scoring images compiled by the subject headings listed above. Any comments about the images made by participants are also included.

²⁻¹ Microsoft Excel calculation description.
²⁻² Niles, Robert. *Standard Deviation*. Journalism.org website.



Highest-Scoring VCS Images

(Top 10% of the Images - Average Score of 3.2 or Higher)

Single-Family (Image 6)

Average: 4.0 • S. Deviation: 1.55



HIGHEST-SCORING IMAGE OF THE 150 SHOWN

Retail Pedestrian Space (Image 27)

Average: 3.8 • S. Deviation: 1.27



Comments: Needed Downtown

Open Space W/ Development (Image 19)

Average: 3.7 • S. Deviation: 1.58



Retail Pedestrian Space (Image 85)

Average: 3.7 • S. Deviation: 1.14



Landscaping (Image 58)

Average: 3.7 • S. Deviation: 1.07



Public Space (Image 13)

Average: 3.6 • S. Deviation: 1.72



Sidewalk in Retail Area (Image 103)

Average: 3.5 • S. Deviation: 1.35



Comments: Nice and wide

Landscaping (Image 5)

Average: 3.4 • S. Deviation: 1.67



Landscaping (Image 30)

Average: 3.4 • S. Deviation: 1.41



Public Space (Image 136)

Average: 3.4 • S. Deviation: 1.62



Single-Family (Image 125)

Average: 3.4 • S. Deviation: 1.57



Single-Family (Image 83)

Average: 3.3 • S. Deviation: 1.36



Street Design (Image 149)

Average: 3.3 • S. Deviation: 1.18



Street Design (Image 44)

Average: 3.2 • S. Deviation: 1.38



Comments: Much more inviting

Public Space (Image 150)

Average: 3.2 • S. Deviation: 1.83



Comments: Love the fountain

Signage (Image 11)

Average: 3.2 • S. Deviation: 1.70



Building Materials (Image 8)

Average: 3.2 • S. Deviation: 1.41





Conclusions from VCS Results of Highest-Scoring Images

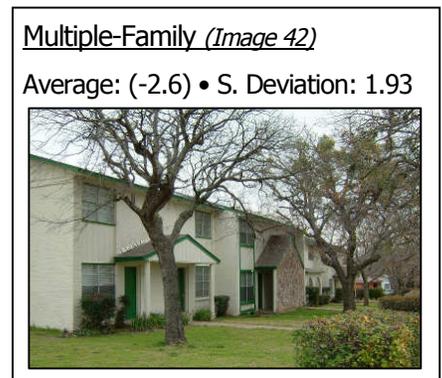
There was not one overriding image type that was highly scored – image subjects varied across the board. However, images that depicted single-family homes, landscaping, and public spaces were most prevalent. Key concepts that can be derived from these highly rated images are:

- ❖ Quality single-family homes of various styles and sizes are desirable. This is especially true for homes designed with front porches and historic features.
- ❖ Pedestrian-oriented areas are appreciated, from those in retail areas to well-designed pedestrian crosswalks and sidewalks.
- ❖ Public spaces are desired by participants. Elements that were featured in the highly rated images included water features, greenery, and benches. One participant commented that they loved the fountain from one of the images.
- ❖ Landscaping is important to the visual appeal of the built environment.
- ❖ Monument signs are the most desirable type of signage to participants.

These concepts can be interpreted to mean that citizens of Waxahachie want a variety of single-family homes, pedestrian-oriented features, and public-oriented places to gather and to experience the outdoors. These concepts also mean that landscaping features and monument signage can positively influence the visual appeal of areas.

Lowest-Scoring VCS Images

(Bottom 10% of the Images - Average Score of (-0.5) or Less)



LOWEST-SCORING IMAGES OF THE 150 SHOWN *Comments: Too cluttered*

Street Design (Image 36)

Average: (-2.3) • S. Deviation: 2.67



Signage (Image 66)

Average: (-1.6) • S. Deviation: 2.69



Building Materials (Image 72)

Average: (-1.3) • S. Deviation: 2.37



Multiple-Family (Image 10)

Average: (-1.2) • S. Deviation: 2.71



Signage (Image 88)

Average: (-1.1) • S. Deviation: 2.77



Signage (Image 78)

Average: (-1.1) • S. Deviation: 2.47



Retail (Image 18)

Average: (-1.1) • S. Deviation: 3.08



Comments: Store ugly, but retail good

Single-Family Zero-Lot (Image 138)

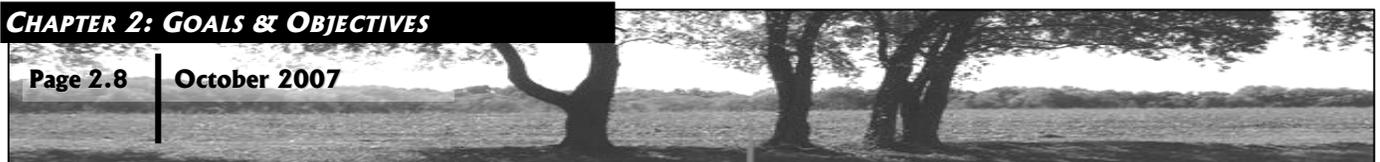
Average: (-0.7) • S. Deviation: 2.82



Comments: Architecture • Don't like zero-lot-line

Mixed Use (Image 70)

Average: (-0.7) • S. Deviation: 3.27



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Building Materials (Image 60)

Average: (-0.7) • S. Deviation: 2.88



Comments: Too crowded

Single-Family (Image 104)

Average: (-0.6) • S. Deviation: 2.45



Comments: Enough already

Single-Family (Image 12)

Average: (-0.5) • S. Deviation: 2.55



Transit-Large Buses (Image 96)

Average: (-0.5) • S. Deviation: 3.08



Comments: Trolley better

Conclusions from VCS Results of Lowest-Scoring Images

Similar to the results of the highest-rated images, lowest-rated images also varied in their subject-matter. However, images that depicted signage were most prevalent. Key concepts that can be derived from these low-rated images are:

- ❖ Strong opinions about signage exist, with poles signs, pylon signs, and large multi-tenant signs receiving some of the lowest scores out of all of the VCS images. More restrictive sign-related regulations may be appropriate for Waxahachie.
- ❖ Single-family homes that are not uniquely designed (i.e., are more cookie-cutter in design) are not desirable in Waxahachie. Images with front-end garages or with garages as a dominant feature of the home were low-rated.
- ❖ Street design images were lowest rated when they depicted visual clutter or indistinct areas. Traffic corridors, therefore, should be well-designed and have unique features.

These concepts can be interpreted to mean that citizens of Waxahachie want quality and visually appealing signage, which may mean that additional sign regulations are needed for new development. They also mean that single-family homes need to be unique to be attractive to participants. And finally, that streets should enhance the visual appeal of the City, and should not be cluttered or without special features that reflect the uniqueness of Waxahachie.

Standard Deviation Images from the VCS

Lowest Standard Deviation – Top Three Most-Agreed-Upon Images

Landscaping (Image 58)
 Average: 3.7 • S. Deviation: 1.07

LOWEST DEVIATION OF THE 150 IMAGES SHOWN

Retail Pedestrian Space (Image 85)
 Average: 3.7 • S. Deviation: 1.14

Street Design (Image 149)
 Average: 3.3 • S. Deviation: 1.18

Highest Standard Deviation – Top Three Most-Disagreed-Upon Images

St Design-Roundabout (Image 14)
 Average: 0.7 • S. Deviation: 3.64

HIGHEST DEVIATION OF THE 150 IMAGES SHOWN

St Design-Roundabout (Image 67)
 Average: 0.6 • S. Deviation: 3.44

Transit & TOD* (Image 134)
 Average: 1.2 • S. Deviation: 3.38

*TOD-Transit-Oriented Development

Comments: Grass between rails





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Conclusions of VCS Standard Deviation Results

Participants agree that landscaping is visually important for attractive corridors, and that pedestrian gathering spaces are highly desirable. Participants disagree on whether streets designed with roundabouts are suitable for Waxahachie. There was also much disagreement as to whether transit is an appropriate transportation facility to pursue.

VCS Images—High & Low Scores by Subject

Entryways

Highest Average Score – Image 4

Average: 2.8 • S. Deviation: 1.67



Lowest Average Score – Image 76

Average: 1.8 • S. Deviation: 2.47



Conclusions – All images depicting entryway features received positive scores, reflecting a generally positive attitude toward such features being part of the built environment in Waxahachie.

Landscaping

Highest Average Score – Image 58

Average: 3.7 • S. Deviation: 1.07



Lowest Average Score – Image 90

Average: 2.8 • S. Deviation: 1.72



Conclusions – All images depicting landscaping were highly rated, with 2.8 being the lowest average score. Based on these results, landscape features would likely be an effective way increase the visual appeal of Waxahachie.

Building Materials

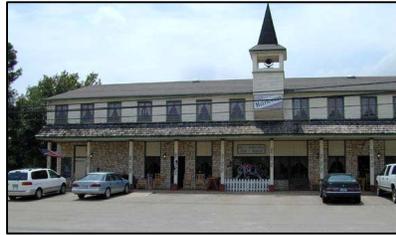
Highest Average Score – Image 8

Average: 3.2 • S. Deviation: 1.41



Lowest Average Score – Image 72

Average: (-1.3) • S. Deviation: 2.37



Conclusions – There was much variation in the scoring of images of building materials. Generally, buildings with masonry materials such as brick and stone highly rated. Buildings with a majority of wood materials received lower average scores.

Mixed Use

Highest Average Score – Image 26

Average: 2.9 • S. Deviation: 2.33



Lowest Average Score – Image 70

Average: (-0.7) • S. Deviation: 3.27



Conclusions – There was much variation in the scoring of images of mixed use developments. Generally, less density and more architectural features were characteristics of the more highly images. Ratings reflected that mixed use development would likely be appropriate in Waxahachie.

Multiple-Family

Highest Average Score – Image 33

Average: 1.6 • S. Deviation: 1.98



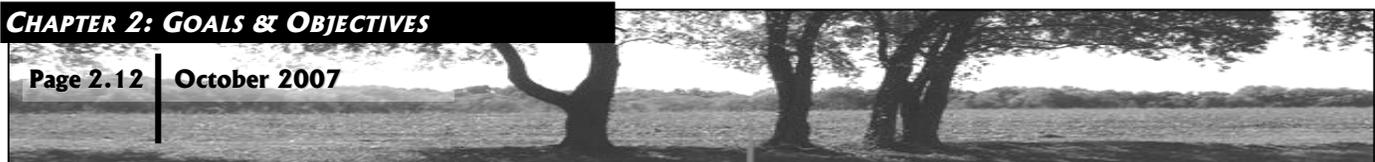
Comments: No fence

Lowest Average Score – Image 42

Average: (-2.6) • S. Deviation: 1.93



Conclusions – No multiple-family images were highly rated, with 1.6 being the highest average score. Design features such as brick, stucco, privacy gates, and landscaping were characteristics of the highest rated images of this subject.



Open Space in Relation to Development

Highest Average Score – Image 19

Average: 3.7 • S. Deviation: 1.58



Lowest Average Score – Image 34

Average: 2.2 • S. Deviation: 2.10



Comments: Not as good as the first

Conclusions – All images of this type were highly rated, with 2.2 being the lowest average score. Participants seemed to be very much in favor of integrating open space with development.

Public Space

Highest Average Score – Image 13

Average: 3.6 • S. Deviation: 1.72



Lowest Average Score – Image 140

Average: (-0.4) • S. Deviation: 2.91



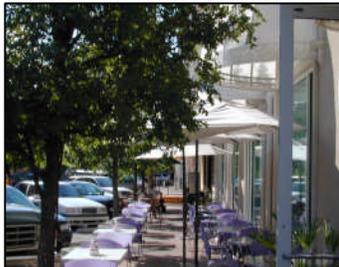
Comments: Inappropriate

Conclusions – Most images of this type were highly rated, with average scores between 2.7 and 3.6. The exception was the lowest rated image shown at the left. It can be concluded from this that people strongly desire public spaces, but that such spaces must be well-designed to attract the public.

Retail Pedestrian Gathering Space

Highest Average Score – Image 27

Average: 3.8 • S. Deviation: 1.27



Comments: Need it Downtown

Lowest Average Score – Image 118

Average: 2.0 • S. Deviation: 1.96



Conclusions – All images of this type were highly rated, with 2.0 being the lowest average score. Like open space and public space images, participants seemed very much in favor of retail-based pedestrian gathering spaces. One comment was that this is especially needed Downtown.

Retail

Highest Average Score – Image 50

Average: 2.8 • S. Deviation: 1.75



Lowest Average Score – Image 18

Average: (-1.1) • S. Deviation: 3.08



Comments: Store ugly but retail good

Conclusions – Images of this type that were highly rated had characteristics like masonry, pedestrian-orientation, and interesting design features. The consensus seemed to be that retail is good for the City in general, but well-designed retail is preferable.

Sidewalk Integration

Highest Average Score – Image 103

Average: 3.5 • S. Deviation: 1.35



Comments: Nice and wide

Lowest Average Score – Image 73

Average: 1.0 • S. Deviation: 2.19



Comments: If done in a way so it is usable

Conclusions – All images of this type received positive scores. Participants were in favor of sidewalks being integrated into developments, but those with special features like brick, lighting, and trees were most favorably rated.

Signage

Highest Average Score – Image 11

Average: 3.2 • S. Deviation: 1.70



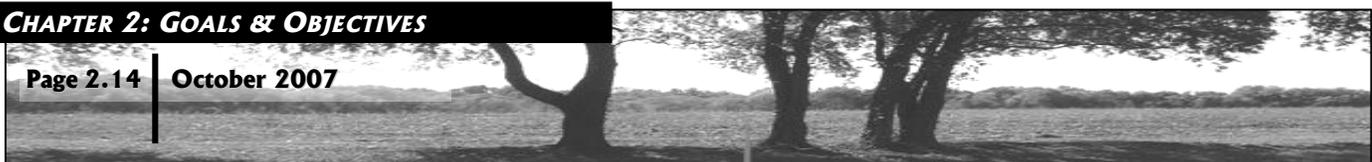
Lowest Average Score – Image 63

Average: (-3.1) • S. Deviation: 1.96



Comments: Too cluttered

Conclusions – There was much variation in the rating of these images. Those most highly rated were of monument signs constructed with masonry materials. It can be concluded from this that people strongly desire attractive signage in Waxahachie.



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Single-Family Development

Highest Average Score – Image 6

Average: 4.0 • S. Deviation: 1.75



Lowest Average Score – Image 104

Average: (-0.6) • S. Deviation: 2.45



Comments: Enough already

Conclusions – Within this image type, participants rated images of historic homes highest. Cottage houses, which fit in with the historic homes in Waxahachie, were also rated favorably. The three top-rated homes had porches and interesting architecture. Images of homes with garages as the dominant feature were lowest-rated.

Single-Family Zero-Lot-Line

Highest Average Score – Image 102

Average: 2.1 • S. Deviation: 2.51



Comments: Fits in Waxahachie • Don't like zero-lot-line

Lowest Average Score – Image 138

Average: (-0.7) • S. Deviation: 2.82



Comments: Architecture • Don't like zero-lot-line

Conclusions – Most images of this type received positive scores, with the exception of the lowest-scoring image shown at the left. Participants seemed to be amenable to this type of housing unit, but the design of this housing type would likely be very important in how well-received it would be in Waxahachie.

Street Design

Highest Average Score – Image 149

Average: 3.3 • S. Deviation: 1.18



Lowest Average Score – Image 79

Average: (-3.1) • S. Deviation: 1.93



Conclusions – Images of this type with landscaping, lighting, trees, and landscaped medians were highly rated. Those with no distinguishable features were rated extremely low. This can be interpreted to mean that projecting a positive “view from the road” within the City is important.

Townhomes

Conclusions – Images of traditionally designed townhomes were highly rated, while townhomes with more modern designed received neutral scores. This can be interpreted to mean that people would be amenable to townhome development, but that units should be traditionally designed to fit into Waxahachie.

Highest Average Score – Image 89
 Average: 3.1 • S. Deviation: 2.43

Lowest Average Score – Image 117
 Average: (-0.2) • S. Deviation: 2.41

Comments: No character

Transit

Conclusions – Most images of this type received positive average scores; the exception to this was the lowest-scoring image shown at the left. Commuter rail and trolley images were highly rated, while buses (of any size) were rated lowest. Therefore, people in Waxahachie would likely use commuter rail and trolleys if they were provided.

Highest Average Score – Image 9
 Average: 2.1 • S. Deviation: 3.11

Comments: Please get this

Lowest Average Score – Image 96
 Average: (-0.5) • S. Deviation: 3.08

Comments: Trolley better

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

Conclusions – Images of this type received positive average scores; but they were relatively neutral, with the highest being a score of 1.8. Participants seemed unsure as to whether TOD would be appropriate in Waxahachie, but they also did not seem to be against this type of development.

Highest Average Score – Image 61
 Average: 1.8 • S. Deviation: 2.60

Lowest Average Score – Image 48
 Average: 0.3 • S. Deviation: 2.97

Comments: The City may not be ready





Two-Family/Duplex Development

Highest Average Score – Image 54

Average: 2.0 • S. Deviation: 1.79



Lowest Average Score – Image 17

Average: 0.3 • S. Deviation: 2.25



Comments: No character

Conclusions – Images of this type all received positive average scores. The difference in the ratings seemed to favor rear-end garages and masonry materials. Two-family units designed to look like large single-family houses were the most highly rated of this image type.

Conclusions from the VCS

The Visual Character Survey (VCS) allowed participants to rate a wide range of image types. The resultant ratings then provided a basis for determining how those participants felt about different aspects of the built environment. All of the conclusions that were arrived at as a result of the VCS are extremely helpful in establishing goals and objectives (refer to page 2.24). The conclusions are also useful as supporting documentation to the policies and recommendations that are in subsequent chapters of this *2007 Comprehensive Plan*.

Survey Questions & Results

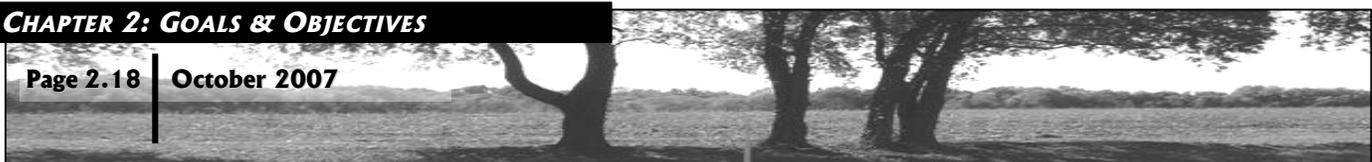
At the conclusion of the Visual Character Survey, participants were asked to answer a few open-ended questions. The following list of questions was asked of the participants. The related general results of each are provided.

#1: What is the best characteristic of Waxahachie?

- ❖ Historic character and architecture
- ❖ Location (close to, but far enough from Dallas)
- ❖ Small-town atmosphere
- ❖ Friendly people
- ❖ Small, intimate, historic places to stop and talk to people
- ❖ Quaintness
- ❖ Uniqueness
- ❖ Downtown (Town Square)
- ❖ Amenities of a city without the crowd of a city

#2: What is the worst characteristic of Waxahachie?

- ❖ Freeway frontage (the lack of visual appeal, especially as people enter the City)
- ❖ Railroad access but no transit
- ❖ Some of the new residential subdivisions are not attractive
- ❖ Lack of code enforcement
- ❖ Lack of upscale businesses
- ❖ Moving toward "every town USA" (i.e., the lack of uniqueness)
- ❖ Insensitivity to historic structures/districts, by encroachment - i.e. willingness to rezone to high density or business
- ❖ Old roads/street infrastructure
- ❖ Traffic problems





#3: What are the top 3 issues facing Waxahachie?

- ❖ Managing growth
- ❖ Quality of life
- ❖ Residential standards
- ❖ Maintaining a viable Downtown
- ❖ Improving run-down properties
- ❖ Transportation management (i.e., addressing traffic)
- ❖ Keeping a sense of history and character with new growth
- ❖ School facilities and the related ability to keep up with growth
- ❖ Water and sewer infrastructure and meeting needs related to population growth
- ❖ Loss of green space with additional development
- ❖ Changing economic base
- ❖ Park and open space needs
- ❖ Becoming like every other city

#4: What is one other city you feel is better than Waxahachie, and why?

- ❖ None better, or did not answer – 17 respondents
- ❖ Waxahachie – 3 responses – nice homes, public buildings, retail, and open space; buildings and developers are held to a high standard while maintaining the history of their downtown
- ❖ Southlake – 3 responses – nice, clean developments; nice Town Center; upper-income areas, proximity to the Metroplex, city has a vision
- ❖ Kerrville – 2 responses – the feel of the city
- ❖ McKinney – 2 responses – the city has handled growth well
- ❖ Midlothian – 2 responses – infrastructure and planning
- ❖ Addison – quality development is standard, with no compromise
- ❖ Dallas – dining opportunities
- ❖ Fort Worth – working to keep history, character, and vibrant downtown with people living downtown
- ❖ Fredericksburg

- ❖ Georgetown – the city seems to have done a very good job of planning
- ❖ Grapevine – Christmas time is great because of decorations
- ❖ Highland Park – upper-income areas,
- ❖ San Marcos – more eclectic

#5: What do you consider to be your neighborhood?

- ❖ General area – 11 responses – most answered with a general area of the City, such as “historic area,” “west end area,” and “old Waxahachie”
- ❖ Subdivision – 8 responses – the second most prevalent answer related to respondents’ subdivisions, such as “Indian Hills,” “Mustang Creek,” “Spring Creek Crossing”
- ❖ The entire City – 3 responses
- ❖ The country or rural area – 3 responses
- ❖ A street or block area – 2 responses

#6: What do you like or dislike about your neighborhood?

- ❖ Answers about what respondents like included:
 - Sidewalks
 - Well-kept areas
 - Good neighbors
 - Historic character
 - Easy to walk to parks, ride bicycles, and run into neighbors
 - The pride of home ownership
- ❖ Answers about what respondents dislike included:
 - Parking
 - Lack of drive-up appeal because of lack of right-of-way maintenance
 - No sense of community, no atmosphere
 - Lack of grocery stores
 - Need for sidewalks





#7: Focusing on U.S. Hwy 77, do you feel safe or unsafe traveling this corridor? If unsafe, why?

- ❖ Safe – 11 responses
- ❖ Unsafe – 21 responses, with reasons including the following:
 - Unprotected turns
 - "Suicide lanes"
 - Too much traffic traveling too fast on roads that are too narrow
 - Lack of traffic law enforcement
 - Too many entrances (driveways)
 - People turning against traffic
 - Not enough stop-lights
 - Congestion/gridlock

#8: Do you think that high-traffic corridors in Waxahachie should have high aesthetic (design) standards? Why or why not?

- ❖ Responses were overwhelmingly affirmative that aesthetic standards should be applied to such corridors.
- ❖ Various reasons were given, including the following:
 - Everything else – architecture, signage – will also improve (i.e., a positive ripple effect)
 - For safety
 - For general attractiveness
 - It is calming to drive along an aesthetically pleasing roadway
 - We all benefit from pleasant surroundings
 - It would help make the City different from surrounding areas
 - Simply for improvement of quality of life
 - It would help attract development and people to the City

#9: Do you envision yourself living in Waxahachie in 10, 20 and/or 50 years?

- ❖ In 10 years – 33 responses, almost 100%, answered that they would be or hoped to be in Waxahachie in 10 years.
- ❖ In 20 years – 33 responses, almost 100%, answered that they would be or hoped to be in Waxahachie in 20 years.
- ❖ In 50 years – Most answered that they would be surprised to be alive in 50 years, but if they were, they would be or hoped to be living in Waxahachie. Four respondents answered that they would likely be elsewhere, generally because of retirement.

#10: Describe the City of Waxahachie as you would like it to be in 10, 20 and/or 50 years.

- ❖ Answers varied widely, but some overall themes emerged, including the following:
 - Larger, economically sound, friendly, and with its historic heritage maintained
 - Growing according to planned growth
 - Thriving, diverse, and well-planned
 - A City with a viable Downtown
 - Rooftops, rooftops, rooftops
 - Aesthetically pleasing developments with a core of unique, historical charm
 - The premier City within the Metroplex
 - Entirely walkable and ride-able
 - A City with something for everyone – Downtown, homes, shops, restaurants, etc.
 - A City with tourism and attractions
 - Quality single-family homes that fit the market





Goals & Objectives

A foundation for the planning process has been provided by the demographic, housing and land use information that is contained within Chapter 1, *Baseline Analysis*. Also, the Visual Character Survey (VCS) has provided insight into what is desired in Waxahachie in terms of aesthetics. Establishment of goals and objectives is the next step in the planning process.

Goals are *general statements of guidance* concerning an aspect of Waxahachie's desired ultimate physical, social and/or economic environment. Goal statements are visionary statements that outline how various issues should be addressed in an ideal and broad sense.

Objectives express *specific statements of intent* that will ultimately lead the City to achieve what is envisioned within the goal statements.

Issues Identified

The goal and objective statements should reflect the demographic, housing and land use information previously gathered and presented. They should also reflect the visioning process – specifically the VCS and the issue identification exercises that have been conducted. Results of the issue identification (some of which were mentioned more than once) include the following.

People

- ❖ Provide things that will keep people in Waxahachie as they age
- ❖ Maintain the concept that Waxahachie is family-oriented
- ❖ Provide a variety of housing

Connectivity

- ❖ Provide mass transit opportunities
- ❖ Address transportation (roads, safety)
- ❖ Connect neighborhoods better
- ❖ Establish retail and mixed use land uses with pedestrian access
- ❖ Make the City pedestrian-friendly
- ❖ Address the design of roadways – slow people down and provide bicycle lanes

Parks & Open Space

- ❖ Provide parks and open space
- ❖ Increase the amount of greenery (trees) throughout the City
- ❖ Have more public gathering spaces

Uniqueness

- ❖ Make sure that there is uniqueness in the design of buildings within Waxahachie
- ❖ Establish a City identity
- ❖ Ensure diversity and differentiation
- ❖ Keep Downtown vital
- ❖ Make the City unique-looking, distinctive
- ❖ Increase the City's "curb-appeal"

Development & Redevelopment

- ❖ Focus on quality throughout the City
- ❖ Think beyond the short-term, think 20 years or more into the future
- ❖ Set high standards for development now, while there is still plenty of land in Waxahachie
- ❖ Find ways to improve what is already developed in Waxahachie
- ❖ Make sure retail development is viable for the future
- ❖ Integrate open space with residential development
- ❖ Have diverse and quality development
- ❖ Consider incentives for developers to develop a quality product
- ❖ Incorporate smart growth principles

Established Goals & Objectives

The following goals and objectives have been established based on the *Baseline Analysis* (Chapter 1), results of the VCS, and the previously listed identified issues. These have been divided by subject matter and related *2007 Comprehensive Plan* chapter.





Neighborhood Livability & Image Enhancement

Goal 1:

Support the creation of unique residential properties and retailing to encourage long-term stability and reinvestment.

Objective 1.1: Encourage a diversity of residential properties in terms of size, type, views and orientation of lots to amenities.

Objective 1.2: Encourage unique retail development that is pedestrian-oriented and connects to adjacent neighborhoods.

Objective 1.3: Encourage retail businesses that meet the needs of a diverse range of age demographics, so that Waxahachie's citizens are able to buy what they need locally for their full life cycle.

Objective 1.4: Develop plans for alternative uses of under-utilized or vacant retail sites.

Goal 2:

Reinforce the vision of Waxahachie as a City of excellence for residents and businesses.

Objective 2.1: Make Waxahachie known as a destination City with many unique points of interest to offer visitors – historic aspects, unique retailing, unique recreation, unique cultural opportunities, and education opportunities.

Objective 2.2: Create gateways at principal entry points into the City, and develop a design theme that is used throughout the community to create a sense of unity, identity, and cohesion for both residents and visitors. Entrances into the City from the Interstate and from Highway 287 should be prioritized locations for gateway features.

Objective 2.3: Develop retail design guidelines that encourage distinctiveness and pedestrian orientation.

Objective 2.4: Continue efforts to instill a stronger sense of civic pride by encouraging involvement in public decision-making and by soliciting citizen input from all age groups.

Objective 2.5: Encourage public/private participation and cooperation in beautification efforts. Explore assistance that may be available from private/volunteer groups to contribute to urban design-related projects and to help maintain enhanced public areas (e.g., street medians, small landscaped areas, etc.).

Objective 2.6: Establish ways in which the City can honor its history and use it to bolster civic pride.

Objective 2.7: Establish ways in which the City can become increasingly known for its sensitivity to, and preservation of, its historic heritage.

Objective 2.8: Create formal public open spaces to serve as focal points and gathering areas throughout the City.

Goal 3:

Review the City's development standards and examine ways in which such standards can be improved to achieve increased livability and sustainability.

Objective 3.1: Develop standards for transitional elements to enhance the relationships between residential and complementary nonresidential development.

Objective 3.2: Create a project review process for unique developments that include mixed use, open space, pedestrian integration, mix of housing types, etc., such that these unique developments become the norm in Waxahachie.

Objective 3.3: Establish nonresidential design standards that will allow the City to proactively plan for the adaptive reuse of buildings that may become vacant as the City ages.

Objective 3.4: Continue to 1) foster a positive relationship with, and 2) coordinate development within the City with representatives of educational and health-related facilities, including the Waxahachie Independent School District (WISD), Navarro College, and Baylor Medical Center.

Objective 3.5: Review zoning and subdivision ordinances and engineering standards to ensure that the Goals of this Plan are incorporated, especially in terms of allowing flexible and innovative design solutions.

Transportation

Goal 4:

Ensure that the City's transportation system is cost-effective and adequate to meet the needs of the current and projected population.

Objective 4.1: Identify strategies that result in mutually supportive transportation choices, balancing convenient and efficient auto access with safe, well-designed pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities.





2007 Comprehensive Plan

Objective 4.2: Identify current areas where access and mobility deficiencies exist.

Objective 4.3: Investigate ways in which public and private funding can participate in transportation system improvements.

Objective 4.4: Prioritize transportation recommendations, and allocate funds accordingly.

Objective 4.5: Build upon connectivity concepts by providing for bicycle and pedestrian circulation within the *Transportation Plan*; concentrate on connecting homes and neighborhoods to schools, retail, employment and recreation opportunities.

Objective 4.6: Determine locations where transit may be especially needed or desired, for instance in areas where workforce housing is located, and prioritize the integration of transit accordingly.

Goal 5:

Plan for transportation needs according to the type of development that is anticipated to be developed in the future.

Objective 5.1: Correlate the *Transportation Plan* with the *Future Land Use Plan*, specifically to ensure that the various land uses are accommodated by the transportation system.

Objective 5.2: Correlate a mixed land use development strategy to minimize auto trips and roadway congestion.

Objective 5.3: Review standards for roadway design based on their anticipated function, traffic volume and adjacent land use.

Objective 5.4: Encourage development of an interconnected and diverse street pattern to ease congestion, more evenly distribute traffic, and offer flexibility of routes.

Objective 5.5: Incorporate updated standards for roadway types into the City's subdivision regulations, as necessary.

Objective 5.6: Create a strong connection between the *Future Land Use Plan* and the *Transportation Plan*.

Objective 5.7: Enhance current roadways with streetscape features, such as a combination of light fixtures, signs, and sidewalks, to make the City's roads unique and to help residents and visitors recognize that they are in Waxahachie.

Objective 5.8: Study existing roads and streets to determine whether their roadway classification and use has changed to the detriment of the neighborhood they serve. If the determination is that the roadway use pattern has compromised the neighborhood,

ensure that future roadway plans are in place to return these streets to their intended purpose.

Objective 5.9: Ensure adequate emergency vehicle service to all parts of the City by providing adequate grade-separated crossings at railroads and at other physical barriers.

Goal 6:

Identify how alternative modes of transportation can be incorporated in Waxahachie.

Objective 6.1: Consider rail options to provide better regional transportation.

Objective 6.2: Investigate how local transit options, such as a trolley system, could be utilized to connect different areas of the City and development centers and be cost effective for residents at the same time.

Objective 6.3: Provide comfortable and attractive pedestrian and bicycle mobility within existing and new development, and throughout the City.

Objective 6.4: Pursue funding for retroactive and proactive integration of alternative modes of transportation throughout the City.

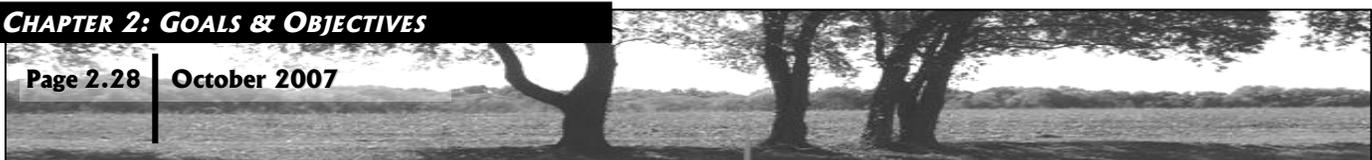
Objective 6.5: Ensure that existing railroad rights-of-way are retained (and not abandoned) so that in the future, railroad rights-of-way can be converted into rights-of-way for mass transit.

Goal 7:

Work with adjacent cities and county and state governmental entities on efforts to maintain and/or expand the transportation system.

Objective 7.1: Ensure that Waxahachie's *Transportation Plan Map* is coordinated with plans in surrounding cities and regional plans, including Ellis County and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG).

Objective 7.2: Investigate how local, county, state, and federal funds could be combined to positively affect regional transportation needs.





Land Use

Goal 8:

Encourage the most desirable, efficient use of land while maintaining and enhancing local aesthetics.

Objective 8.1: Identify vacant areas that are appropriate for innovative, mixed use development as well as areas that are appropriate for single-use development.

Objective 8.2: Establish specific ways in which residential and complementary nonresidential development can be integrated as development occurs.

Objective 8.3: Ensure that standards related to the development of nonresidential uses along major corridors are the highest possible such that a positive visual perception of Waxahachie is projected to citizens and visitors.

Objective 8.4: Establish incentives to encourage existing businesses to make visual improvements consistent with the City's current high standards.

Objective 8.5: Ensure that development enhances and contributes to the livability of Waxahachie.

Objective 8.6: Identify ways in which park and open space areas can be integrated with existing and future development.

Objective 8.7: Require incorporation of pedestrian access through newly developed areas and to adjacent development, wherever possible. When new development occurs and is not adjacent to existing development, provide for temporary (or interim) pedestrian access until such time as in-between, undeveloped areas are developed with permanent pedestrian access.

Objective 8.8: Create distinctive neighborhood areas within Waxahachie that will contribute to the City's future sustainability and that are diverse in housing type such that when citizens desire a different type of housing, they can still remain in their neighborhood.

Objective 8.9: Maintain and enhance the City's local character and aesthetic value by improving existing neighborhoods.

Objective 8.10: Provide for diversity in terms of residential development to meet the needs of citizens' full life cycle and to provide affordability.

Objective 8.11: Study where there are current developed areas without sidewalks, and allocate funds each year to retrofit these areas with sidewalks on a prioritized basis.

Goal 9:

Encourage a balance of land uses to serve the needs of citizens and to ensure a diverse economic base.

Objective 9.1: Identify specific land uses that are needed to serve the citizens of and visitors to Waxahachie, such as healthcare, education, culture, recreation, and retail; establish ways in which the City can proactively attract these identified land uses.

Objective 9.2: Ensure that there is a balanced mix of local nonresidential uses so that residents can have all of their needs met within Waxahachie.

Objective 9.3: Ensure that Waxahachie's land use policies provide adequately for nonresidential uses that will supply the essential tax base needed for the City to support existing and future residents.

Objective 9.4: Attract businesses that will provide increased opportunities for Waxahachie's citizens to work within the City, thereby creating a strong local employment base.

Objective 9.5: Provide locations for quality mixed use developments, business parks, and related employment centers.

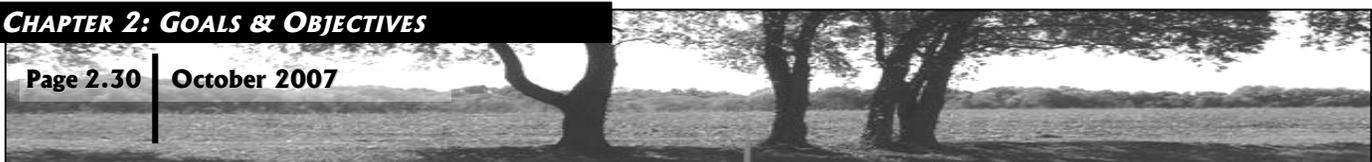
Goal 10:

Ensure that land use recommendations for development and redevelopment respect important physical features and support innovative development.

Objective 10.1: Develop methods by which the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council can evaluate innovative development proposals based on factors that meet smart growth principles; such factors might include the size of the project proposed, its location, environmental considerations, and proposed land use types.

Objective 10.2: Require development proposals to consider physical factors, such as topography, drainage, creek protection, natural floodplain storage, open space conservation, water conservation, and energy efficiency.

Objective 10.3: Consider compatibility and adjacency issues related to developed areas as new proposals are reviewed.





Downtown & Historic Preservation

Goal 11:

Establish policies that support the maintenance and enhancement of Downtown.

Objective 11.1: Ensure that the Downtown area is pedestrian-oriented and that development supports the unique quality of specialty retailing and other types of small businesses.

Objective 11.2: Promote adaptive reuse of existing structures with architectural merit to preserve the Downtown's historic character.

Objective 11.3: Continue to coordinate City initiatives (e.g., expenditures, planning efforts, etc.) with Downtown business owners and property owners.

Objective 11.4: Continue to improve the streetscape within Downtown, as well as to and from Downtown, with an emphasis on walkability.

Objective 11.5: Encourage residential infill development and redevelopment within a 10-minute walk of Downtown.

Objective 11.6: Create formal public open spaces to serve as focal points and gathering areas within Downtown.

Objective 11.7: Create strong links between elements that could help strengthen Downtown, such as a future transit station.

Objective 11.8: Continue to utilize the adopted *Downtown Plan* to improve Downtown Waxahachie.

Objective 11.9: Establish an effective means of communicating information about Downtown-related City initiatives to new residents in and around Downtown, for example through the use of brochures that realtors or financiers could distribute.

Community Facilities

Goal 12:

Recognize the importance of continually ensuring that Waxahachie will be a safe community.

Objective 12.1: Proactively plan and budget for new or expanded City facilities to meet the needs of the growing population and related demand for services; examples include fire stations, police facilities, and library facilities.



Objective 12.2: Design roadways to be safe and to provide maximum movement within the City.

Objective 12.3: Continue to work with the Waxahachie ISD to locate schools within reasonable distances (walking and driving) to where the citizens live.

Objective 12.4: Correlate City services with anticipated population growth and population capacity.

Objective 12.5: Plan for the completion of City services in advance of population growth.

Housing Strategies

Goal 13:

Encourage the development of quality housing throughout the City that meets a diversity of housing needs, for the full life-cycle of citizens.

Objective 13.1: Ensure that there are provisions for meeting the housing type and affordability needs of families with children, young adults just leaving home, young professionals, empty-nesters, retirees and the elderly.

Objective 13.2: Ensure that there is an adequate supply of workforce housing throughout the City for those who work in the service industry in Waxahachie.

Objective 13.3: Ensure that all homes are situated with an appropriate level of positive attributes to maintain desirability, value and attract reinvestment.

Goal 14:

Recognize the importance of existing neighborhoods to the character of Waxahachie by implementing policies that will support their long-term sustainability and livability.

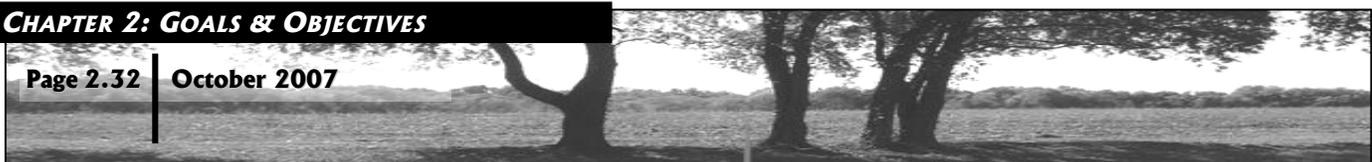
Objective 14.1: Wherever possible, retrofit neighborhoods with pedestrian connections and access to open space.

Objective 14.2: Ensure that all homes have close proximity and access to amenities such as parks, open space, trails, retail and restaurants.

Objective 14.3: Promote home ownership and long-term residency.

Objective 14.4: Investigate specific ways in which the City can actively participate in upgrading deteriorated areas through organized community programs and funding.

Objective 14.5: Promote incentives and strengthen programs to assist economically distressed owner-occupants in meeting housing code requirements.





The Vision Statement

The culmination of this *Goals & Objectives* chapter is an encompassing statement that describes the overriding needs and desires of Waxahachie's community representatives, leaders, and stakeholders. These expressions of what Waxahachie should ultimately be in the future have been discussed throughout this chapter. They have been derived from numerous the VCS and the results of the open-ended questions (outlined previously within this chapter). Toward the end of the visioning process, the Steering Committee was asked to take all of the information obtained during the process and to create such a statement. The vision for Waxahachie that results is as follows:

The vision for Waxahachie is a City which embraces its heritage while looking toward to the future; a City that:

- ❖ **Engages** in balanced and responsible urban design, planning, and development;
- ❖ **Accommodates and encourages** change in a manner that builds upon local history while improving quality of life;
- ❖ **Preserves and enhances** the City's unique historical, cultural, and natural resources;
- ❖ **Supports** a vibrant and diversified economic climate which provides employment, retains existing businesses, and attracts new businesses; and
- ❖ **Provides** safe, dynamic, and sustainable neighborhoods for people of all ages.