



# City of Jefferson Comprehensive Plan **PUBLIC MEETING**

**April 27, 2023**

Texas Target Communities | Texas A&M University

# Agenda

1. Comprehensive Plan
2. Plan Process
3. Topic Presentation and Discussion
4. Report Out
5. Next Steps

## Purpose

1. To present the preliminary strategies for transportation, housing, and economy
2. To garner feedback from the community

# Texas Target Communities

- High-impact service-learning and community engagement program at TAMU
- Partners with small communities to assist with needs that would otherwise go unmet
- Historically worked with small Texas cities that could not afford consultants



# Comprehensive Plan

- Long range guidebook—typically “planning horizons” between 20-30 years
- Depicts an overarching vision
- Public document that justifies city decision making
- Opens new funding opportunities and grants
  - Community buy-in
  - Leadership support

Solid factual understanding of the forces and trends shaping the community

+

Local wisdom, judgment, inspiration, and imagining the future



## Goals, Objectives, & Actions

- Land Use
- **Economy**
- **Housing**
- **Transportation**
- Community Facilities
- Environment

# PLAN PROCESS

*Engaging the community*



SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2022

# KEY THEMES

## *Community priorities - What we heard*



### **Strong sense of community**

- Celebration of organization and people
- Build intentional relationships
- Collaborate with community organizations, regional partners



### **Celebration of historical and cultural heritage**

- Heritage preservation
- Housing preservation
- Events and recreational activities
- Museum, cataloging histories and stories
- Tourism



### **Access to opportunities**

- Housing
- Transportation
- Community facilities
- Economic development
- Infrastructure



# KEY THEMES

## *Community priorities - What we heard*



### **Diverse economy**

Business support  
Infrastructure expansion - Broadband  
Industries  
Workforce development  
Workforce housing, Downtown housing



### **Multigenerational community**

Leadership development  
Youth programs and services  
Aging population needs  
Schools, Healthcare, and Social services  
Lifecycle housing



### **Harmony with nature**

Parks and open spaces  
River access  
Regional network of natural assets  
Disaster resilience



# PLAN PROCESS

## *Envisioning & Strategizing*

EXISTING CONDITIONS  
AND NEEDS

GOALS AND IDEAS

ACTION  
PLAN

**3**

Planning  
Course

**2**

Graduate  
Projects

**30+**

Students

**3**

Core Team  
Members

**5**

Task Force  
Members



# ACTION PLAN

## *Setting up for success*

Important for:

- Visualizing priorities
- Keeping track of tasks at hand
- Assigning accountability
- Maintaining progress.
- Seeking and applying for grants

Overarching goals and objectives

Action Items

Expected Project Timeline

Assigned entities responsible for implementation

Potential Funding

	A	B	C	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	
1	Transportation			Timeframe				Action Type							Responsible Parties	Funding
2	Goal	Objective	Action	On-Going	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Capital Project	Program	Regulation or Standard	Partnership or Collaboration	Communication/Technology	More Targeted Planning			
3	Goal 5.1 Improve existing roads to provide an efficient and safe transportation system	Objective 5.1.1 Establish a transportation planning process that actively engages the larger community to provide community input to inform maintenance and safety improvements.	Action 5.1.1.1 Conduct public outreach to find qualified and interested individuals to form a transportation task force			X								CS, PW, CC	RAISE Discretionary Grants; Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)	
4			Action 5.1.1.2 Create a transportation task force "social contract" to outline the purpose and scope, as well as other organizational criteria (eligibility requirements, etc.)			X								CS, PW, CC	City Transportation Budget	
5			Action 5.1.1.3 Organize and hold regular public meetings with the task force and public on transportation-related matters				X								CS, PW	City Transportation Budget

# 1 TRANSPORTATION

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

- Highest crash density is at the intersection of SH 49 and E Broadway St.
- The highest traffic count has been recorded on SH 49 and US 59.
- Traffic volumes on SH 49 and US 59 are higher inside city boundaries than outside the city limits.
- Modes of commute employed by households using a private vehicle (78%), carpoled (14%) and working from home (3%). About 4% walked to work, while another 2% used other means of transportation.
- The City of Jefferson is transected by two railroad systems: Kansas City Southern Railway and Union Pacific.



## COMMENTS

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

### What's Great

- Low traffic volume
- Room to expand trails
- Golf carts

### Could be Better

- Safety around schools
- Sidewalk connections
- Train Noise
- Signage
- Parking space

### What's Wanted

- Public Transportation
- Bicycle Lane

## GOALS

1. Improve the road infrastructure system to ensure safe and efficient travel.
2. Enhance multimodal accessibility and safety in the city.
3. Enhance transportation safety around schools.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Thoroughfare Plan



## Pedestrian Plan

The main goal of the pedestrian mobility path is to improve sidewalk connectivity around the city. The proposed route is designed with the consideration of being accessible to attractions and safety.



## Cross Section

### South Walcott Street



Illustration of Principal Arterial Cross Section

### Alley Street



Illustration of Shared-Use Path on Alley Street (Local Road)

## STRATEGIES

### 1.1 Improve signage and lighting to enhance wayfinding for vehicular travelers.

- Develop a signage inventory to ensure good visibility and retro-reflectivity
- Communicate with the community and residents to identify locations that need proper signage, like identifying the historic district.
- Conduct a comprehensive lighting assessment and identify deficient locations.

### 1.2 Improve pavement conditions of local roads.

- Develop an ongoing local roads inventory
- Create a maintenance schedule to perform appropriate treatment at an economically-optimal timing
- Develop a system for community reporting of pavement safety/quality issues

### 1.3 Mitigate roadway congestion.

- Identify bottleneck locations and explore potential alternate paths.
- Explore solutions like interchanges to bypass the rails at intersections on Turtle Street.

### 2.1 Improve sidewalk connectivity around the city.

- Identify and construct sidewalks at locations with the greatest need.
- Develop a master plan to identify potential routes and destinations for future expansion.
- Develop an ongoing sidewalk inventory and maintenance plan.
- Develop a pedestrian/bike path along the streets of S Walcott St, S Line St, W Camp St, N Walnut St, Watson St, and MLK Dr.

### 2.2 Improve bike and golf cart travel.

- Implement bike facilities through dedicated bike lanes and shared-use paths starting with Alley Street.
- Promote bicycle and golf cart safety through education and outreach programs, including public awareness campaigns.

### 2.3 Improve public transportation and other mobility alternatives.

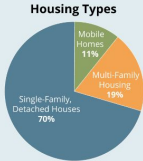
- Review ways to improve on-demand transit services.
- Review city ordinance to potentially update the allowance of rideshare services like Uber or Lyft.

# 2 HOUSING

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

**1,143 Homes**  
+89 since 2011

**93%** built before 2000  
**29%** built in the 1970s  
**13%** built before 1940



**25%** is Poor Quality

**40%** Single-Person Households

**83%** Occupied  
**17%** Vacant

**Cost-Burdened Households**  
**16%** Owners without a Mortgage  
**43%** Owners with a Mortgage  
**30%** Renters

**\$770** Median Rent  
**\$150,943** House Price  
**+31%** since 2011  
**+58%** since 2011

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

### What's Great

- Appreciation for historic homes

### What's Wanted

- Young families to move in
- More affordable housing
- More rental housing

### Could be Better

- Large discrepancy between low and high income households
- Abandoned structures across the city

## GOALS

### More Affordable Housing

- Expand development of different housing types

### More Livable Homes

- Encourage housing rehabilitation
- Help residents stay in their homes

### Improved Neighborhoods

- Promote better use of underutilized land

## Housing Rehabilitation

Financial assistance and regulation that make it easier for property owners to renovate housing



**Case Study**  
House renovated through rehab program run by Redevelopment Authority of Fayette County, PA

### Benefits

- Improved quality for:
  - older housing stock
  - lower income households
  - non-code compliant houses
- Barriers removed through:
  - financial assistance
  - revising requirements

### Potential Actions

- Assist residents in applying for financial assistance through housing rehab programs
- Create own housing rehab program using CDBG funds
- Update Building Code to include rehabilitation code

### Existing Programs

- HOME Investment Partnership Program
- Title I Property Improvement Loan

### Example Code

- International Existing Building Code

## Neglected Property

Programs and regulation to combat the destabilizing effect of neglected properties in neighborhoods

### Gather Information

- Vacant Property Inventory
  - Collect field data and/or require registration with vacant property registration ordinance



### Potential Uses of Inventory

- Enforce maintenance of vacant property
- Encourage Infill Development
- Support Community Development Projects
  - Affordable Housing
  - Community Gardens
  - Parks

### Case Study

Vacant property inventory of Trenton, NJ informs several city programs

### Potential Actions

- Create vacant property inventory
- Add registration ordinance to the city's code
- Plan community projects

## STRATEGIES

## Middle Housing Types

Historically common house-scale buildings with multiple units in walkable neighborhoods

### Potential Action

- Revise Zoning Code to expand allowed use of middle housing
- Explore financing potential for middle housing development

### Benefits

- Affordable Housing
- More Rental Units
- Choice in Living Arrangement
- Compatible with Detached, Single-Family Houses

### Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

Small, self-contained living space added to existing home  
Commonly used to house elderly or young adult family members  
Best use in residential areas



### Live-Work Housing

Residential unit attached to commercial space  
Source of workforce housing  
Best use in historic downtown



## Homeownership Support

Federal and state agencies offer mortgage assistance to lower income homeowners

### Potential Action

Promote federal and state agencies offering assistance

Mortgage assistance includes:

- Information
- Free Counseling
- Refinancing

Agencies offering support:

- HUD
- FHA
- Treasury

## Zoning Design Guidelines

Conventional zoning with design-based requirements such as public realm and building standards

### Benefits

- Allow new development that aligns with city's historic character
- Clarity on building and zoning requirements



### Case Study

Development Code for Beaufort, South Carolina

### Potential Action

Explore design guidelines for historic downtown

Zoning design guidelines for a small, historic town that sees lots of tourism

# 3 ECONOMY

## EXISTING CONDITIONS



## TOP INDUSTRIES IN JEFFERSON

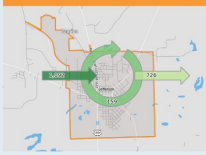


87% of jobs are occupied by workers who live outside of Jefferson.

13% of workers live in the city.

82% of Jefferson residents work outside of the City.

## ECONOMIC INFLOW AND OUTFLOW



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

### What's Great

- JEDCO brings in more business.
- Natural resources are high quality and highly valued.
- Tourism industry thrives thanks to annual events, historic charm, and bed & breakfasts.

### What's Wanted

- More industries and job opportunities
- A willingness to grow.
- Better infrastructure within the community.

## GOALS

### Diversify the Economy

- Ensure that the economy is not solely dependent on tourism.
- Attract industries that can create a more stable economy.

### Develop the Workforce

- Provide more education and vocational training opportunities for workers and students.

### Capitalize on Existing Tourism

- Provide recreation such as boating, kayaking, and fishing.
- Introduce riverfront restaurants and outdoor community spaces.

## BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION PROGRAM

### WHAT

- A collaborative approach to protecting current and attracting new businesses in Jefferson.

### HOW

- Conducting surveys and holding periodic meetings with current business owners.
- Identifying what type of businesses are desired and would thrive in the local economy.

### BENEFITS

- Increased number of businesses and sales tax revenue.
- More jobs created.



## VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAM

### WHAT

- A multi-isd program that offers classes for high school students in various career fields.

### HOW

- Pooling monetary and personnel resources between nearby ISDs (Marshall & Longview)

### BENEFITS

- Exposes students to local career paths.
- Builds and enhances the workforce in fields including healthcare, education, technology, electric, and more.
- Helps students stay on productive life paths.

## CASE STUDY: RURAL SCHOOLS INNOVATION ZONE (RSIZ)

- Students in south rural Texas have 5 vocational programs to choose from.
- Programs provide career prep for education, medical, STEM, military, and technology fields.
- Program creates a larger and more educated local workforce.
- Students in an RSIZ program graduate with higher GPAs than their peers.
- RSIZ schools have a higher graduation rate than neighboring schools.
- RSIZ students enter their careers more successfully.



## STRATEGIES

### INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

#### POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- Paint facades.
- Add additional street lighting.
- Commission local artists to paint murals and create sculptures that highlight the city's history.
- Make road and sidewalk improvements.

#### TOOLS

- Public Improvement Districts
- Tax Increment Financing
- Community Development Block Group Grant Funding

### BENEFITS

- Increased sense of safety.
- Increased accessibility.
- Aesthetically pleasing.
- Boosts economic activity.
- Increases property value.
- Reduces physical vulnerability.
- Decreases likelihood of vacant store fronts.

Downtown Jefferson



### CASE STUDY: AYDEN, NC

- Historic town originating from railroad industry.
- The economy suffered when the railroad was rerouted.
- Infrastructure improvements created a more welcoming and lively downtown.
- Improvements created a newfound sense of community pride and attracted businesses.

## CREATE NEW COMMUNITY SPACES

### WHAT

- A new space, potentially an outdoor amphitheater, for residents and tourists to enjoy.
- A space for community events, such as live music, birthday parties, holiday events, performing arts, etc.
- A space for business incubator, accelerators, co-working spaces.

### HOW

- Applying for grant opportunities including the Community Development Block Grant program.

### BENEFITS

- Encourages economic activity via increased foot traffic in the downtown.
- Creates revenue via booking events.
- Increases community's sense of place and local pride.
- Provides a place for residents to gather and connect.
- Creates recreational activities for locals.

## COMMENTS



# COMMENTS

*Let us know what you think about the goals and strategies!  
Did we miss anything? What else should be included in the plan?*

## 1 TRANSPORTATION

## 2 HOUSING

## 3 ECONOMY

How would you rate today's meeting?

Excellent   Good   Neutral   Bad   Very bad



Please share any additional feedback.

NAME:

CONTACT:



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# Jefferson is an Attractive City

We heard from participants and stakeholders that:

- Jefferson's historical roots provide a sense of pride and drive local tourism.
- Jefferson's historic designations aid in protecting beautiful historic architecture.
- Visitors get a unique tourism experience with history, various conventions, the cemetery, and more.



# Strong Sense of Community

We heard from participants and stakeholders that:

- Jefferson is perceived as a **friendly and welcoming** community with a culture that creates a comfortable environment for visitors and long-term residents.
- Local businesses add to the community's culture and attract visitors looking for **enriching experiences**.





# Strong Sense of Community Cont.

We heard from participants and stakeholders that:

- There are many community members who are engaged and involved in city affairs, but there is **more opportunity for young people to be involved.**
- There is a need to **bridge the gap** between between economic classes and racial groups.



# People Feel Safe in Jefferson

We heard from stakeholders and participants that:

- Residents feel safe in Jefferson due to a low crime rate.
- Many felt there is a great police and community relationship.
- There is a desire for expanded funding and resources for police and fire.



# Improvements Needed in Infrastructure

We heard from stakeholders and participants that:

- Jefferson has a need for maintenance in various areas of infrastructure, including:
  - Sewer
  - Roadways
  - Sidewalks
  - Signages & Street lights
- The city may need to secure outside funding to address infrastructure concerns.



# Limited Resources for Growth

We heard from stakeholders and participants that:

- There is a need for infill development and revitalization, but a concern about lack of resources and investment interest.
- Expanding the tax base should be a major priority for Jefferson.
- Participants were worried about infrastructure capacity and space to facilitate growth.



# Various Services & Facilities Requested

We heard from stakeholders and participants that:

- Residents appreciate the assisted living facilities in Jefferson, but there are concerns about the lack of health and emergency services.
- Jefferson has an opportunity for more facilities and businesses for children and families.
- Improvement of public facilities, including the Marion County Community Center.



# Request for Housing

We heard from stakeholders and participants that:

- Need for more affordable housing.
- Affordable housing that is available is often in poor condition.
- Jefferson needs more rental units and greater overall housing supply.
- Participants expressed a need for greater code enforcement, particularly for debris and junked vehicles in yards.

