

# Existing City

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION

Purpose .....	1
<i>Comprehensive Plan Focus Areas</i> .....	1
Victoria Setting and Context .....	2
<i>Victoria Historical Timeline</i> .....	3
Demographic Highlights .....	6
Population Trends to Date .....	6
Age and Gender Distribution.....	7
Household Size .....	8
Educational Attainment .....	8

### LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Existing Land Use Pattern.....	9
Major Institutional Uses.....	9
Major Retail Locations.....	9
<i>Major Community Accomplishments in Recent Years</i> .....	9
Major Public Uses.....	10
Major Industrial Locations .....	10
Intensive Municipal Facilities .....	10

**NOTE:** The *Existing City Report* was completed and published in late 2015. The *Future City* portion of the Comprehensive Plan was adopted by Victoria City Council on April 5, 2016.

Intensive Special Uses.....	10
Current Allocation of Land Use Types .....	11
Existing Housing.....	12
Key Opportunities and Challenges for Land Use and Development.....	14
<i>Other Information Sources</i> .....	14

**MOBILITY**

Public Concerns and Priorities.....	15
<i>Major Community Accomplishments in Recent Years</i> .....	15
Traffic Conditions and Trends.....	16
Roadway Levels of Service .....	17
Traffic Safety.....	18
Other Transportation Modes.....	18
Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities .....	18
Transit.....	19
<i>Commute Time in Victoria</i> .....	19
Airport.....	20
Port.....	20
Rail Freight.....	20
Functional Classification of Roadways.....	20
Street Conditions.....	21
Key Opportunities and Challenges for Mobility.....	22
<i>Other Information Sources</i> .....	22

**GROWTH CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

City Jurisdiction.....	25
<i>Major Community Accomplishments in Recent Years</i> .....	25
Current City Limits and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction .....	25
Growth Directions .....	26
<i>Fire Department Response into County</i> .....	26
Utility Infrastructure .....	26
Water System .....	27
Wastewater System .....	28
Storm Drainage System .....	28
Public Safety Services.....	28
Fire Department.....	28
Police Department.....	30
<i>Citizen Priority on Public Safety Services</i> .....	30

Key Opportunities and Challenges for Growth Capacity and Infrastructure.....	31
<i>Other Information Sources</i> .....	32

**ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

<i>Major Community Accomplishments in Recent Years</i> .....	33
Key Indicator Data.....	34
Employment and Income.....	34
Retail Sales.....	35
Major Employers .....	36
Geography of Victoria’s Economic Activity.....	36
Economic Development Entities .....	37
Victoria Economic Development Corporation.....	38
<i>Victoria College Emerging Technology Complex</i> .....	38
Victoria College .....	39
Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission .....	39
Benefits of Growth in Hospitality Sector .....	39
Key Opportunities and Challenges for Economic Opportunity .....	41
<i>Other Information Sources</i> .....	41

**RECREATION AND AMENITIES**

<i>Major Community Accomplishments in Recent Years</i> .....	43
Existing Park System.....	43
Park Types .....	44
Park Inventory .....	45
Community Facilities .....	46
Victoria Public Library .....	46
Victoria Community Center.....	46
Victoria Tourism .....	47
<i>Destinations and Activities</i> .....	48
<i>Victoria’s Heritage Resources</i> .....	49
Tourism Challenges.....	50
<i>Using Tourism Revenues to Expand Sports Tourism</i> .....	50
Key Opportunities and Challenges for Recreation and Amenities.....	51
<i>Other Information Sources</i> .....	51

**FIGURES**

1. Population Growth Comparison .....	6
2. Age and Gender Distribution .....	7
3. Educational Attainment for Persons Age 25+ .....	8
4. Existing Land Use Allocation in City Limits.....	12
5. Share of Housing Built 2000-2013.....	13
6. Housing Stock Vacancy in 2013.....	13
7. Changes in Traffic Volumes at Select Locations.....	17
8. Functional Street Classification System .....	21
9. Household Income Comparison .....	35
10. Historic Districts within Victoria .....	49

**TABLES**

1. Population Change 1900-2010.....	6
2. Trend in Average Household Size, 1950-2010 .....	7
3. Highest Volume Intersections (2013) .....	17
4. Retail Sectors with Greatest Sales Surplus or Leakage.....	36
5. Major Employers in Victoria.....	37
6. HOT Funds Allocation for 2015-2016.....	40
7. Existing City Parks .....	45

**MAPS**

1. Regional Context.....	following page 2
2. Existing Land Use .....	following page 12
3. Locations of Existing Housing .....	following page 12
4. Functional Classification of Roadways.....	following page 22
5. Street Condition Inventory 2014 .....	following page 22
6. Annexation History .....	following page 26
7. Growth Opportunities .....	following page 26
8. Existing Water System .....	following page 26
9. Existing Wastewater System.....	following page 26
10. Existing Storm Drainage System .....	following page 28
11. Existing Commercial and Industrial Development ...	following page 36
12. Existing City Parks/Trails and Service Areas.....	following page 46

# Existing City

## INTRODUCTION



### PURPOSE

This report provides background and insights about Victoria as it is today. This information is presented in topic areas relevant to the City's long-range plan for Victoria's physical growth and development, which, in Texas, is technically referred to as a city's "Comprehensive Plan." The report also highlights key planning considerations for the years ahead, which will set the stage for updating the Comprehensive Plan in terms of community needs and desires for the next 20 years, through 2035. The report content is based on initial background studies to date by the City's community planning consultant, Kendig Keast Collaborative (of Sugar Land, Texas), as well as leadership and community input received to this point. The report also points readers to other sources for more detailed information to ensure the brevity of this document and to avoid duplication of available reports and profiles of Victoria.

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOCUS AREAS

- Land Use and Development
- Mobility
- Growth Capacity and Management
- Economic Opportunity
- Recreation and Amenities

## VICTORIA SETTING AND CONTEXT

Nestled along the meandering Guadalupe River, the City of Victoria is located at the convergence of U.S. Highways 59, 77, and 87. As illustrated by **Map 1, Regional Context**, the city is at the center of Victoria County, serving as its county seat. As the historical timeline in this section highlights, Victoria is one of the oldest and most historic cities in Texas.

Victoria is the largest city in the central coastal region known as the Golden Crescent, a group of seven Texas counties including Calhoun, Dewitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, and Lavaca. Victoria serves as a commercial center for its surrounding counties, and four major Texas metropolitan areas are within a two-hour drive (Houston at 124 miles, San Antonio at 114 miles, Austin at 122 miles, and Corpus Christi at 85 miles). In addition, Victoria is just 30 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico.

The community lies about 105 feet above sea level. Located on the South-Central Texas Coastal Plain, the area enjoys moderate

temperatures and mild weather conditions throughout the year. At a latitude of 28 degrees above the equator, the area climate is comparable to Orlando, Florida. Annual precipitation averages 36 inches per year with a mean annual temperature of 71 degrees. The surrounding countryside is flat with a majority of the land being utilized for grazing and cultivation.

Given its accessibility via three U.S. highways, rail, commercial air, and a barge canal connected to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, Victoria offers tremendous growth potential for manufacturing and distribution facilities as well as recreational and cultural opportunities. In fact, the City's municipal limits are only five miles from the Port of Victoria. Victoria is also located on the proposed I-69 corridor that covers much of the current U.S. Highway 59 route through Texas. Designated by Congress as a high priority corridor in the 1990s, Interstate 69, when completed, will be the most direct interstate linking industrial centers in Mexico, the United States, and Canada.



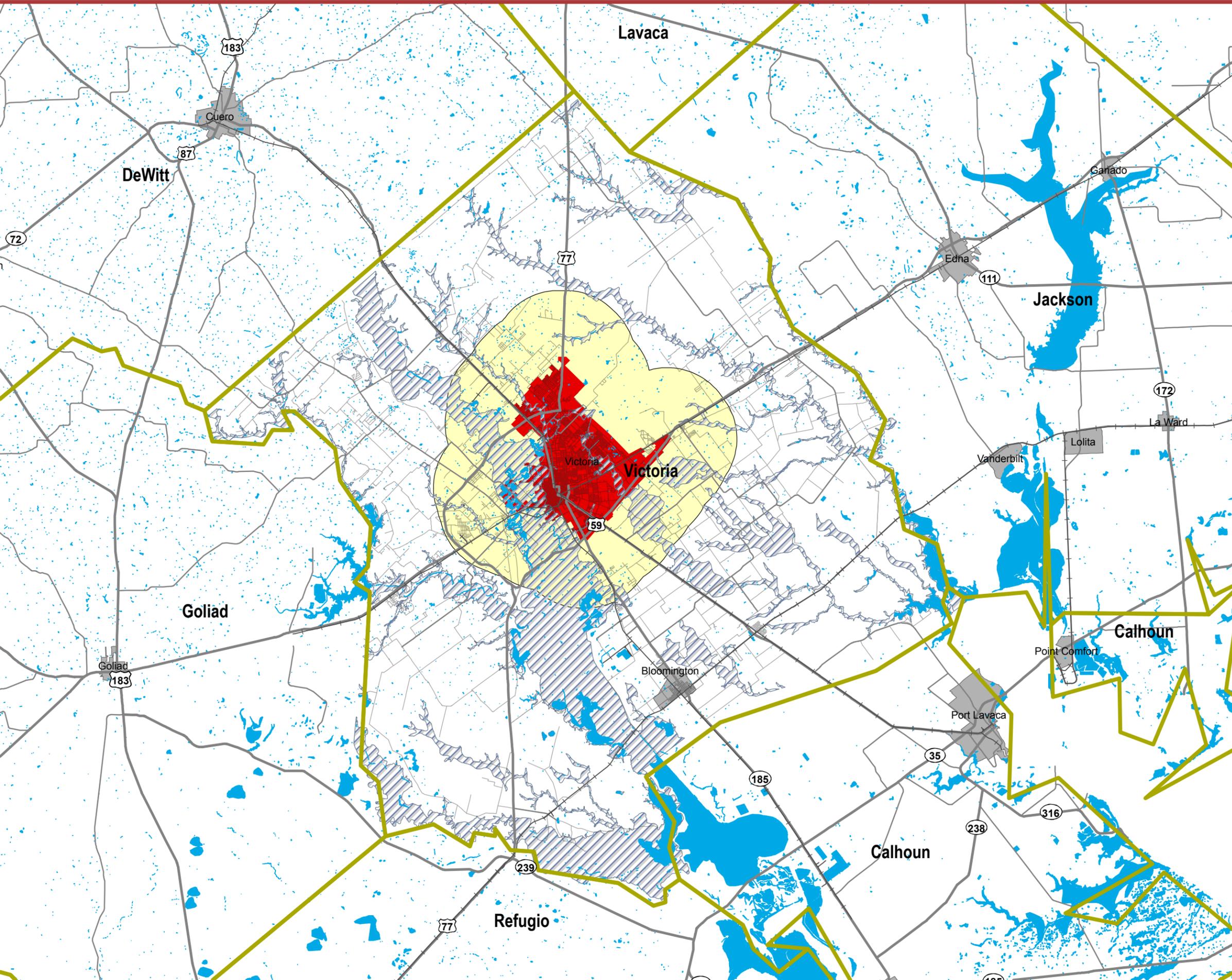
MAP 1  
REGIONAL CONTEXT

LEGEND

-  Victoria City Limits
-  Other Cities and Communities
-  Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
-  Counties
-  Major Interstates and Highways
-  Farm to Market Roads
-  Railroad
-  Creek/River/Lake
-  100 Year Floodplain



*Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.*





## VICTORIA HISTORICAL TIMELINE

- 1824** Town of "Guadalupe Victoria" established as capital city of a large land grant approved by the Republic of Mexico at the request of Don Martín De León. Site along Guadalupe River was known earlier as Cypress Grove.
- 1828** Guadalupe Victoria governed by Council of Ten Friends from 1824 to 1828 and by four alcaldes from 1828 to 1836. The town had about 300 residents by 1834.
- 1836** Town occupied by the Mexican Army following early Texian defeats and until ultimate victory at San Jacinto. Once resettled by Anglos, became known as Victoria.
- 1837** Victoria incorporated under the Republic of Texas. First Mayor (John Linn) and five Aldermen established first City ordinances and assessed first property taxes in 1843.
- 1846** Post office established in Victoria.
- 1854** Casino Hall established as a center for local cultural events.
- 1860** Victoria had grown to nearly 2,000 residents (including just over 500 slaves), serving as a trade center, courthouse location, major junction point between coastal and inland locations as well as northern Mexico, and a destination for incoming immigrants through the port at Indianola.
- 1861** The San Antonio and Mexican Gulf Railroad reached Victoria (and, after the difficult Civil War era, became part of the Gulf, Western Texas and Pacific Railway in 1871).
- 1865** Era of great cattle ranches began in area in post Civil War years. A variety of settlers – Americans, Germans, Italians, and Mexicans – had also transformed Victoria.
- 1869** One of the first meat-packing plants established in Victoria, reflecting the area's ranching success – along with its role as the birthplace of Longhorn cattle.
- 1880s** Local telephone service established, through the Citizens' Telephone Company, which Southwestern Bell acquired in 1894.
- The New York, Texas and Mexican Railway reached Victoria. Another railroad link between Victoria and Rosenberg was completed in 1882.
- Many area cattle ranchers shifted their interests to financial institutions and commerce given a statewide transition from pioneer ranching and trail driving to market production.
- Stone and brick structures began to replace cypress lumber construction, helping to reduce fire incidents.
- 1884** Construction of a 105-foot standpipe at De Leon Plaza (removed in 1923) began the conversion from river water to wells. An \$89,000 bond issue financed the standpipe plus a pumping station to push untreated river water into the reservoir tower.



- 1888 Local businessmen established a mule-drawn streetcar system (operated until 1894).
- 1889 Aldermen divided City into wards. County Judge J. L. Dupree sponsored area's first highway, which ran about three miles from the Guadalupe River bridge to Goldman Hill, southwest of town, where Refugio, Goliad, and Mission Valley traffic merged.
- 1890 The Victoria Light, Power, and Ice Company contracted with the City to provide 40 bulbs of 32 candlepower, after an earlier lighting network consisting of oil lamps. Central Power and Light became the primary electrical supplier after 1925.
- 1893 Aldermen began codifying City ordinances. Also, Opera House opened, drawing large audiences to see local and nationally renowned musicians, politicians, and orators through the 1920s.
- 1897 The Victoria Advocate, the state's second oldest existing newspaper (given its first publication in 1846), began publishing a daily edition.
- 1901 A portion of City revenue dedicated to Valley View Hospital, a precursor to several hospitals still operating in Victoria.
- 1906 Guadalupe River Navigation Company organized to operate barges and dredges in conjunction with the federal government (after earlier steamer service on the river up to Victoria had ceased by the mid-1880s).
- 1907-08 A bond issue financed conversion of the City water system to artesian wells. Other community health measures occurred in this period.
- 1910s Victoria County population surpassed 18,000, and City population increased by 62 percent to nearly 6,000, reflecting a shift to more urban versus rural living.
- 1914 City Fire Department acquired first pumper and hose truck, replacing earlier fire horse teams.
- 1916 Fire Department moved into new Central Fire Station.



- 1917 A \$100,000 bond began era of “hard-top” streets (53 downtown blocks improved).
- 1925 Central Power & Light began supplying electricity.
- 1940 Land for Riverside Park and Golf Course acquired, and park development continues through early 1970s.
- 1942-46 Aloe and Foster Army Air Fields built for World War II. Foster Field later becomes Victoria Regional Airport in 1958.
- 1949 DuPont plant near Victoria established.
- 1960 Victoria’s U.S. Census population more than doubled since 1950, from roughly 16,000 to 33,000, making Victoria among the fastest-growing Texas cities.
- 1967 Victoria Barge Canal opened. Also, Victoria Community Center opened following public/private funding effort.
- 1973 Community leaders succeeded in establishing a University of Houston Victoria Center (away from Houston campus), which opened with 100 students enrolled.
- 1981 Victoria Mall opened after breaking ground in 1977.
- 1983 Victoria County classified as a Metropolitan Statistical Area by the federal government based on further population growth recorded by the 1980 U.S. Census. Also, State legislation renamed the University of Houston Victoria Center to the University of Houston-Victoria (UH-V) and granted the institution permanent degree-granting status as the fourth university in the University of Houston system.
- 1991 U.S. 59 in Texas designated a High Priority Corridor on the National Highway System through the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), enabling portions to be posted as Interstate 69 or when upgraded to that standard.
- 2000 Successful bond election enabled \$50.5 million worth of street and drainage improvement projects from 2000-2005. The largest projects included improvements to Ben Jordan Street (\$10.22 million), Sam Houston Drive (\$3 million), West Outfall drainage (\$13.26 million), and Northcrest area drainage (\$9.28 million).
- 2001 City water plant completed to finalize conversion from ground to surface water.
- 2002 Port of Victoria deepened the canal to 12 feet to reach the same depth as the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and better facilitate traffic between the two.
- 2007 Voters approved a \$159 million bond to construct two new high schools (replacing existing facilities), a new middle school, two new elementary schools, a District Event Center, and many capital projects to existing campuses across Victoria ISD.
- 2012 Development of oil and natural gas in the Eagle Ford Shale showed a direct impact of more than \$18 million and an indirect impact of more than \$130 million. The economic impact directly influenced the creation of 823 jobs in 2012.
- 2015 UH-V enrollment reaches 4,400, with 1,062 degrees awarded annually (Victoria College enrollment passed 4,200 in 2012). UH-V has more than 16,000 alumni.



## SOURCES:

1. Victoria 2025 Comprehensive Plan (as updated through 2007), City of Victoria.
2. Robert W. Shook, “VICTORIA, TX (VICTORIA COUNTY),” Handbook of Texas Online (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hdv01>). Accessed April 29, 2015. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.
3. Thomas Tunstall, “Economic Impact of the Eagle Ford Shale.” Accessed October 1, 2015. Uploaded March 2013. Published by University of Texas at San Antonio.
4. Other local sources (City of Victoria, Victoria Advocate archive articles, organization/institution websites, etc.).

## DEMOGRAPHIC HIGHLIGHTS

This section highlights some key indicators about Victoria as it is today or up to this point in the community's historical growth and evolution. Other data points relevant to planning topics such as housing, transportation, and the area economy are cited later in this report.

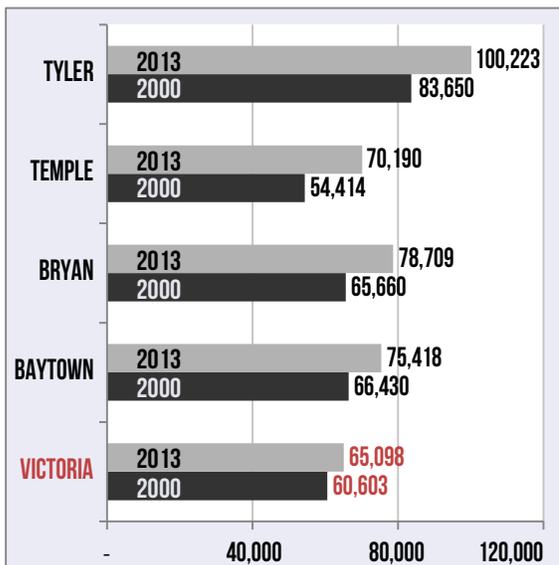
## POPULATION TRENDS TO DATE

The figures in Table 1, Population Change, 1900-2010, illustrate the relative trends in population change over time within the City relative to the balance of Victoria County. A nationwide movement of population from rural into urban areas is reflected in the City accounting for 72.1 percent of the County-wide population in 2010 compared to less than 30 percent 100

**TABLE 1, POPULATION CHANGE 1900-2010**

YEAR	CITY OF VICTORIA			VICTORIA COUNTY	
	POPULATION	PERCENT CHANGE	PERCENT OF COUNTY	POPULATION OUTSIDE CITY	PERCENT CHANGE
1900	4,010	--	29.3%	9,668	--
1910	3,673	-8.4%	24.5%	11,317	17.1%
1920	5,957	62.2%	32.6%	12,314	8.8%
1930	7,421	24.6%	31.6%	16,050	30.3%
1940	11,566	55.9%	48.7%	12,175	-24.1%
1950	16,126	39.4%	51.6%	15,115	24.1%
1960	33,047	104.9%	71.1%	13,420	-11.2%
1970	41,349	25.1%	76.9%	12,417	-7.5%
1980	50,695	22.6%	73.7%	18,112	45.9%
1990	55,076	8.6%	74.1%	19,285	6.5%
2000	60,603	10.0%	72.1%	23,485	21.8%
2010	62,592	3.3%	72.1%	24,201	3.2%

**FIGURE 1, POPULATION GROWTH COMPARISON**

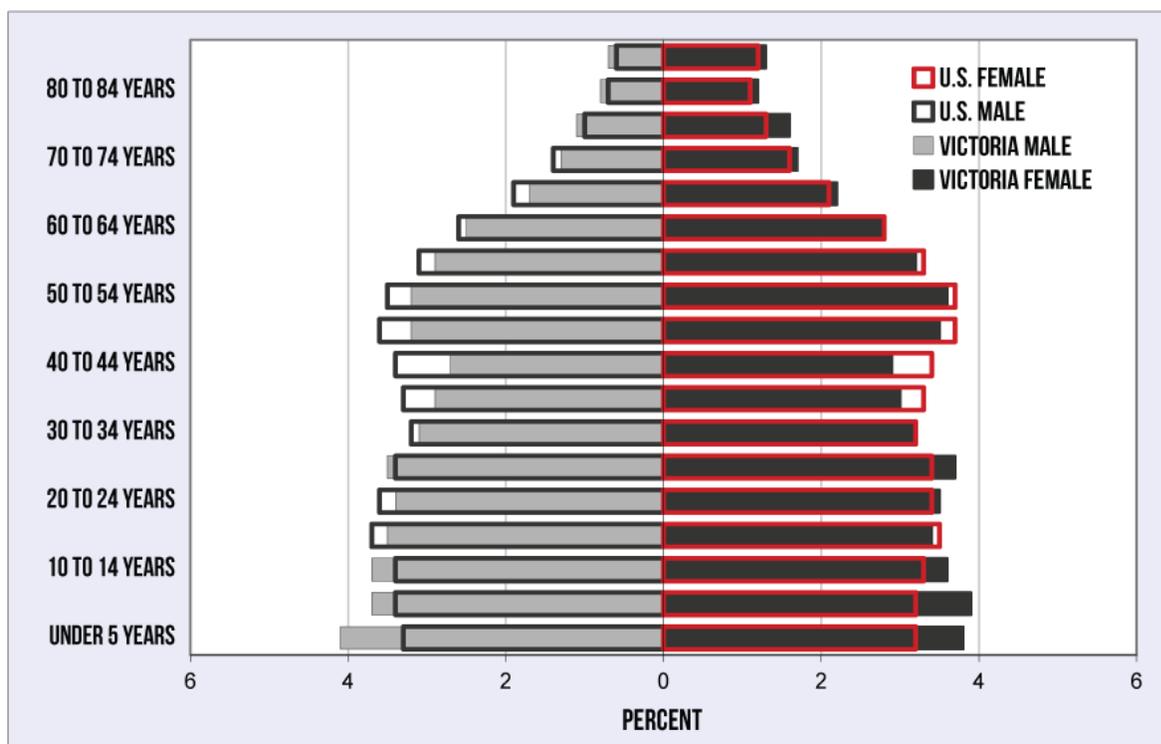


SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey (and Census 2000 data)

years earlier. Shaded rows in the table highlight three distinct economic boom eras for Victoria, driven by cattle and agribusiness in the 1910s (62.2 percent growth in population), then oil in the 1930s (55.9 percent), and the military, petrochemicals and banking in the 1950s (104.9 percent). Since 1960 the City's share of overall County population has remained in the 70th percentile, peaking at 76.9 percent in 1970, and holding steady at 72.1 percent in both Census 2000 and Census 2010.

Victoria added approximately 4,500 residents between Census 2000 and the newest U.S. Census Bureau estimate in mid-2013, for an estimated 2013 population of 65,098. Provided in **Figure 1, Population Growth Comparison**, is perspective on how Victoria's population increased (by 7.4 percent over this period) compared to several other peer cities in Texas. In general, Victoria has seen lower growth rates in recent years than across Texas as a whole.

**FIGURE 2, AGE AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

**AGE AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION**

The age distribution in Victoria as of Census 2010 ranged somewhat older than in all of Texas, with a local median age of 34.9 years relative to 33.6 years statewide. However, when compared to the national age distribution, most evident from **Figure 2, Age and Gender Distribution**, are the higher percentages in Victoria of children in the three youngest age cohorts from under five years through 10-14 years. On the other hand, Victoria has lower shares of its population in the prime earning years between ages 35 and 64. The 2010 population in the City was 52 percent female and 48 percent male.

After Census 2000, the City’s Comprehensive Plan had noted an increase in the age 65+ cohorts from 8.7 percent in 1980 to 12.6 percent in 2000. As of Census 2010, the nationwide trend of a generally aging population, especially involving the “Baby Boom” generation, was also continuing in Victoria with the age 65+ cohort having increased further to 13.5 percent in 2010.

The previous Comprehensive Plan also pointed out that, “It will be important to see if the 2010 Census indicates a continuing downward trend for [the age 20-29 cohorts],” which had decreased steadily from 19.4 percent in 1980 to 13.2 percent by 2000. In fact, by Census 2010 the share of Victoria’s population in the age 20-29 cohorts had recovered somewhat to 14.1 percent in 2010.

**TABLE 2, TREND IN AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE, 1950-2010**

YEAR	CITY OF VICTORIA	VICTORIA COUNTY	TEXAS	U.S.
1950	3.30	3.50	3.40	3.37
1960	3.52	3.59	3.46	3.33
1970	3.38	3.42	3.17	3.14
1980	2.91	3.11	2.81	2.76
1990	2.78	2.99	2.73	2.63
2000	2.68	2.75	2.74	2.59
2010	2.62	2.65	2.75	2.58

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 1950-2010

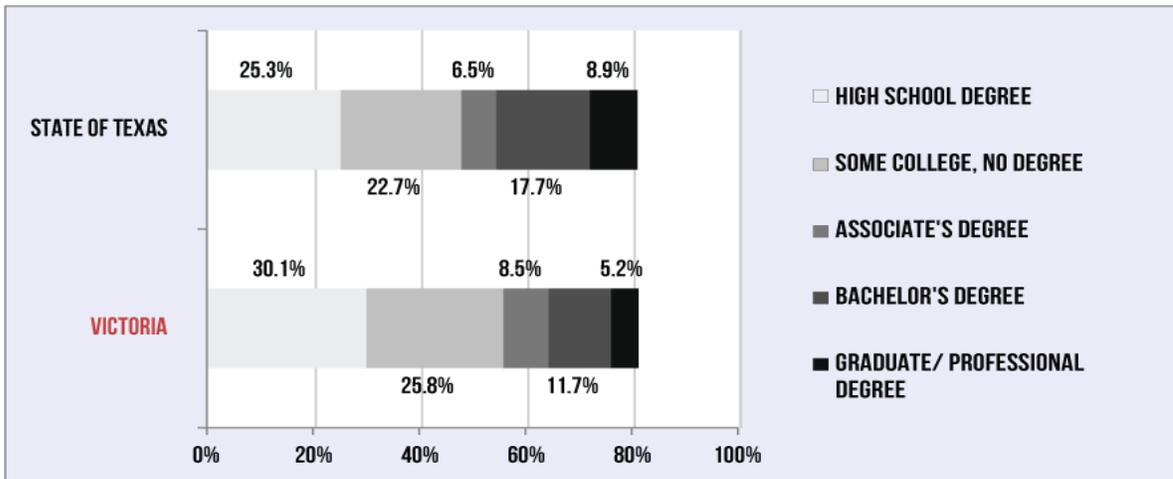
### HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Among the most consistent of demographic trends in recent decades, across various levels of geography, is the continuing decrease in average persons per household. The trend is detailed for the the City, County, State of Texas, and entire nation in **Table 2, Trend in Average Household Size, 1950-2010**. The only deviation from this broad trend is the slight uptick in Texas in Census 2010 relative to Census 2000 (2.75 versus 2.74 persons per household). As of Census 2010, among the geographies shown, the City of Victoria had the next lowest average household size after the nation as a whole (2.62 versus 2.58 persons per household).

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The most recent U.S. Census Bureau figures for Victoria, through 2013, show that 81.3 percent of all City residents age 25 or older had at least a high school diploma, which was in line with the statewide figure of 81.2 percent. The local versus state comparisons in **Figure 3, Educational Attainment for Persons Age 25+**, shows the different composition in Victoria, where the age 25+ population had 16.9 percent of its members with a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 26.7 percent across Texas. Victoria also has a slightly higher share of adults (8.5 percent) with an Associate's degree as their highest level of educational attainment. The proportion who have completed a graduate or professional degree is 5.2 percent in Victoria relative to 8.9 percent statewide. Finally, 17.6 percent of Victoria residents were enrolled in college relative to just under one-quarter (24.6 percent) statewide.

**FIGURE 3, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR PERSONS AGE 25+**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey



# Existing City

## LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

### EXISTING LAND USE PATTERN

In a city that does not use regulation to direct the location of particular land use types, the overall pattern in Victoria reflects more market-driven outcomes, as well as the influences of where street, utility, and drainage infrastructure make land more accessible and suitable for development. Certain land uses also serve as development magnets or “anchors” within a community and individual neighborhoods and sub-areas. Examples of such influential uses in Victoria include:

#### MAJOR COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN RECENT YEARS

Victoria leaders and residents mentioned these items relevant to land use and development:

- ▶ New home construction
- ▶ New apartments (more rental options)
- ▶ Downtown improvements

#### MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL USES

- ▶ Medical facilities (Citizens Medical Center, DeTar Hospital Navarro, DeTar Hospital North)
- ▶ Higher education campuses (UH-Victoria, Victoria College)

#### MAJOR RETAIL LOCATIONS

- ▶ Regional mall (Victoria Mall)
- ▶ Large-scale retail centers (Victoria Crossing, Victoria Retail Village)
- ▶ Other retail concentrations (along US 77 corridor north of Loop 463, north Navarro Street corridor, Business US 59 corridor)

### **MAJOR PUBLIC USES**

- Victoria County Courthouse and related facilities
- Victoria City Hall and related facilities
- Victoria ISD Center for Advanced Learning and related facilities, including the Fine Arts Center and athletic facilities
- Victoria ISD East and West High School campuses
- Victoria Regional Airport and related business and public uses
- City of Victoria Riverside Park
- City of Victoria Community Center and related park and recreation facilities

On the other hand, certain land uses tend to discourage other nearby uses of a different nature. This is especially true where residential uses would be detrimentally affected by

particular characteristics of more intensive uses (e.g., traffic, noise, vibration, lighting, odors, general aesthetics, etc.). Examples of such uses in Victoria include:

### **MAJOR INDUSTRIAL LOCATIONS**

- Industrial parks and clusters (Caterpillar, Complex Delmar Business Park, Gulf Coast Industrial Park, US 59 corridor)

### **INTENSIVE MUNICIPAL FACILITIES**

- Wastewater treatment plants (Regional Plant, Willow Street, Odem Street)
- Solid waste
- Fire training
- Public Works

### **INTENSIVE SPECIAL USES**

- Victoria Regional Airport





## CURRENT ALLOCATION OF LAND USE TYPES

The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) division within the City of Victoria's Development Services Department maintains a robust digital mapping system. This includes up-to-date information on the existing use of land within the community. Displayed on **Map 2, Existing Land Use**, are the respective locations of four major land use types in the Victoria City limits:

- (1) residential uses;
- (2) commercial uses (retail, office and services);
- (3) industrial uses (including utilities); and,
- (4) public uses (both public buildings and publicly-owned land).

The GIS division has greater detail for more specific sub-categories, but the four consolidated categories on Map 2 highlight:

- The extent of residential use which, as in many cities, represents the majority of developed land within the community (54 percent).
- The prevalence of commercial uses in most areas of the community, but especially along major corridors such as North Navarro Street/Business Highway 77 and Houston Highway/Business Highway 59, as well as in downtown.

- The location of most industrial activity south of Houston Highway/Business Highway 59 and west of North Navarro Street/Business Highway 77; near railroad corridors; and especially along the U.S. 59 corridor and on the far east side near Victoria Regional Airport.
- The location of various types of public facilities (e.g., schools, government offices, etc.) across the community, as well as significant land holdings for larger parks (e.g., Riverside Park) and for public works and utility functions (e.g., water supply/storage).

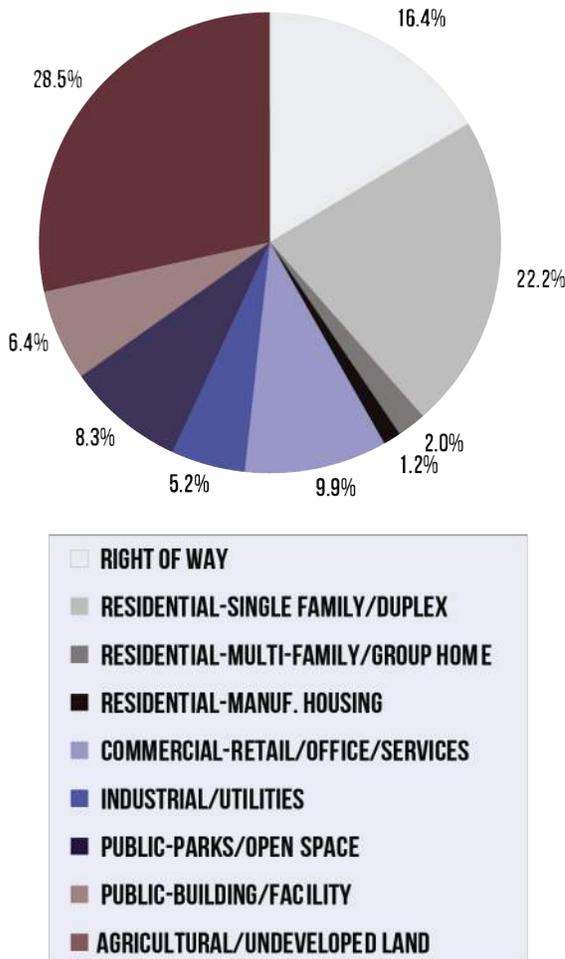
With the caveat that all the cited figures are approximations for general planning purposes (and based on data compiled by the City in Fall 2015), acreage data from the GIS mapping of current land uses, as displayed in **Figure 4, Existing Land Use Allocation in City Limits**, indicates that:

- The Victoria City limits currently include 23,609.6 acres or 36.9 square miles (with 45.7 acres of this total added through annexations during 2015).
- Of this total, 71.5 percent is developed and 28.5 percent is undeveloped. Floodplains affect all of the land use categories to some extent but are most prevalent in Public-Parks/Open Space areas and especially in areas of Agricultural/Undeveloped Land, which reduces the remaining amount of developable acreage within the City limits.
- The residential land use share (35 percent of developed land) is primarily single-family detached and duplex dwellings with smaller amounts of multi-family and manufactured units.

## EXISTING CITY

- ▶ The amount of land in commercial use (nearly 14 percent of developed land) is just under half as much as the amount used for one- and two-family dwellings.
- ▶ Industrial and utility uses are a relatively small share of the city-wide land use allocation (7.6 percent of developed land).
- ▶ Land used for parks/open space and public buildings/facilities accounts for 20 percent of developed land.

**FIGURE 4, EXISTING LAND USE ALLOCATION IN CITY LIMITS**



SOURCE: City of Victoria GIS Division

## EXISTING HOUSING

Depicted on **Map 3, Locations of Existing Housing**, are the three main residential use types for which location and acreage data are available from the City's GIS division. The newest U.S. Census Bureau figures estimated that Victoria had 25,919 total housing units in 2013. Of these, just over two-thirds (67.7 percent) were single-family detached dwellings, slightly less than five percent were manufactured homes (1,231 units), and the remaining 27.6 percent was comprised of various types of attached and multi-unit housing.

The extent of owner-occupied housing in 2013 was estimated at 58.5 percent (13,795 units) relative to 41.5 percent (9,795 units) with renter tenants. The average household size in owner-occupied units was estimated at 2.6 persons compared to 2.71 persons per household on average in rental units.

As shown in **Figure 5, Share of Housing Built 2000-2013**, only about 10 percent of Victoria's housing units in 2013 had been built since 2000, which was the lowest among the peer Texas cities included. This statistic supports a frequent theme heard during the comprehensive planning process that prospective homebuyers have limited options if interested in purchasing a newly-built home. Another indicator of a relatively tight housing market is the extent of vacancy. As shown in **Figure 6, Housing Stock Vacancy in 2013**, the vacancy rate in Victoria in 2013 was estimated at 9 percent (2,329 units), which also was the lowest among the peer Texas cities.

As of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2013 American Community Survey, 61.6 percent of the housing units in Victoria were built in 1979 or earlier. It is important to consider housing that is 30 years or older as this is a common point when maintenance of older homes becomes an increasing burden on their owners and can start to impact the integrity of entire neighborhoods.

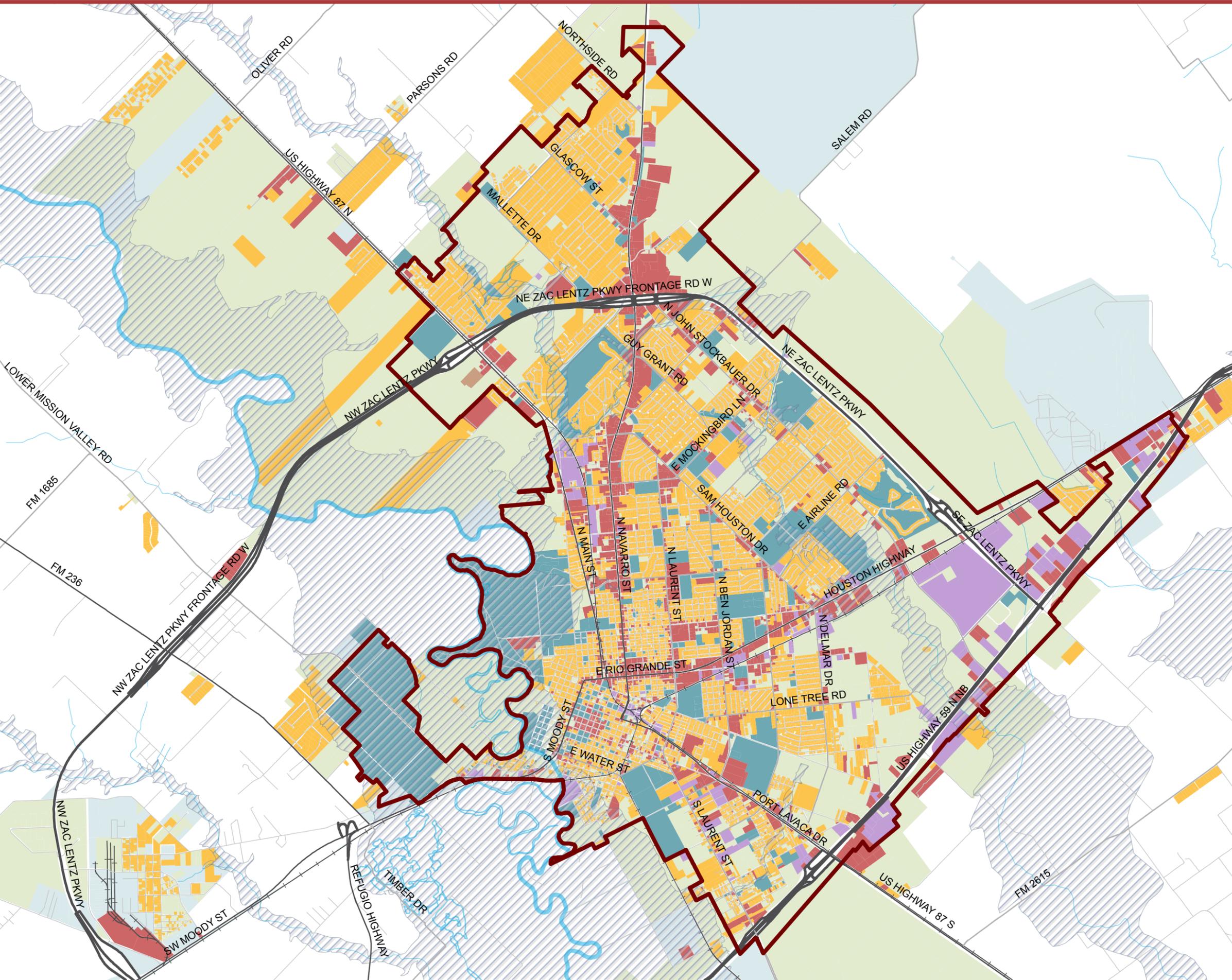
MAP 2  
EXISTING LAND USE

LEGEND

-  City Limits
-  Residential
-  Commercial (Retail/Office/Services)
-  Industrial/Utilities
-  Public Land and Buildings
-  Freeway
-  Primary Arterials
-  Secondary Arterials
-  Railroad
-  Creek/River/Lake
-  100 Year Floodplain



Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.



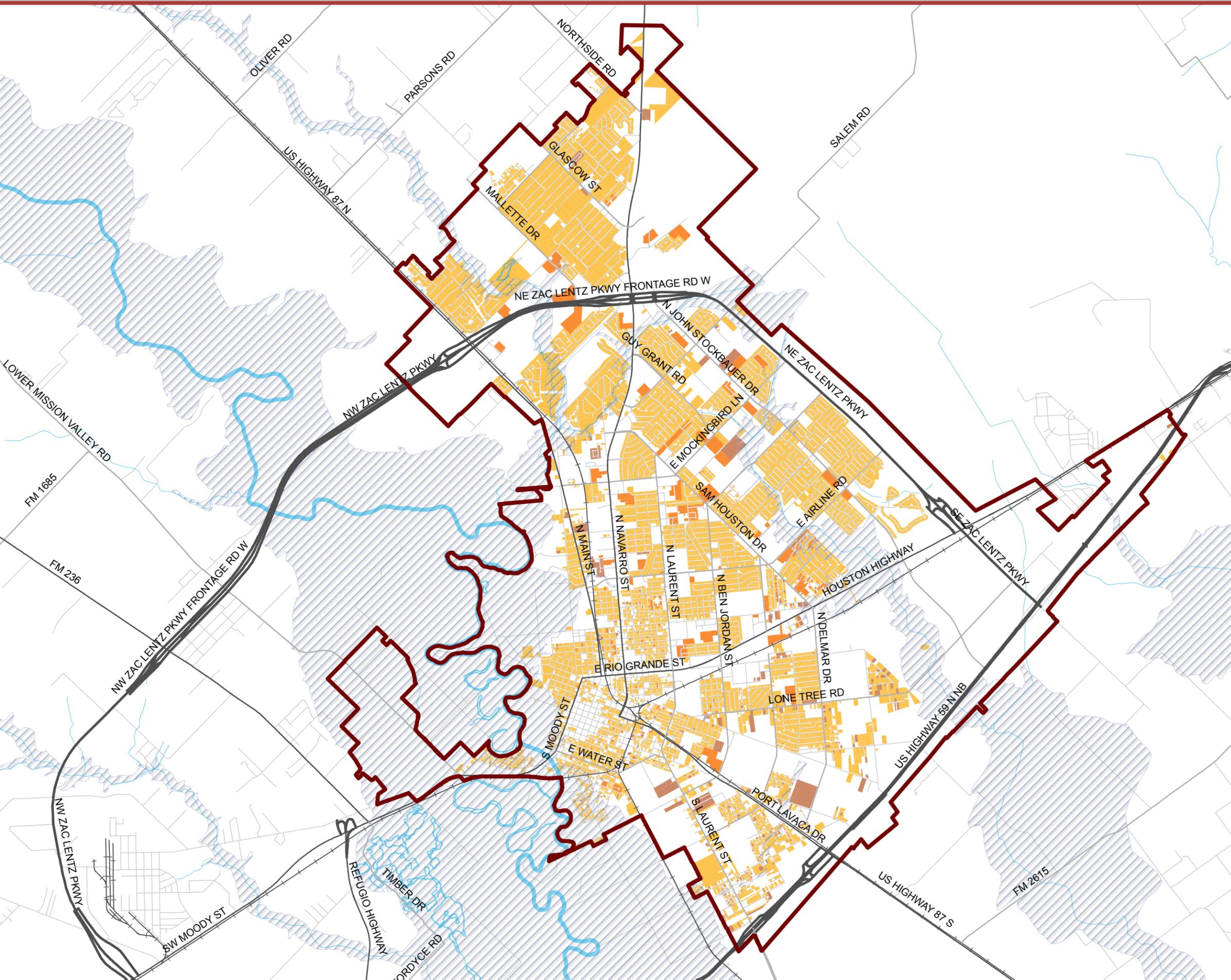
### MAP 3 LOCATIONS OF EXISTING HOUSING

#### LEGEND

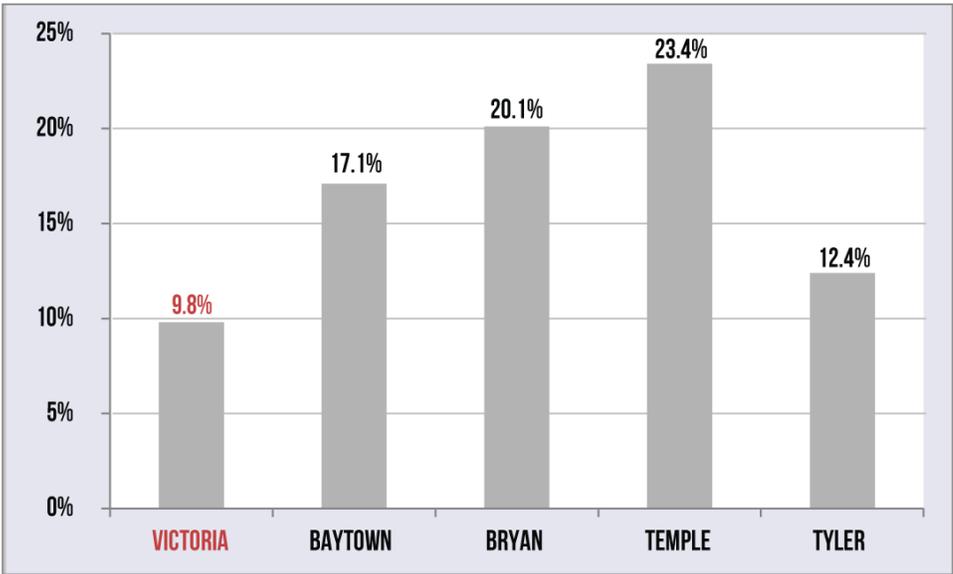
-  City Limits
-  Residential (Single Family/Duplex)
-  Residential (Multi-Family/Group Home)
-  Residential (Manufactured Housing)
-  Freeway
-  Primary Arterials
-  Secondary Arterials
-  Railroad
-  Creek/River/Lake
-  100 Year Floodplain



*Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.*

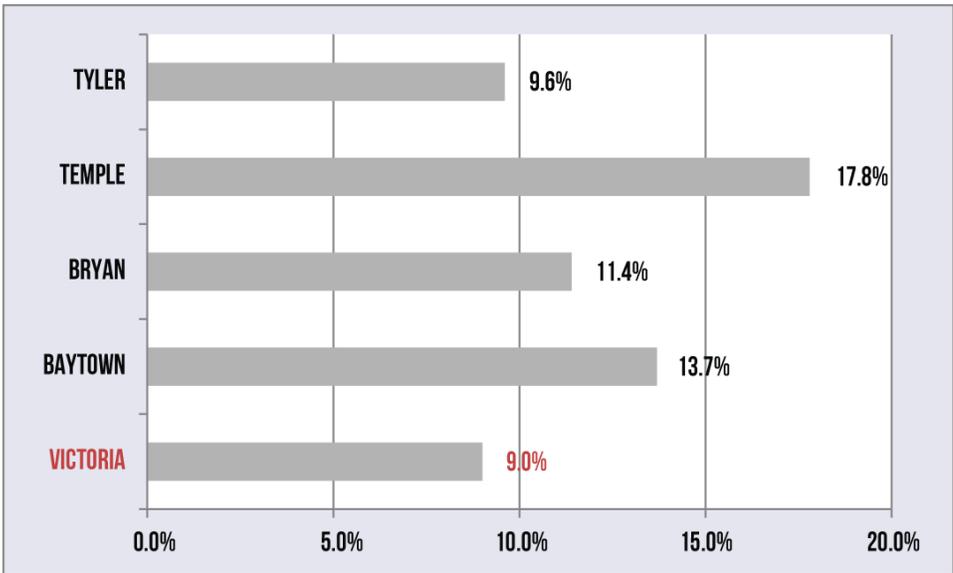


**FIGURE 5, SHARE OF HOUSING BUILT 2000-2013**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

**FIGURE 6, HOUSING STOCK VACANCY IN 2013**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

## **KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT**

Input and discussions for this Comprehensive Plan update, through workshops with City Council and Planning Commission, informal small group sessions, a community-wide public event, interaction with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, and background discussions with City staff, yielded the following items related to the Land Use and Development focus area of the plan:

- ▶ Inadequate supply of new homes at “starter housing” and mid-range price points.
- ▶ South side redevelopment needs and opportunities.
- ▶ Integrity of existing neighborhoods, and good design and amenities in new residential development.
- ▶ Concern for community image and “quality” appearance related to: (1) private site and building practices; and (2) public sites and the “public realm” (i.e., key roadway corridors, community entries/gateways, other public lands, etc.).

### **OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES**

Other relevant documents related to Land Use and Development include:

- ▶ Victoria 2025 Comprehensive Plan
- ▶ 2007 Land Development Study (City of Victoria)
- ▶ Parks 2025 Master Plan (City of Victoria, 2012)

Pertinent websites include:

- ▶ City of Victoria Development Services Department
- ▶ City of Victoria GIS Division Interactive Maps
- ▶ City of Victoria Code of Ordinances

# Existing City

## MOBILITY

The Comprehensive Plan update process occurred concurrently with the latest five-year update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), which is overseen by the Victoria Metropolitan Planning Organization (Victoria MPO). The new 2040 MTP was adopted in April 2015 by the MPO's Policy Advisory Committee. This section draws its highlights primarily from this essential information resource and planning tool for setting area-wide transportation improvement priorities.

## PUBLIC CONCERNS AND PRIORITIES

Input for the 2040 MTP update was obtained from two groups: (1) the general public, and (2) particular transportation stakeholders (e.g., major employers, local institutions, public agencies, and transportation providers). Both groups



were most concerned about existing pavement quality and traffic signal timing. Next on the list for the general public were sidewalks/trails, traffic congestion, and traffic safety, while the transportation stakeholders rated railroad crossings, sidewalks/trails, and bus operations as their next highest concerns. The topics most frequently mentioned by respondents were congestion and Navarro Street. Regarding local transit, those surveyed rated all transit services positively, although improved route timing, bus stop placement, and amenities at stops were suggested.

### MAJOR COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN RECENT YEARS

Victoria leaders and residents mentioned these items relevant to mobility:

- Loop 463 construction
- Local street improvements
- Median added on portion of Navarro (safer)
- Increased transit service

## TRAFFIC CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

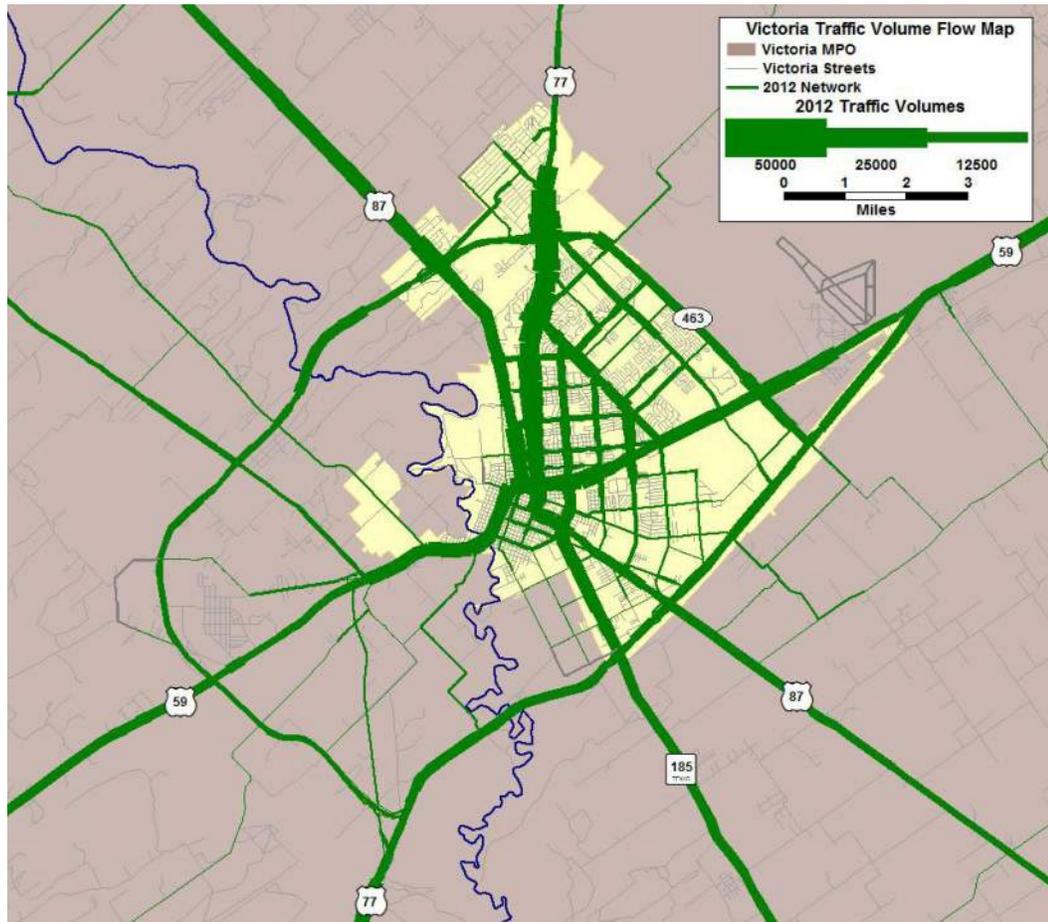
The **Victoria Traffic Volume Flow Map** from the 2040 MTP was produced based on computer modeling of traffic flows in Victoria. The different line widths reflect varying traffic volumes across the community's major roadway corridors. Visually most significant is the extent of traffic carried on Navarro Street between Loop 463 and Business US 59. Also prominent are Business US 59 and US 87 toward Cuero, followed by US 87 toward Port Lavaca, SH 185 toward Bloomington, and portions of US 59 and Loop 463. Within the city, Sam Houston Drive stands out, as well as segments of John Stockbauer Drive.

Displayed in **Table 3, Highest Volume Intersections (2013)**, are the results of traffic counts recorded by the Victoria MPO across

Victoria that year. As highlighted in the MTP, eight of the top 10 intersections in this list are along Navarro Street.

At the same time, **Figure 7, Changes in Traffic Volumes at Select Locations**, shows that, for the period from 2005 to 2013, there was minimal change (five percent) in average daily traffic volume along US 59 south of the city, and slightly more significant change on North Navarro Street (12 percent), compared to the 44 percent increase in daily traffic along Loop 463/ Zac Lentz Parkway. (Note: The traffic numbers in Figure 7 are lower than those in Table 3 as they are from points along a single roadway versus traffic passing through an intersection in all directions.)

Combining 2012 data from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) on Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) and vehicle speeds showed that moderate peak-period congestion was occurring along:



**TABLE 3, HIGHEST VOLUME INTERSECTIONS (2013)**

INTERSECTION		24-HOUR TRAFFIC COUNT
MAIN STREET	Zac Lentz Parkway	63,769
NAVARRO STREET	Loop 463	61,342
NAVARRO STREET	Sam Houston Drive	45,914
BUSINESS US 59	Laurent Street	45,757
NAVARRO STREET	Mockingbird Lane	45,626
NAVARRO STREET	Salem Road	40,433
NAVARRO STREET	Business US 59	40,126
NAVARRO STREET	Larkspur Street	38,942
NAVARRO STREET	Guy Grant Road	38,579
NAVARRO STREET	Glasgow Street	37,616
BUSINESS US 59	Ben Wilson Street	37,253
NAVARRO STREET	Crestwood Drive	36,852
NAVARRO STREET	Airline Road	35,061
SAM HOUSTON DRIVE	Ben Jordan Street	34,890
BUSINESS US 59	Ben Jordan Street	34,503
SAM HOUSTON DRIVE	Mockingbird Lane	33,106
BUSINESS US 59	Sam Houston Dr / Delmar Dr	30,910
BUSINESS US 59	Main Street	30,711
NAVARRO STREET	Red River Street	30,532
US 59	John Stockbauer Dr	30,149

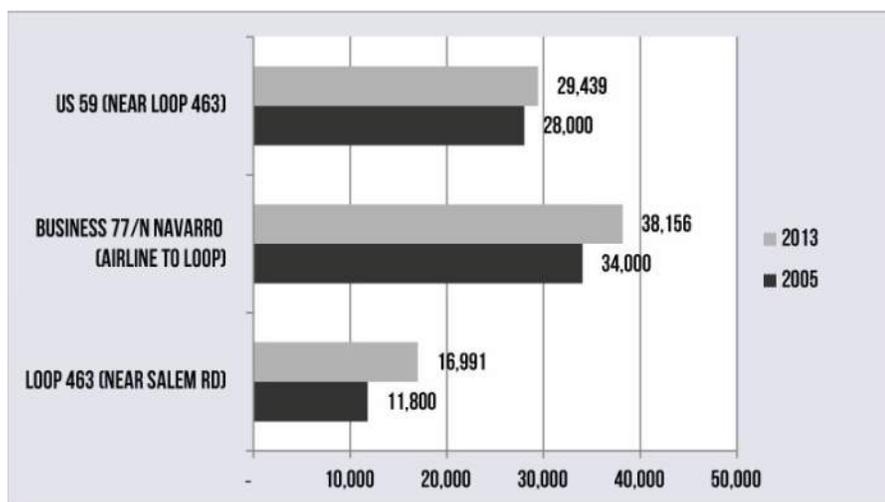
- Loop 463;
- US 77;
- FM 236;
- Business US 59;
- SH 185; and
- US 59.

**ROADWAY LEVELS OF SERVICE**

Figure 3.20, from the 2040 MTP, shows Levels of Service (LOS) in 2012 on particular segments of the Victoria roadway network. LOS is based on the proportion of a roadway’s available capacity that is used by the volume of traffic on the roadway. A low ratio of volume to capacity yields a high LOS, graded as A-B (“desirable” traffic flow conditions). Segments where traffic is using much of the available capacity have a low LOS and evident congestion issues, resulting in an E-F grade (“undesirable” flow conditions). “Acceptable” flow conditions are in between, graded C-D. In the figure, the color scheme is similar to a traffic signal, from green for desirable to red for undesirable,

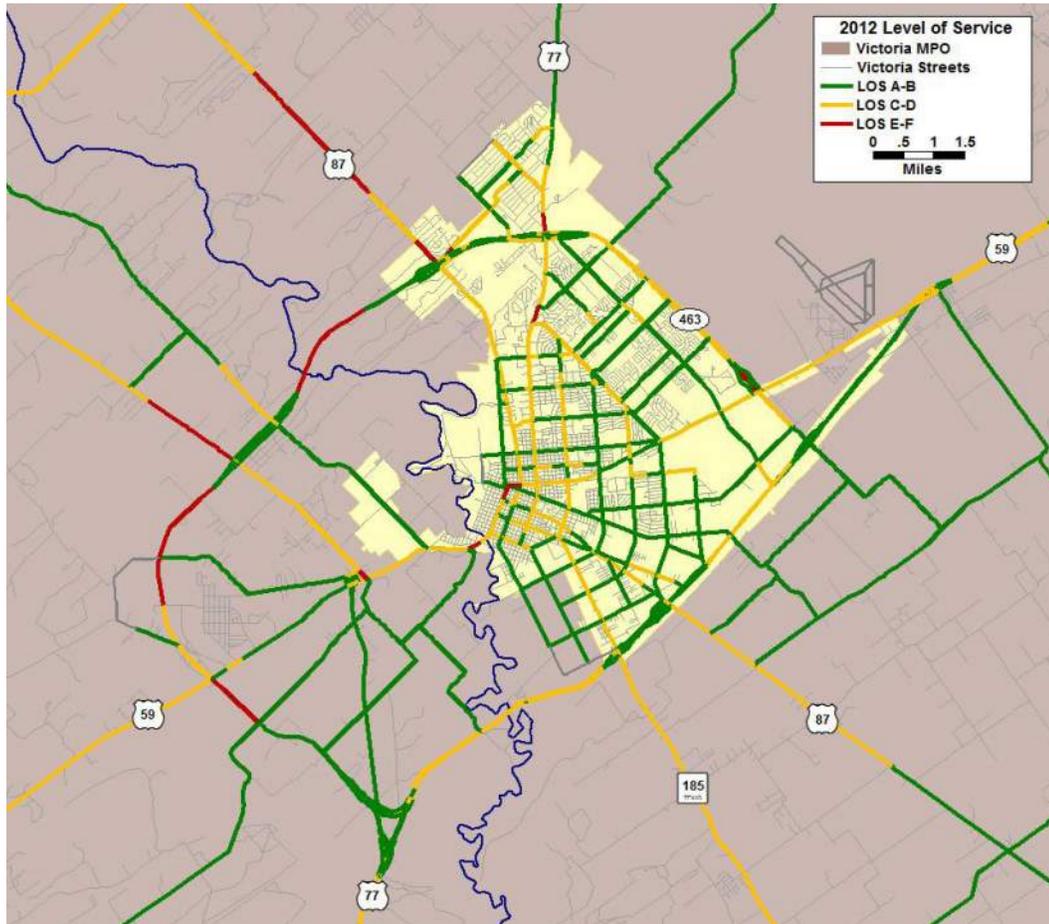
SOURCE: Victoria 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Victoria MPO (April 2015)

**FIGURE 7, CHANGES IN TRAFFIC VOLUMES AT SELECT LOCATIONS**



SOURCE: 2005 traffic counts from Victoria 2025 Comprehensive Plan; 2013 count for Loop 463 from Texas Department of Transportation; other 2013 counts from Victoria MPO (2013 Navarro count was between Salem Road and Sam Houston Drive)

## EXISTING CITY



with yellow in between for acceptable traffic flow conditions.

### TRAFFIC SAFETY

Figure 7.2, from the 2040 MTP, indicates the top 20 intersections with the most crash occurrences from 2010 to 2012 (22 in all given a three-way tie for 20th place). Notable from the figure and associated data is that 11 of the top 20 locations were on Navarro Street, which accounted for approximately 58 percent of the total crashes at all the top intersections (506 crashes at the Navarro intersections relative to 893 in all). Next highest were Business US 59 (26 percent) and Zac Lentz Parkway (22 percent). In the figure, red symbols are at the intersections where fatal crashes occurred.

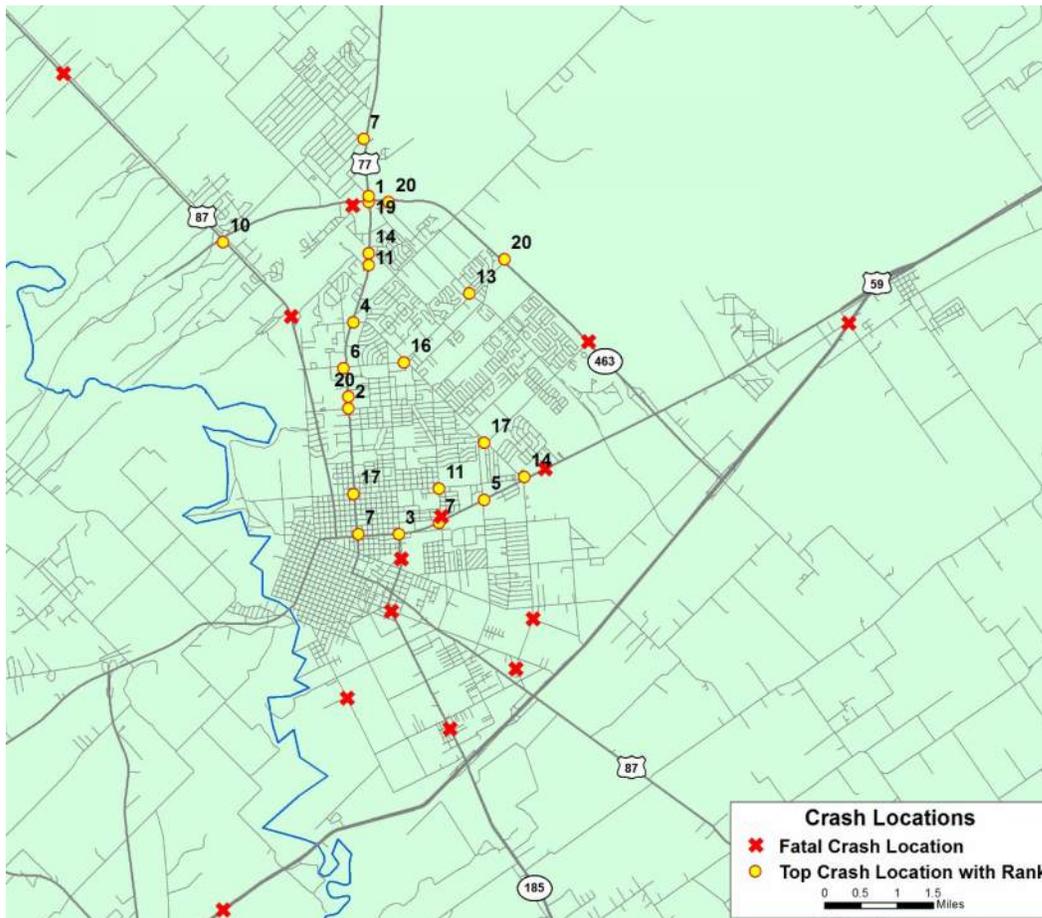
The 2040 MTP also highlighted safety concerns in and around Victoria resulting from Eagle Ford shale activities in south Texas. The Victoria region, and particularly the Port of Victoria,

experienced a significant increase in truck traffic, increased wear on pavements, and concerns for traffic safety and heavy trucks. Since 2009, traffic wrecks in the Eagle Ford shale were three times higher than anywhere else in Texas. Truck crashes in the Victoria region increased by 105 percent while the Eagle Ford shale and Victoria region, combined, had a nearly 250 percent increase in fatal truck crashes. Wrecks involving heavy trucks are often more serious incidents as they tend to cause more fatalities, and the possibility of potentially hazardous cargo can add to the severity of the situation.

## OTHER TRANSPORTATION MODES

### BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

The City of Victoria has adopted regulations in recent years requiring new development



to construct sidewalks along roadways. In the past this was not always the case, leading to gaps in the sidewalk and pedestrian system in developed areas of the city. The Lone Tree

### COMMUTE TIME IN VICTORIA

As of 2013, estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau showed that the average commute time among employed Victoria residents was 17.6 minutes. This was in the middle of the pack compared to several peer Texas cities (high of 23.7 minutes in Baytown and low of 15.7 minutes in Temple) and well below the statewide average of 25 minutes. The local statistics also have to be considered within the context of the number of residents who work at plants and other businesses and industries toward the coast and associated with the Port of Victoria.

Creek hike and bike trail, between East Airline Road and Mockingbird Lane, is available for recreational users and also provides access to Victoria East High School and nearby neighborhoods. While the State of Texas legally recognizes bicycles as vehicles, many cyclists find that it is much safer for them to travel along local and collector roads as opposed to riding on arterial roadways. Victoria currently has no on-street bike lanes, which has been attributed to a lack of funding support relative to other transportation improvement priorities.

### TRANSIT

The City of Victoria partners with the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC) to provide various fixed routes and demand-response transit services within the city. Victoria Transit operates four fixed routes during the day Monday to Friday; four evening and weekend routes, known as Flex Routes; and complementary paratransit services.



Complementary paratransit provides curb-to-curb service surrounding the fixed transit routes during the day and requires an advance reservation. GCRPC operates R Transit, which provides curb-to-curb services through an on-call system in Victoria County and the six surrounding counties. Route maps and other current service details are available on the Victoria Transit website.

## AIRPORT

The Victoria Regional Airport is owned by Victoria County and is operated by the Prautes Corporation. Since 2014, the Alternate Essential Air Service program has been implemented at the airport, providing 30 flights a week to Austin and Dallas-Fort Worth. Flight operations are currently 64 percent military, 30 percent general aviation, three percent scheduled commercial, and three percent air taxi. The airport averages approximately 150 flights per day, including departures and arrivals.



## PORT

While Victoria is not located directly at the coast, the Port of Victoria is at the end of a 35-mile canal to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The canal serves as a route for barge traffic carrying crude oil, liquids and dry bulk, and other general cargoes. The current capacity of the Port of Victoria is 150,000 barrels per day, which can typically be handled by five barges.

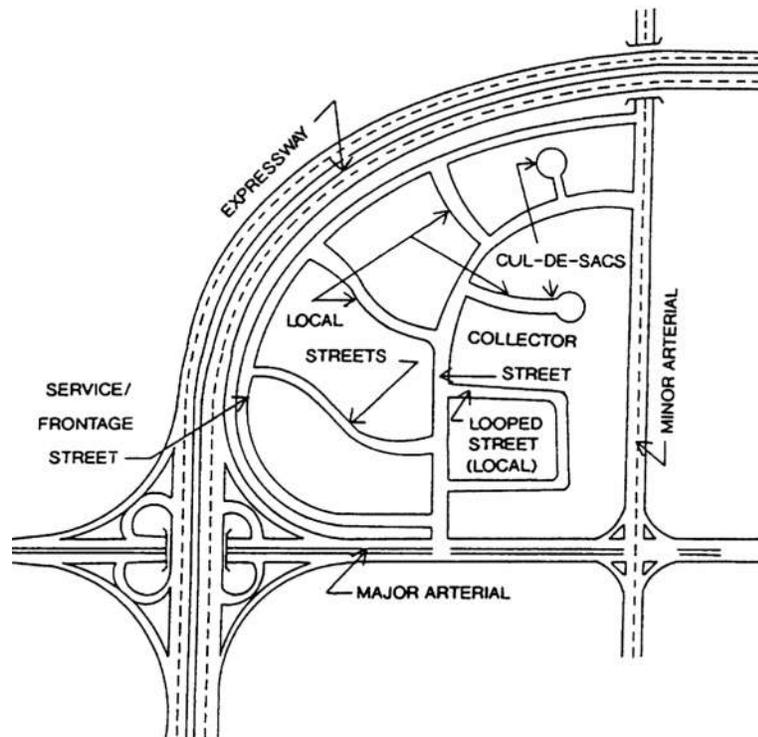
## RAIL FREIGHT

Rail freight has a large presence in Victoria as several major lines run along highway routes through and around the city. Most of the railways are owned by Union Pacific, but Burlington Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF) and Kansas City Southern have rights in the area and at the Port of Victoria. As many of the rail lines run along major routes within the city, at-grade rail crossings are critical locations for both ensuring safety and expecting and managing periodic traffic congestion.

## FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF ROADWAYS

Streets are categorized by their function, whether to serve a neighborhood or to move traffic from one side of a city to the other in a relatively short amount of time. Other factors in determining “functional classification” are the number of driving lanes, speed limits, and the number of property access points along the roadway. Chapter 21, Subdivision and Development, in the Victoria Code of Ordinances provides definitions for functional classification and the five types used on the City’s Thoroughfare Master Plan map:

- *Functional street classification system:* A hierarchical circulation system for the safe and efficient operation of vehicles which provides for the gradation in function from access to movement, as illustrated in **Figure 8, Functional Street Classification System**, which appears in Section 21-3 of the City’s development regulations (as Figure 1.2).
- *Expressway:* These facilities include interstate highways, freeways, expressways, parkways and loops, and provide for the rapid and efficient movement of large volumes of through traffic between regions and across the urban area. Direct access to abutting property is not an intended function of these facilities. *Example: Loop 463*
- *Primary Arterial:* Primary arterials are streets and highways that provide a high degree of mobility, serve relatively high traffic volumes,

**FIGURE 8, FUNCTIONAL STREET CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

SOURCE: City of Victoria Code of Ordinances, Chapter 21-Subdivision and Land Development, Section 21-3, Definitions

have high operational speeds, and serve a significant portion of through travel or long-distance trips. *Example: Navarro Street*

- **Secondary Arterial:** Secondary arterials are similar in function to primary arterials, except they provide a higher degree of local access and distribute medium traffic volumes for shorter distance trips than primary arterials. *Example: Sam Houston Drive*
- **Collector:** Collector streets are the connectors between arterials and local streets which serve to collect traffic and distribute it to the arterial network. As compared to arterial streets, collector streets accommodate smaller traffic volumes over shorter distances. *Example: Red River Street*
- **Local:** Local streets function to provide access to abutting property and to collect and distribute traffic between parcels of land and collector or arterial streets. *Example: residential streets and cul-de-sacs*

Displayed on **Map 4, Functional Classification of Roadways**, is how these classifications have

been applied to the existing roadway network in and around Victoria.

## STREET CONDITIONS

Public surveys conducted for the previous Victoria 2025 Comprehensive Plan showed “better streets” as the greatest community need identified by respondents. Likewise, survey results from March 2015 for the current Comprehensive Plan update again placed “street conditions” as the top community priority.

Since 1993, the City of Victoria Engineering Division has surveyed local roadways to assess their existing condition and determine and prioritize maintenance needs. Based on technical guidance from the Asphalt Institute, the Division developed a visual rating and number system for current street conditions:

- 100-92 (Very Good): New construction, no maintenance recommended

## EXISTING CITY

- 91-81 (Good): Minor cracks, cosmetic deterioration of curbs and joints, weed kill necessary
- 80-70 (Fair): Major cracks, significant surface deterioration, minor potholes, alligator cracking
- 69-51 (Poor): Significant potholes, misaligned curbs and pavement, complete surface deterioration
- 50-0 (Very Poor): Complete pavement failure, numerous potholes, pavement heaving, water ponding, bad riding quality

The newest published inventory results for 2014 showed that Victoria had approximately 1.7 million feet, or 321.8 miles, of roadway. Of the total roadway inventory, 71 percent (229.4 miles) had curb and/or gutter improvements. The average condition rating for 2014, based on the total length of roadway, was 86.8 percent (i.e., middle of the Good range).

Displayed on **Map 5, Street Condition Inventory 2014**, is a visual depiction of the latest inventory results. The corresponding statistics include:

- Very Poor: 0.5 percent
- Poor: 4.9 percent
- Fair: 15.1 percent
- Good: 41.7 percent
- Very Good: 37.6 percent

The results show that nearly 80 percent of the total street length in the city was rated between 81 and 100 (i.e., Good or Very Good condition). Nearly six percent was at the other end of the spectrum, rated as Poor or Very Poor, with most of these roads concentrated in the central area of Victoria as shown on Map 5. Approximately 15 percent was in the middle category of Fair, where repairs are essential to keep these roadways from slipping into more serious condition which becomes increasingly costly to correct. During the 2014 update, 0.2 percent of the total street inventory was under construction.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR MOBILITY

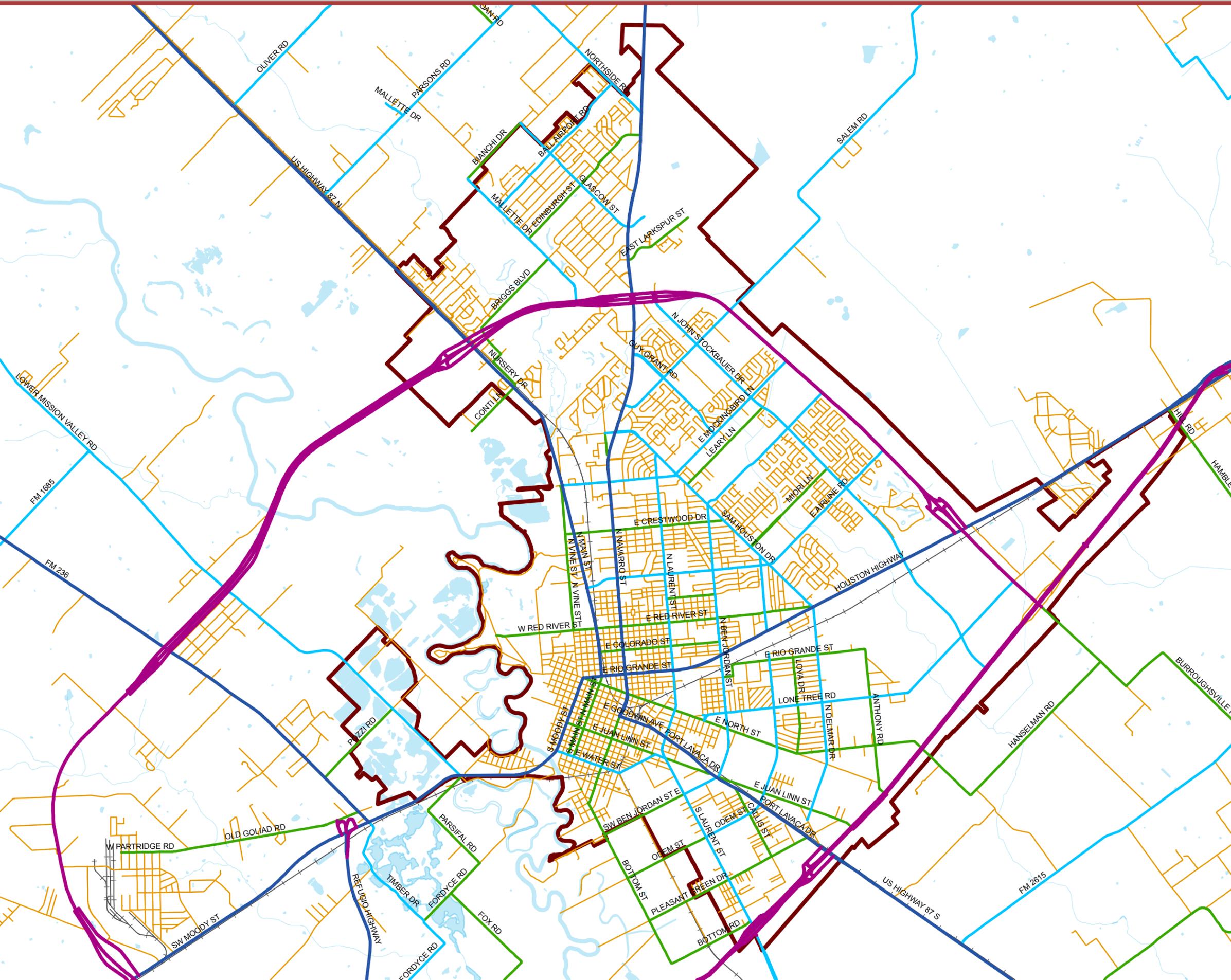
Input and discussions for this Comprehensive Plan update, through workshops with City Council and Planning Commission, informal small group sessions, a community-wide public event, interaction with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, and background discussions with City staff, yielded the following items related to the Mobility focus area of the plan:

- Continued traffic demands on the Navarro Street corridor with a northward growth trend.
- Extension of and upgrades to the thoroughfare network based on projected growth.
- Local street conditions and maintenance.
- Greater opportunity for safe and convenient bicycle/pedestrian circulation to both routine and high-profile destinations in the city.
- Effective and reliable public transit services, especially for transit-dependent populations.

### OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES

Other relevant documents related to Mobility include:

- Victoria MPO 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Transportation Improvement Program 2015-2018 as amended (Victoria MPO)
- Thoroughfare Master Plan
- 2014 Street Inventory Report
- Residential Street Improvement Plan
- Paseo de Victoria: A Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan for Transportation and Recreation
- Victoria County Urban Transportation Study, Texas Urban Mobility Plan Report (Victoria Metropolitan Planning Organization)



### MAP 4 FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF ROADWAYS

#### LEGEND

-  City Limits
-  Freeway/Expressway
-  Primary Arterial
-  Secondary Arterial
-  Collector Street
-  Local Street
-  Railroad
-  Creek/River/Lake



Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.

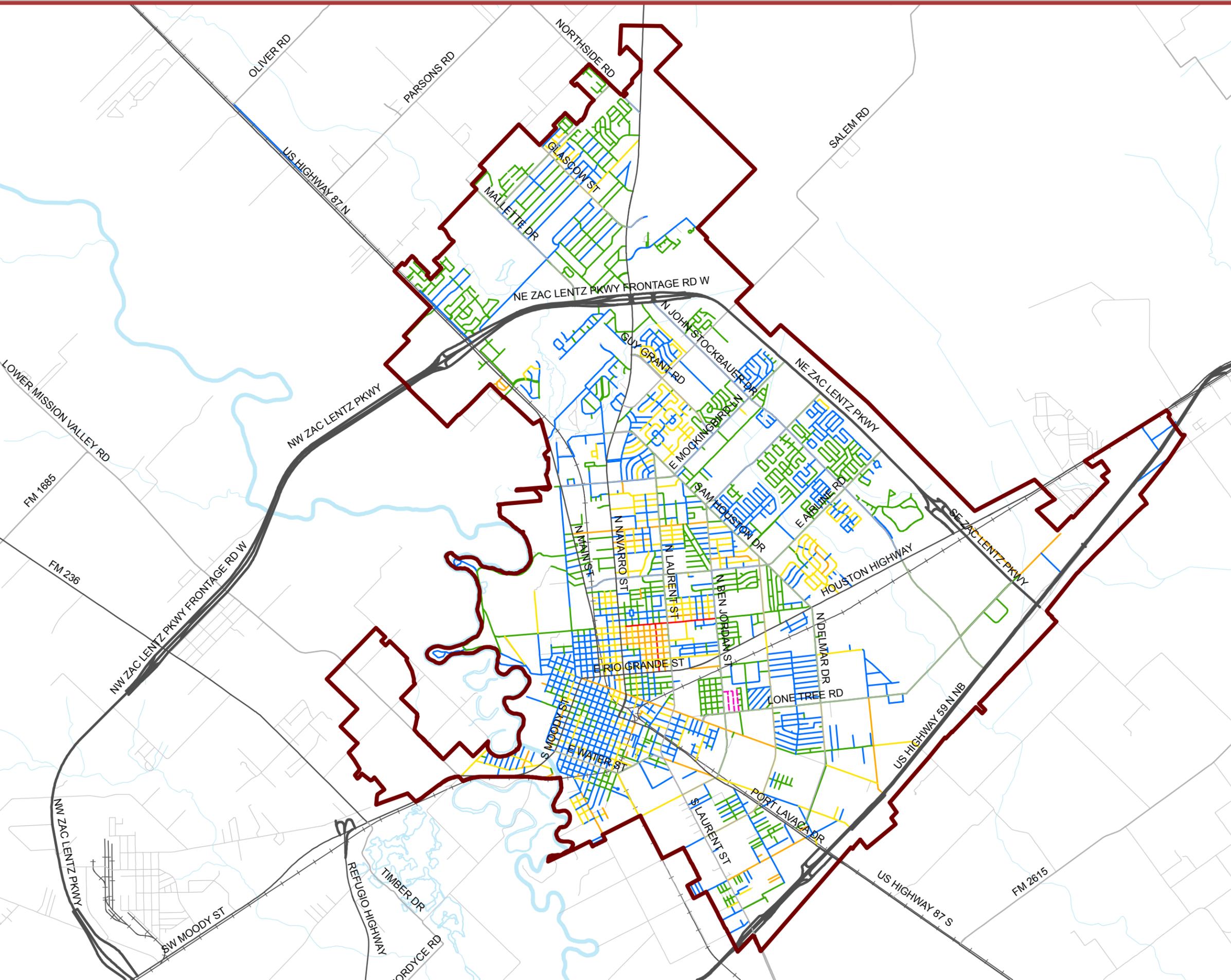
MAP 5  
STREET CONDITION  
INVENTORY 2014

LEGEND

-  City Limits
-  Very Poor Condition
-  Poor Condition
-  Fair Condition
-  Good Condition
-  Very Good Condition
-  Under Construction
-  Freeway
-  Primary Arterials
-  Secondary Arterials
-  Railroad
-  Creek/River/Lake



Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.



## OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES

Pertinent websites include:

- Victoria Metropolitan Planning Organization
- City of Victoria Public Works Department (Engineering, Streets and Drainage, and Traffic Control Divisions)
- City of Victoria Development Services Department (Thoroughfare Master Plan)
- City of Victoria Environmental Services Department (mobility-related air quality)
- Victoria County (Commissioner Precincts 1-4)
- Victoria Regional Airport (Victoria County)
- Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (Transportation Services, Victoria Transit)
- Texas Department of Transportation (Yoakum District)
- Port of Victoria
- Victoria Economic Development Corporation
- Alliance for I-69 Texas

**EXISTING  
CITY**

# Existing City

## GROWTH CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Victoria has experienced ongoing but relatively moderate population growth – and associated physical expansion of its urbanized “footprint” – for decades, dating back to the 1980s. Economic development efforts and growth accommodation are important to the City’s vitality and fiscal health. However, various officials and residents noted the benefit of steady rather than rapid growth which has enabled the City to meet the demands of new growth while also focusing attention and resources on the needs of established and older developed parts of the community.

### CITY JURISDICTION

Displayed on **Map 6, Annexation History**, is a visual record of the evolution of the Victoria City limits since the community’s original incorporation in the 1830s. The map highlights, in particular: (1) the progression of the community’s growth in nearly all directions from downtown (other than westward given the Guadalupe River constraint) during the 1950s; and (2) further expansion of the City’s jurisdiction out to and beyond US 59 and the present-day Loop 463 corridor through wide-ranging annexation activity during the 1980s. Most of the new territory annexed since 2000 has been on the far north side and just outside Zac Lentz Parkway in the northeast area.

### CURRENT CITY LIMITS AND EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION

The Victoria City limits currently include approximately 37 square miles (23,610 acres). As a city in a population range between 50,000 and 99,999 persons, Victoria

### MAJOR COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN RECENT YEARS

Victoria leaders and residents mentioned these items relevant to growth capacity and infrastructure:

- Steady versus rapid growth
- Water system management
- Curbside recycling program and participation rate
- New and renovated school campuses and facilities

## EXISTING CITY

is also assigned an “extraterritorial jurisdiction” (ETJ) of 3.5 miles beyond and contiguous to its incorporated area under Section 42.021 of the Texas Local Government Code. Essentially, this affords a city some ability to plan for orderly growth and development in surrounding areas into which the community may someday expand depending on the direction and extent of population growth and transition of land to more urban uses.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated that Victoria County as a whole added 1,445 more residents than the City of Victoria from 2000 to 2013 (5,940 total compared to the 4,495 gain within the City). The sense among City staff and others is that much of the population growth in the unincorporated county is occurring in close proximity to the City limits. This is among the factors that keeps future potential annexation activity on the list of priority planning issues addressed by the City’s updated Comprehensive Plan, especially if areas to be considered for incorporation may have more existing “rooftops” than previous areas brought into the City limits.

### GROWTH DIRECTIONS

Highlighted on **Map 7, Growth Opportunities**, are areas in and around the current City limits that are classified as undeveloped or in agricultural use by the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) division within the City of Victoria’s Development Services Department. This visual representation, combined with the locations of existing development (the “buildings” layer in GIS) and areas delineated as floodplain, provides a starting point for assessing where new growth and land development might occur in the years ahead, including available land within existing developed areas that could be attractive for infill projects. These implications are pursued further in the Future City portion of the updated Comprehensive Plan, along with consideration of the public infrastructure and services that will be necessary under any growth scenario.

### UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The combination of **Map 8, Existing Water System**, and **Map 9, Existing Wastewater**

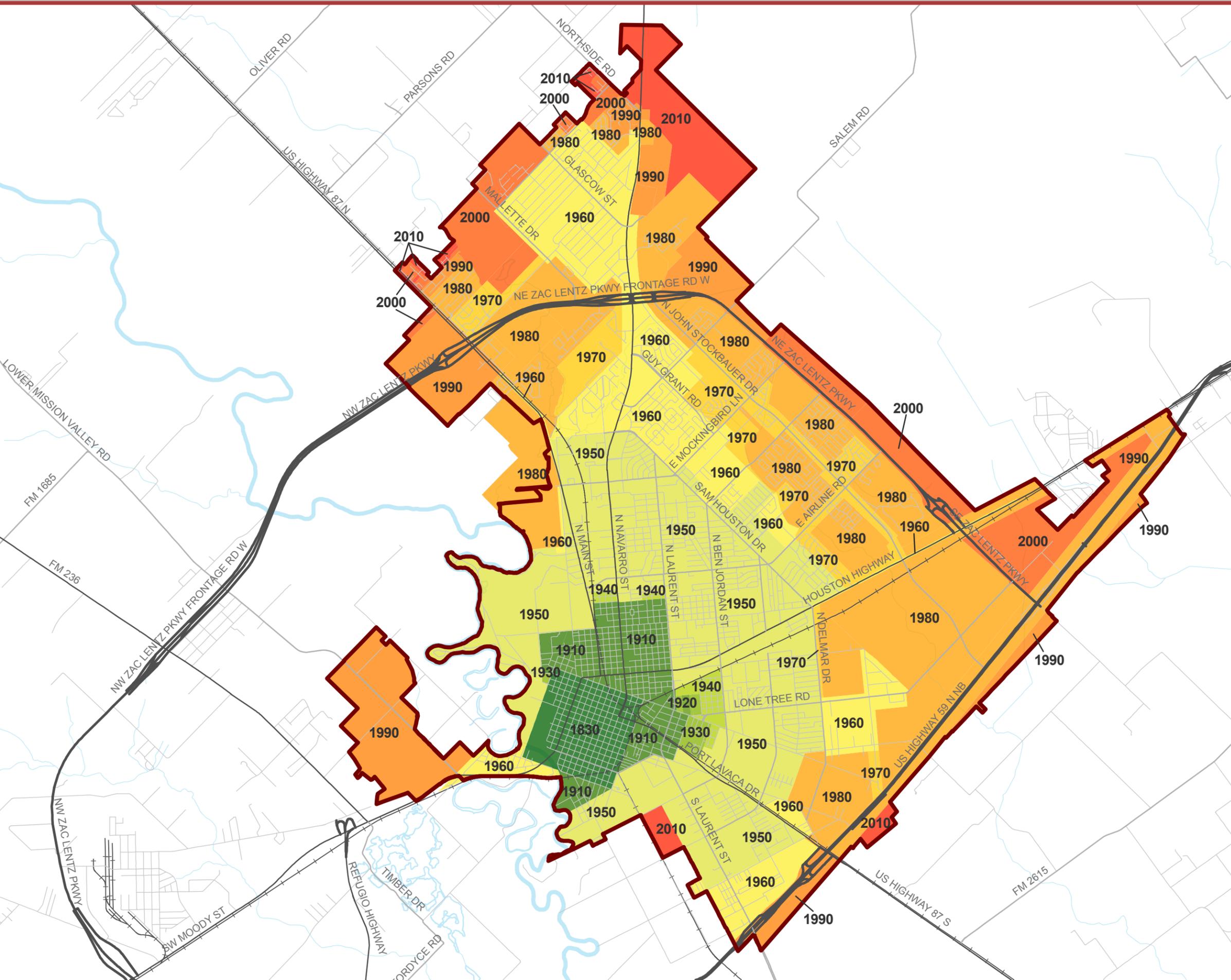
### FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE INTO COUNTY

Perhaps an even more significant number than the scale of the City’s current ETJ is the fact that the Victoria Fire Department (VFD), through a formal agreement with Victoria County, responds to emergency calls across roughly 900 square miles that includes extensive unincorporated areas. VFD receives support from volunteers, but mainly in the form of water supply for structure fires and additional brush trucks for grass fires. Because VFD responds to such calls no differently than its in-city calls, the departments’ available resources are sometimes stretched thin. Currently, VFD has a system in place to put into service additional apparatus for Fire or EMS calls during peak calls for service.

VFD reports that about 20 percent of its calls are currently from unincorporated locations, which may continue to increase given the extent of development happening outside the City limits. Construction of Fire Station 6 for better coverage of northwest Victoria helps provide a more efficient and timely response into the area. Another unique challenge for VFD is when multiple rural grass fires occur on a given day during significant dry spells. During these times there has to be more reliance on the assistance of the volunteer agencies to assist with water shuttles and providing additional brush trucks in order to maintain adequate coverage for other calls for service in their response areas.

**System**, provides a visual snapshot of where basic City utility infrastructure is in place to serve development – and where there may be opportunities to extend the water distribution system and/or the wastewater collection system to contiguous growth areas. More detailed master planning for both systems takes into account topographic considerations, overall system capacities, line sizing, and other factors that ultimately determine the levels of service that would be possible in various areas and directions around the City’s current

MAP 6  
ANNEXATION HISTORY



LEGEND

- |  |      |  |                     |
|--|------|--|---------------------|
|  | 1830 |  | City Limits         |
|  | 1910 |  | Freeway             |
|  | 1920 |  | Primary Arterials   |
|  | 1930 |  | Secondary Arterials |
|  | 1940 |  | Railroad            |
|  | 1950 |  | Creek/River/Lake    |
|  | 1960 |  |                     |
|  | 1970 |  |                     |
|  | 1980 |  |                     |
|  | 1990 |  |                     |
|  | 2000 |  |                     |
|  | 2010 |  |                     |



Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.

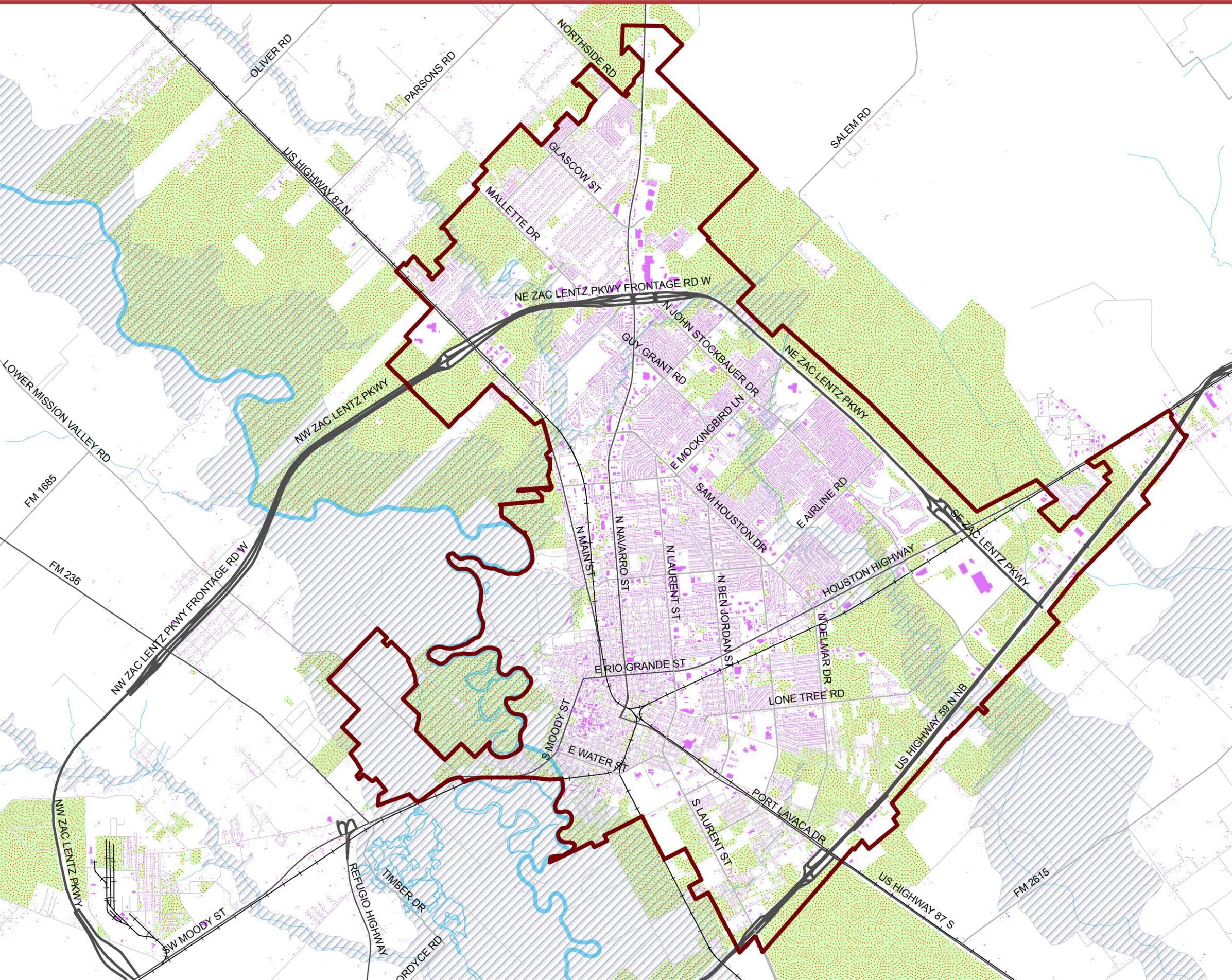
# MAP 7 GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

### LEGEND

-  City Limits
-  Agriculture/Undeveloped Land
-  100 Year Floodplain
-  Buildings
-  Freeway
-  Primary Arterials
-  Secondary Arterials
-  Railroad
-  Creek/River/Lake



*Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.*



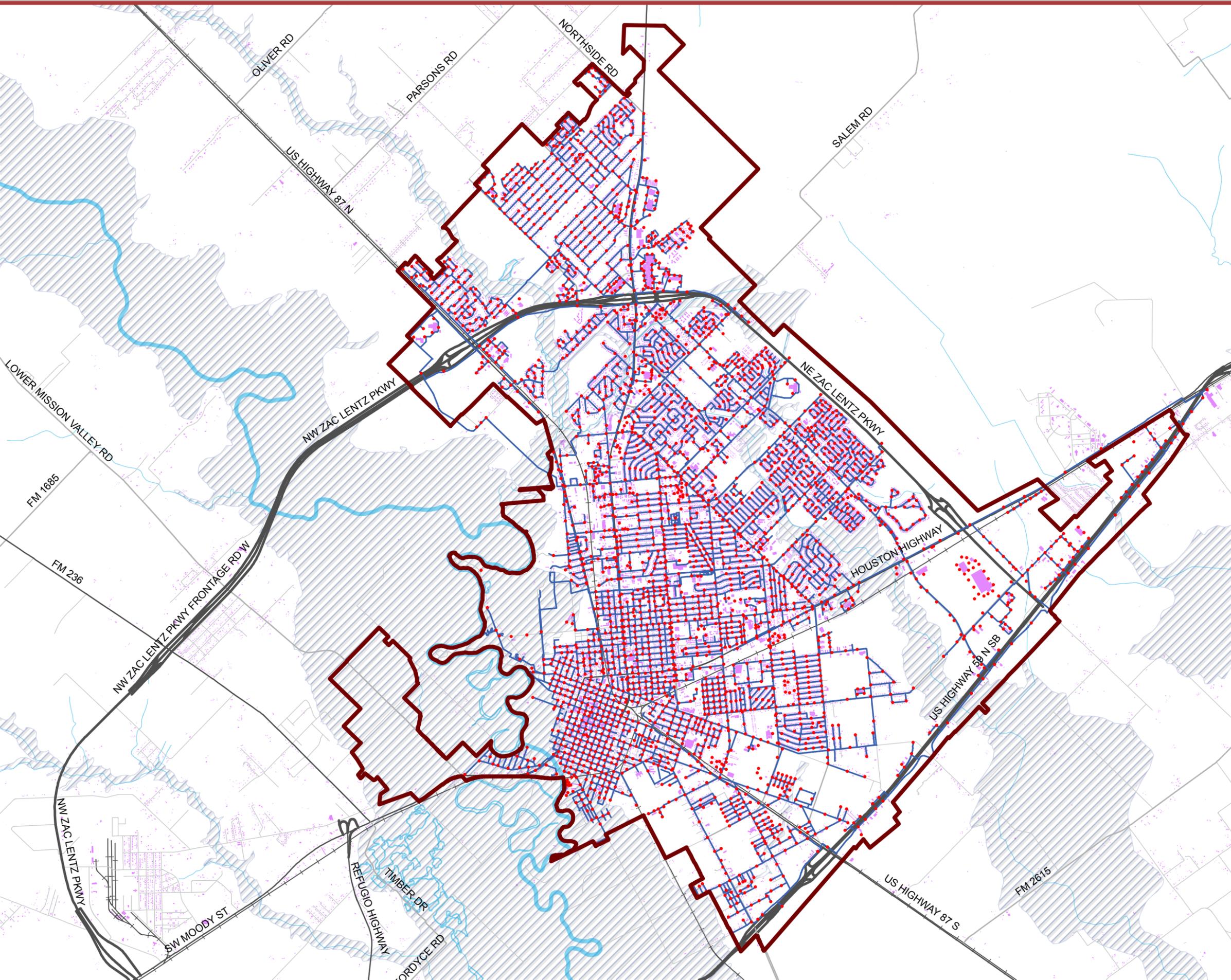
### MAP 8 EXISTING WATER SYSTEM

#### LEGEND

-  City Limits
-  Fire Hydrants
-  Water Mains
-  Buildings
-  Freeway
-  Primary Arterials
-  Secondary Arterials
-  Railroad
-  Creek/River/Lake
-  100 Year Floodplain



*Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.*



### MAP 9 EXISTING WASTEWATER SYSTEM

#### LEGEND

-  City Limits
-  Lift Station
-  Force Main
-  Gravity Main
-  Buildings
-  Freeway
-  Primary Arterials
-  Secondary Arterials
-  Railroad
-  Creek/River/Lake
-  100 Year Floodplain

NORTH



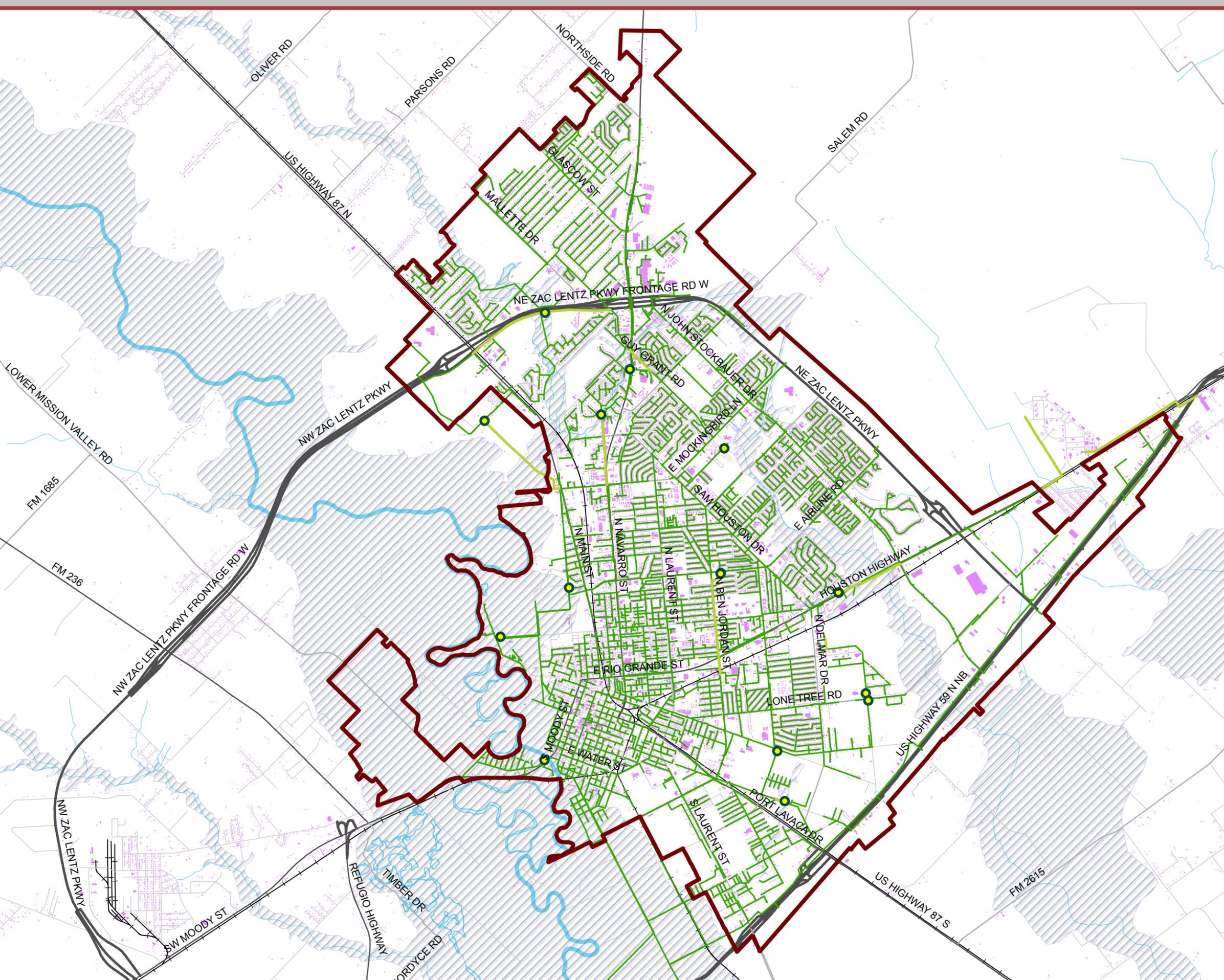
0 0.5 1.0 2.0  
MILES



KENDIG KEAST  
COLLABORATIVE



Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.



jurisdictional edges and beyond. **Map 10, Existing Storm Drainage System**, displays where storm sewer infrastructure and related drainage improvements are in place within the city to convey storm water from roadways and other urban surfaces to natural or constructed drainage ways.

The 2015 update to this Comprehensive Plan occurred as the region transitioned out of a period of continued drought effects in Texas and large portions of the country. City Public Works leadership reported that Victoria will have adequate water system capacity through the 2025-2030 timeframe. Along with planned system improvements, additional methods for supplementing water supply (i.e., aquifer storage/recovery, off-channel storage) will further accommodate future water demands. Construction of the Odem Street wastewater plant and other improvements to the wastewater system ensures adequate system capacity through 2035. Department leaders also noted that drainage issues have received less attention during the recent drought period. However, many long-term Victoria residents remain well aware of the risk posed by the Guadalupe River flowing through a city on a relatively flat landscape, as evidenced by the devastating flooding in October 1998. More recently, during June 2015, Victoria experienced the downstream effects of substantial rainfall across Central Texas, which led to Riverside Park serving its temporary floodwater absorption function, and river water rising into some homes in vulnerable areas near the river.



In general, the City is in a good position with long-term water supply relative to various Texas cities as a result of previous water supply planning efforts. However, the ever-present reality that affects Victoria are the increasing water demands upstream in the San Antonio metropolitan area and across Central Texas, along with the pressure this places on the sensitive Edwards Aquifer. These increasing pressures may threaten the City's good position and should be continuously monitored.

Other pertinent facts and background for this Comprehensive Plan include:

## WATER SYSTEM

- The City of Victoria's primary water source is 20,000 acre feet per year of surface water from the Guadalupe River that is allocated to the community via State of Texas permitting. This is about two times the annual amount of current water demand in the city. However, the City cannot necessarily utilize this entire allotment, especially during extreme drought conditions, due to environmental standards and because of downstream water rights that take precedence over the City's rights. For this reason, the City also has off-channel reservoirs, located on 640 acres of land within the city that hold 3,000 acre feet of water. The City pumps water into the reservoirs which is a mixture of groundwater from a shallow aquifer and Guadalupe River water.
- A Surface Water Treatment Plant satisfies most of the city's water needs. However, 10 water wells are still operational and retained for peak demand periods and in case of extreme emergencies, such as during drought conditions. These wells are drilled into the Gulf Coast Aquifer and, prior to 2001, they supplied all of the city's water.
- Two pumping plants move water through the distribution system, along with five elevated water towers.
- The City maintains a Drought Contingency Plan and administers an associated City ordinance. The Utilities Division

## EXISTING CITY

within the Public Works Department routinely promotes water conservation education and practices.

- The City's most recent annual Drinking Water Quality Report for 2014, as required by the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, reported that Victoria's water system continues to merit a "Superior" rating by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. This rating means that the system meets and/or exceeds all state and federal water quality standards and that the system has ample supply, storage, and pumping facilities to meet the community's needs.

### WASTEWATER SYSTEM

- The City of Victoria's Wastewater Treatment Division operates and maintains two wastewater treatment plants, the Regional Plant (at 923 US Highway 59 S, just east of the Guadalupe River) and the Willow Street Plant (just south of downtown along the river). The Odem Street Plant is under construction and will replace the Willow Street Plant once completed.
- The Regional Plant is permitted to treat up to 9.6 million gallons per day (mgd). This plant also accepts approved hauled waste such as septic tank and grit trap waste.
- The Willow Street Plant is permitted to treat up to 2.5 mgd. The Odem Street Plant is designed to treat up to 4.4 mgd and is permitted to treat up to 6.6 mgd in the future with additional expansion.
- The wastewater system relies on 16 lift stations that help to transport sewage to the two treatment plants.

### STORM DRAINAGE SYSTEM

- The Streets and Drainage Division within the Public Works Department maintains the storm drainage system within the city, including drainage ditch maintenance and the cleaning, maintenance, and installation of inlets.
- The Storm Water Division is charged with administering the City's Storm Water Management Program as mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection



Agency and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Beyond managing storm water quantity and flooding risk, this program is focused on protecting water quality in the area by preventing and reducing contamination of storm water runoff, including from construction sites, developed/redeveloped properties, and municipal operations. A City-adopted storm water ordinance supports other voluntary and educational efforts.

The Engineering Division within the Public Works Department plans and oversees construction of City capital improvement projects, and also is involved in the City's subdivision review/approval process and construction inspection to ensure that infrastructure installed through private development and dedicated to the City meets all design criteria and technical requirements.

## PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

### FIRE DEPARTMENT

The City of Victoria Fire Department (VFD) currently operates from six fire stations:

- Station Number 1, and Fire Administration offices, at 606 E. Goodwin (just east of downtown near Navarro Street).
- Station Number 2 at 2708 Miori (northeast near Sam Houston Drive).
- Station Number 3 at 4406 Lone Tree (east side next to Rodolfo Torres Elementary School).
- Station Number 4 at 2007 Salem Road (north between John Stockbauer Drive and Loop 463).
- Station Number 5 at 9508 Zac Lentz Parkway (east of US 87 on north side of Parkway).



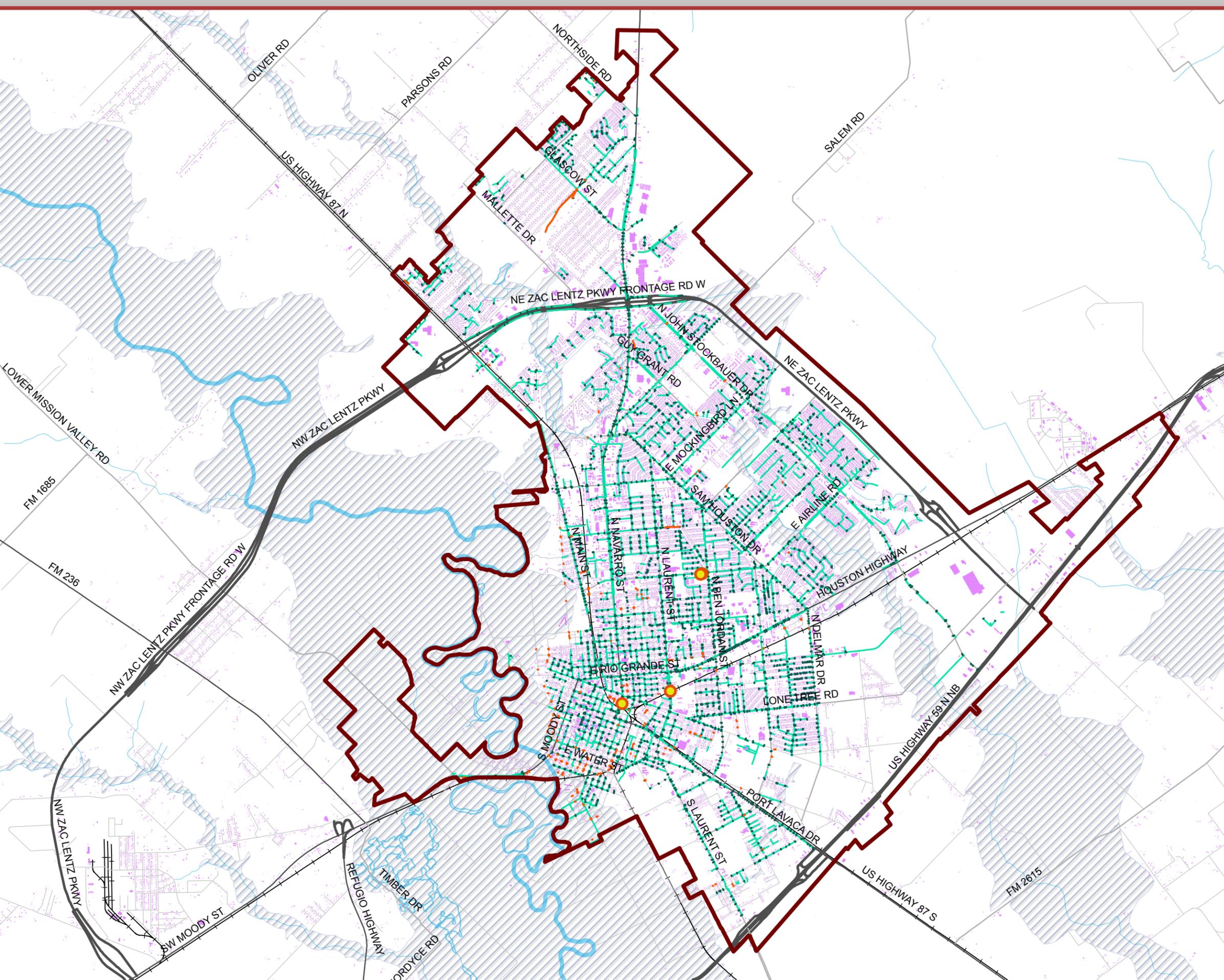
MAP 10  
EXISTING STORM  
DRAINAGE SYSTEM

LEGEND

-  City Limits
-  Storm Structure
-  Storm Pipe
-  Lateral
-  Main
-  Buildings
-  Freeway
-  Primary Arterials
-  Secondary Arterials
-  Railroad
-  Creek/River/Lake
-  100 Year Floodplain



Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.



- Station Number 6 at 1101 Ball Airport Road (north side near the intersection with Glasgow Street).

VFD's Operations Division had 127 uniformed personnel at the time this Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2015. Along with a variety of fire apparatus, the Department staffs six Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU) ambulances, including two reserve ambulances, to meet its emergency medical service (EMS) responsibilities. Given the circumstances of Victoria, VFD must be prepared to respond to incidents at high-rise buildings, residential neighborhoods, industrial plants, and fires in rural settings on brush and pasture lands, as well as hazardous materials response and water rescues.

During 2014, VFD responded to 9,283 requests for service from Victoria residents and visitors. Just over three-quarters (77 percent) of these calls involved rescues and EMS cases. The 2014 total was up 7.2 percent compared to 2013 with fire responses increasing by 20 percent (426 in 2014 versus 356 in 2013). The percentage of responses to locations outside the City limits continues to be within the 19 to 20 percent range annually.

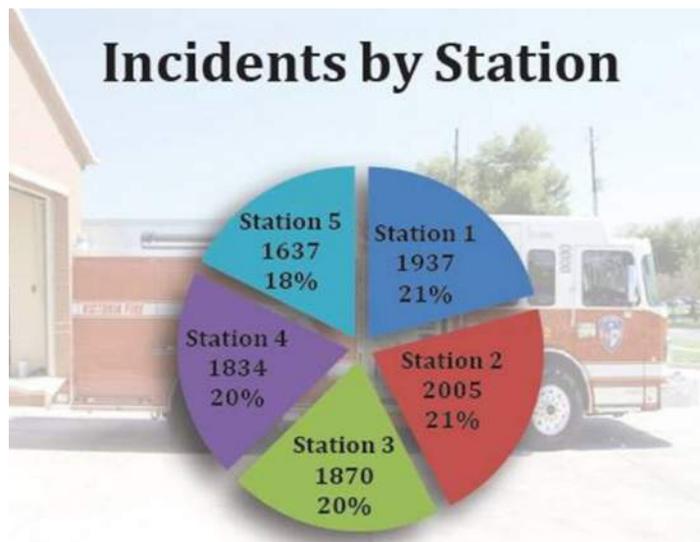
Among VFD's in-city response goals for 2015:

- Turnout time of 90 seconds or less, for 90 percent of responses.
- Response time of 5.5 minutes, for 90 percent of responses.
- Full alarm response time for structure fires of 9.5 minutes, for 90 percent of responses.

In its 2014 annual report, VFD reported these actual results:

- Average turnout time of 1.03 minutes.
- Average response time of 5.16 minutes.
- Average full alarm response time for structure fires of 11.46 minutes.

VFD leadership cited the challenges of timely emergency response in a city with a limited number of north-south thoroughfares, especially given the extent of growth and increased call volume on the north side. Increasing traffic



\* Station 6 opened in November 2015

volumes and periodic congestion on Navarro Street are as much a concern for public safety officials as they are an inconvenience for residents. Slow-moving trains through the community can also be a navigation obstacle for emergency vehicles. Newly-developing areas at the fringes of the city, such as northwest areas accessed mainly via Mallette Drive, present a particular challenge where narrower, open-ditch roads sometimes force other drivers off the street to make room for fire apparatus.

The City of Victoria in recent years has improved its Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating from 4 to 2, which is a notable accomplishment for a growing community with many competing demands for limited public funds. The ISO assigns communities a Public Protection Classification from 1 (best) to 10 (worst). A community's fire suppression capabilities are evaluated based on a variety of factors including the water system, fire department staffing and equipment, emergency communications, fire and building codes, and public education efforts. The ISO currently works with approximately 48,000 communities nationwide, and only a little over 100 jurisdictions have achieved a 1 rating. (Texas has the distinction of having 26 of the 100+ U.S. communities with a 1 rating.)

The ISO program provides an objective, nationwide standard for assessing needs and enhancing planning and budgeting for emergency facilities, equipment and training. Aside from public health and safety

## EXISTING CITY

considerations, the ability to meet defined service standards and performance criteria can have real financial implications for the City and its taxpayers as the ISO rating can help to reduce fire insurance premiums based on better citizen and property protection.

Victoria's improved ISO rating especially reflects investments in more and better fire station locations and a solid and reliable municipal water system. Along with sustaining these strengths, the City will need to continue to maintain adequate capacity in its emergency dispatching given increasing call volumes.

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Victoria Police Department (VPD) has a large in-city jurisdiction to cover from its downtown headquarters and dispatch location (306 S. Bridge Street, adjacent to City Hall), especially with a substantial number of its calls coming from the north side. Deployment of its officers and vehicles across five patrol zones, based on

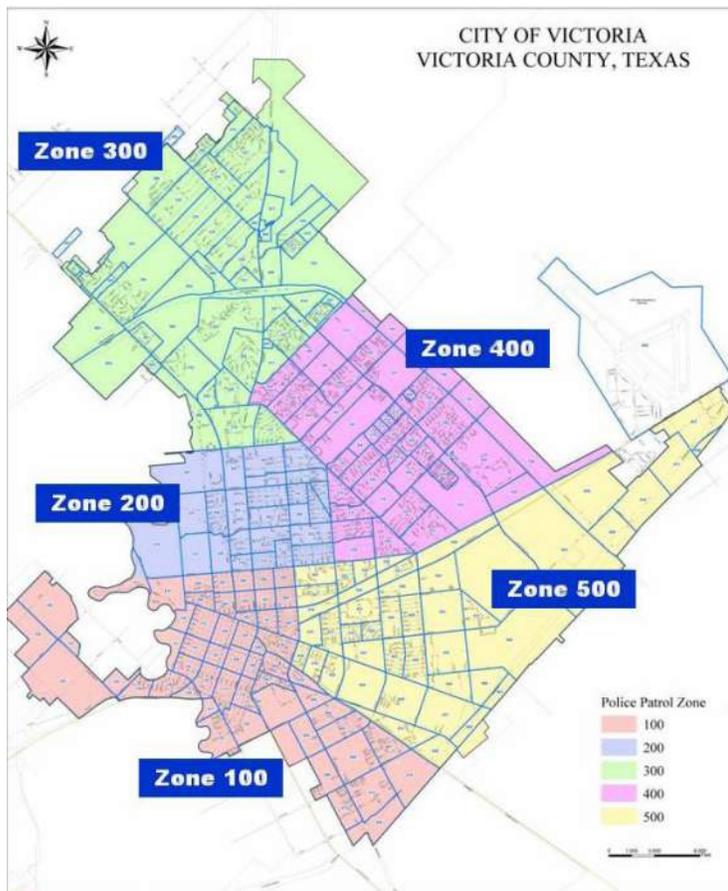
### CITIZEN PRIORITY ON PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

Through a public survey for the 2015 update of this Comprehensive Plan, "Police/Fire/Ambulance Services" ranked sixth when respondents were asked to rank their top five community priorities from among a list of 18 items.

ongoing tracking of the geographic distribution of calls for service, enables on average a five-to six-minute VPD response time to emergency calls for service. The Department has also maintained a presence at Victoria Mall for crime prevention and auto theft detectives.

VPD had authorized positions for 122 licensed officers (and 37 civilian employees) at the time this Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2015. VPD's Patrol Division, with an authorized

strength of more than 70 personnel, was the largest division. Officers are assigned to one of the five patrol zones and work in 12-hour rotating shifts. This allows officers to become more familiar with and concentrate on smaller areas within the city, which supports the Department's Community Oriented Policing approach that emphasizes partnerships between officers and citizens. This geographic distribution of resources also reduces police response time. Uniformed patrol officers also staff VPD's Traffic Safety Unit, which has



primary responsibility for enforcing state and local traffic regulations. Since an initial federal grant in 1996, VPD has also had officers who are cross-trained as bicycle patrol officers, and City and private support have sustained this function.

Victoria has benefitted from 911 service since 1975, and VPD oversees this function through its 911 Communications division. The division coordinates emergency response for VPD and for the City of Victoria, plus for a larger service area that extends into Victoria County for VFD dispatching duties and includes approximately 90,000 city and non-city residents. The 911 Communications division also answers calls for the Victoria County Sheriff's Office but directly transfers such calls to the Sheriff's Office and does not perform dispatching duties. Emergency operations, when activated, are housed at 205 North Bridge Street, Suite B101 (County Annex).

In its 2014 annual report, VPD reported these statistics:

- Response to 95,587 calls for service.
- Average response time of 5.22 minutes to priority one emergency calls.
- In the most serious category of Class I crimes (murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft), the total number of incidents has decreased from a recent peak of 4,622 in 2009 to 2,697 in 2014 (42 percent decline).
- Likewise, the incidence of Class I crimes per 1,000 residents has decreased from 73.5 per 1,000 in 2009 to 41.4 in 2014, which is even more impressive as this method factors in ongoing population growth in recent years.

Through discussions for the 2015 update of this Comprehensive Plan, VPD leadership reported that a current challenge is the increasing allocation of policing resources to traffic enforcement and collision response. Unlike VFD, VPD responds to calls outside the city only in the most serious cases to lend support, so its primary focus is addressing the symptoms that come with a daytime population that spikes above 100,000 compared to Victoria's own resident population closer to 65,000.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR GROWTH CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Input and discussions for this Comprehensive Plan update, through workshops with City Council and Planning Commission, informal small group sessions, a community-wide public event, interaction with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, and background discussions with City staff, yielded the following items related to the Growth Capacity and Infrastructure focus area of the plan:

- Implications for municipal services and finances of continued growth and development in unincorporated areas around the city.
- Opportunities to absorb some share of projected growth within existing developed areas.
- Effective capital projects planning to balance the needs of newly-developing areas with older areas of the city.
- Continued support for excellent public safety services, along with various "quality of life" services that City government provides.
- The imperative to ensure a sound long-term water supply for the city.

## **OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES**

Other relevant documents related to Growth Capacity and Infrastructure include:

- 2007 Land Development Study
- Victoria 2025 Comprehensive Plan
- Master Wastewater Plan
- Master Water Plan
- Summary Report for the Development of a Regional Plan for Aquifer Storage and Recovery and Off Channel Storage in the Golden Crescent Region of Texas
- Storm Drainage Master Plan
- Police Department Annual Reports
- Fire Department Annual Reports
- Fire Suppression Rating Study: Sustaining the City of Victoria's ISO Public Protection Classification
- Previous annexation service plans

Pertinent websites include:

- City of Victoria Public Works Department
- City of Victoria Development Services Department
- City of Victoria Fire Department
- City of Victoria Police Department
- City of Victoria Code of Ordinances

# Existing City

## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

By many measures, Victoria has long been an economically successful community. Another recent validation was when Victoria jumped from the 16th to third highest ranked city on the Milken Institute’s annual assessment of the best-performing small cities in the nation. Victoria placed ahead of Midland (sixth) and Bryan-College Station (eighth) among the three Texas entries in the Top 10 for 2014. As the Institute’s 2014 report states:

RANK ACCORDING TO 2014 INDEX		
Metropolitan statistical area (MSA)	2014 rank	2013 rank
Fargo, ND-MN	1	3
Columbus, IN	2	2
Victoria, TX	3	16
Bismarck, ND	4	4
Iowa City, IA	5	15
Midland, TX	6	5
Morgantown, WV	7	9
College Station-Bryan, TX	8	38
Greenville, NC	9	13
Auburn-Opelika, AL	10	37

Source: Milken Institute

### MAJOR COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN RECENT YEARS

Victoria leaders and residents mentioned these items relevant to economic opportunity:

- ▶ VEDC’s Victoria Partnership (weekly morning “coffee” meetings)
- ▶ Industrial park development (and securing Caterpillar)
- ▶ Growth of UH-V, hotels, retail, Port of Victoria

*[Continued on next page]*

## EXISTING CITY

The Best-Performing Cities index was designed to measure objectively which U.S. metropolitan areas are promoting economic vitality based on job creation and retention, the quality of new jobs, and other criteria. The index shows where employment is stable and expanding, wages and salaries are increasing, and economies and businesses are thriving.

Relative concentration of technology-related businesses and investment in “knowledge-based” aspects of the economy were other key rating factors. The Milken Institute emphasizes the critical importance of employment growth to community vitality, along with growth in wages and salaries as an indicator of quality jobs. The Index also focuses on outcomes versus local “inputs” such as business costs, cost of living, and “quality of life” measures (e.g., crime, commute time, etc.).

According to the 2014 report, the context for Victoria’s rating included:

### Assets

- Its location on the Eagle Ford Shale and proximity to the Gulf Coast provide ample opportunities for investment.
- Manufacturing of petrochemicals is a key driver of growth.

### Liabilities

- Decrease in oil prices would hurt energy-related industries in the region.

Additionally, the following specifics were cited as reasons for Victoria’s impressive ratings jump in 2014:

- Strong five-year job growth and associated wage growth, especially in industries related to mining and extraction (500+ jobs generated during 2008-13, with additional activity stimulated in heavy and civil engineering construction and among specialty trade contractors).
- Mining activity stemming from the Eagle Ford Shale and stable manufacturing of petrochemicals have been key drivers.

## MAJOR COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN RECENT YEARS

- Victoria College Emerging Technology Complex
  - Vibrant downtown
  - Extent of small business ownership
  - More young professionals living/working here
- Activity stemming from the Port of Victoria is estimated to have created a \$10 billion economic impact including the construction of new docks and rail expansion.
  - Manufacturing related to petrochemicals, especially plastics and fabric, has also been a key contributor to regional growth, which has spurred further significant capital investments that create near-term construction jobs and long-term operations jobs.



## KEY INDICATOR DATA

### EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

As of late summer 2015, Victoria County had a total labor force of 46,671 individuals. Of these, nearly 96 percent (44,784 persons) were employed, resulting in a county-wide unemployment rate of approximately four percent (i.e., 1,887 individuals actively seeking

work, whether in a short-term transition between jobs or unable to secure a job).

Displayed in **Figure 9, Household Income Comparison**, is the median household income level in Victoria relative to four other southeast Texas cities. Victoria’s median in the mid \$50,000s range is in the middle of the comparison, ahead of Beaumont and Rosenberg but lower than Lake Jackson with its strong economic position amid the Brazosport industrial/port region, and well below the affluent Houston suburb of Sugar Land. Through the public discussions for the 2015 update of this Comprehensive Plan, many Victoria residents noted that Sugar Land and/or Rosenberg are periodic destinations for out-of-town shopping given their proximity northeast of Victoria along US 59.

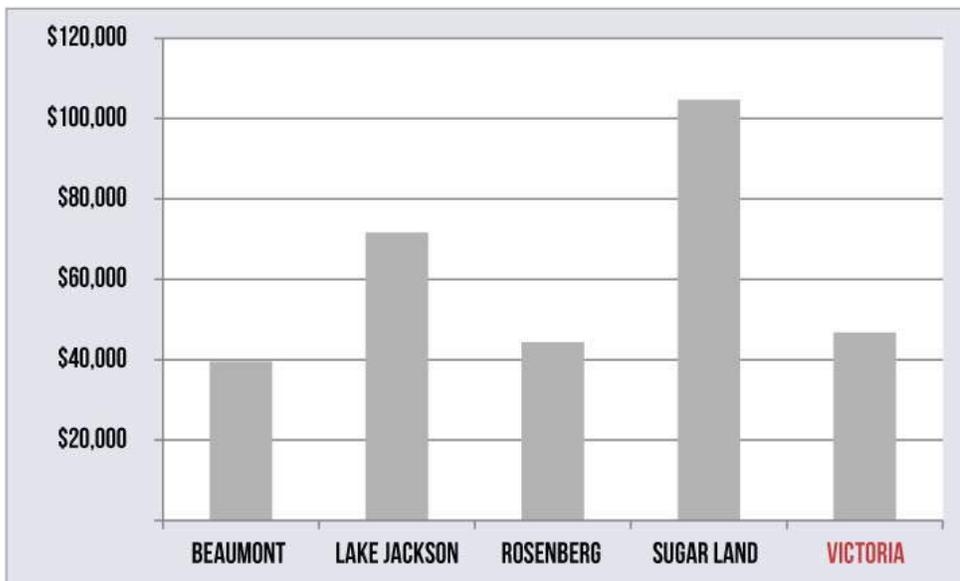
**RETAIL SALES**

Victoria serves as a shopping destination for residents of many smaller area communities and rural and unincorporated areas beyond Victoria County given the level of retail and services a city of Victoria’s size has to offer. Annual data compiled by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts showed that total sales tax receipts in the City of Victoria had increased by 45 percent in 2015 (\$27.4 million) relative to 2009 (\$18.8 million).

Through a recent Retail Market Analysis effort, consultant Retail Coach delineated a primary retail trade area for Victoria spanning from Goliad to Edna and from Cuero to Port Lavaca. It was estimated that this area had nearly 132,700 residents in 2015 and would reach almost 140,000 by 2020. Victoria also draws additional retail patronage from an even broader “secondary” area that stretches to El Campo, Refugio, and Hallettsville. This larger boundary encompassed an estimated 207,000+ persons in 2015 and is projected to surpass 217,500 by 2020.

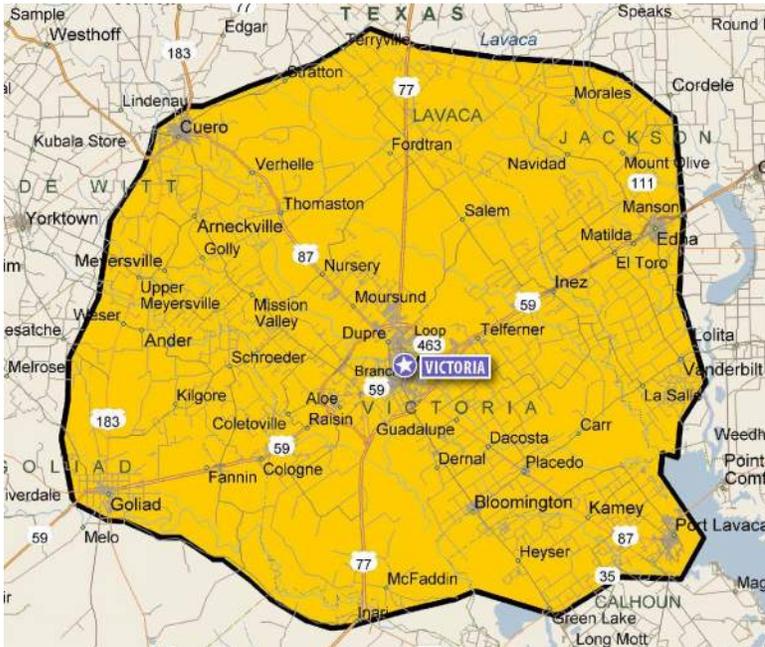
Retail Coach also assesses to what extent Victoria’s retail trade areas – and specific retail sectors in Victoria – are attracting more sales than expected (“surplus”) or losing some amount of projected sales due to area residents taking some of their spending to other market areas (“leakage” to larger and easily accessible Texas metropolitan areas including Houston, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi). Retail Coach published updated numbers in March 2015 indicating that Victoria’s primary retail trade area could have potential annual sales of \$2.05 billion dollars. However, the actual sales total was estimated at approximately \$1.7 billion, meaning that the Victoria area would experience leakage of \$354.1 million in retail spending to other market areas.

**FIGURE 9, HOUSEHOLD INCOME COMPARISON**



SOURCE: Marsh Darcy Partners

# EXISTING CITY



subsector is limited. It was projected that in Victoria, as elsewhere, some sectors would perform better than estimated while other sectors would not be able to generate even half of their potential sales due to significant leakage. Compiled in **Table 4, Retail Sectors with Greatest Sales Surplus or Leakage**, are particular sectors that factor into the overall retail leakage scenario for Victoria. The analysis highlights both strengths and weaknesses of the area's retail market, in which weaknesses could either be business opportunities or a specific subsector that has limited local viability.

The overall surplus or leakage within broader retail sectors is determined by the performance of their associated subsectors. Some subsectors may not have a strong (or any) local presence, especially if there have been recent store closures or local demand for a particular

## MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Compiled in **Table 5, Major Employers in Victoria Area**, are businesses, public agencies, and local institutions that are key sources of jobs (250 or more each), along with numerous other small- and medium-size employers across the area. The Victoria Economic Development Corporation (VEDC) tracks the top employers in the seven-county Golden Crescent region, comprised of Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, and Victoria counties. Reflected in VEDC's data is the diversity of economic sectors that generate local jobs and investment, from base sectors involved in manufacturing and other industrial activity to important service sectors such as healthcare and education.

**TABLE 4, RETAIL SECTORS WITH GREATEST SALES SURPLUS OR LEAKAGE**

GREATEST SALES SURPLUS	% SURPLUS (\$)
SPORTING GOODS, HOBBY, BOOK, MUSIC	48% (\$18,395,368)
MISCELLANEOUS STORES	26% (\$14,602,985)
GASOLINE STATIONS	10% (\$19,651,585)
MOTOR VEHICLE AND PARTS DEALERS	7% (\$16,333,058)
BUILDING MATERIALS / GARDEN EQUIPMENT	7% (\$25,273,886)
ELECTRONICS AND APPLIANCES	5% (\$1,824,027)
GREATEST SALES LEAKAGE	% Leakage (\$)
NON-STORE RETAILERS	-83% (\$149,716,046)
CLOTHING AND CLOTHING ACCESSORIES	-52% (\$49,384,592)
FOODSERVICE AND DRINKING PLACES	-46% (\$92,030,235)
FURNITURE AND HOME FURNISHINGS	-45% (\$18,029,266)
FOOD AND BEVERAGE	-36% (\$91,448,122)
HEALTH AND PERSONAL CARE	-24% (\$30,237,788)
GENERAL MERCHANDISE	-8% (\$19,300,350)

SOURCE: TheRetailCoach®

## GEOGRAPHY OF VICTORIA'S ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Displayed on **Map 11, Existing Commercial and Industrial Development**, is the pattern and distribution of commercial and

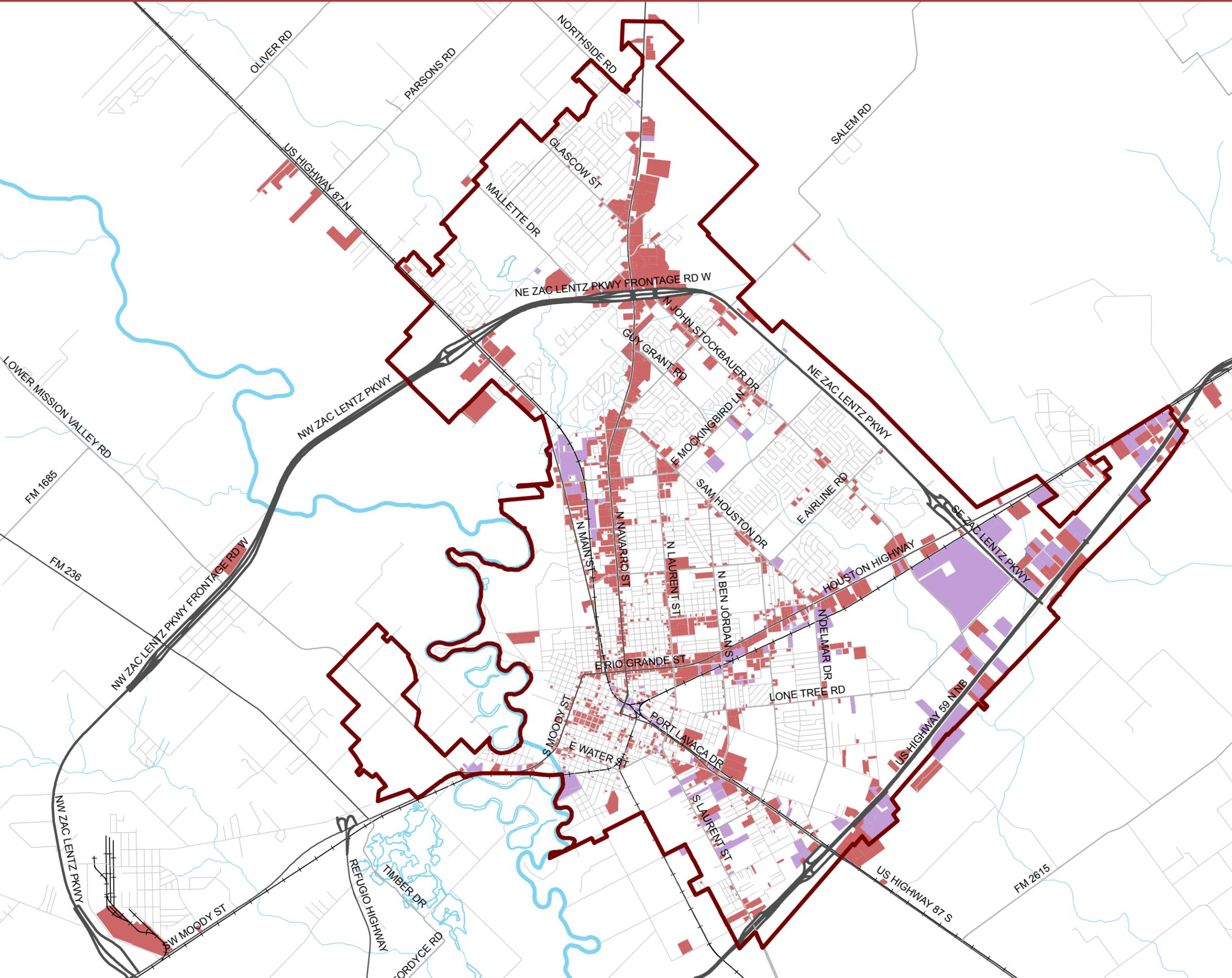
### MAP 11 EXISTING COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

**LEGEND**

-  City Limits
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Freeway
-  Primary Arterials
-  Secondary Arterials
-  Railroad
-  Creek/River/Lake



*Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.*



**TABLE 5, MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN VICTORIA**

EMPLOYER	SECTOR	EMPLOYEES
FORMOSA PLASTICS GROUP	Petrochemical / Plastics	2,595
THE INTEPLAST GROUP	Plastics	2,300
VICTORIA ISD	Public Education	2,163
CITIZENS MEDICAL CENTER	Health Care	986
DETAR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM	Health Care	897
ALCOA	Aluminum / Alumina	706
INVISTA	Petrochemical	700+
CITY OF VICTORIA	Local Government	622
DOW - SEADRIFT OPERATIONS	Petrochemical	579
PIONEER NATURAL RESOURCES	Oil and Gas Production	560
VICTORIA COUNTY	Local Government	550
CATERPILLAR - NAHEX VICTORIA	Heavy Excavators	529
ORION MARINE GROUP	Construction / Dredging	409
KASPAR WIREWORKS	Metalworks / Plating	405
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON - VICTORIA	Higher Education	401
VICTORIA COLLEGE	Higher Education	295
MOUNT VERNON TEXTILES	Textiles	266

SOURCE: Victoria Economic Development Corporation and City of Victoria

industrial development within the Victoria City limits. This pattern reflects typical drivers of investment decisions:

- (1) highway/corridor proximity for accessibility and/or visibility (i.e., retail);
- (2) rail proximity for certain industrial types;
- (3) locations where large tracts are available, including in planned industrial parks;
- (4) residential neighborhood proximity for certain retail and service businesses; and,
- (5) traditional downtown locations for certain retail, service and professional services businesses.

As in many cities, a legacy of older industrial properties and commercial establishments, some on relatively small sites, is visible in and around downtown Victoria and in areas and along corridors north, east and south of downtown. Comparing Map 11 against Map 2, Existing Land Use (in the Land Use and

Development section of this report) shows that residential development occupies many of the “interior” areas amid the city’s network of highways and primary arterial roadways, where much of the commercial and industrial activity is focused.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENTITIES

Victoria has a core group of entities that work hand-in-hand with the City to lead or support economic development efforts. In addition to those highlighted in this section, others include the University of Houston-Victoria, the Victoria Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Victoria Main Street Program, and the Victoria Chamber of Commerce, which supports the local business community through its Building Better Business and Leadership Victoria programs, its networking and special events, and its advocacy efforts.

## **VICTORIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

The Victoria Economic Development Corporation (VEDC) was formed in 1982 and is a private organization which serves the City of Victoria, Victoria County, and the surrounding region. Through contractual agreements, VEDC is designated by the City and County to administer the Texas Enterprise Zone Program, an economic development tool to promote job creation and capital investment in economically distressed areas. The City and County have also assigned VEDC to administer a tax abatement program.

VEDC also has contractual agreements with the City of Victoria's Sales Tax Development Corporation, Victoria County, and the Victoria County Navigation District to provide economic development services. All of these partnerships

strengthen Victoria's competitive position, as does private sector funding that VEDC receives from businesses and individuals committed to supporting Victoria's growth.

VEDC's key objectives are to:

- Recruit new businesses, both international and domestic, to create primary jobs and increase the tax base.
- Retain and expand existing business by assisting them to increase profitability through exports, strategic alliances, new project development, and workforce development improvements.

Services provided by the VEDC to companies moving within or relocating to Victoria include:

- Identifying client needs and coordinating development efforts (i.e., sites, buildings, infrastructure, skilled workforce, utilities).

## **VICTORIA COLLEGE EMERGING TECHNOLOGY COMPLEX**

Victoria College's state-of-the-art Emerging Technology Complex officially opened to the public in June 2015. The complex is comprised of a three-story conference and education center and a two-story industrial training center. Through a 2012 bond election, area voters overwhelmingly approved a \$22 million general obligation bond to support master planning for and construction of the complex. Along with the bond, public and private donations played a large role in equipping the facility with the most up-to-date technology and amenities. The new complex will support Victoria College's Industrial Maintenance Mechanic Program, Commercial Truck Driving Program, and many other workforce and continuing education programs. The facility includes classrooms, meeting spaces, and a meeting hall and can accommodate banquet, conference, and auditorium-style seating for audiences of varying sizes.

SOURCE: [www.victoriacollege.edu](http://www.victoriacollege.edu)



- Working with clients as a liaison to the State of Texas, City of Victoria, Victoria County, and the Victoria Navigation District to obtain fast-track permitting, and ensuring projects are completed on time and successfully.

### VICTORIA COLLEGE

Victoria College has been a part of the region since 1925, offering early college education, job-specific training, and classes for personal enrichment at an affordable rate. Working closely with area industries and businesses, Victoria College provides vital programs for employers to train their employees for specific job skills. Among the education options the College offers, with scholarships available in many cases:

- Degrees and certificates;
- Transfer programs;
- Workforce training; and
- Continuing professional education.

Victoria College is an important economic development entity through its support for employer needs and by enabling workers to gain and reinforce needed skills without traveling far from work or home.

### GOLDEN CRESCENT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC) was designated as an Economic Development District in 1995, which affords Commission members an edge in utilizing Federal and State programs. The Commission’s focus is to assist its seven designated counties (Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, and Victoria) and their respective cities and communities in reaching and exceeding their economic goals through planning, development, and tourism. Commission efforts are coordinated with numerous area organizations, businesses, and professionals.

The GCRPC applies annually for funding through a grant offered by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration. The grant is matched with Commission funds to cover the budget of the GCRPC Economic Development Department

and contribute to the budgets of other supporting departments. The Economic Development District began through the Commission’s participation in an Overall Economic Development Program which produced a resource currently referred to as a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. This is a detailed document that provides economic information, statistics, and growth plans for the region. The District also supports the Regional Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Committee, a group appointed by the GCRPC Board of Directors that is dedicated to raising awareness and increasing the vitality of tourism for the Golden Crescent Region.

## BENEFITS OF GROWTH IN HOSPITALITY SECTOR

The Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) benefits Victoria by contributing to tourism-oriented economic development efforts for the area. State law governs local administration of HOT funds, including a two-part test in Chapter 351 of the Tax Code that must be met: (1) the funds must directly enhance and promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry; and (2) the use of HOT funds is limited to:

- Convention centers and visitor information centers;
- Registration of convention delegates;
- Advertising, solicitations, and promotions;
- Promotion of the arts;
- Historic restoration and preservation;
- Sporting event expenses;



## EXISTING CITY

- Directional signs; and
- Transportation of tourists.

Currently, the State of Texas imposes a six percent tax on hotels and motels while the City of Victoria applies a seven percent tax for those operating within the City limits, resulting in a total room occupancy tax rate of 13 percent within the city. On the expenditure side, state law requires that at least one-seventh of HOT funds must go toward advertising and marketing, and HOT funds allocated to promotion of the arts

may not exceed 15 percent of the total annual revenue.

The City budgets annually for projected HOT revenue and planned expenditures, making adjustments during the year as the actual revenue picture becomes clearer. The proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 surpassed the \$2 million mark at approximately \$2.36 million. The proposed allocation of funds to local programs and other beneficiaries for the fiscal year is compiled in **Table 6, HOT Funds Allocation for 2015-2016**.

**TABLE 6, HOT FUNDS ALLOCATION FOR 2015-2016**

PROGRAM OR OTHER RECIPIENT	FY15-16 ADOPTED BUDGET
CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU BUDGET	\$905,000
VICTORIA REGIONAL MUSEUM ASSOCIATION	\$40,000
VICTORIA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER – FILM FESTIVAL	\$35,000
THEATRE VICTORIA	\$50,000
VICTORIA SYMPHONY	\$50,000
VICTORIA BACH FESTIVAL	\$50,000
QUILT GUILD OF VICTORIA	\$3,900
VICTORIA BALLET THEATRE	\$50,000
VICTORIA ART LEAGUE, INC.	\$15,000
VICTORIA FINE ARTS ASSOCIATION	\$10,000
VICTORIA PRESERVATION, INC.	\$8,000
CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY MUSEUM	\$20,000
MAIN STREET PROGRAM	\$80,000
MUSEUM OF THE COASTAL BEND	\$10,000
LEO J. WELDER CENTER	\$25,000
MINORITY BUSINESS COUNCIL	\$15,000
COMICCON	\$18,100
PRESERVATION PROGRAM	\$30,000
TOURNAMENTS	\$75,000
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$22,000
PERSONNEL SERVICES	\$34,422
COMMUNITY CENTER – OPERATIONS	\$330,000
COMMUNITY CENTER – BUILDING	\$150,000
CAPITAL OUTLAY OTHER STRUCTURE	\$330,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,356,422</b>

SOURCE: City of Victoria Annual Budget Fiscal Year 2015-2016

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Input and discussions for this Comprehensive Plan update, through workshops with City Council and Planning Commission, informal small group sessions, a community-wide public event, interaction with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, and background discussions with City staff, yielded the following items related to the Economic Opportunity focus area of the plan:

- Risk of over-dependence on energy-related sectors of the economy in the local business and employer mix.
- The importance of maintaining Victoria's regional trade center role, especially pertaining to the City's sales tax and hotel occupancy tax revenue streams.
- Workforce concerns involving the quantity of available labor and quality in terms of education, training, and skills.
- Preparedness to employ available economic development and financing tools where appropriate.
- The need for a holistic view of economic development that emphasizes "quality of place" along with employment and investment opportunities (e.g., infrastructure and public services, mobility, housing, recreation and amenities, etc.).

### OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES

Other relevant documents related to Economic Opportunity include:

- Retail Market Analysis Report (2014) and ongoing reports/profiles by The RetailCoach
- A Detailed Analysis of Future Economic Activity in Victoria, Texas and the Surrounding Area:
- An Analysis with Considerations of the Implications for Future Fiscal Policy (The Perryman Group)
- 2014 Best-Performing Cities (Milken Institute)
- Victoria Community Center Market Analysis and Feasibility Study

Pertinent websites include:

- Victoria Economic Development Corporation
- Victoria Chamber of Commerce
- City of Victoria Development Services Department
- City of Victoria Sales Tax Development Corporation
- Retail:360 | Victoria, TX (Community Retail Dashboard maintained by The RetailCoach)
- Victoria Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Victoria Main Street Program
- Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (Regional Tourism and Economic Development)
- Victoria College (workforce/continuing professional education, Emerging Technology Complex)
- University of Houston-Victoria
- Victoria ISD
- Port of Victoria
- Alliance for I-69 Texas

**EXISTING  
CITY**



# Existing City

## RECREATION AND AMENITIES

Early and ongoing discussions for this updated Comprehensive Plan revealed clear pride in and enthusiasm for their hometown of Victoria among officials and residents. While there are always “housekeeping” items to attend to, people across all walks of life consistently pointed to Victoria’s recreational, historical, and cultural assets – current and potential – as features they value and wish for more visitors to enjoy as well.

### EXISTING PARK SYSTEM

The City of Victoria has 16 parks and 887.96 acres of parkland. Riverside Park is the flagship of the system and, at 500+ acres, accounts for nearly two-thirds of the City’s total parkland inventory. The park includes 4.5 miles of the eastern bank of the Guadalupe River and is close to downtown Victoria and nearby historic neighborhoods. Given its size and location, Riverside Park has varied amenities for residents and visitors alike. More recent and notable additions to the City’s park system include:

- A Youth Sports Complex, which Victoria voters endorsed in 2007 by approving the first City bond issue for parks in 30 years. The Complex offers 12 youth ball fields for baseball and softball.
- A two-mile trail along the Lone Tree Creek corridor, which was completed in 2008 and designed for runners/walkers and bike enthusiasts.
- The development of Lone Tree Creek Park in 2013, which includes a popular 2,500 square foot splash pad, numerous practice ball fields, and restrooms.

### MAJOR COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN RECENT YEARS

Victoria leaders and residents mentioned these items relevant to recreation and amenities:

- Riverside Park improvements
- New Guadalupe River kayaking opportunity
- Hike/bike trail development
- Youth Sports Complex
- Skate park

*[Continued on next page]*

## PARK TYPES

Four key park classifications are widely used for purposes of community park system planning: (1) Neighborhood, (2) Community, (3) Regional, and (4) Special Use Parks. These four classifications and others are used within the City's Parks 2025 Master Plan, and they are generally represented within the City of Victoria park inventory. The general descriptions below for each classification provide a sense of how the park types fulfill particular functions and needs and where they differ in size or other characteristics; however, not all the listed amenities and criteria apply to the actual parks in Victoria.

**Neighborhood Parks** are the most prominent type of park in Victoria, providing both active and passive recreational opportunities. Facilities typically include playgrounds, picnic areas, open space, and walking trails. Neighborhood parks generally meet these criteria:

- Service area of up to ½ mile
- 5 to 10 acres
- Serve 2,000 to 10,000 residents



**Community Parks** are the next level of parks provided. These parks typically have more facilities available to the public, including tennis courts, pavilions, sports fields, swimming pools/splash pads, and open space. Community parks generally meet these criteria:

- Service area of up to two miles
- 30 to 150 acres
- Serve between 10,000 and 50,000 residents

**Regional Parks** serve a large area of the city and provide a wide array of amenities which can be utilized by individuals as well as sport

## MAJOR COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN RECENT YEARS

- Splash pad at Lone Tree Creek Park
- Challenged/special needs athletic field
- Bootfest
- Museums and expanded arts/cultural activities
- Victoria Independent School District Fine Arts Center
- More community events

groups and large events. Facility possibilities for regional parks are endless, but most common are basketball courts, hike and bike trails, recreation center, golf course, swimming pool, and camp grounds. Regional parks generally meet these criteria:

- Service area of up to 10 miles
- 200 to 1,000 acres
- Serves the entire urban area (and often draw visitors/tourists depending on the level of amenities and events)

**Special Use Parks** can have a broad range of facilities, but they typically focus on one or two specific uses due to their limited scope. Potential primary uses in special use parks include soccer complexes, sports stadiums, community centers, memorials, and gardens. For special use parks:

- Service area varies
- Size (acres) is determined by the primary use
- Service level depends on the primary use



**TABLE 7, EXISTING CITY PARKS**

NAME	ACRES	TYPE	ASSETS
<b>BOULEVARD PARK</b>	1.40	Neighborhood	Half basketball court, playground, signage
<b>BROWNSON PARK</b>	0.90	Neighborhood	Basketball court, playground, 3 picnic units with grills, open space
<b>COMMUNITY CENTER PARK</b>	73.17	Community	Covered basketball pavilion, playground, 2 soccer fields, 4 lighted tennis courts with pro shop, 7 covered picnic tables with grills, 12 lighted ballfields and signage
<b>DE LEON PARK</b>	1.77	Special Use	Bandstand, 3 monuments, 16 decorative lights, 39 benches, state and national historic site
<b>ETHEL LEE TRACY PARK</b>	30.50	Community <i>(currently indicated as Neighborhood on Map 12)</i>	Amphitheater, pavilion with restroom, sand volleyball court, playground, basketball court, 2 tennis courts, horseshoe pits, 9 hole disc golf course
<b>GREENBELT PARK</b>	12.87	Neighborhood	Open space, lighting, signage
<b>HOPKINS PARK</b>	11.58	Neighborhood	Basketball court, playground, pavilion, benches, restroom, signage
<b>LONE TREE CREEK PARK</b>	127.99	Community	Water playground, shade structure, restroom, practice ball fields, natural area and parking
<b>MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PARK</b>	1.72	Neighborhood	Basketball court, playground, pavilion, benches, signage
<b>MEADOWLANE PARK</b>	1.20	Neighborhood	Playground, multi-use court, benches, 5 picnic units with grills
<b>MEMORIAL (SQUARE) PARK</b>	1.20	Special Use	5 monuments, signage
<b>PINE STREET COMMUNITY PARK</b>	1.80	Neighborhood	Basketball court, 5 picnic tables, playground, 2 backstops, signage
<b>QUEEN CITY PARK</b>	2.11	Neighborhood	Basketball court, pavilion, signage
<b>RIVERSIDE PARK</b>	562.00	Regional	Administration building, rose garden, 27-hole golf course, Challenged Athletes Complex, baseball stadium, 2 senior league fields, duck pond, picnic units with grills, 2 playgrounds, boat ramp, half basketball court, 1.5-mile walking trail, basketball court, 3 restrooms, 3 pavilions, 18 RV spaces, paddling access trail, 2 sand volleyball courts, 2 gazebos, signage, zoo, disc golf course
<b>TED B. REED PARK</b>	10.00	Neighborhood	Pavilion with restroom, 2 handball courts, playground, ¼-mile walking trail, basketball court, baseball backstop, signage
<b>WILL ROGERS PARK</b>	1.90	Neighborhood	Basketball court, playground, open space, signage
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>842.11</b>		

SOURCE: City of Victoria Parks and Recreation Department; City of Victoria Parks 2025 Master Plan

**PARK INVENTORY**

Compiled in **Table 7, Existing City Parks**, are details on the 16 existing City parks in Victoria, including their acreage and type, as well as the available public amenities at each. Park pavilions, where present at each park, and the splash pad at Lone Tree Creek Park are available to rent on an hourly basis from the Parks and Recreation Department. The total of 842.11 acres in this table reflects developed parkland relative to the City’s total parkland inventory of 887.96 acres cited above. When compared to

the mid-2013 population estimate of 65,098 City residents, the current quantity of parkland is 13.64 acres for each 1,000 persons.

Displayed on **Map 12, Existing City Parks/ Trails and Service Areas**, are the City’s current park and trail locations and the respective service areas as discussed above under Park Types. While there is no common standard for hike and bike trails, a ½-mile buffer was also placed around the Lone Tree Creek Trail to highlight its accessibility to numerous residents and neighborhoods – and others who are more than

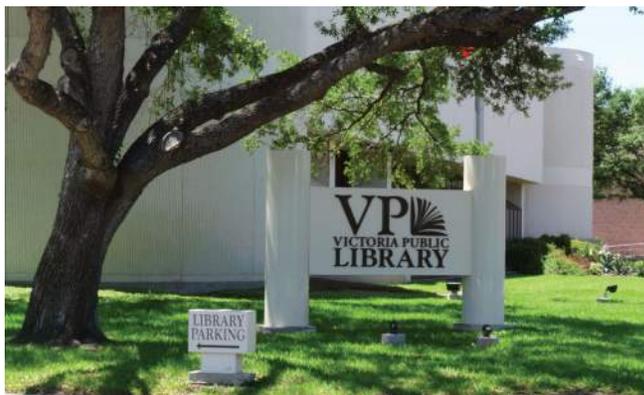
willing to travel a longer distance by car, bike, or on foot to enjoy this community amenity. The map visually underscores the lack of systematic parkland acquisition and the development of Neighborhood and Community level parks in some areas as Victoria grew northward in past decades. Riverside Park made up for this deficiency, to some extent, as a Regional Park relatively close to these underserved areas. However, the relative lack of public parks north of Loop 463 – in Victoria’s north and northwest prime growth areas – is most evident on this map.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

### **VICTORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY**

The Victoria Public Library is located in downtown Victoria at 302 N. Main Street, between E. Commercial Street and E. Goodwin Avenue. The library is a joint service of the City and Victoria County as the County owns the building with City of Victoria staff running the day-to-day operations. The City funds the staffing and other service costs for the benefit of all Victoria County citizens regardless of whether they live inside the city.

- ▶ The library is open 61 hours per week with 4,400 visitors in an average week.
- ▶ 365,000 items were checked out during fiscal year 2014-15.
- ▶ Services offered include children’s programming; access to popular reading materials; access to computers, printers, and wifi; computer and technology classes; workforce development and training; and community gathering and meeting space.



The library utilizes a strategic planning process to guide its operations. It is currently in the midst of a 2011-2016 strategic plan and presents an annual scorecard assessing attainment of goals. The five main goals for the library are: Early Literacy; Information Fluency; Cultural Awareness; Lifelong Learning; and Reading, Listening and Viewing for Pleasure.

Issues that require planning attention are how to meet the information needs of an expanding community through a possible satellite or mobile services and continued enhancements to the Main Street facility.

### **VICTORIA COMMUNITY CENTER**

The Community Center, located at 2905 E. North Street to the east of downtown, is a community amenity available for use by all residents, businesses, and organizations. This includes several areas, itemized below, which can be reserved wholly or partially at a daily rate, along with related rental furnishings and supplies plus marquee advertising. Therefore, the Center operates as a largely self-supporting “enterprise” function of the City as it does not receive transfers from the general fund budget – and is among the many beneficiaries of funds distributed from the City’s Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) revenues. The facilities and spaces available at the Community Center include:

- ▶ Dome (12,305 square feet)
- ▶ Annex with dividable spaces (7,279 square feet total)
- ▶ Arena (46,641 square feet)
- ▶ Exhibit grounds
- ▶ Concession stand (686 square feet)
- ▶ Conference room
- ▶ Kitchen

Among its current issues that will require planning attention, the Community Center sometimes has large events (e.g., Victoria Livestock Show) and/or concurrent users who must contend with limited space availability. Also, parking is at or near capacity when all venues are booked and active simultaneously, including when the nearby Youth Sports Complex has major tournament activity.

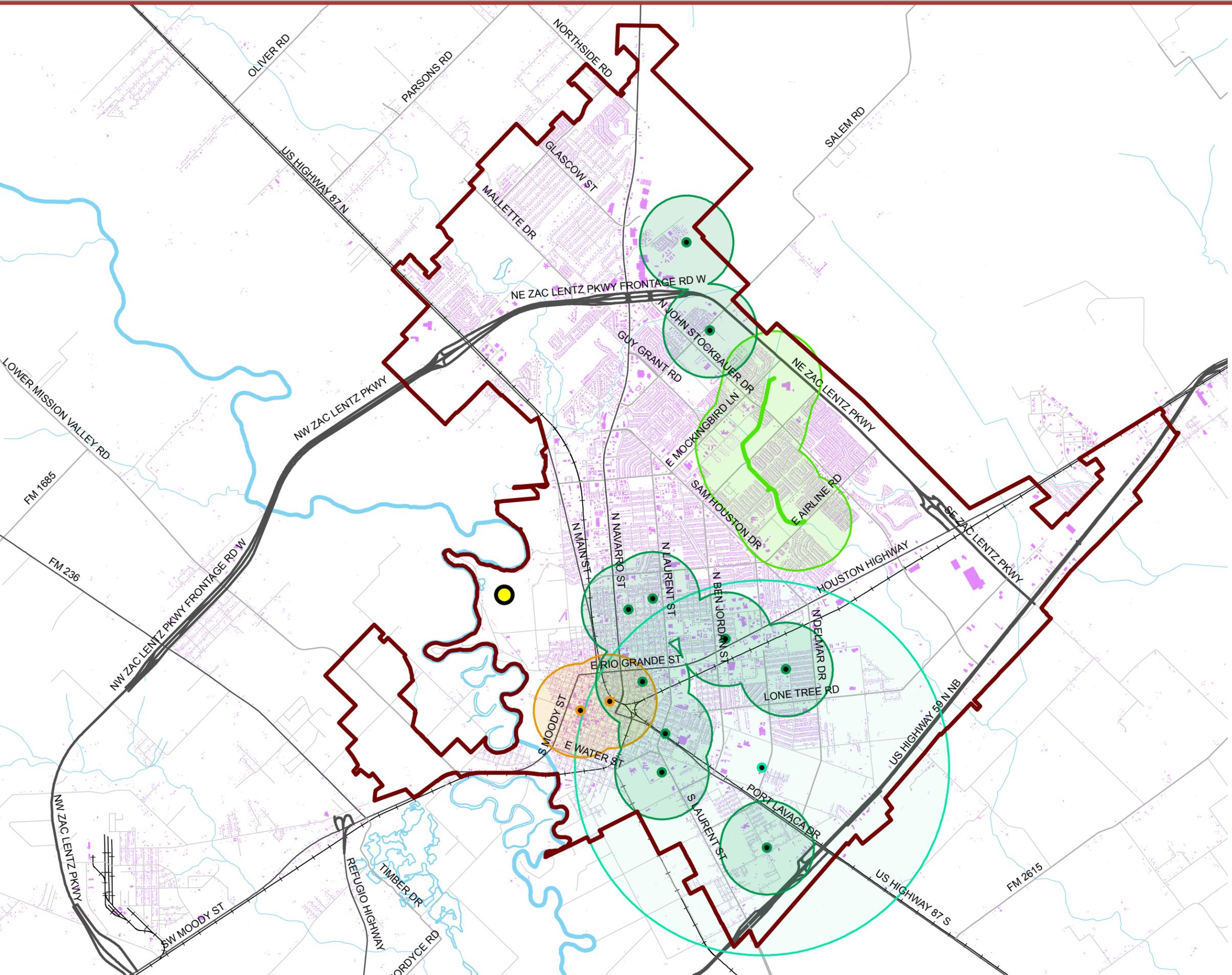
**MAP 12  
EXISTING CITY PARKS/  
TRAILS AND SERVICE AREAS**

**LEGEND**

-  City Limits
-  Regional Park
-  Community Park and 2 Mile Buffer
-  Special Use Park and 1/2 Mile Buffer
-  Neighborhood Park and 1/2 Mile Buffer
-  Hike and Bike Trail and 1/2 Mile Buffer
-  Buildings
-  Freeway
-  Primary Arterials
-  Secondary Arterials
-  Railroad
-  Creek/River/Lake



*Disclaimer: This map is intended for general informational purposes only and does not represent a legal record. No warranty is made by the City of Victoria regarding specific accuracy or completeness, and the data may be subject to revision at any time without notification.*



More recent facility improvements have focused on needed cosmetic and functional upgrades but no significant space additions, which would also likely require added parking capacity.

## VICTORIA TOURISM

More aggressive tourism promotion, especially focused on Victoria's heritage and historic downtown and neighborhoods, was on the mind of some elected officials and other advocates at the time of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update.

The Victoria region is home to a strong inventory of quality lodging properties, unique attractions, and cultural experiences. Attractions are diverse and, in particular, appeal to historical, recreational, and food tourism. Major attractions like the Texas Zoo, the Museum of the Coastal Bend, and the Presidio La Bahia in nearby Goliad, provide the community with draws for visitation on a regular basis. Hunting, fishing, birding, and other natural resources at destinations like Coletto Creek Reservoir and Park, just west of Victoria along US 59, bring in niche travelers. Cultural attractions like the area's diverse styles of barbecue and arts events like the Bach Festival give Victoria a potential national draw.

As of 2014, according to the federal government, hospitality in Victoria was a \$137 million industry annually and supported 4,400 jobs. Lodging

properties in Victoria range from select-service hotels to blue-collar motels. In 2015 Victoria had 1,934 hotel and motel rooms. A dozen hotels were built within the last five years and provide the city with established-brand lodging with modern conveniences. Several bed and breakfasts and extended stay homes are also part of the lodging inventory, giving Victoria unique and diverse lodging opportunities.

Attractions in the Victoria destination marketing area represent a true Texas tourism experience both locally and regionally. Some of the most prominent existing attractions include:

### Historical Tourism

- Museum of the Coastal Bend
- Presidio Nuestra Señora de Loreto de la Bahía in Goliad
- Mission Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga in Goliad
- Old Victoria Driving Tour

### Culinary Tourism



**Outdoor Recreation**

*[Including hunting, fishing, birding, kayaking, etc.]*

- ▶ Texas Zoo
- ▶ Coleto Creek Reservoir and Park
- ▶ Lake Texana
- ▶ Guadalupe River
- ▶ Port Lavaca coastal area
- ▶ Powderhorn Ranch preserve near Port O'Connor



**Arts Based Tourism**

- ▶ Bach Festival
- ▶ Other Performing Arts including the Victoria Theatre, Symphony and Ballet organizations
- ▶ Bootfest
- ▶ Many restaurants and clubs featuring live music and other entertainment
- ▶ Nave Museum and Art League

**Sports Tourism**

- ▶ Softball and baseball youth tournaments
- ▶ Collegiate and professional golf tournaments
- ▶ Disc golf tournaments



**Other Venues**

- ▶ Trampoline Park
- ▶ Laser Tag
- ▶ Victoria Go Karting and Putt Putt Golf (pending)



**DESTINATIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

When members of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) were asked to identify destinations and activities that Victoria's own residents, plus visitors, can enjoy, they listed:

- ▶ Riverside Park
- ▶ Texas Zoo
- ▶ Victoria Mall
- ▶ Arts and culture, including local museums
- ▶ Downtown Victoria
- ▶ Special events
- ▶ Local golf courses
- ▶ Recreational activities and sports leagues
- ▶ Indoor entertainment (movies, bowling, bingo, laser tag)
- ▶ Local restaurants and bars

When asked to cite factors that may draw external visitors, in particular, they first talked about a broader context for local tourism (Coastal Bend, Corpus Christi, San Antonio, Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, other nearby coastal destinations and "eco-tourism" sites, Goliad and other historical draws, etc.). Along with the items listed above, they highlighted Victoria's historic homes/neighborhoods (i.e., driving/bus tours) and sports tournaments as having the greatest potential to pull in outside visitors and spending.

**EXPLORE  
VICTORIA-TX**

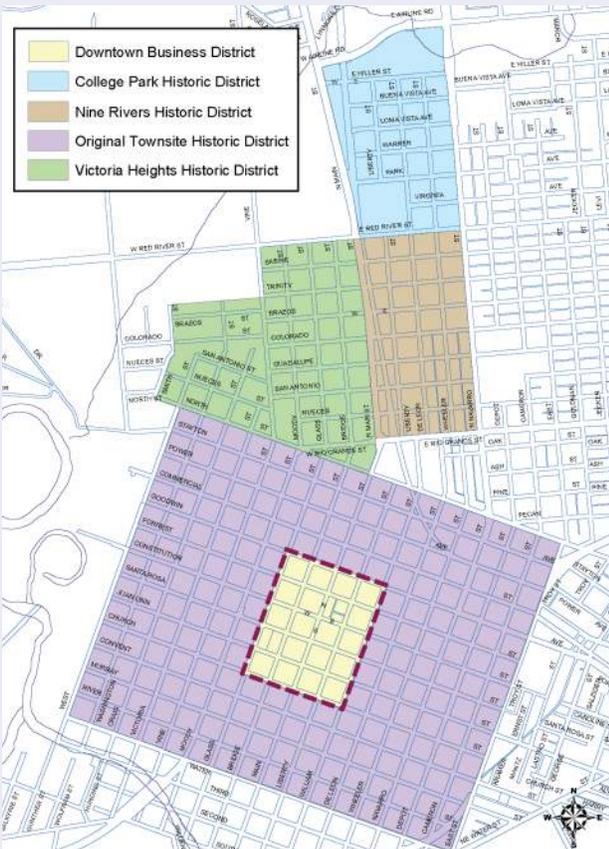
Explore Victoria, the City's Convention and Visitors Bureau, exists to increase visitor spending in Victoria. Current promotions concentrate on local and regional itineraries including culinary tourism, history tourism, and sports tourism opportunities. The success of the Coastal Texas Barbecue Trail to position Victoria on the first page of Google for many barbecue related searches, is an example of effectively

marketing a niche in which Victoria already excels. Sports tourism is booming in Victoria with the Youth Sports Complex and other fields reaching capacity and scheduled events and tournaments growing in attendance. Historical tourism within the city proper is enhanced by the Old Victoria Driving Tour, a popular self-guided tour of the oldest architecture in downtown Victoria.

**VICTORIA'S HERITAGE RESOURCES**

Victoria is home to more than 100 historic structures that are designated on either the National Register of Historic Places or as a Registered Texas Historic Landmark, or both.

**FIGURE 10, HISTORIC DISTRICTS WITHIN VICTORIA**



SOURCE: City of Victoria Development Services Department

The abundance of historic structures has led to various programs, special initiatives, and volunteer efforts which further promote historic preservation and heritage across Victoria County and in Victoria proper. Key agencies and organizations involved in historic preservation and promoting Victoria's heritage include:

- City of Victoria Development Services
- Victoria Main Street Program
- Victoria Preservation, Inc.
- Victoria Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Victoria County Historical Commission
- Victoria Regional History Center
- Museum of the Coastal Bend

The City of Victoria has a Preservation Incentive Matching Grant Program which is intended to protect, enhance, and preserve the historic resources and landmarks within the outlined historic boundaries shown in **Figure 10, Historic Districts Within Victoria**. The Victoria County Historical Commission has a marker program which can provide a designation to qualifying historic structures throughout the county. These markers are awarded to properties meeting the program's required elements.



## **TOURISM CHALLENGES**

At the time of this Comprehensive Plan update, tourism in Victoria, especially the hotel sector, was experiencing severe challenges in the form of downward pressure on hotel rates and occupancy. Historically, Victoria's travel market, like many of its industries, has been closely aligned with the oil and petrochemical industries. But with expansion of the University of Houston-Victoria and the arrival of the Caterpillar plant, hotel rooms were scarce and expensive in Victoria as recently as early 2015. Add to that the Eagle Ford Shale oil boom, and when travelers could find an available hotel room, it was more expensive to spend the night in Victoria than in Houston, Austin and San Antonio. New hotels came online to accommodate the increased business travel with some completing construction just as the Eagle Ford Shale play abruptly ended. With fluctuations in oil prices came a drop in the business travel generated by the local service companies and other business sectors. No longer are hotel rates in Victoria exceeding those in Texas' major cities, but the

challenge ahead is to keep the hotel sector busy and profitable.

Another challenge to the local tourism industry is that few potential visitors in the nearby markets have a clear image of Victoria or what it has to offer. This reality, combined with the lack of a reason to visit, means travelers are choosing other destinations over Victoria.

In 2013, Explore Victoria established a Victoria Tourism Partnership involving representatives from the local hotel sector, attractions, performing arts groups, and other organizations that have a stake in the Victoria travel industry. In 2015, partnership meetings and input from many travel partners culminated in a five-year strategic plan to focus on the community's existing strengths. Victoria's strong attractions together with creative itineraries – and combined with the current weakness in business travel to the area – create a real opportunity for local tourism in the form of simple, relatively inexpensive travel for residents in the nearby large cities of Houston, Austin, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi.

## **USING TOURISM REVENUES TO EXPAND SPORTS TOURISM**

Partly to meet the expectations of the local hotel sector, Explore Victoria initiated the effort in 2013 to seek Texas Legislative approval to allow Victoria to spend HOT funds to improve our youth sports facilities to make them "tournament ready." With passage of that legislation and once the facilities were improved, youth baseball and softball tournaments started occupying hotel rooms in the second half of 2015. In 2015 Explore Victoria partnered with the Victoria Parks and Recreation Department to again seek Texas Legislative support to spend HOT funds on a future sports complex/special events center. With help from City Council and State elected officials, this legislation also passed. This future venue will be the subject of much research and discussion in the months to come.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR RECREATION AND AMENITIES

Input and discussions for this Comprehensive Plan update, through workshops with City Council and Planning Commission, informal small group sessions, a community-wide public event, interaction with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, and background discussions with City staff, yielded the following items related to the Recreation and Amenities focus area of the plan:

- The need to invest in upgrades to existing parks while also providing for future park needs in newly-developing areas.
- Ensuring adequate parkland in appropriate locations to meet the needs of areas projected to gain additional housing and population in the future.
- Enhancing recreational access to the Guadalupe River corridor, especially within Riverside Park, where feasible and safe.
- Responding to growing emphasis on healthy living habits, opportunities and resources in Victoria as in many other Texas and U.S. communities.
- Determining the best ways to promote a vibrant and appealing downtown while growing retail, services, and entertainment options elsewhere in the city.
- Implementing a consensus strategy on how best to position Victoria as a destination for visitors and “overnighters” within the context of, rather than in competition with, a broader array of Coastal Bend and Texas tourism offerings.

### OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES

Other relevant documents related to Recreation and Amenities include:

- Parks 2025 Master Plan
- Paseo de Victoria: A Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan for Transportation and Recreation
- Victoria Public Library Strategic Plan 2011-2016 (and annual Report Card updates)
- Victoria Community Center Market Analysis and Feasibility Study

Pertinent websites include:

- City of Victoria Parks and Recreation Department
- City of Victoria Development Services Department
- City of Victoria Public Library
- City of Victoria Community Center
- Victoria Convention and Visitors Bureau (attractions, events/activities, Bootfest)
- Victoria Main Street Program
- Victoria ISD (Fine Arts Center/ programs, athletics)
- Victoria College (Leo J. Welder Center for the Performing Arts, Museum of the Coastal Bend, Lifelong Learning)
- University of Houston-Victoria (events, visitors)
- Victoria County Historical Commission
- Victoria Regional History Center
- Victoria Preservation, Inc.

**EXISTING  
CITY**