



Future City

GROWTH CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

This Comprehensive Plan section focuses on the potential extent and timing of ongoing population growth in Victoria in the decades ahead, where this growth might occur on the ground, and the implications it could have for maintaining a sound financial footing for municipal government into the future. Growth can bring many economic and community benefits, but the City must also weigh the tax base and revenue gains against the costs of expanding its public services – and potentially extending them across a much larger municipal service area.

Efficient use of land is a prime consideration of community planning, along with orderly and coordinated upgrades to local transportation and utility infrastructure systems, to achieve and maintain a desired community form and character. Maintaining the effectiveness and responsiveness of the City's public safety services is another essential focus of this section.

As part of preparing for its expected growth, the City also has strategic reasons to continue considering prudent enlargement of its geographic jurisdiction where and when appropriate. This can occur through planned, City-initiated annexations of areas within Victoria's state-authorized 3.5-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), as well as through land owner requests to have their property incorporated within the City of Victoria.

KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Five key issues and considerations related to Growth Capacity and Infrastructure were identified through the comprehensive planning process and should be addressed as the City's associated vision, goals, and strategic action priorities for the coming years are pursued.

1. Implications for municipal services and finances of continued growth and development in unincorporated areas around the city.

- Some amount of ETJ development is inevitable given the preference of some home buyers for larger lots and a more rural atmosphere outside the City limits
- while staying close enough to reap the benefits of living near a major city.
- The Fire Department is already accustomed to responding across Victoria County and flexing its resources as necessary; however, further demands on Police Department resources could be a concern with any significant potential service area expansion.
- Among the challenges of achieving further growth and development contiguous to the existing city are property ownership patterns and lack of turnover in some strategic areas, such as northeast beyond Loop 463 and certain areas south of US 59. (When attendees at a public workshop for this Comprehensive Plan were asked to identify locations on a city map “you

POPULATION OUTLOOK FOR VICTORIA

Population projections are an important component of a long-range planning process. They help determine and quantify the demands that will be placed on public facilities and services based on the potential pace and scale of the community's physical growth. Projections reflect local, regional, national, and international trends and offer a basis to prepare for the future.

However, forecasting population changes can be challenging, particularly for the long term, because it is often difficult to account for all circumstances that may arise. Demographers also caution that population projections become trickier as the geographic area gets smaller, making city-level population the most difficult to forecast. This is because local population change is strongly influenced by less predictable factors such as housing prices, availability of vacant land to develop, and annexation of additional territory, which may already have existing residents and results in an instant increase in the citywide total. Therefore, it will be important for the City to monitor population and economic growth continually to account for both short- and longer-term shifts that can influence development activity and trends in the community and larger region.

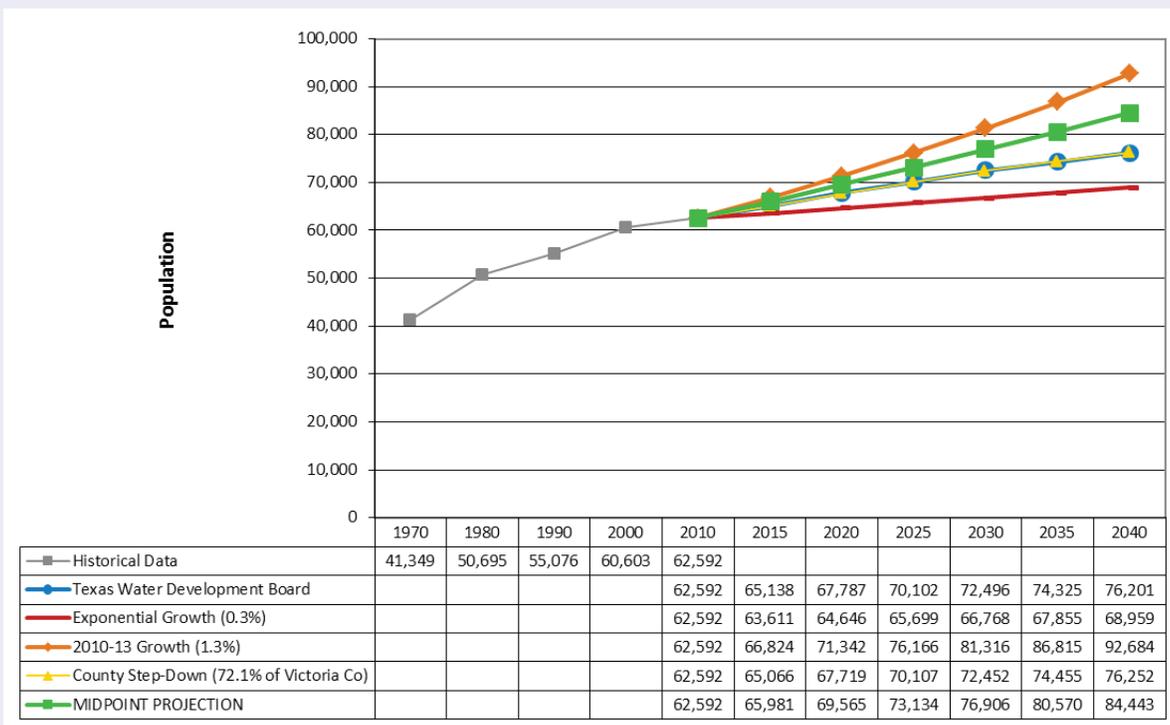
For historical perspective, the last Comprehensive Plan update in 2007 assumed that Victoria would grow from roughly 61,200 residents in 2005 to just over 74,000 by 2025 – and would be around 64,300 residents in 2010. Through Census 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau reported a slightly lower population tally of 62,592. To the extent that interim estimates reflect reality on the ground, the latest U.S. Census Bureau estimate through mid-2014 had Victoria surpassing the 66,000 mark with 66,094 residents (which suggested a gain of roughly 1,000 residents in one year, up from 65,098 in mid-2013).

Given this context, the accompanying chart provides a comparison of several potential scenarios for future population change in Victoria. The projections build on the Census 2010 baseline of 62,592 persons and identify potential population levels in five-year increments out to 2040.

consider good for new homes and growth in or around the city,” the most dots were placed in this northeast area just outside of Loop 463, from Houston Highway/Business US 59 toward US 77 on the far north side.)

- The City recently assessed the public service implications of a first-ever Municipal Utility District (MUD) proposal to facilitate new fringe development. While the MUD proposal ultimately did not move forward, the Public Works Department had to consider near-

term capacity issues (e.g., lift station upgrade), as well as potential longer-term effects (e.g., line extensions and system connectivity). This scenario required contemplation of the tools available to Texas cities for facilitating desirable development (i.e., new and needed housing) while safeguarding the City’s financial position and managing public infrastructure effectively. Among these tools are development agreements, utility over-sizing policies and agreements, and public/private cost-sharing arrangements.



It is wise for cities to think in terms of a range of potential growth rather than an absolute number given the uncertainty of any small-area forecast that extends beyond a few years. As illustrated by the Midpoint Projection line in the scenarios chart, **the midpoint of a potential growth range to assume for this updated Comprehensive Plan – between the high 2010-2013 Growth projection and the lower Texas Water Development Board and County Step-Down projections – would put Victoria’s population at approximately 69,500 in 2020; 76,900 in 2030; and 84,400 in 2040.** This would mean some 21,850 additional residents from 2010 and implies that Victoria could add the equivalent of one-third of its current population over the 30 year period. For perspective, Census 2010 reported an average household size in Victoria of 2.62 persons, meaning that 8,340 additional housing units would be needed to accommodate 21,850 added residents.

WHERE WILL VICTORIA ACCOMMODATE ITS PROJECTED GROWTH?

Displayed on **Map 1, Growth Outlook and Directions**, are a set of key factors that will have some influence on where Victoria’s projected growth can or may occur, including:

- locations of existing developed areas within and around the existing City limits;
- current geographic reach of the City’s infrastructure systems for providing water and sanitary sewer service;
- locations of existing major roadways plus the projected major street network – including the locations of key intersections – based on the City’s adopted Thoroughfare Master Plan;
- land in and around the current City limits that remains undeveloped or in agricultural use; and
- the Guadalupe River and other lesser waterways with associated 100-year floodplains that reduce the quantity of developable land.

For a joint workshop with Victoria’s City Council and Planning Commission midway through the Comprehensive Plan update process, the projection that Victoria could gain nearly 22,000 more residents from 2010 to 2040 was put into perspective in this way:



- The Windcrest and Windcrest Gardens residential neighborhood, along Salem Road between Loop 463 and John Stockbauer Drive as shown in the aerial view, has approximately 160 single-family homes.
- Applying the average household size in Victoria from Census 2010 (2.62 persons per household) means this neighborhood has about 420 residents.

2. Greater focus on absorbing a share of projected growth within existing developed areas.

- The existing Victoria City limits include few large areas of contiguous, developable land.
- Older areas on the south side of Victoria face reinvestment challenges as discussed further in the Land Use and Development section of this Comprehensive Plan. This warrants consideration of special district mechanisms and incentive-based

tools for promoting more infill and redevelopment activity.

- The City should continually assess its capital investment practices to ensure that south side projects not only support private redevelopment and infill activity, but encourage it while balancing the needs of the entire City.
- Given the level of public investment and accessibility to vacant land represented by the northeast segment of Loop 463, continue to promote retail development

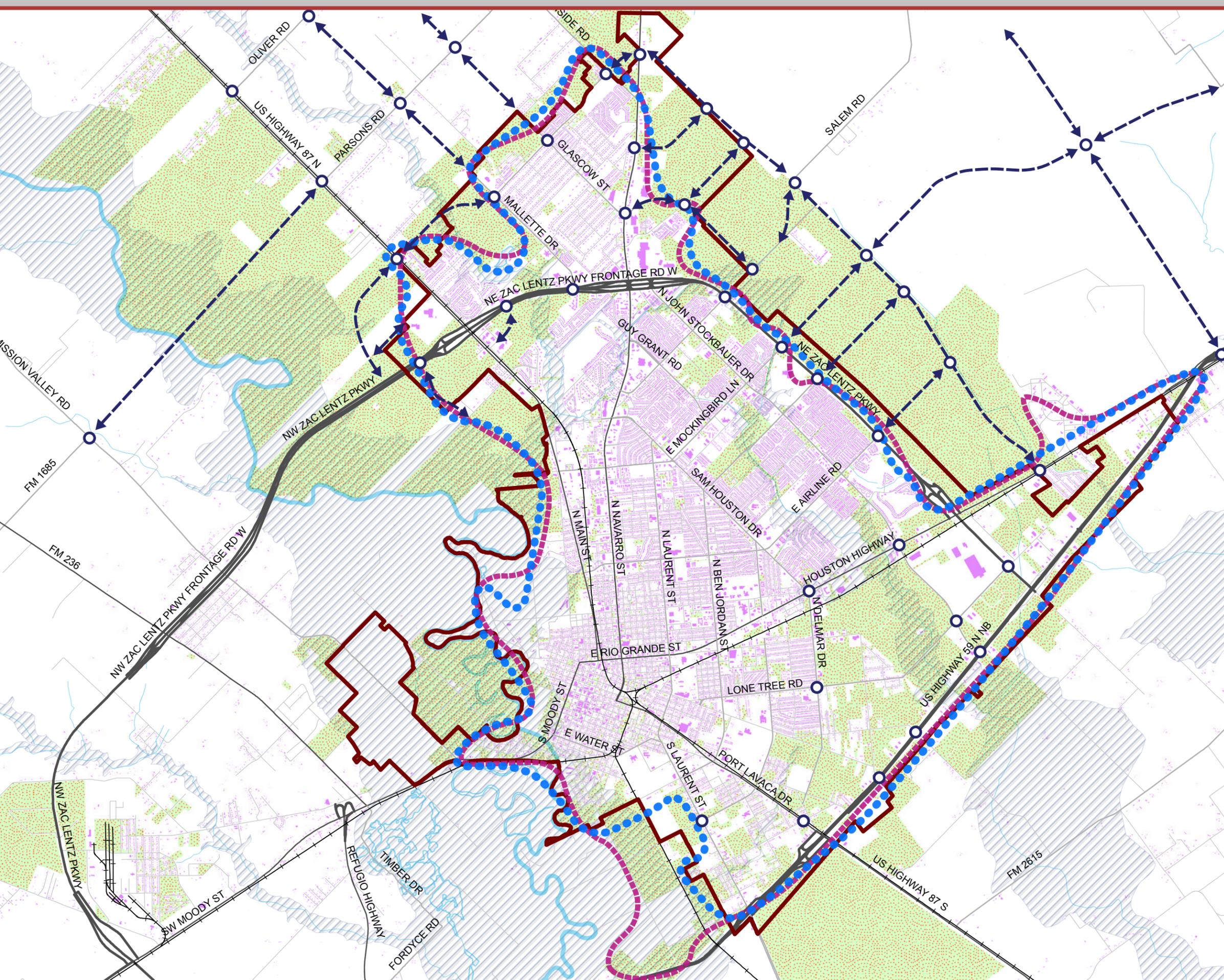
MAP 1
GROWTH OUTLOOK AND
DIRECTIONS

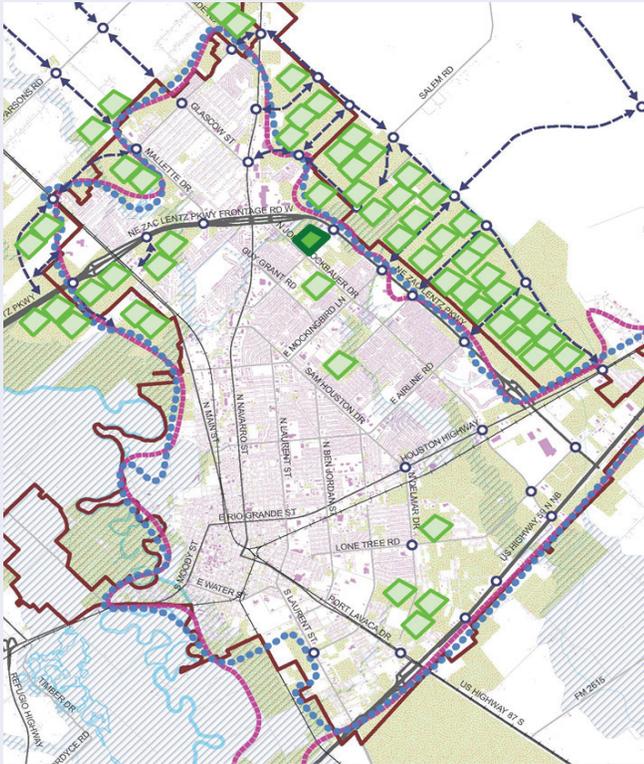
LEGEND

-  City Limits
-  Key Intersections on Thoroughfare Master Plan
-  Key Roadway Links on Thoroughfare Master Plan
-  Extent of Current Water Distribution System
-  Extent of Current Wastewater Collection System
-  Agriculture/Undeveloped Land
-  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.





- ▶ This neighborhood multiplied 52 times would nearly equal the 21,850 additional residents Victoria could have by 2040.

Next, the Windcrest neighborhood “footprint” was reproduced 56 times on Map 1 for a meeting of the City’s Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, as illustrated in the map clip to the left. It was recognized that the actual geographic distribution of new residential population and development can vary in numerous ways (e.g., greater absorption of growth within the city) and may not be at all realistic as depicted (e.g., northeast land availability and drainage issues). However, a key point of the exercise was to illustrate one conceptual scenario of how Victoria’s projected growth could occur in areas contiguous to the current City limits, outside the 100-year floodplain, and in close proximity to roadways already in place or anticipated for the future on the Major Thoroughfare Plan.

opportunities focused around the key Loop 463 intersections at Salem Road, Mockingbird Lane, and Airline Road.

3. Effective capital projects planning to balance the needs of newly-developing areas with older areas of the city.

- Public Works Department leadership noted using the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to balance needed attention to both new and older infrastructure.
- The City should continue its practice of providing City utility services to users outside the City limits rarely, with annexation in exchange for services the preferred scenario.

4. Ongoing support for excellent public safety services, along with various “quality of life” services that City government provides.

- Continue to recognize the implications for various City services of a daytime

population that far exceeds the actual resident population – by 30,000+ persons according to some estimates.

- A recurring point during public meeting discussions was that, with Victoria’s growth, some newcomers place a premium on “quality of life” services based on their experiences in other places they have lived.
- Public safety staffing remains a challenge in Victoria as elsewhere.
- Maintaining and enhancing the City’s valued police services will eventually require new and improved facilities to house key police functions.

5. Ensuring a sound long-term water supply for the city while focusing, shorter term, on water system deficiencies and upgrades characteristic of any aging infrastructure.

- Victoria’s water supply outlook is good, especially relative to many cities elsewhere in Texas.

- However, Victoria also faces competing demands upstream for water by some of the largest metropolitan areas in Texas, plus downstream environmental needs that require certain base river flows to be maintained.
- Along with ongoing prioritization of targeted improvements within the water system, Victoria officials should continue to implement water storage measures as further insurance against drought and peak demand periods.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

The Growth Capacity and Infrastructure framework for action is organized in three tiers: Vision statements, Goals, and Strategic Action Priorities. These topics are intended to mesh with and support the other aspects of this Comprehensive Plan. The Strategic Action Priorities convey tangible actions that will, in the long run, lead to achievement of the Goals in line with the Vision.

VISION STATEMENTS

- V1:** Victoria has technologically advanced, cost effective infrastructure (i.e. water, sewer, streets, drainage, and communications).
- V2:** Victoria has quality municipal services and facilities making the community a safe, healthy, and enjoyable place to live.
- V3:** Victoria’s growth and development pattern accommodates private investment needs while also ensuring a sound financial position for municipal government over the long term.

GOALS

1. Annexation activity that adds to the economic stability of the city and protects and enhances its quality of life and economic resources.
2. Improved condition of existing streets and durable design and construction of new streets.
3. Storm drainage systems that minimize public harm and property damage due to flooding.

4. Well-maintained and improved water and sanitary sewer systems.
5. Improved water quality and quantity.
6. Coordinated infrastructure improvements to serve future development.
7. Maintenance of fire and emergency medical services at a high standard.
8. A low crime rate and police services maintained at a high level.
9. Library services that meet the diverse information needs for all citizens of Victoria County.
10. An efficient municipal solid waste management system.

STRATEGIC ACTION PRIORITIES

>> Enhance and improve the formalized Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process for identifying, prioritizing, and funding essential capital projects.

- The range of activities to incorporate into the City of Victoria’s CIP should go beyond street, drainage, and utility infrastructure projects to include parks and trails, City buildings, land and right-of-way/easement acquisition, major vehicle and equipment purchases, and the planning and design studies that are often a precursor to significant initiatives and expenditures. Even aesthetic or tourism-related enhancements, such as community gateway treatments, streetscape upgrades along corridors, and installation of wayfinding signage qualify as capital projects.

As with any priority-setting process, various criteria could potentially be applied to determine the ultimate timing and sequencing of CIP projects. For municipal governments, perhaps the most fundamental ranking consideration is public health, safety, and welfare. Some projects and improvements the City cannot avoid doing, or cannot put off, as they are mandated by the state or federal governments, or are a condition of a permit (e.g., water and wastewater

system compliance with water quality standards). Once a set of candidate projects has been identified, reasons should be outlined for placing certain projects ahead of others.

As taxpayer funds are involved, elected officials must also consider equity as they seek to show results to their constituents. Geographic and/or socioeconomic fairness may require that beneficial projects occur in various parts of the community, including most or all City Council districts, and not be concentrated in only certain parts of the city.

Public engagement and education to help with project vetting and priority setting is another strategy for gaining consensus during the process. Some cities embrace the political aspect by starting the annual CIP process with district-level public meetings hosted by individual City Council members, with support from City staff. Technical and financial staff then highlight reasons certain projects must be fast-tracked (e.g., mandated improvements) while others will require more time due to sheer cost, right-of-way acquisition, etc. Inter-departmental working groups, as well as subcommittees of Council, Planning Commission, or other City boards/commissions, may also play a role.

- Ensure a direct and strong linkage between the City’s various planning functions (land development, transportation, parks, etc.) and the capital projects planning and prioritization process.
- Ensure that Victoria’s CIP is satisfying a key purpose of such plans, which is to provide predictability – for multiple years in advance – of the City’s capital investment plans and priorities for the benefit and awareness of private interests and citizens.

>> Capital projects to expand Victoria’s water storage capacity.

- Continue to prioritize funding of Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) methods

VICTORIA’S CAPITAL PROJECTS OUTLOOK

As with a wide variety of businesses, institutions (e.g., universities, medical centers, churches), and other public agencies and levels of government, cities must periodically make “big ticket” expenditures. This is one defining aspect of a “capital” project – something that is relatively costly but, in turn, provides benefits over an extended period. Capital projects are among the most complex responsibilities of municipal government given both their typical scope and cost.

Through its most recent annual budgeting process, which concluded in September 2015, the City of Victoria adopted an updated five-year CIP that extends through Fiscal Year 2020. Prior year projects that had already been awarded, were in progress, or still to be bid carried a total value of \$75.5 million. Projects receiving funding in each of the next five fiscal years contribute to the totals shown below. Together with the prior year projects, this means the City has committed \$155.3 million to a variety of major public investment needs, with street and mobility related projects receiving the largest allocation by far, followed by utility infrastructure projects.

- Fiscal Year 2016: \$17.99 million
- Fiscal Year 2017: \$15.40 million
- Fiscal Year 2018: \$14.49 million
- Fiscal Year 2019: \$19.60 million
- Fiscal Year 2020: \$12.33 million

among the set of projected capital projects for the next five- to 10-year timeframe.

- Related to safeguarding and enhancing the City’s long-term water supply position, also:
 - Continually scan the available water market in an effort to identify potential opportunities to purchase additional water rights.

- Continue participation in Texas Water Conservation Association activities to network with other water purveyors and identify subordination or contract opportunities for additional water rights.
- Advise engineering and legal consultants to notify the City of Victoria of potential opportunities and threats associated with acquiring additional water rights.
- Maintain a presence on the South Texas Watermaster Oversight Committee of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to identify potential opportunities to acquire additional water rights.

>> Continued planning for phased annexation activity.

- Underlying the City's annexation policy and planning should be an emphasis on motivating more development activity within the City limits and avoiding after-the-fact annexation of previously developed areas.
- City officials and departments should utilize workshops for any near-term annexation activity so that resources that could go to in-city needs are not held in reserve for any potential annexation moves.
- Among the considerations for ongoing annexation planning is the need for additional industrial park development in Victoria, and whether the associated land requirements (500+ acres) will involve locations partly or entirely within the ETJ.
- Another key annexation factor to the north and northeast is the practicality and potential timing for pursuing regional detention solutions for storm drainage that would likely require partnerships among multiple levels of government and/or public-private agreements and cost-sharing arrangements.
- Also monitor any emerging locations or clusters of new commercial activity within the ETJ that might warrant near-term consideration for annexation.

- As part of special area planning efforts emphasized in this Comprehensive Plan, a market study component would help to clarify the future land development potential for prime growth and candidate annexation areas. As with any speculative forecast, such projections must be handled carefully but can provide insights for public service planning and fiscal impact calculations by the City. This is one way of addressing a stated desire, during the comprehensive planning process, for longer-term forecasting of the municipal finance outlook.
- Remain cognizant of concerns about potential annexation of additional territory given a "take care of what we already have" sentiment that was expressed during this comprehensive planning process.

OTHER ACTIONS

Along with the short list of Strategic Action Priorities outlined above, this section captures other potential action items discussed through the long-range planning process. These items are compiled in five categories that are the main ways Comprehensive Plans are implemented:

- (1) Capital Investments
- (2) Programs and Initiatives
- (3) Regulations and Standards
- (4) Partnerships and Coordination
- (5) Targeted Planning/Studies

Capital Investments 

- A. Continue to prioritize, schedule, and budget for a variety of capital project needs through the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP), including:
 - Orderly infrastructure expansions based on existing and future infrastructure master plans and the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan.
 - Street reconstruction projects.
 - Replacement of deteriorated water and sewer mains.

- Future drainage improvements based on the Storm Drainage Master Plan.
 - Land acquisition, construction, and equipment needs for new fire stations.
 - Major Police, Fire, and EMS equipment purchases based on an inventory process to monitor acquisition and replacement needs for timely action.
 - Land acquisition, construction, and equipment needs for new or expanded library facilities.
 - Maintenance and replacement of rolling stock for the continuation of consistent solid waste collection services.
- B. Continue increasing the annual street maintenance budget in future fiscal years, using the annual Street Inventory to determine priorities for street maintenance.
 - C. Begin multi-year preparatory steps for the eventual design and construction of a new public safety facility through the City's CIP.
- H. Maintain the City's floodplain management program in accordance with the regulations and guidelines of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Flood Insurance Program.
 - I. Perform regular maintenance to sustain the capacity of drainage systems.
 - J. Continue to implement the Storm Water Discharge Permit in accordance with the schedule and guidelines of the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) program.
 - K. Continue to budget for incremental increases in Police Department staffing, especially to better manage an increasing call for service load per officer, and to implement the true intent of Community Oriented Policing – a greater focus on crime prevention versus reaction.
 - L. Regularly monitor the rate of Class I and Class II crimes in Victoria.



Programs and Initiatives

- A. Implement the Water Master Plan to provide for the orderly extension of properly sized water distribution systems into areas of future development.
- B. Continue to monitor water quality in the distribution system.
- C. Continue a program of scheduled fire hydrant flushing.
- D. Continue to evaluate cost-effective treatment techniques and practices to identify opportunities to improve the quality of water produced at the surface water treatment facility.
- E. Encourage use of water conserving landscaping.
- F. Evaluate the possibility of implementing a water conservation plumbing retrofit program.
- G. Continue to implement the Storm Drainage Master Plan, including the new Drainage Criteria Manual as recommended in the plan.
- M. Continue implementing proactive crime prevention activities.
- N. Continue providing opportunities for increased interaction between police officers and Victoria residents through community policing (focused on patrol zones), zone meetings, National Night Out events, and other outreach efforts.
- O. Achieve the Fire Department's established emergency response time goals.
- P. Monitor the City's Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating and identify actions needed to maintain or improve the rating.
- Q. Monitor library usage patterns to determine changing community interests.
- R. Continually monitor emerging electronic formats of existing print sources for library collections to determine when quality and cost permit change.
- S. Periodically review solid waste routes and make adjustments as necessary to maintain balanced routes for efficient, quality collection services.

- T. Take steps to continue the City's recycling program despite market forces that are a continual threat to the viability of municipal recycling programs and the cost implications of trying to satisfy public desire for a robust program. The City should also continue to pursue alternatives and solutions to Victoria's recycling program challenges, including: (1) the extent of non-recyclable material collected that is boosting the apparent participation rate while contaminating the stream of beneficial materials; and (2) how best to provide residents with more options for discarding brush and bulky trash and meet regular trash pick-up needs more effectively.
- U. Continue to support: (1) the school newspaper recycling program; and (2) hazardous waste collection programs.
- V. Continue public education efforts across all departments regarding City functions (fire, police, library services, recycling, etc).



Regulations and Standards

- A. Review existing utility extension ordinances/policies for necessary revisions and/or adopt equitable new policies that achieve the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan.
- B. Continue applying the City's pavement standards and assessing them periodically for further needed upgrades or revisions.
- C. Review periodically and update as needed other City infrastructure design standards and specifications.
- D. Review periodically and update as needed the City's Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance in accordance with the Storm Drainage Master Plan.
- E. Review standards related to best practices for drainage requirements in the subdivision and development of land and update ordinances as necessary.

Partnerships and Coordination



- A. Coordinate annexation plans with area utility providers and Victoria ISD.
- B. Look for opportunities to partner with groups to promote water conservation awareness activities, and continue to distribute and disseminate water conservation information to the public.
- C. Given the presence of two higher education campuses in Victoria, continue to explore opportunities for some degree of coordinated library services and programming to benefit both permanent residents and non-resident college students.
- D. Actively pursue creative financing options, including public/private partnerships, for the construction of a new multi-purpose facility in Victoria that could host major events and conferences and accommodate other public gatherings of varying sizes.

Targeted Planning/Studies



- A. Maintain a detailed annexation study that identifies areas for potential annexation, along with consideration of: (1) priorities for annexation, including preferred growth corridors and areas of future development; (2) constraints to future development, including floodplains, potential for gravity wastewater service, and other limitations; and (3) areas of existing development bordering the corporate limits that can be served by minor utility extensions.
- B. Conduct fiscal impact analyses for potential annexations to weigh the cost of extending municipal services against the projected revenues to be generated by the development.
- C. Continue to implement the Sanitary Sewer Master Plan to provide for the orderly extension of properly sized wastewater collection systems into areas of future development.
- D. Periodically assess public safety facility locations and service areas.