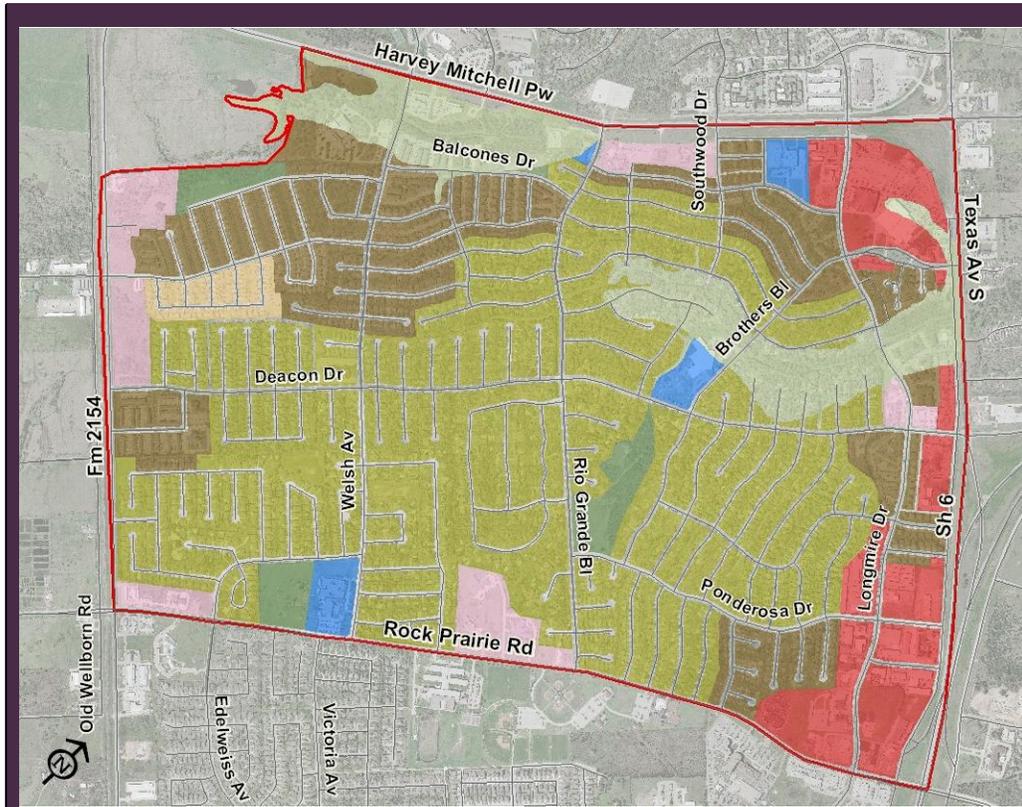


INTRODUCTION



The Central College Station Neighborhood Plan is the first neighborhood plan in an on-going series of neighborhood, district, and corridor plans that will assist in implementing the goals and strategies of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The neighborhood planning process offers the opportunity to develop an in-depth knowledge of an area and develop area-specific approaches to implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

ABOUT CENTRAL COLLEGE STATION

The Central College Station Neighborhood Planning Area is made up of 1,450 acres located in the geographic center of College Station. Bounded by Texas Avenue South/State Highway 6 South, Harvey Mitchell Parkway South, Wellborn Road, and Rock Prairie Road, this area includes eight residential subdivisions, and is home to more than 11,000 residents. The area is surrounded by neighborhood planning areas to the north and south, but is also in the area of influence for Growth Area VI and X and the Spring Creek District as identified in the City's **Comprehensive Plan Concept Map**. This section outlines some of the existing conditions in Central College Station; however, more in-depth information can be found in the **Existing Conditions Report**, an appendix to this plan (**Appendix A**).

Housing and Business

The Central College Station Neighborhood developed over a period of nearly 40 years. The most recent additions are late phases of Edelweiss Estates in 2001, but the earliest development took place in 1974 as part of Southwood

Valley at the northeast corner of the area. Annexations took place between 1969 for parts of Southwood Valley until 2002 for portions of Edelweiss Estates.



Central College Station has more than 4,000 dwelling units, and 1,000,000 s.f. of commercial space.

The area holds more than 1,000,000 square feet of commercial and business space and 2,228 single-family homes, 534 duplexes, and 1,356 other multi-family units. The planning area is primarily residential, but ringed by commercial space along major corridors. Commercial anchors are located at Harvey Mitchell Parkway South and Texas Avenue South, and Rock Prairie Road and State Highway 6 South with moderate- to small-scale businesses and offices along Longmire Drive, Rock Prairie Road, Wellborn Road, and Harvey Mitchell Parkway South. Medical offices are located along portions of Rock Prairie Road and make up a portion of the Spring Creek District Planning Area.

Education and Institutions

Central College Station is home to two elementary schools - Rock Prairie Elementary and Southwood Valley Elementary. All neighborhoods in the planning area are zoned for attendance at one of these elementary schools. Students then attend Cypress Grove Intermediate and College Station Middle Schools located outside the planning area. All students attend A&M Consolidated High School, located to the north of the planning area across Harvey Mitchell Parkway South.



The City of College Station operates the Larry J. Ringer Library on Harvey Mitchell Parkway South in conjunction with the City of Bryan. The City of College Station also operates Fire Station #2 serving the entire planning area. The area is part of two community policing beats – Beats 60 and 80.

This area has six churches serving a variety of religious faiths. The planning area includes two nursing home facilities in close proximity to College Station Medical Center on Rock Prairie Road.

Natural Features

In the planning area, 171 acres are identified on the City's Comprehensive Plan as Natural Area Protected and Reserved. These areas generally cover the floodplain for two Bee Creek tributaries that traverse the north and east section of the planning area. Overall, the planning area is relatively flat, with a slight downward slope from the south to north end – falling 82 feet over 11,000 linear feet (0.7% slope) with the lowest points corresponding with the creek beds. Without direct access to discharge to these tributaries, there are several

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detention ponds located in the southern section of the planning area – mostly maintained by private homeowner or property owner associations. The City has several greenways identified in the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Master Plan covering the Bee Creek Tributaries; however, no land acquisition has taken place.



Drainage areas are located through parts of Central College Station

The City of College Station maintains 50 acres of park space in this area. The planning area is part of Neighborhood Park Zone 5 and Community Park Zone B. Overall, there are five acres of park for every 1,000 residents slightly less than the city adopted objective of seven acres of park per 1,000 residents.

Mobility

Central College Station is served by 42 miles of road. The area is bounded by four arterials – Harvey Mitchell Parkway South, Wellborn Road, Rock Prairie Road, and Texas Avenue South. Within the planning area, collectors Rio Grande Boulevard, Welsh Avenue, and Longmire Drive provide north-south vehicular connectivity, while Deacon Drive provides the only direct east-west connection. Brothers Boulevard, Ponderosa Drive, Southwood Drive, Edelweiss Avenue, Navarro Road, and Balcones Drive also serve as local collector roads.



Bicycle facilities are just one of the transportation options in Central College Station

The planning area is served by three bus systems. Texas A&M University serves students living in this area with bus routes that run between 7am and midnight on weekdays during the regular fall and spring semesters. College Station Independent School District (CSISD) provides buses in this area for students attending Cypress Grove Intermediate, College Station Middle, and A&M Consolidated High schools.

The Brazos Valley Transit District provides limited general public service to this area along Harvey Mitchell Parkway South at Welsh Avenue and Southwood Drive. The area is also served by a network of dedicated bicycle lanes, routes, and paths. Sidewalks are located throughout the planning area.

Community Investment

There are a number of public projects underway or planned for construction in Central College Station. The 2008 bond provided funding for improvements to the Bee Creek tributary channels and the expansion of the Larry J. Ringer Library, tentatively scheduled to be under construction in 2012. The bond also included funds for improvements to Brothers Pond Park to upgrade the jogging trail and make repairs to the entrance sidewalk. College Station is developing a multi-use path located on the north side of Harvey Mitchell Parkway South between Welsh Avenue and Texas Avenue South with construction to begin in 2010.

The area is impacted by the current Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) widening project on Wellborn Road. This project will widen Wellborn Road to six lanes between Graham Road and Southwest Parkway, and is anticipated to be complete by 2011. The reconfiguration of the interchange at Wellborn Road and Harvey Mitchell Parkway South is scheduled to be completed in Fall, 2011. Funding for a raised median on Harvey Mitchell Parkway South between Texas Avenue South and Wellborn Road has been identified by TxDOT, but design of the median has not yet begun (scheduled to be bid in Spring, 2011).

SELECTION

The Central College Station Neighborhood Planning Area was selected for the development of a neighborhood plan because of its diversity of housing type and age, mix of residential and commercial uses, opportunities for redevelopment, and the lack of neighborhood planning focused on this area in the past. This planning area offers the opportunity to better understand the factors leading to changes from owner- to renter-occupied homes.

The physical boundaries of this planning area were based on the contiguous area of neighborhood conservation identified in this area of town in the Comprehensive Plan, and the surrounding areas of influence. Major roads serve as effective boundaries to delineate this area from other areas of the City. There are eight subdivisions within the planning area, each with multiple phases. While none of those subdivisions are exactly alike in age or character, they all share the same roads, parks, and water lines, and are affected by the same infill, redevelopment, and commercial development.

PUBLIC INPUT

Public input is critical in the planning process. Receiving feedback from the community enhances the process by allowing the experts who live in the area to provide the information and issues that are evaluated in the plan. Opportunities were provided for members of the community to voice their opinions on the direction of their neighborhood and begin to strategize ways in which to change or maintain that direction.

Resource Teams

The advice and expertise of three advisory teams were used throughout the planning process - the Neighborhood Resource Team, the Planning Resource Team, and the Staff Resource Team. These teams met throughout the process to offer input and advice, and assist with the planning process including public outreach.

Neighborhood Resource Team

The Neighborhood Resource Team is made up of 15 individuals that represent the Southwood Valley Neighborhood Association, Edelweiss Estates, and Brandon Heights. Additionally, members from College Station Independent School District and Texas A&M University student organizations served on the team. The team served as an advisory board during the planning process, and to encourage community participation in the planning process.

Members were chosen out of a pool of interested individuals based primarily on having as many different geographic areas of the planning area represented, along with ensuring representation from the business community, student residents, and institutions in the area.

The Neighborhood Resource Team met on a monthly basis during the process to provide feedback on the direction of the plan.

PLANNING PROCESS

The Central College Station Neighborhood Plan was developed over the course of ten months, beginning in late August, 2009. The process was broken into four phases, each with specific functions.

Phase 1, Pre-Planning (August – September, 2009): The pre-planning phase is the first step in neighborhood planning. This phase focused on the mechanics of getting a plan started and moving it forward. During this stage of the plan, the draft boundaries were identified, a timeline established, resource teams were established, and public outreach efforts were identified.

Phase 2, Existing Conditions and Planning Vision (September – November, 2009): This phase focused on public outreach and determining the goals for the plan. Two public meetings and two additional neighborhood resource team meetings were held during this time frame to develop the planning goals. Additionally, the existing conditions analysis was conducted to establish some of the baseline data for tracking plan implementation.

Phase 3, Plan Development (December, 2009 – April, 2010): The plan development phase focused on the development of the plan chapters, utilizing the goals and existing conditions that were developed during the previous phase. Draft strategies and actions were developed to achieve the stated goals. At the end of the process, a third meeting was held with the community to gauge acceptance and interest in the strategies.

Phase 4, Adoption and Implementation (June, 2010 and ongoing): The final phase began with the adoption of the plan by the City Council. A public hearing was held on June 3rd with the Planning and Zoning Commission and June 10th with the City Council to adopt the plan. After adoption, implementation will be on-going for the duration of the time period of the plan (five to seven years). Implementation may be tracked on the plan's website: <http://www.cstx.gov/centralplan>.

Members

Steve Arden, Edelweiss Estates
 Mike Ashfield, Planning and Zoning Commission
 Kyle Bryson, Off-Campus Aggies
 Maggie Charleton, Southwood Valley
 Luis Cifuentes, Brandon Heights
 Sandra Goldap, Southwood Valley
 Kristiana Hamilton, Southwood Valley Elementary
 Boyd Larson, Southwood Valley
 Mike Martindale, Rock Prairie Elementary
 Nancy Preston, Southwood Valley
 Hector Silva, CSISD Transportation
 Neil Van Stavern, Van Stavern Small Animal Hospital
 Chris Tucker, Texas A&M University student
 John Westbrook, Southwood Valley
 George Wright, Southwood Valley

Planning Resource Team

The Planning Resource Team worked throughout the planning process to provide technical assistance in planning and related fields, as well as oversight and guidance throughout the planning process. This team assisted in the development of the Citizen Engagement Plan, plan timeline, neighborhood outreach, and maps, as well as worked as facilitators and other group leaders during public meetings. This team was made up of City employees within the Planning and Development Services Department.

Members

Lindsay Kramer, AICP, Senior Planner - Plan Manager
 Bob Cowell, AICP, CNU-A, Director Planning & Development Services
 Venessa Garza, Greenways Program Manager
 Joe Guerra, AICP, PTP, Transportation Planning Coordinator
 Barbara Moore, Neighborhood Services Coordinator
 Matt Robinson, Staff Planner

Staff Resource Team

During the planning process, a Staff Resource Team was assembled to provide additional expertise on issues and opportunities related to their specific departments and fields. The team met once at the beginning of the process to go through the planning process. Additional meetings were held with specific staff as needed throughout the process.

This team was made up of City employees from across the many City departments that provide services to the planning area.

Members

Lt. Steve Brock, Police
 Danielle Charbonnet, EIT, Capital Projects
 David Coleman, PE, Water/Wastewater Services
 Jim Giles, Code Enforcement
 Jennifer Nations, Water Resource Conservation

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Lt. Mike Panelka, Police
Troy Rother, PE, Traffic
David Schmitz, Parks and Recreation
Mark Smith, PE, Public Works

Neighborhood Plan Kick-off Meeting

In September, 2009, the first community-wide event was held at Southwood Valley Elementary. The Neighborhood Plan Kick-off Meeting was attended by approximately 70 residents from the area. Residents were asked to choose their top priorities for the plan and to provide feedback about why they chose a specific topic. The meeting also served as a way to introduce the planning process to the neighborhood.

A summary of the feedback that was received from this meeting is provided as an appendix to the plan (**Appendix B, Public Input Summary**). Members of the community were made aware of the event through doorhangers, flyers around the neighborhood, and information that was distributed through the neighborhood organizations.

Additionally, a survey of the participants was conducted to determine how valuable the event was and how participants heard about the event. This allowed the Planning Resource Team to evaluate how best to utilize resources in publicizing different events.

Survey

After the Kick-off meeting, an on-line survey was made available for residents at the plan's website: <http://www.cstx.gov/centralplan>. Responses were recorded with the documentation from the kick-off meeting.

Issues and Opportunities Meeting

A second community-wide event was the Issues and Opportunities Meeting - held on October 22, 2009, at Peace Lutheran Church. The purpose of the meeting was to collect more in-depth information about what is positive about the neighborhood and where there is room for improvement.

Participants from the Kick-off Meeting were provided information about the date and time of the meeting, and promotional materials were provided to the Neighborhood Resource Team for distribution.

Open House

A community-wide Open House was held on March 30 and 31, 2010, to receive feedback on the draft plan. Participants were able to view some of the draft language, maps, and strategies, as well as converse directly with Staff about any of the Plan components.

Residents were notified by flyers that were sent home through the school district, as well as promotional materials provided to the Neighborhood



Residents meet with City Staff to discuss planning concepts at the Open House

Resource Team for distribution.

PLAN COMPONENTS

The plan is broken down into four subject areas that represent each chapter in the plan and a final implementation chapter. Below are summaries of each of the chapters.

Chapter 1: Community Character

This chapter focuses on strategies relating to image corridors and compatible existing and proposed land uses *to promote and protect the suburban residential character in the core of Central College Station balanced with the need to provide denser redevelopment options along the neighborhood fringe.*

The strategies proposed in this chapter include zoning change, the establishment of new zoning districts, property acquisition, and comprehensive plan changes that are needed to ensure that development and redevelopment in this area are compatible with existing residential subdivisions in the neighborhood.

Chapter 2: Neighborhood Integrity

This chapter focuses on strategies relating to neighborhood image, strong organizations, property maintenance, and emergency response and law enforcement *to improve property maintenance and City code compliance to elevate the attractiveness of Central College Station's subdivisions as an affordable, family-friendly neighborhood.*

The strategies in this chapter are focused on promoting owner-occupied areas of the neighborhood by building strong and lasting neighborhood organizations, creating focused code enforcement programs, and prioritizing community investment in the area for owner-occupied areas.

Chapter 3: Mobility

This chapter focuses on strategies relating to vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks *to promote a safe, well-connected, multi-modal transportation system to better connect Central College Station to the rest of the community and its local neighborhood centers.*

The strategies in this chapter focus on infrastructure analysis and improvements like traffic signalization studies and bicycle lane improvements that will improve connectivity and encourage multi-modal transportation options where possible.

Chapter 4: Sustainability

This chapter focuses on strategies that relate to resource conservation efforts like recycling, stormwater management, and utility consumption in an effort *to increase awareness and participation in resource conservation efforts.*

The strategies in this chapter are focused on ways to increase responsible use of natural resources by residents in Central College

Station such as developing a residential xeriscape plant list guide, promoting existing programs to residents and providing grant funding for sustainable neighborhood practices such as replanting drought-resistant plants or replacing inefficient irrigation systems.

Chapter 5: Implementation

The final chapter is a review of all of the strategies and actions that are proposed in the plan. The plan implementation period is five years. Specifically, it assigns the cost of implementing a particular strategy, a timeframe for when the strategy will be implemented, and the entity that is responsible for implementing the strategy.