



City of El Campo

Comprehensive Plan

DRAFT March 2026



Acknowledgements

Thank you to the City of El Campo's elected and appointed officials, the city staff, citizens, and stakeholders who provided knowledge, assistance, and insight throughout the process of developing this Comprehensive Plan.

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Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	I
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	III
COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT.....	1
HAZARD MITIGATION AND RESILIENCE	21
VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES	33
LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT	47
HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS	85
INFRASTRUCTURE, PUBLIC FACILITIES, & SERVICES.....	99
IMPLEMENTATION	125





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01 *Community Snapshot*

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Introduction

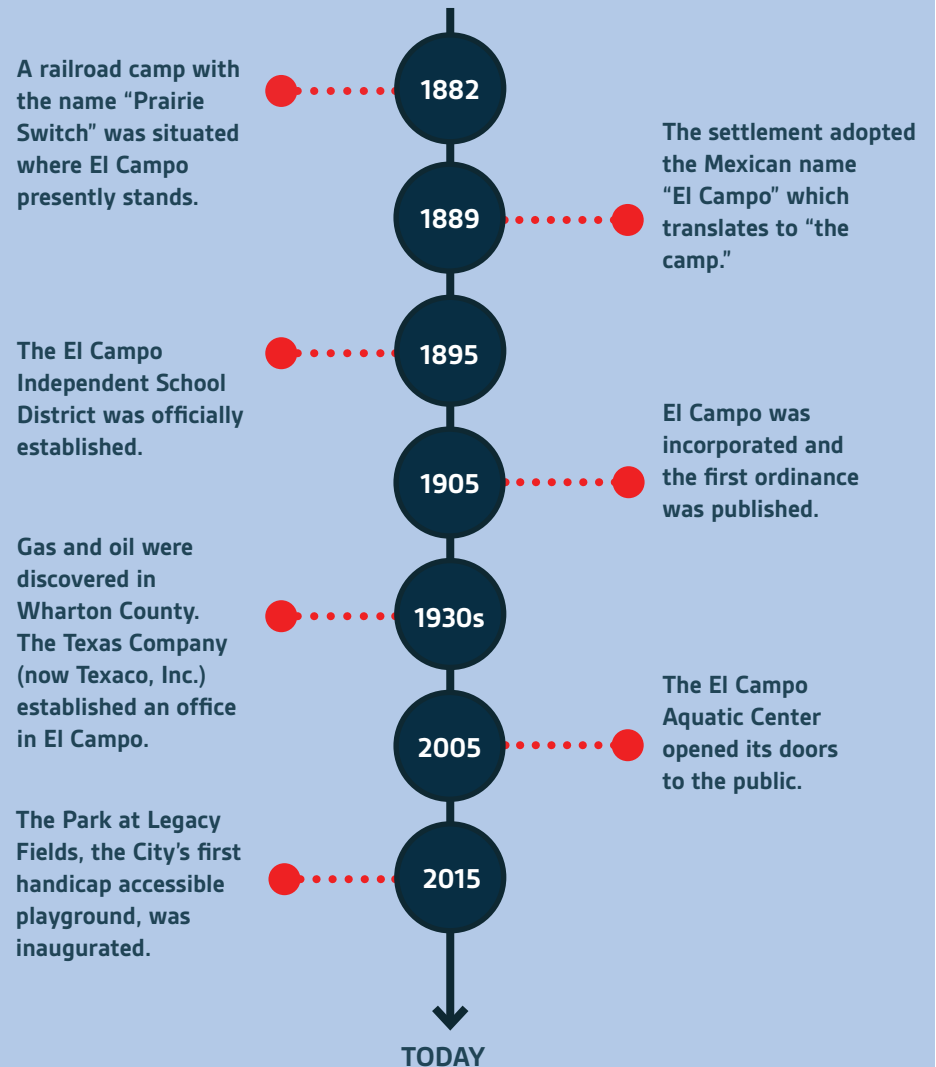
This Plan serves as an update to the City of El Campo's last Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2017. Since the last update, El Campo has undergone notable transformations in its demographic and socioeconomic makeup, necessitating a reassessment of its future vision and priorities.

This chapter provides an assessment of the physical, social, and environmental factors influencing El Campo's growth and development. An overview of the City's existing conditions is included to establish a foundation for the following chapters of the Plan. Understanding the City's background and context helps identify the community's needs and desires and sets the stage for all subsequent recommendations within this Plan.

This chapter provides:

- Historic Context
- Regional Context
- Past and Ongoing Planning Efforts
- Demographics and Growth Trends
- Physical Framework
- Opportunities and Constraints

HISTORIC CONTEXT

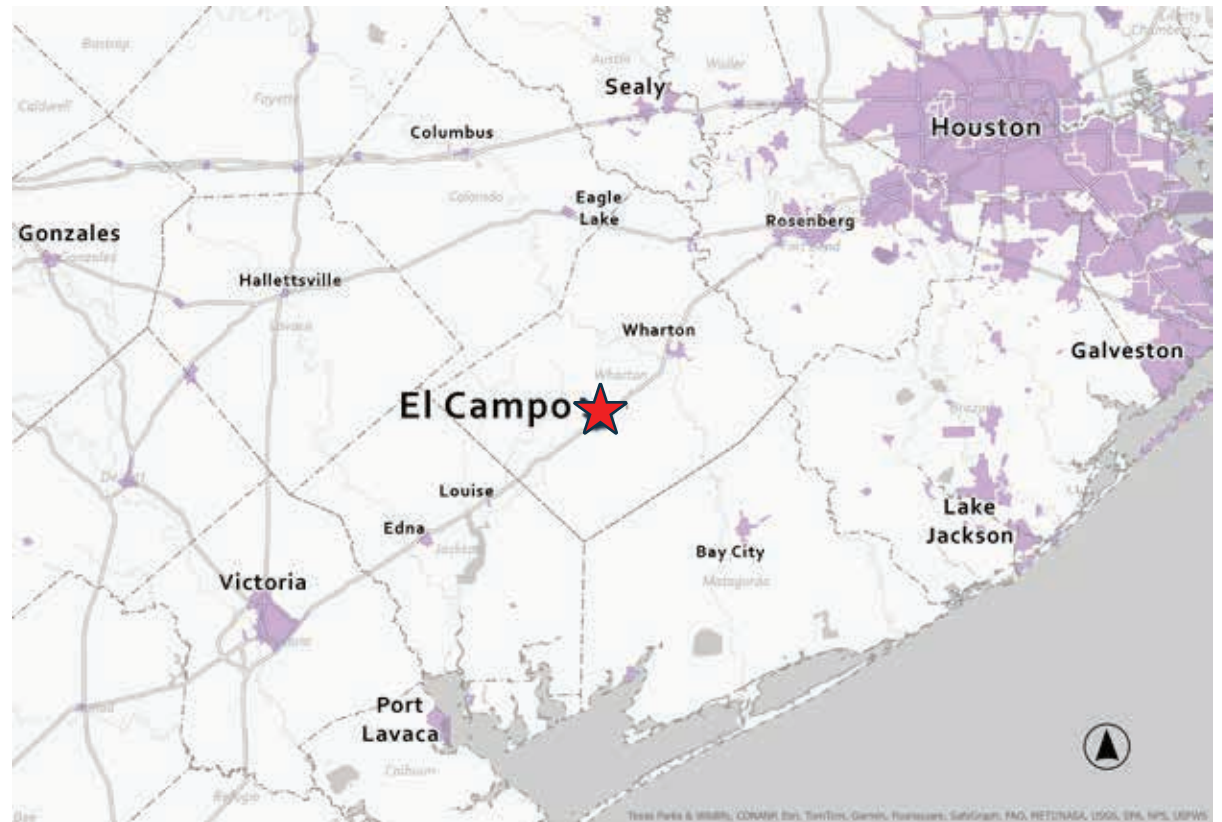


Regional Context

Located approximately 65 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico, El Campo is characterized by its flat coastal plain and is the largest city in Wharton County in terms of population and geographic area.

El Campo is surrounded by several smaller cities—Wharton to the east, Bay City to the southeast, and Edna to the southwest. Victoria, a larger regional hub, is located about 40 miles to the south. El Campo's proximity to Houston, Sugar Land, Richmond, and Rosenberg offers a key economic advantage. Many El Campo residents commute to employment centers in Fort Bend and Harris Counties, reinforcing the City's role as a residential base with strong ties to the broader regional economy.

In terms of connectivity, El Campo is approximately 80 miles from Houston, 130 miles from Austin, and 160 miles from San Antonio. The City is served by U.S. Highway 59 (US 59), part of the proposed Interstate 69 (I-69) corridor connecting it to Houston and Laredo, and State Highway 71 (SH 71), which runs east-west through the City. These thoroughfares provide essential links to other major Texas cities and facilitate local transportation in the region. The nearest airports are located in Houston (George Bush Intercontinental Airport and William P. Hobby Airport), providing convenient access for travelers.



Map 1. Regional Context

Past and Ongoing Planning Efforts

Previous municipal and regional planning efforts should be considered when developing a Comprehensive Plan to coordinate recommendations for the City. El Campo's existing planning framework is shaped by a series of guiding documents that together establish a foundation for its growth, safety, and long-term development. This section provides an overview of relevant plans and studies to the future development of El Campo.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE (2017)

In 2017, the City of El Campo adopted an update to the City's Comprehensive Plan, which was previously adopted in 2007. The El Campo Comprehensive Plan Update identified three strategic planning areas as part of the Future Land Use Plan:

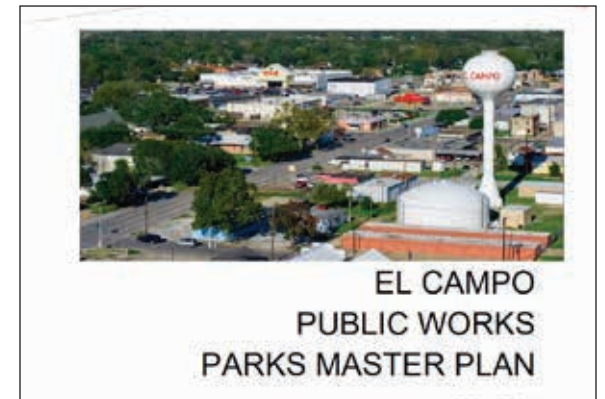
- Downtown Area
- US 59/I-69 Bypass Area
- West Loop Area

The plan also includes a thoroughfare plan, parks and recreation assessment, and stormwater system recommendations.

As part of this comprehensive planning process, the recommendations from the 2017 update will be reviewed and new recommendations will be added to reflect the changes in demographics, community priorities, vision, and current and projected development trends.

PARKS MASTER PLAN (2021)

The City adopted the El Campo Public Works Parks Master Plan in November 2021. The Master Plan assessed the current and future recreational needs of residents. The Master Plan emphasizes enhancing parks and recreation facilities and improving related programs and services to better support the community's well-being. Key components of the plan include updating pavements, creating shade structures in identified areas, and budgeting for long-term or phased-in development and improvements.



El Campo Public Works Parks Master Plan

WHARTON COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN (2021)

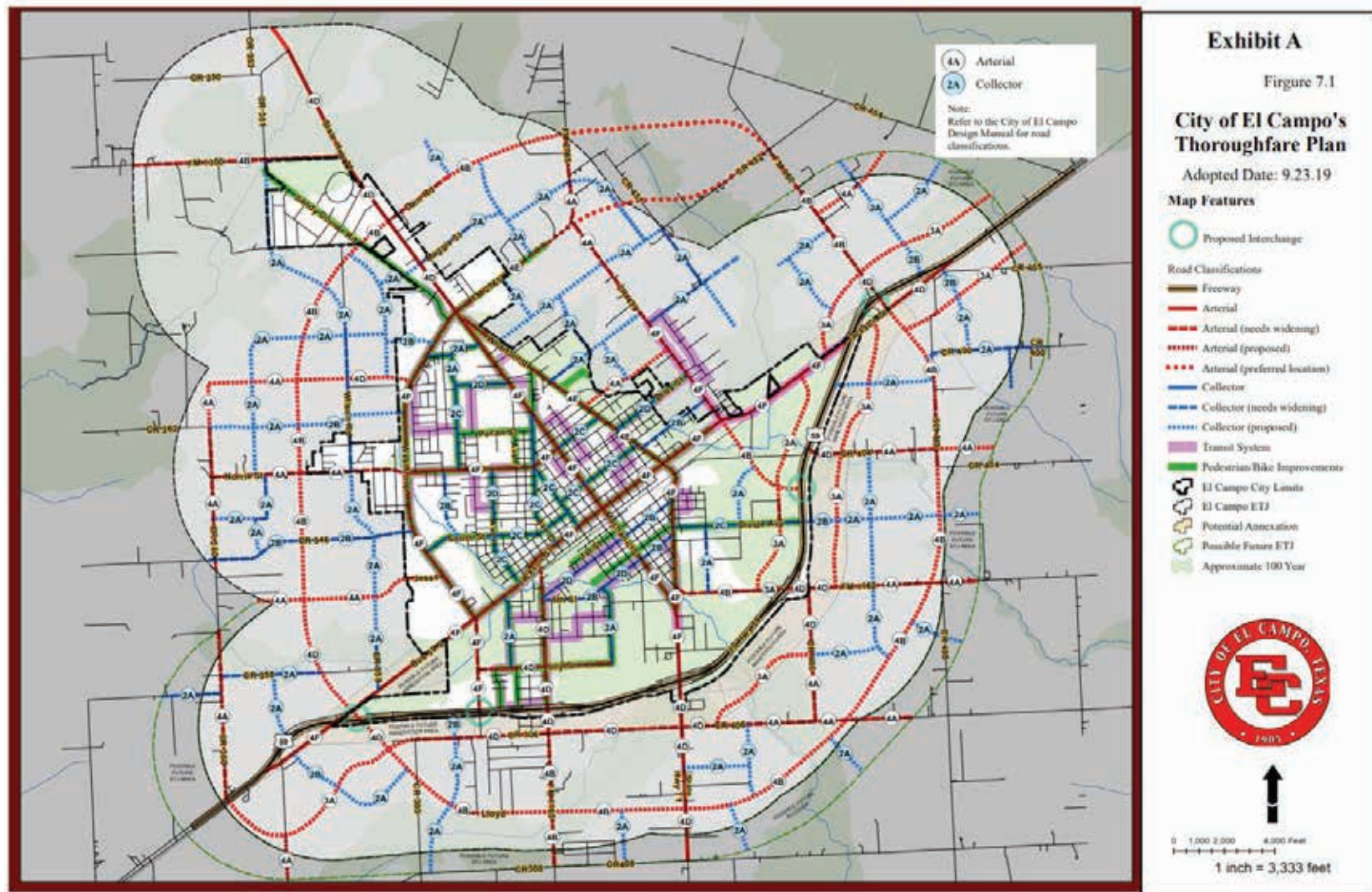
In accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, Wharton County, alongside participating local governments, developed a Hazard Mitigation Plan to reduce risks from natural disasters such as droughts, flooding, and wildfires. The plan provides a framework for proactive risk management by analyzing vulnerability, assessing current capabilities, and recommending strategies to strengthen and improve resilience and emergency response.



Wharton County Hazard Mitigation Plan

THOROUGHFARE PLAN MAP (2019)

In 2019, El Campo completed the Thoroughfare Plan Map with the Comprehensive Plan Update. The Thoroughfare Plan Map integrates context-sensitive design strategies that address adjacent land uses, capacity needs, and physical barriers. The previously adopted Pedestrian Plan and Colorado Valley Transit Authority Transit Plan are also included in the Thoroughfare Plan Map.



City of El Campo Thoroughfare Plan Map

Demographics and Growth Trends

This demographic analysis examines the existing characteristics and trends for the population of El Campo using the 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates. This analysis helps the community better understand and identify facts that may affect the planning process.

POPULATION AND GENDER

Since 2010, El Campo's population has grown by 5.9%. From 2020 to 2023 alone, the City experienced a 4.5% increase in population. As of 2023, El Campo's estimated population was 12,220. Of this, 47% were female and 53% were male.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

Race and ethnicity are distinct aspects that make individuals unique, each representing different aspects of one's identity. Race typically refers to physical traits, such as skin color or facial features, while ethnicity references cultural factors, such as language or traditions. El Campo's largest racial group is White, representing 66.9% of the total population. Additionally, 51.2% of the total population also identifies as Hispanic or Latino, making it the largest ethnic group in the City.

Figure 3. Ethnicity

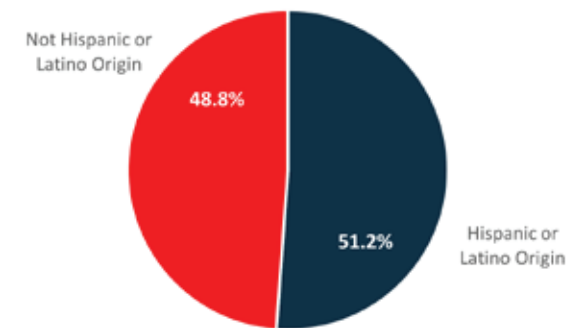
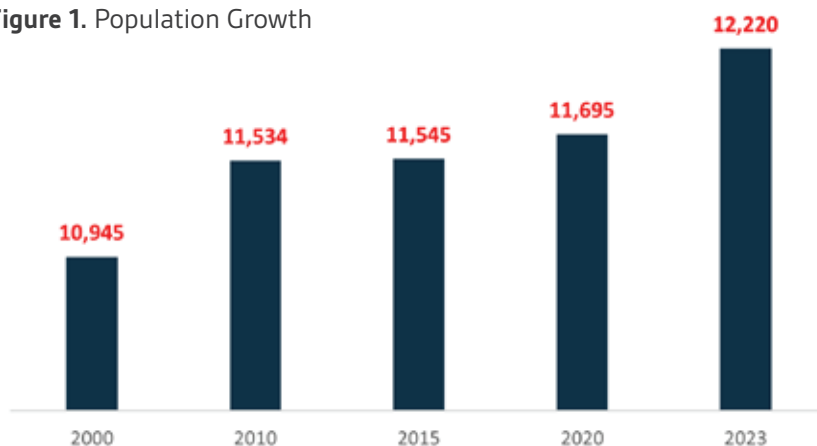
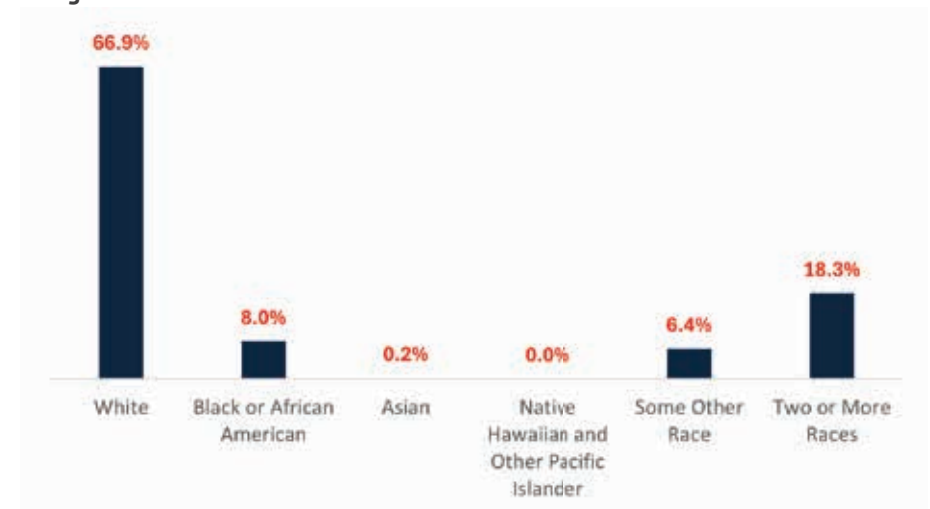


Figure 1. Population Growth



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 2. Race



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Educational attainment is an important factor in shaping employment opportunities and strengthening a city's workforce. Most individuals in El Campo aged 25 or older have received a high school diploma or achieved a higher level of education. Only 9% of the population aged 25 or older has received a bachelor's degree.

AGE DISTRIBUTION

The median age in El Campo is 37.1 years. Approximately 47% of the population is 16 years or older, indicating a significant portion of individuals who are either entering or are already part of the workforce. The largest age group within the City comprises those aged 35 to 49 years. This demographic suggests a community comprised predominantly of young families and professionals in the midst of their careers.

Figure 4. Educational Attainment

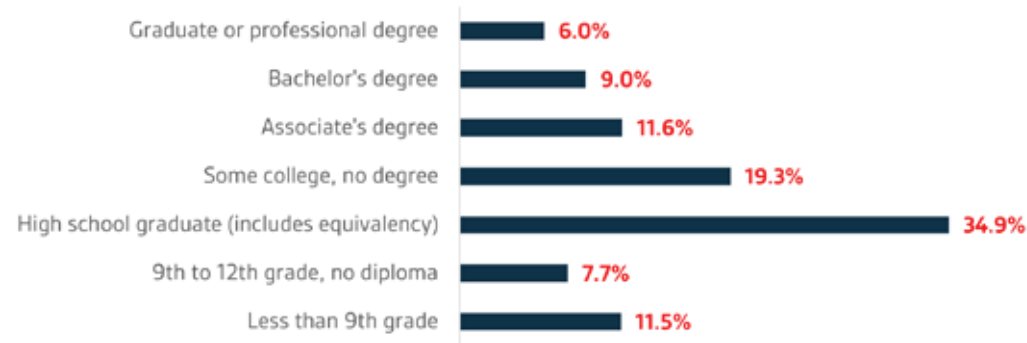
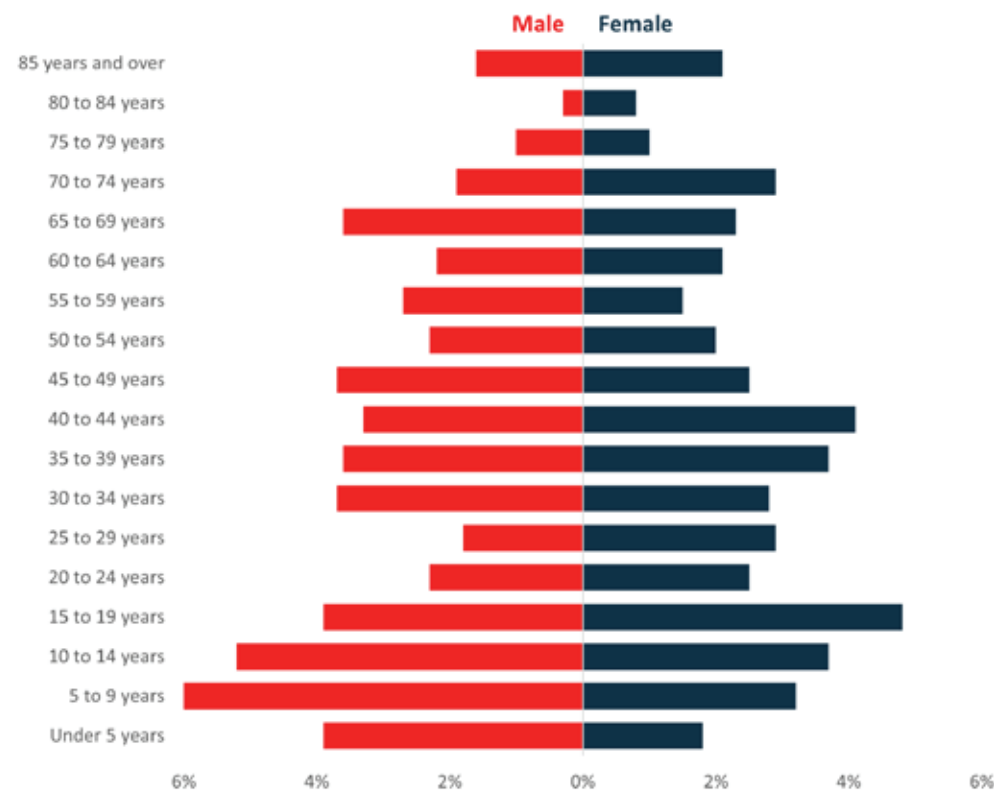


Figure 5. Age Distribution

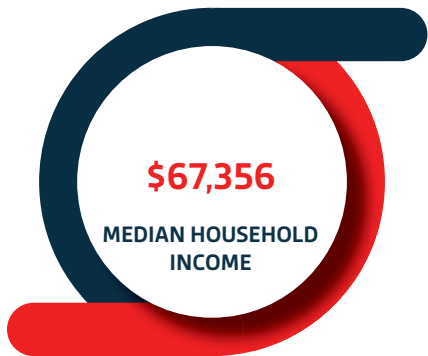


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Understanding a community's median household income is important to identify realistic, obtainable services that the general population can afford. In El Campo, the median household income is \$67,356, which exceeds the median income of Wharton County at \$66,100 but is lower than the state average of \$76,292.

Figure 6. Median Household Income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

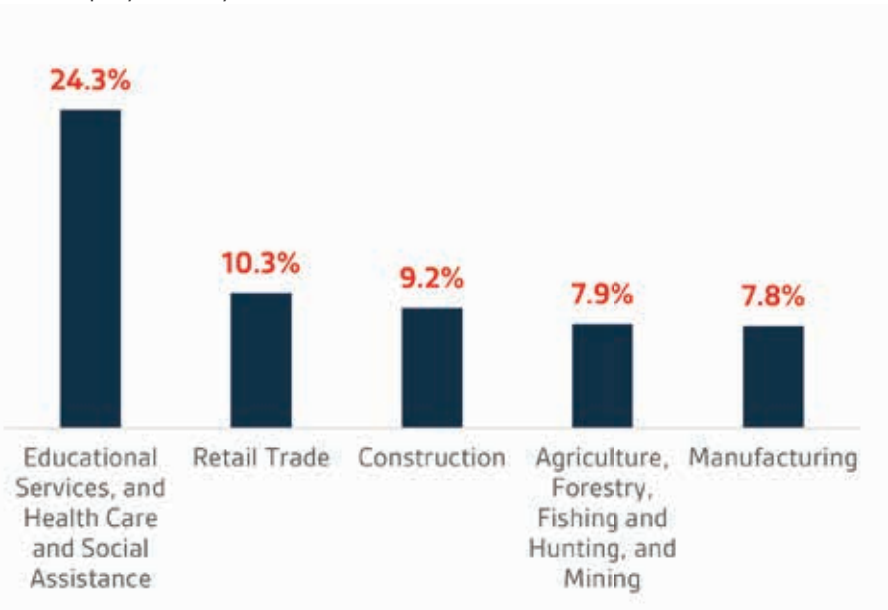
EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR

Equally as important is identifying employment patterns to determine the workforce's needs. The ACS identifies the five major employment sectors in El Campo:

- Educational Services and Health Care and Social Assistance
- Retail Trade
- Construction
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining
- Manufacturing

The largest employment sector in El Campo is Educational Services and Health Care and Social Assistance, which employs approximately 1,207 individuals. These employment trends highlight important areas for potential job growth in the City and demonstrate the strong presence of essential professionals in the education and health sectors.

Figure 7. Employment by Sector



HOUSING

Evaluating the availability, condition, and affordability of housing can guide the development of land use policies that accommodate population growth, promote balanced and sustainable development, and ensure that housing opportunities are equitably distributed.

There are a total of 4,893 housing units in El Campo, out of which 90% are occupied. About 60% of the housing units are owner-occupied, and 40% are renter-occupied. About 41% of the occupied units paying rent are cost-burdened and about 29% of the occupied housing units with a mortgage are cost-burdened.

The median home value in El Campo is \$183,400, comparable to the median home value in Wharton County, which is \$182,700. The median home value has significantly increased from \$101,100 in 2013.

Approximately 60% of the housing units in El Campo were constructed in 1970 or earlier, indicating that a substantial portion of the housing stock is over 50 years old.

The preliminary housing assessment indicates a need for land use policies that address the community's diverse housing needs, prioritize affordable housing solutions, and ensure that both new and existing housing stock meet the needs of current and future residents.

Figure 8. Median Home Value

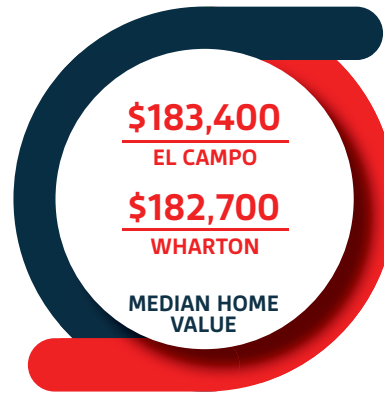


Figure 9. Year Structure Built

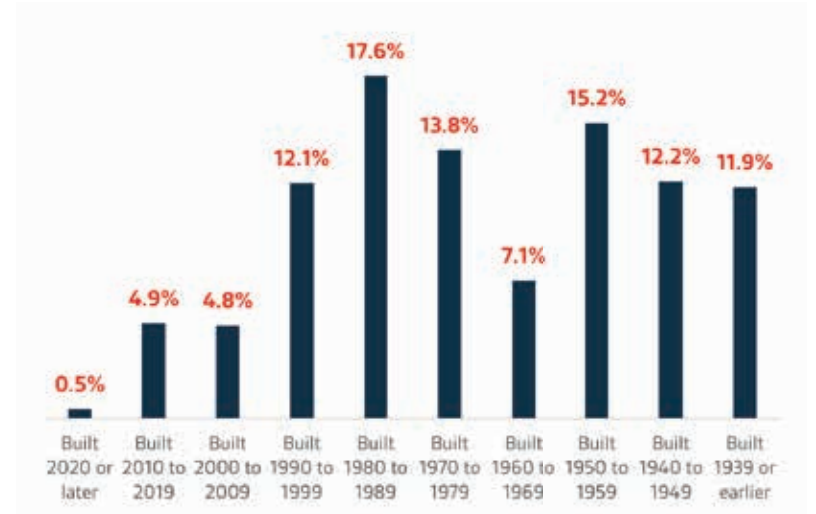


Figure 10. Housing Typology

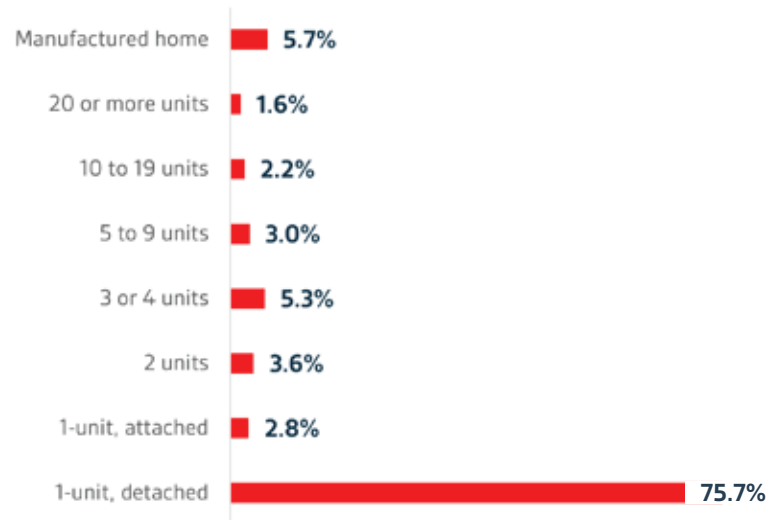
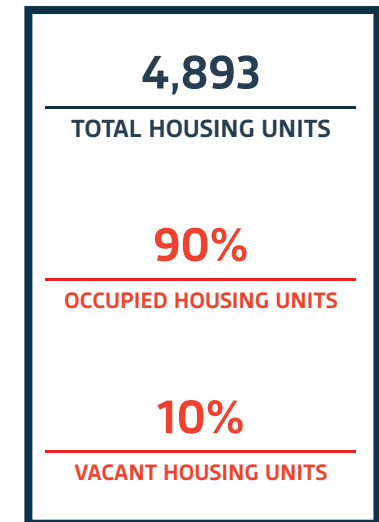


Figure 11. Housing Units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Physical Framework

EXISTING LAND USE

The existing land use provides context for identifying key issues and opportunities within the City and serves as the basis for developing the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). Map 2 illustrates the existing land uses in El Campo and the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

Development Trends

The majority of developed land in El Campo is single-family residential, accounting for 12.8% of the total land area within the city limits and the ETJ. Multifamily residential areas only account for about 0.1% of the total land, while manufactured homes account for 0.9%. A significant focus of the Future Land Use Plan will be addressing the need to increase density and diversify housing options to effectively accommodate anticipated population growth.

Currently, more than half of El Campo's land remains vacant. Specifically, vacant land constitutes 70.2% of the total land area when considering both the city limits and ETJ. This considerable amount of available land represents a significant opportunity for El Campo to accommodate future growth. Strategically developing this vacant land can facilitate balanced growth, enhance the City's infrastructure and economic base, and ensure that future residential and commercial needs are met.

Figure 12. Existing Land Use Acreages

Land Use	City Limits		ETJ		Total	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
Single-Family	1,498.6	25.4%	1,369.5	8.3%	2,868.1	12.8%
Two-Family (Duplex)	30.7	0.5%	0.0	0.0%	30.7	0.1%
Townhome	3.7	0.1%	0.0	0.0%	3.7	0.0%
Multifamily	26.9	0.5%	0.1	0.0%	27.0	0.1%
Manufactured Home	136.0	2.3%	56.0	0.3%	192.0	0.9%
Office	41.8	0.7%	0.0	0.0%	41.8	0.2%
Retail	128.9	2.2%	0.6	0.0%	129.5	0.6%
Commercial	534.6	9.1%	246.6	1.5%	781.2	3.5%
Industrial	197.8	3.4%	66.5	0.4%	264.3	1.2%
Parks and Open Space	67.6	1.1%	0.3	0.0%	67.9	0.3%
Private Recreation	118.1	2.0%	1.1	0.0%	119.2	0.5%
Public/Semi-Public	252.6	4.3%	142.5	0.9%	395.1	1.8%
Utility	8.0	0.1%	5.9	0.0%	13.9	0.1%
Vacant	1,699.4	28.8%	14,089.0	85.0%	15,788.4	70.2%
Right-of-Way	1,159.4	19.6%	592.7	3.6%	1,752.1	7.8%
Total	5,904.1	100.0%	16,570.8	100.0%	22,474.9	100.0%



DRAFT COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

NATURAL FEATURES

Effectively preserving and managing natural resources is essential for navigating the constraints and opportunities related to future development and economic growth in El Campo. This section provides an overview of El Campo's natural features, such as its flat coastal plain, nearby waterways, and green spaces, which are illustrated on Map 3.

Natural Features/Sensitive Environmental Areas

Balancing development with preserving natural resources is essential for maintaining El Campo's well-being. El Campo has access to various smaller water resources. Blue Creek runs along the northwest side of the City's boundaries and Tres Palacios Creek is on the south, eventually connecting to the Colorado River. The City is also heavily influenced by its proximity to the Gulf of Mexico and its location within the coastal plain region. El Campo generally experiences higher humidity levels, which affects the area's agriculture and natural vegetation. Each of these waterbodies hosts delicate ecosystems that support native wildlife and vegetation, which are crucial for maintaining biodiversity and environmental health in the region and help improve the quality of life for residents.

Topography

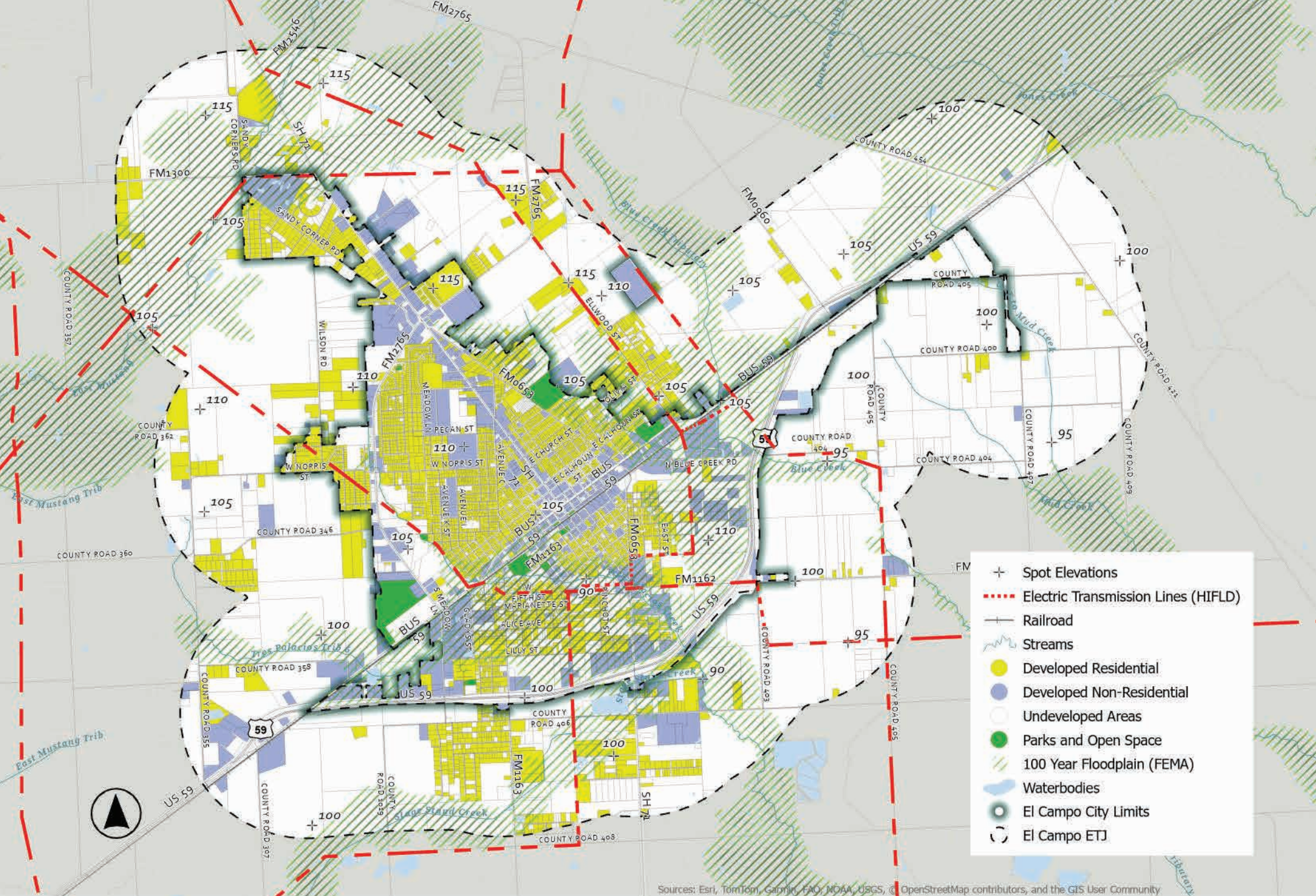
El Campo's topography is characterized by its flat coastal plain with minimal slope, which makes the land suitable for irrigation systems and large-scale agriculture. The flat terrain is a result of sediment accumulation from both river and oceanic processes over time, creating a smooth and level landscape. Lack of natural elevation poses challenges with water accumulation and makes the area more susceptible to flooding. The flat landscape also contributes to challenges in controlling runoff. Implementing effective drainage systems is essential for managing water flow and reducing the risk of flooding. While the topography of the City supports productive land use, it also necessitates careful management to address potential flooding and water management concerns.

Floodplains

A significant portion of El Campo is within the 100-year floodplain, influenced by local waterways such as Tres Palacios Creek and Blue Creek. These areas are susceptible to flooding during heavy rainfall or storms, which presents important considerations for future development. Residential and higher-density developments should be directed away from high-risk floodplain zones to reduce potential damage and ensure the safety of residents. Situating more low-density uses such as parks, green spaces, or recreational facilities that might benefit from the natural features of the floodplain may be more appropriate. Planning efforts should also consider proper stormwater management and conservation protection techniques to protect areas susceptible to flooding.

Parks, Trails, and Green Spaces

Parks, trails, and green spaces are crucial quality of life amenities for El Campo residents. The Parks Master Plan highlights the parks recognized by the City while addressing future actions for restorative opportunities that will help mitigate challenges faced with specific hazards. Pockets of green space throughout the City offer recreational opportunities and scenic landscapes. Extreme heat, outlined as a high-risk hazard in the Wharton County Hazard Mitigation Plan, can be combated by allowing more green spaces and trees to cool land uses in El Campo that are influenced by climate change, high-density development, or transportation corridors.



Map 3. Natural Features

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Developed/Undeveloped Land

Land is often one of the largest constraints facing cities. Within any given municipality there may only be a handful of undeveloped/vacant property available and even less of those are fully connected to utilities and infrastructure. Approximately 29% of the land within El Campo's city limits is vacant or undeveloped and 85% of the land in El Campo's ETJ is categorized as vacant or undeveloped.

The vast majority of vacant land within the city limits is connected by roads and infrastructure, but lies within the 100-year floodplain, which may constrain development. Undeveloped/vacant land within the ETJ is also impacted by significant floodplains from the Tres Palacios Creek and Blue Creek, though there is still a large amount of undeveloped agricultural land/natural areas available for development or conservation.

Ease of Assembly

Ease of assembly refers to how readily parcels of land can be combined to form larger plots suitable for development. In Map 4, ease of assembly is categorized into three classifications—minimum, moderate, and difficult. Land with minimum ease of assembly typically consists of large, contiguous parcels with limited ownership fragmentation, making them especially attractive to external investors and developers. These “shovel-ready” sites require less time and fewer legal complexities, enabling faster development timelines and supporting large-scale projects.

Conversely, areas with moderate to difficult ease of assembly involve more fragmented parcels with multiple owners, complicating the process of land consolidation. While these areas may present challenges, they can also foster a rich, diverse urban environment. Multiple ownerships contribute to varied architectural styles, small-scale businesses, and unique neighborhood character, which can enhance appeal for residents and tourists alike, supporting local services and boutique establishments that enrich the City's cultural landscape.





Opportunities and Constraints

The opportunities and constraints presented in this section are informed by the existing conditions assessment and community input received as part of the comprehensive planning process.

OPPORTUNITIES

Downtown Enhancement and Revitalization

The historic buildings in El Campo's downtown, coupled with the opportunity for thoughtful and context-sensitive development, present a unique chance to create a vibrant, active, and culturally rich downtown area that meets the needs of its diverse community.

There is potential for context-sensitive infill development, allowing for the introduction of new businesses and amenities while preserving the unique character of the historic architecture. Appropriate infill development and revitalization of existing structures can help ensure that new developments blend seamlessly with the existing environment, creating a cohesive and visually appealing downtown area. By capitalizing on this potential, El Campo's downtown could evolve into a lively center of activity, offering

various entertainment options such as family-friendly restaurants, cafes, parks, and recreational facilities. This development would enhance residents' quality of life, attract visitors, and boost the local economy, contributing to the City's overall growth and prosperity.

Family-Friendly Environment and Quality of Life

El Campo offers a family-friendly environment with a lower cost of living and a good quality of life, which can be highly attractive to young families and professionals. Community engagement highlighted a strong desire to retain young professionals within the community. Through targeted development strategies, amenities and entertainment options can be created to meet the needs of this demographic. Additionally, it is important to develop housing options at various price points to serve a diverse population.



Commercial and Industrial Development

El Campo has several distinct strengths relating to its commercial and industrial development opportunities due to its strategic location, transportation infrastructure, and regional industry focus. The City benefits from its position along the US 59 corridor, which provides direct connectivity through Texas and across the U.S.-Mexico border. This corridor supports El Campo's logistics and distribution potential, enabling the movement of goods both domestically and internationally. Currently, there is a significant amount of vacant and undeveloped land that is south of Business 59, within city limits. Though this land is well-positioned logistically, one limitation is that it does lie within the 100-year floodplain. The City may consider implementing updated zoning regulations and/or enhanced building standards as mitigation strategies to reduce hazards in this area.

Rail accessibility is a further advantage, with the Kansas City Southern Railway facilitating direct, cross-border transportation options. This infrastructure is particularly important for large-scale industrial uses, such as sites that accommodate distribution and manufacturing activities on a regional scale.

Agribusiness also plays a crucial role in El Campo's economy, given the area's rich agricultural resources and its role in Texas's broader agricultural production network. Incentives offered by the City, such as Section 380 agreements, Tax Increment Financing (TIF) zones, Transportation Reinvestment Zones (TRA), and Opportunity Zone benefits, in addition to incentives offered by the City Development Corporation (CDC) for site improvement and job creation aim to encourage further commercial and industrial investment. These programs can help offset initial startup costs for businesses and further incentivize investment.

Green Infrastructure

The Tres Palacios watershed in El Campo has a strong foundation for expanding green infrastructure as a means of managing flood risks and improving water quality. By implementing green infrastructure solutions such as bioretention areas, permeable pavements, and riparian buffers, the City can address both existing challenges and future water management needs. These techniques work by capturing and filtering runoff at the source, which reduces the volume and speed of water entering the Tres Palacios Creek and its tributaries during rain events. This helps alleviate pressure on the restricted channel capacities that contribute to frequent flooding, allowing for more controlled water flow that minimizes overflow risks.

In addition, green infrastructure can reduce pollutants before they reach water bodies. For example, riparian buffers along the creek's banks help filter out contaminants from runoff, trapping sediments, nutrients, and bacteria that might otherwise flow directly into the creek. Permeable pavements and bioretention systems also improve water quality by allowing water to infiltrate slowly into the ground, which not only filters pollutants but also supports groundwater recharge. These benefits align well with ongoing efforts, such as the Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) led by the Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI), which focuses on both flood resilience and pollution prevention. These combined strategies, allow El Campo to build a resilient and sustainable watershed system that supports long-term ecological health and hazard resilience.

CONSTRAINTS

Infrastructure Cost and Quality

The City of El Campo faces substantial challenges in funding infrastructure development, especially as it expands its commercial and industrial sectors. Located on a flood-prone coastal plain, El Campo requires robust flood mitigation infrastructure to reduce damage from heavy rains and storms. However, the significant investments needed for flood control strain the City's limited tax base. State and federal support, such as the recent \$14.8 million Texas General Land Office (GLO) grant, has provided some relief, specifically for storm resilience projects aimed at protecting low- to moderate-income neighborhoods with histories of flood damage. Despite this assistance, infrastructure needs, particularly for flood control along the Tres Palacios Creek, continue to exceed available funding.

Beyond flood-specific projects, El Campo's infrastructure quality is influenced by multiple factors. The City's flat terrain and clay-heavy soil contribute to poor natural drainage, exacerbating flood risks and requiring continuous investments in drainage systems. Additionally, aging water and sewer infrastructure requires regular maintenance and upgrades, which challenge the City's financial resources due to its modest tax revenue base.

Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs) play a key role in extending essential services—such as water, sewer, and drainage—especially in developments beyond city limits. By funding infrastructure through bonds paid by property taxes within each district, MUDs allow the City to support new growth without directly impacting its budget. However, this model can create inconsistencies in infrastructure quality and costs across different parts of El Campo, impacting residents' experience and access to services.

Developing within floodplain areas introduces additional financial challenges due to the necessity of costly flood mitigation measures like elevated structures and reinforced drainage systems. These expenses further constrain development potential without significant public or private funding.

Retaining Younger Residents

El Campo displays several demographic trends suggesting potential out-migration, especially among younger and educated residents. Population estimates from the Texas State Demographer and the U.S. Census Bureau reveal a small but steady population decline, with El Campo's numbers decreasing from 12,350 in 2020 to around 12,062 in 2023, a 2.4% drop. This reduction is coupled with a modest educational attainment level, as only 9% of residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to national averages, which may signal limited opportunities locally for highly skilled jobs.

Age data further emphasizes the potential for brain drain: approximately 30% of the population is under 18, while 16.6% are over 65, indicating a smaller proportion of working-age adults. This distribution can be challenging for economic growth, as younger residents may leave to pursue advanced education or employment opportunities in larger urban centers. El Campo's economy, largely grounded in traditional sectors like agriculture and logistics, may not offer the variety of professional roles that appeal to younger, educated residents.

Income levels also play a role, with a median household income of about \$67,356 and a poverty rate of 15.9%. These economic indicators, alongside a limited tax base, restrict the City's ability to invest in infrastructure and diversify its job market, which are critical factors in retaining and attracting younger talent.

The Wharton County Junior College acts as an asset for higher education in the community. In addition, the El Campo Independent School District offers vocational training opportunities through its high school. The City should continue to develop additional programming for increased educational opportunities for its youth.

Agriculture and a Changing Climate

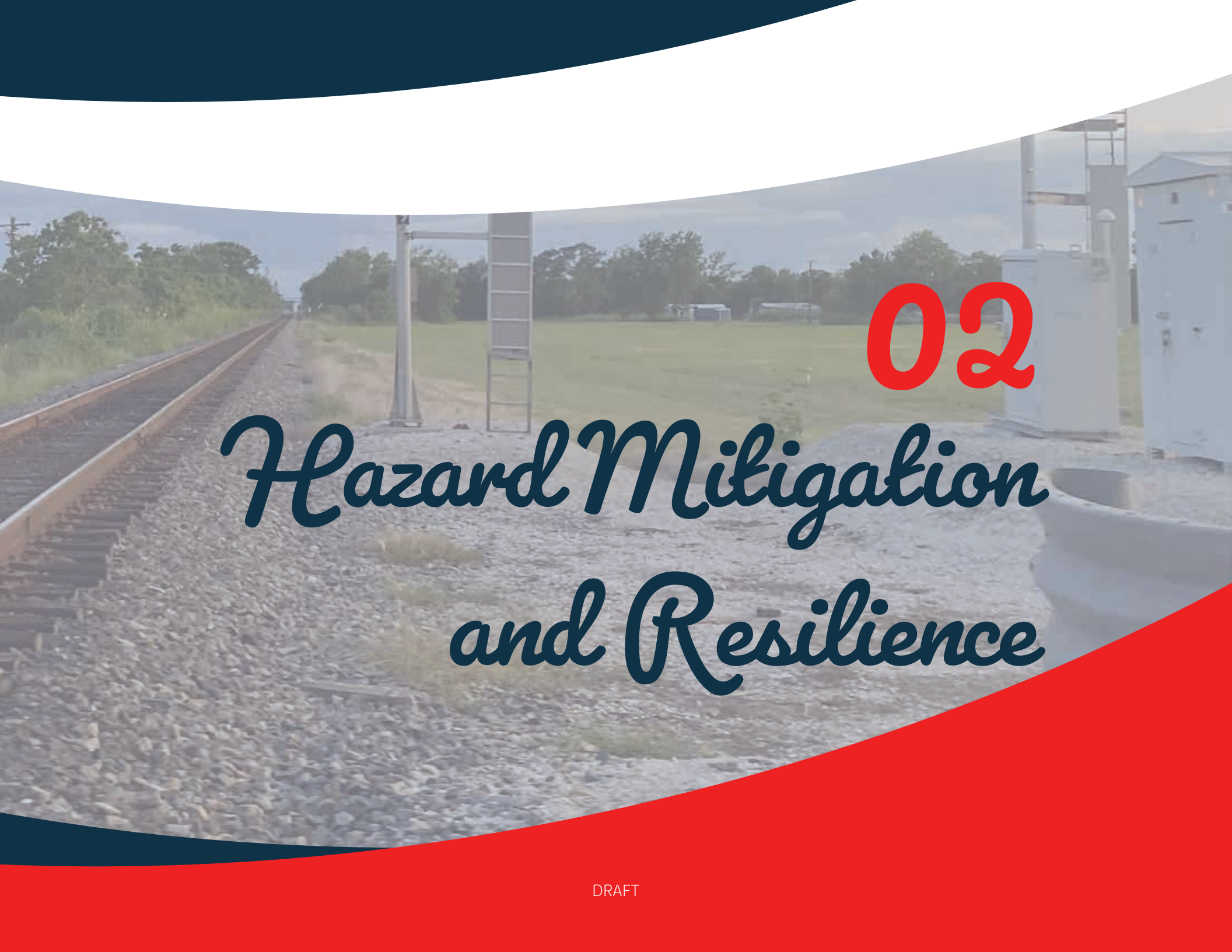
Agriculture is a cornerstone of El Campo's economy, with a large portion of local income and employment tied to farming and related industries. The City's agricultural activities are largely centered on rice, sorghum, corn, and cotton, benefiting from the region's fertile soils and generally favorable growing conditions. However, climate change presents emerging challenges for these industries, necessitating adaptation to sustain long-term productivity.

Future climate projections indicate more extreme and unpredictable weather patterns, which could significantly impact El Campo's agricultural sector. According to Texas A&M AgriLife Research, rising temperatures and prolonged droughts are expected to stress traditional crop varieties, especially water-intensive crops like rice, and could necessitate shifts to drought-tolerant strains and improved water management techniques. Additionally, an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report highlights that while rainfall intensity is likely to increase, resulting in higher flood risks, the frequency of long dry spells may also grow, putting additional pressure on water resources and irrigation infrastructure. These conditions could also accelerate crop maturity, potentially reducing yields as faster-growing cycles limit grain and biomass production. For instance, maize may see a reduction in productivity if heat levels consistently exceed optimal thresholds during the growing season, as demonstrated by NASA's climate and crop modeling research.





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The background image shows a railway track on the left, receding into the distance. To the right of the track is a gravel area with several tall, grey metal poles or signal masts. Further right, there are white electrical cabinets or transformers. The scene is set in a grassy field with trees in the background under a cloudy sky. The image is framed by dark blue curved borders at the top and bottom, and a red curved border at the bottom right.

02 *Hazard Mitigation and Resilience*

DRAFT

Introduction

El Campo is characterized by a rich array of natural assets that contribute to its unique identity and livability. The City's location in the Gulf Coast Region enhances its climate and biodiversity, allowing a variety of species to thrive in its humid coastal environment. The abundance of various water sources and green spaces also contributes to the area's scenic beauty and provides numerous recreational opportunities for residents.

Along with its natural assets, El Campo also faces several potential hazards that must be addressed to protect its residents and environment.

The following sections provide more information on El Campo's different assets and resources to inform the conditions that will impact its future. By recognizing and leveraging its natural assets while proactively addressing potential hazards, El Campo can create a sustainable and resilient community that thrives in its environment.

This chapter provides:

- Hazard Mitigation and Land Use Planning
- Natural Hazards
- Characterization of the Extent of Hazards
- Likelihood of Identified Hazards to Cause Harm

WHAT WE HEARD

Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Priorities



Need better drainage when it floods.



Need a contingency plan that includes more communication with the public in case of another storm or hurricane.



Hazard Mitigation and Land Use Planning

Hazard mitigation and resilience are crucial concepts in urban planning and disaster management. Hazard mitigation is any sustainable action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from future disasters. Resilience, on the other hand, is the ability to prepare for, adapt to, withstand, and recover rapidly from disruptions. By reducing risks, communities can minimize damage and recover more quickly from disasters, leading to greater resilience.

Land use decisions incorporating stern building codes and zoning laws can minimize the risk of damage to building structures and even loss of life in hazard-prone areas. Resilient land use planning that incorporates community input ensures decisions reflect residents' insights and address their needs. Sustainable land use practices and green infrastructure mitigate climate change impacts and create new aesthetics or economic benefits for El Campo through resiliency. Integrating hazard mitigation components into the Plan significantly enhances the ability to address hazards and achieve resilience.

The Wharton County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) identifies natural hazards that impact the City and Wharton County and outlines actions to reduce losses from these hazards. The goals of the Wharton County HMP were developed from a risk assessment during the HMP update process. The goals were created to reduce long-term vulnerabilities to specified hazards and to amplify the full potential of land use within the planning area.

The HMP provides a list of recommended actions that could be implemented to provide hazard mitigation benefits, along with the individual hazards addressed by the action. The list of recommended mitigation actions for El Campo and Wharton County from the Plan are shown in Figure 13 on page 24. These actions support the Plan goals to maximize the land use potential within Wharton County and El Campo.

Goals of Wharton County HMP

The Wharton County HMP provides guiding principles, objectives, and goals resulting from public engagement in efforts to reduce long-term exposure to identified hazards.

GOAL 1: Protect public health and safety.

GOAL 2: Protect new and existing properties.

GOAL 3: Increase public understanding, support, and demand for hazard mitigation.

GOAL 4: Build and support local capacity and commitment to continuously become less vulnerable to hazards.

GOAL 5: Promote growth in a sustainable manner.

GOAL 6: Maximize the resources for investment in hazard mitigation.

Figure 13. Wharton County HMP Recommended Mitigation Actions Applicable to El Campo and Wharton County

Mitigation Actions Developed to Address Hazards			
Action No.	City of El Campo	Action No.	Wharton County Objectives
1	Provide education on water conservation techniques	1	Improve drainage infrastructure throughout the County (Bridge, culvert, channel, levee, and dam projects)
2	Improve drainage infrastructure throughout the City (Bridge, culvert, channel, levee, and dam projects)	2	Update and adopt the Wharton County Flood Insurance Study and FIRM
3	Adopt freeboard ordinance	3	Adopt "Higher Standard" Riverine Flood Damage Prevention Ordinances and Standards
4	Adopt IBC and IRC	4	Join FEMA's CRS Program
5	Use GIS mapping	5	Create/maintain a Wharton Disaster Response Team
6	Outreach to vulnerable populations regarding extreme and adverse weather/conditions	6	Implement a Wharton County Flood Warning/Monitoring System
7	Implement Drainage Master Plan (7 projects)	7	Install emergency backup generators at critical facilities
8	Educate the community on all hazards	8	Educate community on hazards
9	Alternative notification/alert system	9	Drainage Master Plan Update
10	Establish Post Disaster Temporary Transfer Center	10	Update Subdivision Ordinance
11	Establish/implement drought/expansive soils contingency plan	11	Collaborate with Regional Flood Planning Group
12	Update Drainage Master Plan	12	Collaborate with local canal owners to identify funding to improve and expand existing infrastructure
13	Develop a plan to improve pandemic response	13	Collaborate with local MUD Districts to establish/implement drought/expansive soils contingency plan
14	Conduct after-action report and improvement plan meeting in regard to COVID-19 pandemic	14	Develop a plan to improve pandemic response
15	Collaborate with local groundwater district to monitor land subsidence	15	Conduct after-action report and improvement plan meeting in regard to COVID-19 pandemic
16	Establish a hazardous materials response team	16	Collaborate with local groundwater district to monitor land subsidence
17	Install emergency generators at critical facilities	17	Establish a county-wide hazardous material response team

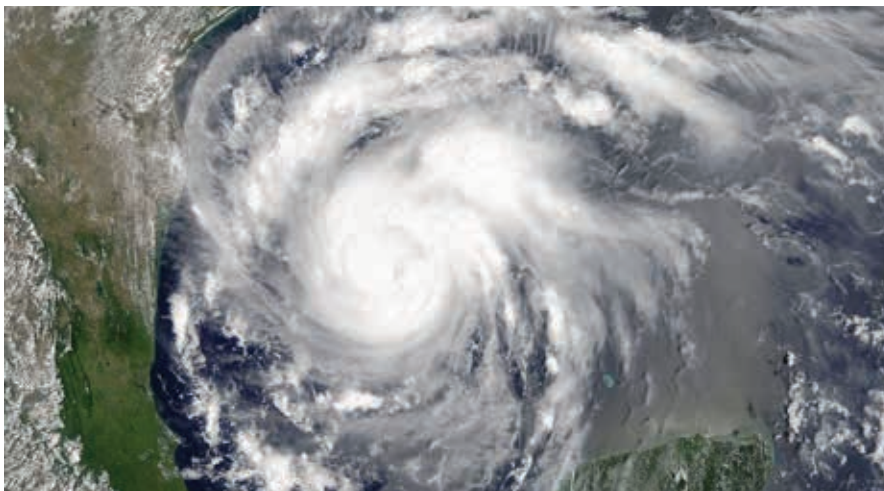
Natural Hazards

The Wharton County Hazard Mitigation Plan outlines five high-risk hazards for El Campo:

HURRICANES/TROPICAL STORMS

Based on intensity, tropical cyclones are classified into three derivations: hurricanes, tropical storms, or tropical depressions. Hurricanes and tropical storms are severe hazards that threaten El Campo, given the City's proximity to the Texas Gulf Coast. El Campo is subject to intense local thunderstorms of short duration, general storms extending over periods of several days, and torrential rainfall associated with hurricanes and other tropical disturbances. Hurricanes or tropical storms can impact the City's economy by destroying infrastructure and altering natural landscapes. This hazard can also strengthen a community by raising awareness and making it more prepared, as well as achieving resiliency.

As a City that neighbors the Gulf Coast, El Campo can also experience storm surges and flooding that may be exacerbated by hurricanes or tropical storms. In addition to causing flooding, hurricanes and tropical storms also produce high winds, heavy rainfall, and lightning.



FLOODING

Flooding is the most significant hazard for El Campo, driven by multiple risk factors. The City's flat coastal plain topography, with minimal slope and predominantly clay loam soil, results in high runoff and limited percolation, increasing flood risk. City officials report that residents have endured property damage for decades due to floodwaters from hurricanes, tropical storms, and prolonged heavy rainfall.

El Campo's location within a major floodplain exacerbates the threat, with 2,257 acres in the 100-year floodplain, 145 acres in the 500-year floodplain, and 125 acres within a regulatory floodway. This makes flooding a critical concern for the City's residents, infrastructure, and ecosystems.

To mitigate flood risks, El Campo could prioritize improving drainage systems and implementing green infrastructure solutions that reduce flood likelihood while protecting essential infrastructure. Although there are no dams or levees within city limits, implementing additional flood control measures could enhance the community's resilience.



HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

As a logistics and agribusiness hub, El Campo faces unique risks from hazardous materials due to the regular transportation, storage, and industrial handling of chemicals and other potentially dangerous substances. Hazardous material spills in this context can release toxic, flammable, or corrosive agents that pose threats to residents, local properties, and the surrounding agricultural landscape. The movement of goods, chemicals for agriculture, and industrial inputs through the area amplifies the likelihood of spills during transit or at processing facilities.

To mitigate these risks, El Campo relies on several regulatory programs. The Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) requires facilities to report emissions, documenting pollutants like ammonia and aluminum oxide that could impact local air and water quality. Additionally, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) oversees hazardous waste management, ensuring proper storage and disposal to protect soil and groundwater from contamination. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits further regulate wastewater discharges, safeguarding local waterways from industrial pollutants. Brownfields in El Campo, which may carry contamination from prior industrial use, offer redevelopment opportunities through EPA-supported assessment and remediation efforts. Facilities that fall under each of these programs are illustrated in Map 5.

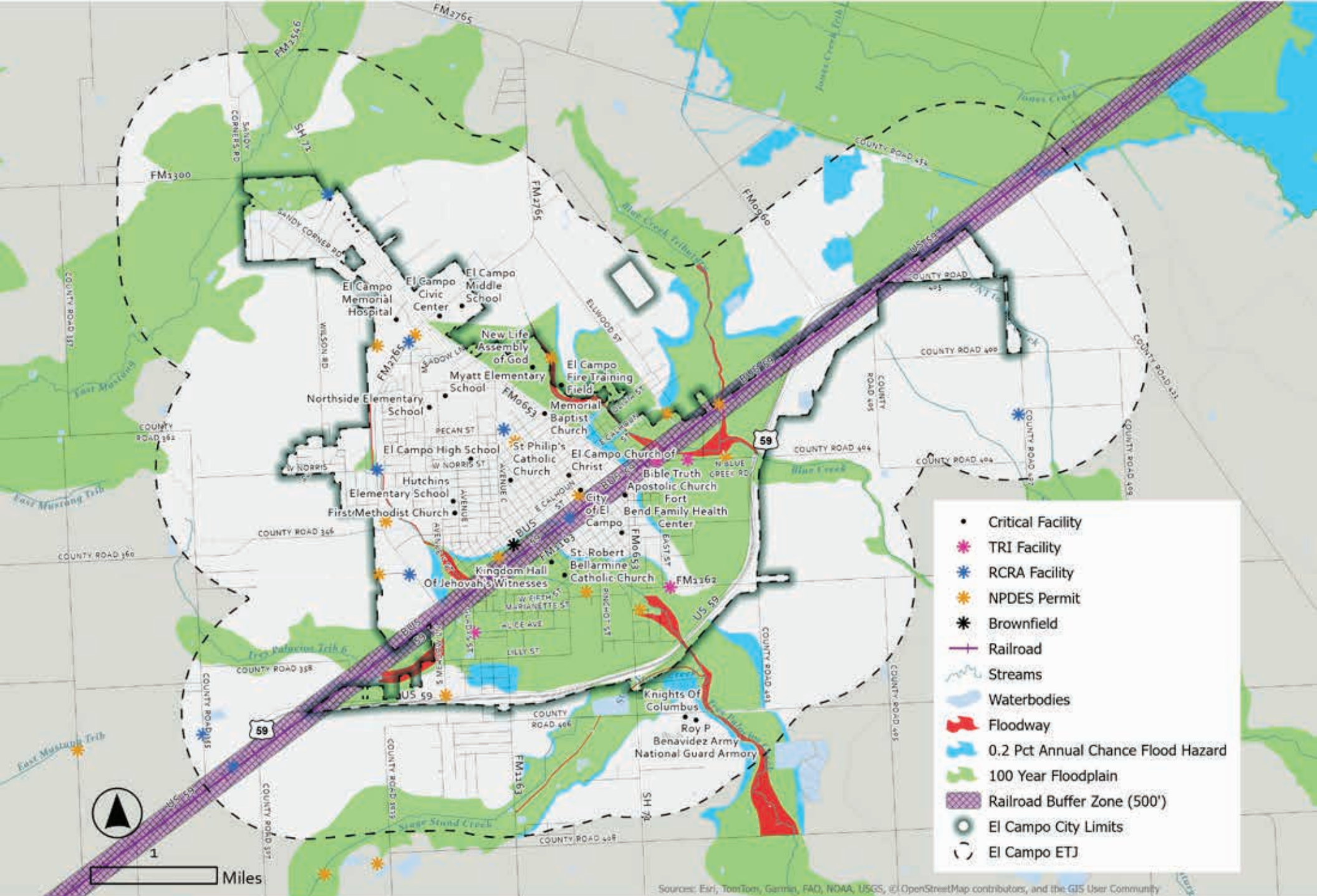
DROUGHT AND EXTREME HEAT

El Campo, like many cities in Texas, experiences the compounded risks of drought and extreme heat. Drought impacts include adverse effects on water resources, wildlife, and farming. The dry vegetation resulting from drought conditions also increases wildfire threat and severity. The Wharton County Hazard Mitigation Plan ranks the area as medium for drought due to the cumulative impact of several dry years on both surface and subsurface water supplies. This can lead to water deficiencies that affect residents' health, well-being, and quality of life, as well as reduce agricultural productivity in a region heavily reliant on farming. With high temperatures often exceeding 100°F, El Campo also ranks high for extreme heat risk. These conditions place stress on local energy infrastructure, heightening the chance of rolling blackouts during peak usage periods, especially as air conditioning demand spikes.

Such blackouts can have serious impacts on vulnerable populations, including young children, the elderly, and economically disadvantaged residents, who may struggle to access cooling resources or withstand extreme heat. Additionally, prolonged heat and dry conditions strain local agriculture, affecting crop yields and requiring increased water use for irrigation, further stressing limited water supplies.

WINDS

El Campo is exposed to wind hazards associated with its geographical location in the coastal plains, making it susceptible to severe thunderstorms, tropical storms, and occasionally hurricanes. These events can bring high wind speeds that damage infrastructure, disrupt power, and affect commercial operations. Average wind speeds generally range from 6 to 15 knots, but severe weather can produce gusts of up to 28 knots, particularly during tropical systems or strong storm fronts, which have historically impacted El Campo and the surrounding region.



Map 5. Natural Hazards

Characterization of the Extent of Hazards

Based on the information gathered, the extent of each major hazard affecting El Campo is characterized below:

TORNADOES

Geographic Extent

Tornado impacts in El Campo are typically localized, affecting specific paths ranging from several yards to potentially a mile or more in width, depending on the tornado's strength.

Magnitude/Intensity

Historical records indicate 38 tornado events with recorded magnitudes of 2 or above (on the Enhanced Fujita Scale) in or near El Campo, suggesting the potential for significant structural damage when these events occur.

Duration

Tornado events themselves are typically brief, lasting from a few minutes to less than an hour, though the recovery period from significant tornado damage can extend for months.

Frequency

El Campo's tornado risk is assessed as lower than the Texas average but higher than the national average, placing it in a moderate-risk category for tornado frequency. Most tornado activity occurs during spring and early summer months.

DROUGHT

Geographic Extent

Drought conditions typically affect large geographic areas spanning multiple counties or even states, meaning when drought impacts El Campo, it usually affects the entire Wharton County region and beyond.

Magnitude/Intensity

Drought severity in the El Campo area can range from:

- Abnormally Dry (D0) conditions - Minor crop/pasture impacts
- Moderate Drought (D1) - Some damage to crops/pastures
- Severe Drought (D2) - Likely crop/pasture losses
- Extreme Drought (D3) - Major crop/pasture losses
- Exceptional Drought (D4) - Exceptional and widespread crop/pasture losses

Duration

Drought conditions can persist for extended periods, from several months to multiple years. Texas experienced a significant multi-year drought from 2010-2015, demonstrating the potential long-duration of this hazard.

Frequency

Texas has experienced 20 drought events with losses exceeding \$1 billion each from 1980-2025, indicating that significant drought conditions affect the region approximately every 2-3 years on average.

FLOODING

Geographic Extent

Flooding in El Campo is not limited to designated Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs). Instead, it affects the entire community due to its flat coastal plain topography with very little slope and predominantly clay loam soil that contributes to high runoff with minimal percolation.

Magnitude/Intensity

Flood events in El Campo can be severe, as demonstrated in 2015 when tropical storms associated with Tropical Storm Bill deposited 10 to 15 inches of rain within 24 hours, causing significant flooding throughout the area.

The potential intensity of flooding in the broader Wharton County area was on display during Hurricane Harvey in 2017, when the Colorado River crested at 50.46 feet—more than 11 feet above flood stage—reaching levels not seen in over a century (since 1913). Wide-ranging flooding impacts also occurred during Hurricane Beryl in 2024 due to intense rainfall.

Duration

Flood events in El Campo typically last from a matter of hours to several days or weeks depending on:

- The source of flooding (flash floods from intense rainfall vs. riverine flooding)
- Drainage capacity of the affected areas
- Soil saturation levels prior to flooding events

The recurring nature of flooding in El Campo has been characterized as a decades-long issue by the City's mayor, indicating persistent vulnerability rather than isolated incidents.

Frequency

El Campo experienced repetitive flood damage from major storm events in 2015, 2016, and 2017 (Hurricane Harvey), demonstrating a high frequency of significant flooding events in recent years.

HURRICANES AND TROPICAL STORMS

Geographic Extent

Despite being approximately 45 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico, El Campo remains within the impact zone for hurricanes and tropical storms that make landfall along the Texas coast. The effects typically include heavy rainfall, strong winds, and potential tornadoes spawned by these systems.

Magnitude/Intensity

During Hurricane Harvey (2017), areas near El Campo recorded substantial rainfall totals ranging from approximately 13 to 15 inches, demonstrating the significant intensity these systems can deliver even to inland communities. During Hurricane Beryl in 2024, El Campo was impacted by flooding as well as high winds that caused property damage and power outages across Wharton County. The City received GLO grants to assist with recovery following the event.

Duration

Hurricane and tropical storm impacts on El Campo typically last for:

- The direct storm impact period: 1-3 days
- Aftermath flooding: Several days to weeks
- Recovery period: Weeks to months depending on damage severity

Frequency

Texas as a whole has experienced 16 tropical events with losses exceeding \$1 billion each from 1980-2025, indicating these systems represent a recurring threat to the region.

EXTREME HEAT

Geographic Extent

Extreme heat events typically affect broad geographic regions including all of Wharton County and surrounding areas.

Magnitude/Intensity

Climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme heat events across Texas, with temperatures potentially reaching dangerous levels that can cause heat-related illnesses and infrastructure strain.

Duration

Extreme heat events in the El Campo area can range from:

- Short-duration heat waves lasting 3-5 days
- Extended heat events lasting 1-2 weeks
- Seasonal heat patterns lasting throughout summer months

Frequency

Extreme heat is a common seasonal occurrence in Texas, with El Campo experiencing high temperatures primarily during summer months (June-September), though climate change is extending the potential season for extreme heat events.

WILDFIRES

Geographic Extent

Wildfire risk in El Campo is primarily concentrated in:

- Interface areas between developed land and natural vegetation
- Agricultural areas during drought conditions
- Grasslands and wooded areas in and around the community

Magnitude/Intensity

Wildfire intensity is closely linked to drought conditions, with increased threat and severity when drought creates dry vegetation that serves as fuel. Dead or dry vegetation resulting from drought significantly increases wildfire potential.

Duration

Wildfire events can last from hours to days depending on:

- Weather conditions (wind, humidity, temperature)
- Available fuel
- Accessibility for firefighting resources
- Containment efforts

Frequency

Texas experienced seven wildfire events with losses exceeding \$1 billion each from 1980-2025, indicating that while less frequent than other hazards, significant wildfire events do occur in the region.

This characterization of hazard extent demonstrates that El Campo faces multiple natural hazards with varying geographic scope, intensity, duration, and frequency. Flooding clearly represents the most extensive and frequent threat, but other hazards also pose significant risks that must be addressed in comprehensive hazard mitigation planning.

Likelihood of Identified Hazards to Cause Harm

Based on the available information, the likelihood of identified hazards causing harm to El Campo can be assessed as follows:

Flooding

Very High Likelihood

The repetitive damage patterns described by the El Campo mayor, with residents suffering “for decades due to flood water,” indicate this is a recurring and highly probable threat to the community.

Tornadoes

Moderate Likelihood

The tornado risk in El Campo is lower than the Texas average but higher than the national average, placing it in a moderate risk category for this hazard.

Hurricanes/Tropical Storms

High Likelihood

El Campo's inland location provides some buffer from direct hurricane impacts, but the City remains vulnerable to the torrential rainfall associated with these systems.

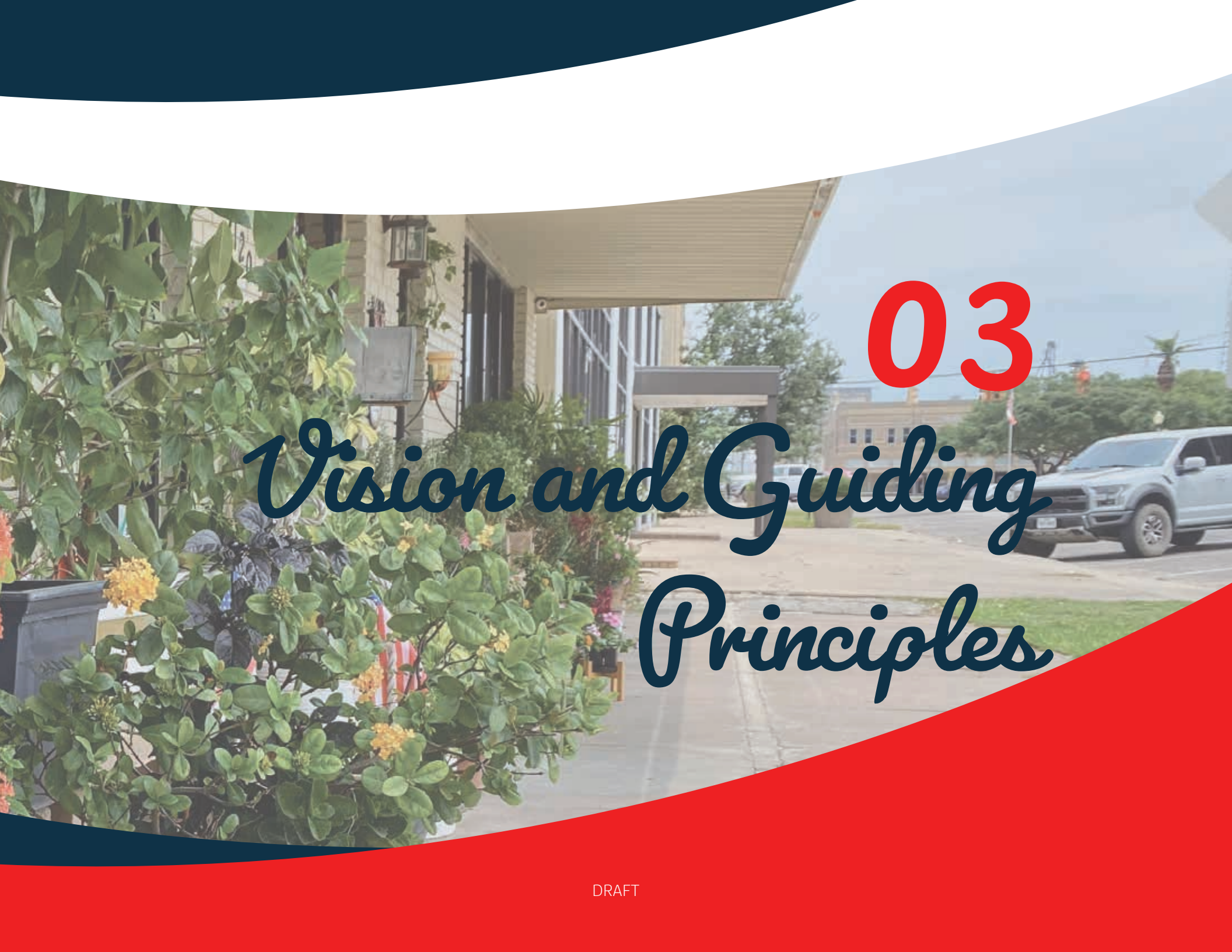
Drought/Heat

Moderate-to-High Likelihood

Climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of certain types of extreme weather, including increased vulnerability to drought and extreme heat events across Texas.



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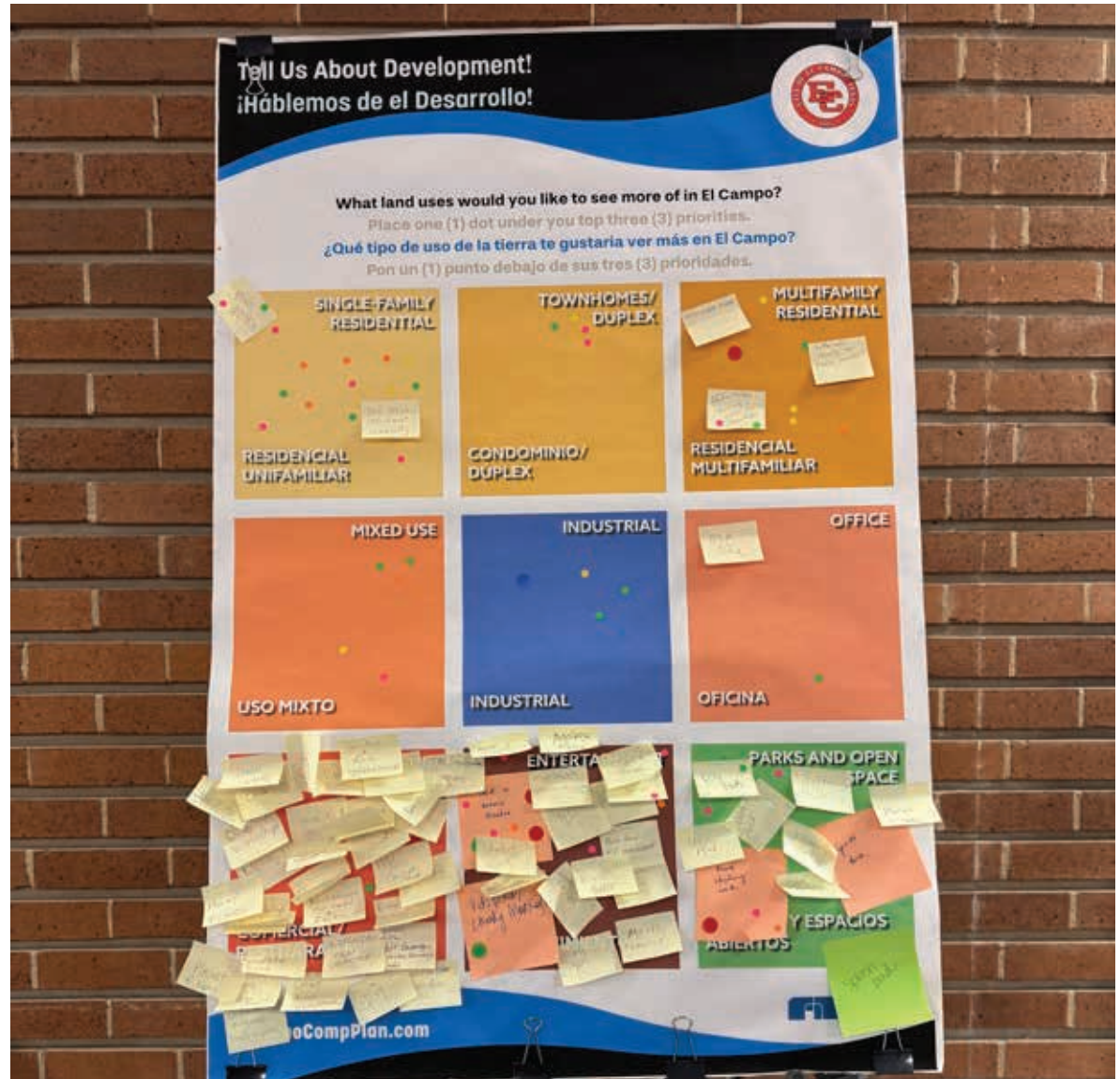
Vision and Guiding Principles

Introduction

The key to a successful plan is public engagement and community buy-in. An open and transparent planning process builds consensus within the community and results in a more singular vision that the residents support. Residents and stakeholders were engaged throughout the process using various outreach methods. Input received from these events, and summarized in this chapter, was used to develop the vision and guiding principles that influence the recommendations of this Plan.

This chapter provides:

- Engaging the Community
 - Engagement Methods
 - Engagement Efforts
 - Key Themes
- Vision and Guiding Principles



Engaging the Community

ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Public engagement is vital to developing stakeholder relationships and instilling trust and support in the decision-making process. Public input was collected through various methods to provide different ways for the community to participate including the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, community open houses, community engagement events, and an online survey. All of the input received helped to identify issues and opportunities to shape the vision and goals that guided this Plan.

City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission

The role of the City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) is to guide development and make policy decisions. The city staff and the planning team met with City Council, and the P&Z throughout the planning process to gather input about the future of El Campo and provide periodic updates.

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) includes residents, business owners, and community members who are knowledgeable about the City and have an interest in the future of El Campo. The role of the CPAC is to serve as advocates for the Plan and to guide Plan recommendations. City staff held several meetings with the CPAC throughout the process.

Online Survey and Project Website

A project website was available where the public could learn about the project, review project materials, and submit feedback throughout the process. An online survey was also used to gather input from the community about the future of El Campo. The survey asked questions about existing conditions and the vision for the future. The survey was available from May 11, 2024, to January 3, 2025, and received 240 responses.

Community Meetings and Outreach Events

Various community meetings and outreach events were held to allow the public to learn about the project and provide feedback on the Plan. Outreach events included traditional community meetings, pop-ups at existing community events, public hearings and input boards distributed throughout the City. The purpose of these meetings and outreach events was to provide ample opportunities for the public to participate in the planning process and provide feedback about the Plan recommendations.



ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Community Events

Community input does not always take the form of a traditional meeting. In some cases, outreach can be expanded by meeting the community where they are. While developing the Plan, the planning team attended several community events—such as the annual Touch-A-Truck event and the Christmas Mall—where they gathered valuable insights from attendees.

Touch-A-Truck

Key Takeaways

- Address the lack of family-friendly activities and entertainment options
- Provide more reasonably priced housing options
- Maintain the small-town feel

Christmas Mall

Key Takeaways

- El Campo is a great place to raise a family, and residents love the small-town feel
- Residents want to see more parks and open spaces
- Residents want more industrial jobs
- Citizens want more family-friendly entertainment, retail, and restaurants



Touch-A-Truck in May 2024



Christmas Mall in December 2024



Touch-A-Truck in May 2024 Input Board

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

CPAC provided knowledge from various perspectives, including long-term residents, community leaders, business owners, and developers. The CPAC steered the planning process, using concepts presented by the City to direct issues and identify opportunities to refine the Plan's recommendations. Throughout the planning process, CPAC meetings were facilitated by city staff.

CPAC'S Primary Role

- Provide knowledge of the area
- Identify issues and opportunities
- Shape the community's vision and goals
- Guide the Plan recommendations and priorities
- Serve as ambassadors of the Plan

Key Takeaways

- The City has opportunities to grow in the ETJ to the northeast of the City
- There is a desire to see more residential development in the northern part of the City and commercial and mixed use along US 59
- Future development should reflect a mix of uses and not just one type



Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Meeting

Community Open House

A Community Open House for the Comprehensive Plan was held at the El Campo City Hall on March 28, 2025. This open house aimed to present an overview of base studies, feedback received to date, the draft vision and guiding principles, the draft future land use map, public infrastructure, and mitigation and resiliency. The feedback received during the meeting was used to tailor the recommendations of the Plan.

Key Takeaways

- There is a desire for more sidewalks and trails to promote walking and biking in the City
- 93% of participants agree with the draft vision for the Comprehensive Plan
- Residents would like to see more diversity in retail and restaurants in the City
- Providing affordable housing is important to attract an employee base
- There is a need to improve roadway and utility infrastructure in the City
- There is a focus on natural hazard issues in the southwest area of the City that needs to be addressed



Community Open House May 2025



Community Open House May 2025



Community Open House May 2025

Online Survey Summary

An online survey was utilized during the planning process to gather input and determine the community's values. The survey measured the local perception of emerging trends, issues, and opportunities in the community. The online survey exercise helped the planning team understand the community's priorities and guided the Plan's recommendations.

Key Takeaways

- There is a desire to bring more entertainment and nightlife into downtown
- Explore more ways to expand economic development opportunities
- Residents expressed a desire to bring in more retail or local businesses, reducing the need to travel elsewhere
- Provide more single-family and affordable housing options
- Improve the overall appearance of the City
- Enhance streetscapes and address infrastructure needs

Community Survey

El Campo Comprehensive Plan

El Campo Comprehensive Plan / El Campo Comprehensive Plan Survey

We want to hear from you!

The City of El Campo is in the process of updating the comprehensive plan, and we would like your input! The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2017, and comprehensive plans should be updated every 5-10 years. The purpose of this process is to update the comprehensive plan to ensure the recommendations reflect the changing environment in the community. Please take this quick survey to share your thoughts.

About the Comprehensive Plan:

- A comprehensive plan is the City's guidebook for decision-making over the next 15 to 20 years.
- The City Council, Planning & Zoning Commission, and City Staff will use the plan to make important land use, budgeting, and development decisions.
- This plan will address topics such as land use, mobility, infrastructure, neighborhoods, economic development, community image, and more.
- We need your input! The community's vision will form the foundation of this plan.

Thank you for helping shape the future of El Campo!

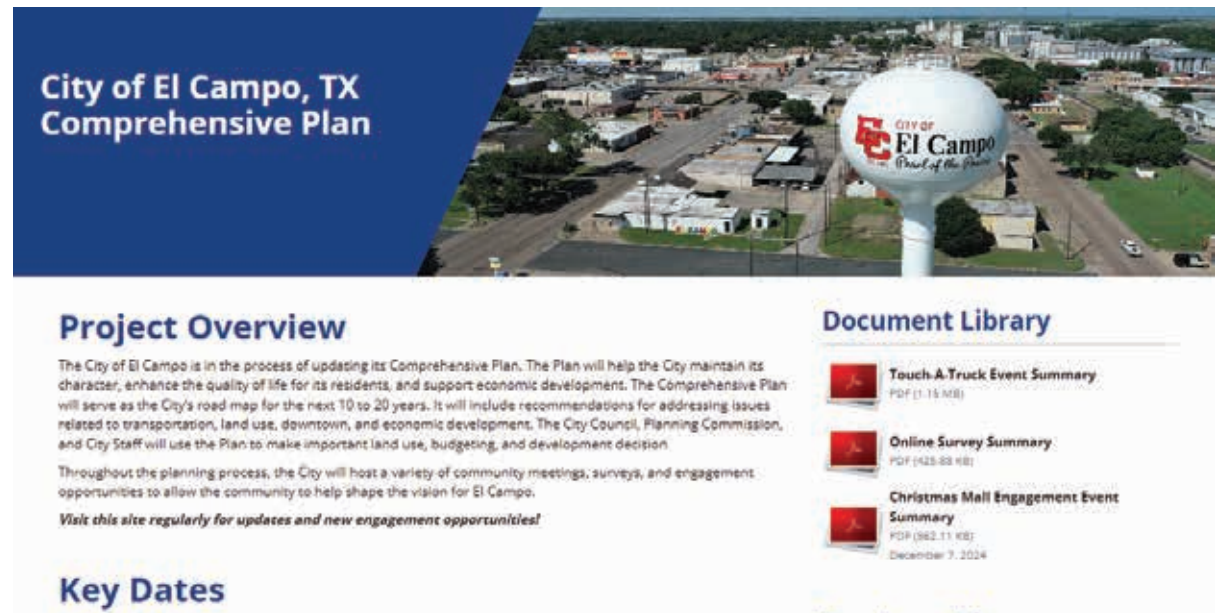
Online Survey

Project Website

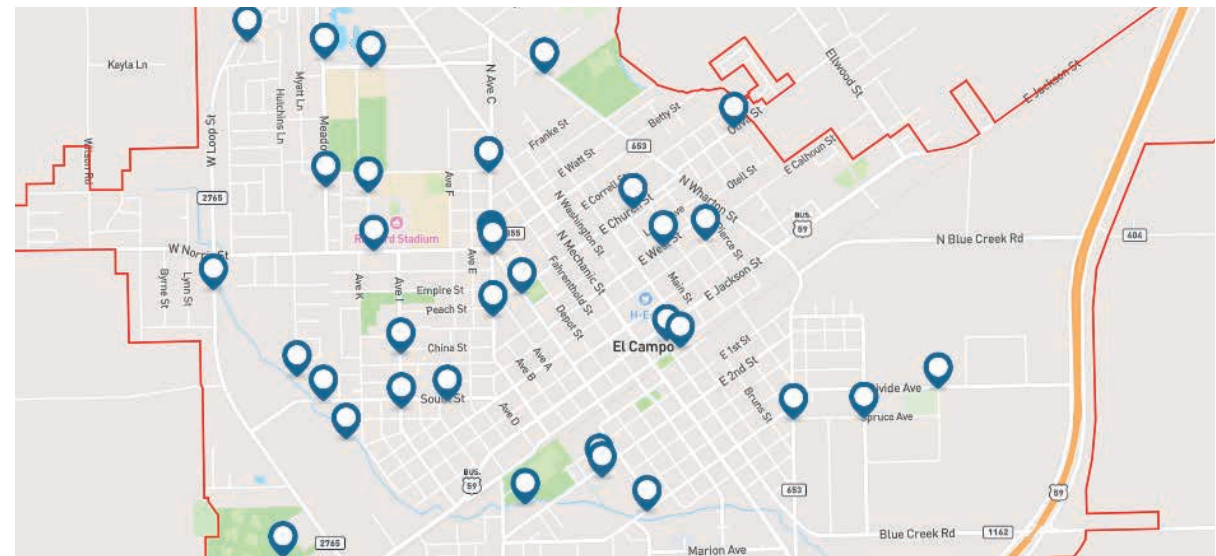
A project website was developed to serve as a single point of information for the community about the project. On the website, residents could learn about the project, download meeting materials, review draft plans, and provide input. Participants were able to provide input through an interactive exercise by dropping a pin on a map and providing a comment. They were also able to tell the planning team their vision for the future of El Campo.

Key Takeaways

- There is a desire to see better lighting, sidewalks, beautification, and general enhanced connectivity along roadways
- Residents want more parks, trails, and entertainment options
- Improve bike lanes and trail connectivity throughout the City
- Improve drainage system
- There is a desire to see more mixed-use development in the downtown area



Project Website Home Page



Project Website Mapping Exercise

KEY THEMES

The following key themes summarize the major takeaways from the various public input sources, including the online survey, in-person engagements, and CPAC Meetings. These themes give a sense of the community's priorities and were used to create the vision statement and guiding principles.

Family-Friendly

Continue to support the family-friendly, safe, small-town character of the community.

Infrastructure and Roadway Improvements

There is a need to improve drainage, the quality of roadways and pedestrian connectivity.

Downtown

There is a desire to improve downtown by incorporating more entertainment opportunities like events and festivals, improving its appearance, and having a greater diversity of businesses.

Retail and Entertainment

There is a desire to have more shopping and entertainment opportunities in El Campo.

Affordable Housing

There is a desire to provide affordable housing at all income levels for younger and older families, including a variety of housing types.

Community Pride

Residents value community opportunities to bring people together, but they also note a need to improve the appearance of vacant or underutilized properties.

Recreation Opportunities

Increase entertainment/recreation opportunities, especially those that cater to families and children.

Economic Development

Create opportunities for more businesses, more employment, and a range of jobs.

Vision and Guiding Principles

VISION

The vision statement is a high-level, long-range goal that should succinctly and vividly describe the community as it ideally will exist in the future. Essentially, this statement describes what it looks and feels like in the next 10-20 years and is intended to guide both the comprehensive planning process, as well as the City's future, more broadly. The vision statement is based on the feedback received from the public to date and is further supported by the guiding principles.

Vision Statement

El Campo is a place where neighbors know each other and families put down roots. Our community blends small-town charm with strong values, diverse traditions, great places to live, and plenty of opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. It's a welcoming town where people work hard, look out for one another, and take pride in calling El Campo home.

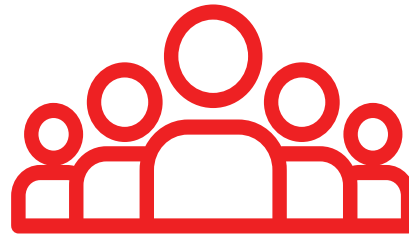
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles are individual elements that support the overall vision. While the vision statement describes the overarching desire for the future, the guiding principles represent the priorities for the community and provide further guidance for growth, development, and decision-making.

The following guiding principles are influenced by the key themes from the public input:

- Preserve and enhance small-town character
- Expand family-friendly and entertainment options
- Diversify economic and commercial opportunities
- Expand the variety of housing options
- Strengthen infrastructure for sustainable growth

A number of supporting statements further supports each guiding principle to clarify what is encompassed within the statement. While these guiding principles are intended to reflect development goals, the concepts presented will also align with the community vision and other City initiatives.



Preserve and Enhance Small-Town Character

- Preserve the local pride and traditions that make El Campo a unique place to live by supporting cultural events and community gatherings.
- Beautify the community by adding more streetscape improvements, landscaping, and public arts in key areas such as downtown.
- Support historic preservation efforts by maintaining historic structures that reflect El Campo's heritage.
- Strengthen community ties by partnering with local organizations to create opportunities to further celebrate local culture, engage residents, and contribute to meaningful community initiatives.

Expand Family-Friendly and Entertainment Options

- Attract diverse family-friendly entertainment options for younger adult populations, such as movie theaters, dining, and shopping centers.
- Develop more multi-use recreational spaces and destinations, incorporating features such as splash parks, updated playgrounds, multimodal trails, and community centers for outdoor events and festivals.
- Increase unique and diverse dining options, including a mix of local eateries and well-known franchises to cater to all preferences.



Diversify Economic and Commercial Opportunities

Promote commercial growth while supporting local businesses to create a balanced shopping environment.

- Prioritize and attract development to strengthen and diversify El Campo's economy.
- Partner with educational institutions and workforce programs to create training opportunities that prepare residents for emerging job markets.



Expand the Variety of Housing Options

- Improve the quality and condition of existing housing to enhance livability.
- Encourage the development of affordable and varied housing types that will appeal to people at all stages of life.
- Foster redevelopment of underutilized commercial properties and vacant lots into mixed-use developments or residential neighborhoods.



Strengthen Infrastructure for Sustainable Growth

- Improve the appearance of downtown and make it a destination that people want to come to for shopping, eating, and entertainment.
- Invest and maintain high-traffic roads and sidewalks to improve connectivity and ensure safe and efficient transportation.
- Prioritize beautification efforts across the community by planting trees, landscaping, and improving entry gateways with signage.
- Address drainage issues by upgrading aging infrastructure and expanding stormwater capacity.
- Incorporate hazard mitigation strategies into infrastructure planning, such as enhancing storm resilience, flood prevention, and emergency preparedness systems.





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04

Land Use & Development

Introduction

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) acts as a blueprint to steer the community's growth and development in the coming years. Its objective is to balance the needs of residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational areas while preserving the unique character and environmental integrity of the region. This chapter presents the FLUM, offers an overview of the land use categories, and sets forth a vision for development along the designated opportunity areas.

This chapter provides:

- Future Land Use Map
- Future Land Use Dashboards
- Development and Redevelopment Opportunities
- Opportunity Areas
- Population Projections

WHAT WE HEARD

Top Three Needed Land Uses in El Campo



Priorities for Downtown

- More Events and Festivals
- More Entertainment and Nightlife
- Improve the Appearance
- Greater Diversity of Businesses
- Enhance Public Spaces

Other Comments

- Need more renting options
- Need more expansion of senior living
- Mixed use development along Mechanic Street and US 59

Early Actions to Achieve the Vision



Bring in new businesses and utilize and revitalize existing structures in the downtown area



Add more shopping centers



Introduce more family-friendly entertainment and activities

WHAT IS A FUTURE LAND USE MAP?

The FLUM is a key component of the Comprehensive Plan. The FLUM provides a road map for future development in the community. The FLUM is developed by considering recent socio-economic and demographic changes, gathering community input on issues and priorities, and making informed predictions about future growth. Moreover, the topography and existing development patterns play a crucial role in determining future land use as the City of El Campo continues to expand.

The FLUM illustrated in this Plan shows the desired growth pattern for the City of El Campo and the ETJ. The FLUM is not regulatory in nature. Instead, it acts as a guiding tool for the City when making decisions about zoning changes and amendments presented to the City Council. Figure 14 provides an overview of the key differences between the FLUM and the zoning map.

Figure 14. Future Land Use Map versus Zoning Map

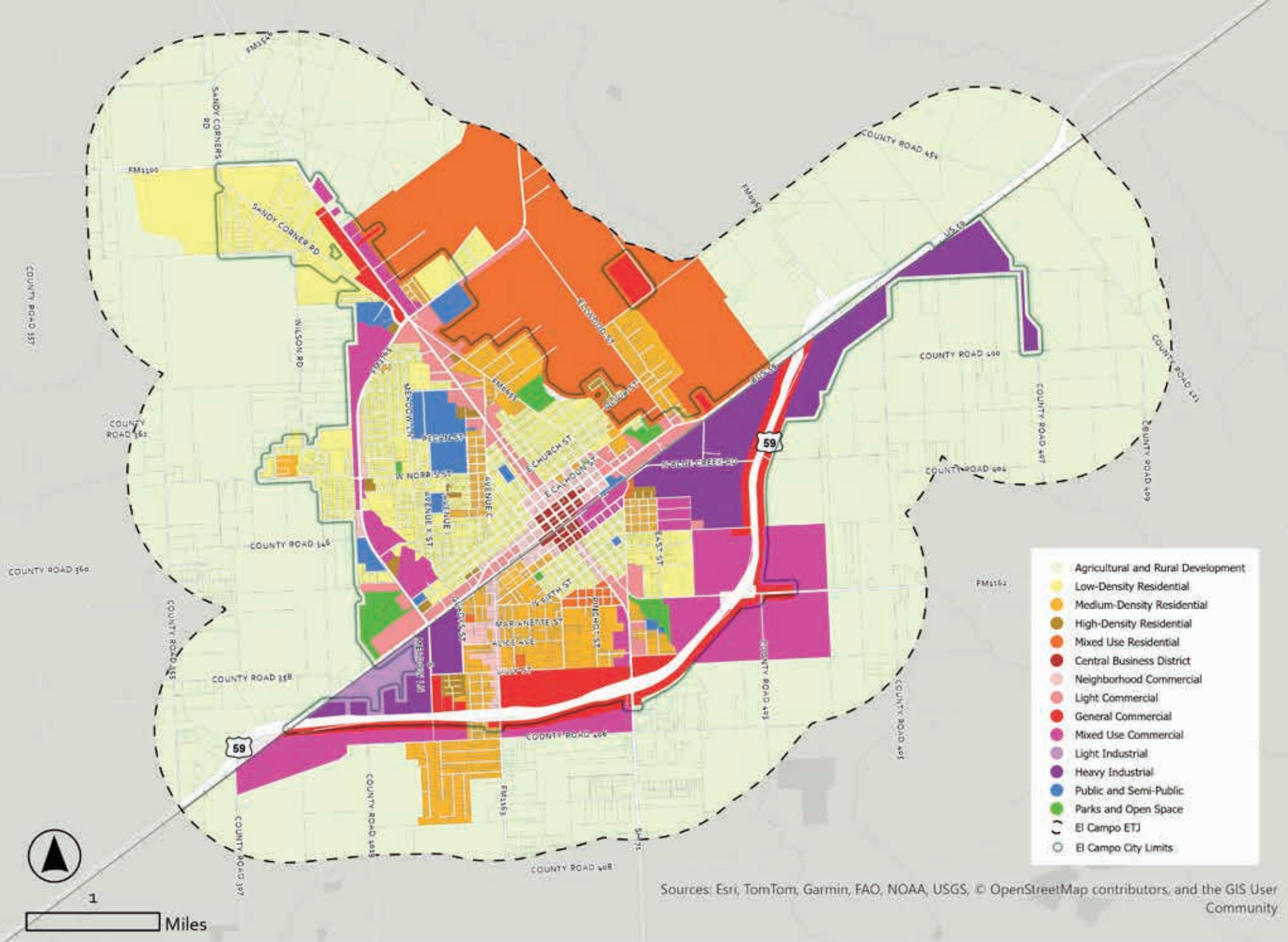
FUTURE LAND USE MAP	ZONING MAP
Purposes	
- Outlook for the future use of land and the character of development in the community - Macro-level, general development plan	- Basis for applying unique land use regulations and development standards in different areas of the City - Micro-level, site-specific focus
Uses	
- Guidance for City zoning and related decisions (zone change requests, variance applications, etc.). - Baseline for monitoring the consistency of actions and decisions with the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan.	Regulating development as it is proposed, or as sites are proposed for the future (by the owner or the City) with appropriate zoning.
Inputs and Considerations	
- Inventory of existing land uses in the City. - Developing better area character and identity as a core planning focus along with basic land uses. - The map includes a notation required by Texas Local Government Code Section 213.005: "A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries".	- FLUM is referred to for general guidance. - Other community objectives, such as economic development, redevelopment, flood prevention, etc. - Zoning decisions should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Future Land Use Map

The FLUM for El Campo identifies 14 land use categories and three opportunity areas ranging from low-intensity rural residential uses to high-intensity industrial uses. The FLUM is shown in Map 6 on page 51. The percentage of each of the future land use categories is listed in Figure 15.

Figure 15. Future Land Use Acreages

Land Use Category		City Limits		ETJ		Total	
		Acreage	%	Acreage	%	Acreage	%
	Agricultural and Rural Development	1.9	0.0%	12,538.5	78.7%	12,540.5	60.5%
	Low-Density Residential	1,374.9	29.0%	356.9	2.2%	1,731.8	8.4%
	Medium-Density Residential	636.1	13.4%	326.8	2.1%	962.9	4.6%
	High-Density Residential	78.3	1.6%	0.0	0.0%	78.3	0.4%
	Mixed Use Residential	39.1	0.8%	1,848.1	11.6%	1,887.1	9.1%
	Central Business District	39.3	0.8%	0.0	0.0%	39.3	0.2%
	Neighborhood Commercial	147.3	3.1%	0.0	0.0%	147.3	0.7%
	Light Commercial	343.7	7.2%	17.2	0.1%	360.9	1.7%
	General Commercial	428.8	9.0%	96.7	0.6%	565.3	2.7%
	Mixed Use Commercial	495.1	10.4%	639.8	4.0%	1,134.8	5.5%
	Light Industrial	0.0	0.0%	104.4	0.7%	104.4	0.5%
	Heavy Industrial	785.9	16.6%	0.0	0.0%	785.9	3.8%
	Public and Semi-Public	238.2	5.0%	0.0	0.0%	238.2	1.1%
	Parks and Open Space	140.3	3.0%	0.0	0.0%	140.3	0.7%
Total		4,748.8	100.0%	15,928.3	100.0%	20,717.0	100.0%



Map 6. Future Land Use Map

Future Land Use Dashboards

Land Use Dashboards provide staff, appointed officials, and elected representatives with a one-stop location for information related to the future land use categories established in the FLUM. The components of each dashboard are described below. Numbers assigned to each component may be referenced with the corresponding dashboard example.

1 INTENT AND CHARACTER

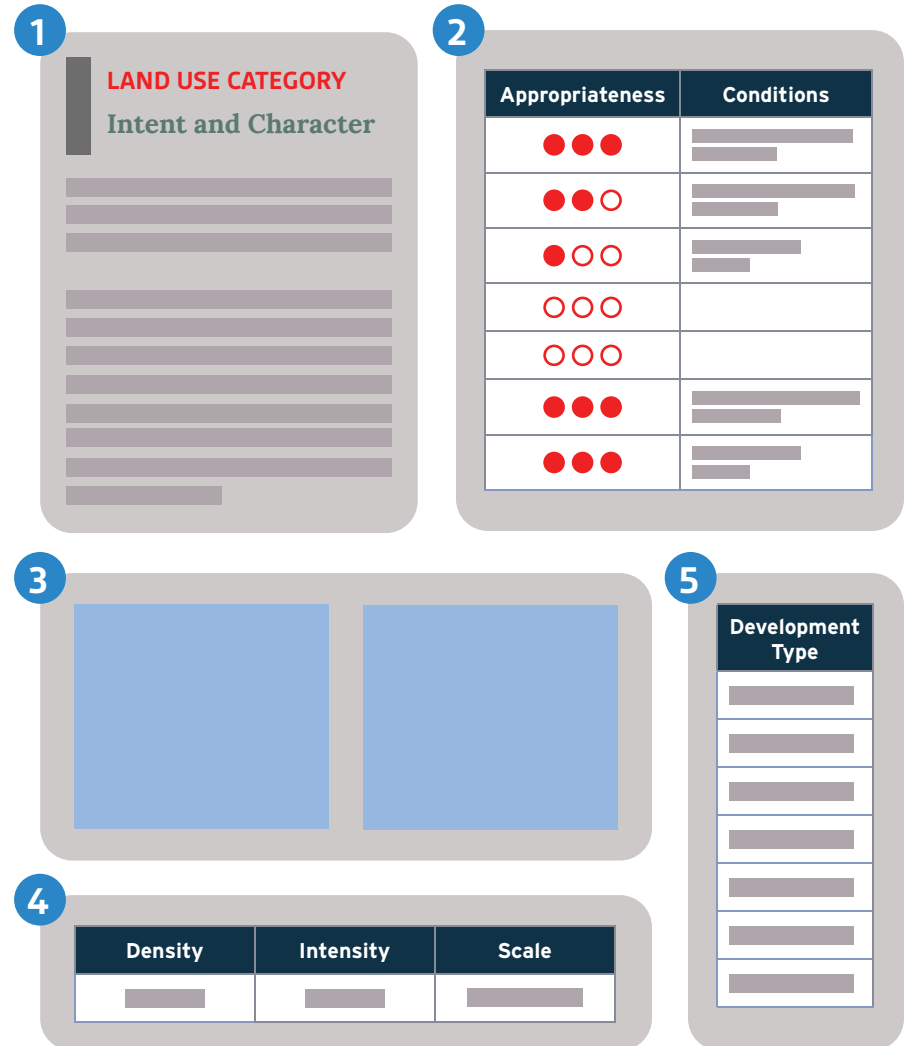
Each category section begins with a general description of the land use category, providing narrative details about the overall intent and land use make up of each category. The descriptions are a framework for how each area is expected to develop or redevelop in the future. Each category will vary in development type, density, intensity, and scale, as noted in the dashboards and appropriateness tables following the description.

2 APPROPRIATENESS TABLE

The appropriateness tables show the ratio of residential and non-residential uses expected for that category as well as the expected mix of development types present under each of those. These uses can take the form of several different development types; for example, an office use could appear in neighborhood commercial, general commercial, or light industrial, depending on its scale, form, and context. The appropriateness of each development type within a land use category is illustrated using a scale of 0-3 shaded dots.

- **0 shaded dots:** Not appropriate
- **1-2 shaded dots:** Appropriate under given conditions
- **3 shaded dots:** Overall appropriate

Parks, open space and civic uses are considered appropriate across all Land Use Categories and are considered appropriate in both residential and non-residential developments, and are therefore not called out separately in the development ratios.



3 PHOTO EXAMPLES

Descriptions for each land use are accompanied by sample imagery to help visually demonstrate the look and feel of the category. Photo examples are intended to provide visual illustration of the type of development appropriate for the land use.

4 DENSITY, INTENSITY, AND SCALE

Density

The term housing or dwelling unit refers to a single space that provides for all the necessities of living, meaning it has complete sleeping and living areas plus at least one bathroom and kitchen. A four-bedroom house is one dwelling unit and a studio apartment is also one dwelling unit.

The term density refers to the number of dwelling units or jobs located in a specific area, noted as an amount of dwelling units per acre (DUA). This Plan uses dwelling units per acre to measure residential density, and jobs per acre to measure employment density. Each category will have a target range of densities appropriate for that land use.

Intensity

Intensity refers to how much of a property or lot is built on, with either buildings or associated development such as driveways and parking areas. For the purpose of this Plan, intensity is defined as:

- **Low:** 0-50% lot coverage
- **Medium:** 50-75% lot coverage
- **High:** 75-100% lot coverage

Scale

Scale refers to the height of the buildings on a property or lot. For the purpose of this Plan, scale is defined as:

- **Low-Rise:** 1 to 2 stories
- **Low/Mid-Rise:** 3 to 4 stories
- **Mid-Rise:** 5 to 6 stories
- **High-Rise:** 7+ stories

5 DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Each category also includes a set of eight identified development types. An appropriateness analysis of each development type is shown on the appropriateness table. The following are descriptions for each of the development types.



Single-Family Detached Homes

One dwelling unit on a lot in a single stand-alone building. Generally, the largest lots of all residential development types with low density, scale, and intensity. Single-family detached homes may include an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) that is clearly secondary to the main property unit. ADUs are often above a garage of the primary unit, or at ground level either attached or detached from the primary unit. ADUs are encouraged to support diversity of housing choice and affordability, for both the people who rent the ADU and the people who own the primary unit, as this rental income can help offset mortgage payments.



Duplexes and Townhomes

Duplexes and townhomes collectively refers to two to four multifamily units in a stacked or otherwise connected configuration such as duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes. This development type also includes townhomes, which are single-family attached units and typically have up to about eight units per building group.



Multifamily

Five or more units contained within a single building, with units usually stacked on top of each other. Usually, the individual units are for rent (apartments), but may be for sale (condos). A higher-density multifamily development may include multiple buildings on the lot, creating a complex.



Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial

Less intense commercial development, such as local retail, offices, restaurants, and services to serve residents at a neighborhood scale.



Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial

More intense and large-scale commercial development such as big box stores, chain restaurants, offices, and hotels usually located along major thoroughfares. These uses provide needed services for the regional population, as well as travelers passing through the area.



Light Industrial

Light Industrial is manufacturing, processing, assembly, warehouse, and similar uses that do not generate nuisances (noise, odor, dust, etc.) and are able to house the entire operation inside the building, meaning there are no materials/products being stored or work happening outdoors. This may include buildings that can adapt to and house a variety of tenants and/or uses, such as offices, warehouses, and production or research



space.

Heavy Industrial

Industrial uses (manufacturing, processing, assembly, warehousing and similar) that do not fit under Light Industrial above and include more intensive operations on site. They may also produce significantly more heavy truck traffic than "lighter" industry.



Parks and Open Space

Consists of parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces. Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all land use categories. Park design should be contextually sensitive and provide the types of amenities appropriate for the surrounding land uses. This means parks and open spaces in residential versus non-residential areas may be very different.

AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Intent and Character

The Agricultural and Rural Development category encompasses El Campo's traditional, low-density residential developments and agricultural landscapes. This designation is intended to preserve the area's rural character and promote complementary uses such as ranching, active crop cultivation, and harvesting. Residential developments within this use typically consist of detached single-family homes situated on large lots and are compatible with the land's surrounding rural look and feel.

Appropriate Land Use

Single-Family Detached Homes, Forestry, Parks and Green Space Accessory Dwelling Units, Home-based Businesses, Agriculture-related Businesses

Compatible Zoning Districts: AG

Density	Intensity	Scale
0-1 DUA	Low	Low-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	● ● ●	Small lot single-family detached housing appropriate in this land use category. Lot and site design may accommodate an ADU to the side or rear.
Duplexes and townhomes	○ ○ ○	
Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○	
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	● ○ ○	May be considered appropriate to provide essential commercial and retail options with site design compatible with adjacent lower-density uses.
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	● ○ ○	May be considered appropriate to provide essential commercial and retail options with site design compatible with adjacent lower-density uses.
Light Industrial	● ○ ○	May be considered appropriate with site design compatible with adjacent uses.
Heavy Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Open Space	● ● ●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Intent and Character

The Low-Density Residential category is primarily composed of single-family detached residential structures arranged in a traditional neighborhood setting where each dwelling unit is located on an individual lot. This land use category emphasizes larger lot sizes and design features that preserve the single-family character of the community.

Appropriate Land Use

Single-Family Detached Homes, Duplexes, Accessory Dwelling Units, Parks and Open Spaces, Schools

Compatible Zoning Districts: R-1, R-1M		
Density	Intensity	Scale
1-8 DUA	Low	Low-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	● ● ●	Small lot single-family detached housing appropriate in this land use category. Lot and site design may accommodate an ADU to the side or rear.
Duplexes and Townhomes	● ● ○	Considered appropriate if similar in character and lot standards to single-family detached.
Multifamily Homes	○ ○ ○	
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	○ ○ ○	
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	○ ○ ○	
Light Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Heavy Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Open Space	● ● ●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Intent and Character

The Medium-Density Residential category is intended to expand the housing choices in the City to provide more variety of housing options at different price points. This category will also serve as a transition between traditional single-family homes and higher-density developments to create appropriate buffers. Residential development within this category includes both attached and detached residential structures, including patio homes, duplexes and townhomes. This category should allow for a mix of densities, lot sizes, housing styles, and patterns. Surrounding retail or office should be connected by pedestrian and multimodal paths when compatible in scale with surrounding residencies.

Appropriate Land Use

Duplexes, Quadplexes, Single-Family Detached Homes, Single-Family Attached Homes, Patio Homes, Neighborhood Commercial, Parks and Open Spaces, Schools, Public Facilities

Compatible Zoning Districts: R-1M, R-2

Density	Intensity	Scale
6-12 DUA	Medium	Low-Rise to Low/Mid-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	● ● ○	Small lot single-family detached housing appropriate in this land use category. Lot and site design may accommodate an ADU to the side or rear.
Duplexes and Townhomes	● ● ●	Overall appropriate.
Multifamily Homes	● ● ○	May be considered appropriate if the development is neighborhood scale and located in transition zones to buffer lower-density residential uses from more intense uses.
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	● ○ ○	Generally appropriate with site design compatible with adjacent lower-density uses. Appropriate in that it provides for retail, office, and services at a scale compatible with and supportive of surrounding neighborhoods. Promotes walkability and 10-minute neighborhoods.
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	○ ○ ○	
Light Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Heavy Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Open Space	● ● ●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Intent and Character

The High-Density Residential category is characterized by concentrated multifamily housing developments that accommodate the highest density of residential units per acre such as multi-story apartment buildings, condominium complexes, and mixed use developments. Development within this category should typically have frontage and main access directly on an arterial or collector street for convenient access to employment and commercial areas without inducing vehicle traffic through lower-density neighborhoods. Medium-density housing types may be appropriate depending on location and scale.

Appropriate Land Use

Multifamily Residential, Duplexes, Townhomes
Limited Commercial/Mixed Use Development,
Parks and Green Spaces, Schools, Public Facilities

Compatible Zoning Districts: R-2, R-3

Density	Intensity	Scale
10-18 DUA	Medium to High	Low-Rise to Mid-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	● ○ ○	Small-lot detached housing options such as patio homes and senior housing communities considered appropriate in this category.
Duplexes and Townhomes	● ● ○	Generally considered appropriate with higher-density multifamily housing.
Multifamily Homes	● ● ●	Overall appropriate.
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	● ● ○	Appropriate in that it provides for retail and office at a scale compatible with and supportive of surrounding neighborhoods. Promotes walkability and 10-minute neighborhoods.
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	○ ○ ○	
Light Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Heavy Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Open Space	● ● ●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL

Intent and Character

The Mixed Use Residential District category accommodates a blend of residential densities and supporting commercial uses, primarily in the eastern portion of the ETJ. This district encourages a variety of housing types ranging from single-family homes to high-density apartments. Supporting commercial development is appropriate in this district along major corridors to provide personal services, retail and employment opportunities. This district also supports mixed use master-planned developments to accommodate future growth and evolving community needs.

Appropriate Land Use

Duplexes, Quadplexes, Single-Family Detached Homes, Single-Family Attached Homes, Patio Homes, Parks and Open Spaces, Schools, Retail, Entertainment, Restaurants, Personal Service, Public Facilities

Compatible Zoning Districts: R-1, R-2, R-3, C-1, C-2

Density	Intensity	Scale
1-18 DUA	Low- Medium	Low-Rise to Low/Mid-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	● ● ○	Small lot single-family detached housing appropriate in this land use category. Lot and site design may accommodate an ADU to the side or rear.
Duplexes and Townhomes	● ● ●	Overall appropriate.
Multifamily Homes	● ● ○	May be considered appropriate if the development is neighborhood scale and located in transition zones to buffer lower-density residential uses from more intense uses.
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	● ● ○	Generally appropriate with site design compatible with adjacent lower-density uses. Appropriate in that it provides for retail, office, and services at a scale compatible with and supportive of surrounding neighborhoods. Promotes walkability and 10-minute neighborhoods.
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	○ ○ ○	
Light Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Heavy Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Open Space	● ● ●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Intent and Character

The Central Business District category represents El Campo's downtown area. This area includes a mixture of single-family and multifamily homes and mixed uses that contribute to the activity and character of downtown. Development within this area should prioritize pedestrian-oriented streetscapes through the use of lighting, street trees, and benches to promote walkability.

Appropriate Land Use

Single-Family Detached Homes, Townhomes, Patio Homes, Duplexes, Quadplexes, Mixed Use, Parks and Green Spaces, Office, Retail, Entertainment, Restaurants, Public Facilities

Compatible Zoning Districts: DT

Density	Intensity	Scale
8-12 DUA	High	Low/Mid-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	● ○ ○	Considered appropriate with character and lot standards compatible with the downtown area.
Duplexes and Townhomes	● ● ○	Considered appropriate with character and lot standards compatible with the downtown area.
Multifamily Homes	● ● ●	May be considered appropriate as vertical mixed use with character and lot standards compatible with the downtown.
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	● ● ●	Generally considered appropriate as vertical mixed use with character and lot standards compatible with the downtown. Local retail and services should be encouraged in this land use category.
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	● ○ ○	Generally considered appropriate as vertical mixed use with character and lot standards compatible with the downtown. Local retail and services should be encouraged in this land use category.
Light Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Heavy Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Open Space	● ● ●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

Intent and Character

The Neighborhood Commercial category includes a variety of small-scale retail development, typically along minor arterials, at the neighborhood level. This designation is intended to provide a blend of small businesses with housing and cater to the community's everyday needs, offering establishments such as small retail, dining, and personal services. These uses generally serve as a buffer between residential and commercial land uses and should be appropriate in scale and intensity with established and planned residences in the area.

Appropriate Land Use

Flexible housing types, Senior Housing, Retail, Hotels, Restaurants, Personal Services, Offices

Compatible Zoning Districts: R-2, R-3, C-1, C-2

Density	Intensity	Scale
N/A	Medium	Low-Rise to Low/Mid-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	● ● ●	Overall appropriate.
Duplexes and Townhomes	● ● ○	Generally considered compatible with this land use category.
Multifamily Homes	● ○ ○	Generally considered compatible with this land use category.
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	● ● ●	Overall appropriate.
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	● ○ ○	Generally considered appropriate to provide essential commercial and retail options with site design compatible with adjacent lower-density uses.
Light Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Heavy Industrial	○ ○ ○	
Open Space	● ● ●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

LIGHT COMMERCIAL

Intent and Character

The Light Commercial category includes a variety of small- and medium-scale retail developments along major interior corridors. This designation is intended to cater to the community's everyday needs, offering establishments such as retail, dining, and personal services. Big box retail stores are appropriate in these areas at a smaller scale that is compatible with adjacent development. Consideration for adjacent residential and commercial land uses should be made to ensure compatible scale and buffering. These uses are most appropriate along major interior corridors within the City's core, such as Jackson Street, Mechanic Street, Wharton Street, and West Loop.

Appropriate Land Use

Duplex/Townhome Communities, Apartments, Retail, Hotels, Restaurants, Personal Services, Offices

Compatible Zoning Districts: C-1, C-2

Density	Intensity	Scale
N/A	Medium	Low/Mid-Rise to High-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	○○○	
Duplexes and Townhomes	●○○	Duplex/townhome communities considered appropriate (Standalone duplex or townhome structures not considered compatible).
Multifamily Homes	●●○	Generally appropriate, especially when designed as master-planned communities encouraging walkability.
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	●●●	Generally appropriate with site design compatible with adjacent lower-density uses.
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	●●○	Generally considered appropriate to provide essential commercial and retail options with site design compatible with adjacent lower-density uses.
Light Industrial	○○○	
Heavy Industrial	○○○	
Open Space	●●●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

GENERAL COMMERCIAL

Intent and Character

General Commercial land uses should encourage large-scale commercial uses and support functions that meet the needs of local and broader communities. This includes businesses such as retail, wholesale sales and services, and office uses. These uses will be primarily located along high-traffic areas near major corridors such as US 59, SH 71, and Mechanic Street and buffered from single-family residential developments to ensure desirable development patterns.

Appropriate Land Use

Big Box Retail, Hotels, Restaurants, Personal Services, Offices, Multifamily

Compatible Zoning Districts: C-1, C-2, C-3

Density	Intensity	Scale
9+ DUA	High	Mid-Rise to High-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	○○○	
Duplexes and Townhomes	○○○	
Multifamily Homes	●●○	May be considered appropriate if compatible scale with commercial development, located in transition zones to buffer lower-density residential uses from more intense uses or promotes walkability.
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	●●●	Overall appropriate.
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	●●●	Overall appropriate.
Light Industrial	○○○	
Heavy Industrial	○○○	
Open Space	●●●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

MIXED USE COMMERCIAL

Intent and Character

The Mixed Use Commercial category is intended to blend residential and non-residential uses, integrating commercial, office, and retail uses within a single area. These areas should foster pedestrian access to shops and dining while prioritizing natural features and situating buildings along streets and sidewalks. This designation provides an opportunity for a variety of land uses that may be majority residential or commercial based on context. This designation is most suitable along major commercial corridors outside the central business district, including US 59, Bus. 59, and SH 71/Mechanic Street. This designation is intended to serve as a transition use between higher-and lower-intensity commercial uses. High-density residential may be incorporated where deemed appropriate.

Appropriate Land Use

Multifamily, Townhomes, Quadplexes, Patio Homes, Parks and Green Spaces, Office, Retail, Entertainment, Restaurants, Public Facilities

Compatible Zoning Districts: R-3, C-1, C-2, C-3, M-1, DT

Density	Intensity	Scale
9-18 DUA	Medium-High	Low/Mid-Rise to High-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	○○○	
Duplexes and Townhomes	●●○	Appropriate with higher-density missing middle housing.
Multifamily Homes	●●●	Overall appropriate.
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	●●●	Generally appropriate with site design compatible with adjacent lower-density uses.
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	●●●	Generally considered appropriate to provide essential commercial and retail options to serve adjacent uses.
Light Industrial	●○○	May be considered appropriate with site design compatible with adjacent uses, such as business parks.
Heavy Industrial	○○○	
Open Space	●●●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Intent and Character

The Light Industrial land use category encompasses industrial activities for the small-scale production or assembly of goods. Businesses in these areas play a vital role in fostering local employment opportunities and bolstering the municipality's tax revenue base. These operations typically occur indoors to avoid generating nuisances (noise, odor, dust, etc.). Operational needs such as freight loading and material storage should be screened away from vehicular and pedestrian thoroughfares.

Appropriate Land Use

Wholesaling, Indoor Warehouse, Industrial Business Park, Retail, Office, Manufacturing (with only indoor activity) adjacent to high-intensity commercial uses or Warehouse/Storage

Compatible Zoning Districts: C-2, M-1

Density	Intensity	Scale
N/A	High	Low/Mid-Rise to High-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	○○○	
Duplexes and Townhomes	○○○	
Multifamily Homes	○○○	
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	●○○	Overall appropriate; retail and services such as restaurants, lodging, etc. that cater to the needs of the workers in this area should be encouraged.
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	●●●	Overall appropriate; retail and services such as restaurants, lodging, etc. that cater to the needs of the workers in this area should be encouraged.
Light Industrial	●●●	Considered appropriate with high-quality design standards.
Heavy Industrial	○○○	
Open Space	●●●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

HEAVY INDUSTRIAL

Intent and Character

The Heavy Industrial category represents areas devoted to higher-intensity industrial uses such as manufacturing, storage, distribution, assembly, and larger shipping operations, potentially generating higher levels of noise and waste. In addition to large-scale industrial operations, office and retail uses provide accessory functions to support administrative needs and convenient goods and services to those employed in this area. Residential uses are not appropriate for this module due to the intensity of manufacturing and distribution establishments.

Appropriate Land Use

Wholesaling, Manufacturing (with no outdoor activity if located adjacent to lower-intensity residential uses), Indoor Warehouse, Industrial Business Park, Retail, Office, Manufacturing (with indoor or outdoor activity), Warehouse/Storage, Industrial Business Park

Compatible Zoning Districts: M-1, M-2

Density	Intensity	Scale
N/A	High	Mid-Rise to High-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	○○○	
Duplexes and Townhomes	○○○	
Multifamily Homes	○○○	
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	○○○	
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	●○○	Retail and services such as restaurants, lodging, etc. that cater to the needs of the workers in this area may be considered appropriate if they are not negatively impacted by adjacent uses.
Light Industrial	●●●	Overall appropriate.
Heavy Industrial	●●●	Appropriate when the intended development is not toxic to adjacent uses.
Open Space	●●●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC

INTENT AND CHARACTER

The Public and Semi-Public category encompasses the City's governmental, institutional, educational, and religious institutions, such as fire and police stations, schools, places of worship, and land used by the City for storage or facilities. These uses are generally appropriate within any of the other future land use categories.

Appropriate Land Use

Public Facilities, Government Offices, Schools

Compatible Zoning Districts: All Districts

Density	Intensity	Scale
N/A	Medium	Low-Rise to Mid-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	○○○	
Duplexes and Townhomes	○○○	
Multifamily Homes	○○○	
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	●●○	Overall appropriate; retail and services that cater to the needs of the workers in this area should be encouraged.
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	●●●	Overall appropriate; retail and services that cater to the needs of the workers in this area should be encouraged.
Light Industrial	○○○	
Heavy Industrial	○○○	
Open Space	●●●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Intent and Character

Parks, recreational facilities, trails, and other open spaces that currently exist or are planned create this land use designation. These types of uses can also be appropriately integrated into any of the other future land use categories, except industrial uses. Industrial uses are generally not compatible with parkland but may thoughtfully incorporate trails and floodplains or wetlands.

Appropriate Land Use

Active or Passive Recreation, Playgrounds, Trails, Recreational Facilities

Compatible Zoning Districts: All Districts

Density	Intensity	Scale
N/A	Low	Low-Rise



Development Type	Appropriateness	Conditions
Single-Family Homes	○○○	
Duplexes and Townhomes	○○○	
Multifamily Homes	○○○	
Small- to Mid-Scale Commercial	○○○	
Mid- to Large-Scale Commercial	○○○	
Light Industrial	○○○	
Heavy Industrial	○○○	
Open Space	●●●	Generally considered appropriate or compatible within all Land Use Categories.

Development and Redevelopment Opportunities

This section outlines the development and redevelopment opportunities in the city limits and ETJ.

PLANNING FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

Vacant areas provide opportunities for new development and infill redevelopment in the City and ETJ. Map 7 identifies the location of vacant properties in comparison with the future land use designations. The map illustrates how vacant areas, predominantly located in the ETJ, along US 59, and along West Loop are proposed to be developed. In the ETJ, new residential communities are planned, featuring a mix of housing options and green spaces, supported by infrastructure expansion. This aims to address the growing demand for housing in the region.

Along US 59, the map designates areas for commercial, industrial, and mixed use developments, aiming to boost the local economy and improve connectivity with transportation enhancements.

The West Loop is earmarked for mixed use, commercial, and high-density residential development, balancing economic growth with community amenities. These proposed developments emphasize the importance of mixed housing, green spaces, commercial hubs, industrial zones, and transportation improvements to promote sustainable growth, economic vitality, and an enhanced quality of life for future residents and workers.

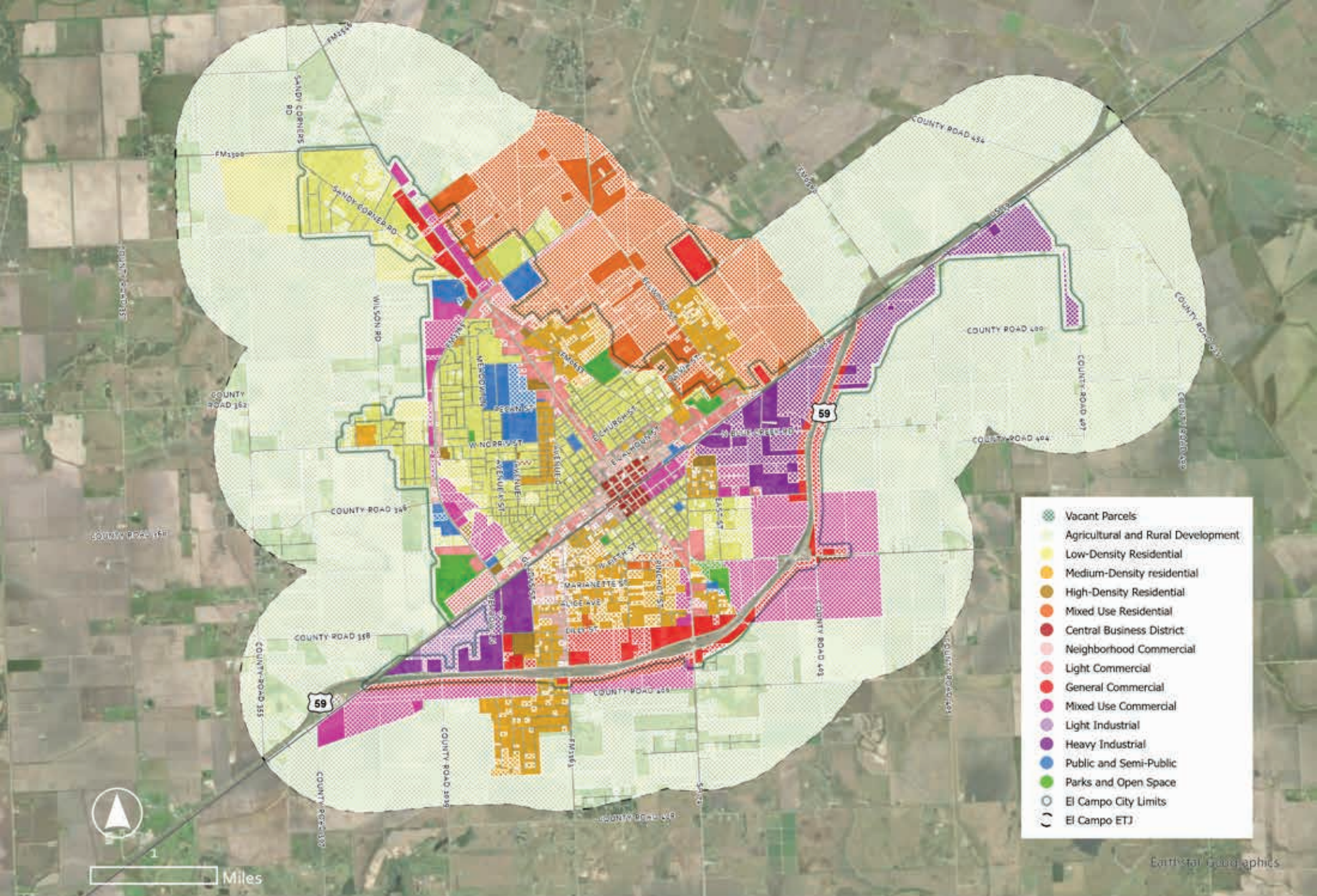
The population projections included in this chapter present how the proposed development would impact the ultimate capacity in El Campo.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Downtown El Campo holds significant potential for revitalization through redevelopment and infill initiatives. There are a few vacant parcels in the downtown area where new development should be encouraged, ensuring it aligns with and enhances the existing character of the neighborhood. Additionally, numerous buildings are underutilized and could greatly benefit from targeted redevelopment efforts. Restoring these structures to a habitable condition would not only preserve the architectural heritage but also attract new businesses and residents. This influx would breathe new life into the downtown district, creating a vibrant, thriving community hub.

Strategies for Downtown Redevelopment and Infill

- Provide density bonuses or reduced development standards for certain locations or zoning districts to encourage redevelopment and infill
- Expand utility and street infrastructure for specific locations to encourage development
- Prepare a Downtown Development Plan to identify specific projects that can be implemented to achieve the vision for downtown
- Set development standards that continue the historic feel and leverage Facade Improvement Grants
- Implement placemaking initiatives such as public art installations, street improvements, pop-up events, outdoor seating area, decorative lighting, etc.



Map 7. Vacant Land

Opportunity Areas

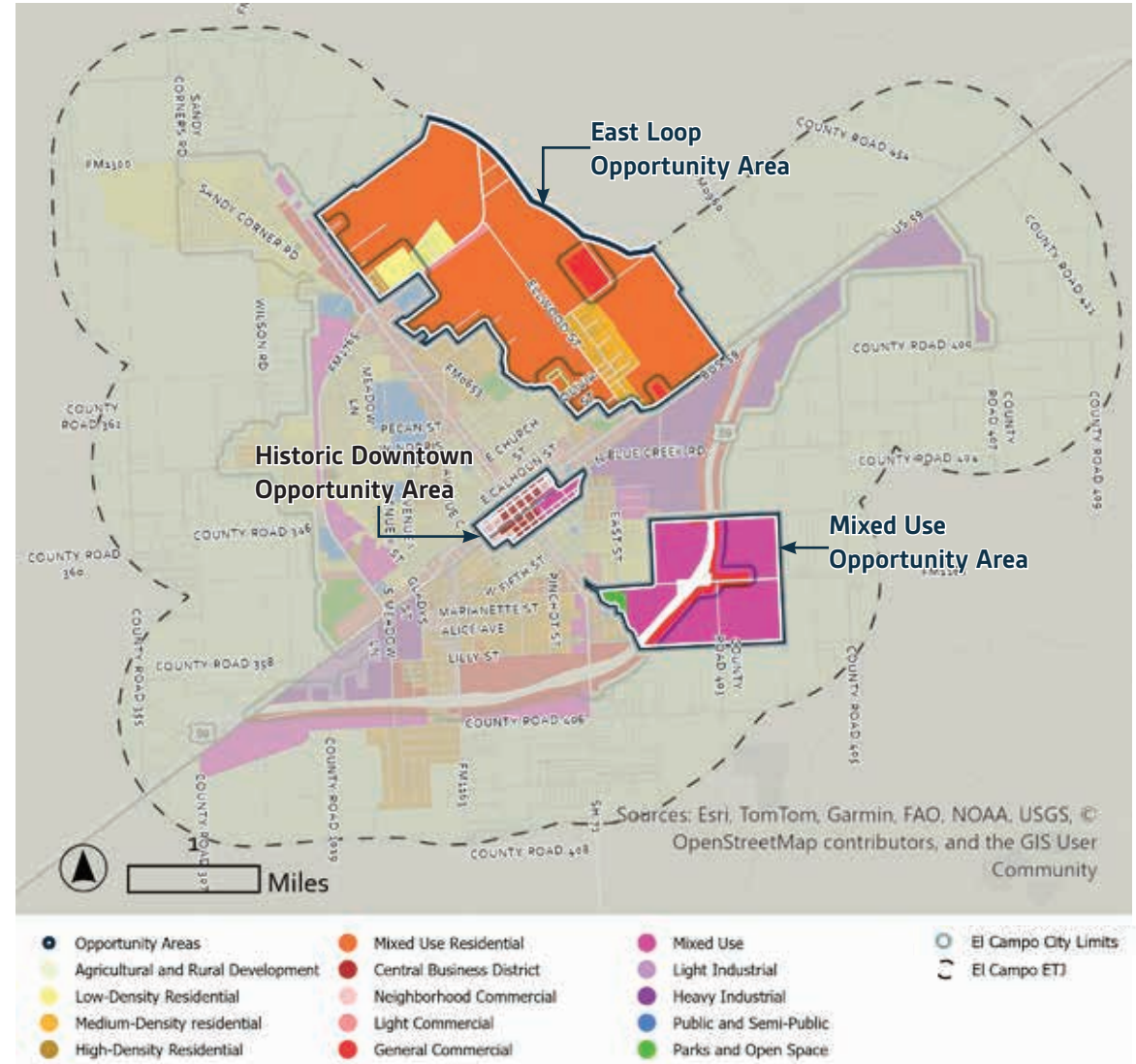
Opportunity areas are specific zones within the City that possess unique and distinct characteristics, which set them apart from other parts of the City. The strategic identification and development of these opportunity areas are crucial for fostering the overall growth and enhancement of the City. The unique attributes of these areas make them prime candidates for targeted development initiatives aimed at enhancing their individual characteristics.

Map 8 highlights three opportunity areas within the City:

- East Loop Opportunity Area
- Historic Downtown Opportunity Area
- Mixed Use Opportunity Area

For each opportunity area, the current conditions have been assessed, a vision for future development and character has been determined, and strategies for implementation have been recommended.

Map 8. Opportunity Areas





EAST LOOP OPPORTUNITY AREA

Assessment

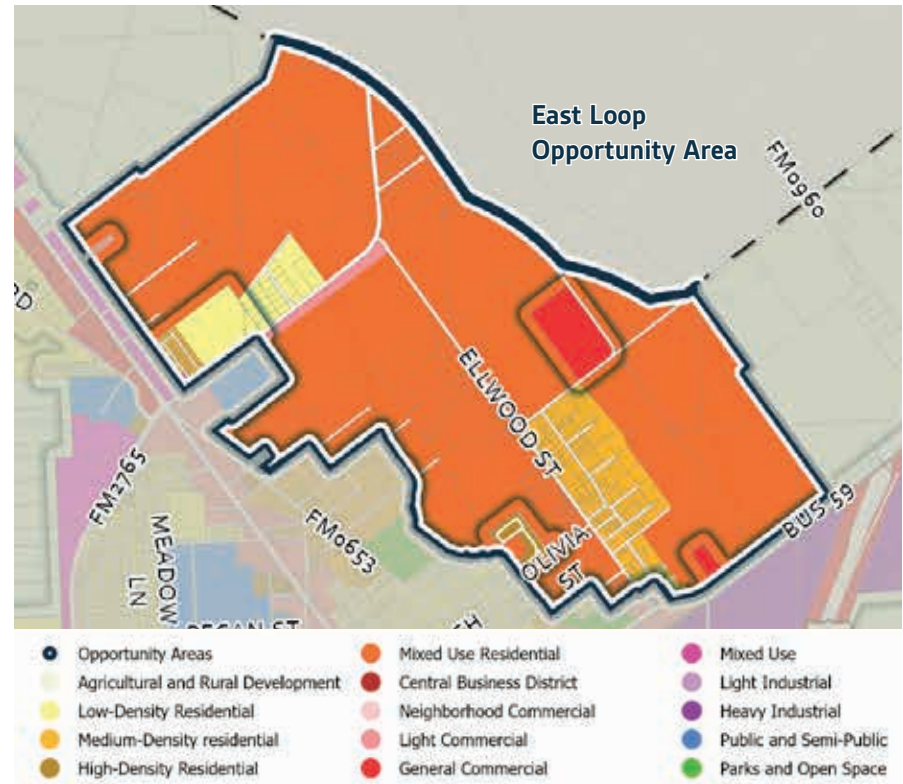
The East Loop Opportunity Area is generally located east of N Wharton Street, encompassing the area in the ETJ from the city limit to the ETJ boundary from FM 2765 to E Jackson Street. The area currently includes a mix of low- to medium-density residential development, limited commercial businesses and many large vacant tracts of land. The current residential development is concentrated in the western portion of this area. Additionally, it is conveniently located near N Wharton Street, a major transportation corridor in the City. Its location in the ETJ and vacant areas presents strategic growth potential in the future.

Future Development and Character

The East Loop Opportunity Area is envisioned as a thriving community characterized by its suburban charm and modern amenities. This area will feature newer housing developments that offer a mix of single-family homes, townhouses, and apartments to accommodate diverse demographics. The area is envisioned to include master-planned communities, incorporating decorative lights, parks, and extensive sidewalks to enhance walkability and safety.

The residential development in the area will be complemented by parks and trails, encouraging outdoor recreation as well as commercial uses along major transportation corridors, providing retail and employment opportunities nearby. The proposed land use in this area also encourages both horizontal and vertical mixed use development where suitable.

Map 9. East Loop Opportunity Area



Strategies

- Encourage and incentivize developers to incorporate parks and trails into proposed residential developments.
- Establish zoning regulations that allow for a variety of housing types, including affordable housing options, to promote economic diversity.
- Encourage horizontal and vertical mixed use developments to provide convenient access to retail and employment opportunities.
- Support local businesses through training programs and financial assistance.
- Continue to work with TxDOT on the East Loop project.



Townhomes



Single-Family Residential Development



Apartments



Mixed Use Development

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN OPPORTUNITY AREA

Assessment

The Historic Downtown Opportunity Area is generally bordered by Avenue B Street on the west, N Wharton Street on the east, W Hillje Street on the north, and E 2nd Street on the south. It encompasses the current Central Business District (CBD) as well as adjacent areas that either share a similar character or are intended to be developed in alignment with the historic downtown's character. This area is home to numerous historic structures that contribute to the distinctive identity and heritage of El Campo. The establishment of this opportunity area aims to encourage historic preservation while fostering revitalization and infill development, all while maintaining the existing charm and character of the neighborhood.

Future Development and Character

The Historic Downtown Opportunity Area is envisioned to be developed as a bustling hub with outdoor events, diverse dining and entertainment options, and boutique shops while retaining its historic charm. By utilizing the upcoming Downtown Revitalization Grant, the focus will be on preserving and restoring historic buildings, attracting small local businesses, incorporating public art, and landscaping green spaces to enhance visual appeal. Context-sensitive infill development will ensure new buildings complement the existing streetscape, promoting walkability and accessibility.

In the southeast portion of the boundary, future development should utilize existing industrial buildings to redevelop them into a thriving entertainment district with restaurants, breweries, and local retail. Development patterns will be similar to those in the core downtown area, with zero-lot-line setbacks and an emphasis on walkability and connectivity.

Map 10. Historic Downtown Opportunity Area



Strategies

- Design and install wayfinding elements and signage throughout the area to help residents and visitors navigate and explore the district easily.
- Leverage the Main Street Program to activate the Downtown District.
- Offer incentives such as community grants to attract developers and businesses to the area.
- Provide accessible, convenient, and safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure connecting destinations within the opportunity area.
- Engage the community in planning efforts and build partnerships with stakeholders and property owners in downtown.
- Implement the recommendations of the El Campo Public Works Parks Master Plan (2021) to activate Alamo Park, Evans Park, and City Hall Greenscape.
- Convert the current CBD to a historic downtown district and establish design standards that are consistent with the desired historic character.



Downtown Redevelopment



Downtown Redevelopment



Restaurant Patio Seating



Murals

MIXED USE OPPORTUNITY AREA

Assessment

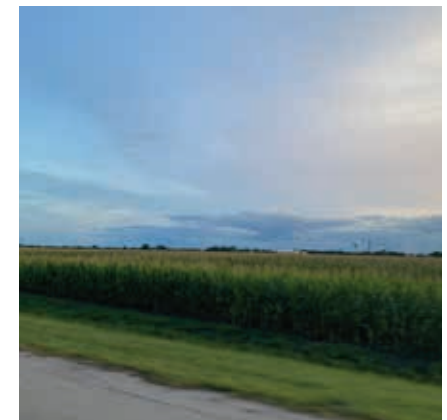
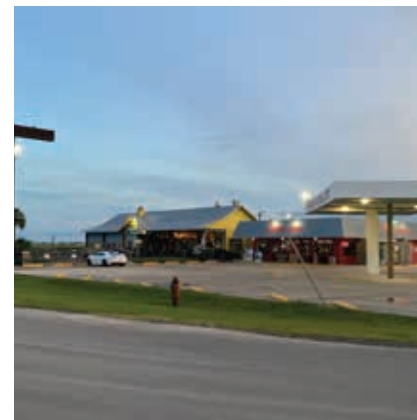
The Mixed Use Opportunity Area is located in the western part of El Campo and roughly encompasses tracts of land to the east and west of US 59 from Divide Street to E Alfred Street. This area encompasses sections of the Tres Palacios Creek, and some existing commercial development along Blue Creek Road. The area is primarily vacant and presents an opportunity for future development.

Future Development and Character

The Mixed Use Opportunity Area is envisioned to be developed as a mixed-use district offering a variety of big-box commercial development and housing options, including upscale apartments and townhomes with walkable access to retail and recreation opportunities. Future development should capitalize on the large vacant lots and the location along US 59 to develop with larger commercial developments that are not as feasible within the central portion of El Campo. Development can incorporate a mix of commercial and residential development both vertically and horizontally.

The FLUM designates parks and open spaces along the Tres Palacios Trail to ensure ample outdoor recreation opportunities. Given its strategic location along US 59, this area has the potential to become a gateway to the community, providing a welcoming sense of arrival for residents and visitors. Wayfinding elements will be thoughtfully incorporated throughout the area to enhance navigation and accessibility.

Map 11. Mixed Use Opportunity Area



Strategies

- Update zoning regulations to encourage mixed use development ensuring that residents have easy access to daily needs and services within walking distance
 - Define permitted uses, dimensional standards, and development patterns within mixed use districts
 - Apply overlay districts to create mixed use development zones
- Offer incentives such as tax breaks or community grants to attract developers and businesses to the area
- Design and install wayfinding elements and signage throughout the area to help residents and visitors navigate and explore the district easily
- Design and install gateway signage at strategic locations.
- Improve pedestrian infrastructure in the area
 - Identify locations for trails to connect destinations in the area
 - Provide sidewalk improvements as needed



Mixed Use Development



Entry Gateway Sign



Plaza Seating



Retail

Population Projections

ULTIMATE CAPACITY

Each land use category depicted on the FLUM comes with recommended DUAs specified within the corresponding dashboard. These DUAs can be used to calculate the anticipated population of El Campo, or the ultimate capacity, in a scenario where all vacant acres develop under the prescribed densities. Due to the external factors that influence development, such as market feasibility and political realities, it is important to note that properties may not develop consistently with their assigned module. The high and low DUAs are intended to serve as benchmarks as the City continues to monitor its development patterns and population growth.

METHODOLOGY

Ultimate capacity is calculated per module using the following metrics:

- Vacant acres adjusted for residential mix from the land use module dashboards
- Right-of-way (ROW) assumptions based on traditional land use patterns
- DUA from the land use category dashboards
- Occupancy Rates (OR) for owned and rented dwelling units from the U.S. Census Bureau
- Persons per Household (PPH) from the U.S. Census Bureau

To determine the ultimate capacity, ROW must be deducted from the vacant acres, then the remaining acres multiplied by the high and low DUAs, occupancy rates, and PPHs. Once added to the existing population, both high and low capacities will inform the City regarding potential population estimates.

$$\text{Ultimate Capacity} = \left[\text{Vacant acres adjusted for non-residential development} - \text{Typical right-of-way (ROW) dedication} \right] \times \text{DUA} \times \text{Occupancy Rate (OR)} \times \text{Persons per Household (PPH)}$$

Ultimate Capacity Estimates

Figure 16. City Limit Ultimate Capacity

Future Land Use Category with Residential Component	Vacant Acres*	ROW	DUA Range		OR**	PPH**	Housing Units [(AC-ROW) X DUA]		Households (Units X OR)		Population (Households X PPH)	
			Low	High			Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Agricultural and Rural Development	0.5	10.00%	0.3	1	89.7%	2.75	0	0	0	0	0	1
Central Business District	1.4	20.00%	8	12	89.7%	2.75	9	14	8	12	23	34
High-Density Residential	8.7	30.00%	10	18	89.7%	2.75	61	110	55	99	151	271
Low-Density Residential	255.3	25.00%	1	8	89.7%	2.75	191	1,532	172	1,373	472	3,777
Medium-Density residential	188.1	30.00%	6	12	89.7%	2.75	790	1,580	708	1,417	1,948	3,896
Mixed Use Residential	10.4	30.00%	1	18	89.7%	2.75	7	131	7	117	18	322
Mixed Use Commercial	138.9	30.00%	9	18	89.7%	2.75	875	1,750	785	1,569	2,158	4,316
Future Population							1,934	5,117	1,734	4,588	4,770	12,617
2023 Demographics in the City Limits***							4,893	4,893	4,387	4,387	12,220	12,220
Ultimate Capacity							6,827	10,010	6,121	8,975	16,990	24,837

Notes:

* Vacant acres adjusted to show the anticipated residential percentage for each category only, as indicated by its individual dashboard

**ACS (2023) 5-Year Estimates; PPH based on 2.75 owner-occupied

*** Source: ACS (2023) 5-Year Estimates

**** Source: ESRI 2024 ETJ Population Estimate

OR - Occupancy Rate

PPH - Persons Per Household

DUA - Dwelling Units Per Acre

Figure 17. ETJ Ultimate Capacity

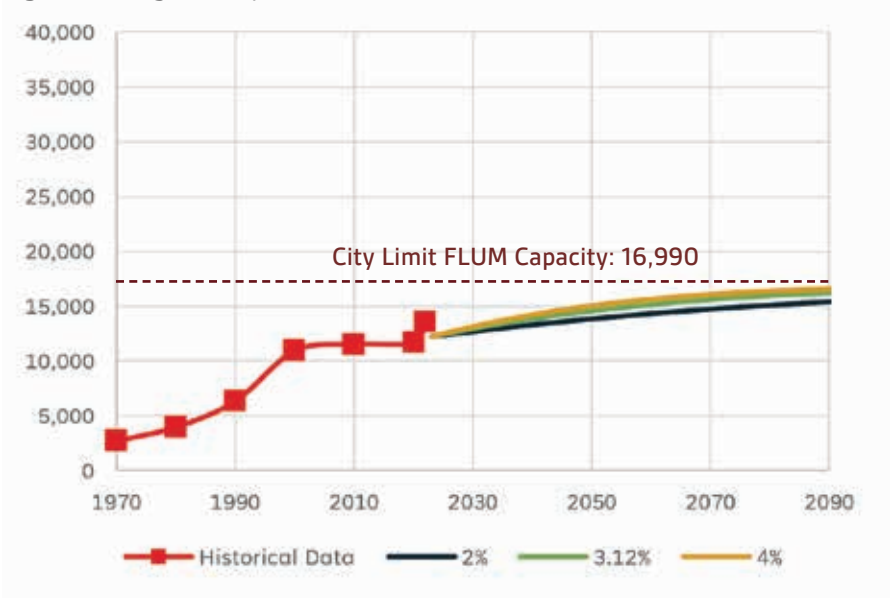
Future Land Use Category with Residential Component	Vacant Acres*	ROW	DUA Range		OR**	PPH**	Housing Units [(AC-ROW) X DUA]		Households (Units X OR)		Population (Households X PPH)	
			Low	High			Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Agricultural and Rural Development	11,314.7	10.00%	0.3	1	89.7%	2.75	3,055	10,183	2,739	9,130	7,532	25,108
Central Business District	0.0	20.00%	8	12	89.7%	2.75	-	-	-	-	-	-
High-Density Residential	0.0	30.00%	10	18	89.7%	2.75	-	-	-	-	-	-
Low-Density Residential	315.3	25.00%	1	8	89.7%	2.75	236	1892	212	1,696	583	4,664
Medium-Density residential	71.9	30.00%	6	12	89.7%	2.75	302	604	271	541	744	1,489
Mixed Use Residential	613.1	30.00%	1	18	89.7%	2.75	429	7725	385	6,926	1,058	19,046
Mixed Use Commercial	240.1	30.00%	9	18	89.7%	2.75	1513	3025	1,356	2,712	3,729	7,459
Future Population							5,535	23,428	4,963	21,006	13,647	57,765
2024 Demographics in the ETJ****							921	921	826	826	2,377	2,377
Ultimate Capacity							6,456	24,349	5,788	21,831	16,024	60,142

GROWTH PROJECTION AND RATES

The City's ability to accommodate future growth can be determined by projecting El Campo's historical growth rates into the year 2050 against the ultimate capacity assessment in Figure 16. The City's compound annual growth rate (CAGR) is determined using the past five years of population growth as recorded by the American Community Survey (ACS) estimates. Within the previous five years, El Campo has experienced a CAGR of 1%.

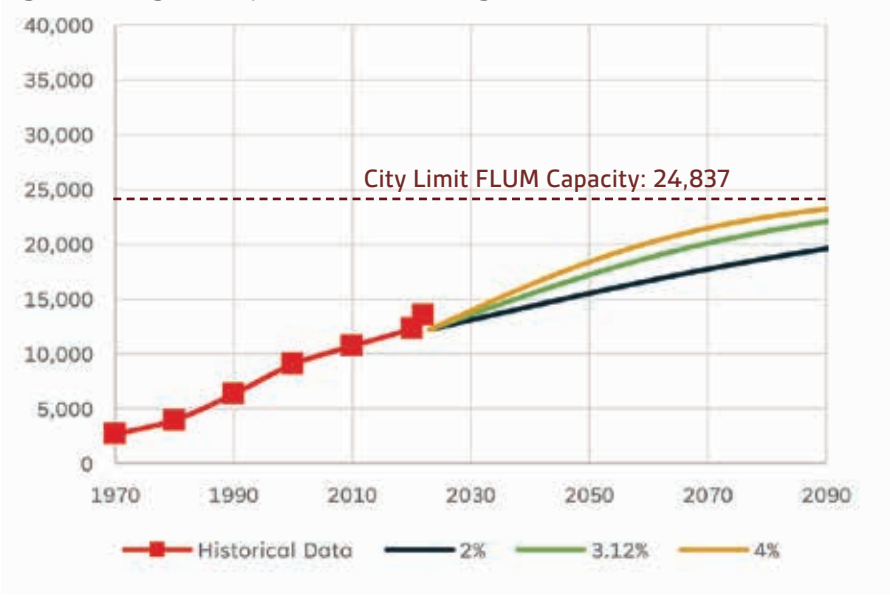
It is important to note that the City's ability to grow is inherently limited by its resources (e.g., land, utilities, infrastructure). It is anticipated that the City will experience an "S-curve" trend (Figure 18 and Figure 19), where population growth levels out as the City approaches its carrying capacity, or maximum limit of growth based on available resources.

Figure 18. Logistic Population Growth, Low Scenario



Future Land Use Capacity, Low Estimate: 16,990			
Year	Population by Growth Rate (City Limit)		
	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%
2023	12,220	12,220	12,220
2030	12,687	12,937	13,128
2040	13,301	13,828	14,203
2050	13,849	14,561	15,025

Figure 19. Logistic Population Growth, High Scenario



Future Land Use Capacity, Low Estimate: 24,837			
Year	Population by Growth Rate (City Limit)		
	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%
2023	12,220	12,220	12,220
2030	13,089	13,573	13,952
2040	14,318	15,456	16,318
2050	15,510	17,205	18,414





DRAFT



05 *Housing & Neighborhoods*

DRAFT

Introduction

Housing is a critical issue for the City of El Campo, consistently emerging as a key point of discussion among City officials, community members, and the advisory committee. Through these conversations, the shortage of adequate and affordable housing has been identified as a significant concern that impacts the well-being of residents and the overall development of the City.

To address this challenge, housing analysis is an integral component of the Comprehensive Plan, aiming to provide a preliminary assessment of the current housing situation and propose an initial set of strategies to meet both existing and future community needs.

While this chapter offers a foundational framework for housing evaluation, it is not exhaustive, and the City is encouraged to undertake more comprehensive studies and analyses in the future to explore additional solutions and refine strategies for addressing its housing challenges effectively.

This chapter provides:

- Existing Housing Stock
- Projected Housing Needs
- Meeting Existing and Projected Housing Demand
- Neighborhood and Housing Programs

WHAT WE HEARD

Top Three Needed Housing Types in El Campo



Housing Priorities



Need housing options for young professional and young families such as townhomes and apartments



Need senior housing and affordable housing options for people to age in place



Need more single-family homes at different price points

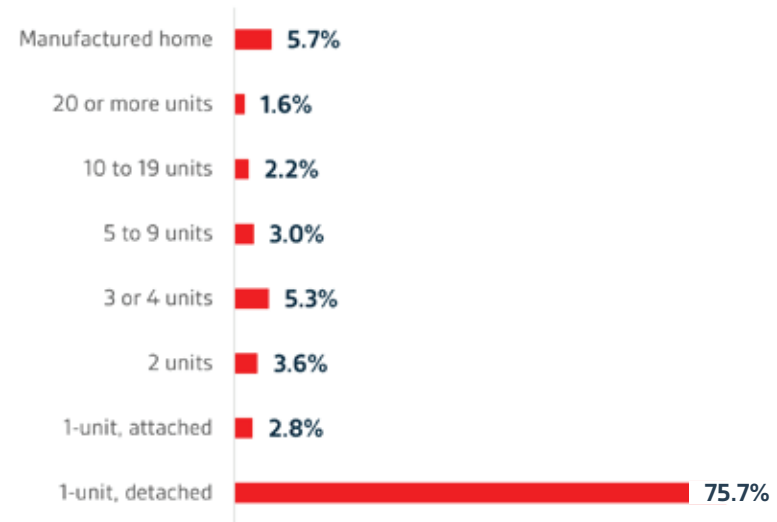
Existing Housing Stock

The existing housing stock in El Campo predominantly comprises single-family detached housing, followed by manufactured homes, triplexes, and fourplexes. The El Campo community expressed a need for more housing options at different scales and price points such as townhomes, apartments, and smaller single-family homes to meet the needs of the current demographic.

As established in Chapter 1, the largest age cohort in the City consists of people in the 35 to 49 years age group which points to a need for housing availability and affordability for young families. In addition, approximately 47% of the population is 16 years or older meaning a significant portion of the population is either entering the workforce or is already a part of the workforce.

The FLUM (Map 6 on page 51) designates land proposed for more missing-middle housing types such as townhomes, duplexes, apartments, etc. to meet the existing and proposed housing needs. Although the FLUM encourages higher-density housing, these units should complement El Campo's existing housing form and character to maintain its small-town feel and integrate seamlessly into the current urban fabric.

Figure 20. Housing Typology



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



AGE OF HOUSING

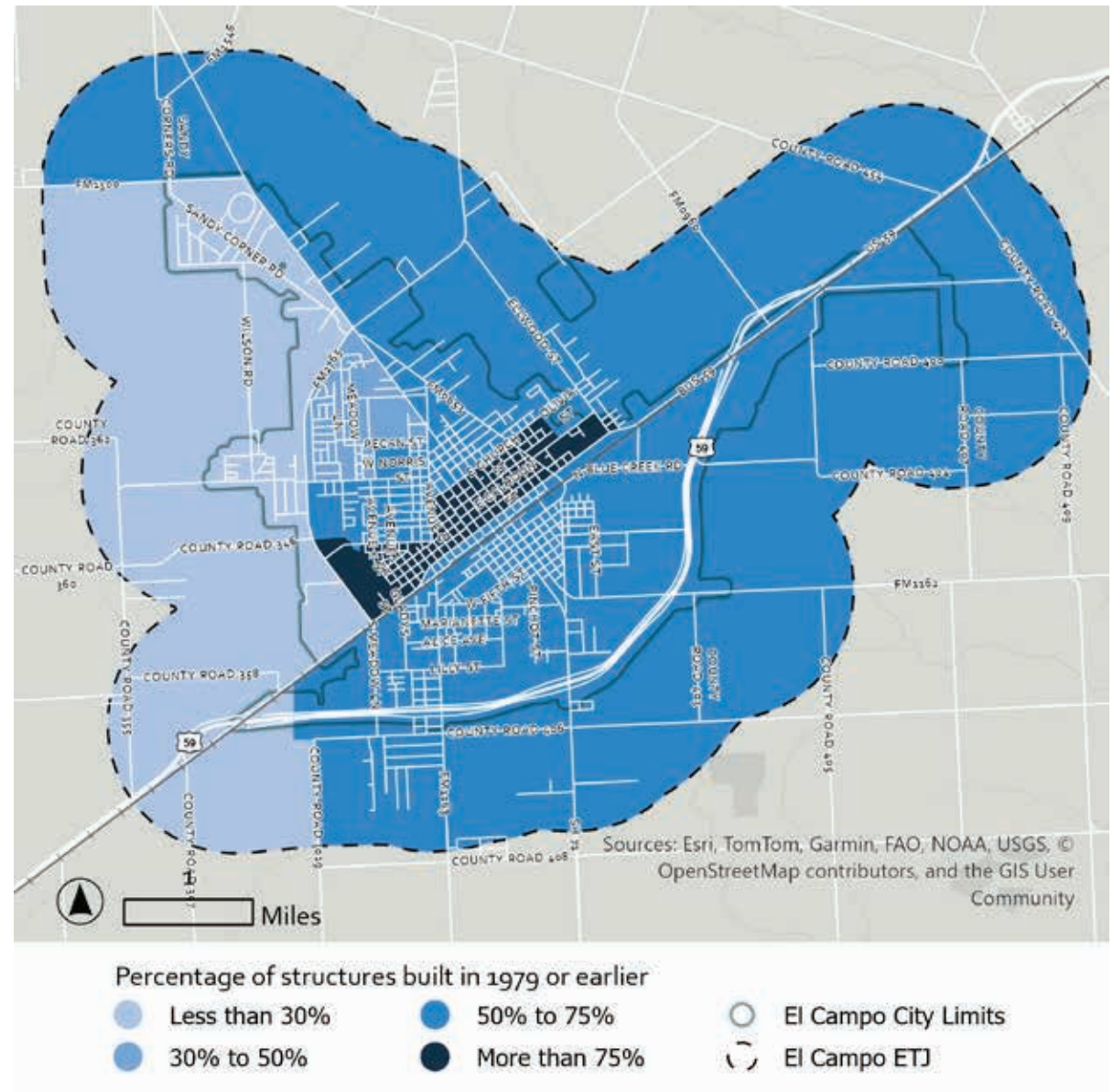
Over time, homes naturally age and require extra care to ensure their safety and viability. Currently, approximately 59% of El Campo's housing stock was built in 1979 or earlier (2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates).

To identify areas with a higher concentration of older homes that may need preservation, rehabilitation, or maintenance, an analysis of the age of housing at the Census Block level was conducted. Map 12 illustrates the percentage of structures built in 1979 or earlier within the city limits and ETJ. The majority of these older structures are concentrated in and around downtown, with a significant portion of the eastern and western parts of the City also consisting of homes built in 1979 or earlier.

Neighborhoods where 50-75% of structures were built in 1979 or earlier should also be targeted for implementing historic preservation incentives for homes that meet DHS standards. Homes built in 1979 will be eligible for the historic register by the end of the decade. These homes most likely need major repairs or contain hazards such as obsolete wiring, deteriorating pipes, inefficient windows and insulation, asbestos, and lead paint.

While this analysis provides a broad overview of housing age in various neighborhoods, it does not assess the current condition of historic or older homes within those areas. Further assessment should be conducted to identify maintenance needs and implement preservation strategies.

Map 12. Year Structure Built



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Over the past decade, Texas has faced significant challenges related to housing affordability, resulting from rising mortgage rates, surging median home prices, and a housing shortage, all of which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The median household income in El Campo is \$67,356 and the median home value is \$183,400. In the last decade, the median home values have increased by 81% while the median income has increased by 61%.

Community engagement underscored the need for more affordable housing options in the City including single-family homes, apartments, townhomes, and senior housing.

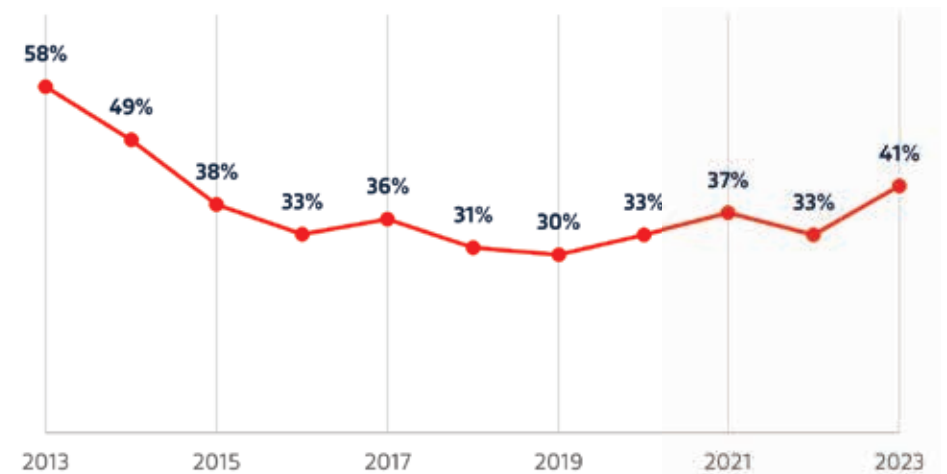
Housing Cost-Burden

Households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing expenses, such as rent or mortgage payments, utilities, and property taxes are defined as cost-burdened. Figure 21 and Figure 22 show the change in the percentage of cost-burdened households between 2013 and 2023 for housing units paying rent and housing units with a mortgage.

Over the 10 years from 2013 to 2023, the percentage of rental units considered cost-burdened decreased. However, despite this progress, a substantial 41% of rental units were still cost-burdened in 2023, showing that many renters continued to experience significant financial strain.

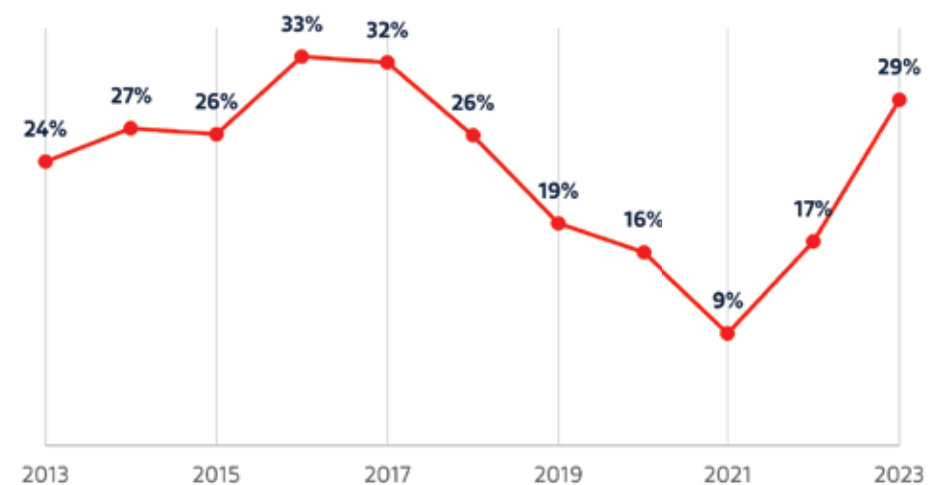
In comparison, households with mortgages exhibited fluctuating trends in cost-burden over the same period. By 2023, 29% of these households were categorized as cost-burdened. Although the percentages have changed over time, affordability challenges continue to affect large portions of both renters and homeowners.

Figure 21. Cost-Burdened Occupied Units Paying Rent



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 22. Cost-Burdened Occupied Units With a Mortgage



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Projected Housing Needs

The population projections and ultimate capacity calculations presented in Figure 16 on page 81 and Figure 17 on page 81 are used to determine the number of housing units and households that could be accommodated within the City limits and the ETJ if development follows the FLUM (Map 6 on page 51). The City currently has 4,893 housing units, comprised of 4,387 households, and a population of approximately 12,220 people. As per the City permit data, 144 new residential building construction permits were issued between January 2020 and January 2025.

LOW SCENARIO

The low scenario refers to development occurring at the lower end of the density ranges specified for each land use category, as outlined in Chapter 3.

The ultimate capacity of the City of El Campo and ETJ is 13,283 housing units and 11,909 households. According to the ultimate capacity projections in Figure 16 on page 81 and Figure 17 on page 81, a total of 7,469 housing units could potentially be added, bringing nearly 6,697 households and close to 18,417 people to the City and ETJ.

HIGH SCENARIO

The high scenario refers to development occurring at the higher end of the density ranges specified for each land use category, as outlined in Chapter 3.

The ultimate capacity of the City of El Campo and ETJ is 34,359 housing units and 30,806 households. According to the ultimate capacity projections in Figure 16 on page 81 and Figure 17 on page 81, a total of 28,545 housing units could potentially be added, bringing nearly 25,593 households and close to 70,382 people to the City and ETJ.



Meeting Existing and Projected Housing Demand

ENCOURAGING HOUSING DIVERSITY

Small-Lot Detached Housing

Allowing small-lot detached housing options can help promote infill development, especially in the older areas of El Campo, and provide more housing options.

Additionally, allowing small-lot detached homes will provide affordable options for young families and professionals. Updating the zoning regulations, as needed, could enable detached housing on smaller lots while maintaining balance with larger or estate-sized lots, particularly in regions outside the core areas, where utility access is challenging.

Missing Middle Housing

Another way to meet El Campo's housing needs while reducing reliance on greenfield development for new growth includes allowing appropriate Missing Middle Housing types. "Missing Middle Housing" is a term that describes a range of housing types, including small single-family residential, duplexes, and small-scale multi-unit buildings that complement single-family neighborhoods. These housing types help provide more affordable housing options for people in different phases of the housing cycle, including young families, young professionals, empty-nesters, and the elderly. Each of these housing types can vary in price point and model. There can be a mixture of affordable and premium price points for each housing type, which can be available either for rent or for sale.

The FLUM (Map 6 on page 51) identifies several locations for mixed use residential development and medium-density residential development where missing-middle housing types might be appropriate.

Aging in Place

Encouraging housing diversity can help the community's older residents age in place. Missing middle housing, such as duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes, offers more affordable options compared to single-family homes. This can be crucial for seniors on fixed incomes.

Aging in place can be supported through City-led or community organization-led initiatives that include housing retrofits or other modifications that allow residents to stay in their houses for a longer period of time. Property owners and developers can make various modifications to existing homes, such as installing grab bars, ramps, and wider doorways to accommodate aging-in-place needs. Additionally, they can include aging-in-place friendly elements in new housing developments, such as single-level living spaces, non-slip flooring, and smart home technologies that enhance safety and accessibility for elderly residents.

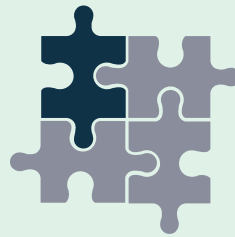


STRATEGIES TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- Continue housing rehabilitation and preservation of the existing housing stock
- Update the Unified Development Code to remove barriers to affordable housing production and preservation
 - Reduce minimum dwelling size and maximum floor area ratio standards
 - Simplify and consolidate the number of zoning districts and allow greater diversity of housing types
 - Allow flexibility for residential use on land owned by faith-based and non-profit organizations
 - Evaluate and establish new or existing zoning districts that allow a wide variety of residential use types
- Work with non-profits to establish a cooperative network of providers and supportive services that can work together to provide housing assistance
- Pursue grants and funding opportunities to build new affordable housing
- Document at-risk areas for hazards and conduct a Citywide housing systems analysis
- Install utility and street infrastructure in specific locations (for master planned communities) to encourage development
- Create an affordable housing program that supports low- to moderate-income residents through down payment assistance, home repairs, rental assistance, and housing construction

COMPONENTS OF GOOD DESIGN

In addition to context-specific design guidelines, the following elements should be considered for new housing development.

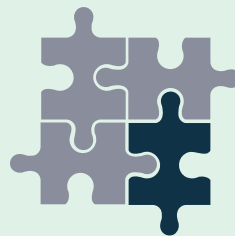
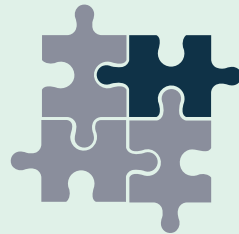


Resilience and Durability

Building homes that can withstand natural disasters, climate change, and wear and tear over time. This includes robust construction techniques and materials, as well as disaster-preparedness features. Durable construction also helps reduce energy costs and lowers long-term maintenance expenses.

Efficient Land Use

Maximizing the use of available land through thoughtful site planning and high-density development, when appropriate, while creating private spaces and reducing urban sprawl. The zoning decisions should be based on the proposed FLUM illustrated in Map 6 on page 51.

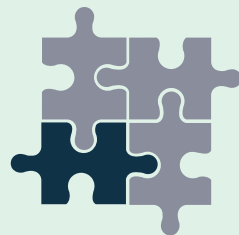


Transportation and Connectivity

Providing easy access to public transportation, bike lanes, and connected sidewalks and greenways to reduce dependency on cars and promote sustainable mobility.

Community Spaces

Incorporating community spaces in new housing developments can significantly enhance residents' quality of life. Include shared spaces such as gardens, parks, playgrounds, and community centers to foster a sense of community and encourage social interaction. This can be achieved by promoting mixed-use development, updating zoning regulations, and encouraging flexible design where appropriate.



COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

As structures age, they need maintenance and repairs. The historic housing structures in El Campo add to the community character and need to be preserved. Historic structures are particularly vulnerable to natural hazards which underscores the importance of aligning historic preservation strategies with hazard mitigation strategies to balance protecting cultural heritage with reducing disaster risks.

The City can implement the following strategies for historic preservation.

- Conduct a comprehensive survey and an associated evaluation process of historic buildings and other eligible resources
- Protect historic districts (downtown) and buildings through historic landmark designation
- Update and revise codes and policies for adaptive reuse
 - Encourage adaptive reuse of older commercial properties to provide more housing options, especially in downtown
 - Allowing the conversion of historic single-family dwellings to multifamily dwellings where appropriate
 - Compatible infill construction of multifamily housing on vacant parcels in historic districts
- Update the Unified Development Code to include a historic preservation ordinance
- Adopt a historic overlay district and/or design standards
- Provide fiscal and technical assistance such as financial incentives, grants, and tax breaks to encourage investment in historic properties
- Leverage state-level incentives for historic preservation
- Allow and encourage infill development opportunities that provide affordable housing in historic districts
 - Provide density bonuses or reduced development standards for certain locations or zoning districts to encourage redevelopment and infill, particularly with medium- and high-density projects
- Encourage private-sector investment in historic preservation initiatives
- Integrate cultural resources into risk assessments to ensure that they are considered in mitigation planning
- Assess the feasibility of reinforcing historic structures with disaster-resistance materials and using nature-based solutions to protect cultural sites

ACCESS AND CONVENIENCE/NEIGHBORHOOD COMPLETENESS/HEALTH AND WELLNESS

A community's health can be measured using several metrics such as active living, proximity and access to healthy food, environmental exposure, emergency preparedness, and social cohesion. The proximity to amenities and services significantly influences both the quality of neighborhoods and the residents' overall quality of life. Map 13 shows the locations of fresh produce, medical facilities, parks, public facilities, and schools. It also shows the location of residential development within the city limits and the ETJ.

Parks and Recreation

Most of the residential neighborhoods within the city limits have convenient access to parks and open spaces. The City recently adopted the Parks Master Plan which provides recommendations for acquiring additional parkland and recreation facilities.

The FLUM (Map 6 on page 51) proposes mixed use residential development in the ETJ as well as mixed use development in the eastern part of the City. The City should develop additional parkland in these areas to accommodate recreation needs for future residential development.

This should be supplemented by adequate pedestrian and bike connectivity to provide non-vehicular access to these parks and recreation facilities. Additionally, multimodal trails and active transportation routes—including on-street sidewalks, off-street trails, and bike lanes—should be provided in all existing neighborhoods and incorporated into future development areas to ensure non-vehicular connectivity throughout the City.

Medical Facilities

Medical facilities in the City include El Campo Memorial Hospital, Mid Care Well Care Clinics, a physical therapy clinic, and dermatology clinics. Public engagement underscored the need for adequate, reliable, and high-quality healthcare facilities. Residents have to travel to adjacent communities to find quality healthcare. The City should work on attracting medical professionals and facilities to the area. The City can explore potential partnerships with medical schools to establish satellite campuses and/or residency programs.

Fresh Produce

The availability of full-service grocery stores as well as convenient, equitable and affordable access to them is crucial in improving public health. The City is largely serviced by an H-E-B and a Walmart Supercenter. These are located at a convenient driving distance from the existing residential neighborhoods. As more residential and mixed use areas continue to develop as per the FLUM (Map 6 on page 51), the City should encourage locating additional fresh produce and grocery stores in commercial as well as mixed use areas to provide fresh food access to higher-density residential developments.

Schools

The El Campo Independent School District operates five campuses within the City including Myatt Elementary, Hutchins Elementary, Northside Elementary, El Campo Middle School, and El Campo High School. The City can work with the school district to leverage the Safe Routes to School Programs to provide and enhance pedestrian and bike infrastructure around the schools.

Public Facilities

Public facilities and hazard preparedness resources should be well-organized to ensure community safety. The City offers detailed guides on hurricane safety, evacuation planning, and emergency supplies. These resources are designed to help residents prepare for and respond to severe weather events.



Neighborhood and Housing Programs

Successful housing strategies involve a variety of techniques, both public and private, and require cooperative actions by property owners, tenants, the City, local organizations, and volunteer groups. While personal investment in property is a key component for attractive neighborhoods, the City may also positively impact and encourage private investment by creating and maintaining livable neighborhoods.

The City currently has the following neighborhood and housing programs that can be leveraged by developers and residents.

- The City offers shared costs for development of infrastructure with private developers
- Housing Authority of the City of El Campo provides affordable housing for up to 150 low- and moderate-income households through its Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher programs

In addition to existing programs, the City can take advantage of the following programs to meet its housing needs. In addition to existing programs, the City can take advantage of the following programs described in this section.

SMALL-SCALE DEVELOPER PROGRAM

The City can establish a support program designed to cultivate and train small-scale housing developers, improving their skills and effectiveness. This initiative could be particularly advantageous in fostering fair investment opportunities in underrepresented communities (e.g., Austin Small Developer Training Program).

FAITH-BASED PARTNERSHIPS

The City could collaborate with local civic and faith-based organizations to offer more substantial support to residents in the community. Involving a City building official and a builder would ensure technical expertise and coordination. While the City might seek some financial contributions for repairs, it is expected that most of the materials, labor, and effort will be donated and volunteered (e.g., Christmas in Action of Johnson County).

COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (CLT)

CLTs are non-profit organizations managed by a board that includes CLT residents, local community members, and public officials. They offer sustainable shared equity homeownership opportunities for families and communities. In this model, the CLT retains ownership of the land, while the homeowner purchases only the house, often at a more affordable price. While the homeowner gains equity over time, it is generally capped at a certain rate to maintain affordability when the owner sells the home.

HOUSING TAX CREDIT PROGRAM

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs Housing Tax Credit (HTC) Program is a key tool for channeling private investment into the creation and maintenance of affordable rental housing for low-income families. Eligible participants receive tax credits to reduce their federal tax burden in return for developing or preserving affordable rental units.

DEED-RESTRICTED HOUSING PROGRAM

Deed-restricted homeownership is a strategy for maintaining the long-term affordability of housing units. This is achieved through government or philanthropic subsidies, inclusionary zoning, or affordability incentives that lower the purchase price below market rates.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)

The City can leverage TIF to capture increased property tax revenues resulting from enhanced property values in a designated area to reinvest in needed housing development projects.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (PID)

A PID is a special district created by a city or county to fund improvements and services that benefit a specific area. These improvements can include landscaping, street lighting, sidewalks, parks, and other infrastructure projects. Property owners within the PID pay assessments to fund these enhancements, which are designed to improve the quality of life and property values in the area.

TAX INCENTIVE REINVESTMENT ZONE (TIRZ)

A TIRZ is a special district created by a city or county to encourage economic development and redevelopment in specific areas. Taxes generated from the increased property values within the zone (the “tax increment”) are reinvested into public improvements like infrastructure, parks, and affordable housing.





DRAFT



06

Infrastructure, Public Facilities, & Services

Introduction

Infrastructure planning is a vital component of this Comprehensive Plan, guiding long-term sustainability and effectiveness. This chapter provides a broad analysis of the current state of essential public infrastructure—such as water and wastewater systems, transportation networks, and utilities—highlighting key challenges and opportunities for improvement. Rather than an exhaustive technical assessment, this section offers strategic insights based on future growth patterns, population projections, and anticipated demand, ensuring that infrastructure investments align with evolving community needs.

Ensuring that infrastructure is both functional and resilient is essential for supporting the current and future needs of the community. Beyond meeting everyday demands, infrastructure must also be designed to withstand the impacts of natural hazards and unexpected disruptions. As outlined in Chapter 2, El Campo is affected by hurricanes, tropical storms, flooding, high winds, drought, extreme heat, and hazardous material exposure. These threats underscore the necessity of integrating hazard mitigation and resiliency into infrastructure planning.

This chapter takes a broad look at infrastructure planning with a focus on hazard mitigation and resiliency, providing a high-level guide for developing and maintaining essential systems within the community. By emphasizing adaptability and resilience, the Plan supports a forward-thinking approach to development, helping to enhance efficiency and quality of life.

This chapter provides:

- Public Facilities and Services
- Water and Wastewater Infrastructure
- Transportation Infrastructure
- Other Infrastructure
- Enhancing Sustainability and Resilience of Utility Systems and Public Facilities

WHAT WE HEARD

Transportation Priorities



Improve roadways and provide better drainage



Need more safe sidewalks through neighborhoods and near schools



Add more trails (especially along Tres Palacios, Legacy Park, and west side of the City)

Other Comments

- Need to improve our infrastructure such as roads and drainage
- Investing in infrastructure to support growth such as public transportation, high-speed internet, creating programs to bring in employers that pay livable wages allowing those that live in the community to work here.
- Focus on aging infrastructure



Public Facilities and Services

El Campo provides efficient and cost-effective services to both residents and businesses, with low fees and taxes to support a lower cost of living. This approach ensures that El Campo residents enjoy reliable public services—such as well-maintained streets, parks, utilities, and public safety—without undue financial burden. The City is organized into the following departments that are responsible for providing and maintaining public facilities and services.

INSPECTIONS AND PLANNING

The Inspections and Planning Department is responsible for overseeing commercial and residential development, land management, zoning, building permits, health permits, and code enforcement within the city limits. The department will use this Comprehensive Plan as a guide for development in the City.

PUBLIC WORKS

The El Campo Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining and enhancing the City's infrastructure and public spaces. It consists of four divisions: Public Works Administration, Streets and Drainage, Vehicle and Facilities Maintenance, and Parks.

The Parks Division maintains the facilities, grounds, and landscaping of approximately 120 acres of public recreation areas, including the El Campo Civic Center, El Campo Aquatic Center, City Hall and Greenspace, and seven parks: Evans Park, Alamo Park, 2nd St Park, Willie Bell Memorial Park, Legacy Park at Legacy Fields, Rotary Park, and Friendship Park. The Facilities Maintenance Division is tasked with maintaining the City's public building structures.

The El Campo Utilities Department is responsible for maintaining and operating the City's water and sewer systems, ensuring reliable service and compliance with state standards.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Public Safety Department includes the police department, emergency management, emergency medical services, and animal control.

El Campo Police Department

The Police Department works in partnership with the community to anticipate, define, and meet community needs with respect to public safety, community well-being, and law enforcement.

Emergency Management Services

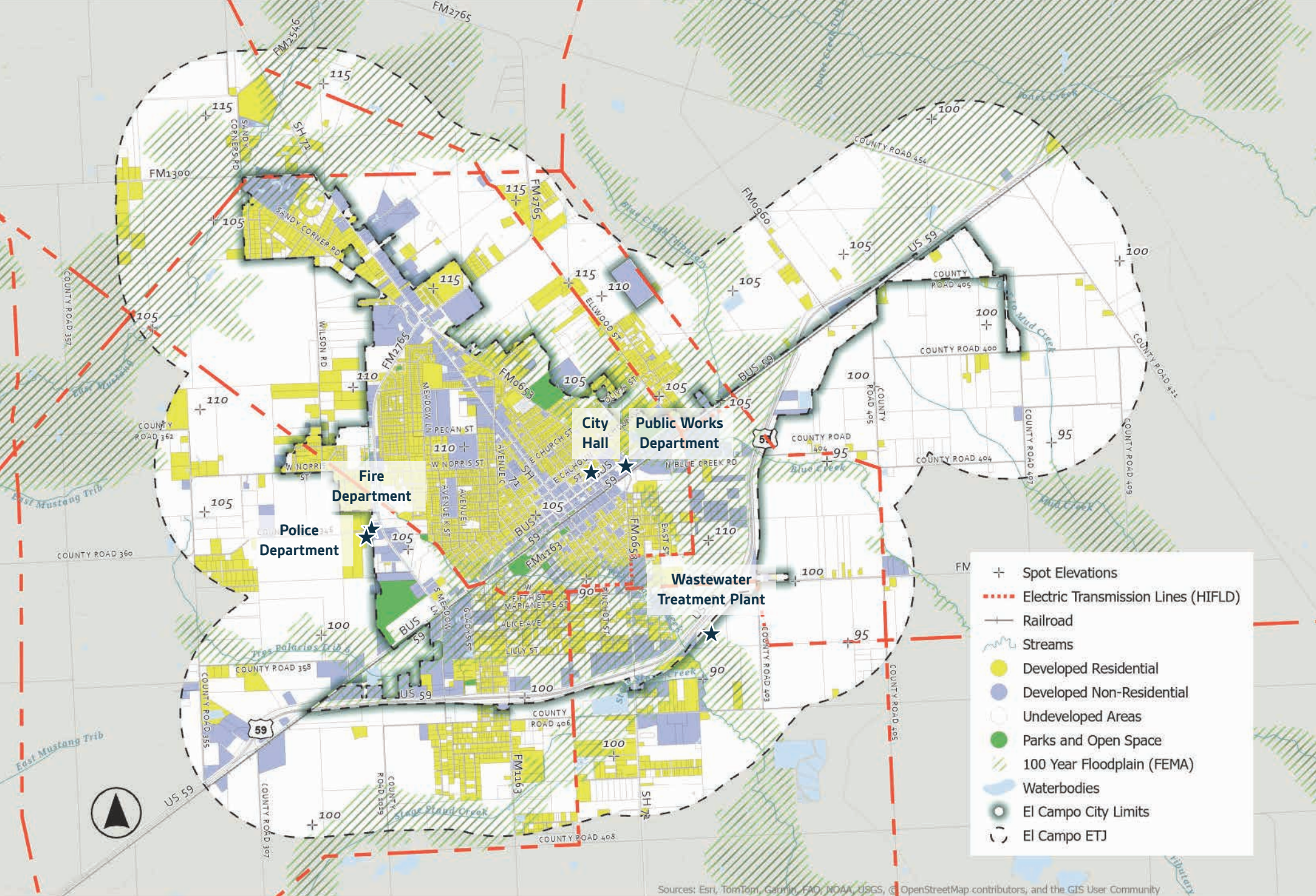
El Campo's Emergency Manager is responsible for preparing the City for disasters, reducing risks, and ensuring a coordinated response and recovery when emergencies occur. The department focuses on mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery to protect residents, businesses, and critical infrastructure.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

El Campo EMS is dedicated to providing effective, safe, and responsive emergency medical care. Recent innovations in response protocols and investments in new equipment demonstrate the department's commitment to continuous improvement and community well-being.

WHARTON COUNTY

While El Campo provides many services to residents, Wharton County provides county-level services. The City and County have a close relationship in providing high-quality services to residents and business owners.



Map 14. Public Facilities

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

Integrating water and wastewater planning with land use planning is crucial to support sustainable development. By actively considering the water supply in planning and development processes, the City can manage resources efficiently and support growth. This can be achieved through a combination of incentives to encourage developers to adopt water efficient practices, regulatory changes to enforce water conservation measures, and educational initiatives to raise awareness among residents and stakeholders about the importance of water management. By aligning these efforts, the City can create a more resilient infrastructure, minimize environmental impacts, and enhance the quality of life for its residents.

Some of the strategies to integrate water/wastewater planning and land use planning include:

- Offering incentives to developers who install water monitoring systems
- Maintaining updated System Development Fees that align with increased maintenance costs from new development
- Including density bonus and other incentives for environmentally sustainable developments that include reduce water consumption

Continued funding for capital projects and the replacement of aging water and wastewater infrastructure is essential to maintaining a reliable and efficient system. Investing in modernizing these systems helps prevent service disruptions, reduce maintenance costs, and protect public health by providing clean water and effective wastewater treatment. In addition, systems that can withstand and recover from natural hazards and climate change are essential for ensuring reliable service delivery, public health, and environmental protection. Upgrading infrastructure also supports future growth and development, as well-maintained systems can handle increased demand.



EXISTING SYSTEM CAPACITY

Water System

The City receives its water supply from five wells that draw water from a combination of the Angelina and Chicot groundwater formations. Combined, these wells are capable of producing 8 million gallons of drinking water per day. A summary of the City of El Campo Public Water System (PWS) is provided in Figure 23 and Figure 24.

The existing water system is shown in Map 15.

Existing Wastewater and Disposal System

The El Campo Wastewater Treatment Plant operates under the Texas Pollution Discharge Elimination System, a permit issued under the authority of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), which grants permission to discharge final treated effluent into the Tres Palacios Creek.

The system collects and transports all sewage within its boundaries to the wastewater treatment facility located on the south side of town. Once arriving to the plant, the influent is transported by a 36-inch piping into the main lift station prior to the headworks. The main lift station is equipped with four 8-inch Gorman Rupp T 8 pumps that are capable of pumping a combined total of 6,244 gallons per minute.

The existing wastewater system is shown in Map 16.

Figure 23. Water System Summary

Population Type	Population Served	Number of Connections
Wholesale	729	243
Residential	12290	4900
Total	13019	5143

Source: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

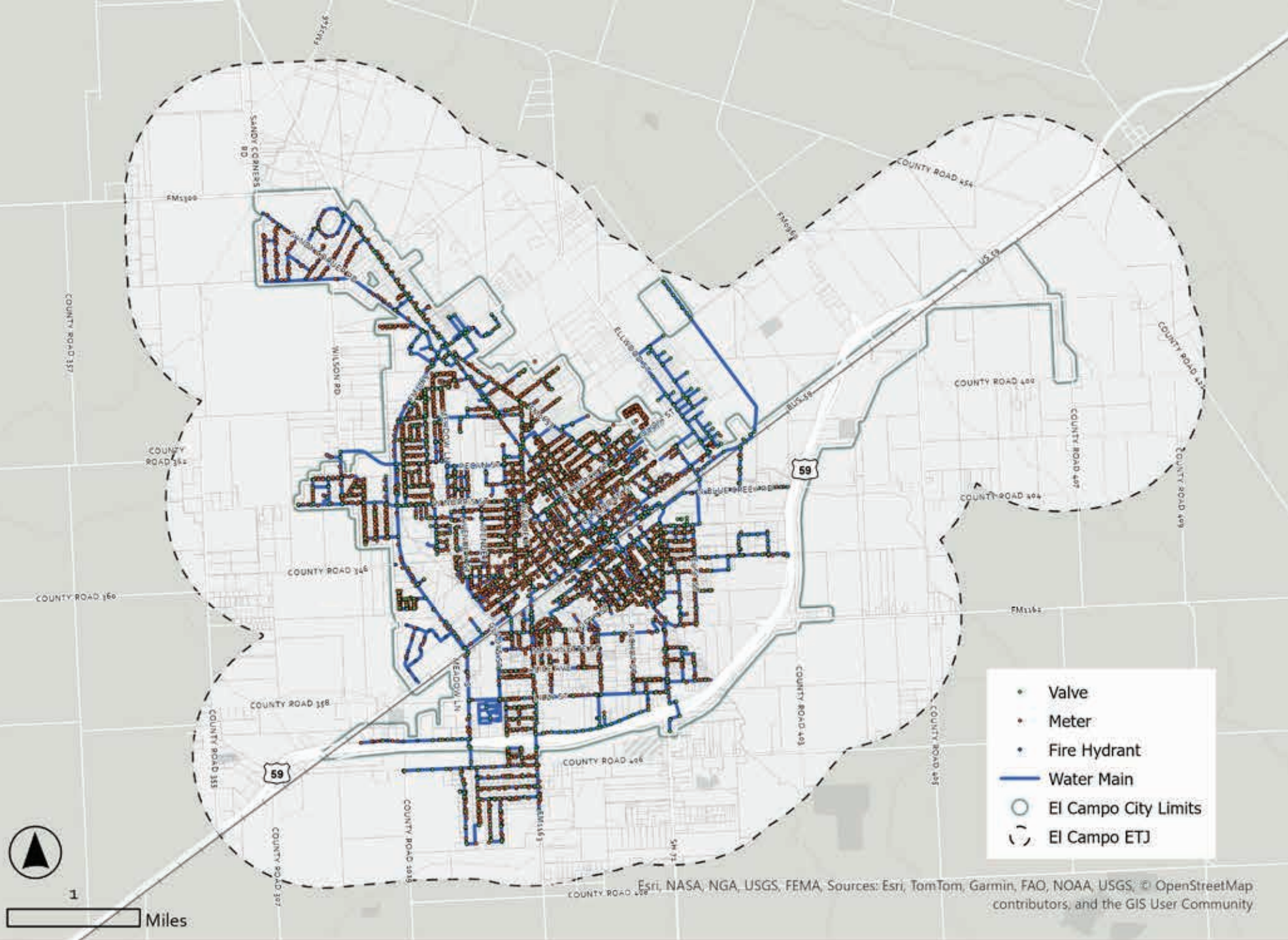
Public Water System

A Public Water System (PWS) is a system that supplies water to be used for human consumption. It includes any collection, treatment, storage, and distribution facilities under the control of the operator of such system and used primarily in connection with such system, and any collection or pretreatment storage facilities not under such control which are used primarily in connection with such system.

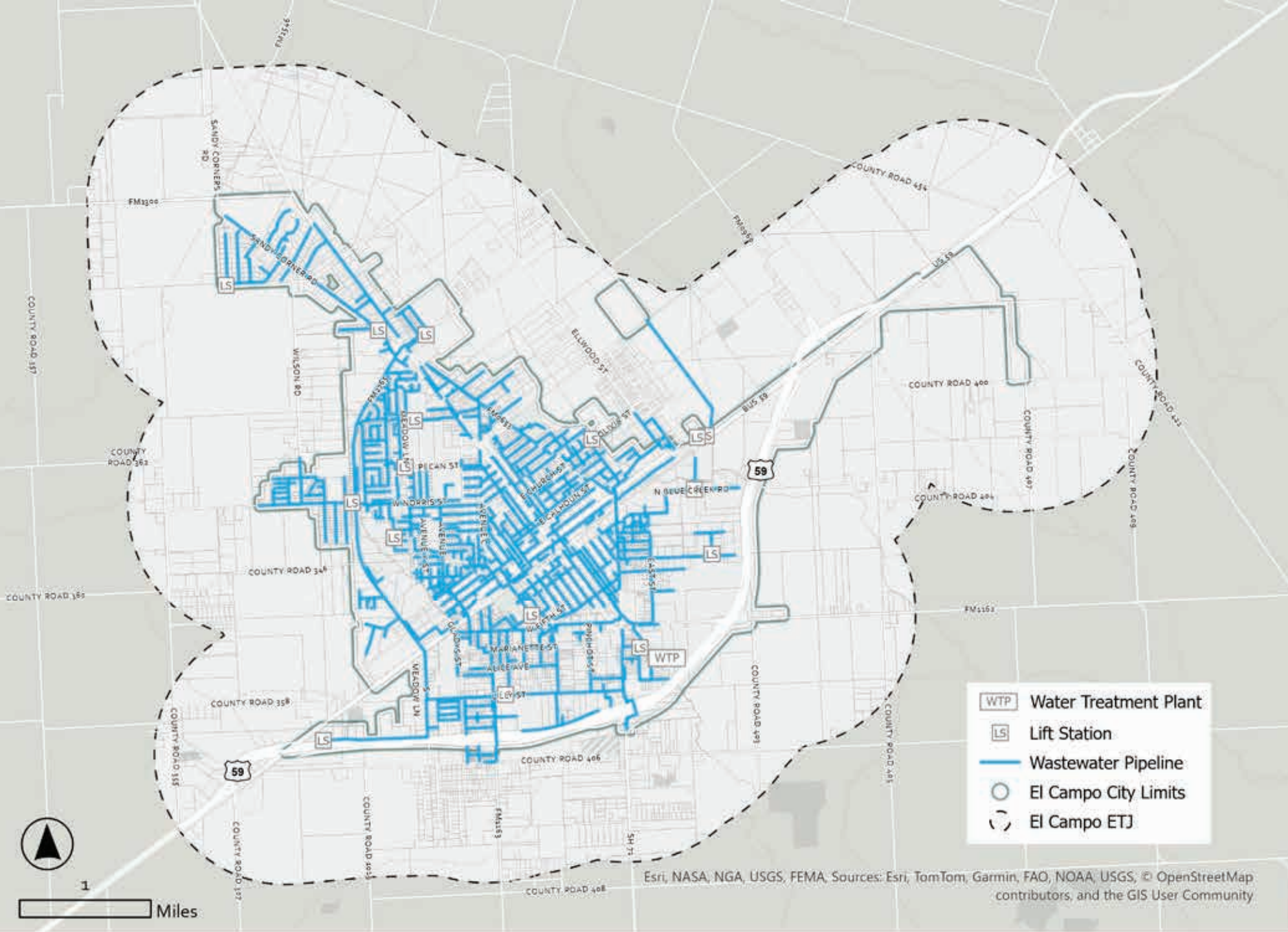
Figure 24. Water System Capacity

Total Product (MGD)	Average Daily Consumption	Max Daily Demand (MGD)	Total Storage (MG)	Elevated Storage (MG)	Service Pump Capacity El Campo
6.6820 MGD	1.8060 MGD	3.3750 MGD Occurred on 07/24/2022	3.3 MG	1.050 MG	12.586 MGD

Source: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality



Map 15. Existing Water System



Map 16. Existing Wastewater System

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

Ongoing Infrastructure Improvements

In early 2024, a failure in the sanitary system revealed a critical vulnerability within the infrastructure. This collapse triggered an emergency response, including road closures to facilitate immediate repairs and subsequent rehabilitation efforts. The incident prompted the Public Works Department to investigate additional areas at risk of imminent failure and to prioritize necessary upgrades.

As part of the ongoing response, rehabilitation of the South Wharton sanitary system was initiated. Concurrently, attention was directed toward the North Wharton Street project (FM 653), which had been previously engineered and identified as a potential concern nearly a decade ago. These efforts reflect a proactive approach to infrastructure management, aiming to prevent future disruptions and ensure long-term system reliability.

Infrastructure Planning Best Practices

Plan Utilities with Equity and Growth in Mind

Utility infrastructure should be equitably distributed and responsive to both existing underserved areas and future development corridors. Areas like West El Campo need focused utility upgrades, while growth near the Port and major corridors must be supported with strategic investments. Coordinated planning across City departments will ensure that utilities grow alongside housing, industry, and transportation improvements.

Embrace the One Water Approach

El Campo should adopt a One Water approach managing all water resources holistically to maximize efficiency, improve resilience, and reduce costs. By integrating drinking water, stormwater, and wastewater systems, the City can explore options like rainwater harvesting, greywater reuse, and green stormwater infrastructure. One Water supports long-term sustainability while preparing the City for drought and flooding challenges.

Implement Water Auditing for Efficiency and Accountability

Water auditing is a critical step toward understanding and managing El Campo's water system performance. Regular audits help identify system losses (leaks, theft, or unmetered use), reduce non-revenue water, and guide conservation efforts. El Campo can adopt auditing standards provided by the Texas Water Development Board to assess both systemwide efficiency and water use in municipal facilities. Water audits also provide data that can inform targeted upgrades and community education programs.

Strengthen Utility Resilience

Utilities must be able to withstand climate shocks and continue functioning during emergencies. This includes upgrading pump stations, wastewater systems, and substations with backup power, elevated designs, and redundancies. Infrastructure in flood-prone areas should be reinforced or relocated. Resilient utilities are critical for ensuring safety, economic continuity, and rapid recovery.

Modernize Energy Infrastructure

As industrial activity expands near the Port and other areas, the City should work with energy providers to install new substations and upgrade grid capacity. El Campo can also encourage distributed generation—such as solar panels on municipal buildings to improve resilience and reduce energy costs.

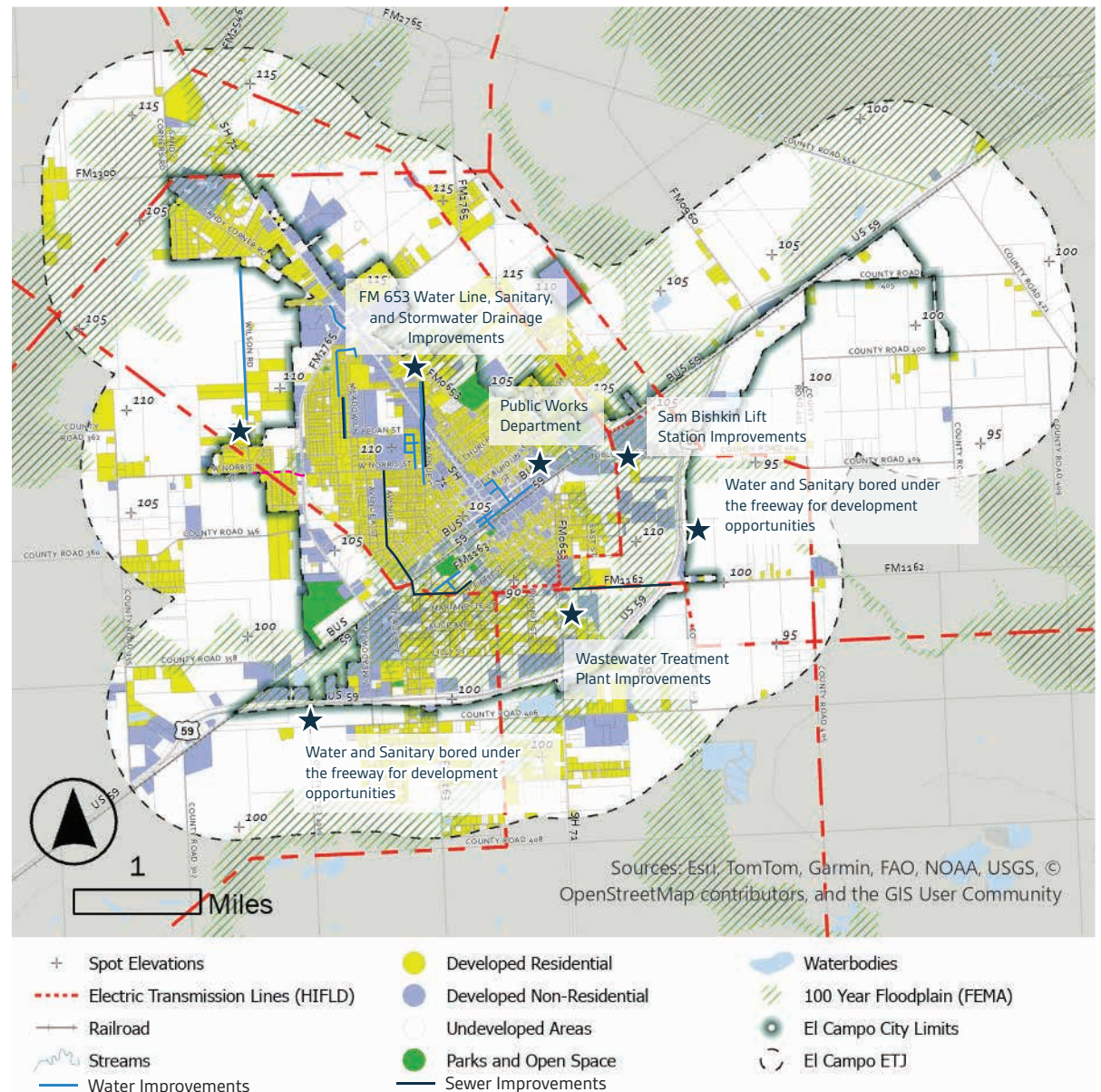
Upcoming Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Projects

The City of El Campo has planned several water and wastewater infrastructure projects as per the City's CIP. These projects include:

- Lift station improvements
- Sewer extensions
- Water main replacements and extensions
- Sewer main rehabilitation
- Wastewater treatment plant improvements
- Drainage improvements

Map 17 shows the location of planned projects. In addition to the projects shown on the maps, the City has also planned for Citywide water and sewer rehabilitation. The implementation of the CIP projects is crucial to meeting the needs of the growing population. Recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan should be used to identify future projects for the CIP.

For detailed descriptions of the planned projects, please refer to the City's CIP.



Map 17. Water and Wastewater System Planned Improvements

Transportation Infrastructure

Land use planning and transportation planning go hand in hand. It is crucial to plan for transportation improvements to ensure connectivity and ease of movement as El Campo continues to develop as per the future land use map. An efficient transportation infrastructure plays an important role in providing access to healthcare, education, employment, and recreation. El Campo's transportation network is comprised of roadways owned and maintained by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the City of El Campo. The City should focus on maintaining the current level of service while also enhancing roadways that need improvements.

EXISTING NETWORK

Roadways

The dominant mode of transportation in El Campo is personal automobiles, which is consistent with the neighboring cities and the Houston Metro Area. The City is serviced by US 59 and SH 71, which are major highways. Map 18 shows the functional classification of roadways within the city limits and the ETJ.

Public Transport

El Campo is serviced by Colorado Valley Transit which offers both fixed route and on-demand services. The fixed route services include the LOOP bus route providing connections within the City and Park & Ride, the County Deviated LINK bus providing intercity connections.

Active Transportation

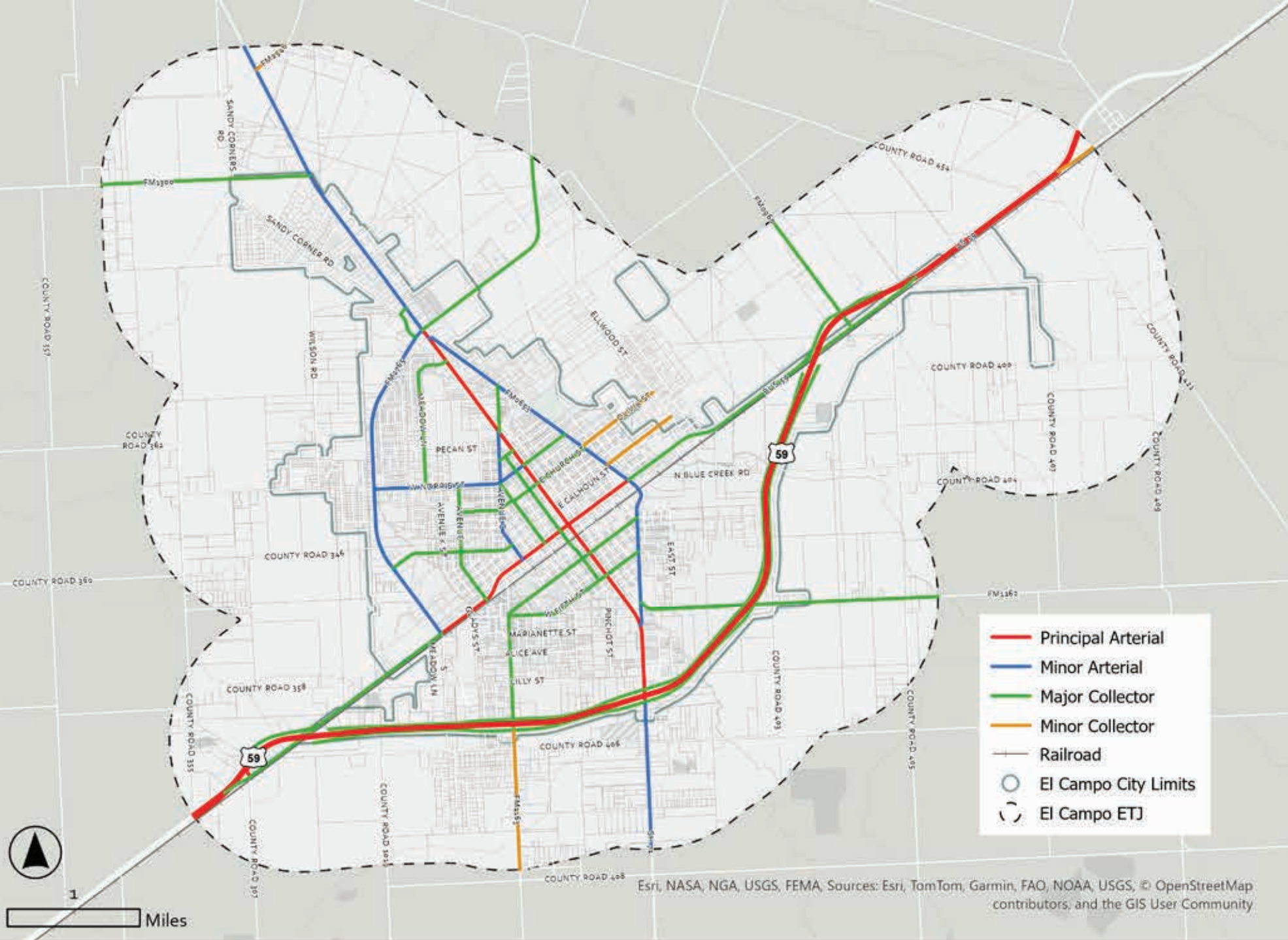
A need for more and improved sidewalk and trail connections was echoed throughout the public engagement process. Currently, sidewalks in the City are primarily concentrated in the Old Town area. As the City continues to grow, providing pedestrian connectivity to schools, parks, and other recreation areas should also be considered. The next section presents an analysis of crash data from the past four years to identify recommendations for improving traffic safety and prioritizing locations that need enhancement.

Railways

El Campo is logistically positioned on US 59/I-69, with thousands of developable acres with frontage and CPKC rail access that is shovel-ready. CPKC is the combination of Canadian Pacific (CP) and Kansas City Southern (KCS) and known as CPKC today. The CDC and the City have partnered on several infrastructure projects along this route.

The entire 1,094 square miles of Wharton County is designated as a Foreign Trade Zone through our partnership with the Port of Houston. Wharton County is also the 12th county member of the Greater Houston Partnership, and prides itself as one of the few "attainment areas" in the region. Three census tracts in El Campo have been designated Opportunity Zones, and are also eligible for New Market Tax Credit investments. All of the US 59/I-69 corridor through El Campo is included in these three census tracts.

Wharton County is a leader in both agricultural production and renewable energy for the State of Texas, with many wind and solar locations across unincorporated areas.



Map 18. Functional Classification

PLANNED AND PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Upcoming CIP Projects

The City of El Campo has planned several transportation projects as per the City's Capital Improvements Plan. These projects include:

- Street reconstruction
- Sidewalk installation
- Drainage improvements

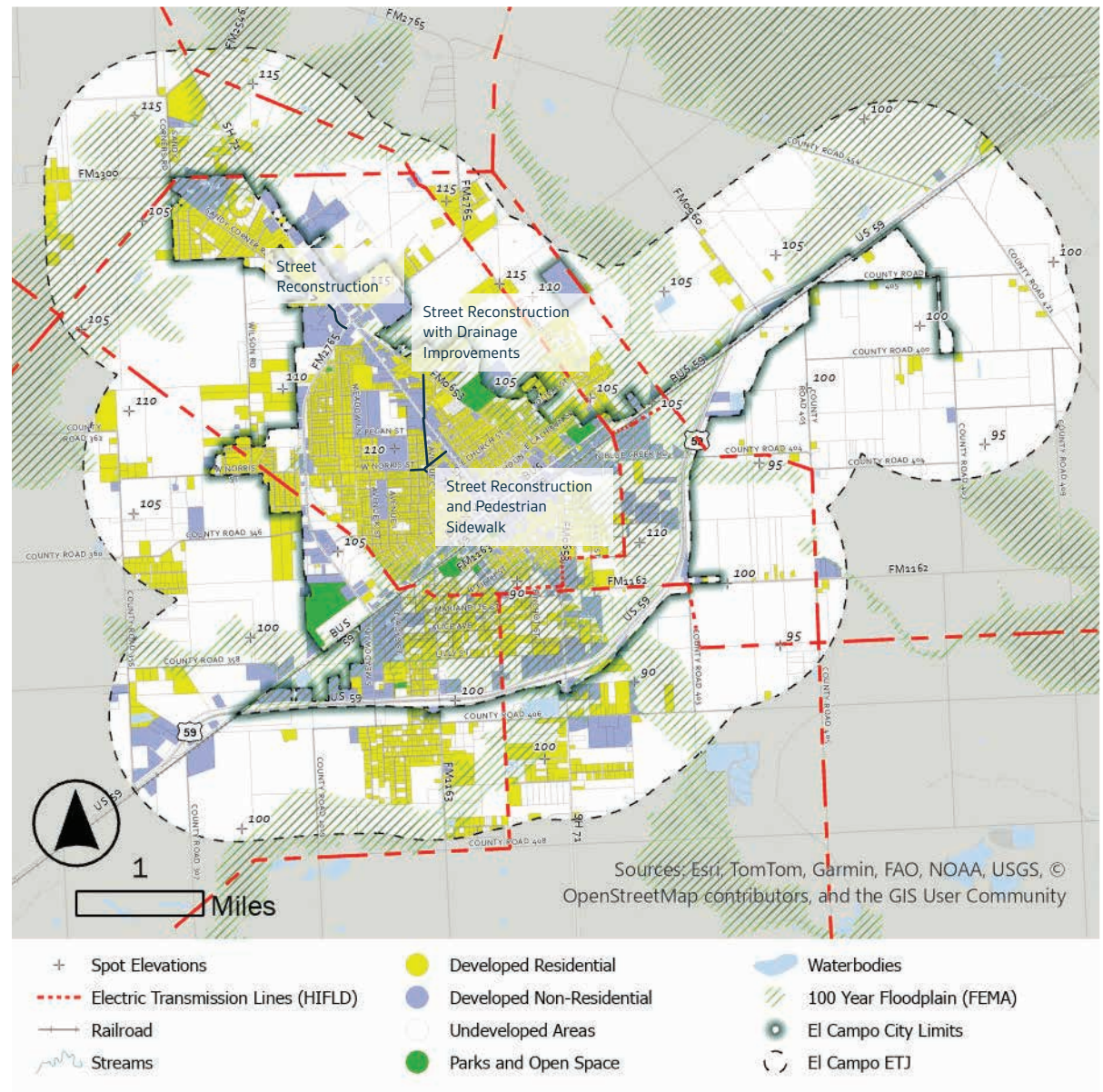
Map 19 shows the location of planned projects. The implementation of the CIP projects is crucial to meeting the needs of the growing population. Recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan should be used to identify future projects for the CIP.

TxDOT Projects

Map 20 shows the ongoing and planned TxDOT projects in El Campo city limits and ETJ. The projects include safety improvement projects, seal coat, freeway operational improvements, surfacing/roadway restoration, and constructing pedestrian infrastructure. The map also shows the project phases.

Pedestrian, Sidewalks & Curb Ramps projects that are currently underway or planned for the future include:

- Jackson Street from FM 2765 to SH 71
- Mechanic Street from FM 2765 to US 59 Frontage Road



Map 19. Transportation Infrastructure Planned Improvements



TRAFFIC SAFETY

Crash Analysis

Crash analyses are a vital part of thoroughfare planning because they reveal how the transportation system is performing in terms of safety. This insight into where, when and why crashes happen allows planners to identify high-risk locations and prioritize improvements where they will have the greatest impact on preventing future crashes, which is especially important for smaller communities with limited resources.

The data used for the analysis were obtained from the TxDOT Crash Records Information System (CRIS). The data includes crashes in the City of El Campo and in the City's ETJ area. The analyses revealed that there were a total of 1,033 crashes in the City of El Campo and its ETJ area between 2021 and 2024. Map 21 reveals crash hotspots in the El Campo downtown area and the intersection of SH 71 (Mechanic Street) and West Loop (FM 2765), as well as multiple locations where local/county roads cross US 59, as listed below:

- A segment northeast of El Campo between County Road 454 and Pierce West Road (County Road 421)
- County Road 355
- SH 71



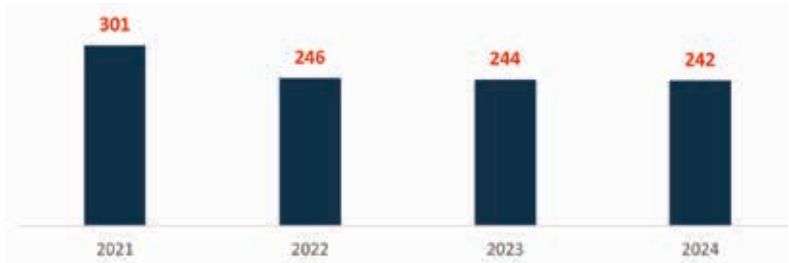
Safety Action Plan

It is recommended that the City develop a Safety Action Plan to guide efforts in reducing severe crashes and improving roadway safety. A plan provides a structured, data-driven approach to identify risk factors, set clear goals, and prioritize safety investments. It typically includes crash analysis, community input, and strategies for both site-specific improvements and broader, lower-cost systemic measures that apply proven solutions across the network.

Crashes by Year

Figure 25 shows the total number of reported crashes from 2021 to 2024. While there is a noticeable drop between 2021 and 2022, likely influenced by COVID-related travel patterns in 2020/2021, the number of crashes has remained relatively consistent over the past three years, hovering around the mid-240s.

Figure 25. Crashes by Year

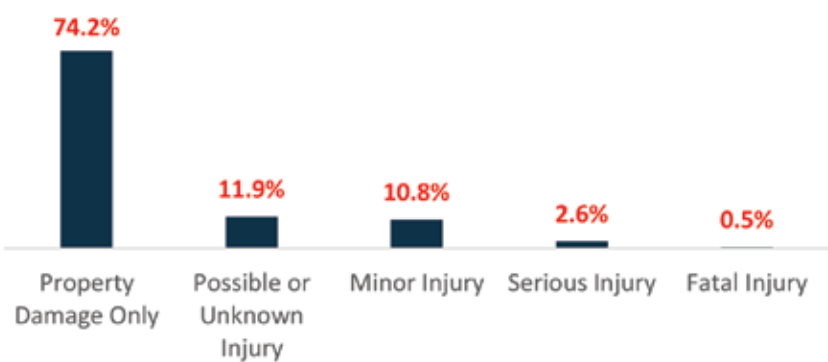


Source: TxDOT

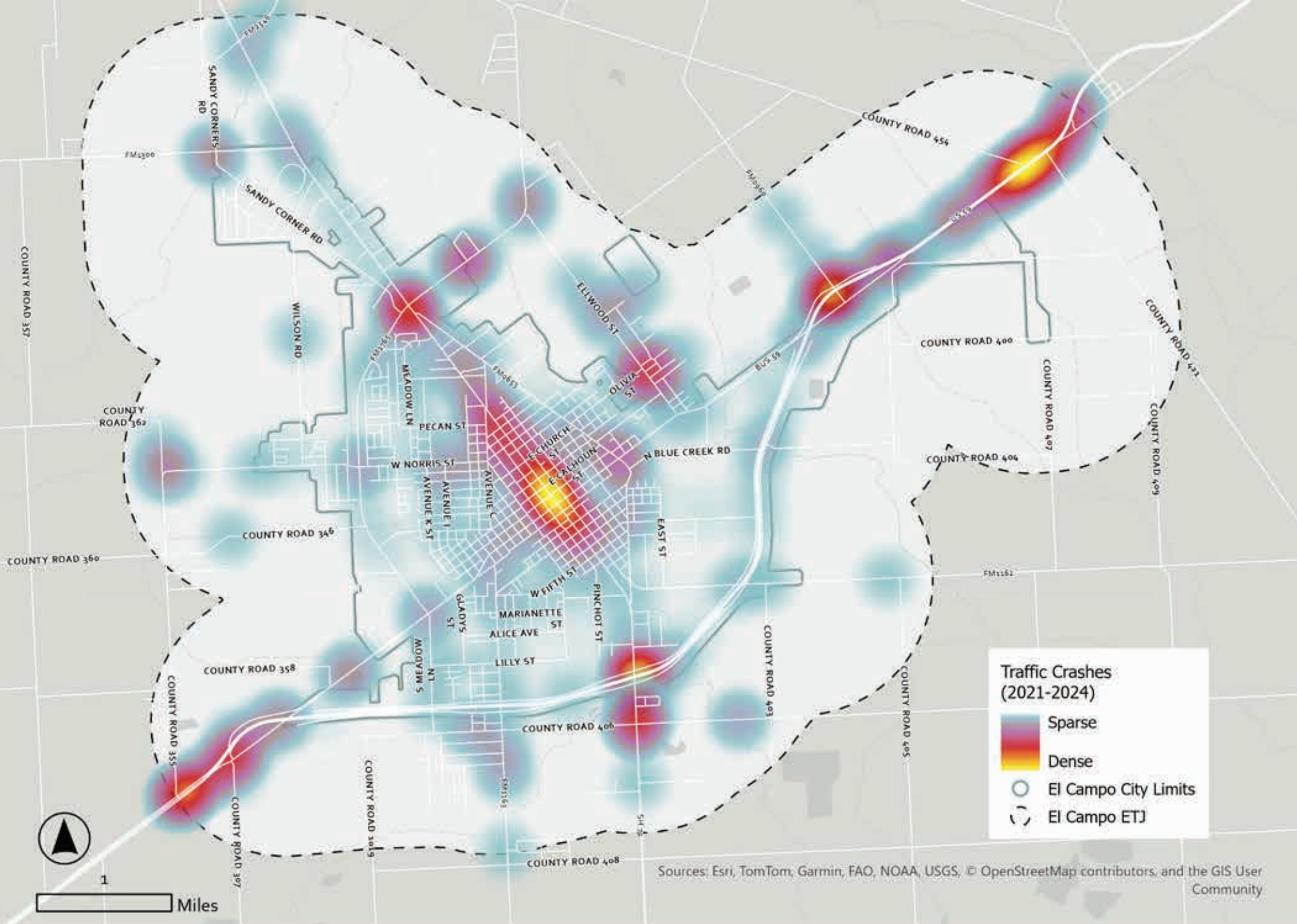
Crash Severity

Figure 26 shows that the majority of the crashes in El Campo and its ETJ area result in property damage only. Serious injury and fatality crashes accounted for around 3% of crashes, which is slightly lower than the statewide trend.

Figure 26. Crashes by Severity of Injury



Source: TxDOT



Map 21. Traffic Crashes

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Active transportation refers to any form of human-powered travel, such as walking, biking, or using a wheelchair, typically for getting to everyday destinations like work, school, or shopping. It supports healthier lifestyles, reduces traffic congestion and emissions, and creates more connected, livable communities.

Facility Types

There are several ways to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure into a street, each serving different purposes based on the street's context, available right-of-way, and community needs. As a next step, the City may consider reviewing its existing street network to identify which streets are most suitable for multimodal improvements. Depending on each street's characteristics, the following facility types may be appropriate for enhancing active transportation in El Campo's network:

On-Street

Bike Route

- Provides basic bicycle access on roads where no space for a designated bicycle facility is available
- Helps to maintain connectivity between destinations and streets with designated bicycle facilities
- "Share the Road" signage or "Sharrow" pavement markings recommended to remind motorists of cyclists' right to the street



Bike Lane/Shoulder Bike Lane

- Designates an exclusive area for cyclists through pavement marking and signage
- Visually reminds motorists of cyclists' right to the street
- Increases cyclists' comfort and confidence on busy streets
- Relatively easy to implement and maintain
- Does not provide physical protection for cyclists



Off-Street

Buffered Bike Lane

- Buffer between car traffic and bike traffic via two painted white lines, with or without diagonal cross-hatching
- Allows cyclists more room without appearing as a car travel/parking lane
- Does not provide physical protection for cyclists

Protected Bike Lane

- Provides physical separation from car traffic via bollards, planters, raised curb, or parked cars
- Prevents double-parking unlike conventional bike lanes
- Requires special maintenance

Hike & Bike Trail

- Also known as a multi-use trail
- Path serving multiple types of users, particularly pedestrians, cyclists and joggers
- Completely separated from traffic (off-street)
- Usually passes through a greenway, park or an open space
- Can be paved or unpaved
- Minimum 8 feet in width, ROW acquisition may be required
- Potential locations could include trails along the Tres Palacios River connecting to Willie Bell Park and continuing along the railroad tracks to downtown.

Sidepath

- Also known as a shared-use path
- Serves multiple types of users – cyclists, pedestrians, inline skaters, wheelchair users, joggers, and other non-motorized users
- Adjacent and parallel to a street
- Can accommodate two-way traffic on one side of the street
- Minimum 8 feet in width, ROW acquisition may be required



Pedestrian Infrastructure and ADA Compliance

In August 2023, the U.S. Department of Justice partnered with the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to adopt the Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG). These guidelines are designed to ensure that pedestrian facilities remain accessible to people with disabilities at all times, whether during routine use, maintenance, or construction activities. These standards are now legally enforceable, and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) uses PROWAG as its primary standard.

The City of El Campo is encouraged to align with these state and federal efforts by first conducting a thorough inventory of existing sidewalks and bus stops, including an evaluation of their physical condition, accessibility features, and compliance with ADA standards. This assessment should also identify gaps in connectivity and any barriers that may limit access for individuals with mobility, vision, or hearing impairments. Once this inventory is complete, the City can use the findings to ensure that all new and existing sidewalks, crosswalks, public transportation stops and facilities, and other components of the public right-of-way not only meet ADA requirements but also serve the full range of community needs.

Safe Routes to Schools

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a national initiative focused on improving safety and accessibility for students walking or biking to school. For a community like El Campo, where many students live within a reasonable distance of their school campuses, implementing a Safe Routes to School program or transportation alternatives program could reduce traffic congestion during school drop-off and pick-up times, encourage physical activity, and enhance overall student safety.

TxDOT provides funding for a variety of infrastructure projects, including SRTS-related improvements, through the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA) Program. This funding can support the implementation of needed enhancements.

Key elements of a successful program could include building or repairing sidewalks, adding high-visibility crosswalks, installing signage and traffic calming near schools, and providing education on walking and biking safety. It also involves close coordination between the City, school district, parents, and law enforcement to identify barriers and develop practical solutions. By investing in these improvements, El Campo can create a safer, healthier, and more connected environment for its students and families.

Safe Routes to Parks

Creating safe routes to parks and open spaces in El Campo is essential for supporting active lifestyles, improving community health, and ensuring that residents of all ages and abilities can safely access recreational amenities. By developing a connected network of walking and bicycling routes that link parks with neighborhoods, schools, and other popular destinations, the City can encourage more people to choose active transportation. Where appropriate, the City may explore traffic calming measures near parks to address safety concerns related to vehicle speed or volumes. Intersection improvements at park access points can also enhance safety for all users. Strengthening public transportation connections to parks, trails, and open spaces can also improve access for residents without vehicles. Equipping parks with secure bicycle parking can further support active travel options.



Source: Seattle Public Schools

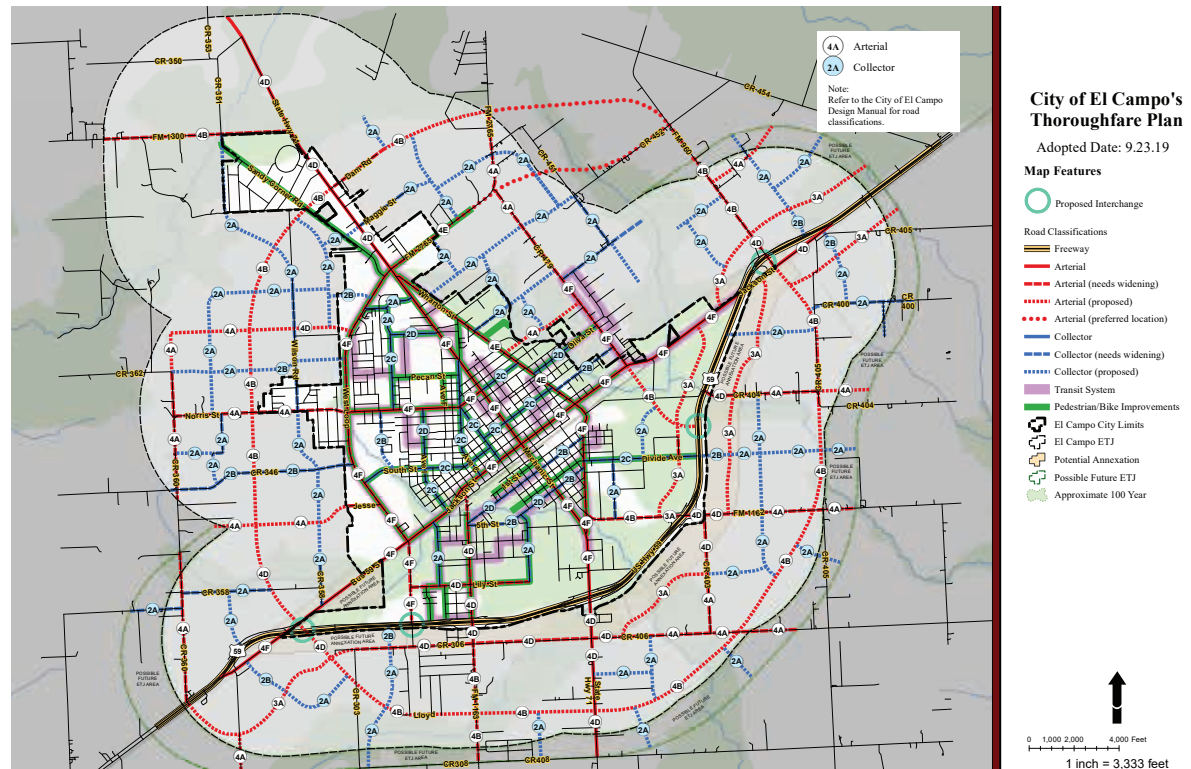
Thoroughfare Plan

The Thoroughfare Plan is composed of the Thoroughfare Map and the Thoroughfare Classification System. The map identifies the proposed locations for each thoroughfare and illustrates how the thoroughfare system functions as a whole. The classification system outlines the specific standards that each thoroughfare should be designed to meet in order to function at its optimum level and achieve the relevant transportation goals.

Thoroughfare planning establishes a framework for El Campo's long-term mobility and guides the decision-making process. By identifying transportation issues and needs, a thoroughfare plan provides the City with directions on addressing these needs and facilitating future developments. The City should plan to update the Thoroughfare Plan for the City of El Campo and its ETJ. The map should include roadways that have been constructed or extended since the last update in 2017. It should incorporate active transportation routes to connect thoroughfares as part of the future plan and it should reflect any changes in roadway classifications, alignment with the thoroughfare plans of adjacent jurisdictions, and changes in land use patterns and future land use designations.

In addition, the map is informed by the locations of potential hazard-prone areas as to:

- Avoid placing major roads in areas with high vulnerability and hazard areas
- Maintain accessibility for first responders by designing roads that allow for quick deployment during disasters
- Ensure thoroughfares support swift evacuation, with clear signage, adequate capacity, and redundancy in case primary routes are compromised



Map 22. 2019 Thoroughfare Plan

COMPREHENSIVE THOROUGHFARE PLAN UPDATE

To support the City's goals and position El Campo for long-term success, the City should consider developing a new, possibly stand-alone thoroughfare plan. A thoroughfare plan provides a detailed, data-driven analysis of the roadway network, including functional classifications, cross-section standards, connectivity gaps, future extension opportunities, and coordination with regional plans. It would also allow the City to incorporate community input and establish clear implementation strategies. A new thoroughfare plan would serve as a practical tool to guide transportation decisions and support infrastructure investments that reflect El Campo's unique context and long-term vision.

ASSET MANAGEMENT

Asset management is a process designed to reduce roadway and bridge life cycle costs while maintaining an acceptable level of risk and quality of service. It provides data-based solutions to justify capital investments and ensures cost-effective and sustainable levels of network performance. Figure 27 illustrates the pavement life cycle and when to consider pavement rehabilitation. As part of asset management, the City is encouraged to create and regularly update a Citywide inventory of pavement condition that can inform the Capital Improvement Program projects.

DESIGN MANUAL

With El Campo experiencing steady growth, maintaining flexibility in roadway design is still important to support long-term community needs and a wider range of transportation options. The City should consider consulting the *TxDOT Roadway Design Manual*, revised in November 2024, as a baseline for current best practices. In addition, reviewing design standards from peer cities can offer valuable insights into how other communities are planning for safe and efficient travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and small-scale transit services.

Peer cities that may be appropriate to review should share similar characteristics with El Campo, for example, being a smaller and more rural community, with steady and not rapid growth, and with a transportation network that balances state highways and railroad with local needs. A consideration can also be given to communities that need to proactively plan for hazard mitigation and floodplain management.

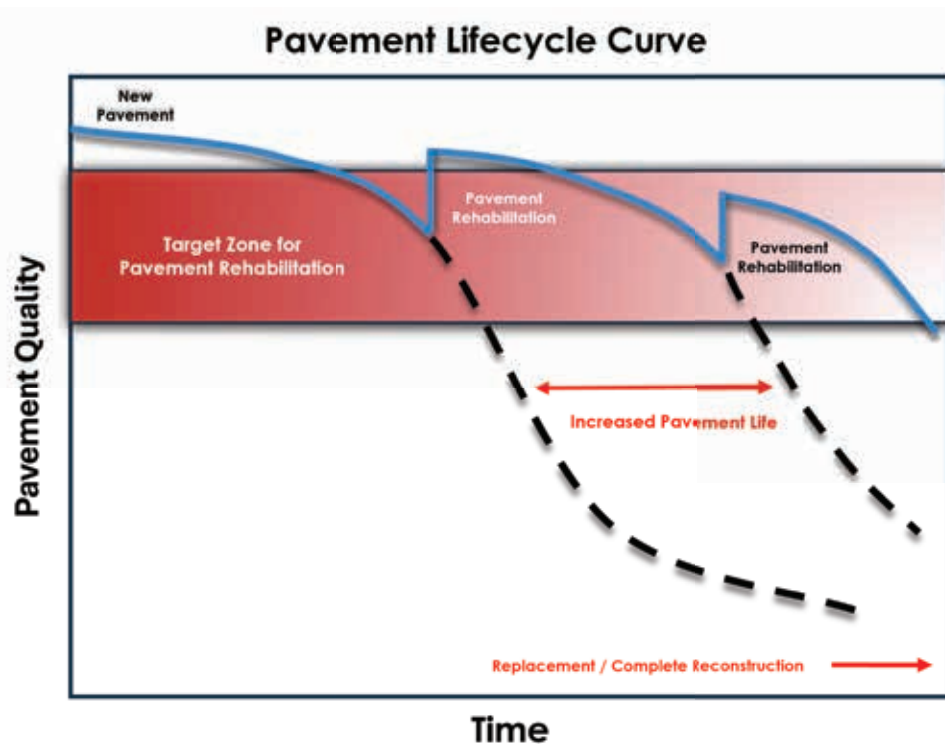
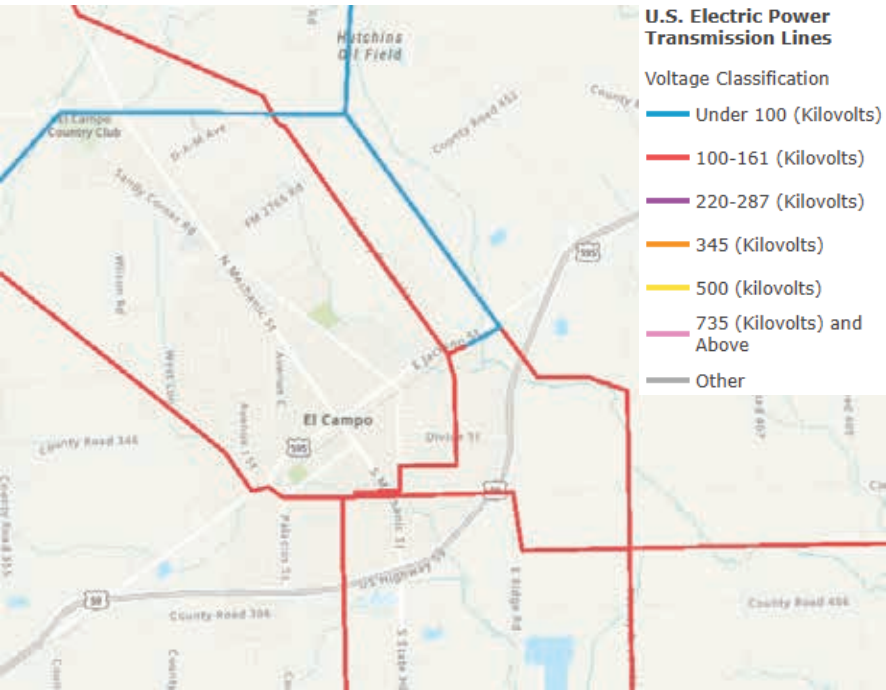


Figure 27. Asset Management

Other Infrastructure

ELECTRIC POWER TRANSMISSION

Map 23 depicts electric power transmission lines, which are integral components of the electrical grid. These lines consist of structures, conductors, insulators, and related hardware designed to transport electrical energy across long distances. Operating at high voltages—typically ranging from 69 kilovolts (kV) to 765 kV—they are capable of delivering substantial amounts of electricity efficiently from generation sources to substations or other distribution points within the power system.



Map 23. U.S. Electric Power Transmission Lines

INTERNET ACCESS

Out of 4,387 households, 78.6% have an internet subscription, while 1.9% access the internet without a subscription, possibly through public or shared networks. However, 19.5% of households lack any internet access, highlighting a potential digital divide. Regarding the types of internet services used, 69.5% of households rely on cellular data plans, making it the most common form of access. Broadband services such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL are used by 50.5% of households, and satellite internet is used by 10.4%, likely in areas with limited infrastructure. These figures suggest that many households may use multiple forms of internet access, and the high reliance on cellular data could reflect affordability or infrastructure limitations. The data underscores the importance of expanding internet accessibility and improving broadband infrastructure to bridge connectivity gaps as needed.

Figure 28. Internet Access

Internet Access		
With an Internet subscription	3,446	78.6%
Internet access without a subscription	84	1.9%
No Internet access	857	19.5%
Total Households	4,387	

Internet Access		
Cellular data plan	3,049	69.5%
Broadband such as cable, fiber optic or DSL	2,216	50.5%
Satellite Internet service	457	10.4%
Total Households	4,387	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Enhancing Sustainability and Resilience of Utility Systems and Public Facilities

As communities grow and environmental challenges intensify, the need to strengthen the sustainability and resilience of utility systems and public facilities becomes increasingly urgent. Aging infrastructure, climate-related risks, and evolving service demands require a strategic approach to ensure long-term reliability, efficiency, and adaptability. This section outlines potential impacts of hazards on infrastructure systems in El Campo. The recommendations outlined in Chapter 7 provide initiatives aimed at modernizing utility networks, integrating sustainable technologies, and reinforcing public assets to better withstand disruptions while supporting community well-being and environmental stewardship.

Infrastructure Systems	Flood Impacts	Drought & Extreme Heat	Wildfire	Tropical Weather System
Water and Wastewater	▪ Inundation of wastewater facilities ▪ Infiltration overload in expanding system ▪ Contamination of groundwater from septic system failures	▪ Water supply stress ▪ Underground pipe damage from soil shrinkage ▪ Water quality challenges from higher temperatures	▪ Reduced water pressure due to firefighting demands ▪ Direct damage to above-ground infrastructure ▪ Post-fire contamination of water sources	▪ Drinking water contamination ▪ Treatment system failures during power outages ▪ Wind damage to infrastructure components
Transportation	▪ Submersion of major evacuation routes (US 83) ▪ Structural damage to roads and bridges ▪ Clogging of storm drainage systems	▪ Pavement softening and buckling ▪ Delays in maintenance and construction ▪ Accelerated deterioration which can increase costs	▪ Closure of critical transportation corridors ▪ Damage to traffic management systems ▪ Extreme demand during evacuations	▪ Widespread debris obstruction ▪ Structural damage to bridges and culverts ▪ Traffic signal failures during power outages

Infrastructure Systems	Flood Impacts	Drought & Extreme Heat	Wildfire	Tropical Weather System
Electricity	▪ Substation flooding and damage ▪ Instability of utility poles in saturated ground ▪ Safety-related power shutoffs in flooded areas	▪ Demand surges during cooling needs ▪ Reduced transmission efficiency ▪ Potential for rolling blackouts during peak demand	▪ Damage to transmission lines ▪ Preventative power disconnections ▪ Substation vulnerability to direct fire damage	▪ Widespread outages from wind damage ▪ Extended recovery time frames ▪ Cascading failures affecting other systems
Emergency Services	▪ Limited vehicle access to affected areas ▪ Strain on personnel and equipment ▪ Disruption of emergency communications	▪ Increase in heat-related emergency calls ▪ Health risks to emergency personnel ▪ Equipment failures due to overheating	▪ Resource depletion during extended operations ▪ Communications system damage ▪ Vulnerability of emergency facilities themselves	▪ Simultaneous multi-hazard response demands ▪ Damage to emergency operations centers ▪ Severe restrictions on emergency vehicle movement



DRAFT

The background image shows a wooden park pavilion with a roof of string lights. A black metal fence and green trees are in the background. The slide is decorated with a dark blue curved shape at the top, a red curved shape at the bottom, and a light blue curved shape on the right side.

07

Implementation

Introduction

The implementation plan is a crucial component of the Comprehensive Plan, as it translates strategic goals into actionable steps. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee expressed a need for an actionable and feasible implementation plan.

This chapter presents a list of implementation strategies, clearly outlining the specific actions required, assigning roles and responsibilities, and establishing a timeline for achieving the desired results. This approach details what needs to be done, who is responsible for each task, and when each step should be completed, ultimately facilitating the successful execution of the Comprehensive Plan's goals.

This chapter provides:

- Implementation Best Practices
- Implementation Action Plan



Implementation Best Practices

PROACTIVE AND REACTIVE STRATEGIES

Plan implementation is often achieved through one of two methods: proactive and reactive implementation strategies. While both are effective in putting the recommendations of this Plan into action, using a balance of both approaches will better set the City up for success in this goal. Examples of proactive and reactive strategies are provided below.

Proactive Strategies

Proactive strategies are those that the City leads in seeking implementation of the Plan's recommendations and actions. City-initiated efforts are effective because they may occur immediately but may prove costly regarding staff time and City resources. Examples include:

- Updating policies, such as Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs), thoroughfare plans, and development codes to achieve the recommendations identified within this Plan.
- Initiating zoning changes within target areas to encourage development that is compatible with the land use designations within this Plan.
- Acquiring property from private individuals and entities in strategic locations to ensure responsible development and engineering practices.

Reactive Strategies

Reactive strategies involve opportunities brought to the City on a case-by-case basis rather than those the City seeks out independently. These strategies rely on elected and appointed officials to act with the recommendations of this Plan in mind, placing further emphasis on the continuing updates and communication of the Plan suggested in this chapter. Examples include:

- Assessing rezoning requests against the intent and purpose of the future land use categories established in this Plan.
- Reviewing development applications for compliance with the adopted development standards and the intent of this Plan.
- Updating the recommendations and actions of this Plan based on public feedback and initiatives.
- Considering economic development projects and incentive options that expand the City's tax base and employment opportunities.

PLAN EDUCATION

An essential part of implementation is education about the role and significance of the Comprehensive Plan. Public education about the Plan builds consensus on initiatives and gains buy-in from the community.

Regular education and training should be offered to City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, city staff, and other individuals with a direct role in the implementation of the Plan. Training is intended to update or educate participants so that those involved with the Plan are always informed about its current status. Training initiatives should include:

- A review of the goals and guiding principles that guide the Plan's recommendations.
- An overview of segments of the Plan that most directly relate to their responsibilities and purposes.
- Discussion of the roles and responsibilities of each individual entity and its function regarding Plan implementation.
- Implementation tasking and priority setting that allows each group to establish their own short and long-term agendas.
- A review of current Plan initiatives and status updates on the progress of recommended implementation strategies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

No single individual or entity is responsible for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. There are multiple aspects of the Plan that require participation by various parties, such as the adoption of regulations, administration of the development code, and partnering with different public and private organizations. Each individual or group involved with the Comprehensive Plan has a vital role to play in the implementation of the Plan based on their authority or expense.

City Council

The key responsibilities of the City Council are to establish priorities, set time frames for when actions should be initiated and completed, and determine the financial resources to be made available for implementation efforts. The City Council works with outside entities or provides direction for city staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission to implement the initiatives of the Plan.

Planning and Zoning Commission

The Planning and Zoning Commission is charged with making recommendations to the City Council regarding zoning and the Comprehensive Plan. In this role, the Planning and Zoning Commission acts as the connection between city staff and City Council. It is important for the Commission to remain knowledgeable about the Comprehensive Plan and to make sound recommendations in the best interest of the City.

City Staff

City staff is involved in the most direct application of the Comprehensive Plan. They are responsible for administering the Plan through the zoning ordinance, subdivision codes, and other regulations influenced by the Comprehensive Plan for the built environment through the administration of these ordinances.

Outside Organizations

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan is not solely on the City resources. Entities like private developers, federal agencies, or local non-profit organizations are useful resources to implement specific recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. These entities can provide resources and support for elements of the Plan to assist the City in completing particular tasks. Partnerships can take the form of public-private partnerships (PPP), grant funding, establishment of programs, and other various methods. The following list of partners is not exhaustive, but provides examples of outside entities that can be beneficial to the success of this Plan:

- Wharton County
- Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
- Chamber of Commerce
- City Development Corporation (CDC)
- Housing Board
- Keep El Campo Beautiful
- Community non-profits
- Adjacent Municipalities (on projects that benefit both jurisdictions)
- Additional affected agencies and entities
- Area property and business owners and the development community

UPDATING THE PLAN

This Plan is intended to serve as a guide for policy decisions and to reflect the community's vision for the future. As such, the Plan is not a rigid document but a living tool that should be revisited and revised, if necessary, depending on the City's changing economic, physical, and social composition. The Plan should be reviewed for accuracy as the City grows to maintain alignment with the vision and guiding principles.

Annual Progress Reporting

Following adoption, the City should assign a responsible body, such as the Planning Commission or another citizen committee to provide an annual progress report on the status of the Comprehensive Plan to City leadership. This annual review will help verify if the Plan's relevance of content and the appropriateness of the Plan's recommendations and actions are still applicable. With assistance from city staff and involved departments, the responsible body could present an annual report on the City's implementation from the year prior to the City Council. This report should be coordinated with the annual budget and can be used as an opportunity to celebrate the City's achievements and reflect on opportunities in the coming year.

Annual Updates

Following the annual progress reporting, the implementation action plan should be reviewed and updated as part of an annual plan amendment. This annual amendment will allow the City to update the implementation plan and identify near-term actions for the coming year. Annual Plan amendments also provide opportunities for relatively minor Plan updates and revisions as needed.

Five-Year Audit Diagnostic

In addition to the annual reviews, the City should conduct a thorough audit of the Plan's outcomes and content every five years following the Plan's original adoption. Such reviews should be a joint effort between all involved departments and officials and should include an analysis of the Plan's successes and shortcomings as it relates to implementing the community's vision for the City. During this process, staff should work to identify any necessary revisions, either minor or comprehensive, to organize potential revisions to the document. Topics of interest should include any shifts in demographic composition, economic factors, and societal factors that may impact the trajectory of the City.

10-Year Update

The Plan sets the stage for subsequent implementation actions in the 10-year planning horizon. Environmental conditions, population composition and City trends and concerns change over time. To help the Plan continue to provide the best and most appropriate direction possible, it should be taken through a full update process every 10 years.

Implementation Action Plan

One of the most important elements of a comprehensive plan is having actionable recommendations that clearly outline the initial steps that a city must take to begin implementing the plan. The following implementation table provides individual actions that will help achieve the vision established by the community. The table is organized by the five goals identified in the Plan and includes several action items related to the goal. For each action, an associated time frame for implementation, involved entities, and action type are identified to assist with planning and completing the action.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations include action items and strategies paired with corresponding numbers. They are developed based on assessments and community input across various topics outlined in this Plan. These action items represent practical strategies that the City can implement to achieve the vision set forth in this Plan.

1

#	Recommendation

2 IMPLEMENTATION TIME FRAME

This Plan provides a phased approach to implementation to help the City identify achievable actions in the near future and distinguish them from long-term actions that might need extensive studies and preparation. The recommended actions are categorized into the following time frames.

Ongoing

Recommendations that are continuously being implemented or should be revisited regularly throughout the life of the recommendation or implementation of the Plan.

Short-Term (1-2 years)

Actions that are typically “low-hanging fruit” or easier to achieve because they do not require a large amount of capital.

Mid-Term (3-10 years)

Actions that may require more planning and capital than the short-term 2-year horizon.

Long-Term (10+ years)

Actions that generally need a large amount of capital, require significant planning and coordination for completion or other steps must take place before implementation. In some cases, there may be opportunities to make some initial progress in the short- or mid-term.

2

Implementation Time Frame

3 INVOLVED ENTITIES

Assigning the key entities responsible for following through on an action and identifying potential partnerships is essential to implementing the suggested recommendations. This portion of the table identifies the departments, groups within the City, and potential partnerships that may assist with completing the action. Communication with these individuals and groups is needed to explain their roles and expectations when implementing this Plan. Please note that the entities mentioned below do not constitute an exhaustive list of entities and potential partners.

City departments and external entities include:

- Planning & Development
- Building Permits & Inspections
- Code Enforcement
- Planning and Zoning Commission
- Building Standards Commission
- Housing Authority Board
- Parks, Recreation and Community Services Boards
- City Development Corporation (CDC)
- Keep El Campo Beautiful
- Public Safety
- Parks
- Utilities
- City Council

3

Involved Entities

4 ACTION TYPE(S)

Successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will take coordination on the part of the City and area partners. The various actions in the table have been identified by one of eight action types. This distinction assists the City in identifying the individuals or groups responsible for carrying out the action and plan for proper resources and staffing. The action types are listed below:

- Plan
- Policy
- Study
- Financial Investment
- Operational Change
- Regulation
- Partnership
- Project
- Program

4

Action Type(s)

5 CORRESPONDING GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The recommendations in this Plan reflect El Campo's vision for its future, with the guiding principles serving as the foundation for every recommendation throughout the document. Every recommended strategy will correspond with an applicable guiding principle listed below, providing a clear way to identify how they are integrated into the recommended actions.

-  Preserve and Enhance Small-Town Character
-  Expand Family-Friendly and Entertainment Options
-  Diversify Economic and Commercial Opportunities
-  Expand the Variety of Housing Options
-  Strengthen Infrastructure for Sustainable Growth

5

Corresponding Guiding Principle

6 FUNDING SOURCES

A range of funding sources is available to support the implementation of this Plan's recommendations. Each recommendation in the implementation table includes potential funding sources that may be utilized to carry out the proposed action. Every funding source is not appropriate for all recommendations. They are identified in the implementation table based on the applicability to the individual recommendations. The list of potential funding sources below is not an exhaustive list but provides guidance on the types of tools available.

These sources include:

- City General Fund
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget
- Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ)
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Public Improvement Districts (PID)
- Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)
- City Development Corporation (CDC)
- Partnerships with agencies such as TxDOT and local organizations
- Various Grant Opportunities

6

Potential Funding Sources



Land Use and Development						
#	Recommendation	Implementation Time Frame	Involved Entities	Action Type	Corresponding Guiding Principle	Potential Funding Source
Downtown						
LU-1	Establish a historic district around the downtown area.	Short-term	Planning & Development	Regulation		Discretionary funding available to Planning and Development
LU-2	Provide incentives in certain locations or zoning districts to encourage redevelopment and infill, especially in downtown. Density bonuses, increased height limits, and reduced parking or landscaping requirements can be offered in exchange for building in downtown or in one of the opportunity areas.	Mid-term	Planning & Development	Regulation	  	Discretionary funding available to Planning and Development
LU-3	Prepare a Downtown Development Plan to identify specific projects and design standards that can be implemented to achieve the vision for downtown.	Mid-term	Planning & Development, Texas Downtown Association	Plan	  	Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources (Main Street Revitalization Grant)
LU-4	Consider joining the Main Street Program to leverage funding opportunities and to activate and implement improvements to the Downtown District.	Ongoing	Planning & Development	Plan	  	Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources (Main Street Revitalization Grant)
LU-5	Engage the community in planning efforts and build partnerships with stakeholders and property owners in downtown.	Ongoing	Planning & Development, City Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce	Partnership		N/A
LU-6	Implement placemaking initiatives such as public art installations, street improvements, pop-up events, outdoor seating area, decorative lighting, etc.	Short-term	Planning & Development, Keep El Campo Beautiful, Parks, Public Works	Plan	  	Requires a line item in the CIP



Preserve and Enhance Small-Town Character



Expand Family-Friendly and Entertainment Options



Diversify Economic and Commercial Opportunities



Expand the Variety of Housing Options



Strengthen Infrastructure for Sustainable Growth

Land Use and Development						
#	Recommendation	Implementation Time Frame	Involved Entities	Action Type	Corresponding Guiding Principle	Potential Funding Source
Commercial Development						
LU-7	Update zoning regulations to: - Encourage mixed use development ensuring that residents have easy access to daily needs and services within walking distance. - Define permitted uses, dimensional standards, and development patterns within mixed-use districts. - Apply overlay districts to create mixed use development zones.	Short-term	Planning & Development	Regulation	 	Discretionary funding available to Planning and Development
LU-8	Establish zoning regulations that allow for a variety of housing types, including affordable housing options and mixed-use development.	Short-term	Planning & Development	Regulation	 	Discretionary funding available to Planning and Development
LU-9	Evaluate and establish new or existing zoning districts that allow a wide variety of commercial use types.	Short-term	Planning & Development	Regulation		Discretionary funding available to Planning and Development
Economic Development						
LU-10	Offer incentives such as tax breaks or community grants to attract developers and businesses to develop in the opportunity areas.	Ongoing	Planning & Development, City Development Corporation	Financial Investment	 	Requires a line item in the City Budget
LU-11	Encourage and incentivize developers to incorporate parks and trails into proposed residential developments.	Ongoing	Planning & Development	Financial Investment	 	Public Private Partnerships
LU-12	Support local businesses through training programs and financial assistance.	Ongoing	City Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce	Partnership		Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources



Preserve and Enhance Small-Town Character



Expand Family-Friendly and Entertainment Options



Diversify Economic and Commercial Opportunities



Expand the Variety of Housing Options



Strengthen Infrastructure for Sustainable Growth

Housing and Neighborhoods						
#	Recommendation	Implementation Time Frame	Involved Entities	Action Type	Corresponding Guiding Principle	Potential Funding Source
Regulatory, Policy, and Programming						
H-1	Update the Unified Development Code to remove barriers to affordable housing production and preservation by updating regulations, such as reducing minimum lot sizes, setbacks, and dwelling size and removing maximum floor area ratio standards, where appropriate.	Short-term	Planning & Development	Regulation		Discretionary funding available to Planning & Development; Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
H-2	Update the Unified Development Code to include a historic preservation ordinance.	Short-term	Planning & Development	Regulation		Discretionary funding available to Planning & Development; Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
H-3	Update and revise codes and policies to encourage adaptive reuse of older commercial properties to provide more housing options, especially in downtown.	Short-term	Planning & Development	Regulation		Discretionary funding available to Planning & Development; Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
H-4	Remove barriers to redevelopment and infill by implementing single-stair amendments to the building code as authorized under Local Government Code Chapter 214, Subchapter I, and allow for sufficient ground floor residential units in buildings to satisfy accessibility requirements under the Fair Housing Act.	Mid-term	Planning & Development	Regulation		Discretionary funding available to Planning & Development



Preserve and Enhance
Small-Town Character



Expand Family-Friendly and
Entertainment Options



Diversify Economic and
Commercial Opportunities



Expand the Variety of
Housing Options



Strengthen Infrastructure for
Sustainable Growth

Housing and Neighborhoods						
#	Recommendation	Implementation Time Frame	Involved Entities	Action Type	Corresponding Guiding Principle	Potential Funding Source
H-5	Establish or continue programs to support housing affordability, including: - Work with non-profits to establish a cooperative network of providers and supportive services that can work together to provide housing assistance. - Encourage an affordable housing program that supports low- to moderate-income residents through down payment assistance, home repairs, rental assistance, and housing construction.	Ongoing	Planning & Development	Partnership		Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
H-6	Continue doing housing rehabilitation and preservation of the existing housing stock.	Ongoing	Planning & Development	Project, Partnership		Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
H-7	Conduct a Citywide housing systems analysis that incorporates an assessment of hazard risk areas and vulnerable populations.	Mid-term	Planning & Development	Study		Requires a line item in the CIP
H-8	Integrate natural cultural resources into risk assessments to ensure that they are considered in mitigation planning.	Ongoing	Planning & Development, Public Works, Utilities, Public Safety	Plan, Partnership		Requires a line item in the City Budget; Requires a line item in the CIP
H-9	Leverage recommended neighborhood and housing programs.	Ongoing	Planning & Development	Financial Investment		Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
H-10	Design and install branding, wayfinding elements and signage in opportunity areas to help residents and visitors navigate and explore the district easily.	Short-term	Planning & Development	Project		Requires a line item in the City Budget



Preserve and Enhance Small-Town Character



Expand Family-Friendly and Entertainment Options



Diversify Economic and Commercial Opportunities

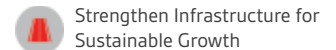
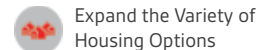
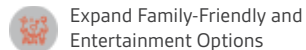
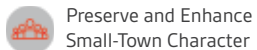


Expand the Variety of Housing Options

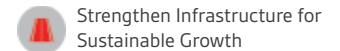
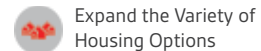
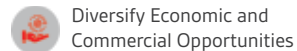
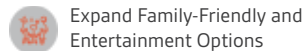
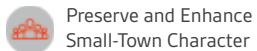


Strengthen Infrastructure for Sustainable Growth

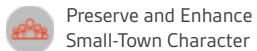
Housing and Neighborhoods						
#	Recommendation	Implementation Time Frame	Involved Entities	Action Type	Corresponding Guiding Principle	Potential Funding Source
Historic Buildings and Preservation						
H-11	Allow the conversion of historic single-family dwellings to multifamily dwellings and commercial uses, where appropriate.	Short-term	Planning & Development	Regulation		Discretionary funding available to Planning & Development; Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
H-12	Establish design standards for the historic downtown area.	Mid-term	Planning & Development	Regulation		Requires a line item in the City Budget
H-13	Conduct a comprehensive survey and an associated evaluation process of historic buildings and other eligible resources.	Mid-term	Planning & Development	Study		Requires a line item in the CIP
H-14	Protect historic districts, such as the downtown area and buildings, through historic landmark designation.	Mid-term	Planning & Development	Policy		Requires a line item in the City Budget
H-15	Allow compatible infill construction of multifamily housing on vacant parcels in historic districts.	Short-term	Planning & Development	Regulation		Discretionary funding available to Planning & Development; Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
H-16	Assess the feasibility of reinforcing historic structures with disaster-resistant materials and using nature-based solutions to protect cultural sites.	Long-term, Mid-term	Planning & Development, Building Permits & Inspections	Study, Partnership		Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources



Housing and Neighborhoods						
#	Recommendation	Implementation Time Frame	Involved Entities	Action Type	Corresponding Guiding Principle	Potential Funding Source
Funding and incentives						
H-17	Provide fiscal and technical assistance such as financial incentives, grants, and tax breaks to encourage investment in historic properties.	Long-term	Planning & Development	Financial Investment		Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
H-18	Leverage state-level incentives for historic preservation.	Long-term	Planning & Development	Financial Investment		Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
H-19	Encourage private-sector investment in historic preservation initiatives.	Ongoing	Planning & Development	Financial Investment, Partnership		Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources



Infrastructure, Public Facilities, and Services						
#	Recommendation	Implementation Time Frame	Involved Entities	Action Type	Corresponding Guiding Principle	Potential Funding Source
Water, and Wastewater Infrastructure						
I-1	Maintain updated System Development Fees that align with increased maintenance costs from new development, as proposed in the FLUM.	Ongoing	Utilities, Public Works	Plan		Requires a line item in the CIP
I-2	Provide density bonuses and other incentives for low-impact developments that reduce water consumption such as water monitoring systems and xeriscaping. Examples of incentives may include increased height limits and reduced parking or landscaping requirements.	Short-term	Planning & Development, Public Works, Utilities	Regulation		N/A
I-3	Develop a new Water and Wastewater Master Plan for the City of El Campo to plan for future water and wastewater needs that align with projected growth. This plan can be used to identify projects to include in the CIP that improve or expand the water and wastewater systems.	Mid-term	Utilities, Public Works	Plan		Requires a line item in the CIP
I-4	Maintain seamless and effective collaboration between other relevant agencies and stakeholders during large-scale transportation, infrastructure and public facility projects in the region (such as collaboration with TxDOT, Wharton County, adjacent cities, etc.)	Ongoing	Planning & Development, Public Works	Partnership		Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources



Preserve and Enhance
Small-Town Character



Expand Family-Friendly and
Entertainment Options



Diversify Economic and
Commercial Opportunities



Expand the Variety of
Housing Options



Strengthen Infrastructure for
Sustainable Growth

Infrastructure, Public Facilities, and Services						
#	Recommendation	Implementation Time Frame	Involved Entities	Action Type	Corresponding Guiding Principle	Potential Funding Source
Transportation Infrastructure						
I-5	Develop a Thoroughfare Plan based on the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.	Short-term	Planning & Development, Public Works	Plan		Requires a line item in the CIP; Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
I-6	Expand utility and street infrastructure to potential growth areas, such as the opportunity areas, to encourage development.	Long-term	Planning & Development, Utilities, Public Works	Project	 	Requires a line item in the CIP
I-7	Develop a comprehensive Mobility Plan that reevaluates the existing thoroughfare network, creates a Citywide active transportation network, updates roadway and streetscape design standards, and provides a prioritized, multimodal strategy to support current and future transportation needs for all users. This plan can be used to identify specific locations for pedestrian and bicycle improvements, such as sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes and prioritize the projects.	Mid-term	Planning & Development, Public Works	Plan	 	Requires a line item in the CIP
I-8	Identify and apply for grants to acquire right-of-way for improvements to the vehicular and active transportation network.	Mid-Term	Planning & Development, Public Works	Financial Investment	 	Requires a line item in the CIP; Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
I-9	Review peer cities' design manual and the 2022 TxDOT Design Manual to determine best practices in the flexible roadway design criteria.	Short-term	Planning & Development, Public Works	Policy		Requires a line item in the City Budget
I-10	Develop an Asset Management process to identify and prioritize street improvement projects for Capital Improvement Program.	Mid-Term	Planning & Development, Public Works	Program		Requires a line item in the CIP



Preserve and Enhance Small-Town Character



Expand Family-Friendly and Entertainment Options



Diversify Economic and Commercial Opportunities



Expand the Variety of Housing Options



Strengthen Infrastructure for Sustainable Growth

Infrastructure, Public Facilities, and Services						
#	Recommendation	Implementation Time Frame	Involved Entities	Action Type	Corresponding Guiding Principle	Potential Funding Source
I-11	Conduct a thorough inventory of existing sidewalks and bus stops, including an evaluation of their physical condition, accessibility features, and compliance with ADA standards, to prioritize needed improvements across the City.	Mid-term	Public Works	Plan		Requires a line item in the CIP
I-12	Develop a Safety Action Plan to guide efforts in reducing severe crashes and improving roadway safety.	Mid-term	Planning & Development, Public Works, Public Safety	Plan		Requires a line item in the CIP
I-13	Provide accessible, convenient, and safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, such as sidewalks and multimodal trails connecting destinations within the opportunity areas and to the surrounding neighborhoods based on the recommended improvements identified in the Mobility Plan recommended in this Comprehensive Plan.	Long-term	Planning & Development, Public Works, Utilities	Plan	 	Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources; Requires a line item in the CIP
Parks and Trails						
I-14	Develop a new Parks Master Plan that addresses the changing needs and priorities of the community.	Mid-term	Parks, Recreation and Community Services Boards	Project		Requires a line item in the CIP; Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources
I-15	Implement the recommendations of the newly adopted parks plan as recommended in this Comprehensive Plan.	Short-term	Parks, Recreation and Community Services Boards	Project	 	Requires a line item in the City Budget; Requires third-party funding, such as grants or partner resources

