

THE FRAMEWORK PLAN

A. INTRODUCTION

The Framework Plan is the “central piece” of this Comprehensive Plan Report because it is the clearest representation of the “Vision” fashioned by those Corsicana residents and property owners participating in the “Open Process” (as described in the Planning Process portion of this document). The Framework Plan is not a typical plan in that it is not portrayed as a traditional land use or thoroughfare depiction. Instead, it is a graphic representation of the physical pattern/ form of a future Corsicana that the Goals and Objectives of the City (as expressed in earlier public workshops) would create if applied to current and future growth. The process by which the Framework Plan was derived consists of three stages:

- Matrix Analysis of the relationship between planning issues (as identified by the consultant and workshop participants) and goals/ objectives (as articulated by the workshop participants).
- Expression of goals and objectives as a physical pattern called the Framework Plan.
- Verification of the extent to which the Framework Plan illustrates those goals/ objectives expressed in Public Workshop #2.

It is important to comprehend the Framework Plan as a document whose sole measure of success is the extent to which it physically depicts the spirit and intent of the goals and objectives. Therefore, it is not in and of itself a policy document but rather a basis of agreement upon which policy documents will be fundamentally (but not completely) based. Being distinguished by its purpose (to physically reflect the spirit and intent of the goals and objectives), it is not mired in the issues of equity, which so often accompany the formulation of a Land Use Plan. Its advantage in the Land Use and Thoroughfare Plan stages (discussed later in this document) is that it gives structure to the dialogue and helps keep the decision process (by which the policy documents are adopted) focused on the will of the community. In addition, its level of freedom from constraints (typically put upon a Land Use or Thoroughfare Plan conceived without the benefit of such a vision oriented process phase) allows greater expression with regard to forms and patterns of growth that will best serve the needs of the Town. In other words, the opportunity for greater vision is more apparent. To better understand this opportunity and the use of the Framework Plan, the following text is subdivided into a discussion of each phase of Framework Plan development and verification.

B. MATRIX ANALYSIS

During the initial phases of the Master Plan, the consultant team undertook a series of assessments, which documented and analyzed the form, economy, traffic patterns, and history of Corsicana, as it exists today. In the course of this assessment, a number of Planning issues were identified. Planning issues are presented as action statements addressing conflicts, opportunities, liabilities, constraints, assets, emerging trends/ patterns, and other such conditions. These action statements are augmented in the course

of discussion during Workshop #1 (see discussion of the Planning Process in the Planning Process portion of this report) and a final list of planning issues is verified. In essence, the planning issues discovered by the consultant team provide a starting point for, and basis of, discussion that leads to articulation of goals and objectives. Therefore, Public Workshop #1 produced a verified set of planning issues and a set of publicly articulated goals and objectives. However, it is the connection between goal and issue that reveals the intent behind the goal statement. Each goal stated depicts a result that maximizes current or future opportunities/ assets/ patterns, preserves current elements of value, and/ or resolves current or future conflicts/ constraints/ patterns.

To make such connections, an analytical device is needed which will permit the systematic connection between planning issue and goal. The analytical device best suited for this purpose is a comparative matrix, called the Matrix Analysis. With planning goals listed on the matrix vertical axis, and planning issues listed on the matrix horizontal axis, one of three relationships is established within the corresponding cells. These are:

- **Complimentary:** Complimentary means that execution of any action prescribed by the planning issue statement will advance implementation of a goal. It also means that implementation of a goal will advance accomplishing the actions prescribed by a particular issue statement. In other words, the relationship is positive.
- **Compatible:** Compatible means that execution of any action prescribed by the planning issue has no influence on either advancing or hindering implementation of a goal. It also means that implementation of a goal has no influence on accomplishing an action prescribed by an issue statement. In other words, the relationship is neutral.
- **Conflicting:** Conflicting means that execution of any action prescribed by the planning issue statement will hinder/ prevent implementation of a goal. It also means that implementation of a goal will hinder/ prevent accomplishing an action prescribed by an issue statement. In other words, the relationship is negative.

This analysis is useful because it is the first opportunity that those participating in the Planning Process have to prescriptively deal with issues facing their City. To make such connections between goal and planning issue requires ever-clearer understanding of the intent and scope of the goal statement. For example, the Goal Statement, “*Create a multi-functional City core that has diverse land uses and attracts a broad range of visitors*” (Goal 1), has a complimentary relationship to such issue statements as, “*Therefore, create a commercial core that gathers the incoming traffic*”, because further clarification of the goal leads to the assertion that Goal 1 would require that vehicular circulation to the Downtown from I-45 wouldn’t bypass (as it does now) the Downtown business district. In this way a relationship between the form of the future City and the stated goals is created. In all there are 67 planning issues and 185 goals (see Publicly Expressed Goals and Objectives beginning at issue L). As a result, 12,395 relationships were established and 5,143 of those were complimentary.

The most significant benefit of such an analysis is the prioritization of goals and issue statements made possible. There are two types of priority groupings established as a result of the matrix. These are:

- **The Strategic Goals**
Strategic Goals are those goals with the most complimentary relationships to planning issues. Such goals are strategic because advancement of those particular goals will have the most impact with regard to addressing planning issues confronting the City of Corsicana.
- **The Effective Issue Statements**
Effective Issue statements relates to the actions prescribed in those statements. Actions that have the most complimentary relationships with goals are those actions, which (if implemented) will do the most to advance goals of the Town.

This “prioritization” of the goals and issues by which are most strategic and which are most effective requires further discussion and understanding of the full scope, spirit, and intent of each and every statement. The most strategic goals are indicated in the previous section by bold type. All such analysis of the statements prepares the way for preparation of the Framework Plan.

c. TOP TEN GOALS AND TOP TEN ACTIONS

The Top Ten Goals are About:

Transportation, Connection, Destination and Core Revitalization.

The Top Ten Actions are About:

Destination, Connectivity, Identity and Economic Performance.

THE STRATEGIC GOALS

#138 Create an overall transportation plan that logically connects all parts of the City by creation of more through street systems.

#37 Improve Traffic flow to and from Downtown with a logical strategic plan.

#64 Create a public transportation network that links sub-districts and neighborhoods with employment, education, and shopping areas of the City.

#182 Create a major, visually distinctive, boulevard connection between the Lake District and the City Center that places the Lake District within the primary movement network of the City.

#52 Improve overall the road quality and specifications of the roads and streets.

#111 Initiate a program of road improvement that will establish a uniform level of road quality, improved accommodation of storm water, improved signalization (where warranted), improved street lighting, and a uniform system of signage.

#133 Improve the overall maintenance and operational effectiveness of the City’s natural drainage system through greater public participation and other maintenance initiatives that preserve the natural condition and function.

#35 Create vehicular and pedestrian/ bike connections between the City core/ Courthouse Square and Community Park.

#134 Employ the City’s natural system as a framework for City beautification and a means of sound mitigation.

#11 Establish a clear identity for downtown through distinctive portals, thematic street signage, enhanced streetscape/ landscape, identifying street furniture, and other enrichments of the public right of way.

#140 Create more positive and meaningful connection between the City core and its surrounding area.

#145 Create parks that have greater natural beauty, natural features (water features) and connection with the natural systems of the local landscape.

#105 Recognize the Western District as a target planning area.

#152 Create a thoroughfare system that establishes Hardy Avenue as a City gateway, enhanced corridor of commercial development, and component of east/ west continuity

that links the Hospital and College with newer residential areas of Corsicana.

#40 Establish a gateway for the central city area that transforms the railroad trestle (at 1st Avenue) into an enhanced/ visually enriched/ identifiable entry feature portal.

#49 Create landmarks within districts and neighborhoods that establish an identity for the area and facilitate orientation within the City fabric.

#66 Establish a transit link to Dallas/ Fort Worth.

#73 Create a gateway that emphasizes the entrance of the City and visibly speaks about Corsicana.

#141 Create a greater sense of definition and identity for neighborhoods and communities within the City that allows both secluded and connected sub-districts.

#142 Maintain, enhance and preserve the rural character that identifies key neighborhoods within the City.

#158 Create a public transportation system that carries people (employees, visitors, and users) to and from the Navarro District.

#173 Improve connections to and circulation within the Lake District that mitigates its sense of isolation and separation from the fabric of the City.

#48 Create a cognitively strong and functionally meaningful entry to the Downtown core which encourages the visual enhancement of the areas abutting the entry right of way.

#50 Establish a beautification program for 7th Avenue and Highway 287 that will identify them as major approaches to the City core and major thoroughfares within a particular sub-district of Corsicana.

#136 Create a safer City that protects neighborhoods from flooding through the preservation and enhancement of natural drainage ways.

#137 Create a more beautiful City through a public domain that is less cluttered by public/private utility providers.

#159 Create a pedestrian movement network that will provide pedestrian linkage between the hospital, nursing home, and other interrelated sub-areas of the Hospital District.

THE STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Therefore, a plan for Corsicana must strengthen the destination characteristics of the Downtown Transition District and facilitate its transformation from barrier to “seam”.

Therefore, create comprehensible pathways to the Town Core that reinforce the centrality of the core and make its skyline a legible statement of the City form.

Therefore, a plan for Corsicana must bring lost traffic densities and visitors back to the City Core so that investment/ redevelopment can be stimulated.

Therefore, a plan for Corsicana must seek to restore elements of its original town grid that have been fragmented by natural corridors or physical intervention.

Therefore, roadway and mobility plans must be formulated that will preserve remaining and return former traffic densities to the core areas of Corsicana.

Therefore, establish approach identities that will identify movement toward the Town Center.

Therefore, a plan for Corsicana must create greater connection between the core area of the City and its surrounding districts (on all sides).

Therefore, create a commercial core that gathers the incoming traffic.

Raise Corsicana performance in key economic sectors so that overall performance meets or exceeds state wide norms.

Therefore, a plan for Corsicana must seek to connect the City across the physical barriers that separate the core from surrounding districts of the City.

Therefore, a plan for Corsicana must define a proper role for the Transition District in creating linkage between the City Core/ Courthouse area and the historic residential zone west of the core.

Therefore, a plan must correct disrupted street continuities between the Downtown core and districts adjacent to it (especially as they traverse the Downtown Transition District).

D. FRAMEWORK PLAN

As stated earlier, the Framework Plan is the “center piece” of Corsicana’s Comprehensive Plan because it is the clearest physical representation of the goals as articulated by resident and land owner participants in the Open Process portion of the Comprehensive Planning Process for Corsicana. The Framework Plan (next graphic) has the appearance of a combined land use and thoroughfare plan but it is neither. Where goals address a particular section of

Corsicana, a circle is created which encompasses that section and the number representing the goal is placed within it. The resulting plan is a very simple assignment of goal numbers to geographic sections of the Town. The resulting graphic document assumes a pattern and form that gives insight into the expressed future directions for Corsicana.

The Framework Plan lists the goal statements underneath the plan image so that the linkage between goal numbers placed on the plan and goal statements can be easily made. A circle or a triangle circumscribes goal numbers on the plan. Those indicated within a triangle are the goals designated as most strategic (in the aforementioned analysis).

In addition, the Framework Plan also associates issue statements with geographic areas of the Town. Where an issue statement (such as, “Commercial development along Highway 380 must be directed to assume nodal patterns that preserve the characteristic openness of the roadscape and encourage commercial development that compliments the Town Center”) can be associated with a circle on the plan (such as those at the intersections of Highway 380 and north/ south cross streets) a bubble is created to associate that issue statement with road intersections at Highway 380. The most effective issue statements are indicated by a star.

The resemblance between the Framework Plan and both the Land Use and Thoroughfare document (presented later in this report) are clear. While each of the two policy plans has elements which vary from some specifics of the Framework Plan, the overall structure, spirit, and intent of the Framework document is preserved. The reason for continuing influence of the Framework Plan over the policy that ensues from the Comprehensive Plan Process is the simple fact that once goals of the community are given physical expression, they tend to galvanize support and they take on a recognizable ‘form’ that abstract text can not always attain. As the Land Use and Thoroughfare Plans are reconsidered for future possible revision, it is important to refer back to this Framework Plan document to further test the extent to which any proposed revision moves the future of the Town away from the vision imposed by the residents and property owners of Corsicana as they fashioned their Framework Plan.

The final test of the Framework Plan was conducted in Workshop #2. At this workshop session, resident and property owner participants in the Planning Process were given opportunity to discuss the Framework Plan and the extent to which it accurately reflects the goals articulated by the community. The Framework Plan is the document amended pursuant to input received at that workshop and verified in the workshop session. (see following page)

E. CONCLUSION

The Framework Plan documented in this chapter is the basis for most of what is recommended in this planning report. The Framework Plan stands apart from the Land Use and Thoroughfare Plans because its test of success is the extent to which it expresses the

goals of the community. Once verified by the community, the Framework Plan becomes a document, which tests the success of the policy instruments that flow from it. Therefore, the measure of success for the Land Use Plan and the Thoroughfare Plan is the extent to which they respectfully (and collectively) accomplish the intricate functional and legal purposes imposed by growth and existing conditions while at the same time express the spirit and intent of the community’s Framework document. In addition, the Framework Plan will remain a test of other programs, actions, procedures, policies, and regulations promulgated by the City of Corsicana due to its unique ability to give physical expression to the goals as set by Corsicana residents and landowners. Backed by strong public participation and solid objective, as well as the analysis of the goals of Corsicana’s citizens, consultants identified planning issues. This Framework Plan constitutes a self validated public mandate.

