



# PLAN FRAMEWORK

City of Bryan Comprehensive Plan

September 2026

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## **Bryan Comprehensive Plan Framework**

This document establishes a preliminary framework for the Comprehensive Plan including initial direction on land use & development, mobility, economic development, housing, downtown & tourism, and infrastructure & city services. It is intended to provide an overview of the foundational elements upon which a more detailed Comprehensive Plan will be developed.

### **Definitions**

**Complete Streets:** a roadway designed and operated to safely accommodate all users, it integrates elements such as sidewalks, bike lanes, crosswalks, transit stops, and traffic calming elements to balance mobility, safety, and access.

**Placemaking:** the act of using urban design, programming, and amenities to transform underused or ordinary spaces into vibrant, distinct places with identifiable character.

**Greenfield Development:** planned or new construction on currently undeveloped land.

**Infill Development:** construction of new buildings or redevelopment of existing sites within developed areas, using vacant or underutilized land.

**Missing Middle Housing:** a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types that are more dense than single-family detached homes, but less dense than large apartment complexes. These housing options are typically modest in scale and help increase density while maintaining a neighborhood's existing character.

**Public Improvement Districts (PIDs):** designated geographic areas where property owners agree to pay an additional assessment (tax or fee) to fund public improvements and services that benefit that specific area.

## Introduction (Community Assessment Report)

### Community Snapshot

This report offers a brief snapshot of Bryan at the time this Plan was developed from October 2025 to May 2026. It summarizes current demographic conditions, key changes since the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the community's assets, major accomplishments over the past decade, and the issues and challenges facing Bryan today.

To provide context, the demographic characteristics below are compared to similar cities outside the Brazos Valley. These comparison cities (shown in the figure below) were selected based on similarities in population size, geographic scale, community characteristics, or influence from a neighboring sister city or university.

*Figure 1: Comparison Cities*

| Comparison City     | Reason for Comparison                                                                   |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| College Station, TX | Proximity to Bryan, sister-city relationship                                            |
| Temple, TX          | Similar population size, historic railroad community, large blue-collar economy         |
| Waco, TX            | University influence, midpoint location between Austin and Dallas                       |
| Champaign, IL       | Similar population size, university influence, sister-city relationship with Urbana, IL |
| Urbana, IL          | University influence, sister-city relationship with Champaign, IL                       |
| Blacksburg, VA      | University influence, sister-city relationship with Christiansburg, VA                  |
| Christiansburg, VA  | University influence, sister-city relationship with Blacksburg, VA                      |



## **Community Snapshot Summary**

Comparing Bryan to peer communities outside of the Brazos Valley provides a clearer picture of its current position. Among older, university-influenced cities, Bryan's growth, income, and education levels are generally average and stable. Unlike College Station's newer, suburban character primarily driven by Texas A&M University, Bryan reflects more historic, established development patterns.

Bryan has grown at a steady, manageable rate of about 1.5% annually and reflects an increasingly diverse population. Although the median age in Bryan is gradually increasing, it can still be considered a relatively 'young' city. A strong working-age base, a rise in high-school-aged residents, and a growing senior population will influence service and infrastructure needs over the next decade. Education, income, and unemployment indicators sit squarely in the mid-range among peer cities, reinforcing the need for targeted, data-driven support.

While Bryan has experienced a healthy amount of new residential development in recent years, its housing landscape is largely defined by its status as an established city with a substantial amount of older housing stock. This creates both a challenge and an opportunity: older homes help with attainability and character, but they also raise reinvestment and code compliance needs. In line with state and national trends, both median home values and median rents have increased over the past ten years, underscoring the need for proactive housing strategies to maintain Bryan's strength as an affordable community.

### *Population*

The demographic information provided below establishes a baseline understanding of "who" Bryan is today and informs projections and recommendations for the future. In addition to highlighting more current characteristics of the city as reflected in the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimate data, several of the demographic factors are compared to the 2014 data utilized in the city's 2016 comprehensive plan in order to highlight trends in Bryan's population over the previous decade.

According to the 2023 ACS 5-year estimate data, Bryan's 2023 population was estimated to be 86,169 people. Historically, Bryan has experienced growth which is steady but moderate compared to earlier decades since 2010 (see Figure 2 below).

| <i>Figure 2: Bryan Historic Population, 1950-2023</i> |            |                |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Year                                                  | Population | Percent Change |
| 1950                                                  | 18,072     | -              |
| 1960                                                  | 27,542     | 52%            |
| 1970                                                  | 33,719     | 22%            |
| 1980                                                  | 44,337     | 31%            |
| 1990                                                  | 55,002     | 24%            |
| 2000                                                  | 65,660     | 19%            |
| 2010                                                  | 76,201     | 16%            |
| 2014                                                  | 80,913     | 6%             |
| 2023                                                  | 86,169     | 6%             |

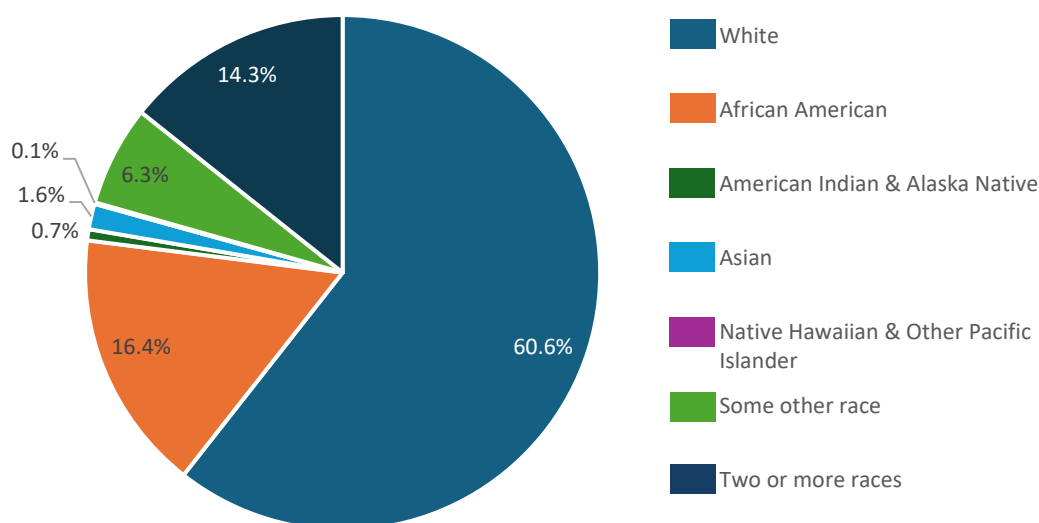
### Race/Ethnicity

Bryan has long considered itself a diverse, multi-cultural city and ACS data supports this trend. As shown in Figure 3, below, Bryan's population in 2023 was majority White (60.6%), however, since 2014, Bryan has seen growing shares of minority populations. Between 2014 and 2023 the share of the population that report themselves as being of Hispanic ethnicity also grew by over 15% (Figure 4).

| <i>Figure 3: Bryan Population by Race, 2014 and 2023 (2023 ACS 5-year estimates Table DP05)</i> |             |                  |             |                  |                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|-----------------|
|                                                                                                 | <b>2014</b> | <b>% of Pop.</b> | <b>2023</b> | <b>% of Pop.</b> | <b>% Change</b> |
| White                                                                                           | 52,270      | 64.6             | 52,218      | 60.6             | -0.09           |
| Black or African American                                                                       | 13,998      | 17.3             | 14,130      | 16.4             | 1.65            |
| American Indian & Alaska Native                                                                 | 404         | 0.5              | 608         | 0.7              | 50.5            |
| Asian                                                                                           | 1,780       | 2.2              | 1,401       | 1.6              | -21.3           |
| Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander                                                        | 1           | 0.0              | 89          | 0.1              | 8,800           |
| Some other race                                                                                 | 10,195      | 12.6             | 5,411       | 6.3              | -46.9           |
| Two or more races                                                                               | 2,265       | 2.8              | 12,312      | 14.3             | 443.6           |
| Total                                                                                           | 80,913      | 100              | 86,169      | 100              | -               |

| <i>Figure 4: Ethnicity of Bryan Population, 2014 and 2023 (2023 ACS 5-year estimates Table DP05)</i> |        |           |                 |           |                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|
|                                                                                                      | 2014   | % of Pop. | 2023 Population | % of Pop. | <b>% Change</b> |
| Hispanic origin                                                                                      | 30,909 | 38.2      | 35,628          | 41.3      | <b>15.3</b>     |
| Non-Hispanic Origin                                                                                  | 50,004 | 61.8      | 50,541          | 58.7      | <b>1.1</b>      |
| Total                                                                                                | 80,913 | 100       | 86,169          | 100       | -               |

Figure 5: City of Bryan Population by Race, 2023 (2023 ACS 5-year estimates Table DP05)



## Ages

Bryan's age distribution resembles a stable population structure with a strong working age base and gradual aging. The population is dominated by the prime labor force (ages 25–44), which accounts for 31% of residents and has grown at a moderate pace since 2014. At the same time, the retired population (65+) increased by nearly 30 percent within the same time frame. In contrast, Bryan is experiencing both an increase in teenagers (15–19) and a decrease in young adults (20–24). These aging trends match general state and national patterns, though its senior share remains below U.S. levels (17% age 65+ according to the 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates), indicating a relatively young community. These trends could signal the following implications for planning of the city overall:

- Rapid growth in the 15–19 age group underscores continued demand for secondary education capacity, youth programming, parks, libraries, and safe transportation options.
- Efforts to retain and attract the prime labor force cohort (age 25–44) will benefit from competitive housing options and neighborhood amenities.
- The decline in ages 20–24 suggests potential gaps in affordable rental housing, student-oriented housing, early workforce housing, educational opportunities, or job opportunities.
- Younger and aging populations have different mobility needs, reinforcing the importance of complete streets, transit options, and walkable mixed-use areas.

Figure 6: Bryan Population by Age Category, 2014 and 2023 (2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates Table S0101)

|                                           | 2014          | % of Pop.  | 2023          | % of Pop.  | % Change |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|----------|
| Young (0-14)                              | 16,896        | 21.5       | 17,495        | 20.3       | 3.55     |
| High School (15-19)                       | 3,845         | 4.9        | 6,146         | 7.1        | 59.84    |
| College & Entry Level Labor Force (20-24) | 11,300        | 14.4       | 8,870         | 10.3       | -21.50   |
| Prime Labor Force (25-44)                 | 23,528        | 30.0       | 26,683        | 31.0       | 13.41    |
| Older Labor Force (45-64)                 | 15,181        | 19.4       | 16,981        | 19.7       | 11.86    |
| Retired (65+)                             | 7,694         | 9.8        | 9,994         | 11.6       | 29.89    |
| <i>Total</i>                              | <i>78,444</i> | <i>100</i> | <i>86,169</i> | <i>100</i> | <i>-</i> |

Figure 7: Bryan Age Pyramid, 2023 (2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates Table S0101)



## Population Projections

To develop the population projections for this Comprehensive Plan, population estimates from the following sources were compared where applicable:

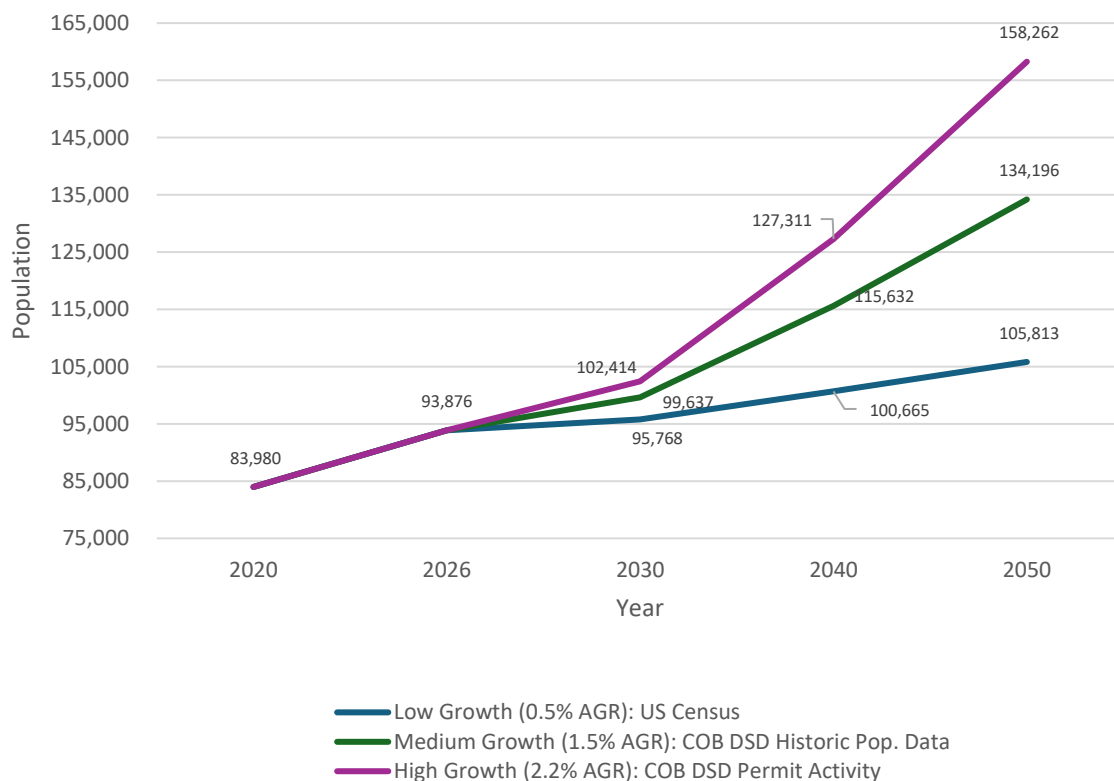
- The United States Census Bureau;
- The Texas Water Development Board;
- The Blueprint 2040 Comprehensive Plan;
- Historic population data provided by the City's Development Services Department;
- The Bryan Water Conservation Plan; and
- Extrapolated estimates utilizing the City's Development Services Department's residential development permit activity.

For Bryan specifically, the data from these sources resulted in estimated annual growth rates (AGR) that ranged between 0.5 percent to 2.2 percent. Three of the sources were chosen as data points to represent a range of potential growth rates.

- **Low Growth Rate:** The United States Census Bureau, which projects an annual growth rate of 0.5 percent.
- **Medium Growth:** Historic population data provided by City of Bryan Development Services Department (COB DSD), which projects an annual growth rate of 1.5 percent.
- **High Growth:** Extrapolated residential development permit data provided by the City of Bryan Development Services Department (COB DSD), which projects an annual growth rate of 2.2 percent.

For projections of future populations, the City will use a baseline 2025 population estimate of 95,689 prepared by the City of Bryan Development Services Department. This estimate is based on recent residential development permit activity and assumptions on average household sizes within the city. For the purposes of this Comprehensive Plan, and in an attempt to be conservative with assumptions, the medium growth scenario is utilized, resulting in an estimated population of **108,947 people by the year 2036** and an estimated population of **116,698 by the year 2046**. These three growth-projection scenarios are shown in the graph below.

*Figure 8: City of Bryan Population Projections*



Population projections were not created for the comparison cities, however; the approximate growth of these communities can be compared using annual rates of population growth calculated from American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimate data from 2014 and 2023. To ensure a fair comparison, the City of Bryan's AGR as estimated by the same data is provided in the table below.

*Figure 9: Annual Rate of Population Growth for Comparison Cities (2014-2023 ACS 5-year estimates)*

| City (or State of Texas) | Annual Rate of Population Growth (AGR) |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Temple, TX               | 2.8%                                   |
| College Station, TX      | 2.7%                                   |
| State of Texas           | 1.5%                                   |
| Waco, TX                 | 1.2%                                   |
| Champaign, IL            | 0.8%                                   |
| Christiansburg, VA       | 0.7%                                   |
| <b>Bryan, TX</b>         | <b>0.5%</b>                            |
| Blacksburg, VA           | 0.5%                                   |
| Urbana, IL               | -0.9%                                  |

#### *Education, Income, and Workforce*

Bryan Independent School District (BISD), the largest of the 26 districts within the College Station-Bryan metropolitan statistical area (MSA), serves over 16,000 students across 26 campuses throughout Bryan.

Between 2019 to 2024, Bryan ISD experienced a decrease of 0.76% in enrollment, which translates to a total loss of 123 students over five years. For comparison, College Station experienced an increase of 2.71% in enrollment, or an addition of 378 students, in that same period. Among local school districts in the Brazos Valley, Bryan boasts one of the smallest class sizes and highest average expense per student.

*Figure 10: School Metrics for Brazos Valley ISDs (2026 Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS))*

|                 | Teacher: Student Ratio | Average Revenue per Student | Average Expense per Student | Enrollment    |
|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| National        | 15:1                   | \$21,313                    | \$18,853                    | -             |
| Texas           | 15:1                   | \$16,966                    | \$13,189                    | -             |
| <b>Bryan</b>    | <b>13:1</b>            | <b>\$14,429</b>             | <b>\$12,408</b>             | <b>16,044</b> |
| Navasota        | 13:1                   | \$15,203                    | \$11,556                    | 3,117         |
| College Station | 14:1                   | \$12,883                    | \$10,248                    | 14,314        |
| Madisonville    | 14:1                   | \$15,318                    | \$11,770                    | 2,377         |
| Caldwell        | 14:1                   | \$16,463                    | \$11,416                    | 1,952         |

### Income, Unemployment, and Poverty Rate

Similar to national trends, the median household income in Bryan has continued to rise, albeit nominally when adjusted for inflation. Although Bryan's median income is below the State of Texas median, it is comparable to the comparison cities within Texas.

| <i>Figure 11: Median income for Comparison Cities (2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates Table S1901)</i> |                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>City (or State or County)</b>                                                              | <b>Median Income</b> |
| State of Texas                                                                                | \$76,292             |
| Christiansburg, VA                                                                            | \$75,451             |
| Temple, TX                                                                                    | \$64,945             |
| Brazos County                                                                                 | \$58,388             |
| Champaign, IL                                                                                 | \$57,544             |
| <b>Bryan, TX</b>                                                                              | <b>\$56,861</b>      |
| College Station, TX                                                                           | \$51,776             |
| Waco, TX                                                                                      | \$51,468             |
| Blacksburg, VA                                                                                | \$47,070             |
| Urbana, IL                                                                                    | \$45,854             |

The unemployment rate for Bryan's workforce is 5%, similar to that of the state of Texas, and a notable decrease from Bryan's 2014 unemployment rate of 8.8%.

| <i>Figure 12: Unemployment Rate for Comparison Cities (2023 ACS 5-year estimates Table DP03)</i> |                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>City (or State or County)</b>                                                                 | <b>Unemployment Rate</b> |
| Christiansburg, VA                                                                               | 2.3%                     |
| Blacksburg, VA                                                                                   | 4.2%                     |
| Champaign, IL                                                                                    | 4.3%                     |
| Waco, TX                                                                                         | 4.4%                     |
| Brazos County                                                                                    | 4.6%                     |
| College Station, TX                                                                              | 4.8%                     |
| <b>Bryan, TX</b>                                                                                 | <b>5.0%</b>              |
| State of Texas                                                                                   | 5.1%                     |
| Urbana, IL                                                                                       | 5.7%                     |
| Temple, TX                                                                                       | 7.2%                     |

Between 2014 and 2023, Bryan's poverty rate declined from 27.3% to 23.2%, indicating gradual economic improvement (see Figure 14). Though higher than the state average, Bryan's poverty rate is comparable to other cities with higher education institutions. College towns often reflect inflated poverty rates due to the large presence of college students who have limited reported incomes.

In 2016, the US Census Bureau found that the presence of college students who live off campus raises the community's poverty rate, and that the poverty rate is 10 percentage points lower when students are excluded from the calculations in Brazos County. Overall, this data suggests that these figures must be interpreted within the context of Bryan's role as a university-influenced community.

Figure 13: Poverty Rate for Comparison Cities (2023 ACS 5-year estimates Table S1701)

| City (or State of Texas)              | Poverty Rate |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Blacksburg, VA*                       | 42.8%        |
| College Station, TX*                  | 28.0%        |
| Champaign, IL*                        | 27.5%        |
| Urbana, IL*                           | 24.8%        |
| <b>Bryan, TX*</b>                     | <b>23.2%</b> |
| Waco, TX*                             | 22.9%        |
| State of Texas                        | 13.8%        |
| Temple, TX                            | 12.9%        |
| Christiansburg, VA*                   | 12.4%        |
| *Denotes university-influenced cities |              |

### Occupations and Major Industries

There are thirteen categories of major occupation industries in Bryan. The largest industry category being 'Education services, health care and social assistance' which employs 28.4% of Bryan's workforce.

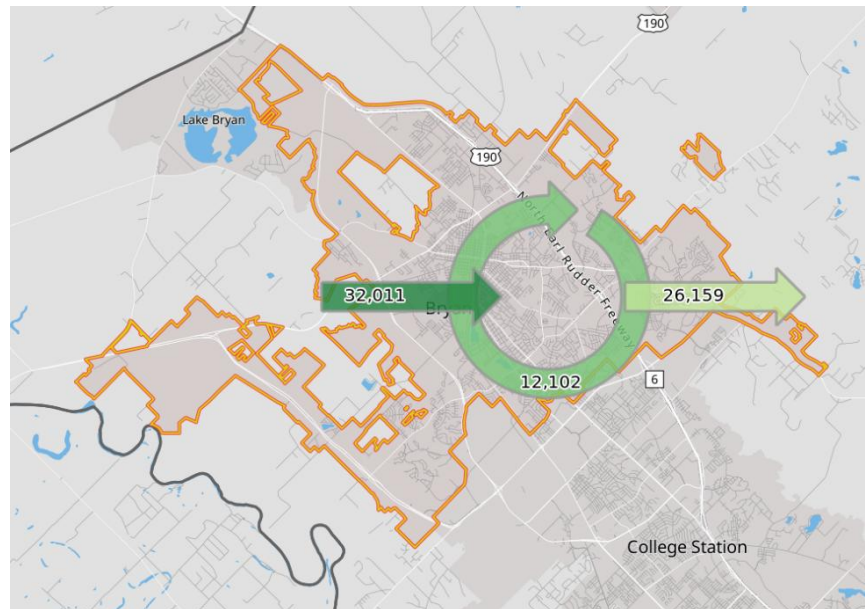
Figure 14: Major Industries by Employed Civilian Population, 16 Years and Over (2023 ACS 5-year estimates Table DP03)

|                                                                                            |       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Educational services, and health care and social assistance                                | 28.4% |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services                   | 11.3% |
| Construction                                                                               | 10.4% |
| Retail trade                                                                               | 9.7%  |
| Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services | 9.5%  |
| Manufacturing                                                                              | 8.8%  |
| Transportation and warehousing, and utilities                                              | 5.2%  |
| Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing                              | 4.5%  |
| Other services, except public administration                                               | 4.2%  |
| Public administration                                                                      | 3.9%  |
| Wholesale trade                                                                            | 2.1%  |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining                                     | 1.3%  |
| Information                                                                                | 0.8%  |

### Inflow/Outflow Labor Force Analysis

According to 2023 data derived from the US Census Bureau's OnTheMap Application, 44,113 people are employed within the Bryan city limits and 27.4% of these people both live and work in Bryan. This data suggests that approximately 72.6 percent of Bryan's workforce commutes into the city for their job, primarily from College Station. The shares of where workers commute to and from can be seen in the graphic below.

Figure 15: City of Bryan Labor Force Inflow/Outflow (US Census Bureau, OnTheMap, 2023)



**Job Counts by Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.)  
Where Workers Live - All Jobs**

| 2023                            |        |        |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|
|                                 | Count  | Share  |
| All Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.) | 44,113 | 100.0% |
| Bryan city, TX                  | 12,102 | 27.4%  |
| College Station city, TX        | 7,580  | 17.2%  |
| Houston city, TX                | 1,313  | 3.0%   |
| Austin city, TX                 | 571    | 1.3%   |
| San Antonio city, TX            | 465    | 1.1%   |
| Lake Bryan CDP, TX              | 313    | 0.7%   |
| Hearne city, TX                 | 306    | 0.7%   |
| Conroe city, TX                 | 299    | 0.7%   |
| The Woodlands CDP, TX           | 295    | 0.7%   |
| Navasota city, TX               | 273    | 0.6%   |
| All Other Locations             | 20,596 | 46.7%  |

**Job Counts by Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.)  
Where Workers are Employed - All Jobs**

| 2023                            |        |        |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|
|                                 | Count  | Share  |
| All Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.) | 38,261 | 100.0% |
| Bryan city, TX                  | 12,102 | 31.6%  |
| College Station city, TX        | 9,055  | 23.7%  |
| Houston city, TX                | 2,500  | 6.5%   |
| Austin city, TX                 | 1,148  | 3.0%   |
| Dallas city, TX                 | 549    | 1.4%   |
| San Antonio city, TX            | 446    | 1.2%   |
| Waco city, TX                   | 264    | 0.7%   |
| Temple city, TX                 | 253    | 0.7%   |
| Brenham city, TX                | 239    | 0.6%   |
| Huntsville city, TX             | 233    | 0.6%   |
| All Other Locations             | 11,472 | 30.0%  |

## Housing

Data related to housing is complex and dynamic as it reflects multiple, rapidly-changing factors including economic trends, local regulations, financial conditions, and neighborhood-level characteristics. These factors are further influenced by national and local trends with a tendency to change over time and vary widely by location.

Because publicly available data is often lagging or incomplete, particularly regarding housing condition and supply, it can be difficult to draw definitive conclusions about Bryan's housing market. Despite these limitations, available data clearly indicates rising costs, aging stock, and a need for diversified housing options.

### Age of Housing Stock

A majority (63.5%) of Bryan's housing was constructed prior to 2000, reflecting decades of incremental growth and neighborhood development. The share of Bryan's housing stock, by the year built, can be seen in Figure 17, below.

When compared with College Station (Figure 18), Bryan has greater shares of housing stock built before 1980 and fewer shares of housing built after 1980; however, when compared with other Texas peer cities, the age of Bryan's housing stock is similar or newer.

The prevalence of older housing has important implications for housing quality, affordability, and reinvestment. Older homes can offer more attainable price points but also require ongoing maintenance and investment.

Figure 16: Bryan's Housing Stock by Year Built (2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates Table DP04)

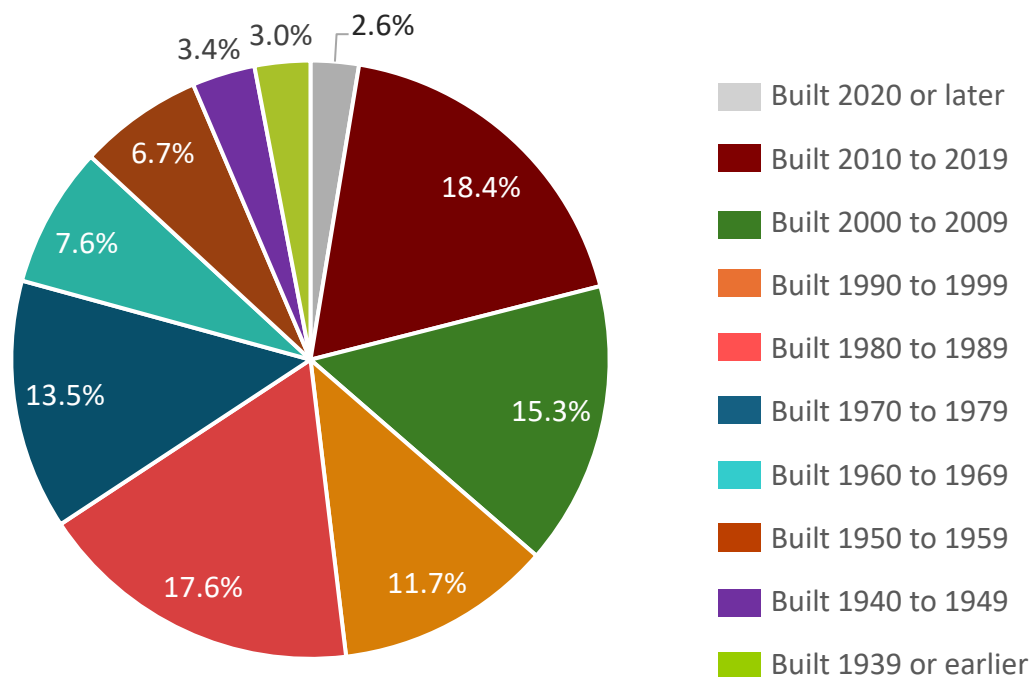


Figure 17: Age of Housing Stock for Comparison Cities (2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates Table DP04)

| <b>Year Structure Built</b> | <b>Bryan, TX (%)</b> | <b>College Station, TX (%)</b> | <b>Temple, TX (%)</b> | <b>Waco, TX (%)</b> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Built 2020 or later         | 2.6                  | 2.4                            | 3.3                   | 1.2                 |
| Built 2010 to 2019          | 18.4                 | 23.2                           | 22.6                  | 14.9                |
| Built 2000 to 2009          | 15.3                 | 20.3                           | 13.2                  | 10.9                |
| Built 1990 to 1999          | 11.7                 | 16.5                           | 10.8                  | 8                   |
| Built 1980 to 1989          | 17.6                 | 18.5                           | 13.6                  | 11.2                |
| Built 1970 to 1979          | 13.5                 | 12.2                           | 13.6                  | 13.9                |
| Built 1960 to 1969          | 7.6                  | 3.9                            | 8.2                   | 12.4                |
| Built 1950 to 1959          | 6.7                  | 1.7                            | 8.1                   | 16.1                |
| Built 1940 to 1949          | 3.4                  | 0.5                            | 3.4                   | 5.5                 |
| Built 1939 or earlier       | 3.0                  | 0.7                            | 3.2                   | 6                   |

### Occupancy Rate

The shares of owner-occupied housing units and renter-occupied housing units are nearly evenly split at 49.4% and 50.6%, respectively (Figure 19). Nearly 11% of the housing units in Bryan are vacant, potentially speaking to similar housing vacancy trends in university-influenced cities, as seen in Figure 20, on the next page.

Figure 18: Owner & Renter Occupied Housing Units in Bryan (2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates Table DP04)

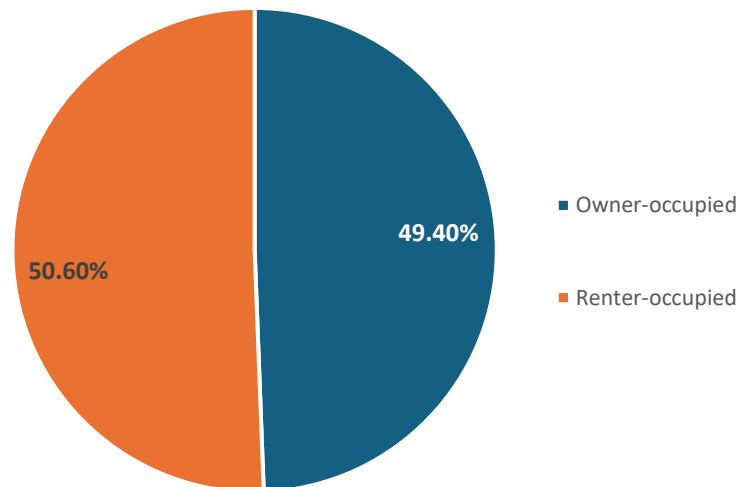


Figure 19: Share of Vacant Housing Units in Comparison Cities (2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates Table DP04)

| City                | Vacant Housing Units |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Blacksburg, VA      | 18.1%                |
| Urbana, IL          | 13.6%                |
| Waco, TX            | 12.1%                |
| Champaign, IL       | 12.0%                |
| College Station, TX | 11.9%                |
| <b>Bryan, TX</b>    | <b>10.6%</b>         |
| State of Texas      | 9.6%                 |
| Temple, TX          | 7.8%                 |
| Christiansburg, VA  | 7.3%                 |

### Short-Term Rentals

Short-term rentals (STRs) as defined by the Bryan Code of Ordinances, are any property that is rented for 30 days or less. These rental properties are required to remit a 7% Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) on gross short-term rents, and the City uses GovOS as its online system for STR operators to register and pay HOT.

According to data from the City of Bryan, there are a total of 477 short-term rentals actively listed on sites such as Airbnb or VRBO as of early 2026, 217 of which are not currently registered with the city. In 2022, when the City of Bryan began using an online system to collect HOT payments, the City estimated there to be approximately 300 STR properties.

### Housing Value and Costs

Similar to national trends, Bryan's median home value increased substantially between 2014 and 2023, rising from \$114,900 to \$210,600, an 83% increase in nominal dollars. After adjusting for inflation, home values still show significant real growth, indicating that housing costs have increased well beyond general price inflation.

Median rents followed a much more stable pattern of growth increasing from \$789 to \$1,150 per month between 2014 and 2023 (45% nominal growth). \$789 adjusted for inflation equates to \$1,040 in 2024 dollars, indicating rents have remained relatively stable. While inflation accounts for a portion of these increases, inflation-adjusted figures confirm that both homeownership and rental housing have become meaningfully more expensive over time.

The median home value and median gross rent for Bryan, comparison cities, and the State of Texas are shown in Figure 21 on the next page.

Bryan's median home value and median gross rent are slightly below average when compared to these other cities (excluding the State of Texas median value). Overall, Bryan is still positioned as a comparatively affordable housing market. However, ownership costs are rising faster than rents; meaning entry-level buyers are being priced out even if Bryan remains "affordable" regionally. While this trend is seen across the nation, Bryan's affordability is likely a key factor in continued in-migration and housing demand.

*Figure 20: Median Home Value for Comparison Cities (2023 ACS 5-year estimates Table DP04)*

| City (or State of Texas) | Median Home Value | Median Gross Rent |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Blacksburg, VA           | \$417,200         | \$1,290           |
| College Station, TX      | \$326,500         | \$1,168           |
| State of Texas           | \$260,400         | \$1,339           |
| Christiansburg, VA       | \$242,900         | \$1,171           |
| Temple, TX               | \$220,300         | \$1,174           |
| <b>Bryan, TX</b>         | <b>\$210,600</b>  | <b>\$1,150</b>    |
| Champaign, IL            | \$199,700         | \$1,103           |
| Waco, TX                 | \$199,600         | \$1,098           |
| Urbana, IL               | \$186,300         | \$951             |

## Home Sales

According to data from the Texas A&M Real Estate Research Center, 25% of home sales were in the \$250k-\$299k price range in both 2024 and 2025. Overall, Figures 22 and 23 (see next page) show the home sale price distribution and average home sale price for Bryan trending upward. However, this could be due to a variety of factors such as rising home costs nationwide and inflation of building materials and consumer goods.

*Figure 21: Home Sale Price Distribution, Bryan 2019-2025 (Texas A&M Real Estate Research Center)*

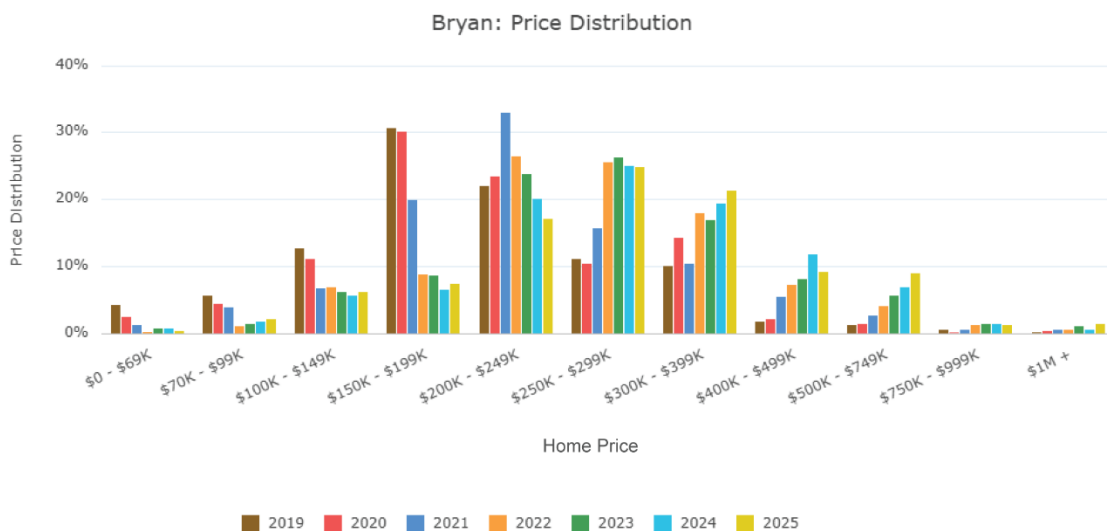
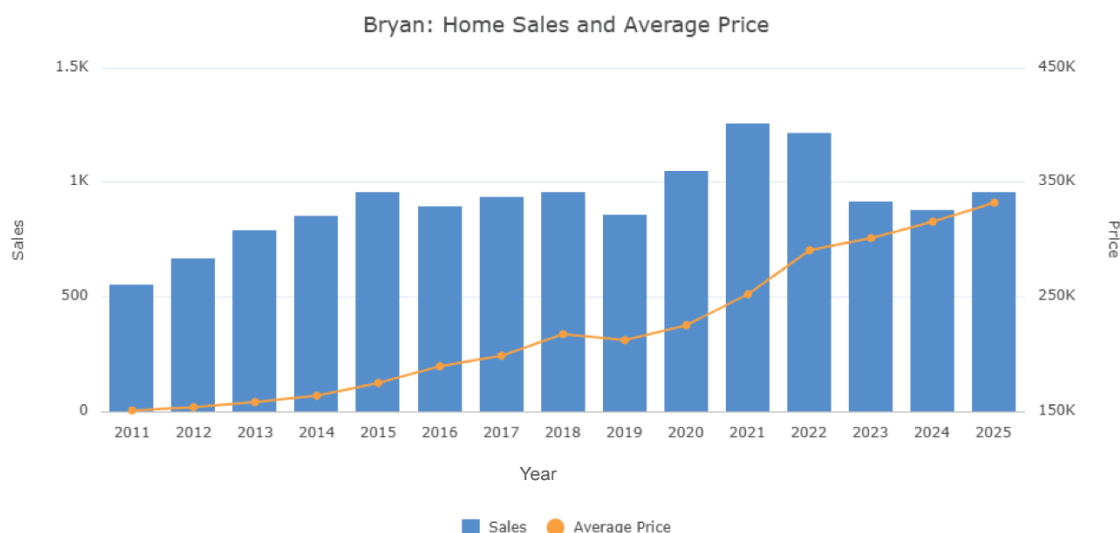


Figure 22: Home Sales and Average Price (Texas A&M Real Estate Research Center)



Other Texas peer cities, as seen in Figure 23 below, are also experiencing increases in the average home sale price, with the exception of Temple, which has experienced a flattening trend of home sales prices since 2022 per Texas A&M Real Estate Research Center data.

Relative to these other cities, Bryan has had the greatest increase in the number of homes sold between 2024 and 2025, which could be attributed to the construction of new housing stock in Bryan. Overall, however, Bryan has fewer total homes sales in 2024 and 2025 than the comparison cities provided below.

| Figure 23: Homes Sold and Average Price for Comparison Cities, 2024-2025 (Texas A&M Real Estate Research Center, ACS 2023 5-Year Estimates Table DP04) |            |      |                                         |       |                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------|-----------------------------------------|-------|---------------------|
| City                                                                                                                                                   | Homes Sold |      | Average Price (in thousands of dollars) |       | Total Housing Units |
|                                                                                                                                                        | 2024       | 2025 | 2024                                    | 2025  |                     |
| Bryan, TX                                                                                                                                              | 880        | 955  | 315.6                                   | 332.2 | 36,245              |
| College Station, TX                                                                                                                                    | 1.4k       | 1.4k | 390.5                                   | 402.2 | 50,730              |
| Temple, TX                                                                                                                                             | 1.3k       | 1.4k | 293.7                                   | 289   | 35,228              |
| Waco, TX                                                                                                                                               | 1.4k       | 1.4k | 305.6                                   | 313.5 | 60,256              |

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Bryan compares similarly with established university-influenced cities outside the Brazos Valley. The city's growth, income, and education levels are stable and generally average, reflecting its more historic character compared to the newer development seen in College Station, driven in large part by the growth of Texas A&M University. Overall, Bryan performs well among its peers. Moving forward, the city's success will be driven by balancing new growth with reinvestment in older parts of town and the preservation of its distinct character.

## Community Assets

The following pages describe the various community assets that this plan can build upon. These are key strategic features of Bryan or recent successes that have been identified during the development of this plan.

### *Community Character*

**Diversity.** Many interviewed stakeholders praised Bryan for the range of cultures represented in the city, noting that this contributes to its vibrancy. Bryan is also home to a diverse range of employment options, including technology and manufacturing, health sciences, and education. The variety of employment options aids in attracting a broad range of visitors and residents to the city.

Additionally, Bryan offers a rich and varied set of attractions, from its revitalized historic downtown with locally owned shops, restaurants, and cultural venues, to nearby wineries, and heritage sites. This diversity of attractions helps Bryan appeal to a broad range of residents and visitors and strengthens its identity as a distinct destination rather than just a college-adjacent community.

**Authenticity, Culture, and Heritage.** Dating back to 1860, Bryan's history can be felt throughout the city, from the historic downtown buildings to the small-town charm that still permeates the city, despite its population of nearly 100,000 people. Bryan is celebrated for having "soul" and being "authentic." In addition to Bryan's heritage as a historic railroad hub, many cultures are celebrated today, and the diverse makeup of the community is celebrated through community events such as the annual Juneteenth, Fiestas Patrias, and Boonville Days festivals and parades.

Many residents have generational roots in the city and continue to call it home with families of their own. Throughout the engagement efforts conducted to-date, many residents expressed a deep sense of pride in their hometown and an eager attitude to see the city improve. Nearly 40% of respondents in the community-wide survey conducted as part of this process identified "community character" as one of the top strengths of Bryan.

**Business Friendly / Customer Service.** In addition to welcoming large employers, Bryan's City Council and City staff foster a "business-friendly" culture for small and local businesses. Development applications are generally reviewed within one week, and the City's Development Services staff are known for working closely with small and local business owners to assist them with navigating the development process. Further, Bryan offers a variety of financial incentives to attract development and businesses to the city.

**Art and Music.** Art and music are beginning play a vital role in Bryan's identity and sense of place. With many live music venues, an annual Songwriters Festival, and a history of live music performances from stars like Selena, The Band of Heathens, Roger Creager, and others, Bryan has the tools to become a music destination.

Created in 2021 by the Visual Art Society of Bryan-College Station, the Aggeland Art Trail showcases art galleries, public art installations, and sculptures across the Bryan-College Station

area. In partnership with Destination Bryan, visitors and residents can download and use a free mobile passport to catalog their art stops along the self-guided Aggieland Art Trail and win prizes. Numerous stakeholders expressed a desire to further emphasize arts and music to boost tourism. The City, in partnership with Destination Bryan and local music and art providers, should leverage these existing assets to enhance Bryan's status as the arts, music, and cultural hub of the Brazos Valley.

### *Strategic Location*

**Texas Triangle.** Bryan is centrally located between the three major metropolitan areas that make up the 'Texas Triangle': Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, and Austin-San Antonio, connecting Bryan with over 70% of the state's population in a one- to three-hour drive. This proximity benefits both residents and economic development opportunities.

For Bryan residents wishing to access major airports, shopping, advanced healthcare services, or business, these major centers can easily be accessed within a day trip. Additionally, this proximity to most of the state's population has been strategically leveraged for Bryan's tourism economy through targeted marketing campaigns to boost the city as an ideal weekend destination.

Further, this central location is a leading factor in the development of the Texas Triangle Park Inland Port. Located in north Bryan, near Lake Bryan, this inland port and federal trade zone serves as a logistics and distribution center, providing direct access to the Port of Houston, and benefiting the economic growth of Bryan and the State of Texas.

### *Success of Downtown Revitalization Efforts*

**Sustained Efforts.** Community members and city staff have been working together to restore Downtown Bryan for over 40 years. In 1981, a historic preservation ordinance was created, and the Bryan Historic Landmark Commission (HLC) was founded. The Downtown Master Plan, adopted in 2001, identified many potential enhancements to be implemented within downtown Bryan for the purpose of revitalizing downtown and strengthening the area economically, aesthetically, as a place to live and gather, and to emphasize Historic Downtown as the heart of the city. In 2001, the City of Bryan started the Downtown Improvement Program, a matching grant program that helps restore and preserve historic buildings. More recently, the City updated its Historic Preservation Plan in 2023.

Renovation of the historic La Salle Hotel in 2000 catalyzed revitalization of downtown Bryan and recent initiatives that have led to this local recognition include the revitalization of the historic Queen Theater in 2018, and the reopening of the Palace Theater, an open-air live music venue, in 2023. Thanks to the "rebirth" of these iconic Downtown landmarks, as well as the addition of various local businesses and restaurants, Downtown Bryan gained recognition from Texas Monthly Magazine in 2024 and Southern Living Magazine in 2025, praising Bryan as an underrated city with a distinct personality.

This sustained community interest and coordinated effort from Destination Bryan and the City have greatly contributed to the ongoing revitalization of Downtown.

**First Friday.** For over 20 years, First Friday has brought residents and visitors to enjoy downtown Bryan. First Friday, held the first Friday of every month, opens the streets of downtown to pedestrians, live music, performances, and art demonstrations, and many businesses remain open late for First Friday attendees.

**Infill Development.** Residential infill development has taken place in several areas around the City, most notably in Downtown, Midtown, and areas adjacent to College Station (North of Northgate area). In Downtown, these projects are generally small-scale multifamily units, while townhomes have been concentrated in Midtown and near College Station city limits.

Approximately 25 percent of residential development submissions received by the City are for replats of existing large residential lots near the city's core. These include both townhouses, ranging from 3 to 10 units, and mid-size apartment buildings. Commercial infill development is most commonly occurring in Downtown and includes adaptive reuse of older buildings in order to maintain the existing historic character.

### *Affordable Cost of Living*

In comparison to the neighboring city of College Station and the State of Texas, Bryan boasts an affordable cost of living. At \$210,600, Bryan's median home value is significantly lower than College Station's median home value of \$326,500. Incidentally, College Station had the highest median home value of any of the comparison communities in Texas. According to Texas Real Estate Source, as of 2023, the average cost of utilities for a resident of Bryan is five percent less than the state and six percent less than the nation. In the online community survey for this planning process, nearly 41 percent of respondents chose "cost of living" as one of Bryan's top strengths, making it the highest ranked strength of all given options.

This comparably low cost of living makes Bryan an attractive place for residents across the spectrum of life stages, from students to young families and retirees. Providing options across a broad range of price points and housing types promotes an "ecosystem" of housing and contributes to broader community well-being as residents are able to remain in the community and have access to various housing options that meet their changing needs.

### **Accomplishments and Incremental progress**

Over the past decade, the City of Bryan has achieved several noteworthy accomplishments, which have strengthened its identity, expanded opportunities, and enhanced quality of life for its residents. This section serves to celebrate the progress Bryan has made and to remind the City to, "keep the momentum going."

### *Developments and Planning Efforts*

**Destination Bryan.** Formed in 2020 as a 501c(6) nonprofit, Destination Bryan is the official marketing organization for the city. Through targeted tourism marketing and branding efforts, Destination Bryan has recently distilled Bryan's character and history into a signature brand and successfully driven economic growth for the city. Destination Bryan plays an integral role in hosting events and marketing new and top attractions throughout Bryan. Because many of these

events are held in Downtown Bryan, Destination Bryan has been an essential partner in attracting investment into Downtown and updating Bryan's image in recent years.

**Downtown.** Revitalization efforts over the past 40 years have transformed historic Downtown Bryan into an area of growing vibrancy, activation, and placemaking. This is primarily due to the sustained efforts and interest from the City and community, as mentioned above, and further spurred by the success of Destination Bryan. When asked to name what they love about Bryan, stakeholders and Bryan citizens have consistently named Downtown Bryan first.

**Downtown Quiet Zones.** Over the past several years, the City has been diligently working with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) towards the completion of an official Quiet Zone for the downtown area. This project will provide safety and acoustical improvements at 24 improved crossings in Downtown. Construction of various crossing improvements is divided into three phases and includes medians, islands, sidewalks, pavement striping, signage, and gate arm improvements.

**Midtown.** Located along South College Avenue, Bryan's Midtown District connects historic downtown Bryan with Texas A&M University. The Midtown Area Plan, adopted in 2020, provides strategies for investment and enhancements to the area, including the use of pre-approved building designs for infill housing development to provide additional housing options while maintaining the character of Midtown. The city has already seen success in the area through the development of several key anchor sites, including Travis Bryan Midtown Park, Travis Fields, Legends Event Center, Topgolf, D-Bat Aggieland, and Travis Major Field, which will be the home of a new Mid-America League Baseball team, the Bryan Yard Dogs, beginning in 2026. Continued development of Travis Midtown Park and the surrounding area, including infill development, will allow the City to leverage this district as a seamless and vibrant connection between Downtown Bryan and Texas A&M University.

**Lake Walk.** Lake Walk includes 350 acres of mixed-use development in southwest Bryan, near John Sharp Parkway (SH 47) and Harvey Mitchell Parkway (FM 2818). Made possible by a 380 Agreement with the City of Bryan, the Lake Walk development is intended to be a premier live, work, and play destination. Lake Walk is currently anchored by developments like The Stella Hotel, Valor Biotherapeutics, and the adjacent Traditions neighborhood, and will soon include The Lumin at Lake Walk, an amenity-rich office space. Lake Walk also features dining, personal services, an amphitheater and observation tower overlooking Lake Atlas, and 3.5 miles of walking trails.

**Corridor Beautification Partnership (CBP).** Since 2017, the City of Bryan has funded and administered the Corridor Beautification Program (CBP), a matching grant program that promotes beautification and reinvestment along key commercial corridors by funding improvements such as landscaping, façade upgrades, and signage enhancements. The program's goals are to improve community image and corridor appearance, eliminate visual blight, stimulate private reinvestment, and increase property values and sales tax revenues. Over nine fiscal years, 20

businesses have participated in the program, leveraging \$617,000 in public grant funds to generate over \$4 million in private investment along some of Bryan's major corridors.

**William J. Bryan Parkway Pedestrian Connectivity.** Spanning from W. State Highway 21 to Highway 6, William J. Bryan Parkway (FM 158) is a key east-west thoroughfare in Bryan. In partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Bryan-College Station Metropolitan Planning Organization (BCSMPO), the City completed safety and mobility improvements along E. William J. Bryan Parkway from Texas Avenue to Highway 6. These improvements were designed to enhance pedestrian, cyclist, and vehicular safety and connectivity. Improvements included dual-lane roundabouts on both the eastern and western side of Sue Haswell Park, a shared use path from Sue Haswell Park to Highway 6, the addition of six signalized intersections and five pedestrian hybrid beacons, and significant landscaping and lighting improvements.

### *Economic and Community Development*

**Coulter Airfield.** Though it has been a part of the City of Bryan for more than 80 years, Coulter Airfield has become a significant economic development tool for the City over the last decade. Recently, the Bryan Business Council (BBC) constructed the Bryan Business Center at Coulter Airfield, complete with meeting space and a conference room, providing the opportunity for aviation visitors to conduct business on-site and expanding the airfield's role as an economic and business driver. Expansion plans are underway, signaling the airfield's significance in supporting Bryan's future growth.

**Bryan ISD.** In the 2025 Accountability Ratings, released by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Bryan ISD received distinction of Postsecondary Readiness, meaning the school district exhibits outstanding academic performance in indicators for postsecondary readiness. Considerable success has been seen in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program, which prepares students with hands-on experience in industries such as health science, engineering, and technology.

The CTE program has been able to leverage the growing presence of manufacturing employment within the city, thus allowing the majority of CTE program graduates to immediately enter Bryan's workforce upon graduation. In 2025, the BISD Career and Technical Education Department received the CTAT District of Distinction Award. The award, which was established by the Career & Technical Association of Texas (CTAT), celebrates CTE programs throughout the state that showcase best practices and demonstrate exemplary leadership, innovation, dedication and excellence in advancing CTE. Of the more than 1,200 school districts in the state of Texas, Bryan ISD was one of only 38 selected to receive the 2025 CTAT District of Distinction Award.

**Texas Triangle Park.** As previously mentioned, Bryan is home to the Texas Triangle Park, an inland port and federal trade zone. According to a Certification Report completed by Quest Site Solutions, approximately 583 of the site's 616 total acres are developable. Property within the park is being sold in tracts of no less than 20 acres to companies that intend on creating new jobs in Brazos County with the wages paid to employees meeting or exceeding the average salary

of Brazos County. The proximity of Texas A&M University and Bryan ISD's CTE program provide opportunities for a workforce pipeline, and coupled with standards for job development and creation, the Texas Triangle Park leverages Bryan's strategic location and manufacturing assets to foster job creation and economic growth in the city.

**No-Fee Library.** The Bryan + College Station Public Library System, an essential resource for the Bryan community, recently stopped charging late fees in order to expand the accessibility of utilizing the library and allow residents to access the library services without penalty.

### *Low Crime Rate*

The City of Bryan experiences an overall low crime rate and has seen downward trends between the first quarter of 2024 to the first quarter of 2025. Bryan Police Department (BPD) data, as reported by local news affiliate KBTX, indicated decreases were seen for aggravated assaults (36%), shoplifting (44%), and reports of theft from motor vehicles (45%). This success can be attributed, in part, to the success of BPD's various programs described below, as well as the in-house police academy and extensive training provided to officers. As of October 2025, BPD has graduated eight classes from the academy and maintains a 100% graduation rate.

**Mental Health Unit.** In a proactive approach to community safety, BPD formed a Mental Health Unit in 2021 to better serve the needs of Bryan's community. Comprised of three officers that have completed extensive training, the Mental Health Unit officers respond to service calls directly involving residents experiencing a mental health crisis. The BPD Mental Health Unit has allowed the Department to more effectively respond to citizen needs and mitigate the potential of violent interactions occurring.

**Bryan Police Department Citizen Police Academy.** BPD offers the Citizen Police Academy, in both English and Spanish, to Bryan residents. This 10-week course educates Bryan citizens about the structure and activities of BPD, encouraging support for the Department and greater involvement within one's own neighborhood. Further, the Junior Police Academy introduces high school students to the operations and activities of the BPD in a two-week program.

**Bryan Police Department Community Oriented Response and Enforcement (C.O.R.E.).** The primary tenet of BPD's C.O.R.E. program is to build partnerships and promote community involvement for improving quality of life within Bryan. Through the assignment of BPD patrol officers to dedicated geographic zones, officers can become familiar with and invested in the areas they work in. Further, C.O.R.E. Team Officers, dedicated to a singular geographic zone of the city, serve as direct liaisons between the City and their community zone.

### *On the Horizon*

**RELLIS.** The nearly 2,000-acre satellite campus of Texas A&M University, located at the junction of State Highway 21 and John Sharp Parkway (SH 47), is planned to be a multi-institutional campus housing research, testing, education, and workforce development activities. Additionally, student housing and nuclear power generation are to be developed on the RELLIS campus. In addition to bringing new companies and employers to the campus, auxiliary development in the

area surrounding the RELLIS campus will further augment economic development. Development in the surrounding area, known as the Innovation Corridor, is expected to include regional commercial and retail development, mixed-use residential development, and additional tech-related companies.

**South College Avenue Redesign.** Reconstruction of South College Avenue, conducted as a capital improvement project (CIP) by the City of Bryan, has been taking place along the stretch of South College Avenue from West Villa Maria Road to West Carson Street. This project includes replacing and upgrading water and sewer facilities as well as the installation of street lighting and pedestrian improvements.

In 2026, the Bryan-College Station MPO began a study to redesign a separate section of South College Avenue, from University Drive to Villa Maria Road, as a “complete street” designed to safely accommodate automobiles, pedestrians, cyclists, and other users of the road. This effort will build upon recently completed work on South College Avenue. The study, funded by the MPO with matching funds from the City of Bryan, City of College Station, Texas A&M University, and Brazos County, will include a proposed redesign of the corridor. Upon completion of the study, phased construction of the complete street could transform the corridor into an accessible space for all users from University Drive to Downtown Bryan.

**High-Speed Rail.** A 240-mile high-speed rail line is proposed to connect Houston with the Dallas-Fort Worth area. The only proposed daily stop on the Texas High Speed Rail between North Texas and Houston would be the “Brazos Valley Station” in Grimes County, approximately 30 miles east of Bryan along the SH 30 corridor. Plans also call for a shuttle service that would directly connect the Texas A&M University campus to the Brazos Valley Station. From that station, it would be a roughly 50-minute ride to Dallas or a 30-minute ride to Houston.

Texas Central, the company set to build the line, expects to be operating around 2030. However, the project has faced numerous challenges related to alignments, land acquisition, regulatory approvals, financing, and legal hurdles. As a result, the original construction and ridership timelines are likely to be delayed. Despite these obstacles, the project represents the potential to significantly influence growth patterns, travel behavior, and economic competitiveness for Bryan and the greater Brazos Valley, if ultimately realized.

## **Issues/Challenges**

The following are current issues or challenges facing Bryan that are expected to influence its ability to grow sustainably, remain competitive, and continue to provide a high quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors if these challenges are left unaddressed or unmitigated.

### *Aging Neighborhoods*

As previously mentioned, older neighborhoods present both a challenge and an opportunity. Old homes may require repairs or upgrades to address outdated building systems, including plumbing, electrical, roofing, and foundations. Even minor deferred exterior maintenance, such as overgrown landscaping, deteriorating fences, and weathered facades, can accumulate over time,

creating visible decline that affects both the appearance of a neighborhood and public perceptions of its long-term stability.

At the same time, older homes often serve as an important source of naturally-occurring attainable housing. They offer character and architectural variety that newer developments frequently lack, along with the benefits of established neighborhood patterns and mature trees. With thoughtful reinvestment, these homes can represent significant opportunities for value appreciation. Their unique charm, solid craftsmanship, and strong sense of place make older neighborhoods highly desirable, allowing cities to celebrate their history while supporting diverse housing options for the future.

### *Changing Population Demographics*

As previously noted, the City's population is simultaneously aging and shrinking in its share of college and early-labor aged residents, resulting in several implications for future planning and economic development. Given the aging population, housing options that allow residents to downsize or are easier to maintain should be available. There are a variety of options that could be considered, including master-planned retirement communities, accessory dwelling units, and community assistance programs for retrofitting existing structures with mobility-assistance features to allow aging in place.

At the same time, attracting and retaining younger workers will become increasingly important as the population ages. Strategic economic development efforts, focused on quality jobs, desirable amenities, and opportunities for young people, will play a key role in strengthening the talent pipeline and supporting long-term economic stability.

The City's growing diversity also presents an opportunity to enhance community vitality. As demographic shifts bring a broader mix of cultures and backgrounds, demand is increasing for dynamic public spaces and a wider range of arts and cultural programming. Supporting these activities can boost quality of life, strengthen community identity, and appeal to both long-time residents and new households.

### *Limited Resources*

**Cost of Infrastructure.** In 2024, the City adopted a Land Use Fiscal Analysis evaluating whether development generates sufficient tax revenue to cover long-term infrastructure and service costs. As highlighted in the analysis, greenfield development, such as that occurring on the east side of Highway 6, requires the installation of new infrastructure (e.g., roads, water, and wastewater). Although new infrastructure initially places minimal demands on maintenance budgets, overall, the amount of infrastructure to be monitored, managed, and maintained is increasing. Unlike incremental reinvestment in existing systems, new large-scale infrastructure tends to age uniformly, meaning that major repairs or full replacements will be needed around the same time as these assets reach the end of their useful life.

Property tax revenue generated from new residential development is often inadequate to cover the cost of the infrastructure maintenance. Since the city does not charge impact fees (one-time

fees paid by developers to help fund infrastructure and public services required for new development), existing taxpayers are subsidizing the cost for this greenfield development. Balancing greenfield development with reinvestment in established areas will be essential to ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability. However, since greenfield development is typically less challenging than infill development, thoughtful strategies, incentives, and policies will be needed to ensure this balance.

**Resource Demand.** As the Bryan-College Station area continues to grow and develop, the availability of water is essential for residents, growing industrial interests, and agricultural uses. In 2024, efforts to export water from the Simsboro Formation of the Carrizo Wilcox Aquifer to an Austin-area suburb resulted in legal action brought by the cities of Bryan and College Station, Brazos County, and the Texas A&M University system against the Brazos Valley Groundwater Conservation District and out-of-state real estate investors. The lawsuit, which was filed with the intent to prevent the depletion of the region's water supply, was settled in summer 2025 and resulted in limits on water exports from the Brazos Valley's groundwater source. Despite this legal victory, the City of Bryan will need to continue planning for additional pressure on water availability, both locally and regionally.

#### *Maintaining Character with Growth*

Bryan's authentic downtown core, historic neighborhoods, and deep cultural roots are fundamental elements of what makes Bryan feel distinct and memorable. Maintaining and celebrating this identity is strongly desired by the community, and community members have consistently emphasized that Bryan's character, embodied in its history, architecture, downtown energy, and cultural traditions, is what makes the city special.

With available property and vacant structures in Downtown and along Texas Avenue, there are many opportunities for the City to prioritize infill redevelopment, encourage adaptive reuse, and activate underutilized spaces to further elevate these strengths. Thoughtful investment in the existing urban fabric not only enhances the character that residents cherish, but also reinforces Bryan's sense of place in ways that new, greenfield development cannot replicate.

Newer suburban style housing, however, is also a key piece in providing the housing options desired by the market and the community, and most new residential development is expected to continue in greenfield areas east of Highway 6. To balance the provision of new, suburban development and maintaining Bryan's existing character, the City can utilize a "community character" approach (described in greater detail in the Preliminary Community Direction Framework) to integrate contextual considerations with new development.

#### *Challenges With Development*

**Infill Development.** The need for infill development is felt most prominently along many of Bryan's commercial corridors. Vacant stores and declining retail impact a city's economy, physical environment, and overall perception. Infill development, by its nature, is generally more complicated and difficult than greenfield development and therefore may require more innovative solutions.

Cities and businesses are prioritizing “better space” over “more space,” favoring vibrant, walkable areas that support small and local businesses as opposed to auto-oriented commercial strip centers. This preference is reflected in Bryan’s community-wide survey, where nearly 70 percent of respondents indicated that they would like to see more small businesses rather than big-box retailers.

Retail vacancies contribute to visual blight, safety concerns, and declining property values, discouraging reinvestment and reducing foot traffic for remaining businesses. Persistent vacancies signal the need to rethink land use and economic development strategies, shifting toward mixed-use redevelopment, adaptive reuse, experiential retail, or community-serving uses. While these transitions can be difficult, they offer an opportunity to create more resilient, diversified, and economically sustainable areas over the long term.

**Development Codes.** Bryan’s primary development-related regulations include its Zoning Ordinance, Land & Site Development Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, Sign Ordinance, and a series of design guidelines for both historic and non-historic areas. The Zoning Ordinance was established in 1989 and continues to be modified, as needed. General comments from city staff, the prevalence of planned development usage, and input from developers signal that there may be features of the development regulations holding development back. Some examples of these features include parking requirements, parkland dedication, and land use matrices, though additional analysis is needed to fully identify how these features are inhibitive.

When briefly comparing the structure of development regulations in Bryan, Temple, College Station, and Waco, it can be said that Bryan’s structure is typical and reasonably flexible, but peer cities show more modern approaches. Bryan’s regulations resemble Waco’s in maintaining multiple standalone ordinances, while in contrast, College Station and Temple use comprehensive consolidated development codes, which generally offer easier navigation and more integrated, consistent regulation. Waco is also implementing a Downtown Form-Based Code, which shifts from use-based toward form and urban design regulating. This input indicates the need for a comprehensive evaluation of the city’s development regulations to identify challenges and develop improved regulations.

**Code Enforcement.** Over the past 15 years, the City’s Substandard Structure Abatement Program has led to the condemnation of 653 structures and the removal of approximately 33% (218) of these 653 structures. However, without a property maintenance code in place, the City has minimal ability to address repair maintenance or disrepair prior to condemnation and structure removal. The City should take steps to improve staff’s ability to enforce property maintenance and upkeep.

**Development Predictability.** While City staff and elected officials have been praised for their collaborative approach, residential developers have noted concerns about inconsistent timelines and uncertainty in the ultimate approval of development submittals.

Nearly 59% of land (44,000 acres) within city limits are zoned as Planned Development (PD) District, making it the largest zoning classification in the city, followed by the Residential District

– 5,000 (RD-5) zoning classification (16%). The PD District primarily consists of residential development, but does include notable industrial sites such as the Bryan Industrial Park, the Brazos County Industrial Park, the Texas Triangle Inland Port, and Coulter Airfield. For developers, the custom nature of PD Districts can introduce elements that reduce market-based adaptability and initial approval for PD Districts can be a lengthy and costly process. Stakeholders have expressed appreciation for city staff being willing to work with developers to find flexible solutions; however, quality development can also be achieved through predictable, by-right zoning with built-in criteria for flexibility which would relieve some of the burden on staff. Ultimately, a more predictable development code and approval process could encourage investment and produce better outcomes.

### *Corridor Aesthetics and Activation*

**Gateway Improvements.** Currently, there is little to signal one's entrance into the city or to differentiate Bryan from College Station. There are two types of gateway improvements the City should focus on:

- Gateway enhancements at primary gateways; and
- Subtle public realm improvements along the border between Bryan and College Station.

The City of Bryan should take strategic steps to enhance landscaping, streetscaping, and overall public realm design along the border of Bryan and College Station to help reinforce the image of Bryan. Gateway enhancements at primary gateways could include signature features like monument signage, statues or public art, landscaping, and lighting.

**Texas Avenue Corridor.** As Texas Avenue exists today, it is characterized by vacant storefronts and a large expanse of surface parking along the roadway, with many of the active businesses found along the corridor being autobody shops and used-car dealers.

While incremental progress has been made in recent years through initiatives such as the Corridor Beautification Partnership and beginning to bury utilities underground, additional and more comprehensive efforts are needed to catalyze widespread transformation. Several structural challenges limit the pace and scale of transformation, including zoning, site development and subdivision requirements, and parcel configurations. Much of the land along Texas Avenue is zoned Commercial District (C-3), which is the most permissive commercial district in Bryan. The C-3 District permits higher-intensity retail and service uses that may include automotive uses, used-goods sales, warehouse storage, and delivery areas. The breadth of commercial uses allowed on Texas Avenue has created some land use conflicts along a corridor that functions as a primary gateway between Bryan and College Station. A transition toward lower-intensity commercial uses, mixed-use development, and multi-family housing may be more appropriate in this context. However, the prevalence of small, fragmented parcels along Texas Avenue makes transformative redevelopment difficult, as the cost and complexity of assembling land for cohesive projects can be daunting.

Improvements to Texas Avenue were also identified as a high priority in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan and the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, underscoring the long-standing nature of this issue. Given

the corridor's complexity, achieving meaningful revitalization will likely require innovative solutions, sustained revitalizations efforts, and a long-term commitment. As a result, the community should anticipate that transformation will occur incrementally over time rather than through immediate, large-scale change.

### **Public Engagement Summary**

In recognition of the deep sense of community pride present in the City of Bryan, this plan is rooted in community input, to ensure that residents and stakeholders shaped the recommended direction for Bryan's future. Stakeholders with expertise across various topics have provided valuable insight into the challenges the city has faced or is currently facing, incremental steps that have been taken, and the desired direction for the future. This section provides an overview of engagement efforts that have been completed and key takeaways.

### **Stakeholder listening sessions**

A series of six (6) stakeholder listening sessions were held, each focusing on a different community topic, to hear directly from community members with targeted experience and knowledge. Participants were invited by City of Bryan staff and represented a broad cross-section of people actively involved within the City of Bryan. Listening session themes included Tourism and Culture, Residential Development, Commercial Development, and Education and Workforce Development. Two listening sessions were general in nature for stakeholders that identified an interest in sharing additional feedback.

### **Inter-departmental staff meeting**

One meeting was held with department leaders or key staff from each City department. In this forum, these leaders provided insight into the specific needs of each department, including future staffing, infrastructure, funding, and/or planning needs, and shared recent department successes.

### **CPAC meetings**

The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) is comprised of stakeholders representing the Bryan community. The CPAC is charged with guiding the direction of the Plan and ensuring the Plan's recommendations are reflective of the community's goals and desires for the next 10 to 20 years. The CPAC is expected to meet five (5) times over the course of this planning process. Brief descriptions of topics covered by past CPAC meetings are provided below:

- Meeting 1 (November 2025): CPAC members confirmed and supplemented community feedback through a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) exercise and completed a mapping exercise to identify areas of preservation and areas of opportunity within Bryan.
- Meeting 2 (January 2026): CPAC members provided initial input on a proposed vision statement and proposed key topics of the plan. Background about the land use scenario planning component of the plan was presented to CPAC members and input was solicited regarding the types of citywide development scenarios to model and analyze.

- Meeting 3 (April 2026): CPAC members discussed components of housing that influence the quality and affordability of housing in Bryan and the different tools available to the City to control housing development.

### Online community survey

An online community survey was publicly available in both English and Spanish for approximately three months. A total of 1,620 people visited the survey website and 1,050 partially or fully completed the survey. The survey solicited feedback on a wide range of topics related to quality of life in Bryan, including, but not limited to, city services, housing and neighborhoods, and transportation and mobility. The survey consisted of 26 questions of multiple choice and open-ended formats, as well as three map-based questions which asked survey respondents to answer a question by marking a location on a map. Survey results represent the views of the participating respondents and should be considered alongside the public engagement, technical analysis, and community data rather than interpreted as a statistically representative sample of all Bryan residents.

### City Council and leadership interviews

Between January and March 2026, a series of meetings were held with City Council members and City leaders to gather insight into a wide range of topics. Below is a brief summary of input received during these meetings:

- **Continued downtown emphasis:** Desire for additional investment, businesses, public gathering space, diversifying amenities, increasing pedestrian walkability of the area, potentially a public plaza or gathering space if city-owned parcels can be leveraged.
- **Corridors are a priority for revitalization:** Texas Avenue is the priority as a (the) main gateway into the city. Medians have been a contentious subject, but placemaking, pedestrian safety, and catalytic redevelopment are needed to spur further development. There is interest in exploring innovative tools, such as Public Improvement Districts (PIDs) to remove barriers to redevelopment and to remove or fill vacant buildings in underperforming corridors.
- **Limited resources:** Most city departments are “stretched thin” financially and have a long list of needs and desires. A dedicated grant writer is needed to help obtain additional funding for the city.
- **Parks:** Parks are a primary quality of life amenity that have been allowed to fall into disrepair. There are a number of easy wins and low-hanging fruit that can help spark life back into these facilities and benefit their surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Reinvest in older infrastructure:** Districts 1 and 2 are the areas of the city with the oldest infrastructure and face a number of problems, including roadway pavement past its useful life, drainage and flooding issues, and worsening housing affordability, reflecting a citywide concern of neglect for the existing city core as new development occurs to the east. Safety, street, and sidewalk improvements are some of the main priorities for these areas.

- **Housing:** There is interest in diverse housing types, both of size and form, to attract a wide range of residents and to maintain the city's relative housing affordability while still offering options at higher price points.

## City of Bryan Comprehensive Plan Open House Summary

The public open house for the City of Bryan Comprehensive Plan was held Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at Phillips Event Center from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Approximately 100 participants attended the come-and-go event. The open house featured eight stations for people to provide feedback on a variety of topics related to the comprehensive plan. Each station had a corresponding game and participants that visited each station were eligible to be entered into a raffle drawing by the City.

Overall, residents indicated a desire to preserve Bryan's small-town character while promoting walkability, increased housing diversity, and reinvestment in existing areas rather than outward sprawl. Common concerns included removing medians on Texas Avenue, improving connectivity, and enhancing public transportation, sidewalks, and bike infrastructure.

Across most stations, participants consistently prioritized practical, near-term improvements. These improvements included maintaining and upgrading streets, drainage, and utilities; improving older neighborhoods; revitalizing commercial corridors like Texas Avenue; and supporting local businesses over chains. Housing affordability and "missing middle" housing options were recurring themes, along with the need for more amenities such as parks, community spaces, and youth-focused activities. Feedback also highlighted interest in making Downtown more accessible, vibrant, and family-friendly. This input reflects a community focused on quality-of-life improvements, reinvestment in existing assets, and balanced growth that supports both livability and economic opportunity.

## Key takeaways and themes

Several key themes have been consistently heard throughout engagement efforts completed to-date. One of the most consistent themes to emerge throughout conversations with the community is the call to 'keep the momentum going.' Residents repeatedly expressed their desire for the City to continue making thoughtful, incremental improvements that move Bryan forward while preserving the strengths that make it unique.

Stakeholders have largely recognized that progress is incremental and complex; however, the City has initiated many improvement projects already (e.g., Downtown and Midtown improvements). Revitalization is an ongoing battle and requires sustained effort over a long period of time; underscoring stakeholder feedback that the City should continue making steady, visible progress. Other key themes included:

### *Corridor revitalization*

- Texas Avenue needs revitalization, with opportunities for mixed-use developments, residential, and better retail offerings.

- Enhancement of visual character of corridors, including Texas Avenue and South College Avenue, is needed to maximize key gateways into Bryan.

#### *Diversity is Bryan's strength*

- Bryan has a rich culture due to its diversity and an ability to attract a diverse range of people.

#### *Housing options*

- There is a perceived need by the community for housing options across all stages of one's life and for a broad range of home price points.
- "Quality" concerns related to neighborhoods and homes.

#### *Maintain authenticity*

- Stakeholders stressed the importance of leaning into the attributes that define Bryan as a unique place, including its downtown and heritage.

#### *Infrastructure*

- Bryan needs to utilize its limited financial resources intentionally and efficiently to maintain its older infrastructure and plan ahead for new infrastructure.

#### *Placemaking*

- The community would like Bryan to be enhanced as a vibrant and attractive community by creating dynamic, walkable places that showcase Bryan's identity.

### **Vision**

The following proposed Vision Statement provides an aspirational outlook for the City of Bryan. The recommendations provided by this plan provide an avenue for the City to achieve this vision. The following Commitments are supplementary to the Vision Statement. Following the Vision Statement are a list of commitments the City makes to the people of Bryan.

### **Vision Statement**

"Bryan is a welcoming, historic, and diverse city rooted in Texas heritage and positioned for the future. We will grow responsibly, reinvest in our established neighborhoods and infrastructure, create memorable places, and support innovation, investment, and opportunity while preserving the authentic character that makes Bryan distinctive."

### **Commitments from the City of Bryan**

- Prioritize Community Desires
  - Use meaningful community input to inform City decisions while balancing long-term fiscal, infrastructure, legal, and community-wide considerations.
- Be Proactive
  - Maintain an invested interest and effort to engage with residents when seeking feedback on policies, priorities, and initiatives of the city.

- Foster Authenticity
  - Cultivate a unique environment that reflects the history and people of the city.
- Embrace Innovation
  - Remain adaptable and welcoming of new ideas or methods that result in continuous improvement.
- Create Memorable Places
  - Build a comfortable and engaging environment with its own identity that tells the story of the people who created it.
- Pledge Fiscal Responsibility
  - Invest in infrastructure and services that maximize public benefit.
- Support Collaboration
  - Value connectedness and shared experiences through open communication in government process.
- Maintain Momentum
  - Continue working towards realistic goals for community growth.

## **Goals/Guiding Principles**

These guiding principles express the community's long-term aspirations and establish the policy direction for each of the six major elements of the Comprehensive Plan, discussed in greater detail below, and guides the direction for subsequent recommendations and actions. By pursuing these goal statements, the city can actively move towards their vision for the future of Bryan.

### **1. Land Use & Development**

Guiding Principle: Implement land use policies and patterns that promote fiscally responsible growth and amplify Bryan's community values through defined community character, thoughtful design, and investment in established areas.

### **2. Mobility**

Guiding Principle: Champion a safe, connected, and multimodal transportation system that is forward-looking, efficient, and fosters a sense of place and identity.

### **3. Economic Development**

Guiding Principle: Foster a dynamic economy that supports existing businesses, attracts new investment, creates quality jobs, and builds long-term prosperity for Bryan.

### **4. Housing**

Guiding Principle: Foster quality housing and neighborhood design that meets diverse needs and strengthens both new and established neighborhoods.

### **5. Infrastructure & City Services**

Guiding Principle: Support growth, protect public health and safety, and enhance daily life by providing adequate infrastructure in a fiscally-responsible manner.

## 6. Downtown & Tourism

Guiding Principle: Amplify Downtown as “the soul of Bryan,” fostering its vibrancy and authenticity and support a growing and diverse tourism economy.

### Preliminary Community Direction

This section further outlines the six major elements of the Comprehensive Plan provided above and identifies preliminary direction for each element. This direction serves as the foundation for the Comprehensive Plan and gives staff an opportunity to confirm or adjust the direction before further analysis. Direction for these elements was derived from the public input summarized in the previous section as well as analysis of existing conditions and industry best practices.

### 1. Land Use & Development

This element covers future development in Bryan and will include scenario planning process and results, the Future Land Use Map and its associated descriptions, development code recommendations, and other related topics.

#### Approach

Conventional land use classifications such as residential, commercial, office, and industrial describe how individual parcels of land may function without fully capturing how a place looks, feels, operates, or interacts with its surroundings. A context-based approach considers both development characteristics, such as infrastructure and landscaping design, in addition to land uses. Together, these elements create distinct, recognizable areas of the community. Land use, character, and design are closely linked and should be thoughtfully coordinated throughout the site planning process.

Using the community context approach below, both land use planning and thoroughfare planning are combined to create an integrated framework for future development. By first defining the desired character of an area, land uses and street designs can be intentionally planned to reinforce that character and strengthen the overall sense of place, but without revisions to the applicable zoning ordinances, it does not change development rights.

#### *Rural, Suburban, & Urban*

Across Bryan, a variety of land use and development patterns have established themselves between the initial incorporation of the city in 1871 and the adoption of zoning and land use regulations in 1989. When focusing on the character of the development though, these patterns can be simplified into three basic categories: urban (in and around downtown), suburban (newer and traditional growth areas), and rural (larger tracts of undeveloped land).

As future development occurs across Bryan, the character of development occurring within these areas should align with the contextual patterns described below. This framework is also applicable in guiding land use categories for the Future Land Use Plan and the infrastructure requirements for roadway classifications identified in the Thoroughfare Plan.

**Rural.** These areas are sparsely developed with large open spaces and may support activities such as agriculture and ranching, along with very low-density housing. These areas have very limited public infrastructure and substantial new infrastructure investment is not anticipated. The rural environment features a variety of land uses and physical design elements, but generally, the following can be concluded:

- Minimal to no pedestrian infrastructure is required;
- City services such as water and sanitary sewer connections are not anticipated to be extended unless warranted by owner-requested annexations that further the city's economic development and public health and safety goals; and
- Land is typically dominated by open green space.

**Suburban.** These areas consist of modern development with land uses spread across separate residential neighborhoods, retail centers, office parks, and industrial sites, typically maintaining clear distinctions between different uses. The suburban built environment features a variety of land uses and physical design elements, but generally, the following can be concluded:

- A moderate amount of pedestrian infrastructure, such as sidewalks, is required;
- City services such as water and sanitary sewer connections exist or will exist in the future; and
- Land may consist of equal shares of open space, buildings, and infrastructure.

**Urban.** These areas feature traditional urban development patterns with higher-density centers and neighborhoods. A wide mix of land uses is integrated within districts, sites, and individual buildings to support compact and walkable environments. The urban built environment features a variety of land uses and physical design elements, but generally, the following can be concluded:

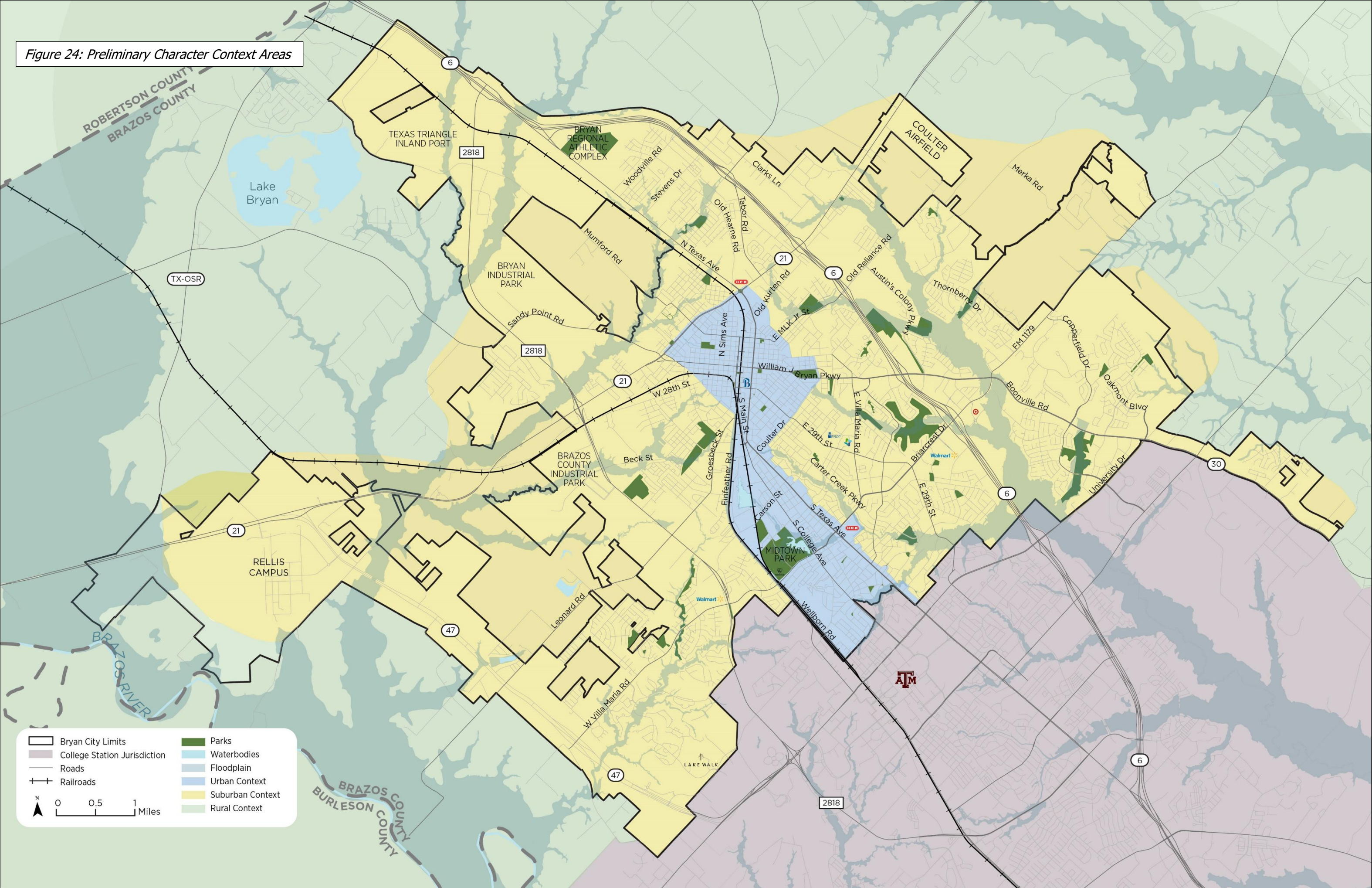
- The maximum amount of pedestrian infrastructure, such as sidewalks, is required to create urban, walkable environments;
- Buildings are built closer to the property line, front driveways and garages are de-emphasized, and a greater level of ground-floor activation is required; and
- Land dominated by structures and urban elements like ample pedestrian infrastructure, public utilities, and various forms of small green spaces, including pocket parks and public squares.

Figure 24, below, illustrates the preliminary boundaries of the proposed character context framework. The blue area designates locations of Bryan that exhibit an urban character where future redevelopment should continue to enhance the urban form. Infrastructure and the built environment within this boundary should include curb and gutter drainage, large sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, an activated public realm, and minimal building setbacks.

Yellow areas represent suburban context areas which should include curb and gutter infrastructure, pedestrian facilities (though less than urban areas may be needed), larger building setbacks resulting in more private open space, and wider roadways.

Areas shown in green represent rural areas that are likely to include very low density of development and minimal drainage and pedestrian infrastructure compared to more urban or suburban areas. City-owned utilities are not planned to be extended into these areas unless warranted by owner-requested annexations.

Figure 24: Preliminary Character Context Areas



## **Land Use & Development Guiding Principle**

Implement land use policies and patterns that promote fiscally-responsible growth and amplify Bryan's community values through defined community character, thoughtful design, and investment in established areas.

## **Preliminary Direction for the Future Land Use Plan**

### *Observed Themes*

- The Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) must be forward-looking and not based on existing uses. The existing Future Land Use Map and the existing zoning districts will inform the development of this comprehensive plan's FLUP component, but the FLUP will not strictly reflect these maps.
- A strong emphasis should be given to placemaking, design guidelines, and distinct community identity.
- Clarity and consensus are needed as to where various residential typologies and densities are most appropriate. Appropriate locations for apartments, missing middle, estate, and small-lot single family residential housing (RD-5 District) need to be clearly defined.
- It has been noted that some of the corridor-specific Future Land Use categories utilized in the existing Comprehensive Plan are too vague in their direction of where certain uses are most appropriate, creating uncertainty in application of the FLUP. The updated FLUP should include clear descriptions and intentions for each category.
- The Future Land Use Map categories and the emphasis on placemaking and design guidelines should support each other in order to create distinct areas of town with visible differences in character. These distinct areas should, at a minimum, include Midtown, Downtown, East Bryan, and West Bryan.
- Future Land Use Map categories should integrate and emphasize urban design and placemaking elements.
- Scenario planning will explore multiple scenarios that consider the following topics:
  - Fiscal performance of existing neighborhoods;
  - Medium- to high-density residential uses integrated into mixed-use development along aging corridors, such as Texas Avenue;
  - Varying lot sizes integrated into a singular residential development;
  - Comparison of performance for different lot sizes, such as 5,000 square feet vs. 6,000 square feet;
  - Performance of varying degrees of infrastructure (ex: rural context with open ditch drainage vs. with curb and gutter drainage); and
  - Horizontal mixed-use development with commercial development located between roadways and residential development.

## Corridor Enhancements

- As previously mentioned, corridor improvements, particularly on Texas Avenue, have been a community priority for more than a decade.
  - Each corridor needs a clear, defined goal other than “revitalization.”
  - Innovative strategies are needed to attract redevelopment and minimize barriers to infill development or redevelopment.
  - Most corridors need improvements outside of the right-of-way (i.e. commercial development, improved aesthetics, activation, etc.).
- The following are corridor vitality enhancements listed in order of corridor priority:
  - Texas Avenue
    - Texas Avenue was a top priority in the previous comprehensive plan, and the community still considers improvements to Texas Avenue to be the number one priority.
    - The Texas Avenue corridor needs a unified vision and likely new land use and design restrictions.
    - The primary goal for this corridor is to increase aesthetics, create more activation between parcels, and enhance placemaking.
  - South College Avenue
    - The South College Avenue corridor needs a unified vision that is aligned with improvements being made by the Bryan-College Station Metropolitan Planning Organization (BCSMPO).
    - Given the ongoing efforts from BCSMPO and simultaneous Midtown projects, incremental progress is being seen on South College Avenue.
  - Briarcrest Drive/ Villa Maria Road
    - Concrete strategies to attract new businesses are needed.
  - 29<sup>th</sup> Street
    - More commercial development located closer to College Station is needed.
    - The 29<sup>th</sup> Street corridor is viewed as another primary entry to Downtown Bryan.
  - State Highway 21
    - State Highway 21 provides a primary connection to Austin from Bryan and provides a primary entry into Downtown Bryan.
    - Plan for high development standards to improve the aesthetics and sales tax revenue on this corridor.

## *Preliminary Tools and Solutions*

### Policies & Regulations

- Re-examine current parking requirements to increase the amount of buildable land.

- Evaluate opportunities to allow multifamily and mixed-use residential development in appropriate commercial districts and corridors where residential uses can support redevelopment, increase housing choice strengthen nearby businesses, and efficiently utilize existing infrastructure.
- Explore policies to encourage “high-quality” residential design, such as garage placement, façade enhancements, etc. In this context, high-quality design includes durable building materials, scale compatible with the existing neighborhood, façade articulation and general architectural interest and pedestrian-centered orientation.
- Modify the zoning for Texas Avenue corridor, driving the vision for higher quality commercial and mixed-use development.

### Investments

- Conduct an assessment to determine problems and challenges with the existing development codes.
- Develop and adopt a unified development code for modernization and ease of use.
- Identify and attract potential developers to redevelop a targeted area of Texas Avenue to serve as a catalyst for revitalization and economic growth of the Texas Avenue corridor. Identify potential incentives and provide these when possible.
- Implement placemaking efforts to encourage private realm investment (i.e., improved infrastructure, public art, improved landscaping).

### Programs

- Explore financing incentive strategies for private sector investment into key corridors such as Tax Increment Finance Districts, Public Private Partnerships, etc.

## 2. Mobility

This element addresses the mobility needs of Bryan and will include the Future Thoroughfare Map and classification specifications, trails and active transportation map, recommendations for corridor revitalization, and other related topics.

### Approach

A well-designed and coordinated transportation system provides multiple modes and routes of mobility to ensure residents and visitors can move in and through a city safely and with ease. People should be able to travel throughout the city by car, bike, bus, or on foot and there should be multiple route options to reduce traffic congestion. Well-designed transportation systems are efficient, safe, and enhance the sense of place in a community.

When the system functions well, movement is seamless and subconsciously contributes to the economic attractiveness of the area and higher quality of life. When the system is deficient, simple movement oftentimes results in higher levels of frustration and a perceived lower quality of life. In this way, the transportation system influences the economic attractiveness of an area for both existing and prospective residents and businesses. While one oftentimes equates this just to the movement of vehicles, the same

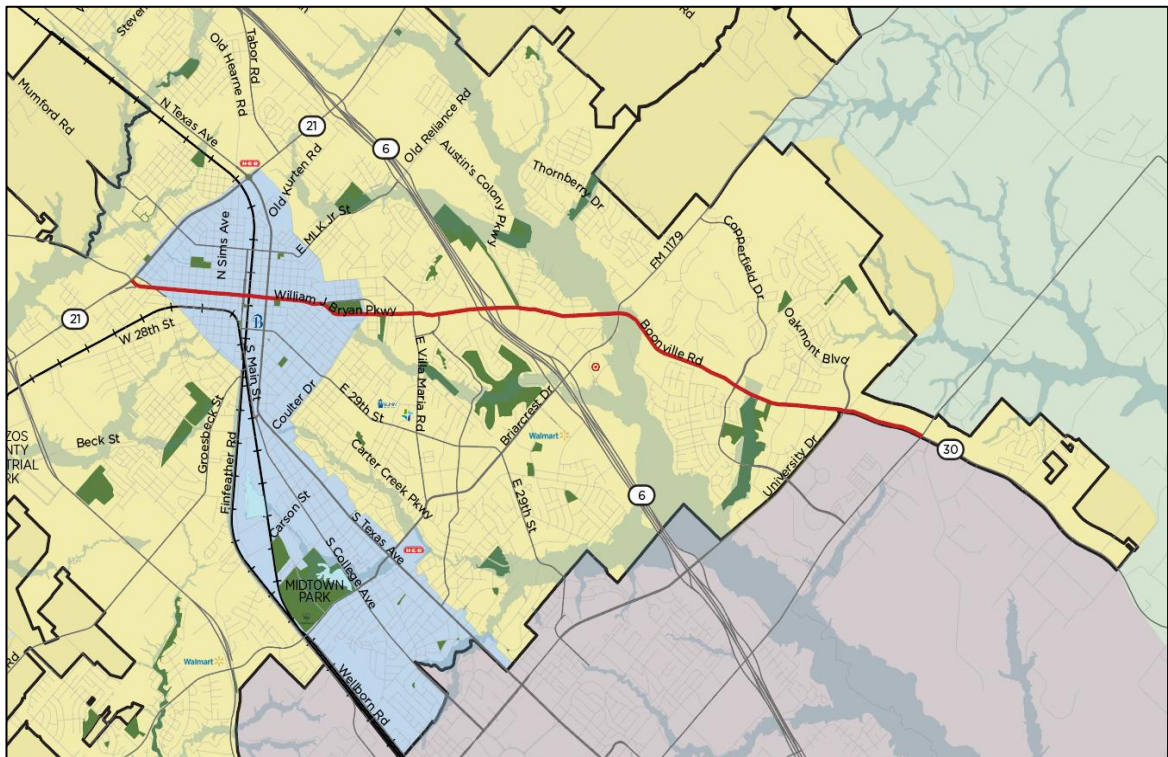
positive or negative feelings of comfort, ease of use, and safety need to be applied to all non-vehicular forms of mobility too, including walking, biking, and other forms of alternative mobility choices.

### *Street Design and Character*

The design of streets impacts the character and sense of place of an area. In this regard, roadway design should align with the surrounding context, transitioning appropriately between urban, suburban, and rural character areas. By applying the character-based approach a roadway can be developed to reflect the surrounding character area, even if the functional classification of the roadway remains constant throughout the areas.

The below examples use William Joel Bryan Parkway/Boonville Road/State Highway 30 (highlighted in red on Figure 25), which is classified as a Major Arterial, to demonstrate how the same roadway can exhibit different designs without changing classification.

*Figure 25: Character-based Classification Example*



**Urban Streets.** Urban streets typically feature a grid pattern, a mix of pedestrian elements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and street furniture, as well as on-street parking supported by off-street public parking lots or garages. These streets are often characterized by a dense and diverse built environment, with considerations for safety, accessibility, and a vibrant urban experience. See the image below of William Joel Bryan Parkway near Main

Street for an example of urban street characteristics such as large sidewalks, on-street parking, and buildings close to the right-of-way (ROW).

*Figure 26: Urban Character-based Roadway Classification*



**Suburban Streets.** Suburban streets most closely reflect the standard street sections commonly found in Bryan today. These streets often face design conflicts because they try to accommodate both high volumes of thru-traffic and direct access to adjacent properties, paradoxically reducing the effectiveness and safety of both. Certain suburban streets should incorporate more Complete Street elements to better serve all users, including drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. These elements are defined in greater detail in the List of Terms found at the beginning of this document. Existing suburban streets should also be evaluated to identify opportunities to improve pedestrian safety and overall traffic operations. See the image below of Boonville Road near Miramont Boulevard for an example of suburban street characteristics such as landscaped medians, sidewalks, and curb and gutter stormwater infrastructure.

*Figure 31: Suburban Character-based Roadway Classification*



**Rural Roads or Streets.** Rural roads or streets are primarily designed for functional mobility and provide limited access in rural character areas, both within the City limits and ETJ. They are designed with drainage swales (rather than curb and gutter) and may or may not have bicycle and pedestrian accommodations (or would be served by a rural off-street shared-use path). The application of rural streets assumes that low-density residential development, agricultural land uses, or other dispersed land uses would remain rural during the plan horizon. See the image below of State Highway 30 near Harvey Road for an example of rural street characteristics such as drainage swales, no sidewalks, and a narrow pavement shoulder.

*Figure 32: Rural Character-based Classification*



## **Mobility Guiding Principle**

Champion a safe, connected, and multimodal transportation system that is forward-looking and balances efficiency with placemaking.

## **Preliminary Direction for Mobility**

### *Observed Themes*

- As Bryan continues to grow on the east and west sides of the city, additional connections running east and west will be needed. As the population grows, the City should expand thoroughfare infrastructure to keep pace with growth and avoid overloading streets with traffic. Without redundant connectivity, the current problems with traffic will only increase.
- City of Bryan should maintain good working relationships with Bryan-College Station Metropolitan Planning Organization, City of College Station, and the Texas Department of Transportation for regional connectivity and project alignment.
- For several reasons, one of which is likely due to its proximity to Texas A&M University, Bryan has several “modern” traffic solutions (i.e., roundabouts, medians, bulb-outs, diverging diamond, etc.) which seem to be new and concerning for residents. While these features receive push-back in most cities, some public education on the benefits, safety improvements, and purposes of these traffic solutions may be beneficial.
- Public comments expressed desires for improved public transit options. Desired improvements included increased availability of and access to bus routes and operating hours, enhanced regional transit with greater connectivity between Bryan and College Station, as well as improved infrastructure at existing and new bus stops.

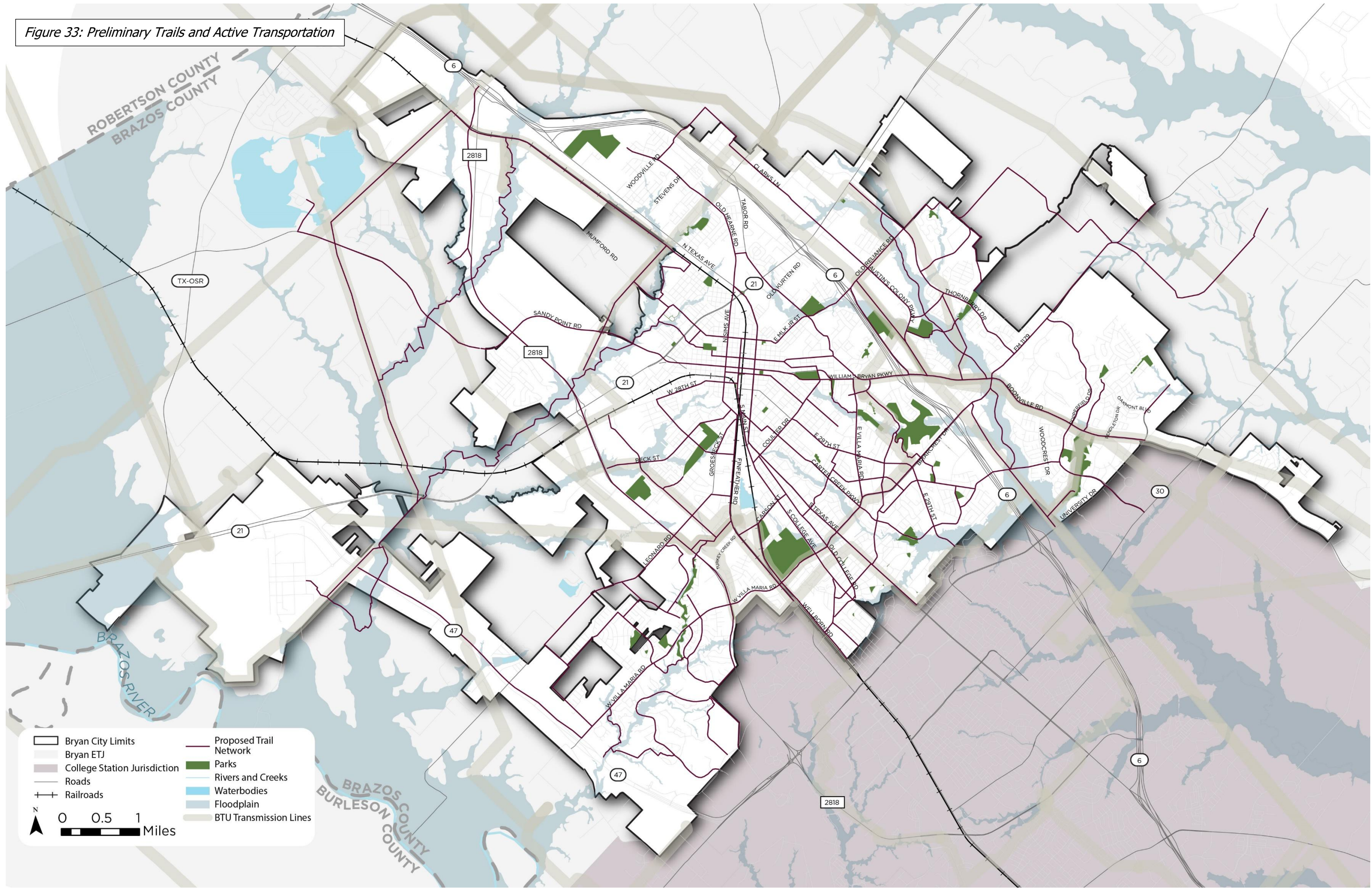
## **Trails and Active Transportation**

The Preliminary Trails and Active Transportation Plan, shown in Figure 33 below, was developed by consolidating existing and planned trails from multiple sources including, City of Bryan, BCSMPO, the RELLIS Campus Master Plan, and the College Station Bike Plan. Floodplains, BTU transmission lines, school and park locations, and community-identified destinations were then overlaid on the map and examined to identify newly-proposed trail connections and alignments that leveraged greenspace and difficult to develop land, existing easements, and community destinations.

- Improved walkability and pedestrian connections are needed throughout the city. However, given the constraint on city resources and the abundance of older parts of Bryan lacking sidewalks, targeted walkability improvements are warranted. Clear prioritization is needed to be able to pursue funding resources for walkability improvements. Additionally, pedestrian infrastructure usage can be improved by planning for design improvements beyond safety.

- Planning principles for increasing walkability. In Texas it is common to see newly installed pedestrian infrastructure seemingly unused by people. There is more to increasing walkability than just making safe connections for people. According to *The Walkable City* by Jeff Speck, for pedestrian infrastructure to be used it must be four things: useful, safe, comfortable, and interesting.
  - Useful means daily needs such as shopping, working, and schooling are located close and organized in a way to encourage walking.
  - Safe means pedestrians must not only be physically protected from automobiles or other hazards but also feel safe and protected. A sidewalk on a busy street might be safe but it doesn't feel safe to most people.
  - Comfortable means people feel enclosed and sheltered from the weather. People prefer walking on a building lined street to crossing an empty parking lot or a tree lined trail over a trail through a field.
  - Interesting means the walk is lined with trees, beautiful scenery, unique buildings, friendly faces, etc. No one wants to walk next to a highway, unless they have to, no matter how safe it feels.
- Observations related to walkability in Bryan:
  - Walkability is highly prioritized by the community, particularly for connections between two of the city's primary destinations, Midtown and Downtown. Expanding such a connection further to the Texas A&M University campus would create a continuous link between the Bryan-College Station area's major destinations.
  - Survey respondents also highlighted desires for linear green spaces and corridor parks to improve connectivity within the city, especially to nearby neighborhoods and retail services.
  - Other prominent walkability concerns noted by survey respondents referenced feeling unsafe using the existing sidewalks as they are located adjacent to roadways with high traffic volumes and/or speeds with little buffers or protection provided for pedestrians.
  - Several respondents noted there are multiple intersections lacking safe crossing features, sidewalks are not continuous in many places causing people to step into the road to walk, and there is a lack of ADA-compliant sidewalks.
  - Figure 33, on the next page, represents a complete citywide trails and active transportation network. The hope would be for the community to prioritize the proposed alignments to identify most-desired linkages.

Figure 33: Preliminary Trails and Active Transportation



## *Preliminary Tools and Solutions*

### Policies & Regulations

- Update subdivision regulations to require developers to contribute to the Trails and Active Transportation network. Consider integrating the Trails and Active Transportation Map with the Thoroughfare Plan and requiring trail dedication in a manner similar to thoroughfare dedication.
- Encourage a pedestrian-friendly environment by reducing off-street minimum parking requirements, implementing shade, and separating the sidewalk from the back of curb.
- Examine impervious cover limits, parking requirements, setback requirements, and other development code restrictions which may be impeding development on Texas Avenue.
- Update the Future Thoroughfare Map with additional connections and alignments. Relate these connections to the proposed land use categories of the Future Land Use Plan.

### Investments

- Develop a phased sidewalk master plan with strategies for obtaining annual funding and recommended actions for prioritizing sidewalk projects.
  - Sidewalk improvements should be prioritized in Downtown, Midtown, Texas Avenue, South College Avenue, and Briarcrest Drive/Villa Maria Road based on community feedback, funding availability, and in coordination with City and regional entities.
- Annually apply for Transportation Alternative Projects (TAP) grants from TxDOT and for other state grants.
- Align prioritized pedestrian facility improvements with the city's CIP to secure funding. Improvements should be prioritized for the following corridors:
  - Texas Avenue, South College Avenue, Villa Maria Road and Briarcrest Drive, 29<sup>th</sup> Street, and State Highway 21.
- Identify any potential opportunities for enhanced east to west connectivity and designate these alignments in the Future Thoroughfare Map.
- Conduct feasibility studies on future roadway alignments to determine project need and viability, approximate cost, and possible impacts to surrounding area and the overall transportation network.

### Programs

- Ensure meaningful public engagement is incorporated into the development of future roadway alignments to gather public input, educate stakeholders, and build community consensus.
- Partner with Texas A&M University, the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), and the BCSMPO to provide education programs to the general public about innovative

and modern road design and the components and benefits of traffic calming measures.

### **3. Economic Development**

This element covers economic development across the city with an emphasis on primary job creation, commercial development, and recommendations for the economic development department. While some things in this element may apply to Downtown, community sentiment indicates that, due to its importance to the city, Downtown should be addressed as its own topic.

#### **Approach**

Economic development in Bryan continues to be a priority for local leaders, institutions, and regional partners. A major component of Bryan's strategy has been a strong focus on attracting and retaining industrial and manufacturing companies. Large employers like Axis Pipe & Tube have already demonstrated the region's ability to support advanced manufacturing operations. At the same time, the continued development of the Texas A&M University System's RELLIS campus has opened the door for significant growth in technology, research, and specialized workforce training.

Economic development efforts in Bryan need to extend beyond business recruitment. A continued priority is the attraction and retention of young professionals. The proximity of Texas A&M University and Blinn College provides the region with an educated workforce across a number of industries. Marketing Bryan to recent graduates as a place where they can build careers and establish long-term community roots is a key goal for the city. This requires job creation to match the skill set of the workforce and thoughtful planning around housing, activities, quality-of-life investments, and the overall public image of Bryan.

Figure 34: Existing Commercial Typologies, provided by City of Bryan staff, illustrates the location of various commercial and industrial typologies that exist in Bryan today. These typologies can be briefly summarized as follows:

#### **Commercial/Retail and Multi-Tenant Shopping Center**

- Features strip centers, drive-throughs, big-box stores, large surface parking.
- Uses: national retail chains, supermarkets, home-goods stores, service businesses, fitness centers, fast-food and casual dining.
- Continues to expand outward along major corridors.
- Key areas:
  - Briarcrest Drive, Texas Avenue, Villa Maria Road, and SH-6.

### **Compact Walkable Retail**

- Walkable clusters with restaurants, bars, entertainment venues, small retail.
- Key areas:
  - Downtown fringe / South College gateway – breweries, small bars, performance spaces, mixed-use potential.
  - Midtown – growing student-oriented dining and retail near Villa Maria.

### **Heavy Commercial/Industrial**

- Large parcels for manufacturing, warehousing, logistics; minimal pedestrian infrastructure.
- Growth driven by rail access, university proximity, and major investments.
- Key parks:
  - Texas Triangle Park – rail-served logistics and manufacturing.
  - Bryan Industrial Park – light industrial, distribution.
  - North Bryan rail-adjacent clusters.

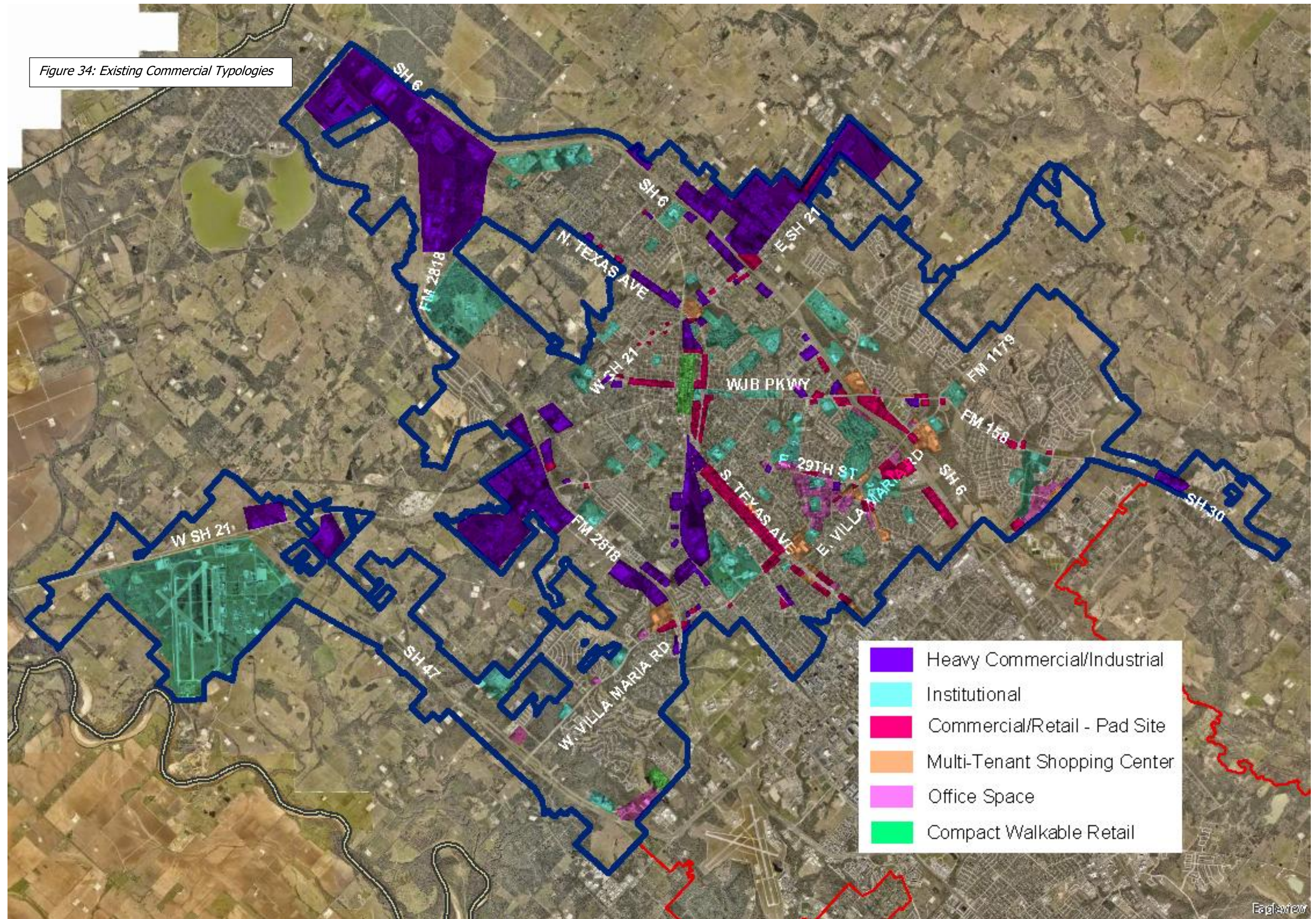
### **Office Space**

- One- to three-story office buildings with landscaped parking; located near major intersections.
- Uses: medical clinics, professional offices, corporate and real estate services.
- Key areas:
  - Medical corridor (Villa Maria to East 29th) – clinics and outpatient care.
  - Briarcrest, Texas Avenue, Boonville – professional services.
  - Downtown upper floors – creative firms, studios, coworking.

### **Institutional**

- Parcels owned by public or semi-public entities such as the City, County, Independent School District, etc.
- Includes city buildings, parkland, RELLIS Campus, Bryan ISD campuses, etc.

Figure 34: Existing Commercial Typologies



## **Economic Development Guiding Principle**

Foster a competitive local economy that supports existing businesses, attracts new investment, creates quality jobs, and builds long-term prosperity for Bryan.

## **Preliminary Direction for Economic Development**

### *Observed Themes*

- Within Bryan and greater Bryan-College Station region there are multiple economic development agencies focused on workforce development, business attraction and retention, and infrastructure improvements.
  - City of Bryan Economic Development Department:
  - Greater Brazos Partnership (EDC for Bryan/College Station)
  - Bryan Business Council
  - Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce
- Industrial development is a priority for many of the agencies, and recent investments have occurred within the Texas Triangle Inland Port, the Bryan Industrial Park, and the Brazos County Industrial Park.
- The City prides itself on its reputation as a “business-friendly” city and operating at the “speed of business.” Continuing these efforts further supports the ability for new businesses to feel welcome and operating efficiently in Bryan.
- Desire from community leaders and stakeholders to prevent “brain drain,” and attract a younger labor force.
- 2024 unemployment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates 62 percent of Bryan’s census tracts had an unemployment rate greater than the Bryan-College Station MSA unemployment rate for 2024. Additionally, according to the U.S. Census Bureau 57 percent of census tracts were greater than the 2024 national unemployment rate.
- Economic development is heavily intertwined with each of the elements discussed in this framework. With relation to land use and development, investment that removes barriers to redevelopment has the potential to serve as a catalyst for additional redevelopment and transformation. Such investment may take the form of improving streetscape infrastructure, upgrading water and wastewater infrastructure, removing vacant and/or dilapidated structures, or contributing to the cost of building a parking structure for a new development.
- There is a strong desire among Bryan’s citizens for family-friendly entertainment. Survey respondents described a desire for entertainment that is outdoors or does not have a focus on consumption of alcohol. Resident examples include children's museums, art and science museums, aquariums, public parks and splash pads, and places with integrated children's play areas.
- As future redevelopment occurs along aging commercial corridors, there is risk of small businesses being displaced due, in part, to construction and/or rising rent costs. Financial and/or technical support could be provided to allow existing businesses to remain in place.

## *Preliminary Tools and Solutions*

### **Policies & Regulations**

- Economic development incentives should be associated with fiscal responsibility benchmarks and should include return on investment (ROI) criteria. Incentives should be based on measurable public benefit such as primary job creation, wages, taxable value, sales tax generation, infrastructure impacts and redevelopment benefits.
- Provide incentives and/or assistance for businesses to locate in existing commercial spaces throughout Bryan including with retrofitting needs and maintenance required to meet building code regulations beyond those addressed by the City's Life Safety Grants for meeting compliance with fire suppression and safety code requirements.
- Improve development codes to reduce barriers to incentivize quality commercial development and redevelopment.

### **Investments**

- Provide financial and/or technical support to small businesses located in areas at high risk for commercial displacement.

### **Programs**

- Create an interactive map with available properties for investment on the economic development website.
- Enhance the workforce pipeline through BISD's CTE, especially for advanced manufacturing.
- Enhance partnerships with the Texas A&M University system and Blinn College to develop internship programs and create a workforce pipeline for new graduates.
- Encourage the development of attractive mixed-use/office spaces to diversify the locations of employment options in the city such as Midtown and Lake Walk.
- Establish a small business assistance program to promote and provide technical assistance to entrepreneurs and small business owners.
- Consider convening targeted stakeholder meetings with College Station businesses, brokers, and developers to explore why they do business in College Station instead of Bryan.
- Regularly host outreach events to hear directly from stakeholders about what barriers exist to business expansion.
- Regularly revisit business attraction and retention initiatives to promote a healthy balance of professional, technical, skilled trades, and industrial employment opportunities.

#### **4. Housing & Neighborhoods**

This element covers housing, neighborhoods, and recommendations related to residential planning, development, and design.

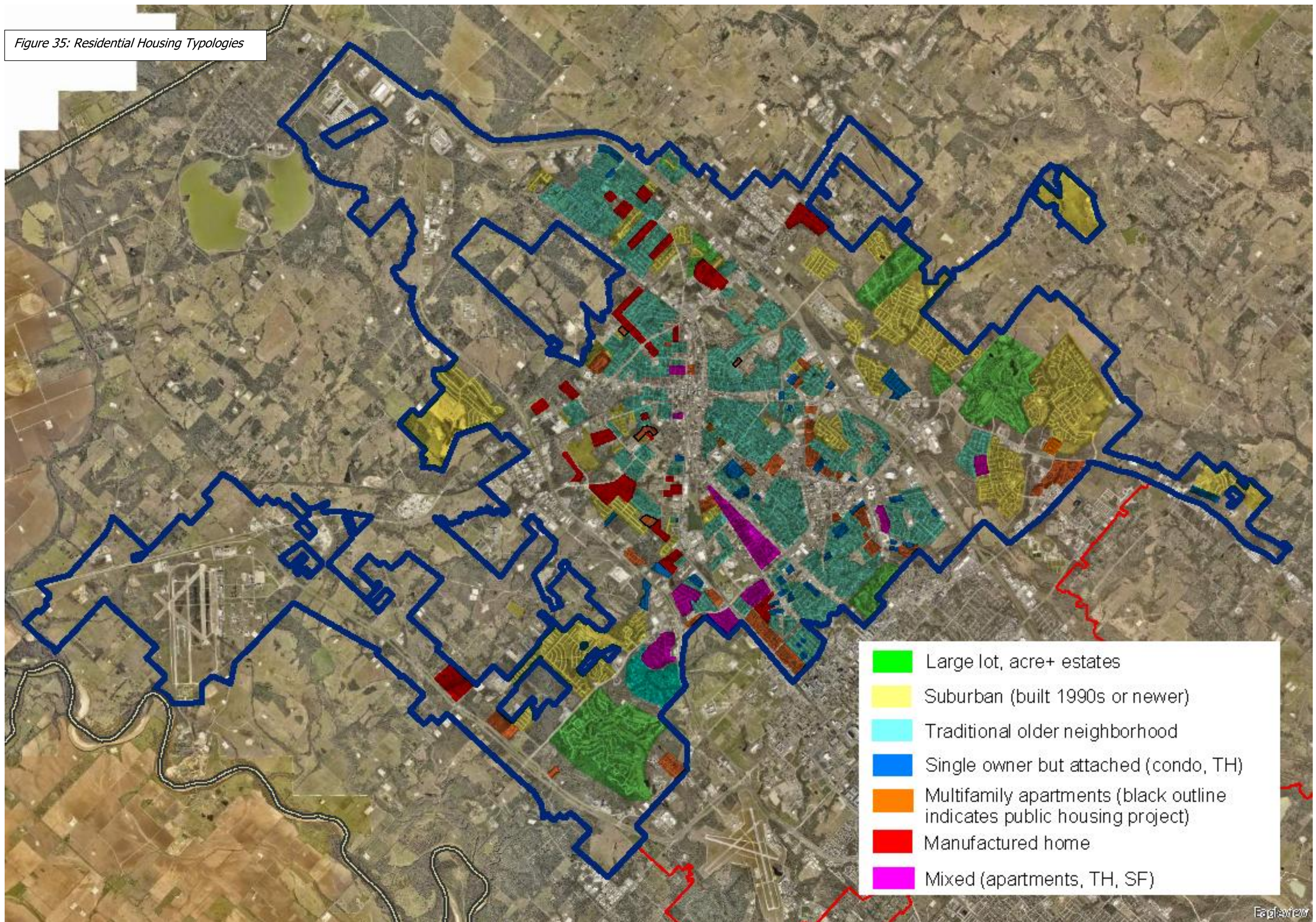
##### **Approach**

Housing should be viewed as an ecosystem. Just as healthy ecosystems rely on biodiversity to thrive, cities depend on a diverse mix of housing sizes, types, and price points to meet the needs of residents across different incomes and stages of life. Young professionals, growing families, empty nesters, and retirees all require different housing options. Providing this range of housing types and ensuring a variety of price points, to the extent possible, allows residents to find housing that fits their needs and supports the ability for all members of the community to live with dignity.

The term “quality” has come up regarding housing throughout this planning process, though “quality” has proved to be subjective. For some, quality housing refers to the use of higher-end or longer-lasting building materials, while others associate it with larger, more expensive homes. Another viewpoint emphasizes the broader neighborhood context, defining quality housing as part of walkable, visually cohesive communities that reflect the character of surrounding areas. The Comprehensive Plan must establish a clear and consistent definition for “quality housing,” one that applies to both future development and the existing housing stock. A well-defined and inclusive framework will help guide policy decisions and ensure the plan responds to these diverse interpretations.

Figure 35, provided by City of Bryan staff, illustrates the locations of various housing typologies seen in Bryan today. Over the past five to ten years, roughly three-quarters of all residential proposals have consisted of suburban single-family subdivisions, many containing more than 100 lots. While some missing middle housing and multifamily projects have been introduced during this time, they represent only a small fraction of overall residential development activity, indicating a continued dominance of low-density, single-family growth patterns.

Figure 35: Residential Housing Typologies



## **Housing & Neighborhoods Guiding Principle**

Foster quality housing and neighborhood design that meet diverse needs and strengthen both new and established neighborhoods.

## **Preliminary Direction for Housing & Neighborhoods**

### *Observed Themes*

- A clear definition of “quality housing” for the purposes of this Comprehensive Plan is needed and consensus should be achieved regarding the definition of “quality housing.”
- The following are tools that can be used to generate consensus on what “quality housing” means:
  - Use of visual examples of different housing and neighborhood types.
  - Side-by-side visual depictions of “desired vs. discouraged” neighborhood patterns.
  - Measurable indicators tied to plan monitoring (Quality should be defined as something that can be measured and tracked).
- Focus on character and standardized requirements to create a baseline neighborhood design.
  - Recent new residential development in the City has consisted of repetitive “cookie cutter” designs, low quality materials, and a lack of nearby amenities or services.
  - Cities generally cannot prohibit, restrict, or require specific building materials for residential or commercial buildings if those materials are allowed by a recognized national model building code.
  - Minimum standards are likely needed in order to encourage desired types and/or quality of development rather than achieving desired outcomes through planned developments (PDs).
  - Design standards should focus on improvements or updates including:
    - Building orientation and streetscape.
    - Landscaping.
    - Garage placement limits.
    - Setback variation.
    - Minimum façade articulation.
    - Floorplan variety.
    - Rear-alley access.
- Best practice is to use Planned Developments (PDs) strategically, not automatically.
  - While PDs are good for facilitating a higher level of control, the absence of straight by-right development indicates a potential problem with the underlying zoning.
  - Position PDs as a tool for innovation and quality, not a workaround.

- Developers thrive in predictable environments, and certainty will likely increase investment.
- Align incentives with housing quality, not just size.
  - Current incentives reward square footage, not neighborhood value.
  - Refocus incentives to reward:
    - Design quality (variation in floor plan, façade design, lot layout, etc.).
    - Neighborhood design (ties to existing character, integration of quality of life amenities, etc.).
    - Infrastructure efficiency (sustainable materials, efficient connectivity to streets or nearby places, etc.).
    - Long-term housing curb appeal (quality landscaping, etc.).
- Integrate infrastructure with neighborhood design policy.
  - Street width, parking, and utility design directly affect neighborhood function and perception. Treat infrastructure as a design feature, not just an engineering requirement.
  - Require designs with:
    - Context-sensitive street standards.
    - On-street parking strategies tied to lot width.
    - Alley and rear-loaded garage incentives (where feasible).
- Existing regulations regarding accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are relatively strict and should be reevaluated to increase their potential as an affordable housing opportunity. Current regulations mandate the following:
  - No rental or separate sale of ADUs, effectively eliminating them as an affordable housing solution.
  - Permitted in the rear-yard only.
  - Size limits (400–1,000 sq. ft.).
- Some existing and older housing stock located within the city’s “core” are falling into disrepair with few resources available to perform maintenance and/or renovations. The City has been able to condemn structures and subsequently demolish said structures, but additional enforcement mechanisms are needed to repair structures and reduce the need to condemn and demolish structures.

### *Preliminary Tools and Solutions*

#### **Policies & Regulations**

- Adopt a property maintenance code and, in conjunction, ensure adequate staffing for code enforcement.
- Evaluate options for encouraging the provision of attainable housing such as housing trust funds and/or land banking. Land Banking is a strategy where a city acquires and holds land to reduce costs and guide future development, often making it available for attainable housing projects. Housing Trust Funds are

dedicated public funding sources used to provide financial support (e.g., subsidies or gap financing) to make attainable housing developments feasible.

- Explore incentives for residential infill through the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.
- Update subdivision regulations to encourage quality neighborhood design, examine block length, parkland dedication, infrastructure requirements, etc.
- Update zoning regulations to support quality housing.

#### Investments

- Proactively reinvest in public infrastructure in older neighborhoods (i.e. park improvements, sidewalk improvements, etc.).

#### Programs

- Monitor the real estate market to ensure housing at various price points is available (to the extent possible).
- Establish grants or low interest loans for homeowners of older housing stock to make home improvements.
- Start a tool rental program for homeowners to borrow landscaping and property maintenance tools.
- Initiate education, outreach, and engagement campaigns on zoning and local housing supply dynamics.

## 5. Infrastructure & City Services

This element covers City-provided infrastructure such as utilities, solid waste collection, and drainage as well as City-provided services such as fire protection, library services, and parks.

### Approach

Infrastructure is the unseen fabric that creates a city. When it is functioning well, most people never pause to consider the complex systems beneath their feet or overhead. From water lines and drainage networks to streets, bridges, and digital connectivity, this network is what makes daily life possible. The reliability of these systems shapes how people move through neighborhoods, how businesses operate, and how resilient a community can be in the face of growth or disruption.

While infrastructure provides the physical backbone of a city, city services form its living heartbeat. These are the essential functions residents depend on every day: public safety, parks, libraries, emergency response, and more. They define the quality of life for the community, influencing everything from health outcomes and personal safety to educational opportunities and social connectedness. When delivered effectively, city services foster trust in local government and help reinforce the sense of belonging that

keeps residents rooted in their community. Together, infrastructure and city services determine the longevity and livability of a city.

Throughout the engagement process for this Plan, the community expressed concerns related to infrastructure and city services. There is a tension between “newer” parts of town and older, established areas with a strong feeling that the aging infrastructure present in older neighborhoods is being ignored. While this tension exists in nearly all cities because it is easier to build something new than to fix something old or broken, it is still important to acknowledge this tension.

In addition, the community survey indicates a need for greater transparency and communication between city government and the citizens. Nearly half (48.8%) of survey respondents indicated they understand the city’s decision-making processes “not much” or “not at all.”

### **Infrastructure & City Services Guiding Principle**

Support growth, protect public health and safety, and enhance daily life by providing adequate infrastructure in a fiscally responsible manner.

### **Preliminary Direction for Infrastructure & City Services**

#### *Observed Themes*

#### **Infrastructure (water, wastewater, drainage, solid waste, and electric)**

- Bryan participates in the Bryan/College Station Unified Design Guidelines, meaning infrastructure standards (streets, drainage, water, sewer) match between Bryan and College Station for consistency. Other regional partnerships should be explored such as potential public transit sharing, partnerships on regional stormwater, etc.
- Most departments within the City report needing additional funding to bring outdated buildings up to date, offer needed trainings, hire additional staff, or other needs. Additional or reallocated funding, paired with more efficient use of resources, will be necessary to maintain adequate city services as the city continues to grow outward.
- Bryan Texas Utilities (BTU), the city-owned electric co-op is considered an advantage to the city, and when asked about satisfaction with city services residents ranked BTU highest for satisfaction with service.

#### **City Services (library, parks, police, fire, and community development)**

- City Departments operate well together during specific circumstances. The City should ensure that all departmental strategic plans are aligned and increase daily cross-coordination.
- Parks have been noted as an essential quality of life element in the City but most are in need of facility maintenance and upgrades. A new park or greenspace in

Downtown stood out as a desire by survey respondents. Other prominent areas identified by survey respondents for a new park location included along Carters Creek to the east of Highway 6 and the west side of Bryan, such as near the Pleasant Hill subdivision and along Still Creek.

- While it is unclear if the City currently needs or will need additional parkland to accommodate growth, from an initial review it is clear that the parkland dedication ordinance needs to be updated. While dedication amounts are comparable for similar cities, fee-in-lieu amounts are low, park development fee amounts are low, and the 6-acre area minimum is high, resulting in very few parks being developed, and the standards for land quality are weak.
- Prioritize park improvements in existing parks near the city's core and align these in the CIP schedule to secure funding.
- A prominent sentiment of community input was that the city's local government lacks transparency and accountability to the public, and that local leadership has not been respectful of the community's concerns or desires. Efforts should be taken to strengthen public trust in local government by increasing transparency, especially with regard to decision-making, appointment of leaders, and the value of taxes paid.

### *Preliminary Tools and Solutions*

#### **Policies & Regulations**

- Develop policy criteria for proposed Public Improvement Districts (PID) that include minimum development standards.
- Hold future development in the Thompson Creek Watershed to a higher standard using updated modeling and mapping for drainage.
- Update the city's parkland dedication ordinance (details forthcoming as assessment still ongoing).
- Incentivize tree preservation within subdivision regulations to provide shade, aesthetics, and encourage pedestrian comfort.
- Increase coordination efforts within the City of Bryan and with interregional partners for the long-term planning and sustainable provision of infrastructure services.

#### **Investments**

- Continue to prioritize the completion of rail quiet zones and prioritize completing quiet zone intersections along a single line to demonstrate cohesive improvements.
- Develop a fiscal model to evaluate large development and annexation proposals to understand the long-term fiscal and budgeting implications for public safety, infrastructure, staffing, operations, maintenance, and debt.
- Install backup generators at Burton Creek and Still Creek WWTPs.

- Pursue funding to meet growing demands for new staff, digital resources, and branch expansion of the library system.
- Fund the development of a Parks Master Plan.
- As the City's footprint expands, consider building a civic complex in east or west Bryan to consolidate any new, needed city buildings such as a fire station, library branch, police substation, etc.
- As a part of a new civic complex, or as a standalone facility, establish new library branches in areas of new growth and development, such as near Midtown, Lake Walk, and in West Bryan.
- Maintain staffing, facilities, equipment, and service capacity consistent with adopted service-level standards and population growth. This includes:
  - Expanding fire stations 3 and 4 to support emergency response functions, particularly EMS response.
  - Increasing budget efficiency and staffing shortages by hiring and recruiting additional firemen and support personnel.
  - Developing a 5-year strategic plan and a 10-year master plan for the fire department. As part of the plans, identify potential new station locations in conjunction with the city's expanding geographic footprint.
  - Increasing staffing for Library Services.
  - Hiring a dedicated grant writer for the City to assist with obtaining new funding sources.

## Programs

- Align 5-year strategic plans from City of Bryan departments to improve coordination between departments.
- Proactively maintain relationships with large landowners in the ETJ to keep abreast of their long-term goals, infrastructure desires, and timing to plan ahead for future service delivery and annexation consideration.
- Expand Corridor Beautification Program grants to include increasing the reimbursement of green infrastructure improvements from 50% of the total estimated construction cost to 75% or more.
- Provide leadership training for Fire and Police Departments staff.
- Develop a performance metric dashboard to publicly track city performance and investments, including, but not limited to, investments such as linear feet of sidewalks improved or added, amount of upgraded drainage infrastructure, increase in housing stock, etc.
- Develop an annual progress report that identifies investments made and progress towards city goals. Present this report to City Council and distribute it across various channels to make it publicly available and increase government transparency and accountability to city residents.

## 6. Downtown & Tourism

This element covers aspects related to tourism, both citywide and specific to Downtown, which is the primary draw for visitors to Bryan. While related to economic development this element is focused on recommendations related to placemaking, downtown enhancements, and expanding tourism.

### Approach

Designated as a Texas Cultural District and recognized in the National Register of Historic Places, community feedback has reiterated time and time again that Downtown is the heart and soul of the city. Bryan is unique in the area for having a true Downtown, and the collection of retail and dining establishments, along with the various community events held in Downtown, are currently the primary drivers of the city's tourism market. However, community members find that additional investment is needed in Downtown to further enhance its vibrancy, particularly additional retail offerings, continued preservation of historic buildings, and activation of the area through public improvements and spaces.

Though Downtown is anticipated to continue being the city's primary destination, new developments in other areas have begun contributing to the city's tourism economy, including Midtown and Lake Walk. Midtown, with Legends Event Center and Topgolf, and Lake Walk, with the Stella Hotel and premier office and retail amenities, both have the potential to draw visitors and diversify the city's destinations. This Plan proposes continued investment in Downtown as well as the identification of other markets to drive tourism and attract visitors.

### Downtown & Tourism Guiding Principle

Amplify Downtown as "the soul of Bryan," fostering its vibrancy and authenticity, and support a growing and diverse citywide tourism economy.

### Preliminary Direction for Downtown & Tourism

#### *Observed Themes*

#### **Downtown**

- Previous and ongoing planning efforts and investment in Downtown have generated revitalization along Main Street. The City should continue these efforts and investments to continue enhancing Downtown as a community asset and tourism driver.
  - Bryan Avenue, being one block off Main Street, has been highlighted by community members as a potential next location for targeted improvements, such as improved parking, streetscape design, and building façades.
- Downtown should continue to be financially supported to improve user experience, promote activation, support businesses, and protect historic properties.

- Bryan's Downtown Master Plan was adopted in 2001. The recommendations of this plan have supported significant changes over the previous two decades. While many of the recommendations are still applicable, the City should consider updating the Downtown Master Plan to account for recent changes including railroad improvements, city-owned parcels in prime locations Downtown, and efforts led by Destination Bryan.
- Additional ground floor activation is needed to enhance the pedestrian experience and promote foot traffic to support Downtown businesses.
- The community has expressed a strong desire for a public plaza or green space Downtown.

## **Tourism**

- The partnership between the city and Destination Bryan should continue to be fostered, allowing Destination Bryan to further promote and diversify Bryan's tourism offerings.
- Tourism in Bryan is largely driven by the "Aggie affinity," or drawing on visitors to Texas A&M University, and as a "weekend getaway" and day-trip destination, and much of the city's attractions are located in Downtown. Additional tourism demand drivers are needed to diversify Bryan's tourist base and the attractions that people are visiting. Additional tourism drivers may include:
  - Sports tourism (leverage Legends Event Center)
  - Midtown (develop as a festival site)
  - Convention and conference spaces
  - Live music attractions
- The creation of a tourism master plan will help to identify targeted strategies and actions the city and Destination Bryan can take to strengthen Bryan's tourism economy.
- Increase placemaking, beautification efforts, and streetscape activation through the addition of public art, landscaping, and pedestrian amenities. Utilize public art installations as an opportunity to showcase local culture and history.

## *Preliminary Tools and Solutions*

### **Policies & Regulations**

- Maintain historic façades on buildings in Downtown. Identify buildings that have altered their facades and develop a phasing and funding strategy to restore the historic façade of these buildings.
- To the extent possible, encourage new buildings to incorporate historic design features into building façades.
- Develop a targeted marketing and/or event strategy to emphasize art, music, and food culture in Bryan.

## Investments

- Update the Downtown Master Plan to integrate new community desires, plan for city-owned parcels, and other recent developments. Incorporate a continued emphasis on historic preservation and the use of the Historic Resources Design Guidelines, updating these guidelines, as necessary, to be aligned with current policies for historic preservation and building code requirements.
- Fund and develop a Tourism Master Plan, as a part of an updated Downtown Master Plan or separate effort if desired.
- Develop a targeted strategy to identify potential tourism demand drivers and market Bryan to providers of such drivers (potentially as a part of a Tourism Master Plan).
- Develop a cohesive plan for Downtown infrastructure and streetscape activation (potentially as a part of the Downtown Master Plan update).
- Invest in placemaking and activation, including the addition of public art, wayfinding and gateway signage, and streetscape amenities that are cohesive with Bryan's "brand."
  - One example would be to hire local artists or schoolchildren to paint murals on electrical boxes.
- Continue development of Midtown Park and develop the park with functionality as a festival site.
- Recruit family-friendly leisure attractions throughout the city.
- Renovate and expand the facilities at the Bryan Regional Athletic Complex (BRAC). Identify and prioritize renovations at the complex and align these with the city's CIP to secure funding for renovations.
- Increase hotel space in Bryan in order to increase the city's revenue from hotel occupancy taxes and to improve the city's attractiveness and capacity for large events.
- Evaluate the demand for conference and convention meeting space and develop a strategy for creating such spaces.

## Programs

- Provide assistance to relocate service businesses outside of the Downtown core to make way for tourism-impactful businesses such as restaurants, retail, and entertainment.