



## **City Adopts the Killeen Comprehensive Plan**



On November 9, 2010, The City of Killeen adopted the Killeen Comprehensive Plan. The Killeen Comprehensive Plan establishes guidelines for the future growth of Killeen by articulating a vision for what Killeen wants to be in the future. The plan sets in place a framework that will assist the city in future land use and development decisions in a way that will encourage quality development within the city.



# Why Plan?



“Planning” is ... the process of identifying issues and needs, establishing policies, goals and objectives, and determining the most effective means by which these ends may be achieved. Planning allows the City of Killeen to have better control over its destiny rather than simply reacting to change.

A comprehensive plan is usually the most important policy document a municipal government prepares and maintains. This is because the plan lays out a “big picture” vision and associated goals regarding the future growth and enhancement of the community.

**Significantly**, by clarifying and stating the City’s intentions regarding the area’s physical development and infrastructure investment, the plan creates a greater level of **predictability** for residents, land owners, developers, and potential investors.



# Important Reasons for Long Range Planning Include:



- ❖ To provide a balance of land uses and services throughout the community to meet the needs and desires of the City's population.
- ❖ To ensure adequate public facilities to meet the demands of future development and redevelopment.
- ❖ To achieve an efficient development pattern that reflects the values of the community.
- ❖ To ensure the long term protection and enhancement of the image and visual appearance of the community, thus preserving, if not enhancing, property values for investors and preserving the City's tax base and revenues.
- ❖ To involve local citizens in the decision making process and reach consensus on the future vision for Killeen and its ongoing development.



**The success of the plan depends upon how it is used in the operation of city government (i.e., planning, policy development, regulation, budgeting, capital investments, and programming).**



# PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESS



**The Killeen Comprehensive Plan is meant to be a flexible document allowing for necessary adjustments to changing conditions.** Shifts in economic, physical, technological, and social conditions, may change the priorities of the community. As the City evolves, new issues will emerge while others will no longer be as relevant. To ensure that it continues to reflect the goals of the community and remains relevant, the plan must be revisited to confirm that the plan elements are still relevant and appropriate.

**Two types of amendments** to the Comprehensive Plan may occur: (1) minor amendments, and (2) major updates. Minor amendments may be proposed at any time such as specific adjustments to the future land use plan related to particular land development applications or public improvement projects. Minor amendments can be addressed by the City in short order or, if not pressing, be documented and compiled for more holistic evaluation through an annual plan review process. More significant plan modifications and updates should occur every five years at least.



## Chapter 2: Future Land Use and Character



**The purpose of this chapter is to establish the necessary policy direction to enable the City of Killeen to manage future land development and redevelopment more effectively. Land use considerations and guidance are at the core of any comprehensive city plan. Effective land use planning provides a framework for successful economic development efforts, for quality and sustainable residential development, for timely investment in new and upgraded infrastructure, and for coordinated extension of the public park system and a range of other municipal services.**



**Economic Success.** For Killeen to achieve its needed economic development objectives, it must address development quality and community image and appearance. The quality standard set for future development and redevelopment is a fundamental task for this Comprehensive Plan.

**Balance.** While Killeen works to catch up with the rapid growth of recent years, it must also progress toward becoming a **“complete” city** with more varied housing options, shopping and services in close proximity to neighborhoods, a broader array of quality job opportunities, and diverse recreational, entertainment, and cultural offerings.

**Compatibility.** This is the best way to ensure that community and neighborhood character are protected—and development value is maintained—over the long term.

**Predictability.** Everyone from large scale commercial and industrial investors to the individual homeowner seeks a level of comfort that comes from knowing the type and nature of development that is likely to occur nearby.



# FUTURE LAND USE AND CHARACTER



Land use designations are shown on the **Future Land Use Map** to guide the pattern and relative intensity of future residential and non residential development and redevelopment in and around Killeen. The descriptions in the text of this chapter indicate the development types anticipated in each category, as well as the intended character of the areas in which these land uses occur.



# Growth Management and Capacity



**The purpose of this chapter** is to clarify and establish City policy regarding how growth and new development will be accommodated and should occur in an orderly and beneficial manner consistent with fiscal and community considerations. Killeen will continue to grow in the coming years. This Comprehensive Plan provides a policy framework for ensuring that growth is managed in the best interest of the community. This will require a commitment to the following principles:

**Coordinated Growth.** The future land use map provides a basis for coordinating investments by municipal government and others. This will help to ensure that the thoroughfare network and other infrastructure and public facilities are extended and located consistent with anticipated directions, types, and intensities of new development. Additionally, coordination with Killeen ISD on a future school siting is essential as it can provide opportunities for joint City parkland acquisition and development in conjunction with new campuses, as well as advance planning for area trail linkages as residential and commercial development plans take shape.



**Fiscally Responsible Growth.** Orderly growth of a City, within the current corporate limits and ultimately into strategic portions of its ETJ, is critical to its long term viability.

A municipality has a responsibility to its citizens to ensure a growth pattern that makes good fiscal sense, particularly in terms of the infrastructure investments needed to keep pace with growth. The integrity of public safety services must also be maintained as the service areas for police, fire, and emergency medical response are stretched by a City's geographic growth.



## **Environmentally Sensible Growth.**

Killeen is expanding southward into more varied and scenic terrain that is marked by notable high and low elevation points; a natural drainage pattern and areas with existing mature tree cover and other natural features. Based on the expressed desires of numerous residents, retirees, business leaders, and major employers—and with the coming of a major university campus to Killeen—there is a clear and growing market opportunity for more creative design of both residential and non residential projects in the community’s new growth areas. This should include conservation design approaches that preserve permanent open space, capitalize on scenic vistas, and incorporate environmental features on sites as development amenities and storm water management.



# Mobility



The purpose of this chapter is to ensure orderly development, extension and improvement of Killeen's transportation system. The approach is "multi modal" by considering not only facilities for automobiles but other modes of transportation as well, such as pedestrian and bicycle circulation, public transit, and freight movement.



# Thoroughfare Plan



The City of Killeen maintains a previously adopted Thoroughfare Plan map (as last revised on June 22, 2010). The plan indicates the existing and proposed alignments of, and associated dimensional standards for, five street classifications:

- ❖ Principal Arterials (110 feet of right of way)
- ❖ Minor Arterials (90 ft of ROW)
- ❖ Collectors (70 ft of ROW)
- ❖ Marginal Access (50 ft of ROW)
- ❖ Local (50 ft of ROW)

The map is mainly a planning tool to enable the City to preserve future corridors for transportation system development as the need arises.



# Parks and Recreation



Killeen's rapid growth, plus the larger geographic scale of the City's developed area, require more park sites and recreation facilities in general. Based on the 2009 Master Plan, plus the concerns and hopes expressed by residents, public and private leaders, and key community stakeholders and investors—from Fort Hood representatives to small business owners—Killeen must act on **Upgrading Past Investments, Addressing Gaps, Building Nature into the City, and Working closely with KISD, Texas A&M Central Texas, land developers, and Fort Hood whenever and wherever possible to increase parks and recreation opportunities.**



# Housing and Neighborhoods



Well designed and sustainable residential areas support individuals and families who are usually making their largest financial commitment by investing in a home. Having a range of housing options available in both new and older established neighborhoods also benefits the entire community, especially when the integrity of these areas is maintained over time, thereby contributing to the City's character and positive image.

Community input for this plan indicated definite concern—across a broad spectrum of residents and local employers—that **Killeen needs to offer a wider array of housing options and associated amenities to ensure that more people will choose to live in the community versus only working and conducting business in it.**



# HOUSING PLANNING CONTEXT



Key factors in planning for housing and neighborhoods in Killeen include:

**Highly Rated Housing Market.** The Killeen Temple housing market area (HMA) has received accolades in recent years for the relative affordability of its single family housing. This included being identified as the most affordable HMA in the nation in 2005 among 344 such areas surveyed for the annual Coldwell Bankers Home Price Comparison Index.



# Fort Hood Housing Situation



HUD estimated in 2006 that approximately 30,000 military personnel lived off post along with their dependents (with the Public Affairs Office reporting that 89,933 family members lived off post as of August 2009). According to the HUD information, most of these Off post military families live within 10 miles of Fort Hood. HUD also estimated that about half of the off post military households are home owners versus renters.



## Extent of Off Campus Housing Needs for Texas A&M University Central Texas



The Overall Campus Development Program unveiled in early 2010 envisions eventual enrollment of 15,000 students. The Development Program includes on campus housing, to be developed in five phases, which will accommodate only 1,800 students. So the new university development in Killeen will place additional pressure on the local housing market in the years ahead.



**The challenge—and opportunity—**going forward is to build upon this growth by making further investments and enhancements to ensure stable and attractive neighborhoods for the long term. Based on the concerns and hopes expressed by residents, public and private leaders, and key community stakeholders and investors—from Fort Hood representatives to small business owners—Killeen must act, through this new Comprehensive Plan, on the following basic principles:



# Balancing Affordability with Variety



As the host community for Fort Hood, Killeen must always ensure responsiveness to the housing needs of military personnel and families. But this is also an opportune time for Killeen to strengthen its market capture in other areas, including young and middle age professionals, upper level personnel assigned to Fort Hood, faculty and staff associated with the new Texas A&M University Central Texas campus, and a growing contingent of medical professionals in the area, as well as retirees (military and otherwise).

**Evidence from all these market segments confirms that Killeen is losing out on a variety of potential home buyers** who would like to live in and become more a part of the community where they work (or wish to retire). But some are not satisfied with the range and quality of offerings currently available locally. To the extent that they are taking their consumer spending elsewhere, along with their home investments, then this adds to the economic drain through “leakage” of retail dollars (and associated sales tax revenue) to other nearby communities and unincorporated portions of Bell County.



With regard to retirees, this is clearly an area with great potential for Killeen given its cost of living and climate advantages plus ready access to medical and military veteran services. Yet data in this chapter show that the **percentage of households in Texas with someone over age 65, at 20.3%, is more than double Killeen's share, at 9.8% in 2008.**

Nonetheless, Texas and the U.S. are still in the early stages of the Baby Boomer retirement wave, so **Killeen still has time to tap into this market segment even more in the years ahead.**



## Building Neighborhoods and not just Subdivisions



Efforts to hold the line on housing costs in Killeen and ensure a smooth process for bringing units to market quickly in a high demand environment also led to very basic subdivision design and limited attention to amenities in various cases. While this helped to achieve short term objectives, longer term considerations—especially return on investment for home buyers and the sustainability of the community's neighborhoods over time—must also come into play.

**Going forward, a key planning and policy question is whether Killeen is prepared to implement and/or raise certain development standards to where more of these neighborhood building factors are addressed at the time of actual development versus after the fact?**

Basic subdivisions with low price points and limited amenities will always be some part of Killeen's unique housing market—and should be provided for. But there are clearly areas of the community where a higher standard is critical (where the terrain and/or public service feasibility calls for preservation of a Suburban or Rural character over the long term).



# Implementation



The Comprehensive Plan should be a “living document,” that is, a document that is frequently referred to for guidance in community decision making. Equally important are formal procedures for the ongoing monitoring and reporting of successes achieved, difficulties encountered, new opportunities and challenges that have emerged, and any other change in circumstances which may require rethinking of plan priorities.

There are five general methods for plan implementation:

- (1) Land development regulations and standards;
- (2) Capital improvements programming;
- (3) Special projects, programs and initiatives;
- (4) Coordination and partnerships; and
- (5) Ongoing study and planning.



# Definition of Roles

The community's elected officials, the City Council, has the lead role in implementation of this plan.

The City Council should take the lead in the following general areas:

- ❖ Acting as a “champion” of the plan.
- ❖ Adopting and amending the plan as needed.
- ❖ Adopting new or amended land development regulations to implement the plan, after recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- ❖ Approving interlocal agreements that implement the plan.
- ❖ Establishing the overall action priorities and timeframes by which each action item of the plan will be initiated and completed.
- ❖ Considering and approving the funding commitments that will be required.
- ❖ Offering final approval of projects and activities and the associated costs during the budget process, keeping in mind the need for consistency with the plan and its policies.
- ❖ Providing policy direction to the Planning and Zoning Commission, other appointed City boards and commissions, and City staff. The Planning and Zoning Commission should take the lead in the following general areas:
  - ❖ Periodically obtaining public input to keep the plan up to date, using a variety of community outreach and citizen and stakeholder involvement methods.
  - ❖ Ensuring that recommendations forwarded to the City Council are reflective of plan principles and action recommendations. This relates particularly to decisions involving development review and approval, zone change requests, and ordinance amendments.