



# City of Howe

Comprehensive Plan  
Adopted October 19, 2010

# City of Howe 2010 Comprehensive Plan Acknowledgements

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ORDINANCE NO. 700

**An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Howe, Texas, Adopting the 2010 City of Howe Comprehensive Plan; replacing the 2001 City of Howe Community Development Plan; repealing conflicting ordinances and resolutions; including a severability clause; and establishing an effective date.**

Whereas, Section 213.003 of the Texas Local Government Code provides for the adoption and amendment of municipal comprehensive plans; and

Whereas, the City of Howe in 2001 did adopt the City of Howe, Community Development Plan; and

Whereas, the City of Howe in September 2009 hired Bucher, Willis & Ratliff Corporation (BWR) for Planning Advisory Services and to update and revise the City's comprehensive plan; and

Whereas, in November 2009 the Mayor of the City of Howe appointed a Steering Committee to assist BWR with the preparation of the comprehensive plan; and

Whereas, on January 20, March 24, May 12, and August 25, 2010 Steering Committee meetings were conducted to identify issues within the community, develop goals, objectives and strategies and review drafts of the City of Howe Comprehensive Plan; and

Whereas, the Planning and Zoning Commission did review and recommend to City Council approval of the City of Howe Comprehensive Plan on October 19, 2010; and

Whereas, a public hearing on the City of Howe Comprehensive Plan was conducted on October 19, 2010; and

Whereas, the City Council, on October 19, 2010, did review the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission and the comments received at the public hearing on the City of Howe Comprehensive Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HOWE, TEXAS, THAT:

Section 1. The facts and recitations contained in the preamble of this ordinance are hereby found and declared to be true and correct, and are incorporated by reference herein and expressly made a part hereof, as if copied verbatim.

Section 2. The City Council hereby adopts the 2010 City of Howe Comprehensive Plan, attached hereto as Exhibit A, as the comprehensive plan for the City of Howe, replacing in full the 2001 City of Howe Community Development Plan, and the plan shall be implemented in accordance with City ordinances, consistent with state law.

Section 3. All ordinances or portions of ordinances of the City in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed and all other ordinances of the City not in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 4. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the City Council that the phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and sections of this ordinance are severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence paragraph or section of this ordinance shall be declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections of this ordinance, since the same would have been enacted by the City Council without the incorporation in this ordinance of any such unconstitutional phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section.

Section 5. This ordinance shall become effective in accordance with the provisions of the ordinances of the City of Howe.

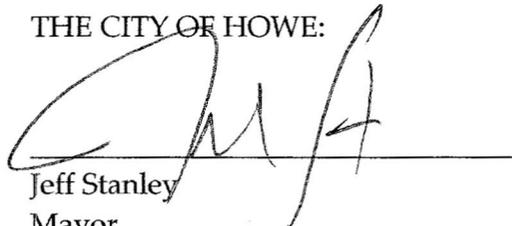
PASSED AND APPROVED on the 19th day of October 2010.

ATTEST:



Barbara Alavarado  
City Secretary

THE CITY OF HOWE:



Jeff Stanley  
Mayor





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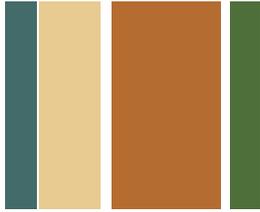
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# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

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# Chapter 1

## Policy Overview



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## Policy Overview

### Comprehensive Planning

The Comprehensive Plan is the official public policy and plan of record recommended by the Planning and Zoning Commission and adopted by City Council for the physical development and redevelopment of the community. The Comprehensive Plan (also referred to as “the Plan”) indicates, in general, how citizens want the City to improve and grow in the short-, intermediate- and long-term. The Plan is a rational and comprehensive guide for physical development that fosters conservation and preservation of natural resources, sustainable, quality growth, quality housing and neighborhoods, appropriate infrastructure to support a growing community, and context sensitive development strategies that preserve the community’s identity.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide policy decisions and provide recommendations for future actions involving community development, and it serves as the legal basis for sound land use decisions. The Plan is the basis upon which the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations are enacted and amended by the City Council upon recommendations from the Planning and Zoning Commission. The Plan in coordination with the City’s code of ordinances will determine the type, quantity, quality and character of new and existing development within the community. More specifically, the Plan:

- serves as a “database” for the City’s long-term planning activities. This database includes information regarding population, economic development, housing, utilities, land use, the natural environment, public facilities, and transportation;
- documents the community’s goals and objectives for the future;
- identifies specific actions that the City should take to realize its goals and objectives;
- depicts in the text and graphically in the maps the future arrangement of land uses and open space, and the required road network and utility infrastructure to accommodate those uses;

- identifies recommended changes that should be made to the City’s ordinances and policies to fulfill the goals and objectives; and
- provides a basis for consideration and evaluation of future development, subdivision, and annexation requests.

The process of preparing the Plan itself serves another important function which is to obtain community input through a participation process that identifies long-term goals and objectives. These goals and objectives represent the community’s common understanding of what growth is expected and the strategies necessary to preserve the special characteristics unique to Howe while positioning the City to take advantage of expected growth.

*The Comprehensive Plan is the official public policy and plan of record for the physical development of the community.*



## Basis in State Law

Comprehensive Planning has a basis in Texas law in Chapter 213 of the Local Government Code. This chapter reads in part: Sec. 213.002. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

- a. The governing body of a municipality may adopt a comprehensive plan for the long-range development of the municipality. A municipality may define the content and design of a comprehensive plan.
- b. A comprehensive plan may:
  1. include but is not limited to provisions on land use, transportation, and public facilities;
  2. consist of a single plan or a coordinated set of plans organized by subject and geographic area; and
  3. be used to coordinate and guide the establishment of development regulations.
- c. A municipality may define, in its charter or by ordinance, the relationship between a comprehensive plan and development regulations and may provide standards for determining the consistency required between a plan and development regulations.
- d. Land use assumptions adopted in a manner that complies with Subchapter C, Chapter 395,

The importance of adopting a comprehensive plan is best understood through its relationship to other municipal functions. The comprehensive plan sets the framework for all land use decisions made by a municipality and enables a municipality to enact development impact fees in accordance with Chapter 395 of the Local Government Code on the basis of the land use assumptions in the plan.

One of the primary ways in which a municipality regulates the development of land within its jurisdiction is through the implementation of a zoning ordinance. Here again, the comprehensive plan serves as the basis upon which all zoning decisions must be made. Chapter 211 of the

Local Government Code requires that all zoning decisions must be consistent with a municipal comprehensive plan. That chapter reads in part: Sec. 211.004. COMPLIANCE WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

- a. Zoning regulations must be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan and must be designed to:
  1. lessen congestion in the streets;
  2. secure safety from fire, panic, and other dangers;
  3. promote health and the general welfare;
  4. provide adequate light and air;
  5. prevent the overcrowding of land;
  6. avoid undue concentration of population; or
  7. facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewers, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

*Zoning regulations must be adopted in accordance with a Comprehensive Plan.*

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### Demographic Snapshot

In order to create a context for the comprehensive planning process, it was necessary to analyze Howe's demographic profile and identify probable scenarios for population changes in the future. The primary data source for the demographic analysis is the 2000 U.S. Census. Because this information is ten years old and the 2010 U.S. Census is in process, the City should consider reviewing this section after the 2010 information is available to ensure that no significant changes have occurred that are not accounted for in this plan. Following is a snapshot of some of the key demographic information used in developing the Plan.

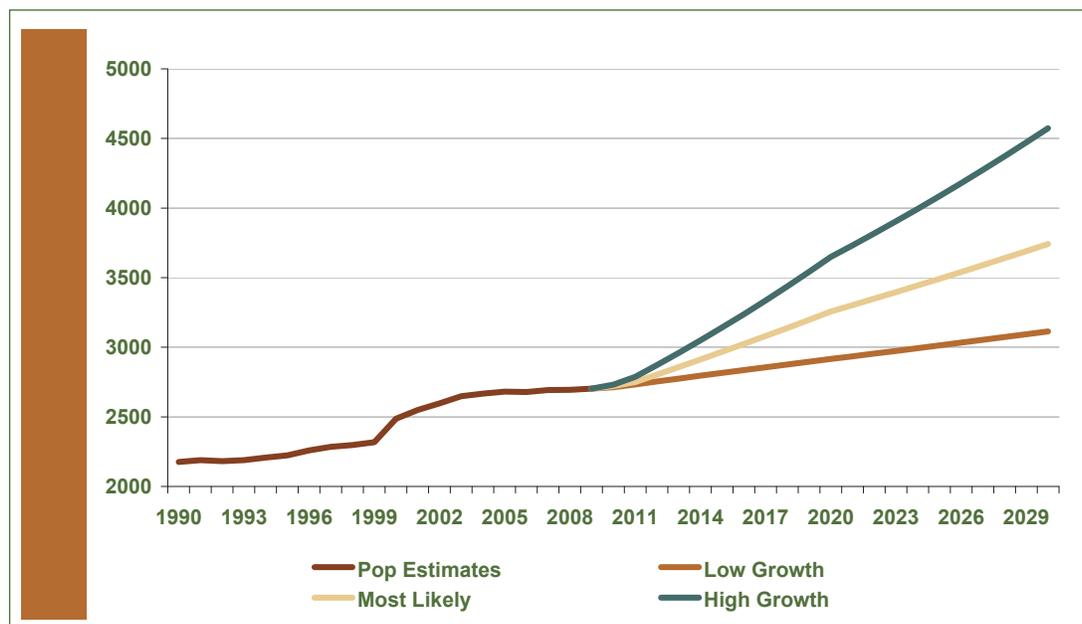
Population Trends - Howe and Neighboring Cities				
Jurisdiction	1990	2000	2008	00-08 growth
Howe	2,173	2,478	2,694	8.7%
Grayson County	95,021	110,595	118,804	7.4%
Dorchester	137	109	109	0.0%
Van Alstyne	2,090	2,502	2,957	18.2%
Sherman	31,601	35,082	38,077	8.5%
Southmayd	643	992	1,078	8.7%
Tom Bean	827	941	1,030	9.5%
Gunter	898	1,230	1,332	8.3%

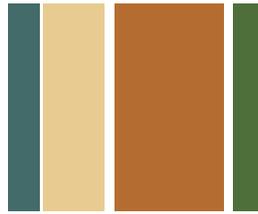
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### Population Projections - City of Howe

Scenario	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Low Growth	2,713	2,816	2,915	3,013	3,114
Most Likely	2,722	2,968	3,257	3,492	3,742
High Growth	2,731	3,142	3,649	4,085	4,574

Source: BWR projections based on recent population trends (U.S. Census) and projections from the Texas State Data Center and the Texas Water Development Board





## Selected Demographics

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Census 2000 and 2006-2008 American Community Survey)

Median Age			
	2000	2006-08	Change
Howe	30.6	N/A	N/A
Grayson	37.2	37.3	0.1
Texas	32.3	33.2	0.9
U.S	35.3	36.7	1.4

Median Household Income			
	2000	2006-08	Change
Howe	\$34,963	N/A	N/A
Grayson	\$37,178	\$46,567	\$9,389
Texas	\$39,927	\$49,078	\$9,151
U.S	\$41,994	\$52,175	\$10,181

Percent of Population by Age Groups			
	Census 2000		
	<18	18-65	65+
Howe	31.9%	59.2%	8.9%
Grayson	25.3%	59.6%	15.1%
Texas	28.2%	61.9%	9.9%
U.S	25.7%	61.9%	12.4%

Educational Attainment		
	2000	
	HS Grad	Bachelors
Howe	85.5%	10.4%
Grayson	80.2%	17.2%
Texas	75.7%	23.2%
U.S	80.4%	24.4%

Average Household Size			
	2000	2006-08	Change
Howe	2.68	N/A	N/A
Grayson	2.51	2.55	0.04
Texas	2.74	2.82	0.08
U.S	2.59	2.61	0.02

Howe Population by Race and Ethnicity	
Race/Ethnicity	Percent
White	96.6%
Other Races	5.2%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	4.6%

*Note: Race alone or in combination with one or more other races (will not total to 100%)*

### Key Findings

*-Howe's population grew by 8.7% between 2000-2008*

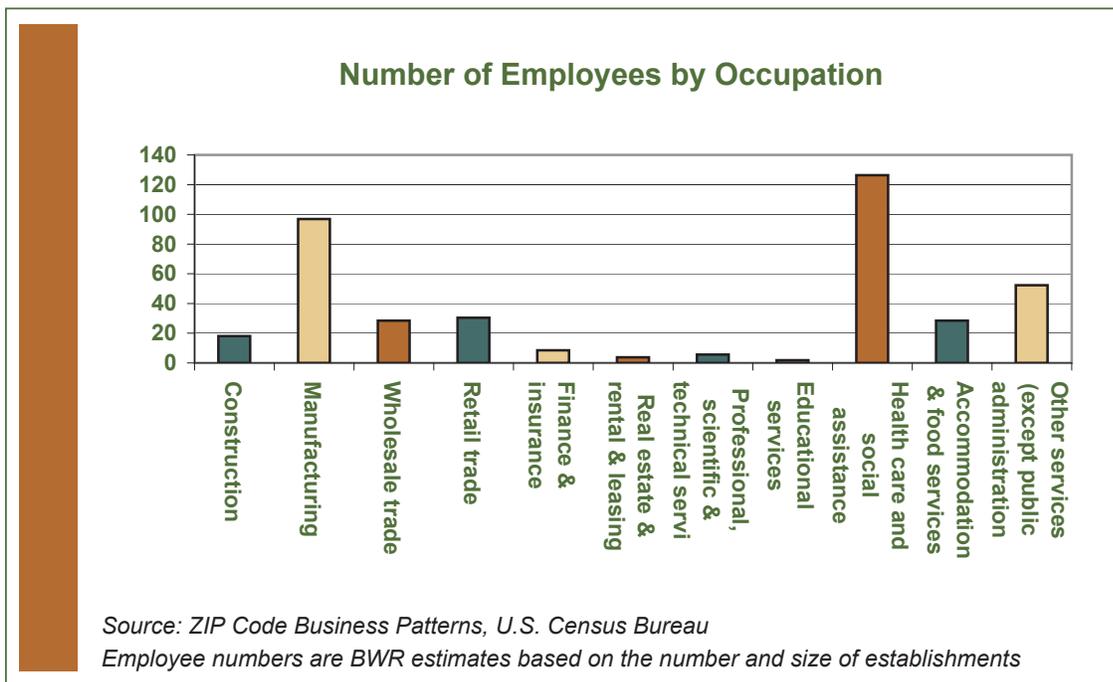
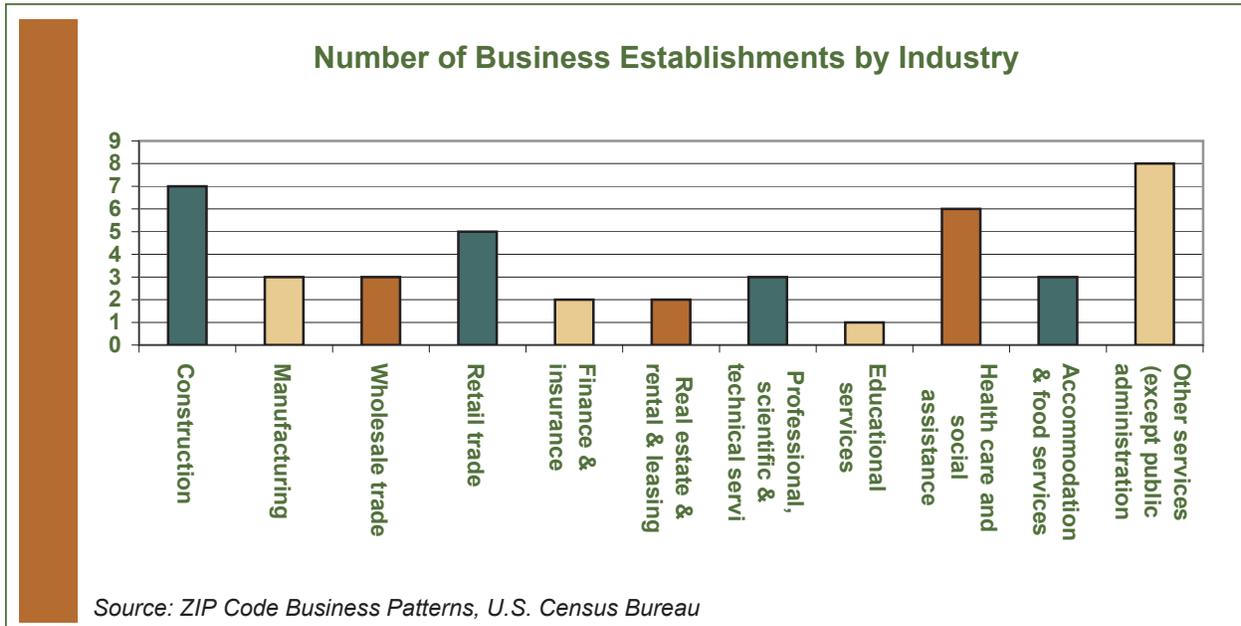
*-Howe has a high percentage of population under 18*

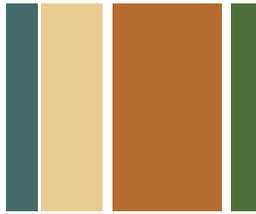
*-The median household income is lower than the County & State median*

*-Howe has a relatively low percentage of population with a bachelors degree.*

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan





## The Planning Process

Beginning in January 2010, the City of Howe began the comprehensive planning process. The Mayor selected a steering committee of citizens to assist the consulting team in developing the plan. The committee engaged in several planning exercises to develop the overall planning goals and policies.

One of the first steps in the planning process was the completion of a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis. The results of this process are summarized below. The committee also approved and distributed a questionnaire to key community stakeholders and made the questionnaire available for all citizens at City Hall. The questionnaire results are also summarized below. The input received through the SWOT analysis and the community questionnaire was used to develop a set of planning goals, objectives and strategies which are listed at the end of this chapter.

From the goals, objectives and strategies, the various planning elements within the comprehensive plan were developed. These elements include: land use, transportation, utilities, parks, open space and trails, economic development and municipal facilities. The planning principles described in each of these elements will help the City achieve its goals and develop in an orderly, efficient and economically prosperous way.

The plan itself is not the end result. The community must commit to take the actions necessary to implement the recommendations and policies in the plan. The implementation chapter of the plan serves to both identify the necessary actions to implement the plan recommendations and a tool to measure progress toward plan implementation.

Planning is an ongoing process. While this plan captures the community's goals and objectives for the future and sets out strategies to achieve them, it is not a static document. It should be revisited regularly as circumstances in the community change and to ensure that ongoing progress is being made toward implementing the plan.



*A Steering Committee of citizens assisted the consulting team in developing the Plan.*

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis Summary

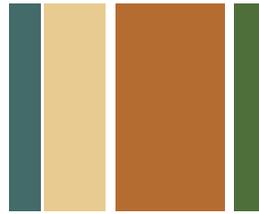
A SWOT Analysis was done with the steering committee in order to provide focus to the planning process. The SWOT analysis allows the community to develop policies to preserve its strengths, address its weaknesses, take advantage of opportunities and avoid potential threats. The results are summarized below:

#### Strengths

- Good school system
- Low crime rate
- Community involvement
- Faith based participation / churches
- Location - U.S. Hwy 75
- Mayor/City Council leadership
- Small town atmosphere
- Terrain – high point
- Friendly citizens
- Clean, well kept, organized city
- Affordable housing available
- Local newspaper
- Library
- Bank
- Exxon station (as local gathering place)
- Low debt
- Good relationship with neighboring communities
- Good City services (waste collection, bulky item pickup)
- Strong volunteer fire dept.
- Family friendly
- Not many stray dogs
- Low City debt
- Good water
- Good City staff
- Good place to raise a family

#### Weaknesses

- Trailer park location/condition/standards
- Lack of communication/public awareness
- Lack of participation - low voter turnout
- Lack of political engagement
- Lack of locations for high end housing
- Aging infrastructure
- Low business development
- Poor park system - lack of trails
- Poor economic base - jobs/businesses
- Bedroom community
- Lack of senior citizen center (SNAP)
- Lack of full-day child care opportunities
- No welcome packet for new residents
- No chamber of commerce or service clubs
- U.S. Hwy 75 negative characteristics, divider of city, more overpasses needed
- Poor street maintenance
- No Howe signs on highway
- Dependence on Sherman for sewer
- No historical society
- Expense of lift stations
- Percentage of community members who live outside City limits



## Opportunities

- Location on highway in fast growing region
- Room to grow
- Potential for more business
- Downtown redevelopment
- Rail line/station - D.A.R.T.
- Ability to get involved in local govt.
- More chances to shop locally
- Business retention
- Many weaknesses are opportunities
- Clean slate
- Comprehensive plan
- New people involvement/increased involvement
- Liquor sales, wet election
- Planning

## Threats

- Sherman control through sewer contract
- Sherman boundary
- Poor relationships- County Commissioners/ developers
- Growth - compromise on quality of life
- Apathy/selfishness towards City
- Uncontrolled growth
- Weak economy - job layoffs, unemployment
- Pessimism

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### Community Questionnaire

Another tool that was used to receive community input into the planning process was a community questionnaire. The community questionnaire was distributed to 55 residents chosen by the City who represented a broad cross-section of residents, business owners, civic leader and other stakeholders. The goal of the questionnaire was to gain an understanding of citizens' views of various aspects of the city. The questionnaire was returned by 16 residents, 6 living out of the city limits at an overall response rate of 29%. Below are the questions asked within the questionnaire and a summary of responses.

#### Question 1: What would you like Howe to be like in the next 10-20 years?

- Growing town with small town feel
- Expanded downtown which maintains "old" character. Something to be proud of
- A proactive city which uses consistent application of codes to improve quality growth and development
- A middle class bedroom community
- More industrial, more employed, better roads
- A city government more supportive of local businesses
- Clean
- Excellent schools
- New homes and improved older homes
- Self sustaining – groceries, other services, more housing, better utilities

Howe residents appreciate the small town feel associated with Howe. They desire a certain degree of self-sufficiency in regards to jobs, services and amenities. A major recurring desire among those surveyed was to continue to improve the school system, while keeping Howe a safe and small community.

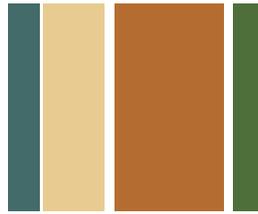
#### Question 2: What are your favorite things about the City of Howe?

- Hometown atmosphere/small town feel (multiple responses)
- Safe, Police Protection
- Easy accessibility to other larger cities
- Strong values
- Affordable housing
- Friendly people
- Emphasis on school events
- Churches
- Good post office
- Good water
- Process of reestablishing civic pride

Question #2 was aimed at discovering what residents found attractive about the City of Howe. In understanding what draws all ranges of residents, the plan can more thoroughly address the needs of the city with regards to development and maintaining its appeal.

In general, most residents surveyed enjoyed the small town feel of Howe, but appreciated its location near the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex as well as the cities of Sherman and Denison. The affordability of housing, as well as the sense of community also serve as attractive characteristics of the city.

*Howe's citizens value the hometown atmosphere and small town feel.*



### Question 3: What would make Howe a better place?

- Growth: Grocery Store, More businesses, increased affordable housing
- More small restaurants, more restaurant choices
- Video store
- Grocery store (multiple responses)
- More Chamber of Commerce interest
- Consistent enforcement of codes
- Better street and utility maintenance
- Streetscaping
- Sign ordinance to reduce small signage
- Beautification program
- Tree trimming
- No alcohol sales
- "Welcome to Howe" sign
- Stronger leadership
- Better utilities with own sewer plant
- Less strict building codes
- Doctor's office, general medical
- More community-wide activities like Fall Festival
- Getting rid of eye sores, i.e. burned down grocery store on west side of town
- Revitalized downtown while preserving historic charm

Question #3 was aimed at getting an understanding of what the citizens would like to see improved, added or removed from the city. This question enables the comprehensive plan to be shaped in a way that improves the unattractive or undesirable aspects of the town creating a more vibrant and desirable community.

Answers to this question were wide ranging, but in general citizens seemed to want more economic opportunities within the town, as well as an overall facelift making Howe a more beautiful and appealing city.



# City of Howe

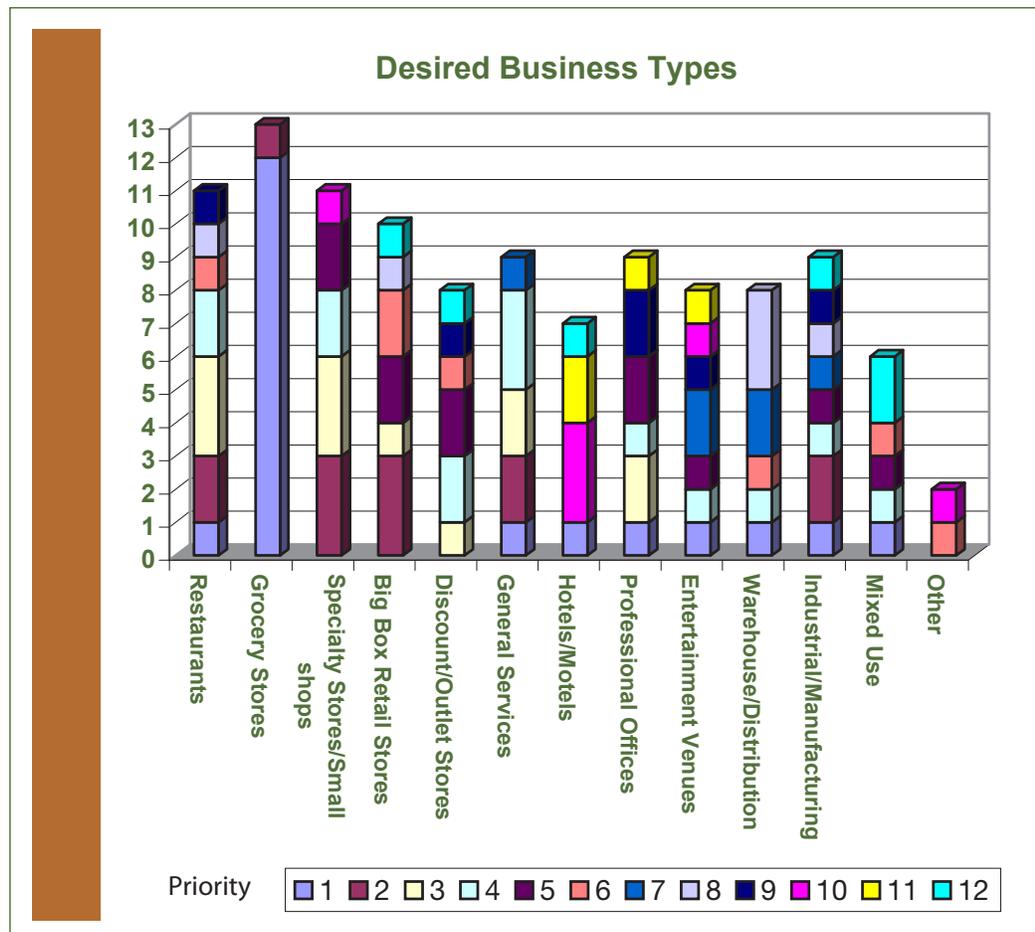
## Comprehensive Plan

Question 4: Please rank the following list of business types that you would like to see more of in Howe (#1=top choice, numbers indicate votes placed for each under ranking).

For this question, participants were asked to rank each business type provided 1-12. The #1 ranking means the highest priority for increasing the particular business type.

Grocery stores were overwhelmingly the citizens' most desired business type with over 12 votes claiming it is the top need. Restaurants and specialty stores also garnered quite a few votes.

*Howe's citizens ranked a grocery store as the overwhelming priority for the type of new business most needed.*





Question 5: What type of housing does the City of Howe need more of (# of votes underlined)?

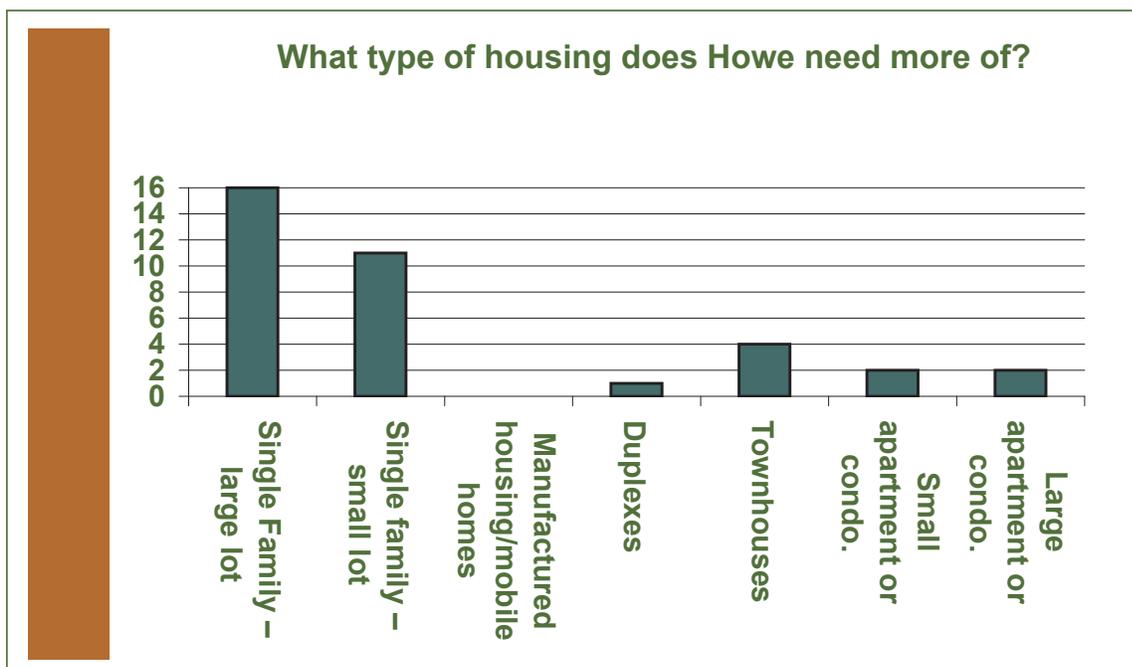
- 15 Single family – large lot (1 acre+)
- 10 Single family – small lot
- 0 Manufactured housing/mobile homes
- 1 Duplexes
- 4 Townhouses
- 2 Small apartment or condo. complexes (less than 20 units)
- 2 Large apartment or condo. complexes (more than 20 units)

*What do you believe is the biggest housing need in Howe?*

- Affordable Housing (young couples need ability to own house)
- Affordable single family units
- Increased single and multi-family housing decrease in manufactured housing
- New middle/upper class housing
- Starter homes
- More homes with 1700+ sq. ft.
- Decreased size of mobile home park
- Single family homes 90K-160K
- Wide variety of housing, allow people to expand with time

The purpose of question #5 was to get a sense of what types of dwellings respondents wanted within the city, and what needed to be expanded. Single family lots were the overwhelming desire of the residents, with a larger amount of residents desiring large lot (1+) acre single family units. This indicates the continuing desire of residents to maintain the rural feel and the importance of home ownership. There was not a strong desire for increased density or multi-family units.

Respondents clearly showed their desire for increased affordable single family housing. In general, residents want a wide range of single family housing to meet the varying income levels of families.



# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

Question 6: How would you rate the city's street and road network?

- 0 Excellent
- 3 Satisfactory
- 13 Needs Improvement



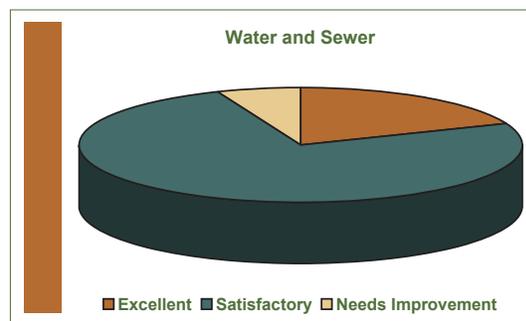
*What do you believe is the biggest street or road improvement needed in Howe?*

- Improvement to older area roadways
- Routine maintenance
- Fill pot holes and top coat
- Smith Road area
- Streets between Bledsoe and Young need redoing
- One-way roads around schools during school hours
- Drainage problems

Respondents indicated that the street and road network within Howe needs improvement. Drainage problems and general deterioration of roads were the most common issues that came up in the questionnaire. The comprehensive plan will address the street and road network issues, while providing goals and objectives that can improve the network.

Question 7: How would you rate the water and sewer utilities available in the City?

- 3 Excellent
- 12 Satisfactory
- 1 Needs Improvement



*What do you believe is the biggest water or sewer improvement needed in Howe?*

- Needs to be more cost effective
- Improved maintenance of creek that has clogged and flooded business including dentist office, and police station
- Improvements in preparation for future growth
- Addition of recycling pickup to monthly service
- Better trash collection

Respondents generally viewed the water and sewer utilities as being acceptable within the city, but encouraged improvements to the water and sewer networks as well as improved maintenance of local creeks and water bodies. Some respondents also indicated the need for improved trash and recycling services in response to this question.



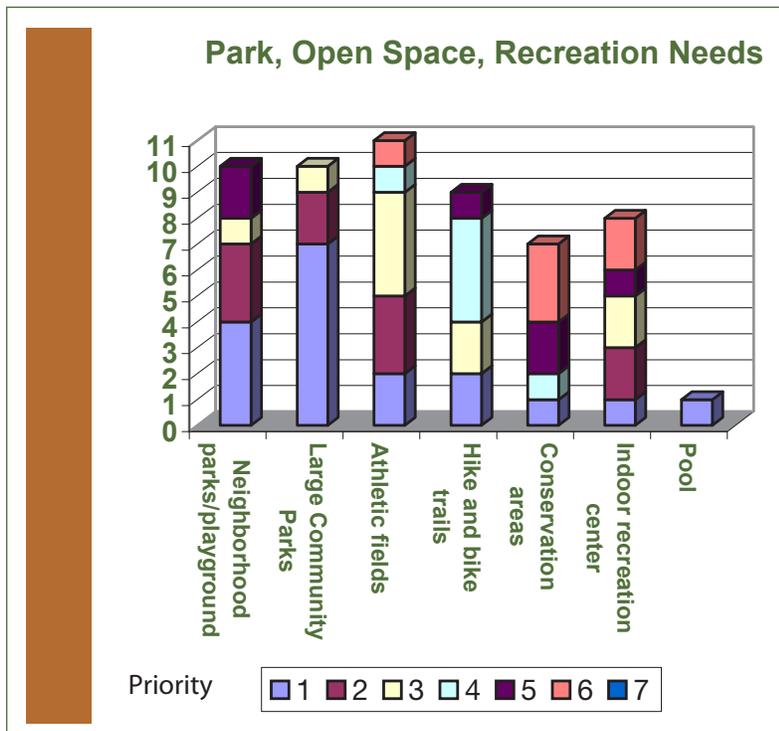
Question 8: Please rank the following list of parks, recreation and open space needs for the City of Howe (#1= greatest need)

*What specific park, recreation or open space improvement do you think is needed in Howe?*

- Fence improvements to baseball fields, bad condition and potentially dangerous
- Better location for Community Park away from highways
- New park with walking trails, most residents currently use school playground
- Better accessibility to athletic fields, as well as better parking
- Indoor place for kids or special events
- Baseball fields open to public and not owned by schools

- Large park with pavilions for parties, etc.
- Better maintenance and presentation of Jones Memorial Park
- A park with picnic area and playground; possibly include athletic complex with walking trail

Respondents viewed the need for neighborhood parks as well as large community parks as being the most important needs for the community in regards to parks and open space. Athletic fields were also highly desired as the current availability of fields is limited and in poor shape. The comprehensive plan will address the need for increased park availability as well as more athletic fields suitable for local organized sporting events.



# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

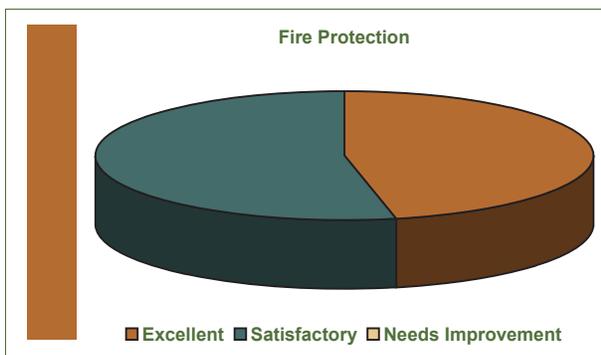
Question 9: What type of employment opportunities would you like to see in Howe?

- Business opportunities, employment outside of city, school and banking
- More service and manufacturing jobs
- Restaurant chain jobs
- Retail
- Grocery Store
- Downtown shops
- Medical field jobs
- Retail, manufacturing, industrial, professional, etc.

Respondents generally desired a wide variety of jobs meeting the needs of a diversified economy. Importance was placed on Howe being self-sufficient and providing the range of jobs in order to keep citizens within town and encourage economic and community growth.

Question 10: How would you rate the fire protection available in the city?

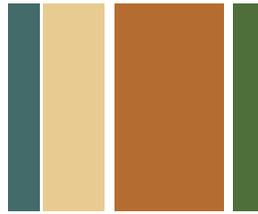
- 7 Excellent
- 8 Satisfactory
- 0 Needs Improvement



*What recommendations would you make to improve fire protection in Howe?*

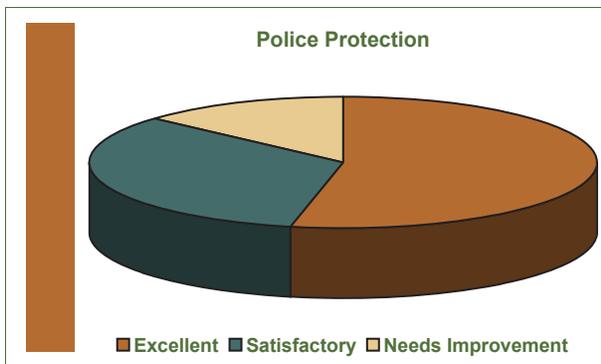
- Paint building and create more professional image
- More incentives given to volunteers, may increase response
- Work with citizens on brush burns, use as training?
- More new equipment, new station, GPS location for all trucks

Fire protection is generally viewed as being a reliable and effective service within Howe. Respondents did voice desires regarding increased training, new equipment and more interaction with the community. The comprehensive plan will address the fire protection capabilities of the department as well as goals and objectives that can be used to create an even stronger fire department.



### Question 11: How would you rate the police service in the city?

- 8 Excellent
- 5 Satisfactory
- 2 Needs Improvement



### What recommendations would you make to improve police protection in Howe?

- Police officers need to be more friendly
- More training and better leadership for officers
- More patrol around elementary and middle schools during afternoon
- Be able to call officers and not have to go through county
- Pay officers more
- More units and officers

### Question 12: How would you rate code enforcement in the City?

- 1 Excellent
- 3 Satisfactory
- 9 Needs Improvement



### What recommendations would you make to improve code enforcement in Howe?

- Improve buffers between differing uses (trash storage next to residential child care playground)
- Enforce consistently throughout city
- Lawn and home improvements needed
- Need to improve reputation of being difficult to work with
- Distribute document informing residents of the codes in place
- Improve city workers' knowledge of codes and equip them to better answer questions
- Do they have code enforcement?

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

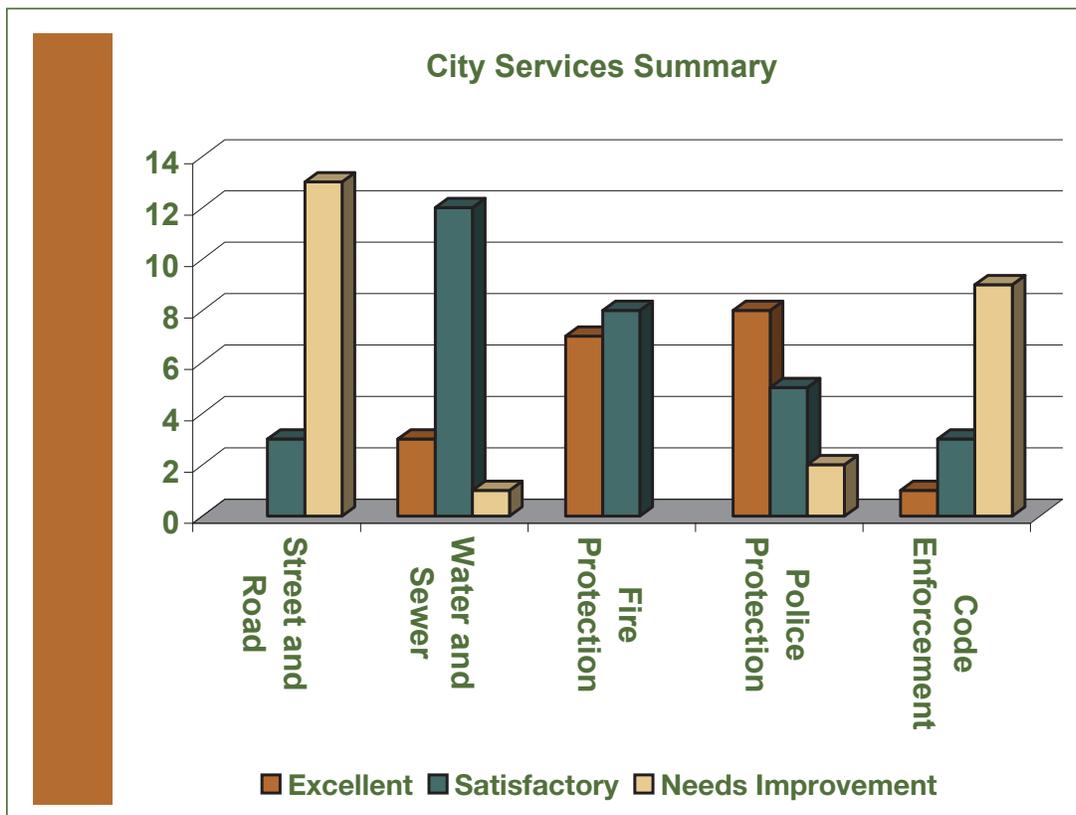
### Question 13: What improvements are needed in other City services?

- Municipal offices should be more accessible to citizens during working hours (8-5).
- Tree trimming at corners and intersections
- City web site with links to all available services – fire, police, water, sewer, code enforcement, parks & recreation, community calendar, etc.

### Question 14: Other input that should be covered during community planning process?

- Equal code enforcement throughout city for everyone
- Removal of mobile homes (banned outside of trailer park that exists)
- Earlier informing of potential eminent domain seizures

- Elected officials should base decisions on expectation of future growth
- Enforcement of zoning ordinance
- Creation of new activities that will draw people to Howe from other places
- Aggressive marketing of Howe
- Must grow to avoid being sucked in by Sherman or Van Alstyne
- Potential increase in commercial zoning
- Test the early warning system more often. Let citizens know about early warning system
- With access to major highway and rail line, the opportunity exists to appeal to large corporations to relocate. Cost of living, property value and current tax base are conducive to growth. Take advantage and market Howe, Texas.





## Developing Goals and Objectives

A major factor in the overall effectiveness of a comprehensive plan is the creation of far reaching and workable goals and objectives. These goals and objectives will serve as a guide for the city, framing physical procedures that can be used to achieve these desires.

Based upon the feedback received from the steering committee and citizens, the goals and objectives have been categorized into four main topic areas: infrastructure, community character, civic engagement and economic development. The goals represent the community's aspirations for the future and the objectives and strategies are the means to achieve the goals.

program that identifies and prioritizes transportation system improvements and identifies a funding source for each

- Revise the City's development regulations to require the preparation of a traffic impact analysis (TIA) for new development
- Revise the City's development regulations to require dedication of right-of-way for proposed roads and trails during the development process
- Adopt an access management policy
- Develop and adopt a transportation design manual that incorporates the recommendations of the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) recommended practice for context sensitive solutions
- Develop a street maintenance priority list and increase funding for annual maintenance

### Goal: Plan for future rail transit.

#### Objectives:

- Identify and protect a potential station location
- Work with DART to identify potential membership options

#### Strategies:

- Develop a transit system plan in coordination with the COG, TAPS and DART to provide for future transit access from Howe to regional destinations
- Complete a transit-oriented development plan that identifies the best location for a future transit station and provides zoning standards that facilitate transit-oriented development

## Infrastructure Transportation

### Goal: Improve east/west access across U.S. 75.

#### Objectives:

- Build additional highway crossings

#### Strategies:

- Identify best location and work with TXDOT on funding

### Goal: Improve the quality of the City's street network.

#### Objectives:

- Bring all streets up to an established baseline maintenance standard

#### Strategies:

- Inventory and rate every street within the City
- Complete a transportation improvements

## Water and Sewer

### Goal: The City will have cost effective options for the treatment of wastewater.

### **Objectives:**

- Develop alternative wastewater treatment options to reduce dependence on Sherman.

### **Strategies:**

- Adopt a waste water impact fee ordinance for new development
- Complete a rate study to determine appropriate rates for the water and sewer utilities in order to provide adequate revenue for maintenance.
- Seek funding through State and Federal Grants for immediate needs
- Develop a five-year capital improvement program (CIP) for water and sewer

### **Goal: Ensure adequate water supply for long-term growth and development**

### **Objectives:**

- Procure or develop sufficient water resources for projected growth.

### **Strategies:**

- Complete a water system master plan to provide for orderly improvements to the water system as development warrants
- Replace dilapidated sewer lines
- Ensure connections for all residents
- Adopt a water impact fee ordinance for new development
- Clear silt and vegetation from drainage ways, clean culverts routinely and create retention and detention ponds for water control
- Require that all new developments are required to construct streets, drainage, water, sewer, gas and electric utilities for their development in accordance with city standards
- Make certain that all water mains in commercially zoned areas are at least twelve (12) inches in diameter for fire protection services
- Hire a professional grant writer to work on obtaining grants
- Establish a schedule and plan for stormwater maintenance operations

- Develop and adopt stormwater drainage design criteria and construction standards
- Complete a rate study to ensure adequate revenue for ongoing service

## **Parks & Open Space**

### **Goal: Provide and adequately equip neighborhood and community-wide parks.**

### **Objectives:**

- Bring existing parks up to minimum standards of maintenance and equipment
- Identify sites for future parks
- Develop a trail systems plan to connect current and future parks

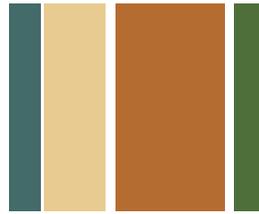
### **Strategies:**

- Maintain and update a parks and trails master plan.
- Create a formal set of amenity standards for each type of park (neighborhood and community) in order to better serve all areas of the community.
- Implement a parkland dedication ordinance for new development.
- Improve current conditions at each park through renovation and redevelopment: new bleachers, paint, landscaping, improved parking conditions, restroom facilities, improved/new concession stands.
- Develop a capital improvements program for existing parks to bring them up to the identified standards in this plan.
- Seek grants for park development and trail construction.

### **Goal: Acquire additional parkland and open space to meet the needs of an expanding population and to protect sensitive lands.**

### **Objectives:**

- Ensure that new residential development provides adequate park and open space
- based upon a community standard of the amount of parkland per capita.



- Ensure that newly acquired parks are equipped to meet the minimum standards identified in this plan.

**Strategies:**

- Adopt a park land dedication ordinance to ensure adequate parkland and open space is set aside during the development process.
- Add baseball and softball fields to various parks including Dot and Casey Jones Park.
- Add public soccer/multi-purpose fields to existing parks such as Dot and Casey Jones Park.
- Provide community with visible and safe community trails (See Ultimate Land Use Map) linking each park.
- Add tennis courts to Dot and Casey Jones Park, and create public tennis leagues.
- Plan for future community park on the west side of US 75 as the City grows.
- Adopt a park improvement fee that is assessed either at the time of platting or building permit to provide a funding stream to equip new parks.

**Goal: Develop city-wide recreation programs that encourage involvement from all citizens and meet their social, recreational and physical fitness needs.**

**Objectives:**

- Partner with Howe ISD and other civic organizations to provide recreational programs.
- Develop indoor recreational facilities as the population increases.
- Ensure that recreational opportunities are available for all age groups.

**Strategies:**

- Utilize the existing Howe Community Center to provide multi-generational recreational

opportunities.

- Create a plan to expand indoor recreational facilities with the possibility of utilizing existing, underutilized community buildings.
- Seek grants for indoor recreational facilities.

**Goal: Educate Howe residents and visitors of the availability and amenities of existing parks and recreational programs.**

**Objectives:**

- Utilize various means of informing citizens on park amenities and activities.
- Update citizens on park openings, changes, additions, etc. through local advertisements, flyers and a city website.

**Strategies:**

- Create a city web page dedicated to local parks and recreation programs.
- Actively promote sports leagues within the city, also create community activities within existing parks to promote added use.
- Utilize the images and inventory information in this plan to create a web and print flyer about Howe’s parks and recreation programs.
- Increase visibility and use of city parks by holding community events in the parks.

**Public Facilities**

**Goal: Provide adequate facilities for the City to carry out its responsibilities.**

**Objectives:**

- Analyze existing city facilities to determine their adequacy

**Strategies:**

- Complete and adopt a City Facilities Master Plan
- Adopt a public facilities extension policy that corresponds with the Sector Plan that

requires that adequate municipal facilities are available before development proposals can be approved

- Adopt a policy that requires developers to coordinate with the appropriate school district for the location of future school sites before development proposals are approved by the City Council
- Update the City's development regulations to require the provision of adequate public facilities prior to development approvals for areas that are not currently served or where development would exceed the capacity of existing facilities
- Upgrade City facilities facades and landscaping as budgets allow in order to reinforce the development character of the areas in which they are located
- Develop a facilities collocation plan in conjunction with Howe ISD that identifies potential opportunities for shared facilities and locations as the City expands
- Develop an environmental sustainability plan for City facilities to help reduce operating costs by reducing energy and water consumption

### Community Character

**Goal: Maintain the small town, rural feel of Howe.**

**Objectives:**

- Preserve open space and agricultural lands
- Locate and manage commercial uses so that they do not negatively impact residential areas

**Goal: Improve the physical appearance of the City.**

**Objectives:**

- Improve appearance of residential neighborhoods and commercial areas

**Strategies:**

- Increase code enforcement activities
- Update the City's zoning and sign ordinance to ensure high quality development standards for highway mixed use areas.
- Adopt updated property maintenance ordinances
- Complete a way finding and entry signage plan.
- Remove or rehabilitate abandoned and dilapidated structures
- Develop a city beautification committee

**Goal: Revitalize downtown.**

**Objectives:**

- Protect and preserve historic structures
- Encourage building renovations
- Increase the number of commercial and retail businesses in downtown

**Strategies:**

- Inventory and prioritize historic structures
- Offer financial incentives to building owners who rehabilitate their properties
- Create a historic overlay zoning district and architectural design guidelines to assist in the preservation of historic structures
- Develop a recruitment and retention program for downtown businesses.
- Develop a downtown improvements plan that provides for the phased improvement of entryways and public right-of-way.



**Goal: Provide a variety of housing options within the City.**

**Objectives:**

- Identify opportunities for the development of higher end housing
- Ensure high standards for all types of housing development

**Strategies:**

- Create marketing materials to recruit higher end residential developers
- Update the City’s zoning and sign ordinance to ensure high quality development standards for highway mixed use areas
- Update zoning ordinance to provide for multiple housing product types

**Civic Engagement**

**Goal: Engage more citizens in the governing process.**

**Objectives:**

- Establish citizen advisory boards to assist with carrying out the recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan
- Improve communication between the City government and the citizens

**Strategies:**

- Create a City beautification advisory board
- Develop a comprehensive City web site

**Goal: Make new residents feel connected to the community.**

**Objectives:**

- Encourage new residents to get involved in local activities
- Create opportunities for citizens to meet each other

**Strategies:**

- Develop a new citizen welcome package and distribute to all new residents
- Help form new service clubs and other civic organizations
- Organize additional community special events
- Provide resources to citizens to help establish neighborhood associations
- Create community gathering places such as downtown, a community center, etc.

**Economic Development**

**Goal: Provide more opportunities for citizens to shop and dine in Howe.**

**Objectives:**

- Recruit a grocery store to Howe
- Increase retail opportunities and encourage residents to shop locally

**Strategies:**

- Develop an economic development recruitment program that identifies and prioritizes specific recruitment targets
- Create a shop local campaign with local merchants
- Complete a wayfinding and entry signage plan
- Update the City’s zoning and sign ordinance to ensure high quality development standards for highway mixed use areas

**Goal: Increase employment opportunities within the City.**

**Objectives:**

- Capitalize on Howe’s assets to recruit primary employers
- Maintain affordable tax rates and fees

**Strategies:**

- Adopt an economic development strategic plan that identifies specific industry sectors that are good targets for recruitment
- Update the City’s zoning and sign ordinance

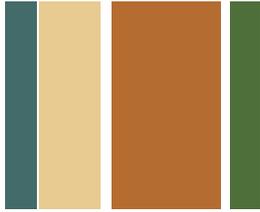
# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

to ensure high quality development standards for highway mixed use areas.

- Create an economic development recruitment package
- Conduct a detailed market analysis and target industry assessment
- Develop and maintain an economic development web page





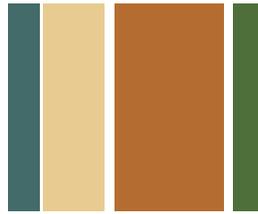
# Chapter 2

## Land Use



### Chapter 2: Land Use

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## Land Use

The future land use plan is the City's primary policy tool for guiding growth and development in an orderly fashion. The land use plan establishes the City's land use planning policies and graphically depicts how the community wants to grow. Throughout the planning process, steering committee members and those who responded to the community questionnaire consistently cited Howe's small town and rural atmosphere as things that they value and that make Howe a great place to live. The need to attract more employment, retail and service uses was also consistently identified as a community priority. These two priorities formed the foundation of the future land use plan and can be summarized in the following land use principles:

- Maintain the small town, rural ambiance of Howe
- Increase the number of employment and retail uses to better serve the residents of Howe

### Growth Management Framework Ultimate Growth Boundary

In order to plan for future development, it is necessary to identify a planning area within which the City is likely to expand its municipal boundaries over time and, therefore, within which the City has an interest in managing growth. The steering committee spent considerable time discussing what became known as the ultimate planning boundary. Throughout this discussion, the committee considered what areas made sense from a long-term service delivery perspective for the City to consider for future annexation. Further, there was a strong desire to keep as much of the Howe Independent School District as possible within the City of Howe's planning boundary. These factors and others led the committee to identify the ultimate planning boundary as depicted in the following map. It should be noted, that this boundary has no legal effect upon the use of land that is currently outside the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The City will work collaboratively with its neighboring municipalities and special districts to develop boundary agreements in the future.

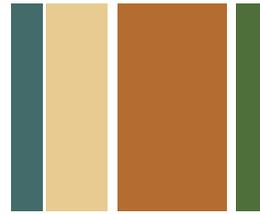
### The Sector Planning Model

One of the most important land use planning considerations is how to manage growth in a way that allows for the orderly expansion of the City and allows the City to provide municipal services in a cost effective way. In its most simplified explanation, this means that the City should grow incrementally from the center outward. Of course, the realities of property ownership, land prices and the expansion of roads and utilities by others sometimes run counter to this goal. To help manage the long-term expansion of the City and to be able to respond to the pressures of growth, the City has adopted the sector planning model to identify and prioritize future growth areas and to ensure the preservation of open spaces and sensitive land.

The sector planning model divides the City's ultimate planning boundary into six sectors: Preserved Open Space (O1), Reserved Open Space (O2), Restricted Growth (G1), Controlled Growth (G2), Intended Growth (G3) and Infill/Redevelopment (G4). This planning framework first considers land that is or should be set aside as open space and assigns it to the open space sectors. Once the open space sectors are identified the remaining area within the ultimate planning boundary is assigned to one of the four growth sectors. Each sector is described on the following page, along with the corresponding map color. Following the sector description is the sector map for the Howe ultimate planning boundary.

As proposals for development are considered by the city they should be evaluated based upon the growth sector in which the project is located. Projects in infill and intended growth sectors should be encouraged using the City's various policy tools. Projects proposed in controlled and restricted sectors should be required to demonstrate the adequacy and availability of all necessary municipal services to support the project. If those services do not exist or if they are inadequate, the cost of providing them should be borne by the project developer or the project should be delayed until the City's plans call for the services to be provided.

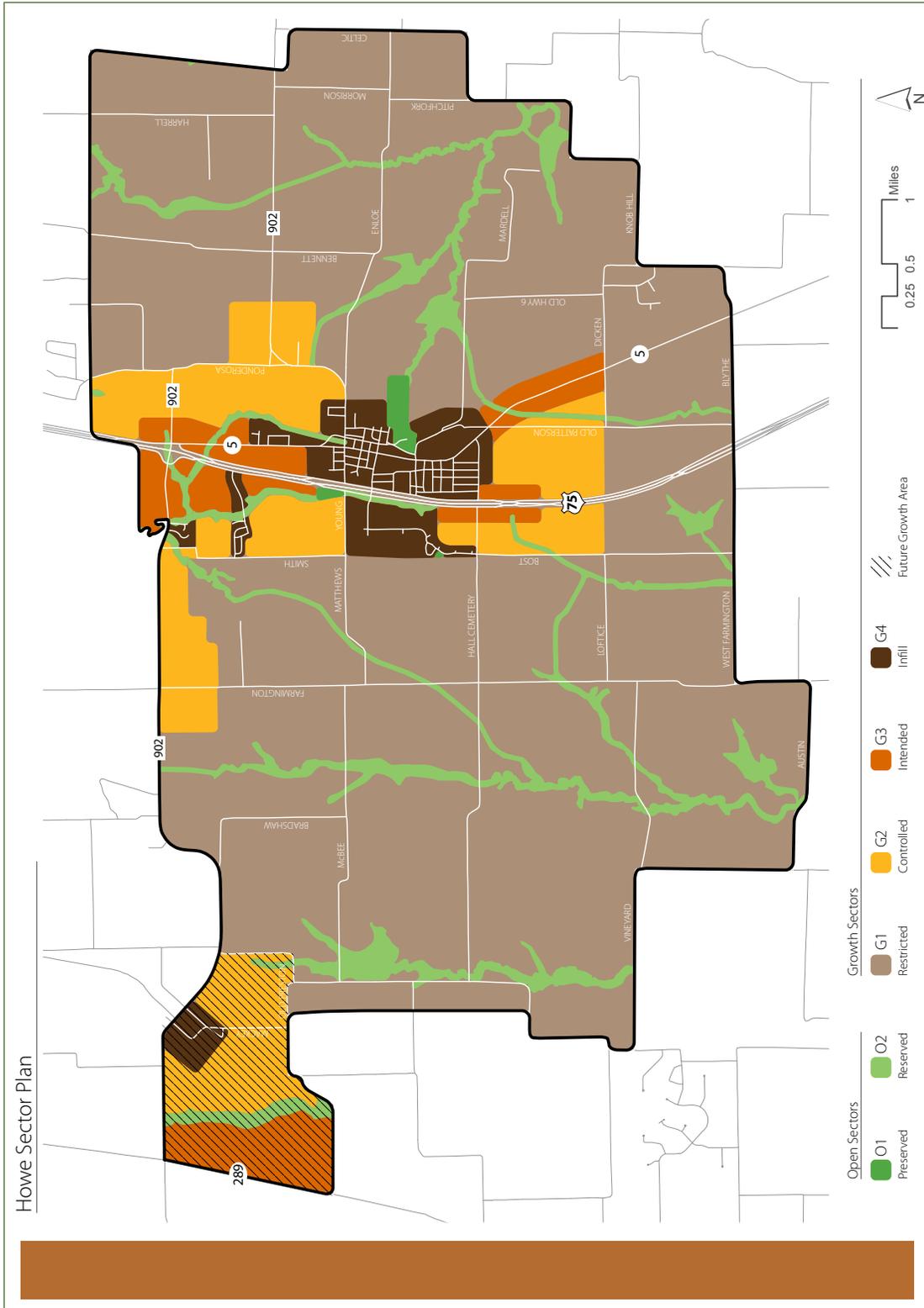




Map Color	Sector	Description
	O1 – Preserved Open Space	The Preserve includes all land that is protected in perpetuity from development. This includes dedicated park land, land that has been purchased for conservation or has a conservation easement over it or other such protection method.
	O2 – Reserved Open Space	The Reserve includes land that is not yet protected from development but that is intended to be protected as part of the community’s permanent open space system. This area includes land within the 100 year flood plain, buffer areas around streams or other sensitive environmental features and historic sites and resources.
	G1 – Restricted Growth	The Restricted sector includes land that is not yet intended for development, because it has an important function as open land or agricultural land and because there are not adequate municipal facilities, such as roads and utilities, in place to accommodate orderly growth. Development that does take place within this sector should follow the standards of Conservation or Cluster Development. As municipal facilities become available to portions of the Restricted sector they may be considered for progression to the G2 – Controlled Growth sector designation through an amendment process determined by the City.
	G2 – Controlled Growth	The Controlled sector includes land that is intended for future growth, but that may require the extension of municipal services before growth can occur. This area should be considered a holding area for development once areas with the Intended and Infill sectors have reached capacity. If development is proposed in this area prior to municipal services being available, the developer will bear the cost of extending services to accommodate proposed growth.
	G3 – Intended Growth	The Intended sector includes land that is adjacent to existing transportation and utility infrastructure that can support new development. This sector should be the primary focus of new development and should be a priority for the City to consider partnering with potential developers for necessary service improvements to accommodate growth.
	G4 – Infill Growth	The Infill sector includes areas that have already been platted or prepared for development and that have vacant lots or opportunities for redevelopment. This area should be a high priority for the City to incentive appropriate infill development to maximize existing municipal infrastructure and services.

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan





## Land Use Organizing Principle – The Transect

Land use planning requires an understanding of how various types of uses and intensities of uses relate to one another within the context of a complete community. One of the best ways to understand these land use relationships is through the rural-to-urban transect. The transect is an organizing principle for community planning that arranges human habitat along a continuum from natural, undeveloped land to the most intense urban environment.

great places no matter the intensity of development by ensuring that the unique characteristics that make up a place are assembled properly.

A graphic representation of the transect is included below.

By understanding a community’s form in this way it is then possible to identify appropriate development patterns based upon where along the transect a development occurs. For instance, it would be appropriate to expect a farm house in a rural setting, but not a large apartment complex. The transect allows a community the ability to provide lifestyle choices by ensuring that the appropriate form of development occurs in the appropriate locations. Not only does the transect ensure the appropriate form of development in the right locations, it also helps to create complete places by ensuring that all of the proper components are included that help to create a particular type of place. For example, a downtown or town center is a collection of appropriately scaled buildings, streets, sidewalks and open spaces that must include a mix of retail, office, residential and civic uses in order to function as intended. The transect framework enables a community to create

*“Each transect zone is comprised of elements that support and intensify its locational character”*  
*-SmartCode*



# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### The Land Use Plan

The Howe land use plan follows the transect framework and identifies the appropriate type and scale of land use for each transect zone. The land use plan is not intended to be a parcel-specific guide to development, that level of planning will be achieved through the City's zoning ordinance. The land use plan is intended to be a generalized guide that represents the appropriate type and character of development within the City's proposed ultimate planning boundary.

### Sense of Place

One of the major benefits of following the transect framework of land use planning is that it leads to the development of great places instead of isolated subdivisions or single-use commercial areas. More and more, communities are discovering the quality of life and economic development advantages associated with creating unique places that differentiate them from the Anywhere, U.S.A. trend of cookie cutter housing developments and auto-oriented commercial strips dominated by corporate franchise architecture. Creating real places where people want to be requires a finer grain of planning than is conventionally done and requires an attention to the details of how all of the components of a community come together to create a great place. For Howe the challenge will be to resist the short-term economic gains associated with conventional development in order to achieve the long-term quality of life and economic benefits associated with creating great places.

*The Plan will help create real places where people want to be.*





### Lifestyle Choice

This land use plan, because it is based upon the rural-to-urban transect, provides many lifestyle choices within the ultimate planning boundary. From the most rural and agricultural setting to dense urban development, the land use plan provides Howe the opportunity to maintain a rural feel while accommodating future growth and providing economic development opportunities that require higher intensity development patterns.

The provision of areas within the community that allow varying intensities of development also increases the range of housing options that will be available to current and future residents of the City. This allows individuals and families the ability to change their housing as their needs change without having to leave Howe. Providing a range of housing types also means that a wider range of housing prices will be available which will assist in providing more opportunities for Howe residents to enter the housing market and move up over time as their incomes allow.

### Open Space Preservation

The land use plan also calls for significant areas of open space to be preserved as the community develops. The preservation of natural areas and open space serves two purposes. First, these areas are generally along natural drainage areas and wildlife corridors so they provide a means of protecting the natural ecology and environmental quality within the planning area. Second, these areas will serve as amenities that will be integrated into new development and will provide the backbone for a community-wide trail and greenway system.

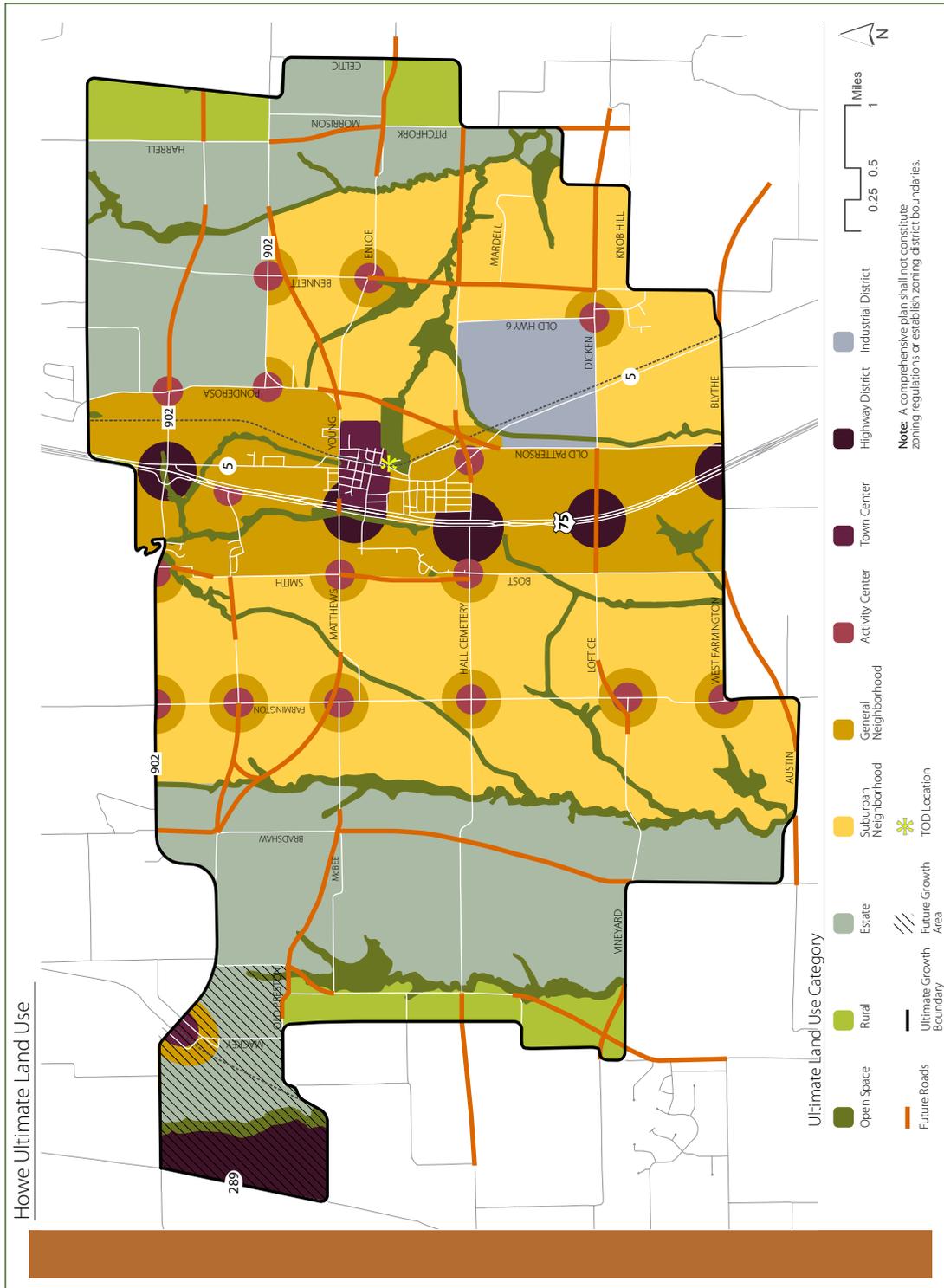
### Economic Development Opportunities in Concentrated Nodes

Another key consideration in developing the land use plan was ensuring that sufficient areas are allocated for employment and commercial uses to accommodate the needs of the community as it grows. While it is important to allocate sufficient area for non-residential uses, it is equally important to strategically locate those areas and manage their development through appropriate zoning so that the City is able to avoid the pitfalls of strip commercial development. Strip commercial development patterns create significant traffic congestion problems and result in under-performing commercial properties that ultimately are a drain on the City's tax base.

This land use plan allocates the areas for non-residential uses within compact nodes that are centered around major transportation systems. As opposed to conventional land use plans that tend to place non-residential uses in single-use areas, the Howe land use plan calls for the creation of mixed-use nodes that will include retail, office, commercial and residential uses in compact, pedestrian-oriented districts. This land use arrangement will result in higher property values per acre, better performing retail and commercial uses, and reduced vehicle trips. These compact, mixed-use areas will allow some Howe residents the ability to live and work within walking or biking distance. By locating restaurants, service and retail uses within walking distance of employment uses, these areas will allow the people employed within them to take care of their daily needs without the need to make multiple automobile trips. These mixed-use areas will also enhance Howe's competitiveness in the regional economic development market by differentiating it from other cities through the creation of unique activity centers with a quality sense of place.

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan





## Land Use Category Descriptions

T-Zone	Map Color	Category	Description
T-1		Open Space	<p><b>Purpose:</b> To provide areas for active and passive recreation, resource conservation and preservation and flood control.</p> <p><b>Uses:</b> Parks, civic spaces, greenbelts, cemeteries, recreation facilities, golf courses, environmentally sensitive and natural resource areas, and any other lands reserved for permanent open space purposes.</p>
			
T-2		Rural/Agriculture	<p><b>Purpose:</b> To provide areas for agricultural production, grasslands, woodlands and other non-recreational open lands.</p> <p><b>Uses:</b> Agriculture, farming, cultivation and other compatible or ancillary uses including homesteads.</p>
			

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

T-2		Estate	<p><b>Purpose:</b> To provide areas for small-scale agricultural uses and very low density (typically between 1 and 5 acres per dwelling unit) single-family home sites that are served by on-site sewage treatment (septic) and are designed to preserve the rural character of Howe.</p> <p><b>Uses:</b> Agriculture, single-family detached, clustered single-family dwellings, and accessory residential units (attached or detached to the single-family dwelling on the same lot).</p>
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T-3		Suburban Neighborhood	<p><b>Purpose:</b> To provide areas of low to medium density (typically an average of 2 dwelling units per acre) single-family neighborhoods including appropriately scaled civic and institutional uses that function as an integrated neighborhood.</p> <p><b>Uses:</b> Single-family detached, clustered single-family dwellings and accessory residential units (attached or detached to the single-family dwelling on the same lot). This category is also appropriate for planned public and semi-public uses designed to be compatible with residential uses, such as schools, religious institutions, and civic uses. However, such uses should be permitted and encouraged only to the degree that the scale, specific location, and design does not significantly impact or impair the residential character of the area.</p>
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T-4		General Neighborhood	<p><b>Purpose:</b> To provide areas for a wide variety of higher density (typically averaging 4 to 6 dwelling units per acre) residential uses that serve the needs of residents seeking alternatives to low and medium density single-family detached housing. These areas may serve the needs of first-time home owners, empty nesters seeking to downsize and smaller households.</p> <p><b>Uses:</b> Single family detached and attached dwellings, townhomes, and small-scale (typically 8 or fewer units) apartment / condominium buildings, and ancillary, small-scale commercial uses that serve the residents of the neighborhood. This category is also appropriate for planned public and semi-public uses designed to be compatible with residential uses, such as schools, religious institutions, and civic uses. However such uses should be permitted and encouraged only to the degree that the scale, specific location, and design does not significantly impact or impair the residential character of the area.</p>
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T-5		Activity Center	<p><b>Purpose:</b> To provide areas for neighborhood serving retail, restaurant and service uses, as well as upper story residential units above commercial uses and high density (typically greater than 8 dwelling units per acre) attached residential uses. Such areas are compatible with and serve the daily shopping, dining and service needs of nearby lower density residential neighborhoods.</p> <p><b>Uses:</b> Retail, restaurant, office, residential dwellings (attached and upper story), civic, and institutional uses primarily intended to serve nearby neighborhoods.</p>
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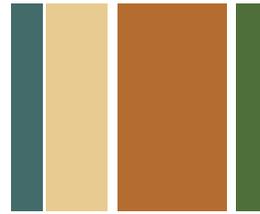


# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

T-6	Town Center	<p><b>Purpose:</b> To provide areas of high intensity mixed-use development consisting of both neighborhood and community serving commercial, retail and office uses, and high density (typically greater than 8 dwelling units per acre) urban residential dwellings. This area is centered around the historic town site and adjacent neighborhoods. This area provides an opportunity to create a regional destination that offers unique retail, restaurant and cultural destinations and offers a more urban lifestyle than other areas within the community.</p> <p><b>Uses:</b> Retail, restaurant, office, entertainment, and medium to high density urban residential dwellings (attached) typically in multi-story structures. Civic and institutional uses are also appropriate. Due to the nature of development within this category as a community or regional destination, high volumes of pedestrians, transit riders, and vehicles must be accommodated. This district is not intended for single-story conventional commercial strip centers, freestanding pad sites, and intensive uses requiring outdoor display or sales yards.</p>
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SD		Highway District	<p><b>Purpose:</b> To provide areas within the community for conventional high intensity regional commercial uses and office developments dependent upon good transportation access to highway interchanges and frontage roads. These areas are also appropriate for high density multi-family residential units integrated within an overall mixed-use site development. This category is limited to areas with existing or future highway access and is the primary area for future employment uses.</p> <p><b>Uses:</b> Hotels, multi-story office buildings, medium to large scale regional commercial uses, high density multi-family residential, restaurants, and other uses dependent upon access to high volume transportation infrastructure.</p>
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SD		Industrial District	<p><b>Purpose:</b> To provide areas for light industrial activities typically dependent upon good transportation access to highways and rail lines.</p> <p><b>Uses:</b> Medium to large scale warehousing, light manufacturing, wholesale storage and distribution, office/warehouses, and ancillary retail, service and restaurant uses that serve the employees within the district.</p>
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### Land Use Policies

LU-1 Maintain the rural atmosphere in Howe by preserving sensitive lands, reserving areas for agricultural uses and rural homesteads, and integrating open space into all new development.

LU-2 Create a quality sense of place by discouraging strip commercial development patterns and encouraging compact, mixed-use nodes that are developed in an integrated manner with a high level of architectural compatibility and pedestrian-scale urban design.

LU-3 Encourage a variety of housing types and price ranges integrated together in new neighborhoods and mixed-use areas to allow residents to stay in Howe as their lifestyles change over time.

LU-4 Reduce vehicular trips by mixing residential and non-residential uses in integrated developments that are designed to encourage walking and bicycling as an alternative to the automobile.

LU-5 Coordinate land use planning with the Howe Independent School Districts so that new schools are integrated into neighborhoods and mixed-use nodes so that students can walk or bicycle to school.

LU-6 Preserve the City's historic resources within the town center and older neighborhoods and encourage their restoration in order to maintain the community's link to its heritage.

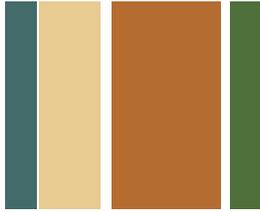
LU-7 Plan for a future passenger rail station in close proximity to the town center and reserve sufficient land around it for transit oriented development.

LU-8 Reserve industrial sites with good road and rail access for long-term economic development opportunities and discourage the conversion of those areas to other uses.

### Implementation Actions

- Revise the City's development regulations including the zoning and subdivision ordinances to implement the land use goals in this plan.
- Create a historic overlay zoning district and architectural design guidelines to assist in the preservation of historic structures.
- Adopt a public facilities extension policy that corresponds with the Sector Plan that requires that adequate municipal facilities are available before development proposals can be approved.
- Adopt a policy that requires developers to coordinate with the appropriate school district for the location of future school sites before development proposals are approved by the City Council.
- Adopt a parkland dedication and improvement ordinance that ensures adequate provision of parkland and park improvements for new residential development.
- Revise the City's development regulations to require the preparation of a traffic impact analysis (TIA) for new development.
- Complete a transit-oriented development plan that identifies the best location for a future transit station and provides zoning standards that facilitate transit-oriented development.





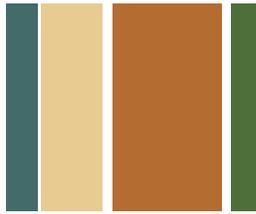
# Chapter 3

## Transportation



### Chapter 3: Transportation

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## Transportation Introduction

A well designed transportation system is a key component in helping the City to achieve its overall development goals. Land use and transportation are symbiotic systems whose relationship is well established. Land uses dictate the types of transportation systems needed by citizens to travel within the City and between the City and regional destinations. Similarly, transportation system improvements, absent land use controls, can shape the way adjacent land is developed. By planning the City's transportation system to support its land use goals, the City will ensure it provides effective and efficient mobility options for its citizens.

Of course the City's transportation system does not exist in isolation. The transportation network in Howe is impacted by decisions that are made in other jurisdictions and at other levels of government. Some of the major transportation system components in Howe's planning area include the Federal highway system, the State transportation network, the County road system, public and privately owned railroad corridors, and the city street system.

In order to achieve the City's land use and mobility goals, the following core principles will guide the City as it plans its future transportation system:

- The transportation system is multi-modal
- Automobile trips are minimized
- The transportation network is well connected
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are an integrated part of the transportation network
- Transit is a long-term strategy to provide regional connectivity and local transportation alternatives
- Transportation system improvements are considered in the context of the City's land use goals
- Transportation facilities are designed to respect and enhance the context of adjacent land use

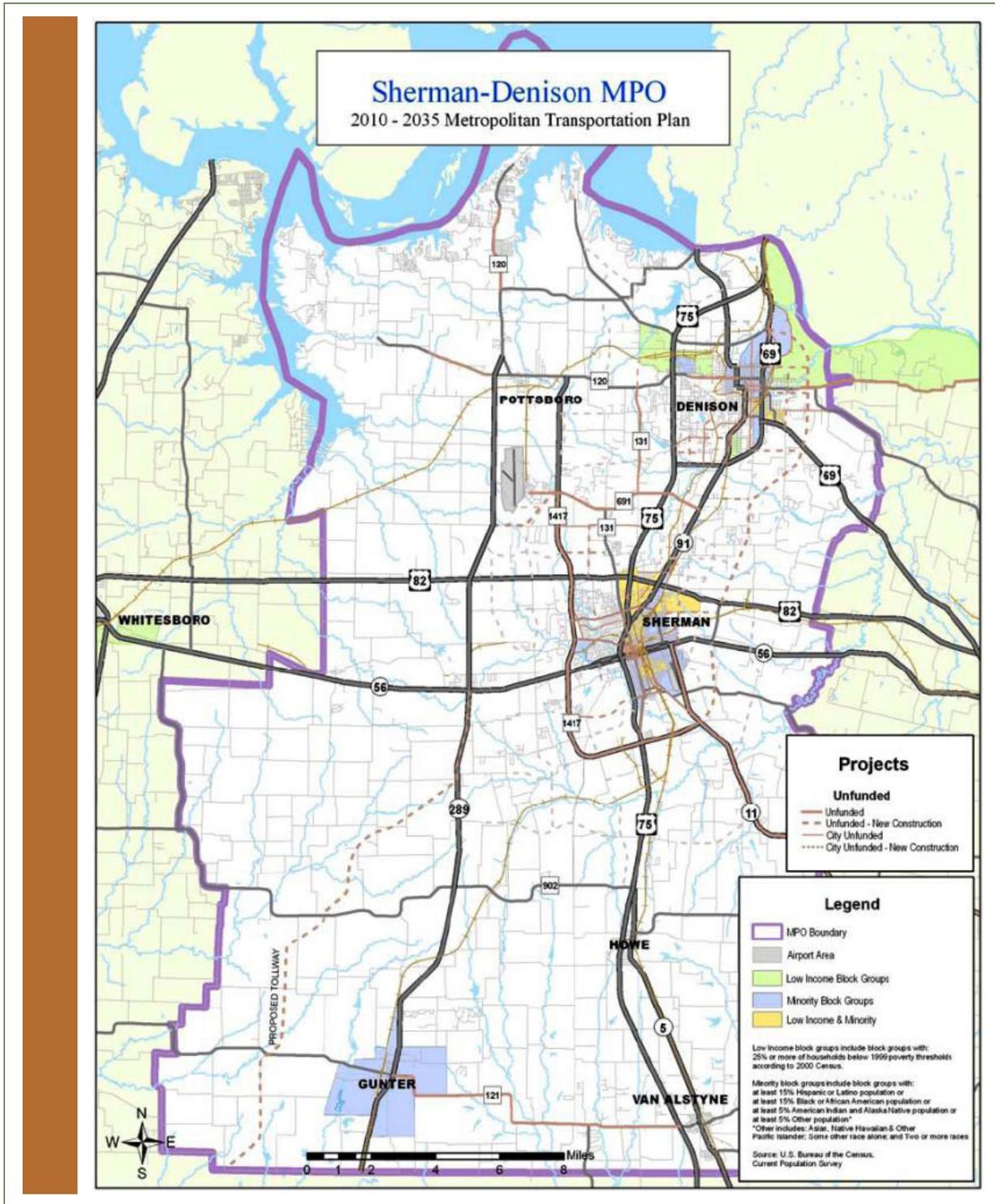
## The Regional Planning Framework

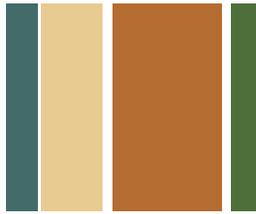
The City of Howe is part of the Sherman-Denison Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The MPO is responsible for planning the regional transportation system and allocating state and federal funds for transportation system improvements. The MPO maintains a regional metropolitan transportation plan that is updated every five years. As the City develops its transportation system plan it is important that it coordinate with the MPO to ensure its plans are incorporated into the regional plan and that eligible projects are included in the MPO's transportation improvement program so that the City benefits from regional transportation funding sources.

*Howe's multi-modal transportation system is designed to support its land use goals.*

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan





## Multi-Modal System

The City of Howe’s transportation plan relies upon multiple modes of transportation to provide a complete transportation system. The primary modes of transportation that are accommodated in Howe’s overall transportation plan include:

- Walking
- Bicycling
- Automobile travel
- Transit (both road- and rail-based)
- Freight (both road- and rail-based)

A brief description and key planning considerations for each mode follows:

### Walking

Walking is one of the most cost-effective and sustainable modes of transportation. However, development patterns since the proliferation of the automobile have decreased walking as a viable transportation mode in many communities. For walking to be an effective mode of transportation, close attention must be paid to developing land use patterns around distances that are appropriate for walking. A widely-used rule of thumb for a comfortable walking distance is ¼ mile. Therefore a theoretical development area in which walking could be the primary transportation mode is a circle with a ¼ mile radius, an area of approximately 125 acres. This area is commonly referred to as a pedestrian shed. According to the pedestrian planning web site PedShed.net, in order to maximize the potential for walking within a pedestrian shed, the following planning principles should be considered:

#### *Destinations close by*

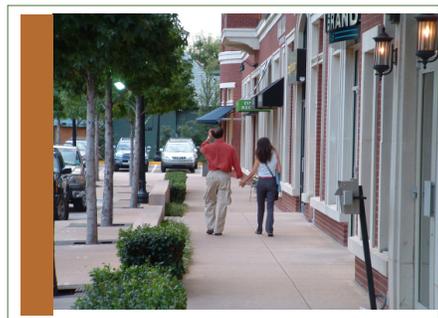
- If people are going to walk, there have to be places to walk to. Walkable neighborhoods have a variety of destinations within walking distance. Destinations might include commercial establishments (such as everyday retail or office) or civic establishments (such as religious, nonprofit or government). Destinations might also be civic spaces or transit stops.

#### *Direct and convenient routes*

- Walkers don’t like to take long detours, so routes from place to place are relatively close to a straight line. That means small blocks and few or no dead ends. There are also plenty of alternate routes between any two places, which both reduce traffic bottlenecks and provide the variety that encourages walking.

#### *Comfortable and interesting pedestrian ways*

- Pedestrian safety is greatest when vehicle speeds are low. On-street parking, trees, and other design elements are a buffer between pedestrians and traffic. Sidewalks are sized appropriately for the number of walkers. Buildings meet the street in such a way to make the “outdoor rooms” that are the mark of the best urban places. Building facades are human scale, with frequent doorways and windows, and attractive details and ornament. These design elements also allow workers and residents to keep an eye on the street and respond to criminal activity; in addition, popular walking areas tend to be safer than deserted areas.



# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan





## Bicycling

Bicycling is another cost-effective and environmentally sustainable transportation mode. The advantage of bicycling over walking is that the area that can be travelled comfortably on a bicycle far exceeds that of a pedestrian shed. Bicyclists can typically cover 3 to 4 times the distance of a pedestrian in the same time. In a well planned transportation network with dedicated bicycle facilities, biking can accommodate a high percentage of all daily trips and that percentage increases if bicycling is coupled with access to transit. However, whereas walking typically occurs on sidewalks that are safely separated from vehicular traffic within a street right-of-way, bicyclists must often share the same lane with motorized vehicles. Except for the most experienced bicyclists, the need to interact with motorized vehicles is a disincentive to bicycling.

According to the 2006 publication *Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning a Guide to Best Practices* by the Victoria Transport Policy Institute, the following are the primary facilities that should be considered in developing a bicycle transportation network:

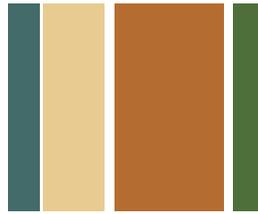
1. *Bike paths and trails* (Class I bicycle facilities) are entirely separated from the roadway except at infrequent intersections. These are generally “multi-use” facilities used by both bicyclists and pedestrians. These are generally “multi-use” facilities for pedestrians, and sometimes equestrians, as well as bicyclists.
2. *Bike lanes* (Class II bicycle facilities) are a portion of the road marked with a line, for use by bicyclists. They are always one-way facilities, with cyclists traveling in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic in the adjacent lane. Bike lanes often become dashed lines approaching an intersection to indicate that cyclists may shift lanes, and motor vehicles may pass through the lanes as needed for turning. Bike lanes are generally found on arterial roads and on major collectors. See the National Bicycling and Walking Study #4 (FHWA 1991) for a comparison of the merits and hazards of striped lanes, shoulders, and wide curb lanes.
3. *Bike routes* (Class III bicycle facilities) are roads particularly suitable for cycling that are marked with signs. This is typically appropriate for streets with low traffic speeds (40 km/h or less) and volumes (3,000 vehicles per day or less). This may be an opportunistic classification or may be the result of specific traffic management and traffic calming modifications. Bike routes may direct cyclists away from high speed traffic, high congestion traffic, or difficult intersection situations. “Bicycle Boulevards” are roads that have been modified with traffic management and traffic calming features to be particularly suitable for cycling. Note that a network of bike routes does not eliminate the need to make all roads safe for cycling.
4. *Other roadway improvements* for cyclists include wide, paved shoulders for use in rural areas, level joints and utility covers, safe drain grates, prompt and smooth repairs, smooth railroad track crossings, bicycle sensitive traffic sensors, frequent sweeping and debris cleanup, high traction paint for roadway markings, etc.
5. Destination facilities include parking facilities, showers and clothes lockers.

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

*Bicycling is a cost-effective and environmentally sustainable transportation mode that is accessible to both children and adults.*





## Automobiles

The vast majority of all transportation planning, engineering and construction resources are dedicated to accommodating automobile travel. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, automobile travel accounted for 97.2% of all commute to work trips for Howe residents. The local street network accounts for the single largest publicly owned asset in most communities. It is no wonder then that most transportation plans are focused almost exclusively on this mode. The automobile, while extremely flexible in accommodating trips of various lengths and routes, is one of the most expensive modes of transportation per capita. In addition to the economic costs of automobile ownership and maintenance, the environmental costs associated with automobile travel are also substantial. It is for these reasons that this plan attempts to recognize the importance of the automobile in the local and regional transportation system while also providing alternatives that allow for the reduction of certain automobile trips.

Some key considerations in planning for automobile traffic include the following:

- Reduced vehicle speeds on local streets ensure the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. Reduced speeds are best accomplished through roadway design. Narrower pavement widths and on-street parking help reduce vehicle speeds. Adopting a 25 mph speed limit in residential and mixed use areas is also recommended.
- Adopting an access management policy helps maintain the level of service and carrying capacity of collector and arterial streets. By limiting driveway access, providing raised medians and requiring cross-access easements in commercial development, the City will ensure the long-term functionality of its roadways. The MPO's 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan suggests the following related to access management:

- *Comprehensive [access management] strategies employ consistent control in the location, design, and operation of all intersecting roads, streets, and driveways. A successful access management strategy requires land use and site development regulations, access design and spacing standards, access permit procedures, and the adoption of an access management policy.*



# City of Howe

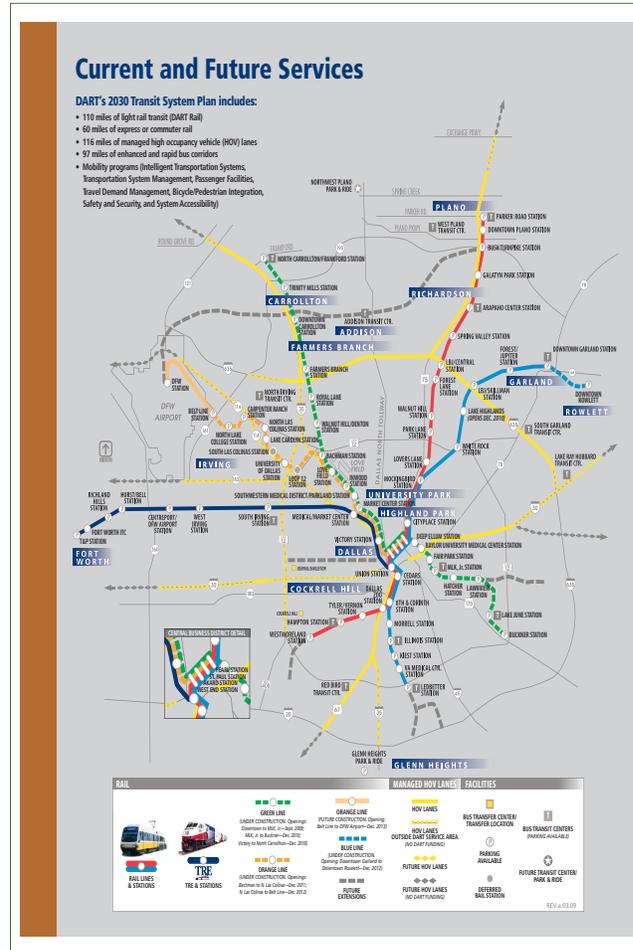
## Comprehensive Plan

### Transit

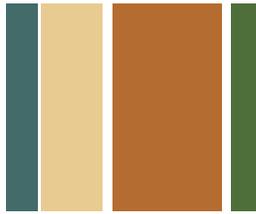
According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 85.6% of the working age population in Howe drove alone in a private automobile on their commute to work and 11.6% carpooled. The mean travel time to work in 2000 was 25.1 minutes, a number that is likely to be higher when the 2010 Census data are available. All of this points to the future opportunity that transit service offers the citizens of Howe.

The potential for passenger rail transit on the DART-owned rail line that runs through Howe is a major advantage that is a part of the long-term transportation system plan for the City. The City should work with the MPO and DART to plan for a potential rail transit station in downtown Howe. The addition of passenger rail to the transportation options would provide an alternative to residents whose place of employment is outside the City.

In the shorter-term, the City should work with regional transit providers to develop a commuter bus service that connects into the DART rail system. Additional study should be conducted to determine specific commuting patterns which will assist in identifying the best routes and services for potential transit riders. The Texoma Area Paratransit System (TAPS) is currently providing service from Sherman to the Plano, Parker Road DART station on the Texoma Express bus. The City should work with TAPS to identify opportunities to expand that service by adding a stop in Howe when demand is sufficient to justify it.



DART's 2030 plan calls for future expansion of the Red Line to the north.



## Freight

The movement of freight is a major component of the local, state and global economies. Providing facilities for freight movement is typically the responsibility of the State and Federal government as well as private transportation entities such as railroad companies. Howe is fortunate to have access to two freight corridors representing two different modes of transportation. U.S. 75 provides a major freight corridor for truck traffic and the rail line provides opportunities for freight movement via rail. The main priority for the City in addressing freight movement is to ensure that the land use plan is followed so that land uses that require access to freight corridors are located with good access to U.S. 75 and/or the rail line. Further, as the City plans for freight-intensive land uses, it must ensure that adequate local roadways are in place to provide local routes to U.S. 75 that keep freight vehicles away from residential and mixed use areas.



# City of Howe

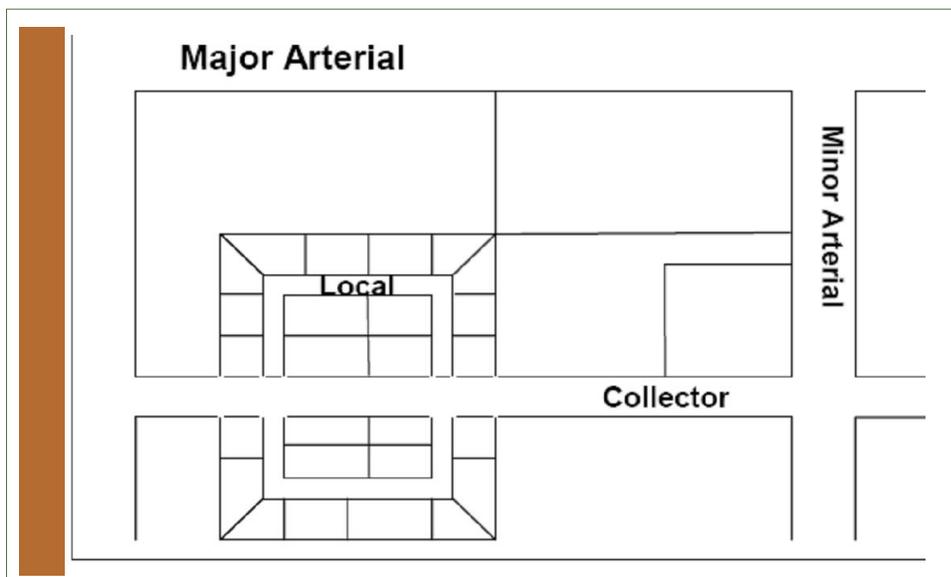
## Comprehensive Plan

### Thoroughfare Planning

The primary organizing principle for roadway planning has conventionally been the functional classification system whereby roads are categorized by function based upon the volume and speed of traffic that each roadway is designed to accommodate. The functional classification system generally consists of local, collector and arterial streets. A brief description of each functional classification is provided below.

Functional Classification	Characteristics
Arterial	Designed to carry the highest volumes and speeds of traffic. These roads are designed with limited driveway access and are intended to provide a route for through traffic connecting local and regional destinations.
Collector	Designed to carry moderate volumes of traffic at slower speeds than arterials. These roads provide connections between neighborhoods and provide limited commercial driveway access in proximity to key intersections.
Local	Designed to carry the lowest volumes of local traffic at very low speeds. These roads provide internal circulation for neighborhoods and mixed use centers.

A graphic representation of the functional classification system from the MPO's 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan follows.





# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### Interconnected

Another key planning consideration for the City's thoroughfare system is the level of interconnectivity of transportation facilities. The Victoria Transport Policy Institute defines connectivity as:

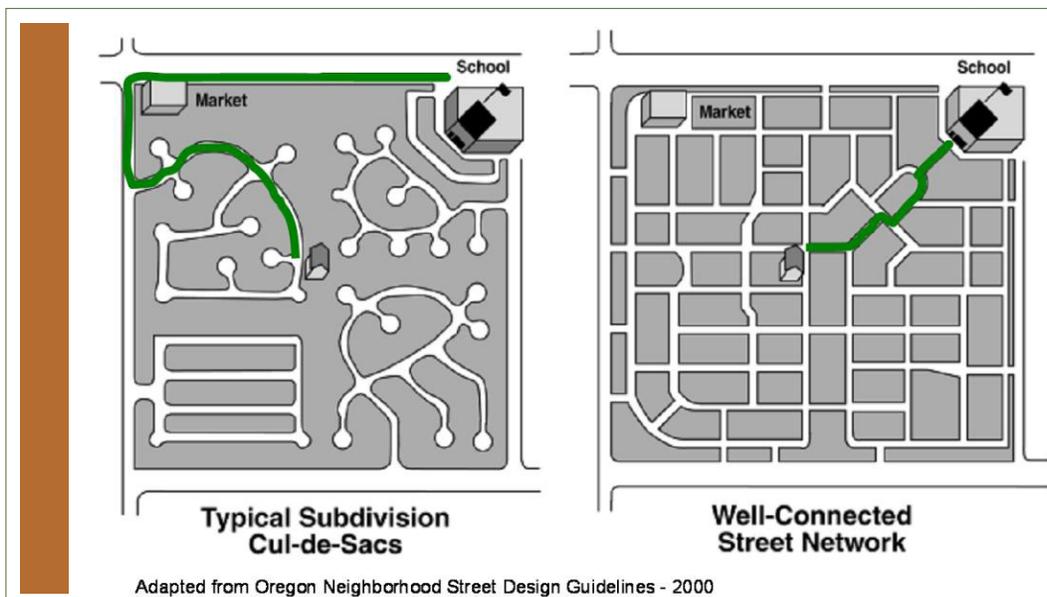
*Connectivity refers to the density of connections in path or road networks and the directness of links. A well-connected road or path network has many short links, numerous intersections, and minimal dead-ends (cul-de-sacs). As connectivity increases, travel distances decrease and route options increase, allowing more direct travel between destinations, creating a more accessible and resilient system. Connectivity can apply both internally (streets within [a neighborhood]) and externally (connections with arterials and other neighborhoods).*

In their 2004 report on street connectivity for the American Planning Association, Handy, Paterson and Butler identified the following best practices to increase network connectivity:

- Minimize dead-end streets, and where they exist limit their length to about 200 feet.
- Where dead-end streets exist, try to create paths that provide shortcuts for walking and cycling.

- A modified-grid street network with a high degree of connectivity should generally be used in urban areas.
- As much as possible, new developments and urban redevelopments should have a high degree of roadway and pathway connectivity.
- Use short street and small blocks as much as possible. An ideal for urban development is a 300 to 500 foot grid for pedestrians and bicycles networks and a 500 to 1,000 foot grid for motor vehicle streets.
- Planners should watch for opportunities to increase connectivity, particularly for non-motorized paths.
- Traffic Calming should generally be used instead of street closures to control excessive vehicle traffic on urban streets.

The advantages of an interconnected network are many, including alternative routes and reduced response times for emergency vehicles, increased likelihood of walking and biking, and reduced vehicle miles traveled. The transportation plan identifies future major roadways that will increase the overall connectivity of the thoroughfare system. The City should also amend its development regulations to ensure maximum connectivity in new developments.





## Transportation Funding

In order to implement the recommendations in this plan, the City will need to tap into multiple transportation funding sources. As outlined above, transportation system responsibilities span multiple levels of government and therefore transportation system improvements funded differently depending upon who has responsibility for the improvement. Following is a brief summary of transportation funding options based upon responsibility.

### Federal and State Government

The Federal government is primarily responsible for funding improvements to the interstate and U.S. highway system. The federal government sends transportation funding dollars to the states where they are allocated regionally by the metropolitan planning organizations. Other federal transportation funds flow through state and federal agencies and to local governments in some cases. The City of Howe should ensure that it works closely with the Sherman-Denison MPO to incorporate major transportation system improvements, such as new highway overpasses, into the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Getting these projects identified in the regional plan and then getting them programmed for funding should be a high priority of the City.

### County Government

Many of the roads in the City's proposed ultimate boundary are currently Grayson County roads. Improvements and expansion of these roads will primarily happen as a result of new development. The City should work closely with Grayson County as the County plans future road improvements and road bond elections to ensure that high priority projects within the ultimate growth boundary are considered for funding. The City should also work with the County on any necessary updates to the County's subdivision regulations to ensure that adequate roadways are provided by new development.

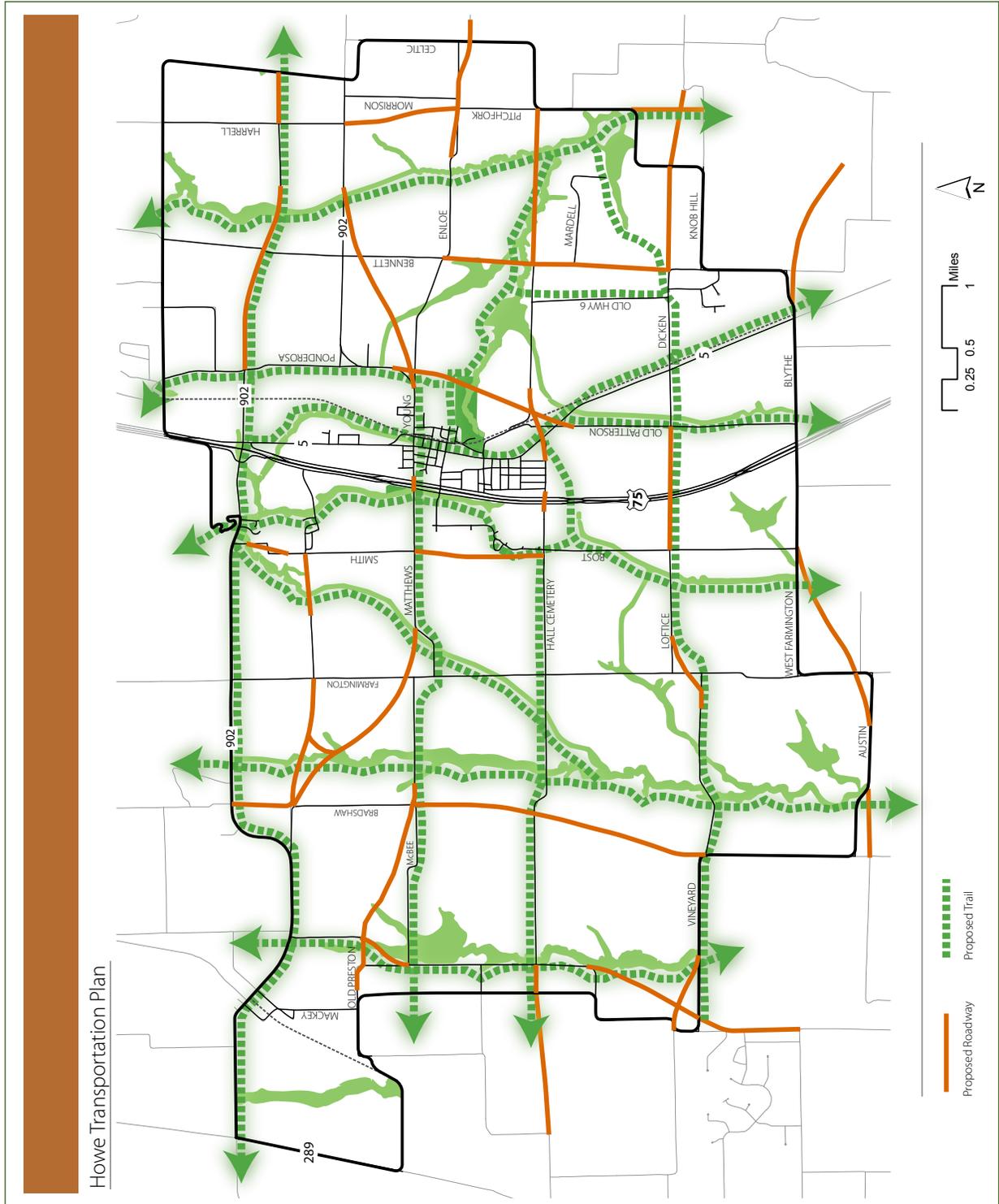
### City Government

Inside the City limits and in the extraterritorial jurisdiction, the City has the primary responsibility for ensuring the local street network is developed as planned. Further, the City is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of all City streets. The City has a number of funding sources available to it for street construction and maintenance and should utilize the appropriate funding sources based upon the project type. The City currently has a Type B economic development corporation that collects a ½ cent sales tax. These funds can be used for street and roadway improvements related to local economic development. The City is authorized by Chapter 327 of the Texas Tax Code to adopt a 1/8 or ¼ cent sales tax dedicated strictly to street maintenance. Because the City is currently at the maximum sales tax rate due to the ½ cent Type B and the ½ cent for property tax reduction, it is not currently able to adopt the street maintenance sales tax. However, in the future the City should consider the option of converting a portion of the property tax reduction sales tax to a street maintenance tax. The City also has its annual capital improvements program that should be used to fund priority street improvement and maintenance projects. The City may also want to establish a road bond program for major projects that could be put forward for voter approval. Regardless of the funding mechanism used, the City should develop a prioritized list of transportation projects and then determine how to fund them.

### Private Development

Many of the transportation system improvement projects identified in this plan will be needed to accommodate growth and development. For that reason, a significant amount of the cost of development-related transportation improvements should be borne by private developers. In order to determine what improvements are needed and quantify the financial obligation of the developer, the City should adopt a traffic impact analysis (TIA) requirement in the City's development regulations. By completing a TIA prior to development approval, new development will identify its impacts on the transportation system and will be responsible for the cost of necessary improvements.

# City of Howe Comprehensive Plan



Howe Transportation Plan



## Transportation Policies

T-1 Accommodate all modes of transportation, including walking, bicycling, automobiles, transit and freight, in the design and construction of new roadways to the extent appropriate based upon the development context and the functionality of the roadway.

T-2 Encourage walking and bicycling as alternatives to automobile travel by ensuring that safe and efficient sidewalks and bicycle routes are provided in all new development.

T-3 Coordinate transportation and land use planning to ensure context sensitive transportation system design and an efficient transportation system.

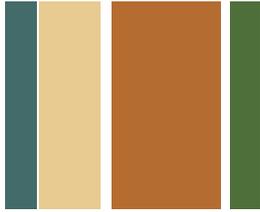
T-4 Require new development to bear its proportionate share of transportation system improvements.

T-5 Coordinate transportation planning with regional partners including the MPO, County, State and Federal government.

T-6 Require that new transportation networks are interconnected to the greatest extent feasible to promote efficient service delivery, reduce vehicle miles traveled and promote walking and bicycling as viable mode choices.

## Implementation Actions

- Work with Sherman-Denison MPO to incorporate the transportation system improvements identified in this plan into the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program.
- Adopt an access management policy.
- Develop and adopt a transportation design manual that incorporates the recommendations of the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) recommended practice for context sensitive solutions.
- Revise the City's development regulations to require the dedication of right-of-way for proposed roads and trails during the development process.
- Revise the City's development regulations to require the preparation of a traffic impact analysis (TIA) for new development.
- Develop a transit system plan in coordination with the COG, TAPS and DART to provide for future transit access from Howe to regional destinations.
- Complete a transportation improvements program that identifies and prioritizes transportation system improvements and identifies a funding source for each.



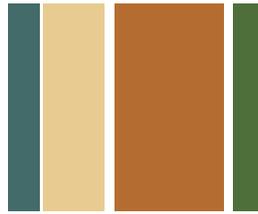
# Chapter 4

## Utilities



### Chapter 4: Utilities

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## Utilities

### Introduction

The existing utility infrastructure in Howe provides the City with adequate transfers of water and wastewater utilities. With the help of long range planning, Howe will be able to ensure that future developments will be efficiently serviced. The City will then be able to expand the utility infrastructure to manage future growth and remain consistent with the Future Land Use Plan, and provide for a sustainable future. This chapter addresses City of Howe owned and maintained utilities and does not address franchise utilities.

### Existing Conditions

#### Water System

The existing water infrastructure in the City is adequate for the existing residential pressure and volume requirements and is in accordance with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) guidelines and criteria. At the current time, the City provides water on one pressure plane, with one pressure reducing valve for the Pioneer Valley Drive subdivision. Pressure ranges from 45 to 60 pounds per square inch (psi), but can reach 100 psi in the area near Well #3 when its pumps are in the lead.

The City has three groundwater well, pump and ground storage reservoir and/or elevated storage tower combinations and one surface water receiving location with pumps and a ground storage reservoir. On the northeast side of the City near Young Street and Cassandra Street exists a 200 gallon per minute (gpm) groundwater well, 500 gpm of pumping capacity, a 200,000 gallon ground storage reservoir (GSR) and a 100,000 gallon elevated storage tower (EST), all referred to as Well #2. On the north side of the City, on FM 902 near Pioneer Valley Drive, there is a 400 gpm groundwater well, 500 gpm of pumping capacity and a 250,000 gallon GSR, all referred to as Well #3. In the west central part of the City off of Western Hills Drive is a 200 gpm groundwater well, 500 gpm of pumping capacity, a 250,000 gallon GSR and a 250,000 gallon EST, all referred to as Well #4. Additionally, a new surface water take point has

recently been established at Old Patterson Road on the south side of the City which contains a 500,000 gallon ground storage reservoir, and two 375 gpm pumps. This station serves to receive water from the North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD) via Greater Texoma Utility Authority (GTUA) systems.

The City is also currently upgrading its water system controls by installing supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems at all of its water facilities. This will allow the City to monitor and regulate pump flows and water storage levels. Additionally, chlorine analyzers are being installed to allow the City to monitor chlorine residuals levels, an essential aspect of maintaining safe drinking water.

Most of the City's water system is constructed of 4 to 8-inch water lines with a few 10 and 12-inch lines. The water system currently averages approximately 290,000 gallons per day.

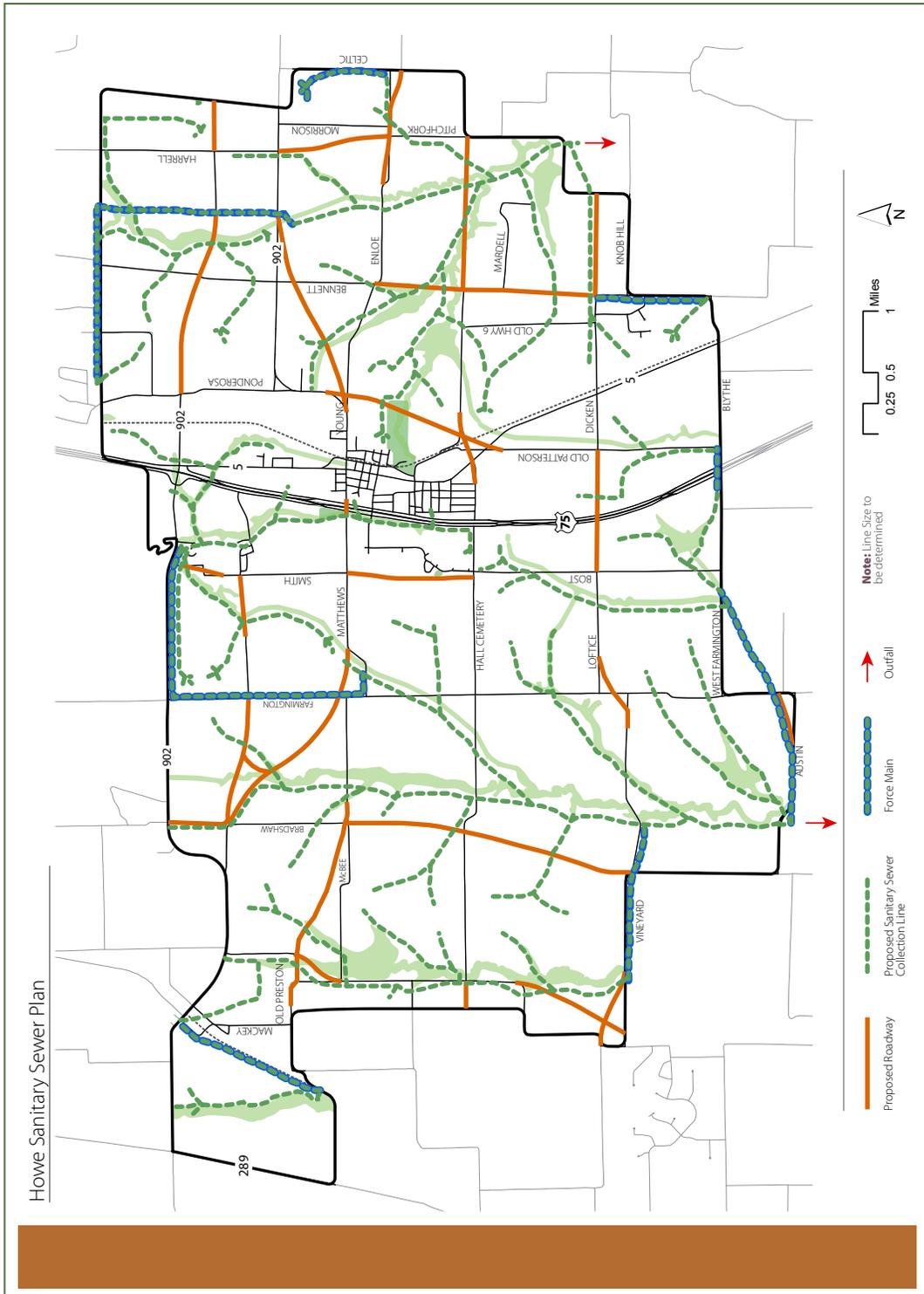
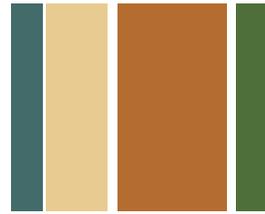


### Wastewater System

The existing wastewater system is currently adequate for the City's needs. However, new lines are necessary to accommodate significant new development. The existing wastewater infrastructure consists primarily of 6-inch lines with some 8, 10 and 12-inch lines. The primary sanitary sewer transmission line is a 12-inch line that runs along Squirrel Creek, discharges to the City of Sherman wastewater system and ultimately is treated at Sherman's wastewater treatment facility. The vast majority of the City's sewer lines consist of vitrified clay tile (VCT) pipe, an older and more brittle pipe material, with the remainder of the pipe material being polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe.

Wastewater flow from the City of Howe passes through a Parshall flume metering station before entering the City of Sherman system. The City's 12-inch transmission line along Squirrel Creek has the capacity range of 5.37 million gallons per day (MGD) to 20.67 MGD and the Parshall flume metering station has the capacity of 2.50 MGD. However, it is important to note that review of the Howe Outfall Line plans (this line begins at the City of Howe and City of Sherman city limits near Well #3 and is in the City of Sherman jurisdiction) indicates that the section of line immediately north and downstream of the metering station has a 1.04 MGD capacity, much less than the capacity of the Howe system. The City of Howe has recently purchased and installed a Flo-Dar flow metering instrument immediately downstream of the Parshall flume. The Flo-Dar instrument combines digital doppler radar velocity sensing technology with ultrasonic pulse echo level sensing to remotely measure both partial and fully-submerged flows. The Flo-Dar was installed to provide a secondary means of flow measure. The City has two lift stations, which are located on Mayo St. near Farmington St. and on Patterson St. near Hughes St. There is a project designed that will abandon the Mayo/Farmington Lift Station by installing a new gravity sewer along

Farmington. This sewer line is also sized for future development to the south (farther south along Farmington as well as south of Bledsoe Road between US Highway 75 and State Highway 5). The City is currently seeking Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for this project.



# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### Utility System Improvements

There is significant long-term growth potential for future residential and commercial projects in the City of Howe. These developments will result in a strong demand for major utility system improvements. It is anticipated areas of existing water and sewer lines in need of repair can be replaced over time with the utilization of a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) which allocates money in the City's yearly budget to make certain improvements to the existing City infrastructure. In addition, the continued utilization of CDBG Grants which the City has been receiving can be used to rehabilitate existing water and sewer lines in the older portions or town.

New utility infrastructure systems are needed to assist and promote new development. Howe is planning for proactive management of growth compared to past decades. There is a general recognition that regional growth is inevitable, and there is a need for strategic planning when providing infrastructure for growth. Future growth projections were based on the following density and flow table:

### Water System

Improvements to the system are needed to provide a base network for future growth and to rehabilitate aging water lines. With residential, commercial and industrial growth, major improvements will be needed. When new main trunk lines are installed, the existing system will be connected and act as the interior loop system. This will provide the City with adequate pressure and volume so the major industries can adequately be served. The City should develop a Water Master Plan to provide for a water system that will accommodate the needs of Howe's long-range plan.

Design Parameters for the City of Howe Utilities	
Land Use	Design
Single Family Residential	100 gallons per person per day 4.0 units per acre 3.2 persons per unit
Multi-Family Residential / Public	100 gallons per person per day 20 units per acre 3.0 persons per unit
Industrial / Warehouse	1,388 parking spaces per 34.7 acres 1 person per parking space 20 gallons per person per day
Commercial / Office / Service	3,100 parking spaces per 34.7 acres 1 person per parking space 35 gallons per person per day

*Notes:*

- 1. Daily peak factor of 2.4 was used for sanitary sewer design flows*
- 2. Sanitary sewer peak flows include an infiltration rate of 400 gallons per acre per day*



# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### Wastewater System

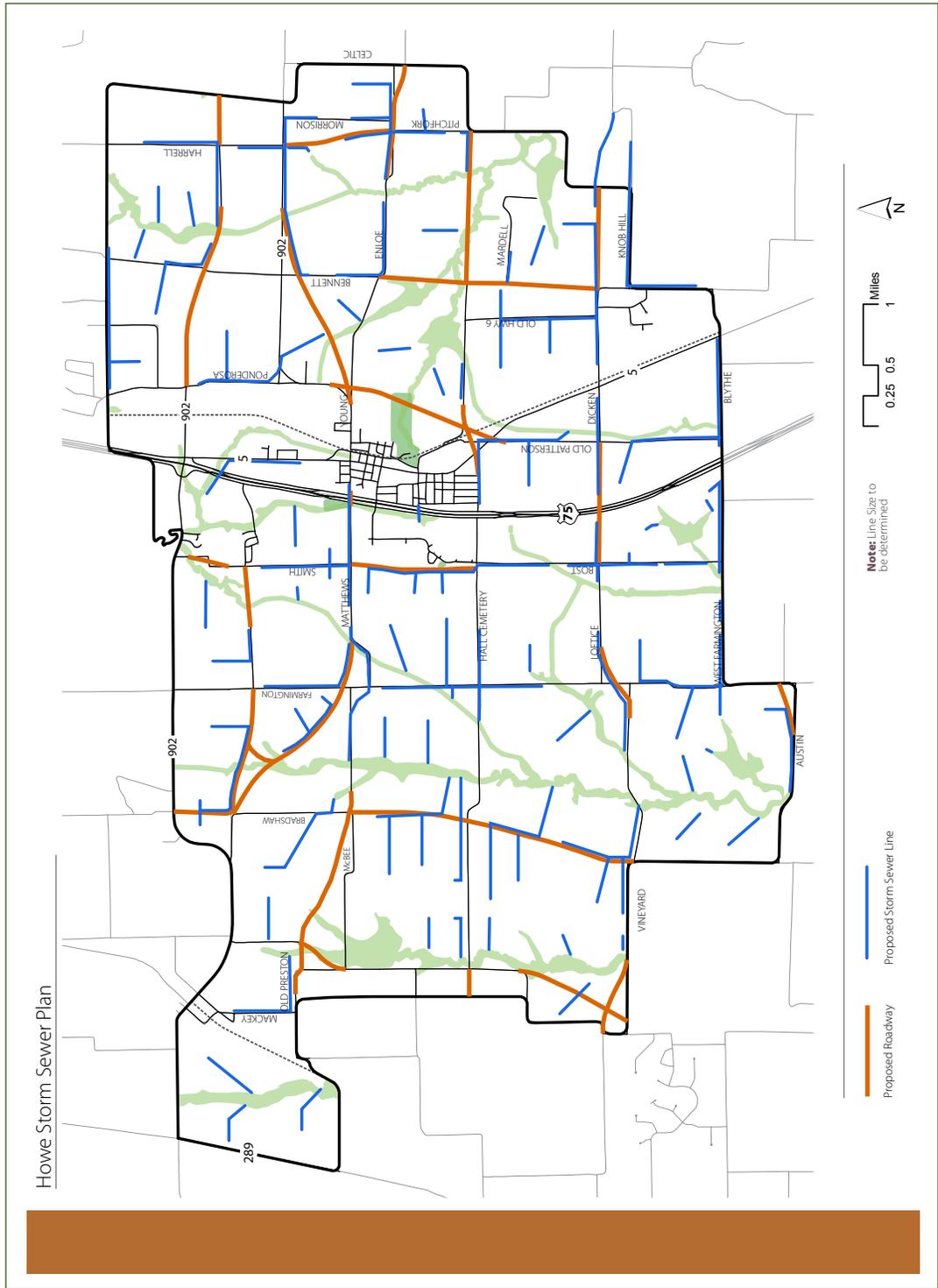
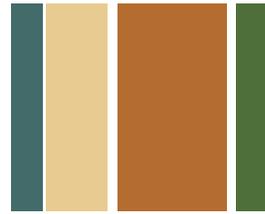
Improvements to the wastewater infrastructure are needed to promote development and minimize the need for lift stations. The expected expansion of residential, commercial and industrial developments will require a planned approach to sanitary sewer trunk mains and wastewater treatment that will facilitate the projected growth of Howe. Currently, the sanitary sewer outfall line exiting the City of Howe to the City of Sherman's treatment facility does not meet the needed capacity to support the future system. Emphasis should be placed on determining long-range wastewater treatment options and planning trunk mains in order to support the increase in sanitary sewer flow that will accompany the future growth of Howe. The City should develop a Wastewater Master Plan consistent with its Future Land Use Plan to provide for an orderly development of its wastewater infrastructure.



### Stormwater System

The City of Howe does not have many major storm sewer systems in place. However, a recently constructed project, Western Hills Drainage, was designed and constructed in accordance with criteria and standards common to this geographic location. The City should develop and adopt stormwater design and construction criteria so that flood hazards are minimized to acceptable levels as new developments occur.

There are a number of unique opportunities and challenges associated with Howe's location and future development. Among these opportunities and challenges is recognizing the balance between maintaining quality of life and the demands of rapid growth. It is important that the City of Howe be prepared to build on its unique location opportunity and its expected rapid growth over the next two decades the strategic and cost-effective provision of utility infrastructure is a key component of Howe's long range planning.



# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### Utility System Policies

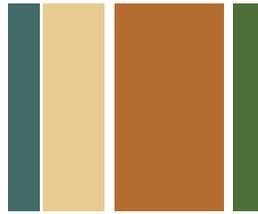
U-1 Improve the quality of the city's water and sewer structure.

U-2 Improve the quality of the drainage system.

U-3 Establish a Water Master Plan to provide for orderly improvements to the water system as development warrant

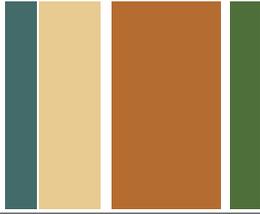
U-4 Ensure utility coverage to all residents within newly acquired areas within 3 years.





## Implementation Actions

- Develop a five-year capital improvement program (CIP) for water and sewer.
- Seek funding through State and Federal grants for immediate needs.
- Hire a professional grant writer to work on obtaining grants.
- Complete a rate study to determine appropriate rates for the water and sewer utilities in order to provide adequate revenue for maintenance.
- Replace dilapidated sewer lines.
- Ensure connections for all residents.
- Make certain that all water mains in commercially zoned areas are at least twelve (12) inches in diameter for fire protection purposes.
- Require that all new developments are required to construct streets, drainage, water, sewer, gas and electric utilities for their development in accordance with city standards.
- Establish a Wastewater Master Plan to provide for orderly improvements to the water system as development warrant.
- Establish a schedule and plan for stormwater maintenance operations.
- Develop and adopt stormwater drainage design criteria and construction standards.
- Clear silt and vegetation from drainage ways, clean culverts routinely, and create retention and detention ponds for water control.



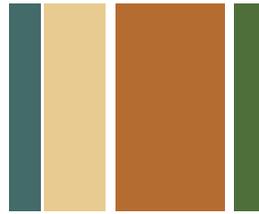
# Chapter 5

## Parks & Open Space



### Chapter 5: Parks & Open Space

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# Parks & Open Space

## Introduction

A system of parks, open space and trails is a vital component of any vibrant community. These recreational spaces portray the health of the community to citizens as well as visitors. Parks do not just provide recreational opportunity; they also play an important role in the seamless transition between land uses. Each space reflects the image of the community and provides citizens and visitors alike with a sense of comfort, enjoyment and place.

In this section attention will be paid to each park and open space available for community use. A thorough look at the present state of each park will be taken before future needs and issues will be addressed. Finally, policies and implementation actions will be created in order to provide a mechanism for guiding local decisions and measuring performance toward achieving the community's goals. The recommendations in this plan cover a twenty year planning horizon and are based upon projections of population and demographics found in Chapter 1.

## Goals and Objectives

Through the planning process for the City of Howe comprehensive plan, a steering committee of local citizens developed a series of goals and objectives related to the City's parks, open space and recreational facilities. The steering committee completed a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis and developed and distributed a community questionnaire. The results from both of these tools provided the basis for developing the goals, objectives and strategies for parks and recreational facilities. A complete description of the planning process is included in Chapter 1 along with all of the goals and objectives.

Following are the goals, objectives and strategies for the City of Howe parks and recreational facilities.

### **Goal: Provide and adequately equip neighborhood and community-wide parks.**

#### **Objectives:**

- Bring existing parks up to minimum standards of maintenance and equipment
- Identify sites for future parks
- Develop a trail systems plan to connect current and future parks

#### **Strategies:**

- Maintain and update a parks and trails master plan.
- Create a formal set of amenity standards for each type of park (neighborhood and community) in order to better serve all areas of the community
- Implement a parkland dedication ordinance for new development
- Improve current conditions at each park through renovation and redevelopment: new bleachers, paint, landscaping, improved parking conditions, restroom facilities, improved/new concession stands
- Develop a capital improvements program for existing parks to bring them up to the identified standards in this plan
- Seek grants for park development and trail construction

### **Goal: Acquire additional parkland and open space to meet the needs of an expanding population and to protect sensitive lands.**

#### **Objectives:**

- Ensure that new residential development provides adequate park and open space

based upon a community standard of the amount of parkland per capita

- Ensure that newly acquired parks are equipped to meet the minimum standards identified in this plan

### **Strategies:**

- Adopt a parkland dedication ordinance to ensure adequate parkland and open space is set aside during the development process
- Add baseball and softball fields to various parks including Dot and Casey Jones Park
- Add public soccer/multi-purpose fields to existing parks such as Dot and Casey Jones Park
- Provide community with visible and safe community trails (See Ultimate Land Use Map) linking each park
- Add tennis courts to Dot and Casey Jones Park, and create public tennis leagues
- Plan for future community park on the west side of US 75 as the City grows
- Adopt a park improvement fee that is assessed either at the time of platting or building permit to provide a funding stream to equip new parks

**Goal: Develop city-wide recreation programs that encourage involvement from all citizens and meet their social, recreational and physical fitness needs.**

### **Objectives:**

- Partner with Howe ISD and other civic organizations to provide recreational programs
- Develop indoor recreational facilities as the population increases
- Ensure that recreational opportunities are

available for all age groups

### **Strategies:**

- Utilize the existing Howe Community Center to provide multi-generational recreational opportunities
- Create a plan to expand indoor recreational facilities with the possibility of utilizing existing, underutilized community buildings
- Seek grants for indoor recreational facilities

**Goal: Educate Howe residents and visitors of the availability and amenities of existing parks and recreational programs.**

### **Objectives:**

- Utilize various means of informing citizens on park amenities and activities
- Update citizens on park openings, changes, additions, etc. through local advertisements, flyers and a city website

### **Strategies:**

- Create a city web page dedicated to local parks and recreation programs
- Actively promote sports leagues within the city, also create community activities within existing parks to promote added use
- Utilize the images and inventory information in this plan to create a web and print flyer about Howe's parks and recreation programs
- Increase visibility and use of city parks by holding community events in the parks



## Plan Development Process

The City of Howe began the planning process for this plan in January of 2010. A steering committee representing a broad cross section of the community was appointed by the Mayor to provide guidance to a consultant team in preparing the plan. A detailed description of the planning process is included in Chapter 1.

### Citizen Involvement

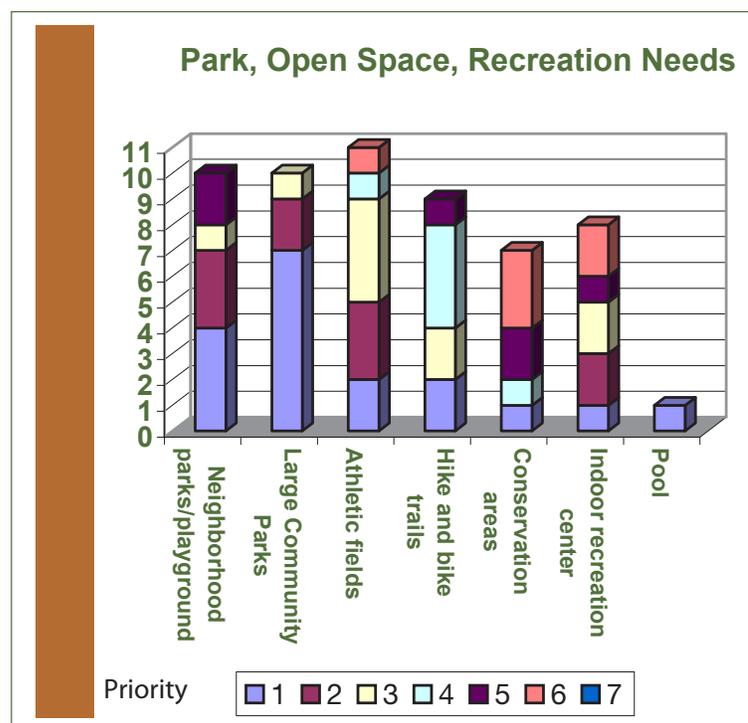
The steering committee had several meetings over the winter and spring of 2010 to assess the community's needs, gather citizen input through a community survey and develop a set of goals, objectives and strategies to guide the planning process. The committee clearly recognized the need and benefit of enhancing the City's parks, recreational opportunities and open spaces. Through the completion of a SWOT analysis the committee identified the need for a better trail system as well as improvements and maintenance to existing park facilities.

The committee also developed and distributed a community questionnaire that was mailed directly to 55 community members representing a broad cross-section of community stakeholders. The questionnaire was also available at City Hall for any member of the community to complete. The questionnaire asked for input on the current state of the public parks as well as the availability of recreation and open space within Howe. The responses received identified the following key needs and issues related to parks, recreation and open space:

- Fence improvements to baseball fields, bad condition and potentially dangerous
- Better location for Community Park away from highways
- New park with walking trails, most residents currently use school playground
- Better accessibility to athletic

- fields, as well as better parking
- Indoor place for kids or special events
- Baseball fields open to public and not owned by schools
- Large park with pavilions for parties, etc.
- Better maintenance and presentation of Jones Memorial Park
- A park with picnic area and play ground. Possibly include athletic complex with walking trail

Participants in the questionnaire were also asked to rate from 1 to 7 (1 being highest priority) the community parks, recreation and open space needs for the future. The results are shown below:



# City of Howe

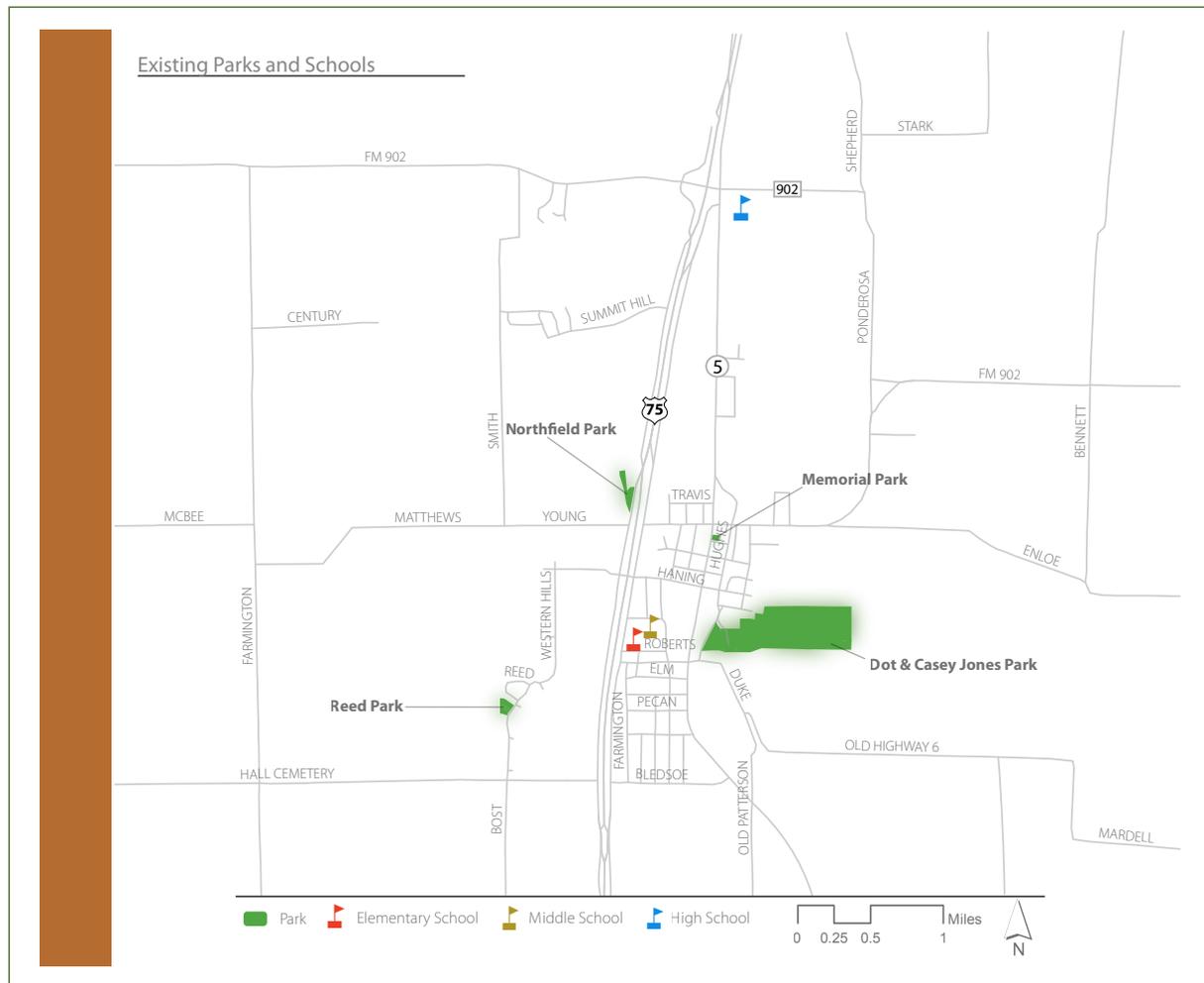
## Comprehensive Plan

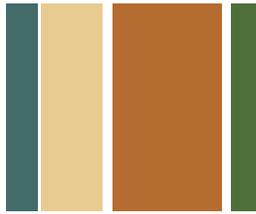
### Area and Facility Concepts and Standards

In order to provide a basis for assessing the community's current parks and facilities and to provide guidance for how to improve those facilities and add new ones over time, the City utilized the Park, Recreation, Open Space & Greenway Guidelines published by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) as a guide for developing local standards for parks, recreational facilities, open spaces and trails.

### Inventory of Areas and Facilities

The City of Howe currently has a number of public parks as well as a community center. There are also recreational facilities at each school including the elementary, middle and high school. In addition to the public parks and facilities located in Howe, there are two private parks located within the city limits. The following map identifies the major parks and school facilities. Following the map is a brief description and photos of each of the City's public parks as well as information regarding park and recreational facilities at Howe ISD schools and private facilities.





## Reed Park

Located on the west side of town, Reed Park serves as a neighborhood park for Western Hills Road and surrounding houses. The park has a sizeable amount of open space that could be utilized as recreational fields for youth. While this park does contain a healthy amount of recreational amenities such as a swing set and slide, some of the equipment is rusting or has become unsteady. In order to encourage greater use of the park, emphasis should be placed on improving the appearance and standards of the equipment in order to project a fun and safe environment. Improvement of park appearance makes the neighborhood itself an even more appealing and attractive place to live.



### *Recommendations:*

- Upgrade existing equipment*
- Improve Landscaping*
- Add multi-purpose sports field*

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

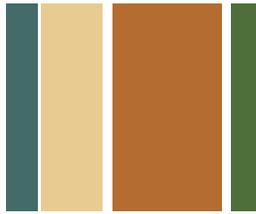
### Northfield Park

Northfield Park is located just to the west of US 75 on the north side of the city. The park's three baseball fields help serve the entire community's little league and recreational needs. There are currently concession and bathroom facilities, but improvement should be made to their appearance. Spectator benches for each field are rusted and in some cases unsteady. Emphasis should be placed on providing adequate paved parking spaces as well as improving building and bench conditions in order to improve the facility's appearance for residents and visitors. Currently, there is an ample amount of land to make these improvements and by doing so Northfield Park can become an attractive and highly visible community park.



### *Recommendations:*

- Improve and add paved parking*
- Upgrade existing buildings, bleachers, and fencing*
- Add a small playground*



## Howe Memorial Park

Howe Memorial Park serves the north-central portion of the city. This neighborhood park contains picnic tables, a wooden climber and a basketball court. Its central location makes the Memorial Park an ideal place for residents to gather. Special emphasis should be placed on landscaping the park to increase its attractiveness as well as potentially furnishing the current pavilion to encourage its use for events. While the park is limited in size, its central location and healthy tree cover make it an attractive place for residents.



### *Recommendations:*

- Upgrade existing landscaping*
- Add benches*
- Add a small playscape*
- Increase use for special events*

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

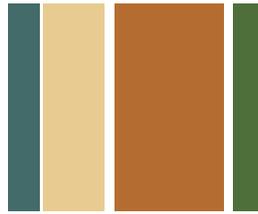
### Ferguson Field

Ferguson Field is located on South Hughes street immediately west of Dot and Casey Jones Park. This baseball field serves the central portion of the City. The field's facilities are aging and in need of upgrading. As the City plans for the continued development of the undeveloped land at Dot and Casey Jones Park, a new baseball field could replace the current facilities at Ferguson Field allowing the area to be used for other park purposes. It's proximity to the town center could provide an ideal location for an outdoor festival area or farmers' market.



### **Recommendations:**

- Consider relocating baseball field to Jones Park*
- Potential uses for this site include downtown festivals and farmers market*



### Dot and Casey Jones Park

The largest of Howe's parkland, Dot and Casey Jones Park will serve as the anchor of the park system within Howe. Located in the central portion of the city, the park will serve the entire community. Currently the parkland is undeveloped open space. As Howe continues to grow, increased priority should be made to develop the land with facilities and amenities to serve the entire community. Amenities such as tennis courts, basketball courts and pavilions are among the many possibilities that exist for the park. In addition, a community trail system could begin with the construction of a loop trail within the park.

### Howe Community Center

The Howe Community Center is located on Haning Street west of Interstate 75 in the same building that houses the Police Department. The facility currently contains two meetings rooms as well as a kitchen and restrooms. Special attention should be paid to the expansion of the center. By expanding its uses and appeal, the center can become a focal point for the entire community encouraging increased community events as well as strengthening social bonds.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Create a master plan for park development
- Begin a community trail system at this park with a link to downtown

#### **Recommendations:**

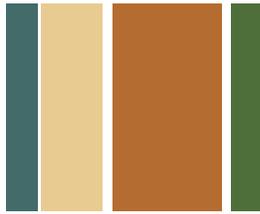
- Add recreational programming for seniors and youth
- Expand existing facility or consider replacing with indoor recreation center/community center
- Upgrade landscaping

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### Existing Parks Inventory

City of Howe Public Parks Inventory						
	Reed Park	Northfield Park	Howe Memorial Park	Dot and Casey Jones Park	Howe Community Center	Ferguson Field
Pavilion	--	--	--	--	--	--
Picnic Tables	1	2	4	--	--	--
BBQ Pits	--	--	--	--	--	--
Gazebo	--	--	1	--	--	--
Benches	--	--	1	--	--	--
Bleachers	--	2	--	--	--	1
Concession Stand	--	1	--	--	--	--
Restrooms	--	1	--	--	--	1
Playground/sc						
ape	--	--	--	--	--	--
Horseshoe	--	--	--	--	--	--
Slide	1	--	--	--	--	--
Merry-go-round	1	--	--	--	--	--
Teeter totter	1	--	--	--	--	--
Climber	2	--	1 (wooden w/slide)	--	--	--
Swings	4	--	--	--	--	--
Tennis	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sand						
Volleyball	--	--	--	--	--	--
Baseball	--	3 (2 lighted)	--	--	--	1
T-ball	--	--	--	--	--	--
Softball	--	--	--	--	--	--
Batting Cages	--	--	--	--	--	--
Football	--	--	--	--	--	--
Multipurpose/practice field	--	--	--	--	--	--
Basketball	--	--	1 (no basket)	--	--	--
Four Square	--	--	--	--	--	--
Rodeo	--	--	--	--	--	--
Show Barn	--	--	--	--	--	--
Boat Launch	--	--	--	--	--	--
Trails/walkway	--	--	--	--	--	--
Paddling Trails	--	--	--	--	--	--
Pond	--	--	--	--	--	--
Drinking Fountains	--	--	--	--	--	--
Meeting Rooms	--	--	--	--	2	--
Kitchen	--	--	--	--	1	--



### School Facilities

Howe ISD maintains a number of recreational facilities and fields associated with their three school campuses. These facilities include the high school football stadium and track, multi-purpose fields at the middle and elementary school campus and a good sized playground also at the elementary school. Because of Howe’s small population, it is advisable for the City and school district to work together on the joint use of certain recreational facilities. As the City grows and additional school campuses are added, the City should work with the school district to develop joint use agreements to cooperatively develop fields and playgrounds on school campuses that are integrated into new neighborhoods.

One current opportunity for a joint use agreement is the elementary school playground located on the west side of the campus. This playground could be used as a neighborhood park for the neighborhood around the school and the City could partner with Howe ISD for some improvements and on-going maintenance.



# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

Howe ISD Recreation Facilities						
	Howe Elementary School	Howe ISD Baseball Fields	Howe Middle School	Howe ISD Football Field (Bulldog Field)	Howe High School	Howe Softball Fields
Picnic Tables	5	--	--	2	--	2
Benches	--	--	--	--	--	--
Bleachers	--	1	--	yes	--	2
Concession Stand	--	1	--	1	--	1
Restrooms	--	multiple	--	multiple	--	multiple
swing-set	1 (10 swings)	--	--	--	--	--
climbers	2	--	--	--	--	--
Balance Equipment	1	--	--	--	--	--
Gymnasium	1	--	1	--	1	--
Basketball	1 goal	--	--	--	--	--
Livestock Barn	--	--	--	1	--	--
Football practice field	1	--	--	--	1	--
Slides	3	--	--	--	--	--
Open Space	300 ft.	--	--	--	--	--
Baseball field	--	2 (lighted)	--	--	--	--
Softball field	--	--	--	--	--	2



### Private Facilities

Private park facilities can also play a valuable role in a city. While they are not open to the public, they can provide needed recreational amenities for neighborhoods and multi-family developments that reduce the demand on public parks and facilities. Howe has two private park facilities within its boundaries located at Howe Estates Park and Westwood Manor Apartments. It is important to understand and include these private parks when assessing park inventories.

### Needs Assessment and Identification

The future needs of facilities and park acreage were determined using the standard-based approach utilizing the NRPA guidelines discussed above. As the City develops its parks, recreation and open space improvements budgets these standards will serve as the guide for what improvements are needed and at what point in the community's growth.

Private Park Facilities		
	Howe Estates Park	Westwood Manor Apartments
Pool	--	--
Teeter-totters	--	3
swing-set	--	1
climbers	--	2
Balance Equipment	--	--
Gymnasium	--	--
Basketball	1 court	--

The following tables show Howe's parks and facilities compared to the NRPA standard for the current population and for the projected population in 2030. Based upon the 2030 population projections, several additions to facilities would need to be made in order to continue to meet the NRPA minimum standards.

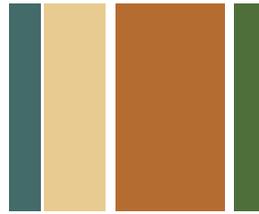
NRPA Standards Related to Howe's Current Population				
Park Type	NRPA Standard of Acres Per 1,000 People	NRPA Standard for current population of 2,722 people	Existing Park Acreage	Difference from Standard
Neighborhood	2.5	6.8	1.54	-5.26
Community	3	8.2	7.13	-1.07
Special	3	8.2	0	-8.2
Open Space	8	21.8	45.08	23.28

NRPA Standards Related to Howe's Projected Population				
Park Type	NRPA Standard of Acres Per 1,000 People	NRPA Standard for future population of 3,742 people	Existing Park Acreage	Difference from Standard
Neighborhood	2.5	9.4	1.54	-7.86
Community	3	11.2	7.13	-4.07
Special	3	11.2	0	-11.2
Open Space	8	30	45.08	15.08

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

NRPA Facilities Standards				
Facility Type	Standard per Population	Existing City Owned Facilities	Units Required for 3,742 Persons	Additional Needs Based on Recommendations in this Report
<b>Fields</b>				
Baseball	1 per 7,000	4 (2 sites)	1 or by demand	0
Softball	1 per 5,000	0	1 or by demand	1
Football	1 per 20,000	0	1 or by demand	1
Soccer / Multi Purpose Fields	1 per 5,000	0	1 or by demand	1
<b>Courts</b>				
Basketball	1 per 5,000	1	1 or by demand	0
Tennis	1 per 4,000	0	1 or by demand	1
Volleyball	1 per 5,000	0	1 or by demand	1
<b>Outdoor Areas</b>				
1/4 mile Running Track		0	1 or by demand	1
Dog Park	No Standard	0	by demand	0
<b>Trails</b>				
Hiking/Biking Walking	No Limit	0	1/2 mile per 1,000 persons	1.5 miles
<b>Specialized</b>				
Aquatic Center	1 per 20,000	0	by demand	0
Neighborhood Meeting Center	1 per 20,000	1	by demand	0
Skate Park	No Standard	0	by demand	0
Golf	1 per 25,000	0	by demand	0
Swimming Pool	1 per 20,000	0	1 or by demand	1
Rodeo Area	No Standard	0	by demand	0
These totals do not include school facilities				



## Plan Implementation and Prioritization of Needs

It is important to prioritize the parks, open space and trails needs of the community in order to develop a framework for addressing these needs in a given time period. In addition to prioritizing specific needs, this section establishes specific parks, recreation and open space policies to help guide community decision making in the future.

### Needs Prioritization

Based upon the feedback of the steering committee, the results of the community questionnaire and the current deficiencies in the City's parks, recreation and open space system, the following priorities were developed.

#### *Outdoor Priorities*

- Bring existing parks up to minimum standards for improvements and maintenance.
- Fully develop the undeveloped land at Dot and Casey Jones Park to serve as a large community park.
- Develop additional neighborhood parks and playgrounds.
- Improve existing and add additional sports fields.
- Develop a recreational trail system beginning with a loop trail at Dot and Casey Jones Park.
- Acquire additional open space as shown on the Ultimate Land Use map.

#### *Indoor Priorities*

- Increase indoor recreational programs utilizing the existing Community Center.
- Develop an indoor recreation center.

## Parks, Recreation and Open Space Policies

PR-1 Increase availability of public baseball and softball facilities throughout the city.

PR-2 Address lack of soccer/multi-purpose fields within Howe.

PR-3 Add tennis court(s) to parks to encourage youth and adult tennis leagues.

PR-4 Encourage added events and activities at parks in order to improve park visibility to community.

PR-5 Create pedestrian/bike trail system linking parks throughout Howe.

PR-6 Improve current park conditions.

PR-7 Address needs for added park space and locations.

### Implementation Actions

- Maintain and update a parks and trails master plan.
- Create a formal set of amenity standards for each type of park (neighborhood and community) in order to better serve all areas of the community.
- Implement a parkland dedication ordinance for new development.
- Improve current conditions at each park through renovation and redevelopment: new bleachers, paint, landscaping, improved parking conditions, restroom facilities, improved/new concession stands.
- Develop a capital improvements program for existing parks to bring them up to the identified standards in this plan.
- Seek grants for park development and trail construction.
- Adopt a park land dedication ordinance to ensure adequate parkland and open space is set aside during the development process.
- Add baseball and softball fields to various parks including Dot and Casey Jones Park.
- Add public soccer/multi-purpose fields to

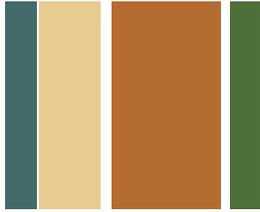
# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

existing parks such as Dot and Casey Jones Park.

- Provide community with visible and safe community trails (See Ultimate Land Use Map) linking each park.
- Add tennis courts to Dot and Casey Jones Park, and create public tennis leagues.
- Plan for future community park on the west side of US 75 as the City grows.
- Adopt a park improvement fee that is assessed either at the time of platting or building permit to provide a funding stream to equip new parks.
- Utilize the existing Howe Community Center to provide multi-generational recreational opportunities.
- Create a plan to expand indoor recreational facilities with the possibility of utilizing existing, underutilized community buildings.
- Seek grants for indoor recreational facilities.
- Create a city web page dedicated to local parks and recreation programs.
- Actively promote sports leagues within the city, also create community activities within existing parks to promote added use.
- Utilize the images and inventory information in this plan to create a web and print flyer about Howe's parks and recreation programs.
- Increase visibility and use of city parks by holding community events in the parks.





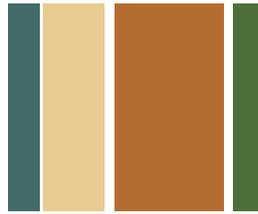
# Chapter 6

## Economic Development



### Chapter 6: Economic Development

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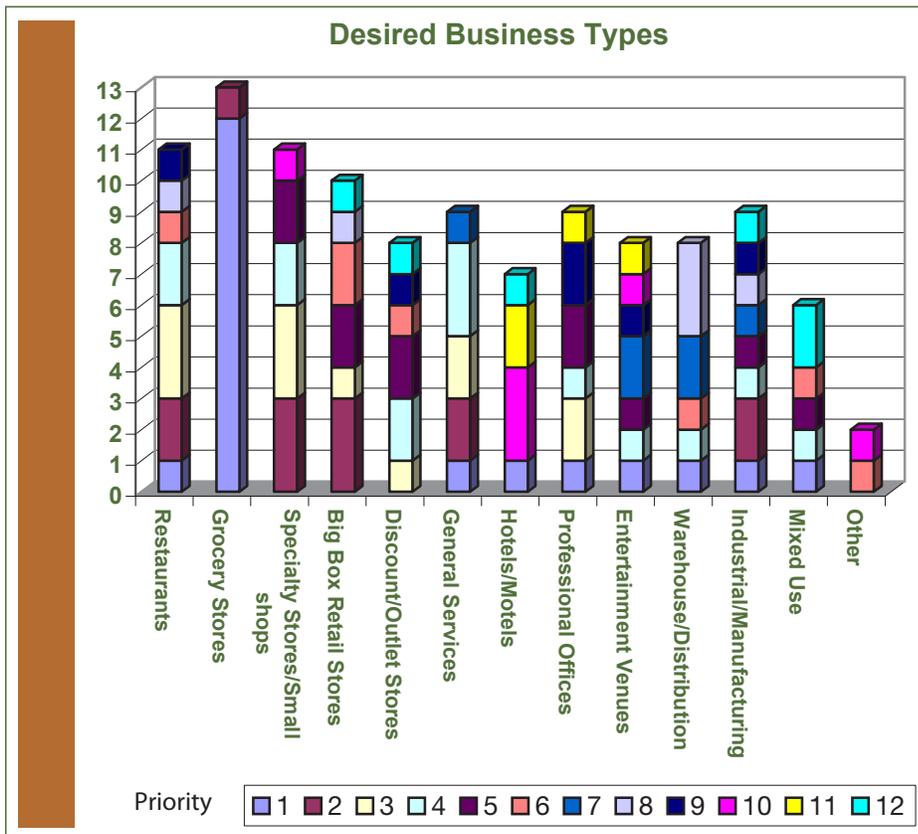
# Economic Development

## Introduction

One of the key issues that surfaced during the planning process was the desire by the citizens of Howe to attract more retail and commercial services to reduce the need to travel outside the city limits for daily needs. In addition, to retail and commercial uses, primary employment was another priority to help create more opportunities for residents to live and work in Howe.

This chapter addresses these economic development priorities by focusing on three strategic areas within the community. Each area provides a specific opportunity to address the City's economic development priorities and special planning considerations should be followed to ensure the highest potential for each area.

An overriding goal for the City of Howe's economic development program should be to ensure the overall quality of life within the community. Many employers determine where to locate their business based upon the quality of life amenities that are available within a community for themselves and their employees. These quality of life amenities include such things as high quality schools, low crime rate, abundant parks and recreational opportunities, a variety of high quality housing choices, and retail and service uses that are easily accessible. So, in many ways, the implementation of the overall comprehensive plan is the City's economic development strategy. If the recommendations in this plan are implemented, Howe will significantly improve its economic development prospects by improving the quality of life for its current and future citizens.



# City of Howe

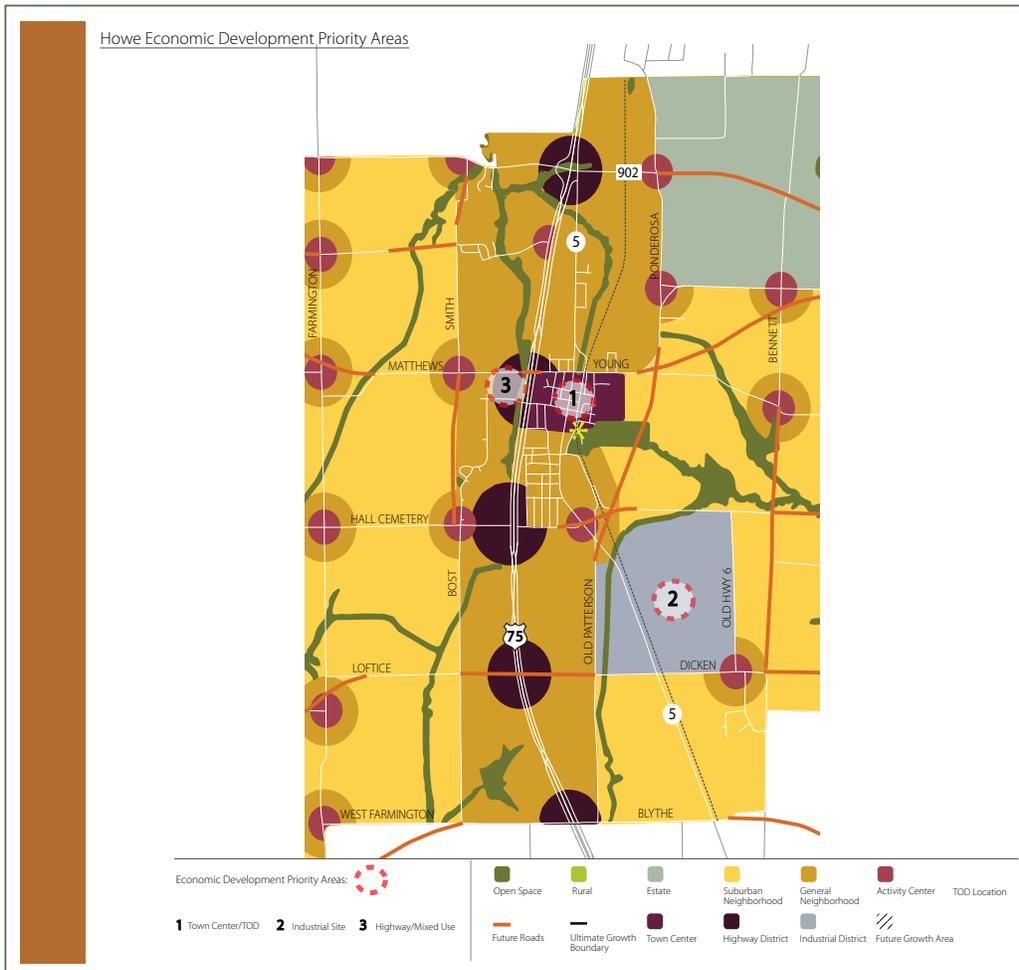
## Comprehensive Plan

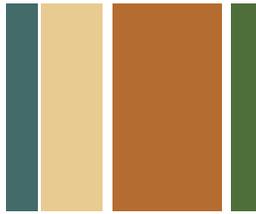
### Priority Areas

The three priority areas within the community that offer significant opportunities for economic development in the short-term include:

1. The Historic Town Center,
2. The South Industrial District, and
3. The Hanning/U.S. 75 Commercial Node.

These three priority areas address three different economic development goals. The Town Center is a high priority for economic development, because it is the community's link to its heritage and must be maintained and revitalized in order to create a unique sense of identity for Howe. The South Industrial District is a prime candidate for primary employment opportunities including light industrial businesses that require good access to roads and rail. The Hanning and U.S. 75 node on the west side of 75 provides a good location for local and regional retail and commercial uses that require high visibility and good vehicular access.





## Town Center

The Town Center is the City's highest priority for short-term economic development. This is the heart of the community and should be given the most immediate attention in order to improve the physical appearance and the economic viability of the town center district. Many communities think of their downtown as their living room and it serves as the first impression of the quality of the community for residents, visitors and economic development prospects. Just like when preparing your house for visitors the living room receives the most attention, when preparing your community for economic development, the town center should get the most attention until it is in top notch condition.

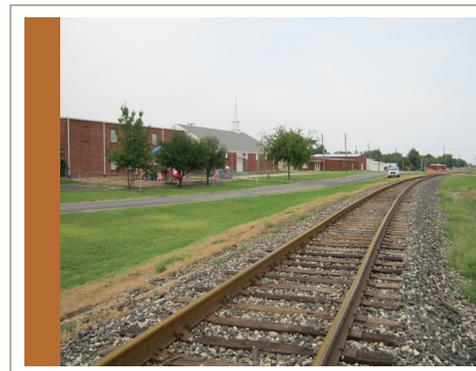
These planning areas form the basic structure of the town center and will be tied together by a common set of urban design principles. In addition to these areas, another important component of a viable town center is the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

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In planning for the revitalization of the town center, it is useful to think of the town center in pieces. Each piece is important and adds to the overall experience that you want to create for residents and visitors. For Howe, the town center district has been divided into four primary planning areas which include:

1. Town Center Core
2. Transit-Oriented Development
3. Highway Entry
4. Gateways (North, South and West)

The photos to the right show current conditions in these planning areas



# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan





Several key principles should be followed when planning for the revitalization of the town center. Each principle is described below.

### *Historic Preservation*

The things that makes Howe's town center unique from any other part of town and from any other town are the historic structures that form the core of district. Without these historic buildings, Howe would not have a unique sense of place and community heritage. These historic resources keep Howe tied to its history and therefore they must be preserved.

In order to ensure appropriate preservation of historic structures, the City should adopt a historic overlay zoning district. Within this district, design guidelines for historic structures should be developed so that historically appropriate restoration and improvements can be made to buildings within the district. The Texas Historical Commission is a good resource for the City as it works to protect its historic assets.



### *Pedestrian Orientation*

Howe's historic downtown was laid out and developed prior to the dominance of the personal automobile. By necessity, the district was planned for primary navigation on foot. This pedestrian orientation is what makes historic downtowns unique from auto-oriented development and this development character should be preserved. Planning for pedestrians is different than planning for automobiles. Whereas auto-oriented developments prioritize parking and access for automobiles, pedestrian-oriented development prioritizes the safety, comfort and convenience of pedestrians. Some key considerations to be followed in planning for pedestrians include:

- Sidewalks should be continuous throughout the district and should be wide enough for pedestrians and outdoor displays and dining where appropriate.
- Shade from awnings and trees should be provided to protect pedestrians from the Texas heat.
- Buildings should be built to the sidewalk edge and should include significant amounts of windows to provide transparency into the buildings for pedestrians.
- Signage for pedestrians should be provided for both businesses and directional purposes.
- Speeds on streets within the district should be slow enough for the safe interaction of pedestrians and automobiles and marked pedestrian crossings should be provided at all intersections.
- Street lighting should be provided with architecturally appropriate fixtures that help to enhance the historic character of the district.
- Other pedestrian amenities should be developed including benches, trash receptacles, interpretive signs, landscaping and public restrooms.

The photos to the left are examples of historic buildings in downtown Howe.

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

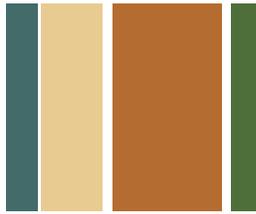


### *Entry Gateways*

Downtown has three primary entry corridors, Haning Street from the west, and Denny Street (S.H. 5) from the north and south. Announcing the entry into the historic town center along each of these corridors should be a primary consideration in planning for physical improvements. Special attention should be paid to developing a unique streetscape design for these three primary entryways. The primary extent of these improvements should be  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from the intersection of Haning and Denny. The following improvements should be designed and implemented over time for each of the primary entry corridors:

- Continuous sidewalks with a paving detail to differentiate them from other sidewalks in the community (a brick exterior band, a scoring pattern, etc.)
- Street trees and native landscaping within the right-of-way.
- Street lights with historically and architecturally appropriate fixtures that include brackets for seasonally changeable banners.
- Wayfinding signs that direct automobile traffic to public parking, civic facilities and other attractions.

The photos to the left demonstrate appropriate sidewalk and streetscape improvements for a town center and the current conditions in downtown Howe.



### *Highway Entry*

The intersection of Hanning and U.S. 75 is a key entryway for automobile traffic into downtown. As this intersection will be many visitors' first impression of Howe as they exit the highway, it is important to pay special attention to the physical appearance of the area and to incorporate entry features that identify this as the entry to the historic town center. Some of the improvements that should be implemented in this area include:

- Construct landscaped entry monuments on the north and south sides of Hanning at the east frontage road intersection that welcome visitors to Howe.
- Work with the property owners of the two primary corners of Hanning and 75 to redevelop those properties over time to bring the buildings up to the sidewalk to create an architectural entryway into the town center.
- Install wayfinding signage that directs traffic to the town center core.

### *Future Transit*

The existing rail line through the town center provides an outstanding long-term opportunity for rail transit. The City should identify an appropriate location for a passenger rail station. Currently, the Howe ISD bus storage facility provides a possible location for a future station and includes sufficient area to provide parking for this type of facility. As the City plans for future rail transit, it is important to reserve plenty of land around the rail station for transit-oriented land uses including higher density residential, retail and service uses and parking facilities. DART provides planning guidelines for station areas that should be consulted as the City develops a more detailed transit-oriented development plan.

### *South Industrial District – Rail Served*

Another economic development priority area is the south industrial district bounded by Old Patterson, Dicken and Old Highway 6. This area provides an opportunity for light industrial uses that require access to rail as well as good highway access for trucks. As the City plans future infrastructure improvements it should prioritize improvements to serve this area with appropriately sized water, sewer, stormwater and roads. The City should work with existing property owners to assemble appropriately sized and shaped development parcels for targeted industrial uses. The City should also coordinate with the railroad for the future provision of rail spurs to serve sites that require rail access.

The most important planning consideration for this area is the preservation of the area for appropriate industrial users. This will mean resisting requests for the re-designation of this area's land use to facilitate other development options.

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### Haning at 75 Highway Mixed Use

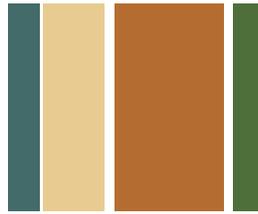
The mixed use node at Haning and 75 provides the City with a key opportunity area for the development of local and regional-serving retail and commercial uses. This area has good visibility from 75, has good access and has some existing utility availability. As is discussed in the land use plan, this area is designated as a mixed-use highway district. How this area develops will set the tone for future highway-oriented development nodes within the City. By setting the bar high for the character of highway-oriented development, the City will ensure the long-term value of this area as well as differentiate itself from other communities in the area.

Some of the key considerations for planning for the development of this area include:

- Plan for an integrated mix of uses including retail, office, residential and lodging.
- Plan for the area to accommodate high volumes of automobile traffic, but to be designed for primary internal navigation by pedestrians.
- Ensure a high level of architectural cohesion within the area to help create a unique sense of place.
- Update the City's sign regulations to provide appropriately scaled and designed signage that complements the architectural character of the area.
- Ensure that adequate utility capacities are available or planned to serve the ultimate development potential of the area.
- Work with TXDOT and the MPO to plan for a new crossing of U.S. 75 at Young St.
- Recruit mixed-use developers who have developed successful projects within the region that exemplify the type of development desired for this location.
- Plan to incorporate civic facilities into future development in this area.

The photos to the right demonstrate mixed-use development that would be appropriate at the Haning and U.S. 75 node.





## Economic Development Process

Economic development does not happen by itself, it requires a focused and sustained effort in order to achieve the community's goals. A successful economic development program typically includes the following core components:

- Target industry assessment/market analysis
- Infrastructure analysis and improvement program
- Recruitment & Retention
- Incentives

### Market Analysis

Before a community can begin to recruit new businesses or employers, it must first have a good understanding of the market potential for its targeted industries. This is one of the first tasks the City should undertake in establishing a focused economic development program. By understanding the market and relating the market conditions to the specific requirements of different industry segments and business types, the City will be much more effective in its economic development program.

This plan provides some basic demographic information that will assist the City in understanding potential issues related to its economic development efforts, but a more thorough assessment of market conditions should be conducted as a key first step in the City's proactive economic development program. Some issues to be aware of regarding the City's economic development competitive position include:

- Number of households within the retail trade area
- Median household income within the trade area
- Educational attainment of the local workforce
- Traffic counts on major roadways
- Local discretionary spending characteristics
- Leakage analysis of local spending

Once the City compiles detailed market analysis and demographic information it should package the information and make it available both in print and on an economic development web site for easy access by prospective businesses.

### Infrastructure Analysis

Once a potential business has determined that the market fundamentals exist in a community to make it a good prospect for locating their business, the next thing they will want to know is whether the infrastructure systems within the community can support their business. Therefore, the City must ensure that it has planned for the provision of adequately sized infrastructure, including water, wastewater, drainage, electricity, gas, and roads, in the areas that it has targeted for economic development. This is another early task that should be undertaken after completing the market analysis and target industry assessment. It is important to match the infrastructure needs with the targeted industries. The utility chapter of this plan is a good start for identifying known deficiencies in the utility infrastructure system and to begin prioritizing necessary upgrades to support the City's land use and economic development goals.

### Recruitment and Retention

Once the market analysis and infrastructure assessment tasks are complete, the City will be ready to begin its targeted recruitment and retention program. For the City's recruitment and retention program to be successful it will require dedicated attention to actively pursue prospects and engage in retention activities.

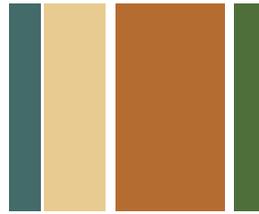
Based upon the results of the market analysis, the City should prioritize its recruitment and retention activities to take advantage of the areas with the most potential for success. A recruitment package with up to date market, demographic and available real estate information should be developed and made available in printed and electronic formats.

For existing businesses in Howe that meet the City's goals for economic development, a retention program should be instituted that regularly engages local business owners to determine their needs and how the City can assist them in improving their business or expanding it. The City can also help facilitate a buy local campaign that makes local residents aware of the products and services available from local businesses.

### Incentives

Because economic development is a competitive process, the City will likely need to be able to offer economic incentives to both attract new businesses and retain existing successful businesses. An incentive package should be developed that is tied to the City's economic development priorities and that is linked to its land use goals. Because community resources are limited, incentives should be highly targeted and tied to specific performance criteria. Some potential incentives include:

- Expedited permitting and development review
- Fee waivers
- Utility and roadway extension cost participation
- Assistance with land assembly
- Cash payments for job creation that meet defined thresholds



There are a number of financial tools that can be employed in the City's incentive program. Currently, the City has a Type B economic development sales tax that can be used for many types of public improvements and facilities associated with economic development. The City should ensure that its Type B resources are aligned with its land use and economic development goals and leverage those resources to the greatest extent feasible. Some other tools to consider include:

- Capital Improvement Program – The City already has a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that funds on-going infrastructure improvements. Consider creating a section of the CIP that is specific to improvements for economic development.
- Tax Increment Financing – The City should consider establishing a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone, authorized by Chapter 311 of the Texas Tax Code, encompassing the priority areas and use the tax increment revenue to fund economic development activities including funding infrastructure improvements, parking system improvements, signage and other high priority items.
- Sales Tax Sharing – Create a set of criteria for offering sales tax revenue sharing agreements to certain targeted businesses. These programs are authorized by Chapters 378 and 380 of the Texas Local Government Code. The agreements should be performance based and should include regular auditing provisions.
- Historic Tax Exemption – The City may offer an historic tax exemption pursuant to Chapter 11.24 of the Texas Tax Code. This allows the City to exempt from ad valorem taxes all or a percentage of the value of a locally designated historic property and can help encourage historic preservation.
- Tax Abatements – Chapter 312 of the Texas Tax Code allows City's to offer tax abatements to certain business and property owners to incentivize the improvement of property or for the creation or retention of certain jobs.

## Economic Development Policies

ED-1 Ensure economic development activities are aligned with land use goals.

ED-2 Utilize economic development financial tools and resources for the provision of quality of life amenities.

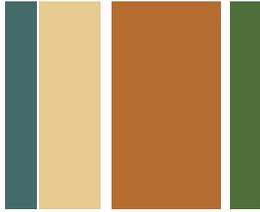
ED-3 Prioritize downtown revitalization in the City's economic development program.

ED-4 Prioritize the retention and expansion of existing local businesses.

ED-5 Tie all economic development incentives to specific performance criteria.

## Implementation Actions

- Conduct a detailed market analysis and target industry assessment
- Develop an economic development recruitment program that identifies and prioritizes specific recruitment targets
- Create an economic development recruitment package
- Develop and maintain an economic development web page
- Create a shop local campaign with local merchants
- Update the City's zoning ordinance to create a historic overlay zone for the town center
- Update the City's zoning and sign ordinance to ensure high quality development standards for highway mixed use areas
- Adopt an economic development strategic plan that identifies specific industry sectors that are good targets for recruitment
- Complete a wayfinding and entry signage plan



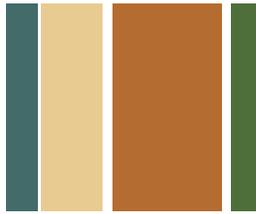
# Chapter 7

## City Facilities



### Chapter 7: City Facilities

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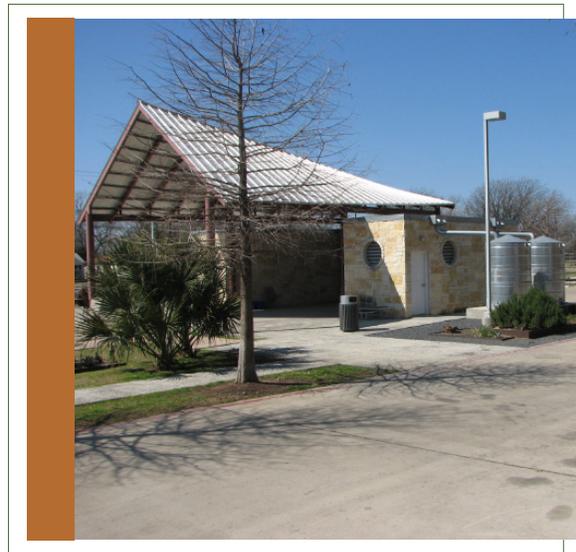
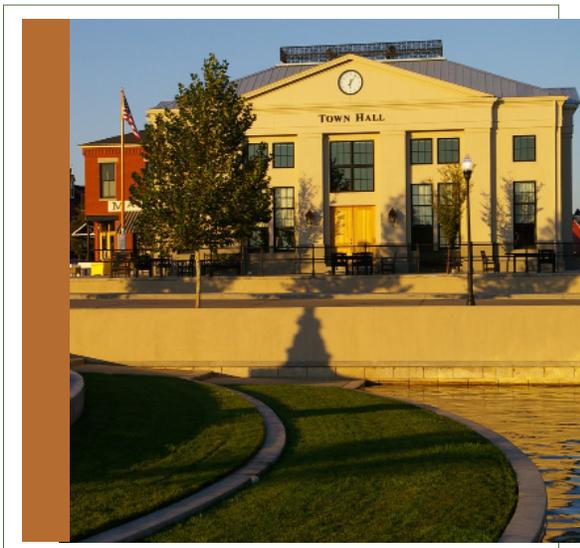
## City Facilities

### Importance of City Facilities

City facilities serve a number of purposes. Public buildings and facilities are an essential part of the infrastructure of the community. These buildings and facilities provide the spaces and resources necessary for the City to fulfill its municipal obligations. Further, public buildings serve as focal points and gathering areas for the citizens of Howe. As the City grows, municipal buildings must be maintained and expanded to keep pace with growth.

### City Facilities as Development Anchors

Civic buildings are important anchors for neighborhoods, downtowns and mixed-use centers. Elementary schools serve as a primary neighborhood civic space as do neighborhood parks and recreational facilities. Currently, Howe's City Hall serves as a major anchor for downtown and therefore, the City should maintain its primary municipal operations in the town center and plan appropriately for their expansion in that location. As the City implements its Land Use Plan which calls for concentrated, mixed-use nodes, it should consider how its City facilities can fit into those development plans to serve as anchors in new mixed use areas.



### City Facilities as Educational Tools

City facilities can also serve as educational tools and demonstration projects for Howe's citizens and local developers. As the City works to encourage environmentally sustainable buildings and developments, it can use its own facilities to demonstrate best practices. For instance, the City can demonstrate the proper use of native and drought tolerant landscapes as it upgrades the landscaping of existing facilities and in community parks. City facilities can also be used to demonstrate energy and water conservation techniques through the implementation of such things as rain water collection systems, solar power generation and energy efficient building materials and mechanical systems.

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### Location Criteria

Many growing communities struggle with determining how to expand their municipal facilities in a cost-effective way. Many cities end up expanding or adding facilities haphazardly in order to save money in the short-term at the expense of good long-term facilities planning. As mentioned previously, municipal facilities are more than just office buildings, they are community assets and focal points. Whenever possible, city facilities should be located so that they anchor the development area in which they are constructed. For instance, city hall is currently a major anchor of Howe's town center. This is important both from an economic stand point for downtown as well as from a community identity stand point. Keeping city hall in the town center will reinforce the importance of downtown in defining the city's identity and preserving its heritage. As the population grows, city hall will need to be expanded and plans should be made to accommodate those expansion needs within the town center.

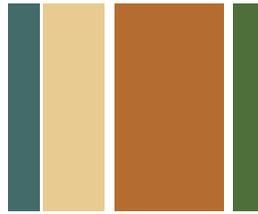
Other city facilities have different location needs based upon their service delivery function and the type of activity that occurs within the facility. Fire stations, for instance, are located to provide the best response times within a geographic area. This means taking into consideration specific criteria such as response time goals, the roadway network, etc. Utility service centers and materials yards are best located where their activities do not negatively impact commercial and residential uses. Community and recreational facilities should be located in close proximity to their primary user group taking into consideration mobility limitations of the populations they serve. For instance, senior activity centers should be located where the highest concentration of seniors is within close proximity of the facility.

### Centralized Vs. Decentralized

One key consideration for the City is whether to centralize its operations in one primary facility or occupy several facilities throughout the community. From an efficiency of operations perspective, centralized City facilities offer a number of benefits. Administrative staff can be shared among multiple departments, utilities, building and grounds maintenance costs are reduced and the City can invest more in creating a signature architectural design if it can gain efficiencies in operational costs over time.

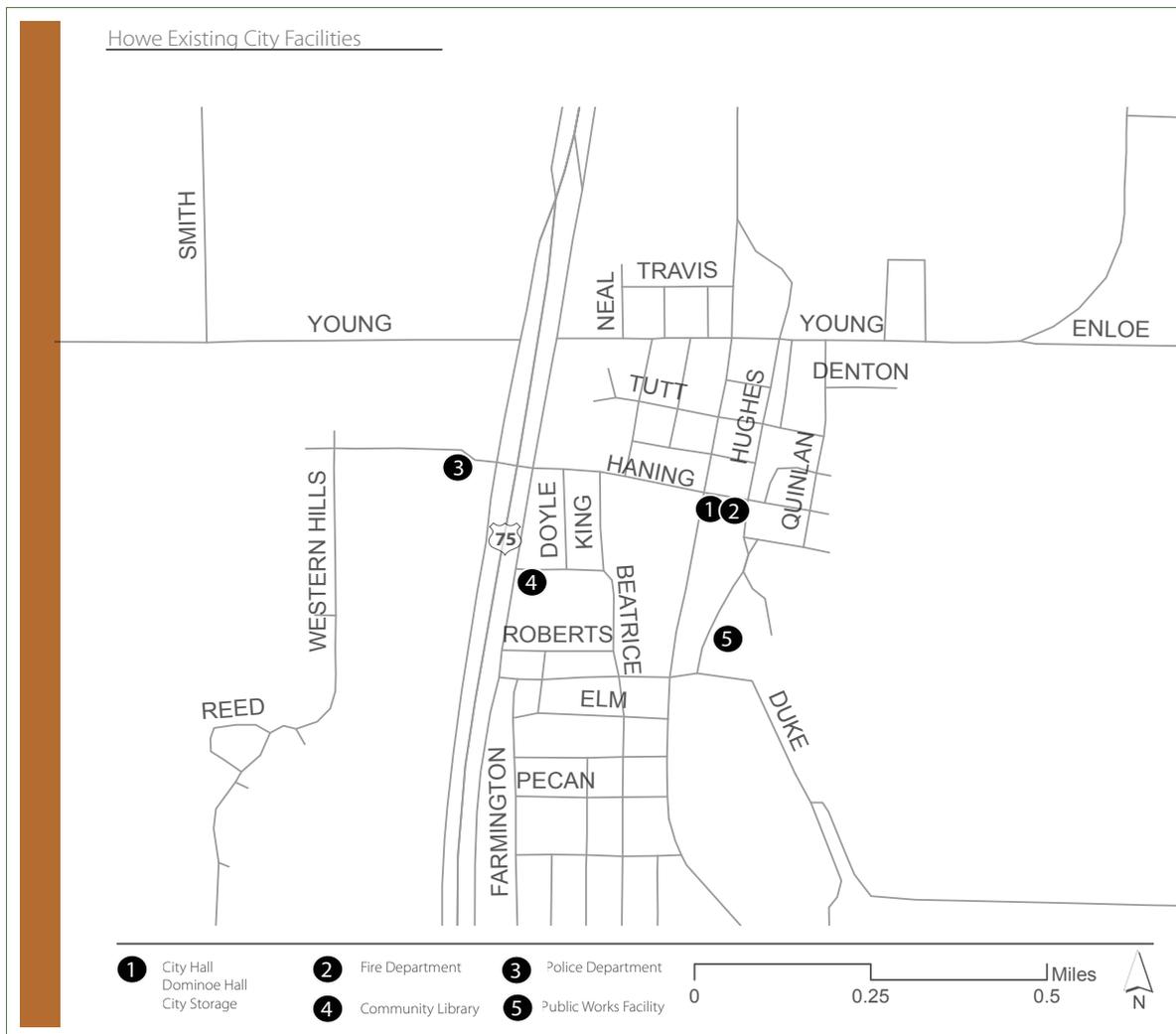
Of course, some city functions cannot be housed with others. As mentioned previously, the nature of the work that is performed by certain City departments will necessitate that their facilities are located so as to mitigate the impacts of their operation on adjacent uses. However, the concept of centralization can still be applied to more intensive city operations by putting departments with similar characteristics in a combined location. An example is locating a utility service yard, a wastewater treatment facility and an animal shelter all on the same piece of property.

As the City plans for its future facility needs, it should pay close attention to opportunities to co-locate as many municipal operations as possible and to plan for the expansion needs of facilities to meet the needs of a growing city.



## Existing Facilities

The City currently operates in three primary facilities, City Hall, the Police Department/Community Center and the Volunteer Fire Department. In addition to these three primary facilities, the City and Howe ISD cooperatively operate the Howe Community Library and the City maintains a public works and materials storage yard. Following is a map of the primary City facilities followed by a photo and brief description of each.



# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

### City Hall

City Hall is located at 116 E. Haning St. in the heart of the town center. Adjacent to City Hall is a City storage facility.



### Volunteer Fire Department

The Volunteer Fire Department is located at 120 E. Haning St. It includes five vehicle bays and office space for the Volunteer Fire Department staff.



### Police Department/Community Center

The Police Department and Community Center is located at 700 W. Haning St. on the southwest corner of the intersection of Haning and U.S. 75. It currently houses the Police Department and is used for community meetings and events. It is also used as the City Council chambers.



### Howe Community Library

The City of Howe has partnered with the Howe Independent School District to operate the Howe Community Library. The library is located at 315 S. Collins Freeway adjacent to the Elementary and Middle Schools.





## Future Facility Needs

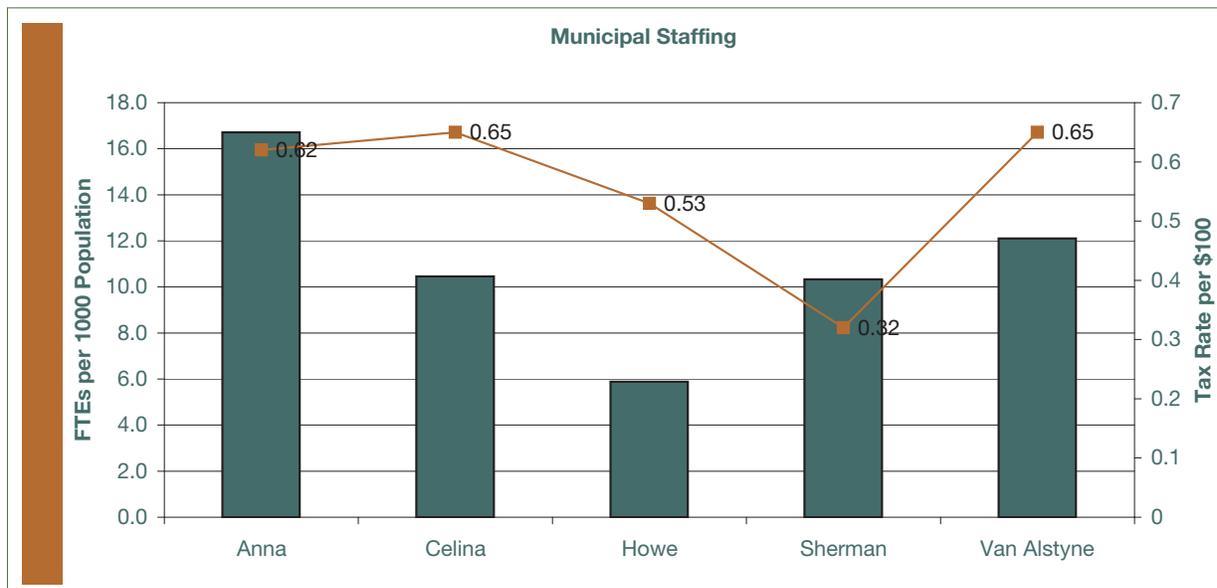
The City's future facility needs fall into two primary categories, maintenance and upgrades of existing facilities and expansion of existing or construction of new facilities to meet the demands of a growing population.

The first category involves the maintenance and upgrade of Howe's existing City facilities. While these facilities currently serve the needs of the municipal government it is important to establish a plan for maintaining and replacing major building systems in an orderly fashion so that expenses can be budgeted over time. Further, exterior renovations and landscaping improvements should be planned to coincide with planned improvements in the town center and in the highway mixed use area incorporating the Police Department/Community Center.

The second category of facility needs includes new facilities and expansion of existing facilities to meet the needs of a growing population. One way of identifying potential facility needs is by establishing a benchmark of the ratio of the number of municipal employees to the population. While every city is unique, it is useful to compare this benchmark to other cities in the region to gauge where Howe falls in this measure. The following table and chart compare Howe's number of municipal employees per 1000 population to those of other cities in the region. Further, the chart and graph also show the municipal property tax rate of each city for 2009.

Municipal Staffing Ratios							2009 City
City	Population	Full Time Employees	Part Time Employees	Full Time Equivalents (FTE)	FTEs per 1000 Population	Tax Rate per \$100 Valuation	
Anna	1795	29	2	30.0	16.7	0.62	
Celina	2727	27	3	28.5	10.5	0.65	
Howe	2717	15	2	16.0	5.9	0.53	
Sherman	38407	393	7	396.5	10.3	0.32	
Van Alstyne	2975	28	16	36.0	12.1	0.65	

Source: City-Data.com, Grayson CAD, Collin CAD



# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

As the data show, Howe has the lowest ratio of municipal employees to population of the cities compared. At 5.9 employees per 1000 residents, Howe currently operates a very lean municipal organization. For its citizens, this low ratio of employees to population means that Howe is able to maintain a tax rate that is relatively low in the region. The data show that Howe's tax rate in 2009 at \$0.53 per \$100 valuation is lower than all those compared except Sherman which has a much larger tax base. As the City grows it is important that it establish a benchmark of employees per population in order to plan for additional space needs in municipal facilities.

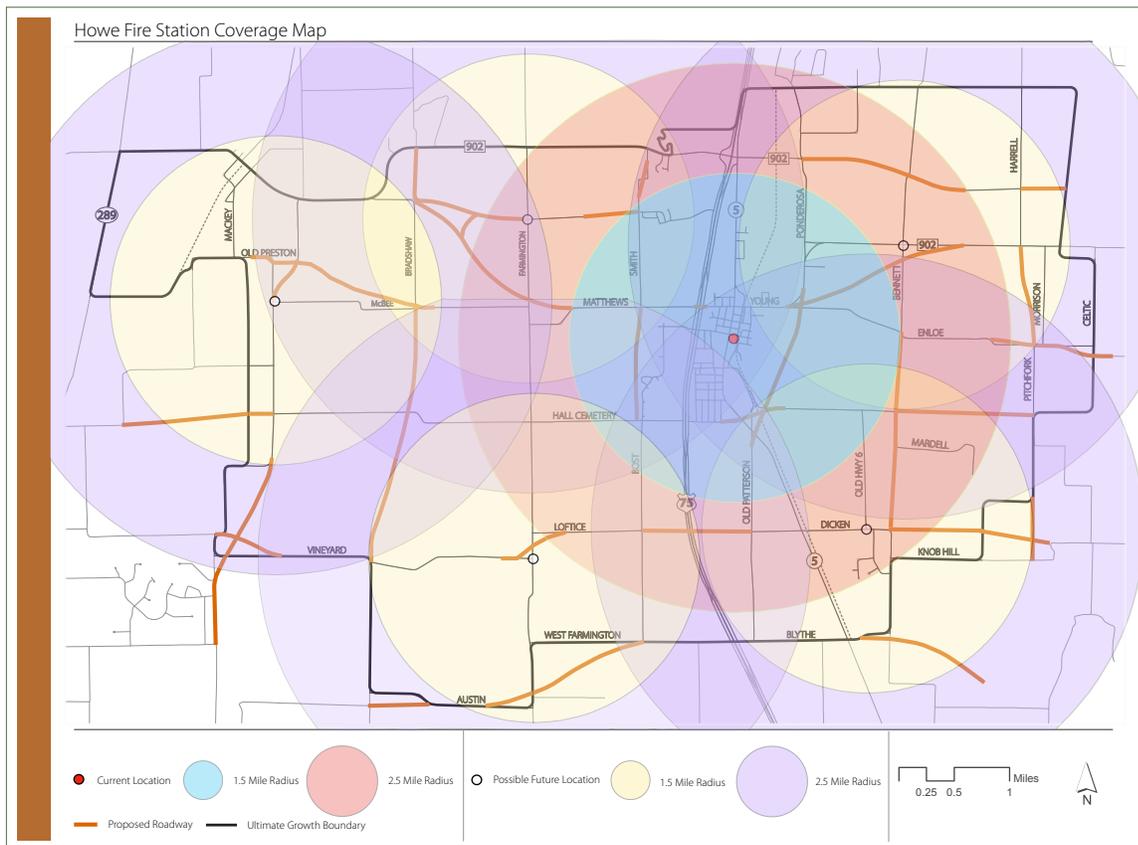
If the City maintains the same ratio of employees to population in the future, its staff growth will be relatively modest over the planning horizon of this plan. However, if the City chooses to expand services which results in an increase in the employee to population ratio, it could see significant staff growth and the need for the facilities to accommodate those new employees. The following table shows two scenarios of potential staff growth based upon the "likely" population projection from the demographics section of the plan.

Potential Staffing Levels Likely Scenario			
Year	Population Projection	Staffing (FTE) - Current Ratio	Staffing (FTE) - 10 per 1000
2010	2,722	15	27
2015	2,968	18	30
2020	3,257	19	33
2025	3,492	21	35
2030	3,742	22	37



Aside from population growth, another factor that will influence the need for certain facilities is the geographic expansion of the city limits. If the City expands the city limits to control additional area within the ultimate growth boundary, development within that expanded city limit boundary may necessitate the construction of additional fire stations in order to provide adequate response times. While response time is highly dependent upon the roadway network and the connectivity of roads, a rule of thumb for appropriate coverage area for an urban fire station is 1.5 miles and for a rural station is 2.5 miles. It is important to note that the response time of local fire service personnel is a contributing factor to the City's Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating. The City's ISO rating is currently 6. The provision of adequate fire suppression service and improved response times could lead to an improved ISO rating which would benefit the community by reducing fire insurance rates.

The following map shows the City's existing fire station and two coverage zones, a 1.5 mile and 2.5 mile zone. The map also shows potential locations for additional fire stations within the ultimate growth boundary indicating the 1.5 mile and 2.5 mile coverage area for each. As development occurs in areas designated for potential fire stations, the City should work with developers to secure land for future construction of fire stations.



### Other Civic Facilities

As the City's population grows and as the City continues to enhance its quality of life amenities, other civic facilities will be needed. As an example, one of the issues identified during the planning process for this plan was the need to reestablish a senior activity center. The Parks and Open Space chapter of this plan also identifies recreational facilities that are recommended based upon population benchmarks. As the City develops a detailed public facilities plan it should identify additional public facility types that will be needed when the population reaches certain thresholds. Periodic community surveys will help establish priorities for new civic facilities.

Another important consideration when considering the expansion or construction of City facilities is the opportunity to partner with other public or civic organizations in order to more efficiently utilize civic facilities. Where possible, the City should work with the school district, service organizations, state and federal agencies and other civic groups to collocate and share space and the operational expenses associated with new or expanded facilities.

### City Facilities Policies

CF-1 Provide adequate facilities for the operation of all municipal functions.

CF-2 Maintain City Hall in downtown as a primary anchor for the town center.

CF-3 Use City facilities to reinforce the development character of the areas in which they are located.

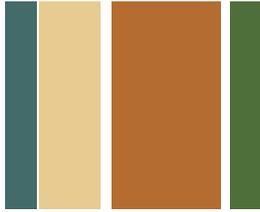
CF-4 Identify sites for future City facilities in coordination with developers during the land development review process and utilize new facilities as civic anchors in new mixed-use developments.

CF-5 Continue to collaborate with Howe ISD and other community groups in efforts to collocate civic facilities and/or partner in the operation of community facilities as has been done for the Community Library.

### Implementation Actions

- Complete and adopt a City facilities master plan
- Adopt a public facilities extension policy that corresponds with the Sector Plan that requires that adequate municipal facilities are available before development proposals can be approved
- Adopt a policy that requires developers to coordinate with the appropriate school district for the location of future school sites before development proposals are approved by the City Council
- Upgrade City facilities facades and landscaping as budgets allow in order to reinforce the development character of the areas in which they are located
- Develop an environmental sustainability plan for City facilities to help reduce operating costs by reducing energy and water consumption
- Develop a facilities collocation plan in conjunction with Howe ISD that identifies potential opportunities for shared facilities and locations as the City expands
- Update the City's development regulations to require the provision of adequate public facilities prior to development approvals for areas that are not currently served or where development would exceed the capacity of existing facilities





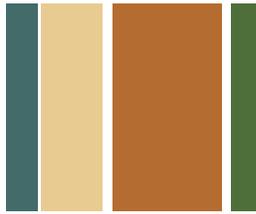
# Chapter 8

## Implementation



### Chapter 8: Implementation

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## Implementing the Plan

In order for the citizens of Howe to realize their goals and objectives as described in this plan, a sustained effort to implement the plan's recommendations is required by the City and its citizens. Because the plan is based upon a twenty year horizon, many of the goals and objectives will take time to realize, however there are others that can be accomplished right away. This chapter summarizes all of the action items that are described in the Comprehensive Plan and assigns a time frame for the completion of each strategy. The time frames are broken down into on-going, short-, medium- and long-term. In addition to establishing a time frame for completion of each strategy, the Implementation Plan also identifies what entities will have primary responsibility for ensuring the action is completed.

It is important for the City Council and City staff to review the Implementation Plan each year as they are developing the annual operating and capital improvements budgets. This plan should serve as a guide for annual budgeting and program evaluation, because implementing these actions will assist the City in achieving the community's goals. This chapter should also be updated regularly to identify which actions have been completed and to modify the projected time frame and cost for those actions that have not yet been completed. There will also be new actions that are identified over time that will help the City achieve its goals and those should be added to the Implementation Plan as well.

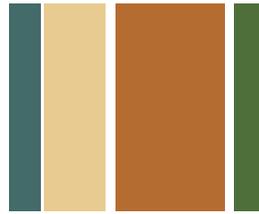
The Implementation Plan summarized in the table below represents each strategy as found at the end of each chapter of the plan. The Implementation Plan provides action steps, responsibilities, and time frames to achieve the goals of the Plan.

## Implementation Responsibilities

The implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will require work and cooperation by the City, other agencies, the development community and citizens of Howe. The Implementation Plan identifies which groups will be responsible for each action item. The following describes who may be associated with each of the groups.

- **City:** Includes City Departments, City Council, Boards and Commissions;
- **Agencies:** May include Federal and State departments and agencies, Howe Chamber of Commerce, Howe ISD, Grayson County, the Texoma Council of Governments (COG), the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) and other neighboring jurisdictions;
- **Development Community:** May include developers, builders and land owners;
- **Residents:** May include home owner associations, neighborhood groups, and individual citizens.

No.	Infrastructure	Implementation Responsibility			
		City	Agencies	Development Community	Residents
<b>Transportation</b>					
<b>Short-Term Actions</b>					
1	Revise the City's development regulations to require the preparation of a traffic impact analysis (TIA) for new development.	◆		◆	
2	Inventory and rate every street within city.	◆			
3	Develop a street maintenance priority list and increase funding for annual maintenance.	◆			
4	Revise the City's development regulations to require dedication of right-of-way for proposed roads and trails during the development process.	◆		◆	
<b>Mid-Term Actions</b>					
5	Adopt an access management policy.	◆	◆		
6	Complete a transit-oriented development plan that identifies the best location for a future transit station and provides zoning standards that facilitate transit-oriented development.	◆	◆		
7	Develop and adopt a transportation design manual that incorporates the recommendations of the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) recommended practice for context sensitive solutions.	◆			
<b>Long-Term Actions</b>					
8	Develop a transit system plan in coordination with the COG, TAPS, and DART to provide for future transit access from Howe to regional destinations.	◆	◆		
9	Identify best location for future east-west highway crossings and work with TXDOT on funding.	◆	◆		
<b>Ongoing</b>					
10	Complete a transportation improvements program that identifies and prioritizes transportation system improvements and identifies a funding source for each.	◆	◆		

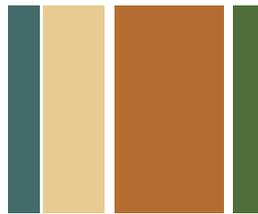


<b>Water and Stormwater</b>		City	Agencies	Development Community	Residents
<b>Short-Term Actions</b>					
1	Develop a five-year capital improvement program (CIP) for water and sewer.	◆			
2	Hire a professional grant writer to work on obtaining grants.	◆			
3	Make certain that all water mains in commercially zoned areas are at least twelve (12) inches in diameter for fire protection purposes.	◆		◆	
4	Complete a rate study to determine appropriate rates for the water and sewer utilities in order to provide adequate revenue for maintenance.	◆			
5	Adopt a waste water impact fee ordinance for new development.	◆			
6	Establish a Wastewater Master Plan to provide for orderly improvements to the water system as development warrants.	◆			
<b>Mid-Term Actions</b>					
7	Establish a schedule and plan for stormwater maintenance operations.	◆			
8	Develop and adopt stormwater drainage design criteria and construction standards.	◆			
9	Complete a rate study to determine appropriate rates for the water and sewer utilities in order to provide adequate revenue for maintenance.	◆		◆	◆
<b>Ongoing</b>					
10	Seek funding through State and Federal grants for immediate needs.	◆	◆		
11	Replace dilapidated sewer lines.	◆			
12	Ensure connections for all residents.	◆			
13	Require that all new developments construct streets, drainage, water, sewer, gas and electric utilities for their development in accordance with city standards.	◆		◆	
14	Clear silt and vegetation from drainage ways, clean culverts routinely, and create retention and detention ponds for water control.	◆			

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

Parks and Open Space		City	Agencies	Development Community	Residents
1	Maintain and update a parks and trails master plan.	◆			
2	Create a formal set of amenity standards for each type of park (neighborhood and community) in order to better serve all areas of the community.	◆			
3	Implement a parkland dedication ordinance for new development.	◆		◆	
4	Improve current conditions at each park through renovation and redevelopment: new bleachers, paint, landscaping, improved parking conditions, restroom facilities, improved/new concession stands.	◆			
5	Provide community with visible and safe community trails (See Ultimate Land Use Map) linking each park.	◆		◆	
6	Create a city web page dedicated to local parks and recreation programs.	◆			
7	Develop a capital improvements program for existing parks to bring them up to the identified standards in this plan.	◆			
8	Adopt a park improvement fee that is assessed either at the time of platting or building permit to provide a funding stream to equip new parks.	◆		◆	
9	Utilize the existing Howe Community Center to provide multi-generational recreational opportunities.	◆			◆
10	Utilize the images and inventory information in this plan to create a web and print flyer about Howe's parks and recreation programs.	◆			
11	Increase visibility and use of city parks by holding community events in the parks.	◆	◆		◆
12	Adopt a parkland dedication ordinance to ensure adequate parkland and open space is set aside during the development process.	◆		◆	

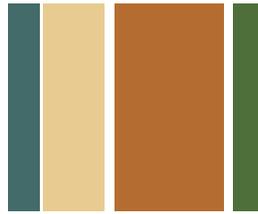


		City	Agencies	Development Community	Residents
<b>Parks and Open Space</b>					
<b>Mid-Term Actions</b>					
13	Add baseball and softball fields to various parks including Dot and Casey Jones Park.	◆			
14	Add public soccer/multi-purpose fields to existing parks such as Dot and Casey Jones Park.	◆			
15	Add tennis courts to Dot and Casey Jones Park, and create public tennis leagues.	◆			
<b>Long-Term Actions</b>					
16	Plan for future community park on the west side of US 75 as the City grows.	◆			
17	Create a plan to expand indoor recreational facilities with the possibility of utilizing existing, underutilized community buildings.	◆	◆		
<b>Ongoing</b>					
18	Seek grants for park development and trail construction.	◆	◆		
19	Seek grants for indoor recreational facilities.	◆	◆		
20	Actively promote sports leagues within the city, also create community activities within existing parks to promote added use.	◆	◆		◆

# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

	<b>Public Facilities</b>	City	Agencies	Development Community	Residents
<b>Short-Term Actions</b>					
1	Complete and adopt a City Facilities master plan.	◆			
2	Adopt a public facilities extension policy that corresponds with the Sector Plan that requires that adequate municipal facilities are available before development proposals can be approved.	◆		◆	
3	Adopt a policy that requires developers to coordinate with the appropriate school district for the location of future school sites before development proposals are approved by the City Council.	◆	◆	◆	
4	Update the City's development regulations to require the provision of adequate public facilities prior to development approvals for areas that are not currently served or where development would exceed the capacity of existing facilities.	◆		◆	
5	Upgrade City facilities facades and landscaping as budgets allow in order to reinforce the development character of the areas in which they are located.	◆			
<b>Mid-Term Actions</b>					
6	Develop a facilities collocation plan in conjunction with Howe ISD that identifies potential opportunities for shared facilities and locations as the City expands.	◆	◆		
7	Develop an environmental sustainability plan for City facilities to help reduce operating costs by reducing energy and water consumption.	◆			

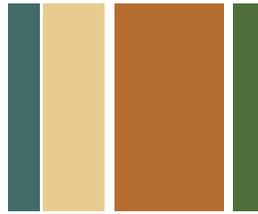


No.	Community Character	Implementation Responsibility			
		City	Agencies	Development Community	Residents
<b>Community Character</b>					
<b>Short-Term Actions</b>					
1	Increase code enforcement activities.	◆			
2	Update the City's zoning and sign ordinance to ensure high quality development standards for highway mixed use areas.	◆		◆	
3	Update zoning ordinance to provide for multiple housing product types.	◆		◆	
4	Develop a recruitment and retention program for downtown businesses.	◆	◆		
5	Complete a way finding and entry signage plan.	◆			
6	Develop a downtown improvements plan that provides for the phased improvement of entryways and public right-of-way.	◆			
7	Adopt updated property maintenance ordinances.	◆			◆
8	Remove or rehabilitate abandoned and dilapidated structures.	◆			◆
<b>Mid-Term Actions</b>					
9	Inventory and prioritize historic structures.	◆			
10	Create a historic overlay zoning district and architectural design guidelines to assist in the preservation of historic structures.	◆		◆	◆
11	Create marketing materials to recruit higher end residential developers.	◆	◆		
12	Complete a way finding and entry signage plan.	◆			
<b>Ongoing</b>					
14	Offer financial incentives to building owners who rehabilitate their properties.	◆		◆	

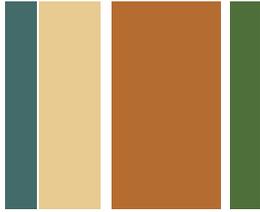
# City of Howe

## Comprehensive Plan

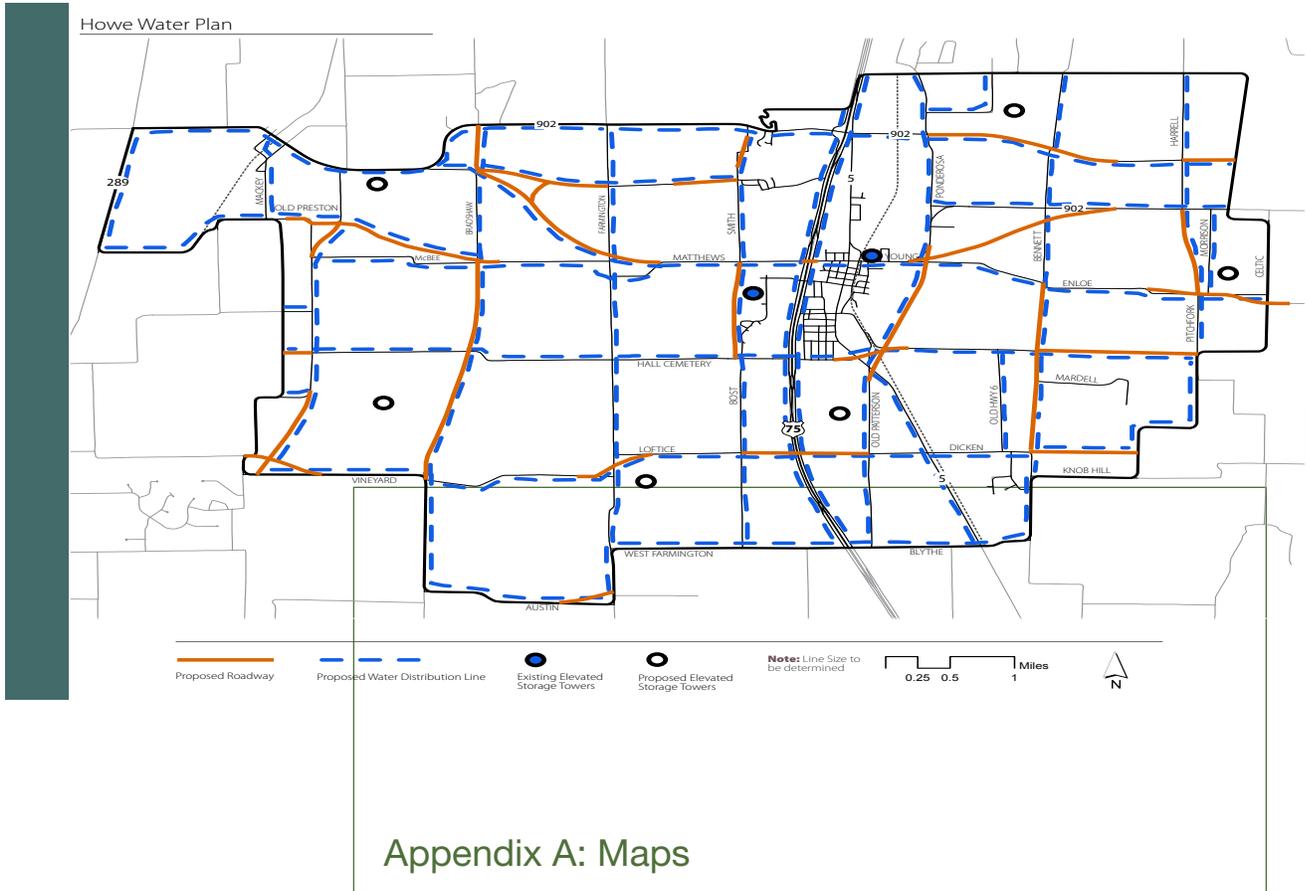
No.	Civic Engagement	Implementation Responsibility			
		City	Agencies	Development Community	Residents
<b>Civic Engagement</b>					
Short-Term Actions					
1	Create a City beautification advisory board.	◆			◆
2	Create community gathering places such as downtown, a community center, etc.	◆		◆	◆
3	Develop a comprehensive City web site.	◆			
4	Provide resources to citizens to help establish neighborhood associations.	◆			◆
Mid-Term Actions					
5	Develop a new citizen welcome package and distribute to all new residents.	◆	◆		◆
Ongoing					
6	Help form new service clubs and other civic organizations.	◆	◆		◆
7	Organize additional community special events.	◆	◆		◆



No.	Economic Development	Implementation Responsibility			
		City	Agencies	Development Community	Residents
<b>Economic Development</b>					
Short-Term Actions					
1	Develop an economic development recruitment program that identifies and prioritizes specific recruitment targets.	◆	◆		
2	Create an economic development recruitment package.	◆	◆		
3	Conduct a detailed market analysis and target industry assessment.	◆	◆		
4	Complete a wayfinding and entry signage plan.	◆			
5	Update the City's zoning ordinance to create a historic overlay zone for the town center.	◆		◆	◆
6	Update the City's zoning and sign ordinance to ensure high quality development standards for highway mixed use areas.	◆		◆	
Mid-Term Actions					
7	Create a shop local campaign with local merchants.	◆	◆		◆
Ongoing					
8	Develop and maintain an economic development web page.	◆			



# Appendix A Maps



Ultimate Growth Boundary  
 Sector Plan  
 Ultimate Land Use Plan  
 Downtown Pedestrian Shed  
 Transportation Plan  
 Water Plan  
 Sewer Plan  
 Storm Sewer Plan

Existing Parks and Schools  
 Economic Development  
 Priority Areas  
 Downtown Planning Areas  
 Existing City Facilities  
 Fire Station Coverage Map