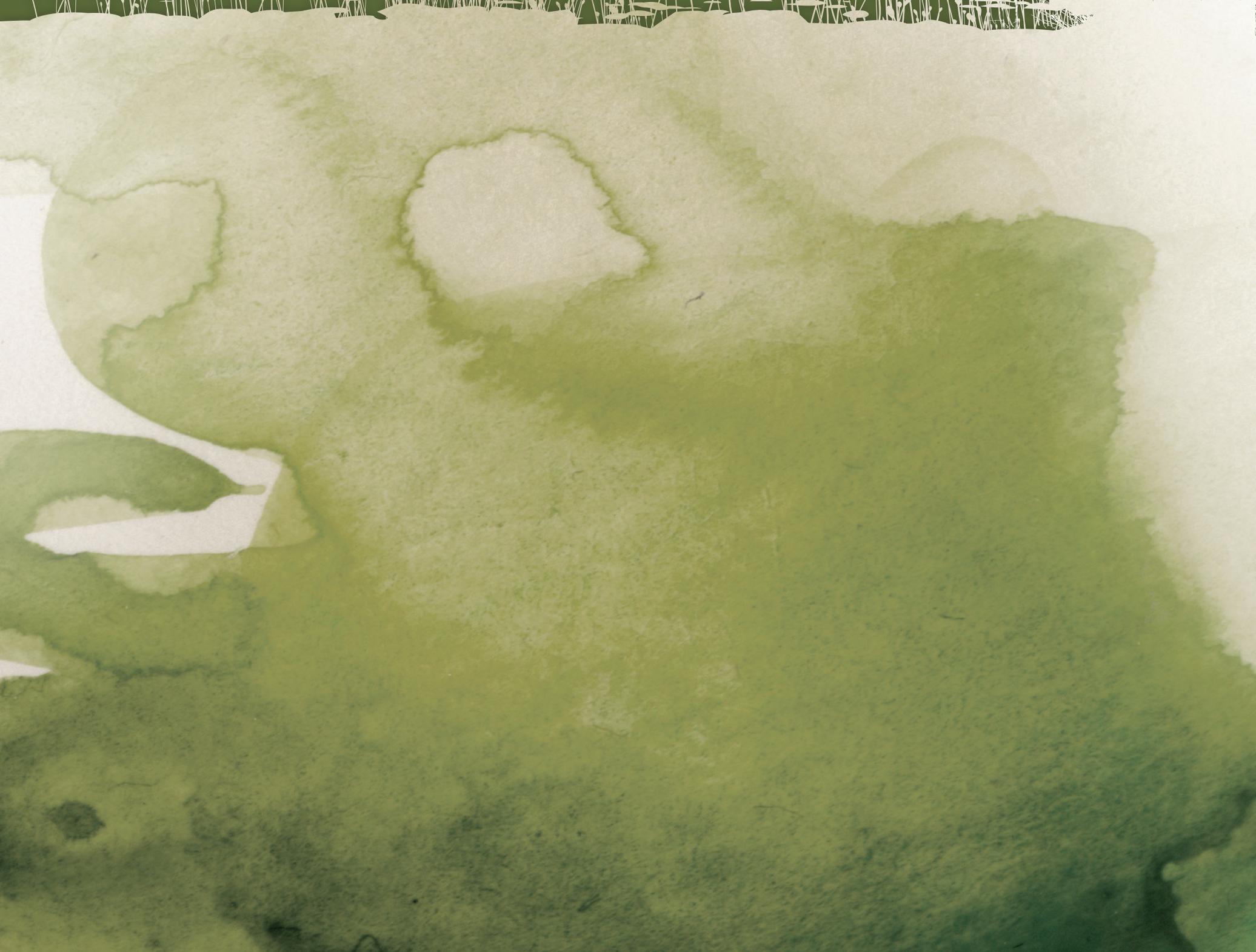


# Nassau Bay

2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN





November 23, 2010

Mr. Chris Reed  
City Manager  
City of Nassau Bay  
PO Box 58448  
Nassau Bay, Texas 77258

Dear Chris:

We are pleased to submit the final Nassau Bay Comprehensive Plan as unanimously adopted by City Council on November 8, 2010. The plan document was prepared in accordance with our Professional Services Agreement with the City.

This new long-range plan aims to protect the integrity of the community's established residential areas; set the stage for ongoing commercial area revitalization, waterfront redevelopment, and a more balanced tax base; address needed infrastructure upgrades; improve parks and recreation amenities; and continue to enhance Nassau Bay's image and aesthetics. Recognizing these opportunities and challenges, this plan also elevates the concept of community character, which is a way of looking beyond just the use of land to those site and building design features that influence the "look and feel" –and the true compatibility—of development.

Priorities and action strategies in this plan originated from informal listening sessions with a cross section of residents and leaders, discussions with City staff and other consultants, four working sessions with the Planning Commission, and two joint workshops between the Commission and the City Council prior to final public hearings and plan adoption. Now attention turns to the pursuit of near-term action initiatives while maintaining a focus on the longer-term vision and strategic direction set by the plan. Change is inevitable, but positive, beneficial change for Nassau Bay will require the ongoing commitment of all who contributed their time and ideas to this plan.

On behalf of our firm, it has been a pleasure working with all involved. We sincerely appreciated the opportunity to lend our professional skills and experience to this process. We look forward to seeing the continued success and enhancement of Nassau Bay in the years ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

KENDIG KEAST COLLABORATIVE

Gary Mitchell, AICP  
Vice President

**RESOLUTION NO. R2010-1893**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
NASSAU BAY, TEXAS, ADOPTING THE UPDATED  
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN.**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NASSAU  
BAY, STATE OF TEXAS:

THAT, pursuant to Section 10.03 of the City Charter, Kendig Keast  
Collaborative, Consultant, working with the Planning Commission, has completed  
the update of the Comprehensive Master Plan; and

THAT, a public hearing was duly held on the proposed comprehensive  
master plan; and

THAT, the Plan is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference,  
and is recommended for approval by the City Manager, and

THAT, the City Council hereby adopts the updated Comprehensive  
Master Plan.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 8<sup>th</sup> day of November 2010.



CITY OF NASSAU BAY, TEXAS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald C. Matter", is written over a horizontal line.

Donald C. Matter  
Mayor

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pat Jones", is written over a horizontal line.

Pat Jones, TRMC/CMC  
City Secretary

# Acknowledgements

## *Mayor and City Council*

Donald C. Matter	Mayor
John Haugen	Council Position 1
Dr. Sandra Mossman	Council Position 2
Ron Swofford	Council Position 3
Brad Bailey	Council Position 4
Mark Denman	Mayor Pro Tem / Council Position 5
Bob Warters	Council Position 6
Bette Johnson	Former Council Position 2
David Braun	Former Council Position 6

## *Planning Commission*

Dr. Roscoe Lee (Chairman)  
Donald Johnson  
Louis Nguyen  
John Nugent  
Arlene Phillips  
Kirk Walker  
Miguel Zamora

## *City Staff*

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Pat Jones	City Secretary
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Csilla Ludanyi	Finance Director
Dick Gregg, Jr.	City Attorney

## **Other City Consultants**

HDR-Claunch & Miller  
Marsh Darcy Partners

## *Kendig Keast Collaborative (Plan Consultant)*

Bret Keast, AICP	President
Gary Mitchell, AICP	Vice President (Project Manager)
Elizabeth Austin, AICP	Associate Planner / Urban Designer
Susan Watkins	Associate Planner
Cristin Burton	Associate Planner

Nassau Bay  
2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



## **Thanks also to ...**

Individual residents, business owners, property owners, community organizations and others who participated in and contributed their insights and ideas to Nassau Bay's long-range planning process.



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## *Community Vision*

The City of **Nassau Bay** will be an incomparable, safe, family-oriented, waterfront enclave, which is fiscally well managed with well maintained, up-to-date infrastructure and aesthetically pleasing residences and buildings that reflect the obvious pride of its citizens.

This community, the Manned Space Program's birthplace, will be the cultural arts center of the Bay Area, with a robust economy anchored by a revitalized commercial district, tourism, and high technology business, while retaining homeowner privacy and a small town atmosphere.





## Chapter 1

# *Introduction*

*The Nassau Bay Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide new development, redevelopment and community enhancement efforts in the City in the coming years. Whether an issue is a challenge or an opportunity, the utmost importance should be placed upon this plan as a framework for thoughtful public and official discussion of the choices facing Nassau Bay.*

### **Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan**

A comprehensive plan is usually the most important policy document a municipal government prepares and maintains. This is because the plan:

- ★ lays out a “big picture” vision regarding the future growth and enhancement of the community;
- ★ considers at once the entire geographic area of the community, including areas where new development and redevelopment may occur; and,
- ★ assesses near- and longer-term needs and desires across a variety of inter-related topics that represent the key “building blocks” of a community (e.g., land use, transportation, urban design, economic development, redevelopment, housing, neighborhoods, parks and recreation, utility infrastructure, public facilities and services, etc.).

Through a comprehensive plan, a community determines how best to accommodate and manage its projected growth, as well as the redevelopment of older neighborhoods and commercial areas. Like most similar plans, this Comprehensive Plan is aimed at ensuring that ongoing development and redevelopment will proceed in an orderly, well-planned manner so that public facilities and services can keep pace and residents’ quality of life will be enhanced. Significantly, by



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

### **Use of this Plan**

A comprehensive plan, if on target and embraced by the City and its leadership, has the potential to take a community to a whole new level in terms of livability and tangible accomplishments. However, comprehensive plans are only words and images on paper if their action recommendations are not pursued and effectively implemented.

The plan is ultimately a guidance document for City officials and staff, who must make decisions on a daily basis that will determine the future direction, financial health, and "look and feel" of the community. These decisions are carried out through:

- ★ targeted programs and expenditures prioritized through the City's annual budget process, including routine but essential functions such as code enforcement;
- ★ major public improvements and land acquisitions financed through the City's capital improvements program and related bond initiatives;
- ★ new and amended City ordinances and regulations closely linked to comprehensive plan objectives (and associated review and approval procedures in the case of land development, subdivisions, and zoning matters);
- ★ departmental work plans and staffing in key areas;
- ★ support for ongoing planning and studies that will further clarify needs, costs, benefits, and strategies;
- ★ pursuit of external grant funding to supplement local budgets and/or expedite certain projects; and
- ★ initiatives pursued in conjunction with other public and private partners to leverage resources and achieve successes neither could accomplish on their own.

Despite these many avenues for action, a comprehensive plan should not be considered a "cure all" for every tough problem a community faces. On the one hand, these plans tend to focus on the responsibilities of City government in the physical planning arena, where cities normally have a more direct and extensive role than in other areas that residents value, such as education, social services, and arts and culture.

Of necessity, comprehensive plans, as vision and policy documents, also must remain relatively general and conceptual. The resulting plan may not touch on every challenge before the community, but it is meant to set a tone and motivate concerted efforts to move the community forward in coming years.

It is also important to distinguish between the function of the comprehensive plan relative to the City's development regulations, such as the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. The plan establishes overall policy for future land use, infrastructure improvements, and other aspects of community growth and enhancement. The City's zoning ordinance and official zoning district map then implement the plan in terms of specific land uses and building and site development standards. The City's subdivision regulations also establish standards in conformance with the plan for the physical subdivision of land, the layout of new or redeveloped streets and building sites, and the design and construction of roads, water and sewer lines, storm drainage, and other infrastructure that will be dedicated to the City for long-term maintenance.

### Planning Authority

#### State Support for Community Planning – Section 213 of the Texas Local Government Code

Unlike some other states, municipalities in Texas are not mandated by state government to prepare and maintain local comprehensive plans. However, Section 213 of the Texas Local Government Code provides that, "The governing body of a municipality may adopt a comprehensive plan for the long-range development of the municipality." The Code also cites the basic reasons for long-range, comprehensive community planning by stating that, "The powers granted under this chapter are for the purposes of promoting sound development of municipalities and promoting public health, safety and welfare." The Code also gives Texas municipalities the freedom to "define the content and design" of their plans, although Section 213 suggests that 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.

In Nassau Bay, City Charter Section 10.03 requires long-range planning.

## Nassau Bay

2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



#### **Nassau Bay Planning Charge**

*"The planning commission shall formulate a comprehensive master plan for the development of the city, containing the commission's recommendations for growth, development and beautification of the city. This plan shall be updated **at least every five (5) years** and shall contain the planning considerations for the period of ten (10) years.*

Section 10.03:  
Comprehensive Master Plan  
Nassau Bay City Charter



## Why Plan?

Local planning allows the City of Nassau Bay to have a greater measure of control over its destiny rather than simply reacting to change. Planning enables the City to manage future growth and development actively as opposed to reacting to development and redevelopment proposals on a case-by-case basis without adequate and necessary consideration of community-wide issues.

The process used to update the Nassau Bay Comprehensive Plan may prove more valuable to the community than the plan itself since the document is ultimately only a snapshot in time. The planning process involves major community decisions about where development and redevelopment will occur, the nature and extent of future development, and the community's capability to provide the necessary public services and facilities to support this development. This leads to pivotal discussions about what is "best" for the community and how everything from taxes to quality of life will be affected.

Long-range planning also provides an opportunity for the City's elected and appointed officials to step back from pressing, day-to-day issues and clarify their ideas on the kind of community they are trying to create and maintain. Through the plan development process, they can look broadly at programs for neighborhoods, housing, economic development, parks, and provision of public infrastructure and facilities, and how these efforts may relate to one another. The resulting Nassau Bay Comprehensive Plan represents a "big picture" of the city within the context of broader trends across the Houston metropolitan area and the State of Texas.

In summary, important reasons for long range planning in Nassau Bay include:

- ★ To provide a balance of land uses and services throughout the community to meet the needs and desires of the City's population.
- ★ To ensure adequate public facilities to meet the demands of future development and redevelopment.
- ★ To achieve and maintain a development pattern that reflects the values of the community, and which ensures a balanced tax base between residential and non-residential development.
- ★ To ensure the long-term protection and enhancement of the image and visual appearance of the community.

- ★ To involve local citizens in the decision-making process and reach consensus on the future vision for Nassau Bay and its ongoing development.
- ★ To guide annual work programs and prioritize improvements consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

### Community and Leadership Engagement

Local planning is often the most direct way to involve residents and other stakeholders in determining the vision for their community. Specific community outreach and leadership involvement activities conducted in support of this Comprehensive Plan update included:

- ★ Initial joint workshop with City Council and Planning Commission (April 2010).
- ★ Series of informal listening sessions with small groups of residents (May 2010).
- ★ Four work sessions with Planning Commission (June, July, August and October 2010).
- ★ Plan review workshop with City Council and Planning Commission (September 2010).
- ★ Final public hearings (November 2010).

#### Insights from Nassau Bay Residents

##### New Economic Opportunity

- Whole new "front door" with NASA Parkway.
- Even better freeway access with Webster Bypass.

##### Community Appeal

- Waterfront and boating attraction.
- Should look at features of other cities and new neighborhoods where young families go (activities for kids, water features, trails).

##### Housing Options

- Liked Nassau Bay the best of other options in the area ... a place to downsize from a house to a condo – with a view.
- People relocate within the community to different housing types.

##### Charming and Friendly Community

- People who grew up here return to live (second and third generations of families).
- Neighbors taking care of neighbors.
- Charming and quaint versus "dated" (step back in time – old street lights, 1960s Americana).
- Small-town feel and lifestyle (comfortable, very friendly, access to elected officials).
- Best kept secret in Houston area – keep it that way!



# Nassau Bay

2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



## Nassau Bay Timeline

1927



Nassau Bay was part of 1776 Ranch

1962 First home sites were purchased

1963 NASA begins operations in area

1964 Families first moved into the development

1965 Nassau Bay Homeowners Association was formed



1970 Nassau Bay incorporated as a city



1981 St. John Hospital became a part of the SCH system



1998 Nassau Bay Economic Development Corporation formed

2007 NASA Area Management District created by Texas Legislature

2008 Tax Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) 1 established by City

2008 Webster Bypass completed

2008 Hurricane Ike causes widespread damage in Galveston Bay area

## Community Overview

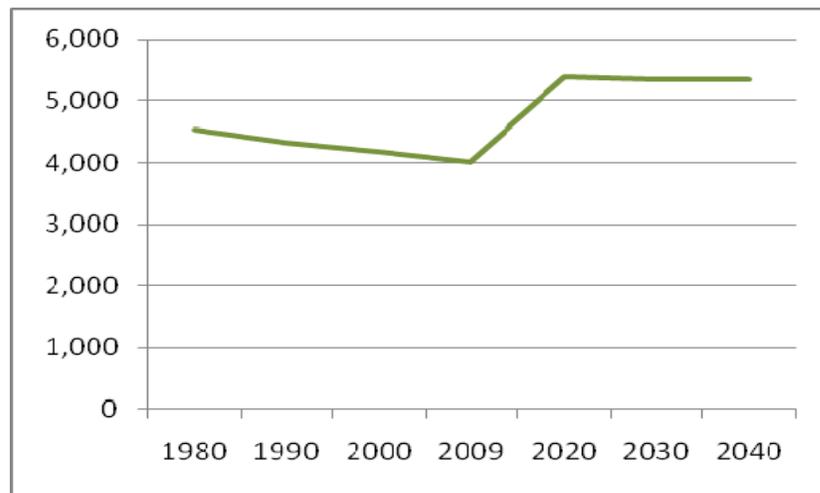
The following data and background information provides essential context to support and guide the City's long-range and strategic planning. All figures are from the U.S. Census Bureau unless otherwise indicated.

### Renewed Population Growth?

#### 4,016 residents in 2009

- ★ 510 (12.7%) fewer residents than in 1980 (4,526).
- ★ Gradual drop in recent decades (4,320 in 1990; 4,170 in 2000).
- ★ Highest point in recent years was a 4,185 estimate in 2002.

**FIGURE 1.1**  
Population Growth Scenario



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau through 2009; then Houston-Galveston Area Council.

H-GAC predicts renewed population growth in Nassau Bay, but a leveling off in approximately the 5,300-5,400 range (5,362 in 2040). This would represent an annual growth rate of 1.37%, on average, through 2030.

Members of the City Council and Planning Commission expressed concern with the growth forecast above if it implies increased residential density in Nassau Bay. During their discussions it was noted that in a community which is effectively built out and unable to add more territory, any significant population increase would come about in three ways: (1) through higher density housing, (2) replacement of former commercial sites with residential development, and/or (3) a higher rate of family formation or increase in average household size.

**The Planning Commission concluded that this updated plan should signal the community's desire for no greater residential density in the future beyond what the City's current zoning allows. Additionally, no significant conversion of current non-residential property or zoning to residential is foreseen but might be beneficial in certain cases if it advances other objectives for quality redevelopment.** One possible scenario is that Nassau Bay eventually regains its 1980 population level of some 4,500 residents and then continues to monitor its year-on-year growth beyond that point. The Commission recognized that the new Voyager project in Town Square has already added 313 units, and feasible waterfront redevelopment will likely involve a mix of uses in a planned development, including some form of more intensive residential development.

## Nassau Bay

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### Approaching the 10 Million Threshold Regionally

Dr. Barton Smith, Director of the University of Houston Institute for Regional Forecasting, recently predicted that the 8-county Houston metropolitan area will have 7.4 million residents in 2020 and 9.5 million by 2035. This would represent an increase of 3.7 million people over the next 25 years, from the current regional population of 5.1 million. These forecasts assume an average annual growth rate of 2.5% over the next decade, which would then moderate to about 1.5% per year, on average, through the 2020s until 2035 due to the momentum-slowng effects of what Dr. Smith labels "sheer city size."



## Nassau Bay 2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### Housing Implications of 2030 Growth Projection

If Nassau Bay were to add some 1,300 additional residents by 2030, as projected by H-GAC, then **approximately 655 housing units** would be needed to accommodate these individuals (assuming the same split between owner- and renter-occupied units – 51% to 49% – and the same average household sizes for each type – 2.23 and 1.74 persons per household, respectively). These 655 units would not necessarily be all new depending on fluctuations in the current housing stock (through demolitions, conversions, etc.) and vacancy rates. But changes over time in the key factors of housing mix and persons per household would make the greatest difference in the number of housing units required. In the meantime, the completion of the Voyager project in Town Square during 2010 has already added 313 new apartment units to the City's housing inventory.

### 2.23 persons per household in owner-occupied units

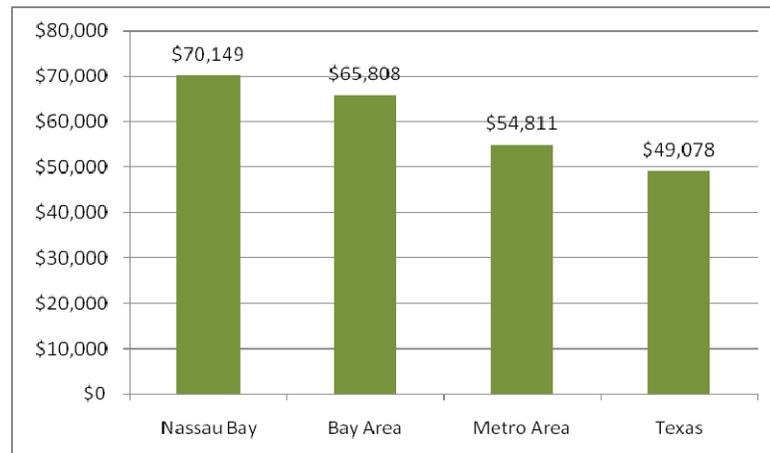
### 1.74 persons per household in renter-occupied units

- ★ These averages from Census 2000 were well below those for the metropolitan area (2.96 owner, 2.56 renter) and state (2.87 owner, 2.53 renter).
- ★ Household sizes have significant implications for a range of City services, including in terms of per-unit water demand, wastewater generation, traffic generation, parkland needs and recreation demand, and emergency calls.

### An Affluent Community

A variety of indicators confirm the relative affluence and status of Nassau Bay's population.

**FIGURE 1.2**  
**Median Household Income (2008)**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

Median income in Nassau Bay and the Bay Area is notably higher than for the region and state. Local income has also increased 36% since 1990.

### 37.7% in 45-64 age range

- ★ More than one-third of Nassau Bay residents in their prime earning years compared to 24.9% for the Bay area and 23.1% statewide.

### 84.7% in "white collar" jobs (Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership)

- ★ Compared to 63.6% for the entire Bay area.

**9.2% self employed**

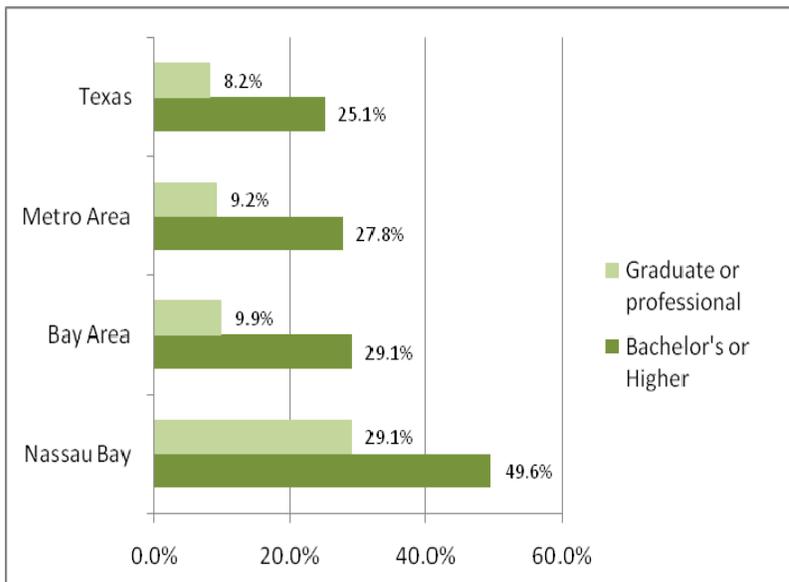
- ★ Compared to 6.2% across the Houston metropolitan area and 7.1% statewide.

**1/3 of home owners free of a mortgage**

- ★ 32.9% as of Census 2000, which was slightly lower than the statewide figure (35.8%) but a higher percentage than for the entire Houston metropolitan area (29.5%).



**FIGURE 1.3**  
**Educational Attainment (2008)**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

Local educational attainment is significantly higher than for the Bay area, metropolitan area, and state – by 20 percentage points or more in all cases. Additionally, the local bachelor’s degree rate has decreased only slightly since 1990, from 51.7% to 49.6%. The graduate or professional degree rate has increased to 29.1% from 25.2% in 1990.

**An Older Population than Most Cities**

Data on local population characteristics highlight this fundamental way in which Nassau Bay differs from the rest of the Bay area, as well as the state and nation.

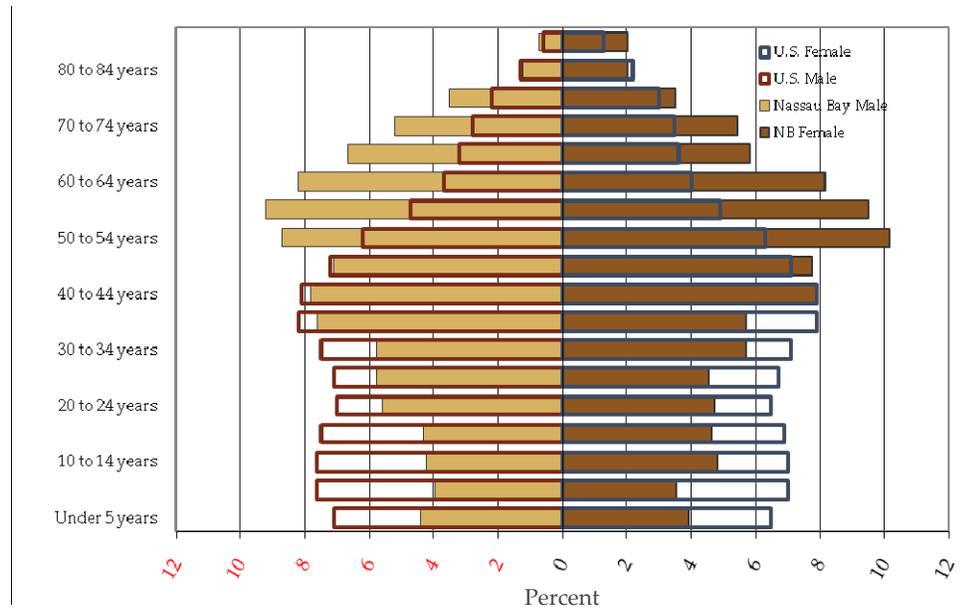




**48 years median age**

- ★ This 2008 estimate was up from 43.3 years in 1990, and clearly higher than the median ages for the Bay area (34.1), Houston metropolitan area (33.0), and the state (33.2).

**FIGURE 1.4**  
**Age and Gender Distribution (2000)**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

Only 14.2% of Nassau Bay households in 2000 had one or more persons under age 18. This was substantially lower than for the entire metropolitan area (42.8%) and the state (40.9%). Newer estimates from 2008 show that the City's percentage in the 0-14 age range has increased some since 1990, from 10.3% to 13.3%, while it is lower across the Bay area (23.7% versus 24.6% in 1990). On the other hand, Nassau Bay's age 65+ population, at 16.5% in 2008, was about twice the percentage for the Bay area (8.3%), and also higher than statewide (10.1%). The gradual aging of the U.S. population is also reflected in the local figures, with Nassau Bay's 65+ population share increasing from 12% in 1990 (but down from 18.1% in Census 2000).

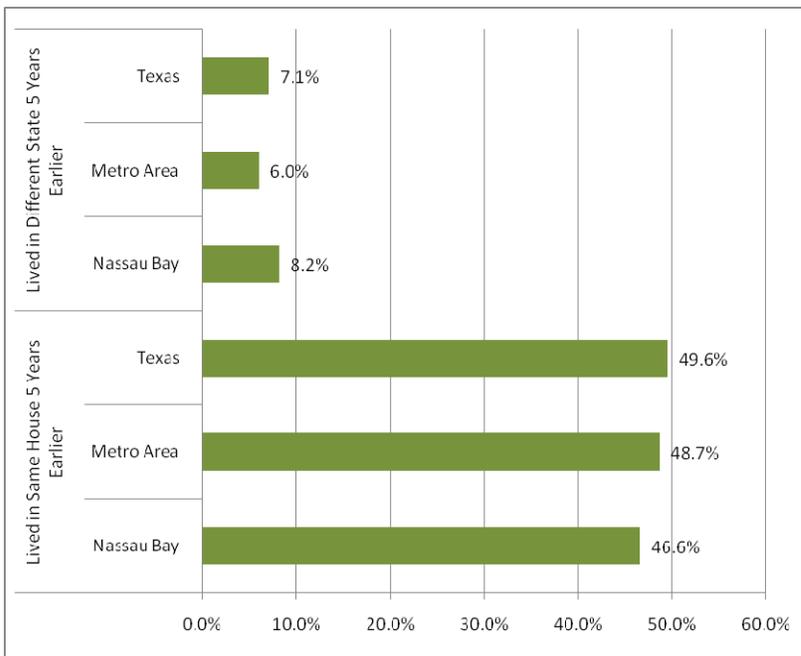
**Both Stability and Mobility**

Nassau Bay has a part of its population base that has lived here since the community's earliest days. On the other hand, various other residents are relative newcomers, either to the City and/or the State of Texas. Commuting data also appear to indicate that the City's working-age population is relatively mobile and does not necessarily work close to



home, such as nearby at NASA's Johnson Space Center and related private businesses in the vicinity.

**FIGURE 1.5**  
**Residential Tenure (2000)**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

Census 2000 data on residential tenure also show that 15.6% of Nassau Bay residents had lived in their current home since before 1980, which was similar to the statewide percentage (15.7%) but higher than the metropolitan area proportion (13.7%).

**15.6% lived in current home since before 1980**

- ★ This percentage from Census 2000 was similar to the statewide percentage (15.7%) but higher than the metropolitan area proportion (13.7%).

**More Costly – But Diverse – Housing**

The median value of owner-occupied housing units in Nassau Bay was \$152,200 as of Census 2000. This was substantially higher than the 2000 median home values across the Houston metropolitan area (\$89,700) and the state (\$82,500). On the rental side, the 2000 median rents were \$624 in Nassau Bay, \$589 at the metropolitan level, and \$574 statewide. Relating housing costs to income levels yields important insights about relative housing affordability. Based on a 2008 estimate of \$70,149, the

**Nassau Bay**  
2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



**Commuter Time Not Unusual**

The mean travel time to work for Nassau Bay residents was 26.2 minutes in Census 2000. This was not significantly different than the metropolitan-level or statewide mean commuting times (28.8 and 25.4 minutes, respectively). The local figure also suggests that a fair number of the City's residents are not dependent on NASA Johnson Space Center jobs given the apparent length of their work trip from the community. Additionally, 5.8% worked at home as of Census 2000 compared to only 2.5% across the metropolitan area and 2.8% in all of Texas.

**The 30-Year Threshold**

This threshold is important for a community's housing stock and neighborhoods. This is because, in addition to most mortgages being paid off by this time, it is also a common point when maintenance of older homes becomes an increasing burden on their owners. At the time of Census 2000, more than half of Nassau Bay's housing stock (54.3%) had been built before 1970 (i.e., more than 30 years old). This compared to less than one-third (31.1%) across the metropolitan area and 35.2% statewide.

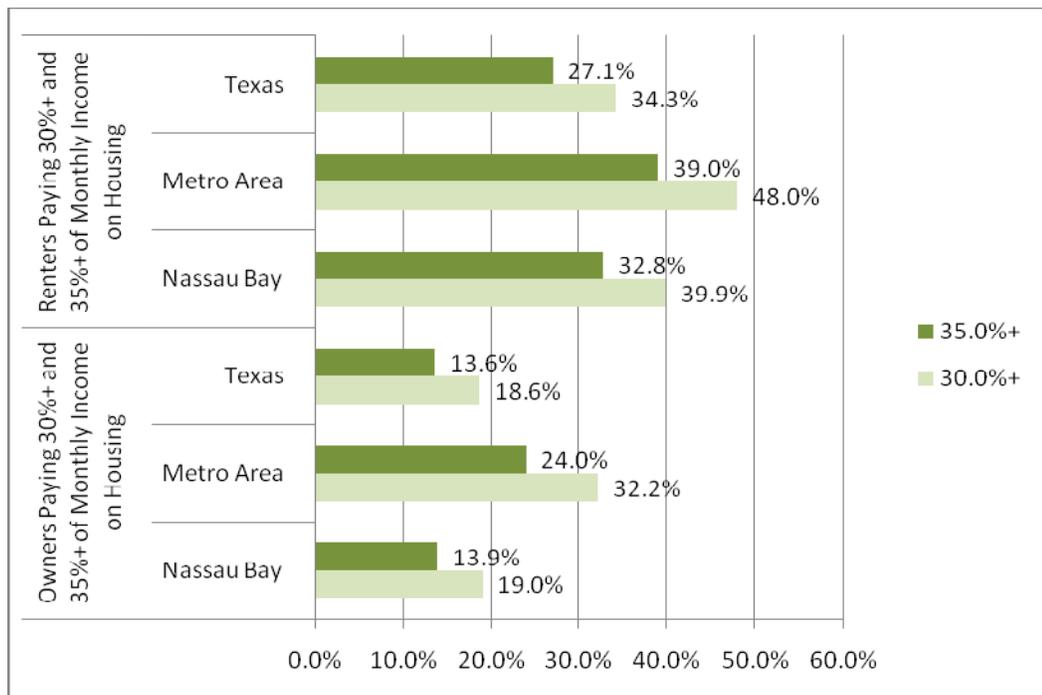


median income household in Nassau Bay should have aimed to pay no more than \$1,754 monthly toward housing costs (30% of income), with an absolute maximum of \$2,046 (35%).

**2,216 housing units**

- ★ This 2008 estimate by the U.S. Census Bureau was only slightly lower than the housing count in the 1990 Census – 2,283 units.

**FIGURE 1.6**  
**Housing Cost Burden (2000)**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

Likely due to income levels in Nassau Bay, a relatively low percentage of local home owners would be considered “cost burdened” (paying more than 35% of monthly income toward shelter costs). However, the cost of rental housing relative to incomes does appear to be more of a challenge for local renters.

**40.8% single-family detached dwellings**

- ★ This percentage relative to other housing types, as of Census 2000, was well below typical single-family unit percentages seen in other communities, including 59.6% across the entire Houston metropolitan area and 63.4% statewide.
- ★ This confirms the relative diversity of housing types in Nassau Bay, dating back to the community’s original master planning and development.



### 51% of housing units owner occupied

- ★ This 2008 estimate compared to percentages of 58.8% across the entire Bay area and 65.1% statewide.
- ★ The share of owner-occupied units in Nassau Bay was also up slightly from 48.4% in 1990.

### Additional Information

Additional indicator data and background information on Nassau Bay is available from the following online resources:

- ★ City of Nassau Bay  
([www.nassaubay.com](http://www.nassaubay.com))
- ★ Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership  
([www.bayareahouston.com](http://www.bayareahouston.com))
- ★ Texas State Data Center  
([txsdc.utsa.edu](http://txsdc.utsa.edu))
- ★ Houston-Galveston Area Council  
([www.h-gac.com](http://www.h-gac.com))
- ★ U.S. Census Bureau – American Factfinder  
([factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en))
- ★ Texas Workforce Commission – Labor Market Information  
([www.tracer2.com](http://www.tracer2.com))
- ★ The Handbook of Texas Online  
([www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/BB/heb5.html](http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/BB/heb5.html))

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### Data Availability

*This Comprehensive Plan update was prepared at the end of a decade. This is when one-of-a-kind data from the last decennial U.S. Census is growing increasingly out of date and data from the next census is still a year or more away. In the meantime, results from the last census are still, in many cases, the best source of detailed data about socioeconomic conditions at the local community level, especially for making “apples to apples” comparisons to other communities, the state, and the nation. Interim estimates for some indicators are also available and used here. The City of Nassau Bay received initial population counts and other basic data from Census 2000 in late May 2001 (population and household characteristics, housing units, etc.) – or about 13 months after the April 2000 decennial Census month.*

## Chapter 2

# Growth & Development

This key chapter of the Comprehensive Plan communicates the desired character for the community and its neighborhoods and commercial areas, today and in the years ahead. In addition to offering predictability to property owners, residents, and investors regarding the community's preferred development pattern, an up-to-date plan also provides the public policy basis for the City's development regulations. Municipal government, in particular, is responsible for ensuring land use compatibility, maintaining adequate infrastructure and public service capacities to serve new development and desired redevelopment, and supporting property values and a stable and growing tax base. The ultimate aims of sound planning are preparedness and promotion of public health, safety and welfare.

### Planning Context

The following facts, considerations and assumptions provide context for the guiding principles and action strategies presented in this chapter:

**Built-Out Community.** Nassau Bay is effectively built out, except for a few remaining vacant pieces, with much of the focus already shifted to redevelopment and revitalization of both residential and commercial areas. In addition, Nassau Bay is an enclave community with no opportunity to annex additional territory.

**Residential Renewal.** Nassau Bay is seeing more teardown and rebuild activity in its residential housing stock. Some of this was necessary due

### Successes and Accomplishments since 2003 Plan Update

- Adoption of economic development tools (NASA Area Management District, Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone 1, 1/4-cent sales tax for street improvements – along with loss of eminent domain as a tool due to court and legislative actions).
- Implementation progress on Town Square project (including U.S. Economic Development Administration grant).
- Ordinance updates.
- Completion of Webster Bypass.

### Still on the Agenda

- Waterfront and multi-family redevelopment.
- Old and vacant retail and office properties.
- Local grocery store (if practical).



to Hurricane Ike damage. But officials and residents pointed out that this trend is inevitable and will likely continue given the age of many homes and rising lot values in the area, plus increasing insurance costs for coastal development. In public discussions for this plan update, some residents emphasized the positives of freshening the community's housing stock, especially when older homes become more costly and difficult to maintain and can adversely affect property values and neighborhood appeal. Increasing rental activity is another concern with an aging stock of single-family detached dwellings. Remaining vacant lots in the wake of the storm is another concern, but it is hoped they will soon be eliminated with new construction. Finally, some noted that a side effect of redevelopment activity could be gentrification if current residents can no longer afford the newly built housing. Once again, however, current real estate trends are already changing the local affordability equation.

**Economic Environment.** At the time of this plan update, a severe global recession that had emerged in 2008 was causing continuing difficulties in both residential and commercial real estate markets – though less so in Texas than in other parts of the nation that had built up property value “bubbles.” With this continuing economic “correction” in the background, plus ongoing Ike recovery, **Figure 2.1, Local Property Trends**, shows that nearly half (46%) of parcels in Nassau Bay had no change in appraised value from 2009 to 2010 while 35% lost value and only 19% saw their appraisal increase. Uncertainty surrounding future NASA programming and funding at Johnson Space Center was also causing concern on a variety of local fronts beyond direct and indirect jobs, including potential impacts on the local office, retail and residential markets.

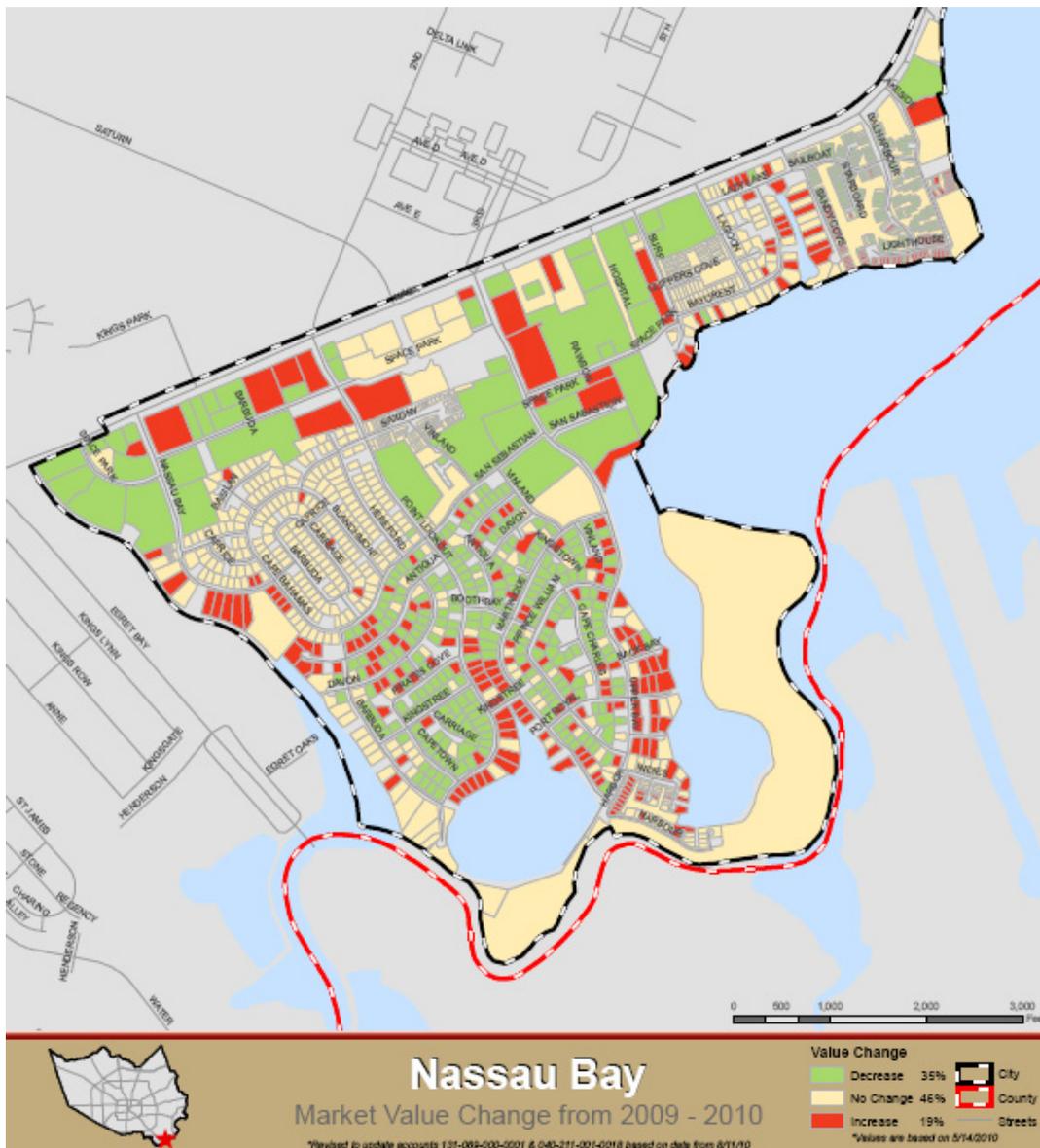
**Regional Growth and Socioeconomic Realities.** Continued, substantial population growth is projected for the Houston metropolitan area. Additionally, much like the state and nation, the local area is seeing increasing racial and ethnic diversity in its expanding population. The “Baby Boomer” retirement wave will also continue across the nation through the 2020s decade, and temperate, coastal, and relatively low-cost living environments will continue to attract retirees.

**Development Context.** Nassau Bay is pursuing its redevelopment agenda against the backdrop of substantial new growth and development in a swath from the Baytown area to the north to Galveston and Brazoria counties to the south and west. Some officials and residents noted the extent of new and attractive development, with amenities, that is drawing home buyers to these areas. This quality development benefits Nassau Bay and the entire Bay Area. But it also poses a challenge in terms of what aspects of older and newer

communities appeal most to prospective buyers and relocating individuals, families, and retirees.

**“Green” Building.** Environmentally focused site and building design, plus ongoing maintenance and management practices, have taken on a much higher profile nationally and globally since Nassau Bay’s last plan

**FIGURE 2.1**  
**Local Property Trends**



SOURCE: Harris County Appraisal District (Nassau Bay City limits not shown correctly for incorporated portion of Clear Lake)

This map, based on the latest county tax appraisal information for 2010, indicates which properties in Nassau Bay were assigned an increased value (in red), reduced value (in green), or no change in value (in tan) from one year ago.



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### Tax Base Mix

The latest tax roll information from the Harris County Appraisal District, for 2010, shows that nearly two-thirds (61.4%) of the \$487.7 million in total appraised property value in Nassau Bay is in residential property (\$299.5 million). Taxable non-residential property accounts for 22.6% (\$110.3 million). Another 14.5% (\$70.5 million) is in tax-exempt properties (governmental, charitable, religious). The balance, at less than 2% (\$7.2 million), is in vacant properties. The \$259 million in value associated with single-family lots in 2010 was reduced by \$14.9 million for applicable residential exemptions.

update in 2003. Both the private and public sectors are pursuing wide-ranging initiatives, recognitions and incentives that promote green practices, and commercial and residential real estate consumers have higher expectations as a result. For public agencies involved with new building construction and facility maintenance, the payoff is usually in terms of reduced long-term operating costs, which may require a higher up-front investment that will be recovered over time.

**Global Factors.** National and international trends in energy and communications technologies will impact business economics and personal lifestyles over time. Given its coastal location, Nassau Bay must also be cognizant of long-term trends in sea level and tropical storm activity and intensity that can particularly impact cities on flat coastal plains.

### Strategic Issues

Based on discussions with City Council, the Planning Commission, City staff, and Nassau Bay residents and other stakeholders, the following items are considered key issues related to growth and development for the current Comprehensive Plan update:

- ★ Successful completion of the Town Square project.
- ★ Continued focus on waterfront and multi-family redevelopment as a next step following Town Square completion.
- ★ Building up the City's non-residential tax base.
- ★ Elimination of vacant retail and office space, especially along the NASA Parkway frontage.
- ★ Appropriate zoning (and parking standards) for non-residential areas to promote investment and redevelopment and ensure residential compatibility.
- ★ Appropriate oversight of residential teardown and rebuilding activity.
- ★ Promotion of housing variety within the community, especially to address the changing housing needs of residents throughout their life cycles (in terms of both dwelling types/sizes and price points).
- ★ Effective coordination between the City and Homeowners Associations, especially regarding respective roles in building and property maintenance standards and enforcement.
- ★ Promotion of "green" site design and building practices.

## Guiding Principles

Guiding principles express basic values or policies and, thus, provide a framework for evaluating strategies and outcomes. Whatever actions Nassau Bay ultimately pursues based on this updated Comprehensive Plan, all such efforts related to the community's growth and development should be consistent with the following principles:

### Guiding Principles for Growth & Development

1. Retaining Nassau Bay's character as essentially a residential community, with supportive and compatible commercial activity and services, office and institutional development, and limited light industrial use.
2. Expanding the non-residential tax base (both property and sales).
3. Maintaining an active role by the City in spurring economic development and redevelopment, using available municipal tools.
4. Ensuring the success of signature redevelopment projects.
5. Generating funds for major capital investments and rehabilitation, as well as new and enhanced amenities for residents.

## Action Strategies

### Successful completion of the Town Square project.

	Capital Improvement	In coordination with Griffin Partners, continue to monitor leasing and absorption of completed space in the Town Square project to evaluate the pace and success of marketing and recruiting efforts.
	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	

### Continued focus on waterfront and multi-family redevelopment as a next step following Town Square completion.

	Capital Improvement	Continue to monitor the financial status of properties of interest.
✓	Program / Initiative	Continue strict enforcement of City code requirements and collection efforts on unpaid taxes and fees.
✓	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
✓	Further Study / Planning	

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### Action Strategies

*This key section highlights a series of potential actions for responding to the Strategic Issues identified in this chapter. Also indicated in each case is the type of action(s) involved based on five categories which represent the main ways that comprehensive plans are implemented:*

- Capital investments
- Programs and initiatives
- Regulations and standards
- Partnerships and coordination
- Further study and planning (especially as required to qualify for external funding opportunities)

*While some action items are relatively straightforward to pursue, other possibilities in this section may remain just that – only concepts and considerations that the City and/or community may not be ready to pursue until later in the horizon of this Comprehensive Plan, if even then. They represent action options that are available to Nassau Bay as a Texas municipality and as acted on by other communities. However, it is recognized that they may not be feasible in Nassau Bay for various reasons such as potential cost, complexity, and/or degree of community support, as well as the capacity of City government to carry out certain initiatives given available staffing and other resources. More definitive choices will ultimately be made through City Council priority setting, the City's annual budget process, and ongoing community input.*



**Building up the City's non-residential tax base.**

**Elimination of vacant retail and office space, especially along the NASA Parkway frontage.**

	Capital Improvement	Continue support of the Nassau Bay Economic Development Corporation as the City's lead entity for promoting new and expanded business investment.
✓	Program / Initiative	Continue support for the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership in its efforts to maintain stable and predictable programs and funding at NASA Johnson Space Center, along with overall economic development initiatives for the Bay Area.
	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	Spend some recruiting effort on specialty shops and businesses in efforts to capitalize more on the completed Webster Bypass and the high-profile NASA Parkway corridor along the City's northern boundary.
	Further Study / Planning	

**Appropriate zoning (and parking standards) for non-residential areas to promote investment and redevelopment and ensure residential compatibility.**

	Capital Improvement	Adjust the City's zoning strategy for prime properties along and near NASA Parkway to promote more retail versus office and institutional development. Also to highlight a more direct route to City approval of desired uses and developments versus the need for Planned Unit Development (PUD) applications to gain flexibility and achieve creative design (as most PUD processes can be time-consuming and unpredictable for both the City and applicants).
	Program / Initiative	
✓	Regulation / Standards	Ensure appropriate application of parking standards to all non-residential uses, including new and expanded institutional uses, to prevent adverse impacts on nearby residential areas.
	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	





**Appropriate oversight of residential teardown and rebuilding activity.**

	Capital Improvement	As teardown and rebuild activity increases, continue to monitor any compatibility concerns with the scale, height, setback, and/or design of newer and larger homes relative to existing dwellings, and any necessary zoning responses (as well as private deed restriction standards that may come into play and must be considered in evaluating potential zoning strategies).
	Program / Initiative	
✓	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	

**Promotion of housing variety within the community, especially to address the changing housing needs of residents throughout their life cycles (in terms of both dwelling types/sizes and price points).**

	Capital Improvement	Identify and recruit development companies with a track record of building quality housing in small-lot, attached, and higher-density forms, as well as senior-focused projects that provide for progression into assisted living and full-time care, in both residential and mixed-use settings.  Avoid re-zoning or non-residential use of properties currently zoned for residential use, especially where conducive for medium- and higher-density residential types.  Consider financial, regulatory, and other types of incentives (e.g., land assembly/clearance) the City might employ to encourage life-cycle housing development and redevelopment.
✓	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	

**Effective coordination between the City and Homeowners Associations, especially regarding respective roles in building and property maintenance standards and enforcement.**

	Capital Improvement	Continue regular outreach and communication, from the City Manager level, to HOAs to ensure effective code enforcement strategies given reduced ability to enforce private standards.  Boost budget support for basic code enforcement, as City resources allow.
	Program / Initiative	
✓	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	

**Housing for All Needs**

*"Life-cycle housing" is the notion that a community is most livable when its residents have local housing options to meet their needs through all or most stages of life (singles, young marrieds, families with children, empty nesters, senior couples and singles, assisted living, etc.). Otherwise, residents who enjoy and are very comfortable in their community must, at some point, move elsewhere to find housing of adequate size and appropriate price range – or, in some cases, because they can no longer afford the annual property tax associated with their current residence.*





**Promotion of “green” site design and building practices.**

✓	Capital Improvement	<p>Explore guidelines and incentive methods to promote green building practices without directly adopting Leadership in Energy &amp; Environmental Design (LEED) standards as a City regulatory requirement for future development and redevelopment. This can also include after-the-fact recognitions and potential tours of exceptional projects.</p> <p>Continue to monitor trends and practices in the building code, land development, and public facilities arenas related to “green” building and operational standards (including for energy efficiency; water conservation, capture, and re-use; waste reduction and recycling, etc.) to ensure that the City’s codes and policies promote and do not discourage such activity in Nassau Bay.</p> <p>Use public facility projects as opportunities to provide leadership and tangible models for green architecture and operational methods, including reporting of cost savings and other indicators of reduced resource use and environmental impact.</p>
✓	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
✓	Further Study / Planning	



## Future Land Use and Character

The following designations, which correspond with the categories depicted on **Map 2.1, Future Land Use & Character**, are designed to guide the pattern and relative intensity of future residential and non-residential development and redevelopment in Nassau Bay. The descriptions indicate the development types anticipated in each category, as well as the intended character of the areas in which these land uses occur and, in some cases, intermingle or are near one another. Specific dimensional requirements and design standards associated with each category are articulated through the City's implementing regulations as they currently exist or may be amended based on this updated plan. The **Appendix** to this chapter provides more background on the relationship between Map 2.1, which is a long-range planning tool for general guidance, and the City's official Zoning District Map, which is a legal instrument for making regulatory determinations regarding specific properties.

The future map is based, in part, on an inventory of existing land use in the community which was conducted during May 2010 as part of this plan update. The map categories may be classified as follows:

### Categories for Future Land Use & Character Map

#### Most Intensive

Urban  
Waterfront Residential  
Industrial

#### Medium Intensity

Multi-Family Residential  
General Residential  
General Commercial

#### Least Intensive

Suburban Residential  
Suburban Commercial  
Parks - Recreation\*

*\* Depends on park setting, size, design, and level of patronage and activity.*

### Urban

#### Development Types

- Mixed use (on single sites and within individual structures)
- Attached residential (brownstones, townhomes)
- Multi-unit attached residential in concentrated developments, whether for rent (apartments) or ownership (condominiums)
- Live/work units
- Commercial retail
- Office
- Public/institutional
- Entertainment





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- Parking structures
- Parks and public spaces

### Characteristics

- Most intensive development character in City.
- Greatest site coverage.
- Multi-story structures encouraged, with minimal or zero setbacks where appropriate.
- Less focus on off-street surface parking and greater reliance on on-street parking, public parking areas, and parking structures.
- Greater emphasis on pedestrian circulation relative to auto-oriented residential and commercial areas.
- Public/institutional uses designed to match Urban character.
- May exclude some auto-oriented uses that, by their very nature, cannot achieve an Urban character (e.g., gas stations).

### **Waterfront Residential**

#### Development Types

- Detached residential
- Attached residential (townhomes, condominiums)
- Multi-unit attached residential in concentrated developments, whether for rent (apartments) or ownership (condominiums)
- Public/institutional
- Parks and public spaces

#### Characteristics

- Intensive residential development (in terms of density, site coverage, building height and setbacks, etc.) due to land value and maximization of water access and views. This can especially involve much more vertical building designs than occurs on nearby lots without direct water frontage.
- Newer buildings elevated as required for storm/flooding protection.
- Development intensity offset by openness and views of nearby water, but street side can be dominated by vehicles depending on on-site and on-street parking arrangements.
- Parking sometimes placed under elevated buildings or accommodated with parking garages to allow for more intensive site development (and made feasible by land and building values).

### **Industrial**

#### Development Types

- Light industrial
- Office uses accessory to a primary industrial use



MAP 2.1  
Future Land Use and Character

**Legend**

- Future Land Use**
- Urban
  - Multi-Family Residential
  - Waterfront Residential
  - Industrial
  - General Residential
  - General Commercial
  - Suburban Residential
  - Suburban Commercial
  - Parks-Recreation
  - City Limits



Note: A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries.



- Public/institutional

Characteristics

- Typically auto-oriented character, although some industrial sites may feature more open space and landscaping, limited signage, screening, etc.
- Outdoor activity and storage, which should be screened where visible from public ways and residential areas.
- Certain publicly-owned uses (e.g., public works facilities, fleet maintenance, treatment plants) are best sited within Industrial areas.

**Multi-Family Residential**

Development Types

- Multi-unit attached residential in concentrated developments, whether for rent (apartments) or ownership (condominiums)
- Public/institutional
- Parks and public spaces

Characteristics

- Auto-oriented character typically, but can be softened by perimeter and on-site landscaping, minimum spacing between buildings, site coverage limits, and on-site recreation or open space criteria.
- May be limited to 2 or 3 stories outside of Urban character areas.
- Height and/or setback regulated near less intensive residential uses for compatibility.
- Can provide transition between less intensive residential areas and non-residential uses.

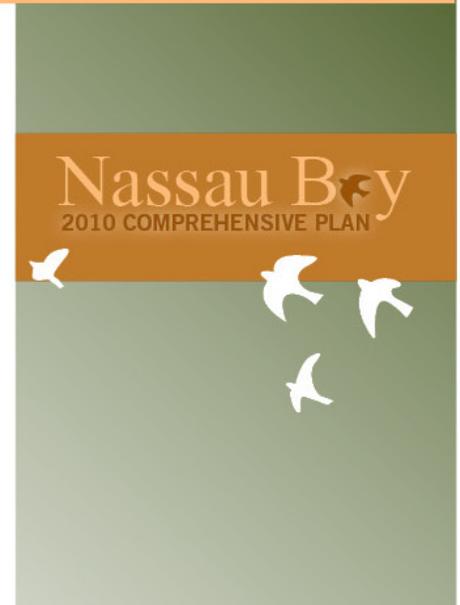
**General Residential**

Development Types

- Detached dwellings the primary focus
- Attached housing types subject to compatibility and open space standards (e.g., duplexes, townhomes, patio homes)
- Planned developments, potentially with a mix of housing types and varying densities, subject to compatibility and open space standards
- Public/institutional
- Parks and public spaces

Characteristics

- Less openness and separation between dwellings compared to Suburban areas.
- Auto-oriented character can result where driveways and front-loading garages dominate the front yard and facades of homes, only minimal landscaping is provided, and regulations do not prevent “cookie





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cutter” subdivision layouts characterized by straight streets and uniform lot sizes and arrangement.

- Neighborhood-scale commercial uses may emerge over time and should be encouraged on sites near the edges of General Residential areas which are best suited to accommodate such uses while ensuring compatibility with nearby residential uses.

### General Commercial

#### Development Types

- Wide range of commercial retail and service uses, at varying scales and intensities depending on the site
- Office (both multi-story buildings and small-scale office uses depending on the site)
- Public/institutional
- Parks and public spaces

#### Characteristics

- Auto-oriented character, which can be offset by enhanced building design, landscaping, reduced site coverage, well-designed signage, etc.

### Suburban Residential

#### Development Types

- Detached dwellings
- Planned developments to provide for other housing types (e.g., attached residential) in a Suburban character setting
- Public/institutional
- Parks and public spaces

#### Characteristics

- Suburban character from balance between buildings and other site improvements relative to degree of open space maintained on the site (compared to predominance of site coverage over undeveloped space in auto-oriented areas).
- Larger baseline minimum lot size allows for larger front yards and building setbacks and greater side separation between homes.
- Also results in less noticeable accommodation of the automobile on sites compared to more intensive residential areas, especially where driveways are on the side of homes rather than occupying a portion of the front yard space, and where garages are situated to the side or rear of the main dwelling.
- Can establish development options through zoning which allow for lot sizes smaller than the baseline in exchange for greater open space



set-aside, with the additional open space devoted to maintaining the overall Suburban character and buffering adjacent properties.

- Can also provide a cluster development option that further concentrates the overall development footprint while providing the developer the same lot yield – or even a density bonus to incent conservation designs with a higher open space ratio and discourage “cookie cutter” subdivision designs.
- More opportunity for natural and/or swale drainage (and storm water retention/absorption) relative to concentrated storm water conveyance in auto-oriented areas.

### **Suburban Commercial**

#### Development Types

- Range of commercial retail and service uses, at varying scales and intensities depending on the site
- Office (both multi-story buildings and small-scale office uses depending on the site)
- Planned development to accommodate custom site designs or mixing of uses in a Suburban character setting
- Public/institutional
- Parks and public spaces

#### Characteristics

- Suburban character primarily from reduced site coverage relative to more auto-oriented commercial development.
- Especially at key community entries and along high-profile corridors, may also involve other criteria to yield less intensive and more attractive development outcomes relative to auto-oriented areas, including higher standards for landscaping (along street frontages and within parking areas), signs, and building design.
- May exclude some auto-oriented uses that, by their very nature, cannot achieve a Suburban character.
- Near residential properties and areas, the permitted scale and intensity of non-residential uses should be limited to ensure compatibility (including adequate buffering/screening, criteria for placement and orientation of buildings and parking areas, height limits, and residential-in-appearance architectural standards).
- More opportunity for natural and/or swale drainage (and storm water retention/absorption) versus concentrated storm water conveyance in auto-oriented areas.

### **Parks - Recreation**

#### Development Types

- Public parks and open space





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- Public trails
- Public recreation areas (e.g., public golf courses, nature centers)

### Characteristics

- Public parkland theoretically will remain so in perpetuity compared to other public property and buildings that can transition to private ownership at some point.
- Park design, intensity of development, and planned uses/activities should match area character (e.g., public squares/plazas in Urban areas; limited development parks for passive recreation in low-intensity residential areas).

### Community Character

A character-based approach to community planning looks beyond the basic use of land (residential, commercial, industrial, public) to consider the placement and design of buildings and the associated planning of sites, as well as of entire neighborhoods and districts. Whether new development or redevelopment, and whether private or public construction, the pattern of land use – including its intensity, appearance, and physical arrangement on the landscape – determines the character and contributes to the image of the entire community over the long term.

On the community character spectrum, the three main character types are Urban, Suburban and Rural. These are common terms that should bring immediate images to mind as one thinks of traveling from the city center to the outskirts of a typical community. Over the years, and particularly since the advent of widespread automobile ownership in the 1920s-1930s, sizable portions of many communities have developed in an “Auto Urban” pattern, which falls in the range between Urban and Suburban.

Community character accounts for the physical traits one can see in an area which contribute to its “look and feel.” A character-based approach focuses especially on development intensity, which encompasses the density and layout of residential development; the scale and form of non-residential development; and the amount of building and pavement coverage (impervious cover) relative to the extent of open space and natural vegetation or landscaping. How the automobile is accommodated is a key factor in distinguishing character types, including street design, parking, and the resulting arrangement of buildings on sites.

It is this combination of basic land use and the characteristics of the use that more accurately determines the real compatibility and quality of development, as opposed to land use alone. Aesthetic enhancements such as the design of buildings, landscaping and screening, sign control, and site amenities also contribute to enhanced community character.



*Urban character*



*Auto Urban character*



*Suburban character*

## Appendix 2.1

# Planning and Zoning Maps

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The side-by-side comparison below highlights the distinct purposes and uses of a long-range land use plan map (such as Map 2.1, Future Land Use & Character, in this chapter) relative to a City's official Zoning District Map (which Nassau Bay maintains and makes available for public review at City Hall).

### Future Land Use & Character Map

#### Purpose

- Outlook for the future use of land and the character of development in the community.
- Macro level – general development pattern.

#### Use

- Guidance for City zoning map and related decisions (zone change requests, variance applications, etc.).
- Baseline for monitoring consistency of actions and decisions with Comprehensive Plan.

#### Inputs and Considerations

- Inventory of existing land use in the City.
- Elevating area character (Urban, Auto Urban, Suburban, Rural, Natural) as a core planning focus along with basic land use (residential, commercial, industrial, public).
- The map includes a notation required by Texas Local Government Code Section 213.005: "A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries."

### Zoning District Map

#### Purpose

- Basis for applying different land use regulations and development standards in different areas of the community ("zones").
- Micro level – site-specific focus.

#### Use

- Regulating development as it is proposed – or as sites are positioned for the future (by the owner or the City) with appropriate zoning.

#### Inputs and Considerations

- Future Land Use & Character map, for general guidance.
- Other community objectives (e.g., economic development, redevelopment, resource conservation, etc.).
- Zoning decisions which differ substantially from the general development pattern depicted on the Future Land Use & Character map should indicate the need for some adjustments to the planning map the next time the Comprehensive Plan is updated.

By elevating area character as a core planning consideration, Map 2.1 illustrates distinct points and edges where transitions between different character types should occur, as well as sub-areas within which a consistent character should be maintained regardless of the particular land uses. For example, the Auto Urban character of most commercial development near NASA Parkway should be distinct from the



Suburban nature of nearby neighborhoods comprised of single-family detached housing amid landscaped yards and mature tree cover. Likewise, both of these areas should be clearly different from the more Urban setting that the Town Square redevelopment is now creating. In turn, the Urban designation for the Town Square area implies that even multi-family development should have an Urban design (multi-story, minimal setback, high site coverage,), as has already been done with the Voyager project, compared to the “garden apartment” design seen elsewhere in the community.

In the end, however, Map 2.1 remains only a planning tool. It is through the official zoning map and the ongoing zoning administration process that binding, legally enforceable decisions are made about property uses and compatibility on a case-by-case basis. Adoption of a Comprehensive Plan containing a future land use map does not mean that the City’s zoning approach or mapping will automatically change. This is partly because there is also a timing aspect to zoning, meaning that a future land use map indicates ultimate outcomes while a zoning map may still reflect interim situations and existing, stable land uses that are not expected to change any time soon, if ever. For example, Map 2.1 indicates the mixed-use potential for the waterfront area near Upper Bay Road and Space Park Drive, and the desire for this anticipated redevelopment to result in a more Urban character where walking takes precedence over vehicle circulation. In the meantime, the City’s zoning does not yet reflect this possible future outcome. A potential amendment to the official zoning map could be triggered as part of a planned development application for the area, or the City might choose not to proceed with a significant zoning change until it is satisfied its water and wastewater systems are ready to accommodate a new increment of development intensity in the community.

## Chapter 3

# *Infrastructure and Public Facilities & Services*

This chapter highlights key needs and issues related to the City's basic utility infrastructure (water, wastewater, and storm drainage), municipal buildings and facilities, and public safety services. This assessment is essential to ensure adequate capacity into the future for the ongoing redevelopment activity anticipated in Nassau Bay in coming years, and to maintain their integrity and compliance with applicable standards and federal and state regulations. This chapter also addresses mobility issues, which, not surprisingly in Nassau Bay, are focused mainly on safety and neighborhood protection concerns rather than any significant traffic congestion problems.

### **Planning Context**

The following facts, considerations and assumptions provide context for the guiding principles and action strategies presented in this chapter:

**Infrastructure Reckoning.** As a planned community in which much of the original development occurred in a relatively narrow timeframe, much of Nassau Bay's infrastructure is roughly the same age and coming due for costly repairs and upgrades at the same time. Various City leaders and residents noted that while the City has been making steady, gradual improvements to its infrastructure systems as limited

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### **Successes and Accomplishments since 2003 Plan Update**

- Hurricane Ike response.
- Approximately \$1.5 million invested in capital projects for street and infrastructure repairs.
- Ongoing storm drainage work and reduced flooding risk.
- Limited municipal debt and low property tax rate – and adopting new methods for financing infrastructure projects (e.g., 1/4-cent sales tax allotment for streets, Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone 1).
- Pending tax base boost from Town Square project, which will help fund infrastructure needs.
- Continued quality of City services, especially police/fire/EMS, NBTV.
- Emergency Medical Service (EMS) transition from volunteer reliance to paid staffing.
- Fire Department acquisition of a new fire truck and fire boat.
- Intergovernmental cooperation with City of Webster on dispatch and municipal court functions.
- Expanded public transit service through the still relatively new Harris County Transit program.

### **Still on the Agenda**

- Aging infrastructure and capital projects backlog.
- Public Safety facility.
- New City Hall.
- Enhanced recycling services, as practical, over time.



revenues allow, a more substantial commitment is needed to stop “band-aiding” lingering problems and deferring critical maintenance and repairs, especially related to the City’s wastewater treatment facility.

#### Infrastructure Status and Outlook

Discussions with City staff and the City’s consulting municipal engineer yielded the following background information and insights on Nassau Bay’s infrastructure status and outlook:

- The City has invested approximately \$1.5 million in infrastructure projects since the 2003 Comprehensive Plan. The City also notified and coordinated with numerous residents in recent years to ensure that problem house connections to the City’s wastewater system were repaired or replaced.
- Like many cities, Nassau Bay is making capital investments both to complete obvious maintenance and repairs to aging infrastructure systems, and also to modernize the systems and incorporate beneficial and cost-saving technological features.
- The City’s wastewater system definitely has the greatest immediate and near-term needs.
- Sewage backups into some homes is still a problem when heavy rainfall (5 inches or more) occurs, but the problem locations are known and relatively isolated. Needed improvements to the City’s wastewater treatment facility and ongoing slip-lining and repairs to the wastewater collection system will be the ultimate solution.
- The problem of water inflow and infiltration (I/I) into the City’s wastewater collection system, which is a common issue in cities with older infrastructure, is no worse – but also no better – than the typical situation in other cities. The City continues to invest in line improvements to reduce I/I and, thereby, lessen excessive flow volume into the treatment plant.
- All development is served by the City’s wastewater system, with no on-site septic systems in Nassau Bay.
- Because Nassau Bay is one of the joint owners of the Southeast Water Treatment Plant, the City is less affected by City of Houston rate increases for wholesale water purchases. This is a major plus for Nassau Bay as the City currently pays only \$0.55 per 1,000 gallons while the cost to other “retail buyer” cities is typically \$1.80-\$1.90 per 1,000 gallons.
- Water pressure is satisfactory throughout the City system.
- The City still has one operational water well that can provide some backup supply in case of any disruption in the City’s primary water supply line which crosses NASA Parkway.
- The necessary infrastructure and technical requirements to enable significant re-use of gray water within the City, as advocated in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, likely makes this a longer-term objective given more pressing needs within the City’s basic infrastructure systems.
- The City is in good standing with its overall regulatory compliance (wastewater treatment/discharge, drinking water quality), although localized sewage backups and overflows (none of which reach local ditches or creeks) must be reported and addressed on occasion.



**Diversified Financing.** The City has expanded its pursuit of infrastructure-related grants in recent years (e.g., Economic Development Administration for Town Square project). Damage from Hurricane Ike also made it possible for Nassau Bay to tap into other external sources for funding infrastructure repairs and upgrades (e.g., Federal Emergency Management Agency, Community Development Block Grant). Like many other cities, Nassau Bay also uses low-interest financing programs available through the Texas Water Development Board.

**Redevelopment Capacity.** It was stated in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan that Nassau Bay was fully developed and no major changes in wastewater flows were anticipated. However, some residents expressed concern that too much high-density residential redevelopment will overtax the City's infrastructure. The City's consulting municipal engineer confirmed that, depending on the scale of any major redevelopment projects beyond Town Square, a tipping point could be reached in the future that would trigger the need for further wastewater system upgrades. It was also noted that the Town Square project, and the associated establishment of a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone, both facilitated progress on needed infrastructure improvements.

**Growth Implication.** Substantial population growth is projected for the Houston metropolitan area and entire State of Texas, which will mean increasing demand – and competition – for limited water resources.

**Perceptions of Water Availability.** Water conservation has been promoted in Nassau Bay, as in most cities, but not aggressively pursued. Relatively cheap water here reduces the conservation impetus, and there are no known instances of sustained water rationing being necessary in Nassau Bay during peak summer usage periods. Another reality for many municipal governments is that water sales and revenues are good for a City's finances and to help fund ongoing system maintenance.

**Coastal Reality and Regional Response.** Periodic tropical storms are a fact of life for Nassau Bay and other Bay Area communities. The new Gulf Coast Community Protection and Recovery District recently held its first organizational meeting in Galveston (April 2010). The District brings together the County Judges from Harris and Galveston counties, as well as Brazoria, Chambers, Jefferson and Orange counties. The District provides a vehicle for cooperative planning and action to better prepare the region for tropical storms and post-storm activities.

**Subsidence No Longer a Critical Factor.** Significant land subsidence has pretty well run its course in Nassau Bay thanks to Harris-Galveston Subsidence District regulations and programs over recent decades. While this is another positive factor in keeping future flooding risk from

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increasing, damage to the City’s underground infrastructure was already done during the years of active subsidence.

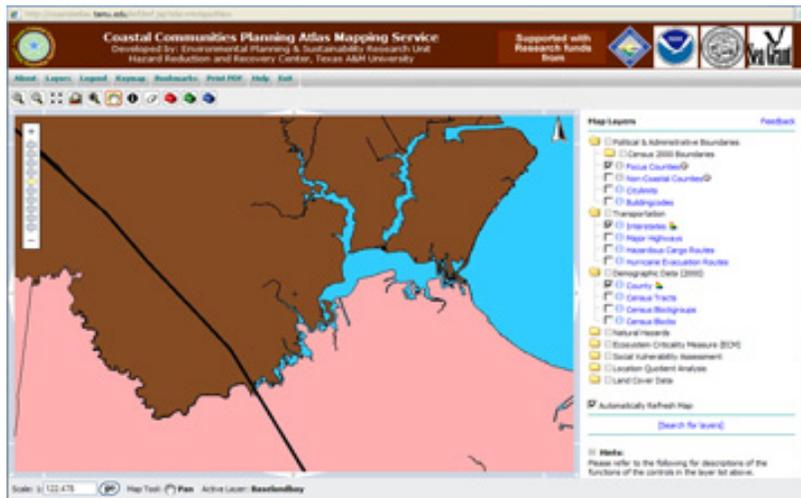
**Actual Storm Risk to Infrastructure.** Some residents speak of the City’s wastewater treatment plant being vulnerable to “flooding” due to its waterfront location. Actually, the tall walls around the facility prevent flood events from disrupting plant operations (aside from some impact on the chlorination/disinfection phase, which is being addressed through the City’s Capital Improvements Program). Loss of power was the main problem during and after Hurricane Ike, although the 1.5-week outage was when most residents were gone from the community (and backup power is also being addressed through the CIP).

**Strategic Issues**

Based on discussions with City Council, the Planning Commission, City staff, and Nassau Bay residents and other stakeholders, the following items are considered key issues related to infrastructure, facilities and public services for the current Comprehensive Plan update:

- ★ Significant upgrades needed to wastewater treatment plant, and ongoing wastewater collection system rehabilitation – plus monitoring adequacy of system capacity for redevelopment plans.
- ★ Replacement of surface water supply line from Clear Lake City Water Authority.
- ★ Ongoing storm sewer system rehabilitation and street/drainage projects to correct continuing problem locations.
- ★ Use of long-term debt to implement major Capital Improvement Program projects.

**Texas Coastal Planning Atlas**



SOURCE: Texas Coastal Atlas (coastalatlus.tamu.edu)

The **Texas Coastal Planning Atlas**, developed by coastal researchers and community planning specialists at Texas A&M University in conjunction with numerous local, state and federal agencies, is an online planning tool that can be used to access geographic information for answering spatially related questions. The interactive Atlas provides access to stored demographic information that is geographically referenced to counties and cities on the Texas coast. This data can be used to make informed decisions about a specific area, including questions regarding physical and social vulnerability. For example, the tool can quickly illustrate vulnerable populations by census tract or block group by selecting an area on the coast and then using the sidebar to select a specific population (e.g., a particular age cohort, those as population age 65+). The tool can also be used to illustrate flood risk areas and surge zones for hurricanes.

- ★ Infrastructure upgrades specifically related to emergency preparedness (backup power, flood-proofing).



- ★ Need for public safety facility to house and support police, fire and EMS functions more efficiently and effectively.
- ★ New City Hall and municipal office space.
- ★ Need for a multi-faceted traffic calming strategy to minimize speeding and unsafe driving on local streets.
- ★ Monitoring additional opportunities for regional and inter-governmental coordination for infrastructure and public services.
- ★ Overcoming “flood-prone community” perception.

### Guiding Principles

Guiding principles express basic values or policies and, thus, provide a framework for evaluating strategies and outcomes. Whatever actions Nassau Bay ultimately pursues based on this updated Comprehensive Plan, all such efforts related to the community’s infrastructure, public facilities and services should be consistent with the following principles:

#### Guiding Principles for Infrastructure and Public Facilities & Services

1. Committing to significant, overdue infrastructure upgrades to avoid costly emergency repairs.
2. Ensuring that new development and redevelopment do not overburden the City’s available infrastructure capacity and/or its effective operation and maintenance.
3. Continuing aggressive pursuit of external funding and financing assistance that is available for local infrastructure projects.
4. Continuing a strong public safety emphasis, from basic police and fire coverage (for homes, businesses, institutions, and parks and public facilities) to pedestrian and bicyclist circulation within the community and the security of children.
5. Maintaining and enhancing the community’s preparedness for emergencies and disaster response.
6. Continuing the City’s emphasis on quality public services and a responsive, customer service focus, which many residents cite as a prime benefit of living in a small community.
7. Continuing regular outreach and communications with residents and businesses through a variety of means.
8. Continuing to pursue inter-governmental cooperation opportunities with other area cities and governments as appropriate and beneficial for Nassau Bay.

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**Action Strategies**

This key section highlights a series of potential actions for responding to the Strategic Issues identified in this chapter. Also indicated in each case is the type of action(s) involved based on five categories which represent the main ways that comprehensive plans are implemented:

- Capital investments
- Programs and initiatives
- Regulations and standards
- Partnerships and coordination
- Further study and planning (especially as required to qualify for external funding opportunities)

While some action items are relatively straightforward to pursue, other possibilities in this section may remain just that – only concepts and considerations that the City and/or community may not be ready to pursue until later in the horizon of this Comprehensive Plan, if even then. They represent action options that are available to Nassau Bay as a Texas municipality and as acted on by other communities. However, it is recognized that they may not be feasible in Nassau Bay for various reasons such as potential cost, complexity, and/or degree of community support, as well as the capacity of City government to carry out certain initiatives given available staffing and other resources. More definitive choices will ultimately be made through City Council priority setting, the City's annual budget process, and ongoing community input.

**Action Strategies**

<b>Significant upgrades needed to wastewater treatment plant, and ongoing wastewater collection system rehabilitation – plus monitoring adequacy of system capacity for redevelopment plans.</b>		
✓	Capital Improvement	Implement – and re-assess and update annually – a multi-year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), following through on specific, priority projects as City resources, external grants, and other financing methods allow.  Complete further outreach to individual home owners, as needed, to ensure that problem house connections are repaired or replaced as part of ongoing efforts to reduce water inflow and infiltration (I/I) into the City's wastewater system.  Continue to monitor plant and system performance, as well as capacity utilization trends relative to ongoing development and redevelopment activity, and with attention to the newest available population estimates each year.  Continue to use development agreements to ensure appropriate private participation in wastewater system upgrades necessitated by significant new development or redevelopment.
	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
✓	Further Study / Planning	
<b>Replacement of surface water supply line from Clear Lake City Water Authority.</b>		
✓	Capital Improvement	Program and complete this priority CIP project to replace the existing 12-inch supply line across NASA Parkway.
	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	





**Ongoing storm sewer system rehabilitation and street/drainage projects to correct continuing problem locations.**

✓	Capital Improvement	Program and complete priority CIP projects, especially to implement street and drainage improvements that will help to maintain vehicular ingress and egress on key roadways during and after storms.
	Program / Initiative	
✓	Regulation / Standards	Continue post-Ike coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to ensure compliant flood prevention regulations and programs, and to ensure the community's ongoing flood insurance eligibility and rating.
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	Continue to use development agreements to ensure appropriate private participation in necessary street and infrastructure improvements.

**Use of long-term debt to implement major Capital Improvement Program projects.**

	Capital Improvement	Continue to prepare for careful use of long-term debt to finance critical, multi-million dollar infrastructure needs in the coming years. Aside from making "big ticket" projects feasible (in light of City budget constraints and the limits of short-term debt instruments), a key rationale for long-term debt is to spread the cost burden to more of the users who will benefit in future years.
	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	Take advantage of low-interest infrastructure financing programs available to municipalities through the Texas Water Development Board.
✓	Partnership / Coordination	Explore all options for funding essential CIP projects, including utility customer fees and potential use of Economic Development Corporation resources, similar to how the EDC helped to fund street repairs. <b>Figure 3.1, Rate Comparison Among Area Cities</b> , illustrates how Nassau Bay customers pay a relatively low amount for sewer service from a system in need of work.
✓	Further Study / Planning	



**FIGURE 3.1**  
Rate Comparison among Area Cities



SOURCE: City of Nassau Bay

**Infrastructure upgrades specifically related to emergency preparedness (backup power, flood-proofing).**

✓	Capital Improvement	Program and complete priority CIP projects intended to address the emergency readiness of the City's wastewater treatment facility (backup power, protecting the chlorination/disinfection system from flooding).
	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	

**Need for public safety facility to house and support police, fire and EMS functions more efficiently and effectively.**

✓	Capital Improvement	Continue to explore location, design, and financing options for accomplishing a new and unified public safety facility.
	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
	Partnership / Coordination	
✓	Further Study / Planning	

**New City Hall and municipal office space.**

✓	Capital Improvement	Continue to explore location, design, and financing options for accomplishing a new City Hall for City administrative functions and departments, as well as public meeting space. This should include consideration of possible rehabilitation and re-use of existing, vacant buildings in the community, if suitable; potential new construction, possibly with other public or private partners; or occupancy of dedicated space within the new Town Square project (although it was discussed during the Comprehensive Plan process whether it made sense for the City to occupy valuable lease space in Town Square with a public, tax-exempt use).
	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
✓	Further Study / Planning	

**Need for a multi-faceted traffic calming strategy to minimize speeding and unsafe driving on local streets.**

✓	Capital Improvement	As street rehabilitation projects are proposed and designed, monitor opportunities to incorporate physical design features which are demonstrated to reduce vehicle speeds and make drivers more alert and aware of safety issues in residential areas. These design techniques can include street curvature, “bulb-outs” and other physical diversions, on-street parking, surface textures, and street trees (and other features that create street “enclosure”) to influence driver behavior. The basic idea is to incorporate traffic calming strategies into initial street system design to avoid having to make costly, disruptive, and potentially ineffective retrofits to existing streets (e.g., speed humps, excessive use of stop signs) at some future point.  In the interim, use a combination of methods (police visibility/enforcement, striping and signage, electronic speed indicators, street lighting upgrades, etc.) to address safety concerns.
✓	Program / Initiative	
✓	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
✓	Further Study / Planning	



*“Bulb-out” feature along roadway*



**Monitoring additional opportunities for regional and inter-governmental coordination for infrastructure and public services.**

	Capital Improvement	Continue to monitor opportunities for inter-governmental cooperation in other areas of service besides dispatch and municipal court (e.g., emergency planning and management, solid waste/recycling, etc.).
	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	

**Overcoming “flood-prone community” perception.**

	Capital Improvement	Through the Economic Development Corporation, the NASA Area Management District, the City’s own publications, and other vehicles and venues, continue to communicate to the real estate community and other Bay Area organizations the facts about ground elevation and flood risk in Nassau Bay relative to other parts of the area, as well as the extent of storm drainage improvements which the City continues to make.
✓	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	



## Appendix 3.1

# *Road Classification*

Displayed on **Map 3.1, Road Classification**, are the results of categorizing Nassau Bay's existing street network into typical functional classes: (a) Arterials, (b) Collectors, and (c) Local streets. Street classification reflects the functions that roadways serve as part of the street network, as described further in this appendix. Roadway design standards are tied to these functional classes so that streets are appropriately engineered and constructed for the role they play in carrying certain volumes and speeds of vehicular traffic and/or accommodating other transportation modes (walking, biking, transit).

### **Arterial Streets**

Arterial streets form an interconnecting network for movement of traffic over longer distances and at higher speeds. Although they usually represent only five to 10 percent of the total roadway network, arterials typically accommodate between 30 and 40 percent of an area's travel volume. Since traffic movement, not land access, is the primary function of arterials, access management is essential to avoid traffic congestion and delays caused by turning movements for vehicles entering and exiting driveways. Likewise, intersections of arterials with other public streets and private access drives should be designed to limit speed differentials between turning vehicles and other traffic to no more than 10 to 15 miles per hour.

Signalized intersection spacing should be long enough to allow a variety of signal cycle lengths and timing plans that can be adjusted to meet changes in traffic volumes and maintain traffic progression (preferably one-third to one-half mile spacing).

Map 3.1 shows only NASA Parkway in the Arterial category.

### **Collector Streets**

Street layout plans for residential subdivisions and commercial and industrial districts must include collector streets in order to provide efficient traffic ingress/egress and circulation. Since collectors generally carry higher traffic volumes than local streets, they require a wider





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roadway cross section and added lanes at intersections with arterial streets to provide adequate capacity for both through traffic and turning movements. However, since speeds are slower and more turn movements are expected on collectors versus arterials, a higher speed differential and much closer intersection/access spacing can be used than on arterials. Collectors typically make up about five to 10 percent of the total street system.

Given Nassau Bay's unique physical design and development history, plus how it is situated along one primary arterial roadway, collector streets play a more prominent role in local traffic circulation. As shown on Map 3.1, many of the primary routes between NASA Parkway and the interior of the community are designated as Collectors, as is Space Park Drive, which provides internal circulation and access to local retail, service and office properties away from the higher speed and higher volume NASA Parkway.

### Local Streets

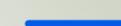
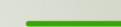
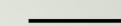
Local streets allow direct property access within residential and commercial areas. Through traffic and excessive speeds should be discouraged by using appropriate geometric designs, traffic control devices, and traffic calming techniques. Local streets typically comprise about 65 to 80 percent of the total street system, as illustrated for Nassau Bay by Map 3.1. They are usually the most appropriate for walking and cycling given lower traffic volumes and vehicular speeds, but caution is still necessary where cut-through traffic and/or speeding can cause hazardous conditions.

Narrowing of local street width may be appropriate where only a limited number of properties have access, and especially where the lots are relatively large and wide so potential on-street parking will not be excessive. (In some cases, on-street parking may only be allowed on one side of the street – or not at all in the narrowest street cross sections – on the condition that adequate on-lot parking will be available.) Narrower streets encourage reduced travel speeds, an increased distance between the street and sidewalk, and a wider streetscape. Additionally, where appropriate, allowing for a reduced pavement width would make providing sidewalks and/or off-street trails more attractive and cost effective to a developer. Reduced pavement widths are designed to carry immediate local traffic effectively, still be sufficient to accommodate fire apparatus, and yet be an appropriate width to accomplish neighborhood traffic calming – and also avoid the up-front cost and long-term maintenance of excessive paved surfaces.



## MAP 3.1 Road Classification

### Legend

-  Arterial
-  Collector
-  Local
-  City Limits



## Chapter 4

# *Amenities & Beautification*

Countless aspects of a community contribute to its livability and to individual quality of life. This chapter focuses on Nassau Bay's quality of life amenities including its park and recreation facilities, open space areas and waterfront views, and cultural resources. Also considered is how the community presents itself, both in terms of visual "curb appeal" and perceptions that passersby, visitors, and home buyers and businesses have of Nassau Bay as a potential place to live, work, invest, or just spend some leisure time.

### Planning Context

The following facts, considerations and assumptions provide context for the guiding principles and action strategies presented in this chapter:

**Core Community Value.** "Quality of life" is a fundamental imperative in Nassau Bay – as much or even more than in most communities.

**Image Upgrades.** Nassau Bay has elevated its "front door" appearance along NASA Parkway in recent years through the Town Square project and removal of obsolete office and hotel properties, along with direct streetscape improvements within the Parkway right-of-way and median.

**Regional Focus As Well.** Greater area-wide attention to image and beautification needs has benefitted the entire region, including through the impact of the City of Houston's landscaping ordinance over the last

### Successes and Accomplishments since 2003 Plan Update

- Completion of Webster Bypass.
- Adoption of new tools that can support beautification efforts (Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone, NASA Area Management District).
- Ongoing beautification activities, especially through volunteer/HOA efforts.

### Still on the Agenda

- Funding for Parks Master Plan implementation and action on specific improvement projects.
- Renovation of obsolete ballfield facilities and other old park equipment.
- Rehabilitation and improvement of Harbour Drive (substandard width and construction) to better accommodate trucks, and with the potential for greater visitation to the Peninsula in coming years.
- Better identity for Nassau Bay, especially at west entry from the new Webster Bypass, as well as the east entry at Space Center Boulevard and NASA Parkway.
- Ongoing efforts to address vacant and unsightly retail and office sites, which detract from Nassau Bay's image.



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decade and the Texas Department of Transportation’s Green Ribbon initiative along area freeways and at major interchanges.

**Tourism Opportunity.** Eco-tourism continues to gain in popularity in the Bay Area as well as across Texas, the U.S., and internationally, and Nassau Bay already has the entire community designated as a bird sanctuary, is a site on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, and has both waterfront access and a unique resource in the Peninsula amid Clear Lake.

**Arts Leadership.** Arts and cultural offerings are another special amenity associated with life in Nassau Bay, as indicated by the aspiration in the community’s Vision Statement to “be the cultural arts center of the Bay Area.”

**Coordinated Efforts.** Nassau Bay has an array of public and private partners to turn to when it comes to amenities and beautification efforts including the City’s Parks, Tree, Beautification, and Special Events committees; Community Association for Nassau Bay Enhancement (CANBE), Nassau Bay Garden Club, Nassau Bay Homes Association and other associations, the Arts Alliance Center at Clear Lake, the Economic Development Corporation, other area cities, Harris County Precinct 2, and the Texas Department of Transportation. Additionally, the Subcommittee on Appropriations and Interfacing helps to determine allocation of the City’s hotel/motel tax funds.

**Strategic Issues**

Based on discussions with City Council, the Planning Commission, City staff, and Nassau Bay residents and other stakeholders, the following items are considered key issues related to amenities and beautification for the current Comprehensive Plan update:

- ★ Enhancements to and facility upgrades and maintenance within existing parks.
- ★ Recreational programming strategy.
- ★ Peninsula public access strategy and improvements – while maintaining and enhancing its natural character.
- ★ Lake Nassau water quality and siltation management.
- ★ Clearer delineation of Nassau Bay along NASA Parkway, and maintenance of appealing gateway treatments at key community entry streets along the Parkway.
- ★ Protection of waterfront views and aesthetics.



- ★ Adequate ordinance provisions for landscaping, maximum site coverage, and other factors that shape development character, especially for non-residential properties along NASA Parkway.
- ★ Monitoring and protection of mature tree cover, including minimization of and response to tree loss in City parks.

### Guiding Principles

Guiding principles express basic values or policies and, thus, provide a framework for evaluating strategies and outcomes. Whatever actions Nassau Bay ultimately pursues based on this updated Comprehensive Plan, all such efforts related to the community's image and beautification should be consistent with the following principles:

#### Guiding Principles for Amenities & Beautification

1. Remaining cognizant of first impressions and perceptions of the community by passersby and visitors.
2. Capitalizing on Nassau Bay's waterfront location and views in all new development and redevelopment, as well as public facilities and parkland.
3. Maintaining the City's core focus on quality of life – and ensuring that revitalization efforts create more amenities for existing and future residents (restaurants, specialty shops, arts/culture, etc.).
4. Continuing to be a family-friendly community that is also appealing to "empty nesters" and seniors to maintain age diversity in the community's residential population.
5. Protecting and maintaining the mature urban forest and tree cover that exists in various areas of the community (residential neighborhoods, office properties, church and institutional sites).
6. Setting a good quality standard through public facility and site design (and maintenance).
7. Maintaining multiple points of quality public access along Nassau Bay's extensive waterfront.
8. Maintaining the surrounding navigable waterways to assure that drainage, safety, and recreation are kept in first-class condition to enhance the waterfront for commercial and residential investment.
9. Optimizing use of the City's existing parkland and sites.
10. Supporting a healthy community and lifestyles through health-focused park design and amenities.
11. Protecting and continuing to enhance the special amenity that Lake Nassau provides for residents.
12. Continuing to pursue low-impact ways to capitalize on the unique asset that Nassau Bay has in the Peninsula.





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**Action Strategies**

This key section highlights a series of potential actions for responding to the Strategic Issues identified in this chapter. Also indicated in each case is the type of action(s) involved based on five categories which represent the main ways that comprehensive plans are implemented:

- Capital investments
- Programs and initiatives
- Regulations and standards
- Partnerships and coordination
- Further study and planning (especially as required to qualify for external funding opportunities)

While some action items are relatively straightforward to pursue, other possibilities in this section may remain just that – only concepts and considerations that the City and/or community may not be ready to pursue until later in the horizon of this Comprehensive Plan, if even then. They represent action options that are available to Nassau Bay as a Texas municipality and as acted on by other communities. However, it is recognized that they may not be feasible in Nassau Bay for various reasons such as potential cost, complexity, and/or degree of community support, as well as the capacity of City government to carry out certain initiatives given available staffing and other resources. More definitive choices will ultimately be made through City Council priority setting, the City's annual budget process, and ongoing community input.

**Action Strategies**

**Enhancements to and facility upgrades and maintenance within existing parks.**

✓	Capital Improvement	Revisit conceptual plans previously prepared for park improvements to assess priorities and phasing (based on newest demographic information and community input) and update cost estimates.  Continue focus on stepped-up maintenance and removal of obsolete equipment as the basic condition of existing parks is a key factor in grant success with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.  Explore the potential allocation of some hotel/motel tax revenue for park improvements that could appeal to visitors as well as residents, such as recreational trails that connect hotels to parks and shopping/entertainment areas.
	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
	Partnership / Coordination	
✓	Further Study / Planning	

**Recreational programming strategy.**

	Capital Improvement	Continue to pursue and formalize partnerships with institutional and non-profit partners (e.g., YMCA, local churches) to achieve desired recreational offerings and venues.  Evaluate programming successes and establish priorities for new or expanded offerings through overall community input and user/participant feedback.
✓	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	

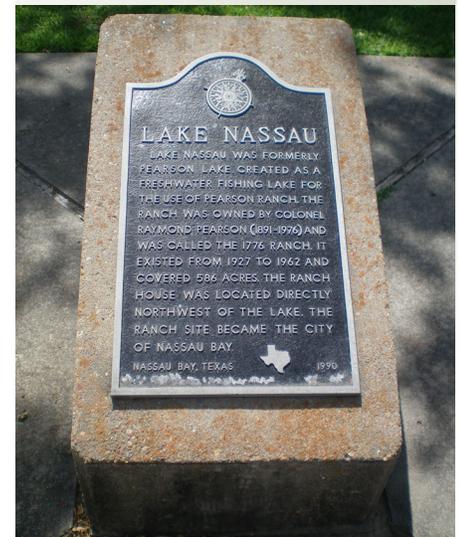


**Peninsula public access strategy and improvements – while maintaining and enhancing its natural character.**

✓	Capital Improvement	Evaluate success of new approach of opening Peninsula for limited public access and hours (level of utilization, any problems or issues, impact on City staff and nearby residents/properties).
	Program / Initiative	Continue to pursue external funding opportunities to make basic, low-level improvements (e.g., trails, picnic areas, trash receptacles, directional and educational signage) to better accommodate Peninsula users.
	Regulation / Standards	Continue to explore partnerships with resource agencies (e.g., Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Texas General Land Office, Galveston Bay Program, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) and organizations (e.g., Galveston Bay Foundation) for guidance on Peninsula management and maintenance, as well as the potential for hosting more environmental monitoring and research activities.
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
✓	Further Study / Planning	

**Lake Nassau water quality and siltation management.**

	Capital Improvement	Continue coordination with resource agencies (Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) on lake management practices.
✓	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	Continue outreach to upstream residents and businesses regarding best management practices to reduce lake impacts and the need for costly dredging activity and other solutions.
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	





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**Clearer delineation of Nassau Bay along NASA Parkway, and maintenance of appealing gateway treatments at key community entry streets along the Parkway.**

	Capital Improvement	Continue coordination with the Texas Department of Transportation and City of Houston on beautification initiatives within the NASA Parkway right-of-way, including the possibility of substantial, high-profile gateway treatments at the eastern and western City limits along NASA Parkway as indicated in <b>Figure 4.1, Image and Aesthetic Elements</b> .
✓	Program / Initiative	
	Regulation / Standards	Continue joint City/volunteer beautification and maintenance efforts at key entry streets from NASA Parkway as highlighted by the Image Intersection locations in Figure 4.1 (Nassau Bay Drive, Point Lookout Drive, Upper Bay Road, and Hospital Boulevard).
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	Emphasize the use of xeriscaping and other landscaping methods that require less water, fertilizer, and hands-on maintenance.

**Protection of waterfront views and aesthetics.**

✓	Capital Improvement	Ensure explicit attention to this community priority during development review and approval procedures, any redevelopment design, and any public building projects at or near the waterfront.
	Program / Initiative	
✓	Regulation / Standards	Explore potential relocation and/or substantial screening of the recycling drop-off area currently located in an open parking area at Lake Nassau Park.
✓	Partnership / Coordination	
	Further Study / Planning	

**Adequate ordinance provisions for landscaping, maximum site coverage, and other factors that shape development character, especially for non-residential properties along NASA Parkway.**

	Capital Improvement	Evaluate the City’s development ordinances to determine the adequacy or absence of provisions which help to avoid or soften Auto Urban outcomes (e.g., site coverage, setbacks, placement and orientation of buildings and parking, site and parking area landscaping and screening, building design, etc.).  Especially revisit current landscaping standards relative to those of nearby cities. Also ensure, through both ordinance provisions and ongoing enforcement, that long-term landscape maintenance is occurring.
	Program / Initiative	
✓	Regulation / Standards	
	Partnership / Coordination	
✓	Further Study / Planning	

**Monitoring and protection of mature tree cover, including minimization of and response to tree loss in City parks.**

✓	Capital Improvement	Explore tree protection/replacement ordinances already used in the region, especially to preserve mature tree cover during redevelopment (e.g., Bellaire, Conroe, West University Place).
✓	Program / Initiative	Periodically engage a contract Urban Forester to conduct monitoring of mature trees along neighborhood streets, in commercial areas, and on public properties and provide information and recommendations to home and property owners regarding treatment of diseased trees and removal/replacement of dead trees.
✓	Regulation / Standards	Include a tree replacement and planting component within all City capital improvement projects, as appropriate.
✓	Partnership / Coordination	Partner with local beautification groups and HOAs to plant trees in appropriate locations within parks and neighborhood street rights-of-way community-wide, especially where mature trees have been lost to age, disease, storms, or unavoidable construction impacts.
✓	Further Study / Planning	



FIGURE 4.1  
Image and Aesthetic Elements

Legend

-  Gateway
-  Gateway Corridor
-  Entry Corridor
-  Image Intersection
-  Public Waterfront
-  Lake Vantage Point
-  Community Asset
-  Streets
-  City Limits



0 0.25 0.5 Miles





## Chapter 5

# Implementation

*With a newly updated Comprehensive Plan, the City of Nassau Bay has direction and priorities for the ongoing development, redevelopment and enhancement of the community over the next five years and beyond. However, now comes the most challenging and important step in the planning process – implementing the plan by turning the community’s aspirations into reality. This will take the continuing efforts and commitment of the City’s elected and appointed officials, staff, residents, business owners, institutions, other levels of government, and other organizations and individuals who will serve as champions of the plan and its particular direction and strategies. It will also require the City to make sound decisions, set priorities, and secure necessary resources to implement the action strategies set forth in this plan.*

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

### Plan Implementation Methods

Simply setting out an implementation framework in this chapter is not enough to ensure that the action items of this plan will be carried out and the community’s long-term goals ultimately achieved. The policies and action priorities in this plan should be consulted frequently and should be widely used by decision-makers as a basis for judgments regarding:





- ★ The timing and availability of infrastructure improvements.
- ★ Proposed development and redevelopment applications.
- ★ Zone change requests and other zoning-related actions.
- ★ Expansion of public facilities, services and programs.
- ★ Annual capital budgeting.
- ★ Potential re-writes and amendments to the City's development ordinances and related code elements.
- ★ Intergovernmental (including inter-City and City/County) coordination and agreements.
- ★ Operations, capital improvements and programming related to individual City departments.

There are five general methods for plan implementation:

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

### **Capital Improvements Programming**

A capital improvements program, or "CIP," is a multi-year plan (typically five years) that identifies budgeted capital projects, including street infrastructure; water, wastewater and drainage facilities; parks, trails and recreation facility construction and upgrades; construction of public buildings; and purchase of major equipment. Identifying and budgeting for major capital improvements will be essential to implementing this plan. Decisions regarding the prioritization of proposed capital improvements should take into account the policy and management directives of this plan.

### **Special Projects, Programs and Initiatives**

Special projects and initiatives is another broad category of implementation measures. These may include initiating or adjusting City programs; expanding citizen participation efforts; providing training; and other types of special projects.

## Development Regulations and Standards

Land development regulations and engineering standards are fundamental for plan implementation. It is plain – but often underappreciated – that private investment decisions account for the vast majority of any City’s physical form. Consequently, zoning and subdivision regulations and associated development criteria and technical engineering standards are the basic keys to ensuring that the form, character and quality of development reflect the City’s planning objectives. These ordinances should reflect the community’s desire for quality development outcomes while recognizing economic factors. They should not delay or interfere unnecessarily with appropriate new development or redevelopment that is consistent with plan principles and policies.

## Coordination and Partnerships

Some community initiatives identified in the Comprehensive Plan cannot be accomplished by City government on its own. They may require direct coordination, intergovernmental agreements, or funding support from other public entities or levels of government. Additionally, the unique role of potential private and non-profit partners to advance the community’s action agenda should not be underestimated. This may occur through cooperative efforts, volunteer activities and in-kind services (which can count toward the local match requirements for various grant opportunities), and public/private financing of community improvements.

## Specific Plans and Studies

There are a number of areas where additional planning work is recommended, at a “finer grain” level of detail than is appropriate in a comprehensive plan. As such, some parts of this plan will be implemented only after some additional planning or special study.

## Plan Administration

During the development of the plan, representatives of government, business, neighborhoods, civic groups, and others came together to inform the planning process. These community leaders, and new ones to emerge over the horizon of this plan, must maintain their commitment to the ongoing implementation of the plan’s policies – and to the periodic updating of the plan to adapt to changing conditions or unforeseen events.



### Education

Comprehensive plans are relatively general in nature, but they are still complex policy documents that account for interrelationships among various policy choices. As such, educating decision-makers and administrators about plan implementation is an important first step after plan adoption. As the principal groups that will implement the plan, the City Council, Planning Commission, and City department heads should all be “on the same page” with regard to priorities, responsibilities and interpretations.

Consequently, an education initiative should be undertaken immediately after plan adoption, which should include:

- ★ A discussion of the individual roles and responsibilities of the Council, Commission (and other advisory bodies), and individual staff members.
- ★ A thorough overview of the entire Comprehensive Plan, with emphasis on the parts of the plan that relate to each individual group.
- ★ Implementation tasking and priority setting, which should lead to each group establishing a one-year and three-year implementation agenda.
- ★ Facilitation of a mock meeting in which the use of the plan and its policies and recommendations is illustrated.
- ★ An in-depth question-and-answer session, with support from planning personnel, the City Attorney, the City Engineer, and other key staff.

### Definition of Roles

As the community’s elected officials, the City Council should assume the lead role in implementation of this plan. The key responsibilities of the City Council are to decide and establish priorities, set timeframes by which each action will be initiated and completed, and determine the budget to be made available for implementation efforts. In conjunction with the City Manager, City Council should also ensure effective coordination among the various groups that are responsible for carrying out the plan’s recommendations.

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

- ★ Acting as a “champion” of the plan.
- ★ Adopting and amending the plan, after recommendation by the Planning Commission.

- ★ Adopting new or amended land development regulations to implement the plan, after recommendation by the Planning Commission.
- ★ Approving interlocal agreements that implement the plan.
- ★ Establishing the overall action priorities and timeframes by which each action item of the plan will be initiated and completed.
- ★ Considering and approving the funding commitments that will be required.
- ★ Offering final approval of projects and activities and the associated costs during the budget process, keeping in mind the need for consistency with the plan and its policies.
- ★ Providing policy direction to the Planning Commission, other appointed City boards and commissions, and City staff.

The Planning Commission should take the lead in the following general areas:

- ★ Hosting the education initiative described above.
- ★ Periodically obtaining public input to keep the plan up to date, using a variety of community outreach and citizen and stakeholder involvement methods.
- ★ Ensuring that recommendations forwarded to the City Council are reflective of plan principles and action recommendations. This relates particularly to decisions involving development review and approval, zone change requests, and ordinance amendments.
- ★ After holding one or more public hearings to discuss new or evolving community issues and needs, making recommendations to the City Council regarding plan updates and plan amendments.

City Staff should take the lead in the following general areas:

- ★ Managing day-to-day implementation of the plan, including coordination through an interdepartmental plan implementation committee.
- ★ Supporting and carrying out capital improvement planning efforts.
- ★ Managing the drafting of new or amended land development regulations, working with the appropriate Boards and Commissions.
- ★ Conducting studies and developing additional plans (including management of consultant efforts, as necessary).





- ★ Reviewing applications for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan as required by the City's land development regulations.
- ★ Negotiating the specifics of interlocal agreements.
- ★ Administering collaborative programs and ensuring open channels of communication with various private, public and non-profit implementation partners.
- ★ Providing briefings on plan implementation progress and activities to the Planning Commission no less than annually.
- ★ Maintaining an inventory of potential plan amendments, as suggested by City staff and others, for consideration during annual and periodic plan review and update processes.

### Action Agenda

A community's vision for its future, as expressed through its comprehensive plan, is attained over time through a variety of specific actions. This section highlights a series of "Strategic Action Areas" which reflect the major initiatives discussed through the plan update process:

- ★ **New/Amended City Ordinances.**
- ★ **Redevelopment (Retail, Office, Multi-Family).**
- ★ **Tax Base Diversification.**
- ★ **Infrastructure Renewal and Investment.**
- ★ **Community Facilities (Parks, City Buildings).**
- ★ **Image and Aesthetics.**

Along with the discussion in the earlier plan chapters, further considerations for pursuing these priority initiatives are spelled out in the tables on the next several pages. Important elements of these tables include:

- ★ **Related Plan Actions.** Compilation of specific action items from the earlier plan chapters which relate to the broader Strategic Action Area.
- ★ **Next Steps.** This involves the essential task of breaking down larger efforts into "first and next steps" to lay the groundwork for measurable action and build momentum toward desired outcomes. This often involves further clarification of objectives and a realistic assessment of resources and capabilities to move an initiative forward.

- ★ **Lead and Involved.** In addition to identifying which City department(s) or function(s) would likely lead a task, this also highlights a variety of local and external agencies and entities that might have a role to play in certain initiatives. This could involve potential cost-sharing, technical assistance, direct cooperation (potentially through an interlocal agreement), or simply providing input and feedback on a matter in which they have some mutual interest. [See Key to Acronyms after the last table.]
- ★ **Typical Funding.** This indicates the typical ways to finance plan implementation efforts. An obvious source is through the City's own annual operating budget, as well as multi-year capital budgeting, which is not only for physical construction projects but also for funding significant studies and plans (e.g., water and wastewater system master plans) that are intended to lay the groundwork for phased capital investments and construction over a period of years. Other governments (e.g., nearby cities, Harris County) are included along with "grants" because grants are often applied for and awarded through a competitive process, but the County or another government agency might choose to commit funds directly to an initiative along with the City. On the other hand, grants can also come from foundations and other non-government sources. The potential for public/private initiatives is also indicated, as well as corporate outreach and volunteerism, faith-based efforts, and other community and volunteer contributions (e.g., churches, Scouts, civic and service groups, etc.).

This Action Agenda section should be consulted in conjunction with the City's annual budget process, during capital improvements programming and budgeting, and in support of departmental work planning. Then the City Manager should initiate a first-year work program in conjunction with City departments and staff and other public and private implementation partners.

The near-term action priorities should be revisited by City officials and staff annually to recognize accomplishments, highlight areas where further attention and effort are needed, and determine whether some items have moved up or down on the priority list given changing circumstances and emerging needs. It should be kept in mind that early implementation of certain items, while perhaps not the uppermost priorities, may be expedited by the availability of related grant opportunities, by a state or federal mandate, or by the eagerness of one or more partners to pursue an initiative with the City. On the other hand, some high-priority items may prove difficult to tackle in the near term due to budget constraints, the lack of an obvious lead entity or





individual to carry the initiative forward, or by the community’s readiness to take on a potentially controversial new program.

Progress on immediate priorities should be the focus of the first annual review and report a year after Comprehensive Plan adoption, as described later in this chapter. Then, similar to multi-year capital improvements programming, the entire Action Agenda section – and all other action items contained within the plan chapters – should be revisited annually to decide if any additional items are ready to move into the next near-term action timeframe.

**Strategic Action Area: New/Amended City Ordinances**

<p><b>Related Plan Actions</b></p>	<p><u>Chapter 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Potential zoning changes to support/accommodate desired redevelopment.</li> <li>▪ Adjusted zoning strategy for private properties along and near NASA Parkway.</li> <li>▪ Review adequacy of parking standards, including for institutional uses.</li> <li>▪ Potential new or amended provisions to ensure residential compatibility given ongoing teardown and rebuild activity.</li> </ul> <p><u>Chapter 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Add protection of waterfront views and aesthetics as another explicit purpose of the City’s zoning ordinance.</li> <li>▪ Review adequacy of current ordinance provisions that influence the design and quality appearance of non-residential development (e.g., site coverage, landscaping, building design).</li> <li>▪ Explore ordinance options for ensuring preservation of mature trees and tree replacement where appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Next Steps</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Determine first priority items to address – and whether to pursue comprehensive or piecemeal, targeted amendments.</li> <li>2. Determine staff capacity and/or consultant support needs.</li> <li>3. Conduct early workshops with development community and other stakeholders.</li> <li>4. Draft potential amendments for Planning Commission review and recommendation to City Council.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Lead</b></p>	<p>City Manager, Building Official</p>
<p><b>Involved</b></p>	<p>Mayor &amp; City Council, Planning Commission, City Attorney, HOAs, community groups, property owners and developers, existing businesses and institutions, NBEDC, NAMD</p>
<p><b>Typical Funding</b></p>	<p>General fund</p>



**Strategic Action Area: Redevelopment (Retail, Office, Multi-Family)**

<b>Related Plan Actions</b>	<p><u>Chapter 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Successful completion of Town Square project.</li> <li>▪ Waterfront/multi-family redevelopment opportunities.</li> <li>▪ Opportunities for senior-focused residential projects.</li> <li>▪ “Green” site design and building practices.</li> </ul> <p><u>Chapter 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monitoring of infrastructure capacity to support ongoing redevelopment activity.</li> <li>▪ Development agreements to ensure public/private cost sharing on new/upgraded infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to monitor status and market outlook of vacant/underutilized sites and structures.</li> <li>2. Monitor ownership changes and opportunities to approach new owners with public/private cooperative proposals, potential City incentives, etc.</li> <li>3. Complete capital projects necessary to support significant redevelopment.</li> <li>4. Explore potential land options/purchases, land assembly, or other real estate related actions the City might take to spur desired redevelopment.</li> <li>5. In coordination with New/Amended City Ordinances action area, adjust City zoning as appropriate to support redevelopment objectives.</li> <li>6. Consider recruiting developers with a successful track record in the type of redevelopment desired.</li> </ol>
<b>Lead</b>	City Manager
<b>Involved</b>	Mayor & City Council, Planning Commission, NAMD, TIRZ 1, NBEDC, property owners and developers, Building Official, Public Works, City Engineer, City Attorney
<b>Typical Funding</b>	General fund, capital budget, TIRZ 1, NAMD, public/private partnerships





**Strategic Action Area: Tax Base Diversification**

<b>Related Plan Actions</b>	<p><u>Chapter 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Successful completion of Town Square project.</li> <li>▪ Other redevelopment initiatives.</li> <li>▪ NBEDC initiatives.</li> <li>▪ Support of Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership.</li> <li>▪ Targeted business recruiting (e.g., specialty shops).</li> <li>▪ Adjusted zoning strategy along/near NASA Parkway.</li> </ul>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clarify roles and responsibilities of multiple players involved in economic development and redevelopment efforts.</li> <li>2. Coordinate annual work programs and budgets.</li> <li>3. In coordination with New/Amended City Ordinances action area, adjust City zoning as appropriate to support economic development and redevelopment objectives.</li> <li>4. Communicate with target business types (e.g., specialty grocery), and locate case study examples of successful strategies in other communities.</li> </ol>
<b>Lead</b>	City Manager, NBEDC
<b>Involved</b>	Mayor & City Council, NBEDC, NAMD, BAHEP
<b>Typical Funding</b>	General fund, NBEDC, NAMD

**Strategic Action Area: Infrastructure Renewal and Investment**

<b>Related Plan Actions</b>	<p><u>Chapter 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wastewater treatment plant and collection system.</li> <li>▪ Surface water supply line.</li> <li>▪ Storm sewer system and street/drainage projects.</li> <li>▪ Emergency preparedness upgrades.</li> <li>▪ Lake Nassau management.</li> </ul>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to prioritize projects through annual capital improvements planning and budgeting process.</li> <li>2. Pursue planning, design and implementation of funded projects (including necessary advance steps such as easement acquisition, environmental permitting, etc.).</li> <li>3. Identify opportunities to coordinate related improvements.</li> <li>4. Continue to take advantage of special financing arrangements available through TWDB.</li> <li>5. Continue to explore grant and other external funding opportunities.</li> <li>6. Continue to pursue public/private partnership opportunities to accomplish mutually beneficial infrastructure upgrades.</li> </ol>
<b>Lead</b>	City Manager, Public Works, City Engineer
<b>Involved</b>	Mayor & City Council, NAMD, TIRZ 1, NBEDC, CLCWA, TWDB, FEMA
<b>Typical Funding</b>	General fund, capital budget, special assessments (¼-cent sales tax allotment for streets), TIRZ 1, grants, special financing (TWDB), public/private partnerships

**Strategic Action Area: Community Facilities (Parks, City Buildings)**

<b>Related Plan Actions</b>	<p><u>Chapter 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Town Square project.</li> <li>▪ Model “green building” and site design practices.</li> </ul> <p><u>Chapter 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public Safety facility.</li> <li>▪ New City Hall and municipal office space.</li> <li>▪ Intergovernmental coordination opportunities.</li> </ul> <p><u>Chapter 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhancement of existing parks.</li> <li>▪ Peninsula public access strategy and improvements.</li> <li>▪ Lake Nassau management.</li> </ul>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to prioritize projects through annual capital improvements planning and budgeting process.</li> <li>2. Pursue planning, design and implementation of funded projects (including necessary advance steps such as easement acquisition, environmental permitting, etc.).</li> <li>3. Maintain the City’s eligibility for grants available through TPWD by keeping an up-to-date Parks Master Plan.</li> <li>4. Continue to explore grant and other external funding opportunities.</li> <li>5. Continue to pursue partnership opportunities with public, private and non-profit partners, including in-kind match possibilities for grant efforts.</li> </ol>
<b>Lead</b>	City Manager, Public Works
<b>Involved</b>	Mayor & City Council, Parks & Recreation Committee, TPWD, Galveston Bay Estuary Program, Texas Coastal Management Program, other state/federal resource agencies, Galveston Bay Foundation, nearby cities, Harris County Precinct 2
<b>Typical Funding</b>	General fund, capital budget, TIRZ 1, NAMD, grants, public/private and public/non-profit partnerships, donations and in-kind support





**Strategic Action Area: Image and Aesthetics**

<b>Related Plan Actions</b>	<p><u>Chapter 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Town Square project.</li> <li>▪ Redevelopment and elimination of vacant spaces.</li> <li>▪ City/HOA coordination on standards and enforcement.</li> </ul> <p><u>Chapter 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Traffic calming methods that also enhance streetscape.</li> <li>▪ Overcoming “flood-prone community” perception.</li> </ul> <p><u>Chapter 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Upgraded park maintenance.</li> <li>▪ NASA Parkway visibility and gateway treatments.</li> <li>▪ Protection of waterfront views and aesthetics.</li> <li>▪ Provisions for site design and building quality along NASA Parkway.</li> <li>▪ Mature tree protection and tree replacement where appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify priority locations for image enhancement efforts (using Figure 4.1, Image and Aesthetic Elements, as one resource).</li> <li>2. Continue to pursue partnership opportunities with public, private and non-profit partners, especially for ongoing maintenance needs.</li> <li>3. Explore gateway designs and other image enhancements completed elsewhere in the region, state and nationwide.</li> <li>4. Host a design workshop to invite community ideas and prioritize desired features.</li> <li>5. Continue to prioritize projects through annual capital improvements planning and budgeting process.</li> <li>6. Pursue planning, design and implementation of funded projects (including necessary advance steps such as easement acquisition, environmental permitting, utility extension, etc.).</li> </ol>
<b>Lead</b>	City Manager
<b>Involved</b>	Mayor & City Council, Building Official, Public Works, City Engineer, City Attorney, Police Department, Parks & Recreation Committee, property owners and individual businesses/ institutions, HOAs, CANBE, Nassau Bay Garden Club, NAMD, TIRZ 1, nearby cities, Harris County Precinct 2, TxDOT
<b>Typical Funding</b>	General fund, capital budget, TIRZ 1, NAMD, grants, public/private and public/non-profit partnerships, donations and in-kind support

**Key to Acronyms**

BAHEP	Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership	NBEDC	Nassau Bay Economic Dev. Corporation
CANBE	Community Assoc. for Nassau Bay Enhancement	TIRZ 1	Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone No. 1
CLCWA	Clear Lake City Water Authority	TPWD	Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
HOAs	Homeowners Associations	TWDB	Texas Water Development Board
NAMD	Nassau Area Management District	TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation



## Plan Amendment Process

The Nassau Bay Comprehensive Plan is meant to be a flexible document allowing for adjustment to changing conditions over time. Shifts in political, economic, physical, technological and social conditions, and other unforeseen circumstances, may influence and change the priorities and fiscal outlook of the community.

As the City evolves, new issues will emerge while others will no longer be as relevant. Some action statements will be found impractical or outdated while other plausible solutions will arise. To ensure that it continues to reflect the overall goals of the community and remains relevant and resourceful over time, the plan must be revisited on a regular basis to confirm that the plan elements are still on point and the associated planning themes and action statements are still appropriate.

Two types of revisions to the Comprehensive Plan may occur: (1) minor amendments, and (2) major updates. Minor plan amendments may be proposed at any time such as specific adjustments to the future land use plan related to particular land development applications or public improvement projects. Minor amendments can be addressed by the City in short order or, if not pressing, be documented and compiled for more holistic evaluation through an annual plan review process. For example, this is how and when the results of another specialized plan or study can be incorporated into relevant sections of the Comprehensive Plan. More significant plan modifications and updates should occur every five years at most. Major updates will involve reviewing the base conditions and anticipated growth trends; re-evaluating the guiding principles and recommendations in the plan – and formulating new ones as necessary; and adding, revising or removing action statements in the plan based on implementation progress.

## Annual Progress Report

The Planning Commission should review and refine a staff-prepared annual progress report for presentation to the Mayor and City Council. This ensures that the plan is consistently reviewed and that any needed modifications or clarifications are identified for the annual minor plan amendment process. Ongoing monitoring of consistency between the plan and the City's implementing ordinances and regulations should be an essential part of this effort.



The Annual Progress Report should include and highlight:

- ★ Significant actions and accomplishments during the past year, including the status of implementation for each programmed task in the Comprehensive Plan.
- ★ Obstacles or problems in the implementation of the plan, including those encountered in administering the land use and development aspects, as well as any other elements of the plan.
- ★ Proposed amendments that have come forward during the course of the year, which may include revisions to the individual plan maps or other recommendations or text changes.
- ★ Recommendations for needed actions, programs and procedures to be developed and implemented in the coming year, including recommendation of projects to be included in the City's CIP, other programs/projects to be funded, and priority coordination needs with public and private implementation partners.

### **Annual Amendment Process**

Most substantive amendments to the Comprehensive Plan should be considered and acted on annually, allowing for proposed changes to be considered concurrently so that the cumulative effect may be understood (although some interim amendments during the year may be straightforward as the City's future land use plan is refined in conjunction with specific land development approvals). When considering a plan amendment, the City should ensure the proposed amendment is consistent with the principles and policies set forth in the plan regarding character protection, development compatibility, infrastructure availability, conservation of environmentally sensitive areas, and other community priorities. Careful consideration should also be given to guard against site-specific plan changes that could negatively impact adjacent areas and uses or detract from the overall character of the area. Factors that should be considered in deciding on a proposed plan amendment include:

- ★ Consistency with the principles and policies set forth in the plan.
- ★ Adherence with the Future Land Use & Character map.
- ★ Compatibility with the surrounding area.
- ★ Impacts on infrastructure provision including water, wastewater, drainage, and the transportation network.
- ★ Impact on the City's ability to provide, fund and maintain services.
- ★ Impact on environmentally sensitive and natural areas.

- ★ Whether the proposed amendment contributes to the overall direction and character of the community as captured in the plan (plus ongoing public input).

### Five-Year Update – Evaluation and Appraisal Report

An evaluation and appraisal report should be prepared every five years. This report should be prepared by City staff with input from various City departments, the Planning Commission, and other boards and commissions. The report process involves evaluating the existing plan and assessing how successful it has been in achieving the community's goals. The purpose of the report is to identify the successes and shortcomings of the plan, look at what has changed over the last five years, and make recommendations on how the plan should be modified in light of those changes.

The report should review baseline conditions and assumptions about trends and growth indicators. It should also evaluate implementation potential and/or obstacles related to any unmet action recommendations. The evaluation report and process should result in an amended Comprehensive Plan, including identification of new or revised information that may lead to updated planning themes and/or action recommendations.

More specifically, the report should identify and evaluate the following:

- (1) Summary of major actions and interim plan amendments undertaken over the last five years.
- (2) Major issues in the community and how these issues have changed over time.
- (3) Changes in the assumptions, trends and base studies data, including the following:
  - The rate at which growth and development is occurring relative to the projections put forward in the plan.
  - Shifts in demographics and other growth trends.
  - Citizen attitudes and whether apparent shifts, if significant, necessitate amendments to the stated priorities or strategies of the plan.
  - Other changes in political, social, economic, technological or environmental conditions that indicate a need for plan amendments.
- (4) Ability of the plan to continue to support progress toward achieving the community's goals. The following should be evaluated and revised as needed:



#### **Census 2010 Evaluation**

*As noted in Chapter 1, the City of Nassau Bay received initial population counts and other basic data from Census 2000 about 13 months after the April 2000 decennial Census month. Therefore, within the first year following adoption of this updated Comprehensive Plan, the City should have the opportunity to peruse and evaluate the Census 2010 results. Any significant findings from this evaluation should be highlighted in the annual reporting and amendment process for the Comprehensive Plan as recommended in this chapter, and also become key considerations for the next five-year plan update.*



- Individual statements or sections of the plan must be reviewed and rewritten, as necessary, to ensure that the plan provides sufficient information and direction to achieve the intended outcome.
- Conflicts between planning principles and action items that have been discovered in the implementation and administration of the plan must be pointed out and resolved.
- The Action Agenda must be reviewed and major accomplishments highlighted. Those not completed by the specified timeframe should be re-evaluated to ensure their continued relevance and/or to revise them appropriately.
- As conditions change, the timeframes for implementing the individual actions of the plan should be re-evaluated where necessary. Some actions may emerge as a higher priority given new or changed circumstances while others may become less important to achieving the goals and development objectives of the community.
- Based upon organizational, programmatic and procedural factors, as well as the status of previously assigned tasks, the implementation task assignments must be reviewed and altered, as needed, to ensure timely accomplishment of the plan’s recommended actions.
- Changes in laws, procedures and missions may impact the ability of the community to achieve its goals. The plan review must assess these changes and their impacts on the success of implementation, leading to any suggested revisions in strategies or priorities.

### **Ongoing Community Outreach and Engagement**

All review and update processes related to the Comprehensive Plan should emphasize and incorporate ongoing public input. The annual and continual plan evaluation and reporting process should also incorporate specific performance measures and quantitative indicators that can be compiled and communicated both internally and to elected officials and citizens in a “report card” fashion. Examples might include:

- ★ Acres of new development (plus number of residential units and square footage of commercial and other non-residential space) approved and constructed in conformance with this plan and related City codes.
- ★ Various measures of service capacity (gallons, acre-feet, etc.) added to the City’s major utility systems as indicated in this plan and associated utility master plans – and the millions of dollars allocated to fund the necessary capital projects.

- ★ Acres of parkland and linear feet (or miles) of trail developed or improved in accordance with this plan and related parks, recreation and greenways plans.
- ★ Indicators of City efforts to ensure neighborhood integrity as emphasized in this plan (e.g., code enforcement activity, results of neighborhood-focused policing, number of zone change and/or variance requests denied that were found to be contrary to neighborhood interests, etc.).
- ★ New and expanded businesses and associated tax revenue gains through the economic development initiatives and priorities cited in this plan.
- ★ Indicators of the benefits of redeveloped sites and structures (appraised value, increased property and/or sales tax revenue, new residential units and retail and office spaces in urban mixed-use settings, etc.) as envisioned through this plan and targeted planning.
- ★ The estimated dollar value of operating cost savings from reduced energy and water use, heating/cooling, etc., from green building practices and related conservation efforts in new and existing City facilities, as suggested in this plan.
- ★ The numbers of residents and other stakeholders engaged through City-sponsored education and outreach events related to Comprehensive Plan implementation and periodic review and updating, as outlined in this chapter.

