

# Introduction

***Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.***

***- John F. Kennedy***

Imagine Burleson: Roadmap to 2030 is a plan to preserve the past, realize the potential of the present, and guide the future of the City of Burleson. It is a coordinated effort of citizens, decision-makers, city staff, and other stakeholders who hold Burleson close to their hearts and choose to live or earn a living here.

The plan analyzes the issues presented by the current conditions to develop a vision for the future of Burleson, and designs the pathway to achieve that desired future. As we have seen in the last decade growth in Burleson is inevitable. This plan is meant to help us preserve our history and resources, as well as manage this growth sensibly and responsibly. This Imagine Burleson document is intended to be a dynamic, adaptable guide to help decision-makers, citizens, City staff, and other stakeholders shape Burleson's future on a continual, proactive basis.

This planning document forms the basis for policy decisions (such as development ordinances and short- and long-term action plans). Policy-makers and City staff will use this document as a guide while reviewing development projects, City budget, prioritizing capital improvement projects, and drafting ordinances to direct growth that leads to the vision identified in this document. For citizens and potential developers, this plan can be used as a guide to:

- Compare development requests or projects with the vision and strategies of this plan
- Choose the right project or realign the request to meet the vision and
- Review recommendations and implementation ideas to determine an appropriate development model



Imagine Burleson: Roadmap to 2030 is structured into four sections – Introduction, Vision, Strategies and Implementation. The process to arrive at this final plan is outlined below.

**The 2010 Picture** section, located within the appendix, represents the first step in developing the plan. It enables everyone to have a clear understanding of the physical and demographic characteristics of Burleson and its surrounding region.

People are the heart of any city: they are the reason for the existence of government, the need for homes and neighborhoods, the need for roads and parks. Each community has a unique citizenry and plan recommendations should be focused on meeting its specific needs. This section examines Burleson’s population growth and provides analysis of local population characteristics such as age, ethnicity, education, and employment.

An analysis of present land use patterns is included to fully assess the City’s future needs. The land use patterns that exist today have evolved to satisfy the requirements of the community as it has grown and developed. The 2010 Picture provides documentation of the people and land currently within the City, allowing policies and implementation actions to be tailored to the needs of Burleson’s current and future citizens.

## Planning Process

- **The 2010 Picture**  
*Where are we?*
- **Vision**  
*Where do we want to go?*
- **Strategies**  
*How do we get there?*
- **Implementation**  
*Actions to get there*
- **Performance Measures**  
*Keeping on the right track*



# Introduction

The **Vision** section describes the future of Burleson based on the desires and dreams of Burleson’s citizens and stakeholders who participated throughout the planning process.



The vision is the formation of a mental image of something that is perceived to be possible, it is an imagination that reveals what Burleson can be. Developing a cohesive vision of the City’s future allows residents, business owners and visitors an opportunity to see what this City strives to be. This vision represents what the people of Burleson value in their community and what they want for its future.



The rapid growth experienced by the City in the last decade is anticipated to continue in the upcoming years. Depending upon how such growth, however, is directed, these changes could be extremely beneficial for the City’s residents, commerce and infrastructure. Unguided and uncoordinated growth can harm the qualities valued by the citizens of Burleson.



The vision helps guide and inform the decision-making process to define and manage the City’s future, providing the opportunity to make sound, informed choices toward accomplishing the community’s goals.

The **Strategies** section guides policy decisions over time in order to achieve the desired vision in regards to land use, transportation, neighborhoods, environment, economic development and urban design. This section is divided into six key initiatives:

## 1) Land Use

This subsection identifies and describes the new land use types, which have been carefully drafted in order to best meet the community’s needs and goals. These land use types incorporate and arrange employment opportunities, entertainment centers, transportation, urban design and housing for both existing and future development in ways that can decrease the use of cars, increase the use of public transit, and decrease the overall amount of developed land to promote open, green spaces. The future land use map (page 3-4) shows the locations of these land use types.



## 2) Complete Streets

This subsection addresses transportation strategies. It incorporates the “livable streets” principles of Context Sensitive Design (CSD), which goes beyond traditional thoroughfare planning to be more inclusive while addressing long-term land use goals. CSD relates and integrates land use and thoroughfare planning to ensure that street design responds to the character of the neighborhoods that streets pass through.



## 3) Community Enhancement

This subsection puts forth strategies to create strong, healthy neighborhoods and ensure that all parts of the City have equal access to quality neighborhoods with good public schools, parks and other public amenities. This subsection also focuses on creating housing options that answer the needs of a diverse population while sustaining existing neighborhoods and steering growth toward areas where it is wanted and needed.



## 4) Environmental Sustainability

This subsection focuses on protecting water quality and watersheds, promoting energy efficiency, increasing the urban tree canopy, improving air quality, protecting and enhancing open space, planning for more parks and maintaining important views and vistas. This strategy is intended to address the community’s desire for open space, recreational trails, adequate drainage and preservation of natural areas.



Policies to mitigate the urban heat island effect, improve storm water management, reduce smog, expand the absorption capacity of floodplains and allow the restoration and rehabilitation of riparian corridors are included in this subsection. Strategies in this subsection are aligned with and build upon Burleson’s 2008 Parks and Open Space Master Plan to ensure that residents can enjoy access to quality natural areas and recreational opportunities in the decades to come.



## 5) Diversified Economy

The approach to economic development strategies in this plan is based on balancing land use as a tool for structuring a sound tax base. It also recognizes that strategically using public resources can stimulate private investment. The challenge is utilizing the City's location in the DFW region, proximity to downtown Fort Worth and availability of highway and air access to create a place where all types of people want to live and businesses want to locate because of the City's range of amenities.



Imagine Burleson stresses that economic development in Burleson should focus on enhancing the built and natural environment of the City that drew the current population to move here. Additionally, economic development efforts should recognize that diversity, and the cultural assets it brings to the City, is a path to enhancing the standard of living for all current and future residents.



Strategies in this subsection address investment in the HighPoint Business Park, enhancing IH-35W and SH-174 corridors, redeveloping Old Town, and developing SH-121 corridor and Transit Oriented Development through partnerships with BISD, Hill College, Texas Wesleyan University and the private sector.

## 6) Urban Design

Urban design principles deal with the sensory response of people to the community's physical environment: its visual appearance, its aesthetic quality, and its spatial character. This subsection of the plan integrates urban design considerations into the City's growth and development processes. Urban Design considerations help create an attractive and recognizable physical environment that complements the functional organization of Burleson, and reinforces a sense of "community" among the people who live here.



Urban design strategies in this subsection focus on:

- bolstering people's sense of well being and civic pride
- creating an awareness of different neighborhoods or areas within the City and
- encouraging reinvestment into the community to stabilize taxes (property values in well-designed cities tend to increase, lessening the need to raise tax rates) and create quality, sustainable developments that attract businesses and residents, expanding the tax base.

# Introduction

The **Implementation** section provides action steps for accomplishing goals outlined in the Vision and Strategy sections. While the Strategies section provides a guide and framework for decision-making regarding the six key initiatives described above, the Implementation section provides specific actions for achieving the strategies related to land use, connectivity, community enhancement, environmental sustainability, diversified economy and urban design. This section also provides **performance measures** for citizens, decision-makers and City staff to create a framework for tracking progress towards achieving the vision of Imagine Burleson.

