

2004 Texas APA Awards

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Comprehensive Planning Awards

Two of these are awarded for outstanding comprehensive plans addressing development of an area, city, or region.

City of Abilene – Comprehensive Plan

Adopted in January 2004 the Abilene comprehensive plan is a guide to development for the next 10- 15 years. The plan ensures that future public and private investment decisions are consistent with the long-range vision of what Abilene should become. Implementation strategies are clearly defined.

Late 2001 the Abilene Community Excellence Task Force was formed to



identify strategies to update the old, 1973 plan. This task force, with neighborhood interest groups, developers and business leaders began the revision process. City staff and the task force recognized that constant public input would be critical to the plan's acceptance in the community. An aggressive media campaign was commenced using workshops, surveys, newspaper articles, advertisements, a project information booth, billboards and an extensive website.

Farmers Branch - West Side Plan

The west side of Farmers Branch is largely vacant. With the rapid growth in the metropolitan area, community leaders saw the need to create an integrated community rather than large single-use districts. The plan includes a development guide for 2,375 acres that will ultimately support 45,000 jobs and 5,000 residences. A series of alternative growth scenarios were analyzed to determine the potential growth.



Project Planning Awards

Three of these are awarded for outstanding plans or studies addressing a specific project, area, or issue in a town, city, or region.

City of McAllen – Heart of the City Plan

McAllen has adopted a plan to revitalize a study area to prevent economic decline. Begun in late 2002, the project began with a telephone survey. Results indicated that 70% of residents believe that the city should focus its attention to the heart of the city area. The report is a 20-year revitalization plan. It includes a demographic and economic analysis as well as recommendations for potential projects and funding sources. Major projects include parking garages, a City Hall Plaza, beautification and gateway treatment as well as commercial redevelopment. Funding sources include a proposed TIF District and a Parking District. A management board would focus on the plan's implementation.

City of San Antonio – River Improvement Overlay District

The City, Bexar County, and the SA River Authority have jointly embarked on a \$140 million improvement project to 13 miles of the SA River which includes concrete channel removal, environmental restoration and flood control. To protect this public investment, the City initiated a project, the River Improvement Overlay program to create an environment in which individual development will enhance San Antonio's most important asset. These improvements address concerns noted in the South Side Community Plan and the Downtown neighborhood plan.



The project establishes design standards for future development along the corridor. These standards will facilitate the preservation of the King William historic district and the San Antonio Missions. It also incorporates TXDOT's mission trails enhancement project and designated historic landmarks along the river.

City of Orange – Navy Park Redevelopment Plan

This neighborhood revitalization plan was adopted to improve the living environment for residents while rediscovering a neighborhood nationally unique as a home to US Navy shipbuilders during WWII. It was a process of building hope, confidence and determination in a neighborhood that has struggled with crime, and absentee landlords. The project was developed based on input from area residents, local nonprofits, businesses and community leaders. The plan provides detailed action statements for implementation. It meets eligibility requirements as a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area to utilize HUD funds. The planning process became a neighborhood-building tool that brought residents and community leaders together to promote communication and to forge a sense of trust. The Navy Park Redevelopment Plan proposes physical, social and economic improvements through land use, housing, parks, transportation, urban design and economic opportunity.

City of Baytown – Downtown Master Plan (Honorable Mention)



The Baytown Downtown Master Plan was developed to address issues related to aging downtown infrastructure and the lack of a market for downtown. Through streetscape design and public investment designed to create a new image in downtown, Baytown has encouraged private investment while increasing its economic vitality.

The Master plan was developed through a detailed analysis of existing conditions, community archives as well as stakeholder and citizen participation. With 2 fortune 500 companies located in Baytown, city leaders, the Baytown Downtown Association and the public believe that the timing is right to commit the resources to revitalizing downtown.

Current Planning Awards

Three awards given in recognition of an outstanding ordinance, program or process directed to the implementation of a plan.

City of Frisco – Interactive Zoning/Development Guide

The City of Frisco has implemented a citizen guide to its zoning and development standards using links throughout its website. The information provided is user-friendly with hyperlinks allowing the viewer to obtain more detailed information on the zoning and development process. The information contained includes zoning applications and checklists, the zoning map, a Home Owners Association directory, the Parks Master Plan among others. Also included is a list of key contacts at the City.



City of Farmers Branch – Public Outreach Plan

Farmers Branch strives to maximize public involvement in the planning process. By disseminating information in various forms including lectures, printed media, technology and special events, the City of Farmers Branch is able to inform all citizen groups. A special Lecture Series with presentations made by ten planning experts was promoted by city planning staff. The Series was another information tool designed to educate residents, elected and appointed officials, developers and other city staff. The cost of the Lecture Series was \$400.



San Antonio – Flex Zoning Districts

To implement the Southside Initiative Community Plan city staff created flex-zoning districts. In contrast to the City's base zoning districts, the flex districts permit mixed uses that are compatible, subject to performance guidelines, design criteria, building façade materials and location standards.

Other alternative development patterns support conservation subdivisions and water rights preservation through density bonus incentives to preserve the rural character, farming and ranching operations, and sensitive environmental features of the South San Antonio.

City of Colleyville – Planning Commissioner Orientation (Honorable Mention)



The Planning staff of Colleyville created an in-house training program for the City's Planning Commissioners. The specialized program is presented annually to new and experienced Commissioners. Key topics include: how to run a meeting; what to expect during a meeting; ethics; platting; zoning and special uses.

Planning Commissioner Award

One award given to an outstanding Planning Commissioner.

Mr. Mel Neuman – Mansfield, TX, Planning Commissioner

Mr. Neuman has been instrumental in shaping Mansfield by assisting the Planning Department with the adoption of commercial and residential design standards, tree preservation and landscaping requirements. As a Planning Commission leader for eight years, Mel brought a comprehensive view of development and land planning to the table. In addition to his duties as a Commissioner, Mel made time to attend Council meetings and contribute hundreds of hours of service to his community.

Student Award

One award given to an outstanding research or planning project by an individual or team of students in an accredited graduate program.

Texas A&M University – Palacious Urban Design Plan

This plan involved the preparation urban designs for the waterfront (Distance/direction), main street/downtown, Highway 35 bypass and the hike/bike trail. Over 150 residents and 29 students participated in this collaborative project.

The student team consisted of a five disciplines – urban planning, landscape architecture, architecture, recreation, and parks. The team collaborated with state professionals in the field of economic development, civil engineering, public education, commercial fishing, tourism and marine biology. One of the key factors for the TAMU student team was the firm commitment from Matagorda County to implement the plan within 3-5 years.

Until the completion of this project, Palacious had no plan or zoning code. Now it has adopted the urban design plan, drafted a zoning code and a historic preservation code. By addressing environmental, social and economic issues, Palacious is geared toward creating a sustainable community.

Long-Range Planning Award

One award given to an outstanding plan concentrating on a single long-range element

City of Dallas – Renaissance Plan



The Renaissance Plan is the City of Dallas's long-range park system plan. Dallas currently boasts the fourth largest park system in the US. An early step toward the revitalization of its parks included a database system of inventory assessing the current status of over 400 park facilities. Dallas voters approved funding for over \$101M in capital improvements in May 2003. Dallas's goal is to once again become the premier park system in the nation. Some of the projects include upgrading existing parks, building new

sports complexes, large multi-generational centers, family aquatic centers, a regional trail network, showcasing historic parks and enhancing signature destinations in Dallas such as Fair Park, White Rock Lake Park, and others.

Texas Chapter Award.

Given to an individual who has made a substantial impact on planning from outside of the profession.

Rich Escalante – North Central Texas Section

Rich is known for exemplary service to the public sector for over 30 years. He has made significant contribution to the planning field at local, state, national and international levels.

As City Manager in Farmers Branch from 1987-2002, Rich oversaw the delivery of all municipal services. He coordinated the capital



planning and development of numerous municipal facilities. He developed a tax dividend program – the first of its kind in the country. This program was selected by Harvard University for the Innovations in American Government award program. His innovative approach to financial planning and the municipal budget process has put the city on a path to be debt free in 2012.

Chapter President's Award

One award given by the Chapter President for exemplary service to Texas APA.

Christina Day, AICP – Texas Chapter Website Manager

Awarded to Christina Day for her dedication and commitment to re-creating and maintaining the Texas APA website.

