

COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN



CITY OF AZLE, TEXAS

September 20, 2005



City of Azle, Texas Comprehensive Master Plan

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Table of Contents

SECTION 1	
Introduction – Executive Summary.....	1
Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan.....	1
Use of the Plan	1
SECTION 2	
Goals and Objectives	4
Purpose and Definition	4
SECTION 3	
Demographics.....	9
Population.....	9
Housing	11
SECTION 4	
Land Use Plan – 2005.....	14
Land Use Classifications	15
SECTION 5	
Thoroughfare Plan – 2005	21
Thoroughfare Design Considerations.....	21
Additional Design Considerations	23
Azle Thoroughfare Plan of 2005	24
Funding Thoroughfares	25
Thoroughfare Vision.....	26
SECTION 6	
Parks Plan	27
Policies	27
Goals and Objectives	28
SECTION 7	
Plan Implementation	30
Application of the Plan	31
Ordinance Application.....	32
Official Map Maintenance	32
Planning Program	33
Short-Range Actions.....	34
Mid-Range Actions	34
Long-Range Actions	34

SECTION 1 Introduction – Executive Summary

In planning for its future, the City of Azle faces many opportunities and challenges. The community will continue to grow as a place of residence, with a population likely to approach 14,000 residents by 2030. Additional housing will be needed to accommodate this growing population, with single-family dwellings continuing to be the principal housing type. Increased demand for City services and community facilities will follow.

Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

The City of Azle, Texas adopted the Azle Comprehensive Plan as a statement of the City’s vision for the future adopted September 20, 2005, Ordinance Number O-2005-14. This Plan revises the previous Azle Comprehensive Plans (adopted 1988 and 1968).

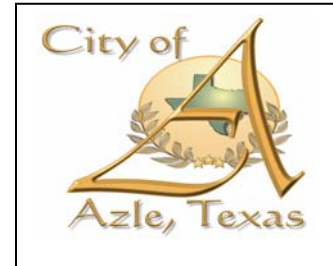
A Comprehensive Plan is one of the more important policy documents any community can develop. It helps the City project service needs to support future growth, including new roads, water and sewer lines, storm drainage, public safety facilities, parks, and other services.

The most important aspect of the Comprehensive Plan is to assist community leaders in evaluating future proposed developments to decide if they reflect and share the City’s goals and vision for the future.

Use of the Plan

Azle’s new Comprehensive Plan establishes a new planning process for the City. The three principles of the process are:

1. Planning must be comprehensive
2. Planning must be directed toward action and the needs of decision makers, and
3. Planning must be a continuous process.



The community will continue to grow as a place of residence, with a population likely to approach 14,000 residents by 2030.

The most important aspect of the Comprehensive Plan is to assist community leaders in evaluating future proposed developments to decide if they reflect and share the City’s goals and vision for the future.

Each plan element is written so that it can stand alone as a specific plan for that functional area. However, each element is linked with all other ones.

It is important to note the difference between the Azle Comprehensive Plan and the City’s Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. The Plan establishes overall policy in terms of future land use, utilities, roads, and open space. The City’s Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map implement the plan in terms of specific land uses, building requirements, and other stipulations to develop in Azle. The Subdivision Regulations legislate the physical subdivision of land and the engineering specifications for water, sewer, storm drainage, and street pavement.

The success of the Plan depends upon how it is integrated with the operation of local government. The Comprehensive Plan builds a strong relationship between the following governmental activities:

- *Planning & Policy Development* – The Plan defines specific objectives and policies for meeting community goals. It stresses policy development and the periodic review and reformulation of policies as needed to address changing conditions and trends.
- *Regulation* – The Plan is closely coordinated with zoning, subdivision, and other development-regulating ordinances. It contains guidelines for applying development regulations and recommends studies and amendments needed to improve the ordinances.
- *Programming* – The Plan outlines a systematic approach for coordinating services and facilities with development. It recommends a five-year departmental service plan with annual updates.
- *Implementation Process* – The Comprehensive Plan recommends implementation to guide and facilitate long-term development. It defines and prioritizes

The Plan establishes overall policy in terms of future land use, utilities, roads, and open space.

The success of the Plan depends upon how it is integrated with the operation of local government

activities to be undertaken following the Comprehensive Plan adoption. In particular, the Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed and updated every two years to ensure an ongoing process toward implementation.

SECTION 2 Goals and Objectives

The Azle Comprehensive Plan is designed to accommodate and manage the City’s future growth. It focuses on ensuring that ongoing development and redevelopment results in an orderly, well-planned community where land use and public facilities are in balance and quality of life is enhanced.

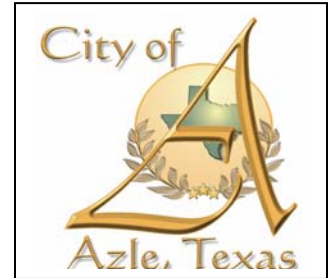
Purpose and Definition

The foundation of a Comprehensive Land Use Plan is the set of Goals and Objectives developed through the public participation process. The City of Azle’s Goals and Objectives are tangible directives raised by citizens to guide the development of the city into the future. These directives were used to establish the relationships among land uses on the Future Land Use Plan Map, and will guide officials as they make decisions regarding growth and development of the City.

In order to provide an understanding of what is required in the development of Goals and Objectives, the following definitions are provided:

Goals are general statements of the community’s desired ultimate physical, social, economic, or environmental status. Goals set the standard with respect to the community’s desired quality of life.

Objectives are the approaches used to achieve the quality of life expressed by the community’s goals. They identify the critical issues and provide direction in steering the City toward eventual achievement of its goals.



Goals and Objectives set forth the guiding principles that will shape the future growth of Azle.

The goals and objectives will guide officials as they make decisions regarding growth and development of the City.

Policies are the means by which objectives are carried out in order to achieve the goals of the City. Policies outline specific procedures to achieve a desired objective. Policies should be as specific and as measurable as possible so that they can be put into action with consistency and their effectiveness can be evaluated.

Goal 1: Promote the development of residential neighborhoods that make a positive contribution while meeting the needs of all citizens.

Objective 1-1

Encourage development of quality low density single family neighborhoods

Objective 1-2

Encourage medium and high density development in areas compatible with higher traffic volumes.

Objective 1-3

Promote the rejuvenation of existing neighborhoods such that they add amenities while protecting property values.

Goal 2: Promote pride in ownership through the development of well-maintained and landscaped neighborhoods.

Objective 2-1

Identify resources and programs that assist property owners with opportunities for restoration, renewal, and improvement.

Goal 1: Promote the development of residential neighborhoods that make a positive contribution while meeting the needs of all citizens.

Goal 2: Promote pride in ownership through the development of well-maintained and landscaped neighborhoods.

Objective 2-2

Encourage architectural controls on residential building design and lot characteristics.

Objective 2-3

Provide consistent and equitable enforcement of municipal codes.

Goal 3:

Promote a climate that encourages commercial businesses that will benefit Azle.

Objective 3-1

Review and refine commercial development guidelines and incentives.

Objective 3-2

Improve efforts to market the City of Azle.

Objective 3-3

Encourage communication between the City and other entities, such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Azle Independent School District, and the Texas Department of Transportation, and others.

Goal 4:

Encourage the development of safe and aesthetically pleasing places to work, shop, and do business.

Objective 4-1

Provide design criteria for aesthetically pleasing commercial development.

Objective 4-2

Locate commercial areas within corridors along thoroughfares.

Goal 3: Promote a climate that encourages commercial businesses that will benefit Azle.

Goal 4: Encourage the development of safe and aesthetically pleasing places to work, shop, and do business.

Objective 4-3

Encourage quality residential growth as a means to encourage increased commercial growth.

Objective 4-4

Promote economic development that creates quality jobs.

Goal 5:

Encourage development and expansion of existing industrial uses and attract new industrial uses that provide a strong economic base while minimizing environmental impacts.

Objective 5-1

Promote industrial development and infrastructure where economically feasible.

Objective 5-2

Encourage development within districts designated for industrial uses.

Objective 5-3

Provide an inventory of available sites to potential developers, real estate professionals, and citizens.

Goal 6:

Develop guidelines and regulations to improve the appearance of industrial properties.

Objective 6-1

Enhance the appearance of industrial properties through screening and buffering while maintaining accessibility and visibility.

Objective 6-2

Provide good frontage and access to main thoroughfares.

Goal 5: Encourage development and expansion of existing industrial uses and attract new industrial uses that provide a strong economic base while minimizing environmental impacts.

Goal 6: Develop guidelines and regulations to improve the appearance of existing industrial properties.

Goal 7: Provide the citizens with high quality, strategically located, adequately staffed city facilities to serve the community.

Objective 7-1

Identify and prioritize current and future needs for facilities.

Objective 7-2

Develop strategies and plans to gain citizen support for needed facilities.

Objective 7-3

Develop creative strategies to fund needed facilities.

Objective 7-4

Identify accessible locations for facilities.

Objective 7-5

Promote and encourage cooperation between taxing and other entities to provide facilities with no duplication.

Goal 7: Provide the citizens with high quality, strategically located, adequately staffed facilities to serve the community in the areas of Fire Protection, Police, Emergency Medical Services, City Government, Municipal Court, Water and Sewer Services, Recreational, Educational, Cultural, Assembly, Health Care, and Code Compliance...

SECTION 3 DEMOGRAPHICS

The identification of trends in population growth and other demographic data is a very important part of the comprehensive planning process. It can provide clues to future growth patterns and indicate what types of housing and public facilities may be needed in the future. For example, an increase in young couples with children would require starter housing, new parks and schools, and new or upgraded community facilities; whereas, an increase in the elderly population would lessen the need for schools and increase the need for specialized housing. This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan contains information on Azle’s population including age, as well as household, housing and economic characteristics.

Population

According to the population projections prepared by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (“NCTCOG”), the City of Azle can expect its population to increase by more than 45% between 2000 and 2030. Table 3.1 sets forth the population projections for the City of Azle in five year increments.

**Table 3.1
Population Estimates**

Year	Population
2000	9,494
2005	10,115
2010	11,078
2015	12,296
2020	13,649
2025	15,150
2030	16,362
Total Growth	6,247
Total Change	61%



The identification of trends in population growth and other demographic data can provide clues to future growth patterns and indicate what types of housing and public facilities may be needed in the future.

According to the population projections prepared by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (“NCTCOG”), the City of Azle can expect its population to increase by more than 61% between 2000 and 2030

This increase in population will serve as the basis for the Azle comprehensive planning effort. This plan will strive to ensure that the City of Azle accommodates the increase in population while maintaining the quality of life that the current residents enjoy.

Population by Age

Table 3.2 breaks down the City’s population by age group. The age characteristics of the City’s population is important as it helps the City to understand if the population will need more schools, single-family homes or homes for people without children living at home.

Table 3.2
2000 Population by Age

Age	Number	Percent
Under 5	619	6.60%
5 to 9 years	678	7.10%
10 to 14 years	759	7.90%
15 to 19 years	719	7.50%
20 to 24 years	503	5.20%
25 to 34 years	1045	11.01%
35 to 44 years	1662	17.40%
45 to 54 years	1357	14.10%
55 to 59 years	522	5.40%
60 to 64 years	397	4.10%
65 to 74 years	641	6.70%
75 to 84 years	417	4.30%
85 and over	175	1.80%

Source - 2000 Census of Population and Housing Summary

According to the 2000 Census, the median age in Azle was 37.4 years.

The 20 to 29 year-old age group is typically the group that is starting out on its own and putting stakes into the community. Members of this age group, particularly in the upper end, are beginning to enter the family formation years, thus the high proportion of people in this age group may indicate increasing school enrollments in the near future.

The 30 to 49 year-old age group is often looked at as the new generation of community leaders and business owners, and

According to the 2000 Census, the median age in Azle was 37.4 years.

... the 30 to 34 year-olds are typically first time homebuyers while the 35 to 49 year-olds are typically included in the move-up homebuyer market

their children are found throughout the school system from kindergarten to 12th grade. These age groups also tend to be active in the community and demand high quality services for their children and families. However, these age groups also tend to be highly mobile and may move away from a community to find better opportunities. Within this population range, the 30 to 34 year-olds are typically first-time homebuyers while the 35 to 49 year-olds are typically included in the move-up homebuyer market. Given that the majority of people in Azle are in this age group, this suggests that the majority of new housing in Azle should not be starter homes, but higher end housing.

Persons in the 50 to 64 year age group tend to be empty nesters and may move to smaller homes while young seniors aged 65 to 74 often seek a variety of housing options. Empty nesters in these age groups begin to abandon homes with several bedrooms and two or more stories for lower maintenance, two bedroom units, often on one story.

While persons aged 85 and over comprise the smallest age group in Azle, this segment of the population is growing rapidly nationwide. This is due partly to the fact that people are living longer than they did previously, but it may also be the result of older residents in the surrounding rural areas moving to the city to be closer to services. A sustained 85+ population has several planning implications for the city. Park and recreational demands of this group tend to be for passive activities rather than ball fields and playgrounds. Also, social services, elderly housing and medical services will be in demand and will most likely need to be located near one another.

Housing

The character of households can change over time in two ways as it relates to a city's population growth: by number and by size. If over time, population growth is coupled with an increase in both the number and size of households, then it generally tends to indicate a community growing from within, i.e. a high birth rate. However, if population growth is reflected by an increase in the number of households and

Empty nesters may begin to abandon homes with several bedrooms and two or more stories for lower maintenance, two bedroom units, often on one story.

If population growth is reflected by an increase in the number of households and a decrease in the size of the household, then it may indicate that the community is growing of an influx on new residents.

a decrease in the size of the household, then it may indicate that the community is growing because of an influx of new residents.

**Table 3.3
Household Projections**

Year	Households
1990	3,221
1995	3,378
1998	3,481
2000	3,716
2005	3,857
2010	4,281
2015	4,752
2020	5,275
2025	5,855
2030	6,323
New Households	2,466
Change in Total Households	61.00%

Available, affordable, and safe housing is necessary for a community to accommodate the growth of all segments of the population.

By examining the 1990 Census and the 2000 Census, it is revealed that along with the population, the number of households increased in Azle between 1990 and 2000, but the size of households decreased, indicating a community growing from an influx of new residents. The number of households increased in the city by 14.6 percent from 1990 to 2000 while its population increased by 7 percent. On average, there were 2.72 persons per household in 1990 and 2.54 in 2000. This represents a decrease of 7 percent. This is consistent with the national trend of smaller families and more single person households. The national average household size is even smaller at 2.40 persons. The average household size figure only counts persons actually in households, which does not include persons in group quarters, such as nursing facilities or college dormitories.

Available, affordable, and safe housing is necessary for a community to accommodate the growth of all segments of the population. It provides a vital link between the community's population growth, economic development goals, and its land use priorities. In order to encourage

growth in the population and economy, housing will be needed in Azle for residents of differing income levels.

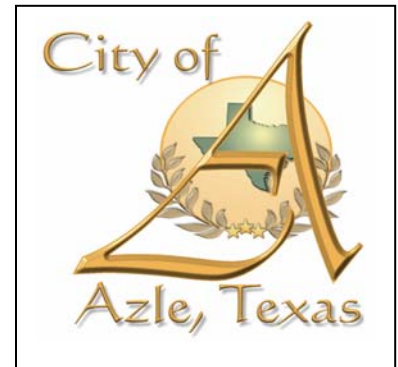
SECTION 4 Land Use Plan - 2005

The Land Use Plan is a general guideline for the location and arrangement of land use in a municipality. It is based to a large degree upon the goals and objectives of the community which should be the thread of continuity over the life of the plan.

The dividing lines between recommended land uses appear very specific on maps, however, as development occurs there are mitigating circumstances that require a degree of flexibility as to the exact change of one land use to another or between levels of density of land uses. This level of specifics must be considered at the time of approvals for development. It is strongly recommended that major changes to the Land Use Plan be carefully analyzed before deviating from the basic concepts of the plan.

The preparation of the Land Use Plan for Azle 2005 is based upon:

- Goals and objectives determined desirable for the continued growth of the community by the elected and appointed officials of the City and presented at public reviews.
- Planning principles established in the Azle Comprehensive Plan 1988 and updated to the present.
- Considerations of physiographic and environmental constraints such as topography, flood prone areas, and noise.
- Analysis of locations and conditions of existing land uses and their potential for continuation into the foreseeable future.
- Assessment of regional and local thoroughfare systems constructed or planned to be constructed.



The Land Use Plan is the guideline for the location and arrangement of land use in a municipality.

Azle will continue to encourage a range in housing types and densities in order to respond to the needs and desires of its residents

- Land use and development trends in the future as affected by the economy, energy conservation, and efficient use of other natural resources.
- Constraints of physical expansion of the municipal boundaries to include new areas for growth.
- Reduction of conflicts and assurance of compatibilities of land uses that will ensure Azle’s future as a desirable place of residence, work, and leisure.
- Community input through two public forums and a citizens survey.



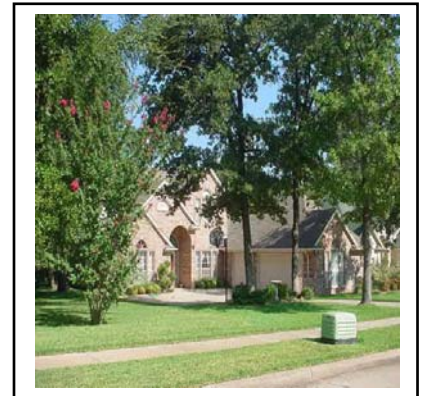
LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

The existing and recommended land uses are classified according to the primary way in which the land is used. For purposes of clarity and common definition, the following are descriptions of the land uses described in the plan.

Residential

There are four levels of residential use indicated in the Land Use Plan.

- Rural density residential represents single family detached residential dwelling units as normally found in rural residential subdivisions. The density levels for this use range from one dwelling unit per five acres to one dwelling unit per acre. The locations of rural density residential have been selected to make the best use of topography and vegetation and to have the greatest amount of protection from high volume traffic penetrating the neighborhood.
- Low density residential represents single family detached residential dwelling units as normally found in residential subdivisions. The density levels



for this use range from two to four dwelling units per acre. These areas are ideally supported by nearby schools and neighborhood parks, preferably within walking distance of most points in the neighborhood.

- Medium density residential consists of detached or attached dwelling units at a density level of five to eight dwelling units per acre. Examples of this classification are small lot subdivision, cluster or patio homes, duplexes, mobile home areas, and some instances of town homes. The location criteria developed for this plan includes the use of medium density residential as an outer buffer between low density areas and higher density residential, along arterials or other non-residential uses. Much more design flexibility can be afforded to this classification to meet new design concepts and to provide the internal protection from the above described conditions. This use should be located near high volume traffic thoroughfares due to higher traffic volumes associated with increased densities. The implication of higher density should not preclude the provision of open space and recreational opportunities within or adjacent to these areas. Open space associated with these areas is important to residents being placed in higher density situations, and modern design concepts offer many opportunities to maximize living amenities within medium density areas.

- High density residential is represented by greater than eight dwelling units per acre. Dwelling units are most often attached or multiple dwelling units located within a single or series of structures. Examples of such uses include town houses, condominiums, and apartments. This use classification does not imply ownership or renter occupancy. The criteria for locating this use include placement along major thoroughfares to facilitate higher traffic volumes generated by the use and placement between low density residential areas and other uses. Design concepts can be incorporated into

The layout of neighborhoods should incorporate parks with pedestrian links from surrounding neighborhood.



Multifamily uses should be located in small groupings around the city rather than concentrating all multifamily uses in one area.

this classification which can provide the living amenities of recreation and open space, safety of the occupants, and aesthetic amenities of high density residential living areas.

Commercial

The Commercial classification includes regional shopping centers, community shopping centers, neighborhood shopping centers, and convenience retailing centers. Commercial activity provides return on investment for business and property owners, employment opportunities for local residents, and an economic base for local taxing entities. Commercial activity generally supports community residential activity. Every effort should be made to encourage development that compliments the area with a diversity of uses to provide a variety of services and products.

Central Business District

The Central Business District is a community-serving shopping center, in a sense, and is also an important focal point of the community. Its viability should be encouraged and, if possible enhanced by redevelopment and expansion. The most serious impediment to this area is the lack of ample parking and amenities such as sidewalks and landscaping, thereby reducing the visual appeal of downtown. Unlike shopping centers which are most often developed under a single design concept and ownership, the downtown area is made up of a multiplicity of building types, ages, and styles which gives a flavor to this unique area. Similarly, there are a larger number of owners in downtown requiring an association of individual owners with a common interest in the downtown area.



Commercial Projects Should Address:

- Building Design
- Building Arrangement
- Tree, Landscaping
- Noise & Light Impacts
- Parking Criteria

Industrial

The Industrial classification includes heavy industrial and light industrial.

- Heavy industrial or those uses that manufacture finished or semi-finished products from raw materials may result in loud noise, heavy truck traffic, and visible open storage. This level of industrial use should be located near major access, removed from residential areas, and be near major water and sewer facilities.
- Light industrial includes warehousing, industrial activities not requiring major open storage, and those that may be a part of a planned center consisting of several buildings. These uses can be attractive and the associated loading areas can be screened with landscape elements resulting in a very pleasing atmosphere. This type of use may also incorporate office use.

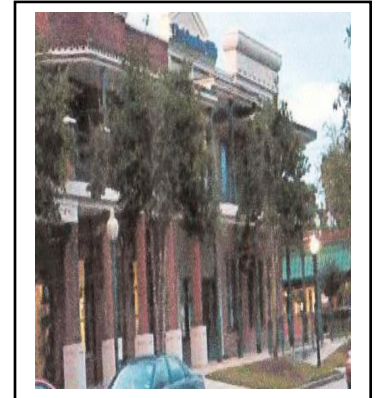
Public

The Public classification includes the broad spectrum of federal, state, county, city, or other government owned and operated facilities. These uses are normally service facilities and should be located to maximize accessibility to the public user. Those public facilities that have characteristics similar to commercial (high traffic volume) or industrial (noise, odor, etc.) should be placed in areas that are acceptable for privately owned but similar characteristic uses.



Regional Mixed Use Activity Center

The Regional Mixed-Use Center is a classification where the focus area contains the shopping, services, recreation, employment, and institutional facilities supported by and serving an entire region. A regional activity center could include a regional shopping mall, a number of major employers, restaurant and entertainment facilities, and high-density housing. A regional activity center is considerably larger and more diverse in its land uses than any other activity center. It includes vertically integrated uses where different uses may occur on each floor of the building.



Neighborhood Mixed-Use Activity Center

The Neighborhood Mixed Use Center contains facilities vital to the day-to-day activity of the neighborhood. A neighborhood center might contain a convenience store, small restaurant, personal service shops, church or synagogue, day care center, individual office space, a small park, and perhaps an elementary school. In addition to business uses a neighborhood center may contain a variety of residential uses including cluster or patio homes, homes above businesses, small apartment communities, and a limited number of single family detached residential dwelling units. It should abut collectors or arterials but not minor streets.

Ultimate Holding Capacity

The ultimate holding capacity represents the total estimated housing and population counts that could be accommodated at build-out throughout the planning area, should all of the future development occur at the stated maximum allowable densities. **Table 4-1** shows the ultimate residential holding capacity estimates.



**Table 4-1
Ultimate Holding Capacity
Azle Planning Area**

Residential Use	Acres	% of Land	Density	Land Use Efficiency	Dwelling Units	Population
Rural	8,613	58	.2	.85	1,464	3,532
Low Density	1,927	13	4	.85	6,551	15,808
Med. Density	1328	09	8	.85	9,030	21,789
High Density	164	01	10	.85	1,394	3,364
Total	12,032	.81	1.803	.85	18,439	44,493

- Notes:
1. Occupancy rate of 95% is assumed
 2. 2000 Census Average Household Size = 2.54
 3. Projection includes development within Azle City limits and Extra Territorial Jurisdiction.

These estimates assume a total build-out of all residential areas at the maximum densities. Realized build-out may differ as maximum densities may not always be realized

Population = Acres x Density x Average Household x Land Use Efficiency x Occupancy Rate

Example:

Low Density Residential

15,808 Population =

1,927 Acres x 4 (Units per Acre) x .85 (land use efficiency) x 2.54 (average household) x .95 (occupancy rate)

SECTION 5 Thoroughfare Plan - 2005

The Thoroughfare plan provides for the basic framework upon which the city designs, builds, and maintains its system of roadways. Much of the basic philosophy of land use planning and resulting arrangements and locations of land uses is often based upon the location and classification of roadways. The basic premise of thoroughfare placement is to achieve the safest and most economical and efficient design of the roadways to serve their intended use. The

Local attitudes concerning land use densities and arrangements, coupled with the willingness by the public at this point in time to contend with the increasing costs of individual transportation, do not indicate that public mass transportation will be a primary mode of local or regional traveling in the foreseeable future. The need to work in concert with land use and physical constraints of landforms is important in the planning of thoroughfares.

Thoroughfare Design Considerations

The basic function of thoroughfare design is to carry traffic between regional and interregional areas (freeways), to bring traffic to and from the freeway and serve major movements of traffic within or through the urban area (arterials), to serve internal traffic movements within an area of the city (collectors), and to provide access to adjacent residential land (minor).

Based upon the functional classification of thoroughfares, the following definitions are the basis for Azle's Thoroughfare Plan:

Freeways (Highway 199):

Freeways are intended to move high volumes of traffic at relatively high speeds over long distances. They are a direct link between major traffic generators and have controlled access to ensure uninterrupted traffic flow and safety. Frontage is provided along service roads. Freeways provide



The basic framework upon which a city is built is its system of roadways

The need to work in concert with land use and physical constraints of landforms is important in the planning of thoroughfares

a system of high-volume radial routes to the central business district, and circumferential or “loop” routes to serve other areas. Freeways also connect local cities with those outside the region.

Arterial Streets (e.g. F.M. 730):

Arterials serve the high volume traffic needs of the local area. These routes are continuous through the community and should connect with similar thoroughfares in adjacent cities. Access is controlled through placement of entering streets, driveway prohibitions, medians, left-turn lanes, and traffic signs/signals. Frontage is normally allowed only at arterial intersections.

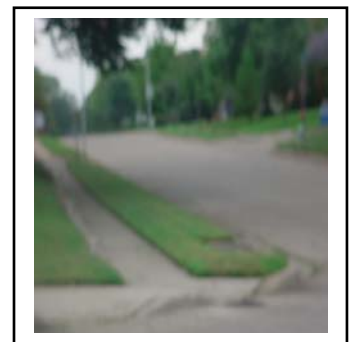
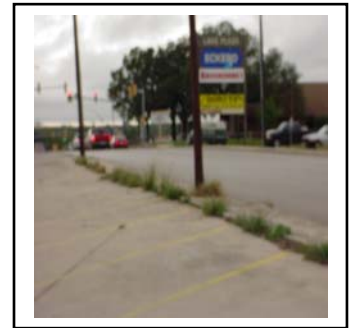
Arterials should be located generally one to two miles apart and designed to accommodate moderate to high traffic volume (25,000 to 45,000 trips per day) and will have abutting commercial uses. Abutting residential uses should be served by side streets. Protected left turn movements are recommended and full traffic signs/signals is warranted at intersections with other arterials. This thoroughfare should not penetrate residential neighborhoods but may border or be the division of neighborhoods. If divided, they can be designed for six moving lanes of traffic at 45 mph or greater. At less than 45 mph, more lanes can occur. If the arterial is undivided, four moving lanes can occur.

(See Thoroughfare Standards Graphic.)

Collector Streets (e.g. Lakeview Dr.):

Collector streets serve as feeder streets for the arterial system, collecting traffic from local streets and feeding onto arterials. These routes should be somewhat less continuous through the community to discourage their use as arterials.

Collectors may be located from 1/8 to 1/2 mile apart, are designed to carry traffic volumes of over 1,500 vehicles per day, and may have abutting commercial (preferably at intersections) and residential uses. Collectors may be more closely spaced in business or industrial areas to handle



higher volumes of local traffic. Due to noise and traffic odors that may accompany higher volume, a greater than normal setback of residential units is recommended. This type of thoroughfare may penetrate a residential neighborhood to collect local traffic and direct it to arterials.

Minor Streets (e.g. most residential streets):

These streets provide local access to residential areas. They should be designed to serve only the residents of the immediate area and should feed into the collector street system. Residential streets should be short, curvilinear, and less continuous to discourage through traffic.

Cul-de-sacs (e.g. Oak View Ct.):

Cul-de-sacs should be provided to all presently dead-end streets not having space to turn at their end. The lack of adequate space to turn around is hazardous at times during emergency situations for emergency personnel such as firemen and police officers.

Additional Design Considerations

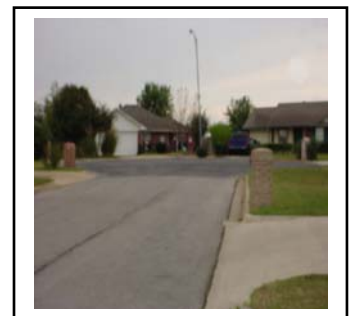
The primary purpose of the thoroughfare system is to move traffic to various points within a given area. However, this purpose does not preclude the need to maintain a pleasurable driving experience while on the thoroughfare. Additionally, there are instances where there are other users of the street rights-of-way. These considerations should be analyzed during thoroughfare planning and in the analysis of thoroughfare safety and maintenance.

Landscape Planting:

The aesthetic treatment of rights-of-way should be encouraged in the areas that are appropriate with the type of design and materials that are easily maintained. The use of grass, ground cover, shrubs, and trees should be planned in conjunction with the functional design of the thoroughfare. The location and type of landscape treatment should take into account roadside hazards as a result of trees or other immovable objects being too close to travel lanes. Trees generally should not be closer than ten feet to the curb on arterial streets. Landscape materials, graphics, and earth mounds can become hazardous at intersections without



The primary purpose of the thoroughfare system is to move traffic to various points within a given area



accommodating for sight distances and blind spots. In order to break monotony, a long expanse of screening should be periodically broken by trees or plant groupings of different form, texture, or color. Additionally, the treatment of parkways should be designed not to cause a distraction to the driver.

Sidewalks/Bike Lanes:

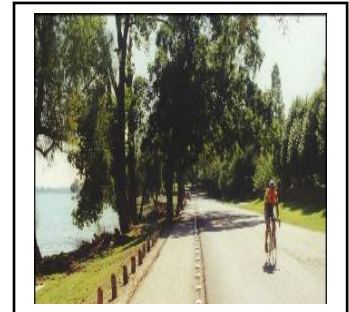
There are many instances that there is a desire or even a need to provide pedestrian access along the thoroughfares. There is always a concern of the incompatibility of pedestrians and heavy traffic. High volumes of relatively high-speed traffic pose a potential traffic safety hazard to pedestrians. Conversely, the presence of pedestrians in close proximity to the roadway increases the level of anxiety of drivers. The placement of sidewalks is often required to provide access to retail areas, schools, and parks.

The location of the sidewalk along thoroughfares should carefully consider the volume and type of traffic and the placement and width of the walk. It is suggested that sidewalks be placed within the parkway at property lines and be a minimum of four feet in width in residential areas and six feet in commercial areas.

Sidewalks are particularly recommended around all school areas for walking students. The City has included sidewalk construction into its development ordinances and they should be enforced for the safety of Azle students. Bike lanes would also be encouraged as a supplement to sidewalks.

Azle Thoroughfare Plan of 2005

This thoroughfare plan provides for the basic framework upon which the city determines the location, design, and capacity of streets for future development. There are also thoroughfare plans either being prepared or already adopted by other governmental entities that have been considered in developing the Azle Thoroughfare Plan of 2005.



Northpass Freeway

Tarrant and Parker Counties have envisioned an outer loop – Northpass Freeway –, which will affect Azle. The present studies indicate a corridor for the freeway to cross over Eagle Mountain Lake at the closest point of the two shorelines. In the case of Azle, this point is just north of the West Bay Marina. The corridor would pass south of Liberty Elementary School, crossing over Timberlake Road just east of the AISD Phoenix Campus, intersecting with Highway 730 at, or just north of Walnut Creek, then southwest connecting Highway 199 just east of Pearson Road. The Northpass Freeway will greatly improve local access, provide access east to beyond Eagle Mountain Lake, and open new lands for development.



State Highway 199

State Highway 199 is the major regional and intraregional access to and through Azle. It is presently operating as an expressway, meaning that there are four travel lanes with service roads on either side of the travel lanes. Typically, a state highway of this design will have speed limits of 60 mph in non-urban areas.

Grade-separated crossings occur at Commerce Street, Stewart Street, Denver Trail and the present bridge crossing at the north end of Main. Two crossings are proposed at Hangar Cut-Off and Wells-Burnett.

Funding Thoroughfares

The primary entity responsible for thoroughfare improvements is the City of Azle. The City has several methods available for the initial construction of thoroughfares.

Minor Streets:

Initial construction is most often borne by the adjoining land owners or land developer. Improvements to platted rights-of-way or street reconstruction include assessment paving programs, i.e. adjoining property owners assessed for the improvement costs. Other options are general obligation

bond programs and using resources provided by the Council of Governments.

Collector Streets:

The developer may dedicate land, either totally or in part. Based on City policy, if part of the cost is borne by the developer, then the rest shall be borne by the City. If this is the case, the City may require improvements over and beyond its typical street standards. Other fund resources may include assessment paving, general bond programs, or funding through the Texas Department of Transportation when the street is determined to be eligible. These funds are administered by TXDOT and are to support federally aided highway systems.

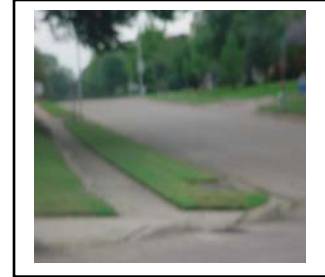
Arterial Streets:

The City of Azle, through its bond programs, dedication of rights-of-way land, and partial assessment programs has the primary responsibility for non-State funded arterials. State funded arterials and freeways indicated on the Thoroughfare Plan are the State’s responsibility. These thoroughfares are Highway 730, Main Street, and State Highway 199. There are roadways that are the maintenance responsibility of either Tarrant or Parker County. The county programs typically do not provide for curb and gutter nor land acquisition policies.

It must be noted that many of the arterial and collector streets must be increased in width in order to meet the design standards necessary to accommodate the volume of traffic. It is suggested that these widths be adjusted as these roadways are overlaid or reclaimed.

Thoroughfare Vision

With relatively minor changes to the existing infrastructure, our individual thoroughfare can become an integrated system. The plan envisions minor land acquisition and disruption of existing property to support Azle’s growth. A central theme encompasses easier, more efficient access to the major freeways. This plan incorporates elements to provide access to Azle’s natural resources. Refer to Thoroughfare Plan Map.



Initial construction of streets, in most cases, shall be the responsibility of the developer.



SECTION 6

Parks Plan

Urban open-space lands may be publicly or privately owned, developed with recreational facilities, or preserved as natural landscape. These areas may be as small as an acre or as large as hundreds of acres. Developments may occur with private open space and recreational facilities. While these facilities are important elements of urban design, this section addresses only public systems of parks, recreational facilities, and open space.

The need and demand for park and recreational facilities in the community are directly proportional to the population and environmental opportunities of the service area. Meeting gross area park standards alone does not adequately address a community's park needs. More importantly is the availability of improved and accessible park areas that conveniently provide citizens with a balanced variety of facilities and environmental protection.

Policies

- a) Parks and recreational opportunities should be equitably distributed and accessible to all Azle residents. Park and facility locations will be determined in accordance with the parks and recreation master plan.
- b) Parks and open spaces should be located in or adjacent to floodplains, where feasible, to aid in floodplain conservation efforts and to enhance recreational opportunities.
- c) The city should acquire and develop parks in conjunction with other public facilities to provide the most cost-effective public services. Parks could be developed jointly with new schools, storm water detention basins, drainage channels, fire and police stations, or libraries.



- d) To ensure the reasonable distribution of public parks in accordance with the plan objectives, residential developers should provide in their projects land for neighborhood parks sufficient to meet the needs generated by their development or provide an alternative strategy to satisfy the demand.
- e) The City should be responsible for the acquisition and development of community and city-wide parks.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Ensure the adequate and equitable distribution of parks, open space, and recreational facilities.

Distribution of Parks Objectives

Objective 1-1

Complete a new parks master plan that adequately addresses public needs.

Objective 1-2

Acquire and maintain sufficient land to keep pace with Azle's population growth.

Objective 1-3

Develop, fund, and implement future capital improvements programs consistent with the parks master plan.

Goal 2: Achieve urban design, transportation, drainage, and environmental objectives through park and open-space acquisition.

Park and Open Space Acquisition Objectives

Objective 2-1

Identify land and easements necessary to establish a unified greenbelt and trails system that achieves recreation and transportation system objectives.

Objective 2-2

Identify significant scenic and environmentally sensitive lands and determine strategies to preserve them.

Goal 3: Ensure cost-effective means for acquisition and maintenance of parks, open-space, and recreational facilities.

Financial Effectiveness Objectives

Objective 3-1

Research the need for and the feasibility of developing specialized parks and recreational facilities that may function as profit centers, which reduce the dependency on property tax revenue and generate profits to underwrite other recreational facilities and services.

Goal 4: Ensure that future parks and recreational improvements are responsive to the changing needs of Azle’

Responsiveness Objective

Objective 4-1

Periodically survey the wants and needs of Azle’s citizens for their parks and recreation system. Incorporate this data into revisions of the master plan.

Objective 4-1

Update the parks master plan at least once every five years.

SECTION 7 Plan Implementation

General

Comprehensive Plans are turned into reality by concerted, consistent attention to implementation. This requires that the City administration, departments and present and future City Councils use the Comprehensive Plan as a key reference for all decisions and actions, consistent with the strategic initiatives and policies contained in the Plan. The City's present zoning ordinance and other development regulations evolved over time without the significant benefit of a community consensus or defined set of long-term goals and policies for the City's economic development, land use, and development pattern. The City's present Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is not presently structured to reflect Comprehensive Plan policies, strategies, and priorities for major public investments. If the City is to exert the necessary leadership in addressing problems and seizing opportunities, it must create the necessary internal organization, secure the necessary resources, and commit to "staying the course" in making such adjustments called for by the policies, strategies, and actions incorporated in this document.

The individual elements of the Comprehensive Plan call for specific strategies and actions to bring about positive change. In order to implement the goals, objectives, and policies set forth in the Plan, it is necessary to establish a highly focused and realistic implementation program. This program sets priorities regarding the sequence in which the strategies and actions contained in the Plan are to be carried out. It is carefully designed to acknowledge fiscal and staff limitations. The program also establishes a process and protocol for monitoring implementation progress and incorporating plan revisions and updates.

This chapter describes an implementation program for the Comprehensive Plan, comprised of the following elements:



*Comprehensive Plans
are turned into reality
by concerted,
consistent attention to
implementation*

- A protocol for the application of, and compliance with the Comprehensive Plan in development review and approvals, particularly regarding rezonings;
- A protocol for adopting, monitoring, amending, and updating the plan, indicating how it is to be used, tracked, updated, and revised; and
- An action plan that identifies short-term (1 year), mid-term (2-3 years), and long-term (4-10 years) priorities for implementation.

The Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategy identifies short-term, mid-term and long-term priorities

Application of the Plan

According to Chapter 213 of the *Texas Local Government Code*, 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.

One can think of the Azle Comprehensive Plan as a guide to future growth and the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations as the tools to carry out that guide. Upon adoption, the Azle Comprehensive Plan will become the City's key policy document, separate and distinct from zoning, but to which future zoning and development regulations must be made consistent. The following are more specific principles to be followed in ensuring compliance, as well as in amending, monitoring, and updating the Comprehensive Plan.

One can think of the Azle Comprehensive Plan as a guide to future growth and the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations as the tools to carry out that guide.

Ordinance Application

As mentioned previously, two of the most powerful tools for implementing the Comprehensive Plan are the City’s Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. The City may consider adopting a resolution that states that the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations be revised to maintain a consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. This action would not mean that upon adoption of the Plan, the City’s development regulations must go through a wholesale revision. The Future Land Use Map is not intended to become or replace the zoning map. Rather, the Future Land Use Map conceptually depicts relatively broad categories of land use, as well as development policies.

Two of the most powerful tools for implementing the Comprehensive Plan are the City’s Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations.

A second principle that the City may adopt by resolution is one that confirms that all development decisions should be in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. Because the Future Land Use Map and its policies are considerably broader than present zoning and development regulations, most development applications that are consistent with present zoning will also be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. In fact, in many cases, particularly those involving rezoning, the Comprehensive Plan review process will add considerable additional flexibility in the development review process. This will be true particularly in areas designated for redevelopment, infill or mixed use, where underlying zoning is more rigid or limited than that provided for in the Comprehensive Plan. However, in cases where a proposed development is in clear conflict with the Comprehensive Plan, such approvals may not be granted until and unless the Comprehensive Plan is amended.

A second principle that the City may adopt by resolution is one that confirms that all development decisions should be in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Official Map Maintenance

If a Comprehensive Plan is to have value and usefulness over time, it is important to develop ways of monitoring its effectiveness and approaches for keeping it current as new information becomes available and as circumstances change. The Plan should not be adopted with the thought that it will, without care and maintenance, provide a tool to guide

growth and development change for more than 5 years. This supports the notion that planning is an on-going process. A Comprehensive Plan is not an end in itself. Without the evaluation and feedback loop, a Plan can soon become irrelevant: it needs to be able to respond to changing needs and conditions. Therefore, the City will monitor plan implementation progress annually and update the Comprehensive Plan at least every five (5) years. In order to effectuate this monitoring, at each anniversary of plan adoption the Planning Department should submit to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council an annual report indicating actions taken and progress made toward plan implementation, along with requests for plan amendments due to altered circumstances or in response to citizen requests.

Planning Program

Care should be taken to develop a comprehensive Action Plan for implementing new Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, and policies according to timeframe and relative priority. Three types of actions are included and defined as follows:

- *Program*: entails detailed, focal area-level planning or additional studies necessary to implement concepts and strategies contained in the Comprehensive Plan.
- *Regulations and Standards*: involves revising development standards, zoning regulations and protocols for development review, approvals and appeals. Numerous individual recommendations for ordinance changes are presented in the various Plan elements.
- *Capital Investment*: require significant financial commitment to a capital project or projects.

All actions assigned to one or more of three timeframes, as follows:

At each anniversary of plan adoption the Planning Department should submit to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council an annual report indicating actions taken and progress made toward plan implementation, along with requests for plan amendments due to altered circumstances or in response to citizen requests.

Short-Range Actions (within one year from plan adoption)

Actions that are designated to occur within one year from plan adoption are generally those which are high priorities and for which minimal additional study is needed, and which can be accomplished with existing staff and financial resources. Examples include relatively straightforward changes to development standards and ordinances, such as those pertaining to annexation criteria and tree protection.

Mid-Range Actions (within 2-3 years from plan adoption)

Actions designated to be carried out in Years 2-3 generally fall into two categories. First, are high priority items that will require significant additional study or more detailed planning, or those for which sufficient resources may not be immediately available. Examples include capital improvement projects.

Long-Range Actions (within 4-10 years from plan adoption)

Actions designated to be carried out four or more years from plan adoption are generally those which are likely to require at least three years to precisely define needs and opportunities, create programs and partnerships and establish funding resources. Hence, many of these actions are described as "carrying out" programs and strategies defined in the mid-range. Likewise, in this timeframe are actions which are less urgent, or which require sizable long range investment commitments, such as initiatives for mass transit and for expansion of water, wastewater and solid waste system capacities.

The Action Plan is not intended to be a definitive prescription or a rigid formula. Rather, it is suggested as a framework to guide decision-making and allocation of resources; a "task list" to ensure steady progress in carrying out the policies and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan.

*Short Range Actions –
within 1 year*

*Mind-Range Actions
– 2 to 3 years*

*Long-Range Actions –
4 to 10 years*

While the Comprehensive Plan incorporates reasonable flexibility, the degree of success in implementing the Plan will be a reflection of the City’s ability to consistently act in accordance with the Action Plan.

The Action Plan does not preclude certain actions from being implemented earlier or later than indicated, subject to the availability of resources. In carrying out the tasks indicated, city staff must make a good faith effort to achieve a balance between actions that place additional restrictions on development and those that provide additional flexibility, consistent with the plan goals and policies.