2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Adopted September 21, 2020

Acknowledgements

The Citizens of the City of Lorena

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CHAPTER 1
VISION and INTRODUCTION to the PLAN

Lorena is a charming small city in central Texas located within McLennan County. Interstate 35 runs north-south through both the City and the County. Although strategically located as the southern gateway to Waco, Lorena sees itself as a small town with great potential.

In January 2020, citizens in Lorena began this Comprehensive Plan work with a visioning workshop on community values. Citizens identified the most important parts of the community as:

- Its hometown feel
- The Old Town historic area
- Proximity to Waco
- Its unique location on the Interstate 35 Corridor
- Excellent schools

These values were then developed into a vision statement to guide development of the Plan.

Vision
The City's vision, which is stated at the beginning of each chapter of this Plan, is an expression of its values. This vision guides all the City's goals, objectives and strategies and will be the basis on which decisions are made for the future:

Lorena will be a multicultural thriving city with a "hometown" feel. It will be supported by excellent schools and infrastructure including utilities, roads, bike lanes, and sidewalks. It will be a unique place to live and visit, capitalizing on its downtown historic district and its location along the I35 corridor. With multigenerational neighborhoods it will have a diversity of housing types and price points. Community gathering spaces will be connected to neighborhoods and commercial areas. Active businesses and small industries will produce a stable tax base.

Prior Comprehensive Planning
The last comprehensive planning effort for the City of Lorena was completed in 2013. At that time, the reconstruction of Interstate 35 and the upgrading of ingress and egress ramps into the City were a top priority for how growth would be managed over the next few years. The plan examined the existing land use mix of the community and compared the available vacant land with the holding capacity of land based on the zoning ordinance. The plan focused on providing attractiveness to North and South Lorena and the Old Town area by examining the need for destination retail and restaurants. A common concern from residents was the time and distance for home repair supplies and a desire for additional grocery stores.

The plan referenced goals of bringing an interconnected trail system to the City especially along the railroad tracks in a rails-to-trails system that could connect the schools, McBrayer Park, and the Old Town Area.

Lorena's plan also provided opportunities for flexible industrial growth and a willingness to examine re-branding the community, themes which are echoed in this 2020 plan.

Comprehensive Plan Process
A part of any comprehensive planning process is the creation of a vision through involvement of community leaders and residents. The public involvement process is important because the plan is ultimately defined by the residents and elected and appointed officials. The planning process allows input and feedback on past decisions regarding capital improvements, land use, and growth and it helps articulate the basis for future decisions.

Development of the Vision
On January 25, 2020, current and past members of the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, residents, property owners, and developers assembled in City Hall to discuss the issues important for growth. The objective of the meeting was to begin the planning process, explain the purpose of the comprehensive plan, and develop a shared vision. As part of the visioning exercise, attendees were split into five groups and tasked to write down their ideas on "Lorena of the Future."

The individual statements were combined into group statements and then by group process formulated into a vision statement. The Vision, affirmed by the City Council on February 18, 2020, provided guidance for development of this Plan.

Organization of the Plan
There are 12 chapters in the Lorena Comprehensive Plan. The first chapter is the Vision and Introduction to the plan. The second chapter contains background data which sets the context for the following nine chapters. These nine chapters cover the major topics involved in achieving the City's vision. The last chapter is a summary

with just the goals, objectives, and strategies from each chapter in the Lorena Comprehensive Plan. The organization of the document is as follows:

1.   Vision and Introduction to the Plan
2.   Background
3.   Growth Management
4.   Existing and Future Land Use
5.   Transportation
6.   Historic Preservation
7.   Economic Development
8.   Housing
9.   Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources
10.   Government Infrastructure, Services and Facilities
11.   Implementation
12.   Summary

Chapter 10 is the longest and most detailed because it provides the roadmap and details for provision of all City services. The eleventh chapter discusses ways to implement the Comprehensive Plan. The last chapter provides a summary of the Plan. The Plan represents an expression of the community's values and its roadmap for the future.

CHAPTER 2
BACKGROUND

History

The City of Lorena is located thirteen miles south of Waco in southern McLennan County. Originally settled in the 1850s, the townsite for the community (Old Town) was laid out in 1881 with the alignment of the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas railroad constructed between Hillsboro and Taylor. A railroad stop was constructed to provide access for cotton product from the local gin to be brought to market. The community's founder was Daniel Aerl and the original name of the community was "Aerl Station." Aerl Station was later named Lorena (pronounced Lo-REE-nah) for the oldest daughter of another prominent settler and his wife, Charles A. Westbrook and Mary Virginia Whitsett.

Lorena Westbrook was born in 1861 on the Westbrook family plantation. She attended Baylor University, graduated in 1879, and married Sterling Clark Robertson that same year. They had several children. She died in San Antonio at the age of 91.

In 1884 the community had a general store, two grocery stores, and one hundred and fifty residents. Area farmers shipped cotton, corn, and livestock. By 1890, Lorena had grown to include a hotel, a school, a steam cotton gin, and gristmill, two churches, three general stores and 250 residents. The population rose to 375 in 1892, and to 500 in 1896. Though the population of Lorena was reported as 342 throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the number of rated businesses fell from 22 in 1933 to 7 in 1945. Lorena's population continued to diminish and fell to 242 in the 1950s. However, in 1970 the U.S. Census showed the population as 406 and by 2018 it was almost 1800.

The introduction of the interstate highway system in the late 1950s and early 1960s contributed to the boost to population and the local economy. Aligned with US Highway 81, Interstate 35 linked Lorena once again with major population and commerce centers within the State. Residential development to the City has increased over the years by outward migration of people moving from the more urban areas of Waco and enjoying the more rural lifestyle that Lorena has to offer.

Education

The Lorena Independent School District (LISD) provides public educational services for children in Lorena. There are four public schools including Lorena Primary School (pre-K through 2nd grade); Lorena Elementary School (grades 3 through5); Lorena Junior High (grades 6 through 8); and Lorena High School (grades 9 through12). The school district serves children inside and outside of the City. Although it is not a City service, the school district has a large impact on residential growth in the City.

Demographics

Table 1: City of Lorena Population Growth

Year	Population	% Increase
1970	406	-
1980	619	52.5%
1990	1,158	87.1%
2000	1,433	23.7%
2010	1,691	18.0%
2018 (est.)	1,767	4.5%

Source: US Bureau of Census 2020

As mentioned earlier, the population of Lorena was greater in 1896 (500) than in 1970 (406). However, it greatly increased in the 1980s with growth in Waco and people moving outside of Waco to less urban neighborhoods. Job growth along the Interstate 35 corridor both within and nearby Lorena, as well as less expensive building materials and labor costs, led to a nationwide housing increase. Several of Lorena's subdivisions had their initial start in the 1980s. Today, with the demand on growth continuing and the attractiveness of Central Texas and an increase of technical job growth in McLennan County, more people are migrating to the area.

Table 2: Lorena Population by Age Cohort

Female Population by Age   Male Population by Age
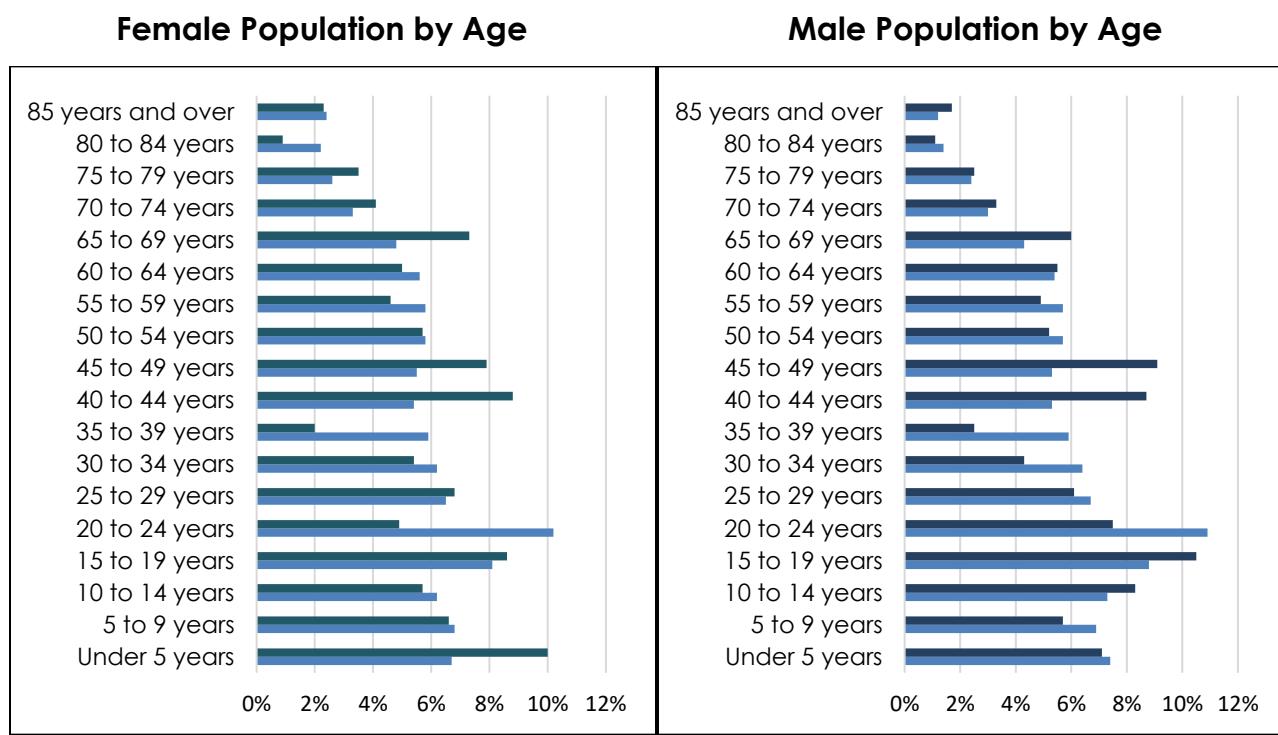
Key: Lorena ▮ *McLennan County* ▮
Source: 2018 American Community Survey

A way to examine age composition within Lorena is through a bar graph. The graph breaks down age into 5-year cohorts and is a graphic representation of age distribution within the community. In the graphic, the dark blue colors represent the age breakdown for the City of Lorena for both males and females, the light blue colors represent the same for McLennan County. The graph reveals that Lorena has a much larger percentage of individuals between the ages of 45 and 79 than McLennan County as a whole. The community also has a slightly larger percentage of children than McLennan County between the ages of 10 and 18. This composition indicates the presence of families with children within the community. Lorena has a significantly lower percentage of individuals between the ages of 20 and 39 than McLennan County which indicates that, as a percentage of the total population of the City, there are fewer young individuals and families within the community than what is represented from the County as a whole.

Although not shown here as a graph, the most recent data from the American Community Survey indicated that 98% of Lorena residents identified themselves as White or Caucasian. Other races were identified usually as more than one race with representation of Black, or African American, Native American, or just identified as

some other race. Those identifying with Hispanic ethnicity made up of about 13% of the community.

Table 3: Lorena Income Levels by Number of Households
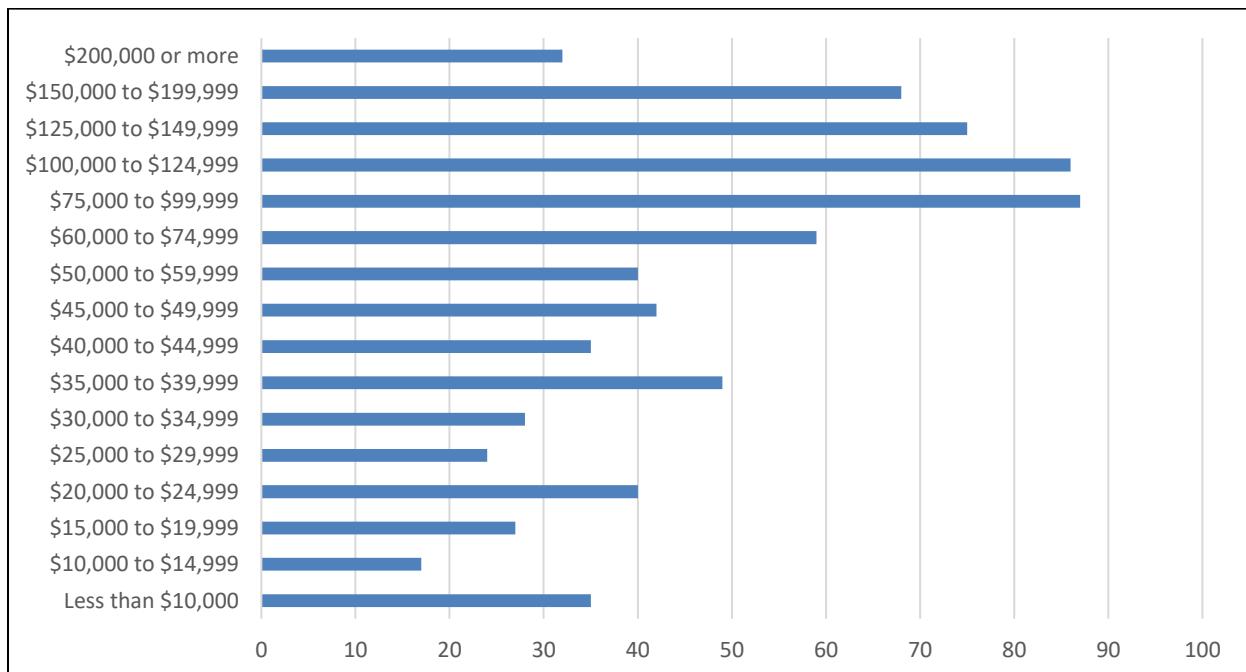
Source: 2018 American Community Survey

Table 4: Median Income of Lorena and Neighboring Cities
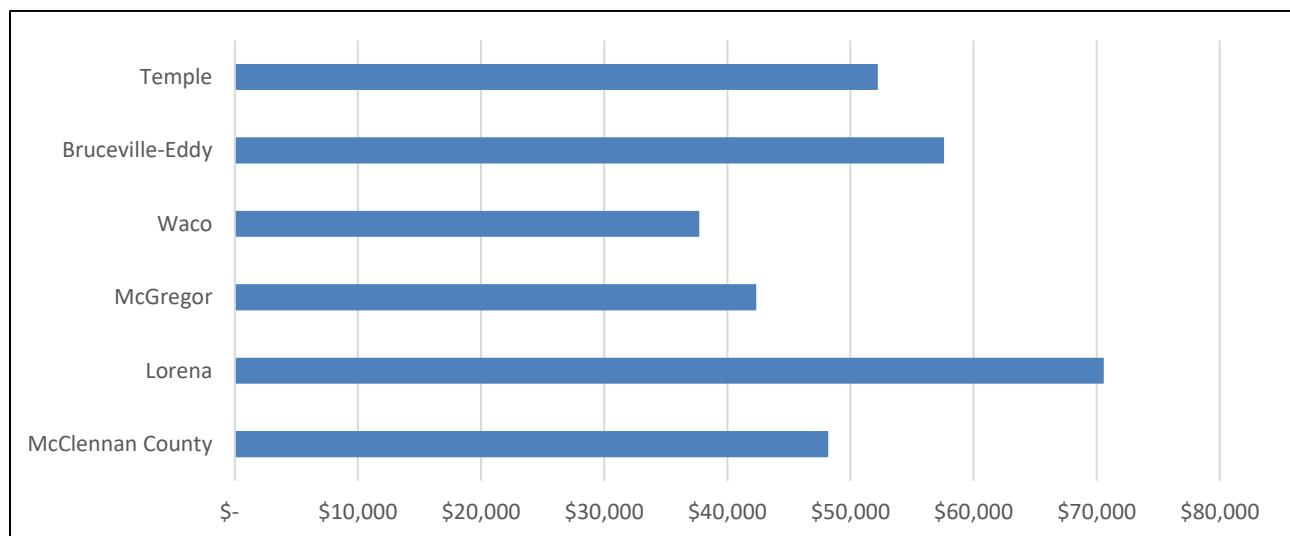
Source: 2018 American Community Survey

Income levels of a community can serve as indicators for future retail growth within a community. The greater amount of disposable income, the more attractive retail

environments can be. While Lorena has a higher median income level than other areas within McLennan County, it has a lower population density than Waco or Temple in Bell County to the south. An increase of population density would increase the attractiveness of Lorena for future retailers.

Table 5: Number of Housing Units Constructed by Year
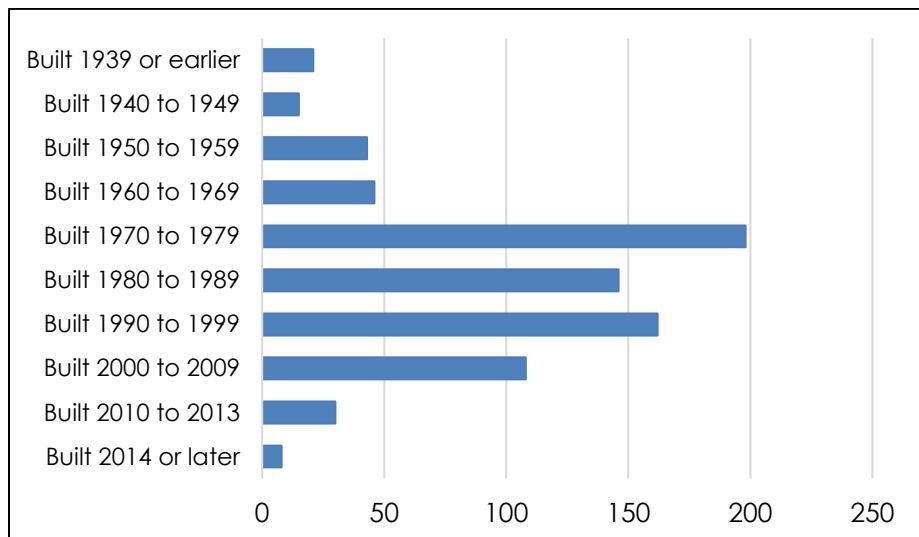
Source: 2018 American Community Survey

As was observed in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, Lorena's primary housing growth was in the 30 years between 1970 and 2000. Infrastructure capacity limited the amount of growth through the 2000s. Since those issues have been resolved, Lorena is free to examine additional housing and population growth.

As seen in Table 6, most of Lorena's housing is valued between $100,000 to $200,000 dollars which indicates affordability in Lorena at this time. If future development occurs from a renewed interest in living in Central Texas, new housing may become more expensive. New home construction in subdivisions south of Waco range between $250,000 to $500,000 in initial asking prices.

Table 6: Home Valuation in Lorena by Percentage
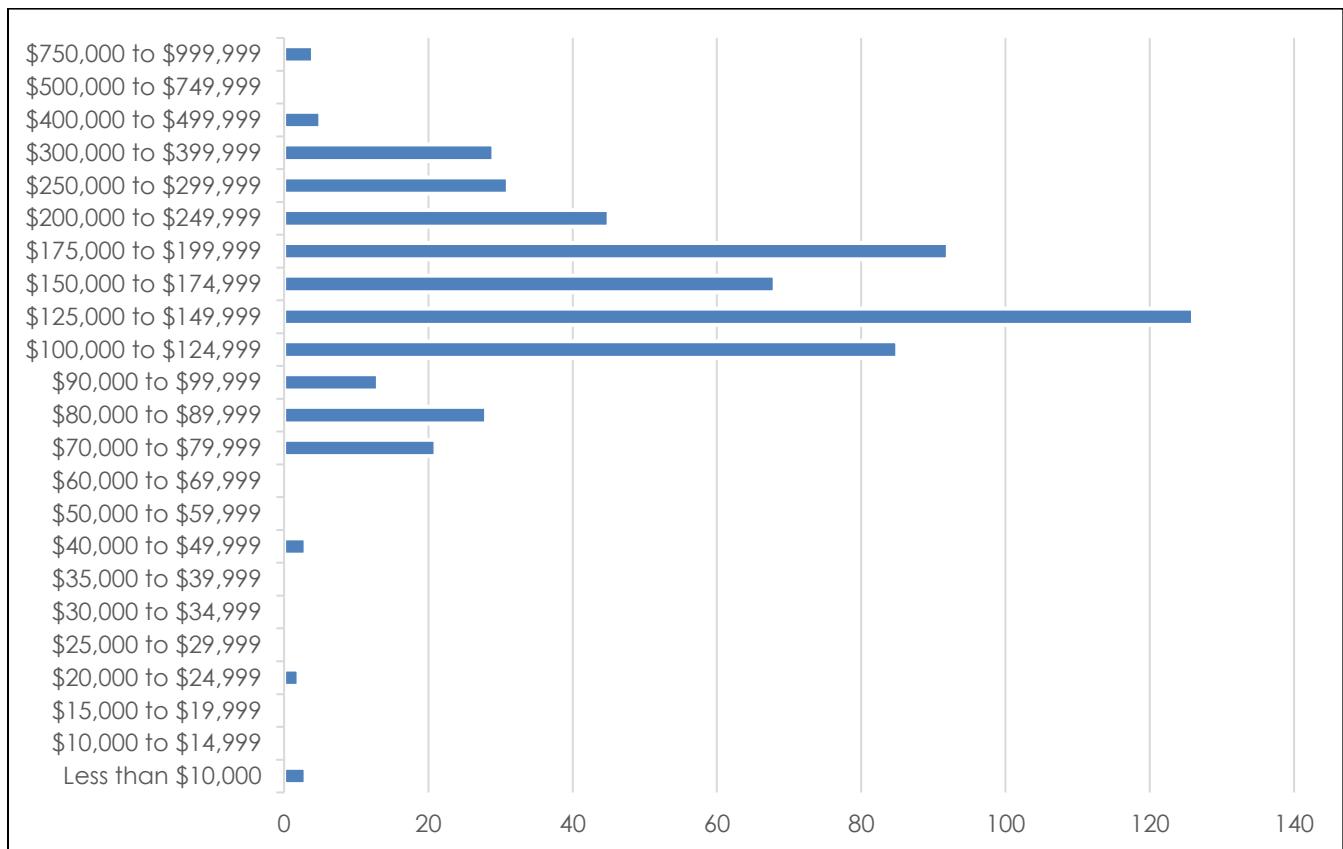
Source: 2018 American Community Survey

Land Use

The Existing Land Use Map is provided on the following page. It shows the City limits and the locations of different land use by category as well as the location of vacant land. It is different from the Future Land Use Plan which shows the desired land uses for the City.

Map 1: City of Lorena Existing Land Use Map
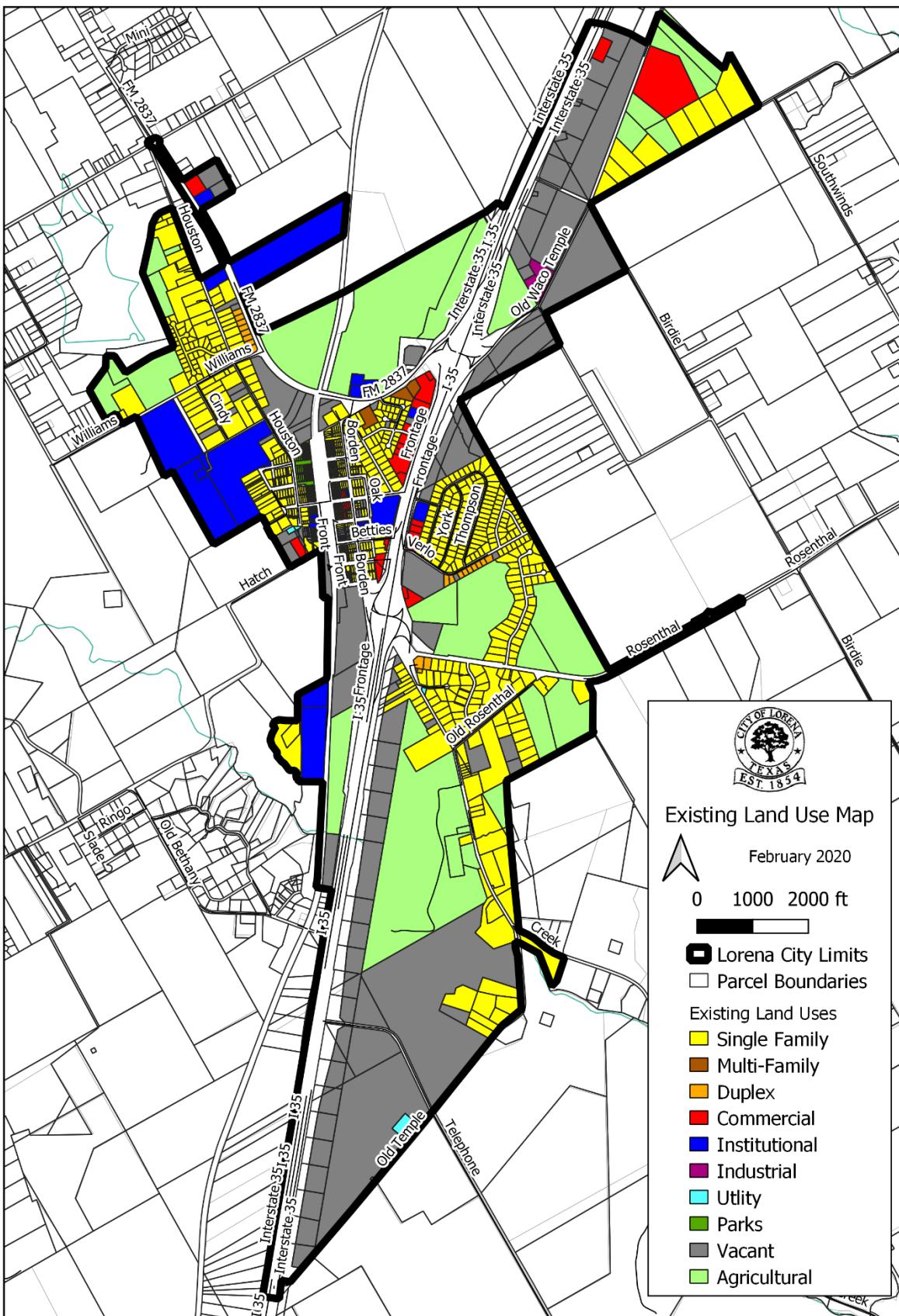
The acreage and percentage of land devoted to these land uses is shown in Table 7. Measurements of area were created using a windshield survey and aerial images of Lorena. Table 7 also shows the change in use from 2013 to 2020.

Table 7: Existing Land Use City of Lorena

| Land Use	Acres 2020	% of City 2020	Acres 2013	% of City 2013
Single Family	437.41	20.94%	417.42	19.98%
Multifamily	4.42	0.21%	4.42	0.21%
Duplex	8.31	0.40%	8.50	0.41%
Commercial	47.01	2.25%	24.30	1.16%
Institutional	134.39	6.43%	149.40	7.15%
Industrial	5.19	0.25%	5.19	0.25%
Utility	3.90	0.19%	3.90	0.19%
Parks	6.18	0.30%	20.42	0.98%
Vacant	550.16	26.34%	627.00	30.01%
Agricultural	464.96	22.26%	478.00	22.88%
Transportation	427.00	20.44%	350.58	16.78%
Total	2089		2089	

Source: City of Lorena; MPG, LLC 2020

As seen in Table 7, land devoted to Single Family use has increased in percentage from 2013 to 2020. This is the result of construction of houses on undeveloped residential lots in a few existing subdivisions within the City. Institutional uses and park areas have been reduced in area as the former school was torn down and the property and its surroundings are now vacant.

The largest shift of land use has been the removal of Commercial and Vacant land and its re-designation as right-of-way. In 2013, property had not yet been acquired for the widening of Interstate 35. Now that the interstate work has been completed and the right-of-way acquired, those properties along the corridor have been reduced in area.

Capacity for Growth based on Zoning Map
A holding capacity model is a forecasting tool looking at available vacant land, current zoning, and the density new housing could be built to accommodate population growth. Calculations for the holding capacity are made utilizing existing land uses and zoning district regulations. Existing land use data from the City that is assigned as vacant (potential to be developed) is compared with existing zoning and developed properties. A sum of the total vacant land area and properties which may be agricultural now but could have the potential for redevelopment in the future is then created. For each area, a total potential number of housing units is assigned based on the maximum number of units (or minimum lot size) allowed within the City. Each zoning district has its own density allowance. Housing units are

then multiplied by the average household size from the American Community Survey (U.S. Census) for owner-occupied units to indicate a population projection.

Certain assumptions must be made when calculating the ultimate additional build-out number:

- All future and existing residential properties are assumed to be 100% occupied. This means that subdivisions currently under development with vacant lots would be built out.

- Existing areas zoned residential will remain unchanged throughout build-out.

- Large-tract residential properties (one single-family house with some agricultural uses) were labeled as Single Family residential and were not included for potential future subdivision.

- All vacant and agricultural land potentially used for residential development would build out at maximum density as currently zoned. These are properties which do not have a specific development plan but are zoned for future development.

- Areas labeled as vacant but had floodplain over 50% of the parcel were eliminated from the study.

- Potential population on build-out utilized 2.8 persons per household as per the 2010 US Census numbers for the City of Lorena.

- Zoning districts not zoned for residential and containing vacant land were eliminated from this calculation.

Table 8: Holding Capacity for City of Lorena

Vacant / AG Property By Zoning	Vacant Acres	Vacant Acres in Floodplain	Developable Acres	DU/Ac Ord	DU Allowed	Persons
SF- Single Family	180.19	3	177.19	5	886	2480
ARR- Agricultural Rural Residential	175.26	23	152.26	0.33	50	141
PD – Planned Development	93	0	93	7.5	700	1960
				TOTAL:	1636	4581

Source: MPG, LLC 2020
AG = Agricultural; DU = Dwelling Units; DU/AC Ord = Dwelling units per acre for the zoning district
As indicated in Table 8, The City has capacity for another 1636 units or an addition 4581 new persons within the City limits if the zoning map does not change.

Population Projections

The Texas Water Board is charged with projecting water consumption rates and demand for the future population of Texas. The agency creates a county-by-county population projection through the cohort survival method. This method takes population by age group or cohort and "ages" them progressively year-by-year. It also factors in the birth and death rates of each individual county and then factors in the immigration rate (movement into and out of the county). Each individual subgroup of the county (cities and municipal utility districts) are then provided a "share-of-the-growth" of the county. The share each city of municipal utility district is assigned is usually based on the historical percentage related to the County as a whole.

The following chart shows the expected population projections of McLennan County. The Lorena population has been projected in a linear factor based on the percentage of the growth of McLennan County. Factors of additional voluntary annexation to the community, rezoning of property to higher density districts which would allow for a greater number of people are variables which affect population projection.

Table 9: Population Projections for McLennan County
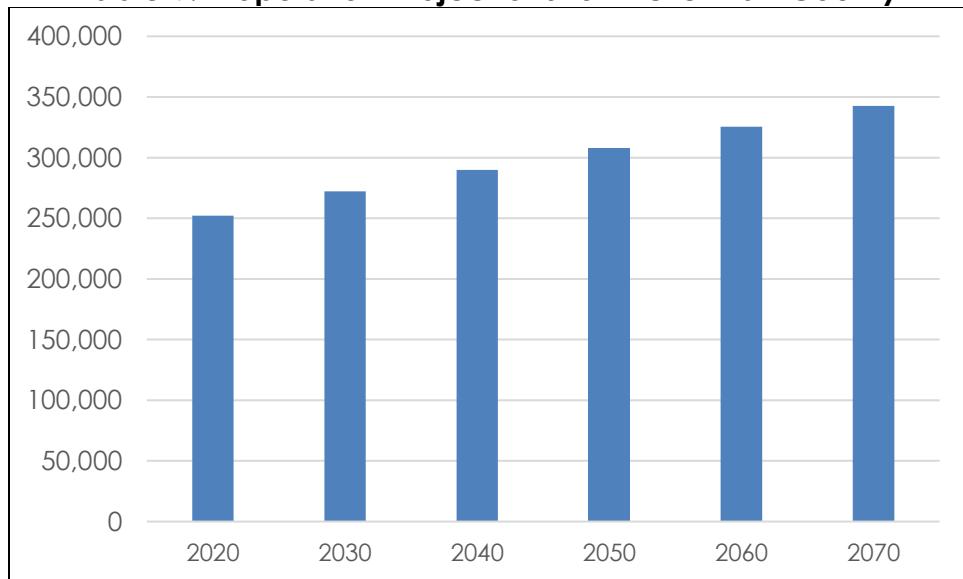
Source: Texas Water Development Board 2020

Table 10: Population Projections for Lorena Based on Percentage Increase of County Population
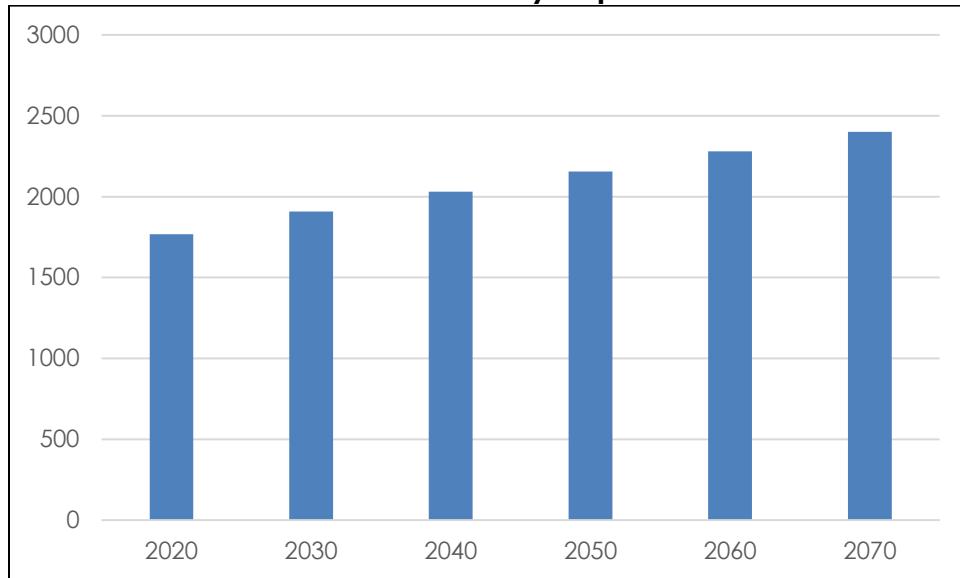
Source: MPG, LLC 2020

If Lorena's proportion of population relative to McLennan County remains constant, using the same linear progression model of the Texas Water Development Board, growth could be expected as shown on Table 10. Barring any dramatic shift in growth trends, the City of Lorena can expect 1000 more residents within the next fifty years. Since holding capacity exists for 4581 residents (see Table 8), it is clear there is enough vacant land to fully develop and house the projected population increase over the next fifty years.

Development Constraints

Constraints to development are either inherent to the land itself or represent a limitation placed on the property. Examples of constraints inherent to the land itself include steep topography, creeks, and floodplain. Limitations placed on the property include things such as zoning, rights-of-way, and political boundaries.

Lorena is situated on a relatively flat plain which was conducive in the construction of the railroad. As seen on Map 2, floodplain inside the City limits associated with the North Cow Bayou is approximately 95 acres or 4.5% of the land area. Any development within floodplain is required to meet Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) standards and is more costly and time consuming to develop.

Map 2: City of Lorena Floodplain

Bull Hide Creek

Floodplain

September 2020

0   1000 2000 ft

Lorena City Limits

Parcel Boundaries

100 Yr Floodplain

Data Source: McLennan County
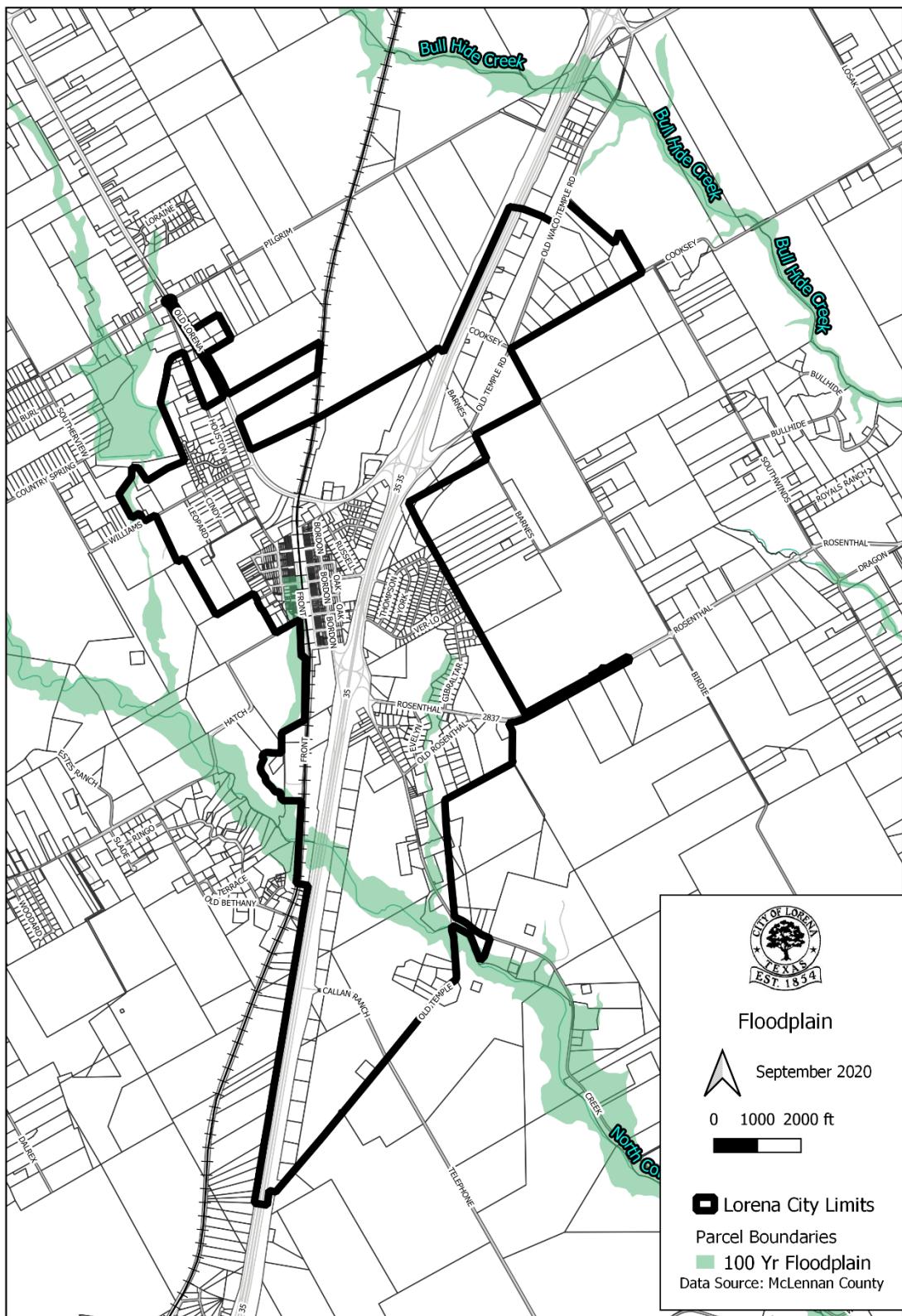
Another development constraint is the location of streets and roads. The railroad and subsequently Interstate 35 connected the community to commerce and trade but also created separation of neighborhoods in the City. These features continue to affect development. Potential new development constructed on the west side of the railroad is limited to the few crossings which currently exist. The interstate still separates east and west Lorena but the reconstruction of the interstate within the past decade has allowed greater crossing capacity between the two sides of the community. Interstate improvements have also provided opportunity to connect pedestrian traffic across the new bridges.

Like streets and roads, utilities also affect development opportunities. The construction of the Bull Hide Wastewater Treatment Plant increased sewer capacity for Lorena and has made available additional residential and commercial development. Unfortunately, some of the sewer lines within the community are substandard need to be replaced in locations where the community wishes to grow.

The water system also has limitations. Existing water mains to areas of the community slated for future growth either have a substandard size adjacent to the properties or no public mains exist in those areas. In particular, property zoned for Planned Development mixed-uses along the north side of the city as well as areas zoned Interstate Corridor (IC) or within the Business Park (BP) zoning districts along the interstate have limited or no water service.

Political boundaries represent an additional constraint. The City limit boundary of Lorena was established as growth and development occurred within the City. The area within the City limits currently stands at just over three-square miles. The City may exercise the highest degree of control over land use decisions within the City limits, particularly through zoning.

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
Extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) is land that an incorporated city may legally annex for the purpose of planning and accommodating future growth and development. Outward expansion is limited to the area of ETJ where other cities have not expanded. Waco's southern and eastern ETJ contains much of the surrounding land north and east of Lorena.

In 2020, the cities of Waco and Lorena executed an ETJ agreement for land to be swapped between each city's ETJ boundaries. A total of 251.09 acres were transferred to the City of Lorena from Waco and a total of 80.95 acres was switched from Lorena to Waco. This arrangement consolidates properties split by the previous boundary and may create conditions more likely for those properties to annex into each city in the future.

All areas of the ETJ with few constraints surrounding Lorena create opportunities for future growth. While the subdivision ordinance for the City is legally enforceable within the ETJ, the City's zoning ordinance is not enforceable within the ETJ. However, the Future Land Use Plan will address land use within the ETJ to provide a framework for growth if, and when such areas are ultimately annexed into the City.

Map 3: City of Lorena Jurisdiction Boundaries

Jurisdiction Boundaries

September 2020

0   1000 2000 ft

Lorena City Limits
Lorena ETJ

Parcel Boundaries
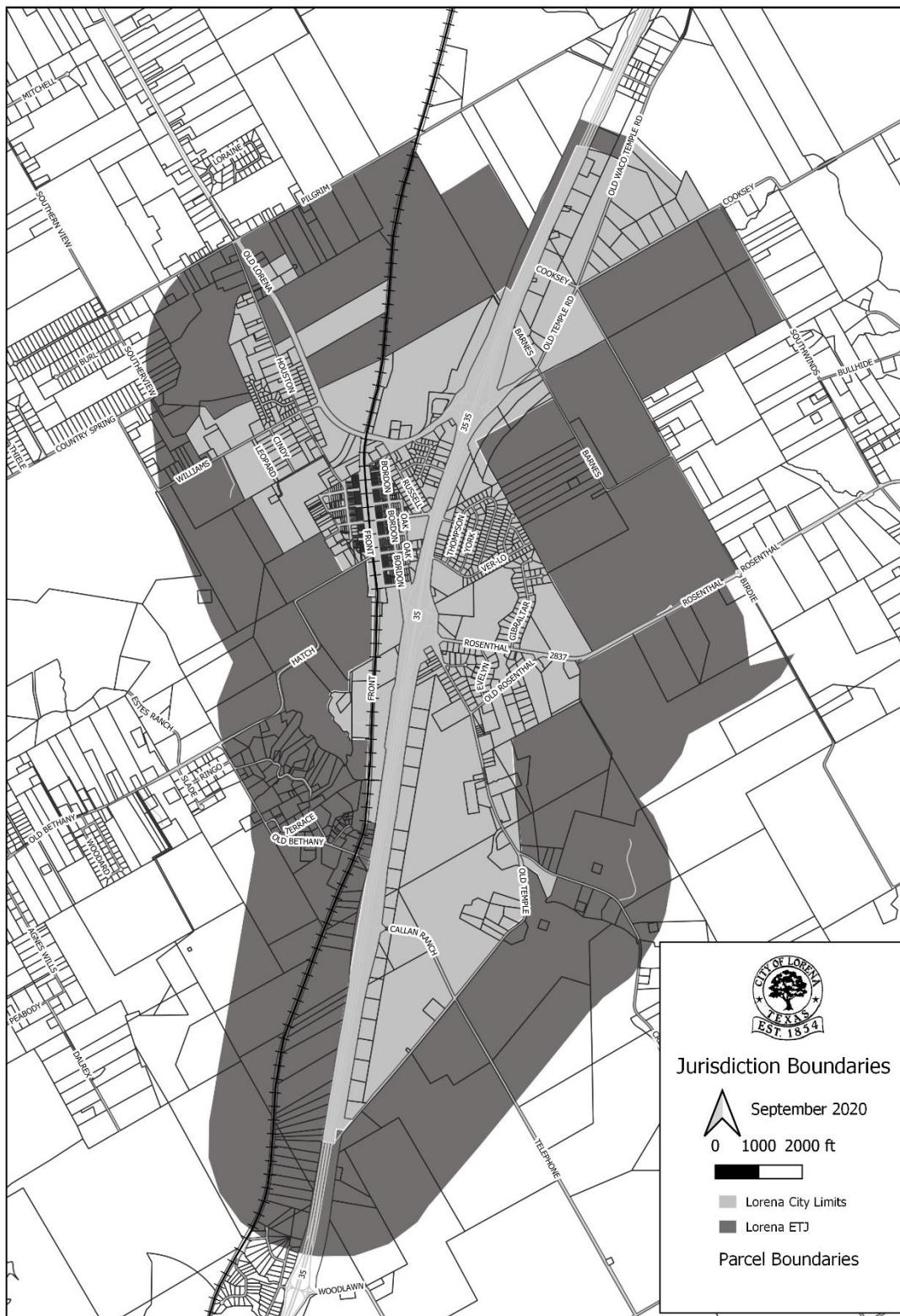
CHAPTER 3
GROWTH MANAGEMENT

GOAL: LORENA WILL HAVE RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND INDUSTRIAL GROWTH WHILE RETAINING ITS SMALL HOMETOWN FEEL.

VISION

Lorena *will be a multicultural* ***thriving city with a "hometown" feel.*** *It will be supported by excellent schools and infrastructure including utilities, roads, bike lanes, and sidewalks.* ***It will be a unique place to live and visit, capitalizing on its downtown historic district and its location along the I35 corridor.*** *With multigenerational neighborhoods it will have a diversity of housing types and price points. Community gathering spaces will be connected to neighborhoods and commercial areas.* ***Active businesses and small industries will produce a stable tax base.***

As seen in Chapter 2, population growth to date has been slow. However, growth management is still important to the City of Lorena. Residential, commercial, and small/light industrial growth is desired but must not be haphazard. It should not dwarf or impede development in Old Town. It should occur in the places designated for growth and be at a size and scale appropriate to the community. These qualifications on growth translate into rate and quality

The rate of growth results from several different factors. Utilities such as water and sewer must be available. Streets and roads must be capable of serving projected traffic or capable of expansion if necessary. Land must be appropriately zoned so that development can occur as the City desires.

Recent growth of the City of Lorena has been limited because of wastewater treatment capacity, water service limits, and construction on Interstate 35. In 2007 Lorena was added to the Waco Metropolitan Area Regional Sewerage System which increased sewer capacity. Lorena continues to examine other needed capital improvements to further increase its readiness for new growth.

Growth also requires an impetus and there are several factors in Lorena's favor. Proximity to Waco is the largest factor. With expanded capacity for wastewater as well as the completion of construction of Interstate 35, Lorena is also poised for

additional residential and non-residential development. Chapter 7, Economic Development, explores ways to expand the City's non-residential tax base. That chapter also recommends ways to grow the economy so that Lorena is
not strictly as a bedroom community.

Objective 1: Increase residential units according to the Land Use Plan.

Chapter 3, Land Use, provides the future Land Use Plan which shows the desired location for growth. Infrastructure and zoning are vital to making sure that residential growth takes place.

Strategies
   a. Ensure that adequate water and sewer service is available to support growth.
   b. Rezone land to reflect land uses shown on the Land Use Plan.

Objective 2: While preserving the character of Old Town, increase the number of commercial and retail uses to provide more shopping opportunities for residents and visitors.

Chapters 6, Historic Preservation, discusses the importance of preserving the historic Old Town area. Chapter 7, Economic Development, suggests ways to increase commercial uses in a way that will not detract from Old Town.

Objective 3: Increase the number of small industries in Lorena.

Chapter 7, Economic Development, provides information on the types of small industries appropriate to Lorena and ways to attract such industries.

Objective 4: Recognize Lorena's unique characteristics which should be preserved and incorporated into potential design recommendations for new buildings.

Lorena has architectural features that help to create its hometown feel. Primarily, these are present in Old Town. With its location on Interstate 35, it could become "Anywhere USA"; however, a better model for development is desired.

Strategies
   a. Identify specific design features of existing buildings in Lorena that could be replicated or mimicked in new construction. These features may be related to scale and size of buildings or materials.
   b. Consider creating design guidelines to recommend for new construction.

Objective 5: Have cultural events and festivals which help to create Lorena as a tourist destination.

Festivals attract residents as well as out-of-town visitors and
civic and cultural events and uses increase retail demand. To increase visitors, Lorena could focus on amenities in Old Town and create better visibility and usability of the park. Major catalyst activities that attract visitors include festivals and arts performances and exhibitions.

Figure 1: McBrayer Park - Source: Parks, Rec and Open Space Master Plan

Strategies
  a. Support efforts of the Chamber of Commerce to promote community pride in and attract visitors to Lorena.
  b. Improve connectivity to and visibility and usability of McBrayer Park.

CHAPTER 4
Future Land Use

GOAL: Lorena will have safe and convenient places to live, work, worship, and play.

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VISION

Lorena *will be a multicultural thriving city with a "hometown" feel. It will be supported by excellent schools and infrastructure including utilities, roads, bike lanes, and sidewalks.* ***It will be a unique place to live and visit,*** *capitalizing on its downtown historic district and its location along the I35 corridor.* ***With multigenerational neighborhoods it will have a diversity of housing types and price points. Community gathering spaces will be connected to neighborhoods and commercial areas.*** *Active businesses and small industries will produce a stable tax base.*

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Expectations for future uses of property are important for residents and businesses. Future land use also plays an important role in infrastructure investment, such as where to extend utilities and streets. Most communities provide distinct places for residents to live separate from places where they shop and work. Historically, this has taken place to avoid conflicts of traffic, noise, shipping, and in some cases, odors, and vibrations. In recent years, efforts have been made to find ways to mix residential and retail or office uses in a way that avoids conflict.

To establish orderly and managed growth, the Lorena community developed a Future Land Use Plan for the City. Keeping in focus a desire to protect existing neighborhoods, certain growth themes were established. These themes include the management of the ETJ, encouraging destination retail shops and restaurants, developing flex space business centers, and improving parks. All these actions help to create safe and convenient places to live, work, and play.

Objective 1: Develop land in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan.

Each of the land uses within the Future Land Use Plan refer to the preferred arrangement of uses the City has determined to be compatible with the managed growth of the community. The land uses are to be considered as guidelines in making decisions regarding zoning districts in the City. The Future Land Use Plan is found on the following page.

Map 4: City of Lorena Future Land Use Plan

City of Lorena / TEXAS / EST. 1854

Future Land Use Plan

September 2020

0   1000   2000 ft

- ▬ Lorena City Limits
- ▭ Lorena ETJ
- ⊢⊣ Railroad

Future Land Use
- Low Density Residential
- Multi Family Residential
- Mixed-Use
- Neighborhood Service
- Low Intensity Commercial
- High Intensity Commercial
- Institutional
- Business Park
- Old Town
- Parks and Open Space
- 100 Yr Floodplain

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

A description of each land use category is found below:

	Low Density Residential -- Single-family detached residential structures are examples of low-density residential uses. Low-density residential land uses reflect a density of five (5) units to the acre or less. Low-density residential is the primary land use within the City of Lorena	
	Multi-family Residential – This land use recognizes the need for housing at more affordable price points and to accommodate younger families and mature adults wishing to live in the community without the burden of maintaining a home and a yard. Units range from duplexes to apartment complexes. Densities should be a maximum of twelve (12) units to the acre.	
	Mixed-Use – This category combines single family, multifamily residential, and low intensity commercial uses that can exist side-by-side without adverse impacts. Examples are apartments, townhouses, retail shops, restaurants, offices, and public uses, which may be allowed in the same building, same lot, same tract, or block.	
	Neighborhood Service – Uses include small-scale retail and services that support the surrounding residential neighborhood. Standalone businesses such as drug stores and small shopping centers with several uses such as laundromats and retail shops fit into the Neighborhood Service designation.	
	Low Intensity Commercial -- Land uses in this category are primarily retail and service uses. These uses can act as a transition from high intensity commercial to low density residential uses. Emphasis is placed on commercial services such as office complexes or low traffic retail businesses which have high compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods.	
	High Intensity Commercial – These uses are regionally-oriented commercial development with high traffic, and high employment. Businesses may include grocery stores, hotel/motels, big box retail, restaurants, and commercial services.	

	Institutional – Uses in this category include City buildings, schools, community centers, or other public service-types of uses. Churches and places of worship are not considered institutional uses because they are typically located within areas having a residential designation.	
	Business Park – Business parks contain offices and light industrial uses which generate few objectionable conditions. Examples of light industrial uses include assembling, research and development, warehousing, and distribution. Focus should be on flex-industrial spaces which can be used for a variety of corporate functions, storage, and office spaces.	
	Old Town -- The Old Town is the identifiable center of Lorena. This designation represents a small-scale mixed--use area with retail, second story residential, office and dining opportunities strategically placed around Center Street and Bordon Street.	
	Parks and Open Space -- This category is reflective of existing and proposed park areas within Lorena and may include community ballparks, neighborhood parks with playgrounds, natural trails, and other open space areas.	

Image Sources: MPG, LLC, Google Street View, Lorena Parks, Rec, and Open Space Master Plan

Acreage attributed to each of the uses shown on the Future Land Use Plan in Map 4 is summarized in Table 11: Future Land Uses.

Table 11: Future Land Uses

Future Land Uses – ETJ Only	Acres	% of Total
Low Density Residential	2880.22	87.7%
High Density Commercial	103.93	3.2%
Low Density Commercial	35.25	1.1%
Institutional	4.23	0.1%
Business Park	17.90	0.5%

Future Land Uses – City of Lorena	Acres	% of Area
Low Density Residential	1174.55	55.3%M
Multifamily Residential	8.23	0.4%
Mixed-Use	298.71	14.1%
High Density Commercial	243.09	11.4%
Low Density Commercial	108.87	5.1%
Neighborhood Service	24.69	1.2%
Institutional	138.57	6.5%
Business Park	97.23	4.6%
Old Town	10.91	0.5%
Parks and Open Space	20.41	1.0%

Source: MPG, LLC 2020

Population Capacity of Residential Land Uses				
ETJ Residential	Acres	DU/Ac Ave	DU	Population Capacity
Low Density Residential	2880	2.7	7776	20761
Mixed Use	104	12	1248	3332
	2984		9024	24094
City Residential				
Low Density Residential	1175	2.7	3172.5	8470
Multi-Family Residential	8	14	112	299
Mixed Use Low Density	198	3	594	1585
Mixed Use Multi Family	100	12	1200	3204
Total	1481		3878.5	10355.6

Source: MPG, LLC 2020

As depicted on the Future Land Use Plan, the largest land use in Lorena will continue to be low density residential. This use will comprise approximately 55% percent of the total land use within the current City Limits. The Plan also reflects a desire of the City of Lorena to reserve highly visible property along the Interstate for commercial purposes. Mixing of uses and housing densities could be accomplished successfully

with appropriate design standards. Such standards could be developed and adopted into the Zoning Ordinance and potentially used in planned development zoning districts.

It should be noted that less than 1% of the land is designated for multifamily residential use, showing a deficit in apartments and attached housing in the City. Lorena recognizes this deficiency but hopes multifamily units will be provided when the mixed--use area shown on the plan is developed. An assessment of the supply of multifamily housing should be made with the next Comprehensive Plan update to see if other properties should be designated and rezoned for apartments and attached housing.

Strategies
   a. Rezone properties in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan.
   b. Follow the guidance shown on the Future Land Use Plan when making decisions for growth in the City.
   c. Promote development of apartments and attached housing in the mixed- use area.
   d. During the next Comprehensive Plan update, assess whether multifamily housing is adequately provided in Lorena.

Objective 2: Develop the Area along Interstate 35.

Recent widening of Interstate 35 is expected to have a significant impact on the future of Lorena. Higher capacity and safer ramps exiting and entering the interstate have made many properties more accessible for retail, commercial, hotels and flexible industrial development. The corridor is the face of the community for thousands of travelers along the busiest commercial thoroughfare in the State. High quality development will enhance the commercial image of the City, create tax benefits, and establish a visible community between the Temple and Waco metropolitan areas. Mixed-use areas with commercial uses on the first floor and offices or residential uses on upper floors can create a different look and feel for the corridor than one-story retail and restaurants. The mixed-use areas may also include horizontal mixing of uses to maximize connectivity between separate ownerships and uses.

Strategies
   a. Work with economic development professionals, local developers, and the Chamber of Commerce to attract business and residential uses to the corridor.
   b. Building on aesthetic features of the overpasses, create a visual theme for the corridor.
   c. Using the recent features incorporated into the interstate improvements, promote an aesthetic quality with new development along the Interstate 35 corridor.

Objective 3: Develop a set of expectations for the ETJ and Voluntary Annexation.

Lorena's Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) is heavily influenced by the ETJ of the City of Waco. Waco's ETJ borders Lorena on the north and east sides. There are areas of commercial development along the Interstate 35 corridor which are split between the ETJ of both cities. Creating a positive economic development climate encourages public - private partnership through adequate public facilities and favorable zoning conditions. Creation of design guidelines can make these properties desirable for commercial and retail growth.

Strategies
    a. Investigate opportunities to coordinate additional ETJ agreements with the City of Waco to consolidate whole development tracts into Lorena's ETJ. The City could then generate the opportunity for the commercial development to voluntarily annex into the City limits.
    b. Working with property owners in the ETJ and the Planning Commission, develop a set of recommended uses and design guidelines for the area in the ETJ southeast of the City limits.

Objective 4: Ensure compatibility of a Contemporary Mixed--Use Lorena with the Existing Community.

Lorena's future for commercial and residential development may be shaped through new development northwest of Interstate 35 and Old Lorena Road. The development could have new designs of residential density, an interconnected street network, and pedestrian access together with a higher intensity of commercial development.

Strategies
    a. Work with residents and property owners in Lorena to thoroughly understand the base values, goals and objectives of the community which will be important in any new mixed--use community design.
    b. Communicate the community's desires to future developers of the mixed--use area.
    c. Develop building inspection and engineering review processes which will encourage high quality implementation, but expedited construction implementation.

CHAPTER 5
TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: LORENA WILL HAVE A TRANSPORTATION NETWORK WHICH MEETS BASIC NEEDS FOR MOVEMENT, ACCESS, SAFETY, AND REASONABLY RAPID TRAVEL FOR PEOPLE AND GOODS THROUGH AND WITHIN THE CITY.

VISION

Lorena will be a multicultural thriving city with a "hometown" feel. **It will be supported by** excellent schools and infrastructure including utilities, **roads, bike lanes, and sidewalks.** It will be a unique place to live and visit, capitalizing on its downtown historic district and its location along the I35 corridor. With multigenerational neighborhoods it will have a diversity of housing types and price points. Community gathering spaces will be connected to neighborhoods and commercial areas. Active businesses and small industries will produce a stable tax base.

Lorena's transportation system consists mostly of streets, state highways, and interstate, and a few sidewalks. While transportation systems are typically thought of as streets, railroads, and airports, two other forms of transportation are important to all communities. Pedestrian paths/sidewalks and bicycle lanes/paths are essential for persons who do not have cars and for health and well-being.

The existing street network is shown on the Thoroughfare Plan (Map 5) in bold lines. This map shows different street types in the City from very large thoroughfares (Interstate 35) to smaller streets (collectors). Roads not labeled are local streets.

Objective 1: Use the cross-sections shown in the plan and concepts for Context Sensitive Design when improving existing streets and building new streets, interconnections, and sidewalks.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) functional classification system of roadways is the predominant method for roadway classification used by transportation planners. This classification ranges from arterials that are streets meant for high speed, long distance travel, carrying large volumes, and not hindered by local access to, local streets. Local streets feed onto other streets, carrying small volumes at low speeds. In between arterials and local streets are collector streets that bring traffic from local streets into the arterial system.

**Table 12: Roadway Functional Classification System**

Functional System		Service Provided
Arterial		Provides the highest level of service at the greatest speed for the longest uninterrupted distance with some degree of access control.
Collector		Provides a less highly developed level of service at a lower speed for shorter distances by collecting traffic from local roads and connecting them with arterials.
Local		Consists of all roads not defined as arterials or collectors; primarily providing access to land with little or no through movement.

Source: Federal Highway Administration – Flexibility in Highway Design

Each of the roadway types has a consistent right-of-way width and sidewalk/buffer improvements. Below are typical functional classifications of rights-of-way. While not used in every scenario the City will encounter, the graphics help illustrate capacity improvements for the community. Through the Capital Improvements Program, the City should consider how much of its network should be improved and at what time. New developments to the community may propose alternative street designs and capacities based on their traffic demand and density. Map 5, the Master Thoroughfare Plan delineates where the different roadway types may be assigned to roads in Lorena. Future roads shown on the map represent suggested locations for roads and connections. Specific engineering and land planning will determine the final location of improvements to existing and new roadways.

Figure 2: City of Lorena Function Classification Types

Major Arterial Street Four-Lane Divided
RIGHT OF WAY
90'

| 8' Sidewalk/ Buffer | Travel 24' | Median 16' | Travel 24' | 8' Sidewalk/ Buffer |

29' B-B

Minor Arterial Street Five-Lane Undivided
RIGHT OF WAY
86'

| 9.5' Sidewalk/ Buffer | Travel 24' | Two Way Left Turn 14' | Travel 24' | 9.5' Sidewalk/ Buffer |

67' B-B

Collector Street Two-Lane Undivided
RIGHT OF WAY
60'

| 9.5' Sidewalk/ Buffer | Travel 18' | Travel 18' | 9.5' Sidewalk/ Buffer |

41' B-B

Local Street Two-Lane Undivided
RIGHT OF WAY
50'

| 9.5' Sidewalk/ Buffer | Travel 13' | Travel 13' | 9.5' Sidewalk/ Buffer |

31' B-B

Source: Stephen Cook, AICP

To design for neighborhoods and pedestrian-oriented areas, decision makers must understand the key relationship between transportation and land use. Flexibility may be needed in roadway design to accommodate a changing urban form within the community. Understanding key community objectives for land use within the community is also important to ensure that public infrastructure investments are in line with ultimate land use objectives. One way to do this is through context sensitive solutions.

Context-sensitive solutions (CSS) is the practice of developing transportation projects that serve all users and meet the needs of the neighborhoods through which they pass. Developing solutions must be a collaborative process which involves all stakeholders in street designs to fit into the character of surrounding neighborhoods while maintaining safety and mobility. The key is making sure that elements of streets complement surrounding or adjacent development.

The process of designing CSS roadways is like the process of designing traditional thoroughfares: design is considered with traffic counts, traffic demand and expected levels of service. The difference is that, in addition to automobile traffic, other elements, such as pedestrian traffic, the built environment, and land use, are also carefully considered.

The most notable publication and guidebook for CSS is *Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach* published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). This publication includes information on balancing the transportation needs of the community with adjacent land uses. In particular, the CSS approach recommends designing thoroughfares based upon:

• Community objectives

- Functional classes
- Thoroughfare types
- Adjacent land use

New streets, sidewalks, and bikeways as well as street upgrades should be planned with the recommendations of CSS. The below graphic shows how one road could be designed to have different capacity and profile based on the intensity of land uses abutting the road.

Figure 3: Context Sensitive Corridor Example
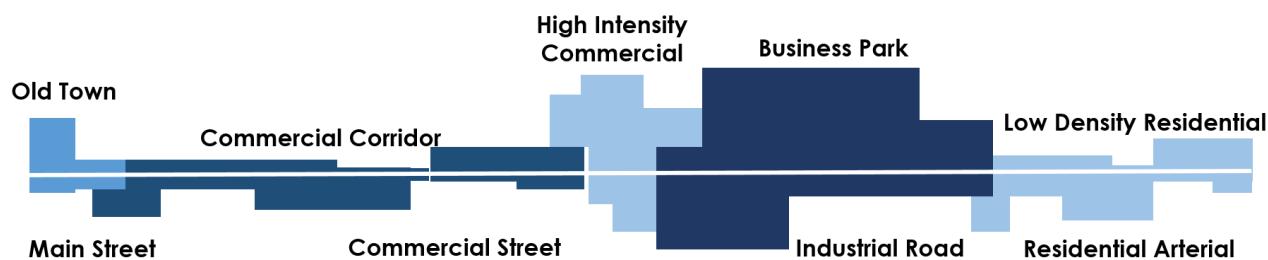
As a street winds through the City – its function and street section may change, based on the surrounding land uses – rather than a one-size fits all pattern.

As Lorena grows, a larger road network containing more lane miles will need to be maintained. Most of Lorena's existing network contains asphalt surface materials which over time will deteriorate through use, heavy loads, edge encroachment by grass and stresses through extreme temperature change. A Pavement Management System is an organized effort to index the surface and subsurface condition of all of the City's roads and, based on a numerical grade on those conditions, provide an annual plan for crack repair, pothole repair, mill and overlay techniques and eventual roadway and subsurface replacement. The Pavement Management System allows the community to move from a demand-response model of road repair to a standardized, quantitative program of repair so that labor and material costs can be normalized and repair activities can be focused on extending the lifetime of road surfaces. The system also allows communities to save capital expenses for future expansion and replacement.

Objective 2: Fund and build improvements to existing streets as shown on the Master Thoroughfare Plan.

Strategies
   a. Continue to fund improvements through the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and available grants and loans.
   b. Create a Pavement Management System which extends existing roadway life and manages the CIP for future roadway replacement.

c. Coordinate with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to address long-range transportation needs.

Objective 3: Make important interconnections of streets to activity centers.

Activity centers, such as places of worship, schools, business, and industry thrive when access is made easy. Street connections are important for residents and businesses alike. Dead-end streets impede movement, especially for school buses and emergency services.

Strategies
a. Minimize use of cul-de-sacs in new neighborhoods so that emergency services can be provided as quickly as possible when needed.

Objective 4: Improve existing sidewalks and construct new sidewalks for pedestrian access and citizen health.

Sidewalks are more than a convenience for recreational walks. They are an essential part of a connected transportation system for mobility of people who may not own a car or may not have the ability to drive. Citizen health largely depends on access to food, medical support, and exercise. Sidewalks can improve citizen health by promoting walking, especially to schools and parks. Persons who cannot drive a car are especially helped by having sidewalks. In the heat of the summer, these sidewalks can still be used in the morning and evening.

There are only a few sidewalks in Lorena. They exist in Old Town along Center Street, along the newly constructed frontage roads of Interstate 35, and along Springdale Circle. Sidewalks should continue to be installed as part of the regular requirement of developers for new subdivisions. An important sidewalk improvement is needed to connect Old Town to McBrayer Park over the railroad tracks. Currently there are no sidewalks along Center Street connecting to the park or to the primary commercial area of the City. Center Street at the railroad is also not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in grade and safety. Improving this short connection between Old Town and the park would provide for good pedestrian connectivity between two of the most important public gathering spaces in Lorena. Having the space and safety to walk to and from vendor spaces and event locations during festivals or other celebrations of the City expands availability of the event to all. Additionally, sidewalk improvements north on Borden Street would connect potential future neighborhoods within the mixed-use area to Old Town and the park and can be integrated within the larger proposed trail network.

Strategies
a. As shown on the Sidewalk Plan, fund and build sidewalks to help create an interconnected sidewalk system throughout the City.

b. When designing new sidewalks along existing streets recognize that right-of-way may not be sufficient for the ideal street cross-section shown in Figure 2. In these circumstances, provide the widest sidewalk possible for pedestrians.

Objective 5: Consider using unused railroad right-of-way for new trails as part of a Rails-to-Trails system.

Lorena benefits from a traditional urban core based on the growth of the railroad which passes through the town. This railroad corridor can continue to contribute to the health, transportation, and well-being in the community. The Rails-to-Trails program is a set of financial and policy tools organized by a national organization to assist communities in identifying and securing resources when there may be limited appropriate space for multi-use trails. Rails-to-Trails enhances local transportation networks by providing non-motorized local connections that are sometimes preferable to on-road bike lanes or sidewalks located on congested, dangerous roadways. Rails-to-Trails benefit railroads, too. In most cases, a locality or group purchases a use-easement or license from the railroad, providing financial compensation and in some cases reducing liability and cost to the railroad. In some instances, a fully developed trail can also provide the railroad with improved access for maintenance vehicles.

Strategies
a. Work with the railroad and nearby property owners to develop a plan for new trails in railroad right-of-way.
b. Provide direct access to adjacent property with minimal interference to movement and safety of traffic on public roadways.
c. Follow provisions of the 2019 Parks and Trails Masterplan to appropriately locate, design and construct planned trails.

Map 5: City of Lorena Master Thoroughfare Plan

City of Lorena

Master Thoroughfare Plan

September 2020

0   1000   2000 ft

Lorena City Limits
Lorena ETJ
Parcel Boundaries
Lorena Roads
- - Future Collector
— Collector
— Minor Arterial
- - Future Minor Arterial
— Arterial
- - Future Arterial
▪▪ Interstate
⊢ Railroad
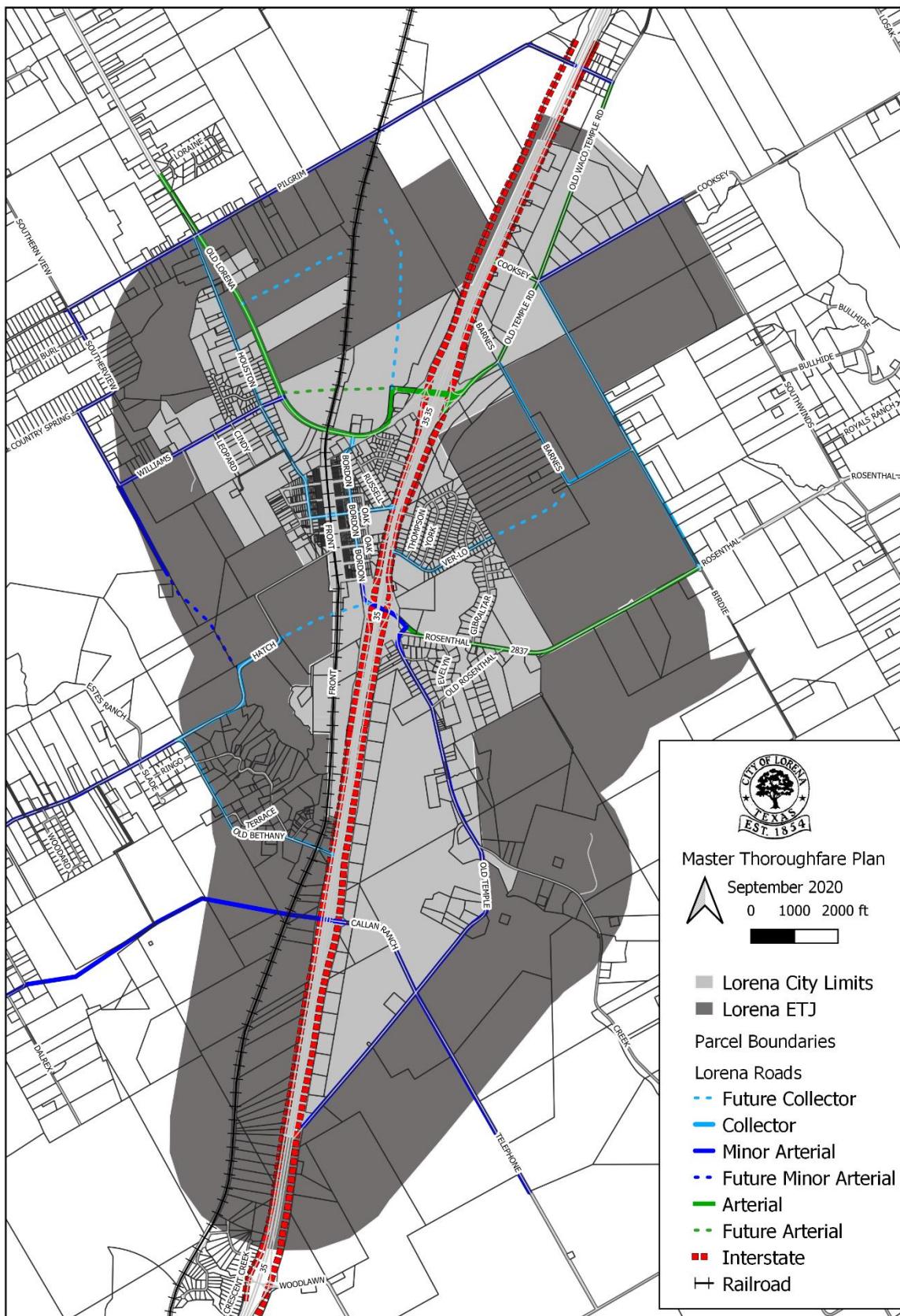
Map 6: City of Lorena Existing and Proposed Sidewalks
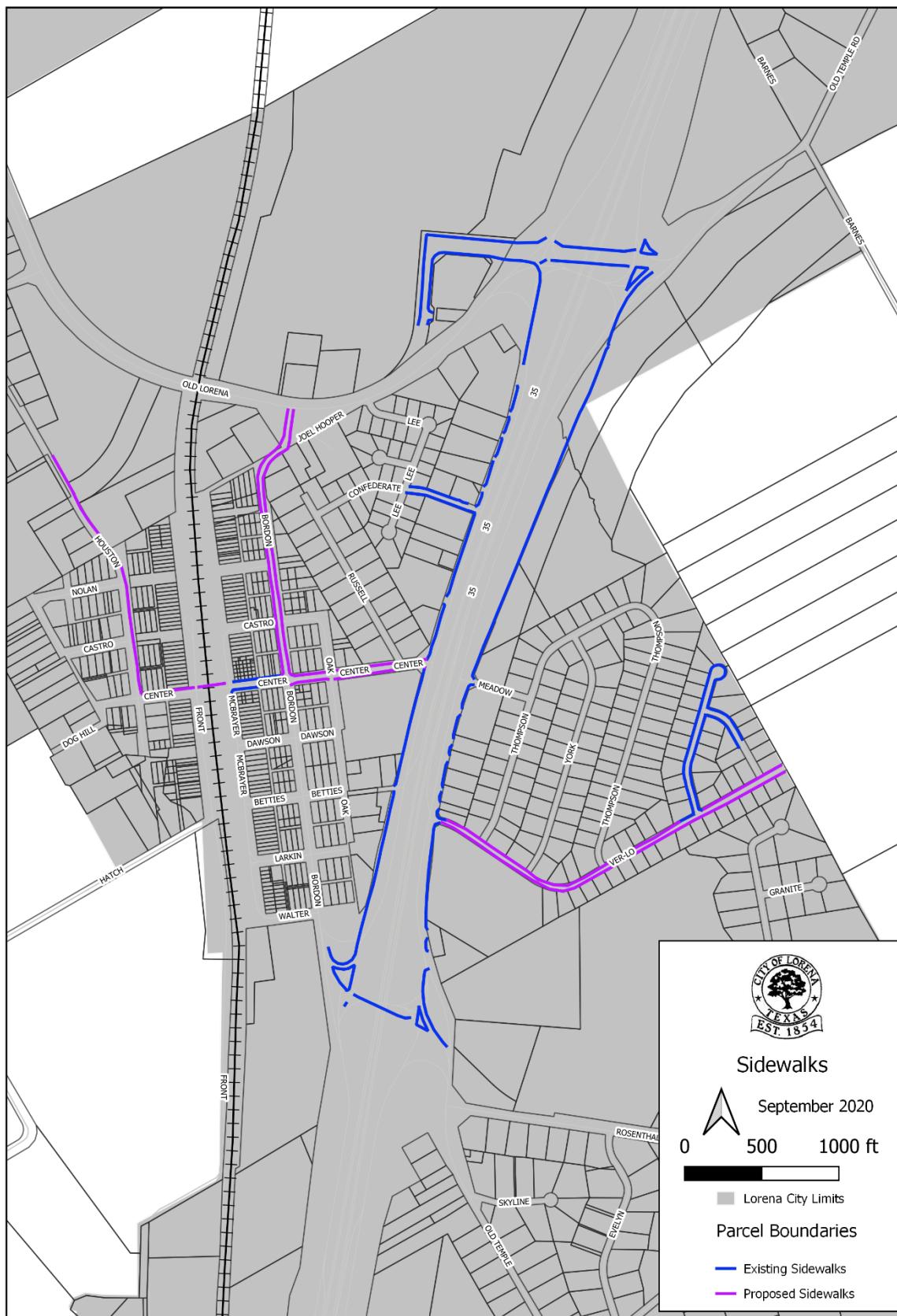
CHAPTER 6
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: LORENA WILL HAVE A STRONG AND RESILIENT ECONOMIC BASE.

> ### *VISION*
>
> ***Lorena*** *will be a multicultural thriving city with a "hometown" feel. It will be supported by excellent schools and infrastructure including utilities, roads, bike lanes, and sidewalks. It will be a unique place to live and visit, capitalizing on its downtown historic district and its location along the I35 corridor. With multigenerational neighborhoods it will have a diversity of housing types and price points. Community gathering spaces will be connected to neighborhoods and commercial areas. **Active businesses and small industries will produce a stable tax base.***

Lorena is a small town with a historic downtown. The City is bisected by a well-traveled interstate. Its economic base consists primarily of revenues from its property tax base. Even though it is sometimes considered a bedroom community of Waco, the community desires greater diversity of business and industry. It aspires to be a unique place that is more than "Anywhere, USA." To that end the City is involved in economic development activities through the Lorena Economic Development Corporation and the Heart of Texas Economic Development District.

The Lorena Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) is a Texas 4B economic development group authorized by the voters of the City of Lorena to expend revenue from sales tax to further the development of the city. Its mission is to stimulate investment and development opportunities while preserving the heritage that defines its future as a "hometown". In 2019, the LEDC was involved in marketing of developable commercial properties to national and regional retailers as well as to commercial realtors, developers, and brokers. Other marketing included distribution of Lorena Tourism Brochures in Waco and Central Texas and marketing Center Street's unique shopping experience along Interstate-35. In May 2019, it completed the design, manufacture, and installation of a new Interstate 35 billboard to market Lorena to the 82,000 daily vehicles that travel on Interstate 35. The billboard replaced an existing fading vinyl sign.

Another organization assisting Lorena with economic development is the Heart of Texas Economic Development District (HTEDD). The HTEDD   is a regional group

authorized by the State of Texas to bring together the private and public sectors in partnership within communities. The HTEDD provides a coordinated strategy and economic development technical assistance with such things as strategic planning, grant writing, grant administration and training workshops. Located in Waco, the HTEDD strategy for regional economic development hinges on five strategic initiatives:

- Increase innovation and entrepreneurship
- Brand and market the region
- Increase access to capital for new and existing businesses
- Increase economic development readiness among local jurisdictions
- Foster key economic development catalyst projects

The Lorena Chamber of Commerce also plays a key role in the community, especially with tourism. Its purpose is to foster, protect, and promote the commercial, industrial, civic, agricultural, and general interests of business and development of the City of Lorena.

Objective 1: Continue to use the Lorena Economic Development Corporation as a vehicle for economic development and support the Heart of Texas Economic Development District and the Chamber of Commerce.

As indicated above, these three organizations are the key groups that promote economic development and business expansions in Lorena. They work closely with City staff to attract new business to the community.

Strategies:
a. Continue to provide funding to the three groups responsible for promoting economic development in Lorena.
b. Continue to work with staff from the three economic development groups to market the community for business development.

Objective 2: Concentrate efforts on attracting destination-based retail.

To invigorate and sustain retail growth that will retain residents of Lorena and attract new retail and employment to the community, the community should focus on three primary destination nodes: North Lorena along Interstate 35 and Old Lorena Road (FM 2837); Old Town; and the southern Interstate 35 corridor. Retail uses encouraged within these areas must be destination-driven and market appropriate. Measuring the successful implementation of this strategy must take a long-term outlook.

Map 7: City of Lorena North/South Commercial Areas
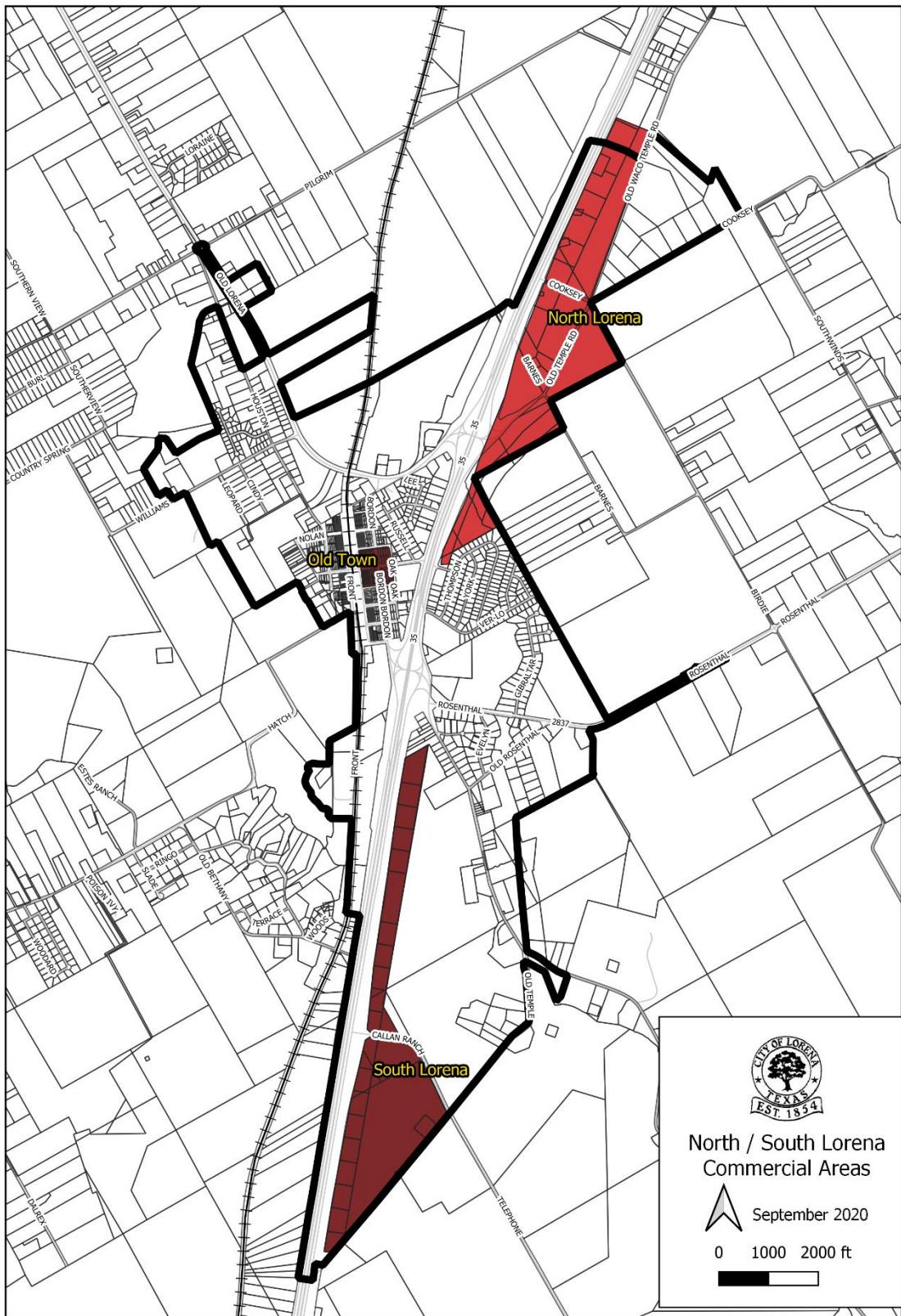
North / South Lorena
Commercial Areas

September 2020

0   1000   2000 ft

Strategies:

    a. Work to attract predominantly visitor-based Class A retail space in North Lorena.

       North Lorena is considered as east of Interstate 35 and north of City Hall. This area should have predominately visitor-based Class-A retail availability. Concentration is needed on adequate parking, visibility, and access to the interstate. In addition:

      1. Design standards must remain focused on traffic movement and landscaping as this is the visual entry to the community from the interstate.

      2. Since destination-driven retail is exceedingly more difficult to attract and sustain than convenience-based retail, the City will need to focus on some criteria as to what tenants would find appropriate. This includes reducing development permitting costs, potential tax incentives and providing public infrastructure capital improvements.

Figure 4: Home Improvement Store
Source: Google Street View

      3. Entertainment-based retail needs traffic, land, infrastructure, and visibility to be sustainable. Providing these elements can bring restaurants, large retail and ancillary entertainment venues. The community has expressed interest at bringing a full-service grocery store and big-box hardware store to the City.

    b. Work to attract a combination of visitor and resident-based Class A retail space in South Lorena.

       South Lorena is considered as the area east and west of Interstate 35 and south of Old Lorena Road. South Lorena should reflect a combination of visitor and resident-based Class A retail availability. The retail environment will be heavily dependent on the development of corridor. Additional employment density will be required to make any retail sustainable. The southern corridor will need to have significant investment of office park / industrial flex-space development adjacent to the retail to provide the demand. The International Council of Shopping Centers estimates that workers with easy access to retail spend an average of $2,350 annually near their workplaces. Most of this spending is food and beverage purchases (about 61%) the remaining are neighborhood goods and services and general merchandise sales. Clustering the destination retail environments with civic, cultural uses gives restaurants and retail shops a broad-based market. Civic and cultural events and uses increase retail demand. Be aware of the following:

      1. Retail attraction and retention – The catalyst for retail attraction and retention is customers whether they are local or visiting. Work-force retail

demand can be generated by focusing efforts of developing office park or flex-industrial space within the northern sections of the City. Lorena could increase its focus on amenities such as a compact downtown area, connectivity to increasing the visibility and usability of the park.

2. The attraction and retention of limited service hotels would increase the availability of guests and employees to the community. Hotels bring the opportunity for Hotel Occupancy Taxes (HOT) which can be used for attracting tourism and conventions, promotion of the arts, historic restoration and preservation, sporting facilities, and tourist wayfinding activities.

Objective 3: Maintain and improve Old Town Lorena as the center of the community and a destination for visitors and tourists.

Old Town Lorena is the center of the Lorena community. It contains most of the community's historic buildings and is actively being revitalized by local entrepreneurs and property owners. Its potential as a tourist attraction exists, especially with restaurants and shops. The Chamber of Commerce heavily promotes this area and continues to look for ways to assist business owners in marketing.

Strategies
a. Promote Old Town for predominately resident-based Class B retail availability. To that end:
   1. Focus should be on redevelopment opportunities including joint-use parking for the established businesses,
   2. Provide connectivity to the Rails- linking Old Town with newer subdivisions,
   3. Tenant choice and retention should focus on family-oriented restaurants, and locally owned retail.
b. Continue effort to establish partnerships to take best advantage of the public and private investment in Old Town.
c. Utilize the Texas Main Street Four Points approach of design, organization, promotion, and economic restructuring to energize the local economy while retaining our historic charm.
d. Continue to implement Old Town revitalization and development using the Main Street Program realizing that downtown development is an ongoing program instead of a project that ends.
e. Continue to assist and support the Chamber of Commerce with tourism development.
f. Continue to promote Lorena as a destination for fun and recreation, especially through festivals and public gatherings.
g. New development and redevelopment should be oriented around the pedestrian. To that end,
   1. New buildings should be placed along the property line and should be oriented towards the street.

2. Wide sidewalks, benches, shade trees, raised/enhanced crosswalks and other pedestrian amenities should be considered during street design.
3. On-street parking, such as parallel or head-in parking, may be incorporated; however, all parking lot areas should be located behind buildings and away from the main center of activity to ensure safe pedestrian movements.

Objective 4: Promote development of a Flex Space Business Park.

Flex Space Business Park
Use of Flex Space is recommended in areas on the Future Land Use Plan designated for Business Parks. Much of that land is in the southern part of Lorena parallel to Interstate 35.

The use of Flex Space is a relatively new strategy to promote economic growth, retain industrial uses and respond to industry trends. Flex space allows certain industrial and commercial uses to be combined into flexible spaces where they complement each other. The term

Figure 5 Flex Industrial Space
Source: Google Street View

Flex Space, in these situations, allows owners to adapt buildings to changing development patterns and to meet modern industry shifts in industrial uses and related sectors.

Strategy:
a. Focus on developing flexible industrial space primarily geared to distribution, logistics, warehousing, and light assembly. These uses can have very limited impact on the surrounding community in terms of environmental of nuisance impact. Combined with upgraded accessibility of interstate bridges and higher speed access ramps have brought to the community, these uses enable a greater employment base to the community. Flex Space Business Park developments should include both functional and aesthetic design.

Objective 5: Rebrand the City and create wayfinding signs in the Community.

Having grown along the railroad and then the interstate corridors, Lorena is a fairly linear community. Access to the community typically comes from Interstate 35. A distinctive logo or brand carefully sited throughout the City is needed to help tourists and travelers identify Lorena as different from other communities on the interstate.

Figure 6: Old Lorena Road Bridge Element - Source: Google Street View

Branding of a Community can:

- Create a common vision for the future of the community and its potential

- Provide a consistent representation of the place

- Enhance its local, regional, and/or global awareness and position

- Become a recognizable and repeatable icon for tying a community together physically through signage

New identification markers with a stylized "L" have been placed on columns on the new bridges over the Interstate. However, additional usage of the "L" brand could be made to make the connection between the physical location of the community and the actions that the community is undertaking to bring new investment, development, and residents to the City. Additional signage, marketing materials, City communications and online presence should all be coordinated.

Wayfinding is a method to help direct residents and visitors to significant places in a community. The term "wayfinding" was first used in 1960 by architect Kevin Lynch in his book, *The Image of the City*, referring to maps, street numbers, directional signs, and other elements as "wayfinding" devices. Effective wayfinding tools include appropriately scaled signs, clearly delineated roads, distinctive transit corridors, consistent lighting, and cognitive maps that allow people to quickly grasp an environment. In addition, it can be used to highlight and inform observers of significant historical/cultural sites within an area. Pointing out major institutions, for example, makes them easier to find and engenders pride in the residents, business owners, and customers who live in the community.

Highway signs and markers issued by TxDOT at Interstate 35 and along FM 1187 point to Lorena as a community, but they do not direct customers to the Old Town area. They do not indicate the potential of available retail space along the interstate corridor. Therefore, future customers unfamiliar with the area could have difficulty finding the retailers there. Modification of wayfinding by providing monument markers defining Lorena and then directional signage would help direct highway traffic from the interstate to Old Town.

Strategies:
   a. Focus on signage at the Interstate through entry gateway signs at both the north and southern ends of the community. Ideally these would be placed near the reconfigured exit ramps to Interstate 35. These entrances are the first opportunity the City must capture the imagination and interest of pass-through traffic made up of consumers and future residents. The gateway entrances should incorporate the unique "L" identifier and include appropriately designed signage that directs people to the amenities within Lorena, but also informs them of the relevance of the community to the entire region.
   b. Develop a design plan for public lighting, median design, signage, and landscaping near Interstate 35, then repeat the design in other focused areas such as the Old Town.

CHAPTER 7
HISTORIC and CULTURAL PRESERVATION

GOAL: LORENA WILL PRESERVE AND ENHANCE ITS CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES.

VISION

***Lorena** will be a multicultural thriving city with a "hometown" feel. It will be supported by excellent schools and infrastructure including utilities, roads, bike lanes, and sidewalks. **It will be a unique place to live and visit, capitalizing on its downtown historic district** and its location along the I35 corridor. With multigenerational neighborhoods it will have a diversity of housing types and price points. Community gathering spaces will be connected to neighborhoods and commercial areas. Active businesses and small industries will produce a stable tax base.*

The City of Lorena began as a railroad town in the 1850s and has grown since that time. A few buildings have historic significance, but none are designated on the National Register of Historic Places. Map 6 shows the location of known buildings and places of significance to the community.

- Old Town – Old Town is the original Lorena town site. The First National Bank of Lorena located at 115A Center Street has been designated as a historic location in the City.

- Mt. Rose Missionary Baptist Church, a historic African American community, was originally opened in May of 1920. Formerly located on Houston Street, a marker with the original structure's cornerstone commemorates the site of the Church and the original families which founded the community.

- A marker at McBrayer Park indicates the original location of Lorena High School and Middle School.

- McBrayer Park is named after Brigadier General James D. McBrayer. A decorated Marine in World War II. Captured and held as a prisoner of war from 1941-1945, he escaped imprisonment and crossed China in search of American Forces. He returned to the United States and became a career officer and educator.
- Lorena United Methodist Church was founded as a community in 1881. The sanctuary was constructed in 1886 and dedicated in 1887.

- Lorena Cemetery at the southern end of the west side of the community holds almost 1,300 memorials. Lorena Westbrook Robertson, the namesake of the City is buried within.

- The Westbrook Plantation original home is located on S. Old Temple Road at the crossing of the Cow Bayou. The home was constructed in the 1870s and was the primary structure of the surrounding cotton plantation.

- The H.J. and Cora Hudson House is located at 306 S. Borden Street and was recently added to list of Texas Historic Landmarks. The Hudsons were a prominent family in Lorena.

Preserving a community's architectural and historic past is important for the following reasons:

- Preservation honors those who have come before us. They lived, worked, and invested in our community. By preserving their accomplishments, we honor prior generations.

- Preservation makes economic sense by encouraging investment in the older areas of Lorena.

- Preservation can add to the affordable housing stock. Much of the older housing is of the size and in a price range so that is affordable to low-and -moderate income families.

- Preservation is an effective tool for neighborhood revitalization. Stable, healthy residential neighborhoods are the backbone of all communities. Historic preservation, when viewed as conservation of older neighborhoods, can strengthen neighborhoods. Preservation of their neighborhood can be a rallying point for residents to organize and work together for the betterment of their community.

Lorena's historic buildings give the community character. They set Lorena apart from any other place.

Objective 1: Preserve historic resources, including buildings, sites, and archeology.

Several historic resources are shown on Map 8; however, this map is not comprehensive, and an updated inventory should be made of all historic buildings in the City so that preservation can occur.

Strategies
    a. Update the inventory of historic buildings, properties, and sites in Lorena.

b. Address apparent barriers to preservation and renovation of structures presented by fire, life safety, accessibility, and building codes.
c. Reconcile differences between the Zoning Ordinance and historic preservation policies to facilitate renovation and restoration of historic structures in the City.
d. Identify, develop, and implement funding sources and incentives to aid in preserving the community's historic resources.
e. Develop and implement a program or programs to increase public awareness and acceptance of efforts to preserve historic resources in the community.
f. Encourage property owners to restore existing historic buildings and sites.
g. Develop and implement a vehicle to buy historically and architecturally significant structures in jeopardy and restore them.
h. Provide resources and guidance to address problems, whether perceived or actual, such as building code application for older buildings, incentives for development, sensitivity to historic design of buildings, and design uniformity.

Map 8: City of Lorena Cultural and Historic Assets

id	Asset
1	Old Town
2	Lorena Westbrook Home
3	Lorena United Methodist Church
4	Lorena Elementary School
5	Lorena Cemetery
6	Site of Mt. Rose Baptist Church
7	Lorena High School
8	McBrayer Park
9	HJ and Cora Hudson House

Historic Asset Map

September 2020

0   1000   2000 ft

Lorena City Limits

Parcel Boundaries

Historic Assets

59
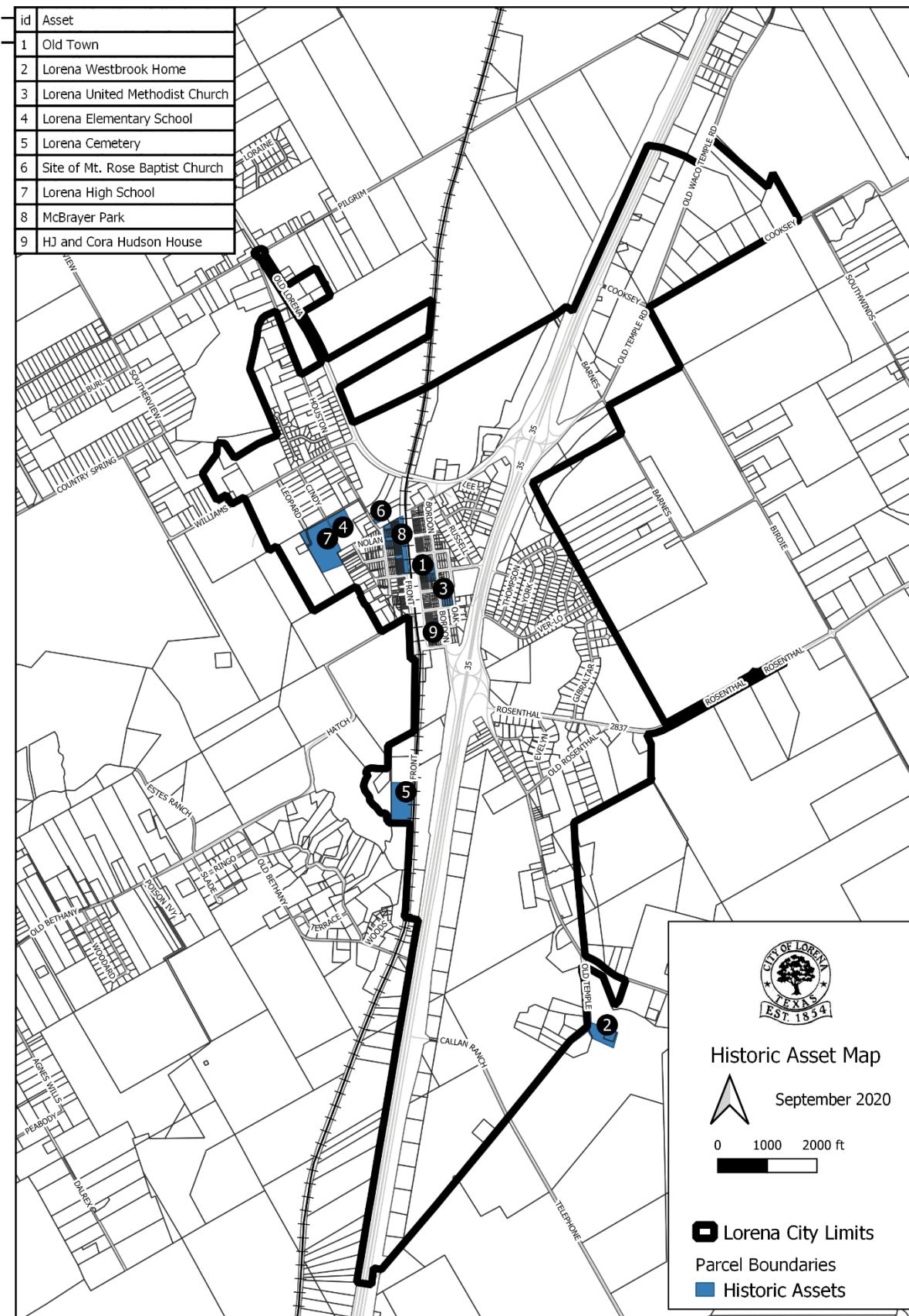
CHAPTER 8
HOUSING

GOAL: Lorena will HAVE A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES AVAILABLE TO ALL INCOMES. ALL HOUSING WILL BE SAFE AND DECENT FOR RESIDENTS.

> ### *VISION*
>
> *Lorena will be a multicultural thriving city with a "hometown" feel. It will be supported by excellent schools and infrastructure including utilities, roads, bike lanes, and sidewalks. It will be a unique place to live and visit, capitalizing on its downtown historic district and its location along the I35 corridor.*
> ***With multigenerational neighborhoods it will have a diversity of housing types and price points.*** *Community gathering spaces will be connected to neighborhoods and commercial areas. Active businesses and small industries will produce a stable tax base.*

Lorena's dominant housing type is single family detached dwellings although there are a few apartment complexes, duplexes, apartments in non-residential buildings and townhouses scattered through the City. Past comprehensive plans have identified the need for a greater variety of housing types to support lifestyles of all ages and income levels.

Having a variety of housing types allows for residents to choose the type of home they can both afford and prefer. Housing needs are different throughout different stages of life. Providing for all types of housing allows residents to gracefully age in place.

Lorena's housing stock also includes abandoned dilapidated houses and overgrown or unkempt property. Lack of property maintenance degrades the community's appearance and has a strong effect on self-image. For health, safety, and community pride, efforts to improve property maintenance are key to a successful future.

Objective 1: Promote development of all housing types: single family detached units, attached units, townhouses, and apartments.

As mentioned above, most of Lorena's housing stock is made up of single-family detached units. To have a diversity of ages, incomes, and affordable housing in the community, a variety housing types is vital. For Lorena, more multifamily housing is

needed in the form of apartments and townhouses. The Existing Land Use Map shows where existing houses have been developed. The Future Land Use Plan shows areas for greater density in housing.

Strategies
    a. Support development of new areas for attached housing, townhouses, and apartments as shown on the Future Land Use Plan.
    b. To the extent possible, allow for a mixture of housing types within larger neighborhoods to support a variety of age groups and income levels.
    c. Redevelop existing residential lots where buildings have been removed. Doing so would provide opportunities for homebuilders looking for lower-cost land to build homes based on traditional Texas style architecture.
    d. Promote replatting of lots to make sure that housing meets minimum lot standards for zoning districts.
    e. Modify the zoning ordinance to improve opportunities for multifamily housing to serve younger populations.

Objective 2: Promote provision of affordable housing in Lorena.

Having a variety of housing types in a community often means providing a variety of affordable housing options. In Lorena, affordability is not a major issue, but it could become one if growth in Lorena takes place because of growth in Waco. Providers of affordable housing will need to be supported by the community for provision of affordable units to be successful.

Strategies
    a. Encourage Habitat for Humanity and other builders of affordable units to provide housing in Lorena.
    b. Support provision of Section 8 vouchers in apartments, as appropriate.

Objective 3: Maintain and improve the existing housing stock.

Most of the housing stock in Lorena was built between 1970 and 2000. Almost all is well maintained but as housing ages, maintenance needs increase. Not all property owners can afford to keep up with needed improvements, but assistance can be made available.

Strategies
    a. Expand programs to maintain the existing housing stock such as Habitat for Humanity and other organizations and agencies.

CHAPTER 9
PARKS, RECREATION, and NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL: HAVE EXCELLENT PARKS AND RECREATIONAL AREAS AND PRESERVE IMPORTANT NATURAL RESOURCES.

VISION

***Lorena** will be a multicultural thriving city with a "hometown" feel. It will be supported by excellent schools and infrastructure including utilities, roads, bike lanes, and sidewalks. **It will be a unique place to live and visit,** capitalizing on its downtown historic district and its location along the I35 corridor. With multigenerational neighborhoods it will have a diversity of housing types and price points. **Community gathering spaces will be connected to neighborhoods and commercial areas.** Active businesses and small industries will produce a stable tax base.*

The City of Lorena has an existing park system that includes the 6.1 acre McBrayer Park, a 15-acre sports field complex known as Evans Field, a small pocket park on Center Street, and recreational facilities at each of the public schools in the City. A regional sports complex, the William Dallas Soules complex, is located outside of the City between Lorena and Bruceville-Eddy. A linear greenway park along the floodplain is made up of both public and privately owned acreage.

In 2019, the City adopted the Lorena Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan to use as a guideline for the future development and fiscal planning for the next ten years, 2019-2028. The purpose of this plan was to:

- Provide a 10-year framework for orderly and consistent park and open space planning and development that functions compatibly with other responsibilities within the City.

- Provide community-based needs analysis to establish priorities for parks, recreational facilities, and open space.

- Provide detailed information concerning the recreational needs of the City of Lorena, and the role of the City in meeting those needs.

- Provide direction in the acquisition, development, and renovation of parkland and recreational facilities to meet future needs.

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan is considered to be part of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 1: Follow the recommendations in the 2019 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan.

Because the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan was so recently completed and adopted, no additional strategies are provided in this Comprehensive Plan. The following strategies are from the 2019 Plan:

Strategies:
a. Develop additional community park on east side of Lorena to expand publicly owned parkland acreage and balance spatial distribution of recreation facilities in the community.
b. Develop a children's Splash Pad to meet high demand, present and past, for water-based recreation option in Lorena.
c. Develop hike/bike walking trails to meet high demand, present and past, for recreation and connectivity in the community.
d. Develop Precinct #1 Regional Park with partners to address need for a publicly owned Sports Complex with additional nature areas, picnic/pavilion areas, dog park, community garden, and more to address other highly requested recreation.
e. Develop additional nature areas, picnic/pavilion facilities, community garden and dog park requested by Public Input.
f. Obtain dedicated park lands in new residential subdivisions and develop neighborhood and community parks to provide recreation options for residents.
g. Acquire park lands for the development of publicly owned recreation facilities.
h. Encourage parkland dedication in new subdivisions.

Objective 2: Protect the Floodplain.

Preserving floodplains has great value for a community. Limiting development helps to protect lives and property. In addition, the floodplain can act as a filter for water entering creeks, streams, rivers, and lakes. It can also provide a location for passive recreation, trails, and paths. Map 2 in the first chapter of this plan showed the location of floodplain in and around Lorena. That chapter also explained limitations for development.

Strategies:

a. Discourage and/or prevent construction of permanent structures in the floodplain to help protect lives and property.
b. Encourage planting of trees and shrubs in the floodplain to help improve water quality.

Map 9 City of Lorena 2019 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan

id	ParkName
1	Lorena Middle School Park
2	Lorena Middle School Tennis Courts and Open Space
3	Lorena High School Ballfields, Stadium and Field Sports
4	Lorena Primary School Park
5	Lorena Elementary School Park
6	McBrayer Park
7	Old Town Pocket Park
8	City Hall Open Space
9	Lorena Cemetery
10	Lorena and Precinct #1 Park and Sports Complex (Future)
11	William Dallas Soules Complex
12	Evans Field
13	Neighborhood Park (Future)
14	Neighborhood Park (Future)
15	Mixed Use Open Space (Future)

Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails

September 2020

0   1000   2000 ft

⬛ LorenaCity Limits

Parcel Boundaries

🟩 100 Yr Floodplain

🟩 Trails (Proposed)

🟩 Parks and Open Space

Future Park areas are generalized boundaries or spacing. Specific park locations will be identified through the development process.

Note: The location and size of future neighborhood parks is conceptual only.

CHAPTER 10
GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES, and FACILITIES

GOAL: LORENA WILL HAVE HIGH QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE PROVISION TO SUPPORT RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES, AND INSTITUTIONS IN THE CITY.

City government exists to ensure that the needs of residents, property owners, businesses and visitors are adequately addressed. These needs include public safety, streets, water and sewer facilities, libraries, public safety, and other services. The City of Lorena has invested millions of dollars over the years to provide the highest quality services and facilities to its residents.

This chapter on community facilities covers provision of water, wastewater treatment, stormwater management, solid waste management, libraries, and other services and facilities owned and managed by the City of Lorena. These services, activities, and buildings contribute in large part to the quality of life for all residents, businesses, and visitors to Lorena.

> **VISION**
>
> **Lorena** will be a multicultural thriving city with a "hometown" feel. It will be supported by excellent schools and infrastructure including utilities, roads, bike lanes, and sidewalks. **It will be a unique place to live and visit,** capitalizing on its downtown historic district and its location along the I35 corridor. With multigenerational neighborhoods it will have a diversity of housing types and price points. **Community gathering spaces will be connected to neighborhoods and commercial areas.** Active businesses and small industries will produce a stable tax base.

Objective 1: Provide sufficient quantity and quality of drinking water for the existing community to promote new development and growth.

Lorena buys water from the City of Robinson, Texas where intake is from the Brazos River and water is stored in an off-channel reservoir just outside the City limits of the City of Robinson. From the reservoir, the water is pumped to the adjacent water treatment plant where it receives conventional treatment before entering a reverse

osmosis treatment train. The finished water is stored in a 565,000-gallon clear well before being pumped to the distribution system. A clear well is the final storage stage in the system following the filtration and disinfection stages. Elevated storage exists in Lorena at a tower facility on S. Houston Street. To date, there is not a comprehensive utilities map to show all parts of the water system. Having such a map is critical to maintaining and improving water service.

Strategies:
    a. Accurately map and maintain digital databases of all mains, hydrants, and other City-maintained appurtenances to accurately plan for future capital expenses and maintenance needs.
    b. Examine all long-range agreements for the procurement of water. Make sure the quantity is scalable to meet future demand by new development growth.
    c. Utilize capital improvement programming to indicate appropriate new system construction for the promotion of new growth and land development.

Objective 2: Provide wastewater collection and treatment to meet all state and federal standards.

Wastewater treatment takes place at the Bull Hide wastewater treatment plant located in southern McLennan County. This plant is run by the Waco Metropolitan Area Regional Sewerage System operated by the City of Waco, which includes Waco and the cities of Bellmead, Hewitt, Lacy Lakeview, Lorena, Robinson, and Woodway. Much of the existing system at the Lorena local main level is composed of six (6") inch to eight (8") inch vitrified clay tile (VCT) piping. Unfortunately, this pipe is prone to cracks and attracts tree roots. Newer PVC mains exist crossing Interstate 35 and parallel to the railroad on the west side of the City. Much of the commercial and business park areas of the community do not have existing access to wastewater which is a limitation on future growth.

Strategies:
    a. Continue to participate in the Waco Metropolitan Area Regional Sewerage System to ensure adequate and environmentally safe sewage disposal.
    b. Seek alternative funding sources for the continual replacement of outdated wastewater system lines.
    c. Ensure that sufficient capacity exists for growth in Lorena.

Objective 3: Provide for stormwater management that prevents flooding and siltation of creeks and streams and meets all state and federal regulations.

Floodplain inside the city limits of Lorena associated with the North Cow Bayou is approximately 95 acres or 4.5% of the land area. Development within the community creates runoff into the floodplain, streams, and creeks and ultimately into the Brazos River. Excessive runoff results in flooding and erosion. Management

of runoff is essential to the public health and safety of residents and businesses in the City.

The City of Lorena participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and works closely with TxDOT on locations in the City that require joint maintenance attention. At present, Lorena has no stormwater plan but could benefit from its development.

Strategies:
   a. Develop a stormwater management plan to ensure that flooding does not occur in the City.

Objective 4: Continue to provide solid waste disposal service in the City.

Solid waste services are provided by the City of Lorena with curbside pickup throughout the community. Curbside recycling is also provided for paper products; plastics labeled 1-7, and metal items such as aluminum, tin, and steel cans.

Strategies
   a. Continue to promote recycling to reduce the volume of waste deposited in landfills and therefore keep the cost of disposal at a reasonable level.
   b. Monitor the needs of the community for solid waste disposal options and act in a timely fashion to meet these needs.
   c. Promote mulching and composting of green wastes, such as leaves, tree limbs, grass clippings, brush, etc. as part of the recycling and waste minimization efforts.

Objective 5: Continue to provide police services and programs to create a safe environment for all citizens in Lorena.

The Lorena Police Department currently employs a staff of nine and a police canine all of whom provide public safety to the larger Lorena community. The Police Department operates from offices located at the corner of Bordon and Center streets, maintaining a significant presence in the Old Town of Lorena.

The Lorena Police Department achieved the status of "Recognized Law Enforcement Agency" in June of 2017. The Department will be up for re- recognition in 2021. The Law Enforcement Recognition Program is a voluntary process where police agencies in Texas prove their compliance with 168 Texas Law Enforcement Best Practices. These Best Practices were carefully developed by Texas Law Enforcement professionals to assist agencies in the efficient and effective delivery of service, the reduction of risk and the protection of individual's rights.

Being "Recognized" means that the agency has proven that it meets or exceeds all identified Best Practices for Texas Law Enforcement. These Best Practices cover aspects of law enforcement operations such as use of force, protection of citizen

rights, pursuits, property and evidence management, and patrol and investigative operations.

Strategies
    a. Apply to recertify for Texas Law Enforcement Best Practices when the recertification is available in 2021.
    b. Develop and maximize the use of human resources through effective management and training. These human resources include police personnel, other governmental agencies, the private sector, and the citizens of Lorena.

Figure 6: Lorena Police Department
Source: Google Street View

    c. Evaluate the need for additional personnel and implement procedures to select only the most qualified personnel.
    d. Update and advance technology to meet increasing challenges and legal requirements.
    e. Monitor pay for police officers and adjust as needed to attract well-qualified personnel.

Objective 6: Continue the relationship with the Lorena Volunteer Fire Department for firefighting and protection services.

The City of Lorena Volunteer Fire Department is a volunteer emergency response organization which responds to fire, emergency, and rescue incidents within the City limits of Lorena.

The department is comprised of 30 personnel, 14 of whom are medically certified responders and hold a First Responder license through the State of Texas. The department operates through the facility located on Center Street in the heart of the Lorena community. The

Figure 7: Lorena Volunteer Fire Department
Source: LVFD Website

Volunteer Fire Department of Lorena operates through donations.

Strategies
    a. Assure relationships that ensure adequate fire protection facilities, equipment, and water pressure to respond to and fight a fire in any part of the community in a timely and efficient fashion.
    b. Monitor the need for additional personnel, equipment, and facilities to provide timely response in all areas as the community increases in land area and population.
    c. Continue to upgrade the emergency medical services to provide the highest level of service possible to the residents of Lorena/McLennan County.

d. Focus on education of the public in areas of fire prevention and accident prevention.
e. Establish an Emergency Operations Center
f. Consider adding fire stations in various parts of the City as the community grows in greater land area.

Objective 7: Explore ways to provide additional library services to residents.

A public library provides books, newspapers, magazines, and access to the internet to help meet the need for information and answers to questions on a broad range of topics. Currently, the City of Lorena does not provide a public library. However, residents have access to the City of Waco's South Branch Library and the City of Hewitt's Library which are near Lorena. In the future, the City should explore whether additional library services are needed including building a library in Lorena.

Strategies
a. Assess whether library services are adequate for Lorena residents. If additional service is needed, examine public and private funding sources for building a Lorena library.
b. Examine the possibility of funding book locker located in the community utilizing adjacent library resources.

Objective 8: Continue to provide city administrative services from City Hall.

Lorena's City Hall building was converted from a bank to its current form in the 1990s. It continues to operate as the administration building for city services and programs. It provides chambers for the elected City Council and appointed committees to conduct meetings.

Strategies
a. Keep the City Hall building in a good state of repair so that it continues to be an asset and an example of good stewardship for the community.

Objective 9: Practice good stewardship of all City Owned properties.

The City owns several properties used for City functions and by the community. Ongoing maintenance is key to provide for future use . However, some of these properties are vacant and currently have no programmed use. Banking of properties may be important to prevent the need to purchase new properties in the future.

Strategies
a. Assure that City-owned property is adequately maintained and landscaped.
b. Dispose of public property which has no foreseeable use, or which other types of development could better utilize.

CHAPTER 11
IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of plans and policies takes place in many ways. Voluntary measures, staffing, capital improvements, regulations, consistent application of policy, and overall budgetary support represent the ways most localities implement their Plan. The strategies in each chapter of the Plan are recommendations which utilize different tools available to Texas cities. Each tool is described in more detail below.

Voluntary Measures
The largest role in implementation occurs by residents and property owners. They make conscious decisions about where to live, what programs to financially support, which businesses to frequent, and what changes to make to land they own, or on which they reside. Residents and property owners can develop habits such as recycling, water conservation, carpooling, and lower energy consumption that will ultimately influence landfill costs and the environment. When residents support local businesses, local dollars go back into Lorena's economy.

Land developers also play a part in the implementation of the City's Comprehensive Plan. For example, when developers adhere to best management practices for water quality, they help the environment. When developers make conscious decisions to respond to recommendations and requests by staff and property owners, they help to implement the Plan.

Partnering with the City on several levels, various area organizations also help to implement the Comprehensive Plan. For instance, the City can partner with a local housing non-profit on a new multifamily development by providing a portion of necessary funding, or assisting with grant applications, or placement of qualified residents. By working together, a considerable amount of work is lessened by shared responsibility and participation.

Regulatory Measures
Implementation sometimes requires more than voluntary action and regulatory measures must be taken. Many of these regulatory measures have been in place for decades, such as State and local building codes and floodplain protection. Two key sets of measures are the zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance.

Zoning Ordinance
Zoning is another implementation tool used to ensure that activities in a community are properly located in relation to each other. Zoning also attempts to provide for residential density where houses and residents can be adequately served by roads, schools, and utilities. The Zoning Ordinance places other controls on development to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of City residents. Zoning is intended to ensure light, air, and compatibility of uses, provide regulations for land use, building use, building heights, and setbacks. It ensures safety and uniformity of site development.

Subdivision Ordinance
The Subdivision Ordinance sets the parameters for physical development such as the creation of lots and blocks. Subdividing is the process of splitting a parcel of land into two or more parcels. This process is regulated to make sure the pattern of development recommended in the Comprehensive Plan actually occurs. During the subdivision process, streets and blocks are surveyed and designed to adequately support expected uses and forms of development. Lot size is largely determined by zoning regulations, but the shape, location, ability to be served by utilities are all part of subdivision regulations. In addition, drainage improvements such as storm sewers, and sidewalks occurs through application of subdivision regulations.

Other Regulations
While local government regulations provide a large amount of protection to residents, businesses, and property, federal and State regulations also help to implement a Comprehensive Plan. Some regulatory measures include floodplain protection and building codes, State stormwater regulations, and TxDOT road requirements.

Consistent Application of Policies
Consistent application of City policies protects the integrity of the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is like a muscle in the body - the more it is exercised, the stronger it becomes. Regular use of the Comprehensive Plan in decision-making provides the City Council with strong legal backing. It also sends a message to residents and future developers that the vision for the City is not a lofty thought, but an expected reality.

Funding

One of the most important ways the City implements its plan is through funding staff and programs, construction, and maintenance. City revenues come from property taxes, permits, fees and licenses, and funding from the State or federal government.

<u>Capital Improvements Program</u>
The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is the way in which the City determines, schedules, and prioritizes major public facilities and services needed to implement the Comprehensive Plan. This program is critical to the success of implementing the Plan.

<u>State and Federal Funds</u>
While both State and federal government financial support for localities has diminished over time, these sources of funding still provide for programs. Through a wide variety of grant making programs, many governmental agencies assist the City in work related to achieving the Comprehensive Plan goals. For instance, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development provides programs to help with housing and recreation for low income facilities. At present, the City does not qualify for Community Development Block Grants, but it might in the future. The Department of Homeland Security provides grants for projects which enhance policing opportunities. However, federal and state funds are expected to continue diminishing over time.

<u>Bonds</u>
Many communities issue bonds to help fund infrastructure improvements. High bond ratings are important for cities to create more ease in issuing bonds for funding.

<u>Grants</u>
There are many non-governmental or semi-governmental grant programs for the enhancement of city facilities. An example is the Rails-to-Trails program. Independently funded through donations and a foundation, the program assists communities in small trail projects which can utilize excess railroad rights-of-way.

Maps and Mapping Tools
Maps are tools that can be used to help implement the Comprehensive Plan. The Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) floodplain maps are used by most localities to help prevent flood damage to life and property. They are essential to helping property owners know when flood insurance is required. They also help the City identify where land development should and should not take place.

Strategic Planning
Strategic planning is a tool that helps decision-makers prioritize projects and spending. It is the next step after development of the Comprehensive Plan to make objectives and strategies a reality. Strategic plans provide a specific roadmap for implementation to occur during real time. Lorena's new Strategic Plan will ensure

that progress is made in a regular and orderly fashion that can respond to changes in priorities and the funding environment.

CHAPTER 12
SUMMARY of OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIES

Lorena is a charming small city in central Texas located within McLennan County. In early 2020, the City began an update to its 2013 Plan beginning with the development of its vision.

Lorena will be a multicultural thriving city with a "hometown" feel. It will be supported by excellent schools and infrastructure including utilities, roads, bike lanes, and sidewalks. It will be a unique place to live and visit, capitalizing on its downtown historic district and its location along the I35 corridor. With multigenerational neighborhoods it will have a diversity of housing types and price points. Community gathering spaces will be connected to neighborhoods and commercial areas. Active businesses and small industries will produce a stable tax base.

To achieve this vision, the developed and adopted the following goals, objectives, and strategies:

Growth Management Goal: Lorena will have residential, commercial, and industrial growth while retaining its small hometown feel.

Objective 1: Increase residential units according to the Land Use Plan.
Strategies
   a. Ensure that adequate water and sewer service is available to support growth.
   b. Rezone land to reflect land uses shown on the Land Use Plan.

Objective 2: While preserving the character of Old Town, increase the number of commercial and retail uses to provide more shopping opportunities for residents and visitors. (for strategies see Chapters 6 and 7)

Objective 3: Increase the number of small industries in Lorena. (for strategies, see Chapter 7)

Objective 4: Recognize Lorena's unique characteristics which should be preserved and incorporated into potential design recommendations for new buildings.
Strategies
    a. Identify specific design features of existing buildings in Lorena that could be replicated or mimicked in new construction. These features may be related to scale and size of buildings or materials.
    b. Consider creating design guidelines to recommend for new construction.

Objective 5: Have cultural events and festivals which help to create Lorena as a tourist destination.
Strategies
    a. Support efforts of the Chamber of Commerce to promote community pride in and attract visitors to Lorena.
    b. Improve connectivity to and visibility and usability of McBrayer Park.

Future Land Use Goal: Lorena will have safe and convenient places to live, work, worship, and play.

Objective 1: Develop land in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan
Strategies
    a. Rezone properties in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan.
    b. Follow the guidance shown on the Future Land Use Plan when making decisions for growth in the City.
    c. Promote development of apartments and attached housing in the mixed-use area.
    d. During the next Comprehensive Plan update, assess whether multifamily housing is adequately provided in Lorena.

Objective 2: Develop the Area along Interstate 35.
Strategies
a. Work with economic development professionals, local developers, and the Chamber of Commerce to attract business and residential uses to the corridor.
b. Building on aesthetic features of the overpasses, create a visual theme for the corridor.
c. Using the recent features incorporated into the interstate improvements, promote an aesthetic quality with new development along the Interstate 35 corridor.

Objective 3: Develop a set of expectations for the ETJ and Voluntary Annexation

Strategies
a. Investigate the opportunity to coordinate an ETJ agreement with the City of Waco to consolidate whole development tracts into Lorena's ETJ. The City could then generate the opportunity for the commercial development to voluntarily annex into the City limits.
b. Working with property owners in the ETJ and the Planning Commission, develop a set of recommended uses and design guidelines for the area in the ETJ southeast of the City limits.

Objective 4: Ensure compatibility of a Contemporary Mixed- Use Lorena with the Existing Community.
Strategies
a. Work with residents and property owners in Lorena to understand the base values, goals and objectives of the community which will be important in any new mixed--use community design.
b. Communicate the community desires to future developers of the mixed-use area.
c. Develop building inspection and engineering review processes which will encourage high quality implementation, but expedited construction implementation.

Transportation Goal: Lorena will have a transportation network which meets basic needs for movement, access, safety, and reasonably rapid travel for people and goods through and within the City.

Objective 1: Use the cross-sections shown in the plan and concepts for Context Sensitive Design when improving existing streets and building new streets, interconnections, and sidewalks.

Objective 2: Fund and build improvements to existing streets as shown on the Master Thoroughfare Plan.
Strategies
a. Continue to fund improvements through the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and available grants and loans.
b. Create a Pavement Management System which extends existing roadway life and manages the CIP for future roadway replacement.
c. Coordinate with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to address long-range transportation needs.

Objective 3: Make important interconnections of streets to activity centers.
Strategy

a. Minimize use of cul-de-sacs in new neighborhoods so that emergency services can be provided as quickly as possible when needed.

Objective 4: Improve existing sidewalks and construct new sidewalks for pedestrian access and citizen health.
Strategies
  a. As shown on the Sidewalk Plan, fund and build sidewalks to help create an interconnected sidewalk system throughout the City.
  b. When designing new sidewalks along existing streets recognize that right-of-way may not be sufficient for the ideal street cross-section shown in Figure 2. In these circumstances, provide the widest sidewalk possible for pedestrians.

Objective 5: Consider using unused railroad right-of-way for new trails as part of a Rails-to-Trails system.
Strategies
  a. Work with the railroad and nearby property owners to develop a plan for new trails in railroad right-of-way.
  b. Provide direct access to adjacent property with minimal interference to movement and safety of traffic on public roadways.
  c. Follow provisions of the 2019 Parks and Trails Masterplan to appropriately locate, design and construct planned trails.

Economic Development Goal: Lorena will have a strong and resilient economic base.

Objective 1: Continue to use the Lorena Economic Development Corporation as a vehicle for economic development and support the Heart of Texas Economic Development District, and the Chamber of Commerce.
Strategies:
  a. Continue to provide funding to the three groups responsible for promoting economic development in Lorena.
  b. Continue to work with staff from the three economic development groups to market the community for business development.

Objective 2: Concentrate efforts on attracting destination-based retail.
Strategies:
  a. Work to attract predominantly visitor-based Class A retail space in North Lorena.
  b. Work to attract a combination of visitor and resident-based Class A retail space in South Lorena.

Objective 3: Maintain and improve Old Town Lorena as the center of the community and a destination for visitors and tourists.

Strategies:

a. Promote Old Town for predominately resident-based Class B retail availability. To that end:
   1. Focus should be on redevelopment opportunities including joint-use parking for the established businesses,
   2. Provide connectivity to the Rails- linking Old Town with newer subdivisions,
   3. Tenant choice and retention should focus on family-oriented restaurants, and locally owned retail.

b. Continue effort to establish partnerships to take best advantage of the public and private investment in Old Town.

c. Utilize the Texas Main Street Four Points approach of design, organization, promotion, and economic restructuring to energize the local economy while retaining our historic charm.

d. Continue to implement Old Town revitalization and development using the Main Street Program realizing that downtown development is an ongoing program instead of a project that ends.

e. Continue to assist and support the Chamber of Commerce with tourism development.

f. Continue to promote Lorena as a destination for fun and recreation, especially with festivals and public gatherings.

g. New development and redevelopment should be oriented around the pedestrian. To that end,
   1. New buildings should be placed along the property line and should be oriented towards the street.
   2. Wide sidewalks, benches, shade trees, raised/enhanced crosswalks and other pedestrian amenities should be considered during street design.
   3. On-street parking, such as parallel or head-in parking, may be incorporated; however, all parking lot areas should be located behind buildings and away from the main center of activity to ensure safe pedestrian movements.

Objective 4: Promote development of a Flex Space Business Park.

Strategy:

a. Focus on developing flexible industrial space primarily geared to distribution, logistics, warehousing, and light assembly. These uses can have very limited impact on the surrounding community in terms of environmental of nuisance impact. Combined with upgraded accessibility of interstate bridges and higher speed access ramps have brought to the community, these uses enable a greater employment base to the community. Flex Space Business Park developments should include both functional and aesthetic design.

Objective 5: Rebrand the City and create wayfinding signs in the community.
Strategies:
    a. Focus on signage at the Interstate through entry gateway signs at both the north and southern ends of the community. Ideally these would be placed at near the reconfigured exit ramps to IH-35. These entrances are the first opportunity that the City must capture the imagination and interest of pass-through traffic made up of consumers, and people looking for a new community in which to work and to live. The gateway entrances should incorporate the unique "L" identifier and include appropriately designed signage that directs people to the amenities within Lorena, but also informs them of the relevance of the community to the region as a whole.
    b. Develop a design plan for public lighting, median design, signage, and landscaping near Interstate 35, then repeat the design in other focused areas such as the Old Town.

Historic and Cultural Preservation Goal: Lorena will preserve and enhance its cultural and historic resources.

Objective 1: Preserve historic resources, including buildings, sites, and archeology.
Strategies
    a. Update the inventory of historic buildings, properties, and sites in Lorena.
    b. Address apparent barriers to preservation and renovation of structures presented by fire, life safety, accessibility, and building codes.
    c. Reconcile differences between the Zoning Ordinance and historic preservation policies to facilitate renovation and restoration of historic structures in the City.
    d. Identify, develop, and implement funding sources and incentives to aid in preserving the community's historic resources.
    e. Develop and implement a program or programs to increase public awareness and acceptance of efforts to preserve historic resources in the community.
    f. Encourage property owners to restore existing historic buildings and sites.
    g. Develop and implement a vehicle to buy historically and architecturally significant structures in jeopardy and restore them.
    h. Provide resources and guidance to address problems, whether perceived or actual, such as building code application for older buildings, incentives for development, sensitivity to historic design of buildings, and design uniformity.

Housing Goal: Lorena will have a variety of housing types available to all incomes. Housing will be safe and decent for residents.

Objective 1: Promote development of all housing types: single family detached units, attached units, townhouses, and apartments.
Strategies
   a. Support development of new areas for attached housing, townhouses, and apartments as shown on the Future Land Use Plan.
   b. To the extent possible, allow for a mixture of housing types within larger neighborhoods to support a variety of age groups and income levels.
   c. Redevelop existing residential lots where buildings have been removed. Doing so would provide opportunities for homebuilders looking for lower-cost land to build homes based on traditional Texas style architecture.
   d. Promote replatting of lots to make sure that housing meets minimum lot standards for zoning districts.
   e. Modify the zoning ordinance to improve opportunities for multifamily housing to serve younger populations.

Objective 2: Promote provision of affordable housing in Lorena.
Strategies
   a. Encourage Habitat for Humanity and other builders of affordable units to provide housing in Lorena.
   b. Support provision of Section 8 vouchers in apartments, as appropriate.

Objective 3: Maintain and improve the existing housing stock.
Strategies
   a. Expand programs to maintain the existing housing stock such as Habitat for Humanity and other organizations and agencies.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Goal: Have excellent parks and recreational areas and preserve important natural resources.

Objective 1: Follow the recommendations in the 2019 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan.
Strategies:
   a. Develop additional community park on east side of Lorena to expand publicly owned parkland acreage and balance spatial distribution of recreation facilities in the community.
   b. Develop a children's Splash Pad to meet high demand, present and past, for water-based recreation option in Lorena.
   c. Develop hike/bike walking trails to meet high demand, present and past, for recreation and connectivity in the community.

d. Develop Precinct #1 Regional Park with partners to address need for a publicly owned Sports Complex with additional nature areas, picnic/pavilion areas, dog park, community garden, and more to address other highly requested recreation.
e. Develop additional nature areas, picnic/pavilion facilities, community garden and dog park requested by Public Input.
f. Obtain dedicated park lands in new residential subdivisions and develop neighborhood and community parks to provide recreation options for residents.
g. Acquire park lands for the development of publicly owned recreation facilities.
h. Encourage parkland dedication in new subdivisions.

Objective 2: Protect the Floodplain.
Strategies:
a. Discourage and/or prevent construction of permanent structures in the floodplain to help protect lives and property.
b. Encourage planting of trees and shrubs in the floodplain to help improve water quality.

Goal for Infrastructure, Services, and Utilities: Lorena will have high quality infrastructure and service provision to support residents, businesses, and institutions in the City.

Objective 1: Provide sufficient quantity and quality of drinking water for the existing community and to promote new development and growth.
Strategies
a. Accurately map and maintain digital databases of all mains, hydrants, and other city-maintained appurtenances to accurately plan for future capital expenses and maintenance needs.
b. Examine all long-range agreements for the procurement of water. Make sure the quantity is scalable to meet future demand by new development growth.
c. Utilize capital improvement programming to indicate appropriate new system construction for the promotion of new growth and land development.

Objective 2: Provide wastewater collection and treatment to meet all state and federal standards.
Strategies
a. Continue to participate in the Waco Metropolitan Area Regional Sewerage System to ensure adequate and environmentally safe sewage disposal.

b. Seek alternative funding sources for the continual replacement of outdated wastewater system lines.
c. Ensure that sufficient capacity exists for growth in Lorena.

Objective 3: Provide for stormwater management that prevents flooding and siltation of creeks and streams and meets all state and federal regulations.
Strategies
   a. Develop a stormwater management plan to ensure that flooding does not occur in the City.

Objective 4: Continue to provide solid waste disposal service in the City.
Strategies
   a. Continue to promote recycling to reduce the volume of waste deposited in landfills and therefore keep the cost of disposal at a reasonable level.
   b. Monitor the needs of the community for solid waste disposal options and act in a timely fashion to meet these needs.
   c. Promote mulching and composting of green wastes, such as leaves, tree limbs, grass clippings, brush, etc. as part of the recycling and waste minimization efforts.

Objective 5: Continue to provide police services and programs to create a safe environment for all citizens in Lorena.
Strategies
   a. Recertify for Texas Law Enforcement Best Practices when the recertification is available in 2021.
   b. Develop and maximize the use of human resources through effective management and training. These human resources include police personnel, other governmental agencies, the private sector, and the citizens of Lorena.
   c. Evaluate the need for additional personnel and implement procedures to select only the most qualified personnel.
   d. Update and advance technology to meet increasing challenges and legal requirements.
   e. Monitor pay for police officers and adjust as needed to attract well-qualified personnel.

Objective 6: Continue the relationship with the Lorena Volunteer Fire Department for firefighting and protection services.
Strategies
   a. Assure relationships that ensure adequate fire protection facilities, equipment, and water pressure to respond to and fight a fire in any part of the community in a timely and efficient fashion.
   b. Monitor the need for additional personnel, equipment, and facilities to provide timely response in all areas as the community increases in land area and population.

c. Continue to upgrade the emergency medical services to provide the highest level of service possible to the residents of Lorena/McLennan County.
d. Focus on education of the public in areas of fire prevention and accident prevention.
e. Establish an Emergency Operations Center
f. Consider adding fire stations in various parts of the City as the community grows in greater land area.

Objective 7: Explore ways to provide library services to residents.
Strategies
a. Assess whether library services are adequate for Lorena residents. If additional service is needed, examine public and private funding sources for building a Lorena library.

b. Examine the possibility of funding book locker located in the community utilizing adjacent library resources.

Objective 8: Continue to provide city administrative services from City Hall.
Strategies
a. Keep the City Hall building in a good state of repair so that it continues to be an asset and an example for the community.

Objective 9: Practice good stewardship of all City Owned properties.
Strategies
a. Assure that City-owned property is adequately maintained and landscaped.
b. Dispose of public property which has no foreseeable use, or which other types of development could better utilize.

The Lorena Strategic Plan provides specific steps to activate the goals, objectives, and strategies.