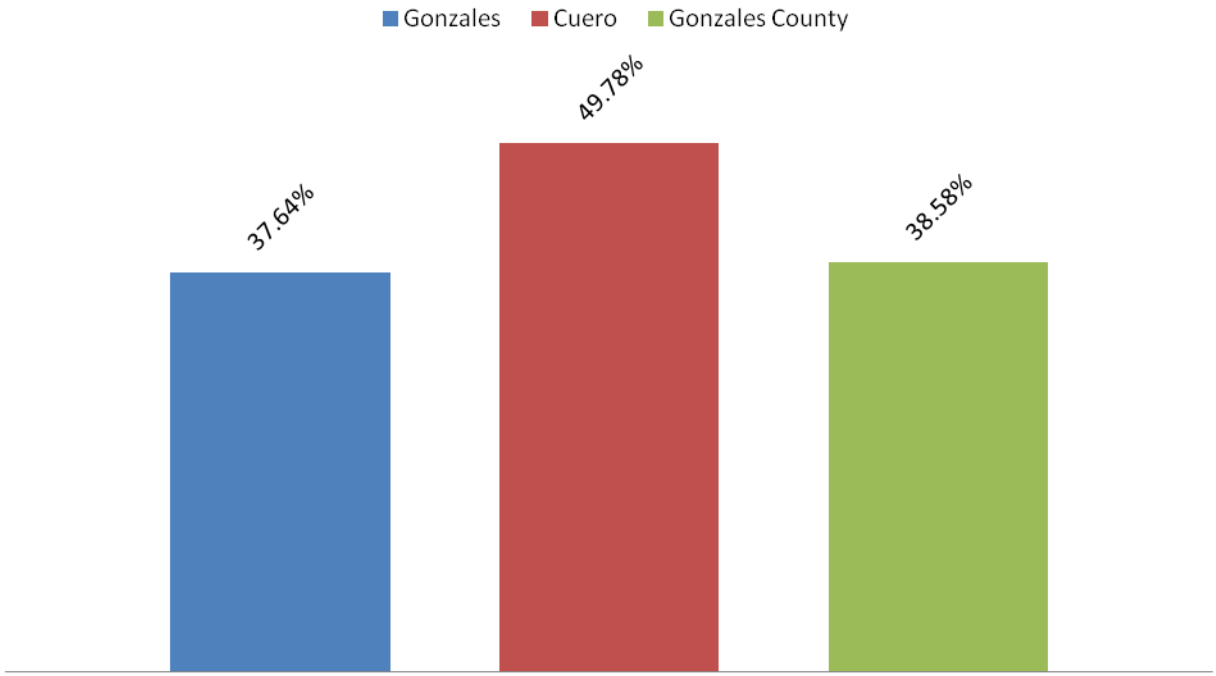
Figure 3.18
10-year Rate of Growth
Total Taxable Sales



Source: Texas Office of the Comptroller

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[1] Center for Community and Business Research; University of Texas San Antonio; Institute for Economic Development. (2012). *Eagle Ford Shale Economic impact for Counties with Active Drilling.* San Antonio.
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[3] Texas State Office of the Comptroller. (n.d.). *TexasAhead*. Retrieved November 11, 2012, from http://www.texasahead.org/tax_programs/typeab/typeb_projects.php
[4] (2012). *Truth in Taxation Summary.* Texas Property Tax Code Section 26.16.

Future Economy

Introduction

The city of Gonzales has spent the last several years working with the department of Economic Development, the Gonzales Economic Development Corporation, and its citizens to develop a plan for the city's future economy. Since 1997, the local businesses in Gonzales have improved, expanded, and employed more people. This section of the comprehensive plan address business retention, expansion of job opportunities, tourism-related business revitalization, downtown repopulation, and housing choice diversification.

Business Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies

GOAL 3.1: Create a healthy, vital, and consistently growing economic environment with plenty of employment opportunities and a diversified tax base.

OBJECTIVE 3.1.1: By 2030, Gonzales will be home to over 4,000 jobs, providing a robust job base for citizens.

POLICY 3.1.1.1: Develop and implement city-wide financial tools designed to support trade sector business retention and recruitment initiatives such as an industrial revenue bond that provides below market interest rates and additional property tax reductions.

POLICY 3.1.1.2: Offer economic development training; conduct work flow analysis which identifies people who are living outside the city but working in the city; and encourage companies which do business in Gonzales but are located elsewhere to open a branch office in the city.

POLICY 3.1.1.3: Build on the momentum of the oil and gas sector by encouraging oil and natural gas related industries to offer more job opportunities in the city itself.

POLICY 3.1.1.4: Reward firms that add a minimum number of new professional jobs with a Job Creation Grant, which ensure the company receives a cash grant per job created.

OBJECTIVE 3.1.2: Develop businesses that offer the goods and services needed by citizens; by 2030, reduce the leakage from the retail sector by 50%.

POLICY 3.1.2.1: Take advantage of current financial incentives, such as GEDC Grant/ Loans and GEDC Small Business Improvement Grants, to provide support to organizations serving low-profit business owners.

OBJECTIVE 3.1.3: Seek a more diverse tax base by increasing the variety of the city's businesses; by 2030, the percent of government revenues derived from sales tax should reach 35%.

POLICY 3.1.3.1: Identify areas that should be prepared for industrial and office uses, and support more industrial park development.

POLICY 3.1.3.2: Encourage mixed-use development, including residential use and local business, especially tourism-related businesses and downtown revitalization.

OBJECTIVE 3.1.4: Increase per capita personal income and promote quality of life.

POLICY 3.1.4.1: Develop a strategic plan to encourage tourism that generates and increases jobs.

POLICY 3.1.4.2: Provide and maintain an attractive environment for existing major employers and future employers by creating a safe and healthy community with an atmosphere of family-work balance that support flexible working hours and part-time contracts.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

Short Term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

- Use zoning tools to create mixed-use development districts in the downtown area.

Medium Term (actions to take place over several years)

- Develop a healthy and attractive investment environment through economic incentives to encourage local businesses, branded historic tourism sites, and desirable landscape design of residential areas.

Long Term (actions to take place over the next 10 – 20 years)

- Establish a proper economic structure which is sustainable, healthy and diverse by maintaining the strength of existing major industries, developing tourism and tourism-related businesses, and providing support to small businesses.

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

- The Texas Leverage Fund provides additional financing help to communities that have adopted an economic development sales tax. The communities may expand economic development through using and collecting future sales tax revenues. More information can be found at *http:// www.texaswideopenforbusiness.com/incentives-financing/financing/leverage-fund.php.*

- Economic Development Sales Tax: According to the State and Local Economic Development Programs, the city of Gonzales is a Type B EDC (economic development corporation). A type B EDC can fund all projects eligible for Type A EDCs, as well as parks, museums, sports facilities, and affordable housing. Type A EDCs are typically created to fund industrial development projects, such as business infrastructure, manufacturing and research and development. More information can be found at *http://www.texasahead.org/tax_programs/*.

- The Texas Enterprise Zone Program is an economic development tool for local communities to partner with the State of Texas to promote job creation and capital investment in economically distressed areas of the state. More information can be found at *http://www.window.state.tx.us/ taxinfo/enterprise_zone/ez_program.html*.

- Small Business Administration Loan programs have several different loans for very specific purposes including General Small Business Loans, Microloan Program, Real Estate & Equipment Loans, and Disaster Loans. More information can be found at *http://www.sba.gov/loanprograms*.

GOAL 3.2: Appreciate the city's history; take advantage of historic buildings and other resources to create a Texas destination with a unique, revitalized tourism-related business.

OBJECTIVE 3.2.1: By 2030, brand our history-related businesses at the state and national levels.

POLICY 3.2.1.1: Support and encourage further development of arts and cultural pro grams that can serve as attractors for new business investment and visitors to the city. Figure 3.19 shows the annual Texas Renaissance Festival in Todd Mission, TX, an exemplary example of this kind of activity. For more information, see *www.texrenfest.com*.

POLICY 3.2.1.2: Make use of advertising and promotions to brand this historic town such as brochures disseminated at historic sites or billboards along the city's major highways. Plans for long-range promotion at the state and national scale via a website should also be made.

Figure 3.19: The Texas Renaissance Festival in Todd Mission, Texas

Source: *http://aggiephotoart.com/texas_ren_fest.html*

POLICY 3.2.1.3: Develop incentives for history-related and tourism-based businesses, such as providing a combination of tickets or discounts for historic festivals, themed local restaurants, and/or museums, to attract more consumers and visitors.

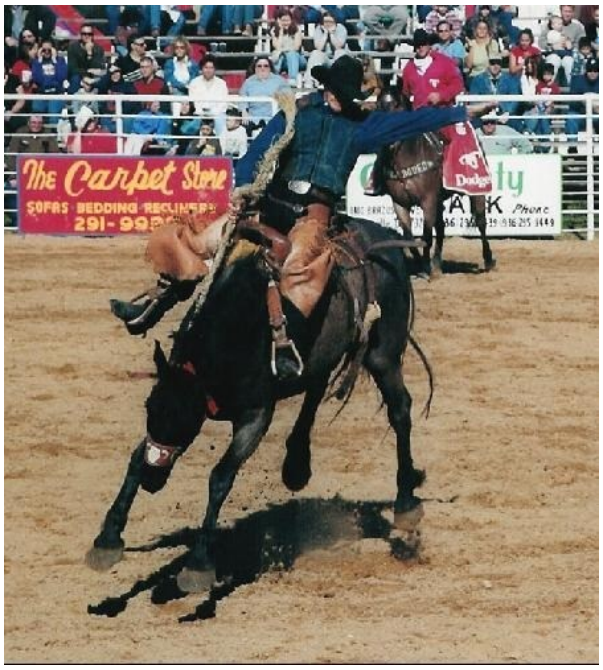
OBJECTIVE 3.2.2: Create a unique identity that is "Texas-style" and "historic" and apply the concept around the whole city.

POLICY 3.2.2.1: Develop a downtown aesthetic that stresses an the history of the city.

POLICY 3.2.2.2: Establish tourism-attracting activities such as mounted patrol, rodeo expansion (Figure 3.20), and themed retail/restaurant development.

OBJECTIVE 3.2.3: Repurpose historic buildings for new commercial activity.

Figure 3.20: The Hunstville, Texas Rodeo



Source: http://members.virtualtourist.com/m/5917f/d6707/

POLICY 3.2.3.1: Coordinate historic preservation with business development.

POLICY 3.2.3.2: Encourage the restoration of older buildings such as the Emporium, Aline Auto Parts, the Boothe & Lewis Building, the Long Branch Saloon, the Gonzales Food Market, Liford's Books and More, and the Eggleston House.

POLICY 3.2.3.3: Develop strategic plans or economic incentives for providing some financial support to repurposing historic buildings toward business uses. One economic incentive could be a sales tax rebate.

OBJECTIVE 3.2.4: Stimulate tourism in historic areas.

POLICY 3.2.4.1: Develop a tourism guidebook that includes all tourism sites and disseminate the guidebook in restaurants, hotels, area bookstores, and during festivals and rodeos.

POLICY 3.2.4.2: Involve citizens in the redevelopment of historic sites and branding efforts.

POLICY 3.2.4.3: Protect downtown landmarks and historic sites such as the Gonzales Memorial Museum (Fig. 3.21), the Gonzales County Courthouse (including the "Come and Take It" cannon), Laurel Ridge Antiques, JB Wells House, Pioneer Village Living History Center and the Old Jail.

Figure 3.21: Gonzales Memorial Museum and Amphitheater

Source: http://www.hillcountrydeco.com/commemorative/gonzales/

ACTION STRATEGIES:

Short Term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

- Review the current historical buildings and identify what buildings needed to be repurposed or restored.
- Use zoning tools to create mixed-use and historical districts within the downtown and main street areas.
- Develop a promotion plan for the city's unique identity as a "Texas-style" and "historic" town that includes tourism guidebooks, promotional brochures, highway billboards, and websites.

Medium Term (actions to take place over several years)

- Apply for funding for repurposing and preservation of historic buildings. See suggested funding options below.
- Obtain necessary building permits and make sure the intended repurposing is in accordance with the neighborhood's zoning requirements.

Long Term (actions to take place over the next 10 – 20 years)

- Complete restoration of downtown landmarks and historic sites.
- Gather the financial capital for building repurposing from previous business investments.
- Construct and establish historic tourism-related business areas.

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

- The American Battlefield Protection Program promotes the preservation of significant historic battlefields on American soil. The program's focus is primarily on land use, cultural resource and site management planning, and public education. More information can be found at *http://www.nps.gov/hps/abpp/*.

- Continue a relationship with the Main Street Program. Through the historic restoration and rehabilitation of downtown's commercial building facades, the Gonzales Main Street Business Incentive aims at improving the image of downtown. Among other functions, the program includes a single payment reimbursement to property owners per building/business, on a first come, first serve basis. For more information, refer to *http://www.cityofgonzales.org/Department%20Pages/mainstreetbusincentives.html*.

- Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives encourage private sector investment in the rehabilitation and re-use of historic buildings. The community revitalization program is one of the nation's most successful and cost-effective community revitalization programs. More information can be found at *http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm*.

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a privately funded nonprofit organization which aims to save America's historic places. Visit *http://www.preservationnation.org/* for more information.

GOAL 3.3: Gain increased tax revenue and other economic development benefits through downtown revitalization.

OBJECTIVE 3.3.1: Forge a healthy partnership between the City of Gonzales and its citizens to support developments that benefit the future economy of the city.

POLICY 3.3.1.1: Establish a quasi-government for the downtown such as a Business Improvement Districts (BID). BIDs are funded by property owners who voluntarily increase their property taxes by 5-15% to pay for BID functions such as clean-up of the downtown, festivals and events, and image improvements.

OBJECTIVE 3.3.2: Update retail that serves the downtown. By 2030, double the number of visitors to the downtown.

POLICY 3.3.2.1: Specify downtown incentives in the existing GEDC Small Business Improvement Program to help local-serving retail expand and/or improve. For existing businesses renting property, try to keep the lease comparable and fair. For existing businesses that are self-running, keep the tax lower. For new start-up businesses, work with them to offer free or low fees as their business gets off the ground.

Figure 3.22: Gonzales' Old Jail Museum

Source: Google Images

POLICY 3.3.2.2: Develop the downtown area into a weekend getaway destination by promoting interesting and meaningful attractions, such as Old Jail Museum (pictured in Figure 3.22), the Gonzales Memorial Museum, and themed restaurants. Create a pleasing and friendly environment by adding wayfinding signage and comfortable sidewalk seating.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

Short Term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

- Begin a downtown advisory group, which includes downtown business representatives and other stakeholders.
- Hold a workshop to define the boundaries of downtown, how dense it should be, and how it addresses the immediate surrounding neighborhoods.
- Hire a consultant firm to determine the retail concentration that a downtown market could support, for instance, urban entertainment (movies, restaurants, night clubs), specialty retail (clothing, furniture, and jewelry boutique stores), and local-serving retail (grocery, drug, book, video stores).

Medium Term (actions to take place over several years)

- Keep events in the downtown area.
- Update the existing zoning codes to encourage mixed-use downtown development and an attractive urban form.

Long Term (actions to take place over the next 10 – 20 years)

- Establish a Business Improvement District (BID) and so that funding from property owners in this district can be reinvested back into it.

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

- Business Improvement Districts (BID) are "special assessment districts in which property owners vote to initiate, manage and finance supplemental services or enhancements above and beyond the baseline of services already provided by their local city or town governments. A special assessment, or common area fee, is levied only on property within the district. The assessments are collected and expended within the district for a range of services and/or programs, including marketing and public relations, improving the downtown marketplace or city/town center, capital

improvements, public safety enhancements, and special events." Source: *http://www.mass.gov/hed/community/planning/bid.html*.

- Community Facilities Grants assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. More information can be found at *http://reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/*.

GOAL 3.4: Create good access to education and training opportunities that meets the needs of the local labor force and industry sectors.

OBJECTIVE 3.4.1: Increase the quality and competitiveness of the Gonzales Center of Victoria College. By 2020, increase enrollment per semester to 5,500. (Enrollment at time of publication is 4,603.)

POLICY 3.4.1.1: Facilitate the collaboration between the Gonzales Center of Victoria College and local industries in order to generate attractive scholarship programs, narrowing opportunity gaps for potential students.

POLICY 3.4.1.2: Support the Gonzales Center of Victoria College in offering post-secondary degree programs that improve the workforce's professional skills. Discuss with local employers and educators what skill sets they would ideally like the college to offer.

OBJECTIVE 3.4.2: By 2030, align training and education to meet workforce and industry skill needs at all levels.

Figure 3.23: Adult education and training are important to Gonzales' citizens

Source: Google Images

POLICY 3.4.2.1: Encourage the development of an "English as a Second Language" (ESL) service to meet needs of a fast-growing Spanish population under the umbrella of the existing Professional Continuing Education program, which offers continuing nurse education and CPR training, or the Workforce Training program which offers services such as business, computer, and truck training.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

Short Term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

- Discuss with professionals in local industries what their expectations are for future business development
- Identify the gap between professional skills that the current labor force has and still needs.

Medium Term (actions to take place over several years)

- Hold a series of workshop to facilitate communication between citizens, Victoria College, and local industries to see if there is potential to develop further education and/or training programs.
- Create a sub-website or a link in the city web page that gives information about education and training programs, including their locations, schedules, etc.

Long Term (actions to take place over the next 10 – 20 years)

- Forge local employer partnerships with the Gonzales Center of Victoria College to offer grants to the expand job training.
- Track the cooperation between the Gonzales Center of Victoria College and local industries to identify whether education and training programs have satisfy employers.

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

- The Texas Workforce Commission's Skill Development Program "is Texas' premier job-training program. Skills Development provides grants to community and technical colleges to provide customized job training programs for businesses who want to train new workers or upgrade the skills of their existing workforce." Source: *http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/funds/skills-development-program-overview.htm*.

- The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant Program builds on the capacity of colleges "to train Trade Adjustment Assistance-eligible and other adult workers for new careers in grocery retail management through an industry-endorsed curriculum and credential that is highly valued in the grocery industry and will bring multiple employ-

employment opportunities. ACT-On colleges will build educational pathways and develop new credentials using competency-based curriculum, "chunked" and connected into horizontal and vertical pathways. Training materials and modules will be available on an online repository for college and industry use." Source: *http://www.doleta.gov/taaccct/*.

GOAL 3.5: Provide fair housing opportunities for residents in all neighborhoods; create a desirable living environment, increase median property value, and decrease housing vacancy.

OBJECTIVE 3.5.1: By 2030, increase the median property value of housing by 30%.

POLICY 3.5.1.1: Propose expanding and establishing parks and green space where most of the properties could benefit from better landscape views.

POLICY 3.5.1.2: Provide appropriate infrastructure and services to neighborhoods, including installation of street furniture, street maintenance, sidewalk construction, and playground construction.

POLICY 3.5.1.3: Develop tax incentives that encourage residents to protect, maintain and upgrade the houses they own or rent. For example, decrease or reimburse 30% of property tax to residents who restore and maintain the property within the framework of design standards of building codes.

POLICY 3.5.1.4: Promote a desirable design and layout of future housing developments, like in Figure 3.24. Desirable design means that housing maintains Texas-style facades, while the desirable layout means a well-maintained landscape environment around the development. Unkempt landscapes lead to a negative impression of the neighborhood while a shaded public walkway promotes the neighborhood's value.

Figure 3.24: A pleasant neighborhood

Source: *http://www.americanlegislator.org/*

OBJECTIVE 3.5.2: Increase diversity of housing choices and consider people with special housing needs.

POLICY 3.5.2.1: Increase desirable and affordable housing stock for renters and homebuyers (see Figure 3.25). Provide assistance for low-income households to apply for the Housing Choice Voucher program.

POLICY 3.5.2.2: Create a new zoning district considering the special housing needs of the influx of workers related to the oil and gas industry.

Figure 3.25: An example of affordable housing

Source: http://www.huduser.org/portal/pdredge/pdr_edge_inpractice_092112.html

ACTION STRATEGIES:

Short Term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

- Create a new zoning district for future influx of workers, to improve the existing living conditions for workers who live in temporary housing or in inappropriate locations for work.
- Encourage multi-family housing through zoning.
- Strengthen and encourage neighborhoods to proactively maintain and upgrade their properties through tax incentives, matching grant programs, and forgivable loans.

Medium Term (actions to take place over several years)

- Identify and remove impediments to housing attractiveness and neighborhood viability, such as nuisance or unmaintained street infrastructure within neighborhoods.

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

- The Public Housing Agency's Housing Choice Voucher program allows a very low-income family to receive a housing voucher. The family must pay 30% of its monthly adjusted gross income for rent and utilities. For more information, go to *http://www.housingchoiceprogram.com/details/gonzales_housing_authority_78629*.

- The Planning and Capacity Building Fund provides grants for local public facilities and housing planning activities in Texas. More information can be found at *http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/RuralCommunityDevelopmentBlockGrantCDBG/PlanningandCapacityBuildingFund.aspx*.

- Using federal Community Development Block Grant funds, the Texas Community Development Fund assist smaller communities. The funds are exclusively for low and moderate income persons (households earning 80% or less of the area median family income) and are available only to units of general local government (cities and counties) that levy either a local sales or property tax. Find more information at *http://tfgainc.com/index.php?tag=tcdp*.

Table 3.13: Economy policy table

#	Action	Lead Contact	Timing	City Resources	Outside Funding	Official Ordinance or Official Act	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards, or Monitoring	Developmental Incentives	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
3. 1.1.1	Use zoning tools to create mixed-use development districts in the downtown area.	Zoning	Short Term (1-3 years)	N/A	N/A		X			
3. 1.2.1	Develop economic incentives to encourage local businesses, brand historic tourism sites	Finance	Mid Range (3-5 years)	N/A	N/A				X	
3. 1.3.1	Establish a proper economic structure	Economic Development	Long Term (5-10	N/A	N/A			X		
3. 2.1.1	Adopt phased historical repurposing plans	Main Street	Short Term (1-3 years)	N/A	Main Street		X			
3. 2.1.2	Use zoning tools to create mixed use and historical districts within the downtown areas.	Zoning	Short Term (1-3 years)	N/A	N/A		X			
3. 2.1.3	Develop promotion scheme to attract business investments	Economic Development	Short Term (1-3 years)	N/A	N/A				X	
3. 2.2.1	Apply for funding for preservation of historic buildings	Finance	Medium Term (3-5 years)	N/A	N/A				X	

#	Action	Lead Contact	Timing	City Resources	Outside Funding	Official Ordinance or Official Act	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards, or Monitoring	Developmental Incentives	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
3. 2.2.2	Obtain necessary building permits for repurposing historic buildings	Zoning	Medium Term (3-5 years	N/A	Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives		X			
3. 2.3.1	Complete restoration of downtown landmarks and historic sites.	Main Street	Long Term (5-10 years)	Main Street Program	N/A		X	X		
3. 2.3.2	Gather financial capital for repurposing buildings	Finance	Long Term (5-10 years)	Main Street Program	The National Trust for Historic Preservation				X	
3. 2.3.3	Construct and establish historic tourism-related business areas	staff	Long Term (5-10 years)	Main Street Program	N/A		X			
3. 3.1.1	Create a downtown advisory group	Staff	Short Term (1-3 years)	N/A	N/A		X			X
3. 3.1.2	Hold workshops to define the boundaries and concerns of downtown area	Staff	Short Term (1-3 years)	Yes	N/A		X			X
3. 3.1.3	Hire consultant firm to determine downtown retail market	Staff	Short Term (1-3 years)	Yes	N/A					X
3. 3.2.1	Maintain a focus on downtown	Staff	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Yes	N/A		X			

#	Action	Lead Contact	Timing	City Resources	Outside Funding	Official Ordinance or Official Act	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards, or Monitoring	Developmental Incentives	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
3. 3.2.2	Update the existing zoning codes to encourage mixed-use downtown development and attractive urban form.	Zoning	Medium Term (3-5 years)	N/A	N/A		X			
3. 3.3.1	Establish Business Improvement Districts (BID)	Economic Development	Long Term (5-10 years)	N/A	Business Improvement Districts (BID) program				X	
3.4.1.1	Collaborate with professionals in the local industries	Staff	Short Term (1-3 years)	N/A	N/A					X
3.4.1.2	Identify the gaps in professional skills for economic development.	Staff	Short Term (1-3 years)	N/A	Workforce Commission - Skill Development Program		X			X
3.4.2.1	Facilitate communication between citizens, the college, and local industries	Staff	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Yes	N/A		X			X
3.4.2.2	Keep records training information, locations, and schedules	Staff	Medium Term (3-5 years)	N/A	N/A			X		

#	Action	Lead Contact	Timing	City Resources	Outside Funding	Official Ordinance or Official Act	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards, or Monitoring	Developmental Incentives	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
3.4.3.1	Offer community college grants to expand job training	Finance	Long Term (5-10 years)	N/A	Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant Program				X	
3.4.3.2	Track the cooperation between Victoria College and local industries	Staff	Long Term (5-10 years)	N/A	N/A			X		X
3.5.1.1	Develop a plan for future housing locations	Zoning	Short Term (1-3 years)	N/A	Planning and Capacity Building Fund		X			
3.5.1.2	Upgrade existing properties through financial assistance	Finance	Short Term (1-3 years)	N/A	Planning and Capacity Building Fund				X	
3.5.2.1	Identify and remove impediments to housing attractiveness	Staff	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Yes	N/A		X			
3.5.2.1	Encourage multi-family housing through zoning.	Zoning	Long Term (5-10 years)	N/A	Texas Community Development Fund		X			
3.5.2.2	Create a new zoning district for future influx of workers	Zoning	Long Term (5-10 years)	N/A	Housing Choice Voucher program		X			

Housing

Introduction

Despite the sluggish economy of the mid- to late-2000s, Gonzales is experiencing a high level of growth as a result of a regional oil boom. Since 2008, a vast number of workers have been moving into the area, leading to a shortage in available housing. While some developers have begun to build new housing, construction has not been able to keep up with demand. At the same time, property values of homes in Gonzales have been rising over the past decade.

While the future of the oil industry is not certain, industry experts predict the boom will last for more than a decade, leading to a stable and long-term demand for new housing. The Institute for Economic Development estimates that more than 65,000 jobs will be created through the oil and gas extraction and production industry alone by 2020. Billions of dollars more in revenue will be paid out to mineral owners as well, which will help stimulate the local economy in the future.

Overall Housing Market

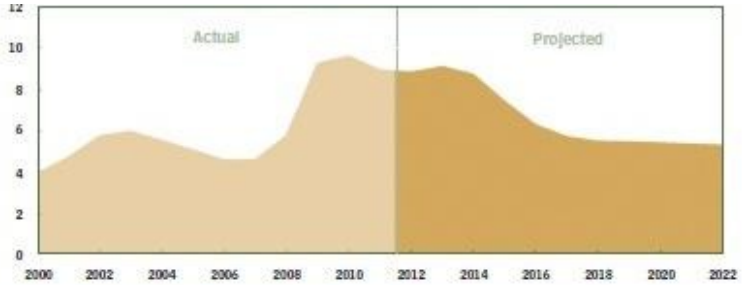
Gonzales' location in the northern portion of the Eagle Ford Shale is an important factor that must be considered when determining the viability of developing new housing. Due to the Eagle Ford Shale's fast-paced development, there has been an increase in the number of oil and gas workers in the area and, consequently, an increase in the demand for housing. Currently, workers are constrained to living in hotels, RVs, rental bedrooms, or barracks on or near drilling sites. Many of these workers' living situations are temporary and create the feeling that they are "living out of a suitcase."

Other factors to consider in a discussion of housing demand are the present supply of multifamily complexes, the current demand for this housing type and the amount people are willing to pay to live in these complexes. The most recent multifamily complex to have been built in Gonzales was constructed in 1999 and consists of 32 units. Prior to this complex, other multifamily projects had been constructed in 1982 and 1983, totaling 41 units. It is estimated that a total of 534 multifamily units exist in Gonzales County today.

Additionally, employment in Gonzales is expected to rise. In 2010, 92.1% of the Gonzales civilian labor force was employed. By 2015, this level is projected to rise to 93.6% and to 94.8% by 2020. All of these percentages are higher than the rates of employment expected nationally. Historical unemployment in the United States has been cyclical, ranging from 4% to 10% since 1990. Currently, unemployment has risen to nearly its highest level, (8% at time of publication, according to the U.S. Census

Bureau) but is steadily decreasing. In the future, the unemployment rate is expected to level off at 6%, as depicted in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: U.S. Unemployment Rate

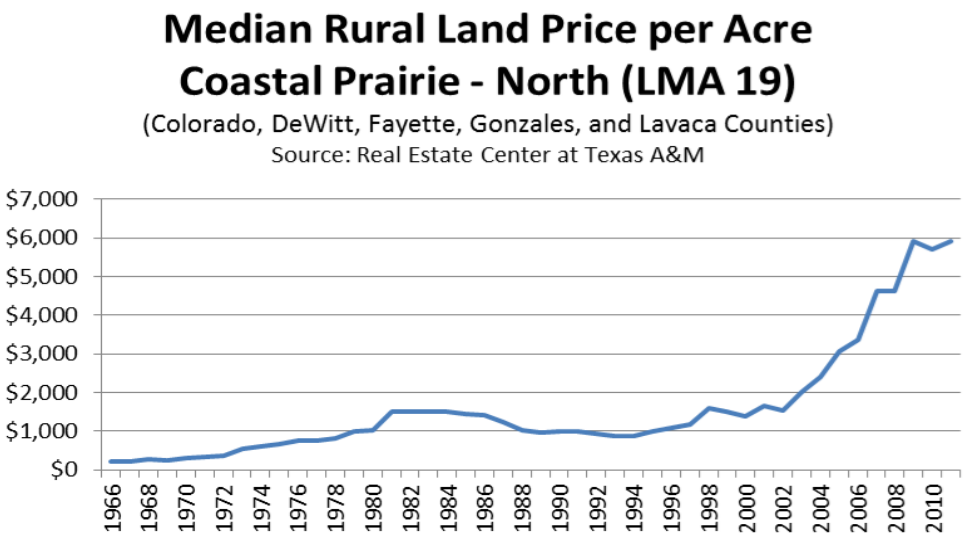


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Land and Housing Values

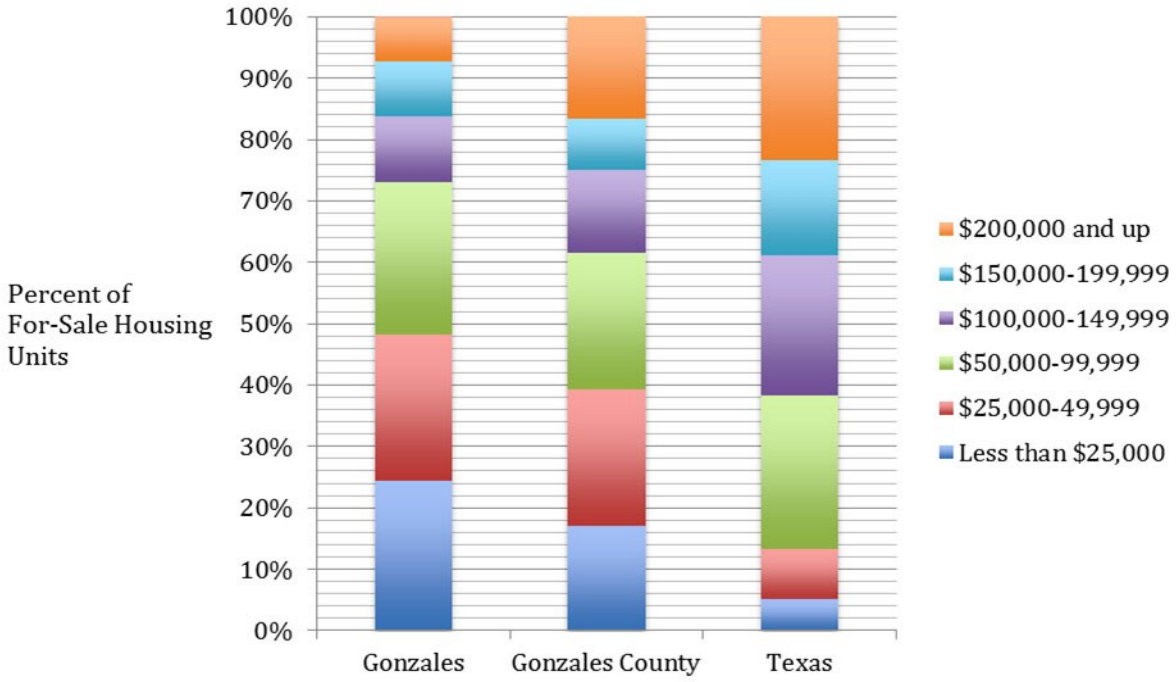
Since 1995, the median price per acre has been increasing for Gonzales County as well as other surrounding counties. In 1995, the median price per acre for the immediate area was $1,000. The current median price per acre has increased by 492% to $5,919 (U.S. Census). The median tract size currently being bought and sold is 33 acres, a decrease in area of more than 50% from the 1995 median tract size of 70 acres. Land values throughout the city of Gonzales and surrounding communities vary depending on the property type being listed and sold. As a point of comparison, the median price per acre within the surrounding counties of Bexar, Guadalupe, Karnes and Wilson was $4,488 in 2011. The median tract size sold in these surrounding counties decreased from 100 acres in 1995 to 41 acres in 2011. The higher cost of land in Gonzales County suggests a growing issue in the affordability of rural land, and it is expected that the current oil and gas boom will increase the pressure on land prices.

Figure 4.2: Median Rural Land Price per Acre



A windshield survey of housing conditions was conducted in Gonzales for this report during the fall of 2012. Housing conditions all over the city were observed and evaluated by housing type, including single-family residences, duplexes, multifamily units, group quarters, manufactured homes, and rural residential housing.

Figure 4.3: Distribution of Housing Values for Owner-Occupied Units, 2006-2010



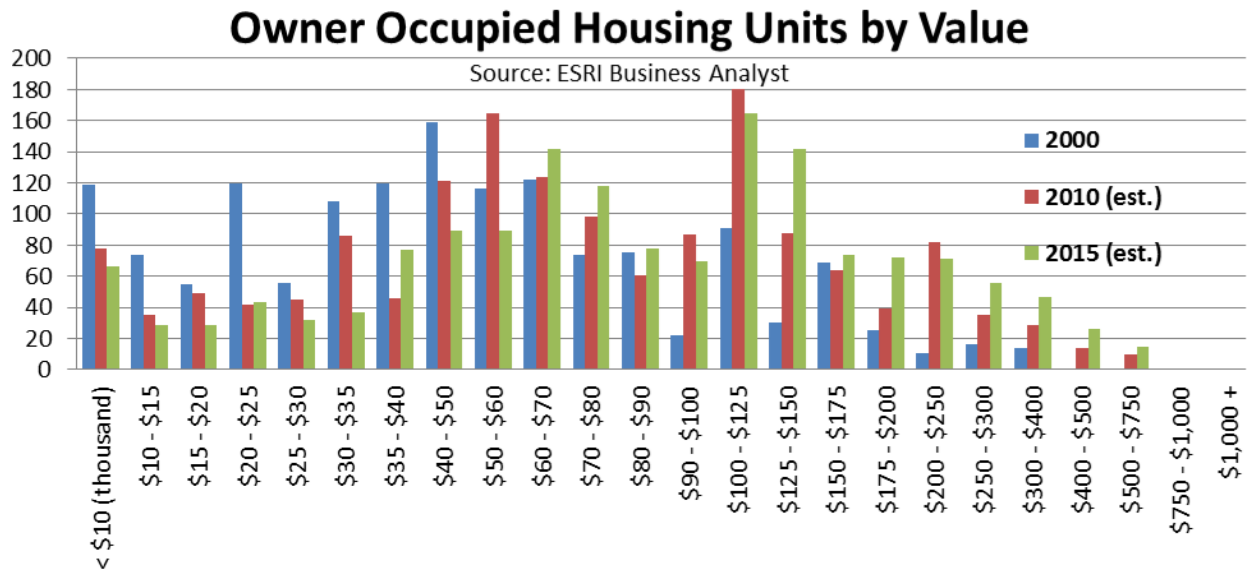
Source: 2006-2010 ACS Estimates

Neighborhoods just south of the city's historic downtown squares have seen new construction or re-modeling of older homes, a signal perhaps of the aforementioned rising income levels. This, coupled with a lacking supply of newer, modestly-priced single-family housing for Eagle Ford Shale workers, creates a small window of opportunity for new development.

Of owner-occupied housing units, 45.7% will be in the $60,000 - $149,999 value range by 2015. This is up from 40.5% in 2010. The share of owner-occupied homes that are valued at more than $150,000 is expected to rise as well, from 17.3% in 2010 to 23.1% in 2015. Owner-occupied housing units in the lower value range of less than $60,000, on the other hand, will fall to 31.4% of the total by 2015. This is a substantial drop from the 42.4% share of total owner-occupied housing units that this value range held in 2010. This data can be interpreted in myriad ways, the most basic is that property values are expected to rise. Furthermore, rising income levels may allow more people to "trade up" to higher-valued homes.

Regarding shifts in property values over time, the median value of an owner-occupied house was $45,409 in 2000. By 2010, that value had soared to $69,839 and is expected to continuing rising, reaching over $84,000 in 2015. This can be attributed to inflation, rising incomes, and a complete lack of added supply, as will be discussed in the section below reviewing historical building permit data. Over time, housing values and quality have trended upward. The number of housing units valued below $60,000 is expected to decrease, while units valued above $90,000 are expected to see significant increases, as illustrated in Figure 4 (ESRI Housing Profile).

Figure 4.4: Owner Occupied Housing Units by Value

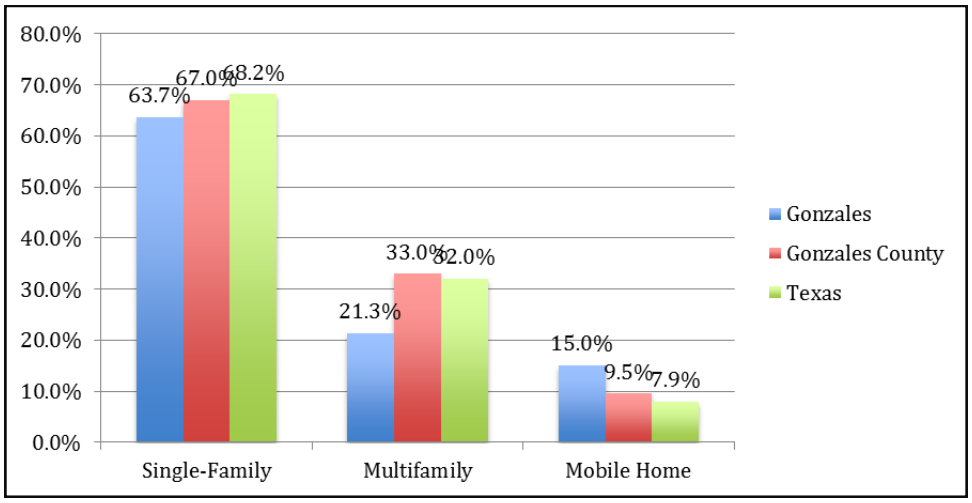


Housing Availability

There are some 2,814 housing units within the city of Gonzales, according to 2010 U.S. Census data. While the number of units is up from the 2,619 units in 1990, the city experienced a net loss of 55 housing units between 2000 and 2010.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), from 2006-2010, single-family housing dominates the city's housing market, representing almost 64% of all housing stock, both attached and detached. This estimate is similar to the statewide share of single-family housing units (about 68% in 2010). Multifamily housing (consisting of two or more units) in Gonzales constitutes 35% of the total housing stock, slightly higher than percentages for the county and state. Gonzales also has a small share (0.15%) of mobile/manufactured homes compared to Gonzales County, which had 745 owner-occupied mobile/manufactured homes in 2010. Texas' stock of mobile/manufactured housing is about 8%. Figure 2-2 illustrates the relative percentages of single-family, multifamily and mobile homes in Gonzales, Gonzales County and Texas.

Figure 4.5: Housing Units by Structure Type, 2010



Source: 2010 ACS Estimates (2006-2009)

Housing Density and Household Size

The city of Gonzales has an average housing density of about 552 units per square mile, or less than one housing unit per acre. The county's housing density is substantially lower at just over eight units per square mile, or 0.01 housing unit per acre. Texas' housing density is about 37 units per square mile, or 0.06 housing unit per acre.

Table 4.1: Household Size, 2010

Average household size	City	Gonzales County	Texas
Total	2.80	2.74	2.75
Owner occupied	2.89	2.72	2.87
Renter occupied	2.67	2.77	2.54

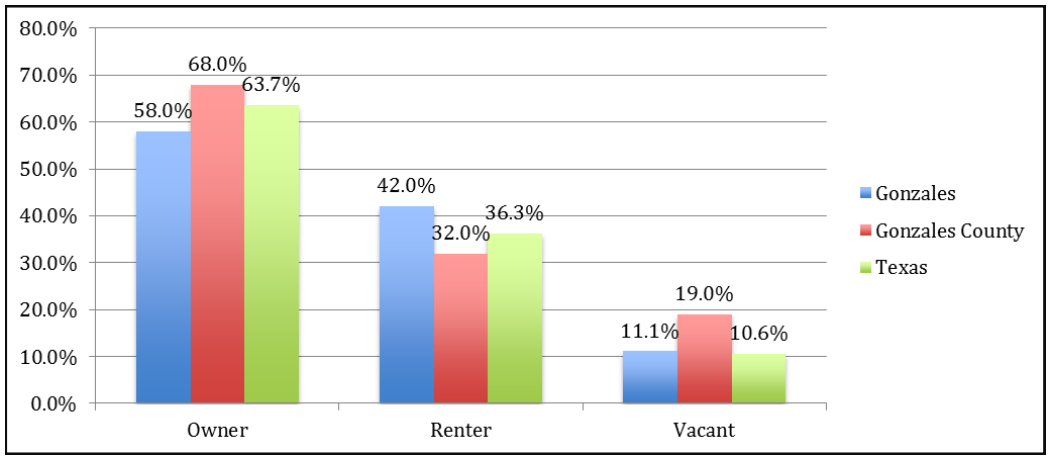
Source: U.S. Census (2010 SF2 Data)

The city's average household size is slightly larger than the county's and state's (2.80 persons per household within the city compared to 2.74 for the county and 2.75 for Texas). The number of persons per household has increased within the city over the last two decades (2.75 in 1990 and 2.73 in 2000).

Housing Tenure

As the 2010 Census indicates, there are 2,814 housing units in Gonzales, of which 2,503 are occupied. Of those occupied units, 1,451 are owner-occupied (58%) and 1,052 are renter-occupied (42%). The vacancy rate in 2010 was 11.1%. Gonzales has a higher share of renters than the county and the state, but its vacancy rate falls between county and state levels. The city's homeownership rate falls below both the county's and state's rates.

Figure 4.6: Housing Tenure, 2010



Source: U.S. Census (2010 SF1 Data)

Table 4.2: Fair Market Rents for Gonzales County (in Dollars)

Gonzales County	0 BR	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR
2011	$408	$465	$595	$865	$891
2012	$400	$457	$584	$849	$874
2013	$460	$463	$626	$922	$928

Source: U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Fair Market Rents

Fair market rents as established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) indicate that, while Gonzales County rents actually decreased from 2011 to 2012, they have surpassed those levels for fiscal year (FY) 2013. The reason for the sudden jump in rents is likely due to

increased demand from workers in the oil and gas industry. The fair market rent for a zero-bedroom unit (efficiency or studio) increased over 2012 by 15%, to $460. One-bedroom units increased 1.3%, from $457 in 2012 to $463 in FY 2013, while two-bedroom apartments increased by 7.2%, from $584 per month to $626. Rent for three-bedroom apartments increased by 8.6% to $922 per month. According to the 2010 Census, the median rent for all unit types in Gonzales was $476 per month, compared to $495 for Gonzales County and $786 for Texas.

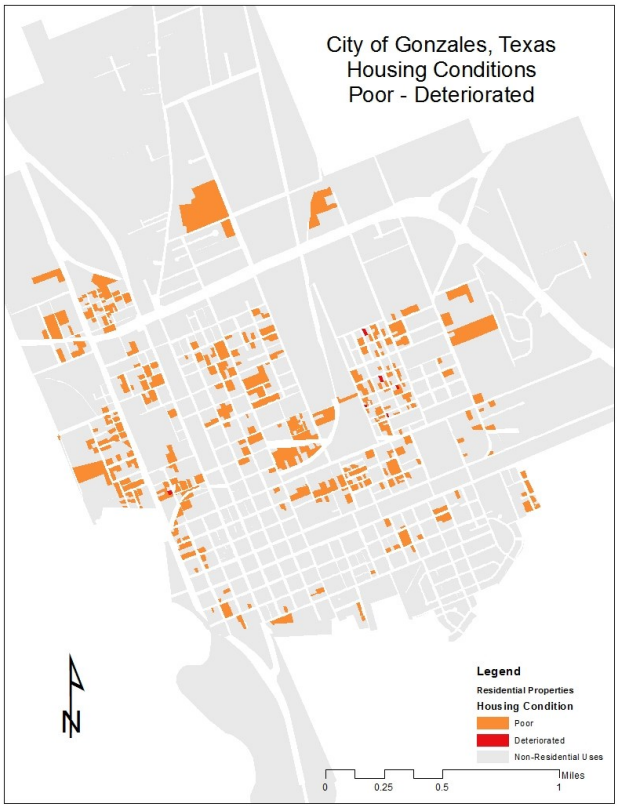
Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is an index that measures the percentage of annual income that a family spends on housing costs, including utilities. The housing affordability gap is the difference between 30% of a family's annual income and the combined cost of utilities and rent or mortgage payment.

For owner-occupied units, about 19.1% of households are cost-burdened, meaning that they spend at least 30% of their income on housing costs. For renter households, the rate of burden is at 29.6%. The cost burden for residents of Gonzales is generally less than that of Texas; about 25.7% of owner-occupied households statewide are paying at least 30% of their income for housing. Nearly half of renters in Texas (48.8%) are experiencing a housing cost burden.

About 15.1% of families in Gonzales earn incomes that place them below the live of poverty, a 2% increase since 2000. However, the poverty rate is

Figure 4.7: Housing Condition (Poor –Deteriorated)



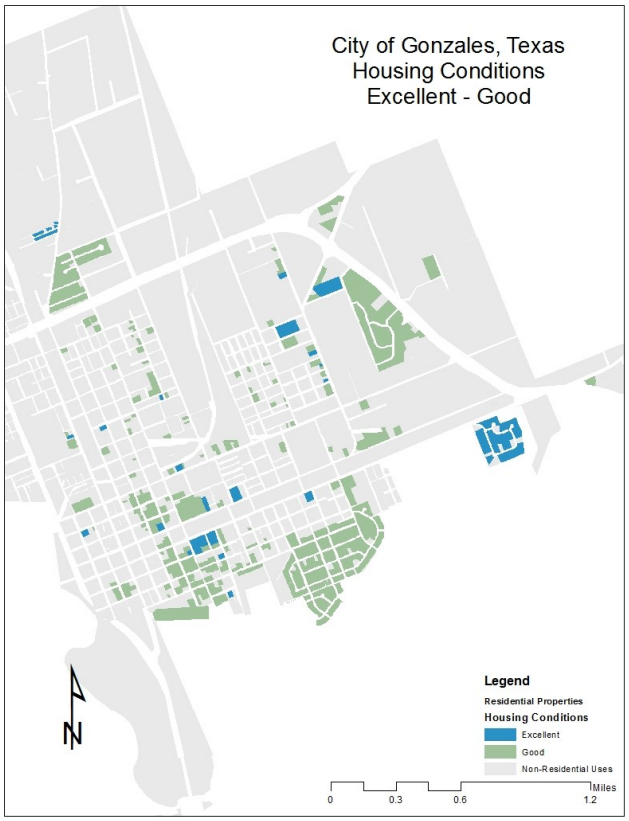
less than half what it was for families in 1990 (30.7%). The current poverty rate in Gonzales is slightly higher than for Gonzales County (14.8%) and for Texas (13.0%). While specific data about their housing is not available, it can be assumed that their housing cost burden is very significant.

Public Housing

According to the Gonzales Housing Authority, the city of Gonzales operates 140 units of public housing. Section 8 vouchers are rental subsidies for low-income residents provided by HUD. Additionally, the regional authority administers 42 housing choice vouchers that allow residents to locate rental housing in the

Figure 4.8: Housing Condition (Average)

Figure 4.9: Housing Condition (Excellent-Good)



private market. The detailed application for housing assistance through the Gonzales Housing Authority follows HUD guidelines. As available housing stock diminishes with the influx of oil and gas workers, it is recommended that the city of Gonzales and the Gonzales Housing Authority seek more partnership opportunities to improve the quality of housing choices through federally-aided programs.

Physical Housing Conditions

The results of the housing conditions windshield survey, conducted in Gonzales for this report during the fall of 2012 and introduced previously, will be covered in detail over the next few sections.

The survey defined three classifications of housing conditions: excellent/good, average and poor/deteriorated/vacant. Photographs depicting a representative sample of each housing condition and a brief explanation of each category were provided within each survey worksheet, which can be found in the appendix for this chapter. Survey findings were mapped and are included here.

The current housing conditions in Gonzales are greatly varied, although the results of the windshield survey indicate that the variation of housing conditions is well-balanced throughout the city.

Figure 4.7 depicts the distribution of poor to deteriorated housing units within the city limits. Generally, these types of units are scattered

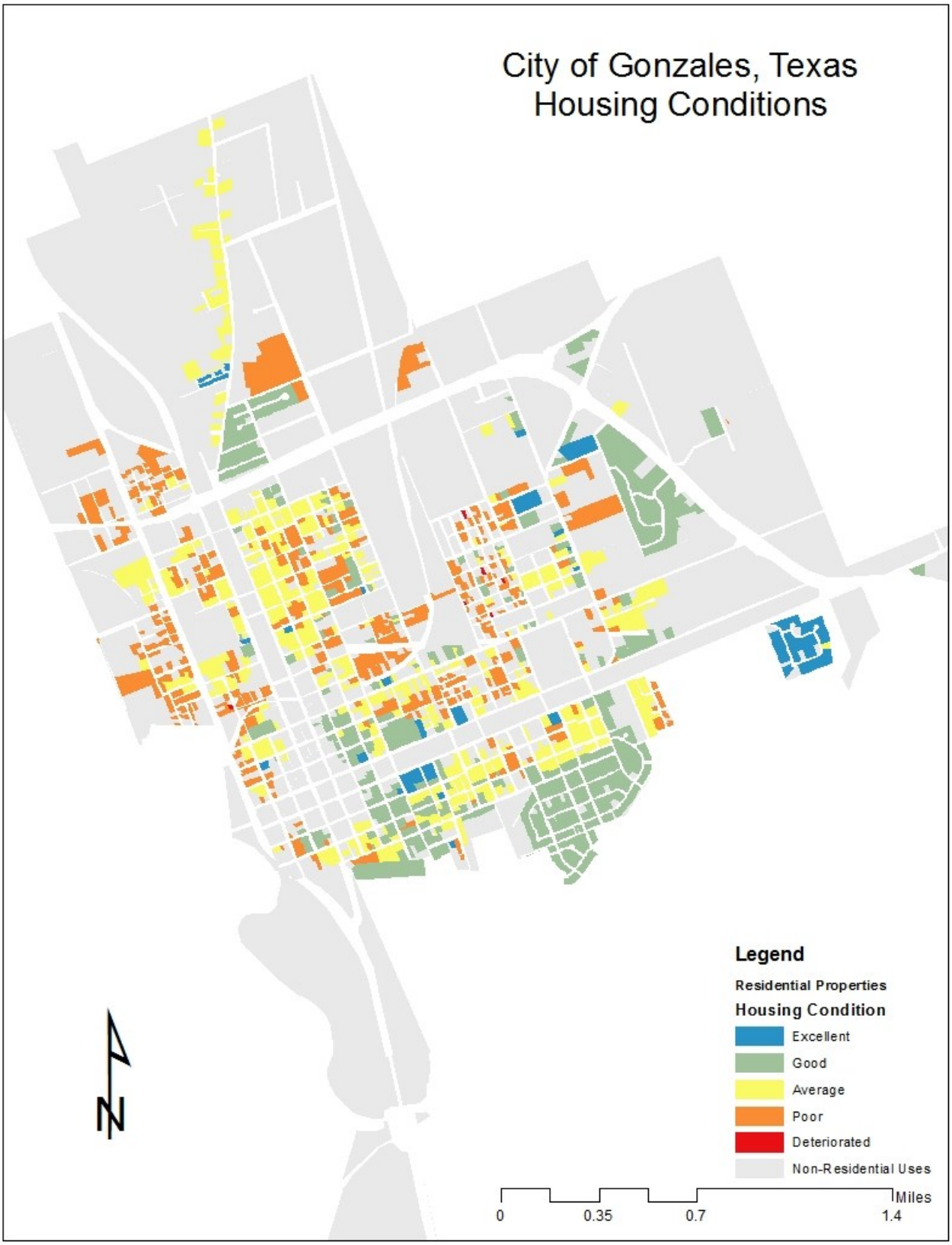
throughout Gonzales though are somewhat more predominant in the north and west of the city. The fairly dispersed nature of the properties, rather than their being concentrated on particular city blocks, is a positive.

Figure 4.8 illustrates the distribution of average-condition housing units within the city limits. As evidenced by the image, these types of units are scattered around the southwestern part of the city. Of note, there is a concentration of housing of this condition on blocks north of the city and close to the rail yard. Also, along the city's southern edge, near St. Louis Street there, is an agglomeration of average-condition housing.

Figure 4.9 depicts the supply of excellent- to good-condition housing units within the city limits. Generally, these units are packed together in areas north of the city center and in the newer subdivisions in the southern part of the city. These subdivisions can be considered suburban-style development due to their design standards that include cul-de-sacs. There is a concentration of older homes near the downtown area, where good housing conditions are also present.

Here, each of the housing conditions described previously is overlaid onto Figure 4.10. To sum up, poor- to deteriorated-condition housing can be found scattered all over the central city, but is more common on the western edge of the city. Average-condition housing is commonly found along the southern edge of the city, near St. Lawrence Street, and along the St. Joseph Street corridor. In addition, excellent- to good-condition housing is currently predominant in the suburban-style development at the edges of the city and among large, typically historic homes near the downtown.

Figure 4.10: Housing Condition



SWOT Analysis

Future Housing Needs

Generally, the city of Gonzales boasts an affordable housing stock when compared to other cities or the state. However, pressure from the growing oil and gas industry is limiting housing availability, making finding solutions for meeting future demand very important.

Infill development is one method that can be used to efficiently increase the number of housing units, taking advantage of existing infrastructure such as streets and utilities. This method could also assist in increasing the vitality of Gonzales' downtown area. Redeveloping space above retail in downtown as housing would also improve Gonzales' core while helping to mitigate the effects of sprawl that are prevalent in other communities.

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1. Adams, Lynn. "Oil Boom Necessitates Gonzales Housing Boom." *The Gonzales Inquirer*. 11 May 2012: n. pag. Print.
2. "Censtats Database." Censtats Database. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Sept. 2012.
3. Gonzales County Appraisal District. Gonzales County Appraisal District. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Sept. 2012.
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Future Housing

GOAL 4.1: Develop a property inventory. ***(This goal has been met in the Housing section of the 2012 State of the Community Report)***

OBJECTIVE 4.1.1: By 2020, have 100% of current housing stock inventoried electronically.

POLICY 4.1.1.1: By City Council mandate, order an inventory of current housing stock. Review the 2012 State of the Community Report to assure the document includes the current housing stock information.

OBJECTIVE 4.1.2: By 2020, designate members of the city staff to survey each property individually for the designated information needs.

POLICY 4.1.2.1: Prepare and enact an official inventory document of each property parcel designated as housing.

POLICY 4.1.2.2: Prepare a comprehensive map or map series based on survey results that identifies the city's current housing stock.

GOAL 4.2: Research types of housing stock that will best suit the needs of Gonzales. ***(This goal has been met in the Housing section of the 2012 State of the Community Report)***

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

- Market analysis reports analyzing single and multi-family residential needs are provided in the Appendix. These reports were developed during the 2012 State of the Community Report.

GOAL 4.3: Improve the quality of existing housing stock through rehabilitation and reconstruction.

OBJECTIVE 4.3.1: By 2030, bring 100% of dilapidated housing units up to code.

POLICY 4.3.1.1: Establish a Homeowner's Rehabilitation Assistance Program for citizens needing assistance.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

Short Term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

- Utilize the survey maps of existing housing conditions on **pgs. 76 – 79** of the State of the Community in order to identify housing units that would need to be improved through rehabilitation or reconstruction. Average conditions are described as "a sound structure but shows signs of wear and needs maintenance. The structure is not as well maintained as the "excellent" category and the pavement or accessory building may need repairs. Minor maintenance needed. A small amount of debris or overgrown landscaping may be present." (pg. 81)
- Offer an incentive program for owners of homes of poor or deteriorated quality in need of financial assistance to improve the home. The structure for an incentivized housing program would be based upon these steps:
    - Offer to pay for 50%, 75%, or 100% of rehabilitation costs if completed within one year of entering the program
    - Provide guidelines for how homes should be redeveloped to meet codes
    - If action is not taken or completed within given time frame, enforce the building code and levy fines or fees upon homeowner

  Note: If the property is sold and purchased by another individual during the time frame of rehabilitation, ensure that the new homeowner is aware of the program and agrees to meet the criteria.

Long Term (actions to take place over the next 10 – 20 years)

- Create an opportunity for Gonzales High School and higher-education institutions to give back to the community by completing housing-related tasks.
    - For insight refer to Texas A&M University's Big Event, the largest one day, student run service project in the nation. This initiative gives students the opportunity to thank the community for their continued support of the University by helping area residents accomplish necessary household tasks such as painting, yard work, and clean-ups.

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

- Homeowner's Rehabilitation Assistance Program is offered through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. This program provides the following services:
    - Rehabilitation or reconstruction of owner-occupied housing on the same site
    - New construction of site-built housing on the same site to replace an existing owner occupied Manufactured Housing Unit (MHU)

- Replacement and relocation of existing housing located in a floodplain to a new MHU or new construction of housing on an alternative site
- New construction or a new MHU to replace a housing unit that has become uninhabitable as a result of disaster or condemnation by local government
- If allowable under the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), refinance of existing mortgages meeting federal requirements.
- More information can be found at *http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/home-division/hra.htm.*

Some available funding opportunities are described below:

Table 4.3: 2012 HOME single family programs reservation system

Program Fund	Total	Reserved	Available
HOME HRA Refinance Reservation Project	$72,560.97	$72,560.97	$0.00
HOME Reservation Funds for HBA/Rehab, HRA, and TBRA	$36,784,668.43	$30,646,322.07	$6,138,346.36
HOME PWD Reservation Funds for HBA/Rehab, HRA, and TBRA	$4,636,716.62	$2,143,478.89	$2,493,237.73
HOME Disaster Reservation Funds for HBA/Rehab, HRA, and TBRA	$1,772,513.68	$595,531.68	$1,176,982.00

Source: Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs

- Section 203 (k) Program is offered through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This program allows homebuyers who want to purchase a dilapidated structure a way to obtain financing.
    - More information on eligible properties, required improvements and how the program can be used can be found at *http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/housing/sfh/203k/203kabou.*

GOAL 4.4: Preserve and enhance the city's existing neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVE 4.4.1: The city should encourage neighborhood revitalization through infill development in established residential areas.

OBJECTIVE 4.4.2: Create a more pedestrian friendly environment through neighborhood enhancements.

GOAL 4.5: Provide affordable housing for all income levels.

OBJECTIVE 4.5.1: By 2030, develop a mix of housing opportunities including low, moderate and high income single family properties.

POLICY 4.5.1.1: Apply for the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Block Grant (CDBG) Program to invest in affordable housing options.

OBJECTIVE 4.5.2: The city should adopt developmental policies to encourage development of housing.

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

- The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs' (TDHCA) Housing Tax Credit (HTC) program is one of the primary means of directing private capital toward the development and preservation of affordable rental housing for low-income households. The HTC program is designed to:
    - Provide a source of equity financing for the development of affordable housing
    - Maximize the number of affordable units added to the state's housing supply
    - Ensure that the state's affordable housing supply is well maintained and operated, serving as a credit to the communities in which affordable housing is constructed and operated
    - Prevent losses in the state's supply of affordable housing
    - More information can be found at *http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/htc/docs/htc-overview.pdf .*

Figure 4.11: Examples of multifamily properties supported by Housing Tax Credits

The Mirabella, San Antonio

South Acres Homes, Houston

Crestshire Village, Dallas

- The primary objective of the CDBG program is to develop viable communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low- and moderate-income. The State must ensure that at least 70 percent of its

CDBG grant funds are used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons over a one-, two-, or three-year time period selected by the State. This general objective is achieved by granting "maximum feasible priority" to activities which benefit low- and moderate-income families or aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight.

- More information can be found at *http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs/stateadmin.*

GOAL 4.6: Provide incentives to stimulate real estate development, specifically in the downtown area.

OBJECTIVE 4.6.1: By 2030, create 50% more housing opportunities within the downtown area.

POLICY 4.6.1.1: Gonzales should revise the zoning ordinance to allow housing to be included as a mixed-use within Downtown Gonzales.

POLICY 4.6.1.2: Establish a Mixed-Use Development Incentive (MuDI) Grant Program similar to the one used in Monroe, North Carolina.

OBJECTIVE 4.6.2: Provide incentives to developers and encourage public/private partnerships.

POLICY 4.6.2.1: Host a "Builder/Developer" Tour Day to attract builders and developers to the area.

ACTION STRATEGIES

Short Term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

- Amend the zoning ordinance to include mixed-use structures in the downtown area.
- Develop standards for how mixed-use developments are to be built in accordance to the surrounding environment.
- Host a "Builder/Developer" Tour Day to encourage and showcase the many available opportunities to develop in the city
    - This Builder/Developer Tour Day will not only introduce to potential developers and residents the available sites and properties for rehabilitation or construction but also provide them with the programs and funding to help facilitate the process of rehabilitation. This

day will allow the city to market themselves to potential developers and create a network which city officials can utilize for redevelopment.

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

- "The MuDI Grant Program assists with the renovation and rehabilitation of commercial and residential properties within the Downtown District. The grant portion of the project must be for the exterior and interior renovation of existing buildings only. The proposed project must meet all applicable zoning requirements and all required permits (i.e. zoning, building, etc.) must have been obtained prior to payment. The proposed project must follow the guidelines for renovation and rehabilitation of historic structures or structures within historic districts as outlined herein" (Source: Historic Downtown Monroe). The grant portion can significantly reduce the costs of rehabilitation by providing a minimum of $5.00 - $10.00 per square foot based on $100 of value per square foot. The length of this program can be up to the City Council's discretion. The rehabilitation project must consist of a multi-story building with the purpose of establishing multiple mixed use income producing properties. Adapted from *http://www.historicdowntownmonroe.org/incentiveprograms.php?cat=49*.
    - Examples of eligible projects include: Mixed-use retail/restaurant storefront; office/commercial, upper floor; residential upper floor.

GOAL 4.7: Facilitate the development of residential projects that will help alleviate current housing supply deficits.

OBJECTIVE 4.7.1: By 2015, facilitate multifamily residential development that can accommodate the growth in employment due to the oil industry.

POLICY 4.7.1.1: Offer incentives to developers to increase multifamily residential buildings. Incentives could include parking space allowances, priority access to funding and tax exemptions for several years.

POLICY 4.7.1.2: Establish the Multi-family (Rental Housing) Development Program through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

- The Multi-family (Rental Housing) Development Program provides funding to units of General Local Governments, Public Housing Authorities, nonprofits, and for-profit entities towards the new

construction or rehabilitation of affordable multifamily rental developments. Development funds are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis through an application process. Additional funding sources may be layered with the Housing Tax Credits.

- More information can be found at *http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/home-division/mf-rental.htm.*

- The Multifamily Mortgage Revenue Bond Program issues mortgage revenue bonds to finance loans for qualified nonprofit organizations and for-profit developers. This program is administered by the Texas Bond Review Board and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). Currently the State receives $525 million for multifamily needs with approximately $105 million set aside for TDHCA. This program works in conjunction with the Housing Tax Credit program to maximize state allocations. However, developers financed through this program are subject to set-aside restrictions for low-income tenants and persons with special needs, tenant services, maximum rent limitations and other requirements.
  - More information can be found at *http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/bond/index.htm.*

GOAL 4.8: Make use of legislative processes that will assist Gonzales in removing sub-standard units and replacing them with new housing developments.

OBJECTIVE 4.8.1: By 2016, coordinate a partnership effort between the City and the Gonzales Housing Authority in redevelopment of substandard units.

POLICY 4.8.1.1: Start a program which aids substandard housing shown in the State of the Community Report to be developed as truly affordable home ownership units.

POLICY 4.8.1.2: Partner with the Gonzales Area Development Corporation (more info at *http://www.gonzalestexas.com/gonzales-area-development-corporation*) to support housing development and neighborhood revitalization such as marketing, credit counseling, and program promotion.

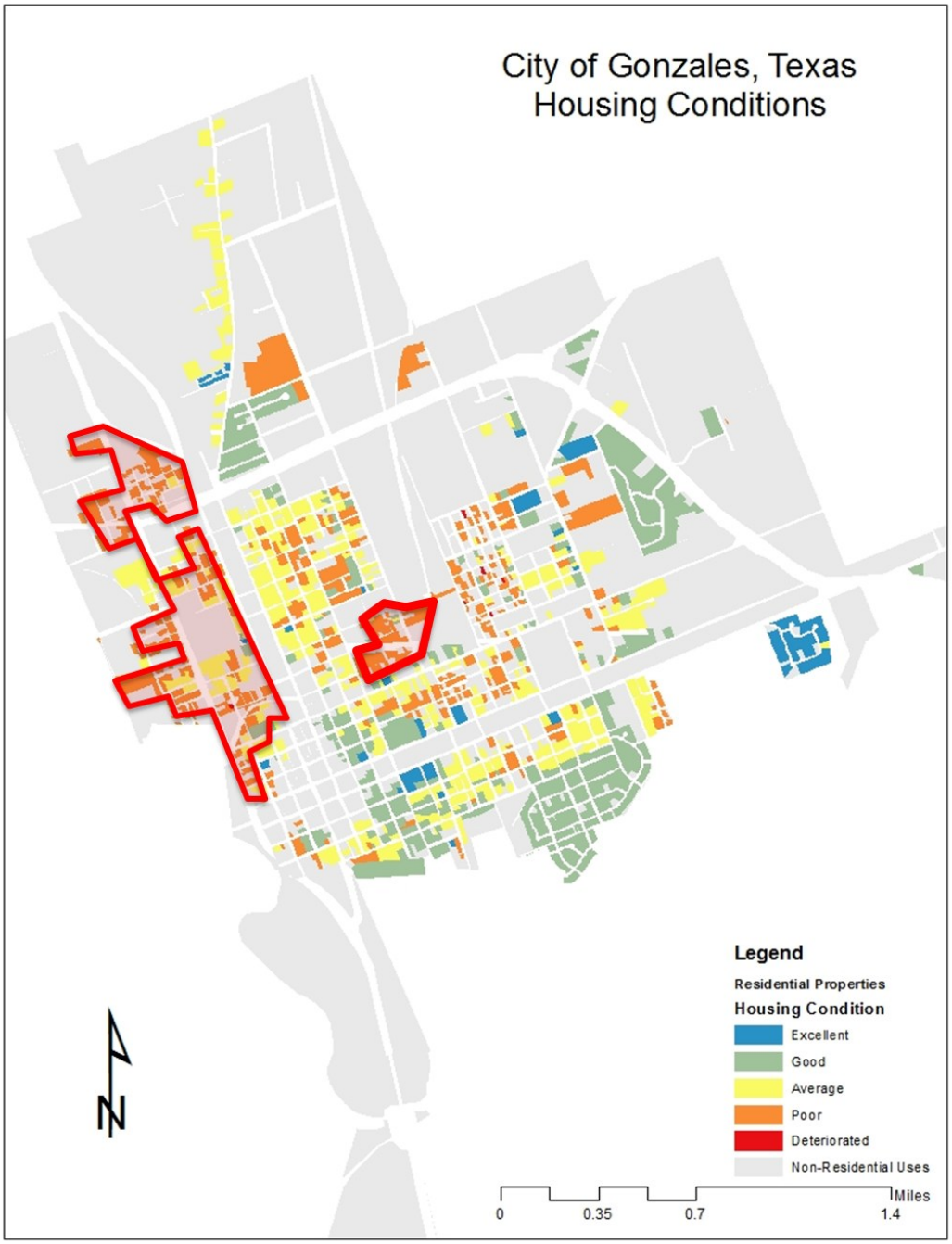
OBJECTIVE 4.8.2: Create a home improvement loan program.

POLICY 4.8.2.1: The home improvement loan program shall be used to repair existing owner-occupied housing units in designated substandard unit blocks and special

project areas as identified in Fig. 4.12 below.

POLICY 4.8.2.2: "Assist and act on behalf of the City in the performance of its govern mental functions to promote the common good and general welfare of the City and in undertaking and completing one or more projects, as may be defined or determined by the City Council of the City." Adapted from http://cfed.org/assets/documents/policy/energy_replacement_brief.pdf .

Figure 4.12: City of Gonzales housing conditions



PROGRAMS/FUNDING:

- Title I Home Improvement Loans
    - Loans on single-family homes may be used for alterations, repairs and site improvements. Loans on multifamily structures may be used only for building alteration and repairs.
    - A property owner may apply at any lender (i.e. bank, mortgage company, savings and loan association, or credit union) that is approved to make Title I loans. Beware of deceptive home improvement contractors.
    - **Maximum Loan Amount:**
        - Single-family house - $25,000
        - Manufactured house on permanent foundation (classified and taxed as real estate) - $25,090
        - Manufactured house (classified as personal property) - $7,500
        - Multifamily structure - an average of $12,000 per living unit, up to a total of $60,000
    - *More information can be found at http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/housing/sfh/title/ti_abou.*

This type of program/funding would help Gonzales revitalize its neighborhoods in need of improvement. Figure 4.7 on page 112 highlights the possible areas the housing revitalization program should be emphasized. The areas near downtown are expected to be redeveloped in conjunction with the city's desire to become a Texas tourist destination.

- "The Model Blocks Program funds rehabilitation of older homes and empowers residents to revitalize their neighborhoods. Designated neighborhoods are selected through a competitive process and must meet income and eligibility criteria before being awarded or revitalization projects".
    - *More information can be found at http://fortworthtexas.gov/uploadedFiles/Planning/Comprehensive_Planning/05Housing_06.pdf.*

GOAL 4.9: Create better housing options for the influx of oil and gas workers in the Gonzales area.

OBJECTIVE 4.9.1: By 2015, 50% or more of temporary housing units for oil workers will be reduced.

POLICY 4.9.1.1: Include Accessory Dwelling Unit permits in residential areas to accommodate the rapid growth the community is expected to experience without increasing housing construction costs.

POLICY 4.9.1.2: Allow Accessory Dwelling Units in single-family areas, especially in dilapidated areas as shown in the housing conditions map on p. 125 which highlights the concentration of dilapidated housing. Changing single-family residential zoning to allow ADUs will permit these areas to flourish with new development., allowing the city to infill the urban core instead of expand into agricultural land.

ACCESORY DWELLING UNITS: A viable option for Gonzales.

What are they? "An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is a second dwelling unit created on a lot with a house, attached house or manufactured home. The second unit is created auxiliary to, and is smaller than, the main dwelling. ADUs can be created in a variety of ways, including conversion of a portion of an existing house, addition to an existing house, conversion of an existing garage or the construction of an entirely new building" (*http://www.portlandonline.com/bds/36676*).

Where will they be located? As shown in the map of housing conditions, the best area to place ADUs is in the low rated housing condition areas, to aid current homeowners with an income source and also help the current overflow of new populations into the city.

Table 4.4: Housing policy table

#	Action	Lead Contact	Timing	City Resources	Outside Funding	Official Ordinance or Official Act	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards, or Monitoring	Developmental Incentives	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
4.3.1	Bring dilapidated homes up to code	City Council	Long Term: 5-10 years	Survey maps provided in the Comprehensive Plan	Homeowner's Rehabilitation Assistance Program			X		
4.4	Preserve and enhance the city's existing neighborhood	Staff	Mid-Range: 3-5 years	N/A	N/A			X		
4.5.1	Develop a mix of housing opportunities	City Council, Community Stakeholders, Mayor	Mid-Range: 3-5 years	N/A	Housing Tax Credit Program, Community Development Block Grants				X	
4.6.1	Create 50% more housing opportunities in the downtown area	City Staff, Community Stakeholders	Long Term: 5-10 years	N/A	N/A	X			X	
4.6.1.2	Establish a Mixed-Use Development Incentive Grant Program	City Staff	Mid-Range: 3-5 years	See other cities' similar programs	N/A		X	X		
4.6.2.1	Host a Builder/ Developer Tour Day	City Staff, City Council	Short Term: 1-3 years	Volunteers	N/A					X

#	Action	Lead Contact	Timing	City Resources	Outside Funding	Official Ordinance or Official Act	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards, or Monitoring	Developmental Incentives	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
4.7.1	Facilitate multi-family residential development	Mayor, City Staff, City Council	Short Term: 1-3 years	N/A	Multifamily (Rental Housing) Development Program, Multifamily Mortgage Revenue Bond Program			X	X	
4.8.1	Start a program that aids sub-standard housing	City Staff, City Council, Mayor	Short Term: 1-3 years	N/A	Gonzales Area Development Corporation	X		X	X	
4.8.2	Create a home improvement loan program	City Staff, City Council	Short Term: 1-3 years	N/A	Title I Home Improvement Loans, The Model Blocks Program	X		X		
4. 9.1	Reduce temporary housing for oil field workers	City Staff, City Council, Mayor	Short Term: 1-3 years	Incentives	N/A				X	X
4. 9.1.1	Include Accessory Dwelling Units in residential zoning	City Council	Short Term: 1-3 years	Maps provided in Comprehensive Plan	N/A	X		X	X	

Appendix

1. Condition Scores Defined:

What is EXCELLENT/GOOD (3)? A recently built structure with no apparent problems that meets codes. If somewhat older, has had careful maintenance of both structure and grounds. No surface wear is apparent and repairs are not needed.

What is AVERAGE (2)? A sound structure but shows signs of wear and needs maintenance. The structure is not as well maintained as the "excellent" category and the pavement or accessory building may need repairs. Minor maintenance needed. A small amount of debris or overgrown landscaping may be present.

What is POOR/DETERIORATED (1)? Significant surface wear is noticeable. The structure is slightly out of plumb with cracks, holes, or breaks evident in walls, foundation, and roof. Paint is blistered and windows, steps, etc., may need to be replaced. Major maintenance is needed. A significant amount of debris or overgrown landscaping may be present. Sometimes the structure may be vacant or dilapidated.

2. Housing conditions survey form

Date of Survey: _____

Street Name and/or Block Number: _____

Side of Street (circle one): N S E W

Ad-									
Score:									

Side of Street (circle one): N S E W

Ad-									
Score:									

Please, write the condition number directly on the map on each parcel—if it is easier for your team.

Transportation

Introduction

The transportation section of this State of the Community report analyzes the existing conditions and level of service of the road network in the city of Gonzales. The largest urban settlement in Gonzales County and one of the oldest in the state of Texas, Gonzales is located along the confluence of the Guadalupe and San Marcos Rivers. It is connected to several major highways. U.S. Route 90 (Sarah Dewitt Drive) crosses east-west through the north of the city. U.S. Highway 183 (Water Street) runs north-south through the west edge of the city. A spur of TX-146 runs east-west overlapping St. Louis Street, and State Highway 97 provides access to the city's north-east corner. The city also has two Farm to Market roads, three county roads, a municipal airport and one railroad line that services the local industrial park.

Street Classification

a. Traditional Classification

A roadway's functional classification describes the importance placed on either the mobility or accessibility of its users. The relationship between mobility and accessibility is an inverse one. Mobility, a measure of the ease and speed of movement, improves as accessibility, a measure of access to bordering land uses, decreases. Since the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1973, all surface transportation legislation has mandated use of a functional classification system (Pickett, 2001). For decades, this system has provided a framework for highway design and has helped assign jurisdictional responsibility of roadways in line with its role in serving the mobility and accessibility of its users. The system maintains a minimum of design standards and provides a basis for evaluation of present performance and future needs and for apportioning limited financial resources among different roadways. In Texas, roadways are classified by the state's Department of Transportation (TxDOT) as either urban or rural and then further defined as part of the following hierarchy:

- Principal arterial (freeway and other): Movement-focused (high mobility, limited access)
- Minor arterial: Connects principal arterials (moderate mobility, limited access)
- Collectors: Connects local streets to arterials (moderate mobility, moderate access)
- Local roads and streets: Access-focused (limited mobility, high access)

In Gonzales, there are two **Principal Arterials**:

- Water Street (US Highway 183 Bypass)
- Sarah Dewitt Drive (US Highway 90)

There are several **Minor Arterials**:

- Farm to Market Road (FM) 532
- Harwood Road (FM 794)
- St. Joseph Street (US Highway 183)
- St. Lawrence (between St. Joseph Street and Jobe Street)
- St. Louis Street (TX-146 Spur)
- US Highway 90 (west of Crawford Street)
- US Highway 90 (east of St Andrew Street)

Collectors are:

- North College Street
- Seydler Street
- St. Andrew Street
- St. Lawrence Street (east of Jobe Street)
- St. Paul Street
- St. Vincent Street
- Texas-131 Spur
- Waelder Road

Local roads include any other street not yet listed.

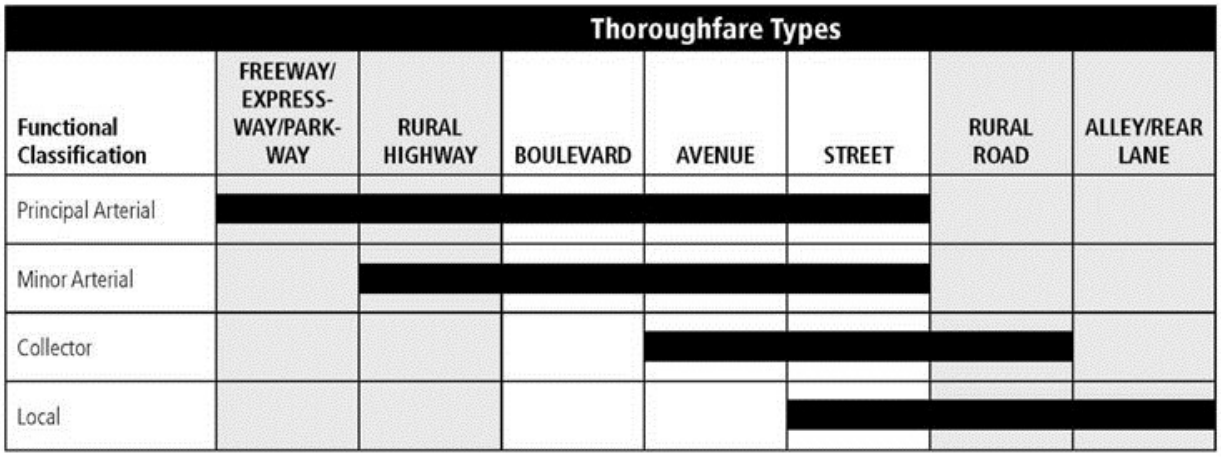
While many miles of the city's road network function in line with their classification, several roads classified as collectors or arterials span contexts that vary throughout their lengths. For instance, St. Joseph Street is functionally classified as one of the city's major traffic thoroughfares though it also serves the important purpose of being one of the downtown's main streets. Likewise, St. Lawrence and St. Louis Streets serve as primary thoroughfares for traffic even as they lie adjacent to a key part of the city's park network and several of its education and church facilities.

Map5.1:Existing Classification

Classification by Thoroughfare Type

Assigning roadways into one of three functional classes, though direct, often leaves out important variables that matter to the safety, convenience and enjoyment of road users. As noted above, the context of roadways that TxDOT acknowledges is very basic – roadways are either urban or rural, with rural areas considered those under a population threshold of 5,000 people. Recently, planners, municipalities and state departments of transportation are giving greater thought to the context of land use surrounding streets. In an effort to bring together place and roadway design, they are asking questions about whether the number of access points is above or below what it should be, whether land use has changed since a roadway's initial classification and if the design speed of a roadway is compatible with the existing uses around it.

Fig. 5.1: Relationship between Functional Classification and Thoroughfare Type



Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers (2010)

Freeways, expressways and parkways function at high speeds (45 mph+), where access is controlled, perhaps by grade separation, and pedestrian use is restricted.

Rural Highways function at high speeds (45 mph+) and while designed for carrying traffic, do give access to adjacent property in rural areas.

Boulevards are medium-speed (35 mph or less), usually attract traffic and are used by all modes of through and local traffic: vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians. Boulevards serve as routes for primary goods movement and emergency response and yet are walkable. Curb parking is encouraged. A variation, multiway boulevards, carries through traffic on a central roadway while allowing parking, pedestrian and bicycle access on parallel lanes separated by landscaped islands.

Avenues are low- to medium-speed (25-35 mph) and are shorter and generally narrower than boulevards. Their chief function is access to adjacent land, so they serve as primary routes for bicyclists and pedestrians while also still being used for local goods movement. Curb parking is the norm.

Streets function as walkable, low-speed (25 mph) connectors within and between residential neighborhoods and their adjacent districts. Streets may serve as the "main street" of commercial and mixed-use districts. Curb parking is emphasized and goods movement is restricted to deliveries.

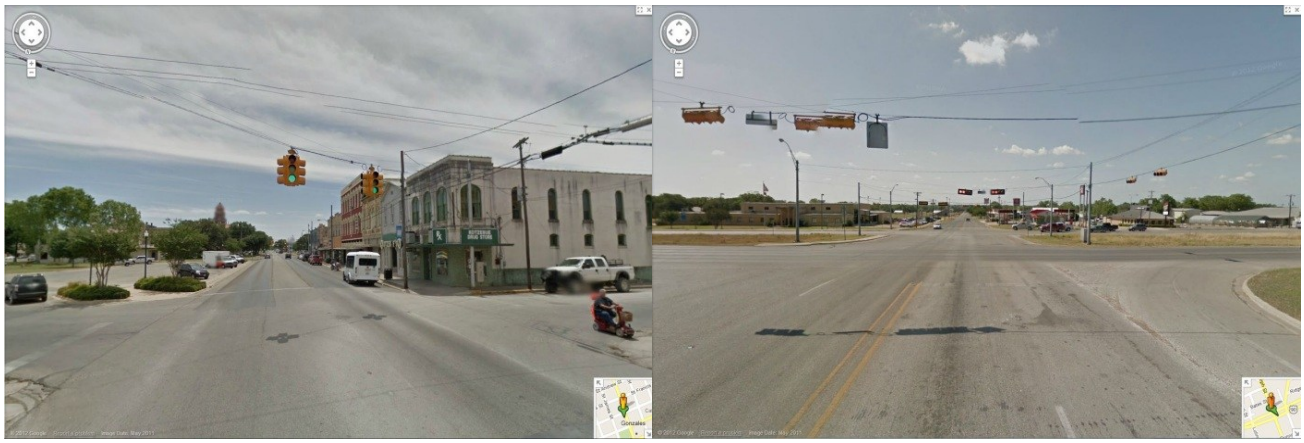
Rural Roads function at low to medium speed (25-35 mph) in rural areas with a focus on serving abutting property.

Alleys or Rear Lanes are very low-speed (5-10 mph) driveways behind properties that direct vehicles to parking, secondary units or other rear uses and utility easements.

The photos below depict St. Joseph Street, one of Gonzales' minor arterials. Map 5.1 shows the functional classification of roadways. However, street segments within the same category can vary in terms of surrounding land use, posted speed limits, and trip purpose. In the urban core, St. Joseph Street is bounded by commercial shops and sidewalks, curb parking is common, and vehicles travel at 30 mph. A mile north where it crosses Sarah Dewitt Drive, St. Joseph Street widens to four lanes; curb parking is absent and speeds increase to 45 mph.

In addition to its functional classification, taking into account the context of a roadway would allow the city to better plan for appropriate design criteria and physical roadway configurations as development and maintenance of the existing and future street network occurs.

Fig. 5.2: St. Joseph Street: Thoroughfare Types



Source: Google Maps (Image Date: May 2011)

St. Joseph Street is functionally classified as a minor arterial but the photos show the very different contexts the roadway travel through, from avenue (left) to rural highway (right).

Right of Way

Right-of-way (ROW) encompasses all elements of a street including the lanes of travel, any parking lanes, shoulders, median, landscape strips, sidewalks and utility lines. Gonzales requires a width of ROW ranging between 40 and 80 feet within which is required a minimum of pavement ranging between 20 and 60 feet. Table 5.1 shows the ROW and pavement width as required by the city's current code of ordinances.

Table 5.1: Street Type/ROW

Street Type	Right-of-Way (in feet)	Pavement Width (in feet)	Remaining footage (for sidewalk, land-scape, curb & gutter,
Arterial (major thoroughfare)	80	60	20
Collector	55	40	15
Minor or residential	45	32	13

Source: City of Gonzales Code of Ordinances

Daily Traffic

Current Average Annual Daily Counts

The Statewide Planning Map produced by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) illustrates the average annual daily traffic count for all major highways and arterials within the Gonzales city boundary. Data include counts for every year between 2007 and 2010 as shown in Table 5.2. Local changes in traffic levels and direction can be inferred from the percentage change of counts over these four years.

The north section of town has experienced pronounced growth in traffic, especially along Sarah Dewitt Drive (US Highway 90), which is consistent with public concern over increased freight traffic within the area. It is also noteworthy that the northern sections of Water Street (US Highway 183 Bypass) and FM 794 present the most significant percentage increase rates in the city, suggesting an influx of traffic from new northern development.

St. Louis Street, used as a spur for TX-146, has also witnessed increased levels of traffic. This has added regional traffic traveling straight through town. St. Joseph Street stands out for having lost important amounts of traffic, presumably to Water Street. FM roads 379, 3090 and 1227, all of which connect to northern residential development, experienced traffic decreases.

Increased freight prompted the City Council to implement changes in the city's truck routes. As of April 2012, St. Louis St. (TX-146) was removed from the authorized truck routes for vehicles of more than 26,000 lbs. carrying capacity, with FM 794 (Hardwood St.), Sarah Dewitt Drive and Water Street remaining as possible routes. The change was authorized by TxDOT. As the change is so recent, there are not yet statistics available to analyze the resulting effectiveness.

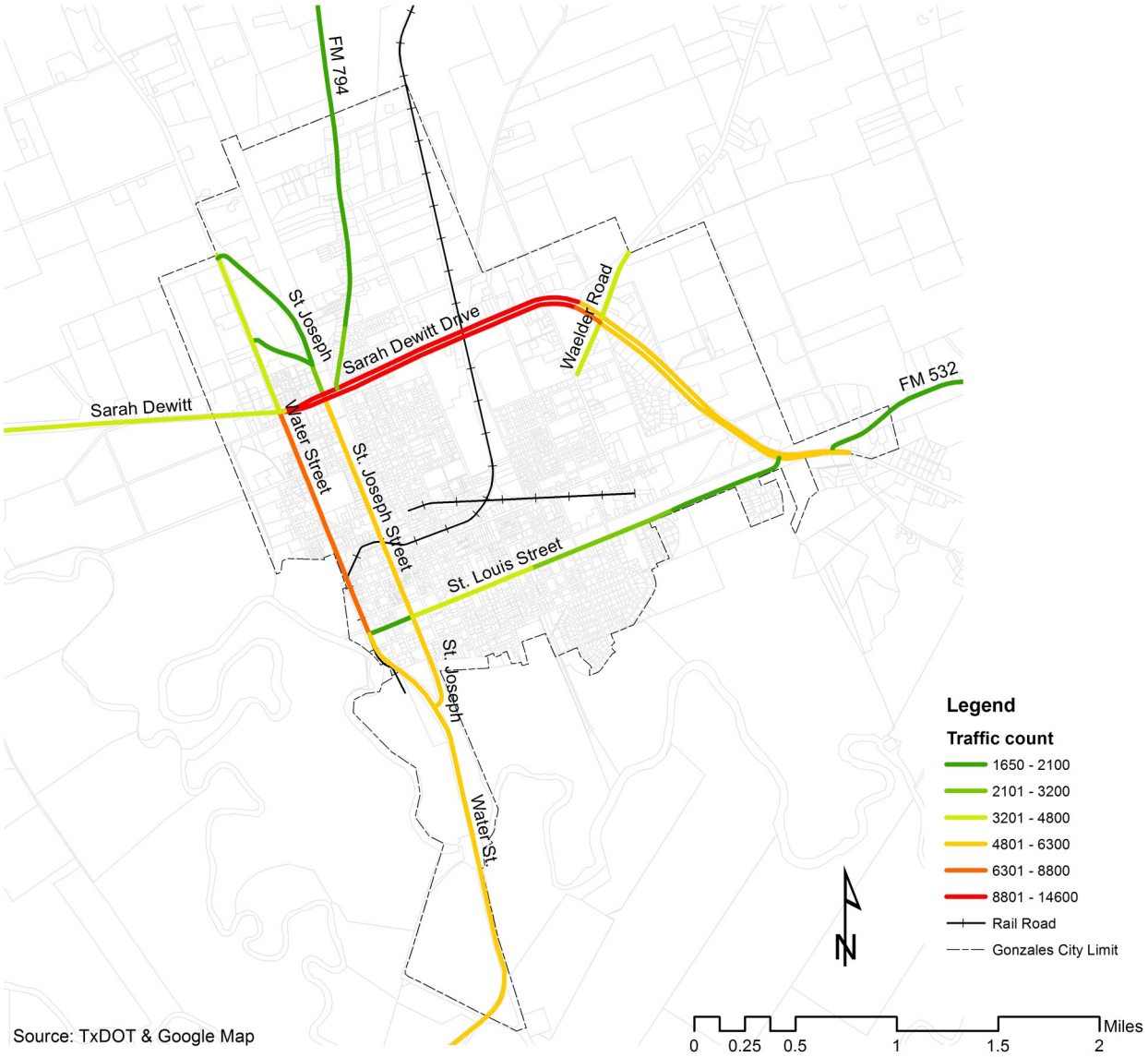
Table 5.2: Percentage Change Graph

Gonzales AADT

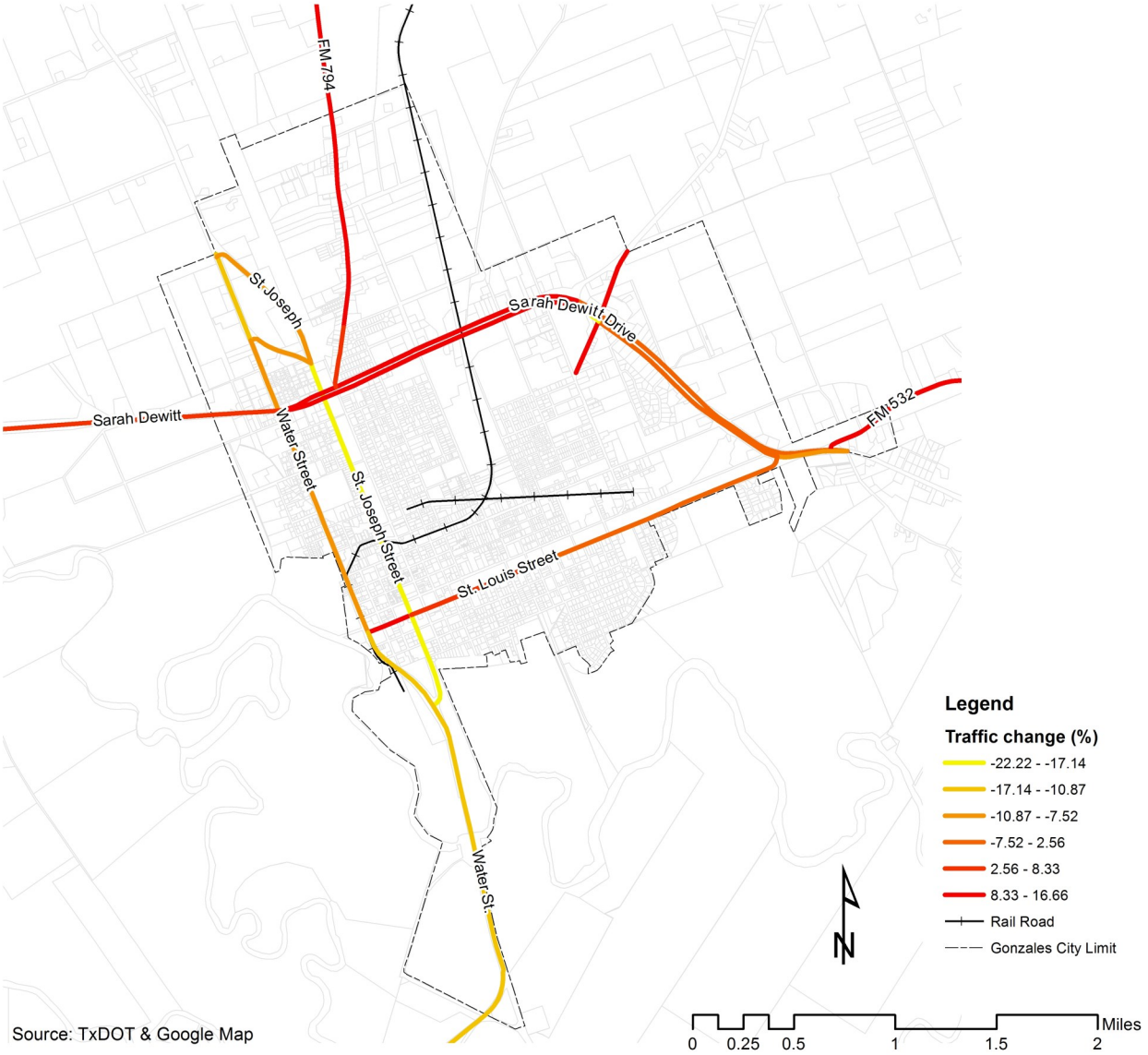
Street	From	To	DTV 2007	DTV 2008	DTV 2009	DTV 2010	Percentage Change
FM 183	*Co Road 197*	*San Joseph*	9,000	8,000	8,600	8,100	-10%
FM 532	*Sara Dewitt Dr. (90)*	*City Limit*	1,500	1,550	1,600	1,650	10%
FM 794	*Sara Dewitt Dr.*	*Stieren Rd*	2,400	2,200	2,300	2,600	8.33%
FM 794	*Stieren Rd*	*City Limit*	1,800	1,550	1,400	2,100	16.66%
Road 131	*Sara Dewitt Dr. (90)*	*Waelder Rd (97)*	1,150	1,050	1,050	1,200	4.34%
Sara Dewitt Dr. (90)	*Water Street*	*Guadalupe River*	4,600	4,200	3,800	4,300	6.52%
Sara Dewitt Dr. (90)	*St. Joseph*	*Road 131*	16,200	15,400	13,200	14,600	9.87%
Sara Dewitt Dr. (90)	*Road 131*	*Waelder Rd (97)*	11,000	9,900		8,800	-20%
Sara Dewitt Dr. (90)	*Waelder Rd (97)*	*St Louis*	5,900	4,900	5,400	5,800	-1.69%
Sara Dewitt Dr. (90)	*St Louis*	*FM 532*	7,000	6,500	5,800	6,300	-10%
St Joseph	*Sara Dewitt Dr.*	*Co Rd 150*	3,500	3,400		2,900	-17.14%
St Joseph	*Co Rd 150*	*Water Street*	2,300	1,950	2,000	2,100	-8.69%
St Joseph	*FM 183*	*St Louis*	7,000	5,580		5,600	-20%
St Joseph	*St Louis*	*St. Andrews*	7,200	5,900	5,600	5,600	-22.22%
St Louis	*Water Street*	*St Joseph*	2,300	2,100			-
St Louis	*St Joseph*	*Moore St.*	3,600	3,500	3,800	3,800	5.55%
St Louis	*Moore St.*	*St Lawrence*	3,200	2,900	3,100	3,200	0%
St Louis	*St Lawrence*	*Sara Dewitt Dr.*	1,950	1,850	1,950	2,000	2.56%
Waelder Rd (97)	*Sara Dewitt Dr. (90)*	*Road 131*	3,300	2,800	3,100	3,600	9.09%
Water Street	*St Joseph*	*St Louis*	7,000	6,100	6,500	6,100	-12.85%
Water Street	*St Louis*	*Sara Dewitt Dr.*	9,300	8,500		8,600	-7.52%
Water Street	*Sara Dewitt Dr.*	*Co Rd 150*	5,200	5,000	4,900	4,800	-7.69%
Water Street	*Co Rd 150*	*N St Joseph*	4,600	4,300	4,400	4,100	-10.87%
Water Street	*N St Joseph*	*Co Rd 241*	5,500	6,000	6,300	6,400	16.36%

Source: TxDOT Statewide Planning Map.

Map 5.2: Traffic Counts



Map 5.3: Traffic Percentage Change



Non-motorized Counts

Data on non-motorized types of travel is unavailable for the City of Gonzales. Nevertheless, the compact and quiet nature of the town makes it an ideal environment for bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Other factors such as its agreeable climate and concentration of community facilities can aid in the success of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, once an effort is made at implementing such facilities.

Traffic Incidents

TxDOT collects data on traffic incidents for the county of Gonzales. According to their records there was a reduction in the number of fatal crashes and fatalities in the county from 2009 to 2011. The city of Gonzales though has experienced a rise in the number of serious injury crashes. Tables 5.3 and 5.4 show TxDOT's statistics for the last three years. This information shows an increase in crashes involving commercial motor vehicles, and while fatalities are low, the growth in crashes is exponential and needs to be addressed. It is important to point out that not all incidents are reported to TxDOT. Incidents investigated after the fact or that did not occurred on federal or state roads are not included in TxDOT records.

Data from the Gonzales Police Department for the current year, 2012, shows that 106 incidents have occurred as of October 19. This represents an increase from the 112 incidents in 2011, 105 in 2010 and 89 in 2009.

Contrasting trends can be identified for the county and the city. Even with the recent surge in traffic, the county appears to fare better on safety issues, while the city is experiencing an increase in vehicle incidents.

Table 5.3

Fatal Crashes and Fatalities in by road type for Gonzales County			
	2011	2010	2009
Interstate			
Fatal Crashes	0	1	0
Fatalities	0	1	0
US and State Highways			
Fatal Crashes	5	6	3
Fatalities	7	7	4
Farm to Market Road			
Fatal Crashes	0	3	1
Fatalities	0	3	1
County Road			
Fatal Crashes	1	1	0
Fatalities	1	1	0
City Street			
Fatal Crashes	0	0	0
Fatalities	0	0	0

Source: TxDOT Traffic Incidents Reports and Statistics.

Table 5.4

Non-fatal Traffic Incidents for Gonzales City.			
	2009	2010	2011
Fatal Crashes (Private vehicle)	0	0	0
Fatal Crashes (Commercial vehicle)	0	2	1
Fatalities (Privatel vehicle)	0	0	0
Fatalities (Commercial vehicle)	0	2	1
Serious Injury Crashes (Private vehicle)	4	15	8
Serious Injury Crashes (Commercial vehicle	4	14	16
Serious Injuries (Private vehicle)	5	20	10
Serious Injuries (Commercial vehicle)	4	20	26
Other injuries Crashes (Private vehicle)	22	17	15
Other injuries Crashes (Commercial vehicle)	8	7	5
Other injuries (Private vehicle)	31	33	21
Other injuries (Commercial vehicle)	10	17	7
Non-injury crashes (Private vehicle)	32	35	40
Non-injury crashes (Commercial vehicle)	14	19	47
Other crashes (Private vehicle)	0	2	0
Other crashes (Commercial vehicle)	0	0	1
Total crashes for private vehicles	58	69	64
Total crashes for commercial vehicles	26	42	70

Source: TxDOT Traffic Incidents Reports and Statistics.

Road Characteristics

The information for this section on road characteristics was compiled from data provided by the City of Gonzales and TxDOT as well as from a windshield survey conducted by members of the Texas Target Cities research team on September 21, 2012.

Road Conditions

A thorough catalogue of existing road conditions helps in scheduling road maintenance and can lead to better-informed decisions regarding future development. Road conditions were scored based on the presence of several factors, including potholes, obvious cracks, and large patches in the road as well as the appropriateness of lane width and general quality of the road surface. Each road received a score from 5 (best) to 1 (worst). A street-by-street evaluation of road conditions was based on Google Street View (images were dated May 2011) as well as insights from the windshield survey in September 2012.

Table 5.5: Road Conditions

Condition	Length in Miles	Percent of Total
5 (Best)	10.21	17.12%
4	22.61	37.92%
3	16.54	27.74%
2	9.03	15.14%
1 (worst)	1.24	2.08%
Total	59.63	100.00%

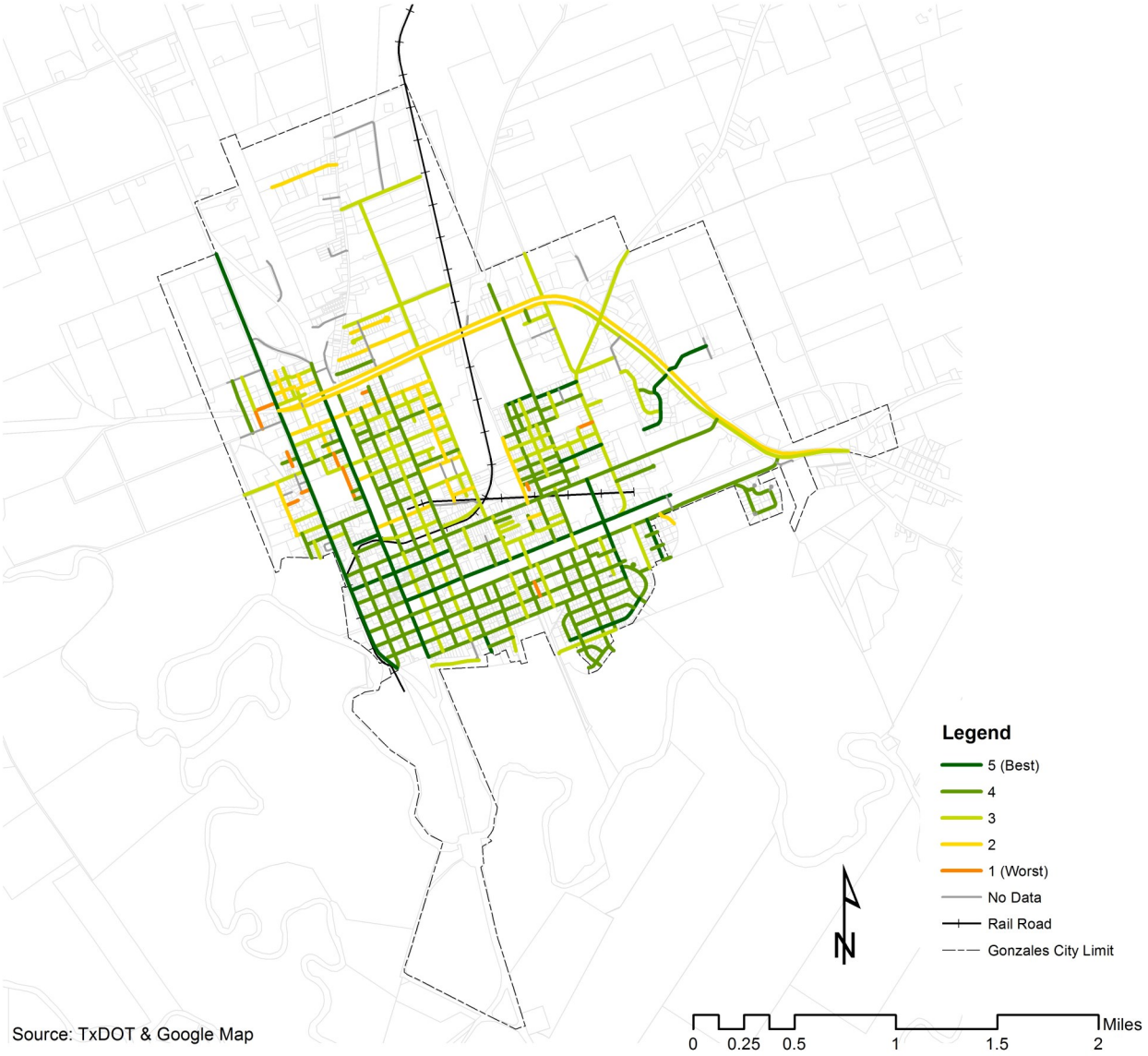
Surface Type

Existing road surfaces in Gonzales can be classified into four categories: concrete, asphalt, gravel, and dirt. Asphalt, the surface type most common in the present street network, is a good pavement material based on its lower cost and greater ease of repair than concrete surfaces. It is not as durable as concrete, but this can be offset by the generally less time-consuming construction process of asphalt roads. The various surface types of adjacent streets could be leading to inconsistent road maintenance in parts of the city, as shown by the previous section on surface conditions.

Table 5.6: Surface Materials

Material	Length in Miles	Percent of Total
Asphalt	58.68	98.41%
Concrete	0.39	0.65%
Gravel	0.48	0.81%
Dirt	0.08	0.13%
Total	59.63	100.00%

Map 5.4: Road Conditions



Road Capacity

Road capacity can be explained as the maximum vehicle flow rate in a period of time on a segment of roadway. It implies the "supply" of the road circulation system or transportation network. After considering the number of lanes, proportion of trucks in the traffic stream, width of the roadway, and terrain type, road capacity of each principal and minor arterial in Gonzales is determined (see Table 5.7).

After comparing with the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) data (also shown in Table 5.7), and considering there is currently no obvious peak hour and off-peak hour difference in traffic volume, we can conclude that Water Street, FM 532, Harwood Road, and US Highway 90 (west of Crawford Street) are greatly under capacity. St Joseph Street and St. Louis Street can also meet the current

traffic demand. Only Sarah Dewitt Drive (US Highway 90) contends with a traffic volume that may, in extreme situations, challenges its designed capacity. However this road's overall traffic condition is still satisfactory when congestion is absent. AADT data is missing for St Lawrence Street, so this prevents conclusions being made about this principal arterial.

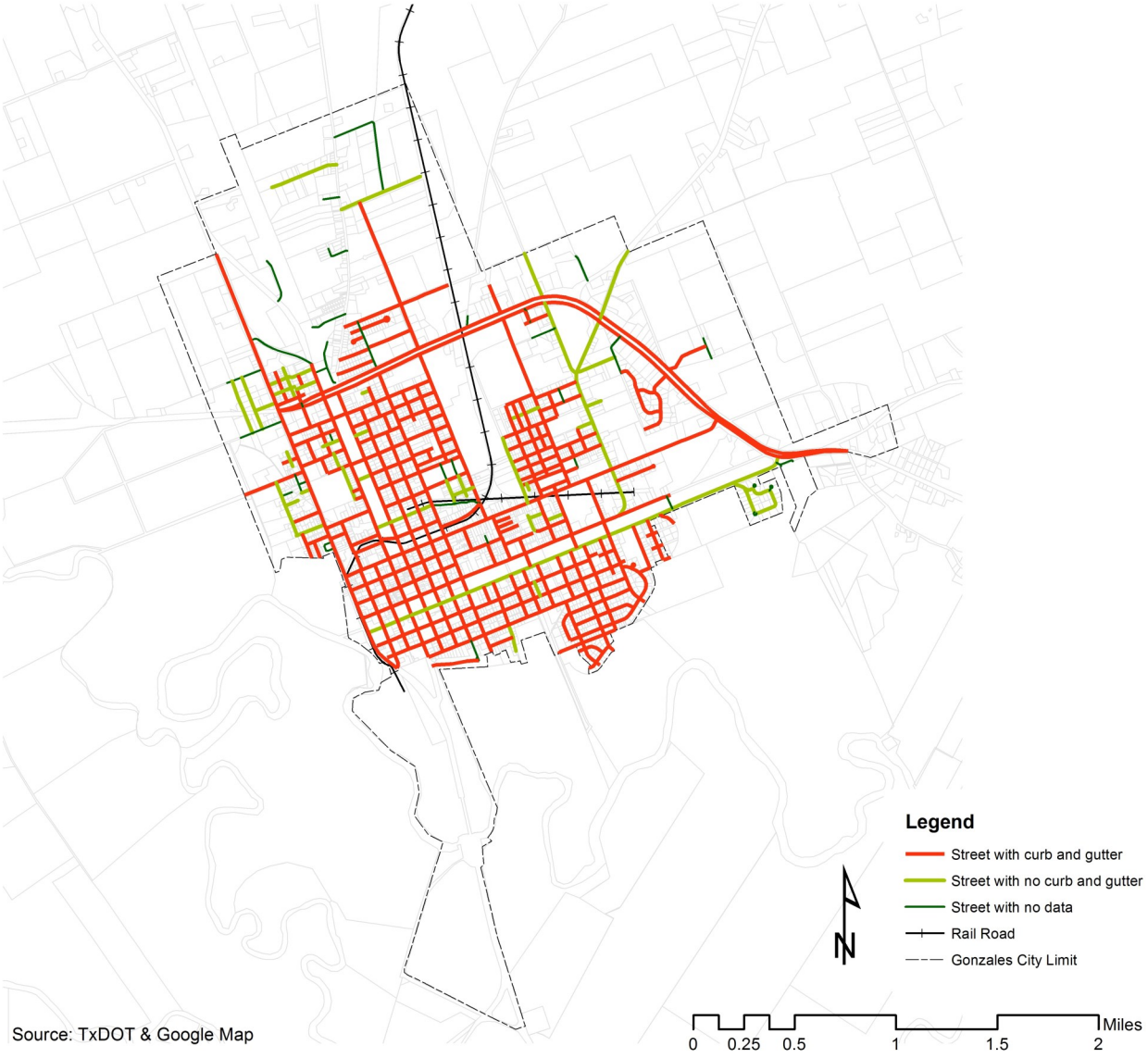
Table 5.7: Arterial Roadways Capacity

	Road Name	Capacity (veh/h)	Comparing with AADT in 2010
Principal Arterials	Water Street (US Highway 183)	8892	4100-6500
	Sarah Dewitt Drive (US Highway 90)	9600	14600
Minor Arterials	Farm to Market Road (FM 532)	2800	1650
	Harwood Road (FM 794)	2800	2100-2600
	St. Joseph Street	2800	2100-5600
	St. Lawrence	2800	
	St. Louis Street (TX-146 Spur)	2800	2000-3800
	US Highway 90 (west of Crawford Street)	9600	4300
	US Highway 90 (east of Crawford Street)	2800	6300

Curb and Gutter

Curbs and gutters provide storm water drainage and are a desired feature to maintain the condition of the roadways. Survey data indicates that Gonzales has a high proportion of streets with curb and gutter: just 20% of streets in the city lack curb and gutter.

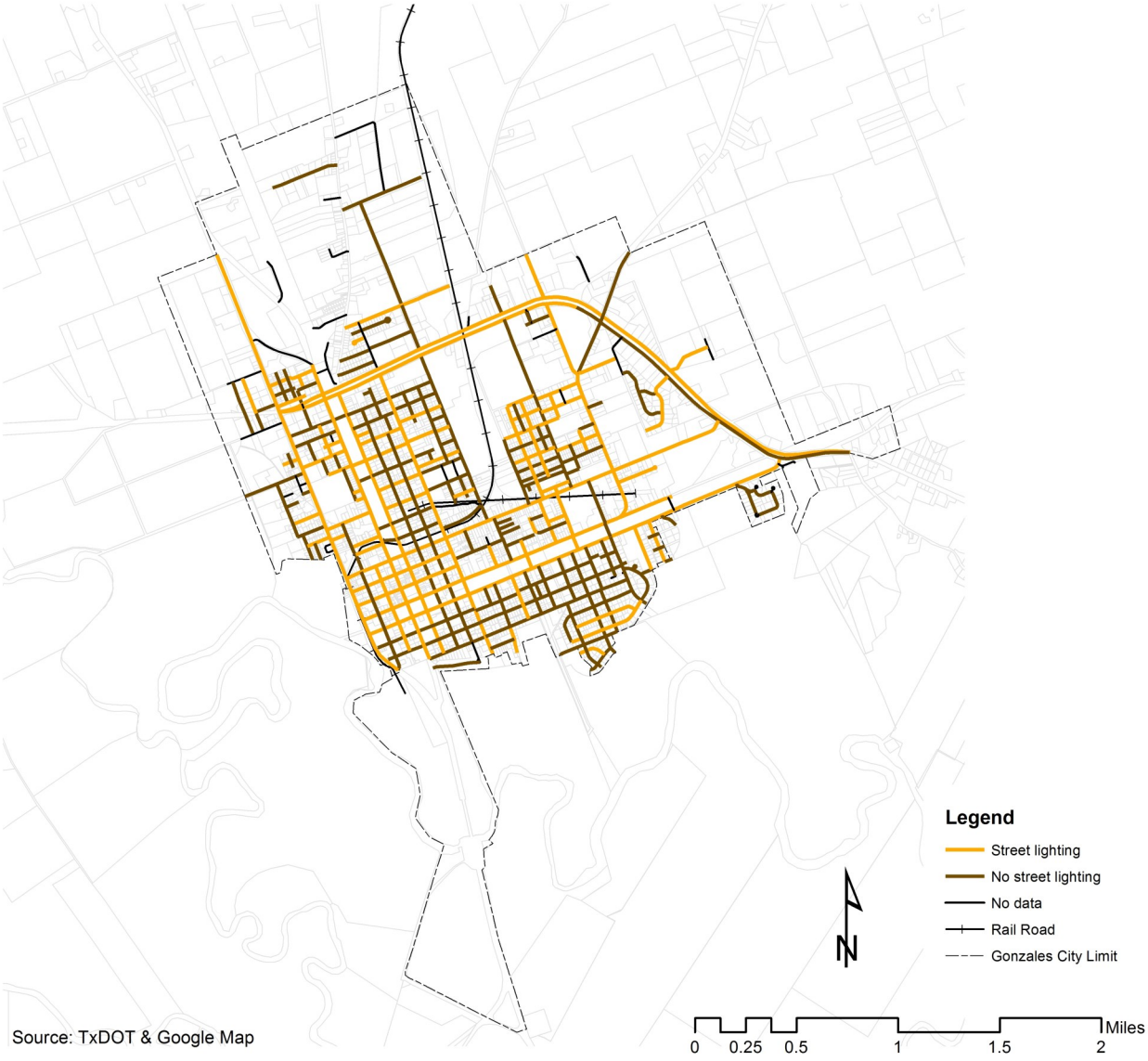
Map 5.5: Curb & Gutter



Street Lighting

Street lighting helps drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists travel more safely and contributes to a safer neighborhood environment overall. Results of the windshield survey show that this is an area needing improvement. Around 60% of streets lack adequate lighting, though most of these streets are low-volume, local streets. Even in streets with street lighting, though, the condition of lights and the type of lights could be improved.

Map 5.6: Street Lighting



State and City Projects

Three future TxDOT projects are slated for areas within or around Gonzales (see Table 5.8). One project within the city limits (ID: 015302039) is a resurfacing of a segment of the US Highway 183 Bypass (Water Street), beginning from the west limit of the Gonzales Municipal Airport through the intersection of Water Street and W. Cone Street. Two other projects include pavement striping and markers (ID: 015401065) and replacement of a bridge (ID: 091322039), though both are outside the city limits.

Table 5.8 Project Description

1) Project ID: 015302039 (Traditional) Highway: US 183 Work From: BU 183 NORTH Work To: CONE STREET IN GONZALES Work Description: RESURFACE ROADWAY Location map:	2) Project ID: 015401065 (Traditional) Highway: US 183 Work From: 0.3 MI. NORTH OF FM 3282 Work To: CR 327 Work Description: INSTALL PAVEMENT STRIPES/MARKERS Location map:	3) Project ID: 091322039 (Traditional) Highway: CR Work From: AT BERRY CREEK CR 342 Work To: (CR 342) STR # AA03-42-001 Work Description: REPLACE BRIDGE Location map:
		

(Source: TxDOT)

Parking

Residents and visitors to the city are allowed to park on the streets and in the city's squares for up to 48 hours at a time, and pavement width of streets, especially in residential areas, is ample enough for "yield parking." Parking is prohibited in a few areas of the city, including:

- The 100 and 200 blocks of St. Joseph Street
- The 1400, 1500, 1600, 1700 and 1800 East blocks of St. Joseph Street (applies to trucks only)
- Adjacent to East Avenue Primary School, the 1500 block of St. Lawrence Street and, during school hours, the 1400 South block of St. Lawrence Street and 1700 North block of St. Louis Street
- Adjacent to Gonzales Elementary School, the 1500 block of St. Andrew Street, during school beginning and dismissal hours
- Adjacent to North Avenue Intermediate, the 1000 East block of St. Joseph Street
- In front of the Gonzales Public Library at the 400 North block of St. Matthew Street

A parking survey of the downtown commercial core was conducted by the Target Texas Cities team during a site visit on Friday, September 28, 2012. Google Maps Street View, dated May 2011, also served as a visual aid in analysis. The survey focused on location and usage of both on- and off-street

public parking spaces within the six-block area bound by St. George and St. Matthew Streets to the north and south and by St. Paul and St. James Streets to the east and west. Three key observations made:

- Three major public off-street parking lots surround Texas Heroes Square, Confederate Square and the Gonzales County Courthouse, totaling approximately 353 parking spaces. At the hour the survey was conducted (1 p.m.), the Texas Heroes Square and Confederate Square lots were approximately one-third occupied (37% and 32%, respectively). Usage of the Courthouse lot was not marked down.
- On-street striped parking totaled about 74 spaces, just under half of which (46%) were in use.
- Of note, parallel parking is generally permitted along street shoulders in the downtown core even where spaces are not striped, or where ADA spaces may be the only parking specifically designated. Fifty vehicles were observed parallel-parked on such unmarked street shoulders during the survey. Parking is strictly prohibited by posted signage in just a few parts of the downtown: in front of the Gonzales Public Library on St. Matthew Street and along the 300-400 blocks and 500 East block of St. Joseph Street.

Transit

Bus Service

R Transit, a curb-to-curb transit service is now offering demand response service to the Gonzales county area through the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission. This service is provided from Monday through Friday, from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, and requires 24-hour advance notice to schedule a ride. This service is available within the county and to other counties in the COG's region, including Dewitt, Victoria, Calhoun, Goliad, Jackson, Lavaca, and Matagorda Counties.

Taxi

Taxi service for the city was once provided by Gonzales Taxi but is no longer in operation. Currently no local taxi service available for the city, though several taxi companies in the Victoria area do provide service by appointment.

Regional Options

Passenger train service: According to the Gonzales Cannon, a delegation of Amtrak officials met with members of Flatonia Rail Park Station (FRPS) in August 2012 to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding reflecting the company's intent to establish a station stop in Flatonia. Amtrak has since approved the Flatonia stop. Considering that Flatonia is a relatively short distance of 30 miles from Gonzales, the potential establishment of a stop in Flatonia would provide an important regional transportation option for Gonzales.

Pedestrian and Bike Facilities

Sidewalks

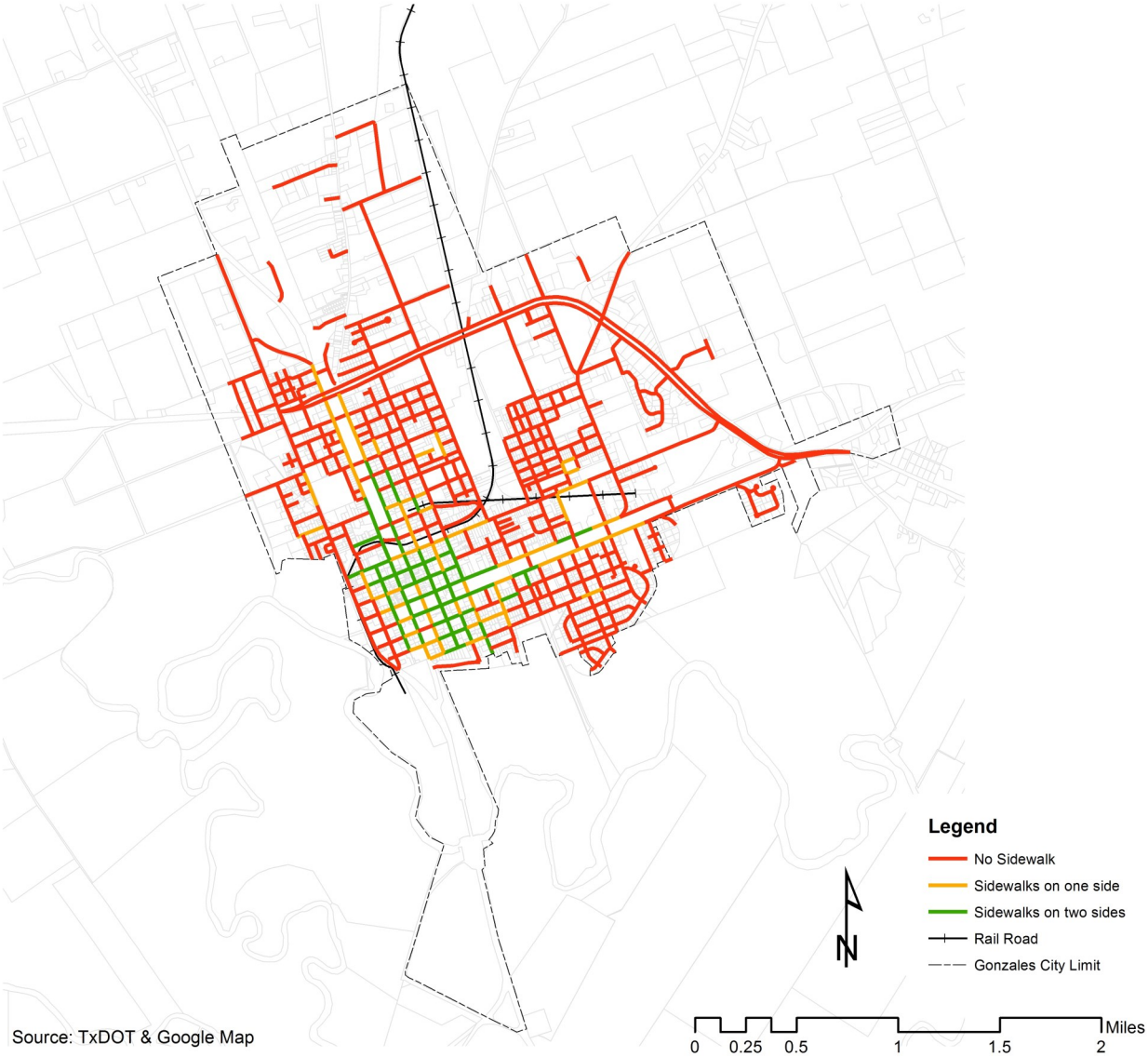
Sidewalk Connectivity

Generally speaking, only the downtown area and a scattering of other streets have sidewalks on both sides of the road. Within a 2500-foot buffer area of downtown, one-side sidewalks could be easily found.

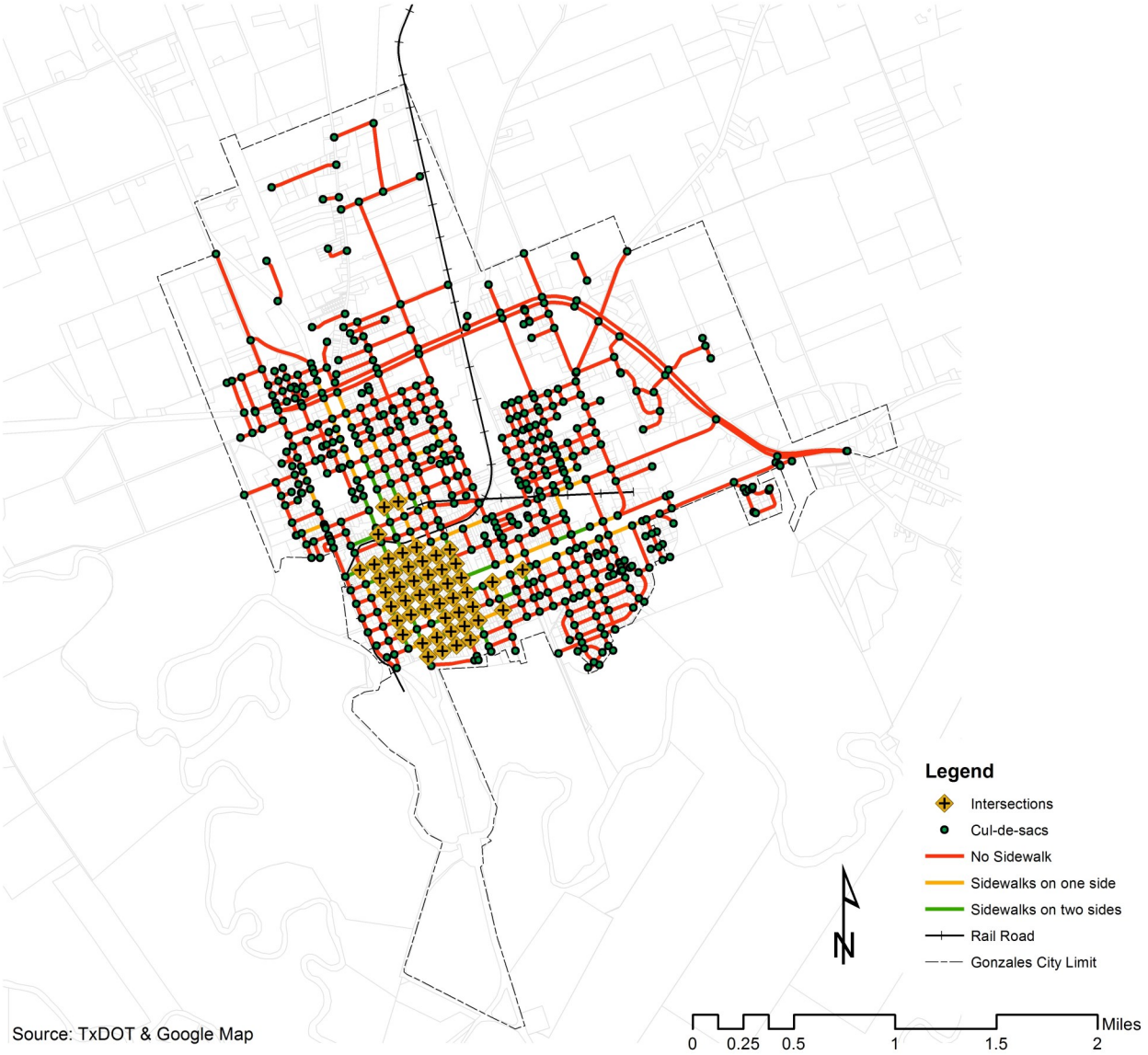
Sidewalk connectivity is in a relatively poor state. Based on the windshield survey and Google Map Street View, the internal street connectivity rate (calculated from the number of intersections divided by the total number of cul-de-sacs and intersections) for Gonzales is almost 0.86. However, the internal sidewalks connectivity rate is only 0.077, which is much lower than street connectivity. This shows most of the intersections in the city are not connected by the sidewalks.

The major problems about sidewalk condition are: 1. Sidewalks might switch from one side to the other side within the same street, requiring pedestrians to cross the street without any crosswalk; 2. A large portion of the sidewalks is interrupted by parking lots or other facilities, for instance at the intersection of St. Peter and St. Paul Streets, a parking lot abruptly ends the street's sidewalk; and 3. Some of the sidewalks are incomplete. W Wallace Street is an example.

Map5.7 Sidewalks



Map 5.8 Sidewalk Connectivity



Bike Routes and Bike Parking Availability

Bicycling was ranked as the second most popular outdoor activity in the country by the 2011 Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report and it is regarded as an inexpensive way to maintain an active lifestyle. Gonzales' city government promotes bicycle activities for children during city festivities and special events, but the city lacks bicycle infrastructure in general and there are no current efforts to address the issue.

Previous efforts to promote cycling in the city included the Canyon Express Tour, a 65-mile cross-country race, and the recent Come and Take it Bicycle Race sponsored by Southern Clay Industries, still an active event. Both of these events featured family-friendly categories, but the annual nature

of these events does not cater to the day-to-day needs of the population.

According to the US Census Bureau, as of 2011, a little under 45% of the city's population is in an age cohort that traditionally does not have access to motor vehicles. This includes 28.5% of the city's population that is under 18 years old and 15% that is over 65 years old. Adding to this, 18.9% of the city's population is below the poverty line and possibly deals with diminished transportation options. Since the city population and density make public transportation not viable, transportation alternatives for these population segments must be provided.

Bicycling is also considered a natural fit for children using alternative transportation to get to school. The Texas Department of State Health Services reports that 6.5% of youths use some sort of non-motorized alternative (walking, riding a bike or skateboarding) to get to school. Appropriate infrastructure for this purpose is important in providing a safe environment for them to do so.

Trails

The term "trail" is presently used to describe a transportation route designed for non-motorized traffic. The city of Gonzales has a 2.35-mile bike and hike trail that is part of the J.B. Wells Jr. Park. The trail starts on the park's north side near the intersection of Water and St. John Streets, and continues until it reaches the golf course facilities on the south section of Independence Park. It is a limestone path that circles around the Santa Anna Mound and offers lateral views of the river. It also connects several wildlife observation points.

Connections to Public Facilities

Gonzales was founded as a land grant settlement under the Mexican rule of Texas. According to this tradition, the majority of public buildings, parks, schools, and churches are located along two axes that intersect in the Gonzales County Court building and plaza. The grid pattern of the streets and this land use configuration plus the compact nature of the city would facilitate their connection through pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly facilities. Gonzales High School, Gonzales Memorial Hospital and other facilities along Sarah Dewitt Drive, on the other hand, do not enjoy this close relationship and access to them for non-motorized types of travel is limited or non-existent.

The J.B. Wells Jr. Park trail is also within accessible distance of downtown and other community facilities, but it lacks infrastructure that can provide a safe passage to the park and thus would open the trail to a larger portion of the population. J.B Wells Jr. Park attracts a significant percentage of the city's tourism, and taking into consideration that access to and from the park implies crossing Water Street, safety considerations should be of the utmost importance. Improving the park's accessibility will also help direct any overspill of special event attendance into downtown Gonzales.

Freight and Railroad

Railroads

The City of Gonzales currently has one rail line: the Texas, Gonzales and Northern Railway Company (TXGN). The line was built by the San Antonio & Aransas Pass Railway, which was acquired by Southern Pacific. TXGN operates a 12.3 mile rail line that runs from a connection with Union Pacific's Flatonia Subdivision at Harwood south to the City of Gonzales. Short line service began on November 13, 1992. Major traffic includes crude oil, grain, animal feed meals, and clay and metal products. There is currently no passenger rail service offered in the City of Gonzales. The nearest passenger rail station is approximately 39 miles away in San Marcos, TX.

Railroad Crossings

According to the Federal Railroad Administration, there are seven public at-grade crossings located in the City of Gonzales. An at-grade crossing is a location where a public highway, road, street, or private roadway, including associated sidewalks and pathways, crosses one or more railroad tracks at the same level. Table 5.9 below shows the number of railroad crossings in the City of Gonzales along with daily train counts and traffic safety warning devices. Although there are seven at-grade crossings, only the 742771C grade crossing at US 90 is along an active rail line. The others are located at abandoned rail lines. The grade crossing along US 90 has pavement markings (stop lines and RRXing symbols) as well as advanced warning devices such as bells.

Table 5.9: Gonzales Railroad Crossings

Gonzales Grade Crossings			
Street Name	**Crossing No.**	**Trains**	**Warning Devices**
US 0090	742771C	3	Stop Lines and RR Xing Symbols
Hamilton St	742774X	5	Crossbucks
College St	742778A	1	Crossbucks
Henry	742779G	1	Crossbucks
Church	742780B	1	Crossbucks
St Peter	764180K	1	Crossbucks, Stop Lines and RR Xing Symbols
Hamilton St	764181S	1	Crossbucks

Hazardous Materials Movement

Due to the minimal presence of a railroad in the City of Gonzales, the most significant hazardous material threat comes from the presence of the adjacent truck routes. Since 1972, according to the Office of Hazardous Materials Safety, there have been 12 hazardous material incidents in the City of Gonzales. Since drilling began in Gonzales and nearby counties, traffic on major routes and city streets have increased. In April 2012, the City Council redesignated truck routes in Gonzales. Section 12.801 under Article 12.8 Truck Routes states that "it shall be unlawful for any person to operate a motor vehicle

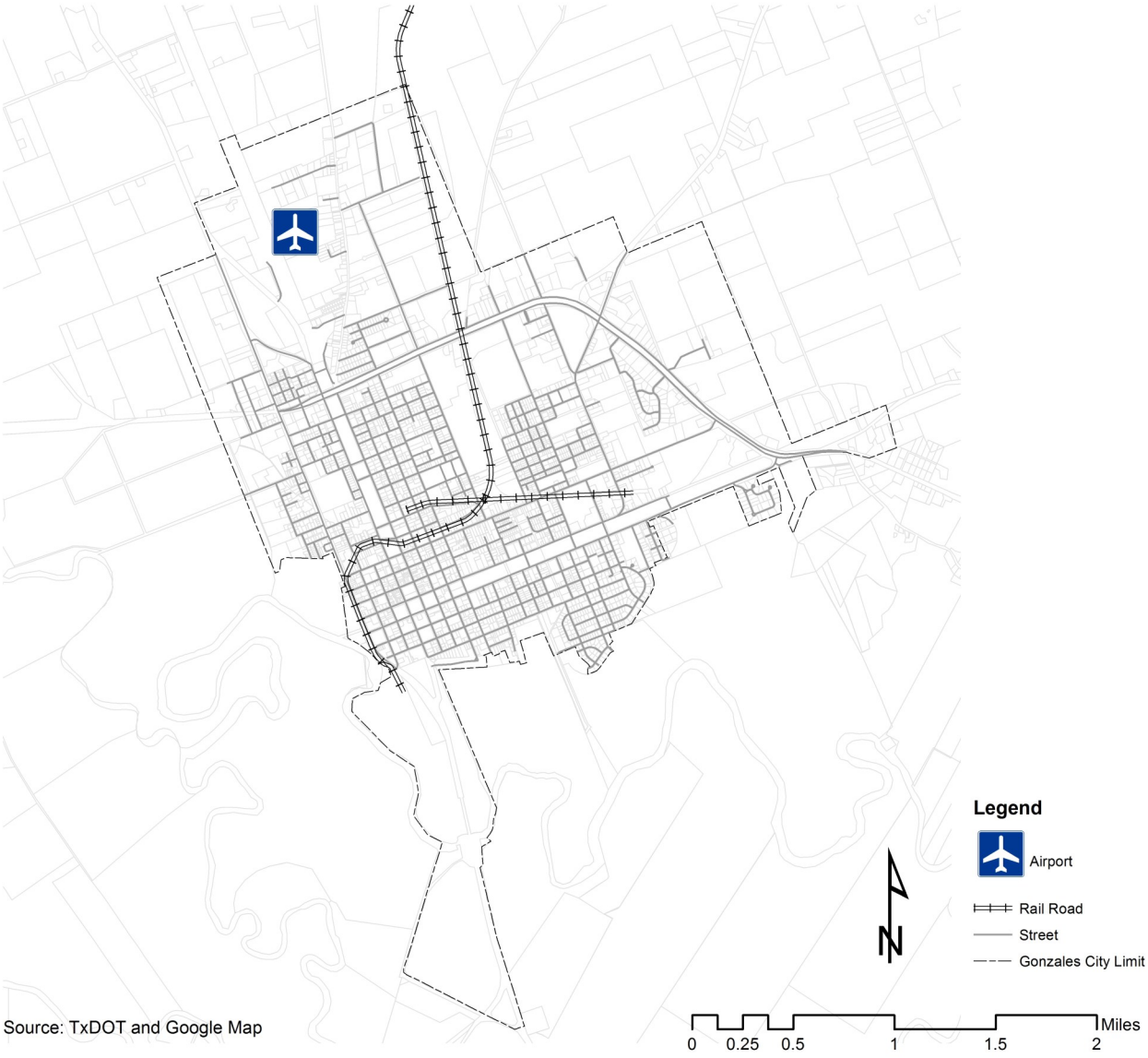
with a carrying capacity of more than 26,000 pounds upon any street within the limits of the city except upon the streets designated as truck routes" (City of Gonzales Code of Ordinances).
The following streets were designated as truck routes through the city: FM 794, U.S. Highway 183 and U.S. Highway 90-A Bypass. However, this does not apply to those trucks weighing more than 26,000 pounds that are operating to secure fuel, repairs or to deliver, load or unload cargo. TxDOT and the City of Gonzales eliminated Spur 146 (St. Louis Street) from the truck route due to risk of a hazardous materials spill. The route is located in close proximity to school and residential areas.

Aviation

Roger M. Dreyer Memorial Airport

The Roger M. Dreyer Memorial Airport is located two miles northwest of downtown Gonzales on 2809 St. Joseph Street. (Map 5.6) It is an unattended public use General Aviation (GA) airport owned by the City of Gonzales. The airport is part of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport System and TxDOT's Texas Aviation Commission (TAC) Airport System.
The airport maintains one 50-foot by 3,200-foot asphalt paved runway. The runway is limited to an axle weight of 21,000 pounds. The airport operates light to medium-sized aircraft on a regular basis. Currently there are six aircraft based at the airport with an average of 34 aircraft operations a week. The airport is equipped with six small T-hangars and two large hangars. The airport is also qualified for night operations through a remote-controlled lighting system.
Currently, the city provides self-serve 100LL aviation fuel at the airport. The city utilizes a Fuelmaster system that allows users to swipe credit cards to purchase fuel. The city also provides hangar leases, sales, a pilots lounge, snooze room and restroom at the airport. There is no landing or takeoff fee. Tie down areas are available at the airport free of charge. The city has purchased 6.5 additional acres to expand the airport grounds and site Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS) equipment. There is one business that operates out of the airport- 6D Ranch Flying Service.
The closest regional-commercial passenger service is provided by the San Marcos Municipal Airport, located approximately 34 miles northwest in San Marcos. The closest major domestic/international airport is at Austin Bergstrom International Airport (AUS), approximately 47 miles northwest of Gonzales in Austin.

Map 5.9: Airport



Source: TxDOT and Google Map

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- The city's transportation network is not congested.
- The city has several well-defined activity centers and trip generators within its city limits.
- The city's traditional street grid means residential and commercial districts have good accessibility.
- The existing configuration of the city's park system allows for easy connections between both auto-oriented and non-motorized transportation infrastructure.

Weaknesses

- Road maintenance is inconsistent throughout the city.
- The downtown faces parking issues leading up to and during festivals and events. Specifically, parking in the downtown is blocked off from potential business customers a day or more prior to events.
- Bicycle infrastructure is scarce or non-existent.
- The lack of any public transit provider means that regional connectivity is poor for people without access to a personal vehicle.
- During school drop-off/pick-up hours, congestion around schools makes conditions for walking and biking unsafe and contributes to the sense that a car is the necessary transportation mode for students.

Opportunities

- Gas and oil companies are generating an influx of capital.
- Independence Park and JB Wells Park are known regionally as event venues and could easily be connected to downtown via pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
- With an impending development boom, the city should work to properly manage traffic for longstanding success.

Threats

- Increasingly heavy traffic on regional roads decreases the intervals between maintenance projects.
- The growing demand for truck drivers in the region has likewise increased the number of inexperienced commercial drivers on the road, yielding more tractor-trailer-related incidents.
- Young residents are being lured to higher-paying oil- and gas-related jobs, such as driving commercial vehicles.

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Future Transportation

This section of the comprehensive plan envisions a connected, multimodal transportation system that provides safe and convenient access for automobiles, freight, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Automobile Mobility

Road Classification and Circulation

The section, Road Classification and Circulation, advises development of a functional classification for the street network.

Currently, automobile mobility in Gonzales is relatively good. The city's transportation network is generally not congested. A high proportion of streets have curbs and gutters. The city's traditional gridded street network means residential and commercial districts have many points of access, while the existing configuration of the city's park system allows ample opportunity for good connections to be made between auto-oriented and non-motorized transportation infrastructure.

However, the city lacks aspects of a complete transportation network, including thorough wayfinding signage, a classification system appropriate to the surrounding land uses, and multimodal connections. More than half of the city's streets lack adequate street lighting, and traffic lights and stop signs are not always placed where they are needed.

Traffic projections for key intersections within the city are noted in Table 5.10. (Traffic projections at more intersections in the city are included in the Appendix).

Table 5.10: Projected traffic for major intersections in Gonzales

Street	From	To	2007	2011	2007-2011	2017	2022	2027
FM 532	Sara Dewitt Dr (90)	City Limit	1,500	2,700	**80%**	4,860	8,748	15,746
FM 183	Co. Road	St. Joseph	9,000	13,700	**52%**	20,854	31,745	48,323
Water Street	St. Joseph St	St. Louis	7,000	10,600	**51%**	16,051	24,306	36,807
FM 794	Stieren Rd	City Limit	1,800	2,400	**33%**	3,200	4,267	5,689
FM 794	Sara Dewitt Dr (90)	Stieren Rd	2,400	3,000	**25%**	3,750	4,688	5,859

Source: Compiled from Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Yoakum District traffic maps

Map 5.10 proposes a system for roadway classification, explained further in Table 5.11

Map 5.10: Proposed road classification for the city of Gonzales

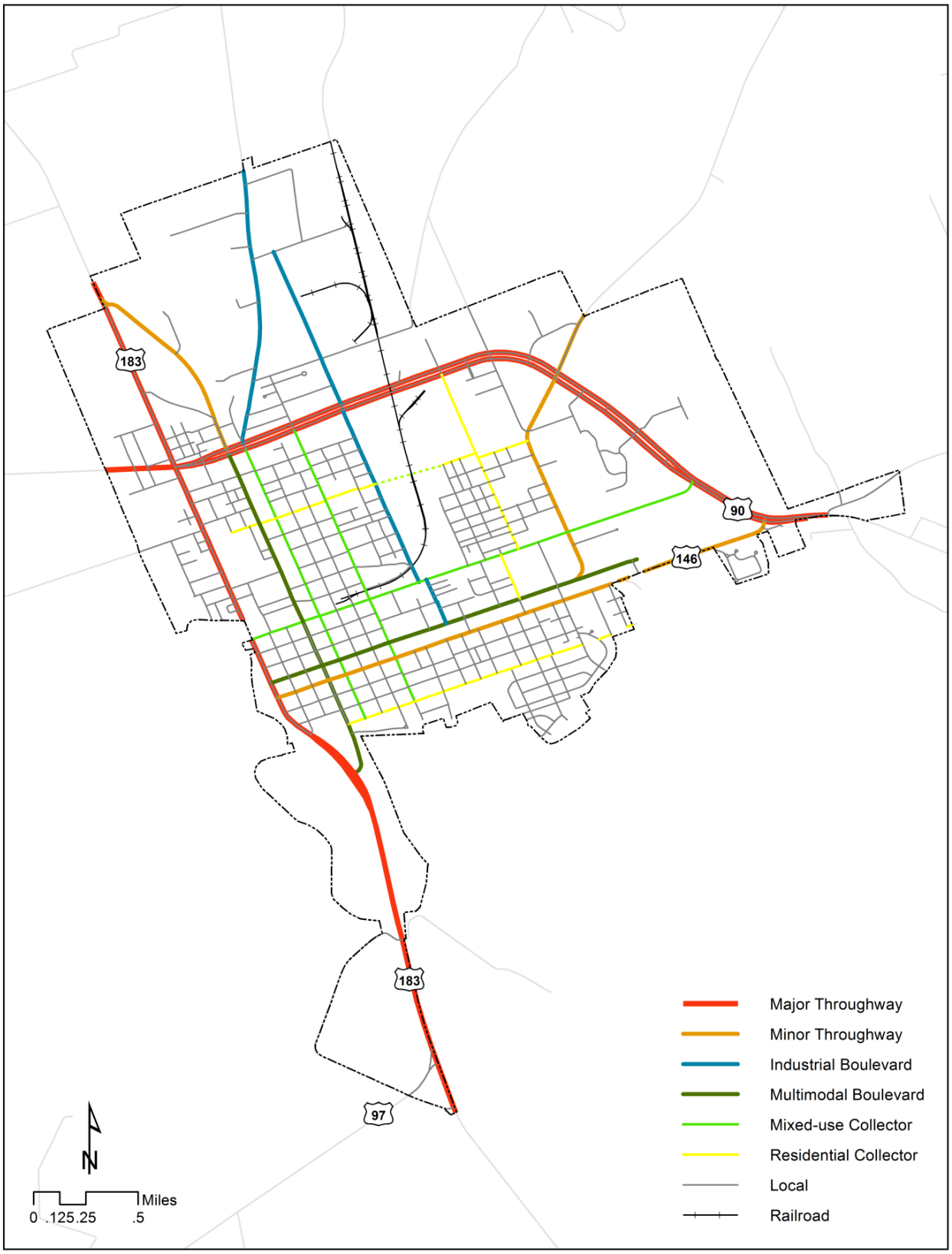


Table 5.11: Types of roadways

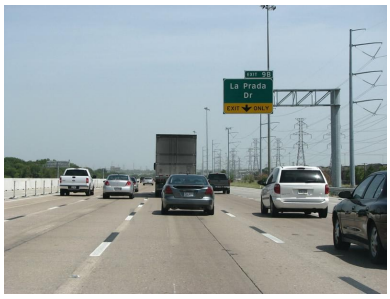
Classification	Description	Examples
Major throughway 	A long-distance, medium speed vehicular corridor that traverses open country. Emphasizes motor vehicle travel and connects major activity centers.	• Water Street (U.S. Hwy 183 Bypass) • Sarah Dewitt Drive (U.S. Hwy 90)
Minor throughway 	A throughway should be relatively free of intersections, driveways and adjacent buildings; otherwise it becomes a strip, which interferes with traffic flow.	• St. Louis St (TX-146) • Seydler St & Waelder Rd • N St. Joseph St (From U.S. Hwy 183 to Sarah Dewitt Dr)
Industrial boulevard 	Serves major centers of urban activity and emphasizes public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian travel while balancing the many travel demands of intensely developed areas.	• FM 794 (Harwood Rd) • Church Street
Multimodal boulevard 	A Boulevard is usually lined by parallel parking, wide sidewalks, or side medians planted with trees. Buildings uniformly line the edges.	• N St. Joseph St (from Sarah Dewitt Dr to Independence Park) • St. Lawrence St

Table 5.11 continued

Classification	Description	Examples
Mixed-use collector 	Collectors are chosen based on road condition rating.	• St. Andrew St • St. Paul St • N College St
Residential collector 	Traffic oriented facilities with designs that integrate all modes but primarily serve motor vehicles.	• Tate St - Weimer St *(potential new east-west connection)* • Robertson St • St. Vincent St
Local road 	Streets that complement the regional system by serving neighborhoods and carrying local traffic.	All others

Image sources (from Top Left to Bottom Right)

http://www.aaroads.com

http://chipsea.blogspot.com

http://www.hickorytreeindustrialpark.com

Shttp://www.waze.com

http://wiki.coe.neu.edu/groups/nl2011transpo/wiki/fb52f/

http://www.waze.com

http://www.columbus.in.gov

Future of Parking

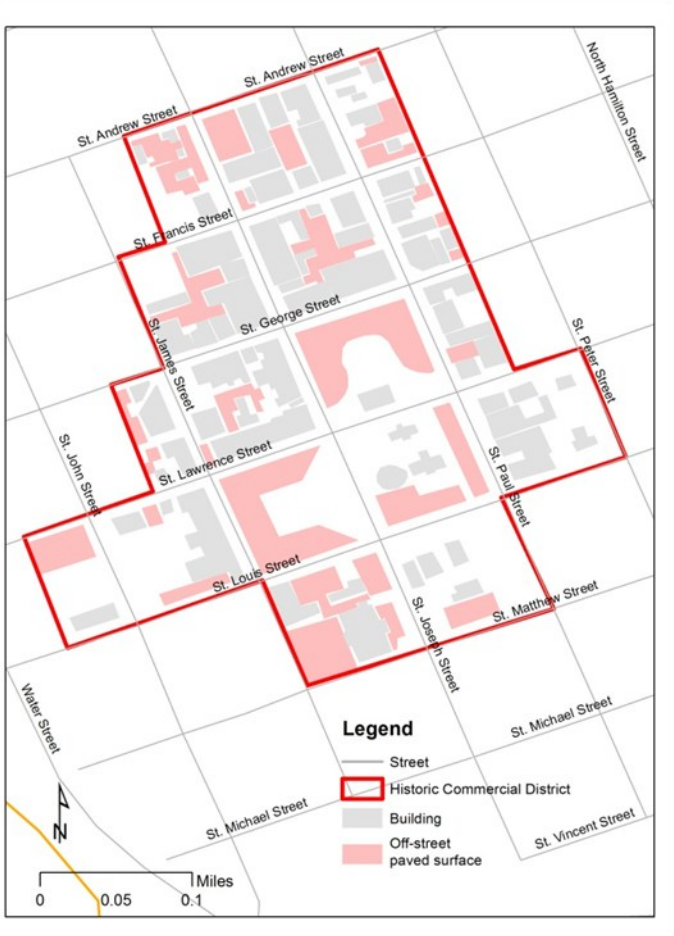
Providing sufficient parking downtown for employees, residents, and visitors is necessary for the success of the businesses located and festivals that take place in the area. While the next section, Bike and Pedestrian Mobility, outlines a vision for improving the convenience of getting to and around downtown by foot and bicycle, many people will continue to arrive to the central core by car as they do currently.

It is typical for four parking spaces to be built for every 1,000 sq. ft. of business area, according to Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) handbook *Parking Generation*. However, studies of parking sites consistently find that just two to three spaces are actually used, even during peak hours.

The Gonzales Commercial Historic District covers just over 50 acres bounded roughly by St. Andrew, St. Peter, St. Matthew, and Water Streets (see Figure 5.3). For the purposes of this section of the comprehensive plan, this serves as the downtown core and parking study area. Table 5.12 shows the areas (sq. ft.) of driveways/parking lots and building footprints.

Section 14.405(c) of the Gonzales City Ordinance defines the average parking space as eight by twenty feet in dimension, an area of 160 sq ft. The approximate area of paved off-street surface accommodates about 2,650

Figure 5.3: Parking and building footprints in the Gonzales Commercial Historic District



Source: Created with reference to Google Maps

Table 5.12: Calculated areas of paved surface and building footprints

	Area (sq ft)
District	2,216,300
Paved off-street surface	425,000
Building	585,000

such parking spaces. If following the typical four spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. of business, the district would require about 2,340 parking spaces. Thus the current parking supply is sufficient for the city's needs.

Table 5.13 shows the number of off-street parking spaces that the Gonzales City Ordinance Section 14.407 requires to be provided for different land use types. Other requirements include:

- *Pavement type*: Driveways and off-street parking area shall be paved using an all-weather surface, such as concrete or asphalt, and have concrete curb and gutter.
- *Separation from street:* Except in residential-zoned districts, off-street parking shall be separated from the street right-of-way by barrier curbs or by tire stops approved by the city.
- *Arrangement of parking areas*: Parking spaces and driving lanes shall be marked and arranged to provide for safe and orderly movement and parking of vehicles.
- *Water runoff*: Parking areas shall provide for appropriate disposal of surface water.
- *Lighting*: Where lighting fixtures are used to illuminate or mark off-street parking areas, they should be arranged to shield direct light from any residence and from street traffic.
- *Distance*: Off-street parking areas do not need to be on the same lot as the principal structure or use but must be within 300 feet of the structure or use.
- *Loading zones*: Any business or industrial building, hospital, institution, or hotel hereafter erected, constructed, reconstructed, or altered, in any district, shall provide adequate off-street facilities for loading and unloading of merchandise and goods within or adjacent to the building, in such a manner as not to obstruct freedom of traffic movement of the public streets, alleys, or sidewalks.

Table 5.13: Parking requirements by development type.

Development Type	Off-Street Parking Space Requirement
A-O (Agricultural Open)	Two, plus one for each additional bedroom over three per dwelling unit
R-1 (Residential 1 District)	Two, plus one for each additional bedroom over three per dwelling unit
R-2 (Residential 2 District)	Two, plus one for each additional bedroom over three per dwelling unit
M-H (Mobile Home)	N/A
C-1 (Light Commercial District	One per shift person and per each 300 square feet of floor area
C-2 (Heavy Commercial District	On-street except any structure over three stories shall be same as C-1 District
H-D (Historical District)	N/A
M-1 (Industrial District)	One per shift person and per each 500 square feet of floor area

Source: Gonzales City Ordinance Section 14.407

For a full list, see Section 4.406 of the Gonzales City Ordinance. Requirements not currently found in Gonzales' ordinance are those for minimizing impervious surfaces, alternative parking surface materials or minimum shade specification. These are examples of features in the growing concept of "green" parking lots, which are designed to improve stormwater management, reduce polluted runoff water, and cool the temperature of parking lots. The *Green Parking Lot Resource Guide* can be found online at nepis.epa.gov.

GOAL 5.1: Develop a safe road classification system that meets the short- and long-range needs of the city.

OBJECTIVE 5.1.1: Considering current traffic volumes, plan for the future needs of streets that meet or surpass their road capacities.

POLICY 5.1.1.1: Develop a catalog of road capacity and a monitoring system for monthly traffic performance at key intersections.

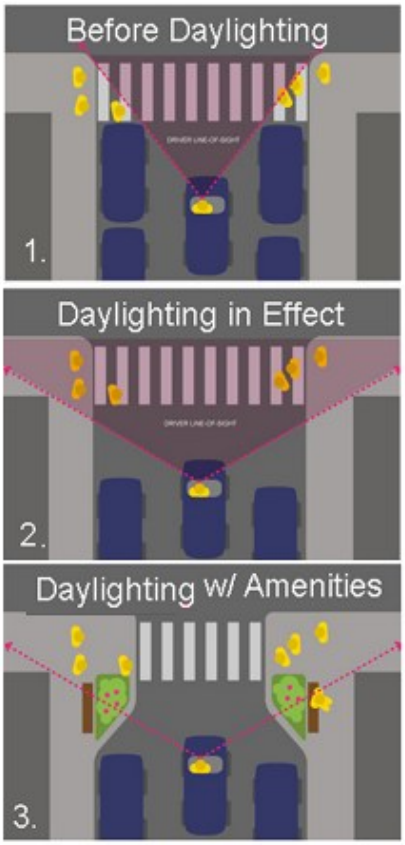
OBJECTIVE 5.1.2: Identify operational and management strategies to improve the performance of the existing transportation network to relieve traffic congestion and maximize mobility.

POLICY 5.1.2.1: Promote efficient system management that mitigates capacity deficiencies on congested roadways and intersections.

OBJECTIVE 5.1.3: By 2020, identify current high-crash locations and decrease the number of traffic incidents by 20% from 2010 levels.

POLICY 5.1.3.1: Make improvements, such as adding left-turn lanes, appropriately-spaced traffic signals and "daylighting" of intersections (Figure 5.4), to enhance the safety of existing roadways.

Figure 5.4: Example of daylighting



Visibility can be improved at intersections by repositioning parking spaces farther from crosswalks in a process called "daylighting".
Source: Streetsblog.org

POLICY 5.1.3.2: Improve pedestrian linkages between residential, commercial, and community facilities.

POLICY 5.1.3.3: Develop guidelines for the use of street lighting along major streets.

OBJECTIVE 5.1.4: Consider the environmental impact of long-range transportation developments and understand the link between environmental resources and transportation planning.

POLICY 5.1.4.1: Identify environmentally sensitive areas, and avoid construction of roadways in such areas.

POLICY 5.1.4.2: Encourage programs that preserve sensitive environments, such as the Green Highways' low impact development approach to infrastructure design, planning, and construction.

GOAL 5.2: Consider the integration of land use and transportation.

OBJECTIVE 5.2.1: Ensure that the existing roadway system provides a proper functional mix and an acceptable balance of land access and travel mobility.

POLICY 5.2.1.1: Determine and attain the Level of Service (LOS) for the street system

POLICY 5.2.1.2: Identify major traffic generators/attractors.

OBJECTIVE 5.2.2: Establish access management standards for streets designated as throughways and boulevards in the proposed road classification system that include minimum separation distance between driveways, joint access driveways, and outparcel requirements.

POLICY 5.2.2.1: Encourage jurisdictions to consider establishing appropriate guidelines for access management.

OBJECTIVE 5.2.3: By 2020, identify suitable corridors to become Complete Streets and achieve the criteria of Complete Street design.

POLICY 5.2.3.1: Define location and configuration of street furniture, sidewalk width, terrace sizes and the harmonization of all these features.

POLICY 5.2.3.2: Decrease space being allocated to vehicles and increase the space for use by pedestrians and bicyclists in the downtown area in order to meet the principles of a walk- and bike-friendly community.

OBJECTIVE 5.2.4: By 2020, minimize through traffic in residential neighborhoods by 10% compared to 2010.

POLICY 5.2.4.1: Improve local and collector street connectivity to complement major streets.

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POLICY 5.2.4.2: Prepare street design standards that address right-of-way width, materials and street design and construction standards to guide the future developments.

POLICY 5.2.4.3: Consider the inclusion of alternative transportation options in future developments.

GOAL 5.3: Enhance transportation facilities.

OBJECTIVE 5.3.1: According to the street classification system developed in this comprehensive plan, enhance traffic facilities such as traffic lights, street signage, and street lights.

POLICY 5.3.1.1: Provide visible, legible, and understandable signs and pavement markings.

POLICY 5.3.1.2: Develop design standards for major streets' facilities, such as sidewalk width, design standards for multi-use trails, bollards, wayfinding signage, pedestrian-scale lighting, surveillance, and paved shoulders.

POLICY 5.3.1.3: Enhance sidewalk facilities through connections with a full bike/ pedestrian system.

OBJECTIVE 5.3.2: Increase the consistency of street maintenance work.

POLICY 5.3.2.1: Develop a catalog of street maintenance within GIS that includes dates and projects completed and expected dates of required maintenance.

GOAL 5.4: Provide a transportation system that supports and enhances the regional economy.

OBJECTIVE 5.4.1: Prioritize roadway system improvements based on cost benefit analysis and level of impacts to the adjacent areas.

POLICY 5.4.1.1: Integrate a cost benefit analysis process into transportation investment and construction.

POLICY 5.4.1.2: Establish a Traffic Impact Analysis procedure when any transportation construction begins to launch.

OBJECTIVE 5.4.2: Coordinate area/regional economic development activities with long-range transportation infrastructure development.

POLICY 5.4.2.1: Encourage transportation developments that facilitate tourism and downtown businesses.

POLICY 5.4.2.2: Implement transportation projects that contribute to the city's quality of life through recreational, historical or cultural amenities

ACTION STRATEGIES:

Short term (actions to be done within 1-2 years)

- Discuss transportation issues and project recommendations on a case by case basis.
- Review previous and ongoing land use and infrastructure plans that affect the city, as well as those at the county and state level.

Medium Term (actions to take place over the next 3-5 years)

- Develop technical tools, such as transportation demand modeling and a more thorough GIS database, to effectively maintain records of the road system, as well as to support decision-making for roadway development.

- Identify and evaluate alternative transportation improvement options based on different scenarios of land use development.

Long Term (actions to take place in the next 10-20 years)

- Monitor system performance and consistently maintain roadways.
- Knit together transportation projects and programs and public/private investments so that they complement each other and support broad community goals.

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

Programs and funding for roadway projects can be obtained from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC), Gonzales County, private developers, and the City. The allocation of funding depends on the classification of the roadway.

- **Formula Grants for Other than Urbanized Areas (5311)** is a rural program that is formula-based and provides funding to states to support public transportation in rural areas, with population of less than 50,000. Source: *http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13093_3555.html*.

- The **Federal-Aid Highway Program, Federal Lands Highway Program** assists state transportation agencies in the planning and development of an integrated, interconnected transportation system important to interstate commerce and travel by constructing and rehabilitating the National Highway System (NHS), including the Eisenhower Interstate System; and for transportation improvements to most other public roads; to provide aid for the repair of Federal-aid highways following disasters; to foster safe highway design; to replace or rehabilitate deficient or obsolete bridges; and to provide for other special purposes. Source: http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/

- The **Safe Riders Traffic Safety Program** is a Texas-wide child passenger safety (CPS) program dedicated to preventing deaths and reducing injuries to children due to motor vehicle crashes. It is funded by federal grant funds through the Texas Department of Transportation. Safe Riders is part of the Child Health and Safety Branch, Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Section, Division for Prevention and Preparedness, Texas Department of State Health Services." Source: *http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/saferiders/*.

- The **Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC) (5316)** program was established to address the unique transportation challenges faced by welfare recipients and low-income persons

seeking to obtain and maintain employment. Many new entry-level jobs are located in suburban areas, and low-income individuals have difficulty accessing these jobs from their inner city, urban, or rural neighborhoods. In addition, many entry level-jobs require working late at night or on weekends when conventional transit services are either reduced or non-existent." Source: *http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13093_3550.html*.

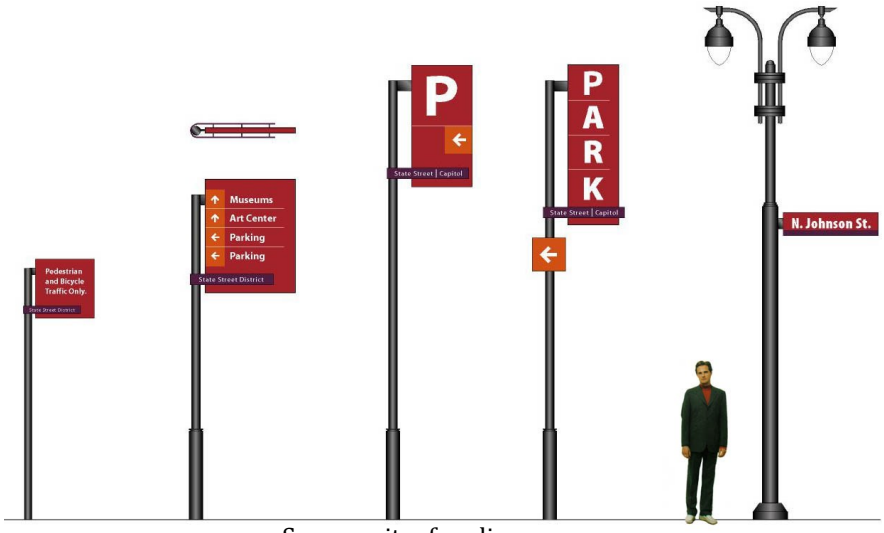
GOAL 5.5: Supply parking downtown that feels safe, pleasant, and convenient for all users.

OBJECTIVE 5.5.1: All downtown parking lots will be "green" parking lots by 2020.

POLICY 5.5.1.1: Amend the parking ordinance to require a 50% shade cover requirement

POLICY 5.5.1.2: Amend the city ordinance to allow the use of permeable surfaces in parking lots.

Figure 5.5: Wayfinding signage guides motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians to their destinations



Source: cityofmadison.com

OBJECTIVE 5.5.2: Install wayfinding signage throughout the downtown by 2018. As shown in Figure 5.5 to the left, this is a navigational system of street signage that guides travelers as they approach destinations and orients them upon arrival, helping to direct people to common places of interest or need.

ACTION STRATEGIES

Short Term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

- Conduct a survey of businesses, shoppers and visitors in the downtown to document current perceptions of the existing parking supply.
- Add a shading requirement to the parking ordinance that must be adhered to with any new off-

street parking developments. Develop a list of appropriate trees to be planted, omitting species that are unsuitable for parking lots and the climate.

- Incentivize retrofitting of existing parking lots by funding the cost of design for the planting responsibility of the lot owner.
- Update the existing requirement for separation of parking lot surfaces from roadway right-of-way to encourage bio-retention systems in addition to barrier curbs and tire stops.

Medium Term (actions to take place over several years)

- Conduct annual follow-up surveys to document any changes to the perception of parking.
- Develop an enforcement and monitoring program to ensure that trees are growing healthily, are being properly pruned and watered, and are replaced in a timely matter, as needed. This should include record-keeping of all trees in parking areas and current contact information of the property manager and may require hiring a part-time city arborist.

GOAL 5.6: Manage off-street parking in a way that supports good urban form and the vitality of commercial and employment areas and special events.

OBJECTIVE 5.6.1: Keep the percentage of parking surfaces within the downtown area at no greater than existing levels.

POLICY 5.6.1.1: Refrain from paving additional lots in the downtown.

OBJECTIVE 5.6.2: Reduce modal share of local trips to downtown by automobile by 10% by 2030.

POLICY 5.6.2.1: Promote neighborhood-based multimodal strategies and trip reduction programs.

POLICY 5.6.2.2: Support programs that encourage cycling and walking to and within downtown.

ACTION STRATEGIES

Short Term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

- Begin conducting regular stakeholder meetings (twice a year or as needed) to gather input about perceived parking supply and demand in the downtown.

- Amend parking ordinance to no longer require concrete or asphalt paved surfaces and to include pavers and other permeable surfaces as surfacing options.

Medium Term (actions to take place over several years)

- Host a parking lot redesign competition. This may involve:
    - Estimating an appropriate maximum budget for designs to be kept within
    - Co-sponsoring the competition with an organization capable of providing funding
    - Recruiting volunteers to help with reconstruction and planting
    - Considering ways to recoup costs, including collecting proceeds from events held at the lot peak-hour parking fees.

PROGRAMS/FUNDING

- Removing unnecessary pavement is an action promoted by the organization Depave (*www.depave.org*) in order to create community green spaces and mitigate stormwater runoff. The organization provides information, ideas, and technical assistance for communities interested in depaving projects. Confederate Square and Texas Heroes Square have potential to turn into even greater community spaces. Possible partnerships with the Texas Water Alliance Limited (TWA) and/or Gonzales County Underground Water District (GCUWD) could be formed to plan and execute a depaving project in the downtown.
- A design competition co-sponsored by the city of Columbus, IN for its municipal parking lot serves as one of the few examples of attention being focused on a parking area. The competition elicited over 100 submissions, with the winning design being a proposal to make over the lot into a multi-functional venue capable of serving as event and market space as well as parking. The scheme was never implemented, so these steps could help Gonzales follow through on a similar competition to redesign one of its public lots. See *http://www.civicarts.com/columbus-carscape.php* for more information.

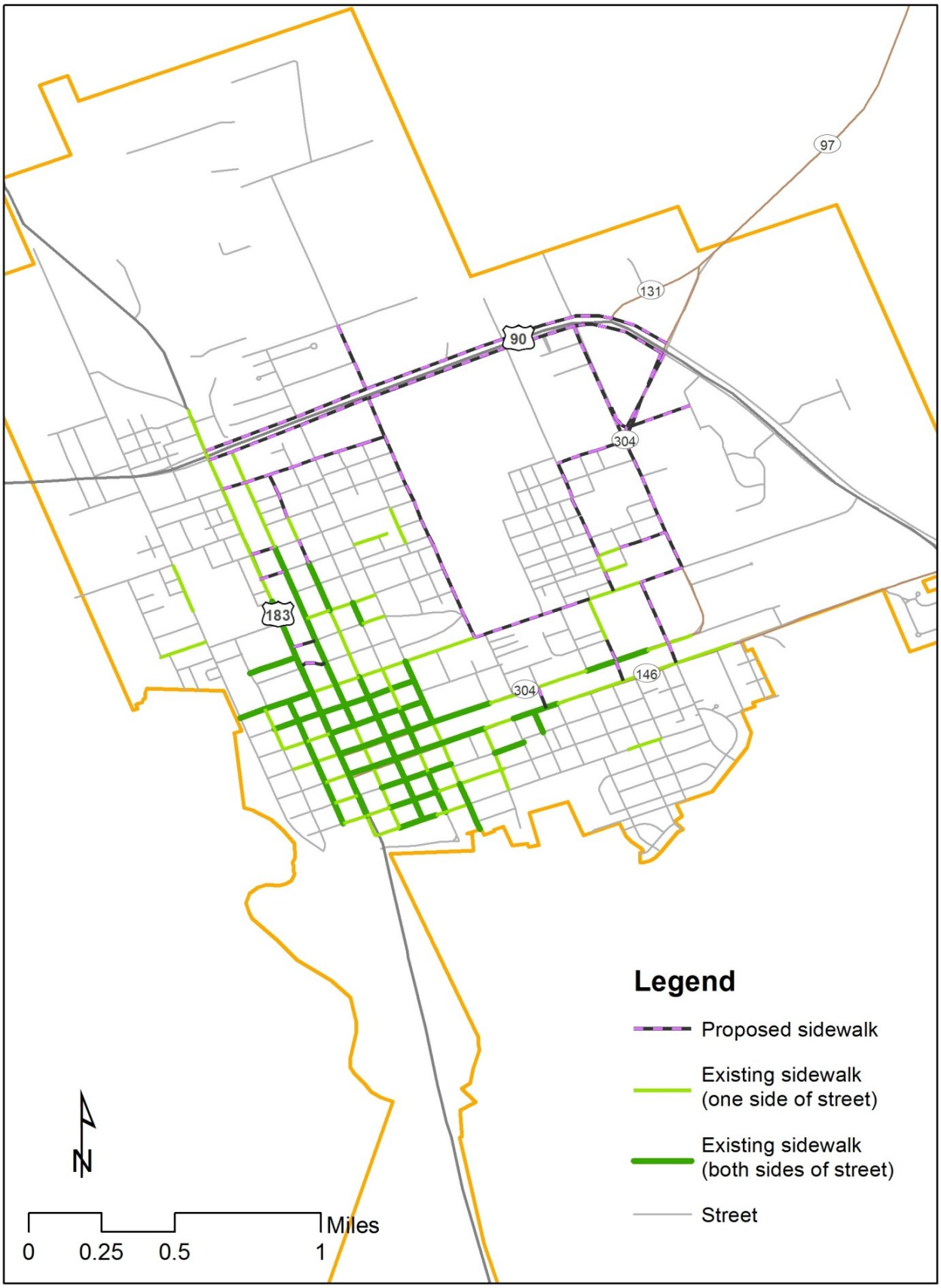
Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility

Proposed locations for bicycle and pedestrian connections are shown in Maps 5.11 and 5.12. (Table 5.14 describes the different types of bicycle facilities proposed in Maps 5.11 and 5.12).

GOAL 5.7: Increase walking and bicycling in and around the city

OBJECTIVE 5.7.1: Develop a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian master plan and map by

Map 5.11: Proposed sidewalk facilities for the city of Gonzales



Map 5.12: Proposed bicycle facilities for the city of Gonzales

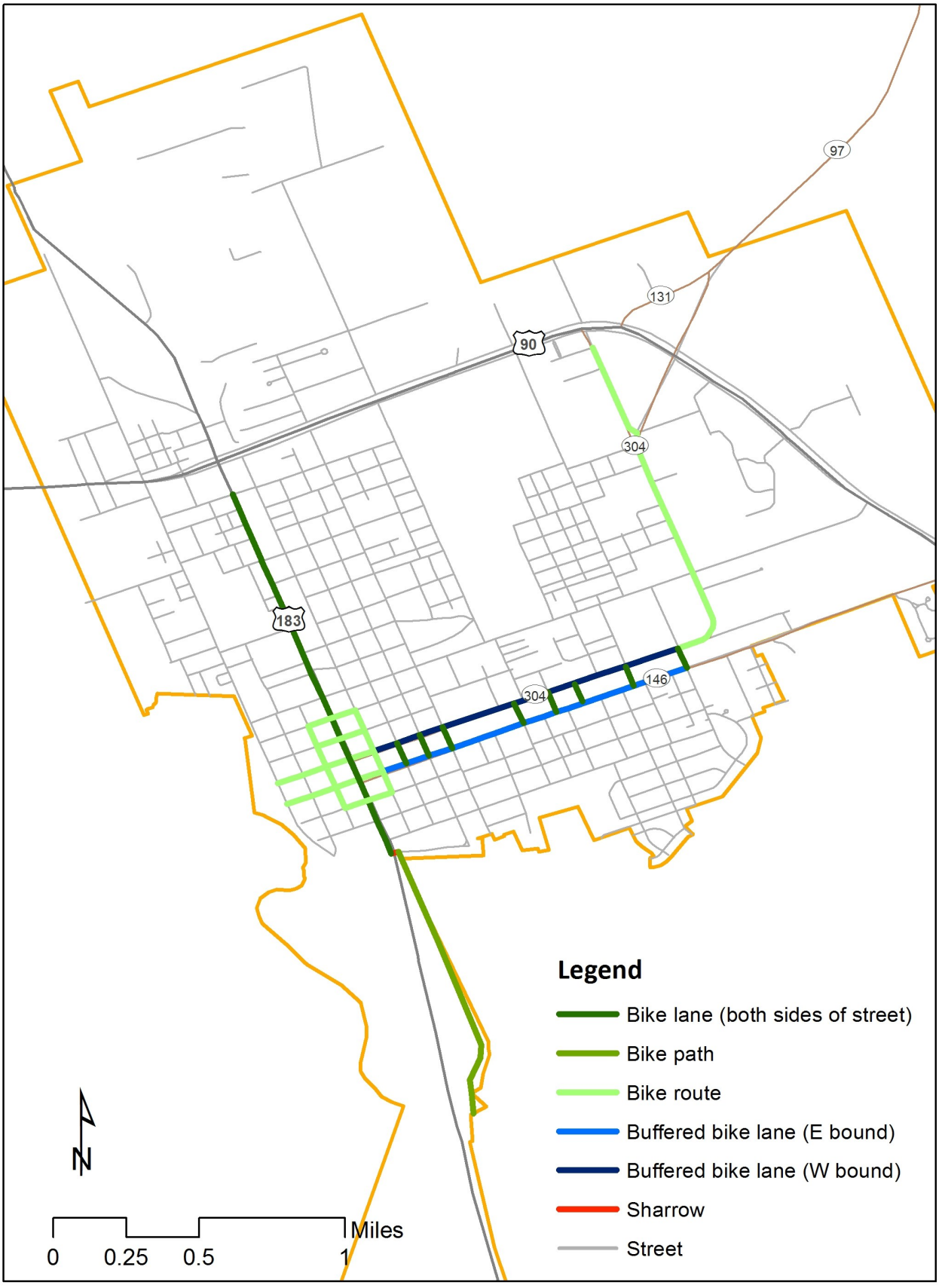


Table 5.14: Types of bike facilities

Facility type	Descriptions	Examples
Conventional Bike Lanes	The conventional bike lane is located adjacent to motor vehicle travel lanes and the flow is in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic.	
Buffered Bike Lanes	Adding a buffer space that separates the bike lane and motor vehicle lane on conventional bike lanes is called a buffered bike lane. This design provides greater space and safety for cyclists. The buffer space could be painted pavement to actual curb or a parking space.	
Left-Side Bike Lanes	Left-side bike lanes are conventional bike lanes placed on the left side of streets. The reduced frequency of right-side door openings lowers "dooring" risk.	
Sharrows	Sharrows are painted symbols on the street that remind motorists that they are sharing the road with bicyclists. The marking indicates to bicyclists the preferred location of travel.	
Signed Bike Route	A signed bicycle route connects bicyclists with points of interest through directional and instructional signage. Routes are usually designated along roads with lighter traffic and lower speeds and are part of a comprehensive bicycling system.	

2015 to indicate where facilities and services exist or will be provided in the future.

POLICY 5.7.1.1: Develop a Walking and Bicycling Master Plan Advisory Group in Gonzales that will organize development of a pedestrian and bicycle circulation system.

POLICY 5.7.1.2: Ensure public roads and parks are developed or improved to be meet walking and biking needs.

OBJECTIVE 5.7.2: By 2020, connect schools, parks, recreational uses and activity centers via the bicycle and pedestrian network suggested in this comprehensive plan (and to be succeeded by a master plan and map of future facilities in 2015).

POLICY 5.7.2.1: Develop sidewalk design guidelines.

POLICY 5.7.2.2: Link the existing bikeway in Independence Park to the downtown

POLICY 5.7.2.3: Build a new bikeway that connects the city's historic sites of interest in order to develop tourism

OBJECTIVE 5.7. 3: Increase the safety of walking and bicycling within one-quarter mile of schools.

POLICY 5.7.3.1: Develop traffic calming guidelines for streets around schools

POLICY 5.7.3.2: Develop traffic signal control strategies around schools.

PROGRAMS & FUNDING

Several state and federal grants and programs are available to communities seeking to fund pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including:

- National Highway System
- Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEAs).
- Hazard Elimination and Railway-Highway Crossing programs
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program

- Recreational Trails Program
- Federal Lands Highway Program
- National Scenic Byways
- Job Access and Reverse Commute Grants
- High Priority Projects and Designated Transportation Enhancement Activities
- State and Community Highway Safety Grants
- More information about all the above programs can be found at *http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding*

Other funding opportunities to consider include:

- Outdoor Recreation-Acquisition, Development and Planning (15.916)
- Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (15.921)
- Safe Routes to Schools (*http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/funding-portal*)
- TXDOT (Oversight, Funding, and Construction. Contact local office)
- Private and Non-Profit Grants
- National Trails Training Partnership (*http://www.americantrails.org/resources/funding/)*
- Boy Scout Eagle Projects, Girl Scout and Boy Scout Troop Projects
- Corporate Sponsorships
- Community Fundraisers

ACTION STRATEGIES

Short Term (actions to be done as soon as possible)

- Crafting a Walking and Bicycling Master Plan that serves the needs of and is accepted by the residents of Gonzales requires active input from diverse groups. Representatives of the city, neighborhood organizations, regional organizations, healthcare system, school district, senior citizens, and the disabled community should serve on such a planning committee. Members should meet consistently and actively engage the input of their social and professional peers. The group should consider distributing a Walking and Bicycling Preference survey online and in person at community events and gathering places to gauge public input.

Medium Term (actions to take place over several years)

- Maintain pedestrian and bicycle awareness by forming a Walking and Bicycling Advisory Council that meets regularly to discuss relevant issues Gonzales faces.
- Consistency in sidewalk design requires guidelines that are publicly available for citizens, developers and city staff to easily reference. The City of Seattle publishes a Right-of-Way Improvement Manual online that allows users to point, click, and learn about the city's ordinances for design

elements such as awnings, crosswalks, street trees, and sidewalk width and is an excellent example of making design guidelines accessible. The manual can be found at *http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/rowmanual/manual/*.

- Traffic calming comes from street designs that use physical and visual cues to prompt motorists to slow their driving speed. If done successfully, traffic calming reduces traffic speeds, the number and severity of crashes, and noise levels of traffic. Traffic calming options include constructing curb extensions or bulb-outs, installing signs indicating that traffic "must stop for pedestrians" at crosswalks, texturing pavement at crosswalks and intersections and narrowing roads. To increase citizen involvement in traffic safety, the Seattle Department of Transportation trained residents raising concerns about traffic speeds and volume about such traffic calming techniques as well as the use of radar speed guns. Citizens then collected speed and volume data themselves at the time and place they perceived the worst traffic conditions, which city staff analyzed for evidence for unsafe traffic behavior. The process resulted in citizens' better understanding of actual versus perceived traffic conditions as well as identification of true areas of concern.
- Existing signalized intersections should be updated with pedestrian countdown signals, and any new signalized intersections should incorporate them. Solar-powered pedestrian crosswalk signals can be installed at existing and additional mid-block points around schools where many students may benefit from the more convenient and safe street-crossing. Map 5.13 on the next page depicts the locations of stop signs and signals within one-quarter mile of schools. These are areas where adding or improving pedestrian countdown and crosswalk signals, like those pictured in Figure 5.6, should especially be constructed.

Figure 5.6: A solar powered pedestrian crosswalk signal.

Source: walkfriendly.org and the Village of Forest

  - Two graphics (Fig. 5.7) demonstrate what kind of change the city can make in the future to the streetscape to provide safer streets. The first example converts Seydler St near Gonzales High School, where a bike route is proposed. The second example shows the intersection of St Louis St and Clark St, near Gonzales East Primary School.

Map 5.13: Locations of stop signs and proposed crosswalk signals within one-quarter mile of schools

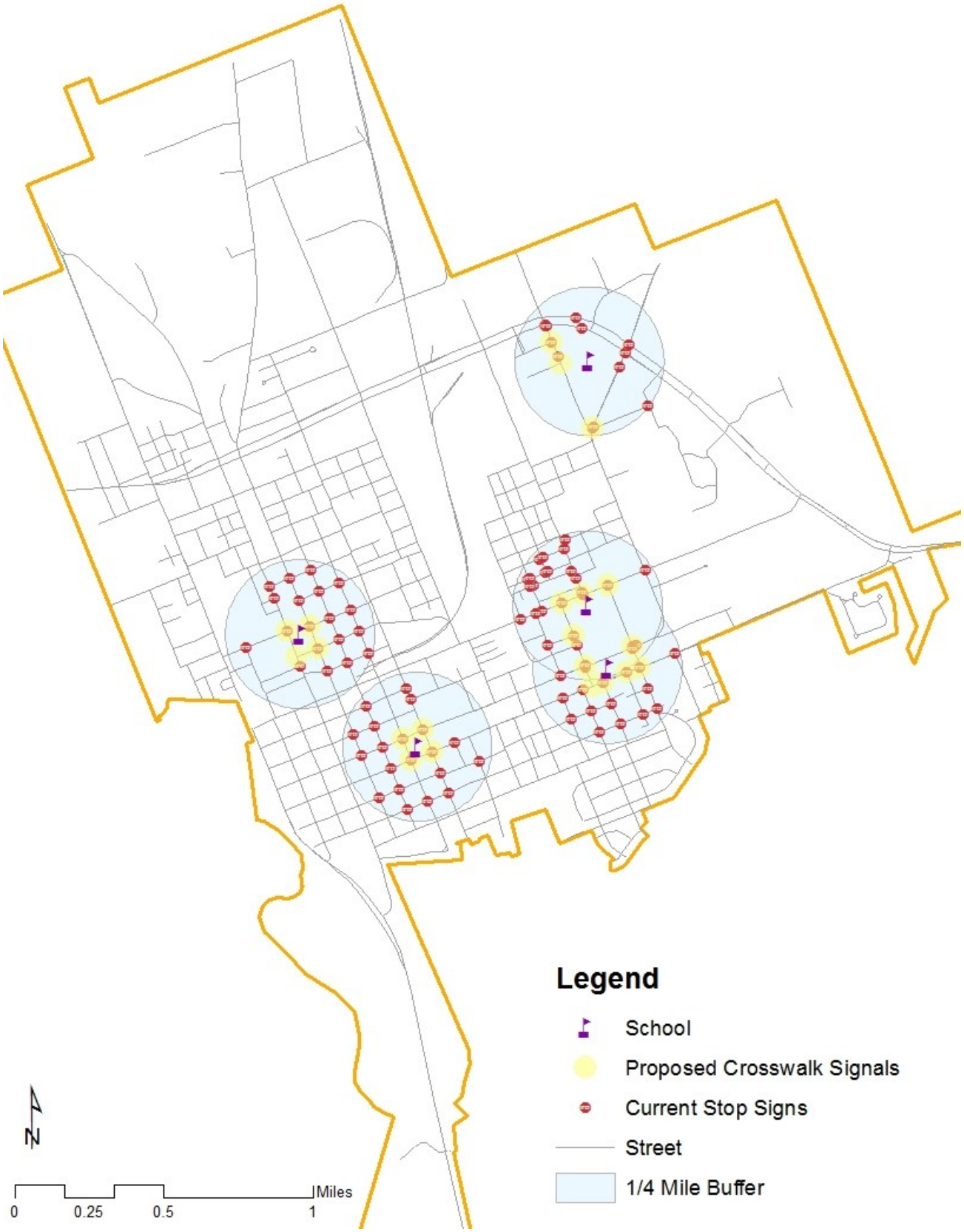


Figure 5.7: Existing streetscapes and potential improvements

(Top) Existing view of intersection near Gonzales East Primary School; (Bottom) Potential improvements Source: Google Maps

(Top) Existing view of Seydler St near Gonzales High School, looking south ; (Bottom) Potential improvements. Source: Google Maps

Figure 5.8: A pleasant streetscape encourages pedestrian activity

Ann Arbor, Michigan. Source: walkfriendly.org and the Ann Arbor Area Convention and Visitor Bureau

GOAL 5.8: Earn recognition as a bicycle and walk friendly community by providing optimal conditions in terms of safety, accessibility and comfort for bicyclists and pedestrians.

OBJECTIVE 5.8.1: By 2015, adopt a Complete Streets policy that achieves the criteria of Complete Street design.

POLICY 5.8.1.1: Develop urban design standards for roadways that coordinate with Map 5.10 of roadway classification map suggested on p. 163 of the comprehensive plan. This includes, but is not limited to, standards for location and configuration of street furniture, sidewalk width, and pedestrian-scale lighting.

POLICY 5.8.1.2: Decrease space being allocated to vehicles and increase that for pedestrians and bicyclists in the downtown area in order to meet the principle of a walk- and bike-friendly community.

POLICY 5.8.1.3: Promote neighborhood-based multimodal strategies and trip reduction programs.

POLICY 5.8.1.4: Support programs that encourage cycling and walking to and within downtown.

OBJECTIVE 5.8.2: Develop a maintenance program for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

POLICY 5.8.2.1: Maintain bicycle routes and lanes with adequate sweeping, pavement repairs, and vegetation trimming on a monthly basis or as directed by the Department of Public Works.