

# 1. PLANNING CONTEXT AND VISION



BASTROP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE (2016 - 2036)



## CHAPTER ONE

# PLANNING CONTEXT AND VISION

The City of Bastrop, Texas, is a community experiencing demonstrable change. Recent and dramatic natural events, and steady demographic shifts, have reminded city officials that they have a role in pro-actively anticipating both the expected, and unexpected. Bastrop requires a new plan.

The decision by City of Bastrop officials to engage in a comprehensive planning process reveals a degree of selflessness not always found among community leadership. The process itself invites constructive criticism - for the purpose of community betterment. Bastrop's comprehensive planning process has been structured to link three (3) key attributes: **potential**, **initiative**, and **consensus**.

- **Potential.** All communities have resources that can be leveraged into opportunity. There exist elements that can be modified or improved to enhance citizen quality of life.
- **Initiative.** Leadership must exercise a willingness to change to improve the community's economic, social, and environmental vitality.
- **Consensus.** Candor and humility must be employed in equal amounts to ensure that a community plan reflects citizen feedback.

Bastrop's comprehensive planning process combines these three key attributes. It is an **initiative** of the City of Bastrop to quantify and leverage the community's **potential** through the **consensus** of community input.



The steel truss bridge to downtown Bastrop over the Colorado River was built in 1923 and now serves as a pedestrian walkway.



## PURPOSE

### WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

Comprehensive planning is an all-inclusive approach to addressing a community's future growth and change. The final product of the comprehensive planning process is a document - which is official in nature - used as a policy guide regarding community development and enhancement.

Comprehensive plans are sometimes referred to as land-use plans, because they often deal with the types of land uses, and forms of development, that should occur in a community. Comprehensive plans are prepared to address a range of compatibility issues between various uses of land, such as the management of parks and the preservation of natural resources, identification and preservation of historically significant land and/or structures, and adequate planning for infrastructure needs. In other instances, comprehensive plans are utilized to address issues related to schools, transportation, housing, and public facilities

### PLANNING AUTHORITY

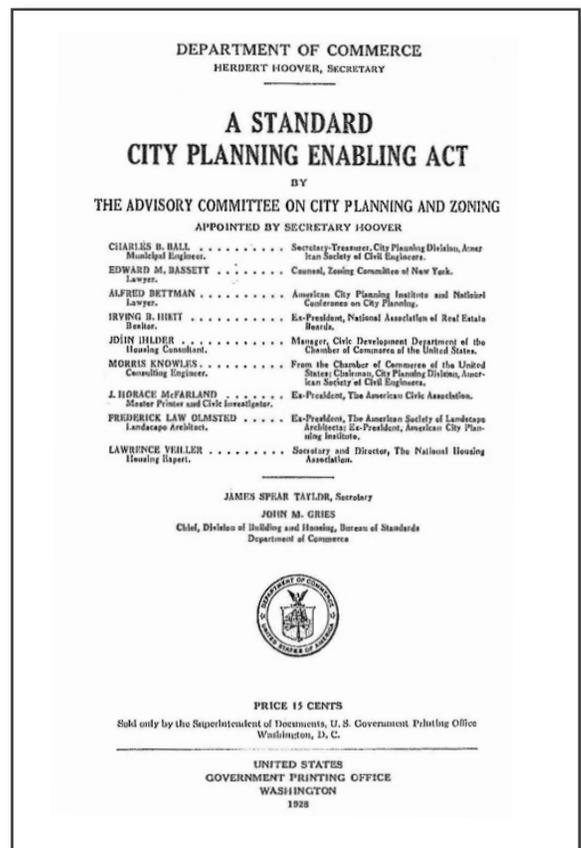
#### COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING ORIGINS

Comprehensive plans and planning processes - although adapted to address the particular issues, needs and attitudes of participating communities - have changed little since the United States Department of Commerce published A Standard City Planning Enabling Act (SCPEA) in 1928. Although not a binding document, the SCPEA provided guidance for local governments on how to establish a planning commission and develop a "master plan" for the community.

In addition to authorizing the preparation of a community-wide master plan, the SCPEA further established the master plan's authority over land use and zoning. Much adaptation has occurred since the 1928 publication of SCPEA, but the contents of Bastrop's comprehensive plan illustrate a consistency with the historic intent of comprehensive planning.

#### COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING IN TEXAS

Municipalities in Texas are not mandated to prepare and maintain local comprehensive or master plans. Still, Section 213 of the Texas Local Government Code states that, "The



Community comprehensive plans continue to be influenced by the framework of the Standard City Planning Enabling Act of 1928 (above).

governing body of a municipality may adopt a comprehensive plan for the long-range development of the municipality.” The Code also cites basic reasons for long-range, community planning by stating that, “The powers granted under this chapter are for the purposes of promoting sound development of municipalities and promoting public health, safety and welfare.”

The Local Government Code also gives Texas municipalities the freedom to “define the content and design” of their plans, although basic components are recommended for communities engaging in comprehensive planning. Section 213 suggests that a master plan may:

- *Include, but is not limited to, provisions on land use, transportation, and public facilities;*
- *Consist of a single plan or a coordinated set of plans organized by subject and geographic area; and*
- *Be used to coordinate and guide the establishment of development regulations.*

Even given these parameters, it is not unusual for communities that are engaged in the comprehensive planning process to incorporate a “comprehensive” list of defined topics to develop an integrated work program. Examples of stand-alone comprehensive plan topics have included, but not been limited to, the following: population, housing, economic development, hazard mitigation, natural resources, environmental management, cultural resources, community facilities, transportation, land use, and more.

## USE OF THIS PLAN

It is important to distinguish between the function of a comprehensive plan relative to a community’s development regulations, such as its zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. The comprehensive plan establishes an overall policy for future land use, roads, utilities infrastructure, and other aspects of community growth. It will be up to City officials to use allowable regulatory authorities outlined within the City’s zoning ordinance, official zoning district map, and subdivision regulations to regulate specific land uses, the layout of new streets and utilities infrastructure, and building and site development standards. The comprehensive plan’s policy decisions will also be carried out through:

- *Targeted programs and expenditures prioritized through the City’s annual budget process, including routine, but essential functions such as permitting and facility maintenance;*
- *Major public improvements and land acquisitions financed through the City’s capital improvements program and related bond initiatives;*
- *New and amended City ordinances and regulations closely linked to plan objectives (and associated review and approval procedures in the case of land development, subdivisions, and zoning matters);*
- *Departmental work plans and staffing in key areas;*
- *Support for ongoing planning and studies that will further clarify needs and strategies,*
- *The pursuit of external grant funding to supplement local budgets and/or expedite certain projects;*



- *Initiatives pursued in conjunction with other public and private partners to leverage resources and achieve successes neither could accomplish alone.*

Despite these many avenues for action, a comprehensive plan should not be considered a “cure all” for every tough problem a community faces. On the one hand, such plans tend to focus on the responsibilities of City government in the physical planning arena, where cities normally have a more direct and extensive role (in contrast to other areas that residents value, such as education, social services, arts and culture). Of necessity, comprehensive plans - as vision and policy documents - also must remain relatively general and conceptual. The resulting plan may not touch on every challenge before the community, but it is meant to set a tone and motivate concerted efforts to move the community forward in coming years.

## PLAN ORGANIZATION

### PLANNING AREA

The geographic scope of the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan includes the municipal area of Bastrop, as well as the City's current extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Bastrop's ETJ area includes both the statutory ETJ boundary extending one (1) mile from the city limits, as well as a voluntary ETJ area that was approved by City Council on June 20, 1985.

Although the city of Bastrop is comprised of only 11 square miles, the geographic scope of this Plan includes an area of over 160 total square miles – due largely to the shape and size of the ETJ. A map of the planning area can be found on page 1-7.



The Bastrop Comprehensive Plan considers how the growth of Bastrop and Austin will impact rural areas of the surrounding county.

## BASTROP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

The Bastrop Comprehensive Plan is comprised of nine (9) chapters. Each chapter is arranged according to key themes, and outlines specific issues that must be addressed in order to achieve the future envisioned by community leaders and residents. Despite the fact that each chapter is topic-specific, all inherently overlap and are compiled to cross-reference one another.



**1. PLANNING CONTEXT AND VISION.** Sets the context for Bastrop's long-range growth and development by presenting the purpose and function of the Comprehensive Plan, documenting community participation, and providing a community vision.



**2. GROWTH, ANNEXATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE.** Identifies preferred community growth policies, and evaluates Bastrop's ability to accommodate new development and/or redevelopment with existing and planned utility infrastructure and services.



**3. PUBLIC FACILITIES.** Anticipates public facility space needs and priorities based on staffing and demands. Utilizes population growth projections to "right size" City resources in accordance with anticipated community needs.



**4. HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS.** Assesses the local housing market and the condition of City neighborhoods; and, evaluates city ordinances and regulations, and their impact on housing development, community form, and land use compatibility.



**5. LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN.** Evaluates current land uses, development, and community image; and, proposes the form and function that future land uses should take throughout the City's various districts, corridors, and neighborhoods. A key component of the chapter is the Future Land Use Program.



**6. TRANSPORTATION.** Relates the companion Bastrop Transportation Master Plan to the other Comprehensive Plan chapters to ensure that the implementation of transportation network and facility recommendations is context sensitive and weighed with other community needs. A shared component of both documents is the Major Thoroughfare Program.



**7. PARKS AND RECREATION.** Evaluates the City's current park facilities and recreational opportunities, and identifies preferred short-term investments, as well as long-term needs to account for anticipated growth.



**8. CULTURAL ARTS AND TOURISM.** Suggests methods to diversify and develop the City's tourism economy, with emphasis on facilities and programs that enhance the quality of life for full-time residents of the City.



**9. IMPLEMENTATION.** Identifies the organizational structure and methods by which Comprehensive Plan policies and recommendations will be implemented, and how the document will be administered and maintained.

### BASTROP TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

*The Bastrop Transportation Master Plan (TMP) is a companion report to the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan. It is an independent document, but its public engagement process, schedule, and management was integrated within the overall comprehensive planning process. Chapter 6, Transportation, of the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan provides a summary of TMP recommendations and relates them to the other chapters of the Plan. TMP recommendations are also incorporated into Chapter 9, Implementation, of the Plan. Please see the TMP for detailed transportation modeling, analysis, and recommendations.*



## COMMUNITY PROFILE

The City of Bastrop is among the oldest towns in Texas, and has a rich history spanning centuries. While an appreciation for this community heritage is necessary, it is critical to analyze recent events and current data to better understand community needs. The Community Profile section of the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan (pages 6 through 11) evaluates current City socioeconomic and demographic data, to identify defining community characteristics and trends. The Community Profile compares standard city population, housing and economic data to the State of Texas, the Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and Bastrop County to provide context .



Bastrop boasts a high volume of historic properties, and has assumed a relevant position in the history of Texas.

### BASTROP HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS (1832 - 2015)

**1832** Bastrop is established by Jose Miguel de Arcinega, the Commissioner of the Spanish colony.

**1839** Bastrop finishes second in the competition to become the capital of the Republic of Texas.

**1845** Bastrop, along with the rest of Texas, joins the United States as the 28th state.

**1853** The Bastrop Advertiser begins publishing their weekly newsletter, and is still in business today.

**1862** A fire destroys Bastrop's business district and a flood forces the town to evacuate in **1869**.

**1870** Railroad reaches Bastrop County, encouraging growth in the area.

**1889** The Bastrop Opera House is built, creating a cultural and social center for the area.

**1890** The wrought iron bridge across the Colorado River is constructed.

**1900** The Bastrop Public Library is established.

**1910** Lignite extraction begins in the Bastrop area and becomes the area's predominant industry through 1940.

**1914** The Kerr Community Center is built as a social center for Bastrop's black community. The Kerr Center is still in use to this day.

**1920s** Oil drilling begins in the area and Bastrop experiences a revival in the timber industry. One mill in Bastrop produces 30 million board feet of lumber each year.

**World War II** The population of Bastrop rises to 5,000 due to the establishment of Camp Swift, but slowly declines to 3,176 by the end of the decade due to the gradual closure of the camp.

**1950** The Bastrop Youth Organization begins using the old Opera House as a teenage activity center called Teen Tower.

**1978** Bastrop is designated as the first Texas Historic and Architectural Multiple Resource Area in the National Register of Historic Places

**1980s** Austin's growth affects the City of Bastrop with a commuter population, suburban developments, increased traffic, rising land values, and pollution in the Colorado river due to sewage.

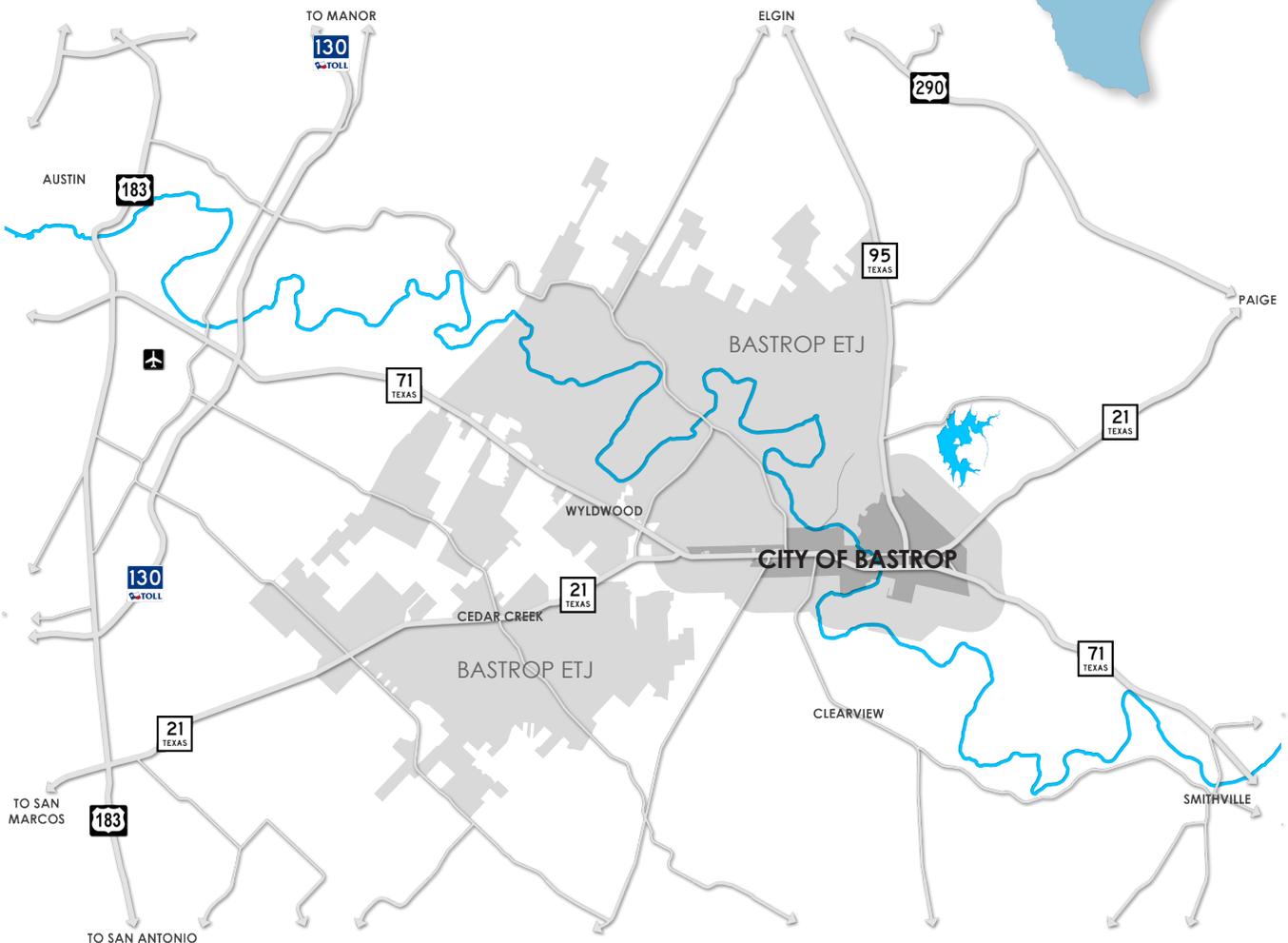
**1999** Bergstrom Airforce Base is converted into Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. Only 20 minutes from Downtown Bastrop, the airport brings growth and activity to the City.

**2011** The Bastrop County Complex Fire burns 34,356 acres, destroys 1,673 homes, and causes \$325 million in damages. The fire damages Bastrop State Park, Lost Pines Forest, and residential areas.

## SETTING

The City of Bastrop is located on the banks of the Colorado River, situated at the junction of State Highways 71, 21, and 95. Bastrop is the administrative seat of Bastrop County, and is known as the “Heart of the Lost Pines” due to it's location in a narrow band of loblolly pine forest that is nearly a hundred miles further west than the Piney Woods of East Texas. The City's closest interstate connections are Interstate 35 (approximately 30 miles to the west) and Interstate 10 (approximately 50 miles to the South). Nonetheless, Bastrop's economy is increasingly intertwined with that of metropolitan Austin, and the City is growing in a manner that is characteristic of historically rural communities being absorbed into expanding urban and suburban population centers.

Bastrop's current land area is only a fraction of the size of its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Area development patterns are increasingly influenced by Austin's proximity and growth.





## COMMUNITY PROFILE, SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

### HISTORIC POPULATION

Population growth in Bastrop and Bastrop County has been inconsistent over the last century. **Figure 1.1** shows that the City experienced a 60.7 percent population increase between 1940 and 1950 through the establishment of Camp Swift. The closure of the camp however - combined with the closure of area coal mines and reductions in lumbering operations caused Bastrop's population to decrease by 5.5 percent in the decade to follow. Bastrop has experienced sustained growth since 1990 as development along the Highway 71 corridor to Austin began to increase. There is little indication that this growth trend will slow or reverse in the coming decade.

**FIGURE 1.1. HISTORIC POPULATION<sup>1</sup>**

YEAR	CITY OF BASTROP	BASTROP COUNTY	AUSTIN-ROUND ROCK MSA	TEXAS
1940	1,976	21,610	-	6,414,824
1950	3,176	19,622	-	7,711,194
1960	3,001	16,925	-	9,579,677
1970	3,172	17,297	398,938	11,196,730
1980	3,789	24,726	585,051	14,229,191
1990	4,044	38,263	846,227	16,986,510
2000	6,308	57,725	1,249,763	20,851,820
2010	7,218	74,171	1,716,289	25,145,561

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey & Texas A&M Real Estate Center

### RACE AND ETHNICITY

**Figure 1.2** (below right) illustrates that Bastrop's racial mix is largely consistent with that of the State of Texas, the Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and Bastrop County - with over 80 percent of residents identifying as white. In contrast, **Figure 1.3** (below) indicates that 21.3 percent of Bastrop's population is of Hispanic or Latino descent - lower than that of Bastrop's comparison areas. The concentration of citizens identifying as Hispanic or Latino in Bastrop grew between 2000 and 2010 by 6.6 percent.

**FIGURE 1.2. RACE OR ETHNICITY<sup>1</sup>**

RACE	CITY OF BASTROP	BASTROP COUNTY	AUSTIN-ROUND ROCK MSA	TEXAS
White	81.1%	84.1%	77.1%	74.4%
Black or African American	12.8%	7.9%	7.3%	11.8%
American Indian & Alaska Native	1.2%	1.0%	0.5%	0.5%
Asian	0.6%	0.8%	4.9%	4.0%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Other	2.6%	4.7%	7.3%	6.9%
Two or More Races	1.8%	1.5%	2.8%	2.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

**FIGURE 1.3. HISPANIC OR LATINO DESCENT<sup>1</sup>**

ETHNICITY	CITY OF BASTROP	BASTROP COUNTY	AUSTIN-ROUND ROCK MSA	TEXAS
Hispanic or Latino Descent	21.3%	33.2%	31.5%	37.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

### MEDIAN AGE AND AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

**Figure 1.4** (right) indicates that Bastrop's median age of 41.1 is much higher than the median age of both the state of Texas and the Austin-Round Rock MSA. The average number of persons per household in Bastrop is 2.54 - lower than the average of all three comparison areas. Although Bastrop's median age is higher than other communities, growth between 2000 and 2010 suggests that Bastrop's household size is gradually increasing while its median age is decreasing.

**FIGURE 1.4. MEDIAN AGE & HOUSEHOLD SIZE<sup>1</sup>**

AREA	AGE	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE
City of Bastrop	41.1	2.54
Bastrop County	38.3	2.85
Austin-Round Rock MSA	33.0	2.64
Texas	33.8	2.82

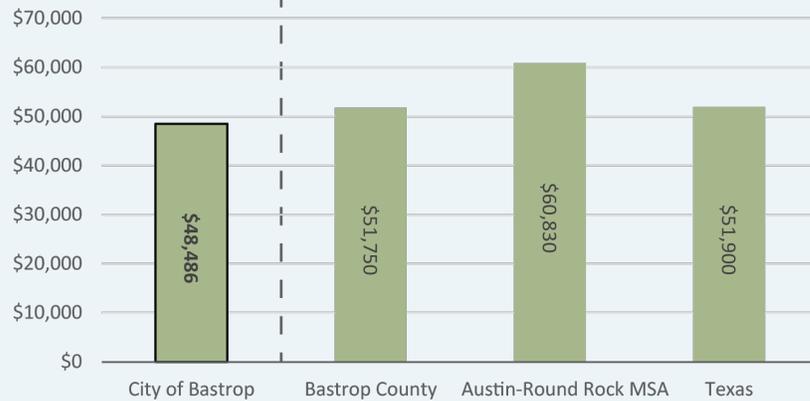
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data was used to compare the City of Bastrop to progressively larger geographic areas of which it is a part.

### HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The median household income of Bastrop residents is \$48,486 dollars - roughly equivalent to that of the State of Texas and Bastrop County. **Figure 1.5** (right) also indicates however, that Bastrop's median household income is at least 20 percent lower than that of the Austin-Round Rock MSA. Although sustained growth in the City may bring increases in household incomes, such wealth can be mitigated by rising housing values.

**FIGURE 1.5. MEDIAN INCOME<sup>1</sup>**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

### POVERTY

As indicated in **Figure 1.6** (right), the percentage of Bastrop residents below the poverty level (9.1 percent) is substantially less than in larger comparison geographies. As suburban growth continues in Bastrop, poverty rates as part of the overall population will likely decrease; although, growth may not directly impact the raw number of the community's residents that subsist at or below the poverty level.

**FIGURE 1.6. POVERTY<sup>1</sup>**

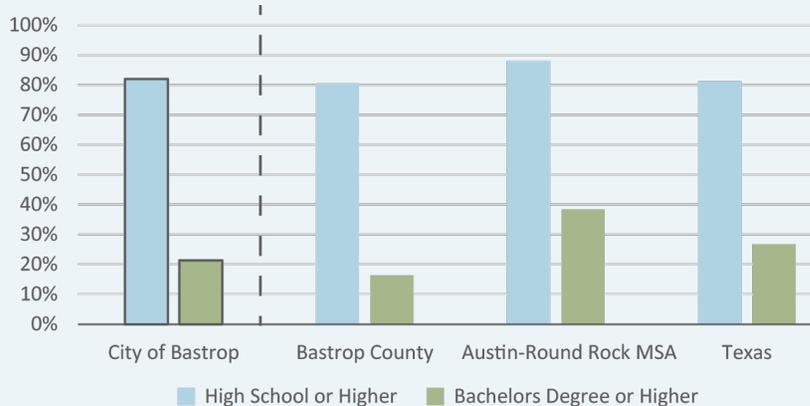


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Although slightly lower than the Austin-Round Rock MSA, **Figure 1.7** (right) shows that high school graduation rates of Bastrop residents is consistent with the State of Texas and Bastrop County. The percentage of Bastrop citizens with a bachelor's degree or higher is lower than statewide or MSA residents, but higher than county residents. The percentage of Bastrop's citizens with at least a high school degree has increased since 2000 but it's percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher has decreased.

**FIGURE 1.7. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT<sup>1</sup>**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data was used to compare the City of Bastrop to progressively larger geographic areas of which it is a part.



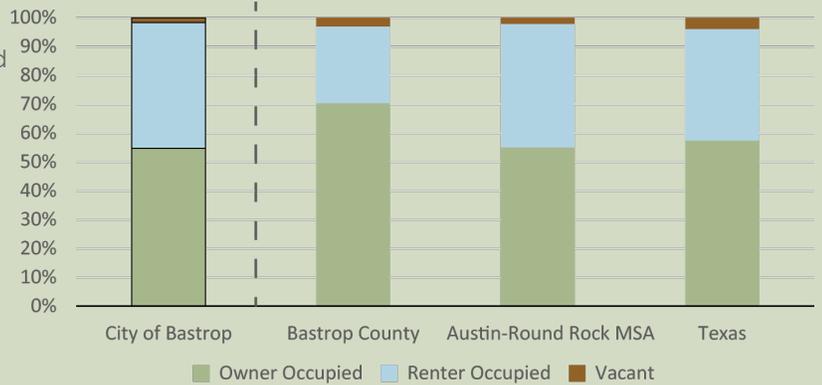
## COMMUNITY PROFILE, HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

### HOUSING TENURE

With 54.7 percent of the City's housing units being owner-occupied, housing tenure in Bastrop is comparable to the State of Texas and the Austin-Round Rock MSA. Bastrop contains the lowest percentage of vacant housing units (only 1.7 percent) of the four comparison areas evaluated in the demographic profile.

The owner occupied and renter occupied categories included in **Figure 1.8** (right) include vacancies that are expected to be unoccupied for only a short time (recently vacated apartments currently available for rent, and homes for sale/homes recently sold). The figure suggests that only 2.3 percent of owner-occupied units in Bastrop are unoccupied but still for sale, whereas nearly 16 percent of rental units are vacant - substantially higher than what is considered a "healthy" rental vacancy.

FIGURE 1.8. HOUSING TENURE<sup>1</sup>

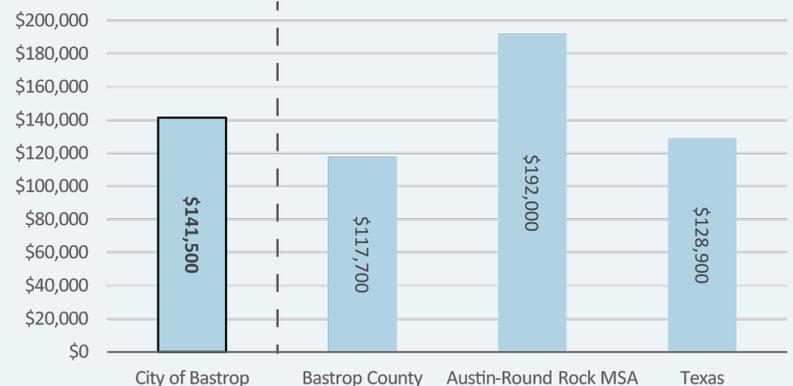


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

### MEDIAN HOME VALUE

With an influx of newer housing stock, Bastrop's median home value (\$141,500 dollars) is higher than both the State of Texas (\$128,900 dollars) and Bastrop County (\$117,700 dollars). **Figure 1.9** (right) indicates that Bastrop's housing values remain substantially lower than the Austin-Round Rock MSA median value (\$192,000 dollars). Roughly 30 percent of Bastrop's housing stock has been built since 2000.

FIGURE 1.9. MEDIAN HOME VALUE<sup>1</sup>

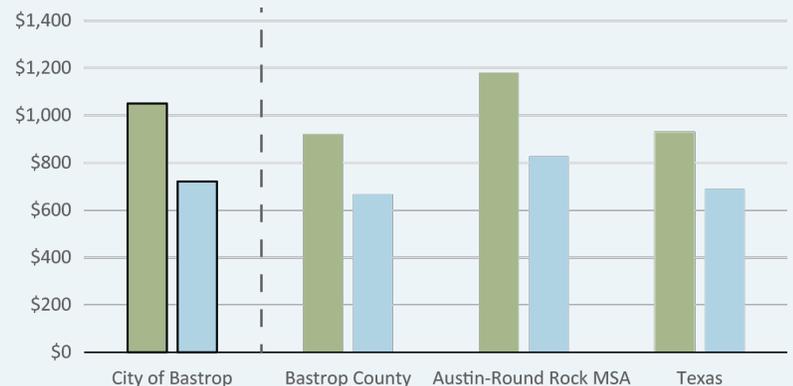


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

### HOUSING COSTS

**Figure 1.10** (right) indicates that the median monthly housing costs and rents in Bastrop are higher than the State of Texas and Bastrop County, but substantially lower than the Austin-Round Rock MSA. While Bastrop's growing housing market may remain more affordable than the MSA in the near future, residents may be impacted by increased transportation costs.

FIGURE 1.10. HOUSING COST<sup>1</sup>



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data was used to compare the City of Bastrop to progressively larger geographic areas of which it is a part.

#### MEASURES OF HOUSING COST

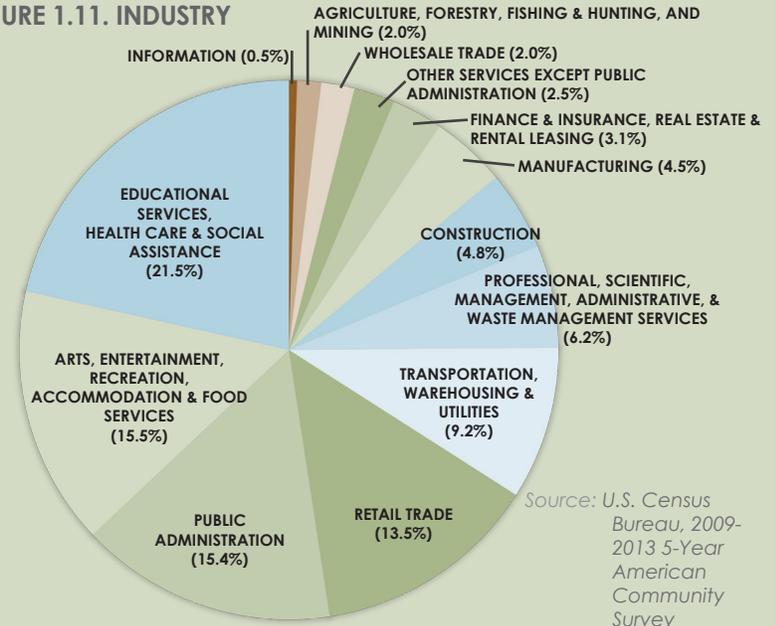
Housing costs have traditionally been measured by calculating mortgages, rents, and associated utilities. The most common measure - referred to by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development as cost-burdened households is defined as when the combined monthly cost of mortgage, rent and utilities exceeds 30% of the monthly household income. Given the dispersed nature of many American communities, demographers recognize the relationship between housing choice and transportation costs. New affordability indexes are now measuring the costs of commuting as a part of the overall costs of living. See Chapter 4, Housing & Neighborhoods for more information.

## COMMUNITY PROFILE, ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

### INDUSTRY

**Figure 1.11** identifies the industry sectors within which Bastrop residents are employed. The “educational services, and health care and social assistance” sector employs the greatest percentage of Bastrop residents (21.5 percent). The “arts, entertainment, recreation and accommodation, and food services” sector is the second largest industry sector employing Bastrop residents at 15.5 percent, followed closely by public administration (15.4 percent) and retail trade (13.5 percent). Heavy employment in service industries reflects Bastrop’s importance as a regional center, and the location of most of the County’s institutional and retail land uses.

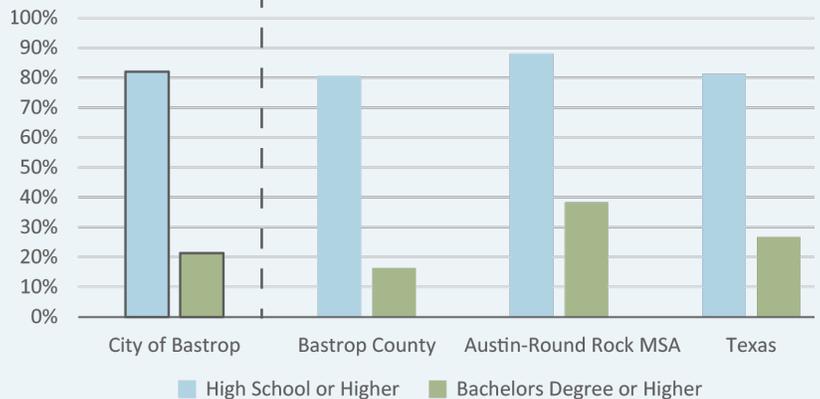
**FIGURE 1.11. INDUSTRY**



### UNEMPLOYMENT

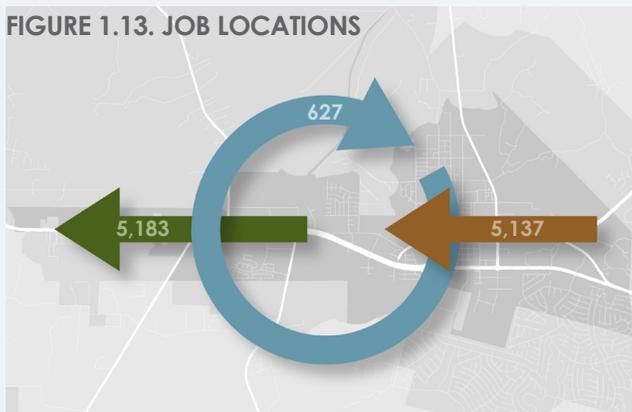
**Figure 1.12** (right) indicates that in 2013 Bastrop’s unemployment rate was 8.9 percent. Unemployment rates consider only those individuals aged 16 years and older that are currently employed or actively seeking employment. While the City’s unemployment rate was lower than Bastrop County, it was higher than in both the Austin-Round Rock MSA and the State of Texas.

**FIGURE 1.12. UNEMPLOYMENT<sup>1</sup>**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

**FIGURE 1.13. JOB LOCATIONS**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap

### JOB LOCATION

Commercial and industrial growth appears to have kept pace with residential growth in Bastrop. **Figure 1.13** (left) suggests that in 2013, 627 people both live in and are employed in Bastrop, 5,137 people live outside of Bastrop and work within city limits, and 5,183 people live within city limits but work outside of Bastrop. The roughly proportional influx and export of labor shows a rough balance between City residents that are commuting to Austin to work, and County residents who work at the City’s various service and government sector employers.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data was used to compare the City of Bastrop to progressively larger geographic areas of which it is a part.



## PLANNING PROCESS

### PRIOR PLANNING EFFORTS

The City of Bastrop adopted the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan (2000-2020) in May of 2001. The document included a total of 54 goal statements, as well as associated objectives, action statements, and policies – all geared toward enhancing the quality of life of Bastrop’s current and future citizens. This document - as well as other community studies - was an essential reference in preparing this Plan.

Much has changed in Bastrop over the intervening 15 years since 2001 Plan adoption. While a comprehensive plan is designed to provide a community with a long-term growth and development vision, its applicability can decrease after only a few years as physical conditions are altered. Periodic review and amendment of the Plan is necessary for it to remain relevant. Likewise, public interest in the Plan can quickly wane if the document does not include a measurable short-term work program by which plan implementation can be affirmed and are tangible.

### ADMINISTRATION AND OVERSIGHT

In exercising its statutory authority to prepare a comprehensive plan, Bastrop City officials determined to administer a robust planning process. The resulting Bastrop comprehensive planning process was subsequently supported by the active participation of City staff, and elected and appointed official alike. An appointed Master Plan Steering Committee ensured an ongoing layer of public oversight in the planning process which augmented the City’s attempts to solicit public participation.

### CITY OF BASTROP

#### CITY STAFF

Daily administration of the Bastrop comprehensive planning process was the responsibility of the City’s Planning and Development Department. The department served as a “clearinghouse” for information on Plan events and interim Plan deliverables. All other City departments provided data and documentation necessary to compile the Plan. Staff representatives were available for interviews and meetings regarding topics that related to the responsibilities of individual departments.

Bastrop City staff assumed an active role in coordinating the public engagement process, and in ensuring that events and activities were accessible and well-advertised. Attendance at public open houses and public hearings – as well as survey participation – was promoted through press releases, social media, and e-mail.

#### ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS

In accordance with its authority under the Bastrop Code of Ordinances (Exhibit A, § 8.5), the Bastrop Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed Plan recommendations, and advised City Council on final Plan adoption. The Planning and Zoning Commission’s recommendation was conveyed to the City Council following an advertised public hearing.

During the comprehensive planning process, the Bastrop City Council was provided with interim updates on the status of the project. City Council exercised its authority to adopt the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan (2016-2036) on (DATE).

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

The Bastrop Comprehensive Plan was prepared under the close supervision of a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC). The CPSC was comprised of acknowledged community leaders appointed by City Council to provide Plan oversight. The stakeholder groups represented by the CPSC included: residents, business and property owners, public officials, representatives from the development community, and neighborhood and community organizations. Representatives of the City Council, and the Planning and Zoning Commission were included in the CPSC.

The CPSC was charged with convening a series of meetings throughout the planning process to review individual plan elements and facilitate discussion and debate on all plan concepts, policy recommendations, and proposed action items. CPSC meetings included:

- **July 22, 2015.** Project kick-off meeting.
- **October 5, 2015.** Introductory document review, plan visioning, growth scenarios.
- **November 20, 2015.** Community growth scenario including infrastructure..
- **?, 2016.** Housing and neighborhoods, land use and urban design.
- **?, 2016.** Transportation.
- **?, 2016.** Parks and recreation, cultural arts and tourism.
- **?, 2016.** Implementation program. Joint meeting with City Council and Planning Commission.
- **?, 2016.** Final document review.

In addition to its Plan review responsibilities, the CPSC was an important community



Activities at the first Master Plan Steering Committee meeting.

liaison. Individual CPSC members actively promoted the planning process, assisted in boosting event attendance, and helped to disseminate information on findings and recommendations.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The utility of a comprehensive plan is greatly inhibited if the public officials that are charged with adopting, referencing, monitoring, and implementing it have not "accepted" it. "Acceptance" of the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan (2016-2036) does not



refer to the official action of Plan adoption. Rather, Plan acceptance is a personal choice – one whereby an individual has determined that the Plan is, **A)** Truly representative of public opinion; and, **B)** Is thereby an essential guide to their decision making process.

To foster long term Plan acceptance by Bastrop’s elected and appointed officials, the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan (2016-2036) employed a robust public input process. The City made substantial effort to ensure that residents, property owners, business owners, and other beneficiaries of Bastrop’s services and amenities were given a voice in shaping the City’s future growth and development program.

**STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS**

The Bastrop Comprehensive Plan public engagement process began with a series of 11 “kick-off” stakeholder meetings that were held over four (4) days in August and September, 2015. Representatives of multiple interest groups, including members of the grass-roots Vision Task Force, provided their perspectives on Bastrop’s most pressing needs, and potential opportunities or initiatives that the City should champion or support. This preliminary feedback assisted in developing initial Plan themes, and ultimate Plan goals and objectives.

**BASTROP’S CITIZENS**

Community input opportunity in the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan was not limited to elected and appointed City leadership, or key stakeholder groups. Bastrop’s citizens framed the initial direction of the planning

process through their participation in community surveys, public open houses, and public hearings. A summary of initial citizen feedback is discussed in more detail on pages 1-16 through 1-21.

**COMMUNITY SURVEYS**

During the comprehensive planning process, Bastrop citizens were asked to submit impressions of community characteristics and needs through surveys. The surveys were accessible online, and at the Bastrop City Library and City Hall. City staff also provided access to the surveys through a utility bill insert, delivery to the Housing Authority, and other means.

There were over 2,545 cumulative survey responses throughout the planning process. The online response to the surveys elicited responses from over 975 city residents - a response rate of nearly fourteen (14) percent of Bastrop’s total population. Survey respondents who provided their e-mail contact information were added to a mailing list that allowed the City to subsequently to provide digital updates of Plan progress to all interested parties, and to provide access to interim documents.

**CITY OF BASTROP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Visit [www.planbastrop.org](http://www.planbastrop.org) or [www.surveymonkey.com/r/BastropPlanning](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BastropPlanning) to take our Online Survey before Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2015



Completing the survey enters you in an drawing to win an Amazon Kindle Fire HD 7 tablet.

## COMMUNITY BLOG

Content pending for “My Sidewalk” initiative.

## PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES.

Three (3) public open houses were held during the comprehensive planning process. As with public survey participants, many open house attendees opted to provide their e-mail contact information to ensure their inclusion in digital updates of Plan progress, and access to interim documents. Public open houses were held according to the following schedule:

- **September 3, 2015.** *Plan overview and identification of key issues of interest or concern.*
- **February ??, 2016.** *Evaluation of land use, design, and transportation recommendations. Comment on interim recommendations of the companion Bastrop Transportation Master Plan.*
- **April ??, 2016.** *Evaluation of all Bastrop Comprehensive Plan recommendations.*



Public open house participants providing initial feedback in September 2015.



## VALUES & VISION

### COMMUNITY VALUES

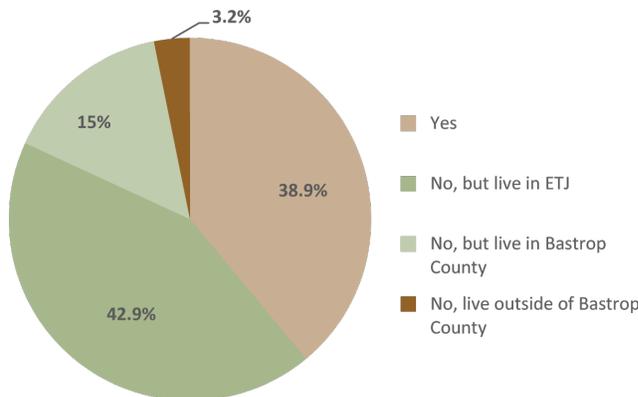
Input received in the summer of 2015 from stakeholder meetings, community surveys, and public open houses was reviewed to identify consistent community needs, aspirations, and priorities. Collective community input revealed themes that would be considered when preparing topic-specific chapters of the Plan throughout the remainder of the process.

### SURVEY RESULTS

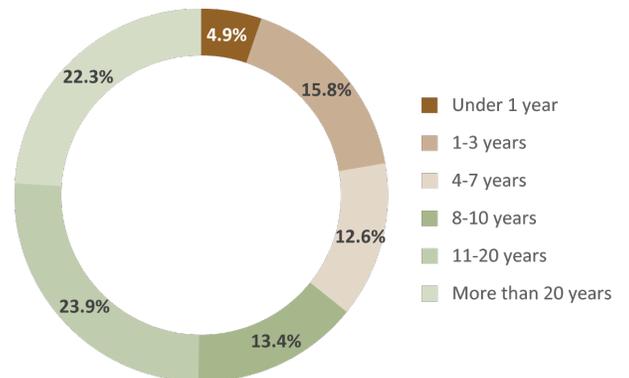
The 2,545 public survey responses illustrated a variety of trends regarding opportunities and issues in the City. In many cases, feedback from survey respondents mirrored the input received during kick-off stakeholder meetings. Key survey findings are provided on pages 1-16 through 1-21.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (JULY - SEPTEMBER, 2015)

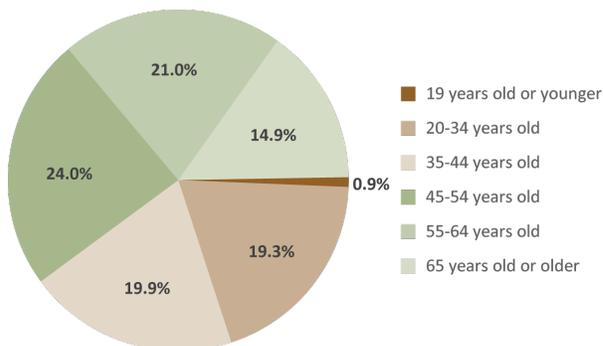
DO YOU LIVE IN BASTROP?



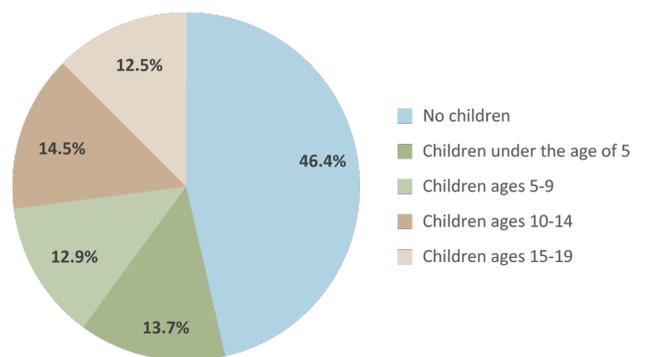
HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN BASTROP?



WHAT IS YOUR AGE RANGE?



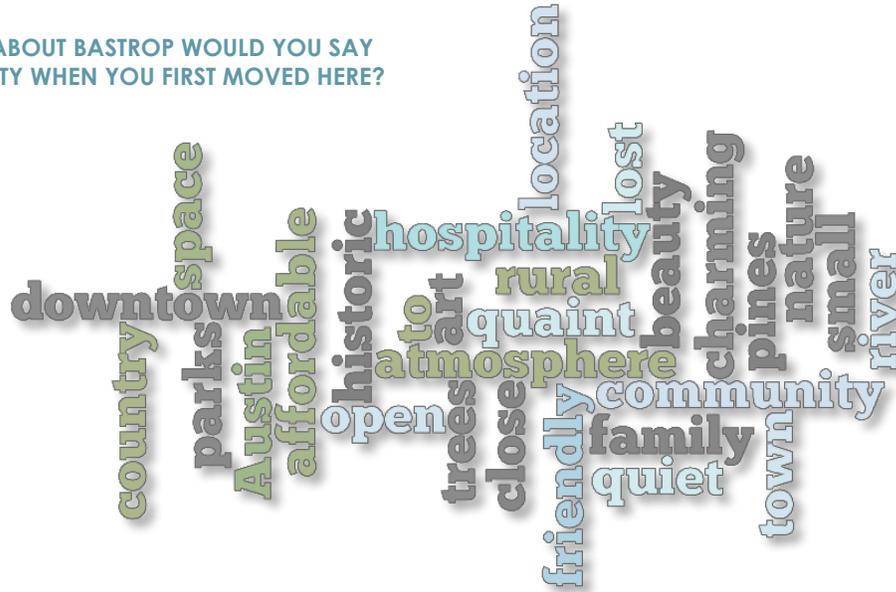
DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 19 LIVING IN YOUR HOME?



### CHARACTER

When asked “what one characteristic about Bastrop would you say drew you to this community when you first moved here” respondents typically responded with “small town feel,” “lost pines,” and “affordability.” Approximately 65 percent of respondents agreed that these key characteristics are still evident today.

#### WHAT ONE CHARACTERISTIC ABOUT BASTROP WOULD YOU SAY DREW YOU TO THIS COMMUNITY WHEN YOU FIRST MOVED HERE?



### COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

Only 17.8 percent of survey respondents indicated they were unlikely or very unlikely to remain in Bastrop for the next five (5) years. The top three (3) reasons include lack of job opportunities, dissatisfaction with the community, and prefer a smaller community, although lack of home options and job-related moves followed close behind.

#### IF UNLIKELY TO REMAIN LIVING IN BASTROP, WHICH REASON(S) WOULD CAUSE YOU TO LEAVE?

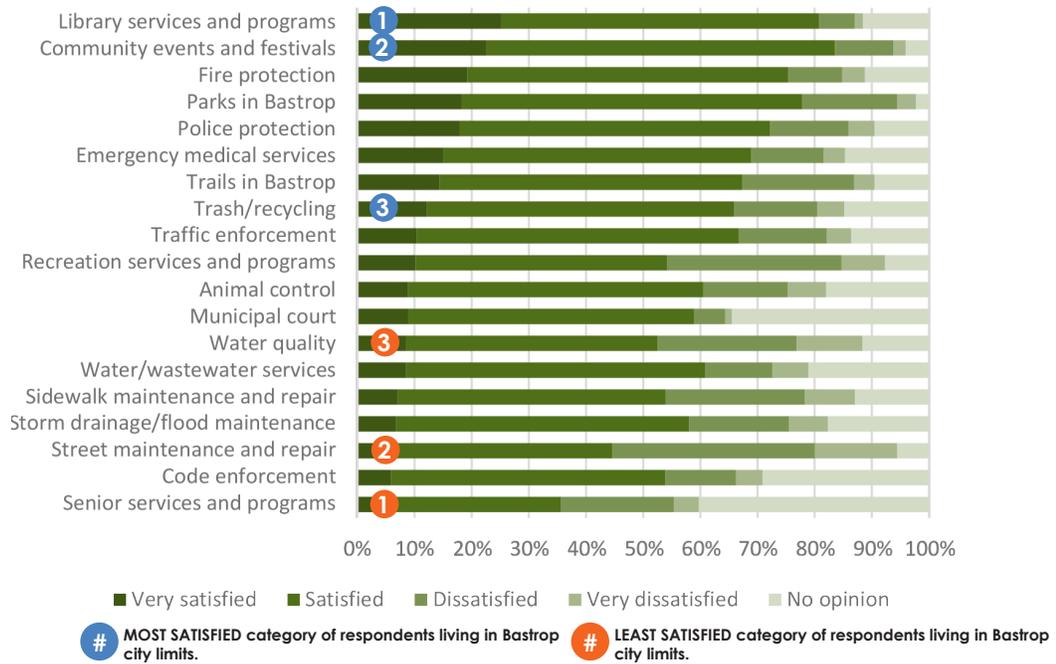




### SATISFACTION WITH CITY SERVICES

In general, respondents were most satisfied with the City's performance in library services and programs, community events and festivals, and fire protection. They were least satisfied with senior services and programs, code enforcement, and street maintenance and repair.

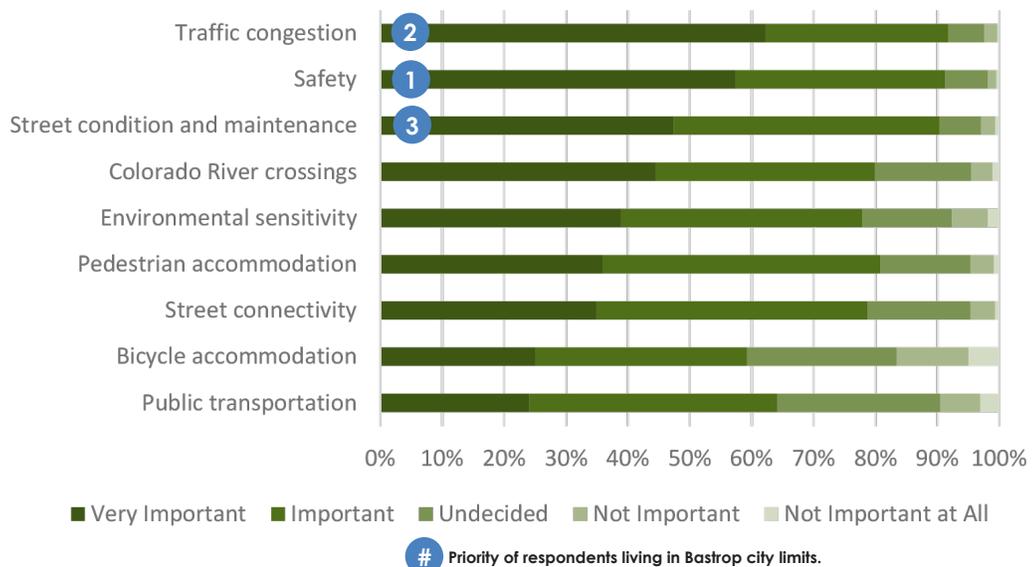
#### HOW SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED ARE YOU WITH EACH OF THE SERVICES LISTED BELOW?



### TRANSPORTATION

When asked about the importance of addressing transportation related issues, traffic congestion, safety, and street condition and maintenance were seen as the issues most needing improvement in the near future.

#### HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU FEEL IT IS TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING ISSUES INVOLVING THE CITY OF BASTROP'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM?



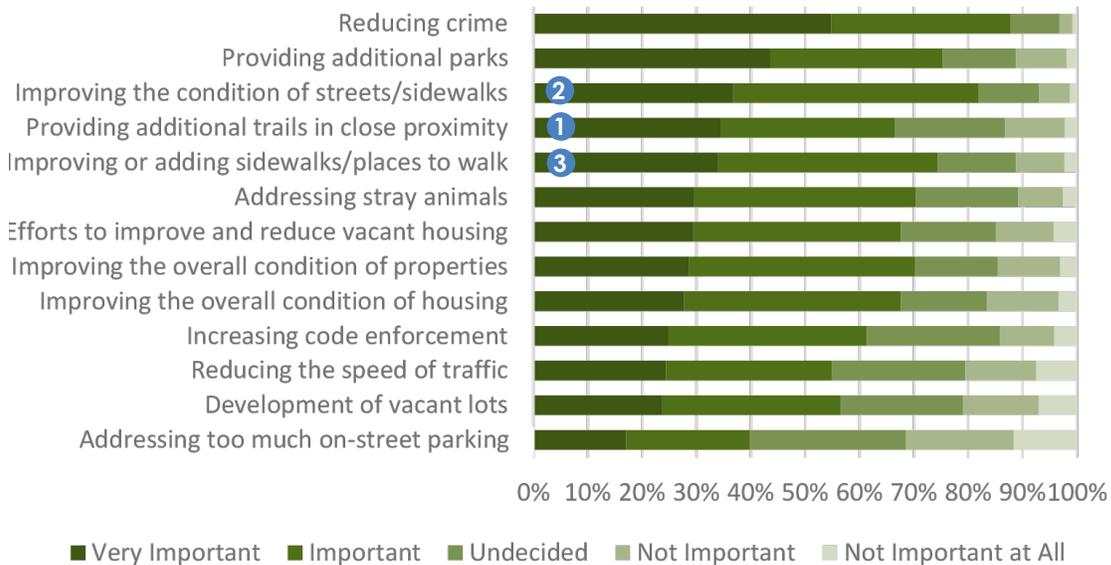
**TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES**

Respondents were asked an open-ended question asking if there were any transportation challenges they experience on a regular basis. In general, respondents indicated frequent congestion on major routes through the city. The most frequently listed specific streets include US Highway 71, US Highway 95, and Chestnut. It was also frequently mentioned that parking downtown is an issue.

**HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS**

When asked what issues were the most important for the City of Bastrop to address regarding neighborhood issues in the near future, respondents chose reducing crime, providing additional parks or recreation amenities in close proximity, and improving the conditions of streets and sidewalks as the three (3) most important issues. Those issues rated with lowest importance included addressing too much on-street parking, development of vacant lots, and reducing the speed of traffic within their neighborhoods. When asked to choose only one (1) neighborhood issue as the most important for the City to address, respondents chose reducing crime, providing additional parks or recreation amenities in close proximity, and improving the conditions of streets and sidewalks.

**HOW IMPORTANT IS IT FOR THE CITY OF BASTROP TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING ISSUES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE NEAR FUTURE?**



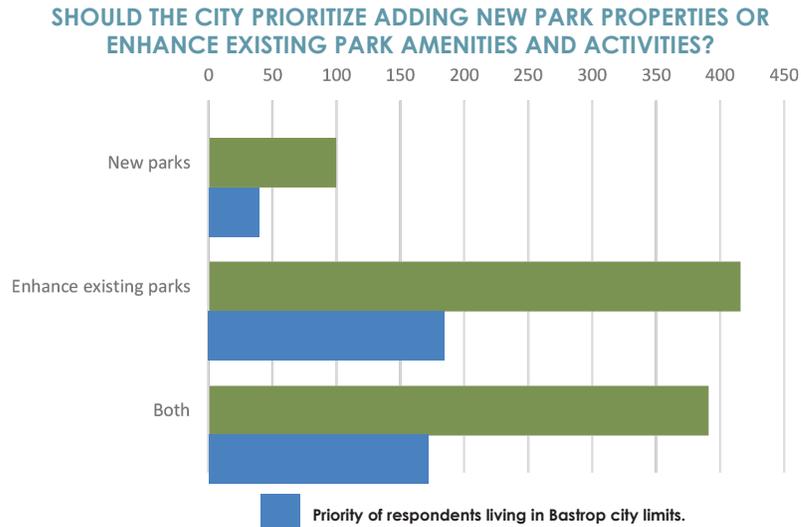
# Priority of respondents living in Bastrop city limits.

Of the respondents who answered the question, over 25 percent indicated they are likely or very likely to relocate to Bastrop or move to another house in the City within the next five (5) years. Seventy (70) percent of respondents indicated the housing type they're interested in is available, 73 percent indicated the housing quality they're looking for is available, while only 58 percent indicated the housing they're interested in is affordable in Bastrop.



### PARKS AND RECREATION

When asked if the City should prioritize adding new park properties or enhance existing park amenities and activities, 46 percent of respondents indicated that enhancing existing parks should be prioritized, 11 percent selected new parks, and the remaining 43 percent chose both.

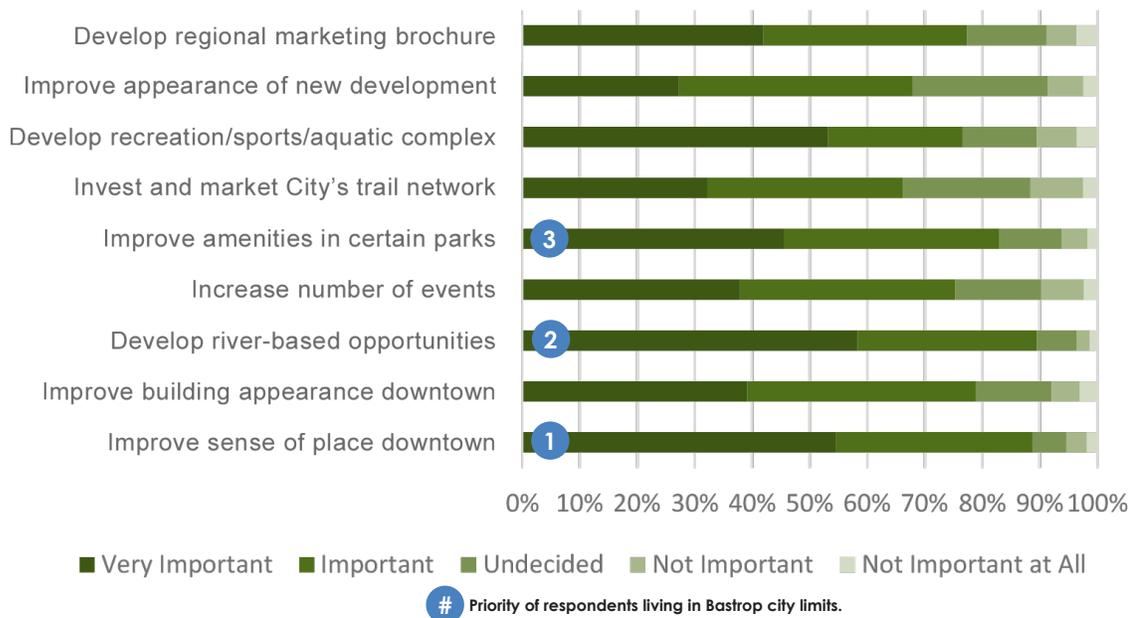


In a weighted question in which respondents were asked what types of parks are needed most in Bastrop, community parks were given the most support at 2.75, followed closely by regional parks at 2.65, trails at 2.46, and neighborhood parks at 2.32.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Respondents were asked to select the most important economic development issues related to tourism to be addressed by the City in the near future, they selected developing additional river-based recreational opportunities, improving the character and sense of place of downtown, and developing a recreation/sports/aquatic complex as the three most important issues.

**CONSIDERING TOURISM, HOW IMPORTANT IS IT FOR THE CITY OF BASTROP TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES IN THE NEAR FUTURE?**



**PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE RESULTS**

Preliminary feedback received from the 90 participants attending the initial stakeholder meetings in July, 2015, was utilized to prepare materials for the initial public open house held on September 3, 2015. Reliance on stakeholder feedback to frame public open house discussions was intended to: **A)** Provide the public with a tangible list of preliminary community issues that they could consider (and add to); and, **B)** To determine the degree to which stakeholder input truly reflected public opinion.

Preferences derived from the public open house are summarized below:

PRIORITY TOURISM FOCUS: <sup>1</sup>	VOTES:
Live music and festivals.	30
Natural resources - focus on river access.	24
Natural resources - focus on trails and open space.	21

<sup>1</sup> Thirty total focus issues (16 write-in)

PRIORITY INVESTMENT: <sup>1</sup>	VOTES:
Lost Pines nature trails/Colorado River Refuge (Write-in combined).	60
Build a recreation center/fitness complex.	35
Build an aquatics complex.	27

<sup>1</sup> Twenty total options (5 write-in)

PRIORITY INVESTMENT: <sup>1</sup>	VOTES:
Nature parks (Lost Pines/Colorado River Refuge) (Write-in).	31
Increase investments in street and sidewalk maintenance.	30
Improve water quality.	25

<sup>1</sup> Seventeen total focus issues (9 write-in)

PRIORITY INVESTMENT: <sup>1</sup>	VOTES:
Increase investments in street and sidewalk maintenance.	41
Enhance street lighting in residential areas.	30
Assist property owners with tree preservation, removal, or replanting (Write-in).	16

<sup>1</sup> Twenty two total focus issues (10 write-in)



### **BASTROP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION STATEMENT**

A community vision statement embodies a collective aspiration for the future - reflecting the shared values of what the community hopes to become. It is often developed early in a planning process to help frame subsequent goals, objectives, and actions of the plan. The vision statement suggests one (1) or more preferred outcomes at the end of the planning period, and often implies a method by which the outcome(s) will be achieved. If it truly represents the desired future of the community, the vision statement can also galvanize the citizenry to action and serve as a tool for decision making by elected and appointed officials and staff.

The Bastrop Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement (below) has been prepared by the CPSC. The Bastrop Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement is intended to articulate the values, and motivate the actions, of the community as a whole.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Bastrop City Council also maintains a mission statement that identifies the organization's aspirations based on perceived community values. Concurrent with the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement, a revised City of Bastrop Mission Statement (below) has been adopted as part of this Plan.

# VISION STATEMENT

***“THE CITY OF BASTROP IS A DIVERSE AND WELCOMING COMMUNITY THAT CELEBRATES OUR TOWN CHARACTER AND ENERGY, DISTINGUISHED HISTORY AND UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT.”***

# MISSION STATEMENT

***THE MISSION OF THE CITY OF BASTROP IS TO PROVIDE EFFICIENT AND PROACTIVE SERVICES THAT ENHANCE OUR QUALITY OF LIFE AND ACHIEVE OUR VISION.***

## GUIDING THEMES

The same community values that were utilized to develop the Bastrop Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement have been summarized and blended to develop an abbreviated set of guiding themes. These themes align with the Vision Statement, but provide greater focus for how key community interests or concerns should be addressed in the Plan's topic-specific chapters.

The collective themes do not list all priorities that were identified during public engagement activities. Reference to the guiding themes ensures that Plan policies and recommendations reflect the vision and values that were articulated early in the planning process.

### FOCUS ON THE RIVER.

Comprehensive planning participants have consistently cited enhanced access to the Colorado River as a community priority. The river is viewed as an essential element of improving the quality of life of local residents, and of enhancing the burgeoning local tourist economy. Colorado River frontage is valued for providing increased linear park space, while river access facilities are seen

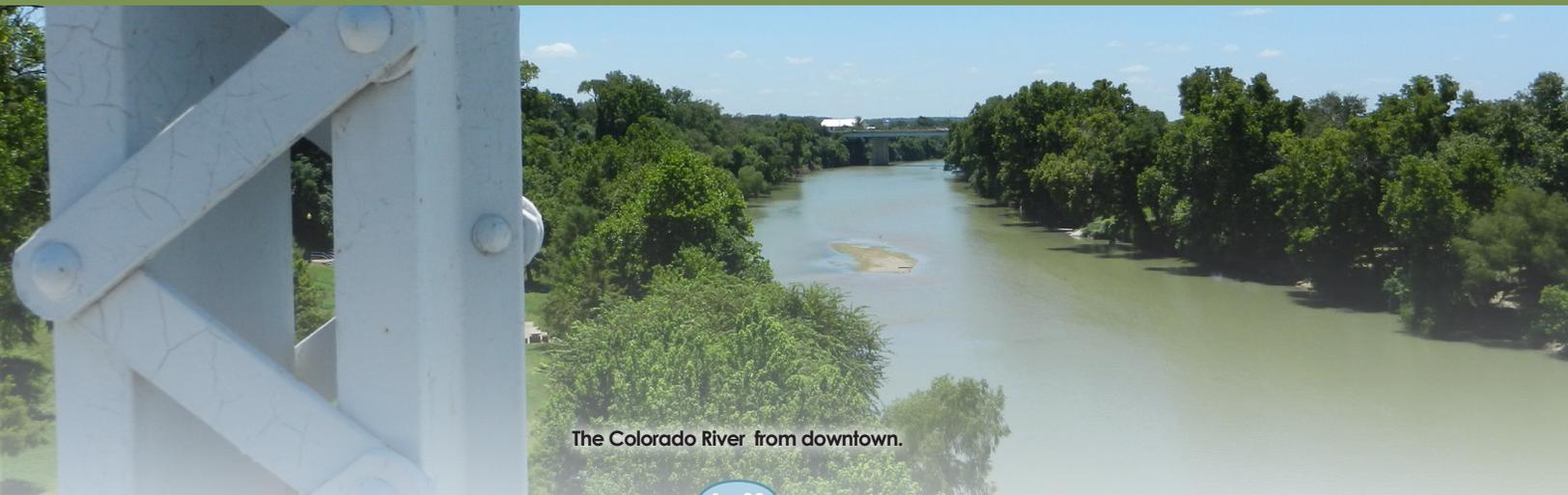
as encouraging river usage by residents and visitors. The Plan will incorporate objectives, strategies, and actions to leverage the dual economic/recreational purpose of the Colorado River.

### PHYSICAL FITNESS OPPORTUNITIES.

When inquiring about public facilities and infrastructure investments that are valued by the community, planning participants identify improved and/or expanded physical fitness facilities as a top community priority. Opinions vary regarding the type of facility (City recreation center, proposed YMCA facility, aquatics center), but enhanced facilities are also viewed as a key toward expanding organized recreational programs.

### PUBLIC EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS.

Enhancements to local educational programs are viewed by planning participants as critical to expanding the local economic base. The competitiveness of the public school district may be improved through partnerships with the City and community organizations. Expansion of dual credit and college preparatory programs, as well as the presence of an institution of higher education in the City are viewed as desirable objectives.



The Colorado River from downtown.



Street maintenance is a community priority.

### INVESTMENT IN NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION.

Maintaining or improving the character and condition of Bastrop's existing neighborhoods is a consistent concern among Bastrop residents. Although there is interest in addressing community design and private property condition, there is greater interest in the maintenance of the public street right-of-way. Community interest revolves around street and sidewalk maintenance, and in street light improvements.

### RESIDENTIAL STREET FRONTAGE.

Rudimentary visual preference surveying suggests that Bastrop residents place greater value on street facing porches, stoops, and balconies rather than garages. Regardless of housing type or density, residential design that places vehicular access to the rear of property was identified as desirable in Bastrop.

### PRESERVING THE PINES.

Community feedback suggests that tree canopy and landscaping are valued by Bastrop residents, property owners, and business owners. A significant number of planning participants identified tree preservation and planting as an essential element in conserving existing neighborhoods. Rudimentary visual preference surveying further suggests that heavy landscape buffers – incorporating a generous volume of canopy trees and shrubbery – is more desirable than expanses of pavement or turf grass.

### RESILIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY.

A variety of inter-related issues regarding community resiliency and sustainability are valued by community members. There is consistent interest in development of the City fire station on the west side of the Colorado River, as well as the construction of a community shelter. There is also community interest in expanding reuse options of waste water, and retrofitting City facilities to incorporating energy saving green technology.



The public values the City's tree canopy.