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# Introduction

## *A New City Prepares for a Bright Future*

**B**ulverde is a new city preparing for the future. This document represents the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Bulverde. The Plan provides the Mayor and City Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission, City management and staff, property owners, residents, developers and other community stakeholders with a long-range guide for the future growth of the City of Bulverde and its surrounding area. It does not impose another layer of regulations, but rather provides the citizens of Bulverde with the basis for building the city they envision. It recommends policies, procedures and planning tools in an effort to maximize the ability of Bulverde to protect its natural assets and grow in accordance with the visions of each element of the Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is an expression of what a community wants, a vision of what it might be. It is a working document representing goals, objectives, assumptions, standards, principle and policies as agreed upon by the citizens of the community.

The City Council commissioned a comprehensive plan to help position the community for the future while protecting, maintaining and enhancing Bulverde's unique quality of life and environment. They realize that to protect the high quality of life, the city must grow in a conscious, proactive and planned manner based on a collective vision. The Comprehensive Plan establishes a positive, sensible direction for the development of Bulverde over a twenty-year time period. In putting together this plan, the city addresses the needs and desires of its citizens and helps guide activities, improvements and development for the next two decades. This comprehensive plan looks at where this new city has been, where it is, where it wants to go, and how it plans to get there. Adopted in accordance with Section 219.002 of the Texas Local Government Code, the Comprehensive Plan provides the legal basis for Bulverde's zoning and subdivision regulations as well as other community development-related regulations and incentives.

## *Why Plan?*

**C**ities plan for the same reason all prudent organizations do – to ensure their future viability. Planning is a system used to apply resources, solve problems, and capitalize on opportunities. It is a means to achieve objectives and progress toward goals. A comprehensive plan is a tool that allows a city to anticipate changes and to guide those changes in a cost effective, orderly manner that is consistent with the desires of the community. It is not considered an end product, but an important

first step in an ongoing process of rational, balanced and creative decision-making regarding the future.

A well thought out plan analyzes future trends and guides growth in desirable ways and to areas where it is most suitable. The plan provides predictability, guidance and reassurance to citizens and developers alike. Planning helps to protect the attributes that attracted people to the Bulverde area in the first place, and defines and promotes a community's image and personality. A plan developed by the citizens can serve as a community consensus regarding the long-range vision of the city. This is the most important reason of all to plan. In a constantly changing world, a plan allows the people to determine a vision of what the community wants to be and how it wants to achieve that vision.

The comprehensive plan is not a static document. Revisions will be made when warranted. The plan will be continually monitored to track the extent to which it has been implemented and to determine if plan implementation results in the expected results. This process will keep the plan a living document and protect the will of the citizens.

## 1.2 The Process

On December 10, 2002 the City Council passed Resolution No. 74-02-12-10 authorizing the Mayor to execute an agreement with Robert D. Larsen, Ph.D. and James W. Vaughan, AICP to assist in the development of a long-range comprehensive plan for the City of Bulverde in accordance with a work program titled “*Establishing the Comprehensive Planning Process for Bulverde, Texas.*” Both Dr. Larsen and Mr. Vaughan are professors at Texas State University in San Marcos.

Citizen involvement, a must for effective planning, incorporates the community's values in terms of quality of life, character and scale and style of development,



Planning participants at one of the twenty-six steering committee meetings

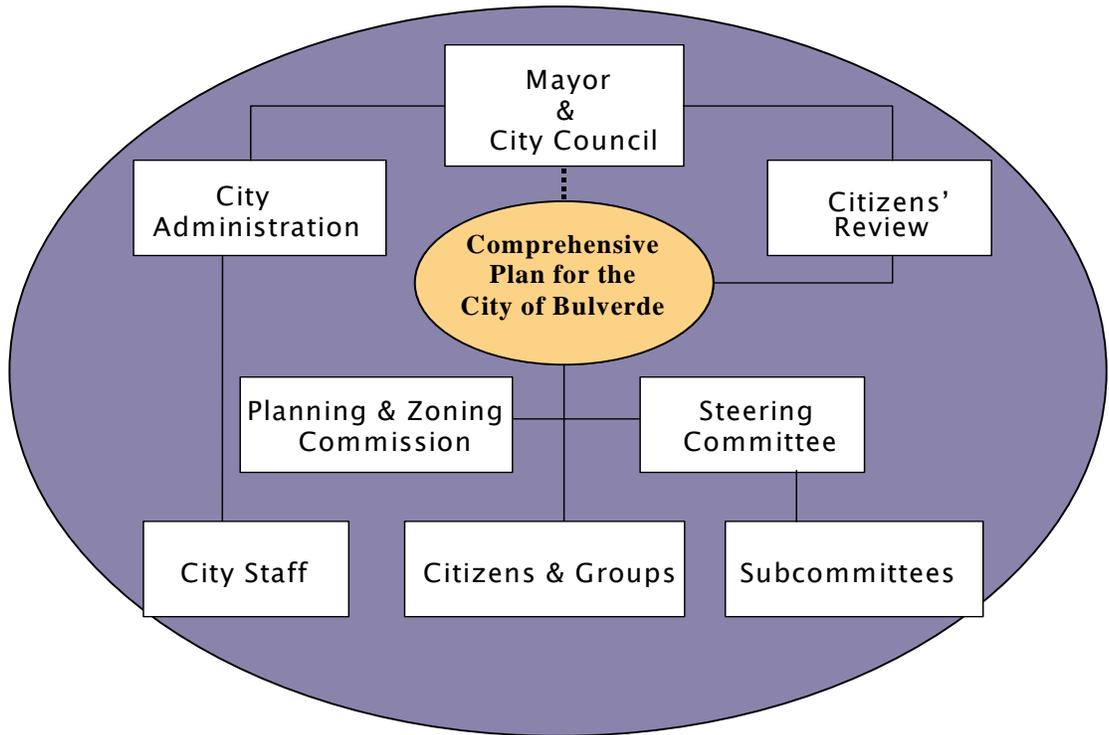
aesthetic appeal, and how development should be integrated into the existing and future city fabric. To further this end, the City Council established the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The Steering Committee structure was made up of 18 members designed to represent the interests, needs, ideas and concerns of all the stakeholders in the future of the City of Bulverde. The members of the

Steering Committee divid-ed up into six sub-committees to discuss and develop visions, goals and actions/objectives for different elements of the plan:

- Infrastructure/Transportation
- Public Safety
- Community Development
- Land Use/Land Development/Growth Management
- Historical/Heritage Preservation
- Economic Development

Bulverde’s Comprehensive Plan is based on meetings, surveys, interviews, and other sessions held by the Steering Committee and its six subcommittees, Planning Commission, city staff, consultants and other involved participants. The organization of the comprehensive planning process is graphically represented in the Organizational Chart below.

### Comprehensive Planning Process for the City of Bulverde



The Steering Committee and its subcommittees were involved in a thorough and time-consuming process of identifying issues, developing visions, establishing goals and objectives, discussing alternatives and solutions, and helping determine needs and priorities for Bulverde. Each committee member was responsible for distributing copies of the Comprehensive Plan Survey. The survey was designed to assist in identifying issues important to citizens. Survey topics included:

- Demographics
- What Bulverde should be
- Priorities for managing growth
- What the Comprehensive Plan should accomplish

- The role of City Government in growth management
- The level of city services
- The quality of existing city services
- Community outreach

Survey respondents consistently indicated a high degree of appreciation for the “rural” atmosphere of Bulverde. The details of the survey are discussed in Chapter Two of this plan.

In addition to the Comprehensive Plan Survey, city staff, the Steering Committee and plan consultants hosted a citizen input event on Saturday, November 9, 2003 at the Bulverde/Spring Branch Library in the HEB Shopping Center. People were offered the opportunity to “vote” on whether they agreed or disagreed with preliminary vision statements derived from steering committee meetings. Findings from the survey and citizen input formed the basis for the preparation of this plan.



Charlie Cantu Jr., Bev Lemmes, Bill Kraewitz, and Rhonda Zunker discussing land use planning

After analyzing survey findings and citizen input, the Steering Committee set about directing the preparation of each chapter of the plan. When a draft of each chapter was prepared, it was discussed and edited by the Steering Committee, Planning Director and Consultants. When all drafts were completed in this fashion, they were forwarded to the Planning Commission and citizens at a public hearing for their review and comment. Following Planning and Zoning Commission review of the plan and public input, the final version of the plan was forwarded to the City Council.



Planning consultants Bob Larsen and James Vaughan with Mayor Cole (center) at the planning open house

The Steering Committee performed a key role in making the decisions and choices that shaped the plan into its final form. The Planning and Zoning Commission is responsible for administering the plan once it has been adopted by City Council. City staff, fire, EMS, and library personnel contributed ideas and information specific to their responsibilities, and the city administrator’s support was invaluable throughout the entire planning process.