

10 | PUBLIC FACILITIES

Public Facilities Policies

- POLICY 1:** Make the proactive maintenance of existing public facilities the top priority for future investment
- POLICY 2:** Use future facilities to anchor or support special districts.
- POLICY 3:** Engage the community in discussions about future facility needs and desires.

Introduction

Good public facilities are a critical to the success of any community. These buildings and facilities house various governmental and service functions, the quality of which is a direct reflection of community pride and investment. The type and quality of the public facilities within Lancaster determine what types of services are offered to the public, and should be viewed as a critical component of the city's infrastructure. These public facilities can generally be grouped into two types; those that function on a centralized, community wide basis (such as city hall), and those that function on a service area basis (such as fire and police service). Some facilities, such as libraries, parks or recreational facilities, may fall somewhere between these two types, initially serving the entire community, but functioning more on a service area basis as the city grows in population.

A commitment to offering quality public services and maintaining a high quality of life requires the employment of two important strategies: First, Lancaster must make investments in new facilities that support the types of services and activities that the growing community needs and desires to offer. New facilities should be carefully planned and constructed to make the most of every dollar spent. Ideally, they should be sited where new development will occur first in the community, as this will support that growth, and ensure that the facilities are being used efficiently. Additionally, growth and development should be guided towards existing facilities whenever possible, optimizing use of the limited fiscal resources.

Second, the city must make a firm commitment to maintaining its existing facilities. Adequate maintenance of the existing public facilities is essential to sustaining the city's level of services and is necessary both to retain existing businesses and residents as well as to attract new ones. Additionally, the proactive maintenance and renovations of existing facilities is generally cheaper and is typically more fiscally responsible than new construction. The city cannot afford to let existing facilities decline, or the entire community will suffer through a reduction in quality, efficiency, and variety of services.

Together, these policies will ensure that Lancaster can continue to provide high quality services to its residents and businesses as the community continues to grow. Quality public facilities are a critical part of the foundation necessary for Lancaster to attract and retain new development, and remain essential to maintaining the city's livability, resiliency, and competitiveness for the long-term.

Existing Public Facilities

In order to review and assess the buildings and facilities available to the city, it is necessary to inventory all the city's current facilities. These include the facility's location, size, and number of employees employed, if any.

City Hall

- 211 N. Henry Street
- 9400 sq. ft.
- 27 employees

Municipal Court

- 220 West Main Street
- 5600 sq. ft.
- 6 employees

Public Safety/ Fire Station #1

- 100 Craig Shaw Memorial Pkwy.
- 50000 sq. ft.
- 113 employees

Fire Station # 2

- 3132 Houston School Road
- 6000 sq. ft.
- 15 employees

Fire Station # 3

- 1960 West Beltline Rd
- 5000 sq. ft.
- 13 employees

Developmental Services/ Animal Shelter

- 700 & 690 East Main
- 4250 sq. ft. & 2400 sq. ft.
- 39 employees

Pump Station

- 999 North Jefferson
- 8050 sq. ft.
- 18 employees

Rec Center

- 1700 Veterans Memorial Pkwy
- 52000 sq. ft.
- 29 employees

Veterans Memorial Library

- 1600 Veterans Memorial Pkwy
- 22000 sq. ft.
- 13 employees

Senior Life

- 240 Veterans Memorial Pkwy
- 11000 sq. ft.
- 2 employees

Regional Airport

- 730 Ferris Road
- 4600 sq. ft.
- 6 employees

Visitor Center

- 103 North Dallas Ave
- 5700 sq. ft.
- 2 employees

Golf Course

- 240 West Beltline
- 6000 sq. ft. building

Community House

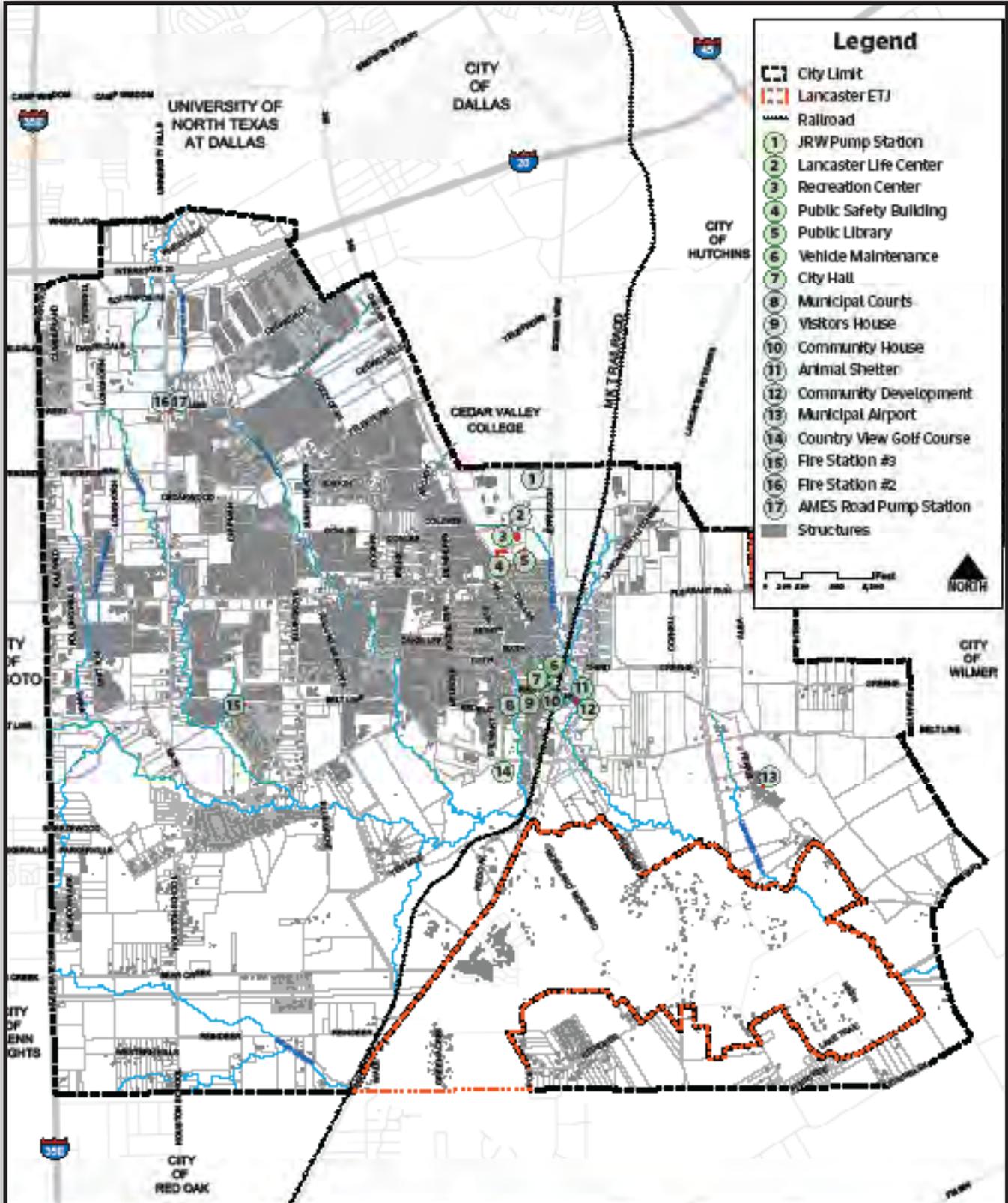
- 100 North Henry St
- 1500 sq. ft.

Equipment Maintenance Service Facility

- 521 East 3rd Street
- 4000 sq. ft.
- 3 employees



Exhibit 10.1 Lancaster Public Facilities



New Public Facilities

Since the last comprehensive plan in 2002, there have been a number of changes to Lancaster's public facilities. These include the construction of an award winning Public Safety Building, a new Public Life Center, Recreation Center, and Aquatic's Center in Community Park, a Senior Center in Community Park, the creation of a new dog park on the site of the former community swimming pool, renovations to the Municipal Court Building, and extensive renovations to the old jail building to convert the space into a museum and visitor center. These additions were the result of community needs and desires.

In addition to these changes, there are several other facilities in the planning or construction stages, including:

- A new fleet building of approximately 12,000 sq. ft. is being constructed just east of the city's existing fleet building facility. The new building is part of Lancaster's strategic plan.
- A new Fixed Base Operator (FBO) building has been designed to be built at the Lancaster Airport. This facility is being built with TxDOT Aviation as a partner, and is currently in the letting phase of development.

In addition to the facilities recently built or currently being planned as described above, the city has identified a need for a new City Hall in order to bring various city departments together under one roof and to accommodate future staffing growth as the city continues to grow. The construction of a new City Hall in Lancaster offers many opportunities for the city. This facility, which will serve as one of the main focal points of the community, is a chance to create a memorable structure that the city can take pride in, and will serve as a symbol of the community's commitment to quality services in one convenient location. Siting the new facility to complete the historic town square would strengthen the urban fabric of Lancaster's downtown, and create opportunities for new uses in the spaces vacated when municipal departments are moved to the new City Hall from their current locations.

Recommendations

The best way for Lancaster to adequately plan for the future is through a thorough facilities analysis, a process the city is currently undertaking. This will allow the community to comprehensively assess every aspect of their current facilities, enabling them to plan more carefully and comprehensively for the future. This plan should allow the city to see what facilities are overtaxed, under used, or in need of repairs. This should include a staffing plan to ensure that there are an adequate number of City workers to provide those services to the residents and businesses of Lancaster.

While the comprehensive plan provides overall direction for the kind of community Lancaster wants to be, the facilities analysis plan should allow Lancaster to gauge how well its current facilities and existing services are in alignment with the fulfillment of their comprehensive plan goals. This type of analysis is crucial if the city is to maintain or increase its service levels as the city expands.

There are several areas in a public facilities report that should be of a specific focus to the city. First, the city should assess the current city hall facility and its capacity to continue functioning in its current state. Consideration should be made as to what departments will eventually be relocated to the city's new city hall, how long those departments can function effectively in their current facilities, and what the needs of those departments will be as the city continues to grow. Some departments that could be consolidated into a new City Hall might include stormwater, planning, and development employees, as well as the Department of Quality of Life and Cultural Services currently housed at Community Park. Second, the city should assess potential uses for the facilities that will be vacated as departments are consolidated in a new City Hall building. These facilities could serve as locations for new city services, partnerships with other entities, or be sold to private interests in the community for reinvestment.

Another area of focus that should be addressed in the facilities analysis should be the availability and quality of

service-area based facilities. Currently, Lancaster has 3 fire stations servicing the community, with fire protection coverage in the LanPort area provided by the city of Red Oak via an inter-local agreement. Increasing development in East Lancaster could put pressure on fire service response times, therefore the potential need for a new fire station should be studied.

Opportunities for partnerships and coordination with other entities in the community should also be explored in a public facilities analysis. Current examples of coordination in Lancaster include partnership with Lancaster Independent School District (LISD) in the siting of public parks and open space near school facilities, and the construction of a single facility that combines both police and fire services in the new Public Safety Building. Additionally, Lancaster has many partnerships with other communities to provide services and facilities that reinforce each other, such as the trails master plan, which was designed to tie into the trail systems of other communities, creating a system more extensive than any community would be able to provide on its own. These types of coordination allow the community to potentially realize a cost savings by leveraging greater amounts of funding and combining costs. Other opportunities for synergy and cooperative partnerships should be explored, such as combining more facilities with LISD or creating partnerships with Cedar Valley College and the University of North Dallas at Texas. Additionally, the city should seek to assess gaps in services it would currently like to provide, such as amenities for seniors and healthy living programs, and partner with other organizations that are working to address those same service deficits. Such partners might include neighborhood organizations, hospitals or offices in the medical district, or other governmental organizations at the state and federal level.

Lancaster provides a number of services and a high quality of life to its businesses and residents. In order to continue and to expand upon that level of service, the city must commit both to the construction of new facilities as needed, and maintenance of facilities the city already has. An open conversation with citizens and community stakeholders is necessary to establish a vision for the types of services the community desires. This conversation has begun as part of the comprehensive plan process, informing all the chapters in this document; however, this is only the beginning of an ongoing process that must continually occur, which, when combined with a comprehensive facilities analysis, will serve as a roadmap for future development and maintenance of facilities within the community.

Public Facilities Implementation Plan

In order to fulfil the goals and aims of the comprehensive plan, the following implementation strategies have been outlined for Lancaster's public facilities. More in depth detail can be found in the Implementation chapter and Appendix 1 of this report.

- Undertake a comprehensive facilities analysis to assess the city's current facilities and the facilities alignment with the goals of the comprehensive plan.
- Undertake a staffing analysis in conjunction with the facilities analysis to ensure staffing levels are adequate and appropriate to support a high level of service to residents and businesses.
- Use City investments, such as a new City Hall, to draw more people to the Town Square.
- Evaluate the types of service the city currently provides and the services the city would like to provide, identifying gaps between current services and preferred services, and create strategies to bring them into alignment.
- Evaluate and fill gaps in the services and amenities desired by seniors, from active seniors to those in care facilities.
- Partner with LISD, neighborhood organizations and others to develop or expand healthy living programs and identify specific initiatives for Medical District leadership.
- Evaluate current synergies and partnerships between various departments and facilities and identify other areas where partnerships could be developed, such as a joint performance center shared between the city and the Lancaster Independent School District.
- Look at service-area type facilities and review service efficiencies and coverage areas to identify what facility improvements will be needed as Lancaster grows. Areas of concern that have been identified include fire coverage in the LanPort area as development continues on the eastern side of the city.