



City of Kingsville
Comprehensive Housing Plan

Adopted: January 2012

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Part I

Introduction

The intent of this plan is to provide a framework for the future housing development within the City of Kingsville, consistent with the approach presented in the City's adopted 2008 Master Plan. Current data shows there was a 15.9% increase in job creation from 2000 to 2010 within or near the City, while the population only increased by 2.5% over the same period of time. What this indicates is that we are successful in adding jobs to increase our labor force, but the expanded labor force is not locating in Kingsville, thereby creating residential leakage to other nearby cities and counties that fulfill their overall needs. One issue contributing to the residential leakage problem, which has been consistently communicated to staff, is that there is a lack of diversity in housing inventory, the inventory is aging, and rental pricing is on the high end of the spectrum. In response to these indicators this plan has been created to factually present this documentation to support these claims, while also providing an organized plan using known city planning practices to address the housing needs of the City.

This Plan will be an accessory to the City of Kingsville Master Plan, and act as a guide to future housing development of the city. The particular focus of this plan pertains to the development of housing and an overall design for an improved quality of life. While housing is the largest component of a city, it is important to provide a comprehensive approach to developing quality neighborhoods within proximity to goods and services.

Part II

The Housing Growth & Diversification Plan

Home Ownership

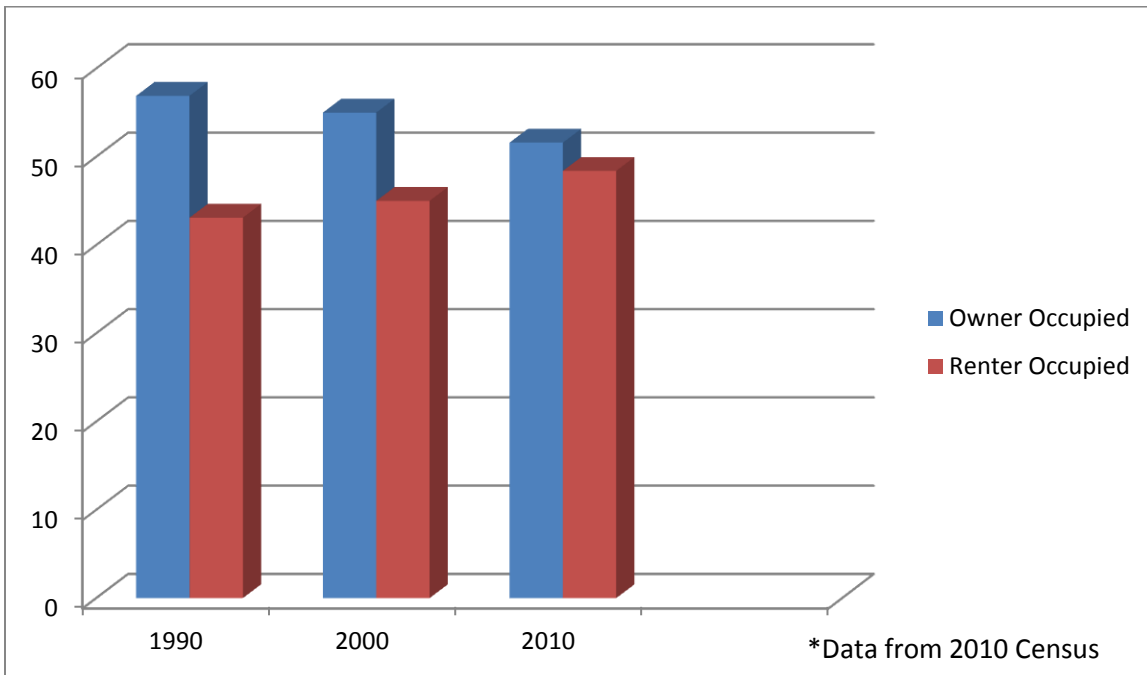
The physical condition and financial value of housing is an important sociological and economic indicator of the state of a City. Not only does housing account for the vast majority of land usage in a community, but housing ownership and cost represent the primary financial investments and obligation of most individuals.

Home ownership is by its very nature is a stabilizing influence because home owners do not move as frequently as renters and they have an added financial responsibility and commitment. Rents, on the other hand, provide a relatively good insight into the costs of living in a particular area as rent is the largest single expense most people have each month and is a reflection of the market demand and supply situation that exists.

Percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units

Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of owner-occupancy decreased slightly from 56.9% in 1990 to 55% in 2000. The largest decline in owner-occupied housing units came between 2000 & 2010 which showed owner occupancy was down to 51.6%. Declines appear to be most evident in the older sections of Kingsville and probably reflect the conversion of older single-family homes into rental units in contrast to the construction of new rental properties. This decline is also most likely partly due to the lack of availability of new construction single family housing which has contributed to residential leakage. Table 1 provides a three decade snapshot of the decline in owner-occupied housing.

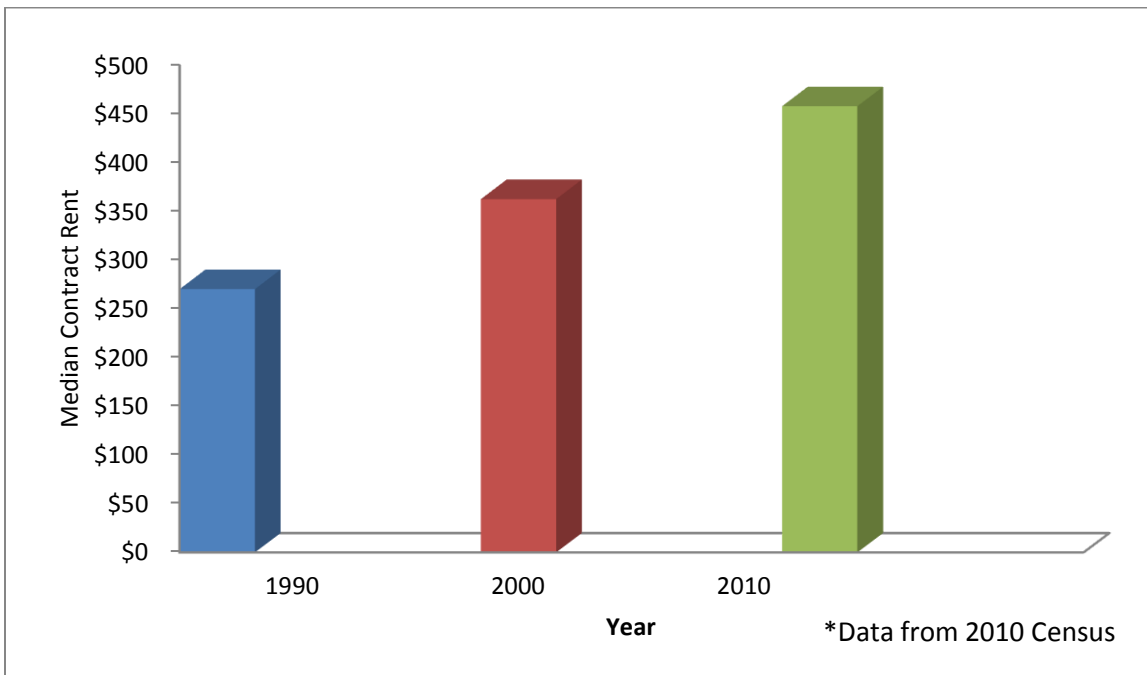
Table 1. Percent of Owner Occupied Housing



Median Contract Rents

Median contract rents increased ninety-five dollars from a median average of \$363 in 2000 to \$458 in 2010. Median Contract Rents continued their previous escalation trend, and at the same basic increment as seen in previous decades. This increase can probably be explained by the relatively stagnant inventory of homes, and increased demand for rental housing as supported by the increase in renter occupation of housing and the decline in owner occupied housing. In short, the supply is not able to meet the demand, thereby increasing rental pricing. For illustration, Table 2 shows the escalation of rental pricing over the past 30 years.

Table 2. Median Contract Rent



General Goals of the Housing Plan:

- A. To provide optimal quality of life aspects in the design and development/redevelopment of neighborhoods within the community.
- B. To provide diverse housing options, in both price and type, for current and prospective citizens.
- C. To provide for thoughtful extension of development in the City.

- D. To avoid “leapfrog” development that leaves large areas of the city undeveloped in between developed areas.
- E. To preserve the unique assets of the region that have historic significance, such as historic buildings and traditional neighborhoods, or other unique qualities that endear themselves to the community.

All current and prospective citizens of Kingsville should have housing options that provide for sound quality, good design, diversity of housing types, and affordable options. Housing stock should be of sufficient size to produce a healthy and satisfying living environment. Housing is to be located in quiet, safe and attractive neighborhoods that provide each dwelling unit with convenient and safe pedestrian and vehicular access to an elementary school, churches, nearby shopping and recreation areas located within or near the neighborhood.

Part III

General Policies

A. The Neighborhood Unit

Whenever possible, residential development and redevelopment should be designed according to the Neighborhood Unit concept. A Neighborhood Unit is an area planned as a unit and used principally for residential purposes, but which contains recreational, religious, educational, and light retail shopping facilities needed to serve the residents of the neighborhood. Each of these elements should be provided as an integral part of the plan for the neighborhood and in accordance with the following principles:



- 1) The neighborhood unit should be of a size which can be served by one elementary school.

2) When possible, neighborhood parks and playgrounds should be included in the neighborhood design, and centrally located in the residential population. Diverse housing options should also be included in the overall development of a neighborhood. Neighborhoods should include the use of diverse housing options including but not limited to, garden apartments/homes, townhomes and single family homes thereby allowing varying price points within a desirable neighborhood.

3) Pertaining to transportation, all major streets should be routed along the perimeter of the neighborhood. Minor residential streets should be designed to provide good access to abutting property, but should be arranged to discourage their use by through traffic. Collector streets should provide fairly direct connection between minor streets and neighborhood recreational, educational, or shopping facilities, or major streets. Whenever possible, residential dwelling units should not face on or have direct ingress and egress to arterial or collector streets.

4) Building sites should be large enough to provide yards and open spaces consistent with the scale and function of individual buildings. Landscaping and site planning should be employed to protect residential dwellings from the more intensive activities of more intense or incompatible uses. The city should strive to maintain a maximum density of five units per acre where applicable, except in Planned Unit Developments where density can be traded for open space considerations.

B. Neighborhood Design Not Involving Housing

1) Neighborhood Parks and Playground Sites

Neighborhood parks and playgrounds and sub-neighborhood playgrounds should be provided in accordance with accepted standards of adequacy.

2) Neighborhood Shopping Centers Sites

Neighborhood shopping center sites should be provided in proximity to the development area to promote the use of multi-modal transportation to and from the shopping site.

3) Neighborhood Sidewalks

Sidewalks should be provided with accepted standards as to encourage a “sense of place and community” and to provide non-vehicular connectivity.

Recommended Strategies

The following is a list of specific housing and residential development strategies to be pursued in the implementation of this plan.

A. City policy should seek to ensure that new residential construction in undeveloped areas is compatible with planning practice pertaining to developmental goals relating to density and building quality.(See Appendix B)



B. City policy should support new residential construction on vacant land in older areas as long as it complements the existing character and design of the area.

C. City policy should encourage preservation and renovation of older residential buildings and neighborhoods

D. Provision should be made to rezone existing neighborhoods or greenfield tract land within the already developed areas with incompatible zoning to a more appropriate zoning designation.

E. The City should encourage, and support through code provisions, the use of Planned Unit Developments or the existing mixed use development in which planned residential densities are not exceeded but in which a mixture of building uses & types may be employed.

F. Residential development should be encouraged in those areas now adequately served by public facilities and utilities.

G. Residential development should be discouraged in areas beyond the city's gravity sewer limits and areas not served by public utilities until those areas now adequately served are fully utilized.

H. Mobile home parks should be permitted as residential uses only where there are adequate public utilities available and where they are compatible with existing land use.

I. The supply of affordable housing for low income persons, the elderly, and the handicapped is in good supply and should be maintained at its current level.

J. The city should promote building on vacant infill lots.

Part IV

Infill Development & Reinvestment

In an effort to create viable, attractive infill development lots and spur reinvestment of blighted areas, several options exist that may be of use to the comprehensive planning area. The first of these options is to assist in the acquisition of back tax property within the City. These properties can be researched through back tax reports or foreclosure reports. These are typically inexpensive lots that create blight in the



neighborhoods but could be suitable for infill housing or reinvestment in existing housing. In addition to these properties, the City of Kingsville has properties in which we have acquired which could be utilized to assist in infill development. These lots are underutilized in the area but can be very suitable for infill housing. The process of purchasing delinquent tax properties can be lengthy, which is the very reason why they are less than desirable. However, through creative partnerships with the City, County and residents steps can be taken in making these properties available with fewer strings attached, and would give developers a more desirable option for redevelopment and provide a lien free property.

An assumption can be made that some of these properties may require a zoning district change, since the primary use in some of these areas is residential even though they were zoned as

Commercial at some point in time. Some, but not all, districts have had these commercial/manufacturing designations but have not developed as commercial or industrial areas. Instead, they have maintained a strong residential base. The city could initiate a zoning district change of a large contiguous area if necessary, wherein it would eliminate the impediment for a developer and, if approved, would create an attractive infill development area.

A site that provides great potential for adaptive re-use of an existing building and subsequent infill development on and around the site, is the Flato School site. This site is reportedly near six acres, within an established neighborhood. The site is currently underutilized, and could be easily converted to a mixed use



housing/commercial development utilizing the Flato School as a mixed use building, and utilizing the remaining available property for townhome and/or garden apartment type planned unit development. A detailed study was researched and compiled as part of the recent Texas A&M Kingsville potential development plan which promotes the aforementioned development strategy. This comprehensive approach to providing several potential development proposals for the site should be further investigated and promoted as a viable re-use of the property. This plan indicates the real potential for creative infill development that will improve the surrounding neighborhoods by activating an inactive property, and improving the available housing inventory by utilizing infill properties and existing buildings. The City should fully support this project and similar proposals as a preferred infill initiative.

The Benefits of Infill Development

In most cases, streets, storm water drainage, electricity, water and sewer already serve the infill properties. This results in less cost for development; the savings can then be integrated



into the sale price of the home, allowing the home to be affordable to a wider range of prospective buyers. This can be a substantial positive point as the vacant properties become useful, viable homes.

Another additional benefit is that of a reduced public liability and a cut in property maintenance costs which can be substantial. There are many health and safety hazards that are created by vacant and overgrown properties. When properties are not maintained, they become liabilities, forcing the city to provide weed and trash abatement, which is in turn billed to the property owner. In most cases, the properties also have a delinquent tax bill. These costs and health hazards will decrease as the infill is carried out and individual property owners are established and maintain the property.

Capacity Building Through Partnerships

The city needs to work to garner partnerships with non-profit housing organizations that are involved in infill housing projects. Organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, or locally



organized service groups should be the focus of City relationship building. This type of relationship can be advantageous for all involved, and is a successful venture in many cities across the country. The city is committed to developing a partnership with these types of organizations as they are critical in the redevelopment of the infill area. With a dedicated partnership, the benefits can be endless to all those involved.

Part V

Growth Management

The City of Kingsville is committed to taking a comprehensive, conservative manner in preserving its resources. As new development occurs the City should focus on the utilization of the existing infrastructure to its full capacity prior to expanding into unimproved areas. When

possible the City encourages proper infill development and full utilization of existing resources prior to developing into new areas, therefore supporting the principles of Growth Management.

Growth Management Strategies

A. Create diverse housing opportunities and choices: providing quality housing for people of all income levels, and housing needs are essential to any growth management strategy. Development of all-inclusive development, i.e. appropriately planned housing integration such as single-family, townhome, garden apartment and similar type housing units within one neighborhood, should be heavily promoted as the development of choice in Kingsville. This will allow for a socio-economic balance within new development, which is desirable.

B. Create walkable neighborhoods: walkable communities are desirable places to live, work and play, and represent another key component to growth management.

C. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration: growth can create great places to live, work and play if it responds to a community's input how and where it wants to grow. Stakeholders should include but are not limited to local builders, local realtors, regional developers, US Navy personnel, university personnel, and other institutions and organization that represent the housing need.

D. Foster distinctive, attractive places with strong place-making or public plaza components: Growth management strategies must encourage setting standards for development and construction which represent community values and architectural diversity and distinctiveness, as well as expanded choices in housing and transportation. This is to include but not be limited to the promotion of connectivity and the use of shade to promote the walkability of interconnected routes.

E. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective: To be successful in implementing growth management practices, regulations and decisions must be consistently applied and embraced by the building community and/or the private sector. In turn the City must streamline the permitting process to net a quick turnaround in plan review to promote development.

F. Mixed land use development: Growth management supports the integration of mixed land uses into communities as a critical component of achieving practical and attractive places to live.

G. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas: Open space preservation is critical to maintain the community’s agricultural base while preserving critical environmental areas, improving our community’s quality of life, and guiding new growth in the community.

Growth management is an area of city planning that responds to inefficient land use practices associated with typical suburban sprawl or unplanned growth. Growth management is in no way an attempt to stop growth; rather it influences the amount, rate, location, environmental effects, and character of new growth. It encourages development that follows infrastructure improvements. Growth management typically involves predicting future land use, controlling density, preserving open space, enhancing environmental regulations, and influencing the pace, location, design, and character of development. A primary objective of growth management in the City of Kingsville is to ensure that new development does not precede full infrastructure improvements that serve the development. A secondary objective is to allow the City to complete infrastructure improvements necessary in areas already developed. A third objective should be to encourage reinvestment, redevelopment of, and/or “infill” development within, our existing and/or historic neighborhoods, business districts and industrial areas. This in turn will build the tax base that pays for the maintenance, improvement and expansion of the infrastructure and services provided by the City.



Additionally, the City will encourage practices consistent with sustainable growth. This term simply refers to growth that can be sustained over time. Sustainable growth encourages development types that exemplify superior site planning and design excellence that minimize adverse environmental impacts on land, air and ground water. Developments should integrate into, and enhance, the existing community. These objectives are accomplished by working with

developers to create quality design within the development including but not limited to mixed uses within neighborhoods, creating connectivity within neighborhoods to existing and future neighborhoods, through streets, sidewalks, hike and bike trails, parks, neighborhood activity centers, etc.

Part VI

Plan Implementation

Policy Review & Amendment

To ensure that the Plan remains a relevant and effective guide for decision-makers, periodic evaluations of the plans goals and policies should be performed. These periodic evaluations should be conducted every three to five years, dependent upon the economic climate and rate of development, and should consider the following:

- Documented and realized progress in implementing the Plan;
- Changes in conditions that form the basis of the Plan;
- Community support for the Plan's goals and policies; and
- Changes in State or federal laws that affect the City's tools for Plan implementation.

The review process should encourage the correlation of this plan with the City's Master Plan and other adopted plans and ordinances of the City.

Development Regulations

On a day-to-day basis, the development regulations (zoning and subdivision regulations) are the most important tools for Plan implementation. This Plan, the Master Plan and all growth related goals are realized through countless decisions regarding individual development projects. Because the neither this Plan, nor the City's Master Plan, carries the force of law, the City must carry out many of the Plan policies through its subdivision and zoning authority. Updates to

these development regulations should be consistent with this plan and the Master Plan to ensure that the goals, policies and recommendations are properly and effectively carried out.

Incentives

Incentives should be utilized where appropriate to assist in the implementation of the Plan. The City has been resourceful in past developments by using existing in-kind resources to incent or assist in the development of the City. This approach is prudent given the economic times and can be beneficial to future development initiatives on an as needed basis. In addition to the utilization of the City's existing resources, several state enabled incentive programs are available. The utilization of these programs are dependent upon the type of development, but the most common incentives utilized are as follows:

Tax Abatement [Tax Code ch. 312]

A tax abatement is an agreement between a taxpayer and a taxing unit that exempts all or part of the increase in the value of the real property and/or tangible personal property from taxation for a period not to exceed 10 years. The City of Kingsville has adopted guidelines and criteria that must be met in order to be considered for the tax abatement program. Additional information pertaining to this program can be found in the City's Legal and Planning & Development Services office.

Chapter 380 Economic Development Programs [LGC ch. 380]

Chapter 380 Economic Development Agreements are a tool to be used to spur economic development throughout the State of Texas. This development incentive typically takes the form of property tax abatements, loans or grants, commitments for infrastructure, or payments of portions of the sales tax generated by the project. Incentives between the City and the developer occur on a case by case basis and in most cases are dependent upon development type, scale and other factors.

Neighborhood Empowerment Zone [LGC ch. 378]

A Neighborhood Empowerment is a designated area within a municipality that is created to

promote one or more of the following: affordable housing; an increase in economic development; an increase in the quality of social services, education or public safety; or the rehabilitation of affordable housing in the zone.

TIF (Tax Increment Financing) [Tax Code ch. 311]

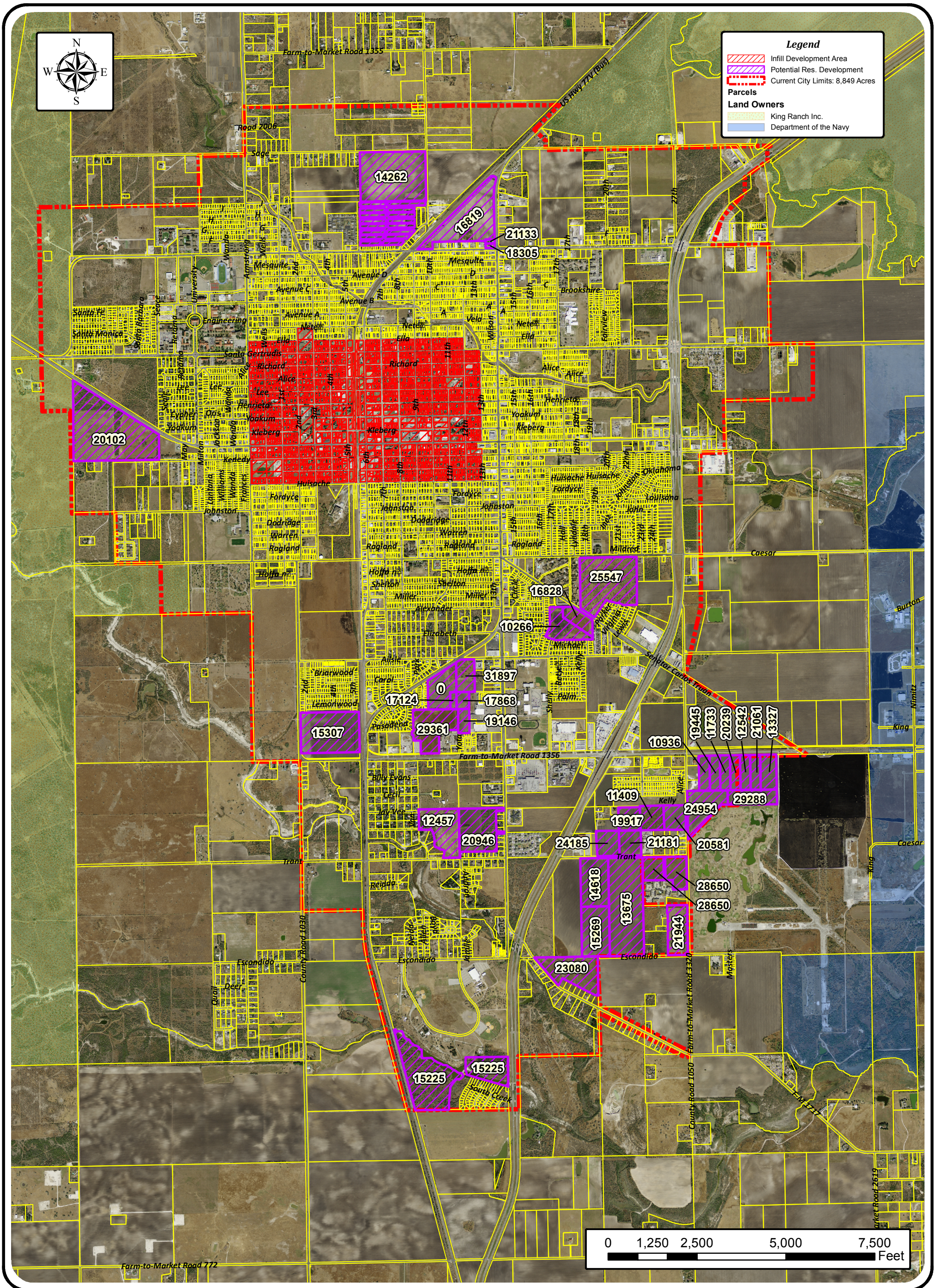
TIF is an economic development tool which encourages the redevelopment of blighted areas, conservation areas and economic development areas. TIF allows future property taxes generated by a new development to be used to pay for the construction of public infrastructure, site clearance and related project expenses. TIF is based on the premise that there will be an increase in the value of real property, new jobs and other economic activity that will generate new tax revenue to the municipality; and, that these new taxes can be used to enable the desired redevelopment.

Appendix A

Comprehensive Housing Plan Plan Implementation Program


- Adoption by the Planning & Zoning Commission & City Commission of the Comprehensive Housing Plan via Resolution. (2012)
- Adoption by ordinance all necessary amendments to ensure quality design requirements for all new development as well as redevelopment initiatives. This will provide the necessary codification to provide policy for design elements that will encourage a sustainable high quality of life. (2012)
- Facilitate meetings with local and regional members of the development community for outreach and education regarding the future plans and development needs in order to carry out the Comprehensive Housing Plan. (2012)
- Facilitate meetings with local and regional non-profit service organizations, i.e. Habitat for Humanity, for outreach and education regarding the future plans and development needs in order to carry out the Comprehensive Housing Plan. (2012-2013)
- City Commission and staff shall begin to identify an action plan for creating funding for capital improvement projects to enhance existing infrastructure while also taking into account walkability and beautification of existing neighborhoods and public areas. This must be a partnership of the residents and the City to identify resident driven projects. (2012-2014)
- Annual review of the Plan to ensure consistency and relevancy with the current development patterns. Possible additions and amendments shall be identified at this time. This shall be performed annually up to the completion of the implementation of the Plan.
- Annual progress assessments shall be performed prior to budget preparation to identify progress and to identify budget proposals to achieve plan goals for the upcoming budget year.

Potential Residential Development Sites -- City of Kingsville



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 Date: 1/24/2012
 Note:

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