Introduction

The City of Weslaco, in Rio Grande Valley of Texas, is preparing for the future and its anticipated growth in the development of the Weslaco Comprehensive Plan. The City, approximately 14 square miles, is located along US Highway 83 and Farm Road 88 (Mile 5 West or Texas Ave.) in south central Hidalgo County. Weslaco has grown from a small farming community to an expanding *All America City*. Also known as "America's Birdland", Weslaco has a number of "hotspots" for the birding enthusiast, drawing tourists from around the world. With a growing population, economic opportunities, increased land base and great natural resources, the *City of Weslaco Comprehensive Plan* will ensure the City continues to grow and be prepared for the future.

The Comprehensive Plan is an official public document that serves as the guide for policy decisions relating to the physical, social, and economic growth of the community. Developed in a multi-stage process, it provides the vision, goals, objectives, and actions necessary to direct the City's progress over the next twenty years. The Plan begins with an assessment of the opportunities and challenges facing the City looks at the physical character of the City and how it might change through actions that lead to practical results. It is highly important that the citizens' needs and aspirations identified in the Plan be balanced with the primary roles and duties of the City in providing mandatory and essential city services.

A Comprehensive Plan allows a city to proactively manage its growth and development rather than reacting to development proposals on a case by case basis without considering the desires and long term vision of the community. The Plan will result in a series of goals and policies that, ideally, will guide the City in administering development regulations; in guiding reinvestment and redevelopment efforts. The Plan also provides a means of coordinating the actions of many different departments and divisions within the City. The Plan provides the guide for the City's future development. The Future Land Use Map, an essential part of the Comprehensive Plan, provides the "blue print" for future growth of the City, directing land use and development decisions based upon the collective long range vision of the City. The Future Land Use Map is not a Zoning Map; however, zoning should be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan becomes the legal means of support for the Planning and Zoning Commission to allow or refuse a zoning change or development. Should the zoning change or proposed land use not be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and the Commission feels that the change would be in the best interest of the City, the Comprehensive Plan would have to be revised through public process to reflect proposed changes.

The Comprehensive Plan is the principal part of the City's overall, ongoing long range planning process. Approval of the Comprehensive Plan by the City Commission represents an important first step toward achieving the City's stated goals and actions. This Plan should not be considered a static document. It is a continuous process to gather and evaluate information and to make informed decisions based upon constantly changing conditions. The Plan should be regularly reviewed, revised and updated as needed to maintain its applicability to current conditions and established priorities. At a minimum, the entire Plan should be revisited every five years to ensure that it continues to reflect the true values and direction of the community. While Weslaco's Comprehensive Plan should be flexible enough to respond to changing needs, the community should remain steadfast in its vision and support for the goals contained in the Plan.

The Plan

The Plan is divided into eleven sections; Introduction, Vision and Goals, Land Use, Annexation, Transportation, Neighborhoods and Housing, Community Facilities, Historic Preservation, Parks and Recreation, Urban Design, and Implementation. The **Introduction** includes a brief description of the City

and its history, discussion of recent focus group interviews, and base study information including population and City character studies.

The **Vision and Goals** chapter establishes the overall vision for the City and specific goals to attain that vision.

The **Land Use** chapter includes a summary of the key issues regarding land use derived through observation and community input, a set of goals, objectives and specific actions to address these issues, a discussion of current land uses in the City, and proposed future land uses and character. This chapter will also include discussions on neighborhoods and housing as well as community facilities. An overview of neighborhoods and their connections in the city will be provided as well as a general inventory of housing stock within each neighborhood. Community facilities will be inventoried and recommendations made for future needs based on projected populations and future land uses.

The **Annexation** chapter describes the process, requirements and responsibilities of annexation. Tracts are identified as high, medium or low priority for annexation based on set criteria. Tracts that can be immediately annexed and those requiring a Three Year Plan are also identified.

The **Transportation** chapter discusses Weslaco on a regional and local level in terms of traffic movements and generators, discusses roadway classifications, provides a summary of key issues, sets forth a set of goals, objectives and actions to address the issues, and develops a Future Thoroughfare Plan for the City.

The **Urban Design and Historic Preservation** chapter develops a series of urban design policies and guidelines based on input from citizens and the vision and goals of the community. Recommendations are provided along with graphic representations of standards and improvements. Historic structures in the City will be inventoried and recommendations for preservation will be provided.

The **Parks and Recreation** chapter provides a summary of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan already developed by the City in May 2007.

The **Implementation** chapter discusses the importance of the Plan, means of updating it, roles of the different responsible parties in using, following and updating the Plan, and a discussion of the capital improvements program. A summary spreadsheet of the objectives and actions is provided at the end of the chapter.

Background

An essential part of developing the Plan for Weslaco's future involves understanding its past. The City has evolved over time with history defining land uses for the development of the City. Understanding the past and current trends helps to define Weslaco's future.

History

In 1904, the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexican Railroad reached the Rio Grande Valley, and developers soon arrived to establish permanent towns. Lands were cleared of cactus and brush, and residents lived in tents while their homes were being built. One of these developers, and founder of the City of Weslaco, was the W. E. Stewart Land Company, from which the name of the City is derived. Land was purchased around Donna and Mercedes. The Couch brothers soon approached Stewart and purchased approximately 320 acres of land and began to develop the City of Weslaco. Ed Couch and R.L. Reeves took on the responsibility of continuing to build the town. Many landmarks in the City and neighboring cities are named after these gentlemen.

Weslaco's economy has traditionally been built on agriculture. With rich and fertile soils, and an ideal climate, the selling of fruits and vegetables soon became the major source of income for the City. The Texsun Juice and Canning Company, a collection of several of the Valley's citrus associations, became one of the main attractions of Weslaco. The Texsun Juice and Canning Company brought many new residents to Weslaco up until the late seventies and early eighties. As agricultural technologies improved however, farming began to shift towards crops that required more machines and fewer laborers. The Texsun Company began to lose business. Nonetheless, Texsun today is still a popular brand of juice under the Texas Citrus Exchange.

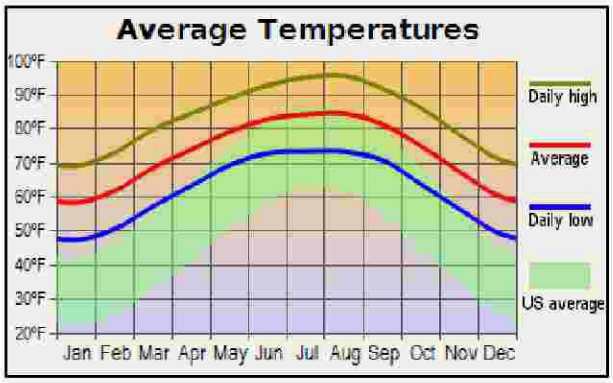
In 1921, a municipal ordinance declared that land to the north of the railroad tracks would be designated for industry and Hispanic residents and businesses, while land to the south of the tracks was reserved for Anglo residents and businesses. Weslaco, in a sense, developed as two separate cities: "Mexican town" to the north, and "American town" to the south. Streets north of the tracks had Spanish names, business was generally conducted in Spanish, and a school was established for Mexican children. To the south, streets were named after northern states. Principally, Weslaco's industrial areas are located north of the Expressway 83. The north and south distinction of street names is visible with Los Torritos, Llano Grande, and Calle de Garza to the north, and Oklahoma, Nebraska and Louisiana to the south. But today, the City is united, no longer separated by the rail lines. The City of Weslaco achieved "All America City" status in 2002, and continues striving to be the best and offer the best to its residents. (Source: The Handbook of Texas Online: www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online, *Texas Small Town History-Weslaco*, Robert Hines, 2006)

Climate

Much of the planning for a community is dependent on its climate. Warmer climates need to be planned for differently than colder climates, dry ones differently from wet climates. Knowledge of Weslaco's climate will help in making planning decisions for the future.

Temperature

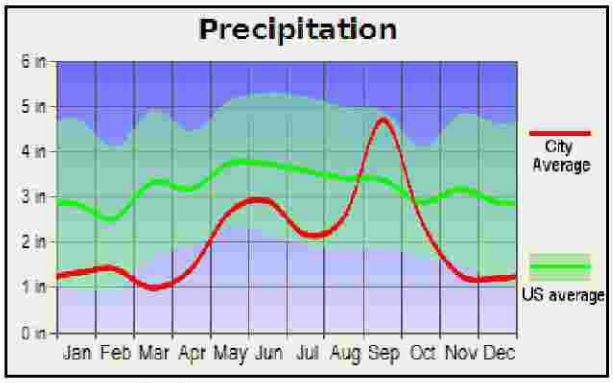
The average daily high, average overall, and average daily low temperature for each month in Weslaco is depicted in the adjacent graph. The yearly average is in the mid 70's. Actual temperatures reach the upper 90's, even 100's in the summer, and as low as the upper 40's in the winter. The intense heat of the summer months is therefore a consideration in planning for the future, particularly when planning for community facilities, urban design, and parks and recreation.



Source: www.city-data.com

Precipitation

The average level of precipitation in Weslaco is lower than that of the US. Precipitation varies throughout the year in Weslaco, with monthly precipitation of one inch to almost five inches. The US monthly average ranges from three to four inches of precipitation. Highest precipitation levels in



Source: www.city-data.com

Weslaco occur in September (almost five inches), and lowest occur in March with just one inch of precipitation. Precipitation, unlike temperature will not factor as heavily in the overall planning for Weslaco.

Demographics

Understanding the demographics and demographic trends of a community provides insight into the community's needs and the direction of the Plan. Population trends and projections help in planning the community as do the age trends of the community, race and ethnicity, and educational levels. A growing older population has a different set of current and future needs than a younger population. An ethnically diverse community may have different needs than a homogenous community and provides a different set of challenges for planning for the future. Observing the demographic trends, therefore is an essential part of planning for the unique needs of Weslaco.

Population

Observing historical population trends help to project future populations for Weslaco. Population estimates for Weslaco are available from the US Census Bureau. Table 1 illustrates historical population and population change for Weslaco and Hidalgo County, as well as Weslaco's contribution to the Hidalgo County population. This information helps give an indication of how fast or slow Weslaco is growing in comparison to other Hidalgo County cities and how it is contributing to Hidalgo County's growth.

TABLE 1
Historical Population Estimates
Weslaco and Hidalgo County

	CITY OF WESLACO		WESLACO ETJ	HIDALGO COUNTY		City population as % of County Population
Year	**Population**	**% Change**	**Population (estimate)**	**Population**	**%Change**	
1930	4,879			77,004		6.3
1940	6,883	41.1		106,059	37.7	6.4
1950	7,514	9.2		160,446	51.3	4.7
1960	15,649	108.2		180,904	12.8	8.7
1970	15,313	2.2		181,535	0.3	8.4
1980	19,331	26.2		283,229	56.1	6.8
1990	21,877	13.2		383,545	35.4	5.7
2000	26,935	23.1	27,370	569,463	33.21	4.0
2005	31,442	16.7	31,941	678,652	15.4	4.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The above table shows how Weslaco has grown over time. The largest increase in population occurred between 1950 and 1960 where the City's population more than doubled, a result of annexation that brought lands north of 1st street into the City. Another sharp increase in population occurred between

1970 and 1980, as more land was annexed into the City. Between 1990 and 2000 the population increased yet again. The expanding Knapp Medical Center complex and the agricultural research facilities of Texas A & M University would have brought new residents into Weslaco. Hidalgo County's population has also been steadily growing, with a significant increase in population between 1980 and 1990 of over 100 percent. The least amount of increase occurred between 1960 and 1970 with an increase of only 631 people. The 2005 Census data shows that both Weslaco and the county populations are increasing at a fairly consistent rate. From the percentage of City to County data, it would appear that Weslaco, although continuing to grow, is probably not growing as fast as other Valley cities in Hidalgo County, particularly in the past ten to fifteen years. Annexations in Weslaco were strictly voluntary. Population increases in Weslaco, therefore, were a result of voluntary annexations as well as expanding families and people moving to Weslaco. Other Valley cities have annexed territory more aggressively in the past ten years hence it would appear that they are growing faster than Weslaco. An annexation strategy for Weslaco has been developed and is part of this Comprehensive Plan. Future population estimates based on land development and annexation are available in the Land Use Chapter and the Annexation Chapter.

Weslaco's ETJ population also provides an indication of the potential increase in Weslaco's future population.

The 2000 Census data shows a total of 89 blocks surrounding the city limits. These blocks make up a total area of approximately 7.8 square miles with a population of 6,694 people. Applying this density ratio of 858 persons per square mile to the ETJ area, this results in an approximate 2000 ETJ population of 27,370. Assuming similar growth rates between 2000 and 2005 for the city limits and ETJ, the approximate 2005 ETJ population is 31,941, almost equivalent to the city limits population.

The City of Weslaco actually serves a population much larger than the population within the city limits. As the ETJ estimates show, the ETJ population is perhaps as large as the current population of Weslaco. There are many people who live outside the City who benefit from city services.

Population and Age

Studying population and age data is a way of determining the needs of the future population. A growing young population will have different future needs than a growing senior population. Table 2 provides data on 2000 population by age for Weslaco.

TABLE 2
Population by Age, 1990, 2000
Weslaco

Age	1990 Population	Percent of Total	2000 Population	Percent of Total
0-4	1,803	8.3	2,550	9.5
5-9	1,979	9.0	2,437	9.0
10-14	2,045	9.3	2,231	8.3
15-19	2,022	9.2	2,158	8.0
20-24	1,545	7.1	1,861	6.9
25-34	3,002	13.7	3,826	14.2
35-44	2,558	11.7	3,162	11.7
45-54	1,659	7.6	2,710	10.1
55-59	817	3.8	971	3.6
60-64	856	3.9	953	3.5
65-74	1,898	8.7	2,018	7.5
75-84	1,208	5.5	1,447	5.4
85+	485	2.2	611	2.3
Total	**21,877**	**100.0**	**26,935**	**100.0**

Source: US Census Bureau

The table above shows some of the trends to be aware of when shaping the future of Weslaco. There is a large young population in the City, with the largest age group being young children under the age of five. Weslaco's future should therefore include planning for this young population, for young families and young professionals, finding ways to keep them educated, employed, involved, and entertained, within the City.

Population Projections

Population projections provide a means of forecasting future populations. This allows for informed and pro-active planning of a city, ensuring the population is adequately served. Population trends also allow cities to gauge, if left to continue, how trends affect population growth or decline. This provides the city with the needed information to make knowledgeable choices for the future. Population projections can be derived from several means, and there are different agencies that provide their projections for population. The following table, Table 3, provides a comparison of different agency population projections for Weslaco.

TABLE 3
Population Projections
Weslaco

Year	Texas Water Development Board	UT Pan America DISC		WSA	
			Step Down	Linear Regression	Exponential Growth
2000	26,935	26,935	26,935	26,935	26,935
2005			26,935	29,464	29,887
2007		32,182			
2010	30,878		31,127	31,993	33,162
2012		37,012			
2015			35,612	34,522	36,797
2020	35,485		45,391	37,051	40,830
2025			50,658	39,580	45,304
2030	40,645		56,252	42,109	50,270
2040	46,229				
2050	53,328				
2060	58,584				

The Texas State Data Center does not provide population projections below the county level. However, the county projections can form the basis for projections for the city. Population forecasts can be developed for the city through a variety of methods and techniques. **Figure 1 – Population Projections Weslaco,** displays alternative projections for the city based on differing methods and techniques. The alternative projections are as follows:

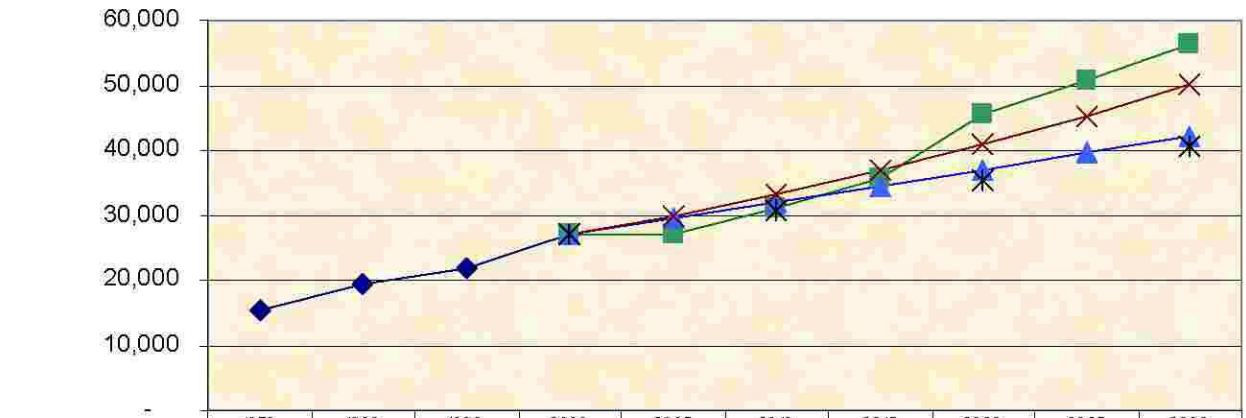
Step down method is a ratio-share technique, where a ratio is established between the county's population and the city's. Through maintaining the City's proportional relationship to the county from the 2000 Census (4.73%) the population of Weslaco would equal 56,252 in 2030. This method shows the highest growth.

Linear regression is a trend extrapolation technique that aggregates data from the past to project future values. This technique produced a projection of 42,109 in 2030, and suggests that the city's share of the county's population will gradually decline.

Exponential Growth is a trend extrapolation technique that produced the projection 50,270 in the year 2030.

As to which projection is the most appropriate and reasonable forecast for the future, consideration must be given to factors that will influence future population trends in the Weslaco area including economic forecasts, employment, build-out capacities, and possible annexations of developed areas. The Exponential Growth method provides an almost average population value between the Step Down and the Linear Regression methods. This may be a more accurate population projection for the city.

FIGURE 1
Population Projections



	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Historical	15,313	19,331	21,877	26,935						
Step Down				26,935	26,935	31,127	35,612	45,391	50,658	56,252
Linear Regression				26,935	29,464	31,993	34,522	37,051	39,580	42,109
Exponential Growth				26,935	29,887	33,162	36,797	40,830	45,304	50,270
TWDB				26,935		30,878		35,485		40,645

Race and Ethnicity

Weslaco's population is becoming increasingly diverse, a trend that is visible in many of the Rio Grande Valley cities. Although the majority of the population is of Hispanic origin, the racial diversity is expanding. Studying the City's racial and ethnic make-up and demographic trends allows the city to prepare for its future. An increasingly diverse community will have increasingly diverse needs. Table 4 presents Weslaco's racial and ethnic composition. As the majority of Weslaco's population is of Hispanic origin, it is treated separately to account for the different ethnicities of people of Hispanic origin. There has been an increase in the number of people of Hispanic origin in Weslaco from 1990 to 2000 by four percent, and a decrease in the "white" population as well during this same time period.

Increasing ethnic diversity is visible across the Unites States and around the world. The majority of ethnic groups showed an increase in overall representation in Weslaco as well. The percentage of white population in Weslaco as a percent of the total population has decreased. The American Indian/ Alaska Native, Filipino, Asian Indian and Chinese populations have increased in Weslaco. This trend is visible in many Valley cities.

TABLE 4
Race and Ethnicity, 1990 and 2000
Weslaco

	1990		2000		
RACE	**POPULATION**	**% OF TOTAL**	**POPULATION**	**% OF TOTAL**	**% CHANGE**
White	17,379	79.4	20,179	74.9	-4.5
Black or African American	38	0.2	72	0.3	0.1
American Indian/ Alaska Native	43	0.2	133	0.5	0.3
Asian					
Chinese	19	0.1	30	0.1	0.0
Filipino	29	0.1	183	0.7	0.6
Japanese	9	0.0	5	0.0	0.0
Asian Indian	20	0.1	49	0.2	0.1
Korean	6	0.0	9	0.0	0.0
Vietnamese	0	0.0	14	0.0	0.0
Other Asian	21	0.1	18	0.1	0.0
Pacific Islander					
Hawaiian	0	0.0	13	0.1	0.1
Samoan	0	0.0	2	0.0	0.0
Other Race	4,313	19.8	5,638	20.9	1.1
Two or more races			590	2.2	2.2
TOTAL	**21,877**	**100.0**	**26,935**	**100.0**	
Non-Hispanic/Latino	**4,443**	**20.3**	**4,375**	**16.2**	**-4.1**
White	4,275	19.5	3,961	14.7	-4.8
Black or African American	22	0.1	32	0.1	0.0
American Indian/ Alaska Native	22	0.1	26	0.1	0.0
Asian Alone	94	0.4	298	1.1	0.7
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander			1	0.0	0.0
Some other race	30	0.1	15	0.0	-0.1
Two or more races			42	0.2	0.2
Hispanic Origin	**17,434**	**79.7**	**22,560**	**83.7**	**4.0**
White	13,104	59.9	16,218	60.2	0.3
Black or African American	16	0.0	40	0.2	0.2
American Indian/ Alaska Native	21	0.0	107	0.4	0.4
Asian Alone	10	0.0	10	0.0	0.0
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander			14	0.0	0.0
Some other race	4,283	19.7	5,623	20.9	1.2
Two or more races			548	2.0	2.0

Education

Weslaco Independent School District (WISD) has consistently scored well in its TAKS tests. Education is a crucial factor in Weslaco's long term development. The number of schools and the quality of education help shape the future of the community. Weslaco is an academically strong community, with 20 schools including eleven elementary schools, four middle schools, three high schools and two alternative schools within the Weslaco Independent School District (WISD). There are two private schools and two charter schools as well in Weslaco. For the past eight years, WISD has been ranked as Recognized by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The quality of education in Weslaco also has been improving year after year. In comparing the 2004 Accountability Ratings from the TEA, with those of 2005, there are schools that have gone from Academically Acceptable ratings to Exemplary. In 2006 Weslaco had three Exemplary schools, 11 Recognized schools, and two Academically Acceptable schools. Weslaco's schools rate far higher than those in neighboring cities of Mercedes and Donna, which have no Exemplary schools, one and two recognized schools respectively, and five and 15 Academically Acceptable schools respectively. Weslaco's school rankings are making it a known name for academic excellence in the Valley. WISD boundaries, however, extend beyond the city of Weslaco, going up to M14½N to the north, levees to the south, M1W to the east, and M7Wto the west (shared with Donna). Based on information from the WISD Transportation Division, approximately one third of students using WISD school bus services live within the city limits and the remaining are outside the city limits.

There are a number of Continuing Education facilities located in Weslaco. The Mid Valley Campus of the South Texas College (STC) is located in Weslaco and since 1993 has been the Rio Grande Valley's fastest growing institute of higher education. The College offers Associate of Applied Science degrees and certificate programs. The South Texas Vocational Technical Institute provides training in areas such as business and computers, health care, child care development, legal assistance, massage therapy and general vocational training. The Career Technology Institute also has a Weslaco campus, and offers Valley residents an opportunity to obtain a certification in areas such as computer office technology, medical billing, and medical and nursing assistant. Programs are designed to get students into the work force quickly with the required skills. There are approximately 3,100 students attending classes at STC's Mid Valley Campus in Weslaco (2007 figures). There are additionally more that 1,000 high school students (2007 figures) concurrently enrolled to earn high school and college credits simultaneously. Of the 3,100 students, approximately half are from Weslaco, the rest coming from around the Mid Valley area. Weslaco also has the Valley Grande Institute for Academic Studies, a private institution specializing in preparing students to enter the medical and healthcare professions.

Census data provides information on educational attainment for Weslaco. The following table shows educational attainment for the population 25 years and older. Both the 1990 and 2000 figures show that the majority of Weslaco's 25 year and older population have less than a 9th grade education. The percentage, however has decreased showing that the percentage of the population achieving higher education was greater in 2000 compared to 1990.

TABLE 5
Educational Attainment: Population 25+ Years
City of Weslaco

	1990 POPULATION	% OF POPULATION (25+ YEARS)	2000 POPULATION	% OF POPULATION (25+ YEARS)	% CHANGE
Less than 9th grade	4,860	39.0	4,748	30.0	-0.9
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	1,183	9.5	2,211	14.0	4.5
High School graduate	2,762	22.2	3,515	22.2	0.0
Some college, no degree	1,689	13.5	2,685	17.0	3.5
Associate degree	420	3.3	498	3.2	-0.1
Bachelor's degree	1,107	8.9	1,451	9.1	0.2
Graduate or professional degree	446	3.6	682	4.3	0.7

Source: US Census 1990, 2000

Employment

Weslaco has a number of major employers that draw employees from all around the Mid-Valley and Delta Regions. In fact, employees of businesses within Weslaco are drawn from a radius of 60 miles around Weslaco. As such, Weslaco's daytime population is significantly higher that the actual population of Weslaco. This daytime population also impacts dollars spent in Weslaco. Some of Weslaco's major employers are listed in the table below, Table 6 – Major Employers, Weslaco. Some of the major employers will be further discussed in the Community Facilities Chapter of the Plan.

TABLE 6
Major Employers, Weslaco

Employer	Product	Employees
Weslaco ISD	Education	2817
Knapp Medical Center	Hospital	850-1000
Wal-Mart	Retail-Department Store	260
WoodCrafters	Manufacturing	592
International Wood	Manufacturing	206
Foremost Paving	Construction	168
City of Weslaco	Government	351
HEB Westgate	Retail Grocery	204
Payne Auto Group	Retail Auto	389
South Texas College	Education	214
HEB North Texas	Retail Grocery	203
Valley Grande Manor	Nursing Home	161
Texas A&M University–Kingsville	Research Center	180
US Border Patrol	Government	150
Foremost Paving Inc.	Contractor	150
USDA	Research Center	124
KRGV-TV5	Communications	112
Summit Contracting	Contractors	100
Torres Espino Cabinets	Wood Finisher	120
Valley Grande Manor	Nursing Home	115
John Knox Village	Retirement	130
Texas A&M	Research	

Source: Weslaco Chamber of Commerce, Weslaco Economic Development Corporation

Existing Character

To begin the planning process, existing conditions within Weslaco were identified, both the tangible and intangible elements that make up the City. Existing land uses were identified as well as visual appearance, defined neighborhoods, areas of significance or importance, areas in transition or growth, areas in decline, and factors influencing development or factors that constrain development, all of which play a role in defining the City.

Using many of the elements described above, **Figure 1- Character Map** was created. This map shows current land uses in a highly generalized manner, not parcel/lot specific, overlaid over a Year 2005 aerial photograph of the entire City. These identified areas represent areas of similarity, be that land use, or density or the "experience" one has while moving through that space. Physical and perceived barriers are also identified. This type of map provides a clear understanding of the city overall, not necessarily tied to individual parcels and uses, but a more holistic approach of what is happening in various parts of the City. This type of analysis also provides a means of discussing desired future character–expanding on desired areas and experiences, improving or changing other areas that are less desirable or that offer potential for creating something more dynamic or desired.

The Authority to Plan

Though Texas state law does not require all municipalities to maintain a comprehensive plan, cities that adopt zoning regulations must do so "in accordance with a comprehensive plan" (Texas Local Government Code § 211.004).

For purposes of "promoting public health, safety and welfare," the Texas Local Government Code indicates that a comprehensive 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
- Be used to coordinate and guide the establishment of development regulations (§ 213.002)

The Comprehensive Plan is the official public document that gives members of the Planning and Zoning and City Commission the authority to accept or reject development plans based on their conformance with development policies, goals and objectives, and the future land use map defined in the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is, however, designed to be evaluated and amended regularly to maintain its applicability as the issues and priorities of the community evolve.

- *Minor Amendments:* Minor amendments to the Comprehensive Plan should be made, at a minimum, once a year, and preferably once every six months. Minor adjustments allow the plan to be flexible to respond to changing needs while maintaining the vision and support for the core goals and objectives contained in the plan. Citizens should have an opportunity to suggest possible amendments for consideration. Again, any amendments made should be in keeping with the vision and core goals and objectives, ensuring the integrity of the plan and the work gone into it are not lost.
- *Major Amendments:* The entire Comprehensive Plan should be revisited every five years, at minimum, for a "fresh look" at key issues, goals, actions, and policies. At that time, the plan should be revised as needed to ensure that it still reflects the true values and direction of the community.

Planning Process

The success of any plan is dependent on the support it has from its community. In developing the Weslaco Comprehensive Plan, opportunity was given throughout the planning process to receive input and feedback from the citizens of Weslaco. At the start of the process, focus group interviews were held to solicit input from the community on the "state of the city". The consultant team then delivered a detailed analysis of the City, a series of maps depicting existing character and land use, as well as observations and suggestions for the future direction of the City. Citizens and stakeholders had the opportunity to provide input and suggestions, and voice concerns regarding the current state of the City and their desires for the future. The chapters were made available through the City's website, and on display at various City facilities with means of providing feedback. At the end of the process, the final draft of the Plan was displayed again for public input and comment. The entire planning process is focused on the public ensuring support from the community and monitoring toward its implementation.