

## Introduction

The Central City element reflects Kerrville's historical, cultural and commercial roots. The central area includes the historic downtown, Guadalupe River, River Hills Mall, and the surrounding commercial and institutional areas. Its prosperity and integrity affect the surrounding community and, to some extent, all of Kerr County. The Central City element focuses on maintaining and improving the area's physical appearance and strengthening its role as the gathering place for the community.

## Plan Update Overview:

In its review and update of this plan, the 2007/08 Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) reviewed the 2002 plan issue statements and concurred the statements remain relevant. The CPUC developed the following vision statement for Central City to provide context for its work

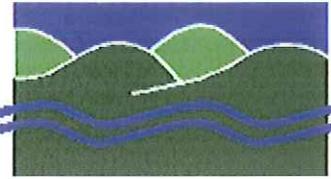
## Vision Statement

- Kerrville's Central City is and should remain the retail, cultural, governmental and psychological heart of Kerrville.
- The river corridor development should allow for recreational and non-motorized traffic to connect the City's residential and other business section to Central City. There should be effective river corridor crossings that allow movement by motorized and non-motorized traffic
- The historic downtown is unique in architectural style and this should be maintained as a defining characteristic of the area. The historic downtown has been and should remain the cultural center of the City.
- The south side of the Central City should continue to provide both regional commercial and medical services.
- The eastern section should continue to serve as a unique commercial element for the community.
- The northwestern sections bring the strength of business services, retail and multi-family residential to balance the Central City and should continue to serve that purpose.

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*Historic structures and culturally significant places mean those areas and structures that reflect the city's history - commercially, culturally and religiously.*

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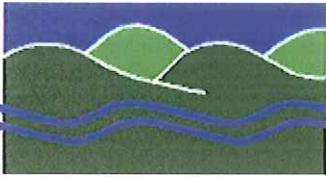


## Original Plan Overview:

In the 2002 Plan, area residents and the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee identified the following issues in its construction of this link of the Comprehensive Plan.

- 1. Relationship between development and the Guadalupe River.** The Guadalupe River has the potential to bring the community together. The natural beauty of the river combined with its historical importance to Kerrville makes its incorporation into future development plans a necessity.
- 2. An Identity for Central City.** Central City is a composition of several areas, each with a distinctly different character. Each area plays an important role in making the Central City a focal point for Kerrville. The relationship between these areas is crucial to local quality of life and the establishment of a cohesive identity.
- 3. Preserve and enhance the historic downtown.** Kerrville's history and culture should be preserved and enhanced. Efforts to enhance historic structures and culturally significant places must be expanded to ensure that those areas continue to reflect the character of the community as it evolves.
- 4. Central City as a destination.** This area represents the historic focal point for the community. The unique mix of the historic downtown, the scenic Guadalupe River, the commercial area surrounding River Hills Mall, the area along State Highway 27 (Junction Highway) from Schreiner University to the Five Points Intersection, and the area around Jefferson and Schreiner Streets east of Town Creek together represent an opportunity to create a dynamic and natural destination for both residents and visitors.
- 5. Accessibility to and within Central City.** Traveling easily to and within Central City is essential to the ability to attract visitors, because the surrounding residential areas are no longer within walking distance, an effort must be made to provide a variety of access options.
- 6. Implementation.** Issues are addressed through actions. Implementation involves a number of projects and programs that serve to eliminate barriers and build upon opportunities.

Guided by the Vision Statement, the CPUC sought to blend the original plan with recent history and current needs to create an updated plan for this essential area of town. This updated plan provides a Comprehensive set of action plans for Central City, and its historic downtown. Each action statement in this link can be achieved independently, or in combination as local leadership and community consensus develops to support its implementation.



## Goals, Objectives, Policies and Action Statements

The goals, objectives, policies, and action statements presented in the following pages of this link represent a combination of the best of the 2002 plan and the vision of the 2007/2008 CPUC.

- Goal 7.1: Preserve, protect, and enhance the natural amenities, visual identity and relationship of the Guadalupe River with Central City.
- Goal 7.2: Develop Central City with a unique identity that maintains and appreciates the strengths of its various areas.
- Goal 7.3: Preserve and enhance the historical and cultural resources of the Central City area.
- Goal 7.4: Enhance the retail, cultural, governmental and psychological character of the Central City to attract more residents of and visitors to Kerrville, making Central City the activity center and focal point of the community.
- Goal 7.5: Provide direct and sufficient transportation routes into and within the Central City area.
- Goal 7.6: Establish mechanisms for moving goals and objectives for Central City from vision to reality.

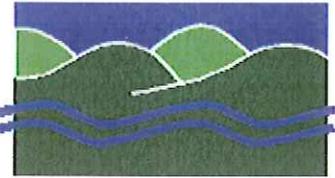
## Central City Character Areas

The 2007/2008 CPUC took the original character area map as a baseline and made three significant changes.

- Expanded historic downtown to include a larger area, to serve a larger constituency.
- Combined the balance of Central City into an integrated character area, uniting its purpose as the regional center for the community.
- Ensured that the river, not connected to any area in the 2002 map, is integrated into the character areas, highlighting the importance of this resource to Kerrville's future.

### **GOAL 7.1: Preserve protect, and enhance the natural amenities, visual identity and the relationship of the Guadalupe River with Central City.**

- Objective A:** Allow the development of uses compatible with the riverside environment and Central City vision statement in the area contiguous with or in close proximity to the Guadalupe River.



**Objective B:** Integrate development and the natural features of the river as a cultural and recreational amenity of Central City.

**Policy:** *Use the Future Land Use Map to guide development in the River Corridor in Central City.*

**Action 7.1.1.** *Promote development of the river corridor within Central City in a way that builds upon the river as an amenity that promotes and encourages visitor traffic.*

- a. Encourage and promote commercial development along the river only to those uses that fully take advantage of the river as an amenity. Encourage dual entrance and pedestrian traffic on the river side of development.
- b. Ensure that accessory uses, such as parking, delivery areas and commercial trash receptacles are placed away from the river corridor or appropriately screened to minimize visibility from the river, Louise Hays Park and other public areas.

**Action 7.1.2.** *Maintain and improve the natural resources of the river in a manner that draws residents to the area, while respecting the environment.*

- a. Physically connect the Guadalupe River Corridor to the Central City and other areas within Kerrville by pathways for pedestrian and non – motorized traffic. Develop river corridor crossing for pedestrian and non – motorized traffic to unify Central City.
- b. Continue efforts to improve the water quality and the overall ecosystem that exists along the Guadalupe River.
- c. Consider construction alternatives other than concrete lined drainage ditches to enhance the visual resource that is the river.
- d. Enhance both sides of the waterfront, particularly near bridges and visual connections, to tie Central City together.

**GOAL 7.2:** *Develop Central City with a unique identity that maintains and appreciates the strengths of its various areas.*

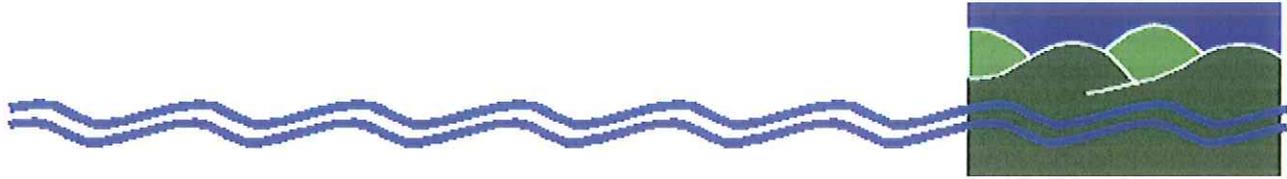


## Kerrville Comprehensive Plan

- Objective A:** Guided by the vision for Central City, use and integrate the unique combination of historic and recent land uses within Central City.
- Objective B:** Provide balanced motorized and non – motorized traffic capability within Central City to increase visitor traffic for all areas and provide a sense of relaxed atmosphere in the historic downtown area.
- Objective C:** Create an aesthetic and physically appealing character in Central City that results in a unique destination for visitors.
- Objective D:** Promote design standards that enhance the character of the individual areas of Central City to strengthen the overall visitor appeal. Minimize exterior building and service elements that distract from the architectural strength of Central City.

**Policy:** *Apply City resources directly to the Central City and/ or indirectly provide Central City stake holders with the tools necessary to encourage redevelopment and sustained growth to achieve the vision set out in page 7-1.*

- Action 7.2.1. Develop and implement plans to strengthen the character and visitor attraction to the Central City area.*
- a. The City must develop a master plan for the Guadalupe River as it interacts with the Central City. Consideration should be given in the overall plan to elements already developed and proposed.
  - b. The City should develop and fund a street and sidewalk enhancement program for the Central City area to include lighting, paving materials, and signage in the Historic Downtown area that will distinguish it as a unique asset of Kerrville.
  - c. Design and fund enhanced river crossing paths for both vehicular and non-motorized traffic that will enhance safety and support future growth in the Central City area. This must be an essential element of the City/County/ State Transportation planning.



- d. In conjunction with historic downtown area business, continue to explore the possible conversion of a portion of the area to a pedestrian mall with areas for relaxation and entertainment
- e. Design and address funding for an overall parking and vehicle movement plan for Central City.
- f. Promote redevelopment through appropriate zoning provisions and development incentives throughout Central City to add density to areas surrounding historic downtown.

*Action 7.2.2. Develop a Design Template (See side for definition) for all of the character areas in Central City that will encourage new or redevelopment designs to form a cohesive, desirable theme that is recognizable as unique to Central City. Design templates should be developed with the input of all property owners and stakeholders involved.*

- a. Establish gateway treatments at the primary entrance points to the Central City.
- b. Create an incentive-based program to promote use of the design template for architectural design in Central City. Promote rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of vacant and underutilized structures in Central City.
- c. The City should consider street trees and other appropriate landscaping, where possible, along streets and within medians.
- d. Continue to install special sidewalk paving treatments such as stone or brick pavers that also meet accessibility standards.
- e. Encourage the installation of public art throughout Central City.
- f. Install decorative entrances to the Louise Hays Park and other public sites of significant interest to residents and visitors.

*A Design Template is a set of standards created to guide development and redevelopment of the City to be applied as that development or redevelopment occurs.*

*Consistent application of a well built Design Template will support property values and promote visual appeal within a specific area by providing an elevated threshold of development code enforcement in that area.*

*Elements of a Design Template may include standards for signage, building setbacks, maintenance of green space, or accessory uses, but can include elements of any of the development codes of the City. Specific elements of a Design Template can be tailored to accommodate unique characteristics and/or uses of the area it impacts. The process of creating a Design Template must ensure that stakeholders affected by its application participate in the creation of the design template impacting a specific area.*

*A Design Template may be embodied in a stand alone ordinance defining the impacted area, and the elements of its design standards; or a Design Template can be an amendment to an existing development code, defining the design elements for a specific zoning district.*



*Action 7.2.3 Coordinate public and private efforts to reduce elements that negatively impact the appearance of Central City.*

- a. Relocate utilities to other, less visible areas when possible and, where feasible, bury remaining lines.
- b. Amend the sign ordinance to reduce the negative visual impact of on-site business signs without impacting competition. Prohibit highway-style billboard signage in the Central City area.

*Action 7.2.4. Ensure that Central City stakeholders, civic leaders, business and property owners, and elected officials participate in preparation of design templates*

## **GOAL 7.3: Preserve and enhance the historical and cultural resources of the Central City.**

**Objective A:** Use the available tools to preserve the historic integrity of the Central City.

**Policy:** *Encourage the reuse of buildings and in-fill of vacant lots to enhance the entire area.*

*Action 7.3.1. Seek out opportunities for development and reinvestment in Central City that respect the historic integrity of the area.*

- a. Identify and encourage rehabilitation of historic structures to the extent practical.
- b. Modify building codes and other regulatory mechanisms so that they do not hinder historic preservation efforts. Enforce local regulations necessary to reasonably ensure public safety, circulation and the integrity of public right-of-way

*Action 7.3.2. The City should build upon existing resources and successes through incorporation of new programs that expand the role of historic preservation*

- a. Provide incentives to owners of historic properties to encourage preservation
- b. Encourage the establishment of a locally adopted historic overlay district with the consent of the property owners.



- c. Study the possibility of a designated national historic district.
- d. Investigate establishing Kerrville as a member of the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program with the Texas Historical Commission.

**GOAL 7.4: Enhance the retail, cultural, governmental and psychological character of the Central City to attract more residents and visitors to Kerrville, making Central City the activity center and focal point of the community.**

- Objective A:** Attract more entertainment and recreation uses to Central City by emphasizing art galleries, studios and restaurants.
- Objective B:** Celebrate Central City through special events and annual festivals to focus attention on the area.
- Objective C:** Encourage residential uses on the upper floors of commercial buildings within the Central City as well as high-density residential uses.

**Policy:** *Promote multiple uses within Central City to strengthen the area as a destination for visitors and residents.*

**Action 7.4.1.** *Actively seek out entertainment uses to the Central City area.*

- a. Encourage location of additional entertainment and recreational establishments such as sidewalk cafes, theaters, galleries, museums, bakeries, coffee shops, artist shops, studios and nighttime entertainment venues.
- b. Promote and partner in the reuse of the Arcadia Theater.

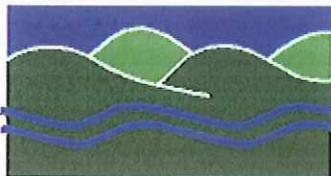
**Action 7.4.2.** *The City should seek creative public/private partnerships within the community to sponsor and/or facilitate festivals, concerts, and other civic activities within the Central City.*

- a. Encourage more community events in the Central City.

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*The CLG Program is a partnership that promotes historic preservation at the grassroots level. The CLG program seeks to develop and maintain local historic preservation programs that will influence the zoning and permitting decisions critical to preserving historic properties, and to ensure broad participation of local governments in the national historic preservation program.*

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- b. Continue support of, and encourage cooperation among the Kerrville Main Street Program, the Hill Country Museum, the Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Kerr Arts & Cultural Center and other organizations that promote commerce and tourism downtown. These stakeholders should cooperatively develop a market identity to increase tourism travel to the Kerrville area.

*Action 7.4.3 Encourage public institutions to locate or play a role in Central City.*

- a. Continue to promote the downtown as a regional center for government activities.
- b. Recognize and reinforce Central City's role as a major location for churches and related religious schools.
- c. Encourage the development of robust visitor lodging industry in Central City. Explore the possible construction of a meeting/convention facility in the Central City area or adjacent to it.

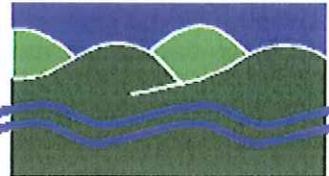
*Action 7.4.4. Encourage residential uses in existing buildings.*

- a. Implement an expanded incentive program for residential dwelling units in new/rehabilitated buildings either on upper floors of existing buildings or new buildings.
- b. Consider the feasibility of townhouse development within and adjacent to the Central City.
- c. Evaluate the opportunities to revitalize neighborhoods in or near Central City through reinvestment in public infrastructure and the provision of assistance for housing rehabilitation.

**GOAL 7.5: Provide direct and sufficient transportation access into and within the Central City area.**

**Objective A:** Encourage non – motorized traffic throughout Central City.

**Objective B:** Encourage and promote alternative forms of transportation to downtown destinations and areas around the Central City.



**Objective C:** Provide for adequate parking to meet the current peak demand and future needs of the Central City.

**Policy:** *Establish a variety of ways to and through Central City including walking, biking, public transit and automobile.*

**Action 7.5.1.** *Develop alternate transportation systems through Central City in order to encourage walking, and enhance the city experience on a pedestrian scale.*

- a. Identify, improve and mark bicycle routes throughout the community and tie them into downtown (refer to Link 8 - Parks and Recreation).
- b. Install bicycle racks throughout Central City to encourage bicycling as a convenient and reliable transportation option.
- c. Provide public or private transit opportunities between major destinations in Central City and strategic locations throughout the community and region.
- d. As hotel and other visitor lodging facilities increase, consider implementing a "trolley system" in the Central City area.

**Action 7.5.2.** *Parking must be addressed in such a way that it does not negatively impact downtown's unique qualities while satisfying current and projected parking demands.*

- a. Continue to encourage shared parking agreements between churches, businesses, government institutions, and other major downtown land uses.
- b. Construct more parking including publicly owned common parking areas. (According to plan in 7.2.1 (e))
- c. Promote access points and locate vehicular parking areas at mid block openings and behind buildings.
- d. Acquire a sufficient amount of property within the historic downtown or fringe to provide adequate garage parking to meet the demand for convenient parking of customers, downtown residents, business owners and employees.



## **GOAL 7.6: Establish mechanisms for moving goals and objectives for Central City from vision to reality.**

- Objective A:** Seek out funding sources for implementation of projects and programs within Central City.
- Objective B:** Propose design templates and zoning revisions of existing districts for Central City and Historic Downtown as guided by the vision set out in page 7-1.
- Objective C:** Expand grant and incentive programs and technical expertise to commercial property owners within the Central City for upgrading and renovating building facades.

**Policy:** *Determine and act upon projects and programs that will aid in enhancing Central City.*

**Action 7.6.1** *Take advantage of the series of special districts permitted through the State of Texas that allow for development and improvement of an area.*

- a. Establish a Public Improvement District (PID) encompassing Central City that will allow for development of improvements geared toward revitalization efforts.
- b. Establish a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone or Tax Abatement Reinvestment Zone in coordination with the PID to further bolster revitalization.

**Action 7.6.2.** *In coordination with public, private and nonprofit partners, utilize the various grants and loans available to assist in economic development, historic preservation, protection of natural resources, improvement of recreation areas, creation of quality housing and other issues related to Central City.*

- a. Consider use of transportation enhancement funds to improve the transportation system and streetscape within Central City.
- b. Utilize Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds
- c. Improve parks and recreational activity areas along the Guadalupe River through the Texas Parks and Wildlife funds.



*Action 7.6.3. Revise zoning regulations to more appropriately reflect the Vision for Central City, to improve efficiency of regulations related to the area, and to urge appropriate development activities.*

- a. Reduce the number of zoning districts and revise the zoning boundaries in Central City into broader districts based upon relationship to the overall area, in concert with the character areas set out in the Vision for Central City.
- b. Expand the range of uses within Central City to those that provide a unique and dynamic atmosphere.

*Action 7.6.4. Establish or expand programs to assist property/business owners with façade improvements and other physical improvements in the Central City.*

- a. Evaluate the package of incentives offered, and determine new incentive offers that will entice new development and redevelopment of buildings in the Central City area.
- b. Recommend expanding the involvement of local financial institutions to maintain a low-interest loan program for the revitalization of commercial buildings.

