

# City of El Campo

## Downtown Revitalization Plan



# CITY OF EL CAMPO DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN



## FOREWORD

This planning document presents the revitalization plan for downtown El Campo, Texas. This document was developed by Texas Target Communities (TTC) in partnership with the City of El Campo. The City of El Campo collaborated with Texas Target Communities in fall 2016 through the summer of 2017 to create a plan for revitalization of downtown El Campo. The purpose of the collaboration was to assess current community conditions, develop goals, objectives, and implementation strategies related to future development & growth strategies, through a public participatory process, in order to help guide the future growth of the City.

### Background of Texas Target Communities

The Texas Target Communities program is a high-impact service learning and community outreach program within Texas A&M University's Public Partnership and Outreach department of the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President. TTC partners with small communities across Texas to assist them with needs that would otherwise go unmet. TTC also serves as a "real world" learning laboratory for undergraduate and graduate students who collect data, provide analysis and recommendations. Since its inception, TTC has worked with over 50 communities to incorporate sustainable planning and design practices. TTC worked with the City, community stakeholders, and students on campus to develop a design and policy strategy to transform the downtown into a bustling marketplace.

### How to use it

The Revitalization Plan for Downtown El Campo is a planning document that provides guidance for the development of Downtown El Campo. This planning document includes an overview and analysis of the existing conditions in the City of El Campo and the El Campo Downtown Revitalization Area, a design proposal with vision, goals, and objectives for enhancing Downtown El Campo and a detailed implementation chapter for successful execution of the plan. As such, it may be used to:

- Assess and communicate existing community conditions;
- Serve as a rationale for revitalization in the downtown area;
- Guide professionals and technicians for implementation of the plan;
- Apply for funding opportunities.

## Organization of the Plan

This planning document provides a summary of the City of El Campo's Downtown Revitalization Plan. Chapter 1 presents the overview of downtown strategic planning area, downtown revitalization area, zoning ordinances, proposed land use updates, outline of the existing demographic conditions with a comparison to the city conditions. Chapter 2 discusses the planning process with the public participation, results from the visioning/survey process and an updated vision statement for the future of Downtown El Campo. Chapter 3 presents the master plan, the design inspiration, and construction phases for Downtown El Campo. Chapter 4 through 8 elaborates on five focus areas including businesses, housing, transportation, events, and public spaces. Finally, Chapter 9 discusses the action steps, priority schedule, and funding sources needed for the successful implementation of the project.

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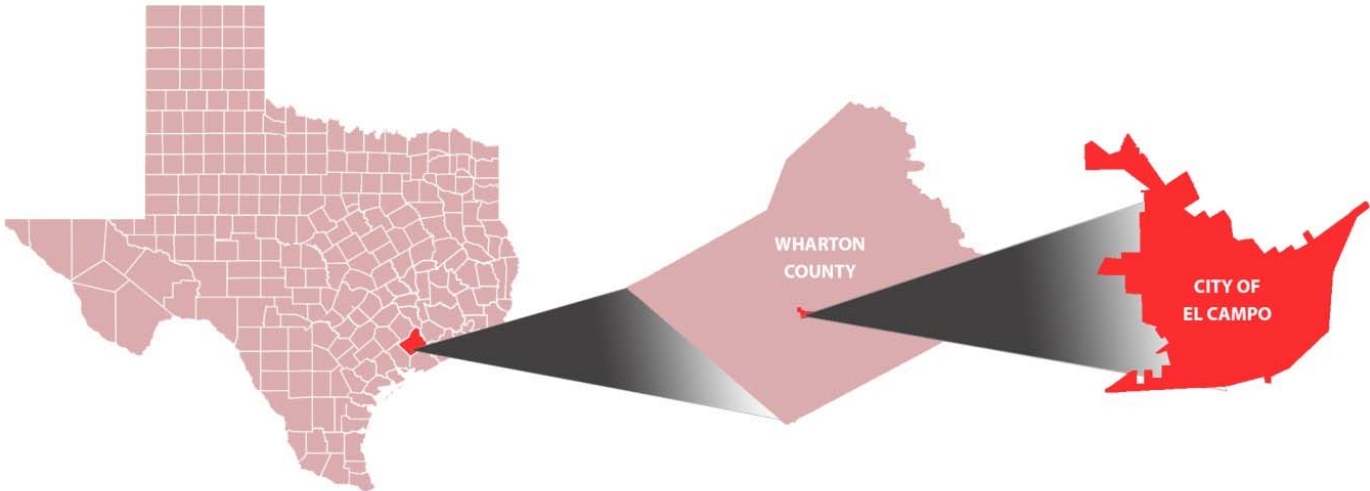
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# 1. Introduction



**Fig 1.1:** City of El Campo Location Map

El Campo, Texas is located in Wharton County, approximately 70 miles South West of Houston. Originally called Prairie Switch, it was the switching point between New York, Texas, and Mexican railways. The City of El Campo saw its major development in the late 19th and 20th centuries. The city extends over 5594 acres (8.7 sq. miles) at the intersection of US

59/IH 69 and US 71/Mechanic Street. El Campo is the largest city in Wharton County. Incorporated in 1905, the city had its first ever comprehensive plan in 2000. El Campo is a home rule charter and the development is regulated by its zoning ordinance.

According to the July 2016 US Census Estimates, El Campo has a population of 11,766 and a growth rate of

0.3 percent per year, compounded annually. Most of this growth has occurred due to migration from the rest of Wharton county and state of Texas to El Campo. It is estimated to have a rise in its population from 11,602 in 2010 to 17,240 by 2030, considering 2 percent Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR). The majority of El Campo's population is either young (0-14 years) or the prime labor force (25-44 years), and it is essential that the city address the special needs and services required by the diverse population. Approximately, three quarters of El Campo's population is Caucasian and ten percent each recognized themselves as African American and another race. From 2000 to 2010, El Campo's Hispanic population grew by 8.3 percent, composing half of the total population in 2010.

The major share of El Campo's population (67 percent) graduated from high school or pursued higher education. As per the US Census 2016 estimates, approximately 95 percent of residents aging 16 years or more were part of the labor force. Five percent of the population aging 16+ is considered unemployed. Since 2000, the median household income for El Campo grew by 35 percent to reach \$45,413 in 2015. Approximately three quarters of households earn less

than \$74,999 annually, while about 16 percent of the households earn between \$50,000-\$74,999 and 19 percent from \$35,000-\$49,999.

Comprising three quarters of the population in 2010, family households are the largest demographic in the City of El Campo. The existing housing stock is dominated by one-unit detached single family housing (77 percent), with the remaining comprising of multi-family housing. Therefore, to address the diverse needs of the residents, it is crucial to consider a range of housing types. The majority of houses were built during the mid-20th century.

Educational services and health care, and social assistance are the largest industry employers in El Campo, contributing approximately 22 percent to the economy of the city. Other significant industry sectors include retail trade and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining. A decline in the manufacturing industry can be observed since 2000 (approx. 7 percent) whereas the construction industry grew by 4.6 percent. With an average travel time to work of 20 minutes or less, approximately 40 percent of the residents' commute to work in less than ten minutes every day or drive alone by car, truck, or van in less than 20 minutes.

**Overview of El Campo Downtown**

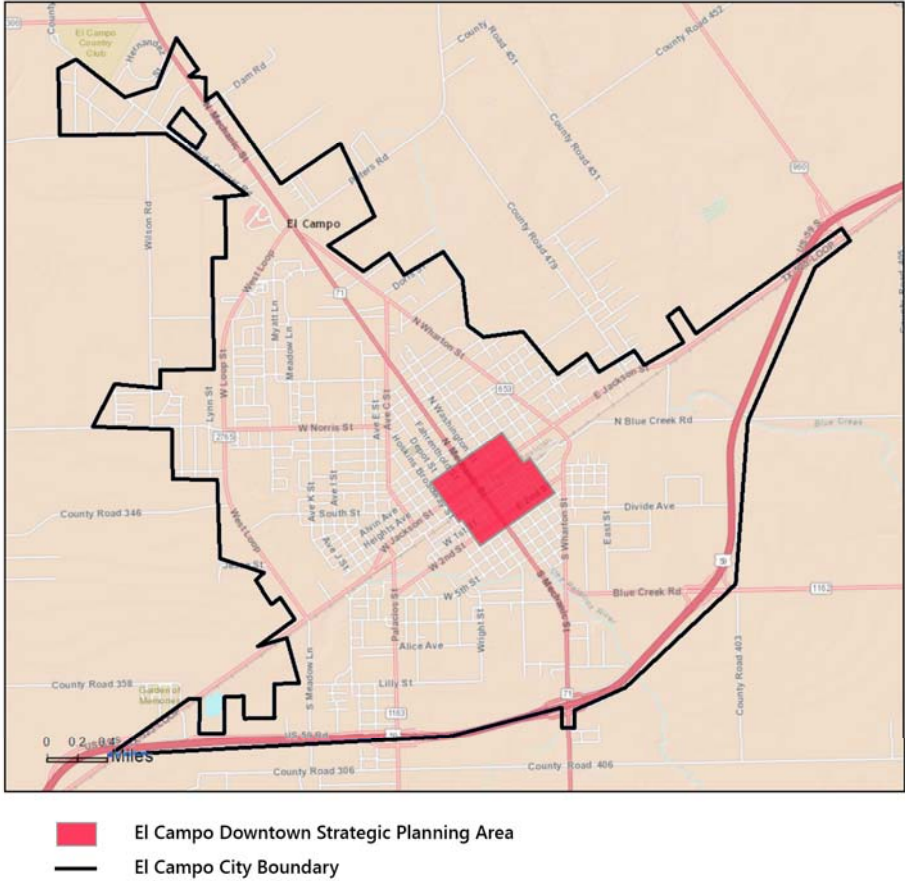
Downtown El Campo is the city’s historic, commercial, and multi-purpose center. The area enclosed around the centrally located Evans Park is popularly called the ‘downtown’ for the City of El Campo.

**1.1. Downtown Strategic Planning Area**

The area enclosed within one fourth mile from the circumference of the centrally located (original downtown) Evans Park is identified as the El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area (see fig 1.2). In short, the 0.27 square mile downtown planning area is marked by Market/Higbee Street on the East, 3rd Street on the South, Hoskins Broadway/Lincoln Street on the West and Calhoun Street on the North.

**1.2. Zoning**

A significant tool used by the municipal governments to regulate the use and development of land by creating special districts is called zoning. The Zoning Ordinance for the City of El Campo delineates the geographic area, governs the permissible land uses, and expounds the



**Fig1.2:** City of El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area Key Map

development standards for every individual zoning district.

Outlined below are the development standards for the Central Business District in the City of El Campo:

**Purpose:** The key motive of zoning in the Central Business District that primarily comprises the downtown area is to identify exclusive attributes of a traditional main street. It is envisioned to include a pedestrian oriented mixed-use development with no specific requirements for off-street parking.

**Uses Permitted by Right:** The CBD zoning ordinance identifies specific lands, structures, and buildings that are allowed for use, erection, construction, reconstruction, relocation, or modification. Refer to the section 50-102 of the zoning ordinance for more details.

**Height and Area Regulations:** No specific rules regulating the size of lots, setbacks, building heights, and parking are laid in the CBD area, except for the following:

- Setbacks and heights of existing nearest structure in the block shall apply for any new buildings and structures, therefore promoting harmony.

- The general minimum setback for parking lot is five feet whereas 15 feet when next to a residential district.

**Development Performance Standards:** The CBD does not have any development performance standards.

### Future Land-Use Plan Update 2015 is

expected to include the following updates for the Downtown Strategic Planning Area:

- The size of the CBD within the Downtown Strategic Planning Area must be reduced while the allowable uses for buildings and performance standards need to be expanded. Therefore, densifying the CBD with mutually supportive uses like residential/commercial would validate the investment needed to counterbalance the re-development costs.
- The future land use for the rest of the El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area must be developed as “Mixed Commercial and Residential” to allow a variety of housing options like duplex, multi-family, and multiplex. This area is expected to act as a buffer between the high-density CBD area and the single family residential neighborhood, therefore creating a flow/hierarchy of density, travel patterns and several activities (see fig 1.3).



**Fig 1.3:** Future Land Use for the Downtown Strategic Planning Area  
**Source:** El Campo Comprehensive Plan Update 2015

### 1.3. Downtown Revitalization Area

The downtown revitalization area marked in Figure 1.4 is the focus of the current planning document for which the revitalization plan has been proposed. It is defined by E Hillje St. on the north, Alamo St. on the east, E 2<sup>nd</sup> St. on the south and Merchant St. on the upper half of the western boundary and cuts through the lots between S Washington St. and August St. in the southern half. This area will serve as the downtown core area of the greater downtown strategic planning area.

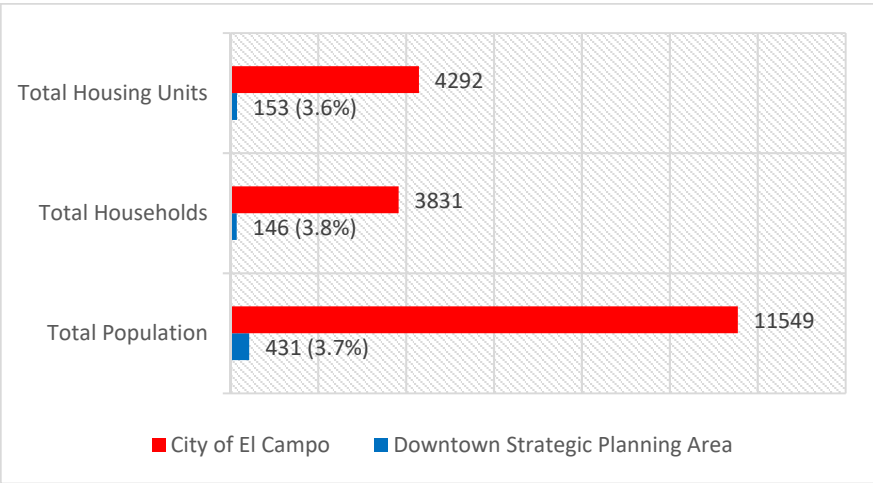


Fig 1.4: El Campo Downtown Revitalization Area

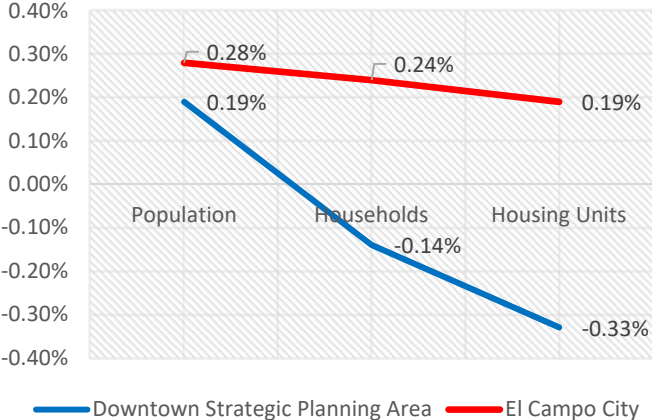
**1.4. Population and Trends**

According to the 2010 – 2014 ACS Estimates, the El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area has a population of 431, 146 households, and a total of 153 housing units in 2014. The population, households and housing units approximate to 3.5 percent of that of the city’s numbers (see fig 1.5).

A similar trend has been noted in the growth rate of population from 2000 to 2010 for both El Campo (0.28%) and the Downtown Strategic Planning Area (0.19%). On the other hand, households (-0.14%) and housing units (-0.33%) in the planning area have seen a decline in their growth rate. By contrast, the city had a positive growth rate of households and housing units during that time (see fig 1.6).



**Fig 1.5:** Population, household and housing units’ profile for Downtown Strategic Planning Area 2010 – 2014 ACS Estimates

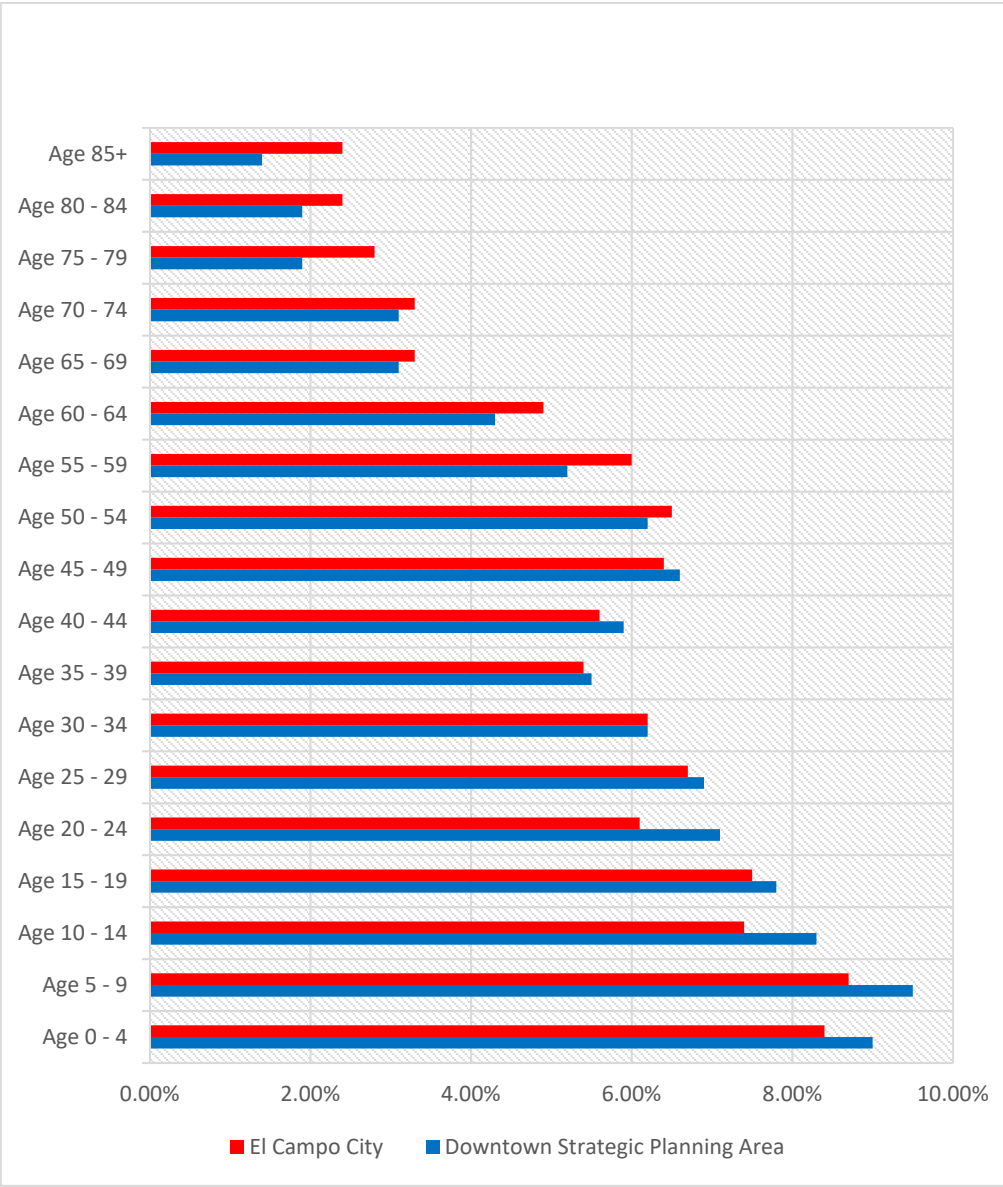


**Fig 1.6:** Average Annual Growth Rate of Population, household, and housing units for Downtown Strategic Planning Area and the City of El Campo, 2000 – 2010



### 1.5. Population Characteristics

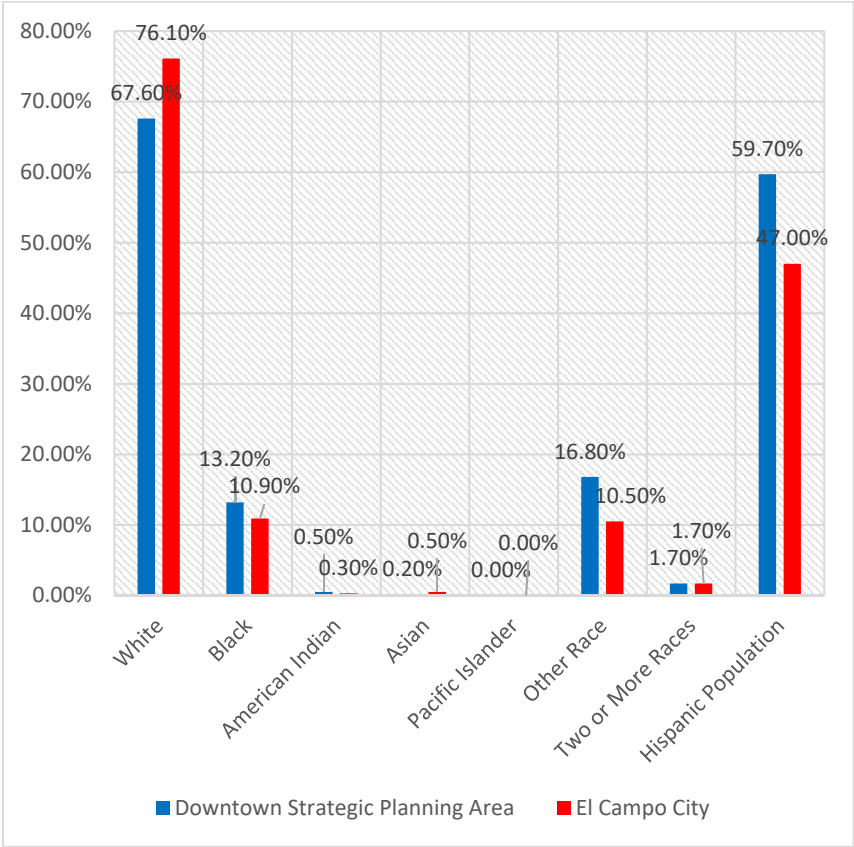
**Age:** Similar to the City of El Campo, the downtown area has a large population of young (0-14 years) and prime labor force (25-44 years) (see fig 1.7)—each a quarter of the total population. According to the US Census 2016 estimates, the downtown region has an equal share of male and female population and the median age is 31 years.



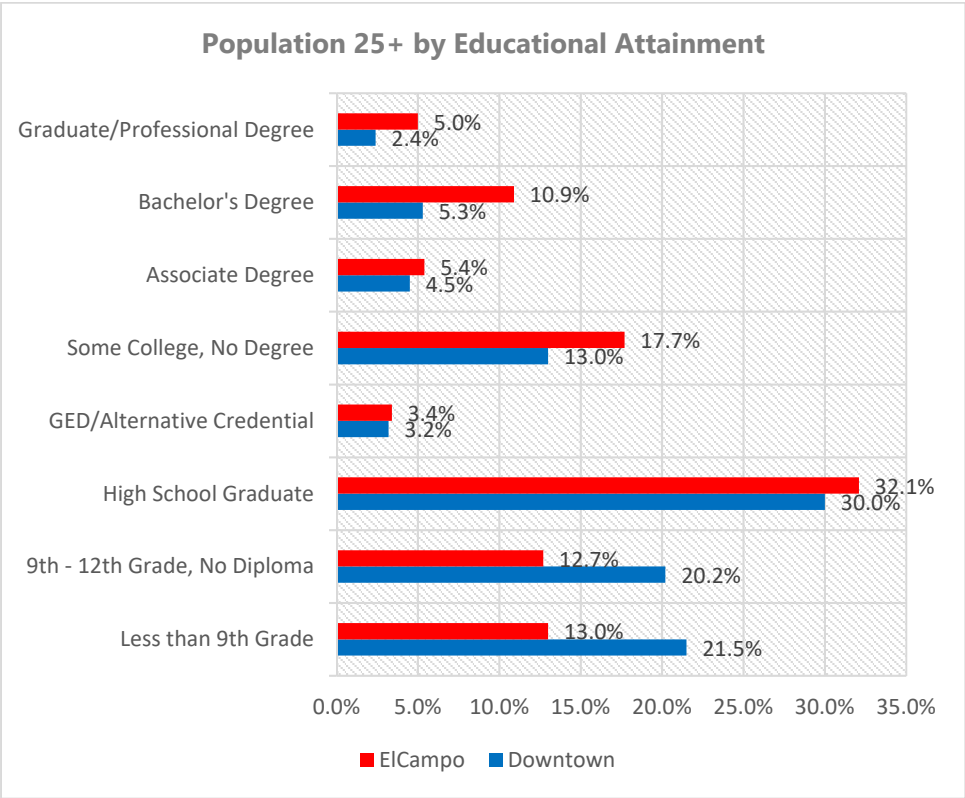
**Fig 1.7:** Age-wise Population distribution for El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area and the City of El Campo, 2010 – 2014 ACS Estimates

**Race and Ethnicity:** The downtown area has a similar race composition as the City of El Campo. The downtown area is primarily composed of whites (70 percent approximately), which is a little less than that of the city. On the flip side, a larger proportion of the black population (13 percent) are found in the downtown as compared to the city. The downtown also has a larger Hispanic population (60 percent approx.) unlike the city (47 percent) (see fig 1.8).

**Education:** The percentage of graduates or bachelor degree holders in the downtown area is half that of the City of El Campo (2.5 and five percent respectively). By contrast, the percentage of the population with educational attainment of 'less than 9th grade' and '9th-12th grade with no diploma' in the downtown area is double the city's percentage. A little more than half of the downtown population is a high school graduate, or have some higher degree (see fig 1.9).



**Fig 1.8:** Population distribution by Race for El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area and the City of El Campo, 2010 – 2014 ACS Estimates



**Fig 1.9:** Educational Attainment of 25+ aged population for El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area and the City of El Campo, 2016 Estimates

**Employment:** As per the US Census 2016 estimates, approximately 95 percent of the residents in the city aging 16 years or more were part of the labor force. Five percent of the population aging 16+ are unemployed civilians. Similar percentages were observed in the downtown region (see fig 1.10).

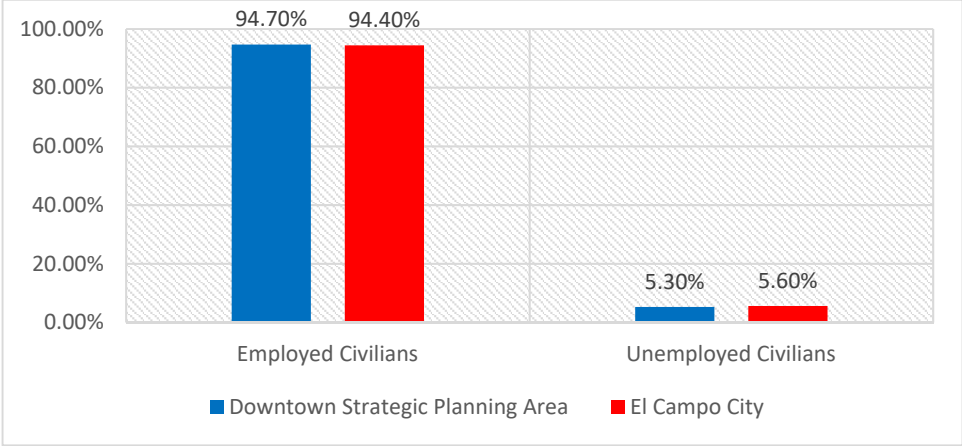


Fig 1.10: 16+ Aged Civilian Population in Labor Force, 2016 Estimates

**Income:** The estimated median and average household incomes in 2016 for the downtown strategic planning area and the city are \$28,456 and \$44,126 respectively. An interesting point is approximately 65 percent of the households earn less than the average household income in the downtown area. Despite the downtown being the nerve for economic activity, almost a quarter percent of the households earns less than \$15,000 annually (see fig 1.11).

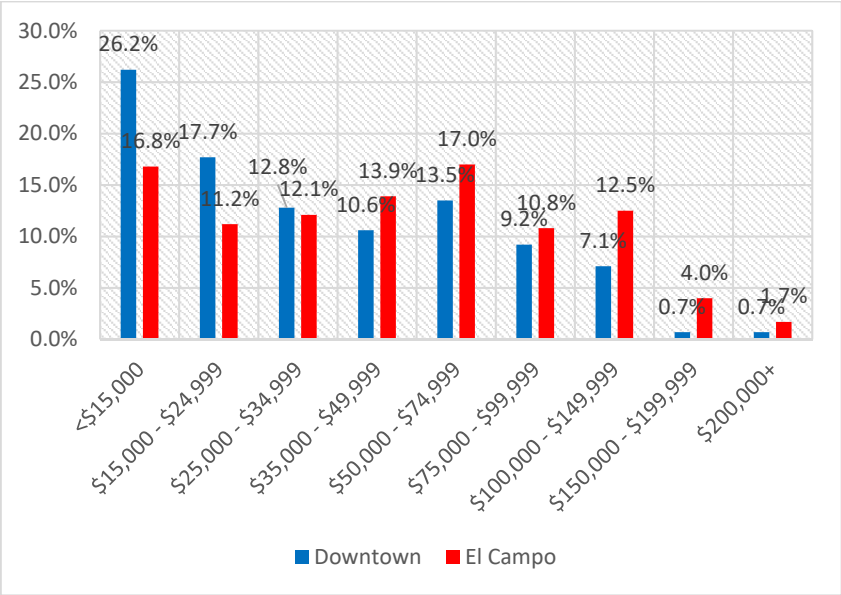
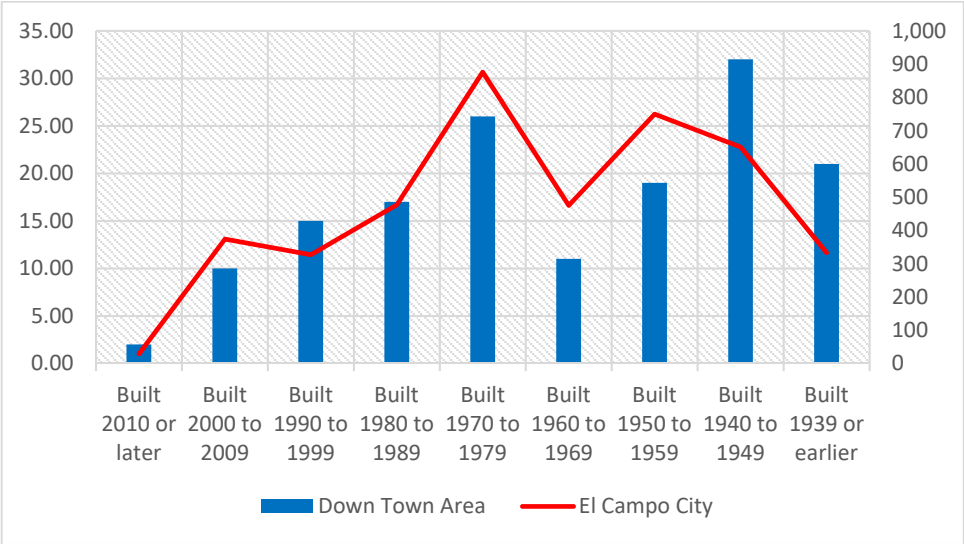


Fig 1.11: Households by Income, 2016 Estimates

### 1.6. Housing

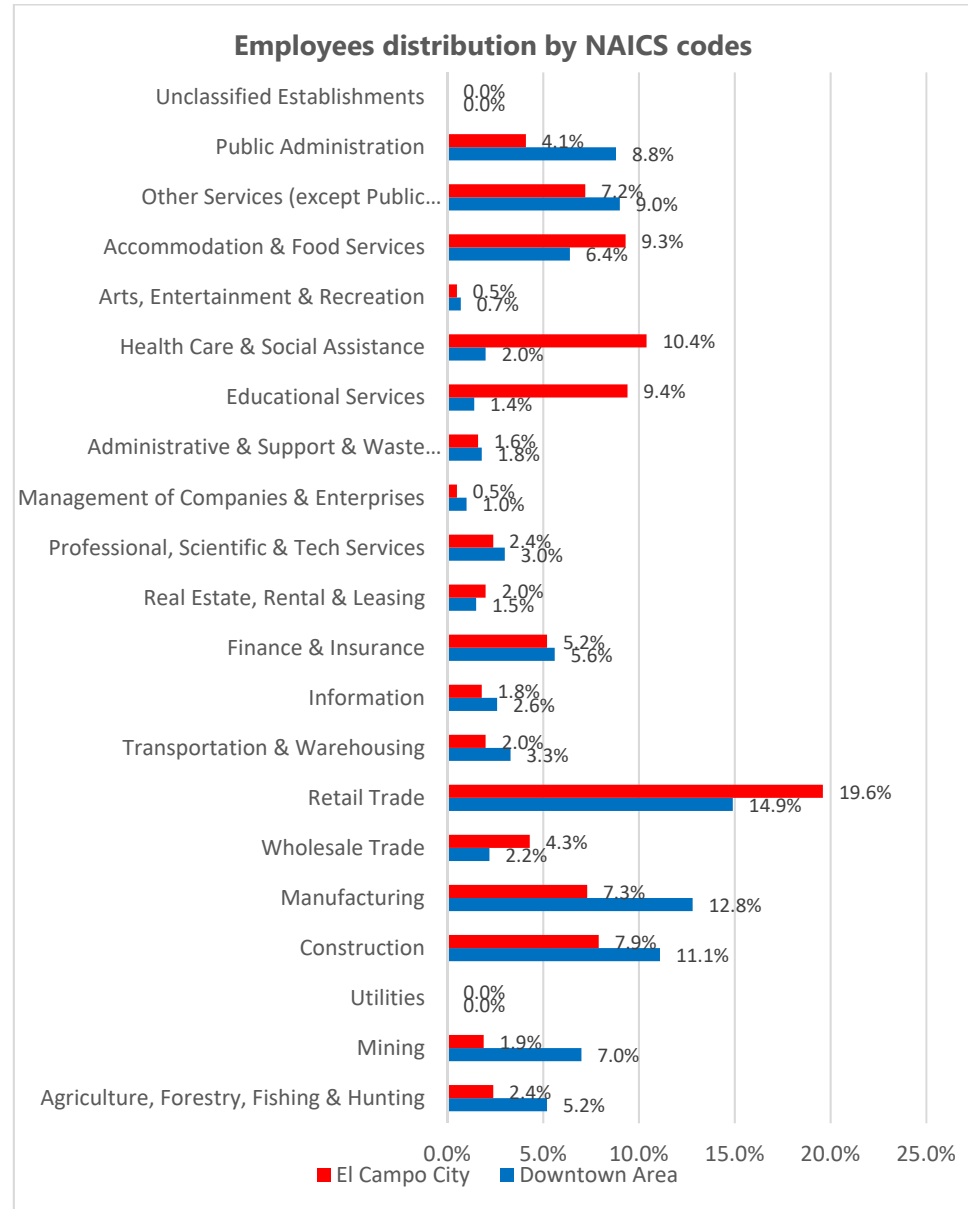
Quite alike to the housing trend in the City of El Campo, the downtown is also dominated by one unit detached housing (77 percent). The next major type of housing within the downtown is mobile homes (12 percent approx.). The average household size in the area was 2.93 in 2010 and estimated as 2.97 in 2016. The majority of the residential quarters built in the downtown area and the city date back to the period between 1970 to 1979. From 1940 to 1949 most of the houses were built in the downtown area (see fig 1.12).



**Fig 1.12:** Number of housing units by year built for El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area and the City of El Campo, 2010 – 2014 ACS Estimates

### 1.7. Economy

According to the 2016 forecasts, retail trade, manufacturing, and construction are the major industrial sectors in the downtown area contributing 14.9, 12.8, and 11.1 percent respectively. It is interesting that Manufacturing, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting provide double the employment in the downtown area as compared to the city. Whereas wholesale trade, educational services, health care and social assistance, accommodation and food services are dominant at the city level and not in the downtown (see *fig1.13*). There are a total of 190 businesses and 1,473 employees in the Downtown Strategic Planning Area (2016 forecasts).



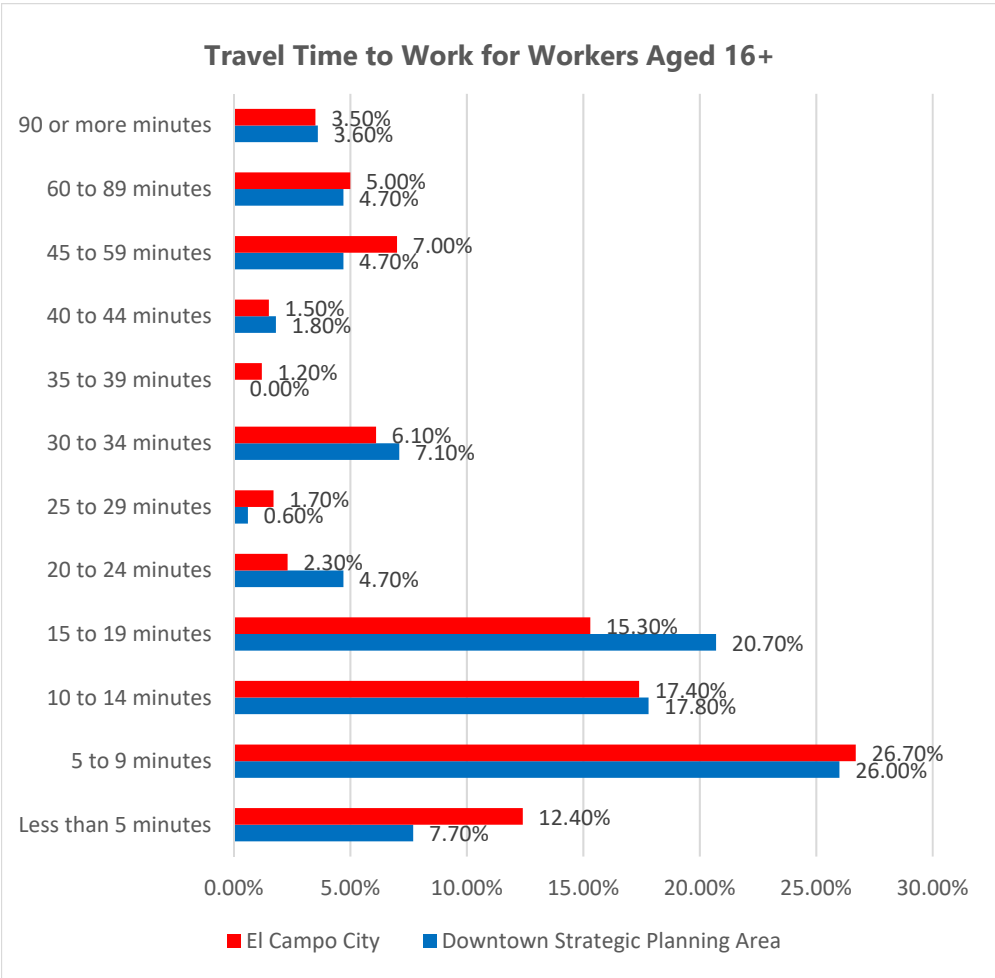
**Fig 1.13:** Employees Distribution by NACIS codes for El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area and the City of El Campo, 2016 Projections

**1.8. Transportation**

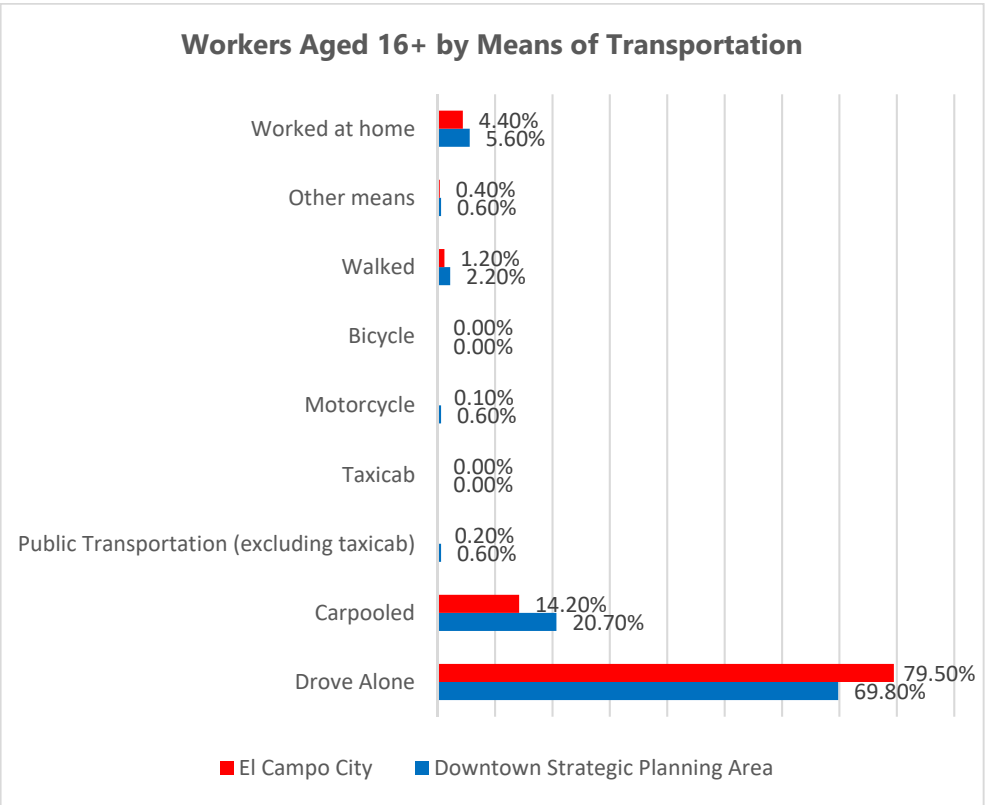
In the downtown area, approximately half of the population over 16 years of age that do not work from home drive 15 minutes or less to get to work (see fig 1.14).

Like the trend observed in the city of El Campo, a little less than three quarters of the population (70 percent approx.) drove alone to work in the downtown area. On the flipside, the percentage of workers who carpooled, walked to work, or worked from home is higher in the downtown planning area (see fig 1.15).

North and South Mechanic Street has the highest average daily traffic volume in the downtown region, ranging from 7,700 to 10,200. East and West 2nd Street and Jackson Streets are other noteworthy roads with considerable traffic volume (see fig 1.18).



**Fig 1.14:** Travel Time to Work for Workers aged 16+ for El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area and the City of El Campo, 2010 – 2014 ACS Estimates



**Fig 1.15:** Means of Transportation for Workers Aged 16+ 2010 – 2014 ACS Estimates



**Fig 1.16:** Average Daily Traffic Volume for Downtown Strategic Planning Area



### 1.9. Land-Use(s)

The El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area has a low percentage of vacant land available for development. However, the existing downtown area gives an opportunity to maintain the prevalent ‘positive visual outdoor character’ by repurposing existing vacant buildings.

#### Downtown Strategic Planning Area

The downtown strategic planning area is spread across 0.27 square miles of which residential is the major land-use (30 percent approx.). Only one percent of the total area has multi-family residential whereas a little more than quarter percent (28 percent) is occupied by single-family residential. Commercial and retail together comprise approximately a quarter percent of the area. Approximately 10 percent each is occupied by public/semi-public, offices, industrial, vacant lots & buildings combined. Open spaces and parks comprise only 1.86% in the Downtown Strategic Planning Area.

#### Downtown Revitalization Area

The 44-acre revitalization area has a daytime population of 582 which 570 of them are workers (2016 estimates). The area has 85

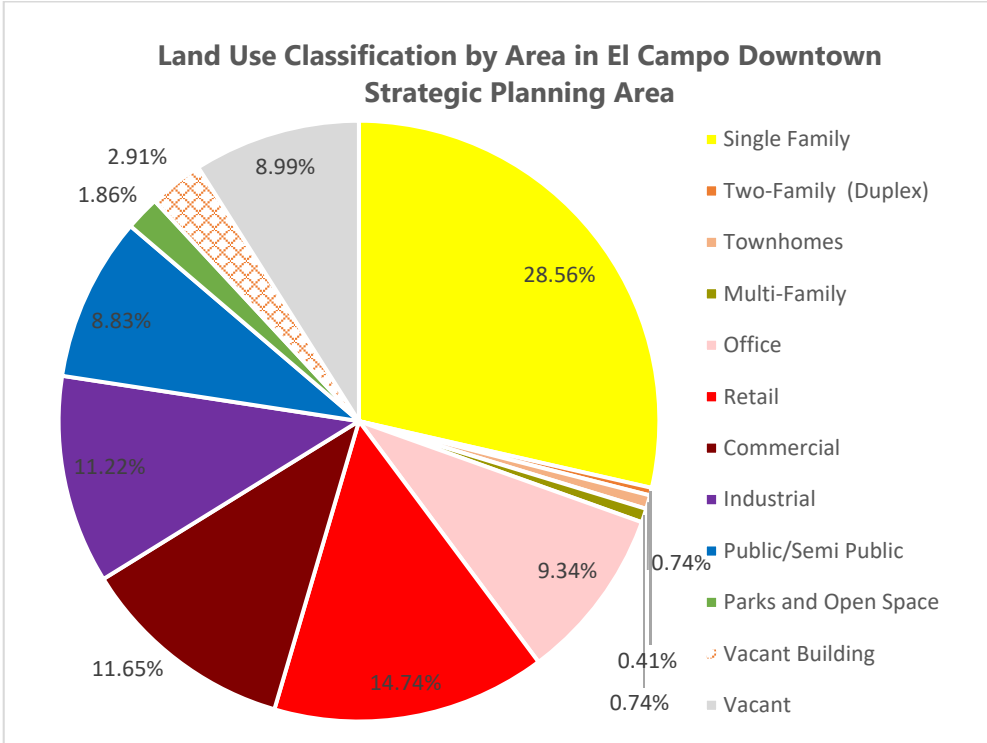


Fig 1.17: Land-Use Distribution of the El Campo Downtown Strategic Planning Area

businesses in total and provides employment to 734 people. Services and Retail trade together take up approximately 50 percent of the businesses and provides 40 percent of the employment in the area.

Though single family is the major land-use currently in the downtown region, it takes up the least share in the proposed revitalization area. Retail (approximately 40 percent) is the dominant existing land-use. Offices and commercial add up to another 30 percent in the revitalization area. A little more than ten percent of this area is either vacant or consists of vacant buildings (see fig 1.19). The traditional characteristics of a downtown can be observed in this proposed future Central Business District.

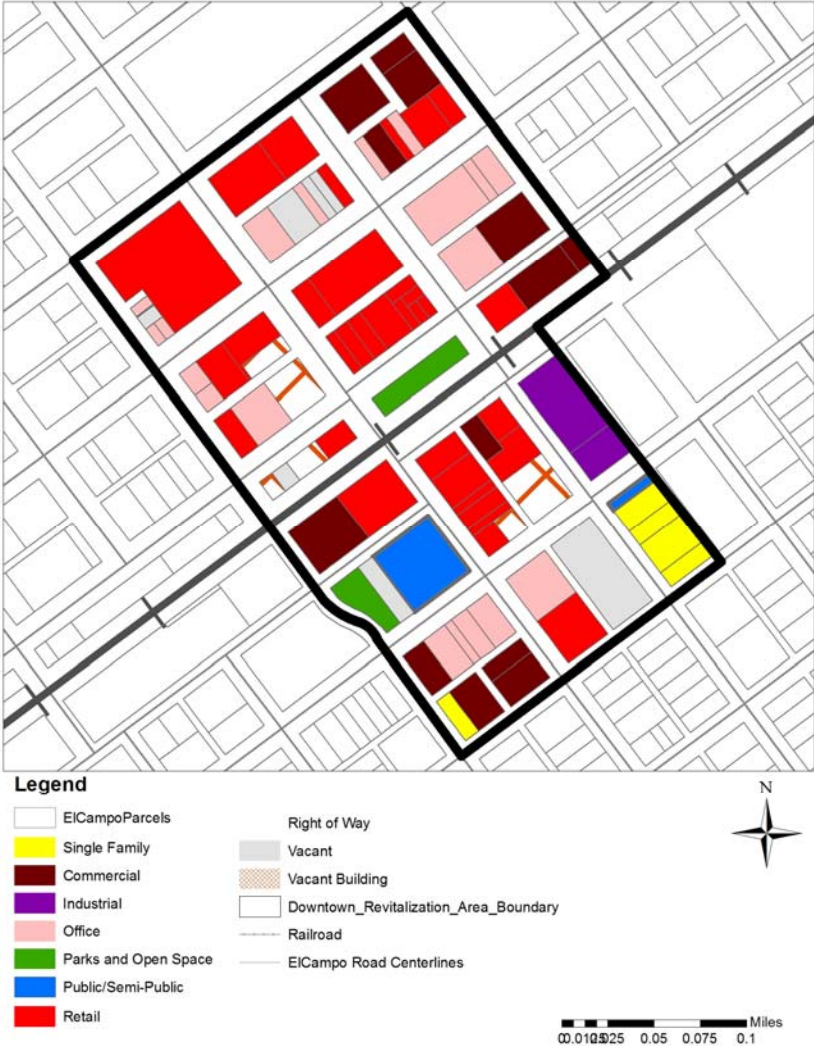


Fig 1.18: Boundary and Existing Land-Use of the El Campo Downtown Revitalization Area

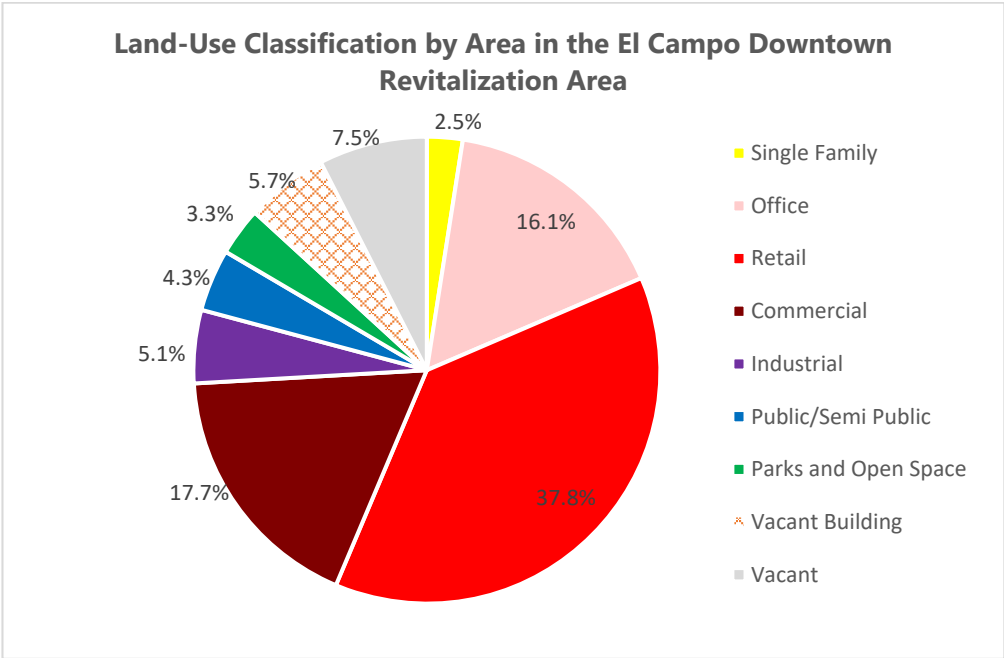


Fig 1.19 Land-Use Distributions in the El Campo Downtown Revitalization Area

1.10. Urban Design/Downtown Character

Urban design “describes the physical features that define the character or image of a place” (City of San Diego, 2008). In short, it is a concept that discusses how people, built and the natural environment relate to each other across the urban landscape. The relationship and visual character are most often described using different components such as architectural character, building scale and massing, streetscape, open spaces, pedestrian scale, landmarks, way-finding etc. The El Campo Downtown Area has a unique urban design character which is described in the following elements:

**Building facades:** The downtown revitalization area has a mix of two storied traditional brick cladded buildings, low rise new structures and vacant buildings. The traditional brick cladded buildings contribute positively to the visual character of the area (see fig 1.20). Whereas old unused buildings not just disturb the outdoor character but also negatively affect the sense of safety in the area. New construction is a huge benefit to the development of downtown. There are some efforts to maintain the character of the place in newly revitalized buildings.

**Transportation Network:** Unlike traditional downtowns, downtown El Campo has wide two-way streets with angled parking on one or both sides of the road. Two-way roads are a huge benefit leaving no room for congestion. Additionally, angled parking provides parking facilities for more cars as compared to the conventional parallel parking found in other downtowns. On the other hand, there are some good sidewalks, but no specific bike paths found in the area (see fig 1.21).



**Fig 1.20:** A traditional brick cladded building in Downtown El Campo

**Source:** Google Street View



**Fig 1.21:** S Mechanic St. highlighting wide two-way roads with on-street angled parking **Source:** Google Street View

**Open Spaces:** Only about 3 percent of the total downtown revitalization area has parks and open spaces. These parks can be a lively and thriving attraction in the downtown area, if enhanced with better infrastructure and planning of events/outdoor activities (see fig 1.22).



**Fig 1.22:** Evans Park is centrally located in Downtown El Campo

**Source:** Google Street View

**Streetscape:** Though the streets are not very welcoming for pedestrians, the planter boxes and conventional designed lamp posts help maintain the traditional downtown character (see fig 1.23). Marked crosswalks, well maintained way-finding tools, and plain colored traditional garbage bins add to the visual quality of the space whereas, lack of seating and shade can be seen. However, few old buildings have graphics/art and murals on the exteriors which would improve the urban design quality of the area if well maintained.



**Fig 1.23:** View showing lamp posts, planter boxes and garbage bins (streetscape)

**Source:** Google Street View

### 1.11. Design Implications – Strengths and Opportunities

Based on the current conditions, the following describe potential strengths and opportunities for downtown El Campo.

#### Strengths

- Grid-patterned streets provide increased connectivity and can be the reason it takes 15 to 20 minutes or less for residents to get to work.
- Ample parking space is provided in the area by use of angled parking. Conventionally, parallel parking strategy is used in downtowns but angled parking accommodates more vehicles.
- The existing downtown area is populated by prime labor force (25-44 years) which forms the supply base of workers.
- 70 percent of the land use is occupied by retail, office and commercial in the revitalization area, provides ample physical space for economic activities.
- Most of the elements that contribute to the streetscape and the existing old traditional buildings create a small town feel and maintains harmony.
- Rich history, art and culture with presence of character in buildings and art around the downtown.

#### Opportunities

- Almost ten percent of the revitalization area is either vacant or contains vacant buildings. These spots can be reused or remodeled for different land uses. Development of these vacancies will also add to the visual quality of the area.
- The revitalization area unlike traditional downtowns has a spread out urban form and therefore leaves great room for future development and densification.
- Open space area can be redesigned for enhanced Open spaces can support existing and new events.
- Wide roads, alleys and open spaces provide a great opportunity to think of bike-pedestrian trails or sidewalks.
- Ordinances can be updated to make sure that any new construction would try to mimic the existing brick cladded traditional old buildings for the best visual urban character of the space.
- Provision of outdoor seating and improving shade through planting more trees will improve the streetscape in the downtown area.

## 2. Planning Process and Public Participation

### 2.1. The Planning Process

The El Campo Downtown Revitalization Project uses the comprehensive planning process which primarily identifies community goals and provides policies for systematic development (*fig 2.1*). The planning process included the following steps:

- Data collection of existing conditions;
- Identifying planning issues, strengths, and opportunities;
- Anticipating change through a vision framework and identification of goals and objectives;
- Providing policy and design level recommendations with a detailed action plan for guiding legislative and administrative decisions.

Citizen involvement at all phases is a crucial part of this process. The recommendations provided in the report are the result of a combination of a technical analysis and public participation to support sound decision making. The planning process for the El Campo downtown was spread across 12 months.



**Fig 2.1:** Comprehensive Planning Process

**Source:** (Fricker, 2016)

## 2.2. Public Participation/Participatory Planning

Participatory planning is the process by which local residents are actively involved in the development of a plan to inform, validate, and speak to technical data and recommendations. The following are advantages of the participatory planning approach:

- Focuses on local first-hand user experience and knowledge to supplement technical knowledge
- Facilitates the prioritization of goals and specific locations in the area
- Enhances the analyses and strategies proposed to reflect real needs
- Ensures the project is socially accepted and adopted
- Gives stakeholders, partners and residents an idea of the constraints (technical, time, budget etc.)
- Inputs from citizens are gained through information sessions, online surveys, workshops, meetings etc.



**Fig 2.2:** Gantt Chart for El Campo Downtown Revitalization Project

## 2.3 Plan Process Meetings

A series of meetings were conducted starting September 2016 through April 2017. Various techniques such as business-owner, property-owner, and tourist surveys; interactive activities; and visual preference surveys collected community feedback. A list of meetings can be found in Figure 2.3.

The planning process focuses on an asset-based approach, where the plan celebrates and builds on the strength of the existing community. The first meeting in September 2016 identified assets in the downtown and future additions. The attendees explored cultural and social assets, along with physical assets. The participant responses were recorded in a word cloud (fig 2.4 and fig 2.5).





Fig 2.3: El Campo Downtown Revitalization Plan Meetings



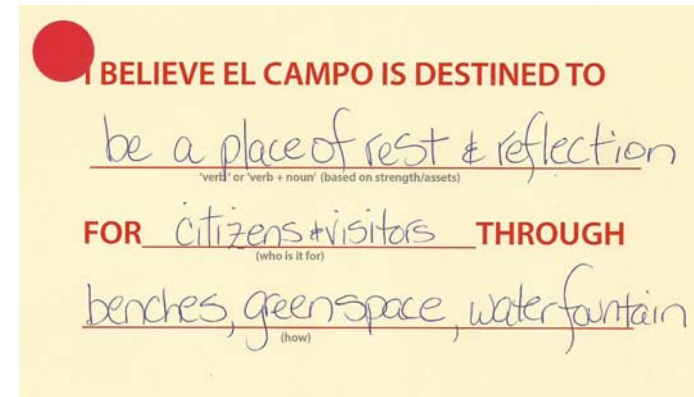
**Fig 2.4:** Downtown El Campo assets identified by community members



**Fig 2.5:** Word Cloud identifying what the residents would like to see in the downtown

## 2.3. Visioning

The October 2016 meeting began envisioning a future downtown. An interactive 'mad lib' activity extracted ideas were used as tool to brainstorm about the vision for the revitalization of Downtown El Campo. Figure 2.6 shows a sample mad lib card filled by one of the residents. All the responses collected were later compiled to develop a vision, goals, and objectives for the revitalization plan.



**Fig 2.6:** Visioning 'mad lib' exercise response



**Fig 2.7:** Meeting attendees engaging in the asset exercise

A follow up meeting was held in November 2016, at the Northside Education Center to finalize the vision. Attendees identified existing assets and located the physical assets in the downtown revitalization area, such as historical markers, art, murals, renovated buildings, and parks.

Based on the feedback a draft vision was created. The following statement was finalized as the vision for downtown El Campo:

### Vision Statement for Downtown El Campo

The El Campo Downtown is vibrant, mixed-use, and walkable destination that celebrates the community by promoting history, art and culture and providing diverse events and business options for both residents and visitors of all ages.



**Fig 2.8:** Downtown El Campo Vision Statement Components

Next, goals and objectives to achieve the vision were explored and discussed. Goals and objectives were identified for following five categories: **Business, Housing, Transportation, Events, and Public space.**

**Vision** A vision statement captures what the community members most value about their community. It is a shared image of what they want the downtown to become.

**Goals** are guidelines that describe what the community wants to achieve and by when.

**Objectives** are strategies or implementation steps used to achieve the goal. Objectives are usually quantifiable, i.e. they are specific and measurable and have a deadline.

Finally, a visual preference survey identified six key themes for feedback: public realm, sidewalks, bike lanes, parking, wayfinding, and housing. Attendees were asked to stick one or more colored dots on each category, to vote for what they consider to fit well in the downtown. The results were used in the design process.



**Fig 2.9:** Preferences marked on the poster for Sidewalk as part of the Visual Preference Activity

## 2.4. Downtown Survey

In December 2016, surveys were distributed to visitors, business owners and property owners in downtown to garner input on El Campo's downtown. The surveys were distributed both electronically and as hard copies. They were also posted on the city website, CDC website, Facebook. Hard copies were distributed within the downtown area. Additionally, local high school students completed the survey for a youth perspective.

A total of 106 visitors, 41 business owners and 22 property owners took part in the survey. In February 2017, a meeting was conducted to discuss the results of the surveys. Listed below are the summaries of responses from visitors, business owners and property owners (*for more details on the surveys refer to appendix*).

### Summary of Visitor Responses

A majority of responders were residents of the city of El Campo (86 percent) and were female (65 percent). There was a variety of age groups represented. Approximately three quarters of the responders visited downtown every day for work, eating or the post office and once per week for retail or eating. Other reasons for visiting downtown include holidays or special events, the farmer's market and fitness activities. Among the special events, the Christmas Train, Christmas Parade, Easter Eggstravaganza and Prairie Days were the most popular. Almost three quarters of the responders are interested to see more outdoor events in the downtown such as outdoor food festivals, more frequent farmer's market, wine/beer festivals and concerts. Restaurants were rated the top business type for visitors to want to visit the downtown. Coffee shops/cafes, food markets, bakeries, and retail stores were other significant preferences.

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*"Fixing up the old buildings is absolutely wonderful and beautiful and much appreciated, at the same time we also have to maintain what is already there and used daily."*

*"Need more to do for the younger adults around my age. Need more activities for the youth and young adults on their free time. "*

### Summary of Business Owner Responses

The responses included an almost equal number of business owners who owned and rented the business space in the downtown area. Half of the responders have operated the businesses in the planning area for more than 20 years. The majority of the responders were owners of retail stores, services, clothing/boutiques, and finance/insurance. These businesses have customers from all age groups, but the majority was between the ages of 35 to 65 years and primarily from the city of El Campo. About half the businesses operate during weekends. The dominant business hours are before 11am all week, between 2-5pm on weekdays, and 11am to 2pm on weekends. Half of the businesses feel they are open for an adequate time, but half of the businesses feel they should open for more hours. Almost 35 percent of the business and property owners are considering building improvements and expanding operations. About half feel there has been steady growth in the last year, whereas only a few feel they are rapidly expanding. Half of the respondents recognized parking as an issue.

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*"It would be good to have more events on nights and weekends"*

*"Events for Money management - how to purchase investment property would be helpful"*

---

### Summary of Property Owner Responses

Almost half of the responders have owned their property for 20 to more than 45 years and only a quarter of them opted in favor of building improvements. Parking, cost, taxes, insurance and condition of sidewalks were identified as the major issues for property owners. More than half responded they would be encouraged to improve their property if they were aided with funds through tax abatement, cost sharing or low interest loans.

The survey responders rated downtown El Campo as fairly safe and clean with fair traffic flow. The business owners and property owners feel they have a fair amount of restaurant choices, service and retail options, but the visitors seem to want some improvements in these areas. These results were discussed and used in the programming and planning of the downtown.

### 2.5. Responsible Parties and Potential Partnerships

During the February 2017 meeting attendees identified potential responsible parties to execute the ideas and action steps. The process explored potential partnerships for each action step. Figure 2.10 provides a sample image of the results of the exercise which directly informed the implementation table in Chapter 9.

### 2.6. Downtown Design Presentation and Feedback

A landscape architecture class of 32 students was involved in developing a revitalization design. The class was divided into eight groups and developed conceptual design ideas from January to May 2017. The inferences gathered during prior meetings were used as guiding principles in the design process. Eight different design proposals were delivered during the meeting at the Chamber of Commerce on April 26, 2017. Design proposals were displayed for a gallery walk (see fig 2.11) feedback was gathered.

Events		
Actions	Responsible Party	Possible Partners
Creating unique events in various locations in the downtown such as – Cultural events, Block party/ street events, Bat watching, wine festival, music, Art in the park, Regular food truck/sidewalk entertainment nights monthly on predictable schedule		
Create opportunities for artists, craftsmen, and local business owners for events at downtown sidewalk venues and Evans Park Space		
Encourage culinary students by providing opportunity to showcase their skills through food truck and food tasting events		
Partner with surrounding counties through coordinated efforts and unified vision		
Enhance storefront with decoration lights during all festivals		
Movie theatre or monthly outdoor movie		
Promote and market different event in the downtown to make sure everyone is well informed on the events happening.		
Re-opening of the theater group		

**Fig 2.10:** Responsible parties and possible partners identified by the citizens for action steps for Events category





**Fig 2.11:** A meeting attendee reviewing and providing feedback to one of the teams

### 2.7. “Rate the 8” Survey

The eight designs were uploaded to the City of El Campo’s website and a survey was carried out for feedback from citizens. The primary motive of this ‘Rate the 8’ survey was to pick the best components of each proposal and incorporate within a final revitalization plan. As of June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017, 481 responses were recorded. The different categories for ranking were

**Art, Open Space, Farmer’s Market, Restaurant/Bar, Gardens, Evans Park, Walkability/Safety, Innovative ideas, Green space, Residential Options, Alleyways, Events, Parking, Shopping, Flexible Designs, Nightlife, Seating/Shade.** The best ranked from each of the above-mentioned categories were incorporated into the master plan.

A detailed master plan for the revitalization of the downtown area is provided in Chapter 3.

## 3. Master planning

The master plan identifies opportunities for revival of the public realm. Design recommendations to enhance the streetscape, alleyways, parks, and open spaces promote Downtown El Campo's vision of celebrating diverse events and boosting business activity in the area.

### 3.1. Plan Philosophy

The primary motive is to encourage the establishment of unique businesses and activities to attract residents and visitors to the downtown area. Listed below are a few significant features of the plan:

- Promotes infill development to attract retail and commercial establishments that align with the City's future land use.
- Preserves the architectural character of the downtown by supporting façade improvement.
- Promotes events, arts, and cultural activities as fundamental components in the downtown.
- Supports pedestrian- and bike-friendly design strategies, such as provision for bike parking and other streetscape enhancements.
- Supports desired physical improvements and additions to public spaces to enhance recreational options for residents and visitors, including alleyways and green spaces.
- Identifies existing buildings whose upper floors could possibly be used for multi-family residential.
- Serves as a tool for prospective business owners and corporate entities to identify areas that have been classified for their purpose.

### 3.2. Illustrative Master Plan

Figure 3.1 illustrates the downtown master plan. The master plan specifies new infill sites (see Figure 3.2), alleyways (see Chapter 6), on-street parking (see Chapter 6), bike parking (see Chapter 6), and green spaces (see Chapter 8). The main purpose of the master plan is to illustrate and communicate the ideas, strategies, and features within the planning document, where detailed construction drawings is a logical next step. The proposed master plan is flexible to accommodate the future needs of the downtown area. For instance, the infill sites are potential development opportunities associated with the future land use.



Fig 3.1: Proposed Revitalization Master Plan for Downtown El Campo

### 3.3. Infill Development

Developing or reusing any existing underutilized or vacant land in an urban service area is called *infill development*. Infill helps to restore the original urban fabric in the community through rehabilitation of old buildings or developing new ones in the existing vacant lands. It is a great tool to make the best use of existing services in a neighborhood, create more jobs and shopping and provide a variety of options, such as affordable housing, etc.

The proposed master plan identifies parcels that are currently underused/vacant and have a great potential for future infill development (see fig 3.2). These parcels were aligned with the current land use of the downtown area and proposed for a wide variety of uses such as a farmer’s market, retail/shopping areas, restaurants/bars and public restrooms.



Fig 3.2: Proposed Infill for Downtown El Campo

### **Do you know how Infill Development is beneficial for El Campo?**

Infill development is one of the popular revitalization efforts that allows to reinvest back into our existing communities and foster economic success. Read below to find out what value infill development brings to El Campo:

- Enhances walkability and active living
- Reduces traffic congestion and cuts down transportation costs and travel time
- Utilizes existing vacant or underutilized parcels and existing infrastructure
- Boosts local economic activity and a noteworthy share in the local tax base
- Promotes compact development and fosters activity in the downtown

El Campo Downtown revitalization and development is discussed as five focus areas that were identified from prior meetings.

The focus areas are as follows:

- Businesses
- Housing
- Transportation
- Events
- Public Space

Development goals, objectives, and strategies for each of the above-mentioned focus areas are explained in detail from chapters 4 to 8.

## 4. Businesses

Businesses are important for the economic health of any city or community. Apart from contributing to the economic development of an area, businesses provide a variety of employment opportunities which enhance the living standards of residents, as well as, expand investment in the community. According to Esri Business Analyst, downtown El Campo currently has 85 businesses providing employment to about 750 people. El Campo envisions boosting the economic activity by increasing businesses and the flow of visitors, resulting in greater job opportunities.

### 4.1. Business expansion to boost economic activity

Businesses support a healthy downtown and provide places to eat, drink, shop and explore. Primarily, El Campo seeks to boost economic activity by supporting local businesses and attracting new retail establishments and small businesses.

#### **Supporting Local Businesses**

The El Campo revitalization area currently utilizes half of its land-use for commercial and retail uses. Yet, residents of El Campo and the downtown area desire to increase businesses to help boost economic activity. The city can increase economic activity by supporting and stabilizing existing local businesses. Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) can be planned in the area to provide support for existing and prospective local businesses. SBDC's provide technical and managerial

support to promote growth, productivity, innovation, and revenue for small businesses. Another strategy the city can utilize is Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), to help fund capital improvements such as street maintenance and safety and security mechanisms. BIDs can be funded by tax collected from the businesses in the area, where downtown business tax dollars go back into the downtown. To support downtown businesses, the city should devote staff to develop relationships and a communication and feedback strategy. Such staff can also assist property and business owners through grant-writing training.

### Attracting New Retail Establishments and Small Businesses

To increase economic activity in the downtown the city, working together with the Chamber of Commerce, Community Development Corporation (CDC), and property owners, should attract new large or small-scale businesses. The City can establish a co-working space or business incubator service to encourage new business establishments that might need these additional services. Co-working spaces provide flexible office space and technological support such as internet.

Some examples of businesses include art shops, boutiques, “junk” stores, retail and other fun shops. Alternatively, a micro-brewery or winery is a good fit within an historic building. The city can proactively reach out to possible businesses and organize events to test different markets in El Campo. The visitor’s survey has shown demand for expansion in restaurants and other types of food establishments.

Another consideration is for the city to review and update existing permit and approval processes to eliminate regulatory barriers for redevelopment. Redevelopment and construction fees could be waived or discounted for new businesses. Additional strategies include expanding the Community Development Corporation of El Campo (CDC) job creation incentives and providing an ombudsman to support to new business owners.

### Mt. Airy Business Improvement District

Mt. Airy Business Improvement District (BID) was established in 2007 in East Philadelphia. Mt. Airy BID strives to clean, beautify, and improve the Germantown Avenue commercial district in Mt. Airy so businesses are more successful, commercial properties are more valuable, and residents and visitors can enjoy the benefits of a vibrant community.

It covers a total of 201 properties and the total assessment is \$125,000. Eighty-three percent of the funds come from assessments, whereas other sources of funding include grants (14%) and voluntary contributions (3%). Past projects include: sidewalk cleaning, weed & graffiti removal, installing flower baskets and planters, holiday decorations, SEPTA Depot Park, security lighting, decorative banners, Big Belly Receptacles, parking regulations (increased parking turnover and customer traffic), and the Community Land Care Grant.



Source: <http://www.mtairybid.com/>

## 4.2. Increase visitor flow into the downtown

Currently, El Campo receives a fair share of visitors, but many business owners observe that far more do not stop to stay and visit. Capturing visitors into the downtown is an important component for business success and to promote local culture. This goal can be achieved by strategies outlined below.

### Activating Opportunities

The most common strategy to attract visitors is to provide retail, food, and recreational facilities for families. The City of El Campo can create a mini entertainment district of complimentary activities to establish the downtown as *the* destination.

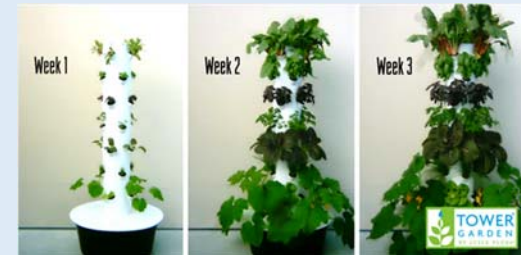
To start, the City and CDC can encourage business owners to increase the hours of operation on weekends and during special events. Research shows that increasing business hours reduces leakage of retail business and increases tax revenues. Additionally, seventy percent of all consumer retail spending occurs after 6:00pm.<sup>1</sup> A special campaign can be organized to advocate the benefits of increasing the business hours to encourage business owners. The City can also consider establishing a loan fund to help businesses hire people to keep doors open longer.

To build on and support the rich farming history of El Campo, the downtown can provide space for a thriving farmer's market. The COOP and citizens can participate in fresh food markets along with a community garden. The responsibility and maintenance can be a partnership between the city, the Chamber of Commerce, and the School districts. Involving the school students in such activities can foster youth civic engagement and attract visitors outside the city.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.rogerbrooksinternational.com/After\\_6pm\\_Handout.pdf](https://www.rogerbrooksinternational.com/After_6pm_Handout.pdf)

### Community Tower Garden

Community tower gardens are an innovative way to incorporate agriculture into a downtown. Instead of simply using a regular, horizontal garden layout, tower gardens allow for multiple plants to be planted on top of each other.



Downtown Community Gardens can be an opportunity for the community to come together as seen in the hybrid school-community garden in Micheltorena, L.A.



Source <http://micheltorena.org/community/garden>



**Community garden:** The proposed plan recommends a community garden on a vacant lot at the intersection of Hiljee St. and North Washington St. The garden is expected to create opportunities to grow food organically and locally. The garden can be developed and maintained by local residents or other groups and grow fruits, vegetables, flowering trees, or herbs. Schools and churches can use the garden to educate and discuss urban agriculture, food security, organic gardening, etc. Grey water and storm water could be utilized for irrigation. Some successful examples include the Deep Eddy Organic Community Garden in Austin, Fulton Community Garden in Portland, and University District P-Patch in Seattle.

#### Do you know how a community garden is beneficial for El Campo?

- Enhances quality of life
- Acts as a catalyst for community development
- Promotes social interaction
- Minimizes family food budgets and a great tool for economic development
- Effects the microclimate of the downtown by absorbing heat

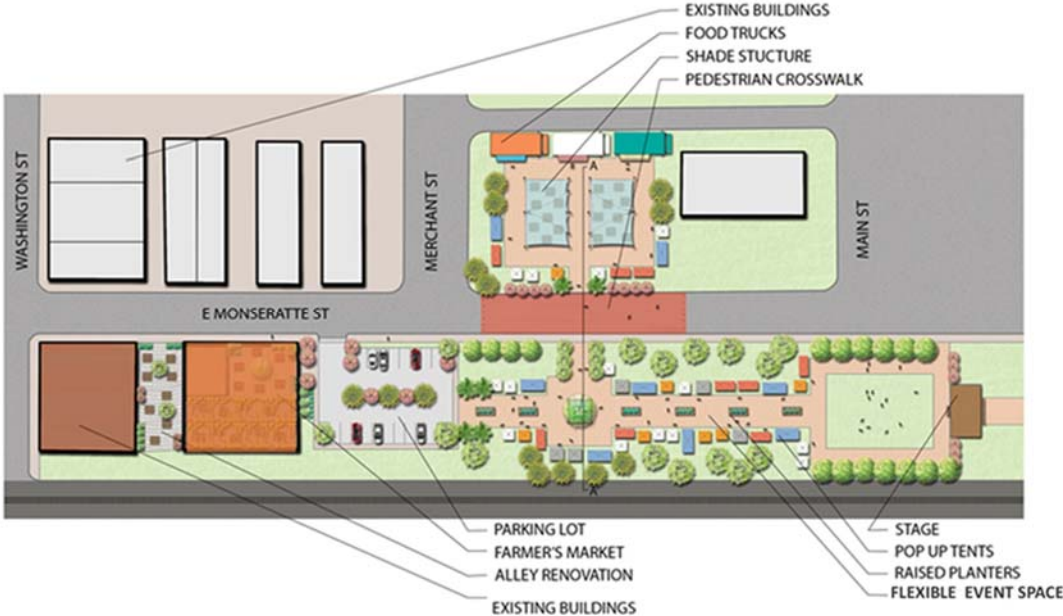
**Farmer's Market:** Another strategy to activate the downtown is through regular farmer's markets. Farmer's markets promote sustainable local food production and increased access to healthy food. It creates a platform for farmers to sell their locally produced fresh vegetables and sustain local small businesses. The proposed farmer's market in Downtown El Campo would stimulate local businesses, economy and encourage healthy lifestyles.

The proposed farmer's market (see fig 4.2) features a pop-up style market space, with tents and canopies. Each vendor stall is 10 feet by 10



**Fig 4.1:** Community Garden

feet or 10 by 30 feet for a tailgate application. The space includes a stage for local music, art or other events. This market space is flexible to host a variety of events and even food trucks. Parking is provided in a nearby lot. While preparing a detailed design, provision for toilets and accessibility should be taken into consideration.



**Fig 4.2:** Proposed Farmers Market and Event Space

### Reuse Historic Buildings

There are a number of communities throughout Texas that do not have the rich architectural and historic resources of El Campo. Projects across the globe have shown the value of historic commercial buildings in attracting new tenants, businesses, and visitors. The Downtown has many historic structures with unique character adding to El Campo's sense of place. Restoration and rehabilitation of these buildings can create a scenic and vibrant downtown. Working together, the CDC and City can establish shopping zones by prioritizing the preservation and revitalization of historic buildings in the downtown.

The City can establish design guidelines and development standards that ensure compatibility of the new developments and renovations with the existing downtown character. New programs that provide cost sharing for building improvement will help property owners with costly upgrades. Additionally, the City can provide tax abatement for property owners that rehabilitate and restore historic buildings.

### Historic Preservation and Downtown Redevelopment in Las Vegas

Main Street Las Vegas, New Mexico was once a popular location for film making with its unique architectural buildings, historic streets, and surrounding country side. Prior to revitalization, the downtown was a low-performing area known for its poor economy. A Downtown Action Plan was created in 2005 with an idea to redevelop a 1.07-mile corridor encompassing three major commercial districts, Old Town, New Town, and Railroad Avenue.

Completed in 2011, the outcomes from the Downtown Action Plan resulted in the creation of mixed-use developments of shops, restaurants, galleries, bookstores, museums, residences, and hotels. A total of 18 new businesses were established and the creation of 181 new jobs into the city which sparked \$12,003,088 in private investments. Listed below are projects taken to achieve the goals listed in the Action Plan:

- Federal and state tax credit assistance to owners renovating buildings
- Technical assistance to small business owners and operators
- Renovation of old sites for art exhibitions, music performances, farmer's market
- Provision of Wi-Fi in downtown & GIS database of local businesses
- Repainting vacant buildings & streetscape improvements



Source: <http://mainstreetlvnm.org/>

In addition, building façade treatment can help activate street life and walkability in the downtown. Façade treatment can include awnings, brick exposure and design elements that reflect the architecture in El Campo. Proposed façade treatment for E Monserrate St. across Evans Park is shown in the Figure 4.3 below.



**Fig 4.3:** Proposed Façade Treatment in E Monserrate Street

Vacant, overgrown lots reduce property values, lower community pride, and reduce the sense of safety in the surrounding area. The condition of existing vacant lots and buildings can be improved through initiating a Vacant Lot Stabilization Program which can include the cleaning and conversion to greenspace. Additionally, the City along with the Chamber of Commerce can work with a local community foundation, the BEEs, a church, or other group to help property owners maintain lots and upgrade building facades. Additionally, a feasibility study to utilize the old theater as a civic, cultural and entertainment center needs to be conducted in the downtown area.

### Market Assets



Murals around the downtown are big assets and can be promoted to attract art enthusiasts and tourists to the downtown.

The City's Economic Development department, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Community Development Corporation (CDC) can assist local businesses through marketing and promotion of the downtown. To start, the City can consolidate the online presence with a unified strategy for the website, social media, and events calendar that are regularly updated. El Campo can look at other websites to create an online "story map" highlighting attractions, historic buildings, art and murals in the downtown area (see text box). The City can invest in rebranding with a new logo and develop event postcards, maps, brochures, and other promotional materials. The city and its partners can help local

### Vacant Lot Revitalization Movement

Cincinnati has recently benefited from a vacant lot revitalization movement. *Keep Cincinnati Beautiful* has modeled their program in accordance with Research conducted by the *Pennsylvania Horticultural Society*, which found that cleaning and greening vacant lots can increase surrounding property values and improve everyday life by reducing gun assaults, reducing vandalism, and encouraging more exercise. Their efforts have resulted in the improvement of 300 vacant lots over the last five years.



Source: <http://www.keepcincinnatibeautiful.org/what-we-do/programs/urban-revitalization/vacant-lot-stabilization.html>

business owners by training them in website development and a social media presence. Additionally, the city can offer internships to local high school or college students to perform regular marketing tasks.

### Story Map

The Historic Downtown of the City of Salem promotes the downtown through an interactive Esri Story Map. IT provides a virtual tour of the downtown and an opportunity to market their many assets. The map contains interesting facts and historic photographs.

**City of Salem's Historic Downtown**  
Discover the charm and stories of Salem's downtown buildings.

**BURKE BUILDING, 1890**  
267 COMMERCIAL STREET SE- This 1890 building, known as the Burke Block is technically outside the boundary of the Historic District by about one block. The earliest use of the building was as a fruit and produce house with the Itsahee Club upstairs. In 1912, this club merged with the Board of Trade. In 1922, the Board of Trade became the first Salem Chamber of commerce.

**BURKE BUILDING, 1890**  
**SHARON OAK HOTEL & PARK, 1910**  
**LADCO & BUSH BANK BUILDING, 1889**  
**CATLIN & LYNN BUILDING, 1906**  
**MANHATTAN COMPANY BUILDING, 1908**  
**BOISE BUILDING, 1913**  
**FORMER WHITE'S BREAD STORE, 1911**  
**SOUTH AID RACE BUILDING, 1910**  
**SALVATION ARMY**  
**10 NATIONAL BANK OF SALEM / PIONEER TRUST**

Resources on creating a story map can be accessed in the Esri website in the following link : <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/en/>.

### 4.3. Summary of Goals and Objectives

#### **Goal 1 - Increased businesses within the downtown to boost economic activity**

**Objective 1.1** – Attract new retail establishments and small businesses through joined efforts of property owners, the Chamber of Commerce, CDC, and the City.

**Objective 1.2** – Support local businesses in the downtown to ensure that they remain part of the market and further their growth.

#### **Goal 2 - Increased flow of people/visitors into the downtown**

**Objective 2.1** – Provide retail, food, and recreational opportunity for families for afternoon/weekend stops at the downtown.

**Objective 2.2** – Create scenic shopping area by preserving and revitalizing historic building in the downtown.

**Objective 2.3** – Increase tourism/ outside visitors by marketing historical buildings, arts, antiques, boutiques, and other assets.

## 5. Housing

Housing located in or near the downtown increases the population and activities. About 70 percent of the City of El Campo's housing market is devoted to single-family residential units. The comprehensive plan for the City of El Campo and feedback from meetings both highlight the need for housing diversity in El Campo. Diversity in housing refers to a variety lot sizes, building forms, occupancy, affordability, and density. Housing diversity ensures the needs of different households and family types (young families, professionals, disabled, retirees, etc.) are met.

### 5.1. Diversity in Housing

#### **Promote Downtown Housing**

Feedback during community meetings indicated a desire to provide additional housing to attract young professionals. Currently, the downtown area devotes only 2.5% to residential use, all of which is single-family housing. The areas surrounding the downtown area allocate 28% to single family housing and only two percent to multifamily housing. Additional forms of housing include upper floor apartments, cottage style homes, tiny houses, granny flats, etc. The City can amend ordinances to allow flexibility of different housing options in the CBD. Amendments can also include rental opportunities, such as Air B&B, granny flats, multi-family housing.

Additionally, utilizing the upper floors of buildings that are either vacant or used as storage can increase the day-time and night time use of the downtown. Uppers floor use can provide an opportunity to increase the property value or generate additional revenue which can be reinvested in the downtown. Or the City and CDC can work together to provide density bonuses or tax abatements to property owners who use upper floors of downtown buildings for residential purposes. Existing vacant and underutilized sites provide an opportunity for infill for creating mixed use buildings. Currently, ten percent of the downtown is vacant lots or buildings, which could be used for private development of residential mixed use spaces. Figure 5.1 shows potential apartment housing within upper floors of the downtown.





Fig 5.1: Potential Housing in Upper floor

**Possible Housing Types around Downtown**

**Floor apartments:** A floor apartment is a unit that occupies the entire floor of a building. This allows residents to enjoy the feel of a single-family home without having to pay the high prices commanded by villas and bungalows.

**Cottage Style Homes:** Cottage style homes are small houses built with the intention of feeling like a larger home. The designs often include dining porches and breakfast alcoves, helping residents to make the most of their limited square footage.

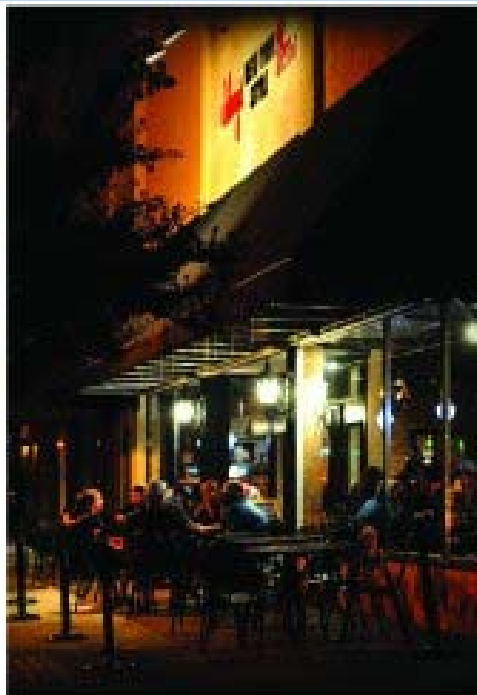
**Tiny homes:** Tiny houses come in all shapes, sizes, and forms, but they enable simpler living in a smaller, more efficient space. The typical American home is around 2,600 square feet, whereas the typical small or tiny house is between 100 and 400 square feet.

**Granny flats:** A small guest house on the same property as the main house that is equipped with full amenities. Granny flats often share the backyard with the main house.

### Downtown Revitalization in Rome, Georgia

Since 1975, Rome's downtown area had lost most of their original businesses to strip commercial development, leading to a 26 percent vacancy rate. In 1981, Rome was chosen for historic preservation and downtown revitalization by the Nation Main Street Program. Throughout the 1980s and 90s, the city and county government invested in downtown to provide public facilities to attract residential and commercial development.

Outcomes of the project included mixed used spaces in downtown of residential and commercial spaces, 156 residential units, about 100 new businesses, and around 200,000 square feet of redeveloped space. By 2012 the occupancy rate had risen to 94 percent. Future plans of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) will focus on tapping the "huge potential for more apartments on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors of downtown buildings."



Source: <https://www.nado.org/vibrant-rural-communities-rome-georgia/>

### 5.2. Summary of Goals and Objectives

**Goal 1** – Create housing options in the downtown for young and old

**Objective 1.1** – Increase housing in and near the downtown

## 6. Transportation

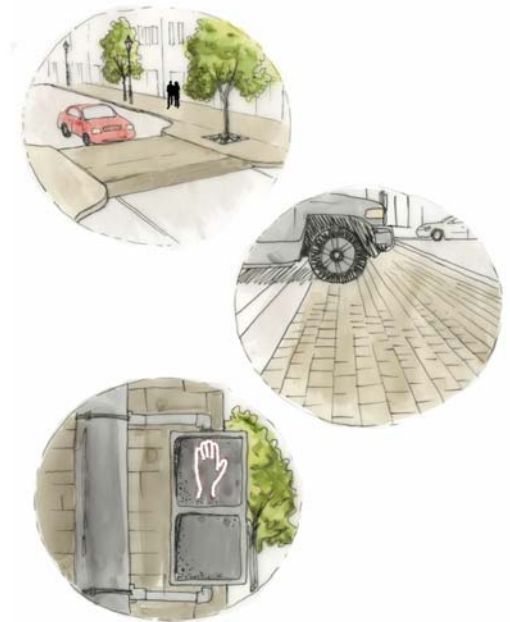
Transportation is key to the overall functionality and aesthetic of a place. As discussed earlier, the El Campo downtown, unlike traditional downtowns, is automobile oriented with wide two-way streets and provision for on-street parking. Community feedback included the limited number and poor condition of sidewalks with few opportunities for alternative modes of transportation (bicycling, public transit, Uber, auto rickshaw, etc.). This chapter focuses on the downtown's vision to enhance walkability. Additionally, it discusses strategies to establish alternative modes of transport to commute to downtown.

### Complete Streets Policy

Complete Streets is a transportation policy and design approach commonly adopted in the United States that signifies "a community's intent to select, design, and build transportation projects that provide safe, attractive transportation options to homes, workplaces, schools, healthcare facilities, civic and cultural centers, and other important destinations" (*Smart Growth America; National Complete Streets Coalition, 2016*). The Complete Streets approach enhances safety and public health and supports equity, while cutting down transportation costs and traffic woes (see text box on Dubuque, Iowa). Complete streets typically include sidewalks, bike lanes, special bus lanes, transit stops, crossings, median islands, pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, roundabouts etc. The following are a few strategies to achieve this goal.

#### 6.1. Enhancing Roadways and Sidewalks

Through a technical analysis, inferences from meetings, and general observations, there are needs to increase walkability in the downtown. The downtown revitalization master plan identifies road upgrades to achieve a walkable, functional, and aesthetically pleasing street (see Chapter 3). To fully execute the conceptual master plan, the City of El Campo can hire a consultant to develop the full designs and construction drawings.



**Fig 6.1:** Sidewalks, curb extensions, pedestrian signals are part of the Complete Streets

The existing street network can be enhanced by providing additional sidewalks, particularly along Alamo St to W Railroad and on E Railroad St to W Railroad. Additionally, shade trees, landscaping and street furniture can improve the experience for pedestrians and as identified within the master plan (see Chapter 3). Additionally, lighting conditions also need to be improved for the safety of pedestrians at night. The city should also develop a maintenance schedule of existing sidewalks.



**Fig 6.2:** Addition of sidewalks and crosswalk can increase walkability as seen in the S Washington St and Railroad intersection

Streets are not merely paths for commuting, but instead shape the success or failure of a place. They play a dominant role in determining the quality and livability of a downtown. This section focuses on the quality of these streets with focus on paving material, hierarchy of streets, street furniture and parking. Streets are of various types based on their use, pattern, features, and transportation priorities. The design of the streets will include provision for vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians—people of all ages and with disabilities.

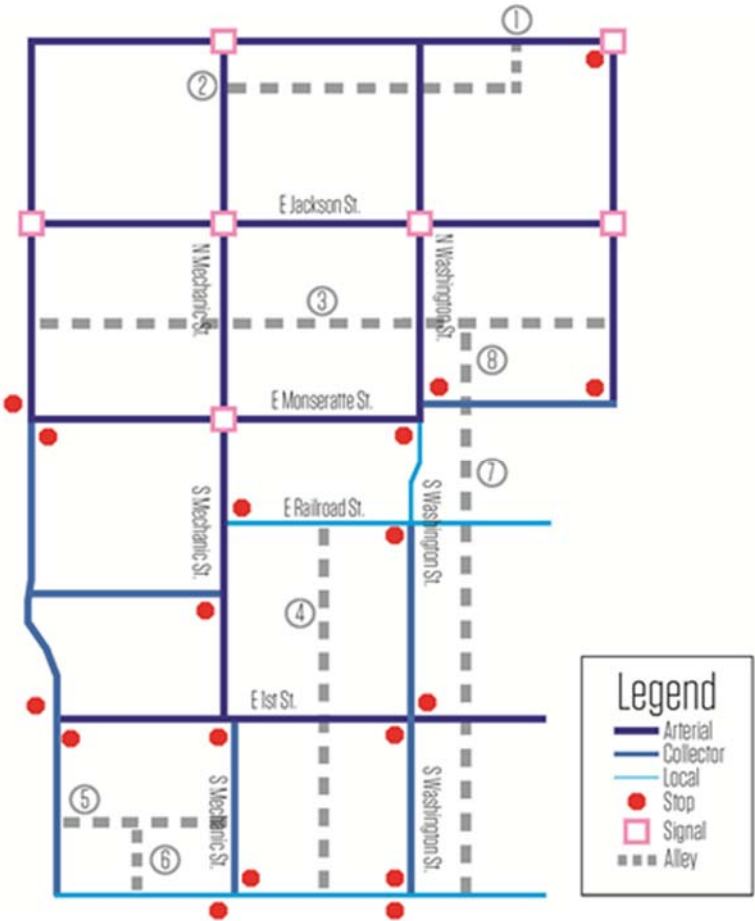
**Street Hierarchy:** The streets within Downtown El Campo have been categorized into three functional classes: Arterial, collector and local (see fig 3.4). The widths do not require the city to acquire any new right-of-way. All streets within the downtown are designed to be two-way. Table 6.1 shows the standard widths for a street network. Figure 6.3 shows the street hierarchy and proposed street configuration.

**Table 6.1: Standard road widths**

Type of Roadway	Rural (Feet)	Urban (Feet)
Freeway	12	12
Ramps	12-30	12-30
Arterial	11-12	10-12
Collector	10-12	10-12
Local	9-12	9-12

**Street Trees:** Though several streets in Downtown El Campo currently have planter boxes, they lack street trees. Streets trees are a great urban design component that can improve the identity and experience of a place. Street trees add texture, color, shade and interest along streets. Street trees also improve the local environmental quality and absorb transportation emissions. The master plan recommends the installation of street trees to reinforce the rhythm of streets within the downtown. The following are design considerations for the city:

- The optimum distance for planting street trees is 30 feet from center to center.
- Trees should not be planted closer than 15 feet from utility poles and driveways and 30 feet from intersections with traffic light or a four way stop.
- If a major street intersects with a neighborhood street using a two-way stop, a minimum of 40 feet must be left from the intersection along major street and 30 feet along the neighborhood street.



**Fig 6.3: Road Classifications for Downtown El Campo**

- As we are planning for street trees in the downtown, low height trees should be used taking into consideration surrounding building heights.

For more information on type of trees suitable for downtown El Campo refer to Appendix D.

**Intersections:** An intersection is a critical juncture along streets. For the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, the current master plan retrofits streets to complete streets design standards for intersections. Some recommendations include:

- Crosswalks should be at least 10 feet in width
- The corner of the sidewalk approaching the intersection should be free of any street furniture.
- Cross walks should be properly marked, possibly with another material.
- Markings should allow vehicles to stop at least at 4 feet in advance of the intersection.
- Provision of curb ramps must be included in the design for the convenience of wheel chair users, elders, strollers, bicyclists etc.

## 6.2. Activating Sidewalks as Public Space

The design of sidewalks should accommodate pedestrians needs with furniture-- garbage bins, seating, trees for shade, lighting, and signage. Table 6.2 shows sidewalk standards along different streets. The planning team recommends the city use the minimum sidewalk widths. The curb zone is a safety buffer adjacent to the street and provides clearance between on-street parking, the road, and the sidewalk. The curb zone would be a minimum of 6 inches and generally accommodates lamp posts or electric poles. The greenscape zone is adjacent to curb zone and contains street furniture or street trees. The pedestrian zone is the unobstructed clear path of the sidewalk. This is the most important part of any sidewalk and the width usually varies depending on the flow of pedestrians. The frontage zone is the area between the building line and pedestrian zone. This area usually acts as a transition space for businesses. It is commonly used by business owners to display their merchandise outdoors or accommodate outdoor seating for customers.

Table 6.2 Sidewalk widths (from the city of Boston/NACTO)

Street Type	Frontage Zone		Pedestrian Zone		Greenscaping/ Furnishing Elements		Curb Zone		Total Width	
	Preferred	Min	Preferred	Min	Preferred	Min	Preferred	Preferred	Min	
<b>Downtown Commercial</b>	2'	0	12'	8'	6'	1'6"	6"	20'6"	10'	
<b>Downtown Mixed-use</b>	2'	0	10'	8'	6'	1'6"	6"	18'6"	10'	
<b>Neighborhood Main</b>	2'	0	8'	5'	6'	1'6"	6"	16'6"	7'	
<b>Neighborhood Connector</b>	2'	0	8'	5'4"	5'	1'6"	6"	15'6"	7'	
<b>Neighborhood Residential</b>	2'	0	5'	5'4"	4'	1'6"	6"	11'6"	7'	
<b>Industrial Street</b>	2'	0	5'	5'4"	4'	1'6"	6"	11'6"	7'	
<b>Shared Street</b>	2'	0	Varies	5'4"	N/A	N/a	N/A	Varies	Varies	
<b>Parkway</b>	N/A	N/A	6'	5'	10'	5'	6"	16'6"	10'6"	
<b>Boulevard</b>	2'	0	6'	5'	10'	5'	6"	18'6"	11'6"	

Sidewalks are integrated into the storefronts as a sort of “front yard.” The utilization of this area can create a vibrant and thriving street. Street vendors and small markets could be part of the street and have dedicated spaces. The city can focus on specific blocks with active businesses and test ideas with a “lighter, quicker, cheaper” philosophy. Incentives can be provided to local business owners who show interest in promoting a lively place. Additionally, the CDC can work with local volunteer groups to host a “working day” to build outdoor street furniture. This strategy helps build a sense of ownership among residents to build the downtown they have envisioned.

### Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper

“Lighter, quicker, cheaper” is a phrase framed by Project for Public Space(PPS) inspired by Eric Reynolds’s ideas of using short term, low-cost and high impact strategies to drive economic renewal in under-utilized spaces.

Other popular terms for this approach: action-planning, guerilla urbanism, pop-up projects, city repair, D.I.Y. Urbanism, and Tactical Urbanism.

More information at : <https://www.pps.org/reference/lighter-quicker-cheaper/>



Photo by: LADOT/Jim Simmons, Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/ladotpeoplest/10175798453/in/photostream/>

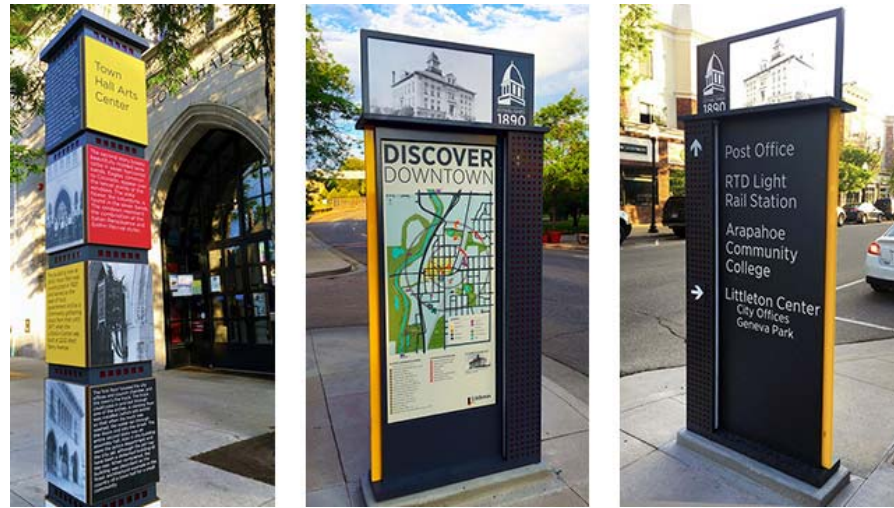
The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council installed temporary Spring Street parklet in downtown Los Angeles to inform the development of a City-wide parklets program through lessons learned. Parklets are small green space with seating area created on sidewalks or on roadside parking space to create vibrant public space. Temporary installations using LQC approach can be a beneficial technique to experiment before making permanent installations and to foster future investment in the area.



### 6.3. Wayfinding and Navigation

It is crucial for first time visitors to find their way around to key public buildings and other historic, retail, and cultural spaces. Improving wayfinding and navigation can increase safety, accessibility and efficiency. An efficient wayfinding system enhances the overall experiences for a visitor in the place. Wayfinding could be improved by installing directional signs at intersections and boards with bike/pedestrian routes. The placement of signage is important at gateway locations to enhance first impressions and the sense of arrival. In addition, the City can partner with the Independent School District and Chamber of Commerce to create a team of street ambassadors whose primary responsibility is to assist visitors.

#### Downtown Signage



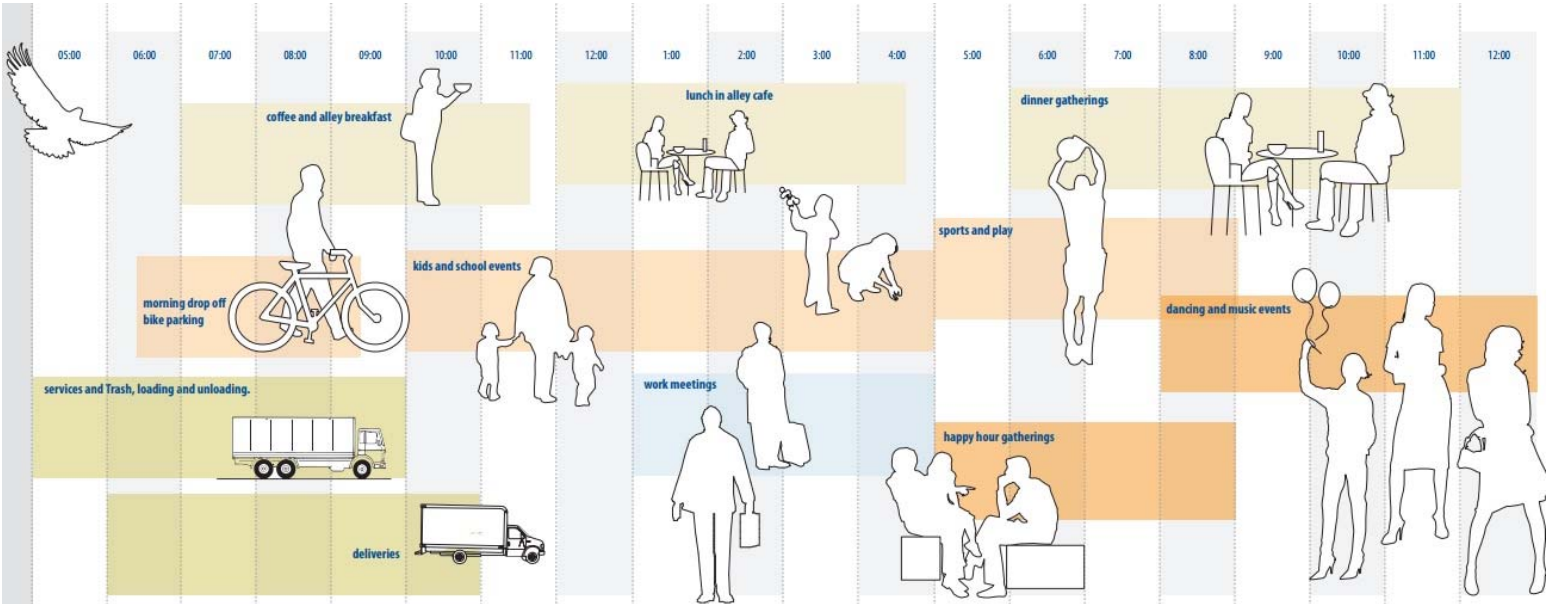
Source: <https://www.littletongov.org/home/showdocument?id=4899>

The Signage of the Historic Downtown Littleton, Colorado was voted as most preferred signage in the visual preference survey conducted during the planning meeting. The signage plan was created through stakeholder and community input to increase navigation and accessibility to resources in the downtown. The El Campo downtown would also benefit from planning, design and execution of a signage and wayfinding project.

### 6.4. Activating Alleyways

Currently, the downtown has an array of alleys which only serve as loading and service zones. These arteries can be transformed into vibrant public spaces for different activities, while maintaining their existing purpose. Pedestrianizing the alleys during certain times of day, encourages walkability and can act as a secondary circulation route for pedestrians. This can be an opportunity to explore art and murals in the public space by utilizing the alleys as canvases to extend art in the city.

Additionally, proper lighting, decorations, and seating spaces can activate alleys. They can be used during events or shopping and arts festivals. Alleys can be used during night time to develop night life in the downtown with food and music events.



Source : Seattle Integrated Alley Handbook Activating Alleys for a Lively City

The proposed master plan identifies alleyways as spaces to promote civic life, encourage businesses, and enhance walkability in the downtown.

Alleyways have great potential to transform the overall experience in a city. El Campo would benefit from alleyways in the following manner:

- Expanded connectivity and walkability in the area
- Improved safety
- Revival of public space
- Highlights historical assets
- Encouragement of small and local business establishments
- A great space to celebrate art, culture, heritage, history and events
- Healthier and eco-friendly by encouraging local plants and green corridors

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*"An Alley is a narrow path for service that has great potential to stimulate public life, interpersonal commerce and enhanced ecological function. "*

- *Seattle Integrated Alley Handbook*



**Fig 6.6:** View of Proposed Alleyways in El Campo Downtown



**Fig 6.7:** View of Proposed Alleyways in El Campo Downtown

The master plan proposes to upgrade and mark specific boundaries for alleyways across Downtown. Figure 6.8 presents a key map of the eight Alleyways proposed for revitalization in Downtown El Campo. These alleyways range from 35 to 18 feet in width. Table 6.3 below presents detailed widths for each.

Table 6.3: Downtown alley widths

Alley	Width (in feet)
1	34
2	23
3	30
4	23
5	23
6	23
7	28
8	18

The following are proposed design considerations to enhance alleys in El Campo:

- **Paving:** The choice of paving material(s) creates a powerful impact on the aesthetics, function and environmental quality of the proposed alleyways. It is optimal to use a mix of paving materials: concrete for access to service vehicles, permeable material to absorb rain/surface water, reflective materials to absorb heat during summer, and recycled materials to reduce the overall cost of the project.
- **Lighting:** Lighting plays a significant role in enhancing the quality and safety of a space. The city could look at examples to create artful elements



Fig 6.8: Proposed Activated Alleys for Downtown El Campo

using lighting. Use of energy efficient LED lights and solar lights should be encouraged.

- **Canopies:** Canopies are a great way to add interest in alleys. Canopies create shading and comfort for users and establish a sense of place.
- **Plants:** Adding greenery in the alleyways improves the air quality and aesthetical appearance. Use of potted plants and window boxes would be easy for a quick and cheap installation. Additionally, it improves the overall quality for pedestrians by providing shade during summer.
- **Facades:** Facades facing alleyways could be enhanced to create architectural interest. These facades could act as secondary entrances to businesses.
- **Identity:** Alleyways can have their own distinct identify with different materials, colors, and alley names.
- **Furniture:** Adding furniture elements to alleyways such as bicycle parking stations, seating, dining areas, etc., will convert alleyways to usable spaces and not just pass-through spaces.
- **Water run-off:** Often, water from roofs during rain gets collected into the alleyways. El Campo could look at installing using cisterns, rain gardens, and bioswales for collecting, filtering or reusing water.



**Fig 6.9:** Alleyways as outdoor shopping area

## 6.5. Accessibility for Cyclists

Bicycling has become a reliable and viable mode of transportation in today's world. Cycling is a healthy and economically-friendly mode of transportation that compliments the downtown. TxDOT and the City of El Campo can work together to develop and provide sharrows (bike lanes shared with vehicular lanes)(see textbox: Complete Streets Policy Dubuque, Iowa). Additionally, the city should work on creating a city-wide bike plan.

As the new revitalization plan strives to promote downtown activities, it is crucial for the city to think about bicycle facilities. Provision of bike stations at several locations within downtown could enable the public to use multiple modes of

transportation. The minimum dimensions for bicycle parking is 6 feet by 2 feet. Potential bike racks and parking areas are identified in the master plan (see Chapter 3). After adoption, the city shall work on maintaining the infrastructure.

## 6.6. Transportation Options

Most communities include residents that need alternative forms of transportation. Residents have discussed their need for alternative transportation options to the downtown. The City, with the help of the CDC, needs to perform a transportation needs assessment of the downtown area. The City can consider providing transportation options such as carpooling and taxi services, while simultaneously working on the connectivity of public transportation. The city can partner with non-profit organizations to establish a community driven ride-sharing company or request service from service providers like Uber, Lyft, etc.

## 6.7. Parking

**Vehicular Parking:** The majority of roadways in the downtown currently have on-street parking. During the various community meetings, the residents expressed the need for more parking within downtown. Residents and business owners have also expressed the need for additional parking. As the city infills and develops vacant lots, it should consider the need for additional parking for events and daily activities. Additionally, the city can consider shared parking areas for multiple businesses to use throughout the day. The city should also consider parking meters along streets, where funds from the meters are utilized for improvements in the CBD area. The city should consider minimum parking requirements and to be adjusted as per demand. The dimensions of the parking must maintain a minimum of 18 feet by 9 feet with a 45-degree angled parking. Also, the city needs to make sure there is one accessible parking provided for every 25 parking spaces. Dimensions for a loading dock must maintain a minimum of 10 feet by 35 feet.

### Complete Streets Policy Dubuque, Iowa

The City of Dubuque's Complete Streets Policy was adopted in 2011. It was implemented in the Historic Millwork District of Iowa and reached completion in 2012. This project is an example of how complete streets efforts often emerge through on-going community planning initiatives. The key purpose of this project was to rebuild streets in the district with high-quality streetscapes, modern utilities, on-street parking, artistic elements, storm water management features, preservation of old railroad tracks, etc.

The total cost of the project was \$7.7 million of which \$5.6 million was funded by the Federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant. The rest of it was supported by the Iowa Great Places grant. This project was designed to enhance safety and accessibility (handicap) in streets for drivers, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians.



Source: <http://www.cityofdubuque.org/2351/Complete-Streets-Project>

## 6.8. Bioswale

A bioswale is an environmental friendly alternative for water drainage. It typically includes native plants, small rocks and soil. Bioswales improve the aesthetic and environmental quality of rain water. Bioswales can be used in parking lot medians and islands, residential roadside swales, highway medians, landscape buffers, etc. These need not necessarily be newly developed, but can be equipped into existing infrastructure. Another advantage is that swales are cost effective as compared to traditional gutter systems.

### Do you know how Bioswales are beneficial for El Campo?

- Filters collected water and therefore improves quality using natural methods
- Reduction of storm water run off
- Boosts ground water level
- Multifunctional conveyance system
- Aesthetically pleasing
- Improves biodiversity



**Fig 6.10:** Proposed Bioswale along the railway line

The proposed master plan recommends installing bioswales along the railway line right-of-way and also in parking islands. A minimum of 42 feet on either side of the railroad track must be included in the right-of-way as a buffer zone, which could include the bioswale. The right-of-way for the railroad track is 18 feet, or a total of 60 feet with the buffer zone. The bioswale should maintain a minimum depth of 2 feet 6 inches and a width of



2 feet 8 inches. This swale will enable the city to maintain the track during the rainy season. The City should collaborate with professionals in the field for a detailed design, implementation and maintenance of these bioswales. Some design considerations include:

- Soil quality must be tested before application. Areas with well drained soils are perfect for bioswales.
- An underground drain system must be planned for areas with poorly drained soils.
- Use of local native plants that absorb high amounts of water must be encouraged.
- Outlet should be designed to facilitate high flow bypass.
- The wider the swale, the better. More water is absorbed by wider swales
- The City should educate the public about swales and how they should avoid walking on them.



**Fig 6.11:** Proposed Bioswale section along the railway line

## 6.9. Summary of Goals and Objectives

**Goal 1** – Complete streets policy to account for everyone using the roads including pedestrian, bicyclist and vehicular traffic.

**Objective 1.1** – Enhance roadways and sidewalks.

**Objective 1.2** - Improve wayfinding and navigation for shoppers and walkers.

**Objective 1.3** – Create opportunities to utilize downtown sidewalks and alleys for alternate uses by businesses through seating, and cooling mechanism.

**Objective 1.4** – Provide accessibility for cyclist to the downtown

**Objective 1.5** – Consider options such as rickshaw and carpooling (Ubers) or taxi service to the downtown.

**Objective 1.6** – Enhance parking in the downtown

**Objective 1.7** – Consider bioswale in the downtown along the railway line

## 7. Events

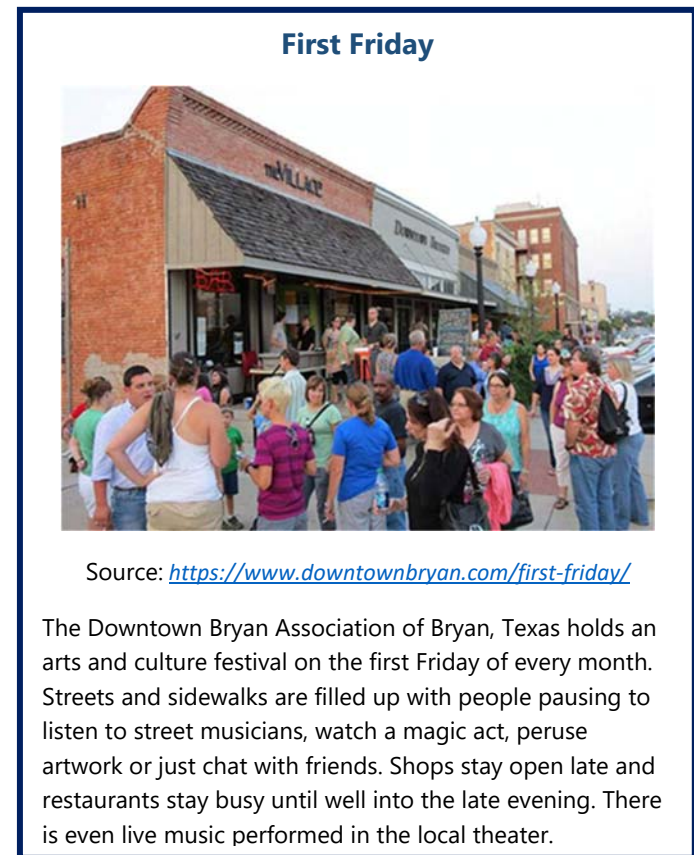
Feedback from surveys and discussions with residents indicate the variety of existing community events. However, the community desires additional activities and recreational options. The city of El Campo envisions a downtown with yearlong events that attract visitors of all ages that celebrate the community. These events can include recreation, art, or crafts, and feature local businesses.

### 7.1. Events to celebrate community

Downtown events are critical to the health and well-being of a community. Events enhance social interaction, revive public spaces, and enhance the public realm. The type of events carried out reveal the character or identity of the city.

#### Celebrating Unique Events

Community members expressed a strong desire to have year-round events in the downtown area to attract visitors of different ages. In addition, the survey results summarized in the City of El Campo's Comprehensive Plan Report also highlighted residents strong interest in more events. Events with different themes can be organized at various locations in the downtown. The CDC should develop a list of events per year and market them at a regional level to gain attraction. Cultural events, block party/street events, wine festivals, culinary/food festival etc. are a few ideas. El Campo can look at hosting "First Friday" monthly events highlighting their culture. Entertainment nights could be planned every month in Evans Park. Street art or architectural installations at public spaces and parks could be used to enhance community events. The city can encourage re-opening the theater group by identifying key leadership and featuring them at 'First Friday' events.



Source: <https://www.downtownbryan.com/first-friday/>

The Downtown Bryan Association of Bryan, Texas holds an arts and culture festival on the first Friday of every month. Streets and sidewalks are filled up with people pausing to listen to street musicians, watch a magic act, peruse artwork or just chat with friends. Shops stay open late and restaurants stay busy until well into the late evening. There is even live music performed in the local theater.

### Opportunities for Artists, Craftsmen and Local Businesses

These events could also be used as a platform to showcase the talents and skills of local artists, craftsmen, and local business owners etc. The city can provide necessary flexible spaces for events that can have multiple usages. Additionally, the city can partner with local art programs or educational institutions to enhance activities in the downtown. The city and art league can establish an original art mural program that identifies and commissions local artists for the beautification of the downtown.

### Partnerships

Events are most successful through partnerships and collaborations. The city can partner with surrounding cities, as well as, the county for a unified event schedule to build on and leverage the assets of the region. Coordination between different events happening around the region can be helpful to bring more tourists by organizing complimentary events. Also, the promotion and marketing is most efficient when with it is a coordinated effort. Grapevine, TX partners with local businesses for their annual Grapefest (see textbox: Partnerships for events).

### Enhancing Storefronts

Well designed and maintained storefronts enhance the identity of a commercial district. Storefront improvements make a street safe, stable and thriving. The physical environment could be enhanced by encouraging storefronts to have decorative lights during festivals. For example, the city can implement programs and incentives that recognize and award the 'best decorated building' in the downtown during events. See the text box below on how the City of Greenville, Kentucky helped improve their aesthetic appeal.

### Partnerships for events



Source: <https://www.grapevinetexasusa.com/grapefest/>

Grapevine, Texas hosts an annual street fair called "Grapefest", in which the city partners with several wineries, businesses, and social clubs to put on a four-day street fair. Local businesses open up booths all along the street as hundreds of visitors enjoy live entertainment, wine tasting, and a festive atmosphere.

### Marketing Downtown Events

A successful event typically includes a successful marketing campaign. The City, Chamber of Commerce, or other partner can appoint a special officer to coordinate with local businesses and nonprofits to create a unified calendar of downtown events. Additionally, the city may consider a yearly calendar of events to keep the public updated through social media campaigns, the website, local newspaper, and radio.

#### Downtown Redevelopment in Greenville, Kentucky

Greenville Downtown originally had deteriorated sidewalks, vacant storefronts, and dilapidated buildings. Main Street Revitalization plan created in 2007 included downtown redevelopment, streetscape improvements, green space preservation and establishment of festival programming.

The redevelopment plan included projects like “Let’s Paint the Town” which involved citizens to restore old buildings by painting their facades, installation of outdoor speakers and neon & running lights. The outcomes of the project were the redevelopment of the Main Street in downtown to be a space of gathering for social events. The city hosts “Saturdays on the Square” for free summer music series featuring live bands; more than 8,000 people have gathered for the music festival. Other popular events include Twilight Antique Car Show, Squash & Gobble Arts Bazaar and Fall Festival, The Clodhopper Vintage Tractor Show, etc.



Source: <https://www.nado.org/facades-festivals-and-footpaths-greenville-kentuckys-downtown-redevelopment/>

## 7.2. Summary of Goals and Objectives

**Goal 1** – Yearlong Events in the downtown attracting visitors of all ages to celebrate the community.

**Objective 1.1** – Creating unique events in various locations in the downtown

**Objective 1.2** – Create opportunities for artists, craftsmen, and local business owners for events at downtown sidewalk venues and Evans Park Space.

**Objective 1.3** – Partner with surrounding counties through coordinated efforts and unified vision.

**Objective 1.4** – Enhance storefront with decoration lights during all festivals.

**Objective 1.5** – Promote and market the events in the downtown to attract visitors and residents.

## 8. Public Space

Public spaces are not just well-designed physical locations, but the soul of any city where the sense of belonging is fostered and the social bonds are strengthened. It is crucial for the downtown to have more public spaces to bring people together and enhance local identity. El Campo aims to enhance existing public spaces and create diverse activities.

### 8.1. Vibrant Public Spaces

Surveys and community feedback indicated a strong enthusiasm to enhance public spaces in the downtown. Public spaces such as parks, open spaces, gardens, etc., create a relaxing and welcoming atmosphere. Jackson, MI revitalized their downtown by increasing outdoor public gathering spaces (see the textbox below for more information).

#### Spaces for Rest and Reflection

Public parks, green spaces, and water features are great public spaces that provide relaxation and encourage physical activity. The City, in collaboration with business owners, can work to provide outdoor seating areas in existing and proposed public spaces. Additionally, El Campo can provide a shaded outdoor study areas and attractive conversation spaces. Public art or architectural installations can be used along with walking mural trails, charge stations, oversized Jenga, Scrabble sets, etc. (see textbox below: Games and Activities in Downtown Sulphur Springs). The City and CDC can work together to create spaces for children through playground facilities, squirt pads, etc. Another popular strategy to attract visitors is the provision of Wi-Fi in downtown public spaces.

#### Parks and Public Spaces

To begin, existing parks, plazas, squares and other public spaces should be maintained and upgraded. To test new ideas before making larger upgrade investments, the City can look at “lighter, quicker, and cheaper” approaches that are already successful across the globe for creating public spaces (see more in textbox in Chapter 6).



The parks in the downtown area can be enhanced to create more activities in the downtown area.

Community residents expressed a need for public restrooms in the downtown (see recommended location in fig 3.1). Along with installing new restrooms, the City, CDC, or other party can partner with merchants to utilize existing restrooms as a cost saving strategy. Public restrooms should be clearly marked and incorporated into downtown maps and navigation materials. In the city of Manistee, public restrooms were provided within infill spaces between buildings (see textbox below: Restroom in Downtown Manistee). The restroom facility that would benefit downtown visitors and enhance the overall experience of downtown users, especially, families with kids, older population, bicyclists, late night crowds, etc. The proposed restroom facilities need to be ADA compliant. The most commonly encountered problem with creating public restrooms is safety and maintenance. See fig 3.1 for possible locations for public restrooms.

### Restroom in Downtown Manistee



Source:

<http://www.manisteemi.gov/Facilities/Facility/>

The City of Manistee constructed Public Restrooms designed to fit the Historic Buildings in the downtown in between spaces at infill locations.

### Games and Activities in Downtown Sulphur Springs



Source: <http://www.sulphurspringstx.org/visitors/downtown.php>

Sulphur Springs completed a downtown revitalization effort, transforming a parking lot into a park. The park includes a splash pad, landscaping, games, and seating to create a vibrant space. Oversize games in the downtown provide a fun activity for all ages.



### ***Designing and Activating Public Spaces, Jackson, Mississippi***

Jackson, MI is a major transportation and commerce hub, whose downtown has been recently transitioning into a mixed-use community. The city has established several cultural and educational organizations near the Jackson Convention Complex, but the downtown lacked outdoor public gathering spaces despite redevelopment. A 1.2-acre parking lot was redeveloped into an open public park with lawn and performance space. This area serves as a venue for the museum and other area arts groups to hold public performances and programs to engage arts with the community and visitors.

The approach of providing diverse programs by collaborating with diverse partnerships was a key strategy in attracting new visitors outside Jackson. Outcomes: 67 percent of people attending evening and weekend events do not live or work in downtown Jackson. A survey revealed extreme satisfaction by 99 percent of respondents. 19 percent of visitors were first comers. Over 50 percent of the respondents heard about the event from the word-of-mouth.



Source: <https://www.arts.gov/exploring-our-town/art-garden>

## 8.2. Parks and Open Spaces

Parks and gardens are hotspots in downtowns and powerful assets within a community. Parks bring to together people from diverse backgrounds, generations, and cultures and create recreational opportunities residents and visitors. Often, these green spaces are connected to food vendors, art and events. The master plan illustrates the proposed dedication garden and community garden and how existing Alamo and Evans Park (fig 3.1).

**Parks:** The proposed revitalization plan includes features to upgrade the existing Alamo and Evans Parks (see fig 8.1 and 8.4) to boost the overall identity of the downtown. Alamo Park is redesigned to create space for a children’s play area, trails, and seating etc. These parks could also act as spaces to promote art, culture and history by creating space for permanent public artworks, and sculptures to create a dynamic counterpoint to the open space. The design would strive to create beauty and interest using elements such as lawn patterns, trees, water bodies, seating, shade, etc. The city can include kiosks to attract more visitors. These parks will be linked to existing sidewalks, alleyways and pedestrian paths for a continuous street network.

**Dedication Garden:** A dedication garden is proposed adjacent to the Post Office (see fig 8.3). As the name suggests, this garden provides space for residents to plant trees or shrubs (preferring flowering varieties) in dedication to loved ones. This garden includes seating and pedestrian paths to encourage social interaction. This garden acts a memorial space, relaxation space, and landmark in the downtown. The City can partner with public and private schools, boy scouts, girl scouts, or other groups to help maintain the garden.



**Fig 8.1:** Proposed design for Alamo Park with playground and Dedication Garden



**Fig 8.2:** Rendering of the Alamo Park play ground



**Fig 8.3:** Dedication garden



Fig 8.4: Evans Park Design

### 8.3. Summary of Goals and Objectives

**Goal 1** – Enhanced public space in the downtown for various activities

**Objective 1.1** – Create spaces for rest and reflection for citizens and visitors of all ages.

**Objective 1.2** – Enhance existing parks and public space.

## 9. Implementation

Implementation is the process of turning strategies and plan proposals into actions to achieve the strategic goals and objectives. The Downtown Revitalization Plan sets forth a roadmap for development. Only by formal adoption of the plan, the development is ensured in the area and the efforts will have a lasting impact. This chapter describes in detail a roadmap for the implementation of the revitalization plan to accomplish the listed goals. It presents the recommended Implementation Action Agenda, which is intended to help the City of El Campo organize and initiate the plan implementation process.

### 9.1. Overview of the Action Plan

The action plan summarized in the table below emphasizes the implementation of the revitalization plan. An overview of the implementation elements is described below:

- **Action Steps** are a list of major projects or action steps that need to be undertaken for fulfilling the development goals and objectives.
- **Priority** for each project, based upon a 10-year horizon and three implementation phases are marked against each action item.
- A list of possible **sources of funding** and assistance programs that would help to finance the implementation of key projects are mentioned.
- **Responsible parties** and possible partners for initiating and participation in the project are identified for each action step.

### 9.2. Projects/Action Steps

The action plan provides a summary of the development recommendations for Downtown El Campo. Recommendations are grouped into five focus categories:

- Businesses
- Housing

- Transportation
- Events and
- Public Spaces

To achieve each objective, the plan has a list of projects or action steps to be taken. Action steps are projects/tasks whose progress can be measured and have a deadline or specific date of completion. Every task has a specific party/parties responsible for the completion of this task. Successful completion and execution of these projects help in achieving the bigger developmental goals.

It should be emphasized that this is only the summary of recommendations prepared during the downtown planning process. Other sections of the plan provide more detailed descriptions of the various planning and policy recommendations.

### 9.3. Priority Schedule

This revitalization plan's vision to see development in downtown El Campo cannot happen all at once. The goals of this plan are expected to be implemented within ten years. But, it is strongly recommended to have a review and update of the project list and their priorities annually.

The action plan suggests three priority phases for project implementation, as described below. However, the implementation schedule should be flexible and can be updated to reflect the changing needs, conditions and preferences of the area and people.

- **Short term** projects are those which need to be undertaken within the next one-two years.
- **Medium term** projects are expected to be completed during the next one to five years, although some may begin immediately after the adoption of the plan.
- **Long term** projects are expected to be completed during the next five to ten-year period.

Citizens and everyone involved should be aware that some projects may move forward or backward, depending on the changes in market conditions, funding sources and local priorities.

## 9.4. Responsible Parties

The success of the implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Plan depends primarily on two main factors: responsible parties and partnerships. The contribution of the City of El Campo, public agencies, local business community, neighborhood groups and organizations, and the private sector both individually and combined are required for the successful implementation of this plan.

Following are the key participants involved in the implementation of the revitalization plan:

### City of El Campo

The city takes a leadership role in implementing the revitalization plan. It will serve as an administrative body in carrying out public improvement projects listed in the plan. Additionally, the city is expected to provide and monitor financial and technical assistance programs to local business owners, residents and developers. The city shall ensure all codes, ordinances and enforcement procedures complement and support the new plan. It can serve as a coordinator of private initiatives and cooperate with other local agencies and organizations to carry out developmental activities.

### Other Participants

Though the city takes up the leadership role during implementation of the plan, other agencies, organizations and institutions will also participate and are responsible in many projects. During the plan process meeting in February 2017, citizens identified parties responsible for each action step. The identified responsible parties and their role is described in detail below:

- **Chamber of Commerce:** The Chamber of Commerce will continue to play a key role in marketing and promoting the Downtown. It is expected to actively take part in organizing and monitoring the development efforts. It can offer financial and technical support for certain projects. Additionally, it should convey the needs of the business community in the downtown area to the City.
- **Community Development Corporation (CDC):** Community Development Corporations, known as CDCs are defined by HUD as “non-profit, community-based organizations.” The prime motive of these CDCs is to revitalize low-income or underserved/disinvested neighborhood. They are involved in range of community development activities such as providing affordable housing, economic development, streetscaping, education and social services. The key role of CDC in the revitalization of Downtown El Campo is described below:



- Provide training and lending for small businesses
  - Develop, own and manage retail and commercial properties and housing available for rent or sale to low and moderate income residents
  - Other duties as required
- **Downtown Stakeholder Group:** A downtown stakeholder group was identified in Chapter 2 whose continued involvement, support and stewardship are vital to the success of the revitalization plan. They are expected to be actively involved in the daily activities of the Downtown. This group should play a key role in the planning, development and operation of downtown. Additionally, it should focus on retail business development and events in the downtown area.
  - **Local agencies and Service districts:** Active contribution and backing of the El Campo Historic Commission, International School Districts, and other institutions will be crucial for the successful implementation of community facilities and service recommendations proposed in the plan.
  - **Other governmental organizations:** Certain projects and actions require the involvement and support of country, state and federal agencies including the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC), and others.
  - **Local business and institutions:** Institutions and individual business owners should continue to maintain their properties while adapting to the overall proposed guidelines and objectives. Special events, activities or improvement projects that benefit the downtown could be initiated and sponsored by existing businesses and institutions.
  - **Local lending institutions:** Local lending institutions can provide active and direct support for upgrading existing properties and facilitating redevelopment. Lenders can plan special programs for building enhancements and repairs, and can also help finance redevelopment projects within the Downtown.
  - **Builders and developers:** Private builders and developers can be recruited to renovate existing deteriorated buildings and undertake new construction that complies with the proposed plan, therefore, enhancing the overall quality and character of Downtown El Campo.

- **El Campo community:** It should be emphasized that Downtown serves – and is an integral part of the City of El Campo. Therefore, all residents and neighborhood groups should be encouraged to take part in the revitalization process. Their inputs and opinions on major development decisions within the area is key to planning and implementation. The community should actively volunteer to carry out the development activities.

The action plan indicates the role of El Campo and a list of other parties responsible for the implementation of the action plan. However, this list only represents major parties and therefore, others may also get involved.

### 9.5. Partnerships

Partnerships are key to successful planning and implementation of projects. Partnerships are made in different forms – public private partnerships (PPP), partnerships among public agencies or governmental bodies, and among private organizations. The El Campo revitalization project would benefit by establishing partnerships with different organizations/authorities. Listed below are few ways in which this project would benefit from having successful partners:

- Enhanced efficiency by pooling resources and sharing risks
- Assure various factors and issues are considered in the planning process
- Enhanced economic and time efficiency
- Mutual understanding of interests, roles and responsibilities
- Integrated planning approach

During the Survey Result Discussion and Partnership meeting conducted on February 16, 2017, possible partners to carry out the various projects listed in the implementation plan were identified. As the plan is being implemented, other parties for collaborating can be identified.

### 9.6. Funding Sources

Following are the list of funding sources that El Campo could look at for the implementation of the projects outlined in the implementation plan.

## A. Funding Sources to achieve Business related goals

### **Texas Capital Fund (Rural)**

Grantor: Texas Department of Agriculture

Purpose: Supports rural business development, retention and expansion by providing funds for public infrastructure, real estate development, or the elimination of deteriorated conditions.

Eligibility: see program website

More information: <http://texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/TexasCapitalFund.aspx>

### **Small Business Administration Loan Programs**

Grantor: U.S. Small Business Administration

Purpose: General Small Business Loans, Microloan Program, Real Estate & Equipment Loans, and Disaster Loans.

More information: <http://www.sba.gov/loanprograms>

### **Small Business Innovation Research Program**

Grantor: US Small Business Administration

Purpose: funds the critical startup and development stages of Small Business. It targets the entrepreneurial sector.

Eligibility: Small businesses that are American owned and independently operated, for-profit, principle researcher employed by business and company size limited to 500 employees.

Limitations: Funding awarded in three phases, up to \$750,000.

More Information: <https://www.sbir.gov/>

### **Rural Economic Development Program**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Purpose: Finance economic development and job creation in rural areas

Eligibility: Any area excluding cities with populations over 50,000

Limitations: up to \$300,000 in grants, up to \$1 million in loans, 10 years at 0%

More information: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-economic-development-loan-grant-program>

### **Business Improvement Districts**

Grantor: Housing and Economic Development

Purpose: for a range of services and/or programs, including marketing and public relations, improving the downtown marketplace or city/town center, capital improvements, public safety enhancements, and special events

More Information: <http://www.mass.gov/hed/community/planning/bid.html>

### **Intermediary Relending Program**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Purpose: Finance business facilities and community development projects in rural areas.

Eligibility: Rural areas and incorporated places with populations of less than 25,000

Limitations: Interest rate 1% maximum term is 30 years, \$250,000 maximum loan

More information: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/intermediary-re lending-program>

### **Business & Industry Program**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Purpose: Create jobs and stimulate rural economies by providing financial backing for rural businesses.

Eligibility: any area, excluding cities, with a population over 50,000

Limitations: government or military employees may not own more than 20%, interest rate changes

More information: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-industry-loan-guarantees>

### **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Purpose: Formula grants for local governments to carry out community and economic development activities.

Eligibility: State allocated

Limitations: Apportioned to States by a formula

More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>

### **Rural Economic Development Program**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Purpose: Finance economic development and job creation in rural areas

Eligibility: Any area excluding cities with populations over 50,000

Limitations: up to \$300,000 in grants, up to \$1 million in loans, 10 years at 0%

More information: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-economic-development-loan-grant-program>

### **Certified Local Government Grants (CLG)**

Grantor: U.S. Department of the Interior

Purpose: Support and strengthen local preservation activities by encouraging communities to develop an action plan. CLG are mainly grants for the development of historic preservation programs, but they can also be used for the preparation of architecture drawings, façade studies, and condition assessments.

More Information: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hpg/local/clg.html>  
<https://www.nps.gov/clg/>  
<https://www.nps.gov/preservation-grants/community-grants.html>

### **The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program**

Grantor: The National Park Service and the Internal Revenue Service in partnership with State Historic Preservation Offices.

Purpose: Encourages private sector investment in the rehabilitation and re-use of historic buildings.

Limitations: over \$62 billion in private investment to preserve 38,000 historic properties since 1976.

For more information: <http://www.nps.gov/tps/taxincentives.html>

<https://www.nps.gov/TPS/tax-incentives.htm>

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More Information: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hpg/local/clg.html>

<https://www.nps.gov/clg/>

<https://www.nps.gov/preservation-grants/community-grants.html>

## **B. Funding Sources to achieve Housing related goals**

### **Sustainable Communities Research Grant Program**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Purpose: Research grants to support cutting-edge research on issues related to sustainability, including affordable housing development and preservation, transportation-related issues, economic development and job creation, land use planning and urban design, etc.

Eligibility: Academic researchers

Limitations: \$2.5 million, max grant \$500,000

More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>

### **The Multi-family (Rental Housing) Development Program**

Grantor: provides funding to units of General Local Governments, Public Housing Authorities, nonprofits, and for-profit entities towards the new construction or rehabilitation of affordable multifamily rental developments.

Eligibility: Development funds are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis through an application process.

More information: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/home/index.htm>

### **Sustainable Communities Community Challenge Grants (renamed Integrated Planning and Investment Grants in HUD FY14 budget)**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Purpose: Support plans, codes and ordinances that incentivize mixed-use development, affordable housing, re-use of existing buildings and other sustainability goals.

Eligibility: Local governments, transit agencies, port authorities, MPOs, state governmental agencies

Limitations: Subject to appropriations; FY10 \$68 million (\$40 million for Challenge, \$28 million for TIGER II); FY11 \$95 million.

More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>

## **C. Funding Sources to achieve Transportation related goals**

### **High Priority Projects and Designated Transportation Enhancement Activities**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & federal Highway Administration

Purpose: Enhancement of numerous bicycle, pedestrian, trail, and traffic calming projects in communities throughout the country.

More Information: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding)

### **Transportation, Community & System Preservation**

Grantor: Department of Transportation

Purpose: Planning grants, implementation grants, and research, could include transit projects, complete streets, streetscaping, ped/bike improvements or plans, implementation of transit-oriented development plans, traffic calming measures, and more.

Eligibility: States, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, and tribal governments

Limitations: \$61 million; Livability is a criterion that will be used to evaluate candidate projects. Projects must improve relationships among transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices.

More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>

### **Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEAs)**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & federal Highway Administration

Purpose: provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists, and the preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use thereof for pedestrian and bicycle trails)

More Information: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding)

### **Federal Lands Highway Program**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & federal Highway Administration

Purpose: Provisions for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Limitations: Priority for funding projects is determined by the appropriate Federal Land Agency or Tribal government

More Information: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding)

### **Transportation, Community & System Preservation**

Grantor: Department of Transportation

Purpose: Planning grants, implementation grants, and research, could include transit projects, complete streets, streetscaping, ped/bike improvements or plans, implementation of transit-oriented development plans, traffic calming measures, and more.

Eligibility: States, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, and tribal governments

Limitations: \$61 million; Livability is a criterion that will be used to evaluate candidate projects. Projects must improve relationships among transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices.

More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>

### **The Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Program**

Grantor: League of American Bicyclists.

Purpose: The program provides a roadmap to communities to improve conditions for bicycling and offers national recognition for communities that actively support bicycling.

Information on applying to become a recognized Bicycle Friendly Community

More Information: <http://bikeleague.org/bfa>

### **Surface Transportation Program (STP)**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Transportations & federal Highway Administration

Purpose: for either the construction of bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways, or no construction projects (such as maps, brochures, and public service announcements) related to safe bicycle use and walking.

More Information: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm#funding)

#### **Alternatives Analysis Program - Discretionary Livability Funding Opportunity**

Grantor: Department of Transportation

Purpose: Assist in financing the evaluation of all reasonable modal and multimodal alternatives and general alignment options for identified transportation needs in a particular, broadly defined travel corridor

Eligibility: MPOs, city agencies, transit agencies, and other local government authorities

Limitations: \$25 million total fund

More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>

### **D. Funding Sources to achieve Events related goals**

#### **Community Facilities Grants**

Grantor: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Purpose: assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns.

Eligibility: public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal governments. Towns of up to 20,000 in population.

Limitations: Development Financing, Construction

More information: <http://reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>

#### **The Texas Workforce Commission's Skill Development Program**

Grantor: Texas Workforce Commission through Texas Legislature

Purpose: provides grants to community and technical colleges to provide customized job training programs for businesses who want to train new workers or upgrade the skills of their existing workforce.

Eligibility: A business, consortium of businesses, or trade union identifies a training need, and then partners with a public community or technical college.

Limitations: Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 20, Chapter 803 and Texas Labor Code, Chapter 303.

More Information: <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/partners/skills-development-fund>



## E. Funding Sources to achieve Public Space related goals

### **Transportation, Community & System Preservation**

Grantor: Department of Transportation

Purpose: Planning grants, implementation grants, and research, could include transit projects, complete streets, streetscaping, ped/bike improvements or plans, implementation of transit-oriented development plans, traffic calming measures, and much more.

Eligibility: States, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, and tribal governments

Limitations: \$61 million; Livability is a criterion that will be used to evaluate candidate projects. Projects must improve relationships among transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices.

More Information: <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/federal-grant-opportunities/>

### **Rural Community Development Initiative**

Grantor: USDA

Purpose: To develop the capacity and ability of private, nonprofit community-based housing and community development organizations, and low income rural communities to improve housing, community facilities, community and economic development projects in rural areas.

More Information: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2015/04/0096.xml>

### **National Trails Training Partnership**

Grantor: American Trails and NTTP

Purpose: for planning, building, designing, funding, managing, enhancing, and supporting trails, greenways, and blue ways.

More information: <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/funding/>

9.7. Implementation Matrix

Category	Specific Action	Phase			Responsible Party	Possible Partners
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term		
<b>Business</b>						
<b>GOAL 1 – Increased businesses within the downtown to boost economic activity</b>						
Objective 1.1 – Support local businesses in the downtown to ensure that they remain part of the market and further their growth	Provide support for current and prospective local business owners to develop their capacity to run a small enterprise effectively and profitably through Small Business Development Centers (SBDC).			●	Community Development Corporation (CDC), Chamber of Commerce	City
	Help property owners and business owners with grants by providing annual grant finding and writing training.		●		Community Development Corporation (CDC)	City, HGAC
	Create Business Improvement District (BID) that is funded by a tax or levy on businesses in the area to fund capital improvement, cleaning streets, safety, and security.	●			City	
	Build relationship with local business owners in the downtown by assigning a staff person from the City to regularly check-ins with business owners.	●			Community Development Corporation (CDC)	

Objective 1.2 – Attract new retail establishments and small businesses through joined efforts of property owners, the Chamber of Commerce, Community Development Corporation (CDC), and the City	Encourage micro- brewery establishment in available historic buildings by creating downtown beer tasting events attracting the potential downtown brewers.				Community Development Corporation (CDC)	
	Proactively reach out to businesses that would be a good fit for the downtown to increase restaurants and retail choices such as arts, antiques, boutiques, “junk” stores, specialty retail and fun shops into the downtown.				City	Chamber of Commerce, Community Development Corporation (CDC)
	Establish a downtown co-working space or business incubator service for new startup businesses that need support by providing temporary flexible office space, technological support, coaching while providing information and matchmaking services for transition to available space in downtown.				Chamber of Commerce	City
	Expand CDC Job creation incentive by providing additional downtown job creation incentive.				City	

	Review existing permit and approval processes and eliminate regulatory barriers for redevelopment by modernizing outdated zoning and buildings requirements to encourage adaptive reuse, infill, mixed-use and higher density development.	●			City	
	Waive local development fees that are related with building construction and redevelopment in the downtown area.	●			City	
	Provide an ombudsman to help businesses that are relocating to downtown easily go through the local regulations process.	●			City	Community Development Corporation (CDC)
	Locate government offices and facilities to the CBD in order to encourage investments.			●	Community Development Corporation (CDC)	

<b>GOAL 2 – Increased flow of people /visitors into the downtown</b>						
Objective 2.1 – Provide retail, food and recreational opportunities for families for afternoon/weekend stops in the downtown	Create entertainment district with retail and inner plaza to provide a unique downtown shopping experience.				City	Community Development Corporation (CDC)
	Encourage businesses to increase operation hours on weekends and extend in evenings on weekdays, especially during events and also maintain common or coordinated operating hours, to avoid confusion of potential customers.				Business Owners	Community Development Corporation (CDC)
	Establish a fresh food market in the downtown area with community tower garden.				The COOP, Citizens	Boy and Girl Scouts, Schools, Culunay
Objective 2.2 – Create scenic shopping area by preserving and revitalizing historic building in the downtown	Establish design guidelines and development standards for new developments and renovations as well as facade and other improvements to concentrate on the cultural identity and ensure compatibility with the planned downtown character.				City	Community Development Corporation (CDC)

	Establish new program to provide cost sharing for building improvement in downtown.		●		City	
	Work with a community foundation to support the property owners to maintain and update facades.		●			
	Provide tax abatement for property owners for rehabilitation and restoration of historic buildings.	●			City	Community Development Corporation (CDC)
	Support property owners to maintain and upgrade the condition of existing vacant buildings and empty lots through initiating Vacant Lot Stabilization Program.	●			Property Owners, Busy Bees or secondary branch of that group, Volunteer Group	School District/Football team, NHS (High School), Community Development Corporation (CDC)
	Conduct a feasibility study to utilize the old theater as civic, cultural, and entertainment anchors.		●		City	

Objective 2.3 – Increase tourism and outside visitors by marketing historical buildings, arts, antiques, boutiques and other assets	Hire a consultant to rebrand logo, promotional materials, events postcards, maps and brochures.	●			City	
	Create an online "story map" with all the highlights in the downtown including attractions, historic buildings, arts and murals.	●			Consultant	
	Offer internships to local high school or college students to perform regular marketing tasks.		●		City	
	Assign the task of regularly updating the website, social media and consolidated events calendar.	●			Consultant	
	Assist local business for marketing and promotion by providing setting up a website or using social media platform through step-by step trainings.		●		Economic Department	

Housing	Action Steps	Short term	Medium term	Long term	Responsible Parties	Possible Partners
<b>GOAL 1 – Housing options in the downtown for young and old</b>						
Objective 1.1 - Increase housing in and near the downtown	Amend ordinances to allow accessory dwelling units within CBD zone which could include cottage style, tiny homes that can be used as rental opportunities or Air B&B or other uses.	●			City	
	Encourage property owners to use upper floor of downtown buildings as residential options by adopting policy tools like density bonus or tax abatement.	●			City	Community Development Corporation (CDC)
	Recruit private developer for infill opportunities for mixed use buildings on vacant and underutilized sites.			●	City, Property Owners	Community Development Corporation (CDC)



Transportation	Action Steps	Short term	Medium term	Long term	Responsible Parties	Possible Partners
<b>GOAL 1 – Complete streets policy to account for everyone using the roads including pedestrian, bicyclist and vehicular traffic.</b>						
Objective 1.1 – Enhance roadways and sidewalks	Coordinate maintenance and upgrades of existing roads with conceptual designs within the plan and hire a consultant for full designs and construction drawings.	●			Community Development Corporation (CDC)	TxDOT, HGAC
	Focus on cleaning, maintenance and repair of all the sidewalks in the downtown area.		●		City	Business Owners, Property Owners
	Work with TxDOT to adopt the proposed street hierarchy.	●			City	TxDOT
	Construct sidewalks on E Railroad Street to W Railroad and the Alamo Street to W Railroad.	●			City	
	Conduct a safety assessment and work with local businesses to identify areas in need of attention.	●			City	TxDOT, HGAC





	Execute the streetscaping plans by adding lights, more landscaping and street furniture. Focus first on the blocks with active businesses and test with "lighter, quicker, cheaper" philosophy.		●		City	TxDOT, HGAC
	Develop and adopt a street trees plan	●			City	
Objective 1.3 - Improve wayfinding and navigation for shoppers and walkers	Develop unique branding for downtown signage and wayfinding		●		City	Community Development Corporation (CDC), Chamber of Commerce
	Install directional signs at decision points and landmarks.		●		City	Community Development Corporation (CDC)
	Partner with ISDs to create a team of street ambassadors to assist visitors, ask field questions and provide motorist assistance and assist in cleanliness.			●	ISD, City, Visitors Bureau	

Objective 1.4 – Create opportunities to utilize downtown sidewalks and alleys for alternate uses by businesses through seating, and cooling mechanism.	Provide dedicated spaces for street vendors and small-scale markets by creating shopping alley in the alley intersecting at N Washington St and Merchant St.				City, Community Development Corporation (CDC)	Bees
	Work with local volunteer groups to host a working day to build outdoor street furniture for downtown.				Community Development Corporation (CDC)	Boy Scouts, High Schools, BEES
	Actively promote opportunities and incentives for the local businesses to occupy the provide spaces on the streets.				City	Bees
Objective 1.5 – Provide accessibility for cyclist to the downtown	Provide sharrows in the downtown area promoting cyclists.				TxDOT, City	
	Develop city-wide bike plan including downtown and incorporate into designs.				City	
	Install necessary infrastructure such a cycle parking spaces etc. to encourage cycling.				City	

Objective 2.2 – Consider options such as rickshaw and carpooling (Ubers) or taxi service to the downtown	Perform a transportation need assessment for the downtown.				●	Community Development Corporation (CDC)	
	Partner with non-profit organizations to establish a community driven ride sharing company or request service from existing carpool service like uber.				●	Community Development Corporation (CDC)	
Objective 2.3 - Enhance parking in the downtown	Provide adequate parking facilities to accommodate the future projected need.				●	City	
	Create shared parking where multiple users can use throughout the day.	●				City	
	Consider parking meters where funds could go towards the CBD improvements.	●				City	
	Adjust parking requirements according to the demands, by changing parking minimums to parking maximum in CBD area.	●				City	
Objective 2.3 - Consider bioswale in the downtown along the railway line	Perform a feasibility of bioswale in the downtown.				●	City	

Events	Action Steps	Short term	Medium term	Long term	Responsible Parties	Possible Partners
<b>GOAL 1 – Yearlong Events in the downtown attracting visitors of all ages to celebrate the community</b>						
Objective 1.1 – Creating unique events in various locations in the downtown	Host increased number of annual events per year, marketing regionally to gain attraction over time.	●			Community	City, Chamber of Commerce
	Plan for Block party/street events.	●			Community	City, Chamber of Commerce
	Host 'First Friday' monthly events highlighting cultural themes including Art Fest, Bat Watching, Wine Fest, Beer Fest, Food Trucks, Culinary Cook-offs, Outdoor Movies, Pep Rallies, H.S. Victory Celebrations, and other passions from community members.	●			Community	City, Chamber of Commerce
	Plan for entertainment nights monthly on predictable schedule in Evans Park area by blocking E Moseratte St from vehicular traffic.		●		Community, Art League	City, Chamber of Commerce
	Enhance community events by encouraging arts in public spaces and parks.	●			Art League, Community	City, Chamber of Commerce

	Identify theater key leadership and feature them at 'First Friday' event to build momentum to encourage re-opening of the theatre group.				Community, Property Owner	Wharton Plaza Troop
Objective 1.2 – Create opportunities for artists, craftsmen, and local business owners for events at downtown sidewalk venues and Evans Park Space	Provide necessary dedicated spaces such as community centers, amphitheaters, shaded spaces, etc., on the streets for the local businessmen and artists to carry out their activities/events.				Art League, City, High School	State, Chamber of Commerce
	Coordinate with the local art programs to create downtown art programs and satellite campus presence that offers classes, and/or student housing options.				City, Art League	State, Chamber of Commerce
	Implement an original art mural program to promote art in the community and identify and commission local artists.				City, Art League	

Objective 1.3 –Partner with surrounding counties through coordinated efforts and unified vision	Encourage private partnerships with regional level players to boost the development.				City, Visitors Bureau	COG and County Committees
Objective 1.4 – Enhance storefront with decoration lights during all festivals	Provide incentives like prizes and recognition for 'best decorated building' in the downtown during events.				City	
Objective 1.5– Promote and market the events in the downtown to attract visitors and residents	Establish a yearly calendar of events to keep the public updated through social media campaigns, website, local newspaper and radio.				Community	City App, Facebook, Chamber of Commerce
	Designate a point person to coordinate with local businesses and nonprofits to create a unified calendar of the downtown events.				City	

Public Space	Action Steps	Short term	Medium term	Long term	Responsible Parties	Possible Partners
<b>GOAL 1 – Enhanced public space in the downtown for various activities</b>						
Objective 1.1 – Create spaces for rest and reflection for citizens and visitors of all ages	Create and maintain infrastructure facilities such as benches, water fountain and green spaces.		●		City, Businesses, HGAC	Rotary Club
	Provide outdoor lunch seating areas in existing and future proposed public spaces.	●			City, Business Owners, Memorial Contribution	
	Create space for kids by providing a playground with space for temporary kid pool as attraction during events.		●		City, Community Development Corporation (CDC)	Arbor Club, Bees, Art League
	Implement the streetscape design to improve the downtown area by installing street furniture.		●		City	
	Plan and maintain shaded outdoor areas.		●		Business owners, Community Development Corporation (CDC), City	City, Schools, HS/ECISD property, clubs
	Create attractive conversation spaces.		●		Coffee Shop, Business owners	City, Schools, HS/ECISD property, clubs



	Plan and maintain spaces with public art such as walking mural "trail".		●		High School, Art League	
	Identify and provide charge stations at high density public areas.	●			Business owners, Community Development Corporation (CDC)	City, Schools, HS/ECISD property, clubs
	Plan for fun activities spaces through oversized jenga/scrabble sets and tournaments.		●		Business owners	City, Schools, HS/ECISD property, clubs
Objective 1.4 –Enhance existing parks and public space	Maintain and upgrade the condition of existing Evans Park.	●			City	TPWD, LCRA
	Adopt "Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper" approach to experiment with different public space ideas.	●			City	

# Appendix

## Appendix A

**1882** – Railroad Camp, originally called Prairie Switch (switching point on New York, Texas, and Mexican railway)

**1890** – Name changed to El Campo by Mexican Cowboys; Ranching was the chief industry; 4 major ranches surrounding the settlement

**1889** – General store was built

**1890** – Post office was opened; First doctor

**1891** – One room schoolhouse was built

**1892** – Estimated community population of 25

**1894** – First newspaper

**1895** – Independent School District established

**1896** – Fire destroyed the principal business section

**Between 1890 and 1898** – Organized Swedish Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic, German Lutheran, and Swedish Methodist churches

**Early 1900s** – second largest hay shipping center in the US

**1900** – 130 businesses rebuilt

**1901** – 177 Students enrolled; organized library; Fire destroyed large part of town; brick buildings were built

**1902** – First bank established

**1903** – El Campo Rice Milling Company was established

**1904** – 70 rice farms, 126 pumping stations in operation

**1905** – El Campo was incorporated

**1906** – 2 funeral homes established

**1907** – El Campo Ice and Water Company established

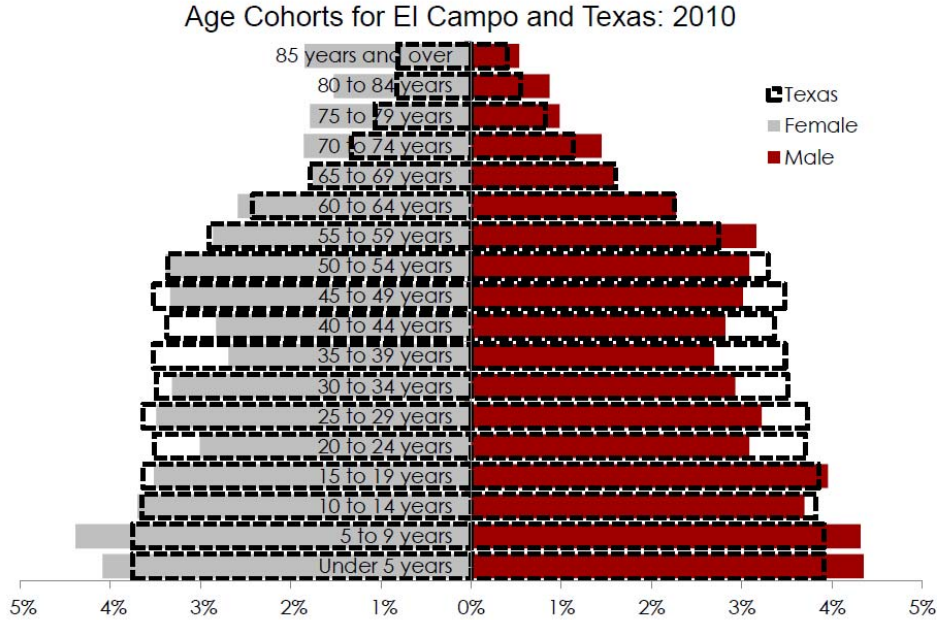
**1910** – Population 1,778

**1919** – First hospital

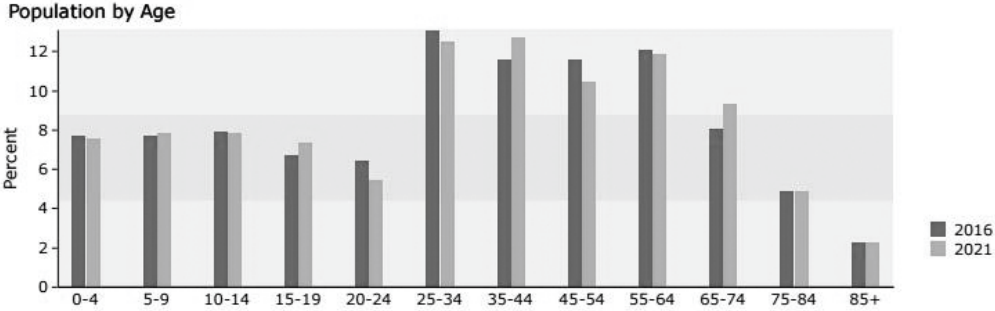
**Mid 1930s** – Oil and gas discovered in Wharton County; spawned local industries; Texas Company, now Texaco established branch office

**1930** – Population 2,034 and 160 businesses

- 1941** – 3,906 residents and 22 businesses
- 1952** – 6,216 residents
- 1959** – El Campo Economic Development Corporation (NGO) to bring new industry and stimulate growth
- 1961** – Population 7,700
- 1970** – 9,995 population
- 1990** – Agriculture and petroleum related businesses – base for local economy; 445 sq miles of El Campo Independent School District, 3600 students; 10,511 population, 294 businesses
- 2000** – 10,945 population, 722 businesses



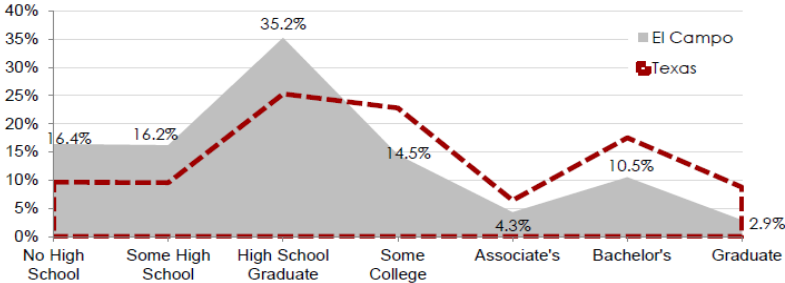
**Fig A2:** Age Cohort for El Campo and Texas, 2010



**Fig A3:** Projected Population by Age for El Campo, TX

Indicator ▲	Value
White Alone	76.62
Black Alone	9.88
American Indian/Alaska Native Alone	0.40
Asian Alone	0.60
Pacific Islander Alone	0.01
Other Race	10.63
Two or More Races	1.85
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	47.89

**Fig A4:** Race and Ethnicity Composition for El Campo, TX



**Fig A5:** Educational Attainment in El Campo and Texas

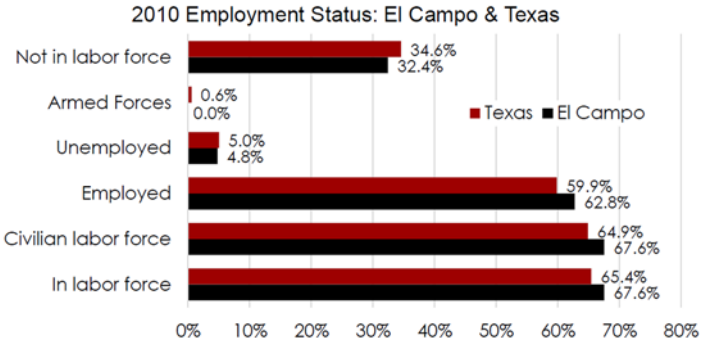


Fig 7: Employment Status in 2010, El Campo, TX

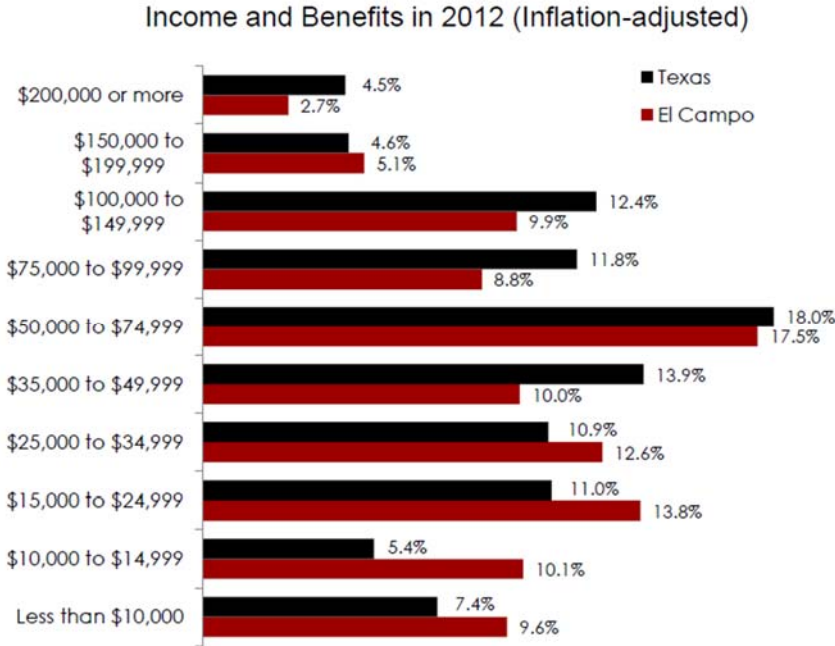


Fig 9: Income Share for El Campo, TX in 2012

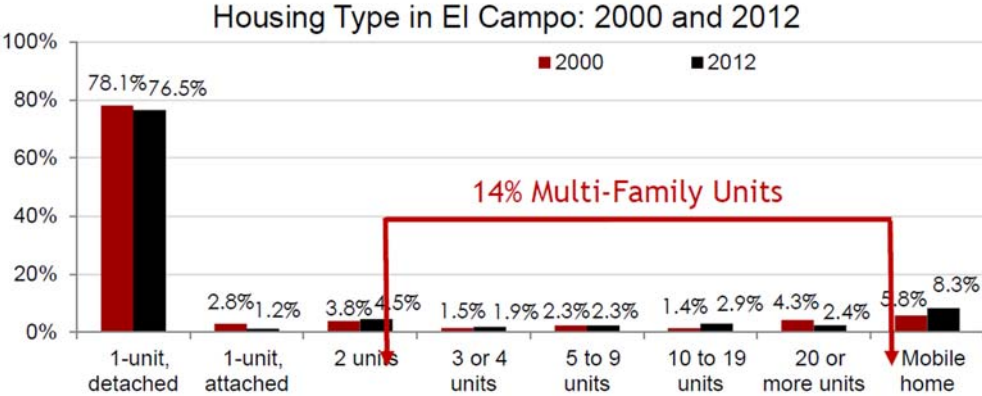


Fig 10: Housing Type in 2000 and 2012, El Campo, TX

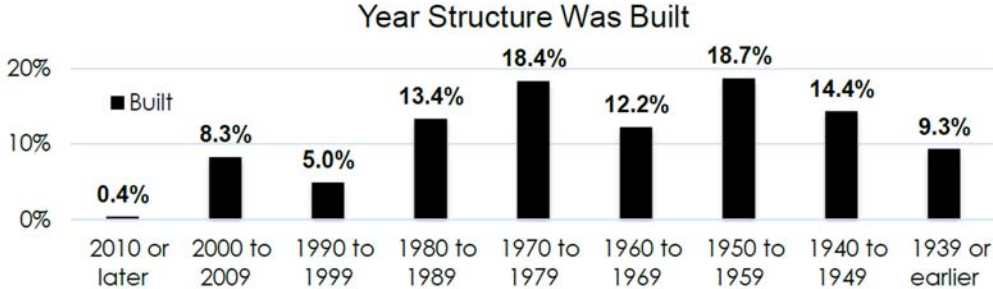


Fig 11: Year Structure Built, El Campo, TX

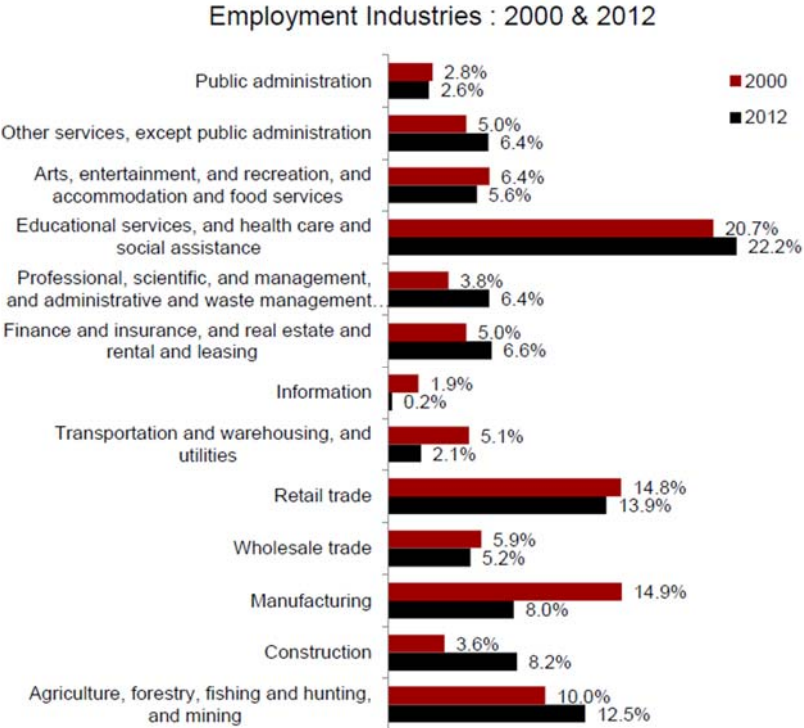


Fig 12: Employment Industries Share, El Campo, TX



Fig 13: Year Structure Built, El Campo, TX

Appendix B

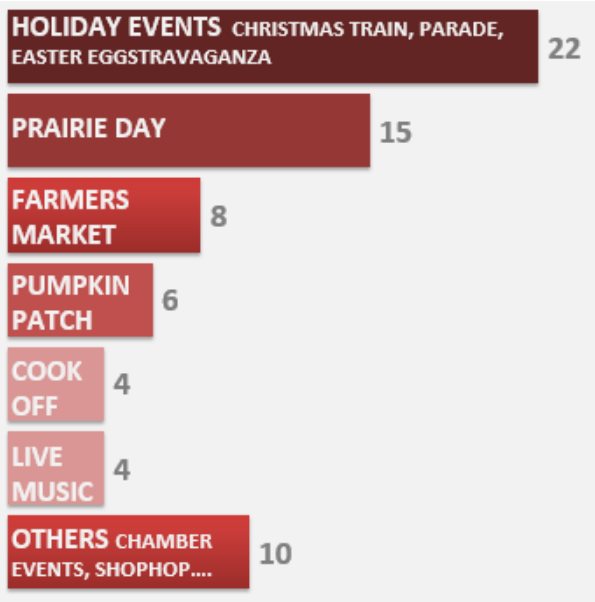


Fig 14: No of Visitors who attended special events, El Campo, TX

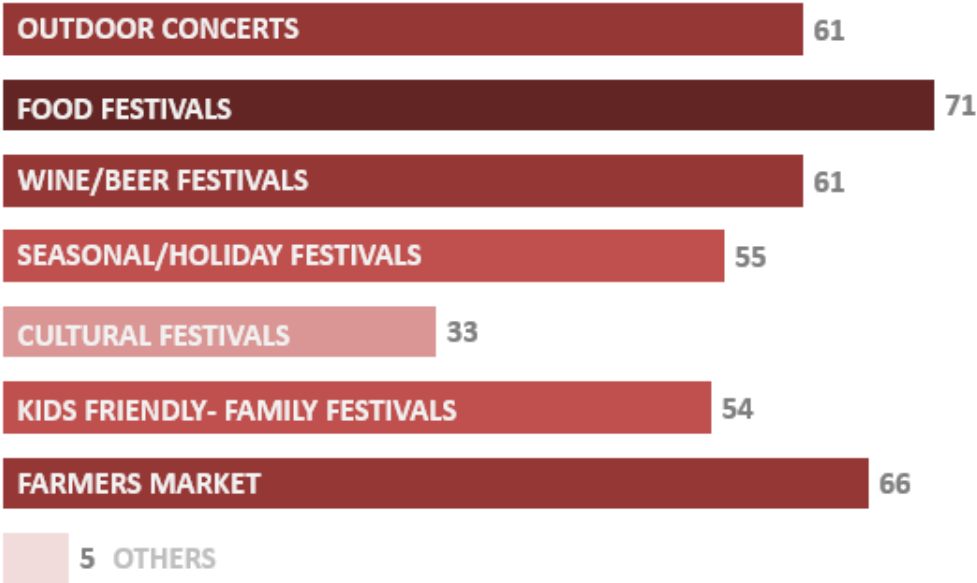


Fig 15: Outdoor events preference of the visitors, El Campo, TX



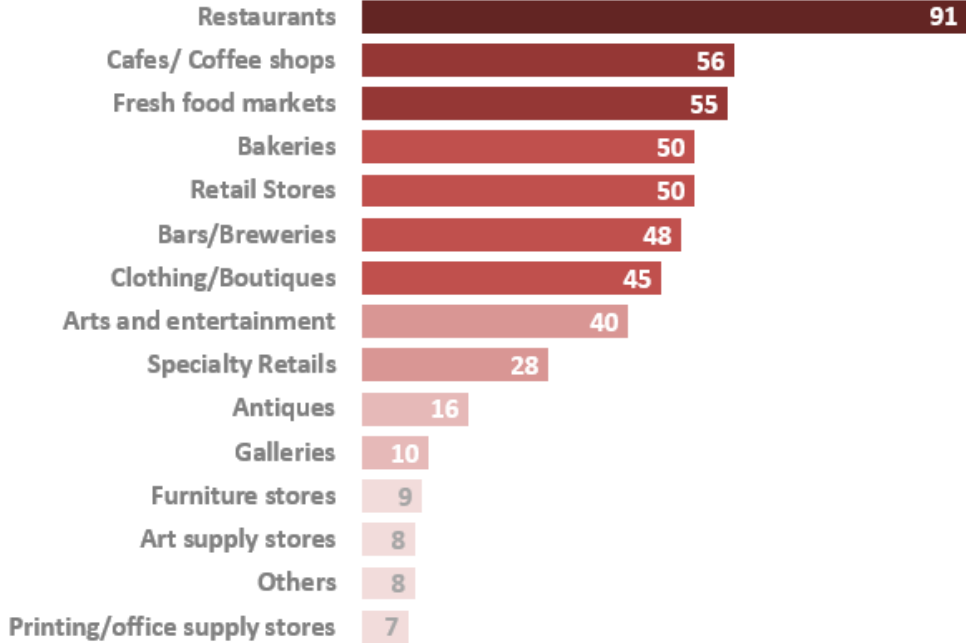


Fig 16: Types of businesses that attract people into downtown, El Campo, TX



Fig 17: Business owners and their time period of operation, El Campo, TX

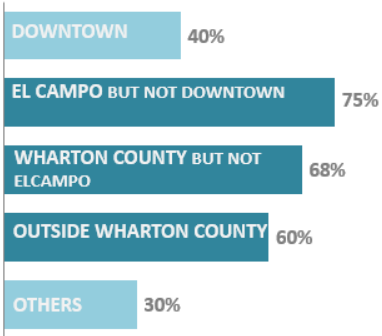


Fig 18: Area wise distribution of customers, El Campo, TX

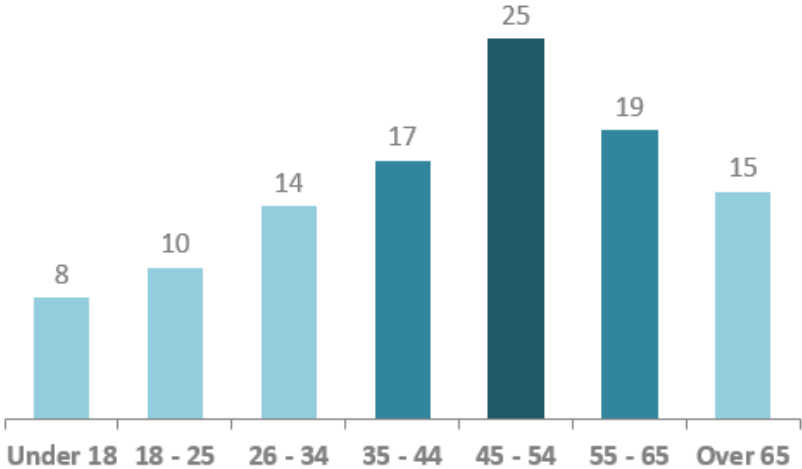


Fig 19: Age wise distribution of customers, El Campo, TX

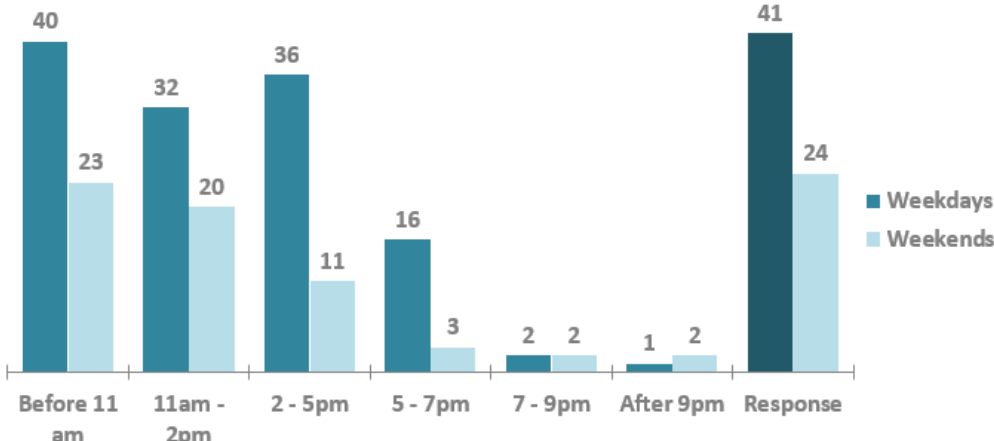


Fig 20: Daily business hours, El Campo, TX



Fig 21: Distribution of business hours of each day, El Campo, TX

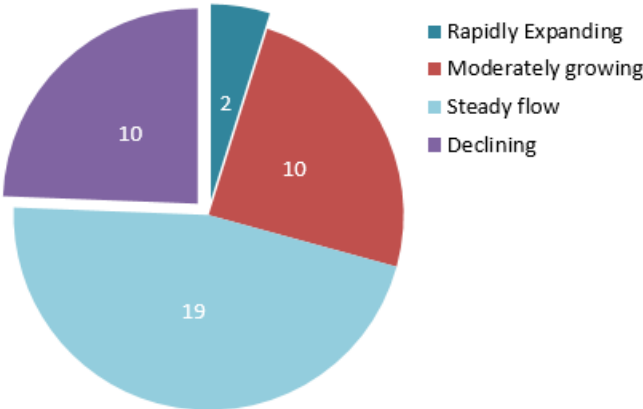


Fig 22: Business activity levels of the past year, El Campo, TX

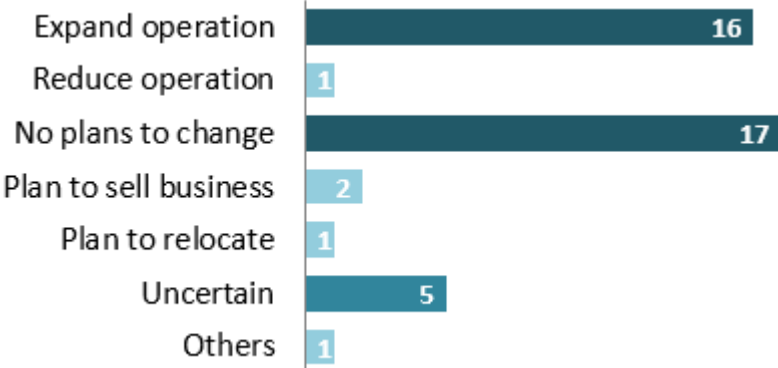


Fig 23: Future plans of business for the next 18 months, El Campo, TX

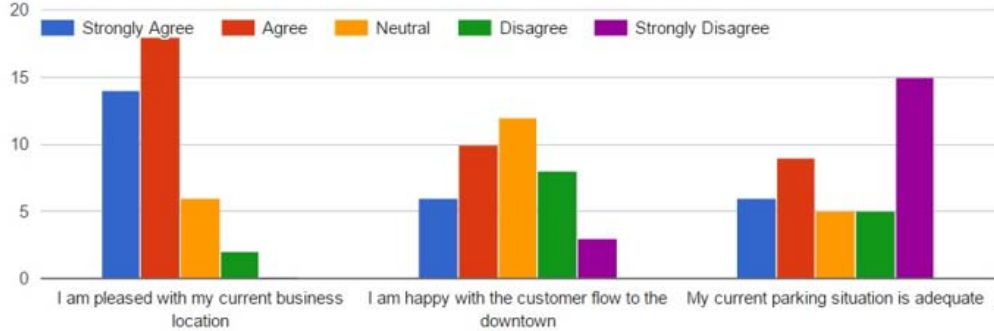


Fig 24: Business owners' opinion, El Campo, TX

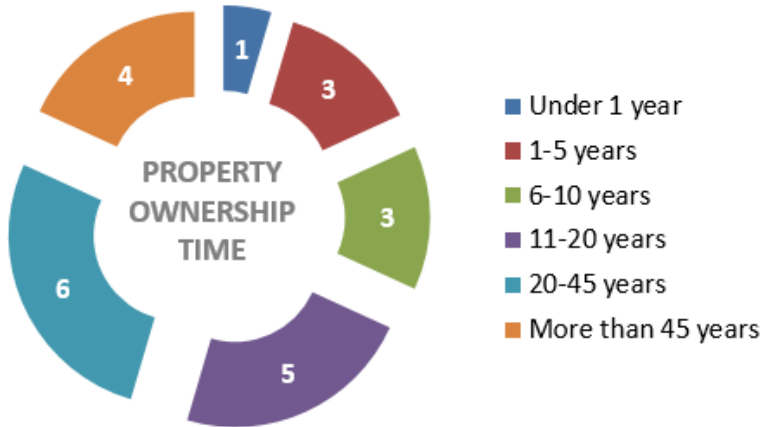


Fig 25: Time period of Property ownership, El Campo, TX



Fig 26: Property owner funded services support initiation, El Campo, TX

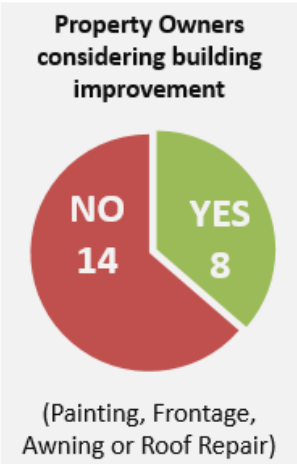


Fig 27: Property owners considering building improvement, El Campo, TX



Fig 28: Downtown ratings, El Campo, TX

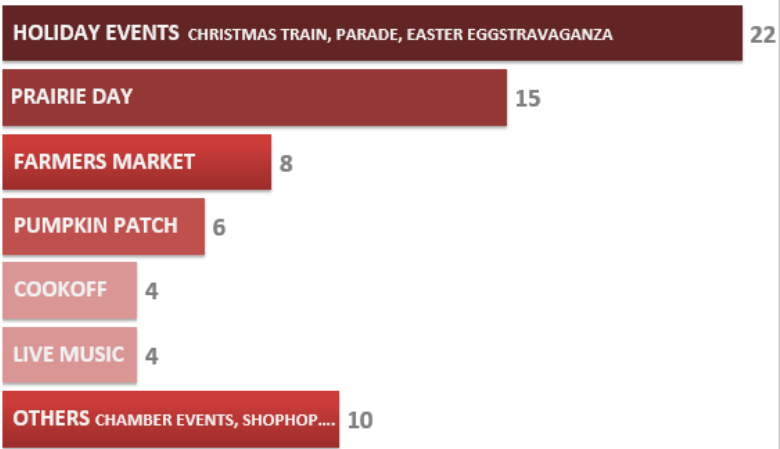


Fig 29: Number of visitors who attended special events, El Campo, TX

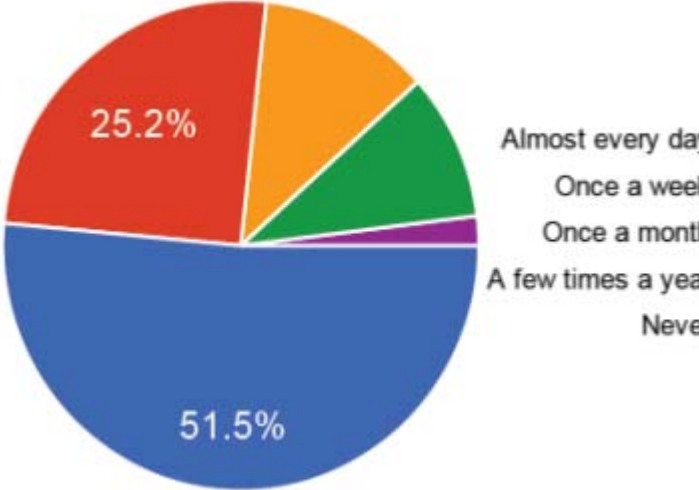


Fig 30: Frequency of visits to downtown area, El Campo, TX



Fig 31: Activities wise Frequency of visits to downtown area, El Campo, TX



## Appendix C

### Right of Way for Rail Road:

- Railway track width – 8.5'+8.5'
- R.O.W on one side of the track = 15'+11.5'+15' = 41.5' (12.6m)
- 15' is the building set back distance from the railway line
- El Campo's site has 13.29m towards the right and 18.46m on the left of the rail line
- **Bioswale depth – 2'-6"; Width – 2'-8"**

### Sidewalk widths (from the city of Boston/NACTO)

Street Type	Frontage Zone		Pedestrian Zone		Greenscaping/ Furnishing Elements		Curb Zone		Total Width	
	Preferred	Min	Preferred	Min	Preferred	Min	Preferred	Preferred	Min	
<b>Downtown Commercial</b>	2'	0	12'	8'	6'	1'6"	6"	20'6"	10'	
<b>Downtown Mixed-use</b>	2'	0	10'	8'	6'	1'6"	6"	18'6"	10'	
<b>Neighborhood Main</b>	2'	0	8'	5'	6'	1'6"	6"	16'6"	7'	
<b>Neighborhood Connector</b>	2'	0	8'	5'4"	5'	1'6"	6"	15'6"	7'	
<b>Neighborhood Residential</b>	2'	0	5'	5'4"	4'	1'6"	6"	11'6"	7'	
<b>Industrial Street</b>	2'	0	5'	5'4"	4'	1'6"	6"	11'6"	7'	
<b>Shared Street</b>	2'	0	Varies	5'4"	N/A	N/a	N/A	Varies	Varies	
<b>Parkway</b>	N/A	N/A	6'	5'	10'	5'	6"	16'6"	10'6"	
<b>Boulevard</b>	2'	0	6'	5'	10'	5'	6"	18'6"	11'6"	

**Optimum dimensions for El Campo:**

- Curb – 6"
- Planter/furniture – 4'
- Pedestrian zone –5'
- Frontage zone – 30"
- Total – 10'
- \*Preferred frontage zone to accommodate sidewalk cafes is 6'

**ROADWIDTHS:**

Type of Roadway	Rural	Urban
	Feet	Feet
<b>Freeway</b>	12	12
<b>Ramps</b>	12-30	12-30
<b>Arterial</b>	11-12	10-12
<b>Collector</b>	10-12	10-12
<b>Local</b>	9-12	9-12

**Parking:**

- No of accessible parking spaces: Provide 1 for every 25 parking spaces; 2 for a total 50
- Loading space – 10'x35'
- Car Parking dimension – 18'x9' (5.4 x2.7m)
- Bicycle Parking – 6'x2'
- On Street Parking for El Campo – majority 45 degree angled parking; rest parallel parking

**Street Trees**

- 30' – center to center for planting streets
- DO NOT plant trees closer than 15' from driveways and utility poles

- Place trees a min 30' from intersections with traffic light or 4 way stop
- Place trees min 40' from intersection along major street and 30' from intersection along neighborhood street where the neighborhood street intersects with major street using 2-way stop

**Curb Radius**

From/To	R/Narrow	R/Medium	R/Wide	C/Narrow	C/Medium	C/Wide
R/Narrow	35					
R/Medium	20	15				
R/Wide	15	15	10			
C/Narrow	20	15	25	35		
C/Medium	15	15	15	30	10	
C/Wide	30	25	15	40	25	50

**R – Residential**

**C- Commerical (All dimensions are in feet)**

**Curb Radius with Permanent Full Time OnStreet Parking**

From/To	Local	Main	Avenue	Boulevard	Parkway
Local	15	20	25	30	-
Main	20	20	25	30	-
Avenue	25	25	25	30	-
Boulevard	30	30	30	35	-
Parkway	-	-	-	-	-

Dimensions used for El Campo – Major Streets (Arterial/Collector Curb Radius/Turning Radius – 14’6”

Alleyways turning radius – 5’

Minor Streets (Local) – 10’

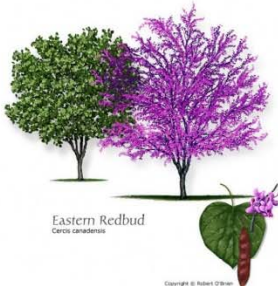
Appendix D

Texas Tree Planting Guide TEXAS A&M FOREST SERVICE

Tree Selections for El Campo - Small



Common Name: Waxmyrtle (Southern Bayberry)
Latin Name: Myrica cerifera
Tree Size: Small
Leaf Type: Evergreen
Growth Rate: Rapid
Water Needs: Moderate
Tolerances: Partial to heavy shade, salty soil or sea-spray, drought, poorly drained sites, alkaline soils (pH > 7.5)
Attributes: Texas native, attractive seeds or fruit, seeds or fruit eaten by wildlife
Features: Aromatic, pale green leaves and small bluish berries.
Comments: Easily adapted to confined spaces; good for coastal landscapes.
Problems: Naturally shrubby; needs pruning to develop one or more trunks.
Firewise: Yes



Common Name: Eastern Redbud
Latin Name: Cercis canadensis
Tree Size: Small
Leaf Type: Deciduous
Growth Rate: Rapid
Water Needs: Moderate
Tolerances: Partial to heavy shade
Attributes: Texas native, showy or fragrant flower, attractive seeds or fruit
Features: Pink to purple pea-shaped flowers in early spring. Seed pods hang on into winter
Comments: Several cultivars available from nurseries.
Problems: Short-lived, often due to stem cankers.
Firewise: Yes



Common Name: Texas Redbud
Latin Name: Cercis canadensis var. texensis
Tree Size: Small
Leaf Type: Deciduous
Growth Rate: Rapid
Water Needs: Moderate
Tolerances: Drought, alkaline soils (pH > 7.5)
Attributes: Texas native, showy or fragrant flower, attractive seeds or fruit
Features: Glossy green leaves, purple flowers, and brown seed pods provide year round interest.
Comments: Good choice for Central and West Texas.
Problems: Short-lived, often due to stem cankers.
Firewise: Yes

# Texas Tree Planting Guide



## Tree Selections for El Campo - Small



**Common Name:** Yaupon  
**Latin Name:** *Ilex vomitoria*  
**Tree Size:** Small  
**Leaf Type:** Evergreen  
**Growth Rate:** Moderate  
**Water Needs:** Moderate  
**Tolerances:** Partial to heavy shade, salty soil or sea-spray, drought, poorly drained sites, alkaline soils (pH > 7.5)  
**Attributes:** Texas native, attractive seeds or fruit, seeds or fruit eaten by wildlife  
**Features:** Dark green, evergreen leaves and red berries on female plants.  
**Comments:** Tolerates a wide range of conditions.  
**Problems:** Requires pruning to develop one or more trunks.  
**Firewise:** No



**Common Name:** Texas Persimmon (Chapote)  
**Latin Name:** *Diospyros texana*  
**Tree Size:** Small  
**Leaf Type:** Deciduous  
**Growth Rate:** Slow  
**Water Needs:** Dry  
**Tolerances:** Drought, alkaline soils (pH > 7.5)  
**Attributes:** Texas native, attractive seeds or fruit, seeds or fruit eaten by wildlife  
**Features:** Fragrant flowers, smooth gray bark, and dark edible fruits.  
**Comments:** Drought-tolerant native with attractive exfoliating bark.  
**Problems:** Thin bark is easily damaged.  
**Firewise:** Yes

# Texas Tree Planting Guide



## Tree Selections for El Campo - Medium



Western Soapberry  
*Sapindus drummondii*

**Common Name:** Western Soapberry  
**Latin Name:** *Sapindus drummondii*  
**Tree Size:** Medium  
**Leaf Type:** Deciduous  
**Growth Rate:** Moderate  
**Water Needs:** Moderate  
**Tolerances:** Drought, poorly drained sites, alkaline soils (pH > 7.5)  
**Attributes:** Texas native, reliable fall color, showy or fragrant flower, attractive seeds or fruit, seeds or fruit eaten by wildlife  
**Features:** Bright yellow fall color.  
**Comments:** Bright yellow fall color and large, amber berries in fall through winter.  
**Problems:** Sucker growth; fleshy fruits can be messy.  
**Firewise:** Yes



Mexican Oak  
*Quercus polymorpha*

**Common Name:** Mexican White Oak (Monterrey Oak)  
**Latin Name:** *Quercus polymorpha*  
**Tree Size:** Medium  
**Leaf Type:** Deciduous  
**Growth Rate:** Rapid  
**Water Needs:** Moderate  
**Tolerances:** Drought, alkaline soils (pH > 7.5)  
**Attributes:** Texas native, seeds or fruit eaten by wildlife  
**Features:** Leathery leaves come in many different shapes and remain on twigs into winter.  
**Comments:** Also known as 'Monterrey Oak,' this species is rapidly becoming used as an urban landscape tree.  
**Problems:** Few insect or disease pests are known.  
**Firewise:** Yes




Anacua  
*Ehretia anacua*

**Common Name:** Anacua (Knockaway, Sandpaper Tree)  
**Latin Name:** *Ehretia anacua*  
**Tree Size:** Medium  
**Leaf Type:** Evergreen  
**Growth Rate:** Slow  
**Water Needs:** Dry  
**Tolerances:** Drought, alkaline soils (pH > 7.5)  
**Attributes:** Texas native, showy or fragrant flower  
**Features:** Flowers, fruit, and trunk.  
**Comments:** Drought-tolerant native with gnarled trunk and sandpaper leaves.  
**Problems:** Fruit drop  
**Firewise:** Yes

# Texas Tree Planting Guide

## Avoiding Problems With Your Trees


- Avoid blocking visibility of traffic signs or street corners.
- Avoid planting trees too close together.
- Avoid planting too close to sidewalks, streets or driveways.
- Avoid blocking access to utility transformers.



- Avoid planting too close to house, chimney or other structure.



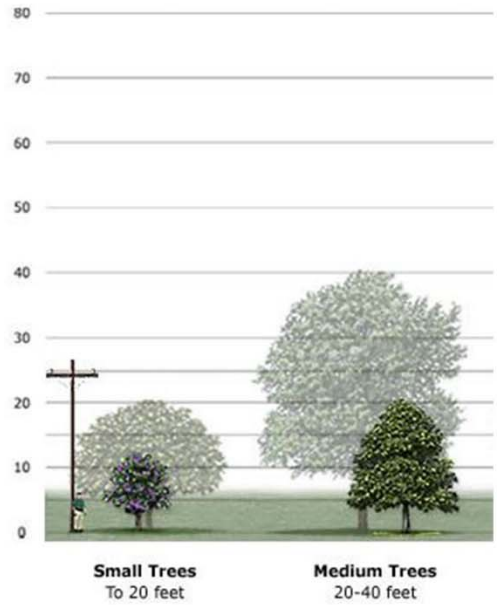
- Avoid planting large trees near utility lines. Plant trees smaller than 20 feet instead.



- Also Avoid:**
- Encroaching on a neighbor
  - Blocking views
  - Shading garden

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## Relative Tree Sizes



## Planning for Your Available Space

**Minimum Planting Space Requirements**  
 Small Trees = 60 square feet  
 Medium Trees = 120 square feet  
 Large Trees = 180 square feet

**Small Tree**  
(Planted in a row)



**Medium Tree**  
(Planted in a row)



**When planting trees in rows, allow for the following growing space:**  
 Small Trees = 3 x 20 feet  
 Medium Trees = 4 x 30 feet  
 Large Trees = 4 x 45 feet

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