

CITY OF SANTA CLARA, TEXAS

MASTER PLAN

2013 – 2017

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Forward

This edition of the Santa Clara Master Plan is focused on the next five (5) years beginning in the year 2013, but does look longer term in some areas. Another function of the plan is to summarize current functioning of the city, so as to provide a framework and understanding in which the city must work to achieve the goals of the City Master Plan.

The City of Santa Clara was incorporated in May 1999. The citizens of the new city were looking to manage the fast growth in the area. The first City Council and Mayor were elected in August 1999. These elected officials immediately began work on behalf of the citizens by passing a Subdivision Ordinance. This ordinance is designed to help manage the growth of the city. Among many items in the ordinance is a minimum lot size of five (5) acres. Continuing pressures on the water system and growth problems in the School District were primary reasons for lot size. These problems remain today and must be taken into consideration when planning for the next five years.

The City Hall building was completed in August 2001. This facility gives the Council and the citizens a needed meeting place. City Council meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. The City Planning Commission meets on the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Meeting agendas and any changes to meeting date and times will be posted at the City of Santa Clara City hall or/and on the web site [<http://www.ciSantaClaraTX.us>].

Purpose of Master Plan and Major Action Items

The City of Santa Clara master plan is a five-year plan for the community. This plan serves as a guide and a vision for policy decisions about the economic and physical development of Santa Clara. It identifies community issues and needs. The plan also recommends strategic goals, objectives, policies, and implementation actions to resolve the issues and needs.

Major action items discussed in master plan

It is the responsibility of the Mayor and City Council to ensure that this Master Plan is followed or changed as needed. To ensure progress in reaching Master Plan Goals, The Mayor and City Council may take appropriate actions, or assign sections of this master plan to individual members, committees, or others. These committees and/or individuals will then report to the City Council possible action items. Some of the major actions suggested in the plan are as follows:

1. Review City Subdivision ordinance annually [see Annexation and Future Growth]
2. Development of a 5 year budget plan [see Financial Factors].
3. Develop a plan for applying for Financial Grants [see Financial Factors].
4. Determine costs for purchase of land for additional city facilities [see City Hall and Community Center].
5. Review 'Master Program for City Roads and Streets annually [see Roads and Traffic Control, and Master Program for City Roads and Streets].
6. Agreement with Guadalupe County Health Department for sewage control [see Sewage and Sanitation].
7. Determine costs of establishing law enforcement and related services [see Emergency Services and Human Resources].
8. Parks, recreational areas, green belts acquisition [see Parks and Recreation].
9. Future personnel requirements [see Human Resources].

Details are found in the appropriate referenced sections of this master plan.

This plan provides a workable means to permit the city to fulfill all of its coordinating responsibilities relevant to physical development with associated services. It coordinates public and private development, and minimizes conflict between different land uses.

As stated earlier the master plan also provides a summary of the current functioning of the city, so as to understand the framework in which the goals of the City Master Plan can be achieved.

Administrative Organization and Functions

The City of Santa Clara is organized with a Mayor, City Council, City Planning Commission, various committees, and a part-time city secretary. The functions of these entities are varied, but are based on providing effective government on behalf of the citizens of the city. The current city organization and people who hold the various positions can be found on the City of Santa Clara web site [http://www.ciSantaClaraTX.us/council_boards.html].

The mayor is the highest elective office in municipal government. The mayor is elected for two years, separate from city council positions. The mayor presides over the City Council and is expected to provide leadership to the council and to the city as a whole. The mayor is the ceremonial head of the city and represents the city at official and ceremonial functions. The mayor shares legislative responsibilities with the council in identifying the needs of the city, setting policy goals, adopting rules, regulations, ordinances, etc., and evaluating the extent to which municipal policy meets the goals.

There are five City Council members. A City Council member is an elected official with a term of two years. The council member has a distinct role to play in city government in that the council must approve all ordinances, adopt the budget, confirm appointments, set the policy, and determine the direction of the city. The Council is responsible for the total performance of the city government while assuring that all actions are reasonable and prudent. As an individual a council member may not direct employees, determine priorities, make assignments or make decisions for the city unless directed by the mayor.

The City Planning Commission is composed of seven members. The Mayor and City Council appoint members to the Commission. Each member is appointed for a period of two years. The Mayor has two appointments and each council member has one appointment. The Planning Commission is an advisory commission and can only recommend actions to the City Council. The Planning Commission supervises the production and the updating of the master plan. It may hold public hearings on the master plan and make recommendations to the City Council. The Commission makes recommendations to the City Council on planning issues, zoning matters where zoning is an issue, budgets, capital improvement program, and any other item requiring review and decision by the City Council. It reviews subdivision plats and recommends approval/disapproval action to the City Council. More information about the City Planning Commission can be found on the city web page under City Ordinances, "Planning Commission Guidelines, Duties, and Mission Statement" dated Jan. 2011 [http://www.cisantaclaratx.us/ci_ordinance.html].

There are several paid positions; City Secretary, a roads maintenance person, inside building cleaning service, and city grounds keeper.

Future positions are discussed under the appropriate section of this plan.

Community Goals

City to promote active citizen involvement in the governing of their city by ensuring all citizens receive communication about the future needs of the city and by promotion of community participation in city sponsored community projects.

City to grow in a managed and deliberate manner, not only in residential housing, but also in commercial and industrial development. Continue to develop the city's industrial zone.

City to have a government infrastructure that is responsive to community needs, but does not intrude into and/or upon the lives of the citizens while at the same time providing a safe community by ensuring appropriate services are secured for security, emergencies, human needs, adequate roads and streets, and a clean environment.

City to provide a cost-effective government managed to meet the need for long term fiscal security.

City to develop and implement comprehensive strategies that accomplish stated goals.

Annexation and Future Growth

Santa Clara, as a Type A Municipality, cannot force annexation on anyone or any area of land. Consequently, any future change in city boundaries will be accomplished through voluntary annexation or voluntary inclusion in the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) j.

An annexation policy for the city needs to be developed and maintained. While annexation is certainly a method of boundary growth, there may still be managed growth within present city limits. The subdivision ordinance minimum lot size encourages growth while limiting density. Growth will occur as evidenced in the San Antonio area and surrounding counties. The city endeavors to manage growth through the subdivision ordinance and other vehicles at the City's disposal.

In order to be able to respond to changing conditions, the subdivision ordinance will be formally reviewed at the request of the Mayor. Results of the review will be reported to the City Council. If the review indicates change to the ordinance is necessary, then the change(s) will be undertaken.

The city will maintain an agreement with the County of Guadalupe, in order to maintain control of the ETJ as allowed by State Statues.

Financial Factors

The annual city budget is developed in a series of discussions with the City Council as to municipal projects needed for the coming year. The City Planning Commission provides input and makes recommendations on budget matters during the budget process.

The major sources of revenue for the city are as follows:

Ad valorem tax

Annual contribution from the Industrial Zone (Power Plant).

One percent (1%) sales tax.

Investment income.

The operating budget for 2010-2011 was approximately \$175,000, and the 2011-2012 was approximately \$140,000. In the next five years there are no plans to substantially increase this. However, unplanned events, such as major road maintenance costs can create a severe impact on revenue requirements.

In the future there may be financial requirements for road improvements, emergency services, infrastructure development, law enforcement and other items. It is necessary to plan for and have funds available to support these activities as needed. To fulfill this plan, it may be necessary to form a committee or some other organization to look at a proposed 5 year budget plan, including revenue sources.

One financial avenue that needs to be addressed is financial grants. The city needs to develop a plan for applying for grants. This plan should be finalized by 2015.

Franchise fees also need to be researched as an avenue of income.

Population Factors

The year 2000 established a count of 889 citizens in Santa Clara and the latest national census (2010) has the population as 725. The expected growth in the next five years is expected to be small but growth will depend on economic conditions.

Community Development

Community development falls into three main areas; residential, commercial, and industrial. The city fosters managed growth in residential undertakings that meet the subdivision ordinance requirements, or as approved by the city council, and provides residences that permit ranch and agriculture endeavors if so desired by owners or potential owners. Agriculture activities must meet the requirements of homeowner associations, city, county, state, and/or deed restrictions. The city encourages single unit dwellings either constructed or manufactured, and requires that all dwellings be of sound construction in accordance with city building codes.

Commercial development is considered by the city to be of the light commercial type or retail. Examples would be gas stations, restaurants, and florists. Santa Clara's proximity to larger urban areas such as Schertz, Seguin, New Braunfels, Universal City, and San Antonio may preclude larger commercial endeavors from considering Santa Clara for expansion. This is not to say that the city does not foster such expansion, but rather the city should be vigilant for expansion interests so that appropriate decisions can be made in a timely manner.

Heavy industry is not a major factor in developing Santa Clara for the next five years. Although the city is in an enviable position being located approximately mid-way between Interstate Highway 10 (I-10) and I-35, there is not a direct roadway system connecting these two highway systems at this time. According to Texas Department of Transportation, development of such a roadway is being studied.

Due to the rapid growth of the area along I-35, Texas Department of Transportation has developed a plan for an 'outer loop for New Braunfels'. This new road will go through the City of Santa Clara. This 'outer loop' could have a major impact on the city and if the State or the City of New Braunfels decides to implement the plan, then the citizens need to be made aware of project plans.

Relative to zoning, the Planning Commission will continue to study this area and when appropriate, develop recommendations to present to the City Council. Items to be considered are: where the "Power Plant" is located is zoned as Industrial or continue its location designation as an Industrial Zone; zone commercial activities and businesses within the city as Light Commercial/Residential; zone city frontage along highway FM 78 as Light Commercial/ Residential; and zone all other areas of the city as Residential.

Community development is of vital importance to the city. Continuing effort must be expended to seek the appropriate means to develop the city in a responsive manner.

City Facilities and Services

City Hall and Community Center

The city hall was completed in the year 2001. It is a 2000 square foot building and houses the administrative offices and council chambers. The city has .86 acres for expansion. Within the next five years as the city grows there may be a need for additional acreage to house various activities. The city council needs to address this by looking for suitable land (location, size, etc.) and getting estimates for its purchase. This needs to be in the city budget as soon as costs are better understood. Getting the costs better understood should be completed in the next 3 to 5 years. It should be purchased as soon as possible (avoid escalating land prices), even though it may not be developed immediately. It could be used as a temporary green belt or park until construction is needed and started.

Water

Green Valley Special Utility District and the City of Marion provides water to the citizens of Santa Clara with each homeowner or renter having an agreement with the respective provider. Green Valley is a non-profit special utility district who cannot refuse to provide new service if the seeker has the ability to pay for desired services. If growth were to exceed supply then Green Valley has an ordinance requiring the seeker of water to purchase water rights from another entity and provide these rights to Green Valley. Green Valley provides secure sources of water through the Edwards Aquifer with three wells, Lake Dunlap via the Canyon Regional Water Authority, and from the Carrizo Aquifer.

Green Valley has a paid manager and a Board of Directors. Directors are elected with candidates required to file for election and they cannot hold another elected office. Board meetings are open to the public.

Water is a critical resource, especially in South Texas. The city will continually stress to its citizens to conserve this important resource.

Roads and Traffic Control

In September 2003 the City of Santa Clara assumed from Guadalupe County responsibility for the maintenance of 22 miles of roads located within the city limits. The Mayor and city council are responsible to ensure the roads are maintained in a responsible manner and provide appropriate road planning to accommodate city growth.

The city government must ensure: that vehicle and pedestrian safety standards are maintained and conform to City, County, and State repair codes; that streets, roads, bridges, signs, culverts, and bar ditches are maintained according to standards established by the city; and that road repairs follows the city's road repair priority listing.

Roads are the major expense for the city, and that distinction will likely continue for the next five years. The Planning Commission has a Roads Committee to which the Mayor and City Council may assign responsibilities as necessary.

It is anticipated that during the next five years there will not be new road development, and that there will be major maintenance required on existing roads.

Sewage and Sanitation

Sewage is currently handled through the Guadalupe County Health Department permit system for installation of approved treatment systems. During the next five years the City Council will work with the County to coordinate plans to ensure appropriate sewage control. Agreements with the Guadalupe County Health Department will be documented by city ordinance, proclamation, or other instrument. CSC will work closely with GVSUD in the development of a regional sewage system along with Cibolo Creek Municipal Authority (CCMA) and the city of Marion.

Emergency Services

Fire and EMS services are provided through agreements with the Marion VFD and the Schertz EMS. Air life / airlift services are provided through these agencies. These agreements have provided citizens with excellent coverage. Schertz EMS has an EMS 'Plan' that the City Council may want to investigate further in behalf of the citizens.

Law enforcement may become a major budget item in the near future. At the present time the county provides law enforcement to the city. There is a need to consider the possibility and effectiveness of inter-local agreements with an entity that already has law enforcement and Justice of the Peace capability to provide services as needed. The City should also determine the cost of establishing law enforcement, associated courts and related items. This cost estimate needs to be completed in 2015.

In case of a widespread disaster the city hall can provide as a focal point for the coordination of services such as shelter, medical services, food, and water. Doing this entails further analysis to determine the most appropriate means of providing this service. These services need to be coordinated with existing emergency plans, disaster response plans and FEMA regulations. Health and Public safety allows the city to address issues as needed.

In order to help the city fulfill the various emergency services requirements discussed in this section, the Planning Commission has formed the Emergency Services Committee.

Schools

The majority of the children that reside within Santa Clara city limits receive their primary, middle, and secondary education through the Marion Independent School District (MISD). The MISD campus is located in Marion, Texas. School bus transportation from home to school and return is provided by MISD. MISD is a taxing district and affected property owners pay a property tax to MISD.

The MISD mission, in partnership with parents and community, is to prepare graduates to compete as responsible, productive citizens in a diverse and rapidly changing world by providing them knowledge and resources to achieve academic excellence and personal growth. It behooves Santa Clara to work in concert with MISD to ensure students receive the best possible education.

There are other districts that some students may intend. These are Comal ISD and Schertz, Cibolo, Universal City ISD.

Animal Control

Presently the city has to rely on Guadalupe County Animal Control or the Sheriff department. The city should work with the County to continue such services and determine if a special agreement is needed. The city may also look at the feasibility of entering into an inter-local agreement with a neighboring facility/city to remove animal carcasses and strayed domestic animals from city streets and right of ways.

Parks and Recreation

Community facilities such as parks and other types of recreational endeavors are of importance to the quality of life, the general welfare, and goals of the community. This also includes simple 'green belts'. At present the city does not own or lease land for parks and other recreational facilities.

There is a need to identify in advance potential sites which can then be reserved or acquired. Site acquisition in advance generally results in significantly lower acquisition costs, and assures that future facilities are located so as to maximize their services to each neighborhood in the community.

Human Resources

The city presently has two part-time employees, the city secretary and roads maintenance person. There is also some part time 'contract services' as follows; inside building cleaning service, and city grounds keeper. The City Secretary position is slated to continue as part-time for the present and the other part time 'contract services' will also continue. There is a contract City Attorney and this position will also continue as is.

A comprehensive study needs to be made to determine future (near and far term), personnel requirements. Areas to be studied:

- City Secretary - It needs to be determined if the position will remain part time or change to full time. To help determine this, a job description needs to be developed. Instead of a full time position, two part time positions need to be considered where one person is to keep the city hall open Monday - Friday mornings to conduct city business.
- City Manager – A detailed job description needs to be developed for this position. From this job description, it can be determined if this position is needed, and if it will be full time, part time, or added to a full or part time city secretary.
- Law Enforcement – A comprehensive study needs to be made to determine all the costs associated with such a position. More detailed information is in the section titled 'Emergency Services' (page 8).

Regional Medical and Other Services

With regard to medical services, those available are the Guadalupe Valley Hospital in Seguin, the Christus Santa Rosa Hospital in New Braunfels, and the Northeast Methodist Hospital in Live Oak, Texas. These institutions are acute care facilities with 24 hour, seven days per week emergency rooms. There are numerous medical clinics in Schertz, Seguin, New Braunfels, and San Antonio proper. For the active duty and retired military personnel residing in the city there is the Randolph clinic and the San Antonio Army Medical Center (SAMC), formerly known as BAMC.

For other services, the surrounding cities provide a wealth of services to include banking, hardware stores, grocery stores, and other needs associated with day-to-day living. The San Antonio International Airport is approximately 35 miles from the city and provides flights or flight connections to anywhere in the world.

Municipal Services

Such services as offered by the city have been covered elsewhere in this plan. However, the city will continue to study ways in which to provide more services on an as needed basis. Citizens can give input to any City Council Member or via the city web site.

Technology

The city intends to make optimal use of the latest informational technology and has created the city web site: [<http://www.ciSantaClaraTX.us>]. However, as this is a rapidly changing technology the city must ensure that its needs and acquisition of services are met in the best possible manner. The City Planning Commission is responsible for making 'technology' recommendations to the City Council.

Capital Improvement Program

At this time there are no planned capital improvements for the next five (5) years. However, the city planning process is on going and as needs for capital improvements become known they will be incorporated into this document.

APPROVED AND ACCEPTED BY THE CITY OF SANATA CLARA CITY COUNCIL

ON THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 20__

SIGNED BY MAYOR _____

ATTACHMENT

Master Program for City Roads and Streets

General

The City Planning Commission (PC), at the request of the City Council and Mayor, has established as City Development Committee (CDC). This committee is responsible for a large part of this roads program.

One of the primary assignments of the CDC is to develop and maintain a Road Repair Priority Listing by referring to the Guadalupe County Road Ordinance and by using other criteria as necessary, including an actual road survey.

Five (5) City Council members will monitor the condition of the city's roads and streets. When a council member discovers a road related problem or has one reported to him/her, he/she will notify the Mayor and/or CDC. The reported problem will be handled according to established plans.

For repairs of roads from the 'Road List';

The CDC will determine the roads that can be repaired as limited by the City Council approved budget. The roads nominated for repair will then be approved by the City Planning Commission. The roads will then be repaired by established plans. Established plans include the names of firms, agencies, or individuals that will correct a particular problem. Contracts are obtained through the Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

For emergency road repairs or work outside of the 'Priority Listing';

Once the appropriate agency or individual is identified, a work request, with estimated cost, is forwarded to the City Council for approval, disapproval, or modification. It is then returned to the CDC for disposition. All contracts and fund expenditures for road repairs and/or general maintenance that are not on the approved 'road list' or exceed budget for the fiscal year, must be approved by the City Council and signed by the Mayor, or designated authority. See next section for more details.

Emergency Road and Street Problems

Any citizen can identify and report to a council member any road emergency condition. City Council members identify and/or verify road conditions requiring emergency service. An emergency is any act (man made or nature) that forces the closure of a road, street, bridge, or creates a major obstacle and/or causes a hazard to a pedestrian or vehicle.

The CDC identifies twenty-four (24) hour Emergency Response Resources from local cities' road departments, road repair and construction firms, or individual contractors.

Once sources are identified, a RFP is prepared indicating work to be done, standards to be met, established time requirements, and requests an estimated job cost. Selected vendors must respond on a quick turn around basis.

The most cost effective RFP is then submitted to the City Council for approval, disapproval, or modification. Once acted on by the City Council, the CDC develops a final contract for the work to be done. The contract is signed by the Mayor, or designated authority, based on council approval.

For road barriers, the council member monitoring road conditions in a particular area notifies the CDC for barrier needs. The CDC contacts the appropriate agency/individual to have barriers placed or removed.

Road Signs

Road signs should be maintained in accordance with the Texas Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices: Part IV, Standards and Guide for Traffic Control for streets, highways, construction maintenance, and utility and incident management operations.

The City Council and Planning Commission may work with the county traffic engineer and law enforcement authorities to help determine city speed limits.

When sign maintenance is beyond the capabilities of the road maintenance person, the CDC develops sign replacement or sign repair contracts (by the RFP process) on an as needed basis. The contract is forwarded to the City Council for approval, disapproval, or modification. It is then returned to CDC for disposition.

Citizens may report signage problems to the CDC and/or the City Council.

Road Striping

City Council members determine the need for road striping in accordance with the Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic control Devices. When a road requires striping, the CDC develops a contract using the RFP process and forwards it to the City Council for approval, disapproval, or modification. It is then returned to the CDC for disposition. The Mayor, or designated authority, must sign all contracts and/or funds expenditures for road striping based on council approval.

Review and Update of Road Master Program

The CDC is responsible to review the Road Master Program for accuracy and applicability on an as needed basis, but not later than every two years. The CDC will follow the standard procedure of bringing suggested changes to the PC and then the PC submits the changes to the City Council for approval.