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Public Facilities



INTRODUCTION

As the growth of communities change over long periods of time, planning for public facilities becomes an ever challenging issue for the community leaders and residents. Determining what influences are at work provides the necessary data to make determinations on the type, size, location, and design aesthetics that match the community's established standards as well as its desires for these public facilities. Developing a strategy and adequately planning to finance these needs is also crucial to the perceived effectiveness of the local government by its citizens. After all, the quality of life for the community is affected by these public facilities.

The City of Plainview has conducted many community facility studies, with the most recent completed in 1989 covering the time frame of 1989 through 2010. As this study points out, there are two basic phases of evaluation; the review and analysis of the existing facilities and the analysis of the future needs.



The first phase is to analyze the existing public facilities to determine if the current needs are being met. This evaluation looks at not only the physical size of space needed for the functions and services being provided, but also at the condition of the existing facilities, the life expectancy of the facility and equipment, and the location of the facility relative the current growth patterns of the City.

The second phase focuses on the future needs of the community. Where is the future growth of the City headed? How does the age of the population affect what services will be needed? Do new facilities need to be provided or existing ones renovated/relocated to better serve the community? Are more/expanded services going to be necessary in the future? Are current building and life safety codes being met in these existing facilities? All of these questions are just a sample of the forward looking analysis this second phase addresses.

The 1989 plan also addressed the accessibility of facilities to the community. Our use and meaning of the word accessibility has changed over the past 22 years, but the basic definition is the same. Community facilities should have physical access provided to all citizens. Because so many of a community's facilities were constructed prior to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, many do not meet the minimum requirements for accessibility required under today's codes. Each community is required to have a transition plan in place that outlines each non-accessible feature of the public facilities and a timeline which describes when these specific features will be corrected.

Along with the anticipated life cycles and accessibility to and within these public facilities, life safety should also be considered. Protecting the health, safety and welfare of the community is an essential function of the local government. Building and life safety codes are updated on a regular basis and as the changes are implemented in new construction, there is little enforcement on existing building to be brought up to current standards. Public facilities become "grandfathered" by code, which leaves the facility as originally designed meeting the codes at the time of design and construction.

As the community plans for the future, and renovation/expansion of facilities is considered, improvements to these public facilities should include upgrades to meet accessibility as well as life safety code requirements.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

On July 26, 1990, President George Herbert Walker Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The ADA is the nation's first comprehensive civil rights law addressing the needs of people with disabilities, prohibiting discrimination in these areas:

- Employment;
- State and local government services;
- Public transportation;
- Places of public accommodation;
- Telecommunications services; and
- Governmental activities.

Disability is defined by the ADA as "... a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity." The ADA enables people with disabilities to participate more fully in their communities, compete more effectively for jobs, travel more easily in their hometowns and across the nation, and gain more complete access to the goods and services that most Americans take for granted. Over 54 million Americans have a disability covered by the ADA, and though there is no list of covered disabilities, some well-established examples include spinal cord injury, blindness, hearing impairment, epilepsy, HIV infection and AIDS, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, emphysema, cancer, dyslexia, organic brain disorder, cognitive impairment, and depression.

Source: www.eeoc.gov; www.unitedspinal.org

EXISTING PUBLIC FACILITIES

The current inventory of the City of Plainview public facilities can be viewed in detail in **Table 5.1, Existing Public Facilities Inventory** (on next page). For locations of public facilities, refer to **Map 5.1, Public Facilities**.

City Hall

Many of the issues this facility has today were also indicated in the 1989 plan. The building is overcrowded and there is inadequate space for any growth. Office space is not adequate for the specific departments and their tasks. Current departments and municipal functions located within this facility include: City Council and Council Chambers, City Manager, Assistant City Manager, City Attorney, Human Resources, Municipal Court, City Secretary, Civil Service, Building Permits and Inspections, Code Enforcement, Zoning Administration, Community Development, Public Works, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), City Switchboard, Information Technology, and Main Street/Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB).

Table 5.1, Existing Public Facilities Inventory		
Facility	Address	Approximate Size (square feet)
City Hall	901 Broadway	10,442 SF
Police Station	108 W. Ninth	7,512 SF
Emergency Operations Center (EOC)*	1108 S. Bus I H 27	10,500 SF
Fire Station #1	215 E. Sixth	12,712 SF
Fire Station #2	911 Quincy	5,807 SF
Fire Station #3	3405 SW. Third	10,043 SF
Public Library	825 Austin	16,762 SF
Finance Office	121 W. Seventh	4,080 SF
Animal Control	500 SW. Third	4,272 SF
Plainview Hale County Health Department	111 E. Tenth	2,500 SF
Civic Center / Plainview Country Club	2902 W. Fourth	32,139 SF
Hale County Airport	10 Miller Boulevard	Unknown
Broadway Shelter House in Broadway Park	101 SE. First	2,400 SF
Rotary Building in Regional Running Water Draw Park	3600 W. Fourth	1,925 SF
Big Shop Broadway Park	101 SE. First	2,400 SF
Service Center	500 W. 18th	24,508 SF
Parks Department	200 S. Beech	Unknown
Solid Waste	1031 County Road Y	1,440 SF
Water Production	3500 W. 16th	4,000 SF
Water Reclamation / Wastewater Treatment	1059 County Road Y	2,500 SF
Fair Theater	717 Broadway	9,500 SF
RSVP Volunteer Program	2503 W. Eighth	Included in Library
* The existing EOC is located in the basement of the Police Department. The City owns the National Guard Building and has plans to relocate to this facility in the future.		

City Hall is overcrowded and there is inadequate space for any growth, especially with regard to specific departments and their tasks.

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative



The Police Department has outgrown the available space within this outdated, non-ADA compliant building.

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative



Functions such as municipal court are being held in the City Council chambers, which is not ideal for a court proceeding. In addition, parking for citizens continues to be a problem during public events, such as municipal court and Council meetings. There is also no elevator in the building, which prohibits access to the departments located in the basement for those with limited mobility.

As a result of the limited space within this building, some services have been relocated to other buildings, creating issues with the citizens not knowing exactly which building to come to for the desired services. In some instances, they must first go to one building and then to another to complete a transaction.

In addition to these issues, the building is now beginning to show extensive physical wear and is outdated. Life expectancies of mechanical equipment and fixtures are nearing the end or have exceeded industry standard limits, and there currently is no emergency backup generator servicing the City Hall.

Police Station

The 1989 plan noted issues including the department having outgrown the available space and having inadequate training facilities. Those issues persist today and are exacerbated by the growth over the last 20 years.

In addition to these issues, the building is now beginning to show more physical wear and is outdated. Life expectancies of mechanical equipment and fixtures are nearing the end or have exceeded industry standard limits.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

The current EOC is a joint operation between the City of Plainview and Hale County. Located in the basement of the Police Station, it is not accessible

to individuals with limited mobility due to the lack of an elevator. The space is undersized and inadequate for the current and future operational needs. The physical arrangement of the space is not configured in such a way as to perform the operations of the center as intended and is set up in a make-shift manner. There is also a lack of adequate facilities for periods of extended use (such as during natural disasters or other long-term events), including no kitchen, sleeping quarters, or supply storage of cots, food and supplies.

Fire Station #1

Fire Station #1, built in 1951, was designed at the time as a two-story fire house with a traditional fireman's pole from the second floor to the apparatus bay. This system is now outdated and creates a higher risk of injury for the staff.

Fire Station #2

Due to growth patterns of the City, Fire Station #2 is not currently serving the community in the most efficient way possible. Established response times of four minutes to any location within the service boundary of this station, are being exceeded, in many instances by more than a factor of three. This problem causes the insurance rates for the residents of the City to be higher than they should be due to a lack of adequate coverage for the community.

This station also serves as the department's administrative headquarters. In doing so, there is a lack of physical space for all of the functions required in this facility. In addition, this station does not currently provide adequate training for the department. This lack of training space requires the department to either use other facilities not specifically suited to their type of training or to travel to other cities to train, costing the City time and money for travel and rental of training facilities.

Fire Station #1 is now beginning to show more physical wear and is outdated.

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative



Recognizing that Station #2 no longer fulfills the Fire Department's logistical and programmatic requirements, the City has identified a suitable parcel (of City-owned property) for a future fire station.

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative



Fire Station #3

Fire Station #3, the newest station, constructed in 2000, serving the southwest side of the City well. At this time, there is no need for renovation or addition to this facility.

Public Library

Since the 1989 plan, an addition to the building has been constructed and an elevator has been installed to serve the basement and mezzanine levels of the facility. The library currently serves the community well and is in need of no major work other than routine maintenance.

Finance Services Office

The Finance Services Office currently contains services that should be located in City Hall, but due to the physical constraints of City Hall were moved to a separate location a few blocks away. As noted above, this physical separation does cause some issues for the citizens who either do not know which building to go to for services, or must go to both in order to complete their transaction.

City Maintenance Facility

The current facility is serving the City's functional requirements well at this time.

Animal Control

The animal shelter is outdated and in need of renovation. Animal quarters are in need of replacement, and routine maintenance to the facility should not be deferred or the facility could fall into disrepair quickly due to the nature of the activities.

Plainview Hale County Health Department

The Plainview Hale County Health Department has not been upgraded since the recommendation of

the 1989 plan and continues to provide inadequate patient privacy and organization to the building layout. In addition, usage of this facility has dropped dramatically over the last 20 years. The privacy issues, along with an outdated facility may be major factors in citizens looking for alternative health care service providers with more modern facilities located in more convenient locations across the City.

Civic Center/Plainview Country Club

The civic center and country club are owned by the City, but are operated independently. Currently the facilities are adequately serving the community and are in no need for major renovations other than routine maintenance.

Hale County Airport

The airport is a vital part of the City economy. Owned by the City of Plainview and Hale County, a Fixed Based Operator (FBO) runs the facilities on a daily basis. Industries located in Plainview make use of the facilities for corporate air service. As part of a long-term goal, the City has been working on an airport master plan which includes an extension of the runway for larger aircraft to be serviced.

Broadway Shelter House and Rotary Building

These two facilities are located in two different parks and are rental facilities operated by the City. Both facilities are outdated for today's current usages and technology demands.

PLANNING FOR FUTURE FACILITY NEEDS

Any planning effort involving future facility needs first requires a clear understanding of the existing

The Finance Services Office currently contains services that should be located in City Hall.

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative



Plainview Hale County Health Department has not been upgraded since the recommendation of the 1989 plan.

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative



facilities. Conditions and life expectancies of equipment, current access to facilities by citizens, location and usage/demand, are all critical to the understanding of the current facility's limitations in meeting the community's needs.

In addition, analyzing the current and future needs of both the community and the staff provides additional data in determining the inefficiencies and inadequacies of the existing facilities, and assists in determining prioritization of resources to address these needs.

FOCUS AREAS

The City has identified two such priorities related to facility needs.

- Focus Area 5.1 - Consolidation of City services;
- Focus Area 5.2 - Relocation of City facilities.

FOCUS AREA 5.1: CONSOLIDATION OF CITY SERVICES

Consolidation of City services into a single location will ultimately provide better service to the citizens of Plainview. In the past, consideration was given to purchasing a building in the downtown area for the relocation of City services. This option has its pros and cons. Positives for this option are the adaptive reuse of an existing building. If the right building is found, it can provide adequate parking, and possibly provide the ability to have a drive-thru which provides convenient access for citizens to conduct transactions and pay City bills. It could potentially encourage downtown private sector redevelopment around this location as well and foster an attitude among the citizens that the City views downtown as essential to the City's long-term future.

On the negative side, purchasing an existing building can have its share of problems from building and life safety code compliance issues, to mechanical, plumbing and electrical systems that are out of date and in need of replacement. Energy efficiency will be lower in an existing building due to less restrictive code requirements in the past for insulating buildings. Roofing and window issues can also be a problem over the long term. There is also the issue of the physical arrangement. Can it accommodate the departments in a configuration that is most suitable for the City? All of these

issues should be considered before the purchase of an existing building.

Another option is to purchase land, either vacant or with existing structures and build a new building from the ground up. In this case, the City has the ability to control the size and configuration, meet current code requirements, as well as provide sufficient parking. This option could potentially cost more after purchasing the land, demolishing any existing structures, and covering construction costs at today's market prices.

Strategy 5.1.1: Consolidate City Hall services into a single location.

Initiatives and Actions

1. Commission a study to conduct a complete space and function needs assessment of all departments that should be collocated at a new City Hall complex.
2. Based on the results of the needs assessment, research available existing buildings and vacant (or available) lots within the downtown area to determine whether the new City Hall complex should be relocated into a:
 - Renovated, existing building; or
 - Newly constructed building on a vacant lot.
3. Determine an adequate funding source to locate and construct a new City Hall complex.

FOCUS AREA 5.2: RELOCATION OF CITY FACILITIES

Strategy 5.2.1: Provide efficient Fire Department service coverage to ensure adequate protection of the population.

Fire protection services within the City limits is another priority for the administration. In evaluating the current needs of the department, and the positioning of stations in and around the City, it has been determined the City needs to address two issues.

The first is the addition of a local training facility for the fire department. This training facility could serve not only the fire department, but also the police department. A modern training facility

would reduce time spent traveling out of town to other facilities to address current training needs.

The second need is the relocation of Fire Station #2. There is currently more overlap in coverage between station #2 and the other two stations, such that relocating station #2 more to the north would benefit the City in two ways. First, it would first provide better coverage to the north, and reduces the overlap that currently exists with the other stations. Second, it could potentially assist in lowering the insurance rates for City residents through a reassessment of the City's Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating.

Initiatives and Actions

1. Plan for, design, and build a local training facility for both the fire and police departments.
2. Develop a fire station facility replacement program; schedule and budget for Fire Stations 1 and 2.

Strategy 5.2.2: Provide efficient emergency operations services to ensure the adequate protection of the population.

Due to the inadequacies of the current Emergency Operations Center (EOC) mentioned previously, it is recommended that the EOC be relocated to the former Texas National Guard building near the airport. This facility is large enough to accommodate a fully functional EOC, and provide the necessary support spaces, such as a kitchen, restroom facilities, sleeping quarters, storage and emergency response vehicle storage under one roof. This facility could be a joint venture between the City and County, so some cost savings may come from sharing the overall renovation costs of this facility. The facility is of sound construction with masonry walls and interior partitions, there is a large open space that can easily be configured to any size and shape EOC, and there are existing restrooms and kitchen which would require only minor renovation to meet the needs of the EOC.

Initiatives and Actions

1. Form a collaborative partnership with Hale County in order to relocate the Emergency Operations Center to the former Texas National Guard building near the airport.

CONCLUSION

Beyond these three highest priority issues, the relocation of the police station into the existing City Hall building after a new City Hall complex is constructed would alleviate the overcrowding at the existing police station. Alternately, the existing City Hall could also be reconfigured to a municipal court with a courtroom, jury room and other support spaces as necessary.

Finally, updating City park facilities with technologies that are needed and desired by renters is also a long-term goal for the City. While these facilities are utilized on a regular basis, over time, they need a facelift and modernization.

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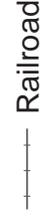
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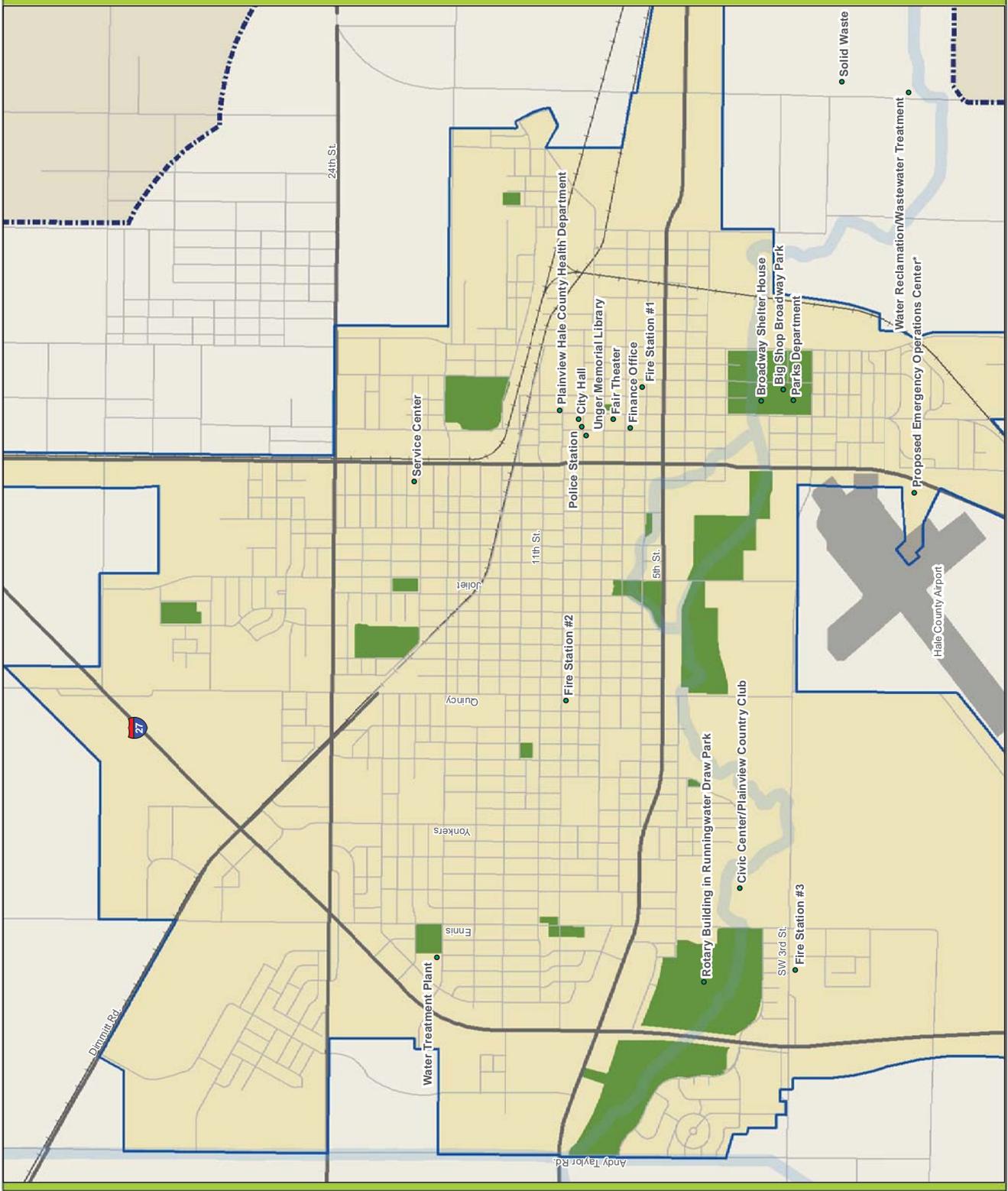
Map 5.1 Public Facilities

Legend

• Public Facilities



Source: Parkhill, Smith & Cooper



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