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## SECTION 1 Introduction

In coordination with the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (CAMPO) Long Range Transportation Plan, the City of Georgetown has completed an update of the Overall Transportation Plan (OTP). The implementation of the OTP is critical in the overall development of the City. Just as the Comprehensive Plan outlines the long-term goals and objectives for the overall vision of what Georgetown strives to be, the OTP serves as a guide for development of future transportation systems. The OTP is a working document that enables the City to plan for future transportation needs. Through the adoption of the OTP the City is ensuring that the basic transportation infrastructure needs and right-of-way are available as the city grows and system improvements are warranted.

The OTP adopted in 2004, laid the foundation for roadway analysis and made recommendations with respect to the future system needs. This updated OTP is more comprehensive and introduces the need for new elements such as a bicycle plan, a sidewalk plan and a transit plan. While some recommendations cannot be immediately implemented, the plan outlines specific, measurable steps the City can take and review on an annual basis as it works towards full realization.

### **1.1 Study Background and Purpose**

The initial OTP adopted in 2004 provided an analysis of the existing conditions and travel characteristics, refined the area-wide travel demand model, reviewed the City's roadway functional classification system, and revised the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This analysis was solely for the purpose of identifying and prioritizing future roadway needs.

Since the 2004 plan, the City has experienced tremendous growth and development. Additionally, the 2030 Comprehensive Plan which includes a revised Future Land Use Plan, has been completed. The Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for physical growth and development and the OTP serves as a guide for transportation development. These documents should be used in coordination with one another, not as separate competing documents.

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The updated OTP serves several purposes. It accounts for change that have occurred since the previous plan; it provides recommendations for new roadway locations and functional classifications. The updated plan revises the implementation program and improves the design recommendations through the implementation of CSS. A secondary purpose is the review of the existing sidewalk and pedestrian/bicycle plans to determine the existing network and lay the ground work for future needs.

The transportation improvement recommendations are based on projected 2035 travel demands. The implementation program prioritizes the improvements through short and long-term recommendations. The improvements identified for funding prior to this adopted OTP are identified as “near term” and those where funding, routing, and right-of-way have not been identified are considered “long term”. Potential improvements include roadway widening and/or extensions, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and transit considerations. This study involves an evaluation of various transportation improvements and considers the impacts related to traffic/mobility, anticipated construction and right-of-way costs, and environmental/land use criteria. As part of the study, the TDM has been updated and integrated with CAMPO’s 2035 plan/model and provides a more detailed zone structure and additional socioeconomic data. By modifying the CAMPO travel demand model, the Georgetown TDM provides better forecasts of future travel demands in and around the Georgetown area.

## **1.2 Study Area**

The study area for the OTP includes the City of Georgetown city limits as well as the Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) area, which typically extends one to two miles beyond the city limits, as shown in **Figure ES-1**. There are roadways in the study area that the City has complete control over including Shell Road, D B Wood Road, Williams Drive, and Inner Loop. These facilities provide critical connectivity for the residents within the city. There are also many transportation facilities within the City that are not under its jurisdictional control. These include Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) facilities such as Interstate Highway 35, State Spurs 26 and

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158 (Austin Avenue), State Highways 29 and 195, and the tolled State Highway 130. In addition, there are state and Williamson County facilities that provide regional circulation – Farm-to-Market Roads 971, 972 and 1460, as well as Ranch-to-Market Road 2243 (Leander Road). These facilities lie outside of the purview of the City and only limited improvements can be recommended. In addition, many of these facilities have significant adjacent development making improvement recommendations extremely difficult and cost prohibitive. Each of these facilities provides a critical link in the City’s overall development plan.

### **1.3 Study Participants**

The development of the OTP was a cooperative effort between the City of Georgetown staff and other City supported agencies. While a Technical Advisory Committee was not specifically set up for this effort, the Georgetown Transportation Advisory Board (GTAB) was updated on a regular basis. Comments and suggestions were solicited during each of the presentations.

### **1.4 Goals and Objectives**

It was determined that the goals established as part of this study would mirror those set forth in the previous OTP (since this is an update) and follow the transportation goals set forth within the Comprehensive Plan.

The overall goal of the OTP is to develop a transportation system that will accommodate present and future needs for mobility of all people and goods traveling within and through the Georgetown area, which is safe, efficient and economically feasible. While this goal is revisited during subsequent updates, the goal is not changed, only the underlying objectives are refined further.

The following goals and objectives established in the Comprehensive Plan provide the framework from which the City can develop the OTP. They set forth the community values and aspirations related to transportation in each of four main themes: quality of life, sustainable development, balanced transportation/efficient mobility, and effective governance.

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- Implement improvements to the local road and traffic control system, including new thoroughfare linkages to enhance connectivity, improved and coordinated traffic signalization, standards for access management to enhance traffic flow and safety.
  - Progress toward a functional, well-integrated, multi-modal transportation system that provides a variety of choices – bicycle, public transportation, and pedestrian – on a local and regional level.
  - Reduce reliance on single-occupant automobile traffic and conventional fuels by promoting alternative fuel vehicles; retrofitting bicycle lanes and sidewalks in underserved areas to enhance bicycle and pedestrian mobility; incorporating these facilities in new developments; and encouraging compact mixed-use and other “walkable” development types.
  - Guide the future growth and development of the City toward a more balanced approach between employment and commercial centers, schools and other high traffic generators.

The following goals and objectives were set forth to guide the development of the OTP:

1. Provide for a high degree of safety for motorists, transit users, pedestrians and bicyclists.
2. Transportation facilities should be considered as a total system incorporating the various modes of transportation in appropriate combination, based on analysis of travel demand and consideration of community costs, benefits and needs.
  - c. Roadway facilities should be planned and classified based on function and relative importance, providing a proper balance of freeways, toll ways, expressways, major/minor arterials, collectors and local streets.
  - d. Encourage and accommodate through traffic on the classified roadway network and discourage it on collectors and local neighborhood streets.
  - e. Encourage the most efficient use of existing and future highway and street facilities to maximize the benefits of capital investments.
3. The transportation system should consider planned development patterns, accessibility and mobility needs.

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- a. Improve overall accessibility to employment, education, public facilities, downtown and other activity centers.
  - b. The transportation system should provide access between all developed areas of the region.
  - c. Minimize disruption of existing and planned developments and establish community patterns.
  - d. Consider development potential within and beyond the ETJ for the design years and provide tools to assess the impacts of growth to support decision making. This includes the recently adopted CAMPO Growth Center model as discussed in this report.
4. Meet the area's long range transportation needs.
    - a. Establish procedures for monitoring the OTP and provide for periodic updating and revision. These procedures should provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate changes in land use planning for the City of Georgetown and other unforeseen changes and conditions.
    - b. Preserve right-of-way for future roadway development and expansion.
    - c. Perform transportation planning within the framework of comprehensive regional planning to support regional growth and development goals.
    - d. Provide for an orderly improvement and expansion of the roadway system at a minimum cost as the need for improvement arises.
  5. Consideration should be given to social and environmental impacts.
    - a. Minimize air, noise and water pollution, as well as other environmental impacts of transportation improvement and new facility construction.

## **1.5 Purpose and Benefits of a Transportation Plan**

Transportation planning is one of the most cost beneficial processes that a municipality can undertake. The process plans for future system improvements in an orderly fashion, allowing for prioritization of future Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) and aiding in the justification of future expenditures. In general, the plan provides a mechanism for the City to develop an efficient and effective transportation system for existing and future community needs. In addition to the

roadway network, the plan also includes bicycle, sidewalk and transit planning considerations. Effective transportation planning is an integral part of the overall urban planning and community development process.