

9 - COMMUNITY FACILITIES



Community facilities take on a wide variety of functions that can impact residents, businesses and League City’s guests on a daily basis. Each plays a particular role and function in the community, some of which are more glamorous than others. Helen Hall Library is recognized throughout the city as a marvelous resource for residents of all ages. On the other hand, facilities that house the equipment needed to maintain streets and infrastructure go relatively unnoticed, yet the services provided by staff in these facilities ensures that the daily lives of most residents goes on without interruption or major inconvenience. Fire stations are scattered strategically throughout the community to be located in close proximity to neighborhoods, commercial areas and schools. The Animal Control facility, in comparison, is intentionally less obvious.

Community facilities represent a rare opportunity for government to directly play a part in the built environment as examples in quality construction and as landmarks. Equally important, however, they can serve as nodes that draw people to an area, as in the case of schools or City Hall. Together with other resources, community facilities can become attractions capable of enhancing the city’s marketability.

The Community Facilities chapter of the Comprehensive Plan contends that government structures have an important place in League City’s vision for the future by building upon their ability to perform three distinct roles:

- Providing critical services needed or desired by residents;
- Establishing the standard for private development; and,
- Furthering the community’s destination-based approach and building its brand.

By definition, the term “community facilities” can represent an extremely broad group of structures and spaces. A number of community facilities are addressed as part of other chapters. Parks and parks facilities are addressed in the Parks and Open Space chapter, mobility and streetscape improvements are found in the Mobility chapter, and infrastructure improvements are located in the Infrastructure Chapter. Additionally, many of the facilities found in League City today, as well as anticipated in the future, are not municipal structures. To impact various educational institutions or other governmental entities, League City will have to build strong regional partnerships. Regardless, the goals and policies of this chapter are largely applicable.

Inventory and Analysis of Current Facilities

Assessing existing facilities and services and identifying future needs is a necessary first step toward accurately planning for appropriate location and type of facilities. Below is a description of major municipal community facilities in League City, as well as additional county and educational facilities. Municipal facilities include discussion of current conditions, deficiencies, and projected needs, as available. Analysis of existing facilities is largely based on information provided by the League City Feasibility Study completed in 2008, as well as substantial research and discussion with staff.

CITY HALL

300 West Walker

Year constructed: 1969

Size of building: 22,420 square feet

Last renovation: Currently (2010)

Functions: The two story, 20,000 square foot structure currently houses City Administration, City Secretary's Office, Finance, Utility Billing, Public Information Office, Human Resources, Information Technologies, Public Works Administration and Emergency Management. Services offered at City Hall include utility payments, public hearings and visits to the Mayor. Due to space constraints, other activities that would typically be housed within City Hall, including departments that provide planning, engineering, building, and code enforcement services, as well as the Fire Marshal's offices, have relocated to an alternative, temporary space.

Conditions-Inadequacies: The current space is very limited and underutilized, largely due to obsolete design. There is no additional room for storage of documents, filing cabinets or additional staff. The general condition of the building is poor and the interior space is not readily handicap accessible. The mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems are aged and in need of replacement. The exterior of the building contains multiple deficiencies, some of which were the result of damage caused by Hurricane Ike. Water leaks, cracked and broken panels, rusted windows and deteriorating frames and the roof materials reflect the age of the structure.

Needs: The 2008 study of community facilities estimates that a space close to 100,000 square feet will be needed to fully accommodate the growing community's needs for City Hall once the community has reached "build out". In the interim, the need for space and updates to lighting, windows, storage, workable space and technology warrant near-term improvement. More

important, the current space, size and working conditions are inappropriate for today's modern government practices and inconvenient to city residents, contractors and other visitors seeking services.

The study of community facilities proposes creation of an expanded government campus along Walker Street in which City Hall could serve as the anchor facility surrounded by a series of additional structures. While grand in vision, the recommendation for construction of a new municipal complex seemed costly and impractical. As a cost effective short term alternative, in December 2010, the City began renovation efforts to repair damage caused by Hurricane Ike and age, as well as improve functionality of City Hall. Upon likely completion in 2012, the facility will have a stronger "skeleton" that is more resistant to wind damage, in addition to new windows and minor façade improvements. Internally the structure will include an entire remodel of the interior to better accommodate staff and citizens. While space will remain insufficient to accommodate all of the services typically housed in City Hall, it will prolong the life of the existing structure and allow for focus on other major facility improvements, including a new Public Safety building.

MUNICIPAL COURTHOUSE

200 West Walker

Year constructed: 1969

Size of building: 5,600 square feet

Last renovation: Addition in 2000

Functions: The Municipal Courthouse serves as home to the City's municipal court system, as well as City Council Chambers. Additionally, the single court chamber provides space for a number of city boards and commissions.

Conditions-Inadequacies: Built alongside City Hall, the Municipal Courthouse suffers from many of the same problems afflicting that structure. The courthouse is generally small in size and does not have adequate seating for the growing public. The general condition of the building is poor and the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems are aged and in need of replacement. The exterior has many of the deficiencies of City Hall. More, the interior space is inefficiently designed for an era that requires increased technology and security.

Needs: Because the facilities serves many functions, needs are extensive. Upon "build out" the city is expected to need courthouse space of approximately 25,000 square feet. New technology is critical to safety and

the ability of municipal court staff to meet goals for a more advanced and efficient system. Finally, location of the facility ensures that City Council meetings, as well as meetings of boards and commissions will be increasingly difficult to reach, particularly as population in the western portion of the city grows. To avoid isolation from an increasing portion of League City residents, staff have suggested consideration of a secondary location on the west side of the city to hold City Council meetings, as well as those of some of the boards and commissions.

Currently, the city is proposing a new facility to house a number of public safety related services. A new municipal court facility located within the new Public Safety Building is a part of the discussion. If so, the existing space has the potential to become more strongly focused on service to City Council.

JOHNNIE AROLFO CIVIC CENTER AND ADJACENT RECREATION CENTER

400 West Walker

Year constructed: 1969

Size of building: 14,762 square feet (Civic Center) and 3,534 square feet (Recreation Center)

Last renovation: Addition in 1993

Functions: The Johnnie Arolfo Civic Center is a general purpose hall that provides space for meetings, conferences and local events. A large ballroom occupies the majority of available space, including space for an event of roughly 475 people, as well as a stage for performances. Four adjacent meeting rooms, separated by collapsible partitions, can support groups of roughly 40 people. The recreation center is a separate, adjacent facility that serves as an expansion of the Civic Center. While available to all interested parties, the recreation center is particularly well utilized by the senior population.

The Civic Center and recreation center are very actively used by staff and the general public. Approximately 15 events take place in the ballroom each month. Combined, the spaces within the Civic Center and recreation center service roughly 120 events each month. Activities range from general meetings to weddings.

Conditions-Inadequacies: The general condition of each building is poor with mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems showing signs of age and in need of replacement. The exterior of the buildings likewise show signs of wear. Parking for the facilities is generally inadequate to accommodate the increasing number of patrons using each facility.

Needs: The age and size of the Civic Center are beginning to show signs of obsolescence. Once the city has reached full maturity, it is estimated to require approximately 40,000 square feet of space to host the myriad meetings that will be a part of a large community. The recreation center is insufficient to offer the various requirements of a full senior center, including classrooms, as well as large spaces. Eastern Regional Park, a major new park facility within League City, will provide for many of the activity-related needs of the community, including senior citizens. Parking and accessibility will continue to be an issue.

HELEN HALL LIBRARY

100 West Walker

Year constructed: 1972

Size of building: 29,300 square feet

Last renovation: 1988

Functions: The Helen Hall Library is currently the largest and busiest member of the Galveston County Federated Library System, with over 23,000 patrons every month, 776,647 checkouts per year and 87,135 computer users per year. The library is accredited by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and is therefore also a member of the Houston Area Library System. The library contains space for story time, a catalog, comfortable chairs for reading, and a bank of computers with internet access for both adults and children to utilize. Study space is also available with tables and chairs.

Conditions-Inadequacies: The library is part of a combined structure shared with City Hall and Municipal Court. It encompasses over 29,000 square feet but the general condition of the building is poor and there is need for additional space based on the increase of population. The interior and exterior of the building is not handicap accessible. The parking area is inadequate for the number of patrons this library serves. The mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems are aged and in need of replacement. The exterior of the building, like the remainder of the structure, contains multiple deficiencies such as water leaks, cracked and broken panels, rusted windows and frames and the roof materials are deteriorating.

Needs: The current building size and condition is inadequate for a city that will double in population over the next 20 years. It lacks space for expanded children's programming, new teen programming or adult programming.

There are no quiet study areas or meeting rooms. There is no space for an enclosed computer lab and inadequate parking. City staff have discussed the concept of "repurposing" the current library building through renovation and bringing the building up to standards as one potential solution, although no recommendation has been made.

Library branches and express libraries have become another means of stretching resources for larger, growing cities. With the majority of the west side of League City still undeveloped, branches could place the library in closer proximity to residents. Branches could offer a number of the amenities of Helen Hall Library, including youth programming with story time, quiet, comfortable reading areas, and a bank of computers used for internet and research. City staff and the 2008 study regarding community facilities together suggest that the future needs of the city for library space could encompass over 100,000 square feet for a central library by the time the population has reached its peak. A branch library could require approximately 25,000 to 35,000 square feet.

PUBLIC SAFETY/EMS

Functions: League City Emergency Medical Services provides emergency medical care for the entire city, as well as medical standby for events such as football games, fairs, concerts, and more. Currently the EMS operates from two locations that house personnel for a fleet of four ambulances, one supervisor response truck, five staff vehicles, a special operations trailer with MCI equipment, and a medical golf cart.

Conditions-Inadequacies: The building located at 260 FM 270 is fairly new with adequate space and amenities. The second location at 409 Newport Boulevard is an older facility that does not have sufficient space for the necessary personnel to man one emergency vehicle. The general condition of the building is poor. The interior of the building is not readily handicap accessible. The mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems are aged and in need of replacement. The Newport location has been slated in the Capital Improvements Program in FY2011 for renovations. At the same time, the City is looking to add a hurricane-ready, hardened facility behind Fire Station #2 on Hobbs Road.

Needs: With two projects currently in the Capital Improvement Program, League City EMS should have adequate facilities and locations to properly serve League City until 2025. As the city expands westward, an additional facility in conjunction with additional fire stations could assist to serve that area of the community.

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDINGS/POLICE DEPARTMENT

500 / 600 West Walker

Year constructed: 1986 / 1969

Size of building: 24,400 / 8,044 square feet

Last renovation: 2003 / 1995

Functions: The League City Police Department is composed of 111 sworn personnel, providing an average of 1.48 officers per 1,000 citizens. The department provides a variety of services to the community, including patrol, criminal investigations, criminal records maintenance, property/evidence collection, analysis and safekeeping, emergency communications, animal control, and code enforcement. Patrols are provided in six beats, which are divided into sub-districts. Three 8 hour shifts of patrols provide 24-hour coverage to the city. The department also participates in the Combined Agency Response Team (a special weapons and tactics unit that is staffed by participating cities), and maintains a marine unit that patrols the portions of Clear Creek and Clear Lake that are within city limits. The Police Department also plays a large role in Community Involvement projects.

Conditions-Inadequacies: According to the Strategic Plan, the department falls behind the national average of sworn police officers for cities of similar size of 1.8 officers per 1,000 people, and well below the Texas average of 2.21 sworn officers per 1,000 population. Realizing that the population of League City will continue to increase, and desiring to maintain the existing level of service (and intending to improve the level), the Police Department plans to add officers based on needs. It is anticipated in 2027 there will be 264 employees and sworn officers within the department.

Needs: Currently the Police Department is occupying two adjacent buildings, both of which require substantial repair. General mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems are aged. The exterior of the buildings contain multiple deficiencies.

The city is proposing to build a new, fully hardened Public Safety building that would include an Emergency Operations Center for use during major storm events, a new jail and possible space for municipal courts. While the 2008 study of community facilities suggested construction of a new facility as part of a major campus renovation on Walker Street, staff is also researching the possibility of location of the facility on the west side of the city to take advantage of higher elevation and greater distance to the coastline. Additionally, a location on the west side of the city would allow for a stronger municipal presence in an area that currently has very few municipal facilities.

If a new Public Safety building is completed, at least one of the existing two buildings is proposed to be refurbished to house departments that provide planning, engineering, building, and code enforcement services, as well as the Fire Marshal's office.

FIRE PROTECTION

League City's Volunteer Fire Department was established in 1939 and consists of 124 volunteer fire fighters, eighty percent of which actively respond. Five fire stations located throughout the city currently provide adequate fire protection for the City. League City is currently awarded a positive rating of 3 (on a scale of 1 through 10) through the Insurance Service Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification system. The Fire Department has a training facility, but maintenance issues related to the burn building and propane system have limited its usefulness in recent years and forced the department to look elsewhere to conduct live fire training.

To maintain the existing fire rating (or perhaps improve it), the Fire Department has begun looking at space for a sixth fire station, as well as the possibility of relocating some facilities as a means of improving coverage. City staff are actively investigating opportunities to share resources between city departments, particularly by co-housing the Fire Department and EMS in shared stations. The Fire Department has taken a first step in the transition from a fully volunteer organization to one which includes some paid staff by establishing a full time Fire Chief.

PUBLIC WORKS OPERATIONS



Public Works Operations, including but not limited to vehicle maintenance, the tool shop, streets and drainage, and line repair are located on Dickinson Avenue in several adjacent buildings. Any additional space needs for new or existing activities could take place on site. Recycling facilities for the city are also located at this site. Future expansion of the city westward will warrant a need for additional facilities for recycling in order to better serve the community.

ANIMAL SHELTER

The Animal Shelter and Animal Control is located on Kansas Street in the Historic District. The facility was expanded in 2009 to approximately 6,000 square feet. The League City Animal Shelter is different from other municipal shelters in that staff does not take in unwanted animals. The League City Animal Shelter has a high rate of adoption, owner retrieval and transfers of up to 71 percent.

The Animal Shelter houses roughly 90 animals at any one time. As a result, staff place emphasis on reducing the number of sheltered animals by expanding community outreach and promoting responsible pet ownership, thus reducing the amount of strays in the community. The Animal Shelter Advisory Board established by City Council suggests that more space is needed at the shelter as a means of conducting more on-site educational programs.

Staff indicate that, as the city continues to grow, a satellite shelter could improve service and benefit the city. The satellite facility could house strays but also serve as an educational site where various groups could learn about animal care and animal training.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Clear Creek Independent School District (CCISD)

The majority of League City residents are served by the Clear Creek Independent School District. CCISD, like other school districts, has established a district capital facilities plan that provides a glimpse into anticipated needs and plans for future growth including discussion of enrollment, classroom size, service standards, and financing. Currently CCISD operates 18 facilities within League City and is continuing to prepare plans for expansion to accommodate the anticipated municipal growth.

Most recently, CCISD made history in Texas with establishment of the Educational Village. Built along League City Parkway (SH 96) and stretching over 144 acres, the Village provides a "community" learning atmosphere

by sharing resources and space among Clear Falls High School, Bayside Intermediate School and Sandra Mossman Elementary School, including cooperate use of the kitchen, sports fields and track.

Dickinson Independent School District (DISD)

A southern portion of League City falls within the boundaries of Dickinson ISD. The district currently operates two schools within city limits - Calder Road Elementary and Bay Colony Elementary. While future growth may necessitate additional construction, the district has no plans for expansion in League City at this time.

Santa Fe Independent School District (SFISD)

Santa Fe ISD crosses into League City municipal boundaries along the community's southwest edge. While a limited number of students from the city attend Santa Fe ISD schools, there are no schools managed by SFISD within city limits.

College of the Mainland (COM)

Despite a population of well over 70,000 people, League City offers relatively few higher education opportunities to residents. In fact, the College of the Mainland (COM) North County Learning Center is the only physical facility for higher education in League City. Located just off of FM 518, the North County Learning Center is also one of the few facilities located west of I-45 in League City. The majority of students taking advantage of the facility come from northern Galveston County, including Dickinson, Friendswood, and League City. Enrollment regularly exceeds 2,000 students enrolled each year at the facility. As a result, COM has been forced to use other facilities to meet demand.

The College of the Mainland North County Learning Center provides continuing education classes for personal and professional growth, including classes and workshops in computers, real estate, leadership training, English as a Second Language (ESL), fitness, and more. Adjacent to the Learning Center is COM's Allied Health Center which offers Dental Assistant, Medication Aide, and Nurse Aide courses. COM utilizes Clear Springs High School for evening classes and they have over 100 high school students enrolled in dual credit courses. The Learning Center also utilizes the classrooms as meeting space when classes are not in session.

GALVESTON COUNTY AND STATE OF TEXAS FACILITIES

The Galveston County Annex Building located on Calder Road houses a number of county government services and resources, including accounting, motor vehicle, property tax, and voter registration functions. The facility also serves as offices for County Commissioner for Precinct 4, as well as Texas State Representative for District 24. Like several municipal facilities, the Galveston County Annex Building is an aging facility.

On the other hand, Galveston County has invested substantially in a 23,500 square foot Emergency Management Facility located along FM 646. As noted by the Galveston County Office of Emergency Management, the facility “combines the Galveston County Office of Emergency Management, the National Weather Service, the Galveston County 911 District and members of the Texas Division of Emergency Management National Weather Service.” The structure is designed to withstand the forces associated with a Category 5 hurricane event and act as a regional resource in emergencies.

Community Facilities as Placemakers

Many community facilities serve a secondary purpose as gathering places. This is certainly true of the parks and park facilities discussed in the Parks and Open Space chapter, as well as the Johnnie Arolfo Civic Center, the adjacent recreation center and, to an extent, the Helen Hall Library. However, as a whole, the City of League City has not taken full advantage of community facilities as a means of establishing a destination. As an example, numerous residents make the effort to come to the library and peruse the shelves, but they have no place to go once they have finished. The same can be said of many of other facilities. Even City Hall, to an extent, is a natural draw.

Time is not so far removed from a period when families would picnic on the lawn of the small town city hall or county courthouse and children would regularly play at the neighborhood school.

Placemaking through public facilities complements the destination-based approach recommended in the Land Use chapter. Doing so, however, requires a distinct departure from the current mindset toward community facilities, including:

- aggressively approaching facilities like the civic center and library as major cultural attractions that could be capable of drawing larger audiences if designed and programmed appropriately,
- utilizing City Hall as a potential community landmark, a natural “traffic” generator and one means of establishing critical mass,

- complementing existing facilities with other potential attractions (such as a performance center or amphitheater),
- recognizing that parks and schools are marketable amenities that can play a much larger role in neighborhood and community life,
- reinventing existing facilities to incorporate high quality architecture and site design,
- treating community facilities as economic and marketing amenities complete with appropriate landscaping, parking, signage, art and other features, and
- linking facility based destinations with other districts in the community.

A nearby example of a community that has leveraged public facilities is the City of Sugar Land and the extraordinarily successful Town Square. Beginning in 1996, the City of Sugar Land coordinated with a series of public and private partners to establish a “town square” in an area near First Colony Mall. In 2005, City Hall was relocated to a new facility anchoring the Town Square and including an urban plaza. The 82,000 square foot municipal structure is surrounded by over 160 residential units, 566,000 square feet of office space and 238,000 square feet of retail space, all within an urban footprint. The result is a highly walkable, well programmed destination that draws people to the area and keeps them interested for an extended period of time. Additionally, First Colony Mall has expanded to include lifestyle-center walkable format that connects the mall to the Town Square.

As impressive as the partnership is the attention to detail within the Sugar Land Town Square. The events plaza includes a fountain and artwork, as well as ample room for activities. Pedestrian walkways are heavily landscaped, well ornamented and constructed of bricks. Parking garages are strategically placed to be seen from the entry but only on-street parking is visible from most locations. “Bulbouts” at intersections and midpoints of streets ensure that pedestrians feel comfortable crossing the street to reach other stores.

Community Facilities as the Standard

Without question, the quality of community facilities send a message to taxpayers about the manner in which tax revenues are spent. For this reason alone it is imperative that the design of community facilities reflect the government that the community deserves and reflect the expectations for the community. Elected officials have established Organizational Values that reflect responsible government, world-class customer service, and a healthy community. The facilities built for the benefit of taxpayers should be a statement of those values.

Community facilities should present a similar statement to the potential investors in League City - builders, developers, and individuals looking to bring business to the community. The standards in energy efficiency, water conservation, architecture, and site design of public facilities should serve as the model for private investment. It should also be considered an opportunity to creatively build upon the desired identity for the community.

As an example, the City of Columbus, Indiana has transformed efforts to set a standard into what has actually become a marketable amenity. Over the course of more than 60 years the community placed an emphasis on constructing facilities that reflect the world’s finest architecture and, in doing so, has hired some of the most well-known architects in modern history. The initiative began with local churches, but was quickly adopted by city leaders. A major manufacturer, impressed by the effort, agreed to support continued efforts to bring internationally recognized architecture into the community. Today, this small community of approximately 40,000 is considered among the most important architectural destinations in the country. Among its distinctive structures are City Hall, the post office, a county jail, a series of fire stations, the major library, and numerous schools of all levels. The private sector has responded accordingly by utilizing similarly well known architects to construct banks and office buildings.



Sugar Land Town Center

Sharing Resources

Government entities have long been territorial, but have begun to recognize the benefits of sharing resources. Galveston County and League City have discussed numerous partnerships and share a variety of resources, most particularly during major storm events. However, the concept of sharing resources can be substantially more expansive. Consider that:

- Within League City, the Fire Department and EMS have similar needs to be located strategically throughout the community for appropriate response time
- League City and Galveston County build parks and recreational facilities while CCISD, DISD and SFISD all have open space needs for students, including athletic activities
- League City, Galveston County, CCISD, DISD, SFISD and College of the Mainland have library and resource needs
- All of the governmental entities and educational institutions in the area benefit from meeting areas and classroom space



Combining resources into shared facilities has the obvious advantage of reducing the cost of services for each of the involved organizations. It also provides the opportunity to extend coverage, sometimes by simply improving and enhancing existing resources. The City of Houston has successfully extended its parks system by coordinating with Houston ISD through a local nonprofit to establish “SPARK Parks”. Now the program has extended to include seven school districts and has resulted in transforming over 180 school playgrounds into neighborhood parks, many of which now also include public art.

Sharing resources in many cases has the added benefit of increasing the use and potential of each of the uses, particularly when they are highly complementary. In one innovative example, the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County coordinated with the Children’s Theater of Charlotte to establish the ImaginOn Children’s Library and Theater. The mission of ImaginOn is to bring “stories to life through extraordinary experiences that challenge, inspire and excite young minds”. Beginning in 1997 as a concept, the two organizations have shared resources to combine the powers of reading and the stage to create a dynamic and exciting learning experience. In 2005, the Joe and Joan Martin Center was completed as a facility dedicated to this unique partnership.

Public/Private Partnerships

Many communities have begun to take advantage of opportunities to coordinate with the private sector to expand and enhance resources in a manner similar to shared resources with other government entities. For the public sector, coordination with private investment offers an opportunity to stretch resources while also achieving the community’s efforts to enhance services. It also provides an increased opportunity for the public sector to play a role in placemaking. For the private investor, partnership with a government entity reduces a project’s risk, increases visibility and immediately draws a supply of employees and guests to take advantage of commercial activity. The public sector plays a role in establishing much needed critical mass.

Public/private partnerships can range in scale and impact. The City of Homewood, Alabama established a partnership with a local investor to construct a large mixed use facility in downtown that included residential units, restaurants, shops, an underground parking garage, and a major anchor - City Hall. Located on 5 acres, SoHo Square, is the absolute essence of public/private partnership. The project is not only mixed-use, the entire development is a single facility with City Hall nestled as the centerpiece while private development enjoys visibility along two major roadways within

downtown. Not only has the project brought new life into downtown as a result of the \$55 million investment, it also bolstered the area’s reputation as an upscale, eclectic destination. Restaurants in SoHo Square are distinctive and intended to provide excitement in the area during work and evening hours.

Goals and Policies

Following are goals and policies intended to ensure that community facilities are adequate to meet the needs of community residents. Equally important, however, they are also established to allow for community facilities to play a larger role in League City’s physical, social and economic fabric. The goals and policies in this chapter are designed to complement those found in other chapters in the Comprehensive Plan, including those found in the Land Use, Parks and Open Space, and Economic Development chapters.

GOALS

- ❖ Public facilities and services that keep pace with population and employment growth and are strategically located and easily accessible by residents.
- ❖ Public facilities and buildings that set the highest standard for development in regards to community character, building and site design and environmental excellence.
- ❖ Facilities that contribute to the creation of “great places”.
- ❖ Efficiency and effectiveness through partnerships and shared resources.

POLICIES

General

- New community facilities are recommended only as needed. New facilities, such as a new library facility or city hall should be taken into the context of overall community needs.
- Ensure that existing community facilities remain in the highest state of repair and that every effort is made to utilize each facility to its maximum potential.
- Maintain an ISO rating of 3 or better by anticipating and addressing expansion needs for the Fire and EMS Departments.
- Efforts should be taken to establish community facilities on the west side of League City, as appropriate, particularly in consideration of emergency facilities.

Placemaking

- Strategically locate facilities according to their potential role in the community as a node, gathering space, or attraction.
- Community facilities can serve as landmarks, as well as gathering places when placed at locations such as the terminus of a roadway or within a town square.
- Linkages are as critical to community facilities as other attractions, including landscaping, wayfinding, monumentation, and mobility.
- Complement facilities with functional and contextually appropriate open spaces, when the opportunity is present.
- To the extent possible, elementary schools should be located in a manner that allows for maximum and safe walkability, as well as service as a community gathering place.
- Fully mitigate impacts generated by community facilities to or above the extent expected from private development.
- Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) practices in public facilities and spaces at all possible opportunities to reduce opportunities for criminal activity and vandalism, as well as overall safety concerns.
- Promote artwork, fountains, distinctive landscaping and other features as a means of establishing memorable landmarks within public places.
- Avoid fences, other than ornamental fences, surrounding public facilities that also serve as gathering spaces, nodes or attractions, to the extent practical.

Shared Resources

- At minimum, League City should pursue joint use of resources such as library or park resources, parking areas, and meeting areas between departments or government entities that share common needs or interests, such as the fire department and EMS, or City of League City Police Department and Galveston County Sheriffs Department.
- Utilize resources such as parking areas, parks and meeting areas as a means of promoting shared use with private uses, such as retail, office and residential activities.
- The City should explore shared resources as a means of attracting additional higher education opportunities, as well as increased presence of the College of the Mainland.
- Maximize the potential for critical mass by clustering complementary activities to the extent practical.

Energy and Quality of Design

- Public facilities should be constructed, to the extent practical, using green standards, with consideration given for development to LEED standards.
- Water conservation and stormwater management techniques should be fully integrated into all existing and new public structures and site to the fullest extent practical.
- All public facilities should reflect dignity and permanence in design while allowing for sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing technology and needs.
- Architecture of public facilities should be innovative and bold in design. At the same time, architecture should fit into the surrounding context and should avoid styles capable of becoming quickly dated.
- Site design of any public facility should be highly respectful of the surrounding community character, including location of parking, open space requirements, and lot coverage.

Partnerships

- Partnerships that enhance educational opportunities in League City are strongly encouraged including construction of distinctive facilities that expand the learning experience and the possibility of research or training centers.
- Coordination with nonprofit organizations, particularly those related to cultural activities and the arts should be considered a viable means of expanding the creative use of facilities and the quality of services provided to League City residents.
- Public/private partnerships are strongly encouraged as a means of building stronger destinations and enhancing opportunities for customer service.
- Partnerships with other government entities that provide services in League City are encouraged for purposes of improving customer service and efficiently using resources.
- Partnerships with adjacent municipalities, Galveston County, Harris County and other entities could spur development of major regional attractions located strategically throughout the area.

