



# **CITY OF TOMBALL STRATEGIC PLAN 2011 - 2016**

# Definitions

## **MISSION**

Create a consensus plan that identifies the overall strategic direction and priorities for the City of Tomball. The Strategic Plan serves as a decision-making guide and budgeting tool translating the community's long range plans into action.

## **OVERALL GOALS**

- Easy to use and understandable by the council, staff and public.
- Focus on realistic, action-oriented strategies.
- Provide mechanisms to evaluate progress.
- Outline strategies for updating or making changes.
- The result of a council and staff collaborative effort.

## **FOCUS AREAS**

Focus Areas provide the framework for the Strategic Plan and strategic directives. Focus Areas contain a collection of projects and initiatives that will move the community toward its vision and goals.

## **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

Strategic Initiatives are shorter term directives that relate to the Vision and Focus Areas.

## **ACTION STRATEGIES**

Refer to the specific activities that Tomball will undertake within a 5-year timeframe. For each of the action strategies identified, staffing responsibilities and potential relative budget implications (range of impact: \$ = low budget impact to \$\$\$ = high budget impact) are indicated.

## **PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Measures used to track how well Tomball progresses toward implementation of the Strategic Plan. They reveal whether the key community attributes are going up or down; forward or backward; getting better, worse, or staying the same. Performance measures assist the community in measuring its success over time. The City of Tomball will develop specific performance measures over time.

# FOCUS AREA: COMMUNITY BASICS

**GOAL:** Expand and improve the City’s quality infrastructure, facilities and public services to meet current and future needs.

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Provide basic services such as water, sewer, gas, streets, signage, and drainage targeted to undeveloped and underserved areas and complete previously identified infrastructure projects that may be impediments to development. Continue to ensure that infrastructure capacity meets demand and the long term land uses for the City of Tomball.

<b>ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)</b>	<b>STAFFING/BUDGET</b>
1) Update 10 year master plan to align with the adopted Comprehensive Plan and zoning.	\$\$
2) Develop a drainage master plan.	\$\$
3) Annually fund capital improvement program.	\$\$\$
4) Continue preventative maintenance programs that includes all Infrastructure such as roadways.	\$\$\$
5) Develop utilities along westbound FM 2978 from FM 2920.	\$\$\$
6) Implement a comprehensive signage program.	\$\$
7) Fire Station 3 completion.	\$\$\$

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Ensure effective and consistent code compliance that will enhance the quality of life.

<b>ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)</b>	<b>STAFFING/BUDGET</b>
1) Revisit and implement potential changes to nuisance ordinances that will enhance the quality of life.	\$
2) Ensure adequate staffing to support compliance efforts.	\$\$

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Enhance public safety as the community grows to maintain quality service levels.

<b>ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)</b>	<b>STAFFING/BUDGET</b>
1) Complete Standards of Cover to evaluate and revisit fire facilities needs.	\$
2) Collaborate with EMS District on facilities and/or land.	\$\$
3) Revisit and make appropriate modifications to the Tomball Police Department facilities needs assessment.	\$
4) Develop staffing plan to accommodate public safety service delivery.	\$\$\$

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Capitalize on recreational opportunities as an economic development strategy, while enhancing services to residents.

**ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

**STAFFING/BUDGET**

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|---|------|
| 1) Perform a needs assessment to determine the viability of recreation as an economic development strategy.   | \$   |
| 2) Take advantage of regional and local recreational events by exploring joint marketing opportunities or marketing for visitors to stay in Tomball while providing shuttle services to the event. Develop a feasibility study to:<br>a. Identify all current events and activities<br>b. Identify potential partnering opportunities<br>c. Identify all local facilities that could be used<br>d. Identify implementation strategies | \$   |
| 3) Explore grant opportunities for parks.   | \$\$ |
| 4) Implement a recreational program based on the results of the recreational needs assessment.  | \$\$ |

# FOCUS AREA: CONNECTING TOMBALL

**GOAL:** Improvement multimodal accessibility to the City and within Tomball.

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Develop bike, trail, and pedestrian facilities that connect neighborhoods and activity centers.

## **ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Develop and adopt a circulation master plan.
- 2) Implement and fund circulation master plan priorities.

## **STAFFING/BUDGET**

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\$\$

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Work to extend passenger rail to Tomball.

## **ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Explore grant funding for the establishment of a rail overlay district feasibility study.
- 2) Advocate Tomball as the most viable location for a passenger rail stop and maintain communication with agencies working on this issue.

## **STAFFING/BUDGET**

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Improve the east-west connectors in Tomball.

## **ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Advance the development of the Brown-Hufsmith corridor.
- 2) Advance the development of Medical Complex Drive.
- 3) Implement 2920 Access Management recommendations.

## **STAFFING/BUDGET**

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Maximize the benefits from the development of the Grand Parkway.

**ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Strengthen the relationship with the Grand Parkway Board and advocate the City of Tomball's interests.
- 2) Explore opportunities with the City of Houston for acquisition of ETJ along the proposed Grand Parkway route.

**STAFFING/BUDGET**

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Develop a Tomball centered transit circulator to provide transportation choices for residents.

**ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Work with regional partners to develop a transit feasibility study.
- 2) Pursue grant funding and partnerships to implement transit feasibility study recommendations.
- 3) Encourage the development of transit facilities such as park-and-ride lots that provide services for commuting residents.

**STAFFING/BUDGET**

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Ensure a developed street network to meet current and future needs.

**ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Maintain and upgrade street inventory based on pavement management plan.
- 2) Annually review the thoroughfare plan.
- 3) Annually fund street improvements according to adopted plans.
- 4) Fund the extension of Brown Road.
- 5) Implement a city-wide sidewalk development and improvement program.

**STAFFING/BUDGET**

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# FOCUS AREA: ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

**GOAL:** Create a highly efficient, service-oriented culture within the City of Tomball.

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Ensure effective boards and commissions.

## ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)

- 1) Develop a program to provide a broad understanding of the City's operation that will prepare participants to take on community leadership positions such as participation on Boards and Commissions or to run for elected office.
- 2) Hold annual joint meeting of each Board/Commission with the City Council.

## STAFFING/BUDGET

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Improve service and communication throughout the organization.

## ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)

- 1) Implement a customer service training program for all employees.
- 2) Develop a team culture that transcends all departments and staff levels.
- 3) Develop and implement a program to retain organizational knowledge and ensure adequate staffing.
- 4) Improve communications within the organization (i.e., staff and Council) and with customers and regional entities.
- 5) Continue to implement a records management system throughout the organization.
- 6) Continue to enhance, both the direct and online service functions, such as website improvements, online surveys, improved search functions, mobile app, and other service enhancements.
- 7) Identify and implement a continuous process improvement program for the City including regular review of existing processes including development review and permitting.
- 8) Re-codify Tomball city ordinances.

## STAFFING/BUDGET

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Continually solicit customer and citizen feedback in City operations.

**ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

**STAFFING/BUDGET**

- 1) Develop a customer satisfaction program, including a customer survey.
- 2) Identify and implement more opportunities for citizen involvement, including more board and commission recruitment.

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# FOCUS AREA: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

**GOAL:** Ensure the City's revenue stream is sufficient to sustain the operation and future needs.

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Maintain and Improve City of Tomball Bond Rating.

## **ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Identify leading practices for AAA bond rated cities and discuss recommended strategies with City Council.

**STAFFING/BUDGET**  
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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Improve and expand public finance communication and education.

## **ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Enhance financial transparency through more extensive financial reporting through appropriate City media outlets.
- 2) Develop a program to educate citizens on local government finance focusing on financial sustainability.

**STAFFING/BUDGET**  
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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Expand and diversify financial resources including bonds, taxes, certificates of obligation, grants, etc.

## **ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Identify and pursue available and potential funding sources.
- 2) Encourage and provide incentives to types of development that broaden and expand the local tax base.
- 3) Annually review actual and effective tax rates.
- 4) Continue to achieve a balanced budget.

**STAFFING/BUDGET**  
\$  
Determined case by case

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Ensure financial accountability and sound financial practices.

**ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Revisit and update administrative and financial policies and ensure they are being consistently implemented.
- 2) Develop a plan to ensure financial accountability.

**STAFFING/BUDGET**

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## FOCUS AREA: BUILDING OUR ECONOMY

**GOAL:** Implement economic development strategies to increase revenues to the City, diversify the tax base, create quality employment and housing opportunities, grow local businesses, and maximize the community's economic assets.

**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Maximize the economic benefit of the college and its expansion.

### ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)

- 1) Re-evaluate, in partnership with the college, land uses and zoning around the college to encourage support businesses and housing.
- 2) Strengthen the relationship between the City and College to promote joint planning efforts.
- 3) Improve multimodal connectivity to the college facilities in and around Tomball (main campus, medical center, HP/Compaq).
- 4) Develop and enhance workforce training opportunities with area community colleges.

### STAFFING/BUDGET

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Ensure that downtown is positioned for success.

### ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)

- 1) Complete the specific plan and zoning for downtown.
- 2) Implement infrastructure and other public improvements to support existing and new development.
- 3) Implement the Livable Centers Study and Access Management Plan.
- 4) Implement a downtown marketing strategy for new investment.
- 5) If citizen initiative is successful, hold an election to repeal the 1944 Liquor Law limiting liquor sales in downtown.
- 6) Establish a management district or TIRZ to encourage downtown reinvestment.

### STAFFING/BUDGET

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Explore the expansion of the ETJ boundary.

**ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Using the Comprehensive Plan’s Annexation Plan, evaluate rates of return on infrastructure investment in ETJ areas to determine annexation viability.
- 2) Periodically meet with the City of Houston to discuss joint planning of ETJ areas.

**STAFFING/BUDGET**

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Invest the HOT funds most effectively to get maximum return to the City.

**ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Provide education on how the HOT funds can be used.
- 2) Establish a plan with priorities and criteria for HOT funds.
- 3) Partnership with hotel and tourism industry on joint marketing events in which funds are invested.
- 4) Create and install “Welcome to Tomball” monument signs.

**STAFFING/BUDGET**

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Maximize the economic benefit of the medical industry.

**ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Develop specific plan and zoning for the Medical Center area.
- 2) Connect area more effectively with sidewalks/streets.
- 3) Strengthen the relationship with the hospital and medical industry and coordinate planning.
- 4) Implement drainage infrastructure improvements.

**STAFFING/BUDGET**

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Provide a range of housing options within Tomball.

**ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

- 1) Identify and address the components of the City's policies and guidelines that may limit development of a range of housing.
- 2) Conduct an analysis of the housing mix within Tomball and determine adequacy. Identify and monitor the housing mix over time.
- 3) Update zoning ordinance and include design criteria for high density residential development.

**STAFFING/BUDGET**

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**STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:** Support the growth and development of existing businesses.

**ACTION STRATEGIES (5 YEAR)**

**STAFFING/BUDGET**

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|--|------|
| 1) Research and identify appropriate targeted businesses.  | \$   |
| 2) Develop and implement a marketing strategy to target businesses.  | \$   |
| 3) Implement a workforce training program.   | \$   |
| 4) Support the development of the TEDC business park.  | \$   |
| 5) Review the impact fee process and explore a payment plan approach.  | \$   |
| 6) Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and TEDC regarding a business incubator to encourage the development of quality base businesses. | \$\$ |
| 7) Support TEDC's existing business assistance and business expansion efforts.   | \$   |

*“The future is not completely beyond our control.  
It is the work of our own hands.”  
- Robert F. Kennedy*

## Implementation – Making the Vision a Reality

The success of the Tomball Strategic Plan is measured by the effectiveness of its implementation over time. The promise to the residents of Tomball is that through solid partnerships, diligent effort and innovative decision-making, progress will be made to position the community for success. Following are the steps to ensure that implementation moves forward.

**Strategic Plan Adoption** – City Council will adopt and/or readopt the strategic plan annually.

**Budget Process** – Annually the Strategic Plan will be used as the blueprint for the development of the City of Tomball budget. Funding priorities will relate to the Strategic Plan.

**Department Work Program** – All Tomball city departments will develop work programs that directly relate to the adopted Tomball Strategic Plan.

**Keeping Score** – Annually a Strategic Plan Progress Report will be developed to communicate achievements. The Progress Report will include quantifiable performance measures that the City can monitor over time to track progress.

**Strategic Plan Revisions** – The City Council, along with input from residents and staff, will identify internal and external changes (economic, financial, legislative, etc.) that have occurred as well as priority shifts that may necessitate an update to the Strategic Plan.

The Tomball Strategic Plan provides the strategic direction and a guide for decision-making over the next five years. The Plan guides the development of department level work programs, specific capital improvement planning, and the annual City budget priorities. The Plan is used by the City Council, City Manager and City Management, and City staff in their day-to-day positions. Additionally, the Strategic Plan communicates the City’s commitment to implement the community’s long-term vision embodied in the Comprehensive Plan.



*“Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world;  
Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”  
- Margaret Mead*

## Acknowledgements

The City of Tomball would like to thank the residents who provided their wisdom and time through discussions and participation in the development of the Tomball Comprehensive Plan that set the vision and foundation for the Tomball Strategic Plan. Additionally, the City Council recognizes the extraordinary effort and commitment of city staff to ensure that Tomball achieves all that the community envisions in the most cost-effective and efficient manner.

### **Tomball City Council**

Mayor Gretchen Fagan

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Mark Stoll

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Field Hudgens

Rick Brown

### **Strategic Plan Consultant**

