

CHAPTER 20: MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

Municipal facilities are City-owned structures and grounds not covered in other chapters of the plan that provide the City with office, storage, maintenance, court, and gathering space for carrying out community and government functions. The municipal facilities chapter addresses facilities for street services, facilities maintenance, maintenance facilities for City equipment and vehicles, Code Compliance, Environmental Management, municipal buildings, and Municipal Court. Other facilities such as parks, police, fire, and libraries are addressed in separate chapters.

This chapter also covers the overall provision of public buildings. As population increases and undeveloped areas of the city begin to develop, new public facilities will be needed. It is important to coordinate the planning and development of these new facilities to create the opportunity for shared use among City departments. Shared facilities will allow the City to provide services in the most efficient manner possible by avoiding duplication.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

City facilities are designed, constructed, and maintained by the Facilities Management Group of the Transportation and Public Works Department (T/PW). Facilities Management builds City facilities after other departments have secured the site and funding for the facility.

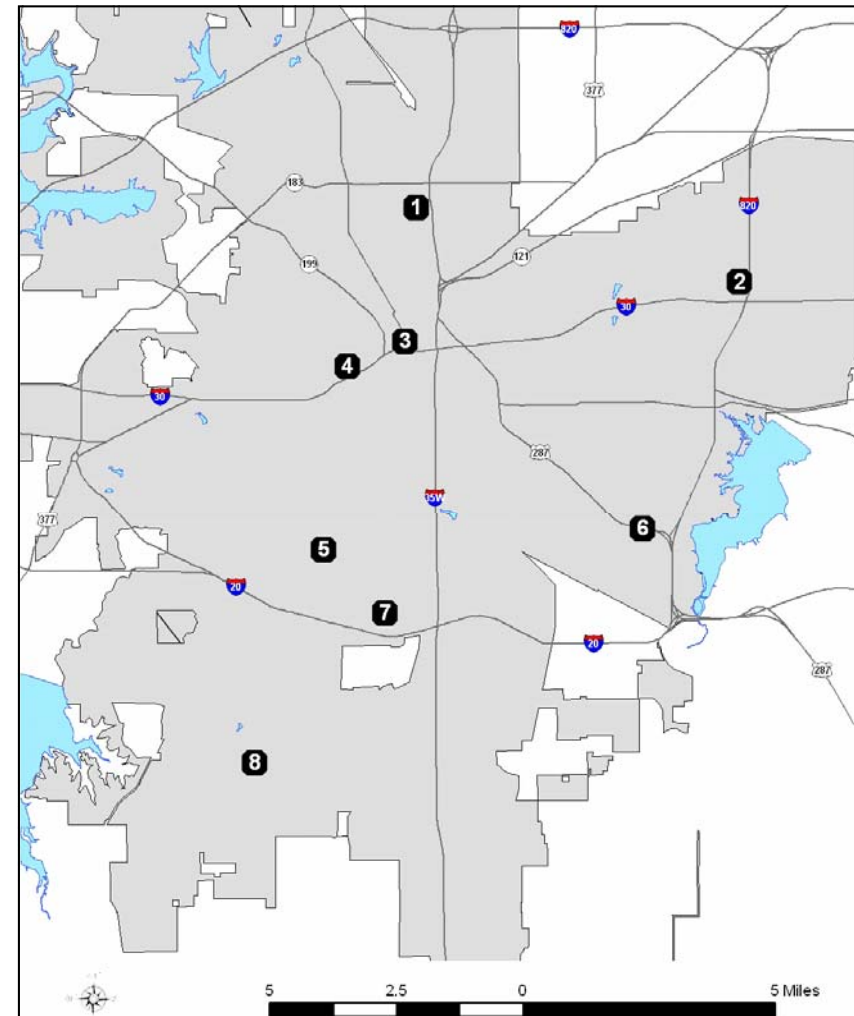
Street Equipment and Telecommunication Facilities

Street services such as signs, signals, and street markings are provided by the Street and Traffic Services Division of T/PW. Facilities supporting these services are the James Avenue Service Center on James Avenue, the Southside Service Center on Columbus Trail, and a facility on Brennan Avenue. The facilities are industrial in nature, generating heavy truck traffic and requiring large outside storage areas and storage warehouses.

The Equipment Services Department maintains and repairs 5,086 pieces of City-owned equipment including 3,922 pieces of rolling stock vehicles at five locations: Southside, James Avenue Service Center, Brennan Avenue, Tire Service Center, and the Water Service Center. Four of these locations, plus the Southeast Service Center, provide gasoline, propane, and diesel fuel for City vehicles. In order to maximize efficiency, maintenance, repair, and fueling services are generally provided at locations where equipment and crews are based.

The City recently upgraded its existing internal telecommunications infrastructure. As a part of its telecommunications upgrade, the City constructed a new communications tower in the Far West sector. The Western Communications Tower was completed in May 2005. The tower will be used for communication among the public safety community. The City offers many of its facilities (e.g. buildings, communication towers, etc.) for antenna co-location opportunities. The City

Municipal Buildings and Service Centers



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|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Brennan Service Center | 6. Southeast Service Center |
| 2. Environmental Collection Center | 7. James Avenue Service Center |
| 3. City Hall, City Hall Annex, Public Safety | 8. Southside Service Center |
| 4. Water Service Center | |
| 5. Tire Service Center | |

The map above shows the existing service centers throughout the city and the location of municipal buildings. (Sources: Transportation and Public Works Department, Equipment Services Department, 2007.)

currently is a telecommunications tenant at Burnett Plaza and leases space on the Bergh Tower in Euless.

Gas Wells

The Barnett Shale is a large natural gas reserve that stretches underground across a 17 county area. It contains an estimated 30 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and is located approximately 1.5 miles below the surface. In recent years, advances in drilling technology have made it possible for energy companies to extract large amounts of natural gas from the Barnett Shale. There are approximately 944 gas wells permitted and over 2,500 gas wells that could potentially be drilled within the city limits.

The drilling and production of gas wells within Fort Worth is regulated primarily by the Texas Railroad Commission and the City's Gas Drilling Ordinance (#16986-06-2006). The state and city regulations are intended to protect the health, safety and general welfare of the public, minimize the potential impact to surface property and mineral rights owners, protect the quality of the environment, and encourage the orderly production of available mineral resources.

The City's gas drilling ordinance allows gas wells to be located in any zoning district in the city through a permitting process. The regulations require that all gas wells be located greater than 600 feet from any protected use, including a church, school, residence, public building, hospital and public park, unless a waiver is received from the City Council or from all protected use property owners within 600 feet of the well. Gas well sites may be located on City-owned property, including public parks, only with the consent of the City Council. Additionally, the City's regulations govern notice requirements, well setbacks, noise levels, delivery hours, truck traffic, fencing, landscaping, and technical regulations in conformance with the Railroad Commission rules.

Code Enforcement Facilities

The Code Compliance Department enforces the City's Environmental, Solid Waste, Land Use, Nuisance, Building Standards, Multi-family Inspection, and Illegal Dumping codes. Administrative staff works out of a central office located on Texas Street. Field operations consisting of seven Neighborhood District Units, a Special Enforcement Division, and Building Standards Division operate out of eight branch offices. Since Code Compliance officers work in the field, and work closely with the Police Department and other public safety agencies, branch offices are mainly housed in police storefronts and community centers.

City Hall, City Hall Annex, Public Safety and Courts, and Zipper Building

Fort Worth's three municipal buildings are centrally located in Downtown, grouped around the intersection of Throckmorton and West 10th Street. City Hall provides offices for the City Manager, Mayor and City Council, Law, Finance, Internal Audit, Engineering, Transportation and Public Works, Planning and Development, Human Resources, and Information Technology Solutions. Meeting space is provided for

City Hall



City Hall provides offices for many of the City's departments. (Source: Planning and Development Department, 2007.)

Municipal Court



Municipal Court is located Downtown in the Public Safety and Courts Building. Two satellite locations have been established in southeast and north Fort Worth to improve access to basic Court services. (Source: Municipal Court, 2007.)

public hearings and workshops. The complex provides convenient access for developers and the public to departments that are often needed simultaneously. City Hall Annex is located across the street in the historic Lone Star Gas building, providing space for Housing, Water, Human Resources, Environmental Management, and the Community Relations Departments. The historic Public Safety and Courts Building provides space for Municipal Courts, the Fire Department, and Traffic Engineering.

Neither City Hall nor the Public Safety Building has surplus office space. As the population increases and staff increases to meet the needs of the public, additional office, meeting, and public space will be needed for the departments and services currently housed in those buildings.

The City recently purchased the two-story, 70,000 square foot building at the southeast corner of Monroe and 13th Street, commonly known as the Zipper Building. MCI leases the first floor. The second floor has been renovated to provide office space for much of the staff of the ITS and Finance Department currently housed in City Hall. The office space vacated in City Hall by this move will be used to address critical space needs of other City Hall departments. Most notably, the Planning Development Department has expanded and establish a consolidated Building Permit Center to better serve citizens and local businesses/developers.

There is one municipal parking garage located Downtown, with 338 employee spaces. An additional 170 spaces are provided Downtown at City-owned and leased parking lots. However, there are not enough spaces available to meet current employee parking needs, and additional parking will be required as staff expands. Design of a new 1,150 space garage across from the Convention Center on Houston Street is underway.

Municipal Court

Fort Worth Municipal Court is located Downtown at 1000 Throckmorton in the Public Safety and Courts Building. Municipal Court is a court of record that provides the City with control over the adjudication of misdemeanor violations occurring within the city limits. On average, between 350,000 to 400,000 new citations are filed annually. These include traffic, general complaint (City ordinance and penal code violations), and parking citations. The volume of citations filed constantly challenges the department to manage its case flow. Case flow is defined as the various steps or processes a citation undergoes from its initial filing to final disposition. Municipal Court relies heavily upon automated systems to support manual processes to ensure every case is docketed or reviewed for action. A new case management and electronic document management system was implemented in December 2005. The new system is the Municipal Court Integrated Management System (MCIMS) which provides enhanced case management functionality. MCIMS has the functionality to image and scan documents, thereby reducing paper and storage requirements, and to streamline business processes with automated workflows and reminders. The system also has a web module to enhance the way customers and attorneys conduct business with Municipal Court. Phase II of MCIMS will allow public access for customers to view citation information, pay fines, and electronically file documents.

Southside Service Center Facilities

Facility	Service Division	Square Footage
Service Center	DEM/Solid Waste/Code Compliance	13,248
	Equipment Services Admin.	28,560
	TPW/Street Services and Stormwater	13,248
Garage #1	DEM/Solid Waste	1,600
Garage #2	TPW/Street Services	6,000
Fuel station & truck wash	Equipment Services	1,774
Storage	DEM and TPW	6,018
Communications	Information Technology Solutions	480
Total Building		70,928
Total Site		19.6 acres

The Southside Service Center, located at 4100 Columbus Trail, houses the Solid Waste Division of the Department of Environmental Management (DEM); the Equipment Services Department administrative offices and a vehicle maintenance and repair shop; and the Street Services Division of the Transportation and Public Works Department (TPW), which schedules street maintenance operations. There is also an Information Technology Solutions communications tower building. (Sources: Department of Environmental Management, Transportation and Public Works Department, 2007.)

Southeast Service Center Facilities

Facility	Service Division	Square Footage
Office building	DEM/Air Quality and Water Quality	5,418
Spill response shop	DEM/Water Quality	9,300
Storage building	DEM	5,520
Total Building		20,238
Total Site		18.4 acres

The Southeast Service Center, located at 5000 Martin Luther King Freeway, has facilities originally designated for various Department of Environmental Management (DEM) operations. (Source: City of Fort Worth, 2007.)

Municipal Court is divided into four divisions: (1) Administration, (2) Judicial, (3) Court Clerk, and (4) City Marshal. The Administration Division has responsibility for management of overall departmental operations and acts as the liaison with other agencies. Additionally, the Division includes the Ground Transportation Office located at 909 Taylor Street, which monitors and regulates ground transportation activities and service providers. An additional responsibility includes conducting truancy/failure to attend hearings at the Fort Worth School Attendance Court. The Judicial Division is comprised of eleven judges, including a Chief Judge and a Deputy Chief Judge. Primary responsibilities include adjudication of cases scheduled on the various dockets for five courtrooms and the School Attendance Court, and reviewing and signing warrants. In addition, judges serving in the capacity of magistrate conduct arraignment hearings at the Tarrant County Jail facility. This Division includes the Teen Court program, which is designed to provide alternatives for youths who have received citations.

The Court Clerk Division has responsibility for activities related to the case flow process, the collection and posting of fines, management of the City's jury system, community service operations, and warrant issuance.

The City Marshal Division has responsibility for warrant service, prisoner bonding, prisoner transfer, courtroom security, and building security. The division is also responsible for oversight of the Lake Patrol Office, located at 7500 Surfside Drive. Staffing for Lake Patrol operations is comprised of five Deputy City Marshals and one Senior Deputy City Marshal who have responsibility for patrolling approximately 3,560 acres of the Lake Worth recreational area, which includes Lake Worth, the Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge and 14 surrounding City-owned parks.

Municipal Court is improving the effectiveness of court operations through continued development of technology and satellite facilities. The Court is seeking to expand the options available to citizens through the utilization of an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. A main objective is to facilitate payment of tickets without the need to have citizens come Downtown. Through a joint venture with the Fort Worth Water Department, two satellite locations were established in Southeast and North Fort Worth in 2001 to facilitate access to basic Court services. Additionally, Internet access is available on-line through the City's web page, which provides general information regarding court activities and fine schedules.

Municipal Court also operates an off-site School Attendance Court located at 2215 Weiler Boulevard. The School Attendance Court was established in April 2001 through an interlocal agreement with the Fort Worth Independent School District. This Court handles school attendance-related cases filed by the District. The City of Fort Worth and the FWISD have a collaborative venture in hearing truancy cases. These cases involve students who fail to attend school and parents who contribute to non-attendance behavior. The Texas Education Code allows truancy cases to be heard by Municipal Courts. The Fort Worth School Attendance Court was established in collaboration with the FWISD as part of a Comprehensive Truancy Intervention Program. The program's initiative is to aggressively address truancy

Zipper Building



In May 2005 the City purchased the 70,000 square foot "Zipper Building" just south of City Hall to provide additional office space for City staff previously located in City Hall. The completion of building renovations and move-in occurred in July 2006. The newly available space in City Hall allowed a Building Permit Center to be opened on the lower level. (Source: City of Fort Worth, 2007.)

problems and encourage school attendance.

Future Facilities

The City's capital improvement bond program provides funding for the facilities that house the services discussed above. However, these services must compete with other City services for funding. Many facilities, such as parks and recreation, libraries, and fire have local and national standards, which help to determine when new facilities are needed. The operational and municipal facilities do not. Standards are useful for ensuring adequate provision of services and for determining the need for additional facilities.

As the city grows, decentralization of some municipal services may serve the population better. These decentralized municipal complexes could be developed in different forms, depending on the most efficient and effective means of service delivery. These complexes could include one large facility or building that houses compatible services, or the co-location of multiple facilities on one site with separation of incompatible uses. Careful planning and review will encourage the development and use of shared facilities, resulting in cost savings and increased service to the public.

Growth centers will be ideal locations for some facilities that provide City services. It is important for most City services to be located near the population that is to be served. Just as many City services are centralized in Downtown, growth centers will provide an opportunity for appropriate services to be grouped in main activity centers and areas easily accessible to major portions of the population. The City should plan ahead and, when appropriate, purchase properties in growth center areas before these areas experience further development. This will help to ensure the best placement for these services and facilities.

Chapter 14: Urban Design emphasizes the importance of the design and location of public buildings and public spaces to the character and vitality of the community. Careful planning will ensure that future public buildings and facilities are compatible with surrounding structures and neighborhoods, and that future decentralized public services are sited to best serve the public.

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Provide municipal facilities to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of service providers and the public.

- Complete a facility master plan process in 2008.
- Develop, implement and monitor ground transportation ordinances. Implement recommendations resulting from ground transportation study as appropriate.
- Implement security measures throughout municipal complex.
- By 2008, implement a technology plan comprised of a document management system, and a new case management system for quicker accessibility in retrieving records and streamlining processes for enhanced efficiency.

James Avenue Service Center



In January '06 the City opened the 180,000 square foot James Avenue Service Center to replace the aged and obsolete Harley Avenue and Downtown Service Centers. (Source: City of Fort Worth, 2007.)



The James Avenue Service Center is located at 5001 and 5021 James Avenue. The Transportation and Public Works Department occupies the 5001 James Avenue building and the Equipment Services Department occupies the 5021 James Avenue building. (Source: City of Fort Worth, 2007.)

- In 2008, continue to review the feasibility of expanded services to include additional locations and expansion of service options for accessibility and flexibility to customers.
- In 2008, continue to evaluate customer service training and practices, building on customer service philosophy to provide a user friendly environment.

STRATEGIES

The following strategies will enable the City to efficiently provide municipal facilities that best meet the needs of the community:

Strategies

- Provide facilities that are aesthetically pleasing, sustainable, and environmentally sound.
- Encourage shared facilities by City departments for the provision of services by implementing a review program for all proposed facilities that includes all City service providers.
- When feasible, locate public facilities, schools, parks, libraries, and police and fire stations in designated growth centers.
- Anticipate future needs of the community by identifying and purchasing sites in developing areas that will serve multiple departments in the efficient provision of services.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

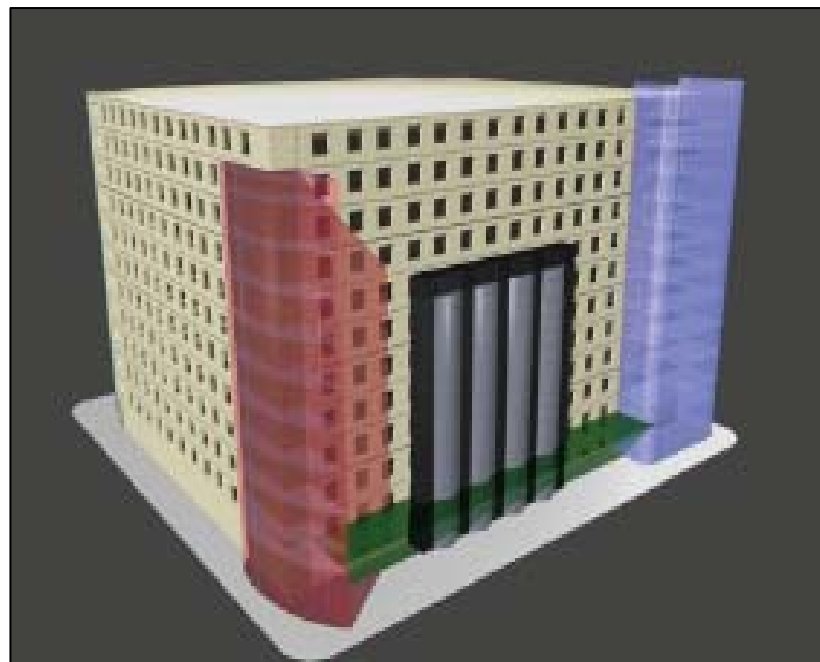
Strategic Technology Plan

In FY05-06 the City's Information Technology Department published the *Strategic Technology Plan* that sets technology priorities and goals for 2006-2010. The seven goals in the plan include 1) ensure quality customer service; 2) streamline and facilitate access to information and services for all constituents; 3) provide mobility of information and services; 4) promote and pursue standardization across all dimensions of information technology and business operations; 5) promote and pursue an enterprise approach to information technology solutions; 6) promote and pursue efficient and effective resource management; and 7) become a best-in-class information technology solutions provider.

Capital Improvement Projects

Construction should begin on a new downtown municipal parking garage in the summer of 2007 and should be completed within one year. A list of projects, with estimated costs, completion dates, and proposed funding sources can be found in Appendices D and E.

Municipal Parking Garage



Rendering of the new downtown municipal parking garage that will include retail/restaurant space on the ground floor. (Source: Jacobs: Architects and Engineers, 2006.)