

City of Van, Texas
2021 Comprehensive Plan
Executive Summary

The new comprehensive plan provides Van’s Citizens and the City with focused-policies and a design framework for resilient growth. These policies and framework (represented in Quality of Life Character Areas) promote harnessed growth and investment decisions that will maintain Van as a community of neighborhoods with a downtown central to life and city commerce.

The plan was developed by an active and engaged master plan committee of City Leadership. Gateway Planning Group and Leap Town Planning supported the committee. Reflecting the community’s vision, the committee secured a plan that focuses on a “village” approach to growth that is accomplished through a variety of housing, walkable streets and connections to nature. The plan also provides the capacity to remain a village while being a regional economic center and a place of opportunity and diversity.

The following principles guide the plan:

- **Nature and natural places respected and integrated into the built environment**
- **Public spaces and places designed for people**
- **Walkability integrated into every aspect of the City**
- **Agriculture as a local food source and an export industry in the new economy**
- **A culture that encourages self-improvement for all members of the community**

The plan provides for resiliency. Therefore, the plan suggests that Van’s Citizens transform themselves as the town transforms within the vision of the community. This will aid in their ability to direct Van’s future with quality of life always in mind.

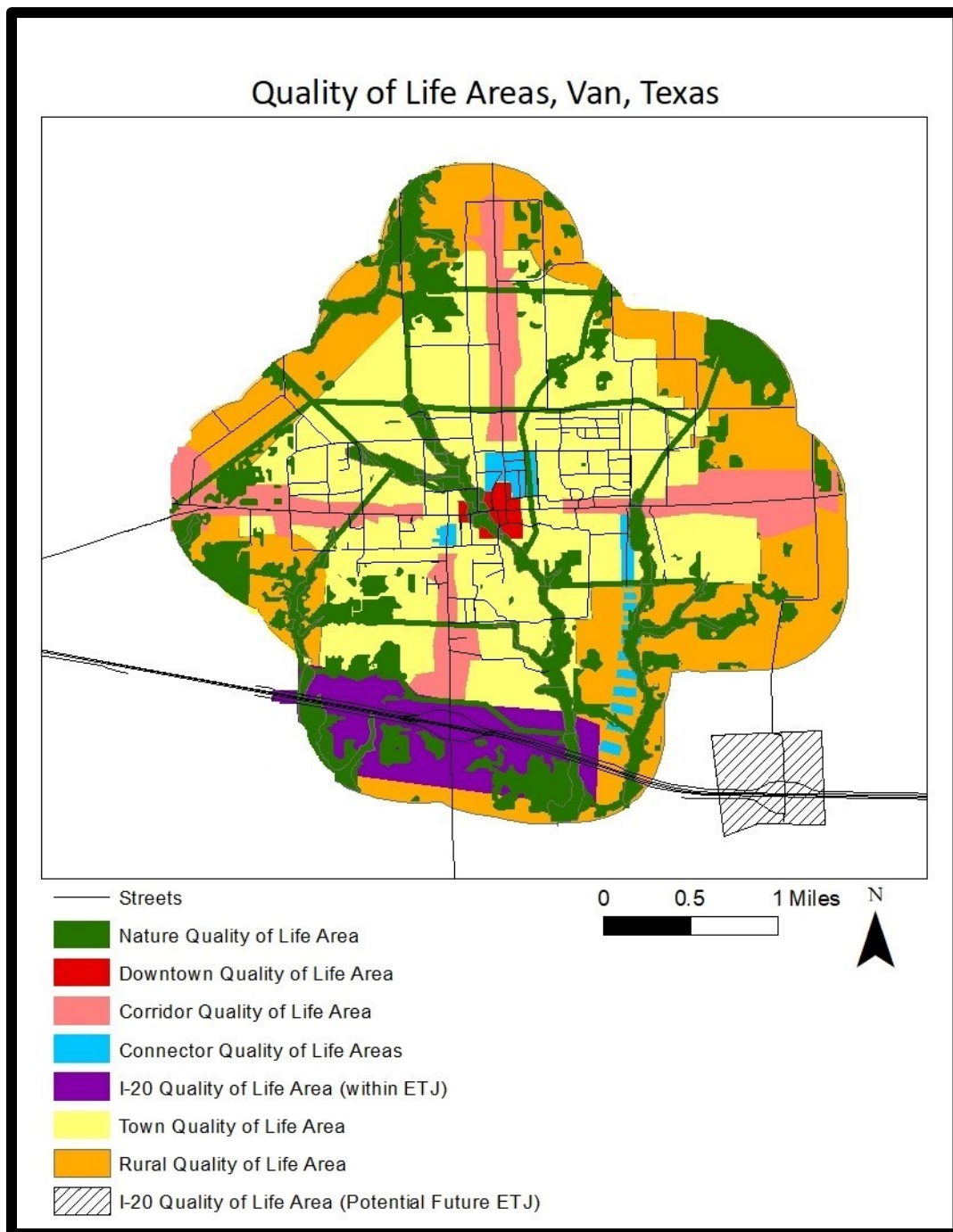
The history and context of the Van region is presented with the current population estimate to be 2,751 people. Jobs in Van are diverse including education services, entertainment and food services, finance and real estate, manufacturing and construction. The average resident of Van commutes 27.5 minutes, which means that many in Van work outside of Van. This plan is intended to grow more jobs locally.

History has shown that Van will continue to grow. The city can influence the nature of the growth by implementing this plan by updating its ordinances to include urban design and conservation practices in its subdivision, zoning and other regulations.

The plan establishes seven Quality of Life Areas within the city’s jurisdiction. Each area has a set of recommended guidelines that help establish the desired development activities that can preserve and enhance the character of the particular area. The areas are described below and shown in a composite plan below. The separate area maps are included in the full plan.

- **Nature Areas serve as greenways** running through the city and become a network of trails and easy access to nature.
- **Major Corridors connect the city to the rest of Texas.**
- **Connector Areas offer opportunities for linkages** and transitions between neighborhoods and downtown.

- **Downtown** is the heart of the city where people live, work, shop, and play.
- **Town Areas** are where most people live in connected and diverse neighborhoods with a variety of housing choices.
- **Rural Areas** are a band of countryside that surrounds the town distinguishing Van as a special place. Food products are grown here in addition to smaller gardens in town.
- **I-20 Corridor** is the gateway to Van and provides regional opportunity.



10 policy statements guide the vision of plan and future ordinance updates, as well as land use decisions in zoning and related actions considered by the City Manager, Planning Commission and the Mayor and City Council:

- **The Nature Policy** states that the city respects nature in land use decisions, public improvement projects, equipment and vehicle purchases, public and private utility construction projects, and land and building development regulations.
- **The Urban Design Policy** provides that changes in the built and natural environment will enhance the physical character of the city with street types, buildings and their placement, and pedestrian scaled infrastructure. As an extension of that, the Transportation Policy provides that pedestrian design is the foundational transportation planning scale to be utilized.
- **The Housing Policy** provides that a variety of site built and select manufactured homes are encouraged and sited with a community design that fits the particular new Character Areas of the Plan.
- **The Economic Development Policy** provides that economic activities are welcome and encouraged that build on Van's beautiful natural setting, the Van ISD Campuses, an authentic downtown, neighborhoods, and the I-20 interchanges.
- **The Infrastructure Policy** states that the city will use its utility capabilities in ways that encourage adherence to the goals of this plan while minimizing a financial impact on existing residents and businesses.
- **The Public Services Policy** expects that citizens be engaged in advisory roles to help manage the services of the city. It also provides the city will monitor its provision of services and utilize best practices in their delivery.
- **The Education Policy** provides that the city will work with the Van ISD to develop a unit of curriculum for Kindergarten through Senior High students that addresses personal development, including passion identification, and community development so students receive a well-rounded understanding of how they can participate in their community over a lifetime.
- **The Health Care Policy** provides that the city will engage the health care industry and develop a program to attract and retain more medical and health related services.
- **The Human Development Policy** provides that human development is vital for developing a sustainable, resilient, desirable, affordable, and environmentally conscious city. Van will encourage and support development of its employees, community organizations, the school district, and the general citizenry.

The plan concludes with a set of strategic suggestions related to ETJ expansion, human development, housing, cultivation of relationships with land trusts, curriculum development, and community involvement by the citizenry.