

Vision, Goals, and Objectives

ELM SPRINGS VISION PLAN: FUTURE LAND USE AND MASTER STREET PLAN

DRAFT: JUNE 3, 2025

Vision

The City of Elm Springs desires to develop a plan that respects the city's sense of community and small-town character, while proactively planning for context appropriate growth. The plan should encourage amenities and infrastructure that contribute to a high quality of life for current and future residents, organizations, and businesses in the community.

Goal 1 – Maintain small-town character and sense of established community, while also growing in a welcoming way. *(2024 survey Q #1, 2, 12)*

OBJECTIVE 1: Along Hwy 112, encourage thoughtful development that strengthens Elm Springs' sense of community, through a mix of compatible land uses and development scale/character. Approach this through the revised Future Land Use Map as well as updates to zoning district regulations.

OBJECTIVE 2: Recognize and prioritize improvements in the downtown core and ensure thoughtful transitions to adjacent areas. Adopt clear and focused design standards for this area that encourages new community amenities. The downtown core is generally recognized as the area between:

- Brush Creek (south);
- Elm Springs Rd/Jayroe Ave (north);
- Elm Springs Cemetery (east); and
- Up to but east of Mill Park Subdivision (west).

OBJECTIVE 3: Reserve a portion of city-owned land—or otherwise plan—for a downtown park/square/plaza that can complement private sector development and other amenities. Ensure that pedestrian access is prioritized.

OBJECTIVE 4: Update the zoning code, zoning districts, and district regulations to clearly depict the development scale and form the City envisions downtown and in other priority development areas.

- Neighborhood Services (Goal 2, Obj. 6)

OBJECTIVE 5: Ensure that new development advances walkability and connectivity throughout the city.

OBJECTIVE 6: Pursue and advance private and institutional partnerships with the City that can advance community resilience and redevelopment in a way that is supportive of the City's vision and goals, especially downtown. Partnership opportunities that should be further explored may include:

- churches
- cemeteries
- businesses
- state and regional agencies

OBJECTIVE 7: Maintain centralized city services and administration, as this is an important aspect of what makes living in Elm Springs convenient and supports the welcoming atmosphere of the community.

- Administration/Public Works
- Police
- Planning/Building
- District Court

Goal 2 – Attract small-scale businesses, mixed-use development, and daily destinations (e.g. coffee, parks, town square, small/local restaurants) that are connected and accessible via bike/pedestrian/vehicular accommodations.

(2024 survey Q #4, 7, 8)

OBJECTIVE 1: Assess development patterns, land use trends, and transportation projects in surrounding jurisdictions. Discuss related opportunities and challenges. Explore ways to leverage these activities to spur appropriate connections and opportunities in Elm Springs.

OBJECTIVE 2: Update the zoning map, zoning codes, and future land use map to more clearly indicate the desired land uses, density, and scale of development throughout the city.

OBJECTIVE 3: Identify approaches to strengthen the local identity of Elm Springs to attract desirable small businesses, entrepreneurs, and community amenities, including through:

- marketing and communications
- the planning of a central focal point or public space;
- infrastructure investments

OBJECTIVE 4: Building on the current development in west Springdale, prioritize the southwest corner of Gene George/Elm Springs Rd as an eastern gateway into the city, and ensure the applicable plans and regulations are updated as needed to facilitate quality development that connects to the community identity of Elm Springs.

OBJECTIVE 5: Review the home-based business application process to ensure it is manageable and meets the intent of the city's support of home-based business. This review should also consider if an additional future land use category or zoning district is needed. Ensure related procedures comply with state law.

OBJECTIVE 6: Explore the creation of a neighborhood services (small-scale mixed-use) zoning district to support local businesses; add necessary design standards and mitigation measures to assist with land use compatibility.

OBJECTIVE 7: Plan for long-term water and wastewater needs, including future operations, management, and maintenance. Visit **Goal 4, Objective 5** for more details.

Goal 3 – Encourage context appropriate growth by managing development in a way that concentrates higher intensities and densities in planned locations to allow the city to maintain and improve its overall positive quality of life.

(2024 survey Q #5)

OBJECTIVE 1: Review and update the future land use map to ensure it identifies areas that should remain as Rural and/or Rural Residential, including but not limited to the Brush Creek corridor.

OBJECTIVE 2: To manage a balance of both rural residential and higher density housing options, focus mixed uses and higher density housing Downtown, near Shaw Park, and at Gene George Blvd.

OBJECTIVE 3: Assess where additional park/recreation land may be needed and consider adoption of a parkland dedication ordinance to support both park land dedication/acquisition as well as park management resources through certain development types.

Goal 4 – Ensure infrastructure improvements that support residents and encourage visitors.

(2024 Q #6, 7, 9)

OBJECTIVE 1: Review and update typical street sections and 2022 Master Street Plan map as needed, to ensure they depict future transportation needs in a nuanced, Elm Springs specific way.

OBJECTIVE 2: Ensure that new development advances walkability and connectivity. Update the Master Street Plan to best accommodate future local and regional bike/ped and vehicular connections that will serve the City's needs as it grows and that will provide a high quality of life. Identify priority projects and connections.

OBJECTIVE 3: In the downtown area, identify priority options and potential solutions to providing a grade-separated pedestrian crossing across the planned 4-lane AR 112.

OBJECTIVE 4: Proactively approach franchise utilities to improve residents' options or quality of service.

OBJECTIVE 5: Plan for long-term water and wastewater needs to best accommodate this goal by considering the following long-range planning and capacity initiatives:

- Digitally document current wastewater infrastructure, including both as-built locations and the general condition of main collection lines and pump stations/lifts. As individual septic systems have a finite lifespan and individual pumps/tanks supporting the pressurized system can complicate future development, utilize infrastructure documentation to plan for future wastewater needs, including:
 - A plan for future connections to accommodate both new development as well as failing individual septic systems;
 - A plan to determine and fund future needed wastewater treatment capacity; and
 - A plan to assess long term maintenance of the overall pressurized system.
- Require that all new development provide record/as-built drawings of both water and wastewater infrastructure provided; and
- Plan for future operations, management, and maintenance needs for both water and wastewater infrastructure.