

Cottonwood Comprehensive Plan:

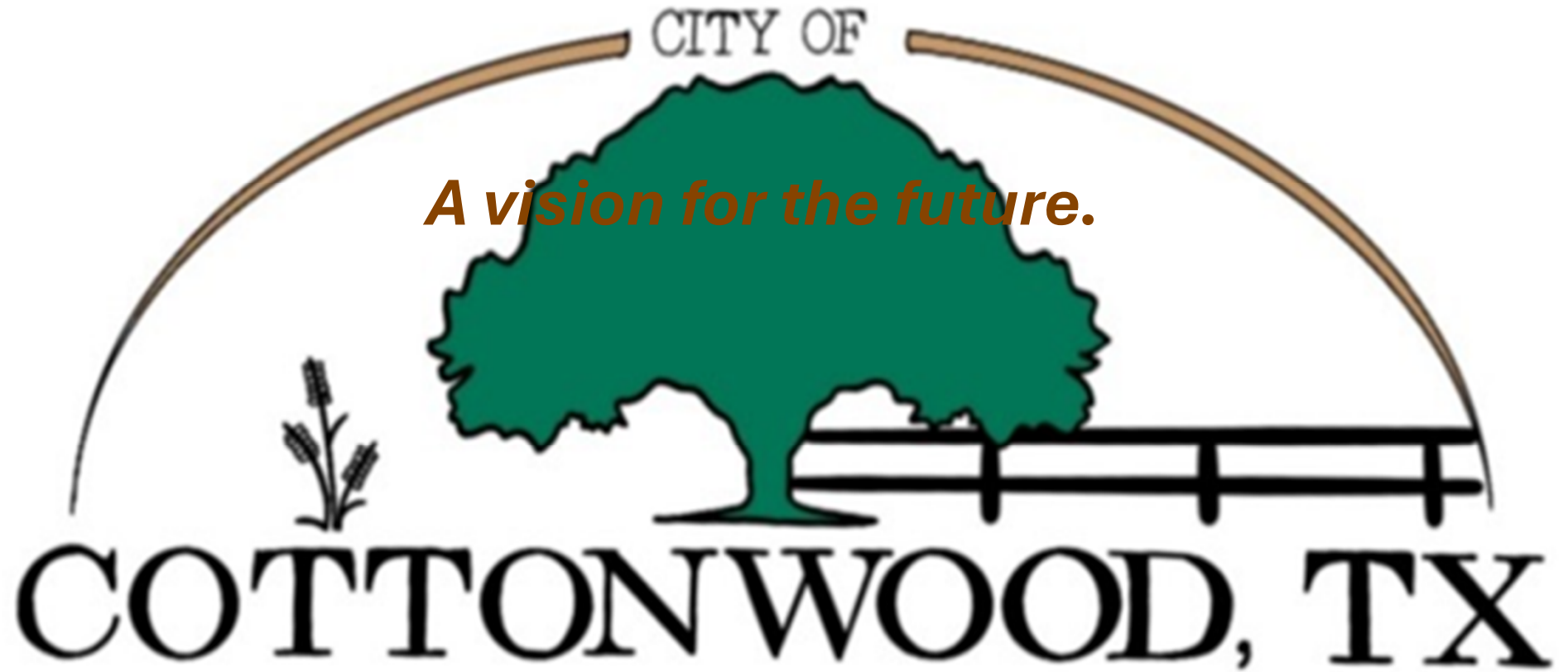


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Acknowledgements

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What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan reflects the citizens' view of how the city should grow and prosper. It becomes a blueprint for future growth and reflects the values of those who live in the city. While considering the historic framework of Cottonwood, the comprehensive plan establishes a framework for what the city should be in the future. Once adopted, city staff and decision-makers will use the comprehensive plan to guide the development and growth of the city. The comprehensive plan guides the city, but does not replace zoning regulations, budgetary constraints, or other regulatory documents.



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

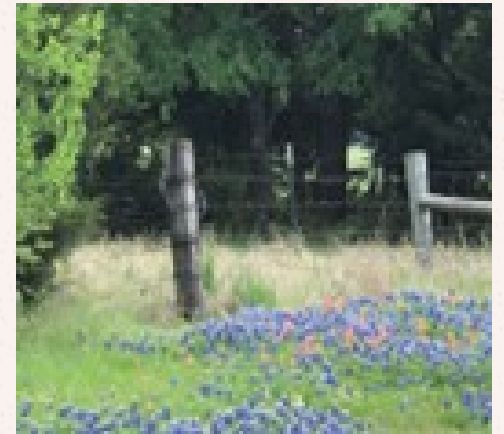
CHAPTER 213 of the Texas Local Government Code (TLGC) provides for Municipal Comprehensive Plans. The Purpose is to promote sound development of municipalities and promote public health, safety, and welfare.

The body of a municipality may adopt a comprehensive plan for the long-range development of the municipality.

- A municipality may define the content and design of a comprehensive plan.
- A comprehensive plan may:
 - include but is not limited to provisions on land use, transportation, and public facilities;
 - consist of a single plan or a coordinated set of plans organized by subject and geographic area; and
 - be used to coordinate and guide the establishment of development regulations.
- A municipality may define, in its charter or by ordinance, the relationship between a comprehensive plan and development regulations and may provide standards for determining the consistency required between a plan and development regulations.
- Land use assumptions adopted in a manner that complies with TLGC Subchapter C, Chapter 395, may be incorporated in a comprehensive plan.
- Notation on a Comprehensive Plan Map shall include the following statement:
"A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries."

How will this plan be used?

The Cottonwood Comprehensive Plan will create a framework upon which all future decisions are made. As new development proposals are submitted to the city, each aspect of the proposal will be considered subject to the vision of the Plan. Proposals should reflect the direction of the Comprehensive Plan and augment the stated vision of the citizens of Cottonwood. Any decisions, either by staff or the City Council, will be guided by the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the proposal is compatible with the community vision for the future.



Why Plan now?

Cottonwood is at a crossroads in its development cycle. As Kaufman County and the towns surrounding Cottonwood feel the pressure of expanding growth from the Dallas area, each town needs to determine the direction in which they want their town to grow. For some, that will mean limiting commercial development, retaining the “small town” feeling characteristic of Cottonwood, and limiting the expansion of roadways for the benefit of through traffic and the expense of Cottonwood safety and well-being.



Process

- Public meetings were held to understand the public's opinions and goals for the future land use plan for the City of Cottonwood. The following slides show responses provided during public meetings to a variety of questions posed to citizens.
- Public meetings were held:
 - 07.19.2023
 - 08.25.2023
 - 04.23.2024
 - 03.18.2025



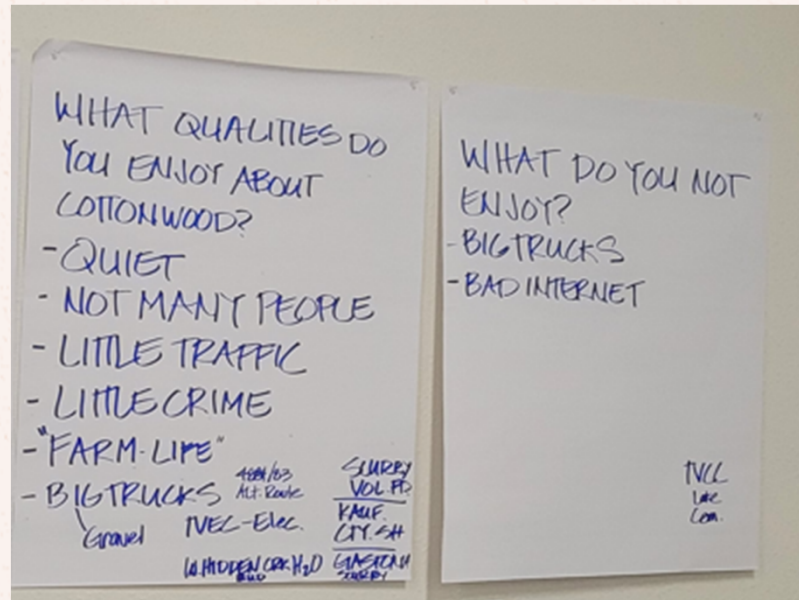
Strengths and Weaknesses

- ***“What qualities do you enjoy about Cottonwood?”***

- Quiet
- Not many people
- Little traffic
- Little crime
- “Farm life”

- ***“What do you not enjoy about Cottonwood?”***

- Big trucks
- Bad internet



Strengths and Weaknesses

- ***“What are future growth concerns?”***

- School population growth
- Road expansions causing a reduction of trees
- Zoning = Preparing for sale; zoning “for” development
- Crime
- Neighboring cities growing “into” our city

- ***“What are the benefits of growth?”***

- I.D. benefits of being in city
- Increased tax dollar generation/revenue
- Improved roads
- Fire service improvement
- Improved internet infrastructure

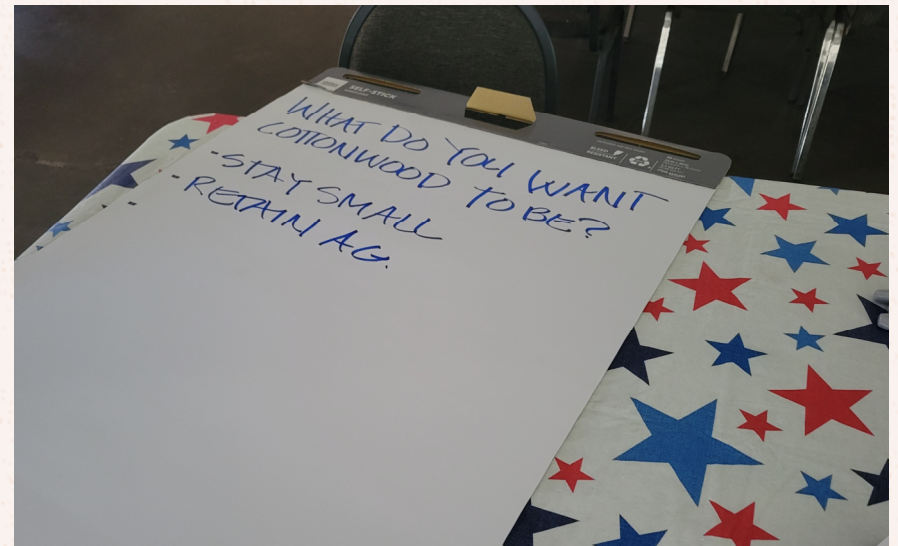
Strengths and Weaknesses

- ***“What do you want Cottonwood to be?”***

- Stay small
- Retain agriculture
- State Highway 34 road sizes
- Family-oriented
- No heavy industry/corporations
- No apartments/multi-family housing
- No parks/people

- ***“How should Cottonwood look in 10 years?”***

- Like it is now!
- Very little development

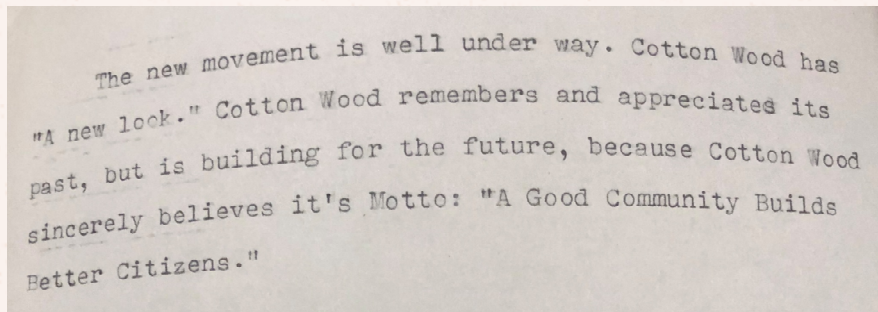


Goals

- Preserve Cottonwood's rural character.
- Promote low density developments, if/when development occurs.
- Ensure that new development does not overload existing road networks.
- New neighborhoods should be compatible with adjacent neighborhoods.
- Development within the ETJ should be limited when possible and scaled to infrastructure capabilities.
- Identify small-scale, commercial and/or manufacturing uses that build on and can be adapted from the city's rural and agricultural history.
- Promote efficient transportation that is softened through landscaping.

Vision Statement

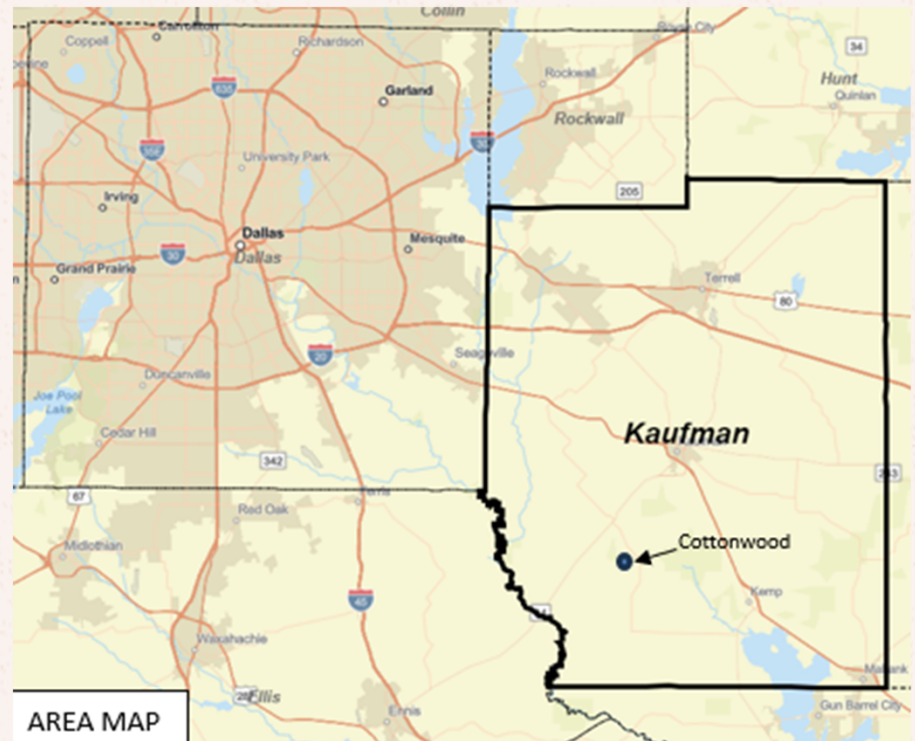
Cottonwood's natural areas will combine with our friendly, and close-knit community members, to protect and preserve our rural character and small-town feel. Our commitment to our sense of community and the vision of the city's founders will ensure that we never lose sight of our rural roots and what makes us special.

A photograph of a document with typed text, tilted slightly to the right. The text reads: "The new movement is well under way. Cotton Wood has 'A new look.'" Cotton Wood remembers and appreciates its past, but is building for the future, because Cotton Wood sincerely believes it's Motto: "A Good Community Builds Better Citizens."

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Cottonwood Today: Location

Cottonwood is a small town located southwest of the City of Kaufman, the county seat of Kaufman County. Kaufman County is located to the southeast of Dallas County, east of Mesquite and Seagoville in Dallas County.



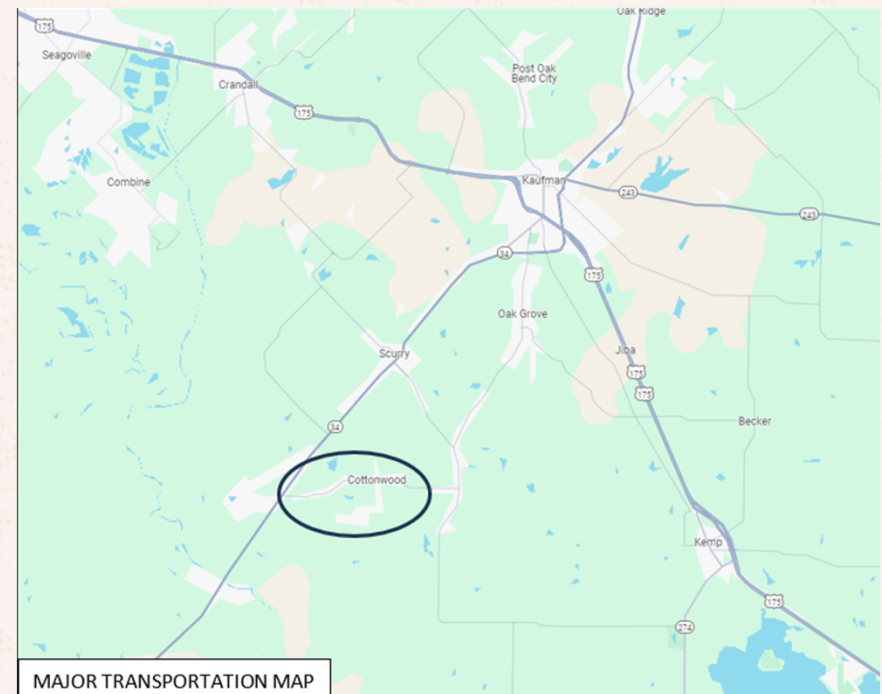
Cottonwood Today: Transportation

- Two freeways traverse Kaufman County: US 80 and Interstate 20, which merge into one freeway just south of the City of Terrell. US 80 continues as a 4-lane limited access road east of Terrell. In addition, US 175 cuts a diagonal path from Dallas through Kaufman and continues to Kemp and Mabank.
- State Hwy. 34 runs from the northeast section of Kaufman County near Ables Springs through Terrell, Wilson, Oak Ridge, and the City of Kaufman, continuing in a southwesterly direction to Scurry and into Ennis in Ellis County. CR 243 continues east from Kaufman to Canton in Van Zandt County.
- The City of Cottonwood will work with Kaufman County in coordinating a Thoroughfare Plan meeting the needs of its roadway users.

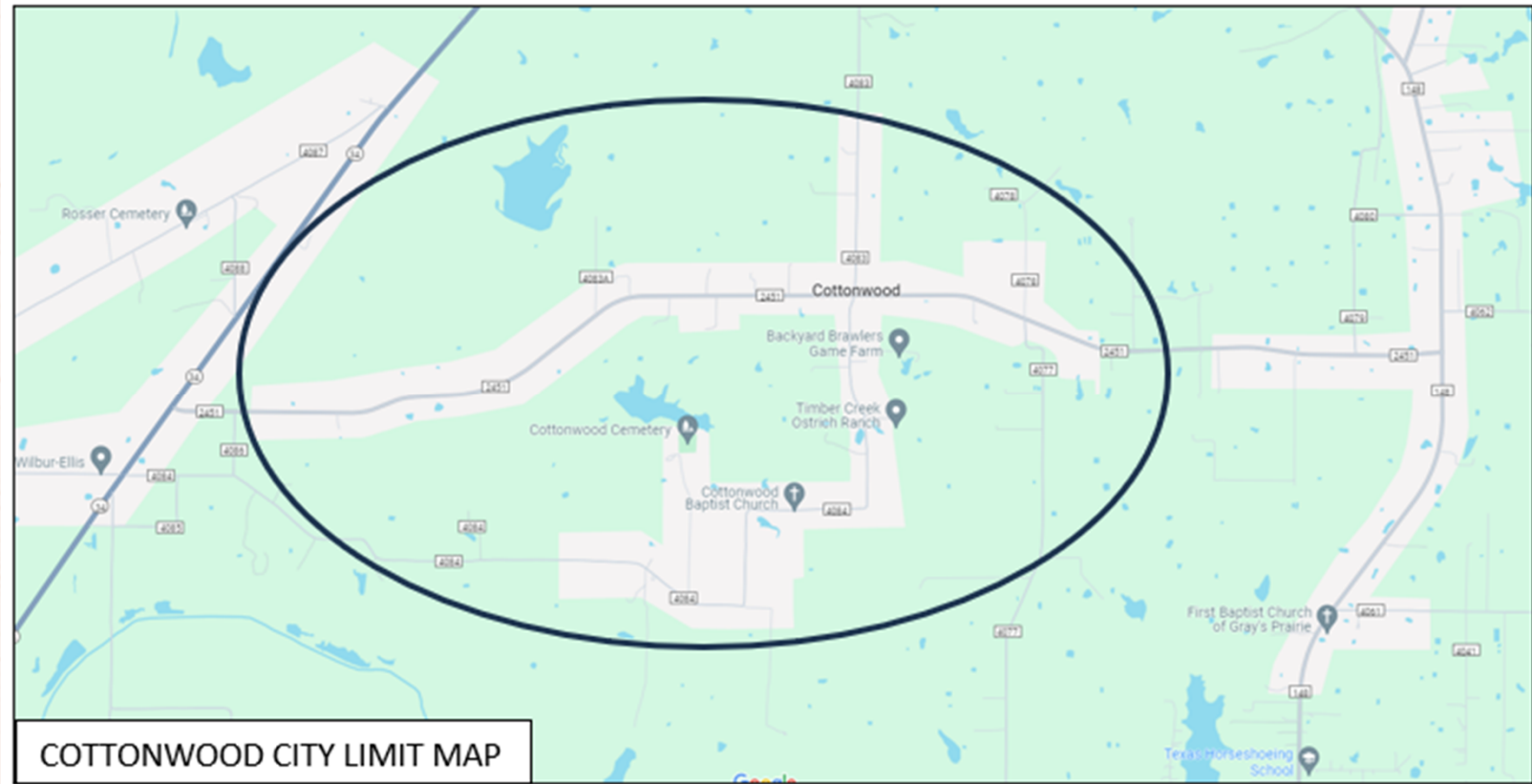


Cottonwood Today: Transportation

- Cottonwood is located at the crossroads of FM 2451, CR 4083, and CR 4084, and the city limits of Cottonwood roughly follow the rights-of-way of these two county roads. Cottonwood is only 42 miles from the center of Dallas and is located within a triangle made up of the cities of Kaufman, Ennis, and Mabank.
- Cottonwood is approximately 17 miles southwest of Kaufman, 17 miles northeast of Ennis, and 24 miles northwest of Mabank.

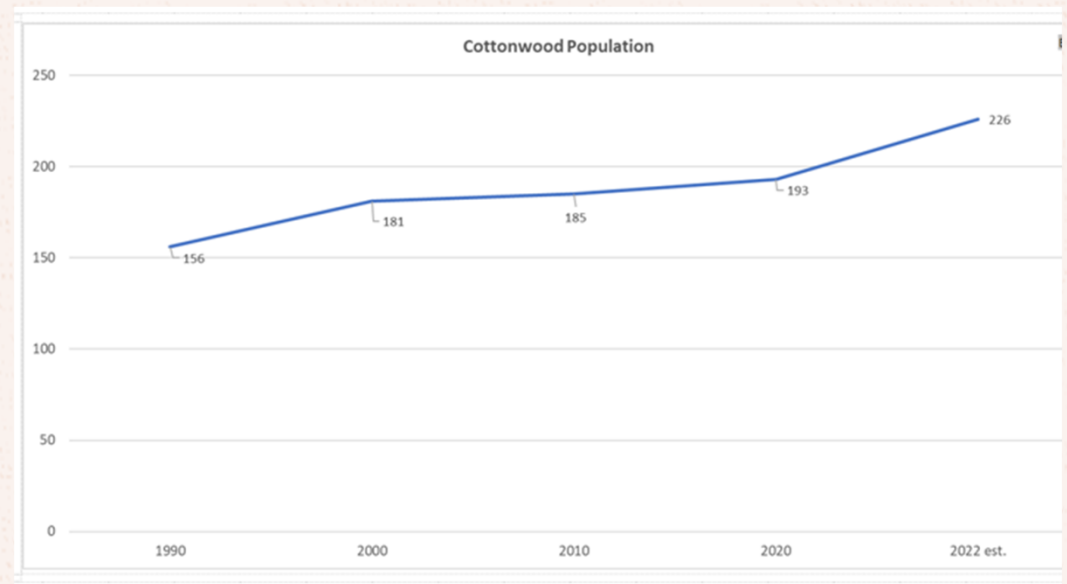


Cottonwood City Limit Map



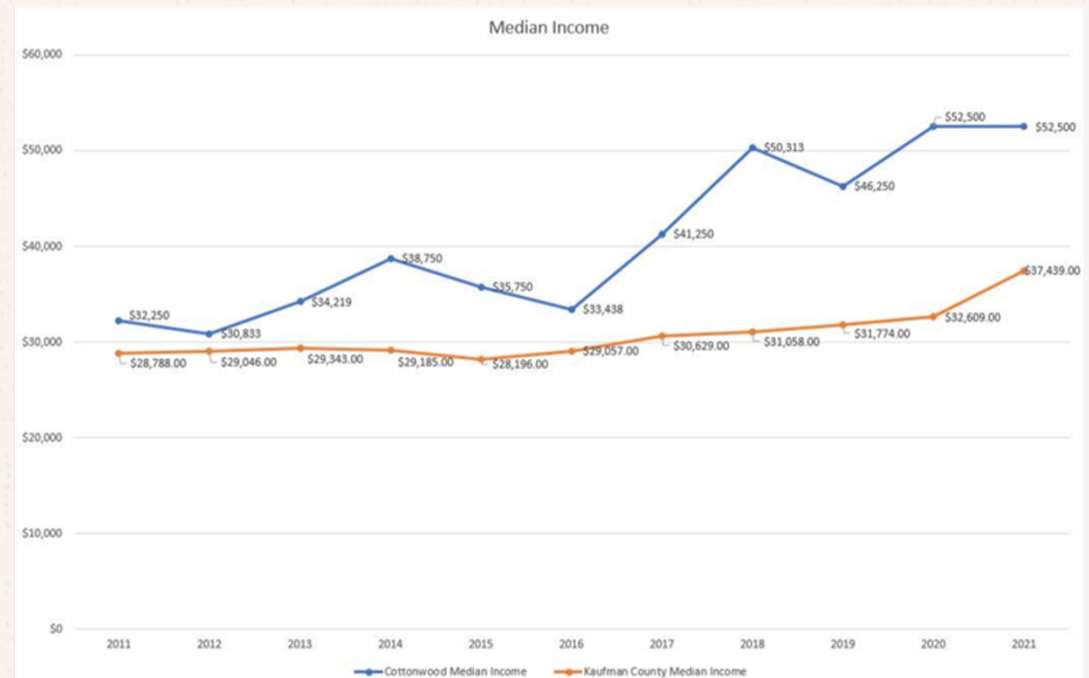
Cottonwood Today: Population

- The population of Cottonwood was 185 people in the 2010 census. The 2020 census identifies 193 people, a 4% growth.
- The 2022 population estimate is 226 people.
- The American Community Survey estimated Cottonwood's 2023 average population as 335.



Cottonwood Today: Income

- The median income in Cottonwood exceeds the overall median income statistics for Kaufman County by over \$15,000, at \$52,000 as compared to the overall county median income of \$37,439.



Cottonwood Today: Government

The City of Cottonwood is run under the provisions of the TEXAS LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE under Title 2, Organization of Municipal Governments, Subtitle D, General Powers of Municipalities for a General Law City. The governing body in the City of Cottonwood is the City Council.

The City Council has the authority to:

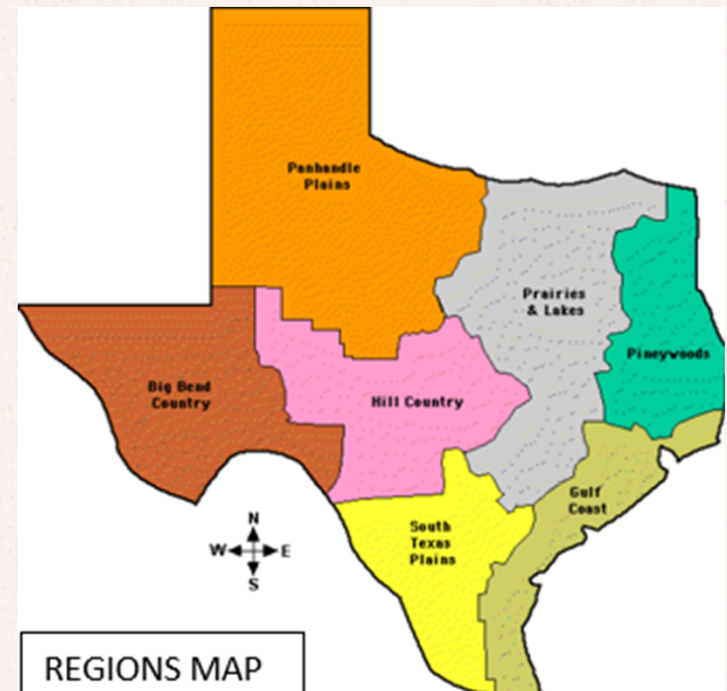
- Review and approve the annual budget;
- Establish long- and short-term objectives and priorities;
- Oversee effectiveness of programs;
- Establish tax rates;
- Enter into legal contracts;
- Borrow funds;
- Pass ordinances and resolutions;
- Regulate land use through zoning laws;
- Regulate business activity through licensing and regulations;
- Regulate public health and safety;
- Exercise the power of eminent domain;
- Communicate policies and programs to residents;
- Respond to constituent needs and complaints; and
- Represent the community to other levels of government.
- The City Council meets as needed to complete the required work of the city.

Cottonwood Today: Utilities

Gastonia-Scurry Special Utilities District provides water in Cottonwood. Electricity is provided by Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative. There are no sewer facilities in the City of Cottonwood – individual septic systems are used.

Cottonwood Today: Natural Environment & Open Space

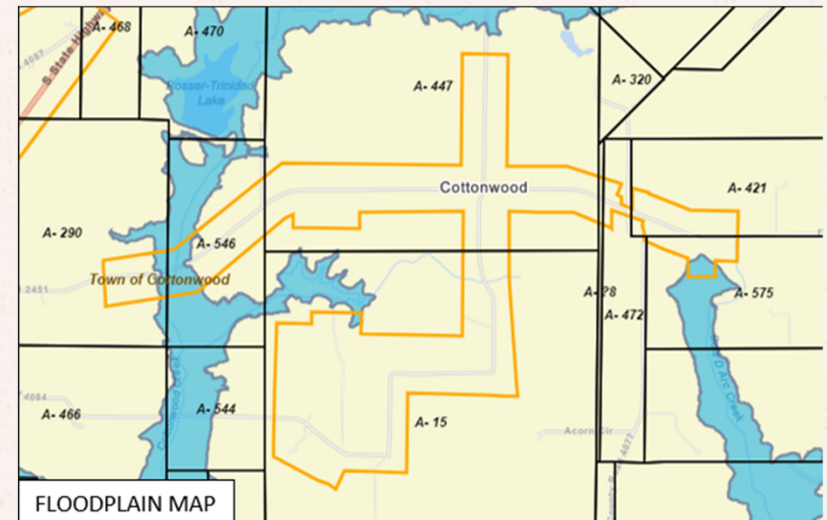
The City of Cottonwood is located where the Prairies & Lakes region meets the east Texas Piney Woods. This area is known for its fertile crop land, adequate rainfall, and rolling hills suitable for farming or ranching with rolling terrain covered with pines and oaks, and rich bottomlands with tall hardwoods.



Cottonwood Today: Natural Environment & Open Space

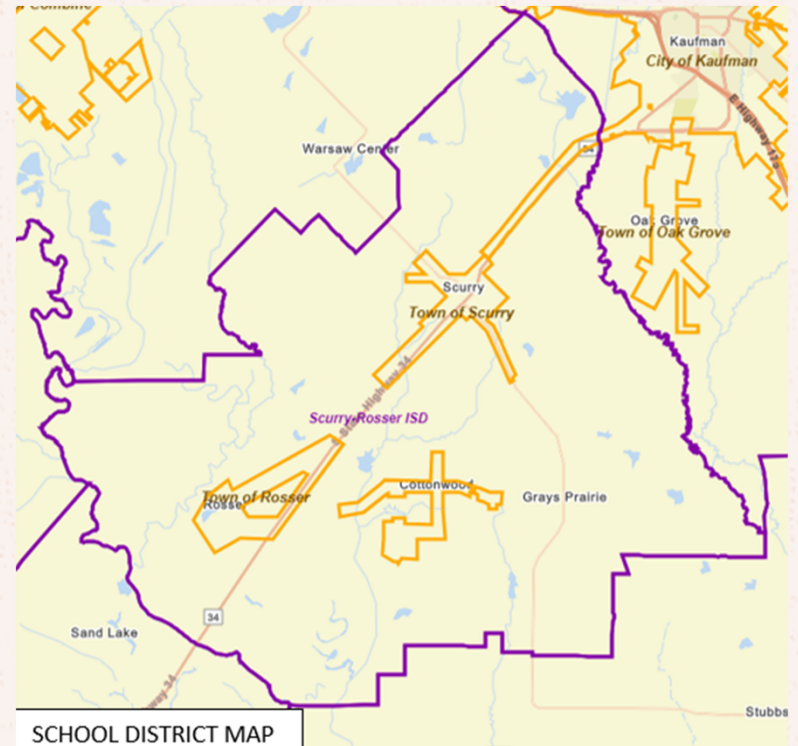
The floodplain map (right) shows that while there are lakes and streams within the area, the actual limits of the floodplain have little impact on the incorporated city limits of Cottonwood.

Open space can consist of any land that is not used for development. Examples of these are open, non-built areas, pristine environmental areas, public green spaces, or areas within the floodplain/floodway. Open spaces provide several benefits to the City of Cottonwood. Open space can help provide environmental protection where natural resources and wildlife that are important to Cottonwood's rural identity can be preserved.



Cottonwood Today: School District

Cottonwood is part of the Scurry-Rosser Independent School District which serves the cities of Scurry, Rosser, Cottonwood, and Grays Prairie as well as the county land surrounding these towns. The Scurry-Rosser Elementary School is located at 9511 Silvercreek Drive; the Scurry-Rosser Middle School is located at 10705 State Highway 34; and the Scurry-Rosser High School is located at 8321 State Highway 34, all in the town of Scurry. Busing is provided from Cottonwood.



Cottonwood Today: Housing

The housing in Cottonwood is rural in nature with large lots that run along FM 2451, CR 4083 and CR 4084. Generally, the city limit is a mere one-lot deep. Some of the acreage lots (over 1.0 acre in size) are small farms or ranches, with pastures and wooded areas. Many luxury ranch properties are present as well. Much of the land is undeveloped at this time.

Cottonwood Today: **Businesses/Commercial**

There are few retail businesses in Cottonwood. The land located at the four corners of the primary intersection of FM 2451, CR 4083, and CR 4084 is owned by residents. The southeast corner is a 99-acre tract that is undeveloped. The other three corners range in size from 2.0 acres to 9.7 acres and are homesites. The Cottonwood Baptist Church is located on CR 4084.

Businesses shown on Googlemaps.com are:

- Backyard Brawlers Game Farm, a chicken hatchery
- Timber Creek Ostrich Ranch
- Cottonwood Baptist Church
- Cottonwood Cemetery
- Cottonwood City Hall

Cottonwood Today: Existing Land Uses

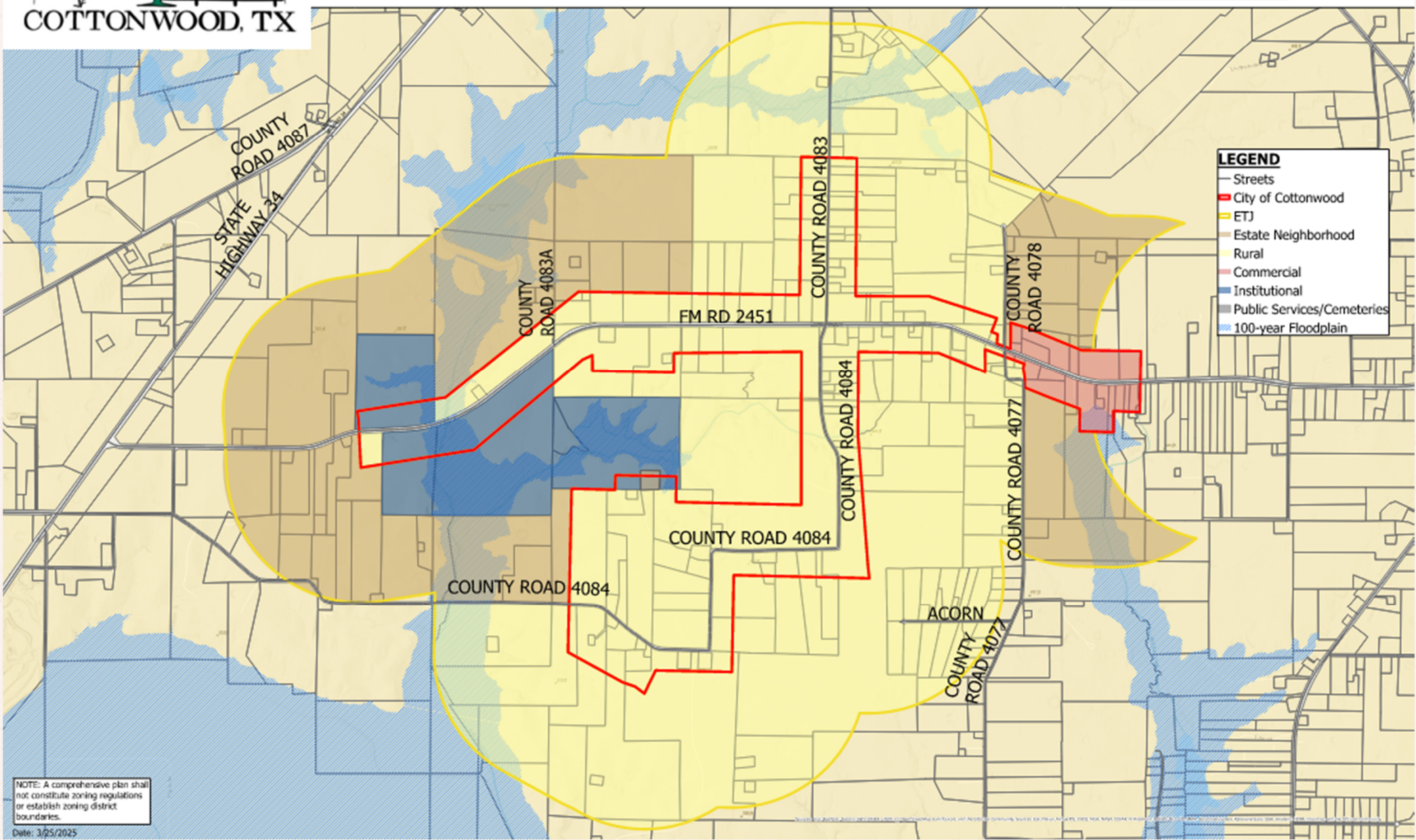
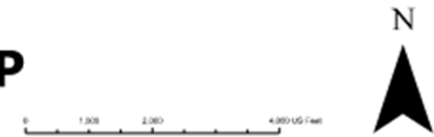
Cottonwood's existing land use is predominately rural residential/agricultural and is characterized by large farm estate lots, with several generations growing up on the same property being a common trait in the community.

Future Land Use Categories (Place Types)

The City of Cottonwood's Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Plan provide the guiding land use categories and placement within the community to retain the rural character and appropriately plan for its stakeholders' vision of limited and suitably scaled development.



CITY OF COTTONWOOD FUTURE LAND USE MAP



Future Land Use Categories: Rural Living

- The Rural living designation is intended to provide for a transition between existing agricultural uses and new subdivisions.
- These areas have limited access to neighborhood shopping, employment, and regional roadways.
- Abundant open space, pastoral views, and a high-degree of separation between buildings are characteristics of the rural living category.
- Home sites are located randomly throughout the countryside. This type of development helps to maintain the rural character, scale, and scenic values of the surrounding area.
- Lot sizes are typically a minimum of five acres in size, and may allow for accessory uses such as barns or accessory dwellings (in-law houses) and agricultural uses.
- This land use type is intended to be the home of Cottonwood's farmland and pastureland.



Future Land Use Categories: Estate Neighborhood

- Predominately large lot single-family housing development that serves as a boundary between neighborhood commercial and rural living land use types.
- Unlike the Rural Living land use, home sites are typically located in a subdivision layout.
- Estate neighborhood lots are a minimum of two acres in size with Residential lots oriented interior to the site.
- Rural living neighborhoods should strive to protect existing trees and natural features. Use of coverings and vegetation shall be incorporated to hide or obscure infrastructure such as electrical boxes.
- Estate neighborhoods may have clubhouses, or other onsite amenities for the use of the residents.



Future Land Use

Future Land Use Categories: Neighborhood Commercial

- The Neighborhood Commercial land use/character area designation is intended to accommodate smaller scale, neighborhood serving commercial uses at key locations along FM 2451 and intersections of local roadways.
- The neighborhood commercial land use is service or small-scale retail oriented, including but not limited to donut shops, nail salons, dry cleaners, and small office use such as doctors, insurance and banking but do not allow for big box retail stores.



Future Land Use

Future Land Use Categories: Public Services/Cemeteries

- The Public Services/Cemeteries is used to designate areas that are to be used for municipal or public services including but not limited to:
 - City/County facilities
 - Emergency service facilities
 - Cemeteries are also included in this use category



Future Land Use Categories: Institutional

- Education and health services provide necessary community facilities.
- Scurry-Rosser ISD may require additional school sites within Cottonwood.
- Trinity Valley is a major landowner in the City and infrastructure should be provided to accommodate the needs.
- Facilities for both educational organizations may benefit from shared or closely situated resources.



Summary

The City of Cottonwood's Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Plan provide the guiding land use categories and placement within the community to retain the rural character and appropriately plan for its stakeholders' vision of limited and suitably scaled development.

