

# Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan



## Summary

<b>Request:</b>	Consider a recommendation on the “Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan” and the Preferred Growth Scenario Map.
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## Notification

<b>Application:</b>	January 25, 2023 and August 4, 2023	<b>Neighborhood Presentation:</b>	February 7, 2023
<b>Published:</b>	February 12, 2023 and August 6, 2023	<b>Response:</b>	11 written comments included in the packet.

## Staff Recommendation

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval as Presented	<input type="checkbox"/> Alternate Approval	<input type="checkbox"/> Denial
<p>Staff recommends <b>approval</b> of Vision SMTX+ and the Preferred Growth Scenario Map with the following amendments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Include the 16 proposed amendments made by the Planning and Zoning Commission on May 9;</li> <li>2. Allow staff to address typos, punctuation, and grammatical errors;</li> <li>3. Keep the Place Type Graphics in Vision SMTX+, remove the caption graphics, and add a statement that the graphics “are for illustrative purposes only”.</li> </ol> <p>If the Commission chooses to split Neighborhood Low into “Neighborhood Low-Existing” and “Neighborhood Low-New”, staff recommends that the “Neighborhood Low-Amendment” attachment included in the Commission packet be recommended.</p> <p><b>Six</b> affirmative votes are required to recommend approval of this item.</p>		
<b>Staff:</b> Andrea Villalobos, AICP, CNU-A	<b>Title:</b> Assistant Director of Planning	<b>Date:</b> August 16, 2023

## Background

In February, 2023 the Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing and voted to postpone action on the Comprehensive Plan. At that time the Commission established a subcommittee consisting of Chair Garber, Commissioners Meeks, Commissioner Agnew, Commissioner Case, and Mayor Hughson to review the document. At the April 11, 2023 Commission meeting, the Commission voted to postpone the action on the plan to the May 9, 2023 meeting. The Commission directed staff to prepare an Alternative Draft Comprehensive Plan, referred to as Vision SMTX+, using the redlines provided by the subcommittee. **Please reference the Vision SMTX+ Summary Table document for a complete list of all changes between Vision SMTX and Vision SMTX+.**

Staff met with the Mayor and Chair Garber to discuss staff comments and questions related to the redlines. Following those discussions, staff prepared Vision SMTX+.

	<h1>Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan</h1>



During the May 9 meeting, the Commission moved to approve Vision SMTX + and voted to approve 16 amendments, however, the motion to approve the plan was postponed to August 22, 2023. The 16 proposed amendments are reflected in the *Vision SMTX+ Summary Table* document in the packet but are duplicated here for clarity. During the meeting, staff recommended holding a workshop with the Planning and Zoning Commission to consider the remaining details of the plan.

The Commission held a workshop on June 21, 2023. During the workshop, the Commission discussed and agreed to multiple discussion points. No formal action on the plan was made at this workshop. The following two topics were discussed at the workshop:

- Keeping the Place Type Graphics in Vision SMTX+, remove the caption graphics, and add a statement that the graphics “are for illustrative purposes only”.
- Splitting the Neighborhood Low Place Type into “Neighborhood Low-Existing” and “Neighborhood Low-New”. Staff does not recommend this amendment, however, if the Commission chooses to recommend this split, staff recommends that the **“Neighborhood Low-Amendment” attachment be considered.**

# Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan



## May 9, 2023 Planning Commission Proposed Amendments:

#	Vision SMTX	Pg	Vision SMTX+	Pg	Staff Comments
73.	Goal LU-2: Ensure all residents have safe and convenient access to nearby basic amenities, goods, and services	61	Goal LU-2: <del>Ensure all</del> <u>New developments should provide residents have</u> safe and convenient access to nearby basic amenities, goods, and services	53	<p>The below text reflects staff's recommended language and was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.</p> <p>Goal LU-2: <del>Ensure</del> <u>Encourage land use patterns that allow</u> all residents <u>the opportunity to</u> have safe and convenient access to nearby basic amenities, goods, and services</p>
104.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Neighborhood Low</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Medium</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood High</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Transition</li> <li>▪ Mixed Use Low</li> <li>▪ Mixed Use Medium</li> <li>▪ Commercial/Employment Low</li> <li>▪ Commercial/Employment Medium</li> <li>▪ Conserve/Reserve</li> </ul>	80	<p><u>Provide a short description of each place type here:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Neighborhood Low</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Medium</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood High</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Transition</li> <li>▪ Mixed Use Low</li> <li>▪ Mixed Use Medium</li> <li>▪ Commercial/Employment Low</li> <li>▪ Commercial/Employment Medium</li> <li>▪ Conserve/Reserve <u>(rename)</u></li> </ul> <p><u>Note: Mixed Use High and Commercial/Employment High Place Types are not included because the high-level land use and intensity are not appropriate for San Marcos.</u></p>	72	<p>The below text reflects staff's recommended language and was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.</p> <p><u>Neighborhood Low – primarily low density single-family neighborhoods.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Neighborhood Medium – a mix of low to medium density residential housing types.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Neighborhood High – primarily high density housing types with some commercial.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Neighborhood Transition – small scale commercial, mixed use, and some diverse housing types.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Mixed Use Low – small scale mixed use.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Mixed Use Medium – higher density, larger scale mixed use.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Commercial/Employment Low – auto-oriented, low density industrial, retail, and office.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Commercial/Employment Medium – office, commercial, and campus (medical, education, etc.) uses.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Conserve/Reserve Conservation/Cluster – a place holder for potential clustered development and/or protection of environmental features.</u></li> </ul>

# Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan



113	<b>Overlay/Characteristics/Considerations:</b> Clustered and Low Impact Development with overall development limited to 50% of land area	87	<b>Overlay/Characteristics/Considerations:</b> Clustered and Low Impact Development with overall development limited to 50% of land area [Change to whatever is in the LDC now]	77	The below text reflects a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting. Staff has no concerns.  Clustered and Low Impact Development <del>with overall development limited to 50% of land area.</del>
116	<b>Land Use:</b> Primarily attached single-family residential development, ADUs, low to medium- scale multifamily residential with some mixed use commercial	88	<b>Land Use:</b> Primarily attached single-family residential development, ADUs, low to medium- scale multifamily residential, with some mixed use commercial	78	The below text reflects a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting. Staff has no concerns.  <b>Land Use:</b> Primarily attached single-family residential development, ADUs, low to medium-scale multifamily residential, with some mixed use commercial
119	<b>Neighborhood Medium Primary Land Uses:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attached Single-Family Residential</li> <li>Accessory Dwelling Units</li> <li>Low to Medium-Scale Multifamily Residential</li> </ul>	91	<b>Neighborhood Medium Primary Land Uses:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attached Single-Family Residential</li> <li><del>Accessory Dwelling Units</del></li> <li>Low to Medium-Scale Multifamily Residential</li> </ul>	79	This text reflects staff's recommended language and was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.  Move "Accessory Dwelling Units" from Primary Land Uses to the Secondary Land Uses.
133	<b>Mixed Use Low Mobility Characteristics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sidewalks along, within and connecting to ???</li> <li>Bike facilities typically connecting and parallel to ???</li> </ul>	103	<b>Mixed Use Low Mobility Characteristics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sidewalks along, within and connecting to ???</li> <li>Bike facilities typically connecting and parallel to ???</li> </ul>	85	The below text reflects staff's recommended language and was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.  Add "the area" in place of the question marks.
147	<b>CONSERVE/RESERVE</b> ... The Conserve/Reserve place type was originally developed to identify areas where development would be discouraged over the life of the Comprehensive Plan.	116	<u><b>CONSERVE/RESERVE</b></u> <u><b>NEW NAME</b></u> ... The <u><b>NEW NAME</b></u> <u><b>Conserve/Reserve place type</b></u> <u><b>Place Type</b></u> was originally developed to identify areas where development would be discouraged over the life of the Comprehensive Plan.	92	The below text reflects staff's recommended language and was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.  <u><b>CONSERVE/RESERVE Conservation/Cluster</b></u> ... The <u><b>Conservation/Cluster Conserve/Reserve place type</b></u> <u><b>Place Type</b></u> was originally developed to identify areas where development would be discouraged over the life of the Comprehensive Plan.

# Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan



<p><b>168</b></p>	<p><b>Northeast Highway 110</b> is an undeveloped area along FM-110 where the community expressed a strong desire for new mixed use development to serve potential new residential developments. Due to the environmental assets and constraints pervasive in and near this location, the intensity of development is expected to be low to medium. Place types comprising the Northeast Highway 110 Community Center include Mixed Use Low and Neighborhood Medium.</p>	<p>126</p>	<p><b>Northeast Highway 110</b> is an <del>undeveloped</del> <u>developing</u> area along FM-110, <u>including Whisper.</u> <del>where the community expressed a strong desire for new mixed use development to serve potential new residential developments.</del> Due to the environmental assets and constraints <del>pervasive in and near this location,</del> the <del>intensity of development is expected to</del> <u>is ongoing</u> <del>will</del> be low to medium. Place <del>types comprising the Northeast Highway 110 Community Center</del> include Mixed Use Low and Neighborhood Medium.</p>	<p>98</p>	<p>The below text reflects staff's recommended language and was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.</p> <p><b>Central Northeast Highway 110</b> is an undeveloped area along FM-110 where the community expressed a strong desire for new mixed use development to serve potential new residential developments. Due to the environmental assets and constraints pervasive in and near this location, the intensity of development is expected to be low to medium. Place Types comprising the <b>Central Northeast</b> Highway 110 Community Center include Mixed Use Low and Neighborhood Medium.</p>
<p><b>187</b></p>	<p>Thus, seven Area Plans are included in the Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan planning process. While two of those Area Plans focus on higher intensity mixed use regional centers, the remaining five focus on neighborhoods around San Marcos. The Neighborhood Character Studies promised in the Vision San Marcos are included as a major component of the five Area Plans focusing on neighborhoods.</p>	<p>134</p>	<p><del>Thus,</del> <u>s</u>Seven Area Plans are included in the Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan planning process. While two of those Area Plans focus on higher intensity mixed use regional centers <u>of Downtown and East Village,</u> the remaining five focus on neighborhoods around San Marcos. The Neighborhood Character Studies promised in the Vision San Marcos are included as a major component of the five Area Plans focusing on neighborhoods. <u>These Area Plans will have the same power and effect as Neighborhood Character Studies noted in the statement above from the Vision San Marcos 2013 Comprehensive Plan.</u></p>	<p>104</p>	<p>The below text was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting. Staff has no concerns.</p> <p><del>Thus,</del> <u>s</u>Seven Area Plans are included in the Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan planning process. While two of those Area Plans focus on higher intensity mixed use regional centers <u>of Downtown and East Village,</u> the remaining five focus on neighborhoods around San Marcos. The Neighborhood Character Studies promised in the Vision San Marcos are included as a major component of the five Area Plans focusing on neighborhoods. <u>These Area Plans will guide future development.</u></p>

# Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan



234	LU-4.4: Adopt standards for impervious cover limits for all of the city and extra-territorial jurisdiction to minimize flooding	62	LU-4.4: Adopt standards for impervious cover limits for all of the city and extra-territorial jurisdiction to minimize flooding, <a href="#">protect water quality, and preserve recharge of groundwater</a> . <a href="#">As part of this policy development, consider using net site area in lieu of gross site area to take into account areas of a site that are undevelopable and adopt lower limits for areas that are environmentally sensitive</a> .	54	<p>Staff does not recommend the adoption of the second sentence without prior evaluation of the impacts. It is recommended that this is evaluated as part of the Development Code update.</p> <p>The below text reflects staff’s recommended language and was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.</p> <p>LU-4.4: Adopt standards for impervious cover limits for all of the city and extra-territorial jurisdiction to minimize flooding, <a href="#">protect water quality, and preserve recharge of groundwater</a>.</p>
235	ENV-1.5: Establish riparian buffer zones for resource protection of rivers, creeks, retention ponds, and flood mitigation areas.	53	ENV-1.5: Establish riparian buffer zones <a href="#">and enhanced setbacks</a> for resource protection of rivers, creeks, retention ponds, and flood mitigation areas.	45	<p>Staff has no concerns with this text. It was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.</p>
236	N/A	54	<a href="#">ENV-3.#: Adopt a dark skies ordinance to mitigate harassment of wildlife and preserve rural character</a> .	46	<p>Staff has no concerns with this text. It was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.</p>
238	Preferred Scenario Map	123	Change the Place Type from Neighborhood-Low to Mixed Use-Low on the highlighted parcels along Post Road.	95	<p>Staff has no issues with the proposed change. Post Road is a major corridor and could warrant some mixed use along the roadway to support existing residences. In addition, the highlighted parcels are between two existing Mixed Use-Low Place Type designated parcels on the Preferred Growth Scenario Map.</p> <p>It was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.</p>
239	These inputs were used to recalculate environmentally constrained areas on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the least constrained and 5 being the most constrained. The Environmental overlay includes all areas scoring a 5 within the City Limits and all areas scoring a 4 or 5 outside the City Limits, but		These inputs were used to recalculate environmentally constrained areas on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the least constrained and 5 being the most constrained. The Environmental overlay includes all areas scoring a 5 within the City Limits and all areas scoring a 4 or 5 outside the City Limits, but within the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). <del>For Scenario planning a</del>	69	<p>Staff has no concerns with this text. It was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.</p>

# Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan



	<p>within the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). For Scenario planning a maximum of 50% of areas with the environmental overlay were "developed" with allocations of housing and jobs. In addition, high level land use and land use intensity were assigned strategically to minimize the amount of land within the overlays necessary to accommodate projected development.</p>		<p><del>maximum of 50% of areas with the environmental overlay were "developed" with allocations of housing and jobs. In addition, high level land use and land use intensity were assigned strategically to minimize the amount of land within the overlays necessary to accommodate projected development.</del></p>		
240	<p>Complete Communities consist of a variety of places that provide opportunities for people to live, work, and play. Many areas in San Marcos today are single use. For example, some residential neighborhoods have no nearby goods and services, or employment areas. In these areas, residents may have to travel farther and longer than they would prefer to access all of their needs.</p>		<p>Complete Communities consist of a variety of places that provide opportunities for people to live, work, and play. <del>Many areas in San Marcos today are single use. For example, By this definition,</del> some residential neighborhoods <del>would not be considered part of a Complete Community since they</del> have no nearby goods and services, or employment areas. <del>In these areas,</del> residents <del>in those neighborhoods</del> may have to travel farther and longer than they would prefer to access all <del>of</del> their needs.</p>	67	<p>Staff has no concerns with this text. It was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.</p>
241	<p>Many of San Marcos' original neighborhoods, especially those closest to Downtown, benefit from access to shops, restaurants, cultural amenities, employment opportunities, civic offerings, and recreation.</p>		<p>Many of San Marcos' original neighborhoods, <del>especially those closest to Downtown,</del> benefit from access to shops, restaurants, cultural amenities, employment opportunities, civic offerings, and recreation.</p>	67	<p>Staff has no concerns with this text. It was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.</p>

# Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan



242	<p>This contributes to demand on the roadway network, potential traffic congestion and environmental impacts, and could contribute to a higher cost of living for households. It also means that those who are not able to drive, bike, or use transit may not have their needs met. With these potential impacts in mind, an incomplete community includes few or poorly distributed amenities and services that may have an inequitable impact on transportation, health, quality of life, the environment on residents or areas of San Marcos.</p>	<p>This contributes to demand on the roadway network, potential traffic congestion and environmental impacts, and could contribute to a higher cost of living for households. It also means that those who are not able to drive, bike, or use transit may not have their needs met. <del>With these potential impacts in mind, an incomplete community includes few or poorly distributed amenities and services that may have an inequitable impact on transportation, health, quality of life, the environment on residents or areas of San Marcos.</del></p>	67	<p>Staff has no concerns with this text. It was a proposed amendment by the Planning Commission at their May 9, 2023 meeting.</p>
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# Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan



## Additional Amendments to fix typos

The following typographical errors were brought to staff's attention. Any additional typos, punctuation, and grammatical errors will be addressed by staff during the adoption process.

Item #	Vision SMTX	Pg#	Vision SMTX+	Pg#	Type of Change	Staff Comments
243.	The policies, projects, and programs in this Plan will shape the future of the places where residents live, work, shop, and play by preserving what's important to the community and guiding investments that help make San Marcos a vibrant and unique city for all."		The policies, projects, and programs in this Plan will shape the future of the places where residents live, work, shop, and play by preserving what's important to the community and guiding investments that help make San Marcos a vibrant and unique city for all."	12	Grammatical	Typo
244.	New developments in existing neighborhoods and along existing corridors need to be compatible with the surrounding context as per the Area Plans and Neighborhood Character Studies, applicable.		New developments in existing neighborhoods and along existing corridors need to be compatible with the surrounding context as per the Area Plans and Neighborhood Character Studies, <u>as</u> applicable.	48	Grammatical	Typo
245.	The maximum land use intensity of Mixed Use and Commercial/ Employment areas is envisioned as medium.		The maximum land use intensity of Mixed Use and Commercial/ Employment areas is envisioned as <u>M</u> medium <u>I</u> ntensity.	71	Grammatical	Typo
246.	Pockets Parks		Pocket <u>s</u> Parks	77, 79, 83, 85, 87	Grammatical	Typo
247.	The Regional Center Plan for the East Village will provide specific direction for creating a new higher intensity growth area that will relieve development pressure neighborhoods.		The Regional Center Plan for the East Village will provide specific direction for creating a new higher intensity growth area that will relieve development pressure <u>on</u> neighborhoods.	108	Grammatical	Typo
248.	In addition, the Comprehensive Plan lays out an updated and comprehensive set of goals the community wants to achieve in the next 20 years		In addition, the Comprehensive Plan lays out an updated and comprehensive set of goals the community wants to achieve in the next 20 years <u>.</u>	115	Grammatical	Typo
249.	The Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee appointed by City Council should include community representatives and, agencies and organizations that participated in crafting the plan.		The Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee, <u>which is</u> appointed by City Council, <u>should</u> include community representatives <del>and</del> , agencies, and organizations that participated in crafting the plan.	122	Grammatical	Typo

# Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan



The following Criteria are from Chapter 2, Division 2 of the San Marcos Development Code.

Evaluation			Criteria for Approval (Sec.2.4.2.4)
Consistent	Inconsistent	Neutral	
<u>X</u>			<p>Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with other policies of the Comprehensive Plan;</p> <p><b><i>The Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan provides updated vision, goals, and policies for the community over the next 20 years.</i></b></p>
		<u>N/A</u>	<p>Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with any adopted small area plan or neighborhood character study for the area;</p> <p><b><i>Studies are in-progress as part of this Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan, but are not complete at the time of the request.</i></b></p>
<u>X</u>			<p>Whether the proposed amendment promotes the orderly and efficient growth and development of the community and furthers the public health, safety and general welfare of the City;</p> <p><b><i>The Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan includes an updated Preferred Growth Scenario Map which will replace the existing Preferred Scenario Map to provide better direction for land uses as well as built form, mobility, parks, and amenities by designating different Place Types.</i></b></p>
<u>X</u>			<p>Whether the proposed amendment corrects and error or meets the challenge of some changing condition, trend, or fact;</p> <p><b><i>San Marcos, like all cities, is a living organism that is constantly changing and growing either through physical growth, economic growth, or societal growth. The Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan is a critical tool used to guide that growth appropriately.</i></b></p>
<u>X</u>			<p>Whether the proposed amendment constitutes a substantial benefit to the City as a whole and is not solely for the good or benefit of a particular landowner or owners at a particular point in time;</p> <p><b><i>The Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan process was developed through over 100 meetings and events, hundreds of participants, and includes over 4,000 community comments. The Plan as proposed creates a vision for the future of San Marcos that is inclusive of all backgrounds, perspectives, and ways of life.</i></b></p>
<u>X</u>			<p>Whether the proposed amendment will impact: a) adjacent properties; b) existing or future land use patterns; c) existing or</p>

	<h1 style="margin: 0;">Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan</h1>
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			<p>planned public services and facilities; d) existing or planned transportation networks or greenways; e) the natural environment, including quality and quantity of water and other natural resources, flooding, and wildlife management</p> <p><b><i>The Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan creates updated vision, goals, and policies which:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Provide transitions and orderly development of land uses;</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Allocate future land use patterns to accommodate San Marcos growth over the next 20 years while preserving natural spaces and vacant farmland;</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Considers future public services and facilities to accommodate current and future resident needs;</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Prioritizes multimodal transportation networks and greenways throughout various Place Types and policies;</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Furthers and enhances the quality and preservation of natural and environmental resources by strategically accommodating growth.</i></b></li> </ul>
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