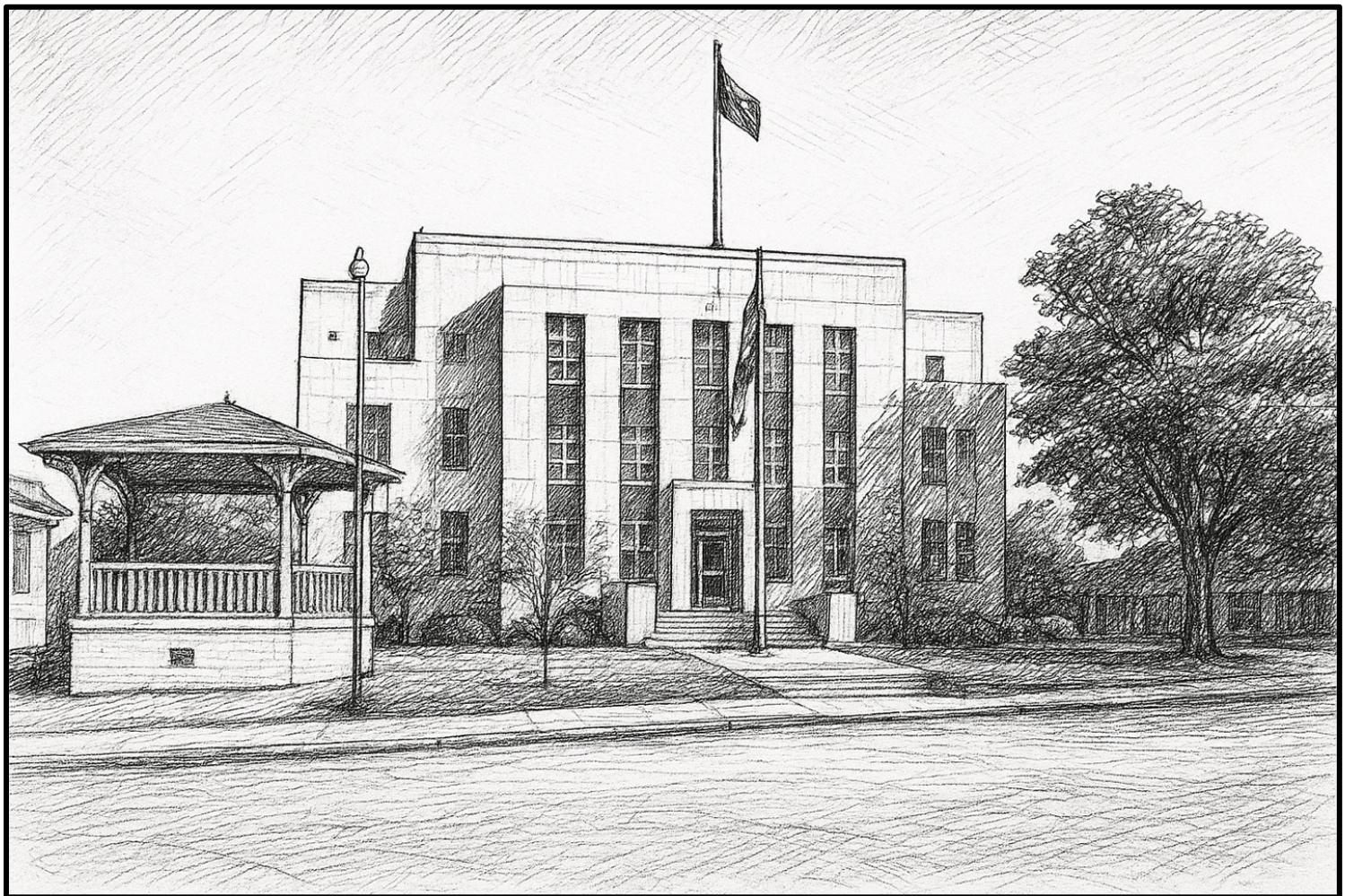




Washington County 2026-2030 Strategic Plan



Commissioned By:

Judge John Durenberger

Precinct 1 Misti Corn

Precinct 3 Kirk Hanath

Precinct 2 Candice Bullock

Precinct 4 Dustin Myjewski



Executive Summary:

In 2025, the Washington County Commissioner's Court engaged in a robust strategic planning process to help guide the County into the future. The process placed a strong emphasis on engaging citizens and stakeholders to truly understand their desires for what Washington County will become. Those responses along with trend data, existing plans and current and projected service delivery needs were all integral elements to the strategic planning discussions of the Washington County Judge and Commissioners.

Common themes emerged across the public engagement meetings. The community values its small-town feel, sense of community, natural beauty, history and safety. It hopes that its future will maintain these attributes and be enhanced by better infrastructure, a stronger economy and new generations of young families. The community desires the County to communicate more effectively, to guide growth and mitigate its impacts, to improve economic development and to maintain and construct infrastructure. Finally, when asked what the top priorities should be for Washington County, communication, roads, growth management, public safety and economic development were the predominant responses.

The top priorities identified by the community support those established in this plan by the Commissioner's Court: **Infrastructure, Economic Development, Growth Management, Public Health and Safety, and Operational Effectiveness.**

The Washington County 2026 Strategic Plan defines the aforementioned priorities and establishes specific goals and initiatives in support of each. No priority is deemed more important than another, rather they are inter-related and should be advancing simultaneously to move Washington County toward its future successfully.

This plan is organized with Priorities, Goals, and Initiatives. Priorities represent the key areas of concern that impact the present and future. Each Priority has Goals that prescribe particular strategies to support the Priority. Each Goal has Initiatives which describe steps to be taken to advance the Goals. (Numbers are for organizational purposes and do not assign priority or order.)

This Washington County 2026 Strategic Plan represents the desires of the community and the vision of the County Judge and Commissioners. It gives guidance to staff, sets internal and external expectations, and creates measurable markers of success. By incorporating this plan in all decisions, the County can ensure that the future is one that will make all in Washington County proud.



Washington County Strategic Plan - 2026



Infrastructure Priority

Infrastructure is at the foundation of Washington County. It ensures mobility through roads and bridges, connects business, education and citizens through broadband and provides facilities that allow for delivery of County services and for public use. Infrastructure must be actively managed to improve its function and extend its lifespan.

Goal I.1 Maintain and Improve Roads

Initiative I.1.1 Revisit Road Use Agreement

Initiative I.1.2 Improve road condition including pavement, grass and debris

Goal I.2 Extend Access to Broadband

Initiative I.2.1 Advance Washington County Broadband Strategic Plan([link](#))

Initiative I.2.2 Pursue public-private partnerships to attract service providers to underserved areas

Goal I.3 Maintain, Update and Construct Facilities

Initiative I.3.1 Evaluate, update and coordinate facilities maintenance plans

Initiative I.3.2 Create Jail expansion plan

Initiative I.3.3 Adopt and implement Expo Master Plan

Initiative I.3.4 Judicial Center plan (see Goal 4.2)



Economic Development Priority

A strong economy is essential to the future of Washington County. To thrive, a balance between residential and commercial uses must be present. The development of strong retention and expansion partnerships that allow businesses to create jobs, generate revenue and benefit the citizens of Washington County is paramount. The County will increase its participation in attracting new business to the community by expanding regional partnerships and utilizing destination development for continued diversified economic growth.

Goal E.1 Improve Business Recruitment/Expansion

Initiative E.1.1 Evaluate Economic Development partnership

Initiative E.1.2 Update Economic Development strategy to include a diversified approach that prioritizes target industries and creates high-paying jobs

Initiative E.1.3 Activate participation in Houston First, Brazos Valley Partnership and Texas Business Association

Goal E.2 Utilize Destination Development for Economic Diversification

Initiative E.2.1 Maximize the economic impact of the Expo with event frequency, visitor attendance/experience and regional recognition

Initiative E.2.2 Leverage historical and cultural assets

Initiative E.2.3 Create partnerships that enhance and promote quality of life assets to increase tourism spending and tourism growth



Brenham | Washington County
Economic Development

THREE-YEAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN
October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2028



Growth Management Priority

Washington County is a highly desirable place to live because of its beauty, quality of life and location. Its proximity to two large metropolitan areas creates increasing interest for new development, and citizens are concerned with impacts of changes to the lifestyle they currently enjoy. Washington County has restricted authority under State Law to prevent growth, but it does have some limited ability to mitigate the impacts of growth through policies and financial management.

Goal G.1 Update, Adopt and Enhance Policies

Initiative G.1.1 Update Subdivision Manual ([link](#))

Initiative G.1.2 Update and enhance Environmental Policy ([link](#))

Goal G.2 Strengthen Financial Management

Initiative G.2.1 Explore financial forecasting tools

Initiative G.2.2 Explore alternative funding sources

Goal G.3 Steward Water Resources

Initiative G.3.1 Build relationships with rural water supplies, water organizations and the State

Initiative G.3.2 Continue evaluating water resource preservation options



Public Health and Safety Priority

Washington County has a fundamental responsibility to provide for the health and safety of its citizens. Washington County Sheriff's Office, County and District Courts, Washington County Emergency Medical Services, Washington County Office of Emergency Management and partnerships with Volunteer Fire Departments are each integral to the public safety system.

Goal P.1 Improve Fire Service

Initiative P.1.1 Hire Fire Services Director

Initiative P.1.2 Develop comprehensive standards, policies and procedures

Goal P.2 Construct Judicial Center

Initiative P.2.1 Determine plan and financing

Goal P.3 Enhance Emergency Medical Services

Initiative P.3.1 Provide resources to support the EMS Strategic Plan (link)

Goal P.4 Improve Dispatch System

Initiative P.4.1 Advance dispatch technology

Initiative P.4.2 Explore facility relocation options and determine plan

Goal P.5 Improve Emergency Management

Initiative P.5.1 Create standard operating procedures based on best practices

Initiative P.5.2 Improve internal and external agency coordination

Initiative P.5.3 Create and implement Emergency Management training program

Goal P.6 Explore Medical Care Partnerships



Operational Effectiveness Priority

Washington County strives to provide excellent services to its citizens. Engaging with citizens through both outreach and education helps them better understand processes and connect to services. The effectiveness and efficiency of County Staff requires assuring appropriate resources for personnel, training, technology and equipment.

Goal O.1 Increase Communication/Engagement

Initiative O.1.1 Create a communications plan and adopt policies

Initiative O.1.2 Create County Ambassadors program

Goal O.2 Support Personnel

Initiative O.2.1 Remain competitive in the market

Initiative O.2.2 Determine appropriate staffing for departments

Initiative O.2.3 Improve the onboarding process

Initiative O.2.4 Improve training and professional development

Initiative O.2.5 Encourage development of succession plans

Goal O.3 Utilize Technology

Initiative O.3.1 Provide technology resources to support and improve operations

Initiative O.3.2 Prescribe technology needs for achievement of Strategic Plan Goals and Initiatives

Goal O.4 Improve Equipment and Fleet

Initiative O.4.1 Create a fleet management program

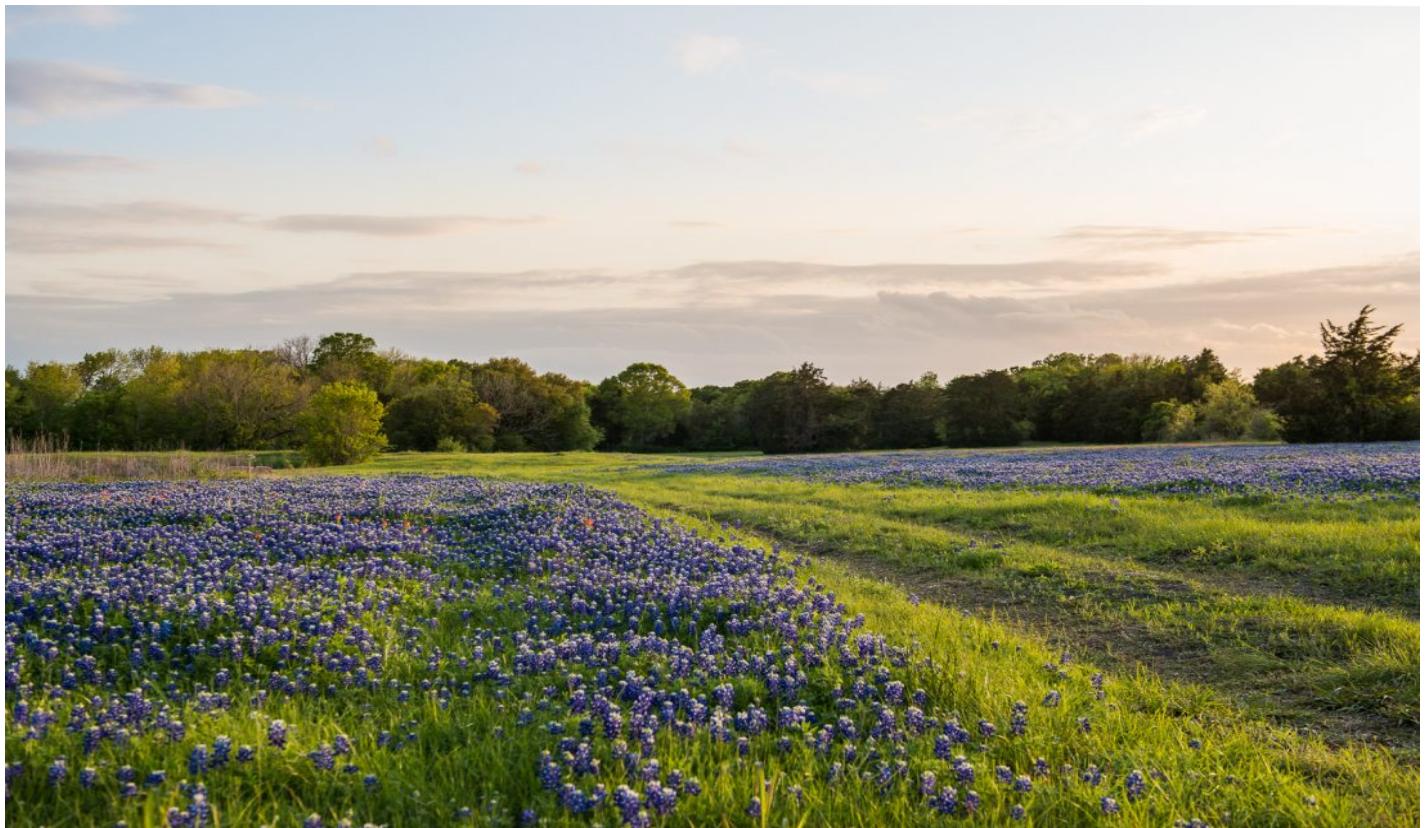
Initiative O.4.2 Create asset maintenance schedules

Initiative O.4.3 Create vehicle and equipment replacement plans





Washington County Strategic Plan - 2026 Support Materials



Community Engagement Detail

The community and stakeholders were engaged in a variety of ways in the strategic planning process over a four-month period. In each meeting, open-ended questions were asked to solicit group opinions about what was loved about the community, what areas were in need of improvement, what Washington County should be in the future and what priorities are most important to address. An online survey was made available for responses from individuals unable to participate in person.

- **Steering Committee:** A Steering Committee was established by nominations of the County Judge and each Commissioner to assist in planning community meetings and identifying specific stakeholders. It also served as a stakeholder group made up of active community members from different areas, businesses and interests. The Steering Committee assisted in promoting community engagement opportunities and in engaging harder to reach stakeholders.
- **Precinct Meetings:** Meetings were held in each of the four precincts. Commissioners assisted in the promotion of their respective meetings and were present to observe. Each meeting was structured to solicit responses to the aforementioned, open-ended questions.
- **Focus Groups:** The Steering Committee assisted in identifying groups and organizations that should be represented in the community engagement process. Participants included individuals and formal and informal organizations. While these conversations came from more specialized viewpoints, the same questions were asked related to areas for improvement, desires for the future and priorities.

The discussions at these community and stakeholder engagements produced common themes along with some more discreet opinions based on area, specialty, interest, etc. The common themes that emerged served as the foundation for discussions with the Commissioner's Court and the ultimate design of the strategic plan. The following details responses received to the questions asked of the community. Responses in **bold** are those that were common across all groups. Those in *italics* were received but less common.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

Community Strategic Planning Meetings

You're invited to join local leaders and fellow citizens from your Precinct in open, constructive conversations about our county's future.

Topic Discussions:

Economic Growth | Public Safety & Wellness | Housing & Infrastructure
Roads, Water, & Broadband | Judicial Center Planning & Development



What do you love about Washington County?

- Small town feel
- Sense of community/people
- Natural beauty
- Open space, skies
- Family-friendly
- History/Heritage
- Safety
- Easy to get around
- Peace and quiet
- Faith community
- Blinn
- Blue Bell
- Small businesses
- Access to healthcare, EMS
- Quality of Life
- County Fair
- Location
- Support for youth
- Downtown Brenham
- Washington on the Brazos

What do you hope never changes?

- Small town atmosphere
- Sense of community/people
- Natural beauty
- Open space, nature
- Family-friendly
- History/Heritage
- Values/Culture
- Neighborhood identities
- Safety
- Peace and quiet
- Don't want flooding
- Agriculture
- Blue Bell
- Access to healthcare, EMS
- County Fair
- Generations

What could Washington County do better?

- Communication, engagement
- Economic development
- Growth management
- Roads, roadways
- Infrastructure ahead of growth
- Internet
- Traffic management
- Water management
- Medical services
- Coordination
- Noise and light mitigation
- Balance for precincts
- Reduce spending
- Affordability
- Employee salaries
- Drainage regulations
- Animal control
- Public transit
- Fire service
- Mental health
- Support agriculture
- Expand Expo
- Judicial Center
- Schools
- Youth entertainment



What do you want Washington County to be or have in 10 years?

- Still feel like Washington County
- Well-run
- Managed growth
- Water resources
- Strong business environment
- Better Internet
- More jobs
- More amenities
- Attractive to young people
- Better roads
- Better schools
- Healthcare option
- Safe
- Clean, beautiful
- *Public transportation*
- *Things for kids*
- *Tourism*
- *More influence*
- *Low light pollution*
- *Progressive, but maintain history*
- *Better public buildings*
- *Identity*
- *Unity across county*

What are your top 3 priorities for Washington County?

- Communication
- Roads
- Growth management
- Water
- Public Safety
- Economic Development
- Medical
- Enforcement
- Cell/Internet service
- Traffic control
- Small business preservation
- Ag property preservation
- Maintain sense of community
- Lower taxes
- Infrastructure maintenance
- Staff salaries
- VFD funding
- Homelessness



Commissioner's Court Discussion Details

The Washington County Commissioner's Court was engaged throughout the strategic planning process. The County Judge and Commissioners gave guidance on many areas including planning process, participants, support materials and service needs and concerns. Commissioners also provided individual responses to key strategic planning questions that were compiled for group consideration. The following provides detailed responses received from the questions asked to the Commissioners.

Strengths

- Financially sound
- EMS
- Technology investments
- Location
- Blinn
- Community support
- Community pride

Weaknesses

- Schools
- Communication
- Lack of fiber
- Economic development
- Dispatch
- Fire service structure

Opportunities

- Changing economic development
- Working together, partnering
- Dispatch director hire
- Operational improvements
- Being proactive
- Better schools

Threats

- Weak schools
- Water management
- Economic development
- Relationship with State
- State overreach
- 290 bypass
- Growth from Houston/Austin
- Unaffordability

What do you want Washington County to be or have in 10 years?

- Young people living, working
- Self-sustaining economy
- Strong economic development
- Proactive communicators
- Great schools
- Water regulation
- Access to quality healthcare
- Good roads
- Efficient, effective government
 - Facilities
 - Equipment
 - Personnel
 - Processes
- Improved facilities
 - Expo
 - Justice Center



What do you believe should be the County's top 3 priorities?

- Roads
- Economic Development
- Better communication
- Public Safety
- Fire, Sheriff, Dispatch
- Expo Improvements
- Water management
- Operational improvement
- Schools

What are your short-term goals for the County?

- Road investment
- Economic development strategy
- Fiber
- Expo improvements
- Judicial Center plan
- Fire plan
- Communication improvement
- Operational improvements (process, equipment, personnel)
- Strategic partnerships
- School strategy
- Sheriff's Department improvements

The Commissioner's Court considered all of the community engagement input alongside their collective responses and compared trends, data and documentation to arrive at the Strategic Plan Priorities. Those Priorities are (in no ranked order of importance) **Infrastructure, Economic Development, Growth Management, Public Health and Safety, and Operational Effectiveness**.

The Strategic Priorities created the framework for the resulting Washington County 2026 Strategic Plan. Each Priority was then assigned Goals to be tracked or accomplished over the next one to three years. Initiatives were created for each Goal to establish expectations for actions that should begin within a year. The Initiatives will be supported by annualized workplans for responsible departments. The Commissioner's Court will institute this plan and establish regular review and reporting schedules to track progress and assure transparency.



Support Documents

Reports:

Washington County Economic Overview Q4 2024
Brazos Valley Council of Governments

Industry Diversity Snapshot Q4 2024
Brazos Valley Council of Governments

Blinn College Fact Sheet
Blinn College

Subdivision Status
Washington County

Variance Requests
Washington County

Policies:

Washington County Subdivision Manual

Washington County Environmental Policy

Strategic Plans:

Washington County EMS Strategic Plan

Advance Washington County Broadband Strategic Plan

Washington County Economic Development Strategic Plan

