SECTION 2. BASELINE ANALYSIS

2.1 Introduction

The foundation of the comprehensive planning process rests in basic information, such as the historical, statistical and factual information about the community. The *Baseline Analysis* section consists of documentation of this information and presents an overview of the City's history, and describes its social and economic characteristics. It also describes the City's development pattern. All of these elements together are essential for a clear understanding of the physical and social composition of the City. The primary objective of this section is to document current physical and socioeconomic conditions within Levelland and to then identify various opportunities and constraints the community must consider in addressing its future built environment. The secondary objective of the *Baseline Analysis* is to ensure that the information being used in the planning process accurately portrays the community and its needs. The identification of major issues within the community begins early in the planning process and serves as a basis for creating the following components of the *Baseline Analysis* section:

- Historical Background
- Regional Relationship
- Physical Factors Influencing Development
- Demographic Profile
- Existing Land Use
- Existing Housing
- Existing Plans & Ordinances
- Existing Public Facilities
- Existing Water and Wastewater System

The Baseline Analysis presents a critical review of Levelland's existing conditions, providing the basis from which to begin the planning process.

Each section contains information pertaining to the topic, as well as graphic support where appropriate. The *Baseline Analysis* section includes the identification of other issues that will be addressed in the formulation of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Levelland. It also contributes to the ideas communicated in Section 3. *Goals and Objectives* for the community.

Historical Background

The oil industry has always had a major role in the history of the City, though its economic impact is much less in recent times.

South Plains College was instrumental in offsetting the economic downturn of the 1980's.

Levelland is located in the western region of Texas known as the South Plains. Levelland's current population is about 12,866[1] and is the county seat of Hockley County. Before the City was settled and incorporated, the area was known to the Indians and a few Spanish explorers. It is believed to have first been settled by Anglo-Americans hunting buffalos around 1877.[2] These hunters were followed by cattlemen who began ranching activities. Hockley County was established in 1876, though an organized government did not form until 1921. Soon after, Levelland (then briefly known as Hockley City) was named the county seat. During this time, farming began to gain a serious foothold, increasing from 20 farms in 1920 to 1,344 in 1930.[3] Levelland's name is appropriately derived from the abundance of flat or *level* land in the area. The important role farming played in Levelland's early beginnings continues today; the area consistently ranks in the top five cotton producing counties in the state. Beyond cotton and other farming-related products, Levelland began its most significant growth with the discovery of oil in the western portion of the county in the late 1930's. With this discovery came the infrastructure, human and otherwise, to begin the exploitation of these petroleum reserves. Evidence of this can be seen in the 60 percent population increase experienced by the City during the 1940's.[4] The important benefits of this industry have continued in spite of the severe downturn the industry experienced in the mid 1980's.[5] The effects of the downturn in this industry were undoubtedly damaging to the growth and prosperity of Levelland. Offsetting the damaging effects of this event to some extent was the South Plains College. Established in 1957, South Plains College is a two-year institution whose successes have long been a source of community pride. In spite of the 1980's economic downturn, South Plains College was able to double its enrollment, curbing the hardships incurred by the petroleum industry.[6] Today, the economic and demographic make-up of the City has remained much the same for the last 10 years, according to U.S. Census data.

[1] U.S. Census, 2000.
[2] Levelland Comprehensive Plan, March 1970. Nathan L. Kiser, Consulting Planners.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Comprehensive Plan, 1986. aPRIMER. Texas Tech University.
[6] Ibid.

Regional Relationship

Levelland is situated 25 miles west of Lubbock, the nearest major city, and intersected by U.S. Highway 385 and State Highway 114. Plate 2.1 *Regional Relationship* shows the relationship of Levelland to the surrounding region. Levelland functions both as a self-sustained community with its own employment base and as a bedroom community to the Lubbock metropolitan area. Because of the proximity to Lubbock, citizens can enjoy the benefits of small town life while being able to access the economic, educational and cultural amenities of a mid-sized city. The health and welfare of the Lubbock metropolitan area is of prime concern for maintaining and improving the quality of life for the citizens of Levelland.

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2.2 Physical Factors Influencing Development

Natural Features

The natural features of a city include the geology, topography, soils and vegetation found in that city. It is the interrelation of these natural features that creates the natural environment of a community. Floodplains, aquifers, endangered species and the climate of the area are some other natural features that may also affect development in an area. The knowledge of a city's natural environment plays a significant role in determining future development trends and possibilities for the community by enabling the City to make better-informed decisions and ensuring the exercise of accepted planning principles.

Levelland's physical landscape poses virtually no limitations for development throughout the City.

Geology [7]

Geology, in simple terms, is the study of rocks and the surface characteristics of those rocks. The mineral wealth and varied landforms found in the state today are actually a legacy of the geologic history of Texas. Thus while developing any area or to understand the different landforms and how best to utilize them, it becomes important to study and take into consideration the geological formation of that area. For much of West Texas, including Levelland, the area is most seriously defined by the early Paleozoic Era, a time period approximately 350-600 million years ago. It was during this time that shallow seas covered this region of present-day West Texas. Evidence of this is found through the existence of Paleozoic rocks (sandstones, shales and lime stones) which characterize much of the sedimentation found in seas today. In later periods, limestone reefs formed valuable oil reservoirs. Through events during the Cenozoic Era, formations created during the previous Paleozoic and Cenozoic Eras were covered by gravel and sand deposited from streams originating in the Rocky Mountains. This deposit eventually formed what is now the Caprock of the modern High Plains of Texas.

Soils [8]

Soil in the South Plains is most notably characterized by well-drained sandy loams in shades of brown and red. Large amounts of lime may also be found at varying depths in this region. The soils are moderately productive but the generally flat area allows for ease in irrigation and mechanization of the area for farming purposes.

[7] Information in this section derived from the *1998-1999 Texas Almanac.* Dallas: The Dallas Morning News, 1997.
[8] Ibid.

Vegetation[9]

Levelland is part of the High Plains region, the southern portion of the Great Plains and is characterized by mostly native grasslands for those areas not actively farmed. Buffalo grass and blue grama are the dominant vegetation types on the clay and clay loam soils. Areas featuring sandy loam soil are characterized by little bluestem, western wheatgrass, Indian grass, switch grass and sand reed grass. Trees and brushy plants consist of sand shinnery oak, mesquite, yucca and sand sagebrush.

Topography[10]

The South Plains is characterized by a flat and closely level treeless plain with very few streams bringing relief to the area. Altitude for Hockley County ranges from 3,388-3,633 feet. Numerous small lakes known as Playas dot the landscape and are responsible for holding much of the runoff from rains in the region.

Playa lakes dot the Levelland landscape and provide for drainage and recreational uses.

Floodplains and Drainage Ways

The floodplains of Levelland consist of approximately 12 playa lakes scattered throughout the City. Although development within the playas is very restricted, they are situated such that they do not pose any substantial limitation to overall city development.[11] The playa lakes range in diameter from roughly 1,000 feet to 2,500 feet.[12]

Drainage is addressed through a storm water collection system of streets and a storm sewer along College Avenue. Twelve drainage areas are all served by a playa lake. The following are the flooding potentials of each of the playa lakes[13]:

Lake 1 (L.G. Griffin): possible flooding of Highway 114, city streets, residential properties
Lake 2 (13th Street and West Avenue): possible flooding of surrounding city streets and residential properties
Lake 3 (Lobo): possible flooding of surrounding city streets and residential properties

[9] Information in this section derived from the *1998-1999 Texas Almanac.* Dallas: The Dallas Morning News, 1997.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Electronic Mail communication. Rick Osburn, Assistant City Manager, Levelland , Texas. May 14, 2003.
[12] Flood Insurance Rate Map. City of Levelland, Texas; Hockley County. Effective Date: August 2, 1990.
[13] Comprehensive Plan, 1986. aPRIMER. Texas Tech University.

Lake 4 (Breshear): possible flooding of city streets, residential properties, parts of South Plains College
Lake 5 (Country Club): possible flooding of Levelland Country Club
Lake 6 (High School): possible flooding of high school property, city streets, residential properties
Lake 7 (Kaufman): possible flooding of Highway 114 (running through) and residential properties
Lake 8 (City Park): possible flooding of City Park (located within), city streets, residential properties, National Guard Armory
Lake 9 (Landfill): possible flooding of sanitary landfill
Lake 10, 11, 12 (W of Airport, E of Airport, N of Capitol Addition): little or no possible flooding currently

Aquifers

About 80 percent of Texas is above underlying aquifers. Approximately 56 percent of the water currently used in the state is derived from underground sources that occupy 9 major and 20 minor aquifers. Levelland relies partially on water from the Ogallala Aquifer. Refer to subsection 2.9 *Existing Water & Wastewater* for further information on water resources.

Endangered Species

The State Endangered/Threatened species of Wildlife, Fish, Mammals, & Reptiles for Hockley County according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife are as follows:

Birds:

- **American Peregrine Falcon** (potential migrant)
- **Arctic Peregrine Falcon** (potential migrant)
- **Bald Eagle**
- **Whooping Crane** (potential migrant)

Mammals:

- **Black-footed Ferret**

Reptiles:

- **Texas Horned Lizard**

Climate

Climate is also a factor that affects the type of developments occurring in an area. Climate of a community can either be a limiting or an encouraging factor to urban development depending on the type of industry or business. The summary of the climate in Hockley County and Levelland is as follows:

Indicator	Average	Record
Temperature	60.0	-16/110
Daily High Temperature	73.5	110
Daily Low Temperature	46.4	-16
July (Hottest Month) Highs	91.9	108
January (Coldest Month) Lows	24.6	-16
Annual Precipitation (Inches)	18.2	29.19
Snowfall (Inches)	10.2	41.2
Wind Speed	12.4	72
Prevailing Wind Direction	SSW	

Source: City of Levelland, Texas website. http://www.noaa.gov
Retrieved April, 2003.

2.3 Man-Made Features

Man-made features such as major thoroughfare routes, electrical transmission lines, special areas/corridors, the extra-territorial jurisdiction, railroad, and public facilities within the City are some factors that impact urban development patterns in a city.

Major Thoroughfare Routes

The City is oriented on a grid street system with immediate access to the highway network and industrial rail infrastructure.

Transportation routes and access points are the critical factors in determining the location and intensity of all types of development. The transportation system for Levelland may be defined by a hierarchy of roads, based on level of service. This hierarchy consists of arterials (i.e., highways, multi-lane streets) at the top, with lesser service provided by collector and residential streets. Levelland is due west of Lubbock and located in the middle of Hockley County. It is intersected by the east-west U.S. Hwy 114 (linking it directly to the Lubbock MSA and New Mexico to the west) and the north-south Hwy 385.

Streets

As in many West Texas cities, Levelland's street system is a grid system with typical block sizes of 300'x 300'. In the early 1980's, several dirt streets were paved to include curb and gutter as a result of Texas Community Development Program grants. Some new asphalt streets were constructed with new subdivision development in the mid-1980's and also included concrete curb and gutter. In the late 1980's, a $2.25 million bond issue was passed and used for street reconstruction and improvements across the City. Street maintenance has been performed annually with the City's ongoing seal coat program with a significant percentage of the total streets seal coated each year.

Levelland's grid street system has determined the overall development pattern.

A significant portion of the downtown area has recently been improved with assistance from grants made available through the Main Street Program and addressed accessibility, sidewalk and landscaping improvements.

Railroads

Railroads have historically been an important part of the transportation industry and have been responsible for generating major industrial developments along the rail lines. The reliance of the industrial sector on the railroads and the service they provide has declined over the years but these railroads can still be considered a great resource for maintaining the existing industries and for attracting future industrial development in the City. Currently, the West Texas and Lubbock Railroad running through the City of Levelland (and along U.S. Hwy 114), is carrying only a few hundred cars per year due to a lack of demand. Sufficient demand may come in to play with the recruitment of new industrial activities. Estimates made several years ago indicated that about 1,000 cars per year would make the railroad economically viable.[14] Should this occur, the following is a list of rail delivery times to various U.S. cities[15]:

[14] Personal Interview. Rick Osburn, Assistant City Manager, Levelland, Texas. April 9, 2003

[15] City of Levelland, Texas.

Destination	Days
Albuquerque	3
Boston	8
Dallas/Ft. Worth	2
El Paso	3
Houston	3
Phoenix	3
Seattle	5

Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

Extra-territorial jurisdiction can be defined as the land that an incorporated area may legally annex for the purpose of future development. The Texas State Legislature has established specific amounts of unincorporated land for possible annexation by municipalities depending upon their sizes. As a home-rule city, Levelland has an ETJ extension of one mile. Plate 2.2 *City Limits and ETJ* on the following page shows the one-mile ETJ for the City of Levelland.

Special Corridors/Areas[16]

Special corridors/areas are areas in the City with special historic, economic or locational significance that the City wishes to enhance. Levelland has several examples of these kinds of initiatives. The most well-known program is the Texas Main Street Program, of which the City has been a member since 1998. The Main Street area covers the Avenue H corridor from Highway 114 to the North to Highway 385 to the South. Coverage area expands to an eight-block width around the court house square. The Levelland Enterprise Zone was established in 1996 and will expire in 2004. It strives to provide incentives for industrial development. Levelland is now in the process of adopting the required policies and guidelines for tax abatement. A reinvestment zone for commercial tax abatement has been established in the core of the downtown and encompasses a 12 block area within the area established for the Texas Main Street Program.

The Main Street Program addresses central city areas like this downtown section of retail stores.

[16] Electronic Mail communication. Rick Osburn, Assistant City Manager, Levelland, Texas. May 9, 2003.

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2.4 Demographic Profile

As has been the case historically, the people who live and work in Levelland will be the most important resource of the community. The following discussion is intended to provide insight into the historical and existing demographic characteristics of the City. Knowledge of these characteristics can help the City plan for projected population increases and expected growth patterns.

Population

From the period of 1970-2000, Levelland has experienced a modest growth rate, netting a positive increase of 1,421 persons or roughly an 11% increase (Table 2.1). However, such a statement does not tell the complete story of population changes for the City and further examination is required. From the period 1970-1980, the population grew substantially at roughly 17%, due in large part to growth in the oil industry. However, much of this growth was then lost in the period 1990-2000 because of the economic downturn experienced in the oil industry. Though the decline of oil-related activities occurred in the mid 1980's, the growth in enrollment at South Plains College contributed to holding the population level steady, actually growing approximately 1% for the 1980-1990 period (Table 2.1).[17]

Table 2.1 Population Change
Levelland (1970-2000)

Year	Population	Percentage Change
1970	11,445	N/A
1980	13,809	17.1%
1990	13,986	1.3
2000	12,866	(8.7)

Source: U.S. Census

To better understand the population shifts of Levelland during the period 1970-2000, it is helpful to examine the experiences of other cities within the region. The most beneficial cities to examine are cities with similar populations, local economies, and proximity to the regional commercial center, Lubbock, Texas. Cities

Levelland has fared better in population retention and net growth than comparable regional cities in the last several decades.

[17] Comprehensive Plan, 1986. aPRIMER. Texas Tech University.

selected in Table 2.2 below represent the closest approximations of Levelland to be found in the region. Lubbock showed a relatively healthy growth rate for the entire period at 10.2% and should not have had any direct negative impact on regional population changes based strictly on its population figures. Removing Lubbock from the comparison, these selected cities showed an overall growth rate of roughly 2%, a number much lower than the 11% figure posted for Levelland during the same period (Table 2.2). Brownfield, the city with the most similar population levels, declined in population by 1.6% over the entire period.

Table 2.2 Population Change in Selected Cities
South Plains Region (1970-2000)

City	1970	1980	1990	2000	Net Growth
Levelland	11,445	13,809	13,986	12,866	11.0%
Abernathy	2,625	2,904	2,720	2,839	7.5
Brownfield	9,647	10,387	9,560	9,488	(1.6)
Littlefield	6,738	7,409	6,489	6,507	(3.4)
Lubbock	179,295	173,979	186,206	199,564	10.2
Slaton	6,583	6,804	6,078	6,109	(7.2)

Source: U.S. Census

Specific to Hockley County, we can see from a review of Table 2.3 that the county's net growth over the period 1970-2000 was roughly equal to that of Levelland at roughly 10%. The percentage of Hockley County's population attributable to Levelland held stable, Levelland averaging 57.5% of the County's population make-up (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3 City Population in Relationship to County
Levelland and Hockley County (1970-2000)

Year	Levelland	Hockley County	Levelland as a Percentage of County
1970	11,445	20,396	56.1%
1980	13,809	23,230	59.4
1990	13,986	24,199	57.8
2000	12,866	22,716	56.6

Source: U.S. Census

Household Structure

From an analysis of Table 2.4 below, we can better understand the make-up of households within Levelland and how they compare to those of the United States as a whole. Initially, one would

expect the U.S. as a whole, taking into account major urban areas, to reflect a much more non-traditional family household than a smaller, more family-oriented community. However, this is not the case as Levelland shows only a slightly higher propensity for a traditional family structured household. Most notably, the percentage of married couples in Levelland is just roughly 4% higher than the national average and these same couples with children of their own represent just over 2% more of the population than the U.S. as a whole. It may be concluded that the type of households in Levelland is very representative of the whole United States.

Table 2.4 Households by Type
Levelland and the United States (2000)

Relationship	Levelland	U.S.
Total Households	**100.0 %**	**100.0%**
Family households	73.5	68.1
With own children under 18 years	36.2	32.8
Married-couple family	55.9	51.7
With own children under 18 years	25.7	23.5
Female householder	13.2	12.2
With own children under 18 years	7.9	7.2
Non-family households	26.5	31.9
Householder living alone	23.2	25.8
Householder 65 years and over	11.6	9.2

Source: U.S. Census

Age and Race Composition

The age composition of the population within a city can provide insight into the types of facilities and services that may need to be provided in the future. An analysis of age composition, among other population characteristics, can ensure that the Comprehensive Plan is tailored to meet Levelland's needs in the future.

From the period 1990-2000, the median age of Levelland residents has risen nearly four years. This is attributable to slight increases in the two categories representing older residents and decreases in categories representing the younger population (Table 2.5).* Referring to Table 2.5, age distribution over the period 1990-2000 in Levelland has remained relatively the same. The largest categories are for those in their prime working years and school aged children. However, both of these categories have declined by roughly 3% over the period and some redistribution

* The exception to this is a very slight increase of .8% in the 18-24 year old bracket.

seems to have occurred in an increase in the older working force and the elderly (roughly 4% and 2% respectively). This suggests a slightly aging population, though those aged 18-24 has increased somewhat.

Table 2.5 Age Distribution, Levelland (1990, 2000)

	1990		2000	
Age Group	**Number**	**Percentage**	**Number**	**Percentage**
Young (under 5)	1,144	8.2%	917	7.1%
School Age (5-17)	3,227	23.1	2,633	20.5
Post High School (18-24)	1,851	13.2	1,807	14.0
Prime Labor Force	3,875	27.7	3,165	24.6
Older Labor Force	2,240	16.0	2,552	19.9
Elderly	1,649	11.8	1,792	13.9
Totals	13,986	100.0	12,866	100.0
Median Age		28.8		32.7

Source: U.S. Census

As the age composition is important to take into account in the planning of a community's physical needs, so is the community's ethnic composite. An understanding of this increases the chances for generally informed decisions to be made in all matters planning-related. Various ethnic groups may have certain issues that may be addressed from a planning perspective and an understanding of racial and ethnic distribution provides some basic information from which these issues may be analyzed.

The "Prime Labor Force" is the largest age demographic and high school graduates make up the largest percentage of the population.

Table 2.6 describes the racial and ethnic composition for the City of Levelland as it compares to the state as a whole. Reviewing this table, we can see that the City is very similar to the state in many regards. The State and the City have a similar percentage level of White/Caucasian. Both have a very similar percentage of Hispanics, with the state showing a roughly 7% lower figure. The most significant differentials may also be attributed to larger ethnic populations in large MSA's as the percentage of African Americans in the State is approximately double that of Levelland and an extremely low Asian population in Levelland (.4%) compared with 2.8% for the state (Table 2.6).

Table 2.6 Race and Ethnic Distribution
Levelland and Texas (2000)

	Levelland		Texas	
Race/Ethnicity	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
White/Caucasian	9,050	70.3%	14,799,505	71.0
African American	690	5.4	2,404,566	11.5
Hispanic (of any race)*	5,045	39.2	6,669,666	32.0
Asian/ Pacific Islander	51	0.4	576,753	2.8
Other	2,905	22.6	2,952,634	14.2

* Individuals may report more than one race and therefore total numbers will exceed actual population. This is particularly true for the Hispanic (of any race) category where a person may be accounted for as both White/Caucasian *and* of Hispanic origin.
Source: U.S. Census

School Enrollment

Table 2.7 shows the school enrollment for Kindergarten through 12th grade and Special Education during the last decade within the Levelland Independent School District (LISD). Enrollment over the last ten years has generally been in decline though it seems to have stabilized over the last few years. For the period 1993-2003, enrollment has declined by 950 students or 24.1%.

Table 2.7 School Enrollment
Levelland Independent School District (1993-2003)

School Year	Enrollment	Numerical Change	Percentage Change
1993	3,936		
1994	3,525	(411)	(10.4)
1995	3,477	(48)	(1.4)
1996	3,522	45	1.3
1997	3,341	(181)	(5.1)
1998	3,213	(128)	(3.8)
1999	3,077	(136)	(4.2)
2000	2,987	(90)	(2.9)
2001	2,978	(9)	(0.3)
2002	2,978	0	0.0
2003*	2,986	8	0.3

*1st semester enrollment only. All other years represent 2nd semester enrollment
Source: Levelland Independent School District

Future student enrollment predictions over the 2002-2009 period describe nominal growth or decline in student populations, depending upon the grade level of school (does not include college level). Total school enrollment is predicted to increase by 52 persons, or 1.7%, over this period.[18]

Educational Attainment[19]

From an analysis of the educational attainment levels below in Table 2.8**,** most categories are very similar in comparison. The most notable difference is in the portion of population who have achieved Bachelor's degrees. In this area, the State is nearly double in its number of Bachelor's degree recipients. This lower level may prove somewhat prohibitive in the City's ability to generate an employment base reflective of this level of education. The level of educational attainment may help to explain the lower levels of income than the state, coupled with other factors such as a lower cost of living in Levelland.[20]

Table 2.8 Educational Attainment
Levelland and Texas (2000)

Level Attained*	Levelland	Texas
Less than 9th grade	16.1%	11.5%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	16.7	12.9
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	25.4	24.8
Some college, no degree	19.9	22.4
Associate degree	7.9	5.2
Bachelor's degree	8.6	15.6
Graduate or Professional Degree	5.5	7.6
Total	100.0	100.0

***Based on persons 25 years and older
Source: U.S. Census

[18] Levelland Independent School District
[19] 1990 figures are based on U.S. Census Data & 1999 figures are based on 1999 EASI Demographics Report.
[20] U.S. Census, 2000

Income and Poverty Levels

Another important factor for retail trade and personal services is family income. In 1990, the median household income for the City of Levelland was $27,675[21], increasing slightly to $28,820 in 1999. These figures are not inflation-adjusted and may in fact reflect a decrease in the median income over this period in real dollars. Though the local median income level was slightly higher than the state's in 1990 at $27,016[22], this level diminished to fall behind the state median income in 1999 of $39,927. A closer examination of Table 2.9 following shows the percentage of households in Levelland earning below $34,999 is considerably more than the State. Perhaps most concerning is that percentage earning below $10,000/annually. As the income levels increase, the relationship becomes reversed with the percentages considerably higher for the State in higher income brackets.

Table 2.9 Household Income Levels
Levelland and Texas (1999)

Household Income	Levelland	State
Less than $10,000	13.6%	10.4%
$10,000 to $14,999	11.8	6.6
$15,000 to $24,999	16.3	13.6
$25,000 to $34,999	18.9	13.5
$35,000 to $49,999	14.3	16.5
$50,000 to $74,999	14.1	18.4
$75,000 to $99,999	7.2	9.5
$100,000 to $149,999	2.7	7.2
$150,000 to $199,999	0.4	2.1
$200,000 or more	0.6	2.2
Median Income ($)	**28,820**	**39,927**

Source: U.S. Census

A snapshot of poverty levels for Levelland and the State over the period 1990-1999 in Table 2.10 following show some similarities. In short, the relationship of the City versus the State has been inversed and now (1999) shows poverty levels for the total population of Levelland to be somewhat higher (5.2%) than the State's.

[21] U.S. Census, 1990
[22] Ibid.

Table 2.10 Persons Below Poverty Level
Levelland (1990 and 2000)

Place	1990	2000
Levelland	18.6%	20.2%
Texas	18.1%	15.0%

Employment

To gain an understanding of how employment plays a role in defining the economy of Levelland, it is useful to review several types of data (for Levelland) in comparison to the State. This data includes statistics related to employment by industry/sector and types of occupations employed by these industries.

Persons employed in agricultural or educational fields represent nearly half of the total workforce.

Employment distribution by industry is very similar in numerous industries between Levelland and the State (Table 2.11). The most significant differences are much higher levels in agricultural employment for Levelland versus the State, an understandable statistic given the high level of agricultural production, particularly cotton, for the City of Levelland versus the State whose employment relies much less heavily on agricultural-related services. South Plains College, as a major employer of Levelland citizens, increases employment percentages in education to be approximately 7% higher than the state's. The other notable categories show significantly lower levels of employment in Levelland for the construction and manufacturing industries (Table 2.11).

Table 2.11 Employment by Sector, Levelland and Texas (2000)

Type of Industry	Levelland	Texas
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	18.8	2.7
Construction	4.9	8.1
Manufacturing	3.8	11.8
Wholesale Trade	2.9	3.9
Retail Trade	10.6	12.0
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	4.6	5.8
Information	N/A	3.1
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	4.7	6.8
Professional, scientific, management, admin., waste mgmt.	4.5	9.5
Education, health and social services	26.6	19.3
Entertainment and Recreational Services	7.3	7.3
Other services (except public administration)	5.3	5.2
Public Administration	4.0	4.5

Source: U.S. Census

An occupational analysis (Table 2.12) reveals an almost equal level of significance to that of Table 2.11 employment by sector type analysis. Most of the categories are very similar in percentage levels except for considerably lower levels of management and professional-related positions in Levelland, a higher relative number of service employment and higher percentages of the "construction, extraction, maintenance occupations" category. Given the lower percentages for Levelland reported in Table 2.11 above for construction, this number may be weighted more towards extraction and maintenance-related occupations.

Table 2.12 Occupational Analysis, Levelland and Texas (2000)

Occupation	Levelland	Texas
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
Management, professional, and related	26.5	33.3
Service occupations	18.0	14.6
Sales and office occupations	24.7	27.2
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	2.2	0.7
Construction, extraction, maintenance occupations	14.9	10.9
Production, transportation, material moving occupations	13.7	13.2

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2.13 following describes changes in employment figures over a 19 year period for Hockley County. Because Levelland has the most significant impact in Hockley County, this is a useful analysis to understand changes in the economic environment in which Levelland contributes. Given the general economic climate of the late 1980's due to a severe downturn in the oil and gas industry it may be more pertinent to examine Table 2.13 for the entire period of 1980-1999 to better understand the response and experience of Hockley County to this occurrence since that time. Overall, employment has increased by 18.4% for this period. Many categories did experience significant growth like government employment at the state level, however, these sectors will not be discussed given their low levels of employment versus total persons employed. Farm employment showed moderate growth for the period at 7.7%. For private, non-farm employment, several categories showed significant changes. "Manufacturing" grew at a rate of 18.8%, "Transportation, public utilities" declined by 22.8%, "Finance, insurance, real estate" grew by 28.8% and "Services" showed phenomenal growth, increasing by 104.5% over the period. "Government, government enterprises" grew at 26.9% for the period 1980-1999, the segment having the most significant impact being "Local", was growing by 30.1% (Table 2.13).

Farming, manufacturing and professional services represent the most notable growth over the last two decades.

Table 2.13 Changes in Industrial Employment, Hockley County (1980, 1990, 1999)

Employment Category	Total Employment of Industry			% Change by Share of Industry		
	1980	1990	1999	1980-1990	1990-1999	1980-1999
Total Full and Part-Time Employment	9911	11680	11733	17.8	0.5	18.4
Wage and salary employment	7756	8734	8537	10.1	(2.3)	10.1
Proprietor's employment	2155	2946	3196	36.7	8.5	48.3
Farm proprietor's employment	733	599	792	(18.3)	32.2	8.1
Nonfarm proprietor's employment	1422	2347	2404	65.1	2.4	8.1
Farm employment	1256	960	1159	23.6	20.7	7.7
Nonfarm employment	8655	10720	10574	23.9	(1.4)	22.2
Private employment	7233	8833	8770	22.1	(.7)	21.2
Ag. Serv., forestry, fishing, other	455	412	474	(9.5)	15.0	4.2
Mining	2034	2154	1744	5.9	(19.0)	(14.3)
Construction	540	537	517	(0.5)	(1.9)	(4.3)
Manufacturing	207	167	246	(19.3)	47.3	18.8
Transportation, public utilities	419	482	372	15.0	(22.8)	(22.8)
Wholesale trade	311	389	333	25.1	(14.4)	7.1
Retail trade	1366	1517	1534	11.1	1.1	12.3
Finance, insurance, real estate	445	506	573	13.7	13.2	28.8
Services	1456	2669	2977	83.3	11.5	104.5
Government, government enterpris es	1422	1887	1804	32.7	4.4	26.9
Federal, civilian	74	71	58	(4.1)	(18.3)	(21.6)
Military	69	88	61	27.5	30.7	11.6
State and local	1279	1728	1685	35.1	(2.5)	31.7
State	32	53	63	65.6	18.9	96.9
Local	1247	1675	1622	34.3	(3.2)	30.1

Source: Regional Economic Information System. http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/cgi-local/reisbin. Retrieved April 2003.

A "snapshot" look at unemployment figures in Table 2.14 for Levelland and Hockley County, as compared with surrounding counties for May 2003, shows the second lowest unemployment numbers in the area. The lowest figures were for the decidedly more urban Lubbock County. The figures for Levelland and the county are very similar and indicate a substantially healthier employment climate than the other *rural* counties.

Table 2.14 Employment Estimates, Hockley and Adjoining Counties, (May 2003)

County	Labor Force*	Total Employment	Total Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
Bailey	3,518	3,322	196	5.6%
Cochran	1,469	1,290	179	12.2
Hale	16,489	15,540	949	5.8
Hockley	10,333	9,873	460	4.5
Lamb	6,753	6,346	407	6.0
Lubbock	133,523	129,650	3,873	2.9
Lynn	2,813	2,656	157	5.6
Terry	5,008	4,630	378	7.5
Yoakum	2,510	2,321	189	7.5
Levelland	6,030	5,774	256	4.2

*Civilian only

Source: Table recreated from the Texas Workforce Commission.

Location Quotient

Reviewing employment statistics is one of the key ways to gain a better understanding of a community's economy. To help not only understand the shape of that economy but its strength, it is necessary to use other analysis tools. Of these tools, reviewing Location Quotients (LQ) helps to identify export industries within the community. Identifying and then examining export industries for performance allows one to understand a community's ability for economic expansion and population growth. The growth of *export* industries is the only real way for a local economy to grow by bringing new money into the local economy. Figure 2.1 following defines LQ and explains how the LQ is calculated:

Figure 2.1 Determining Location Quotient

A location quotient compares the amount of employment in an industry within a region to the amount of employment in that industry in the nation as a whole. If an industry in a region employs a greater ratio of people in the region than does the nation as a whole then it is presumed that the industry in that region must be exporting its product.

If the ratio is greater than 1 it is an export industry
If the ratio is equal to 1 the region is self-sufficient
If the ratio is less than 1 the region is importing

Example: $LQ = \frac{\text{\% of local employment in industry i}}{\text{\% of national employment in industry i}}$

or

$LQ = \frac{\text{Local employment in industry i / total local employment}}{\text{National employment in industry i/total national employment}}$

Table 2.15 examines five of the largest employers in the City and produces. The Agricultural category (which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining) produces an extremely high LQ of 9.93. This is evidence of a local economy producing very high levels of exported products and services in this category. Education, Health and Social Services proves to be an export industry also with an LQ of 1.32. This is most likely due to a major community college, South Plains College, operating within a smaller community. Of the three remaining industries, Retail, and Arts and Entertainment are very close to a self-sufficient level and a possible move into qualifying as an export industry. Construction, at an LQ of 0.72 is relatively close to this status as well. It should be noted in this analysis that particular industries within some of these more broad industrial categories may produce various levels of location quotients.

Agriculture is the strongest export industry and is most capable of generating new revenues and basic jobs.

Maintaining and/or increasing the presence of these industries as well as a diversification of the economy in general may prove critical to economic success and will be examined later in the Comprehensive Plan.

Table 2.15 Export Industry Analysis, Levelland (2000)

Industry	Location Quotient	Jobs
Educational, health, social services	1.32	1,422
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	9.93	1,005
Retail	0.89	566
Arts, entertainment, recreation	0.92	390
Construction	0.72	264

Source: U.S. Census

Employment Multipliers

An employment multiplier is a tool used after a LQ analysis is performed and export industries are determined. An employment multiplier is a measure of an export *or basic* job's ability to produce non-basic jobs for the community. For example, an export industry with a 1.5 employment multiplier means that for every one job in that export industry, 1.5 indirect (non-basic) jobs are created. For Levelland, under the analysis applied above, the "agricultural, forestry, fishing" sector has an approximate employment multiplier of 1.29, producing 1.29 indirect jobs for every one local job in the industry. For Education, Health and Social Services, this export industry is assigned an employment multiplier of 1.32, indicating an ability to produce indirect jobs at relatively the same strength as the agricultural category.[23]

2.5 Existing Land Use

Providing for the orderly and efficient use of land should be a major planning consideration in Levelland. In order to more accurately assess the City's future land use needs, an analysis of present land use patterns is very important. The patterns of land use found in Levelland have evolved to satisfy the requirements of the community as it grew. The activities of the residents of a city create a need for residential, retail, commercial, recreational, office and industrial areas, as well as an efficient thoroughfare system. The conversion process and how it occurs will be very important to the City because it is one of the factors that will determine the community's future urban form. It will not only have an impact upon how Levelland develops economically, but the existing and future land uses that will shape the character and livability of the community for years to come. These relationships will be reflected in the provision of services and facilities

[23] 1995 IMPLAN State Data Package for Texas (Average taken for Economic Multiplier among specific industries for each category). MIG Inc., Minneapolis, MN.

throughout the community. An orderly and compact land use arrangement will best serve the needs of the community.

In order to analyze the land use trends within Levelland, a field survey was conducted during the preparation of this Plan. Using accepted survey methodologies and land use categories, a comparison of existing land uses can be made. Table 2.16 shows the existing land use composition for Levelland in 2003. Plate 2.3 *Existing Land Use* shows a general representation of the existing land use pattern in Levelland as of Spring 2003.

Land Use Survey Methodology

In Spring 2003, a parcel-by-parcel land use survey was conducted by automobile for all areas within the existing city limits. Table 2.16 shows the results of the 2003 land use survey for the entire City. Each parcel was color-coded and documented according to the following categories:

Residential Uses

Single-Family Residences - One-family dwellings and related accessory buildings.

Two-Family Residences – Duplex/town home dwellings and related accessory buildings.

Multiple-Family Residences - Apartments, rooming houses & related buildings.

Manufactured Homes - A manufactured home located on a lot or parcel and used as a dwelling.

Public, Semi-Public and Related Uses
Schools, Churches, Cemeteries, Utilities and Public Buildings.

Parks and Open Spaces
Parks, Playgrounds and Public Open Space.

Office Uses
Professional/Administration, doctors, dentists, real estate, architects, accountants, secretarial service, offices, etc.

Retail Uses

Retail stores, shops and personal service establishments, shopping centers, service stations and any associated off-street parking facilities.

Commercial Uses

Commercial amusements, building materials yards, automobile garages and sales lots, automobile body repair, warehouses, telecommunications/broadcasting towers and facilities, wholesale establishments, sale of used merchandise and welding shops.

Industrial Uses

Light Industry - Light processing, storage, light fabrication, assembly and repairing.

Streets and Alleys

Land dedicated to public use for street and alley rights-of-way whether open or closed to use.

Vacant and Agricultural Uses

Vacant Land having no apparent use or land used for agricultural purposes (ranching or farming).

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Existing Land Use Analysis

Of the developed land area in 2003, (excluding roadways) single-family residential land uses comprise the greatest percentage of land use. It is expected that the composition of land uses in Levelland will remain constant for the foreseeable future.

By calculating the amount of acreage consumed for various land uses and comparing it to population, insight can be gained into future land use demand. Assumptions can be made regarding the future consumption of land use based upon these relationships, balanced with the community's own desired goals and objectives.

The 1986 Comprehensive Plan by aPrimer (Texas Tech University) did not measure actual land use (rather acreage based strictly on zoning districts) and therefore measured land use changes over the period 1986-2003 are not possible. However, the 1970 Comprehensive Plan does calculate actual percentages of occupied land and this data is presented and compared with the 2003 findings in Table 2.16 below. Table 2.16 presents total developed land use acreage, percentage of that developed land occupied by various land uses and land use related to population by acres per 100 persons. Ratios of developed land use acreage/100 persons based on various land use types are difficult to recommend or comment on given the unique needs of each community. From looking at the data presented in Table 2.16, major land use categories (i.e. single-family residential, public/semi-public, parkland) have not changed substantially and will most likely remain virtually the same for the foreseeable future. Commercial and industrial categories differ greatly over the 1970-2003 period but this difference may be largely attributable to differing land use definitions rather than actual land use changes. Most likely, land considered to be commercial in the 2003 survey may have been categorized as light industrial in the 1970 survey.[24] Such a difference in definition would explain the differences in the industrial and commercial categories. Actual changes in land use for these two categories are probably minor.

Single family residential units comprise the largest land use category in the City. Land usage is similar for comparable cities.

24 The 1970 plan categorizes 159.5 acres as Light Industrial versus a possible classification of Commercial in the 2003 survey.

Table 2.16 Land Use Acreage, Levelland (1970, 2003)

	1970[1]			2003[2]		
LAND USE CATEGORY *	**Acreage**	**% of Dev. Land**	**Acres per 100 persons**	**Acreage**	**% of Dev. Land**	**Acres per 100 persons****
Single-Family	678.5	34.2%	5.3	925	29.6%	7.2
Duplex				3	0.1	.02
Multi-Family***	7.0	0.3	0.1	43	1.4	0.3
Manufactured Homes				77	2.5	0.6
Public and Semi-Public	300.6	15.2	2.2	494	15.8	3.8
Parks and Open Space	84.0	4.2	0.7	147	4.7	1.1
Office				36	1.2	0.3
Retail				70	2.2	0.5
Commercial	77.7	3.9	0.6	375	12.0	2.9
Industrial	181.6	9.1	1.4	6	0.2	.05
Rights-of-Way				946	30.2	7.4
Total Developed Land Within the City Limits	1,984.3	100.0	15.3	3128	100.0	24.3
Vacant/Agricultural	853.7		6.5	3252		25.3
TOTAL LAND WITHIN CITY LIMITS	2,838.0		21.8	6380		49.6

*Office and Retail are accounted for as Commercial in the 1970 Comprehensive Plan, other areas left blank were not specified in the 1970 Comprehensive Plan

**Based on 2000 U.S. Census population figure of 12,866

***This figure includes Duplex numbers for 1970.

Source: [1] Nathan L. Kiser Consulting Planners and Parkhill, Smith, & Cooper, Inc., City of Levelland 1970 Comprehensive Plan.

[2] Dunkin, Sefko and Associates, Inc. Land Use Survey, 2003.

Table 2.17 following offers land use ratios for Texas communities with either regional proximity (Midland, Amarillo, San Angelo) or similar socioeconomic characteristics (Lufkin, Mount Pleasant) and an average from selected communities with populations under 100,000 from across

the U.S. For regional cities, Levelland's land use in general is very similar. Significant differences may be seen for retail usage, with higher levels for Midland and Amarillo, an easily explainable statistic given Levelland's proximity to retail amenities in Lubbock. Midland has a substantially greater area of single family housing. San Angelo has a significantly greater ratio of persons to Parks/Open Space areas though that ratio is substantially less for San Angelo when comparing Public and Semi-Public usage to Levelland. For smaller Texas cities and the average overall, land usage in Levelland is again very similar. The most outstanding differences may be seen for single family land use in Mt. Pleasant and in the national average, where these two categories report a roughly 20% higher acreage usage. Mt. Pleasant reports a much higher level of Parks/Open Space area, though Levelland's percentage of developed land in this category is highly similar to the national average. Though public and semi-public usage for Levelland is roughly in between such usage for Lufkin and Mt. Pleasant, it is less than half of the national average for small cities. Finally, Levelland has less developed industrial land and significantly more right-of-way area when compared to the national average and these smaller Texas communities (Table 2.17).

Table 2.17 Land Use Acreage, Regional and/or Similar Texas Communities

	Amarillo		Midland		San Angelo	
Land Use Category*	% of Dev. Land	Acres/100 persons	% of Dev. Land	Acres/100 persons	% of Dev. Land	Acres/100 persons
Single Family	29.8	5.7	51.3	5.5	26.1	7.1
Two Family	1.2	0.2	1.9	0.2		
Multi Family	1.7	0.3	3.9	0.4	1.4	0.4
Man. Homes	1.1	0.2	2.0	0.2	0.1	0.0
Parks/Open Space					14.9	4.0
Public/Semi-Public	19.2	3.7	22.5	2.4	10.5	2.8
Office	0.8	0.2	2.4	0.3	0.6	0.2
Retail	9.8	1.9	5.5	0.6	2.8	0.7
Commercial			8.3	0.9	3.2	0.8
Industrial	3.8	0.8	1.5	0.2	3.5	0.9
Rights-of-Way	32.5	4.3	50.7	5.4	25.1	6.6
	Lufkin		**Mt. Pleasant**		**Average**[2]	
Land Use Category	% of Dev. Land	Acres/100 persons	% of Dev. Land	Acres/100 persons	% of Dev. Land	
Single Family	27.3	5.4	48.1	10.6	48.0**	
Two Family	0.2	0.0	0.5	0.7		
Multi Family	1.0	0.2	3.1	0.0		
Man. Homes	0.7	0.1	0.7	0.0		
Parks/Open Space	4.0	0.8	12.9	2.8	4.0	
Public/Semi-Public	6.6	1.3	17.3	6.2	36.0	
Office	1.2	0.2	1.2	0.3		
Retail	2.4	0.5	1.5	1.1		
Commercial	6.1	1.2	10.7	2.4	7.0	
Industrial	1.0	0.2	1.6	0.4	8.0	
Rights-of-Way	10.1	2.0	21.9	7.8	19.0	

* Categories left blank represent data uncollected or data accounted for in another category. For example, "Office" may be accounted for as "Commercial" depending upon data collection methodology for the represented city or "Average" category.

** Accounts for all residential uses, including Single Family.

Sources:

Data for Midland, San Angelo, Lufkin furnished from past studies by Dunkin, Sefko & Associates.

City of Amarillo Planning Department.

[2] Longhini, G. and Sutton, M. "Land-Use Ratios". *APA: Planning Advisory Service Memo*, May 1983, Table 1. Percentage of Land Uses For Selected U.S. Small Cities and Towns.

Existing Housing Conditions

Quality of housing and the appreciation of housing values are very important planning considerations. Among the factors influencing the desirability of Levelland as a place to live, and affecting the potential for future development of various portions of the City and surrounding area, is the condition of existing housing and the quality of the residential neighborhoods they form. The community has an interest in the ability to attract new industry/businesses and new residents, as well as provide adequate habitation for its residents.

The quality of housing in Levelland is an important consideration in the evaluation of the adequacy of the existing housing stock, and in estimating future housing requirements. Condition and age are two of the physical characteristics of the housing supply, which reflect the present quality of housing. Tenure, length of residence, persons per household, and affordability are other features which indicate the general status of the housing supply, and are also factors to be considered in the evaluation and analysis of the City's housing requirements. The condition of housing within an area also influences the attractiveness of investment in new or remodeled dwelling units. Normally, residents of a neighborhood area, which consists of well maintained, sound housing units with school facilities within a reasonable distance, convenient parks and open space, adequate streets and good sanitation and drainage, and other features that make up a sound neighborhood, will reflect minimum health, economic and social problems. In contrast, a blighted or partially blighted area, where many of the above listed elements are either nonexistent or poorly provided, will likely present a greater number of problems to the community and the residents.

Analysis of residential neighborhood area assists in defining any existing problems or deficiencies that are related to the physical features found within the surrounding environment. It further provides a basis for determining proper directive measures required for bringing specific areas into acceptable community standards. For sound neighborhood areas it is appropriate to establish the goals or standards which will emphasize continuation of existing characteristics contributing to the present desirable physical condition. The following sections outline the various characteristics of Levelland's housing supply.

Trends in Housing Supply

Examining Table 2.18 following, the total number of dwelling units in the City has decreased by roughly 9% over the period 1990-2000 while persons per household has decreased slightly.

Table 2.18 Total Number of Dwelling Units

Levelland (1990-2000)

Year	Total Number of Dwelling Units	Persons Per Household
1990	5,286	2.89
2000	5,186	2.68

Source: U.S. Census

From Table 2.19 below, several conclusions may be drawn. The percentage of Single-Family has decreased by roughly 12% while multi-family housing (as a percentage of total housing) has increased by roughly 3%. The most obvious reason for this shift is the creation of South Plains College and the need for multi-family housing for students. Given data presented in the 1986 Comprehensive Plan, it is unclear how manufactured housing has changed over the period 1986-2003.

Table 2.19 Housing Type, Levelland (1986,2003)

Housing Type	1986*		2003	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Single-Family	3,719	91.4	4,122	79.4
Duplex**			20	0.4
Multi-Family	348	8.6	594	11.4
Manufactured Homes	____	____	457	8.8
TOTAL	**4,067**	**100.00**	**5,193**	**100.00**

Source: aPrimer, Texas Tech University, City of Levelland 1986 Comprehensive Plan.
**Duplex count included in Multi-Family Category for 1986 numbers.
Source: Dunkin Sefko & Associates, Inc Land Use Survey, 2003

Residency

The length of time people tend to reside within a community, to a certain degree, influences the city structure's physical condition. It can be reasonably assumed that the occupancy of a structure by a particular family unit over a long period of time would be a deterring factor in any decline of the structure's condition, as compared to several families occupying a structure during the same or a shorter period of time. Also, a renter or owner-type of occupancy will likely be

reflected by the level and quality of maintenance and upkeep that is given to a residential structure. According to the U.S. Census, Levelland's owner-and renter-occupancy rates were comparable with other cities in the area for the year 2000. A high owner-occupancy can be considered an asset when planning for Levelland's future. The percentage of renter versus owner-occupied dwellings in Levelland, compared to other selected cities, is shown in Table 2.20. The percentage of owner-occupied units in Levelland is higher than the State average with the obvious percentage of renter-occupied units in Levelland being below the State's 36.2% level.

Table 2.20 Renter versus Owner-Occupied Units
Levelland, Area Cities and Texas (2000)

City	Owner-Occupied	Percentage	Renter-Occupied	Percentage
Levelland	**3,270**	**71.5%**	**1,304**	**28.5%**
Abernathy	724	72.7	272	27.3
Brownfield	2,242	70.6	934	29.4
Littlefield	1,771	74.1	619	25.9
Slaton	1,546	68.6	707	31.4
Texas	4,716,959	63.8	2,676,395	36.2

Housing Value and Rental Rates

Housing values and rental rates often determine the ability of a family to obtain adequate shelter, since the expendable amount for this income is generally closely related to total family income. The usual guide for the amount of money to be spent on shelter is about 30 percent or less of a family unit's gross total income. Table 2.21 shows the housing value for occupied dwelling units in Levelland for 1990 and 2000. Most of Levelland's occupied dwelling units continue to be in the less than $50,000 range, followed by the $50,000-$99,999 range during the last decade.

Levelland's housing stock is largely owner-occupied, affordable and in good to fair condition.

Table 2.21 Housing Value of Owner-Occupied Units
Levelland (1990, 2000)

Housing Value	1990		2000	
	Number	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Less than $50,000	1,716	59.6%	1,461	49.4%
$50,000 to $99,999	1,012	35.2	1,219	41.2
$100,000 to $149,999	112	3.9	204	6.9
$150,000 to $199,000	28	0.9	41	1.4
$200,000 to $299,999	10	0.4	22	0.7
$300,000 or more	0	0	11	0.4
TOTAL	**2,878**	**100.0**	**2,958**	**100.0**
Median Value	***$42,300***		***$50,600***	

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2.22 describes the monthly contract rent for renter-occupied dwelling units in Levelland in 1990 and 2000. If the median rental rate value is accepted as the amount which is required to obtain adequate shelter, and if it is assumed that 30 percent of the family income is expended for this purpose, Levelland is in no foreseeable risk for failing to provide adequate affordable housing. Median income in Levelland for the year 2000 was $28,820[25], this figure translates to require no greater than a Median Contract Rent of $720 be required to meet the affordable housing definition. Because Median Contract Rent in 2000 was $428, Levelland is at no risk for exceeding affordable rental demand.

[25] U.S. Census, 2000

Table 2.22 Contract Rent, Levelland (2000)

Rental Rates	1990		2000*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than $250	622	52.1%	100	7.9
$250 to $499	540	45.3	699	55.0
$500 to $749	31	2.6	267	21.0
$750,000 to $999	0	0	56	4.4
$1,000 or more	0	0	11	0.9
TOTAL	**1,193**	**100.0**	**1,272**	**100.0**
Median Contract Rent	***$245***		***$428***	

*First two categories are "Less than $200" and "$200-499" for yr 2000 per 2000 U.S. Census survey methodology.
Source: U.S. Census

2000 Housing Inventory

A housing inventory was also conducted for the purpose of determining the physical condition of housing and identifying any blighted areas. Each block was classified according to visible exterior physical conditions. Four categories of condition were used, as described below:

Type 1: ***Good and sound condition***

Structures placed in this category were either new or older housing units being maintained and in sound physical condition.

Type 2: ***Housing in need of minor repair***

These structures included those needing minor maintenance which could be performed by the occupant, and generally included painting of trim or exterior surfaces, replacement of small trim areas, or other similar minor repairs.

Type 3: ***Housing in need of major repairs***

Structures placed in this category were those needing repairs which would not normally be performed as annual maintenance by the occupant. Generally, the structures placed in this category were in various stages of deterioration and showed signs of sagging roofs, missing shingles and similar major repairs.

Data obtained from the field survey provides a basis for evaluating existing housing conditions and any factors influencing blight. Analysis of existing conditions serves to guide the measures

needed to either preserve or physically upgrade the overall housing inventory, if necessary. The results of the field survey are shown in Table 2.23 below. Almost half of the City's housing is in sound condition, a third of housing requiring minor repair and roughly 20% needing major repair.

Table 2.23 Housing Conditions
Levelland (2003)

Structure Type*	Percentage
Type 1	47.1
Type 2	33.2
Type 3	19.6
TOTAL	**100.0**

Source: Dunkin, Sefko & Associates
2003 Land Use Survey.

Plate 2.4 *Existing Housing Conditions* shows the various conditions of housing by the above types. Areas prescribed various conditions reflect an *average* of the homes in the area and is not reflective of housing types on an individual basis.

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2.7 Existing Plans & Ordinances

Existing Plans

The last Comprehensive Plan update was completed in June 1986 by aPrimer of the Applied Planning Research Institute of Municipalities, Environments and Regions; Texas Tech University. Using the input of all community members, the Plan identified the priorities and objectives for planned growth and economic development. To meet these objectives, the Plan provided policies, plans and strategies that address all aspects of development and planning for the City.[26]

Existing Zoning Ordinance

The City of Levelland's current zoning ordinance was adopted in 1981. The purpose of this zoning ordinance incorporated numerous goals to include:

- Promote health, safety and general welfare
- Promote stability of existing land uses and be in keeping with the comprehensive plan
- Promote safe and effective traffic circulation
- Promote and protect the aesthetic quality of the city
- Adequate protection for community investments
- To divide the city into zoning districts to provide for the elimination of nonconforming uses of land, buildings and structures

2.8 Existing Public Facilities

The type of public facilities and services available to the residents of the City is an important factor influencing the desirability of Levelland as a place to live. The availability of public facilities in a community also affects the potential for future development of various portions of the City and surrounding area. The community has an interest in providing public facilities and services that may be desired by the residents because it not only helps in maintaining the current population but also attracts new residents to the community, which may in turn lead to improving the quality of life for old and new residents alike.

26 Comprehensive Plan. June 1986. aPrimer, Texas Tech University.

A municipality usually provides public facilities and services in a community. These public facilities include administrative and municipal services such as City Hall, Public Works Department and service centers, animal control facility, police and fire protection, library, community centers, parks and other recreational facilities such as swimming pools etc. Presently, the City of Levelland provides its residents with the following facilities:

Animal Control Center

The City's animal shelter is currently located at 2000 South Alamo Road, is 846 square feet and employs two animal wardens (employed by the police department).

City Hall

The present City Hall is located at 1709 Avenue H; Levelland, Texas and is 11,000 square feet in size. The services housed within City Hall are as follows:

- City Management
- City Secretary
- Administrative support
- Main Street Program
- Water/Wastewater administration
- Finance
- Inspection/ Code Enforcement
- Municipal Court

Levelland City Hall

Civic Center

The civic center is located at 1900 McKinley, is 11,970 square feet in size and houses the Parks Department. The Parks Department employs 3.5 full time personnel and 13 summer-only employees.

Levelland Civic Center

Fire Station

The fire station is located at 504 Avenue F, 5,296 square feet in size, and employs 7 full time firefighters along with 25 authorized volunteer firefighter positions. There has been some informal talk regarding the creation of a substation.

Police Facility

The police department is located at 1320 Avenue H, is housed together with the County Jail and is 3,578 square feet in size. There are 28 permanent full time positions including 15 uniformed officers. In addition to full time positions, there are 8 crosswalk guards and 19 authorized police reserves (volunteers).

Other Facilities

Other facilities are as follows:

- Activities Building, 1800 Lee Street
- Park Maintenance Building, 1820 Houston Street
- Pool and Bathhouse, 1820 Wilson Street, 14 part-time employees
- Wastewater Lab, 2000 Alamo Road
- Airport Terminal, Hangers, 4/10 mile South Highway 385
- Cemetery Office/ Maintenance Shop, 1400 15th Street, 3.5 full time/1.5 part time employees
- Water/Wastewater Office and Maintenance, 215 Hickory Street; 10 full time employees (7 Water, 3 Wastewater)
- Street & Sanitation Offices/Vehicle Maintenance Shop, 302 Avenue G; 9 full time employees (7 Street, 1 Service Center, 1 Sanitation)
- Senior Center, owned and operated at the county level
- Library, owned and operated at the county level
- Service Center, 302 Avenue G, 5,000 square feet, 1 full time employee

2.9 Existing Water and Wastewater System[27]

General

Levelland is a member city of the Canadian River Municipal Water Authority (CRMWA) and thereby receives most of its drinking water supply from that system. A mixture of surface water from Lake Meredith and groundwater from the authority's well field in Roberts County is treated at the City of Lubbock water treatment plant prior to delivery to the City of Levelland's Hickory Street Pump Station.

The City of Levelland uses its own groundwater wells to meet peak demand requirements, with most of the production historically from the wells in the vicinity of the municipal park on the west side of town. Declining production rates and recent quality problems with some of these wells has led to their diminished use. In addition, the City's airport well field is available, but concerns with iron and manganese in the water and the resulting discoloration of the produced water have also diminished their use.

Levelland's main source of drinking water is the Canadian River Municipal Water Authority, the remainder comes from a combination of surface and groundwater.

Water Distribution

Most of the recent improvements to the water distribution system were done in conjunction with the City's growth in the mid-1980's and were concentrated in the east and northeast part of town – Ridgecrest Addition, Bartlett Subdivision, Hickory Square Subdivision – in the vicinity of the high school and Industrial Park area. These improvements consisted mostly of providing oversized lines around the City for adequate delivery of future water supply to these areas.

Certain of the City's elevated storage tanks have undergone repair and maintenance, including new coating systems and other improvements necessary to meet the current requirements of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). These improvements have been made to both the Adams Street and 4th Street elevated storage tanks. In addition, the interior coating system of the Lee Street elevated storage tank was recently redone in association with the detection of perchlorate in the tank in 2002.

An emergency generator was installed at the City's main pump station, the Hickory Street Pump Station, in 1996 in order to provide backup power in the event of a power outage. The diesel-fueled unit is automatically activated should such an outage occur, and supplies power to not

[27] All information for this section from Parkhill, Smith & Cooper, Inc. 2003.

only the pump station but also a groundwater well on the pump station site so that at least some water production capability is available at all times.

Wastewater is treated through a lagoon system and used for irrigation in city-owned farmland. Wastewater collection improvements were made in the mid 1980's.

Wastewater Collection

As with the water distribution system, most of the wastewater collection system improvements were done in conjunction with the City's growth in the mid-1980's to provide adequately sized lines for future growth and loading. Several of the City's wastewater lift stations, however, have been upgraded and/or replaced in recent years, including the Kaufman and McDonald lift stations. These stations were a source of ongoing maintenance problems due to their age and deteriorated condition, and have been replaced with new submersible pump stations.

Wastewater Treatment

The City's wastewater treatment plant consists of a three-cell aerated lagoon system followed by an irrigation holding pond. Treated effluent is used for irrigation of City-owned farmland adjacent to the plant east of the City. In 1986, the aeration system was replaced with a more efficient system in an effort to improve treated water quality and reduce odors from the facility.

Drainage

Drainage of storm water runoff and nuisance water is accomplished through conveyance by City streets to the numerous playa lakes in the area. The most recent study of the City-wide drainage system was done in the mid-1980's and relied exclusively upon contour maps as prepared by the USGS, with additional but limited survey data for a few of the playa lakes. In that study, which also included a general assessment of the condition of all City streets, high water elevations and contributing drainage areas were delineated for the playa lakes within and adjacent to the City.

A new storm sewer system was installed by the Texas Department of Transportation along with the reconstruction of Avenue H and Houston streets in the late 1980's, with the collected storm water conveyed to Lobo Lake.

In order to effectively reduce the lake levels in Lobo and Breshear Park Lakes after significant rainfall events, a project was completed in 2000 that consisted of a storm water pump station at both lakes. A pipeline conveys the water southeast of town to a playa lake in the vicinity of the wastewater treatment plant and old municipal landfill. The purpose of the system is not to

prevent flooding but to reduce the volume of the lakes within a reasonable time after the rainfall event in order to reduce the impact of a subsequent storm.