



Photo credit: Lance Winter,
Weatherford Star-Telegram

10. QUALITY OF LIFE

CHAPTER 10: QUALITY OF LIFE ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION TO QUALITY OF LIFE

People and businesses choose to locate in cities because of the value they provide. Some of that value is based on proximity – a business may want to be close to its suppliers or its customers, a family may want to be close to relatives or friends. A community’s identity, assets and amenities may appeal to residents and businesses. These assets and amenities may be provided by the private sector (for example, a major regional employment center), by non-profits (for example, museums, theaters or hospitals), or by the public sector (for example, parks and sports complexes). In addition to the infrastructure of buildings, streets, utilities, parks and open spaces and public safety, an additional critical aspect of the value provided by a city is the quality of life. While these functions are not critical to the growth of a city, they play a vital role in creating the quality of life residents desire and the business environment a company seeks.

This Element of the General Plan includes libraries, educational facilities and other functions. Some of these are operated and funded by the City of Weatherford and some are funded and under the control of entities separate from the City. As Weatherford plans for its future, it must ensure that the City can provide an adequate level of service to meet the

basic needs in these areas, as well as coordinate with those other entities to maintain the quality of life residents and businesses desire.

This Element of the General Plan provides direction for construction, maintenance and operation of Weatherford’s quality of life services consistent with the Plan’s Guiding Principles. The Element summarizes the growth plans of these quality of life functions as adopted by their respective boards and organizations. Those detailed plans are found in master plans for each of individual organizations. They are referenced in this chapter and should be reviewed for more specific information.

LIBRARY

CURRENT AS OF JANUARY 2018

A number of national studies have explored the value of public libraries to the community. Annual surveys by the Pew Research Center have consistently shown that the majority of Americans believe the library is valuable to their community. A June 2017 article from this survey data found “Millennials are the most likely generation of Americans to use public libraries.” A 2017 study by The Bureau of Business Research at the IC² Institute of the University of Texas at Austin found that, statewide, libraries provide a return on investment (ROI) of



roughly \$4.50 per dollar of investment in library activities. The library helps develop an empowered workforce and serves as an incubator for small businesses, building the human infrastructure needed to support a robust economy. A strong public library adds to the quality of life which increases the attractiveness for business and contributes to economic

development. In 2007, the Urban Library Council produced a report titled “Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development.” For further information on the economic benefits a library provides to a community:

http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2016/09/PI_2016.09.09_Libraries-2016_FINAL.pdf
<https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/45600/bbr-2017-texas-public-libraries.pdf>
<http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/46006/1001075-Making-Cities-Stronger.PDF>

OVERVIEW

The Weatherford Public Library promotes literacy throughout the community, providing support for formal educational activities and offering opportunities for lifelong learning. The library also serves as a resource for those seeking jobs or making career changes. The Weatherford Public Library has always been heavily supported by local citizens, clubs, organizations, leaders and businesses. Weatherford Public Library’s legal service population, as defined by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, includes a large percentage of the population of Parker County. Weatherford Public Library operates a regional consortium of libraries known as the Parker County Library Association to share

resources, primarily through a weekly courier service. The library also participates in several other regional and statewide resource-sharing initiatives. Given the long history of cooperation between the City of Weatherford and Parker County in the operation of the library, continued provision of services to all County residents is desired. County growth is predicted to outstrip even City growth, and therefore an increasing burden will be put on library resources.

POLICY DIRECTION FOR THE LIBRARY

The Weatherford Public Library Public Services Policy manual was last revised in early 2016 and was reviewed and approved by the Weatherford Public Library Board, the City’s Chief Financial Officer, and the City Manager. It establishes a



mission for the Library and defines the Library's role in the community. The mission statement is: "The Weatherford Public Library promotes free lifelong literacy, learning, and enjoyment of reading in Weatherford and Parker County."

The Library's role should be:

- 1) To assemble, preserve, organize and administer educational and recreational materials in various formats.
- 2) To serve the community as a center of reliable information.
- 3) To bring people and resources together.
- 4) To provide physical space for meetings and study.
- 5) To support the educational, civic, and cultural activities of groups and organizations.
- 6) To preserve those documents and audiovisual recordings which chronicle the life, history and culture of the citizens of Parker County.
- 7) To provide Internet access and services.
- 8) To provide access to current information technology.
- 9) To extend library services into the community.
- 10) To provide educational and cultural events.

In addition to describing the Library's operating policies, it also discusses the philosophy behind Weatherford Public Library's policies.

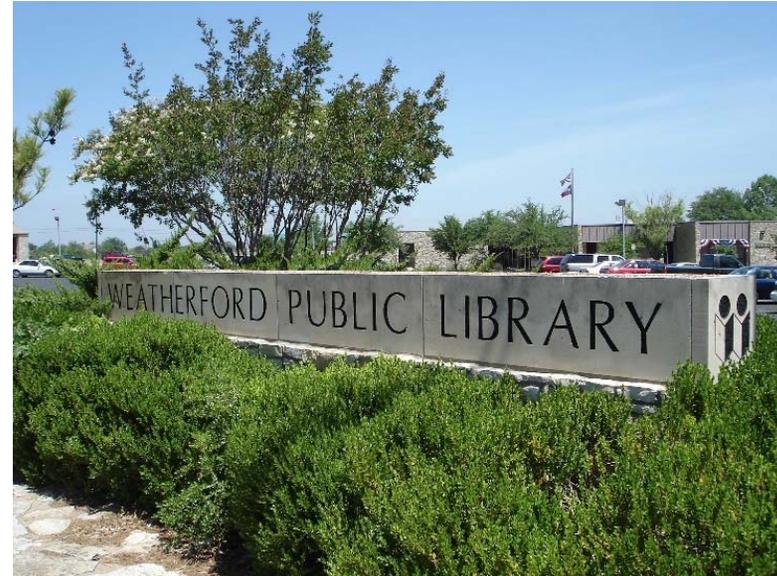


This manual is available at <http://ci.weatherford.tx.us/DocumentCenter/View/13161> In

HISTORY

Public library service in Weatherford began in 1959 when Weatherford College dedicated space on the second floor of its library building to the Weatherford Children’s Library, operated by the Friends of the Weatherford Library. The City of Weatherford and Parker County began paying staff salaries in 1960, and in 1964 the name was changed to the Parker County Youth Library, to emphasize that services were available to all County children. In 1966, the City of Weatherford assumed the lead role, establishing the Weatherford Public Library by City ordinance. The City took over the entire library building when Weatherford College moved into its new campus in 1969. In 1975, construction began on a new 7,200 square foot library building on Charles Street, at the western edge of the City limits, on land donated by James and Dorothy Doss. Major funding for the building came from the Doss and Goss families, and also through Civic Development, Inc. Mary Martin and U.S. Representative Jim Wright were on hand to dedicate the new building in June of 1976. In 1991, the building was expanded to its current 17,000 square feet with funding provided by a Garden Gala in 1986 and a 1990 bond election.

Weatherford Public Library is located within a 15-minute drive for the majority of the area’s residents. Located in a “Suburban Living” place type on a major thoroughfare (Bowie



Dr.), the library is within walking distance of three schools (Hall Middle School, Wright Elementary, and Curtis Elementary) and is directly across Charles Street from the City’s tennis courts and Little League baseball fields. With recent annexations, its location has moved from the far western edge of the City closer to the center of development.

The library serves as the primary local history repository for Weatherford and Parker County. The genealogy collection has been expanded over the years since the move to Charles Street, and has now gone digital with Preserving and Expanding Access to Local Culture and History (PEACH). PEACH makes digital versions of local history documents,

photographs, and audio recordings available online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Available library statistics go back to 1974, and usage of library services has grown steadily since then. In 1976, the library checked out approximately 55,000 items. Four decades later in FY2016, the library checked out over 347,000 items, welcomed over 136,000 visitors, and had over 25,000 registered borrowers.



LIBRARY BOARD AND SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

LIBRARY BOARD

The City Council appoints members to the Weatherford Public Library Board. There are five voting members on the board, with two additional non-voting members from Parker County residents outside the City limits.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Friends of the Weatherford Public Library, Inc. (the “Friends”) formed in April of 1960, was formally constituted on April 8, 1977 as an unincorporated organization, and attained status as a nonprofit Texas corporation on April 6, 1990. Friends members contribute volunteer time directly assisting with library activities, and raise funds to contribute toward library collections and services. The Friends currently have over 150 members.

LIBRARY FOUNDATION

The Weatherford Library Foundation, Inc. was founded as a nonprofit Texas corporation on December 28, 1984 for the purpose of “raising funds for the library in Weatherford.” Its formation was mainly to solicit donations toward expanding the original library building on the current site, which was accomplished in 1991, and to start an endowment for future library needs.

EXISTING FACILITIES

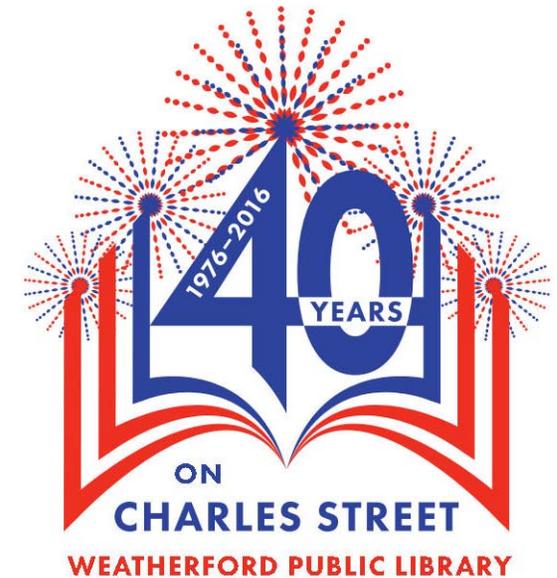
The library building sits on an 8.66 acre tract of land that was donated to the City in 1974 by James and Dorothy Doss with the condition that it be “used for a library, fine arts center and other educational and recreational purposes.” Completed in 1976, the Library needs new investment if it is to continue meeting the demands of Weatherford’s residents and businesses.

The library’s electrical, interior lighting, plumbing, and network systems need updating. The HVAC equipment has been replaced within the last ten years. There is a need for functional seating areas and additional meeting spaces for all group sizes. In comparison with libraries in eight other comparable Texas communities (Burleson, Cleburne, Denison, Cooke County, Greenville, Texarkana, Waxahachie

and Huntsville), the library’s square footage is ranked below median at sixth.

The physical appearance of the library is dated and worn. The carpeting needs replacing and interior walls need repainting. The exterior stone façade needs power-washing and some stones may need to be replaced. The entrance to the library will probably need to be relocated or remodeled in any major expansion.

Most library furniture has not been replaced since the 1991 renovation and used furniture has been added since then including shelving donated by a law firm in Dallas and display furniture assembled from bookstores and department stores.



Currently the library's size is limiting the type and quality of spaces and services it can provide. There is a need for more space for a larger collection size, needed to meet an increasingly sophisticated demand. Also needed is floor space to add a variety of seating, lounge chairs for parents and children, suitable private space for people to work on laptops and areas for students to work on group projects. Video production, music production, makerspaces, RFID sorting equipment, and self-checkout machines are all technologies emerging in libraries, and space is needed for them in Weatherford. Finally, more staff space for offices and work areas is needed.

FUTURE NEEDS

In order to determine the library's facility needs over the next several decades, the City hired national architectural consulting firm Dewberry to perform a facility needs assessment in March 2016. The opinions of the community were gathered in two ways. The library hosted a series of meetings, with the community and staff members, to gather initial information on the library's community needs and priorities. At the same time, an online survey was available to all wishing to voice their opinion. The online survey garnered 537 responses. In these results, the community identified a strong need to improve the library's amenities, public



meeting spaces and an assortment of other features. They also expressed a need to focus on sustainability, flexibility, outdoor areas and comfortable spaces for individual and group work. The community desires service spaces for all generations of library users, including children, teens, and adults.

Along with responding to the needs of existing residents, the Library's plan must consider future growth. In 1970, Weatherford's population was 11,750 and in 1980, soon after the current Library opened, it was 12,049. Today, the population of Weatherford has grown to just under 29,000 residents and the Library's service population is close to 94,000 since it includes Parker County. Since there are so many more Library users now than when the Library opened, additional space and resources are needed.

As discussed in the Land Use and Development Element, growth in Weatherford and its ETJ is expected to continue to increase. The population projections considered by the Library Department in its recent Master Plan are consistent with the projections in that Element. The City of Weatherford's population in 2030 (four years after the time horizon targeted by the Library Master Plan) is projected to range from 36,157 to 41,451. This population is significantly larger than today and many times the population when the current Library opened. In addition to the larger population size, the library must address changes in the demographic mix of the population and the many new forms of media a library must manage.

FUTURE FACILITIES PLAN

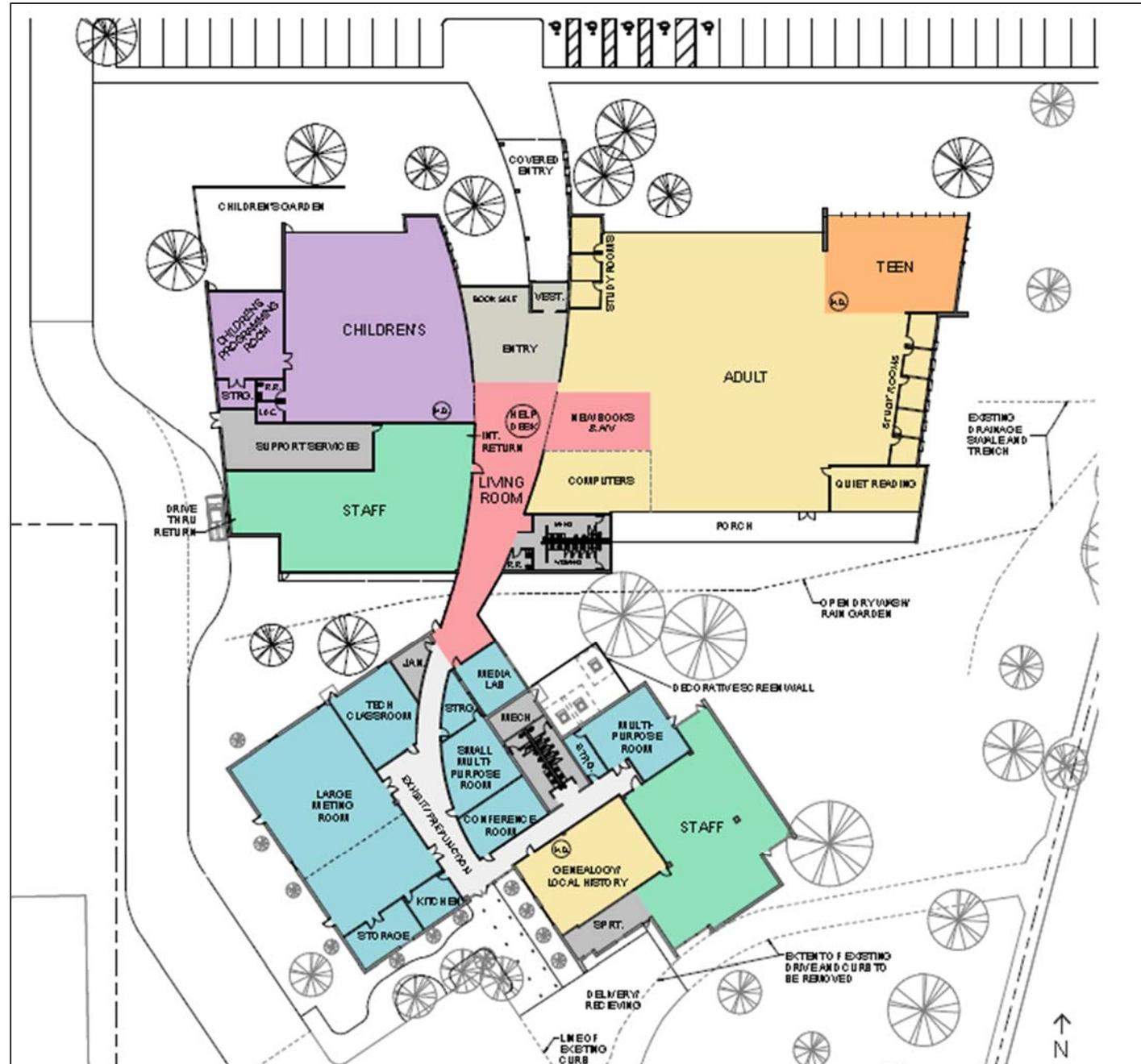
LIBRARY EXPANSION

The Library's planning process considered several options to meet the need for more library space in Weatherford, including building branch locations, moving the library to a new location, building a completely new library on the exiting site, and renovation and expansion of the current facility. Through a careful analysis of the library's service area, it was determined that an expansion of the existing facility would be the best way to serve the community at this time. The community expressed a strong attachment to the existing

building as a place where they grew up, where they took their children to story-time, etc., and the architect determined that by preserving the "bones" of the building, the City could both save money and preserve the history of the building. Various layout options were explored during an interactive design charrette. Dewberry's analysis of the site and facility suggests the enlargement of the library facility would be best achieved by going to the North of the existing building with additional parking at a new main entrance. The final conceptual scheme, Exhibit 10.1, respects the current library facility, addresses the needs of the community, and takes into account staff workflows in a very open and flexible manner.



Exhibit 10.1 -
Future Library
Expansion



One large addition to the existing facility will house the new designated children's, teen and adult areas as well as the new building entrance and staff material return work areas. The current building will be adapted to house the new large meeting room, several smaller multi-purpose spaces, the genealogy/local history room as well as additional staff work areas.

With these plans, the existing 17,000 square foot (sf) facility would be expanded by approximately 33,000 sf to a total of 50,000 sf. The expanded library provides a much larger multipurpose meeting room, a children's area that includes programming and craft rooms, a teen area, media lab, study rooms, a dedicated quiet reading room, a classroom and new maker-space, an expanded book sale area as well as expanded collection and reading areas. The existing building and new addition will be linked by an interior bridged walkway spanning a new dry creek bed landscaped amenity that will manage the site's water runoff. The final Library Master Plan report is available at <http://ci.weatherford.tx.us/DocumentCenter/View/12152>.

LIBRARY EXPANSION FINANCING

The estimated cost of the renovation and expansion, in today's dollars, is \$12,387,342. Funding sources for these improvements has not yet been identified. The expansion

could be included in the City's Capital Improvements Plan and in a bond program considered by Weatherford voters. If the bond election passed, the expansion would receive funding from general obligation bonds issued by the City. Based on current information, renovation and expansion of the library facility could begin between eight and ten years—2027 at the latest. Those estimates will be refined through the capital improvements planning process. The project will ultimately require approval from the City Council and, most likely, the citizens of Weatherford. Other funding sources, including participation by the Library's partners and user groups could be considered, based on groups' usage.

INTERIM LIBRARY FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Because of the extended timeframe for a full renovation and expansion, and due to the deteriorating condition of the existing facility, interim renovations have been identified to improve the look and functionality of the facility.

Improvements will include:

- Remove and replace all library carpet. This will require moving the library collection offsite and closing the library for approximately two weeks.
- Renovate public restrooms.
- Repaint all existing walls.



- Reconfigure current L-shaped entry into a straight entry path.
- Install windows in South wall of Genealogy room.
- Install windows on North-most wall, in staff work area.
- Install chair rails in auditorium.
- Install a new circulation desk.



- Create a quiet reading room and small study rooms in what is now the Reference room.
- Remove front entry awning.
- Install patio seating area to the right of front entrance.

In addition to these physical renovations, new furniture for the public services areas and replacement of some furniture in staff areas is also proposed. The intent is to provide durable, aesthetically pleasing public seating and spaces as described in the November 2016 Facility Needs Assessment.

OTHER CITY FACILITIES CURRENT AS OF JANUARY 2018

The City of Weatherford maintains other facilities, such as City Hall, that provide services to its residents and property owners. Since each facility is unique and provides a specific service, plans for their maintenance, expansion or replacement are also individualized. These details are found in master plans for each of individual organizations. They should be reviewed for more specific information. This Plan Element can be amended as master plans and information on the other quality of life services become available. As this General Plan is implemented, all quality of life agencies should participate in planning, studies and other implementation programs so ensure that their services can be provided effectively as the community grows.

ARTS AND CULTURE

CURRENT AS OF JANUARY 2018

Weatherford has a long and colorful history, and connections to that past are among the foundations of this plan for the future. Arts, cultural and heritage-related museums, theaters, events and resources celebrate Weatherford and

- Doss Heritage and Cultural Center
- The National Vietnam War Museum
- Museum of the Americas
- Vintage Car Museum and Event Center
- Capernaum Village
- Firehouse Art Center and Gallery
- Earth to Art Studio and Gallery
- The Texas Opry Theater

The General Plan supports continued public-private collaboration to strengthen existing assets that celebrate Weatherford's Western heritage, its reputation as the "Peach Capital of Texas" and the "Cutting Horse Capital of the World" and its other assets and amenities. It also encourages new arts and cultural events and venues that will add to Weatherford's diversity and attract future generations of residents and visitors.

make this community unique. Some of these assets are public, owned and managed by the City or County. Others are operated by non-profit organizations or are private businesses. As a result, many of these assets are not a part of City government's responsibilities. They do, however, create opportunities for partnership and collaboration. Among Weatherford's arts and culture assets are:

- Theater Off the Square
- Weatherford Blooms Festival
- Peach Festival
- Goodnight-Loving Festival
- Parker County Frontier Days
- Bankhead Highway Celebrations



EDUCATION

CURRENT AS OF JANUARY 2018

The City of Weatherford is not responsible for educational services to the children of this community. However, it recognizes the importance of schools and education to Weatherford’s future. The City must work with the six school districts that provide service to the City of Weatherford and its ETJ, as well as with Weatherford College, to ensure that residents get the educations they need and the skills training they need for future employment. Weatherford businesses also want to be sure that Weatherford residents provide the workforce they need for their own success. In today’s world, with people living longer and pursuing many different careers in the course of their work lives, education does not end with high school or college graduation or the completion of a job training program. Instead, life-long learning opportunities are needed. All these aspects of education are essential to the quality of life Weatherford seeks.

- Weatherford Independent School District
- Aledo Independent School District
- AZLE Independent School District
- Brock Independent School District
- MILLSAP Independent School District
- PEASTER Independent School District
- Private and Charter Schools

K – 12 SCHOOLING

Weatherford and its ETJ are served by six Independent School Districts. Most of the incorporated city is served by Weatherford ISD, but parts of the area are served by Aledo, Azle, Brock, Millsap and Peaster ISDs. These school service areas are as shown in Exhibit 10.2. In addition, there are a number of private and charter schools that serve the area. It is important to note that school districts are separate political jurisdictions and their boundaries do not change in relation to Weatherford’s expansion. Staff will work with the individual school districts to develop short summaries of their attendance, growth projections and building plans.

- To be inserted by WISD
- To be inserted by AISD
- To be inserted by AISD
- To be inserted by BISD
- To be inserted by MISD
- To be inserted by PISD
- To be inserted as they become available



WEATHERFORD GENERAL PLAN – CHAPTER 10: QUALITY OF LIFE ELEMENT



GENERAL PLAN

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

DRAFT

LEGEND

- Weatherford City Limits
- Weatherford ETJ Limit
- Railroads
- Lake / Pond
- Schools
- Aledo ISD
- Azle ISD
- Brock ISD
- Millsap ISD
- Peaster ISD
- Weatherford ISD

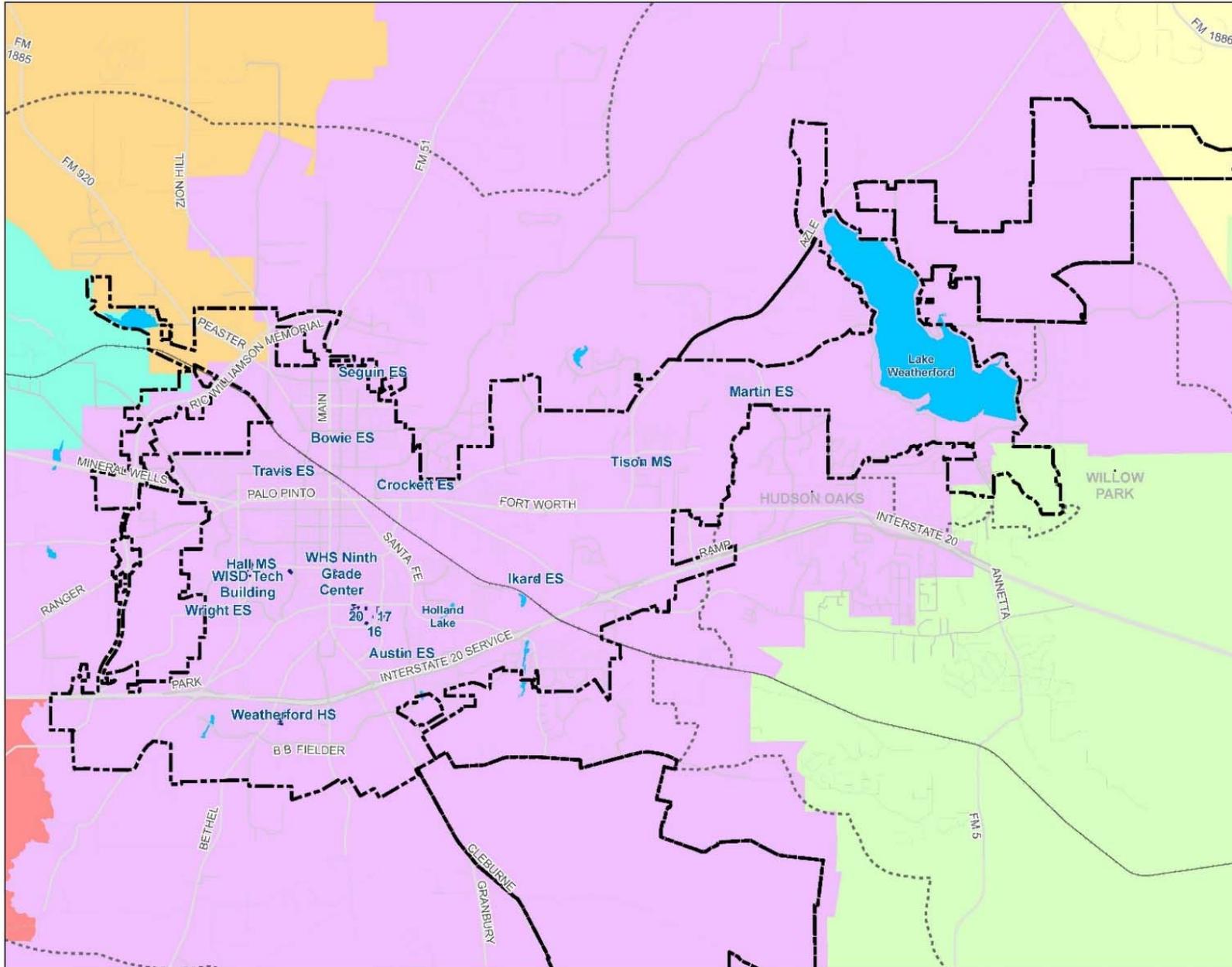


Exhibit 10.2: School Districts Serving Weatherford and its future ETJ/Urban Growth Boundary



WEATHERFORD COLLEGE

Established in 1869, Weatherford College still claims to be the oldest continuing educational institution west of the Mississippi River. Its District consists of five counties – Parker, Palo Pinto, Hood, Jack and Wise (Exhibit 10.3). As a publicly-supported, comprehensive community college and a member of the system of higher education, Weatherford College primarily serves the needs of its five-county service area through teaching, research, public service and learning. It seeks to enrich the lives of the students and communities it serves through innovative, affordable, and accessible learning and cultural opportunities.

Weatherford College develops and maintains educational programs, student support services and activities appropriate to the needs of the communities served. The College provides programs that parallel the first two years of baccalaureate education, prepare students for vocational and professional degrees and provide valuable lifelong learning opportunities. Through its academic transfer and technical and career programs, Weatherford College has developed a national reputation for its academic standard and outstanding career programs. The fall 2017 semester marked the first time Weatherford College enrollment exceeded 6,000 students.

The enrollment of 6,357 students marks a substantial increase over past years. Of these students, the largest number are enrolled at the campus in Weatherford (2,991 students, or 47% of the total). Other students study online or at campuses in Wise County, Granbury and Mineral Wells. Staff will work with Weatherford College to insert maps of existing and future facilities and a summary of future plans.

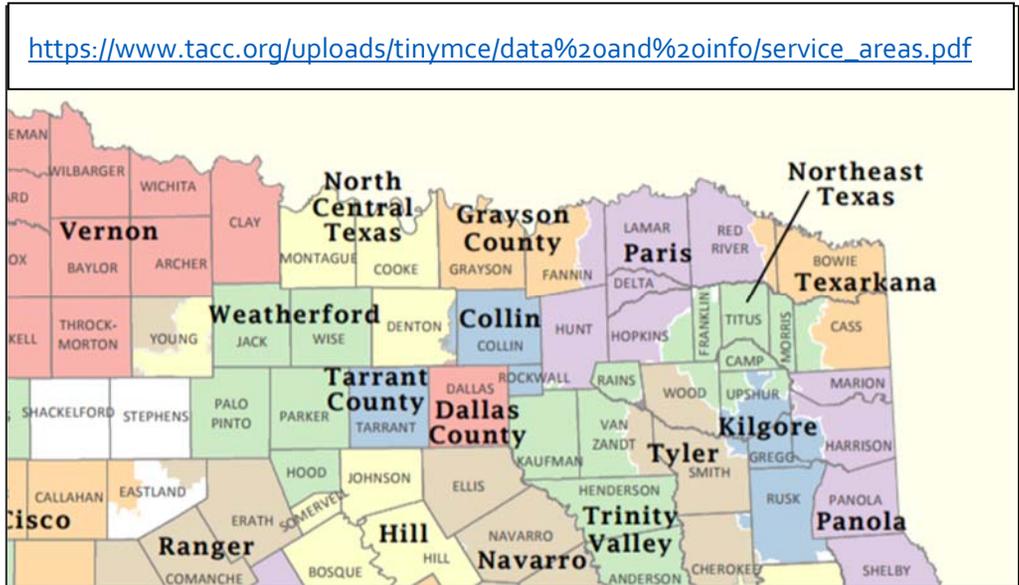


Exhibit 10.3 - Weatherford Community College Service Areas as Amended by the 84th Legislature, 2015



QUALITY OF LIFE POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

QUALITY OF LIFE POLICIES

- Q1. Weatherford will continue to use its library and public facility assets to achieve established service level standards and serve the community as effectively as possible given available resources.
- Q2. The departments will use their own facility and resource planning processes to identify the investments and resources needed to meet the future service demands generated by the pattern of development anticipated by this General Plan and its Place Type Diagram.
- Q3. The City should ensure that the costs of any Quality of Life services provided to non-residents are covered in a way that is fiscally responsible and does not burden City taxpayers.
- Q4. The departments will periodically evaluate their own facility, staff expertise, equipment and other resources in light of the mix of calls being received and any changes in the demographic characteristics of the community it serves.
- Q5. The City should partner with other public, non-profit and private organizations to encourage the creation

and continuation of museums, galleries, theaters, events and other activities that support and enhance the cultural life and appeal of Weatherford.

QUALITY OF LIFE INFRASTRUCTURE ACTIONS AND INVESTMENTS

The following actions include recommendations to be considered by the various advisory boards and other public agencies. They are a general summary of the City Department or outside agency’s plans and their key projects, actions and investments. Some actions are noted as the Department or agency’s response to growth plans and place types contained in this general plan and color coded as either *Short Term* or *Long Term*. All others are important to the Department or the agency. This list is not all-inclusive, and the reader is encouraged to refer to the list of references below for a complete list of recommendations. The types of development desired under this General Plan will not only increase demand for services, but will increase demands for an attractive, inviting facility. Quality of life facilities must keep pace with the expectations of the public, in order to provide the highest return on investment and quality of life for City residents.

Action 10.01 Refine for General Plan Consistency. Review and revise the plans for these facilities and services as necessary to ensure consistency with the General Plan and



support future development that achieves this vision of Weatherford's future.

Action 10.02 Interim Library Facility & Furniture

Improvements. Finance approximately \$500,000 of interim repairs and improvements, and fund \$260,000 of new library furniture in the near future.

Action 10.03 Complete Library Expansion. Develop a capital improvements program and funding campaign to raise funds for a \$12+ million-dollar library expansion at its current site in the next 8 - 10 years. Funding could comprise general obligation bond funds, private fund-raising efforts and donations.

Action 10.04 Library Implementation Collaboration. Form a collaboration with Planning, Library and other departments to use the Library's resources and programs to educate and engage residents in the implementation of this General Plan.

Action 10.05 Arts, Culture and Heritage Plan. Work with the Chamber, WD and other partners to evaluate current arts, culture and heritage events and assets, and create a plan to build on these assets and increase their role in Weatherford's identity and economic vitality.

Action 10.06 Senior Services. Evaluate and fill gaps in the services and amenities desired by seniors, from active seniors to those in care facilities.

Action 10.10 Other City Facilities. Develop and insert summaries of the future plans of other City facilities that are impacted by the physical growth of Weatherford.

Action 10.20 Educational Plan Summaries. Develop and insert summaries of the future plans of Weatherford College, Weatherford ISD and other ISD's and private education facilities that are impacted by the physical growth of Weatherford.



CONTACT INFORMATION

LIBRARY

Responsible Department: Library (817) 598-4158 caccardo@weatherfordtx.gov
Web Page: <http://ci.weatherford.tx.us/142/Library>

FULL ELECTRONIC COPY OF PLANS AND DOCUMENTS SUMMARIZED IN THIS CHAPTER:

November 2016 Facility Needs Assessment Report <http://ci.weatherford.tx.us/DocumentCenter/View/12152>
WPL Public Services Policy Manual <http://ci.weatherford.tx.us/DocumentCenter/View/13161>
Pew Research Center <http://www.pewinternet.org/topics/libraries/>
Texas Public Libraries: Economic Benefits and Return on Investment
<https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/45600/bbr-2017-texas-public-libraries.pdf>
Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development
<http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/46006/1001075-Making-Cities-Stronger.PDF>

OTHER EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES/QUALITY OF LIFE SECTIONS TO BE INSERTED AS THEY ARE DEVELOPED



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