



CITY OF SAN BENITO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

*Draft Goals, Objectives,
and Actions for Public Review*

DRAFT: APRIL 2025



GOAL 1:

Establish Downtown San Benito as a vibrant, cohesive, and pedestrian-friendly destination

OBJECTIVE 1.1:

Revitalize Downtown commercial corridors

ACTION 1.1.1:

- ▶ Implement a focused commercial corridor revitalization program, including streetscape and facade improvements.

COMMUNITY VOICES

"The lack of foot traffic... eventually leads businesses to go to a different city or to close down completely"

Downtown Streetscape

CURRENT

CONCEPT



COMMUNITY VOICES

"Incentives to building owners to fix or sell rundown buildings should be in place"

SURVEY SAYS...

72% of survey respondents identified **"unsightly or abandoned buildings"** as a challenge that needs to be addressed, making it the most frequently cited issue. The second most common concern was **"infrastructure issues,"** listed by **63%** of respondents.

ACTION 1.1.2:

- ▶ Join the Texas Main Street Program to access resources and technical assistance.

ACTION 1.1.3:

- ▶ Launch a facade improvement program targeting historic and blighted buildings.

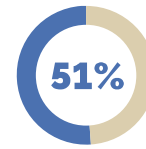
ACTION 1.1.4:

- ▶ Advance the renovation of Stonewall Jackson building.

ACTION 1.1.5:

- ▶ Develop branding and signage for Downtown Arts District.

SURVEY SAYS...



of survey respondents stated that they do not feel safe walking or biking in San Benito

OBJECTIVE 1.2:

Make Downtown accessible and safe for pedestrians

ACTION 1.2.1:

- ▶ Upon completion of a comprehensive safety action plan (funded by Safe Streets and Roads for All planning funds), apply for Safe Streets and Roads for All implementation funds to improve pedestrian infrastructure, including sidewalks and crosswalks.



Stonewall Jackson building rehabilitation

COMMUNITY VOICES

"Turn Stonewall Jackson into a boutique hotel with temporary art exhibits"

COMMUNITY VOICES

"San Benito needs to be rebranded as a cultural, heritage and family oriented place live with many family oriented activities. The downtown district needs help!...I envision complimentary colored facades, renovated buildings and outdoor sitting cafes."



San Benito street mural

GOAL 2:

Future-proof San Benito against a range of hazards

OBJECTIVE 2.1:

Mitigate flood risk

ACTION 2.1.1:

- ▶ Implement drainage improvements in flood-prone neighborhoods.

ACTION 2.1.2:

- ▶ Construct pilot projects demonstrating the reduction of impervious surfaces.

ACTION 2.1.3:

- ▶ Adopt higher base-flood elevation standards for new construction, possibly including land use regulations promoting permeable surfaces.

Reducing impervious surfaces

CURRENT

CONCEPT



GOAL 3:

Make San Benito the most livable city in the Rio Grande Valley

OBJECTIVE 3.1:

Increase housing options across all income levels

ACTION 3.1.1:

- ▶ Focus affordable housing investments in areas of opportunity, in partnership with local and state housing development agencies.

ACTION 3.1.2:

- ▶ Update zoning regulations to enable and support the development high-quality multi-family housing

ACTION 3.1.3:

- ▶ Increase code enforcement to reduce property vacancies and improve neighborhood conditions.

COMMUNITY VOICES

"More dense public & social housing.. It would be a worthwhile investment for our community given the large amount of people on our Section 8 waitlist and families that are doubled up with relatives."

SURVEY SAYS...

When asked to **"Pick five words to describe San Benito in five years,"** the most commonly chosen word was **"clean,"** selected by **41%** of survey respondents.

SOURCE: National Association of Realtors

Multi-family apartment building



OBJECTIVE 3.2:

Enhance public facilities

ACTION 3.2.1:

- ▶ Improve existing green spaces and establish new parks (in partnership with school board, utilizing school district land holdings).

ACTION 3.2.2:

- ▶ Invest in the renewal and programming of the library, community center, and other public facilities.

ACTION 3.2.3:

- ▶ Pursue funding to expand broadband access and improve digital connectivity citywide.

Recreational trail and playground facilities at Heavin Park



SURVEY SAYS...

71% of survey respondents listed **"parks and recreation"** as a type of the development the city should encourage.

COMMUNITY VOICES

"Free variety of classes for residents like teaching how to paint, cook or garden. Community gardens, centers for people to get together and get to know each other or so that people who live alone or seniors can feel like they belong."

COMMUNITY VOICES

"San Benito could focus more on making their parks like Kennedy park more accommodating by adding more benches for people to rest and Shade spots like the parks in Mcallen"

COMMUNITY VOICES

"I think a community swimming pool would be great like we had before."

OBJECTIVE 3.3:

Leverage regional job growth to enhance the local economy

ACTION 3.3.1:

- ▶ Encourage walkable, mixed-use subdivision developments to support employees in regional growth industries.

ACTION 3.3.2:

- ▶ Launch workforce development initiatives focused on regional growth industries, in partnership with private sector employers.

ACTION 3.3.3:

- ▶ Support local businesses and entrepreneurs in launching or expanding ventures aligned with growing industries (e.g., restaurants, retail, guesthouses, engineering services).

ACTION 3.3.4:

- ▶ Explore strategies to increase revenue from Los Indios International Bridge.

SURVEY SAYS...

74% of respondents identified **retail** as a type of development the city should encourage, making it the most common response. **Sit-down restaurants** were the third most common, with **68%** of respondents supporting their development.

COMMUNITY VOICES

"It is very difficult to get a clear pathway to starting a business through the various departments in the city"



GOAL 4:

Transform San Benito into a cultural destination in Texas and beyond

OBJECTIVE 4.1:

Position San Benito to be a leading live music destination

ACTION 4.1.1:

- ▶ Launch the Amphitheatre as a public-private venture.

ACTION 4.1.2:

- ▶ Partner with School District to build a new performing arts center (explore leveraging naming rights for the amphitheater to secure private donations).

ACTION 4.1.3:

- ▶ Support the development of hotels and hospitality infrastructure to accommodate visitors.

ACTION 4.1.4:

- ▶ Market San Benito's Resaca festival and other cultural attractions to national audiences.

COMMUNITY VOICES

"Bring conjunto music back to San Benito!"

COMMUNITY VOICES

"Bring more activities for families to do together and have those activities better announced and accessible to everyone."

Renderings of proposed Amphitheatre



OBJECTIVE 4.2:

Grow the cultural economy for the next generation

ACTION 4.2.1:

- ▶ Support the establishment of a recording studio for local artists.

ACTION 4.2.2:

- ▶ Collaborate with educational institutions to create audio tech training programs.

ACTION 4.2.3:

- ▶ Launch a micro-grants (\$2,000–\$5,000) program targeted to non-profits and cultural organizations for youth-focused programming.



San Benito water tower

COMMUNITY VOICES

"[Should have] food trucks parked by resaca, entertainment along resaca, and more family friendly events"

COMMUNITY VOICES

"More free, public spaces to congregate. Eventually, have so many that you have a walkable network of free, inexpensive things to do in the city with local businesses nearby to serve these potential patrons."

OBJECTIVE 4.3:

Invest in placemaking to create amenities for locals and visitors

Resaca park



COMMUNITY VOICES

"Need more family oriented outings indoors/outdoors"



Birdwatching

ACTION 4.3.1:

- ▶ Renovate linear parks along Resacas to be more inviting and active spaces (including improved playgrounds and family-oriented facilities).

ACTION 4.3.2:

- ▶ Activate parks and open spaces with programming such as outdoor concerts, food trucks, and temporary art installations (e.g., fiberglass accordions painted by local and visiting artists).

ACTION 4.3.3:

- ▶ Improve communication and accessibility of community events by creating a clear, user-friendly, and widely promoted community calendar.

ACTION 4.3.4:

- ▶ Develop marketing and amenities that highlight San Benito's potential for ecotourism, such as birdwatching and kayak tours.

ACTION 4.3.5:

- ▶ Apply to join the Texas Commission on the Arts Cultural Districts Program.



Resaca trail