



# Strategic Plan 2024-2025

## Vision & Operations

Adopted December 02, 2024

Resolution 2024-47 - Exhibit A

### City Council

Mayor	Lori Klein Quinn
Mayor Pro Tem	Dane Dunagin
Council Member	Paul Garcia
Council Member	John Ford
Council Member	Lisa A. Covington
Council Member	Randy Parr

### City Staff

City Manager	David Esquivel, PE
Asst. City Mgr.	Jessica Rogers
Human Resources	Kristie Lewis, Esq.
City Secretary	Tracylynn Garcia
Finance	Bragg Farmer
Public Works	Drew Huffman
Police	Jeffrey Bert
Fire	Joe Sykora
Marketing	Chrislord Templonuevo
Community Dev.	Craig Meyers, PE
Information Tech.	Tom Wilson
Special Projects	Luisa Taylor





# City of Tomball

*Lori Klein Quinn*  
Mayor

*David Esquivel, PE*  
City Manager

November 18, 2024

Dear Council Members,

I am pleased to present this summary of the strategic planning process and the resulting framework for guiding our wonderful city, Tomball. As our city continues to experience a steady growth trend, it is clear that both our residents and city leaders share a commitment to preserving our heritage and maintaining the cherished small-town character that makes Tomball unique.

In alignment with our community's values, this strategic plan prioritizes five focus areas:

1. **Livable City:** Enhancing quality of life for all residents by fostering, quality infrastructure, inclusive services, and encourage business growth.
2. **A Connected City:** Strengthening physical and social connections through improved mobility options, expand, maintain or enhance public infrastructure well as open channels for community engagement.
3. **An Effective City:** Building a responsive and efficient government by streamlining processes and enhancing city operations.
4. **A Safe City:** Prioritizing public safety through robust emergency services and proactive safety programs that reflect our residents' commitment to a secure, welcoming environment.
5. **A Fun City:** Creating vibrant recreational and cultural spaces that bring the community together and celebrate our shared heritage.

Throughout the strategic planning sessions, we integrated operational plans from each department, ensuring alignment with your vision and direction for Tomball. This comprehensive approach has provided a solid foundation for actionable strategies that reflect both our current needs and our aspirations for the future. Please note that the proposed action strategies will be updated and added throughout the upcoming fiscal year.

Several important themes emerged during our planning discussions, including the community's strong desire for safety, a sense of belonging, and the preservation of our small-town feel. Equally notable were the cultural values of service, kindness, and dedication to excellence, which remain cornerstones of our city's identity. These themes have not only shaped our strategic priorities but will also guide the city's service delivery across departments.

We look forward to sharing and updating the plan as we move forward. Together, we can build on our progress to keep Tomball a thriving, connected, and welcoming place for all.

Thank you for your continued guidance and support as we move forward in this shared vision for Tomball.

Sincerely,

David Esquivel, PE  
City Manager

# City of Tomball

## STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION JUNE 2024

### I. Vision and Mission

#### Vision Statement

The City Council envisions people coming together to create the future of Tomball instilling a sense of community and pride (2019).

#### Mission Statement

The Mission of the City of Tomball is to promote a healthy and safe environment of increasingly higher quality of life for all citizens with sensitivity to the financial burden it may impose (2019).

### II. Summary

The City of Tomball held a strategic planning retreat involving city administration, staff, and council members. The two-day session aimed to enhance collaboration, define roles and responsibilities, assess the city's strengths and weaknesses, and establish strategic priorities for the coming years.

#### A. Key Objectives

1. Foster open communication and team building.
2. Clarify roles and responsibilities within the council-manager form of government.
3. Conduct a comprehensive SWOT analysis.
4. Develop draft elements of a strategic plan.
5. Align on the city's mission and vision.

#### B. Participants

- Mayor
- City Council Members
- City Manager and Assistant City Manager
- Department Heads (Marketing, Police, Community Development, HR, Public Works, IT, Fire)
- Facilitators: David Esquivel and Kelley Moore

#### C. Major Topics Discussed

- Communication Styles and Team Building
- Roles and Responsibilities of the Mayor, Council Members, and City Manager
- SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
- Strategic Planning and Priority Setting
- Alignment on Mission and Vision

#### D. Key Outcomes

- Enhanced understanding of individual roles and contributions.
- Identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Development of initial elements of a 3-year strategic plan.
- Clear articulation of commitments between the council and staff.

- Establishment of a unified vision and mission for the city.

### III. Session review

#### A. Introduction

- Facilitator David introduced council members, staff, and facilitators.
- Kelley led familiarization activities including setting agreements for the process, a city timeline activity, and communication styles and team dynamics.
- Discussion on the council-manager form of government, emphasizing the roles of the Mayor, Council, and City Manager.

#### B. Agreements

- Listen with openness and intention to understand.
- Assume positive intent.
- Dialogue without attacking
- Do the serious, hard things
- RESPECT: Be willing to take another look
- Honor differences of opinion
- Show up with faith and trust in yourselves and each other
- B.U.T.T.E.R.—Best Use of Talent, Time, Energy, and Resources
- Create a culture on purpose, with purpose

#### C. Tomball Timeline Activity

- 1907-2020:
  - Farming and ranching community with German roots
  - 1906 Arrival of the railroad
  - 1933: Humble oil discovery, free gas until 1998
  - 1934: Formation of TFD
  - 1950s: Doc Graham and the first hospital
  - 1960s: School fire leading to community unity
  - 1973: First graduating class of 100
  - 1994: Formation of TEDC
  - North Harris Community College establishment
  - 2007: 100-year celebration
  - 2008: Transition from volunteer to professional fire department, adoption of zoning
  - 2012: Introduction of gyrocopters for PD
  - 2011: Creation of Tomball Business Park
  - 2014: Opening of SH 249
  - Creation of Tomball Farmer's Market, German Fest, and other events
  - Longtime businesses closing
- 2020
  - Post-COVID work culture
  - Multi-generational workforce challenges
  - Public safety hiring challenges
  - Changing community demographics and leadership
  - Social media evolution
  - Major infrastructure projects

- Response to February 2021 freeze and 2022 ransomware attack
- Unprecedented growth and development
- 2024:
  - Maintain Tomball's identity with a balance between longtime and new residents
  - Adapt to technology changes and new director dynamics
  - Address service delivery changes
  - Manage school district demands and general finances
  - Tackle largest projects ever seen in Tomball
- 2025 and Beyond:
  - Vision for a walkable, cycle-able city
  - Development of trails and running paths
  - Embrace multi-modal transportation
  - Enhance attractions and venues
  - Address infrastructure and downtown parking needs
  - Regional detention solutions
  - Expand amenities for residents and incentives for staff

#### **D. Operations**

- Staff presented departmental updates and perspectives. (See retreat workbook for presentations.)
- Key points included marketing initiatives, public safety enhancements, community development projects, HR strategies, public works operations, IT improvements, and financial health.
- Discussion on the operational challenges and opportunities facing each department.

#### **E. Personal Responsibility**

Council members shared their motivations for running for office and their personal commitments to the city and staff.

##### **1. Council's Why's**

- Service
- Can't complain if you don't step up
- Get things done
- Better communication to citizens
- Felt called/destined to lead
- Maintain "small town feel" and status quo
- Keep Tomball clean and pretty
- Learn and explore what a city is

##### **2. Council Commitments to Staff**

- Respect and trust
- Honor their time
- Understand they have a tough job
- Understand boundaries and limitations
- Provide necessary resources
- Protect them from citizen critique
- Appreciate them
- Honor the chain of command

- Work in partnership

### 3. Staff's commitments to each other, to council, and to citizens

- Maintain and operationalize core values (professionalism, integrity, respect)
- Partnership to focus moving parts
- Communicate with a purpose
- Provide council with the bad news
- Work for the same people (the citizens)
- Educate council
- Act ethically without favor
- Act without a personal agenda
- Be open to receiving feedback
- Do what's right, not necessarily what's popular

## F. Organizational Discussion

Recap of the council's role in governance. Detailed SWOT analysis led to the identification of key priorities and concerns for the city.

### 1. Concerns

- Political: Decaying trust in higher government levels, lack of civil discourse, national election impacts, polarized identity politics, changing demographics
- Economic: Revenue growth limits, inflation, interest rates, regional economy, national election impacts, grant funding decreases
- Social: Preserving small-town feel, differing generational expectations, housing diversity and affordability, workforce needs, effective communication
- Technological: Infrastructure improvements, cybersecurity, efficiency, costly backbone infrastructure mandates
- Environmental: Managing tree removal, ethical environmental practices, sustainability efforts, climate impacts on resources
- Legal: State's stripping of local powers, home rule city authority changes, litigation culture, keeping up with legal/regulatory changes
- Policy/Expectations: Reviewing legal counsel expectations

## IV. Strategic Planning

Development of draft elements for a 3-year strategic plan. Focus areas included public safety, community engagement, infrastructure development, and economic growth.

### A. Important Themes

- Public safety
- Community
- Small-town feel
- Culture of service, kindness, and commitment

### B. Goals

- Smart city initiatives
- More development, particularly downtown
- Tree City USA / TX Scenic City designation



- Maintain great schools
- Establish Tomball as a destination city with music venues and entertainment
- Create longer stay attractions and commerce opportunities
- Build a convention center
- Develop S Live Oak partnerships
- Enhance infrastructure

### **C. Mission and Vision**

- Alignment on the city's mission and vision statements.
- Emphasis on maintaining Tomball's small-town feel while embracing growth and modernization.

### **D. We Are A (blank) Community**

- Fiscally Responsible
- Community-centric
- Safe
- Dependable (services)
- Vibrant

#### **1. Fiscally Responsible**

- Properly prioritize capital projects
- Staff the right number and quality of people
- Manage debt structure
- Regularly review revenue forecasts

#### **2. Community-Centric**

- Preserve small-town feel
- Display and record heritage
- Balance growth
- Expand community amenities/engagement
- Strengthen community partnerships
- Enhance communication

#### **3. Safe**

- Maintain police staffing levels
- Expand traffic safety programs
- Meet NFPA 1710 standards
- Improve emergency communication and public education
- Dependable Services:
  - Ensure reliable water, wastewater, storm, and gas services
  - Coordinate with the county on services
  - Maintain parks, right of ways, and streets
  - Communicate service impacts timely and reliably

#### **4. Vibrant**

- Create destinations and attractions
- Diversify events and activities

- Promote health and wellness initiatives
- Enhance entertainment options
- Develop arts and cultural areas

## **V. Action items**

### **A. City Manager**

- Update and incorporate any new objectives into the strategic plan.
- Provide draft of updated plan to Council for further discussion and/or adoption.

### **B. Mayor**

- Facilitate ongoing communication between the council and staff.
- Champion the strategic priorities in public forums and council meetings.
- Support initiatives that align with the city's mission and vision.

### **C. Council Members**

- Actively participate in follow-up meetings to refine and approve the strategic plan.
- Engage with constituents to gather feedback and ensure alignment with community needs.
- Uphold commitments made during the planning session, fostering a culture of respect and collaboration.

### **D. Staff**

- Operationalize the core values of professionalism, integrity, and respect in daily activities.
- Maintain open lines of communication with the council, providing updates and feedback.
- Implement departmental action plans that support the overall strategic goals of the city

## **VI. Updated recommended focus areas**

### **A. A Livable City**

- Preserve our small-town feel
- Seek, display, and record heritage
- Balance our growth
- Expand our community amenities and engagement
- Ensure the consistent and reliable delivery of water, treatment of wastewater, conveyance of stormwater, and delivery of gas service
- Ensure the timely and reliable communication of service impacts
- Create and promote health and wellness initiatives

### **B. A Connected City**

- Strengthen and develop our community relationships
- Promote communication
- Coordinate with Harris County on services

### **C. An Effective City**

- Properly prioritize capital projects

- Staff the right number and quality of people
- Manage the debt structure
- Regularly review revenue forecasts

**D. A Safe City**

- Maintain police staffing at 3.3 officers per 1,000 citizens
- Expand our system to meet National Fire Protection Association 1710
- Expand system to meet response goals
- Improve community communications programs for emergency use

**E. A Fun City**

- Promote destinations and attractions
- Diversify our events and activities
- Create more entertainment options
- Encourage and develop arts and cultural areas.

DRAFT

**CITY OF TOMBALL  
PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN  
2024-2025**

(green text) – denotes new / updates  
Proposed Action Strategies will be updated and added throughout the fiscal year.

<b>Focus Area: A Livable City</b>	
<i>Strategies that promote the livability of Tomball for residents and encourage business growth.</i>	
<b>Proposed Strategic Initiatives</b>	<b>Proposed Action Strategies</b>
<p>Enhance beautification efforts in targeted areas across city.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement aesthetic and beautification projects for Four Corners and Main Street to be incorporated into the FM 2920 reconstruction project.</li> <li>● Standardize all street signs and sign poles throughout city and replace as needed.</li> <li>● Enhance property maintenance and aesthetic requirements.</li> </ul>
<p>Enhance and beautify city gateways and entryways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Design and implement entryway monument program.</li> <li>● Explore Green Ribbon grant opportunities with TXDoT for medians and rights-of-way.</li> <li>● Work with developers at key locations to incorporate enhanced design aesthetics.</li> <li>● Explore ways to increase public art and cultural amenities.</li> <li>● Develop formal wayfinding sign program to be implemented across parks, parking lots, and pedestrian/visitor areas.</li> </ul>
<p>Improve existing park facilities and enhance natural features.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Complete the implementation of the Theis Attaway Nature Center.</li> <li>● Support initiatives that promote the health and wellness of the community.</li> <li>● Create destinations and attractions for residents.</li> <li>● Develop a tree protection ordinance.</li> </ul>
<p>Update long-range planning and visioning documents and develop implementation plans to foster sustainable growth and development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seek funding to update and implement the Livable Centers Downtown Plan.</li> <li>● Update model codes as necessary to encourage safety in the built environment.</li> <li>● Adopt updated Comprehensive Plan.</li> <li>● Update existing development codes and integrate into a Unified Development Code.</li> </ul>

<p>Provide programs and resources to support business growth and development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with TEDC to develop infrastructure and provide resources to encourage small businesses, retail, and sustainable commercial growth.</li> <li>• Diversify city-sponsored events.</li> </ul>
<p>Implement and enhance community heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display and record community heritage.</li> </ul>

**Focus Area: A Connected City**

*Strategies that increase mobility and expand, maintain, or enhance public infrastructure*

**Proposed strategic initiatives**

Expand water, wastewater, and gas utility systems to meet the demands of growth and replace aging infrastructure.

- Seek out grants and other funding sources for capital and infrastructure needs.

Expand and improve drainage infrastructure.

- Seek out grants and other funding sources for capital and infrastructure needs.
- Expand and prioritize maintenance of parks, rights of way, and streets.
- Adopt updated Master Drainage Plan.

Continue development of east/west connections, including sidewalks and trails.

- Work with developers to increase pedestrian connectivity when possible.
- Develop sidewalk plan and identify possible funding for key sidewalk improvements.
- Incorporate trails identified in Parks Master Plan into future capital programs.
- Seek grants for the funding of infrastructure projects whenever possible.
- Explore options for sustainable funding mechanisms for roadway enhancements.
- Prioritize the CIP projects.

Update visioning documents for road/street development and invest in high priority-high traffic areas.

- Work with TXDOT to design and construct the Main Street/FM2920 project and the remaining segments of FM 2920.
- Work with Harris County Precinct 3 and 4 and Harris County Flood Control District on improvements to key corridors, channels, and basins.

Coordinate with outside agencies to improve infrastructure.

- Communicate service impacts in a timely and reliable fashion.

**Strengthen our existing community partnerships**

*Strategies that foster innovation and a sustainable municipal government operation*

**Proposed Strategic Initiatives**

**Proposed Action Strategies**

<p>Enhanced transparency of City operations and functions and encourage citizen participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a new Tomball citizen academy (for general city operations).</li> <li>• Update and maintain information on City's website with a focus on the most accessed information and pages.</li> <li>• Establish a system for regular review of the City Charter.</li> <li>• Establish an effective records management program for all City records.</li> </ul>
<p>Work with Boards and Commissions to involve members in the implementation of long-term plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop training materials and hold training sessions with each board.</li> <li>• Department orientations for newly elected or appointed officials.</li> </ul>
<p>Provide support, clarity, and resources to City staff to ensure everyone can effectively perform their job duties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop formal onboarding and offboarding procedures for staff.</li> <li>• Ensure that the city is always staffed at the appropriate level in proportion with its growth.</li> </ul>
<p>Develop five-year IT roadmap to enhance cybersecurity, project hardware and software needs, and reduce the overall cost of operations through IT tool deployment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with departments to establish software and hardware needs and consolidate redundant systems whenever possible.</li> <li>• Conduct bi-annual penetration testing followed up with a network security review.</li> </ul>
<p>Complete development of needed financial studies, plans, and audits to ensure the long-term health of Tomball finances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand reporting of the City's financial forecasting of revenues and debt.</li> </ul>
<p>Plan for future staffing and facility needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to identify potential employees and provide opportunities for them to learn and develop.</li> <li>• Enhance succession planning efforts.</li> </ul>

<p>Continue to use development financing tools, when applicable, to foster development and ensure developments comply with financial and legal requirements</p>	
<p>Develop strategies to continue operations during emergencies, operational system outages, or economic downturns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop departmental continuity of operations plans to prioritize restoration of service in the event of an emergency or system outage.</li> </ul>
<p>Focus on the City's core values, which are Professionalism, Integrity, and Respect, in all aspects of operations and service delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain best practices and accreditations across City departments.</li> <li>• Update and document key documents, policies, and procedures and conduct regular reviews.</li> <li>• Provide regular feedback, coaching, and training to employees.</li> </ul>
<p>Recruit and retain high-performing employees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the City of Tomball employer "brand" and explore incentives to encourage recruitment and retention of highly qualified employees.</li> </ul>



*Strategies that enhance and preserve public safety and uphold community values*

**Proposed Strategic Initiatives**

**Proposed Action Strategies**

<p>Enhance public safety services to meet community growth and needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance capabilities of Fire Prevention and Operations divisions.</li> <li>• Coordinate with ESD #15 regarding fire service area and community needs.</li> <li>• Improve emergency communication and education.</li> </ul>
<p>Encourage youth and community involvement in public safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand youth programs in public safety.</li> <li>• Coordinate with Tomball ISD and Lone Star College-Tomball on internships and educational programs.</li> <li>• Re-establish the Tomball Police Department citizen academy.</li> <li>• Enhance the community relations missions and fire prevention education.</li> </ul>
<p>Address growing traffic safety concerns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use speed trailers and other resources to prioritize education.</li> <li>• Develop new traffic initiatives and enforcement strategies.</li> <li>• Expand existing traffic safety programs.</li> </ul>
<p>Reduce substandard property features and encourage property maintenance and advanced aesthetics across Tomball homes and businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop business and residential Yard of the Month program to encourage property maintenance.</li> <li>• Implement property maintenance and code compliance missions to address regular violations and targeted areas.</li> </ul>
<p>Work with Tomball partners and nonprofit agencies to support vulnerable populations</p>	
<p>Enhance emergency preparedness and emergency management capabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold tabletop and training exercises to prepare staff for emergency situations.</li> <li>• Use technology to enhance public warning systems and provide real time data to public officials.</li> </ul>

**Focus Area: A Fun City**

*Strategies that develop Tomball as a family-friendly, fun-filled community with amenities for all ages*

**Proposed Strategic Initiatives**

**Proposed Action Strategies**

Develop a long-term plan for the development of parks and recreation programs

Develop engaging content for web and social media

Further develop amenities, activities, and programs to draw visitors to Old Town Tomball

Develop partnerships to foster the growth of events, promotions, and activities in Tomball

Explore new marketing avenues and opportunities to attract young visitors, residents, and businesses to Tomball

Establish a plan to enhance the Tomball information center

Diversify city events

- Update social media policies and guidelines.
- Train staff on tools and resources and use user-driven data to develop and update content.
- Schedule to post engaging and informative items for residents and visitors.
- Establish webpage review process for Departments to engage in online content.
- Provide engagement reports to Departments and develop plans to update outdated content across website.
- Develop new festival, event, or program ideas to engage new audiences.
- Find new ways to attract visitors to Old Town.

- Develop event sponsorship program to encourage local participation in events.
- Continue coordination with local hotels to determine success of visitor attraction and marketing programs.
- Work with other entertainment-focused local entities to build on visitor-attracting events.

- Create brand standards and style guide.
- Develop an overall marketing and communications plan for City and Tomball Texan for Fun.
- Hold regular discussions with hotel managers regarding what is attracting people to Tomball.

- Develop marketing and communications plan.
- Brainstorm interactive elements that could be incorporated into the Information Center or ways to program the space.

# APPENDIX A: Departmental SWOT Analyses

## City Council

### Strengths

- We have a great sense of community which motivates togetherness.
- Our citizens and staff are united in their love for Tomball.
- Sometimes there are unintended results of our past decisions which positively affect us.
- We make careful, informed decisions.
- Our farmer's market is thriving.
- The Chamber of Commerce is active in the business community.
- We have a safe community with low violent crime and active policing.
- Both our citizens and our staff are engaged in their community.
- Our marketing program is strong and dynamic.
- The Tomball Economic Development Corporation is wealthy and able to invest in the community.
- Our commercial structures are welcoming and numerous.
- Citizens are comfortable voicing their opinions.
- Our staff is professional and committed to careful planning and execution.
- We have done a good job of thinking ahead eight-to-ten years.
- Our utilities system provides citizens access to essentials and gives the City a vital line of revenue.
- We have beautiful parks.
- Tomball Emergency Assistance Ministries is present and able to provide essential items to Tomball.
- The Tomball Independent School District is excellent.
- The Lonestar Community College is a boon to the community by offering inexpensive education beyond high school.
- Tomball's hospital provides high quality care to our whole city.

### Weaknesses

- The growth of our revenues is limited by a variety of factors including state law, the expansion of our utilities network, and random factors such as rainfall.
- Uncertainty about the timing and pace of future development in Tomball complicates advanced planning.
- As we expand, we have fewer and fewer green spaces.
- Due to the supremacy of state law, there are limited measures we can take without state intervention.
- With the expansion of social media, it has become increasingly hard to combat misinformation about city programs.
- As our organization expands, we are bound to encounter conflicts of personality.
- We must continue our efforts to find new ways to communicate with our citizens.
- We would prefer to avoid over-legislating Tomball.
- While some of our decisions have unintended consequences that are positive, others are negative.
- We must have sound policies that do not prevent us from efficiently executing our jobs. This means being "policy sound not policy bound."

## **Opportunities**

- As much as keeping our trees is a challenge, it also presents an opportunity to continue beautifying our neighborhood.
- By building out walking trails and fitness equipment, we can give our citizens more opportunities to keep fit.
- We can work with other agencies to help improve our community.
- Our radio station can and should be utilized in new and creative ways.
- With a changing demographic comes new ideas about how we do things.
- There are many active people in the city limits. This means that we have even more opportunities to get them involved in City events.
- With some work, we can become a Texas Scenic City
- Through partnerships with other organizations and our citizens, we can invest in improvements to revitalize downtown.
- Wherever we have growth, we also have an opportunity to improve upon that growth and anything that was there before.
- It is possible that we can use artificial intelligence to help streamline City functions.
- We can continue expanding our utility system until we can provide for everyone in the City limits.
- In addition to expanding our systems, we can also update them.
- With growth, we will also have the opportunity to expand our public safety systems.
- Innovative forms of messaging can revolutionize how we interact with our citizens.

## **Threats**

- The current direction of the Texas state government in relation to its cities' autonomy risks inhibiting our growth.
- When we educate our citizens, we must be careful that we speak with one voice and do not unintentionally mislead them.
- We must be careful to ensure that rumors regarding the City, its departments, and related organizations do not overshadow the truth about these organizations and mislead our citizens.
- We have to be careful that opposition to development does not hamstring our ability to respond when it does come.
- We would like to do everything in our power to preserve our trees while continuing expansion.
- Tomball is a safe city, and we would like to keep it that way.
- Our infrastructure needs are growing, and it is difficult to keep up with the costs of a constantly expanding list of projects.
- Texas Senate Bill 2 has greatly reduced the latitude given to the City in its affairs.
- The State government can and, at times, does interfere with City-level issues.

## City Manager's Office

### Strengths

- The organizational structure of our department allows it to function efficiently for both our staff and citizens.
- Our staff is dedicated to the improvement of Tomball.
- Our department's endeavors are strengthened by the support and partnership of the community.
- The strength and diversity of our local economy is great.
- Our department continues to be a healthy and welcoming environment for our staff.
- The financial position of our department is excellent.
- Internal and external communication within our department is effective.

### Weaknesses

- The maturation of our department has brought growing pains.
- Leadership turnover hinders our functionality.
- As our staff undergoes changes, we need to create an identity consistent with our departmental goals.
- As our department expands, our projected needs outpace current revenue growth.
- Given our expected growth, we must increase recruitment to match our needs.
- The physical state of our facilities doesn't match the advancement of our department.
- While our current modes of communication work well, there is always room for improvement.

### Opportunities

- With the growth of our department and the nature of our work, we can prioritize staff development and cross-training.
- We have the opportunity to review and update policies and procedures based on our previous performance.
- Advancements in technologies such as artificial intelligence (A.I.) can increase the efficiency of our work.
- We can prepare for the future strategically by reviewing, prioritizing, and planning effectively.

### Threats

- State and federal-level directives that do not have any funding behind them force us to bear the upfront costs of changes without any support from the responsible agencies.
- Given the unpredictable economy, we must be aware of how it effects our costs and recruitment.
- Our department must be watchful for natural and man-made emergencies and their effect on our community.
- Both stability and instability on council and in staff can pose a threat. High turnover means we lose institutional knowledge, but having no change means that we could become stuck in our way of doing things.

## **Tomball Police Department**

### **Strengths**

- Our strong police force and civilian work force are dedicated to assisting our City and performing their jobs effectively.
- We are proficient in data-driven analysis of crimes and traffic problems.
- Our department has ample support for a broad range of planned initiatives.
- Our organization is accredited by the Texas Police Chiefs Association (TPCA) for our modern policies and best practices.

### **Weaknesses**

- The growth of our patrol team is hindered by higher-paying agencies in the Houston area and a nationwide shortage of officers.
- Follow-up investigations are particularly difficult because most suspects tend to be non-Tomball residents.

### **Opportunities**

- With the growth of surrounding agencies, we have the opportunity to strengthen inter-organizational relations to hone crime-fighting abilities.
- We can utilize flock cameras in the area to quickly identify criminals and their patterns as well as City crime trends.
- We have the opportunity to increase recruitment, community engagement, and awareness through a strong social media presence and a fully staffed community relations team.

### **Threats**

- As the number of thefts from stores in the area rises, we must encourage better communication between our department and those stores.
- With growing infrastructure, we must monitor key intersections closely due to the recent spike in major traffic accidents.
- Our current resources do not match the needs of Tomball's unhoused population.
- Our department's current staff is not sufficient for an increasing call volume.

## **Tomball Fire Department**

### **Strengths**

- Our access to high-quality technology helps our responses to be prompt and thorough.
- Each apparatus and piece of gear is in peak condition.
- We have positive relationships with our ESD and partners.
- Our firefighters receive significant training.
- The health and wellness of our firefighters continues to be high priority.

### **Weaknesses**

- We need additional support staff.
- Our facilities are old and aging.
- Apparatus maintenance is tasking and complicated.
- Growing development makes service challenging with limited staff.
- Our current software is approaching the end of its lifespan.
- We need to improve our fire prevention programs.
- We have limited experience among staff.

### **Opportunities**

- With emboldened recruitment efforts, we can increase administration and prevention staff.
- We have the opportunity to improve in-house training opportunities.
- We can increase fire prevention and life safety programs in the City.
- We can cross train suppression and prevention staff.
- With grant funding, we can improve our department's functions.

### **Threats**

- The cost of our equipment and facilities is increasing.
- We need to improve recruitment and retention of personnel.
- We often compete with Emergency Services Districts (ESDs) for new talents.
- Our facilities do not match the needs of our department.

## **Public Works – General Fund**

### **Strengths**

- Our staff is dedicated to offering quality service to our citizens.
- We are adept with equipment operation and technology.
- Our staff has a professional attitude when dealing with customers.
- Our department is self-sufficient and can perform smoothly in times of crisis.
- We have fostered a strong, supportive relationship with the community.
- New developments in technology greatly improve our systems and functions.
- Our department collaborates well with other government agencies.
- Department leadership provides ample support for its staff.

### **Weaknesses**

- The infrastructure in older parts of the City is outdated and insufficient for our growing community.
- With the City's growth, we are struggling to conserve park space for our citizens.
- We rely on outsourcing services to handle solid waste.
- Other government agencies outside of Tomball can inhibit our operations.
- Our function is limited by funding.
- Our facilities are aging and less resistant to damage.

### **Opportunities**

- With effective planning, we can expand and enhance City infrastructure.
- The growth of our department can give us room to hire staff with experience and great skillsets.
- We can replace older equipment to match the needs of our operations.
- We can develop progression plans to improve staff and leadership.

### **Threats**

- The quality of our service must match increased demands caused by the growth of City streets, drainage corridors, and rights of way.
- As cost of materials and construction increases, we need to be frugal with our purchases.
- The City's susceptibility to flooding is a threat to infrastructure development.
- There is increased competition for staff in both the public and private sector.
- Without improvement to our facilities, we will continue to be hindered in our function and performance.



## Public Works – Utilities

### Strengths

- We have a dedicated staff.
- We are in compliance with all relevant regulations.
- Our current system has met demand from the public.
- Our system continues to expand, and we estimate that we will be able to meet our delivery timelines on all high-priority projects.
- The staff has a high level of skill in operations and technology, and we also have strong customer service skills at our disposal.
- We have a reputation of delivering a high level of service.
- Support from our leadership remains strong.

### Weaknesses

- Our water, wastewater, and gas infrastructure has a majority age of over fifty years.
- There is significant inflow and infiltration in the wastewater collection system.
- There are certain “hot spots” in the water system model.
- An uneven flow to the North and South Wastewater Treatment Plants.
- Our staff continues to need specific certifications and licenses.
- We face unfunded mandates from the TCEQ and EPA that puts strain on our system.

### Opportunities

- We can upgrade our infrastructure through the master planning process.
- Our city limits contain a variety of water supplies such as ground and re-use water.
- We can continue to formalize our policies and procedures through operations and maintenance manuals.
- As we grow, we can add new skillsets and talent to our roster.
- Asset management can always be improved to help us execute work orders.
- When planning out infrastructure we must continue to act strategically and intentionally.
- Open communication and transparency both internally and with the public can continue to strengthen the department.

### Threats

- As the city grows, we face increasing needs to provide water for new people. Our number of water connections has increased from 4,000 in 2019 to 6,000 in 2024.
- Unfunded mandates from higher agencies puts additional strain on our system.
- Costs for building materials have risen 15-30% since 2019.
- With every retirement we lose a little institutional knowledge.
- We are in competition with other agencies for specialized staff.
- The growth of the city is outpacing our ability to respond to needs.
- With time, our operations are requiring an increasing amount of specialization.
- Emergencies, both natural and man-made, threaten our operations.

## **Finance Department**

### **Strengths**

- Our staff is dedicated and works together cohesively.
- Our department has well-defined roles while also allowing room for flexibility when needed.
- Our staff is eager to learn and grow in their respective roles.

### **Weaknesses**

- We are hindered by a lack of formalized processes and procedures.
- Lack of dedicated backup personnel for critical functions leaves holes in our operating.
- The tenure of our staff is short, averaging only two years.

### **Opportunities**

- With the enthusiasm of our staff, we have the ability to develop them and expand their knowledge.
- We have the ability to implement best practices and develop corresponding policies.

### **Threats**

- Turnover heavily impacts our department's operations and ability to meet demand.
- The growth of the city has led to an increased workload for our employees.

## City Secretary's Office

### Strengths

- We provide excellent internal and external customer service.
- Communication within and without the department is strong.
- Our team members are reliable.
- Collaboration continues to lend heavily to our success as a department.

### Weaknesses

- Our city-wide Records Management Program needs more attention and expansion
- There is currently no onboarding or orientation for our City Council or Boards and Commissions members.
- There is little opportunity for growth within the department.
- External collaboration poses a challenge.

### Opportunities

- We can develop a succession plan for when our staff starts to move on.
- Technology offers us aid through programs such as Municipal Justice 10, JustFOIA, and Records Repository.

### Threats

- Litigation challenges the City.
- The actions of the state legislature impose additional burdens on the department.

## Community Development

### Strength

- Our staff members have great attitudes about work.
- We provide exceptional customer service to citizens.
- Our staff maintains a strong camaraderie with one another.
- Our staff is quick and eager to learn.
- Our team's communication is consistent and effective.

### Weaknesses

- Our current staff is light on experience.
- We lack consistent succession planning for the future of the department.

### Opportunities

- We have the opportunity to lessen our workload with the help of new technology.
- Our current organization gives us the chance to identify inefficiencies at a smaller scale.
- The growing workload can teach our staff to work smarter, not harder, in order to match demands.

### Threats

- Our department must grow to provide appropriate customer service to our developing City.
- Leadership and employee turnover stalls the work of the department.
- Our staff is often unsure how to approach work outside of their assigned duties.
- The size of our department leaves leadership too busy to delegate tasks and lead employees.
- Our office environment is not conducive to close teamwork.

## Marketing & Tourism

### Strengths

- We have open communication and strong connections with the members of our team.
- We are able to exercise our personal creativity while making it relevant to marketing efforts.
- Our staff is accountable on projects, events, and task-related strategies.
- Regular, positive engagement with community members contributes to a more effective marketing environment.
- Compared to other agencies, we have adapted well to evolving technologies and used them as tools to gain a competitive advantage.

### Weaknesses

- A lack of technical skills in radio operations could hinder our ability to leverage new opportunities effectively.
- Keeping up with industry trends, consumer preferences, and the competitive landscape requires continuous learning and research.
- We have a lack of staff to properly execute projects and initiatives.

### Opportunities

- We continuously develop our skills through online courses, industry conferences, and certifications.
- Single points of failure can be eliminated through cross training and succession planning.
- By allowing the support of A.I. technology, we can increase our efficiency.
- Gaining access to analytic tools for insights into consumer behavior, campaign performance, and market trends could be huge.
- We can engage our audience with surveys to gather new ideas on the public's interests.

### Threats

- Our volunteer staff at the Depot could depart at any time.
- Future budget constraints risk hamstringing the department.
- With a changing public face for the city, we could face backlash.

## Information Technology

### Strength

- Our staff have a great capacity to learn and utilize new technology.
- We have experience with the remediation of major technological events.
- Current department policies enhance our users' experiences.
- Our staff communicates well when working on projects.
- We have standardized equipment across all City operations.
- Our department is ready for audits and reviews at any time.
- We created effective fallback systems to consistently provide excellent technological services.

### Weaknesses

- We lack backup staff and succession planning.
- Current personnel are unfamiliar with project development.
- Our innovation may stall due to a lack of knowledge in new technologies.
- Our IT policies are currently limited.
- The City system has some vulnerabilities.

### Opportunities

- New technologies give us the opportunity to develop the knowledge of our team.
- The nature of IT allows us to form strong relationships with other departments.
- We can continue to foster project management skills among our staff.
- We will continue to implement audit recommendations.

### Threats

- Incorporating newer technologies can bring more risks to current systems.
- It may be difficult to provide solutions to new technologies.
- Implementing new technology may have a high monetary cost.
- We must be aware of which new software is peer-reviewed and which may be malware.
- Providing new solutions may leave vulnerabilities in the current system.

## Human Resources

### Strengths

- We have a robust schedule of city-wide engagement events and initiatives. This included ten launched in FY23.
- Clear and consistent communication helps our employees remain in-the-loop.
- We continue to improve our hiring processes.
- An employee-focused outreach and participation structure helps our staff feel appreciated.
- Our strong benefit administration philosophy ensures our staff is taken care of.
- Investing in our leadership and staff training and development continues to contribute to the overall productivity and quality-of-life for City staff.

### Weaknesses

- There is a learning curve and ongoing acclimation for less-tenured leadership and staff.
- Our risk management programs and policies need review.
- A current lack of standardized procedures needs addressing.

### Opportunities

- We must focus on a “whole employee investment.” This means providing compensation and benefits, health and wellness, and career development.
- Providing meaningful employee perks and benefits such as alternative work schedules and pre-paid legal services would make us more attractive as an employer.
- Impactful employee recognition and appreciation events and activities help retain staff.
- Technology can be leveraged to help smooth operations.
- All-around improvements to our recruiting and retention efforts would help make the City a more coveted employer and help us keep our current staff.
- By fostering the trust and the empowerment of our staff, we create a work environment that people truly want to be a part of.

### Threats

- Comparable municipalities with more appealing or competitive roles and benefits can take our current staff and deprive us of future applicants.
- Employee turnover remains a trouble for our institution.

