



City of Melissa

2015 Comprehensive Plan Update

Chapter 7: Public Services and Facilities Plan





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Introduction

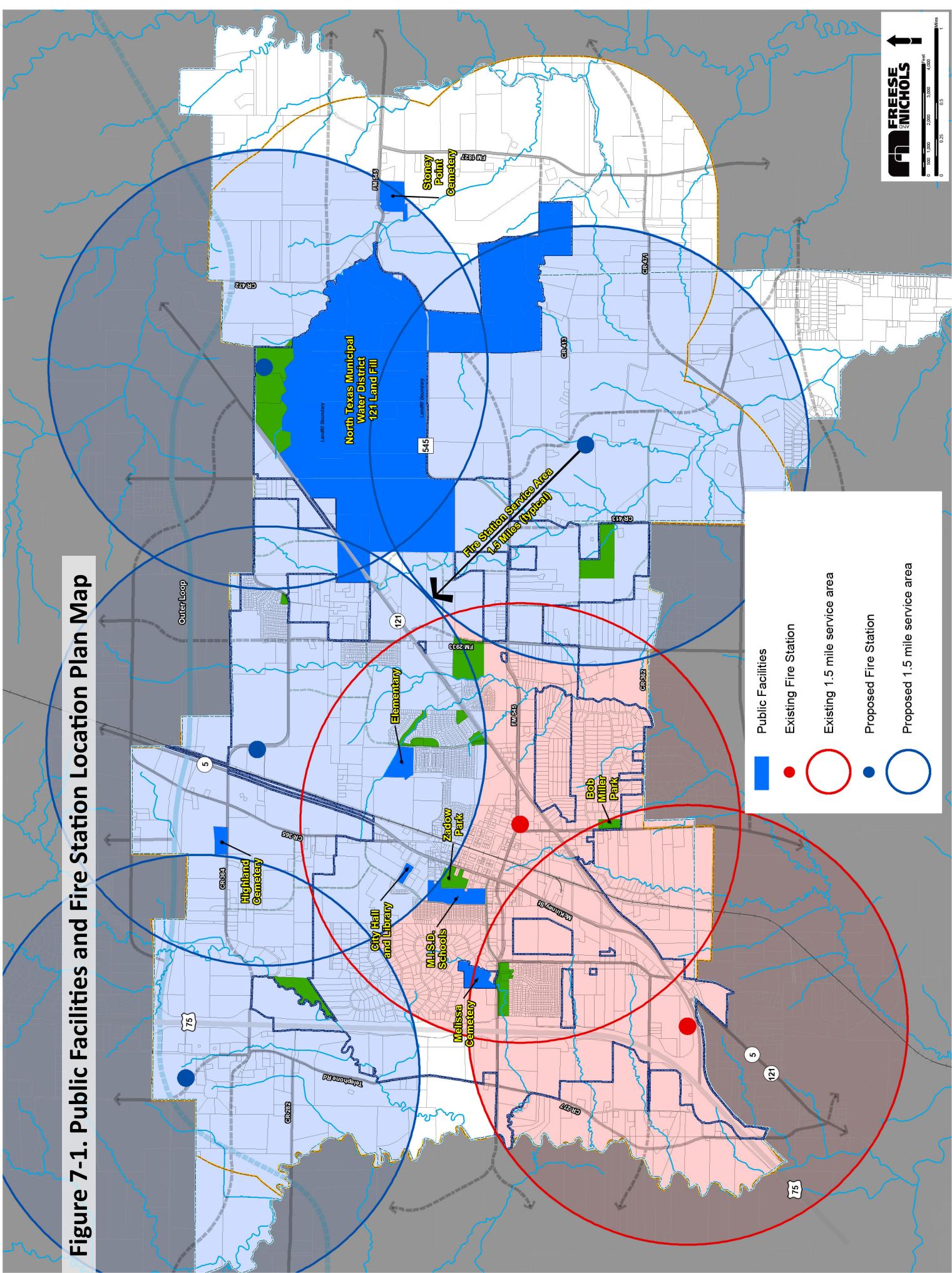
Public buildings that house the various governmental and service functions of a municipality are generally of two types: (1) those requiring a nearly central or a common location and that serve the entire municipal area, and (2) those serving segments of the community on a "service-area" basis. Melissa's Municipal Center is an example of a governmental building that serves the entire community, while the local fire station represents a public building that has a service-area relationship with the community.

The Public Services and Facilities Plan element of the Comprehensive Plan addresses the expectations that a community's residents have regarding public services and the facilities needed to provide these services. The Public Services and Facilities Plan is a general assessment of Melissa's services and related building space needed to provide such services. This assessment includes City administration, library, police, and fire services. Policies at the end of this chapter outline the way in which Melissa's leaders should address public service and facility needs in the years to come as the population continues to increase.

Local governments face growing pressure and increased expectations with respect to promoting economic development, addressing social problems and improving the quality of life for all members of the community. At the same time, they are constrained by cost factors and limits to the ways in which they can generate revenue. Direct investment and program creation are key policy responses. Yet equally important is the ability of local governments to convene key players who can take concrete action on these problems. Local governments can harness resources from a wide range of sectors. They can engage a variety of groups and organizations to work collaboratively towards the achievement of their overall vision and specific goals. In short, local governments can play a central role in building safe, healthy and caring communities.

Caledon Institute of Social Policy. *Strategies for a Caring Community: The Local Government Role*. Caledon website.

Figure 7-1. Public Facilities and Fire Station Location Plan Map





Existing and Future Services and Facilities

City Administration

Melissa's City administration services are currently operated out of the new City Hall center, which is located along State Highway 5. The new City Hall center opened in 2010 upgraded the City's offices, addressed the need for more room, and contains room for future growth. The City has 29 total full-time employees of which 23 are housed at the City Hall.



Library Services and Facilities

Citizens of Melissa are provided library service through the Melissa Public Library. The library is centrally located within the City Hall area near Highway 5, as shown in **Figure 7-1**. The library currently has approximately 3,500 square feet of building space.

The American Library Association (ALA) standard for library space in relation to population is 0.75 square feet per library patron, which is the standard used for many cities in Texas to make decisions regarding library service. **Table 7-1** shows square footage projected for the anticipated future population based on a slightly decreased amount of square footage per library patron than what the ALA recommends. (Population projections are discussed within the Future Land Use Plan, Chapter 3.) This decreased ratio is likely more applicable because not every person in Melissa will ultimately use the library.

Important to note in this discussion is that the phrase "library service" has changed in recent years. It is no longer adequate to provide only books and other traditional research materials. Libraries need to be more diverse, with computer and internet related services as well. So, when library services are discussed herein, the discussion is intended to encompass these newer technology-related services.

Table 7-1. Library Square Footage Needs based on Population

Basis and Needs	Current Square Footage	2014	2025	2030	Ultimate
Population		7,755	22,127	35,635	119,072
Square Footage Needed Based on Revised ALA Standard of 0.5 Square Feet per Population	2,000 square feet	3,878	11,063	17,818	59,536



Based upon the standard of 0.5 square feet per person, the current population requires approximately 3,900 square feet of library space.

- The City moved library services from a small building in the Old Town area to the new Town Center in a temporary space. This space is anticipated to be utilized for at least ten years.
- The temporary space is approximately 2,000 square feet.
- According to the standard in **Table 7-1** of 0.5 square feet per citizen, 2,000 square feet does not meet the library services needs of a population of approximately 7,755 people.
- Increased library space should be considered in the City's future facility planning, even with the temporary space established within the new City Hall.

Library needs could also be met with a satellite facility in another part of Melissa. For instance, a future community center could contain library space in addition to what is provided within the City Hall. This would allow for additional library facilities to be provided without having to relocate established library facilities.

Another way to provide library services is not with additional building space, but with additional services that are not tied to traditional "brick-and-mortar." These include outreach services, such as book service programs (i.e., delivery) for children and the elderly, tutoring programs, and cooperative-use programs with local school districts (i.e., for books, research materials, etc.). Other types of services which are becoming more common with the widespread use of the internet, include checking books and research materials out electronically with downloads, paying late fees online, or renewing books online. Establishing such programs would require some City investment, but would likely be less expensive than building additional facilities to meet short-term needs.

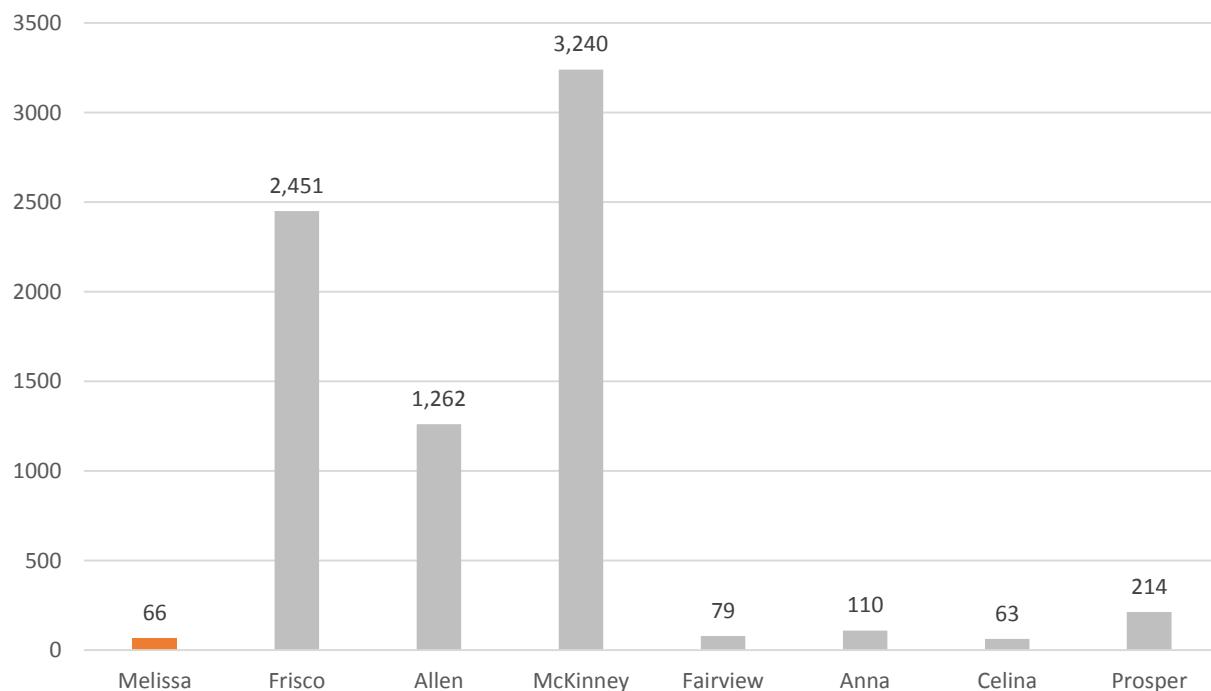


Police Services and Facilities

Police service is an extremely important factor in assessing a community's quality of life. Safety is often a prime consideration for people when deciding where to establish a home. A high crime rate (or perception of crime) can cause people to decide not to locate in a particular area. Conversely, a low crime rate can be an attractor for population growth.

Suburban communities like Melissa often experience population growth partly due to the feeling of safety that a low crime rate provides. As shown in **Figure 7-2**, Melissa has a low crime rate that is consistent with that of other cities in the area. Local areas all have much lower crime rates than those of Dallas, the state of Texas, and the nation.

Figure 7-2. Number of Offenses in 2013



Source: Texas Crime by Jurisdiction – 2013 Crime in Texas, Texas Department of Public Safety Website



Police Officers

There are currently 10 full-time police officers, 1 reserve officer and 1 clerical/administrative worker within the Police Department. The ratio of police officers to population is commonly used to assess whether the police force can properly serve the citizenry. An accepted ratio of police officers to population is between 1.5 and 1.8 officers per 1,000 people.⁷⁻¹ However, consider the following:

- There is no consensus on staffing levels for local police departments. The ratio of both officers and total police employees per 1,000 is significantly related to crime rates...Such standards have limited meaning because the actual number required will vary depending on the size of a city, geographic region and city type (central, suburban, free-standing rural). ...Even cities of the same population size and type may differ widely in staffing needs because of differences in demographics, socio-economic characteristics, climate or other unique conditions.

Municipal Research & Services Center of Washington, [Level of Service Standards - Measures for Maintaining the Quality of Community Life, MRSC Report 31,1994.](#)

- The City currently has a ratio of about 1.4 officers per 1,000 people. This is slightly lower than recommended by the ratio. It is important to note that the generally accepted ratios are difficult to apply to small cities, given the fact that there has to be a certain number of officers for each shift, 24 hours per day and seven days per week. Other criteria for hiring police officers in smaller cities may be based on the number of calls received and the average response times.
- **Table 7-2** also projects the number of police officers needed in the future correlated with future population projections in 2025, 2030, and at build-out capacity.
- More officers will be needed in the next 10 years if Melissa's population growth as quickly as is anticipated within this Comprehensive Plan.

Table 7-2. Ratio Analysis of Existing and Future Police Service Needs

Current # of Officers	Ratios	Current # of Officers Needed by Ratio	Future # of Officers Needed			
		2014 Population	2025 Population	2030 Population	Ultimate Capacity	
		7,755	22,127	35,635	119,072	
11 total (10 full-time, 1 reserve)	1.5 Officers per 1,000	12	33	53	179	
	1.8 Officers per 1,000	14	40	64	214	

⁷⁻¹ U.S. Department of Justice (website).



Police Department Space

Melissa's Police Department currently operates out of the new City Hall center, which is located along State Highway 5, along with the City's administrative services.

- The space has approximately 3,100 square feet, and is intended to be temporary. This new space alleviated space issues from the old Municipal Center building.
- Ultimately, a police headquarters facility will need to be established, given the number of officers that is projected to be needed by 2025 to serve the local population.

Fire Services and Facilities

Like police service, fire service is important to local quality of life. In addition to fighting fires, a community's fire personnel are often called on to provide emergency management service (EMS), alongside police and traditional ambulance services. Fire service and facilities are therefore a significant element in one of municipalities' main functions – ensuring the public's health, safety and welfare.



Melissa's volunteer Fire Department currently has approximately 30 members. Paid staff includes the full-time Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, and 7 part-time firefighters. The Fire Department currently operates out of one fire station that is located in the Old Town area. This station can be seen on **Figure 7-1**. The existing fire station's service area radius generally encompasses the City's currently developed area.

The fire department provides fire suppression, advanced life support, and rescue response. Additionally, the department is responsible for prevention and emergency management activities. The fire department received a Class 2 ISO designation in 2012. Many people moving to the City of Melissa are expecting similar or better level of emergency service delivery as where they came from. As more people make Melissa their home, the department has seen and will continue to see an increase in the number of emergency incidents as well as an increase in the level of complexity of incident types. The department must be capable of meeting the citizens' needs in their time of distress to demonstrate to potential citizens and business the City of Melissa emergency services will be there for them as well.

Advanced Life Support Transport Service

The fire department's current first responder protocols enable department personnel to deliver more advanced interventions and pain control methods than the current transport service is able to offer. When private services are compared to fire-based EMS, overall patient care is improved and they tend have a higher patient satisfaction rating. Most of the fire departments operating in the DFW-Metroplex area provide Advanced Life Support Transport Services to its citizens. By implementing a plan to acquire needed



equipment and personnel over the next few years the department can begin providing Advanced Life Support First Response and Transport to all who live and work in the City of Melissa.

A major factor in terms of fire protection service is the service-area of fire stations to the geographic area of the community. According to the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA), the generally accepted fire service area for urban areas is 1.5 miles, while for rural areas, it is 2.5 miles. These distances correspond to the NFPA standard of a 4-minute maximum response time. For Melissa, the urban-area standard should be used because of the anticipated population growth in the coming years. **Figure 7-1** shows the recommended locations for future fire stations based on the recommended service area consistent with a 1.5-mile radius.

Fire stations can also be combined with other municipal uses such as water and wastewater facilities, park sites, and community centers. Fire stations can also be funded through cooperative efforts with other governmental entities. Refer to Policy 1 within this chapter for further discussion.

Personnel

If the City continues to grow the department will need more personnel to adequately meet the needs of the citizens and businesses in the City of Melissa. Below is a chart based on the city's current population and expected growth.

Table 3. Analysis of Full-Time Firefighter Current and Projected Staffing Needs

Current Staffing Level	Current Need Population 2014 7,555	2025 Projected Population 22,217	2030 Projected Population 35,635	Ultimate Capacity Projected Population 119,072
2 Full-Time, 8 Part-Time, 25 Volunteers	8	23	37	122

Potential New Service Center

As the City continues to grow in population and expand its services, a specific location for operation and maintenance of certain services will likely be needed. For example, park and street maintenance will require large equipment that needs to be properly sited (i.e., for aesthetics) but also needs to be have accessibility for ease of use. Not only could a service center house Melissa's operational tools, but it could also allow for consolidation of services, such as police and fire, into one location. Components of a new service center could include:



- Police Department headquarters – this would need to have individual access to roadways and could possibly be combined with a municipal court facility.
- Second fire station – this would also need to have individual access to roadways.
- Operation-and-maintenance area – this would include gasoline facilities for City vehicles, equipment for park maintenance, storage for City vehicles when they are not in use, etc.
- Infrastructure facilities (such as water and wastewater).

Although several of the listed services would need to have separate access to thoroughfares to ensure public safety needs are properly addressed, consolidation of services into one area can be very cost-effective and good for time management. For example, having gasoline services on-site with police vehicles would save police officers the time of having to drive to a separate site for such services.

Recommended Public Services and Facilities Policies

Following are recommended policies related to public services and facilities. **Figure 7-1. Public Facilities and Fire Station Location Plan Map** is intended to be used in conjunction with these policies. The Implementation Plan, Chapter 9, will outline specific ways in which the City can implement these policies, along with other recommended policies from within this *2015 Comprehensive Plan*.

Policy 1: Work Cooperatively with Other Entities to Provide Services & Facilities

Similar to policies in the Parks & Trails Plan (Chapter 6), inter-jurisdictional cooperation is recommended for public services and facilities. Not only can the cost of constructing facilities be shared, but so can the operation and maintenance costs. Adjacent cities and Collin County are the most likely entities with which Melissa could partner.

PS1.1 | The City should investigate ways in which it can work with adjacent communities to provide public services and facilities.

- Both McKinney and Anna border Melissa, and both must provide adequate levels of services in terms of public safety. Fire station service areas provide a radius of service coverage, as shown on **Figure 7-1**. The service radii of several recommended station locations extend into McKinney and Anna. Shared coverage areas could result in the cost of new fire stations being shared between Melissa and Anna and/or McKinney (similar to the way in which water and wastewater facilities have been in the past).
- Support for a community center has grown in Melissa. This community center could be a shared asset for Melissa and surrounding communities.



PS1.2 | The City should investigate ways in which it can work with other agencies and entities to provide public services and facilities.

- Other agencies and entities help fund various types of projects, including public facilities. Matching funds from the cities is often a requirement for Collin County funds. Melissa has been fortunate to receive some of these funds in the past for park facilities. The City should investigate the availability and opportunity for County funding for future public facilities and services such as library services, community buildings, and public safety needs (e.g., vehicles, materials).

PS1.2 | The City should recognize the need for quality-of-life related services and plan for such services as funds become available.

- Some services that the City should provide are not safety-related, but rather they are related to the local quality-of-life provided within Melissa. Funds for expanding library service, whether with additional space (above what is now provided in the City Hall), or with outreach programs, should be allocated as the City budget allows.
- There is support within the City for a community center. The center should be planned for an area that is accessible to a majority of residents, and should provide services for all age groups.

Policy 2: Provide for Public Safety Services in Advance of Population Growth

As stated previously within this *Public Services & Facilities Plan*, providing for public safety and meeting other citizen needs are the primary function of government. Therefore, the City needs to be ready to meet these objectives as population growth occurs.

PS2.1 | The City should proactively plan for police and fire service expansion, and a service center.

- As the City grows in population, new fire stations must be built to maintain adequate coverage. The next location needed should be decided upon in the next year to two years, and property should be purchased. General criteria that the City should use in assessing a piece of property as a potential fire station location are as follows:
 - The property should be at least one acre in size.
 - The property should not be located along an arterial roadway, but should be within approximately 500 feet of an arterial roadway.
 - The property should not be located along a major physical barrier, such as a rail line.
 - The property should be located with consideration to service areas, as shown on **Figure 7-1**.
- The relocation of police service to the City Hall has provided enough room for expansion of the police force for several years to come.



- However, this will not likely be an appropriate long-term solution, given the number of personnel and police vehicles Melissa will require as the population continues to grow.
- A specific piece of property for a police headquarter location should be researched in the next few years. One possibility would be a joint site location with a new service center.

Policy 3: Project a Positive Image of the City through the Design of Public Facilities

This policy is one that in the past has been easily understood and embraced. A good example is the old, ornate county courthouses in Texas that were once the embodiment of county government. Although these old courthouses that still stand are now celebrated historic landmarks, in more recent times public buildings have become increasingly utilitarian.

PS3.1 | The City should ensure that future public facilities are designed to project a positive image of Melissa.

- City leaders have recognized that the City Hall needs to be a representation of the City itself. This policy supports that recognition, and endorses a continuation of this recognition in future facilities.
- Through the City “leading by example,” other types of development, such as retail uses, will be more amenable to providing sites, building designs, site amenities, etc. that also project a positive image of Melissa. For example, some cities choose to require all future municipal buildings meet LEED or require some type of sustainable design criteria.

Policy 4: Ensure Educational Facilities Meet Local Needs

The availability of educational resources is key to an educated citizenry. There are various facets that are involved in this—such as the local school district, adult education programs, and higher education opportunities. Education is often mentioned as one of the primary reasons that people move into or out of a community. As one non-profit organization that is focused on factors related to livability asserts, “without question, education is a critical component of a livable community.”⁷⁻² Given the importance of education to a community’s livability and sustainability, Melissa should continue to foster close relationships with local education providers and should strive to increase local educational opportunities.

⁷⁻² Local Government Commission Website. Community Design link; Schools link, ADDRESS: <http://www.lgc.org/communitydesign/schools.html>.



PS4.1 | The City should investigate the feasibility of cooperatively working with a local facility that would provide continuing/higher education opportunities.

- Providing continuing education and/or higher education opportunities locally would be advantageous for the senior citizen population, and well as for recent graduates of Melissa High School (and other area high schools).
- The City should continue discussions with Collin County Community College to encourage a local location.
- Other continuing education/higher education options should be explored. One option would be a local location of another institution, such as a technical college or small private college. Another option would be a facility within which various colleges or universities offer classes. This latter option is one that is becoming increasingly utilized.⁷⁻³

PS4.2 | The City should strive to attract other educational facilities, museums, and other types of cultural destinations.

- The addition of cultural destinations will give the residents more recreational options within the City limits of Melissa.
- The cultural destinations will also create a small tourism market for Melissa. These facilities would play a large role in the marketing and branding plan that is discussed in the Future Land Use Plan (Chapter 3).

⁷⁻³ Examples of cities in Texas with such a facility include Burnet, Fredericksburg, Junction, and Marble Falls.