EDINBURG 26340 BUILDING FOR TOMORROW'S FUTURE, TODAY!





With growth comes great responsibility, and great cities look ahead to the future while still preserving their histories, cultures, and traditions.

Today, Edinburg is one of the fastest growing cities in the state of Texas. In fact, among all U.S. cities with 100,000 or more residents, Edinburg was the twelfth-fastest growing city in the country in 2010-2020.

We want to build on that momentum, but we know managing growth in a way that benefits all residents will be challenging—and we will need your help.

In February 2022, we launched Edinburg 2040, a community-driven, strategic planning initiative to develop a long-range vision for the city. Through a series of town halls held in different locations around the city, as well as a household survey conducted by the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, we were able to engage with more than 2,000 members of the community.

This report summarizes what we learned from you, about community priorities today, and what your vision is for the Edinburg of tomorrow.

Thank you for participating in this initiative. I look forward to working together to make your vision a reality.



Mayor Ramiro Garza, Jr.
City of Edinburg



City Council



Ramiro Garza, Jr., Mayor



Johnny Garcia, Mayor Pro Tem



Daniel 'Dan' Diaz, Place 1



Jason De Leon, Place 2



David White, Place 4

Myra L. Ayala City Manager

Overview



Purpose

Edinburg 2040 is a community-driven, strategic planning initiative to develop a long-range vision for the city. The initiative was designed to gauge perceptions of the community, obtain feedback on city services, and establish priorities for city planning and budgeting. The goal of the process was to engage residents in a discussion of where we are today, where we want to go in the future, and how we will get there. While information collected from residents through the Edinburg 2040 process will be used in the short-term for FY 2023 budgeting, the initiative is intended to be an ongoing conversation with the community.

Participation

Edinburg 2040 included two primary means of community engagement: town hall meetings and a resident survey. Approximately **100** community members attended a series of four town halls held in February-March, 2022. Meetings were held at City Hall, Los Lagos, Legacy Chapels, and Boys & Girls Club.

In addition, the City contracted with the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley to conduct a survey of residents in the city limits, collecting responses online and through the mail. The survey was open February 10 – March 31, 2022. More than **2,000** residents participated in the survey.









Defining Characteristics

- Residents are exceptionally proud of Edinburg's sense of community, cultural diversity and history, and outdoor recreation—defining features of a "place."
- Residents embrace opportunities resulting from growth and development, but want the community to maintain its "hometown" character—e.g., many want a vibrant, family-friendly downtown, but value a quiet, peaceful environment.
- Residents view Edinburg as somewhere you can "age in place"—it rates highly across life stages as a place to live, raise children, work, and retire.
- As the gateway to the Rio Grande Valley with room to grow, Edinburg is uniquely positioned to offer a variety of urban, suburban, and rural lifestyle options.
- Edinburg is welcoming, inclusive, and values diversity, as reflected in the city's wide range of well-attended cultural activities and events.
- Residents feel safe in their neighborhoods and around the city overall, but want more investment in bike/pedestrian routes, street lighting, etc.
- Residents are generally satisfied with the city's overall appearance and image, but want more compliance with property maintenance codes.









Key Assets

Residents were asked to identify Edinburg's unique or defining features as a way to differentiate the city from other communities in the Rio Grande Valley and develop a consensus on key assets—i.e. the elevator pitch that answers, "Why Edinburg?"

- UTRGV the city's "talent pipeline," catalyst for development that aligns with resident preferences for more entertainment, restaurants, and shopping
- Cultural Arts Museum of South Texas History, festivals
- Professional Sports teams (Vipers, Toros), venues (Arena, H-E-B Park)
- Outdoor Recreation municipal golf courses, World Birding Center, parks
- Public Sector county seat, largest school district in county
- Healthcare hospitals (DHR, STHS), medical school
- Location 14 miles of highway, northward expansion











Residents were asked to describe their vision for the future of the city. The following themes emerged as potential focus areas. These consensus themes could be used to create committees, strategic plans, or budgeting for implementation.

- Growth
- Safety
- Mobility/Connectivity
- Health
- Government Transparency/Openness
- Cultural Arts
- Entertainment
- Equity
- Beautification

These themes are not mutually exclusive; implementation strategies or projects may address multiple priorities. In other words, choosing one path does not necessarily mean neglecting another. For example, investing in protected bike lanes could be relevant to safety, mobility/connectivity, health, and equity.









Future Vision

The implementation phase of Edinburg 2040 could involve creating goals, strategies, and initiatives or projects that help achieve the community's vision for the city. Residents offered many ideas in the town halls and the survey, including the following representative comments and suggestions:

In 2040, Edinburg is...

- "... the largest city in Hidalgo County."
- "... growing fast and growing together."
- "... home to a Fortune 500 company."
- "... growing sustainably."
- "... a five-time All-America City."
- "... a true college town."
- "... a creative hub."
- "...affordable and accessible to everybody."
- "... healthier."

How do we get there?

- Year-round family attractions (e.g., children's museum)
- Mobility (protected bike lanes, frequent bus, sidewalks)
- Interconnected greenspace/trail system
- Food banks
- Living-wage jobs
- Civic participation (e.g., public safety academy)
- Nightlife
- Convention center
- Public art



Survey Methodology

The City of Edinburg partnered with the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley to conduct a survey of residents for the purpose of gauging perceptions of the community, obtaining feedback on city services, and identifying priorities. The survey was available to residents in the city limits and conducted via mail and online, February 10 – March 31, 2022. It was six pages in length, available in English and Spanish, and required approximately ten minutes to complete.

2,031 residents completed the survey, or about 3% of the adult population.

Technical Note

Survey results were based, in part, on an unweighted, non-random sample of city residents self-selecting into the sample (i.e. completing the survey online). Self-selection can result in over-representation of certain residents, such as those who are more comfortable working online (with internet access), more likely to attend public meetings, more knowledgeable of city business, etc.

Accordingly, compared to the total population, survey respondents were much more likely to be homeowners, age 35 or older, with completed postsecondary education, and higher incomes.

This technical issue is not critical for informing or implementing the Vision, but should be noted for appropriate interpretation of the survey results.

	Sample	Population
Homeowner	84%	52%
Renter	16%	48%
Female	61%	48%
Male	39%	52%
Age 18-34	23%	44%
Age 35-54	49%	34%
Age 55+	28%	22%
Hispanic/Latino	86%	87%
Not Hispanic/Latino	14%	12%
\$0 to \$35,000	19%	41%
\$35,001 to \$75,000	32%	30%
\$75,001 to \$100,000	17%	7%
More than \$100,000	33%	23%
Postsecondary Degree	67%	35%

^{*} Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.



Community Perceptions

Residents are highly satisfied with most aspects of living and working in the city of Edinburg.

The majority of respondents rated the city highly across all stages of life, as a place to live (87%), raise children (85%), work (73%), and retire (70%). Among residents age 65 or older, 84% were satisfied with Edinburg as a retirement destination.

Resident perceptions of quality of life in Edinburg were also consistently positive across life stages, with early-(18-34), mid- (35-54), and later-career (55+) residents all reporting satisfaction levels of 70% or more, a key advantage in attracting and retaining workforce and maintaining a strong local economy.

In addition, the majority of respondents were satisfied with the city's appearance and image, as well as the community's embrace of diversity.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Place to live	87%	3%	10%
Place to raise children	85%	3%	12%
Quality of life	75%	6%	19%
Place to work	73%	8%	20%
Image	71%	10%	19%
Place to retire	70%	9%	22%
Welcoming of diversity	66%	9%	25%
Appearance	56%	20%	24%
Place to start a business*	53%	9%	38%

^{*} Note the large percentage of neutral responses, which could be explained by the fact that most people do not own businesses and may not have a positive or negative view of Edinburg as a place to start a business.



City Services

Overall, residents are satisfied with city services, with several categories—Fire, Library, Police, Parks, EMS, Cultural Arts—highly rated at 60% or better. Of the 15 major categories of services, the majority of residents reported satisfactory ratings for 11 of them.

In fact, of the nearly **100** topics included in the survey, **none** were rated as majority dissatisfied.

That said, improvements are needed in several areas. More than 30% of respondents were dissatisfied with the condition of city streets, drainage, and traffic flow.

Code enforcement also scored relatively low, but the favorable responses in the survey outnumbered the unfavorable responses by a wide margin (and many were neutral, likely due to unfamiliarity).

Most survey respondents (59%) were satisfied with the City's customer service. Of those contacting the City with a question, problem, or complaint recently, 66% said it was easy to get the issue resolved and 57% rated customer service positively.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Fire	83%	1%	16%
Library	73%	3%	23%
Police	71%	8%	22%
Parks	68%	13%	19%
EMS	68%	5%	27%
Cultural Arts	63%	8%	29%
Recreation	58%	12%	30%
Utilities	57%	18%	25%
Building/Facility Maintenance	56%	11%	32%
Communication	56%	15%	28%
Solid Waste	54%	23%	22%
Code Enforcement	43%	23%	34%
Traffic Management	39%	33%	27%
Drainage	34%	38%	28%
Streets	31%	44%	25%



Community Needs

The City of Edinburg must submit a community needs assessment to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in order to receive Community Development Block Grant funding. Residents were asked a series of questions in the 2040 Survey to fulfill this federal requirement.

According to survey respondents, the City's <u>current</u> focus should be on the following priorities (top five):

- 1. Street lighting
- 2. Sidewalks
- 3. Senior services
- 4. Veteran services
- 5. Crime prevention/public safety

Survey results suggest there is some consensus on street lighting, sidewalks, and veteran services as high-priority, current areas of emphasis.

Total Households	Low-Income Households*
Street lighting	Health services
Health services	Education services
Education services	Sidewalks
Crime prevention/public safety	Domestic violence services
Youth services	Street lighting
Veteran services	Down payment assistance
Domestic violence services	Veteran services
Sidewalks	Child care
Youth centers	Job training
Elderly housing	Youth services
Job training	Rental assistance
Child care	Homeowner housing repairs
Energy conservation	Elderly housing
Recreational services	Fair housing counseling
Residential lead-based paint removal	Homeless services

Note: Table shows top fifteen categories ranked by percentage of respondents indicating high priority.

* Defined here as household income less than \$15,000 (N = 60).



Priorities

Residents were asked to prioritize services that should receive the most emphasis from city officials over the next two years. The following list of short-term (two-year) priorities was generated from the survey results and town hall discussions.

1. Street Quality

Approximately one-third of respondents identified streets as the top priority, easily outpacing every other category of city service in the survey. Residents are equally dissatisfied with major city streets and neighborhood streets.

2. Drainage

Drainage is the second-highest ranking priority. Resident dissatisfaction (41%) is on par with streets (44%), and about one out of every five residents views drainage as the most important priority for city officials.

3. Street Lighting

Residents generally feel safe in the city and in their neighborhoods at night, with the exception of downtown. However, 39% of residents are dissatisfied with the state of street lighting in the community, roughly equivalent to streets and drainage. Further, street lighting was among the highest-ranking priorities and community needs.









4. Pedestrian Accessibility

Residents want more (or better) sidewalks, in their neighborhoods and on major city streets. Approximately one-third of respondents were dissatisfied with the quality or availability of sidewalks, tracking just behind street lighting.

5. Property Maintenance

The term "code enforcement" is not very well understood, and thus may not rank as highly as other resident priorities for city services. However, several issues surfaced in the survey results and town hall meetings. For example, the majority of residents are satisfied with the cleanliness of their neighborhoods, and about one out of two are neutral (or no opinion) on the extent to which code violations are a problem in the city. But many residents are dissatisfied with weedy lots (43%), littering (37%), and related property maintenance or other "beautification" issues.

6. Traffic Management

Traffic is an inevitable byproduct of growth, and relative to larger cities, congestion in Edinburg is minimal and limited to peak periods. Nonetheless, nearly one out of ten residents view traffic management as the city's top priority, with a significant number perceiving traffic signal timing as the primary issue.





While the results of this process will be used to help shape short-term priorities and budgeting considerations, Edinburg 2040 is an ongoing initiative. As such, this is a "living" document that will evolve as community priorities do.

The next step is to determine how this Vision will be operationalized.

Key Questions

- Did we get it right—does this report accurately reflect what we heard?
- Are the themes or focus areas the right ones (Growth, Safety, Mobility/Connectivity, Health, Government Transparency/Openness, Cultural Arts, Entertainment, Equity, Beautification)?
- How will the Vision be implemented, and who will do it—create new committees/taskforces, work through existing City advisory committees, some other way?
- What existing city initiatives or projects align to the 2040 priorities, and what new requests or changes in direction will be needed for FY 2023?



Detailed Survey Results





Q1.

Please rate your overall satisfaction with major categories of services provided by the City of Edinburg.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Fire	83%	1%	16%
Library	73%	3%	23%
Police	71%	8%	22%
Parks	68%	13%	19%
EMS	68%	5%	27%
Cultural Arts	63%	8%	29%
Recreation	58%	12%	30%
Utilities	57%	18%	25%
Building/Facility Maintenance	56%	11%	32%
Communication	56%	15%	28%
Solid Waste	54%	23%	22%
Code Enforcement	43%	23%	34%
Traffic Management	39%	33%	27%
Drainage	34%	38%	28%
Streets	31%	44%	25%



Q2.

Which three of the major categories of city services do you think should receive the most emphasis from city leaders over the next two years?



	First	Second	Third
Streets	32%	19%	13%
Drainage	21%	16%	12%
Traffic Management	8%	11%	12%
Police	7%	4%	5%
Utilities	6%	7%	6%
Parks	6%	8%	8%
Solid Waste	5%	9%	11%
Code Enforcement	3%	6%	5%
Cultural Arts	2%	3%	7%
Communication	2%	3%	4%
Recreation	2%	4%	5%
EMS	2%	2%	3%
Library	2%	1%	2%
Customer Service	1%	2%	3%
Fire	1%	2%	1%
Building/Facility Maintenance	1%	2%	2%





Q3.

Several items that may influence your perception of Edinburg are listed below. Please rate your satisfaction with each item.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Place to live	87%	3%	10%
Place to raise children	85%	3%	12%
Overall quality of life	75%	6%	19%
Place to work	73%	8%	20%
Overall image	71%	10%	19%
Place to retire	70%	9%	22%
Welcoming of diversity	66%	9%	25%
Overall appearance	56%	20%	24%
Place to start a business	53%	9%	38%
City management	49%	16%	35%
Elected leadership	49%	17%	34%



Maintenance

Q4.

Please rate your satisfaction with the following services provided by the City.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Overall cleanliness of streets and public areas	49%	24%	27%
Appearance/condition of city medians, ROWs, public areas	47%	22%	31%
Timing of traffic signals on city streets	43%	31%	27%
Condition of landscaping along public streets	42%	26%	32%
Condition of major city streets	41%	36%	23%
Pedestrian accessibility	39%	34%	27%
Condition of sidewalks in your neighborhood	39%	38%	23%
Traffic flow on major city streets	37%	35%	28%
Condition of pavement markings on city streets	36%	31%	32%
Condition of streets in your neighborhood	36%	44%	20%
Adequacy of city street lighting	35%	39%	26%



Maintenance

Q5.

Which two city maintenance services do you think should receive the most emphasis from city leaders over the next two years?

	First	Second
Condition of major city streets	18%	8%
Adequacy of city street lighting	17%	17%
Condition of streets in your neighborhood	17%	10%
Pedestrian accessibility	11%	13%
Traffic flow on major city streets	10%	11%
Timing of traffic signals on city streets	9%	8%
Overall cleanliness of streets and public areas	4%	10%
Condition of landscaping along public streets	4%	7%
Condition of sidewalks in your neighborhood	4%	7%
Condition of pavement markings on city streets	4%	6%
Appearance/condition of city medians, ROWs, public areas	2%	4%



Police, Fire, Emergency Services

Q6.

Please rate your satisfaction with the following public safety services provided by the City.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Quality of fire protection	71%	2%	27%
Quality of police protection	67%	8%	25%
Fire personnel emergency response time	66%	2%	32%
911 service provided by operators	62%	3%	35%
911 response time from first responders	60%	5%	35%
Enforcement of traffic laws	56%	14%	29%
Quality of fire safety education programs	55%	7%	39%
Visibility of police in retail areas	54%	15%	31%
Police response time	52%	11%	36%
Visibility of police in neighborhoods	52%	21%	27%
Efforts to prevent crime	49%	13%	38%
Quality/accessibility of municipal court services	47%	8%	45%
Disaster preparedness public education	45%	18%	37%
Quality of animal control services	44%	23%	33%
Police safety education programs	40%	15%	45%



Police, Fire, Emergency Services

Q7.

Which two public safety services do you think should receive the most emphasis from city leaders over the next two years?

	First	Second
Visibility of police in neighborhoods	20%	12%
Disaster preparedness public education	16%	14%
Quality of animal control services	14%	13%
Efforts to prevent crime	9%	14%
Quality of police protection	8%	3%
Enforcement of traffic laws	8%	7%
Police response time	5%	5%
Visibility of police in retail areas	5%	7%
Police safety education programs	4%	7%
911 response time from first responders	4%	5%
Quality/accessibility of municipal court services	2%	3%



Feeling of Safety

Q8.

Please rate how safe you feel in the following situations.

	Safe	Unsafe	Neutral
In your neighborhood during the day	86%	3%	10%
Overall in the city	71%	5%	24%
In your neighborhood at night	66%	13%	21%
In commercial and retail areas	64%	8%	28%
In the City's parks, trails, recreational areas	51%	15%	34%
Downtown after dark	30%	30%	40%
Traveling by bicycle in Edinburg	25%	38%	37%



Code Enforcement

Q9.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Cleanliness in your neighborhood	53%	22%	25%
Enforcement of loud music	39%	25%	36%
Overall responsiveness of city code enforcement staff	38%	16%	46%
Clean-up of debris/litter	38%	37%	25%
City effort to enforce code violations	37%	21%	42%
Efforts to enforce exterior maintenance/upkeep of residential property	34%	33%	33%
Degree to which code violations are a problem	31%	20%	49%
Enforcement of parking on grass in front yard	27%	33%	40%
Enforcement of weedy lots, abandoned vehicles, graffiti	25%	43%	32%
Efforts to remove dilapidated structures	24%	38%	38%
Efforts to identify abandoned or unsafe properties	23%	37%	40%



Residential and Neighborhood Services

Q10.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Quality of residential garbage collection	72%	12%	16%
Quality of residential curbside recycling services	46%	21%	32%
Quality of residential brush collection	45%	33%	22%
Importance of neighborhood associations	35%	16%	50%





Q11.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Quality of wastewater services	55%	11%	33%
Quality of drinking water	49%	23%	29%
Quality of drainage infrastructure	33%	41%	26%



Parks and Recreation

Q12.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Quality of city parks	67%	11%	22%
Quality of Edinburg Scenic Wetlands & World Birding Center	64%	5%	31%
Number and location of city parks	60%	18%	22%
Quality of city sponsored events and activities	59%	12%	28%
Quality/availability of accessible routes to and from playgrounds	54%	13%	33%
Quality of youth sports programs	54%	11%	36%
Quality of picnic, pavilion areas, playgrounds at city parks	54%	18%	28%
Number, quality, condition of walking and biking trails	52%	24%	24%
Quality of outdoor athletic fields	49%	15%	36%
Recreational opportunities	48%	18%	34%
Number, quality, condition of swimming pools and splash pads	47%	22%	32%
Quality of city golf courses (Ebony Hills and Los Lagos)	45%	10%	46%
Quality of adult sports programs	40%	15%	45%



City Communication

Q14.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Quality of the City's social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	61%	6%	33%
Quality of the City's website	57%	11%	32%
City's efforts to keep you informed	57%	14%	29%
Availability of information on City services and programs	56%	13%	31%
Level of public involvement in local decision-making	39%	23%	38%
Transparency of City government	35%	27%	38%
City's station, ECN-1300	33%	7%	60%
Quality of auxiliary aid or services for person with sensory disabilities	32%	11%	57%



Development Services

Q16.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Building inspections	32%	9%	59%
Obtaining a residential building permit	32%	9%	59%
Quality of communication during the development process	27%	8%	65%
Obtaining a commercial building permit	26%	6%	69%



Education

Q17.

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
Overall quality of your local schools	62%	14%	24%
Overall condition of your local schools	55%	21%	24%



Community Needs

Q18.

Please rate the importance (priority level) of the following services needed in our community.

	High	Medium	Low	Not Sure
Health services	70%	11%	11%	7%
Education programs	67%	9%	13%	11%
New sidewalk construction in residential areas	61%	16%	18%	5%
Services to assist victims of domestic violence and abuse	56%	11%	22%	11%
Street lighting in residential areas	56%	14%	23%	7%
Down payment assistance	55%	14%	18%	13%
Veteran services	54%	15%	22%	9%
Child care programs	54%	19%	20%	7%
Job training programs	54%	18%	20%	9%
Youth services	53%	9%	18%	21%
Rental assistance	52%	20%	17%	11%
Housing repairs/reconstruction assistance for homeowners	52%	12%	26%	10%
Housing for elderly	51%	13%	25%	11%
Fair housing counseling	51%	15%	26%	8%
Homeless population services	50%	15%	24%	11%
Energy conservation	50%	19%	17%	15%



Community Needs (cont'd)

Q18.

Please rate the importance (priority level) of the following services needed in our community.

	High	Medium	Low	Not Sure
Crime prevention and public safety	49%	15%	24%	13%
Lead-based paint removal in homes	49%	17%	19%	15%
Youth centers	48%	14%	23%	14%
Substance abuse services	45%	16%	25%	13%
Asbestos removal in homes	44%	13%	27%	15%
Public housing	44%	20%	18%	18%
Multi-family housing repair assistance	43%	20%	19%	19%
Senior services	42%	12%	18%	28%
Senior centers	42%	18%	18%	23%
Welfare services	41%	13%	32%	14%
Recreational services	40%	24%	31%	5%
Historic preservation	39%	20%	30%	11%
Transitional or temporary housing	38%	18%	22%	22%
Parking facilities	34%	30%	27%	9%
New home construction	27%	36%	22%	15%



Community Needs

Q19.

Which two community needs do you think should receive the most emphasis from city leaders over the next two years?

	First	Second
Street lighting in residential areas	14%	11%
Senior services	11%	4%
New sidewalk construction in residential areas	9%	7%
Housing for elderly	6%	4%
Crime prevention and public safety	6%	6%
Veterans services	6%	7%
Youth services	4%	5%
Housing repairs/reconstruction assistance for homeowners	4%	2%
Health services	4%	5%
Homeless population services	4%	3%
Education programs	3%	7%
Services to assist victims of domestic violence and abuse	3%	3%
Historic preservation	3%	4%
Youth centers	3%	3%
Job training programs	3%	5%
Down payment assistance	2%	2%



Community Needs (cont'd)

Q19.

Which two community needs do you think should receive the most emphasis from city leaders over the next two years?

	First	Second
Recreational services	2%	2%
Energy conservation	2%	4%
Rental assistance	2%	2%
Substance abuse services	2%	2%
Parking facilities	2%	1%
New home construction	1%	1%
Child care programs	1%	2%
Public housing	1%	1%
Asbestos removal in homes	1%	1%
Fair housing counseling	1%	0%
Lead-based paint removal in homes	0%	1%
Multi-family housing repair assistance	0%	1%
Senior centers	0%	2%
Transitional or temporary housing	0%	0%
Welfare services	0%	1%



Technology Access

- Q20. 93% of residents have access to a computer (64% with household income < \$15,000).
- Q21. 96% have access to internet at home (78% with household income < \$15,000).
- Q22. 93% with access to internet at home have wireless (89% with household income < \$15,000).



Other Questions

Q26. In the last 12 months...

- 88% of residents visited a city park.
- 65% of residents visited the city library.
- 57% of residents attended a city cultural arts event.
- 38% of residents rode a bicycle on city streets or trails.
- 28% of residents attended a city council or other public meeting.
- 18% of residents applied for a permit or inspection online through the city website.
- 12% of residents used 311 to call the City.
- 6% of residents rode the bus.