



## The Central Texas Greenprint for Growth: *A Regional Action Plan for Conservation and Economic Opportunity*



### A Green Vision for Central Texas

Central Texas is one of the fastest growing regions in the country. In fact, experts estimate that in twenty years, the population will increase by another

million. **A big part of what makes the region so attractive is its natural amenities:** lakes and rivers, farms and ranches, nature preserves, parks and hike and bike trails. The unique heritage and natural beauty of the area contribute directly to its lauded economic vitality, fostering the kind of livable communities that attract the very best businesses and jobs.

Working with the region's citizens from 2002-2004, Envision Central Texas (ECT) created a vision for how we would like our region to grow in the future. Overwhelmingly, citizens expressed a desire to protect and preserve the environment, natural resources, water and air quality, recreational areas and other important elements that will ensure future generations enjoy the quality of life we have today. Rather than simply reacting to growth and sprawl or settling for what land is left after development occurs, **this vision advocates proactively planning for a green infrastructure** that is as important to our future as power lines, wastewater treatment facilities and roads.



### What is Greenprinting?

To help identify this valuable *green infrastructure* for Central Texas, ECT formed a partnership with the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL), to complete a *Greenprint*

for Growth for the region. **This proactive planning tool uses a sophisticated computer model** that takes multiple Geographic Information Systems (GIS) layers of information about a specific area and integrates this data with local conservation goals to help communities make strategic, objective decisions about land conservation and development priorities. Greenprinting has been used successfully around the country, helping preserve an area's natural environment and character, identifying lands whose protection could meet **multiple conservation priorities**, and helping diverse community members **reach common ground** on conservation priorities as well as development and infrastructure goals.

### How Does Greenprinting Work?

The Greenprinting process engages community leaders in a collaborative effort to define conservation priorities and establish criteria that reflect locally distinctive resources and objectives. Then, using state-of-the-art GIS models, the Greenprint analyzes this community-based data and **generates maps and reports that provide unique insights for formulating conservation acquisition strategies or development goals.** The maps show color-coded areas that best meet the priorities defined by the community and makes the determination of conservation targets a much more scientific process. The "living" computer models may be updated for changing priorities and needs. .



### Why Create a Central Texas Greenprint?

In October 2009, the Greenprinting process was completed in Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays and Travis Counties.

These **integrated, interactive green infrastructure maps are invaluable tools** to identify and preserve critical open space for trails, parks, habitats as well as understand which land is most appropriate for development. The regional nature of this Greenprint helps to identify synergies between jurisdictions and develop strategies to support collective and individual county land protection plans.



The interactive Greenprint maps will be available on November 11, 2009 on the Information Clearinghouse section of [www.capcog.org](http://www.capcog.org). Other materials that will be available include a 46-page printed report or pdf of the Central Texas Greenprint for Growth, a 46-page report or pdf of the Travis County Greenprint for Growth, and 12-page summary Greenprint brochures for Bastrop County, Caldwell County and Hays County. The Central Texas Greenprint for Growth initiative was made possible by contributions and grants from the Federal Highway Administration, the Lower Colorado River Foundation, the Shield Ayres Foundation, and Bastrop, Caldwell and Hays Counties. To download materials, visit the Resources Section of [www.envisioncentraltexas.org](http://www.envisioncentraltexas.org) or, for if you have questions, email Diane Miller at [dmiller@envisioncentraltexas.org](mailto:dmiller@envisioncentraltexas.org).

