



Smithville Economic Development Strategic/Resiliency Plan

Implementation Section

Draft for Public Workshop 7/30/2020

The Smithville Economic Development/Community Resiliency Strategic Plan Report will consist of four overall elements 1) public participation-outreach strategy 2) historical development and general characteristics 3) economic profile and 4) implementation plan. The implementation plan element is the final element of the Strategic Plan. This plan recognizes the recommendations of the Smithville stakeholders, the desires of community citizens. It also recognizes the history of past actions and plans of the City, the economic characteristic and economic potential. The implementation plan set forth the Mission of the Strategic Plan: enabling Meaningful Growth. This Mission Statement is sustained by four pillars of the plan as defined and professed by the citizen participants. These pillars make Smithville unique and establish its Plan as a reflection of the City: 1) The Community, 2) the Downtown, 3) Arts and 4) the Colorado River. The 7 goals have a one- to five-year focus. The action objectives under each goal will help to achieve the goal through the tasks identified. Important to the success of this plan is annual review and celebration of achievements. Tasks may change after these reviews; however, the goals should remain in place for five years. Smithville's resiliency and its ability to change, recover, grow and sustain its economy is based on its elasticity and the overall plan moving forward, adapting and overcoming the obstacles, addressing diversity in an economic and social sense and listening to the desires of all the citizens to provide meaningful growth and opportunity. The Plan is to be a joyful journey and celebration of achievements.

- ❖ The Mission (why we plan): "Meaningful Growth"
- ❖ Pillars of the Plan (Foundation of Implementation Efforts)
 - Community
 - Downtown
 - Arts
 - Colorado River
- 1. The Goals: (1 to 5-year focus)
 - ✓ Increase market awareness beyond Smithville
 - ✓ Facilitate a range of housing opportunities
 - ✓ Guide development adjacent to SH71; encourage hotel and airport development
 - ✓ Focus the industrial attraction to the SH71/SH95 Smithville Industrial Park
 - ✓ Continue the Downtown Renaissance
 - ✓ Enhance the Experience of the Colorado River/Gazley Creek

- ✓ Review the Accomplishment and Celebrate the Success
- 2. Action Objectives (Overall 5-year path to meeting the goals)
Described in the following pages....
- 3. Tasks (Annual to 5-year activities of the plan, tasks may change each year)
Described in the following pages....
- 4. Subcommittees of the Chamber Economic Development Committee to implement the plan tasks include the following teams
 - Marketing Team
 - Incentive Team
 - Neighborhood Housing Team
 - SH71 Development Team
 - Housing Finance Team
 - Downtown Development Team
 - Colorado River Parks Team
 - Colorado River/Gazley Creek Trails Team

Each of the seven (7) goals for the Smithville Strategic Economic Development/Resiliency Plan are supported with Action Objectives, which provide the path to meeting the goals in five (5) years. Tasks under each action objective are the annual activities of the Teams to implement the objectives which will then meet the goals.

GOAL No. 1: Increase market awareness beyond Smithville

Action Objective: *Prepare economic development web site & brochure.*

1. Task: Chamber of Commerce create, update and utilized web site section exclusively for economic development. Monthly add to and update. \$2,500 annually.
2. Task: Chamber of Commerce create digital tri-fold brochure and one-page economic development advertisement and keep up to date. \$1,500 annually.

Action Objective: *Organize marketing team, develop network of public agency contacts and schedule contacting of the network*

1. Task: Organize marketing team of 3 to 5 city and chamber officials and utilize the team to schedule calls, hold regular zoom meetings, visits and prepare quarterly Constant Contact newsletter.
2. Task: Develop a 30 second to 1-minute elevator speech about the advantages of investing in Smithville. Change out the speech quarterly.
3. Task: Build the network of key County, State, Regional Public Officials, plus Federal Agency and Development Agencies officials. Plan a contact a day (one a week per marketing team member) marketing Smithville and building the development network for Smithville. Tell the story of why to invest in Smithville. Document the call, name, email or phone and discussion. Share documentation with the marketing team. Key State Officials include the State Representative and State Senator and their staff, State agencies and their staff including the Governor's Office of Economic Development, Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas General Land Office, Texas Water Development Board, Austin Area Chamber of Commerce, Capital Area Council of Government, University of Texas Real Estate Office, Texas A & M RELLIS Campus, Lower

Colorado River Authority, Union Pacific Railroad. Add in years two through five Federal and County Agencies to build the network for Smithville's development. Annually build a list of 100 key public agency officials for the network.

Action Objective: *Develop a network of private sector development interests.*

1. Task: Marketing team to build the network of key private sector stakeholders, investors, developers, Realtors, and large property owners. Plan one contact a day (one a week per marketing team member) to discuss Smithville and the community's interest in new development. In the initial year begin the contacts with local investors, local Realtors, local property owners and builders/developers. Each year add more outside contacts to this list. Document the calls, name, email or phone and discussion. Share documentation with the marketing team members. Plan quarterly Constant Contact email to this key private sector network participants. Annually develop a list of 100 key private sector contacts. Send this network the Smithville Economic Development newsletter through Constant Contact.

Action Objective: *Attend Statewide or regional marketing events.*

1. Task: Marketing Team to attend 2 to 3 trade shows or similar marketing events (virtually or in-place) annually. Invite local property developers and Realtors to participate.
2. Task: Chamber to develop Smithville marketing booth display of table covering with logo, pull up banners, and material handouts for marketing events.
3. Task: Plan to attend Austin Live (Retail trade show), ICSC Deal Making (International Council of Shopping Center Red River Deal Making) and North Texas Commercial Association of Realtors annual trade show events. Begin to work on virtual and digital displays and techniques due to the COVID-19. Seek out unique marketing events in unfamiliar opportunities that may assist in marketing Smithville. Include events related to the State Parks and recreation, agricultural, education and technology. Plan on \$2,500 to \$5,000 annually for this effort.
4. Task: Attend trade show training provided at no cost by Trade Show companies that provide trade show displays.

Action Objective: *Prepare a property inventory (What is available and shovel ready for development, sale, or lease).*

1. Task: Ask area Realtors to provide their electronic graphic of the information that they have for properties for sale, lease, or development. Have the Chamber place these information graphics on the economic development web site. Share with the marketing team to be sure this team is aware of the investment and development opportunities in Smithville.
2. Task: Marketing Team to prepare information sheets for property where owner has not employed a Realtor. If the property is for sale add it to the inventory with an information sheet and graphic location.
3. Task: Keep the inventory up to date and add 10 properties per year to the inventory and Chamber web site. Include commercial, industrial, and residential developments.

Action Objective: *Prepare a formal development incentive plan as an investment objective.*

1. Task: Organize an Incentive Team; three from the City and Chamber of Commerce economic development committee to prepare the menu of incentives that Smithville will want to have available for development project attraction.

2. Task: Review consultants such as Impact Data Source and their fees and services for cost/benefit analysis (direct and indirect costs and benefits) and become prepared to utilize this or other services to review incentive options as projects become available.
3. Task: Prepare a quick analysis system, in Excel format, of a sample project impact including size-acres, size-building, value of property and value of new construction, value of property tax from land, value of property tax from new construction, and estimate of potential sales tax all at year one plus years 5 and 10. Utilize the format to review the existing values of property and the new value of taxes from improvements against the cost of an incentive. Run sample scenarios to test the analysis for a quick review of a potential project against the cost of the incentives that could be offered.
4. Task: Review business incentive opportunities at the local, state and federal levels including the existing façade improvement program, a policy on tax abatement, tax increment financing, 380/381 economic development incentive agreements, freeport tax exemption, goods-in-transit exemption, use of Municipal Management Districts and Neighborhood Empowerment Zones, funds available through Texas at the Governor’s Office of Economic Development and other Texas Agencies see...<https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/business/IncentivesOverview.pdf> . The Texas incentive funds include HB 1200 value limitation and tax credit, Texas Enterprise Zone, Texas Enterprise Fund, Skills Development Fund, Events Trust Fund, plus other opportunities. At the Federal level, the “new” Opportunity Zone tax credits offer a new opportunity for properties adjoining Smithville.
5. Task: Introduce a menu of incentive opportunities and the impact analysis of when to use an incentive to City Council. Develop and provide to Council an annual training session to discuss why to invest in incentives and select one or two opportunities annually to review and incorporate into the marketing of new investment in Smithville.

GOAL No. 2: Facilitate a range of housing opportunities

Action Objective: *Market available City in-fill residential lots*

1. Task: Organize a Neighborhood Housing Team of four members from the Chamber’s Economic Development Committee.
2. Task: Neighborhood Housing Team to annually target four City-infill lots from Sunnyside neighborhood and neighborhoods outside of the Historic Preservation zone.
3. Task: Neighborhood Housing Team to analyze and report the market advantages, barriers, and lot price for the list of target City-infill lots with data gathered from the property owners, City offices and Realtors. Prepare detail reports on the four properties as to ownership, asking price, available utilities, zoning, photos, and map of location.
4. Task: Neighborhood Housing Team to identify and meet with 6 local and area homebuilders to discuss and promote the four City-infill lots. See listing in Chamber of Commerce Directory for homebuilders to contact. Be sure to have accurate and up-to-date information concerning the in-fill lots for the meeting.
5. Task: By the end of 12 months, Neighborhood Housing Team to report to the Chamber’s Economic Development Committee the results of the analysis and homebuilder interviews for the City in-fill lots. Note the opportunities and barriers for each property.
6. Task: Neighborhood Housing Team to continue the annual marketing of City in-fill lots each year following steps identified above, eliminating the lots determined to be unfeasible for development, and adding new in-fill lots for study and analysis.

Action Objective: Market larger land tracts for residential development

1. Task: Organize SH 71 Development Team of five City Staff/Chamber Economic Development Committee members.
2. Task: SH 71 Development Team to Identify two to four land tracts suitable for residential development by residential development companies. Identify the actual landowner(s); Realtors (s) size of tract; zoning; water and sewer utilities, if available; access to SH71; location in Opportunity Zones or New Market Tax Credit zones; and land price offered or requested. Team to include the Village of Smithville site as one of the four tracts to be examined.
3. Task: SH 71 Development Team to analyze and report the market advantages, barriers and land price with data gathered from the land tract property owners, City offices and Realtors. Prepare a short report on each property.
4. Task: SH 71 Development Team to identify and meet with four Austin area homebuilders, Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (non-profit) to discuss the market feasibility of the selected two to four residential tracts identifying opportunities and note information provided on loss of opportunity of any land site presented. Ask the homebuilders for names of investors and developers who precede the homebuilder in the development process. Begin the contacting process by contacting D. R. Horton-America's Builder www.drhorton.com/contactus 521 345 4663-builder for Express, Emerald, Freedom, and DR Horton homes. Contact Pulte Homes www.pulte.com 512 399 2980 Builder for Centex, Del Webb. DiVesta, John Wieland Homes and Pulte Group, Inc. Contact Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation ddanenfelzer@tshc.org 512 477 3562. Contact Multi-family developer including Lonestar Development Partners info@ldpre.com 737 222 5333 and Lincoln Property Company 800 Sugaree Ave Austin, TX 78757 512 643 4563. Be sure to have accurate information on sites to present as well as up-to-date City demographic and housing information.
5. Task: SH 71 Development Team to build a marketing network of investors, developers, builders, contractors, and public agencies who will assist and participate in residential development in Smithville. Meet monthly with one from this network.
6. Task: SH 71 Development Team to report to the Chamber's Economic Development Committee the results of the analysis and marketing of the residential land tracts within 12 months.
7. Task: Continue the annual marketing of residential properties each year following steps identified above, eliminating the lands determined to be unfeasible for development, and adding new lands for study and analysis.

Action Objective: Find financing tools

1. Task: Organize a Housing Finance Team, of four from the Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee, Smithville Housing Authority, local banks, Mayor and City Staff.
2. Task: Research on-line the definitions and understanding of low -moderate income for Bastrop County including Smithville via US Housing and Urban Development Department.
 - ✓ US- HUD Bastrop County (including Smithville) 2020 MFI (Median Family Income) \$97,600
 - Low/Moderate Income is 80% of MFI or \$78,100
 - Very Low Income is 50% of MFI or \$48,800
3. Task: Housing Finance Team to research on-line the qualifications and deadlines for housing development and infrastructure grants available through these offices....
 - ✓ Texas Department of Agriculture-Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs
 - ✓ Texas Department of Agriculture- CDBG (Community Development Block Grant for Rural Texas)

- ✓ Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation
 - ✓ Texas Water Development Board
 - ✓ Texas Governmental Land Office
 - ✓ US Department of Agriculture
4. Task: Housing Finance Team to meet with the Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation to alert them of the interest of Smithville and to gain information on their particular capabilities to assist Smithville in finding developers or incorporating workforce/affordable housing options in development and to learn about land banking for in-fill lots. Discuss feasibility of the Villages of Smithville land site.
 5. Task: Housing Finance Team to meet with contacts from the other agencies noted to establish a relationship and to get on the mailing lists and alerts for grant information and training.
 6. Task: Housing Finance Team to prepare short fact sheets on the most feasible grant options for Smithville in-fill and larger tracts and present financing facts to the Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee and the other housing subcommittees. Keep the information up-to-date and available on Chamber web site.
 7. Task: Housing Finance Team to research Grant Station for available grants from foundations and private sector such as below....

“Local Initiatives to Advance Affordable Housing Supported

[United States Conference of Mayors: CommunityWINS Grant Program](#)

The CommunityWINS (Working/Investing in Neighborhood Stabilization) Grant Program, administered by the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) and funded by Wells Fargo, supports local nonprofits in promoting long-term economic prosperity for municipalities by advancing housing affordability solutions. The awards recognize outstanding mayoral-based initiatives that can assist their city in reducing the cost burden of housing and increase access to safe, affordable places to live. USCM members may nominate up to three programs run by nonprofit organizations that address housing affordability solutions to increase availability and affordability of rentals, transitional housing, and/or sustainable homeownership. Two awards in each of the following four population categories will be given in 2020: Metropolitan Cities (one \$300,000 and one \$100,000 award); Large Cities (one \$200,000 and one \$75,000 award); Medium Cities (one \$150,000 and one \$50,000 award); and Small Cities (one \$75,000 and one \$50,000 award). All programs must be initiated with the full support of the mayor to be eligible, including those developed and implemented in collaboration with the private sector, community groups, and other partners. The application deadline is October 9, 2020. Visit the USCM website to review the CommunityWINS Grant Program guidelines.”

Action Objective: *Develop financial incentives*

1. Task: Housing Finance Team to investigate incentive opportunities to encourage housing development in Smithville.
2. Task: Review the existing Zoning Ordinance and City Codes for obstacles that discourage and encourage housing development. Consider if housing development on the second floor of commercial buildings and in the back yards of single family lots is available without significant regulation changes. Review if manufactured housing developments and tiny home developments may be considered and provide site criteria to encourage housing options in acceptable locations. Review if duplex and quadra-plex housing is possible on traditional single-family lots.

3. Task: Run a TIRZ scenario through Council to aid in understanding of this financing tool to assist in infrastructure and other public improvements.
4. Task: Review incentive tools that may be useful for residential development including 380 agreements, tax abatements, credit/refund/waiving of city fees and permits, participation in infrastructure development and costs. Encourage development of tools to encourage in-fill affordable housing in Sunnyside neighborhood.
5. Task: Review incentive tools with City Council to understand the Council's goals and concerns.

GOAL No. 3: Guide development adjacent to SH 71; encourage hotel development and airport development.

Action Objective: Develop design standards for an SH 71 Overlay Zone to create neighborhoods not suburban sprawl.

1. Task: Identify the properties within Smithville that would develop with access to SH71.
2. Task: Research three overlay zones, including sign control, from cities who control their highway development and obtain example of zoning controls.
3. Task: Prepare a proposed overlay zone for SH71. Consider a consultant to prepare this overlay zone proposal being a planner and architect. Approximate cost \$7,500.
4. Task: Have City Council consider adoption of the design standards.

Action Objective: Develop a marketing campaign to attract a hotel.

1. Task: Identify approximate 2-acre sites along SH 71 for a hotel and prepare an inventory sheet of owner, price, and site features.
2. Task: Prepare a list of hotel chains that have hotel products that are like hotels in LaGrange and Bastrop.
3. Task: Utilizing the economic profile prepared with this report, the Marketing Team to contact hotel chains and inform the hotel chains of the interest of Smithville to attract a hotel. Provide at least two site locations and list of major employers and employees for the contact of the hotel chains. One site to be within the Village of Smithville site.
4. Task: Continue the networking with the hotel chains until a project is obtained.

Action Objective: Continue development of the Smithville-Crawford Airport

1. Task: City of Smithville to prepare a digital brochure of the Airport, hangers, and aviation facilities available for lease, and future development plans. Place on economic development web site of the Chamber.
2. Task: Marketing Team to utilize the Airport as a marketing feature for all prospect visits and promotions.
3. Task: City of Smithville to develop an inventory sheet for placement on the Chamber Economic Development web page for specific hanger leasing features available at the Airport.
4. Task: City of Smithville to continually review availability of aviation facilities improvement grants to provide opportunities for the airport expansion.
5. Task: Marketing Team to meet with State and Federal aviation agencies and interests at least bi-monthly to continue the market awareness of the Airport.

Action Objective: Market with property owners of land tracts along SH 71 and in Opportunity Zones.

1. Task: Marketing Team to identify all the property owners and their contact information for property within the Opportunity Zones and along SH 71 within and adjacent to the City.
2. Task: Schedule contacts with each of these property owners annually by the Marketing Team.
3. Task: As these properties become represented by Realtors add the contacting of these Realtors semi-annually.
4. Task: Marketing Team to become aware of the Texas Capital Fund, the EDA CARES Act funding and the TIF/TIRZ financing tool for expansion of infrastructure to these properties as they develop.

GOAL No. 4: Focus the industrial attraction to the SH71/SH95 Smithville Industrial Park

Action Objective: Attract an industrial developer for the Industrial Park

1. Task: Marketing Team, in their contacting of State and Local agencies, local and area industrial Realtors, seek out interests and additional developer contacts who may be interested in the development of the industrial park site and attraction of industrial user (s). Monthly contact an industrial Realtor from Austin.

Action Objective: Develop industrial marketing tools to enhance the attraction effort.

1. Task: Marketing Team to apply to the Governor's Office of Economic Development to obtain a Smithville Economic Development Organization certification to receive the Statewide prospect notifications that are suitable to the Industrial Park site.
2. Task: Prepare a virtual rendering of a speculative building that is sized and suitable for the Smithville Industrial park site. Use the virtual rendering as a marketing tool. Cost is approximately \$ 3,000.
3. Task: Marketing Team to interview the local manufacturers to become informed of the local industrial company needs and to seek out suppliers and customer that may have an interest in locating near a local industry and within the Smithville industrial park. Monthly the marketing team should interview one major employer and manufacturer.
4. Task: Chamber of Commerce to develop information brochure on the Smithville Industrial Park for placement at the Smithville Airport and other locations where prospective investor may obtain information on the Industrial Park.

GOAL No. 5: Continue the Downtown Renaissance

Action Objective: Develop and implement the plan for an office remote workplace solution with small business incubator and a "Maker Space" for art and technology innovations.

1. Task: City to apply for EDA CARES Act funds for renovation of city- owned property into a remote workplace office providing small business counseling and "Maker Space" for arts collaboration and technology innovations.
2. Task: Reach out to local artisans, innovators and inventors who would mentor at the Small Business incubator and Maker space.
3. Task: Plan the management of the space
4. Task: Market the space for use by residents and students starting businesses.

Action Objective: Target two to four building improvement projects annually.

1. Task: Organize a three-member Downtown Development Team of the Chamber Economic Development Committee to champion minimum of two improvement/renovation projects and assist the owners with issues that the Chamber and City may work together to resolve. Consider the old Pine Hotel project as one of the present-day projects.
2. Task: Downtown Development Team to inventory lease available or for sale downtown buildings. Prepare property inventory data sheets or Realtor information graphics for placement on the Chamber Economic Development web page. This Team would include keeping downtown inventory sheets up to date, adding and removing those as applicable from the web page. Goal would be to have at least 5 inventory sheets annually on the web page.
3. Task: Downtown Development Team to seek out two residential rental opportunities in the downtown and begin to resolve solutions to providing the housing in the downtown. Goal would be obtaining 4 to 6 rental units annually. Consider the old Pine Hotel project as one of these projects.

Action Objective: Market for Investors for Downtown Properties

1. Task: Downtown Development Team to work with the Marketing Team and local Realtors to seek out new property investors for purchasing the properties the downtown. Goal is to attract at least \$2,000,000 investment dollars annually for new property purchases for developments.

Action Objective: Develop a plan to upgrade infrastructure in the downtown

1. Task: Downtown Development Team to prepare a list of public improvement infrastructure improvements including water, wastewater, and stormwater needed for building improvements to move forward. Advocate for placement of these infrastructure needs on the City Capital Improvements Program. Work with the City to seek out public agency grants and private sector collaboration to accomplish the infrastructure improvements.
2. Task: Investigate and consider applying for funding of the “2nd Street to Gazley Creek” storm water sewer through the CDBG-Texas Capital Fund, EDA CARES Act funding or the Texas Water Development Board funding to facilitate new development in the downtown.

GOAL No. 6: Enhance the experience of the Colorado River and Gazley Creek

Action Objective: Annually plan for enhancements of the boat landing areas at Loop230/SH95 and at Vernon Richards Riverbend Park.

1. Task: Organize a Colorado River Parks and Recreation Team of four from the Chamber Economic Development Committee and one member from the City.
2. Task: Initial Year-Plan for enhancements to these boat landing areas including boat landing improvements, signage from the highway, wildflower areas, art for amazement, nature trails and bird watching sites, picnic tables and family oriented improvements to the site that improve access to the Colorado River. Involve citizen surveys and needs assessment participation in the planning. Prioritize the plan elements over 5 years. Emphasize low maintenance and low-cost improvements. Formalize the plan with a report and market the plan to the local community.
3. Task: Year Two and annually-seek grant applications from Texas Parks and Wildlife through their boating access, trails, and small community grants.

4. Task: Create a 501(c)3 fund and involve opportunities for citizen participation in the improvement grants through cash donations and in-kind services. Set an annual fund-raising goal of \$1,000 in cash.
5. Task: Yearly seek out private sector recreational and COVID-19 grants for the park improvements through Grant Station www.grantstation.com and through area foundations from big box stores and corporations.
6. Task: Report Annually to the Chamber of Commerce the accomplishments of the tasks identified.

Action Objective: *Annually plan for trail development along the Colorado River/Gazley Creek.*

1. Task: Organize a Colorado River/Gazley Creek Trails Team of three from the Chamber Economic Development Committee and two from the City.
2. Task: Initial Year, identify on a map, the property owners along the Colorado River and Gazley Creek and meet with these owners to determine the possibility of access to a trail.
3. Task: Year Two, begin investigating the optional property rights available to allow for a public trail along the Colorado River and Gazley Creek. Seek opportunities for public access from local streets to a trail. Prepare documentation explaining access rights available to property owners including fee simple, conservation easements, and Texas Parks and Wildlife leasing through the Texas River Access & Conservation Areas Program.
4. Task: Plan for the trail along the Colorado River and Gazley Creek working with the City to establish trail development standards including trail width, paving and trail accessories including signage and rest areas.
5. Task: By year three, assist the City to begin to acquire trail access through available property rights. Seek out Texas Parks and Wildlife Department trail grants.
6. Task: Year Four and annually, begin to construct trail features as property rights are acquired.
7. Task: Year Five. celebrate the opening of ½ mile of trail

GOAL No. 7: Annually Review the Accomplishments and Celebrate the Success

Action Objective: *Plan for an Annual Review*

1. Task: Review the tasks annually and eliminate the unnecessary, add new tasks and adjust tasks based on in-the-field experience and Team recommendations
2. Task: Plan a Smithville Annual Pin Award for Team volunteers who contribute more than 40 hours of volunteer time annually.