



STRATEGIC
PLAN

LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITY

Steering Committee

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Cynthia Stafford, Broker-Principal
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City of Gonzales Vision Statement:

“Gonzales is a business and family friendly city known for the availability of high quality jobs and excellent schools. The quality of life is outstanding due to its many festivals and concerts in its entertainment district, its various recreational facilities and cultural activities. Gonzales is located centrally between Louisiana’s two largest cities, connected to them by passenger rail.”

2018-2025 Strategic Economic Development Plan

Executive Summary

The City of Gonzales partnered with Louisiana Economic Development to participate in its “Development Ready Communities” program to develop a strategic economic development plan to enhance economic opportunity and quality of life for the citizens of Gonzales.

The first step was to solicit help from the community. The city reached out to various civic leaders with expertise in different areas to lend their guidance in the development of the strategic plan.

The development of the plan begins with a community assessment, which is conducted by a series of surveys, focus groups, and town hall meetings to solicit information from the public on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the city. Comprehensive datasets for the community were provided to the steering committee by Louisiana Economic Development. Then brainstorming sessions for goals and action plans to improve the city’s position. Finally, the goals were prioritized to determine which ones would have the most important and greatest impact so as to make the best use of limited resources.

The goals selected were in five of the community assessment categories:

Category	Goal
Economic Development	Develop and Adopt the Strategic Plan Develop an Event & Conference Center Create a Recruiting Incentive for Destination Retail Initiate a “Live Local” Campaign Small Business Incentive Created for NGEDD
Transportation	Start a Subsidized Ride-Share Program for Public Transit Partner with other Cities to Begin Rail Transit Create More Bike and Walking Connections
Education	Help Promote the RPCC Technical College Advocate for a Magnet School and/or other Educational Opportunities Within the City
Quality of Life	Reduce Blighted Properties Reduce Litter Add a Basketball Gym to the City’s Recreation Facilities Beautification Committee Established
Infrastructure	Establish a Land Bank Develop a New Corridor in the Hospital District Double the Wastewater Capacity for the City

The appendix contains copies of the survey results, the town hall results and a copy of the community assessment tool.

2018-2025 Strategic Economic Development Plan

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Priority: Economic Development

- The City of Gonzales has a strong economy, healthy median household income, and is strategically located between Louisiana’s two largest metropolitan areas. The City has good leadership and is in good fiscal condition.
- The City of Gonzales partners with Ascension Economic Development Corporation for all of its economic development promotional efforts.
- Continued expansion of new manufacturing facilities in the area is strong.
- Continued marketing of prime, centralized location for increased retail, entertainment and transportation development.

Overview of Goals

1. **The 2018 – 2025 Strategic Economic Development Plan guides our city’s economic development activities and identifies the specific strategies that will help grow our economy.**
2. **Pass a hotel tax to fund an Event and Conference Center (Multi-Use Facility), which is vital to supporting the City’s vision for tourism, supporting hotels, restaurants, small businesses, and the residents’ quality of life.**
3. **Creation of an economic development incentive for large scale retail.**
4. **Create a “Live Local” Campaign**
5. **Develop a Small Business Incentive Program for the NGEDD.**

Goal 1: The 2018 – 2025 Strategic Economic Development Plan guides our city’s economic development activities.

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- **The new economic development plan is completed by August 2018**
- **Adoption of the strategic economic development plan**
- **Funding established to implement the strategic economic development plan**

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- **The city sees an increase of total governmental revenues increase by more than 5% each year thru 2023.**

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, Ascension Economic Development Corporation

Strategic Actions for Goal 1	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Presentation of the 2018-2025 Strategic Economic Development Plan to the City of Gonzales Mayor, and City Council	Responses and comments on the plan
Estimated Cost: none	

Strategic Actions for Goal 1	
Source of Funding: none	
Timetable: August 2018	
#2 – City Council adoption of the Strategic Plan	Program adoption
Estimated Cost: \$100,000 / year	
Source of Funding: General Funds	
Timetable: August 2018 – March 2023	
#3 – Provide funding for economic development	funding approved
Estimated Cost: TBD	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: June 2019	

Goal 2: A hotel tax is passed to fund an Event and Conference Center (Multi-Use Facility).

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- A marketing and promotional plan to rally public support is created and begun to rally public support for the tax.
- A site selection committee is established to choose the site for the conference center

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- The Event and Conference Center produces 24 events that bring over 20,000 additional visitors to the City of Gonzales.

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, Ascension Tourism, Gonzales Marketing Team, Gonzales Planning & Zoning

Strategic Actions for Goal 2	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Create a marketing plan to promote public support for the tax	Develop materials, recruit grass roots volunteers
Estimated Cost: \$5K	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, Private Partners	
Timetable: 2018	
#2 – Create a Site Selection Committee	Recruit people to help identify quality sites for the center
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales City Council	
Timetable: September 2018	

Goal 3: A local incentive is passed for large-scale destination retail

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- A marketing and promotional plan to recruit destination retail to the City of Gonzales. Identification of incentive qualifiers and ROI analysis performed by AEDC.
- Creation of marketing materials for existing retailers to utilize incentives for façade improvement.

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- The incentive is utilized by at least three retailers within the first five years.

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, Ascension Economic Development, Gonzales Marketing Team

Strategic Actions for Goal 3	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Create an incentive plan	Develop materials
Estimated Cost: \$0	
Source of Funding:	
Timetable: 2018	
#2 – Create an ordinance	City Council vote
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales City Council	
Timetable: September 2018	

Goal 4: Create “Live Local” Campaign.

Short-Term Measurable Outcomes or Metrics:

- Create a promotional/marketing campaign to encourage Gonzales and Ascension Parish residents to patronize their local restaurants, retailers, doctors, banks, contractors, etc.

Long-Term Measurable Outcomes or Metrics:

- Reinvest increased sales tax revenue generated by more local shopping/spending back into community improvement projects.

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, Ascension Chamber of Commerce, Gonzales Marketing Team

Strategic Actions for Goal 4	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Create “Live Local” brochure and other advertising material.	Work with the Chamber to create marketing strategy. Develop marketing materials i.e. Physical brochure, social media and bill board advertisements.
Estimated Cost: TBD	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, Ascension Chamber of Commerce, Lamar Advertising (In-kind)	
Timetable: 2018	
#2 – Partner with the Ascension Chamber	The Chamber has led Shop Local campaigns in 2013 and 2016. The CEO of the Chamber has already committed to partnering with the City on the next campaign.
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: none	
Timetable: August 2018	
#3 – Update website to “toot horn”	Work with the City IT Department or website designer to create a page or tab on the City’s website that promotes local shopping. The website could highlight a local business on weekly basis.
Estimated Cost: TBD	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: September 2018	

Goal 5: Develop a Small Business Incentive Program for the NGEDD.

Short-Term Measurable Outcomes or Metrics:

- Determine the eligibility requirements for the incentive
- Determine the level of funding to set aside for the incentive

Long-Term Measurable Outcomes or Metrics:

- The City will have 20 businesses take advantage of the program by the end of year 2020.

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, City of Gonzales Marketing Team

Strategic Actions for Goal 5	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Determine the eligibility requirement for the incentive	Creating a working committee to review ideas for businesses to be eligible to participate and what the eligible uses of funds will be.
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: 2018	
#2 – Set aside funding for the incentive.	Present the findings of goal one to the city council for them to decide how much funding to provide to support the program.
Estimated Cost: TBD	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: 2019	

Priority: Transportation

- The City of Gonzales will create a privatized public transportation system featuring a public private partnership with ride share services

Overview of Goals

1. The City develops a plan for increasing ride-share services (Uber & Lyft) and other public transit options.
2. The City of Gonzales partners with other cities to help create a public train route between Baton Rouge and New Orleans with a station in the City of Gonzales.
3. The City of Gonzales creates a network of trails and sidewalks to create greater walkability and connectivity within the city, emphasizing the area around the train station.

Goal 1: The 2018 – 2025 Strategic Economic Development Plan creates a public private partnership to provide public transit thru ride-sharing services

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- A plan for funding the service is created.
- Create an ordinance and/or resolution for the program.
- Contacts and arrangements are made with ride-sharing providers.
- A grant is applied for to help fund the program.

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- The city has a healthy ride-sharing network that has plenty of capacity and is well used by the citizens.

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, Congressman Garrett Graves' Office, Uber and/or Lyft, City of Gonzales Marketing Team, Ascension Tourism

Strategic Actions for Goal 1	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Create a ride-share funding plan	Develop materials
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, Private Partners, public grant funds	
Timetable: 2018	
#2 – Create an ordinance and/or resolution	City Council vote
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales City Council	
Timetable: November 2018	
Action	Performance Metrics
#3 – Contacts and arrangements are made with ride-share providers	Develop materials
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, Private Partners, public grant funds	
Timetable: 2018	
#4 – A grant is applied for to help fund the program	City Council vote
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: 2018	

Goal 2: The City of Gonzales Partners with other Cities between New Orleans and Baton Rouge to create a train route by the year 2025.

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- **A master plan for the train station area is created.**
- **A funding plan and economic development district is created to fund Gonzales' share of the negative operating costs of the multi-city train service.**
- **A committee is formed to meet and coordinate with other city leaders.**

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- **The city is part of a network of cities served by train service between Baton Rouge and New Orleans by 2025.**

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, City of East Baton Rouge, City of New Orleans, City of LaPlace, Louisiana Governor's Office, City of Gonzales Marketing Team, Baton Rouge Area Foundation

Strategic Actions for Goal 2	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Create a master plan for the train station area	Hire a planning firm and work with them on the plan
Estimated Cost: \$50K	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, public grant funds	
Timetable: 2018	
#2 – Create an economic development district to help fund Gonzales’ share of negative operating costs	City Council vote
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales City Council	
Timetable: 2018	
Action	Performance Metrics
#3 – A committee is formed to meet with other city leaders and the governor to plan the train service	Recruit members, hire experts as required
Estimated Cost: TBD	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: 2019	

Goal 3: The City of Gonzales improves its network of sidewalks and trails with an emphasis on the area near the train station over a five year period.

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- A master plan for the trail improvements is created.
- Funding is dedicated in capital outlay to fund the improvements over time.

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- The city has a healthy network of sidewalks and walking trails by the year 2023.

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales

Strategic Actions for Goal 3	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Create a master plan for the sidewalks and trails and implementation budget for a five year period	Create the plan
Estimated Cost: \$50K	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, public grant funds	
Timetable: 2019	
#2 – Dedicate funding to implement the plan	City Council vote
Estimated Cost: TBD	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales City Council	
Timetable: 2018	

Priority: Education/Workforce

- The City of Gonzales recognizes the importance of workforce training and technical colleges in providing area employers and their employees with the resources needed to continue to thrive and grow.
- Providing the maximum opportunities for our high schools students is also important to our success.

Overview of Goals

1. The City of Gonzales partners with River Parishes Community College to promote its programs.
2. The City of Gonzales advocates for a magnet school and increased educational opportunities within the city in partnership with Ascension Parish Schools.

Goal 1: Promote River Parishes Community College and Workforce Development

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- A marketing and promotional plan to promote awareness of RPCC programming for high school students, college, and workforce training.

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- Enrollment is doubled within ten years.

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, Ascension Economic Development, City of Gonzales Marketing Team

Strategic Actions for Goal 1	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Create a marketing and promotional plan	Develop materials
Estimated Cost: \$0	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, Private Partners	
Timetable: 2018	
#2 – Develop the marketing materials, dedicate funding	City Council vote
Estimated Cost: TBD	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, City of Gonzales City Council	
Timetable: 2018	

Goal 2: Advocate for the Creation of a Magnet School within the City of Gonzales

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- A committee is formed to meet with the school board and attend school board meetings.

- A marketing campaign and awareness campaign is developed and implemented.

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- In partnership with Ascension Parish Schools, a magnet school and/or other significant improvements to educational opportunities are created for the city within 5 years.

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, Ascension Parish Schools, City of Gonzales Marketing Team

Strategic Actions for Goal 2	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Form an advocacy committee	Select members and acquire committment
Estimated Cost: \$0	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, Ascension School Board	
Timetable: 2018	
#2 – Create an awareness and marketing campaign	Materials developed, a plan is created, funds are dedicated
Estimated Cost: TBD	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, private partners	
Timetable: 2018	

Priority: Quality of Life

- The City of Gonzales is known for being a safe community, having been ranked as one of the top 5 safest cities in the State of Louisiana.
- The City of Gonzales is known for being a friendly community, welcoming citizens from every demographic group with open arms.
- The City has high quality parks to enable recreational opportunities for its residents at every age level, including a park for the handicapped, swimming pool, tennis courts and ballfields.
- Like many areas in Louisiana, the City of Gonzales has a litter problem and blighted property problem.
- The Capital Region recognizes the City of Gonzales as being one of the most beautiful cities in the region.

Overview of Goals

1. The 2018 – 2025 Strategic Economic Development Plan provides for improving the city’s overall appearance by reducing blighted properties.
2. The 2018 – 2025 Strategic Economic Development Plan provides for improving the city’s overall appearance by reducing litter.
3. The City adds a basketball gymnasium to its offering of recreational opportunities for its citizens.

4. A beautification committee is formed to recommend beautification projects for the city.

Goal 1: The 2018 – 2025 Strategic Economic Development Plan provides for improving the city’s overall appearance by reducing blighted properties.

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- The strategy for reducing blight is completed, vetted by city staff and the city council.
- Blighted properties are identified and prioritized for action.
- Code enforcement officer is empowered by city council to fine offenders.

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- The city sees a decrease of blighted properties by more than 15% each year for the next seven years.

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales Code Enforcement Division, City of Gonzales Police Department, City of Gonzales Planning & Zoning

Strategic Actions for Goal 1	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – The strategy for reducing blight is completed, vetted by city staff and the city council	Plan is reviewed by staff, police department, adopted by council
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: none	
Timetable: August 2018	
#2 – Blighted properties are identified and prioritized.	City is surveyed, properties identified and prioritized.
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: none	
Timetable: September 2018 –	
#3 – Code enforcement officer is empowered by city council to fine offenders.	Law reviewed by city attorney, ordinance drafted by city clerk and adopted by city council.
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: none	
Timetable: October 2018	

Goal 2: The 2018 – 2025 Strategic Economic Development Plan provides for improving the city’s overall appearance by reducing litter.

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- A marketing campaign is developed to help instill pride in the community.
- The marketing campaign is implemented.
- A specific plan of action is developed by the police department to increase public awareness of enforcement.
- City staff dedicates one day each week to pick up litter and increase public awareness.

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- **The City of Gonzales wins a statewide award for cleanest city by 2020.**

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, City of Gonzales Police Department, Louisiana Department of Tourism, Ascension Parish Government, City of Gonzales Marketing Team

Strategic Actions for Goal 2	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Create a marketing plan to instill pride in the community.	Develop materials, decide on types of media
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, Grants	
Timetable: September 2018	
#2 – Implement the marketing campaign	Distribute materials to schools, libraries, public spaces. Fund media campaign.
Estimated Cost: \$15K	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: October 2018 – June 2019	
#3 – A specific plan of action is developed by the police department to increase public awareness of enforcement.	Coordinate with the police chief and staff to create a plan.
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales Police Department	
Timetable: October 2018 – June 2019	
#4 – City staff dedicates one day each week to spend some time picking up litter	Wednesday mornings some staff dedicated to pick up litter.
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: October 2018 – June 2019	

Goal 3: The City develops a basketball gymnasium to increase the diversity of its recreational opportunities for its citizens.

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- Identify an appropriate site.
- Set aside funding and purchase the site.
- Develop a set of architectural and engineering plans.
- Set aside funding and build the facility.
- Develop a plan and funding for managing the facility.

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- **The City of Gonzales has an operational basketball gymnasium by 2021.**

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales

Strategic Actions for Goal 3	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Identify an appropriate site for the gym.	Work with area realtors, councilmen, city staff to identify ideal spot.
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: September 2018	
#2 – Set aside funding and purchase the site	City Council votes
Estimated Cost: \$15K	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: November 2018	
#3 – Develop a set of architectural and engineering plans.	Environmental survey, civil engineering plans, architectural plans.
Estimated Cost: \$200K	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: June 2019	
#4 – Set aside funding and build the facility.	Look for available grants
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales , Federal Government, State Government	
Timetable: June 2020	

Goal 4: A beautification committee will be formed to recommend beautification projects for the city.

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- **The beautification committee is formed.**
- **A list of beautification projects is established and prioritized.**

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- **The city will complete 5 beautification projects per year for the next five years.**

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, City of Gonzales Planning & Zoning, City of Gonzales Marketing Team

Strategic Actions for Goal 4	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – A beautification committee is formed	Volunteers are recruited, meeting dates established
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: none	
Timetable: October 2018	
#2 – A list of beautification projects is established and prioritized.	List of projects made by the committee members and approved by the City Council.
Estimated Cost: TBD	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: 2019	

Priority: Infrastructure Plan

- The City of Gonzales will develop a land bank for acquiring adjudicated properties and land donations and selling them to fund the purchase of land for development as part of public/private partnerships
- The City creates a new corridor to improve public safety and promote high quality development near the hospital.
- The City Doubles the Capacity of its Wastewater System

Overview of Goals

1. **The City creates a land bank by the end of 2020.**
2. **The City develops a new corridor near the hospital by 2021.**

Goal 1: The City Develops a Land Bank by the end of 2020.

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- Research on best practices for establishing a land bank.
- An ordinance is passed creating the land bank.
- Properties are identified to be targeted for acquisition
- Big landowners are notified of the city's goal and invited to donate land to help us.

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- The city has purchased or acquired 5 properties for the land bank and developed at least one property thru a public private partnership in 5 years.
-

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales

Strategic Actions for Goal 1	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – The city staff researches best practices for establishing a land bank.	Other cities contacted, economic development agency help requested, city attorney reviews ordinance.
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: none	
Timetable: 2019	
#2 – Ordinance passed to create the land bank.	City Council votes.
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: none	
Timetable: 2019	
#3 – Properties that are targeted to be acquired are identified.	Survey of the city and list created and plan to maintain the list.
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: none	
Timetable: 2019	
#4 – Landowners contacted and informed about the city’s plan	Make a list of large landholders and create a mailing list to periodically remind them of the program.
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: none	
Timetable: 2019	

Goal 2: The City Builds a New Transportation Corridor by the Hospital to Improve Public Safety and Spur New Development

Short-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- Identify the site for the road.
- Set aside funding to acquire the land and build the road.

Long-Term Measureable Outcomes or Metrics:

- The new transportation corridor is completed by end of 2021.

Responsible Organizations will include (but not limited to): City of Gonzales, City of Gonzales Marketing Team, City of Gonzales Planning & Zoning

Strategic Actions for Goal 2	
Action	Performance Metrics
#1 – Identify the site for the road.	Hire engineering firm
Estimated Cost: none	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales, Grants	
Timetable: 2019	
#2 – Set aside funding to acquire the land and build the road.	City Council vote
Estimated Cost: \$750K estimated	
Source of Funding: City of Gonzales	
Timetable: 2019	

Appendix A

Summary of Results of Survey of Residents and Business Owners



City of Gonzales Strategic Economic Development Plan

Tuesday, June 12th, 2018

What are your community's top five strengths?

- #1: Retail/Restaurants/Services
- #2: People/Great Community/Helpful
- #3: Public Schools
- #4: Location/Interstate/Distance to New Orleans/Baton Rouge
- #5: City Government
- #6: Trust in Police/Fire

What are the top five issues you would address in the community's strategic plan?

- #1: Traffic/Roads/Redlights/Hwy 30
- #2: Drainage/Flooding
- #3: Blight/Redevelopment/Burnside
- #4: Zoning
- #5: Subdivisions/Housing – too many/over growth

Appendix B

Summary Results of Goal Setting Session for Town Hall Meeting

Prioritized by Number of Votes Received by Participants

Build an event & conference city with multi-use capabilities

Create a magnet school within the city

Develop a community basketball gym to expand the city's recreational offerings

Create & enforce ordinances to deal with blight and litter

Establish after school programs

Promote RPCC enrollment and programs

Increase awareness of services and facilities offered throughout the city

Find ways to increase public transit thru ride-sharing programs (Uber/Lyft)

Develop a land bank

Appendix C

The LDRC Community Assessment is the component of the LDRC program that allows the Steering/Sustainability Committee to research and analyze its community's competitiveness. A community assessment report is part data and facts. Your Steering/Sustainability Committee (and others it brings into the process) must gather accurate information as it will affect the validity and credibility of your plan.

The following is the complete data set that allows the Committee to self-analyze its strengths and weaknesses as it relates to its competitiveness; however, in the essence of time, we have highlighted the data that is required to be gathered and reported to the LED Resource Team during the LDRC process with an asterisk*. The gathering of the remaining data points should be incorporated into your community's strategic economic development plan as it will be an important resource that your community can use in many ways, including responding to RFPs (request for proposals) from LED, your regional organization, as well as responding to business inquiries.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. Describe the local government governing body.
2. Describe the major capital improvement projects that have occurred over the last several years and those planned for short and long term.
3. What is the annual community budget?
4. Describe the regular sanitation services provided by the community to include: standing water control, trash removal, recycling programs, and any other.
5. Sanitary sewer, solid waste management, and water systems:
 - Describe each system. Are there system issues? Does the city have ordinances in place that meet state and federal guidelines? Is the city in compliance with all regulations?
 - Approximately what percentage of the community is covered by each system?
6. Fire Protection
 - Describe protection system/code, class and rating, facilities, equipment, and maintenance plan.

Police/Sheriff Protection

8. Describe the police/sheriff protection in place.
9. Are there citizen participation campaigns in the community? (i.e. neighborhood watch, crime stoppers, etc.)
10. Emergency Services - Describe the emergency services available in the community. (EMS, etc.)
11. Ordinance Governance – Is there a zoning ordinance in place? If so, please explain for residential, commercial and industrial.
12. Does the city have a business permitting process in place? Please describe.
13. Emergency Communications and Planning system and plan in place. How are emergency communications provided to the public?

***Disaster Preparedness**

14. Is there an emergency communications and preparedness plan in place?
 - Describe the plan in a few sentences including facilities, evacuation routes, and staff trained to assist.
 - Has the public been informed about the emergency plan and how?

QUALITY OF LIFE

Community Appearance

15. Are there any organizations in the community focusing on beautification, preservation and appearance?
 - What activities and events focus on beautification?
 - Provide some examples of beautification projects conducted in the community, what organization completed them, and how they were funded.

Parks and Recreation

16. Describe the public parks and recreation facilities, staffing, activities, and funding for the community.
 - What kind of organized sports and recreation activities are organized in the community?
 - Does the community have a community center to host activities?

Arts and Culture

17. List the arts and cultural assets and initiatives in your community – museums, cultural centers, historical sites, arts programs, tourist centers, etc. Describe each in a few words.

Housing

18. Is there an adequate amount of housing for all market segments – executive housing, middle to low income housing, rental properties, apartments, etc.

19. Describe shelters for the homeless and include information on their capacities – waiting lists or other issues.

20. Describe housing specifically designed for the elderly – what is being done to address increasing demand for elder housing?

21. Describe vacant residences and dilapidated/blighted housing and how the city is addressing this issue.

Healthcare

22. Describe the healthcare services/facilities available in and/or around your community? Are they adequate? What services are missing that might be viable for your community such as medi-quick units, clinics, etc.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

k-12 Education System

***23.** Describe the public education system in your community in terms of quality of education, facilities, curriculum, and services offered.

24. List the schools in the k-12 public school system including enrollment and teaching faculty.

***25.** Considering the current and future population, is the education system adequate?

Are facilities adequately equipped with:

- Library services and materials.
- Science and Computer labs, auditoriums, theater, and assembly areas.
- School sponsored music and art programs.
- School sponsored sports programs.

***26.** Gather data related to school quality and student learning:

- Student to teacher ratio for both public and private/parochial institutions
- Accreditation for all public and private/parochial institutions
- Average ACT/SAT scores by high school.
- Comparison of local ACT/SAT scores vs. regional and national averages
- Average LEAP score.
- Average I-LEAP score.
- Average LEAP and I-LEAP scores by category and compared to regional and national averages on English, Math, Science, and Social Studies.
- Number and % of seniors who pass the exit exam – average score?
- Graduating seniors going to 4 year or 2-year college or institution.

***Skills Training to Obtain Work**

27. What training and other education programs are available to help citizens acquire job skills so they can be employable? (Workforce Investment Board, faith-based, non-profit, Sheriff’s Office, on-the-job training, LA Dept. of Corrections, etc.). Describe what services these programs provide and how effective are they at helping citizens obtain skills and work.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

***Government Ordinance**

28. Is there a zoning ordinance in place? If so, please explain for residential, commercial and industrial. Is zoning up-to-date and relevant to today’s operating environment?

29. Does the city have a business permitting process in place? Please describe.

30. Describe the main business base in your community – retail, manufacturing, logistics, etc.

31. What business development and expansion activities, staffing and funding do you have in your community? Are they adequate or are enhancements needed to make your community more

competitive?

32. What business incentives are in place to help supplement business investment?

Sites and Buildings

***33.** Develop a list of the top quality, available and “marketable” sites, business or industrial parks, and buildings (retail, commercial and industrial) including data: location/address, size, lease or sale price, terms, access to utilities, and ownership contact information.

34. Working with your utility providers, develop a description of your community’s power and telecommunications capacity and competitive positioning including cost, availability and quality.

- Electricity and natural gas systems.
- Local substation or system’s excess capacity during peak load periods.
- Capacity to add significant load to the system.
- Describe any local distribution system electric outages of more than 10 minutes (not due to storms) during the last 5 years.
- Availability of natural gas throughout the city.
- Telecommunications capabilities including broadband availability.
- Sanitary sewer, solid waste management, and water systems.

NOTE: As part of your community’s plan, enter all data as requested in the Louisiana Site Selection Center database. Produce a profile sheet (with all fields filled-in) for each property. Every community should strive to develop sites as this is a “product” that companies and site consultants are seeking for their projects.

TRANSPORTATION

35. Inventory all public transportation services.

36. Describe the community’s airport and services including:

- Runways (#, dimensions, weight bearing capacity)
- Terminal building (size, staffing, hours)
- Hanger service (#, size, lease fees)
- Fuel and maintenance service (# of fixed base operators, hours of operation)
- Charter service (availability and costs)

- Commercial airline services (carriers, fly-to locations)
- Zoning around airport (commercial, industrial, residential?)
- Expansion capabilities (how much land could possibly be available)
- Describe available freight services (provider and services)

37. Describe available railroad services (mainline, branch line, or short line length and provider)

38. Describe active port facilities (location, water depth, facilities)

NOTE: If the community does not have an airport, railroad, or port, please describe the capacities of the nearest within a 60-90-minute drive-time.