

A collage of photographs is scattered across the page. One photo shows a man in a white shirt pointing at a document during a meeting. Another shows a man in a purple shirt and a woman in a pink shirt looking at a document. A third shows a landscape with a river and trees. A fourth shows a building with a window. The text is overlaid on the collage.

**CITY OF WHITEHOUSE, TEXAS**  
**2018 STRATEGIC PLAN**

Prepared in Conjunction with  
the City of Whitehouse & KSA

Updated September 2019





Big Bold Steps Discussion

## OVERVIEW

The City of Whitehouse strategic plan was developed during a two-day workshop held on Friday and Saturday, May 4-5, 2018. Participating in this workshop were Mayor Charles Parker, Council Members Chad Cleckler, James Wansley and Paul Hickey, Aaron Smith, City Manager, Susan Hargis, City Secretary, Jennifer Lusk, Director of Finance and Human Relations, Ginger Cardwell and Melissa Briscoe representing the Parks and Recreation Commission. Facilitating the workshop were Randy Tuminello, Francois de Kock, Hunter Hilburn and Brittney Smith from KSA.

## A LOOK BACK AT HISTORY

At the very beginning of the strategic planning workshop, participants were invited to take a glimpse back into the past. As the old saying goes, “those who don’t learn from history are bound to repeat it.” As the team recounted important milestones in the city’s history, a number of important trends and themes began to emerge. During this time, past achievements as well as challenges were discussed and applied as lessons for the future. A historical chart was used to document key milestones. (See Historical Chart Appendix 1, Page 1.)

The purpose of the workshop was to create a vision and strategic plan that would serve as the city’s strategic roadmap for the next 10 years. Guided by citizen feedback received from two separate citywide polls, the plan’s authors established five ‘big bold’ and detailed action plans that would transform each step into tangible results.

The entire process was guided by a commitment to develop a realistic plan that would address community aspirations in a clear, concise, feasible and sustainable manner.

## AN EXAMINATION OF THE CITY’S CURRENT SITUATION

Prior to the workshop, each team member participated in an hour-long one-on-one interview by Randy Tuminello. A questionnaire was prepared in advance and used as a guide for each discussion. An important segment contained questions pertaining to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats specific to the City of Whitehouse. Answers to these questions were later compiled and analyzed by the KSA team.

The results and conclusions drawn from the SWOT analysis were then presented for the first time to the entire group. During the discussion, key themes began to emerge as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were further clarified. (The actual SWOT table used in the workshop can be found in Appendix 2.)

Ultimately, these themes provided an effective means to classify the opportunities that arose from the SWOT analysis. Many of these opportunities became the impetus behind the key programs and projects listed in the detailed action plans.

**City of Whitehouse Mission Statement:**  
**“Provide the amenities and infrastructure that allow for a safe, connected and engaged community. ”**

## ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

The progression from the past and current situation set the stage for moving toward the future. The planning team was asked to image a scenario 10 years into the future where the City of Whitesboro was featured in a national magazine. They were then asked to describe the outside cover of the magazine, including the headline, subtitles, side bars, images and quotes. The result was a vision of the possibilities for the future. Many of the important opportunities identified in the SWOT analysis were reconfirmed and further developed through this visioning exercise. (See Appendix 1 Page 2.)



1. Create a city management plan to establish a strong foundation for city management, performance, and leads the city toward the fulfillment of its vision.
2. Create a proper governance that is transparent
3. Obtain the necessary land as required to accomplish the vision.
4. Obtain adequate funding as needed to fulfill the vision.
5. Develop the amenities that will enhance our community's quality of life for a lifetime.
6. Create the city's identity and brand to promote the vision.

Mayor Charles Parker presents his team's vision.

The impetus for these bold measures was derived from a prioritized list of twelve imperatives compiled by the planning team:

- Residence success**
- Reliable infrastructure**
- Enjoyable spaces**
- Being the best possible place to call home**
- Community success**
- An increase in happiness**
- High quality lifestyle**
- Be the ideal community**
- Connected and engaged**
- Friendly**
- Safe**
- Protection of property values**

These important community aspirations work to solidify the purpose of this strategic plan. Their achievement will influence not only the creation of future opportunities, but the proactive decision's that will turn each of these goals into reality. (See Vision Board Appendix 1 Page 3.)

## MISSION AND VALUES

At the heart of this vision lie the city's mission and values. Together, they embody the foundational elements that will bring the community together toward its common vision. They will also serve as the guide and inspiration behind the everyday behavior and decisions the community and its leaders will espouse to enable the successful implementation of this plan. Upon completion of the mission statement, the planning team achieved consensus on five overarching values:

INTEGRITY

TRANSPARENCY

COMMITMENT

ENGAGED

BOLD

These values were selected to crystalize the city's culture while painting a vivid picture of the behaviors that would continue to distinguish Whitehouse as a safe, vibrant and forward-thinking community. All were embodied in the following values statement developed during the planning workshop.



### **Values Statement:**

*The City of Whitehouse shall be guided by our core values of integrity, transparency, commitment, engaged and bold. These values will embody the spirit of our community, our transparent approach to governance, our policies and decision as we move forward achieving our vision for the future.*



A team is working on a context map for a Big Bold Step.



Hard at work on Big Bold Step #3.

## DETAILED ACTION PLANS

The planning process up to this point analyzed past, present and future issues and opportunities. From this analysis, six major themes emerged which led to the creation of the city’s vision including its mission, values and major imperatives—its six big bold steps. With the identification of the bold steps, the planning team was now prepared to enter the final stage of the planning process—the development of detailed action plans for each of the six big bold steps.

The content within each action plan provides the basis for the strategic plan itself. The intentional use of the action plan tables was designed to encourage continual interaction with the plan.

In order to efficiently develop the six detailed action plans, the planning group was divided into two teams. Each team was then assigned two action plans. The sixth and final plan was discussed together by the entire team.

A Key Objectives Context Map was used by each team to provide an initial framework for the development of each action plan. Based on the discussion surrounding these context maps, the specific action items for each action plan were then developed.

Going forward, each of the six action plans will be used continually as a dynamic worksheet to prompt progressive action on the key programs and projects identified. As shown on the following pages, each action plan contains four important elements: 1) a listing of all the key programs necessary to complete the bold step; 2) identification of who is responsible; 3) a schedule and budget; and 4) milestones to monitor progress. (Action plans and their associated context maps are shown on the following pages.)

## ACTION PLAN: BOLD STEP #1

Big Bold Step #1: Create a city management plan to establish a strong foundation for city management, performance and communications.						
REQUIRED PROGRAMS	Accountability		Timetable		Resources	Milestones
	Primary	Others	Start	Finish	T&M + (\$)	Feedback Mechanism
1. Develop a performance management plan that provides current job descriptions with clear roles/responsibilities, qualitative and quantitative performance goals for the city manager, department heads and key staff, accountability measures and an annual review process that recognizes and rewards outstanding performance.	Council, City Manager and HR Director	Assigned staff and consultant	TBD	TBD	TBD	Job descriptions, performance goals, and annual reviews initiated
2. Develop an internal communication plan/protocol based on recommendations provided in the city management plan. Includes the daily huddle, weekly reviews and monthly summaries. Also includes the creation of the KPI dashboard.	City Manager	Dept. Heads	TBD	TBD	TBD	First daily, weekly and monthly meetings
3. Develop an external communications plan based on recommendations provided in the city management plan. Includes funding for a Public Information Resources Officer (PIRO) and communication coordination between the city, EDC, WISD, Chamber of Commerce, KWB and Youth-in-Action	City Manager and PIRO	Key Inter-agency Liaisons	TBD	TBD	TBD	Interagency news reports sent through various mediums
4. Develop the inter-agency council comprised of the city, EDC, WISD, Chamber of Commerce, KWB and Youth-in Action. Establish the Youth-in-Action team based on recommendations provided in the city management plan.	City Manager	Key Agency Leaders	TBD	TBD	TBD	First meeting of the inter-agency council
Total Budget Amount for Resources Portion					TBD	



Note: Big Bold Step #1 was added to the strategic plan after the initial draft was complete. A context map was not created for it. Instead see Whitehouse Management Plan on file with the City Secretary.

## ACTION PLAN: BOLD STEP #2

**Big Bold Step #2: Create a proper governance that is transparent and leads the City toward the fulfillment of its vision.**  
**Note: We will integrate and link all of the programs listed below to achieve an cohesive overall communication platform.**

<b>REQUIRED PROGRAMS</b>	<b>Accountability</b>		<b>Timetable</b>		<b>Resources</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
	Primary	Others	Start	Finish	T&M + (\$)	Feedback Mechanism
1. Develop a proactive messaging program that includes standards/protocols and the appropriate vehicles for its transmission including website, app development, announcements, reports, etc.	City Manager and City Council	Assigned staff and consultant	6/1/18	6/1/19	Staff time + \$36,000	Message and standards developed
2. Develop a two-way communications program that includes standards/protocols, a feedback loop, P2P (city office) and D2D	City Manager and City Council	Assigned staff	6/1/18	9/1/18	Staff time	Feedback loop & P2P in place
3. Establish a program of proactive engagement including booths at events, town hall meetings, civic meeting presentations, D2D campaign and a connect business campaign.	City Manager and City Council	Assigned staff	6/1/18	1/1/19	Staff time + \$2,500	First town hall meeting
4. Establish an onboarding process for elected officials and staff that includes the City's vision, governance, communications protocols, etc.	City Manager and City Council	Assigned staff and consultant	6/1/18	9/1/18	T + consultant costs	Completed first onboarding event



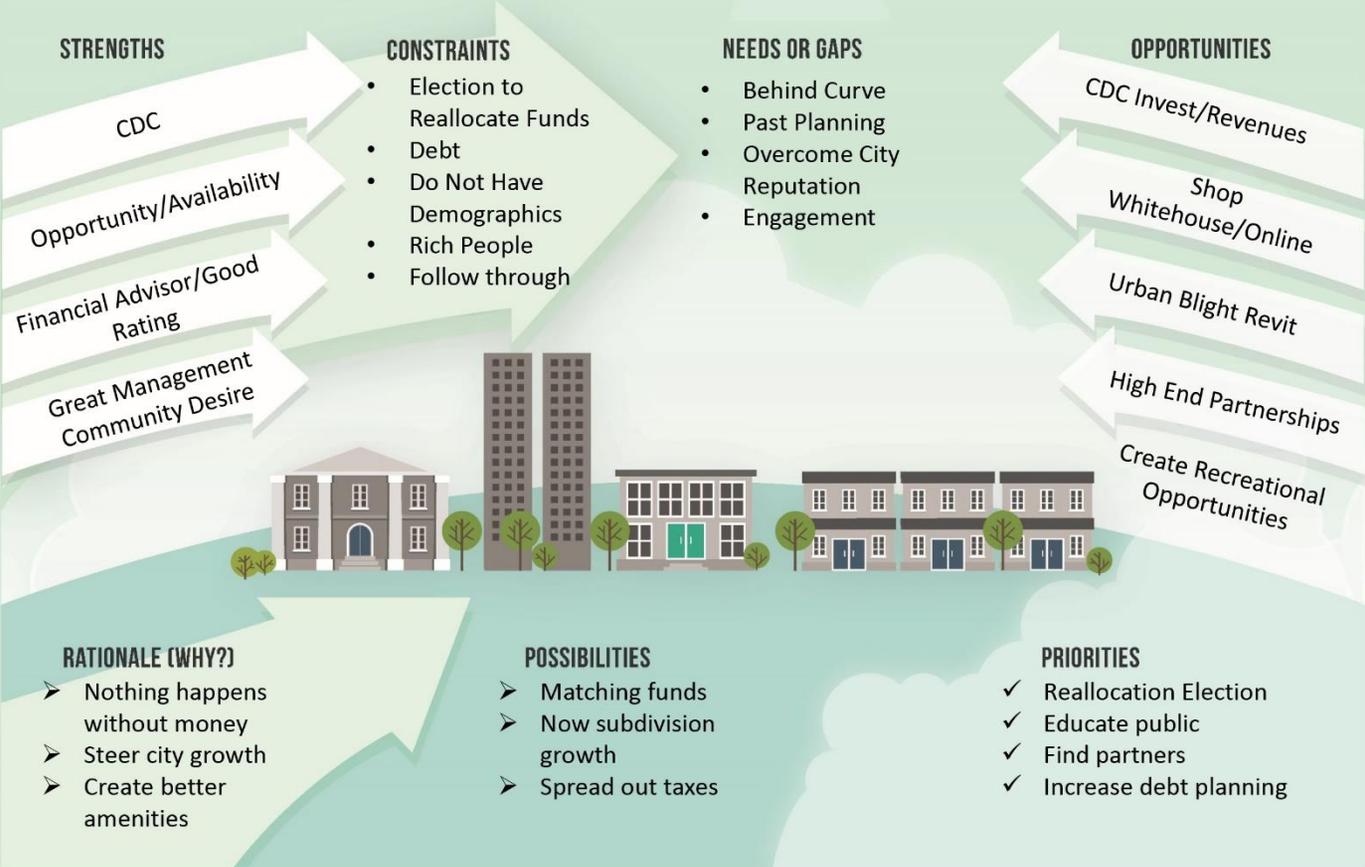


**ACTION PLAN: BOLD STEP #3**

<b>Big Bold Statement #3: Obtain the necessary land as required to accomplish the Vision.</b>						
<b>REQUIRED PROGRAMS</b>	<b>Accountability</b>		<b>Timetable</b>		<b>Resources</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
	Primary	Others	Start	Finish	T&M + (\$)	Feedback Mechanism
1. Utilizing the strategic and comprehensive plans as a roadmap, commission the CDC to develop a land acquisition strategy including the identification of the right parcels and the development of key partnerships.	CDC	City Council, P&Z & Parks	7/1/18	11/30/18	CDC funding mechanisms \$ TBD	Land strategy complete & acquisition of 1 <sup>st</sup> parcel
2. Develop key relationships to create an effective Donor's Program. Note: Consider the following: 1) Oakbrook, 2) ISD, 3) Passionate landowners and 4) Parks Foundation.	CDC	City Council, ISD, Parks C of C	6/1/18	Ongoing	Proceeds from Donor's Program \$ TBD	Documentation of Donor Program strategy & initial implementation
3. Utilizing the strategic and comprehensive plans including future land use, zoning and a Parks Masterplan, establish an appropriate annexation strategy in alignment with the governance strategy described in bold step #2.	City Council	P&Z	Current	Case-by case basis on-going	Comp Plan \$175,000	Completed Comprehensive & Annexation Plans
Total Budget Amount for Resources Portion					\$175,000 +	

# Key Objectives Context Map

**BIG BOLD STEP #4:**  
 Obtain adequate funding as needed to fulfill the Vision.



**ACTION PLAN: BOLD STEP #4**

Big Bold Statement #4: Obtain adequate funding as needed to fulfill the Vision.						
REQUIRED PROGRAMS	Accountability		Timetable		Resources	Milestones
	Primary	Others	Start	Finish	T&M + (\$)	Feedback Mechanism
1. Utilizing the strategic, comprehensive & CIP plans as a roadmap, commission the CDC to develop a funding strategy that includes 1) election, 2) donors, 3) the Chamber of Commerce and 4) property flips. Note: Public Private Partnerships (PPP's) are recommended as part of this strategy.	CDC	City Council	11/1/18	2/30/19 on-going	Establish 5 year funding goal TBD	Strategy in place, budget workshop, monthly reports & yearly reviews
2. Establish a comprehensive and proactive grants program that utilizes all applicable awards.	City Manager & Staff	Grant writer(s)	6/1/18	On-going	Matching CDC funding and Consultants	Funding program & strategy documented
3. Establish a program to grow the tax base including specific ways to: 1) attract the right kind of developers & businesses; 2) use of a campaign(s); and 3) a strategy deployed by the Chamber of Commerce.	City Council, CDC	Chamber of Commerce & City Manager	7/1/18	12/1/18 & On-going	CDC & Chamber of Commerce	Program written, C of C strategy documented by 12/1/18
4. Develop the requisite policy and program to establish a proactive debt planning strategy including the use of bond counsel.	City Council	City Manager & Bond counsel	7/1/18	12/1/18 & On-going	Time + bond counsel fees TBD	Policy & program strategy complete by 12/1/18
Total Budget Amount for Resources Portion						

# Key Objectives Context Map

**BIG BOLD STEP #5:**  
 Develop the amenities that will enhance our community's quality of life for a lifetime.

## STRENGTHS

- Pre-existing amenities
- Pre-existing infrastructure
- Availability of land

## CONSTRAINTS

- Insuring consensus on community wants
- Funding

## NEEDS OR GAPS

- Funding
- Poll feedback
- Parks & Trails Master Plan
- Aesthetic appeal of the community

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Partnership WISD for parks
- Partnerships with Union Pacific for trails
- Partnerships with secondary education
- Partnerships with clubs & organizations, e.g., bike clubs, triathletes, etc.

## RATIONALE (WHY?)

- Cities are rated and ranked based more on quality of life amenities than anything else

## POSSIBILITIES

## PRIORITIES

- ✓ Parks & Trails Masterplan
- ✓ Code enforcement



**ACTION PLAN: BOLD STEP #5**

<b>Big Bold Statement #5: Develop the amenities that will enhance our quality of life for a lifetime.</b>						
<b>REQUIRED PROGRAMS</b>	<b>Accountability</b>		<b>Timetable</b>		<b>Resources</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
	Primary	Others	Start	Finish	T&M + (\$)	Feedback Mechanism
1. Revitalize and/or complete existing projects.	City Council & Staff	Rec & Sports Board	6/1/18	On-going	TBD but based on CIP	Completion of 1 <sup>st</sup> project
2. Identify what the community wants. Note: Integrate with bold step #1.	City Council & Staff	Rec & Sports Board	6/1/18	On-going		Poll results, Web & other communication
3. Prioritize, plan and complete identified projects. Note: Consideration of start date based on completion of the comprehensive plan.	City Council & Staff	Rec & Sports Board	10/1/18	On-going	Follows funding strategy	Defined amenities program
4. Develop community/city center green space. Note: Planning consideration for this program will accommodate community events, e.g., farmer's market, boutique shops, restaurants, hotel, etc.	City Council & Staff	Green Space Taskforce	6/1/20	6/1/25	Follows funding strategy	Appointment of task force
5. Create a Parks & Trails Masterplan that includes: 1) the development of Blackhawk Creek walk/bike trail & park; and 2) the utilization of existing Union Pacific trails.	City Council & Staff	Rec & Sports Board	11/30/18	12/1/21	Follows funding strategy	Parks & Trails Master Plan complete
6. Develop sports complex #2 (includes soccer, baseball, etc.), suitable as a team sport destination.	City Council & Staff	Rec & Sports Board	TBD (based on poll)	TBD	Follows funding strategy	Initial poll results in and analyzed
Total Budget Amount for Resources Portion						

**ACTION PLAN: BOLD STEP #6**

**Big Bold Statement #5: Create the City’s identity and brand to promote the Vision.**

<b>REQUIRED PROGRAMS</b>	<b>Accountability</b>		<b>Timetable</b>		<b>Resources</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
	Primary	Others	Start	Finish	T&M + (\$)	Feedback Mechanism
1. Develop strategy and concept design to update the current branding elements—logo color pallet, social media sites, letterhead, signage, etc., *	City Manager & Staff	City Department Heads	6/1/18	8/31/18	\$7,500* 3 concepts for selection of final design	Adoption by City Council & Staff
2. Develop next level social media strategy, e.g., the more effective utilization of boosting posts. Strategy will also consider ways to increase the reach, e.g., paying for targeted placement in social media platforms or creating opportunities for individual participation, e.g., firemen giving tips on proper smoke detection uses.	City Manager & Media Manager	City Department Heads	9/1/18	On-Going	T + \$150/month budget	Social media metrics
3. Develop train-the-trainers hospitality training for selected staff who would then train service workers in Whitehouse. Program would provide 2-4 hour hospitality training in applicable local business establishments as well as city service departments that routinely interface with residents or people visiting Whitehouse. Ensure they know factual information about upcoming events in Whitehouse and how to disseminate it properly.	Chamber of Commerce	City Manager	1/2/19	On-Going	T & one-time facilitator cost estimated at \$10,000	Positive feedback from residents or people visiting Whitehouse.
4. Develop and implement marketing/communications campaign with targeted companies about Whitehouse. Develop an effective message, identify targets, begin to call, email, and travel to corporate offices to discuss the benefits of locating in Whitehouse.	City Manager & CDC Chair	Chamber of Commerce	9/31/18	On-Going	T + \$5,000 marketing materials + travel expenses	Target identification & documented calls on targets
Total Budget Amount for Resources Portion					\$25,000 + T	

# A Look Back to Take a Step Forward

## History of



# A Journey into the Future

## BIG IDEAS

The Big GREEN—A Central Park serving as our Town Square  
 Invest in Building Community  
 Focus on Education—Bring the Young and Old Together  
 Integrate Amenities (boutiques, restaurants, hotel, trails, education) around Town Square  
 Spontaneous Encounters  
 Citizen over Customer

## “ QUOTES ”

*“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is a progress; working together is success.”*

– Edward Everett Hale

*“Build it and they will come.”*

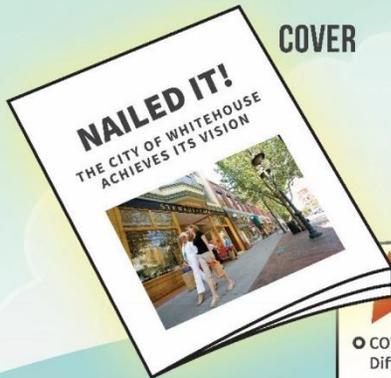
–Shoeless Joe Jackson in Field of Dreams

*“It’s our ‘Field of Dreams’”*

–Former Mayor Charles Parker

#happycity  
 #noregrets

## COVER



## BIG HEADLINES

- COW—Green But in a Different Way
- Education Never Stops!
- Recreation Destination



- Operation Bootstrap
- All Generations Converge
- Trails to Success



## SIDEBARS

- Green Square Replaces Town Square
- Education 101—Incubator
- Sports/Festivals



- Walking and Connecting to Everywhere
- Embracing Diversity
- How a Strategic Planning Workshop Changed Our City



## IMAGES





## APPENDIX 2

### City of Whitehouse SWOT Analysis Results

The SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) was based on a series of one-on-one interviews conducted between April 6, 2018 and May 1, 2018 with the City of Whitehouse City Council and staff. This analysis was used to identify the major themes that arose from describing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats currently impacting the City. These results were ultimately used as a framework for developing the five bold steps and their related detailed action plans.

The major themes that arose from the discussion are as follows:

- Identity/Community** (brand, sense of community, sense of belonging)
- Governance** (elected & appointed officials, city staff, political will, policy, regulations)
- Economics** (funding, taxes, markets)
- Amenities** (quality of life items, entertainment, infrastructure)
- Development** (physical development of housing, retail, commercial, etc.)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Small town feel	Lack of lodging	Finalizing & funding the EDC	Money spent outside the City
Large town amenities nearby	Lack of retail	Create more positive press for the City	Lack of growth means higher taxes
School district	Lack of restaurants	Incentivize needed developments	State & federal regulations
Bedroom community	Limited budget & financing for projects	Create developments to keep people here	Lack of business growth
Recreation	Past reputation and public perception	Create recreation niche	Lack of housing
Safety (low crime)	Economic incentives	Issue bonds to eliminate weaknesses	Poor past planning

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Available land	Economic development	Streamline red tape to promote business—adjust land use code	Inability to adapt to change
Fire & police department	Overdependence on water as a revenue base	Attract outside investment & keep it circulating in town	Overdependence on water as a revenue base
Great for families	Our brand—our means to sell ourselves	New sidewalks—to be a walkable/bikeable city	Too much debt
City maintenance, a clean city	Resistant to change	Higher-Ed partnerships remote learning center	High water rates
City infrastructure	Deteriorating properties	Accommodate recreationalists	Lack of annexation and political will to do so
City management	Limited recreation resources—ball fields—no soccer	The right kind of development—boutique retail, hotels, restaurants, new neighborhoods, etc.	Lack of follow-through on key initiatives—nee for accountability to take action
Community pride	Limited tax base	To be a regional distribution center	Lack of community engagement—need to hear from the people
Good strategic location	Perception of city government—lack of trust	Land purchases, annexation	Tyler
Current leadership	Lack of recreation for young adults	Grow 110—bulldoze and build something	School district adding new locations in Tyler
High average household income	Tunnel vision—lack of forward vision in the past	Implement realistic achievable plan	Overvalued land
Open for business	High taxes	Leverage recreational amenities	NIMBY
	Lack of local business to generate sales tax	Leverage location near Tyler lake	
	Lack of leadership diversity—no women on the Council	Build identity and recognition through brand	
	Lack of restaurants, retail/amenities to keep dollars within	Create Americana (community identity, look & feel)	
	Lack of community events—Farmer's Market	Leverage EDC to fund and develop projects	

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
	Tools for economic development—never a focus previously	We are successful! We aren't getting enough credit for what we're doing. We need to get the word out!	
	Lack of a city center	Create a city center core	
	We don't know our values—Council needs to create accountability and transparency	Business retention & expansion	
	Lack of city staff	Increase public events/activities, e.g., community garden, farmer's market, concerts	
An insane capacity for water and waste water	Ability to grow without relying just on annexation	Build war chest to increase funding	
	Lack development standards	Big priority—clean up ordinances; develop stronger development standards	
	Trail Education	20,000 vehicles on 110	
	Lack of funding for amenities, P3 partnerships and sponsors	Create a hub of leadership training & innovation	
	Lack of strong identity and brand		