



# Hamilton Economic Development Corporation

2017-2020 Three-Year Strategic Plan



Hamilton Economic Development Corporation

Prepared by

## Hamilton Economic Development Corporation

### Summary

In April 2017, the Hamilton Economic Development Corporation began a 3-Year Strategic Planning process that was completed in June 2017. The following is the process used to reach the conclusions for the plan.

1. Preliminary meeting between the facilitator, the Economic Development Director, and the Board Chair to go over key economic development issues facing Hamilton, understand the programs and projects underway through the Economic Development Corporation, and review the agenda and format for the visioning retreat.
2. Meeting between the facilitator, the Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors, and other key City Staff if needed, to identify key economic development issues in Hamilton and Board Member priorities.
3. Facilitator conducted multiple stakeholder interviews with business leaders, property owners, entrepreneurs, elected officials, Chamber, etc. to identify what they think Hamilton's priorities, needs and challenges are regarding economic development. Some interviews were conducted individually and others in focus groups. Questions included items such as business recruitment, retention and expansion efforts, growing local businesses, marketing, branding, community development, and other topics the EDC requested to receive feedback on.
4. Facilitator conducted the half-day Board Development Session with the Hamilton EDC Board and Staff and any invited guests. This session included:
  - a. Economic Development Overview - community development, business development, leadership, workforce, social infrastructure, physical infrastructure, recruitment, retention, tourism, etc.
  - b. Board Development Training - roles, responsibilities, best practices, the 5 Cs, prospects, sales team development, responding to requests, economic development trends, pitfalls to avoid

5. Facilitator conducted a half-day visioning retreat/workshop with the Hamilton EDC Board and staff. The workshop included:
  - a. Development of the organization's Vision Statement
  - b. Review of key issues from the community leader interviews/facilitator presents report
  - c. Prioritization of needs
  - d. Development of 6 Goals
  - e. Development of preliminary strategies for implementation
  
6. Facilitator conducted a second half-day follow-up workshop with the Hamilton EDC Board and staff. The workshop included:
  - a. Redevelopment of Mission Statement
  - b. Consensus on Vision Statement
  - c. Further development of the strategic initiatives under each goal that has been developed
  - d. Determine Metrics/Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
  
7. Facilitator met with staff to finalize plan onsite.

## Mission & Vision Statements

The board and staff of the Hamilton EDC developed new Mission and Vision Statements for the organization. The following are the new statements.

### Mission Statement

The Mission of the Hamilton Economic Development Corporation is to promote and enable community and economic development in Hamilton.

### Vision Statement

Hamilton will be recognized as the premier Hill Country community for economic development and quality of life.

## 2017-2020 Goals

The following are the list of goals developed by the board and staff throughout the process described above.

### Goal #1: Downtown Development

To revitalize Hamilton's historic downtown into a thriving district.

1. Determine needed infrastructure and create plans for installation
  - a. Streets: create brick crosswalks
  - b. Sidewalks: Safe walkability and ADA-compliant
  - c. Trees & flowers: rainwater collection, solar lighting, more greenery and color
  - d. Maintain relationship with TxDOT
  - e. Research grants for sidewalks
2. Encourage proper signage throughout downtown
  - a. Establish wayfinding/directional signage
  - b. Research grants for funding
3. Secure charrette for Downtown that results in a professional design rendering
  - a. Research costs and/or get quotes
  - b. Annually put funding in budget for items in this plan
  - c. Take fieldtrips to San Saba, Sherman, & McKinney to meet with Downtown officials

- d. Hire someone to create a map of Hamilton's Downtown District
- 4. Create a new parking plan for downtown
  - a. New striping for parking places
  - b. Plant trees and flowers along parking areas
  - c. Work with City to ensure covered trash bins in downtown
- 5. Lighting
  - a. Black lighting poles
  - b. Solar
  - c. Ensure that initiatives in downtown create a charming effect
  - d. Dimming capabilities
- 6. Community Foundation
  - a. Research pros and cons to establishing one
  - b. If moving forward, hire attorney to help establish one

#### How will Goal #1 be Measured?

- Did we create an infrastructure plan?
- Was a signage plan established?
- Did we create charrette?
- Have our parking options improved?
- Is there new lighting throughout downtown?
- Did we research the pros and cons to establishing a Community Foundation?

## Goal #2: Business Retention & Expansion

To build and foster relationships with existing businesses that result in retention and expansion

### 1. To conduct existing business visits

- a. Formulate a new Business Retention & Expansion Program that includes topics to be discussed during industry visits.
- b. We will identify 12 businesses to visit in 2017-2018
- c. Visits will consist of 2-on-1 (two EDC representatives to one industry leader.) Board members will identify a visit they would like to participate in.
- d. Prior to visits, board members will have access to BRE Training that will consist of topics such as:
  - Mechanics of BRE Plan
  - Roles and responsibilities
  - Interview tips
  - Confidentiality
  - A pre-meeting review of topics to be discussed
  - Tips on asking “How can we help you succeed?”
  - Recording and reporting results
- e. Analyze data and create monthly report for board regarding visit information
- f. Identify ways to market the BRE program and Hamilton existing businesses:
  - Create an annual Hamilton (or regional) existing industry newsletter
  - Google information on Hamilton’s top 10 industries
  - Write article
  - Visit management to review article
  - Request quotes
  - Publish in newspaper, Facebook, and other distribution channels
  - Social media outlets
  - Email blasts
  - Highlight a business of the month each month to show recognition for existing industries
  - Business showcases
  - Local media outlets

2. To host industry events that promote business retention efforts
  - a. Host annual Business Appreciation Luncheon or Breakfast
  - b. Host a Business/Workforce Resource Fair
3. To provide support to local existing businesses
  - a. Educate more businesses about the benefits of working with various workforce development resources such as the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Workforce Solutions, SCORE, etc.
    - Distribute educational marketing material to typical small business service providers in Hamilton such as attorneys, certified public accountants, financial institutions, and financial advisors
    - Social media exposure/training workshops for existing businesses
  - b. Create and distribute welcome packages and list of area resources for new businesses (partner with Chamber?) Ask for certificate of occupancy list from the permit office each month.
  - c. Provide social media exposure/showcase to existing businesses on a routine and requested basis
  - d. Identify wholesale Buy Local gap opportunities with local businesses
    - Secure an ESRI or EMSI wholesale gap analysis
    - Matchmaking B2B to lower cost/more convenient options
    - Workforce Solutions data
    - BRE visit questions, such as “What supplies does the hospital buy?” ISD?

### How will Goal #2 be Measured?

- Was there at least one industry visit per month?
- Was there a board member involved in each visit?
- Did we host the Business Appreciation Luncheon/Breakfast each year?
- Did we build a database/dossier on our companies?
- Did we follow up with business requests for help?

## Goal #3: Community Development

To improve the quality of life in Hamilton

### 1. Workforce/Education

- a. Identify Baby Boomers retiring in the area., i.e., dentists
- b. Create a Career Fair
  - i. Talk to Bastrop EDC to learn their award-winning process
  - ii. Explore potential partners
  - iii. Market to existing industries as a solution to their succession planning challenges
  - iv. Market to students as exploring what their options are and why considering a trade could lead to a rewarding career
- c. Partner with the Hamilton ISD to identify opportunities to bridge the workforce gap between education and employers

### 2. Beautification

- a. Contact Keep Texas Beautiful to create a Keep Hamilton Beautiful Program
- b. Contact Master Gardeners in the area to see how they can help
- c. Organize and host a Clean-Up Day
  - i. Market it with an economic development message for residents
  - ii. Heavy promotion for participation
- d. Explore the creation of a Community Garden
- e. Encourage the tearing down of old nursing home property
- f. Research the purchase of properties to modify into parking lots, restrooms, water features or for purposeful resale

### 3. Establish written guidelines for signage, awnings, and façade grant program

- a. Write guidelines to improve aesthetics
- b. Determine color scheme for branding
- c. Establish payment schedules
- d. Create line item in budget
- e. Create grant application
- f. Share with building and property owners
- g. Revise Hamilton's ordinances (look at other towns)
- h. Establish wayfinding/directional signage
- i. Research grants for funding

#### 4. Housing

- a. Pursue opportunities to partner with others for housing, including a possible Community Foundation
- b. Contact Habitat for Humanity to explore options for Hamilton housing

#### How will Goal #3 be Measured?

- Did we create a Career Fair?
- Did we bridge the gap between skills needed by employers and skills produced in school?
- Did we create a Clean-Up Hamilton Day?
- Did we establish guidelines for signage, awnings, and a façade grant program?
- Did we fully explore our housing options?

#### Goal #4: Tourism

To become a premier Hill Country tourism destination

1. Research and replicate what some other Hill Country communities have done to attract tourists, i.e. Hico, Fredericksburg, Brady, Comfort, San Saba, Marble Falls
  - a. Answer the question: What do we do here that people would come see/do?
  - b. Take a 281-Road Trip Day to take notes on what tourists are already enjoying along route
  - c. Create something complementary to what tourists are already doing along 281
  - d. Research feasibility of becoming a Main Street Designated City
  - e. Create a plan to capture tourism tour busses
  - f. Establish a Historical Home District tour
  - g. Create two Selfie Stations with great background for photos
    - a. One at Circle T
    - b. One in downtown
  - h. Leverage Ann Whitney Day
  - i. Pipe music throughout downtown
  - j. Leverage the RV visitors to shop downtown

2. Leverage Circle T
  - a. Purposefully schedule events during key roping weekends
  - b. Partner with downtown businesses to increase awareness and create experiences
  - c. Establish a Shuttle from Circle T to downtown
  - d. Market downtown to roping visitors
  - e. Fair Park RV spots
  - f. Contact Livestock Association
  - g. Survey Circle T visitors to determine what they would like to do most while in town
3. Partner with area wineries
  - a. Learn everything about the various Wine Tours
  - b. Visit the “Way Out Wineries” organizers to seek opportunities to work together
  - c. Partner with the owners of the old BoxCar restaurant to explore options
4. Farm-to-Table Community Event
  - a. Research how other communities create successful outdoor dining events
  - b. Research “Outstanding in the Field” events
  - c. Create a “Table on Main” Dinner event
5. Partner with the Museum and Library to create a History tourism draw
6. Leverage hunting and fishing tourists and spouses to explore Hamilton while here
7. Subscribe to Small Business Saturday (American Express) and use their materials to promote shopping local.
8. Explore becoming a Film Friendly Community to attract film industry projects

#### How will Goal #4 be Measured?

- Did we survey participants at Circle T?
- Did we create marketing materials to supply visitors at Circle T?
- Did we secure a shuttle bus to bring people to downtown and “Way Out Wineries?”
- Did we explore opportunities with the Museum and Library?
- Did we determine criteria for becoming a Film Friendly Community?

## Goal #5: Business Development/Marketing

To successfully market the Hamilton area for business development:

1. Business Recruitment
  - a. Collateral materials
  - b. Develop an economic development incentive policy
  - c. Identify target industries and target prospects
  - d. Create a list of all available buildings and sites
  - e. Identify site selection consultants and industry site selection professionals
  - f. Attend “Meet the Consultants” events to begin building relationships
  - g. Texas Economic Development Council
  - h. Southern Economic Development Council
  - i. Explore regional marketing opportunities
    - i. Texas One
    - ii. Team Texas
    - iii. Grand Central Texas
  - j. Make efforts to build a stronger relationship with Workforce Solutions
  - k. Secure relevant workforce information from Workforce Solutions
  - l. Make efforts to network with other Economic Development professionals and developers
  - m. Explore IAMC membership
  - n. Add 3 feet to airport runway to qualify for financial incentives
2. Entrepreneurial Development
  - a. Collateral materials
  - b. Create selection criteria and award guidelines for start-up incentive grants
  - c. Create a “Startup Texas”-like support team approach and checklist. Talk to SBDC & SCORE.
  - d. Develop resources for entrepreneurial advice
    - i. Research and fully describe all revolving loan fund options
    - ii. Branding advice

3. Telling our story

- a. Business-friendly
- b. Small town charm
- c. No impact fees here
- d. Resurrect the Genealogical Library
- e. Team Roping Capital of Texas
- f. Most ranchland in region
- g. Historical background
- h. Billy The Kid
- i. Tell the Ann Whitney story
- j. Showcase airport and Glider Club story
- k. Promote hunting and fishing lifestyle

4. Social Media

- a. Create, populate, and effectively manage an Instagram account
- b. Host a photowalk on Instagram
- c. Utilize Instagram Stories
- d. Use hashtags: #hamiltontexas & #visithamiltontx
- e. Geotagging
- f. Create tips packet for local business to maximize TripAdvisor/Yelp/Google
- g. Promote a local selfie station
- h. Facebook Page:
  - i. Start posting on Facebooks
  - ii. Start using Facebook Live for showcasing businesses & events

5. Website

- a. Complete design and content rebuild and rebrand
- b. New visual design
- c. New content
- d. Evaluate proposal for new web developer

### How will Goal #5 be Measured?

- Did we develop new marketing/collateral materials?
- Did we develop an incentive policy?
- Did we identify our target industries?
- How many buildings and sites do we have catalogued and marketed?
- What partnerships have we developed with Workforce Solutions?
- Are we continually telling our story better?
- Are we effectively using our social media channels to market Hamilton and have a dialog with others?
- Did we rebuild our website?

### Goal #6: Organizational Structure

To maximize effectiveness of the Hamilton EDC by continually improving organizational management

1. Review and update by-laws
2. Establish a policy and procedures manual
3. Create a budget that reflects the Strategic Plan
4. Establish program guidelines for available grant programs

### How will Goal #6 be Measured?

- Did we update the bylaws?
- Did we establish a policy and procedures manual?
- Did we design a budget that matches the Strategic Plan?
- Did we create guidelines for available grants?