

## Sealy Main Street

Kimbra Hill, Main Street Manager

### Main Street Advisory Board Strategic Plan:

**I. We will restructure and refresh the brand of the Sealy Main Street Program by creating a new Vision Statement, Mission Statement and Logo with the goals of strengthening the sense of community, attracting new business, promoting tourism, and retaining and growing existing business. Our program should be built upon Main Street symbolizing a place where friends and neighbors can cross paths and come together, downtown being the core of our community that becomes the anchor to the sprawl. Our Vision, Mission and Development Plan should tell who we were, are, and will be. We should create a spirit and environment of entrepreneurship, market to new innovative businesses, and expect our district and program to move through three phases of growth, Catalyst, Growth and Management.**

#### **A. Main Street Manger will research and study the Main Street Model:**

1. Draft a Sealy Main Street Program Handbook and Guideline for the restructuring of the program, with the goal of being consistent with the proven Main Street Model, built upon Main Street symbolizing a place where friends and neighbors can cross paths and come together, the core of our community that becomes the anchor to the sprawl. Our vision, mission and development plan should tell who we were, are, and will be. We should create a spirit of entrepreneurship
  - a. Create Committees from board members to share the workload and operate as the program's worker bees:
    - i. **Design** – working to get the downtown district into top physical shape, considering elements of buildings, storefronts, signs, public spaces, murals, pedestrian friendly features, landscaping, merchandising, displays, and promotional materials.
    - ii. **Promotion** – creating a positive image that will rekindle community pride and improve consumer and investor confidence, selling our image, advertising, retail promotional activities, special events, and promotional campaigns.
    - iii. **Organization** – the manager and board members building relationships with business and building owners, planning and preparing for growth and revitalization.
    - iv. **Economic Vitality** – strengthening our economic assets while diversifying our base, retaining and expanding business, converting underutilized or unused space into productive property, and sharpening the competitiveness and skills of businesses.
    - v. **Volunteer** – maintaining a list of volunteers and contact information, and a spreadsheet of volunteer hours invested by each board member and volunteer.
    - vi. (Other) committees as needed
2. Review and revise the Main Street Advisory Board Bylaws, approved on July 16, 2019, to be consistent with the restructured plan for the Sealy Main Street Program.
3. Review and revise the Chapter 29 Downtown Preservation District

of the City of Sealy Ordinance 2016-12, inclusive of all edits.

- B. During the Catalyst Phase, excite the community and stakeholders with possibilities, get the program's name, vision and mission exposed to the public.**
- C. During the Growth Phase, show tangible progress to investors and present a realistic and achievable development plan.**
- D. The Management Phase will be a period of maintenance.**
- E. Survey stakeholders, Main Street Advisory Board Members, EDC Board Members, City Council, City department heads, and members of the community.**
  - 1. Main Street Manager will develop an interview/survey.
  - 2. The board will create a Vision Initiative Committee to interview and collect the information to help the board determine our district's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, needs, wishes, and dislikes.
  - 3. The Main Street Manager, Committee and board members will work together to use the information we collect to draft, and approve, new Vision and Mission Statements, which represents where we want to be in a decade.
    - a. The Mission Statement helps the board plan work and prevents the board from taking on work that exceeds our purpose, as well as distinguishes our program from others in the community.
    - b. The Vision Statement will be written in the present tense, as if all the goals were reached 10 years from now.
      - i. Upon completion of the statements, we will hold a special event and press release to reveal and unveil the statements.

**F. Four key committee's roles in fresh branding:**

**1. Design Committee:**

- a. The committee will design a new logo that represents our past, as well as our new vision and mission, creating a positive image that will rekindle community pride and improve consumer and investor confidence
- b. Evaluating current approved color selections
- c. Proposing mural options for the board's vote
- d. Recommending merchandising and display designs for storefronts
- e. Leading the board in sign improvement and advertisement plans
- f. Recommending options for public space uses, landscaping and pedestrian and consumer features
- g. The committee will design t-shirts for board members and volunteers that will be worn at events to help promote our cause.

**2. Promotion Committee:**

- a. Sell our image by creating a strong following on social media
- b. Encourage the downtown businesses to share their marketing promotions so that our promotion committee may assist with designing ads and sharing them on social media
- c. Communicate with local organizations to encourage them to plan community events in the downtown district so that we may help promote it on our social media and by other advertising means
- d. Routinely advertise our businesses and services, consider interviewing business owners and promote stories about them
- e. Recommend and lead Sealy Main Street promotional campaigns

based on Public Holidays and celebrations, possible considerations include, but are not limited to :

i. January

1. New Year's Day

ii. February

1. Groundhog Day
2. Valentine's Day
3. President's Day
4. Marti Gras commences

iii. March

1. Texas Independence Day
2. Read Across America Day
3. Super Tuesday
4. Employee Appreciation Day
5. St. Patrick's Day

iv. April

1. Easter
2. Earth Day
3. Administrative Professionals Day
4. Take Your Child to Work Day

v. May

1. Cinco de Mayo
2. Mother's Day
3. Armed Forces Day
4. National Nurses Day
5. Memorial Day

vi. June

1. Flag Day
2. Father's Day

vii. July

1. Independence Day

viii. August

1. Back to School

ix. September

1. Grandparent's Day
2. Main Street Program's Birthday
3. Labor Day
4. National Clean Up Day

x. October

1. Boss's Day
2. Oktoberfest
3. Halloween

xi. November

1. Veteran's Day
2. Thanksgiving
3. Black Friday/ Shop Small Saturday
4. Cyber Monday

xii. December

1. Christmas

2. New Year's Eve

**3. Organization Committee:**

- a. Build relationships with stakeholders
- b. Develop a contact list for all members of local foundations and societies. Plan and facilitate annual planning meetings with other community groups.
- c. Call on stakeholders and community leaders for fundraising and sponsorships
- d. Organize and manage information for benchmarks and evaluation of success and achievements

**4. Economic Vitality Committee:**

- i. Make recommendations to convert underutilized or unused space into productive property
- ii. Recommend tools to sharpen the competitiveness and skills of the businesses
- iii. Recommend types of new businesses to diversify our base
- iv. Analysis of businesses and services to make recommendations for retaining and expanding business

**G. The Main Street Manager will be responsible for creating a Sealy Main Street website**

- 1. Logo
- 2. Pictures of our district
- 3. Contact information of staff and board members
- 4. Event calendar
- 5. Appeal for volunteers
- 6. Vision Statement
- 7. Information about our Historic District Improvement Grant
- 8. Successes and recent investments
- 9. Business Directory within the Main Street District
- 10. City of Sealy's Chapter 29 Downtown Preservation District Ordinance
- 11. Map of the district
- 12. Main Street Advisory Board Bylaws
- 13. Press releases or media coverage
- 14. Calendar of board meetings
- 15. Board agendas
- 16. Capability to accept donations online
- 17. Link to real estate available for sale or lease
- 18. Photo gallery of before and after project pictures
- 19. Links to social media pages
- 20. Approved Historic District color palette
- 21. Annual reports
  - a. Mission Statement
  - b. Directory of board and staff members, and committee chairs
  - c. Awards and recognitions
  - d. Testimonials
  - e. Explanation of the Main Street Approach

**H. Generate activity and strong presence on social media**

**I. Communicate with local newspaper editor for publicity ads**

## **J. Identify and plan new tourist attractions and beautification projects**

1. Identify tourist attractions
  - a. Sealy Historical Society's Museum and Park – Develop a 3-5 phase plan to complete this project
  - b. Historical Markers in the downtown district
    - i. Preibisch Building (Saddleback Saloon) – 207 Main
    - ii. Hackbarth building (Verity Mortgage) – 111 & 113 Main
    - iii. Hayne's Mattress Factory (Sealy Decorating) – 109 N. Hardeman
    - iv. Sealy (City Hall) – 415 Main
    - v. St. John's Episcopal Church – 311 6<sup>th</sup> St.
2. Photo opportunities in and around Main Street District
  - a. Levine Park
  - b. Mural at Citizens State Bank
  - c. Liedertafel Hall
3. Annual Events, and event coordination with Sealy Community Foundation, Chamber of Commerce, Sealy Historical Society, Master Gardener's Club, Sealy ISD/PTA, and community churches:
  - a. Sealy Community Foundation's SealyBration
  - b. Sealy Community Foundation's Fantasy of Lights
  - c. F.U.M.C.'s Vendor Blender – Thursday before Fantasy of Lights
  - d. Small Business Saturday – Saturday after Thanksgiving
  - e. Consider:
    - i. Vendor Market Day / Farmer's Market Day
    - ii. Car Shows
    - iii. Sip and Shop – determine legalities of sponsoring events, where alcohol is served, with City attorney
    - iv. One or two annual Main Street Advisory Board fundraiser events to raise money for an approved development/beautification project

**II. Identify buildings and businesses in Downtown District and create a live Downtown District Building & Business Inventory to use as a reference tool in marketing buildings and businesses, for getting to know the historical significance of our district, as well as to develop and strengthen relationships with our stakeholders. It is our responsibility to be knowledgeable about our downtown preservation district, and to inform our stakeholders about Main Street Program and EDC services.**

### **A. Take a photos of each building/business**

### **B. Austin County Appraisal District Information:**

1. Property ID
2. Legal description
3. Owner name and mailing address
4. Building and lot sizes
5. Appraised value

### **C. Building Owner Information:**

1. Email address
2. Phone numbers
3. Is building for sale or lease
  - a. If leased:
    - i. Price per square foot
    - ii. Term of lease

- b. If for sale:
  - iii. Realtor contact information
  - iv. Price
- 4. Explain services provided by Sealy Main Street Program and determine if owner is interested in, or in need of services.
  - a. Maintain an active list of potential buildings
  - b. Allocate funds for projects in current/upcoming budgets

**D. Business Owner Information:**

1. Business and owner names
2. Email address
3. Phone numbers
4. Number of employees, full-time and part-time
5. Describe type of business and merchandise/services
6. Determine percentages of business/sales by storefront, internet, social media
7. Identify obstacles to success in downtown
8. Identify skills training needs
9. Explain services provided by Sealy Main Street Program and determine if owner is interested in, or in need of services
10. Determine if plans for expansion
11. Discuss owner's vision for downtown
12. Identify design, promotional, organizational or economic vitality needs the business has so that the Main Street Advisory Board can plan resolutions.

**E. Use the building/business owner information**

1. Upload to and activate Downtowntx.org
2. Advertise available real estate on Sealy Main Street website and social media

**F. Create Welcome Packets to distribute to businesses and building owners in the district to familiarize them with our program and the EDC services.**

1. Historic District Improvement Grants
2. Market research
3. Other funding sources
4. Design services
5. Promotions – Main Street Board's and those we can piggy-back on to that are sponsored by Chamber of Commerce and other community foundations and societies

**G. Develop a marketing plan for buildings, office spaces and businesses that are available for lease or sale**

1. Advertise on Main Street website
2. Activate downtowntx.org through Texas Historical Commission Main Street membership
3. Develop a relationship with local real estate agents
  - i. Provide them with downtown Ordinance 2016-12, Chapter 29 for compliance with Section 29-3 Permitted Uses, Prohibited Uses and Non-conforming Uses
  - ii. Correspond with one another to alert of new listings
  - iii. Create advertisement fliers
  - iv. Develop and maintain a live listing to have available

for immediate distribution

**III. Draft a Downtown District Development Plan to use as a tool in planning our annual budget, determining the need for fundraising events or alternative funding options and for requesting City services from multiple departments, and to plan for and direct growth, and to identify and plan solutions for the marketing and advertisement needs of our businesses.**

**A. Identify buildings, businesses, lots, alleys/roads and infrastructure that are target candidates for improvement and request funding from EDC for Historic District Improvement Grants in budget**

**B. Identify buildings & businesses that need extensive rehabilitation and redesign to attract investors, businesses, start-ups, including the outskirts of the Downtown District border, or lots for development**

1. Contact owners to encourage them to consider sale of identified building(s)
2. Revise Chapter 29 to control approved and prohibited uses of buildings, types of buildings, sign rules, and other criteria identified as needing revision

**C. Identify funding options to implement the development plan**

1. Main Street Advisory Board fundraiser – one annual event
2. EDC funding
3. Identify prospective community donors
4. Identify prospective real estate investors
5. Research TIRZ (Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone) for downtown
6. Identify State grants
7. Identify corporate donors for recognition projects (i.e. handrails)
8. T-shirt sales – designed by our Design Committee

**D. Perform a Market Analysis**

1. ESRI Study through Texas Historical Commission's economic developer
  - a. Identify retail & services needs and desires
  - b. Identify financial demographics/spending trends
  - c. Identify leakage
  - d. Identify innovative markets and possibilities, while promoting local attractions and creating new assets and opportunities that appeal to growing market segments, including tourists.
2. Survey Monkey for residents of Sealy, using Facebook, to create a plan-vision from community input
3. Conduct surveys of business performance/conditions
4. Identify needs of services, retail, housing and entertainment in the downtown district, by multi-generations, that are met, or deficient

**E. Design parking solutions/options, consider visiting other downtowns for inspiration**

**F. Identify residential and/or entertainment, retail and services for all generations**

1. Although we do not have zoning, designate or recommend types of businesses/uses for available real estate

**G. Design plans to enhance and refresh interest in downtown**

1. Design a theme
2. Design a logo
3. Make a commercial for social media
4. Create pamphlets

**H. Sign/Marketing improvement**

1. Wayfinding signs from major arteries that direct traffic to downtown
2. Meyer Street/Highway 36 Sign plan to advertise shops and services in the downtown district –

- a. Mural
  - b. LED
  - c. Raise the arched entry sign and add brackets to install small name signs
  - d. Purchase flagpole brackets for street lights and mount flag signs to change out on a monthly basis
3. Billboard on Interstate 10

**I. Mural project**

- 1. Work with City attorney to develop an agreement between City and building
  - a. owner to allow our program to commission artists, and agree to maintain it.
- 2. Identify building sites
- 3. Identify local artists
- 4. Allocate funds in annual budget

**J. Complete the safety handrails and steps project throughout downtown**

- 1. Receive bid
- 2. Raise funds from donors

**K. Awning repairs and new construction throughout downtown**

- 1. Request renderings from three or more companies, to include bids
- 2. Allocate funds in annual budget

**L. Develop an abandoned building management plan**

**M. Landscape improvement**

- 1. Landscape the base of the clock tower
- 2. Flower pots along sidewalks
- 3. Additional benches

**N. Entertainment and restaurant recruitment site identification**

**O. Alley improvements to create a walkable downtown**

- 1. Identify sites to improve, specifying types of improvements
- 2. Improvements to alleys examples:
  - a. Pavement
  - b. Lighting
  - c. Art
  - d. Music/speakers

**P. App development for a walkable tour**

**IV. A work plan and annual work program will be developed as the guiding tools of implementation to carry out the program's activities.**

**A. The Work Plan will be based on the Vision Statement.**

- 1. Create an annual work plan to include projects, funding, schedules, events and activities.
  - a. Create a short-term, Five-Year Work Plan.
  - b. Create a long-term, 10 Year Work Plan.
- 2. Measure our progress with benchmarks and timetables to achieve specific objectives.
- 3. Implementation plans may include many community entities involvement to see the plan through.
  - a. Sealy Chamber of Commerce
  - b. Sealy Community Foundation
  - c. Sealy Historical Society
  - d. Master Gardener's
  - e. Volunteer Base



4. Useful visual planning tools to develop our Work Plan and help the community visualize future changes:
  - a. Architectural renderings
  - b. Site plans
  - c. Reports
  - d. Posters
  - e. Banners

**B. The Annual Work Program outlines our plan to achieve the goals of the Work Plan.**

1. Form an Implementation Committee to plan 12-months work at a time.
  - a. List Annual events – recurring and new promotions and fundraisers.
  - b. List projects the committee can realistically complete in the year, in keeping with the Main Street model of incremental changes to keep the program fresh and slowly changing.
2. Develop committees for each of the four points. Committees members can be volunteers, led and guided by the board
  - a. Board members should create goals and objectives for each committee, Design, Organization, Promotion, Economic Vitality.
    - i. Brainstorm at least a dozen ideas.
    - ii. Determine if any of the ideas can be combined into one.
    - iii. Finally, prioritize the objectives.
  - b. For each goal and objective, the board lists activities with an appropriate time frame for accomplishing each one.
    - i. Develop a budget for the activities.
3. Post the Work Plan on the Main Street website so people can follow the projects we are tackling.

***An example of a Work Plan element:***

EXAMPLE: **Goal** for Economic Vitality Committee:

*Research and analyze the downtown's economic conditions.*

**Objective #1:** Understand the retail market conditions that affect the downtown.

Activities:

- Gather the most recent Census data.
- Conduct customer and merchant surveys.
- Obtain copies of market studies from city planning department.
- Conduct preliminary market analysis.

**Objective #2:** Gather information about downtown real estate.

Activities:

- Develop a base map that shows all downtown buildings.
- Conduct a building inventory and note vacant lots and abandoned buildings.
- Collect real estate data from tax office.  
Collect historical data (maps, photos, directories).

**V. Track the program's success and achievements by use of benchmarks to show results.**

**A. Organization Benchmarks:**

1. Keep track of the number of volunteers annually involved.
  - a. Set up a database, managed by the Volunteer Committee Chair.
    - i. Include their time and skills.

- ii. Show the number of new volunteers recruited.
  - iii. Estimate the total number of volunteer hours, give the board a monthly update.
  - iv. The number of volunteer hours can be calculated per hourly rate (ex. 100 volunteers at 10 hours @ x \$19.51/hr.= \$19,510.00 in-kind donation from private sector).
  - v. Keep track of successful partnerships, collaborative efforts with other local organizations, such as Sealy Community Foundation).
- b. Recognize volunteers at the end of the year.

**B. Promotion Benchmarks:**

- 1. Keep track of attendance at attendance at promotional events.
  - a. Set up a database, managed by the Promotion Committee Chair.
    - i. Document the number of participants (vendors, ticket sales) at each event, and their increase or decrease from previous year(s).
    - ii. Document the number of participating retailers.
    - iii. Estimate the impact of promotional events on sales.
    - iv. Follow up with the Chamber of Commerce to monitor the number of requests for community information immediately following the event.
    - v. Check with retailers to get the zip codes of the shoppers during the event.

**C. Design Benchmarks:**

- 1. Keep an ongoing list of private design improvements and their costs:
  - a. New signs/murals
  - b. Building rehabilitation
  - c. Historic District Improvement Grant projects
  - d. Interior renovations
  - e. Parking lot improvements
  - f. Benches and landscape improvements by the private sector
- 2. Keep an ongoing list of public improvement projects and their costs:
  - a. Sign and mural projects
  - b. Historic District Improvement Grant projects
  - c. Work plan projects, Main Street or City funded
  - d. Infrastructure and road improvements
  - e. Street furniture
  - f. Sidewalk improvements, handrails, utility burials
  - g. City parking improvements or expansions
  - h. Tree plantings, park improvements
  - i. New light poles
  - j. New Christmas or holiday décor
- 3. Keep track of in-kind design services the Main Street Program provides to a business and property owners. An in-kind dollar figure can be attributed to these services.
- 4. Calculate the increase in property assessments following a rehabilitation project completion. Be able to compare these, year to year.

**D. Economic Vitality Benchmarks:** To accurately measure Main Street's impact on the economic growth of the commercial district, determine baseline figures for the beginning of the following:

1. Number of current businesses in the district. (Check with city offices for those that have licenses and permits on file).
2. Number of new businesses in the district.
3. Number of businesses lost in the district.
4. Number of jobs in the district.
5. Schedule quarterly meetings with stakeholders for feedback.