

A PATH TO THE FUTURE

City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County

Long-Range Community Vision

October 2018

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A Path to the Future

Mayor's Introduction

In 1998 eleven community leaders formed a committee to develop a plan for the future of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County, just as businesses do in their strategic planning. The final plan “Journey to 2020 ... A Focus on Gillespie County” was compiled by over 200 citizens who attended numerous meetings. The final report included 6 Key Focus Areas (Economy, Education, Health, Infrastructure, Quality of Life, and Tourism/Traffic/Transportation).

The results of this plan have aided the City of Fredericksburg, Gillespie County, Hill Country Memorial, Fredericksburg Independent School District, Economic Development Commission, Fredericksburg Chamber of Commerce and many other entities as a guide for the future needs of our community.

As 2020 is nearing, and much of the 1998 report has been accomplished, the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County began a new visioning process in February 2017. This process has included hundreds of our citizens who were involved in countless committee meetings and public forums, with additional input gathered from numerous sources. The visionary statements included in this document are intended as opportunities to keep concerned Fredericksburg and Gillespie County citizens involved in a continual process of planning for the future.

The now complete visioning plan “A Path to the Future” includes 4 Key Focus Areas (Business, Government, Family Life, and Quality of Life) along with goals and objectives which are identified in this document. These visions are a direct result of the issues that consistently generate the most involvement and interest throughout our community. Some of these issues may or may not be considered as imminent concerns, however, it is the goal of the participants in this process to avoid these issues becoming problems as they may have for other communities.

Our community has worked well together for generations to preserve our quality of life, our history, and our culture. I encourage everyone who was a part of, and those who are new to, “A Path to the Future” to become involved in and supportive of the views and concepts included in this document. We, and future generations, will be the beneficiaries of this foresight.

Linda Langerhans
Mayor, City of Fredericksburg

A Path to the Future

Executive Summary - October 2018

Background

This serves as an executive summary of the process the community has used over the past 20 months to develop a new long-range vision for Fredericksburg and the Gillespie County area. As we started this process, we recognized the overarching theme should be to preserve our quality of life, our culture, our architecture, and our community. This process started in February 2017 with several brainstorming meetings where we asked local citizens to provide their input. We asked them to tell us what made our community great. And we asked them to share with us what could make our community even better. We received over 600 different comments at these initial community brainstorming meetings.

During the next phase of the public input process, we went out into the community, local churches, schools, civic groups, and other organizations. Over 200 additional comments were provided at these sessions from individuals representing a broad range of ages, ethnicities, occupations and backgrounds. This included people who have lived in Gillespie County all their lives as well as recent newcomers to our community.

Citizens were open and honest during these input sessions. We were amazed at the level of insight that these citizens had on current local issues, the diversity of ideas that were offered and the level of thought and creativity that they had in defining the future of our community. In providing this report, the Community Visioning Steering Committee wants to thank each person who came forward with their comments. Citizens' input was critical to the final visions and recommendations.

Following the public input process, we recognized that most of the comments included common areas of concern. Therefore, the Steering Committee started to group the various comments into major subject areas. These four subject areas included Business, Government, Quality of Life and Family Life.

We then agreed to establish citizen committees to focus on these four major areas and opened these committees to anyone who wanted to participate. These committees involved over 100 local citizens who volunteered their time over an 8-month period reviewing the public comments submitted. They spent over 1,000 hours researching significant community issues. They also met with individuals who had specific knowledge in the topics that they were reviewing. These committees developed the vision statements and recommendations that are summarized below. Their detailed report and recommendations are included in this report. The Steering Committee wants to recognize and thank every individual who participated on one of the four committees.

Community Visions and Key Recommendations

The following ten long-range visions for our community will serve to guide major decisions made by Gillespie County, the City of Fredericksburg, Fredericksburg Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Commission, Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Hill Country Memorial Hospital and other major local organizations. In offering these visions and specific recommendations for achieving these visions, we believe that we have answered the two basic questions that were raised when we started this process some 20 months ago.

- WHAT MAKES OUR COMMUNITY GREAT?
- WHAT COULD MAKE IT BETTER?

Child Care Vision

The long-range vision includes the provision of affordable, safe and high-quality early childhood educational opportunities that will be available to all families so that children in our community will be placed on the path to educational and economic success.

Recommendations:

1. Establish on-site childcare services at major local employers.
2. Provide additional training and certification of child care workers and offer a higher level of compensation provided to these workers.
3. Create a foundation (or use an existing foundation) to provide financial support for these programs.

Diverse Economy Vision

This vision includes the maintenance of our successful tourism and wine business and current positive economy, while expanding desirable target industries that create jobs with "living wages." This can be accomplished by leveraging the underlying strengths of our community and maintaining our unique character.

Recommendations:

1. Focus economic development efforts on target industries that pay higher than "living wages."
2. Implement a local working group to link current and future workforce demand with local workforce training and development capabilities.
3. Consider steps for reducing barriers for new business creation and existing business growth.
4. Consider steps for reducing barriers for workforce recruitment and retention.

Domestic Violence/Drug and Alcohol Addiction and Mental Health Vision

This vision includes seeking holistic, long-term community strategies for dealing with these issues which are often considered to be “taboo” but have a significant impact particularly on our young people, the elderly and their families.

Recommendations:

1. Establish a Family Crisis Hot Line in the community.
2. Develop a women and children’s shelter.
3. Develop a County mental health facility.
4. Hire a full-time licensed social worker at Fredericksburg High School.
5. Provide advanced training on mental health issues to all local first responders.

Education, Training and Workforce Development Vision

This vision includes the need for better training and education to develop our local workforce to address future employment needs in the community. This vision also includes the need to have a dynamic and comprehensive educational system that will provide equal opportunity for local students from pre-kindergarten through college/university degrees.

Recommendations:

1. Establish a formal working group made up of a cross-section of local businesses, schools, Central Texas College and Texas Tech University to create, review and adjust workforce development programs to meet current and future needs.
2. Expand local workforce programs to address immediate community needs such as the Child Development Associate (CDA) degree and the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program.
3. Develop innovative academic programs which feature student centered learning and problem-solving models such as the Systems Go rocket engineering program.
4. Support the phased development of first-class educational facilities both at the local public and private schools as well as the projects detailed in the University Center Master Plan.

Healthcare/Hill Country Memorial Hospital Vision

The Hill Country Memorial Hospital and other associated medical facilities are one of the most important assets of our community and we should make every effort to protect this asset while creating opportunities for local medical services to expand to serve a growing population with diverse health and medical needs.

Recommendations:

1. Create opportunities for additional community support for the Hospital Foundation to provide funding for future medical equipment and capital improvements.
2. Expand local nursing education programs.

3. Assist in the recruitment of additional medical personnel as needed.

Housing Vision

This vision includes the development of quality housing that is affordable and that will accommodate our expanding workforce including workers in all employment categories from the hospitality industry to individuals in the fields of nursing, teaching and emergency services.

Recommendations:

1. Review all development and zoning regulations and make changes necessary to encourage the development of additional affordable housing.
2. Create a local land trust to bank land that can be used to develop affordable housing.
3. Create a Housing Ombudsman position in the community who can work with local builders, developers and government agencies in a cooperative effort to develop more affordable housing.
4. Create opportunities for use of local investor funds to help reduce the costs for affordable housing.
5. Continue to annex property into the City Limits as needed for affordable housing development.

Infrastructure Vision

The improvement of infrastructure including broadband, water, roadways, trails and recycling services will be important for providing quality and dependable services to existing residents and businesses and for facilitating future growth.

Recommendations:

1. Implement a transportation system to serve the local workforce.
2. Improve local roadway system in accordance with the Transportation Master Plan.
3. Complete planning, design and construction of a Relief Route.
4. Make on-going improvements to parking in downtown area.
5. Improve broadband services both within the City and throughout the County.
6. Improve and expand parks and trails system.
7. Expand local recycling programs.

Market Square/Main Street Vision

This vision recognizes these major community assets that should be protected and improved for future generations to enjoy. The vision focuses on maintaining the historic feel of Main Street and the approximate 20 acres set aside by the founders of Fredericksburg for green space and community functions.

Recommendations:

1. Support and implement the One-Square-One Vision Concept for future development of Market Square.
2. Conduct opportunities for broad community involvement in the long-range development plans for Courthouse Square.
3. Prepare redevelopment options for Main Street for community discussion when the Relief Route project is designed and constructed.

Tourism Vision

This vision includes the City of Fredericksburg partnering with other organizations and stakeholder groups to further enhance the reputation of the Texas Hill Country as a major tourism destination including increasing the efforts to establish this area as a family destination.

Recommendations:

1. Focus recruitment of tourism businesses that are small to medium-sized with fewer employment needs and lower water consumption.
2. Take additional steps to protect our historic assets and expand our cultural opportunities.
3. Continuously review HOT funding distribution at both the City and County levels to ensure that these funds provide maximum benefit to the community.
4. Develop and maintain infrastructure such as water, streets, sidewalks, and broadband services to support tourism as part of the community's overall economic development program.

Wineries Vision

This vision recognizes that the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County have a unique opportunity to become both the winery and culinary center of Texas. However, the growth of these types of businesses requires planning and proper management to protect the excellent quality of life enjoyed in our community.

Recommendations:

1. Support efforts to develop the Texas Center for Wine and Culinary Arts so that this project can be completed as part of the University Center campus.
2. Continue to urge local winery businesses to improve the quality of wine produced in the area.
3. Consider managing the number of wine-related businesses in the downtown area so that there is a balance between these types of businesses and other establishments such as restaurants and retailers.
4. Increase traffic safety efforts in the Highway 290 East area by expanding law enforcement, reducing speed limits and completing roadway improvements.

5. Pursue legislation that will provide County government with the tools to plan and manage the growth of wineries in the area.

Recent Accomplishments

While the focus of the visioning committees was on creation of a long-range vision for the community, many specific short-term recommendations were identified by the visioning committees. These were identified as opportunities that could improve our community immediately. So, rather than including these in the long-range visions and recommendations cited above, steps have been taken to move forward to implement and adopt these “low hanging fruits.” These short-term accomplishments serve as another example of the value of both the community brainstorming meetings and the work of the visioning committees in creating ideas and recommendations that will make our community better. These accomplishments include the following:

1. Development of plans and adoption by the City Council of a new Fort Martin Scott Trails Plan.
2. Development of promotional information on summer youth activities for dissemination to the community.
3. Establishment of programs at Fredericksburg High School for hospitality, culinary arts, medical and building trades.
4. Adoption and implementation of new short-term rental ordinance.
5. Improved ADA compliance by making ADA improvements to sidewalks.
6. Initiation of plans by Morning Rotary Club for new basketball courts at Old Fair Park.
7. Initiation of plans for new women’s shelter near Law Enforcement Center.
8. Development of new soccer fields at Oakcrest Park.
9. Establishment of new City communications program.

This list will be updated and included in an annual report card that is developed each year.

Business Visioning Committee Report

Topic 1: Workforce Development

Vision Statement

A model of collaboration between city, county, and business leaders should be developed that results in a locally grown workforce, recruiting from non-traditional sectors plus creating an attractive atmosphere to attract and keep workers in our community.

- Our workforce will be both grown from within and recruited from outside to match the growth needs of our local economy.
- Our business and education community will utilize all available technologies to provide this collaboration in the most efficient, cost-effective means possible.
- Our business and education community will have a process to develop our local youth to take advantage of all local employment opportunities, a process to recruit and match non-traditional resources with local employment opportunities.
- Our community will make strategic investments to address the following key challenges in the growth and retention of our local workforce:
 - Child care
 - Transportation
 - Training
 - Workforce housing
 - Living wage and benefits

Background

As of 2018, we have a chronic workforce shortage. Our current unemployment rate in Gillespie County as of February 2018 is 2.6% (source: Texas State employment statistics). We have 400-500 job vacancies and expect future job growth of 900 jobs over the next five years based on currently known new projects (source: EDC estimates). Additionally, local employers who have recruited talent from outside our community have reported that they met with very poor success rates for a variety of reasons. This is often due to limited housing options and few appropriate job prospects for the trailing partner of the employee.

Recommendations

It is recommended that our community grow our available workforce by focusing our efforts on the following resource pools:

- **Local Youth**

- Our business and education community will have a focused recruitment and retention program for our local youth. We will have programs to educate and mentor our youth in our schools on the variety of career options available to them in our local community. These programs will provide information on each of our local industry sectors, the types of jobs and wages available in those sectors, the employment requirements of those sectors, and the available training and education resources for potential employees. These programs will be matched with our local training and education programs in our local high schools, Central Texas College and Texas Tech University.

- **Non-Traditional Resources**

- Our business community will have a focused identification, recruitment and retention program to recruit and retain employees from non-traditional resources:
 - Active retirees
 - Stay at Home parents
 - Trailing Partners
- Our business community will have a program to match available resources with open positions, both paid and volunteer. We will fully utilize available commercial technologies to provide matching services for full-time, part-time and freelance options.
- Our business community will work with local employers to structure their work requirements into positions that are flexible to match the part-time, freelance resources available.

Specific recommendations that our community should take include investments in the following areas:

- **Child Care** - We will invest in high-quality, affordable-cost child care for workers in our community. This investment is a combination of not-for-profit service providers, employer subsidies, and a Foundation to secure and provide grants for training and certification, and additional subsidies for low-income families.
- **Transportation** - We will invest in a workforce transportation system using a combination of multiple offerings: regional van transportation between cities with a reliable schedule,

carpool parking locations and technologies to enable people to voluntarily carpool to and from work, and a local shuttle system to enable workers without local transportation to easily get around the city. These options will be developed using existing options available such as Alamo Regional Transit and supplementing with alternatives where needed to match workforce requirements.

- **Training** - Our business community and education community will have a process by which local employers are able to forecast their employment needs, translate those needs into skill requirements and training needs, and fulfill local training needs through a combination of the local schools and school districts, Central Texas College and Texas Tech University.
- **Workforce Housing** - We will create housing suitable for students, entry-level, seasonal, and short-term workers in the community by investing in low cost rental housing options throughout the county. We will use a combination of employer subsidies, grants from various philanthropic institutions and governmental agencies, and local investor funds to create these options.
- **Attainable Housing** - We will create owner occupied housing suitable for skilled and professional workers in fields such as nursing, law enforcement, allied health services, teaching, first responders, and management. We will use a combination of different options including increased density zoning inside the City limits, development of land outside of the City Limits, use of local investor funds and grants, and creation of small community / condominium / Homeowner Association / Community Land Trust type structures. This will help to create entry-level homes that are attractive and affordable for these types of workers.
- **Living Wage and Benefits** - We will create and maintain awareness of our minimum living wage levels among our business community and our workforce. This will help local employers understand the costs to live in our community and assist them in wage negotiations with their employees. Our business community will create a business cooperative association to secure more favorable terms on employee benefits, back office services, supplies, etc. to reduce ongoing costs and improve employee compensation packages for all participating businesses.

Topic 2: Economic Diversity

Vision Statement

Using the underlying strengths of our community, history, culture, proud citizens and intention to maintain our unique character we will have maintained our successful tourism and wine industries

while expanding the diversity of economy into desirable target industries and related lifestyle support businesses that create jobs with “living wages.”

Background

Fredericksburg and Gillespie County are in an enviable position compared to other communities, in that we enjoy a thriving economy, low unemployment levels, a reputation as a tourism destination, and a good quality of life for our citizens.

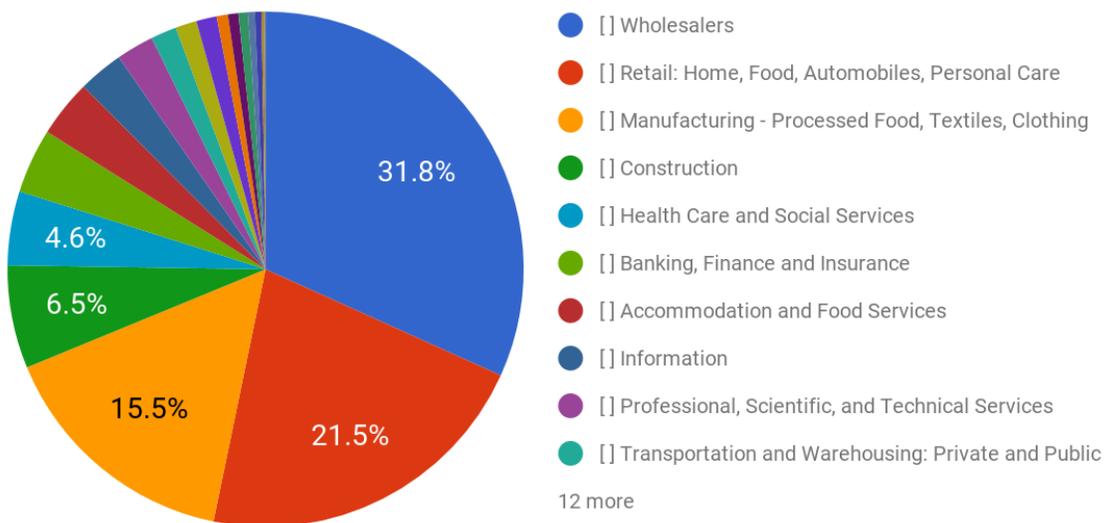
Much of this success is due to elements of this community’s history: a primarily laissez-faire regulatory environment, an agricultural region that can successfully grow a variety of fruit, nuts, and grapes for winemaking, a legacy of historical architecture that had been mostly untouched, and a focus on building the tourism industry over many years.

Our Historic District is enviable due to its charm and vibrancy. It is one of the key reasons tourists come to visit and stay.

The Gillespie County economy, based on franchise tax reporting, as of 2015 is already relatively diverse:

Gillespie County 2015 Revenues by Industry, Summarized for Retail, Manufacturing

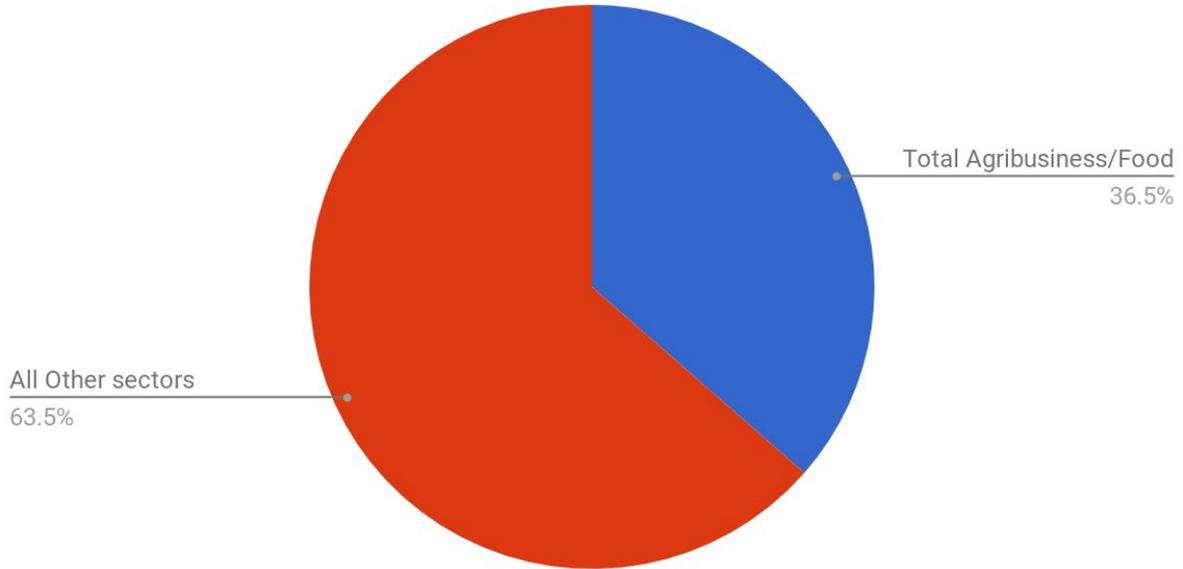
\$1,782,433,000



In addition, our Agribusiness economy is a significant portion of our total economy:

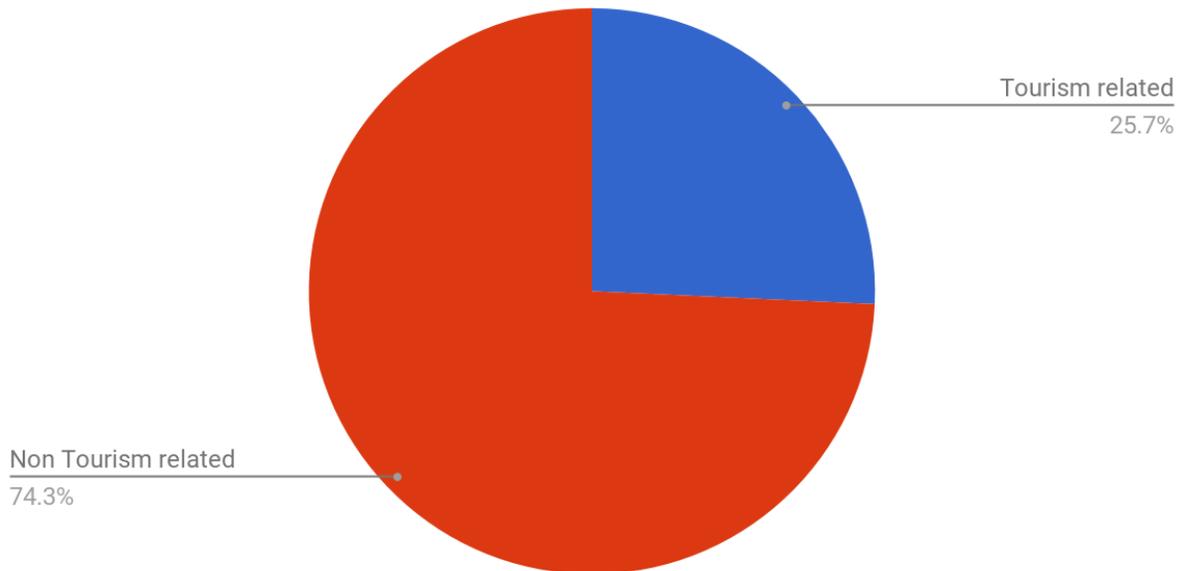
Agribusiness/Food Sector Economy

Share of Total Gillespie Economy 2015



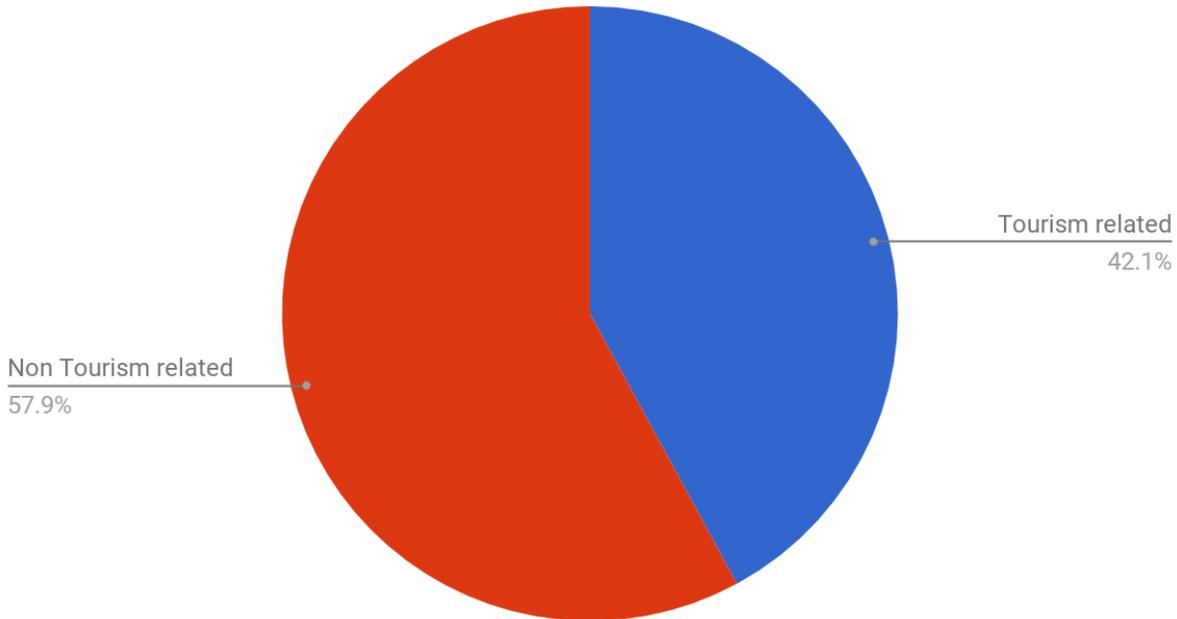
Tourism-driven sectors also play an important role in our economy:

Gillespie County 2015 Economy Tourism v. Non-Tourism Revenues



It also drives a large segment of our employment:

Gillespie County 2015 Employment Totals



We do have challenges that need to be addressed to sustain our economic growth and prosperity:

- Our current economy's employment is heavily dependent on tourism, with over 42% employed in tourism-related activities. The 2017 average wage per hour for most positions in this segment does not meet the minimum living wage of \$12.20 (per single resident without children) to reside in our county.
(source: <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/48171>, adjusted for 2017 housing inflation from MLS data)
- While our population growth has not shown large increases over the past 10-20 years, we have experienced significant upward price pressure on real estate in the county, both for agricultural land and residential/commercial property. This has caused commercial rents to increase sharply, in contrast to sluggish business growth over the past 8-year recovery from a serious recession. As a result, we have recently experienced an increase in business closure and turnover, particularly evident in the Historic District.
- Our low unemployment level means that businesses experience difficulty in hiring and retaining quality employees. Many businesses have tried to import employees from other locations, only to lose them quickly. Many of our young residents leave our community to attend college and to pursue better economic opportunity, some never to return.

We do have many assets that create future opportunities for our community including:

- A substantial pool of talent and investment funds in our community. Many people who have chosen to move to our community come with significant experience, willingness to invest in our community, and have available time.
- A great agricultural climate that can produce many types of agricultural products.
- A small but reputable aviation industry centered around our County airport.
- A combination of workforce development assets already in place and working: Fredericksburg ISD, Central Texas College and Texas Tech University.
- A strong economic base from which to grow.

Strengthening the diversity of our local economy would provide two benefits:

- Reduce our vulnerability to the tourism ebbs and flows. By increasing the size of non-tourism business sectors, we reduce the percentage of impact that tourism has to our overall economy. This doesn't mean that tourism doesn't continue to be a significant focus in our community; it means that we balance tourism with investment in other sectors so that we are more resilient.
- Provide better economic opportunity for our young residents to stay in our community. By focusing on a broader number of business sectors, we create more economic opportunity choices for our residents.

Recommendations

Focus on targeted business types to diversify our economy, and re-evaluate targets regularly to keep pace with changing demographics and market trends. Specific target industries or businesses identified by the Visioning Committee include:

Sector	Strategy	Specific Growth Opportunities	Meets Minimum Living Wage	Challenges
Arts	Increased promotion and organic growth	All	Ownership and Management only	None identified
Agribusiness	Target investment	Fruits and vegetables; goat or sheep milk and milk products	Ownership and Management only	Land costs, training programs, housing, access to post-harvest processing facilities, water use
Aviation	Organic growth	All	Yes	Airport land limitations, training, housing
Avionics	Organic growth	All	Yes	Training, housing
Light Manufacturing	Organic growth	drones and robotics; alternate energy equipment supplies; medical equipment; outdoor recreation equipment and accessories	Ownership, Management and trained certified skilled employees only	Training, housing
Construction	Target investment	All trades	Yes	Training, housing

Sector	Strategy	Specific Growth Opportunities	Meets Minimum Living Wage	Challenges
Culinary	Target investment	Food manufacturing, Food retail, Restaurants, Mobile food services	Ownership, Management and trained certified skilled employees only	Training, housing, access to all types of production facilities, access to retail markets, water use
Hospitality	Organic growth	All	Ownership, Management and trained certified skilled employees only	Housing, training, regulation that does not match market demand (e.g., hotels v. STRs)
Resident and Household Support Services	Organic growth	Child care, Pet care	Ownership, Management and trained certified skilled employees only	Avoiding Residential Mental Health and Substance Abuse Facilities, all types of Alcohol and Drug addiction recovery services, halfway houses, and sober houses
Retail	Organic growth	TBD	Ownership and Management only	Rent escalation, over-regulation
Senior Services	Organic growth	Family caregiver respite	Ownership, Management and trained certified skilled employees only	Highly regulated industry

Sector	Strategy	Specific Growth Opportunities	Meets Minimum Living Wage	Challenges
Wineries, Vineyards and Suppliers	Target investment	Vineyards, Viticulture and Winemaking Suppliers	Ownership, Management and trained certified skilled employees only	Safety along 290 corridor, potential for over-regulation, land costs, training, housing

Link targeted business workforce requirements to local workforce development capabilities. Establish a formal working group, made up of a panel of cross-sector businesses, local schools and school districts, and Central Texas College/Texas Tech University Fredericksburg. This working group's purpose is to:

- Create, review, and adjust workforce development programs.
- Match participants in programs with internship and apprenticeship opportunities within the community.
- Recruit graduates of programs to job or business opportunities within the community.
- Link pool of non-traditional workforce resources to job or business opportunities within the community.
- Lower barriers to entry in targeted areas through local investment to support creation of new businesses and growth of existing businesses, such as:
 - Incubator facilities to enable start-up businesses to enter the market.
 - A business cooperative association to secure more favorable terms on employee benefits, back office services, supplies, etc. to reduce ongoing costs and improve employee compensation packages for all participating businesses.
 - A regulatory, infrastructure, and economic development environment that supports the creation and growth of businesses in the community.

Address key barriers to workforce recruitment and retention through local investment in addressing key workforce challenges.

It is recommended that a private community investment organization (“The Gillespie Community Investment Fund”) be created to achieve the elements outlined above, patterned after elements of the Telluride Foundation and Telluride Venture Accelerator. This organization will work in collaboration with the Economic Development Commission and the Chamber of Commerce to achieve its goals. The purpose of this organization is to make strategic investments that support the resilience, diversity and growth of the local economy, and address workforce development challenges in Gillespie County (and surrounding counties where applicable).

It will also increase resilience and diversity of the Gillespie County economy by providing access to capital and reduce barriers to entry and growth for local businesses. This organization will also provide local investment options to local residents with reasonable returns. Investments will be made to address key workforce challenges in Gillespie and surrounding counties including small business creation, attainable housing, childcare and training.

The organization will fall into two broad categories: Not-for-Profit and For-Profit. The Not-For-Profit elements will most likely be supported as foundations within The Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country and will include the following:

- **Mentor/Talent Management** - Organization for identification and deployment of local volunteer business mentorship talent.
- **New Business Incubator** - Organization for incubation of local start-up businesses. Selects candidates for incubation, provides boot camp style advice and training for success, facilitates access to capital, talent, and incubator resources, monitors results, and determines graduation from incubation program.
- **Business Accelerator** - Organization for acceleration of existing local businesses. Selects candidates for acceleration, provides boot camp style advice and training, facilitates access to capital, talent, and accelerator resources, monitors results, and determines graduation from acceleration program.

For-Profit components are investment fund structures, created for the identification, structure, and management of investments in target industry sectors or targeted objectives. During the Visioning process a number of targeted objectives and sectors were identified including:

- **Attainable Housing Investment Fund** - Investment in multiple attainable housing models, with returns from sales and rents of attainable housing units.
- **Culinary Investment Fund** - Investment in culinary related projects, such as agriculture incubator, kitchen incubator, Public Market or Food Hall, and other resources to lower the barriers to entry for market gardens, small farming operations, specialty food manufacturing, restaurants. Return on investment from rents received and investment positions held in incubator and accelerator program participants.
- **Commercial Real Estate Investment Fund** - Acquisition and rehabilitation of dormant or declining commercial properties, and resale or leasing of same. Investment in physical business incubator/accelerator location. Return on investment from property sales or property rental income.
- **New Business Incubator Investment Fund** - Investment in incubator candidates. Returns from investment positions held in incubator candidates.
- **Business Accelerator Investment Fund** - Investment in accelerator candidates. Returns from investment positions held in accelerator candidates.

Economic Sector: Aviation, Avionics, and Light Manufacturing

Vision Statement

In 20 years, we will see aviation, avionics and light manufacturing as elements in the Gillespie County economy that will be larger and more significant.

Background

As the population and business economy grows in Gillespie County, more airport service companies will be necessary to serve the increased general aviation air traffic. Specific airplane parts and services will make up the increase in the aviation sector. Current service providers include: Fredericksburg FBO, Hangar Hotel and Airport Diner, Everts Air Cargo, Fletch Air Fleet Support, Fredericksburg Aviation, Gillespie Air Services, Pippen-York and Snowden Aviation.

Recommendations

Light manufacturing has a solid start in the county with Heartland Enterprises, Kager Industries, Quantum Components, SRM Manufacturing, Sauer Machining, and Swissomation. We recommend creating a business climate where each of these businesses can grow over the next 20 years. New opportunities for light manufacturing that are recommended for consideration include drones and robotics; alternate energy equipment supplies; medical equipment manufacturing; food manufacturing; and outdoor recreation equipment and accessories. The preference should be on

small footprint manufacturing facilities that minimize the adverse impact on air, water or land resources. It is recommended that we not include large scale manufacturing of large equipment such as cars or oil field equipment. These types of manufacturing should be left to larger cities with a larger labor pool. Nor do we see national or international airlines making our airport a stopping point on their routes.

When Gillespie County grows, the airport will grow. Airplanes will supply businesses with important resources - from management meetings to mail to raw materials. Light manufacturing, particularly using high-tech tools, should also be a growth sector for Gillespie County.

Aviation, avionics, and light manufacturing provide important jobs requiring higher education levels and higher pay. Local training for these important industries will be critical. High school programs can be aimed at these markets. In some cases, a process similar to the FHS Systems Go Rocket Program may be appropriate. Community college vocational degrees will become more important as the need for local talent increases. Training in the following areas should be encouraged: engine maintenance, electronic systems development and maintenance, welding, quality management and control, and other industry specific educational needs.

Economic Sector: Culinary

Vision Statement

We envision an economic sector that leverages our history of agriculture and food production into a diverse array of small-to-medium scale culinary businesses, from post-harvest preparation of crops to specialty food manufacturing to food retail and restaurants.

Background

This sector, which encompasses portions of Agriculture, Manufacturing, Retail, and Hospitality, showcases the best of what our community has to offer, with ample outlets for small-to-medium scale local producers to sell and promote their products, both locally and to the rest of the world.

Recommendations

In this sector, small to medium scale establishments are much preferred, with smaller employment bases; low net water consumption is a must due to overall water resource conservation issues. We should exclude poultry slaughter businesses, due to their tendency to be large scale operations with environmental damage concerns.

To achieve this vision, we recommend private investments in the following areas, to reduce the cost of entry for new businesses:

- Agricultural Incubator-integrated with the Texas Tech soil sciences program in Fredericksburg, this incubator will acquire, make ready and lease start-up agricultural space and post-harvest preparation space to graduates of the soil sciences program. It can take the form of either a Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) or a Community Land Trust (CLT).
- Food Hall or Public Market-Investment in a permanent space focused on local food and beverage, with flexible booth spaces for local start-up food and beverage producers at graduated rent structures to allow such start-ups to flourish.
- Culinary Incubator-Investment in commercial kitchen facilities that can be leased out by the hour or day, with both food production lines and catering production lines. This may be co-located with the Food Hall, at the HCUC campus, or at the Fisd campus.

The Committee researched all of the NAICS codes applicable to the Culinary space, and for each one, assessed its fit for our community based on its detailed definition, and assessed its job classification mean wages to our local minimum living wage requirements. In this space, we found that most food production businesses meet the minimum living wage requirement, and management of food and beverage establishments also meet the minimum level.

We also researched existing Food Hall/Public Markets, Kitchen incubators, and Agriculture REIT/Incubators.

Economic Sector: Hospitality

Vision Statement

We envision a diverse hospitality sector that leverages our tourism strengths, such as a history of unique Bed and Breakfast lodging throughout the county, linkage to the flourishing wine industry and Agritourism, growing organically in response to changing market tastes.

Background

Hospitality is an important part of our local economy and is expected to continue to expand in the future.

Recommendations

In this sector, small to medium scale establishments are much preferred, with smaller employment bases. Also, low net water consumption is a must due to overall water resource conservation issues. We exclude Casinos and Theme Park Hotels as appropriate establishments in our community.

To achieve this vision, we recommend a neutral, consistent, light touch (reasonable, equitably enforceable, and necessary) regulatory policy, enabling each type of hospitality offering to compete on a level playing field in response to market tastes.

The Committee researched all of the NAICS codes applicable to the Hospitality space, and for each one, assessed its fit for our community based on its detailed definition, and assessed its job classification mean wages to our local minimum living wage requirements. In this space, we found that management of hospitality establishments also meet the minimum level.

Economic Sector: Resident and Household Support Services

Vision Statement

We envision a diverse ecosystem of products and services in support of residents' personal and family needs and household/home maintenance needs.

Background

In this sector, small to medium scale establishments are much preferred with smaller employment bases. Also, low net water consumption is a must due to overall water resource conservation issues. This sector is made up of businesses from the following NAICS sectors:

- Information
- Finance and Insurance
- Real Estate Rental and Leasing
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
- Educational Services (see Education subcommittee)
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- Other Services (except Public Administration)

Recommendations

We recognize the need for and wish to regulate growth of Residential Mental Health and Substance Abuse Facilities, all types of Alcohol and Drug addiction recovery services, halfway houses, and sober houses.

While we see organic growth in most segments of this sector being sufficient to keep pace with changing demographics, we see the area of child day care services and pet care services are areas where targeted investment should be made.

The majority of this sector is a mix of occupations, some exceeding the minimum living wage, and some not. As we found only a few areas potentially requiring targeted investment to achieve the

growth necessary to meet market demand, we did not make any summary conclusion on the overall living wage potential of this sector.

To achieve this vision, it is recommended that a neutral, consistent, light touch (reasonable, equitably enforceable, and necessary) regulatory policy be followed which would enable each type of service offering to compete on a level playing field in response to market demand.

For the two segments currently seen as opportunities:

- In child care services we recommend partnering with existing church-based child care services and pursuing strategies to help them meet the growing demand.
- In pet care services, particularly boarding, grooming and pet sitting, we recommend highlighting these as potential new businesses for investors coming into the community.

Economic Sector: Retail

Vision Statement

We envision a diverse ecosystem of small to medium retail outlets in our community that meet the needs of both our residents and visitors. We see this ecosystem as being:

- Diverse, providing a variety of unique merchandise
- Independent and entrepreneurial
- Attune to the needs of our broader trade area
- Market driven, adaptable, and customer service focused
- Experiential, especially in our Historic District

Background

In this sector, small to medium scale establishments are much preferred, with smaller employment bases; low net water consumption is a must due to overall water resource conservation issues.

While we see organic growth in most segments of this sector being sufficient to keep pace with changing demographics, we are aware that areas may exist where leakage of sales to other locations may occur, and these may require targeted investment to close the gap.

The majority of this sector is comprised of occupations that do not exceed the minimum living wage, and management positions that do exceed the minimum. We found only a few areas potentially requiring targeted investment to achieve the growth necessary to meet market demand. We did not make any summary conclusion on the overall living wage potential of this sector.

Recommendations

To achieve this vision, we recommend a neutral, consistent, light touch (reasonable, equitably enforceable, and necessary) regulatory policy, enabling each type of retail offering to compete on a level playing field in response to market demand.

We also recommend the Retail Coach study be completed to identify areas of retail leakage, as these may present new investment opportunities for businesses in our community.

We researched all of the NAICS codes applicable to this segment, and for each one, assessed its fit for our community based on its detailed definition, and assessed its job classification mean wages to our local minimum living wage requirements.

Economic Sector: Senior Services

Vision Statement

We envision a sector with in-home and small facility care businesses that provide services to support senior citizens and family caregivers.

Background

In this sector, small to medium scale establishments are much preferred, with smaller employment bases; low net water consumption is a must due to overall water resource conservation issues. This sector does not include Healthcare providers, which are covered elsewhere, except in-home providers.

While we see organic growth in most segments of this sector being sufficient to keep pace with changing demographics, we see the area of caregiver respite services as currently deficient, and an area where investment may close the gap.

The majority of this sector is made up of management and professionals, which have pay scales exceeding the minimum living wage levels required. In the segments that employ mostly home health aides, the pay scales for those jobs do not meet the minimum living wage requirements currently and may not grow organically as a result.

Recommendations

To achieve this vision, we recommend a neutral, consistent, light touch (reasonable, equality enforceable, and necessary) regulatory policy, enabling each type of Senior Service offering to compete on a level playing field in response to demographic changes over time. There is one exception: home health services and caregiver respite services. In these two areas, there may be a need for further study of models that have worked elsewhere to identify the right type of business types and models to increase the availability of these types of services.

We researched all of the NAICS codes applicable to the Hospitality space, and for each one, assessed its fit for our community based on its detailed definition, and assessed its job classification mean wages to our local minimum living wage requirements. In this space, we found that management of hospitality establishments also meet the minimum level.

Culinary, Hospitality, Senior Services, Household Support Services spreadsheet. Contains all applicable NAICS codes, with comments on suitability, exclusions, minimum living wage levels, research commentary.

Economic Sector: Wineries, Vineyards and Suppliers

Vision Statement

This vision includes three areas of focus including:

- **Quality** - Fredericksburg and Gillespie County will continue to drive significant improvements of Texas wineries.
- **Vineyards** - Future growth will be through the planting of vineyards thus providing more choices of securing grapes and reducing the risk of weather-related shortage.
- **Culinary** - A convergence of education (Texas Tech Plant & Soils program), production of fine wines, and culinary arts (Texas Center for Wine & Culinary Arts) will drive Fredericksburg to become the Wine & Culinary center of Texas.

Background

This report used interviews of winery owners in Gillespie County, information from GCEDC, historical research, information obtained from State of Texas, and Texas Wine & Grape Growers Association.

Vineyards in Gillespie County date back to late 1800s and expansion was ended with Prohibition. In the 1980's wineries and vineyards were being established in Gillespie County and throughout the state. Growth of vineyards and wineries in the county escalated quickly over the past decade and there are now 40 unique wineries/vineyards in the county. In 10 years, this number could easily double, bringing opportunities and challenges to the county and Fredericksburg. One winery expert stated that the Texas wine industry is in its beginning stages and expects explosive growth. This growth will be driven by the state's population and strong economy. Another factor is the rising costs for wineries in California, Oregon and Washington making the mostly unregulated wine industry in Texas attractive.

Improving the quality of Texas wines will in part be related to planting more vineyards in the Hill Country AVA. This will provide more grape supply and provide vintners more options to produce quality wines. It will also reduce the reliance on importing grapes when weather reduces the Texas harvests. A third benefit of planting more vineyards are the lessons learned and agricultural experimentation that will help vintners with their quest to produce high quality Texas wines.

Fredericksburg and Gillespie County have a unique opportunity to become the wine and culinary center of Texas. This can happen due to Texas Tech having a Plant/Soils & Vintners program plus RHIM (restaurant-hotel-institutional management) classes at the Hill Country University Center and the Texas Center for Wine & Culinary Arts (TCWCA) also being on the campus. This is a combination that has not been accomplished at any wine growing region in the USA. Agricultural education to support vineyards and vintners combined with culinary education plus food and beverage facilities owned/operated by TCWCA. The TCWCA can take the lead role in bringing this vision into reality.

Recommendations

During our research the following key Issues were identified that are recommended to be addressed:

- Highway 290 speed limit of 60 mph. Wineries would like speed limit dropped to 55 mph and have more enforcement
- Create alternative routes to access wineries without having to travel on the major highways
- Development of bike trails system connecting wineries
- Working with State Legislature to create laws assisting Gillespie County manage the growth of wineries by requiring wineries to own a minimum acreage of vineyards as this supports the intention to have high quality wines made in Gillespie County

Information Sources:

- Brian Heath – Grape Creek Vineyards
- Richard Becker – Becker Vineyards
- John Weisinger – Weisinger Family Winery
- Wine America
- Texas Wine & Grape Growers Association
- Gillespie County Economic Development Commission
- Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission
- Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
- Fredericksburg Convention & Visitors Bureau

Important Statistics:

- Gillespie County is the second most visited wine region in USA
- 40 unique wineries in Gillespie County (TABC)
- Eight AVAs in Texas
 - Texas Hill Country AVA is second largest AVA in United States. Established in 1991, it covers 15,000 square miles and contains all or parts of 22 counties.
 - Fredericksburg is in the Texas Hill Country AVA
- Texas is America's fifth largest grape and wine producer
- Texas wine industry direct output is \$4.5 billion
- Estimated revenues in Gillespie County from wine industry is \$60 million+ (2015 – 23 wineries/vineyards)

Topic 3: Key Issues and Challenges

Several key issues and challenges were identified by the Business Visioning Committee during its development of long-range community visions including the following:

- **Regulation** - During the course of our Visioning process, numerous instances were identified where City regulatory actions were inconsistent, leading to increased costs for real estate developers, real estate owners, and businesses. Some was due to unclear regulations requiring interpretation, and some was due to a history of lack of enforcement, leading to a “beg forgiveness, don’t ask permission” attitude among local residents, sellers of real estate, and local businesses.

We also uncovered several instances where City Council-accepted policies in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan appear to have not been implemented. In particular were policies related to Section 3. Livability Element, A: Housing and Neighborhoods, Goal 1: diverse housing choices, Policies 1.1 through 1.4, and Goal 2: Affordable Housing, Policies 2.1 through 2.5. Section, B: Economic Development, Goal 13: Business Climate, Policy 13.3.

We envision a City and County Government which understands that regulation and the provision of public infrastructure can either create or stifle upward mobility for its citizens. With this in mind, our governments create a regulatory environment that is supportive of entrepreneurship and provide public infrastructure that enables local businesses to grow and prosper.

It is recommended that City and County regulations be written in clear, unambiguous language and consistently enforced. It is also recommended that these regulations be interpreted in writing and applied at the beginning of investment decisions, with no

surprises once investments are made. In addition, where State regulations are unclear, our City and County should provide guidance on application and enforcement within the City or County, including referrals to appropriate State contacts to ensure clarity, and advocacy on behalf of our local community where appropriate.

- **Infrastructure** - Our City and County should provide infrastructure that is:
 - appropriate for the needs of both businesses and residents
 - well maintained and consistently available, with redundancy where required to protect businesses and residents from disruption
 - the most efficient and cost-effective use of taxpayer dollars and/or user fees possible at the time

- **Economic Development** - Our City and County support economic development appropriate for our community through the Economic Development Commission (EDC), which:
 - focuses on achievement of our targeted economic balance and diversity
 - provides information on applicable regulations and assists businesses in securing clarity of ambiguous elements
 - works together with both public and private entities to achieve target economic development objectives

- **Housing** - Fredericksburg has developed a dynamic business economy that employs many persons in the entry level of the workforce such as those in the service sector. There are also many in the early years of their professional careers with low to moderate incomes, such as medical services, teachers, and the emergency and protective services. This population cannot find local affordable housing, and many decide to seek housing and/or employment elsewhere.

Fredericksburg once had many smaller and affordable homes in its inventory. But, that has changed as the economy has developed a large tourism and wine industry, resulting in a high demand for second homes and short-term housing. This has caused the conversion of many of these formerly affordable dwellings to vacation homes and short-term lodging. In addition, the price of land has increased significantly over the past 5-10 years. Consequently, housing that could serve the workforce of the community has disappeared or is in very short supply.

The following are issues that need to be addressed:

- High land cost
- Lack of appropriate zoning for small lots
- Complexity of rezoning appropriate land
- Lack of utilities on the edge of town
- High cost of city fees
- “Not in my back yard” attitude and political issues
- Bias against manufactured-housing
- High construction costs

The attainable housing charrette has been helpful and points out the need for some form of coordination among and between the various parties that impact the development of workforce housing. An Ombudsman for attainable housing, in some form, could assist a developer find a way toward the intended goal. This person could be a city employee, or one employed by another public-spirited entity.

- Create a new zoning category that allows for smaller lots and accommodating setbacks, smaller street width, alleys, flexible height limits, etc.
- Allow the application of the concept of a Planned Unit Development
- Allow the use of condominium ownership and homeowner associations
- Reduce city development fees, capital improvement fees, etc.
- Annex suitable property where utilities can be extended
- Allow for private wastewater and water systems on a small scale
- Allow manufactured housing
- Provide for public improvement districts for this purpose
- Review the regulations involving apartments for lower cost units
- Investigate the use of community land trusts among the public land holders
- Investigate the use of inclusionary zoning

Modifying the rules of the game surrounding workforce housing, as suggested, could improve the inventory of such housing and foster private enterprise development of affordable units. Direct government involvement is frequently costly and ineffective. If new rules can be created that are clear and functional, the City of Fredericksburg would be able to encourage private developers to get in the game and solve the problem.

Topic 4: Key Recommendations

The Business Visioning Committee identified several major recommendations which they believe are important to achieve the future vision of the City and County. This includes recommendations related to the economy and a number of key areas.

Economy

Implement the Four Elements of the Proposed Strengthening Strategy

- **Element 1: Focus on target industries.**

Focus on targeted business types to diversify our economy. Re-evaluate targets regularly to keep pace with changing demographics and market trends. Implement recommended actions for each industry sector.

- **Element 2: Link workforce demand with supply.**

Link targeted business workforce requirements to local workforce development capabilities. Establish a formal working group, made up of a panel of cross-sector businesses, local schools and school districts, and Central Texas College/Texas Tech University Fredericksburg. This working group's purpose is to:

- Create, review, and adjust workforce development programs.
- Match participants in programs with internship and apprenticeship opportunities within the community.
- Recruit graduates of programs to job or business opportunities within the community.
- Link pool of non-traditional workforce resources to job or business opportunities within the community.

- **Element 3: Reduce barriers to entry and growth.**

Lower barriers to entry in targeted areas through local investment to support creation of new businesses and growth of existing businesses, such as:

- Incubator facilities to enable start-up businesses to enter the market.
- A business cooperative association to secure more favorable terms on employee benefits, back office services, supplies, etc. to reduce ongoing costs and improve employee compensation packages for all participating businesses.

- A regulatory, infrastructure, and economic development environment that supports the creation and growth of businesses in the community.

- **Element 4: Reduce barriers to workforce recruitment/retention.**

Address key barriers to workforce recruitment and retention through local investment in addressing key workforce challenges. (See Workforce recommendations below)

Support the Gillespie County Investment Fund as a Vehicle for Economic Growth and Diversification

Revise the objectives of the Economic Development Commission to include cooperation and support for the Gillespie County Investment Fund.

Address Key Challenges

- **Implement the Regulatory, Infrastructure and Economic Development Solutions**

Create a regulatory environment that is supportive of entrepreneurship and provide public infrastructure that enables local businesses to grow and prosper.

Workforce

- **Make Strategic Investments in Workforce Development**

- **Child Care** - Invest in high-quality, affordable-cost child care for workers in our community. This investment is a combination of not-for-profit service providers, employer subsidies, and a Foundation to secure and provide grants for training and certification, and additional subsidies for low-income families.
- **Transportation** - Implement a workforce transportation system using a combination of multiple offerings: regional van transportation between towns with a reliable schedule, carpool parking locations and technologies to enable people to voluntarily carpool to and from work, and a local shuttle system to enable workers without local transportation to easily get around the city.
- **Training** - Implement a process by which local employers are able to forecast their employment needs, translate those needs into skill requirements and training needs, and fulfill local training needs through a combination of the local schools and school districts, community college, and University system.

- **Workforce Housing** - Create housing suitable for students and entry-level, seasonal, and short-term workers in the community by investing in low cost rental housing options throughout the county. Use a combination of employer subsidies, grants from various philanthropic institutions and governmental agencies, and local investor funds to development these options.
- **Attainable Housing** - It is recommended to create owner occupied housing suitable for skilled and professional workers in fields such as nursing, law enforcement, allied health services, teaching, first responders, and management. This recommendation includes using a combination of increased density zoning options inside City limits, use of ETJ and county land, local investor funds, grants, and small community condominium/Homeowner Association/Community Land Trust type structures (separating land ownership from building ownership, restrictions on owner occupancy duration, leasing, caps on increases in selling prices) to create entry-level homes that are attractive and affordable for these types of workers.
- **Living Wage and Benefits** - Create and maintain awareness of our minimum living wage levels among our business community and our workforce, so that they understand the minimum costs to live in our community and can conduct wage negotiations more effectively. Create a business association to secure a package of employer benefits, such as insurance, employee 401K type devices, business supplies, etc. to lower the cost of doing business and improve the benefits available to our local workforce.

Implement the Housing Solutions

Improve the inventory of workforce housing and foster private enterprise development of affordable units. Create new rules that are clear and functional and encourage private developers to get in the game and solve the problem.

- Modify the rules of the game surrounding workforce housing, as suggested above.
- An Ombudsman for attainable housing, in some form, could assist a developer find a way toward the intended goal. This person could be a city employee, or one employed by another public-spirited entity.

Recommendations Responsibility Matrix

In order to accomplish these recommendations, we propose the following responsibilities within our community:

Recommendation	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Focus on Target Industries	Economic Development Commission	Economic Development Commission Board of Directors	Chamber of Commerce All School Districts All private schools CTC TTU FBG	Business community
Link workforce demand with supply	Chamber of Commerce	Chamber of Commerce working group	All School Districts All private schools CTC TTU FBG Business Community	General public Parents of school age children All businesses
Reduce barriers to entry and growth of businesses: incubators	Gillespie County Foundation - Fund	Participating investors	Gillespie EDC Chamber of Commerce	Business community General public
Reduce barriers to entry and growth of businesses: business cooperative association	Chamber of Commerce	Chamber of Commerce working group	Gillespie EDC Gillespie Community Foundation/Fund Local businesses	Business community General public
Reduce barriers to entry and growth of businesses: regulatory, infrastructure and economic development environment	City of Fredericksburg Gillespie County Commissioners Court Gillespie EDC	City of Fredericksburg Gillespie County Commissioners Court Gillespie EDC	Chamber of Commerce Business community	General public

Recommendation	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Reduce barriers to workforce development and retention: Child Care	Gillespie County Foundation - Fund	Employers, Service Providers	Chamber of Commerce Business community	General public
Reduce barriers to workforce development and retention: Transportation	Gillespie EDC	Gillespie EDC ART Employers	Chamber of Commerce Business community	General public
Reduce barriers to workforce development and retention: Training	Chamber of Commerce	Chamber of Commerce working group	All School Districts All private schools CTC TTU FBG Business Community	General public Parents of school age children All businesses
Reduce barriers to workforce development and retention: Workforce Housing	Gillespie County Foundation - Fund	Participating employers and investors	Chamber of Commerce Business community	General public
Reduce barriers to workforce development and retention: Attainable Housing	Gillespie County Foundation - Fund	Participating investors	Chamber of Commerce Business community	General public
Reduce barriers to workforce development and retention: Living wage and benefits	Chamber of Commerce	Chamber of Commerce working group	Business community All education entities Workforce Alamo	General public

Recommendation	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Implement the Housing Solutions: modify the rules of the game	City of Fredericksburg	City of Fredericksburg Development Dept.	Chamber of Commerce Local real estate investors and developers	General public
Implement the Housing Solutions: Ombudsman	Gillespie County Foundation Fund	Participating investors	Chamber of Commerce Business community Local real estate investors and developers	General public

Family Life Vision Committee Report

Topic 1: Infant and Child Care

Vision Statement

Affordable, safe, and high-quality childcare and early childhood educational opportunities should be available to all families to put children on the path to educational success and ensure that parents are able to fully participate in the workforce.

Background

Sufficient, quality, and affordable infant and child care are essential to the physical, mental and emotional development of healthy children. Such care benefits the support of a stable family and results in a more productive work force. When employees cannot find sufficient, safe, affordable child care it negatively impacts their presence on the job (absenteeism) and their productivity; a parent worried about the health and safety of their child will not be an engaged employee.

The impressive impacts of early childhood education to students, families, and communities includes the following:

- Crime reduction of 90%
- Increase in adult earnings
- 11.4% increase in graduation rate
- Reduction in special education 8.1%
- Grade retention of 8.3% (McCoy et al., 2017)

Furthermore, the Nonpartisan Economic Policy Institute reported that universal prekindergarten education for all children saves billions of dollars in economic benefits for state and local governments at a cost benefit ratio of up to 16:1. Economist Robert G. Lynch writes in his report, “Enriching Children, Enriching the Nation”:

Providing a voluntary, high-quality, publicly funded, targeted prekindergarten education program serving the poorest 25% of three- and four-year-old children would generate rapidly growing annual benefits that would surpass the more slowly growing annual costs of the program within six years. In the year 2050, the annual budgetary, earnings, and crime benefits would total \$315 billion: \$83 billion in government budget benefits, \$156 billion in increased compensation of workers, and \$77 billion in reduced costs to individuals from less crime and child abuse.

However, programs such as these targeting at-need families in Fredericksburg are operating at capacity, and those for the typical Fredericksburg family are both at capacity and at times beyond those families' financial abilities. It is recommended that child-care expenses not exceed 7% of a family's monthly income. Such expenses in Fredericksburg are 2 to 3 times this amount for the average working family. Monthly tuition averages \$715/mo. for infant care, \$445 - \$672/mo. for toddler and older children care, and \$100/mo. for after school care. Fewer than four of the 14 licensed child-care facilities accept infants less than 18-months old, and all have waiting lists.

Recommendations

- Promoting affordable on-site day care for businesses, especially some of the community's major employers such as FISS (faculty, employees, and students), HCMH, HEB, Walmart, and the City and County. Few centers stay open past 5:30 P.M. with some closing earlier, and no daycares are open on the weekends. These are impractical hours for many of our parents who do shift work and 12-hour days. All parents would benefit from reduced commute, easy access to breast feeding, and the ability to check in throughout the day. Local employers could be offered incentives in the form of reduced taxes, lowered utilities and/or permitting fees. Research shows that on-site childcare improves retention, reduced employee burnout and stress, and assists in recruitment of new employees. Eligible employers could also benefit from the Credit for Employer-Provided Childcare Facilities and Services.
- Expanding Child Development Associate (CDA) certification through courses at the Hill Country University Center (HCUC) and the Fredericksburg Independent School District. The site could include a child-care facility to act as an on-site day care for students and staff, and as a practical, hands-on portion of the educational program. Students could also choose to participate through the Fredericksburg High School Work Program to spend part of their school hours working at a child care facility. Additionally, CDA certification could be promoted as an opportunity to develop teachers and directors to create qualified licensed child-care facilities and stimulate small business growth.
- Asking Economic Development Commission and Chamber of Commerce to actively recruit franchise child-care programs and independent facilities to the area, with incentives such as building permit waivers, reduced utilities, tax incentives, and low-cost land rent of City and/or County property, as well as counseling regarding existing incentives such as available grants, USDA Rural Development funding, and the Franchise Tax Credit for Childcare.
- Creation of a fund within a community foundation to financially support existing and new licensed child care facilities. The fund would serve to connect visionary philanthropists, employers, churches, and other institutions to day care small business owners. The fund

could also channel financial support to low-income families for child care through establishing scholarships and grants. Successful examples include The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee's Childcare Tennessee, The Marin Community Foundation Access to Quality Child Care, DeKalb County Community Foundation's Community Works, and the Vermont Community Foundation.

Topic 2: Families and Children

After School Programs for Area Youth (K-12)

Vision Statement

The community will have a variety of after school programs for all children that includes healthy snacks, active play, help with homework, mentoring programs, and instruction in basic life skills and health.

Background

Existing after school programs are inadequate to meet the needs of the number of children in Fredericksburg who have no child care or after school supervision. Effective after-school programs bring a wide range of benefits to youth, families and communities. After-school programs keep kids safe, boost student success, and help parents keep their jobs. Children achieve more, productivity goes up, and risky behaviors go down.

Although the Boys and Girls Club and other church-supported programs do a good job with the children who participate, the actual number of children served is a small percentage of Fredericksburg's youth. There are not enough slots for every child who could benefit from such a program, and for older teens, these programs are not seen as "cool."

Children need supervised social and skills programs that include: healthy snacks, active play, help with homework, and enrichment. For older teens, enrichment could include simple vocational training, instruction in basic life skills (cooking a simple, nutritious meal; how to write a check; sewing on a button), and sex education/mentoring programs.

Recommendations

- Consulting with high school administration about the feasibility of creating "Distributive Education" (DE) curriculum in the high school. This could set up vocational programs in marketing, sales, and other skills between schools and employers in which students receive both classroom instruction and on-the-job training. Incentives might be offered to businesses that participate in DE.

- Establishing regular programs for kids and their parents in a non-threatening venue to facilitate open and honest information sharing and conversation about drug/alcohol/substance abuse and issues of mental and emotional health.
- Expanding services at Pioneer Memorial Library to boost usage of the facility and to identify it as a community meeting place and educational center for programs and topic exploration. See also our committee’s recommendation for a Multipurpose Community Center.
- Seeking members of Academic Boosters and Retired Teachers Association to serve as mentors to students beginning with elementary age and continuing throughout school. Enlisting seniors and/or retired experts to mentor middle- and high-school students in an organized, consistent program. (see section on Senior Citizen Enrichment)
- Incorporating life skills into the existing juvenile probation program (emphasis on this has lessened in classes offered at the high school). There is particular concern that general health instruction may be dropped from the list of required subjects for high school graduation.
- Exploring local implementation of existing after-school programs, with an emphasis on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) curriculum. Some examples include:
 - Crazy 8s Club, a free afterschool math program with 32 weeks of hands-on activities and games designed for elementary students of all math competencies.
 - Girls Who Code was founded to close the gender gap in technology.
 - After-School All-Stars (ASAS), a national nonprofit organization that partners with schools across the country to expand the learning day for low-income children.
 - Austin Parks and Recreation Department has a vigorous after-school program; its goal is to “create opportunities for youth ages 5-12 to engage in critical thinking and exercise decision-making skills.”

Youth and Family Social and Emotional Needs Programing

Vision Statement

We seek holistic, long term strategies for dealing with “taboo” issues of drug and alcohol abuse in our community which is wider in scope than we realize, is adversely affecting our young people and their families, and having negative impact on the ethical viability of our community.

Background

About 15% of the students in our schools are affected by drug and/or alcohol abuse. Addiction is protected by a “code of silence” and has never been addressed by our community in a “head on” fashion. It is critical to the health of our community that positive action be taken to contain the abuse/addiction and to redirect the affected lives. A small effort was made many years ago in the FISSD to educate school aged children about the dangers of drug and alcohol consumption, but the program no longer exists, and our guard has disappeared. An anti-drug program in our educational system is mandatory.

Some of the deficiencies we noted include:

- School curriculum currently offered to students through their health courses address these issues superficially, if at all. This concern is particularly troublesome in light of FISSD’s recent discussions to remove mandatory health education credits from the high school curriculum.
- Targeting only adolescents has not proven an effective strategy. A holistic program that includes assistance to the entire family would be more beneficial.
- Even when treatment is recommended or mandated, many of our youth and families cannot afford counseling.
- The community lacks counselors who specialize in working with children and youth to help them reach their full potential. Additionally, Fredericksburg lacks sufficient counselors specializing in chemical dependency issues.

Recommendations

We recommend that a holistic approach for recognition, treatment, and prevention be instituted at Fredericksburg High School. The program can be initiated and carried out in the following ways:

- Students – education, assessment, diagnosis, treatment, consultation, empowerment
- Parents and Families – education and accompanying their child in all ways being addressed
- Staff – training and empowerment enabling help with each individual student
- Community – education, empowerment, support, and reinforcement

A licensed social worker/teacher is necessary for this task with additions to staff if needs arise on other campuses.

A School Foundation should be created for purposes of holding and distributing funds for this program. The Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country is a non-profit possibility to assist with funds until a school foundation could be created. It is of primary importance that this program stem from and is supported locally and not with state or federal funding. It is most effective if locally administered.

A successful model for this program is already in effect in San Antonio in the Alamo Heights Independent School District and is being carried out with complete funding from their School Foundation and through donations. Their mission is: “To rid drug use in children and adolescents.” They are achieving unusual, long term success.

Activities for Single Adults and Young Families

Vision Statement

The community of Fredericksburg should offer a variety of diverse activities for singles and young families.

Background

Fredericksburg has many vineyards, wine bars, and restaurants, but no place to sit and have a conversation in the evening, play a game, or meet socially (no coffee shops or bookstores to linger and browse.) We lack an abundance of outdoor spaces for competitive and friendly sport, apart from soccer, baseball/softball, and tennis. There is a lack of playground equipment dedicated to toddlers and the very young, nor is there adequate seating for parents to sit and supervise them.

Recommendations

- Expanding services at Pioneer Memorial Library to book usage of the facility and to identify it as a community meeting place and educational center for programs and topic exploration. More than just books and banks of computers, libraries are still places where individuals gather to explore, interact, and imagine. They add value to communities and serve as cultural centers for patrons. Recent years have seen advancement in the area of public access to technology and greater depth of materials available, but these gains should be continued and re-imagined to capture the attention of more of our city and county populace. Suggested areas for improvement include an expanded Spanish language inventory, wider selection of videos and magazines, a lending collection of music (all genres), wider variety of activities (readings, presentations, literary events for children) to attract a diverse audience, extended hours of operation, and fresh interior decoration to enliven the space. Attending to all of these ancillary issues has not traditionally been viewed as the responsibility of a library, but when everything works together, libraries become places that anchor community life and bring people together.

- Offering incentives to turn some of our vacant buildings into a food court similar to the Bottling Department Food Hall at the Pearl District in San Antonio and/or into a “community entertainment center” like Downtown Social in New Braunfels, which offers cultural, artistic, and entertainment activities.
- Developing existing parks (specifically Gillespie Country Park and Marktplatz) to include equipment, activity space, and seating for toddlers, young children, and those who are supervising them.
- Increasing outdoor areas for competitive, non-competitive, and lesser-known sports such as bocce ball, shuffleboard, 4 square, chess/checkers, volleyball, disc golf, etc. This would include many young families whose children do not or cannot participate in organized group sports and miss out on some of our community’s life. It would also offer single adults a social connection with their peers without having to rely on eating out or going to bars.
- Encouraging friendly conversation and competition through regularly scheduled community events. Included in this are bunco groups, trivia nights (specialized evenings for movies, geography, sports, U.S. and Fredericksburg and Gillespie County history), Pictionary, etc. Events could be held at the Hill Country University Center or other spaces that would enjoy a larger, more inclusive profile within the community. The goal would be to invite citizens who are not part of an existing local group into a great connection with their community. Cost would be minimal and could be donated to a rotating list of needy causes.
- Employing a dedicated staff member or widening the duties of current staff to plan and publicize community events for this target audience modeled after the Community Education coordinator at FISD. Duties could include the development of a user-friendly calendar and website, plugging all age and family groups into an enriched community social life.

Topic 3: Families in Need

Healthy and secure families are beset by a variety of external and internal challenges threatening their well-being. Effectively addressing the following three areas of concern could have a major impact on improving the quality of life for all families in our community.

These specific issues needing attention are:

- Inclusive educational opportunities for all children with disabilities
- Problems associated with generational poverty
- Issues of domestic violence/abuse

Educational Opportunities for Children with Dyslexia

Vision Statement

Every child with dyslexia in Gillespie County will have access to adequate, compassionate and effective instruction as part of the regular education system.

Background

We recognize school administrators are obliged to follow mandates from TEA, yet we would like to see our schools, across grades K-12, institute and administer inclusive, in-school programs of compassionate, effective instruction for children with disabilities, including services like therapy, counseling and one-on-one tutoring.

We chose to work with the definition of disability provided by the World Health Organization's World Report on Disability (2011):

Disability is the umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions, referring to the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual (with a health condition) and that individual's contextual factors (environmental and personal factors).

and

Disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Defining disability as an interaction means that "disability" is not an attribute of the person.

Because "disabilities" covers such a wide range of physical, emotional, cognitive, and learning differences in relation to society and environmental barriers, we are focusing on one of the most common subtype of specific learning disabilities: dyslexia. Approximately 5%-10% of children are considered to have dyslexia. Children with dyslexia are at a high risk of failing in school. Too often the weak sequencing skills and poor short-term memory that affect dyslexic children's ability to read and spell follow them into adulthood with disastrous results. Dyslexia is considered a key factor in the "crib-to-prison pipeline; approximately 80% of prison inmates are functionally illiterate with a disproportionate number deficient in word attack skills and reading comprehension.

Recommendations

- Teachers need adequate policies and support (from school administration, parents and funding agencies) to initiate explicit, multisensory, and systematic practices to address dyslexia. This includes the hiring of a third dyslexia specialist by Fisd.
- Funding for individualized teacher-training and acquisition of keyed learning materials could be raised and administered by a dedicated education foundation or by a separate designated education fund through an existing foundation, such as The Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country.

Combating Issues of Generational Poverty

Vision Statement

The community needs to address issues of generational and situational poverty in our community, with an emphasis on breaking the poverty cycle.

Background

According to U.S. poverty guidelines for 2018, a family of four making less than \$25,100/year is living below the official poverty line. Fredericksburg has an economically divided population, one we can define as an “hour-glass economy.” Fredericksburg was listed as number 1 in Texas for millionaires per capita (and Texas ranks just behind California as a state with the greatest number of millionaires per capita), yet despite our vast “wealth,” we have a tiny, wasp-waisted middle class, and a broad, deep base of poverty. According to U.S. public elementary school statistics, “Fredericksburg is a lower middle class, moderately educated city,” with 60.8% of K-12 students participating in the National School Lunch Program.

We need to address issues of generational and situational poverty in our community, with an emphasis on breaking the poverty cycle.

Recommendations

- Whenever possible/appropriate, encourage existing social service programs to expand and/or reconfigure their hours/days of operation to include at least one evening per week and one weekend day per month. For example, the Fredericksburg Food Pantry, dedicated to “providing supplemental food to help assure adequate nutrition for those families’ children, adults and aged,” is only open 12 hours/week, and only from 1:00 P.M- 5:00 P.M. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Such short, restrictive hours make it almost impossible for working poor to access this necessary service.

- Publish and maintain an up-to-date directory listing various social services in both English and Spanish. Include a calendar for routine and special events, i.e., when the Capital Area Food Truck is in Fredericksburg (second Saturday of the month).
- Provide computer access to those who do not own devices and/or have inadequate online connectivity.
- Investigate the feasibility of starting a therapeutic infant facility in Fredericksburg using Talitha Koum as the model.
- Make affordable/attainable housing a number-one priority in the City and County.

Addressing Issues of Domestic Violence and Abuse

Vision Statement

Make Fredericksburg and Gillespie County a safe place for all, which includes offering safe emergency facilities to shelter those who are fleeing domestic violence and/or abuse.

Background

Domestic violence cases have sharply increased in Texas in recent years. The Texas Department of Public Safety shows more than 214,000 wives, husbands, girlfriends, and others were injured or died in 2016 at the hands of a family member, an increase from about 193,000 in 2011. Nonetheless, according to Gloria Aguilera Terry, chief executive of the Texas Council on Family Violence, "We continue to underestimate the reach and devastation of domestic violence."

The effects of domestic violence often extend beyond the immediately involved family into the wider community as evidenced by statistics that demonstrate the link between domestic violence and mass shootings. Currently, local law enforcement statistics do not reflect the number of domestic violence/abuse incidents routinely seen by local service agencies such as the Needs Council, Good Samaritan Center, MOM Center, and clergy.

Recommendation

- Local law enforcement, with encouragement from administration, will treat domestic abuse/violence as a top priority issue.
- Provide local law enforcement officers with comprehensive education on identifying domestic abuse/violence so they can accurately recognize and classify these incidents in their reports.

- Law enforcement will actively partner with social service agencies, HCM and the medical community to gather and report evidence of domestic abuse/violence.
- Involvement in stopping domestic abuse through education programs and dissemination of resources.
- City and law enforcement support efforts to establish a shelter in Fredericksburg (based on the Kendal County Women’s Shelter in Boerne, www.kcwtexas.org, as the model).

Please note: an ad hoc committee, under the supervision of the Gillespie County Ministerial Association has been working toward such a facility for the past 18 months. In addition to gathering anecdotal evidence (since no viable statistics were available from law enforcement), the group has toured several area women’s shelters, consulted with domestic violence experts and researched the scope of domestic abuse/violence. In the last few months a tentative site (near the Law Enforcement Center) has been identified for building such a facility, the owner was contacted and is willing to sell the property for such a purpose, and a philanthropist has offered to purchase the property and gift it to the shelter project. Additionally, a donor has offered to pay legal services/fees to file necessary nonprofit, 501(c)(3) paperwork, and an architect has agreed to draft preliminary plans. The committee is working to identify a working board of directors to take the project to the next level.

Topic 4: Senior Life

Vision Statement

The community will support and encourage seniors who choose to reinvest their talents in the community thereby enabling positive self-help, care, and support for the physically and medically challenged in Gillespie County.

Background

We recognize the genera of our senior population as widely diverse, ranging from highly functional, productive, and active individuals through the gamut to aged, medically challenged citizens needing home medical care and help in many other areas of their lives.

We acknowledge and support the value of challenging and motivating the highly energized and productive seniors in our community through enrichment activities that will encourage their gifts and talents toward realizing their own fulfillment and, therefore, to reinvest in the community by choosing to help nurture, educate, and care for those who have been less fortunate. We honor the premise that all people should be treated with highest human dignity.

The Senior Life Committee has discovered through observation and evaluation that caregiver services and respite care are lacking in Gillespie County. There is a deficiency in certified nursing care available for nursing homes, and we seek possible solutions.

Our conclusions may help impact positive changes and set realistic goals for growth and sustainable productivity throughout the greater community with the intent to encourage improvement in health, support services, education, ethical posture, and building/maintaining skill sets necessary to encourage a higher quality of life for all senior aged people.

Recommendations

- Promoting affordable and safe respite care services as relief for full-time home care providers, served by volunteers through a Caregivers Day Out Program with sponsorship by service organizations and churches in the community. A successful example of this service is the Mom's Morning Out Program offered at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, in Fredericksburg, which offers respite care on a daily basis for mothers with young children. A similar service could serve as an avenue for the networking of additional nonprofit efforts for older children and adults who need full-time care. It would also provide a base for meeting respite care on an as needed basis. Positive impact would generate job opportunities for full and part-time care givers.
- Expanding and promoting Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certification through courses at the Hill Country University Center is possible in cooperation with the Fredericksburg Independent School District. A partnership would serve to fill the need for additional qualified nursing care for our senior care homes and provide job opportunities for qualified nursing associates.
- Senior Investment in Community
 - Providing an incubator style program wherein seniors can create and participate in voluntary networking and mentoring programs for students and adults. There are very strong needs for a parent mentoring program at all levels of our public school education system. Also to be addressed are after school church mentoring/tutoring programs for students and expanded service opportunities for mentoring at the Pioneer Memorial Library. An example of local success is the Transform Program created by Fredericksburg Hill Country Church, which is in its third year of operation. It offers free transportation from the schools, refreshments, Bible stories, and mentoring, by background checked adults, three days a week from 3:30-6:00 PM for primary school aged students. We need more opportunities like this successful model of mentoring for students on every educational level and for their parents.

- Establishing a monthly senior speaker forum would enable retired senior professionals to speak within their area of expertise in a lecture, question-and-answer format, thereby enriching the lives of citizens, especially students, in the community. This could be established and maintained by partnering between the Golden Hub, Rotary Club, and the Museum of the Pacific War, which might willingly cooperate by giving veterans speaking opportunities in a forum format. Veteran Visits, a successful program adopted by many cities, allows teams of veterans to visit classrooms once a year and speak to students about their military experiences. Fifteen-minute allotments for each veteran is followed by a question and answer session. This is a highly successful event and anticipated every Veterans Day throughout America.
- Partnership to Build Community
 - Working with Fredericksburg High School Automotive Mechanics Program to establish a monthly car clinic where oil, fluids, and tires are checked, small repairs made, and seniors encouraged to assist in maintaining their vehicles.
 - Partnering with churches, civic, and other service organizations to provide seniors with basic home maintenance and minor repairs for a small fee, or cost of materials, is another way to meet the needs of seniors yet encourage them to take responsible action on their own behalf.
 - Providing space and initial help from local gardening experts like the Native Plant Society of Fredericksburg for creation of a voluntary community vegetable garden which would help seniors maintain their independence, grow some of their own food, and service the community while engaging in the possibility of developing a business venture.
- Requesting the Economic Development Commission to actively recruit part time franchise transportation for senior citizens to encourage attendance at community enrichment events such as art shows, library talks/programs/book sales, plays, fairs, and many other community activities. A local source of transportation could be the utilization/rental of wine tour buses which are not fully utilized during the week days.
- Assisting senior citizens and all hearing-impaired citizens with Loop/T-Coil technology for assisted listening in larger spaces, which adds to quality of life. This technology has been standard in many facilities since 1990. Locations where t-coil technology would be useful are the Fredericksburg High School Auditorium, the City Council Chambers at the

Law Enforcement Center, and the Fredericksburg Theatre Company, all of which are difficult listening environments for hearing impaired individuals.

Post face: Affordable Housing and Building a Multi-Use Recreational Center for Community

Although these two issues have been addressed by other subcommittees, the Family Life Committee wants its voice included in recommending the leaders of the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County focus candid attention on working to alleviate the scarcity of attainable housing in our community and to give serious consideration to creating a community center that is accessible to all and affordable to most.

Lack of suitable places for low- and middle-income families to live affordably is the single greatest detriment to successful family life in our community.

Fredericksburg needs a community activities center for all its citizens. Ideally such a facility would include outdoor spaces for organized athletics (basketball hoop, softball field, four-square, tetherball, hopscotch, horseshoes) and indoor spaces for educational classes in life skills (needlework, cooking, basic money management/home accounting, first aid), exercise classes (yoga, Zumba or Nia dance), meeting spaces for small groups (formal and informal), a reading room, a room for playing board games, carrels for homework or individual study, maybe even space for a community garden.

This could be a community hub with a volunteer network listing all opportunities for service and/or a place where someone seeking services could come to look for resources.

We'd also like to see an area that could be utilized as a sort of incubator facility for small or start-up businesses with shared machines (copier, shredder, conference table), Wi-Fi and AV capabilities. Use of much of the center would be low-cost and/or free, with meeting rooms and incubator resources available for a fee, perhaps on a sliding scale.

NOTE: This committee is aware of the availability of a potentially suitable site and of a local philanthropist who is interested in substantially contributing to such a venue. We would encourage City leaders help facilitate such a deal by meeting with and/or brokering a deal between the interested parties by offering incentives, tax-breaks, etc.

Government Vision Committee Report

Topic 1: Recommended Steps for the Future

Vision Statement

Make Fredericksburg an oasis of celebration, innovation and excellence.

Recommendations

The City of Fredericksburg should update its Comprehensive Plan on a regular basis. As a living document, the Comprehensive Plan serves as the statement of policy and priority that guides the City in their consideration of development proposals and investment in capital improvements.

The Comprehensive Plan should be developed by City staff and stakeholders in the community and will be a statement of direction for the decisions that help achieve the desired community future.

The City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County should partner with other organizations and stakeholder groups to enhance the reputation of the Texas Hill Country as a destination for business, homeownership, and tourism.

The City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County should partner with other organizations and stakeholder groups to continue to diversify the region's economic base to include tourism, entrepreneurship, and retirement living.

The City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County should partner with businesses and stakeholder groups to work to keep communication infrastructure up to date and accessible to its residents and business community.

Citizens of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County recognize that successful cities plan for the future and continually develop, update, and fund the infrastructure. Identifying infrastructure needs is the responsibility of the City Manager, assisted by City Staff department heads, under the direction of the Mayor and the Fredericksburg City Council, as well as the County Judge and County Commissioners for County infrastructure. A city's and county's infrastructure bind the area together with a shared sense of community.

Prudent planning for posterity may require formation of a Gillespie County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, and work with the Hill Country Land Trust, which is an independent nonprofit organization, to share the goal of protecting the scenic, natural, agricultural and open landscapes of Gillespie County.

Gillespie County Commissioners Court will also need to have responsibility and authority with breweries, distilleries, and wineries to protect the beauty of the county, safety on highways (especially 290 East), and water conservation. We recommend a local group be formed of City officials and County Commissioners, as well as a cross section of citizens, to work with the State Representative to write and promote legislation that will properly plan the future growth of wineries.

We recognize that a certain amount of regulation is good and positive for the community. We envision a regulatory environment in our community that is:

- Open and transparent
- Easy to understand and implement
- Consistent in application and easy to enforce
- Light touch (reasonable, equitably enforceable and necessary) and fit-for-purpose
- Fair and equitable to all concerned

To achieve this vision and benefits the body of this work outlines, it is essential the officials of the City and County work together to agree upon and implement goals locally.

The City should establish a Comprehensive Plan Committee composed of citizens, City Council and City staff to review the City Comprehensive Plan and incorporate an annual update on what was accomplished, is on deck, and what cannot be addressed. This annual update should be reported to the City citizens in as broad a manner as possible (through newspaper, social media, city newsletter, and other means). The Comprehensive Plan should drive the City Council meeting agenda.

All ordinances should be relevant and maintain their relevancy in the future. It is recommended that a process be created so that all new regulations have a review provision of five years. Any current regulations should be reviewed initially and then follow the same five-year review criteria. The City Attorney will consider using a volunteer Review Committee to conduct this review and make recommendations to City Council of changes to regulations in order to meet the following conditions:

- Are constitutional
- Confirm that they are currently applicable (not using out of date terms or language, addressing a matter that no longer exists or has significantly changed)
- Can be consistently and uniformly applied and enforced in a fair and equitable manner across the entire population
- Do not benefit or harm a specific individual or group
- Are not arbitrary or discriminatory

- Are important to the health, safety, well-being, and public resource protection of the citizens
- Are compliant with State law

It is recommended that Gillespie County Commissioners Court follow a similar process in reviewing all County regulations.

Topic 2: Festival Center for Gillespie County and City of Fredericksburg

Vision Statement

In order to maintain the historic ambiance of Main Street, and the original twenty acres dedicated by the founders of Fredericksburg as a community center, the recommendations of the 175th Anniversary Courthouse Square Park Committee should be followed closely. A single consolidated square used for public events and festivals is envisioned.

Background

Many members of the Government Committee attended the presentation on October 25, 2017 by Gloria Barrera of Vanir Construction Management, hired by Gillespie County to assess the need for new facilities and renovation of existing facilities. Timothy Koock of the Courthouse Square Advisory Board also made a presentation to the Government Committee citing the culmination of over 20 years of work on Marktplatz and the Courthouse Square. Currently, the Courthouse Square Advisory Board’s plan is to:

- Complete the Courthouse Square Park – including a master plan for the Square and the Old Jail
- Connect the Square with a Vereins Kirche footprint in the center of Main Street
- Repave Austin, San Antonio, Crockett, and Adams streets to form the parameter of the original square.

The Government Committee discussed possibilities and expanded the ideas presented by the consulting firm.

The 1939 Courthouse, Annex 1 (old Post Office building), and portion of Annex 2 (hotel and former Fredericksburg Clinic buildings) are designated historic sites. All the properties the County owns on and around the Courthouse Square are in the National Register Historic District. The designation file for Pioneer Memorial Library’s State Antiquities Landmark (SAL) does not show any limiting boundaries around the 1882 Courthouse, within and less than the courthouse square. The site is straightforwardly identified as the “Courthouse Square” and not subdivided to exclude areas of the square not immediately under and next to the 1882 courthouse. In other words, the entire site is considered a State Antiquities Landmark.

As a Certified Local Government, the City of Fredericksburg has a responsibility - Item # 11 in the City’s Certification Agreement states that the City will “monitor and report to the Texas Historical Commission any actions affecting any county courthouse, Recorded Texas Historic

Landmark, State Archaeological Landmark [now renamed State Antiquities Landmark], National Register property, and any locally designated landmark.”

- The old Jail at 117 San Antonio is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark
- The 1939 (current) courthouse is locally rated as “high” and is included in the SAL designation for the 1882 Courthouse Square
- The Pioneer Memorial Library is locally rated as “high” and is a State Antiquities Landmark
- The old post office is locally rated “high” also part of SAL Courthouse Square
- Two- story old Central Hotel has “medium” rating
- Old Clinic at corner of San Antonio and Adams is rated “medium”

The Committee also looked at what requirements festivals and other gatherings should meet to hold events on the Square.

Recommendations

- Focused investment on One Square to support events and limit adverse impacts on the community such as:
 - Cellular and data bandwidth reductions during festivals
 - Parking issues
- Gillespie County should carefully consider all aspects regarding construction of a new Courthouse and parking garage that would impact the beauty and green space of the County-owned portion of Courthouse Square. The County should consider and involve a broad spectrum of the community and City officials in its long-range development plan and the future development of the Marktplatz/Courthouse Square to allow synergism with future City facilities. The Government Committee recommends Gillespie County Commissioners Court consider other options in addition to the two options presented to the committee. Included below are additional options as examples of other approaches that the County may want to consider.
 - Annex 1 could be revisited for the Art Guild to conduct art exhibits and classes, thus providing income.
 - Annex 2 could be sold and subsequently used for retail space and/or parking garage (privately developed).
 - Current Courthouse could be used as the Pioneer Memorial Library while the current library (McDermott Building) could be used as community event center for special exhibits, events, small concerts and other community beneficial uses to generate revenue.
 - Every effort should be made to maintain green and open space on Courthouse Square in order to preserve its current charm and community's quality of life.

- The County should leave the development and operation of any new garage facility (no matter where it is located) to private enterprise since this is not the County's core competency. The County could benefit from such arrangement by:
 - Selling the Annex 2 site to offset some of the new Courthouse development cost, or
 - Leasing the land at Annex 2 site in exchange for revenue sharing
 - Any garage development should be esthetically and architecturally in harmony with the community architecture and its surroundings. It should not diminish the value or negatively impact the look of the surrounding historical buildings. Furthermore, it should not be on Courthouse Square.
- A real time cost evaluation must be done for all options to provide financial comparisons of the projects. However, the total cost may be reduced when considering option of selling Annex 2 to pay for other development costs.
- The County should move all criminal procedures to the Law Enforcement Center, to reduce the safety risk to the community from transporting detainees through the City for court appearances.

Courthouse and County Offices Options Summary Evaluation

Evaluation Criteria	RECOMMENDED			
	Option 1 New Courthouse Annex 2 site	Option 2 New Courthouse Square site	Option 3 New Courthouse Off Site	Option 4 Existing Courthouse Square site
Utilizes existing site	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Reduces Courthouse Square Green Space	No	Yes	No	Yes
Maintains traditional look	No	Yes	No	Yes
Centrally located	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Customer convenience	Yes-	Yes-	Yes+	Yes-
Alleviates traffic congestion	No	No	Yes	No
Parking garage on site?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No (off site)
Garage impact to historical site	Yes	Yes+	No	No
Allows Annex 1 for "Art Guild"	Maybe	Maybe	Yes	Yes
Allows Annex 2 for private development	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Allows Courthouse for library	Maybe	Maybe	Yes	No
Allows old library for special events	Maybe	Maybe	Yes	No
Consolidates all County offices	Maybe	Maybe	Yes	Maybe
Meets long range (>20yrs) needs?	No	No	Yes	No

Option 1 (County Presentation – Annex 2 Site Development)

Develop new Courthouse and parking garage on the Annex 2 site

- Renovate old Courthouse and consolidate some of the offices there
- Renovate and maintain Annex 1 and library

Pros:

- Utilizes existing site
- Preserves Courthouse Square site green space
- Close in town for employee and citizens

Cons:

- Parking garage may not be in tune with surrounding historical buildings
- Retains Annex 1 which would force future renovations (cost)
- Retains current library which would force future renovations (cost)
- Does not alleviate downtown traffic congestion
- Site may be limited to adequately provide additional facility to consolidate County offices efficiently
- May not accommodate long term (greater than 20 years) County needs

Option 2 (County Presentation – Courthouse Square Site Development)

Develop new Courthouse and parking garage on the Courthouse Square site behind the existing Courthouse

- Renovate old Courthouse and consolidate some of the offices there
- Renovate and maintain Annex 1 and library
- Relocate offices from Annex 2

Pros:

- Utilizes existing site
- Maintains traditional location
- Close in town for employees and citizens
- Makes Annex 2 available for future development

Cons:

- Courthouse Square site becomes too congested with less green space
- Does not alleviate downtown traffic congestion

- Parking garage not in tune with surrounding historical buildings
- Retains Annex 1 which would force future renovations (cost)
- Retains library which would force future renovation (cost)
- Site may be limited to adequately provide additional facility in order to consolidate County offices efficiently
- May not accommodate long term (greater than 20 years) County needs

Option 3 (New Option – Off-Site New Development) Preference of Government Committee

Consolidate County offices and develop new facilities off-site away from downtown and Courthouse Square site (perhaps a Friendship Lane location). The new Courthouse could be consolidated with City facilities future development. City and County conference rooms, restrooms, and parking could be shared thus reducing redundant costs:

- Renovate old Courthouse for library
- Renovate and make the current library available for special events
- Renovate and make Annex 1 available for Art Guild exhibits and classes or other community beneficial uses
- Sell or lease Annex 2 to private enterprise for development

Pros:

- Meets the long term (greater than 20 years) future demand of the County in a well-planned site consolidating all offices in one complex facility
- Removes historical entanglement associated with redevelopment of current buildings
- Provides for easy access and customer interaction particularly if built on proximity with the future City office complex
- On-site parking garage could be developed for easy access without impact to the City historic sites
- Frees up Annex 1 to be used for special events like Art Guild for exhibits and classes similar to Kerrville
- Frees up Annex 2 site to be sold or leased to private enterprise to offset some of the development cost
- Allows old library to become revenue generator for special events while the old Courthouse would accommodate future library needs
- Removes congestion concerns with Courthouse Square site
- Preserves the green space and makes better use of the Courthouse Square site

Cons:

- Offices further away from city center

- Not a traditional site

Option 4 (New Option – Courthouse Square Site Re-Development)

Add additional office space to the existing Courthouse possibly connected by bridge or breezeway, and move garage development to another site

- Relocate offices from Annex 2
- Renovate existing Annex 1 and library
- Move parking garage to off site

Pros:

- Utilizes existing site
- Maintains traditional location
- Makes better use of existing Courthouse
- Moves parking garage away from Courthouse Square site and historical buildings
- Makes Annex 2 available for future development

Cons:

- Courthouse Square site becomes too congested with less green space
- Does not alleviate downtown traffic congestion
- Retains Annex 1 which would force future renovations (cost)
- Retains library which would force future renovation (cost)
- Site may be limited to adequately provide additional facility in order to consolidate County offices efficiently
- May not accommodate long term (greater than 20 years) County needs

Topic 3: Education System

Vision Statement

Gillespie County will have premier educational entities that are more dynamic and comprehensive, providing access to programs for students from pre-kindergarten through college/university degrees. The system will include post-secondary workforce development programs, training certificates and life-long learning opportunities tailored to seniors and other adults.

Recommendations

To accomplish this Vision, the community will:

- Strengthen the commitment to assuring the access to equal educational opportunity for every student.
- Provide a seamless system of education with aligned expectations from the earliest years of a child's development, through the K-12 system, and into and through postsecondary education (P-16/20 concept). This includes identifying and addressing special needs students, especially those dealing with dyslexia.
- Establish and support an education foundation whose aim is to provide funding that is both adequate and sustainable through the local districts, complemented by efforts of the state, private sector, public and private research institutions, community-based organizations, and workforce programs at all levels.
- Vigorously support strong collaborations with community college and university partners, especially those that maintain a local presence.
- Ensure that the school districts, private schools, partner community colleges and universities provide curriculum that includes college/university prerequisite and credit transfer courses.
- Promote the development of innovative academic programs which feature student-centered learning and project or problem-based learning models, such as the Systems Go engineering program.
- In order to emphasize and retain the heritage of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County, we recommend the basic German language be taught in primary schools.
- Encourage increased engagement of parents, students and the public in educational programs.
- Realize that not all students will pursue a four-year university degree and provide programs and certificates which meet the needs of students, as well as local/regional employers by:
 - Involving local business in planning and implementing workforce and technical programs similar to Nashville's Opportunity Now.

- Working closely with the community college partner to fund, design and implement workforce programs which build upon similar programs present in the middle and high schools.
- Support the phased development of first class, post-secondary education facilities, as detailed in the Hill Country University Center Master Plan.
- Support the presence of life-long learning programs for older adults, such as the Osher Life-long Learning Institute.
- Create opportunities for private and public schools to interact and learn from each other.

Topic 4: Waterways and Groundwater

Background

The Pedernales River and tributary creeks in the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County are assets to the community that provide important ecosystem services as well as serving as natural drainage for storm water and a natural firebreak. Healthy riparian—river and creek side—areas help to stabilize banks, reducing erosion-related damage to property, improve water quality and quantity, and serve as a “sponge” to absorb water for plants. Healthy creeks also provide habitat as well as a source of water for wildlife. These creeks are truly the gems of the Texas Hill Country and should be maintained in a way that naturally helps flood and fire control as well as aesthetic beauty.

Although the City of Fredericksburg and the Hill Country Underground Water Conservation District state there is adequate groundwater in the aquifer to handle the growth of the City, the City needs to establish redundancy in supply lines and strategic equipment to avoid a severe curtailment of water due to supply line or equipment failure. Gillespie County needs to carefully consider water usage and availability before allowing new businesses and subdivisions to be established.

John O. Meusebach chose the location... “four miles north of the Pedernales River between two creeks.” He named the settlement Friedrichsburg (later changed to Fredericksburg) to honor Prince Frederick of Prussia. Settlers received lots in town with an additional 10-acre outlot outside town. Some of the creek side and creek bed ownership was retained by the County. In 2015, the County traded the ownership of the creek sides and creek beds it still owned to the City of Fredericksburg.

Threats

- **Invasive Plants** - Currently, much of the stream beds are “choked” with invasive plants,

the most problematic and aggressive of which is Arundo (*Arundo donax*, also called Giant cane, Georgia cane or Carrizo cane). There are also other invasive plants that are very common and problematic in some areas.

- **Development and Clearing of Riparian Buffer Zones** - Development is on the rise in the Texas Hill Country, bringing with it an increase in both impervious surfaces (e.g., concrete/asphalt), mowing all the way to the water's edge along creek side areas, hay production, and intensive grazing along creeks and rivers which damage the riparian buffer zones. With this comes an increase in runoff, worsening the possibility of flooding.
- **Excess Nutrients** - Runoff of fertilizers and excess nutrients from animal waste into the creeks can impact water quality, algae growth, and aquatic life. Minimization of fertilizer use and maintenance of un-mowed, vegetated riparian buffers play an essential role in reducing runoff of these nutrients into our creeks and the Pedernales River.

In late 2015, the Healthy Creeks Initiative to manage Arundo in the Hill Country began with surveys and demonstration treatments by Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) in partnership with Hill Country Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, City of Fredericksburg (committed \$25,000 to project), and several private landowners. In 2016, the initiative began to implement large-scale management of Arundo on Hill Country streams. Through building partnerships with TPWD, TxDOT, and river and creek side landowners in the headwaters of the Pedernales River, especially Barons and Town Creeks as priority areas, these initial efforts have been successful over the past two years. In 2018, efforts are continuing and expanding to fill in gaps in treatment areas —100% landowner participation is essential to maximizing the success of this project.

Recommendations

City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County should make management and prevention of Arundo and other invasive species a priority to reduce risk of flooding, remove fire hazards, and maximize the natural beauty, health and ecosystems of the waterways. The City and County should work with government agencies, landowners, builders, landscapers and other groups to develop a detailed plan (guidelines) for creek side maintenance and invasive species eradication, information dissemination, and develop and enforce a timeline for eradication. Also, the City of Fredericksburg should responsibly utilize the natural beauty of the creek side property owned by the City (as aerial maps show) for the use and enjoyment by residents and tourists, such as Frantzen Park, and proposed bike and hike trails at Ft. Martin Scott as well as other portions of Barons and Town Creeks.

We must confront the hard truth that groundwater is not a limitless resource, and that we live in a dry and difficult land. “Groundwater is and will continue to be a major source of water for

Texans. However, in many parts of the state, more groundwater is being used than is being replenished through natural means. If this practice continues, Texas water costs will rise, land could subside, water quality could decline and people in some areas could run out of water.”
Texas Cooperative Extension at Texas A&M University

- The City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County should emphasize water conservation via information campaigns in all facets of commercial and residential usage.
- Large water-use industries should be carefully reviewed before being approved, and requirements for water reclamation should be instituted.
- The City of Fredericksburg should make redundancy of water systems a priority in order to insure there is always adequate water for residential, business and visitor use.
- The City should move forward with the planned 47 million-gallon effluent pond and find additional clients to use the recycled water (currently the Boot Ranch Golf Course and Lady Bird Johnson Golf Course use recycled water for watering).
- Gillespie County and the Hill Country Underground Water Conservation District should carefully consider groundwater availability before allowing additional businesses and subdivisions to be developed within the County.

Topic 5: Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel

Vision Statement

We envision a significant enhancement and development to promote bicycle trails and pedestrian walkways to make Fredericksburg a well-known destination and friendly environment for such activities for both residents and visitors alike. We also suggest that City trails link to County and winery trails.

Recommendations

To achieve our stated vision, a community citizen advisory group should be formed to help City staff study, evaluate, and recommend the plan for bicycling and walkway networks. The team should be formed as soon as possible to begin mapping the current and future City network and be able to report its first findings in one to two years considering the following goals:

- **Network & Facility Development**
 - Make bicycle lane and walkway requirements an integral part of the City

- development and redevelopment plan.
- Construct bikeways and walkways where possible.
- Provide a continuous sidewalk network along all City streets compliant with ADA and easily accessible to City commercial and business centers.
- Provide support facilities (bicycle parking, lockers) that encourage walking and bicycling.
- **Safety**
 - Build a system that addresses the needs and safety of all users, including youth, the elderly, people with disabilities.
 - Continually improve bicycling and walking comfort and safety through design, operations and maintenance.
 - Ensure that the transportation system is accessible to people with disabilities, and that an ADA Transition Plan is completed to identify obstacles to access, develop a work plan to remove those obstacles, and identify responsible parties.
- **Education & Promotion**
 - Improve awareness and acceptance of bicycling and increase bicycle ridership throughout the City through promotion, education, and encouragement
 - Promote awareness of safe walking and bicycling routes throughout the City and County through all available media outlets.
 - Funding Resources
 - Develop an achievable annual budget for the development of improvements to walkways and bicycle routes.
 - The budget should employ both government and private funding.

Topic 6: Transportation

Vision Statement

The ultimate goal of both the City and County is to make our transportation corridors safe, efficient and sustainable. The community wants to reduce congestion on City streets in a fashion that will enhance the experiences of visitors, residents and merchants and will help promote the vision of other entities in their efforts to maintain the cultural identity of the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County. In addition, the City should make walking and bicycling as safe as possible. Public transportation must also be considered to move as many tourists and residents possible with better efficiency.

Recommendations

- **Relief Route** - As far back as the mid-1960's it has been recognized that for the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County to grow and prosper, there was then and still exists a

need to re-route major truck traffic off historic downtown Main Street. Studies conducted in 2004-2005 and as recently as 2013 were completed to determine a suitable right-of-way for a relief route. Together the Relief Route Task Force Committee, the Gillespie County Commissioners Court, the Economic Development Commission, the City Council and City Staff, the Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau Board all endorsed the 2013 study. Now in 2018 the city and county have each contributed \$50,000 to further yet another engineering study for a Relief Route. We encourage both the City and County to urge TxDOT to complete the route as quickly as possible using as much information gathered in previous studies as possible. The current estimated timeline is 15 years, but we would like to see this completed ahead of schedule. The State Representative and State Senator should introduce and work to successfully pass legislation and remain engaged with the State and TxDOT for line item budget commitment on the Relief Route.

- **Friendship Lane** - In the interim, we urge the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County to obtain all necessary right-of-way and engineering studies to begin completion of Friendship Lane. The completion of Friendship Lane to Highway 290 West is of the highest importance but the extension of this road on to Highway 87 North is also highly desired. Once completed, vehicles currently coming through downtown via Main Street may choose to take this road to avoid the congestion of Main Street. This needs to be accomplished as soon as possible. As the oilfields in West Texas enter the expected expansion cycle, additional large truck traffic will be traversing Fredericksburg. If Friendship Lane is completed to at least Highway 290 West, it will help alleviate truck traffic until the Relief Route is constructed.
- **Expansion of Surface Streets** - We urge continuation of studies to expand Cherry Street to Highway 16 South (and possibly to Friendship Lane) and either Frederick Road or Morse Street to Highway 290 East. This will help alleviate traffic and allow our citizens to travel intracity without approaching the downtown area.
- **Sidewalks and Bike Lanes** - We urge the City to require sidewalks and bike lanes any time a new road is constructed, and to install as many sidewalks on existing streets as possible, especially on Main Street (to accommodate visitors from the planned Convention Center to easily walk to the downtown area). We also encourage sidewalks near H-E-B and the high school to alleviate the current safety issue. Please refer to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Vision Statement as well as the 2006 Comprehensive Plan.
- **Public Transportation** - We urge the City to provide or oversee public transportation, and to make the stops and schedules known to residents and visitors alike via apps. The cost for trolleys, buses or vans could be defrayed by paid advertising.

- **Parking** - Until the Relief Route is completed and the State of Texas relinquishes control of Main Street to the City of Fredericksburg, there will be very little change in the downtown parking situation. Therefore, we recommend the use of the following existing parking areas when these lots would otherwise be vacant:
 - Fairgrounds
 - High School and football stadium
 - Area churches

Liability (insurance) issues could be worked out, and a per car fee charged. For example, churches, could charge \$10/car for the day on a Saturday or less on a Sunday afternoon, possibly be manned by the church youth group as a fundraiser, and serviced by the public or private transportation network to carry visitors from parking to the shopping / entertainment / winery locations.

Also, a parking and shuttle package to/from remote lots must be advertised and placed in ticket packages by event management for events held on Marktplatz.

Topic 7: Recycling and Waste

Vision Statement

We envision efficient waste collection, recycling and disposal services in our community. We encourage the City and County to be aware of the economic factor of recycling and be positioned to seize emerging recycling-related opportunities and dramatically reduce the use and extend life of the landfill as well as raise community awareness via communications and financial incentives to recycle.

Recommendations

To achieve our stated vision, we recommend the following mission planning steps:

- Provide comprehensive and best practices for collecting and disposing of recycled materials that are timely (less than 5 years), user friendly, and will serve the current needs of our community.
 - Implement recycling of all materials (papers, plastics, glass, cartons, cardboards, metals, etc.) that meet industry and regulatory requirements.
 - Implement services that promote easy residential and small business recycling such as single stream (unsorted) with curbside pickup.
 - Make every effort and take actions which reduce the demand for landfill space.
 - For comparison, in 2017, the City of Fredericksburg Public Works Sanitation

Division presented the following statistics: 34,614 tons of garbage placed in landfill (approximately 2,547 tons more than 2016); of this, 4,525 tons were city residential garbage picked up by City crews. The Division chipped 18,729 piles of brush weighing 339 tons from curbside collection which is approximately 37 tons less than in 2016. Also, 1,624 tons were collected at the landfill which is 283 tons less than in 2016. Approximately 218 tons of grass clippings and leaves were added to the compost operation while approximately 3,360 cubic yards of double ground wood chips were sold. The estimated useful life of the landfill is approximately 22.2 years.

- Implement projects, programs, and processes that promote sustainability while anticipating the needs and challenges of our community in the future (greater than 5 years).
 - Consider options to move solid waste and recycling services to contracting companies that possess core competency in the field to provide cost effective and efficient services for long term community needs.
 - Engage with surrounding municipalities in understanding, developing, and the potential implementation of new technologies and solid waste conversion processes.
 - Engage with Gillespie County to develop a plan for County recycling pick up services and integration into an overall City/County waste management program.
 - Stay abreast of new technologies and position the City to evaluate and implement new technology in the disposal of the recycled materials that dramatically reduces the demand for landfill.
- Continually educate the community regarding sustainability, environmental responsibility, recycling, and proper waste management.
 - Make waste disposal and recycling an integral part of the City capital improvement plan.
 - Build community awareness of the need to minimize the production of waste, and the need to consider solid waste management from an environmental perspective.
 - Recycling must be discussed via community engagements/involvements, at public hearings, church, educational venues and beyond.

Topic 8: Pet Friendly Community

Vision Statement

Make the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County, a pet-friendly community for residents, visitors, cats and dogs.

Recommendations

Encourage and engage proactive, win-win, pet-friendly, intergenerational collaborations among businesses, mass-media, local, state and national pet-friendly agencies, foundations that financially support pet-friendly initiatives and programs, volunteers, non-profit organizations, youth-education, leadership and entrepreneurial programs (e.g., Fredericksburg High School animal-focused curriculum and extra-curricular projects, Leadership Gillespie County, *iOpener*, Rotary Interact at Fredericksburg Middle School and Fredericksburg High School; Texas AgriLife Extension and 4-H programs) – to maximize all opportunities to create and promote Fredericksburg and Gillespie County with the Fredericksburg Animal Shelter successes as a pet-friendly community (via social media, mass-media community-service announcements and paid advertising).

- Raise awareness about the physical and emotional benefits of healthy pets and legal mandates related to pets -- through mass-media and educational outreach through existing training materials (on-line and through Texas AgriLife Extension, etc.) and existing, effective door-to-door conversations.
- Encourage and leverage new and on-going strategic partnerships and formal or informal collaborations among:
 - Local and state entities (City of Fredericksburg Animal Shelter, Gillespie County Commissioners Court, Texas Department of Health Services Zoonosis Control; Texas Parks and Wildlife;
 - Businesses such as veterinarians and their vendors; feed and building-materials stores, grocery and all-purpose stores, non-profit and/or volunteer-driven organizations such as FixFurLife, Pedernales Animals Welfare Society, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Willow City Volunteer Fire Department, the Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country (as a prospective, fiscal agent for donations to benefit the programs of the Fredericksburg Animal Shelter), Dogologie, animal-focused philanthropists and pet-friendly foundations (Community Foundation, PetSmart Charities, *Big Give San Antonio*; etc.);
 - Local, pet-friendly lodging and rentals; as well as others.
- Create a volunteer-driven system in-service to the Fredericksburg Animal Shelter to foster homeless cats and dogs – to give volunteers, pet-rescue organizations ... in coordination with the Fredericksburg Animal Shelter ... time to secure safe, healthy forever homes for healthy, socialized, fully vaccinated, spayed/neutered stray cats and dogs.
- Continuously publicize community-wide (via social media, Weblinks, community-service and paid advertising: print, electronic, etc.) all existing, local resources that

support healthy pets (low and no-cost spay-neuter, vaccinations, foster homes available, etc.) and all resources needed (volunteers and volunteer manager for cat-and-dog fostering system and to care for feral-cat colonies) so that Fredericksburg and Gillespie County may join other successful communities in becoming a no-kill community: 90% live-release of healthy, adoptable cats and dogs.

Quality of Life Vision Committee Report

Our mission is to organize citizen input for the preparation of a list of strategic vision points with attainable and realistic action items for City and County leadership in order to protect and enhance the charm, heritage, and life for residents of the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County.

The Quality of Life Committee has been well attended by between 20 and 35 members. The topics that were pointed out by the diverse visioning meetings prior to our formation have been included below. We have determined that these topics fall within the parameters of the Cultural and Heritage subcommittee and the Family-Friendly and Safe Atmosphere subcommittee. Below you will find the narrative for both of those committees.

Topic 1: Culture and Heritage

Vision Statement

Retain and emphasize the historic culture and heritage that make Fredericksburg and Gillespie County the place we chose to make our homes.

Background

It is important to continue the work of historic preservation in the city and county. Once these treasures are lost they are lost forever. We must strengthen the relationship with the Gillespie County Historical Society and Pioneer Museum through increased financial assistance and counsel. It is important to remain conscientious in realizing the importance of balancing residents' needs with those of tourists.

Recommendations

- Historic Preservation
 - Continue the work of the Historic Review Board to protect the visual architecture and construction in the Historic District.
 - Expand the Historic District in a thoughtful and deliberate manner.
 - Consider adding landscaping to the requirements for the District, i.e., requiring native plants to be included when planning new landscaping inside the Historic District.
 - Preserve Courthouse Square under the plan submitted by the Courthouse Square Advisory Committee and keep the integrity of the initial purpose of the original design's purpose.
 - Implement the One Vision, One Square proposal.

- Gillespie County Historical Society (GCHS) and Pioneer Museum
 - Include the GCHS/Pioneer Museum as a line item in the annual City/County budgets.
 - If there are no substantive plans for the Old Jail, work with the Pioneer Museum to include it in their historic offerings. (See Family Friendly and Safe Environment for additional commentary).
 - Actively market the Museum as the repository of the City’s and County’s historic offerings.
 - Emphasize and leverage the sister-city relationship with Verbands Gemeinde Montabaur, Germany for the purpose of helping to maintain Fredericksburg cultural roots.

- Balance Needs of Residents with Tourism
 - Support the formation of a citizen advocacy group (Gillespie County Citizens Alliance - see Topic 4) to be a voice for residents with an aim for guiding the direction of the City and County that will protect the historic and family environment as well as quality of life for residents, business owners, and visitors. (See following sub-committee for expansion on this topic).
 - Continue to improve website for enhancing communication between the City and County with their residents. Emphasis should be upon “user friendly”.
 - Undertake a major improvement or redevelopment of Lady Bird Johnson Park. Improving the park’s existing fishing holes and other natural habitats, nature trails, and playgrounds that would benefit both residents (children and adults) and tourists.

Topic 2: Family-Friendly and Safe Atmosphere Committee

Vision Statement

Maintain Fredericksburg as the crown jewel of the Texas Hill Country through the preservation of our historic assets, supporting our cultural heritage while maintaining and improving upon Fredericksburg as the most desirable place to live and raise a family. Our mission is to establish a community-based culture of continuous improvement and accountability for the quality of life for current and future residents that keeps pace with the growth and prosperity of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County.

Recommendations

The recommendations ensure that the following important issues and recommendations are properly identified, communicated and emphasized for the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County action.

- City Council and County Commissioners Court should ensure that all law enforcement units are adequately staffed, trained, and equipped in order to assure that all laws and ordinances are enforced. This committee’s recommendation is to evaluate our City’s service agencies to ensure that we are meeting today’s requirements while planning and investing for the next 20 years.
- Consistently enforce driving laws for both automobile and bicycle traffic.
- Clearly mark school zones and crossing zones for all school areas. Properly equip each crossing with pedestrian flow lights/indicators (e.g., add signs and flashing lights to mark school zones).
- City of Fredericksburg, Gillespie County, and TxDOT to conduct a traffic flow assessment to include peak times to better recommend additional lanes, infrastructure, etc., to optimize traffic flow and ensure residential safety (e.g., right turns on red prohibited at all intersections on or crossing Main Street; “No Parking” signs erected; and curbs painted red on narrow streets).
- Synchronize traffic lights to support increase of traffic flow into and through Fredericksburg at a safe speed.
- Consistently enforce parking ordinances to include those prohibiting parking for more than 24 hours for commercial vehicles and RVs.
- Ensure both residents and tourists comply with current city and state laws and ordinances regarding pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
- Develop and train a team of volunteers to assist with enforcement, especially during large events and peak hours. These would be “eyes for the police”.
- Ensure future municipal laws and ordinances, establish hike and bike trails in parks, tributaries and other paths, which will avoid impeding vehicular traffic in and through the City and County.
- Ensure the proper training of law enforcement personnel on conducting noise measurements and code enforcement.
- Establish a clear line of responsibility for compliance with existing ordinances.

- Review current International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) regulations for possible modification and enforcement, and for future developments, to ensure “*dark-skies*” goals.
- Communicate to all residents and builders the current code requirements for residential and commercial exterior lights to support the current light ordinance.
- Establish criteria to provide guidelines for winery/brewery/distillery applications in City/County to be reviewed, permitted and approved for business operations.
- Limit the number of TABC permits issued on Main Street, excluding restaurants.

Topic 3: Parks and Playgrounds

It is recommended that we work to improve and maintain parks and playgrounds within Fredericksburg/Gillespie County. The goal is to ensure that Fredericksburg and Gillespie County are proactively looking at our residential growth and planning for adding and maintaining parks and playgrounds to meet the growing needs of our residents and tourists. Funding should be sought from the federal, state, corporate, private funding, and grants as well as civic volunteer groups to support the initiatives listed below. Parks and playgrounds should receive adequate planning and appropriate funding to keep up with the anticipated growth of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County.

Recommendations

- Conduct a bi-annual review of the Parks Master Plan. The goal is to invest in additional recreational facilities based upon the needs of the residents of Fredericksburg.
- Review and apply for federal and state grants that may apply to minority populations that reside within Fredericksburg.
- Develop hike and bike trails in existing and future city parks as well as in future residential developments. Ensure to establish and maintain these trails away from vehicular traffic thoroughfares and private properties (e.g., Ft. Martin Scott; Frieden Development).
- Investigate setting up a commercial hike and bike rental facility in existing parks as a source of revenue for Fredericksburg.
- Encourage the CVB to advertise park activities to attract tourists as well as residents.

Topic 4: Organize a Residents Group to Ensure a Healthy Residential Experience

Background

There is a need for a privately funded volunteer citizens advocacy group to interface directly with City and County elected officials. The stated goal of this group would be to maintain a direct line of communication and to provide a voice for the community that would address key issues impacting the quality of life of residents.

In addition, increasing the existing pool of volunteers for Fredericksburg and Gillespie County is necessary to help support the large population swings that we experience during peak times.

Fredericksburg and Gillespie County house a tremendous talent pool of residents. These residents could provide the volunteer staffing necessary to support our tourist experience and to act as a bridge to our public safety agencies.

Recommendations

- Residents to organize and self-fund a resident's advocacy group for development and prioritization of key issues affecting the residents of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County. This group would be self-governing and would act in the best and broadest interests of this community and county.
- Encourage privately organized group(s) of residents as volunteers to support Gillespie County and Fredericksburg law enforcement.

Topic 5: Monitor and Manage Growth Fredericksburg/Gillespie County

Background

Fredericksburg's growth over the past 20 years has created both new opportunities and new challenges to be addressed. As part of this initiative, we encourage the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County officials to develop relationships with other towns/counties with similar tourism and hospitality mix, with a goal to share and learn best practices and to manage and ensure responsible future growth and expansion of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County.

Provide oversight and monitoring of the hospitality industry, in order to maintain a proper balance of the needs of our residential community with our tourists' needs.

The growth of local establishments that serve alcohol has been significant in the past 10 years. We must ensure that our citizens and tourists responsibly enjoy alcoholic beverages, without our town declining into the excesses that have occurred in other destination cities.

Creative efforts should be initiated that focus on tourism opportunities during the weekdays and slower periods.

Recommendations

- For all current and future development, clarify zoning definitions and enforce zoning; communicate clearly to all realtors, builders, and citizens.
- Enforce and monitor the recently passed STR/Article V Ordinance.
- Establish a monitoring program to include city employees and encourage citizens to help police neighborhoods, to aid enforcement of STR regulations.
- Establish guidelines for an “Interview Process,” to educate prospective buyers on City STR ordinances. The City must communicate with all local real estate brokers to require their support and compliance with Article V in dealing with all prospective buyers. Realtors should provide prospective buyers the information necessary to make an educated decision before investing in STR property in the City of Fredericksburg or in Gillespie County.
- Monitor data for the number of actual STRs, permits being submitted, and actual HOT funds being generated.
- Monitor STR permit revenue to ensure that it covers all costs associated with the city’s code enforcement efforts and that STRs are paying annually the necessary fees.
- Monitor and manage the number of wineries, breweries, distilleries, and tasting rooms for the following reasons:
 - To protect water resources both for now and the future, by managing usage during the production and manufacturing processes.
 - To ensure the viability of vineyards and wineries to help maintain the preservation of the agriculture industry in Gillespie County.
 - To ensure that Fredericksburg and Gillespie County are cultural and historic destinations, not a destination for excessive drinking.
 - To ensure smooth traffic flow into and through Gillespie County and Fredericksburg, to prevent traffic congestion and to promote safe travel.
 - Review the lack of an open container ordinance to address public drinking.

Topic 6: Promote Fredericksburg/Gillespie County as a Historic, Cultural, Outdoors, and Family Destination

Background

What makes Fredericksburg and Gillespie County unique is that we have maintained a great number of our historic buildings and traditions, effectively establishing Fredericksburg and Gillespie County as the crown jewel of the Hill Country. The responsibility is ours to continue to preserve our culture, our history, our land, our water and our charm for future generations. Our agricultural lands are as much a part of our heritage as our buildings. These lands need our protection and preservation from nonagricultural development.

Fredericksburg and Gillespie County are unique in that they generate a significant amount of hotel occupancy tax (HOT). These funds are significant to the City and County's tax income. Consequently, these funds should be used in the most effective manner for the encouragement of tourism and the attraction of diverse demographic economic groups while maintaining a high level of accountability and transparency. Consideration of how HOT fund disbursements impact the quality of life of residents should be kept at the forefront.

Recommendations

Considering the above and looking forward to the next two decades, it is recommended that the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County consider modifying the present distribution of the received HOT funds on a needs/request basis that is in compliance with State law.

- It is recommended that all organizations as well as City or County departments that are legally qualified to receive HOT funds be required to present a detailed budget for the expenditures of all HOT funds being requested.
- All requesting entities be required to maintain records of all expenditures allowed under the law for review and audit.
- City and County should consider HOT funds for creative and wise uses that will promote increased quality tourism while protecting the fragile quality of life of residents.
- Consider the creation of new venues that would bring in different tourist demographics focusing on those that are not presently visiting the area.
- City and County should consider approaching the legislature as other municipalities have to receive permission to use HOT funds in ways that may be considered questionable under the existing law if it becomes necessary.

- We encourage the creative use of HOT funds that include preservation of historic buildings and new attractions that will positively impact the tourism industry.
- We encourage the development of events that honor our culture and heritage.

Topic 7: Improvement and Preservation of Historic and Public Facilities

Background:

As stated in Topic 6, this committee recommends that we provide HOT funding along with any available federal, state, corporate and private funding for the preservation and improvement of our historic buildings, to enhance our town and to draw additional quality tourism.

Recommendations

Assess and prioritize projects to ensure the preservation of the following historical properties including:

- Work to preserve the Old Jail and investigate it as a revenue generating resource. (i.e. a museum of Gillespie County's Peach and Wine History.).
- Preserve and remodel the Gillespie County Courthouse, making it a productive community focal point, rather than building a new facility with a parking garage. Leverage any existing state funding to help accomplish this renovation.
- Preserve the S. Nimitz Parkway located behind the courthouse, library, etc., along with the green area and bandstand.
- Investigate using the law enforcement pad or old Fredericksburg Clinic building as a potential build site for the proposed new courtrooms.
- Preserve and restore the Old Post Office as the Gillespie County Arts & Cultural Center.
- Maintain the historic elements of the library building while modernizing services for the residents and tourists for Gillespie County.
- Preserve the Gillespie County Fairgrounds. Add heating and air conditioning to some buildings that are used during hot or cold times of the year.
- Promote and advance the Guardians of the Legacy, through the Historical Society and the Pioneer Museum, to drive residents' participation with a focus on history-based projects.

- Continue to preserve the Ft. Martin Scott property, and expand the existing parks' facilities as outlined in Hike & Bike Trails Study.

Topic 8: City and County Emergency Preparedness - All Possibilities including Large Events

Background

Fredericksburg and Gillespie County continue to grow and draw ever-increasing numbers of tourists and residents to local and regional organized events. It is recommended that the City and County control the permits and therefore the timing of these events to ensure that our public services can be properly staffed and are not overwhelmed.

Our current response capabilities are dictated by our current state of readiness. The 175th Anniversary Celebration of Fredericksburg and upcoming eclipse are in the near future and will present drastic increased demands upon our resources.

Recommendations

- Enforce laws and ordinances requiring permits to coordinate and control large events within Fredericksburg and Gillespie County.
- Ensure proper traffic controls are in place, as well as proper scheduling of necessary resources to support those events.
- Each permitted organization should provide the additional funding necessary to ensure that adequate staffing for required Police/Fire/EMS services is available to support permitted events.
- Ensure that support is provided to Police/Fire/EMS agencies to fill all vacant job requisitions. Look at development of long-term retention incentives (monetary and non-monetary) as a means of retaining staff.
- Modernize and explore synergies to create a radio communication system for the City of Fredericksburg that works across all first responder departments.
- The City and the County should make an effort to ensure that the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County are able to share a common radio infrastructure platform that will support all public service demands. This would reduce costs for both City and County as well as ensure interoperability.

- Evaluate the need for a City-wide emergency storm warning system. The City and County currently do not have an emergency storm warning system to alert residents/tourists of impending tornado and other severe weather-related issues.
- State law requires more storage capacity for our law enforcement departments to properly archive incident videos as captured by police vehicle and body camera systems. Adequate storage needs should be addressed.

Topic 9: Promote and support local arts

Vision Statement

Fredericksburg will be recognized as a premiere Arts destination in Texas, encompassing visual, music, and performing arts.

Background

Various initiatives will serve to cultivate, promote, and develop a viable, integrated, and art form-balanced arts industry in our community. As such, they will attract, reflect, elevate, and more broadly share our culture, values, and history through the Arts.

Recommendations

Initiatives recommended for expanding this economic sector include establishing an “Art Zone” within the City’s Historic District to concentrate art activity, development of a public arts program, unique festivals, and an integrated means to organize, manage, reinforce, and communicate the area’s strength as *a Great Arts Destination*. This “Art Zone” would also support the acceptance of grants from federal, state, and charitable organizations. Specific recommendations include:

- Create a dominantly Art-Centric Zone. Create and implement a long-range strategy to evolve an area(s) in the Historic District of the community into an Arts-centric zone to include music, restaurants, art galleries, and similar forms of art.
- Establish a Public Art Foundation and Program. Establish an entity for the development and implementation of a comprehensive Public Art Program.
 - Focus on local history, architecture, and culture.
 - Include a foundation or similar funding mechanism for public/private matching.
 - Develop criteria and a strategy for types of art and locations across the community or county.
 - Relocate existing public art to more visible (e.g. Marktplatz Treaty Sculpture).
 - Integrate the public arts program into destination marketing efforts.

- Establish a robust and comprehensive arts-related advocacy organization. Establish a joint-participation entity for the purpose of synergistically sharing and integrating the various efforts and goals of existing arts-related organizations. Such an entity can be a stand-alone organization or part of an existing organization, such as the Chamber of Commerce.
- Create a public art program for enhancement of public owned properties.
- Involve youth artists – mentor and youth working together.
- Identify locations and property for Pop Up Art.
- Leverage our theater and local musicians to explore “flash” events to create a unique Fredericksburg experience. (YouTube Video – Amsterdam Rembrandt Painting).
- Spontaneous Art Canvas.
- Create Fredericksburg historic statues (benches/free standing) to create points of interest along Main St.

Topic 10: Enhance communication between the City, County, and the Public

Background

The City of Fredericksburg, Gillespie County, and the public will only be able to make successful decisions for the community if communication efforts are successful as well.

Recommendations

- Encourage citizens and youth to sign up for notification for events and meetings through City website (www.fbgtx.org).
- Explore current website for expanded offerings for notifications and event promotions.
- Create an emergency notification system for smart phones.
- Educate and market the existing Fredericksburg Law Enforcement number to allow easy non-emergency communication between the Public and the City. (830-997-7585)
- Include automated phone system to provide information on local events and key points of contacts and city and county services.

Topic 11: Plan for mental health needs of growing community

Background

As our community and surrounding communities grow, we will see more need for mental health support.

Recommendations

- Develop and advertise a Family Crisis Hot Line.
- Women and Children’s shelter – a facility is under strong consideration and meetings are already being held.
- Early childcare – an identified issue on several committees – from the mental health perspective issues need to be addressed in the first 5 years of life to prevent larger adult issues that affect an entire community.
- Advanced training for first responders for mental health issues and emergencies.

Topic 12: Support for Youth

Background

To promote, support, encourage, and educate our young people (the hope of tomorrow) and our residents towards intentional community awareness, resulting in the creation of a passionate willingness to invest their time, talent, or treasure towards the ongoing needs of their neighbors, the City of Fredericksburg, and Gillespie County.

Recommendations

- Form a small team of adult volunteers that will be the liaison between teachers and youth to encourage community care and involvement.
- Include them in everything, they are the future of this community!
- Brainstorm with teachers to target particular students who could potentially lead others.
- Have regular meetings with students to gather input, ideas and address concerns.
- Help the youth to see how they can get involved and that their voices are important to this community.

- Continue to foster Fredericksburg and Gillespie County mentoring programs.
- Combine school, FFA and 4H leaders in a council that will develop and present suggestions to the City and County that will address the needs of our youth.

Quality of Life Committee Closing Statement

As we make plans and prepare for the next two decades for our city and county, there are several major issues that will have considerable impact upon our government, quality of life, economics and community morale. These issues cannot be avoided or ignored, to do so would be a disservice to the history of Fredericksburg, present and future residents, as well as the health and future existence of Fredericksburg.

Tourism is an impactful part of Fredericksburg, and it is here to stay and grow. The future will be one that includes a growing tourism industry with all the positive and negatives that this industry brings. Economically, the growth of tourism benefits will depend upon the quality of tourists. Seeking greater numbers of tourists can be detrimental to our economy and our way of life. Targeting a broader demographic that brings and demands quality will, however, be of great value to both. Fredericksburg has a high tourist to resident ratio. We are fortunate to have over 10 million plus residents within three hours' drive of Fredericksburg. Such numbers of tourists could impact the quality of life that the residents enjoy. Therefore, it becomes extremely important that the City and County work together to protect our neighborhoods, byways, transportation, safety, culture and heritage of our community. The coming visitors for our 175th Celebration in 2021 and solar eclipse in 2024 require significant planning, training, and expanded resources.

The growing wine, beer, and distilling industry, like tourism, also presents challenges to the quality of life. In the next two decades, Gillespie County and Fredericksburg may become one of the most visited and celebrated wine, brewing, and distilling regions in the U.S. These trends require proactive planning, ordinance creation, zoning, and infrastructure preparedness. Some of what is needed will require legislative actions (i.e.: agricultural land restrictions, winery licensing, County Commissioners ability to zone). For these reasons, if for no other, the City of Fredericksburg and the County Commissioners Court need to work closely with each other to protect the beauty, history, culture, agricultural lands, and natural resources for the residents of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County.

Summary of Key Visions and Major Recommendations

During the development of the Path to the Future Community Visioning Plan, a large number of visioning statements and recommendations for the future were offered by local residents and citizens who participated on the four Citizen Visioning Committees. The goal of preservation of our quality of life, culture, architecture, and community were present in the recommendations of every committee. Following review of these statements and recommendations, ten key visioning issues were identified as being the most important for our community to address in the future. These were included as high priority issues in the final reports from the Visioning Committees. They include the following:

- **Childcare Services**

Childcare services were identified as a high priority issue by the Business, Family Life and Quality of Life Visioning Committees. In terms of childcare, the long-range vision includes the provision of affordable, safe and high-quality early childhood educational opportunities that will be available to all families so that children in our community will be placed on a path to educational success. This commitment to childcare services will help ensure that parents are able to fully participate in the local workforce.

In addressing this issue major recommendations include the establishment of on-site childcare at major local employers. Additional training and certification of child care workers is also recommended along with a higher level of compensation offered for these workers to reduce turnover. To fund these initiatives, it is recommended that a foundation be created to provide financial support for these programs.

- **Diverse Economy**

The City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County are in an enviable position compared to other communities in that we enjoy a thriving economy, low unemployment levels, a reputation as a tourism destination, and a good quality of life for our citizens.

There is a perception, especially when reviewing State Sales Tax data, that our economy is overly dependent on tourism, which does not generate high paying jobs, and is subject to economic swings. However, following an assessment of a broader data set, State Franchise Reporting data, it was determined that the Fredericksburg and Gillespie County economy is robust, diverse and primarily driven by agribusiness. Tourism and agribusiness are directly and strongly linked; growth in one will spur growth in the other, and vice versa.

Our long-term economic vision is to maintain our successful tourism and wine industries, and already diverse economy, while expanding desirable target industries that create jobs with “living wages.” This can be accomplished by leveraging the underlying strengths of our community and maintaining our unique character. The importance of this focus was emphasized by both the Business and Quality of Life Visioning Committees.

Four interrelated recommendations to realize this vision are (1) to focus economic development investments on target industries that pay higher than “living wages”; (2) implement a formal working group and process to link workforce demand with local workforce development capabilities; (3) reduce barriers to new business creation and existing business growth; and (4) reduce barriers to workforce recruitment and retention.

- **Domestic Violence/Drug and Alcohol Addiction/Mental Health**

Both the Family Life and Quality of Life Visioning Committees identified local problems associated with an increase in domestic violence, drug and alcohol addiction and mental health issues. This vision includes seeking holistic, long-term strategies for identifying and dealing with these “taboo” issues which are affecting our young people and their families. This will require increased efforts in education, treatment and prevention.

Several recommendations were offered to help fulfill this vision including the establishment of a Family Crisis Hot Line, development of a women and children’s shelter and development of a County mental health facility. It was also recommended that a full-time licensed social worker be hired at the High School and advanced training in mental health issues be provided to local first responders.

- **Education/Mentoring/Training/Workforce Development**

The need for better training and education to develop our local workforce to address future employment needs was identified as a high priority issue by the Business, Family Life and Government Visioning Committees. As an additional focus, the Government Committee emphasized the need to have a dynamic and comprehensive educational system that will provide equal opportunities for students from pre-kindergarten through college/university degrees.

In terms of workforce development, one of the key elements identified during the visioning process was to link targeted business workforce requirements to local workforce training opportunities. To accomplish this goal, one of the key recommendations is to establish a formal working group made up of a cross-section of businesses, local schools, Central Texas College and Texas Tech University. This group will create, review and adjust workforce development programs to meet current and future local needs. Specific training needs cited by the Visioning Committees include

expanding the Child Development Associate (CDA) and the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) programs.

Creating the premier educational system in Gillespie County is an important and challenging focus that will take extensive involvement of parents, teachers and the public in local educational programs. This will include the development of innovative academic programs which feature student centered learning and problem-based learning models such as the Systems Go engineering program. It is also recommended that we support the phased development of first-class educational facilities as the projects detailed in the new University Center Master Plan

- **Healthcare/Hill Country Memorial Hospital**

During the visioning process the Hill Country Memorial Hospital, and other associated medical facilities, were identified as one of the most important community assets that need to be maintained and expanded in the future. The Hospital is a major draw to the City of Fredericksburg and has a significant impact on both the quality of life and family life in our community. The Hospital is also the largest local employer and offers “living wage” jobs that are needed in the community. The future vision calls for protecting this asset as it expands to serve a growing population with needed medical services.

Recommendations that will help support this vision include additional community support for the Hospital Foundation so that funding can be provided for needed medical equipment. Expansion of local nursing programs and assistance in the recruitment of other medical personnel are additional recommendations.

- **Housing**

The development of additional housing that will support our expanding workforce continues to be one of the biggest issues facing the City of Fredericksburg and Gillespie County. Both the Business and Family Life Vision Committees discussed this issue and identified it as a major priority to be addressed for continued community growth and expansion of our economy. In discussing this issue, it was agreed that this is a problem that exists due to numerous factors including the high price of land, high construction costs and zoning issues. And it was agreed that all types of affordable housing are needed including owner-occupied housing, apartments and student housing.

It is recommended that we explore different options to address this problem including changes in zoning regulations, creation of a land trust, use of employer subsidies and use local investor funds. It is also recommended that a Housing Ombudsman be funded and hired to work closely with local developers and builders, as well as local government agencies, to address issues that impact the

construction of affordable housing. Other recommendations include annexation of land for affordable housing development and allowing more manufactured housing throughout the City and County.

- **Infrastructure-Transportation, IT Broadband, Recycling, Trails, Water**

The improved maintenance and expansion of local infrastructure was identified as a major priority by the Business, Government and Quality of Life Visioning Committees. Specific infrastructure was emphasized for improvement include transportation, broadband services, recycling programs, trails system and water resources. These improvements will help serve the existing residents and facilitate additional growth.

Numerous recommendations were provided for each of the different types of infrastructure that needs improvement. This includes implementation of a workforce transportation system, improvements to the local roadway system including construction of a Relief Route and downtown parking improvements. Improvements to broadband services was identified as a critical need for residents, businesses, and visitors. Expansion of both the parks system and recycling programs are additional recommendations for future action.

- **Market Square/Main Street**

The Market Square and Main Street areas were also identified as major community assets that need to be protected and improved in the future. Both the Government and Quality of Life Visioning Committees created visions to address this goal. These visions focus on maintaining the historic feel of Main Street and the 20 acres set aside by the founders of Fredericksburg for green space and community functions. The One Square-One Vision concept was also supported by these Committees.

Recommendation related to this vision include the need for the County to involve a broad sector of the community in its long-range development plans for the Courthouse Square. A number of advantages and disadvantages related to the development of this site for a County Administration Building and parking deck were identified that need consideration. Redevelopment options for Main Street also need to be identified and discussed by the community when the Relief Route is constructed in the future.

- **Tourism**

The Business, Quality of Life and Government Visioning Committees highlighted the continued importance of tourism to the future economy of Gillespie County. The vision includes the City partnering with other organizations and stakeholder groups to further enhance the reputation of the

Texas Hill Country as a major tourism destination. It also includes increasing efforts to establish this area as a family destination.

To accomplish this vision, it is recognized that we will need to leverage our tourism strengths including our wineries, agritourism, museums, culinary businesses and history/culture. It will also be important to balance tourism with the needs of our local residents to ensure that the excellent family lifestyle and quality of life we all enjoy continues in the future.

One of the key recommendations is that we focus on recruitment of small to medium-sized tourism businesses with fewer employment needs and low net water consumption. Also, the community should take additional steps to protect our historic assets and expand cultural opportunities. Other recommendations include reviewing the distribution of HOT funds to ensure that these funds provide maximum benefit to the community. And it is important that infrastructure be developed and properly maintained in the future to support tourism as part of our economic development program.

- **Wineries**

The future development of wineries, wine tasting rooms, breweries and distilleries was identified as a high priority issue by the Business and Quality of Life Visioning Committees. It was recognized by these Committees that these types of businesses generally have a major positive impact on our local economy. The long-range vision focused on the unique opportunity that Fredericksburg and Gillespie County have to become both the winery and culinary center of Texas.

It was also noted that the numbers of wineries and other similar businesses has increased significantly over the past 10 years and this growth is expected to continue in the future. Therefore, citizen concerns focused on ways to plan and manage this growth both in the County and within the downtown area. The goal in addressing these concerns is to accomplish the long-range vision of growing this economic sector while protecting the quality of life in both the City and County.

Some of the specific suggestions for realizing this vision include the development of the Texas Center for Wine and Culinary Arts at the University Center Campus. It is also recommended that efforts continue in making improvements in the quality of wine produced in this area. Several recommendations were made on the need to control the numbers of wine tasting rooms in the downtown area. Decreased speed limits on Highway 290E and increased State and County traffic enforcement in this area are also recommended. It is also recommended that legislative action be pursued to help the County with planning and managing the growth of wineries in the unincorporated areas.

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Initiative #1 – Enforcement of all laws and city ordinances:

- Sound / Noise Ordinance
- Dark-Skies movement – Hill Country Alliance: hillcountryalliance.org & hillcountryskies.com
- International Dark-Sky Association (IDA): darksky.org

Initiative #2 – Work to improve and maintain parks and playgrounds.

- City Parks Master Plan
- Ft. Martin Scott Hike & Bike Trails Study

Initiative #3 – Organize a resident’s group to liaison to support public safety:

- Property Owners Who Care: www.powc-spi.org 956.346.4431

Initiative #4 – Monitor and control the growth of Short-Term Rentals (STRs) and wineries, breweries, and distilleries.

- Chapter 23 – Planning – Article V Short Term Rentals
- Peter Greenberg, 02/16/2018: *When A Destination Is Too Popular: The Problem With ‘Overtourism’*

Initiative #5 – Promote Fredericksburg/Gillespie County as a Historical, Cultural, Outdoors, and Family Destination

- Texas Hill Country Trail Passport: <http://txhillcountrypassport.com>
- Fredericksburg Fly Fishers: fredericksburgflyfishers.com

Initiative #6 – Improve and preserve historic public facilities.

Initiative #7 – Large event control

Initiative #8 – Mass incident active shooter next generation procedures:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Columbine_High_School_massacre
- <https://www.newstimes.com/policereports/article/FBI-releases-Sandy-Hook-files-12302085.php>
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P16/20 Concept Blinn College: <https://www.blinn.edu/p16/index.htm>

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Transportation Resource Material:

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<http://ridethevine.com/yountville-trolley>

<http://ridethevine.com/vine>

<http://www.ridemcat.org/agency-information/>

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants/grant-making-agencies/department-of-transportation.html>

<http://fbgtx.org/744/Relief-Route-Task-Force>

Waterways Resource Material:

“Arundo donax in the Pedernales River Watershed”, power point Hill Country Alliance & the Nature Conservancy

Fighting Aquatic Invaders, Healthy Creeks Initiative & Arundo Control, TX Parks & Wildlife, <http://tpwd.texas.gov/healthycreeks>

[Healthy Creeks Initiative – Spring 2018 Progress Update, Fredericksburg, Blanco and Wimberley Area Maps](#) <https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/water/aquatic-invasives/healthy-creeks-map-page.phtml>

Baron’s Creek Parcels Map

Monica E. McGarrity, Aquatic Invasive Species Team Leader, Inland Fisheries Division, Habitat Conservation Branch, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Rd., Austin, Texas 78744, Office: 512.389.8292, Cell: 512.552.3465, Fax: 512.389.4405, monica.mcgarrity@tpwd.texas.gov

“Leadership Gillespie County 2015, Class Project, Frantzen Park Revitalization” power point Fighting Aquatic Invaders, Lessons from Arundo Control Man

<https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/water/aquatic-invasives/arundo-control-man.phtml>

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Fort Martin Scott Proposed Hike & Bike Trail Study