



COMMUNITY-BASED STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR THE CITY OF BAYTOWN

DECEMBER 2016

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Message from the Mayor



I take great pleasure in presenting to you our city's 5-year community-based vision and strategic plan. Many hours have been invested in its creation, most of which were offered by volunteer citizens with a desire to contribute to the future of our community.

In looking to the creation of this plan, we were careful to set up a process that would be driven by citizens, rather than elected officials or city staff. I'd like to personally thank the members of our strategic planning advisory committee. They gathered citizen surveys and planned meetings where residents could share their thoughts on the future of our community and where we need to focus our efforts as a city. Citizens from all areas of the city collectively contributed thousands of hours to the creation of this plan.

We have been truly overwhelmed by the response. The committee reviewed information from thousands of written responses and evaluated feedback from hundreds of residents that participated in-person through community dialogue sessions. Thank you to those that took this opportunity to share your thoughts!

I expect this plan to serve as a guide for city staff and elected officials over the coming years as we make decisions about how to best allocate the resources entrusted to us by our citizens. It will guide us in determining where to focus our efforts as a city and form the basis of our annual budgeting process.

We are committed to using the resources we have in ways that advance the priorities identified in the document that follows. Imagine the future we can create if we unite our efforts in advancing those things that our citizens have identified as most important! I look forward to joining with you in building that future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Carlos'.

Mayor DonCarlos

Meet Baytown



Nestled within the largest bay on the coast of Texas, Baytown is a large and diverse city. Baytown was settled in approximately 1822, and has played a significant part in historical events ever since, such as the Texas Revolutionary War. Prominent Texas figures such as Ashbel Smith, David Burnet, and Sam Houston all owned property within Baytown's borders, and even the ferry crossing between the San Jacinto River and Buffalo Bayou, set up by early-resident Nathaniel Lynch, is still in operation today.

In 1910, an unexpected oil boom promoted the rapid growth of Baytown, catapulting it into the spotlight of success, and eventually helping to form Baytown's community into one centered on industry, including oil, rubber, and chemical plants. Such business continues to thrive here with major corporations investing billions just in the past few years.

Today, Baytown maintains its important place nearby the largest city in Texas while retaining the neighborly feeling of a small bayside town—a remarkable feat for such a wide-spread town. Resting along Interstate 10 and State Highway 146 and roughly 30 miles outside of Houston, Baytown's entire west edge is bordered by the Gulf waters feeding in from Trinity Bay, making its convenient and cozy location one of the best-kept secrets. The town square with its outdoor ice rink, the Nature Center, Wetlands Center, and the Pirate's Bay Water Park all help to make Baytown a more modern attraction to today's visitors. But by far, the main reason for Baytown's continued success is its dedicated community. The people here care about the city's well-being and image, and want Baytown to be seen in the way they see it—a fascinating place full of history, small and comfortable, friendly and accommodating—but most of all, home.



Baytown's Strategic Plan

The central purpose in this undertaking was to provide Baytown with a tool that can be used by elected officials and city staff to guide goal setting and focus efforts on those things that residents have identified as their highest priorities. In order to truly be effective, this plan needs to become part of how elected officials and city staff operate and think about programs and services. Ultimately, it needs to be incorporated into how we measure success. No matter how comprehensive this plan is, the test of its usefulness will be defined by how effective it is in guiding decisions and creating the future to which citizens aspire.

The Methodologies

The City Council commissioned a group of citizens to serve on the City's Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC). The purpose of this committee was to gather data from the citizenry and synthesize that information into a set of recommended strategic directives.

The methodologies utilized by the SPAC included the following:

- Stakeholder focus group meetings
- Citizen surveys
- Business meetings

In all, the committee was able to gather almost 4,000 responses through a citizen survey and synthesize them into clear priorities. Over 250 individuals participated in the various stakeholder meetings and community dialogue sessions. The advisory committee conducted one dialogue session in each council district along with several other sessions with stakeholder groups in the community. Participants in the process were also able to provide the SPAC with information related to key initiatives and improvements they would like to see implemented.

Below are some quotes and a word cloud gathered from the citizen surveys:

"I love Baytown and it has so much potential! I would love to see it grow!"

"I can see the difference that has been made, in appearance and in the community, in just over the past couple of years, and I love it! Keep doing what you're doing!"

Raised Grown Lee College Education Location
Fishing Improving Clean Parks Police
Houston Close to Work Live
Dining Options Baytown Housing
Family Library Shopping Convenience
Small Town Variety Proximity Businesses Mall
Look School



Baytown's Strategic Plan

Explanation and Definition of Key Strategic Plan Elements

In the process of examining this strategic plan, the reader will encounter various terms and phrases associated with key elements of the plan. It is important that we place an understanding of the strategic plan within the context of what these elements are intended to contribute.

Primary Directive

This is a statement that clearly describes the city's rationale for existing. It is the product of what we in Baytown are passionate about, where our competencies lie, and what we believe provides the means to realize our community vision. The Primary Directive represents the highest level directive, serving as the hub of the plan to which all other strategic directives are attached.

Strategic Directives

This plan contains five strategic directives. A strategic directive is a very high level priority that is articulated in a way that effectively describes a community priority. Such is not intended to describe specific initiatives, ideas, programs, or services. It merely captures in a very general way what citizens believe is most important in their community.

Strategic Initiative

Each strategic directive is accompanied by a number of strategic initiatives which assist in bringing the directive to the level of application. In other words, strategic initiatives are more specific actions, programs, and ideas designed to bring about the realization of the strategic directives. A directive is a destination and the initiatives represent the directions that will enable us to arrive at our destination.



The Primary Directive of Baytown

The primary purpose of government is to provide the basis or foundation for civilized living. While this concept may appear elementary and more than intuitive, much debate in recent years has swirled around the role of government. It is therefore critical that, before presenting the community strategic direction, the City define its role in the lives of its citizens. We do this by formulating and articulating the Primary Directive of Baytown.

This is the essence and reason sustaining the existence of the City of Baytown. It lies at the intersection of three things.

- 1) What city leaders and staff have a deep passion for – Why do we come to work every day? What motivates us? Why do we care about what happens in Baytown?
- 2) What we believe the city can do well or even better than any other city – Are we uniquely positioned to do something extraordinary? What are we equipped to accomplish? This is a question of not only what we can do, but what we can do better than others.
- 3) What drives the city's resource engine – What is it that needs to happen in order to empower us to realize this primary directive?

In Baytown, our Primary Directive is

“Build upon Baytown’s rich history, sense of community, and bayside location to fuel economic vitality while creating the opportunity for all residents to enjoy an exceptional quality of life.”

What are we deeply passionate about?

In Baytown, we have a passion for elevating and sustaining quality-of-life. We understand completely the sacred trust that is ours; to maximize our citizens' investment by supporting those programs, initiatives, and ideas that will translate into an opportunity for them to live an exceptional quality of life. We believe that our passionate commitment to our community vision and values, combined with careful planning and purposeful follow-through, will translate into every resident's opportunity for a better life.



The Primary Directive of Baytown

What can we be the best in the world at?

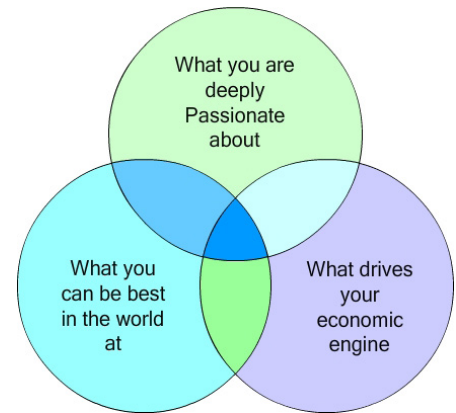
With our coastal location and proximity to the fourth largest city in the country, Baytown is uniquely positioned to build a community with a vibrant economy that enables a truly excellent quality of life for our residents. Industry here is vibrant and growing and offers excellent employment opportunities. Quite simply, there are few places in the world with this kind of broad-based economic vitality.

What drives our economic, or in the public sector, our resource engine?

We believe that as we are able to lift our citizens' quality-of-life, we will have demonstrated our competency and trustworthiness. Citizen trust, meanwhile, is generated at the intersection of competency and trustworthiness. As our citizens' trust increases, they are more likely to continue to invest in the services that we provide. As they do so, we are empowered to continue lifting our level of service, which results in greater trust, and so the process repeats itself. Public trust drives Baytown's resource engine.

All programs, initiatives, and energy must therefore be focused on achieving the Primary Directive. All metrics and outcomes should support this Primary Directive. The strategic plan's role in fulfilling the Primary Directive begins by defining what citizens believe is essential to quality of life. As a precursor to developing the strategic plan, the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee was able to identify five factors that citizens believe define quality of life in Baytown. These are:

1. Community Reputation & Image
2. Infrastructure & Mobility
3. Community Amenities
4. Neighborhood Quality
5. Operational Excellence



Strategic Directive 1

Community Reputation & Image



“I want to be a part of a community where I’m proud to tell people where I’m from.”

Due to the substantial investments made by big industry and because Baytown has played a central role in the Texas oil boom, our community acquired a reputation as an industrial town with some of the negative connotations that flow from that image. We are proud of the growth of industry in our city and want to do a better job of telling our story. This growth has created excellent, high-paying jobs and provides a stable base of resources for city services. Baytown has a unique opportunity to provide beautiful landscapes with its proximity to the coast. It is imperative that we hold ourselves to high standards of property maintenance and implement land use planning and construction standards that are consistent with the appealing image we hope to reinforce.

Key Initiatives:

- Dedicated branding and public relations campaign in partnership with GCCISD and Lee College
- Review, update, and enforce city ordinances for cleanliness and property upkeep
- Employ initiatives to clean up the city and remove trash and junk
- Employ policies and initiatives to preserve and maintain green space and open space where appropriate and practicable
- Beautification of major commercial corridors (burying electrical transmission lines, curb, gutter, and sidewalk, etc.)
- Proactive code enforcement

What Does Success Look Like?

- Recruitment of higher-end retail establishments improves
- More individuals that work in Baytown also live here
- Improvements in brand and reputation observed through annual citizen survey and surveys of non-residents
- Decreasing crime rates
- Use of City resources to measurably reduce litter

Strategic Directive 2

Infrastructure & Mobility



“I want to live in a community where I can get where I need to go by car or on foot in a safe, efficient manner.”

With the growth experienced in our community and expectations for future growth, it is critical that we focus on core infrastructure to support that growth. This will require long-range planning for major road projects as well as care exercised in how we plan for and manage the growth that is coming. Roads and traffic mitigation are important, but so are pedestrian walkways as many areas of the city do not have adequate sidewalks for pedestrian access.

Key Initiatives:

- Create and implement a traffic flow plan that includes evaluation of traffic impacts in planning for new land development
- Prioritize traffic reduction measures on major roadways
- Develop and execute a plan for developing sidewalks in areas where they are absent beginning with major arterial roads and then moving to collectors and neighborhoods
- Create and fund a 5-year capital improvement plan

What Does Success Look Like?

- Improving or stable drive times on major roadways (Garth Road, N. Main, SH146)
- Increases in pedestrian usage of sidewalks and trails
- Increased percentage of signalized roadway intersections in Baytown with pedestrian crossings
- Linear feet of new sidewalk constructed
- Pavement Condition Index score

Strategic Directive 3

Community Amenities



“I want to live in a place where I can live, work, and play without the need to leave the city limits.”

To enhance the quality of life available to our residents, it is vital that we focus on cultivating opportunities to recreate and make memories in Baytown. This comes with the added benefit of enhancing our reputation with visitors. It will also foster the special sense of community that has developed in our city over many years. Creating attractions that allow our citizens to enjoy the city they live in and that encourage others to visit Baytown will provide a solid foundation for economic growth and enhance the image of our city.

Key Initiatives:

- Prioritize development and revitalization of older commercial areas of Baytown
- Recruitment of higher-end dining establishments and indoor family entertainment venues
- Facilitate the development of a convention center
- Create and execute waterfront development and usage plan

What Does Success Look Like?

- Development activity in the Arts, Culture and Entertainment (ACE) District and the Revitalization Incentive Zone
- Increasing sales tax base
- Development of new dining and entertainment options throughout the city
- High close rate on EDF opportunities

Strategic Directive 4

Neighborhood Quality



“I want to live in a neighborhood that looks and feels like home.”

With the availability of open land and our close proximity to Houston and two major airports, we will see significant residential development in the coming years. This offers an opportunity for us to prepare for that development in a way that establishes a high standard of quality for our neighborhoods. This includes things like sidewalks, street widths, setbacks and construction standards. For existing neighborhoods, it will include things like code enforcement.

Key Initiatives:

- Review planning, zoning and construction standards to ensure adequate street widths, setbacks, and other aesthetic elements that impact the overall look and feel of our neighborhoods.
- Where practical to do so, develop sidewalks in residential neighborhoods where they are currently incomplete or absent.
- Focus on neighborhood beautification through strict code enforcement in residential areas
- Prioritize revitalization of older residential areas by leveraging neighborhood associations and other community groups
- Positive police presence in “hot spot” crime areas
- Build partnerships with the County, the United Way and other community groups to address homelessness and mental illness

What Does Success Look Like?

- Increases in residential property values throughout the city
- Clean, well-kept residential neighborhoods
- Aesthetically appealing new residential development
- Increasing levels of compliance with city codes
- Lower crime rates
- Reduced rates of homelessness

Strategic Directive 5

Operational Excellence



“I want to have confidence that city staff and elected officials are good stewards of the resources entrusted to them and that everyone at the City takes pride in the excellent service they provide to the community.”

In order for this plan to be successfully implemented and our citizens’ directives achieved, public trust in our City government is critical. Building trust with the public should be centered around a culture where City employees treat all associates, citizens and stakeholders with respect, appreciation and value. Trustworthiness should also be demonstrated by an organization that competently and honestly manages citizen resources and strives for excellence through continuous improvement, personal integrity in all situations, and organizational transparency.

Key Initiatives:

- Ensure interaction with the City is a positive experience by continually monitoring and improving services provided to residents and other customers
- Foster public trust through open communication and reporting key performance data
- Ensure long-term master plans are in place so that short-term goals don’t impede the City’s success in the future
- Develop high performance work teams that are engaged, well trained, and empowered to provide the highest levels of service
- Continuously improve by implementing innovative practices and process improvement efforts throughout the organization

What Does Success Look Like?

- Improvements in citizen survey scores for the overall quality of city services
- Improvements in citizen survey scores for the value residents receive for their tax dollars and fees
- Improvements in citizen survey scores for the overall quality of customer service provided by City employees
- Improved turnaround times for permits and other interactions with the City
- Improved employee engagement scores

The Strategic Planning Process

The Baytown City Council determined the need to bring focus to spending priorities. Key to this endeavor was the creation of a community strategic plan. The Council determined that such an initiative, if it were to survive and become truly useful to the community, would need to become a community initiative driven by citizens.



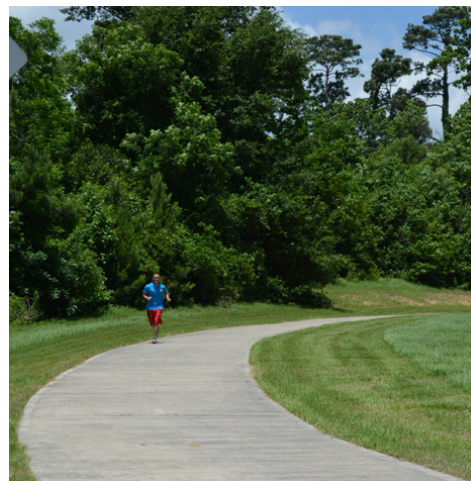
The Mayor and Council therefore commissioned a committee of citizen volunteers, known as the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) to drive the strategic planning process. The strategic planning process began with SPAC meetings with staff and discussions with City Council members in order to define expectations and council member understanding regarding community priorities. These meetings also assisted the committee in identifying critical stakeholder groups that would need to be engaged during the strategic planning process.

Stakeholder meetings were then held with business groups, service clubs, civic and charitable organizations, and a host of others. Surveys were administered on the city website as well as distributed to city email groups, volunteers, and community event attendees. The process of gathering stakeholder input spanned more than four months. At the end of this process, the SPAC began to synthesize the thousands of pieces of information they had gathered from citizens into more specific focus areas, more commonly referred to as “strategic directives.” Ultimately, five strategic directives were produced. The committee, utilizing these community priorities, then produced specific strategic initiatives associated with each focus area. The final plan was adopted by the Council in January of 2017. It will stand as the planning blueprint for the city until 2020.

Implementation of the Plan

Simply having a plan does not ensure its implementation. The city should take specific measures in order to implement this strategic plan and measure progress toward its realization. Specifically, the city should:

- Utilize this plan as the basis for annual strategic planning and goal setting.
- Annually establish and review outcome measures associated with strategic plan directives. Make adjustments as necessary to ensure close correlation between outcome measures and plan directives.
- Create a community scorecard for city and citizen use. This should be in a highly illustrative format, accessible electronically via the city's website. The site should provide data associated with previously identified outcome measures. It is critical that this information is kept as current as possible.
- Annually provide the City Council and departmental decision-makers with a city business plan, which ties Council goals to strategic directives, identifying critical outcomes, measures, objectives, and expected budget impacts.
- Report semi-annually strategic plan implementation progress and impacts.



Special Thanks

The strategic planning process and composition is a broad-based community endeavor. Generally speaking, the broader the base of community participation, the greater the survivability of the plan. In Baytown, this was certainly and fortunately the case. Nevertheless, the city expresses its appreciation to specific individuals and groups that made this initiative possible. Special thanks go to:

- The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (Heather Betancourth, Gary Englert, Brennon Marsh, Bert Marshall, Tina Martinez, Christy Ponce, Mark Stafford, Mike Wilson, and Lena Yopez).
- Dan Griffiths – Tanner LLC, public sector consulting, for the facilitation of the strategic planning process and the production of the strategic plan.
- The Baytown Kiwanis Club, the Baytown Rotary Club, the Baytown Chamber of Commerce, the Pilot Club of Baytown, GIFT, Baytown Non-Profits, and the City of Baytown Employees.
- The Citizens of Baytown, without whose participation this plan would not be possible.

