

# ELGIN MAIN STREET



2017-2019

3- Year Strategic Plan

Prepared by  Opportunity  
Strategies LLC

# Elgin Main Street

## 3- YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

### SUMMARY

On Thursday, February 23, 2017, the Board and Staff of Elgin Main Street met at Eight Point Ranch near Elgin, Texas for an annual planning session consisting of a SWOT Analysis and the design of a new 3-year Strategic Plan.

Alysia Cook of Opportunity Strategies LLC provided the facilitation and planning services. Prior to the planning workshop, the facilitator visited with Amy Miller, Community Development Director, Board Chair Ed Rivers, and board member Renee Girling to develop the agenda.

The following are the results of the Elgin Main Street Strategic Planning Workshop.

### PARTICIPANTS

- Ed Rivers
- Jamie Hausladen
- Allan Tolbert
- Stacey Wilhite
- Theresa McShan
- Renee Girling
- Dorothy McCarther
- Owen Rock, Elgin Economic Development Corporation
- Gena Carter, Elgin Chamber of Commerce President
- Amy Miller, Community Development Director

## EXPECTATIONS

The facilitator asked the participants to share their expectations for the day so that she could build in any additional topics and discussions that weren't already planned. Their answers were as follows. Items marked with a check mark were determined by the group in the closing moments to be adequately achieved; items with a ★ mark indicate that further discussion is needed. The board agreed to add the one unfinished item to the next board meeting agenda as an item for discussion.

- ✓ 3-yr Strategic Plan that is "out of the box"
- ✓ Bring downtown alive
- ✓ Bring families downtown
- ✓ Build good rapport with downtown businesses/visit them
- ✓ Help downtown businesses work together better
- ✓ Downtown Connection-improve
- ✓ What are the businesses asking for?
- ✓ Promotion/Marketing downtown
- ✓ Build on opportunities
- ✓ Forward thinking/future focused
- ✓ Cross promotion among merchants
- ✓ Improved communications
- ★ Building safety/City ordinances
- ✓ Unity/working together

## SWOT

The facilitator distributed the results of the anonymous and aggregated pre-work that was requested and asked for additional entries to the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats facing the Elgin Main Street organization. The following are their combined responses.

### Strengths

- Most of the buildings are strong and can be reconstructed instead of removed completely
- Main Street has a small hometown feel
- Great volunteers
- Excellent city staff leadership
- Annual event
- Main Street lends a great deal of potential growth and development
- Active & dedicated Volunteers/board members
- Successful fundraiser
- Engaged partnership and relationship with Texas Historical Association
- Opportunities via EDC Mega Grants
- Zoning overlay
- City staff and MS working together
- State tax credits

## Weaknesses

- Most buildings need some type of repair
- Not enough active and dedicated volunteers
- Insurance coverage for cancellation
- Businesses being able to stay open, great deal of turnover in the past years
- The ability of to attract patrons that purchase and not just window shop
- Provide better warnings to vendors regarding need for their own insurance for cancellation/weather
- Some folks do not want development/growth

## Opportunities

- Future growth of Main Street to extend than just the buildings downtown
- Perfect timing to shape the look and feel of Main Street
- Educate the public on what Main Street does/doesn't do and is/isn't responsible for
- Continue with more exposure and more participation
- Continued and improved relationship with all downtown business owners and employees
- Attract businesses that will draw residents as well as visitors to Main Street
- To grow to be nationally known and remain faithful to benefitting the City of Elgin
- Increasing #s of Hispanic-owned businesses
- Better understand our Hispanic shoppers
- Promotional materials in Spanish
- Alleys—improving image, drainage, lighting, expanding
- Downtown Central Park
  1. Needs funding
  2. Prioritization for funding
  3. Grant writing
  4. Civic Club partnering
  5. Partnership development
- Cotton Oil Mill site
  1. Should it be a Theater?
  2. Should it be a Private/Public Partnership?
  3. Explore all opportunities
- Future Parking Plan

## Threats

- Economy
- The poverty level of Elgin residents
- Inability to attract visitors
- Local political pressure from those who do not understand the value of a Main Street Program

## VISION 2021

The facilitator asked the participants to envision their ideal version of Elgin in the Year 2021. She asked them what kinds of things they would see, hear, and feel. Answers could be literal or figurative. Below are the responses.

### SEE

- A church-social type atmosphere
- Something for children
- Active park
- Central park fully developed
- Clean
- Nightlife (with or without families)
- Entertainment Center
- Art
- Outside dining
- People having fun

### HEAR

- Live music (start with weekend)
- Traffic
- Trains
- Visitors saying positive things about what they're enjoying
- Referrals
- Local residents loving visiting downtown

### FEEL

- Welcoming
- Safe
- Nurtured businesses
- Nostalgic
- Excited
- Curious
- Electric
- Appreciated
- Pride

## 3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

The board and staff together developed new ideas for specific goals for a 3-Year Strategic Plan. The following is the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan for Elgin Main Street. The staff will determine the specifics of how these items are implemented and the proper timelines.

The 7 Goals, in no specific order, are:

1. To Broaden the Perception of What is Considered Downtown
2. To Develop and Fund the Downtown Central Park
3. To Develop a Parking Plan
4. To Develop and Implement a Communications Plan
5. To Develop Volunteers
6. To Facilitate Business-to-Business Partnerships & Collaborations
7. To Increase Revenues of the Hogeye Festival While Maintaining Its Family Appeal

## VISION STATEMENT

The new Vision Statement of the Elgin Hogeye Festival is:

**A financially successful nationally-known event that brings people to Elgin.**

The board reviewed the Vision and Mission statements for Main Street and decided no changes were needed at this time.

## GOALS

### **Goal #1: To Broaden the Perception of What is Considered Downtown**

Strategy 1.1: *Alleys will look like streets to serve new residents, and expanding rear entry uses.*

Action 1.1.1: *Working with the City of Elgin engineer, public works department and utilities department, assess drainage, utility improvements & pavement costs.*

Action 1.1.2: *Assess available lighting and work with residents, businesses and the city to determine lighting concerns and possible solutions.*

Action 1.1.3: *Assess dumping issues, for example behind Lions Club Thrift Store, possible cleanup and prevention options, then present findings to City for funding and implementation*

Action 1.1.4: *“Name Your Alley” contest - Work with Planning & Development to determine any 911 addressing concerns and then implement the contest. Naming alleys offers an opportunity to recognize significant events, important individuals in the community and and unique community identifiers.*

### Key Performance Indicators:

- 18 months - delivery of drainage and pavement costs
- 18 months - delivery of lighting needs and costs
- 12 months - assess dumping issues and implementation
- 12 months - complete “Name Your Alley” contest
- 18 months - Submit budget request to City

Strategy 1.2: Elgin Cotton Oil Mill—encourage development for mixed use. The mill is no longer in operation. The approximately ten acre site immediately adjacent to the historic district provides the opportunity for public private partnerships, developing more residential, commercial and mixed use space and continue to grow a solid economic base in the core of the community capitalizing upon existing infrastructure.

Action 1.2.1: Assess water, waste, and drainage

Action 1.2.2: Street and drainage improvement

Action 1.2.3: Sidewalks-connectivity

Action 1.2.4: Determine public/private partnership (begin dialogue with RR)

Action 1.2.5: Assess RR impact which “could” or “should” affect redevelopment.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Determine challenges and costs of redevelopment

**Goal #2: To Develop and Fund the Downtown Central Park to create a destination, encourage visitors to stay longer, make guests in the district feel comfortable and welcome, ultimately encouraging them to visit more often.**

Strategy 2.1: Reevaluate existing plan – is it still relevant to community’s needs?

Action 2.1.1: Water, sewage, drainage – City staff

Action 2.1.2: Is there any room for private/commercial construction?

Action 2.1.3: Is there permanent infrastructure for festivals?

Key Performance Indicator:

- 18 months - complete assessments for Actions 2.1.1 – 2.1.3

Strategy 2.2: Build Awareness and support in the City Council, businesses and local community.

Strategy 2.3: Determine Implementation and Funding. CARTS public restrooms will be part of the CARTS transit stop at Central Avenue and Avenue C.

Action 2.2.1: Identify funding and develop options for phasing in the improvements.

Action 2.2.2: Identify grants

Action 2.2.3: Identify partnerships

Key Performance Indicator:

- 24 months to determine funding avenues

**Goal #3: Develop a Parking Plan to pro actively assess available parking and how it can be most successfully utilized in this developing downtown. Residential and commercial uses are increasing.**

Strategy 3.1: Determine current number of lots/spaces

Action 3.1.1: Create actual map/schematic of lots

Action 3.1.2: Walmart parking overlay on the district to illustrate the number of spaces downtown and proximity to businesses.

Strategy 3.2: Create Signage for public parking areas.

Strategy 3.3: Educate community and Businesses about the parking plan.

Action 3.3.1: Creative “step counter” education - from here to there is XX Steps. Get your steps in -

Action 3.3.2: Educate businesses how best to use public lots (i.e. museum)

Action 3.3.3: Educate businesses about the lost revenue from employees and owners using prime customer spaces.

- Key Performance Indicators:
- # of spots
  - # of “step-counter” walking tours, signs and information provided.

**Goal #4: To Develop and Implement a Communications Plan**

Strategy 4.1: Determine who we are talking to:

Action 4.1.1: Businesses (create current list/contacts/emails/visits/flyers/events)

Action 4.1.2: Citizens (social media, 78621, newspapers, school flyers, events)

Action 4.1.3: Visitors (Social media, brochures, flyers, trade shows, signage, events)

Strategy 4.2: Quarterly Council meeting updates

Key Performance Indicators:

- Conduct a benchmark survey, six months later survey again.  
Responses of the surveys to usinesses
- Increase social media hits by 10%
- Track sales taxes - set up a Mall report with the State Comptrollers office.
- Conduct traffic counts two times per year through the police department, one in early June and one first week of October.



## Goal #5: To Develop Volunteers

Strategy 5.1: Identify which events need volunteers and how many

Action 5.1.1: Make lists of upcoming events

Action 5.1.2: determine number of volunteers needed for each event.

Share specific help requests needed.

Strategy 5.2: Create a communication piece to recruit volunteers

Action 5.2.1: Social media

Action 5.2.2: Word of mouth

Action 5.2.3: Ad in the Courier

Strategy 5.3: Identify potential volunteers - How can I help?

Action 5.3.1: Determine their strengths, what they enjoy and where to place them

Strategy 5.4: [Recruit volunteers - Bring a friend get a prize!](#)

Strategy 5.5: Volunteer education and/or training

Action 5.5.1: Informative information-explanation of expectations

Action 5.5.2: Yearly calendar of events/meetings

Action 5.5.3: Better organized/volunteers know in advance/a schedule/ life is busy

Action 5.5.4: [Encourage commitment to organization and programs.](#)

Action 5.5.5: [Who we are when we approach businesses - representing a group not an individual.](#)

Action 5.5.6: [Provide name badges to volunteers.](#)

Key Performance Indicators:

- Increase volunteer base by 25% in 2017
- Increase volunteer base by 15% in 2018
- Increase volunteer base by 10% in 2019

**Goal #6: To Facilitate Business-To-Business Partnerships & Collaborations - Businesses that know each other and what they do, or their products will refer customers to each other and be more successful and provide a better customer experience for all.**

Strategy 6.1: Host a Cross

- Promotion Event
- Action 6.1.1: Promote as an “Event” of Main Street giving back to business owners as opposed to a “Formal Meeting”
  - Action 6.1.2: Drinks/prizes to promote attendance
  - Action 6.1.3: More of a social event
  - Action 6.1.4: Themed event either once or twice per year

Key Performance Indicators:

- # of one-on-one invitations extended
- # of mass mailers and/or emails sent

Strategy 6.2: Buddy System

- Action 6.2.1: Team up business owners to check in on each other via phone calls or in person (“How are things going?”, etc.)
- Action 6.2.2: Structure referrals (Compliments---gift shop to homewares)

Strategy 6.4: Rejuvenate Business Networking Events

- Action 6.4.1: Identify new names
- Action 6.4.2: Design the event
- Action 6.4.3: Door prize/Create incentive
- Action 6.4.4: Advertise

Key Performance Indicators:

- **90% of Business Owner Participation (75 % we’d be happy) this is not realistic.**
- # of events
- # of people attending

Strategy 6.3: Incentives to get employees involved

- Action 6.3.1: % off on coupons to businesses or \$ off---solicit coupons from businesses
- Action 6.3.2: Communication piece to business owners for distribution of coupon.

Key Performance Indicators:

- # of coupons used
- # of attendees at event

**Goal #7: To Increase the Revenues of the Hogeve Festival While Maintaining Its Family Appeal**

Strategy 7.1: Increase vendor fees

Action 7.1.1: Update fee

Action 7.1.2: Send applications

Strategy 7.2: Consider other vendor options

Strategy 7.3: Evaluate sponsorship tiers, consider special 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary tier

Strategy 7.4: Increase souvenir prices

Strategy 7.5: Effectively manage expenses

Action 7.5.1: Reduce expenses where possible

Action 7.5.2: Seek bartering opportunities

Action 7.5.3: Plan for future increased expenses

Strategy 7.6: Establish partnership policies and agreements

Action 7.6.1: Sodas

Action 7.6.2: Beers

Action 7.6.3: Water

Action 7.6.4: Ice

Action 7.6.5: Trademark pursuit

Strategy 7.7: Determine Structure of Event

Action 7.7.1: Do we add a Friday night component?

Action 7.7.2: Friday night dance/street dance?

Action 7.7.3: Other?

Key Performance Indicators:

- Vendor fees/revenue
- Souvenir revenue
- Sponsorship revenue
- Operating expenses
- Repeat/return vendor %



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