



In January 2009, the Elgin Chamber of Commerce selected Envision Elgin as the Brick of the Community, an award utilized to recognize a community organization for outstanding commitment to community service. The award nomination highlighted projects and programs that Envision Elgin had supported, encouraged and or spearheaded such as the Elgin Education Foundation, the Elgin Alumni Association, research of cemetery capacity, creation of Elgin Caregivers, Community Center facility and location research, relocation of the Log Cabin, arts initiatives, expanded tour programs, expanded tourism promotional efforts, business assistance and education programs, business recruitment initiatives, Shop Elgin First campaign, continued and expanding participation in regional planning efforts, active engagement with transportation projects, increased communication with state elected officials, and a continued commitment to facilitating cooperative efforts and partnerships to accomplish community goals.

In 1996, a Strategic Plan for Elgin was completed by the LCRA. By 2004, most of the actions prescribed in that plan were completed and the decision to develop a new community plan was begun. Community leaders were identified and asked to serve on the plan's Steering Committee. The purpose of the Steering Committee was to guide the overall direction of the plan and coordinate activities of their organizations in the development and implementation of the plan. The Steering Committee created the planning schedule and identified the **initial areas to be considered for this plan. These areas of concern were: economic development, infrastructure, quality of life, education (later changed to workforce and education) and historic preservation.**

In March 2004, Envision Elgin was kicked off with a community discussion where over 150 community leaders participated. Focus groups met and answered the following questions: why people love to live in Elgin? what is important to the community? and in what direction would the community like to see Elgin head?

Envision Elgin is an example of cooperative planning to address current and future community needs. It is **intended to motivate and direct the community and to coordinate and focus on priority development projects in order to meet existing and future social and economic needs of the community.**

Oversight of the plan implementation is the responsibility of the **Community Development Team. This group meets quarterly and evaluates the progress of the strategies. The team consists of 31 members with 5 at-large positions.** Additionally, each focus area has a committee that oversees the implementation of the objectives for

that area. It is up to the lead agencies to coordinate the activities of the plan and report their progress and successes. Annually, the Community Development Team will host a public forum to detail the accomplishments and plan adjustments. The following is a summary of each of the Focus Areas and their accomplishments for the past year. **If you have any questions, comments or would like to volunteer to serve on a focus group, please contact the Parks & Community Development Department at 281-5724 or email Pam Carter, Administrative Assistant, at pcarter@ci.elgin.tx.us**

Quality Education and Workforce Development

Vision Statement

Elgin is a community that values education and lifelong learning. Every student in Elgin ISD has the opportunity to reach their potential and graduates compete in the workforce. Elgin ISD attracts new residents to the community.

Focus Group Chair: Bill Graves, Elgin ISD Superintendent

Objectives: ♦STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN ELGIN ISD, PARENTS AND COMMUNITY. ♦RAISE EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS TO EXCEL IN EVERY ASPECT OF LEARNING AND SCHOOL EXPERIENCE. ♦PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS ON STATE AND NATIONAL STANDARDIZED TESTS. ♦INCREASE ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AND STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIP WITH HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERS. ♦INCREASE ACCESS TO ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION.

In June 2004, Envision Elgin approved some 21 strategies for emphasis in the area of “Education and Workforce Development.” Since that time, a continuing process of review and revision has produced the current “Plan Timeline” of 18 strategies which remain as areas of major focus. Significant progress has been made in several areas of emphasis. The most notable are:

Strategy - Educational Facility Needs

- Major construction projects have been completed in the Elgin Independent School District which will provide a significant increase in the number of new and additional classrooms as well as core facilities available in the District.
- Elgin High School: Student classroom capacity was increased in August, 2008, from 1000 students to 1400 students with construction of a new classroom wing at EHS. Core capacity at EHS was increased from 1000 to 2000 student capacity with the construction of a new gymnasium, a large addition to the library, additions to the cafetorium and to the administrative office area.
- A new 1100 student middle school was constructed and occupied in October, 2008.
- The old middle school has been completely renovated to add facilities for an additional 700 elementary students to take care of new population growth in the District.

Strategies-Welcome the Community into all Schools

- Community and Parent participation with the Elgin ISD continues to grow with greater emphasis through the District Advisory Committee which has seen a steady increase in attendance from teachers as well as the public in district wide planning.

Strategies-Education Foundation and Alumni Association

- Continued growth of the EISD Education Foundation and the Elgin High School Alumni Association

Areas that continue to need greater emphasis are:

- Increased retention of professional staff.
- Establishing mentoring programs.
- Increase community education opportunities.

New Business Development

Vision Statement

Elgin recruits and attracts desirable businesses that create jobs and provide employment for the existing and regional workforce.

Focus Group Chair: Dennis Sheehan, Economic Development Director

Objectives: ♦INCREASE ELGIN’S DESIRABILITY AS A SITE LOCATION FOR NEW BUSINESS BY CAPITALIZING ON THE STRONG LOCATION FACTORS FOR THE CITY. ♦PROMOTE A PRO-BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT TO ENCOURAGE CONTINUED GROWTH OF BUSINESS IN ELGIN. ♦RECRUIT BUSINESSES THAT MEET DESIRED TARGET INDUSTRY LIST FOR ELGIN.

Strategy - Participate in regional recruitment initiatives

- Work with Texas National Guard to push forward the construction at Camp Swift of the Training Center of Excellence.
- Work with Union Pacific Railroad to attract potential users for “Green Line” rail located North of Elgin. Participate in regional trade events which rail industry leaders attend.

Strategy – Encourage entrepreneurial development in the community

- A second round of Big Austin business training classes started in March 2009 to be held through June. Topics included Excel, Quick Books, credit reports, marketing, finance, bookkeeping, business planning and others.
- Emerging market opportunities for agricultural development

Strategy - Research and consider expanding targeted industry list

- Targeted industries now include retail development, food manufacturing, rail users, furniture manufacturing, business services, light manufacturing.

Strategy - Identify through the comprehensive planning process future industrial land

- The City of Elgin is in a Comprehensive Planning process. Plan to address direction in City’s growth, including passenger rail, freight rail and possibilities of high density development &/or new urbanization direction. Passenger Rail project has now been included in Capital Metro’s “All Systems Go” plan and received initial approval of CAMPO’s Transit Working Group.

Retention of Existing Businesses and Jobs

Vision Statement

Elgin supports and recognizes the importance of existing businesses that provide both jobs and a stable tax base for the City.

Focus Group Chair: Dennis Sheehan, Economic Development Director

Objective: ♦STRENGTHEN LOCAL BUSINESSES THROUGH COOPERATIVE MARKETING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Strategy-Develop a Welcome to Elgin Fact Sheet

- Directory of businesses on the City of Elgin website maintained by city staff, in conjunction with EDC's Shop Elgin First Campaign.

Strategy-Establish a Formal Business Visitation Program

- EDC met with and provided business assistance to 6 businesses in the amount of \$19,009.
- EDC participated in Opportunity Austin Business Retention and met with major employers.

Strategy-Establish Educational Business Enhancement Courses and Materials to Increase the Competitiveness of Local Businesses

- Texas Historical Commission Main Street office provided a class on merchandising and storefront window displays, and has joined with the EDC to offer additional business training classes, "Doing Better Business" and "eCommerce".
- EDC negotiated a series of classes with Big Austin to be conducted in 2008. Courses are funded by a Workforce grant, EDC and the Chamber. Course topics include marketing, business plans, e-commerce, financing, Excel and QuickBooks.

Sustainable Growth

Vision Statement

The City of Elgin grows in such a manner as to be consistent with the City's ability to serve existing and new development.

Focus Group Chair: Jeff Coffee, City Manager

Objectives: ♦DEVELOP A BALANCED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CAPABLE OF MOVING PEOPLE & GOODS IN A SAFE, EFFICIENT & ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE MANNER. ♦ENSURE RESIDENTS ARE SERVED BY WATER & WASTEWATER SYSTEMS THAT PROMOTE HEALTH & SAFETY & CONTINUE TO MEET THE GROWTH OF NEW RESIDENTS & BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES. ♦INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING AT ALL INCOME LEVELS. ♦INCREASE COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF INFRASTRUCTURE & GROWTH ISSUES.

Strategy – Comprehensive Plan for City of Elgin

- The City retained Wilbur Smith to provide a new comprehensive plan
- The Comprehensive Plan process started in January 2008 and will result in a blueprint for sustainable growth. Community meetings throughout the past year have been well attended. The Advisory Committee for the Comprehensive Plan is reviewing a draft document that will be presented to the community and the City Council in 2009.
- The comprehensive plan will address:
 - Land use and zoning designations
 - Transportation
 - Utilities infrastructure
 - Facilities planning
 - Overall development
 - Open space

Strategy - the connection between land use and transportation as it affects the quality of life in Elgin.

- Through involvement in both local and regional efforts to increase transportation infrastructure investment, the City of Elgin is preparing for the unprecedented growth that is sure to come.
 - Continued efforts to encourage passenger rail service between Elgin and Austin, working closely with Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Capital Metro, City of Austin and various transit related groups
 - The EDC retained IMS Worldwide to address expanded utilization of the Union Pacific rail
 - Street improvement projects: Phase I \$3 million project to be completed in 2009. Future projects would be addressed in Phase II and Phase III.

Strategy - Encourage the development of assisted living facilities and senior housing

- Elgin Nursing and Rehabilitation Center opened February 2008

Strategy - Annexation of growth corridors

- City of Elgin annexed west along Hwy. 290 through the Elm Creek subdivision

Preservation of Elgin's History and Downtown

Vision Statement

*Elgin preserves its historic character while at the same time
accommodating continued development in downtown.*

Focus Group Chair: Donna Snowden, Elgin Historic Association President

Objectives: ♦CONTINUE WORK TO PRESERVE AND DEVELOP THE HISTORICAL AND DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS OF ELGIN. ♦TELL ELGIN'S STORY TO RESIDENTS AND VISITORS. ♦DEVELOP RAILROAD PROPERTY AND ♦INCREASE CEMETARY CAPACITY.

2008 Completed projects:

- Elgin Cemetery Research was completed in the last year. It was determined that development of a new cemetery in Elgin was not needed at this time.
- Log Cabin was moved to Down Home Ranch and will be restored.
- Monthly meetings are held by the Elgin Historical Association in order to preserve much of Elgin History.
- Elgin Etc., a collection of Elgin stories, was completed by the Elgin Historical Association and is for sale at the museum.
- The Elgin Depot Museum completed its seventh year of being open.
- Elgin youth are being encouraged to learn Elgin history by school field trips to the Elgin Depot Museum and Evergreen Christmas Tree Farms. These field trips are coordinated with the schools, Evergreen Farms, and the Elgin Historical Association.

2009 Ongoing Projects:

- Mary Christian Burleson Cabin- searching for funds or grants to restore this home. This cabin was built in 1847 and is Elgin's most historic structure.
- Elgin Main Street Program recognized as a National Main Street Community
- Purple and White Jubilee- This is Elgin's first Alumni Association celebration which will occur every five years. This association strives to enhance the educational process in Elgin plus preserve friendships and memories. This event has the potential to grow into a large event for Elgin. Alumni have the potential to directly influence the educational process by donations and scholarships to seniors. The Distinguished Alumni Awards will encourage our students to excel in their chosen fields.
- The museum continues to host two temporary exhibits a year.
- The President of the Elgin Historical Association meets quarterly with other museums in the county in order to preserve Bastrop County history.

- The museum works with the Chamber of Commerce to give tours to visitors in the area.

Regionalism

Vision Statement

Regional infrastructure projects are developed and supported by Elgin that improve access, attract industry and increase commerce

Focus Group Chair: Marc Holm, Mayor

Objective: ♦COMMUNICATE ELGIN’S NEEDS AND CONCERNS TO REGIONAL PARTNERS ON ALL REGIONAL PROJECTS

Strategy - Stay involved in regional forums and workgroups

- Mayor Holm is active with CAPCOG, CARTPO, Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, Clean Air Force, County Affairs and Mayor’s Breakfast
- Envision Central Texas
Land Use and Transportation co-chair, Jeff Coffee, City Manager
- CAMPO Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transit Working Group Member, Jeff Coffee, City Manager
- Alliance for Public Transportation
President, Jeff Coffee City Manager
- The City of Elgin participates in the following:
Bastrop County Transportation Master plan funded by TXDOT
Council members Pat Frenzel and Keith Joesel are active participants
Office of Rural Community Affairs Tx CDBG grant review committee
Council member WC Estes actively serves on this committee
Envision Bastrop County Strategic Plan
Austin Chamber of Commerce Regional Partners
Austin San Antonio Corridor Council
CARTS, Capital Area Rural Transportation System
CAPCOG, Capital Area Council of Governments
CARTPO, Capital Area Rural Transportation Planning Organization

Strategy - Host and schedule frequent and regular meetings with state and elected officials and their staff

Legislative meetings

Actively working with Senator Hegar, House Transportation and Appropriations committees, Senate Transportation committee

Tourism

Vision Statement

Elgin is a destination for leisure, cultural and business travelers.

Focus Group Chair: Gena Carter, President Elgin Chamber of Commerce

Objective: ♦IMPROVE AND EXPAND PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE ELGIN AS A TOURIST DESTINATION

Strategy – Increase the number of scheduled tours

The Tourism Committee has actively solicited this market. Each year, we have increased the number of tour groups visiting our city. In order to continue our marketing efforts, the Committee partnered with Texas Brazos Trail and BEST to complete a new brochure for group leaders that was used at four trade shows sponsored by the Group Leaders' Association of America.

Strategy – Continue the promotion and improvement of annual festivals

The Chamber sponsored Western Days event had one of its most successful years raising money for Chamber projects. The Main Street Board sponsored Hogeys Festival also had a successful event with over 20,000 attendees. The Holiday by the Tracks event co-sponsored by Chamber and Main Street was very successful and had an increase in attendance. The Tourism Committee has partnered with local art groups to promote art events. There will be an Art Walk on May 9 and November 13. First Bloom Art Event will be held April 24-25.

Strategy – Participate in Regional Tourism and Marketing Associations

The Tourism Committee is extremely active in the Texas Brazos Trail, Presidential Corridor, LCRA River Trail, Texas YES! and BEST Tourism Group. Through these partnerships and with the financial support from the Hyatt Lost Pines Resort, Elgin has been able to participate in travel shows and do cooperative advertising in brochures, flyers and publications.

Strategy – Improve park and recreation facilities to compete and attract organized events

The Tourism Committee continues to work with local sport leagues and the Elgin ISD to provide lodging, dining and shopping information for visitors participating in sporting events.

Strategy – Nurture the Farmers’ Market measured by an increase in vendors and attendance

The River Valley Market operates year around on Tuesday afternoon from 2pm-5pm. The tourism committee has printed and distributed flyers promoting the market.

Quality of Life

Vision Statement

Elgin maintains and improves the community’s cultural, recreation and essential facilities and services to meet the desired quality of life and wellness of all residents.

Focus Group Chair: Patsy Neidig

Objectives: ♦MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE EXISTING RECREATION FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACES. ♦ESTABLISH RECREATION PROGRAMS FOR ALL ELGIN RESIDENTS. ♦MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE. ♦IMPROVE ESSENTIAL HEALTH AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND SERVICES FOR SENIORS. ♦MATCH LIBRARY SERVICES AND USE TO DEMAND OF THE COMMUNITY. ♦IMPROVE THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE ENTRYWAYS OF THE COMMUNITY.

The following provides a summary of the Community Activity Center and Elgin Caregivers projects, which were the primary projects of this focus area in 2008-2009.

PROPOSED COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER

(Study has been completed on this strategy and no further action will be taken until funds are available.)

This strategy is addressed in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, pages 21 & 22.

In August, 2007, a committee was formed to study the feasibility of constructing a large community activity center/complex in Elgin.

- Strong community interest and support.
- Focused on areas such as committee education, location possibilities, uses/programs, design, funding, marketing, etc.
- Conducted survey to gather information as to where and what activities are currently being offered in Elgin.
- Took field trips to other centers – sought information regarding construction, maintenance and pitfalls:
 - Smithville
 - Pflugerville
 - Georgetown
 - Burnet
 - San Marcos.
- Identified short term and long term possibilities.

Findings and Recommendations:

- Determined that best use of land and most efficient use of funding would be to plan and construct a connecting recreation/activity complex. . . .
 - Area behind EISD Admin Bldg
 - Near old hospital bldg
 - Near current swimming pool
 - Near current hike and bike trail
 - Near the old football stadium and track
 - Near Elgin Elementary School (could be used by students during the day)

- Unable to continue planning without possibility of funding, the committee presented their research and recommendations to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for the purpose of amending the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan with the committee's recommendations.

- That action was taken by the board and City Council approval is pending.

Additional Note:

One small part of the old hospital building has been renovated and once served for as the Parks and Recreation Department staff office. The rest of the building is not currently usable.

Funding to renovate the old hospital building has been committed by the Elgin Rotary and Kiwanis clubs. After restoration, it can be used as part of a desired Community Activity Center Complex. Senior activities would be a good fit for the space.

Another possible source of funds is from the sale of the city-owned Fisher Street property. Elgin City Council has authority to recommend use of those funds.

MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION ACCESS FOR SENIORS

ELGIN CAREGIVERS was established in October, 2008.

The purpose of this program is to assist senior adults who live in their own homes to remain independent by offering services provided by volunteers from a coalition of area faith, civic and community organizations. Services include transportation, information and referrals, social contact, errands, minor home repair and chores.

Services are provided to ambulatory individuals, 60 years-old and over, who live within the service boundaries of zip code 78621 (Elgin) and 78650 (McDade). Driving boundaries include Elgin, Bastrop, Taylor and Central Austin.

Volunteers render services at no charge to clients. Therefore, to sustain the program, funding in the form of individual and business donations, local fundraisers, and grants are constantly being sought. To date Elgin Caregivers have received funds in excess of \$14,000.00. Much more is needed to sustain the free services.

The national Faith in Action Caregivers (FIAC) invited Elgin Caregivers to join the Austin area collaborative membership where we can share knowledge and experience, raise money and increase community awareness. This collaborative membership includes many separate Austin caregiver groups, as well as Pflugerville, Georgetown, Round Rock and now Elgin.

The Elgin Caregivers program currently serves 19 clients and has 30 volunteers. Dorothy Doolittle is the Executive Director and can be contacted at 285-4503.

Another program previously established is the ROAD TO RECOVERY program which is coordinated through the First United Methodist Church and is for cancer patients only. Volunteer drivers are the strength of this program.

Envision
Elgin
Community
Development
Team



Community Development Team 2009

<u>Board Member Name</u>		<u>Represents</u>
Jeff	Carter, President.	Economic Development Corporation
Sonia	Browder, Vice President	Chamber of Commerce
Patsy	Neidig, Treasurer	Main Street Board
Molly	Alexander	Historic Review Board
James	Lewis	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Anthony	Ramirez	City Council
Geno	Chavarria	Planning & Zoning Commission, EISD Board
Lee	Dildy	County Commissioner
Pat	Frenzel	City Council
Rhoda	Gersch	Combined Community Action
Beth	Walterscheidt	Chamber of Commerce
Vacant		Ministerial Alliance
Marc	Holm	Mayor
Janet	Masek	Economic Development Corporation
Robert	Mauck	EISD Board
Gary	Null	
Vacant		Rural Capitol Area Workforce Dev Board
Beth	Rollingson	Advocacy Outreach
Patsy	Hoffman	Library Advisory Board
Donna	Snowden	Elgin Historic Association
<u>At-Large</u>		
Scott	MacKay	At-Large Term expires June 2009
Merideth	Williams	At-Large Term expires June 2009
Shawn	Walker	At-Large Term expires 2010
Angela	Villarreal	At-Large Term expires 2010
Susan	Snelson	At-Large Term expires 2010
<u>Perpetual Membership</u>		
Jeff	Coffee	City Manager
Bill	Graves	EISD Superintendent
Amy	Miller	Community Development Director
Gena	Carter	Chamber of Commerce
Beverly	Daughtry	Editor - Elgin Courier
Shirley	Garvel	City Secretary