



2017 Strategic Map

| 03.17 |

CITY OF ATHENS, TEXAS



The 2017 Strategic Map represents the 2-year plan of work to outline and achieve the vision for the City of Athens. This document serves as a roadmap to link the vision of the City through 7 major themes and a wide range of individual initiatives and projects.

2017 Strategic Map

CITY OF ATHENS, TEXAS

Vision

City of Athens commits to building on our heritage, while enhancing a high quality of life for **all** our citizens.

We pledge to work in collaboration with our residents and business community to foster community pride, develop a vibrant, diverse economy, thoughtfully plan for our future, prioritize quality growth, preserve and enhance the beauty of our natural environment and to use our resources efficiently.

Strategy

Over the next two years, the City of Athens will strengthen the public's confidence in City government by improving resident, business and visitor experience with City services through initiatives and projects that cover 7 major themes:

Heritage | **Q**uality of **L**ife | **C**ommunity **P**ride | **E**conomy
Planning and **G**rowth | **N**atural **E**nvironment | **E**fficiency

HERITAGE

- Restore the distinction and significance of the Cain Center in Athens as a primary community-wide event venue, public meeting space, workout facility and aquatics center, and ensure its vitality for the next 30 years
- Resurrect the Texan Theater as an anchor for social and cultural life in downtown Athens
- Increase historic preservation of Athens' square through Downtown Façade Improvement Program
- Refresh and support the existing Downtown Master Plan and implement many of its recommendations within FY 2017 through FY 2019 Budgets
- Update Downtown fixtures including: benches, trash and recycling cans, landscaping and wayfinding signs
- Gather public input about primary festivals, events, traditions and other markers of cultural identity in Athens and support their advancement with City resources

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Partner to bring AISD campuses under law enforcement services by 2017-2018 school year
- Plan for additional 2 Police Officers for FY 2018 and 2 for FY 2019
- Ensure all Athens boundaries have Emergency Notification System facilities
- Bring Athens into full compliance with TCEQ for water and wastewater for first time this decade
- Work with AMWA to update Water Treatment Plant and reduce HAA5s
- Complete Water Model and develop, implement and fund a Capital Improvement Plan for water facilities with the Water Model findings
- Partner with AMWA to plan for future water needs
- Plan for additional wastewater plant to serve growth areas
- Continue street rehabilitation and seal-coat program funding at \$400,000 per year or more, as budget allows
- Create a storm water detention program for all new construction and plan for systematic drainage improvements across the City in future budget years



Cain Center



Texan Theater



Downtown



Culture



Public Safety



Water & Wastewater



Streets & Drainage

COMMUNITY PRIDE

- Enhance code enforcement and property standards City-wide to strengthen property values, increase public safety and support the beauty of our community
- Develop a substandard property mitigation program and fee structure that encourages re-development and revitalization and removes incentive to have City maintain or abate substandard properties
- Introduce new website and increase use of social media platforms with a focused approach for “resident”, “business” and “visitor” initiatives and information
- Develop and implement an-ongoing program for citizen surveys and other public engagement tools
- Seek opportunities to strengthen partnership with Athens Independent School District and Trinity Valley Community College as the publicly supported education systems in Athens

ECONOMY

- Gather public input on new housing start programs for developers
- Develop housing incentives for first-time homebuyers
- Finalize and implement the findings of the Airport Planning Advisory Committee to expand the airport and the aviation industry in Henderson County
- Establish a new partnership through a joint Airport Authority with Henderson County and Athens Economic Development Corporation
- Take a more proactive role in Athens Housing Authority and leverage programs and strategies to boost affordable housing initiatives in Athens
- Understand and utilize all state economic development tools available to the City to strengthen business and housing investments
- Seek opportunities to diversify local economy to best adapt to changes in state and federal economies
- Continue strong partnership with Athens Economic Development Corporation to grow the local economy and ensure its long-term viability by being *THE* investment destination in East Texas
- Define benchmarks and track outcomes with the City and AEDC sponsored joint retail recruitment strategy



Property Standards



Communications



Engagement



Partnerships



Housing



Airport



Diverse and Viable

PLANNING AND GROWTH

- Refresh and support the important work and useful tools found in the existing Comprehensive Plan and implement its recommendations as a guide for good growth in Athens
 - Involve people who care about the City's future
 - Build a prosperous place through collaboration
 - Become financially solvent
 - View land as the base resource for all planning since it is not reproducible
 - Plan for infrastructure as a means toward financial prosperity and not as an end unto itself
- Develop and implement an Annexation Plan focused on a) Lake Athens ETJ b) Primary Corridors and Loop 7
- Prioritize expansion of services along the City's eastern boundary
- Plan for and fund a 3rd Fire Station and related personnel and equipment to be built within the City's eastern boundary
- Gather public input about thoughtful zoning and ordinance changes that provide the right mix of East Texas, rural feel within the City limits, including fencing, lot size, livestock, etc.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Discover the best approach to the City's Collection Site and all related costs and funding sources
- Study and provide recommendations for beautification projects, related-entities and initiatives
- Provide for continued, significant park improvements across the City
- Seek grant opportunities whenever available
- Plan for and fund immediate projects at Cain Park including a dog park, full-size soccer field and football practice field
- Explore options to bolster East Texas Arboretum



Comprehensive Plan



Expand Services



Zoning



Beautification



Parks



Opportunities

EFFICIENCY

- Utilize 9 Budget Principles for Conservative Stewardship for FY 2018 and FY 2019 Budgets*
- Adhere strictly to transparent and accessible financial policies and procedures
- Seek financial solvency as a core of all decision-making
- Recruit, maintain and fairly compensate a highly responsive and professionalized workforce at the City
- Initiate and utilize the findings of an updated compensation study for all City personnel
- Seek opportunities for Public/Private Partnerships (3P) and other innovative solutions to ensure the City leverages its own dollars well
- *Maintenance. Not only operations.* | Take care of existing and new facilities, equipment and assets, knowing that to maintain today prevents crises of tomorrow
- Develop and maintain a vendor list for all City purchases and ensure fairness and ethics are paramount in award processes
- Develop a 2-year program to appraise all City-owned properties and facilities and conduct competitive, sealed bid processes to transfer excess properties back into the community
- Conclude the Forensic Audit and move forward with financial surety



Conservative Stewardship



Professionalism



Maintenance. *Not only operations.*



Transparency

* 9 Budget Principles for Conservative Stewardship at the City of Athens

1. Establish and maintain budgeted reserves for 3rd and 4th consecutive years in a row
2. Keep tax rates and user fees as flat as possible and reflective of cost recovery model
3. Focus on accounting for revenues, expenses, assets and long term liabilities
4. Understand variances and adjust as needed
5. Identify programs and what they cost - then prioritize
6. Spend within our means
7. Purchase with current resources and without use of debt; except for “inter-generational equity” projects
8. Purchase with the understanding of “useful life” and with a plan for eventual replacement
9. Provide ongoing economic analysis and long-term planning