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PFLUGERVILLE OLD TOWN VISION PROCESS

The City of Pflugerville initiated the Old Town Vision process to set a path toward consensus and action in a variety of potential areas related to the community's traditional downtown area.

The process was born out of a certain degree of contention over the direction for Old Town, but also a definite desire to revitalize and enhance the area. The process was overseen by a City-appointed Steering Committee, managed by City planning staff, and facilitated by prime consultant Kendig Keast Collaborative and subconsultant José E. Martínez, LLC (Austin, Texas).

As requested by the City, the vision process included extensive community outreach and targeted stakeholder input opportunities on a very aggressive timeline between October 2008 and January 2009.

Activities included:

- initial interviews with key individuals and groups,
- separate forums with key stakeholder groups (commercial property owners, businesses, and neighborhood residents),
- a combined stakeholder forum,
- an Old Town Vision Forum for the entire community,
- periodic meetings with a City-appointed Steering Committee and Downtown Planning Committee, and
- several workshop sessions with the Pflugerville Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council



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Consultant observations and suggestions were also part of the vision process. The consultants served primarily in a neutral, third-party facilitation role during the community and stakeholder outreach phase. However, as the project moved into consideration of the action implications of the new vision for Old Town, the consultants offered their own insights and recommendations based on what they had heard and observed through the vision process, as well as their own community planning background and experience.

Both the vision process and resulting report were intended to build upon previous planning efforts for Old Town that had yielded limited tangible results.

The consultants were also challenged to take the community engagement for this vision process to a new level. In particular, they needed to drill down into the reasons and rationale behind positions taken by various individuals and groups to determine what types of potential action strategies for downtown enhancement might enjoy the broadest community support.

The project report also provided comparisons to and "lessons learned" from two other fast-growing Texas communities with similar downtown revitalization scenarios.



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Besides a consensus Vision Statement to guide Old Town revitalization efforts, the final report highlights

- (1) a first set of initiatives which the Steering Committee identified as the "Top 5" to pursue,
- (2) a second set of initiatives which City staff can readily address, and
- (3) a third set of "other potential initiatives" with varying degrees of stakeholder support, from substantial (e.g., bicycle/pedestrian connections into Old Town) to minimal (e.g., Main Street extension).

Summary tables in the report highlight the status of consensus on various action items through color coding (green/GO for consensus achieved, yellow/CAUTION for consensus possible, and red/STOP for no consensus), along with considerations that factored into the achievement or lack of consensus.