

CITY OF SWEENY, TEXAS
*Leadership Retreat Summary &
Work Plan*
Sweeny Community Center
June 10, 2023



Adopted:

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Introduction & OVERVIEW

Purpose & Introduction

The City of Sweeny is preparing the budget for FYE 24 and, as part of that process, recognized the need for visioning and strategic planning to provide support and direction to the staff. To this end, the City engaged City Hall Essentials (CHE) / McDougal & Associates, LLC. (MDA) to assist in the development of a shared vision and near-term strategies for the Council and staff.

On June 10, 2023, CHE/MDA facilitated a day-long retreat where City Council and Key Leadership came together at the Sweeny Community Center to discuss what is working, and not working, at the City.

This is the inaugural planning session for the City. The intent is to continue this process annually as part of developing the annual budget and planning for the future success of the community. Future sessions should include community partners such as the EDC and Planning Commission. Working together to adopt a shared vision will ensure success for all involved.

RECENT WINS: Incentive pay and earning interest on savings.

Community Snapshot

Situated just twenty miles from the Gulf of Mexico and approximately 65 miles from the Houston Metropolitan Area, Sweeny is the westernmost city in Brazoria County. Sweeny is a charming community of approximately 3,591 with a walkable downtown. Brazoria County and the Upper Texas Coast are growing, and, with visioning and planning, Sweeny will be ideally positioned to benefit from that growth.

Location and existing community assets are working in Sweeny's favor. At a time when many small hospitals are closing, Sweeny Hospital is expanding. With approximately 1,900 students, Sweeny ISD is ranked as an above-average public school district. These assets, coupled with strong local leadership and a community-wide commitment to community pride provide a strong foundation upon which to grow.

Sweeny should be proud of its past and embrace the many opportunities for the future. Coming together and developing a vision for the future- crafted through dialogue and compromise – will provide a path toward future success.

Key Takeaways

This is not a comprehensive or long-range document. This strategy provides a way for City Council to adopt a policy and give direction to City staff for immediate needs while beginning conversations about long-term needs. A robust comprehensive planning process is needed and should be a near-term project. The following projects are summarized in the Work Plan and are of such significance they warrant additional attention here:

1. Start today. Plan for long-term, big-picture projects while implementing short-term, attainable projects.
 - a. Quick downtown beautification project – select an alley to redevelop into a destination using string lights, murals, and plants.
 - b. HR – Pride / Initiative Program
 - c. Policies / Procedures / Technical Specifications
 - a. Charter Review: The City Charter was revised and readopted in 20***. It is recommended that the City engage a municipal attorney with expertise in city charters to review the charter for compliance with state and federal laws. Furthermore, it is recommended that charter review ensure that it does not conflict with or contradict the tenets of a Council / Manager form of government. To this end, reviewing all codes, ordinances, policies, and procedures is

recommended to ensure documents do not contradict or conflict with one another or with state and federal law.

2. Comprehensive Plan
 - a. Adopt a shared vision
 - b. Adopt a citywide Comprehensive Plan to address land use and development, transportation and connectivity, infrastructure, parks and recreation, economic development,
3. Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)
4. Economic Development
 - a. The City will have to think creatively about economic development and craft a strategy that recognizes the community's place in the region and builds upon its strengths and attributes.
 - i. Water Quality: fix the problem then brag about it
 - ii. Alcohol sales: Revise local ordinances
 - iii. Beautification – start with the petunias
 - iv. Walkability/ Quality of life
 - v. Infill development and redevelopment commercial and residential

SWOT Analysis

INTRODUCTION

A SWOT analysis assesses a community's major strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This exercise can also provide a framework for identifying local action items and priorities, and for creating a legislative "to do" list for the locally elected officials. Action items under each category help decision-makers: build on community strengths; address weaknesses; take advantage of opportunities; and prepare for threats.

The SWOT analysis was used as the starting point for identifying needs and priorities for City staff and

Internal - Strengths

Strengths are existing features, amenities, and characteristics that lead to a community's success. These include intangible attributes as well as physical assets. Successful communities reinforce, protect, and build on all their strengths.

When looking into the strengths of your organization, ask yourself the following questions:

- What do we do well? Or, even better: What do we do best?
- What's working well? How do we know?
- What do our citizens like about our organization?
- What sets us apart from other cities?

External - Opportunities

Strengths are unique to the inner workings of the organization. These are the things the City of Sweeny – public officials and staff – do well. Unlike strengths and weaknesses, opportunities are more forward-looking and deal with larger forces. These are future prospects that could help a community realize its goals. A community should consider ways to strategically take advantage these opportunities.

Internal - Weaknesses

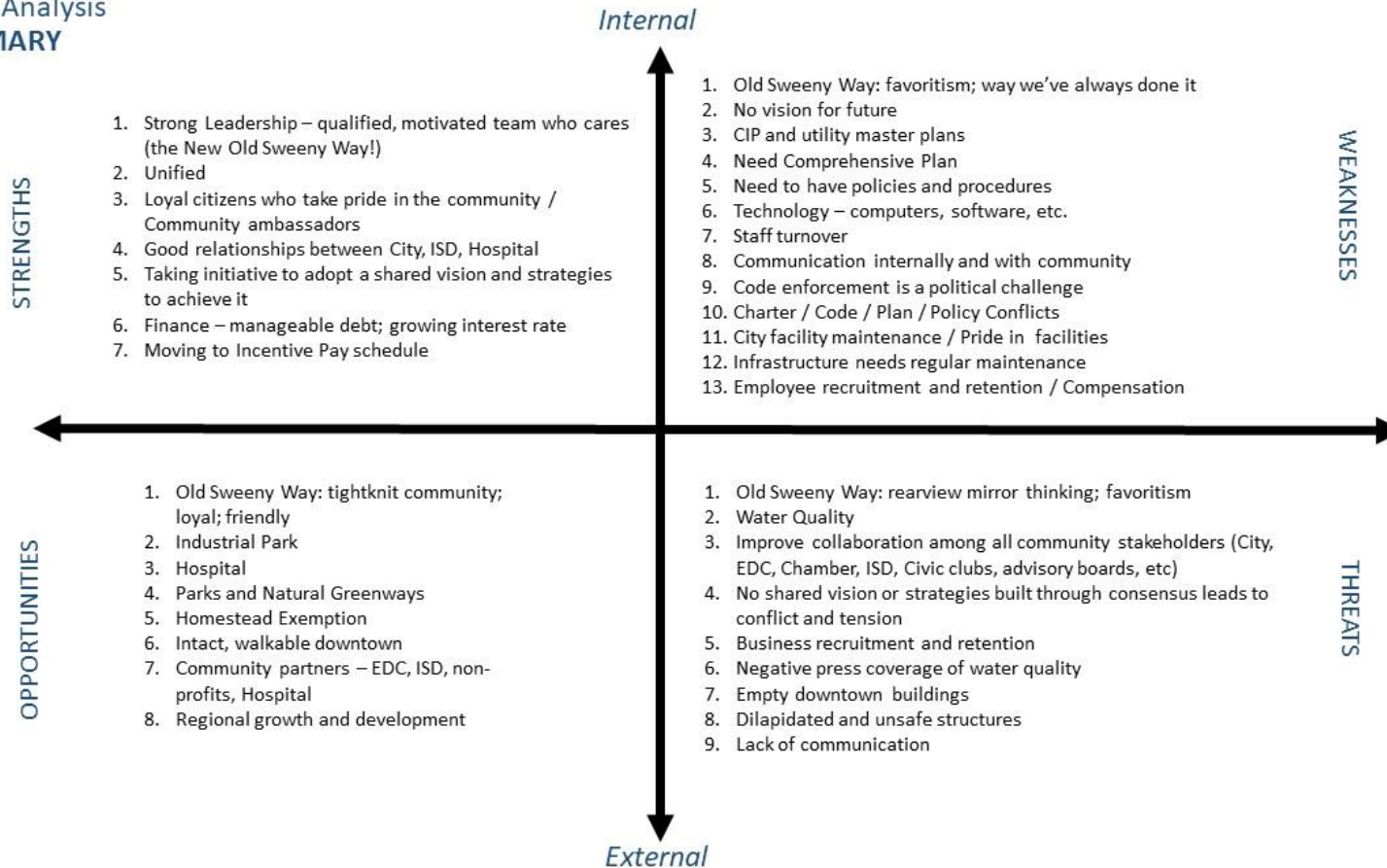
No organization is perfect. Weaknesses are existing features, conditions or problems that hinder a community from realizing its goals. A community should consider ways to address or overcome these obstacles.

In this step, the group identified those internal characteristics or conditions that hinder staff and keep the organization from operating to its full potential.

External - Threats

Like opportunities, threats are more forward looking than strengths and weaknesses. These future challenges could hinder the community from realizing its goals. A community should consider ways to avoid or mitigate threats.

SWOT Analysis
SUMMARY



Resource Guide &
WORK PLAN

***SEE ATTACHED SPREADSHEET – FINAL WORK PLAN TO BE
INSERTED IN REPORT***