

ARANSAS COUNTY PARTNERSHIP EDC STRATEGIC WORK PLAN 2022-2025

Priority A: Retain, Support, and Grow Existing Businesses

Utilize information gathered from the Business, Retention, and Expansion (BRE) calls in Fall-Winter 2021 as well as selected strategies from the 2017-2021 studies recommended by multiple agencies and organizations to carry out action plans for assistance in the post Harvey recovery.

Action Strategies:

- Develop a tool kit of resources based upon the EDC assessment (Completion Summer 2022)
- Utilize Aransas County Workforce Development Center as a centerpiece for local employers to gain skilled workforce in their businesses (by January 2023)
- Educate local primary employers about expansion opportunities encouraged and made possible by incentive policies of county and city (Commence Spring 2022)
- Address workforce housing needs for local employers and their employees; utilize county and city incentive policies to increase supply (ongoing-see Pegasus recommendations)
- Create a micro-loan fund to grow small businesses (Roll-out Spring 2024)

Priority B: Address Workforce Needs and Workforce Skills Development

Action Strategies:

- Work to see the successful opening of the Aransas County Workforce Development Center (WDC) by January 2023
- Coordinate with local employers and the WDC for specific technical and career education programs needed (via annual BRE visits-data mining) for their employees
- Develop post-secondary certification programs to support the growth in the target business sectors (by Fall 2023-Fall 2024)
- Organize a quarterly meeting of private sector employers and education providers to communicate workforce skills shortages pervasive in existing industries to identify workforce training needs (by Spring 2022)

Priority C: Facilitate impactful Investment(s) in Downtown Sectors to Support Tourism, Entertainment and Recreational Amenities in Aransas County

Action Strategies:

- Support arts, meeting, and event venues to anchor the districts (ongoing via web site)
- Support efforts of the Fulton Convention Center and the coming Rockport Center For The Arts Performing Arts and Events Center (ongoing via web site and other marketing mediums)
- Work to consolidate the Heritage District, Cultural Arts District, and Harborfront Plans into one coordinated plan. (Complete by Summer 2022)
- Encourage construction of living units (residential, townhouse, condo) in these commercial districts to facilitate year-round food traffic. Discourage commercial development in existing zoned residential areas. (ongoing)
- Support efforts of the Aransas County Navigation District with their plans to develop marine-assets in the downtown districts (ongoing)
- Recommend utilization of city and county programs to create increased commercial tax base in these districts (by Spring 2022)
- Support city and county efforts to address flooding and drainage issues (ongoing)

Priority D: Perform Marketing Efforts to Focus Companies and Developers on Targeted Business Sectors

Action Strategies:

- Assist with marketing of the Aransas County Airport to increase the number of Aviation-related businesses located there (Commence Fall 2022)
- Promote corporate and regional offices as well as R&D firms to locate in Aransas County to take advantage of the high quality of life enjoyed by full-time residents. Target “work from home remote employees” of firms in the Houston and Austin-San Antonio markets utilizing business journals. (Commence Winter 2022)
- Once enhanced broadband is attained, promote more extensively to office centric firms (Summer 2024)
- Target marine-related product producers and recreational item producers to utilize the positive Rockport-Fulton brand with “made here” campaigns (Commence Spring 2023)
- With incoming enhanced medical center(s), promote to regional medical practitioners to leverage these assets. Market to Corpus Christi, San Antonio, and Houston Medical Society members. (Commence Spring 2023)
- Utilize new Workforce Development Center to market to targeted business sectors via Site Selectors (Commence Fall 2023)
- Market availability of local workforce housing in regional media such as Caller Times, business journals, local newspapers in region (Commence Spring 2022)

Priority E: Secure Suitable Building Space to Attract Targeted Businesses

Action Strategies:

- Support efforts of Aransas County in making available surplus, non-aviation related property at Aransas County Airport; support efforts with the FAA and TXDOT Aviation (ongoing; allocate funds via targeted marketing line item in previous priority above)
- Consider “land-banking” suitable sites with infrastructure in place via investors and partnerships (2024-5)
- Consider funding-construction of infrastructure to serve site(s) lacking infrastructure (Situational via special funds)
- Inform the public and political stakeholders of well-thought out public-private partnerships to support targeted industries (via quarterly meetings, civic clubs, media)
- Identify public and private sources of funds to leverage local sources of funds (ongoing)
- Develop a “build-ready” site strategy (by Spring 2023)