

■ FORWARD, TOGETHER

An Economic Master Plan for College Station

MAY 2020



CITY OF COLLEGE STATION
Home of Texas A&M University®

PROPOSAL HIGHLIGHTS

Specific Areas for Immediate Work

Several items listed represent specific projects that Economic Development will undertake in 2020-2021.



ENHANCE AWARENESS OF COLLEGE STATION WITH IMPROVED MARKETING

The overall economic development program needs to build on its 2019 efforts to “Check out College Station.”

- Additional advantages that College Station can provide for prospects seeking new locations.
- Expanded information regarding real estate options such as the Midtown Business Park, College Station Business Center, etc.
- Articulate benefits for possible relocating targets will include specific age populations as well as competitive market businesses.
- Highlight quality of life amenities in College Station.



ENCOURAGE REDEVELOPMENT IN UNDERPERFORMING AREAS

Staff will focus efforts on encouraging redevelopment in areas where there is already sufficient infrastructure capacity, but where the existing use is underperforming. A great example is the redevelopment on University Drive to Embassy Suites.



AMPLIFY EXISTING EVENTS AND ASSETS

Events - With the BCS Marathon gearing up for the 10-year celebration in December and numerous Christmas events held around the city, staff should market College Station as a Christmas destination.

Assets - The city has strategically invested in the Wolf Pen Creek and Northgate districts. Efforts should maximize these investments as much as possible.



RECRUIT AGGIE-OWNED AND LED BUSINESSES

Texas A&M graduates identify strongly with College Station. Equally notable, they are creating and leading many successful businesses in Texas and throughout the country. Attention should be placed on recruiting Texas A&M led and owned businesses to their beloved alma mater.



BETTER DEFINE THE "RECRUITMENT SWEET SPOT" FOR COMPANIES

Based on the target industry work conducted by the BVEDC and the city, staff will continue to refine the precise business opportunities that best fit College Station from broader industry clusters.

Please see this section expanded to learn more about immediate work planned for College Station on page 22

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I. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

The Economic Development Master Plan is one chapter of the city's Comprehensive Plan, which serves as a statement of the community's vision for the future and a guide to achieving that vision.

The intent of the overall master-planning process is to ensure that future growth and development advances the city's economic development objectives. The process should also further College Station's goal of "ensuring a diversified economy, generating quality, stable, full-time jobs; bolstering the sales and property tax base; and contributing to a high quality of life." The Economic Development Master Plan has a planning horizon of five years. Strategies with longer-term implications also were considered during the process.

The original Economic Development Master Plan was developed in 2013. This review and update to that plan outlines out community's economic development path for 2020-25.

PLAN PROCESS

As part of the plan's development, staff engaged with local residents, business owners/operators, and community leaders to understand their vision of the local economy and to review and formulate pragmatic strategies. The engagement came in the form of focus groups with community leaders in November and December of 2019. The results were used throughout the plan's development.

UNIQUE ASPECTS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The overall goal for this plan and previous program planning has been to build a more competitive market for growth and investment in College Station. Businesses and individuals have choices of where and when to locate and grow their operations and careers. To ensure that College Station is a leading contender for desirable business and personal investment, the plan supports sound community planning principles while maintaining a pragmatic and proactive approach to the market.

II. EXISTING COMPETITIVE POSITION

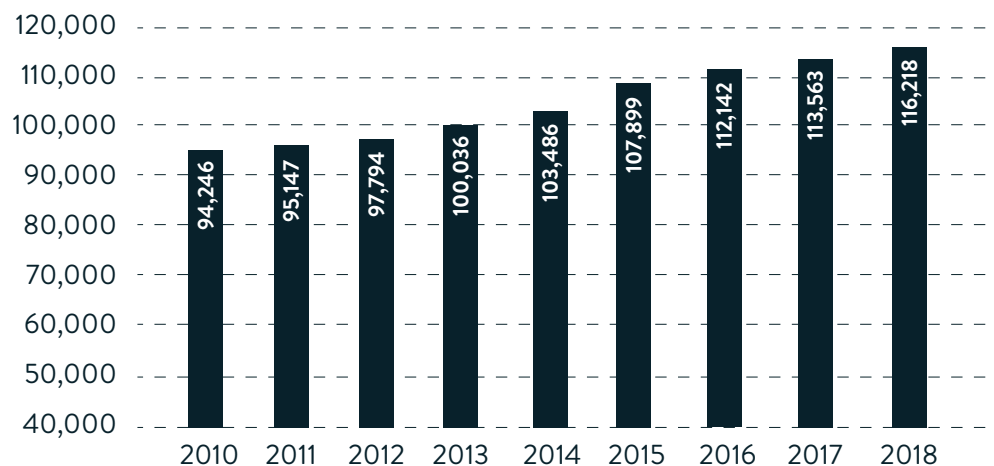
As part of the update, staff reviewed critical market data items that underpin the plan. Data items most relevant to economic development competitiveness are summarized in this chapter.

COMPETITIVE POSITION: POPULATION

Of all the factors expanding and relocating companies and individuals analyze in making location decisions, the size, growth potential, and skill levels of the local workforce are the primary concern. College Station is a modest-sized market overall in the near term, but with an outstanding upside.

- College Station's total population continues to grow from 2.5-3.5% annually. Since 2000, the average annual growth rate has been 2.8%.
- As of December 2019, the trend has continued with the population estimated at 122,738, an increase of over 20% since the plan's last update in 2013 (when the population was about 100,000.)
- College Station's population growth has been led by the increasing student population

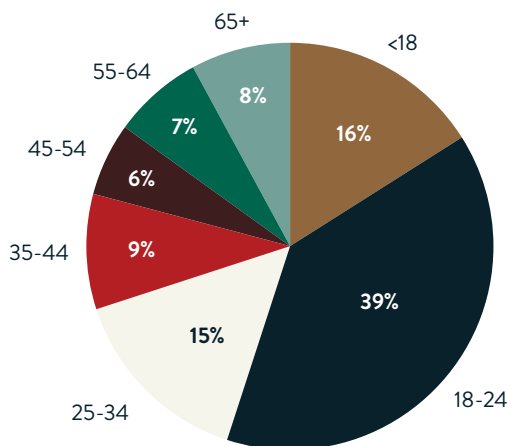
F1 City of College Station Population, 2010-2018



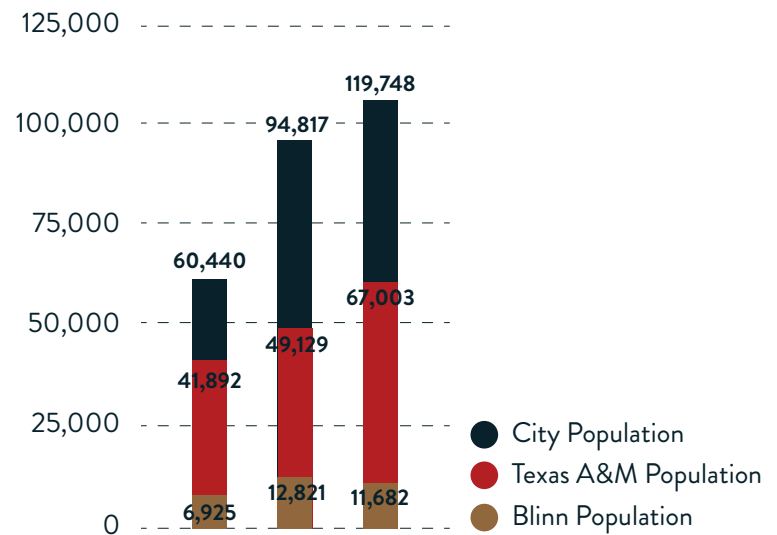
- The College Station market is considerably younger than many Texas communities.
- From a business perspective, 30% of the population falls between ages 25-54, which are the primary working years.
- 39% of the market is between ages 18-24, which represents the next generation of the labor force.
- About 18,000 students graduate from Texas A&M University each year.
- The ability to capture a higher percentage of that population as they leave college is critical for College Station's economic development program and overall competitive advantage.



F2 Population By Age Group



F3 Higher Education Population Since 1996

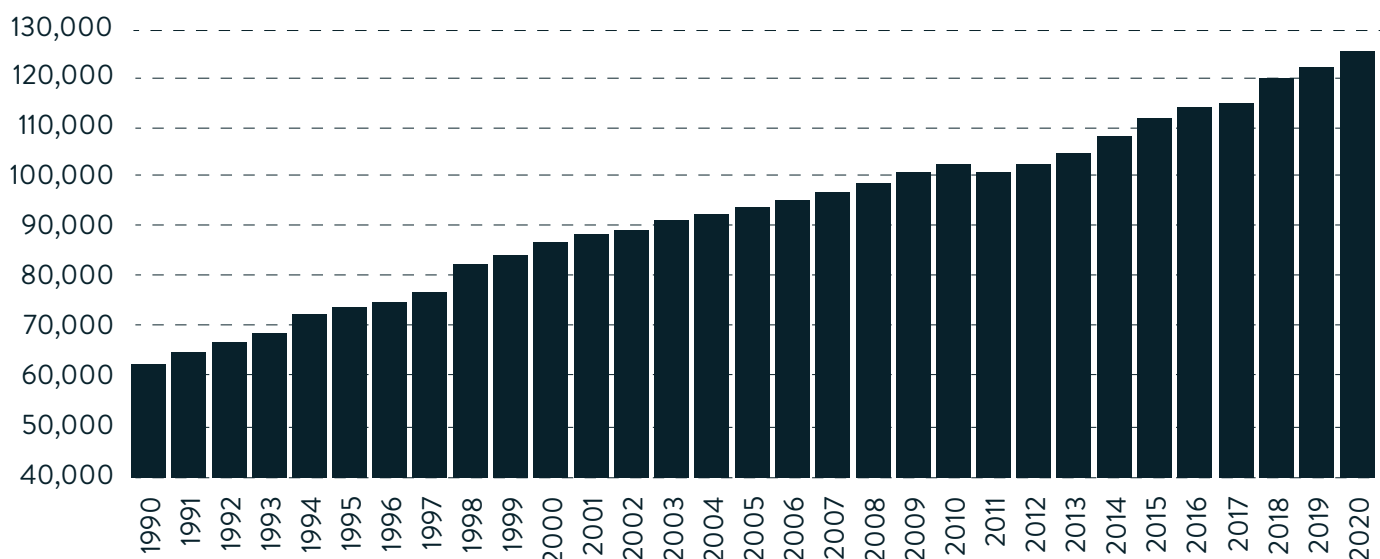


COMPETITIVE POSITION: WAGES AND EMPLOYMENT

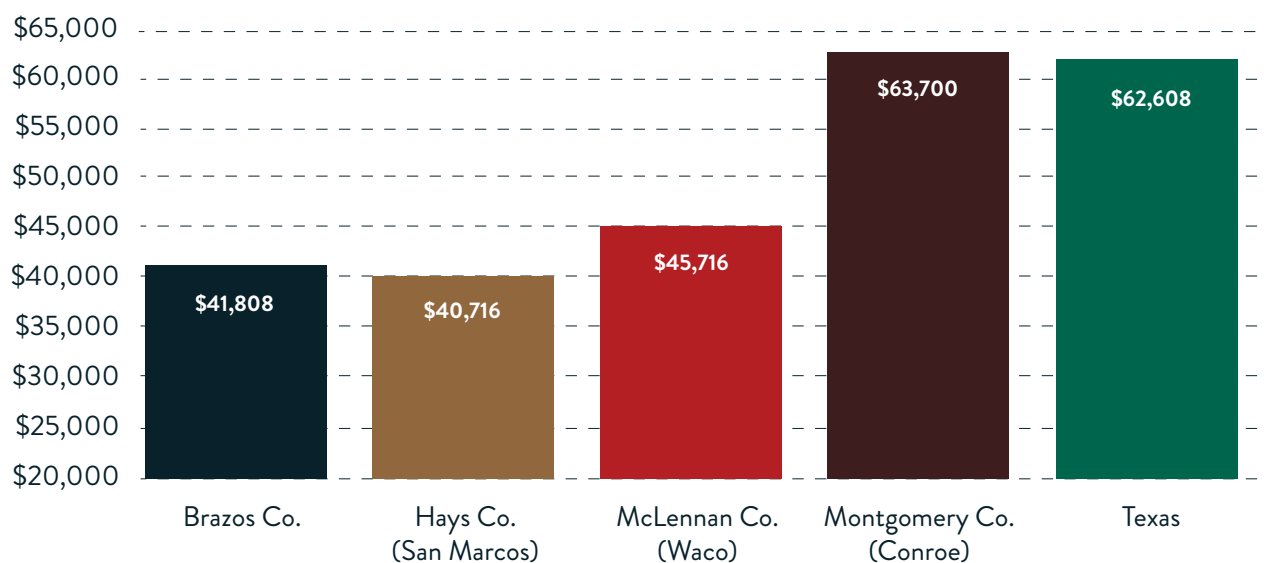
While the number of jobs continues to grow, Brazos County's employment base maintains lower wage levels in comparison to benchmark communities.

- Wage levels supported by Brazos County businesses are below nearly all peer communities and are 49% below the average wage for Texas.
- Large employment concentrations in the Retail sector and Accommodations and Food Services sectors lower overall wages across all employment sectors.
- The most recent figures show that the College Station Bryan MSA has a historically low unemployment rate of 3.0%, the lowest rate since 1969.
- The unemployment rate, in addition to the lower wages in Brazos County, reflect a high degree of underemployment in College Station.
- As College Station recruits industries to the market, focus should be placed on recruiting jobs that will raise the average annual wage.
- The tightness of the existing market means attracting employers that need hundreds of workers may be challenging.
- Instead, opportunities that feature fewer numbers of employees, as well those that can take more advantage of the student population, should find success.

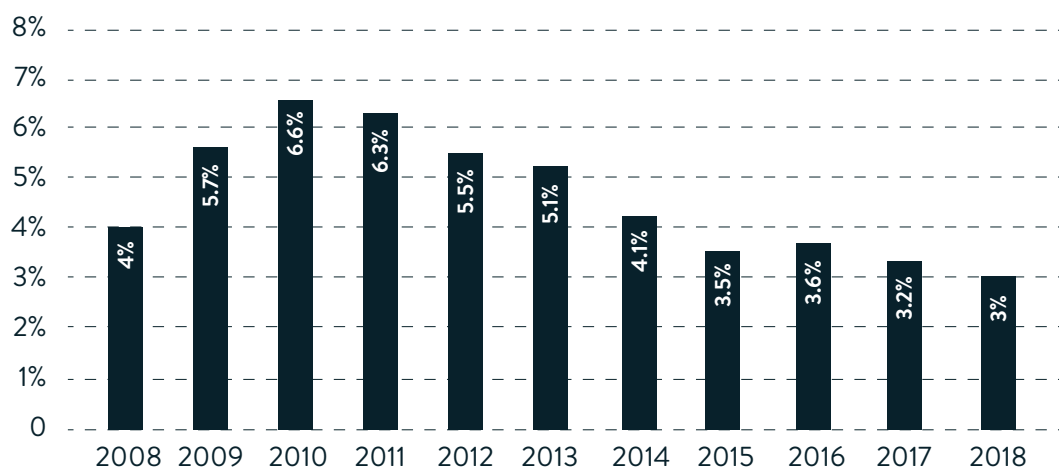
F4 College Station-Bryan Annual Jobs



F5 Average Wage Comparison, 2019



F6 MSA Unemployment by Year





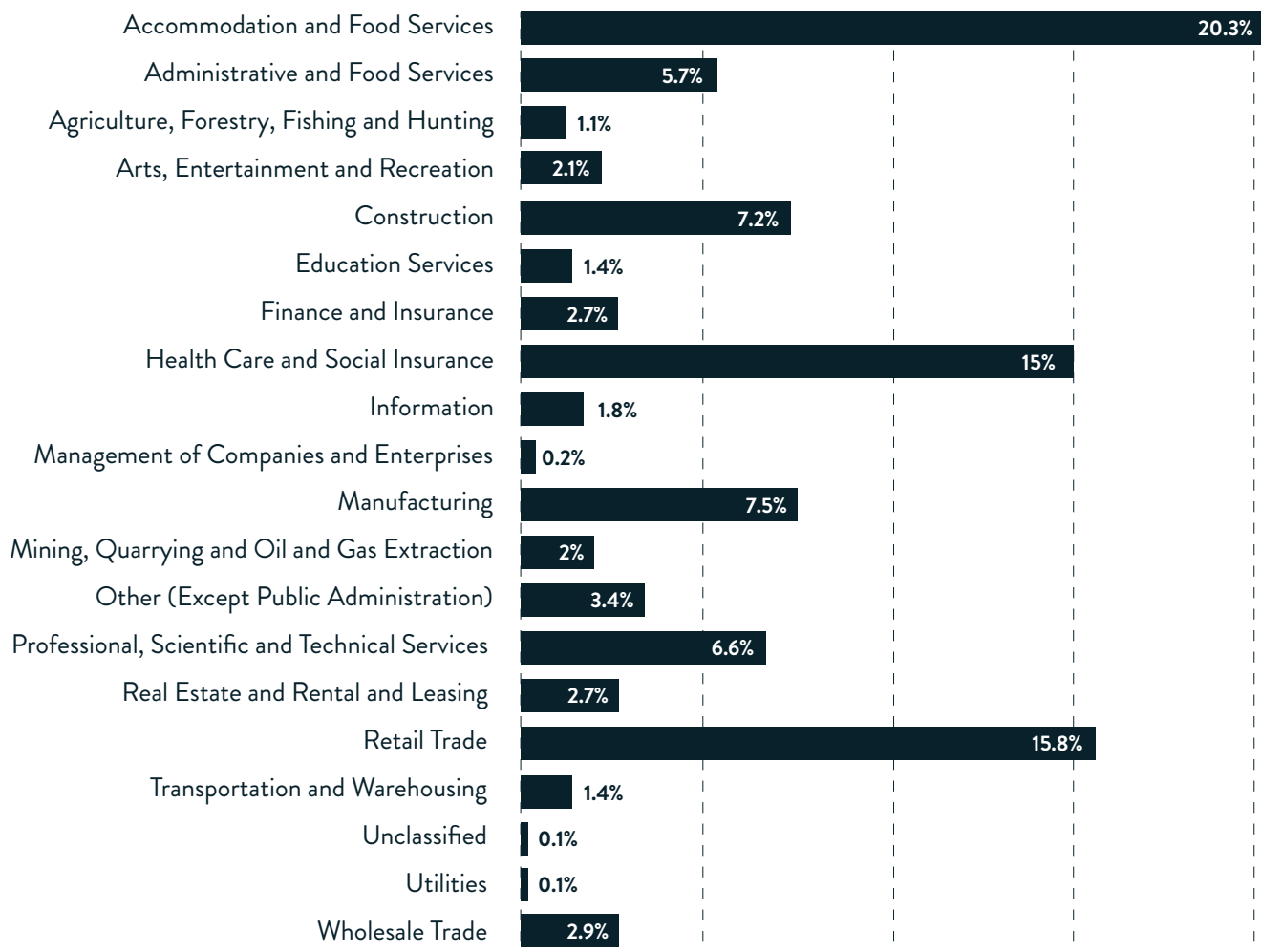
COMPETITIVE POSITION: INDUSTRY CONCENTRATION

While a large share of College Station's job base is contained in non-primary industries, the city has done a good job of retaining a primary industry presence in the Manufacturing sector and Professional & Technical Services.

- College Station's industry mix includes primary and non-primary industries.
- Primary industry presence is desirable because such industries export goods and services outside the region and import wealth.
- Employment in primary industries generally requires higher skill/education levels and supports higher wages.
- The top five sectors by employment are: (1) Accommodation and Food Services, (2) Retail Trade, (3) Health Care and Social Assistance, (4) Manufacturing, and (5) Construction.
- While College Station-Bryan has historically been dominated by government jobs, data indicates a shift to a higher concentration in private industry jobs.
- The highest concentration of jobs in College Station are in Accommodation and Food Services and Retail Trade. While both are needed, they add to the downward trend in wage averages in Brazos County.
- Focus should be placed on continuing the diversification in employment with a heavier emphasis on jobs that leverage College Station skills advantages while helping to raise overall wages.

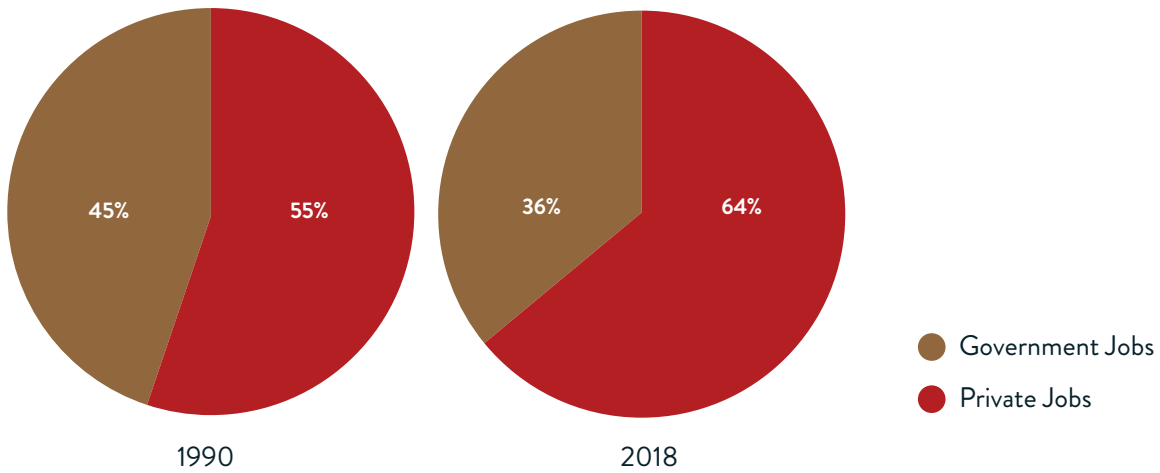


F7 Private Sector Employment Breakdown Brazos County (2018)





F8 College Station-Bryan Employment by Industry (Percentage of Jobs)

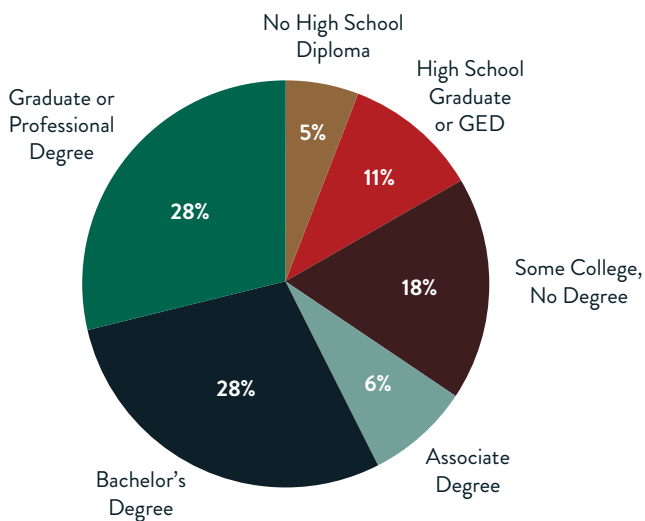


COMPETITIVE POSITION: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

College Station and Brazos County residents enjoy higher educational attainment levels compared to peer communities. This is not surprising given the presence of Texas A&M and its ability to provide a steady flow of highly educated graduates to support the community's economic base.

- College Station's residents have the highest educational attainment of similar communities with over 50% of the population (age 25+) with at least a bachelor's degree.
- Only 5% of the city's population lacks a high school diploma.
- National forecasts point to knowledge-based industries supporting a significant amount of future economic growth.
- College Station's high education levels are one of its top marketing assets to companies in constant search of highly educated workers.

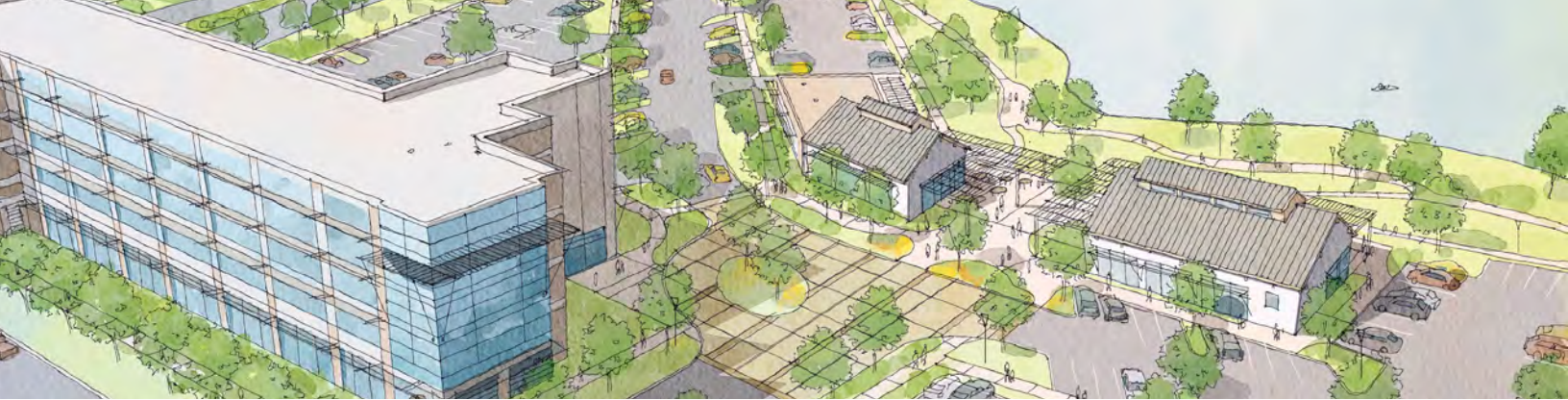
F9 Educational Attainment for Population 25+ in 2018



OUR ADVANTAGE

In summary, the market continues to experience steady growth, with specific advantages tied to the overall skills and talent of the workforce as well as the strong growth in population in the prime years for employment. College graduates can be a long-term advantage if opportunities exist to add additional high-end jobs to the market.





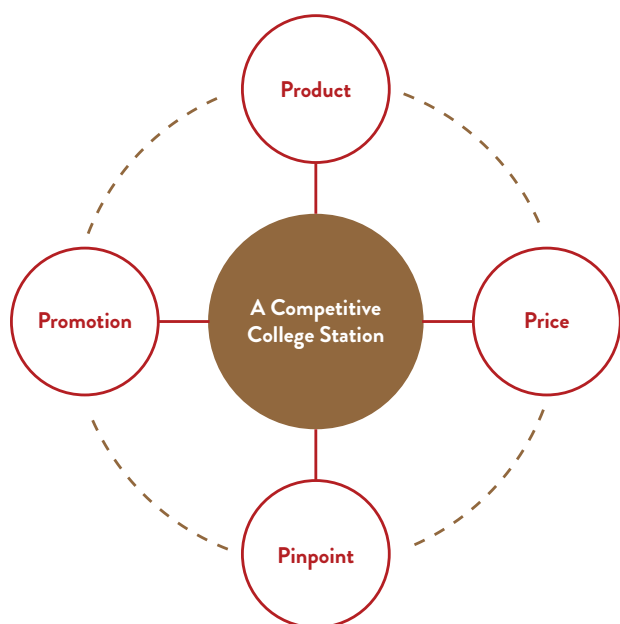
III. OVERALL STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

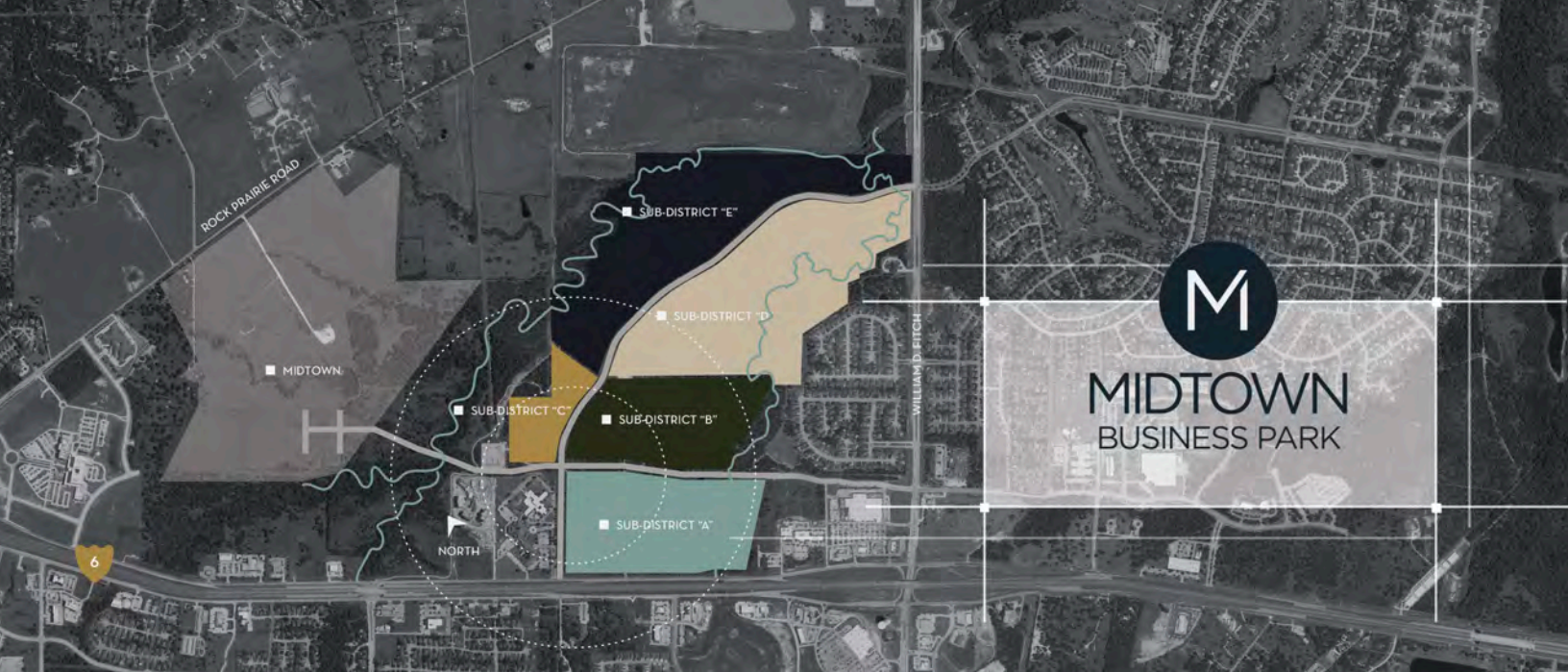
The plan's framework is rooted in enhanced competitiveness and market awareness.

Successful economic development requires a complete, coordinated, and connected program. For College Station to compete and locate industry, attention must be paid to these four central elements.

- A. **Product**—The facilities, sites, and infrastructure available to prospects, particularly those needing larger sites with appropriate zoning and/or on-site amenities.
- B. **Price**—The prospect's total costs associated with the community and the ability of the locality to offset those costs with incentives, available development-ready sites, workforce training, fast-track permitting, and other initiatives.
- C. **Pinpoint**—Enhanced targeting to streamline efforts and match community strengths with company and individual needs.
- D. **Promotion**—Effective communication of competitive advantages to targeted audience.

A Competitive College Station





Since 2016, Economic Development staff has sought to address and tackle these four elements. Accomplishments include:

PRODUCT, PRICE, AND PROMOTION: MIDTOWN BUSINESS PARK

To ensure there are adequate ready-to-go sites for investment opportunities of a certain scale, the city worked diligently to develop a master plan for 200+ acres on Highway 6 that work included:

- Creation and adoption of Midtown Master Plan—implementation ongoing.
- Capital funding requests submitted for Midtown Business Park development in four phases.
- Major infrastructure including the construction of Midtown Drive, construction of electric facilities along Midtown Drive, and creating the availability of public water and sewer services has been completed.
- Co-branding and signage developed with adjacent Midtown City Center development.
- Co-branding efforts with adjacent city regional ballpark—Texas Independence Ballpark Midtown College Station.
- Marketing material developed for the overarching Midtown area.
- Preliminary Plan approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- Street name changes within and surrounding MBP to create a branded area.
- Issued RFP for 57-acre commercial tract fronting Highway 6 in the center of the park.
- Sub-District A and B tracts are active on the market, with accompanying marketing material developed for each lot.
- Presented Midtown as site options for a variety of state RFP responses.
- Price reduction for development due to planning for infrastructure and development readiness.

- Determine path forward on Sub-District A RFP.
- Create and place temporary signage.
- Fund, design, and construct Capital Project Phases 1-4.
- Create Covenants and Restrictions.
- Establish a Property Owners Association.
- Set up TIRZ Board and encourage county participation.
- Design a separate Midtown page on the economic development website.
- Continue marketing, including in RFP responses when appropriate, and meeting with potential buyers.





PRODUCT, PRICE, AND PROMOTION: COLLEGE STATION BUSINESS CENTER

To increase the opportunity to meet demand for smaller end users on existing city land, the staff focused on these changes to the existing city business center:

- 30-acre tract at Gateway Blvd. divided into five smaller tracts.
- Preliminary plan and final plat approved for five smaller tracts.
- Sold seven-acre lot to FedEx for a \$10 million ground facility, made possible by subdividing the larger tract.
- Real estate brochures created to market remaining tracts.
- All remaining tracts are actively on the market.
- New signage renderings created and capital funding project request submitted.
- Presented College Station Business Center to have site options for a variety of state RFP responses.

ONGOING INITIATIVES:

- Design and place new “for sale” signage.
- Fund and construct new permanent signage per capital funding request.
- Design a separate College Station Business Center page on the economic development website.
- Shared maintenance agreements.
- Continue to market, include in RFP responses when appropriate, and meet with potential buyers.

PRODUCT, PRICE, AND PROMOTION: SCIENCE PARK

To highlight an existing light industrial facility that is underperforming and not utilized to its fullest potential, as well as to highlight new shovel-ready sites for research and high-tech manufacturing in College Station, staff has:

- Entered into a 10-year performance-based Economic Development Agreement in which the property owner can receive tax rebates based on additional property valued added in 2015, helping to make the property more financially attractive.
- Presented Science Park as a site option for a variety of state RFP responses.

ONGOING INITIATIVES:

- Highlight Science Park on the economic development website.
- Continue to market and include in RFP responses.

PRODUCT, PRICE, AND PROMOTION: BIOCORRIDOR

To promote a destination for education, research, development, commercialization, and production of innovative technologies to improve global health, College Station and Bryan entered into the BioCorridor InterLocal Cooperation and Joint Development Agreement in 2011. Since then College Station has:

- Entered into an Economic Development Agreement with Fujifilm Diosynth for a \$70 million capital investment, 100 full-time jobs, and a payroll no less than \$6 million annually.
- Staff is working with Fujifilm Diosynth on an announced expansion consisting of \$120 million capital investment and 100 jobs.
- Entered into an Economic Development Agreement with Viasat for a \$20 million capital investment, 150 new full-time jobs and an additional payroll of \$7.6 million.
- Marketed the BioCorridor and presented as a site option for a variety of state RFP responses.

ONGOING INITIATIVES:

- Continue working with Fujifilm Diosynth on their expansion process.
- Continue marketing the BioCorridor.

PROMOTION: RECRUITMENT

To stay in front of prospects and their advisors, as well as close specific deals, the staff undertook these activities:

- Executed Economic Development Agreements with ViaSat, Fujifilm Diosynth, Strategic Behavioral Health, Science Park, and StataCorp to locate or expand in College Station.
- Identified and promoted private assets throughout College Station.
- Partnered with Texas A&M University (TAMU) to develop an industry recruitment strategy that recognized strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and specific industries for direct outreach.
- Hosted the 7th annual America's Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ACE), a week-long international reverse trade mission that provided an opportunity to promote economic development in Central Texas.
- Created the ED Marketing Framework for College Station—evaluated current conditions and competitiveness and targeted industry selection and optimization.
- Developed “Check Out College Station” marketing campaign and promoted in Site Selectors and Texas Real Estate magazines.
- Expanded recruitment efforts with the Brazos Valley Economic Development Corporation (BVEDC), collaborating with TAMU when appropriate.
- Attended site selector events in Indianapolis, Plano, Dallas, Chicago, and Houston.
- Initiated a working group with area's hospital administration group to develop a master plan for the medical district.



CITY OF COLLEGE STATION
Home of Texas A&M University®

Check Out College Station

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- ✓ **ACCESS TO THE TEXAS MARKET**
More than 70% of Texas' population resides within a 3-hour drive.
- ✓ **EDUCATED WORKFORCE**
62% of the population has a post-secondary degree.
- ✓ **SHORT COMMUTE TO WORK**
15-minute travel time across College Station.
- ✓ **RESEARCH COLLABORATION**
\$922 million invested annually in research at Texas A&M University.
- ✓ **ELITE SCHOOL DISTRICT**
School district ranks in top 2% in Texas.

**SHOVEL-READY SITES
AVAILABLE NOW.**

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- Created “**All Up In Your Business**” podcast to highlight retail and industry happenings.

ONGOING INITIATIVES:

- Complete redesign of the economic development website.
- Continue marketing College Station in publications where appropriate.
- Continue meetings with hospital administration to market the region’s healthcare attributes.
- Continued outreach efforts in conjunction with BVEDC.

PINPOINT: RETAIL AND INDUSTRY

To refine and focus prospect opportunities from the commercial and retail sectors, staff undertook the following activities.

- Target industry strategy adopted by Brazos Valley Economic Development Corporation, which aligns with 2017 Economic Development Marketing Framework developed by Greyhill Advisors.
- Targets refer to small to midsize firms that stress applied engineering and product development across a range of industries that also dovetail with research excellence in the market.
- Initiated a Retail Recruitment Program that includes a market analysis, identification of leakage areas, targeted retailers, and ongoing recruitment to our market.
- Developed a specialized website/landing pages for potential retailers.
- Adopted an informal retail incentive policy to incentivize retailers to locate here.
- Attended state and national trade shows designed for direct retail recruitment annually to connect face-to-face with retailers and interested retailers and developers.
- Located several retailers on “target retailer” list, including Home Goods, At Home, Snooze Breakfast Eatery, Five Guys Burgers and Fries, Dunkin Donuts, and more.
- Initiated commercial preservation strategies, including city-initiated rezonings, to preserve commercial development opportunities in key locations.
- Successfully completed five of eight commercial rezonings and proposed city-initiated land use amendments (final three in progress).

ONGOING INITIATIVES:

- Complete city-initiated rezoning projects and potentially identify other key commercial development and redevelopment opportunities to pursue.
- Complete BVEDC’s Target Industry Strategy implementation process.

The Brazos Valley is home to a competitive mix of assets that afford it opportunities to compete for some of the most attractive investments in Texas and the U.S. Although the region houses one of the nation's largest universities and research institutions, the regional economy has not leveraged this advantage to the fullest extent. In 2019, the BVEDC conducted a review of industry attraction options (targeting study) to match the regions assets with the growing technology and service sectors. As the region better aligns with existing and statewide assets, future job growth can focus increasingly on high-end jobs and investments in three primary clusters: **Applied Research and Development, Professional and Technical Services, and Engineered Materials and Components.**

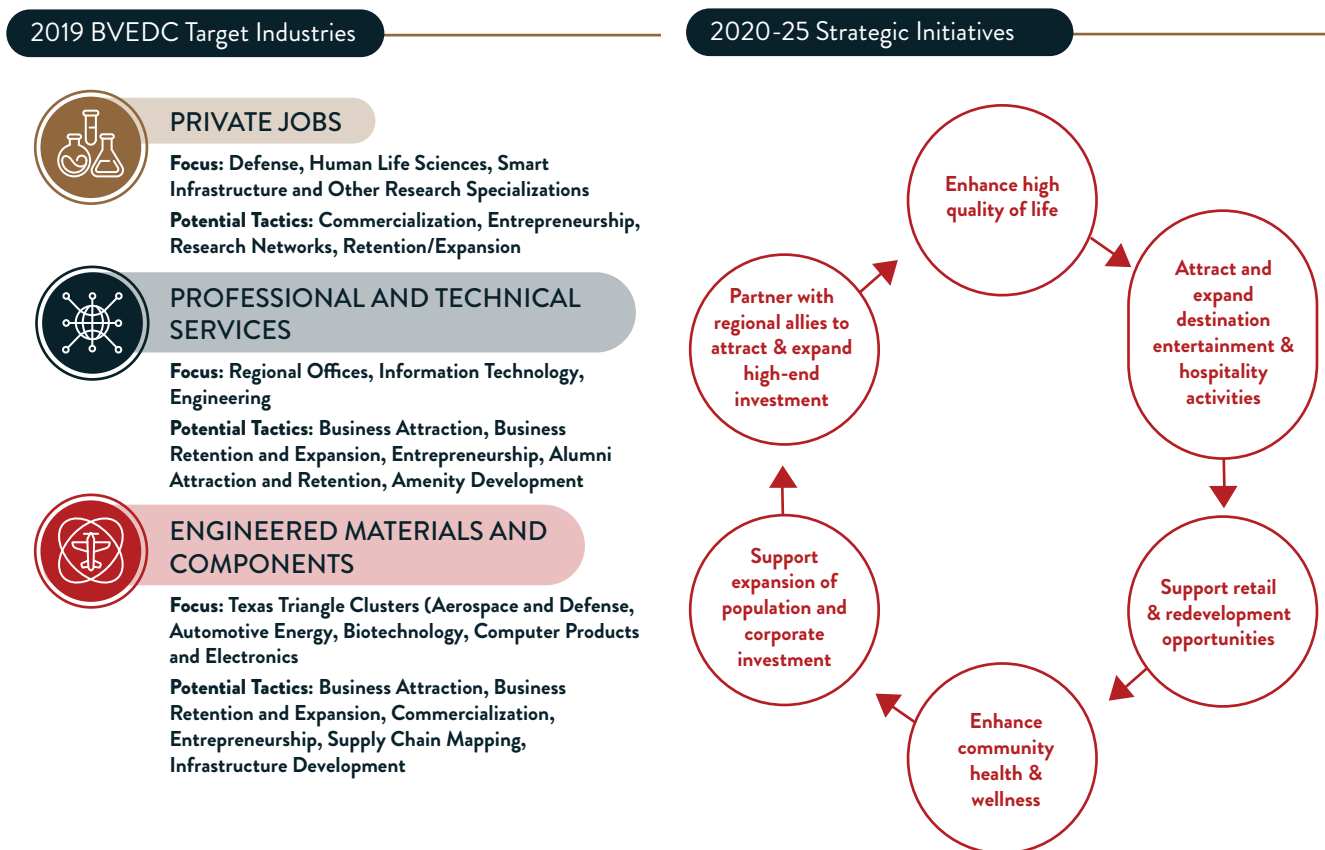
The city supports these targets and will partner with BVEDC to identify and recruit opportunities in these sectors.

IV. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN STRATEGIES 2020-2025

The following strategies and actions are the key focus for the next five years of the plan.

They were developed with an understanding of the overall competitiveness of the market, as well as the success of past initiatives. Input from over 70 community stakeholders also figured prominently.

The following graphic highlights the six strategic initiatives for 2020-25:



The strategies fall into two main categories:

- **Category I** *Strategic Initiatives are targeted to specific recruitment opportunities for companies, and hospitality and retail industries, along with individuals, who are considering entry into our regional market. The strategies are primarily led by College Station's Economic Development team. Here's a summary:*

CATEGORY I - STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: SUPPORT AND PARTNER WITH REGIONAL ALLIES TO ATTRACT HIGH-END INVESTMENT

- Focus efforts on recruiting Aggie-owned and led businesses to College Station.
- Continue partnerships with regional economic development partners such as BVEDC to raise the profile and compete for high-end investment opportunities.
- Maintain direct dialogue with existing businesses to aid in their abilities to expand their presence in the community.
- Focus on retaining students by connecting them with internships, and post-graduation employment.
- Engage in frequent communication and cooperation with Texas A&M and the Texas A&M System, especially regarding opportunities in the private sector (e.g. RELIS).

CATEGORY I - STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: SUPPORT RETAIL DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Continue to promote the city's market opportunities to retailers and developers trying to enter the local market on the economic development website.
- Develop retail reinvestment strategies to enhance mixed-use opportunities and commercial area upgrades.
- Ensure land use planning and development regulations provide for adequate ability to respond to market opportunities.
- Use financial and other incentives to aid underperforming or underutilized business sites when appropriate.
- Start retail business retention and expansion (BRE) visits to encourage growth and additional locations.
- Pursue retail entertainment opportunities.
- Consider establishment of a gateway improvement incentive program.
- Encourage retail redevelopment where ample infrastructure exists.
- Seek retail opportunities in close proximity to city assets (e.g. Texas Independence Ballpark and Veterans Park).

CATEGORY I - STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: SUPPORT EXPANSION AND RELOCATION OF CORPORATE INVESTMENT AND PEOPLE

- Continue to promote market opportunities to companies, realtor/brokers, and site selectors to attract of high-end jobs and investment in biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, and other key industries that can utilize our highly skilled workforce.
- Coordinate outreach to these sectors through direct city marketing as well as regional partners such as Texas A&M and BVEDC.
- Ensure land use planning and development regulations provide adequate opportunities to respond to market opportunities.
- Ensure necessary infrastructure and public services are adequate and available when needed to serve development opportunities.
- Support infrastructure to ensure critical sites (e.g. Midtown) are ready for development.

- Highlight business parks and other available sites on the economic development website.
- Maintain dialogue with existing business to support their expansion.
- Pursue Foreign Trade Zone designation for sites in College Station.
- Advance efforts to retain students post-graduation and re-attract Aggies of all ages.
- Directly contact U.S. market areas with large senior populations that are considering relocation and communicate College Station's many advantages.

CATEGORY I - STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: SUPPORT ATTRACTION AND EXPANSION OF DESTINATION ENTERTAINMENT AND HOSPITALITY ACTIVITIES

- Expand and enhance city and partner facilities to attract athletic, cultural, and business events.
- Expand partnerships with hospitality advocacy groups and providers (EBCS, Texas A&M) to target and promote select events.
- Tie those opportunities to strategies to augment existing venues such as Wolf Pen and select areas such as the Northgate District.
- Partner with and strengthen existing events in the community and on campus.
- Combine entertainment recruitment efforts with TAMU wherever possible.
- Explore retail opportunities surrounding athletic complexes.
- Focus on mid-week business conferences and meetings (corporate tourism).
- Seek ways to enhance the use of and activities at Wolf Pen Creek.
- Highlight city assets such as Northgate and Wolf Pen Creek as viable entertainment venues.



- *Category II Strategic Initiatives will help ensure that the overall goals of the Plan are supportive—in a broad sense—of all the public, business and citizen-related initiatives in the city's entire Comprehensive Plan. Here are some of those major activities in which Economic Development will participate:*

CATEGORY II - STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE

- Continue to promote enhanced mobility options for residents and visitors.
- Seek high quality entertainment and arts opportunities for residents and visitors.
- Support walkable development with a concentration of activities.
- Promote enhanced flight options at Easterwood Airport.
- Message quality of life amenities to the community and beyond.
- Recruit a variety of internet service providers to community.
- Focus on land use planning and redevelopment opportunities surrounding campus and in key corridors.
- Create and maintain high quality and diverse employment opportunities.

CATEGORY II - STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: ENHANCE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- Support hospital systems in their efforts to grow and diversify medical facilities and service offerings (mental health, wellness programs).
- Ensure land use planning and development regulations provide adequate options to respond to market opportunities.
- Maintain ongoing dialogue with providers to aid in their ability to expand their presence in the community.
- Ensure connectivity between city-sponsored health, wellness, and fitness programs and the regional medical community.
- Strategically use incentives to attract key medical services and aid existing providers in their ability to expand services (e.g. Strategic Behavioral Health).
- Highlight city's medical infrastructure as a recruitment tool on the economic development website.
- Consider complimentary medical uses around major hospitals.
- Maximize city assets such as walking and biking trails.

V. SPECIFIC AREAS FOR IMMEDIATE WORK

While section IV outlines the overall strategies Economic Development will support in the next five years, several items represent specific projects Economic Development will undertake in 2020-2021 that are consistent with the overall strategic framework. Here are a few of the initiatives:

ENHANCE AWARENESS OF COLLEGE STATION AND ALL ITS ASSETS WITH IMPROVED MARKETING

The overall economic development program needs to build on its 2019 efforts to “Check out College Station.” Better knowledge of the market will help interested parties fully grasp the advantages the market offers. Much of this can be done through improved information and content on the Economic Development website as well as targeted outreach at marketing events.

- Additional advantages College Station can provide for prospects seeking new locations.
- Expanded information regarding real estate options such as the Midtown Business Park, College Station Business Center, and other priority development areas.
- Articulate benefits for possible relocating targets that include specific populations (retirees, young professionals) as well as businesses that are building blocks for a more competitive market.
- Highlight quality of life amenities in College Station (e.g. medical infrastructure, school district, arts and entertainment).

ENCOURAGE REDEVELOPMENT IN UNDER-PERFORMING AREAS WHERE APPROPRIATE

Staff will focus efforts on encouraging redevelopment in areas that already have sufficient infrastructure capacity but where the existing use is underperforming. An example of this is the redevelopment on University Drive to Embassy Suites. Before the development



of Embassy Suites, the total assessed value was \$836,530. The current assessed value is \$20,346,232. The property went from paying an annual city tax of \$3,785.30 to \$108,774.62, a significant increase in revenue for the city. Similar examples exist in the Northgate area. In considering redevelopment opportunities, staff also considers ways to enhance the compatibility of redevelopment projects in blending appropriately with existing neighborhoods. Areas of focus include University Drive, Texas Avenue, and Harvey Road.

AMPLIFY EXISTING EVENTS AND ASSETS

Events - With the BCS Marathon gearing up for its 10-year celebration in December and numerous Christmas events around the city during the holidays, staff should work to market College Station as a Christmas destination. The goal would be to tie those activities together into an overall promotion that leverages a wide number of events such as Christmas in the Park, George Bush Library Tree Lighting Ceremony, BCS Christmas Parade, Santa's Wonderland, Aggeland Safari, and Spirit Ice Arena to create an overall Christmas package. Additionally, TAMU Athletics is working to utilize their athletic venues for more than just sporting events, and their facilities should be incorporated where possible.



Assets - The city has strategically invested in the Wolf Pen Creek and Northgate districts. Efforts should be placed on maximizing on those investments as much as possible. In the immediate future, the city should actively advertise the Northgate surface lot and Wolf Pen Creek venue as viable entertainment venues on the economic development website. Long-term planning should be utilized to enable the venues to operate at their highest and best use.



RECRUITING AGGIE-OWNED AND LED BUSINESSES

Texas A&M graduates identify strongly with their university and College Station. Equally notable, Texas A&M graduates are creating and leading many successful businesses in Texas and throughout the country. Attention should be placed on recruiting Texas A&M-led and owned businesses to their beloved alma mater. Relocating from a congested metropolitan area and expanding businesses to College Station where there are numerous ways to tap into the talent and research at Texas A&M should be some of the selling points. The city should work with the Association of Former Students to advertise in the Texas Aggie magazine and create direct outreach opportunities with former students to include in-town meetings for alumni to experience the many ways College Station has grown. A quarterly outreach newsletter should also be considered.



BETTER DEFINING THE COLLEGE STATION RECRUITMENT SWEET SPOT FOR COMPANIES

Based on the target industry work previously conducted by the BVEDC and the city, staff will continue to refine the precise business opportunities that best fit College Station from the broader industry clusters.

City staff and partners will continue to identify and recruit specific companies that can take full advantage of the assets at Texas A&M, the overall workforce, and the business climate advantages.

As those companies enter the market, they will help build critical mass allowing further development of the workforce already in

place as well as expansion of supporting businesses, further retail and service offerings, and related mixed-use development options.

Taken together, these new businesses will create more opportunities and stimulate existing business expansion while supporting the community's overall growth objectives.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION WITH OUR PARTNERS

The immediate and long-term success of the plan is dependent on the city's synergy with several partners.

The Texas A&M University and System, Brazos Valley Economic Development Corporation, Experience Bryan-College Station, and the Chamber of Commerce, join the city to represent, represent the largest cross section of the community's stakeholders. Those organizations have the most to gain from the plan's successful implementation. Communities work more efficiently and effectively when everyone works together to achieve economic growth and productivity. A description of what each organization offers is summarized below along with their unique roles.

TEXAS A&M (SYSTEM AND CAMPUS)

Texas A&M is among the world's leading research institutions. With research expenditures greater than \$920 million in FY 2019, the university ranks in the top 20 based on a survey conducted by the National Science Foundation. With more than 200 centers and institutes engaged in tackling some of society's most pressing challenges, the breadth and depth of the research enterprise is among the nation's best.



With more than 60,000 students at its main campus and over 400,000 alumni worldwide, the university's contribution to workforce development and constant supply of highly trained graduates can not be overstated. The city will continue to coordinate with Texas A&M on connecting current and former students to job opportunities in the market. In addition, wherever possible the city will be interested in coordinating and connecting business opportunities with university resources, especially market-facing programs such as RELLIS.

BRAZOS VALLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (BVEDC)

The Brazos Valley Economic Development Corporation (BVEDC) has made substantial strides over the last five years. It has rebranded, adopted a community economic development strategy, significantly increased the number of private funding partners through Invest Brazos Valley, and continued to produce substantive marketing material for the Brazos Valley as a whole.

College Station is confident in allowing BVEDC take the lead in promoting the region for industry recruitment as it implements the work from the 2019 Targeted Industry Plan. Specific steps to be taken by BVEDC:

- Update economic development marketing materials and Incorporate New Target Sectors.
- Align external Identity for the Brazos Valley to targeted sectors by developing the brand identity in year one of implementation.

- Develop and sustain relationships with site consultants, influencers, and “upstream” partners.
- Develop and implement a direct company recruitment program aligned with targeted sectors.
- Operate a highly targeted outbound marketing program.
- Launch an earned media campaign to strengthen external perceptions of the Brazos Valley.
- Leverage Invest Brazos Valley (IBV) to inform and support economic growth.

While College Station plays a support role in the region’s business recruitment, the city

is the leader when it comes to landing businesses. College Station will take the lead in business park development, guiding businesses through the permitting process and negotiating economic development agreements. College Station will also be directly involved in talent attraction efforts for professionals and retirees.

In its continuing support for and partnership with the City of College Station, the BVEDC is actively engaged in supporting entrepreneurial activities that would further develop the ecosystem



and provide soft landings for spinouts. The BVEDC is proactive in networking with community entrepreneurial organizations such as the local branches of the Small Business Development Center, 1 Million Cups and the Entrepreneurs Organization, along with Women Entrepreneurs of B/CS, Lemonade Day B/CS, and others. The Bryan/College Station Chamber of Commerce will continue to receive BVEDC support in its on-going efforts to enhance entrepreneurial activities in the community. The BVEDC will support public and private efforts to attract real estate partners to provide office and coworking space for rising startups.

Finally, the Brazos Valley EDC, in partnership with public and private partners, is leveraging resources and relationships with Texas A&M University (TAMU) and the Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) to support business attraction, retention and expansion efforts. TAMU is a Category I funding partner of the BVEDC.
















The efforts include:

- Monthly meetings with leaders at TAMUS’s RELLIS campus.
- Engagement with Texas A&M Technology Commercialization, including supporting companies spinning out of TAMUS and international trade missions.
- Coordination with the TAMU Career Center to connect local companies with soon-to-be-graduates.
- Targeted recruitment efforts with Aggie-owned and Aggie-led companies.
- Presenting prospective companies with the wide-range of research and collaborative opportunities presented by TAMU and the TAMUS.
- Through relationship building with leaders at institutes and agencies, taking advantage of connections when industry is brought into our community.

College Station will work with BVEDC to ensure these relationships are an integral part of the overall economic development strategy.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Chamber of Commerce has been successful in uniting businesses and community leaders in College Station and Bryan. Membership has reached 1,550 and its network continues to grow with new businesses joining monthly. The Chamber not only hosts successful networking functions, they also host educational opportunities through events like the Economic Outlook Conference and Leadership Brazos. The Economic Development department has added a third position to focus on supporting the Chamber of Commerce as a city liaison to the business community.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	City of College Station	BVEDC	Texas A&M	Chamber of Commerce	EBCS
Attract new business development					
Enable business expansion					
Enhance relations with allies					
Increase tourism and hospitality					
Increase brand awareness					

EXPERIENCE BRYAN COLLEGE STATION (EBCS)

Experience Bryan College Station markets the Brazos Valley as a destination for conventions, sports tourism, leisure travel, trade shows, and other activities. This is done primary through publications, bidding on events and attending recruiting events. Economic development staff will work with EBCS to amplify existing events and assets in College Station, as well as provide support where appropriate to EBCS' tourism recruitment efforts. Economic development staff is also participating in a tourism study RFP being conducted by the city.

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