

Rowlett^{TX}
On the Water. On the Move.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN



VISION

A well-planned lakeside community of quality neighborhoods, distinctive amenities, diverse employment, and cultural charm. The place to live, work, & play.



MISSION

The City of Rowlett provides innovative citizen-centered services that exceed the expectations of our residents, businesses, and guests. Our purpose is to serve.



TARGETED OUTCOME

Foster Economic Vitality

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Dollar value of existing commercial property tax
- Net annual increase of commercial property tax value
- Amount of sales tax generated
- Increase in the number of new businesses
- Number of net new jobs created
- Number of business visits
- Number of commercial permits
- Number of visits with brokers/developers/prospects
- Number of visits with external partners/organizations
- Number of website visitors
- Number of website downloads
- Number of visitors

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Goal 5.1. Create and promote a positive brand identity
- Goal 5.2. Achieve regional, state, and national recognition
- Goal 5.3. Cultivate Sapphire Bay as a premier destination development
- Goal 5.4. Attract specialty retail and restaurant development
- Goal 5.5. Develop North Shore as a mixed-use employment center
- Goal 5.6. Strengthen the City's employment base
- Goal 5.7. Forge public/private development partnerships
- Goal 5.8. Responsibly develop identified economic opportunity areas



FOSTER ECONOMIC VITALITY

Rowlett has a vibrant economy that effectively integrates commercial, retail, and lake-oriented development with rich employment opportunities and a sustainable and diversified tax base.

It is a great time to live in Rowlett



An important insight gained through the strategic planning process was the realization that now is the time to “think big” about the economic future of Rowlett. Due to the rapid pace of growth over the past 10 years, 22.4% of the City’s total landmass is vacant, therefore the opportunity to make significant impacts on the economic future is limited. Furthermore, the strength of the Dallas Fort Worth Metroplex economy is such that Rowlett finds itself in a highly competitive marketplace.

For Rowlett, with its history as a suburban bedroom community, economic vitality for the future of the community hinges on both the expansion of the non-residential tax base and the diversification of housing options. With its strategic access to a major highway network, connection to the Dallas Area Rapid Transit rail line linking Downtown Rowlett to Downtown Dallas, and the adjacency to Lake Ray Hubbard, Rowlett is well-positioned to accomplish both.

The Rowlett 2019 Comprehensive Plan establishes the vision for the physical development of the City from present day to ultimate build-out. It provides for a carefully integrated and thoughtfully planned growth pattern incorporating single family and multi-family residential, office, commercial and retail, light industrial, and downtown and resort destination development.

The City has established both Municipal Management Districts and Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones to facilitate the creative public/private partnerships necessary to realize the vision. Furthermore, the Rowlett Chamber of Commerce is an essential strategic partner in sustaining and expanding the community’s economic vitality. The Chamber’s focus on workforce development, business education, maintaining a welcoming business climate, and its promotion of community spirit and quality of life reinforce the City’s strategic priorities.

This is a 10-year plan and should adjust with market conditions and vision. Having plans in place, however, is not enough. Rowlett will need to continue efforts to raise the community’s profile and reinforce its brand identity at regional, national, and international levels.

Economic Vitality in Rowlett may be evidenced by:

- Successful development of the Sapphire Bay project
- Successful office campus and mixed-use development in North Shore
- Attraction of specialty retail, restaurant, and high-quality commercial projects
- Steady growth in local employment and the creation of high-paying professional jobs
- Creation and leverage of innovative public/private development partnerships



FOSTER ECONOMIC VITALITY GOALS:

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GOALS

Foster Economic Vitality: Rowlett has a vibrant economy that effectively integrates commercial, retail and lake-oriented development with rich employment opportunities and a sustainable and diversified tax base.

5.1 CREATE AND PROMOTE A POSITIVE BRAND IDENTITY

Objectives:

5.1a. Continue to improve and update the Economic Development website to engage existing and future customers

- Maintain website with relevant and current content
- Utilize CoStar or similar third-party software for maintaining a list of available properties
- Maintain database of current businesses
- Pursue IEDC Internet & New Media award for General Purpose Website, and/or other similar awards
- Evaluate interactivity and accessibility and if appropriate, explore ways to improve engagement
- Participate in the City's evolution to digital communication strategy

Performance Measures: Annual number of site visits and downloads

Objectives:

5.1.b. Evaluate the use of social media as a means to further Economic Development efforts

- Develop positive story feeds for distribution as part of a digital communication strategy and other marketing channels
- Evaluate creating social media platforms for each catalyst area (i.e. North Shore, etc.)

Performance Measures: Annual number of social media engagements, tracking # of likes, shares, etc.

Objectives:

5.1.c. Promote Rowlett as a place for people to connect

- Create destination events and gathering places that draw people from Rowlett, the greater region, and the Nation
- Identify signature event(s) that ties into Rowlett's unique water-oriented opportunities (i.e. sail boat regatta, fishing tournament, etc.)

Performance Measures: Annual number of visitors, net change year over year

Objectives:

5.1.d. Create and support opportunity area-specific branding

- Support the city in exploring other rebranding areas not within RR2020 Plan
- Promote development projects that create wayfinding, signage and landscaping that help reinforce the area-specific brand or compliment the Rowlett brand
- Support the city in conducting a study to identify how to effectively promote Rowlett through

GOALS (CONTINUED)



unified and cohesive gateways/signage

- Support projects that prioritize place-making (unique to Rowlett)
- Maintain ED marketing materials to articulate “Why Rowlett” and spell out the value proposition to targeted retailers, office users, entertainment, restaurant and other users
- Continue promotion to end users, brokers and developers through one-on-one meetings, speaking engagements, conferences, webinars and other outlets
- Maintain list of prospects by NAICS and track each sales cycle from start to close (note prospects by opportunity area and targeted prospects based upon recent targeted industry study)

Performance Measures: Annual number of targeted prospects identified, contacted, engaged in ongoing conversations, or have opened a business

5.2 ACHIEVE REGIONAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Objectives:

5.2 Support actions that earn Rowlett regional, state, and national recognition

- Support efforts to maintain recognitions such as “best place to live,” “weather-wise,” and “best small city to relocate to”
- Support efforts to achieve new recognitions such as “All-America City,” “Scenic City,” and “Safe City”

Performance Measures: Annual number of recognitions maintained, and number of new recognitions attained

5.3 CULTIVATE SAPPHIRE BAY AS A PREMIER DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Objectives:

5.3 Cultivate Sapphire Bay as a unique mixed-use destination

- Complete conference center to accommodate business and leisure functions and attract destination events, conventions, and meetings
- Support strategies to complete entertainment and resort amenities
- Recruit and support developers in securing entertainment anchors
- Create a landing page on the ED website that promotes Sapphire Bay as a destination, maintain project information on Rowlett as an entertainment destination
- Create regional and national awareness of the development as a prime office location, maintain a list of premier office and mixed-use developers and jointly market available development sites
- Attract an award-winning hospitality operator that can catalyze the conference center and harness throughput from area visitors and business travelers
- Maintain available hotel statistics regarding market needs and up-to-date data on salient hotel drivers, including new businesses, visitor counts and other information to support hotel attraction
- Pursue Tourism Public Improvement District legislation with the State of Texas
- Catalyze the Urban Residential districts in Sapphire Bay
- Support developers in activating high-quality strategic residential locations, as made available/market ready
- Create and maintain marketing material/pitch book (such as “Why Sapphire Bay”) that creates awareness for entertainment/retail/restaurant destination
- Maintain key retail statistics on the development(traffic counts, retail demand, demographics, etc.)
- Support developer in providing first-class amenities/open space (Crystal lagoons, island entertainment feature, and other project amenities) to create a regional and national destination
- Support the development by attracting high-quality water-oriented operators, including marina amenities, water sports and other complimentary uses
- Support the development with coordination of infrastructure in appropriate phases, including but not limited to public facilities (fire, police) water, sewer, roads, and other utilities needed to service the public amenities and development over time

Performance Measures: New commercial permit valuation, Job creation for businesses located in Sapphire Bay, Annual number of net new visitors

5.4 ATTRACT SPECIALTY RETAIL/RESTAURANT DEVELOPMENT

Objectives:

5.4 Attract specialty retail development within existing and planned retail districts

- Recruit specialty retail, boutique hotel(s), and fine dining
- Promote opportunities that are suitable to unique, destination-oriented, boutique-style businesses
- Provide continuous feedback on opportunities to enhance the suitability of areas to be more attractive to unique retail concepts
- Participate in regional and national conferences that provide information and engagement opportunities with targeted businesses
- Develop and maintain a list of brokers that specialize in high-end and specialty tenants that align with Rowlett’s vision

Performance Measures: Annual number of specialty retail/restaurant contacts identified, contacted, engaged in ongoing conversations, or have opened a business



GOALS (CONTINUED)

5.5 DEVELOP NORTH SHORE AS A MIXED-USE EMPLOYMENT CENTER

Objectives:

5.5 Develop North Shore per the 2019 Comprehensive Plan

- Maintain relationships with key North Shore property owners to reinforce the unified vision and development potential
- Explore the viability of a stadium or destination anchor for concerts, conventions, and competitions
- Support Community Development/Public Works in upgrading/expanding future streets, sewer, water, and other public infrastructure (as needed)
- Explore opportunities and partnerships to attract higher education facilities
- Engage third party marketing support to increase awareness and aid in fostering developer interest
- Create and maintain marketing material/pitch book (such as “Why North Shore”) that creates awareness for an employment center in the region
- Evaluate the need for a “catalyst project” and determine incentive tools needed to attract initial private investment
- Develop a list of qualified national, regional, and local developers/brokers to promote North Shore with an emphasis as an employment center

Performance Measures: New commercial permit valuation, Job creation for businesses locating in North Shore

5.6 STRENGTHEN THE CITY'S EMPLOYMENT BASE

Objectives:

5.6 Determine best practices to retain and create new employment opportunities

- Continue implementing the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program to aid in additional job creation and private investment
- Maintain strategic relationship with the Rowlett Chamber of Commerce, Dallas Regional Chamber, major businesses, and key small businesses
- Support strategic catalyst projects to create places that employers and employees desire to locate
- Support technical training and higher education opportunities to enhance skilled employees
- Explore partnerships with GISD/RISD and others to support workforce training and increase in-demand talent in the region
- Recruit high-quality employer(s) pursuant to the targeted industry study

Performance Measures: Annual number of Business Retention and Expansion visits

5.7 FORGE PUBLIC/PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Objectives:

5.7 Forge Public/Private development partnerships

- Continue existing strategic partnerships to enhance public-private partnership with businesses and other organizations (Rowlett Chamber, NTCAR, DART, TEDC, etc.)
- Create a hospitality program (“concierge”) for future or existing developers to aid in the development process
- Host targeted developers in a “Developer Day” tour highlighting opportunity areas and available properties
- Explore a “Restaurant Recruitment Program” that attracts and promotes restaurant opportunities in Rowlett
- Utilize fiscal impact modeling software to ensure successful and balanced public/private partnerships
- Continuously review the City’s policy statement for Economic Development Incentives and explore innovative tools to advance the vision for key opportunity areas identified in the 2019 Comprehensive Plan
- Explore long-term funding mechanism(s) to support Economic Development Incentives
- Leverage Economic Development resources to support public/private partnerships with local organizations/partners (i.e. ISD, County, EDAB, etc.)
- Explore innovative funding mechanisms that can include partnerships with the Rowlett Chamber, franchisee fees, parking fees, PID & MMD’s and other tools
- Continue to examine existing Economic Development operational structure and review alternative structures to remain competitive in the region and produce long-term results

Performance Measures: Annual number of Public/Private projects, amount of public investment to private investment for each project



GOALS (CONTINUED)

5.8 RESPONSIBLY DEVELOP IDENTIFIED ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Objectives:

5.8 Responsibly develop identified economic opportunity areas

- Continue collaboration with Community Development in developing and activating development plans for remaining opportunity areas in RR2020 and 2019 Comprehensive Plan

5.8.a. Develop Woodside Living District

- Participate in evaluating the Liberty Grove Road alignment & improvements as a connector to the North Shore Commercial District
- Support City in exploring potential secondary access to Community Park
- Coordinate other development opportunities generated from “The Homestead at Liberty Grove” project
- Explore sports tourism related opportunities to activate open space and greenfield areas
- Support activation of quality in-fill office, condo’s, and other commercial projects
- Support the evaluation of Muddy Creek as a recreational amenity (Parks Master plan)

5.8.b. Develop Healthy Living District

- Coordinate development opportunities near Scenic Point Park to ensure compatibility with overall Parks Master plan
- Maintain ongoing conversations with Baylor Scott & White on expansion plans and other medical/commercial opportunities
- Develop a recruitment strategy for additional opportunities once Baylor Scott & White has finalized their master plan
- Develop and maintain relationships with prospects that align with City and Baylor Scott & White master plan vision
- Promote eastern section of the Opportunity Area as destination, anchored by medical offices and services which support Healthy Living district in RR2020 Plan

5.8.c. Shape Signature Gateway District

- Research long-term access options to support development opportunities in Signature Gateway
- Support the future development of the remaining acreage in Signature Gateway
- Appoint Municipal Management District (MMD) Board and evaluate its role in providing funding for maintenance of the public spaces identified in the Form Based Code

5.8.d. Develop a vibrant Village of Rowlett Downtown

- Continue to market and promote area as destination for mixed-use with unique commercial development
- Utilize TIRZ funds for public improvements



- Protect existing investments
- Encourage high quality development
- Support the expansion and maintain strategic infrastructure that can leverage future private investment
- Maintain and promote strategic retailers/restaurants
- Integrate cohesive signage that aligns with citywide way-finding and branding
- Explore opportunities to maintain and promote the heritage of Bankhead Highway as national landmark
- Leverage strategic investments which takes advantage of light rail transit, the regional road network, and existing multi-modal facilities
- Conduct parking management plan to inform timing and strategy of parking needs in context of development velocity
- Implement parking management plan including how to integrate DART/public shared opportunities

5.8.e. Promote and protect the SH 66 and PGBT Corridors

- Maintain high quality development to ensure Rowlett's commercial frontage is first-class and creates a strong identity along Rowlett's major corridors
- Explore targeted merchandising and branding districts along major intersections or nodes to create a sense of place (differentiation)
- Support amendments in policies and operational structures which encourage a quality and character of development that is market-supported yet superior to what exists today
- Provide input and guidance in researching and implementing regulating tools that protect the City in the event future retailers ultimately vacate their buildings (i.e. "go dark" provisions, escrow dollars for demolition, right of first refusal, etc.)
- Create a targeted incentive policy that focuses on the health and vitality of existing retail shopping centers
- Refine incentive policy to expand solutions for infill commercial and redevelopment (Citywide incentive policy)
- Maintain data on existing retail to be proactive in addressing any potential loss of retailers in the City
- Prepare a redevelopment strategy for the reinvention and retention of businesses in these more established commercial locations

Performance Measures: Annual vacancy/occupancy rate, average rental rate

Key Objective or Strategy	Key Output (Activity Level)	Target Outcome	FY2017 Outcome	FY2018 Outcome	FY2019 Outcome
Create and promote a positive brand identity		# web site visits/Year	N/A	N/A	
		# of Downloads/Year	N/A	N/A	
		# Targeted prospects identified and contacted	N/A	N/A	
		# Targeted prospects engaged in ongoing conversations	N/A	N/A	
		# Targeted prospects that have opened a business	N/A	N/A	
Achieve regional, state, and national recognition			N/A	N/A	
Business Retention & Expansion program (existing businesses)	\$ of existing commercial private investment	100 (# business visits)	80 (# business visits)	69 (# business visits)	105 (# business visits)
Diversification of Rowlett's tax base (new commercial investment & taxable sales)	\$ of new commercial private investment	75 (# commercial permits issued)	74 (# commercial permits issued)	149 (# commercial permits issued)	100 (# commercial permits issued)
	\$ of taxable sales	(% budgeted +/- prior actual FY)	2.9% (% actual FY +/- prior actual FY)	5.29% (% actual FY +/- prior actual FY)	0.01% (% actual FY +/- prior actual FY)
Cultivate Sapphire Bay as a premier destination		New Commercial Square Footage	N/A	N/A	
		\$ of new commercial private investment	N/A	N/A	

Key Objective or Strategy	Key Output (Activity Level)	Target Outcome	FY2017 Outcome	FY2018 Outcome	FY2019 Outcome
Strengthen the City's Employment Base	# new businesses	150 (# engagements with broker/development partners)	170 (# engagements with broker/development partners)	177 (# engagements with broker/development partners)	155 (# engagements with broker/development partners)
	# jobs created	150 (# engagements with community partners)	165 (# engagements with community partners)	169 (# engagements with community partners)	138 (# engagements with community partners)

Target Outcome	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19
# Web visits												
# Web downloads												
# Targeted prospects identified												
# Targeted prospects contacted												
# Targeted prospects engaged in conversation												
# Targeted prospects that have opened a business												
# New recognitions attained												
# BRE visits												
# Commercial permits issued												
\$ of taxable sales +/- budgeted taxable sales												

SCORECARDS

Economic Development Success Metrics Scorecard(KPI's)

Number Web Visits



Projected:

Actual:

Number Web Downloads



Projected:

Actual:

Number Targeted Prospects



Projected:

Actual:

Number Targeted Prospects Engaged



Projected:

Actual:

Number Targeted Prospects Made Investment or Opened Business



Projected:

Actual:

Number Awards



Projected:

Actual:

Number Business Visits



Projected:

Actual:

Number Commercial Permits Issued



Projected:

Actual:

\$ Amount Taxable Sales



Projected:

Actual: