



Kingsville, Texas

A Vision for the Future of the Downtown District

Center for Urban and Regional Planning Research - College of Architecture, Construction and Planning
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Preface

The City of Kingsville, founded in 1904, has a rich historic and cultural legacy. Two of the major early ranching empires of South Texas, King Ranch and Kenedy Ranch, are nearby. Kingsville is bordered by two King Ranch Divisions, Santa Gertrudis to the North and West and Laureles to the East. Kenedy Ranch is located a short distance south of Kingsville adjacent to Baffin Bay. In recent years retail and lodging activity has declined in the Downtown District, but the area is still the governmental and cultural center of the City and Kleberg County.

This vision plan examines a number of options designed to improve Kingsville's Downtown District's future by increasing visitor and tourism potential. These options include street, parking and building improvements to the historic Downtown District; improving the connection to Texas A&M Kingsville; and developing a special events center. A potential museum cluster would link the King Ranch Museum with the Train Depot Museum and a possible future children's museum in the vacant Kingsville Publishing Company Building. Recommendations are also made for branding and wayfinding in the Downtown District. Infill development strategies for new housing within walking distance of downtown is also discussed. Many of these ideas surfaced in the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) discussion session held with residents on September 21, 2016.

The intent of this vision plan is to suggest a possible roadmap for future development in the Downtown District and includes an Implementation Plan to provide a framework for long-term

development. Of prime importance is retaining Kingsville's historical and cultural legacy in this process.

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Source: South Texas Archives, James C. Jernigan Library, Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Collection: Kingsville Historic Photographs, Jimmie Dodd Photograph Collection

Introduction

Regional Context

Kingsville, Texas is located in north central Kleberg County in the Coastal Bend portion of the South Texas region. It is the county seat of Kleberg County. The Gulf Coast is approximately 30 miles to the east: specifically, the Upper Laguna Madre, which lies between the coastline and Padre Island. Despite being a fair distance inland, Kingsville is closely linked with the Gulf Coast and its various landforms. Almost all of the portion of Padre Island within Kleberg County is part of the Padre Island National Seashore. The southern border of the County follows Baffin Bay and Laguna Salada and San Fernando Creek flows southeast from Alice, forming the Nueces-Kleberg County border for several miles, and passes just to the east of Kingsville and adjacent to Naval Air Station (NAS) Kingsville before emptying into the Cayo del Grullo only seven miles to the southeast. There are numerous creeks, streams, reservoirs, and irrigation channels in the area.

Kingsville is part of the Kingsville Micropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which includes Kleberg and Kenedy Counties (Fig. 2). The Kingsville Micropolitan Statistical Area is combined with the Alice Micropolitan Statistical Area (Jim Wells County) and the three counties of the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Statistical Area (Aransas, Nueces, and San Patricio Counties) to form the six-county Corpus Christi-Kingsville-Alice Combined Statistical Area.

Kingsville is in a predominantly rural area characterized by ranching and farming. Corpus Christi, the largest city in the region, is about 35 miles to the northeast. Alice, the county

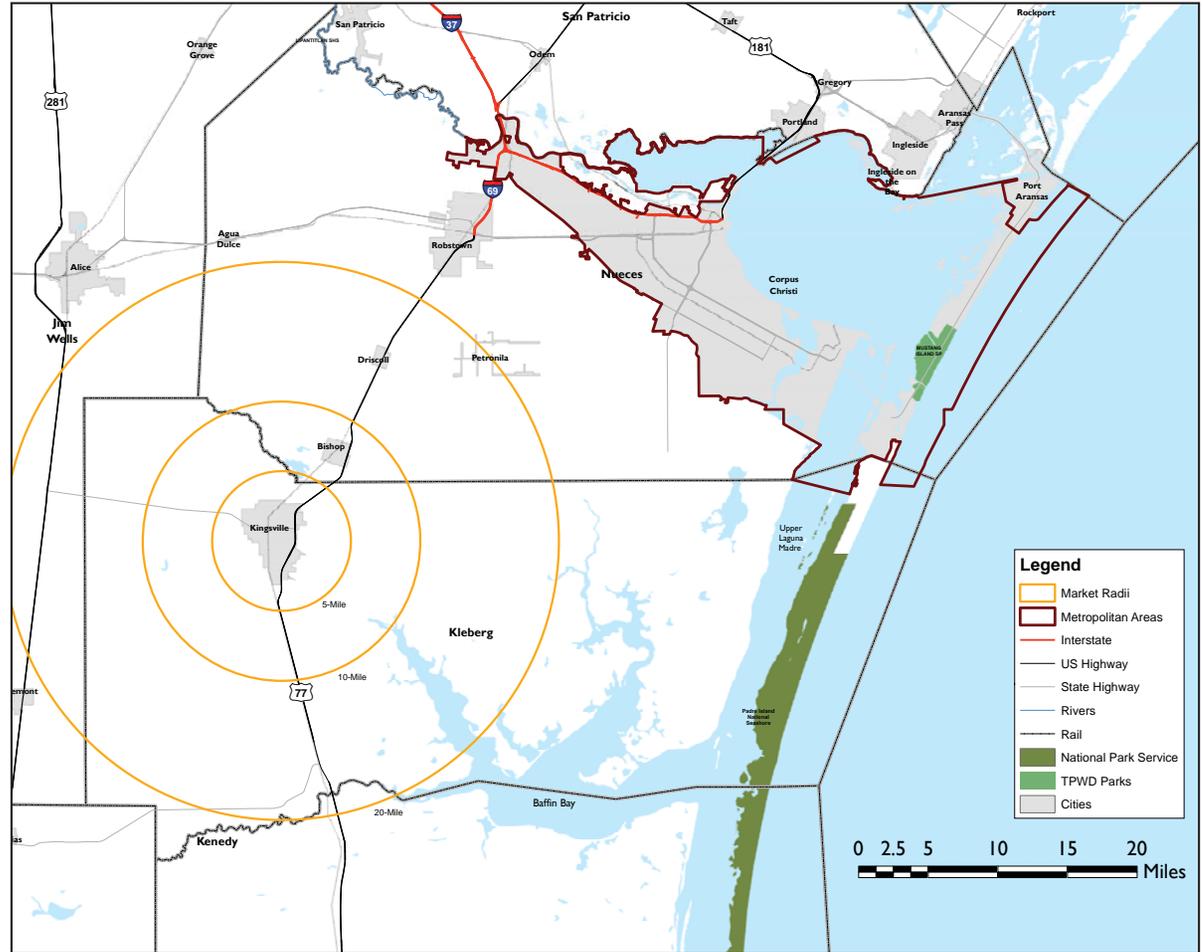


Figure 1: Regional Context Map - Kingsville, TX

Source: ESRI, CURPR

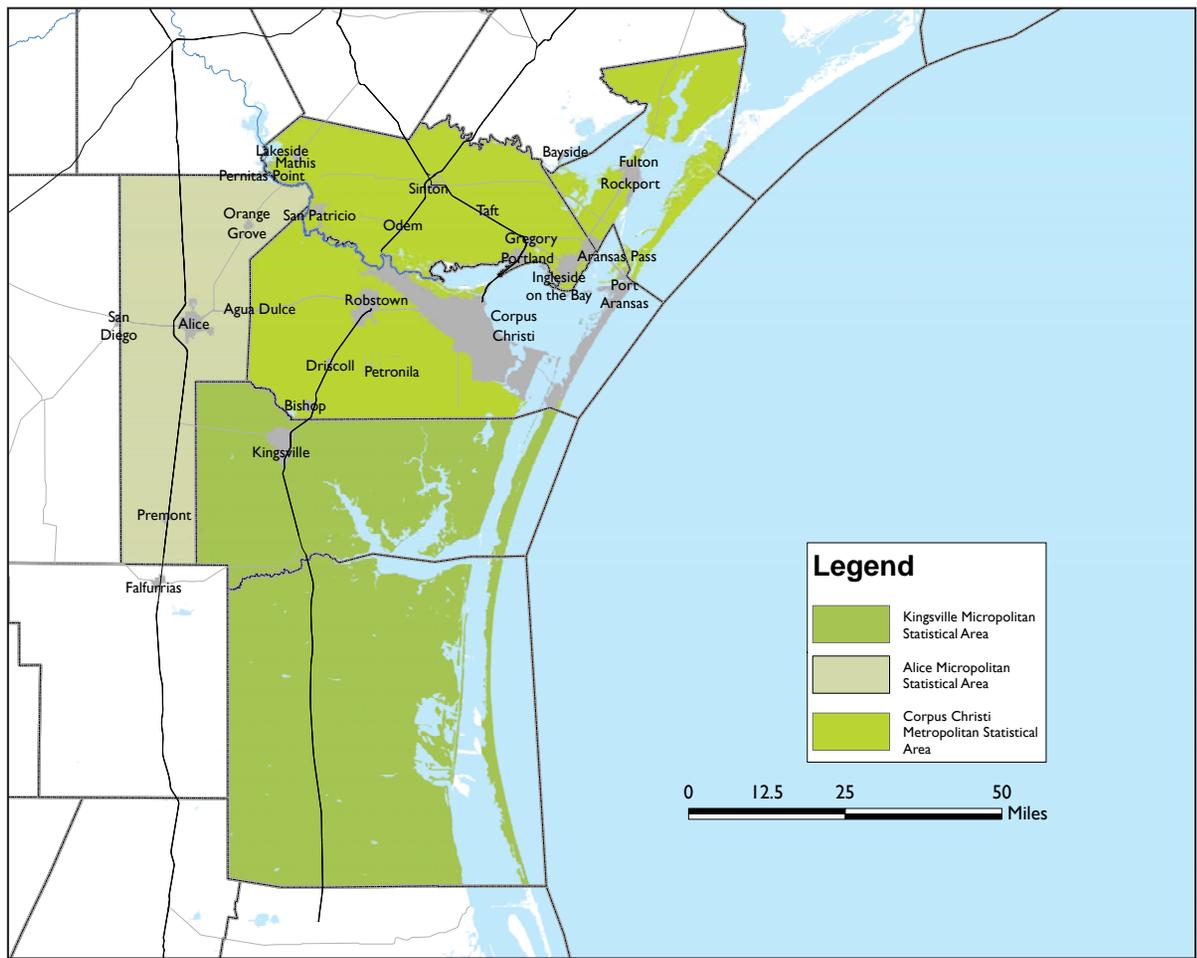


Figure 2: Regional Micropolitan and Metropolitan Statistical Areas

Source: ESRI, CURPR

seat of Jim Wells County, is about 20 miles to the northwest; Falfurrias, the county seat of Brooks County, is 25 miles to the southwest; Sarita, the county seat of Kenedy County, is 20 miles to the south; and Bishop, just across the Nueces County Line, is only six miles to the north.

The terrain is predominantly flat, and, due in part to the proximity of the Gulf of Mexico, the climate is predominantly humid subtropical, with precipitation averaging 26-30 inches a year. The area to the south, including almost all of Kenedy County, is considered “Coastal Sand Plain”; this area is also known as the “Wild Horse Desert”.

Kingsville’s primary market area, as defined by a 5-mile radius seen in Figure 1, only includes Kingsville itself and the closest unincorporated land (most of it in Kleberg County). The secondary market area, within a 10-mile radius, includes the nearby town of Bishop in Nueces County. It is only with the tertiary market area, within a 20-mile radius, that several significant towns are partially included (Alice, Premont, Robstown, Spring Garden, La Paloma-Lost Creek, and Driscoll). However, the last three are within the tertiary market area of Corpus Christi, and it will be difficult for Kingsville to retain its micropolitan status (as opposed to being swallowed by the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Statistical Area) if Corpus Christi expands its urbanized area to the south and southwest.

Historical Background

The Coahuiltecan

Earliest signs of inhabitation of South Texas point to human settlement 11,000 years ago. The Folsom point, found approximately 100 miles to the south of Kingsville, near the Rio Grande, has been dated from 9200 to 8000 BCE. Other archeological finds can be dated from 6000 BCE onward, indicating the possibility of continuous habitation of the region, although it is unknown what connection the Native Americans who inhabited the area at the time of European arrival, the Coahuiltecan, had to these early settlers.

The Coahuiltecan, the name given to a collection of approximately 60 small, independent groups of Native Americans who were loosely similar in language, inhabited the area of Texas from roughly San Antonio south to the Rio Grande, and a large swath of Northern Mexico. The land of the Karankawa (many of whom also shared language similarities with the Coahuiltecan) generally found further north along the coast, often overlapped with that of the Coahuiltecan, and the area that is now Kingsville would likely have been inhabited by both groups at different times. These groups largely made camp near the coast, the mouth of the Rio Grande, and other sources of water, and were semi-nomadic subsistence hunter-gatherers. They foraged for pecans, wild garlic, yucca flowers, and prickly pear cactus. They hunted deer extensively, as well as bison, although they numbered far fewer in this region than in the plains to the north. Small animals like rabbits, armadillos, and javelinas were hunted, and the Coahuiltecan, being close

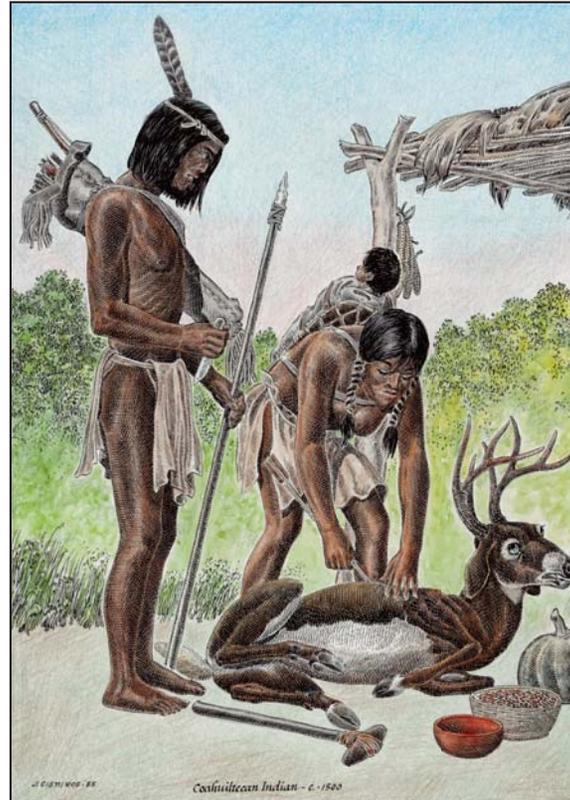


Figure 3: Coahuiltecan Indians c. 1500. Drawing by José Cisneros
Source: Margaret H. McAllen Memorial Archives, Museum of South Texas History

to the coast, were avid fishermen. In the harsh climate of South Texas, even insects, spiders, and snails were eaten regularly.

European Arrival

The earliest European activity in the region was that of Spanish explorers and settlers crossing through between settlements near San Antonio and further south in present-day Mexico. The first Englishmen in the region and Texas in general were likely the survivors of the 1568 Hawkins Expedition: after losing five of his six ships in a battle with the Spanish at Vera Cruz, Sir John Hawkins was forced to put 114 of his men ashore in Northern Mexico, and 26 of these men chose to try their luck heading north. Of these 26, only three reached England again, after traveling through South Texas north all the way to present-day Nova Scotia, facing hostile Native Americans, unknown terrain, and starvation. A Texas Historical Marker on Kleberg Avenue commemorates their likely passing through the area that is now Kingsville.

The area between the Rio Grande and San Antonio was incorporated fully into the Spanish empire beginning in the mid-18th century, which spelled disaster for the Coahuiltecan. They were hard hit by European diseases as well as raids by Apaches and Comanches – Native American groups that had flourished with the introduction of the horse. The Coahuiltecan who survived either assimilated by intermarrying with nearby Spanish settlers or by entering the protection of the missions of South Texas. By the mid-19th century, there were virtually no signs of Coahuiltecan culture remaining in the area.

The Spanish – and later Mexicans – did not establish missions or settlements in the area of South Texas. The severe, arid land – known to early Spanish in the area as “The Desert of the Dead” – was left to individual farmers who were brave enough

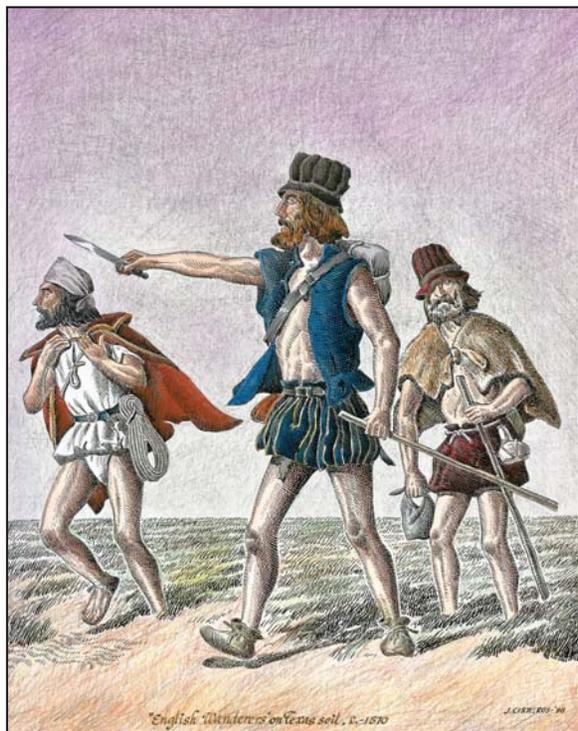


Figure 4: English Wanderers Drawing by José Cisneros
Source: Margaret H. McAllen Memorial Archives, Museum of South Texas History

to attempt to develop the land amidst Native American raids. After Texas's independence, this area fell into the disputed land between Mexico and the Republic of Texas, and it wasn't until the Mexican-American War's end in 1848 that the land formally became part of the United States.

The King Ranch, Railroad, and Founding of Kingsville

In 1853, Captain Richard King, a New York steamboat pilot who served in the Mexican-American War, bought a Spanish land grant of 15,000 acres around the Santa Gertrudis Creek with his business partner, Gideon Lewis. King would continue to buy huge swaths of land in South Texas, eventually personally owning over 500,000 acres by 1885, the time of his death. His wife, Henrietta King, oversaw the ranch with ranch manager Robert Kleberg, Sr., and, eventually, his son, Robert Kleberg III. The King Ranch would become a symbol of Texas known around the country, developing its own cattle breed (the Santa Gertrudis,) breeding a Triple Crown-winning horse, and reaching a size greater than that of Rhode Island.



Figure 5: Captain Richard King Source: King Ranch Archives

It was under Henrietta King's leadership that Kingsville was created. A railroad was needed connecting Brownsville, on the Rio Grande, with urban centers further north. King, sensing the boon that a railroad connection would be for the ranch, set aside hundreds of acres near the King Ranch headquarters to be sold, with the provision that half be sold to a railroad development company. In 1904, Kingsville was officially established, and passenger trains began running through the town. Importantly for the city, the managers of the St. Louis, Brownsville, and Mexico Railway were convinced to locate their headquarters in the new community.



Figure 6: Henrietta King High School - 1914
Source: Martha Rogers Ward Garbarino Photo Collection

The early years of Kingsville were dominated by the presence of the railroad and the King Ranch, both of which continue to influence the city today. Approximately one-third of the working population of Kingsville worked for the railroad, and most businesses in town were started by the King Ranch. The population grew quickly, reaching 4,000 in 1912, just

8 years after the city's founding, and 6,815 in 1930. In the 1920s, Kingsville received two new sources of economic and community activity in the discovery of oil and the founding of South Texas Teachers College, which became Texas College of Arts and Industries in 1929. Population and economic growth slowed in Kingsville, as throughout the nation, during the 1930s. By 1940 the population was 7,782.

World War II to Present

In 1942 the establishment of the Kingsville Naval Auxiliary Station – now the Naval Air Station, Kingsville – greatly increased the population of Kingsville and provided another economic hub for the city. The population on the base itself during World War II was more than 6,000, and Kingsville's population grew during this time. The population declined after the NAS's closing once the war ended, but the population was still 16,898 in 1950, more than double the population ten years prior. The NAS was reopened in 1951 to aid in the Korean War,



Figure 7: Kleberg County Courthouse Source: www.texasescapes.com

and has been in operation since then. It is a key component in the U.S. Navy's aviation training system.

Kingsville continued to grow rapidly through the 1950s and 1960s. The regional office for Exxon (then Humble Oil), opened in the 1960s, which spurred economic growth and attracted new residents to Kingsville. The college continued to grow, and in 1967 changed its name to Texas A&I University. The football team of Texas A&I University was historically very successful, as it continues to be today, and had an impressive run of NAIA championships in the 1970s. By 1970 the population was 28,995. Growth slowed in the 1970s and 1980s, as the petroleum industry suffered and Exxon closed its regional office. Enrollment also declined at the university. By 1980 the population was 29,949, and the population declined by more than 4,000 between then and 1990.

The city began to stabilize in the 1990s, and is now slowly growing once again. In 1993 the University signaled its inclusion in the Texas A&M System by becoming Texas A&M University-Kingsville. The increased extraction in South Texas of oil and natural gas from the Eagle Ford Shale has greatly increased the amount of money flowing into Kingsville.

Modern Day Ranching

Ranching and the vaquero (cowboy) tradition originated and developed in Spain to handle large herds of grazing animals on dry land from horseback. Spanish settlers in Mexico introduced these livestock-raising techniques from Spain and modified them to meet the challenges and demands of the New World. In 1537, the Spanish crown ordered the establishment of a

stockmen's organization (Mesta) in Mexico with each cattle owner required to have a different brand, and each brand had to be registered in a brand book in Mexico City.

These traditions of ranching reached Texas by the 1730s with the establishment of missions and later rancheros with herds of cattle, sheep, goats and horses. Many rancheros were established in the Nueces Strip or Wildhorse Desert which is the land between the Nueces and the Rio Grande Rivers. After the 1820s, the missions in Texas were officially secularized and hostile actions by Apaches and Comanche raiders also caused many ranchers to abandon their ranches and livestock. During the first half of the 1800s, wild cattle and horses increased in large numbers in South Texas which made possible cattle drives to northern rail heads after the Civil War.

The historic King Ranch founded by Richard King and Gideon Lewis in 1853, now covers over 825,000 acres and operates out of four divisions in six Texas counties. The Ranch was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1961. King Ranch is the birthplaces of modern ranching in the United States with its accomplishments in the scientific breeding of cattle and horses. Today, the King Ranch is a diversified modern agribusiness with activities in cattle ranching, farming, recreational hunting, and retail sales of hardware and luxury goods.



Background Assessment

Demographic Trends

Age Structure

The population pyramids for Kingsville and Kleberg County clearly reflect the presence and the significance of Texas A&M University-Kingsville (Figs. 8 and 10). The male and female cohorts for ages 20-24 are so large as to define the population of the City (and County). Together they represent 14%—roughly one-seventh—of the total population of the City and 12.6%—roughly one-eighth—of the total population of the County. The median age of the City (27.6) and county (29.0) for the 2010 Census is significantly lower than the statewide median age (33.6).

The distinctiveness of this demographic structure becomes apparent when comparing city and county population pyramids with the population pyramid for the State of Texas (Fig. 9). Larger populations tend to have more regular (even and symmetrical) population pyramids, as they aggregate all the variations and distinctive patterns into a more general picture of a large group.

Note in particular the evenness of the younger cohorts, from age 0 to 49; there is no bulge among the childhood cohorts, the young adult cohorts, or the middle-age cohorts. This shape of pyramid is typical of developed economies in which agriculture and manufacturing sectors have been de-emphasized and public and/or private services (education, information, health care, financial) have become important to the economy.

The population pyramids for Kingsville and Kleberg County have cohorts on either side of the predominant 20-24 cohort that are significantly larger in comparison; the 15-19 cohort is drastically larger than the 10-14 cohort, and the 25-29 cohort is substantially larger than the 30-34 cohort. A small portion of this difference may be explained by the general difference between Generation X (ages 30-44 in 2010) and the Millennial Generation (ages 10-29 in 2010)—see the difference in the Texas population pyramid between the 30-44 cohorts and the 25-29 and 45-49 cohorts above and below—but most of it is because Kingsville is a “college town”. Such towns are characterized by a college or university which is the most important economic, demographic, and cultural contributor to a town or to a small- or medium-sized city (no more than 100,000 and preferably less than 50,000).

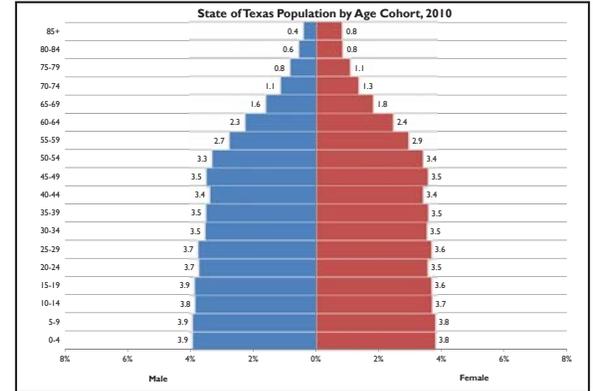


Figure 9: Population by Age Cohort for State of Texas, 2010
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

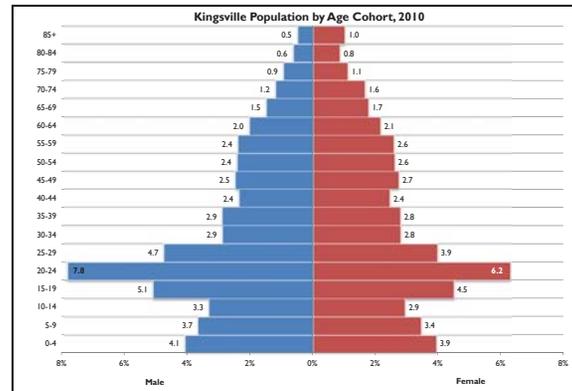


Figure 8: Population by Age Cohort for Kingsville, TX, 2010
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

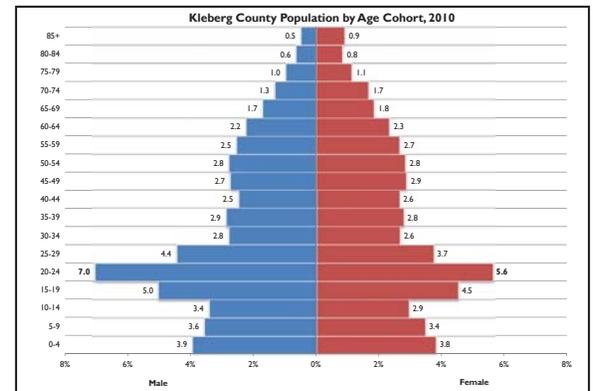


Figure 10: Population by Age Cohort for Kleberg County, TX, 2010
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Kingsville is thus part of a group of towns and cities in which the university has grown to be synonymous with the town or city in which it is located—it may contribute the largest share of employment to the local community; the majority of residents may be faculty, staff, or students of the college or university; the largest share of tax revenue (including sales tax) may come from students, staff, and faculty (students in particular) spending money at various local businesses. According to the Handbook, Kingsville is one such town; other towns with a similar (though not identical) situation are: San Marcos, Georgetown, College Station, Prairie View, Denton, Plainview, Abilene, Canyon, Commerce, Edinburg, and Alpine. In such towns, the working-age population tends to be high in relation to the dependent population (those under 16 years of age and over 64 years of age). In some cases, children and elderly are grouped together to calculate the “dependency ratio” of the population (the ratio of the dependent population, i.e. children and elderly, to the independent population, i.e. those of working age).

Table 1: Comparison of Working-age and Dependent Populations, 2010

Subject	KINGSVILLE		KLEBERG CO.		TEXAS	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total population	26,213	100.0%	32,061	100.0%	25,145,561	100.0%
16 to 64 years	17,428	66.5%	21,195	66.1%	16,433,369	65.4%
Under 16 years	5,883	22.4%	7,185	22.4%	6,110,306	24.3%
65 years and over	2,902	11.1%	3,681	11.5%	2,601,886	10.3%
Median Age (years)	27.6	(X)	29.0	(X)	33.6	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population Growth

In general, the population of Kleberg County has closely tracked the population of Kingsville, with only a small portion of the county population outside the city. Although some population growth occurred in Kingsville and Kleberg County in the 1920s and 1930s as a result of the founding of South Texas State Teachers College in 1925, the bulk of the historical growth was precipitated by the establishment of the Naval Air Station (NAS - originally the Naval Auxiliary Station) in 1942 shortly after the U.S. entered World War II. With around 7,000 personnel, the NAS roughly doubled the population of Kingsville between 1940 and 1950. Although the base was closed briefly after the end of the war, it re-opened in 1951.

Combined with the effects of the GI Bill (which allowed veterans to attend college free of charge) enrollment at the university experienced a postwar boom until the 1970s, after

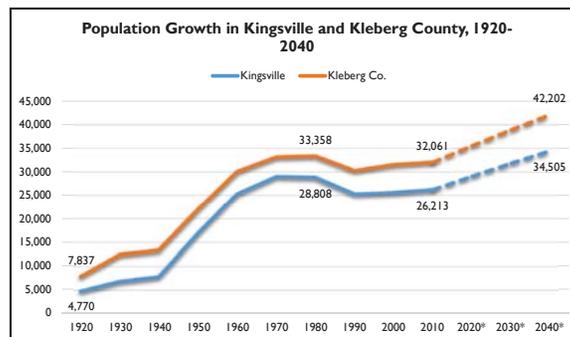


Figure 11: Population Growth in Kingsville and Kleberg County, 1920-2040 (*projected 2020-2040)

Source: Texas Water Development Board

which population growth slowed and then stopped. During the 1980s, the population actually declined by about 10%. Between 1990 and 2010, the population grew slightly; the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) forecasts the population of both city and county to increase by roughly a third over the next three decades from 2010 to 2040. According to the TWDB, Kingsville’s population is projected to increase to 34,505 residents by 2040. The Texas State Data Center, forecasts the population of Kingsville to increase to 32,274 by 2040.

Table 2: Kingsville and Kleberg County: Population Growth, 1920-2050 (projected population for 2020-2050)

Year	Kingsville	Growth	Kleberg	Growth
1920	4,770	--	7,837	--
1930	6,815	42.9	12,451	58.9
1940	7,782	14.2	13,344	7.2
1950	16,898	117.1	21,991	64.8
1960	25,297	49.7	30,052	36.7
1970	28,995	14.6	33,166	10.4
1980	29,949	3.3	33,358	0.6
1990	25,276	-15.6	30,274	-9.2
2000	25,575	1.2	31,549	4.2
2010	26,213	2.5	32,061	1.6
2020	26,868	2.5	35,587	11.0
2030	29,447	9.6	39,003	9.6
2040	32,274	9.6	42,240	8.3
2050	34,920	8.2	45,746	8.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Texas State Data Center

Race/Ethnicity

Kingsville and Kleberg County are very similar in terms of race and ethnicity (Figs. 12 and 13). Kingsville has a slightly higher percentage of Hispanic (of all races) population (71% to 70%), and Non-Hispanic Other population (3.5% to 3.2%). Kleberg County has a slightly higher Non-Hispanic White population (23% to 21%). These are small differences and are primarily due to the general tendency (nationally, statewide, and countywide)

for Non-Hispanic Whites to prefer unincorporated suburban and rural areas to urban or metropolitan areas.

However, both Kingsville and Kleberg County are substantially different from Texas as a whole in terms of race and ethnicity. The share of Hispanic population in the city and county is roughly twice what it is at the state level, and the share of Non-Hispanic White population is roughly half what it is at the state level. The share of Non-Hispanic Black and Non-Hispanic

Asian population at city and county level is significantly less than that at the state level.

This difference is largely a function of geography; while both the County and the City were established by Non-Hispanic White ranching families, the overwhelming majority of the population in this area of South Texas was Hispanic before Texas independence and statehood, and it continues to be majority Hispanic.

Table 3: Kingsville Population by Race/Ethnicity 1980-2015

Race/Ethnicity	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015
Total Population	28,808	25,276	25,575	26,213	26,285
Non-Hispanic White	11,703	8,123	6,666	5,522	4,979
Hispanic of Any Race	15,287	15,765	17,151	18,726	19,429
Non-Hispanic Black	1,213	912	1,045	1,039	1,180
Non-Hispanic Asian	493	395	427	670	670
Other	112	81	286	256	207

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Table 4: Kleberg County Population by Race/Ethnicity 1980-2015

Race/Ethnicity	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015
Total Population	33,418	30,274	31,549	32,061	32,029
Non-Hispanic White	13,955	10,279	8,997	7,479	7,029
Hispanic of Any Race	17,388	18,529	20,635	22,495	22,846
Non-Hispanic Black	1,390	955	1,091	1,070	1,264
Non-Hispanic Asian	518	81	444	715	647
Other	167	430	382	302	243

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

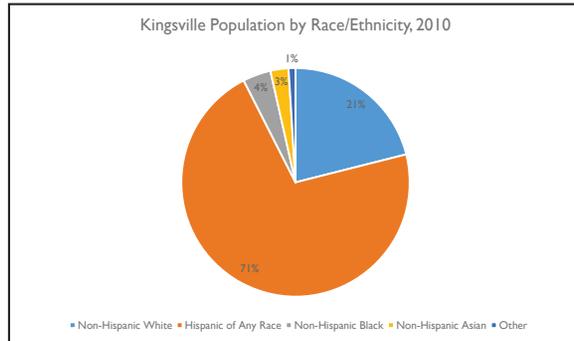


Figure 12: Kingsville Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2010
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

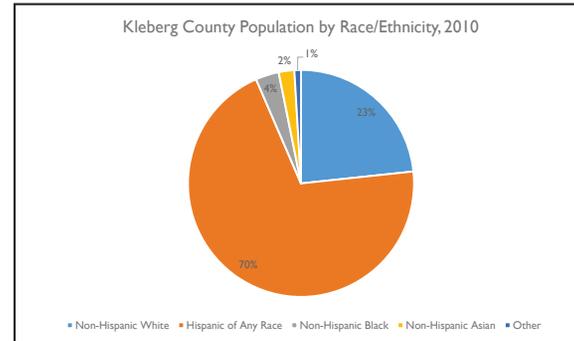


Figure 13: Kleberg County Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2010
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

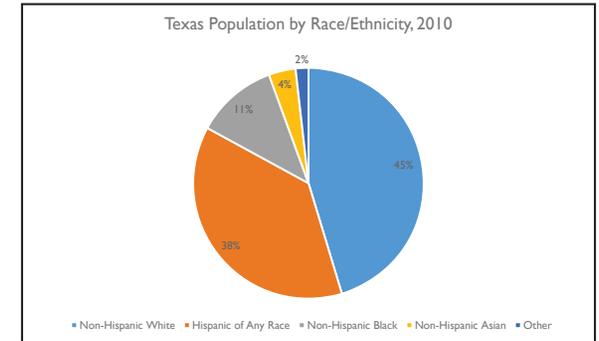


Figure 14: Texas Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2010
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Educational Attainment

Kingsville is in the Kingsville Independent School District, which consists of four elementary schools, one intermediate school, one middle school, one alternative school, and one high school. The student population is 4,463 students. Kingsville Independent School District consistently rates as average on state educational benchmarks and the school campuses are rated as having met standard.

In terms of the overall educational attainment of Kingsville and Kleberg County (Figs. 15 and 16). From 2000 to 2010, as a percentage of the total population, Kingsville experienced a decrease in the share of those with less than a high school education while experiencing an increase in the percentage of the population with a high school degree and those with some college. From 2010 to 2015, Kingsville experienced a significant decrease in the percentage of people with a high school diploma and those with some college/Associate's along with an increase in the share of people with a Bachelor's degree or higher, while those with education levels less than a high school diploma stayed roughly the same.

The level of educational attainment in Kingsville and Kleberg County is generally lower than in Texas as a whole. Although the presence of Texas A&M University-Kingsville might normally lead to the conclusion that Kingsville and Kleberg would have a generally higher level of educational attainment than Texas (a smaller share of residents with less than a ninth-grade education), in this case a significant share of the city and county population are likely involved in rural employment or have unskilled service jobs.

From 2000 to 2010, Kleberg County experienced a decrease in the percentage of people with less than a high school education along with an increase in those with a high school diploma and some college. Bachelor's degree or higher stayed the same.

From 2010 to 2015, Kleberg County experienced an increase in those with a Bachelor's degree or higher; a decrease in those with some college education and stayed about the same for people with a high school diploma or less.

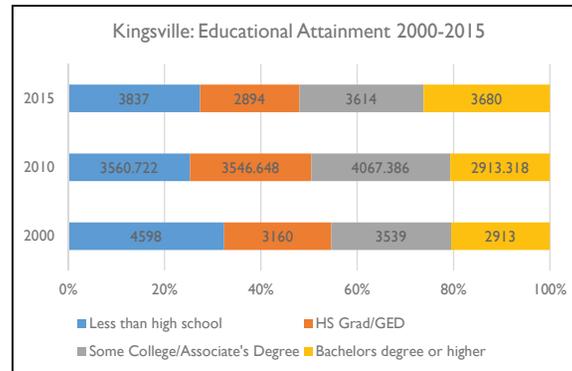


Figure 15: Kingsville - Educational Attainment 2000-2015
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

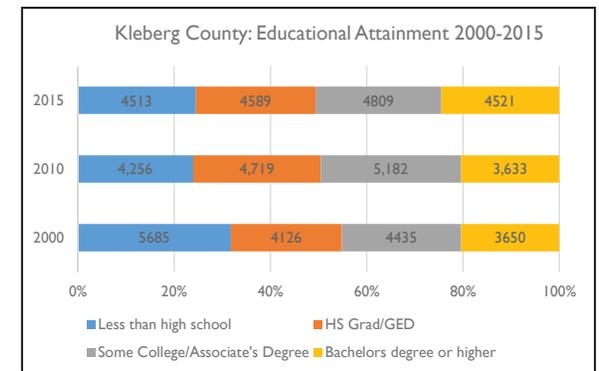


Figure 16: Kleberg County - Educational Attainment 2000-2015
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

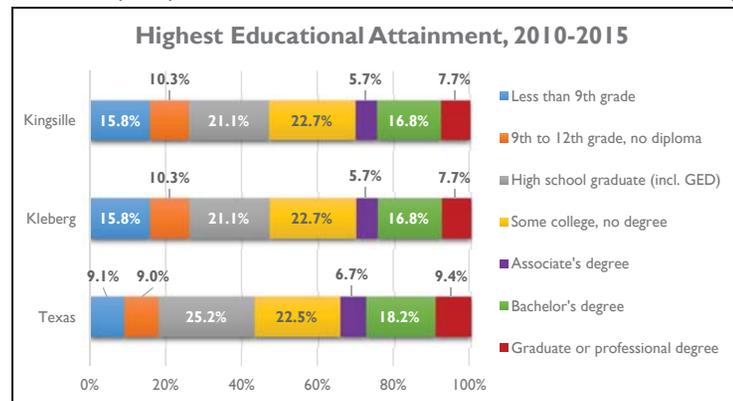


Figure 17: Highest Educational Attainment, 2010-2015 Source: American Community Survey

Housing

Housing occupancy in Kingsville is slightly below the statewide average (84.8% to 88.8%), with housing occupancy for Kleberg County being slightly below Kingsville. As will be seen with other housing characteristics, this relatively high occupancy rate is at least partly due to the sizable student population associated with Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

Within the subset of occupied housing units, Kingsville has a majority of renter-occupied units (47.5% owner, 52.5% renter), while Kleberg County as a whole has a majority of owner-occupied units (52.9% owner, 47.1% renter) and Texas as a whole has a considerable majority of owner-occupied units (62.2% owner, 37.8% renter). The high rate of renter-occupied units in Kingsville is a result of the demand of non-permanent residents (i.e. students) for rental housing.

A clear majority of the owner-occupied units in Kingsville and Kleberg County are owned “free-and-clear” (without a mortgage): 61.9% in Kingsville and 61.5% in Kleberg County. For Texas, the pattern is almost the reverse: 59.6% of owner-occupied units are owned with a mortgage and only 40.4% are owned “free and clear:”

Table 5: Comparison of Housing Characteristics in Kingsville, Kleberg County, and Texas, 2010-2015

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS COMPARISON, 2015						
Subject	Texas		Kleberg Co.		Kingsville	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
HOUSING OCCUPANCY						
Total housing units	10,305,607	100.0%	12,995	100.0%	10,562	100.0%
Occupied housing units	9,149,146	88.8%	10,906	83.9%	8,957	84.8%
Vacant housing units	1,156,411	11.2%	2,089	16.1%	1,605	15.2%
HOUSING TENURE						
Occupied housing units	9,149,146	100.0%	10,906	100.0%	8,957	100.0%
Owner-occupied	5,693,770	62.2%	5,169	52.9%	4,252	47.5%
Renter-occupied	3,455,426	37.8%	5,737	47.1%	4,705	52.5%
MORTGAGE STATUS						
Owner-occupied units	5,693,770	100.0%	5,169	100.0%	4,252	100.0%
Housing units with a mortgage	3,396,286	59.6%	2,222	38.5%	1,620	38.1%
Housing units without a mortgage	2,297,484	40.4%	3,547	61.5%	2,632	61.9%

Source: American Community Survey

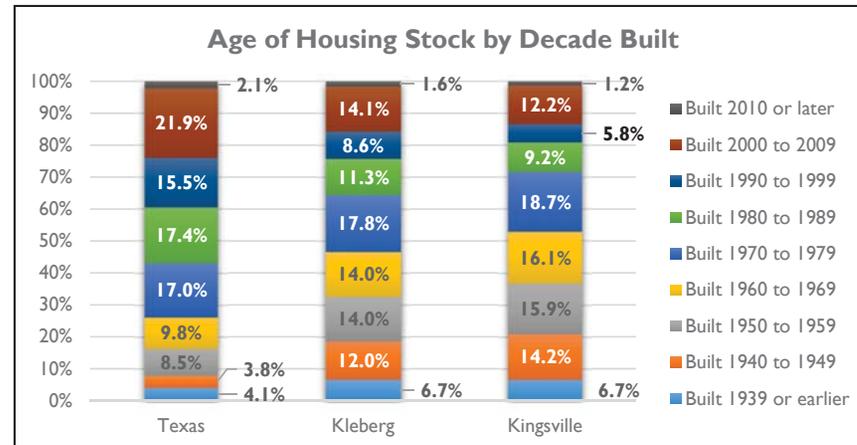


Figure 18: Age of Housing Stock Comparison of Kingsville, Kleberg County, and Texas

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Existing Economic Conditions

Sales Tax

According to the Texas State Comptroller's office, the sales tax rate in Kingsville is .0825 (8.25%); .015 (1.5%) for Kingsville itself, .005 (.5%) for Kleberg County; and .0625 (6.25%) for the State of Texas. Since 2002, total sales in Kingsville have generally increased, from approximately \$365,000,000 in 2002 to \$657,000,000 in 2015. Gross sales reached a peak of over \$750,000,000 in 2014. The amount of taxable sales have also increased over this time period, albeit at a slower pace: in 2002, the amount subject to sales was approximately \$160,000,000, compared to \$230,000,000 in 2015.

Hotel Occupancy Tax

Another source of tax revenue is the Hotel Occupancy Tax; the State of Texas levies a tax rate of 6% (.06) on accommodations which cost \$15 or more per day. Cities and some counties can also impose additional taxes of up to 7% (.07) each. In some cases, civic venue development, such as sports arenas and concert halls, are also allowed to generate revenue through hotel occupancy tax.

From the first quarter of 2014 to the fourth quarter of 2015, Kingsville's room receipts dropped significantly. In the first quarter of 2014, the room receipts in Kingsville totaled more than \$2,340,000, then rose to a peak in the third quarter of

2014 at \$3,250,000. After that, total room receipts generally fell, with the fourth quarter of 2015 totalling \$1,742,000. The taxable hotel receipts follow a similar pattern, peaking at \$2,660,000 in the third quarter of 2014 and falling to \$1,579,000 in the fourth quarter of 2015. The falling receipt totals are due to the reduced number of rooms in Kingsville, from the closing of hotels. In the first quarter of 2014, room capacity was 794 in Kingsville. By 2016, room capacity had fallen to 611.

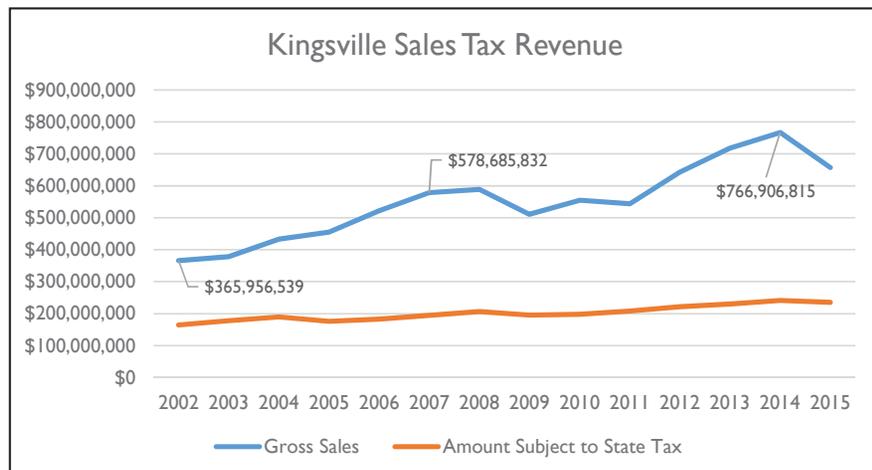


Figure 19: Kingsville Gross Sales Tax Revenue, 2002-2015

Source: Texas State Comptroller

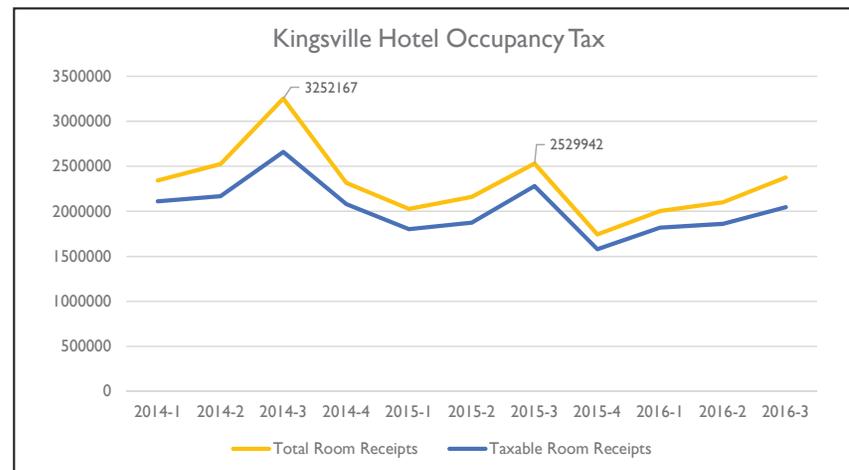


Figure 20: Kingsville Total and Taxable Room Receipts, 2014-2016

Source: Texas State Comptroller

Retail Market Gap Analysis

A retail market gap analysis was calculated for the City of Kingsville in September of 2016, using data from the Nielsen Company. This gap analysis uses the city limits of Kingsville as the market area. Table 6 shows the summary information of the analysis based on industry group.

Leakage occurs for Kingsville in five industry groups: Motor Vehicles and Parts Dealers; Electronics and Appliance Stores; Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores; Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores; and Nonstore Retailers. When leakage does occur, it occurs significantly, as all five have leakage factors of 75% or more. Consumers are likely meeting this gap between the demand and supply by traveling to nearby Corpus Christi or Alice. The total leakage adds up to nearly \$120,000,000 in sales revenue for Kingsville lost to other markets.

In terms of surplus, several industry groups have a retail surplus in Kingsville. The largest of these surpluses belong to Gas Stations; Miscellaneous Store Retailers; Food and Beverage Stores; and Food Services and Drinking Places. The total surplus adds up to more than \$180,000,000. Therefore, Kingsville surplus is larger than its leakage, and the city is drawing more sales away from other markets than those markets are drawing from Kingsville.

Table 6: Industry Subsector Gap Analysis - Kingsville, Texas

Industry Group	Demand (Spending)	Supply (Sales)	Retail Surplus or Gap	Surplus or Leakage
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers (441)	\$82,634,925	\$20,760,881	(\$61,874,044)	-75%
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores (442)	\$6,927,718	\$7,447,439	\$519,721	8%
Electronics & Appliance Stores (443)	\$7,238,686	\$905,095	(\$6,333,591)	-87%
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores (444)	\$37,883,869	\$48,438,952	\$10,555,083	28%
Food & Beverage Stores (445)	\$48,295,828	\$102,297,844	\$54,002,016	112%
Health & Personal Care Stores (446)	\$21,190,194	\$24,470,510	\$3,280,316	15%
Gasoline Stations (447)	\$29,686,731	\$73,504,488	\$43,817,757	148%
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores (448)	\$18,185,433	\$4,377,701	(\$13,807,732)	-76%
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores (451)	\$8,225,060	\$1,054,767	(\$7,170,293)	-87%
General Merchandise Stores (452)	\$43,909,411	\$65,550,665	\$21,641,254	49%
Miscellaneous Store Retailers (453)	\$10,364,900	\$23,948,949	\$13,584,049	131%
Nonstore Retailers (454)	\$34,124,022	\$1,758,924	(\$32,365,098)	-95%
Food Services & Drinking Places (722)	\$42,715,675	\$90,646,422	\$47,930,747	112%

Source: The Nielsen Company



Figure 21: Downtown District Businesses

Source: CURPR



Figure 22: Downtown District Businesses

Source: CURPR

Flood Plain

The risk of flooding is significantly lower in Kingsville than in many Texas cities. Kingsville lies in a relatively arid part of Texas, and no rivers flow through or near the city. Despite this, there are still some areas at risk for flooding, largely near the creeks that can be found in the city.

The portion of Kingsville most at risk for flooding (as shown in Figure 23, which shows the extent of a 100-year flood) is located north of the downtown area along Tranquitas Creek. The part of town affected by this flood plain lies between Santa Gertrudis Avenue on the south, FM 1898 on the north, 3rd Street on the west, and 9th Street on the East. Smaller areas on either side of this creek, both northwest and southeast of this section, are at flood risk, but not to the extent found in the area listed above. Santa Gertrudis Creek, to the south, is the cause of small areas of flood risk on the southern edge of Kingsville's city limits, containing mostly residential units.

Portions of the flood plain are regulatory floodways. Significant stretches of Tranquitas Creek are channelized, but the risk of flooding is mitigated, not eliminated.

The closest river gauge is for San Fernando Creek near Alice; according to the National Weather Service, there have been eight historic crests at flood stage (12 feet) or above (moderate flood stage of 13 feet, major flood stage of 15 feet), as shown in Table 12. The largest crests were during the late 1960s into the early 1970s in a major flood stage. The most recent historic crest was in 2010 during a stage of moderate flooding.

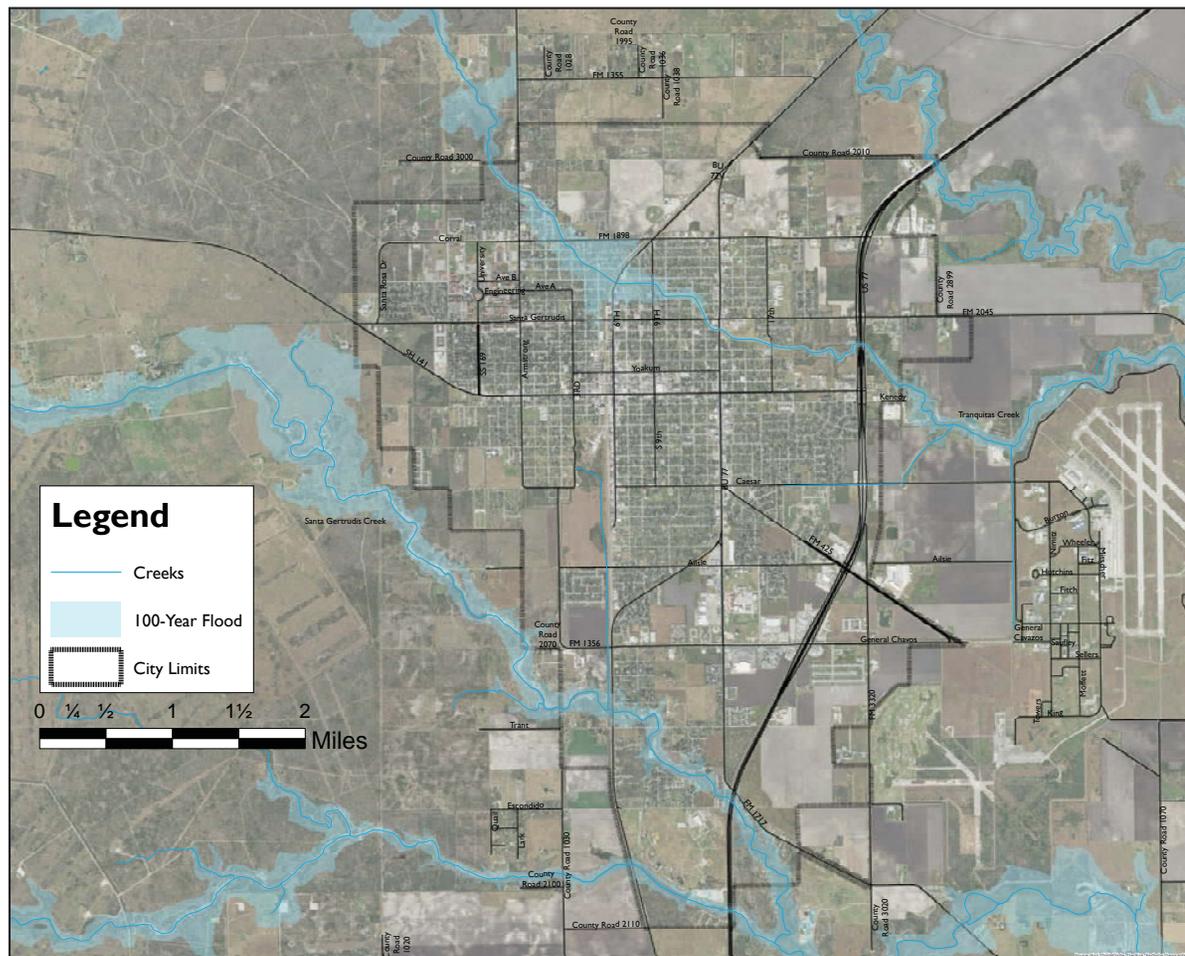


Figure 23: 100 Year Flood plain - Kingsville, TX

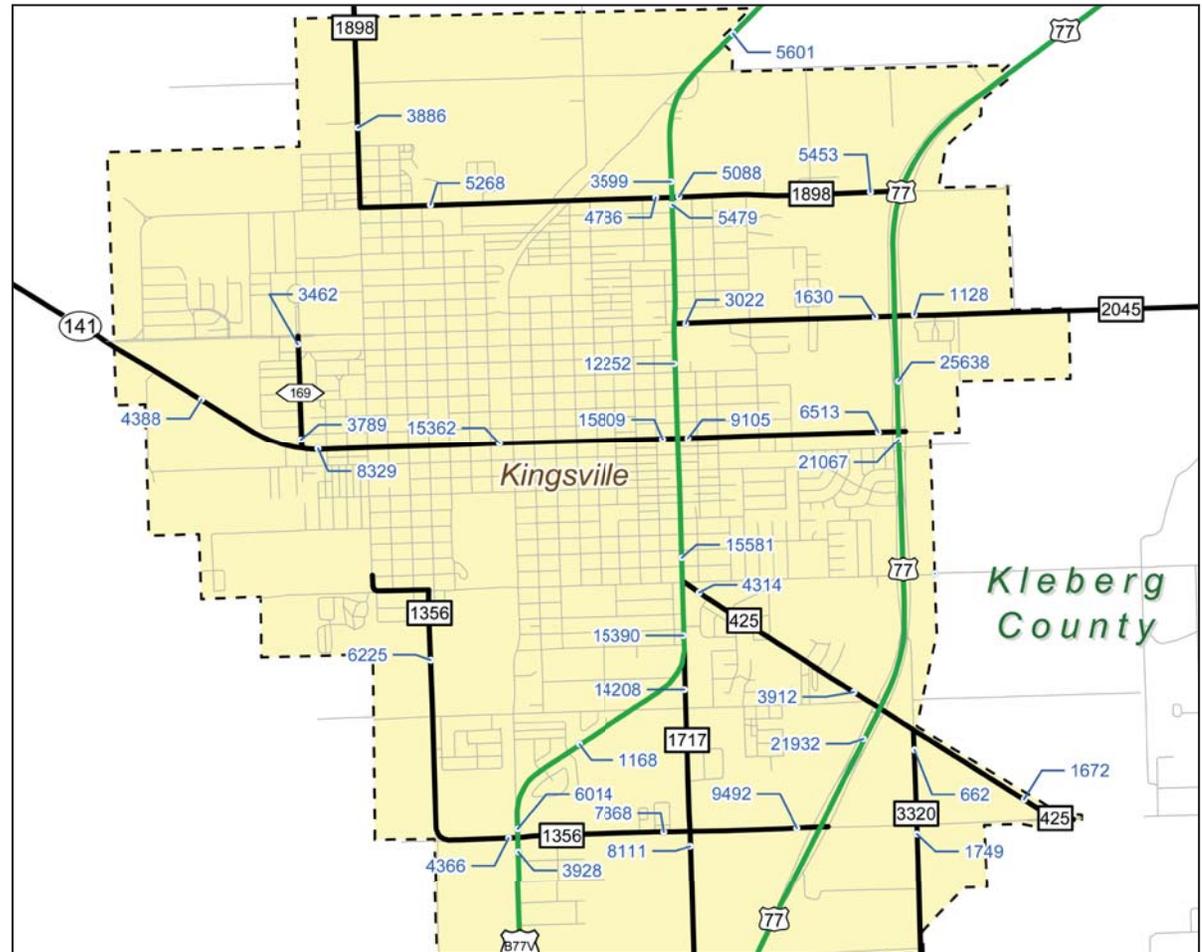
Source: ArcGIS, CURPR, FEMA

Road Traffic Circulation

Kingsville is located a considerable distance from major population centers; Corpus Christi is 35 to 40 miles away and the closest major interstate highway is Interstate Highway 37 (I-37), which has average daily traffic counts in the 50,000 to 70,000 range in and near Corpus Christi. The highest traffic counts in the vicinity of Kingsville, in the 20,000 to 30,000 range, are the locations along U.S. Highway 77 (US-77), the major north-south route between Corpus Christi and the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

The next highest traffic counts in Kingsville are along King Avenue (Texas Highway 141 or TX-141), which runs east-west, and 14th Street (Business 77-B), which runs north-south. The two intersect close to the historic center of Kingsville, and the highest traffic counts tend to be near this busy intersection.

While Texas A&M University-Kingsville draws a considerable amount of traffic, it is located to the northwest of downtown, and at the edge of town. The traffic counts along the nearest arterial streets ranges between 3,000 and 5,000, and since there are multiple entrances and exits, the impact of the commuting student population is somewhat spread out. The lowest two locations of the fourteen studied are on one such arterial street, University Boulevard.



Rail Traffic Circulation (Passenger & Freight)

As befits its founding in 1904 as a stop along the newly built St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway (SLB&M), the railway has been a key part of Kingsville's history and economic development. Henrietta King, the widow of Richard King, designated a part of the Santa Gertrudis Division of King Ranch for sale in order to facilitate construction of settlements and railroad stops at what became Kingsville and Raymondville. The railway itself was built along 75,000 acres of right-of-way purchased by Uriah Lott and Benjamin Franklin Yoakum. A depot and post office both opened in 1904.

As the town was founded along with the railroad, the street directions (north & south; east & west) are centered at the depot. In addition, the axis formed by the Henrietta King Public School and the Kleberg County Courthouse at opposite ends of an eight-block stretch of Kleberg Avenue passed directly by the depot and the SLB&M headquarters building (the railroad moved its headquarters to Kingsville once the depot opened). This contrasts with the center of town for auto traffic, which is one block south (on King Avenue) and 8 ½ blocks east (on 14th Street), as seen in Figure 25.

In 1925, the SLB&M was acquired by the Missouri Pacific Railroad along with the other subsidiary railroads of the New Orleans, Texas & Mexico Railway which were known as the "Gulf Coast Lines." It kept its separate identity until 1956, at which time the whole system became known as the Missouri

Pacific. Missouri Pacific was then acquired by Union Pacific in 1982, during the era of deregulation, mergers and acquisitions, and consolidations. This line handles four freight trains daily (28 trains weekly), two between 6am-6pm and another two

between 6pm and 6am. There is no passenger traffic. According to the Federal Railroad Administration, Burlington Northern & Santa Fe also has trains using this railway, but no data is available for those trains (just for the Union Pacific trains).

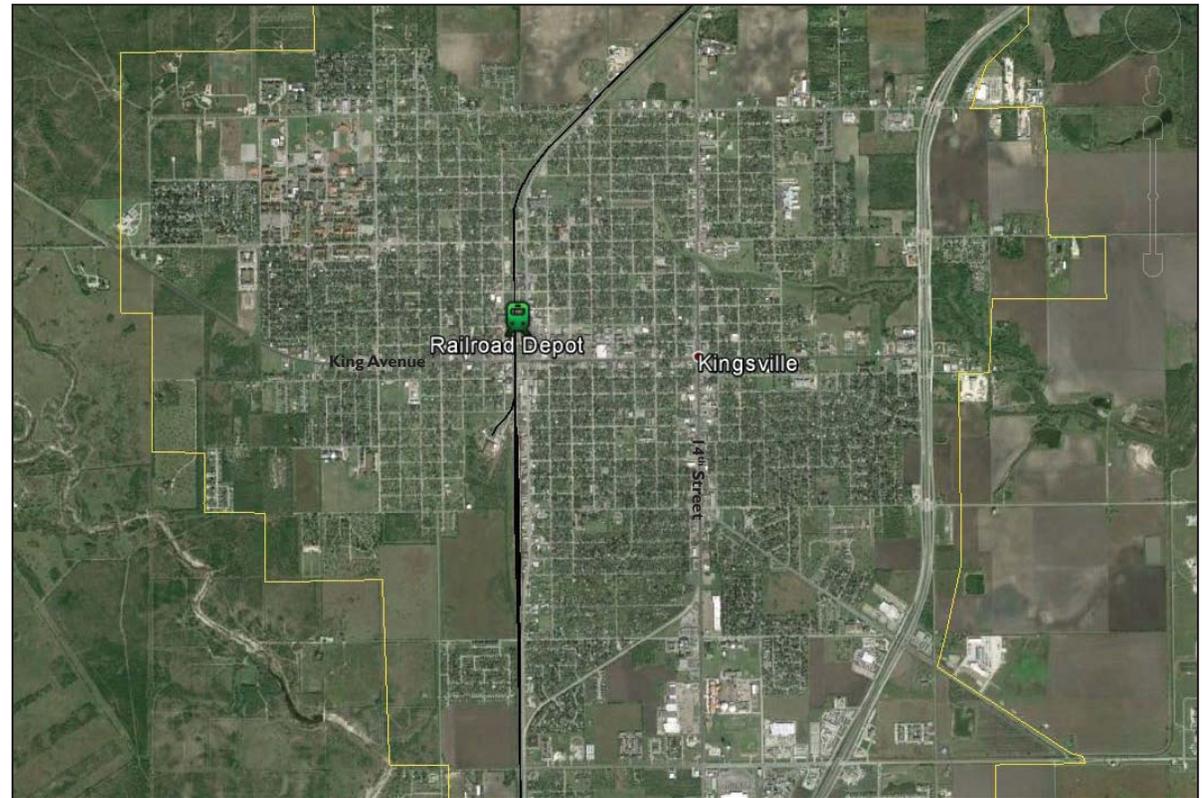


Figure 25: Google Earth View of Railroad Line in Kingsville

Source: Google Earth, Sanborn Maps, Amtrak

SWOT Analysis

Community Input Meeting

A community input meeting was held on September 21, 2016, at the City Hall Community Room with local stakeholders to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) to the Kingsville Downtown District. The discussion was moderated by staff from the Center for Urban and Regional Planning Research and the Rural Business Program at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Members of the community expressed their views and concerns in a two-hour discussion. At the beginning of the meeting, those present were given a Community Assessment Survey to complete. After filling out the survey, the participants were divided into four groups, and each group compiled their own list of factors. Below is a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that were generally agreed upon.

Strengths

The members of the community enumerated several strengths they believe to be found in Kingsville. All groups agreed that the presence of Texas A&M University-Kingsville is an asset to the community, particularly the diverse student population. Centers of employment – NAS Kingsville, King Ranch, Celanese – and the general stability of the local economy were also seen as strengths by most participants. Kingsville's convenient location, both in relation to nearby urban centers and its proximity to the coast, is seen as important to the city's success. Similarly, the high number of opportunities for outdoor recreation to be found in both the city and in the surrounding area is a positive



Figure 26: SWOT Session - Kingsville, TX

Source: CURPR

for the community, as is the region's climate. Finally, the history and culture of Kingsville is seen as a major strength by the community.

Weaknesses

One of Kingsville's weaknesses as perceived by the participants is the poor appearance of sidewalks, streets, public buildings, and other infrastructure maintenance problems. Similarly, all groups believed that the poor condition of Kingsville parks and green spaces is a weakness, as is the lack of entertainment options, retail options, and nightlife. The participants viewed vacant and dilapidated buildings as a problem for Kingsville – especially the underuse of buildings downtown. Also included as weaknesses were the poor performance of Kingsville ISD schools, and the inability of Kingsville to retain college graduates and other young people. A low amount of private industry jobs is also seen as an issue, as is the lack of healthcare options.

Opportunities

Members of Kingsville's community singled out several opportunities they perceive Kingsville has. One opportunity is the ability to attract outlet malls and other retail options, to both provide shopping options for residents and to attract more jobs to the area. Another opportunity is the expansion of tourism, especially in regards to the wildlife and hunting opportunities around Kingsville. An increase in the enrollment at the University, and furthering the city partnership with the University, are also seen as opportunities. Finally, the potential to develop transportation options in and around the city and turn Kingsville into a regional transportation hub is a positive opportunity for the city.

Threats

Among the threats to Kingsville, as seen by the community, is the potential closing or realignment of NAS Kingsville, which



Figure 27: SWOT Session - Kingsville, TX

Source: CURPR

would take jobs from the city as well as remove a local landmark. Another potential threat to Kingsville is the increasing danger and congestion caused by trains at busy intersections. Drug and gang activity is seen as a threat to the Kingsville way of life, as is general community apathy. Finally, retail competition from neighboring communities and high property taxes are seen as threats by some participants.

Next Steps

The success of a community is dependent on the community's ability to utilize its assets fully, compensate for its weaknesses, capitalize on opportunities that come its way, and prepare for threats down the road. None of these are possible without the cooperation of leaders of the community with the members of the community that they serve. Kingsville's leaders must take into account the needs and fears of the residents of Kingsville in order to properly serve them. It is only through



Figure 28: SWOT Session - Kingsville, TX

Source: CURPR

this cooperation that the plans created in this process can be implemented fully.

Community Assessment Survey

The assessment survey is designed to give a better understanding of Kingsville and the capabilities it has to deal with its needs. It is also designed to identify and evaluate the kinds of assets, resources and talent that are available to the community to address its issues and concerns. Finally, it establishes a baseline to help local leaders get a better idea of where the community stands relative to its needs.

Overall, 39 local residents provided their input on questions posed in a comprehensive Community Assessment conducted at City Hall in Kingsville on September 21, 2016. These residents were asked to respond to a wide range of questions over a 20-minute time line. They had to either check a YES or NO response, or a Declined, Been Stable or Increased response. If they did not know the answer or were not able to respond to a particular question, they were asked to check the Don't Know response. This survey was conducted in conjunction with the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis also held that day.

Local Economy

This assessment sought to get a better idea of how the survey participants perceived Kingsville's local economy and how it has done over the past decade. It looked at several key variables such as wage levels, number of new businesses being created, employment levels and the number of business closures and

expansions. These variables are important because they provide a good snapshot of the local economy. They also serve as good markers for mapping local economic trends.

The participants' perception of the local economy varied based on their understanding of the dynamics of that economy and the market it serves. For example, over 56 percent of the survey takers felt that Kingsville's population had been relatively stable over the past decade, while about 23 percent felt that it had increased. Also nearly 54 percent believe that the number of employed workers increased during this same time period. However, nearly 53 percent of the survey participants felt that the number of businesses in Kingsville either declined or remained stable over the past decade. About 50 percent also believed that unemployment levels either declined or remained stable over that same time period. With respect to business expansions, over 48 percent felt that the number of expansions in Kingsville had been stable or had increased over the last 10 years. Their perception of Kingsville's overall economy was generally positive with about 72 percent indicating that it had either been stable or had grown. The categories where responses centered heavily on the "Do Not Know" category were: Number of businesses closing (35.9%); Level of wages (33.3%); Number of business expansions (38.5%); and, the Number of new business startups (38.5%). Because of the types of information needed to evaluate these variables these findings would be expected. The survey participants generally felt that the local economy has done relatively well over the past decade.

Educational Assets

This assessment sought to measure how well the community is perceived to be educating its youth and preparing them for employment or further education. It included several questions dealing with student enrollment; changes in enrollment over time; dropout rates; educational attainment levels; and, the overall performance levels of schools in Kingsville. These variables are designed to provide a good picture of the state of education in the community. They also provide some idea of how local residents perceive their schools.

In evaluating the perception of survey participants responding to this assessment several key factors stand out. First, a significant number of respondents indicated that they actually had little information on the state of their schools. Second, those who did respond to the questions indicated that school tax levels have increased (33.3%); the overall education performance of schools in Kingsville had either declined (23.1%), or had remained stable (33.3%) over the past two years; and, that over a third (35.9%) felt the school district's performance had declined. Also about a third of the survey participants (33.3%) felt that the performance levels of schools in Kingsville had remained stable. In general, the survey takers felt that the community's schools had done an adequate job of educating their youth and preparing them for employment or further education, but additional improvements were needed.

Environmental Status

This assessment sought to measure the survey participants' general perception of Kingsville's current environmental status,

and how it is responding to environmental concerns. It focused in on concerns such as pollution levels in the community; infrastructure needs; the community's overall appearance; and, its ability to sustain growth. A community's environmental status can be likened to a barometer of sorts. If it is low, a community's ability to maintain a high quality of life is also low. Conversely, if it is high it is reasonable to presume that it is able to better sustain itself overtime.

Most of the survey participants indicated that Kingsville's environmental status has been relatively stable (41.5%) over the past decade. However, over a third (33.3%) of the survey-takers felt that the quality of the community's infrastructure had declined. They also noted that the resilience of that infrastructure had either declined (22.1%), or had been stable (25.6%). With respect to the community's overall appearance one-third (33.3%) felt that it had declined or remained stable (28.2%). Nearly a third of the survey-takers felt that its appearance had gotten better. In terms of its overall environment, over half (56.4%) of the participants felt that it had been stable indicating that little change in the community – either positive or negative – had taken place with regard to its sustainability levels. Over half felt that sustainability either declined (17.9%), or remained stable (38.5%). Only about 13 percent (12.8%) of the survey-takers felt that the level of sustainability in Kingsville increased over the past decade. In comparison, almost over-third of the participants (30.8%) were not able to respond to this question because of a lack of information or knowledge of the subject.

In terms of Kingsville's water supply and the quality of its water, over half (51.3%) believed that the community's water supply had been stable, and its quality had remained about the same over the past decade. Slightly over 20% of the respondents believed that Kingsville's available water supply had increased, and nearly 18 percent felt that the quality of that supply had increased as well. The overall assessment, based on this survey, is that the environmental status of Kingsville has remained relatively stable over the past decade. While issues certainly exist many felt that these issues can be addressed with good leadership and foresight.

Local Government Capacity/Outreach

This assessment sought to measure both the capacity and the ability of Kingsville's local government to support and sustain long-term development in the community. Some of the variables in this survey focused in on the ability of the local government



Figure 29: SWOT Session - Kingsville, TX

Source:CURPR

to provide critical services, and its capacity to plan ahead. Also included were questions designed to evaluate the quality of the community's overall leadership and the level of involvement by local citizens in governing the community. These factors are important in terms of defining just how responsive the local government is in meeting in the needs of its citizens.

Based on the number of responses to questions in this particular measure, participants felt that, in general, the capacity and capabilities of the local government in Kingsville were good. They also felt that it was generally responsive to the needs of citizens in the community. Nearly 75 percent of the survey takers (74.4%) felt that local leaders are involved with the community, and that access to local officials (64.1%) was easy. Almost half (46.2%) felt that there was an active engagement process on the part of local officials in the community. Over 60 percent also felt that local government provides adequate services. Another key variable – community participation – also scored high. Over 50 percent of the survey-takers felt that local residents were encouraged to participate in local governmental affairs. However, nearly half (48.7%) felt that the community was not proactive enough in dealing with community issues and concerns. Another 20.5% did not have enough information to respond to that question.

Regarding the issue of planning ahead nearly 44 percent of the participants felt that the community does plan ahead to meet future needs. However, almost the same number (41.6%) did not have enough information to answer that question. Given these responses there is some evidence to suggest that Kingsville's local government may need to be more aggressive

in reaching out to the community as a whole. While it did score relatively high with regard to capacity and outreach it may have to increase its activities in this area as it moves forward.

Successful Community Assessment

This assessment focused in on those qualities that make a community successful. Successful communities usually share a set of common values and perspectives. These include openness and extensive dialogue. They are also proactive and try to deal with issues and concerns before they get so bad that only drastic action can mitigate them. They also try to generate a consensus, and take full advantage of their assets, resources and talent. Finally, they are open to new ideas.

Participants in the Kingsville survey were generally optimistic. Many felt that the community had leaders who were able to put differences aside to develop a consensus on what is best for the community as a whole. In fact, nearly half (46.2%) felt that this was the case in Kingsville. However, over 40 percent felt that their community was not willing to take risks in dealing with its issues and needs. Of course, this question can go both ways in the sense the community's leadership seeks to define the issues before they take steps to deal with them. On the other hand, many of the participants (46.2%) felt that the community did not take full advantage of its assets, talent and resources in dealing with its problems, issues and concerns. On a more positive note the survey-takers felt that the community was actively involved in helping local businesses to grow and prosper (46.2%); and its leadership was able to take a long-range view of the issues it is dealing with. In fact, nearly 44 percent of the participants agreed with that statement.



Figure 30: SWOT Session - Kingsville, TX

Source: CURPR

Equally important, most of those taking the survey felt that Kingsville's leadership was open to new ideas. In fact, over half (56.4%) of the survey-takers gave a positive response to this factor. However only about a third (35.9%) felt that the community, as a whole, was proactive, while slightly more (38.5%) of the respondents felt that it was not proactive. About a fourth (25.6%) of the survey-takers did not have enough information to answer that question. Finally, slightly more than a third (35.9%) felt that the community was successful, while about 31 percent said it was not. Another third (33.3%) did not have enough information to answer that question.

Local Housing Assets

Housing is a critical asset in any community. It is also an important variable in evaluating a community's overall viability. For example, a community suffering from high vacancy rates, declining housing values, and substandard housing is probably



Figure 31: SWOT Session - Kingsville, TX

Source: CURPR

suffering from some kind of economic distress. In general, the status of housing in a community usually reflects on how well it is coping. It is also a good indicator of a community's quality of life.

Participants in the Kingsville survey were somewhat positive regarding housing in the community. Over half (51.5%) of the survey-takers saw Kingsville's housing situation as being strong. For example, about two-third (66.7%) noted that the supply of quality housing in the community has been increasing. Over half of the survey takers (59.0%) also indicated that the cost of housing in Kingsville has been increasing. At the same time they noted that the variety of housing choices in the community has also been increasing. With respect to affordable housing the responses were more mixed. Almost half of the survey participants had indicated that the number of affordable housing units in Kingsville had either declined (23.1%), or been

stable (28.2%). Only about 26 percent felt that there has been an increase in the number of affordable housing units. Another 23 percent did not have enough information on this topic to respond. Closely related to this question is the number of substandard units in the community. About half indicated that the number of substandard units in Kingsville has declined (25.6%), or has been stable (25.6%). Another 28 percent felt that the number has increased. With respect to the number of rental units in the community, about two-thirds (69.2%) indicated that there has been an increase. Overall, housing in Kingsville seems to be improving given the survey responses. This is also reflected in the community's rising income levels and general population growth over the past decade.

Community Assets, Talent and Resources

A community's ability to address its needs is largely determined by the kinds of assets, talent and resources it is able to draw on. Equally important is how well the community uses these assets, talent and resources to address local issues and concerns. A community that is successful also involves its local citizens in dealing with its needs. Moreover, the local leadership in a successful community is always open to new talent. This survey topic focused in on how well Kingsville is able to use its own advantages to address its needs.

Overall, the survey-takers in this particular topic were not able to give us a clear picture of how their community is using its assets, talent and resources to deal with its needs. The responses were mixed. For example, in responding to a question regarding whether the community was able to attract local citizens to deal with local issues and concerns, 38.5 percent

said YES, 38.5 percent said NO; and, 23 percent did not have enough information to answer the question. Over half (51.3%) said that Kingsville did not have adequate assets to draw on to meet its needs. The same response was evident in terms of whether the community had an adequate tax base to address its needs. With regard to Kingsville having the means to involve local citizens in building up the community, 41 percent said that it did have the means, while about 31 percent said it did not. Nearly 28 percent of the survey participants indicated that they did not have enough information on this topic to respond to the question. On a more positive note over half (56.4%) said that Kingsville had responsive local leaders, and nearly 72 percent said that there were a wide range of volunteer civic organizations that were involved in the community.

With regard to citizen input, nearly 41 percent of the participants indicated that there was little or no citizen feedback sought on many of the issues and concerns confronting the community. Another 36 percent of the participants were not able to respond to the question because of a lack of information on this topic. To sum up, while the community as a whole appears to be using its assets, talent and resources appropriately, there may be room for improvement. Certainly, if there are civic groups and organizations that are not participating in activities designed to improve the community the local leadership should evaluate its outreach strategies to draw these groups into the community building process more effectively. The same applies to involving individual citizens who want to make the community better.

Leadership Assets

The ability of any community to move forward is to a large extent driven by its leadership. In a real sense, it is the leadership factor that drives the development process in many communities. This leadership can be generated by key community leaders, a group of citizens who want a better neighborhood or community, or a civic organization that is centered on community revitalization or growth. On the other hand, a community that lacks leadership is often characterized by indecision, conflict and poor planning. This assessment tries to get an idea of how Kingsville ranks with regard to its leadership.

Participants in this survey generally ranked Kingsville high on leadership. Over 40 percent (41.0%) felt that the leadership in Kingsville thinks long-term and comprehensively. Slightly over 25 percent (25.6%) gave a negative response to this question, and roughly one-third (33.3%) were not able to answer this question. They also felt that their leadership was able to forge a consensus on key issues impacting the community. In fact, over half (51.3%) agreed with that statement. They noted that Kingsville has committed leaders who are able to put aside differences to move forward (56.4%); that its leadership is able and willing to take action (61.5%); and the local leadership is open to new ideas (56.4%). On the other hand, nearly 44 percent of the survey-takers felt that Kingsville did not have a clearly stated vision. Over 60 percent (61.5%) were not able to respond to the question as to whether or not their community's goals aligned with its vision. While most of the survey participants felt that Kingsville has strong leadership, their response to questions regarding its goals and long-term

vision indicates a possible lack of understanding on what the community wants to become in the years ahead. It also suggests that Kingsville's leadership may have to do a better job in addressing the long-term needs of the community as a whole.

Workforce Assets/Status

This assessment factor sought to gain a better understanding of how Kingsville is dealing with its workforce needs. This is important because the quality of the local workforce is a key factor in any long-range economic development strategy for the community. If it is to move forward, Kingsville needs to have a trained workforce. Equally important, it needs a workforce that can engage in an increasingly competitive economic environment in the area.

With regard to the supply of skilled workers in the community, the perception of the participants was mixed. Slightly over 30



Figure 32: SWOT Session - Kingsville, TX

Source: CURPR

percent (30.8%) said that the supply has declined, while about one third (33.3%) said that it has remained stable. Only about 10 percent (10.3%) said that it has increased. The remaining 26 percent (25.6%) did not know. The same pattern is apparent with regard to the ability of local schools to prepare students for work. Slightly over one-third (33.3%) said that the ability of schools in the community has become less effective in preparing students for work, while about 23 percent (23.1%) noted that the situation has been stable. Only about 13 percent (12.8%) indicated that the ability of schools to prepare students for work had increased. The community's ability to hold on to young people after graduating high school also reflected a generally negative response with one-half (56.4%) noting that it has declined over the years.

Another key area addressed in this assessment was the quality of the local workforce. Over a third (35.9%) felt that the quality of the workforce in Kingsville had declined, while another third (30.8%) indicated that the quality has remained stable. Another 28 percent (28.2%) were not able to answer this question. Over half (53.8%) of the survey takers did not have enough information to answer the question dealing with the community's understanding of its workforce needs. Also the majority of the survey takers were not able to answer questions dealing with the community's access to workforce training (48.7%), its ability to deal with its workforce needs (56.4%), or, the ability of local businesses to train workers (56.4%). This appears to indicate that the community as a whole needs to put additional emphasis on workforce development as part of a broader strategy to grow the local economy.

Business Environment

A community's business environment or climate has to do with how it seeks to work with local businesses and entrepreneurs to ensure their overall success. This particular assessment sought to gain some information on how local officials, civic and community leaders, and residents perceive the community's role in growing local businesses and encouraging entrepreneurship. It also sought to get some idea of the kinds of incentives, services and support local businesses receive in the community as they start up and grow their operations over time. Finally, it was to better understand how business people are viewed and treated in the community.

When asked whether or not local officials do their best to make local businesses succeed, 41 percent of the survey takers said YES, while about 21 (20.5%) said NO. The remaining participants (38.5%) did not know the answer or were not able to respond. When asked if local officials have a positive attitude toward business growth, over 60 percent (61.5%) of the respondents said YES. In terms of providing a good environment for promoting business growth, and reaching out to businesses to improve the community, local officials also did well. For example, 41 percent of the respondents said that local officials do reach out to businesses, and about one-third (33.3%) felt that they provide a good environment for promoting business growth. However, almost 54 percent (53.9%) did not know whether or not the City of Kingsville provided incentives or had programs designed to expand businesses. The same lack of information was evident with regard to the question asking whether or not local officials had a business retention/expansion plan in place. Over 69 percent



Figure 33: SWOT Session - Kingsville, TX

Source: CURPR

(69.2%) of the survey respondents were not able to answer this question.

With regard to inviting local business leaders to engage in the community and the ability of local officials and the community, in general, to attract business leaders and others to actively engage in the community and local politics the responses were more favorable. Over 46 percent (46.2%) of the respondents indicated that local officials do want business leaders to engage with the community. With regard to local officials attracting business leaders to actively engage in the community and local politics over 43 percent (43.6%) said YES. The "Do Not Know" response, however, was also high for these questions. Over 40 percent of the respondents gave a "do not know" response to each of these questions. The same was true with regard to the local Chamber of Commerce. Over 48 percent (48.7%) of the respondents said that local officials do work with the

local chamber, while about 44 percent (43.6%) were not able to answer the question.

Overall, local officials appear to be actively involved with the local business community. Successful communities generally have strong economies and a good business environment. It is important to note that businesses drive the local economy. They also help to create a viable tax base to allow communities to grow and improve the quality of life. The key to a good business environment in any community is how well that community responds to the needs of local businesses and entrepreneurs. Given the responses by local survey takers there appears to be a relatively good business environment in Kingsville. However, every effort must be made to strengthen that relationship in order to grow the local economy and to bring in new investment.

Quality of Life Assets

All communities strive to improve their quality of life. Quality of life is a subjective concept that is both satisfying and sustainable. Certain kinds of assets contribute to a community's quality of life. They include such things as having good schools, fine stores, museums, and good restaurants. It also includes excellent public services, attractive environments, and good medical facilities. These kinds of assets add value to the community. A community that lacks these kinds of assets is usually one that is having difficulty in sustaining itself. Its population is declining and its economy is struggling. The goal here is to get some feedback on how local citizens perceive their quality of life in Kingsville.

The response was mixed. About one-third of the survey takers (33.6%) responded positively to the questions posed in this category. A third (32.1%) however, responded negatively, and another third (34.3%) was not able to fully respond to all of the questions. The same pattern also applied to the question as to whether Kingsville has a good quality of life. The response was 35.9% responding YES, 30.8% responding NO, and 33.3% responding “Don’t Know”.

Specifically, most of the respondents gave a lower reading to assets like civic culture, schools and medical facilities. In this regard, nearly 49 percent (48.7%) indicated that Kingsville does not have a vibrant civic culture. About half (48.7%) felt that local schools were not performing well. However, many felt that the community has good medical facilities (43.6%); good parks and recreational areas (48.7%); and active youth groups and organizations (43.6%). They also noted that they have a senior center/day-care centers (43.6%) in the community. With respect to high quality public services about 23 percent (23.1%) said that Kingsville provides good services, while slightly over 30 percent (30.8%) said that the services were not of high quality. Another 46 percent (46.1%) were not able to respond to this particular question because of a lack of information. Housing, however, received a positive response with over 38 percent (38.5%) saying that the community has good housing, while about 28 percent (28.2%) responded negatively to this question. Another third (33.3%) were not able to respond due to a lack of information on the topic.

All communities strive to enhance and maintain a high quality of life for their citizens. However, this is an ongoing task that

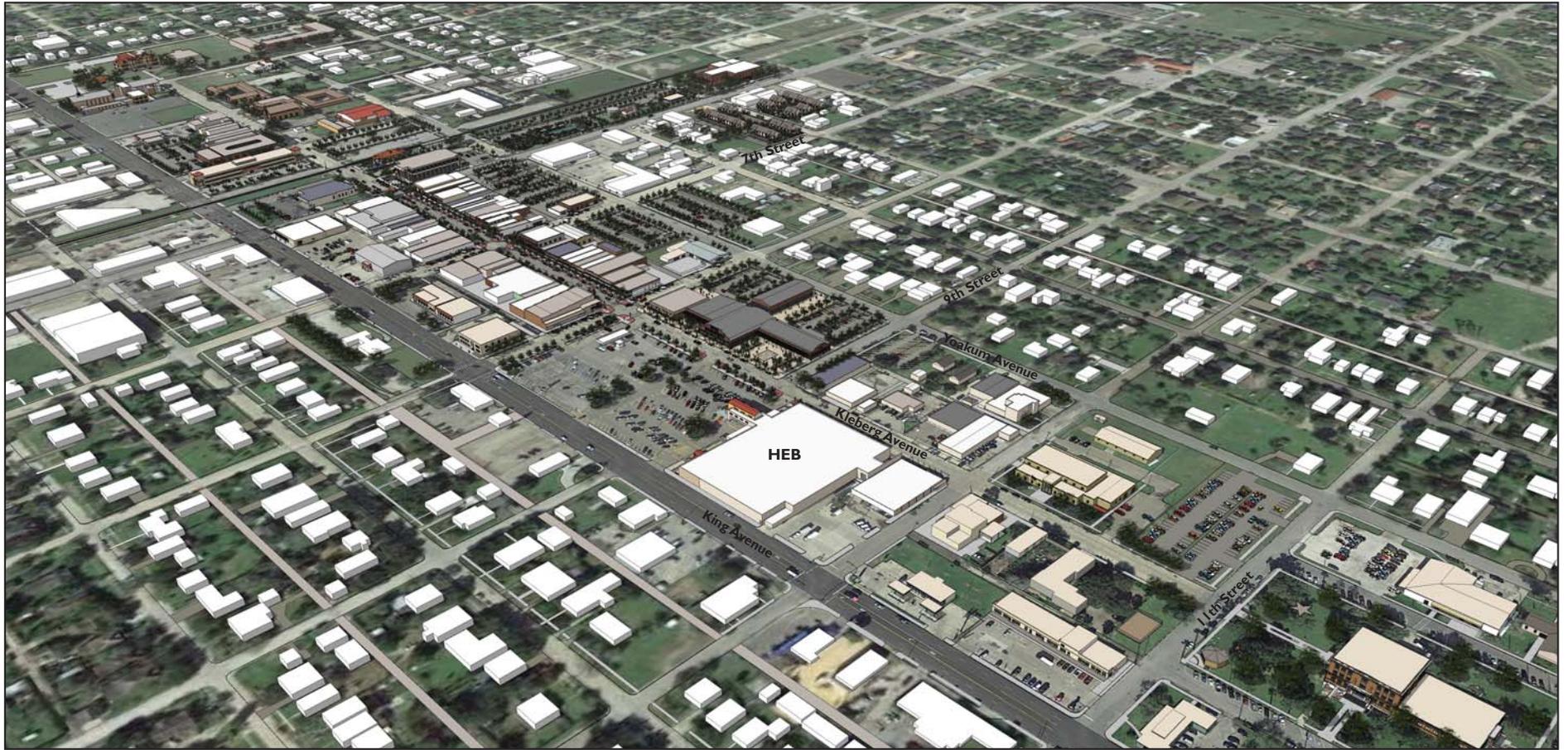
is continually evolving as communities grow and prosper. For Kingsville the task is one of maintaining and enhancing its quality of life. As a community it has a number of important assets. For example, it is home to Texas A & M University – Kingsville, and the Naval Air Station at Kingsville. It also has several major retailers, the King Ranch and a major hospital facility – Christus Spohn Hospital –Kleberg. It is a multicultural city that has a number of historical sites and a historic downtown area. These and other assets provide the basis for a high quality of life for citizens. The key is how the community is able to use these assets to grow itself.

Conclusion

The purpose of this Community Assessment was to gain important information to better understand the capabilities and assets that Kingsville can draw on as it grows its community and local economy. It was also designed to give information to evaluate the kinds of resources and talent Kingsville can mobilize to meet its needs over the long-term. By examining each of the 11 categories included in this assessment we can also gain a better idea of where Kingsville stands with regard to its developmental and long-range growth prospects. It also provides an idea of some of the key issues and concerns the community is dealing with.

In general, Kingsville has been successful in meeting the needs of its residents. It has a relatively strong economy, good education assets, and a stable environmental context. Its local government also seems to have sufficient capacity to support long-term development in the community. Kingsville can also be viewed as a successful community in that it has created a

good environment for most of its residents. However, problems do exist. For example, there appears to be a need for more affordable housing in the community. Efforts to improve the local economy and enhance the overall environment also need to be continued. In terms of its assets, resources and talent Kingsville seems to be doing a good job of using its advantages to move the community forward. It also has a strong leadership base that is both accessible and knowledgeable. However, its leadership will have to do a better job of addressing the community’s long-term development needs. With regard to its workforce there is evidence to suggest that the City of Kingsville could also do a better job in dealing with issues like workforce training, improving the ability of local schools to better prepare young people for the world of work, and creating more jobs at the local level. Kingsville also needs to do a better job of addressing the needs of local businesses and encouraging new development. Finally, while many felt that its living standards and overall environment are good, more needs to be done. The key here is to effectively bring together their assets and talent to deal with many issues and concerns. This effort is a good start in accomplishing that end.



Options for the Future

Increase Visitor/Tourism Potential

This section describes a number of possible options the City of Kingsville may want to consider as it moves forward with the development of its Downtown District and surrounding area. The recommendations in this section focus on the Mainstreet District as illustrated on page 37. The intent is to suggest ways that Kingsville could capitalize on its existing assets and take advantage of its unique historical and cultural legacy. The following section will then focus more on developing a more comprehensive implementation strategy for the community.

South Texas is to a large extent the birthplace of ranching in the United States. Spanish settlers who arrived in the 1700s and early 1800s brought cattle and then the technique of raising and herding livestock. The Spanish vaquero was the forerunner of the American cowboy. Thus, the history of ranching is an important legacy of Kingsville.

Establish a Museum Cluster

Kingsville has a wealth of museums for a city of its size. The King Ranch Museum, housed in the historic ice house building on 6th Street, just north of downtown, details the history of the famous King Ranch. The 1904 Train Depot Museum, found along the railroad tracks between Yoakum and Kleberg Avenues, represents the history of trains and the railroad, which were vital to Kingsville's growth. The Conner Museum, a part of Texas A&M University–Kingsville, is named after the

first history professor at the university, who started this Texas history museum by contributing his private collection.

The positions of the Train Depot Museum and the King Ranch Museum are advantageous to Kingsville. They're located within the Historic Downtown District, separated by only two blocks. The Train Depot Museum itself is located on Kingsville's main street, Kleberg Avenue, just 200 feet from the commercial downtown.

This report recommends the vacant Kingsville Publishing Company Building at the intersection of South 5th Street and West Kleberg Avenue be used as a proposed children's museum. This would put three major museums all within easy walking distance of each other. Alternatively, another good location could be found in one of the vacant buildings on Kleberg Avenue, between 6th and 7th Street. This would be a smaller space than is found at the Kingsville Publishing Company Building, and would be slightly further away from the other museums, but it has the advantage of being a more historic building, as well as being in the heart of Kingsville's main street.

The purpose of establishing a children's museum downtown would be to create a museum district or corridor in the heart of the city. From the entrance of the recommended Children's Museum building to the entrance of the 1904 Train Depot Museum is a walk of only about 500 feet. From the Train Depot Museum north to the Urban Xeriscape Garden is only about 300 feet. From the garden to the King Ranch Museum is about 800 feet. Another three blocks from the King Ranch is the

Venerable Mother Julia Museum, dedicated to the history of the early 20th-century Kingsville nun who is in the process of being canonized. Although this museum is a bit too far to be walkable from the museums to the south of the corridor, it is still important to the city and adds to the overall value of the downtown museum area.

The value of this museum corridor is in the density of attractions and information found in it, which draws people to downtown and to Kingsville in general. A visitor could park near the proposed Children's Museum (the Kingsville Publishing Company building), then move on to the Train Depot Museum to learn about one of the two major forces that developed Kingsville: the railroad. From there, they could walk through the Xeriscape Garden and experience native vegetation, then walk to the King Ranch Museum to learn about the other developmental force behind the city: the King Ranch. This area would increase the cultural academic renown of Kingsville, and should be attractive to many types of visitors, but it would especially draw students from surrounding areas in the form of field trips. The Corpus Christi Independent School District has more than 38,000 students and there are approximately 20,000 students within the school districts that are less than 30 minutes from Kingsville, including Kingsville ISD, Alice ISD, Robstown ISD, and West Oso ISD, among many others. The proposed Children's Museum and the Train Depot Museum are both free admission, while the King Ranch Museum is \$7 for an adult, and \$4 for children 5-12, making these museums inexpensive options for school districts to visit. The museum district would attract these school trips, which would increase tax revenue for the city and revenue for nearby businesses.



Figure 34: Proposed Museum Cluster

Source: CURPR

Maintain and Improve Historic Buildings

Cities can capitalize on the presence of historic buildings. Well-preserved and well-utilized historic buildings represent the history and character of the city, which, in turn, affects the economics, culture, and attractiveness of the city. Communities are inexorably connected to their geography, and buildings physically represent the story of a community's place. A dedication to the preservation of historic buildings adds to the sense of community of a place, while connecting it to larger historic and aesthetic movements. A successful city should make every effort to maintain and restore its historic buildings.

Historic buildings are important economic assets to a city and region. For both their aesthetic value and historic significance, these buildings are more attractive to businesses owners because they are able to draw the interest of consumers in a way that newer constructions cannot. Historic buildings also attract visitors, which benefits the whole city. Historic tourism brings in people from throughout the region, state, and country. These visitors patronize restaurants, hotels, and retail stores, while utilizing transportation and recreational opportunities provided within the city. The presence of an established Historic District can further benefit the economic prospects of a city, especially when it includes a historic downtown area. Centralized historic buildings organized into a Historic District encourage the focus of population in downtown, leading to increased patronage of businesses and services in the area. They contribute to the overall feel and attractiveness of

downtown, which is often key to a city's economic success. Both visitors and residents are drawn to the city center due to these historic attractions.

Culturally, historic buildings contribute to the sense of place of the city and region in which they were built. They serve as landmarks and easy identifiers that separate the city from others like it. The stories these buildings tell provide a sense

of pride and community to residents, and encourage others to move there. The history of these buildings is tied to the people of the community by reminding them of special events and eras in their lives. The aesthetics of these buildings, as well, are important to providing a defining artistic and visual culture of the city, which sets the tone for future development, and sets it apart from other cities around it.



Figure 35: John B. Ragland Mercantile Building - King Ranch Saddle Shop

Source: CURPR

Kingsville has a wealth of historic buildings and locations; 72% of the houses in Kingsville were built prior to 1980, compared to 42% for Texas as a whole. Many commercial buildings in town were built prior to 1950, with a number originally constructed soon after Kingsville was established in 1904. The city has an established Historic District, which shows an effort by the City of Kingsville to preserve its historic landmarks. There are nine sites within Kingsville that have been designated either on the National Register of Historic Places or as a Registered Texas State Historic Landmark, and an additional seven have been designated by the Kingsville Historic Development Board as City of Kingsville Landmarks. All ten of these can be found in or near the Historic district, and are either well-preserved/well-utilized, or are in the process of being restored and put to better use. Efforts are underway by the City to nominate the Mainstreet District as a National Register District.

There are still several actions Kingsville could take in order to further enhance the historic value of the city. These recommendations come largely from the 2013 Kingsville Historic Resources Report, by Cynthia Martin and produced in coordination with the City of Kingsville and Texas A&M University-Kingsville. The report itself makes several recommendations for "Potential Nominations for the National Register of Historic Places," including the B.O. Sims Building, the old Kleberg Bank Building, and the Ice House Building where the King Ranch Museum now resides. Additionally, other landmark recommendations are included here based on the factors enumerated in the report, including the building's age, location, architectural style, and the report's designation of "priority" (high, medium, or low.) The 2013 report contains

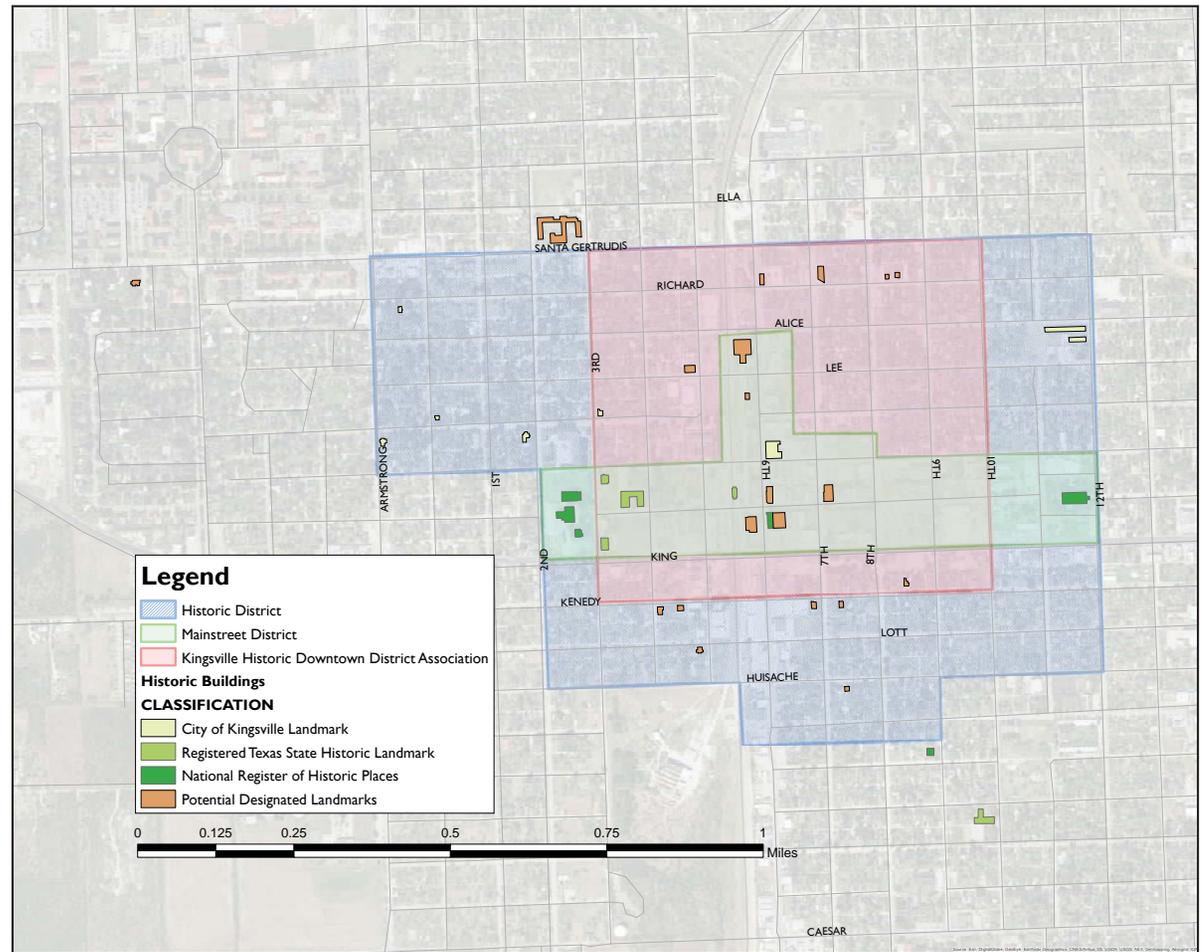


Figure 36: Historic District Map - Kingsville, Texas

Source: ArcGIS, CURPR

information on the historic value of these buildings, but stops short of recommending their inclusion as Kingsville Landmarks. This vision study provides both the recommendations from the 2013 report, and new recommendations based on the data provided in that original report. Special attention is paid here to buildings in areas that are included in the Historic District but lack individual landmark status. The Kingsville Local Landmark Designation provides buildings with opportunities to increase public recognition through inclusion in a registry and a plaque to be placed on the exterior of the building. These buildings are also protected from damaging renovations in the future, and can be eligible for property tax relief. Figure 36 shows the Historic District, as well as the buildings with current landmark status, and the buildings that could, potentially, be recognized on a national, state, or city level. It is recommended that the owners of these buildings that are eligible for recognition apply for landmark designation, for both the benefit of the building and for Kingsville as a whole. These are recommendations, meant to provide options for the City of Kingsville moving forward.

El Centro is a neighborhood within the Historic District that has declined commercially in recent decades, as many small businesses in the neighborhood have closed down. Significant historic buildings in the neighborhood include the Salazar Grocery Store Building, built in 1927, the Day & Night Club Building (a historic Tejano dance hall), built circa 1950, and the Venerable Mother Julia Navarette Museum, found in the schoolhouse built between 1916 and 1930.

Similarly, there is only one designated landmark south of King Avenue, despite the approximately 125 acres of the Historic District to be found there. Potential sites include the first hospital in the town (the home of the first town doctor, which needs extensive restoration), and several other pre-1930 residences that exhibit a specific historical architectural style. The T.C. Moore House, at 227 West Kenedy, for example, was built in 1904 and exemplifies the Folk Victorian aesthetic, as does the house found at 311 East Huisache, constructed circa 1910. Two houses at 229 and 414 East Kenedy, both built circa 1910, represent the Neoclassical and Craftsman styles, respectively. There are several other options in these neighborhoods for houses with high historic value.

Another step Kingsville should take is to ensure that all buildings of high historical value within the city are being properly utilized. On Kleberg Avenue between 6th and 8th Streets, nearly every building, with only a few exceptions, is of historical value. However, several of these historic buildings are vacant or underutilized. Across 7th street, on the 300 block of East Kleberg, there are even more vacancies in these historic buildings. Filling in these buildings with contributing, appropriate businesses would help revitalize the downtown area.

The proper use of these buildings is also important. Even when occupied, these buildings can represent lost potential when not utilized to their full extent. For example, downtown buildings that are two stories tall often use the second story for storage, when there would be great value in the space as apartments. This would bring more people to downtown and increase the customer base of commercial enterprises in the area.

The appearance of historic buildings is the key to their value. Restoring and maintaining historic buildings should be a high priority for any city. The original Kingsville Hospital, mentioned above, is in desperate need of restoration, as are several other historic buildings – mostly residential. These structural repairs, however, should only be done if the changes made are consistent with the historic style of the building and others in the area. If the repairs significantly alter the aesthetic style of the building, the building's historic value could be irreversibly lowered. A particular problem in Kingsville, and in many Texas towns, is not necessarily with the structural soundness of the buildings but with the deterioration or alteration of their aesthetics, specifically, their façades. Awnings, transoms, kickplates, and other external aesthetic features are iconic of commercial buildings in Texas built between 1900 and 1950. Over the years, these features might have broken down or been removed by the building owners in pursuit of modernization. Examples of this can be found all over Kleberg Avenue; storefronts found at 224 and 226 East Kleberg are notable for this problem. Restoring these façades is a relatively inexpensive way to greatly increase the historic, cultural, and property value of these buildings. To aid with the cost, Kingsville has established a façade improvement grant program which will match the money spent on façade improvements by the building owners, dollar-for-dollar, up to \$10,000, for buildings that meet the criteria. This includes all buildings that are recognized at the national, state, or local level, as well as buildings that are considered “contributing” to the Historic District or otherwise recommended by the Historical Development Board. All historic commercial buildings in Kingsville should look to take advantage of this program.



Figure 37: Texas Theater Building

Source: CURPR



Figure 38: Existing Conditions of the 300th block of Kleberg Avenue



Figure 39: Proposed Improvements of the 300th block of Kleberg Avenue



Source: CURPR



Source: CURPR

Enhance Sidewalks and Street Crossings for Pedestrians

In order to make Kingsville (especially downtown) more inviting to pedestrians, the streetscape system should be improved. Kingsville has both the opportunity and resources to have a thriving, pedestrian-oriented Central Business District (CBD), and one of the key steps in seeing that come to fruition would be to strengthen the streetscape system. For practical reasons, an extensive and well-maintained sidewalk network allows for a greater volume of pedestrians to utilize it, and, in turn, access the businesses and services found downtown. Particularly, members of the community that have mobility problems – the elderly, disabled – are dependent on sidewalk networks. Aesthetically, the upkeep and design of sidewalks and other streetscape features encourages use of Downtown Kingsville by visitors and residents alike by creating a pleasing atmosphere.

Along Kleberg Avenue between the courthouse and Henrietta M. King High School, the sidewalk system is the best to be found in the city. The coverage is virtually complete along this corridor, except for areas near the periphery with large numbers of curb cuts. The coverage improves the closer to the center of the corridor one gets, and the sidewalks in the heart of downtown, between 6th and 8th Streets, are very high quality compared to the rest of Kingsville. This is an important starting point for the development of an extensive, well-maintained sidewalk network around Downtown Kingsville.



Figure 40: Proposed Street Improvements at Kleberg Avenue and 6th Street

Source: CURPR

The secondary main street, King Avenue, is also well-covered with sidewalks. Outside of these two main corridors, however, the consistency of the coverage falls significantly. 6th Street, running north-south, is well-covered, as is a five-block stretch of Kenedy Avenue east of 6th, but similar areas are not covered at all. In particular, blocks west of the railroad tracks are lacking in sidewalks, as is much of Yoakum Avenue, which is especially problematic due to its proximity to Kleberg Avenue, and, thus, its potential as another commercial corridor.

Kingsville should look to ensure that areas in the vicinity of downtown are adequately covered through the sidewalk network. Specifically, the City should look to have complete coverage of the areas of Kingsville that fall within the official Historic Downtown District (Figure 44.) Even in the residential neighborhoods in this area, sidewalk coverage is important because their proximity to the CBD suggests that those who live there should be able to easily access those businesses by foot. Overall, a complete sidewalk network in the areas around downtown works to funnel pedestrians towards the city center.

The quality of the sidewalk coverage is important as well. A poorly maintained sidewalk, with many cracks, gaps, and inconsistent heights, is as ineffective as a total lack of a sidewalk. In the center of Kleberg Avenue, sidewalk quality is high, but on the peripheries it suffers in some areas. King Avenue is covered in sidewalks, but most of them are old and broken down. Overall, outside of the main Kleberg Avenue corridor, the trend in Kingsville is that of poorly-maintained sidewalks.

Another obstacle to Kingsville's success as a pedestrian-friendly community is a lack of crosswalks. Too few crosswalks make pedestrians feel, at best, inconvenienced, and, at worst, in danger. The 2.5-mile stretch of King Avenue through Kingsville has just six intersections with protected crosswalks, and, again, the community west of the railroad tracks is underserved: only one is found on this side of town, at King's intersection

with Armstrong Avenue, and there is a gap of over half a mile between it and the next crosswalk. Kleberg Avenue has several stop sign intersections but only one truly protected crosswalk with signals. Yoakum Avenue has virtually no crosswalks. Kingsville needs to add protected crosswalks in these area of potentially high pedestrian activity.



Figure 41: Proposed Street Improvements at Kleberg Avenue and 7th Street

Source: CURPR

Branding

Branding effectively represents how a city wants to be perceived by the rest of the world. Successful branding efforts distinguish the city from its neighbors and make it an attractive place to visit. Ineffective branding reduces potential interest from outsiders, which hurts the economy of the city. Branding is also important for residents of the city. It develops a sense of place and pride in the city, fostering community engagement. Branding also helps to establish priorities for the city, as it fosters a dominant vision that policies and activities follow.

Kingsville is in need of effective consistent branding in order to draw attention and activity to the city and, especially, downtown. Kingsville's cultural history is very closely tied to the King Ranch, and, more broadly, ranching, as well as the railroad. Kingsville's connection to the King Ranch, a famous landmark known across Texas and beyond, should be emphasized in the branding efforts of the City. The imagery of the ranch and the railroad, two icons of the western United States, could be utilized well to create a distinctive view of the City.

A successful branding strategy would likely require Kingsville to work with consultant firms and agencies to establish an in-depth cultural branding plan that represents the interests of the city. It should look to create an attractive, logical, and effective brand for itself in the pursuit of overall success for Kingsville.



Figure 42: Generic Example of Brand

Source: CURPR



Figure 43: Proposed Historic District Signage

Source: CURPR

Wayfinding

Cities use wayfinding for a variety of needs. For visitors, wayfinding is necessary to help them become oriented and comfortable in new surroundings. This aids tourism and helps the economy of the city. Wayfinding is important to residents, as well, in part because it helps to signify what the community finds important. A city's priorities are represented by what they choose to advertise, and wayfinding helps define the urban environment to residents and visitors alike. The aesthetics and methods of wayfinding, too, contribute to the culture of a city. Matching the style of wayfinding to the feel of a city is a positive for the city, but choosing a style that doesn't fit would be a negative. It's important for a city to ensure that its wayfinding is representative, understandable, and beneficial to the city. Kingsville has recently added new signage to assist visitors and residents in the Downtown District. The City needs to continue to improve its wayfinding network downtown.

Kingsville has several landmarks and areas of interest within the Historic District but a lack of wayfinding limits the benefits Kingsville can receive from these cultural indicators. This wayfinding system should be easy to understand, visually appealing, and encompass the most important areas of Kingsville. The city's wayfinding should, both in style and substance, match the branding strategy that is decided upon. It is up to the City to decide how they would define these factors, but consistency, uniqueness, and an accurate representation of Kingsville should be the goal of these branding and wayfinding efforts.

Improve the Connection to Texas A&M Kingsville

The physical disconnect between Kingsville’s downtown and the Texas A&M University-Kingsville campus is a significant issue for the city. The University is hugely important to Kingsville: the student population comprises approximately one-third of the total population of the City. Physical separation of this population from the central commercial area of the City is wasted potential. Many students don’t have cars on campus, and the public transportation options are limited to an hourly shuttle from campus.

An easy way for the City to help connect the two areas of Kingsville would be the establishment of bike lanes, particularly in a network or loop. Kingsville has started this process by creating bike lanes running both directions along University Boulevard, between Santa Gertrudis Avenue and Texas Highway 141. This shows that the City is aware of its cycling population and is looking to make transportation easier for them. Kingsville should expand upon this and create more bike lanes to fully facilitate bicycle transportation between important areas of the City.

There are many options for the precise locations for these new bike lanes, but the important idea is that they connect the TAMU-Kingsville campus and the Downtown District in order to make traveling between the two safer for cyclists. One option for a route would build off the existing bike lane on University Boulevard. Going south on University, the route could turn east at Kleberg Avenue (avoiding the heavy traffic

of 141), briefly turn north in order to cut through the green space adjacent to the historic Henrietta M. King High School/ the City Hall, then continue along Kleberg through downtown until 11th Street. There it could turn north, cutting west on Yoakum Avenue, and then north on 6th Street, until heading west on Santa Gertrudis Avenue where it intersects with University Boulevard. This route would access every part of the commercial downtown and several residential areas around the City, while avoiding areas with high traffic that would be dangerous to cyclists. This is just one option out of several, and the ideal option would be the development of many options into a network of lanes.

The creation of a bike lane network would allow easier access to downtown, encourage cyclists, and generally create a more active urban environment. It would also help the development of businesses in the cycling industry, such as bike shops. Bike rental services could also develop, either as a private industry or public access through the city government. This would allow residents and students to use bikes when needed by picking them up and dropping them off at locations near downtown and campus, without needing to purchase a bike themselves.

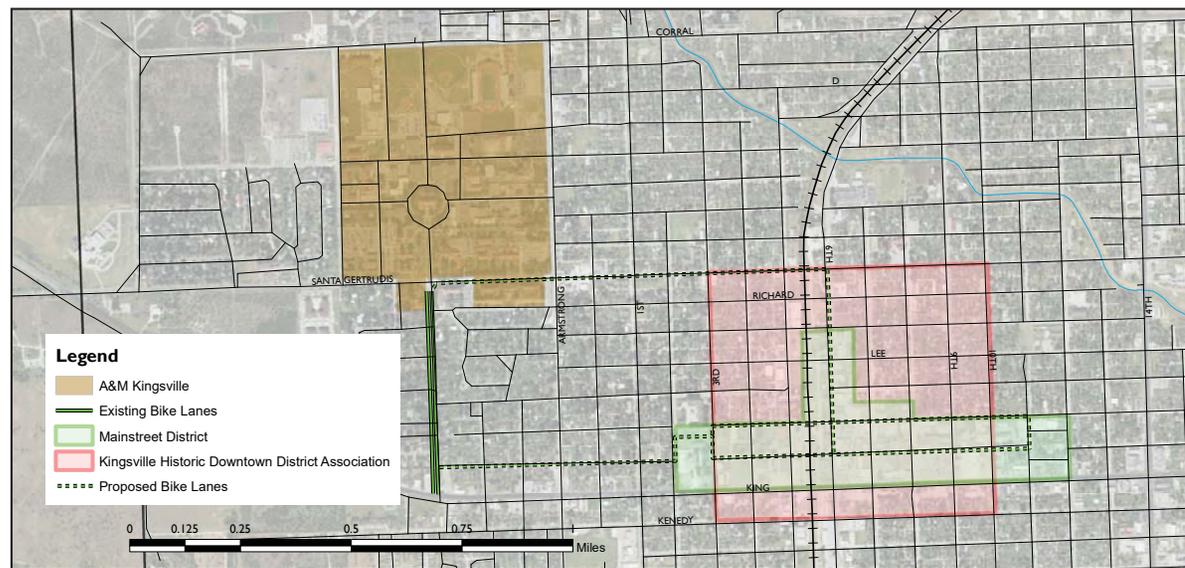


Figure 44: Proposed Bike Path Extension

Source: CURPR

Provide Enhanced Downtown Settings for Community Events

Special Events Center

There are a variety of buildings that can be constructed to provide event and meeting space for a city. A conference center is a facility which hosts various public and private conferences, and can include main conference rooms which connect to smaller conference room space. Conference centers tend to be small and largely serve businesses and handle work-related events. An event center is a facility which hosts various public and private events. Event centers can be located in settings such as hotels, conference rooms, and convention centers. An event center holds events such as concerts, sporting events, and banquets. They tend to be versatile and capable of handling events of all types. A convention center hosts various public and private conventions along with meetings. Convention centers are often stand alone venues, and tend to be very large, often containing an auditorium. Convention centers serve areas of high populations. Exhibition halls are typically found within the three previously mentioned centers, and are often the main location for events being held there. The architectural design of conference, event, and convention centers ranges from historic, rustic to contemporary and eco-friendly designs.

Kingsville has a wedding and event center called The Salazar Building, located north of downtown. While the center is somewhat centrally located, the capacity for occupants in the Salazar Building is only 120-180, and it is primarily a wedding/private event venue which makes it less than ideal for holding

Table 8: Comparable Event and Conference Center by City

City	Name	Population	Square Footage
Palestine	Palestine Civic Center	18,712	25,000
Corsicana	IOOF Event Center	23,770	20,000
Paris	Love Civic Center	25,171	13,000
Kingsville	Salazar Event Center	26,213	2,400
Eagle Pass	International Center for Trade	26,248	20,000
Cleburne	Cleburne Conference Center	29,337	17,856
New Braunfels	New Braunfels Civic/Convention Center	57,740	50,000
<i>Kingsville</i>	<i>Proposed Kingsville Special Events Center</i>	<i>26,213</i>	<i>23,000</i>

Source: CURPR



Figure 45: Proposed Events Center

Source: CURPR

a variety of events and functions. Texas A&M-Kingsville has multiple small conference rooms and meeting venues, but no large, multi-function event center. The University is also significantly removed from the downtown area. Kingsville would benefit from the development of a special events center near downtown that could also moderate small conventions and larger special events.

It is common for a city the size of Kingsville to have an event or conference center. In Table 8, Kingsville is compared to similar-sized Texas cities with existing event centers. The proposed Kingsville Event Center is compared with the Salazar Center, to give an idea in the gulf in square footage between Kingsville's existing facilities and the potential event center. The proposed center could have as much as approximately 23,000 square feet of space.

The proposed event center could be located at the current location of the non-operational K. A. Childs building on East Kleberg Avenue between North 8th Street and North 9th Street. The dealership's building complex occupies a large amount of land near the heart of downtown Kingsville, and the buildings are not currently in use. The main building, which contains the storefront space and is most visible to passersby, has a unique, classic design which could be utilized in the development of a special events center. The location of this complex is hugely beneficial to the City; it is just one block from the stores and restaurants along Kleberg Avenue, and, most importantly, very close to the Texas Theater, which would allow for large scale performance arts and musical events. A centrally-located, large-scale, distinct special events center working in conjunction

with the Texas Theater would be an important economic and cultural asset for Kingsville.



Figure 46: Proposed Events Center

Source: CURPR

Enhance East Kleberg Avenue as a Street Plaza

Kingsville lacks a dedicated public space for use by the community for special events and gatherings, such as a plaza or town square. On occasion East Kleberg Avenue between 6th and 8th Streets is blocked off and used as a temporary street plaza for special events. Through the use of barricades and bollards, Kleberg can be temporarily closed to automobile traffic to provide a safe, open, public space for events within the community.

This space could be used for a wide range of public activities as farmers or crafts markets, music festivals, public ceremonies, and holiday gatherings. This plan would require no permanent development or change of existing city structures, while still allowing for the creation of public plaza space when appropriate. Importantly, this corridor connects directly with the proposed Special Events Center at the K.A. Childs Building. This allows the community to hold events that would connect the Special Events Center and this proposed public plaza. This side of the corridor also includes the Texas Theater, which, if restored as proposed, would also serve as a cultural node for events and recreation. Holding events here would be a boon to businesses in the corridor, and overall serve to demarcate this area as significant. Kingsville could establish the importance of this area through signage and streetscape improvements that address lighting, paving, and street furniture. The light standards could be designed with multiple power outlets for street vendors.



Figure 47: Proposed Street Plaza on Kleberg Avenue

Source: CURPR



Figure 48: Proposed Street Plaza on Kleberg Avenue

Source: CURPR

Develop Future Parking Options

It would benefit Kingsville to expand parking options near downtown. Several lots exist to serve businesses in the Downtown District, as well as parallel parking along most of the streets, and angled parking near the heart of downtown. This amounts to 2,745 existing parking spots in Downtown Kingsville. With the proposed special events center found on Kleberg Avenue between 8th and 9th Streets, Kingsville should prepare to accommodate large events downtown, especially if the City intends to increase its tourism.

Figure 50 illustrates the existing parking in red, and potential parking lots in blue. If all the proposed were added, it would add another 445 parking spots to downtown. Most of the proposed parking can be found in vacant lots near the proposed special events center. Another area for proposed parking increases is near the 1904 Train Depot Museum and Downtown Pavilion. Greater parking options here would allow for an expanded Farmer's Market, as well as serve the many museums and other attractions in the area.

It is also proposed that Kingsville change the street parking along Kleberg Avenue between 6th and 8th Streets from angled parking to parallel parking. This change, which would sacrifice some parking spaces, would allow for easier access to these parking spots, safer exits from these spots, and would allow for greater sidewalk width which is vital to increasing pedestrian activity in Downtown Kingsville. If all proposed parking changes are implemented, 341 spots will be added to Downtown Kingsville, bringing the total to 3,086 parking spaces.



Figure 49: Proposed Parking Options

Source: CURPR

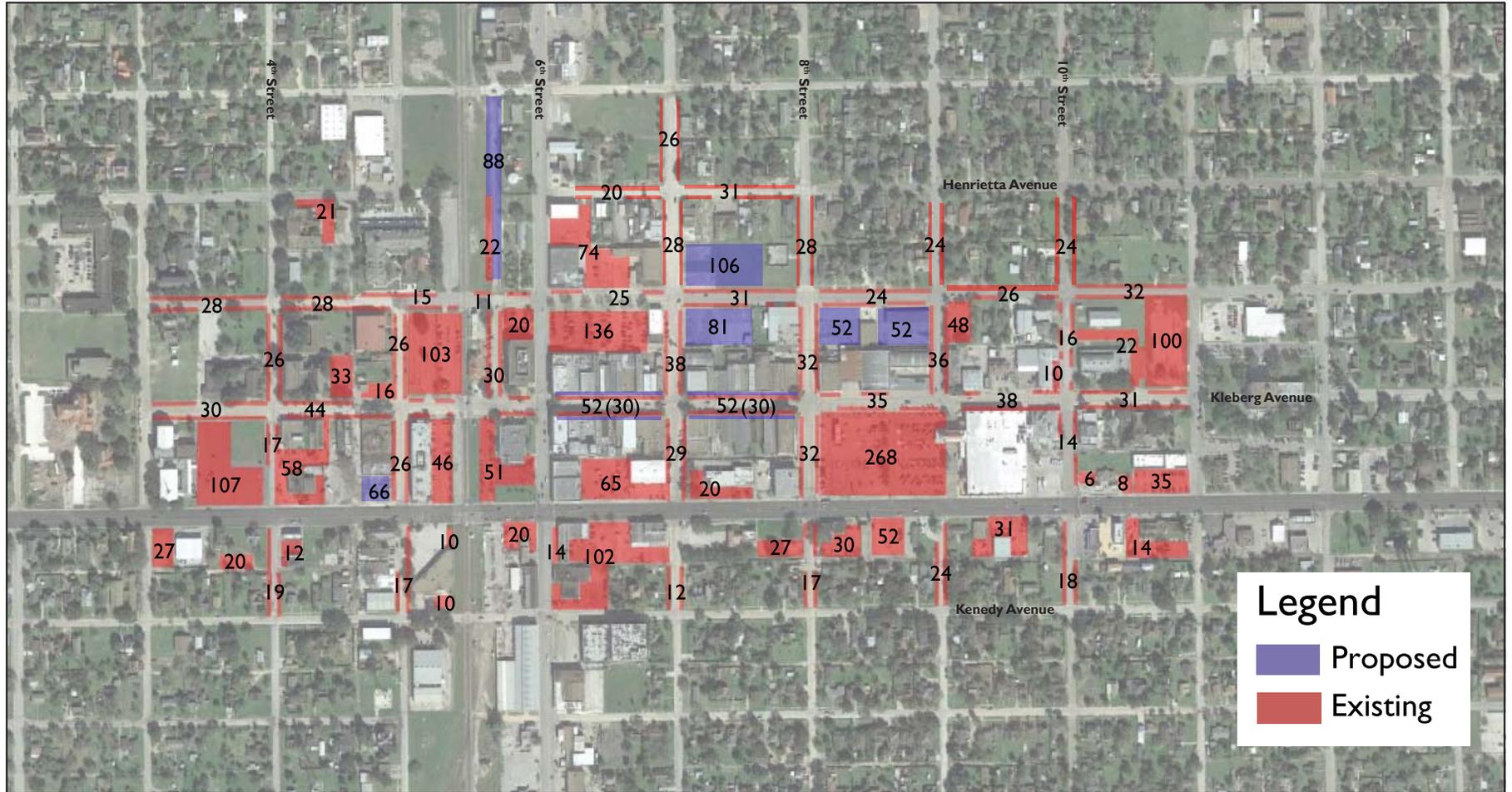


Figure 50: Existing and Proposed Parking Options

Source: CURPR

Adaptive Reuse of the Texas Theater

The Texas Theater is a historical and cultural landmark in Kingsville. Built in 1950, the theater served as the only movie theater in downtown Kingsville until it ceased operations in the early 1970s. The distinctive architectural style of the theater, historical significance, and location in the heart of downtown contribute to the value that the theater has to the city of Kingsville. Its restoration and revitalization as a part of downtown is vital to the future of Kingsville. The restored Texas Theater could serve as a movie theater, playhouse, music venue, and events center, all of which would help bring residents and visitors to downtown.

The Texas Theater's location at the corner of Kleberg Avenue and 8th Street places it at the center of activity in Kingsville. It sits at the end of the 2-block commercial center corridor between 6th and 8th Streets, and sits across 8th Street from the HEB store, and diagonal from the Old K. A. Childs Building, which is proposed to become a special events center elsewhere in this report. The theater can serve as a focal point for special events held in this important area of downtown. On average days, the theater can draw people to downtown who then would walk to nearby commercial buildings, aiding in the City's effort to draw more pedestrians to this area. The theater could also help connect students at Texas A&M University-Kingsville with activity downtown. Texas A&M Kingsville offers degrees in music and music performance. The Texas Theater could be used for university musical performances or as a setting for music festivals.

Revitalization of the Texas Theater is part of the key to the successful revitalization of downtown Kingsville. The theater is in the process of restoration although this process has stalled recently due to funding issues. The City of Kingsville should ensure that restoration of the theater is completed.

A revitalized Texas Theater can contribute to a revitalized Kingsville.

The Texas Historical Commissions Town Square initiative Team published a feasibility study in August 2016, that identifies reuse options for the theater and adjacent spaces.

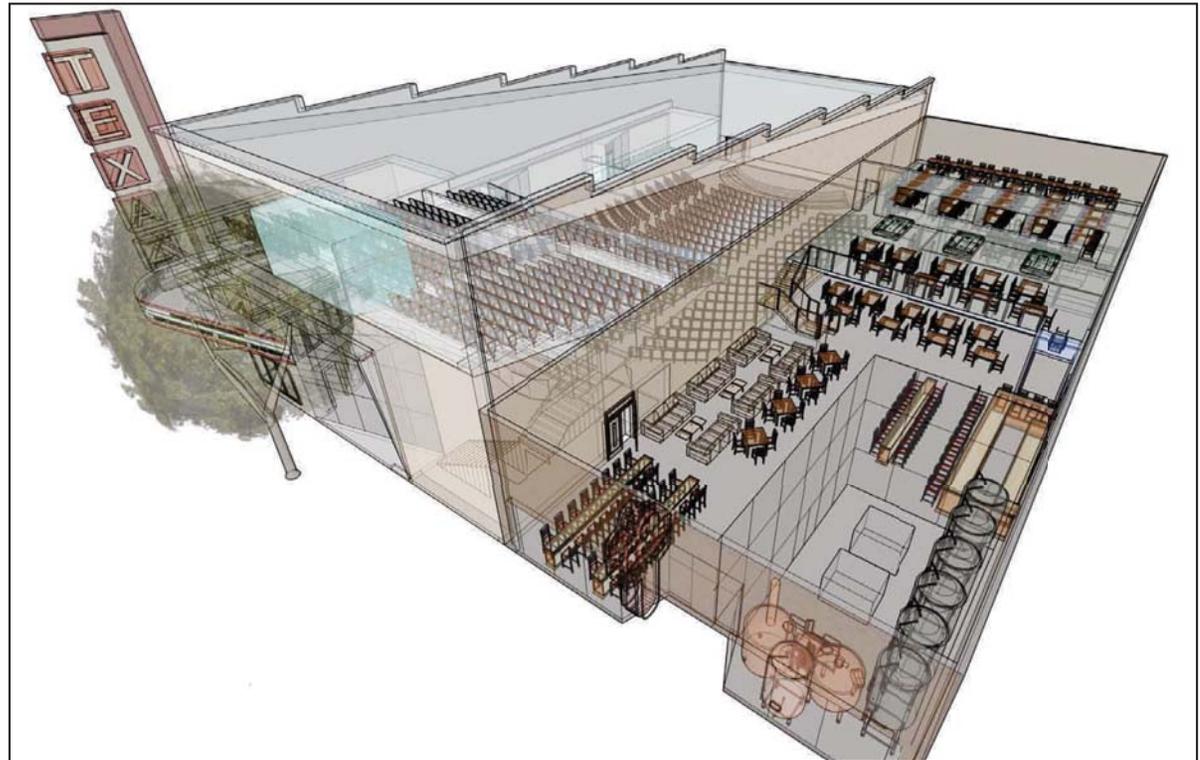


Figure 51: Proposed Texas Theater Improvements

Source: Texas Historical Commission

Relocation of the Bandstand

Kingsville has several assets near the train tracks that help the city develop a sense of place and community. The bandstand, found in the parking lot west of the tracks and just north of Kleberg Avenue, can serve as a focal point for events, especially those that feature live music. The City's urban xeriscape garden, found just east of the tracks and north of Yoakum Avenue, is a unique sustainable garden featuring native South Texas plants. The pavilion, just north of the garden, serves as the location for monthly farmer's markets and other public and private gatherings. To get the most out of these assets, there are several improvements Kingsville should make.

The City should consider moving the bandstand from its current parking lot location to the north end of the pavilion. This would create a cluster of these three community focal points, leading easily into one another. This is important so as to not disperse pedestrian activity over a large area – instead, focusing this activity in one area makes it easier for pedestrians to access each one of these features in relation to the others. This area is also a more natural gathering place for use of the bandstand, as compared to the parking lot it is currently in. This move also would allow for use of the bandstand for musical performances while events are occurring in the pavilion – especially the farmer's market.



Figure 52: Proposed Bandstand Relocation

Source: CURPR

Expansion of the Farmer's Market

Expansion and development of the area around the pavilion would allow for a larger farmer's market with easier access. The adjacent parking lot is poorly maintained but unusable in places. Restoring the lot and widening the car access would allow for more parking, as well as easier loading and unloading for vendors at the farmer's market.

Expanding the urban xeriscape garden area would create a more consistent corridor running parallel to the train tracks. A pair of garden walkways extending north past the pavilion and bandstand to the King Ranch Museum would greatly increase the aesthetic value of this area and help connect the museum to downtown.



Figure 53: Existing Farmers Market Pavilion



Figure 54: Proposed Farmer's Market Expansion

Source: CURPR

Bed and Breakfast Opportunities

An important step Kingsville could take would be to increase the amount of lodging options within the Downtown District. There are ten hotels in Kingsville, according to the Texas State Comptroller, that paid the hotel occupancy tax in 2016, and none of them are within walking distance of Downtown Kingsville (defined as falling within a quarter-mile of the stretch of Kleberg Avenue between the historic Henrietta M. King High School Building/City Hall and the Kleberg County Courthouse.) Most are found on highways leading into the city. Providing visitors lodging locations within walking distance of downtown is important for increasing the tourism revenue of the City. Lodging within the Downtown District encourages visitors to the city to spend a night or weekend in Kingsville, rather than just passing through.

Bed-and-breakfast-style lodgings would be the most practical to implement in this area of Kingsville, because of how little space is required and the reuse of existing structures. No bed-and-breakfast lodging facilities operate in Kingsville currently; this is a missed opportunity. Not only is Kingsville missing out on revenue from visitors who typically stay in bed-and-breakfasts, but the large number of historical houses near downtown means there are many options for bed-and-breakfast locations.

There are 750 houses within walking distance of downtown Kingsville, and the majority of these were built prior to 1960, with many being built around the time of the city's founding.

According to 2014 census data, approximately 12% of the housing units in Kingsville are vacant. While that number is likely lower closer to downtown, it can be expected that there are still options for vacant houses within walking distance that could be easily turned into bed-and-breakfasts. This would be

a good use of these buildings and would help the problem of lodging near downtown. The vacant upper floors of commercial buildings could also be adaptively reused for bed-and-breakfast lodging units such as the B. O. Sims Building.



Figure 55: B.O. Sims Building, JC Penney

Source: CURPR

Develop Infill Housing in the Downtown District

Key to the revitalization of downtown Kingsville is increasing the number of residential units in the area. More residential units would increase the population who live within ¼-mile walking distance of Kleberg Avenue. The area in question is defined as all the land within a ¼-mile of Kleberg Avenue between Henrietta M. King High School (City Hall) and the Kleberg County Courthouse. This area was chosen because of the ease of walkability to downtown. There are currently many sites in the area that would be suitable for the development of infill housing units as well as multi-family housing complexes. These sites include vacant lots and unused buildings, which are an inefficient use of land near downtown. Apartments could be developed at many of these sites, and those too small for apartments could be developed into houses to further extend the residential capacity of downtown.

Certain areas of Kingsville have concentrations of vacant space that should be utilized to the city's benefit. On either side of 7th Street, running north-south, there are several sites that are suitable options for development into apartments. The vacant area along 7th Street between Henrietta and Lee Avenues is particularly large, and quite close to the main street of downtown, Kleberg Avenue between 6th and 8th Streets. There are also vacant buildings in this area, like the Neesen Chevrolet Building, which could be replaced or reused as infill housing.

Higher density housing in this area is important for bringing activity from residents to the Central Business District.

Commercial activity has somewhat moved away from downtown recently, which partly explains the amount of vacant space in that part of Kingsville. By using some of this vacant space for housing, a greater percentage of the city's population would be located within walking distance of downtown, which would encourage more use of services and businesses in the area. Currently, there are only a few apartments in the area: twelve

apartment buildings, mostly small, adding approximately 85 units to the area, compared with 840 houses. With Kingsville's high under-30 population, due to the university, there would likely be a large market for apartments near downtown. Kingsville should look to develop apartments and other infill housing in many of the vacant lots near downtown.



Figure 56: Proposed Infill Housing Concept

Source: CURPR

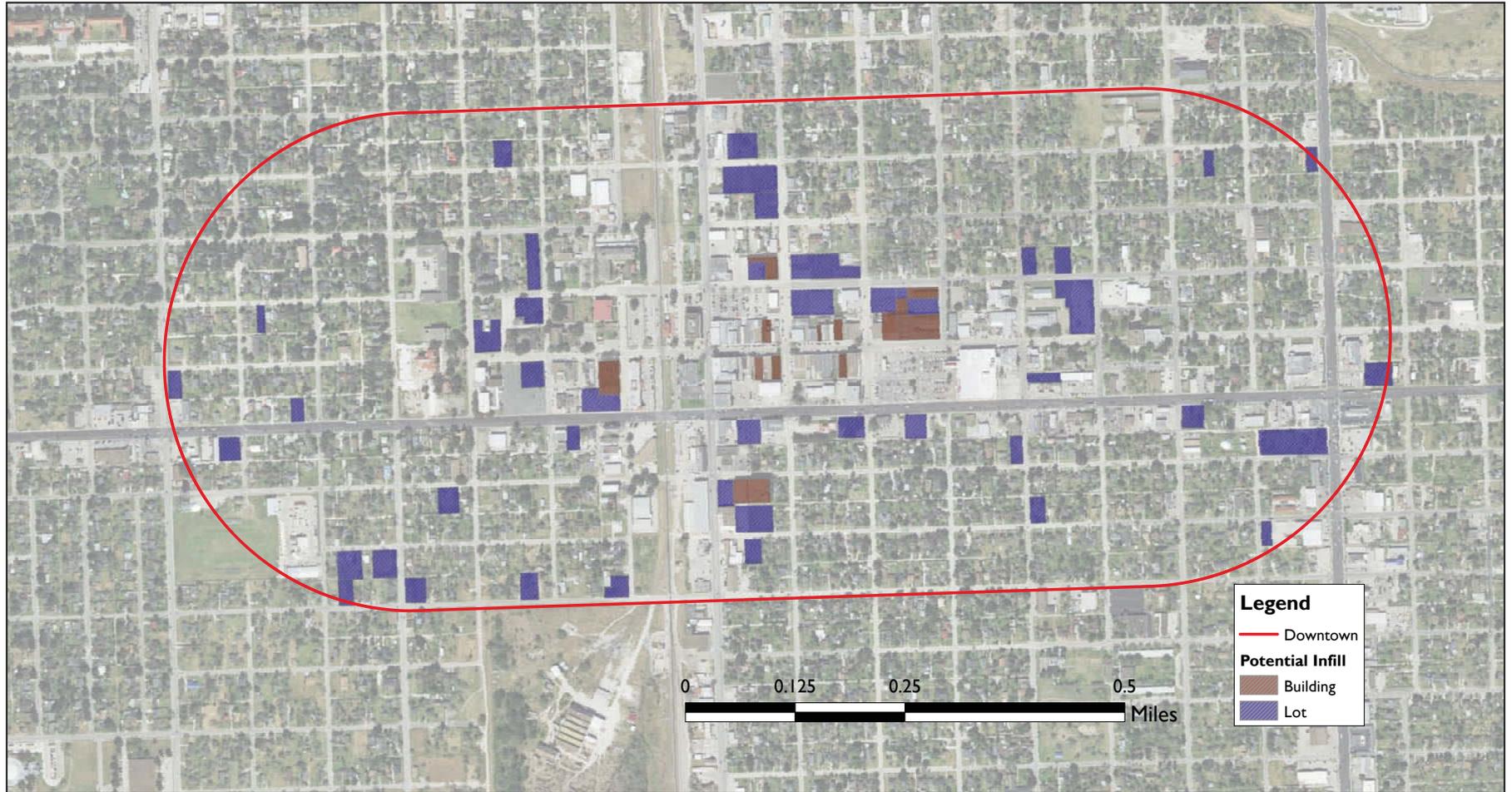


Figure 57: Potential Infill Location in the Downtown District

Source: CURPR



Implementation Plan

Introduction

Communities are complex; they are made up of many different parts that interact with one another to create a community of interests. These interests include issues dealing with the kind of environment residents in a particular neighborhood or community want; what kind of economy the community desires; and what kind of quality of life residents want. They also include things like how a community wants to be perceived; and, what kinds of actions and policies a local government needs to put in place to create and maintain a livable, attractive and sustainable community.

The very complexity of communities makes it difficult to articulate a strategy or plan of action to achieve a goal or a specific project. This also means that no simple prescriptive remedy or plan will likely succeed unless there is some kind of buy-in from the community and strong leadership by its civic, community, and public leaders. Equally important is the need for a framework or strategy to be formulated. Once that is in place, a plan of action can be developed and implemented. This section seeks to outline such a strategy for Kingsville to help revitalize its historic downtown area.

Previous sections in this vision plan outlined and discussed several initiatives and projects to accomplish this goal. They also presented a number of recommendations centered on revitalizing the Downtown District; improving its streetscape; enhancing its 'brand'; increasing its potential for attracting visitors and tourists; and, developing a marketing strategy to transform Kingsville's downtown area into a destination for

tourists. In addition, we examined several long-term options that Kingsville could pursue to expand the Downtown District's economic impact, and improve its desirability as a place to enjoy and shop. These options also center in on the development of Kingsville's downtown area as an economic and cultural hub for the larger community and the surrounding region. Underscoring these recommendations is Kingsville's historical context, and the role that context plays in its future development. We will continue to explore these ideas, projects and options further in the pages that follow. We will also discuss the possibility of putting in place an economic development/investment strategy to improve its business environment and enhance the community's overall tax base. The goal is to formulate a workable strategy for Kingsville to set the stage for new investment in its downtown area and surrounding neighborhoods.

Setting the Stage

On September 21, 2016, a community meeting was convened at Kingsville's City Hall with local stakeholders to get a better idea of some of the issues confronting the community, and to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats impacting the downtown area. As noted earlier there were a wide range of perceived strengths underlying Kingsville's Downtown District. One was the presence of the Texas A&M University-Kingsville campus near the downtown area. Another strength was Kingsville's relatively strong local economy and its location in a fairly prosperous region centered on Corpus Christi and other large communities in the area. The participants also pointed out that Kingsville is located within a well-traveled corridor centered on Highway 77/I-69. Also,

listed as a strength was Kingsville's rich history and culture that encompasses its ranching heritage.

In terms of its weaknesses the community stakeholders pointed out several key areas that needed to be addressed relative to the Downtown District. One was the poor appearance of the sidewalks, streets and buildings in the area. Another weakness was the absence of any entertainment and retail options in the district. Vacant and dilapidated buildings in the area was another major weakness. Other weaknesses centered on streetscape design, poor infrastructure, and a lack of a civic focus on the downtown area. In short, most of the stakeholders felt that Kingsville's Downtown District was in need of a major makeover.



Figure 58: Sidewalk along Kleberg Avenue

Source:CURPR

In revitalizing Kingsville's downtown area the stakeholders at the community meeting also pointed out several key opportunities that could come into play. One was the need for new retail options in the Downtown District. If Kingsville is to strengthen its position as a regional center the revitalization of the downtown area becomes an important goal. As part of that goal, retail development is a vital component of that revitalization effort. Another perceived opportunity was growth in the tourism sector centered around recreational and hunting opportunities available in the region. This could lead to the development of additional lodging facilities in the Downtown District and in other parts of the city. The close proximity of the Texas A & M University-Kingsville campus was another factor that could create a richer, more vibrant downtown environment.

In terms of threats, the perceptions of those participating in the community meeting were mainly centered on citywide concerns such as the availability and quality of Kingsville's water supply. Another threat was the congestion caused by trains moving through the community, and the possible closure of the Naval Air Station (NAS) in Kingsville. While these were noted as citywide concerns their potential impact on the viability of the Downtown District were obvious. Indeed, it is difficult to divorce issues that impact the community, as a whole, from its downtown area. Everything that happens in the community will most certainly affect the civic core.

Several additional areas were also addressed at this community meeting. These included the need to enhance Kingsville's visitor/tourism potential. As noted previously this was thought

to be an important part of any revitalization strategy for the Downtown District since this could also increase business opportunities in the area. Another issue discussed was the potential for improving the downtown area by creating a museum district. Other actions discussed included improving the area's historic buildings; building new residential/apartment units in and around the downtown area; improving the overall appearance of the area; creating better signage; and generating additional activities that would bring more people into the downtown area. Also cited was the adaptive reuse of the Texas Theater in the Downtown District which is now underway.

During the session a number of strategic initiatives were put forth as ways to revitalize the Downtown District. These included:

- Take steps to make the Downtown District a visitor/ tourist destination by improving its overall physical environment; creating new activities that would serve to attract visitors and tourists; and put in place a marketing strategy that would highlight the area.
- Establish a museum cluster in the downtown area.
- Initiate a program to improve historic buildings in the downtown area and within the Downtown District. Steps should be taken to ensure the proper use and reuse of these buildings and, when possible, provide for additional office/retail/ residential facilities in the district.

- Expand the El Centro District, a historic Tejano area located within Kingsville's historic district, as part of a broader Downtown District revitalization strategy.
- Make the Downtown District easier to get around by improving its sidewalks and crosswalks. Steps should be taken to improve the area's streetscape and build on its historic significance.
- In addition to improving the area's sidewalk network, take steps to enhance its signage and wayfinding assets to help visitors and tourists to better orient themselves.
- Improve the physical connectivity between the Texas A&M-Kingsville campus and the Downtown District by creating additional access points and bike lanes on several streets linking the campus to the downtown area.
- Brand and market the Downtown District as a regional center and a place to visit.
- Provide an enhanced downtown setting for community events and business activities.
- Encourage additional investment on the part of the private sector to enhance the Downtown District and transform it into a major retail/commercial area.

- Develop a special events/cultural center to house multi-faceted functions such as art shows, music performances, farmer's markets and other outdoor events.
- Enhance East Kleberg Avenue as a street plaza between 6th and 8th streets in the Downtown District. This plaza would be close to the Texas Theater and the proposed Events/Cultural Center.
- Improve parking options and facilities in and around the Downtown District.
- Move forward with the adaptive reuse of the Texas Theater. This facility could serve several functions including its historic role as a movie theater. It could also serve as a center for the performing arts, a



Figure 59: Texas Theater - Kingsville, TX

Source: CURPR

- conference center and a museum. In addition, it could serve as part of the Texas A & M University operation in Kingsville.
- Upgrade the area near the railroad station by relocating the bandstand away from the tracks and providing a venue for outdoor events such as music concerts and a farmer's market. It would also include an urban xeriscape garden put in place by students at the University, and a plaza that could be used for a variety of public and private events.
- Take steps to expand the Farmer's Market in the Downtown District by creating additional spaces for growers and merchants to sell their produce and wares.
- Create additional lodging and Bed and Breakfast facilities in the area to accommodate visitors and tourists.
- Develop additional infill housing in and around the Downtown District to create higher density residential units to bring more people into the area. Vacant housing and buildings in the area could also be transformed into residential housing units. This would add another dimension to downtown living and improve the area's overall business environment.

The ideas and concepts discussed during the community meetings also underscored the need to put in place some kind

of long-term vision and plan of action that will not only preserve Kingsville's unique cultural and historical assets, but advance its local economy, enhance its quality of life, and energize its downtown area. Equally important is the need to take into account the forces that are already shaping Kingsville's future. For example, Corpus Christi's growth on its western edge will, without a doubt, have an effect on Kingsville's long-term development. Equally important is the development of the US 77/I-69 Corridor, and Kingsville's place as a regional center in the larger Corpus Christi metro area. The consequences of these developments are still unfolding. What is known for sure is that without a long-term vision and a plan of action, much of this development will be haphazard and unplanned. This is not in the best interest of Kingsville.

A major focus of this study and vision plan is to put in place a strategy that will not only protect Kingsville's Downtown District from unplanned growth around it and within the district itself, but provide the means to grow its economy, as well. Another focus is to develop a strategic framework that will allow Kingsville to revitalize its Downtown District and to better manage its growth over the long term. Finally, this study and action plan outlines an overall implementation strategy and plan of action that can be used by Kingsville to move forward.

The execution of a selected course of action, i.e., an implementation strategy, is critically important for ensuring that whatever plan is put in place is managed well. While this vision study provides an overall strategy to carry out the necessary steps to move forward, it will still be up to the local leadership in Kingsville to make it work. Just as important is

the need for involving local citizens, the private sector and civic groups in the process. It also means that the local leadership will need to both organize and motivate the community to move forward with the implementation process. The sections that follow provide some suggestions to help Kingsville in carrying out these important tasks. It is important to point out that Kingsville's municipal government has the necessary governmental assets to move forward with this effort. The key to this is the leadership factor. Leadership, above all, will drive this process.

Next Step – Organizing the Process

To carry out the recommendations and action steps included in the vision plan it is important to put in place an overall strategy to make sure that all of the pieces are in place, and that the community's leadership is on the same track. The key players include the City of Kingsville, Kleberg County and the



Figure 60: SWOT Session - Kingsville, TX

Source: CURPR

citizens of Kingsville. The City of Kingsville should also make sure that the community, as a whole, is on board. In addition, it must take into account the needs and requirements of the many entities who have a stake in the Downtown District's success. These include the city's Main Street Program, the Kingsville Historic Development Board which oversees the Historic District (including the Downtown District and the El Centro area), the Kingsville Economic Development Council, a citywide economic development organization and the private sector that drives the local economy. Another key player and stakeholder is Texas A & M University – Kingsville. While not located in the Downtown District it is close enough to have a strong influence on the District's long-term development. Finally, it will be important to involve the local businesses and merchants who have a direct stake in the development of the Downtown District.

Closely linked to the organizing process is the task of managing it. This is especially important because there are several organizations with a strong interest in the development of the Downtown District. The key is making sure that their interests are taken into account, and that the plan's goals are shared by these entities. The City of Kingsville may want to establish an overlay district encompassing the downtown area; work with the Main Street Program exclusively; establish an entirely new public/private partnership with the overall mission of revitalizing the Downtown District; or make this a direct function of its own operations by setting up a Downtown Development Office as part of its Planning Department. Once it decides on how to proceed, the next task will be to develop a plan of action to carry out various projects within the district.

The implementing entity should be in a position to identify problems and issues that could slow it down as it begins to move forward. Forming a strong team involving key players in the community also helps the community to address issues and concerns early enough to take steps to mitigate them by taking corrective action. Also important is the need to keep the community apprised of the progress being made in the Downtown District. As the planning process advances, the creation of an implementation process will take on added importance. This, in turn, requires other kinds of mechanisms and processes. At this point a strong public/private partnership is crucial. This partnership will also drive the implementation process as the overall strategy is defined, and a plan of action is put in place.

Areas of Responsibility

In implementing this plan a blend of both the public and private sectors is necessary. This public/private partnership is important because no one entity in Kingsville has all of the resources needed to fully implement this kind of plan. Also important is the nonprofit sector, which includes community based organizations and civic groups that have a stake in Kingsville's future. Each has its own set of responsibilities. These are briefly described below:

Public Sector – City of Kingsville/Kleberg County

Both have major responsibilities for planning and constructing infrastructure, the platting of land for various uses, zoning, and the development of ordinances and regulations to guide the community's long-range economic, housing, parks and recreational needs. They

are also responsible for developing and maintaining the community's streets, roads and highways. The City of Kingsville has the additional responsibility of providing planning and development services to meet the needs of its resident population. Kleberg County's government has a similar role in its jurisdiction. As envisioned here the City of Kingsville will take on the major role of coordinating services and activities associated with this plan. It will also work with the other entities that have a major stake in the development of the Downtown District, i.e., the Main Street Program Office and the Historic Development Board. The City of Kingsville may also want to organize some kind of Downtown Revitalization Committee or task force to spearhead this effort.

Private Sector

The private sector is, of course, the primary driver of the local economy in Kingsville. It helps to generate the necessary revenue and investment assets to sustain growth and development in the community and the surrounding area. It is comprised mainly of local businesses and entrepreneurs that produce and sell goods and services to the local population. It is this sector that often serves as a catalyst for change in communities. It is also one of the recipients of any benefits that result from the development process.

Non-Profit Sector

This sector consists mainly of those organizations and groups that contribute to the civic, cultural and quality of life aspects of the larger community. These qualities

are extremely important for a community's success, sustainability and livability. They also add a distinctive flavor to the community's focus and character. Often the leadership in these groups are also leaders in the community's public and private sectors. They bring to the table critical management, resource and organizational assets to grow the community.

Communities are most successful when they are able to coalesce when they need to do so. Successful communities are also proactive; they anticipate changes, not react to them. This plan seeks to pull Kingsville together. It also seeks to create new opportunities for its citizens and leaders. To make this happen it is important to bring them together and involve them as much as possible in the planning and implementation phases. This can be done by creating a task force or working committee that can integrate the public, private and non-profit sectors together to forge and implement a plan to transform the community.

With respect to redeveloping and revitalizing the Downtown District in Kingsville, the community has several options to organize this process. One option is to use existing organizations, such as the Main Street Program, to spearhead the redevelopment/revitalization process. Another option would be to create a special district encompassing the downtown area to bring together critical assets, resources and talent to transform Kingsville's downtown. This district could encompass existing organizations and groups and bring in additional individuals and municipal entities to coordinate projects and activities in part of an overall redevelopment/

revitalization effort. A third option could focus on the City of Kingsville's role and its Planning Department. It could also establish a Downtown Projects Office to spearhead the effort and mobilize the community's public, private and nonprofit sectors to create a new kind of downtown. A fourth option might involve establishing a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District to bring in additional revenues to finance and coordinate ongoing projects in the downtown area. The goal of each option is to create an organizational mechanism to carry out the planning and implementation process in the most effective and efficient way possible. These options will be discussed again later on.

Strategic Considerations

In putting together a community plan/downtown redevelopment strategy and a plan of action, the ability to think strategically and over the long-term is vital for addressing the needs of the community as a whole. This kind of thinking has several important components. First, by thinking strategically and long-term it becomes easier to align this community's vision with its strengths and opportunities. Second, it takes into account the future and provides a framework to allow the community to envision itself in a way that is both comprehensive and sustainable. Third, it is centered on outcomes that are linked to the goals the community has set for itself. Finally, it allows the community and its leadership to carefully examine their options, and to make changes if needed. This is important because there is rarely only one solution to a problem or need. A critical element in this process is the availability of resources to carry out the plan. From a strategic standpoint resources and their availability will likely change overtime. As needs

dictate the community as a whole will have to decide which options provide the best solutions for it given its priorities and resources at the time. By taking on a strategic long-range view these kinds of adjustments become easier to make.

Pulling The Community Together – Organizing For Development

In pulling the community together to plan and organize an implementation strategy several additional factors need to be taken into account. These factors are centered around the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Most communities want to build on their strengths; take full advantage of their opportunities; reduce what they perceive to be their weaknesses; and mitigate, to the extent possible, their threats. This can be done by carefully evaluating and assessing the community's overall environment, i.e., its social, political and economic situations and the forces that are shaping it. Some of these forces are within the community; others are external to it. Also important, is the community's quality of life, and how it perceives itself. Once this is done, the community and its leadership can begin to formulate appropriate policies, strategies, plans and projects to address them.

In developing an overall strategy and plan to address Kingsville's downtown area several additional variables come into play. First, Kingsville is located within a rapidly growing corridor centered on U.S. Highway 77/I-69. This highway serves as a connector to the larger region. It also brings people into this community. In short, it expands Kingsville's market area. Second, Kingsville is located in a dynamic metro area centered around the City of Corpus Christi and several other larger

communities linked to the U.S. Highway 77/I-69 corridor. These communities include cities like Robstown and Bishop. Third, Kingsville's economy is centered on a region that is focused mainly on agriculture and ranching. However, there are also sectors like retail, manufacturing, health services and tourism that contribute to the local economy. While local residents tend to do most of their shopping in the Kingsville area, they also shop in other communities close by. For larger purchases they will likely go to Corpus Christi. This is reflected, in part, by a moderate level of income leakage from the community's overall market base. These dynamics, however, could change as the U.S. Highway 77/I-69 corridor continues to grow. At some point this corridor could become part of a larger metro area built around several communities in the area, Kingsville being one of them. Fourth, while Kingsville's current downtown area is not a major draw for much of the population living around it, it still is able to attract a sizable consumer base because of a number of larger retail operations such as the HEB grocery store and several specialty stores. It is also a major governmental center with Kingsville's City Hall and the Kleberg County Courthouse located there. Given those building blocks, Kingsville's downtown area will likely grow in importance in the years to come. Another major building block is the Texas A&M University-Kingsville campus located a short distance away from the downtown area. This campus has a student population of around 10,000; many of these students live on campus, but also need to purchase goods and services from local merchants. Some of these merchants are located in the downtown area.

From an investment standpoint, there are a number of additional factors that need to be addressed as Kingsville organizes itself to revitalize the Downtown District. First, the maintenance of the status quo in developing its downtown area is no longer tenable. Second, if the local leadership and the citizens of Kingsville want to grow their community they will need to make some important decisions regarding its local economy. For example, there is a consensus that Kingsville needs to "rebrand" itself to expand its tourism industry. In addition, decisions need to be made regarding the development of Kingsville's larger economy, the future of its downtown, and the expansion of its infrastructure base. Other issues such as the future of the Naval Air Station (NAS) in Kingsville, and the growth of Texas A & M University in Kingsville also need to be taken into account. In order to move forward the community and its leadership will have to focus on the long-term and establish priorities for development. While this vision plan suggests a framework to do this, the community itself will have to decide on the direction it wants to take.

Equally important is the need for strong management control and oversight to ensure that the development process stays on track over time. Because the planning and development process will be ongoing it is recommended that the city's Planning Office and Historic Preservation Division be involved. It is also recommended that the city's Main Street Program be an integral part of a community task force to oversee the revitalization and redevelopment of the Downtown District. That task force should work under the City Administrator or a special development manager designated by the City Manager. This kind of arrangement would provide the kind of continuity

necessary to allow the City of Kingsville and its partners to engage in long-range planning.

Funding Considerations/Resources

Financial resources and funding considerations are an important part of any long-term redevelopment and revitalization effort to upgrade the Downtown District in Kingsville. Financial needs and requirements will always be a key factor in any business or community development project. As a result, priorities need to be established, and a carefully defined plan of action put in place that will take into account these priorities. Also important is the need to develop an implementation plan that is both realistic and feasible.

In Texas, property taxes are the main resources for funding local operations, services and capital improvements. In addition, there are local sales taxes, hotel occupancy taxes, state and federal grants, and the issuance of city and county bonds. Local governments also have the power to initiate special programs like municipal development districts, tax increment financing districts and public improvement districts to leverage additional financial resources. These resources, in turn, can be used to incentivize revenue generating development in a community or a special district to improve the local economy, redevelop a downtown area or neighborhood, or improve its quality of life.

The revitalization/redevelopment effort being proposed for Kingsville's Downtown District will likely use several types of funding to facilitate various projects in the district. For example, Kingsville could seek funding through the State of Texas, or the federal government to develop projects within the

Downtown District. One possibility is the Texas Capital Fund Infrastructure Development and Real Estate Program (INFRA/RE) which provides funding to communities and counties to build public infrastructure and fund real estate development to assist businesses that create jobs. Another is the Texas Leverage Fund which can be used to underwrite specific projects in a community. Additional funding may be available through the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) for projects designed to upgrade access to the Downtown District and Main Street enhancement projects. Kingsville may also try to get additional funding through the Texas Main Street Program, administered through the Texas Historical Commission, to revitalize some of the historic buildings in the downtown area for reuse.

There are also a number of programs at the federal level administered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the U.S. Department of Commerce that could fund projects in the Downtown District. It is important to keep in mind that these programs are competitive. Therefore, additional research and project clarification will have to be taken into consideration before Kingsville can apply for state and/or federal grants. A listing of possible state and federal grants that could be used to fund projects in the Downtown District is included in the Appendices.

Tax Increment Finance District

The City of Kingsville may also want to look at other ways to finance the development and implementation of specific initiatives and projects in the Downtown District. For example,

it could create a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District to cover projects proposed for the Downtown District or the area around it. Tax increment financing is a valuable tool that is widely used by local governments in Texas to finance needed upgrades and infrastructure improvements in a designated area such as a downtown area or an industrial zone. It can also be used to promote existing businesses and for attracting new businesses to a designated area within a community. The statutes governing this kind of financing for local governments in Texas can be found in Chapter 311 of the Texas Tax Code.

The idea behind this type of financing is that the costs of improvements in a particular part of a community can be covered and repaid by future tax revenue raised by the City of Kingsville. The taxing unit, in this case Kingsville, can choose to dedicate all or a portion of the tax revenue generated from an increase in tax revenues derived from improvements made in the designated TIF district. The additional tax revenue is referred to as the tax increment. If a TIF were to be established as an overlay district for the Downtown District in Kingsville, the revenues generated by improvements in the district could be used to cover the cost of these improvements and provide additional revenue for other projects in the district.

Public Improvement District

Another option Kingsville may want to consider is the establishment of a Public Improvement District (PID) as an overlay district for the downtown area to generate additional revenue. The PID is designed to raise revenue to improve existing infrastructure, or to build new infrastructure in a designated area. It can also focus on other kinds of public

improvements to facilitate economic and business development in a targeted area. A PID can either be initiated by the City Council or property owners in the area. If property owners take the lead they would have to initiate a petition process calling for the targeted area to be declared a public improvement district. The petition would also have to state the nature of the proposed solutions sought and the estimated cost of these improvements. In addition, they would have to include some kind of property assessment methodology, and an apportionment strategy to allocate funds raised by the district. These districts are especially effective for improving local infrastructure networks within a defined area. The key is developing a realistic plan of action, and an assessment methodology that can work for both property and business owners alike in the designated area.

Municipal Management District

Another option the City may want to consider is the creation of a Municipal Management District (MMD) to coordinate development within the proposed Downtown District. The MMD is designed to help commercial property owners and local businesses to improve their physical environment and add amenities to an area to attract more visitors and shoppers. These kinds of districts are usually centered on established commercial areas within a community. Once established, they allow the community to finance the development of new facilities, infrastructures, and services within a targeted area beyond those already in place or provided. This is accomplished through a combination of self-imposed property taxes, special assessments and impact fees, or through other charges and/or fees imposed on property owners within the designated

district. Chapter 325 of the Texas Local Government Code governs the creation and activities of these kinds of district.

To establish a MMD the owners of a majority of the assessed value of real property in a targeted area, i.e., the Downtown District of Kingsville, or at least 50 property owners within the targeted area must sign a petition asking that such a district be created. At this point, the procedure for setting up a MMD is similar to that of a PID. The main difference, however, is that the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) must also approve the district's designation as a MMD. Once empowered a MMD assumes the authority and functions similar to that of a conservation or reclamation district. The MMD can also impose ad valorem taxes, impact fees, and special assessments against what are called "benefited properties" within the designated district to finance development type projects such as streets and sidewalk repairs, landscaping, drainage improvements, off street parking facilities and other improvements.

Economic Development Corporation

A final option that the City of Kingsville may want to consider is the creation of a Type A or B Economic Development Corporation (EDC) as a way to strengthen the local economy and to finance improvements in the community. While Kingsville already has an economic development council in place, the Greater Kingsville Economic Development Council, this entity does not have a revenue generating capacity to help develop the downtown area. A Type A or B Sales Tax, like the TIF concept discussed earlier, is an important tool for local governments in Texas seeking to raise additional revenue to

foster economic and community development. In fact, over 500 communities in the state have elected to implement either a Type A or Type B Sales Tax to accomplish these ends.

The Type A Sales Tax is generally considered to be the more restrictive of the two in terms of authorized expenditures. The kinds of projects that are authorized under Type A are also more restrictive, focusing mainly on manufacturing or industrial projects. It can also be used to fund certain types of infrastructures that can contribute to the development of new business enterprises and the expansion of existing businesses in the community. In comparison, the Type B Sales Tax includes many of the same activities listed under the Type A classification. In addition, revenues generated under the Type B Sales Tax can be used to fund projects that are considered to be community development related. These include such things as the construction of sports facilities, tourist venues, affordable housing, water related infrastructure and water conservation programs. Type B organizations are also allowed to engage in projects that promote new business development, and facilitate the growth of businesses already in the community.

Revenues generated by Type A or B sales taxes are dedicated by statute to assist economic and community development projects in counties having fewer than 500,000 people. However, communities looking to establish either a Type A or Type B Sales Tax must also be within their local sales tax cap to allow them to adopt an additional one-half cent sales tax. These taxes and the projects funded by them are usually managed by an economic development corporation operating

under a board of directors. This board, in turn, operates within the purview and authority of the community's city council.

While both Type A and Type B corporations operate much the same way, there are some differences in how they can be created or altered. For example, a Type A tax is authorized through a local election that has mandatory wording for a ballot proposition. Once adopted, the Type A tax continues until it is formally repealed by local voters. The Type B tax, in contrast, has no required statutory wording for a ballot proposition. It can be adopted through a general ballot proposing the adoption of a Type B sales tax for economic development. However, no community can adopt a sale tax that would result in a combined rate that exceeds 2% of all local sales taxes. There are other limitations and restrictions, as well. The City of Kingsville will need to consider a course of action that best fits the fiscal/tax conditions that are now in place in the community.

Regardless of the approach used, the City of Kingsville and its development team will still need to put in place some kind of mechanism or program that will generate sufficient resources to finance the revitalization and redevelopment of its Downtown District. It will also have to devise a long-term strategy that will provide a sufficient revenue stream to fund projects over time keeping in mind the development process is ongoing. Equally important, the City of Kingsville will have to develop an organizational structure that will allow it to work with organizations such as the Main Street Program already involved in the development of its downtown. These organizations also have funding requirements that need

to be addressed over the long-term. While some of these options can provide funding for these organizations, a careful assessment will have to be conducted by the City of Kingsville and others to develop the best possible approach to organize and finance the redevelopment/revitalization process in the Downtown District.

Development Timeline

In putting together a development timeline, it is important to keep in mind several things. First, the recommendations and courses of action put forth in this vision plan are part of an ongoing process. Planning is a continuous activity that constantly builds on past and present successes, and changes in a community's economic, social and physical environment. Second, all of the parties involved must be fully integrated into this process. Third, priorities will need to be established. This will be one of the main tasks for those responsible for carrying out the action plan. Finally, it will be important to determine the level of funding needed to implement the plan. This is critical because priorities will always be governed by the availability of resources, and their relationship to other needs the community has to address.

It is also important to note that adjustments and changes in the plan are likely as the community moves forward with its implementation. Because of this it will be necessary to continually monitor the plan's implementation to make sure that it stays on course. Just as important, however, is the need to ensure that the implementation effort continues and does not falter because of a lack of resources, disinterest or apathy. Community improvement, if it is to succeed, must be ongoing

and continuous. If it is disrupted, delayed, or put on the 'back burner' the whole thrust of the development/redevelopment/revitalization effort could be curtailed causing additional problems in the future.

The development timeline suggested here is centered around three key phases: Planning, Implementation and Monitoring. Each phase overlaps with the others as the implementing entity or team carries out the plan. While it is strongly recommended that the planning and implementation effort should be ongoing, it will be important to initiate a startup time period in order to pull together the necessary financial and organizational resources. This is especially important because there are several key players already engaged in the downtown revitalization/redevelopment effort. Once this is done and with the organizational and financial resources in place, planning can proceed. The implementation process can also move forward as projects are defined, initiated, and completed. As development continues, changes may be required in terms of project timing, resource allocation, and priorities. This will require the planning team and the implementing entity or entities to adapt to change over time. If there is an ongoing monitoring process in place these changes should not cause a problem.

Each project within the Downtown District will have its own timeline. As one project is completed another will be starting up. The important point here is the need for Kingsville to maintain this process over time so that it is not blindsided or caught unaware if a problem emerges. The ramifications of being caught by surprise can be costly. Even when a condition or

situation seems to be well managed for a long time unforeseen events can change the status quo very quickly. To prevent this from happening, it will be important for Kingsville to build sufficient capacity and capabilities to enable it to continue this process into the future.

Implementation Strategy – Proposed Action Plan

The proposed action plan and recommendations outlined below are based on discussions with key leaders in the community; research conducted by the Center for Urban and Region Planning Research; and a comprehensive review of previously prepared plans and studies done by the City of Kingsville. The recommended action items presented in this section have already been described and discussed at length. The intent here is to summarize and put into context the various initiatives and projects being proposed. While these are addressed separately they are really part of a broader strategy designed to improve the economic, sustainable, environmental and aesthetic aspects of Kingsville's Downtown District. In this sense, they also become part of a broader action plan that seeks to lay out a coherent set of long-term initiatives that will help to shape its future. In some instances, the recommended action items overlap. In others they are largely independent of the other proposed projects. All, however, constitute a broad based strategy to revitalize and redevelop Kingsville's Downtown District.

Recommendations

As part of a long-term strategy to revitalize and redevelop Kingsville's Downtown District it is recommended that priority be given to the following action items and initiatives:

- **Establish a Museum Cluster in the Downtown District**

In order to improve the Downtown District's ability to attract visitors and tourists as well as local citizens it is proposed that the City of Kingsville, in association with its partners, establish a museum cluster in and around the Downtown District. This cluster would include several existing museums already in the area like the Train Depot Museum and the King Ranch Museum. In addition, a new children's museum is proposed. Several vacant buildings in the Downtown District could be utilized for this museum. Some of these buildings are designated as historic. Efforts should be made to invite Texas A & M University – Kingsville to become a partner in developing the museum district. This involvement could include establishing facilities, engaging in academic/cultural type activities, and in hosting civic/cultural programs in the new museum and in the larger cluster proposed for the Downtown District.

- **Maintain and Improve Historic Buildings in The Downtown District**

The Downtown District is already located within a designated historic district. Every effort should be made

to capitalize on this by marketing the downtown area as a integral part of a larger historic area. This would also mean taking steps to improve the maintenance and upgrading of historic buildings in the area. By carefully designing a marketing strategy that emphasizes the historic nature of the area, the City of Kingsville and the ongoing Main Street Program could use it to brand the area as a special place to shop, visit, dine, and enjoy cultural related activities. The historic buildings in the district now become important symbols for the area helping to define its status and exclusiveness.

- **Enhance Sidewalks and Street Crossings in the Downtown District**

One of the key ingredients in any successful downtown area is the ease of getting from Point A to Point B. This is why sidewalks and street crossings are so important. Moreover, these sidewalks and crossings should be safe and attractive. A successful Downtown District will also have a well-maintained sidewalk system that takes into account the needs of the pedestrian who may be a shopper, tourist, or someone just passing through. The current connector system in Kingsville's Downtown District lacks these qualities. In addition to improving the sidewalks and street crossings in the area, there is a need for additional streetscaping to enhance the area's overall environment to make the pedestrian experience more inviting and pleasurable. Finally, the area's wayfinding, i.e., signage, system needs to be improved to make the downtown experience work more effectively.

- **Branding – Marketing Kingsville’s Downtown District**

Oftentimes shoppers and visitors go to a particular place because they want to experience its environment, stores, restaurants and ambience. In other situations, they are forced to shop in a particular place because they have no alternative. Kingsville’s downtown area has a number of important retail and commercial establishments that serve a large market. The area also has other attractions and assets that draw people in. In addition, the Downtown District in Kingsville is the civic heart of the community housing both its city and county government offices. In terms of branding and marketing in the downtown area, careful thought should be given to the kind of image the City wants to present. It also needs to take into account the types of activities it wants to include in the downtown area. When we take into consideration all of its assets and what it means to the residents of this community the Downtown District is truly the heart of Kingsville.

In terms of branding the downtown area may need to look at other attributes that make Kingsville and its Downtown District a unique community. Several come to mind. These include the region’s strong ranching culture. Also important is the area’s rich agriculture and hunting culture. Another key attribute is the railroad and its impact on the community over the years. As we begin to define a brand and a marketing strategy for the Downtown District these attributes will need to be examined. The goal is to attract more people to the area. An effective brand, i.e., image, and

a good marketing strategy will help to accomplish that goal.

- **Improve Connections Between Downtown and the University**

Texas A & M University – Kingsville provides the City with a tremendous asset. Not only does it serve as an economic catalyst for the community as a whole, it provides additional benefits that only a major center of learning can. The key is making these benefits work for the Downtown District. While the actual distance separating the District and the campus is relatively small, the cultural and psychological gap is much wider. Also, the physical distance between the campus and the downtown area is such that many university students, faculty and staff rarely go there to shop, eat or seek entertainment. Steps, however, can be taken to improve these connections.

Earlier it was proposed that dedicated bike lanes providing a safe connecting link between the campus and the downtown area be established. Another proposal is for the University to play a greater role in the downtown area by expanding its day-to-day presence in the area. This could be done by having the University sponsor or co-sponsor more arts and cultural related activities in the area. The University could also hold classes in the Downtown District and expand its outreach into the broader community. Also important are the kinds of stores and restaurants located in the downtown area. If the goal is to attract

more students, faculty and staff to the Downtown District, the community must give them a reason to go there. By improving the linkages between the University and the Downtown District, expanding the daily presence of the University in the area, and providing the kinds of goods and services desired by students, faculty and staff, the barriers that are now in place could be eliminated. If this happens both the businesses in the downtown area and the University will benefit as will the community as a whole.

- **Enhance Downtown Settings for Community Events**

A successful downtown is also an active downtown. Downtown areas are meant to include a variety of activities, businesses, institutions and events. In the vision being proposed in this plan it has been suggested that in order to revitalize the downtown area of Kingsville it is important to add a number of new assets and venues designed to spur activities and foster creativity. This includes the addition of a Special Events Center to host a variety of public and private art shows, conferences, music events and educational activities. One possible site for the center is the K. A. Childs Building located on East Kleberg Avenue between North 8th Street and North 9th Street. This building is large enough to house a variety of activities and shows. It is also located close to the Texas Theater now undergoing renovation. This will provide the Downtown District with a new kind of venue that will

not only support the arts, but provide the means for enhancing tourism in the area.

This plan also proposes that East Kleberg Avenue be transformed into a temporary Street Plaza to provide space for a wide range of events and gatherings that can energize the downtown area, and provide a dynamic environment or setting for various outdoor activities such as markets and festivals. This plaza would also serve as an integral part of the proposed Events Center discussed earlier. The intent is to refocus the Downtown District as a place to go to. It is also designed to reach out to the community, and the region to bring residents, visitors and tourists into the district to engage in community type events. Again the goal is to make the Downtown District the 'heart' of Kingsville.

- **Adaptive Reuse of the Texas Theater**

Built in the 1950s, this historical landmark is now undergoing extensive renovation to transform it into an active venue for Kingsville's downtown area. Once the renovation process is completed the Texas Theater is slated to become a multi-use facility that will be able to accommodate a movie theater, a playhouse, art galleries, conferences and other special events. Combined with the proposed Special Events Center located close by, this portion of the Downtown District could indeed become the 'heart' of Kingsville. In addition to providing an important asset for the arts in Kingsville it could create another venue for the

University to become more actively engaged in the downtown area.

- **Relocate Bandstand – Downtown District**

Located close to the Train Depot and the urban xeriscape garden in a parking lot, the bandstand provides a landmark for the Downtown District. However, there are problems regarding its present location. It has been recommended that it be moved closer to the Train Depot and the garden area to create a cluster of activities. By relocating the bandstand a greater concentration of pedestrians in the area could be achieved. This area could then become a natural gathering place for showcasing these facilities. It would also allow it to become a focal point for other activities now held in this part of the Downtown District such as the farmer's market and other outdoor events in the area.

- **Develop Future Parking Options**

Another key ingredient in creating a successful downtown is to provide sufficient parking facilities to make it accessible. Several lots currently exist to serve businesses in the Downtown District. Parallel parking along most of the streets, and angled parking near the heart of the downtown area, provides additional parking slots for local businesses in the area. It is estimated that there are 2,735 parking spots in the Downtown District in Kingsville. This number appears to be sufficient for meeting the day-to-day needs of the downtown area. However, this becomes more

problematic for large events and outdoor activities that occur in this area. Given the proposed projects, the need for additional parking options becomes more pronounced.

To deal with these particular needs it is proposed that additional parking be developed for the area. Most of this new parking can be slated for existing vacant lots in and around the Downtown District. This additional parking would also allow for an expanded Farmer's Market, the development of a Special Events Center, and the renovated Texas Theater complex.

- **Develop Additional Lodging Facilities for the Downtown District**

At the present time the Downtown District in Kingsville has few lodging facilities. While Kingsville has a number of hotels few are located within walking distance of its downtown area. Most are found on major highways leading into Kingsville. Having a lodging facility in the downtown area would not only help to attract additional visitors and tourists to the area, it would expand its place as a true downtown center for the larger region. This would also help local businesses in the Downtown District and provide another asset to spur further development and investment in the area.

Another option is to create bed-and-breakfast style lodging. In many respects this would probably be the best short-term option for the Downtown District

due to how little space would be needed. Also, it could use existing buildings already located in the area. By utilizing existing structures to create bed-and-breakfasts the community could not only generate additional tax revenues, it would help homeowners, especially those living in historic homes, to gain additional income. This would also help Kingsville's historic district gain additional traction in bringing in visitors and tourists to take advantage of its assets. In short, the development of additional lodging facilities in the Downtown District becomes a win-win solution for both the City of Kingsville and for the merchants and home owners in and around the downtown area.

- **Develop Infill Housing in the Downtown District**

Another important factor that needs to be taken into account in revitalizing the Downtown District in Kingsville is increasing the number of residential units in the area. This is important for several reasons. It would add diversity to the area. It would also strengthen the downtown area's economic draw. Higher density strengthens the area by reducing the number of open lots and unused vacant buildings in the Downtown District. It would also mean more use of services and businesses in the area. Combined with Kingsville's large under-30 population due to the University, there is likely a large market for apartments near the downtown area. It could also set the stage for additional investment in the area by spurring new apartment development and businesses to serve a growing population.

- **Encourage An Expanded Farmer's Market**

An expanded farmer's market in the downtown area would not only serve to attract more visitors and tourists to the area, it would strengthen its central focus. Located around the pavilion it is proposed that the area be made more accessible. It would provide more parking by restoring the parking lot currently being used for this activity. It would also have wider loading zones, a more attractive streetscape and better connecting walkways. The goal is to make the Downtown District a central place by incorporating activities like markets to draw people in. The proposed modifications would also provide access to other areas in the Downtown District.

In carrying out these and other projects in Kingsville's Downtown District it will be important to put in place an expanded management team that can coordinate the various activities being proposed. The lead entity for implementing these projects should be the City's planning department or some other entity located within the municipal government. In addition, it is recommended that a strong public/private partnership be formed involving local civic, business and community leaders along with public officials and private citizens to help coordinate specific initiatives, and to maintain some kind of oversight to ensure that the various projects stay on course. Equally important is the need to ensure that Kingsville's Main Street Project and the Historic Development Board become co-partners in this effort. They will also have a major say in what occurs in the downtown area as the various projects are initiated. The intent is to make sure that the City

of Kingsville and its partners are able to successfully move forward with the implementation of projects that will have a significant impact in the community's long-term development and quality of life.

Economic Development/Investment Strategies

Equally important for the long-term development of Kingsville's Downtown District is the need to expand its business sector, generate new investment in the downtown area, provide for additional job opportunities for local residents, and create the means for generating a more orderly and sustainable growth process in the area. To achieve these aims it is recommended that the City of Kingsville put in place a broad-based economic and business growth strategy for the Downtown District centered on expanding its small business sector, diversifying its product and service base, enhancing entrepreneurship in the area, bringing in new investment, and expanding its tourism draw through branding and marketing. In addition, the City of Kingsville, working through its Main Street Program and the Greater Kingsville Economic Development Council, should work more closely with local businesses in the Downtown District to expand their markets. To accomplish these ends several initiatives are proposed. These are described below:

- In order to expand and diversify the local economy and strengthen small businesses in the Downtown District, the City of Kingsville and its partners should take steps to rebrand the downtown area as a destination for visitors and tourists. As part of this rebranding strategy, emphasis should be placed

on developing a strong, creative marketing program that transforms the district into a unique shopping/cultural/civic/entertainment area. In addition, it should put in place a business development strategy that is centered on creating new specialty retail businesses, restaurants and other businesses that could reach out to this market. It should also take steps to strengthen the historic character of the Downtown District as a way to attract more visitors and tourists to enjoy the historical and cultural heritage that Kingsville can provide. Finally, emphasis should be placed on improving the wayfinding and connectivity assets in this area to allow tourists and visitors easier access to various historical and cultural sites in the Downtown District.

- In addition to reaching out more to tourists and visitors, the City of Kingsville and the partners should take steps to diversify the Downtown District's civic and cultural assets by building a Special Events Center, redeveloping the Texas Theater complex, creating a museum district, developing additional infill housing in the area, restoring and upgrading the area's historical buildings, and improving the area's streetscape. These can be accomplished by putting in place incentives designed to attract new businesses to the area, and creating new investment options to build the necessary infrastructure improvements to make things happen in the Downtown District. These incentives and investment options could include special tax rebates for new businesses locating in the Downtown

District, a development fee reduction program to create additional investment opportunities in the area, expedited permitting to encourage the development of new assets in the downtown area, and the development of a special tax abatement program for certain types of businesses. In addition, the City of Kingsville and its partners may want to consider establishing a Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) encompassing the Downtown District to provide an ongoing revenue stream to foster economic and business development in the area over time. Finally, the City of Kingsville and the Main Street Program should devise a targeted business development strategy that would focus in on certain types of businesses to locate in the downtown area.

- The City of Kingsville and the Main Street Program should also consider putting in place a Small Business Support Network to further strengthen local businesses already in the downtown area, and to support local and outside entrepreneurs looking to establish new businesses in the district. This support network could involve several entities such as the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) housed at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, the Greater Kingsville Economic Development Council, components of the Main Street Program, and business outreach programs and support initiatives at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. The goal of the proposed network would be to strengthen existing businesses in the downtown area and grow new businesses in the area by providing

them with the support they need to better address the needs of their markets. This network could also provide ongoing training, technical support and market research to those businesses in the network.

- One of the limiting factors that could potentially impact businesses in the Downtown District as merchants and owners begin to refocus their markets is its location within the larger community and a dynamic regional market. This plus Kingsville's location relative to Corpus Christi's market reduces the market base for local businesses in its downtown area. This also results in a major income leakage factor for Kingsville. As noted earlier a retail market gap analysis calculated for the City of Kingsville pointed out that some leakage occurs in five industry groups – Motor Vehicles and Parts; Electronics and Appliance Stores; Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores; Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music Stores; and, Non-store Retailers. All five sectors/industry groups have leakage factors of 75% or more. This means that consumers are likely addressing this demand and supply gap by going to Corpus Christi or Calallen to shop for these items. The total leakage adds up to nearly \$120,000,000 in sales revenue lost to the Kingsville economy. To address this, Kingsville can either recruit businesses in these sectors or develop new types of businesses to encourage local residents to shop more in Kingsville. It can also grow its local market base by expanding its resident population base. This, of course, is a long-range solution. For the short-term,

however, Kingsville should target those businesses that are needed to provide goods and services to the local population. It can also identify new businesses or specialty retailers to attract shoppers from a larger market area. In addition, Kingsville could take steps to grow its tourism industry to bring in new money to feed its economy. In terms of the Downtown District, this would be an excellent area for high-end specialty shops and restaurants designed to target visitors and tourists.

- Another factor that can have a bearing on the long-term success of Kingsville's Downtown District has to do with quality of life issues. This also applies to downtown areas. Downtowns that provide a livable environment with a high level of services for residents tend to be more successful than those that don't. Communities that have a high quality of life tend to be more successful than those that do not. Several initiatives proposed in this vision plan are designed to provide such an environment for Kingsville's downtown area. One has to do with developing a Special Events Center for the Downtown District. Another deals with adding more infill housing in the downtown area. Other proposals designed to enhance Kingsville's downtown area include an enhanced streetscape, a more diverse range of businesses, the creation of a museum district, the development of a street plaza and the development of new parking facilities for downtown merchants, shoppers and residents. These and other projects proposed in the plan not only

meet specific needs in the downtown area, but also contribute to the larger community's quality of life.

- Equally important to the long-term success of Kingsville's Downtown District is creating a stronger market base to draw students, faculty and staff from Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Several proposals are presented in this plan to draw the University closer to the Downtown District and to enhance its role as a major economic catalyst for the community, as a whole. In many respects this is an untapped market for local merchants in the downtown area. To be successful, however, students, faculty and staff at the University have to have a reason to go downtown. This will require creative marketing on the part of merchants in the downtown area. It will also require the development of new assets to draw this market into the area. If successful, the economic impact on local businesses in the Downtown District could be significant.

Economic and community development are closely linked. Without a strong local economy, communities often find it difficult to move forward. This also applies to downtown areas, whether they are in large cities or in smaller rural communities. In terms of Kingsville, the Downtown District has the potential to become the heart and soul of its economic, cultural, social and civic life. It already has many of the assets needed to achieve this status. The proposals put forth in this plan will strengthen the District's role in the larger community. They will also contribute to its ongoing success in the years to come.

Where Do We Go From Here?

The initiatives, projects, and strategies included in this section are designed to improve the sustainability, economic potential, investment prospects, and quality of life factors in Kingsville's downtown area. They are also designed to support business and economic development in the larger community. In order to move forward with the implementation of these projects and initiatives a more detailed plan of action will be necessary. That effort, in order to be successful, must be cost-effective and incorporate realistic goals. Also important is the need to involve organizations, stakeholders and citizens in this process. Once these factors are taken into account the next step is to carefully review the ideas, proposals, recommendations, and strategies in this vision plan to determine their feasibility for the community. As this is done, the City of Kingsville and its partners will then have to put in place appropriate mechanisms to move forward with their implementation.

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Appendix A

SWOT September 21, 2016

Group I (Ernest)

Strengths

1. University
2. Naval Air Station
3. King Ranch-tourism
4. Location
5. Stable Employment
6. History/Heritage/Culture
7. Climate
8. Diverse Population
9. Helpful People-hospitality
10. Fertile Land
11. Access to Bay for Recreation
12. Local Cuisine
13. Artistic Community
14. Lots of "Native" Citizens
15. Civic Clubs/Culture
16. Birding
17. Hunting
18. Local Farmers Market
19. Venues-Coliseum
20. Churches
21. Museums
22. Pan Am Schools
23. Athletic Programs
24. Parks
25. Close to Gulf

26. Children Hospital (40 miles - Corpus)

Weaknesses

1. Poor Performing Schools (Kingsville Independent School District)
2. Street repair
3. Competition with Corpus
4. Absentee Landlords-housing
5. Run down neighborhoods
6. Downtown Parking (lack of)
7. Unsightly spots downtown
8. Lack of Corporate Restaurants
9. Street Drainage-everywhere
10. Lack of recreational opportunities
11. Lack of viable business Downtown
12. Empty vacant properties
13. Limited health care
14. Lack of major private sector employers
15. Retaining college grads
16. Lack of publicity
17. Lack of B&B's
18. Golf course maintenance
19. JK Northway needs repairs

Opportunities

1. Wild life tourism/hunting
2. Outlet malls?
3. Antique stores
4. Farmers market
5. More events
6. Art walks/galleries

7. Attract large retail
8. Upgrade of 77
9. Kings Inn
10. Increasing student enrollment Texas A&M Kingsville and Coastal Bend College
11. Texas Theater
12. Train Depot Museum

Threats

1. Apathy
2. Train Blocking Intersections
3. Hill Country Competition
4. Outlets/Malls
5. Declining Downtown
6. Coastal Resort Commodities
7. Difficulty Coordinating Events
8. Lack of cooperation
9. Corpus
10. Kingsville Independent School District poor performance
11. Property Taxes

Group II (Paul)

Strengths

1. Good Corporate Citizens
2. Celanese Chemical Plant
3. I-69 Expansion/Railroad
4. Low Crime Rate
5. Space for Expansion
6. Water Supply
7. Health Care/Hospital

8. Downtown Layout
9. Javelina Football
10. Weather
11. Centrally located
12. Pharmacy School
13. Open Enrollment Schools
14. Jobs/Economy
15. Good Location
16. Leadership
17. Diversified Economy
18. A&M Kingsville
19. King Ranch
20. Naval Air Station
21. Border Patrol
22. Low Cost of Living
23. Abundance of Recreation (outdoor activities)

Weaknesses

1. Lack of Senior Community Services
2. Kingsville Independent School District
3. High Tax Rate-No Developed Airport
4. Work Force
5. Brain Drain
6. Lack of Industry
7. Lack Affordable Housing
8. Lack of Retail/Restaurants/Entertainment
9. Parks/Golf Need Renovation
10. County Government Issues
11. Overall Appearance (infrastructure)
12. Growth Slants South
13. Low Income Demographics

14. Not Enough Child Care Facilities
15. Apathy
16. Leakage

Opportunities

1. 10K People Over 10 Years
2. Growth In University
3. Navy Base (redevelopment)
4. Industrial Land Available
5. Proximity to Port Corpus Christi
6. Transportation Services-Trucking Support,
7. A&M Kingsville Resource Partner
8. Regional HUB
9. Baffin Bay

Threats

1. Base Realignment and Closure
2. Kleberg County Government
3. Commodity Prices (oil/gas farming)
4. Dr. Tallant's Birthday (retiring)
5. Lack of Political Leadership
6. Lack of Succession Planning
7. Brain Drain

Group III (Bert)

Strengths

1. Texas A&M University Kingsville
2. Naval Air Station Kingsville
3. King Ranch
4. Celanese
5. Tourism/Rec

6. Public Schools
7. HEB Downtown
8. REV. of HMK
9. Major Highways
10. Cultural Aspects
11. Historical District
12. Coastal County
13. County Seat
14. Public Service
15. JK Northway Coliseum
16. Location
17. Historical
18. Railroad
19. Museums- King Ranch Museum, Common Museum, Railroad Museum, KC?
20. Diversity-Population
21. Hospital-Medicine
22. Padre Island/Beach
23. Law Enforcement Agencies
24. Way Finding Signs-Coming
25. Veterans Facilities
26. Agriculture

Weaknesses

1. Lack of Streets
2. Lack of Sidewalks
3. Poor Drainage
4. Dilapidated Buildings
5. Lack of Night Life/Entertainment
6. Lack of Shopping
7. Weather Extremes

8. Lack of Trees/Shade
9. Maintenance of Improvements
10. High Taxes
11. Lack of Implementation
12. Low Performing Schools
13. No River
14. Bike Lanes
15. Funding for Improvements
16. Vacant Buildings/Lots
17. Low Relative Wage Structure
18. King Ranch
19. Government
20. Water
21. Lack of Day Care-Adult/Children Options
22. Lack of Assisted Living-Elderly
23. Lack of Veterans Facilities
24. Hospital
25. Commuter Workforce
26. Lack of Public Transportation Options Downtown
27. Lack of Neighborhood/Downtown Parks
28. Lack of Events/Festivals
29. Lack of Public Art/Murals/Monuments
30. Lack of Walking/Jogging Trails
31. Museum/Multicultural Center/Performing Arts Center
32. Shaded Areas
33. Not Pedestrian Friendly
34. Lack of Funding for Improvements

Opportunities

1. Vacant Buildings
2. Land/Plots

3. Real Estate
4. Cost of Living
5. Education/Partnership
6. Pharmacy Schools
7. Weather
8. Interstate
9. RV Parks
10. Expand Farmers Market
11. Fishing/Hunting/Bird Watching
12. King Ranch
13. Retail Options
14. Children's Store
15. Entertainment
16. Bike Rental/Store/Storage
17. Grocery Options
18. Mom/Pop Stores

Threats

1. Highway 69
2. Geography
3. Drugs/Trafficking/Crime
4. Military
5. King Ranch
6. Railroad Dangerous
7. Pot Holes/Street Conditions
8. Unmarked Pedestrian Crossing
9. Coastal County
10. Energy Dependent Jobs
11. Follow through on this process and everything else in Kingsville
12. Gang Activities

13. Law Enforcement Communication/Collaboration

Group IV (Cynthia)

Strengths

1. Texas A&M Kingsville-cultural diversity
2. Volunteers
3. Spirituality-churches
4. History-King Ranch
5. Stock of History Buildings
6. Naval Air Station Kingsville
7. Security-Safety-Respect
8. Celanese
9. Slow Pace of Life
10. Pro Real Estate Development
11. Outdoor Recreation Opportunities
12. Climate
13. Location to San Antonio, Corpus Christi, Rio Grande Valley

Weaknesses

1. Lack of Industry Jobs
2. Young People Leaving
3. Lack of Things to Do ex. Bowling (no variety)
4. Infrastructure Issues Due to Fiscal Constraints
5. Lack of Medical Facilities
6. Poor Perception of Our Educational System
7. Workforce- inability to make downtown vibrant, vacant and underutilized buildings
8. High Development Costs
9. Lack of Sidewalks and Sidewalk Maintenance (narrow walks)

- 10. Lack of trees and green space
- 11. Apathy
- 12. Not business friendly-perception too many rules

Opportunities

- 1. Texas A&M Kingsville-interns, volunteers projects
- 2. Adopt a spot
- 3. Community appearance-volunteers
- 4. More industry in retail
- 5. Retail along highway 77
- 6. Build Up Tourism
- 7. Improve Quality of Life to Bring in More People
- 8. Vacant and Underutilized Buildings

Threats

- 1. Base Realignment and Closure
- 2. Crime-drug
- 3. High Taxes (property)
- 4. Water Supply Potential to Decrease
- 5. Decreased Funding in Education
- 6. Competition From Nearby Communities with regards to retail/shopping
- 7. Valley Workforce

Planning and Zoning Board SWOT October 19, 2016

Attendees

Steve Zamora
Lupe Alvarez
Robert McCreight
Brian Coufal

Strengths

- 1. Definable Space
- 2. Area – HEB
- 3. Financial Assist.
- 4. Zoned
- 5. Historical Relevance
- 6. Downtown Business Association – Main Street
- 7. Downtown Manager
- 8. Diversity

Weaknesses

- 1. Parking
- 2. Empty Fronts
- 3. Absent Owners
- 4. Repair costs prohibitive
- 5. Demolish

Opportunities

- 1. EDC / Retail Coach
- 2. TX Theatre
- 3. Who's the target?

- 4. University Growth
- 5. Corp Businesses

Threats

- 1. High Property Taxes
- 2. Lack of Money
- 3. Parks

Appendix B

Community Resources - State/Federal Grant Options

U.S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development Programs (USDA-RD)

Business and Industry Guaranteed Loans (B & I)

B&I loans are offered to improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. Cooperative organizations, partnerships, non-profits, public bodies, or individuals can apply for a loan provided that the funds are used for specific purposes. They can be used to start up or acquire a business if doing so will prevent employment loss and/or create employment opportunity. Funds can also be used to modernize a business or purchase equipment, land, buildings, or easements. Further information can be found on the USDA-RD website: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_gar.html

Rural Energy for America Program

This program is available to rural small businesses and agricultural producers through local lenders approved by the USDA. The loans and grants must be used to purchase renewable energy systems or make energy efficiency improvements. More information is available at: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_ReapResEei_Eligibility.html

Rural Business Enterprise Grants Program (RBEG)

The RBEG Program provides grants for the development of

rural businesses, provides funding employment rated adult education programs, and funds distance learning networks in order to give employees access to adult education programs. Examples of eligible projects include construction or renovations, training and technical assistance, and distance adult learning for training and advancement. More information can be obtained by visiting the RBEG Program website: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_rbeg.html

Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)

The purpose of the IRP is to alleviate poverty and increase economic activity and employment in rural communities. Low-interest loans are provided to community organizations for the establishment of revolving loan funds. These organizations can then provide loans for activities like construction or repair of businesses, purchasing and development of land, or pollution control and abatement. More information can be found at: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_irp.html

Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)

These grants are designed to promote sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs. Funds can be used for strategic planning, feasibility studies, leadership and entrepreneur training, and more. This program is designated for any area not within the boundaries of a city that has a population of more than 10,000. More information can be found at: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_RBOG.html

Community Facilities Grants

This program provides grant funds to develop essential community facilities in rural communities and areas up to

20,000 in population. Funds may be used to build healthcare facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities. More information on the program can be found at: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-CF_Grants.html

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable communities and ensure everyone has access to an affordable home. They accomplish this through a variety of grants and programs that offer assistance for a variety of needs including disaster recovery, home-improvement, and housing for the elderly.

HOME Investment Partnerships Program

This program offers grants to states and local governments to implement local housing strategies for increasing home ownership and affordable housing opportunities for low-income Americans. Funding can be used for the rehabilitation of housing, provide assistance to home buyers and facilitate the construction of new housing. Participating jurisdictions must match 25% of HOME funds. More information can be found at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUDPrograms2013-12.pdf>

Good Neighbor Next Door

Law enforcement officers, teachers, firefighters, and EMT's are given the opportunity to buy homes in revitalization areas at a significant discount. The goal is to make the neighborhoods safer and stronger. More information can be found at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUDPrograms2013-21.pdf>

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

The CDBG Program is a national program whose goal is to develop viable communities by providing decent housing, suitable living environments and expanding economic opportunities principally for those of low to moderate income. Funds can be allocated for several uses including disaster relief, water and sewer infrastructure improvements, and renewable energy pilot programs. More information can be found through the Department of Housing and Urban Development website at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/hudprograms/toc>

Rural Housing Stability Assistance Program

This program offers competitive grants to private non-profits, counties, and local governments for re-housing of individuals placed in emergency or transitional housing, and for improving the housing situation of low-income families in a geographical area. Funds can also be used to help low-income residents keep their homes and/or improve their access to affordable housing. Additional information is available at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUDPrograms2013-15.pdf>

Self-Help Housing Property Disposition

This program makes surplus federal properties available to state and local governments at less than fair market value for the purpose of building self-help housing for low-income residents. Residents of the property must make a substantial contribution of labor towards the construction, rehabilitation, or renovation of the property. More information can be found by visiting the HUD website at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUDPrograms2013-47.pdf>

Community Challenge Planning Grant Program

These grants are given in partnership with the Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency for the development of affordable, economically vital, and sustainable communities. Funds can be used to modify master plans, zoning, and building codes to promote development and the re-use of older buildings with the goal of promoting sustainability at the neighborhood and community levels. More information can be obtained at: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUDPrograms2013-85.pdf>

Other Federal Agencies and Programs

U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)

The EDA has several programs designed to improve communities throughout the country. The Public Works Program provides funding to revitalize, expand and upgrade infrastructure in distressed communities to draw in new business and job opportunities to an area. They also provide planning and economic development strategies to designated Economic Development Districts, communities and councils of government. More programs and information are available at: <http://www.eda.gov/>

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

The SBA offers a number of financial assistance programs for small businesses. They also set guidelines for loans through lenders and community development organizations, help small business contractors obtain surety bonds, and provide mentors and counseling through its Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) Program. While they do not directly provide grants,

they have several sources of funding listed on their website at: <http://www.sba.gov/content/what-sba-offers-help-small-businesses-grow>

Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA)

FEMA offers a variety of grants not only for victims of natural disasters, but for mitigation activities that avert future damage. They also offer grants to local fire departments for staffing, volunteer firefighter retention, and reducing injuries and deaths among high-risk populations. More information can be found at <http://www.fema.gov/grants>

Texas Historical Commission Programs

Texas Main Street Program

The Texas Main Street program was formed over 30 years ago and is operated through the Texas State Historical Commission. The program's goal is to provide technical expertise, resources and support to Texas communities to preserve and revitalize historic downtowns and commercial neighborhood districts. Communities can apply annually, and each year up to five cities are selected for Texas Main Street designation. Once accepted, cities pay a nominal annual fee based on population and have access to strategic planning reports, design services, resources for funding projects, and much more. More information can be obtained by visiting: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/texas-main-street> or by contacting the Texas Main Street State Coordinator at (512)463-6092. (Texas Historical Commission)

Museum Services

The Texas State Historical Commission also helps small history museums through its Museum Services Program. Staff provides free consultations and assistance in a number of areas including museum development, strategic planning, exhibit design, fundraising and volunteer training. Additionally they offer training on various museum topics through workshops and online. More information can be found by visiting: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/museum-services> or contact the Museum Services Coordinator at (512)463-6427.

Cemetery Preservation

The Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designation provided through the Texas Historic Commission protects these cemeteries by recording boundaries in the county records to alert current and future owners of land surrounding these areas. This designation does not impose any restrictions on the private use of land. The site must be designated as an HTC before it is eligible for a historical marker. More information is available at: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/cemetery-preservation>.

Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation (THCP)

The THCP Program was established in 1999 to help counties restore their historic courthouses. The program provides partial matching grants and is regularly funded by the Texas Legislature. Training and education is also provided to county staff for future preservation needs. Further information can be found at: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/texas-historic-courthouse-preservation>

Certified Local Government Program (CLG)

The CLG Program is a partnership for historic preservation of state, federal, and local government. Local governments work independently to develop and maintain a successful preservation program. To qualify, a city or county must enforce legislation that protects historic properties, establish a qualified review commission, maintain a survey and inventory of historic properties, and provide for public participation in the preservation process. More information is available at: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/certified-local-government>

Texas Department of Agriculture Programs

Texas Capital Fund (TCF)

This program allocates funds to incorporated cities and county governments that do not meet the standards set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program. Funds can be used for real estate development, infrastructure improvements, and downtown revitalization efforts. The TCF can also help attract new business and grow the local economy. More information can be found at: <http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/TexasCapitalFund.aspx>.

GO TEXAN Rural Community Program

This program is designed to encourage the growth of rural communities throughout Texas. It is a membership-based program that promotes economic activity in rural areas through restaurants, tourism, and special recognition of products made in Texas. Restaurants as well as items manufactured

or grown in Texas can receive the special GO TEXAS label. More information is at: <http://www.gotexan.org/ForMembers/GOTEXANPartnerProgram.aspx>

State Office of Rural Health (SORH)

The SORH works with local healthcare providers, county leaders and state partners to support access to quality healthcare for rural Texans. It also assists healthcare providers through programs that provide information and referrals, medical licensing, grants, and educational awards. A complete list of programs can be found by visiting: <http://www.texasagriculture.gov/GrantsServices/RuralEconomicDevelopment/StateOfficeofRuralHealth.aspx>

Other State Agencies and Programs

Texas Education Agency (TEA)

The TEA provides grants to schools and school districts throughout Texas for the academic enrichment of students. Examples of grants offered are the Algebra Readiness for Small and Rural Schools Grant, the Online College and Career Preparation Technical Assistance Grant, and the Public Charter School Start-up Grant. More Information can be found at: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=2147487872>

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA)

The mission of the TDHCA is to improve the quality of life of all Texans through the development of better communities. They act as an intermediary for federal grant funds for housing and community services. They also act as a financial and

administrative resource that provides essential services and affordable housing to those who qualify and provides resources for first-time home buyers. More information is available at: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/index.htm>

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

TxDOT offers a number of grants for infrastructure and accessibility improvements. The Safe Routes to Schools Grant is designed to improve the safety of children in grades K-8 that walk or bike to school. The routine Airport Maintenance Program matches local government grants up to \$50,000 for basic improvements like parking lots, fences, or other similar needs at airport facilities. TxDOT also administers funds from several federal grant programs designed to help cities with planning and research, rural public transportation, and transportation for individuals with disabilities. Further information can be found at: <http://www.txdot.gov/government/funding.html>

Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)

The TWDB offers grants and loans for the planning, design, and construction of water related infrastructure and improvement programs. They also offer grants to local governments and technical assistance for agricultural water conservation, flood mitigation, and clean drinking water programs. More information can be found at: <http://www.twdb.state.tx.us/financial/programs/AWCG/index.asp>

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

The TCEQ offers both competitive and non-competitive grants to local governments for a variety of uses. Funds can

be provided for cleanup or prevention of pollution, research into pollution reduction, or for replacing old municipal vehicles with newer, more efficient models. The Texas Clean School Bus Program provides money to school districts to replace old school buses with new ones or retrofit them with new technology to reduce the pollution from diesel exhaust. More information can be found at: http://www.tceq.texas.gov/agency/governments_main.html

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)

The TSSWCB offers a matching funds program for soil and water conservation assistance. Through local conservation boards they also offer technical and planning assistance to agricultural producers to incorporate best management practices on their farms and ranches. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/programs/swcdassistance>

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)

The TPWD offers 50% matching grant funds to municipalities, counties, and other units of government for the development of parks, nature centers, urban outdoor recreation, and recreational trails. They also offer 75% matching funds for the construction of public boat ramps throughout Texas. Further information on programs and deadlines can be found at: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/#outdoor>

Texas Veterans Commission (TVC)

The TVC awards reimbursement grants to local government agencies and Veterans Service Organizations that provide direct assistance to Texas veterans and their families. Grants

are offered for limited financial assistance, transportation services, housing assistance, and family and child services. More information, grant applications and deadlines can be found at: <http://www.tvc.texas.gov/Apply-For-A-Grant.aspx>.

Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA)

The TCA offers a variety of grants to municipal and county arts agencies to provide services and support in the advancement of the cultural arts. Information and deadlines can be found at: <https://www2.arts.state.tx.us/tcagrants/TXArtsPlan/TAPTOC.asp>

Economic Development

Type A and B Economic Development Sales Tax

These voter-approved taxes are used by cities to promote economic development. To date, more than 583 cities in Texas have collected over \$500 million annually in sales tax revenue. (Office of the Attorney General of Texas) There are key differences between the Type A and Type B sales tax mainly in the ways cities can adopt a sales tax, use tax revenue, and the oversight of project expenditures. Not every city can collect Type A sales taxes, but every city in Texas can collect Type B.

Type A is considered more restrictive and allows more traditional types of economic development initiatives that assist manufacturing or industrial activities. It can fund things like buildings, equipment, facilities, distribution centers, and infrastructure improvements. It can also fund business related airports, port facilities, and some airport activities within 25 miles of an international border. (Office of the Attorney General of Texas)

Type B Sales Taxes fund the same projects that Type A can, as well as projects considered to be community initiatives. Facilities and expenditures for a professional or amateur sports park, entertainment facilities, tourist facilities, and affordable housing are allowed under Type B funds, but with additional procedural requirements. More information is available through the Office of the Attorney General of Texas: https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/pdfs/econdevhb2013.pdf

Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT)

The HOT is imposed on anyone paying for a room or space in a hotel, motel, or bed and breakfast costing \$15 or more per night. It also applies to condominiums, apartments, and houses that are rented for less than 30 consecutive days. The State of Texas charges 6% of the cost of the room, and local city and county taxing authorities are allowed to impose an additional percentage provided it does not go above 15% of the room rate. Funds collected must be used to directly enhance and promote tourism. They must also fit into one of the nine statutory categories outlined in the tax code. These categories include the funding of a visitor's center, tourism related advertising, programs that enhance the arts, historical preservation, and others. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/hotel/index.html>

Property Tax Incentives

Attracting new businesses and encouraging economic growth can be accomplished using the right property tax incentives. Property tax abatement, tax increment financing, and the Texas Economic Development Act are three ways a municipality can

grow economically, attract new industries, and retain existing employers.

Property tax abatement is where incorporated cities, counties, and special districts are permitted to enter into an agreement with a taxpayer (i.e. a business) that exempts all or part of the increase in property value from taxation over a period of up to ten years. (Texas Comptroller's Economic Development & Analysis Division)

Tax increment financing can be used by a city or county to publicly finance needed improvements to infrastructure and buildings within a designated reinvestment zone. (Office of the Texas attorney General) The cost of improvements is financed by future tax revenues levied against property in the improved area.

The Texas Economic Development Act also gives school districts the ability to create jobs and attract investment. A school district can provide tax credits and an 8-year limitation on appraised value of a property on the school district property tax to eligible corporations or limited liability companies (LLC). In return, the companies are required to use the property for manufacturing, research and development, clean energy generation and other similar uses. (Office of the Attorney General of Texas) More information on property tax incentives can be found by visiting: https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/pdfs/econdevhb2013.pdf

County Development District (CDD)

Counties with a population of 400,000 or less can be petitioned

by landowners to establish a CDD in an effort to promote and develop tourism in the county. They are allowed to levy taxes for such purposes provided that they do not exceed the 2% cap on local tax rates. More information can be found at <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/LG/htm/LG.383.htm>

Public Improvement Districts (PID)

PID's provide a way for cities make necessary public improvements by allowing them to collect special assessments on property within the city and its extraterritorial jurisdiction. A PID can be formed to improve drainage and wastewater facilities, construct or improve libraries or off-street parking, acquire and install pieces of art, or other similar projects that improve public safety and economic development. More information of PID's can be found at: http://www.texasahead.org/tax_programs/pubimprovement/

Municipal Management Districts (MMD)

Also called a downtown management district, a MMD is created within an existing commercial area as a supplement to municipal services in the area. Improvements to infrastructure and facilities are paid for by a combination of self-imposed property taxes, impact fees, and special assessments. Many cities in Texas have used this tool with great success. Additional information can be found by visiting: https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/pdfs/econdevhb2013.pdf

Neighborhood Empowerment Zones (NEZ)

A NEZ can be established by a city to promote economic development activities within a designated area. The zone must promote the creation of affordable housing; an increase

in economic development; an increase in quality of social services; education, and public safety; and, the rehabilitation of affordable housing. The city has certain development powers within the zone to draw in economic activity. They may grant waivers for building fees, issue municipal sales tax refunds, offer property tax abatements, and establish baseline performance standards and environmental goals on construction projects. More information can be found at: <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/LG/htm/LG.378.htm>

NAFTA Impact Zones

Cities with areas affected by the North American Free Trade Agreement are authorized to establish this zone. The rules are nearly identical to Neighborhood Empowerment zones. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/LG/htm/LG.379.htm>