



**CITY OF BRADY  
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION AGENDA  
MAY 15, 2018 AT 4:00 PM**

NOTICE is hereby given of a meeting of the City Council of City of Brady, McCulloch County, State of Texas, to be held at 4:00 pm on May 15, 2018, at the City of Brady Municipal Court Building, located at 207 S. Elm Street, Brady, Texas, for the purpose of considering the following items. The City Council of the City of Brady, Texas, reserves the right to meet in closed session on any of the items listed below should the need arise and if applicable pursuant to authorization by Title 5, Chapter 551, of the Texas Government Code.

**1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Certification of a Quorum**

Tony Groves  
Mayor

Jim Griffin  
Mayor Pro Tem, Place 5

Rey Garza  
Council Member, Place 1

Shelly Perkins  
Council Member, Place 2

Jeffery Sutton  
Council Member, Place 3

Jane Huffman  
Council Member, Place 4

**2. Presentation and discussion regarding Tourism Strategic Plan by Cygnet Strategies**

**3. Adjournment**

*I certify that this is a true and correct copy of the City of Brady City Council Meeting Agenda and that this notice as posted on the designated bulletin board at Brady City Hall, 201 E. Main St., Brady, Texas 76825; a place convenient and readily accessible to the public at all times, and said notice was posted on \_\_\_\_\_ by 4:00 p.m. and will remain posted continuously for 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting pursuant to Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Tina Keys, City Secretary*

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, the City of Brady will provide for reasonable accommodations for persons attending public meetings at City Facilities. Requests for accommodations or interpretive services must be received at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. Please contact the City Secretary at 325-597-2152 or [citysec@bradytx.us](mailto:citysec@bradytx.us).

Kim Lenoir  
City Manager

Tina Keys  
City Secretary

Lisa Remini  
Director of Finance

Steve Miller  
Director of Public Works

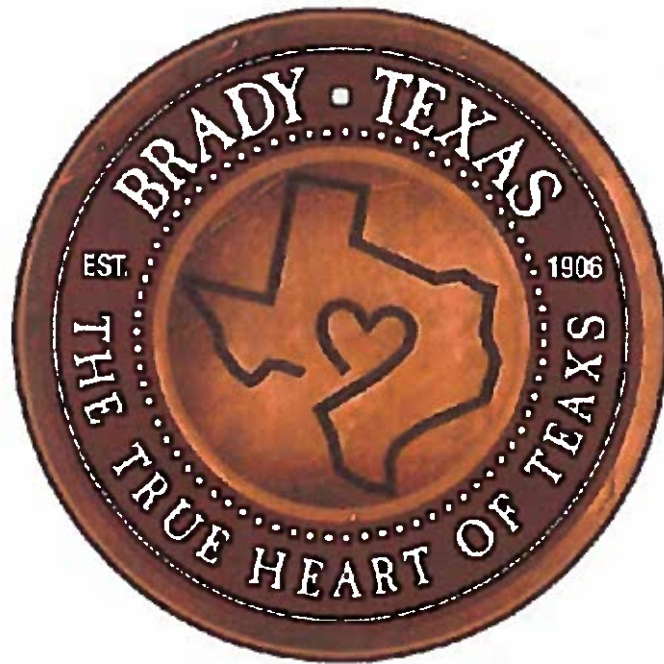
Peter Lamont  
Director of Community  
Services

Steve Thomas  
Chief of Police

Brian Meroney  
Chief of Fire/EMS

Sarah Griffin  
City Attorney





## **TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN**

**BRADY, TEXAS**

**MAY 2018**



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## Acknowledgements

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### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

The development of this strategic plan was a collaboration between Cygnet Strategies, City of Brady staff and elected officials, Brady/McCulloch County Chamber of Commerce and various tourism stakeholders.

We would like to express our gratitude for the hours, ideas and resources contributed by a broad range of participants to make this plan a reality.

The information and recommendations contained in this plan are based upon Cygnet Strategies' broad-based experience working with communities and destinations combined with independent research, Brady's previous planning efforts, interviews, informal conversations, and best practices.

Any plan is only as effective as its implementation effort. We encourage the City of Brady to support the Chamber of Commerce and the community's tourism stakeholders with funding and resources as they move forward through the implementation process.

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an enormous economic driver for the State of Texas. In 2017, visitors spent \$74.7 billion resulting in \$7.0 billion in local tax revenues and supporting 1 out of every 10 jobs. More specifically, visitors to McCulloch County in 2017 had the following impacts:

Total Direct Spending: \$18.5 million

Total Direct Employment: 160 FTE

Total Local Tax Receipts: \$350,000

Clearly, tourism is a strong partner in terms of economic development and business retention with a pleasant side effect: local residents spend more of their money at home when their community offers new and different experiences. This helps to stop the leakage—the cash residents spend someplace else—and strengthens local pride.

Decisions to close attractions, stores and restaurants, even those that appear successful, are announced too frequently in today's economy. Downtown Brady is a prime example of this and has seen restaurants and retailers come and go over the past several years.

Doing nothing puts Brady at the mercy of the unknown and at risk of losing control over the community's future quality of life. The purpose of this plan is to leverage the existing tourism product and consider additional options that will add sustainability and resiliency for the community.

Throughout the development of this plan, five consistent themes emerged: (1) Brady embraces family and multi-generational activities; (2) access to outdoor recreation is not being maximized; (3) downtown needs significant assistance; (4) history is often referred to but there is little experience connection made for visitors or residents; and (5) the current schedule of local events does not draw regional visitors more than a few times a year.

Based upon these themes, this plan provides a roadmap for improving the visitor experience, creating visitor loyalty, and increasing Brady's visibility as a tourism destination.

The following analysis and recommendations are aimed at building a foundation for future tourism efforts that positively impacts the community's quality of life. Implementation may require adjustments to staffing and re-evaluation of existing and proposed opportunities, however, all of the recommendations are economically viable within the constraints of the Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) annual revenue.

How do Brady's assets fit into its tourism identity? Traditionally, a community's tourism is based on product, which includes:

- **Primary lures**—activities and experiences that draw people to the community. These are different and unusual things they can't get closer to home and are the primary reason for visiting.
- **Secondary diversions**—activities and experiences people participate in once they're in a community. These may be things they can do closer to home, but people will do them in the community they're visiting because they're already in town.
- **Amenities**—things that make a visit more comfortable and enjoyable. Depending upon the community it might include a variety of quality lodging and outstanding restaurants; adequate wayfinding; free Wi-Fi; clean, convenient accessible restrooms; comfortable, shaded outdoor seating; public green spaces; and plenty of parking.
- **Sense of Place**— the overall feel, or ambience, is critical but ambience alone will not create a successful tourism destination. Hundreds of communities have beautifully restored buildings, impressive fountains and lush landscaping in their downtowns, but there are no people on the streets. Public art helps, but without things for people to do— activities to participate in, experiences to enjoy— visitors will go elsewhere.

Successful implementation is a team effort. We encourage the City of Brady to support the Chamber and the community's tourism stakeholders with funding and resources as they move forward through the implementation process.

### KEY OBJECTIVES

The product development, marketing, and administrative recommendations contained in this plan support the four key objectives guiding the plan:

- Development of an implementable strategic plan for improving, monitoring, and promoting Brady's visitor experience
- On-going accountability and transparency in managing HOT funds
- Clarification of the identity defined by Brady's tourism product and experiences
- Improvement in civic pride and resident activity participation



## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### VISITOR EXPERIENCE ASSESSMENT

August 2016

A team of five completed the marketing assessment to determine if Brady shows up as an option when people plan a Texas vacation. The assessment started with planning a trip to Central Texas and then focused on Brady to determine whether they would visit and what they would do if they did visit.

Getting past the first step, where visitors gather information, is challenging for all destinations. When visitors are making decisions about where to spend their time and money, they consciously and subconsciously access an array of resources over an indeterminate period of time. The team was free to use any resources they would normally use when planning a trip, including:

- Recommendations from friends and family
- Books
- Movies and TV shows
- Magazine and newspaper articles
- Guidebooks and brochures
- Print advertising
- TV and radio advertising
- On-line advertising
- Social media including Facebook and Twitter
- Websites
- Blogs
- YouTube and Flickr
- Billboards
- Highway signs

### **September 2-5, 2016 and September 27-28, 2016**

Another team conducted the on-site assessment of Brady. The purpose of this phase was to experience the community the same way a first-time visitor might. Questions addressed were:

- With so many destinations for visitors to choose from, why should they choose Brady and what will their experience be once they arrive?
- Can visitors find Brady?
- What's the first impression?
- Where can visitors get information?
- What is Brady's tourism product?
- Is Brady's tourism product worth the visit?
- Where are the public restrooms?
- Can visitors find their way around?

The team took pictures, explored, visited attractions, made purchases, ate in restaurants and talked to business owners, residents and other visitors.

### **September 28, 2016**

A meeting was held to review the assessment findings and begin the conversation about Brady's future as a tourism destination. A copy of the final report is included in the Appendix.

As part of the assessment, the team identified initial expectations prior to the on-site visit. These expectations were re-evaluated after the assessment was completed. As part of the presentation and report, Brady's strengths, opportunities, challenges and threats were determined and initial recommendations were outlined.

## Research Summary

### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

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The team's initial expectations are highlighted in bold text—we analyzed whether the expectations were met during the visit in 2016.

**Interesting landscape**—YES. The topography in the area provides an interesting setting, as does the drive to Brady from surrounding communities.

**Not much to do**—YES and NO. Although there are a few things to do on the weekends and during events, most of the time the only visitor draw is shopping at D & J's and/or Evridge's. Hunting season does bring visitors for a specific activity; however, unless they are purchasing gear or supplies, visiting hunters are at all-inclusive locations.

**Great events**—YES. The Goat Cook Off is a solid event and provides a foundational event that makes a significant economic impact on the community. Other events, like Hogtober Fest are also strong assets.

**Great boating, swimming and fishing at the lake**—NO. The lake needs significant infrastructure work before this will be true.

**Variety of restaurants**—YES. For a town of its size, Brady has a solid variety of cuisines at reasonable price points.

**Interesting shops**—YES and NO. Currently there are only a few destination shopping experiences.

**Friendly people**—YES. Except for a handful of aggressive, non-pedestrian-friendly drivers, everyone we encountered was kind and helpful.

**No traffic**—YES and NO. While there is minimal traffic in most areas of town, the traffic along Commerce Street creates a dangerous pedestrian experience.

**Identified Strengths and Opportunities**

- Courthouse Square buildings
- Brady Lake
- Well-known annual events
- Foundation of restaurants
- Lodging options
- Proximity to other places
- Country Music memorabilia collection
- Richards Park
- G. Rollie White Complex

**Identified Challenges and Threats**

- TXDOT plan for courthouse square
- Empty storefronts
- Limited shopping
- Brady Lake
- No city staff person focused on events
- Need decision on identity
- Lack of tourism strategic plan
- Need strategic plan to grow events
- Limited to non-existent cell service for many carriers
- Events aren't in places where people can spend money with local businesses

**Recommendations from the Assessment**

- **Develop and implement Tourism Strategic Plan**
- **Complete southside gateway sign**
- **Redesign sign at golf course**
- **Recruit complementary shops on the square**
- **Improve and promote historic home tour**
- **Promote military aspects of museum**
- **Increase interpretation at County Music museum**
- **Clean up entrance area at G. Rollie White**
- **Address landscaping and playground issues at Brady Lake**
- **Claim business listings**
- **Review websites**
- **Be proactive with TXDOT about Courthouse Square Project**
- **Establish who you are and own it**
- **Tourism management strategy**
- **Grow/enhance current signature events**
- **Develop both product and events to support defined identity**

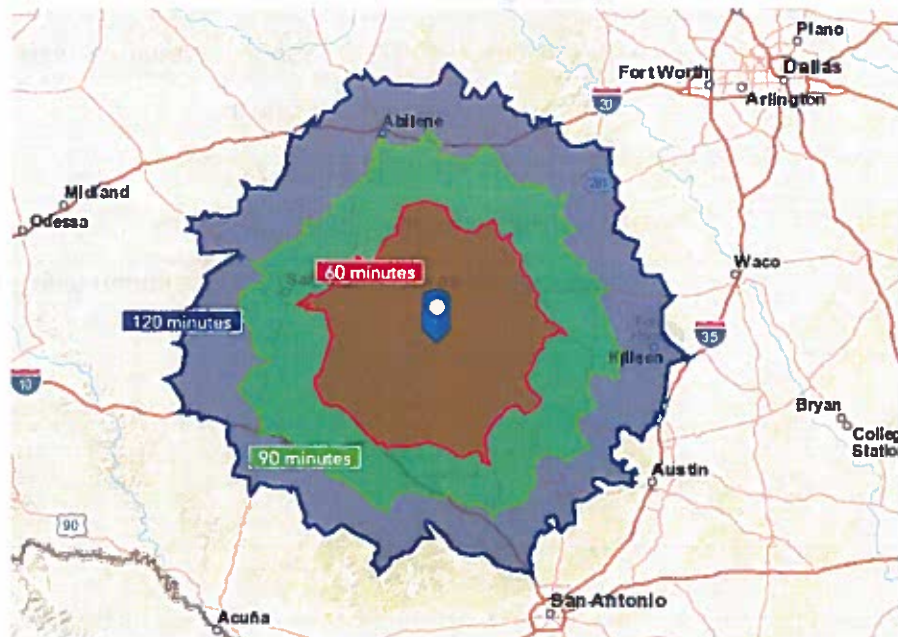
## DEMOGRAPHICS

Tourism marketing and product development focuses on bringing visitors to your community. To be successful, you need to know where those visitors might come from and what they might be interested in.

You also need to understand the psychographics and sociographics of local residents. This is important because creating and implementing any tourism plan that is contrary to what local residents want to do or how they want to spend their money will be counterproductive and risks diminishing the quality of life for residents.

Generally, people travel for one of two reasons: (1) leisure, including visits to friends and relatives; or (2) business. Leisure visitors, particularly those who live nearby, will form the foundation of Brady's tourism market for the next several years. While they may not stay overnight, as long as visitors live outside of Brady they qualify as tourists and HOT funds may be used to attract them to the community and provide services and activities to encourage them to stay longer and spend more.

The data below reflects Brady itself compared with the market within a 60 minute, 90 minute or 120 minute drive time.



ESRI has developed a segmentation tool that provides an accurate, detailed description of American neighborhoods based upon their socioeconomic and demographic composition. Using these Tapestry segments for understanding your potential market will be useful as you implement the recommendations in this plan. (Note: Detailed information about each segment is included in the Appendix.)

Top segments for Brady (92.6% of population):

12C Small Town Simplicity

6F Heartland Communities

While the top segments for the 60-minute radius remain similar, as the distance increases, the composition of the area becomes more more varied. Using this information as you plan and market events and activities to appeal to your audience will be helpful and prevent you from spending dollars marketing to people who aren't interested.

## PREVIOUS PLANS/REPORTS/INTERVIEWS

The planning process is a critical part of successful communities. Plans are the roadmap for identifying where you are, where you're going and how you'll get there.

But what happens when things change? Funding diminishes or disappears, priorities shift, or politics and new perspectives emerge. Often the chosen solution is to create a new plan to reflect the changes, which can result in another unimplemented plan gathering dust. It also leads to valid questions:

"Why are we spending money on a new plan? Can't the current/previous one be updated?"

"How will this plan be different?"

"Why should we spend the time and money on this plan when in a few years someone new is going to want to do it all over again?"

After completion of the Visitor Experience Assessment and multiple conversations and interviews with city staff, officials, and tourism stakeholders, Brady's 2013 Comprehensive Plan was reviewed.

### **2013 Comprehensive Plan**

This plan was reviewed to identify sections that focus on tourism.

#### **Chapter 2: Community Vision**

Opportunities identified included recreational opportunities such as the lake, having places to eat, events at G Rollie White, and sports tournaments.

**Goal 1:** Create a land-use plan that promotes the development of quality housing options, recreation, tourism, Brady Lake, and a diversified economy.

**Goal 4:** Improve the City's visual appearance and identity.

"Brady residents should identify a brand or image for the community.... The city is already well known as a place for outdoor activities of wildlife. The city should build upon this existing marketable data and appeals to people looking for outdoor based recreation. However, the city should not be limited to just outdoor recreation and should focus on its historic nature and providing recreation opportunities for those individuals not interested in outdoor sporting events, such as hunting."

**Goal 5:** Promote recreational opportunities to support tourism and to provide a benefit to local residents

"The lake is one major opportunity that should be considered the opportunities around the lake are currently underutilized .... Other recreational opportunities that should be considered include sports recreation."



### **What Our Team Heard From Others in 2016 and 2017**

#### **Vision for Brady Lake:**

- uses can be limited due to flooding
- lower elevations are used as recreation areas
- recreational uses should be the predominant land use with a conference/retreat center, parks in outdoor sporting activities, community festivals
- retail and commercial establishments such as restaurants would be appropriate
- city-owned boat docks, cabins and cabanas are in need of maintenance
- RV park should not allow long-term residents

#### **Downtown Vision:**

- downtown should be considered focal point of the community
- focus on developing tourism and recreational opportunities downtown
- a survey of downtown business owners should be conducted
- improve traffic flow around the courthouse
- improve pedestrian safety

#### **Recreational Facilities Vision:**

- baseball/softball facility updates are needed chamber and other individuals involved in economic development should be consulted when planning improvements to facilities to better understand what will make the park more attractive to tournaments
- develop a multipurpose recreational facility
- improve the connection between Richards Park and G. Rollie White
- purpose of G. Rollie White should be evaluated to expand use of the complex
- physical improvements to both G. Rollie White and Richards Park

#### Additional Tourism-Related Recommendations:

- investigate the feasibility of a conference/retreat center
- hold events in downtown to foster community spirit/pride and social interaction
- hold sports tournaments within the community
- create a new park downtown along Brady Creek and create connections to the train station, Heart of Texas Historical Museum, and courthouse
- improve the streetscape downtown and create a more walkable and pedestrian friendly downtown
- Enforce codes on substandard buildings.
- Provide cleanup assistance for homes and businesses.
- Need more separation between city and EDC.
- Need security for residents/affordable housing/food insecurity.
- Adopt potholes— beautify Brady one pothole at a time.
- Integrate hospital into the community.
- Do a pedestrian count downtown on Sundays.
- Become a Main Street community.

**If money and personnel were no object, what tourism product, activity or events would you like to see in Brady?**

- More chain restaurants
- Chain clothing stores
- H.E.B.
- More events
- Use G. Rollie White for equestrian event
- Use the facilities we have— airport, lake, racetrack, Civic Center, golf course, parks, museums, movie theater— but having all of these to maintain spreads resources too thin

**Event Ideas:**

- Car shows like Llano.
- Llano Crawfish Fest.
- Llano music on the square.
- Llano rock stacking.
- Canton 1st Monday flea market .
- Expand fly-in to the square.
- Have a monthly dance hall event at the Civic Center.
- Build upon Hunter's dinner.
- Do a pentathlon or triathlon at the lake.
- Do a D-Day reenactment at the dam at the lake for the 75th anniversary of D-Day in 2019.
- Antique shows with quality items.
- Ethnic, heritage and cultural events.
- Washer tournaments.

**Civic Center Ideas:**

- Use Civic Center for concerts.
- Overcome mentality about the Civic Center that just because we built it, they will come.
- New sand plants could use it for local meeting space.
- Get referrals from San Angelo when their spaces are full.
- Need a system to subdivide space, could use curtains.
- During Goat Cook Off have vendors at Civic Center and run a shuttle between the hotels, park, and Civic Center.

### MISSION STATEMENT/GOALS

Every organization should have a mission statement. It clarifies your purpose, it determines your direction, it focuses on the future, and it provides a basis for decisions. A mission statement answers 4 basic questions:

- What do we do?
- How do we do it?
- Whom do we do it for?
- Why do we do it or what value do we create?

For Brady's tourism effort, the mission is:

***Brady will build upon its assets to create engaging visitor experiences and will be an effective steward of Hotel Occupancy Tax funds to market and support these experiences in ways that increase overnight visitation and local tax revenues.***

When developing goals to support the mission, it is important for the goals to be S.M.A.R.T.—specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely. The following goals meet these criteria and form the foundation for the recommendations outlined in this plan:

**Goal 1:** Increase the variety/quantity of visitor experiences by 25% within 3 years.

**Goal 2:** Increase utilization of the Civic Center by 50% within 5 years.

**Goal 3:** Effectively utilize HOT funds to increase overnight visitation by 15% within 3 years.

## IDENTITY

At its core, the essence of this project is to make Brady a “3rd place” for residents and potential visitors. Their 1st Place is their home. Their 2nd Place is where they work. Their 3rd Place is where they hang out and spend their leisure time (and money). Third Places are important to demographic groups and smart communities work to establish their reputation as a local and regional option to meet this need.

However, communities cannot be all things to all people. Narrowing your focus and building your identity upon existing assets and the desired quality of life for residents is the most effective and sustainable approach.

Your identity is comprised of two things—an identity vision and identity pillars.

**Identity Vision:** A statement of fewer than 10 words that concisely describes the identity Brady is striving to become.

**Identity Pillars:** Concepts that support the identity while retaining Brady’s core characteristics.

Brady’s identity vision and the accompanying pillars are built upon defining and clarifying what it means to be “The True Heart of Texas.” Each of the recommendations in this plan supports this effort and meets one of the three goals.

### BRADY’S IDENTITY VISION

A relaxing front porch filled with laughter and engaging experiences.

### BRADY’S IDENTITY PILLARS

**Family/Relationships**—Building, sustaining and enhancing relationships with family, friends, and new acquaintances.

**Outdoor Activities**—Exploring the natural environment through a variety of sports and activities.

**Events**—Bringing people together in creative, engaging ways.

**Heritage**—Understanding and experiencing history and culture.

# Product Development Recommendations

## Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

### PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Enhancing and building upon existing assets is the easiest way to initiate tourism product development. Starting with what you have and what is already working, instead of rushing to create new attractions, will be less expensive and more supportive of the community. The recommendations in this section address ways to work with and build upon what you have.

As this plan is implemented, the emphasis will be less about generating overnight stays and more toward creating so much activity that, eventually, Brady will become a primary draw as a destination for people from throughout the region.

Specific information about the target audiences defined by both regional demographics and existing tourism product is provided in the Tourism Administration Recommendations and these audiences have been considered in the development of both the Product Development and Marketing Recommendations.

### 1.0 EVENTS

Events are an excellent tool for attracting visitors and, with a dedicated focus on developing new events and enhancing existing ones, this can be an effective way for Brady to increase visitation.

Keep in mind that events draw people to a community but, depending upon the structure and location of the event, attendee spending does not necessarily contribute to the local economy. One way to mitigate this is to create partnerships and have local restaurants and businesses be your event vendors.

There are three types of events:

- **Venue Events** where Brady provides the venue—places like the Ed Davenport Civic Center, Richards Park, or the Courthouse Square—and an outside group runs an event that may be attended by locals, visitors, or both.
- **Local Events** that primarily attract residents.
- **Visitor Events** that will attract both residents and visitors and may be hosted by the City, the Chamber of Commerce, or another local group or organization.

## Product Development Recommendations

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### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

Some of Brady's current/recent/past events include:

- World Championship BBQ Goat Cookoff
- Heart of Texas Country Music Festival
- Hogtoberfest
- Heart of Texas Thunder Drag Boat Races
- July Jubilee
- Christmas in the Heart
- Texas Muzzle Loader Association
- Golf Tournaments
- Hunter Appreciation Dinner
- Armed Forces Weekend Celebration and Fly-In
- Early Days Celebration

Some of these events are attended primarily by residents and others draw regional, state-wide, and out-of-state visitors. In addition to expanding current efforts, there are other ways to leverage events to both increase attendance and make them appealing to potential visitors.



# Product Development Recommendations

## Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

### 1.1 EVENT RECRUITMENT (POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE FOR HOT FUNDS)

Recruiting events is easier than creating and running them, and this type of event primarily attracts out-of-town visitors who often spend the night.

#### 1.1.1 Database

Develop a database of local and regional groups including professional organizations, non-profits, niche organizations, and religious groups.

#### 1.1.2 Research the Competition

Build a list of groups holding events in surrounding communities and identify those who could be accommodated using the facilities available in Brady.

#### 1.1.3 Event Marketing Collateral

Develop a marketing piece (in digital and print) about why Brady would be a good location for an event that includes information about venues, food options, lodging and camping options, and support services.

#### 1.1.4 Examples of events include:

- ✓ Classic Car Shows
- ✓ Square Dancing Groups
- ✓ Family reunions
- ✓ Biking/running group events
- ✓ Sports tournaments

## Product Development Recommendations

### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

#### 1.2 LOCAL EVENTS (USUALLY NOT ELIGIBLE FOR HOT FUNDS)

An increase in events has been requested both by residents and city staff. Although local events are not eligible for support by HOT funds, they are important and can serve as building blocks for an event that attracts visitors.

##### □ 1.2.1 Local Events

Local events are important to strengthen communities, build relationships and provide activities for residents and their friends and family.

Event ideas include:

- ✓ Back-to-school events
- ✓ Boy Scout/Girl Scout Events
- ✓ Water-based sport “try it” events at the lake
- ✓ Health and wellness workshops/competitions
- ✓ Youth writing and art competitions/workshops
- ✓ Make up Brady-only holidays for each month or quarter
- ✓ Restaurant week
- ✓ Scavenger hunts
- ✓ Sidewalk Chalk Art contests/workshops
- ✓ Farm to Table meals
- ✓ First Night
- ✓ Support for local business events
- ✓ Annual alumni event/homecoming
- ✓ Expand Farmers Market

## Product Development Recommendations

### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

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### 1.3 VISITOR EVENTS (POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE FOR HOT FUNDS)

In addition to local events and events that are recruited to use Brady's venues, larger events should be developed to appeal to a broader geographic audience. These events don't need to be on the same scale as the Cookoff but, they should be able to grow and expand in ways that appeal to those from outside of Brady.

#### ☐ 1.3.1 General Events

Within three years, Brady could be hosting at least one major event every other month that attracts visitors. Ideas include:

- ✓ Mardi Gras
- ✓ Cinco de Mayo
- ✓ Microbrew Festival
- ✓ Local music festivals
- ✓ Food eating contests
- ✓ Water-based events at the lake
- ✓ Storytelling/Cowboy Poetry
- ✓ Liars' Festival
- ✓ Adventure races
- ✓ ATV Poker Runs

## Product Development Recommendations

### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

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#### 2.0 ED DAVENPORT CIVIC CENTER

Increasing utilization of the civic center is important and this is possible, with the staffing outlined later in this plan.

##### □ 2.1. *Improvements needed*

In order for the Civic Center to be a competitive venue, some amenities are needed:

- ✓ Pipe and drape
- ✓ Tablecloths
- ✓ Rectangular tables
- ✓ New chairs
- ✓ Ability to provide electricity for booths

##### □ 2.2 *Increase Civic Center bookings*

One of the current challenges is the lack of a staff person responsible for developing leads, pursuing leads, and working with potential opportunities. After addressing this need, the following are possible options:

- ✓ Area business meetings and trainings
- ✓ Weekends for niche collectors/enthusiasts
- ✓ Writer's workshops
- ✓ Songwriter's workshops
- ✓ Monthly dance parties
- ✓ Home show
- ✓ Agricultural-related trade shows

## Product Development Recommendations

### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

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### 3.0 OUTDOOR RECREATION

In addition to events that are held outside, two of Brady's draws are hunting and activities at Brady Lake.

#### □ 3.1 *Hunting*

Since hunting access and activities are on private land, development of the activities and opportunities is something that the tourism staff can't facilitate, however, when special events or offerings are available, there is an opportunity for marketing partnerships.

#### □ 3.2 *Brady Lake*

As improvements continue at the lake, there will be more opportunity to use the lake as a venue for events. Additional information should be available about where to rent equipment, where to get licenses, and where the public access points are located.

When visitors are at the lake, they are contributing to the local economy in limited ways. An information kiosk at the store would be beneficial to encourage people to come into town and shop or have a meal or attend an event.

#### □ 3.3 *Trails*

Creating a trail system, whether for hiking, biking, or BMX, would serve three purposes: (1) add an activity resource for residents; (2) create a potential draw for visitors; and (3) serve as a venue for competitions and training workshops.

## Product Development Recommendations

### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

#### 4.0 DOWNTOWN

Brady's downtown has incredible potential. It also has multiple challenges. The area needs significant attention and requires capital investment.

##### □ 4.1 *Critical Mass*

Downtowns are a draw when they have a concentration of shopping, dining and entertainment options clustered in one place. Brady's courthouse square needs a better, stronger business mix to be competitive as an option for visitors and residents.

This may mean creating relocation incentives to move inappropriate businesses to other areas of town and to encourage property owners to partner in recruiting targeted business types.

As an overall goal, Brady should strive to have the following business mix around and within one block of the square:

- ✓ 10 retailers that appeal to both residents and visitors
- ✓ 10 food-related businesses—restaurants, ice cream, candy, specialty foods
- ✓ 10 places open after 5 p.m. at least 3 nights a week

##### □ 4.2 *TXDOT*

Many small towns struggle with getting traffic into their downtown but, this isn't the problem for Brady. In fact, it's just the opposite. Due to the multiple highways converging on the courthouse square, pedestrians deal with semi trucks along with passenger vehicles on the narrow streets. Trying to back out of a parking space on Commerce Street is not for the faint of heart.

Continue to aggressively lobby TXDOT for improvements to the traffic flow and pedestrian safety around the square. Just because the project is currently mothballed doesn't mean it has to stay that way.

## Product Development Recommendations

### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

#### 5.0 MAIN STREET

Becoming part of the Texas Main Street program is a recommendation that has been made before. Spend the next few years preparing and file an intent to apply in 2019 so you can apply for 2021.

##### □ 5.1 Recruitment

Making a focused effort to recruit and sustain downtown businesses is a key component of the product development effort. Without assistance in creating a critical mass of shops, restaurants, and activities, it will be extremely difficult for downtown to be what it could be. Organic growth is unpredictable and has not been sustainable over the past several years. Brady already has home goods destination retail and that is an excellent foundation. Adding more quantity and variety will increase downtown's appeal as place for visitors to spend the day. Types of businesses to be considered for recruitment:

- ✓ Toys and games
- ✓ Children's clothing
- ✓ At least two more restaurants
- ✓ Food-related (natural foods, oil and vinegar, herbs)
- ✓ Outdoor equipment sales and rentals
- ✓ Brewery
- ✓ Wine bar
- ✓ Women's clothing

Starting with the goal of attracting 25 more people each day for shopping and activities with dining and music in the evening is realistic. Increasing that number to 200-300 a day on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday is possible, but not without adding events and a strong recruitment and support process. Downtown is the heart of Brady but it has been struggling for many years. A Main Street/ Downtown Manager position within the City as a part of Economic Development is, realistically, the most effective alternative for creating a vibrant, sustainable downtown.

## Product Development Recommendations

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### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

## 6.0 PUBLIC ART

### □ 6.1 Public art

For public art to be eligible as a HOT fund expense, it must, at a minimum, provide an experience for nonresidents and hotel guests and not be primarily targeted at and/or primarily attended by Brady residence. While it is true that up to 15% of each year's HOT funds may be allocated to public art, there is no requirement that any monies be spent on public art.

Dare to be creative—add art in unexpected places, hire street performers for the farmers market and other events. Use large blank walls as canvases and create collaborative murals.

### □ 6.2 Art activities and events

Activities incorporating the arts are the easiest and least expensive place to start.

- ✓ Instagram scavenger hunts
- ✓ Make and take events
- ✓ Collaborative murals or mosaics
- ✓ Spoken word or poetry readings
- ✓ Young writer workshops
- ✓ Parent/child or grandparent/child memory board events
- ✓ Storycorps-type events
- ✓ Plein air painting at various locations
- ✓ Photography walks



## Marketing Recommendations

### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

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#### MARKETING

Decisions about when and where to travel are influenced by a variety of information sources:

- ✓ Recommendations from friends/family
- ✓ Books, TV shows, movies
- ✓ Newspaper and magazine articles
- ✓ Blogs
- ✓ Google/Facebook/Banner Ads
- ✓ Billboards
- ✓ Brochures (that can be obtained in dozens of ways)
- ✓ Suggestions by retail/restaurant/hotel staff
- ✓ Overhearing conversations held by strangers
- ✓ Social media channels
- ✓ Websites
- ✓ Review sites (TripAdvisor, Yelp, Google)
- ✓ Claimed listings

The content provided by some of these is under your control but when and if the information connects with a potential visitor isn't. Creating as many touchpoints as possible that are targeted to a specific audience is the best approach.

## 7.0 AUDIENCE

Understanding your markets makes decisions about how to promote Brady easier. You are trying to appeal to everyone and your message can be more specific. People don't want to know that you have something for everyone. They want to know what you have to offer for them.

### □ *Day Trip Markets*

The primary day trip market for Brady is people who live within a 90-minute drive. Becoming and remaining a favored destination for this group will require an emphasis on:

- ✓ Proximity
- ✓ Bringing them into the "locals" club with special deals and events
- ✓ Providing a better/different experience than they can get closer to home
- ✓ Cultivating customer/visitor loyalty

### □ *Overnight Market*

Once the daytrip market is well-established, tourism staff will be better able to define the appropriate overnight niche markets. Brady's appeal will be directly related to the amount of product development that occurs.

### □ *Drive Through Market*

The multiple highways criss-crossing Brady often create a traffic headache but they also bring hundreds of people a day to your community. They stop to eat and they stop to buy gas. Providing them with information about upcoming events or specials at local retailers helps encourage them to stay a little longer or come back.

### □ *Friends and Family*

Every kitchen table in Brady should be considered a concierge desk. Providing residents with updated information about events and shopping and dining options encourages them to spend their time and money in Brady when friends and family visit.

## 8.0 DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

It's time for Brady's online presence to be revamped. Start with the development of a new, tourism-specific website.

### □ 8.1 Website URL

[www.visitbrady.com](http://www.visitbrady.com) has already been claimed and will be used once the new website is developed. This allows for an independent online presence for tourism.

### □ 8.2 Website redevelopment

As the new website is developed be sure that the format and content are able to be easily updated. One of the most important rules for your website is that it must be current. If it isn't, the impression it communicates is one of a dying community. Start simple. You don't have to have 50 pages before you go live. Get the basics down, launch, and then keep adding content.

Initial considerations:

- ✓ Lodging information
- ✓ Restaurant information
- ✓ Retailers that might appeal to visitors
- ✓ Be sure it's mobile friendly
- ✓ Upcoming events
- ✓ Don't just use lists
- ✓ Be sure to include links
- ✓ Photos/video
- ✓ Include social links for every business that has them

Links are important and challenging to keep up-to-date. It is worthwhile to keep a list of outbound links to businesses, etc. that are used in your website. This makes it easier to just click through each one on a monthly basis to make sure they are still live.

## 9.0 SOCIAL CHANNELS

Leveraging social media is an inexpensive way to have a significant impact. Online chatter is a presence with an on-gong shelf life and meets the visitor's desire to have information available 24/7.

While there are dozens of social media tools that are used by tourism entities, however, the key is to use the ones that your visitors and potential visitors use. If your audience isn't hanging out on Twitter, don't waste your time (unless you have a full-time social media manager).

### □ 9.1 *Editorial Calendar*

Setting up a calendar to know what you will promote and when allows for creating content in advance and helps to keep the message on track. Events can be added and the content schedule adjusted. The calendar provides a roadmap and helps you to know whether there are topics that need more attention.

### □ 9.2 *Platforms to use*

Try to keep social media as a conversation. It's okay to link back to a relevant page on your website or to invite people to events, but keeps the sales pitch low-key. Social media is a conversation, entice people to want to know more instead of hitting them over the head.

Using the following platforms should target most of your potential visitors:

- ✓ Facebook
- ✓ Instagram
- ✓ YouTube

### □ 9.3 *Negativity*

Social media has become a safe space for those with complaints or who choose to whine or attack others and the natural inclination is to hide from negative comments or posts. While sometimes it is better to let it go and let the community as a whole deal with it, staff should contact anyone who has a concrete or detailed complaint. Determine what the real issues are and be creative in resolving them.

If there is a response necessary, try to put it into a post of its own instead of as a response to their comment. This avoids it being buried or lost. If it's important enough for your response, it's important enough to stand on its own.

## 10.0 PARTNERSHIPS

Maintaining relationships with a variety of current and potential partners is important for a number of reasons. It helps keep you up-to-date on what's happening, it fosters collaboration, and it makes Brady stronger as a destination.

### ❑ 10.1 *Tourism Organizations*

Brady should be an active member of the following organizations to take advantage of the resources and expertise they provide.

- ✓ Texas Forts Trails
- ✓ Texas Downtown Association (TDA)
- ✓ Texas Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus (TACVB)

### ❑ 10.2 *Local Businesses and Attractions*

Creating strong two-way communication with local businesses and attractions helps everyone know what's going on and where support or information are needed.

One tool that can be added is a monthly update about events and special promotions. This is particularly beneficial as part of the resources available to frontline staff who get questions about what there is to do in Brady.

### ❑ 10.3 *Area Communities*

Surrounding communities are both your competition and your partners. Supporting each other's major events by adding them to event calendars and coordinating to provide overflow lodging are easy ways to do this. The more people who come to the region, the better the opportunity for you to get them to Brady.

#### 11.0 GROUPS/CONFERENCES/NICHES

Identifying the groups and organizations who might be interested in the Civic Center is the first step. Letting them know what is available and finding ways to meet their needs will be more successful for everyone.

Search for potential groups and organizations and contact their directors or event planners to get on their RFP lists. Let local residents know about the facilities that are available. They belong to a number of social, military, educational, religious or fraternal groups and organizations, plan family reunions, and have ideas about events.—do they know that Brady can host their groups?

#### 12.0 PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations focuses on managing the public perception of Brady. While it can be considered a form of marketing, it isn't focused specifically on sales or driving visitation. It's all about positive publicity.

Opportunities like "American Pickers" don't shout "come visit Brady" but they do put Brady in the spotlight. Coverage of the Goat Cookoff by Texas Highways magazine or a segment with Chet Garner on The Daytripper provide third-party endorsements and information that are considered more interesting and reliable by your audience.

Continue and to seek out these opportunities and consider partnering with area communities to provide more options for visitors.

### 13.0 TRADE SHOWS

Attending tradeshow can be effective if they target appropriate audiences. Once you have increased the number of events and improved Brady's tourism product, attending select shows will be worth the time and expense.

Shows to consider include:

- ✓ Lone Star Outdoor Show
- ✓ TX Society of Association Executives Annual Conference

### 14.0 ADVERTISING

Advertising in magazines or producing rack cards is the traditional means of marketing a destination. Today the choices have expanded exponentially. There is still a need for collateral and advertising in targeted publications, but the majority of contact points will need to be online in order to connect with your market.

#### 14.1 *Collateral*

Every community still needs some printed materials. Not everyone once their information digitally. At a minimum you should have the following both digitally and in print (and the print version should be updated annually):

- ✓ Visitor Guide
- ✓ Major event calendar
- ✓ Rack cards for Goat Cookoff

Make sure materials are available at TXDOT VICs, especially the Goat Cookoff rack card. For now, that is what sets you apart.

#### 14.2 *Print Advertising*

Put together an annual plan focusing on major events and advertising in regional and statewide tourism-focused publications.

#### 14.3 *Online Advertising*

Create an annual plan for promoting events, allowing enough flexibility for spontaneous opportunities that arise.

#### 15.0 MONITOR THE COMPETITION

It is important to define and keep an eye on your competition. When a community is doing things well people want to emulate them.

##### *Events*

Subscribe to events calendars for surrounding communities. This will be important as new events are developed. You'll know what others are doing and where there are opportunities to partner or create complementary experiences.

##### *Marketing*

Take the time to see how others are using social media and what marketing programs, social media initiatives or special offers are complementing or competing with the ones offered by Brady.



# Tourism Administration Recommendations

## Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

### TOURISM ADMINISTRATION

Brady needs to formalize its tourism presence. Creating a designated tourism entity—Visit Brady—the city's stature will rise and it will be more effective at increasing tax revenues and will provide a focused effort for utilizing the Civic Center.

### BASIC DATA

Year-over-year data is important as a means of identifying negative trends and taking actions to reverse the downward trajectory. Looking at the big picture helps put a single year in perspective and helps account for influences that are beyond the control of a local community. Virtually every destination saw a significant impact from the 2008 Financial Crisis but, as you can see from the data below, the impact on spending, tax revenues, and employment were not simultaneous.

In Texas, natural disasters, volatile weather, and the ebb and flow of the oil and gas industry also create anomalies not seen in the rest of the country.

The good news for Brady is that the results of the tourism efforts in 2017 (led primarily by the Brady/McCulloch County Chamber of Commerce) have been dramatic and have positioned Brady to continue strengthening its tourism product and its appeal to visitors.

TOTAL DIRECT TRAVEL SPENDING (M)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
McCulloch Co	\$16.6	\$14.2	\$15.0	\$18.3	\$18.0	\$17.9	\$19.0	\$16.6	\$15.50	\$18.5
Growth %	12.50%	-14.60%	5.90%	21.70%	-1.50%	-0.60%	6.00%	-12.20%	-6.60%	18.90%
TOTAL DIRECT EMPLOYMENT	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
McCulloch Co	140	170	140	180	160	160	160	160	150	160
Growth %	0%	21.40%	-17.60%	28.60%	-11.10%	0%	0%	0%	-6.20%	6.70%
TOTAL LOCAL TAX RECEIPTS (000)*	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
McCulloch Co	\$160	\$170	\$160	\$220	\$230	\$230	\$280	\$280	\$250	\$350
Growth %	14.30%	6.30%	-5.90%	37.50%	4.50%	0%	21.7%	0%	-10.70%	40.00%

Data: Office of the Governor, Economic Development & Tourism

\*does not include HOT receipts

## Tourism Administration Recommendations

### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

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#### 16.0 VISIT BRADY STRUCTURE

While it might seem appropriate to add a city position and department, this would not be the most efficient or cost-effective choice. By building upon the efforts to-date by the Brady/McCulloch County Chamber of Commerce, Brady will be able to keep moving forward. Creating a new position and new department will take time and will not be easy.

Recruiting a competent person capable of starting a successful tourism department from scratch will necessitate a salary of about \$75,000 plus benefits. Once the person is hired, there will be a significant delay before they understand Brady's tourism product, create and produce events, set up a sales process for filling the Civic Center, and create annual marketing and editorial plans.

The recommendation is that the City of Brady contract with the Chamber to establish Visit Brady and operate it for three years. A tourism board would be established for oversight and, at the end of three years, there will be an established, effective entity and it would, potentially, be feasible for the City to hire a director and other staff as city employees.

## Tourism Administration Recommendations

### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

#### 17.0 STAFFING

Initial staffing for Visit Brady would consist of 2 positions (1.5 FTE):

**17.1 Tourism Director (0.5 FTE)**

This position oversees all tourism activities with primary responsibility for:

- ✓ Budget, including monthly reports
- ✓ Grants
- ✓ Marketing Plan implementation
- ✓ Training partners
- ✓ Overseeing development efforts
- ✓ Maintaining and leveraging partnerships

**17.2 Events & Engagement Manager (1.0 FTE)**

This position has primary responsibility for the following:

- ✓ Event development and production
- ✓ Assisting with marketing plan implementation
- ✓ Increasing utilization of Civic Center
- ✓ Communicating with partners
- ✓ Event and activity calendar

#### 18.0 VISITOR CENTER

A new, more welcoming visitor center location should be considered to provide the following services:

- ✓ Better parking
- ✓ Meeting and work space for groups planning events
- ✓ Display space for art and cultural exhibits
- ✓ Office space for future Main Street Director
- ✓ Storage for event materials

# Tourism Administration Recommendations

## Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

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### 19.0 BUDGET

In order to facilitate the creation of Visit Brady and implement the recommendations in this plan, Visit Brady should be provided with 95% of the city's annual H.O.T. revenues with 5% being held in reserve by the City for future tourism infrastructure costs, including upgrades to amenities at the Civic Center.

### 20.0 GRANTS

Visit Brady would establish a grant review committee as a part of the Tourism Board to oversee the grant process.

### 21.0 REPORTING DASHBOARD

Once the specific criteria are identified by the City Manager, City Council, and Visit Brady, a reporting dashboard will be created for submission to Council on a monthly basis. Some ideas for information to be included in the dashboard are:

- ✓ Budget/Expenditure overview
- ✓ Walk-ins at Visitor Center
- ✓ Website visits, pages visited, time on site
- ✓ Facebook/Instagram/YouTube followers, engagement
- ✓ Hotel occupancy rates
- ✓ Event attendance numbers

## Tourism Administration Recommendations

### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

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#### 22.0 TRAINING

On-going training, both for stakeholders and for Visit Brady staff, is important to raise the level of Brady's tourism product and to remain current with industry knowledge.

##### 22.1 *Staff Training*

Both the Director and the Events & Engagement Manager should attend Tourism College sponsored by TTIA and, at a minimum, the Director should attend both the TDA and TACVB annual conferences along with any relevant workshops throughout the year.

##### 22.2 *Digital Training*

Continue the effort to get local businesses to claim their Google, Yelp and TripAdvisor listings and offer annual social media training to help them improve their reach.

##### 22.3 *Event Training*

An important role for Brady's tourism entity is to develop training and assistance for businesses who want to create their own events. Most businesses do not know where to start when it comes to determining the type of event that might be appropriate for their business.

Training in how to identify creative ways to provide an engaging, experiential promotion for customers will add to the city's event opportunities and can infuse new energy into a business's customer service delivery.

## Implementation Plan

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### Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

**AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN WILL BE ADDED ONCE THE PLAN IS APPROVED.**

## Appendix—Main Street Program Application

Brady Tourism Strategic Plan

### BECOMING A MAIN STREET COMMUNITY

(FROM THE TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION WEBSITE—[HTTP://WWW.THC.TEXAS.GOV/BECOMING-MAIN-STREET-COMMUNITY](http://www.thc.texas.gov/becoming-main-street-community))

An applicant from a community of less than 50,000 in population applies as a small-city program through city government. An urban program with more than 50,000 population may choose to apply either under state government or through a stand-alone non-profit.

To apply, a community must agree to hire a full-time Main Street Director, adequately budget for the local program, and show the following:

- Historic commercial fabric and historic identity—The historic significance of the proposed Main Street area and the interest in and commitment to historic preservation.
- Community and private sector support and organizational capacity—Demonstrates community and private sector support for the program. (The capability of the applicant to successfully implement the Main Street Program.)
- Support and financial capacity—Demonstrates the public sector support and the financial capability to employ a full-time manager, fund a local Main Street Program and support downtown-related projects.
- Physical capacity—The cohesiveness, distinctiveness and variety of business activity conducted in the proposed Main Street Program area.
- Demonstrated need—The need for the Main Street Program and its expected impact on the city.

For reference, the application and process for 2017 can be found at: <http://www.thc.texas.gov/becoming-main-street-community>

