

# MID-TERM STRATEGIES

## The Building Blocks that Support Our Long-Term Vision

### I. EDUCATION

#### VISION

Before 2020, Angelina County will have an educational system with high expectations that drives both jobs and incomes through creation of a balanced mix of career, technical and professionally trained citizens.

#### STRATEGIES

##### A. K-12

1. **Expect<sup>1</sup> all of our young people to graduate from high school ready to go to work or attend a college or university. Provide remediation immediately at each grade level to ensure that students stay on track. Motivate all students to achieve at the highest level possible.**
2. **Expect parents to be mentors and role models for their children. When parents cannot fulfill this role, community organizations including businesses, civic clubs, faith-based organizations, retirees, higher level students, and others will ensure that every student that needs a mentor will have one.**
3. **Provide career academies<sup>2</sup> that prepare students for meaningful careers and provide the foundation for the next level of skills training and education. Enlist business/school partnerships that clearly help with the skills required for specific Angelina County job sectors and provide internships, field trips to businesses, apprenticeship programs and other programs.**
4. Increase emphasis on math and science beginning at an early stage.
5. Ensure that our young people graduate with basic life skills.
6. Provide recognition and emphasis for academic achievements that parallel or exceed recognition for sports.

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<sup>1</sup> The highest priority strategies resulting from balloting by the Vision Task Force are in bold.

<sup>2</sup> Career Academies are high-standards themed schools within public high schools. Career academies have significant employer- and higher education- involvement. Research shows that career academies will improve educational outcomes and graduation rates while decreasing absenteeism and discipline problems. Graduates of career academies are much more likely to continue education and secure high wage employment.

7. Expect the community, parents and school boards to support the administration and teachers as they provide the discipline required for a safe learning environment.
8. Recognize the importance of standardized testing for improving educational quality and learn to work within the system while achieving all our educational strategies.
9. Expect parents and churches to teach sex education to teenagers. However, if parents and churches do not fulfill this role, expect sex education to be taught at school.
10. Encourage and enable people with special skills and training to teach in the school system.
11. Ensure continuous improvement, increased productivity and education processes that achieve academic excellence.
12. Provide students entering the ninth grade with resources to determine possible career track(s) and thus influence class schedules.

**B . Higher Education**

1. **Create a Multi-Institutional Teaching Center in Angelina County that involves UT, Texas A&M, SFASU, and other educational institutions that would offer Bachelor's, Masters, and PhD level curriculum in Angelina County. Distance learning could be a component. A focus should be on opportunities for adults to continue their higher level education.**
2. Increase the number of slots available for nursing students at Angelina College to meet local requirements for these high paying jobs. Provide the incentives required to recruit and retain qualified teachers and expand the clinical facilities.
3. Attract more male students at Angelina College. (currently 64% female, 36% male)

**C. Skills training and Life-Long Learning**

1. **Increase productivity potential of young people and adults through education and skills training in alignment with employee and market needs. Ensure skills training is available to replace retiring or laid-off workers and provide workers for new businesses that are relocating, expanding, or starting up. Employers should help educators and employees understand and respond to skill sets required for advancement.**

2. **Provide training for parents with emphasis on changing attitudes, increasing communications, providing discipline, building character, and ensuring quality family time that will result in stable families and parenting skills. Help parents to understand the competitive nature of the global economic system and the fact that continually increasing educational achievements provide the best opportunities for higher incomes.**
3. Increase the Functional adult literacy rate.

**D. Pre-K**

1. **Ensure that every child in Angelina County enters kindergarten with the skills and knowledge needed.**

## II. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### VISION

Before 2020, Angelina County will identify economic development niches with competitive advantages and pursue a multi-faceted economic development program that will enhance and diversify the County's economy and ensure an optimal quality of life

### STRATEGIES

1. **Develop an aggressive economic development and marketing program for creating jobs that produces products and/or services sold outside Angelina County. These jobs will be created through the expansion and retention of existing businesses, relocation of businesses to Angelina County, and the creation of new businesses.**

- Encourage cooperation between all private and public organizations involved in job creation efforts.
- Promote Angelina County as a regional hub
- Concentrate the marketing focus on Metro Houston, neighboring states and specific identifiable areas that would be able to capitalize on our assets
- Develop advertising that describes who we are, where we are headed and the resources we have to offer
- Develop a business task force that identifies and promotes the top 20 relocation prospects each year

**Pursue targeted job sectors that help meet Vision 2020 Key Benchmarks in a competitive global job market.**

- Short-term and Long-term targeted job sectors
  - Health care
  - Professional, scientific and technology
  - Wholesale trade, warehousing, transportation, and logistics
  - Manufacturing
  - Information
  - State and federal government
  - Water use intensive industry, automotive equipment supplies and aviation maintenance.
- Short-term targeted job sectors
  - Retail, including specialty shops and restaurants.
  - Tourism, conferences, and conventions

2. **Develop and maintain a business climate in Angelina County that actively promotes job retention and creation, including:**

- Competitive regulations

- **Competitive incentives package for higher paying jobs**
  - **Expedited permitting process**
  - **Energy sources that allow our businesses to be competitive**
  - **Proactive, business-friendly government**
  - **Competitive communications technology**
  - **Promotion of local businesses**
  - **Development of a technology park in downtown Lufkin and/or north of town**
  - **Development of large competitive office and industrial parks**
  - **Beautification efforts**
  - **Increase development in North Lufkin**
- 3. Support the development of small business start-ups with an emphasis on companies that sell products and/or services outside Angelina County.**
- **Provide assistance with banking and capital requirements**
  - **Help with business planning and marketing**
  - **Develop a technology business incubator**
  - **Focus on increasing the size of start-up companies**
  - **Provide networks for entrepreneurs to share experiences**
  - **Target high-growth potential job sectors**
  - **Consider a medical device incubator jointly sponsored by an engineering school and a local hospital**
  - **Increase the commercialization of energy research in Angelina County.**
- 4. Develop a brand/image for Lufkin/Angelina County that most effectively positions Angelina County in the minds of potential customers—expanding companies, higher income retirees, tourist and conference attendees, Angelina County young people and current citizens. This brand will be developed by a public-private partnership of organizations involved in promoting, marketing and developing Angelina County. Developing the most effective brand with consensus may take longer than expected.**
- 5. Increase visitors, including conventioners and tourists.**
- **Promote ecotourism including forestry and timber industry, the Neches River Corridor and our other natural resources**
  - **Maximize the opportunities with Lake Sam Rayburn.**
  - **Develop a regional conference and convention center**
- 6. Attract high-income retirees to Angelina County**
- **Become the first “Certified Retirement Community” in Texas**
  - **Provide housing opportunities for higher-income retirees**
  - **Create Del Webb Sun City-type developments**

- **Create a retirement package linking our parks, education, medical, arts, recreation, culture, infrastructure and housing as a total community**

### **III. QUALITY OF LIFE**

#### **VISION**

Before 2020, Angelina County will become an innovative, energetic, and inclusive community with a common sense of pride and shared commitment to excellence.

#### **STRATEGIES**

##### **A. Recreation, Arts, Culture and Entertainment**

- 1. Develop and implement a cities/County recreation master plan that provides comprehensive passive and active recreational opportunities for all ages of Angelina County residents. Involve all age groups of our citizens in a needs assessment and in establishing levels of service requirements. A major focus should be on the recreational opportunities required to attract and retain young people and young families in Angelina County. Include facilities that will enhance Angelina County's regional attraction in the master plan. Recreational opportunities that should be considered include a central recreation complex, ball fields, tennis courts, swimming pools, arena, skate park, amphitheatre and multiple purpose trails for hiking, biking, running, etc. Increase opportunities for using Sam Rayburn Reservoir, etc. The master plan should include funding, improved maintenance and security plans. Ensure that all parts of the County have adequate parks and recreation levels of service.**
- 2. Enhance arts, culture and entertainment for our residents and for increased regional attraction, including the Ellen Trout Zoo and County museums.**
- 3. Increase access and use of Angelina National Forest, Davy Crockett National Forest, Neches River, Angelina River and Lake Sam Rayburn. Develop a plan that educates residents on the importance of waterways and forests to clean air and water.**
- 4. Encourage more child-oriented commercial establishments.**

##### **B. Healthcare**

- 1. Provide accessible, affordable, quality healthcare for all Angelina County residents. Options for improving service and/or limiting the growth in service cost include:**
  - Fiscal responsibility within Medicaid system.**
  - Every adult and family will take "ownership" of his or her healthcare. Increase wellness and prevention programs**
  - Nutrition and health education, particularly for the poor**
  - Improve the availability of health insurance for employees, self-employed and small businesses.**

- **Provide opportunities to assist residents in understanding the health care system, insurance availability and the best way for each individual and family to insure availability of future health care.**
- **Increase assisted living for elderly.**
- **Increase VA healthcare.**
- **Coordinate prescription plan for the elderly.**
- **Include vision, dental and mental health services.**

**C. Substance Abuse**

- 1. Commit to prevent and reduce substance abuse through a three-step process;**
  - a. Commitment of the community to the prevention and eradication of substance abuse**
  - b. Commitment of the community to whole person rehabilitation of users including:**
    - Health**
    - Education**
    - Employment**
    - Residence**
    - Rehabilitation facilities**
  - c. Commitment of the community to an aggressive program by law enforcement and the justice system to identify and to imprison long-term the dealers and producers on the supply side. Reeducate drug dealers during their prison terms so they can return to productive lives in free society.**
- 2. Maintain the Drug Court program.**

**D. Family and Youth**

- 1. Make Angelina County a young person-friendly community with job opportunities, and an attractive life style and living environment**
2. Encourage faith-based institutions to network together to provide family restoration and preservation services.
3. Provide summer job opportunities for young people.
4. Provide mentoring programs for families that enhance life skills and family sustainability.

**E. Public Safety**

- 1. Maintain a safe environment for our citizens, visitors, and businesses in all neighborhoods.**
2. Maintain constant cities/County preparation and vigilance to be prepared and to protect our residents from natural and man-made disasters.

## **F. Social Services & Welfare**

- 1. Provide Angelina County social services through a multi-disciplinary network with more collaboration and avoidance of duplication of services.**
- 2. Help children and families with parents in prison. Empower these children to help them believe they can pursue educational opportunities.**

## **IV. GOVERNMENT**

### **VISION**

Before 2020, Angelina County will have proactive government that serves the needs of its citizens and helps ensure our growth as a vibrant regional hub.

### **STRATEGY**

- 1. Increase the Lufkin urban area population from 38,726 in 2000 to over 50,000 by 2010.**
  - Ensure that all people are counted in the 2010 census, especially minorities**
  - Develop a mock census in 2006 and 2008 to measure progress towards achieving the goal of 50,000**
  - Provide incentives and implement action steps to make up any projected gap revealed by the mock censuses in 2006 and 2008**
  - Educate residents on the importance of being counted.**

**Communicate the importance of reaching MSA status:**

    - Increased visibility in marketing Lufkin/Angelina County for job creation. Lufkin would appear on all maps of metro areas in the US, and more data would be readily available for companies searching for expansion and relocation opportunities.**
    - An MSA would have its own Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation. Currently Angelina County has to compete with eleven other counties for CDBG funds and has problems because the other counties have greater perceived needs.**
- 2. Expect all elected officials in government and education and their staffs to endorse Angelina County Vision 2020, to commit to achieving the Key Benchmarks and to implement the strategies that are within their realms of responsibility.**
- 3. Maintain focused communication with and between local, state and federal officials that will continuously advance Angelina County Vision 2020. Develop a consensus agenda support by a group of organizations**

**representing the diversity of Angelina County that will be used in communicating with state and federal officials.**

- 4. Ensure that local government is pro-business, pro-development, customer-oriented, and efficient.**
- 5. Enhance relationships with state and federal elected representatives.**
6. Conduct forums before elections to confirm candidates' commitment to implementing Angelina County Vision 2020.
7. Enhance regional relationships to coordinate, communicate and advance our agenda.
8. Benchmark city and county regulations against other high growth areas.
9. Maintain or increase the lobbying efforts at the state and federal levels.

## V. INFRASTRUCTURE

### VISION

Before 2020, Angelina County will have the necessary infrastructure to support continued growth and to provide for an enhanced quality of life through a proactive maintenance and improvement program.

### STRATEGIES

#### A. Growth Management

1. **Develop and implement coordinated master infrastructure plans for cities and Angelina County that provides the infrastructure with an adequate level of service required by Vision 2020 Key Benchmarks.**
  - **Plans will be developed and implemented for the following infrastructure elements: transportation (including roadways, bike and walking trails, rail and air travel), waste management, utilities (water, sewage, solid waste, electricity, gas, alternative energy), parks and recreation, drainage, historic preservation, environment, economic development, and communications.**
  - **Encourage neighborhood development and non roadway linkages between neighborhoods.**
  - **Promote “Smart Growth” that utilizes existing infrastructure.**
  - **Place emphasis on areas that are declining or at risk for decline. Focus efforts of government departments on these at-risk areas. Take actions that will eliminate the decline and increase the real estate tax base.**
  - **Coordinate efforts and resources between different entities to increase the livability and quality of life in all parts of our County.**
  - **Provide incentive programs that encourage higher quality development.**
2. Enhance the public/private partnership that considers and develops cost effective and flexible approaches for drainage permits and other development regulations.
3. Create and maintain user friendly street signs.

#### B. Downtown Redevelopment

1. **Continue to develop downtown Lufkin (a Main Street community) as a specialty shopping, eating and business district. Consider improving building façades by establishing architectural guidelines and providing façade grants and loans. Consider rehab of Angelina Hotel, the downtown railroad properties, courthouse, and other major landmarks.**

**C. Beautification**

- 1. Place proactive focus on maintaining the cleanliness and aesthetics of our streets and highways and reducing visual pollution. Increase civic pride in our appearance. Enhance and preserve the beauty and aesthetics of Angelina County while maintaining the flexibility to meet our Key Benchmarks. Implement an ordinance that increases the appeal and/or use of abandoned buildings. Strengthen the landscape and signage ordinances. Ensure the major entrances into Lufkin are inviting.**
2. Develop and improve Kurth Drive a primary northern entrance into Lufkin.
3. Consider implementation and enforcement of an ordinance that ensures that obsolete vacant buildings are razed.

**D. Housing**

- 1. Develop housing that is affordable for a wide range of income levels of our residents and that would meet the needs of a variety of age levels.**
2. Initiate an aggressive, integrated approach to attain government funds for affordable housing.

**E. Environment and Natural Resources**

- 1. Develop the Neches River Corridor to preserve the Neches River.**
- 2. Identify and preserve the natural resources, such as forested open spaces, creeks, rivers, and aquifers, which freely provide the clean air and water fundamental to economic growth. Research what other communities are doing to achieve this successfully.**

**F. Transportation**

- 1. Develop a regional commercial airport beginning with increasing charter operations, air cargo and aviation repair facilities.**
- 2. Plan, design, finance and build 1-69.**
3. Consistently review traffic flow on streets and highways and use creative designs for small projects that will reduce choke points and enhance traffic flow.
4. Consider a Regional Mobility Authority (RMA) to help finance transportation.
5. Consider transportation to Houston airports.

**G. Utilities**

- 1. Maintain adequate water supply to meet Angelina County's growth needs through-out this century.**
- 2. Maintain state of the arts communications capability through-out the County which would include fiber optics, wireless and future technologies.**
3. Improve the county-wide recycling program

## **VI. PRIVATE SECTOR LEADERSHIP**

### **VISION**

Before 2020, Angelina County will demonstrate private sector leadership across a representative range of demographics which makes it possible to continuously advance economic prosperity, business environment and desirability, education and quality of life for Angelina County.

### **STRATEGIES**

- 1. Expect for-profit organizations and not-for-profit organizations to endorse Angelina County Vision 2020 and to commit to assist with effective implementation. All types of organizations including (but not limited to) faith based institutions, civic clubs, school systems, neighborhood associations, private businesses, non-profit organizations, etc. will need to embrace the Vision and assist in implementation. Each organization that volunteers will become a Vision Partner and should adopt for implementation the strategy/strategies that interest it or that uniquely fit within its mission and scope of operation. Angelina County Vision 2020 will serve as an umbrella that ultimately brings together a network of 85 to 170 Vision Partners in alignment to achieve our interdependent Key Benchmarks and strategies.**
- 2. Develop grass roots communications of Angelina County Vision 2020 progress to ensure that our diverse community understands, supports and has the opportunity to participate in implementation.**
- 3. Encourage qualified leaders to run for office and serve on appointed boards. Support these leaders during their term in office, or suggest corrective actions, as they inevitably experience the conflicts and challenges of making difficult decisions in the best interests of Angelina County. Presume that they are working in the community's best interest unless proven otherwise. Encourage and support these leaders as they gain experience to move from local to state and federal positions.**
- 4. Establish a network of business, church, not-for-profit and government leaders to address emergency, moral and social issues affecting Angelina County.**
- 5. Focus efforts to raise up and train new leaders within the community while continuing to train current leadership.**
6. Develop a newcomers club to welcome people to Angelina County.
7. Expand and enhance participation in the Lufkin/Nacogdoches Day in Austin and regional days (e.g., Pineywoods Economic Partnership) in Austin.

8. Mentor new leaders.
9. Encourage retirees to be active as volunteers and mentors.
10. Provide training for prospective board members that will increase their opportunities and effectiveness.