



CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE VISION PLAN

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Prepared by: Vision 2014 & Beyond Steering Committee

Prepared for: City of St. Augustine City Commission

Completed June 2015



CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE VISION 2014 AND BEYOND

To: Nancy Shaver, Mayor
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From: The *Vision 2014 & Beyond* Steering Committee

June 8, 2015

For well over a year, The *Vision 2014 & Beyond* Steering Committee engaged in a open dialogue with the St. Augustine community through surveys, town halls, and many neighbor-to-neighbor conversations with one aim: to understand the trends and forces that will shape the future for the City of St. Augustine.

Then, after many hours working to define the future our community desires, taking into account the needs, hopes, expectations, and values of our residents, property owners, businesses and visitors, we developed a roadmap to that future: The 2014 & Beyond Vision Plan.

We believe this vision plan articulates a shared vision, the underlying principle that will guide our efforts, the results we seek to achieve through this effort, and specific goals and objectives to focus our future work.

We thank you for the opportunity to participate in the initiative and look forward to a bright future for the Nation's Oldest City.

The *Vision 2014 & Beyond* Steering Committee
Roxanne Horvath, Vice Mayor/Commissioner
Steering Committee Chair

Steering Committee Members

(* Original committee members serving throughout the visioning initiative)

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THE VISION STATEMENT

St. Augustine will be a livable, authentic, waterfront city that builds upon its rich history and environment to create a distinctive community character founded on a healthy and vibrant economy, a diverse mix of people and experiences, and a valuing of its natural assets.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE: BALANCE

The development and execution of the Vision Plan will consistently seek to develop and use a set of governing principles, practices, and processes that balance the interests of residents, businesses, institutions, and visitors which contribute to a livable, authentic, character based, and vital community.



T H E F O U R A P P R O A C H E S

The Steering committee reached consensus that there are four approaches critical to the success of the *Visioning 2014 & Beyond* Vision Plan.

A CALL TO ACTION

Time and time again, whether among ourselves or in community dialogue, we heard “we have been saying this for years” or “the 1995 vision said this and nothing was done.” The fact that the same challenges were repeatedly identified by various studies with no results was a familiar statement.

We recognize that much of what is proposed will take time to implement, and acknowledging that we don’t want to engage in “ready...fire...aim” approaches, we still need to “fire.”

There are actions that can be initiated now and those should be identified and implemented quickly. Also, recognizing that trying to do everything at once means nothing gets done, we have identified the priority that should be the first focus of the City. We believe creating progress on this first priority will generate the confidence, trust, and energy to address other goals and objectives. Communication of this progress in multiple ways will be critical.

THE FIRST PRIORITY

In order to ascertain the first priority, we analyzed two critical concerns.

The first was livability. Residents, businesses, and visitors all want a City that is livable, a City that retains those important quality of life aspects critical for resident and visitors alike.

There was agreement that the community wants a more vibrant and dynamic city, and there was agreement that a strong and viable business community is critical to sustain the City. As these concerns were analyzed, we identified one barrier that stands in the way of successfully addressing these two concerns: the lack of mobility.

Traffic and parking were consistently identified in every conversation with every group, thus we recommend that the first priority of the City be developing and implementing a holistic solution that encompasses parking solutions, alternative means of transport, creative uses of existing assets, and accessibility.

THE NEED FOR BALANCE

A constant voice throughout the community was the value placed on St. Augustine as a living community and the need to manage the tensions and pressures that all living communities have as they seek to make choices about their future.

St. Augustine experiences the natural tension present in communities with an extensive tourism industry, the pressures of large numbers of visitors vs. the daily experience of residential life in such a community. St. Augustine certainly has those tensions.

Tourism undergirds much of our economy, bringing both benefits and costs, and while tourism generates much of the tension mentioned before, we also recognize that the industry brings economic benefits and is the source of the many quality of life features that would not otherwise exist in a similar sized city.

Therefore we stress as our core principle the practice of balance where the values and needs of all community members be heard, understood and considered as decisions are made and policies established. This requires a process in which balanced solutions or decisions are the explicit goal.

EXECUTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

A vision is just that, a vision, if there is no action. For this vision plan to become realized, we all must assume responsibility for it.

We propose an annual community review of progress toward the goals and objectives stated in this vision plan so there may be a discussion of accomplishments and renewed commitment to priorities. We leave to the Commission the decision as to the format for this review, but we do encourage that it be as public and participatory as feasible. To review status, the Commission will need to ensure that there is a measurement system in place to measure progress.

S T R A T E G I C R E S U L T S

This Vision Plan is intended to produce four results:

LIVABILITY

The City of St. Augustine is a safe and pleasant place to live where the experiences and services that make life enjoyable and rewarding are accessible. It is a welcoming and compassionate community that embraces diversity in all senses of that term. The intent of this theme is that St. Augustine be an even more desirable place to live by offering the full range of experiences that make a city highly livable.

AUTHENTICITY

The City of St. Augustine has protected its rich layers of history while adding to those layers as a living and dynamic community which is fully engaged in today's world. The intent of this theme is that St. Augustine remain a work, live, play city that is multi-generational and culturally diverse and that it will manage change while also protecting its distinctive features.

CHARACTER

The City of St. Augustine has protected its historic physical character by maintaining its built scale, its architecture, its intensity and density of uses, and its natural environment. It has also maintained and strengthened its social and cultural character through continued development as an arts and culture hub, a culinary destination, and a small town of both historical and architectural depth. It is the intent of the Vision Plan to protect, retain or enhance those features of the city (be they natural, built, or human) which make St. Augustine a historic and distinctive community.

VITALITY

It is the Vision Plan's intent to enhance the level of economic activity in the City so as to encourage the development of diverse existing and new entrepreneurial economic drivers, maintain and restore a rich and healthy physical eco-system, and support a diverse group of people who find St. Augustine home.

R O A D M A P

Following, in a strategy map format, is the work proposed by the Vision Plan to realize the vision and achieve the four strategic results.

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE • 2014 & BEYOND VISION PLAN ROADMAP

VISION: THE DISTINCTIVE COMMUNITY

PRINCIPLE		BALANCE			
STRATEGIC RESULTS		LIVABILITY	AUTHENTICITY	CHARACTER	VITALITY
		Maintain the quality of life for residents by focusing on City policies and resources to enhance livability.	Encourage and facilitate development and redevelopment in ways that are consistent with the look and feel of the various areas of the City.	Maintain St. Augustine as a small residential community while protecting its historic features and scale, distinctive neighborhoods, hospitality, and natural environment.	Secure the vitality and sustainability of St. Augustine for the future through policies and practices that support economic vitality, environmental assets, and human diversity.
GOALS		<p>Improve mobility.</p> <p>Increase diversity of people, places, and economic opportunity.</p> <p>Establish a greater sense of place.</p>	<p>Promote those local features that are found only in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Encourage the growth of small businesses and experiences that are historically accurate or consistent with respect to St. Augustine.</p> <p>Recognize and promote historic diversity.</p>	<p>Strengthen the distinctiveness of various neighborhoods and districts.</p> <p>Improve the City aesthetics.</p>	<p>Promote attracting visitors who value the City's unique blend of history, arts, architecture, and culinary features.</p> <p>Support regional cooperation in economic development.</p>
OBJECTIVES		<p>Establish as the first priority of the City the implementation of a comprehensive mobility plan with funding strategies to address all transportation modes: visitor and resident parking, ADA* accessibility, visitor way finding and intercept.</p> <p>Develop budget and metrics that align with vision.</p> <p>Participate in the homelessness strategy developed by the County.</p>	<p>Expand the use of neighborhood empowerment zoning standards and tools to support the interests and goals of the various areas of the City.</p> <p>Establish a heritage tourism task force as recommended by the 2003 NHTP** report. Among its assignments should be: overhauling the training, testing, and enforcement of the City's tour guide program that will result in historically comprehensive tours that capture the distinctiveness of St. Augustine, and developing an incentive program to encourage historically accurate and diverse businesses.</p> <p>Complete historic preservation plan and put policies in place to promote historic and cultural diversity and encourage and facilitate redevelopment in ways that are consistent with the current and historic look of the City and with the vision.</p>	<p>Review the event management policies and procedures with the intention of promoting diversity and neighborhood protection.</p> <p>Develop and promote a brand identity and accompanying message that features the distinctiveness of our neighborhoods, art communities, culinary experiences, and historical diversity.</p> <p>Eliminate overhead cabling.</p> <p>Eliminate billboards.</p> <p>Re-design entry corridors into distinctive destinations.</p>	<p>Promote and enforce policies and practices to maintain a rich and healthy physical ecosystem.</p> <p>Recognize and promote diversity in the cultures and histories that comprise St. Augustine of the past and present.</p> <p>Create incentives to ensure a balance in the development of business, recreation, education, and culture for residents and visitors.</p> <p>Increase City participation in regional economic development strategies and activities.</p> <p>Develop a sustainability report on our ecosystem to address protection of natural assets, foreseeable environmental changes, and potential responses.</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive Utility and Infrastructure Plan to remedy deficiencies, increase efficiency and resiliency, and reduce environmental and aesthetic impacts including overhead utility lines.</p> <p>Complete a study of the fair and accurate economic contribution to the City of tourism.</p>

*ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act **NHTP - National Trust for Historic Preservation



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