

Morgan's Point Resort Economic Development Corporation

Linda Bridges, President; Jason Johnson, Vice President; Terry Harrah, Secretary;
Scott Fournier, Director; Ted VanLier, Director, Greg Weisman, Director, Ted Teegarden, Director
Dennis Green, Ex officio Director

December 31, 2024

RE: Annual Report- October 2023- September 2024

Dear Mayor Green and City Council Members:

I would like to share with you last year's MPR EDC Work Plan highlights, projects and our plans for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Maximize City Assets

- Worked with a retired economic development/marketing professional to write a marketing plan to promote the Garrett and Mic Hill Event Center. EDC proposed financing a "curb appeal" project and submitting a grant proposal to T-Mobile (\$50,000). Offered a proposal to City Council for a design to "disguise" the bathroom area with a decorative screen, power wash the stone siding and landscaping to help with soil erosion. Due to flooding at the center, this project was put on hold.
- The Board continues to push for a wastewater solution for the business district. The EDC contributed \$15,000 towards the FM 2483 Master Plan and wastewater feasibility study with the City of Morgan's Point Resort and the City of Temple. KPA Engineering has reviewed the water and wastewater master plans in conjunction with the defined master plan area in relation to the proposed density and development type.

Business Development

- Worked with Belton ISD to help MRR create a youth entrepreneurship program in our community. Belton ISD offers an entrepreneurship program in their high schools and the EDC was told that students would benefit from having a location to take their business idea from the classroom to the real world with an incubator store front (possible tenant for a Tiny Business Village).
- Held a Young Entrepreneur pop up event at the November "Kid's Day" at the MPR Farmer's Market.
- Moved the "mini" Farmer's Market to Priority Charter School parking lot in September. The market was a great place for our residents to gather, but the pop up event was not successful. MPR is competing with larger cities for the very limited number of actual farmers, and these farmers are going to set up in an area with the largest customer draw.
- EDC hosted two general merchandise & business showcases at Ansay Park (May and June). Original location was to be at the Priority Charter School parking lot, but due to a good response from vendors (and lack of a bathroom), we moved the event to Ansay Park. We had good customer turn out, even without main street drive by exposure. The Third Saturday Market was a test for a possible Tiny Business Village location that would be off the main roads. Could we draw the customers?
- April 1, 2024- sent in a formal proposal to City Council for the EDC to fund a Pop Up Placemaking Demonstration. We would start with 6 storefront business "Chalets", an area for food trucks and an entertainment pavilion. Location to be determined. We had multiple conversations (webinars etc.) with Placer.ai- a company that could help EDC determine the economic benefits of the Tiny Business Village based on Geofencing.
- Fifteen MPR Business Network vendors were recruited by the EDC to participate in the third Annual SummerFest. The crowd was not as large as in 2023, but the vendors and attendees all enjoyed the event (even with the super high heat!)

Community Outreach:

- The EDC became a Main Street America member- a great resource that has been helpful to organize community outreach events (pop-ups & economic development demonstration ideas-Tiny Business Village etc.)
- Continued to advertise local businesses and MPR events through the Discover MPR Facebook Page and Website. Publish food for thought articles in the monthly EDC Newsletter- The Lakeside Write-up concerning economic and business development.
- MPR Master Plan- both the current EDC president and the past EDC president are serving on the steering committee.
- Talked with “four corner” business owners about forming a Business Owners Group to help bring in customers to the commercial district.
- Set up a community outreach table at the Third Saturday Market to promote the idea of a Tiny Business Village. Had great response from both the residents and possible business tenants.

Corporate Management:

- John Coggin, CPA, completed our non-profit 501 (c) 4 Application, Taxes, Financial Statements Compilation and helped with IRS penalties abatement. A 3 year audit (FY19, 20 & 21) was completed and bylaws were changed to require an Annual Financial Compilation rather than an Annual Audit in the future.
- Added a new requirement for EDC payments- a request for payment is approved by two officers. We have set up a “Dot-Loop” e-sign program for approvals.
- Researched how EDC transfers assets to the City.
- Applied for a Unique Entity ID to enable the EDC to apply for Federal Grants
- Researched the history of the EDC ¼% sales tax- Ordinance 23-41 authorized the vote and approved by the voters on Nov 2, 2010. The ballot language was posted in the Temple Daily Telegram on Oct. 17, 2010.
- EDC signed up for an annual subscription to Grant Watch. There are quite a few grants available that could help with financing the Tiny Business Village.
- May 2, 2024- EDC sent a formal proposal to City Council to set up a meeting with both Council and City Manager to our collaboration for economic development in MPR- to insure that both groups are “on the same page”.

MPR EDC Plans for 2024-25

Over the past year, the EDC has started our research, made contacts in the business world and will continue to explore new ideas to maximize City assets and to expand opportunities in MPR for entrepreneurs of all ages.

The EDC Board recommends:

- Continue to push for a wastewater solution in the commercial district.
- Develop the 35 acres at Lake Forest Drive and FM 2483 into income generating businesses and activities (now, rather than later). The EDC urges City Council to include sewer and a place for entrepreneurs.
- Consider NOT using the city parks for community events. Keep large events centralized at “the Pit” area to slow down out of town traffic in the residential zones (and resident traffic too!)
- Amend the Special Use City Ordinance “Home Occupation” (EDC recommends Home Occupations be permitted outright in the residential zones, based on performance standards, rather than types of businesses)

The EDC has started our research with:

Planning and Zoning Commission:

- City Ordinance amendment- changes to the “Home Occupation Ordinance” to enable more residents to follow their dream to become a small business owner, without the heavy expense of a brick and mortar building.
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Central Texas Council of Governments:

- Discussed an idea of adding golf cart crossings (40 mile hour + streets). This project may be eligible for assistance.

- Ctcog offered a list of business ideas (from similar small lakeside cities) on how to move MPR towards the classification of an “Outdoor City” and the possible economic impact.
- Will be meeting with Ctcog early 2025 to discuss tiny business village funding opportunities and building process using a mix of public and private funds.

City Staff and Council Members:

- Keep MPR Beautiful- The EDC board can easily get behind a “Mpretty” Campaign in the MPR commercial district for a “curb appeal” campaign (trash enclosures were highly recommend by both the business owners and residents at our MPR Business Network Focus Group back in 2022).
- Finding a location for a MPR makerspace. A typical location is in the community library. Most schools now include STEM makerspaces for their students. An art focus for residents of all ages could be a great addition to “things to do in MPR”. When considering a new City Library, please keep the idea of a makerspace in mind. Space is funded both by membership fees and grants, and could help fund the library, as well!

MPR Business & Property Owners:

- Contacted local property owners to find a space to house a “Tiny Business Village” (a popular solution for cities to utilize empty lots and promote entrepreneurship) and an “antique mall” type location for an entrepreneur, start up and side-gig HUB.
- Researched the economic impact of City-owned short term rentals (hotel tax and rental income).
- “Glamping”- The EDC recommends bringing back camping at Rogers Park.

At our June 29th Board of Directors meeting, the members voted to focus on business development for the 2024-25 fiscal year. The Tiny Business Village is our first choice in economic development and we have garnered a lot of community support over the past year for the idea. We look forward to working with both the City Council and City Staff to help us create *“A desirable and welcoming community that supports business opportunities while honoring its small-town roots and vibrant lakeside lifestyle”!* (EDC Vision)

Sincerely,

Linda Bridges

Linda Bridges, MPR EDC President