

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 10, 2014

TO: Kirk Fauver, Statewide Planning Engineer
Texas Division, Federal Highway Administration

FROM: Ben Ettelman
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TASK REPORT:

On October 15, 2014, the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) hosted the “Corpus Christi Livability Summit” at Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz International Center in Corpus Christi. The goal of the Summit was to discuss best practices for livability and sustainability programs and projects in the Corpus Christi region. The summit provided an opportunity for attendees to hear the latest information on major plans and programs for advancing livability in the Corpus Christi region from local and federal agencies, which included the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In addition, the Corpus Christi Livability Summit introduced the concepts of livability and sustainability as an introduction for the development of the focused sustainability plan for the Northside neighborhoods’ plan.

State and Federal Agency Funding Presentation

State and federal agency representatives participated in a panel discussion about available funding opportunities. Christopher Amy from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Richard Lopez from HUD, Amy Villarreal from Workforce Solutions, Amber Perry from EPA, and Kirk Fauver from FHWA all provided brief presentations regarding funding opportunities from their agencies and fielded questions from the audience. The following is a summary of the funding opportunities that were discussed during the panel discussion.

Summary of FHWA Funding Opportunities (by Kirk Fauver, FHWA Texas Division)

Kirk Fauver of the FHWA Texas Division provided an overview of various Federal-aid Highway Programs as part of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). The first Federal-aid Highway program mentioned was the \$2.2 B Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program (only eligible for air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas designated by the U.S. EPA). For additional information on the CMAQ Program please see the following web-link: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/factsheets/cmaq.cfm>

The second Federal-aid Highway Program presented by FHWA was the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) under MAP-21. For additional information on the \$800 M TAP Program, please see the following web-link: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/factsheets/tap.cfm>. Under the TAP Program, any

environmental mitigation activity is eligible for funding (including pollution prevention and abatement activities and mitigation to address storm-water management, reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.

The third Federal-aid Highway Program discussed by Kirk was the Surface Transportation Program (STP) under MAP-21. For additional information on the \$10.0 B STP Program please see the following web-link: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/factsheets/stp.cfm>. Under the STP Program, environmental restoration and pollution abatement including environmental mitigation efforts are eligible for funding assistance purposes.

In addition, Kirk mentioned the National Highway System (NHS) program initially formed under the Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 and passed into law in 1995 as part of the National Highway System (NHS) Designation Act. Under MAP-21, the NHS program was superseded by the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP). The \$22 Billion NHPP provides support for the condition and performance of the National Highway System, for the construction of new facilities on the NHS, and to ensure that investments of Federal-aid funds in highway construction are directed to support progress toward the achievement of performance targets established in a state's asset management plan. For additional information on the NHPP, please see the following web-link: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/factsheets/nhpp.cfm>. Under the NHPP, environmental restoration and pollution abatement as well as environmental mitigation related to NHPP projects are eligible for funding assistance.

Summary of EPA Presentation “Brownfields”

**By Amber Howard Perry, EPA Region 6 Brownfields Coordinator
(CC Livability Summit, 10/15/14)**

Amber Howard Perry, Brownfields Coordinator for EPA Region 6 in Dallas, provided an overview of the EPA Brownfields Program. She explained that the purpose of the EPA Brownfields program is to empower communities to address contaminated properties through voluntary assessment and cleanup activities. She gave an overview of the resources EPA can provide to communities, which include several grant opportunities as well as technical assistance. Amber outlined the many benefits of addressing local brownfields, namely, leveraged redevelopment, job creation and improved public health.

Amber discussed the key roles of the various partners in Brownfields redevelopment and the importance of involving all stakeholders. She provided several examples of successful brownfields redevelopment projects throughout Texas and demonstrated how community visioning is key to successful redevelopment. Amber also briefly discussed EPA’s Greening America’s Capitols and Smart Growth programs (www.epa.gov/smartgrowth). She concluded with a noting that the Request for Proposals for Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grants had been posted and proposals are due Dec. 19 (www.epa.gov/brownfields).

Summary of EPA Presentation “Green Infrastructure and Other EPA Water Quality Initiatives (CC Livability Summit, 10/15/14) by Bill Honker, EPA Region VI

Bill Honker, Director of the Water Quality Protection Division for EPA Region 6 in Dallas, provided an overview of EPA green infrastructure initiatives and other water quality issues relevant to livability in the area. He outlined how land development impacts water quality in the area, due to the volume of stormwater produced and the significance of contaminants carried by it. He stressed the significant increases in runoff caused by impervious cover and the success of green infrastructure (or low impact development) approaches in reducing runoff and related pollution of waterways. He outlined the benefits of green infrastructure techniques and gave examples of such practices, many of the examples from cities

in Texas. He also discussed opportunities for taking green infrastructure approaches not only for new development, but also for redevelopment projects.

Bill gave examples of green infrastructure techniques for residential areas, commercial areas, and parking and street designs, stressing that GI techniques usually enhance the attractiveness of an area. He also discussed the GI Collaborative, which had featured an event at the White House the week before the Corpus Christi Summit. He outlined EPA technical assistance resources for GI (www.epa.gov/greeninfrastructure) and Smart Growth (www.epa.gov/smartgrowth). Bill also outlined potential funding sources through Clean Water Act 319 funding (administered by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality) and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund program (administered by the Texas Water Development Board).

Bill also briefly discussed EPA's water quality areas of focus in Nueces County, including improving water infrastructure for colonias, improving water quality at area beaches, and the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program. Bill concluded with a discussion of Gulf Restoration opportunities through the RESTORE Act and other sources (<https://www.restorethetexascoast.org/>).

Summary of Sustainable Communities – HUD (by Richard Lopez, San Antonio Field Office Director)

HUD offers funding opportunities to help communities realize their own visions for building more livable, walkable, & environmentally sustainable communities. Sustainable communities provide economic momentum & helps America compete more effectively for jobs. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities is enabling communities to accelerate their plans based on their own resources, landscape, culture and ingenuity (local talent).

- ❑ Sustainable communities allow people to live closer to jobs and save money on personal transportation usually the second largest household expense & sometimes the largest for low-income Americans.
- ❑ Neighborhoods that make it easy to walk or bike to work, school, stores, parks, & other destinations help people stay healthy by incorporating regular exercise into their daily routines.
- ❑ Sustainable communities also reduce air & water pollution & protect treasured landscapes & prime agriculture land.
- ❑ The U.S. is in the midst of a demographic shift that is changing the nation's housing preferences & development patterns.
- ❑ The two largest demographic segments – millennials, who are entering the workforce, and baby boomers, who are leaving it – are most interested in walkable neighborhoods that offer a variety of housing choices, convenient transportation options, shopping, restaurants, parks, and cultural amenities.
- ❑ Interagency partnerships between HUD, DOT, & EPA...breaks down the traditional silos of housing, transportation, & environmental policy to consider these issues as they exist in the real world-inextricably connected.
- ❑ Interagency collaboration gets better results for communities – such as building affordable housing that is convenient to a range of job opportunities & transportation choices and uses taxpayer money more efficiently.
- ❑ City of Austin – Community Challenge Planning grant – proposed master planned 208-acre development that will incorporate best practice strategies for energy-efficient building design, water conservation & zero – waste technology & standards to create a model of sustainable and energy efficient housing.

- ❑ Capital Area Texas Sustainability (CATS) Consortium – regional planning grant – the capital area council of governments of Austin will develop the CAMPO 2035 long-range transportation plan, which envisions future growth being accommodated in a network of 37 mixed-use, mixed-income, walkable, connected & transit support.
- ❑ San Antonio Housing Authority – Choice Neighborhood Planning and Implementation grant - \$30million – funds leveraged other public and private funds that will be used to transform the East side of San Antonio, This includes the demolition of Wheatley Courts – relocation of tenants – rebuilding a new apartment complex.
- ❑ Partnerships with Dept. of Education and Dept. of Justice, Trinity University, St. Philips College, Incarnate Word University, San Antonio Independent School District, City of San Antonio, police, fire, Via.
- ❑ Office of Economic Resilience
- ❑ HUD.GOV

Summary of Workforce Solutions Presentation (by Amy Villarreal, Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend)

At Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend, we invest in our regional economic success through access to jobs, training, and employer services. We serve employers and job seekers in the twelve county Coastal Bend region through our nine Career Centers. WorkinTexas.com is Texas' largest job matching database and assists in connecting employers and job seekers. Residents of the Coastal Bend can apply and if qualified, participate in our Workforce Investment Act training programs. Our training programs have provided more than \$250,000 in tuition assistance to customers in the area. Our childcare program helps customers pay for daycare while they work or attend training. For more information or questions contact me at amy.villarreal@workforcesolutionscb.org or see our website www.workforcesolutionscb.org.

For more information see our 2013 Annual report here: [2013 Annual Report](#)

Workshop Methodology

The Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) developed and facilitated a workshop held in conjunction with the summit. Attendees of the workshop were engaged through a series of small and large group activities in order to gather feedback about preferred livability and sustainability initiatives for the Corpus Christi region's residents and stakeholders. The following report provides an explanation of the workshop's proceedings and the results of the input received at the workshop.

Attendees to the Corpus Christi Livability Summit workshop were engaged through a series of collaborative group activities. Upon registering for the summit, attendees were given a nametag with a colored dot affixed to the nametag. The color of the sticky dot designated the attendee's affiliation amongst the following stakeholder groups:

- Red dot: City, county and regional agencies
- Blue dot: State and federal agencies
- Green dot: Local residents/grass roots advocacy groups
- Orange dot: Local university students and staff
- Yellow dot: Business representatives

Upon entering the workshop, participants were given a strip of five additional dots (with the colors corresponding with the color of the sticky dot on their nametag), labeled one through five.

Once seated, attendees were asked to consider and deliberate upon a series of four questions regarding livability and sustainability in the Corpus Christi region. Participants were first asked to define livability and sustainability in their region, and given two minutes for individual thought, ten minutes for group discussion, and three minutes to report their answers to the larger group. Next, groups were asked to develop an unconstrained list of livability and sustainability initiatives or improvements for their region or community. Groups were given two minutes for individual thought and roughly 13 minutes to create the unconstrained list. Groups were then given 15 minutes to work together within their groups to narrow their list to the five most important initiatives or improvements. Each group reported their findings to the entire workshop once they had collaboratively developed a list of their top five priorities. As each group read their five most important initiatives or improvements, workshop organizers recorded them onto large pieces of paper located at the front of the room.

For the final activity, participants were asked to rank the top five priorities out of the entire list of improvements or initiatives recorded on the large pieces of paper at the front of the room. Participants were instructed to affix the numbered (one through five) dots that they received upon entering the workshop to their top five priorities. When tabulating the results of this exercise, researchers used the following weights to calculate the rankings of each initiative or improvement:

- 1: 5 points
- 2: 4 points
- 3: 3 points
- 4: 2 points
- 5: 1 point

After the workshop, TTI calculated a numeric ranking for each of the livability and sustainability initiatives suggested at the workshop for both the group as a whole, and for each of the individual stakeholder groups. The results of this exercise are provided in greater detail in the next section of this report.

Who Participated

There were 35 workshop attendees at the Corpus Christi Livability Summit. Of the 35 workshop attendees, 11 were from city, county, and regional agencies (red group); 10 were from state and federal agencies (blue group); five were local residents or representatives from grassroots advocacy groups (green group); five were representatives from local businesses (yellow group) and four were students and staff from local universities (orange group). Figure 1 below provides a pie chart of attendee's affiliation.

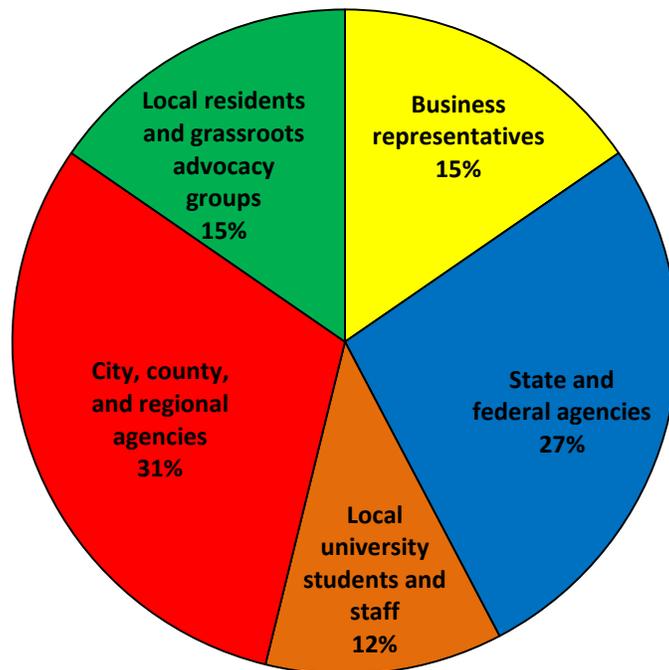


Figure 1- Corpus Christi Livability Summit workshop attendee affiliation

Workshop Findings

The following section provides the results of each question asked of participants at the workshop.

Question 1: How would you define livability and sustainability in your region?

While each group provided a range of definitions for livability and sustainability within their region, many responses centered on the common themes of economic opportunity, multimodal transportation options, affordable housing, safety, and aesthetics. Two groups chose to define each term separately, defining livability in terms of quality of life and sustainability in terms of environmental protection.

The full list of each group's responses to Question 1 can be found in Appendix A.

Question 2: Please develop an unconstrained list of livability/sustainability initiatives or improvements for your region or community.

Suggested initiatives or improvements ranged from "crawfish boil" to "adopt complete streets policy" to "35 mph in front of TAMUCC," showcasing the diversity of interests and opinions held by participants.

A full list of each groups' responses to Question 2 can be found in Appendix B.

Question 3: Please work within your group to create a list of the five most important initiatives or improvements to the sustainability and livability of your region. Please note that this list does not have to be ranked in any particular order.

The five most important initiatives or improvements for sustainability and livability in the region, as defined by each of the four groups, are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Corpus Christi Livability Summit workshop group’s five top ranked initiatives and improvements

Group 1	Group 3
Aesthetic enhancement	Revitalization plan
Economic development	Water
Education	Upgraded roadways – streets are poor
Arts and culture (music)	Downtown – robust and thriving
Comprehensive transportation system	Recreation
Group 2	Group 4
Infill development: revitalization of neighborhoods	Walk/bike path from ABC to TAMUCC, separated from traffic
Adopt complete streets policy	Recruiting / investing in medical profession, home builders, and other needed industries (green industries), certified arborist
Approved storm water master plan and improved utilities	Downtown revitalization and attractions
Improved coordinated regional planning	Shade and trees
Tax incentives for downtown and North Beach	Outdoor recreation activities

Workshop facilitators worked with participants to develop the following list of 13 initiatives or improvements, which were used to answer Question 4:

- Education and training,
- Future water resources,
- Shade, trees and aesthetic enhancements,
- Coordinated regional planning,
- Recruiting employers and employees,
- Approved storm water master plan and improved utilities,
- Downtown, Sea District, and North Beach revitalization (including tax incentives, grocery, retail and housing)
- Comprehensive transportation system, multi-modalism and complete streets policy,

- Outdoor recreation activities,
- Infill developments to revitalize neighborhoods,
- Walk / bike paths from American Banking Center to Texas A&M Corpus Christi,
- Art, culture and music,
- Updated city of Gregory comprehensive revitalization plan.

Question 4: Please use the five sticky dots you were given when you entered the workshop and rank your top five priorities out of the entire list of improvements or initiatives recorded at the front of the room.

Workshop organizers evaluated what the top five priorities were for the entire workshop as well as for each stakeholder group by counting the sticky dots that participants affixed to each improvement or initiative and weighting the votes based on the weighting system discussed earlier.

Top five priorities amongst all workshop attendees

A comprehensive transportation system, multi-modalism, and complete streets initiatives were found to be the highest priority amongst all workshop attendees, garnering 56 total points using the weighting system described above. The revitalization of Downtown Corpus Christi, the Sea District, and North Beach, through the provision of tax incentives, grocery, retail, and housing options was the second overall priority, garnering 46 points. Infill developments to revitalize neighborhoods (41 points), education and training (34 points), and shade, trees, and other aesthetic enhancements (31 points) rounded out the final three of the top five priorities chosen by the entire group of workshop participants. Figure 2 provides a summary of the top five priorities amongst all workshop attendees.

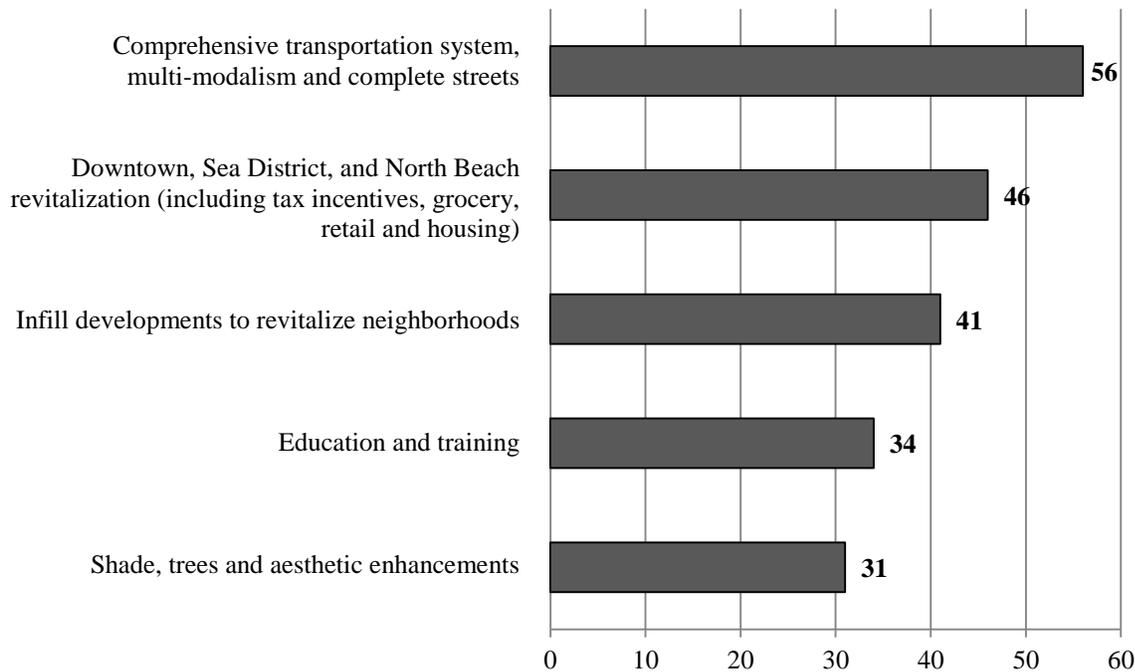


Figure 2. Top five priorities amongst all attendees of Corpus Christi Livability Summit workshop

Top five priorities for representatives of city, county, and regional agencies (red group)

Workshop participants from city, county, and regional agencies ranked initiatives and improvements in the following order: 1. A comprehensive transportation system, multi-modalism and complete streets

initiatives; 2. Infill developments to revitalize neighborhoods; 3. (TIE) Coordinated regional planning / Approving a storm water master plan and improved utilities; 4. (TIE) Recruiting employers and employees / Outdoor recreational activities. Figure 3 provides a summary of the top five priorities for representatives from city, county and regional agencies.

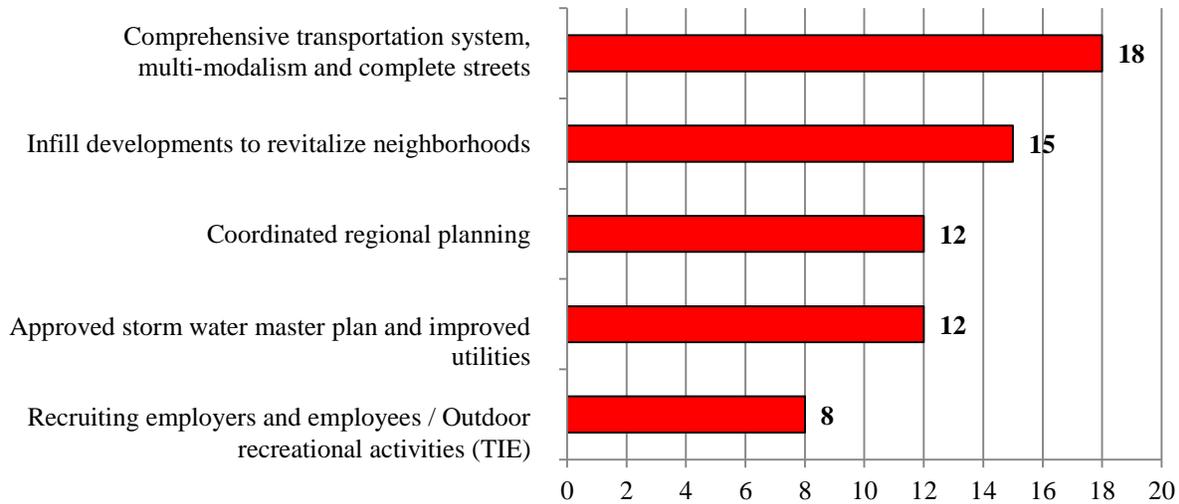


Figure 3. Summary of top five priorities for representatives from city, county and regional agencies

Top five priorities for representatives of state and federal agencies

Participants from state and federal agencies ranked initiatives and improvements in the following order: 1. Comprehensive transportation system, multi-modalism and complete streets; 2. (TIE) Infill developments to revitalize neighborhoods / Downtown, Sea District and North Beach revitalization; 3. (TIE) Education and training / Shade, trees and aesthetic improvements. Figure 4 provides a summary of the top five priorities for representatives from state and federal agencies.

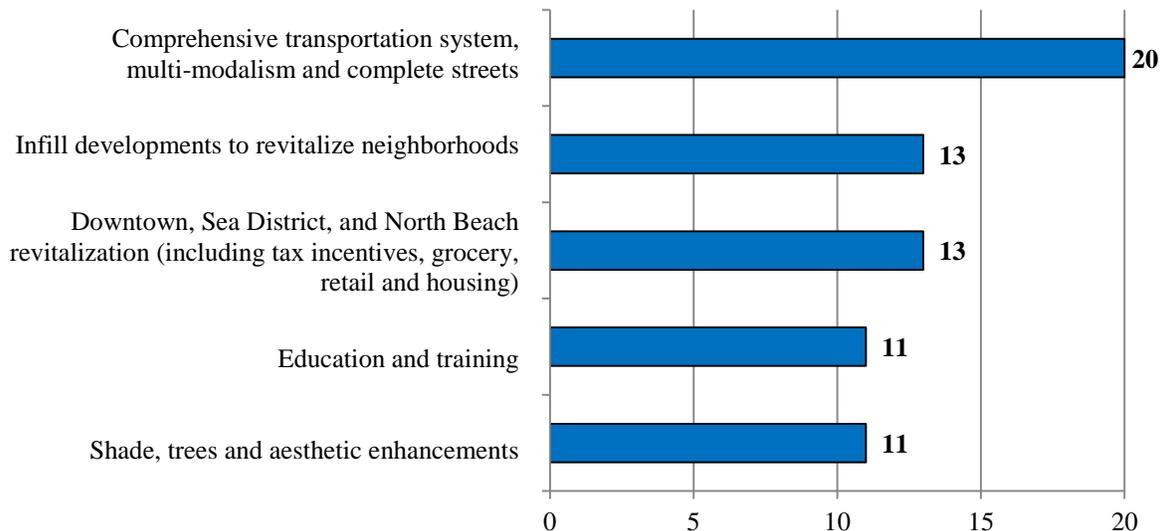


Figure 4. Summary of top five priorities for representatives from state and federal agencies

Top five priorities for local residents and representatives of grassroots advocacy groups

Participants who were local residents and representatives from grassroots advocacy groups ranked initiatives and improvements in the following order: 1. Approved storm water master plan and improved

utilities; 2. Downtown, Sea District and North Beach revitalization through the provision of tax incentives, grocery, retail, and housing options; 3. Infill developments to revitalize neighborhoods; 4. (TIE) Comprehensive transportation system, multi-modalism and complete streets / Updated City of Gregory comprehensive revitalization plan. Figure 5 provides a summary of the top five priorities for local residents and representatives from grassroots advocacy groups.

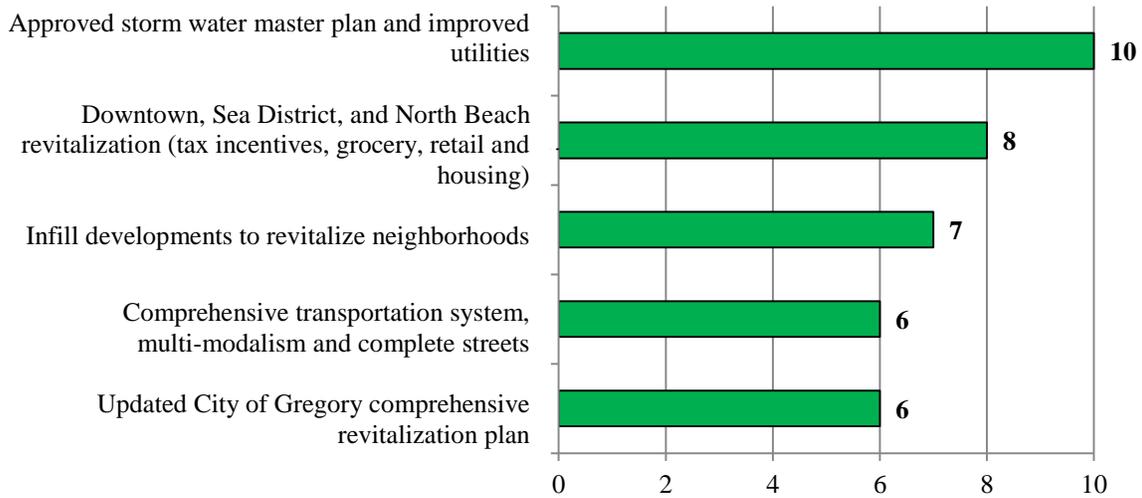


Figure 5. Top five priorities for local residents and representatives from grassroots advocacy groups

Top five priorities for students and staff of local universities

Participants from the local university stakeholder group ranked initiatives and improvements in the following order: 1. Downtown, Sea District and North Beach revitalization through the provision of tax incentives, grocery, retail, and housing options; 2. Walk and bike path from the American Bank Center to the Texas A&M University Corpus Christi campus; 3. (TIE) Shade, trees and aesthetic enhancements / Education and training; 4. (TIE) Recruiting employers and employees / Outdoor recreational activities. Figure 6 provides a summary of the top five priorities for students and staff of local universities.

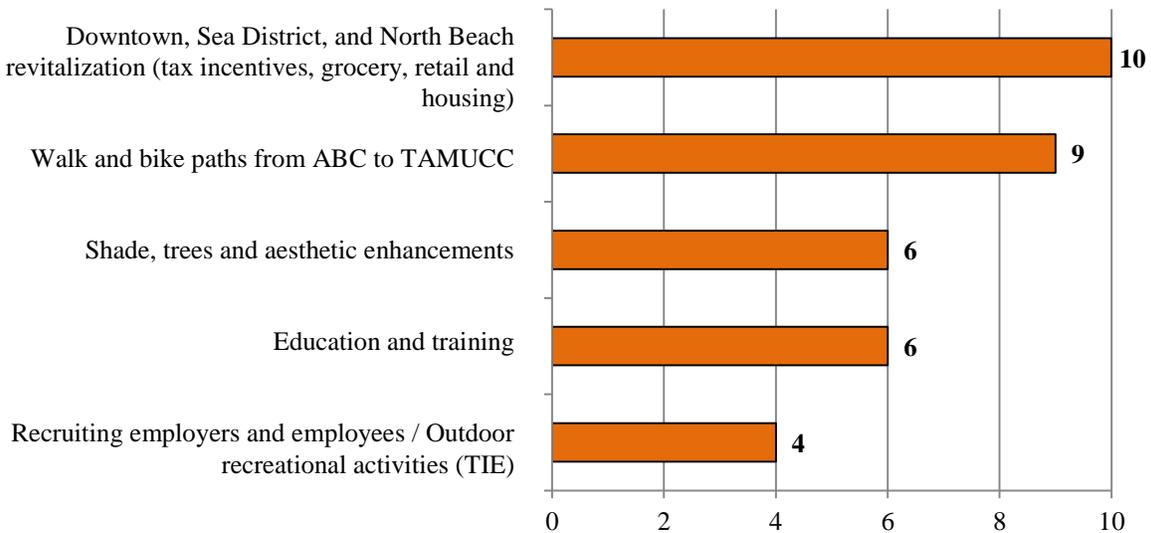


Figure 6. Top five priorities for students and staff of local universities

Top five priorities for business representatives

Representatives from local businesses ranked initiatives and improvements in the following order: 1. Education and training; 2. Comprehensive transportation system, multi-modalism and complete streets; 3. (TIE) Downtown, Sea District and North Beach revitalization through the provision of tax incentives, grocery, retail, and housing options / Recruiting employers and employees; 4. (TIE) Arts, culture and music / Future water resources.

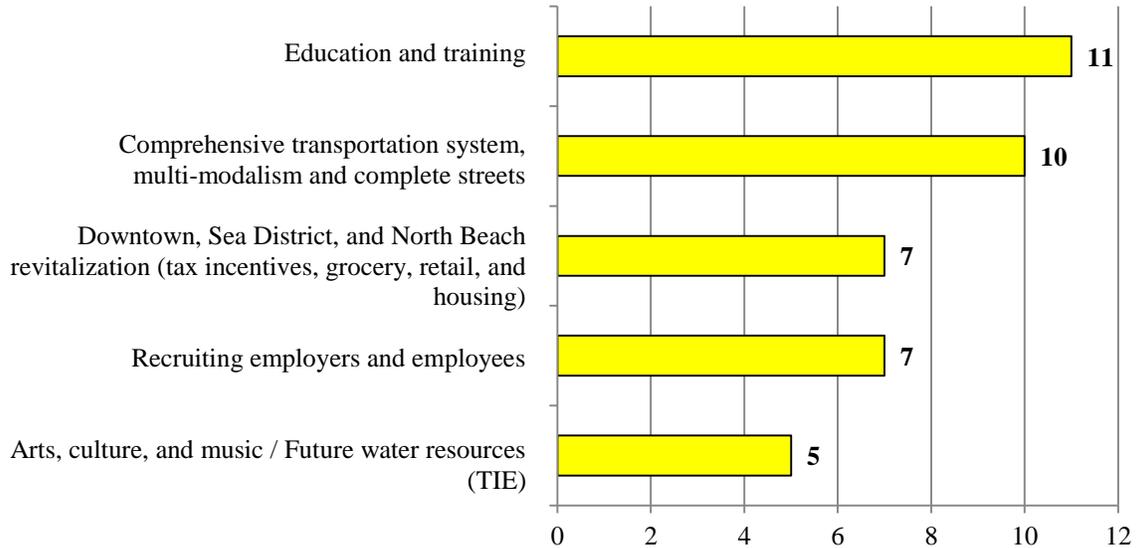


Figure 7. Summary of top five priorities for representatives of local businesses

Improvements and initiatives that received the most #1 votes

In addition to weighting the rankings that workshop participants placed on each improvement or initiative, researchers also noted which improvements and initiatives that the most workshop participants ranked as their top priority (#1 vote). Table 2 shows the improvements and initiatives that received the most #1 votes from the entire group of participants as well as from each stakeholder group.

Table 2. Improvements and initiatives that received the most #1 votes

Stakeholder Group	Improvements and Initiatives (Total #1 Votes)
All participants	Comprehensive transportation system, multi-modalism and complete streets (6)
Business representatives	Comprehensive transportation system, multi-modalism and complete streets (2)
City, county, and regional agencies	Infill developments to revitalize neighborhoods (2)
State and federal agencies	Comprehensive transportation system, multi-modalism and complete streets (2)
Local residents and grassroots organizations	<i>No improvements or initiatives had more than one #1 vote</i>
Local university students and staff	Downtown, Sea District and North Beach revitalization through the provision of tax incentives, grocery, retail, and housing options (2)

APPENDIX A

Question 1: How would you define livability and sustainability in your region?
Group 1
Multi-modal
Access to city services, education, food
Walkable to amenities
Options other than car/SOV
Bring people together (cafes, public space)
Pleasant to eye / beauty
Security / safe for children
Future technologies
Channel economic opportunities / job to local businesses
Range of housing opportunities
Good transportation system / access to multi-modal opportunities (public transportation)
Group 2
Livability:
Quality of life in city and neighborhood
Communication between city, counties, neighborhoods
Connectivity
Safe walking paths to amenities (community / neighborhood)
Health – healthy foods
Sustainability
Attributes which cause quality of life over years
Economic growth
Mixed use development
Clean environment
Group 3
Livability = good environment, economic opportunity
Sustainability = ability to support local population
Livability:
Access
Safety
Economic opportunity
Comfortable standard of living
Affordable housing
Employment opportunities
Health care
Recreation opportunities
Entertainment
Sustainability:

Ability to support population
Diverse industry base / job options
Transportation options
Reduced pollution
Clean water and air
Livability + Sustainability -> Social Capital
Group 4
Peace and quiet – we need this!
Housing
Extending streets
Capitalize on Eagle Ford Shale
Economic development
Tourism
Aesthetics
Downtown, Bayfront, beaches
Community pride

APPENDIX B

Question 2: Please develop an unconstrained list of livability/sustainability initiatives or improvements for your region or community.
Group 1
Aesthetic improvements, beautification, trees
Bicycle/pedestrian
Park system
Bus system
Grocery stores
Lighting / street improvements
Community garden
Medical centers
Clean water
Infill development (denser)
Casino?
Crawfish festival
Entertainment
Restaurants/music
Events, free, for families
Amphitheater
B-cycle (rentals)
Segway tour
Economic development
Diverse industry
Fortune 500 businesses (attract businesses)
Kid entertainment
Art and culture
Education and training opportunities for children (urban community)
Historic preservation
Urban parks/boardwalk (near water)
Group 2
Speed bumps on shoreline and ocean drive
Neighborhood improvements
Repair/ revitalize homes
No more sprawl
Infill development and neighborhood revitalization, better use of land
Full accessibility throughout city
Improve utilities
Bigger lots for new development
Narrow road lanes
Adopt complete streets policy

Adopt transit oriented development
Car ferry to North Beach
Storm water Mater Plan approval and improved utilities
Shade on bay front
Funding downtown transit circulator
Tax incentives for downtown revitalization
Code enforcement downtown
Improve tourism amenities / attractions
Improved coordinated regional planning for livability, sustainability
Lower crime, violence, lawlessness
Bus rapid transit
Group 3
Revitalization plan
Water
Comprehensive: Infrastructure, drainage, streets, housing
0% unemployment
Provide water resources for rest of Texas
Lower insurance rates
Upgraded roadways – streets are poor
Water and air quality
Downtown – robust and thriving
Grocery store, retain, dining, safety!
Hike and Bike – alternative transportation
Upgraded public transportation
Better land use development codes
Recreation
Group 4
Walk/bike path from ABC to TAMUCC, separated from traffic
Connectivity of bike lanes
Recruiting / investing in medical profession, home builders, and other needed industries (green industries), certified arborist
Community gathering places public/private
Downtown revitalization and attractions
Light rail / better public transportation
Bike share
Façade improvements downtown
Street art / wall art
Dog park
Water transportation
Historic preservation
Shade trees

Protecting the Oso
Outdoor recreation activities
Clean water efforts
North Beach improvements
Animal care services - increased shelter capacity, ACOs, publically funded spay/neuter in target neighborhoods
More housing downtown / options
Grocery downtown
RUDAT 37 recommendations
35 mph in front of TAMUCC