

City of Marceline

Strategic Plan

Community Planning for a United Vision

Approved via Ordinance #15-03.06

March 17, 2015



MISSION:

The City of Marceline is committed to promoting the highest quality of life for all residents and visitors by providing fiscally-sound, friendly, and transparent customer service.

A Strategic Plan defines where our Community is going, how we are going to get there and measures success over time. It ensures the most effective use of the City's limited resources by focusing those resources on key priorities.

The Marceline Strategic Plan was developed over a 3-month period that included two Town Hall Meetings involving the citizens of Marceline, facilitated by the Green Hills Regional Planning Council. It is the framework by which the Community will provide services and programs over the next five years to all members of the community and to members of the public who visit our beautiful City.

VISION:

The City of Marceline Missouri is a family-friendly hometown community with a well-balanced economic base of agriculture, industry and tourism, strengthened by talent, creativity and imagination. It is a community that honors its history, taking great pride in being the boyhood home of Walt Disney. Marceline is extremely proud of its high-quality education and a rich natural environment that embraces a wholesome country lifestyle. It provides residents, workers, and visitors a friendly, welcoming sense of place – a place to call home.

A Vision Statement is an essential ingredient in successful comprehensive community policy planning. Essentially, the statement should reaffirm time-tested policies or values that are generally held as positive "community trademarks" and identify others deemed relevant. Moreover, a Vision Statement should be a reflection of community aspirations. Through periodic review and refinement, it should help to set parameters for future community activities. Most importantly, the Council, its advisory bodies and the community-as-a-whole will proceed with a common understanding of the quality of life values or themes that will shape our community for years to come.



DISCUSSION:

Visioning and (Strategic) Community Planning sessions have been held in many other communities and has proven highly successful in how those communities plan for the future. How involved residents become in sharing their concern for Marceline’s future, and how supportive they are of local efforts will ultimately shape the future of the City in terms of what type of services, programs, and events, if any, should be provided.

The Strategic Planning process can be arduous in nature, involving numerous meetings over a period of six months to a year. With a population of 2,233, Marceline does not share the same issues and concerns as those of a larger metropolitan area with a higher population and diverse demographics, such as crime, transportation, infrastructure, etc. Therefore, the Strategic Planning process for Marceline is more simplistic, addressing the top three concerns that were identified during the public meetings, which can be accomplished within the next five years.

PROCESS:

Public Meetings were held on February 12th & 26th of 2015 at the Walsworth Community Center titled: “Community Planning for a United Vision”. Approximately 35-45 members of the public attended each session that was hosted by the Green Hills Regional Planning Council. Attendees represented a broad range of the community to include high school students, business owners, industry professionals, farmers, and property owners.

At the first session on February 12th, the primary subject of discussion was Marceline’s strengths and weaknesses. The following are some of the top condensed responses on these topics:

City Strengths	City Weaknesses
High-Quality Education & School Spirit/Support	Downtown (vacant buildings/business support)
Low Cost of Living/Taxes	Job Opportunities
Strong Church/Ministerial Alliance	Marketing/Promotion of Marceline and Business
Attractive & Appealing Americana City	More Youth Activities
Numerous Adult and Youth Civic Organizations	More Adult (evening) Activities
Rich History (Rail & Disney Brand)	Housing (Dilapidated/Vacant/Supply)
Friendly and Welcoming Community	Community Participation
Great Place to Raise Children/Family	Negative People (don’t want change)
Healthy Industrial Base	Code Enforcement

Following the discussion, attendees were asked to place a red dot on those concerns/issues that they felt were a priority for the City of Marceline. The top 3 in bold above, were selected far above the other concerns, and were chosen as the City’s primary goals and objectives.

The second session was held on February 26th. Following a quick review of the previous session, the group went straight to work on strategies to address the top three concerns through goals and objectives.

PLAYERS:

The following groups were identified as playing a role to the actions of this Strategic Plan. Although not specifically mentioned in the Goals, Objectives and Actions, it takes all of the players working in unison to make this plan successful.

Primary	Secondary Resources (as required)
City of Marceline	Marceline Ministerial Alliance
Marceline Chamber of Commerce	Marceline R-V School Board
Downtown Marceline	Tourism Board
Industrial Development Authority	Marceline Carnegie Library
Industrial Leaders	Walt Disney Hometown Museum
Property Owners (Business / Private)	Planning & Zoning Board



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1: Enhancement and revitalization of the Downtown Business District with new, vibrant business activity

OBJECTIVES:

1A: Conduct a Market Analysis, in conjunction with an Economic Development Plan, on a regional level to determine the retail needs of the community and the businesses that would thrive in the local environment to further:

- a) Recruit New Downtown Businesses
- b) Retain existing Businesses
- c) Expanding existing Businesses
- d) Encourage Entrepreneurial Realization and Growth
- e) Capitalize on Niche Market(s)
- f) Provide entertainment and activities for all ages

1B: Develop and implement a Downtown Building Façade Improvement/Rehabilitation Program and a Streetscape Renovation Project to further:

- a) Create a destination
- b) Capitalize on existing assets
- c) Increase Tourism Opportunities
- d) Enhance current events

1C: Regain local control of empty Downtown Buildings and encourage active retail through

- a) Local investment
- b) Investment group or organization
- c) City Legislation de-incentivizing empty buildings through encouragement of sale, rent, or active business



1D: Review, modify and implement the Planning and Zoning Ordinances in context of growth, development and façades to ensure it is in keeping with the desires of the downtown merchants, property owners, and local residents.

1E: Create a database inventory of available business properties available for sale or rent, to include condition, square feet, amenities, and sale / rent price and actively market them, making it available online for prospective businesses.

1F: Encourage business draw to the Downtown Business District by annexation of municipal boundaries and business development (Hotels, RV Parks, etc.) along Hwy 5 to Hwy 36.

1G: Explore and evaluate a Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) to provide the incentive for building renovations and upgrades.

GOAL 2: Increase employment opportunities and marketable job skills in the City and the Region

OBJECTIVES:

2A: Create and implement and Economic Development Plan in conjunction with a Market Analysis which includes strategies to recruit new viable business and industry to the area to further:

- a.) Bring new people to the area
- b.) Attract former residents back to the City
- c.) Provide full-time jobs w/ benefits (not seasonal)
- d.) Complement existing business and industry

2B: Establish a Business Assistance Program for local businesses and residents to:

- a.) Encourage entrepreneurship within the community
- b.) Identify needs of current businesses for:
 - 1.) Financial Assistance
 - 2.) Marketing / Promotions Training
 - 3.) Business Planning
 - 4.) Expansion / Relocation

2C: Fully support local business organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Marceline in establishing programs to:

- a.) Develop and promote Marceline as a business-friendly community
- b.) Feature “Business of the Month”
- c.) Promote shop local education and campaigns

- d.) Convene (and communicate to) local businesses to brainstorm the job opportunities for Marceline residents and develop methods to match the job with the resident.
- e.) Advocate for job skill development (vocational, technical and STEM) for skilled trades with local industrial leaders, policy-making boards, and the Marceline School District.

2D: Encourage regional area property developers to hire local workers and increase the local housing stock.

GOAL 3: Promote the City, its events and amenities, and support local businesses through increased marketing and promotions.

OBJECTIVES:

3A: Prepare (professional) and implement a City-wide Marketing Plan (this objective would address most, if not all of the following objectives).

3B: Research the possibility and willingness by the residents to reinvent Marceline with a new logo / tagline.

3A: Increase Marceline’s visibility on HWY 36 through the use of wayfinding signs and billboards to:

- 1.) Target tourism
- 2.) Increase awareness of Marceline Businesses
- 3.) Promote Marceline Brand Awareness and its amenities (aquatic center/parks/sports facilities)

3B: Increase Marceline’s global presence on the internet through social networking and published video productions.

3C: Increase Marceline’s regional presence through utilization of media in St. Louis and Kansas City local area television, radio, and newsprint for high profile City events.

3D: Create a database inventory of available business properties available for sale or rent, to include condition, square feet, amenities, and sale / rent price and actively market them, making it available online for prospective businesses.

3E: Increase promotion of the North Industrial Park through active marketing and online presence.

3F: Promote (and cross-promote) Marceline Events and activities collaboratively by all organizations at various regional events.

ACTIONS

Marketing Plan – Complete with Market Analysis, Brand Identity

As with any business, the City of Marceline will need to initiate a Marketing Plan, and implemented by all Players to be successful. A Marketing Plan will specifically identify:

- the customers (business / industry / tourism)
- the means to reach the customers
- how to retain the customers and ensure repeated visits
- the product(s) needed to attract and retain customers
- how customers will identify and remember you
- Market Marceline’s assets

Economic Development Plan

Economic development is the sustained, concerted actions of the City and Civic Organizations (Players) that promote the standard of living, quality of life and economic health of a community. Businesses provide jobs, a strong tax base to support high quality services, and bring prosperity to the community. Furthermore, businesses contribute significantly to local charities and sponsor community events. Initiated by the Marceline Industrial Authority, an Economic Development Plan will guide the City in promoting economic growth and job creation to:

- Retain and expand existing businesses
- Fill existing building with viable, successful business activity
- Target key industries and assist with site readiness
- Achieve prosperity by stimulating economic activity in the Downtown Business District, North Industrial Park and HWY 5 Business Corridor.
- Generating robust job growth by maximizing the opportunities to produce and sell products and services for existing, emerging and relocating businesses.
- Maintaining a leadership position in sustainability by constantly striving to produce an innovative urban setting that fosters creativity, invention, and imagination.

Business Assistance Program

A Business Assistance Program, facilitated by the Marceline Chamber of Commerce and assisted by Downtown Marceline, will be necessary to:

- Develop and promote Marceline as a business-friendly community
- Feature “Business of the Month” campaigns
- Promote shop local education and campaigns

- Convene (and communicate to) local businesses to brainstorm the job opportunities for Marceline residents and develop methods to match the job with the resident.
- Advocate for job skill development (vocational, technical and STEM) for skilled trades with local industrial leaders, policy-making boards, and the Marceline School District.

GAUGING SUCCESS

There are many ways to gauge the success of a Strategic Plan. Once the Action Items in this plan have been completed, the following should be tracked and reported publicly on a quarterly basis and should be made a subject of celebration.

- Jobs Created
- New Business Openings
- Businesses Expanded
- School Enrollment increase
- Population Increase
- Event Attendance
- Museum Visits
- Increased Building Permits / New Housing Stock
- Increased City Revenues

