

**Santa Clara City Economic Development Commission Report
November 2, 2016**

Economic Development Commission Mission Statement for council approval:

“To promote an environment friendly to economic development with particular attention to maintaining and encouraging the values and quality of life historically found here.”

Topics of discussion for potential economic development:

- Petroglyphs – How to increase the number of visitors to this site and how can we encourage longer stays while here. Can we include the Santa Clara River sites as part of this tour?
- Native American Village – request local tribal involvement to develop activities for public participation and enjoyment.
- Bicycle trails – Moab has become a destination for bicycle riders because of the extensive trail systems developed. We can develop trails which will attract large groups for leisure riding, as well as sanctioned races. However, we will need to develop accommodations, dining opportunities, etc. for these participants.
- Rifle range – For general public use, as well as tournament competition opportunities.
- Partner with Ivins City to capitalize on the crowds coming to Tuacahn. Possible brochures or other handouts emphasizing the resources and attractions in Santa Clara and Ivins.
- Website exposure – Provide a page associated with Santa Clara City’s website that names each business with information about the nature of the business, services, location, contact information, etc.
- Directory Center – Bulletin boards providing maps and information on locations and activities in the area.
- Recognition - Recognize individual businesses in a “spotlight” feature in the city newsletter to help build local support.

Current Concerns

- Most property in commercially zoned areas is privately owned, with a parcel under management of SITLA. We believe that the privately owned, commercially zoned property available for development is currently priced at such a level as to discourage commercial development.
- Future commercial growth is likely to be inhibited due to lack of availability and pricing, and we are not aware of any current plans to expand commercial zoning.
- Maintaining our current status as a “bedroom community” of St. George places significant financial pressure on our residents to pay the expenses of maintaining our city infrastructure with higher property taxes and utilities fees, due to the limited revenue available to the city resulting from lower volume of commercial retail sales.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Santa Clara City Council seriously study, then put into effect, a concerted plan of action to annex the land from Santa Clara’s current southern city limits (including the South Hills annexation) south to the Utah-Arizona border, and to include areas as far west as geographically feasible, as part of the city’s long-term plans for growth and development. We

believe this action would put the city in a position to take advantage of future growth along the proposed “Western Corridor”, and give notice to all entities of Santa Clara City’s long-term plans for expansion and growth. Though the Western Corridor is only in initial long-term planning stages, its future development will give the city closer access to I-15 - something that many companies require for consideration as a site location for their operations. We believe this approach to long-term planning will bring employment opportunities to our citizens, growth for our community, and increase the city’s revenue base with establishment of retail businesses being supported by a significant increase in population in our city, while at the same time, maintain the historic nature of the current downtown area of Santa Clara.

Proposals

After some discussion regarding how we might promote and develop a Swiss-themed destination (similar in nature to the themed streets and buildings of the destination city of Solvang, California) we have come to the conclusion that “Swiss” is likely not what most people are thinking about when they come to the southern Utah desert (apart from our Swiss Days celebration each year). Many visitors come for the activities and environment provided by our area’s natural resources, and many leave with the thought that they want to ‘settle here someday’ because of the environment, people, and lifestyle they encounter.

We therefore propose that Santa Clara City should:

- Pursue opportunities that capitalize on the resources of the area.
- Expand our current city limits to include future growth potential by annexing the area from South Hills to the Utah-Arizona border.
- Discover ways promote our area natural resources and beauty.
- Further expand the opportunities to make Santa Clara a multiple-day stayover for out-of-town visitors.

Conclusion

This represents some of the steps Santa Clara City can take to enhance our city’s long-term future and improve its image as a location where people will find employment opportunity and financial stability and enable their families to remain here for generations to come. We believe these steps, when implemented, will enhance commerce and increase the city’s revenue needs as we continue to grow, without placing undue tax burden on our residents to shoulder the costs of city operations and development.