

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

FORWARD

In the fall of 2003, faculty and students associated with Texas A&M University's Texas Target Cities Program were commissioned by the Navasota Economic Development Corporation to engage in the production of four tools relating to the City's future. The four identified tools were:

- Navasota Comprehensive Plan
- Navasota Economic Development Plan
- Navasota Geographic Information System
- Navasota Internet Website

The Texas A&M graduate students spent a full academic year researching, analyzing, and organizing these four tools.

This document constitutes the second tool identified above, the Navasota Economic Development Plan (NEDP). The associated sister document, the Navasota Comprehensive Plan, was used as a vehicle for the generation of almost all the base data used in the NEDP, and numerous references to this document are contained in the Comprehensive Plan. Information from the NEDP will also be placed on the City's Internet website.

This document is divided into seven sections, including a community profile, an economic assessment and analysis, and a statement of community goals, objectives, and strategies. The NEDP culminates with a detailed five-year Action Agenda for plan implementation. The Target Cities Team's approach to the preparation of this plan was to utilize what is commonly referred to as a "SWOT" analysis. The term "SWOT" stands for "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The overriding goal of the Navasota Economic Development Plan is the identification of policies, programs, and actions that can be taken to improve the City’s short and long term economy. Implementation of the NEDP is intended to result in the:

- Creation of well paying Jobs
- Expansion of economic diversity and opportunities
- Stabilization of employment
- Revitalization of the urban fabric
- Elevation of civic pride
- Improvement of quality of life for residents

RELATIONSHIP OF THE NEDP TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Navasota Comprehensive Plan (NCP) contains much of the base data and the analysis that were used in the production of this document. Most of the ideas used in this document were derived from discussions concerning the NCP. Several major projects or actions discussed in the NCP are further identified and elaborated upon in this plan. Several of these actions include but are not limited to:

- Improvements in the image of the City
- Enhancements to the Downtown, including business development and expansion
- Optimization of the City’s historic resources with an emphasis on tourism
- Creation of an arboretum/tourism venue in the northeast corner of Navasota
- Improvements in educational opportunities
- Strengthening of the local workforce
- Creation of a more robust and proactive role for city government in economic development activities