



City of Melissa

Community Strategic Planning Retreat

REPORT

Students:

Abigail Azima
Myung-Ji Bang
Shon Brooks
Frederick Lopez
Martin May
Robert Pacleb
Justin Pruitt
Kristin Weegar

Faculty:

David W. Tees
Dr. Sherman Wyman

The University of Texas at Arlington
Institute of Urban Affairs
School of Urban and Public Affairs.
Fall 2009

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the University of Texas at Arlington's School of Urban and Public Affairs, the class of Management of Economic Development would like to thank the following officials from the City of Melissa for their help and support of this project: Mayor Reed Greer, Jason Little, city manager, and city staff member Linda Bannister. Also, we would like to thank David W. Tees with the School's Institute of Urban Studies and Dr. Sherman Wyman for their guidance, knowledge, and support.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	i
Table of Contents	ii
1. Executive Summary	1
2. Introduction	2
3. The Retreat Process	4
4. Post-Retreat Observations	7
Communication	8
Connection	9
Celebration	10
5. Appendices	12
A	13
B	25
C	27
D	28
Strategies - Group A	28
Strategies - Group B	29
E	30
F.....	32
6. Supplemental Comments	33

Executive Summary

Melissa is a growing city in Collin County, Texas located approximately 35 miles north of Dallas. In fall of 2009, the City of Melissa engaged Dr. Sherman Wyman and a graduate Management of Economic Development class in the School of Urban and Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Arlington to design and facilitate a strategic planning retreat for Melissa government and business leaders. The retreat took place at Melissa Ridge Intermediate School on November 12, 2009 with twenty seven (27) community leaders in attendance. The retreat was preceded by an environmental scan with anticipated retreat participants including the mayor, city council members, and various Melissa business and community leaders.

The report includes an introduction, a review of the retreat process used in Melissa, post-retreat observations of the facilitators, and a series of appendices that contain the data produced by and for the retreat participants.

The school was represented at the retreat by David W. Tees (lead facilitator), Dr. Sherman Wyman (class instructor) as well as graduate student facilitators Abigail Azima, Myung-Ji Bang, Shon Brooks, Frederick Lopez, Martin May, Robert Pacleb, Justin Pruitt, and Kristin Weegar.

Introduction

The people are the city.

- William Shakespeare

The City of Melissa is a fast growing North Texas community with a population of approximately 4,800. It is located seven miles northeast of McKinney just off State Highway 75, in north central Collin County. Melissa is in a dynamic growth area with a region encompassing nine counties and spanning one hundred miles with a population of over four million. Melissa's close proximity to Dallas and its suburbs offer easy access to all parts of the Metroplex.

From this community came many individuals and families who have been prominent in the business and professional life of Collin County. Some of the first settlers came from the old Highland community, which was located north of present day Melissa. It was here that C.H. Wysong settled as early as 1846. A Post Office was established and Isaac N. Foster became the first Postmaster on September 9, 1853. The location of the Post Office was located at Foster Crossing about three miles north of Melissa. The rich soils of the Blackland Prairie and the waters of the Elm Fork of the Trinity River attracted settlers to the area in the 1840s. In 1872, the Houston and Texas Central Railroads were built through the community, and the town of Melissa was laid out. Sources disagree as to the origin of the name of the town. Some say that Melissa was named for Melissa Quinlan, daughter of George A. Quinlan, an official of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad. Others say that it received its name for Melissa Huntington, daughter of C. P. Huntington, a prominent railroad executive.

In 1886 Melissa had a flourmill, two cotton gins that shipped 3,000 bales of cotton annually and several business houses. It became a stop on the Interurban (The Texas Electric Railway), linking Dallas and Denison in 1908. Due to this transportation network, Melissa became a commercial and community center for area farmers. By 1914, Melissa's population

had reached 400. Unlike many rural communities in Texas, before 1920 Melissa had electric lights, a telephone exchange, and paved roads. It also had five churches, a large school, and a number of businesses, including a bank. A tornado struck the town on April 13, 1921, killing thirteen people, injuring fifty-four, and demolishing many homes and businesses. Eight years later, on August 8, 1929, a fire destroyed many of the buildings that had been rebuilt after the tornado.

The Great Depression, the mechanization of farming, and job opportunities in the Dallas metropolitan area after World War II further slowed community growth. The population of Melissa declined from 500 in 1925 to 285 in 1949. In 1966 the population was 375. Melissa was incorporated in the early 1970s. In 1980 it had a population of 604 and nine businesses.

Melissa encompasses approximately twenty-one square miles of rolling hills situated between the East fork of the Trinity River and Sister Grove Creek. The City of Melissa is located a short distance from two popular Texas lakes, Lake Lavon and Lake Texoma. Melissa has three intersecting highways, Highway 75, State Highway 121 and Highway 5 (McKinney Street) all of which provide easy access south to Dallas, Austin and San Antonio, and north to Oklahoma. Highway 75 also intersects with Interstate 635, the major business loop around Dallas. State Highway 121 runs northeast and southwest providing access south to the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and south to the Dallas North Tollway.

The Retreat Process



City Administrator Jason Little discusses the retreat process with Melissa leaders.

A group of government, business, and community leaders from Melissa met on Thursday, November 12, 2009, at the Melissa Intermediate School, to create a strategic plan for the time period from 2009 to 2015. The retreat was facilitated by David W. Tees, Dr. Sherman Wyman, and seven students from The University of Texas at Arlington's School of Urban and Public Affairs. The afternoon retreat began with a dinner at 5:30 p.m. and was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Preparations for the retreat began about two weeks in advance with thirty minute interviews with the Mayor of Melissa and twenty-three others identified as important community leaders. The data gathered during these interviews, known as an "environmental scan," was summarized by the facilitators and displayed on large sheets of chart paper for review by retreat participants. All of the information gathered was reviewed by the facilitators at the start of the retreat, point by point. The data provided participants with an overview of conditions in Melissa

today as they are seen by the interviewees themselves. A summary of the interview results is shown in Appendix A.



Facilitator Robert Pacleb summarizes results from “environmental scan.”

After reviewing the interview summaries, participants were asked to develop statements describing what Melissa could be like in the year 2015 assuming “*reasonable luck, hard work and no miracles.*” There were many items identified that represented key elements of a community vision for Melissa. These vision elements are listed in Appendix B.

The facilitators were asked to use the vision elements as a basis for fashioning a narrative statement representing a preliminary vision for the community. It was thought that the narrative could be a useful concept piece for a smaller group to use to draw up a final vision statement at a later date. The requested draft vision narrative is proposed in Appendix C. When the vision elements were discussed thoroughly, retreat participants were asked to develop strategies—the means by which visions become realities. In this case, participants were split into two groups and asked to draw up a list of ideas (strategies) which they believed would be effective for realizing the elements of the 2015 vision for Melissa. To do this, facilitators guided participants through a

process known as the “Nominal Group Technique” or NGT. After each group developed its list of strategies (16 for Group A and 21 for Group B), colored dots, each color assigned a number value, were used by participants to rank the strategies according to their importance for the attainment of Melissa’s 2015 vision. After voting, the groups came back together and combined the top strategies from each group to establish a single list of strategic priorities.



Facilitators Justin Pruitt and Kristin Weegar help participants discuss and review strategies.

It was understood that all the strategies proposed by retreat participants would be included in the retreat report. However, it was agreed that principal attention would be given to the ten strategic priorities identified by retreat participants and to the actions believed necessary to implement each of them. It was suggested by facilitators that, as the year progresses and new challenges arise, the strategy list might be revisited and other strategies assigned priority for attention.

A list of all 37 strategies and the 10 identified as strategic priorities (in bold face type) is shown in Appendix D. Initial action responsibilities and target dates were specified by retreat

participants for each of the nine strategies identified as strategic priorities to encourage quick responses. Appendix E is a table showing the ten strategic priorities, actions that can be taken to implement each of them, the persons who agreed to take responsibility for the action and timelines for completed action in each case.

Post-Retreat Observations

If the enthusiasm of those present at the fall 2009 retreat is any indication, the future of Melissa is in good hands. We were impressed with the intelligent and open-minded discussions and sharing of ideas that took place in the plenary and small group sessions. The action agenda produced by retreat participants represents a strong and positive direction for the community as it moves forward to carve out its own distinctive destiny. Before closing this report, we have a few observations that we hope will enable Melissa profit fully from what was accomplished during the retreat.

Involve the Community

There is a considerable degree of skepticism in every community about public programs and the willingness of government and other public institutions to do what they say they are going to do. An effective way to allay skepticism about public leadership in Melissa is to present citizens with a compelling vision of the future for their town accompanied by the specific steps that their leaders have committed themselves to take in order to make that picture a reality. This must be followed by frequent public reporting on progress with implementation of the strategic priorities outlined in this document. To be effective, all of the media outlets at the command of the various community institutions which are stakeholders in the strategic planning process must be used to deliver the good news. Regular town hall meetings can be used to report on progress and give citizens a chance to ask questions and share their views on the future of Melissa. An

updated website incorporating a “strategy implementation scoreboard” is a useful way to keep citizens apprised of progress. The 7th and 8th grade classes of MISD are currently helping to research other outlets that Melissa could use to promote its vision. It would also be worthwhile to enlist some of the MISD high-school computer classes to design and maintain the new city website. By continually seeking out the most effective means of communicating with the public about the strategic priorities of Melissa, citizen support of development efforts will increase in the years ahead.

Staff Leadership and Coordination

Success with economic development requires the alignment and coordination of all community groups with a responsibility for the economic well-being and advancement of the community. Melissa has already discussed the appointment of an economic development director with a principal responsibility for attracting new businesses to the community. Such an individual who possesses the appropriate credentials and experience can provide the necessary leadership to stimulate coordinated action by key economic development stakeholders to pursue the city’s vision for the future. Any future direction on this position will be addressed by the City Council/4A at a later date.

Commitment and Follow Through

Strategic plans are not self-implementing. It is for that reason that strong emphasis was given at the retreat to the necessity of follow-through and progress monitoring. Success depends on an unqualified commitment from the city council, the chamber of commerce, Melissa Industrial and Economic Development Corporation (4A) and Melissa Community and Economic Development Corporation (4B) boards, the school board and other community institutions to follow-through on the strategic priorities and specific actions adopted at the retreat. This might

be done by forming a Strategic Planning Action Committee or similar body chaired by a prominent member of the community. Members might be selected from the institutions represented at the retreat and others who must be involved for sustained progress. The committee could meet bi-monthly to review implementation progress with the strategic priorities and related actions approved at the retreat. A simple monitoring sheet can be used to track implementation progress and encourage a discussion of what is going well, not so well and what should be added, deleted or changed. Information on progress should be made public. The committee also might propose modifications to the strategic plan in response to emergent community needs not foreseen during the planning process.

Constructive Interaction

One inevitable consequence of growth in cities like Melissa is a growing divide among citizens on what they want their community to be as the years pass. A portion of the residents want to preserve the small town character of Melissa that persuaded them to settle there in the first place while others want a transformation of Melissa into a vibrant community with job and shopping opportunities and other amenities found in larger cities. Often times developers are against any limits to development whatsoever while the environmentalists and portions of the population want to erect blockades at the borders. In many cases everybody has already taken sides and so nobody is really talking. While this has not occurred yet in Melissa, the City should be prepared to deal with this situation and see this as an opportunity. City government can serve as a catalyst for change first by acknowledging that no one will support a new vision or anything else being proposed unless they understand the reason for it. A second step is to encourage ongoing public discussion of the complex issues that accompany growth with emphasis on how the quality of life enjoyed by city residents can be preserved as the city continues to grow. People should be given a chance to talk with each other at town hall meetings and other venues

about what they like and do not like about the way the city is growing and how the 2015 vision might be modified to accommodate differing points of view. Outcomes of these discussions can be documented and shared with the city council and other public bodies and made available to all city residents on the city website. Further, development of an interactive curriculum for students at the 7th and 8th grade levels at MISD could be developed and used to inform these students how Melissa has grown and changed over time and to join these students in a discussion of what kind of community they want to live in as adults. All of these efforts should be helpful in connecting citizens with each other and to show them how planning for growth is necessary and vital key for community building.

Creating Opportunities to Celebrate

The most common definition of celebration is “a joyful occasion with special festivities to mark some happy event.” The hard work of community leaders and others to plan for the future of their community on behalf of their friends and neighbors is certainly an act worthy of celebration. The School of Urban and Public Affairs has cooperated over the years with many communities in strategic planning activities. Rarely, when the process is over, do those involved take time to celebrate what they have accomplished. Without a sense of closure and self-congratulation for a job well done, the next planning cycle can become a grind. We believe that appreciation dinners, council proclamations, or similar actions draw positive attention to those who have contributed their time to strategic planning efforts. Such efforts reward hard work and can encourage other citizens to get involved in future efforts. Another interesting definition of celebration that has particular relevance for strategic planning is, “to hold up or play up for public notice.” As mentioned previously, to have any hope of long term impact, the strategic priorities and action commitments that result from the planning process must be “held up” or shared with those who will be affected in an atmosphere that encourages public discussion. The

payoffs for the community for doing this in terms of ongoing community support and involvement can be enormous.

Appendices

Appendix A: Environmental Scan Results¹

1. What is going well in Melissa? What are the best features of the Melissa economy as you see them right now?

- 4th of July Parade – other civic activities /sense of community / community activity (8)
- Access to DART (Dallas Area Rapid Transit) rail line
- Administration is patient / administration willingness to say "no" (2)
- Beautification over last 12 years (2)
- Church growth, 75 member church to 900 members
- Collin county steel; hub for building supplies and materials; strong building industry (3)
- Comprehensive plan in place; thoroughfare and parks plan (4)
- Drive-up appeal from 75 into Melissa
- Economic development corporation is setting aside land for future
- Engaged community / new residents bringing new ideas / “new blood” / ideas (4)
- Escaping vertically to Melissa
- Exciting leadership / good leadership; good city staff (3)
- Exemplary schools / great superintendent (11)
- Getting charter prepared
- Good management of tax base, higher than other cities; recruitment of businesses (3)
- Growing young population / planning for growth / other communities are reacting to their environment (6)
- Highways 75, 121, 5, & future outer loop (15)
- Improved city systems with performance measures, budgetary process, record keeping, and keeping track of fund balance (2)
- Infrastructure investment – water, sewer, roads (8)
- Inviting buildings / aesthetics / well built and affordable communities and developments / quality of development and developers (8)
- Low crime / safety / police force: good balance of justice and care (3)
- Melissa a well kept secret / small community / everyone knows everyone (7)

¹ Numbers in parenthesis represent the number of similar responses to the interview question.

- Melissa’s economic potential / recession “a chance to catch our breath” (2)
- Mixing of old and new residents (2)
- Nice traffic flow
- Not over built and over burdening the schools / just enough people here to justify business (4)
- Potential to become another “Highland Park” (2)
- Property taxes reasonable / community for price is good / option for young families to move up (5)
- Proximity to Plano, Dallas, McKinney and amenities / population growing towards Melissa (8)
- Ready for retail, new growth / opportunity for development (3)
- Rural and country atmosphere / away from the hustle and bustle / resistant to change / slow growth (7)
- Sales tax revenue up over last 10 years; not as far down as could be (2)
- Selective but not exclusive and not Fairview
- Set standards / ordinance for quality growth / controls what is coming in and what is going on (3)
- Spirit of Melissa – neighborhoods have their own personality
- Strategically placed to create the same Prosper/Frisco relationship with McKinney/Melissa (2)
- Town center and new city hall (3)

2. What is not going well in Melissa? What are the major weaknesses or your chief concerns about the Melissa economy right now?

- 4A board is out of money, tied up in big debt obligations, \$1 million for Melissa Road / no extra 4B money (2)
- Anna has gotten ahead of Melissa, doubling population
- Beautification lacking, the fireworks stands look awful and need to clean up town for first impression / chickens and goats in backyards (2)
- Black cloud perception of leadership / council targeting one another for defeat /divisive politics / lack of leadership (10)
- Blank chalk board, but we are doing nothing
- Budgetary – sales tax projections are 50% or more off / sales tax revenue down (4)
- Builders not selling homes / concerned developers will go bankrupt (3)
- Chamber needs to be more involved
- City is too spread out, kind of looks like three cities
- Commercial market waiting for economic slump to end / economy, beyond administrators control (3)
- Communication issues / no mechanism for new and old resident communication (2)
- Condition of streets / highways / underdeveloped roads / hard to maneuver around access roads (4)
- Development is not coming along as expected / 15-20% growth not coming / lack of economic activity / nothing in the pipeline (7)
- Downtown looks awful, not ready to move in / need cleanup / core part of Melissa has economic issues (4)
- Forcing ourselves to go only with big boldest business development / going after downtown Dallas business plan (2)
- Fragmented community, with conflicting views / faction opposed to growth / not all have bought into change / them against us very pronounced / concern growth will have an adverse affect (5)
- Franchise taxes high
- Gas prices and commute scaring people away from suburbs (2)
- Infrastructure challenges of water and sewer absent for retailers and development (6)

- Independent school district and municipal government lack of cooperation (2)
- Lack of support for local business from the community / customers alienated by businesses / mom and pop stores failing / hard time keeping businesses (6)
- Lack of target marketing / not proactive about business awareness (2)
- Lack population to get and sustain stores or restaurants; not enough “rooftops” – population is too small (11)
- Lacking a downtown / no appealing town center (3)
- Land opportunities are small and rent is high / housing cost prohibitive / housing range on the high end (5)
- Land value worth more that it is used as / need more property value and office space (3)
- Major traffic not captured to encourage retail / money spent in McKinney (5)
- Missing one person for businesses information, socioeconomic info and demographics / unelected city staffer for stability in economic development (8)
- Need amenities: grocery store, healthcare center, restaurants, delivery places, bars (16)
- Need TIF (tax increment financing) to succeed to pay for bonds around town center
- Need to determine location decisions for retail and restaurants / need townhouses, condos, and small offices in one area / bring too much business without a plan (3)
- Need to regionalize
- Needs identity / no obvious country small town charm (2)
- No fast internet
- Not a home rule city
- Not allowing some businesses into city business climate, turning businesses away / road blocks trying to get permits / strict code ordinance / sign ordinance (5)
- Not enough diversification: property and sales tax base (4)
- Outsiders with lack of vision and understanding
- People need to think about where they start with their new businesses
- Melissa too far out, realtors don't know what's going on here (2)
- Small enough to pick sides, start rumors / some citizens have broken from the pack (2)
- Vacancies on main drag

3. What economic development opportunities do you see that the city can or should take advantage of?

- Eleven month supply of lots for development
- Quality development through zoning ordinances / manage land resources properly (3)
- Town center / encourage businesses to join in developing town center and building community (5)
- Interconnecting subdivisions
- Opportunity for variety of land uses (golf course, industrial parks, etc...) / 100 acres / utilize the parks / biking and walking trails / dog park (12)
- Private public partnerships / church / community college / school district / TXDOT (5)
- Significant population of young families
- Could be like Allen with different styles of housing (Apartments, Retirement, etc...) / supplying assisted living housing (3)
- Strong school district
- Leadership that people believe in
- Attracting technology based companies / back office industries / suppliers (5)
- Opportunity with the highways going through town / cross corridor from one side of town to the other / opportunity to develop near highways / outer loop (11)
- DART rail line access (2)
- Industry clusters / industrial base / warehousing (2)
- Infrastructure / capital improvements (4)
- Regionalization (2)
- Small town, sleepy community / family oriented (2)
- Trees; beautification program (2)
- Stable ad valorem taxes
- Plenty of room for businesses / small business opportunity (2)
- Melissa's potential to absorb predicted growth in downtown core / population increase to support diversity of businesses / population to support local business (6)
- Retail area / target family-orientated business / catch consumers - dry cleaners, hair salons, pharmacy, grocery stores, daycare, hospital (7)

- Full-time economic developer (2)
- A 4A and 4B executive director
- Housing prices less than other areas
- Market city of Melissa better / marketing materials for specific targeted businesses / “Easy to find hard to leave” campaign / city wide slogan (4)
- Moving into another chapter of planning
- Creating a 4A and 4B detailed plan for revenues / commit long term revenues
- Developing old Melissa

4. What obstacles could prevent the city from taking advantage of these opportunities?

- 4A Board absent an executive promotional director and unable to do the job themselves
- Affordable housing in low supply, Anna may have overdone it / keeping housing prices too high / need multi-family housing (5)
- Banks are not lending money for development
- Big government
- Business community is weak compared to Melissa community
- Change of attitude after election city council less enthusiastic
- City staff, boards and commissions not pro-active
- Communication obstacles / misinformation about Melissa (2)
- Consumer interest changing and commercial business not staying up with change and demographics
- Development is not based on comprehensive plan / “Where will the growth happen?” (3)
- Economic development website not developed
- Growing pains – lacks community maturity
- Infrastructure in terms of water and sewer (2)
- Lack of communication between city and community / people don’t know the details of Melissa / lack of community engagement (6)
- Lack of government outsourcing
- Lack of population to create partnerships with non profits / increase retail / increase local amenities (4)
- Lack rationalized process
- Land affordability / unavailable land for sale
- Land use
- Missing incentives for businesses / need more facilities for businesses to come (2)
- Need more businesses to come in addition to the town center
- Need someone to develop business / lack one person in place that will not change with a change in government (4)
- No MUD (municipal utility district) (2)
- No senior center
- Not ready for economic development

- Not using city staff effectively
- Old time philosophy on selling land
- Only one large church
- Overloading operations & management / people's resources are stretched (3)
- People's attitudes – “too country” or “Southern Oklahoma” / hard to change ideas of old Melissa (2)
- Perception of land fill area is negative
- Permit costs are too high / impact fees / lack incentives (5)
- Political grudges steering plans / old regime versus new / divided council / bad publicity during election / lack political unity (14)
- Politicians and staff becoming impatient
- Proximity to McKinney / Anna (3)
- Recession
- Retaining businesses
- School's attitude is not progressive/stagnant
- Sustained communication effort
- Tendency to invest in short-term plans / lack of “Big Picture” / lack of clear and consistent vision of development (4)
- Too many tax breaks given
- Vocal minority driving agenda not in everyone's best interest / residents of Stiff Creek area using EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) to prevent progress (2)
- Won't allow billboards / sign ordinance (2)

5. If you could see one thing accomplished, but only one, what would you want that to be?

- 80-90% of people that come in to the city, have reached their sanctuary
- A point where Melissa can define itself
- A safe, competent, effective, heterogeneous, balanced city
- A thriving town center / a sustainable community with walking distance between subdivision, library, shopping / live and work in Melissa / mixed used development housing, employment, and shopping (7)
- A united council / city leaders passionate about the city (3)
- All types of development / attract commercial business to support vision / good mix of retail and manufacturing / more business, restaurants, and a grocery store (10)
- Building supplies capital of North Texas / nurture building materials industry (2)
- Collin community fire and rescue
- City council meeting at parks, schools, or property owner associations parties to get more people involved
- Comprehensive plan with tax and budgetary elements beyond infrastructure for 8-10 years (2)
- Continue partnership between schools and city / families, and churches (2)
- DART comes here, and whole area upgraded
- Exemplary school district
- Facilitate quality development / continue to grow in a controlled manner
- Have a high level of unity in terms of economic development vision and funds
- Higher end homes
- Implement smart code philosophy into city transportation
- Keep it from looking like the rest of North Texas
- Let developers have breathing room
- Manufactures bring people into Melissa
- Melissa the next Highland Park
- Old antique look
- Outside of box development
- Reaching 5,000 population
- Seeing community events 4th of July celebration

- Transportation, get the widening done of 75, 121, 5 with available funds
- Walking trails, more interconnection (2)

6. Is there anything else I should know?

- Council is caring, but they need to be on same page
- Happy to be in Melissa; excited about Melissa (2)
- Technology should be a focus
- Quality of life to reach a peak for all citizens
- Everyone watches out for everyone / has pride in where they live
- Neighborhood are creating their own identity
- A good, clean neighborhood
- Beer stores are an eye soar
- Find a way to keep Jason Smith
- Alternative energy
- Collin County Community College is an important partner
- People can be rude at public meetings
- Need unification
- Former mayor's style of politics served Melissa well
- Working on a business continuity plan
- Need server backup, kept off site
- Council prefer to see failure among each other instead of moving forward
- Council a good old boys club
- City has a 80% brick ordinance
- Village of Melissa – 2 developers have gone out of business
- Community centers not developed in some developments
- Winchester Farms now light industrial previous slated for home major problems getting sewer
- Should have preserved library and Masonic building
- Comprehensive plan has a lot of green space and hike and bike trails
- Opposition annexation of ETJ except for utility purposes
- Do not want to be another Frisco / 15,000 - 20,000 population maximum
- Keep ambience / quality place and be proud of Melissa
- City staff that is proactive with economic development to support and raise the tax base

- Lot of mobile home cleanup
- Town center mixed development will set the tone of Melissa / aggregate retail around town center (3)
- Comprehensive plan needs to be a living breathing document
- Melissa should be a unique environment crossing Trinity River similar to Kansas City Power and Light District – pedestrian oriented
- Alcohol ban restricting
- Make city available to business
- Top priority is an economic development department is working full-time to make vision happen
- A lack of housing supply could change in a couple of months
- Zero projects in the pipeline
- Previous mayor not helping with economic development
- During economic crisis best recruiting time, greatest time to work on future
- Need an economic developer but not sure if we need one right now
- Look at the previous SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis from the comprehensive plan that has been done and build off that
- Target and recruit industries of diversity food services, general retail, 2-3 industrial categories, and office space users, medical component, and phone centers
- Good sign ordinance
- Diversify design without a commercial feel to create a sense of place and purpose where you want to raise a family
- Boils down to people in charge
- Some people in the community are engaged, some critics, and some are disengaged
- Would like to involve other people but stay the course

Appendix B: Melissa 2015 Vision Elements

1. What do you see in Melissa in 2015?

- Mass-Transit: bus, parking and DART (Dallas Area Rapid Transit) rail line into Melissa. Having interconnected trails that tie into the rail. Business centers that connect with the trails regulated with a Smart code.
- Master plan with development of city (infrastructure, etc.).
- Top schools, best in the world.
- A medium size city with a community atmosphere, exemplary schools, adequate tax base, and amenities to support population.
- Melissa has an uptown look, its family oriented for multi-generated opportunities; tax revenue is 40% from eco-friendly businesses recruited according to an industry cluster plan.
- Restored old town.
- Growing town with schools, governments' services and transportation systems.
- Highway projects complete (121 expansion), full-time fire department, independent school district will hit exemplary status at least once, trauma hospital in town.
- Revitalized downtown connected to the new town center, old town center, new town center connected through a series of retail shops.
- Neighborhood residents are able to walk safely and easily to one to another's homes, to schools and to businesses.
- A community center with fields for football, soccer and designed for lifetime adult recreational activities.
- A balanced mix of tax generated resources (sales and ad valorem).
- Melissa city leaders and residents focused on making the city a better place.
- MHS in partnership with university with 50% of students graduating high school with first year college completed, and 20% of involved engineering internship program.
- Community has a clearly articulated vision that people generally fall into, so that decisions are guide-posts.
- Connectivity throughout community/ hike and bike trails.
- Population has grown to 10,000 town center is a thriving center for business-banks, restaurants, another business.

- Self sustaining city with historic downtown, world class schools and a way to walk from one end to the other.
- Resort style destination location with walkability, schools, shops “Carmel-by-the-Sea.”
- Vibrant community made up of unique, complementary neighborhoods connected by a thriving town center supported by an exemplary school system.

Appendix C: Preliminary Vision Narrative for 2015

Melissa is a great place to live in 2015. Residents here enjoy the relaxed feeling of a small town but with all the advantages of a thriving business economy that provides meaningful employment. Melissa is an economic leader in Collin County through a progressive approach to economic development. New and mostly home-owned shops flourish as the result of a vigorous business retention and expansion program. Local residents have everything they need to shop locally.

Connected parks, exemplary schools, proximity to mass-transit, and the progress SMART government will all have brought Melissa to its place it is in 2015. As a result of a good leadership at city hall, our city entrance to Melissa off the interstate is attractive and welcoming. Town residents take great pride in their community. Everywhere there are clean and well-landscaped homes, buildings, and businesses.

Our city is filled with opportunity and growth. Due to our exemplary schools, teachers, and schools we have taught young people what they need to know to position themselves for successful careers, and to be successful in life. Melissa residents are proud of what has happened to their town in the last few years, and are eagerly anticipating those in the future. Visitors are amazed by the transformation and find Melissa a city to call home.

Appendix D: Vision-Attainment Strategies²

Strategies – Group A

1. Master plan developed for park system (5)
2. Sustained and sophisticated intra communication plan (15)
3. Recruit commercial and retail businesses (11)
4. Administer a community health (organizational) survey
5. Comprehensive master plan for city (15)
6. Create a product to sell by formulizing 2015 Vision through comprehensive plan (15)
7. Higher quality executive director to recruit/manage efforts to recruit new businesses (11)
8. Advertise uniqueness
9. Survey current businesses for likes / dislikes of Melissa (7)
10. Hire the staff to meet and coordinate and implement plan once plans finishes (2)
11. World class school, create a high-tech center, align with university, create an endowment program/ incentives/ foundation (30)
12. Aggressively seek land donations (10)
13. Developers / develop system to rank and target developers (9)
14. Comprehensive plan for economic development plan (clusters, education system, and regionalize) (19)
15. Institute a comprehensive communication system
16. Hire, grow, maintain strong campus administrators

² The number in parenthesis represents the number of “votes” given to the strategy by the retreat participants in the divided group.

Strategies – Group B

1. Promote Melissa entire package (17)
2. We will complete sidewalks and streets to connect neighborhoods, schools, and businesses (consolidated)
3. Recruit actively businesses kind of commercials we want (consolidated)
4. We need to work with our state, regional, and county to complete DART (Dallas Area Rapid Transit) expansion
5. Implement a community-oriented communications strategy linking neighborhoods together neighborhoods to city (by web and any other meetings) (23)
6. Implements park, trails improvement program and aggressively promote and implement connecting neighborhood (12)
7. Connect the housing area by roads (3)
8. Economic development begin actively recruiting businesses (24)
9. Implement the promotion as a universal package campaign among all city government and entities
10. We will develop a plan that implement a filter system for making decisions about the vision through the comprehensive plan (14)
11. Support bond issue for parks and trails instead of paying for it out of current revenue (4)
12. We need to work with TXDOT (Texas Department of Transportaiton) to acquire land (between 121 and Highway 5)
13. Aggressively pursue ‘Home Rule.’ (20)
14. Solicit community input in goal setting and then empower residence to be a part of solution
15. Communicate the vision to citizens via internet (consolidated)
16. Create a comprehensive for city (consolidated)
17. Implement the ‘SMART CODE’ for business clustering and housing options (19)
18. Work with landowners and developers to create sustainable green development
19. Inform residents of accomplishments and direction (consolidated)
20. Implement a system that enables citizens to utilize services
21. Continue add programs to independent school district (i.e. sports, programs for educational credits, fine arts, quality teachers) (16)

Appendix E: Action Steps, Timelines, and Progress Reporting

Action Steps, Timelines, and Progress Reporting

Strategies	Action Plans	Responsible	Date
1. Update and Implement Comprehensive Plan.	a. Review existing plan and revise by sub-comprehensive plan	CITY	Spring/Summer 2010
	b. Create a scope of work and engage professionals		Spring/Summer, 2010
2. World class school. Create a high-tech center, align with university, create an endowment program, incentive/foundation. (Sports, Dual credit, Fine arts, quality teachers)	a. Start developing partnerships with colleges and universities, and business community (High-tech, Texas Instrument, etc.)	MISD / 4A	January, 2011
3. Create a comprehensive economic development plan promoting regionalization and industry clusters	a. Search regional partnerships for economic development.	4A / MISD	March, 2010
4. Create a sustained and sophisticated intra-communication plan.	a. Implement a community oriented communications strategy linking neighborhoods together and neighborhoods to the city by web/internet or/and any other means.	CITY	-
	b. Identify definition(s) of messages(s). "What is the message?"		
	c. Identify the different modes of communication and the message(s) - 7th and 8th graders, MISD etc}		
5. Actively recruit commercial and retail businesses	a. Find a means for finance an EXEC. DIR.	4A/ 4B/ CITY	October, 2010
	b. Revise criteria for hiring EXEC. DIR. To incorporate regional ideas and strategies	4A	March, 2010
6. Hire quality executive director to manage efforts to recruit new businesses.	a. Find a means for finance an Economic Development Director.	4A/ 4B/ CITY	October, 2010
7. Implement the 'SMART CODE' for business clusters and housing options.	a. Develop a hybrid 'SMART CODE' proposal.	CITY	In Progress
	b. Begin formal adoption process.		Spring, 2010
	c. Submit Proposal to key community groups for review and feedback.		
	d. Submit it to citizens through wide variety of means (Ads, meetings, website, etc.)		

8. Promote Melissa's total "package" - lifestyle/who we are/what we want	a. Identify 'point person' for managing communication process.	CITY	
	b. Publish revised comprehensive plan.		January, 2011
	c. Publish revised Economic Development plan.		
	d. Circulate the summary through identified communication modes (website, etc.)		
	e. Develop an annual tool to recap work of city during the year.	CITY/MISD	January, 2010
9. Aggressively pursue 'Home Rule'	a. Agree on methodology for declaring population	CITY	Spring 2010
	b. Formal declaration of 5,000 if applicable		
	c. Creation of Charter Committee		

Appendix F: Participants

City of Melissa:

Reed Greer, Mayor
Dan Trott, Mayor Pro Tem
Randy Kaiser, City Council
Sharon Weideman, City Council
Stan Mercer, City Council
Bill Farmer, City Council
Jason Little, City Administrator
Bob Helmberger, City Engineer

Community Participants

Bill Reynolds
Brent Brown
Carolyn Corbin
David Dorman
Don Paschal
Dr. Lawrence Silver
Dr. Robert Rich
Jason Smith
Jim Luscombe
Kelly Maberry
Kenny Deel
Leanne Bush
Michael Davis
Michael Moore
Pastor Trey Graham
Ray Corbin
Scott Birmingham
Shannon Mott
Steve Rodriguez

Supplemental Comments

Texas Enterprise Fund

The 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, created the Texas Enterprise Fund (fund), to give the governor the ability to respond quickly to opportunities in bringing companies and jobs to Texas. The fund can be used for a variety of economic development projects, including infrastructure development, community development, job training programs and business incentives.

Emerging Technology Fund

The 79th Legislature, Regular Session, 2005, created the Texas Emerging Technology Fund (ETF) as a dedicated investment fund to cultivate research and development activities in the new economy from new and emerging technology. Eligible projects are vetted by the Emerging Technology Advisory Committee. Priority funding is awarded to proposals that:

- (1) Involve scientific or technical fields that have a reasonable probability of enhancing this state's national and global economic competitiveness;
- (2) May result in a medical or scientific breakthrough or a breakthrough in the area of clean energy;
- (3) are interdisciplinary;
- (4) Have attracted or may attract federal and other funding for research superiority;
- (5) are likely to create a nationally or internationally recognized locus of research superiority; or
- (6) are matched with other funds available to the institution seeking funding.

The North Texas Regional Center for Innovation and Commercialization (NTXRCIC) is tasked with promoting awareness of the ETF, identification and preparation of quality deals for review

at the state level, working with all elements of the Regional 'entrepreneurial ecology' and continued support to ETF companies that have received ETF funding in the 63 county region.

Since the NTXRCIC began in 2005, the North Texas region has already secured over \$54 million in ETF investment for 28 projects:

22 Commercialization awards

4 Research Superiority grants

2 Researching Match grants

Public Private Partnership

A public private partnership is a business venture between a government entity and a private company. In the partnership the government entity may provide support through infrastructure, tax incentives, administrative support, below market loans, subsidized utilities, and in many other forms.

Electric Cooperative

An electric cooperative operates in partnership to cooperatively own the infrastructure for an electrical system. Electric cooperatives are different from other power providers because the cooperatives are tax-paying, not-for-profit businesses owned by the consumers they serve. Areas under an electric cooperative can benefit a municipality through an incentive package to provide reduced or partially subsidized electrical power to attract businesses.

Developing Incubators

The City of Melissa maintains land that may be utilized to create an incubator and industry cluster. The city provides a structure for a short fixed time to nurture and develop new technology. The entity utilizing the services and facility will provide some ownership of the technology and locate within the city's industry cluster after vacating the facility. The plan can be created in cooperation with the NTXRCIC and the universities in close proximity.

Business incubators are designed to accelerate the success of entrepreneurial companies by providing resources for growth and expansion. An industry cluster means a concentration of businesses and industries in a geographic region that are interconnected by the markets they serve, the products they produce, their suppliers, the trade associations to which their employees belong, and the educational institutions from which their employees or prospective employees receive training.

For more information for a successful strategy of this form of a public-private partnership, it is available by reviewing the strategy of TECH Fort Worth. The partnership functions as a collaborative effort between the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth, the city of Fort Worth, and the Fort Worth business community.