

# City of Johnson City

## **STRATEGIC WORK PLAN**



### **CITY COUNCIL**

- Rhonda Stell, Mayor**
- Patricia Dildine, Councilmember**
- Gayla Guthrie, Councilmember**
- Teresa Babb, Councilmember**
- Stephanie Fisher, Councilmember**
- Shelton Coleman, Councilmember**

**Amended by the City Council on July 7, 2022**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A **Strategic Work Plan** is a living document created by the City Council to guide future policy decisions and Staff actions. Each year, the City Council revisits the document to remind itself of the City's vision, mission, history, goals, and work tasks.

### VISION STATEMENT

Our vision for Johnson City includes a well-planned community, ensuring small town values that consider our town's rich history, resulting in an improved quality-of-life for all Johnson City citizens and those who visit.

### MISSION STATEMENT

To promote and enhance quality-of-life thru the advancement of excellent services, superior infrastructure, and community growth and public safety.

### HISTORY

Johnson City, the county seat of Blanco County, is at the junction of U.S. Highways 281 and 290, twelve miles north of Blanco in the central part of the County. Settlers living along the Pedernales River in the rugged central part of the County, among them one James Polk Johnson, for whom the town was later named, thought that the county seat at Blanco was not accessible, so, in 1876, they called for an election to move the courthouse closer to the geographical center of the County. When this attempt failed, the citizens followed Johnson's lead and began publicizing the idea of establishing a new community. The site chosen was on land originally granted to James Fentress, which belonged to Johnson. A post office was established there in 1878, and, soon afterwards, town lots were offered for sale. In 1879, the people successfully petitioned for an election to choose a new county seat but were defeated. Meanwhile, the town continued to grow, especially bolstered by the construction of Johnson's two-story office building and his hotel. He also donated lots for schools. In 1890, another county seat election, a hotly contested one, made Johnson City the County seat.

Though its new status boosted the economy of the community, Johnson City did not get modern utilities until the 1930s, when Lyndon Baines Johnson, a relative of the founder of the City, sponsored legislation that introduced full electric power to the area under the Lower Colorado River Authority and the Pedernales Electric Cooperative. After Johnson became a United States Senator and began his climb to the presidency, telephone service rapidly progressed from the old magnetic box phones to dial service and then to worldwide service. In addition, when he returned from the White House, Johnson made the United States a gift of his lands, now the Lyndon Baines Johnson National Historical Park.

Johnson City, for many years mainly a ranch trade center, had a steady tourist business from its origins. Though the number of businesses dropped from twenty in 1914 to seven in 1933, it rose to forty-two in the mid-1950s, when the town was incorporated. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, when Johnson was President of the United States, the major income in Johnson City came from the tourist industry, and the number of businesses rose to fifty-two. By 1986, the number had dropped to twenty-six. The town's newspaper, the Record-Courier, was established in 1883. The population fluctuated from 400 in 1925 to 950 in the late 1940s, and from 660 to 800 between the late 1960s and the mid-1980s. Johnson City continues to be mainly a tourist center. In 1990, the population was 932. That figure increased to 1,191 by 2000. The U.S. Census Bureau 2019 population estimate is 2,131.

*Mary H. Ogilvie, "Johnson City, TX," Handbook of Texas Online, accessed December 20, 2020, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/johnson-city-tx>.*

**GOAL 1 | INCREASE HOUSING DIVERSITY**  
**short- to mid-term goal (2021 - 2026)**

**PRIORITY ONE:**

Support the development of single- and multi-family residential housing.

**PROJECTS**

- ~~Conduct a property analysis and identify those single- and multi-family properties that are or can easily be serviced by water and wastewater utilities.~~
- Increase water and wastewater capacity throughout the City.
- Amend the Code of Ordinances to allow for flexibility regarding septic systems, densities, setback requirements, lot sizes, and other subdivision and zoning-related matters.

**PRIORITY TWO:**

Assist the single- and multi-family residential housing development community.

**PROJECTS**

- Provide Staff assistance to the single- and multi-family residential housing development community on securing necessary zoning and related matters.
- Support annexation of single- and multi-family residential housing developments.

**PRIORITY THREE:**

Promote the development of single- and multi-family residential housing .

**PROJECTS**

- Promote the City through a variety of mediums to the single- and multi-family residential housing development community.
- Consider the use of economic development incentives for large, multi-family housing developments.

**GOAL 2 | EXPAND QUALITY LODGING**  
**mid-term goal (2024 - 2026)**

**PRIORITY ONE:**

Support the expansion and development of quality lodging.

**PROJECTS**

- ~~Conduct a property analysis and identify those commercial properties that are or can easily be serviced by water and wastewater utilities.~~
- Encourage the development of quality lodging within or near the City's Downtown District.
- Increase water and wastewater capacity throughout the City.
- Amend the Code of Ordinances to allow for flexibility regarding septic systems, building heights and densities, and the use of grey water for landscaping and other irrigation purposes.

**PRIORITY TWO:**

Assist the lodging development community.

**PROJECTS**

- Provide Staff assistance to the lodging development community on securing necessary zoning and related matters.
- Support annexation of quality lodging developments.

**PRIORITY THREE:**

Promote the development of quality lodging.

**PROJECTS**

- Promote the City through a variety of mediums to the lodging development community.
- Consider the use of economic development incentives for lodging developments located within the Downtown District and/or providing increased walkability throughout the community.

**GOAL 3 | IMPROVE CODE ENFORCEMENT**  
**short-term goal (2021 - 2023)**

**PRIORITY ONE:**

~~Create and m~~aintain a Code Enforcement / Animal Control Department.

**PROJECTS**

- ~~Employ a competent Code Enforcement / Animal Control Officer licensed through the Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation (TDLR) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).~~
- Provide continuing education for the Code Enforcement / Animal Control Officer.

**PRIORITY TWO:**

Provide the tools necessary for the Code Enforcement / Animal Control Officer to identify, respond, and correct Code violations throughout the City in a timely manner.

**PROJECTS**

- ~~Configure and u~~tilize iWorQ's FundView's Code Enforcement Module for the identification, tracking, and correction of Code Enforcement / Animal Control issues throughout the community.
- Utilize iWorQ's a Citizen Rrequest Mmodule to receive citizen complaints and/or comments and rectify said issues in a timely manner.

**PRIORITY THREE:**

Initiate a public relations campaign to educate the public on Code of Ordinances requirements.

**PROJECTS**

- Utilize the City's website, social media platforms, utility billing statements, and other appropriate mediums to educate the public on:
  - Municipal Code of Ordinances;
  - iWorQ's Citizen Rrequest platforms;
  - Short-term rental unit registration requirements and Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) collection and remittance; and
  - All other identified Code Enforcement issues.

## GOAL 4 | IMPROVE STREETSCAPING & SIGNAGE short- to mid-term goal (2021 - 2026)

### PRIORITY ONE:

Create and/or encourage distinctive and aesthetically pleasing streetscaping and signage within the City's main commercial corridors (U.S. Hwy. 290, U.S. Hwy. 281, and N. Nugent Ave.).

#### PROJECTS

- Install and/or encourage the development of sidewalks, pedestrian amenities, streetlighting, and improved directional signage within the City's main commercial corridors.
- Reduce vehicular speed limits on U.S. Hwy. 290 / Main St. and U.S. Hwy. 281.

### PRIORITY TWO:

Maintain existing entry signage welcoming residents and visitors to the City.

#### PROJECTS

- ~~Determine whether current entry signage is located on Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) rights-of-way or private property.~~
- ~~If located on private property, determine if right-of-entry documentation exists for said signage. If not, create and receive property owner approval of right-of-entry documents for each location.~~
- ~~Work with the Johnson City Chamber of Commerce and replace and/or repair defective signage components, including, but not limited to, paint, wording, pictures, irrigation, and landscaping.~~

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### PRIORITY THREE:

Determine whether existing entry signage should be updated and/or replaced.

#### PROJECTS

- Locate and secure, through TxDOT, public rights-of-way for signage location(s).
- Engage a landscape architect, architect, or professional engineer to design signage.
- Develop project cost estimate(s) and determine funding options.
- Bid and construct gateway signage in TxDOT rights-of-way.



**GOAL 5 | IMPROVE FIRE SAFETY**  
**short-term goal (2021 - 2023)**

**PRIORITY ONE:**

Evaluate and rectify identified deficiencies in the City's current fire safety infrastructure.

**PROJECTS**

- Add, replace, and/or repair existing nonfunctional fire hydrants and valves throughout the City.
- Correct negative pressure and line collapse issues identified within the City's water infrastructure.
- Increase the number of fire hydrants on U.S. Hwy. 290 / Main St.

**PRIORITY TWO:**

~~Streamline the City's International Fire Code review and approval of commercial and residential subdivision developments.~~

**PROJECTS**

- ~~▪ Create an efficient and effective International Fire Code review process utilizing City Staff, Bureau Veritas, and/or the Johnson City Volunteer Fire Department.~~

**GOAL 6 | IMPROVE STREETS**  
**short- to mid-term goal (2021 - 2026)**

**PRIORITY ONE:**

~~Create an~~ **Update** annual Street Improvement Plans for City Council review and approval during the Municipal Budget process.

**PROJECTS**

- Utilize ~~iWorQ's a P~~avement ~~M~~anagement ~~M~~odule to document street and signage condition indexes, deficiencies, treatments, and/or replacements.
- Evaluate all readily available street surface treatment options and recommend surface treatments that offer long-term results and are cost effective.
- Prioritize and correct street sub-base failures. Correctly installed street sub-base provides strength and support for pavement, proper drainage, and prevents pavement settlement.

**PRIORITY TWO:**

Implement a "Complete Streets" model when drafting annual Street Improvement Plans.

**PROJECTS**

- A "Complete Streets" model considers all infrastructure located within municipal rights-of-way, including, but not limited to, right-of-way vegetation, culverts and other drainage structures, sidewalks, signage, pavement, and street striping.
- ~~Regularly M~~mow / trim rights-of-way ~~regularly~~.
- ~~Regularly R~~emove debris from all culverts and drainage structures.
- ~~Regularly A~~ddress damaged sidewalks, signage, pavement, and street striping. Include parking spaces, road crossings, et. cetera when proposing street striping.
- ~~Regularly R~~oute and fill street cracks ~~in a timely manner~~.
- ~~Regularly R~~eplace faded and/or ineffective signage ~~regularly~~.

**PRIORITY THREE:**

Address parking along and within public rights-of-way and its affect on street edge pavement.

**PROJECTS**

- Amend the Code of Ordinances to address and/or prohibit parking along and within public rights-of-way and its affect on street edge pavement.

**PRIORITY FOUR:**

Add accessible public parking within the Downtown / Historic Overlay District.

**PROJECTS**

- Plan and implement an accessible public parking lot on City-owned property near the intersection of Lady Bird Lane and E. Elm St.

**GOAL 7 | INCREASE PUBLICITY & PROMOTION OF THE COMMUNITY**  
**short-term goal (2021 - 2023)****PRIORITY ONE:**

Develop a cohesive public relations message / campaign for the City, the Johnson City Chamber of Commerce, and the Johnson City Visitor's Center.

**PROJECTS**

- Increase the use of different types of multimedia, including, but not limited to, photography, print materials, videography, infographics, and aerial video footage.
- Increase the City's social media presence across:
  - Instagram;
  - Facebook;
  - Twitter;
  - Nextdoor;
  - LinkedIn; and
  - YouTube.

**PRIORITY TWO:**

Continue to promote and encourage day-tripping and other forms of tourism within Johnson City.

**PROJECTS**

- Create a campaign that promotes what to see/do/eat in the City.
- Develop videos that highlight activities in the City.

**PRIORITY THREE:**

Develop and implement additional City-sponsored events for community enjoyment and increased tourism and lodging within the City.

**GOAL 8 | INCREASE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**  
**long-term goal (2027+)****PRIORITY ONE:**

Evaluate and refine current marketing and communication plan efforts for the development and real estate community.

**PROJECTS**

- Ensure easy access to complete and pertinent development information on the City website and through other electronic mediums.
- Use social media and other mediums to promote development opportunities.
- Attend trade and similar events and distribute information directly to the development and real estate community.

**PRIORITY TWO:**

Better communicate the City's commercial growth strategy within the corporate City limits and its Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ).

**PROJECTS**

- Promote development within the Downtown District and along all commercial corridors (U.S. Hwy. 290, U.S. Hwy. 281, and N. Nugent Ave.).
- Encourage general economic activity, tourism, alcohol-based tourism, and eco-tourism.
- Target restaurants, retail establishments, corporate or regional headquarters, grocery stores, and all other business types housed within buildings of 25,000 sq. ft. or less.
- Highlight the benefits of being located within the corporate City limits.
- Encourage annexation if located in the ETJ.

**PRIORITY THREE:**

Utilize all available economic development incentives to encourage and support the City's commercial growth strategy.