

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS,  
ESTABLISHING AN ABILENE COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE (ACE) OVERSIGHT  
COMMITTEE.

WHEREAS, the Abilene Community Excellence (ACE) Task Force has completed its report outlining strategies for improving the City's economic and community development quality of life; and,

WHEREAS, the ACE Task Force recommended the creation of an Oversight Committee to ensure that the strategic plans, projects, and ideas contained in the report are brought to fruition.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS:

PART 1: That the City Council of the City of Abilene hereby establishes an ACE Oversight Committee. Said Committee shall be composed of nine (9) members, eight of who shall serve by virtue of their office as:

Chairman of the Abilene Regional Airport Board  
Chairman of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce  
President of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce  
Chairman of the Technology Committee  
President of the Development Corporation of Abilene  
Chairman of the Abilene Industrial Foundation  
Chairman of the Tax Increment Financing District Board  
Director of the Texas Midwest Community Network

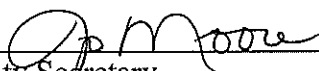
The ninth member shall be appointed at-large by the Mayor of the City of Abilene and shall serve for a two-year term.

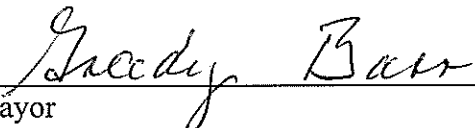
PART 2: That the Committee shall carry out the tasks and roles delegated to it by the City Council and the recommendations contained in the ACE Task Force report as shown in the attached Exhibit "A."

PART 3: That this resolution shall take effect immediately from and after its passage.

ADOPTED this 12 day of November, 2001.

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney

## X. FRAMEWORK FOR OVERSIGHT

### Need for Oversight

Strategic planning is a proactive process that should extend into and through the established timeline for completion. The recommendations outlined in this Plan will not implement themselves. There are so many variables involving different actors, schedules, and precedent events that taking a passive approach to implementation will have the strategic plans gathering dust in no time. Organizations that are serious about the process devote the resources necessary to coordinate, manage, and oversee the implementation phase.

When a strategic plan is completed, there is a great sense of community pride and a strong desire to produce results. This feeling of accomplishment provides important momentum for a brief time to "keep the ball rolling." That period provides the opportunity to secure the resources and put a mechanism in place for oversight. Momentum built upon feeling often wanes quickly. Without a tangible and immediate organizational commitment to bringing the strategic plans, projects, and ideas to fruition, the opportunity to ensure the success of the strategic planning effort may be irretrievably lost.

Regardless of what form or structure it takes, the oversight function is needed to steer the strategic plan around problems that are common to local government.

- *Attention Deficit*  
Local governments are by nature reactive organizations. Responding to the latest demand, the crisis of the week, and generally focusing on the present is the norm. Urgent but unimportant matters (in the longer view) diminish personal and organizational effectiveness. A local government should have a firmly established culture that values multi-year goal setting and accountability for executing those goals. Where it does not exist, an entity with oversight responsibility for the strategic plan is needed to ensure that the plan does not suffer from a lack of attention.
- *Shifting Priorities*  
Times change, and so do community priorities. A good strategic plan takes this reality into account by providing for periodic updates. However, some cities make harmful shifts in their priorities and jeopardize the overall effectiveness of the strategic plan. These are changes that occur without a proper foundation in planning, critical thinking or public input. They

can weaken the cohesiveness and long-term viability of the plan. Independent oversight will reduce the chances that ill-advised changes will supplant the plan's legitimately derived priorities.

- *Lack of Goal Congruence*

Each of the strategic recommendations in this report stems from a goal that a group in the Task Force developed to solve a particular problem or issue. The Task Force was coordinated, and great care was taken to be certain that the strategies and attendant goals are not at cross purposes with each other. A variety of actors and different City departments will have responsibility for implementing the strategies. Since each of these has its own set of goals and way of doing things, there is a very real possibility that the strategies will be co-opted for other ends. Continuous oversight can keep the Task Force's overall goals intact and ensure that the manner in which a strategy is implemented remains true to its original goal.

- *Parochial Interests*

A local government has a primary responsibility to listen to and respond to the needs of its taxpayers. It is not that a city will ignore the interests of non-residents and neighboring units of government, but understandably, those interests will be subordinated to the concerns of its own constituents. The strategies in this Plan include recommendations with regional implications. Proper oversight will ensure that wider area interests are engaged whenever they are essential to implementation of a strategy.

## Organization

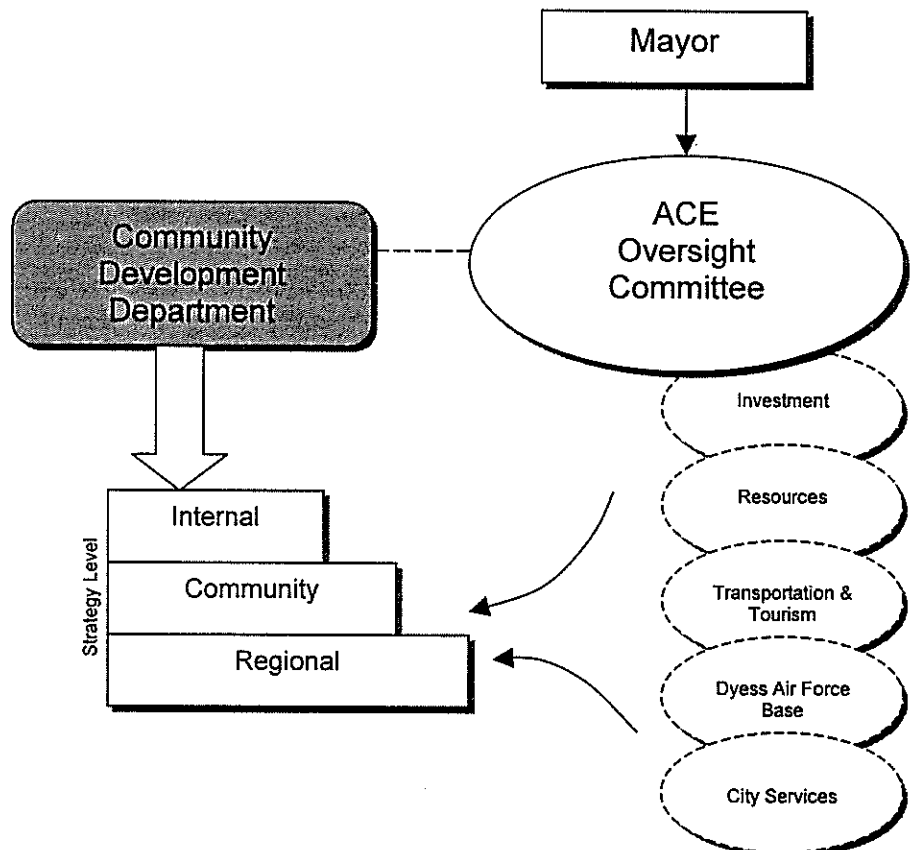
Throughout the strategic planning process, Mayor Barr, Chairman Ferguson and members of the Advisory Committee emphasized the need to manage implementation of the strategic plans. A general view emerged that day-to-day responsibility should reside in the City's Community Development Department. Staff from the Department worked closely with the Task Force throughout the process. Community Development staff assisted the groups in drafting or critiquing their strategies, and they are familiar with the underlying goals and rationale. As the Department in charge of other City planning efforts, it has the information necessary to coordinate implementation of the strategic plans within a broader context.

In addition, an independent entity should be established to provide general oversight of the Department's activities and to deal with the thornier problems that are likely to arise from the issues noted above, namely, attention deficit, shifting priorities, lack of goal congruence, and parochial interests. Toward that end, as a suggestion, the Mayor should appoint a five member ACE Oversight Committee with such terms and other conditions of office as he deems appropriate. In keeping with the regional theme of the Task

Force itself, one or more of the Committee members should represent concerns outside the City proper. Either by design or through mutual agreement, the members should organize themselves and their duties around the five Task Force groups.

For purposes of analyzing the working relationship of the Community Development Department and the Oversight Committee, the strategic plans can be categorized into three levels by principal organization/actor.

- *Internal* issues are those that modify local government function, policy or process. Examples include reorganization of environmental code enforcement, improved street maintenance, and reforming the City's development process.
- A *Community* strategy is one that requires cooperative arrangements with local non-profits and quasi-governmental entities. The targeted industries study, formation of a downtown development authority, workforce retention, creation of the technology non-profit, and the provision of neighborhood-based services, are all examples of community strategies.
- Finally, *Regional* issues depend largely upon cooperative agreements with other units of government. These include such important strategies to address encroachment at Dyess Air Force Base, improvements to Shotwell Stadium, privatization of DAFB utilities and housing, and a decision on a regional tourism identity.



Properly managed, the Community Development Department should be effective in advancing internal strategies. However, it lacks the *de jure* authority to influence actors outside the confines of city hall. The Oversight Committee will be most helpful in that regard. As community and regional stakeholders, they are already plugged into networks that can facilitate bringing organizations and actors to the table. In that sense, Committee members can and should do much more than merely sit back and watch how implementation of the strategic plan is progressing.

### Roles of the Committee

The Community Development Department and Oversight Committee must share other roles that are critical to the implementation phase. Once again their responsibilities can be assigned roughly by strategy level. They are illustrated in the table below.

ROLE		STRATEGY LEVEL		
		Internal	Community	Regional
Second Tier Priorities	Action	▲	▼	▼
	Timing	▲	▲▼	▲▼
Implementation Resources		▲	▲▼	▼
Boundary Management		▲	▼	▼
Communications		▲	▲▼	▲▼

 Community Development Department  
 ACE Oversight Committee

1. **Second Tier Priorities** — The second tier priorities are ranked in no particular order. Nor do they include a commence date. At some point, the Department and Committee must draft a plan for the order and timing of these strategies.
2. **Implementation Resources** — All of the strategies require staff or monetary resources in order to succeed. Some will also need the infusion or expenditure of political capital. Depending upon the issue, the Oversight Committee will be instrumental in acquiring the resources necessary to move forward.
3. **Boundary Management** — To sports enthusiasts, boundary management is the same thing as “running interference” for the person carrying the ball. Implementing the strategic plans should be a cooperative endeavor for everyone. But if someone gets upset because its treads on his or her turf, and progress is threatened, then the Department Director or Oversight

Committee will need to do some “downfield blocking” and clear the path for implementation.

4. Communications — The City Council and community at-large want timely information on the status of implementing the Task Force recommendations. The Department should handle most written and web-based reporting for both internal and external dissemination. The Committee should provide periodic updates to the Council and be available for other public presentations.