



Cameron, North Carolina

Report of
Economic Positioning Vision Forum
May 31, 2018



July 24, 2018



NC Department of Commerce
Rural Economic Development Division
NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center

Report on *Cameron Economic Positioning Vision Forum* *An Economic Development Strategy*

Cameron is quaint, vibrant and rich in history, and the hub for antiques, eclectic shopping and dining in the Sandhills. Cameron is a destination for cultural activities celebrating local artists and artisans with access to regional attractions.

Introduction

Community visioning is the process of developing consensus about what future the community wants, and then deciding what is necessary to achieve it. An economic positioning/vision statement captures what community members most value about their community, and the shared image of what they want their community to become.

It inspires community members to work together to achieve the vision. Community economic positioning/vision statements are typically developed through a collaborative process that involves a wide variety of community residents, stakeholders and elected officials.

A community economic positioning/vision statement is one of the elements needed to form a forward-looking strategic framework that provides local government boards/commissions the long-term and comprehensive perspective necessary to make rational and disciplined tactical, incremental decisions on community issues as they arise.

The Process

On Thursday, May 31, 2018, thirty-eight (38) Cameron residents and six (6) town board members gathered at the Cameron United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall at 465 Carthage Street to develop an Economic Positioning/Vision Statement for the Town. The forum was facilitated by the *NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center (MS&RPC)*, a division of the NC Department of Commerce. *MS&RPC* is part of the NC Department of Commerce, the state's lead agency for workforce, community, and economic development. In this capacity, the Center provides planning assistance and downtown revitalization to communities across the state, primarily in economic development planning.

There were five tables of 7-8 people at each with a Town Board member acting as Team Leader. The facilitator led the Teams through a series of activities:

- 1) Identifying the Town's assets
- 2) Identifying the Town's economic drivers
- 3) Identifying the Town's challenges or weaknesses

Each Team was tasked with developing an economic positioning/vision statement utilizing those resources. The statements were read and posted on the wall. Prior to leaving, each team member was asked to “vote” by placing a sticky dot onto their favorite statement.

The facilitator later transcribed each statement, identified “action statements” from each and sent to a small group of 4 to 5 team members the list of action statements with the task of writing a statement using up to 3 of the action statements. The facilitator took elements from each of those statements, the most popular of the Team statements and shaped it into the proposed Cameron Economic Positioning/Vision Statement:

Cameron is quaint, vibrant and rich in history, and the hub for antiques, eclectic shopping and dining in the Sandhills. Cameron is a destination for cultural activities celebrating local artists and artisans with access to regional attractions.

Summary Work Plan

The positioning statement is just a collection of words if there is no action to achieve the vision. A summary workplan has been developed to follow the development strategies within the statement:

- a) *Quaint, vibrant and rich in history*
- b) *Hub for antiques, eclectic shopping and dining (in the Sandhills)*
- c) *Destination for cultural activities celebrating local artists and artisans*

A goal and measurable objective was determined for each. Possible actions were suggested to achieve the goals and objectives based on the Four Points of Main Street® *Organization, Design, Promotion and Economic Vitality.*

The Town’s Assets, Economic Drivers and Challenges (weaknesses) lists developed during the forum are also included as part of this report.

Next Steps

The Town of Cameron should not endeavor to undertake all these actions by itself! A working group of residents and other partners, including the *Main Street & Rural Planning Center*, should be organized to implement these proposed actions over the course of the next five years. We suggest appointing a leader for each of the Four Points of Main Street® and recruit individuals who can provide knowledge, resources and labor and report to the Town Board quarterly about progress. For this report, the Town should handle the items labeled “Organization” but appoint the others.

For guidance and some assistance, please be sure to contact the Community Economic Development Planner for the Sandhills (South Central) Prosperity Zone. Her name is Grace Lawrence, grace.lawrence@ncommerce.com (910) 391-1298.

The Main Street & Rural Planning Center office is in Raleigh and the number is (919) 814-4658.

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**Cameron Economic Positioning Vision &
Summary Work Plan (Proposed)
7/24/18**

Cameron is quaint, vibrant and rich in history, and the hub for antiques, eclectic shopping and dining in the Sandhills. Cameron is a destination for cultural activities celebrating local artists and artisans with access to regional attractions.

O: Organization D: Design P: Promotion EV: Economic Vitality

Development Strategies:

1. Cameron is quaint, vibrant and rich in history

- **Goal:** Improve appearance and use of buildings and streetscape/hardscape
- **Objectives:** Reduce by 75% abandoned, vacant and unkempt properties by 2023
Increase by 50% streetscape/hardscape improvements by 2023

Possible Actions:

- O: Inventory abandoned, vacant and unkempt buildings/properties with photos and descriptions to identify property owners, establish baseline and to keep track of improvements/status
- O: Inventory existing sidewalk distance and condition and evaluate where to add additional sidewalks
- O: Consider establishing design guidelines for new buildings*
- D: Evaluate where there is need for amenities such as benches, trash/recycling receptacles, signage such as for Public Parking, etc. and begin putting together a plan for incorporating
- O: Review existing ordinances, policies, and practices regarding historic district for best practices to encourage investment and renovations
- O: If it does not exist, consider a plaquing program to install signage or other recognition on contributing buildings to Cameron's National Register Historic District (1983)
- EV: Establish and cultivate a new market for dewberries



2. Hub for antiques, eclectic shopping and dining in the Sandhills

- **Goal:** Increase diverse retail and dining options
- **Objective:** Adding two new eclectic businesses to the retail mix by June 2020 and increase downtown retail sales by 20% by June of 2023.

Possible Actions:

- EV: Use business inventory template to track all businesses and identify the truly unique and eclectic existing retail.
- EV: Utilizing retail marketing research, identify retail gaps and put together a business recruitment program
- EV: Research incentives and identify best incentives that could assist in growth
- P: Develop a creative marketing program to promote Cameron as “hub for antiques, eclectic shopping and dining in the Sandhills.”

3. Destination for cultural activities celebrating local artists and artisans

- **Goal:** Grow and expand opportunities for cultural activity
- **Objective:** Increase by 100% the number of current cultural activities by 2021

Possible Actions:

- EV: Create and promote pop-up spaces for quarterly or monthly “makers market”
- D: Encourage development of colorful public art within town spaces
- EV: Encourage development of studios and makers space
- O: Develop policies/procedures for independent organizations to develop cultural activities/events in town limits
- EV: Develop methods to spin-off artist and makers activities into long-term businesses (See #2)

Assets-Combined		
5/31/2018		
Comments	Category	Group
Attractive homes/yards	Buildings	Design
Available property (affordable)	Buildings	Design
Homes available	Buildings	Design
Antique destination	Business	Economic Vitality
Antique Shops	Business	Economic Vitality
Antique shops	Business	Economic Vitality
Antiques business very established	Business	Economic Vitality
Auto shops/towing	Business	Economic Vitality
Christmas Tree Farm	Business	Economic Vitality
Convenience store	Business	Economic Vitality
Dewberry Deli	Business	Economic Vitality
Family owned businesses\School	Business	Economic Vitality
Farming	Business	Economic Vitality
Farms	Business	Economic Vitality
Horse community	Business	Economic Vitality
James Creek Cider	Business	Economic Vitality
Lumber	Business	Economic Vitality
Miss Belle's Tea Room	Business	Economic Vitality
Restaurant	Business	Economic Vitality
Sand	Business	Economic Vitality
Churches	Community	Promotion
Churches	Community	Promotion
Churches	Community	Promotion
Diversity of churches	Community	Promotion
Friendly people	Community	Promotion
Little white fences	Community	Promotion
People	Community	Promotion
People, the	Community	Promotion
Post office	Community	Promotion
Post office	Community	Promotion
Quaint & quiet	Community	Promotion
Quiet community	Community	Promotion
Quiet town	Community	Promotion
Nearby community college	Education	Promotion
School	Education	Promotion
School	Education	Promotion
School	Education	Promotion
School (good schools)	Education	Promotion
Established Antiques Fairs	Events	Promotion
Hardy Boyz	Events	Promotion
Street fair	Events	Promotion
Active town council	Government	Organization

Comments	Category	Group
Active Town Hall - governing body	Government	Organization
Clean streets	Government	Organization
EMS	Government	Organization
Fire Department	Government	Organization
Fire department	Government	Organization
Fire Department	Government	Organization
Fire Department	Government	Organization
Fire Department	Government	Organization
Law Enforcement	Government	Organization
Town Hall	Government	Organization
Town Hall (meeting place)	Government	Organization
Town water	Government	Organization
Trash pickup	Government	Organization
Volunteers (town committees)	Government	Organization
Waste management	Government	Organization
Water department	Government	Organization
Depot, the	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Depot, the	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Historic buildings	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Historic District	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Historic district - architecture	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
historical locations	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
History - Dewberry capital	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
History (town-Dewberry)	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Nation Historic Registry	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Old Painted tobacco barns	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Painted barns	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Plank Road - historic	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Centrally located	Location	Promotion
Highways	Location	Promotion
Small town between larger metro areas	Location	Promotion
Ball field	Recreation	Promotion
Park	Recreation	Promotion
Phillips Park	Recreation	Promotion
Phillips Park	Recreation	Promotion
Phillips Park	Recreation	Promotion
Walking distance	streetscape	Design

Economic Drivers-Combined

5/31/2018

Comments	Category	Group
Housing	Buildings	Design
Agriculture	Business	Economic Vitality
Antique Center of NC	Business	Economic Vitality
Antique Shops	Business	Economic Vitality
Antique Shops	Business	Economic Vitality
Antique Shops	Business	Economic Vitality
Antiques	Business	Economic Vitality
Construction company	Business	Economic Vitality
Convenience Center	Business	Economic Vitality
Convenience Stores	Business	Economic Vitality
Convenience stores - 3 of them	Business	Economic Vitality
Dewberry Deli	Business	Economic Vitality
Farming/Livestock	Business	Economic Vitality
Farmland	Business	Economic Vitality
Jackson Orchard (Cider)	Business	Economic Vitality
James Creek Cider	Business	Economic Vitality
Lumber	Business	Economic Vitality
Mechanics/Repair	Business	Economic Vitality
New Business J.C.C	Business	Economic Vitality
Nursery	Business	Economic Vitality
Oakley's Towing	Business	Economic Vitality
Store	Business	Economic Vitality
Towing & Auto Garage	Business	Economic Vitality
Towing/Vehicle repair shops	Business	Economic Vitality
Trucking companies	Business	Economic Vitality
Churches	Community	Promotion
Excellent place to reside	Community	Promotion
Post Office	Community	Promotion
Post Office	Community	Promotion
Post Office	Community	Promotion
Small town with zones	Community	Promotion
Elementary School/Ballfield	Education	Promotion
School	Education	Promotion
School	Education	Promotion
Schools	Education	Promotion
Antique Fairs (two)	Events	Promotion
Antiques Fair	Events	Promotion
Christmas Parade	Events	Promotion
Church concerts	Events	Promotion
Dewberry Drop	Events	Promotion
Street Fairs	Events	Promotion
Street Fairs	Events	Promotion

7/19/2018

Comments	Category	Group
Tourism	Events	Promotion
Local taxes	Government	Organization
Water Department	Government	Organization
Dewberry Capital	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Historic Buildings	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Historic District	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Historical buildings & houses	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Historically significant	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Placement on National Register (<i>of Historic Places</i>)	Historic Preservation	Economic Vitality
Jobs - Retail	Jobs	Economic Vitality
Close to Capital/Triangle (<i>location</i>)	Location	Promotion
Highways 24/27 & US 1	Location	Promotion
Highways 24/27 and US 1	Location	Promotion
Highways 24/27, US 1 & 15/501	Location	Promotion
Jordan Lake	Location	Promotion
Proximity to golf/equestrian/SPAP Area	Location	Promotion
Proximity to Highways 24/27 & US 1	Location	Promotion
Proximity to US 1 / Pinehurst / Fort Bragg	Location	Promotion
Moore County Parks & Rec	Recreation	Promotion
Park	Recreation	Promotion
Park w/ restrooms & rental facility	Recreation	Promotion
Phillips Park	Recreation	Promotion
Pond & park	Recreation	Promotion

Challenges (Weaknesses)-Combined

5/31/2018

Comments	Category	Group
Abandoned buildings	Buildings	Design
Too many vacant properties	Buildings	Design
Unkempt vacant properties	Buildings	Design
Homes & buildings falling to ruin - condemnable	Buildings	Design
Property maintenance	Buildings	Design
No voting place	Citizen engagment	Organization
Not enough citizen participation in Town Meetings	Citizen engagment	Organization
Advertising	Communication	Promotion
Lack of cohesive community Communications (newsletters)	Communication	Organization
Lack of web page	Communication	Organization
No community message board	Communication	Organization
Lack of economic diversity/opportunity	EconDev	Economic Vitality
Lack of economic opportunity/jobs	EconDev	Economic Vitality
Need more investment/funding in town	EconDev	Economic Vitality
No general store or grocery	EconDev	Economic Vitality
No late night businesses	EconDev	Economic Vitality
Small population	EconDev	Economic Vitality
Stagnant Tax Base	EconDev	Economic Vitality
Too few businesses	EconDev	Economic Vitality
Family - Better appeal to young families	EconDev	Economic Vitality
Family - Few child activities	EconDev	Economic Vitality
Food - Lack of affordable restaurants (hours)	EconDev	Economic Vitality
Food - Lack of Dining	EconDev	Economic Vitality
Lack of past vision	EconDev	Economic Vitality
Reputation as not open to growth	Government	Organization
Frequent power outages	Government	Organization
Inconsiderate NCDOT (trees)	Government	Design
Lack of willingness to change	Government	Organization
LE - Lack of Law enforcement	Government	Organization
LE - No law enforcement	Government	Organization
Missed opportunities	Government	Organization
No road workers	Government	Organization
Speeding	Government	Organization
Speeding - Law enforcement (speeding)	Government	Organization
Speeding on Highway 24/27	Government	Organization
Speeding traffic	Government	Organization
Tax High rate	Government	Organization
Tax high tax/no reward	Government	Organization
Zoning & No Code Enforcement	Government	Organization
No sewage system	Infrastructure	Economic Vitality
School traffic - need pickup lane	Infrastructure	Design
No public restrooms	Restrooms	Economic Vitality

7/19/2018

Comments	Category	Group
No public restrooms	Restrooms	Economic Vitality
Public restrooms lacking	Restrooms	Economic Vitality
Street - Lack of parking	Streetscape	Design
Street - Lack of parking streetside	Streetscape	Design
Street - Need parking	Streetscape	Design
Streetscape - Lack of sidewalks	Streetscape	Design
Streetscape - land/streetscaping	Streetscape	Design
Streetscape - light posts	Streetscape	Design
Streetscape - Need benches	Streetscape	Design
Streetscape - Need garden improvement group	Streetscape	Design
Streetscape - No seating (benches)	Streetscape	Design
Streetscape - No sidewalk	Streetscape	Design
Streetscape - No sidewalks	Streetscape	Design
Streetscape - No Sidewalks	Streetscape	Design
Streetscape - Weak lighting on streets	Streetscape	Design