

Introduction

In a small community, a strategic plan is often an overlooked, powerful economic tool. However, to ensure the well-being of the local economy and the future of the community—planning is essential. Before one can plan, he must first discover where he is today. This will provide a baseline to judge one's future outcomes. A great way to get the baseline data is to conduct a community wide survey. To ensure equal representation three types of surveys need to be conducted: citizen survey, business survey, and leader survey. The survey data along with assessing the area's competitive position and a visioning process will help determined the long term path of the community. All of which will provide the foundation for a shared vision for the future of Red Boiling Springs and create a strategic plan to guide the city government.

Background

Historically, Red Boiling Springs was a resort community that people, from around the nation, visited for the healing sulphur waters and the variety of entertainment. It was a place to escape from all the hustle and bustle of city life, and a location in which one could cool off during the hot summer months. Families would spend several weeks to several months soaking up the beautiful natural landscape, drinking the healing sulphur waters, partaking in a little moonshine from atop the hill, and enjoying the big band orchestras or comical dinner theaters during the evening hours. The town was bustlingthen western medicine made huge strides in alternative healing options. In addition, the invention of "horse-less carriages" (i.e., cars) made it easier for people to venture off to other destinations (Keith).

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

Page 2

Unfortunately, the town is located at lower elevations and is prone to flooding. In 1969, the community was completely overwhelmed by a huge flood. This hit the community very hard and most of the businesses destroyed by the flood never re-opened. Since the food of 1969, three water sheds have been created to avoid such devastation. However, most of the historic district remains in the 100 year flood plain. As recent as 2010, the community experienced flooding that caused damage to several downtown buildings.

The next boom era came to Red Boiling Springs with USA factory expansions during the 1970-1980's. Factories employed the majority of the population—outside of farming. Then NAFTA happened, which lead to many factories shutting down and relocating to Canada and Mexico in order to be more globally competitive. The town suffered tremendously with a major loss of jobs and people moving away to find employment. With few new jobs and loss of population, one by one the small storefronts shut down and for the most part have never bounced back.

Demographics

Red Boiling Springs is a predominantly Caucasian community, with limited diversity. The highest percentage of the population are 40 years of age or older. The median income is half of the national average. In fact, 49% of the population make less than \$30,000 a year (Movoto). The majority of the workforce are employed in manufacturing, education, or healthcare.

Vision 2020 Inc

Vision 2020 Inc. is a non-profit, community support organization for Red Boiling Springs, TN and the surrounding area. The group consists of dedicated, concerned citizens that want to improve the

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

Page 3

overall quality of life—special attention is given to historical attributes, and revitalizing the downtown region. Currently, the organization is working to create a Red Boiling Springs Heritage Museum in a historic structure in the historic downtown region. The group's brick and mortar location doubles as an unique gift shop, Step Back In Time, that is run completely by volunteers. Inside the shop, work by local artisans and crafters are sold on commission, and a variety of art classes are offered. All proceeds from the shop benefit the Red Boiling Springs Heritage Museum. Also, the group manages several of the community's on-going events; such as the Community Easter Egg Hunt, Folk Medicine Festival, Small Business Week Workshops, Ice Cream Social, Cathie and Troy Johnson 5K, and the Nighttime Christmas Parade. More details be may found on the group's website:

www.vision2020inc.com or by visiting their Facebook page.

In 2010, the non-profit was awarded a grant through the Tennessee Downtown Program—this is a prelude for the national Main Street Program. This program provided technical assistance and a monetary award to get the gears turning. The TN Downtown Program follows the Main Street four point approach: Organization, Design, Economic Vitality, and Promotion. Vision 2020 Inc.

incorporates this approach into the yearly work plan and the overall strategic plan.

The Economic Vitality work generated a lot of baseline data but solution were elusive. Therefore, the chairman felt the community needed additional technical assistance to move forward in the right direction. Vision 2020 Inc. was still in its infancy stage. Because the community is economically disadvantaged; no funding was available to hire a local economic development specialist. For that reason, the chairman reached out to the State of Tennessee's Department of Economic and

Community Development for resources and technical assistance. In addition, the chairman previously attended the Basic Economic Development Course as a Three-Star Committee Member. These experiences led to the Tennessee Certified Economic Development Program (TCED). It appeared that the TCED training would provide the tools the community so desperately needed to move forward in economic development. Unfortunately, funding for the training was an issue; so the economic vitality chairman of Vision 2020 Inc researched scholarships opportunities and solicited local donations to attend the TCED classes.

The TCED classes that are most relevant to this project are the Strategic Planning and the Business Retention and Expansion. The Strategic Planning class walks one through the planning process step-by-step and provides the tools needed to hit the ground running. The Business Retention and Expansion helped one understand the importance of existing industry and helped open the lines of communication between the businesses and Vision 2020 Inc. The business owners know the organization is serious about wanting to help them grow, be successful, and improve the overall business climate. In fact, during the first round of the business retention survey Vision 2020 Inc was able to alleviate several issues for the local businesses by simply connecting them to resources or providing the proper contacts at the local utility providers.

Building a Partnership with the City Government

Since its inception, one of Vision 2020 Inc. main goals was to work diligently to build a strong relationship with the City of Red Boiling Springs. In fact, the city is one of the organization's largest supporters. The non-profit understands that it must have a cooperative relationship with the key stakeholders in order to make successful changes. Having this groundwork laid out before this project

came to fruition has been a big help in gaining support for the strategic plan process. There is a strong bond of trust between the two entities.

It is important to have Red Boiling Springs' key decision makers on-board with the strategic plan. These individuals are making the decision about how the limited resources of the city will be spent. Therefore, if they do not support the plan—it will be a waste of time and scarce resources will not be directed in the right area.

Project Description

Now that the past has been examined and there is an understanding of the present, the next logical step was to focus on where the community wants to be in the future. Therefore, it was time to seek out support for a strategic planning process. The Economic Vitality chairman began educating the City of Red Boiling Springs Mayor about the importance of having a strategic plan. After several meetings, Mr. Mayor asked the chairman to attend the next city council meeting to present the idea and provide detailed information to the council. Mr. Mayor, acting in an advisory capacity, encouraged the council to tackle the Strategic Planning process; he stated that it is a big win for the community. Thus, the city's first ever Strategic Planning Process was officially approved by the council and the preparation began.

The time frame of this project has been extended due to changes in city's administration and mayor. The new administrative staff received no training from the retired staff members, had no governmental experience, and no accounting training. Therefore, the new staff members had to start from ground zero and build a new system. However, the project is in motion and a Steering Committee is currently being formed to create the economic strategic plan for the City of Red Boiling Springs, TN.

The Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will consist of three governmental representatives, and three citizens; one of which will be a champion for the cause. The committee will meet with the official and unofficial leaders of the community to gain their perspectives about the issues the community faces and help build support for the strategic planning process. The partnerships formed in this stage will be instrumental in forming a consensus with the local leaders. Kolzow states, “The most successful economic development planning efforts incorporate the desires, and needs of both public and private sectors from the very beginning of the planning process” (Kolzow, 16). Community partnerships make things happen.

Assessing the City’s Competitive Position

Next, the Steering Committee will begin to assess the community’s competitive position. This research will help identify the major issues of the community and how the city compares to other communities of similar demographics and/or issues. The tools that will be used to analyze this information are a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), a community wide survey (three types; all accessible online or paper), an analysis of the local economy, and a competitive assessment.

A SWOT analysis of the community’s current situation will help to identify the internal and external issues the city is facing. The internal issues are reflected as strengths and weaknesses in the quadrant and this is where the city has the most control. The external issues are titled as opportunities and threats and tend to be forces outside of the community’s control. Yet it is very important to be aware of these external forces because no community operates in a silo. Each

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

Page 7

city is interrelated with national and/or regional trends (Kolzow, 17). Therefore, the city must be aware of how the issues will affect the community and create a proactive plan.

Three types of community surveys are being conducted; a leader survey, a citizen survey, and a business survey. Each of the surveys are available online via SurveyMonkey, or paper form that may be picked up at city hall. For the leader survey, a letter was presented at the city council meetings stating how to access the survey. The leaders may choose to use a personal computer to visit the URL listed, scan the QR code with a smart phone, or pick up printed copy from city hall. Please review Appendix A for the leader's survey questions. This survey will offer tremendous insight because this group of individuals will have localized information. Next, citizens were educated about the community wide survey via newspaper articles, Facebook posts, community flyers, and a note on the monthly water bill. The citizens may choose to use a personal computer to visit the URL listed, scan the QR code with a smart phone or pick up printed copy from city hall. Asking the citizens to be a part of the process "...increases their buy-in into the strategic planning process" (Kolzow, 18).

Please review Appendix B for the citizen's survey questions. Lastly, a business survey letter was hand delivered to each business in the incorporated city limits of Red Boiling Springs, TN. The letter provided information about the strategic planning process and explained that their responses would be used to create a strategic plan for the city. Business leaders may choose to use a personal computer to visit the URL listed, scan the QR code with a smart phone or pick up printed copy from city hall. Please review Appendix C for the business' survey questions. The main objective was to make the survey as accessible as possible to ensure the greatest response from the community. This will help ensure that the various perspectives have an equal opportunity to participate in the process.

Next the steering committee will analyze the local economy. This will help the group clarify the current economic climate and provide a glimpse of what needs to become economically competitive.

The best practice here is to keep it simple. Typically, this report will cover population changes, the labor force stats, income changes, employment trends, and retail activity (Kolzow, 19).

To conduct the competitive analysis, the steering committee will rely on the expertise of the State of Tennessee's Department of Economic and Community Development. This department readily has updated information for the steering committee to review. The main focus of this assessment will be identify the resources that the community has to attract new investment and/or jobs, and place the local resources into the national/regional perspective to determine the current and future advantage and disadvantages (Kolzow, 20).

Once the above assessments have been completed, a press release and Facebook post will be created to share the findings with the community. Education and communication are essential for community buy-in and to ensure support of the strategic planning efforts.

Visioning Process

Now that there is a clear understanding of where the community is today, the next step is to "vision" where the community would like to go. Kolzow declares, "A vision for the community generally incorporates a view of the future that would be better, in some ways, than what now exists" (Kolzow, 24). First step, the chairman of the economic vitality committee of Vision 2020 Inc will facilitate a visioning workshop for the steering committee to build consensus and create a shared vision for the community. The participants will be asked to answer the following questions, individually on a sheet of paper (Kolzow, 26):

1. What is your vision for the development of the community?

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

Page 9

2. What types of economic, governmental, and social activity would you like to see happen in the community's future?
3. What type of jobs should be developed to meet the needs of the community and the workforce?
4. What new infrastructure is needed to more effectively develop the community?
5. What social and quality of life issues need to be resolved?
6. What attractions and facilities should be built?

Once the participants have completed their list, the facilitator will go around the table and each item will be listed on a flip chart. Each component should be reviewed by the steering committee to determine if everyone is in agreement with the characteristic—if it remains. If the group does not agree, the steering committee should try to modify the item to create a consensus. However, if an agreement can not be reached the item will be eliminated. Once an agreed upon list is generated the committee should review each item to determine if it is a high, moderate, or low priority for the community's vision. The facilitator will take the final list and create a shared vision statement. The statement will be returned to the steering committee for approval. Once approved by the steering committee, it will be shared with city council. After acceptance by the council; a press release will be sent to the media and Facebook posts will be created to share the vision with the citizens of Red Boiling Springs. This distribution is important to educate and build consensus in the community as they navigate through the strategic planning process.

Prioritizing Economic Issues

With limited resources, it is very unlikely that a community can tackle all economic development issues as once. Therefore, it is important that the steering committee creates a prioritized list of the economic development issues uncovered in the visioning process. The chairman of the economic vitality committee of Vision 2020 Inc will act as the facilitator and utilize the Nominal Group Technique. Each committee member will be asked to list and rank his or her top five to seven issues for local economic growth; independently. Then the facilitator will go around the table requesting each member to give his or her first priority issue; which will be recorded on a flip chart. If the participants' first issue has already been stated, then the member will be asked to share his or her second issue. Other members may only ask for clarification but are not allowed to discuss the merits of any item. The facilitator will continue around the table until all prioritized issues are finally listed—issues will be consolidated into issue set to clarify and eliminate duplication. Then the committee members will independently rate the issues listed on the flip chart (Kolzow, 33). The facilitator will tabulate and display the results to the steering committee for approval. Once approved by the steering committee, it will be shared with city council. After acceptance by the council; a press release will be sent to the media and Facebook posts will be created to share the issues with the citizens of Red Boiling Springs. This distribution is important to educate and build consensus in the community as they navigate through the strategic planning process.

Formulating Goals and Outcomes

After prioritizing the economic issues it is time to create goals with measurable outcomes. Goals are considered a bridge between the vision statement and the strategic actions (Kolzow, 35).

A goal states a desired future and is often written in present tense. However, they are often not measurable. Therefore, the committee must link the goals to measurable outcomes; in fact, it may be

difficult to measure every aspect of the stated goals. Kolzow notes outcomes should be measurable, attainable, and represent meaningful benefits for the community (Kolzow, 37). The Vision 2020 Inc economic vitality chair will assist the committee through this process. This is important because the work of this session will become a tool for the evaluation process that will be discussed in a later section.

Strategic Actions

Once the outcomes have been declared, the steering committee and facilitator will focus on creating the strategic actions necessary to accomplish the desired results. The group will use the problem-solving approach to identifying the strategic actions. Though it is not often used in strategic planning, it forces one to broaden his or her thinking; especially when it incorporated in a team environment (Kolzow, 43). The problem-solving steps are:

1. Clearly identify the problem.
2. Brainstorm and/or research the causes of the problem.
3. Researching the problem and its causes
4. For each cause, identify specific actions that could be taken to remove or reduce the impact of the cause.
5. Evaluate these strategic actions to determine which courses to take.

It is important to focus on the strategic actions that will create the biggest impact with the limited resources of the community. Working closely with the State of Tennessee's Department of Economic

and Community Development Department the steering committee will research other communities that have experienced the same issues, look for similar advantages to duplicate, and seek effective practices from other organizations. Many tasks will be delegated to committee members and brought back to the steering committee to consider. Getting the leaders involved in creating the solutions creates a sense of ownership. In addition, Kolzow recommends that once the preliminary list of the strategic actions is created that the steering committee must decide which strategies are most likely to implemented, cost-effective and successful (Kolzow, 47).

The key to a successful strategic planning is creating a plan of implementation. The steering committee may be reformulated into an implementation committee and become the watch dog ensuring that strategic actions are being carried out properly. This group will decide how and when the plan must be reviewed. A check and balance system is critical to the implementation process. The members will meet with the respective organizations and receive written agreements from each entity listing the responsibilities agreed upon (Kolzow, 50). The committee will prepare an annual report and present to the council, a press release will be sent to the media and Facebook posts will be created to share the issues with the citizens of Red Boiling Springs. This distribution is important to educate the citizens and build consensus in the community.

Evaluating the Plan

The strategic plan is never finished—it is dynamic document that is always in flux. Furthermore, it is important to ensure the plan is evaluated on a regular basis. This will ensure the plan is on track to generate the desired outcomes and is adapted to the ever-changing economic climate. Kolzow claims, “Evaluation and strategic planning should be synonymous” (Kolzow, 57). Monitoring the respective responsibilities of partner organizations is essential so that the coordination of the strategic

plan is as smooth as possible. In addition, it will ensure good working relations between the city and the partner organizations. Lastly, an evaluation is a systematic process for comparing where the plan is and where the plan should be. It is a tool that is used to determine if the course should be modified or if this route will deliver the desired outcomes.

Goals

The first goal of this planning process is to communicate a clear picture about the economic situation of the City of Red Boiling Springs to the steering committee, leaders, and citizens. Though elected leaders and citizens can see the deterioration of the community, many are not aware of the economics behind the problems nor how to create solutions. Within the next 4 months, the baseline economic data, community wide survey results, and economic development best practices will be shared with the Steering Committee. Within the next 6 months, the visioning process will lead into the creation of a strategic plan for the City of Red Boiling Springs.

The second goal is to build community consensus. This will be accomplished by issuing monthly press releases about the visioning and strategic planning process; sharing survey results, economic discoveries, economic decisions, effective economic development practices, future economic opportunities and creating a “shop local” campaign. Kolzow indicates that the above actions will help “educate the citizenry and unite the community in a common vision for the future” (Kolzow, 64).

Lastly, the third goal is to build a commitment to the shared vision and the strategic plan. This will be accomplished by ensuring the survey is accessible to as many residents, businesses, and council members as possible. The more involved the citizens are in the process, the more ownership they take on. To ensure the survey is accessible, it will be a digital survey via SurveyMonkey, city hall will add a note to the city’s water bills, QR codes will be created to provide easy access via smartphone,

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

Page 14

press releases with a weblink will be sent to local newspapers/community channel, Facebook post with a weblink will be generated, and printed survey copies will be made readily available at city hall. Lastly, the facilitator will ensure that the goals and outcomes created coincide with the community data and economic realities of the community (Kolzow 37).

Conclusion

Though one may not think of a strategic plan in a small town—it is a cost effective tool that can be a real game changer. A strategic plan is essential to the economic development and overall well-being of a community. Baseline data, community surveys, assessing the community's competitive position, and the visioning process will ensure the long term strategic plan will represent a shared vision for the future of Red Boiling Springs. Providing ownership to the citizens will ensure the community builds a consensus and moves forward together. This plan will become the blue print for all future decisions for the city government.

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

Page 15

Works Cited

Keith, Jeanette *Simple Pleasures: A History of the Resort at Red Boiling Springs, Tennessee;*

<http://www.vision2020inc.com/Pages/SimplePleasures.aspx>

Kolzow, David *A Strategic Approach to Economic Development; A Comprehensive "How-To" Manual
for Community Leaders and Economic Development Professionals, 2010.*

Movoto. <http://www.movoto.com/demographics/tn/37150/>

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

Appendix A

Leadership Survey

Place a check mark (✓) in the column that best reflects your opinion. Is each item listed on this survey a strength of the community, a weakness, or is it an average or normal situation? Please answer every item, even if you are not very familiar with it, responding based on your perception of it.

QUALITY OF LIFE	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Availability of executive-level housing				
Availability of moderate cost housing				
Availability of housing for low-income families				
Availability of rental apartments				
Cost of housing overall				
Level of crime				
Level of cultural activity and facilities				
Availability of recreational opportunities				
Presence of major sporting events				
Level of air quality				
Quality of the climate				
Attractiveness of the physical environment				
General appearance of the community				
Availability of adequate hospital facilities				
Adequate local clinics and health care professionals for basic health care				
Cost of health care relative to other areas				
Adequate social services (day care, counseling, poverty assistance)				
Services and programs for senior citizens				

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

QUALITY OF LIFE	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
The rate of the population growth in the community				
Quality of relationship between the races and ethnic groups				

LOCAL EDUCATION SYSTEM	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Quality of local elementary education				
Quality of local secondary educations				
Quality and availability of post-secondary education in the community				
Involvement in the community by the higher education institutes				
Involvement of local residents and parents in the school district				
Availability of vocational programs at the secondary level (job skills, computer classes, etc)				

TRANSPORTATION SITUATION	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Adequate local major highways				
Movement of traffic in the community				
Condition and maintenance of local streets				
Level of traffic-carrying capacity of local streets				
Availability of public parking in the local commercial areas				
Availability of public transportation				
Availability of intermodal(truck to train) shipping				
Adequacy of commercial air passenger service				

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

TRANSPORTATION SITUATION	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Adequacy of the Airport for Freight shipping needs				

LOCAL LEADERSHIP SITUATION	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Adequate level of professional staff in government offices and development organizations				
Involvement of both public and private sectors in development programs of community				
Level of leadership support of economic development programs				
Level of communication and cooperation between various organizations involved in the development programs of the community				
Level of awareness of community regarding the local development programs				
Level of leadership commitment to advancing the growth and development of the community				
Level of funding for local development programs				
Level of cooperation with other development organizations serving this area of the State				

LABOR SITUATION	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Availability of unskilled and semi-skilled workers				
Availability of skilled industrial workers				
Availability of clerical (retail and office) workers				
Availability of technicians and professionals				
Availability of managerial personnel				
Availability of quality jobs for the workforce residing in the community				
Level of wages and salaries paid locally				

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

LABOR SITUATION	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Quality of labor-management relations				
Availability of post-secondary vocational training				
Availability of on-the-job training assistance				
Availability of adult/continuing education at a post-secondary level				
Availability of upgrade training for existing employees				
Availability of apprenticeship programs				

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SITUATION	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Adequacy of local police protection and public safety				
Adequacy of local fire protection				
Adequacy of trash pickup and water disposal				
Adequacy of local planning and zoning				
State and local permitting and regulation process for business				
Annexation policy of the city				
Adequacy of local building codes				
Level of local property taxes				
Level of local sales tax				
Adequacy of local tax base to cover cost of local government				
Cooperation of local government with business				
Cooperation of local government entities with each other				
Long-range planning for municipal improvements and capital budgeting				
Availability of funding to support economic development				

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

UTILITY SITUATION	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Local telephone company's quality of service				
Connection of local telephone company to national long distance network				
Cost of electricity				
Availability of high quality electric service				
Availability of natural gas				
Cost of natural gas				
Availability of potable (drinking quality) water				
Availability of adequate wastewater treatment capacity				
Availability of adequate water and sewer lines to industrial/commercial sites				
Cost of water and sewer				
Adequacy of storm water or flood water control				

CAPITAL SITUATION	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Availability of low interest or tax-exempt financing for new industrial facilities				
Availability of low interest loans for small business				
Availability of venture capital from local sources for business startups				
Availability of home mortgage loans				
Investment in the community by local financial institutions				

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

REAL ESTATE SITUATION	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Availability of fully served and attractive industrial sites				
Availability of fully served and attractive office sites				
Availability of attractive and well located commercial/retail sites				
Cost of sites to new users				
Availability of suitable industrial building space				
Availability of suitable office space				
Availability of suitable commercial/retail space				
Availability of subdivided sites for new homes				

MARKET SITUATION	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Location of the community for serving the national market				
Location of the community for serving foreign markets				
Proximity to other major markets in the state				
Appearance of the downtown for attracting business activity				
Appearance of the highway-oriented retail/commercial areas for attracting business activity				
Availability of a range of retail stores and goods in the community				
Availability of a range of quality restaurants in the community				
Availability of a range of personal services (legal, professional, dry cleaning, repairs, etc.)				
Availability of business services and professional services that support business and industry				
Availability of adequate hotels and motels				

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

MARKET SITUATION	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Availability of adequate conference and meeting facilities				
Adequacy of local newspaper for promotion of local business activity				
Adequacy of industrial marketing programs				
Adequacy of local programs to attract new retail and commercial business to the community				
Adequacy of the marketing program to attract tourist				
Impact of the tourism industry on the community				
The range of attractions for expanded tourism				
Availability of funding to support tourism development				

What do you consider to be the five most important problems that your community is facing now and into the future?

Appendix B

Citizens Survey

What is Your Vision for the Community?

- Listed below are five factors that many people think are important in choosing a place to live. Please rank the issues below by importance to you? (1 being the most important—5 being the least important).**

_____ Employment opportunities

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

- _____ Desire to be near family
- _____ Near good schools and other community services
- _____ Climate and recreation activities
- _____ Housing availability

2. Please place a check mark (✓) in the column that best reflects your opinion about the following issue in your community:

ISSUE	VERY PLEASD	SATISFIED	NOT SURE	NOT SATISFIED	VERY UNHAPPY
Elementary & Secondary education					
Community college					
Availability of adult continuing education					
Job skills training					
Programs for senior citizens					
Programs for senior citizens					
Child care services					
Race relations					
Recreation facilities					
Cultural activities (art, music, festivals)					
Housing availability and cost					
City planning					
Local streets and county roads					
Major highways serving the community					
Public transportation					
Traffic movement					
Water and sewer service					

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

ISSUE	VERY PLEASSED	SATISFIED	NOT SURE	NOT SATISFIED	VERY UNHAPPY
Water quality					
Storm drainage					
Environmental protection					
Law enforcement					
Telephone service					
Level of local taxes					
Availability of quality jobs					
Availability of local business financing/loans					
Retail shopping					
Downtown					
Image of the community					
Public access to the recreation areas					
Cleanliness of the community					

3. What would you say is the biggest problem facing the City today that you would like local government to do something about? Place a check mark (✓) in front of the answer of your choice (only one choice permitted).

- The quality of local education
- The availability of quality jobs
- The availability of job training or retraining
- The loss of young people moving out of the community
- Programs for senior citizens
- Health care quality and availability
- Availability of a range of recreational and cultural activity

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

Page 25

- Availability of public transportation
- Quality of drinking water
- The attractiveness and cleanliness of the community
- Storm drainage control
- Race relations
- The availability of quality housing
- The lack of developable vacant land in the city
- Lack of enforcement of zoning and building codes
- Inadequate shopping opportunities in the community
- The condition of the downtown
- Other (describe) _____

4. How old are you?

- 15 years or younger
- 16 to 21 years
- 22 to 35 years
- 36 to 55 years
- 56 to 65 years
- over 65 years

5. What is your sex?

- Male
- Female

6. What is your level of education?

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

- _____ 8th grade or below
- _____ 9th grade thru 11th grade
- _____ High school graduate
- _____ Some college/technical school
- _____ Associate degree from 2-year college
- _____ College graduate (4 years)
- _____ Post graduate college

7. How long have you lived in the community?

- _____ Less than one year
- _____ One to five years
- _____ Six to ten years
- _____ Eleven to twenty years
- _____ All my life

8. What is your occupation?

Open Comment:

Do you live in the county _____ or city _____?

Appendix C

Business Survey

From a Business investor viewpoint, how would you rate the following locational attributes of the community. Please place a check mark (✓) in the column that best reflects your opinion. Is each item listed on this survey a strength of the community, a weakness, or is it an average or normal situation? Please answer every item, even if you are not very familiar with it, responding based on your perception of it.

QUALITY OF LIFE	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Labor availability				
Labor skills and education				
Quality and productivity of the workforce				
Wage levels				
Labor management relations				
Diversity of the local economy				
Geographic location in relation to major US markets				
Highways and interstates				
Local traffic flow				
Trucking availability				
Railroad service				
Passenger air service				
Electric service and cost				
Gas availability and cost				
Water and sewer availability				
Industrial and commercial sites				
Available buildings for manufacturing and call centers				
Real estate cost				
Business support services				

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

QUALITY OF LIFE	STRENGTH	NORMAL	WEAKNESS	NO OPINION
Local property tax				
Local sales taxes				
Availability of local business financing				
Availability of local business incentives				
Quality of local primary & secondary education				
Quality of local community college				
Quality of local 4-year educational institutions				
Local training capacity and quality				
Housing availability and cost				
Medical services				
Lodging				
Restaurants				
Cultural & recreational facilities/activities				
Public safety (crime)				
Level of local retail				
Climate				
Government attitude toward business				
Quality of local economic development professional assistance				
Condition of downtown				

What are the five most important steps the community should take to improve the local business situation?

1. _____

Red Boilings Springs:
Honoring our History, Understanding our Present, and Looking to our Future

By: Crystal Justice

Page 29

2.

3.

4.

5.
