

Building Pearl River County's Future A Strategic Plan for Pearl River County

**Pearl River County Strategic Plan and Leadership Initiative
A cooperative effort between the Pearl River County Board of Supervisors and the City of
Poplarville.**

Funded with a grant from the Lower Pearl River Valley Foundation

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Administered by the Pearl River County Department of Planning and Development

Introduction

Pearl River County Strategic Plan came from a desire by the community to thoughtfully consider and plan for the future of Pearl River County. To accomplish that effort, there had to be a sharing of thoughts, ideas and concerns. And from these conversations and dialog, arose a vision for Pearl River County.

Pearl River County is a gateway community in Mississippi. The county is located in the southern part of the state located adjacent to Louisiana, north of the Slidell and New Orleans' Northshore. U.S. Interstate Highway 59 places Pearl River County on a national highway system, linking New Orleans to Atlanta.

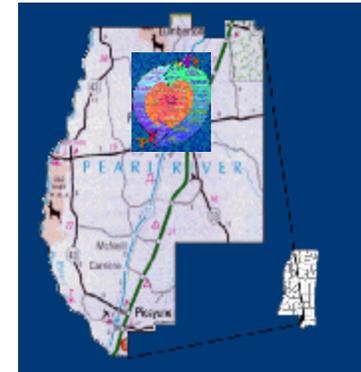
Pearl River County has abundant natural resources. The County has its western boundary on the Pearl River that provides unique habitat and excellent recreational opportunities such as fishing, boating and swimming. Smaller rivers and streams dot the county. Hunting is a popular activity in Pearl River County, due to the vast amounts of land held for forestry, or that are undeveloped.

The Cities of Picayune and Poplarville are located in Pearl River County, and a little bit of a third city, Lumberton, is located in Pearl River County, with the larger part of the city located in Lamar County. Poplarville is a city of approximately 2,601 people and is the county seat. The City of Picayune is located in the southern part of the county and has a population of 10,525 people.

Pearl River County was organized in 1870 as Pearl County. The county had few private landowners, and after a fire that burned the county seat, which was a Masonic Lodge located on the Pearl River at Byrd's Chapel, the county was abolished and the land area was split between Hancock County and Marion County.

The New Orleans and Northern Railroad was completed in 1890, providing a rail link between New Orleans and Atlanta. Business leaders and property owners successfully petitioned to re-establish the county, this time named Pearl River County. Pearl River County was established on February 22, 1890. Property for a county seat was secured from "Poplar" Jim Smith, and by 1892 a courthouse and a boarding school were located in Poplarville. Eight years later, the City of Lumberton officially withdrew from Pearl River County and was annexed by Lamar County. And in 1908, Pearl River County annexed the land area containing Picayune from Hancock County.

The Heart of Pearl River County



The Pearl River Agricultural High School was established in 1909 in Poplarville and in 1922, Poplarville became the home of Pearl River Junior College, the first state-supported Junior College in Mississippi. Now known as Pearl River Community College, the school is still a very important presence in the community and the region.

Picayune's earliest beginnings were thought to be as a trading location on the Hobolochitto Creek. The community was known as Hobolochitto. The community was incorporated in 1904 as a village, as a town in 1905 and as a city in 1922. When the community was incorporated it took the name Picayune. The community was named for the New Orleans newspaper published by Eliza Jane Poitevent. Ms. Poitevent was a pioneer newspaperwoman who was raised in the community of Hobolochitto. She published articles under the pen name, Pearl Rivers, in the New York Journal and the New Orleans Picayune. Eventually she was made literary editor of the New Orleans Picayune. She later married the Picayune's publisher, Colonel Alva Holbrook and then became publisher when he died. She passed away in 1896.

Picayune and Pearl River County were communities built on the logging and forestry industry. The Pearl River and the railroad made transportation of logs easy, and the southern climate and growing season helped quality yellow pine grow fast and strong. By the 1930's much of the virgin yellow pine in Pearl River County was cut over, and many communities that had developed to support the timber industry disappeared. Among those were the communities of Anderson, Barth, Bola Junction, Burge Spur, Conn, Elder, Emery, Forena, Loftin, Long Branch, McGehee, New Camp Rowlands, Orvisburg, Tyler, and Wilco.

Other communities in the county managed to maintain their identities, either because of their location in the county or because they did not rely solely upon the timber industry for livelihood. The community of Caesar was the first settlement in the county and was largely a farming community. Carriere was home to one of the largest turpentine industries in the area as well as a sawmill. Crossroads, once known as Strahan's Ferry was the site of a ferry landing on Pearl River. Cyber was originally a small sawmill town but later a large Satsuma orchard was planted. There were also large Tung orchards planted at Cyber. Henley Field, named for the Jeramiah Henley family, was the site of an industrial school. Jackson Landing was originally a flatboat-landing site and later a ferry was operated there; a large hardwood mill opened in 1936. L. O. Crosby donated 400 acres of land for the establishment of a Government Experimental Station for further development of the Tung industry in Mill Creek, ensuring the survival of the industry and the town. Located on the railroad and just south of Picayune, Nicholson was a flag stop for the Pearl River Valley Railroad, the last stop before crossing into Louisiana. The Palestine community grew up around the Palestine Baptist Church and most area residents were truck farmers. Waukiah Bluff was the site of an old Indian campground and one of the oldest boat landings on the Pearl River; in later years, the area became a popular recreational area.



In the 1920's, thousands of acres of cut over timberlands were planted with tung trees, particularly in the central area of the County between Poplarville and Picayune. At the time, tung oil, extracted from nuts, was in high demand as an ingredient for paint and the availability of cut over, cleared land, combined to create a new agricultural opportunity for the area. A thriving industry for approximately 30 years, the Tung industry fell prey to technology with the invention of synthetic paint ingredients in the second half of the century. When the bottom fell out of the Tung market, many of the tung tree orchards were cut to make way for pastures or other farming interest. The pale pink blossoms of the remaining tung trees in the spring are living reminders of a long gone industry. Some of the Tung orchards were replanted with the pine trees, coming full cycle back to the forestry industry that fueled the early economy of the county.

A largely rural county, agriculture also played a significant roll in the early development of Pearl River County. Agricultural interests included cattle, sheep, dairy and hog farming, truck farming and growing of pecans, satsumas and pears. Additionally, brooms and baskets were manufactured on a small scale and muscle shells were harvested from the Pearl River for button making. The Goodyear Yellow Pine Company in Picayune produced bus bodies constructed of pine in the 1930's and at least one enterprising farmer operated a frog hatchery to produce frog legs that were sold to the New Orleans culinary market.

When the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) constructed its rocket-testing site on the Pearl River in neighboring northwestern Hancock County in the 1960's, workers were drawn to jobs at the site from all over the country. New NASA employees were attracted to southern Pearl River County in and around Picayune by the pleasant, small town environment, good school district and availability of reasonably priced land. Now known as the John C. Stennis Space Center, the north gate of the test site is located southeast of Picayune, allowing an easy commute for space center workers. Incomes earned at the text facility continue to help fuel the economy of the City of Picayune and Pearl River County.

Pearl River County has grown by leaps and bounds in the last half of the 20th century. The most significant decades of growth were those between 1960 and 1970, and 1990 and 2000. In the past decade population in Pearl River County grew by more than 25%. New residents are being welcomed into the community daily with new ideas and new experiences. A strategic planning process was a method to capture these new ideas to frame a vision for the future of the Pearl River County.



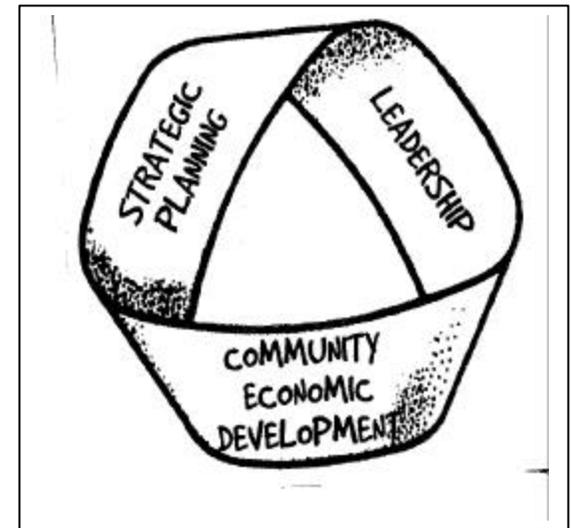
The Strategic Planning Process

The Pearl River County Strategic Plan and Leadership Initiative grew from an idea of its citizens and was supported and nurtured by the Pearl River County Board of Supervisors. The effort created an opportunity for citizens in Pearl River County to enhance the capacity of the community, create a vision for the future and map the path to realize that vision. The City of Picayune and the City of Poplarville participated in and supported this process.

The planning process asked people to work together to learn about their county, define issues facing the county, and to determine solutions. A planning grant from the Lower Pearl River Valley Foundation was secured to fund this effort. Ken Hubbell and Gordon Goodwin of Ken Hubbell and Associates facilitated and coached the process. The community adopted a process entitled, "Moving from Vision to Action." This process considers community development based upon six building blocks.

These building blocks are:

Civic Infrastructure;	build a forward looking, accountable and inclusive culture of civic decision-making and problem solving.
Heritage Preservation;	preserve and enhance the natural, cultural, historical, and built environment.
Jobs;	build the economic base and create larger numbers of higher quality jobs.
People;	create a high-skill, high- value workforce.
Physical Infrastructure;	connect the community with distant markets, people, educational options; ensure public health and safety.
Social Infrastructure;	ensure strong human and social services to support working people, families and those in need.



A Community Kick-Off Dinner was held at the Pearl River Community College in November 1999. Approximately 100 people attended to learn about strategic planning. After this meeting, Task Force Co-Chairs were picked to lead each of the six building block groups.

In January 2001, upon the completion of a business survey of Pearl River County businesses, the planning effort began with a morning “Coffee Call” to learn the results of the business survey. Community Workshops were scheduled each month thereafter with the exception of July and August. Task Force Teams gathered information, defined the problem, developed ideal future conditions, defined goals, developed strategies, and finally developed action plans. Teams finished the planning in November. During this process, people learned about themselves, about other people in the community and gained new insights, new friendships and new partners.

In August, a Summer Leadership Retreat was held. Thirteen people participated in the one-week session. Participants learned about leadership and also considered the future of the Pearl River County Strategic Plan. From that session, consensus was reached on two important issues. These were:

A coordinating Committee should be established to insure that the plan is implemented. This committee should be composed of team members from each of the six teams.

Dialog between community members is very important to a healthy community and valued in Pearl River County. Therefore, the coordinating team will continue to hold quarterly Community Workshops to encourage interaction between people about issues that are important to the future of the County.

This document is a summary of the planning process. The community will now begin the next step of the process, ***implementation.***



Community Assessment

Population and Demographics

Pearl River County is the 14th fastest growing county in Mississippi. The population for the year 2000 was 48,621 people, a 25.6% increase from 1990. Nearly one in five people in Pearl River County was new to the community during the last decade. This rate of growth surpasses the growth that Pearl River County experienced during the 1960's and the 1970's when the Stennis Space Center was developing and staffing up.

The municipalities in the County experienced far slower growth; Poplarville saw only 1.5% growth between the 1980 and 2000 Censuses. Picayune grew at the rate of 2.6% between 1980 and 1990, but actually lost 1.0% of its population between 1990 and 2000.

Much of the development in Pearl River County occurred in the unincorporated areas of the county. Fully 70% of the population within the county lived in rural unincorporated areas.

Pearl River County is a large community. There are 24 miles between the county seat of Poplarville and the southern hub of Picayune. That distance has developed into a perceived barrier to communication. Many people within the community feel there is a divide between the northern and the southern communities within the County.

The 2000 Census shows a relatively young population, with 59.4% of the population between the ages of 18 to 64 years of age and 28.9% between the ages of 0 to 17 years of age. Persons 65 or older account for 11.2% of the population. These percentages roughly mimic similar percentages by age group for the State of Mississippi.

Local Institutions

- Pearl River Community College
- Four school districts
- Strong spiritual presence within the community
- Newly formed community foundation, the Lower Pearl River Valley Foundation
- County unified library system with regionally renowned genealogy and history collections
- Stennis Space Center employs 4,055 people (30% live in Pearl River County)

Assets

- Population growth
- Natural beauty
- Spiritual presence within the community
- Location between three regional economies, New Orleans Region, Mississippi Gulf Coast Region, and Hattiesburg Region

Community Capacity/Strengths

- Pearl River Community College
- Workforce Development Center at Pearl River Community College
- Church organizations and support
- Pearl River County Board of Supervisors
- John C. Stennis Space Center

Threats

- Perception that two Pearl River Counties exist, a north County and a south County
- Few organizations have representatives from both southern and northern portions of the county
- No programs cultivate new leadership
- Unplanned growth

Social Conditions

Approximately 21.5% of the population within the county lived below the poverty level- slightly lower than the average for the State of Mississippi that is 25.2%. Approximately, 24.9% of the children in the county live below poverty.

Statistics from the 1990 Census of Population indicated that 68.4% of the working population is high school graduates, and 11.4% of the working population is college graduates. Pearl River County ranks 13th within the state for the percentage of high school graduates.

Opportunities

- Leadership training to cultivate new leadership and network people from across the county
- Capital Improvement Plan to determine locations of infrastructure
- Adoption of minimum standards for building and development
- A new jail facility
- Cooperation among faith based organizations to address social service needs and to share capacity for coordinating services
- Use of Library Information System to coordinate information about social services in one accessible location (accessible by phone, fax, internet and in person)
- Pearl River County Historical Society is an existing countywide organization
- Public has access to the Pearl River County Historical Photograph Collection
- County is in the process of preserving Pearl River County Courthouse records
- Communities in schools program can help students and families succeed
- Early childhood intervention program can prepare children for school and help parents support their children in school

Economic Assessment

Economic Performance

The per capita income in Pearl River County was \$16,639, and ranked 58th among the State's 82 counties. The per capita income was 80.6% of the average per capita income for the State of Mississippi. A study by the University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf South Economic Research Center indicated that in the past decade the total personal income within the county increased at a rate of 6.7% per year in the county.

The per capita personal income grew by 4.3% per year. The average weekly wage in Pearl River County was \$375, approximately 83% of the average for the state and ranked 68th among Mississippi's 82 counties.

The unemployment rate in Pearl River County was 3.5% as of September 2001. The county enjoyed an increase in the civilian labor force of 17.3% in the last decade. As of September 2001, there were 20,240 people in the County's civilian labor pool.

Approximately 62% of the working population in Pearl River County commutes to another county for work. Likely regional employment centers include the John C. Stennis Space located in Hancock County, the New Orleans metropolitan area, the Mississippi Gulf Coast and the Hattiesburg area.

Business Composition and Vitality

Within Pearl River County, the top employment sectors were retail and wholesale trade, government employment, services and miscellaneous employment, and manufacturing. A study completed by the University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf South Economic Research Center indicated that total retail sales in Pearl River County more than doubled between 1990 and 1999. The greatest rate of growth was in the sales of machinery, equipment and supplies—which grew by 24% per year. Contracting, miscellaneous services, apparel and general merchandising and automotive sales expanded into the double-digits during the past decade.

Over 70% of the employers have fewer than 20 employees.

Assets

- John C. Stennis Space located 6 miles south of Picayune
- Location near 3 regional economic hubs; New Orleans Region, Hattiesburg Region and the Mississippi Gulf Coast
- New airport
- Pearl River Community College
- Pearl River Community College Workforce Development Center
- Good school districts

Threats

- Lack of industrial infrastructure
- Lack of funding to recruit new businesses
- Lack of entrepreneurial training
- Economic development organizations within the County are not unified and lack a common focus

Opportunities

- Market the Pearl River Workforce Development Center to businesses
- Establish a county industrial park
- Establish a formal relationship between County economic development and the John C. Stennis Space Center
- Take advantage of strong regional economies to bring new businesses to a cost-effective location

Strengths and Weaknesses Threats and Opportunities

Each Task Force Team developed a list of strengths and weaknesses and treats and opportunities. This step in the “Moving from Vision to Action” process allowed the Task Force Teams to learn more about their building block or areas of concern, and helped the teams to analyze not only statistical data, but also to analyze antidotal information.

Teams defined several common strengths and weaknesses. These are identified as Critical Strengths and Weaknesses, and Critical Threats and Opportunities. These critical elements of the community are listed within the sidebars that accompany these pages.

Civic Infrastructure Task Force

Strengths

- 14th fastest growing county in Mississippi
- Population grew by 10,000 people in past decade
- Schools have community service policy for students
- County initiated Plan for the future
- Lots of organizations and clubs
- Clubs represent diversity of the county
- Strategic Plan brought new people to the table
- Some organizations have adopted missions

Weaknesses

- Same people in leadership roles in many clubs
- County/City Boards don't reflect community diversity
- Few business owners involved in planning process
- Perceived lack of commitment by government leaders to follow through
- Lack of knowledge on how state government works
- Perception that local government does not want citizen participation
- City/County are reactive not proactive

Critical Strengths

- Stennis Space Center
- Location of Pearl River County near New Orleans, the Gulf Coast and Hattiesburg Region
- Pearl River Community College
- Access to transportation corridors
- Strong K-12 school systems
- Room to grow

Civic Infrastructure Task Force Weaknesses (continued)

- Few media outlets for local information
- Little interaction between business and government
- Little City/County cooperation
- Chambers not working closely with local governments
- Many factions starting their own “thing”
- Little regional collaboration on issues
- Little citizen participation at public meetings
- Budget hearings for local governments not sufficiently advertised
- Organizations are not chamber members
- Citizens do not support local events
- No common threads to bind county together
- No leadership programs

Opportunities

New Leadership at local newspaper

Regional collaboration for grants

Limited revenues force local leaders to solve problems creatively

Threats

Apathy by citizens

Lack of diversity

Lack of collaboration to solve problems

History and Heritage Preservation Task Force

Strengths

- Conscious effort to preserve family heritage
- Libraries provide history and genealogy collections
- Schools and churches promote a sense of community and continuity
- Organizations preserve history of the county
- Independent groups are nominating sites to the National Register of Historic Places
- Attractive landscape with good elevation
- Arable land with abundant pine forests
- Clean air
- Mild winters
- Navigable waters
- Outdoor sports are available

Critical Weaknesses

- Perception of north/south division in County.
- Separation between the economic development organizations within the county.
- Litter

Historic Preservation task Force (continued)

Weaknesses

- Lost, neglected and vandalized cemeteries
- Buildings deteriorate over time
- Pressure to develop land
- Some roads are inadequate
- Summers can be too warm

Opportunities

Growing interest in genealogy & history
Storytellers can rekindle history
School stimulates interest in family history
Scouts/4-H volunteer to recover cemeteries
Good retirement area
Possibility of more outdoor recreation

Threats

Over crowded/inadequate school facilities
T.V./ Mass media
County records are deteriorating
Current infrastructure is stressed
Pine beetles and Formosan termites

Jobs Task Force

Strengths

- Access to transportation and highway system
- Excellent schools
- Desirable place to live
- Competitive power rates

Weaknesses

- Limited financial support for economic development
- No major industrial parks
- Lack of "basic" jobs

Critical Threats

- Perception of the north./south split in the county
- Growth and lack of planning
- Loss of ownership of large tracts and parcels of land

Jobs Task Force (continued)

Opportunities

Right to work state
Strategic planning effort
Advantage Mississippi legislation
Tourism development
Polymer based industries
Current Board of Supervisors
Reappraisal of property
Collaboration between PRCDA and Chambers
Expanding to support Louisiana and Gulf Coast businesses
PRCC provides entrepreneurial training

Threats

Lack organized economic development
Lack of local incentives
Attitude of status quo
Bedroom community
Low sense of community self-esteem

People Task Force

Strengths

- School systems have successful accreditation ratings
- Students score above the state average on ACT
- School-to-Career program in K-12 works in harmony with PRCC
- School districts offer Advanced Placement
- ¾ off seniors indicate that they will attend college
- PRCC Workforce Development Training Center

Weaknesses

- Teacher's salaries are not competitive with surrounding counties
- Parental apathy regarding education
- Low student attendance rates
- Lack of minority teachers
- Lack of early childhood education and childcare
- Lack of pride in beautification
- Lack of entrepreneurial training
- Limited number of high paying jobs
- Some graduates of local high schools are not prepared for college and take remedial classes in college

Critical Opportunities

- New people are moving into the areas with new ideas.
- County is located close to the Stennis Space Center, New Orleans, the Gulf Coasts and the Pine Belt
- PRCC Workforce Development Center
- Strategic Planning process is underway
- New airport in Picayune

People Task Force (continued)

Opportunities

3 Adult Basic Education/GED Programs
Available literacy programs
National Board Certification program
Critical Teacher shortage Act provides funding
Scholarship opportunities to recruit teachers
Governor and Lt. Governor support education
Tech-prep programs are in all schools
Business and industry involved in education

Threats

Revenue shortfall in state funds
Lack funding for specialized programs
Parental apathy for school attendance and performance
School systems are not prepared for population growth
Cuts in Medicaid/Medicare buy limited health care

Physical Infrastructure Task Force

Strengths

- Natural beauty and available land for development
- Natural gas pipelines
- “Smart” schools wired for internet access
- PRCC is a virtual community college
- Highway and rail access is available
- Two airports within the county
- Subdivision regulations are in place

Weaknesses

- Lack of a unified vision and mission
- No land use plan or capital facilities plan in place
- Water lines in many rural areas are too small for fire protection
- Inadequate striping on roads create safety hazards
- Jail is unsuitable for present capacity.



Physical Infrastructure (Continued)

Opportunities

Distribution hub for region
Telecommunication exist to meet industry needs
Regional landfill is adequate, but need to find
Other alternatives
Markets for electricity expanding due to
Deregulation

Threats

Lower property values caused by uncontrolled
growth
Public not receptive to land use regulations
Clean water regulations may cause water
companies to turn over management to
utilities for a fee
Community water systems opposed to unified
county system
Inadequate jail is a liability

Social Infrastructure Task Force

Strengths

- The County offers culture and country
- Strong spiritual presence
- Library system has a social services module
- Strong individual and moral values
- Churches offer family support and social services
- Strong family ties
- County Administrator manages with big picture

Weaknesses

- Lack of regional networks
- Resigned to say culture is elsewhere
- Lack of affordable rental housing
- Lack of vision- what do we want the county to look like
- Lack of knowledge by residents on how to adapt to change
- Lack of support to retain businesses

Opportunities

Regional economic development
Interstate 59 Interchanges
Consolidated facilities

Threats

Local constituency
Parochialism
Change in social and civic structure is inevitable
Lack of knowledge on how people should greet
change (adapt, alter, fight)
No incentive to not be a divided community
Aging senior population



A Vision for Pearl River County

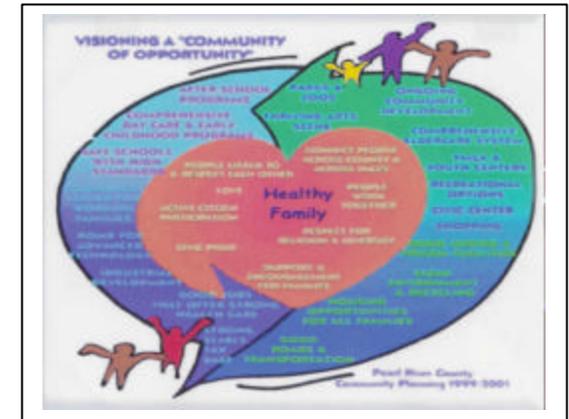
By the year 2010, Pearl River County will be known for its rich past, cultural heritage and a prosperous economic future. The citizens of the county will enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of lush forests and plentiful open areas intermingled with pristine flowing streams and hidden lakes abundant with wildlife. There will be a spirit of trust, respect and harmony among all citizens and politicians of the County. The citizenry will be confident and Local, County and State Governments, working in harmony, will preserve their quality of life, while providing the necessary infrastructure of paved streets, roads, recreational parks, facilities and services to support a robust economy and environment for entrepreneurs to use their creative talents to develop new ventures.

This broad based coalition of community, County and Stennis Space Center leaders will be seeking economic growth and development using the County's innovative technology park and the industrial manufacturing center to attract clean, small and medium sized aerospace, marine, medical, electronic, remote sensing, computer science and engineering based enterprises to the area. The government's use of the latest technologies, will provide citizens with ample opportunities to make informed investments in the County's healthy economic environment.

There will be opportunities for all citizens to receive education and training for a number of career paths to fill the ever-increasing number of up-scale paying jobs. The local school systems and Pearl River Community College will reach out to all employers, students, working adults and the unemployed in providing access to "education and job training for all", particularly those who were formerly struggling for employment because of their deficient jobs skills. The high school drop out rate will fall drastically, as more students graduate from high school, well prepared for work and post secondary education. The County will be recognized as a place that values lifelong learning.

The new hospital and medical complex will provide "state of the art" medical care and social services for all the citizens of the area and surrounding Counties. There will be an abundance of social programs provided to inform, strengthen and support families that will facilitate a countywide focus on health family relationships. Judges, lawyers and religious leaders will establish mechanisms for reconciliation, rehabilitation and mediation as alternatives to litigation.

The County will be recognized for its progressive management of economic development with an emphasis on maintaining environmental quality. Families will enjoy the fishing, boating, walking trails, and other recreational activities provided by the various lakes and resorts in the County. The abundance of weekday and weekend "get-a-ways" will attract many to, not only visit, but to live, work and worship in a County known for its natural beauty, stewardship of the land and rich history and cultural background, which have remained unharmed by the growing economy.



Action Plans for Pearl River County

The Task Force Teams built upon the strengths and opportunities of the community to overcome the threats and weaknesses of the community in each of the community building blocks to map a pathway to realize the vision for Pearl River County. Strategies were developed by each of the task force teams. To achieve these strategies, the Task Force Teams developed action plans, through a process defined by the “Moving from Vision to Action” methodology.

The Strategies and Action Plans are listed under the Task Force Team that developed the strategy. The strategies are listed in a hierarchical order within the building block by priority of goals. Many strategies and goals can be addressed concurrently.

A Community Action Plan combines many of the action plans of the teams and follows this section.

“Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?” asked Alice. ‘That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.’”

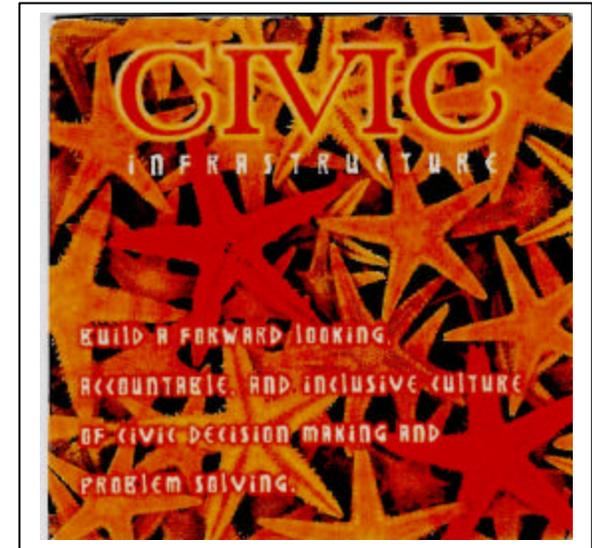
From Alice in Wonderland
by Lewis Carroll

Civic Infrastructure Task Force

Goal: Increase Civic entrepreneurship participation for the youth, adult and senior adult by 25% each year.

Strategies to be initiated within one year.

- Research successful leadership programs for youth, adults and senior adults.
 - Research programs that have been successful in developing civic entrepreneurship in the three age groups.
 - Identify benefits to stakeholders by having employees and county residents participate in leadership development programs.
 - Identify programs that are age appropriate.
- Develop a leadership program using research proven methods that will develop civic entrepreneurship in Pearl River County.
 - Identify and/or develop program model to use as leadership program.
 - Identify leaders in county to develop the leadership program.
 - Develop a Leadership Task Force to coordinate all three levels the leadership program.
- Promote and Market leadership program to stakeholders and the public.
 - Develop a marketing plan to promote program.
 - Develop a Leadership Task Force to coordinate all three levels the leadership program.
- Create a process of selecting participants for leadership programs on the three age levels.
 - Establish a process of selecting participants.
 - Develop a process for maintaining and sustaining current civic leaders.
- Implement program developed on the three levels.
 - Establish training schedule for each age appropriate group.
 - Identify resources to implement programs.
 - Identify class project guidelines.
 - Publish class projects.
 - Evaluate process
- Evaluate and provide ongoing feedback to stakeholders.



History and Heritage Preservation Task Force

Goal: Revitalize and reorganize the Pearl River County Historical Society that it may become the vehicle for other projects that will promote the unique history, cultural diversity and heritage of the county.

Strategies to be accomplished within two years:

- Contact former historical society members to revitalize and reorganize the society (Historical Society Librarian/ Nov/Dec 2001).
- Find meeting locations in Picayune, Poplarville and McNeill to encourage better participation (Nov/Dec 2001).
- Advertise and hold a reorganization meeting for the historical society (Jan/March 2001)
 - Prepare a letter asking permission to revitalize the Pearl River County Historical Society (Secretary of History and Heritage Preservation Task Force/ November 2001).
 - Obtain a site and date to hold the reorganizing meeting (History and Heritage Preservation Task Force/December 2001).
 - Mail out letters (Secretary of History and Heritage Preservation Task Force/ January 2002).
 - Establish who will be in charge of the meeting and how to accomplish a smooth transition (History and Heritage Preservation Task Force and the Chairman of the Historical Society).
 - Create an agenda of items to be accomplished during the first meeting, including a slate of officers (History and Heritage Preservation Task Force and the Chairman of the Historical Society).
 - Hold meeting (History and Heritage Preservation Task Force, former members of the Pearl River County Historical Society and John Matthews/ March 2002).
- Find areas of concentrated interest in order to set priorities in motion (March/May 2002)



Long-term goals include:

Goal: Preservation and collection of pictorial record of the County's history, in conjunction with the Crosby Memorial Library.

- Secure grant funding to prepare collection for public use.
- Recruit and train volunteers to scan and to identify subjects of the photographs.
- Library system and volunteers will catalog the collection of photographs into the Library's computer database.
- Library will continually search for additional photographs to add to the collection.

Goal: Work with county officials to help with the organization and preservation of county records.

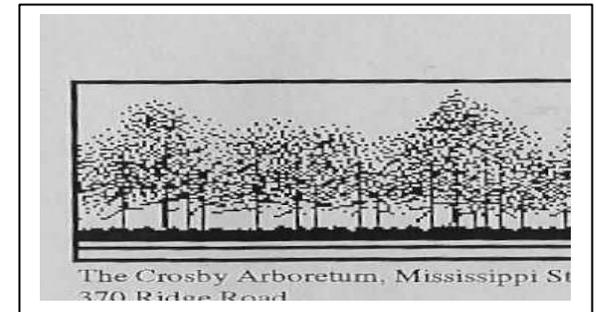
- With assistance from the State of Mississippi's Department of Archives and History, sort and organize the records to determine how long records must legally be maintained and which records can be preserved through the use of microfilming or digitalization.
- Determine the feasibility to establish a county archive within the Courthouse or near the Courthouse.
- Establish a partnership with Pearl River Community College to preserve records.

Goal: Establish a County Archive and/or museum.

Goal: Establish a countywide Heritage Festival that would promote pride and understanding of the County's History.

Goal: Work with the Crosby Arboretum to become a focal point in the Southeast.

Goal: Reclaim historic cemeteries and old buildings.

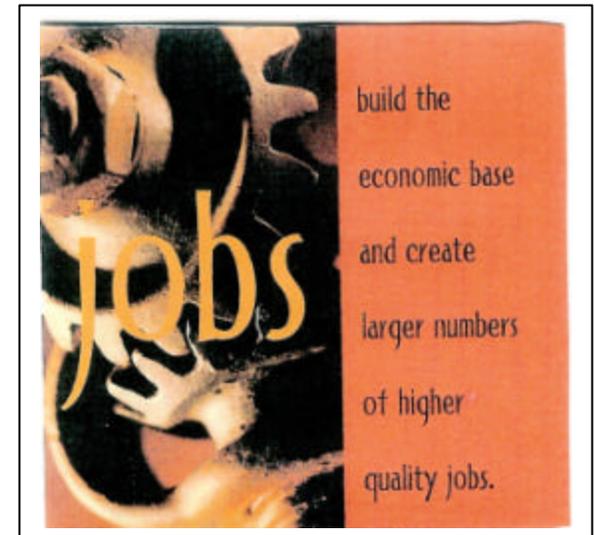


Jobs Task Force

Goal: Provide an economic development focus for Pearl River County. Study the Mississippi Development Authority's cluster research on Remote Sensing and Polymers for Mississippi and see how it can apply to our area. Coordinate with Pearl River Community College, the University of Southern Mississippi, Mississippi Power and Coast Electric to do a cluster study and develop a target based economic development program.

Strategies to be accomplished within 2 years:

- Develop an economic development focus best suited for Pearl River County and develop a plan for implementation.
 - Organize a "Tiger Team" to develop the plan using best practices from other similar projects (July 2002).
 - Target response to the Business Cluster Survey Developed by Mississippi Development Authority (PRCDA/ Spring 2002).
 - Determine infrastructure and workforce needs of industry clusters (PRCDA/2002).
 - Determine best short-term fit between business needs and community (PRCDA/fall 2002).
 - Determine best long-term fit between county and business needs (PRCDA/ Fall 2002).
 - Seek funding sources to address infrastructure needs to address the of long-term prospective target industries (PRCDA/winter 2002).
- Evaluate the Mississippi Development Authority Remote Sensing Cluster study and extract information that fits with Pearl River County.
 - Obtain a copy of the Remote Sensing Cluster Study being developed at the University of Southern Mississippi for the Mississippi Development Authority (Third quarter 2002).
- Pursue long-range funding for the execution of the plan.
 - Through the use of an aggressive marketing program, seek funding resources (December 2002).



Goal: Develop a workforce alliance. This alliance will analyze workforce needs for Pearl River County's economy today and those needs crucial for our future economy. The alliance will organize workforce development activities region-wide to secure that Pearl River County is positioned with an active skilled workforce for the years to come.

- Work closely with People Team to implement strategy.
 - Hold joint meetings between committees and committee leaders (Jan. 02)
 - Make this issue a priority issue for the Coordinating Committee (Jan. 02).
- Market Workforce Alliance.
 - Publicize the program through the Partners for Pearl River County newsletter.
 - Publicize the availability of the program through newspaper and radio.
 - Make personal contacts to publicize the program.
 - Make presentations to Civic Clubs to publicize the program.
- Organize group of key businesses and concerned citizens with a desire for workforce training dollars to be spent in Pearl River County (first quarter 2002).
 - Host businesses leaders with known training needs, as well as the People Team, the Chamber and Partners for Pearl River County for a brainstorming meeting.
 - Host a second meeting to define commitment and plan a strategy.
- Develop Needs Survey Study (second quarter, 2002).
 - In conjunction with the Mississippi Development Authority, the People Team, the Chamber, Partners for Pearl River County and business leaders develop a survey.
- Conduct Survey of Needs (third quarter, 2002)
 - Train people to implement survey.
 - Survey will be given through personal contact.
- Identify common training needs and organize businesses with similar training needs for training projects (third and fourth quarter, 2002).
 - Analyze data.
 - Match needs with existing programs.
 - Encourage participation of participating businesses in the workforce alliance.
- Implement training programs (second quarter 2002).
 - Apply for project funding.
 - Initiate training.

“Just as successful companies develop and sustain core competencies, regions develop niches where they can sustain competitive advantage by investing in talent, technology, and specialized infrastructure. Often, this development means cultivating clusters of businesses in related fields as part of the region's milieu. At the same time, region's must offer a quality of life that will attract and retain knowledge-workers essential to high-value activities.”

From Grassroots Leaders for a New Economy, p.9-10 written by Douglas Henton, John Melville and Kimberly Walesh.

Goal: Establish a millage from the Pearl River County Board of Supervisors, increase support from both Cities over the next three years, increase membership through a strong membership drive and establish fundraising activities that will not compete with currently established events in the County.

- Educate citizens on economic development and how an increase in millage will affect them (April 2002).
 - Make personal contact and have discussions with key leaders within the community.
 - Form alliances.
 - Develop a program for civic clubs.
 - Provide information to the press.
 - Provide speech at Salute to Industry Banquet.
- Increase economic development services (January 2002).
- Develop/ implement a marketing plan to show the benefits to businesses and citizens (December 2001).

Goal: Establish Partners for Pearl River County liaison office at the Stennis Space Center to better inform and align county assets with those of Stennis.

- Attend regular meetings of the Partners for Stennis (PRCDA/on-going).
- Work with the Mississippi Technology Transfer and Mason Technology to establish liaison with both organizations (PRCDA/Spring 2002).
- Research potential projects that may develop due to cooperation with organizations (PRCDA/Spring 2002).
- Present ideas to both organizations (PRCDA/Summer 2002).

Goal: Develop a united economic development program that will include all organizations, as well as public, private and social interest groups.

- Continue meetings with Poplarville Chamber, Picayune Chamber and Partners for Pearl River County. Invite Retirements Development, Main Street and the Downtowners to attend(2002).
 - Develop a Pearl River Community Planning Organization to continue strategic planning efforts.
- Continue and expand on joint programs (first quarter, 2002).
 - Hold forums often and at many locations to develop interest, excitement and leadership for economic development in Pearl River County.

“Economic communities have three basic features:

- Engaged clusters of specialization: Concentrations of firms that create wealth in regions through export and are engaged by their communities to meet mutual needs
- Connected community competencies: The community assets and processes that create the foundations for competitive clusters and sustain a high quality of life
- Civic entrepreneurs linking economy and community: Leaders that connect economic clusters and community competencies to promote economic vitality and community quality of life

“In economic communities, success is the product of continuous collaboration across the traditional domains of economy and community. Businesses rely on the community’s assets- specialized suppliers, skilled workers, information networks, and responsive government- for their competitive advantage. The community relies on businesses to invest in people and infrastructure and share responsibility for solving regional problems. Relationships forge links for continuous improvement. And civic entrepreneurs nurture these relationships.”

From Grassroots Leaders for a New Economy, p.23 written by Douglas Henton, John Melville and Kimberly Walesh.

- Develop a coordinated program to professionally market all county assets (third quarter, 2002).
- Locate a suitable professional facility that would allow for multiple economic development organizations to share space and ideas (third quarter, 2002).
- Present a unified front to all prospects (January 2004).

Goal: Develop a Countywide Industrial park to serve the business needs of Pearl River County.

- Perform a site analysis (February 2002).
- Purchase property (April 2002).
- Install infrastructure at site (Fall 2002).

Goal: Develop a Pearl River County enterprise development center.

- Perform feasibility study (July 2002).
- Select site (July 2002).
- Search for funding resources (May 2002 through July 2002).
- Begin construction (Spring 2003).

Entrepreneurial Innovation and Economic Development

- A well-educated and skilled labor force are central to a region's ability to foster new firms.
- A 1 percent increase in the number of people having a college degree is associated with a 0.31 percent increase in the rate of new firm formation.
- Large metro areas gave birth to more new forms as compared to small metro areas; moreover, geographic isolation seems to deter formation of new firms.
- The level of local government spending has no impact on new firm formation.

Source: Vinod Sutarra, "The Dynamics of New Firm Formation."

People Task Force

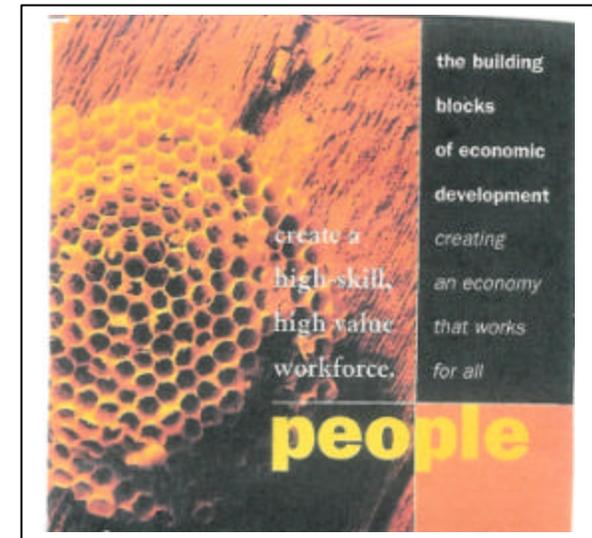
Goal: Student attendance rates in Pearl River County will improve to 97% and more than 80% of the parent/caregivers will participate in at least one or more events per year.

Strategies to be accomplished within two years

- Convince employers of the importance of parental involvement and solicit their support.
 - Research proven methods of parental involvement (School personnel/August 2002).
 - Inform all appropriate stakeholders of the benefits of parental involvement (school leaders/ August-September 2002).
 - Inform business organizations of school activities (designate school personnel/July - August of each year).
 - Identify businesses that affect the most children (selected school personnel/Registration 2002).
 - Evaluate process (school personnel/ end of each school year).
 - Hire public relations person (all three school districts).

- Educate the school personnel and parents of the need for parental involvement.
 - Develop a Parental Involvement Task Force in each district (school superintendent/other delegated school leaders, Spring 2002).
 - Research effective parental involvement to show benefits (appropriate school personnel/ Spring 2002).
 - Develop an appropriate agenda to discuss with the school (Parental Involvement Task Force personnel and parents/ Spring- Summer 2002).
 - Schedule appropriate meetings with school personnel and parents (Selected school personnel and parents/Summer-Fall 2002 and on-going).
 - Evaluate process (School districts and parent organizations/ at end of school year).
 - Publish with appropriate media, the benefits of parental involvement (school districts and parent organizations/end of school year).

- Create effective two-way communications between parents and schools in Pearl River County.
 - Develop a web page for parental involvement (school district web master or Public relations person/Summer-Fall 2002).
 - Create appropriate surveys to gather parental input (school personnel/2002-2003 school year).
 - Designate a parent liaison person in each school (administrator in each school/2002-2003 school year).
 - Personal contact by designated school personnel when child is absent (school nurses or other designated person or volunteers in schools/spring 2002).



- Create an understanding of the financial and academic importance of good school attendance.
 - Research appropriate data to support academic/financial importance (selected personnel at each school district, and parent resource people/Summer-fall 2002).
 - Schedule appropriate meetings with public groups (business people with selected school personnel/ 2002-2003 school year).
 - Publicize with appropriate media, the importance of good attendance (Public Relations people and selected school personnel/2002-2203 school year).
 - Develop partnerships with various businesses and organizations to make the public aware of importance of good school attendance (businesses, governmental agencies and selected people/ 2002-2003 school year).

Future Strategies:

- Create a parent-friendly climate in the schools.
- Develop and implement an Adopt-a-Parent/mentoring program.
- Develop a parent outreach program.

Goal: Use Pearl River Community College (PRCC) to prepare, develop and train the workforce for current and future business and commercial entities in Pearl River County.

Strategies to be accomplished within two years:

- Survey business and industry needs.
- Market PRCC's Workforce Development Program in Pearl River County and surrounding areas and create an awareness of PRCC's low-cost resources and benefits.
 - Create a needs survey(PRCC/second semester 2002).
 - Conduct survey (PRCC, PRCDA/Third Quarter 2002).
 - Identify common training needs (PRCC, PRCDA/Third & Fourth quarter 2003).
 - Market, advertise and promo te selected training (PRCC/first & second quarter 2003).
 - Implement training (PRCC/second & third quarter 2003).

Future Strategies:

- Execute PRCC's Workforce Development Training Program.
- Review and evaluate the process and public report.
- Create a Workforce Training Consortium.

Goal: All School Districts n Pearl River County will implement Early Childhood Intervention Programs.

Strategies to be accomplished within two years:

- Seek funding to support Early Childhood Education programs in Pearl River County.
 - Conduct long-range study of early childhood in Pearl River County (Civitan Research Center, Birmingham/ Nov. 2001 6 month study).
 - Identify funding sources for early childhood education (appropriate school personnel/ 2001-2002).
 - Write appropriate grants (selected school personnel/2002-2003 school year).

“The world we have created today as a result of our thinking thus far has problems which cannot be solved by thinking the way we thought when we created them.”

From Albert Einstein

- Publicize and educate about the need for Early Childhood Education programs.
 - Research and collect appropriate data to support the need (Parent Resource personnel/ Spring 2002)
 - Make presentations to various organizations and groups (select school personnel-day care providers/ 2002-2003 school year).
 - Publicize the need in various media outlets (Public relations person and school district personnel/ 2002-2003 school year).
 - Publicize the need in various community events (Parent Resource personnel and community volunteers/ 2002-2003 school year).
 - Develop and distribute appropriate literature to the community (various governmental agencies and school personnel/ 2002-2003 school year).
- Develop a task force to coordinate and collaborate Early Childhood resources in Pearl River County.
 - Select members of the Early Childhood Education Task Force (daycare employees, community, parents and school personnel will serve on the task force/ Fall 2002 and on-going).
 - Conduct long-range study on Early Childhood in Pearl River County (Civitan Research Center, Birmingham/ Nov. 2001 6 month study).

Future Strategies:

- Develop Early Childhood programs in each school district in the County.
- Encourage innovative research based Early Childhood Programs.
- Expand parent resource centers.

Goal: The adult population in Pearl River County who are at literacy levels 1 and 2 will be reduced.

Strategies to be accomplished within two years:

- Create a Reading Task Force.
 - Select members of the Reading Task Force (School superintendents, Spring 2002).
 - Fine-tune a plan to improve literacy (Reading Task Force/Summer 2002).
 - Locate the void in the adult literacy efforts in the county (Reading Task Force/ 2002-2003 School year).
 - Market benefits of being a literate population (Reading Task Force/ 2002-2003 School Year).
 - Create partnerships with businesses and several organizations to provide emphasis and awareness for improving literacy (Reading Task Force/ 2002-2003 School Year).
 - Identify available funding opportunities (Reading Task Force/ 2002-2003 School Year).

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

From Margaret Mead

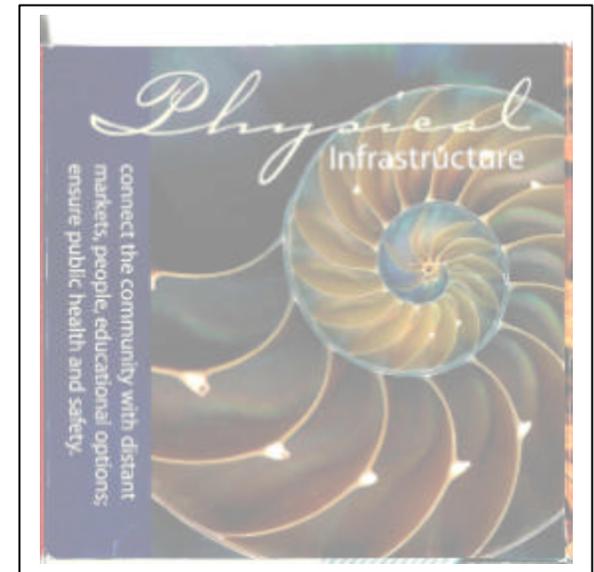
Physical Infrastructure Task Force

Strategy: Establish minimum standards for buildings in Pearl River County.

- Brainstorm ideas to promote acceptance (Physical Infrastructure Task Force, Homebuilders, Fire Departments, Real Estate Brokers, Insurance Agents and Banks/ January 2002).
- Research how the adoption of minimum standards was addressed in other counties (Physical Infrastructure Team/ December 2001).
- Develop an outreach strategy to educate the public on the need for codes (Planning Department/ Spring-Summer 2002).
- Organize meeting of key participants (Builders, public, city and county planning departments, lenders, and fire departments/ Summer-Fall 2002).

Strategy: Improve water and wastewater system to accommodate growth.

- Brainstorm ideas to present to independent water companies to work towards consistency in service and line sizes (Physical Infrastructure Team, Planning Department, Developers and Real Estate Interests/ March 2002).
- Educate the public (Environmental Protection Agency, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Health Department, Planning Department and Partners for Pearl River County/ Summer-Winter 2002)
- Develop a Master Plan to consolidate independent water companies - possible source of funding is Community Development Block Grant Program (Planning Department, Fire Departments, Health Department and Board of Supervisors/ Summer 2002-2003).
- Encourage strict enforcement of state and local regulations (Health Department, Planning Department and Tax Office/ Spring 2002-Winter 2005).
- Set up a system to continually update the County's Geographic Information System (Planning and Utility Departments, Septic tank and well contractors/ Summer 2002-Winter 2005).



Strategy: Improve Roads and Road Maintenance

- Educate the public to the need for better roads. Probable sources of funds will be an increase in taxes (Partners for Pear River County, Mississippi Department of Transportation, County Road Department, Supervisors, Real Estate Agents and Fire Departments/ Spring/Winter 2002).
- Establish a funding mechanism for maintenance (Physical Infrastructure Team, County Road Department and Board of Supervisors/ Spring 2002- Winter 2003).
- Encourage cooperative efforts to improve road maintenance that address the needs within the County, not necessarily within supervisor districts (Planning Department, Fire Departments, County Road Department, Board of Supervisors and the public/ Spring 2002-Winter 2003).
- Work with the Mississippi State Department of Transportation Southern District Commissioner to enhance funding for new projects and maintenance projects (Planning Department, Fire Departments, County Road Department, Supervisors, Public/ Spring 2002- Winter 2004).

Strategy: Create a community that is resistant to threats of crime, terrorism and natural hazards.

- Build a new jail facility with adequate capacity for future growth within the county (Board of Supervisors, 2003).
- Establish a data resource network to help governmental staff, decision makers and individuals make better decisions regarding building and development in areas of natural hazards.
 - Develop a drainage and storm water management plan (2004).
 - Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for drainage (2002-2004).
 - Update information that is available to determine areas that flood and are subject to natural hazards, including severe erosion (2003).
 - Establish a comprehensive drainage model to determine potential storm water runoff from construction activities within the watershed (2004).
 - Make data, mapping and model accessible to the public (2003).
- Establish a system of safe, accessible hazard shelters in Pearl River County (Civil Defense Office, 2005-2008).
- Reduce repetitive flooding in Pearl River County (Pearl River County Planning Dept 2003-2008).
 - Elevate properties and where elevation is not an option, purchase properties that flood repetitively (2003-2008).
 - Make improvements to the Alligator Branch to alleviate flooding in Picayune and Nicholson (2003- 2005).
- Establish a Hazardous Materials Response Team (Cities of Picayune and Poplarville, Pearl River County Board of Supervisors, 2005).



Social Infrastructure Task Force

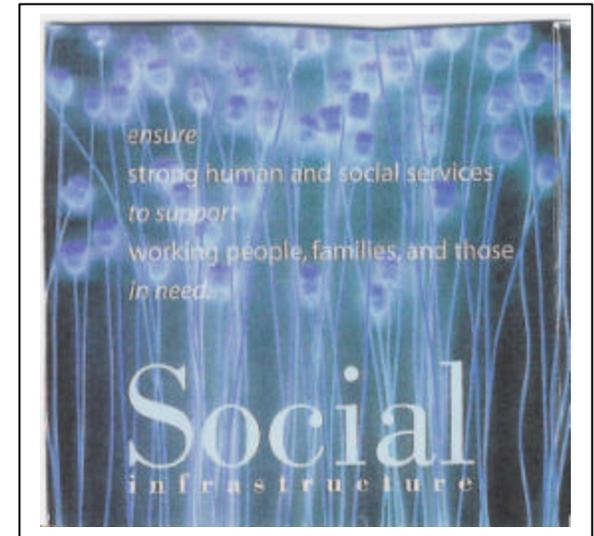
Goal: The library information system will become the purveyor of outreach and information on available social and cultural services and resources in Pearl River County. Information will be available on-line and as a booklet.

Strategies to be accomplished within the next two years:

- Perform Needs Assessment completed for the County.
 - Develop cost estimate for staff and survey (Social Infrastructure Team/Winter 2001).
 - Determine if students from USM School of Social Work could provide assistance (Social Infrastructure/Winter 2001).
 - Research grant options (Social Infrastructure Team/Spring 2002)
 - Write grant/proposal (Social Infrastructure/Spring-Summer 2002)

- Partner with the United Way of South Mississippi to perform a service assessment.
 - Review survey form used by United Way to determine data and skill level required (Social Infrastructure/Winter 2001).
 - Meet with United Way to determine method to interview (Social Infrastructure-United Way/ Winter 2001).
 - Recruit volunteers to help implement the survey (Social Infrastructure/Spring 2002).
 - Train volunteers (United Way/Spring 2002).
 - Develop list of service agencies contacts (United Way/ Spring 2002).
 - Implement survey (Social Infrastructure-United Way- Volunteers/Spring 2002).

- Partner with computer club to input data in to the library system.
 - Contact president of Computer Club to secure interest (Social Infrastructure Team/completed).
 - Attend meeting of the Computer Club to explain project (Social Infrastructure Team/spring 2002).
 - Determine if service assessment data can be entered from home computers and e-mailed to the Library Module (Computer recyclers/winter 2001).
 - Training session on data entry for Computer Club (Computer Recyclers-Social Infrastructure/Spring 2002).
 - Enter data from Service Assessment (Computer Club/Spring 2002).



- Provide training workshops to community-based organizations, churches and social service organizations to teach them how to access the use the information module.
 - Establish library policy and procedures for receiving written, phone and in person requests for information on services accessed through the information module (Library System/Spring 2002).
 - Test Library Module to insure that Service Assessment data can be accessed through the computer system, by Internet, by phone, by fax and in person (Library System and Social Task Force/late summer 2002).
 - Develop agenda for training sessions (Social Task Force-United Way/Summer 2002).
 - Determine list of invitees to include social service providers, chamber, city and county staff, police departments and religious leaders (Social Task Force- United Way/ Summer 2002).
 - Schedule one meeting during working hours for employees of service agencies to attend training workshop (Social Task Force/ Fall 2002).
 - Schedule one meeting during evening hours for religious leaders and anyone else who may not be able to attend the day session (Social Task Force/Fall 2002).

Goal: Establish a central location in Pearl River County to meet social service and health service needs.

- Complete Feasibility Study (2001).
- Seek funding through grants applications (2001).
- Determine location for site in central part of the County (2001).
- Begin construction of New Health Department facility (2002).
- Link centralized site with city sites via real time Internet access with video and audio capability (2003).

A Longer Term Goal is:

Goal: Adequate transportation for Pearl River County residents in need of supportive services.

- Survey other groups who have attempted to do this.
- Approach ministers and groups about possible participation in meeting this goal.
- Investigate financial and legal aspects of such services.
- Solicit donations from private enterprise in the form of funds or vehicles.

“Coming together is a beginning;
 keeping together is progress; working
 together is success.”

Goal: Provide training necessary to generate health family living for the county.

- Provide training to ministers to help provide pre-marital counseling to couples.
- Provide marriage enrichment seminars and parenting classes.
- Provide reconciliation or divorce counseling that will be designed as an alternative to dismantling families through the court systems.
- Get schools to prepare students for marriage and healthy family living where guidance in health relationship between the two sexes is a major emphasis.

Goal: Provide a public relations program that will help to increase community participation and input.

- Educate people about available programs and the use of these programs.
- Solicit input from the community to identify community needs and to enhance effectiveness of the program.
- Secure support from the community and funding.
- Recruit volunteers.
- Work with Civic Task Force to develop a Leadership program.



Training Our Leaders

A very important component to this program was a one-week intensive leadership program, led by Ken Hubbell. Thirteen members of the Strategic Planning Team participated in the program. From this effort, the team was able to establish a community structure and values to govern the implementation of the program.

The Summer Leadership Retreat was held at the Crosby Arboretum in late August. The four-day session was punctuated with full group discussions, team exercises and solitary reflection within the piney woods savannah of the Crosby Arboretum. People learned about each other. They learned about themselves, and most importantly, they learned how to work together to bring about change that was based on community values of trust, respect, and inclusiveness.

Together, the participants discussed readings on leadership that were as varied as a thesis on organizational management, practical accounts of civic entrepreneurship, the Chinese Tao, and reflections on stories from the bible. Participants in this program discussed “right action”, the theory of abundance versus a theory of scarcity—reflected through the biblical story of the loaves and fishes, and discussed the unique values of community structures that brought about effective and positive change in Austin, Cleveland and Phoenix.

On the fourth day of the Summer Leadership Retreat, the group of participants became a team of leaders. As individuals they defined the values that would make them effective leaders. And as a team they defined the values of the community that would close the gap between the current situation in Pearl River County and the vision of Pearl River County developed by the Strategic Planning Group.

The Ripple Effect

“Do you want to be a positive influence in the world?

First, get your own life in order. Ground yourself in the single principle so that your behavior is wholesome and effective. If you do that, you will earn respect and be a powerful influence.

Your behavior influences others through a ripple effect. A ripple effect works because everyone influences everyone else. Powerful people are powerful influences.

If your life works, you influence your family.
If your family works, your family influences the community.

If your community works, your community influences the nation.

If your nation works, your nation influences the world.

If your world works, the ripple effect spreads throughout the cosmos.

Remember that your influence begins with you and ripples outward. So be sure that your influence is both potent and wholesome.

How do I know this works?

All growth spreads outward from a fertile and potent nucleus. You are a nucleus.”

An interpretation from the
Chinese Tao Te Ching

As individuals, the leadership participants declared that they would;

Act proactively,
Share credit for successes broadly,
Lay aside personal interests,
Be flexible and strive to see the perspective of other people, and
Be accepting of all ideas.

As a team charged with implementing the Strategic Plan, the leadership participants declared that they would;

Be optimistic and focus on the positive,
Reflect the importance of the family,
Reflect the heritage of the community,
Reflect on and refine the options and strategies that were available to be implemented,
Perform all actions with honesty of emotion, and integrity, and
Respect the integrity of all people in Pearl River County.

From this four-day Summer Leadership Retreat, the goals, the community values, and the structure of the Coordinating Committee was born.

Four Levels of Leadership

<i>Level</i>	<i>Key Value</i>
Personal	Willing to set aside ego to find the common essential truth
Team	Individual contribution Commitment to vision Capacity Flexibility Shared power
Community	Diverse perspectives Transcending organizational turf Respect for traditions Civic will to change Innovation Abundant, equitable opportunities
System	Patience Transcending vision Inclusive perspective

From Ken Hubbell and Associates

The Next Steps: A Coordinating Committee

During Community Workshops, Planning Participants asked themselves;

How would the work of implementation and continued conversations and dialog continue?
How will the planning effort merge with an implementation effort?

In August, during the Summer Leadership Retreat conversations began to reveal a solution to these questions.

A Coordinating Committee will be established composed of two members of each task force team. The appointment to the Coordinating Committee would be initially for one year.

The role of the Committee will be

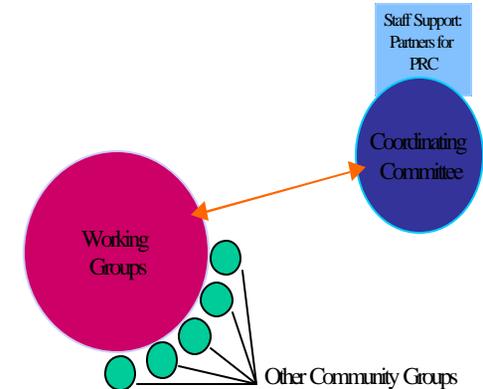
- To carry on planning, and
- To launch and guide projects of the Task Force Teams.

The tasks before this Committee will be

- To coordinate the action of the plan with key stakeholders and the working task force teams.
- To communicate and provide outreach about the plan, the planning process, projects under development and projects to be implemented.
- To track progress of projects.
- To convene community conversations through Community Workshops.
- To manage and to complete the plan.
- To help raise funding.
- To look for links with other organizations and volunteers and to organize activities.

Now the Committee will change their focus towards the implementation of projects defined from this process.

Coordinating Committee Structure



Community Action Plan of Key Strategic Actions

People		Jobs	Physical	Social	Civic		Heritage	Key Strategic Actions
Develop Childhood Task Force		Establish Workforce Alliance	Meet with all water systems to insure consistent technology		Develop and manage Coordinating Committee for Strategic Plan		Re-organize Pearl River County Historical Society	2002
		Determine target project		Research social service patterns and transit system needs				
	Survey Business and Industry needs	Review/target responses to MDA-Business Cluster Survey	Campaign for adoption of building standards and road issues		Develop/expand Leadership network	Expand school leadership programs	Expand work on local photos and county records	
Set up Reading Task Force								
		Expand membership resources for economic partners		Coordinate Social Service database at Library			Preserve historic sites	
Develop grants/funding					Identify staff			

People		Jobs	Physical	Social	Civic		Heritage	4th quarter 2002
Publicize need for early childhood center		Establish presence at Stennis		Provide training for resource database				
	Map research gaps in literacy efforts		Plan for staffing, implementing minimum building standards					
Work with employers Re: parental involvement	Market workforce training assets to potential and existing businesses	Workforce Alliance links firms to training		Research family enrichment network				2003
		Market/recruit target businesses clusters	Develop master plan for Water systems				County Heritage Fair	
	Examine the capacity of PRCC's resources	Expand public investment in economic development network	Refine/revise County Road Surface Plan					
Public awareness campaign on Attendance			Review, revise County wastewater and storm water plans and ordinances	Develop a cohesive, coordinated social service transit network				
Implement Early Childhood Program		Connect all local development groups					Establish a museum	

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The Lower Pearl River Valley Foundation

Other Support

Bank Plus

The Cornerstone

Crosby Arboretum

First Baptist Church of Poplarville

First National Bank of Picayune

Margaret Crosby Memorial Library

Mississippi Power

Pearl River Community College

Pearl River County Board of Supervisors

Pearl River County Department of Planning and Development

Picayune School District

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