

The City of Helotes  
Economic Development Corporation

**WORK PLAN**  
**FYE 2017**

ADMINISTERED BY:



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Approved by EDC on January 18, 2017  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PAGE 3  </b>	<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> Mission Statement Vision Statement History
<b>PAGE 4  </b>	<b>WORK PLAN</b> Overview
<b>PAGE 5  </b>	<b>GOAL 1:</b> Capital Improvements
<b>PAGE 6  </b>	<b>GOAL 2:</b> Business Development
<b>PAGE 8  </b>	<b>GOAL 3:</b> Effective Communication
<b>PAGE 10  </b>	<b>The History of Economic Development in Helotes</b>

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**The Work Plan** is a living document created by the Helotes Economic Development Corporation (HEDC) to guide future decisions. Each year, the HEDC Board of Directors revisits this document to remind themselves of the Corporation's vision, mission, and goals. The Work Plan constitutes the Annual Plan of the HEDC, mandated by Article IV, Section 4.1 of the HEDC Bylaws. A review of the previous year's progress is completed, and updates and revisions may follow.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

To promote, encourage, and enhance the creation of jobs, the expansion of the local tax base, and our quality of life through projects that assist in the retention and expansion of existing employers and which attract new employers and aid in their development and growth.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

Our vision for Helotes includes a balance of sales and property tax that takes into account our town's historic roots and unique environment, resulting in an improved quality of life for all Helotes citizens.

### **HISTORY**

The City of Helotes was incorporated in 1981 in an effort by local residents to avoid annexation by the City of San Antonio. The newly organized city of 1,535 residents rapidly transitioned from a small rural town to a suburban bedroom community. To ensure positive growth, the City Council appointed an Economic Development Committee in 1997. In 2002, Helotes citizens approved a ballot initiative to add a half-cent 4B Economic Development Sales Tax. The Helotes Economic Development Corporation (HEDC) was formed in 2003, and the HEDC Board of Directors was tasked with administration of the dedicated 4B sales tax fund.

Today, the HEDC remains dedicated to thoughtful economic growth, and supports public and private investment in projects that improve the economic outlook of the City and enhance the quality of life for nearly 10,000 Helotes citizens.

## WORK PLAN

### GOAL 1 | CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

**PRIORITY ONE:**

Fund infrastructure improvement projects.

**PRIORITY TWO:**

Support community enhancement projects.

### GOAL 2 | BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

**PRIORITY ONE:**

Recruit new jobs/businesses and aid in their development.

**PRIORITY TWO:**

Support existing businesses and aid in their expansion.

### GOAL 3 | EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

**PRIORITY ONE:**

Focus on brand consistency across all communication channels.

**PRIORITY TWO:**

Implement a targeted communications campaign.

## WORK PLAN

### GOAL 1 | CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

#### **PRIORITY ONE:**

Fund infrastructure improvement projects.

Work with City and industry professionals to plan for, assist, and fund projects that improve/expand public infrastructure.

#### **PROJECTS**

- Water/Sewer Project - Highway 16 (Funding secured; design completed).

#### **PRIORITY TWO:**

Support community enhancement projects.

Advance a community-centric environment to facilitate growth in business, entertainment, recreation, and community events by improving transportation, public gathering places, parking, and green space throughout Helotes.

#### **PROJECTS**

- Facilitate the construction and financing of a pedestrian bridge in Old Town Helotes.
- Shared parking agreements in Old Town Helotes Special District.
- Assist, as needed, with annual Municipal events.
- Assist City, when possible, on capital improvement projects, with Board approval.

# WORK PLAN

## GOAL 2 | BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

### PRIORITY ONE:

Recruit new jobs/businesses and aid in their development.

Develop attraction efforts with a focus on developments that provide primary employer(s) and new retail opportunities within the City and its ETJ.

- (1) Recruit primary employer(s) to include corporate and regional headquarters and call centers.
- (2) Ensure Retail Strategies provides quarterly presentations to the EDC Board of Directors.
- (3) Continue developing assistive resources and incentive plans.

### EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION

The Extraterritorial Jurisdiction, or ETJ, of the City of Helotes recently expanded, increasing the number of existing and potential businesses/developments in the Helotes area. The expanded ETJ allows the City and EDC to influence and receive economic benefit from new or expanding businesses / developments, particularly if said entities apply for annexation within the City.

### MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Research the creation of an MDD, and if viable, provide a Resolution of Support to City Council.

### PRIORITY TWO:

Support existing businesses and aid in their expansion.

Build quality working relationships with existing business owners/developers and help them stay competitive.

- (1) Make face-to-face contacts via a systematic visitation/call program.
- (2) Continue developing assistive resources and incentive plans.
- (3) Work with and support, as necessary and appropriate, the Helotes Area Chamber of Commerce (Chamber).
- (4) Coordinate and support low cost business development seminars and other educational opportunities through partners, such as the UTSA Small Business Development Center and Chamber.
- (5) Utilize Chamber memberships to facilitate a forum for round table discussions with business leaders.

**BUSINESS INCENTIVES**

- Old Town Helotes Special District Tax Abatement Program.
- 380 Economic Development Agreements and other assistance that supports the City/EDC goal to obtain primary employers, businesses, and retailers.

# WORK PLAN

## GOAL 3 | EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

### PRIORITY ONE:

Focus on brand consistency across all communication channels.

Enhance the Helotes brand message across all promotional efforts.

Create and communicate, through EDC Staff and marketing professionals, a consistent brand promise, message, and identity across all media, including Municipal websites, newsletters, advertisements, press releases, and public relations efforts.

### PRIORITY TWO:

Implement a targeted communications campaign.

Focus on a communications/marketing campaign, including tactics that build and drive traffic from B2C (business-to-consumer) targets, while implementing a targeted B2B (business-to-business) marketing initiative that increases leads for economic development.

- (1) Implement a B2B communications campaign that targets primary employer(s), corporate site selection consultants, and new business prospects.
- (2) Implement a B2C communications campaign that targets new consumers, day-trippers, event-goers, and resident participants.
- (3) Produce hard copy and digital information packets highlighting Helotes business opportunities, reaching the above targets.

### MARKETING PROJECTS

- Informational brochures, including a Retail Brochure Map.
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO) across all Municipal websites.
- Social Media Branding, Management, and Marketing:
  - HelotesEDC.com;
  - ShopHelotes.com; and
  - Helotes-tx.gov.

- Blogging.
- Website / Social Media / Event Photography.
- Unified Branding.
- Conference Booth Display(s).
- Destination Videography.

## The History of Economic Development in Helotes

### 1981 to 1997

Rick Lee, then owner of Hickory Hut, states he met with every Helotes City Administrator to request water and sewer lines for Old Town Helotes. However, no action was taken until 1997.

### March 1997

Planning and Zoning Commission recommended the creation of an Economic Development Committee to focus efforts on the attraction and retention of new and existing businesses.

### August 1997

City Council created the Economic Development Committee and appointed thirteen Helotes citizens as committee members; Stevie Seitz became President.

### December 1997

Economic Development Committee mailed a survey to Old Town Helotes business owners to determine needs and concerns. Survey responders deemed the construction of water and sewer lines as most important.

### August 1998

City Council adopted guidelines to regulate the character, architecture, landscaping, and lighting in Old Town Helotes.

### January 1999

City Council directed City Engineers to complete cost estimates for the construction of water and sewer lines along Old Bandera Road and Highway 16.

### October 1999

City Engineer estimated cost to construct water and sewer lines in Old Town Helotes at approximately \$2.2 million. The City Council was unwilling to fund water and sewer lines through the issuance of bonds or other revenue sources, reporting that grants or other funding sources should be identified.

### May 2000

The City of Helotes withdrew from the VIA ½ cent service tax due to lack of ridership. The intent was to replace the VIA ½ cent service tax with a 4B sales tax dedicated to economic development.

### February 2003

The City of Helotes approved a ½ cent 4B sales tax and initiated the creation of the City of Helotes Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to administer the tax. City Council member Barb Galland stated revitalization of Old Town Helotes could be a possible 4B project.

**February 2004**

San Antonio Water System (SAWS) installed a sewer line through Old Town Helotes at no cost to the City of Helotes. The line runs along Old Bandera Road and Riggs Road. The City contracted with an independent inspector to oversee the installation of the sewer line.

**February 2004**

The EDC commissioned a study by The University of Texas at San Antonio to investigate possibilities for economic development in Helotes, with particular focus in and around Old Town Helotes.

**February 2005**

EDC proposed the creation of a special zoning district in Old Town Helotes.

**March 2005**

EDC hosted meetings to inform citizens and business owners about new zoning proposed for Old Town Helotes.

**April 2005**

EDC recommended City Council approve creation of the “Old Town Helotes Business District” and proposes inclusion of the area between Bandera Road and Helotes Creek, from Our Lady of Guadalupe Church to El Chaparral Restaurant.

**October 2005**

City Council accepted the tentative proposal, schedule, and budget estimates for a waterline project in Old Town Helotes. Public hearings dates are determined regarding the project.

**November 2005**

First public hearing was held regarding water project in Old Town Helotes.

**January 2006**

The Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) recommended approval of the “Old Town Helotes Business District” as proposed by the EDC, with a schedule of uses allowing all B-3 uses plus 13 additional uses.

**January 2006**

City Council passed unanimously the creation of the “Old Town Helotes Business District” and its schedule of uses, allowing all B-3 uses plus 13 additional uses identified during the Council meeting.

**June 2006**

EDC contracted with engineering firm Bain Medina Main, and design begins on Phase A of the water line project planned in the Old Town Helotes Business District.

**July 2006**

The Old Town Helotes Plan was presented to Helotes citizens by EDC contracted city planners Winter and Company, at Old Town Helotes Public Workshop #1.

**October 2006**

The Old Town Helotes Plan was presented by Winter and Company at Old Town Helotes Public Workshop #2.

**December 2006**

Bain Medina Bain engineers completed design of Phase A and began design of Phase B of the waterline planned in Old Town Helotes.

**January 2007**

Bain Medina Bain engineers completed design review of the Phase B waterline plan for Old Town Helotes and the design plan was presented to citizens and property owners for public comment regarding waterline alignments.

**January 2007**

The Old Town Helotes Plan was presented by Winter and Company at Old Town Helotes Public Workshop #3.

**January 2007**

EDC adopted Resolution No. 1, requesting approval from the City of Helotes City Council for the funding of a waterline and other capital improvements projects in Old Town Helotes through issuance of Certificates of Obligation for \$4 million.

**January 2007**

City Council authorized a Resolution giving Notice of Intention (NOI) to citizens indicating a desire to issue Certificates of Obligation in the amount of \$4 million to fund the waterline and other capital improvements planned for Old Town Helotes.

**February 2007**

Bain Medina Bain engineers completed the Old Town Helotes waterline design and Contractor bidding was completed.

**February 2007**

First and second NOI publication by City Council indicating desire to issue Certificates of Obligation in the amount of \$4 million to fund the waterline and other capital improvements in Old Town Helotes.

**February 2007**

EDC and City of Helotes entered into an interlocal agreement to pay Certificates of Obligation for capital projects in Helotes, including the waterline project and other improvements in Old Town Helotes. The City Council authorized the issuance of the Certificates of Obligation.

**March 2007**

Winter and Company completed The Old Town Helotes Plan and Economic Report and a final presentation was made at Old Town Helotes Public Workshop #4.

**May 2007**

Winter and Company submitted the final codification of regulations for the Old Town Helotes Business District. The City Council adopted the final codification including the Old Town Helotes Plan.

**June 2007**

A contract for the construction of the Old Town Helotes waterline was awarded.

**December 2007**

Waterline project in Old Town Helotes was complete and operational.

**June 2008**

EDC entered into a marketing contract for the design and production of a City of Helotes telephone book.

**January 2010**

The MightyGroup delivered the 2010 phonebook to residents and businesses.

**April 2009**

E-Z Bel Construction began Phase 1 of the Capital Improvement Project in Old Town Helotes.

**April 2010**

Phase 1 of the Old Town Helotes Capital Improvement Project was completed.

**April 2010**

EDC and City Council approved their first Chapter 380 Agreement to incentivize commercial development at "Helotes Town Centre."

**August 2010**

EDC and City Council approved a second Chapter 380 Agreement to help attract new tenants and fill vacant lease spaces at the "Helotes Plaza".

**October 2010**

EDC funded the printing of a visitor's guide to promote local attractions and businesses.

**May 2011**

The MightyGroup completed the EDC's 2011 City of Helotes phonebook and delivers to Helotes residents and area businesses.

**October 2011**

EDC approved a Retailer Façade and Tenant Improvement Program. Approved grants provided a 50% match reimbursement for eligible fixed improvement costs of up to \$10,000 for existing businesses and up to \$20,000 for new businesses.

**November 2011**

EDC approved grant funding for the first Retailer Façade and Tenant Improvement Program applicant--Pizzeria Venti. The grant helped fund a 1,500 sq. ft. expansion of leased space.

**December 2011**

EDC approved grant funding for the second Retailer Façade and Tenant Improvement Program applicant--Helotes Barber Shop. The grant helped fund the finish-out of newly leased space and facilitated the creation of 3+ new jobs.

**February 2012**

EDC approved grant funding for two more applicants in the Retailer Façade and Tenant Improvement Program--Helotes Lions Club and Wine 101. The Helotes Lions Club grant helped fund building improvements and the Wine 101 grant was later rescinded by the applicant.

**April 2012**

EDC approved grant funding for a fifth Retailer Façade and Tenant Improvement Program applicant--Cha Cha's Bar and Grill. The grant helped bring 30+ new jobs to Helotes, and facilitated the expansion and long-awaited reopening of a vacant commercial property.

**June 2012**

EDC placed additional signage along Hwy 16 to help identify Old Town Helotes as a shopping destination and attract new customers to the area.

**June 2012**

EDC approved grant funding for two additional applicants in the Retailer Façade and Tenant Improvement Program—Ooh La La and Helotes Cafe & Bakery. The Ooh La La grant helped fund building improvements and the Helotes Café & Bakery grant was later rescinded by the applicant.

**December 2012**

EDC issued an RFQ for engineering services to design sanitary water and sewer utilities along Bandera Road from Circle A Trail and Scenic Loop Road.

**February 2013**

EDC selected LNV Engineering as prime firm and Young Professional Resources as consulting firm to begin engineering the water and sewer utilities.

**February 2013**

EDC selected Giles-Parscale Media to design a new EDC website.

**May 2013**

EDC was notified by the MPO that the Helotes Trails grant application for the Transportation Enhancement Program was approved for funding.

**June 2013**

EDC contracted with Giles-Parscale Media to design a new Helotes Business Directory website.

**December 2014**

EDC approved a contract with 360 Zone to complete Google 360 Virtual Tours and still photography for all Helotes businesses that apply to the program.

**March 2014**

EDC approved contracting with The Retail Coach to define the city's trade area and provide community analytics for retail marketing.

**April 2014**

EDC approved hiring Squires & Company to complete a marketing and media analysis for the City of Helotes.

**April 2014**

EDC approved a Resolution adopting the Business Improvement Grant for Small Businesses.

**July 2014**

EDC approved a Chapter 380 Agreement for the development of at least 10 buildings in the Old Town Helotes Special District for the "Shops at Old Town."

**July 2014**

EDC issued an RFQ for Professional Services for Helotes Creek Linear Park.

**January 2015**

EDC contracted with Terra Design Group to design pedestrian and bicycle facilities for the Helotes Creek Linear Park Project.

**April 2015**

EDC Contracted with Giles-Parscale Media to re-brand the Helotes EDC with a new logo and marketing collateral.

**April 2015**

EDC contracted with Giles-Parscale Media to implement a digital marketing strategy to promote Shop Helotes.

**June 2015**

EDC contracted with Alamo HD to create a promotional video for the City of Helotes.

**August 2015**

EDC approved hiring Retail Strategies to provide retail analytics and recruitment for the City of Helotes.

**September 2015**

EDC approved hiring Freese & Nichols to complete a Growth Management Plan for the City of Helotes and its extra territorial jurisdiction.

**September 2016**

EDC approved a contract with 360 Zone to complete Google 360 Virtual Tours and still photography for all Helotes businesses that apply to the program.

**September 2016**

EDC approved a Chapter 380 Agreement for the consolidation and relocation of various subsidiaries of BMC Millwork located in New Braunfels and Austin to Helotes.

**November 2016**

EDC approved a Chapter 380 Agreement for the development of Slim Chicken's, a fast-casual restaurant.