

Magnolia Economic Development Corporation  
Board of Directors  
Strategic Planning and Visioning Report

March 2011

## Background

Boyette Strategic Advisors (BSA) was engaged to facilitate a visioning and planning session with the Magnolia Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) board of directors which was held on March 1 and 2, 2011. This session included the following components:

- Presentations on how to function effectively as an economic development organization board and best practices for economic development organizations;
- A facilitated discussion of the community's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis);
- Exercises to lead the board to a shared vision for the community's economic development efforts; and
- Development of strategic priorities for MEDC.

In preparation for this retreat, BSA reviewed a variety of background documents, including basic demographic reports, an overview of educational offerings in Magnolia/Columbia County, the 2004-05 Tamerica report of targeted industries for Magnolia, and a white paper on the issue of lignite mining in the area. In addition, BSA participated in a comprehensive tour of the community to understand the various assets available to support economic development efforts.

Participants in the planning session included:

- Mike Boyd
- Jim Davis
- Bob Edstrom
- Robert Gantt
- Tongia Gaston
- Cammie Hambrice
- Jerry Hubbard
- Steven Hughes
- Mike Lewis
- Dr. David Rankin
- Todd Smith
- Mayor Parnell Vann

In addition, two students from the Master's in Business Administration program at Southern Arkansas University provided assistance and support to the BSA staff in facilitating the retreat and developing this report.

## Community Assessment

### Location

Magnolia, Arkansas, is located in southwest Arkansas between Texarkana and El Dorado and serves as the county seat for Columbia County. Located at the intersection of three US Highways - 79, 82 and 371 – Magnolia is less than two hours from Shreveport, LA, and 2.5 hours from Little Rock.



### Demographic Profile

	Columbia County	Arkansas	U.S.
Population (2000)	25,603	2,673,400	281,421,906
Population (2010 Estimate)	23,812	2,893,784	308,332,907
Population (2015 Projection)	22,724	3,021,761	322,581,814
Population (2010 Census)	24,552	2,915,916	308,745,538
Ethnicity White	62.7%	78.3%	73.5%
Ethnicity Black	35.2%	15.3%	12.4%
Ethnicity Asian	0.4%	1.1%	4.6%
Ethnicity American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut	0.3%	0.9%	0.8%
Ethnicity Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Ethnicity Multi-Race	0.9%	2.1%	2.9%
Ethnicity Hispanic	1.8%	5.6%	15.5%
Ethnicity Other	0.5%	2.3%	5.7%
Per Capita Income Current Year	\$24,095	\$21,568	\$ 27,867
Median Age	37.8	37.4	37.1
Total Labor Force (Age 16+)	19,596	2,336,859	247,349,245
<b>Educational Attainment</b>			
Total Population Age 25+	15,623	1,919,022	204,363,850
Grade K-8	4.2%	6.8%	6.2%

	Columbia County	Arkansas	U.S.
Grade 9-12	9.5%	11.1%	8.6%
High School Graduate	40.5%	36.0%	39.7%
Associate's Degree	5.8%	5.9%	7.6%
Bachelor's Degree	13.5%	12.7%	17.6%
Graduate Degree	9.1%	6.5%	10.3%
Some College, No Degree	17.4%	21.0%	19.9%

### *Population*

The 2010 Census show the population of Columbia County is more than 24,000 and the population is expected to decline by approximately seven percent by 2015, while population in the state of Arkansas and the US is expected to grow by 3.6 percent and 4.5 percent, respectively.

### *Median Age*

The median age in Columbia County is 37.8, which is slightly higher than Arkansas' median age of 37.4 and the U.S. median age of 37.1.

### *Per Capita Income*

The 2010 per capita income in Columbia County was \$24,095, while the state of Arkansas average is \$21,568 and the U.S. average is \$27,867.

### *Educational Attainment*

More than 28 percent of the population in Columbia County over the age of 25 hold an associate degree or higher. In comparison, only 25 percent of the population over the age of 25 in the State of Arkansas hold an associate degree or higher, while more than 35 percent of the U.S. population over the age of 25 hold an associate degree or higher.

### *Labor Force*

The 2010 estimated labor force for Columbia County is 19,596. The labor force is expected to decrease by 5.5 percent by 2015.

The unemployment rate in Columbia County for December 2010 is 8.7 percent, which is higher than the rate for the State of Arkansas at 7.8 percent but lower than the U.S. at 9.1 percent.

	Labor Force			Unemployment		
	Columbia County	Arkansas	U.S.	Columbia County	Arkansas	U.S.
2000 Annual	11,276	52,904	143,734,000	5.1%	4.2%	4.7%
2005 Annual	11,033	68,617	149,320,000	6.2%	5.1%	5.1%
2009 Annual	10,745	100,236	154,142,000	9.1%	7.4%	9.3%
2010 Annual		106,546	153,889,000		7.9%	9.6%
January 2010	10,536	117,612	152,957,000	10.0%	8.9	10.6%
February 2010	10,647	118,781	153,194,000	10.0%	8.9	10.4%
March 2010	10,606	110,949	153,660,000	9.5%	8.3%	10.2%
April 2010	10,654	102,950	153,911,000	9.1%	7.6%	9.5%
May 2010	10,665	102,662	153,866,000	9.1%	7.6%	9.3%
June 2010	10,346	107,951	154,767,000	9.4%	7.9%	9.6%
July 2010	10,325	111,535	155,270,000	9.6%	8.1%	9.7%
August 2010	10,197	104,283	154,678,000	9.8%	7.7%	9.5%
September 2010	10,386	100,291	153,854,000	9.2%	7.4%	9.2%
October 2010	10,568	95,942	153,652,000	8.6%	7.1%	9.0%
November 2010	10,565	100,542	153,698,000	8.6%	7.4%	9.3%
December 2010	10,538	105,052	153,156,000	8.7%	7.8%	9.1%

## Business/Industry Profile

### Employment by Industry

Employment in Columbia County is predominately comprised of manufacturing, retail trade and real estate/rental and leasing. Almost 31 percent of workers in Columbia County are employed in manufacturing, 11.4 percent in retail trade and 13 percent in real estate/rental and leasing. Another 8.5 percent are employed in accommodation and food services.

Industry	U.S. TOTAL		Arkansas		Columbia County	
Total, all industries	106,947,104		931,223		6,991	
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	11,810,371	11.0%	164,105	17.6%	2,147	30.7%
NAICS 44-45 Retail trade	14,544,111	13.6%	129,645	13.9%	1,014	14.5%
NAICS 53 Real estate and rental and leasing	1,971,344	1.8%	149,022	16.0%	937	13.4%
NAICS 72 Accommodation and food services	11,079,375	10.4%	89,997	9.7%	592	8.5%
NAICS 21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	641,366	0.6%	8,185	0.9%	419	6.0%
NAICS 55 Management of companies and enterprises	1,855,139	1.7%	35,373	3.8%	288	4.1%
NAICS 23 Construction	5,948,837	5.6%	51,820	5.6%	252	3.6%
NAICS 81 Other services,	4,369,780	4.1%	24,729	2.7%	231	3.3%

Industry	U.S. TOTAL		Arkansas		Columbia County	
except public administration						
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and warehousing	3,985,037	3.7%	48,806	5.2%	210	3.0%
NAICS 42 Wholesale trade	5,561,787	5.2%	47,016	5.0%	191	2.7%
NAICS 61 Educational services	2,419,382	2.3%	37,652	4.0%	173	2.5%
NAICS 56 Administrative and waste services	7,153,937	6.7%	13,801	1.5%	109	1.6%
NAICS 11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1,142,192	1.1%	12,609	1.4%	67	1.0%
NAICS 51 Information	2,807,721	2.6%	16,262	1.7%	68	1.0%
NAICS 52 Finance and insurance	5,618,477	5.3%	10,330	1.1%	72	1.0%
NAICS 54 Professional and technical services	7,479,760	7.0%	9,753	1.0%	46	0.7%
NAICS 22 Utilities	560,713	0.5%	6,755	0.7%	35	0.5%

### Major Employers

Significant employers in Magnolia/Columbia County that have 100 or more employees include, but are not limited to, the following:

Employer	Product/Service	Number of Employees
Albermarle	Specialty Chemicals	600
Magnolia Public Schools	Education	430
Southern Arkansas University	Higher Education	400
AmFuel	Aircraft Fuel Cells	325
CMC Steel	Steel Products	300
Magnolia Regional Medical Center	Healthcare	285
Weyerhaeuser	Wood Products	250
Walmart	Retail	180
Deltic Timber	Wood Products	160
SAPA	Aluminum Fabrication	150
Farmers Bank	Banking	110

### Education

#### Public Education

Magnolia Public Schools and Emerson-Taylor Public Schools offer K-12 education in the area. Magnolia Public Schools show a graduation rate of 89.4 percent, which is significantly higher than the State of Arkansas rate of 68.0 percent. Emerson-Taylor Public Schools are slightly higher than Magnolia at 89.9 percent. The dropout rate for Magnolia is 2 percent, which is lower than the state average and Emerson-Taylor, both of which are at 3 percent.

Composite ACT scores for both school systems are in line with the state average as shown below. Magnolia is the highest at 21, with Emerson-Taylor at 20.2 compared to a state composite of 20.87. In addition, the attendance rate for both districts is also very similar to the state average of 94.5 percent.

District	Enrollment	Attendance Rate	Graduation Rate	Dropout Rate	ACT Score
Magnolia	2,938	94.2%	89.4%	2%	21
Emerson-Taylor	656	94%	89.9%	3%	20.2
Arkansas	465,801	94.5%	68.0%	3.0%	20.87

### *Higher Education*

Magnolia/Columbia County is home to Southern Arkansas University, which has an enrollment of more than 3,200. It offers more than 80 associate, bachelor's and pre-professional degree programs.

Southern Arkansas University's Tech campus is located in Camden, which is less than 40 miles from Magnolia. With an enrollment of more than 2,000 students, SAU-Tech is a two-year comprehensive college emphasizing technical education, with programs delivered through various technologies and methodologies to meet the needs of its service areas.

South Arkansas Community College at El Dorado is located 34 miles from Magnolia and offers degrees and certificates in health sciences, industrial technologies, liberal arts, and business.

Following is an overview of each of these institutions:

Institution	Enrollment	Degrees Awarded	Operating Budget	Major Programs
Southern Arkansas University	3,228	Associate – 55 Bachelor's – 399  Master's - 50	\$72.1 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accounting</li> <li>▪ Finance</li> <li>▪ Management Information Systems</li> <li>▪ Marketing</li> <li>▪ Organizational Management</li> <li>▪ Agriculture</li> <li>▪ Chemistry/Physics</li> <li>▪ Math/Computer Science</li> <li>▪ Biology</li> </ul>

Institution	Enrollment	Degrees Awarded	Operating Budget	Major Programs
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nursing</li> <li>▪ Education</li> </ul>
Southern Arkansas University Tech – Camden	2,007	Proficiency – 68 Technical – 367 Associate - 90	\$23.5 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aviation Maintenance</li> <li>▪ Business Administration</li> <li>▪ Computer Information Systems</li> <li>▪ Electronic Data Storage</li> <li>▪ Environmental Science</li> <li>▪ Fire Science Management</li> <li>▪ Industrial Technologies</li> <li>▪ Multi-Media Technology</li> <li>▪ Nursing</li> <li>▪ Office Systems Technology</li> <li>▪ Welding Academy</li> </ul>
South Arkansas Community College – El Dorado	1,753	Proficiency – 65 Technical – 72 Associate - 92	\$30.9 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accounting</li> <li>▪ Automotive Service Technology</li> <li>▪ Business</li> <li>▪ Computer Technology</li> <li>▪ Cosmetology</li> <li>▪ Economics</li> <li>▪ Entrepreneurship</li> <li>▪ Industrial Equipment Maintenance</li> <li>▪ Network Security Technology</li> <li>▪ Office Technology</li> <li>▪ Welding</li> </ul>

### Available Sites and Buildings

Magnolia/Columbia County has four available properties. Sites range in size from 15 acres to 300 acres as outlined below, with a 250-acre site in the Magnolia Business Park certified as a Select Site by Entergy Corporation.

Site Name	Street Address	City/County	Acreage
Airport Property	212 Airport 980	Magnolia	300
Al Greene Property	US 79 Bypass	Magnolia	15.64
Certified Magnolia Business Park	US 82	Magnolia	250
Magnolia Industrial Park	Commerce Street	Magnolia	27.7

There are six available buildings in Magnolia/Columbia County. These range in size from almost 22,000 square feet to 120,000 square feet. The largest available building is an industrial property with a total of 120,000 available square feet sitting on approximately eight acres.

Building Name	Street Address	City / County	Type	Square Feet
K-Mart East	401 N. Frederick	Magnolia	Commercial	24839
K-Mart West	401 N. Frederick	Magnolia	Commercial	37512
Oil and Gas Building	231 A St	Magnolia	Commercial	21890
Peace Builders	300 & 301 N. Vine	Magnolia	Commercial	50500
Porterco Building	1622 Commerce St	Magnolia	Industrial	40500
TriMek Properties, LLC	1706 N Vine St	Magnolia	Industrial	120000

## Business Climate

### *Cost of Living*

When reviewing cost of living data for Magnolia, which is available through Sperling's Best Places, the total cost of living is lower than the U.S. average in all categories, which include food, utilities and miscellaneous. Overall, Magnolia's cost of living is 17.60 percent lower than the U.S. average. While this source does not provide an index number for housing, it does indicate that the median home cost in Magnolia of \$114,840, while the U.S. median is \$183,450.

Cost of Living	Magnolia	United States
Overall	82	100
Food	95	100
Utilities	95	100
Miscellaneous	93	100

Also, in CNBC's 2010 *"Top States for Doing Business,"* which scored all 50 states on 40 different measures of competitiveness in the following 10 categories: cost of doing business, workforce, economy, education, quality of life, technology & innovation, transportation, cost of living, business friendliness, and access to capital, Arkansas ranked 32<sup>nd</sup> overall but had the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest cost of living, tied with the state of Kentucky.

### *Cost of Doing Business*

The State of Arkansas has traditionally and recently also ranked as a lower cost state for doing business. CNBC's 2010 *"Top States for Doing Business,"* ranked Arkansas as the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest cost of doing business, with only Iowa having a lower cost.

### *Crime Rate Information*

According to Sperling's Best Places, Magnolia's violent crime index, on a scale from 1 (low crime) to 10, is 7. Violent crime is composed of four different offenses: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault. The U.S. average violent crime index is 4.

For property crime, on a scale from 1 (low) to 10, Magnolia has an index of 6, while the U.S. average is 4. Property crimes include the offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

### *Poverty Rate Information*

As of 2009, an estimated 24.8 percent of residents in Magnolia had income below the poverty level, as compared to 17.3 percent in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and 13.2 percent in the U.S.

## SWOT Analysis

Boyette Strategic Advisors conducted a Shared Community Visioning and Planning session with 10 MEDC Board members. As part of this meeting, the group was asked to identify strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats to their success. The specific categories discussed were: infrastructure, workforce, business climate, quality of place, MEDC as an organization, perception and image, and intangibles. The chart below highlights the key points from this discussion (note the strengths and weaknesses in each category are listed alphabetically):

Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Infrastructure</b>	
Electric Capacity	Bridge from El Dorado
Gas Line	Broadband Access
Highway Bypass	Cellular Service
Lake Columbia	Lack of Four-Lane Highways
Local Airport/Runway	Storefront Appearance
Railroad	Street and Road Maintenance
Regional Air Service	
Sewer Capacity	
Three US Highways	
<b>Workforce</b>	
Affordability	Brain Drain
GED Program	Drugs
Louisiana Tech	Illiteracy Rate

Strengths	Weaknesses
Public School System	Lack of Education
Religious Base	Location of Adult Education Facility
Rural Sourcing	Post-secondary Education
Southern Arkansas University	Quantity of Workers
Training Center	Shortage of Specific Skill Sets/Experienced Professionals
Training Consortium	
Work Ethic	
<b>Business Climate</b>	
Advertising and Promotion Commission	Lack of Entertainment
Affordable Permits	Local Sales Tax
Continuous Improvement	Logistics
Diverse Industry Base	Near Local Tax Maximum
Downtown Square	Residential Zoning
Healthy Retail Climate	Transportation
Hospital	
Responsible Industry	
Southern Arkansas University	
Strong Natural Resources	
Strong Rebound	
Strong Workforce	
<b>Quality of Place</b>	
Blossom Festival	Drugs
Community Feeling	Lack of Entertainment Options
Community Leadership	Leadership Diversity
Downtown Square	Physician Shortage
Hospital	Residential Zoning
Lake Columbia	
Logoly State Park	
Outdoor Activities	
Retail Diversity	
Safety	
Small Town Atmosphere	
Southern Arkansas University	
<b>Organization</b>	
Business Park and Industrial Park	Lack of Available Cash
Chamber/MEDC Relationship	Lack of Fiber in Industrial Park
Funding/No Debt	Need for Spec Building
Multiple Regional Partnerships	Office Space
New Board Membership	Perception of MEDC and Economic Development

Strengths	Weaknesses
Staff	Private/Public Ownership Mix of Properties
Website	Staffing
<b>Perception/Image</b>	
Blossom Festival	Dry County
College Town	Lack of Image
Community Experience	Lack of Philanthropic Spirit
Community Pride	Loss of Population
Courthouse/Downtown Square	Rural Setting
Influential Natives	
Nice Surprise	
Regional Community Ties	
Rural Setting	
Southern Arkansas University Alumni Base	
<b>Intangibles</b>	
Growth of Louisiana and Texas Economies	Loss of Population
Lignite	Management Succession
Presence of Professional Services	Possibility of Murphy Leaving El Dorado
Texarkana	

Opportunities	Threats
Better Utilization of Hospital	Declining Population
Community Clean-up	Illiteracy
Development of Philanthropic Culture	Lion Oil Future
Downtown Merchant Improvements	Losing Business
GED Program	Murphy Oil Future
Lignite	Poverty
MEDC Organizational Update	
Rural Sourcing Program	
Targeting Older Professionals	

### Vision Statement

During the Visioning and Planning session, MEDC Board members participated in two exercises designed to help them identify a shared community vision for Magnolia's economic development efforts. As part of this effort, the group discussed what gives the community life, what small changes could have the greatest impact, and what the primary focus of MEDC should be. In addition, they worked in small groups to develop a shared picture and memorable phrase describing what would be happening if Magnolia were fulfilling its promise.

Common themes that emerged from these exercises included:

- A “can do” community attitude
- A cooperative spirit/unity
- Economic diversity
- Family atmosphere
- Abundant natural resources
- Enhanced communications
- Southern Arkansas University

Based on this input, BSA proposes that MEDC consider the following options for a vision statement for Magnolia’s economic development efforts:

#### Option 1

To develop a diverse economy for Magnolia that provides quality, sustainable jobs, employment for youth and a positive environment for business creation.

#### Option 2

To maximize community resources to create an economic development environment in Magnolia that attracts quality businesses with higher paying jobs, improves productivity and retains our youth.

#### Option 3

To actively work with existing business entities, cultivate and encourage new entrepreneurs, and seek business ventures that are compatible with and viable in Magnolia.

### Strategic Priorities

Following completion of the SWOT analysis and discussion of MEDC’s vision for the future of Magnolia, BSA assisted the Board in developing strategic priorities to guide its work for the next three years. Following is an overview of these priorities:

#### Business Development and Retention

- Determine current targeted industries for Magnolia/Columbia County. The Arkansas Economic Development Commission recently completed a targeted

business opportunities project. BSA believes the following AEDC targets might provide good opportunities for Magnolia/Columbia County:

- **Advanced Food Manufacturing and Packaging** -- Advanced Food Manufacturing involves –the application of technology to raw agricultural products for the purpose of loss prevention, preservation, food safety, and quality control or enhancement. The technologies involved relate to on-farm handling, food processing, food packaging, storage, and distribution. Advanced Food Packaging includes areas such as redesigned package shapes that fit better in car holders or refrigerator doors; package flexibility; the use of advanced films, such as antimicrobial, that prevent produce spoilage; biodegradable or –green packaging; edible packaging; and the use of nanoscale materials that have enhanced mechanical and thermal properties to ensure better protection of foods from exterior effects.
- **Energy Storage Devices** -- Energy Storage Devices commonly take the form of batteries and can be used in consumer electronics such as cell phones, laptop computers, iPods, and cameras; appliances; power tools; electric and hybrid electric vehicles, and renewable energy systems. Lithium-ion batteries are the newest and fastest growing battery technology because they are rechargeable, abuse tolerant, relatively lightweight, and carry a high energy density. Lithium-ion batteries are expected to be the battery choice for electric and hybrid electric vehicles because of their reliability in cold weather and ability to recharge at high rates.
- **Paper and Timber Products** -- The forest products industry includes pulp, paper, packaging and wood products manufacturers, and forest landowners. Within the forest products industry are the following sub-sectors: forestry, logging, wood products, and paper and allied products. Within paper and allied products is the tissue category, which includes toilet paper, facial tissue, napkins, paper towels, disposable diapers and feminine products.
- **Green and Sustainable Building Products and Fixtures** -- Building materials and fixtures may be considered green and sustainable if they conserve energy and water, improve Indoor Air Quality (IAQ), or are resource efficient. Examples of green building products and fixtures include steel products, forest products, mechanical systems/HVAC, appliances, and lighting, including Light Emitting Diode (LED).
- **Technical Support Centers** -- A technical support center requires a higher level of skill for its employees than does a traditional call center. In these centers, employees are solely engaged in attending to customer telephone calls and e-

mails, and providing advice and assistance such as troubleshooting technical problems. Technical support may include a range of services providing assistance with computer hardware, software, or other electronic or mechanical goods. In general, technical support services attempt to help the user solve specific problems with a product—rather than providing training, customization, or other support services.

- Enhance opportunities to diversify Magnolia's employment base, which is currently heavily dominated by manufacturing businesses.
- Develop an aggressive business retention and attraction program. This program should include a corporate headquarters visitation program, annual visits to local employers, and a database to track information gathered during these meetings.
- Establish a process for responding to requests for proposals and for conducting prospect visits. This process should address members of the project team, training for the project team, how to entertain a prospect, an agenda for visits, where prospect meetings should be held, and what to include on a community tour.
- Establish an incentives fund with an understanding of what is required to be competitive for key projects. Ensure that the community's incentives policy adequately addresses issues for offering this fund.
- Research, monitor, and as appropriate, support efforts to develop the lignite industry in Columbia County.

### Marketing and Communications

- Develop an internal communications plan to enhance awareness of MEDC's efforts and successes among area residents.
- Confirm a series of key messages designed to sell Magnolia to potential prospects. Following are proposed key messages for this purpose:
  - Magnolia has a diverse economic base focused on manufacturing, with retail and white collar sectors also being strongly represented.
  - Southern Arkansas University, with its main campus in Magnolia, provides outstanding educational opportunities and supports the community's workforce training efforts with a range of course offerings leading to associate, bachelor's and master's degrees.
  - Magnolia's public school system exceeds state averages in many key performance indicators, which contributes to the area's highly educated workforce.

- Magnolia's residents have a tremendous sense of pride that offers a strong sense of place, including a vibrant downtown, beautiful community parks, and access to a wide variety of recreational opportunities.
- Magnolia offers companies available buildings and sites with various assets to meet their needs.
- Design a PowerPoint template to be used for presentation to prospects.
- Explore marketing opportunities to take advantage of Magnolia's proximity to Dallas, Shreveport, and northern Louisiana and their economic successes.
- Consider a cooperative outdoor advertising program with Southern Arkansas University.

#### Workforce

- Collect and review data to obtain a thorough understanding of the labor draw area for Magnolia/Columbia County.
- Explore opportunities that might exist through enhancement of the rural sourcing program.
- Develop MEDC's relationship with key local and state leaders in an effort to enhance the organization's role as a relevant influencer in issues related to Southern Arkansas University and its future development.

#### Community Development

- Develop a plan for maintaining downtown and the Courthouse square. This should address clean-up, support for existing merchants/tenants and marketing this unique community asset.
- Support the city's need for enhanced fire protection that will provide the equipment necessary to protect all buildings in the community.
- Establish an ad hoc committee to explore poverty issues in Magnolia and investigate best practice programs that might help the community address these issues.
- Explore opportunities to upgrade existing city parks, develop additional green spaces and possibly construct a city water park or other attraction that would benefit area families.

- Encourage a philanthropic culture among community leaders and major businesses in the community.

### Organization

- Review and update MEDC bylaws.
- Seek to diversify board membership to reflect the wider community.
- Explore staffing needs of MEDC and the Chamber of Commerce. Ensure that adequate staff is available to conduct research, maintain the website, implement communications strategies and respond to prospect requests for proposals. To achieve this a new position such as Director of Research and Communications might be considered.
- Consider how to effectively work regionally with neighboring communities to maximize assets and opportunities to market Magnolia.
- Support the economic development professional development of the MEDC Executive Director.

## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### *Sample Prospect Visit Agenda*

Magnolia Economic Development Corporation

Get It There Distribution Services  
Community Visit Agenda

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Southern Arkansas University Activity Center

- |       |   |                                |
|-------|---|--------------------------------|
| I.    | Welcome & Introductions                   | Mayor Vann                     |
| II.   | Community Overview                        | Cammie Hambrice/<br>MEDC Chair |
| III.  | Discussion of Project Needs               | Prospect                       |
| IV.   | Catered Luncheon                          |                                |
| V.    | Driving Tour of Magnolia Sites            | Cammie Hambrice                |
| VI.   | Education & Training Overview             | Dr. David Rankin               |
| VII.  | Incentives Summary                        | Cammie Hambrice                |
| VIII. | Follow-up Questions and Information Needs | Prospect                       |
| IX.   | Dinner at Private Home                    |                                |

Participants: Mayor  
Cammie Hambrice  
2-3 Community Leaders  
Others dictated by prospect

## Appendix B

### *Sample MEDC Executive Director Job Description*

The Executive Director will have the following responsibilities:

- Supervise maintenance of all data relative to the local economy and economic development
- Maintain information to be used in responding to inquiries and prospect needs
- Develop and implement procedures for prospect visits
- Develop and maintain relationship with community leaders for efficient direction during prospect visits
- Produce an effective program for dealing with prospect inquiries and ensure that all leads are dealt with promptly and thoroughly
- Coordinate all prospect visits
- Develop a targeted list of potential prospects
- Maintain a relationship with all economic development allies in the community and state, including but not limited to utilities and AEDC
- Plan and conduct sales trips and attend trade shows as partner opportunities arise
- Oversee the operation of the organization
- Conduct bi-annual meetings with investors and supporters
- Develop monthly/quarterly and annual reports for meetings of the Board and organization
- Report prospect activity monthly to the Board of Directors, maintaining confidentiality of details when required
- Develop and monitor budget
- Implement and maintain policies and procedures
- Supervise and assign duties to staff
- Conduct employee performance appraisals
- Manage expenditures and overall economic development budget