



Attachment B

Transcription of worksheets from

SWOT Analysis Workshops

Held February 14 & 15, 2012
City of Solvang Council Chambers

Note: The SWOT Analysis process is an information-gathering, brainstorming session where participants are encouraged to express “top of mind” thoughts and ideas in a rapid-fire format.

SWOT Analysis Workshop Participants

Special thanks to those who participated in the SWOT Analysis Workshops & Interviews:

Civic Group

Jim Richardson, Mayor
Hans Duus, Mayor Pro Tem
Brad Vidro, City Manager
Day Yeager, Planning Commission Chair
Kathi Hopkins, Planning Commission Vice Chair
Rick Rantz, Allan Hancock College
Chris Parker, Solvang Lutheran Home
Maria Centrella, PCPA – Solvang Theatre

Services Group

Debbie Reed, Santa Barbara Bank & Trust
Lana Clark, Buynac & Fauver, Chamber Co-President
Allan Jones, SYV Real Estate
Rich Condit, SYV Real Estate
Steve Battaglia, Battaglia Commercial Real Estate
Kelly Schreiner, Nirvana
Brian McInerey, Property Owner

Retail Group

Susan Williams, Wandering Dog Wine Bar, Chamber Co-President
Dave Rasmussen, Rasmussen Gifts
Max Hanberg, Solvang Shoe Store
Travis Mueller, First Street Leather
Candice Libera, Parts Unknown
Rodney Nielsen, Nielsen's Market
Ken Andersen, Nielsen's Building Materials
Michael Larner, Vintners Association
Sue Moulalim, Artistic Pony
Linda Smith, Solvang Chamber of Commerce

Hospitality Group

Aaron Petersen, Greenhouse Café', Peterson Inn, other)
John Martino, Hotel Corque
Mary Harris, Santa Ynez Valley Hotel Association
Tracy Farhad, Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau
Susie Sorensen, Bit O' Denmark
Linda Johansen, King Frederick
Sandy Hallman, Wine Valley Inn

Interviews

Elaine "Willi" Campbell, Former Mayor
Lee Rosenberg, Arts & Entertainment Interests

CIVIC GROUP

Workshop February 14, 2012

Strengths	Weaknesses
Danish tradition	Lack of "family" activities
Pedestrian friendly	Lack of economic diversity--too dependent on tourism and retail
Beautiful location	Lack of evening activities--streets roll up at 5:00
Great year-around climate	Some Danish-themed places lack authenticity
Close to LA and Southern California	There has been compromise with esthetic standards
Safe	Feeling by some residents that TRC is a nuisance (traffic, parking, crowds)
Good bakeries	Perception by some residents that TRC merchants don't care about their trade
Active with lots of opportunity for healthy recreation	Some residents' lack of knowledge of the goods, services and other assets of the TRC
Clean city	Limited transportation services
Unique Danish architecture in the TRC	Lack of certain type of shopping
PCPA theatre offerings	Commuters who patronize businesses closer to their jobs
Allen Hancock Community College	Cost of water and water hook-up fees
Good hospital, medical services	Citizens who are opposed to any change
Vibrant retirement community	New development is limited to infill
Good museum(s)	Weekend traffic
Friendly, hospitable community	Lack of regional focus and cooperation among organizations--too much "turf"
Slow growth policies have helped retention of unique legacy	Limit of business types
Proximity to vineyards	Fading of Danish tradition
Wine tasting	Lack of food/dining variety
Chumash Casino as a draw to the area	High cost of some commercial leases
Windmills	Lack of interest and responsiveness of some absentee landlords
Special events	Aspects of the current Sign Ordinance
Farmers markets	Quality of public lighting not consistent throughout TRC
Stronger tourism & hospitality efforts	
Good restaurants	
Good schools	
Golfing & tennis	
Stable city council and city finances	
Pro-business city council	
Beautiful parks	
Ample public restrooms & parking	

Opportunities	Threats
<p>Sequel to film "Sideways" is underway</p> <p>Casino expansion & wine passport (?)</p> <p>Greater leverage of wineries and vineyards</p> <p>Potential Allen Hancock expansion of offerings including culinary arts</p> <p>Greater number of art galleries, antique dealers and other niche businesses</p> <p>Farmers market</p> <p>Architectural envelop (?)</p> <p>Improving the quality and substance of the town's "look"</p> <p>Greater leveraging of regional attributes and assets</p> <p>New festival opportunities</p> <p>Development of a conference center</p> <p>Increasing off-season, mid-week visitors</p> <p>Improved night life</p> <p>Improving the consistency of efforts—developing good plans & sticking with them</p> <p>More "spontaneous" activities</p> <p>Greater use of theater</p> <p>Environmental tourism, e.g. birding</p> <p>Encourage more economic diversity in city's periphery</p> <p>Enhanced resources for marketing through the regional tourism BID</p> <p>Greater promotion of Solvang's proximity to Cachuma Lake</p>	<p>Potential negative impacts of casino expansion</p> <p>Doing nothing</p> <p>Increasing traffic</p> <p>Economic uncertainty (macro)</p> <p>Natural disasters effecting region</p> <p>Competition from neighboring communities, wineries, etc.</p> <p>Continuing business closures</p> <p>Scattered, uncoordinated efforts</p> <p>Lack of focus on attracting good businesses</p> <p>Policies unfriendly to business from local, state and federal governments and agencies</p>

SERVICE GROUP

Workshop February 14, 2012

Strengths	Weaknesses
Great weather	Negative impacts of casino
Unique architecture	Traffic problems, especially on weekends
Attractive landscaping	Over-regulation by local government
Proximity to wine country	High water/sewer costs & hook-up fees
International recognition as a destination	"Nickle diming" by city on various fees
Diverse visitors	Short duration of visits by tourists--day trippers
Danish tradition	Slow community acceptance of new business
Proximity to SoCal	Fear of competition
Developed, efficient infrastructure in place	Resistance to change
Good municipal services	Landscaping in TRC needs improvement
Strong sense of community	Lack of night life
Safe	Too many businesses close too early
Clean	Perceived lack of shopping variety
Good schools	Lack of adequate directional signage
Relatively stable real estate values	Retail shopping leakage to other cities
Good recreation assets inc. golf	Lack of adequate parking in some areas
Art & theatre	Lengthy and expensive code checking process
Strong events including "3rd Wednesday"	Regulations of the State of California
Support for philanthropic activities & organizations	Reputation as a difficult place to do business
A "sense of place"	Insufficient communication to business and development communities of beneficial changes in City policies
Commercial center of Valley region	Overly complicated and cluttered building code and zoning ordinance
Casino as a magnet for commercial activity	Definition of TRC needs revision, includes too many marginal businesses
Recognition created by participation in Amgen tour	Dated image as a "cute" little Euro village
Home of world-famous equine hospital	Conflicts between citizens and shop owners (?)
Good medical and other human services	City leadership lacks understanding and experience with commercial activities of Village
Good grocery stores	
Welcoming people	
The Alisal	

Opportunities	Threats
<p>Wellness-related vacations</p> <p>Cross marketing opportunities of local & regional attributes</p> <p>Rebranding Solvang to tourists</p> <p>Upgrading of hotels and restaurants to a high Standard</p> <p>Increased/improved night life including a "night life district"</p> <p>Adaptation to changing tastes</p> <p>Lower fees and removal of other barriers to entry for business</p> <p>Better use of social media</p> <p>A better front counter experience in the planning department--a more "can do" attitude</p> <p>Create a "concierge" approach to permitting</p> <p>Empower counter staff to issue approval for BAR review issues (signs, colors)</p> <p>More help at the counter to save applicants costs associated with multiple fees. Better communication about process and available short cuts</p> <p>A wine festival</p> <p>More catering to the wine and culinary visitor</p> <p>More arts & cultural offerings, shops, etc</p> <p>Culinary college courses</p> <p>Hospitality directed to the wives of the Rancho riders</p> <p>More focus on promoting the mission and its grounds</p> <p>More mixed uses in the TRC commercial/residential</p> <p>Potential development of a State park near mission</p> <p>An in-house, on-site plan checker</p> <p>The natural environs surrounding Solvang</p> <p>Opportunities for greater regional cooperation</p> <p>Potential development of a new regional park</p> <p>Greater bicycle touring</p> <p>More technical assistance for business</p>	<p>Increasing cost of water</p> <p>More traffic</p> <p>Casino expansion</p> <p>Competition for same tourist</p> <p>Higher gas prices</p> <p>Potential road closures, projects</p> <p>Political policy related to cost of doing business and regulations</p> <p>Continuing business failures</p> <p>Labor force quality & costs</p> <p>Increased social instability, e.g. divorce, drugs & alcohol abuse</p> <p>California's financial condition</p> <p>Gang activity</p> <p>Lack of youth activities</p> <p>Immigrations reform</p> <p>Doing nothing</p>

RETAIL GROUP

Workshop February 15, 2012

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Location--close to large population centers Unique architecture Solvang is a good "brand" Small town Compact design Diversity of visitors Variety of retail types Generally satisfied citizens Beauty of location--SIV Good weather Safe environment Good infrastructure Famous residents Strong civic pride Strong traditions Presence of Mission St. Ines Casino Employment opportunity Variety of life styles Strong local/regional marketing organizations Clean Generous number of hotel rooms International visitors International name recognition Proximity to other popular destinations The commercial center of Valley Relatively affluent community Popular events & festivals Destination for external events, e.g. Amgen Tour, Rancho Ride Healthy community environment Civic pride Strong civic involvement Support for philanthropy Strong retirement community PCPA Popular wedding venue Stable city politics</p>	<p>Traffic--Hwy. 246 divides the town Lack of merchant involvement--apathy Expensive cost of living for younger people Few high paying jobs Relatively high commercial rents in some properties Early and inconsistent merchant closing times Lack of readily available information about which businesses stay open at night Low off-season, mid-week visitor traffic Lack of economic diversity Few options for new manufacturing businesses (e.g. wine making) Solvang is nearly completely built out Excessive retail space (?) Residents who commute out for jobs, shop near jobs Water costs Zoning ordinance discourages wine making Road projects and closures Transportation Image of Hwy. 154 as a dangerous road Lack of business diversity Difficult to fill commercial vacancies Dearth of cultural activities not based on retail Lack of directional signage City's permit process Poor press coverage, relationships No strong iconic image--there is no "thing" that represents Solvang Image as a "cute", kitschy place Local support for Village merchants by residents and neighbors is weak Local economy is seasonal Too weekend-dependent Limited selection of available merchandise Limited cultural diversity Scarcity of worker housing Not enough for kids to do</p>

Opportunities	Threats
<p>Revising zoning ordinance to allow more light manufacturing for artisans & crafts</p> <p>New events and festivals</p> <p>Better signage</p> <p>More effective use of and presence on internet</p> <p>More training for businesses in use of internet and social media</p> <p>Better public transportation (esp. from SB)</p> <p>Development of medical services as a visitor draw</p> <p>Continued development of wedding services</p> <p>Stronger targeted marketing of Solvang brand</p> <p>Casino marketing of region</p> <p>Stronger "shop local" efforts</p> <p>Developing a "green" image</p> <p>Higher end restaurants</p> <p>Taking a more regional view of marketing</p> <p>Attracting more higher paying jobs</p> <p>Move night life options--dance club</p> <p>A community forum to exchange information and ideas</p> <p>Improved City permit process</p> <p>Better government - business cooperation</p>	<p>Change in City government</p> <p>Stricter state & local regulations</p> <p>Natural disasters</p> <p>Highway projects and road closures</p> <p>Competition</p> <p>State's financial problems</p> <p>The economy</p> <p>Scandals and negative publicity</p> <p>Casino</p> <p>Limits of infrastructure</p> <p>Cost of gas</p> <p>Increasing competition from internet commerce</p> <p>More big-box retail development nearby</p> <p>Competition from Los Olivos</p> <p>Internet rating sites like YELP</p> <p>Decline of local media</p> <p>Failure to improve quality and variety of dining options</p> <p>Absentee landlords</p> <p>Physical limits to economic growth and business diversity</p> <p>Fear of change</p>

HOSPITALITY GROUP

Workshop February 15, 2012

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Beautiful setting in the Santa Ines Valley Large number of hotel rooms with wide range of rates Proximity to large markets (LA, SoCal) Good weather Improving mix of restaurants Improving mix of retail mix Variety of available leisure activities Unique destination--"look" Strong standards--BAR Safe environment Pedestrian-friendly Parking, accessibility Clean, available public restrooms Parks and other civic assets Collaborative public/private relationship Tourism sector is very focused Affordable destination Adjacent wine region Solvang festival theater (?) Mission SI Diverse business opportunities</p>	<p>Too many day visitors, not enough overnight stays Lack of local buy-in of importance of tourism Early or inconsistent closing times Quality and quantity of available workforce Fear of change, new ideas Trapped in strict tradition(s) Kitschy image for some, including travel writers Perception that Solvang has "sold out" to cheap tourism Inconsistent public lighting in parts of village Theatre is open air, limiting its utility Not a destination for business groups No conference center Lack of variety of restaurants Too rigid enforcement of regulations, rules Too few off-season, mid-week stays Limited resources for promotion of tourism Funds for tourism promotion are not secure—subject to annual review Lack of directional signage, info kiosk Visitor information center staff need better training Weak cross-marketing among retailers Lack of forum for communication among business sectors Uncertain definition of "Solvang" Dearth of "new blood" to take on leadership roles in tourism Some high commercial rents Absentee landlords</p>

Opportunities	Threats
<p>Greater cooperation with other Valley towns on projects of mutual interest</p> <p>Greater cooperation with casino</p> <p>Hold a valley-wide summit on tourism issues and opportunities</p> <p>Develop a conference center</p> <p>Upgrading public facilities</p> <p>Stronger off-season, mid-week visitor promotion</p> <p>Increased promotion of outdoor activities and niche markets</p> <p>Allen Hancock expansion</p> <p>Niels Brock Culinary school</p> <p>Expansion of city's sphere of influence to permit more business activity</p> <p>Greater collaboration with vintners</p> <p>Improvements at the corner of Alisal & Mission</p> <p>Improve business portal</p> <p>Greater night life</p> <p>More music</p> <p>Stronger promotion of Wednesday as locals' night</p> <p>Create tangible benefits for merchants willing to stay open later</p> <p>Stronger outreach to locals & neighbors</p> <p>Creation of strategic parking limits and/or metering</p> <p>Better transportation</p> <p>Incentives for new businesses to open</p> <p>Opportunities to attract more visitors from northern part of state</p>	<p>The economy</p> <p>Price of gas</p> <p>Competition</p> <p>Loss of Danish tradition</p> <p>Apathy, doing nothing</p> <p>Exhausting the volunteer leadership</p> <p>Natural disasters</p> <p>Road closures</p> <p>Potential threat to BIDs by State courts</p> <p>California's financial situation</p> <p>Failure to improve regional transportation issues</p> <p>Zealous traffic stops & ticketing by CHP & police patrols during tourist events and festivals in SYV</p>