

SEALY EDC NEWSLETTER

WWW.SEALYEDC.COM

Friday August 30, 2024



Sealy EDC News and Updates August 2024

1 Provide Quality
Infrastructure

2 Support Existing
Business/
Redevelopment and
New Business

3 Create Effective
Marketing and
Communications

4 Enhance Amenities
for Citizens and
Tourism



A Focus on Downtown

We hope this message finds you well. At the August SEDC Meeting, the Sealy EDC Board of Directors reviewed, discussed, and approved the FY'25 budget. The Board also took action on the SEDC's downtown parking project by approving an auction of the building on the property to be moved, making room for additional parking spots.

News and Updates

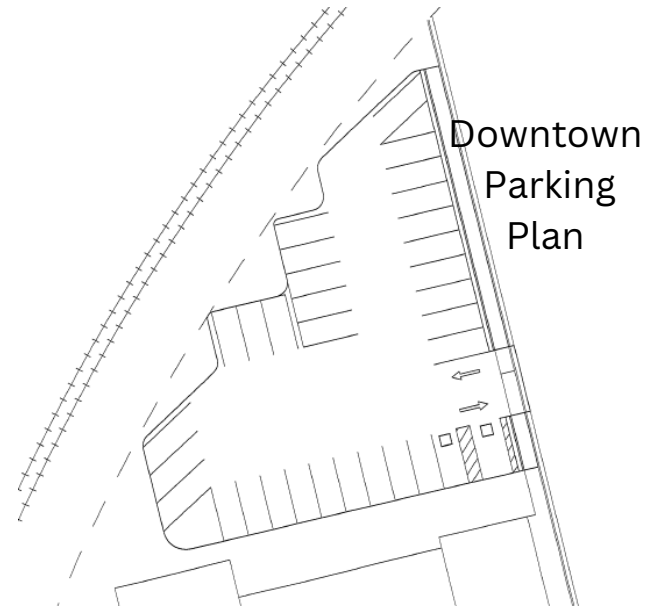
1 Provide Quality Infrastructure



Throughout the Newsletter you will find that the Sealy EDC's progress-to-date is now being provided in a synopsis with bullet points summarizing information from previous newsletters. This approach will keep newsletters concise while ensuring up-to-date details are being provided.

Live Auction of 125 2nd Street Building

The SEDC Board deliberated on the future of the structure remaining at 125 2nd Street. It was determined during the March meeting and the Board took action to authorize staff to seek methods to have the building removed for the future parking lot. This decision was made with the understanding that removal of the building would facilitate the creation of additional parking spaces for Downtown. The EDC placed the building up for bid in May - June. The bidding results from June were not advantageous, prompting the SEDC staff to inquire with the city and the county about their potential use for the building.



In July, staff met with Mark Switzer, a seasoned Auctioneer, to discuss the logistics and cost associated with holding a live auction for the structure. **The Live Auction, now scheduled for September 20, 2024 will be a critical milestone for the parking project. The auction will take place at Switzer Land and Auction 1036 S. FM 331 Sealy, TX 77474.** During the August meeting, the Board approved staff to place the building for auction. The auction would include a contingency requiring the building to be moved off site with in 45 days of the sale. This project is designated to provide a parking lot where patrons currently park on the grass when visiting local businesses. This project will bring a fresh wave of development and convenience to the heart of Sealy.

Hill Center Parking

Progress Summary-to-Date

- March: EDC Board prioritized Hill Center Parking expansion using Strand Associates' aggressive plan; agreements were approved in June for collaboration on parking projects.
- April: City Leadership advised SEDC to suspend the Hill Center project until the drainage plan was assessed.
- May: SEDC informed of the need to revise the comprehensive drainage plan for Mark A. Chapman Park and the surrounding area.
- June 2024: Pause on Hill Center project no longer advised; SEDC to work with Strand Associates on two (2) parking projects simultaneously.
- Running Hill Center and Downtown Parking projects concurrently will result in cost savings through economies of scale.
- Expansion will go from 34 spaces to 100
- Parking projects scheduled to start in January/February 2025.

Hill Center Parking Plan 2024



J.A. Cryan Park Pond



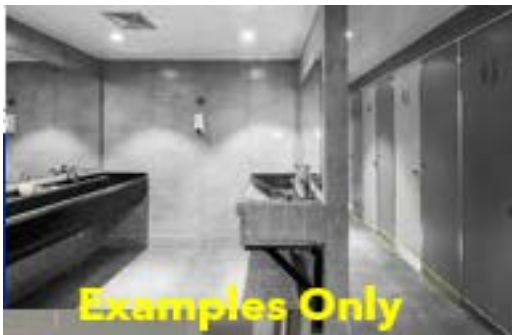
The Walking Path & Pond at J.A. Cryan Park



- The city is evaluating Jacqueline A. Cryan Park Pond for improved design and capacity.
- A city study will guide EDC's plans to address erosion issues.
- The pond and surrounding area will be re-evaluated for path lighting to enhance evening use.
- Path lighting improvements were postponed until the city's drainage study is complete.
- Funding for the project approved by Sealy EDC and City Council for the fiscal year 2025 budget.

W.E. Hill Center Building Improvements

The Hill Center is currently available as a rental venue for the community, and the City has identified several necessary improvements for the building. The Sealy EDC staff will continue to update the Board with the plans for the improvements, which currently include interior and exterior painting, as well as, design and update of the restrooms to be compliant with Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accessibility requirements.



City of Sealy Splash Pad Project

The bid for the city's Splash Pad Project came in higher than expected at \$415,300, resulting in a shortfall of \$104,072. To address this, it has been proposed that the Sealy EDC fund the shortfall through the following allocations:

- FY 2024 Budget Cryan Pool M&O transfer: \$30,000
- FY 2025 Budgeted Cryan Pool M&O transfer: \$30,000
- Eliminate & Reallocate Wayfinding funding: \$44,000

This plan will cover the \$104,000 shortfall for the Splash Pad Project. Additionally, there will be \$31,000 remaining from the Wayfinding Program.

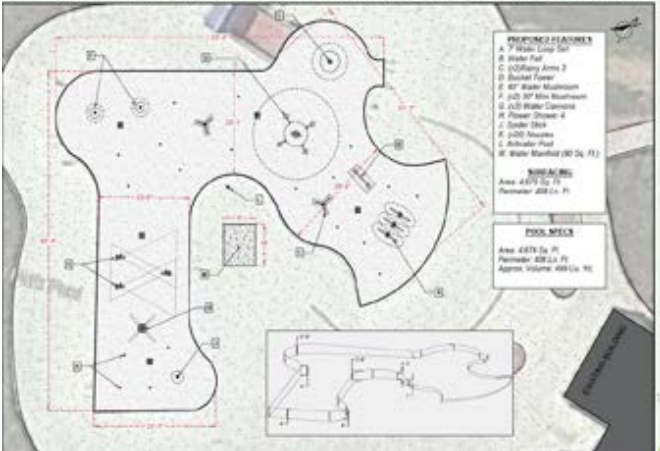
A Representation of the Proposed Splash Pad



City of Sealy Splash Pad Project

A Representation of the Proposed Splash Pad

Design...does 4,675 square feet fit? Actual Google image for perspective!



Liedertafel Hall



Liedertafel Hall Flooring

Liedertafel Hall Improvements

The Sealy EDC will work with the City to fund the 2025 improvements to the Liedertafel Hall. The estimated costs for repairs and improvements are as follows:

- Front Entry: \$7,500
- Hardwood Floor Replacement: \$39,000
- Kitchen Improvements: \$7,500
- Chair Storage System: Unknown
- Ceiling Fans and Lighting: Unknown
- Exterior Improvements: Unknown
- Safety Repairs: Unknown

Total Estimated Costs: \$75,000. The City is requesting that the remaining \$31,000 from the Wayfinding Project be allocated to this project to help offset the costs.



Liedertafel Hall Entry

FY'25 EDC Budget



During the July 2024 meeting, the Sealy EDC Board of Directors discussed the upcoming fiscal year 2025 budget. Staff's forward looking approach to schedule the funding of FY'25 EDC projects, instead of reacting to various requests throughout the year, provides the Board with improved planning and expectations of annual outcomes. It allows the Sealy EDC to stay on target.

The fiscal year 2025 budget was approved by City Council on July 30th with one requested change. City Council requested that the Board consider reallocating \$75,000 from the Wayfinding Signs Project to instead provide some funding for the City's Splashpad Project in the amount of \$44,000 and Liedertafel Hall Improvements in the amount of \$31,000. Staff requested a Special August meeting, and received SEDC Board approval for City Council's requested change in funding for the City's Splashpad Project and Liedertafel Hall Improvement.

The FY'25 budget will account for projects that were previously planned as well as new capital projects. The funding for capital projects include:

- W.E. Hill Center Parking and Downtown Parking
- W.E. Hill Center Building Improvements
- J.A. Cryan Park Pond Erosion and Path Lighting
- Flock Cameras
- Community Art Program
- New City Splash Pad
- Liedertafel Hall Improvements

Support Existing
Business/
2 Redevelopment and
New Business

Retail Coach/EDC Partnership

Sealy EDC staff continues their successful collaboration with The Retail Coach. The Retail Coach team is scheduled to visit Sealy, TX to meet with EDC staff, Downtown Stakeholders, and the Sealy EDC Board of Directors to report and further evaluate available sites and retail needs.



News and Updates Continued...

The Medrano Project

Retail Coach/EDC Partnership



TO VISIT
SEALY IN
SEPTEMBER

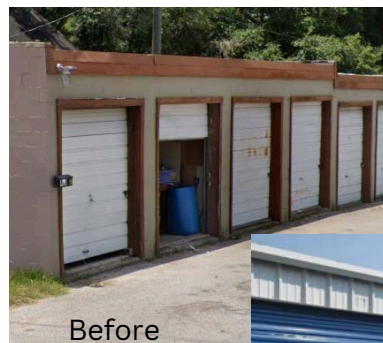
Kaleb Wilson, Retail Coach

To-Date-Meetings with the Retail Coach

- 02.23.24 Completed our kick-off call
- 03.19.24 Retail Coach provided our Market Data and a list of possible retail businesses for our Sealy market.
- 04.17.24 Retail Coach provided updates with retail that fits Sealy's market data, and developers that have shown interest in Sealy. Prepping for upcoming conference.
- May 2024 Retail Coach provided updates from the May International Council of Shopping Center's Conference.
- June 20, 2024: Retail Coach reported meeting with approximately 5 retailers on Sealy's behalf.
- July 17, 2024: Retail Coach is planning to attend the Sealy EDC September meeting to provide an in person update of their retail recruitment progress.
- August 22, 2024: Retail Coach updated staff on an upcoming prospect visit, and the Retail Coach team is representing Sealy at the Retail Live Conference in Austin on Friday, August 29th.

Progress-to-Date

- In June, the Sealy EDC reviewed and approved a façade improvement application for a multi-business project at 416 HWY 90 West in Sealy.
- The property owners addressed code violations and planned additional improvements, including an ADA-compliant public bathroom, a new façade, a new roof, and more.
- The Sealy EDC's Historic District and Business Improvement Grant provides a 50% match up to \$11,000 for the façade and ADA-compliant bathroom.
- The property owners will fully fund the remaining improvements.
- The City Council approved the first reading resolution of the project on July 2nd.
- The Medranos are collaborating with the City's planning department on a parking plan for a new business, with the City Council's second reading pending.



Before



After

3 Create Effective Marketing and Communications

Sealy EDC Digital Presence

In this fast-paced digital world, a strong online presence is crucial for any community looking to thrive. Recognizing this, Sealy EDC is planning significant improvements to its website to enhance connection with target markets and ensure that market data remains current and accessible.

The website is a valuable resource for businesses, potential investors, and residents. However, as the town grows and evolves, so too must its digital footprint. Initially, EDC staff took on the challenge of updating the website, focusing on maintaining functionality while improving content. As the vision for Sealy's online presence evolved, so have the ambitions for the website. Staff is now exploring the benefits of working with professional website designers. These discussions are not just about aesthetics, but they are also about exploring the possibilities of what a professionally designed site can offer, from innovative layouts to enhanced user experiences. How can professionals bring the SEDC website to the next level, and at what cost?



One of the most important aspects of the website is incorporating professional photography and videography. High-quality visuals can make a significant impact, offering visitors a vibrant, engaging view of Sealy. From showcasing the town's historic charm to highlighting our largest industries, our local small businesses, and community events, these updates would provide a more dynamic and inviting experience for all who visit the site.

As Sealy continues to grow and attract new opportunities, website improvements are a strategic move to ensure our connection to target markets. Staff is striving to show Sealy's market in the best possible light. While the discussions with professional designers are ongoing, the commitment to creating a website that truly reflects the vibrancy and potential of Sealy is our focus.

Enhance Amenities 4 for Citizens and Tourism

Sealy - Texas Sign Improvement

Progress-to-Date

- The Sealy Texas Sign project began on June 10th, 2024, involving collaboration between Sealy EDC, City staff, Master Gardener Renee Kofman, and local contractors Southern Touch and El Guero Landscaping.
- The project was approved by the SEDC Board in March 2024 and by the Sealy City Council in April, with a delay due to a 60-day waiting period.
- Improvements include enhanced landscaping, flag pole lighting, and fresh paint on the SEALY - TEXAS letters.
- Landscaping is complete, and Renee Kofman's design has received positive feedback; Southern Touch handled power washing and painting the letters.
- Solar pole lighting will be installed in September, with John Wilson volunteering to prepare the ball topper for the lighting.
- The project is a cost-effective preliminary step to improving the area ahead of future Texas Department of Transportation projects.



Flock Cameras

Shopping districts are the heart of many communities, serving as vibrant hubs for commerce, entertainment, and social interaction. However, they can also be targets for crime. To ensure the safety and well-being of shoppers, businesses, and residents alike, many cities are turning to innovative solutions. One such technology gaining traction is Flock license plate reader cameras.

News and Updates Continued...

Flock Cameras

Shopping districts are the heart of many communities, serving as vibrant hubs for commerce, entertainment, and social interaction. However, they can also be targets for crime. To ensure the safety and well-being of shoppers, businesses, and residents alike, many cities are turning to innovative solutions. One such technology gaining traction is Flock license plate reader cameras. Businesses are more likely to invest in areas where they feel their operations and assets will be secure. This can lead to the revitalization of commercial areas and increased economic activity. In turn, tourists are more likely to visit and spend time in cities they perceive as safe.



By identifying areas that require more traffic management, the data can lead to more targeted and efficient use of economic development funds.

With investment in Flock cameras, the Sealy EDC can provide funding to create a safe and welcoming business district and community. This, in turn, can attract visitors, boost local businesses, and enhance the overall quality of life for residents. As technology continues to evolve, solutions like Flock cameras offer a promising path toward more prosperous shopping districts.



Enhanced security measures like FLOCK cameras can thus enhance tourism, bringing more revenue to the local economy. Additionally, the data collected by FLOCK cameras can be analyzed to understand traffic patterns, thus assessing events and assisting in city planning and development projects, ensuring projects are more effectively aligned with the community.

The cost for the fully turnkey solution system is \$25,100 the first year, and \$22,000 the following year. The system includes: the FLOCK operating system platform and (4) cameras and (2) highspeed cameras.

June 2024 Sales Tax Reporting

📍 Sealy, Texas
Sales Tax as of June 2024

\$2,584,554
Fiscal YTD Collections

2.29%
Fiscal YTD % Change

\$3,417,096
12m Collections

0.04%
12m % Change

FYTD Budget to Actual



\$1,667,423
Fiscal YTD Local Taxes

\$947,745
Fiscal YTD Remote Taxes

\$5,030
Fiscal YTD Audit Collections

\$27,406
Single Local Rate Collections

Collections for June 2024

Current Collections	340,428	4.52%
Prior Period	8,264	-39.07%
Future Period	4	-99.48%
Audit	(985)	-138.4%
Single Local Rate	3,859	0.1806%
Unidentified	55	-25.96%
Total Collections	351,625	0%
Fees & Retainage	19,683	-
Net Payment	343,459	2.53%

12m vs 36m Moving Averages



Top Taxpayers

Change for this month compared to last year

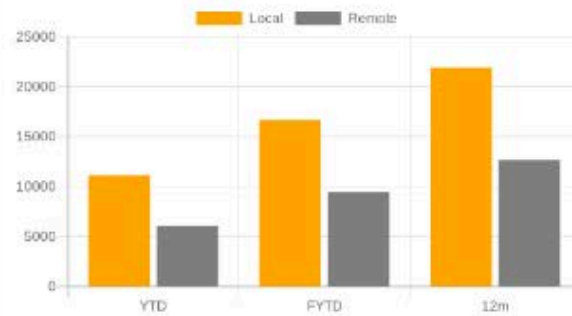
Variance	7,066
% of Total	65.68%

Benchmarking

Comparing year over year change

Alpine, Texas	-19.87%
Breckenridge, Tex...	-1.51%
Bridgeport, T...	5.91%
Burnet, Texas	1.41%
Celina, Texas	17.79%
Childress, Tex...	-1.24%
Decatur, Texas	-1.47%
Everman, Texas	8.16%
Fair Oaks Ran...	-1.49%
Fate, Texas	16.17%
Hempstead, T...	161.59%
Iowa Park, Te...	-3.08%
Joshua, Texas	-16.22%
Keene, Texas	5.55%
Lago Vista, Te...	5.39%

Local Versus Remote Taxpayers



Top Industries (FYTD)

Retail	1,325,639	3.98%
General Services	467,167	47.62%
Food	340,724	6.82%
Manufacturing	181,568	-31.73%
Wholesale	138,695	32.71%
Professional Services	114,099	-0.67%
Miscellaneous	43,509	-62.8%
Agricultural	3,595	-82.73%
Accommodation	173	76.79%

A Strong Start: Sales Tax Collections Up in June

Sales tax collections in June 2024 continued their upward trend, demonstrating a robust economic recovery. Overall, collections for the month totaled \$343,459.18, a 2.53% increase compared to the same period last year. This growth has been sustained throughout the year, with a 2.29% increase in collections through June and a 4.29% higher 12-month moving average. Projections for the remainder of the fiscal year remain optimistic. Based on current trends and historical data, it is anticipated that end-of-year revenue will fall between \$3,322,049 and \$3,690,638. This represents a projected growth rate of approximately 3% compared to the previous year.

Several key industries contributed to the overall increase in sales tax revenue. The General Services industry, which in general, consist of utilities, construction, transportation, personal services, repair and maintenance, entertainment services, rental services, waste management services etc., experienced significant growth, with collections up by 43.42% in June. This sector's year-to-date growth of 47.6% indicates a strong performance. The Wholesale industry also saw substantial growth, with a 51.75% increase in June and a 32.7% year-to-date increase. However, not all industries experienced positive growth. The Retail industry faced a decline of 7.18% in June, although its year-to-date growth of 4.0% remains modest. The Food industry also experienced a slight downturn, with a 10.40% decrease in June.

The performance of new taxpayers was a noteworthy factor in the overall increase. There were 91 businesses that contributed to sales tax collections for the first time in June, accounting for 1.37% of total collections. This influx of new taxpayers is a positive sign for the local economy.

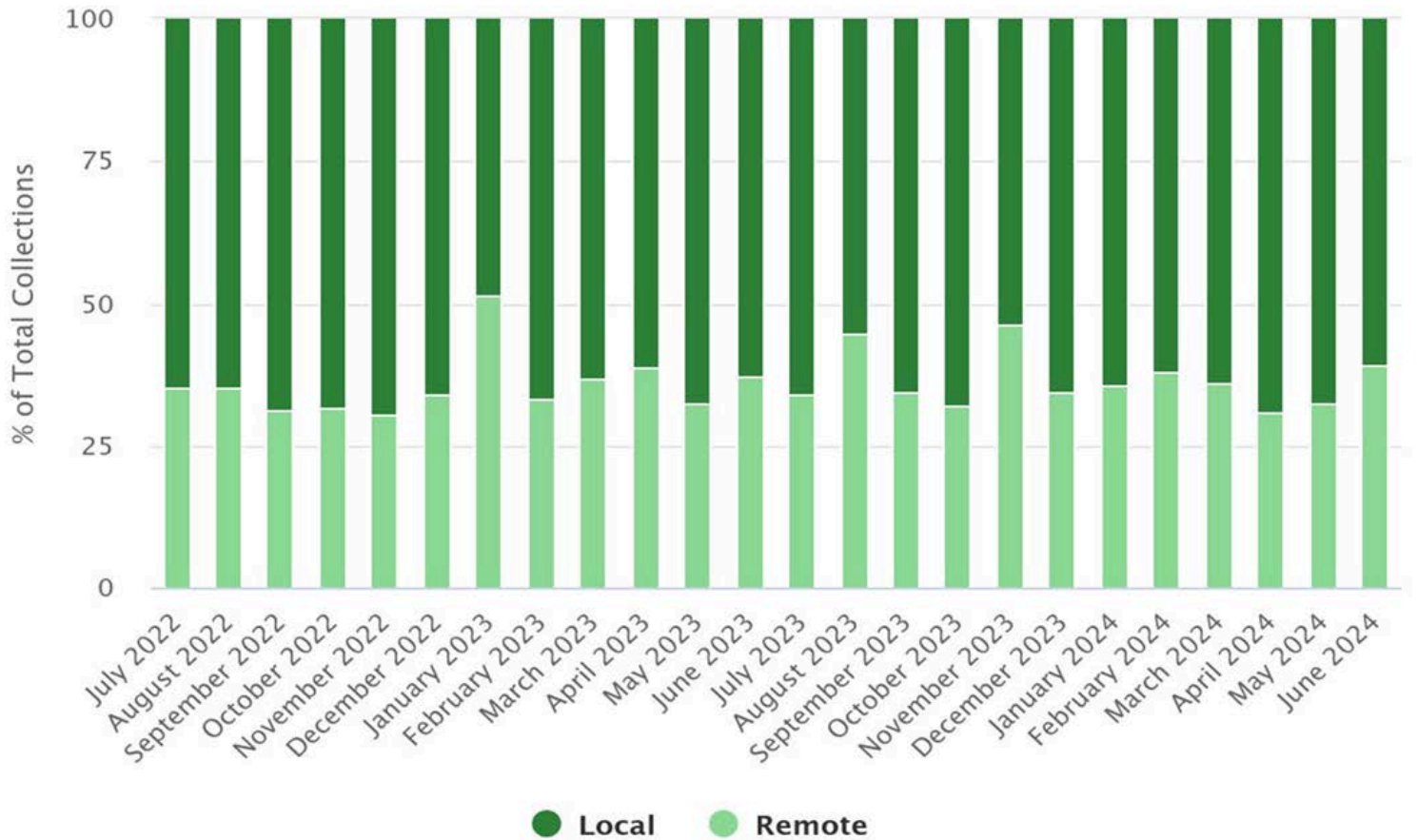
A key driver in this shift is the increase in remote purchasing. Like everyone else, we are experiencing an overall trend of increasing remote collections and decreasing local collections over the time period. The highest percentage of remote collections occurred in April 2023, followed by March 2023. The lowest percentage of local collections occurred in April 2023. There appear to be some seasonal fluctuations in the data, but these are not as pronounced as the overall trend.



A Strong Start: Sales Tax Collections Up in June



Table 1: Remote (On-line or Delivery) versus Local Sales



In conclusion, the strong growth in sales tax collections in June 2024 is a positive indicator of the overall health of the local economy. The diverse performance of various industries, coupled with the contributions of new taxpayers, has contributed to this positive trend. As the year progresses, it will be interesting to see if this momentum continues and if the projected end-of-year revenue targets are achieved.



A Focus on Downtown

In August, a group of downtown stakeholders met to discuss plans to bring vibrancy to Downtown Sealy. During the meeting, Sealy EDC Executive Director, Bill Atkinson shared insights on the Sealy EDC's upcoming projects and available programs that will enhance the downtown experience. He highlighted initiatives in the pipeline, including a parking expansion, funding for a new Art Program, available grants for downtown businesses, and other community improvements. The group discussed planning processes for downtown improvement projects. Discussions centered around drawing inspiration from best practices of other communities. The group considered strategic planning with a focus on starting with small projects, then celebrating the small wins, and a rolling vision that spans no more than three years.



"There's a real energy in this group," said Sealy EDC Executive Director, Bill Atkinson. "We're all working towards the same goal: making downtown Sealy a place where people want to spend time, shop, and enjoy the community."

A sense of urgency filled the room to chart a path to transform downtown into a hub of activity. The Sealy EDC is fully on board, looking forward to being a part of this collective effort. The opportunities are vast, with the potential to boost tourism, increase foot traffic, and create a downtown that's as dynamic as it is welcoming. Public art installations, community events, and carefully planned improvements were all a part of the vision.

In September, the Retail Coach, a key partner in attracting new retailers to the community, will meet with the Downtown group to get their feed back and perspective. Retail Coach will present possible retail opportunities for downtown, and provide their recent activities and updates in Sealy.



Upcoming Local Events

- Sealy Chamber Lunch & Learn Sept. 4th at 12 pm- 1 pm at the American Legion.
- Lions Sealy Dance Club Sept. 7th at 7:30 p.m. at American Legion Hall - Post 442
- Cody Ray Henry Band Sept. 14th at 8:30 p.m. at Saddleback Saloon
- Thirsty Thursday Networking Sept. 19th at Gordon Memorial Library 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm
- Sealy EDC Building Auction Live, Sept. 20th at 1:00 p.m. at 1036 S. FM 331 Sealy, TX 774
- Ribbon Cutting for Pupila Family Eye and Ear Care Sept. 20th 6:30pm-7:30 pm
- Adult Prom 2024 Sept. 28 at 7:00 p.m. at the Sealy American Legion Hall
- San Felipe Nature Walk Sept. 29th at 2 p.m. at San Felipe de Austin Historic Site

Upcoming Agenda Items

September 2024

- SEDC Strategic Plan
- 125 2nd Street Building
- Land Agreement with the City of Sealy at 125 2nd Street

Thank you!

As we navigate through new projects, and our strategic plan we remain committed to transparency, accountability, and progress. Together, we can shape Sealy with a future of promise and prosperity.

