



Rooted — & — Ready

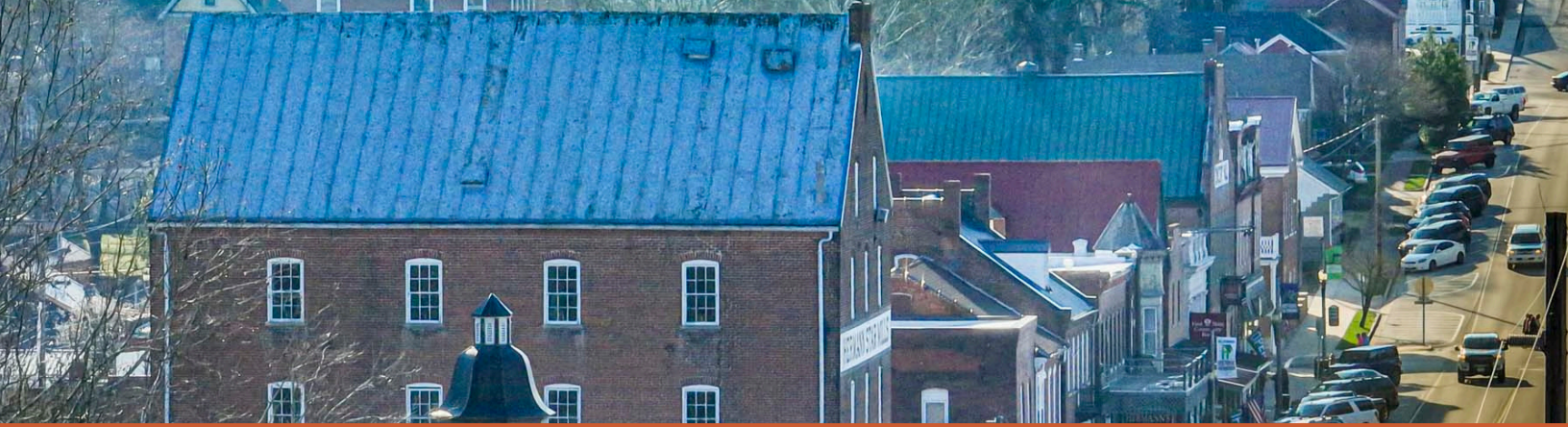
HERMANN REGION
PROGRESS WITH PURPOSE & PRESERVATION



STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2029

Endorsed by the Hermann Area
Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors





WHERE WE HAVE BEEN

Founded in 1837 by German immigrants, Hermann has a storied past rooted in viticulture and winemaking. Known as the "Rhineland of America," Hermann quickly became a hub for wine production, with its rolling hills and fertile soil providing the perfect conditions for vineyards. Hermann's architectural landscape reflects its German heritage with beautifully preserved buildings, quaint streets, and traditional festivals drawing visitors from around the world. The annual Wurstfest, Oktoberfest, and Maifest are celebrated with great enthusiasm showcasing our community's commitment to honoring its roots. In 1903 the first iteration of our current Chamber of Commerce was formed as the Board of Trade. Its purpose was to recruit a shoe manufacturing company to Hermann. In 1904, Peters Shoe Company began production and employed about 400 workers by 1923. Since 1903, the Hermann Area Chamber of Commerce (HACC) and its previous forms has led countless initiatives that supported our local businesses and have improved our community and the lives of our residents.

WHERE WE ARE

Our community is characterized by strong civic engagement and a high quality of life. Hermann offers excellent schools, its own critical access hospital, recreational facilities, and cultural amenities. Tourism continues to play a vital role, with our wineries, hospitality businesses, and historical sites attracting thousands of visitors each year. While our world has faced significant economic challenges, visitors to the Hermann Area have increased and the area has experienced a major increase in the number of short-term rental properties. In addition to tourism, the Hermann Area has seen growth in local businesses, artisans, and agri-tourism. The HACC and Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) championed the cause for joining the Greater Montgomery County Port Authority (GMCPA) and housing development. However, our community grapples with a dwindling population and non-existent housing for our workers signaling a need for strategic interventions to invigorate growth. This growth will ultimately protect our two greatest community assets - our schools and healthcare system.

WHERE WE ARE GOING

The Hermann Area Chamber of Commerce proposes an expanded, bold strategy to drive intentional economic growth. We believe Hermann and its surrounding communities are at a pivotal point for new opportunities, and we want to ensure success by developing resources to strengthen and diversify our economy. The mega site industrial development 15 minutes north of Hermann presents significant opportunities for economic growth, attracting families, and will provide employment opportunities for our residents. Furthermore, capitalizing on the potential benefits as a result of joining the GMCPA, those benefits may include but not limited to, economic development, infrastructure funding, and regional collaboration. For the HACC to institute this aggressive, effective program, private investment is required. Our mission is to help the Hermann Area thrive and grow by generating economic activity, supporting the expansion of our existing businesses, and supporting new business and resident recruitment. We need to increase the resources available to deliver increased economic development services and business support. We recognize that the City of Hermann will be conducting a comprehensive plan addressing its long-term responsibilities in the near future. We look forward to possible areas of collaboration where our goals might overlap. Our plan includes four primary focus areas over the next five years:

- WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT/HOUSING
- LIFESTYLE/ENTERTAINMENT
- INFRASTRUCTURE/RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT
- HERITAGE/CULTURAL PRESERVATION



4 CORE INITIATIVES FOR ROOTED & READY 2025-2029



I. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT/HOUSING

GOAL

Strengthen the local workforce by supporting existing region businesses with employee attraction and retention, attracting new talent to the Hermann Region, increasing the number of available housing units, and enhancing the availability of quality childcare services.

STRATEGIES

- Solicit a housing study to identify any gaps between current housing availability and future demand. Identify & connect with 3 or more potential developers targeted at diversifying the housing stock.
- Create a blue-ribbon task force (business leaders, elected officials, developers, financial institutions, and critical infrastructure representatives) to develop a plan to address critical issues (infrastructure, real estate, incentives, etc.) related to affordable housing.
- Create a clear pathway for current homeowners to transition into housing that better fits their evolving needs, whether upgrading or downsizing.
- Connect and communicate with families about childcare programs within our community and connect local providers to governmental resources to increase the capacity of infant/childcare services to expand the available workforce.
- Provide support to expand learning experiences and apprenticeships/internships between Gasconade County R1 students and regional businesses to create pipelines of qualified talent and assist with job placement.
- Enhance and promote the existing Chamber job board to assist job seekers and businesses with job placement.
- Collaborate with local educational institutions (East Central Community College, State Tech, 4 Rivers Technical, etc.) to provide workforce training meeting the needs of the business community.
- Support the creation of a career center for high school students focusing on the careers servicing our hospitality, culinary, healthcare, and viticulture industries.
- Support retention efforts for Hermann High School (HHS) graduates by utilizing the alumni database for communication.
- Expand and develop the HACC Business Development Center to meet the needs of local businesses and workforce.
- Support REDI (Regional Economic Development Initiative) mentorship & coaching system for new entrepreneurs.
- Hire a Community & Business Development Liaison to assist in the implementation of this strategic plan.

KEY METRICS

- Housing study complete
- Creation of Blue-Ribbon Task Force
- Increase in Hermann school district (including home school) population: 2% year over year
- Determine a housing objective tied to the results of the Housing Study
- Annual increase in the number of businesses offering apprenticeships, internships or job shadowing programs
- Report and benchmark the availability of childcare slots
- Annual employee retention survey of businesses
- 5-year retention and recuperation of HHS graduates
- Utilize the alumni database to establish an objective to track high school graduate retention



II. INFRASTRUCTURE/RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

Bring key infrastructure elements up to standards of quality & sustainability by 2035. Enhance riverfront and business/industrial park areas with site plans that allow for improvement and expansion.

STRATEGIES

- Partner with the City and the GMCPA to develop and support key infrastructure needs.
- Support the City's infrastructure needs such as streets, electric, gas and wastewater, waste, & recycling management.
- Request specifications and plans from GMCPA for potential riverfront needs.
- Develop a site plan for the riverfront.
- Work with the City/County on developing a Frene Creek Flood control plan.
- Support and advocate for the identification of parking and bike-friendly needs and opportunities within the Hermann community.
- Advocate for Hwy 19 to be on a MODOT 3-year plan with the state to widen the highway, including shoulders and include designated bike lanes from the Katy Trail.
- Support grant funding requests for future Safe Sidewalk initiatives.
- Advocate for and support a reimaged business/industrial park plan within 5 years.

KEY METRICS

- Investment in Hermann Region Infrastructure Projects
- Number of infrastructure projects identified and/or initiated: Beginning in year 2 of the strategic plan, target a minimum of 1 project identified/approved per year
- Completion of plan to identify and develop riverfront projects
- Number of grants secured and financing for key strategies above
- Inclusion of parking opportunities identified and developed in the city plan
- Inclusion of Highway 19 on a MODOT 3-year plan
- Secure funding for Safe Sidewalk initiatives within 5 years
- Completion of reimaged business/industrial park plan within 5 years



III. LIFESTYLE/ENTERTAINMENT

GOAL

Identify and implement programs that will enhance economic growth, promote quality of life, and make downtown Hermann and the surrounding region more attractive to visitors and residents 7 days a week.

STRATEGIES

- Assess opportunities including the expansion of the senior center and other facilities, for a community center with the inclusion of an indoor pool.
- Champion for updates to the Sesquicentennial Park & playground.
- Support the development of an entertainment center with a youth-oriented focus.
- Support ongoing efforts by the City in Hotel and conference facility site identification and attraction to the Hermann Region in support of the Feasibility Study findings.
- Utilize new Community & Business Development Liaison to attract new businesses that enrich the existing local lifestyle and contribute to a higher quality-of-life.
- Recruit and track additional volunteers and committees to support key events.
- Support local performing and fine arts opportunities.
- Create a welcome package for conference and meeting attendees with communication on options for meeting and conference space.
- Conduct a study and develop a plan for community bike lanes connecting to the Katy Trail.

KEY METRICS

- Completion of community center opportunities assessment
- Respond to and accommodate all requests for new conference and hotel facilities within the 5-year period
- Number of site visits/inquiries/contacts for new conference and hotel facilities: 5 per year
- Increased number of new volunteers and committees at trackable key events year over year
- Increased communication frequency regarding the promotion of recreational opportunities
- Completion and communication of physical improvements to Sesquicentennial Park & Playground
- Number of new annual conferences/meetings: Increasing annual number year over year



IV. HERITAGE/CULTURAL PRESERVATION

GOAL

Protect and celebrate Hermann's rich German historical and cultural heritage through active preservation of its historic buildings, promotion of local traditions and festivals, and the education of residents, visitors, and future generations about the town's unique legacy.

STRATEGIES

- Seek and support grants and funding opportunities for preservation projects.
- Provide support and communication for volunteer programs for community members to participate in preservation projects and cultural/heritage opportunities.
- Identify, communicate, and support applications for incentives or low-interest loan programs for property owners to maintain and restore historic properties.
- Continue to expand cultural and educational opportunities about Hermann's heritage, including Wurstfest, Maifest, and Oktoberfest.
- Collaborate and coordinate with the local historical society, museums, and other cultural organizations to pool resources and expertise.
- Advocate and communicate with local, state, and federal government agencies to align Hermann preservation efforts with broader heritage initiatives.
- Support academic research on the history and culture of the Hermann region, particularly the influence of German settlers and the Missouri River, and share the findings with the community and visitors to increase public knowledge and appreciation.

KEY METRICS

- Accumulated amount of funding secured for heritage & cultural preservation
- Increased number of program enhancements introduced for local events and festivals
- Increased number of field trips and visitors to local historical sites
- Increase number of grants, incentives, and low-interest loan programs communicated to local property owners



TOTAL INVESTMENT NEEDED OVER 5 YEARS: \$1M DRAFT BUDGET SUMMARY



CORE INITIATIVES	ONE YEAR COST	FIVE YEAR COST
Workforce Development/Housing	\$85,000	\$425,000
Infrastructure/Riverfront Development	\$50,000	\$250,000
Lifestyle/Entertainment	\$45,000	\$225,000
Heritage/Cultural Preservation	\$20,000	\$100,000
TOTAL	\$200,000	\$1,000,000

OVERSIGHT OF INVESTMENTS

The funds needed to implement these 4 core initiatives will be sought from those with a vested interest in the growth and economic future of the Hermann Area – businesses, organizations, community leaders and stakeholders. Funds will be deposited into a designated fund with the Community Foundation of the Ozarks, a 501(c)(3) organization, and its local affiliate, Community Foundation of the Hermann Area, who will provide oversight of the invested funds. Program implementation will be the responsibility of the HACC and REDI Board of Directors with input from major campaign investors.

ACCOUNTABILITY

In order to track its progress, implement strategic activities, and demonstrate tangible returns to its investors, the HACC and the REDI will pursue meaningful goals using performance-based metrics to be achieved by the end of the five-year cycle. The HACC and REDI boards and staff will be held accountable to its investors and the community to achieve the stated metrics through effective use of invested funds.



2025 HERMANN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



PRESIDENT

Colleen Murphy

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Melissa Lensing

Beverly Zak	Larry Miskel
Curt Bruckerhoff	Linda Miskel
Patricia Heaney	Marie Newell
Karen Held	Jenna Schaefer
Bill Hellebusch	Megan Stiers
Hannah James	Karla Uthlaut
Alicia Jett	Mike Walton

ROOTED & READY CAMPAIGN OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Raylene Hollrah (Co-Chair)	Jenna Schaefer
Alicia Jett (Co-Chair)	Laura Schulte
Muriel Brison	Susan Stiers
Chris Heldt	Mike Walton
Allyson Hollrah	Sable Dixon
Heather Krafft	Madison Miller
Jennifer Littrell-Davis	Amanda Engemann
Colleen Murphy	Emily Render
Dr. Geoff Neill	Karla Uthlaut
Dale Ridder	Chantele Watson