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## **Open Skies - Open Doors - Open For Business**

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Open Skies – Open Doors – Open For Business

Above is the tag line the SEDC Board of Directors and staff adopted a couple years ago to represent the attitude of the community and the community leaders of Seagoville in order to promote business growth and development for both new and existing business.

Working with the City Council, City Staff and the Chamber of Commerce as well as other leaders of the community, a sense of unification and pride can be instilled in the citizens of Seagoville and all those who visit our community.

The Goals and Objectives of the City Council, Chamber and SEDC Board must work together to make Seagoville a better place to live.

As projects are completed, new goals and challenges will come forth and the SEDC is committed to working with the City, Chamber and Community leaders to promote and expand the business community of Seagoville and work to improve the overall quality of life therein. The year 2012 will continue to be a “building” year for SEDC as we look

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forward to supporting a strong, stable and vibrant community together.

#### Type B Sales Tax

In 1995 the citizens of Seagoville passed a half-cent sales and use tax for economic development and community improvements.

The Seagoville Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) was formed after the passage of the half-cent sales tax, which funds the corporation. A seven-person Board of Directors oversees the SEDC and those directors are appointed by the City Council. Type B funds can be used for community projects such as infrastructure, park improvements, and economic development projects such as incentives for business relocations or expansions of new and/or existing businesses. The SEDC continues to work with existing and potential businesses in the areas of business expansion, relocation, retention and redevelopment through market development, as well as education and training.

Some examples of what the Seagoville Economic Development does for the citizens and businesses in this community are as follows:

In 2011 SEDC assisted in approximately 19 Façade Improvement Program projects. The Façade Improvement Program was adopted to assist current businesses with improving the appeal of their business. There are four parts to this program; landscape, front elevation improvements(façade), entryway improvements and signage. The program is a 50/50 participation with SEDC funding half of the project and the owner/tenant paying the other half. This program has been a key component to the overall improvements of the community. This program started as a means to improve the Hwy 175 Corridor and eventually took on with the entire community.

Some of the businesses that received grants for the new signs have been: Git Fit Fitness Center, Napoli's Italian Restaurant, Seagoville Food Mart, Public Auto Sales, 1st Smoke Shop, Alvarado's Hair Salon, Munoz Tax Service, Mitch Martzen - Attorney, and Goin' Postal.

Façade Improvements grants awarded to enhance the façade of the business have been:

Stark Square Retail Center, Seagoville Food Mart, Best Western and Goin' Postal. In prior years this grant program was used to improve the Town and Country Shopping Centers Aarons Rents, Los Arcos Mexican Restaurant, American Feeds, Collision Correction, Ross Auto Care, Gordon's Barber Shop and Lyons Den Barber Shop just to name a few.

The Façade Improvement Program is not limited to one grant per business. If a business desires they can apply for all four parts for a total improvement of the business.

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SEDC also assist with infrastructure and construction grants for existing businesses. Parking lot improvements can also be vital to a business's success or failure. In 2011 SEDC assisted with four major parking lot improvements: James Sudduth parking lot at an industry site on Simonds Road, parking lot and drainage improvements for Seagoville Food Mart at Stark Road and Hwy. 175 and parking lot and site improvements to North Texas Scales on Hwy. 175.

A major past year parking lot project that was a key project was the improvements to the Town and Country Shopping Center parking lot. Since those improvements were made, several new businesses have made that center their home.

SEDC also assisted with the relocation of Inlet Structure Specialties, LLC, a Dallas based business that moved to Seagoville this year with a relocation grant to assist with construction cost. This is a new company locating on Simonds Road. Inlet Structures is bringing approximately 33-35 jobs and an increased tax base for Seagoville. Another type of relocation project for SEDC was Ramsey Insurance Agency, now located at 1510 N. Hwy 175. Mr. Balch was having to relocate for his current office on Kaufman Street and was actually considering moving to a nearby city. We were able to find an office suitable for his business and assist with some of the renovations. Mr. Balch, owner of Ramsey Insurance only employs 3 people in his office but this was 3 jobs that we did not want to lose in this community. These 3 people work, eat, shop and one lives in Seagoville.

SEDC is proud of each project that we are able to assist with. Each one gives something to this community and the citizens. Not that one is more or less important, but one of the main projects for 2011 was Napoli's Italian Restaurant. SEDC heard that Mr. Abduhli was considering opening a new location and we were able to convince him to make Seagoville his choice. Napoli's was awarded a grant for renovations to convert the shell space that once was Just A Buck dollar store into a restaurant facility. I think everyone will agree this project has been a great asset to the community.

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Along with our Façade Improvement Program grants, Infrastructure/Construction grants and business relocation and expansion grants SEDC also funds \$100,000 per year for park projects for city. These are our Quality of Life projects that make key improvements for the citizens and their day to day family quality of life.

Park projects for 2011 include the purchase of a 20' Commercial Christmas Tree for the City's Christmas Tree Lighting Program. Compared to some of the Charlie Brown Trees the city has had in the past this tree is amazing. Christmas 2010 actually brought out the biggest crowd for the Tree Lighting event. This tree will last for many years, is pre-lit and easily assembled. The tree is 20' and rings can be added at the bottom in two-foot sections to increase the height of the tree.

Other park projects for 2011 were the Petty White soccer field lights, Central Park Lights conversion, playground equipment upgrades for Petty White Park and Heard Park, the resurfacing of the tennis/basketball court at Central Park and new trash receptacles at all the parks.

Some other major park projects have been the new playground equipment at Central Park along with the landscape around the playground. One can go to the park at almost any given time of any day and see the kids enjoying this playground. From time to time you can also see school buses from other city's that stop by apparently going or returning from field trips that stop and allow the kids time to enjoy the playground. Shade structures were installed at Central Park and Heard Park to cover the play equipment so kids could still enjoy this during the heat of our summer days.

A few other past projects have been the installation of a half-court basketball court for Casa Grande park and the new lighting system at the Bearden Park Baseball fields. Again these projects allow children in this community to have some type of recreational activity.

SEDC also funds the majority of the money needed for the Fourth of July Fireworks Show each year. If you have ever attended this event you know it brings a lot of people together at Central Park and is enjoyed by many.

And there are the projects funded by SEDC that aren't as noticeable now but will be in the future such as the Parks Master Plan, the Industrial Park Master Plan, and the Tax Increment Finance district. These are "plans" but planning and vision are both vital to the growth and survival of a community.

Other past projects that have made a difference for this community and the citizens are the Walgreens Traffic Signal, Environmental Way Road Construction and infrastructure project, the new signal at Malloy Bridge Road and the service road (north side), Wal-Mart Supercenter, the retail center containing; Bealls Department Store, Cato, Dollar Tree, Sally Beauty Supply, Dominos Pizza, Hibbits Sports, Eastern Buffett and a dental office as well as the retail center containing La Pradera Mexican Restaurant, Napoli's Italian Restaurant, A T & T, Payless Shoe Source

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and others. What once was a vacant lot now offers the citizens of Seagoville some of the same amenities of other cities.

With the construction of Environmental Way Road and infrastructure we now have an industrial area to offer to industrial, manufacturing and distribution companies that are looking at new builds or relocation of existing builds. SEDC is currently in discussions with two metal fabrication companies looking to relocate their existing businesses out of the Dallas Area. Each of these companies would bring a number of jobs to the community along with a substantial increase in property tax and sales tax.

Our most recent project is the 20,000 square foot new construction of Ace Hardware that should break ground in mid February 2012. This will be another major asset to the community as well as more job creation and substantial increase in sales and property tax.

SEDC strives on a daily basis to keep "Seagoville" in front of major commercial real estate players, retail developers and big company site selectors. Marketing is key to the business climate of our community. SEDC staff attends 4-8 major trade shows each year in order to market the City of Seagoville and promote the community at the upmost level.

This is your tax dollars at work for you as we adhere to the guidelines set before us by the State of Texas Local Government Code, the Comptroller's Office, the Attorney General's office and by the guidelines adopted and set forth by the City Council of Seagoville.

Any and all are welcome and encouraged to come by our office located at 1512 N. Hwy 175 if you would like more information or for any comments in general.

As stated at the beginning of this article, we follow our new tag-line:

Opens Skies – Open Doors – Open For Business

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