

## STATE OF THE CITY Q&A'S FOR MAYOR AMES

1. According to ACS numbers Beaumont only gained about 1,400 people between 2011 and 2017. This is slow growth in a state that is growing rapidly. What are the city's strategies for keeping young people in Beaumont and increasing our growth to keep up with industrial expansions?

**The Texas Demographic Center estimates that Beaumont's population hit 120,321 as of January 1, 2018. If these numbers hold, this will be Beaumont's highest population count ever.**

**By continuing to develop our infrastructure and support quality-of-life projects (like the Lakeside Center and Cattail Marsh Boardwalk), we believe that the City of Beaumont will be well positioned for future growth. As one example, we believe that the construction of Northwest Parkway (which links Parkdale Mall to Major Drive) will result in further development in northwest Beaumont.**

**Citizens can also go to <https://discoverbeaumont.com/> to see all of the planned events occurring in our city.**

2. We have a thriving port system, but I personally feel the I-10 West Corridor is an untapped resource for transportation and industry expansion (rail/air) with a focus on non-traditional industry to attract a new tax base. How can we expand infrastructure/ attract growth?

**The City contracts with the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce for economic development purposes. We will continue to work with the Chamber, Lamar University, Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT) and others to build our tax base, including non-traditional industries. As it relates to infrastructure, the City has to have the water or sewer capacity to allow for future growth, which we have.**

3. As a region, we have done a great job of attracting LNG, and Petrochemical industry. What have we done to target Technology, Automation, Biotech and other industries non-traditional to SETX?"

**The City of Beaumont works with various partners, including the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, to recruit various industries to our area. In addition, the City also works with Lamar University, Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT), and Workforce Solutions of Southeast Texas to identify the needs of upcoming industry so we can ensure a readily qualified workforce because companies locate in areas where they can readily hire qualified labor and make a financial return.**

4. With the projected \$54 billion in expansions over the next 10 years what can and is Beaumont doing to prepare for the growth?

**Please see question #1**

5. Beaumont and the surrounding area is seeing tremendous growth in the industrial segment, is there any plan being established to revitalize the downtown area? Any incentives to encourage businesses to locate in the area?

**The redevelopment of downtown Beaumont has been ongoing for years. The most recent example of that is the development of the "Lake District" which now includes the Event Centre and Great Lawn, the skate park, the Lakeside Center, the rotary playground and the city has plans to add a food truck park in the near future.**

**Downtown Beaumont is also part of an "empowerment zone." Empowerment zones provide incentives for property owners to build or rehabilitate property within specific geographic boundaries.**

6. What is the status of the Beaumont Water System, post Hurricane Harvey. Are there plans in place to prevent a recurrence in the interruption of that system under similar circumstances?

**The City Council received an update from our Public Works Department on Tuesday February 26, 2019 regarding Riverfront Park and the City's Water Production System. City staff are working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and engineering consultants on both projects.**

**The City is evaluating two options to repair Riverfront Park (RFP). Option 1 will restore RFP to its “pre-harvey” condition and cost approximately \$34.5 million. Option 2 will restore RFP to its “post-harvey” condition and cost approximately \$23.3 million. Both options should be 90% funded by FEMA with a 10% match required from the City. The City Council has tentatively decided to move forward with option 2. After the bank is stabilized, we plan to make Riverfront Park a passive park with sidewalks, benches and other amenities.**

**In terms of the water system, the City is in the process of implementing Phase I improvements to Lawson’s pump station, Loeb pump station and the Pine Street Water Plant**

**Lawson’s Phase I Improvements (estimated to cost \$3 million)**

- **(1) elevate electrical building; (2) elevate generator; (3) add fuel storage tank**

**Loeb Phase I Improvements (estimated to cost \$3.5 million)**

- **(1) elevate electrical building; (2) elevate generator; (3) make chemical building improvements**

**Pine Street Water Plant Phase I Improvements (estimated to cost \$1.1 million)**

- **(1) improve electrical building flood protection; (2) expand chemical storage capacity; (3) make chemical feed system improvements**

**Phase II improvements to these facilities are still in the design phase and will be implemented at a future date.**

7. Does the City have an estimated timeline for repairs that will restore Riverfront Park? Is it possible that the city could open the park in 2019 with basic park amenities with some access to the river and include a long range plan for the future development?

**Please see question #6**

8. Recycling in Beaumont is expensive for the residents, so as a result very few people utilize the service. Is there anything that can be done to encourage

greater use (and lower cost) for home pick-up recycling, as well as including glass items in recycling?

**The curbside recycling program has been growing slowly since it was implemented in October of 2016. To date, over 850 households participate in curbside recycling.**

**The City recently allowed new participants to pay their “container fee” over a three month period in an effort to make the program more affordable.**

**It is very difficult to recycle glass in a curbside program, which is all driven by market conditions. However, glass can be recycled at Target on Eastex Freeway.**

**In addition to curbside recycling, the City also offers other types of recycling, including (1) indoor recycling which is available at certain city-owned facilities, (2) yard waste recycling and (3) used motor oil recycling. You can learn about all the City’s recycling programs here:**

**<https://beaumonttexas.gov/departments/public-works/garbage-and-recycling-services/>**

9. What was the result of Beaumont seeking designation as a Cultural Arts District? If designation has been granted what plans are in place to utilize it? If not, why not? and are there plans to re-apply?

**Although the City supports the Downtown Beaumont Cultural Arts District, the City is not the entity making application for the designation.**

**For more information, please contact the Southeast Texas Arts Council:**  
**<https://setxac.org/>**