

Stall to steer Vision 2025

\$350,000 in grants helps chart Greenville's course

BY JOHN BOYANOSKI
staff writer

Russell Stall couldn't wait to get out of Greenville when he was attending high school in the late 1970s.

He tells some bleak stories about how bad Main Street looked and problems with crime around town. It took him about 15 more years to realize Greenville was a good place to work and raise a family.

Now, he is the man right in the middle trying to get a new generation of young Greenville residents interested in shaping the area's future through the much talked-about Vision 2025 process.

"I want young people to now really think about staying or at least coming back," said Stall, the executive director of Greenville Forward.

Unlike most executive directors, Stall

joked he doesn't care if people don't know the name of his organization. He is more concerned about getting a message out that Greenville needs to decide its future now.

"Greenville is a good place, but it can be better," he said.

A \$300,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Greenville and a \$50,000 grant from the Hollingsworth Fund will help the process, which is modeled after similar steering groups such as Action Greensboro, Memphis Manifesto and A Vision for Central Texas, Stall said.

Vision 2025 is the follow-up to the Vision 2005 process where Greenville residents created a road map of the county's future in 1987. That plan came up with the Peace Center for the Performing Arts, the Governor's School for the Arts, the Bi-Lo Center arena and the revitalization of Main Street by 2005.

Vision 2005 became successful because of a handful of Greenville's bigwigs decided they wanted to get certain projects done.

The landscape of Greenville has

changed dramatically since then, and it would be close to impossible to have a small group of people handle all of Vision 2025, Stall said. That's why the Vision 2025 organizers decided there needed to be someone steering the process.

Initially, members of Leadership Greenville were going to monitor Vision 2025's process, but Stall said that wasn't working out. There wasn't one person who was waking up each morning thinking about the project.

Now that is Stall, who added he wakes up in the middle of the night thinking about Vision 2025.

"I'm doing this for my children," he said. "I want them to grow up and appreciate Greenville."

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Want to know more about Vision 2025?

Go to:
www.greenvillechamber.org
and click on leadership development.