



WHEATON CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN WORKSHOP MINUTES

MAYOR PHILIP J. SUESS

COUNCILMAN MICHAEL BARBIER | COUNCILWOMAN ERICA BRAY-PARKER

COUNCILWOMAN SUZANNE FITCH | COUNCILMAN JOHN RUTLEDGE | COUNCILMAN CHRISTOPHER ZARUBA

WHEATON CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 303 W WESLEY STREET, WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60187

Saturday, September 12, 2020

I. Introductions

The Wheaton City Council Planning Workshop began at 9:00 a.m. with a welcome and introductions by Mayor Suess. The following were:

Physically Present:

Mayor Suess
Councilman Barbier
Councilwoman Bray-Parker
Councilwoman Fitch
Councilwoman Robbins
Councilman Rutledge
Councilman Zaruba

City Staff Physically Present:

Michael Dzugan, City Manager
John Duguay, Assistant City Manager
Susan Bishel, Public Information Officer

Consultants Present:

Jacquelyn McCray, Management Partners
Keith Spoelker, Management Partners

II. Public Comment

Allison Torrence (Environmental Improvement Commission member) stated that the Commission previously shared their Sustainability Plan with the City Council. The Commission unanimously voted to encourage the City Council to incorporate the Plan into the City of Wheaton Strategic Plan.

III. Strategic Planning

City Manager Dzugan provided general comments regarding the upcoming Strategic Planning process and changing in public sector. He stated when public entities change, it is done with order due to the processes and requirements placed on the City and staff and the parameters that the City must work within.

Ms. McCray provided greater detail regarding the Strategic Planning process and how the written products were produced. She reviewed sections contained in the Strategic Plan Workshop binder: Themes from surveys, Core Service Compendium, COVID-19 Service Delivery Impacts, Department Head Workshop Results, Environmental Scan and Annual Reports. Mr. Spoelker provided an overview of the Environmental Scan and the Glen Ellyn Analysis included in the binder.

Responding to Ms. McCray's question regarding their impressions of the information provided, the City Council provided comments such as: considerable feedback was received even though the process was challenged by COVID restrictions, the City should recognize who we are and determine how to maintain and enhance that, the City should meet the needs of the present without compromising the assets of the future, the City was in a better position than municipalities with malls that rely on sales tax, there were not many comments on services – perhaps because residents are satisfied with the current level and we should promote what we currently do, the City is challenged by the fact that we are built out and EAV is not

growing (little space for growth) and the City should encourage economic growth by having a safe community with quality infrastructure and high service levels, environmental sustainability should be a priority for the future.

There was also support for a renewed emphasis on Public Safety support amid safety concerns reported in the surveys and the desire to not become complacent. While some stated a desire for greater economic development, others questioned the City's ability to affect this area outside of allocating funds for grants, etc. City Manager Dzugan stated housing stock is a component of economic development.

There was support to: diversify revenue versus relying heavily on property taxes, market the City better and continue working with the Downtown Wheaton Association and Chamber of Commerce, communicate well with residents to be the "Gold Standard" with timely and factual information.

Ms. McCray summarized the Mission/Vision the Department Heads worked on and suggested it as a good starting point. She clarified that Community Safety was not just Police and Fire Departments, but also Public Works, Building & Code Enforcement, Engineering, etc.

The draft vision statement provided by staff: *Wheaton strives to be a modern, inclusive, vibrant, and family-oriented community that is connected to the past and focused on the future.* The Council discussed their thoughts related to a proposed vision for the City.

The draft mission statement: *It is the mission of the City of Wheaton to provide increased quality infrastructure and services that enhance safety and quality of life for all residents by being responsive, transparent, innovative, and efficient.* The Council discussed their thoughts related to a proposed mission for the City.

The draft list of values included: *Accountability and Transparency, Fiscal Responsibility, Honesty and Integrity, Innovation, Respect, Pride, Responsive.* The Council discussed their thoughts related to proposed values for the City.

The Council agreed in the importance of the concept of financial stability and after discussion determined the best verbiage was "Financial Sustainability" for the first priority. The draft goals included:

GOAL A: Conduct Long-Term Financial Planning

1. Prepare a long-term financial forecast.
2. Annually prepare a budget decision-making framework.
3. Reevaluate the City's fund balance reserve policy.
4. Achieve a structurally balanced budget, striking a balance between operating expenditures and infrastructure investment.
5. Develop a financial dashboard on the City's website.

GOAL B: Identify Expenditure Reduction Opportunities

1. Conduct a review of contracted and in-house services to get the most effective and economical quality service.
2. Analyze the unfunded liabilities of Police and Fire pension plans.
3. Analyze current service levels to identify expenditure reduction opportunities.

4. Seek inter-governmental consolidation of services.

GOAL C: Identify Revenue Enhancements

1. Diversify and grow revenue sources to reduce the City's reliance on property taxes and state- shared revenues.
2. Seek and leverage federal and state grants to supplement infrastructure project funding.
3. Align fees with City Council policy parameters for operational cost recovery.

The Council agreed in the importance of the concept of quality infrastructure and after discussion determined the best verbiage was "Enhanced Infrastructure" for the second priority. Some areas of concern shared by the Council included: eliminating lead service lines, sanitary sewer backups, addressing the worst situations of flooding/stormwater, Council desire to get some projects going as soon as possible. The draft goals included:

GOAL A: Improve Planning and Maintenance of Existing Infrastructure

1. Create an inventory of all infrastructure assets.
2. Develop a long-term financial plan to address rehabilitation, replacement, and maintenance of existing infrastructure.
3. Prioritize existing infrastructure projects within each department annually.
4. Develop criteria for prioritizing existing infrastructure rehabilitation, replacement, and maintenance projects.
5. Track existing infrastructure maintenance operations to ensure alignment with industry best practices and standards.

GOAL B: Use Innovative Methods to Address Flooding Issues

1. Develop programs to address flooding on private and public property.
2. Develop programs to provide relief to property owners experiencing overland flooding in identified flood-prone and flood-plain areas.
3. Develop criteria for prioritizing flooding mitigation efforts.

GOAL C: Achieve a Reliable Sanitary Sewer System

1. Identify best practices to address overflows.
2. Create programs to provide relief for property owners experiencing basement backups.

GOAL D: Prioritize All Infrastructure Projects and Funding

1. Develop criteria for prioritizing all new and replacement infrastructure improvements.
2. Prepare a funding plan for new and replacement infrastructure improvements.

The Council agreed in the importance of the concept of high-quality services provided where/when needed. After discussion they determined the best verbiage was "Responsive and Efficient Services" for the third priority. The draft goals included:

GOAL A: Identify Essential Services

1. Establish criteria and identify the three highest priority essential services for each department.
2. Identify necessary resources to support the three high priority services in each department.

GOAL B: Improve Service Delivery through Process Improvements and Data Analysis

1. Use process and data analysis to improve service delivery and/or reduce service-related costs; explore appropriate technologies.
2. Improve processes that require in-person visits to city facilities.
3. Improve processes that require paper submittals, e.g. application forms.
4. Use surveys to assess resident/customer satisfaction with city services.
5. Use employee training to improve job performance and customer service.

GOAL C: Promote Programmatic Performance Measures and Benchmarks and Report Goals

1. Enhance ways to assess city programs and services.
2. Enhance the electronic service request system to ensure service delivery and accountability.
3. Prepare annual performance reports for each department.

GOAL D: Regularly Communicate with Wheaton Residents and Stakeholders about City Services, Programs, and Initiatives

1. Enhance current social media platforms.
2. Develop survey and feedback mechanisms to ensure that communication remains effective.

The discussion related to the proposed priority of Community Safety centered generally on the heading. It was noted that “safety” was a frequent comment on the surveys. There was continued discussion regarding the concept that most City services provided relate in some way to safety. Some comments included considering the health, safety and welfare of the community and a desire to communicate what we currently do to maintain a safe environment. The draft goals included:

GOAL A: Promote Education and Outreach about the Health, Welfare, and Safety of the Community

1. Enhance and strengthen community partnerships with schools, the Park District, and other city and county service providers.

GOAL B: Ensure that City Services Match Community Needs

1. Identify social service gaps and needs.
2. Promote shared services and partnerships to address local needs.

The Council discussed their desire to include Environmental Sustainability as a Strategic Priority. Some comments related to including Environmental Sustainability elements as part of other priorities instead of a stand-alone priority. In the end, it was the consensus of the Council to include Environmental Sustainability as a Strategic Priority and they directed staff to provide some draft goals and outcomes for their consideration. The draft goals included:

GOAL A: Reduce the City’s Carbon Footprint

1. Identify the current carbon footprint of the City.
2. Implement carbon reduction strategies.

GOAL B: Reduce the Amount of Waste Routed to Local Landfills

1. Install dedicated recycling collection site(s) throughout the city.
2. Promote salvaging usable materials from building demolitions.
3. Increase the use of composting through programs and education.

IV. City Council/City Staff Comments

Mayor Suess thanked Management Partners and Staff for the work associated with putting the Strategic Planning Workshop binder together and bringing the draft ideas to the City Council.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John M. Duguay