City of Hot Springs



A Strategic Goal Setting Initiative September 2012

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City of Hot Springs Goals Setting Initiative

September 2012

Overview

The Mayor and Board of Directors held a strategic goal setting work session on September 14-15, 2012, to identify, review and prioritize important issues facing the community, both now and in the future. The priorities were divided into two categories: short-term goals and priorities the Board of Directors and staff will focus on implementing during the next two years, including a focus on reflecting these priorities in the budget preparation process; and, long-term goals that will require more analysis and citizen input over the next two years in order to take action to implement beginning in 2014 and beyond.

The Mayor and Board of Directors should consider updating the City's goals every few years as factors change and projects and initiatives are completed or modified. The Governing Body believes that identifying goals, assigning priorities and developing an action plan to implement and address these initiatives will serve as a catalyst to spur high quality and appropriate development, enhance economic and financial sustainability, and provide the resources necessary to ensure a safe and secure City. Most importantly, the Governing Body and the City's Leadership Team desires to maintain and continue to improve the "quality of life" for all citizens of Hot Springs by striving to provide the highest quality of municipal services possible.

Using a decision by consensus process, the Board established a set of strategic goals that fall into five (5) categories. Upon review and adoption by the Board, it is recommended that the Board direct the City Manager to work with staff to map out a more detailed implementation plan and action steps necessary to achieve success on each goal. Successful completion of strategic planning and goal setting initiatives requires an ongoing focus and scorecard to track and report progress made. It is important for the Board of Directors to work with the City Manager to develop a scorecard mechanism for receiving updates on a continual basis. This set of strategic goals will provide direction for the staff to pursue implementation of the agreed upon priorities. It is important to remember that the work plan can be adjusted as new issues arise and it is determined that the issue merits priority status.

The Board of Directors also identified four organizations and groups that it would like to improve relations with in order to more effectively serve the community. These groups include the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, the Metro Partnership, the Downtown Hot Springs business community, and other neighboring cities and communities. Strategies to improve relations will be incorporated into the goals and action steps detailed in this document.

Hot Springs' Strategic Priorities

The elements and themes included in the proposed set of strategic goals fall into five (5) categories: A "MAP3" for the Future!

Maintain, Assess and Construct New Infrastructure

Improving the basic infrastructure of a community, including streets, bridges, highway access, storm water drainage, sanitary sewers, water supply, treatment, and delivery, are critical elements necessary for a city to achieve success in all goal areas. Utilizing a reliable and sound decision process to assess capital needs and identify possible funding for projects will provide a blueprint for making future improvements. Possessing sound infrastructure is a key factor in achieving improved citizen satisfaction, being able to compete in attracting new investment, and would improve the overall safety of the community.

Address Pension Solutions

It is important to proactively address funding constraints and challenges in a timely manner, resisting the urge to defer possible major funding obligations to the future. Identifying possible solutions (includes working with State officials) and assessing the adverse impact on the organization will provide a range of options and strategies to begin to address the unfunded liability.

Pursue Economic Development and Financial Sustainability

Growing the tax base will increase existing revenue streams enabling the City to maintain and improve services, address community and organizational priorities, and lessen the burden on existing taxpayers. It is important to first prepare and utilize consistent economic development strategies and policies that adhere to a common community vision. Second, cost benefit analysis and a review of each project should be conducted to ensure there is an enhancement of revenue streams that are sustainable, creating a more "livable" and "healthy" community that can then attract future investments.

Protect Citizens and Provide Public Safety

By passing a 3/8 cent sales tax, the citizens of Garland County have supported addressing the long-term detention center (jail) space constraints for the region. In the short-term, the City will need to work closely with the County to identify interim strategies to increase and extend the time of detention for arrested suspects.

Pursue Downtown Redevelopment Strategies

The heart and lifeblood of every community is its central business district and Hot Springs has benefited from the significant work being undertaken by various groups focused on continuing downtown redevelopment, historic preservation and attracting more investors and visitors intended to expand the community's economic well being. It is important for the City to provide leadership and work collaboratively with all groups and interested individuals to establish a process of inclusivity. Equally important is the need to establish a unified strategic framework, identifying what key actions are necessary for Hot Springs to benefit from a meaningful and sustained renaissance. This coalescing of interests into a single unified strategy document might include identifying the best and most desired land uses, the highest identified needs, preparing a financial plan identifying possible funding alternatives, and an implementation timeline.

Outline of Strategic Issue(s) Implementation Plan

Goal (Brief Description)

- Strategic Issue Defined Action(s)
 - ➤ Action Step(s) to Achieve Desired Result or Address Issue
 - Group/Person Assigned to Lead/Coordinate
 - Fundina:
 - Dates: Start/End

Hot Springs Strategic Goals & Priorities (Short-term = Next 24 Months; Long-term = October 2014 and Beyond)

Goal 1: Initiate and Implement a Comprehensive Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Strategy 1: (Short-term):

Initiate preparation of the annual CIP (in coordination with the preparation of the annual budget) that would define, prioritize, estimate costs, identify possible revenue sources, and prepare a schedule to design and construct all City related capital projects that exceed a certain dollar amount. This would include roads, bridges, and projects related to storm water, sanitary sewer treatment and transmission, water treatment and transmission, the airport, public buildings, park facilities, etc.

Action Steps:

- > Staff to create a schedule and process to prepare a comprehensive CIP document for preliminary review by the Planning Commission, and then review and adoption by the Board of Directors
- > Once project descriptions are completed, staff should solicit review and input by various affected agencies and organizations, including NPS, A&P, utility companies, State of Arkansas, Major Projects Task Force and all other departments of the City
- Finance Department should analyze possible financial impact of projects and identify financing mechanisms necessary to design and construct identified priorities
- Assess constraints and funding for demolition of the Math & Science Building; City is obligated to demolish the building six months after the boiler room is relocated; seek State assistance to finance energy center relocation; seek State and philanthropic contributions toward demolition
 - Lead Group/Person: City Manager (Final CIP to be approved by Board of Directors)
 - Funding: TBD
 - Dates: Immediate Preparation (Will evolve into more comprehensive CIP after first year)

Strategy 2: (Long-term):

Implement priority projects contained in the new CIP; address and implement relevant projects and recommendations contained in Major Unfunded Projects Report

Action Steps:

- Assess and determine the next steps necessary to implement relevant recommendations of Major Unfunded Projects Report into CIP process; identify funding options for review and consideration
- Expand and maintain quality public safety services: address need for new Police communications system; and, site, design, fund and construct a new fire station serving the Highway 7 South area
 - Lead Group/Person: City Manager + designated CIP coordinator
 - Funding: TBD Dates: Ongoing

Goal 2: Develop New Economic Development Strategies / Policies

Strategy 1: (Short-term)

Prepare a set of economic development strategies and possible new policies to achieve these desired outcomes:

- ❖ Define incentives that could be used by the City/State
- Seek input on policies, funding, governance, and work with area experts to pursue a more coordinated and collaborative approach
- ❖ Increase accountability with partner agencies; establish contracts for funding that contain benchmarks and performance standards for work conducted on behalf of the citizens. Identify and refine development initiatives and major projects that would enhance development prospects
- Establish benchmarks for measuring success
- Clarify communication protocols between Mayor and Board regarding economic development prospects and during negotiations with possible investors
- Develop a routine method of communication so that all members are kept informed on project status Action Steps:
 - Schedule Board work session to develop timeline and define possible policy parameters for City Manager and City Attorney to use in preparation of draft strategy / policies
 - Assess existing precedents and policies; determine how to improve moving forward
 - Once a draft strategy and policies are prepared, share with A&P, Chamber, NPS and others to obtain formal and informal input regarding how to improve draft policies and determine if there are ideas not yet considered
 - Continue to capitalize on the land and services available at the municipal airport
 - A major emphasis will be placed on redevelopment of Downtown Hot Springs (See Goal 6)
 - Lead Group/Person: Board of Directors; Mayor; City Manager; City Attorney
 - Funding: TBD
 - Dates: Immediate Schedule a work session on next available date

Goal 3: Address Interim Public Safety Issues Relating to Jail

Strategy 1: (Short-term)

Work closely with Garland County to identify interim strategies to increase and extend the time of detention for arrested suspects currently being released early because of space constraints

Action Steps:

- > Identify and cost out options
- Set up meeting with Garland County officials
- Pursue possible partnerships to share in the cost burden
 - Lead Group/Person: City Attorney, Police Chief, City Manager
 - Funding: TBD (unknown at this time)
 - Dates: Immediate Fall 2012

Goal 4: Finalize Water Supply Decision

Strategy 1: (Short-term)

Continue efforts to assess best option(s) to address needs for long-term water supply

Action Steps:

- Identify costs and other long-term benefits, and determine whether to build new or expand existing water treatment facility and transmission lines
- > Select rate consultant and begin conducting financial analysis regarding costs for a new system
- ➤ If new facility is desired, a preferred site must be selected
- Work with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the City's selected project engineer to finalize design and determine detailed cost estimates
- Seek possible collaborative agreements with other utilities, including SW Public Power Association, Central Arkansas Water Association, etc.
- Identify, finalize and secure funding sources
 - Lead Group/Person: City Manager, Board of Directors
 - Funding: TBDDates: Immediately

Strategy 2: (Long-term)

Secure financing and begin construction on the water treatment facility and transmission lines

Action Steps:

- ➤ Begin construction of plant and transmission lines
 - Lead Group/Person: City Manager, Board of Directors
 - Funding: TBD
 - Dates: 2014 and beyond

Goal 5: Address Police and Fire Pension Fund While Maintaining a Balanced Budget

Strategy 1: (Short-term)

Define best practices for pension assessment in the region and determine various strategies to begin paying down or lessening the obligation

Action Steps:

- Utilize an actuarial consultant with expertise in pensions to assess major cost scenarios; begin to develop a legislative and communications plan, including possible desired changes to pension(s)
- Establish a task force of representatives from Administration, Police & Fire retirees, and current Police & Fire employees to establish a protocol for sharing information, addressing concerns, and answering questions; provide access to all information produced by actuarial consultant
- Verify accounting strategies and actual payments from inception of pension transfer; present to area legislators any possible discrepancies and proposed solutions
- ➤ Set up meeting with area State Senators for the Fall of 2012 to request their assistance; share the findings
 - Lead Group/Person: City Manager, Finance Director, and Board of Directors
 - Funding: TBD
 - Dates: Immediately (Fall 2012)

Strategy 2: (Long-term)

Begin implementation of finalized and adopted steps to address, modify, and/or fund the pension fund **Action Steps:**

Track and monitor changes that have been made to the plan

Lead Group/Person: City Manager, Finance Director, and Board of Directors

Funding: TBD

Dates: 2014 and beyond

Goal 6: Align Downtown Redevelopment Strategies

Strategy 1: (Short-term)

Identify and document the various Downtown redevelopment initiatives underway; identify desired outcomes by each group; coalesce multiple interests into a single, unified, strategic framework.

- Assemble a list of possible stakeholders located in Downtown (including residents) representing all vocations, tenants, residents, property owners, businesses, the faith community, theater owners, nonprofits, etc.
- Provide support and encouragement to those organizations expressing a desire to have increased collaboration with the City

Action Steps:

- Convene a meeting with stakeholders
- Identify leaders from key groups currently leading various initiatives (the Chamber, property owners and merchants)
- ➤ Identify a liaison from the Hot Springs Board of Directors (plus a staff liaison) to represent the City at special events and future meetings
- ➤ Determine if there is an interest in working together to build a unified vision.
- Document key issues / concerns / needs expressed by stakeholders to use when identifying strategic options to evaluate
- ➤ Utilize stakeholder input to assess and determine preferred strategies to pursue; prepare set of action steps necessary to achieve success; encourage and support implementation; assist stakeholders when necessary and appropriate

Lead Group/Person: City Manager; Leadership Team; Mayor and Board of Directors

■ Funding: TBD

Dates: Immediately

Strategy 2: (Long-term)

Support the various initiatives for revitalizing Downtown Hot Springs

Action Steps:

- > Seek philanthropic and other community assistance for special events and identified long-term needs
 - Lead Group/Person: City Manager; Leadership Team; Mayor and Board of Directors

■ Funding: TBD

Dates: Fall 2014