


MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor England
Vice Mayor Kostka
Commissioner George
Commissioner Samora
Commissioner Rumrell

FROM: Max Royle, City Manager 

DATE: December 6, 2019

SUBJECT: Strategic Plan: Review of Draft

BACKGROUND

The City's last strategic plan was developed in 2015. You hired a professional facilitator, Marilyn Crotty, to help you. The result was that you adopted six Tier One objectives:

1. To establish a plan for evaluating various special events held in the City and their impact on the residents' quality of life.
2. To review additional revenue sources, including fees, grants, taxes, public/private partnerships, bonds, etc.
3. To review and update the City's codes and their enforcement: parking, traffic and speed limits, solid waste, and Land Development Regulations.
4. To advocate for continued funding for beach renourishment using state and federal sources.
5. To increase and improve citizen engagement.
6. To develop a City-wide traffic management plan.

All of these objectives were met, either entirely or in part. The sixth one, traffic management plan, was changed to pedestrian and bicyclist management, which resulted in the flags at certain crosswalks on A1A Beach Boulevard.

In 2019, you discussed updating the strategic plan at three meetings. On January 7th, you decided not to hire a facilitator but to have the update done inhouse, that is, by City staff. On August 5th, you discussed a mission statement for the plan and for individual Commissioners to send their suggestions to the City Manager. On September 10th, you reviewed possible mission statements for the strategic plan and directed the City Manager to draft one.

THE PROPOSED PLAN

It is attached as pages 1-4 and is the product of suggestions from the City staff as well as the Planning Board and SEPAC (the Sustainability and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee). You will note that it has:

- A mission statement, a vision statement and a values statement.

- Five goals, each with a series of tasks listed under it.
- A category titled "Meeting Challenges," which consists of four topics that the City Manager proposes should be on the Commission's long-term "radar."

The goals and their tasks are ones that the City administration suggests are achievable rather than aspirational and are within the City's manpower and limited financial resources to accomplish. We have tried to avoid goals/tasks that might require the hiring of a consultant and/or additional employees to achieve.

We propose that the plan be a five-year one, meaning the five goals and their related tasks be implemented over the next five years. Nearly all are the staff's responsibility to implement. A few we propose be done by the City Commission, such as holding town hall meetings with the residents, providing competitive pay and benefits to the employees, and increasing the undesignated reserves by \$100,000 a year.

ACTION REQUESTED

It is that you discuss this draft of the strategic plan and make whatever changes you think are needed, though with this overriding guideline: that the goals and their tasks should be ones that can over the next five years be accomplished by the employees and even board members, such as SEPAC and without significant cost.

In accordance with your directives, a second draft of the plan will be prepared and presented to you at your February 3rd meeting.

STRATEGIC PLAN II

I. MISSION STATEMENT

St. Augustine Beach is a welcoming, inclusive beachside community that strives to provide responsive services for the health, safety and welfare of its residents and visitors, and protect its inviting small-town residential and environmental character while welcoming commercial development and redevelopment that contribute to a strong economy and tax base.

II. VISION STATEMENT

During the next five years, the City will: a. prepare itself financially for a future when land development will no longer provide significant revenue for City operations and infrastructure; b. support changes to its Land Development Regulations and Comprehensive Plan that will help the City protect public and private property from the effects of sea level rise and increasing storm surge elevations; c. continue and maintain a cooperative relationship with St. Johns County for beach restoration and maintenance of a robust coastal dune system and the provision of mutually-shared services; d. seek to maintain a stable City work force by providing competitive pay and benefits.

III. VALUES STATEMENT

The City is committed to the delivery of quality services, fiscal responsibility, ethics and integrity, transparent and honest communication, and equal opportunity for its residents, visitors and employees.

IV. GOALS

A. Transparent Communication with Residents and Property Owners

Tasks:

1. Keep up-to-date on latest social media trends and platforms and utilize those that are most beneficial to City residents and visitors.
2. Individual Commissioners or the entire Commission have yearly town hall meetings, either for specific topics or for matters of general interest.
3. Upgrading when necessary and financially feasible video and related equipment for media production and the streaming of Commission/Planning Board meetings.
4. Conduct an annual survey, the topic to be determined by the Commission.
5. Provide relevant and accurate information regarding pressing issues, e.g., City-provided programs and services, upcoming significant projects, responding to the Census, environmental concerns, such as sea level rise, stormwater management, water quality and illicit discharges to receiving waters.

B. Residential and Commercial Development

Tasks:

1. Annually review Land Development Regulations to see what changes are needed to strengthen those regulations that protect the City's largely residential character and promote commercial development and redevelopment where feasible.

2. Annually review Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives and policies to see what changes may be needed.
3. Commission works with Florida League of Cities to resist Florida Legislature proposals to preempt all local government vacation rental regulations and weaken the cities' home rule authority in other ways.
4. Work with builders and developers to reduce illicit discharges from construction sites.

C. Infrastructure Improvements

Tasks:

1. Develop a comprehensive five-year Capital Improvements Plan that will include:
 - a. five-year pavement and sidewalk management plan.
 - b. five-year drainage system maintenance plan.
 - c. five-year City parks improvements plan.
2. Update the City's Storm Drainage Master Plan
3. Develop projects for pedestrian and bicyclist safety.
4. Annually review computer and software needs to see where improvements are needed and where changes can be made to reduce costs.
5. Develop an urban forestry plan to maintain or increase the City's tree canopy by the Sustainability and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee.

D. City Services

Tasks:

1. Maintain Police Department accreditation.
2. Require same-day response, when possible, by the staffs of City departments to resident complaints, requests for information, etc.
3. Establish ongoing means for residents to provide feedback on City services and suggestions for improvements.
4. Review annually City services/programs and their costs, to see which are necessary, which may not be needed, or which can be improved.

E. City Finances

Tasks:

1. Seek ways to reduce expenditures.
2. Seek new, recurring revenue sources.
3. Seek grants.
4. Promote commercial development and/or redevelopment that strengthens City's tax base.
5. Review annually all fees, fines and charges levied by the City to see which ones need to be raised, reduced or eliminated.

6. Conduct study to see whether City's recycling program is worth the cost or should be scaled back or eliminated in 2022, when current recycling contract expires.
7. Do Request for Qualifications when insurance contracts for health, dental, vision, liability, property, vehicle and workers compensation lapse, to see if all property is adequately insured and whether changes are possible to reduce costs for insurance.
8. Review annually City's existing debt, research refinancing options, and avoid taking on new debt until existing debt is paid.
9. Commission will support efforts by other coastal cities and counties to change state law to allow revenue from the bed tax to be used for the services and needs created by tourists.
10. Commission will increase General Fund's undesignated reserves by \$100,000 a year for the next five years.
11. Upgrading technology to support paperless records retention by purchasing equipment needed for backup.
12. Upgrading Public Works Department to have Laserfiche availability for records.

F. Meeting Challenges

1. Sea Level Rise: Stay up-to-date on information relevant to Florida, and on state and federal initiatives concerning sea level rise. Develop a vulnerability assessment and adaption plan to prepare for future sea level rise and increased storm surge, and work with other governmental agencies on projects that are suitable for our City and financially feasible, given the City's limited revenue sources. The Sustainability and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee will do the following:
 - With assistance of the Public Works Department, identify, design and build dry retention areas in City-owned parkettes and appropriate road right-of-way locations to provide natural retention of stormwater runoff.
 - Research and draft an everyday climate change action plan with low cost recommendations for residences, businesses and government, to promote a reduction in the City's carbon footprint.
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2. Beach Restoration and Dune Protection:
 - a. Continue strong support with the County regarding federal authorization and funding, as well as state funding, for periodic restoration of the beach and dune system in the state park and the City.
 - b. Coordinate with St. Johns County to reduce dune degradation through education and construction of new elevated dune walkovers in vulnerable pedestrian traffic areas.
3. Labor: Provide competitive pay and benefits so that City can attract and retain employees.
4. Public Transportation: Work with the County and/or St. Augustine on whether there is a need for improved public bus service for residents, workers and visitors, and whether there are any improvements that are financially feasible for the City.

5. Former City Hall: Explore options of what to do with it when Cultural Council lease expires in September 2026.