

Council Study Session

August 2, 2021

Agenda Item	Review and Next Steps for Existing and New Council Goals	
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Item Type	Requested by Council <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Update <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Request for Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/>	

SUMMARY

A special meeting of Council was held on March 5, 2021 to initiate a conversation and to develop an initial working document for updated Council priorities and responsibilities for 2021-23 timeframe. Seven specific initiatives were developed within the work session and are attached for reference. Given the upcoming biennial budget process, Council directed staff to place a follow up study session on the schedule after the completion of the budget process to further refine and integrate into the existing Council goals for 2019-21 adopted via Resolution No. 2019-27 on September 19, 2019.

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Council last formally conducted specific goal setting sessions in the fall of 2019 with then City Administrator Kelly Madding. This resulted in Resolution No. 2019-27 as well as a supporting document that is also attached in this packet for reference. Council at that time indicated a desire to move forward with the goals and begin a strategic planning process that would also involve significant community engagement and input. With Kelly's departure and the nearly concurrent onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, that strategic planning work was put on hold.

In early 2021, the newly seated Mayor and Council scheduled a special, facilitated meeting on March 5, 2021 to work on a new set of initiatives and purposefully deferred further Council work on the draft initiatives until the completion of the 2021-23 biennial budget. With the budget process complete and formally adopted, Council can now review both the currently adopted goals (Reso 2019-27) and the draft initiatives/priorities and determine a preferred course of action to ultimately update/approve a new working goals, priorities, initiatives document.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Initial facilitation services were provided free of charge and no immediate costs exist at this point in the process. Staff can develop cost estimates subsequent to Council discussion and direction on desired next steps.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How would Council like to involve the community in this process?
- What role would Council like staff to be involved in this process?
- Is there interest in incorporating Advisory Commission input in this process?
- Is there an identified target completion date for the final product?

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

With the staffing transitions in a number of key positions, agreement and clarity on the desired process, timeline and level of community involvement is critical in determining the staff capacity to meet Council's expectations while also keeping up with other identified Council and operational projects and tasks.

Staff also suggests that Council review and discuss the attached General Fund Financial Planning Meeting Outline submitted by Councilors Graham and Hyatt that follows up on Council approval of the development of a set of meetings starting in August to address the general fund budget implementation outlined in the recently approved BN2021-23 budget document as this Council directive will likely need to integrate in some fashion with the goals/initiatives process.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

[Resolution No. 2019-27 – 2019-21 Council Biennial Goals](#)

Attachment 1: 2021-23 Council Initiatives and Priorities – Draft

Attachment 2: Strategic Planning Process Proposal – Councilor Graham

Attachment 3: General Fund Financial Planning Meeting Outline – Councilors Graham and Hyatt

Priorities and Responsibilities for Ashland City Council for 2021-23
City Council Study Session March 5, 2021

- **Increase availability of affordable housing, especially for middle-income families, by reducing City costs and improving permitting procedures**
Duquette, Akins
- **Review Ashland government spending on capital-intensive services to identify long-term opportunities for operational cost savings and fiscal stability**
Moran, Hyatt
- **Establish programs to improve resilience during environment-related crises, e.g. renewable energy sources to provide emergency power for essential services**
Akins, Graham
- **Manage smooth, positive transition to new City governance structure including staff and council training, and communication with public**
Jensen, Seffinger
- **Make Ashland more affordable by reviewing City policies and regulations to avoid unintended consequences of increased living costs for Ashland residents**
Seffinger, Duquette
- **Foster economic growth and diversification within high-tech and services sectors to increase livable-wage jobs and improve economic resilience**
Hyatt, Moran
- **Create broadly focused long-range vision and strategic plan for Ashland governance, including agency structure, decision-making process, and cost efficiencies, emphasizing social, racial and demographic equity.**
Graham, Jensen

Strategic Planning Process Proposal

September: Online survey with these questions:

1. What are three words that describe the best parts of our community?
2. What do you want Ashland to be known for in 20 years?
3. What are your three greatest concerns for our community?

Here are the goals identified by the City Council in early 2019.

4. What are your ideas for community-wide goals for the next 5 years?
(click to keep any of the existing goals, spaces to add new ones)

The City Council identified these essential services (services the City is entirely responsible for) and value services (services the City provides by working in partnership with community organizations).

5. Are these correct? Do you suggest any changes?

October: Process survey results and structure strategic planning process around major goal areas

November/December/January/February: Planning processes around goal areas that include existing and future council members as well as interested residents.

February/March: Follow up electronic survey to confirm the draft goals and tasks and ask how residents would like to help

March: Finalize the plan with 5-year, 3-year, and 1-year goals – assign commissions the task of considering how they do or could fit into this strategic plan

April/May/June: Budget Process

June/July/August: Align Commissions with the strategic plan, clarify/adjust charters, and assign tasks and timelines

General Fund: Financial Planning Meetings & Community Outreach Plan

Structure: 1 meeting per month, 3hrs per meeting/multiple opportunities for community input

Meeting #1 - APCR Joint Meeting

Date: August 2021

Topics for Consideration and Discussion

1. Dedicated Revenue Stream,
2. Food & Beverage Tax,
3. Independent Service District
4. Required Funding Level to Maintain Current Service Level,
5. Impacts of a Lesser Funding Level on Service
6. Other items?

Meeting #2 – Mandatory vs. Optional General Fund Functions and Service Levels

Date: September 2021 (May require a second session)

Topics for Consideration and Discussion

1. **Ashland Fire and Rescue**
 - a. 8/10 vs 9/11 fire staffing
 - b. Fire Adapted Ashland
 - c. CERT
 - d. Fire Inspection (Charter Mandated)
 - e. Ashland Fire Resilience Program (Watershed)
 - f. Ambulance Service
2. **Police**
 - a. Proactive Patrol vs. Response Only
 - b. IGA with Talent, expansion?
 - c. Others?

LEVERAGE EXISTING COMMUNITY INPUT: Prior Survey Feedback from Ashlanders. Ex. LOC Survey and Housing Needs Assessment Survey

Meeting #3 – Revenue Sources

Date: October 2021

Topics for Consideration and Discussion

1. Existing General Fund Revenue Sources
 - a. Property Tax
 - b. F&B
 - c. TOT
 - d. Franchise Fees
 - e. Miscellaneous Fees
 - f. Potential General Fund Revenues
2. Potential Revenue Streams if any

REQUEST FOR COMMUNITY INPUT: Conduct a separate Town Hall/ Listening Session (Joint with APCR)

Meeting #4 – Prioritization of Services

Date: November 2021

Topics for Consideration and Discussion

1. Address open questions from prior sessions
2. Develop Preliminary Service Priority List based on Meetings 1, 2 & 3
3. Further Revision informed by community feedback

REQUEST FOR COMMUNITY INPUT: Survey to all Ashland adults – Work with SOU

1. Finite (10 minute max to complete)
2. Focus rank order of program/ service priority
3. Goal – Aid City Council Prioritization for funding services and programs

Decision Point: Develop Draft Service Priority List

Meeting #5 – Regionalization Conversation

Date: December 2021

Topics for Consideration and Discussion

1. Services compatible with regionalization structures
 - a. Police and Fire, other?
2. Impacts of Regionalization
 - a. Loss of direct control
 - b. Need for IGA to provide support services?
3. Time Frame to Regionalize
4. Available Partner Agencies, if any?

Decision Point: Does Council give staff direction to pursue regionalization for any existing services

Meeting #6 – Define Course of Action

Date: January 2021

Topics for Consideration and Discussion

1. Review of Survey and Town Hall feedback compared to draft Council Priorities from Meeting 4
2. **Revise Priority Document as appropriate given community feedback**
3. With priorities outlined, DEFINE COURSE OF ACTION / General Fund Plan

Council moves forward with policy decisions to support defined course of action.

If action involves going to the voters, file as appropriate and support community discussion through to May.