

Meeting Minutes

City Council Special Meeting

February 1, 2023 | 9:30 a.m.
Chandler Museum, Saguaro Room
300 S. Chandler Village Dr., Chandler, AZ



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kevin Hartke at 9:52 a.m.

Roll Call

Council Attendance

Mayor Kevin Hartke
Vice Mayor Matt Orlando
Councilmember OD Harris
Councilmember Mark Stewart
Councilmember Christine Ellis
Councilmember Jane Poston
Councilmember Angel Encinas

Appointee Attendance

Josh Wright, City Manager
Kelly Schwab, City Attorney
Dana DeLong, City Clerk

Staff in Attendance

Tadd Wille, Assistant City Manager
Dawn Lang, Deputy City Manager / CFO
Andy Bass, Deputy City Manager
Matt Burdick, Communications and
Public Affairs Director

Facilitator Attendance

Nicole Lance, Lance Strategies &
Extraordinary Balance
Eric Bailey, Bailey Strategic Innovation Group
& Extraordinary Balance

Welcome

MAYOR HARTKE welcomed staff and councilmembers.

NICOLE LANCE, Lance Strategies & Extraordinary Balance, and ERIC BAILEY, Bailey Strategic Innovation Group & Extraordinary Balance, introduced themselves and set goals for the day.

Discussion

Discussion, Review, Identification, and Modification of Priorities to Address and Create a Unified Strategic Policy Direction for the City of Chandler

1. Facilitation Framework, Review and Editing of Existing Priorities, Common Barriers to Effective Strategic Planning

MS. LANCE noted that the current Strategic Framework 2021 – 2023 document will be the starting point of consideration. First, look for what is missing and consider what might need to be removed, edited, or adjusted from the existing framework.

MR. BAILEY shared a presentation on perception and reality. Mr. Bailey instructed everyone to break into pairs and discuss their top ideas for each category.

2. Brainstorming New Priorities

Quality of Life

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON mentioned that Public Safety does not fit cleanly into this category. Quality of Life has the connotation of other services, like events or athletics. Quality of Life should be a stand-alone category.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said that public safety was discussed to be integrated into everything that we do in Chandler. The question is do we consider public safety to be its own category or combine it into all different areas.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS added that water and environment should be incorporated into this category.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said having continual plans to maintain and improve our resources like water is important.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART suggested continuing volunteer opportunities and events while collaborating with nonprofits and other interest groups.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO mentioned aesthetics, taking opportunities to beautify the city.

MAYOR HARTKE shared a goal of being public safety leaders, setting a responsible water policy, and continuing supporting celebrations and events.

MR. WRIGHT said we need to learn to support Chandler's diverse residents and adapt our organization to make a difference to individuals.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said they discussed public safety as a separate item from Quality of Life, but it would still fit.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO said we need to expand the definition of public safety to consider more than police and fire.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said that including public safety issues into our consideration of Quality of Life is important. This is a topical issue, and a clear framework for how to deal with these recent concerns will help.

Neighborhoods

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said that neighborhoods play a holistic role in the city goals. Community service fits under this category. Community navigators are part of this category as well, we need to consider how to integrate them further to benefit our neighborhoods.

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON said that Chandler has a culture of community service. Community service is about both people doing the service and the people receiving benefits from the service. Neighborhood challenges are not a department-specific target, but a whole City target.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO said that affordable housing is a recent focus. The city's plan for affordable housing on its land is a good way to move forward. One improvement would be to speed up the development process. Neighborhood clean ups is another suggestion for improving neighborhoods.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said we need to find innovative solutions to speed the process up. Councilmember Stewart suggested removing Housing from our core strategic focuses. The city's responsibility is not to provide housing to residents, only to facilitate the permitting process for builders.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS agreed with the holistic approach to neighborhoods and community service and added that the city can do more independently of the other groups that provide these services. A common theme discussed was engagement, investment, and outreach. Collaboration and open communication is key.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS mentioned engaging HOA neighborhoods more through quarterly round table discussions. It is critical to be involved with HOA leaders and residents. The city offers some incentives to landlords for low-income housing, but we need to return to creating incentives and working relationships with landlords. Bringing up new ideas to builders is one way to influence the future of neighborhoods. Council's influence does matter to these groups and to individual constituents.

MAYOR HARTKE said that staff will return with concepts or program ideas. It is our job to provide vision and policy to staff. HOA workshops are in full swing, we can work on visibility. In considering housing strategic partnership, what are some areas we have not explored. Continue to maintain positive perceptions of Chandler for visitors and residents.

Mobility

MAYOR HARTKE said Chandler needs to be a leader in a substitute plan for transportation funding to replace Proposition 400. We need to embrace technology and alternative mobility while maintaining high standards of transportation. Multi-modal planning can address system gaps.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS said there was some confusion as to why mobility was a pillar on its own. The question is where the high-tech transit options are.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said that the Chandler Flex has been a great program, now we can expand the areas of service.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO emphasized connectivity in service. The question is how we reprogram current bus service. Vice Mayor Orlando brought up fiber connectivity and advances towards 5G technology.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART asked how we create more awareness for the services we already provide. Multi-modal or micro transit options are the future, so we must consider how we rotate funding from an old service to a new service. Perhaps connectivity is rolled into the Mobility category, where it is not just physical mobility, but mobility of opportunities.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS mentioned mobility as it applies to non-Chandler residents.

Innovation and Technology

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO mentioned that Innovation applied to all the focus areas. We can add sustainability to Technology category.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART shared some overlap between economic development and smart sustainability practices when it comes to energy.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said that everything we do is innovative across all focus areas. We can consider how we use A.I. and what Chandler looks like in the future.

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON said that most of the points in this area related more to technology than they did innovation. We also must consider if the technology goals are internal or external. Much of the goals of the other focus areas were outward facing, but this one seems less clear.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said we conducted various assessments and now must implement suggestions to meet our goals.

MAYOR HARTKE mentioned we need to be sustainable and innovative leaders in energy and water. We can revisit the incubator, and revisit partnerships with other groups. There is still room to build on the Price Corridor area for semiconductor manufacturing opportunities. Our internal needs to invest in hardware, software, infrastructure can realize spending one-time funds to get ongoing savings.

Economic Vitality

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON said that internally we need to prioritize a business-friendly culture. Economic vitality does not just come from the Economic Development department.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said Mayor and Council need enough direction to be able to direct questions from business owners and residents.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS mentioned that Chandler has a great technology employment base, but we can be more open to other industries to foster new businesses and start-ups. Infill redevelopment and reuse is a big opportunity for Chandler to become more innovative. We need to think outside the box to bring cool and exciting new things to Chandler.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said that making access to capital, marketing, and starting a business easier for entrepreneurs will help businesses. Let the City support them with our resources and find sustainable partners. We need to continue expanding and cleaning north Arizona Avenue.

MAYOR HARTKE said we need to tell our story better through better marketing. We can use our strong position on water to influence economic vitality. In considering the situation with build-out, what are we missing and what needs remain. We can conduct an inventory and then determine what the best use for that space is. Chandler needs to be assertive in its redevelopment and reuse.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART summarized that in Price Corridor, Economic Development is tied to Planning and Zoning. We need to support small businesses and provide them with the resources and tools they need to succeed.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO said that more partnerships may do better on with working with small businesses, we need to prioritize what we do best. What is the next step after inventory is completed.

MR. BAILEY asked each councilmember to identify one focus area they would like to focus on for the rest of the day.

3. Consensus-Building on Priorities and Focus Areas

MR. BAILEY organized councilmembers to target certain focus areas. In each group, look at the current strategic plan and determine what items will be listed under each focus area.

Neighborhoods

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS suggested adding more bullet points rather than editing what was already there. There should be more of a focus on neighborhoods rather than housing. Suggested bullet points were well maintained neighborhoods that show pride in ownership; engagement of community leaders, residents, and HOAs; providing infrastructure to create community through events and volunteer opportunities; exploring strategies to streamline processes in order to bring diverse housing to market quickly and efficiently; reinvest and revitalize traditional

neighborhoods; and explore partnerships with HOAs to ensure sustainability and viability of neighborhoods. They would keep the bullet point about holistic neighborhoods.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO asked where housing would fit.

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON said that it was in one of the bullet points, where the intention was not to delete it entirely but to change the focus.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART commented that this realignment would focus less on housing as a product and more on the neighborhood.

Innovation and Technology

MAYOR HARTKE said that the title of this area should be Sustainability and Technology but highlight innovation in other supporting text. Every area of the City already fosters and implements innovation.

MR. WILLE said additional text would be about embracing innovation in all aspects.

MAYOR HARTKE continued that current bullet points are still relevant, and we should add a point stating Chandler's goal to be a lead in water, energy, and infrastructure sustainability. As part of the action plan, internally invest in new technology, hardware, software, and infrastructure to enhance sustainability and workforce retention. Building on the Price Corridor brand and revisit strategies to help small business should move to Economic Vitality. Conduct a broad band fiber needs assessment across the city. This was done internally for City facilities, but we can secure better quality broadband for residents.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS commented that the name change is topical and fits better with the content.

MAYOR HARTKE said we are elevating innovation, not removing it from this area.

Mobility

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said they revised mobility to mean more than just physical mobility. A better title would be Connectivity. Communication and physical access would be a part of this.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said additional points would be fiber expansion can provide partnership and how the city can expand access for all. Expand internet access. Cybersecurity, virtual experiences, and community engagement.

MS. LANCE asked to expand on these subjects.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART explained that the goal is to provide equal access to events either physically or virtually.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS continued talking about micro transit options within the current budget. We would replace high tech with micro transit options in the text. Add city-to-city connections in the East Valley by identifying additional transit circuits that neighboring cities have. Add Electric Vehicle charging somewhere in the Strategic Initiative, under Sustainability.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART added that if we build the infrastructure for EV, that is a good movement forward, but it is not our responsibility to build the stations.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO said the infrastructure bill puts money to subsidize the work that private industry does.

MAYOR HARTKE said our job would be in permitting and communicating with other cities for integration.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO said we can study how new transportation technologies fit into connectivity

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said some of this may already be addressed in other groups like the East Valley Transportation Plan.

MR. BAILEY clarified that staff will transform recommendations into the Strategic Plan document itself. For tomorrow, there are three focus areas left to discuss if public safety becomes its own focus area.

Council consensus was that community safety should be its own focus area.

MR. BAILEY asked each councilmember to identify one focus area they would like to focus on for the next day. He said there was a lot today, we will meet and regroup tomorrow.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

Mayor

Approval Date of Minutes: March 20, 2023

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Special Meeting of the City Council of Chandler, Arizona, held on the 1st day of February 2023. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DATED this _____ day of March, 2023.

City Clerk