

Meeting Minutes

City Council Work Session

March 23, 2023 | 4:00 p.m.
Council Chambers Conference Room
88 E. Chicago St., Chandler, AZ



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kevin Hartke at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Council Attendance

Mayor Kevin Hartke
*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

*Councilmembers Encinas, Harris, and Ellis and attended telephonically.

Absent

Vice Mayor Matt Orlando - excused

Staff in Attendance

Matt Burdick, Communications and Public Affairs Director

Discussion

1. Presentation and Recommendations on the Proposed 2023-2025 Strategic Framework

MAYOR HARTKE called for a staff presentation.

JOSHUA WRIGHT, City Manager, introduced the discussion item, the retreat last month went well and resulted in this strategic plan draft. The strategic plan is embedded into the City of Chandler.

The executive team met together to discuss action plans. Once the document is complete, it will be formally adopted by Council.

MATT BURDICK, Communications and Public Affairs Director, presented the following presentation.

- Strategic Framework 2023-2025 City Council Work Session
- Vision and Brand
 - Our Vision: We are a world class city that provides an exceptional quality of life.
 - Our Brand: A safe, diverse, equitable and inclusive community that connects people, chooses innovation and inspires excellence.
- Strategic Policy Direction
 - Innovation is the lifeblood of our community. The introduction of new ideas and methods is rooted in Chandler's culture and heritage. This thread of innovation embodies how we connect, plan and serve our city to be a contemporary, financially responsible and safe place to live and work.
 - Six focus areas identified by the City Council are priorities for innovation and investment for the next two years.

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON mentioned that the innovation idea will run as a thread through the six focus areas

MR. BURDICK said yes, the theme of innovation will be included throughout the entire document.

MR. BURDICK continued the presentation.

- Community Safety
 - Chandler is recognized among the safest cities in the nation. Our fire and police departments are accredited and elite in their field. We ensure our community's safety with continued investment in people, systems and technology. Innovative partnerships extend our ability to address emerging community safety needs.
 - Ensuring community safety through:
 - Prevention initiatives and emergency response services that support a safe, vibrant and healthy city.
 - A proactive approach to maintaining and enhancing infrastructure and safety systems.
 - Programs and technology that enhance cybersecurity and criminal justice systems.
 - Investments in people, technology and outreach that build community trust in being a safe city for all.
 - Partnerships with service providers that sustainably address behavioral health and homelessness, recognizing the City's role as a facilitator and convener.

MAYOR HARTKE said that he was not originally sold on Community Safety as its own focus area, but this makes sense to stand on its own.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said that we can add something about constitutional and civil rights, being mindful with those things before moving forward with innovation, by balancing security and privacy with new developments in technology.

MAYOR HARTKE suggested adding a point on this topic.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS clarified that the verbiage was behavioral health not mental health.

MAYOR HARTKE said that behavioral health is meant to be an umbrella term.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS commented that behavioral health is a good use of the term.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS asked if substance abuse is covered by behavioral health.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS answered that substance abuse is covered by behavioral health, as it is part of the cause and effect of behavioral health.

MR. BURDICK continued the presentation.

- Connectivity
 - Connectivity – the ability to connect people, places and commerce through local, regional and virtual networks – is essential. Chandler is served by three major highways, a well-planned street and transit network, expanding bike and shared-use paths and a municipal airport that efficiently connects people and commerce. Chandler’s advanced communication systems enhance our ability to connect through technology and transportation systems.
 - Forward-thinking transportation and technology networks with:
 - Multi-modal, integrated options to access Chandler’s employment corridors, local destinations and connections with Valley cities.
 - Safe, attractive and well-managed roadways, paths and traffic systems connecting developments and neighborhoods.
 - Innovative micro-transit options integrated into regional systems to serve Chandler residents and visitors.
 - Fiber and wireless technology providers that quickly and reliably connect people and business.
 - Regional resources that maximize the ability to finance transportation projects.

MAYOR HARTKE asked about possibility for transportation routes while giving homage to historic Chandler railways.

MR. BURDICK said that could be included in the narrative section.

MAYOR HARTKE agreed.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said this encapsulates everything we are trying to accomplish with this focus area. There is a large focus on bicycles here, is that realistic with the presence of bicycling in our community.

MAYOR HARTKE said there is not that much emphasis on bicycling in these points.

MR. WRIGHT said that there was interest in bicycling in the 2019 Transportation Master Plan and Parks Master Plan, especially protected or off-road bike lanes. Most larger road projects there is a lot of federal grant money available to use.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said there was feedback received in the survey about interest in bicycling. Expanding train service in Arizona may involve Chandler in the future.

MAYOR HARTKE said the proposed commuter railway will go through Queen Creek and Gilbert. There is no connecting point in Chandler.

MR. BURDICK continued the presentation.

- Economic Vitality
 - Economic vitality includes the use of creative policies and marketing efforts that ensure Chandler remains a world-class community for residents, visitors and businesses. Our approach preserves the viability of employment corridors and positions properties for adaptive reuse, infill and redevelopment. Chandler offers a business focused environment for global industry leaders, exciting startups and entrepreneurs through every stage of development. Our business climate, talented workforce and lifestyle make Chandler a destination of choice for key industries.
 - Strategic economic development through:
 - Preservation of employment corridors for planned uses to serve as economic engines and create high-quality jobs.
 - A modern airport that supports business aviation and airpark area development.
 - Targeted use of adaptive reuse, infill, mixed-use and redevelopment tools and plans supporting the vitality of commercial centers and neighborhoods.
 - High development standards incorporating innovative aesthetics and amenities in our built environment.
 - A culture of creativity, business-friendliness and problem solving to address customer needs.

- Partnerships with higher education and workforce development programs that create a talent pipeline for key industries.
- Partnerships to support entrepreneurs, startups and small business.
- Marketing and illustrating Chandler's brand as a destination for innovative people and technologies.

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON said that this could go under connectivity as well: regional partnerships or leaderships are not mentioned.

MAYOR HARTKE supported mentioning our partnerships as we are a collaborative city.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said it is important to keep Chandler on the map globally.

MAYOR HARTKE asked if we should incorporate regional, national and global partnerships into the description. Many of our councilmembers are on national boards to bring something back to Chandler.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said that there are targeted industries we seek that are based in other countries, bringing awareness about Chandler would benefit us.

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON said that one is our partnerships, but marketing and illustrating our brand would both fit this sentiment.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS commented that we are a top 100 city in America, this is something that companies are looking for.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS asked about the culture of creativity bullet point.

MR. WRIGHT said that this was an attempt to incorporate the discussion of development process getting completed as quickly as possible.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said that Mr. Wright's terms of get to yes and customer service should be implemented.

MR. BURDICK continued.

- Neighborhoods
 - To sustain an exceptional quality of life for Chandler residents, preservation and enhancement of neighborhoods is paramount. These approaches ensure that all neighborhoods remain safe and vibrant. Engaging residents, developers and community stakeholders provide opportunities to achieve this goal, while maintaining each neighborhood's distinct character.
 - Unique and vibrant communities with:

- Amenities, infrastructure and services that support community safety and align with the needs of people in the surrounding neighborhood.
- A wholistic neighborhood improvement approach that connects City departments, non-profits, businesses, faith agencies and residents.
- Innovative programs that preserve neighborhood quality and streamline processes to approve housing options that meet residents' diverse needs.
- Partnerships with community leaders, homeowner associations and residents to promote reinvestment in the viability of neighborhoods.
- Activities that promote the community's spirit of volunteerism and pride in ownership.
- Quality of Life
 - Chandler's commitment to high standards has spanned generations of City leadership and resulted in the safe and beautiful community residents and businesses enjoy today. Our innovative practices maximize cost savings for taxpayers while enhancing the quality of city services. Our unparalleled quality of life includes a focus on arts, culture, learning and recreation. High-quality developments, parks and amenities shape the character of our neighborhoods and commercial centers.
 - Providing an exceptional quality of life through:
 - Parks and open spaces with amenities and activities that cater to the needs of the surrounding area.
 - Activities and entertainment that capitalize on Chandler's culture, unique history and captivating arts and music scene.
 - Partnerships, volunteerism and consistent processes that foster recreational and cultural activities relevant to all residents.
 - Unique amenities and experiences that attract people to Chandler.
 - Cultivation of a community and municipal organization that values diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Sustainability and Technology
 - Chandler's high-tech industries, businesses and talented workforce drive the local economy. We recognize the importance of infrastructure, water and streamlined city services that support key industries engaged in the development of current and future technologies. The pursuit of sustainable and technological infrastructure and services advance our ability to meet the unique needs of the community and equip our empowered, talented workforce to serve.
 - Embrace sustainable and global technology advancements by:
 - Leading in the sustainability of water infrastructure and conservation.
 - Partnering with energy and technology providers to enhance reliability, redundancy and coverage for the community.
 - Pursuing smart energy solutions that lower the cost of services and improve environmental resiliency.

- Investing in people, services and technology to streamline internal processes, enhance customer service and support a 21st century workforce.
- Taking calculated risks to implement innovative ideas that promote efficiency, productivity and connectivity.

MAYOR HARTKE added that there should be more homage to green spaces or trees, perhaps as a smart energy solution.

MR. WRIGHT said we can fit that in.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said that community-based sustainability is a great thing to implement, but there must be more than just a commitment. Language around cost-savings to implement new technology can be added, improved efficiency and savings explain investments.

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON asked if that would limit our ability to do pilot programs.

MAYOR HARTKE said it is hard to value some aspects of sustainability.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said this should not discourage trying new things within reason.

MAYOR HARTKE said that it was cost efficient to work with energy providers to work with solar. It was trackable with goals and steps to realize profits.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said the community should know we are being fiscally responsible in developing innovative solutions in the city.

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON suggested that this can be incorporated as an emphasis rather than a limit or requirement.

MAYOR HARTKE added that we are willing to explore new technologies and pilot programs, how can we incorporate that into our vision.

MR. BURDICK said it is incorporated but can be included more specifically.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS suggested that using vocabulary like engage and implement gives an active feel to the idea.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said that we need to take a deeper look into what we do for sustainability, for example, the details on tree planting. We fund tree planting; how can we incorporate value in our planting.

MAYOR HARTKE said that another city handed out trees at a state of the city.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said combining technology and innovation in sustainability is all about this.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS mentioned a point about preserving Chandler's history.

MAYOR HARTKE asked if this would be Quality of Life.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS explained that is more about sustainability and preserving these areas, like our historically designated areas.

MAYOR HARTKE asked if there has been an emphasis on this before.

MR. BURDICK said that our unique history is only mentioned as an activity and entertainment in Quality of Life.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS requested adding another bullet about this.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS said that it felt like there was a strong emphasis on technology, with sustainability in the background. Prioritizing them equally is important, there should be a balance in the description.

MR. WRIGHT continued the presentation.

- Next Steps
 - Produce Strategic Framework Booklet and Webpage
 - Adoption of the Strategic Framework 2023-2025
 - Develop Executive Team Action Plan to support Strategic Framework and review with Council
 - Begin executing, tracking and reporting on plan

MAYOR HARTKE said we are better and smarter together; this document will reflect all of Council's input. Mayor Hartke added there have been many questions about Chandler's timeline in our history, this can be updated.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS asked if this new plan is fitting our brand of emphasizing the Chandler story.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said that this does tell our story. This is a way to continue to see Chandler grow and be prosperous. Our budget will follow these priorities to move our city forward.

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON said that this captured a list rather than a storytelling aspect which may be better presented in the book format.

MR. BURDICK explained that there will be more storytelling elements included in print books. A letter from the Mayor, images, narratives and graphic elements will help put this together. This presentation is about the text of the document.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said Chandler has a wonderful story, this sets the direction in the policy of how to accomplish that. We did set our core competencies of what we are moving forward with, we can continue telling our story elsewhere.

MAYOR HARTKE said the goal of council retreats was to bring council goals together and set where we think the city should go in defining our goals and what we can do as an organization. This has elements of storytelling, but this process is not meant to tell the full story. This is meant to share the vision and direction from council.

MR. BURDICK said the printed document as a medium is limited. Website elements can incorporate a wider variety of mediums. The document can be resigned, but there will be more opportunities on the website.

MAYOR HARTKE said there is some room to incorporate storytelling in the print document, but it should not become a large storytelling document.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS explained that at the retreat, the focus was on innovation and what that means and how we define it. Councilmember Encinas asked if we have met that as a marketing point for Chandler.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS shared that the strategic framework is seen as a guideline to lead staff in the direction that council desires to lead Chandler forward rather than a storytelling document.

MR. BURDICK added that there will be additional elements incorporated later to further define what innovation means to us and tie in focus areas to the vision for the community. There will be a marketing element of promoting our strategic framework to the community.

MAYOR HARTKE said that we have used this as a tool to be able to tell Chandler's story. We weave innovation into our story.

MR. BURDICK said further refinements will create a final document for approval. This information will be made into a presentation roadshow, a promotional piece to be used in speaking opportunities. This will allow councilmembers to incorporate their own context to this content.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

ATTEST: _____

City Clerk

Mayor

Approval Date of Minutes: April 13, 2023

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Work Session of the City Council of Chandler, Arizona, held on the 23rd day of March 2023. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DATED this _____ day of April, 2023.

City Clerk