

Meeting Minutes

City Council Work Session

June 26, 2025 | 4:30 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 4:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Council Attendance

Mayor Kevin Hartke
Vice Mayor Christine Ellis
Councilmember Angel Encinas
Councilmember Jane Poston
Councilmember Matt Orlando
Councilmember OD Harris
Councilmember Jennifer Hawkins

Appointee Attendance

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

Staff in Attendance

Tadd Wille, Assistant City Manager
Dawn Lang, Deputy City Manager / Chief Financial Officer
Andy Bass, Deputy City Manager
Alexis Apodaca, Mayor & Council Public Affairs Senior Manager
Matt Burdick, Communications & Public Affairs Director
Ryan Peters, Strategic Initiatives Director

Discussion

1. Presentation and Discussion of the 2025-2027 Strategic Framework Update and Proposed Action Items

MAYOR HARTKE called for a staff presentation.

JOSHUA WRIGHT, City Manager, introduced the discussion item. The Strategic Framework is revisited every two years to discuss new information and new objectives and goals. Council met in a retreat at the end of April and gave staff direction. After discussion with the executive leadership team, department heads, and mostly recently, members of boards and commissions, staff would like some feedback on this draft before it comes to Council for adoption.

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

- City Council Work Session: Strategic Framework 2025-2027
- Strategic Framework Update
 - The strategic framework outlines the City Council policy vision for innovation and investment through 2027.
 - Council reaffirmed its commitment for the current six focus areas:
 - Community Safety
 - Connectivity
 - Economic Vitality
 - Neighborhoods
 - Quality of Life
 - Sustainability & Technology
- Strategic Framework Update Process
 - City Council Strategic Framework Retreat April 29
 - Board and Commission Strategic Framework Meeting May 14
 - Executive Leadership Team Strategic Framework Meeting June 6
 - 2025-2027 Strategic Framework Review Work Session June 26
- Common Themes
 - Emphasis on incorporating the following into the framework's implementation through 2027:
 - Future Focus
 - Next Big Things for Planning and Investment
 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
 - Focus on Redevelopment
 - Streamline Development
 - Quality of Life
 - Strategic Framework 2025-2027 Influences:
 - General Plan Update
 - Community Demographics and Housing
 - Economy and Job Market
 - City Revenues and Bond Election

MAYOR HARTKE commented that potential updates to the City Charter may go under the Streamline Development bullet point.

MR. BURDICK said he had not called out the City Charter specifically, but other documents are mentioned.

MAYOR HARTKE commented it could be an opportunity to streamline the City Charter.

MR. BURDICK continued the presentation.

- 2025-2027 Strategic Framework
 - 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.
 - Future Focus Theme
 - The Strategic Framework is our playbook to ensure we are a step ahead, investing wisely and keeping our community's future in focus.
- Community Safety
 - Ensuring community safety through:
 - Community-based policing and engagement through a presence in neighborhoods and schools
 - The care provided by a municipal ambulance service and accredited paramedic training program.
 - The enhanced capabilities for crime prevention and investigation enabled by the development of a Police Forensic Sciences facility.
 - Technology that advances community safety and efficiency of public safety resources.
 - The attraction and retention of the next generation of our public safety workforce.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said these items were appropriate and noted the inclusion of new upcoming projects such as the ambulance service.

MR. BURDICK agreed and added the fact that Chandler maintains an accredited paramedic training program which puts the city in a unique position. After training, individuals can have a pathway to work in Chandler and serve the community, which is a great recruiting advantage.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS asked if firefighters are cross trained in EMT.

MR. WRIGHT said there will be a paramedic onboard every ambulance once fully transitioned, and existing staff will be used for that, then additional positions will be recruited.

MR. BURDICK added for the police forensic facility, one thing to note is the increased capacity to perform forensic tests that will help in the investigative process.

MR. BURDICK continued the presentation.

- Connectivity
 - Forward thinking transportation and technology networks with:
 - Safe, attractive, and well-maintained roadways, bike paths and transportation infrastructure.
 - Integrated micro-transit services with other forms of mobility that connect people with local destinations.
 - Advanced fiber and wireless technology networks that connect people and businesses.
 - Investments in transportation infrastructure that supports commerce and the viability of neighborhoods.
 - Communication for residents that outlines upcoming roadway projects and neighborhood improvements.

MAYOR HARTKE requested to revise the idea of communication for residents that outlines upcoming roadway and neighborhood improvements.

MR. BURDICK asked if he meant from a project coordination perspective.

MAYOR HARTKE specified that creating a goal to better communicate projects with residents. Residents share frustration with the various work being done in Chandler, whether it is a city project or not.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO asked if the GIS system for roadway and neighborhood projects is available and publicly accessible.

MR. WRIGHT said yes, the system is up and running. It may be difficult for residents to navigate to it on the city's webpage. A City Council subcommittee is scheduled to discuss revising policies or notifications. Successful communication comes from having multiple avenues of communication with residents.

MAYOR HARTKE commented anything the city can do to alleviate frustration around connectivity or travel would help.

MR. BURDICK continued the presentation.

- Economic Vitality
 - Strategic economic development through:
 - A future focus that preserves employment areas for business expansion, infill and redevelopment.
 - Proactive investment in utility infrastructure to support economic development opportunities.

- A modern airport that supports business aviation and job creation through airport area employment.
- Workforce development partnerships with higher education, trades and industries that keep Chandler's next generation of talent locally.
- Streamlined development processes that create a reputation for excellence in infill and redevelopment.
- Attraction of technology industries and mixed-use retail destinations.
- Downtown development that promotes economic activity and pedestrian traffic.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS asked about lighting and artwork in downtown Chandler for pedestrian safety and walkability. He also commented about the importance of a safe pedestrian crossing area on Boston Street.

COUNCILMEMBER POSTON added that downtown Chandler could be considered an arts and culture hub to incorporate more artwork outside of murals and utility boxes.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS agreed.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO asked about how to measure or investigate resources, investments, or capitalization. The city cannot complete all the areas discussed, but through partnering with outside groups, its goals could be accomplished in creative and fiscally responsible ways. He suggested that the city be more proactive in seeking private partnerships and other opportunities to advance projects.

MAYOR HARTKE brought up a grant that Chandler recently received from the State of Arizona for roadway infrastructure improvements on Chandler Boulevard between Dobson Road and Chandler Fashion Center.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO clarified that he would like to see partnerships develop in various industries, such as banking or finance.

MR. BURDICK said he would follow up with staff.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS asked when construction on Dr. A. J. Chandler Park is expected.

MR. BURDICK said the project is slated to begin in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2025-26.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS commented that this project and some others are related, such as a previous suggestion regarding digital signage on Boston Street and Arizona Avenue. The strategy of addressing economic vitality focus areas can be similar and have opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

MR. BURDICK continued the presentation.

- Neighborhoods
 - Unique and vibrant communities with:
 - Destinations for people to live with an emphasis on diverse housing products for home ownership.
 - Designated housing corridors for infill and development projects that create housing, employment and retail uses.
 - Land trusts that create affordable and workforce housing options.
 - Projects that promote reinvestment in traditional neighborhoods and maintenance of city infrastructure and parks.
 - Innovative programs that promote neighborhood engagement.
 - Advocacy that seeks to protect neighborhoods from state legislative impacts and commercial blight.

VICE MAYOR ELLIS spoke about housing corridors and mentioned that the industries of education and public safety should be considered in establishing corridors for workforce housing.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS added comments about maintaining clean and healthy neighborhoods, specifically referring to alleyway cleanup and addressing concerns about neighborhood dumping. Partnering with the community will be essential in completing this goal.

MR. BURDICK agreed and said that it is a neighborhood engagement opportunity.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO spoke about developing a partnership with schools to enhance the neighborhoods.

MAYOR HARTKE commented that it was similar to the partnership with schools in the Galveston neighborhood.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO agreed and suggested developing this partnership further with other neighborhoods.

MR. WRIGHT said opportunities were identified at other sites such as Pueblo Villejo and Hartford. However, the school district bond question for rebuilding the Hartford school site did not pass.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said this connects to addressing blight, safety, and security mentioned under this category.

MAYOR HARTKE asked him what he would add to the category in order to address his point.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said more focus on the school district to make that partnership more prominent.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS asked for an example of this partnership.

MAYOR HARTKE said the partnership at Galveston Elementary is an example, the city and school district collaborated.

MR. WRIGHT said the city and school district collaborated on project planning so neighborhoods saw one cohesive plan occurring at the same time. Schools were also used the schools as an effective way to get in contact with residents.

COUNCILMEMBER ENCINAS confirmed that this would be the city being proactive in developing and maintaining partnerships with school sites.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO mentioned workforce development in partnership with the school districts, existing higher education, and the Chandler Chamber of Commerce.

VICE MAYOR ELLIS noted that many departments, such as Public Works and Utilities, were involved in this collaboration.

MR. WRIGHT said Galveston was an example of integrated planning within the city's organization and with external partners. Multiple individual projects were all completed at the same time, under one general contract with multiple guaranteed maximum price contracts. The model was successful, but it took a lot of synchronizing funds and schedules.

VICE MAYOR ELLIS asked if there were any private funds involved in the project.

MR. WRIGHT said a grant from the County Flood Control District paid for a significant portion of the drainage work. ARPA and CDBG funds also contributed.

MR. BURDICK continued the presentation.

- Quality of Life
 - Providing an exceptional quality of life through:
 - Parks, walkable spaces and recreational amenities that cater to community needs.
 - Recreational and social spaces that enable people to converse and connect in the community.
 - Partnerships and permit processes that bolster special events managed by community members.
 - Activities and programs that capitalize on Chandler's culture, unique history, educational excellence and captivating artistic and musical talent.

- A community and municipal organization that showcases its cultural heritage and values diversity, equity and inclusion.

VICE MAYOR ELLIS asked what departments would work on the special events process.

MR. BURDICK said it is to be determined, the four departments that have the most special events would be DEI, Neighborhood Resources, Community Services, and Cultural Development.

MR. WRIGHT clarified that one change made was collapsing the department's handling the special events permitting process, which is now handled through Cultural Development. Organizational change with employee reorganization was completed in order to achieve this. Surface level efficiency improvements have been completed, but more work is needed from the ground up to develop a fluid process to better serve the customer.

COUNCILMEMBER HARRIS said he would rephrase it to be a streamlined permit process. This would increase community engagement.

MR. BURDICK continued the presentation.

- Sustainability and Technology
 - Embrace sustainable and technology advancements through:
 - Investments in water resources and infrastructure.
 - Advocacy with energy and technology providers to enhance reliability and service capacity in Chandler.
 - A sustainable building program for private sector development that produces energy efficiency and cost savings.
 - Advanced technology and artificial intelligence use that streamlines internal processes, ensures cybersecurity and promotes service delivery.
 - Energy solutions that produce resiliency and lower cost of services.

COUNCILMEMBER HAWKINS asked about the bullet reading "A sustainable building program for private sector development that produces energy efficiency and cost savings."

MR. BURDICK explained there was conversation among previous Councils for the green building program, encouraging sustainability among private sector developments.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO said previously, sustainable building was incentivized which helped cost savings in the long term. There were certain guidelines a developer had to meet in order to receive incentives.

MR. BURDICK said the goal would be to modernize and reemphasize this program especially for redevelopment and infill projects.

MAYOR HARTKE added a point about energy efficiency improvements for community members.

MR. BURDICK clarified the idea as being similar to existing water conservation grants for residential properties.

MAYOR HARTKE said yes, making improvements to insulation, sealants, and air conditioning to improve energy efficiency, especially in older homes or for community members who cannot afford it.

COUNCILMEMBER ORLANDO brought up rebate programs through energy providers and other community partners.

MAYOR HARTKE mentioned trees as a point for sustainability and to mitigate the heat island effect. The tree giveaway for Arbor Day is a great community event, there is availability for great partnerships.

MR. BURDICK continued the presentation.

- Discussion and Comments
 - Next Steps:
 - Revise based on City Council comments
 - Prepare Strategic Framework for City Council Adoption at a future meeting
 - Implementation of Strategic Framework

MAYOR HARTKE asked about a timeline for completion.

MR. WRIGHT said around July or August is the expected timeline.

MR. BURDICK said once the document is approved, it will be translated into different languages.

MR. WRIGHT said the departments would then work together to schedule informational events for Mayor and Council to share this information with boards and commissions, community organizations, and other outside groups.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

Mayor

Approval Date of Minutes: July 14, 2025

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 26th day of June 2025. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DATED this _____ day of July, 2025.

City Clerk