

**CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL WORK SESSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Special Work Session on Tuesday, May 18, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Mark Kuzma
Councilmember Ryan Heineman – attended remotely
Councilmember Chelsea Howell
Councilmember Debra Musgrove
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Dan Specht
Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Finance Director Diana Lund
Fire Chief Matt Kohner
Police Chief Jeff Katers
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher
Deputy City Administrator Timothy Gladhill
City Engineer Bruce Westby

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kuzma called the City Council Special Work Session to order at 6:05 p.m.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Annual Planning Session

City Administrator Ulrich reviewed the intent of the planning session to identify common goals and identify the framework for the plan.

Each person present identified one accomplishment from the past year they are proud of and one thing they would like to accomplish for the future or their goal for tonight.

City Administrator Ulrich acknowledged and appreciated the different points of view that were brought to that exercise. He read through the organizational values, vision, mission, and objectives from the Strategic Plan. He confirmed agreement with those items. It was noted that the demographic numbers of the City should be updated with the most recent data from the census.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill led the group in a planning exercise to identify strengths and weaknesses.

The group took a short ten-minute break.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill explained how the different strengths and weaknesses were clustered together and reviewed some of the common themes within each category. He referenced an email that was sent out to the Council earlier today which mirrors the Strategic Plan with the intent of identifying items that need further discussion, should be modified, or removed. He explained the different levels of the goals, strategies and actions of the Strategic Plan and the related timeframe in which that should cover. He reviewed the first high level strategy and confirmed the consensus of the Council to keep that statement as written and add the two action items as proposed by staff.

There was discussion towards the strategy related to the pavement management program. Some members felt that item has been accomplished and should be removed, some members felt that a continued discussion should occur related to the use of franchise fees and the language should be changed to continue discussion on pavement management program funding, and some believed that the language should be changed to evaluate the pavement management program. There was not a consensus reached and it was agreed that the Council would come back to this item later in the meeting.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill moved to the next action, suggesting additional language to identify a new business practice within the organization. He noted that the previous year that focused on the implementation of the fire duty crew. He confirmed the consensus of the Council that this item could be removed as it was already covered by the new action items added during the earlier discussion. He confirmed the consensus of the Council to add an action item related to reviewing social media programs. He confirmed the consensus of the Council to leave the economic development strategy and add an action item to continue to look for opportunities to increase the library of shovel ready sites for development. He moved to the action item related to business retention and confirmed the consensus of the Council to keep that item as written. He reviewed a potential action item that could be added to complete a comprehensive City Code audit and update and confirmed the consensus of the Council to add that item. He confirmed the consensus to retain a high-level strategy to maintain a positive image for residential neighborhoods and business corridors. He confirmed the consensus of the Council to move the streetscape plan to the parking lot list at the end of the plan.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill moved to the next strategy related to the development master plan for The COR. It was the consensus of the Council to remove the multi-family housing policy language and simply leave the downtown COR master plan discussion language within that item. He moved to the multi-family property management program strategy and asked for input from the Council.

Police Chief Katers provided additional details on the difference between the Crime Free Prevention Program and the Multi-Family Property Management Program.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill confirmed the consensus of the Council to leave that item in the plan. He confirmed the consensus of the Council to add a strategy related to creating volunteer

opportunities to engage the community. He reviewed the other action items related to community engagement and noted that staff suggests because those are more of everyday duties and processes, those items should be considered as part of the organizational culture rather than listing them in multiple places. The Council agreed. He confirmed the consensus of the Council to keep the item related to approving safety and mobility of the transportation corridors.

City Engineer Westby stated that no traction has been gained with the County related to the CR 5 corridor. He confirmed that the item has been included on the plan for more than one year. He explained that as development proposals come forward, they include a portion of improvement to CR 5 as needed to support the development. He explained that the study looks at the corridor as a whole to project needs for the future and development projects impact how long the study will be accurate for the corridor, therefore it is important to get the timing right for when the study is done. He stated that the County offered to assist with the study but noted that the County has other priorities at this time as well, including Highway 10.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that the study will take into account the future land use. He noted that a consultant study would use some staff time and hoped that the County could cost share that study.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill confirmed the consensus of the Council to keep the CR 5 corridor within the plan. He stated that staff would suggest moving the Highway 47 study to the parking lot and confirmed the consensus of the Council. He provided a recommendation for a new strategy to enhance the priority street light plan in order to improve lighting intersections and promote pedestrian safety. He moved to the next strategy related to a connected community and additional background information was provided with the intent behind that strategy. He stated that perhaps the overarching strategy would be to divide that into two categories, the first on the park land and connectivity and the second being related to recreational programming. He also confirmed consensus of the Council to have a strategy to complete parks capital maintenance plan for existing parks. He referenced the customer service process improvement strategy and confirmed consensus to move that under organizational culture. He noted an additional action that could be added to review existing metrics and the system to track customer/resident interaction, but it was the consensus of the Council to explore an interactive request feature under the website strategy. He moved to the next strategy related to enhance sustainability and efficiency and the Council direction was to change enhance to spotlight. He reviewed an additional action item related to solar, electric charging stations and other opportunities but the Council did not support adding that action item. He confirmed the consensus to keep the water treatment plant action item within the plan. It was also confirmed that the new public works campus item can be removed as that is already in progress.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill asked if there would be an appetite to setting aside City dollars for open space preservation. He provided additional details on how Andover chose to preserve open space areas through the use of levied dollars for that purpose. Staff provided additional details on how the land would be protected and available for public enjoyment. It was the consensus of the Council to explore the concept further.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill noted that the next items related to the communications plan and confirmed the consensus to keep the overarching strategy to strengthen and enhance the overall brand of the City along with the related action items. He confirmed consensus to keep the high-level strategy related to organizational morale and proposed action item related to a review of the telecommunications policy. He stated that staff would also suggest additional staff events as an action item to continue to strengthen the relationship between staff and the Council. The Council agreed to add the action item. He referenced the strategy to strive to reflect demographics in the community and confirmed agreement to add that item to the culture section of the plan.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed the suggested development fee impact study, noting that could remain in the parking lot and move forward when time permits or when appropriate. The Council agreed to place that on the parking lot list and perhaps look to delve into that next year. He reviewed the parking lot item related to an organizational staffing plan that deals with high organizational morale.

Administrative Services Director Lasher provided additional background on that item. She stated that she could attempt to complete a review internally or the Council could choose to hire a consultant to complete that action. She commented that she feels that each department is aware of their needs for staffing.

City Administrator Ulrich provided additional details on the interim approach that the City has taken with the departments reviewing their needs and presenting staffing requests in a manner to show the staffing that is needed to meet certain service metrics. He stated that if that method continues to be used, the Council should take into account that each department best knows what their staffing needs would be to address the items within the Strategic Plan.

Mayor Kuzma commented that sometimes the items within the Strategic Plan place additional burden on staff and therefore the Council needs to consider that when prioritizing goals and strategies in addition to the level of service that is able to be provided by City staff.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill confirmed the consensus of the Council to remove that staffing plan study from the plan and continue to follow the interim process to bring staffing requests forward through the budgeting discussions.

Each member present shared something memorable they will take away from the planning session tonight.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The Special Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich

City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
Deputy City Clerk

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.