



CITY OF WESTMINSTER, SC

2016-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN

SEPTEMBER 17, 2016

ADDENDUM FROM JANUARY 26, 2017 SESSION

Janet E. Danforth, CPF, FACILITATOR
Robert L. Moir, CPF, FACILITATOR



Tel. 864-324-2991
Email: jdanford@facilitator4hire.com

City of Westminster, SC Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

Strategic Planning Sponsor Brian Ramey, Mayor

Overview

The City Council met on Saturday September 17, 2016 at the Blue Ridge Electric Coop offices to conduct Strategic Planning for 2016-2021. The participants decided to complete Agenda Item H, Action Planning for Prioritized Strategies, at a later date when additional residents can be involved.

This document presents the results of the session as it occurred and was recorded by the group. Comments appearing in italic represent additions made by the documenter for clarity.

City Council Members & Staff Participants

Chris Carter
Derek Enderlin
Ronald Dodson
Yousef Mefleh
Susan Ramey

Charles Miller
Brian Ramey
Bill Brockington
Doug Williams

Session Purpose

To Prepare a Five-year Strategy Plan for the City of Westminster.

Session Agenda

- A. Welcome and Introduction to the Process for Achieving the Meeting Purpose
- B. Critical Assumptions
- C. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
- D. Key Issues
- E. High-level Goals/Mission Review
- F. Measurable Objectives (1 Yr – 5 Yr), Critical Success Factors & Barriers

- G. Strategies, Prioritized Strategies
- H. Action Plans
- I. Close

B. Critical Assumptions

The team began by identifying Critical Assumptions, those beliefs about probable future occurrences or events significant to the City, over which the City has little or no control. These assumptions can be internal or external.

Critical Assumptions – Positive	Critical Assumptions - Negative
• Comprehensive plan	• Electric rates high
• BMI plant... 25-30 new jobs	• Utility Director retires
• Population growth	• Water Director retires
• New businesses	• Services needed will increase**
• Clean up downtown	• Tax base declining
• New transformers + water meters complete	• Infrastructure repairs & upgrade
• Good people in the City	• Recreation needs will grow
• Need to expand city limits	• DHEC regulations increase re water
• Outdoor tourism increases	• Aging population needs**
	• Citizens' personal welfare, economic well-being
	• Uncertainty over future utility sales**
	• Limited ability to influence economic growth
	• Can we continue to provide what we are providing with the resources we have?
	• City growth needs to occur
	• Limited resources – revenue
	• Can't satisfy all citizens
	• Need more businesses (tax base)
	• Loss of volunteers
	• Cost of living increases

(*Asterisks indicate duplicate answers)

C. SWOT

The team was asked to conduct a SWOT Analysis. What follows is that SWOT analysis.

Strengths	Benefits
Recreation	Brings in people

Location	Tourism
People	Support
Fresh water	Revenue/Quality
Railroad	New business
Schools	Attracts young families/education
Available property	New homes
Clemson	Experts
Lakes	Tourism

Weaknesses	Impact
Commercial property tightly held by a few, poorly maintained	Not viable financially for new businesses to rent due to the condition
Reputation as high-cost utility provider	Some people will not choose us as a place to work or live
Substandard housing being occupied	Blighted condition in areas. Lack of proper utilities
Cost of utility repairs	Ties up resources
Parking	
Green space	
Attraction of downtown	

Opportunities	Benefits
University	Professional services, healthcare, potential new services
Industrial Park	Employment, new families
Lakes, National Forest	Tourism, hunting, fishing
Sanctuary Point	Tourism
Highway 11	Tourism, traffic flow
Stars, festivals, Long Creek	Tourism
Tri-County Tech	Industrial Park
Westminster Music Hall	Tourism, stars

Threats	Impacts
Pioneer	Loss of revenue
County Rec Center	Loss of Rec participation
County Fire Service	Cost will increase
Old water & sewer lines	Unknown cost

D. Key Issues

The group reviewed the Critical Assumptions and SWOT, and identified key issues, or “first things first” items that must be addressed. They then grouped the key issues into like groups with working titles for each group. The results are below.

Key Issues...Grouped

Group One...Reduce Cost of Power

- Power Rates
- High Utility Costs (Electric) Must be Lowered
- Utility Lower
- Power Cost
- Electric Rates Lowered
- Cost of Power
- Electric

Group Two...Administrative Issues

- 5/10 year vehicle Replacement Plan
- Software
- Employee Benefits/Salaries
- Training

Group Three...Downtown

- Clean Up Downtown
- Code Enforcement Against Blighted Commercial Buildings
- Downtown Buildings

Group Four... Economic Development

- Capital Plans
- Economic Development
- Businesses
- Need Businesses
- Major Attraction for Rec./Tourism
- Get People to Come
- Growth
- Growth Commercial/Residential

Group Five...Get More Money

- Continue Services
- Grants
- Lowering Budget

- Tax Revenue
- Repair Neglected Infrastructure
- Utility Repairs
- Budget Amount
- Method to Accomplish Major Infrastructure Needs
- Revenue

E. High-level Goals/Mission Review

The team reviewed the City's Mission Statement and were in consensus that the Mission is current and appropriate for the planning period.

Mission Statement

The City's Mission is to provide reliable, quality services, protect our citizens and property, improve the quality of life and promote development through managed growth.

High-level Goal Areas

The team came to consensus around the four high-level goal areas expressed in the Mission.

- A. Promote development through managed growth
- B. Provide reliable, quality services
- C. Improve the quality of life
- D. Protect our citizens and property

F. Measurable Objectives, Critical Success Factors and Barriers

The team identified sets of measurable objectives in support of each high-level goal area. Once the measurable objectives were completed, the team identified critical success factors, those things that must be in place in order for the set of measurable objectives to become reality. In addition, they identified the barriers that must be overcome in order for the measures to be achieved.

What follows are the four Goal Areas, their Measurable Objectives, Critical Success Factors and Barriers.

HIGH-LEVEL GOAL A							
PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH MANAGED GROWTH							
Measurable Objective	Baseline	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Issues
A1. Increase # of Businesses	3	3 new/ year	3	3	3	Full Downtown	Econ. Dev., Revenue, Clean up downtown
A2. Increase # of citizens	-1%	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%	
A3. Increase Owner-occupied	?	?	?	?	?	?	
Increase City Limits	0	Planning Commission Study Completed	Incentives in place	New Citizens	Ongoing	Ongoing	
CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS				BARRIERS			
Incentive Plan				Reputation			
Power rates lowered				Blight			

HIGH-LEVEL GOAL B							
PROVIDE RELIABLE QUALITY SERVICES							
Measurable Objective	Baseline	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Issues
B1. Have a City Property & Facilities Maintenance Crew w/skilled labor	0	Create	Hire position				Hire & create crew
B2. Decrease Budget (Controllable Expense)	?	5%decrease					More Rec \$\$ from County Lower dept. budgets
B3. Have a Motor Pool	Tools/equip. exist	Cost comparison	Create position				Lower cost for Maintenance, speedier repairs
B4. Increase employee training	?	Determine needs	Start implementing training	Cont'd	Invest in employee certifications		Employee pride=better work. Increase salary, quicker response to needs,
B5. Maintain a capital plan	0	Form savings plan or loan process	Purchase brush truck				Less maintenance costs
B6. Decrease Westminster power costs to \$.14/KWH	\$.17/KWH					\$.14/KWH	
CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS				BARRIERS			
Add one person/budget, salary base				Training, software utilization			
Job description for Facilities Manager, certifications				Limited revenue			
Increased revenue to fund							
Skills assessments							
Class/Comp study							
Work order system/ID areas of problems							
Grant research							

HIGH-LEVEL GOAL C IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE							
Measurable Objective	Baseline	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Issues
C1. Increase Adult Recreation		Investigate Video Equip. Bldg. Middle School	Maintain	Use	Use		
C2. Increase # of Ball Fields		+1	+2	+3	+4		
C3. Clemson study RR fill-in	Study	Input	Action				
CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS				BARRIERS			
Upgrade facility				\$\$			
Cost estimate				RR			
Citizen input							
Railroad agreement							

HIGH-LEVEL GOAL D PROTECT OUR CITIZENS & PROPERTY							
Measurable Objective	Baseline	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Issues
D1. Establish Property Maintenance Code	Min. code	Create rough draft	Create enforcement procedure	Adopt & Enforce			
D2. Maintain \$\$ from County for Fire Protection	\$285,000	Maintain funding	Ongoing				Go to County Council
D3. Maintain Police Protection & staffing/resources as needed	11 officers	Same	Same	12			Based on needs
CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS		BARRIERS					
Education/PR of public re codes		Bad experience with codes enforcement					
Adopt a code/staff position		Short time frame/fire protection					
Maintain funding		Disconnect between County fire establishment & elected County Council					
		More revenue					

G. Potential and Prioritized Strategies

Throughout the day the team members captured potential strategies that were grouped and prioritized at the end of the day. Owners were identified for several prioritized strategy groups. The owners will be responsible for identifying teams and leading action planning initiatives for their strategies.

As strategies are completed, additional strategies can be assigned owners, and action plans can be developed. Action planning templates are included below.

Strategies That Require Action Plans

Strategy: Incentive Program Developed for Encouraging New Business and New Home Builders

Owner: Brian

- Develop a plan for New Business
- Contact Barrett's about purchasing the white downtown building
- Develop Incentive Plan for New Home Construction
- Inventory the City's Available Residential and Commercial Property
- Create Advertising Booklet for the Available Residential and Commercial Property
- Meet with R.R. and Show Plan/Design
- Establish Grants for Business

Strategy: Convince County Council and Fire Departments to Continue Funding as is

Owner: Brian

Strategy: Develop Baseball/Recreational Complex to Bring in Tournaments

Owner: Bill

- Development Plans, Cost for New Ball Fields
- Need Investors for Possible Ball Fields
- Develop Plan for Use of Audio Visual Building
- New Gym-Increase Basketball Program and Multiple Additional Uses
- Utilize Recreational Resources

Additional Strategies

- Develop a Reliable Mechanism to Control Blight by Adopting a New Code and Staffing the Responsibility (Compliance gained by Consistent Enforcement)
- Amend Business License Ordinance to Allow Special Event Vendors Similar to Seneca Ordinance
- Make Downtown More Attractive/Appealing
- Advertise On-line, Television, Magazines, all of our Strengths
- Develop a Way to Replace Utility and H2O Direction

- Establish an Incremental Policy to Limit and Reduce Reliance on Utility Revenues to Fund Governmental Activities (Reduces Electric and Water)
- Reduce Budget Costs to Lower Power Rates
- Implement an Annexation Plan
- Establish a Budget to Fund a Facilities Maintenance Manager
- Adopt or Create Maintenance Code and Determine Enforcement Staff Position
- Meet With County Grant Writer and Establish Needs and Wishes for our City
- Meet With Clemson Students for Assistance
- Implement Proper Training of Staff on Proper Use of Software
- Establish the Proper Level of Service for Certain General Fund Activities Like Recreation

H. Action Plan Template

The following are action plan templates strategy owners can use to create action plans.

PRIORITIZED STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN			
Strategy Name			
OWNER			
Measureable objectives supported:			
When finished we will have:			
Total Time:		Total Cost:	
Action	Who	When	Cost

I. Close and Next Steps

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Session Documentation	Facilitator4hire	Sept. 22, 2016
Research Green St. closing and report findings	Derek	By Sept. 23
Update on Spinx	Derek	TBD

Addendum

Overview

The Council met on January 26, 2017 to conduct additional planning around strategies identified and prioritized in the first session Sept. 17, 2016. Present were Mayor Brian Ramey, Chris Carter, Derek Enderling, Susan Ramey, Charles Miller, Bill Brockington and Ronald Dodson. The session was facilitated by Janet Danforth and Bob Moir from Facilitator4hire Inc.

Session Purpose

- Review documentation from Sept. 17 planning
- Identify any changes since then that might impact this planning session
- Review the prioritized strategies and second-level strategies
- Conduct action planning on wholly-owned Council prioritized strategies

Agenda

- A. Welcome
- B. Review documentation
- C. Identify what has changed
- D. Review the prioritized and second-level strategies
- E. Re-prioritize strategies
- F. Identify wholly-owned Council strategies and those requiring a team to implement
- G. Close and Next Steps

What Has Changed...

The Council answered the question, "What has changed since September, 2016 that might impact our planning?" Their responses are as follows

- Power costs have decreased.
- Further division and lack of shared vision
- Competing priorities not being effectively sorted out [during Council meetings].
- The new County Council is more willing to assist Westminster.
- County will continue to fund the Fire Department.
- Several new businesses in the City. [11 in 2016].
- Contract with Lawn service
- No committees
- Property maintenance person hired
- Pending personal lawsuits

- Pioneer Water has contracted to build new plant
- No room in budget for additional expenses
- Public attitude about Westminster due to social media. County and state
- Poor reputation... "Can't work together."

Progress on Strategies From September 2016 Meeting

Upon review of the three strategies prioritized on Sept. 17, the following highlighted actions are in process.

Strategy: Incentive Program Developed for Encouraging New Business and New Home Builders

Owner: Brian

- Develop a plan for New Business *(Completed)*
- Contact Barrett's about purchasing the white downtown building
- Develop Incentive Plan for New Home Construction *(Completed)*
- Inventory the City's Available Residential and Commercial Property *(Completed)*
- Create Advertising Booklet for the Available Residential and Commercial Property
- Meet with R.R. and Show Plan/Design
- Establish Grants for Business *(Meeting in February with Destination Oconee to finalize...)*

Strategy: Convince County Council and Fire Departments to Continue Funding as is (COMPLETED SUCCESSFULLY!)

Owner: Brian

Strategy: Develop Baseball/Recreational Complex to Bring in Tournaments

Owner: Bill

(NO ACTION TAKEN...REQUIRES ADDITIONAL RESOURCES)

New Strategies Added/Re-prioritized**

The Council, upon identifying what has changed since September, 2016, added five more strategies, listed below. They then reviewed all identified strategies and re-prioritized the last two for which to develop action-plans. The action plans with owners and timelines follow.

- Implement a PR campaign to improve public attitudes about Westminster
- Make downtown more attractive
- Find more revenue

Re-prioritized Strategies

- **Develop a Commercial Property Maintenance Plan**
 - Adopt or create maintenance code and determine enforcement and staff position
 - Establish an ongoing effort to abate the most prominent nuisances
 - Develop a reliable mechanism to control blight by adopting a new code, staffing the responsibility.
 - Gain compliance by consistent reinforcement

- **Develop a plan to determine the proper level of General Fund services to citizens and all departments, [primarily Recreation, Fire and Police]**

Action Plans For New/Re-prioritized Strategies

Upon reviewing all the strategies identified in both sessions, the following two strategies were prioritized for action planning. The Council identified those measurable objectives which would be positively impacted by implementation of these plans.

PRIORITIZED STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN			
Strategy Name: Develop a Commercial Property Maintenance Plan			
OWNER: BILL B.			
Measureable objectives supported: A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4, B-6, B-2, D-1			
When finished we will have: A cleaner city, increased property values, a way to manage a standard ordinance			
Total Time:		Total Cost:	
Action	Who	When	Cost
Share Georgetown template with Council	Chris	Feb.	
Identify grants for property owners	Econ. Dev., Brian, Chris	By March	
Council studies template and identifies revisions to modify for Westminster	Workshop/Council	Mid-March	
Compare our draft to Seneca & Walhalla	Derek	March	
Determine # of days, fines and level of enforcement	Workshop/Council	Mid-March	
Finalize the plan and introduce it with PR campaign/media prior to public meeting	??	May	
Commit as a Council to back each other	Council	Ongoing	
Find a way to implement and staff the plan	Council	May3	

PRIORITIZED STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN			
Strategy Name Develop a plan to determine the proper level of General Fund services to citizens and all departments, [Primarily Recreation, Fire and Police]			
OWNER SUSAN RAMEY			
Measureable objectives supported: B-2, B-5, B-6, D-1			
When finished we will have: A sound plan & feel for our cost per service as compared to other cities			
Total Time:		Total Cost:	
Action	Who	When	Cost
Identify all General Fund services	Chris	Spring, 2017	
Identify the costs of each service (online research)	Chris	Spring, 2017	
Gather data & compare ourselves to Walhalla & Seneca (Ex. Per capita, per \$1000 of property evaluation) for each service, Rec, Fire, Police	Chris	?	
Determine impact of limiting service	Council	??	
Decide on budget cuts	Council	??	
Conduct Implications Wheel on budget decisions	Council, F4hire	??	
Finalize budget decisions	Council	??	

Close and Next Steps

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Update the document with tonight's inputs (Addendum)	Facilitator4hire	Monday, January 30, 2017