



City Council Memorandum

To: Mayor Fasbender & City Councilmembers
From: City Administrator Dan Wietecha
Date: February 21, 2023
Item: Strategic Priorities

Council Action Requested:

Select an overall approach for the next round of strategic planning. Based on that, I will bring 1-2 specific proposals to an upcoming meeting.

Background Information:

Over the last year-plus, we have used a set of Strategic Initiatives as agreed priorities in order to maintain focus and progress, drive accomplishment, and ensure regular tracking and reporting.

When the City Council approved the Strategic Initiatives in September 2021, they were expected as a guide for the next year to year-and-half. As a matter of practical effect, we are wrapping up that cycle and should begin planning the priorities of the next cycle. As a matter of timing, this matches well with the November election and two new Councilmembers in January.

In January 2023, the City Council had general consensus that we should develop an updated set of Strategic Initiatives this spring. The Council had several recommendations: not meeting by Zoom, preferring a day-long retreat, and keeping “down time” brief if the work is done over a series of meetings.

Since then, I have discussed options with several consultants that the City has done some work in the past. These provide a range of approaches to the Strategic Initiatives. As outlined, in the attached “Options for Approaching Strategic Planning,” the approach may be project-focused, comprehensive, or some blend in-between.

I believe the main questions are 1) What or how much does the City Council want to get out of the process? and 2) How much time are the City Council and staff able to invest in the process?

In the meantime, the Management Team has developed a “Ninety Day World” action plan to focus on key priorities and reporting over the next three months. This will help avoid a gap

between the City Council's two cycles, identify the degree of operational detail for initiatives, and ensure that all departments are working toward and reporting priorities.

Financial Impact:

Undetermined

Committee Discussion:

City Council discussion 1/3/2023

Attachment:

Options for Approaching Strategic Planning

Options for Approaching Strategic Priorities

	<u>In House</u>	<u>Project Focused</u>	<u>Blended</u>	<u>Comprehensive</u>
Description:	Sessions facilitated by City staff, likely myself. Expect this approach would be "Project Focused."	Outside facilitator with approach that brainstorms potential projects and key issues then narrows to a manageable list of priorities for next 1-3 years.	Outside facilitator with approach in between Project Focused and Comprehensive. For example, identifying what makes Hastings distinctive instead of going through a mission/vision exercise.	Outside facilitator with multi step approach including mission/vision and SWOT analysis to identify priorities across several timeframes (1-4, 5-9, and 10+ years).
Pros:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little/no direct budget impact. • Staff more familiar with City and topics than an outside facilitator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate quicker process than other options. • Priorities will be highly implementable and readily measured. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to have the "best of both worlds." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified priorities may have greater buy-in than in other options. • May include listening sessions for community input. • May include governance and team building exercise.
Cons:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited staff bandwidth. • Limited capacity to both facilitate and participate in the retreat. • Philosophical question of overstepping City Administrator's role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator not budgeted, but likely less cost than other options. • May be viewed more as goal setting than as strategic planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator not budgeted. • People may be dissatisfied with a "compromise" approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator not budgeted. • Takes longer than other options, potentially multiple meetings.