

Salinas City Council Strategic Planning Session
Salinas Community Center – 940 N. Main Street, Salinas
Supplemental Meeting Minutes
January 25, 2020

Present:

Councilmember Tony Barrera
Councilmember Christie Cromeenes
Councilmember Scott Davis
Councilmember Gloria De La Rosa
Councilmember Steve McShane – *left the meeting at 9:25 a.m.*
Councilmember John “Tony” Villegas
Mayor Joe Gunter

Also Present:

Ray E. Corpuz, Jr., City Manager
Jim Pia, Assistant City Manager
Christopher A. Callihan, City Attorney
Patricia M. Barajas, City Clerk

Facilitator: Brigid McGrath Massie

WELCOME

Meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. Mayor Gunter welcomed everyone to the Strategic Planning Session and introduced the facilitator Brigid McGrath Massie.

RETREAT RULES

The City Council established the rules for the day. Mrs. McGrath Massie requested the City Council “Speak for Self” throughout the day as a way of taking ownership of their own thoughts and opinions.

OBJECTIVE

Identify 3-4 goals that are achievable over the course of 3 years (2020-2023).

Listed items that are of most importance to each Councilmember

- To receive public comment at the beginning of the meeting(s)
- To have clear vision for City’s immediate future
- Develop S.M.A.R.T. Goals
- Provide clear direction to staff for information directed to Council
- Create a sense of team working positively for all Salinas
- Present for the public, to learn accomplishments and set goals as a team
- Develop goals that can be completed in 2 years

WHAT DO WE HAVE – WHAT DO WE WANT?

Accomplishments

Reviewed 2016-2019 Quiz of Significant Achievements

- The Strategic Plans and various plans adopted by the City are focused. Work is ongoing thereby creating success stories for the City
- City's communication of its successes and dissemination of information needs to be strengthened
- There is significant work being done throughout the City and not district specific

Collaborative Vision Statement Creation

Vision statements must address all five areas of sustainability. Councilmembers crafted individual vision statements.

- "Salinas celebrates a safe, vibrant and affordable City that embraces sustainable planning, healthy families, and opportunities for all residents"
- "Statement No. 3 – with emphasis on safety, family oriented, recreational opportunities"
- "Salinas will be a community that respects all people, be prosperous, provide meaningful jobs, safe livable neighborhoods, and an array of entertainment in arts, recreation and cultural events"
- "Statement No. 3 - plus Salinas will be a community that respects all people"
- "Inclusion, safe, clean, affordable City, prosperous, fiscally sound, quality of life, families, social economic, opportunities offer jobs at livable wages"
- "livable wages, open space, housing, safe neighborhoods, recreation"
- "The heart of a regional population and economic center offers jobs a livable wages where diverse housing stock serves all income levels concentrating on higher density mixed use development surrounded by residential neighborhoods"

Constituent Realities and Planning Constraints

Review of statistics and Salinas' demographics specific to income, ethnicity, housing, education, poverty rate, city budget.

- Identified a number of housing projects and initiatives that have helped the housing crisis and laid the foundation for increasing housing opportunities
- Agriculture is driving force in Salinas and draws hard working people with low wages.
- Farm labor employees continue to live in poverty
- What can the City do to develop farmworker housing?
- Housing, poverty, and homelessness is not just a city problem, it required partnerships with the County, social services, mental health services, and services for the homeless population
- Lack of affordable health services at a national level; too much for one city to tackle
- What the City afford v. cost for a solution
- Misconception of reasons that lead to homelessness; i.e. drug addiction
- Development of a unique plan to address homelessness while being cognizant of the legal aspects that prevent cities from taking certain actions
- City's budget – Public Works v. Public Safety
- The need to address the legacy cost such as CalPERS unfunded liabilities
- The community is holding each other accountable via social media
- The majority of Fire calls for service are medical related; consider revisiting the American Medical Response contract with the County
- Assessment of City services provided to residents
- Implementation of mobile medical and mental health services in effect to reduce the calls for service

VISION

“Our vision for Salinas is a community that values family, safety (define), respect, fiscal stability, jobs, and housing for all our residents.” Proactive Leadership (add)

IDENTIFICATION OF HIGH IMPACT GOALS FOR 2020-2023

Goals incorporating The Salinas Plan recommendations (Councilmembers divided into teams to identify goals)

1. Investment Strategies/New Revenue
 - a. Transfer station
 - b. Strategic policing
 2. Operational efficiencies
 - a. Workforce, cost drivers
 3. Public Safety
 - a. As expanded (The Salinas Plan excerpts)
- Be mindful of cost drivers in order to manage core services
 - Efficacy of funding spent on policing and services without compromising public safety
 - No correlation between number of officers v. reduction of crime rate
 - Green space and operational efficiencies could embody efficacy
 - Increase public safety by creating more open space and recreation
 - Avoid redundancy; the community requests more green space for children to enjoy and investment in youth
 - Relocate the solid waste transfer station
 - Increase public safety specifically traffic enforcement in order to create a walkable community
 - Operational efficiencies is the priority and responsibility of the City Manager

CITY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

City Council identified operating principles, policies and ground rules for each of the categories below:

- Meeting Behaviors
 - Respect all opinions and input
 - Be respectful of staff and public time
 - No texting during the meeting
 - Focus on the agenda items and not personal/staff compliments
 - Provide input to advance the report
 - Limit *Councilmembers' Reports, Appointments and Future Agenda Items* to reporting out on regional boards and committees and substantive reports
 - Read materials and be prepared
 - No distractions and sidebar conversations; be attentive to the person speaking
 - Be aware of body language
- Discussion Guidelines
 - Read material and check with City Manager before the Council meeting if clarification is needed
 - Attend Council briefings

- Learn and follow Roberts Rules of Order to understand parliamentary procedures
- Consider re-ordering agenda items to make the best use of staff and public's time; Example: Public Comment, Councilmembers' Reports, Consent, Public Hearings, etc.
- Complaining
 - No Sniping. Personal grievances with one another should be taken up individually
 - Accountability. Give city management an opportunity to address issues as they arise
 - Truth.
- Participation
 - Support each other and apply empathy
 - Accountability
- Celebration
 - Celebrate accomplishments
 - Reformulate City of Champions – Establish guidelines for recognitions and implement a Key to the City award
 - Host a “State of the City” in each Council District to highlight accomplishments
 - Consult/Appoint a Public Information Officer to assist with sharing positive information and control misinformation
 - Teamwork. Respectfully work as a team

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gloria Moore recommended opening doors to youth for trade jobs, certified programs, and other job opportunities.

Nona Childress commented that the Council Constitution was missing public accountability. The public needs to be a part of the discussion as well.

Ray Montemayor stated The Salinas Plan is a “Salinas Sham” and treats workers as cost drivers rather than a benefit to the City and community. It assumes the worst for the future and did not anticipate new initiatives. It makes hiring employees more difficult and it was developed without community input.

Steve Ish recommended establishing a committee to better understand and City finances. Specifically, review of funds spent outside of established assessment districts and further recommended establishing additional assessment districts throughout the city.

Dominic Dursa commented that the City's population is comprised of 1/3 youth and recommended establishment of a Youth Commission. He acknowledged there is cost to establishing a new commissions and noted that a Youth Commissions can bring positive exposure to local government and promote community engagement. He also recommended clear and transparent posting of City Council agendas in order to get better sense of future discussion items.

Veronica Leon, Alisal Vibrancy Plan Steering Committee member stated she would like to see the Alisal Vibrancy plan to become a reality and supports the creation of more open space. She strongly recommended implementation of the tasks outlined in the Vibrancy Plan.

Monica Grumilan, Building Healthy Communities, stated they were heavily involved with the development of the Alisal Vibrancy Plan and Parks Master Plan and would like to ensure that the implementation becomes a reality. She added that the Plan identifies clear short term goals that the city can begin with yielding tangible results. In closing, Ms. Grumilan stated that the City can assist the community with sharing of information and services related to housing, education and legal assistance.

Daniel Gonzalez, Center for Community Advocacy, stated they are focused on promoting and working on the Alisal Vibrancy Plan (AVP). The City made history by including the AVP in the General Plan process. He encouraged the City Council to begin implementation of the short term goals identified in the AVP such as a community housing trust to support relocation of residents. He also recommended the City continue to promote city-lot development for housing, implementation of the Parks, Recreation, Libraries and Open Space master plan.

SUMMARY CLOSING COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Davis thanked the public for attending and participating in the planning process. He recommended the City and Council focus on youth by getting involved in the community, attending the high school's Top 100 Students events, or establish a young councilmembers program with a focus on local issues.

Councilmember Barrera stated the Council Constitution is a Celebration. He expressed support of transparency and development of short term goals. He recommended the Council move forward with the implementation of the Alisal Vibrancy Plan and share the information to the public as the project(s) move forward.

Councilmember Cromeenes stated the City Council can do a better job at collaborating with organizations that can support the community. She added that there are a lot of high paying jobs available for youth and the City needs publicize the information. She expressed support of trade jobs and apprenticeship programs for youth.

Councilmember Villegas recommended the City focus on engaging youth, update the website to facilitate access to information.

Councilmember De La Rosa commended the work that was done during the session and also recommended the City focus on the implementation of the Alisal Vibrancy Plan.

Mayor Gunter stated the Alisal Vibrancy Plan is a great plan that outlines open space, housing, and the relocation of the transfer station. He also recommended the City be a leader in energy efficiency by placing solar panels and charging stations at the Community Center and other City facilities.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

APPROVED:

Joe Gunter, Mayor

ATTEST:

Patricia M. Barajas, City Clerk