

City of Adel, Iowa Goal Setting Session Summary Report 2018

Mayor
Jim Peters

City Council
Shirley McAdon
Bob Ockerman
Mike Haynes
Jodi Selby
Rob Christensen

City Administrator
Anthony Brown

Approved at the March 13, 2018 Adel City Council Meeting



Facilitated by:
Jeff Schott
Institute of Public Affairs
University of Iowa

**CITY OF ADEL, IOWA
GOAL SETTING SESSION
2018**

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CITY OF ADEL, IOWA SUMMARY REPORT GOAL SETTING SESSION 2018

Introduction

The City of Adel requested the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA) to assist the City with goal setting. IPA agreed to organize and facilitate a process that involved the following steps:

1. Prepare a questionnaire to identify recent accomplishments, issues/trends/concerns, potential new initiatives/programs/policies, and suggestions to improve organizational effectiveness.
2. Conduct a goal-setting session with the elected officials and department heads.
3. Preparation of a final report.

Goal Setting Work Session

City elected officials and department heads held a work session conducted by the IPA on Monday, February 26, 2018. In attendance and participating at this meeting were Mayor Jim Peters and City Council Members Mike Haynes, Shirley McAdon, Bob Ockerman, Jodi Selby, and Rob Christensen.

Also in attendance and participating in this session were City Administrator Anthony Brown, Finance Director Brittany Sandquist, Public Works Director Kip Overton, Building Inspector Steve Nichols, Parks and Recreation Director Nick Schenck, Police Chief Gordy Shepherd, Fire Chief Tim Morlan, Assistant Fire Chief Braden Nemechek, Water Superintendent Jordan Altenhofen, and Chamber of Commerce President Deb Bengtson.

Major City Accomplishments

The following were identified as major City accomplishments during the past two years:

Infrastructure

- Completion of 2017 Brick Streets / Main Street Project
- Work toward improving water and sewer
 - Implemented new debt service charges
- Let bids for storm water projects that will start in spring 2018
- Agreement with County – East Annex Sewer Extension Project
- Development of Five Year Streets CIP
- HWY 169 TEAP Study
- McClure Engineering’s Utility Capacity Study
- McClure Engineering’s Annexation Analysis
- Emergency water connection agreement with Xenia

Economic Development

- Completion of the Downtown Façade Project
- Collaborating and coordinating more closely with the Chamber (e.g., economic development)
- New Commercial Tax Abatement Program
 - Slowly getting new businesses in town
- Multiple residential developments
 - Multiple subdivisions completed
- Joining the Greater Des Moines Partnership
- Sold 425 River Street property

Finance/Budget

- Hiring of PFM for financial analysis and review
- Refinancing of several bonds, saving approximately \$200,000
- Reduction/elimination of audit issues each year
- Offering in-office debit/credit card payments again and starting online utility bill payments
- Passage of Hotel/Motel Tax
- Increased budgets to cover new people in town
- Budget process seemed smooth this year
- New Accounting Clerk
- New Finance Director
- Applying for USDA-RD and SRF loans for major infrastructure and utility projects
- Revamp of utility billing policies and procedures

City Operations/Facilities

- Update of the Residential Tax Abatement Program (Phase out)
- Updated Subdivision Ordinance
- Oakdale Pride Revitalization Project of Oakdale Cemetery
- New website
- New Street Laborer
- Switching over to new email system
- New Water Superintendent
- Successful union negotiations for all parties involved, including updates to the collective bargaining agreements
- Consistent and competitive raises with annual salary surveys
- 2016 Goal Setting Session
- Updated longevity policy
- Switching to monthly newsletter in Adel Living Magazine
- Boards and Commissions have recruited new residents and maintained gender balance
- Department head performance reviews completed for the first time since the Chad Bird era
- Switching over to the State's elective retirement program
- Switching over to new iPads
- Implementation of McClure Project Update meetings
- New Water Conservation Policy
- Using Future Land Use Plan for land use/development decisions

Public Safety

- New fire truck
- Police Dept at full staffing
- Police Dept body cameras
- Purchased Fire Dept first response duty vehicle
- Improved ISO rating from 6 to 4
- Participated in county-wide public safety communications system

Parks & Rec

- New Parks & Trails Master Plan
- New Bailey's Grove Park
- New Dog Park (S)
- Completion of Nile Kinnick museum addition
- New Butterfly Garden
- New Ice Skating Rink
- Eagle Scout Project
- Named Tree City for 24th Year
- New programs at Aquatic Center (doggy dip and parent-tot classes)
- Creation of council liaison to Parks & Recreation Board

Issues, Concerns, Trends, and Opportunities

The participants identified and discussed the following issues, concerns, trends, and opportunities that may affect future City services, policies, finances or operations:

Infrastructure

- Traffic – condition of roads
- Widening HWY 169) (E/S)
 - Turning lanes at the stop light
- Concern for water softening and supply until new plant/wells arrive
- Impact of Xenia territory and City water territory
- Opportunity for impact from new storm water projects
- Concern for how the process of the proposed extension of 289th Place played out and where to go from here to meet the August 2018 deadline for a RISE grant
- Need to pave gravel roads
- Increase in population will bring strain on City infrastructure
- Need for sidewalks; sidewalks along N. 15th St

Economic Development

- Meeting expectations for quality of life that reflects “small town” atmosphere while welcoming new residents and growth
 - Work with schools to help with this
- Opportunity with East Annex Sewer Extension Project
- Loss of several businesses on the Square, including eventually Adel Chrysler
- Cliff for residential tax abatement in 2019
- Big boom of residential construction to be completed before abatement changes and expires
- Not enough available land for commercial/industrial
- Protection of eastern border; annexation moratorium agreement expires 4/22/2021

Budget/Finance

- Managing growth and demand for services if/when building permit revenue slows down but before tax abatement funds arrive
- Potential loss of backfill funds
- Impact of utility rate increases on residents and businesses

City Operations/Facilities

- Need to update the City's 2009 Comprehensive Plan
 - Being prepared for smart growth with comprehensive long-term planning, standards creation, setting clear expectations, working with other governmental entities, and receiving input from all stakeholders and the community
 - Long-term planning (5, 10, 20 years)
 - Planning for east and south of town
- Communication with citizens
- Expand social media presence
- Staff issues:
 - Retention – retaining talent;
 - Competitive pay
 - Potential need for new employees while not being able to fairly/competitively pay existing employees
 - Succession planning for City Attorney
 - Determine the next major in-house position to create and when/how to fund it (e.g., Economic Development, Planner, Human Resources, Communications, Maintenance, IT, Engineer, etc.)
- Concern for how the process of the proposed southern annexation played out and how everyone can get on the same page for future annexations
- Making sure we get an accurate 2020 Census
- Plan for City buildings – maintenance and repair
- Need larger Parks Maintenance Shop in the future
- Issues with hiring summer seasonal help (e.g., pool) and not getting correct documentation

Public Safety

- Increase in population will bring:
 - Increase in EMS calls
 - Increase in number of structures will increase fire-related calls
 - Increase in call volume will require larger department (some non-volunteers will be necessary)
- Need for fire safety inspections
- Need additional storm sirens in east annex area
- Need for additional Police Dept staffing
- Increase in apartment construction may require need for aerial fire apparatus

Parks and Open Space

- Opportunity to purchase 30 acres of land for recreation
- Improving and expanding trails system - connectivity

On-Going Commitments

The mayor/council identified the following on-going City commitments for the upcoming 24-month period:

- Construct Phase I and II Water Improvements
- Sanitary and storm sewer improvements
- Review and update Strategic Plan
- Develop five-year plans for city departments and boards (including capital projects, maintenance and staffing needs, and other large projects)
- Complete negotiations with Rural Water
- Develop financial policies
- Review and update street repair / replacement schedule
- Selection of City Attorney
- Prepare for 2020 census
- Continue to work with Chamber/Adel Enterprises on economic development
- Develop plan for HWY 169 widening project

New Priority Projects, Programs, Policies and Initiatives

The participants reviewed potential projects, programs, policies and initiatives for consideration as priorities for the upcoming 24-month period. After discussion, the mayor and city council selected the following as priorities for the upcoming 24-month period:

- Major update to 2009 Comprehensive Plan, to include
 - Community Visioning (already completed)
 - Develop processes and standards for new developers
 - Street layout planning
 - Planning for expansion/update of water/sewer services
- Provide funding and construct Hwy 169 widening project
- Conduct an annexation study
 - East Annexation
 - South Annexation
- Develop city facilities plan
- Pave gravel roads (e.g., Meadow, Old Portland, 288th)

A complete list of all programs and initiatives considered by the Mayor and City Council members is attached as **Exhibit A**.

Organizational Effectiveness Initiatives

The Mayor and City Council reviewed a variety of ideas relating to improving organizational effectiveness to accomplish the selected goals and priorities. After review and discussion, the Mayor and City Council selected the following steps to improve organizational effectiveness:

- Provide Mayor/Council with monthly department financial reports (budget vs actual)
- Provide orientation/training for members serving on boards and commissions
- Evaluate the Economic Development Commission (purpose, members, accomplishments)
- Provide quarterly or semi-annual reports/updates (e.g., written, council meeting presentation) from department heads to the council
- Review and evaluate council meeting schedules, committee structure, and starting times and other related issues
 - Review and evaluate existing council committees; consider replacing with the following:
 - Organization & Finance
 - Economic Development & Prosperity
 - Public Safety
 - Public Works
- Review job descriptions and update as necessary
- Review employee handbook and update as necessary
- Succession planning for key positions that will be vacated in next 2-5 years due to retirement
- Develop a council meeting policy/procedure manual with code of ethics, conflict of interest, and nepotism policies (parts of which could be used for all boards, commissions, and committees)

Final Comments

It was a pleasure to assist the City of Adel with this strategic plan review and goal setting process. I was very impressed with the level of cooperation and positive attitudes of the elected officials and staff.

It is important to note that the prioritization of projects and initiatives is not “cast in stone.” They can be modified as new circumstances may occur.

It is recommended that staff prepare an “action plan” for accomplishing the planning goals. The action plan would define the steps that would be needed to accomplish each goal, identify who is responsible for implementation, and establish a timeline for each accomplishment. The action plan should then be presented to the City Council for review and approval. It is also recommended that staff review with the City Council the status of implementing the goals on a quarterly basis.

Exhibit A

CITY OF ADEL
Goal Setting Session – 2018

SIGNIFICANT NEW INITIATIVES OR PROGRAMS CONSIDERED

- Planning for commercial and industrial growth related to Apple development east of town
- Conducting an annexation study
 - East Annexation
 - South Annexation
- Major update to 2009 Comprehensive Plan, to include
 - Community Visioning (already completed)
 - Street layout planning
 - Planning for expansion/update of water/sewer services
- Streamline development process (i.e., can we be thorough and comprehensive but efficient and quick?)
- Purchase additional 30 acres of land near water tower for sports complex
- Provide funding and construct Hwy 169 widening project
- Reform/refocus economic development strategies from simple tax incentives to active business recruitment
- Develop downtown revitalization plan
- Update and clarify tax abatement policies to make them more targeted and effective
- Review/revise our street assessment policy
- Develop city facilities plan
- Develop city staffing plan
- Consider an aerial apparatus for Fire Department
- Investment/funding in new trails
- Pave gravel roads (e.g., Meadow, Old Portland, 288th)
- Work toward multi-year budgeting and looking out past current and next year's budget
- Clean up files and get records scanned and more secure
- Develop sidewalk plan/survey/priorities
- Sidewalks along N. 15th St