City of Carroll, Iowa
Goal Setting Report
December 14, 2017

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Dr. Eric Jensen

<u>City Council</u>:
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Misty Boes
Clay Haley
Carolyn Siemann
Jerry Fleshner
LaVern Dirkx

<u>City Staff:</u>
Mike Pogge-Weaver, City Manager
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CITY OF CARROLL, IOWA
GOAL SETTING SESSION
2017

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CITY OF CARROLL, IOWA
GOAL SETTING SESSION
DECEMBER 14, 2017

Introduction

The City of Carroll 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.
3. Conduct a preliminary session with department heads.
4. Preparation of this final report.

Goal Setting Work Session

Planning Work Session

The Mayor and the City Council Mayor held a work session conducted by the IPA on December 14, 2017. In attendance and participating at this meeting were Mayor Dr. Eric Jensen and Council Members Mike Kots, Misty Boes, Clay Haley, Carolyn Siemann, Jerry Fleshner, and LaVern Dirkx. Also in attendance and participating in this session were City Manager Mike Pogge-Weaver, City Clerk/Finance Director Laura Schaefer, City Engineer/Public Works Director Randy Krauel, Building Official/Safety/Fire Chief Greg Schreck, Police Chief Brad Burke, Parks and Recreation Director Jack Wardell, Library Director Rachel Van Erdwyk, and City Attorney David Bruner.

A preliminary session was held with city department heads on November 29, 2017. In attendance and participating in that session were City Manager Mike Pogge-Weaver, City Clerk/Finance Director Laura Schaefer, City Engineer/Public Works Director Randy Krauel, Building Official/Safety/Fire Chief Greg Schreck, Police Chief Brad Burke, Parks and Recreation Director Jack Wardell, and Library Director Rachel Van Erdwyk.

Major Accomplishments

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

Infrastructure

- Water Supply Wells and Transmission Main Improvements – In progress
- Third Street Storm Sewer Improvements
- Water Treatment Plant Filter Rehabilitation
- Industrial Park Road Sanitary Sewer Extension
- Wastewater NPDES Permit – Work Session
- Wastewater Treatment Facility Plan – Copper Compliance Strategy
- Street Conditions – Work Session held
- Street rehab projects
    - Third Street HMA Resurfacing
    - High Ridge Road HMA Resurfacing
    - Court Street Resurfacing
    - 10th Street Completion
    - U.S. 30 and Grant Road Intersection Improvements – In progress
- U.S. 30 Traffic Signal Study
- Downtown Streetscape projects continue – Phase 7
    - Phase 8 – In progress
- Gateway Signage – In progress
- Sidewalk Repair Program – Work Session
- Pedestrian Access Route Transition Plan

Housing

- Timber Creek East Subdivision Plat 5
- Rolling Hills South Third Addition
- Northridge Fourth Subdivision Phase Three

Economic development

- Biokinemetrics/Carroll Brewing Company

Public Safety

- Canine Purchase
- Body cameras and Tasers for Police Officers
- Replaced weather sirens

City Operations and Facilities

- PFM workshop/debt financing scenarios for major projects
- Library:
  - Library Bond Referendum approved
  - Reaccredited with the State Library of Iowa as a Tier 3 status (highest tier possible for meeting public library standards)
  - Improvements and upgrades to technology and website
  - Program attendance increased with additional programs added
  - Collaboration initiated with local organizations and Carroll County libraries
  - Library recipient of Governor's STEM Advisory Committee's Scale-Up Grant (received a STEM cart and supplies)
- City Hall renovation with passed referendum
- Airport improvements including snow removal equipment building and sealing cracks on the runways
- Replaced the street sweeper
- Street Maintenance Facility -
  - Street maintenance building fund established
  - Space Needs and Preliminary Design
  - Work Session held
- New cemetery maintenance building
- Historical building improvements – boiler and A/C replacements
- Upgraded lights in all city buildings
- New city email addresses hosted in the cloud
- New city server installed at City Hall
- Competitive Bidding Laws – Work Session held
- Hired new City Manager

Parks and Recreation

- Trails:
  - Trail section completed and connector to the SAUK trail.
  - Trails expansion/additional expansion planned
  - Applied for REAP Grant 2018
  - Section A Trail by Fairview
  - Review of Trails Master Plan
- Graham Park/ISU Study Complete with Master Plan
  - Basketball courts
- Initiation of pickle ball court availability
- Rec Center:
  - Weight room expansion and exercise equipment upgrades
  - New software at Rec Center with online program registration
  - Added new leisure services programs like 3rd/4th grade volleyball
- Marchants Park Stadium Completion
- Golf course clearing of house and purchase of carts
- Introduction of ice skating rink

Issues, Concerns, Trends and Opportunities

The following were identified as issues, concerns, trends, and opportunities that may affect future city services, policies, finances or operations:

Infrastructure

- Need sidewalks in strategic, high volume locations—11th Street on north side of aquatic center; safety is concern among public
- Sidewalk deterioration
- Need to increase funding for street improvements/street rehabilitation
- Street parking – certain roads can't accommodate emergency vehicles
- Extremely rough railroad grade crossings
- Wastewater Treatment Plant – Compliance with dissolved oxygen, disinfection, copper and nutrient reduction requirements
    - Cost of wastewater treatment plant
- Water Distribution – Compliance with system pressure and residual chlorine requirements

Budget/Finance

- Challenge of funding major projects while maintaining a low city tax levy
    - Many big ticket projects across several taxing authorities starting in close proximity of each other (Library, football stadium, Graham Park project, HWY 30, Rec Center, county jail, Trails and Street Maintenance Facility).
- Potential $500,000 shortfall due to lack of state backfill/rollback
    - The continued implementation of the Senate File 295
    - Impact of the residential rollback, 2017 equalization order of 7% for residential and 9% for commercial
- State equalization order every two years and public's concern over rising property taxes
- A significant number of citizens believe we over spend as a community
- Rising healthcare costs

Housing and Community Development

- Need to grow workforce and expand tax base/housing/home ownership
- Areas of community falling into disrepair (i.e. vacant, etc.)
- Everyday conversations about Fairview Apartments
- Rental properties being viewed as "not to code" or low standard
- Housing market has not changed from last year, possibly worse with higher home values and little for entry level workers
- Housing for low income

Economic Development

- Businesses looking for employees but workforce availability limited
- Perception in constituent's eyes of continuous "business closings"
- Trend of growing economy is apparent here in Carroll

Public Safety

- Escalation of break-ins, theft, property damage
- The City/County Communications Center 28E agreement should be renegotiated for equity. (Currently, the City of Carroll is the only incorporated city in the county that provides additional funding for operational cost of the Communications Center. All cities within the county utilize the Communications Center for dispatch of each entity's emergency services with no additional operational fees paid)

City Operations and Facilities

- Street Maintenance Facility construction
- City Staffing:
    - Competitive pay
    - Employee retention
    - Workforce availability
- Maintaining of public grounds
- Library
    - New initiatives and programs have been pulled from the library's proposed long-range plan (2018-2022)
    - Libraries combatting fake news and educating people how to locate accurate information
    - Libraries are transitioning into becoming a community space and offering a variety of different services to meet community needs
    - Technology is changing how libraries operate
    - Concern for work morale with the lack of room for staff to run operations out of
    - Concern of staff overload—as programs are increased, staff have to take on additional job tasks

Parks and Recreation

- Public wants City to move ahead with Rec Center/Rec Center pool improvements
- Lack of any modernized shelter house for year-round use

Other

- Lack of population growth
- DMACC is growing and is very integrated into the community
- Voting turnout is on the rise (younger demographics)

On-Going Commitments/ Obligations

The following were identified as on-going commitments/obligations for the upcoming 24 month period:

- Implementation of Library /City Hall concept/financing plan, design and construction
- Council adoption of Financial Policies
- Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements – comply with disinfection and nutrient reduction requirements – implementation of multi-year plan
- Continue street improvements
- Grant Rd/Hwy 30 improvements
- Implement Street Maintenance Building project
- Water distribution study
- Continue Corridor of Commerce streetscapes on planned basis
    - Phase IX
- Implement Housing Study – continue to study issue; make a decision regarding the city role
- Make a decision regarding rental housing, sidewalk repair, and code enforcement, including staffing
- Develop plan/strategy for Rec Center for long-term viability
    - Programming, membership, financing, operational and physical improvements
    - Start Rec Center improvement projects
- Develop plans regarding Graham Park Athletic District, including parking.
- Trails expansion
- Make a decision regarding design of city gateway signs at entryways to city.

New Priority Programs, Policies and Initiatives

The participants reviewed potential new programs, policies and initiatives for consideration and selected the following as priorities for the upcoming 24 month period (listed in priority order):

- Revisit traffic signal situation – Hwy 30 at Court and Adams, including pedestrian crossing across Hwy 30
- Identify and evaluate alternatives for affordable lot prices to include city land acquisition and/or infrastructure
- A more permanent set of pickle ball courts - at Northwest Park

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

Organizational Effectiveness

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:

- Continue to hold work *s*essions for significant projects:
  - Have a specific goal/goals for each work session to ensure we are moving forward
  - Provide information prior to the work session prior to make efficient use of Council's time, prepare questions, etc.
  - Consider holding some work session; on off-council meeting night
- Use a systemic approach towards reviewing the city's goals: - consider identify dates
  - Identify timelines and person responsible for implementing/coordinating
- Continue to identify methods to enhance communications with the public
- Develop written Rules of Procedure for council meetings
- Evaluate digitizing council materials, so transfer and sharing of information is more seamless and timely
- Provide enhanced training to the Council on the budget and city finances

Final Comments

It was a pleasure to once again assist the City of Carroll with this goal setting process. I continue to be highly 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 city 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 accomplishment. The action plan should then be presented to the Mayor and City Council for review and approval. It is also recommended that staff review with the Mayor and City Council the status of implementing the goals on a quarterly basis.

Jeff Schott
Institute of Public Affairs
University of Iowa
December 15, 2017

Exhibit A

City of Carroll
Goal Setting Session – 2017

SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES OR PROGRAMS CONSIDERED

- Staff input - We need to focus on the projects we have already committed to
  - Some will extend beyond two years. (See Annual Planning Session Update, Sept. 30, 2017)
  - Especially with the Library/City Hall project, additional projects are not advisable at this time. Work we should continue working on includes:
    - ✓ Grant Rd/Highway 30 Improvements
    - ✓ Rec Center
    - ✓ Street Maintenance Facility
    - ✓ Trail Expansion
    - ✓ City Entry Signs
    - ✓ Corridor of Commerce
    - ✓ <Other commitments/priorities - See On-Going Commitments>

- We need to focus on the projects we have already committed to
- Revisit quiet zones; silence train horns
- Revisit traffic signal situation – Hwy 30 at Court and Adams, including pedestrian crossing across Hwy 30
- Affordable housing construction
- Identify and evaluate alternatives for affordable lot prices to include city land acquisition and/or infrastructure
- Use TIF money for the housing shortage
- Neighborhood rejuvenation projects (Region XII?)
- Repair of N. West Street between 13th and 18th
  - Improvements to storm drain SW corner of 16th and N. West – excessive snow
- New lighting at the Youth Sports Complex
- Continue/extend trails to soccer complex and across Highway 30
- Investigate providing fitness equipment in conjunction with trail system (e.g. NFC fitness court)
- Miracle Field
- Consider shelter house improvements, in particular air conditioning at South Side Shelter House
- A more permanent set of pickle ball courts - At Northwest Park
- Dog Park

- Attempt to renegotiate the City/County Communications Center 28E agreement for equity.
- Citizen survey to assist in guiding service levels and capital programming
- Learn more about and provide information about the Community Endowment Fund