

City Council Planning Retreat Summary - March 13, 2015
Madren Conference Center
8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Summary of Planning Session Retreat:

1. City Council started the Planning Retreat by receiving reports from City Department Heads regarding the accomplishments of the past year and departmental goals for 2015.
2. Council reviewed the status of several projects or initiatives that are currently in progress or will be started within the near future. A summary of those projects includes the following:
 - a. Berkeley Drive Bridge & Shared Path Project – to be bid and constructed in 2015.
 - b. Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit and the creation of a new City Stormwater Utility – to be initiated in 2015. Permitting will take 18 months to complete.
 - c. State Revolving Fund Sewer Line replacement projects – this \$1.4 million project is approximately 30% complete at this time. Additional 5 months for completion.
 - d. Pacolet Milliken Land Master Plan: charette planned for this May. Planned Development ordinance development to follow in summer/fall.
 - e. Tottie’s Place – new park greenway. Finish the design plan, install entrances, and start construction of walking paths/sidewalks, bridges and other amenities over the next year as budget allows.
 - f. College Avenue storm water line replacement project – coordinate with developers of the Dukes Center private investment (cost sharing by developer).
 - g. Downtown Clemson decorative street light replacement – finish during summer 2015.
 - h. Old Calhoun District streetscape project: finish conceptual design plan this spring and relocate utilities in summer 2015. Complete construction plans, bid and conduct the streetscape construction in summer 2016.
 - i. Parks & Recreation ADA improvements – complete in this fiscal year.
 - j. Cochran Road WWTP improvements: finish the ammonia reduction improvements; complete the land swap with CU; select architect/engineering firm for design of the new office and laboratory facility. Budget for construction of office/lab in FY 15/16.

- k. CAT transportation issues: meet with Clemson University officials to discuss bus replacement schedule and financial match requirements; discuss FTA Section 5307/5340 funding allocation issues; bid the GPS CAT tracker and obtain Section 5339 funding award; work with Tri-County Tech and Pendleton on preserving that route; prepare for CAT Connector route to Greenville Depot location to serve Amtrak.
- l. Bid and start construction of SRF Loan – water line replacement projects.
- m. Gateway Park – lighting conversion to LED fixtures – complete this spring/summer.
- n. Douthit Hills development issues: sidewalk construction? CATbus pull-offs on Highway 93 locations? Future Bridge Student transportation to Tri-County Tech?
- o. Fire Substation project: budget and select an architectural firm to design the new substation building in FY 15/16.
- p. Fire Contract negotiations with Clemson University: contract expires in June 2016. Start negotiations in fall – for adoption by March 2016.
- q. Public Works – recycling collection/transportation site development: grant opportunity in fall 2015.
- r. Highway 123 retaining wall construction project: bid and construct in summer 2015.
- s. Parks & Recreation Master plan projects: continue to work on the list and budget for projects and park upgrades in FY 15/16.
- t. Downtown Clemson – Fendley Street extension project: will be delayed due to private investment projects that are under plan review at this time.
- u. City Hall electronic sign board installation: budget and complete in FY 15/16.
- v. Downtown Parking Deck possibilities: continue to monitor any future development that could include a public/private partnership to construct additional parking spaces in Downtown Clemson.
- w. CU/City Tennis Complex concept: continue to discuss with Clemson University. The Sloan Tennis Center reconstruction is still a few years into the future.

3. City Council used a round table discussion format to briefly identify issues that should be addressed or considered during the next year. Following the identification of issues, Council members ranked the priority of these issues by using the 10/3 priority rating system. Each Council member was allotted 10 priority stickers to utilize in marking their priority, with not more than 3 stickers to be placed on one item. The issues are identified below, with the priority ranking points as tallied:
- a. Consider a potential public/private partnership for Downtown Clemson that could result in a significant private, taxable development that could provide land for the City to develop a second public parking deck facility **(8 points)**.
 - b. Meet with Clemson University to address short and long-term issues related to Clemson Area Transit **(7 points)**, including:
 - i. Future loss of grant funding due to the de-obligated SMTF award that will be closed next year.
 - ii. Impact of CU contract with GTA, which increases the mileage component of the annual FTA grant allocation and decreases CAT funding allocation.
 - iii. CAT bus replacement – need for local financial matching funds for bus replacement.
 - iv. Pendleton/Tri-County Tech route – future financial match for operations of this route.
 - v. Douthit Hills Bridge Program relocation – will CAT buses be utilized for transporting 700 students from new housing to Tri-County campus? When?
 - c. Create special event(s) for Downtown Clemson on a scheduled and regular occurrence, similar to Greenville’s Downtown Alive **(6 points)**.
 - i. Partner with Chamber of Commerce
 - ii. Budget to host and promote with Hospitality Taxes
 - iii. Partner with local non-profit organizations for potential fund raisers for their organization.
 - iv. Spring/summer events – and use new stage cover at Catherine Smith Plaza.
 - d. Downtown College Avenue – consider a new zoning overlay district to protect the existing core business district **(6 points)**.
 - i. Consider height limitation changes or “step-back” provisions, and examine the Architecture Review District for building materials and colors. (Involve Downtown merchants and property owners).
 - ii. Begin considering future development issues for upper College Avenue – discussions included sidewalk widths, on-street parking issues, changing the width of College Avenue driving lanes, and other discussion items.
 - iii. Consider impact of higher density developments that are occurring in Downtown Clemson – require traffic studies of developers who want to build, examine traffic signalization timing, continue to protect pedestrians and promote a walkable and attractive Downtown.

- e. Consider options to create affordable housing options for residents, including new and existing housing stock **(6 points)**.
 - i. Consider CDBG grant applications to assist low/moderate income home owners in maintaining or upgrading their homes to allow long term residency.
 - ii. Consider CDBG grant application to create new housing subdivision area – similar to Red Hill Court project previously constructed.
 - iii. Consider housing options for young professionals or new homeowners that are “starter home” options – potentially in Pacolet Milliken development – depending upon ability to negotiate lower land acquisition cost for this purpose.

- f. Consider hosting a series of joint meetings with the City’s various boards and commissions **(5 points)**.
 - i. To ensure that boards understand their roles in the local government.
 - ii. To create and communicate that City Council appreciates these volunteer board members and the time that they spend on community issues.

- g. Support the creation of the Green Crescent Trail concept **(4 points)**.
 - i. City Staff should continue to participate in this planning concept.
 - ii. Joint project with Clemson University and possible private land owners.
 - iii. Encourages biking and walking

- h. Evaluate an East Clemson Trail System **(4 points)**:
 - i. Evaluate possible trail routes and connections.
 - ii. Examine City sewer easements – can these easements be converted to add the use of walking/biking paths?
 - iii. Consider liability issues – can City insurance cover trail use by public?
 - iv. Involve property owner associations in the possible trail discussions - early and continuously.

- i. Dogs (and owners) need greater accessibility to “Mutt Mitt” baggies and disposal site **(4 points)**:
 - i. Budget and install Mutt Mitts at additional locations and collect the waste.

- j. Make a renewed focus on recruitment of new & additional medical facilities to Clemson **(3 points)**.
 - i. Re-initiate discussions with medical providers and hospital systems.
 - ii. Evaluate locations for new medical clinics or offices.

- k. Littlejohn Community Center – look at assisting in the upgrade of their computer center of the facility **(3 points)**.

- l. Continue to maintain what we build – pay attention to maintenance and appearance issues **(3 points)**.
 - i. Budget to provide adequate funding for maintenance of assets and equipment.
 - ii. Prioritize improvements so that we are not responding to emergencies – but making repairs/replacements in a proactive manner.
 - iii. SRF Loans on water and wastewater lines need to be completed during the next 12 months.
 - iv. Pilot program on Abernathy Park boardwalk – be selective in making long-term replacement for this asset.

- m. Look for opportunities for design partnerships with Clemson University – similar to what was done by architecture class recently **(3 points)**.
 - i. Opportunities may be available with Architecture, Regional Planning program, Parks, Recreation & Tourism, and other programs.
 - ii. Cost of these types of programs can be relatively inexpensive to the City.
 - iii. Examine areas of the City that may need studies and be conscious of the programs at Clemson University that could involve students and faculty.

- n. Consider options for redevelopment or reconstruction of the Old Planning Office on College Avenue **(2 points)**.
 - i. A new awning and painting of the building was completed last summer, but the interior is not very presentable for public use.
 - ii. Consider budgeting for some preliminary planning/design consulting fees to develop a conceptual building plan with varied uses.
 - iii. Formalize a plan and establish cost estimates for this building.

- o. Evaluate annexation opportunities during the next year **(1 vote)**.
 - i. Pacolet Milliken land master plan will take place later this spring.
 - ii. Old Tri-County Landfill property was recently purchased by Danny Youngblood. Discussions with Mr. Youngblood should be scheduled to examine opportunities and discuss his ideas for this property.
 - iii. The City has adequate water and sewer capacity at this time (for the properties that will be treated by the Pendleton/Clemson WWTP).
 - iv. Any annexations that would involve sewer service at the Cochran Road WWTP (north side of Clemson city limits) will be much more expensive for the developer (due to lift station capacity) and there is limited treatment capacity at this plant.

- p. **The following items were listed by Council members, but received no priority points during the prioritization process:**
 - i. Housing and vacant business nuisance properties need to be kept under close observation by Planning & Codes Administration.
 - ii. Acquire and install additional bus shelters and CAT bus stop signage (Section 5339 funding possibilities for paying for these items may be available).
 - iii. Anderson Regional Joint Water System – water quality issue: the taste and odor issues need to be monitored and resolved. This will cost additional money for treatment, which will be passed through from ARJWS to the member agencies and will impact our cost of purchased water. Budget accordingly.
 - iv. Planning & Zoning – look at tree requirements on new construction activity. Is the buffer requirement adequate at this time?
 - v. Synchronize the Comprehensive Plan with the Zoning Ordinance and Board of Architecture overlay districts.

- vi. Consider traffic studies for Highway 123 & Highway 76. Assuming that the NSRR project will be completed in 2015, the traffic patterns to/from north Clemson to CU campus will likely change. Monitor that change and work with SCDOT on signalization coordination needs that may occur.

- vii. Investigate the potential to attract Google Wi-Fi to Clemson & Clemson University.