

City of Plattsburgh
Strategic Planning Steering Committee Meeting
March 6, 2017 Minutes

1. Members in attendance: Mayor Colin Read; Carol Garcia, Deputy City Chamberlain, Ann Giard Chase, Human Resource Officer; Paul Dedominicas, Community Development Director; Curt Gervich, Associate Professor of Environmental Science, SUNY Plattsburgh, Councilors Rachelle Armstrong and Joshua Kretser.
2. The committee met to discuss its purpose and process. Members received copies of “Local Government Management Guide” published by the State Comptroller’s Office and “Strategic Plan for Fort Collins, CO, 2015-16. Dr. Gervich provided EPA maps and census data.
 - Members offered their questions and comments regarding the committee’s purpose and process. Members generally agreed to the following: The plan should be clear and specific with measurable outcomes.
 - Build on previous planning.
 - Planning should be holistic and replace what are now operations within individual silos.
 - A strategic plan may change the status quo; this change may be discomfiting to some.
 - How does a Strategic Plan compare to a Comprehensive Plan?
 - How will decisions be made? Consensus vs. majority rule? Will the plan need Council approval?
 - What audience will the plan address?
 - Concern: planning often addresses economic development and social infrastructure, rather than quality of life for the poor.
 - *Building Local Economy from the Grassroots* might be a reference to look into.
 - We need to strive to be a socially sustainable city. Economic development can mask problems.
 - Historically, budget decisions have been driven largely by the department heads. The community has had no voice.
 - Strategic Planning presents a unique opportunity to prioritize our goals.
 - Composing the vision statement might need to precede the formation of a larger committee comprised of a variety of community stakeholders. Input from the community and staff will be vital to buy-in. However, since change is difficult, we must consider that resistance to change and misunderstanding about purpose and process can work against planning efforts. Effective and transparent public relations is essential to successful planning.
3. The committee will review the references and meet regularly Mondays at 2:30. Our next meeting is March 13, 2017 2:30 pm, City Hall Chambers