

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Council Retreat

January 30-February 1, 2003

The Resort at Ludlow Bay
Port Ludlow, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Marshall, Deputy Mayor Degginger, and Councilmembers Creighton, Davidson, Lee, Mosher, and Noble

ABSENT: None.

Councilmembers attended a retreat beginning on Thursday evening, January 30, and ending on Saturday, February 1, in the afternoon.

Staff and Council reviewed the following accomplishments of the past year:

- Boeing property acquisition
- Qwest building acquisition
- Meydenbauer bay property acquisitions
- AT&T last mile
- DSI – Development Services Improvement Initiative
- NIS – Neighborhood Investment Strategy, with pilot project in West Lake Hills
- Budget process
- Transportation – Access Downtown, Coal Creek Parkway, 40th Street, 140th Avenue
- Lattawood Park
- Eastgate Park acquisition
- Factoria zoning
- Coal Creek Utility District assumption
- Continued enhancement of school playgrounds
- Downtown Transit Center redevelopment
- Downtown Implementation Plan (DIP) Update Process
- Construction Code Advisory Committee
- Cascade Water Alliance leadership and participation
- 40/40/20 Transit service
- Increased Human Services budget in a down economy
- Performing Arts Center handoff to private sector
- \$40 million in transportation projects
- Did not raise taxes

- Strategic hirings
- Park Bond process
- Made progress on Core Value of *Commitment to Employees*
- Yakima jail contract.

When asked to prioritize 2002 accomplishments, Council identified the following as the highest impact: Transportation project completions, Boeing and Qwest acquisitions, the budget process, Neighborhood Investment Strategy, Cascade Water Alliance efforts, DSI, Park Bond effort, and revised transit service split. Councilmembers commented on how creative approaches, prudent financial management, responsiveness to opportunities, and a team approach contributed to the successful accomplishments of 2002. When discussing opportunities for improvement, Council identified becoming more proactive in developing a long-term vision for the City, making additional progress on economic development, and improved communications and public processes.

Council reviewed 2002 priorities and discussed what was still to be accomplished, what had been completed, and possible amendments. They acknowledged that many of the priorities are actually visioning statements, some were strategies, and many were tactical statements. Council determined to reevaluate the list and develop a new vision statement and list of current priorities. The vision statement will drive new audacious goals for the community.

Council identified the following concepts to be incorporated into a new Vision Statement for the community:

- Neighborhoods remain neighborhoods
- Quality place for the best people in the world
- Unique downtown – concentrated, strong revenues, managed growth.
- City looking for a soul
- Why come to Bellevue? Living the dream—building schools, raising kids, developing a good life.
- International city
- Identify a label for the City (e.g., viable, livable, memorable).
- Notable qualities:
 - Safe
 - Good schools and educational opportunities
 - Business opportunities, especially for small businesses
 - Ability to get involved
 - Live where you work and play, as 40% of residents do.
 - Recreation, parks and the arts
 - Common values
 - Open civic opportunities—volunteers make a difference. Accept new people and ideas.
 - Outstanding quality of life.
 - New city – developing from ground level; clean-looking; design values.
 - Well maintained by planning for repair and replacement reserves.
 - High expectations; always reinventing ourselves.

- Desired outcomes—marketing a common identity, building buy-in, answering the question “Why Bellevue?”

Councilmembers reviewed the 2003 Work Program and requested periodic updates throughout the year. Council discussed several new or enhanced work initiatives in more depth.

NIS - Community Outreach/List Server

City Manager Steve Sarkozy described the introduction of a list server to enhance community outreach efforts as the next phase of the Neighborhood Investment Strategy. The list server will provide City information to neighborhoods and will eventually be available in a variety of languages. The proposal was well received by Councilmembers who suggested rolling out the plan for this new capability during Bellevue 50Fest as part of Council’s vision for enhanced neighborhood communication. The list server will provide a variety of information including community events and recreational opportunities.

Economic Development

Council discussed the need for a targeted economic development policy. Mr. Sarkozy reviewed a model portraying economic development in Bellevue. Councilmembers agreed on the core elements and suggested some additional relationships to be depicted in model. They acknowledged the need to test the model regularly to determine whether all the right elements are incorporated. Council encouraged the inclusion of the international city concept, as discussed in reference to the vision statement.

Councilmembers discussed the importance of technology in Bellevue’s economic development and the potential for incubator spaces for business and the arts. Mr. Lee encouraged a focus on being a business-friendly government.

Mayor Marshall suggested expanding the Safety section of the model to describe the City’s crime lab, emergency preparedness program, and Overlake Hospital for which a trauma center designation is being sought.

Councilmembers identified the City’s replacement reserves and sustainable infrastructure as key strengths for Bellevue. Council appreciated that the economic development model allows them to see the whole universe as well as the disparate pieces. The group concluded it would be beneficial to perform a gap analysis to determine whether elements are missing from the model.

Councilmembers noted the need for affordable housing and the importance of a diverse community. Mayor Marshall suggested identifying People and Community as essential elements at the core of the model. She feels promoting economic development will provide advantages to the people living in Bellevue. Councilmembers discussed the link between the economic development work program item and the City’s Core Value of Innovation. They suggested using more than one strategy to achieve economic development goals including tourism, hotel development, and convention center expansion.

Organizational Challenges

Staff and Councilmembers discussed a number of challenges facing the organization including:

- Economists are suggesting a slower than previously predicted economic recovery during 2003. City staff are reevaluating revenues regularly and making contingency plans in case the economy does not improve as predicted.
- The City's soft hiring freeze has resulted in approximately 40 positions being put on hold. The workload in operating departments continues to be high based on current projects. Staff are looking at areas where functions might be combined as well as potential new revenue sources.
- Staff discussed the current health care budget and projections of up to 15% increases for each of the next three years.
- Staff and Council discussed the concept of market-based compensation. Staff are currently evaluating whether the City has too many employee classification levels.
- In reference to labor negotiations, staff and Council discussed a plan to present proposals for each negotiation in the context of all other labor groups. Staff will develop a set of principled guidelines to address budget, compensation, and benefit levels.
- Organizational health affected by major new projects and initiatives including Development Services Improvement (DSI), Enterprise Resource Planning (Finance and Human Resources system), and Qwest acquisition.

Regional Involvement

Councilmembers discussed the need to continue to assert leadership at the state and county levels. They identified the need for the City Manager to become more involved in regional decisions. Council suggested creating a local legislative agenda, similar to the current state and federal legislative agendas.

Council and staff discussed an idea to develop a chart of relationships among Eastside partners and their positions on various issues. This would facilitate seeking balanced representation from each partner and developing an information-based collective approach.

Executive Sessions

On Friday morning, Council met in Executive Session to conduct the performance evaluation of the City Manager.

On Friday afternoon, Council met in Executive Session to discuss potential property acquisitions.

Council Rules

Councilmembers discussed a number of minor revisions to Council Rules and directed that the City Clerk bring forward a Resolution incorporating these revisions. Councilmember Lee

January 30-February 1, 2003 Council Retreat

suggested Council consider adding direct staff support for Councilmembers, but there was no consensus to move forward with this suggestion.

Technology Improvements

Staff described a plan to expand Councilmembers' access to information utilizing broadband technology and enhance emergency communications.

The retreat was adjourned on Saturday, February 1, at approximately 12:28 p.m.

Myrna L. Basich
City Clerk

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