



**City of Fountain Valley
Strategic Planning Retreat
November 17, 2022
Follow-up Report
Facilitated by: Marie Knight, Owner of Knight Leadership Solutions**

CITY OF FOUNTAIN VALLEY MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Fountain Valley delivers cost-effective quality public services to provide a safe and desirable community that enriches its residents and businesses.

CORE VALUES

The City of Fountain Valley values . . .

- Fiscal stability
- Honesty, Integrity, and Ethical behavior
- Teamwork
- Excellent customer service
- Innovation
- Quality of life

THREE-YEAR GOALS 2020–2023 • not in priority order)

- Enhance the culture and environment of “A Nice Place to Live”
- Attract and retain revenue producing businesses
- Achieve fiscal stability in accordance with the 20-Year Financial Plan
- Attract and retain quality staff

Pre-Retreat Activities

Prior to the Retreat the City Council and Executive Management staff were asked to complete a survey with their thoughts on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats related to the organization's operations. The summary of that survey is attached to this report. (Attachment A)

Retreat:

Attendees:

City Council:

Mayor Harper
Mayor Pro Tem Constantine
Councilmember Bui
Councilmember Grandis
Councilmember Vo

City Staff:

City Manager Le
Police Chief Sheppard
Fire Chief Cookston
HR Director Hanes
Community Development Director Dadabhoy
Finance Director Smith
Information Services Manager Kim
Community Services Director Frizzelle
Public Works Director Lee
Attorney for the City: Burns
City Clerk Miller

Additional Attendees: Several members of the public attended the Retreat throughout the day as well as City Staff from various departments.

Agenda:

- State of the State of Local Government Services
- Accomplishments
- Review status of the 3-year Goal Objectives
- SWOT Analysis
- Review of Goals, Specific Goal item Discussions, and Indicators for Success
- 3 Year Goal Objectives for the next six months
- Strategic Plan Objectives Resources
- Three New Festivals Discussion
- Spring 2023 Strategic Planning Retreat Discussion.

General Note:

- Prior to the day's discussion areas, Council members agreed to modify Goal #2 to read "Attract and retain revenue producing business and opportunities"

The following is a summary of the day's discussions by topic.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Approved project by Slater Investments
- Navigation Center moving forward and transitioning with 3 other cities
- Revamped HR to better support the organization
- Successful EOC deployment for Omni Fire
- Shop local video
- Approved 2 electronic message boards along with new revenue
- Execute agreements for SciFi (and incorporated fiber optics in various places)
- We have a new Internal Fire Chief
- Purchased a new Vactor truck at a HUGE discount
- We have a new Internal City Manager
- Adopted 5/11 marine units from Camp Pendleton
- Revisited employee events for increased morale
- Facilitated successful election process
- Continuous efforts in acknowledging businesses and residents with "City of Kindness"
- Free tickets for employees to community events
- 38 persons experiencing homelessness exits
- Wildlife Resolution
- New businesses were helped to meet expedited timelines before the holidays
- Opiate settlements went towards funding Education and the Navigation Center

INTERNAL WEAKNESSES

- IT Infrastructure
- Employee engagement
- Tensions and differences between tenured employees and new hires
- The way some staff treat people (staff and customer/community members) and what behavior we allow
- Council roles and responsibilities in relation to staff
- Understaffed
- Unified direction both as a team and in partnership with the City Council
- Stability in the finance department
- Community engagement with the direction and transparency of the City
- Council going directly to labor groups undermines staff efforts
- One official voice and message to the community
- Moving away from policy and procedures – one-offs, makes more work for the staff to address
- Mental health services for 1st responders
- Unfunded pension liability

EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES

- End of the pandemic
- Mental Health support and resources for the community (Be Well, etc.?)
- Inflation easing a bit
- Grant funding at the city and state levels - more support and resources
- Marketing of Fountain Valley as a great place for development
- County support of homeless SVCs through the Future Navigation Center
- Measure HH Sales Tax Increase is going well
- Stock Market uptrend
- Housing opportunities for employees (i.e.) low-income interest loans, priority low-income housing, etc. as a recruitment and retention measure.
- External training for staff development - learn from the private sector

EXTERNAL THREATS

- Community Resistance to change
- Inflation & Recession
- Return of Covid, RSV, Flu
- Crime
- Biased negative external perceptions
- Litigation increased in all aspects
- Unfunded mandates from state/federal
- Technology changing rapidly, hard to keep up
- Housing regulations from the state
- Labor market is difficult
- New elected officials in city, county, and state
- Limited affordable housing

INTERNAL STRENGTHS

- Good fiscal strength and path with a competent road map to follow
- A competent and committed staff
- Ability to pivot and multitask
- Diversity of experience and talent
- A willingness to plan
- Strong volunteerism, internal to city and in partnerships
- Location
- Respectful council
- Executive team works well together
- Ability to do more with less
- A sense of hope and stability with new leadership
- We care about our employees
- We share mutual goals
- Great infrastructure
- An open and honest work environment where people can enjoy their work and laugh
- We all want what's best for the community

WHAT DOES A RESPECTFUL WORK ENVIRONMENT LOOK LIKE?

Consultant Knight facilitated a discussion related to a few comments in the pre-retreat survey complaining about staff being “harassed” and “bullied” by City Council Members. These comments were of great concern to City Council and Staff. These comments put the City on notice and change is required. As such, the following was discussed:

Instances of any kind of harassment and/or bullying need to be reported and taken seriously. If these instances persist, the City should consider enhanced training for the Council. It was agreed that the HR handbook and processes should cover Council and Staff communication, and what respectful discourse looks like. Council was asked to be conscious of tone and intent when redirecting community to staff, when possible, contact staff in advance of Council meetings with questions so staff does not feel ambushed, and provide greater explanation for their questions at Council meetings (i.e. I am asking these questions so the community can hear the answer...) All should remember Council meetings and other public arenas such as social media, are the business card for the City when it comes to recruitment and even outside developers considering coming to Fountain Valley. The Council and Staff should be working in partnership for the successful service to the community and at no time is bullying, harassment, and disrespectful behavior to be tolerated.

3-Year Goal Six-Month Strategic Objectives

Attachment B is the updated Strategic Objective Grid with the new Objectives created at the retreat.

Strategic Objective Resources

City manager Le led a discussion related to the resources that may be needed in order to move forward the next set of six-month objectives for the three-year goals. In the past this process has moved forward without any identifiable line-item budget in order to accomplish the objectives. Many of the objectives for the next six months include the use of consultant services, and or other resources in order to accomplish the objective. It was decided that when the final list of six-month objectives comes before the Council, the City Manager will include a financial impact statement with an estimated expenditure for each of the objectives. At that point in time, based on the information provided, the City Council can decide to either appropriate the funding needed towards each individual objective, direct staff to reallocate funding from another area, or direct the city staff not to move forward with them.

Three New festivals, Direction for 2023

Director Frizzell led a discussion recapping the three new festivals, the Crawfish Festival, the BBQ and Music Festival, and the Lobster Festival. Although all three festivals were successful, well attended, and enjoyed by the community, Director Frizzell identified some of the challenges related to scheduling the festivals when there are not impacts to the local youth sports user groups, the high cost of renovating the fields after the use, and, along with representatives from other city departments, discussed the high impact and staff resources for these events. The Council was supportive of Director Frizzell bringing back recommendations and a plan for 2023 that may include a different time frame for the festivals as well as a reduced number of festivals.

2023 Strategic Planning Process

Discussion ensued regarding The 2023 strategic planning process. This is the end of the three-year goals and in May of 2023 the strategic planning process will include the establishment of new 3-year goals. Based on the discussion the Council supported including Department Managers in next year's process, as well as conducting some outreach, potentially via a survey, to the community to gauge any changes or additions that may be needed to the 3-year goals for 2023 through 2026, and input on a Vision Statement for the City. The City Council was also supportive of keeping the same time frame of a May and November meeting in 2023 for the strategic plan process.

Next Steps:

Date	Responsible Party	Action Item
November 20	Consultant	Submit Draft Post-Retreat Report to CM/EMT for review
November 30-December 6	EMT	Review Strategic Objectives and finalize
December 7-15	EMT	Share Strategic Objectives with department staff
December 20	City Manager	Present proposed Strategic Objectives to City Council for approval
December 21	City Manager/IT	Post Strategic Goals, Objectives, Strengths, and Accomplishments updates on City website
Monthly- By 25 th of each month	EMT	Present to City Manager updates on Strategic Objectives
Monthly	City Manager/City Clerk	Update and distribute to all participants the 3-year Goal Objectives Grid
May 11, 2023	City Council, EMT	Strategic Planning Retreat Strategic Planning Retreat to: develop new Goals and Strategic Objectives, revisit Mission Statement, create Vision Statement

Attachments:

A: Strategic Planning Pre-workshop Questionnaire Responses

B: Final Six-Month Strategic Objective Grid

