

OLYMPIA CITY COUNCIL RETREAT SUMMARY REPORT

JANUARY 8, 2016

CORE VALUES *

- **Integrity:** Being authentic, protecting trust to address the public's needs; owning who you are and where you come from
- **Stewardship:** Acting as [guardians] stewards of the common good of the City

Secondary values:

- **Wisdom:** Being open and willing to seek/consider input; being compassionate and just
- **Serve with joy** and kind-spirited humor

*Exercise instructions can be downloaded from the Center for Ethical Leadership website

APPLICATION OF GRACIOUS SPACE TO THE COUNCIL'S WORK

1. Create clear process and follow it so that people know what to expect
 - a. Publish in Council minutes what next step(s) & follow-up will be following public comment
 - b. Share a positive story or accomplishment at the beginning of every meeting
 - c. Increase transparency- intentional framing of questions & of what goes on the agenda
 - d. Take breaks at realistic intervals during meetings
2. Councilmembers rotate serving as hosts to great citizens before meetings
3. Ensure there's "enough" space, chairs, handouts, good sound for the audience as a means of creating a welcoming setting
4. Listen actively
5. Interact graciously with staff; acknowledge that they/their work are appreciated
6. Support the Mayor's role in facilitating meetings by all Councilmembers tracking own behavior
7. Clarity objectives and intended outcomes
 - a. Identify conflicts and next steps toward resolution
8. Use break-out groups as often as appropriate
9. Think through decision making strategically regarding opportunities for public participation
10. IAP2- Utilize this tool to be clear about the public's role in the decision-making process. Maybe list it on the staff reports.

DISCUSSION ABOUT POTENTIAL REVISIONS TO COUNCIL GUIDELINES

1. Look at length of term of Mayor Pro Tem
2. Mayor's Role as facilitator- maintain a neutral stance throughout discussions, adding your own comments last.
 - Be clear when you switch from facilitator role to councilmember role in discussions.

- If you have information that needs to be shared upfront, invite the City Manager to comment
3. Mayor Pro Tem role: Interest expressed in making better use of this role
- Participation in agenda setting (continue to invite councilmembers to rotate through attending these meetings)
 - Actively follow agenda items to be scheduled w/ referral tracking system
 - Manage Public Testimony process: the order of people speaking and calling them to the podium
 - Deal with issue of Councilmembers not easily able to see the clock
 - Covering for the Mayor in the five minutes before meetings start so the Mayor can complete final prep

REVIEW OF INFORMATION GATHERED IN INTERVIEWS

(What items from the pre-retreat list of accomplishments were mentioned or missing?)

Accomplishments

Surprises:

- We have become a council that cares about clean air
- Unanticipated revenues
- We finally got some things done that took years to that point

What's missing from Accomplishments?

- Market rate housing- Sear's building – Franklin Lofts
- LBA woods/Kaiser Heights Acquisitions
- We did well on more than one thing
- *Implementation* of past projects- State Street storm water treatment
- Downtown- we need to be more specific with the public about what we've done & the positive things that are happening downtown

Challenges (mentioned in pre-retreat interviews)

Surprises:

- That only one person talked about homelessness
- That our response to the office-involved shooting was excellent. We took this challenge and made it into an opportunity
- Stepping up by Providence to provide for Community Care Clinic
- We continue to get unfunded state & Federal mandates

What's Missing:

- Homelessness is short-hand for lack of mental health, service delivery, shelter space, warming centers
- Economic development- we still have huge challenges
- Impact of economic downturn & how to turn that around

- Sub-area planning

Priorities

Surprises:

- Nisqually
- Brogan purchase option for Capitol Lake building

What's Missing:

- Downtown Strategy
- DES (Capitol Lake)
- Transportation & bicycle funding & other funding sources (TBD)
- Street maintenance
- Recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee, like Body Cams

THREE WISHES EXERCISE

1. Address homelessness so that everyone has a home that is safe & affordable and has access to medical care (18 votes)
2. The City has a thriving downtown economy that includes (10 votes):
 - a. No empty/vacant buildings
 - b. Ample parking
 - c. Resolution of Sea-level rise
 - d. Dirty/contaminated soil cleaned/gone
 - e. Seismic risk addressed
 - f. Transportation challenges solved
3. Olympia is held up as the city every other city wants to emulate (4 votes)
 - a. Residential density is increased
 - b. Vitality of neighborhood centers is increased
 - c. High volume transit systems are enhanced to encourage vitality of downtown
4. The Shoreline is redeveloped as a public amenity, including the Big W & freeing the Deschutes (3 votes)
5. The City's culture attracts job growth and business investors (3 votes)
6. Active, successful isthmus with community consensus (finally) (2 votes)
7. We implement a process where all citizens know how & when [and where] to have their voices heard
8. Relocate the courthouse to downtown and redevelop courthouse hill into a planned development and parking

WRAP-UP/EVALUATION OF DAY ONE

Rating of overall afternoon: average: 4.5 (4,4,4.25, 4.5, 4.5, 5,5)

Most Useful

- Foundation for Gracious Space (GS) and having a common language (2)
- Application of GS (2)
- Review of Council Guidelines and role of Mayor Pro Tem (2)
- Core Values exercise
- Talking about the future & regrouping
- Great crash course of my first day

What to do more of:

- More time for us to talk/dialogue with each other
- More movement
- Facilitator was good at bringing us back to task
- We were well fed; would like coffee
- More frequent breaks

What to do less of:

- Fewer sweets
- Less talk about GS and more focus on application

JANUARY 9, 2016

WHAT STOOD OUT FROM YESTERDAY'S SESSION:

- Listen before you speak and avoid "groupthink"
- Same values provide a foundation for working together
- The dance floor and the balcony metaphor was very helpful
 - Varying levels of public participation and active listening
 - Advocates vs. stewards
 - Three wishes activity
 - Cohesive team and a new cohesiveness
- Three wishes exercise
- Attitude is everything
- This is the strongest group of public servants I've seen in a decade: compassionate, professional, fun
- Enjoyed the Three Wishes/ Appreciative Inquiry exercise. Great energy and fun.
- We're all working with the stranger. Council wants the Mayor Pro Tem to take on more responsibilities to assist the Mayor.
- Enough trust on Council to constructively discuss modifying the structure of Council meetings.
- The ideas of inviting the stranger and welcoming the "conflict"

REVISED GROUND RULES

- Be thoughtful about perspective ("balcony" vs. "dance floor")
- Share the floor

- Listen
 - Minimize side-bar conversations
 - Be open to hearing other people’s perspectives
 - Listen without judgment (inquiry before advocacy)
 - Question assumptions (yours own and others)
 - Respect confidences and confidentiality
- Be honest
- Use tact and be gracious
- Respect the body, the process, and each other

NOTES FROM IMPLICIT BIAS DISCUSSION & HOW TO APPLY AS COUNCILMEMBERS

- Bias goes beyond race- its’ the story we tell ourselves before we know the individual
- We can apply this in our day-to-day interactions, in how we represent the City- both individually and institutionally
- Approach those we typically wouldn’t
- Increased awareness about treating all people fairly
- The idea of Councilmembers as Greeters in the lobby before meetings to approach all who come
- Challenge one’s own biases → look for disconfirming data
- Take all seriously, and thus fairly- challenge assumptions
- Lead by example on both the balcony and the dance floor
- Perhaps invite the public to engage in this conversation [from Ad Hoc Committee to City Government] to bring it more main stream

DIMENSIONS OF COMMUNITY EXERCISE

Examples of Social Quadrant: Farmers Market, Evergreen and other Colleges, people economically struggling, coordinated entry program for the homeless, social isolation & lacking services for stay-at-home moms and the elderly, South Sound Senior Center.	
Things going well	Things not going well
Evergreen, SPSCC, Emerging diversity, Compassionate advocates, Farmers Market, Social Services/Social Service Providers, MEI Score/LGBTQ support, Food bank, strong network of services	Homelessness, mental illness, drug abuse, domestic violence, hopelessness
Examples of Spiritual/Cultural Quadrant: Arts Walk, Parks, Interfaith Works, active church groups & across congregations, Camp Quixote, Music Out loud, Procession, Harbor Days, Music in the Park, Dragon Boat races, Canoe journeys, PRIDE, culture of Evergreen and its impact on the City.	
Things going well	Things not going well
WA Center, MEI Score, Interfaith Works, PRIDE, Procession, Arts Walk, Parks waterfront, Community events, Tribes, Community festivals, event opportunity rich, theater/arts scene	Loss of habitat, Legacy cleanup, window breakers, under-utilized regional marketing, bridge between evangelical & mainline churches (families vs. elders), not enough parks, library/could be better YMCA, Lack of educational source downtown, no museum
Examples of Power Quadrant: Black Alliance, CNA, Advisory Committees, citizens extremely involved & feel entitled to participate, continual push to evaluate our process, State!!, Sustainable Thurston, regional partnerships, youth engagement missing.	
Things going well	Things not going well
Highly engaged , Sustainable Thurston County Commission, CNA Thurston CEO Roundtable, LTC/Chamber, culture of engagement, Black Alliance, Advisory Committees, ODA, PBIA,	Not engaging majority, under-representation of minority population and vocal minority, divided community, fear-based thinking, division between classes, lack of opportunity for youth

Advisory Committees	engagement
Examples of Economics/Wealth Quadrant: CYS, Youth Employment, Port of Olympia, EDC, worker rights, unions, State Government, We are the State Capitol, Evergreen College.	
Things going well	Things not going well
TESC, SPSCC, good housing stock, St. Peters, Port of Olympia, Enterprise for Equity, engaged around ideas related to community prosperity, Gov't partners, ODA, PBIA, WOBA	Low wages, empty storefronts, lack of affordable housing, legacy cleanup, state shared resources, economic inequity, need stronger support of Biz, under-developed/DT not vibrant, support of investor interests lacking

DIMENSIONS OF COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

- Impact of increasing diversity
- Time pressure- impact on meaningful conversation
- Power has the greatest opportunity to change. Council can include/share systems
 - When the norms change, it is disruptive
- Spiritual/Cultural & Social quadrants would be most difficult to change
- Economics/ Wealth quadrant affects all quadrants
- It would be helpful to have assistance identifying groups/people that are outside my group that I am not connected to
- How can we use our branding to strengthen Spiritual/Cultural quadrant?

NOTES FROM ACTION PLAN UPDATE

- Process included Public meetings, partner organizations, consultant, sharing process with the community. Input impacted and changed the Action Plan.
- One page overview got big thumbs up/affirmation from the public
- Review of dashboard and drill down with detail re: why each indicator is important, what influences it, what we are doing about it, how progress is measured.
- Downtown Sales Tax Data is compiled from a random sample of 25 businesses.

Comments:

- Suggested that information be added about how tax revenues are being used
- There are many measures- maybe too many
 - There are 28-30 measures. We have data for about half of them. Some have data that is pulled from other sources. In a year we will be in a very good place w/ solid data. There are a few that will still likely not have data; it doesn't currently exist.

Example Action Plan- Downtown Map Feedback

- Alcohol Impact Area (AIA) - it looks like it needs to have its own line
- Bathroom is for all citizens, not just the homeless

- Partner list at the highest level; only use City logos, not other logos
- Add staff lead w/ contact information
- Documents are well done & easy to digest. Great job of getting rid of jargon. Love the local photos.
- There are so many indicators under each of the five categories that there would be too many to put them all into hard copy. It will be easier to look online to see the nest/cascade which can rolled-up or drilled down.
- Work on a condensed/high level version with complete scores.
- Review of Wheel
- Partner Workgroup has been convened & has met. About 15 participating to date. Partners may shift depending on goal being worked on.
- How can you do annual report w/o annual financials? December may better to be a progress report with the annual report published in March. Councilmember Cooper suggested that in 2017 an annual report be mailed out to all households in the community. Still working on how to do it, how much it would cost.

Plans in Action:

- How to show connections between various actions with the plan. Concern that it would be confusing to the public. It might look like a spider web.
- Could relate to Committees & their links to the Comprehensive Plan

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATIONS

Downtown Olympia is a regional downtown. There are issues that are unique and issues that are common across cities. For downtown, one of the issues is redevelopment from commercial to residential.

Renee reviewed recent and in-progress development.

Renee's Top 10 priorities:

1. Survey DT businesses
2. Support to business retention
3. Outreach to major employers
4. Support current development projects & respond to new inquiries
5. Work w/regional partners to support strategies to attract new investors
6. Assimilate working knowledge of current market realities
7. Ensure ED strategies are consistent w/ the Comprehensive Plan
8. Work to strategize methodologies that help demonstrate Olympia is a great place to do business
9. Get the word out that the City supports culture of growth & quality of life
10. Motivate the team

Critical Elements of success:

Community support, creating partnerships and timing

Most commonly identified issues in business survey were parking, vagrancy, and lack of public restrooms. Would also like to see more family-friendly businesses.

SUMMARY OF RETREAT EVALUATIONS

1. Greatest accomplishments:
 - a. Positive interactions
 - b. Trust. Pushing us to reconsider structure and agenda of meetings to include the stranger, more welcoming to all
 - c. Getting through the entire agenda and being productive
 - d. Common understanding regarding bias and economic development
 - e. Getting through the Council assignments and calendar without anxiety and anger
 - f. No votes! Most collaborative retreat ever!

- 2.a. Review of accomplishments, challenges and priorities: Ave score: 4.43; (5,5,5,4,4,4,4)
- 2.b. Review of Council Guidelines: Ave score: 4.23; (5,5,5,4,4,4,3)
- 2.c. Review and discussion of Comprehensive Plan Action Plan: Ave Score:4.21 (5,5,4.5,4,4,4,3)
- 2.d. Council Committee and Jurisdictional Assignments: Ave score:4.07; (5,5,4,4,4,3.5,3)
- 2.e. Gracious Space exercises and discussions: Ave score: 4.36; (5,5,5, 4.5,4,4,3)
3. We made good use of our together: Ave score: 4.5; (5,5,5,4.5,4,4,4)
4. Overall rating of the Council retreat: Ave score: 4.65; (5,5,5,4.8,4.5,4.25,4)
5. One thing that would have improved the day:
 - a. Skip the Dimensions of Communities exercise
 - b. Unclear about what the objective and task was for the Dimensions of Communities exercise
 - c. More standing and stretching breaks
 - d. More discussion of economic development
 - e. Start at 8:30am
 - f. None
6. Additional comments:
 - a. Wonderful! A+. Thank you. Please come back.
 - b. Thank you Diane for your skilled and gracious work.