



City Hall
601 4th Avenue E.
Olympia, WA 98501
360-753-8244

City Council

Citizen Survey Results and Community Indicator Dashboard

Agenda Date: 1/9/2018
Agenda Item Number: 2.A
File Number: 18-0010

Type: study session **Version:** 1 **Status:** Filed

Title

Citizen Survey Results and Community Indicator Dashboard

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive a briefing on the results of a citizen survey and the Action Plan Indicator Dashboard in preparation for City Council's January retreat.

Report

Issue:

City Councilmembers will receive an in-depth briefing on the results of a statistically rigorous citizen survey conducted by Elway Research, and receive a briefing from staff on the Action Plan Indicator Dashboard.

Staff Contact:

Stacey Ray, Senior Planner, Community Planning and Development, 360.753.8046

Presenter(s):

Stacey Ray, Senior Planner
Stuart Elway, Elway Research, Inc.

Background and Analysis:

In 2014, City Council (Council) adopted a broad and ambitious Comprehensive Plan vision for our community, and shortly after accepted a new and strategic approach to achieving that vision, called the Action Plan (Attachment 1).

The Action Plan identifies strategies and actions for achieving the vision, organizing them into five different action areas: Community, Safety & Health; Downtown; Economy; Environment; and Neighborhoods. It also establishes 31 community indicators to help us track, share, and evaluate our progress in each of these action areas. Council received a briefing in early 2017 on an initial subset

of about one-third of the indicators. Now, all but two measures have data and are being updated on the City website. [Note: The two measures not included don't have current data readily available. They are: *number of historic and cultural sites* and *percent of business owners rating Olympia as a good place to do business*.]

2018 will be the first year in which the City can now use data from these indicators to inform its priorities in department work plans, the capital facilities plan and budget. Attachment 2 shows how this can be accomplished through an annual cycle that emphasizes performance, priorities, and investments. This cycle combines the Action Plan annual cycle with our City's annual budget and capital facilities planning processes. It establishes a consistent and predictable pattern for the City Council and staff to engage key stakeholders, partners, and community members each year in carrying out the Action Plan strategies and actions.

As highlighted in the cycle, the first quarter of each year is primarily dedicated to learning and engaging - reflecting on recent accomplishments and what the dashboard indicators tell us about progress toward the Comprehensive Plan's vision. It's also an opportunity to share what we learn, and use it to guide a broader community conversation on citizen interests and priorities.

This study session will take a closer look at the two tools that will contribute significantly to our learning in the first quarter of 2018: a recently completed citizen survey and the Action Plan Community Indicator Dashboard.

Citizen Survey

City staff contracted with Stuart Elway, Elway Research, Inc., and Larisa Benson, The Athena Group, to assist in designing, distributing, and analyzing the results of a citizen survey. The survey questions were designed to inform City outreach and engagement methods, City investment and budgeting priorities, and five specific dashboard indicators.

Five-hundred and forty-eight (548) Olympia residents were surveyed over a two week period in November and December. Two-hundred responses were from phone interviews, while the remaining were received online. The rigorous sample size provides for a $\pm 4.2\%$ margin of sampling error for a 95% level of confidence in the results.

The survey included four different focus areas: overall satisfaction; city services and prioritization; communication, information, and engagement; and demographic questions. Unique to this survey, however, was the addition of a question asking if the citizen being surveyed would also be willing to participate in a future workshop or focus group to discuss key city topics. Over 200 survey respondents volunteered.

At this study session, Mr. Elway will share with Councilmembers the survey methodology and final analysis of the results as outlined in a final report (Attachment 3). Staff will highlight several examples of how the survey results can inform conversations on establishing City priorities, and Councilmembers will have an opportunity to discuss the results.

Community Indicator Dashboard

The Action Plan includes a Community Indicator dashboard with 31 indicators. Like the dashboard on

a car, indicators are intended to serve as “check engine” lights, in that they call our attention to areas of our community’s vision that may need to be looked at closer.

Indicators are different than performance measures. Indicators help us understand how the community is progressing toward the vision described in the Comprehensive Plan. Data for the indicators may be influenced by City initiatives or actions, but are also influenced by the broader community. For example, one of the desired outcomes in the Action Plan is to have a thriving arts and entertainment industry. The dashboard indicator measures how many arts-related businesses we have in Olympia. Actions by the City may help support and encourage arts-related businesses, but many other actions by private and non-profit organizations, citizens and the broader arts community are significant factors influencing this indicator.

Performance measures, on the other hand, measure how well a specific program, agency, or service system is working. For example, a performance measure of a City contribution to a thriving arts and entertainment industry could be the number of arts-related business licenses it issues annually.

Using the Data

Like a “check engine” light, our indicators can alert us to an area of our vision that needs greater attention by examining specific City performance measures that contribute to that indicator, and by working with partners that also play a significant role.

Using the example above, if the dashboard indicates less-than-desirable progress toward increasing arts-related businesses, the City could look at improving its licensing process, and learn from arts-related businesses and non-profits other factors that might be slowing progress - and what support the City could provide in addressing those factors.

At this study session, staff will introduce a tool, called Results-Based Accountability, to help guide a deeper discussion of the indicators. What we learn by implementing this step-by-step process can then inform the City’s approach in 2018 to community engagement and identifying City priorities.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

This topic has widespread impact and interest among community members.

Options:

None; briefing only.

Financial Impact:

The citizen survey was funded with \$25,000 in 2016 end-of-year funds; the goal is to continue surveying citizens at least every two years. Staff is also exploring with the consultant team options for conducting future surveys at a reduced cost.

Attachments:

Action Plan

Annual Cycle: Performance, Priorities, and Investments

Citizen Survey Final Report