



## City Council

### Approval of Council Goal Money to Host Community Conversations

**Agenda Date:** 2/6/2018  
**Agenda Item Number:** 6.B  
**File Number:** 18-0111

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**Type:** decision   **Version:** 1   **Status:** Passed

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#### Title

Approval of Council Goal Money to Host Community Conversations

#### Recommended Action

##### Committee Recommendation:

The Finance Committee recommends Council authorize the use of \$15,000 in Council Goal Money to fund a contract with Benson Consulting to design, facilitate and train staff to host Community Conversations.

##### City Manager Recommendation:

Move to authorize the use of \$15,000 in Council Goal Money to fund a contract with Benson Consulting to design, facilitate and train staff to host Community Conversations.

#### Report

##### Issue:

Whether to authorize the use of \$15,000 in Council Goal Money to fund a contract with Benson Consulting to design, facilitate and train staff to host Community Conversations

##### Staff Contact:

Debbie Sullivan, Administrative Services Director, 360.753.8499

##### Presenter(s):

None - Consent Calendar Item

#### Background and Analysis:

The 2018 operating budget includes \$100,000 in Council Goal money. This request is to authorize the use of \$15,000 in Council Goal money to fund a contract with Benson Consulting to craft an invitation, design, facilitate, and train staff to host Community Conversations.

2018 will be the first year in which we enter into an annual cycle of *performance, priorities, and investments*. This new and improved cycle combines what was known as the Action Plan cycle with our City's annual budget and capital facilities planning processes. It establishes a consistent and predictable pattern for the steps we'll take each year to check our performance, engage with citizens, establish our priorities, and direct our investments to achieve our community's vision.

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 host a broader community conversation on citizen priorities.

The first community conversation will be scheduled in late March with 40 Olympia residents. Using results from the recently completed Citizen Survey, invited participants will represent a valid sample of our City's demographics. The conversation will be designed and hosted to include and accommodate diverse backgrounds, experiences, and abilities, so that Council can use what's learned to help inform the City's budget investments.

The consultant and staff will also use what lessons are learned from the development of the initial conversation to guide how future conversations are designed and hosted, including a proposed virtual town hall and focus groups on additional topics identified from the Citizen Survey.

**Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):**

N/A

**Options:**

- Option 1: Move to authorize the use of \$15,000 in Council Goal Money to fund a contract with Benson Consulting to design/facilitate and train staff to host Community Conversations. This provides staff with the necessary expertise and coaching to design and host conversations using a variety of new techniques to engage a diverse Olympia population to inform the City's priorities and investments.
- Option 2: Do not authorize the use of Council Goal money and direct staff to identify other resources to host the Community Conversations. The quality of the conversations may be impacted including, the size of focus group, depth of facilitation skill and experience, or the analysis to identify participants that reflect our City demographics.
- Option 3: Do not authorize the use of Council Goal money and direct staff to stop planning for Community Conversations.

**Financial Impact:**

Funding is available through Council Goal money. If this request for \$15,000 is approved, the 2018 Council Goal money fund balance will be \$85,000.

**Attachments:**

None