

MINUTES
VISIONING SESSION/STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW
DESTIN CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 27, 2022
CITY HALL ANNEX COUNCIL CHAMBERS
8:30 AM

The Council of the City of Destin met in regular session with the following members and staff present:

Destin City Council

Mayor Gary Jarvis (Virtual)
Councilmember Kevin Schmidt
Councilmember Bobby Wagner
Councilmember Terésa Hebert

Mayor Pro Tem Dewey Destin
Councilmember Jim Bagby
Councilmember Johnny King

Destin City Staff

City Manager Lance Johnson
City Clerk Rey Bailey
Parks & Rec. Director Lisa Firth
Finance Director Krystal Strickland (Virtual)
Library Director Wen Livingston
Deputy Code Compliance Director Kris Mercurio
Community Dev. Director Louis Zunguze
Grants/Project Manager Jeffrey Cozadd
Land Use Attorney Kim Kopp

Deputy City Manager Webb Warren
IT Manager Matthew Pace
IT Specialist James Lauria
Public Info Manager Catherine Card
Code Compliance Director Joey Forgione
Public Works Director Michael Burgess
HR Manager Nichole Rivera (Virtual)
City Attorney Kyle Bauman

Facilitator

Laura Rakas

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem Dewey Destin called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM; followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Welcome and Introduction

A. Overview of the day

The City Manager and lead facilitator Laura Rakas provided a brief overview of the workshop, discussed its overall objective, and reinforced what needs to be accomplished during this time.

The City Manager provided the following presentation:



Stay the course making only the most necessary tweaks to the plan.

- Desired outcomes from the session:
 - ❖ Reaffirm current plan direction, tweaking, if necessary, the priority levels of current council objectives
 - ❖ Expanded/Clarified direction, if necessary, for any current council objectives
 - ❖ Provide direction to staff on items requiring research for consideration during the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Cycle

Where are we as an organization - "A Year in Review"

A. Vision and the Organizations Core Values (Adopted 2018):

➤ Vision

Destin is a family-oriented beach and fishing community where people want to live, work & play, and where guests are welcomed to respectfully enjoy our community and its resources.

➤ Core Values

- Transparency
- Teamwork
- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Stewardship
- Respect

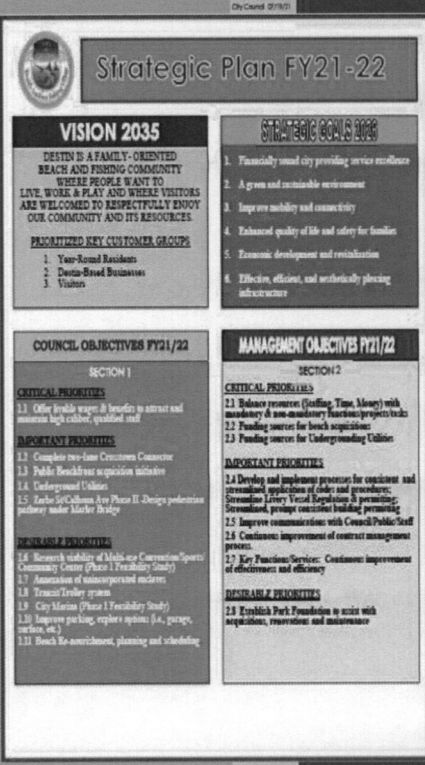
B. Prioritized Customer Groups: Residents, Businesses & Visitors (Key customers in priority order.

- Year-Round Residents
- Destin-Based Businesses
- Visitors

C. Strategic Goals 2026 (In no particular order of priority)

- Financially sound city providing service excellence
- A green and sustainable environment
- Improved mobility and connectivity
- Enhanced quality of life and safety for families
- Economic development and revitalization
- Effective, efficient, and aesthetically pleasing infrastructure

D. Council's Current Strategic Objectives (FY 21/22) – Listed in Priority Order



Strategic Plan FY21-22

VISION 2035
DESTIN IS A FAMILY-ORIENTED BEACH AND FISHING COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE, WORK & PLAY AND WHERE VISITORS ARE WELCOMED TO RESPECTFULLY ENJOY OUR COMMUNITY AND ITS RESOURCES.

PRIORITIZED KEY CUSTOMER GROUPS

1. Year-Round Residents
2. Destination Businesses
3. Visitors

STRATEGIC GOALS 2026

1. Financially sound city providing service excellence
2. A green and sustainable environment
3. Improve mobility and connectivity
4. Enhanced quality of life and safety for families
5. Economic development and revitalization
6. Effective, efficient, and aesthetically pleasing infrastructure

COUNCIL OBJECTIVES FY21/22

SECTION 1

CRITICAL PRIORITIES

- 1.1 Offer livable wages & benefits to attract and maintain high caliber, qualified staff

IMPORTANT PRIORITIES

- 1.2 Complete two-lane Crosstown Connector
- 1.3 Public Beachfront acquisition initiative
- 1.4 Underground Utilities
- 1.5 Zerbo Street/Calhoun Ave. Phase II - Design pedestrian pathway under Marler Bridge

DESIRABLE PRIORITIES

- 1.6 Research viability of Multi-use Convention/Sparks Community Center (Phase I Feasibility Study)
- 1.7 Assessment of commercial mid-rise
- 1.8 Transit/Trolley system
- 1.9 City Marina (Phase I Feasibility Study)
- 1.10 Improve parking, explore options (i.e., garage, surface, etc.)
- 1.11 Beach for enrichment, planning and scheduling

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FY21/22

SECTION 2

CRITICAL PRIORITIES

- 2.1 Balance resources (Staffing, Time, Money) with mandatory & non-mandatory functions/projects/tasks
- 2.2 Funding sources for beach acquisitions
- 2.3 Funding sources for Underground Utilities

IMPORTANT PRIORITIES

- 2.4 Develop and implement processes for equipment and operational applications of code and procedures; Streamline Library Visual Regulations & permitting; Streamlined, prompt construction building permitting
- 2.5 Improve communication with Council/Public/Staff
- 2.6 Continuous improvement of contract management process
- 2.7 Key Functions/Services: Continuous improvement of effectiveness and efficiency

DESIRABLE PRIORITIES

- 2.8 Establish Park Foundation to assist with acquisitions, restoration and maintenance

MANAGEMENT IN PROGRESS FY21-25

SECTION 3

CRITICAL PRIORITIES

- 3.1 Member/Staff institutional knowledge
- 3.2 Plan for renewal and replacement of city facilities and infrastructure
- 3.3 Monitor Reserve Act grants

IMPORTANT PRIORITIES

- 3.4 Implement enhanced signage control
- 3.5 Develop/Implement Workforce Program; Improvement of the City's pathways; more "Welcome Signs" on east side of bridge
- 3.6 Update Golf Cart/Low Speed Vehicle (LSV) Rules
- 3.7 Implement a roadway striping program
- 3.8 Provide training to Board and Committee members
- 3.9 Improve intermodal (water, more walkable)
- 3.10 Reduce residential noise and RV parking regulations
- 3.11 Monitor beach cleaning with Okaloosa County
- 3.12 Redevelopment (citywide)

DESIRABLE PRIORITIES

- 3.13 Establish Environment Committee

PRIORITY LEVELS

CRITICAL PRIORITY
An objective that must be successfully accomplished within a specified amount of time (no matter what)

IMPORTANT PRIORITY
A priority that can have a significant impact on performance. Resources are fixed and the variable is either time or the objectives.

DESIRABLE PRIORITY
A priority where both resources and time are variable. The organization desires and outcome but cannot absolutely commit specific resources over any specific time period. *Resources are fixed for all critical and important priorities, therefore, it may become necessary to transfer resources from DESIRABLE priorities to CRITICAL priorities.

MAJOR PROJECTS FY21-25

SECTION 4

CRITICAL PRIORITIES

- 4.1 Implement and Manage COMPASS software
- 4.2 Harbor Capacity Study (HACS)
- 4.3 Land Development Code revision
- 4.4 Impact Fee Study
- 4.5 Building Permit Fee Study

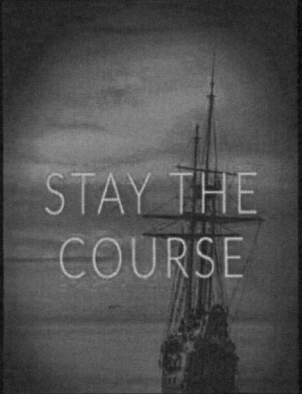
IMPORTANT PRIORITIES

- 4.6 Update REX Fee Schedule and provisions
- 4.7 Construct Cape Royal Mobile Heritage Park
- 4.8 Zerbo St/Calhoun Ave Phase II - Design pedestrian pathway under Marler Bridge
- 4.9 Bay W Mobile Improvement project
- 4.10 Stoney Pt. Pt. 225 - Recreation Companion
- 4.11 Renovate Clement Taylor Park
- 4.12 Redevelop Joe's Bayou Recreation Area
- 4.13 Continuity of streetlights/Conversion to LEDS
- 4.14 Implement prioritized sewer/water improvement based on the Stormwater Master Plan

DESIRABLE PRIORITIES

- 4.15 Design and construct Golf Course Extension Trail Linear Park
- 4.16 Design and construct pickleball courts

The FY 21-22 Strategic Plan was formally adopted by City Council on July 19, 2021



CRITICAL PRIORITIES:

- 1.1 Offer livable wages & benefits to attract and maintain high caliber, qualified staff.

IMPORTANT PRIORITIES

- 1.2 Complete two-lane Crosstown Connector
- 1.3 Public Beachfront acquisition initiative
- 1.4 Underground Utilities
- 1.5 Zerbo Street/Calhoun Ave. Phase II – Design pedestrian pathway under Marler Bridge

DESIRABLE PRIORITIES

- 1.6 Research viability of multi-use convention/sports/community center (Phase 1 Feasibility Study)
- 1.7 Annexation of unincorporated enclave
- 1.8 Transit/Trolley System
- 1.9 City Marina (Phase 1 Feasibility Study)
- 1.10 Improve parking, explore options (i.e., garage, surface, etc.)
- 1.11 Beach re-nourishment, planning and scheduling

#1 (Critical) – Offer Livable Wages & Benefits to Attract and Maintain High Caliber, Qualified Staff

- Council approved a 5% COLA and up to a 2% merit increase to help our staff meet the rising pressure of inflation.
- Council also approved a one-time longevity award for long-term eligible employees
- New health insurance plan, providing increased benefits at more affordable rates.

#2 (Important) – Complete Two-Lane Crosstown Connector

- Since 2004, the city has worked on an alternative to US Hwy 98 for citizens to access city amenities within Destin. Atkins North America has been re-engaged to update the project design and engineering to a two-lane section with multi-use trails. Revised design and engineering is anticipated to be completed in FY 2024 after acquisition of right-of-way. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has budgeted financial support for right-of-way purchases. The city anticipates support from Okaloosa County for construction.

#3 (Important) – Public Beachfront Acquisition Initiative

- Acquiring public beach is an important priority in the city's FY 21/22 Strategic Plan. The City of Destin has pledged \$9,000,000 (voter approved ½ cent sales tax) and Okaloosa County \$13,000,000 (funded by tourism bed tax) for potential beach acquisitions to expand beach access in Destin.
- Expansion and improvements at the City's Shore at Crystal Beach Park began in April 2020.
- Park design has started. City is in active communication with 3rd parcel owner, TDD and Okaloosa BOCC.
- TPL working on other opportunities for purchase.
- Staff expects to bring an update to council on this initiative by the first meeting in March.

#4 (Important) – Underground Utilities

- Surveys – Spring 2022
- Binding Cost Estimate, Funding Research – Summer 2022
- Funding Proposals – Fall 2022
- Funding Resolution of Intent, RFP to solicit contractors – Fall/Winter 2022
- Vote on Funding – Spring 2023
- Chosen contractor continues engineering/design work – Spring 2023
- Engineering/Design – Summer 2023
- Construction Starts – Fall 2023

#5 (Important) – Zerbe Street/Calhoun Avenue Phase II – Design Pedestrian Pathway Under Marler Bridge

- The area of Calhoun Avenue from Clement Taylor Park to US Hwy 98 is identified in the Pathways Master Plan.
- Phase I of the project was completed during FY 2021
- Phase II of the project incorporates designing and constructing a walkway under Marler Bridge to the Harbor Boardwalk.
- Funding and sources will be reviewed again when engineering design is completed.

#6 (Desirable) – Research viability of multi-use convention/sports/community Center

- Workshop held on /February 24, 2020
- Pending council direction and resources

#7 (Desirable) – Annexation of Unincorporated Enclaves

- Staff has begun research on the annexation process.
- Staff will identify possible priorities for annexation, the sources required and will provide a report to council.

#8 (Desirable) – Transit/Trolley System

- Staff has met and gathered information from Walton Cnty TDD about their trolley system and public/private partnerships.
- Future transit infrastructure located at paid parking lots be funded in part from paid parking funds **

** Parking resolution 2021-03 passed on October 4, 2021

#9 (Desirable) – City Marina

- Perform Phase 1 Feasibility Study to determine available options in the future as funding allows.
- \$75k budgeted in FY 22.

#10 (Desirable) – Improve parking: Explore options, garage, and surface

- Free resident parking passes are available for 2022.
 - ❖ 312 passes have been issued as of 1/20/2022
- Paid parking revenue is earmarked for future parking solutions.
- Program is freeing up parking spaces for intended use and preventing unintended use.
- Utilize Harbor Study/Recommendations.
- Zerbe Parking Lot improvements in 2022.

#11 Beach Renourishment, Planning and Schedule

- 2020 dredging operations provided emergency sand placement of approximately 193,310 cubic yards on Holiday Isle beaches.
- County contractors have compiled data from Sally storm/beach erosion assessment, report is forthcoming.
- Although no immediate and comprehensive renourishment plan is in place, the TDC and BOCC are researching options and is in regular communication with city administration.

Partnerships

A. Comments from Strategic Partners

- Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office – Sheriff Eric Aden

Okaloosa County Sheriff Eric Aden reported that common crimes has dropped in 2021 for the City of Destin; however, violent crimes such as aggravated assaults and murder have increased. The pandemics may have played a role since this is quite an easy place to get to, with the Governor not being too restrictive resulting in maintaining the number of visitors in the area. Most everyone is aware that the moral fabric of their society in general has declined, so too are the clientele that use to come in this area which probably exacerbated the violent crimes.

Also, according to Sheriff Aden, a lot of money is being spent during late night hours and that businesses have the right to stay open late at night. Trends show most violent crimes occur after midnight. DUI cases are also high because of people excessively drinking through the midnight hours. They work with local bars and restaurants to see what they need and how they can deter violent crimes. One idea that was given was to have armed security in establishments that want to

stay open late. Some of the establishments are already utilizing deputy armed security relying on off-duty officers to work the off-duty details.

Councilmember Bagby inquired as to the cost of a detail and whether there is a minimum number of hours for off duty officers to perform it.

According to Sheriff Aden, they have to attract their officers to come to work by offering them more money. It starts at \$30 per hour, the second tier at \$40 per hour, the third tier at \$50. His staff works side by side with many state law enforcement officers that are getting paid the state contract and getting paid a lot more making it unattractive for their local law enforcement officers to perform the detail. Depending on the venue, they typically require two officers or more. All the officers are paid the same amount of money regardless of rank. They used to have a two-hour minimum; it has been increased to 4-hour minimum to incentivize the officers to perform the work. The venue determines the price range. He also stated that they have not been competitive with the market area. A lot of other places, such as those in Tallahassee, are paying their officers a lot more and so they are having less problems fulfilling those details. They need to be more competitive since this is a tourist area.

Councilmember Schmidt asked if they would have staffing issues trying to fulfill an ordinance requiring businesses to have armed security detail.

Sheriff Aden stated the ordinance may have no enforcement capability. They are about 18 percent short in staffing at this time. They will be asking businesses to implement something they may not be able to fulfill, giving them a reason not to adhere to regulation. He continued there is a lot the city can do with their ordinance. The establishments also have the option to utilize private security. The city can word their ordinance to their advantage by requiring either public or private security. They could be more restrictive on late-night establishments; citing the owner of the establishment to make them more responsible. Potentially having their licensed pulled or penalizing them for violating regulations.

Okaloosa County Commissioner Mel Ponder, speaking on behalf of the county, stated that partnerships between the city and county have been great. The county has always been striving for the opportunity to partner with Destin on things like beach access, to give residents and tourists alike access to the beach. The Destin Cross Town Connector has been in the planning stages for quite some time, and they hope they can move forward with it soon. There is a dedicated stream of funds that could be used. He also stated the county just signed the Joint Use Agreement, signing a 40-year agreement with the military. They have conducted a workshop session and discussed possible usage for this money. Using these funds to make a difference on some things in which they were deficient as a county is really important. The bed tax money is a good win especially for the Destin community. There is funding in the county budget, and they have also petitioned Tallahassee for a multi-purpose trail on Okaloosa Island that would benefit a lot of residents. It will part of the pedestrian trail going all

the way down the length of Okaloosa Island. As a BOCC Chairman, he would like to focus on affordable workforce housing. Identifying parcels will be quite a task but he will be trying to work with local organizations and see what they could do to put this vision out there.

Mr. Shane Moody, President and CEO of Destin Chamber of Commerce, spoke next. He urged the council to speed up construction of the Destin Cross Town Connector as traffic is getting worse and worse; and to move the parking garages in the priority list. He stated that traffic in the harbor is bad not due to the number of vehicles on the road but for lack of a place to park those vehicles. They may also be able to build affordable workforce housing on top of those parking garages. He stated that the community center is on the list of the city's priorities, and that he would like the city to expand that vision to include the Town Center CRA. He continued there is some activity in the Old Time Pottery property. He and the mayor have been trying to confirm whether an earnest money has been put down by a major corporation. It has been reported they only intend to use about a third of the property. There may be a chance for a public-private partnership in that regard. There are adjacent properties that may also be up for sale. He concluded by saying that Destin is a small town with big city issues. They are a town of 14,000 people, and a region of about 24,000 people. They could have about 75,000 to 100,000 on any given day during the summertime, especially during the holiday weekends.

Mr. Ronnie Bell of Waste Management discussed the level of service they provide they provide for the City of Destin. He stated they appreciate the opportunity to serve the city. It is a good place to live and work. Under the contract they provide twice a week garbage pickup for all residents, once a week for recycle, and once a week for yard waste. In 2021, the amount of residential garbage in Destin was 8,920 tons, and commercial was 23,972 tons. It was 9% and 29% increase respectively from 2020 to 2021. Garbage will continue to grow because of the growth of the community. They value their partnership with the City of Destin.

Mr. Lockwood Wernet, General Manager of the Destin Water Users, water and sewer provider for the City of Destin, noted they have some expansions they need to make in their sewer capacity. It is a 20-year time frame, but they have already started working on it. He stated they have a great working relationship with city staff. They share resources and they appreciate their partnership with the city. They have completed some projects together – i.e., the Morgan Sports Complex which started in 1998 as well as a recent project at the Destin Elementary School, which saved the city \$500,000 in cost of irrigation and re-sodding. They have other projects they plan to collaborate in the future. As their partner, they are asking the city to coordinate with them on big projects such as the undergrounding of utilities. They have utilities and waterlines underground they are planning on possibly upgrading. As far as the cross-town connector, they see that project as an opportunity for them to increase connectivity of their system. They appreciate the partnership and the support they receive from the city, and that they are willing to provide same.

Mr. Joe Janazzo, Destin Elementary School Principal, noted that the school is at a 120 percent capacity. They have a 3-to-5-year plan to grow. He asked the city to keep this in mind as they discuss growth and affordable workforce housing and consider their impacts.

Mr. Phil Dorn, Destin High School Athletic Director, stated that they are very excited about their growth as a school, and that the City of Destin has been very supportive. As they grow, they are trying to implement a school-based community comprehensive high school projecting about 500 students in the fall of 2022. They are currently at 310 students. They are trying to provide 22 sports, but they also realize they are branching out in a community that is very tight on space and facilities. He urges the council to include some thoughts on multi-use facility from which the high school could also benefit in the future as they go forward with their strategic plan.

Ms. Sandy Trammell, prior member of the council and current member of the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee and Parks and Recreation Committee, addressed volunteer coordination. She reported that they have had some issues with the committees not having a quorum to consistently meet on a monthly basis. She feels the committees need more training. The new members of the council also need to be trained on the purpose of the volunteer committees and what they can do for them. She also mentioned that when the Public Works and Safety Committee Chair brought forth an item to council at a previous meeting, some members of the council lauded the chair for doing so and expressed the desire for committees to do it more often. She stated that her committees want to do the same. Council and staff have worked hard in the past to give volunteer committees the impetus to bring items before the council and not just rely on council reviewing their meeting minutes. Right now, they do not feel they are allowed to do so. They think they had to contact a member of the council to bring these items up. It stagnates the committees and does not give them the purpose as a committee. She offers to provide some assistance to help train the committees as she had done so in the past as a member of the council. They would also like the City Attorney to continue providing training on the Sunshine Law and Public Records Law.

Ms. Trammell also addressed the parking issue. She urges the council to look at determining how big a parking lot should be before it has to go vertical. They currently do not have an ordinance that can provide the criteria for it. She added they do not have big enough lands to accommodate a big surface lot similar to that of a Wal-Mart parking lot.

Ms. Trammel also stated they have added great looking parks in the city; however, they have not done anything to improve required maintenance, or additional staffing for these parks. She urges council to consider this issue at the next budget cycle.

Next, Ms. Trammell stated that it is expensive to recycle, but the city needs to work with Waste Management to do something to incentivize their businesses to recycle. It will go along way towards achieving one of their strategic goals of having a green and sustainable environment.

Mr. Jim Wood, prior member of the council and current member of the Public Works and Safety Committee and Local Planning Agency, addressed pedestrian safety.

He reported being hit by a car while walking on a city street. Luckily, it was not severe as the car was making a right-hand turn and failed to look to his right before turning. He stated that a lot of their residents sit in traffic all year round and most of them are always in a hurry anxious to go as soon as the light turns green, or even run a red light. They need to change this behavior by issuing more citations than warnings, as the latter does not do much to change people's behavior.

Mr. Wood noted that the city Strategic Plan sheet refers to the term "golf carts." He stated that people associate this term with low-speed vehicles, which is a lot different than golf carts. Golf carts are used on the golf course while low-speed vehicles are equipped to be able to be driven on the road.

Also, according to Mr. Wood, the subject of annexation is very important to him going back when he was a member of the council. He continued it is very hard to annex a territory or enclave into the city if they do not have anything to offer to people in that community that would incentivize them to do so. Affordable workforce housing, which they have been discussing recently, could be one of the tools they could use to encourage annexation.

Mr. Wood stated that they need to replace some of the street signage around the city, specifically the signs by the gas station on Airport Road and Main Street intersection. Main Street used to have two signs – a stop sign and right-turn only sign. Both signs have been gone for over a year. It is working well in Pensacola

Public Comments

Mr. Claude Perry, a Destin resident and business owner, stated that it would be a tremendous benefit to the city if they move Objective 1.8 – *Transit/Trolley System* from the Desirable Priorities to the Critical Priorities category. They have to deal with the serious traffic problem in the city and one way to reduce traffic is through the trolley system. It is working well in Pensacola, and Walton County has already approved the conceptual plan for the transit system, and they are in the verge of making it a reality for that county.

Mr. Perry stated that they have problems with violent crimes lately, as the sheriff alluded to earlier; however, this council should consider other options to address late hour crimes other than penalizing certain businesses by reducing their operating hours. Tourists are important to this town because many people rely on the hospitality industry. Late hours armed security is one option with the limitation the sheriff laid out.

Mr. Steven Franco, a Destin resident and business owner, stated that he has been communicating with Mayor Jarvis and Mr. Shane Moody of the Destin Chambers regarding some of the ideas for a city center. Both the mayor and Mr. Moody have some great ideas. He has a vast amount of experience in the commercial real estate and redevelopment of commercial properties. He is volunteering to assist in this initiative. As a Destin resident, he would like nothing but the best for this community. There are a lot of things they could do to enhance it. He encourages the city to move forward with this initiative, and that he looks forward to participating in this process with the city.

Mr. Todd Buhr, a Destin resident, pointed out that one of the city's strategic goals is Economic Development and Revitalization. However, the city's comprehensive plan Section 1.1 states that *Quality Development and Revitalization is one of five strategic goals identified by the City Council for 2020. Quality development should be efficient to service, promote development, enhance quality of life for current and future residents, and encourage stable or improving neighborhoods and center.* He stated that "quality", "stable", and "improving" are very important words. He encourages the council to look back and examine if they are really accomplishing this with their strategic plan. To determine the direction and how their visioning is working through into the objectives to enhance quality of life for residents. He continued that their prioritized customer groups are year-round residents, Destin-based businesses, and visitors. They need to think about whether this is translated into perception from their actual full-time residents. His neighborhood in Crystal Beach has the perception that Crystal Beach is the number 3 priority for a good part of the year. Businesses and visitors have a higher priority depending on who has more money to spend. This perception is formed by a lot of things such as noise from late night parties, with less than satisfactory resolution. It does not form a perception from residents, especially those with young children and are working full time, that they are the number one priority. The perception is not matching the goals. They need to make people accountable for their action. They need to examine how to convert these goals to objectives, and then to directions.

Updates & Requests

A. Department Updates, Ideas & Requests

1. Parks and Recreation Department (Lisa Firth, Director)

Parks

- Adjust staffing levels to account for increased recreational facilities.

Morgan Sports Center

- Replacement of sports turf which is nearing or at the end of its useful life (20+ years).
- Converting sports lighting to a new LED automated system.
- Addition of restrooms and equipment storage near the multipurpose fields to accommodate demand.

Community Center

- Window replacement (\$200k)
- Stucco repairs (\$150k)
- Foyer repairs, internal (\$100k)
- Stage replacement (\$8k)

Administrative

- Replacement of existing management software to improve public interactions including registrations and payments as well as better record keeping.
- Gymnasium use at the community center is at or near capacity. With demand increasing, expansion should at least be considered to maintain service levels especially for our youth.
- Sports field use at Morgan Sports Center is at or near capacity during peak season. Expansion should be considered to maintain service levels, especially for our youth.
- Continued focus/improvement on the cleanliness of our beaches in partnership with Okaloosa County needs to remain a department priority.
- The establishment of the Destin High School is adding and is projected to continue to add demand for sports/recreation facilities in Destin.

2. Library (Wen Livingston, Director)

Staffing

- High turnover of part-time staff

Collection Development Funding

- Nonfiction materials are very dated and need to be replaced
- eBook and e-audio book demand is increasing, and these materials are typically double or triple the cost of print materials; new demand for streaming video services.

Building Limitations

- The building is close to 20 years old and was not designed for future needs. The large meeting room is too small for some events. Children's Storytime room is not soundproofed, and the programs disturb people in the library.
- Library needs outdoor programming area and medium size meeting rooms to allow for social distancing.

3. Community Development Department (Louis Zunguze, Director)

Customer Service:

- Compass/Energov Software
 - ❖ Make full use of the system's capabilities
 - ❖ Streamlining development review processes – to improve turnaround times

Economic Development and Revitalization:

- Land Development Code (LDC) Update
 - ❖ Complete re-write of the LDC to align with Comprehensive Plan
- Harbor Capacity Study
 - ❖ Enhance the economic vitality and safety of the Destin Harbor

Improved Mobility and Connectivity:

- Mobility Plan
 - ❖ To replace Multi Modal Transportation District (MMTD)
- Cross Town Connector
 - ❖ The project is now at the 60% design stage

Sound Operational Sustainability:

- Impact Fee Study
 - ❖ To update the current Impact Fee Schedule which was last updated in 2008
- Permit Fee Study
 - ❖ Determine appropriate level of permit fees for Building Code Applications

Enhanced Quality of Life:

- Stormwater Master Plan Implementation
 - ❖ Implement the priority list of projects identified in the Master Plan and approved by council to address flood prone areas in the city

Public Engagement Initiative:

- Involve the public in the implementation of the city's major initiatives

4. Code Compliance Department (Joey Forgione, Director)

Proposed Community Outreach Initiative:

- Implement a pilot bicycle patrol program during peak season day shift.

- ❖ Will provide community outreach and education like the community policing concept
- ❖ Will contribute to ease of mobility for officers in highly congested areas during peak season.
- ❖ Will provide daily opportunities for officers to be in direct contact with residents, businesses, and visitors.
- ❖ Will contribute to the health and welfare of code officers.
- ❖ If desired, staff can bring back budget options for consideration. This may be achievable during the current fiscal year.

Future Staffing Consideration:

- Addition of a new officer who would assist in several areas including:
 - ❖ Allowing for two officers on weekends, evening shifts during the season.
 - ❖ Will provide a safer environment for staff and address their concerns
 - ❖ Will be used to cover for vacations, time-off, and sick leave to maintain service levels.
 - ❖ Will be used to temporarily assist when high demand is present in certain areas.
 - ❖ If desired, staff can bring back budget options for consideration during the FY 2023 budget process.

Future Technology Considerations:

- There are several services and strategic partner data sets that can potentially assist us in identifying short-term rentals (STR) that are not complying with local, state, and federal mandates.
 - ❖ They can potentially identify STRs that have not registered with the city.
 - ❖ They can potentially identify STRs who are not paying the required bed-tax.
 - ❖ They can potentially identify potential changes in occupancy for specific STRs.
 - ❖ If desired, staff can bring back budget options for consideration during the FY 2023 budget process
- Provide ongoing staff training regarding the COMPASS System so the organization can continue striving to use the system to its fullest capacity. Staff continues to budget for this training.

5. Public Works Department (Michael Burgess, Director)

Departmental Staffing Needs:

- Median Maintenance/Sidewalk/Concrete Repairs/ADA Compliance
- Six full-time staff members plus equipment
- Ability to return several services in-house, increase levels of service, responsiveness, and accountability
- Public Works will bring back budgetary options for consideration during the FY 2023 budget process

Departmental Budgetary Needs (Operational):

- Pavement Management (roads) R&R – \$1.2 million per year (15-yr)
- Sidewalks R&R - TBD, based on ADA Transition Plan Engineer's estimates
- Stormwater R&R - \$250,000 per year (repairs, deep cleaning)
- Safety Improvements Budget - \$100,000 per year
- City-wide Pavement Assessment - \$250,000 (based on recent quote)
- Facilities Conditions and Needs Assessment – TBD, in-process
- City-Wide Stormwater System Survey – FY 2023 Project
- Implementation of Asset Management Software

Departmental Budgetary Needs (Capital Purchases):

- Brush Chipper (existing unit is 20 years old) - \$80,000
- Mini-Excavator - \$80,000
- Storm Sewer Cleaning Truck, Vac-Con or equivalent - \$350,000
- New Building at Maintenance Facility – TBD
- Hardened Structure for Emergency Operations - TBD

6. Human Resources (Nichole River, Director)

Future Staffing Needs

- Upgrade current HR part-time position to full-time to manage increased demands on the HR Department
- If desired, staff can bring back budget options for consideration. This may be achievable during the current fiscal year.

Compensation & Job Satisfaction

- Ensuring total benefits are competitive with our public and private sector peers
- Enhance training initiatives and communication
- Compensation study with Evergreen Solutions is nearing completion. This study aims to address wages, compensation and accurate job descriptions.

Highly Competitive Market

- High turnover
- Enhancing recruitment practices & new hire onboarding experience

7. City Clerk Department (Rey Bailey, City Clerk)

Implementing New Cemetery Records Management Software

- User-friendly and offers robust computing, searching, and plotting feature to manage cemetery data more effectively

Growing Overall Number of Public Records Requests (PRR) and Increasing Complexity of Requests Fulfillment

- CY 2020: 388 PRRs / CY 2021: 502 PRRs / 29% increase
- Social media, text messages, emails
- Training Regimen
- Technology plays a key part in allowing us to meet the challenge, be more efficient and provide quicker/more accurate response to PRRs

Creating a training plan for committees

8. Information Technology Department (Matthew Pace, Director)

EnerGov (COMPASS) and MUNIS Software

- Upgrade to latest versions
- Migration to Software as a Service (SaaS) solution with Tyler Technologies to increase organization efficiency
- Continue to assist departments in streamlining functions and processes

Network and Information Technology Growth Within the Organization

- Consolidation of hardware to accommodate technology use on and off site

- Cloud-based initiatives continue to be a priority across all departments and services provided by the city.
- Software and hardware upgrades (from workstations to servers)
- Best-in-suite systems for consolidation of services
 - ❖ I.e., Microsoft, CivicPlus and Tyler Technologies
- New and improved equipment to maintain high levels of service
- Maintain and Manage Wireless Phone and Data Services (Federally Regulated Service Provider Access)

Network and Data Cybersecurity Measures

- End-user Training and Awareness
- Continued Advanced Threat Protection measures within our current systems
- Enhance network and wireless equipment to handle more secure and sustainable communications

9. Public Information (Catherine Card, Manager)

New website launched – March 2021

Website and Social Media Metrics:

- In 2021, there were over 368,000 visits to the City of Destin website / over 15,000 likes on Facebook / 1,088 public engagement posts / 109 press releases distributed / 172 stories covered by local and regional media.

Instagram Launch – October 2021

Future Staff Need:

- Digital Media Specialist or 3rd Party Partnership
 - ❖ Continue to strengthen and engage citizens by creating and administering proactive content on the city's social media platforms and website
 - ❖ Support social media strategy by creating strong digital content for the city
 - ❖ Create video library for city achievements, high-level projects, council and staff Q&A

10. Grant, Projects and Contracts (Jeff Cozadd, Manager)

American Rescue Plan Act

- Stormwater improvements

- IT projects

Infrastructure Bill

- Undergrounding

TDC Funding Agreement

- Capital projects
- Beach acquisition

City Procurement Policy

- Increase efficiency

Grants/Projects

- Active – 15 / over \$11 million
- Pending – 4 / over \$2.2 million

Externally Funded and Managed Projects

- Active – 6 / over \$18 million

Active Contracts – 30

Capital Project Management RFQ

11. Finance Department (Krystal Strickland, Director)

Operational Sustainability

- Updating fee schedules
- Investing in technology
- Maximizing use of external sources for capital projects to relieve pressure on the General Fund
- Long-range planning (i.e., facilities)

Better Matching Funding Sources for Top 3 Capital Projects

- Cross Town Connector
- Beach Acquisition/Development
- Undergrounding

12. Deputy City Manager (Webb Warren)

Implement technology and best practices to improve processes and to implement Council's objectives

- MUNIS Financial/HR System
- COMPASS
- CivicRec

Partnerships

- Okaloosa County
- Tourist Development Department
- Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office
- Destin Fire District

Beach Acquisition

Paid Parking System

13. City Manager (Lance Johnson)

#1. Keeping the organization constantly moving towards achieving the city's vision and strategic objectives in the most efficient and effective method possible

- Continuously strive to improve communications with Council, Residents, Businesses, Visitors and Staff members.
- Professionally execute the City Council's adopted Strategic Priorities and Policies.
- Provide staff with the resources they need to execute City Council's adopted Strategic Priorities & Policies.
- Remove barriers preventing staff from executing City Council's Strategic Priorities and Policies.
- Oversee the stewardship of the City's; fiscal resources, human resources, & physical resources.
- Ensure the Organization's knowledge is being memorialized in processes and procedures.
- Foster a team-oriented culture of Continuous Quality Improvement that strives to exceed expectations.

B. Council and Mayor Key Initiatives and Projects

At this time, Ms. Rakas presented the information that she received during her one-on-one meeting with some of the members of the city council; noting that the council responded to the following questions posed to them during that session:

Are there any council objectives on the current plan the council would like to see re-prioritized?

Are there any future projects they would like staff to research for the Fiscal Year 2023 budget process, and which can be considered for inclusion in the strategic plan?

**** Are there any projects or initiatives that are not rising to the level of inclusion that they would like to see in the strategic plan, and which they would like to see implemented within the next couple of years (short term)?*

Ms. Rakas shared the results of the interview. She asked the council to clarify or add anything to the information they already provided, to answer questions, and/or provide any new information.

1. Councilmember Bagby

- Strategic goals. Councilmember Bagby recommends making the following changes to the list:
 - ❖ Move #2 (A Green and Sustainable Environment) to position #6
 - ❖ Move #4 (Enhanced Quality of Life and Safety for Families) to position #2
 - ❖ Move #5 (Economic Development and Revitalization) to position #3
- Council Objectives (FY 21/22)
 - ❖ Councilmember Bagby agrees with the order of priorities as listed. Though he may not necessarily agree with Desirable Priority 1.6 – *Research Viability of Multi-Use Convention/Sports/Community Center – Phase 1 Feasibility Study*), he does not object to the feasibility study being conducted.
 - ❖ Improving the culture of the council is of paramount importance to Councilmember Bagby.
- Future projects and initiatives: Councilmember Bagby recommends:
 - ❖ Add the Four Prong Lake Flooding Mitigation project in FY 2023 budget process; and to include any other areas of the city that has flooding problems
 - ❖ Emphasize priority for parks improvements and developments
- New projects or initiatives ***
 - ❖ Changing the culture, improving relationships of council and staff, staff with the citizens
 - ❖ To have a designated legislative sponsor/champion among the council members for any initiatives (Providing information in the agenda cover sheet for the legislative sponsor).
 - ❖ Update many of the city's policies, i.e., investment/procurement
 - ❖ Examine and implement staff and council training; especially training staff on continuous improvement processes.

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Bagby spoke about empowering the committees and staff, which would include providing professional training, with the City Attorney giving the committees training in the Sunshine Law, and staff providing other necessary training to individual committees.

Councilmember Destin recommends the council indicates which things they support and bring forward as each member discusses their priorities since they are in a workshop session and cannot take any formal actions.

Councilmember Bagby explained the reasons behind his recommendation for realignment of the strategic goals. He stated that *A Green and Sustainable Environment* is listed as their #2 strategic goal; however, as he looked at the council's objectives and all the initiatives and projects they are trying to accomplish, he did not see a single green and sustainable project, such as putting solar panels on top of the community center or other city facilities. He also noted that the council has discussed purchasing natural gas vehicles for the city about 10 years ago, but it did not happen. He added that becoming a green and sustainable environment should not be high on their priority list if they are not currently doing anything to reach that point.

Councilmember Schmidt pointed out that the strategic goals are not supposed to be in any particular order of priority.

The City Manager confirmed these are the adopted strategic goals by the council, but they are not currently listed in priority order.

Ms. Rakas asked if there are any comments or objections to Councilmember Bagby's other recommendations. She asked whether there were any specific items the council would like to provide additional support and they would like to see researched by staff for consideration for FY 2023.

Councilmember Hebert supports moving forward with designating legislative sponsor among the council for any city initiatives.

Councilmember Destin noted that the council passed a resolution about 10 years ago requiring legislative sponsor for any city initiatives.

Ms. Rakas announced there is full support for the legislative sponsor idea.

Councilmember Bagby addressed the "Right-Turn Only" sign off west bound US Hwy 98 to Airport Road, stating that a lot of motorists are frequently missing those signs and then attempting to change lane in heavy traffic. He continued there are currently 3 signs that are located very close to each other. They should ask FDOT to place these signs at a maximum distance from each other as the state's manual requires.

At this time, the mayor recommends giving each member of the council a chance to speak and provide their input before making any type of adjustment to the plan in terms of priorities or compiling a "wish" list.

According to the City Manager, the main reason for this session was to have conversation and improve communications so that staff knows what the council wants. He encourages the council to focus on high level items.

Councilmember Schmidt agrees with the recommendation in terms of committee and staff training. He suggests putting more emphasis on the responsibility of the staff liaisons to these committees and whether they are doing the job they should be doing.

The City Manager noted that Training is listed on the management plan for this year and that staff is currently working on it.

2. Mayor Jarvis

Mayor's recommendations:

- Accelerate the completion of the Destin Cross Town Connector.
- Controlled growth and development
 - ❖ Undergrounding of US Hwy 98
 - ❖ Creation of new comprehensive plan
 - ❖ Development of city center – to serve the community needs within the next 20 to 30 years. They are quite inept in some of their facilities and capabilities for their residents.
 - The event center that was initially recommended has grown to something much bigger. They would need a property big enough to incorporate a new community center, a new city hall with a hardened emergency management facility
 - Need to work with the private sector in developing a gateway to the CRA that would not only be aesthetically pleasing but that would take the CRA, which has been in high debt since 2005, get out of debt, create a tax base, and improve the quality of life for the community.
 - Need to create a list on the status of the CRA and what it would take to improve it
 - Create a 3-dimensional idea on what a city center might look like
 - Create a private citizen board with visionary members and experts in development
 - Current CRA Board explore places such as Silver Springs, Georgia and observe current development there and learn its history. Compare what it used to look like and what it looks like now and bring that idea back to the community and start developing that vision.
- Proponent of improving the direction of the citizen advisory groups
 - ❖ Give each group a charter
 - ❖ Make sure they have people in that panel with professional experience or visionary approach to their position and can come up with well-thought out, practical, doable, visionary ideas

DISCUSSION:

According to Councilmember Bagby, there were Town Center renderings back in 2004, just before he became a member of the council for the first time, where all the parking was internalized, and all the building were on the outside perimeter. He continued that the plan was similar to Rosemary Beach, and it may or may not include a public component. He added it would be a good place to start if they could locate those renderings.

The City Manager commented that the initial plan to build an event center has potentially transformed into an even bigger initiative such as the city center as alluded to by the mayor. Staff will need some guidance from the council on whether to add additional components to this plan and shift some funding from other areas into a feasibility study that would include other components such as an additional city hall facility or hardened facility as the mayor suggested.

The mayor recommends allowing him to get some clarity on the piece of property the council authorized him to investigate before giving further direction to staff. He would inform the council of his findings, and they could possibly schedule a public workshop to discuss this matter, and then the council could give direction on how to proceed.

Councilmember Destin agrees that providing directions to staff will be quite premature at this time. He recommends allowing the mayor to find out whether they have a chance to obtain that property since another entity reportedly expressed interest in obtaining it.

Councilmember Bagby stated that since they have already appropriated the money to conduct the feasibility study for the event center they should go ahead and move forward with it. It could run parallel to the city center which the mayor was talking about that would include a new city hall and gateway to the CRA. They could conduct the study, re-prioritize, and make some adjustments, if necessary.

Ms. Rakas stated there seemed to be an agreement at least for conducting a feasibility study for Desirable Priority 1.6 – *Research viability of Multi-use Convention/Sports/Community Center (Phase 1 Feasibility Study)*. She mentioned that Councilmember Schmidt has expressed his desire to move it up to Critical Priority level.

Councilmember Schmidt explained that Objective 1.6 may need to be elevated to a Critical Priority, but it may also need to be restructured since the event center has grown to something much bigger as the mayor has indicated. He also stated that the status of the Town Center is of critical importance. But he also feels spending the money to conduct a feasibility study is a little premature at this time.

Council members Hebert and Destin recommend postponing making any decisions on this matter until the mayor has a chance to examine the situation regarding the property in question.

Ms. Rakas stated there seemed to be a consensus to have future discussion on possible re-adjustment or re-structuring of Objective 1.6.

3. Councilmember Schmidt

- Move Objective 1.6 to a Critical Priority and restructure.
- New projects or initiatives ***
 - ❖ Citywide street safety / Safer streets project
 - Making streets safer for pedestrians, bicyclist, motorists, etc.
 - Staff to research prior to FY 2023 budget process and consider for 2023 strategic plan.
 - ❖ Fee schedules updates – to be completed soon
 - ❖ Clement Taylor Park Renovation – to commence soon
 - ❖ Focus on Management Objective 2.4 – *Develop and implement processes for consistent and streamlined application of codes and procedures; streamline livery vessel regulations and permitting; streamlined, prompt, consistent building permitting.*
 - ❖ Contract Project Manager/Consultant position – making hiring someone a priority

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Bagby inquired as to the status of the safety program initiated by the previous City Engineer.

Mr. Zunguze noted it is being worked on and should be presented to the council in approximately two months.

Councilmember Bagby requests the plan be vetted through the Public Works/Safety Committee.

4. Councilmember Wagner

- Emphasize importance of mobility
 - ❖ Specifically making it easier to stay on sidewalks
 - ❖ Creating sidewalks that do not abruptly end
- Continue theme of responsible development
 - Create net-zero buildings
 - Longevity/sustainability
- Move undergrounding utilities to Critical Priority for the current strategic plan
- New projects or initiatives ***
 - ❖ Expanding undergrounding project
 - Consider aesthetic implications
 - Landscape projects
 - Laying 5G fiber at the same time utilities are being buried
 - Consider underground aesthetics, landscaping beautification
 - ❖ Emphasize connectability/mobility
 - Making it easier to get around the city

- ❖ Recycling/green initiatives
 - Keeping carbon footprint low
- ❖ Cleanup of the harbor and waterways
- ❖ Annexation of unincorporated enclaves

DISCUSSION

Ms. Rakas asked if there was council support for moving undergrounding utilities to Critical Priority.

Councilmember Hebert stated she does not think they can do anything more than what they have already done. This project has been in motion for over 10 years. They are at the stage now that they are paying for it and working together with the utility company.

Councilmember Destin agrees they should leave undergrounding utilities in its present position. They have enough money at their franchise fee increase to pay for phase 1. They need to stay at their present position until they determine how to pay for the subsequent phases.

Councilmember Wagner stated it is important to consider all avenues as that project is getting underway the next couple of years. The critical part is not for moving faster but for taking advantage of every opportunity.

5. Councilmember Hebert

Ms. Rakas stated that in her conversation with Councilmember Hebert, she indicated to her she was happy where things stand at this point. She has no desired changes with regards to reprioritization mainly because she does not want to disrupt current efforts.

Councilmember Hebert stated that the big projects and initiatives they really wanted the past several years are starting to come to fruition, with everything falling into place. Though she agrees with other council members' ideas and thoughts, she does not see any major reasons to reprioritize. She wants staff to be able to focus on the jobs at hand and continue to make progress.

6. Councilmember Destin

Councilmember Destin feels they are on the right course, and that prioritization of strategic plan is not necessary at this time. He recommends adding in their capital projects list charging stations for electric vehicles. The Marler Street parking lot which have now been utilized more than ever is a perfect location. This is also a clear support of their green initiative.

Councilmember Destin seeks other council members opinion about continuing to pursue Objective 1.5 – *Zerbe Street/Calhoun Avenue Phase II – Design pedestrian pathway under Marler Bridge*, which is currently listed under important priorities. He stated he would still like to pursue it, even though he does not have a complete consensus among residents in his neighborhood.

Councilmember Hebert noted they have had multiple discussions about this matter in the past, and they have been presented 3 different designs by their engineer, each of which has its pros and cons. She would still like to move forward with it and for the council to decide on the design sooner rather than later. It is a safety issue as there a lot of pedestrians crossing US Hwy 98 especially during the summertime.

Councilmember Schmidt stated that the presentation was very confusing to him, and that the overall objective of the project was not very clear. He personally needs to have the history of it to have a better understanding as what they expect to achieve from it. He also pointed out there are a lot of potential activities going on around that area, including one that involves the community center parcel, that could affect this particular project. Also, there is a study underway on the Stahlman Avenue and US Hwy 98 intersection that could potentially affect the Town Center area. He supports keeping this objective at its present location.

Councilmember Bagby pointed out that the original goal was to connect parking with the festive marketplace. His original idea was to place tunnels underneath US Hwy 98 as he believes it would be the most used tunnels in Northwest Florida even though not many thought it was possible. He agrees to keeping this objective at its current location.

Councilmember Wagner supports the idea of placing tunnels underneath US Hwy 98 to prevent pedestrians from having to cross the busy highway.

The City Manager announced that the previous council had instructed staff to look at the different safe crossing options at Stahlman Avenue. Those options have been analyzed and their recommendations will be provided to FDOT when they ask the city for their ideas during their PD&E Study from Airport Road to Marler Bridge, which should be taking place very soon.

7. Councilmember King

Councilmember King expressed his support for staying the course to avoid any potential disruptions to several projects already underway and to all the other initiatives they have established. He would like the council and staff to focus on the current priorities. He would also like for everyone to ensure that year-round residents remain the #1 key customer group in the City of Destin.

Council desired changes to priorities established in the current adopted strategic plan

In summary, Ms. Rakas stated that based on comments by the council members in today's session, it seemed there were no sweeping changes to the existing plan at this time; just some refocusing, reemphasizing, or getting movement on certain initiatives. There are new items for FY 2023 that were brought up as well as the desire for further discussion about either reprioritization, adjustment, or both for the feasibility study for the community center/city center.

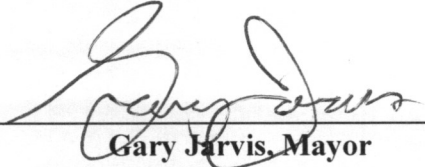
Projects/Initiatives for staff to research for upcoming budgeting season (Fiscal Year 2023)

The City Manager stated they will be bringing back suggestions as they interpreted them from today's session. They will be doing research for potential budget items for Fiscal Year

2023. There may be potential swap of the current budget to get things started before the hundred days of summer.

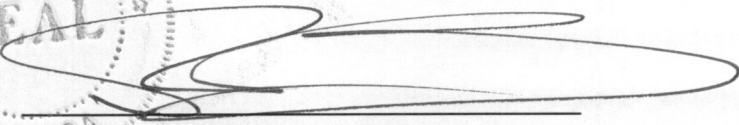
ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM.



Gary Jarvis, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rey Bailey, City Clerk

