



Council Worksession

April 5, 2022

5:00 pm

Present: Mayor Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas
Councilmember Abdullahi Abdulle
Councilmember Pam Axberg
Councilmember Emily Dunsworth

Absent: Councilmember Graeme Allen

Staff in Attendance: Devin Massopust, Mark Suggs, Jennifer Fink, Gina Foschi, Craig Schlichting

Guests in Attendance:

Review Final 2022-2023 Strategic Priorities

Massopust stated on March 5, 2022 the City of New Brighton staff and elected officials and a consultant, Barb Strandell with What Works, met to identify strategic priorities for 2022 and 2023. He explained a pre-retreat survey was completed to assist in identifying goals. The strategic priorities identified by the work group are:

- Infrastructure
- Operational Effectiveness
- Environment and Sustainability
- DEI
- Livable Community

Massopust reviewed each of the strategic priorities in further detail with the Council. He reported City staff has refined the programs and initiatives within each of the strategic priorities based on capacity, timelines, budget appropriateness, and applicability. The attached presentation describes each of the priorities as well as the programs and initiatives within each of them. Council is asked to ensure these priorities reflect where they want resources allocated to in 2022 and 2023. Staff is in the process of creating a Management Action Plan that will ensure each initiative is being accomplished within set time frames and will provide progress updates to the Council.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas discussed how budgeting practices should be amended over time in order to reflect the City's strategic priorities while also supporting the City's commitment to the public safety model along with its commitment to funding fleet and non-fleet budgets.

Councilmember Abdulle recommended the streets be referred to as "livable streets" versus "living streets". Schlichting discussed the difference between living streets, complete streets, and green streets noting these were all options for the Council to consider.

Councilmember Dunsworth questioned if the infrastructure plan included County roads. Schlichting reported County roads were harder to get a City arm into because they do not plan as far out as the City does. He understood there were plans for Old Highway 8 and the City was working with the County on this project. He indicated the City would have input on the County roads when they are redone in the community.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas reported the strategic priorities were high level aspirations for the City to focus on. She suggested the language for the Operational Effectiveness priority be amended to eliminate the competitive wages and benefits language.

Councilmember Axberg stated she believed Operational Effectiveness was a balance of quality and efficiency for high value services.

Massopust commented on the need for another senior administrative staff member and how this would benefit City staff.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas recommended the EV charging station program be included in the programs and initiatives for the City's Environment and Sustainability strategic priority. Schlichting reported this would be included in the City's climate action plan. He anticipated it would take the City nine months to complete the climate action plan.

Councilmember Abdulle recommended the City have high level policies in place with respect to environment and sustainability. Massopust indicated the City would have policies in place for living streets, the Pavement Management Plan, within the Comp Plan, and would be drafting a climate action plan.

Councilmember Axberg questioned how the City would use the data gathered from the Community Survey. Massopust explained he would like to review the data with the Council once compiled and noted adjustments could be made to the City's strategic priorities if this was warranted.

Councilmember Dunsworth asked if metrics would be included in the framework. She recommended this be considered with all community engagement that is conducted by the City. Massopust reported metrics would be included in the strategic action plan to assist staff with tracking progress.

Councilmember Abdulle stated he appreciated all of the work staff had done on the DEI efforts, noting community engagement was important along with completing the equity strategic action plan.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas commented when the equity strategic action plan moves forward she believed it would be important to clarify what would be done internal and what would be done external. She suggested the goals and strategies for the NBCC be connected to the City's operational effectiveness and that this be done early in 2023 in order to qualify for funding from the State in 2024. Fink reported she hoped to complete a feasibility study in order to ask for dollars from the State.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas asked what was next for public safety given the uptick in crime and if there would be more outreach in the community, or an embedded social worker. Massopust discussed the community oriented policing that was already taking place and noted the current public safety model would remain in place. He reported he could provide the Council with further information on community oriented policing.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas stated she would like to see the City staying ahead of the curve when it comes to public safety.

Councilmember Dunsworth thanked staff for all of their efforts on the Council's strategic priorities and the corresponding programs and initiatives. She questioned how the City's commissions would play into the next steps. Massopust discussed how Commissions reviewed items and were then brought to the Council in order to achieve the proposed strategic priorities. He stated some of the commissions were generating their own work plans as well and staff could see if adjustments were necessary.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas commended staff for all of their efforts for properly capturing the Council's strategic priorities. She understood this was a great deal of work and she looked forward to completing these tasks in the coming months and years.

Councilmember Axberg agreed this was very well done. She commented her only concern was how the City would face some realities and tradeoffs in trying to achieve all of these goals.

Councilmember Dunsworth stated she appreciated how staff had broken down the strategic priorities into actionable items. She indicated this was a lot of work and would take a great deal of effort to complete. She explained she wanted to be sure the City would be able to accomplish the items within the strategic priorities. She asked that staff provide authentic, real and regular updates to the Council.

Councilmember Abdulle commented he too was proud of all of the work that was done on the strategic priorities. He did not believe anything was missing and while this was a lot of work, he looked forward to all the City would accomplish in the next two years.

Worksession adjourned at 6:25 pm

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Terri Spangrud".

Terri Spangrud
City Clerk