

AUSTIN, TEXAS CITY COUNCIL RETREAT

November 9 and 10, 2006

Agenda

Objectives:

- Develop and confirm a common vision for the future of the community.
- From that vision, integrate and then prioritize new initiatives with on-going initiatives in order to give staff direction and focus for the near future.
- Increase understanding of how the Council is going to work together to achieve this common vision.

Thursday morning, 9 am to 12 noon

“SETTING THE CONTEXT”

Overview and coming together

Roles, Responsibilities, and Values of Elected Officials

This is a presentation and discussion of the difficult “working conditions” and challenges facing a governing body. The council will come to understand the public service value conflicts they must balance in order to build and maintain a strong sense of community among all citizens.

Leadership Styles and Effective Team Work

Using the self-assessment instrument, “Strength Deployment Inventory” (SDI), participants will learn more about the strengths of each person’s leadership style and how the collective strengths can best be used to build a more effective team. The instrument is non-judgmental, makes good sense to people, and its concepts are easy to apply. It considers each individual’s style not only when things are going well but also under situations of conflict. This instrument does not presume that there are problems, but is a tool used to enhance effectiveness and cooperation.

Thursday afternoon, 1 to 4:30 pm

Leadership Styles and Effective Team Work (continued)

“SETTING A DIRECTION”

Dreams and Fears for the community of Austin

We utilize an exercise to help the council think broadly about how they see the future. The intent is to begin at the broadest level and then narrow the focus to achievable outcomes and priorities. We have found that there is usually quite a bit of agreement at this broad level, which develops a level of trust to build upon for the subsequently more difficult task of priority setting.

Test Current City Vision: “We want Austin to be the most livable city in the country”

Thursday evening:

Dinner together, including partners. Before dinner, there will be informal time; the facility has walking trails and spa activities. The website for The Crossings is: www.thecrossingsaustin.com

Friday morning, 8:30 am to 12 noon

“SETTING PRIORITIES”

– Strategic Goals for the Long-term Future

We proceed from the dreams and fears to the development of strategic goals that incorporate the goals in the existing Strategic Plan. Together we will determine where on-going and new initiatives fit into the Strategic Plan.

Test Current Council Priorities & Develop Goal Statements where appropriate:

- 1. Youth, Family and Neighborhood Vitality***
- 2. Public Safety***
- 3. Sustainable Community***
- 4. Affordability***

– Key Objectives for the Next 18 to 24 Months

For each of the strategic goals the council will identify and prioritize key objectives that they would like to see accomplished in the next 18 to 24 months (the time that this council will be together as a body). This provides the basis for staff work plans and for budget preparations. It is common that the council will propose many objectives, and the difficult part will be to prioritize them in light of staff and resource constraints. We will do this using a nominal group voting process.

Friday afternoon, 1 to 3 pm

“BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE COUNCIL TEAM”

– Communication and Team Work within the Council

This will be a facilitated discussion about how well the council communicates with each other and how well they work together. This discussion may lead to the development of guidelines that the council can use to enhance their team work.

– Summary and Next Steps.

Ground Rules:

- ✓ Participate but don't dominate**
- ✓ Listen for understanding and commonalities**
- ✓ Work for consensus but allow for differences of opinion**

Facilitators:

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