

City of Smithville

Strategic Planning Summary

July 31, 2018



Executive Summary

The City of Smithville Mayor and Board of Aldermen gathered July 31, 2018 to set a course for the community's future over the next five years. The full agenda for the day can be found on Page 13 of this document, with the complete summary beginning on Page 4.

Vision

The governing body affirmed the following vision statement established at the 2017 retreat.

*A thriving Smithville will
embrace growth, encourage commerce,
respect its past and cultivate its natural surroundings.*

Key Focus Areas and Goals

Following the completion of a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) exercise, the Mayor and Board determined the key performance areas – those things that must go well to achieve the community vision. They then brainstormed hoped-for achievements in each of those key performance areas and subsequently prioritized those goals. On the following page are the governing body's priorities for the next one to five years, categorized by the key performance areas and whether they are short- or long-term goals.

Key Focus Areas and Goals

Growth	We nurture a thriving economy by attracting and maintaining diverse development.
Short Term	Update comprehensive plan
Governance	We act as a cohesive team, providing the human and physical resources to advance the goals and the betterment of the community.
Short Term	Evaluate staffing needs, hire and develop staff
Long Term	Build a new police station or substation
Community Life	We provide an environment where all can experience safety, security and opportunity for an active, healthy lifestyle.
Long Term	Develop a 12-court basketball mega complex
Finance	We maintain public trust through fiscally sound investment of public revenues and resources.
Short Term	Develop a balanced budget
Infrastructure	We envision, build, and maintain the necessary road, utilities and strategic land use to prepare for residential and economic growth.
Short Term	South sewer line completion
Long Term	Implement recommendations of water master plan; complete update of sewer master plan
Community Engagement	We seek input, partner with our community, and encourage active participation in creating our future.
Short Term	More professional live stream
	Citizen Based Strategic Plan
	Heritage Park playground improvements

Complete Summary

Preparation

The mayor and board members were asked to come to the retreat prepared to share with their colleagues their reflections on serving on the governing body. Their answers, edited for brevity, are captured in the following table.

	I serve because	What I enjoy most about serving is...	What frustrates me about the governing process is...	I contribute to the decision making process	The governing body does this well	The governing body could do this better	To make the governing body more effective, I will
Steve Sarver	Important to volunteer; enjoy it now that I have the time	I see Smithville growing and like change	Nothing to this point; have enjoyed all civic participation	Have time, study every issue, hopefully will learn	Wants Smithville to prosper	Give oversight but not micromanage staff	Learn, study issues
Marv Atkins	Give back to the community	See growth and achievement; for city and for individuals; believe in servant leadership	Sunshine law; respect what it's meant for. Like to talk and communicate and mull ideas; wish there was a happy medium	More analytical (although that will take longer)	Shows respect for each other	Researching the facts; don't go to the feelings vote	Improve the citizens and governing body and communications
Josh Hurlbert	Giving back; being in government is in my blood; past president of Rotary club; had help during tornado	Responsiveness; We can be more responsive on the local level than on the federal level.	Would like to be able to talk to other people; prohibited because of Sunshine Law	Bureaucratic experience	Works together well; only one issue that were divided on	Been impressed with how the governing body has worked given how new it is	Has been quiet in the first few months, but will speak up with longer tenure

	I serve because	What I enjoy most about serving is...	What frustrates me about the governing process is...	I contribute to the decision making process	The governing body does this well	The governing body could do this better	To make the governing body more effective, I will
Melissa Wilson	Be more actively involved	Opportunity to help the city move forward	Finding the funding for things we need and want to do	Analytical person; look at it from a conservative fiscal process	Really respect each other		Be the watchdog on the budget and really research
John Chevalier	Started going to meetings after seeing how some aldermen were treating people, so wanted to show community that there are people who are listening	Being able to help plan for the future; we need to think far ahead	One or two negative people in town that are out of control; Have to figure out a way to break out of that cycle	Active on social media; Listening and seeing what's going on	Listening to people	Do more engagement on social media	Research issues more

	I serve because	What I enjoy most about serving is...	What frustrates me about the governing process is...	I contribute to the decision making process	The governing body does this well	The governing body could do this better	To make the governing body more effective, I will
Jeff Bloemker	Public service is in my blood.	Sense of accomplishment when we work together to tackle tough issues.	We don't move fast enough. We aren't agile enough. Takes us too long to get to decisions. Give broad direction to staff and then get to it. Hate Hancock.	Vision and focus; lay out a plan and move forward	Appreciates each other's strengths and isn't afraid to look to someone else for advice; Everyone has been the single dissenting vote at some point	One complaint does not mean a movement of the people. Need to stay focused on the bigger issues and not on complaints	Citizen based strategic plan
Damien Boley	Want residents and guests to want to hang out and enjoy Smithville	Seeing the process, celebrating the successes and working to improve the process	Want to encourage others to "get in the game," get involved in the city	Get as much of the story as he can	Listens to everyone and respects everyone	Spending time in the community; leading by example; worrying less about the blowback by a few	Listen and learn

Understanding the Current Environment

City Administrator Cynthia Wagner provided a progress report regarding the goals established last year. Thereafter, the governing body discussed the successes of the past year and the lessons learned.

Successes	Lessons Learned
Hired city administrator	Don't need to go as fast (TIF)
More professional board	Study issues for personal decisions/ask more questions
9-11 Memorial	Role as elected official; represent citizens to do what is best for entire community
Parks and Recreation Board	Can always improve communication
Street sweeper	Rates, financing, budget; It is ok to have the courage to increase rates, taxes
Positive interactions with the public	
July parks program	
Communication: between staff and board, with the citizens, and among staff	
Staff work with contractors	

This I Believe Exercise

Each participant was asked to share "what they believe" about the future of the City of Smithville.

Steve Sarver:

I believe that Smithville has had the fortunate experience of positive growth in the community, as it brings in people who have chosen Smithville to be their new hometown. I believe that the reasons people have for making Smithville their home include our excellent school district, our proximity to a beautiful lake and wildlife habitat, the opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle with access to youth sports teams and biking and hiking trails, access to food products from our local farmers, our reputation for being a friendly community that is working hard to create more fun family events, our small town feel, and the fact that a person can get more bang for their buck with the housing in Smithville.

I moved here 10 years ago this summer and have witnessed many changes during that time – changes that Smithville can be proud of. I believe that the City staff, mayor and aldermen have a very positive vision for making Smithville the best community it can be for all residents, and that they are working hard to achieve many goals that will support the future growth. I believe that Smithville will continue to enjoy more growth in population and business opportunities, and that its reputation of having quality schools, happy residents and a reasonable cost of living will become even more well-known.

Marv Atkins:

We were wanting out of Kansas City so moved to Smithville. We went to a local gas station to fill up, three people in front wanted to talk to each other. So I started talking too. I thought, "Is this what a community is supposed to do?" That changed my opinion about moving to little Smithville. It's nice to sleep in a smaller town but it's also nice to be able to wave at your neighbors with all your fingers. I believe in making a positive contribution back to the community. I want to focus on people's needs and not their feelings. I want to help create a better tomorrow.

Josh Hurlbert:

We are on the precipice of substantial growth of the community. Smithville is going to change. How we adapt is what the board will deal with in the next few years. Getting the south sewer is going to be huge for town. We are only going to go forward from here, and I'm excited to be a part of that.

Melissa Wilson:

I'm excited about the future of Smithville. We need to figure out how to balance residential and business growth. We will study and plan for the future. We want it to stay a friendly community.

John Chevalier:

I'm from California. Southern CA was similar to Smithville. It was a lake town. But you couldn't do anything quickly from home. When I moved to Northern CA, every subdivision had a park, there were walking trails. You could ride your bike anywhere. I believe that we can get Smithville to be a place you can do everything, and there would be no complaints.

Damien Boley:

I grew up near Smithville. When I was 10, we moved to North Missouri. You could jump on your bike, go to the store, people knew everyone, people looked out for one another, there were jobs there, they didn't have to leave the area, Smithville could be a place like that. When my daughter gets out of college she could choose to come back and work, not just live. I also want us to keep our natural surroundings.

Jeff Bloemker:

I believe Smithville is a gifted athletic teenager. We've got so many growing pains but our potential is endless. We don't need to decide what single sport we're focusing on. We need to be good at a couple of sports and not just basketball. We need to understand and plan for the future and look at others' mistakes and successes. Our biggest day was when we passed the school levy on in November 2016. We are the hidden jewel of Kansas City. This is not rocket science. It's not complicated but it is complex. We will have short-term pain for long-term gain.

Strategic Planning 101

To ensure that all participants were using the same language in discussing the elements of a strategic plan, a brief overview as provided. The building blocks of Strategic Planning are a vision for the future, a clear mission for the organization that is executed with common values, and an understanding of the "key focus areas," those things that must go well to achieve the vision. Goals and strategies are then identified to make progress to achieving the ideal community

Key Focus Areas

To determine the key focus areas, the categories of things that must go well to achieve the vision, participants divided into three groups to discuss a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) exercise. The results of that exercise are compiled in the table below.

Key Focus Areas	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Recreational activities Sense of community Accessible by car Investing in infrastructure Board of Aldermen Land for neighborhood parks Opportunities for progress—nowhere to go but up Low cost of utilities Low housing costs More community interaction Area to expand Lake Proactive board and staff Schools Quality of life Location Core values of residents Community involvement School district Low crime Hospital Lake/trail Low taxes	Lack of clear communication with the city Limited entry level workers Lack of businesses/limited retail Funding Infrastructure capacity Diversity of businesses Low cost of utilities Infrastructure Not on major interstate Making up for lost time/inactivity Sales tax revenue No follow through Lack of trail Low taxes Lack of business space Lack of city-owned land Low daytime population Chocolate milk Lack of amenities Economic development
Opportunities	Threats
Available land for development including city needs Educated workforce Encourage longer retail hours Annexation City as developer Use lake to the city/community benefit Plan for commercial growth Brain Gain (not Brain Drain) Potential for targeted commercial/retail growth Smithville Lake/traffic Annexation Convention hotel Twin Creeks/KCI Programming on lake Communication Talented/professional population	Kearney, KCMO and Clay County all have aggressive growth plans and are more ready for development People who don't want to change/grow Growth without good planning Continue being just a bedroom community Retail growth just outside the city Clay County Aging infrastructure Growing crime Small town mindset Potential for being landlocked

Based on the SWOT exercise, the governing body identified six categories as key performance areas. In addition, to ensure a common understanding of what success would look like in each of these key performance areas, thematic statements were developed.

1. Growth
We nurture a thriving economy by attracting and maintaining diverse development.
2. Governance
We act as a cohesive team, providing the human and physical resources to advance the goals and the betterment of the community.
3. Community Life
We provide an environment where all can experience safety, security and opportunity for an active, healthy lifestyle.
4. Finance
We maintain public trust through fiscally sound investment of public revenues and resources.
5. Infrastructure
We envision, build, and maintain the necessary road, utilities and strategic land use to prepare for residential and economic growth.
6. Community Engagement
We seek input, partner with our community, and encourage active participation in creating our future.

Goals and Priorities

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen then individually brainstormed goals within each of the key performance areas. Participants were then given dots to place next to their personal priorities.

- Green: one dot, indicating the most important short-term goal
- Red: six dots, indicating short-term priorities
- Yellow: one dot, indicating the most important long-term goal
- Blue: six dots, indicating long-term priorities

Growth	Green	Red	Yellow	Blue
Limit types of business in the Heritage District	-	2	-	-
Light industrial development	-	-	-	2
Comprehensive Plan	-	5	-	-
New sales tax generating businesses	-	1	-	-
Invest in land	-	2	1	-
Annexation of golf course and/or Smith's Fork	-	3	-	1
Diverse housing	-	-	-	-
Logistics center	-	-	-	-
Target animal health	-	-	-	-
Tech school/robotics classes	-	-	-	-
Convention hotel	-	-	-	-
Get a tech company headquarters or second headquarters	-	-	-	-
New city works location	-	-	-	-

Governance	Green	Red	Yellow	Blue
Evaluate, hire and develop staff	2	4	-	-
Build a police station	1	-	-	4
Score cards	-	1	-	-
Improve city hall	-	1	-	-
Open and honest	-	1	-	-
Training for staff and elected officials	-	2	-	-
City exchange	-	-	-	-

Community Life	Green	Red	Yellow	Blue
Develop a 12-court basketball mega complex	-	1	2	1
Community Town Center	-	1	-	1
More trails	-	-	-	2
Connected parks: Wi-Fi, multi-media	-	1	-	
Maintain public safety rating	-	-	-	2
Policing of subdivisions	-	-	-	-

Finance	Green	Red	Yellow	Blue
Balanced budget	1	3	-	-
Transient guest tax	-	-	-	2
Sports betting	-	1	-	1
Priority based budget	-	1	1	-
Long-term Capital Improvement Plan	-	-	1	-
Casino	-	-	-	1
List of pending problems	-	-	-	-
Continue to offer citizens ways to pay	-	-	-	-

Infrastructure	Green	Red	Yellow	Blue
South sewer line completion	-	4	1	-
Heritage Park playground improvements	-	5	-	-
Water master plan	-	-	1	3
Streetscape Phase 2	-	-	-	2
Rate Study	-	1	-	-
Complete streets and trails	-	2	-	-
Transportation master plan	-	3	-	-
Light rail connection to downtown KC	-	-	-	-
Move from force main to gravity flow sewers	-	-	-	-
Deliver on time 90% plus	-	-	-	-
Corridor Study	-	-	-	-
Develop next generation nuclear plant to supply the region	-	-	-	-

Community Engagement	Green	Red	Yellow	Blue
More professional live stream	-	5	-	-
Citizen Based Strategic Plan	1	3	-	-
Program downtown events	-	2	-	-
Community engagement survey	-	-	-	1
Volunteer program	-	2	-	-

City of Smithville Strategic Planning Retreat July 18, 2018

Paradise Point Golf Course
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Retreat Goals

- Strengthen the working relationships among members of the governing body
- Determine key focus areas for the City of Smithville
- Identify goals for 2019-2024 to move the City closer to its vision

Preparation

Mayor and Aldermen: Please come prepared to share an “opening statement” that includes the following:

- I serve my community on this governing body because...
- What I enjoy most about being on this governing body is...
- What frustrates me most about the process of governing is...
- What I contribute to the decision making process of the Board of Aldermen is...
- I think this governing body does _____ extremely well.
- I think this governing body could do a better job of _____
- In the coming year I plan to _____, to help make this governing body being an (even more) effective body.

Norms for the Retreat

- Listen with respect
 - Let others finish before you start talking
 - Be attentive to the speaker
 - Disagree agreeably
- Be:
 - positive
 - candid
 - patient and respectful
 - engaged and fully present
- Look for opportunities to agree
- Strive for consensus
- Practice “yes, and” rather than “yes/no, but”
- Have fun!

Introductions

- Welcome and Introductions
- Agenda Review
- Norms and Expectations for the retreat

Agenda Item Outcome: Create a safe environment for honest exchange of ideas.

Understanding the Current Environment

City Administrator Cynthia Wagner will provide a progress report regarding the goals established last year.

Agenda Item Outcome: Understand the current environment in which the City of Smithville is operating

This I Believe Exercise

Each participant will be given three minutes to share "what they believe" about the future of the City of Smithville generally use the following guidelines.

- This exercise is loosely based on the "This I Believe" Essay format made popular on National Public Radio. You are invited to share what you personally believe to be true about the *future* of Smithville.
- Tell a story: Be specific. Focus on events in your life that have shaped how you look at and experience "community."
- Be positive: This is what you **DO** believe, not what you **DON'T** believe. Avoid speaking in the editorial "we," and make sure this is about what you believe. Speak in the first person.
- Be personal: Use words and phrases that are meaningful to you.

Strategic Planning 101

The building blocks of Strategic Planning are a vision for the future, a clear mission for the organization that is executed with common values, and an understanding of the "key focus areas," those things that must go well to achieve the vision. The vision is best articulated by the governing body, the mission statement (who we are, what we do and how we do it) works best when owned by the organization, and values are often a shared statement between the governing body and the organization.

Key Focus Areas

Last year, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen developed the following vision statement.

*A thriving Smithville will
embrace growth, encourage commerce,
respect its past and cultivate its natural surroundings.*

Agenda Item Outcome: Agree on key focus areas—those things that must go right to secure a positive future for the City of Smithville.

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen's Priorities

Given the key focus areas that have been identified, what priority issues ensure the City moves in the right direction?

Agenda Item Outcome: Identify the governing body's priority work plan (goals) for 2019-2024.

Next Steps

Identify what support the Mayor and Board of Aldermen need from staff to maintain focus on their priority issues.

Agenda Item Outcome: Clarity regarding the path forward

Parting Thoughts/Adjourn

As the retreat ends, each participant will be asked to share a parting thought on how they feel about the work done during the retreat.