

Final Report for City of Storm Lake 2022 Strategic Planning Retreat

The City of Storm Lake Strategic Planning Retreat was held on October 12, 2022 at the King's Pointe Resort from 8 AM – 1:30 PM. The retreat's primary goal was to update the existing strategic plan for Storm Lake which was initially developed in October 2021. Additionally, the City Council reviewed their current meeting protocols, procedures and rules of the road. In attendance at the session was Mayor Porsch, City Council Members: Martinez, McKinney, Ramos, Rice, and Ricklefs. Also in attendance was City Manager Navratil, Deputy Manager Derragon and City Clerk Martinez. Following the morning session, City department heads attended an afternoon briefing that summarized the goals, objectives and outcomes of the retreat. In advance of the retreat, City Council members completed a form soliciting their feedback on the most important issues facing the community of Storm Lake. The retreat was facilitated by Mark Collins with KRW Associates.

The agenda for the Strategic Planning Retreat included the following:

- 1.) *Welcome/Introductions***
- 2.) *Power Point Presentation: "Working as a Team for Good Governance"***
- 3.) *Strengths: What Are We Doing Well? What Can We Identify as Notable Accomplishments?***
- 4.) *Identification of Goals and Objectives from Strategic Focus Areas:***
Housing, Utility Infrastructure, Community Participation/Involvement, Economic Development, Recreation and Community Perception.
- 5.) *Prioritization Exercise***
- 6.) *Measuring Success: What Are Our Benchmarks For a "Job Well Done" and How Will We Communicate the Results to Our Community Members?***
- 7.) *Wrap Up: Additional Ideas, Comments and Suggestions***
- 8.) *Overview of Retreat outcomes with City Department Heads***

In an opening exercise, the Mayor and Council listed City of Storm Lake's current strengths and notable assets.

- Successful Affordable Housing Initiatives
- Economic Diversity
- University
- Strong Schools
- Regional Access
- Outstanding Shopping and Medical Services
- Good Community Services (Local Organizations)
- 4th of July Events
- Outdoor Public Spaces
- The People of Storm Lake (Eager, Friendly and Diverse)
- The Lake
- Parks
- Food Diversity
- Water Park
- The Community Feels Safe

Utilizing the strategic focus categories from Agenda Item #4, the following items and issues were identified as "strategic goals and objectives" by the Mayor and Council. At the conclusion of their discussion, the Mayor and Council then conducted a dot exercise to identify and prioritize the most important goals and objectives. The number of votes (or tallies) is shown in parentheses.

Housing

- Keep Building Houses (especially single-family dwellings) (7)
- Explore New Incentives
- Examine Properties for Potential Redevelopment (e.g., refer to Downtown Master Plan)
- Upgrade and Improve Distressed Properties (Infills) (2)
- Utilize (and Enhance) the Nuisance Abatement Fund
- Grow the Community in an Outward Direction (5)
- Utilize the FDA Loan Fund

Economic Development

- Implement Recommendations from the Downtown Master Plan (1)
- Update the Sign Ordinance, Improve Wayfinding (3)
- Redefine the Downtown Business District
- Seek a New Approach/Relationship with Storm United
- Initiate New Recruitment Efforts
- Renew Retention Efforts
- Develop Apprenticeship Programs (2)
- Identify Jobs for Young People to Keep them in Storm Lake (1)

Community Participation/Involvement

- Re-examine the Financial Contribution to Storm Lake United (Revisit the Resolution and Consider Appointing a Member from City Council) (5)
- Improve and Expand Community Outreach Efforts ((Elected Officials and Staff) (2)
- Use King's Pointe Resort and Other Venues to Meet with Community Members (2)
- Support Neighborhood Night Outs
- Consider Holding City Work Sessions Away from City Hall (Change Meeting Nights) (2)
- Support Leadership Roundtable (6)
- Focus on Code and Nuisance Enforcement
- Potentially Investigate the Use of a Lobbying Entity

Utility Infrastructure

- Pursue Water Regionalization Efforts (Avoid Tax Burden for Storm Lake Citizens) (7)
- Think Strategically Regarding Future Infrastructure
- Promote Sustainable Water Practices (Use DNR Resources and Assistance)
- Solidify the Plans for the Water Plant Location
- Address 4th Street

Recreation

- Develop a Recreation Plan for the Spoils Site (Potential Land Swap?) (6)
- Initiate a Recreation Feasibility Study (2)
- Market City Properties for Sale
- Investigate New Pickle Ball Courts (1)
- Solicit Assistance from the University for Marketing Help (1)
- Pursue More Indoor Soccer Facilities
- Continue Trail Connections and Enhancements (3)

Community Perception

- Host More Public Safety Presentations
- Strengthen and Enhance Public Information Efforts (Especially Social Media) (4)
- Focus on Quality over Quantity (City-wide)
- Emphasize the Positive
- Work Closely with the Schools
- When City Council is out in Public, Be Positive
- Update the City's Web Site
- Reinforce Storm Lake as a Safe Community (5)

Prioritization of Goals and Objectives

High to Medium Priority: 3 or more dots; Low Priority: 2 or less dots; No Priority - no dots

High/Medium Priority

- Keep Building Houses (especially single-family dwellings)
- Grow the Community in an Outward Direction
- Update the Sign Ordinance, Improve Wayfinding
- Re-examine the Financial Contribution to Storm Lake United (Revisit the Resolution and Consider Appointing a Member from City Council)
- Support Leadership Roundtable
- Pursue Water Regionalization Efforts (Avoid Tax Burden for Storm Lake Citizens)
- Develop a Recreation Plan for the Spoils Site
- Continue Trail Connections and Enhancements
- Reinforce Storm Lake as a Safe Community
- Strengthen and Enhance Public Information Efforts (Especially Social Media)

Low Priority

- Upgrade and Improve Distressed Properties (Infills)
- Implement Recommendations from the Downtown Master Plan
- Develop Apprenticeship Programs
- Identify Jobs for Young People to Keep them in Storm Lake
- Improve and Expand Community Outreach Efforts ((Elected Officials and Staff)
- Use King's Pointe Resort and Other Venues to Meet with Community Members
- Consider Holding City Work Sessions Away from City Hall (Change Meeting Nights)
- Initiate a Recreation Feasibility Study
- Investigate New Pickle Ball Courts
- Solicit Assistance from the University for Marketing Help

No Priority

- Explore New Incentives
- Examine Properties for Potential Redevelopment (e.g., refer to Downtown Master Plan)
- Utilize (and Enhance) the Nuisance Abatement Fund
- Utilize the FDA Loan Fund
- Redefine the Downtown Business District
- Seek a New Approach/Relationship with Storm United
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