



City of Chaska Planning Retreat

March-May 2009

*Grow
Change
Perform*

Introduction



The City of Chaska City Council and Department Head staff met with the City Administrator for a 2-Day retreat. This is the first activity of this kind that this ‘new’ team has had the opportunity to do. Preliminary interviews with the members helped to formulate the agenda where the primary focus was expressed to:

- Generating new ideas
- Getting to know each other and form a cohesive team
- Develop a work plan for 2009-10
- Review accomplishments
- Define roles and responsibilities

AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Review Session
Expectations
3. Rules for session
4. Express Values
5. Purpose/Mission
6. Visioning
7. Review of Recent
Accomplishments
8. Keys to success
9. Visioning
10. Maplewood (The other
side of success)
11. Environmental Scan
 - SWOC Analysis
12. Goal Setting and
Prioritization
13. Fold challenges into
strategies that support
vision
14. Our roles in making it
happen
 - Keys to success II
15. Parking Lot
16. Adjournment

Expressed Values

The first exercise the participants did after the introduction was to express values.

- Integrity
- Pride
- Experience
- Dedication
- Productive
- Trusting
- Generosity
- Compassion
- Diversity
- Ingenuity
- Humor
- Appreciate Dumb Luck
- Service
- Common Sense
- Partnership
- Drive
- Respect
- Commitment
- Desire to Succeed
- Honesty
- Team
- Good Listening
- Sense of History (respect past)
- Experience
- Creativity
- Ethics
- Leadership

The Question asked on Values:

What Values do we bring to our roles in the City as individuals and as a team?

Purpose(s)

The group took individual time to identify the key purposes fulfilled by the staff and council.

Considering Purpose

Q1: What are the purpose(s) we fulfill in our roles as stewards of the community?

We are means to many ends; what ends?

- *Serve the community and each other*
- *Unite and promote the community*
- *Provide essential city services*
- *Provide good quality of life*
- *Be leaders*
- *To be unique (Promote small town values)*
- *Guide growth*
- *Make decisions*
- *Listen to community*
- *Communicate*
- *Represent the best interests of the community*
- *Stewards of the community money (resources)*
- *Partnerships*
- *Advocate for unmet needs*

Check-in on Mission:

The members reviewed the mission while considering the expressed values and purposes. The discussion produced no change to the mission statement. The group indicated understanding that the idea of using the word “small” is really reflecting values, while striving to be the best was a continuous commitment.

City of Chaska
Mission Statement
“To be the Best Small Town in Minnesota”



Accomplishments:

Participants were asked to think of accomplishments that have resulted from planning and acting over the past 20 years.

Keys to Success:

Participants were asked what made the difference in being able to accomplish so much. What were the keys to this success?

- Clearly defined roles
- Understanding roles and responsibilities
- The right people
- Commitment
- Calculated Risk Taking
- Teamwork
- Clear/Strong Vision from Elected
- Leadership
- Clear Mission
- Creativity
- Innovation
- Willing to take on challenges
- Creative Financing
- Effective Communication
- Citizen Participation
- Build on Past
- Partnerships
- Planning with the community
- Thinking "Outside the Box"
- Trust & Support
- Adequate Resources
- 5-o Council Support on Priorities
- Strategic
- Value Driven

- Freeway 212
- SW Transit
- Downtown Redevelopment
- History Center
- Athletic Park
- Innovative Planning (Clover Field, Heights, etc.)
- Electric Utility
- Tax rate (Cost-effective Services)
- Life-cycle housing
- Utilization of TIF
- School District Facilities in Chaska
- Chaska Bio-Tech Center
- Chaska Power Plant #2 (Turbine)
- Retail Development
- "Best Small Town in Minnesota"
- Values
- City Hall
- Fire Station
- Community Center
- Water Treatment Plant
- Town Course
- Great Hires
- Storm Water Utility
- Quality in City Build Facilities
- Flood Control
- PGA – US Open – Ryder Cup – Amateur
- Chaska.net
- Industrial Parks
- Partnerships (School, County, MnDOT, etc.)
- Community Land Trust
- Ambulance License
- AOA
- Minnesota River Substation/Turbine

Visioning

“You must give birth to your images. They are the future waiting to be born.”

~Rainer Maria Rilke



The purpose of the *Visioning* process is to develop a *clear* and *succinct* description of what the community should look like as it achieves its full potential. It is a vision of success acquired with the strategies that are implemented.

The participants were asked to imagine Chaska in the year 2017 as if it had become the most desirable city that could be reasonably “created.”

The participant formed 3 teams and worked individually and then together to formulate statements as to what the City would look like. These ideas were later grouped and named.

The Visioning Exercise

Imagine it is **2017**. Chaska is “*The*” example for Metro Cities to follow and you have, marvelously enough, created your most desirable City. Here is an opportunity as a team, to describe it - as if you were able to see it, *realistically* around you.

Chaska has a historic downtown with a vibrant commercial district that is “The” Twin Cities destination.

- Has a vibrant commercial district with transit that is a regional draw
- Downtown is a destination
- Shopping, Restaurants
- The Chaska “Paseo” is implemented (Greenway on both sides of Chestnut through downtown)
- Cub Foods on Chaska Blvd.
- There is a new library that is the envy of the neighboring communities
- Thriving Farmers Market
- Band Concerts 2X Week
- Trolley Rides between Chaska and Carver downtowns
- Municipal parking lot
- Marina on River
- Block 6
- City Square utilized every summer weekend
- Developed Riverfront as regional commercial venue (Showboat)
- Downtown Rehabilitation is Complete
- All downtown streets are reconstructed

“There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all.” ~Peter Drucker

“When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.” ~ Audre Lorde

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Chaska is the leader in Green Energy Production, Distribution, & Usage

- First electric utility in state to meet ‘green’ requirements
- Smart Grid
- Solar Panels on all City Buildings

Chaska: Nationally Recognized for Recreational Opportunities

- World class indoor sports complex
- Sports University Open
- SW Regional sports facility site
- Minor league baseball team
- Nationally recognized as top Junior Golf Development Program
- PGA Event at Town Course
- 3rd Ice Sheet at CCC
- More parking at CCC

Chaska is a Diverse, Lifecycle Community

- National model of partnerships with faith communities
- Balance in housing options provided
- Several additional senior housing units added
- New Elementary School
- Diverse workforce in City

Chaska Creates and Promotes an Environment to allow for the attraction of a large number of high quality jobs

- Chaska Hospital (First Metro City with Mayo Clinic Expansion)
- Created 8,000 Jobs
- Higher education facility
- Bio-tech center/Heights re-conceptualized
- 212/140 Interchange constructed
- Nordstrom’s
- New corporate campuses
- World Trade Center
- Chaska/Hazeltine Commons Full
- AAA Bond Rating

“Strategic planning is worthless -- unless there is first a strategic vision.”

~John Naisbitt

Chaska has a Greenbelt Plan that the Community Understands and Embraces

- Increased Government Collaboration
- No gravel roads
- Natural Amenities are preserved
- Preserve Greenbelt
- Vineyards in the Greenbelt
- Lake Bavaria Park is developed with Beach, Picnic, Fishing
- Develop a trail link to arboretum/Wildlife Refuge
- McKnight road property developed as conservation designed residential tied to arboretum

Chaska has a Western River Crossing with an LRT Hub providing congestion alternatives and an inviting access to downtown

- 41 River crossing is West of Downtown
- Commuter rail is in town
- Transportation hub established

SWOC Analysis: The group examined the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and the community. Next the group expressed opportunities and weaknesses external to the organization and City.

*What are our
community and
organization
strengths?*



The participants placed marks by those items they identified as being currently most critical. The council marks are identified in (brackets). The top 3 strengths are ***Value Based & Goal Driven, Commitment to each other, and Innovative.***

1. ***Value based & Goal Driven 10 (4)***
2. ***Commitment to Each Other 10 (4)***
3. ***Innovative 8 (3)***
4. Strong sense of community 6 (3)
5. Smart Risk Taking 4 (2)
6. Committed to Excellence 3 (2)
7. Experienced, talented, & qualified staff 4 (1)
8. Excel at core services (1)
9. Lots of jobs (1)
10. Committed to Chaska 2
11. Recreation Facilities 2
12. Chaska.net 1
13. Electric Utility (with funds) 1
14. Historic Downtown 1
15. Diverse Community 1
16. Commitment to employees 1
17. Commitment to success
18. Natural resources

1. ***Downtown 11 (5)***
2. ***Small town “feel” at risk 8 (4)***
3. ***Affordable housing options 8 (4)***
4. City’s WEB site/communication 8 (3)
5. Low tax rate 7 (1)
6. Aging infrastructure 6 (1)
7. Diversity 3 (1)
8. Business retention effort (1)
9. Traffic congestion 2
10. Aging workforce 1
11. Team still coming together 1
12. Downtown parking “perception”
13. Medical facilities
14. Chaska.net \$

*What are our
community and
organization
Weaknesses?*



The top 3 weaknesses are ***Downtown Small town “feel” at risk Affordable housing options***

What are External Opportunities that can help us fulfill our Mission?



1. ***Bio-science 13 (6)***
2. ***Light rail 9 (4)***
3. ***212 Highway 9 (3)***
4. Growth in SW Area 9 (3)
5. Technology Fiber 6 (3)
6. Federal Stimulus Money 8 (1)
7. Slow down in housing 2
8. Non-profits
9. Hazeltine National Golf (Name recognition)
10. School District

The top 3 Opportunities are ***Shared Services, Press Coverage, and 212 Completed.***

1. ***River Crossing 14 (6)***
2. ***Keeping service level up to expectations with growing population***
3. ***National Economy 12 (4)***
4. Levy limits (revenue sources) 8 (3)
5. 212 Highway 7 (2)
6. Energy costs 3
7. Falling down the "list" 1
8. Demographics
9. Unfunded Mandates



What are External Challenges that can deter us from fulfilling our Mission?

The top three Challenges are:
***The River Crossing
Growing Population
National Economy***

Strategic Issues: The top three items from each category of the SWOC analysis were identified as the strategic issues. The others were not eliminated; however, the concentration was on those considered by the council to be most significant.

Action Items:

Participants were asked to think of one action item to deal with or take advantage of each strategic issue. Participants were also asked to add action items that would help move the City in the direction of the vision statements

Goals 1-5: The action items were grouped together in common by the facilitators. Once common action items were grouped, goals were given a preliminary name by the facilitators.

Decision DNA or Values

impacting decisions: Values were identified that were to be applied to all decision making

1. *Value based & Goal Driven 10 (4)*
2. *Commitment to Each Other 10 (4)*
3. *Innovative 8 (3)*
4. *Downtown 11 (5)*
5. *Small town “feel” at risk 8 (4)*
6. *Affordable housing options 8 (4)*
7. *Bio-science 13 (6)*
8. *Light rail 9 (4)*
9. *212 Highway 9 (3)*
10. *River Crossing 14 (6)*
11. *Keeping service level up to expectations with growing population*
12. *National Economy 12 (4)*

1: Create Jobs through Econ Development

- Concentrate on using Bio-science designated to encourage job growth
- Develop strategies to install first phase of infrastructure into Chaska Biotech Center within 12 months
- Monitor federal stimulus activity for opportunities
- Participate in creation of World-class Sports Facility
- Emphasize Business Retention Program
- Support Attraction of future national golf tournaments
- Create trail connections into USFW area to promote nationally recognized “Bird Watching”

2: Promote “Small Town” Image

- Emphasize current and future positive downtown features
- Expand and create more neighborhood and “Chaska” community events
- Promote on-going activities in the downtown (ie: Art Fairs, Movies, Ferry Rides, Concerts, etc...)
- Create a downtown master planning process (experts)
- Encourage Discussion around Diversity
- Continue monitoring communities recreational needs to determine expansion needs for recreational facilities
- Actively promote the positive attributes of “Chaska-Only” High School
- Encourage discussions with Faith Community to develop partnerships
- “Events” not just concerts in City Square
- Create comprehensive “Greenbelt” plan



FUTURE STEPS

The next steps are for staff to develop action plans to work toward the goals with priorities, time tables, and assigned responsibilities.

The action plans will be presented to the council for discussion, modification, and approval.

Periodic monitoring of progress will be done by senior staff.

3: Influence Regional Transportation Choices

- Coordinate multiple transportation modes in Chaska
- Continue discussions with MnDOT and USFW to ensure a positive influence on the routing of River Crossing
- Appoint a person or group to explore avenues of communication for creating partnerships/task force for light rail at all levels of government
- Divert truck traffic out of downtown

4: Provide Balanced Housing Options

- Pursue partner to provide great affordable housing options to the community
- Create housing options in community

5: Promote Chaska's Sustainable Energy Practices

- Electric Utility meets 'green' requirements
- Obtain LEED Certification on Energy Star Buildings
- Solar Panels on City Building when economically feasible
- Energy Monitoring (Grid)

APPLIED VALUE: Maintain High Quality Service Level

- Evaluate current service usage and take necessary action to be prepared to continue to offer a high quality of services and resources.
- Survey residents every 6 to 12 months to determine if services are being met.

APPLIED VALUE: Support the Strategic Plan Throughout the year

- Use vision and goals to evaluate decisions
- Provide opportunities to solve/address issues through "Think-Tank" approach
- Work as a team with trust and respect
- Encourage risk taking and acknowledge there will be failures to be used as learning

APPLIED VALUE: Maintain and Develop Partnerships

- Use partnerships whenever possible to build solutions, create synergy, and build influence when moving toward goals and vision.

Discussion on Roles

The participants took part in a significant discussion on the roles that are executed by the elected and the appointed bodies. They discussed each role and how the two sides are dependent on each other for results. There was also discussion on the role of elected officials on split votes. The consensus of the group was that when an individual is in the minority, it is important to come back and support the group decision. It was discussed that it is counter-productive to hold on to opposition of an idea once it has reached the implementation phase.

ROLES

Elected Officials	Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board of Directors• Set functions/procedures• Set in place laws• Set in place certain policies• Monitor progress• Spoke persons for community• Set priorities of goals• Be eyes and ears of community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Handle day-to-day operations• Make goals happen• Follow vision and priorities of the City Council• Provide information and alternatives• Give recommendations

TRUST

RESPECT