



Report

on

Strategic Plan

Adopted
(Considered May 2, 2023)

Prepared and Facilitated
By
Ron Cox Consulting



REPORT AND STRATEGIC PLAN COUNCIL/STAFF RETREAT

CITY OF SEABROOK

**Governance - November 1, 2022
Council/Staff Planning Session - February 10, 2023**

Introduction

On November 1, 2022, the Mayor, City Council, and executive staff of the City of Seabrook met for a governance session. The purpose of this meeting was to establish the Council's governance philosophy. Council agree to meet at a later date to develop a multi-year strategic plan.

On February 10, 2023, the Mayor, City Council, executive staff and department directors met together for an all-day planning session. Their agenda for that day was as follows.

- Review Governance Model prepared on November 1, 2022
- Review results of citywide survey.
- Review status of most recent strategic plan.

During all sessions, the Council and staff freely worked together and their work was exemplary in all respects. Ron Cox facilitated the process.

Governance

The Council participated in discussions about their role, together and their leadership responsibilities. Several questions were asked by the facilitator to assist them in defining their leadership and communications philosophies and their expectations with each other and with staff.

Personal responsibility

First, they were asked to list the reasons why they serve as elected officials for the City of Seabrook.

Why do Council members run for the office?

- To gain more information and knowledge on how the city functions.
- To help make decisions to benefit the city.
- To get involved – to help the city for future generations.
- Love Seabrook and want to support and preserve the quality of life.
- To be able to establish and express a consistent vision to the community.
- My civic duty.
- Be involved in the decisions during the change as SH 146 is completed.
- Provide an historical perspective.
- Continue to be involved.

They were then asked to list the individual attributes they bring and can contribute to the Council.

What are the Councils' individual attributes and how can they contribute?

- Contribute an historical perspective for the newer Council members.
- To provide professional, personal, and ethical experience.
- Business experience.
- Willingness to listen to everyone and remain neutral to allow equal time to all.
- Provide a younger, feminine perspective.
- Ability to move on after a vote and accept the decision.
- Always strives to do the right thing when making a decision.
- Ability to focus and stay on task.
- Be respectful to all.

Vision

Since the Council had not discussed their vision for the city together in several years, and since there are several new members, the discussions turned toward a discussion of the combined vision they have for the future of Seabrook.

First they described their views of their vision in general terms..

- To rebuild the commercial base that left when the SH 146 highway project started.
- To have a strong sustainable tax base – rooftops, commercial and light industry.
- To determine what Seabrook will be like in ten years.
- To lower property taxes, and have a strong sales tax.
- To keep our small town environment.
- To keep our zoning and adjust it to maximize the use of the remaining vacant land.
- Be invitational to people who want to come – invite them; help them to succeed.
- Be choosy given the small amount of land remaining.\

The Council then narrowed these discussions down into their key elements of their vision for the City of Seabrook.

Key Vision Elements.

- To provide a sustainable tax base.
 - To put a structure in place to assure growth in the undeveloped areas and in Old Town Seabrook.
 - To have an inviting environment
 - City government that works and helps prospects to come.
 - Provide infrastructure necessary for the citizens.
- Encourage and maintain a good balance of residential and commercial interests.
- To maintain the great quality of life – parks, aesthetics, lifestyle.
- To keep our small-town environment.
- Keep our city safe and secure.
- Ensure transportation accessibility.

With these key elements in mind, the Council reviewed the Vision Statement established in 2014. After review, they determined the Vision Statement still embodies the vision of the current council and needs no changes.

Seabrook is a sustainable, energetic, and beautiful coastal community that embraces environmental stewardship, fosters safe neighborhoods and promotes tourism and economic diversity.

Mission

The Council then reviewed the Mission Statement, and agreed it still reflected their view of the mission and confirmed its wording.

The City of Seabrook is responsive, innovative, and fiscally sound in delivering services that preserve, protect and enhance quality of life.

Following their discussion of vision and mission, they turned to their governance philosophy. The Governance Philosophy revolves around leadership, communication roles and responsibilities and expectations. The facilitator led the group through these discussions.

Leadership

Discussion first centered on how they will lead collectively as a group. They responded as follows.

The City Council of Seabrook will lead...

- Do your research.
- Talk to as many people as you can about issues of concern.
- Listen to the citizens.
- Remember you are always a councilmember – you can never take that hat off.
- Be empathetic.
- Be brutally honest – tell them the facts.
- Understand where council's authority begins and ends.
- Be open minded.

- The role belongs to all of us – we own the role, we own the decisions, no matter our personal vote.
- Lead by example – with integrity, professionalism, trust and transparency.
- Be positive.
- Be consistent in our message.
- Be humble – give credit to others.

Communication

Council then defined how they intend to communicate with citizens, each other, and with staff.

Council will communicate with citizens, each other, and staff ...

Citizens...

- With honesty and openness.
- By listening with a good ear.
- Tactfully.
- Actively.
- Face to face is the preference.

Each other...

- Always following the open meetings act.
- Clearly.
- Making eye contact.
- Respectfully and civilly
- Knowing and understanding the issues before them.

Staff...

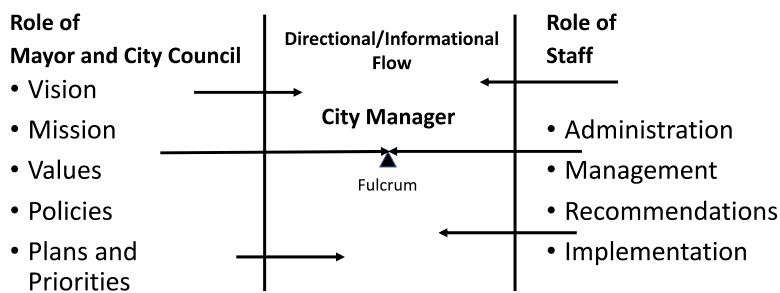
- Respectfully.
- Through the city manager.

Roles and Responsibilities

Council reviewed their roles and responsibilities as defined in the City Charter. The City is a Council-Manager Form of Government and there are defined roles for each the following slides were used to depict that relationship.



Council/Manager Form of Government



Scott Sellers 2022

November 1, 2022

Ron Cox Consulting rcox@roncoconsulting.com
271.543.0042

29



Policymaking & Implementation

CITY MANAGER

- Keep council informed on city affairs.
- Propose policy
- Implement policy adopted by council.
- Report back to council regarding policy implementation and possible improvements

COUNCIL

- Listen to city residents – keep track of their concerns and wishes.
- Discuss, develop, and adopt city policies governing many aspects of city operations

November 1, 2022

Ron Cox Consulting rcox@roncoconsulting.com
271.543.0042

34



City Budget

CITY MANAGER

- Work with staff to develop preliminary budget.
- Lead council in process of establishing goals and priorities for the city.
- Implement budget adopted by council, provide regular financial reports, and present alternatives when council needs to deal with budget problems.

COUNCIL

- Establish goals and priorities which provide framework for budget – discuss and adopt final budget – amend budget as needed.
- Set city tax rates, to the extent permitted by statutes.
- Set utility rates and other fees as required.

November 1, 2022

Ron Cox Consulting rcox@roncoconsulting.com
271.543.0042

35



Land Use and Planning

ASST CITY MANAGER

- Recommendations to the planning commission and council on a broad range of planning issues.
- Supervise staff who enforce building codes and other development regulations.

COUNCIL

- Adopt and amend zoning, development regulations, and comprehensive plan after receiving input from staff, residents, planning commission, and others.
- Staff Liaison to quasi-judicial BOA committee that has capacity to decide land use issues.
- Amend planning documents as necessary

November 1, 2022

Ron Cox Consulting rcox@roncoconsulting.com
271.543.0042

36

Expectations

Council expects the following of each other...

- Listen objectively to others as they discuss the issues at hand.
- Be respectful and agree to disagree.
- Provide clear justification for your decisions and opinions.
- Be open minded toward the deliberation.
- Don't hold grudges.
- Prepare for the meetings.

Council then defined their expectations of staff as follows.

Staff is expected to...

- Provide and keep the budget balanced.
- Communicate with Council
- Be knowledgeable in their skill sets.
- Know your limitations.

Council defined the expectations they believe the staff would have of them.

Staff expects Council to (as defined by Council members themselves)...

- Follow protocols.
- Be prepared.
- Be respectful.
- Know your limitations.

Issues and Challenges

Following the governance discussions, the staff presented several issues and challenges as they relate to the upcoming strategic planning session. These items included the following.

- The upcoming bond program.
 - City facilities.
 - Fire apparatus replacement.
 - Aquatics facility upgrades or replacement.
 - Streets and drainage improvements
- Hotel and Convention Center opportunities.
- Red Bluff District and build out.
- SH 146 completion and retail opportunities.
- Old Seabrook District and infrastructure.
- Port and Industrial District.

No decisions were made but these topics were discussed at a high level in preparation for the planning session to come.

Planning Session

February 10, 2023

Citywide Survey

The City Manager reviewed the results of the citywide survey with the Council and staff. The city has regularly polled the citizens with a survey, and the participation has always been good and the responses worthy of consideration.

Of the results, there were some areas that garnered more conversation and consideration. These are as follows.

- **Demographics.** During the discussion, some asked for additional information about those responding. For example, which side of the city do they reside and relating those to the respondents needs. The idea is to assure that when services are being considered that all segments of the community are addressed.
- **Services.** Several issues were discussed related to services.
 - **Transparency.** Although transparency ranked well in the survey, there are those who reported that improvements can be made. Discussion ensued on how transparency can be improved. Suggestions included.
 - Providing follow up questions in future surveys that if there is a negative response would lead to additional questions to garner more information. That would apply to more than just the issue of transparency and allow the respondent further opportunity to respond.
 - Determine additional ways to promote information on policies and procedures to allow better ease of navigation through those procedures.
 - Use mobile device texting for information dispersal.
- **Solid Waste Collection “Trash”.** Staff had asked some specific questions regarding trash collection services, since the contract is coming up for renewal. The most significant issue was a lack of understanding of “at your door” pickup for certain household hazardous waste. This service is included in the collection fee, and is an additional cost. Further study will be done to determine if it is in fact a useful service for collection at the residence, or if other collection points are convenient enough for the users.
- **Events.** There was a general discussion of the appropriate uses of Hotel/Motel Occupancy (HOT) taxes. No decisions were made, but it was agreed this should be a topic more fully discussed when beginning to budget those funds for the year.
- **Economic Development.** It was noted that the needs identified in the survey are very similar to the market demands as well. It was also noted the city should continue to strive to match the market needs with the zoning in order to maintain as much flexibility as possible in meeting market demands.
- **CIP.** There is a continuing need to educate and re-educate the public on capital improvement needs, and on the progress of ongoing construction projects.
- **Citizen needs.** Finally, it was noted that the citizens are generally “satisfied” with the services provided. The question should be what should the city do to raise the bar to the “very satisfied” level. The idea is to always strive for improvement.

Strategic Planning

Strategic Plan Update

The City Manager then provided a broad overview of the status of the strategic plan. This was provided in a separate document and is available for review.

Strategic Focus Areas

Through the course of the discussion on the results of the survey, as well as the update on the status of the strategic plan, an eye was kept on the continued relevance of the current Strategic Focus Areas. For the current plan these are

- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Quality of Life
- City services

On additional Strategic Focus Area was added based on their discussions. This additional Focus Area was based on the discussions about transparency and the need to update the city’s website, and the need overall to continue to focus on the brand of the city – that is what are the significant markers for identifying Seabrook as a community.

- Engagement and Branding

Strategies

Based on the issues and challenges identified in each Area of Emphasis, the Council and staff worked together to establish and prioritize broad strategies. The strategies are presented in priority order. First the strategies were identified, and secondly, the priorities were voted up #1 – 3 points each; #2 – 2 points each; #3 – 1 point each. Again, this was done by the combined group of Council and staff.

Economic Development

Infrastructure

Quality of Life

City services

Engagement and Branding

1. Identify locations and construct wayfinding signage to further delineate a sense of place. Votes – #1-15, #2-1, #3-2. Total 49 points.
 - a. Work with Highland to develop a lighted, connected “welcome” sign on NASA Road 1 at the city limits. Votes – no separate votes.
 - b. Improve the sense of place through additional park signage, street signage and light pole banners. Votes #1-0; #2-2; #3-2. Total 6 points.
 - c. Improve city hall signage and presentation for informational purposes. Votes added in above.

2. Update the website. Votes #1-5; #2-9; #3-5. Total 38 points.
3. Utilize additional communications mediums to better inform citizens. Votes #1-0; #2-3 ; #3-0 . Total 6 points.
 - a. Use mobile device texting to impart information. Votes #1-0; #2-4; #3-6. Total 14 points
4. Create an inviting environment for engagement with citizens. Votes #1-1; #2-2; #3-1. Total 8 points.
5. Establish a plan to improve customer service. Votes #1-0; #2-4; #3-0. Total 6 points.

Infrastructure

1. Redevelop old wastewater treatment plant property. Votes #1-0; #2-1; #3-1. Total 3 points. (Combined total of 21 points.)
 - a. Demolish the old wastewater treatment plant. Votes #1-3; #2-1; #3-0. Total 10 points.
 - b. Repurpose old sewer plant site. Votes #1-0; #2-4; #3-3. Total 11 points
2. Plan for and begin the replacement of aging infrastructure. Votes #1-5; #2-1; #3-0. Total 17 points.
3. Relocate the Red Bluff water line. Votes #1-1; #2-5; #3-1. Total 14 points.
4. Identify and plan for alternate potable water sources. Votes #1-2; #2-4; #3-0. Total 14 points.
5. Place security cameras at popular public locations (parks, public restroom, etc). Votes #1-1; #2-3; #3-2. Total 11 points.
6. Construct more sidewalks. Votes #1-2; #2-0; #3-3. Total 9 points.
7. Improve shoreline structure protections. Votes #1-1; #2-0; #3-4. Total 7 points.
8. Continue to monitor the coastal barrier project. Votes #1-2; #2-0; #3-0. Total 6 points.
9. Conduct a needs assessment for the completion of the SH 146 project. Votes #1-1; #2-0; #3-2. Total 5 points.
10. Replace needed water lines. Votes #1-0; #2-1; #3-1. Total 3 points
11. Support and monitor the Harris County Flood Control Clear Creek Study. Votes #1-0; #2-0; #3-1. Total 1 point.

City Services

1. Plan for and construct a new police/municipal court facility. Votes #1-11; #2-2; #3-1. Total 38 points.
2. Develop staffing plans that include the following. (Combined 23 points)
 - a. Succession planning. Votes #1-1; #2-1; #3-1 Total 6 points.
 - b. Future staffing needs. Votes #1-2; #2-2; #3-2. Total 12 points.
 - c. Increase code enforcement staffing. Votes #1-0; #2-1; #3-2. Total 4 points.
 - d. Consider departmental restructuring for better efficiency. Votes #1-0; #2-0; #3-1. Total 1 point.
3. Conduct a technology audit. Votes #1-0; #2-6; #3-2. Total 14 points.
4. Plan for and construct a new EMS and City Hall facility. Votes #1-0; #2-4; #3-4. Total 12 points.
5. Consider change for household hazardous waste collection to quarterly. Votes #1-0; #2-3; #3-3. Total 9 points.
6. Conduct periodic functional audits. Votes #1-1; #2-2; #3-1. Total 8 points.
7. Institute a staff training and development program, including technology. Votes #1-1; #2-0; #3-2. Total 5 points.
8. Conduct records audit. #1-0; #2-0; #3-0. Total 0 points.
9. Establish a tree recycling program. Total 0 points.

Quality of Life

1. Plan and provide for increased water activities. (Total 39 points.)
 - a. Increase and enhance public water access points. Votes #1-7; #2-1; #3-0. Total 23 points.

- b. Plan for the availability of more water accessible activities (kayaking, launches, beachheads). Votes #1-2; #2-1; #3-1. Total 9 points.
- c. Stay on boat ramp crusade. Votes #1-3; #2-3; #3-0. Total 16 points.
- 2. Improve and enhance parks, opens space and trail systems city wide. Total 30 points.
 - a. Review and update the Trails Strategic Plan. Votes #1-0; #2-0; #3-1. Total 1 point.
 - b. Continue to connect trails. Votes #1-1; #2-0; #3-3. Total 6 points.
 - c. Establish a green barrier between adjoining industrial and residential areas. Votes #1-1; #2-1; #3-1. Total 6 points.
 - d. Conduct a cost benefit analysis of the city pool. Votes #1-0; #2-1; #3-2. Total 4 points.
 - e. Enhance and improve seating areas on trails. Votes #1-0; #2-3; #3-0. Total 6 points.
 - f. Create a dog park. Votes #1-0; #2-0; #3-3. Total 3 points.
- 3. Improve code enforcement efforts. (Also see City Services #2c). Votes #1-6; #2-1; #3-4. Total 24 points.
- 4. Review and revise as needed city sponsored HOT tax funding policy. Votes #1-0; #2-5; #3-1. Total 11 points.
- 5. Assessment of aquatics. Votes #1-0; #2-3; #3-1. Total 7 points.
- 6. Create a community fitness/natatorium facility. Votes #1-1; #2-1; #3-4. Total 9 points.
- 7. Set out a plan for greater golf cart accessibility in the city. Votes #1-0; #2-2; #3-0. Total 4 points.
- 8. Establish an art initiative on TxDOT signal control boxes. Votes #1-0; #2-0; #3-1. Total 1 point.
- 9. Ensure new commercial and residential development is compatible with existing development. Total 0 points.
- 10. Establish policy on long term rentals. Total 0 points.
- 11. Enhance youth recreation opportunities. Total 0 points.

Economic Development

- 1. Enhance economic drivers regarding locating a major grocery store in Seabrook. Votes #1-8; #2-2; #3-5. Total 33 points.
- 2. Establish a business signage program. (Total 29 points)
 - a. Fund directional signage for businesses. Votes #1-3; #2-5; #3-2. Total 21 points.
 - b. Implement an economic wayfinding program. Votes #1-1; #2-1-#3-3. Total 8 points.
- 3. Establish a program for promoting existing businesses. Votes #1-2; #2-6; #3-1. Total 19 points.
- 4. Implement and fund the Liveable Center project. Votes #1-2; #2-3; #3-3. Total 15 points.
- 5. Identify businesses with compatible products. (Why?). Votes #1-1; #2-1; #3-1. Total 6 points.
- 6. Work with local businesses to update the sign ordinance. Votes #1-0; #2-2; #3-1. Total 5 points.
- 7. Continue support of CVB and Chamber of Commerce. Votes #1-0; #2-0; #3-2. Total 2 points.

These strategies will be reviewed by the City Council and inserted into a newly updated strategic plan.

Staff Session Implementation Plan Strategic Initiatives

Implementation Plan

The executive staff met March 29, 2023 to review the strategies prepared at the retreat and to begin development of the framework for the Implementation Plan. At those meetings, team facilitators, team members and partners were identified. The assignment of a team facilitator and team members was designed to include

additional staff in the implementation process. Assignments were made based on their area of expertise and involvement in the implementation of the strategy.

The culmination of the work of the Council and staff are included in the Strategic Plan attached to this Report.

Reporting

Finally, staff determined the following reporting protocols. These protocols serve the purpose of keeping the staff on schedule with the implementation of strategies, keeping the City Manager informed, and providing regular reports to the City Council on the status of the implementation of the adopted strategies. This provides for long term accountability toward the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Reporting Protocols

- **Council**
 1. Receives periodic updates regarding various projects related to the strategic plan.
 2. Receives formal status reports quarterly, including an annual report.
- **City Manager**
 1. City Manager receives regular updates from staff at regular staff meetings on progress of assignments.
 2. City Manager receives formal quarterly updates from staff on progress of assignments.

City Council Approval

On May 2, 2023, the City Council reviewed their work as well as the work of the staff since the planning session. The Report was approved as amended by a vote of:

Conclusion

The Council and staff of the City of Seabrook worked through a strategic planning process that allowed the Council to identify strategies for moving the city forward, brought the staff leadership and Council closer together as a team, and developed an implementation process to ensure the strategies are addressed and accomplished over time.