

CEDAR FALLS CITY COUNCIL GOAL SETTING

DECEMBER 7 & 9, 2021

Goal Setting Work Sessions

City Council members held goal setting work sessions on December 7 and 9, 2021.

In attendance and participating at these meetings were council members Frank Darrah, Susan DeBuhr, Kelly Dunn, Dustin Ganfield, Simon Harding, Daryl Kruse, Mark Miller, Gil Schultz and Mayor Rob Green.

Also attending were Ron Gaines, city administrator, Jennifer Rodenbeck, director of finance and business operations, Stephanie Houk Sheetz, director of community development, Craig Berte, assistant public safety director/police chief, Chase Schrage, director of public works, and Jeff Olson, director of public safety.

Policy Agreements

The City Council discussed and reached consensus on the following items that will be added, edited or deleted in the FY2023 City Council Goals, Work Program and Short-Term Financial Plan as noted below.

GOAL #1: Deliver Responsive Local Government

1.B.4. Encourage the professional development of City Council members, city commissioners and board members through staff-facilitated work sessions, training sessions, the Iowa League of Cities annual conference, the Municipal Leadership Academy, and innovative project presentations from other cities.

1.B.6. Continue working with MET and other transportation options to explore public transportation options which meet the needs of Cedar Falls' public transit-dependent residents at an affordable cost to the city.

1.B.10. Maintain an online index of major city plans, policies, and documents for easy public reference.

1.B.11. Continue to expand the City's online services and website to take advantage of the prevalence of smartphones & other mobile devices in our community, while also ensuring that the less digitally advantaged can fully access city services.

1.B.12. Continue to implement Nutrient Reduction Strategy as submitted to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to update the existing Wastewater Treatment Facility.

1.C.1.a. DELETE

1.C.1.b. Maintain mutual aid agreements with Waterloo for faster emergency response times and lower callback expenses for both cities.

1.C.1.d. DELETE

1.C.2.e. Continue to provide paid internships to UNI students as a means to promote civic engagement.

1.C.3.a. DELETE

1.C.3.d. Continue to engage directly with High School student groups to introduce students to civic engagement. (e.g. CAPS program)

1.C.3.e. Build collaboration between CFCSD and the City to highlight and celebrate the many cultures in the community and how they add value to our city.

1.C. 3. F. Create pathways and collaborative equity discussions between businesses and UNI.

1.C.5.a. Continue to implement the Island Park Revitalization Plan.

1.C.5.b. Continue to evaluate cost-effective measures to reduce damages resulting from Cedar River flooding.

1.C.5.f. Continue to support the development of a city Resilience Plan to identify opportunities for increased city resiliency & sustainability.

1.C.6.a Invest in organizational capacity and infrastructure by hiring a staff member to assist the city in achieving human rights and equity goals.

1.C.6.b Continue to actively partner with the Black Hawk County Health Department, CFCSD, UNI, and Grow Cedar Valley to develop coordinated and supporting equity plans and initiatives.

1.C.6.c. Build collaboration between the CFCSD and City to highlight and celebrate different cultures in the community and how they add value to the city.

1.C.6.d. Create pathways and collaborative equity discussions between businesses and UNI.

1.c.6.e. Work with Human Rights Commission about forming a Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) subcommittee or determine best approach to establishing a Cedar Falls Equity Committee.

1.c.6.f. Work towards actively building capacity to create public engagement opportunities that are welcoming and inclusive.

1.C.7.e. Develop a long-term participation protocol for public meetings including videoconferencing options.

GOAL #2: Ensure Government Efficiency and Effectiveness

2.B.13. DELETE

2.C.2.f. DELETE

2.C.2.k Pursue the establishment of a new fire station along West First Street / Highway 57.

2.C.2.m. Expand the reach of the City's marketing and promotional campaigns regarding policing and racial equity efforts, beyond traditional media sources.

2.C.2.n. Public Safety staff to review and implement viable Racial Equity Taskforce recommendations for policing.

2.C.8.a. Add: There will be redistricting impacts on Cedar Falls.

2.C.8.b.1. Tax Cut/Tax Reform. Expect a wide-ranging discussion of ways to significantly lower income taxes in Iowa. One of those discussion items will be a review of the local option sales tax the cities currently collect. Local governments will need to forcefully advocate protecting the continuance of this funding.

2.C.8.b.2. Restrictions on the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Tax Credits. House File 849 was passed in the 2021 session that put 20-year sunsets on all TIF districts and may bring more discussion in 2022. Cedar Falls supports the continuation of TIF as the primary tool for communities to promote economic development.

2.C.8.b.4. Cedar Falls will continue to oppose any unfunded mandates, reserve restraints (\$8.10 levy, rollback, 411 pensions, recouping of legal costs associated with public record requests, etc.) erosions of Home Rule Amendment¹ authority, and elimination of state tax credits used for economic development.

2.C.8.c.2. Water and Wastewater Infrastructure. Cedar Falls supports state efforts to provide additional funding sources and flexible policies related to water, wastewater, and storm water infrastructure; these changes are necessary to meet the demands of increasing environmental regulation of cities. Funding for local government water and wastewater infrastructure may come through the State's ARPA, Infrastructure, and COVID relief funds.

2.C.8.c.3. University of Northern Iowa. During the 2021 legislative session, the City of Cedar Falls provided support for UNI's legislative priorities and would expect to do so again in 2022.

2.C.9.a. Continue to request federal transportation funding support for major street projects, including the Greenhill and Highway 58 interchange, including a city funding match.

2.C.9.b. Request federal funding for EPA mandated treatment plant improvements.

2.C.9.c. Support CFU in securing federal grants for utility or telecommunication infrastructure projects which will benefit citizens through improved reliability, security, efficiency, accessibility, or environmental impacts.

GOAL #3: Promote Economic Development

3.C.1.j. Explore options for city support of expanded day-care options in Cedar Falls.

3.C.1.k. Pursue expanded benefits and incentives to recently separated military members willing to relocate to Cedar Falls, as part of the state's Home Base Iowa initiative.

3.C.2.b. Change the city's funding model for Grow Cedar Valley from an annual competitive grant to an annual contract to provide greater assurance of financial support to GCV.

3.C.2.d. Continue to support the efforts of the Cedar Falls Economic Development Corporation in advancing Cedar Falls' economic interests.

3.C.4.c. Revise the Major Thoroughfare Plan

3.C.6.a. Continue to seek ways in to provide affordable housing options to residents by:

- 1) Maximizing Section 8 funds available to provide as many vouchers as possible, given HUD guidance.
- 2) Incentivizing improvements in Section 8 housing (with tools such as Community Development Block Grant rental rehabilitation program).
- 3) Revising zoning codes to encourage a variety of housing types in every neighborhood, e.g., allow for Habitat for Humanity builds.
- 4) Request to Housing Commission to explore and evaluate initiatives to balance investments in market rate and low-income housing (e.g., tax abatements, forgivable loans, gap payments on rent or mortgage, housing trust fund).

3.C.6.f. Complete a Housing Needs Assessment, focusing on how to provide housing variety to promote affordable housing options for all.

3.C.6.g. Create educational messaging and outreach for landlords and citizens to emphasize the importance of healthy housing for all, along with destigmatizing affordable housing options such as Section 8 and Habitat for Humanity builds.

3.C.6.h. Create a resource database of all federal, state and local programs that can be used to foster more homeownership among low- and moderate- income families and individuals.

3.C.6.i. Create an ongoing educational program for low- and moderate-income families to access available homeownership assistance programs.

3.C.6. j. Implement diversity, inclusion and affordability considerations and evaluation in all new housing development plans.

3.C.6.k. Expand the forgivable loan program for conversion of rental properties to owner-occupied, expanded service area, and more qualifying expenses.

3.C.10.b. Explore all options to building a downtown parking structure, in conjunction with a feasibility study and continual re-evaluation of paid parking options.

3.C.11.b. Reserve TIF increment capacity to pay off debt incurred by the City/IDOT cooperative construction of US 58 interchanges.

3.C.13.b. Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Program: Carry out separation of sanitary sewer and stormwater sewer lines from the footing drains when reconstructing streets.

3.C.13.c. Extend sanitary sewer to areas that are unserved and remain on septic systems (i.e. South Main Street).

3.C.14.a. Develop cooperative agreements with State Agencies to improve the following streets using RUT, LOST, and GO bonds, if necessary:

Main Street Reconstruction – Use LOST, RUT, Stormwater, ARPA, and GO bonds to complete this project for construction 2023-2025.

West 23rd Street Improvements – Use LOST, Assessment, and GO bonds to complete this project in FY2024.

Ridgeway & 58 – Use TIF funding as City match to Iowa Department of Transportation’s project in FY2023-FY2024.

West 27th Street Improvements – Use LOST, RUT, and GO bonds to complete this project in FY2021-2023.

3.C.14.c. Continue to develop the plans for the reconstruction of Union Road from 27th Street to University Avenue - Use LOST and RUT funds to complete this project. Timing of project dependent on receipt of grant funding sources.

3.C.15.a. Slope Repairs- Continue to develop plans to address significant slope failure issues. Use storm water funds to complete these projects.

GOAL #4: Enhance Community Quality of Life

- 4.C.14. Encourage private development for an official Independence Day fireworks display.
- 4.C.15. Continue working with private property owners to remove trees impacted by emerald ash borer infestation.
- 4.C.16. Design and develop facility improvements to Seerley Park.
- 4.C.17. Have a work session to develop an ordinance to address political campaigning (federal, state and local) within the city's parks.
- 4.C. 18 DELETE
- 4.C. 19. Continue pursuit of sister city partnerships and engagement, including in-person visits as part of major Iowa delegations.
- 4.C.20. Update the Bike Plan.
- 4.C.21. Continue evaluating and implementing pedestrian safety measures.

GOAL #5: Foster Organizational Excellence

- 5.A.2. Maintain clear lines and methods of communication between elected officials and city staff.
- 5.A.6. DELETE
- 5.A.7. DELETE
- 5.C.1. Conduct a workforce climate assessment/employee satisfaction survey in FY23 to identify areas for improvement in human resources management and employee relations.

ANNEX A: FY2023 Short-Term Financial Plan

- A.19. Coordinate and centralize all requests for grants, including the Black Hawk County Gaming Association.
- G.17. The city will seek minimum private donation match of 25% of/for recreation & quality of life projects. Funds shall be escrowed or an agreement with the City Council needs to be executed prior to the project bid letting.

G.18.a. General Obligation (GO) Bonds - \$12.43 Million Total

- Cameras (\$.37 million)

- Financial System (\$.70 million)
- Bridge & Culvert Replacements (\$.10 million)
- Sidewalks/Trails (\$1.60 million)
- Slope Repair (\$.28 million)
- Aldrich Elementary School Connections (\$1.34)
- Greenhill Road & South Main intersection improvements (\$.55)
- Fire bunker gear, thermal imaging cameras, and SCBA (\$0.30 million)

G.18.b. Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

- Annual TIF Rebates
- Main Street
- Olive Street Box Culverts

G.18.c. Road Use Taxes (Street Construction Fund)

- Intersection improvements
- Aldrich School Connections
- West 22nd
- West 27th

G.18.d. Refuse Fund

- Refuse trucks & equipment
- Security cameras

G.18.f. Sewer Fund

- Sanitary sewer extensions

Additional Notes from Presentation:

Financial Policies to Develop Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

- Only issue Replacement Debt – approximately \$3.5 – 4 Million every other year
- Maintain a Debt Strategy that protects at least 25-30% of capacity

Financial Policies to Develop Budget

- Increase on Residential Properties no more than CPI
- Use Backfill for Capital Project
- Continue to transfer TIF release to Ec Dev Fund
- General Fund Cash Reserves – Maintain at 20%

Budget/CIP Financial Policies

- Savings – use general savings to fund certain projects like Public Safety Building, City Hall Remodel, and High School Pool
- User Funds – Build in capital projects when establishing fees
- Private Donations – 25% of cash project
- Emergency Reserve Fund

Final Comments

It was a pleasure to assist the City of Cedar Falls with this goal setting process. We continue to be impressed with the progress that the City Council and city staff make each year toward your priority goals.

Aimee Viniard-Weideman
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

December 16, 2021