Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy

Energy Services Director Dunbar gave the history of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (EECS). The new Department Directors that were not on staff at the time of adoption of the Strategy have worked together to determine what portions of the Strategy have been completed and what items are outstanding.

The four goals of the EECS were:

1. Maintain City leadership role in energy conservation and renewable energy production.
2. Ensure the City codes and policies foster energy conservation and the production of renewable energy.
3. Create community-wide opportunities for energy conservation and renewable energy production.
4. Maximize the benefits of existing Tier 1 power pricing. City Council will need to decide power needs this year for 2019 pricing.

Staff has reviewed 56 recommended strategies and completed a matrix which is located on the city’s website at http://www.ci.ellensburg.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/5819.
Staff is requesting guidance on the outstanding implementation strategy located on page six of the agenda packet.

Council consensus was to delete item #28 “Incentivize eco development through tax breaks to renewable power businesses located within the Innovation Partnership Zone” from the Outstanding Items list. Low Energy Efficiency Design (LEED) was discussed in terms of staff certification versus hiring consultant services.

Councilmembers participated in a “dot” exercise to select their “top 5 picks” from the nine Outstanding Items on page six of the agenda packet with the following results:

1. Offer cost breaks for exemplary green developments, such as reduced permit fees. (#20)

2. Include informational handouts and tips with energy bills, targeted especially to college students. (#3)

3. Create and launch a municipal Green Business Program. (#1)

4. Create and launch a city Green Building Program. (#24)

5. Reclaim alleys as pedestrian thoroughfares. (#8)


Community Development Director Sackett summarized the agenda report. The City’s 2017 Comp Plan update needs to be completed by June, 2017.

Staff is proposing to use the “Heart and Soul Community Planning” concept for the 2017 Comp Plan Update and is proposing to hire a temporary long range planner whose duties would be to work on the update using this process. In answer to Council inquiry, no state monies are available for comp plan updates. Community Development has some carryover money available to fund the long range planner position through the end of 2016. Funding for 2017 would be included in the upcoming budget process. The City has resources dedicated to the comp plan update. Council consensus to move forward with the long range planner position.

Council watched a video on the heart and soul community planning concept.
Council and staff took a ten minute break at 10:09 a.m.

Council and staff reconvened at 10:26 a.m.

Staff would like to immediately start on a community network analysis and come back to Council with a proposal at the April 18 meeting to request hiring a temporary long range planner to work on the comp plan update through the end of adoption of the comp plan.

Council consensus to support the Heart and Soul Community Planning concept for the 2007 Comprehensive Plan Update and for staff to bring forward a proposal for formal Council approval which includes the staffing, software and resources to make the Heart and Soul Community Planning process work.

**Disposal of Surplus Property Discussion**

Staff distributed an inventory of City-owned property and requested Council review it as a revenue generating opportunity with the goal of surplussing and subsequently selling property no longer of value to the City and/or requiring ongoing maintenance with small return on investment. Staff requested Council review the list, identify candidate locations for surplussing and submit them to staff. Staff will research the property deeds for issues which may bind the property to the City and bring back a list to Council for consideration and possible Council consensus.

**Outreach Plan and Staffing**

Staff is proposing the creation of a public information officer position to head up the City’s communication efforts to include outreach, marketing and electronic media. Funding for the position would come from a combination of sources.

A proposed job description, based on similar positions in other communities, was reviewed. The position would provide support to every department and would be exempt from the Union. The salary range is under review.

Council consensus to move forward with the Communications/Government Relations Officer position.

Council and staff took a lunch break at 11:51 p.m.

A time for public comment was scheduled for 12:30 p.m. No one was present to speak during the public comment time. The Council retreat reconvened at 12:46 p.m.

**Public Safety Building Refresh**

City Manager Akers summarized the agenda report. After review of the work completed by the City’s architectural consultant a project proposal has been developed that anticipates a design cost of $480,000 and a project development cost of $5,600,000. The project cost estimate has been revised.
after review of the work prepared by the architect and revision of the exterior parking lot construction estimates to reflect project costs developed by in house public works staff. The estimate also eliminated construction of the parking lot at the north end of the building to reflect funding that has already been obtained under a Department of Ecology stormwater retrofit grant. While staff believes $5.6 million is adequate for the project it recommends preparation of bid documents in a way that provides for additive alternatives designed in a way that can be incorporated at a later date. In order to have sufficient specificity to move ahead with funding estimates staff based its analysis on a project that would make public parking on the north end of the building. This proposal would also demolish most of the existing building footprint currently occupied by the Police Department and include provisions for construction of a secure parking area on the property formerly occupied by the Police Department footprint. Initial review of the opportunity for additive alternate bidding suggests the gun range, demolition, and secure parking would be logical divisions of work that could be isolated for treatment as alternates. There may be other project components that could be included under an additive alternate scenario.

The Police Department believes the gun range and secure parking portions of the project are critical. The secure parking portion cannot happen without demolishing the existing building. Chief Miller distributed a handout showing security camera footage from the police vehicle parking area during a recent incident.

Council reviewed and discussed the three debt scenarios considered for the project and outlined on pages 12-14 of the agenda report. Staff is recommending Scenario 2 which provides for structuring of new debt around existing debt obligation. The financing proposal would divert construction sales tax funding for two years which is estimated to be $240,000 each for 2016 and 2017. This approach would provide $480,000 for design costs on a $5.6 to $6 million dollar facility.

The short fall in financing would come from sales tax growth. The proposed plan relies upon revenue which is currently being discussed for potential revenue sharing in the urban growth area intermodal agreement with Kittitas County. If some form of revenue sharing agreement is reached there will be a need to replace this funding in the overall development package. Staff will have a better understanding of the revenue sharing needs by the end of September.

Staff would like direction on what alternatives to select. The schedule would be to begin the design phase services this year with design completion in the spring of 2017 for bid letting.

After discussion, Council consensus for: 1) staff to bring back a financing package for construction within the existing footprint of the building along with 2) alternative financing to construct a new building off site. Staff will provide information on the amount of voted debt that would be necessary to fund the shortfall in either alternative if Council elects to proceed without bidding contingencies of additive alternatives. Based upon estimates prepared by the City’s architect, the likely total building cost of either alternative is in the range of eight million dollars.
Our Next Big Thing

Council discussed potential future projects and identified the Community Center as the next big project for the City. Staff also identified the revenue demand for asset maintenance to be a likely large cost need. A consultant hired by the City is currently performing a maintenance analysis on all city facilities. The report on infrastructure maintenance could result in the need to issue additional debt to bring facility maintenance up to an acceptable level.

Budget Development

Council reviewed a proposed Preliminary Budget Process Schedule for the 2017/2018 Biennium Budget. Items Council wishes to have included in the budget preparation should be sent to Finance Director Pascoe. Two items mentioned by councilmembers were: 1) continuing work on activities to reduce flood risk in the City and 2) moving from a transportation system built on cars to a system built on mobility units (pedestrian, bicycle, bus service).

Economic Development and Tourism Promotion Discussion

The City Manager will reconnect with the Ellensburg Business Development Authority (EBDA) to determine whether it has developed the road map to accomplish the scope of services for the Economic Development Strategy Plan. Staff would appreciate receiving Council input in preparation for developing the next contract with the EBDA.

The Chamber’s tourism contract ends this year; staff’s intent is to renew the contract for another year. The Chamber will be required to submit its funding request to the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) for the next funding cycle as a provision of the contract. Council identified funding of event promotion as a concern now that the council funded grant program has replaced the annual request process. Staff will work with Councilmember Lillquist to ensure event promotion is included in the next tourism promotion contract with the chamber.

City Standards Application in the Urban Growth Area – Interlocal Agreement Update

City Manager Akers gave an update on negotiations with the County. Two major issues continue to be: 1) City concern with the County’s reluctance to assess impact fees and the County’s history of rejecting City staff SEPA comments on projects that occur in the UGA, and 2) revenue sharing in annexation areas.

The protection of the City’s road corridors is also of particular concern; the potential costs to the City as a result of the County allowing development in these areas will be expensive.

Council-Staff Interaction

Councilmembers shared why they ran for public office and what they hoped to accomplish.
The City Council retreat concluded at 3:27 p.m.

_________________________________________ Mayor

ATTEST: ____________________________________

City Clerk