

CITY of DOTHAN



STRATEGIC PLAN

December 2021 -- February 2022

Report to City Leadership
February 7, 2022

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On February 5, 2022 during a public Strategic Planning Workshop at Eastgate Park, the Dothan City Commission made the following NEXT LEVEL commitments for 2022-24

PERSONNEL: Agreed to remain open to ideas that will keep Dothan competitive in securing and retaining top quality talent, and to remain aware of and to promote (internally and externally) the benefits of being a Dothan employee.

LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL: Agreed to do what is necessary to effect compensation and marketing changes in order to increase and sustain full employment in the Dothan Police Department.

FIRE STATIONS: Committed to move forward on both Station #3 and Station #10, recognizing that adjustments in design or allocation may be necessary as projects proceed through the bidding phase.

NEIGHBORHOODS: Agreed to take measured steps to implement solutions that are a good-fit for Dothan, that balance the needs of residents with the rights of responsible property owners, and that lead to real progress in this area.

BIG PROPERTY OPPORTUNITIES: Agreed to move forward with property acquisitions that add value to City plans, and to donate/lease/sell properties when: a) proposed operations benefit the community, b) missions are fully understood and the roles of other involved partners are in-sync with the goals of the City, c) a business plan for program sustainability has been accepted, and d) the owner/lessor has committed (through MOU or other mechanism) to continuing proposed operations at the site for a defined number of years.

DOWNTOWN: Affirmed, unanimously, the vision being presented through the Transformation-through-the-Arts initiative, and authorized the Mayor and City Manager to proceed with next steps. Committed also to continuing progress on commercial corridor development to generate growth opportunities along all of Dothan's major thoroughfares, through and beyond downtown.

DOTHAN CITY SCHOOLS: Empowered the City Manager, Mayor and representative Commissioners to meet with Superintendent Coe to ascertain how the City could effectively assist the Dothan City School System (through funding or other interventions) to have a positive impact on enrollment and student learning.

360-DEGREE COMMUNICATION:

- 1) Recommitted to the time that is necessary to remain current on the large amount of information regularly provided by internal and external sources.
- 2) Requested that City staff work with external partners to enhance the currency and (where necessary) frequency of information being provided in the most accessible formats.
- 3) Requested that the Mayor and City Manager arrange quarterly updates for Commissioners with the Chamber staff regarding projects underway and under consideration (while respecting limitations of non-disclosure agreements.)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Dothan has engaged in formalized strategic planning since 2006. In recent years, the process has focused on projects. Commissioners traditionally received updates from the City Manager and Department Heads regarding ongoing projects and sector needs. This information was merged with financial capacity updates and with the insights and recommendations of the elected officials to create a list of project priorities and estimated costs. The Commission then discussed each project and assigned a top, high, or other priority designation, from which senior staff created operational plans. The Strategic Planning update work for 2022-24 originally was expected to follow this same format. However, that expectation changed markedly.

Interviews with the Dothan City Commissioners and the Mayor: During individual interviews with consultant Barbara Alford of *In Sight Solutions, LLC*, the Commissioners and Mayor unanimously expressed the same sentiment: that they already were informed about and had confidence in the projects scheduled for the next several years, and that they wanted to spend time together talking about bigger, broader issues. Three of them individually used the phrase “next level.” And so began planning for a workshop to foster dialogue about challenges and opportunities to take Dothan to its **NEXT LEVEL**. (See Appendix A for summaries of individual Commissioner and Mayor interviews.)

Individual interviews with Department Heads: While each Department leader focused on the priorities within his/her own sector, these conversations also yielded a similar list of overarching themes for Dothan’s growth and development. When asked to meet together as a group to collaborate on “big topics”, the main issues identified by the Department Heads closely paralleled those expressed by the Mayor and Commissioners. However, the Department Heads added a caveat that current fiscal commitments for capital projects and staff support also should be considered in order to maintain the current rate of progress. (See Appendix B for summaries of individual Department Head interviews.)

Following the interviews, the 2022 Strategic Planning Workshop was intentionally redirected to merge information updates on current projects related to chosen “big topics” and to provide substantial opportunity for Commission dialogue and creative thinking. The program also was structured to link planning to the City’s Mission, Vision, and Goals—and to the new and highly successful initiative LOVE Dothan. This approach was selected to create cohesion between commitments resulting from this year’s work and the principles already adopted.

Background research: Two years of COVID disruption followed by unprecedented amounts of federal (direct) and federal-to-state money flowing to communities have stirred both concern and celebration in U.S. cities. The same is true for Dothan. Workshop participants were provided with several publications to initiate conversation about challenges and opportunities common to City leaders in 2022. (See Appendix C for citations.)

Information from major community partners. The strategic directions of six key Dothan City community partners were referenced during the Workshop. Partners included: Visit Dothan, Dothan City Schools, the Downtown Dothan Redevelopment Authority, Wiregrass Museum of Art, the Dothan-Houston County Library System, and the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce. (See Appendix D for Partners’ Summary Information.)

STRATEGIC PLANNING FUNDAMENTALS-for the City of Dothan, AL

The City of Dothan has in place a comprehensive *Strategic Plan* through the year 2034. The Mission, Vision, and Goals (listed below) are reflective of Dothan's present values and general directions. During the 2022 planning workshop these fundamentals were continually referenced to ensure that decisions arising from this year's strategic plans were integrally connected to what the City is today (Mission), where the City wishes to be in 2034 (Vision), and its fundamental aspirations (Goals). The work also was purposefully connected to the relatively new and very well-regarded community initiative Love Dothan.

Dothan's Mission

The Mission of the Dothan City Government is to provide
the ***BEST MUNICIPAL SERVICES,***
in a
CUSTOMER FRIENDLY MANNER,
and to be
FINANCIALLY SOUND
while
INVESTING IN THE CITY'S FUTURE,
and
ENGAGING OUR RESIDENTS.

Dothan Vision 2034

In 2034 Dothan is:
the ***MOST BEAUTIFUL, LIVABLE CITY*** in Alabama.

Dothan is:
the ***HUB OF THE WIREGRASS REGION***
with ***CONVENIENT ACCESS AND MOBILITY.***

Dothan has:
a ***VIBRANT 24 HOURS DOWNTOWN***
the heart of the community
and a ***STRONG DIVERSE ECONOMY.***

Dothan is:
a ***FAMILY FRIENDLY COMMUNITY***
with ***EXCEPTIONAL LEISURE AMENITIES FOR ALL,***
and ***An INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY FOR ALL***

Dothan's Goals for 2024

- ***Maintain a Financially Sound City and a High Performance Team***
 - ***Expand the Local Economy***
 - ***Plan for Dothan's Future***
 - ***Make Dothan a More Livable and Inclusive City***
 - ***Improve Mobility***
-

LOVE ❤️ DOTHAN

Love your City employees
Love your neighborhoods
Love your neighbors
Love your downtown

Love your businesses
Love your orange barrels
Love your work
Love your schools

STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Mark Saliba, Mayor
Kevin Dorsey, District 1 Commissioner
Dr. Aristotle Kirkland, District 2 Commissioner
Bradley Bedwell, District 3 Commissioner
John Ferguson, District 4 Commissioner
Gantt Pierce, District 5 Commissioner
David Crutchfield, District 6 Commissioner

Kevin Cowper, City Manager
Randy Morris, Assistant City Manager
Will Benny, Dothan Police Chief
Alison Hall, Leisure Services Director
Andy Love, General Services Director
Romona Marcus, Finance Director
Jack Mason, IT Director
Billy Mayes, Utilities Director
Todd McDonald, Planning Director
Delvick McKay, Personnel Director
Larry Williams, Dothan Fire Chief
Thad Taylor, Internal Analyst
Vincent Vincent, Community Relations Officer
Lisa Matheny, Executive Assistant to the City Manager
Shirley Cosby, Administrative Secretary

Barbara Alford, Consultant

The STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP PROCESS



The City Commission met in a public work session on February 4 and February 5, 2022, at the City’s Eastgate Park facility. A series of *Next Level Conversations* was constructed to incorporate updates on projects related to the “big topics” of most concern to the Commission. The conversation topics and specific areas of focus were:

- Our City Organization—finance, personnel, and redistricting
- Our Public Safety—law enforcement personnel and fire stations
- Our Neighborhoods—enhancement teams, ordinances, and redevelopment efforts
- Our Economic Development—federal grant opportunities (infrastructure and red water), corridor redevelopment/planning/zoning, big property opportunities
- Our Downtown—visions/plans/partners and next steps
- Our Children’s Education—Dothan City Schools
- 360-Degree Communication

The first day was structured to provide information and opportunity for reflective dialogue amongst elected leaders and between them and the Department Heads. The most critical topic for each area was derived from these discussions and advanced to deeper dialogue on day-2. For each topic, the Commission and senior staff identified specific issues/concerns, posited strategies that are within the purview and authority of an elected City body, specified expectations for success, and identified internal and external resources needed to achieve that success. Each conversation ended with a commitment by the Commission that will provide general direction to senior City staff for 2022-23.

The full Workshop agenda is found in Appendix E.

Outcomes for each of the *Next Level Conversations* are on the following pages.

NEXT LEVEL CONVERSATION 1—OUR CITY ORGANIZATION	
City-Wide Personnel	
Key Issue(s)	To address significant challenges in recruiting and retaining high quality personnel (full- and part-time, including seasonal) throughout Dothan City departments.
Link to Dothan Goal	Maintain a high performance team.
Link to LOVE ❤️ Dothan	Love your employees.
Expectations for Success	Success will create a stable and happy workforce that is reflective of who and what the City of Dothan is today, and results in a balanced approach to both employee and customer satisfaction.
Possible Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define what is meant by high-performance team within each department or job function, and incorporate that information into job descriptions, evaluations, and marketing. • Develop policies/procedures that enable a research-based response to sector (and position) requirements with regard to compensation and work conditions. • Diversify job-search processes to tailor to the specific target market; make better use of multiple search strategies. • Consider flexible work situations that provide greater work-life balance without sacrificing customer service. • Gain a better understanding of the relative competitiveness of the full Dothan City compensation package, consider adjustments where warranted, and market the total package. • Create recruiting and retention programs/policies that are reflective of best practice for cities of aspiration. • Consider the possibility of adding to employee base wages for those who do not require a City contribution for health insurance.
Essential Partners	Search resource firms/sites; employees
Role for Dothan City	Solo
Primary City Resources	Personnel Department; Community Relations; Legal
Commission Commitment 2022	<i>Agreed to remain open to ideas that will keep Dothan competitive in securing and retaining top quality talent, and to remain aware of and to promote (internally and externally) the benefits of being a Dothan employee.</i>

NEXT LEVEL CONVERSATION 2—OUR PUBLIC SAFETY	
Law Enforcement Personnel	
Key Issue(s)	To address current understaffing and serious challenges in recruiting and retaining high quality personnel (sworn officers, dispatchers, and call-takers) for Dothan Police Department (DPD).
Link to Dothan Goal	Maintain a high performance team.
Link to LOVE ❤️ Dothan	Love your employees. Love your neighborhoods.
Expectations for Success	Full-force staffing will increase public safety, enable proactive vs. reactive policing, increase community engagement, increase the diversity of the police force, alleviate dangerous fatigue for these first responders, and ensure DPD fulfills its mission.
Possible Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase compensation to competitive levels. • Gauge and respond to non-wage issues that may be detrimental to employee retention. • Ensure technology and other support is current and effective, and that it helps attract candidates interested in DPD jobs. • Develop opportunities for gap-positions for interested candidates between the ages of 18 and 21 (i.e. scholarships or tuition reimbursement for Wallace College or Troy enrollment in degree/certificate programs; internships.) • Increase partnerships with local high schools to develop effective pipelines of motivated and qualified candidates. • Create Dothan’s own Police Academy. • Better market the total benefits of working with Dothan City. • Continually assess the value-added for non-policing job duties that may be discouraging personnel from continuing career paths with Dothan City.
Essential Partners	Area school systems; Wallace College; Troy State University; marketing resources.
Role for Dothan City	Lead Partner
Primary City Resources	Dothan Police Department; Personnel Department; Community Relations.
Commission Commitment 2022	<i>Agreed to do what is necessary to effect compensation and marketing changes in order to increase and sustain full employment in DPD.</i>

NEXT LEVEL CONVERSATION 2—OUR PUBLIC SAFETY	
Fire Stations	
Key Issue(s)	To improve emergency response time and Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC) time for Dothan Fire Department, and to maintain the City’s current ISO rating of #1.
Link to Dothan Goal	Make Dothan a more livable city.
Link to LOVE Dothan ❤️	Love your neighborhoods. Love your neighbors.
Expectations for Success	Construction and full operationalization of the two new stations will ensure that response times and ROSC times for all city sectors are within the recommended limits set nationally; the ISO rating remains at 1.
Possible Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proceed with design of both Station #3 and Station #10 for 2022. • Move station construction funds from conditional to approved. • Proceed with construction of Station #10 in 2023. • Proceed with the construction and relocation of Station #3 in 2024. <p>(Note: Depending upon revenue and capital budget management, simultaneous construction may be possible.)</p>
Essential Partners	Architects; general contractors,; subcontractors
Role for Dothan City	Solo
Primary City Resources	Dothan Fire Department; General Services; Utilities; Public Works; IT
Commission Commitment 2022	<i>Committed to move forward on both Station #3 and Station #10, recognizing that adjustments in design or allocation may be necessary as projects proceed through the bidding phase.</i>

NEXT LEVEL CONVERSATION 3—OUR CITY NEIGHBORHOODS	
Residential Properties	
Key Issue(s)	To provide functional, well-maintained, affordable housing for all.
Link to Dothan Goal	Make Dothan a more livable city.
Link to LOVE ❤️ Dothan	Love your neighborhoods.
Expectations for Success	Success will be evidenced by the implementation of programs and policies that reflect national best-practice, significantly reduce neighborhood blight, and increase the quality of life in Dothan's economically challenged neighborhoods.
Possible Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build on the progress being experienced by the new Neighborhood Enhancement Team; increase the flow of information between the Team's work and the Commission; keep the Commission informed of successes and help to identify issues that may need to be addressed but that the Team (and other City personnel) are currently unauthorized or unable to impact. • Identify legal, fair and effective ways to incentivize homeowners, including non-resident landlords, to participate in home repairs and property clean-up. • Intentionally gather additional information to develop a comprehensive and detailed picture of where the currently known problems are, who the owners are, what already has been tried, and what else can be attempted with current policies and staffing. • Research and consider rental ordinances that are effective in addressing the problems without creating unnecessary bureaucratic barriers to law-abiding residential and commercial property owners. • If ordinances are to be considered, determine additional costs for implementation and allocate funding. • Determine the pros and cons of implementing complaint-driven response programs. • Where appropriate for City investment and/or service expansion, consider purchasing properties. • Consider use of some CDBG funding, including a possible increase in the City allocation, to fund pilot initiatives without substantially reducing competitive nonprofit funding.
Essential Partners	Private sector landowners and homeowners; neighborhood citizens and leaders; private investors
Role for Dothan City	Lead Partner
Primary City Resources	Planning Department; Neighborhood Enhancement Team; Legal
Commission Commitment 2022	<i>Agreed to take measured steps to implement solutions that are a good-fit for Dothan, that balance the needs of residents with the rights of responsible property owners, and lead to real progress in this area.</i>

NEXT LEVEL CONVERSATION 4 – OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 	
Big Property Opportunities	
Key Issues(s)	To determine possible best uses for large Dothan City-owned or potentially owned properties specifically the former Dothan City Schools Central Office on Dusy Street, the vacant National Guard Armory on Westgate, and the Houston County Farm Center.
Link to Dothan Goal	Expand the local economy; plan for Dothan’s future
Link to Love ❤️Dothan	Love your neighborhoods. Love your businesses.
Expectations for Success	City investment and use of properties will improve neighborhoods, enhance the lives of residents, be financially prudent, and reflect sound property management decisions of Dothan City Leaders.
Possible Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dusy Street: Pursue lease or lease-purchase opportunities with nonprofit(s), particularly those that will engage youth within the surrounding community. Review and consider church’s request to lease two buildings on property site. • Armory: Retain the property within the City Westgate Recreation complex footprint; assess and consider possible exception for sale of Westgate Parkway frontage; develop long-term use plans for expansion of recreation opportunities with the added acreage. • Farm Center: Proceed with purchase; reconsider purchase offer to reflect due-diligence report regarding essential maintenance for occupancy. • General: complete research on and bring forward a proposal to create a Commercial Development Authority (Code of Alabama Section 11-54.)
Essential Partners	Businesses; nonprofits; investors
Role for Dothan City	Peer Partner
Primary City resources	City Manager; Assistant City Manager; Public Works, Utilities, General Services; Leisure Services; Community Relations; Legal
Commission Commitment 2022	<i>Agreed to move forward with property acquisitions that add value to City plans, and to donate/lease/sell properties when: a) proposed operations benefit the community; b) missions are fully understood and the roles of other involved partners are in-sync with the goals of the City; c) a business plan for program sustainability has been accepted; and d) the owner/lessor has committed (through MOU or other mechanism) to continuing proposed operations at the site for a defined number of years.</i>

NEXT LEVEL CONVERSATION 5—OUR DOWNTOWN	
Transformational Dothan Opportunity	
Key Issue(s)	To identify the City’s expectations, capacity and next steps regarding this public-private partnership initiative.
Link to Dothan Goal	Plan for Dothan’s future.
Link to LOVE Dothan	Love your neighborhoods. Love your downtown. Love your neighbors. Love your businesses.
Expectations for Success	Success will be the emergence of Dothan as a true destination location, regional hub, and model city; significant growth in census population and in population diversity; increased tax revenue; increased outside investments; an elevated quality of life that draws new residents and retains large percentages of our own future generations. Success also will reflect increased interest by research and development entities, and changes in workforce characteristics that lead to new local education programs. As the initiative evolves, Commissioners expect to continue conversations, to be able to consider significant investments on a case-by-case basis with regard to outlay and ROI (fiscal and other), and to have local people and businesses involved as much as possible.
Possible Strategies	Next Steps as outlined by City Manager Kevin Cowper: Engage Executive Architect to oversee design. Designate project oversight team. Designate a citizen committee. Designate a user-design committee. Design public presentation materials; develop ongoing campaign. Initiate private fundraising efforts. Market downtown hotel, and commercial and residential opportunities. Determine management, funding and operating structures for organizations and facility operations. Evaluate financial feasibility, including a possible contract with a financial advisor for the City. Begin process to relocate City personnel. Conduct downtown traffic study.
Essential Partners	Wiregrass Foundation, private investors, Houston County, DDRA, arts organizations and their boards
Role for Dothan City	Lead Partner
Primary City Resources	City Manager; Department Heads; Community Relations Office.
Commission Commitment 2022	<i>Affirmed, unanimously, the vision being presented through the Transformation-through-the-Arts initiative and authorized the Mayor and City Manager to proceed with next steps. Committed also to continuing progress on commercial corridor development to generate growth opportunities along all of Dothan’s major thoroughfares, through and beyond downtown.</i>

NEXT LEVEL CONVERSATION 6—OUR CHILDREN’S EDUCATION	
Dothan City Schools	
Key Issue(s)	Declining enrollment and academic achievement.
Link to Dothan Goal	Planning for Dothan’s future.
Link to LOVE ❤️ Dothan	Love your schools.
Expectations for Success	Student attrition is reversed, families that have left DCS will begin to return, academic achievement levels continually rise (both objectively and comparatively), graduation rates remain above the 90% target while college-going rates increase and remediation rates decline.
Possible Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider funding one or more of the requests presented by Dr. Coe at the Jan. 18, 2022 Commission Meeting if this allows for reallocation of funds for academic improvement. • Identify and clearly communicate to DCS the data/information that the Commission would like to know to stay apprised of school progress. • Discuss with Dr. Coe ways in which City leadership can engage with school leadership in some form(s) of joint strategic planning that leverages the resources of partners while recognizing the autonomy of the administrative structure and board. Such collaborations could extend to other major community partners.
Essential Partners	Dothan City Schools and other major organizations that may be included in an “all hands on deck” strategy to change the trajectory of student enrollment and achievement.
Role for Dothan City	Lead Partner
Primary City Resources	Mayor; City Manager; Commission Representatives
Commission Commitment 2022	<i>Empowered the City Manager, Mayor and representative Commissioners to meet with Superintendent Coe to ascertain how the City could effectively assist the Dothan City School System (with funding or other interventions) to have a positive impact on enrollment and student learning.</i>

NEXT LEVEL CONVERSATION 7—OUR BEST COMMUNICATION	
360-degree Communication	
Key Issue(s)	To strengthen transparency and decision-making.
Link to Dothan Goal	Maintain a high performance team.
Link to LOVE ❤️ Dothan	Love your work.
Expectations for Success	Successful strategies will increase the timeliness and flow of information to the Commissioners and enhance transparency.
Possible Strategies	Conversation focused primarily on two distinct areas: 1) the format and timeliness of information to the Commissioners from internal sources; and 2) updates from community partners (particularly the Chamber of Commerce) on economic development projects. The agreed upon strategies are best reflected in the three commitments listed below.
Essential Partners	Chamber of Commerce Leadership Staff
Role for Dothan City	Peer Partner
Primary City Resources	Mayor; City Manager; Commissioners; City Analyst; Community Relations
Commission Commitment 2022	<p>4) Recommitted to the time that is necessary to remain current on the large amount of information regularly provided by internal and external sources.</p> <p>5) Requested that City staff work with external partners to enhance the currency and (where necessary) frequency of information being provided in the most accessible formats.</p> <p>6) Requested that the Mayor and City Manager arrange quarterly updates for Commissioners with the Chamber staff regarding projects underway and under consideration (while respecting limitations of non-disclosure agreements.)</p>

APPENDICES

Appendix A-1
CITY OF DOTHAN—Strategic Planning 2022-24
Interview with Commissioner Kevin Dorsey and Commissioner Aristotle Kirkland

Both Commissioners expressed confidence in the City staff (City Manager, Assistant City Manager, and Department Heads) to analyze and bring forward the projects needed to maintain and grow Dothan. Both leaders prefer that the emphasis for strategic planning time at the February Workshop be dedicated to discussing critical needs of communities and citizens and interventions/investments the City can make to address these. They understand they will hear and vote upon department/operational projects. However, they want time committed to discussing City leader positions on broader issues: Improving Public Education, Building Families, and Fostering Financial Security for Dothan residents. Topics leading their list:

- Renters' Ordinances. What can and should be implemented in Dothan, and what steps must be taken to address the blight in Dothan's poorest neighborhoods? What are best practices of communities like Dothan?
- Focus on law enforcement (presence, visibility, and officer recruitment) with special emphasis on neighborhoods experiencing an increase in violent crime. Homeowners want to "take back" their neighborhoods. What role can the City play in facilitating this action?
- Collaborative strategic planning with Dothan City Schools. There is frustration with funding schools (focusing on facilities) while student achievement continues to slide and concerned parents continue seeking private options. Can the City sponsor community-wide conversations to include nonprofits that provide many of the support services needed by school children and their families?
- Greater communication and transparency between Commissioners and the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, et al, with regard to recruitment and development of business and industry opportunities in Dothan (particularly those that will require the advocacy of district leaders and/or fiscal participation with taxpayer dollars.)
- The continuation and expansion of Love Dothan neighborhood initiatives, with emphasis on sustainability after the weekend event is completed.
- More information about Civic Center and downtown conversations. Particular interest in how investment in the city service corridor can help improve the adjacent neighborhoods and the quality of life for residents there. (They hope to have more information about this when they meet with RDG representatives in a few weeks.)
- What role can/should the City play in supporting small businesses and enabling workforce development?
- Concern about roads---focusing on those within neighborhoods. (i.e. speed bumps)
- Procedurally:
 - More time to review the Commission Meeting materials.
 - Deeper orientations for new Commissioners regarding each City department.

Regarding Dothan fiscal commitments—Commissioners are looking forward to allocating funds that Dothan has acquired/will acquire due to revenue increases and/or COVID related federal funding. However, both Commissioners also affirmed some fiscal conservatism, preferring to seek out and engage resources from the private sector before committing large sums of taxpayer dollars.

Appendix A-2
CITY OF DOTHAN—Strategic Planning 2022-24
Interview with Commissioner Bradley Bedwell

Commissioner Bedwell would like to be provided with updates on the projects currently scheduled and budgeted (in progress and planned) for the City. (NOTE: this information will be provided to Commissioners through pre-Workshop information packets and via presentations by the Department Heads at the February Workshop.) Commissioner Bedwell's major topics for Workshop discussion include:

- Ways in which the City of Dothan can participate in industry recruitment. (Note: some suggestions may be provided during Chamber President Matt Parker's presentation to the City Commission on 1/18. If so, these will be incorporated into the February Workshop dialogues.)
- Strategies to encourage "good neighbor" residents (i.e., long-term homeowners, senior citizens with many years' experience in Dothan) to stay in Dothan.
- More activities for Dothan's active seniors---recognition that the population is aging, but these seniors are not interested in, nor well-served, by stereotypical senior center programs.
- Investment and/or strategies to build up Dothan's older neighborhoods.
- Downtown development opportunities---as a starting point to change the future of Dothan overall, as well as positively impact the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Farm Center property opportunities. Identify opportunities to develop this property to add to the quality of life in that part of the City, improve the visual appeal of that location, and add a desired signature feature to the City (i.e., mixed use retail/residential space.).
- Development of walkable, self-contained communities within Dothan---communities that reflect the live-work-play neighborhoods desired by increasing numbers of families.
- Renters' ordinances—striking a reasonable balance between the rights of private citizens to use their homes to generate revenue and the quality of life expected by surrounding homeowners.
- Strategic planning with local public schools---ways to engage in collaborative planning vs. simply providing funding; having input without encroaching on the elected board members and leaders of the schools.
- Consideration of different reporting systems to enable Commissioners (and the City overall) to know the impact of various projects (particularly high-dollar projects.)
- Internally—more opportunity to study and reflect upon major issues coming before the Commission.

Regarding Dothan fiscal commitments—Commissioner Bedwell expressed an understanding that progress sometimes entails risk, some of which is fiscal. However, he believes in researching opportunities and options thoroughly.

Appendix A-3
CITY OF DOTHAN—Strategic Planning 2022-24
Interview with Commissioner John Ferguson

Both Commissioners expressed confidence in the City staff (City Manager, Assistant City Manager, and Department Heads) to analyze and bring forward the projects needed to maintain and grow Dothan. Both leaders prefer that the emphasis for strategic planning time at the February Workshop be dedicated to discussing critical needs of communities and citizens and interventions/investments the City can make to address these. They understand they will hear and vote upon department/operational projects. However, they want time committed to discussing City leader positions on broader issues: Improving Public Education, Building Families, and Fostering Financial Security for Dothan residents. Topics leading their list:

- Renters' Ordinances. What can and should be implemented in Dothan, and what steps must be taken to address the blight in Dothan's poorest neighborhoods? What are best practices of communities like Dothan?
- Focus on law enforcement (presence, visibility, and officer recruitment) with special emphasis on neighborhoods experiencing an increase in violent crime. Homeowners want to "take back" their neighborhoods. What role can the City play in facilitating this action?
- Collaborative strategic planning with Dothan City Schools. There is frustration with funding schools (focusing on facilities) while student achievement continues to slide and concerned parents continue seeking private options. Can the City sponsor community-wide conversations to include nonprofits that provide many of the support services needed by school children and their families?
- Greater communication and transparency between Commissioners and the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, et al, with regard to recruitment and development of business and industry opportunities in Dothan (particularly those that will require the advocacy of district leaders and/or fiscal participation with taxpayer dollars.)
- The continuation and expansion of Love Dothan neighborhood initiatives, with emphasis on sustainability after the weekend event is completed.
- More information about Civic Center and downtown conversations. Particular interest in how investment in the city service corridor can help improve the adjacent neighborhoods and the quality of life for residents there. (They hope to have more information about this when they meet with RDG representatives in a few weeks.)
- What role can/should the City play in supporting small businesses and enabling workforce development?
- Concern about roads---focusing on those within neighborhoods. (i.e. speed bumps)
- Procedurally:
 - More time to review the Commission Meeting materials.
 - Deeper orientations for new Commissioners regarding each City department.

Regarding Dothan fiscal commitments—Commissioners are looking forward to allocating funds that Dothan has acquired/will acquire due to revenue increases and/or COVID related federal funding. However, both Commissioners also affirmed some fiscal conservatism, preferring to seek out and engage resources from the private sector before committing large sums of taxpayer dollars.

Appendix A-4
CITY OF DOTHAN—Strategic Planning 2022-24
Interview with Commissioner Gantt Pierce

Commissioner Pierce would like to focus some attention on more 360-degree communication (amongst commissioners, with the Mayor, with the City Manager and department heads, and with key community partners), but without crossing a line into micromanaging. He believes conversation about communication can lead to actions by all involved with regard to generating trust and minimizing surprises.

He would like the majority of the Workshop to focus on broad topics such as:

- Downtown—Investment there could be a catalyst for major enhancements to the quality of life in Dothan, including workforce opportunities and future generations choosing to make Dothan their home. He would like to discuss opportunities with open minds, and have a dialogue about what it means to be fiscally responsible without fear of risk. What are the opportunities that will take Dothan/Wiregrass to the “next level”? (Note: the term “next level” was used by three of the six commissioners.)
- Focus on public safety, with emphasis on a competitive, excellent police force. The force should be at 100%, with officers choosing to work in Dothan. What are the strategies and investments needed to recruit and retain quality officers, and are there issues other than compensation that also can be addressed by the Commission?
- Westgate Park—as the key component in Dothan’s recreation crown, are there investments that should occur here to retain forward momentum, to support Visit Dothan’s successful initiatives, and to make WaterWorld a true regional destination attraction?
- How can/should the City take a more proactive approach to zoning and ordinances? Instead of “playing defense” in response to problems and challenges, how should the City use research and community input to develop recommendations tied to visions for each neighborhood? (i.e., if downtown is envisioned to generate a walkable entertainment and arts district, an appropriate ordinance may be needed to allow open containers for alcohol; if a neighborhood is envisioned for family housing, can zoning ordinances be legally and fairly developed to foster appropriate development and use?) The Commissioner also cited current regulations pertaining to food trucks as an example. Are there ways to cut down on red tape associated with the requirement that the trucks affiliate with a commissary? This issue may become increasingly important for the downtown initiative, with food trucks playing an increasing role in providing services.
- Exploring new quality of life opportunities—the skating rink cited as a unique (to Dothan) fun, family example. What are other possibilities? However, more information is needed for Commissioners with regard to costs (immediate and long-term). It is not necessary that such attractions be structured to generate a profit, but the net fiscal outcome should be honestly predicted so that Commissioners can make informed decisions about value-added to citizen quality of life.
- Similarly, the role of the arts should be elevated to improve quality of life in Dothan. Is there a role (fiscal or other) for the City government to play in that endeavor?
- Dothan’s approach to legal services—are there ways to increase staff expertise/capacity and reduce reliance on outsourcing?

Regarding Dothan fiscal commitments---Commissioner Pierce would like time during the Workshop (perhaps near the end) for frank dialogue amongst elected leaders about how to be fiscally responsible without being risk averse. This will be of particular importance in major projects that cannot be cash-funded, and major new opportunities such as downtown transformation.

Appendix A-5
CITY OF DOTHAN—Strategic Planning 2022-24
Interview with Commissioner David Crutchfield

Commissioner Crutchfield's list of positive accomplishments for 2021 includes (but is not limited to) the City's continuing funding of essential infrastructure: sewer, water, utility, roads; and the City's increasingly proactive approach to improving Dothan (code enforcement team, Love Dothan neighborhood projects.) Areas of disappointment dealt primarily with unprecedented cost overruns due to Covid and supply/demand national and international conditions. He expressed appreciation for City management in enabling a pay-as-we-go approach without incurring unnecessary debt. He is interested in the City identifying one-time (non-recurring cost) projects for any American Rescue Plan funds. He is interested in hearing from Department Heads regarding their most critical project—as a status update and/or to provide better understanding of the need for those allocations that are still conditional. Would like the majority of the Workshop to focus on new opportunities and broader topics such as:

- The importance of prioritizing and continuing to fund critical infrastructure—which is a primary function of City government.
- Ways the City can assist the Chamber (et al) in recruiting industry to Dothan, particularly industries with higher wage jobs.
- The downtown initiative as a catalyst for major progressive change in Dothan; specific strategies to generate public-private partnerships; how to communicate with those City stakeholders who will see investment downtown as support for a narrow geographic corridor that does not interest them.
- Recruitment and retention of police officers. Are there law enforcement recruiting strategies and/or pay scales that will alleviate the shortage in Dothan?
- Changes to reporting by funded entities (either city departments or external agencies) to apprise Commissioners of progress toward meeting intended goals vs. narrative reports in general. (i.e., if a project investment was supposed to save XXX dollars within three years, is it achieving that target? If an increase in agency funding was intended to increase client participation by xx%, has it done so?) More focused feedback, but without micromanaging projects or project leaders.

Regarding Dothan fiscal commitments—Commissioner Crutchfield expressed willingness to invest in Dothan's future, even if such investment may not be universally popular at the outset. Investment would need to be focused (expected outcomes for dollars spent) and leveraged with private, state, federal, corporate, and other non-City sources.

Appendix A-6
CITY OF DOTHAN—Strategic Planning 2022-24
Interview with Mayor Mark Saliba

Mayor Saliba is focused on community collaborations---ways in which the City can work with partners (current and new), neighborhoods, and other community leaders (individual and organizational) to accomplish major objectives. He also wants to concentrate more efforts on the City's youth, both in terms of assisting them with challenges and engaging them in leadership opportunities to help drive new solutions and initiatives. The Mayor expressed the need to be intentional about the use of huge amounts of federal dollars (federal-direct and those that will be made available through the state) that will be one-time funding, and to consider the sustainability of any investments that are funded through this mechanism. He also wants to make the best use of staff and contracted services to put Dothan in a good position to request, compete for (where necessary), and obtain the dollars that will be available.

For the strategic planning session, he would like to see an agenda that raises issues linked to current projects/programs and incorporates discussions about visionary opportunities for Dothan in the next few years.

Projects mentioned include, but are not limited to:

- Finish prioritizing projects such as Honeysuckle Road, ATRIP partnerships, et al.
- Recognize the need to continue infrastructure endeavors and be apprised of possible next steps—he would like a general update from Public Works.
- Next steps for Rip Hewes—not only the continuing development of the venue for health/recreation purposes, but also best-use of the surrounding land to benefit that community.
- Moving ahead on decisions about the two new fire stations.

Visionary opportunities for possible inclusion in the Workshop:

- Downtown—discussion about the big decisions the City will be asked to consider, including what commitment government will make, what is the best future for the current arena and for the city complex overall, etc.
- Helping and involving Dothan's youth, with special emphasis on those in crisis. Are there partnerships the City can lead/participate in that would alleviate some of the serious challenges facing young people in the City (poverty, career-focused job training, educational achievement, etc) ?
- As a logical extension of Love Dothan, are there ways that neighborhood leaders can be encouraged to be more involved in long-term collaborations with the City?
- Humane Society—community conversation about this initiative has quieted. The Workshop may not be the time/place for an update, but he would like to know where this project stands, what next steps are planned, the timeline, and how the City will be asked to be involved.

Appendix B-1
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Alison Hall, Director of Leisure Services
12/6/2021

Question 1: the planning process used in this department.

Transition still in process regarding engaged planning culture under her administration and that of prior leaders. Progress is being made, with staff increasingly encouraged and guided to think about actions they can take presently to effect outcomes two years out. Planning Calendar now in place.

Question 2: this department's major project focuses 2021 (relevant to current Strategic Plan.)

Water World improvements.

Phase I of Rip Hewes, with Phase II out for bids now.

*important to save solid structures that are in the heart of our city and are connected to our history.

* important to involve and to build-up the surrounding communities; not just about the facility, but about the quality of life that can be created around these facilities throughout Dothan.

Question 3: major initiatives/projects for the department that were not part of the current Plan

(Note: this question is not intended to list daily/weekly tasks that arise, but rather major initiatives that required large amounts of time and resources not anticipated by the Commission during the last planning session.)

Had to quickly regroup and rebudget for the BMX track to host the national tournament—opportunity not foreseen during planning process. Very successful and will lead to other opportunities of this kind for Dothan.

Walton Park Trail—was strongly encouraged by Commissioner Dorsey, but was unplanned and unbudgeted. Completed, with Library partnership to create story walk.

Question 4: most critical projects involving this department for the next 2 years.

1. Phase II of Rip Hewes---new locker rooms to accommodate today's teams, new concessions and public bathrooms, ADA compliance overall, turf field, new LED's, finish parking lot. The goal is not simply to restore an old structure. But to create a 7A stadium appropriate for play for the next 30 years AND to engage the community in a neighborhood revitalization initiative.
2. Continued improvements/upgrades to Water World—Lazy River, new wave equipment to meet expectations of todays customers, concessions, et al.
3. Grow programming---expand special events (S'more and Snores)
4. Special emphasis on reaching out to communities less often considered for major programs: around Andrew Belle, Wiregrass, Walton parks. Leisure Services as a community partner in quality of life enhancements throughout Dothan.

5. Focus on future opportunities, but remember to invest in maintenance of current facilities---Doug Tew, Westgate. Ask, “What do we already have in Dothan that needs ‘love’?”

Question 5: resources needed to accomplish these projects.

Focused one-time and replicable funding

Question 6: major external partners for accomplishment of these projects.

Everybody—as Leisure Services can too often be seen as “non-essential”, it is critical to get out the message about why these projects and programs are essential to the quality of life we want for Dothan.

More partnerships with organizations like the Library, and agencies funded by the United Way.

Question 7: from vantage point of a city department leader, what should be the most critical investments/commitments for the next two years?

Personnel—major steps have been accomplished through implementation of the payroll study. But for some of the roles that have to be filled at the lower rungs of the employee ladder and particularly in seasonal and part-time workers, Leisure Services is finding it hard to compete. Summer/Seasonal jobs for youth—they can get more money, with lesser training requirements, from Starbucks, Target, McDonalds, etc...

Investment simultaneously needed in new initiatives and in current programs, people, infrastructure. This is a pivotal moment for Dothan, but we could lose it if the momentum is not sustained and the messaging is not on-point and continuous.

More involvement in investing (fiscally or otherwise) in our school system.

Appendix B-2
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Andy Love, General Services
12/9/2021

Question 1: the planning process used in this department.

The budget preparation process helps drive priorities and planning in the department. Senior staff participate in the 5-6 year planning process, and allocated funds predicate project commitments.

Question 2: this department's major project focuses 2021 (relevant to current Strategic Plan.)

For 2021, focused heavily on vehicles. Reduced the police vehicle fleet turnover from 10-12 years to 8 year rotation. Recognizing that garbage truck maintenance increases dramatically after five years of use, increased the frequency of truck replacement in that department. Focused on pumper and ladder trucks for fire department. All changes proposed with emphasis on sustainability of the rotation cycles.

Question 3: major initiatives/projects for the department that were not part of the current Plan

(Note: this question is not intended to list daily/weekly tasks that arise, but rather major initiatives that required large amounts of time and resources not anticipated by the Commission during the last planning session.)

Most challenging issue not foreseen/foreseeable was the huge increase in cost of materials, equipment, supplies and labor. I.e.. Rip Hewes I and II was projected to cost \$6-8 million. Phase I cost \$3.3 million, and Phase II is now estimated at \$14 million. Project scope will need to be scaled back, with alternates prioritized within the current bid to keep the project moving forward. I.e.. Plans for the police department lobby and municipal courtroom also coming in at 2.5 times the estimated amount.

Question 4: most critical projects involving this department for the next 2 years.

1. Maintaining fleet replacement cycle
2. Design and build two fire stations
3. Waterworld replacement of 40 year old equipment and essential upgrades for public use.
4. Rip Hewes Stadium—ready for football in August 2022; how much of the overall site plan will be affordable is a question.

Question 5: resources needed to accomplish these projects.

Focused one-time and replicable funding.

Question 6: major external partners for accomplishment of these projects.

Local architectural firms and general contractors.

Question 7: from vantage point of a city department leader, what should be the most critical investments/commitments for the next two years?

Program/Design/Build new facilities to meet new requirements and/or replace end of lifespan facilities.

Maintaining and sustaining the existing facilities and equipment. (And awareness that costs have escalated and may continue to do so.)

Addressing all areas of the City equally in terms of future development.

Appendix B-3
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Billy Mayes, Dothan Utilities Department
12/7/2021

Question 1: the planning process used in this department.

In DU, we have a long-range departmental planning solution which incorporates 5-, 10- and 20-year planning initiatives. Some of these are done by consultants (i.e. Water Long Range Plan currently being updated by Poly, Inc., the Electric System Study being completed by McLean Engineering, and the Administrative Order on Consent was completed by Barge). We extract data from the plans; determine operational needs including regulation changes; and administrative needs (includes personnel, building and facility maintenance, and miscellaneous items) to determine a 6-year budget. From this we develop the biennial budget requests. As a note, after the budget approval process, we continue to evaluate and prioritize items. Typically, in January of each year, we take a high-level view and evaluate our overall progress in preparation for the next budget cycle.

Question 2: this department's major project focuses 2021 (relevant to current Strategic Plan.)

- Electric System Study.
- Emergency Electric Source Station project.
- Updated Pole Attachment Consultant for Communication Companies Agreements.
- Convert To Underground Electric and Lighting in 300 Block of North Foster Street project.
- Long Range Water Plan and Model update.
- Indian Hills Lift Station Elimination project.
- Baywood Lift Station Elimination project.
- Basin B4-52 Sewer Repair and Rehab project.
- Beaver Creek Trunkline project.
- Cypress Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant 201 Plan update

Question 3: major initiatives/projects for the department that were not part of the current Plan (Note: this question is not intended to list daily/weekly tasks that arise, but rather major initiatives that required large amounts of time and resources not anticipated by the Commission during the last planning session.)

The 2021 Strategic Plan discusses that items already part of the current CIP with budgets or that could be best addressed by the City Manager and his team as management issues are not included. We have listed projects in the attachments for completeness that were approved under these criteria.

Question 4: most critical projects involving this department for the next 2 years.

- Design and Upgrade/Rehab the Cypress Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Electric Source Backup Station.
- Wastewater Sub-Basin Rehabs (includes complete funding of Beaver Creek Trunk Line project).
- Ross Clark Circle Water Line Upgrades/Replacements.
- Red Water Program Continuance.

Question 5: resources needed to accomplish these projects.

- Design and Upgrade/Rehab the Cypress Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant. Project will require a design consultant at \$1.5M plus the construction budget of \$10-15 million.
- Electric Source Backup Station. Project will require consultant, fees for APCO's work and construction costs which is planned to be funded through AMEA.
- Wastewater Sub-Basin Rehabs. Requires an annual commitment for a design consultant at \$0.5M plus the annual construction budget of \$4 million. Note: The Beaver Creek Trunk Line project was funded (FY2022) but recent increases in overall material/labor costs may require additional funds.
- Ross Clark Circle Water Line Upgrades/Replacements. Project will require a construction budget of \$4 million.
- Red Water Program Continuance. Project will require DU budget to continue of \$1.6 million each year.

Question 6: major external partners for accomplishment of these projects.

See above comments

Question 7: from vantage point of a city department leader, what should be the most critical investments/commitments for the next two years?

- New federal infrastructure bill-Understand and position the City to receive as much funding as possible.
 - Investment and/or revitalize in vacant/underutilized property in Dothan where DU already serves.
 - Industrial Park Property (within DU service area or at least DU Electric Territory).
-

Appendix B-4
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Chief Larry Williams Fire Department
12/14/2021

Question 1: the planning process used in this department.

Department has a Mission Statement and a formalized annual planning process. Leadership meets quarterly, with assigned tasks tied to priorities, budgets, assessment, and Business Plans. Input is received from the three key divisions of operations, development, and administration.

Question 2: this department's major project focuses 2021 (relevant to current Strategic Plan.)

- 9 new firefighters hired to assist with current OT issue and to prep to staff Station 10.
- Implemented CPR and Stop-the-Bleed programs with Dothan City Schools
- Cardiac Monitor Replacement
- Initiated Home Fire Safety education using WPSC Teach-me House.
- Continued with annual apparatus/vehicle replacement plan (Ladder Truck added)
- Community outreach/risk-reduction through Love Your Neighborhood presentations.

Question 3: major initiatives/projects for the department that were not part of the current Plan

(Note: this question is not intended to list daily/weekly tasks that arise, but rather major initiatives that required large amounts of time and resources not anticipated by the Commission during the last planning session.)

None

Question 4: most critical projects involving this department for the next 2 years.

1. Staffing:
 - a. Maintain replacement process for anticipated vacancies
 - b. Address shortages of minimum staffing per operation
2. Address paramedic and EMT shortage through in-house schools
3. Complete design for and authorize construction of two fire stations
4. Stay the course on apparatus and fleet replacement plan
5. Leadership reorganization to provide effective line and staff controls for all three department divisions.

Question 5: resources needed to accomplish these projects.

Most initiatives for 2022-23 are in the Capital Plan, either approved or conditional. Consider incentive pay to encourage personnel to attain credentials for higher ranks.

Question 6: major external partners for accomplishment of these projects.

City and area County departments; regional and state departments, agencies and organizations; Alabama Fire College; Dothan City Schools; Wallace College; Pilcher Ambulance and City/County partners.

Question 7: from vantage point of a city department leader, what should be the most critical investments/commitments for the next two years?

City infrastructure maintenance and upgrades

Investments in public safety

Stay on track with the compensation plan

Increase recreational, arts, sports attractions within the City, but only after the prior three items are addressed appropriately

Appendix B-5
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Chief Will Benny, Dothan Police Department
12/7/2021

Question 1: the planning process used in this department.

Four captains leading bureaus/divisions: patrol and traffic, investigations, administration, and special opps. Meet regularly to discuss needs and opportunities for the next 1, 2 and 5 years. Staff encouraged to be proactive in planning.

Question 2: this department's major project focuses 2021 (relevant to current Strategic Plan.)

Recruitment and retention have been, and will continue to be, the primary strategic focus. Changes in recruiting strategies have begun to yield more applicants, and Chief/staff continually consider technology that will enable the department to do more with less (force multipliers.)

Question 3: major initiatives/projects for the department that were not part of the current Plan

(Note: this question is not intended to list daily/weekly tasks that arise, but rather major initiatives that required large amounts of time and resources not anticipated by the Commission during the last planning session.)

Post-COVID lockdown increases in gun violence, predicted by public safety researchers, did not spare Dothan. City's response resulted in NIBIN partnership and Dothan becoming a regional hub for bullet and shell casing identification; addition of license plate readers and camera systems were needed.

Other requested items to address this threat were not funded: armored vehicle; shot spotter system.

Question 4: most critical projects involving this department for the next 2 years.

1. Manpower—outpaces all other challenges to department effectiveness. Approximately 30 officers short. 5% of department's officers are assigned to Dothan City Schools—a necessary role, although it further depletes personnel for general duties. And to be effective, more officers should be assigned to the larger schools.
2. Salaries—were increased after pay study, but still not competitive with cities nearby like Troy; equal to Enterprise which has far fewer calls.
3. Officer health and wellness
4. Staying on pace with technology
5. Timely replacement of vehicle fleet

Question 5: resources needed to accomplish these projects.

Focused one-time and replicable funding

Question 6: major external partners for accomplishment of these projects.

Federal government—participation in task forces such as ATF and DEA. Had to relinquish role in FBI task force due to personnel shortage.

Question 7: from vantage point of a city department leader, what should be the most critical investments/commitments for the next two years?

Investments that strengthen the basic sense of security and safety in the community.

Appendix B-6
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Delvick McKay, Director of Personnel
12/6/2021

Question 1: the planning process used in this department.

Department staff hold weekly meetings (generally on Monday mornings) with reps from the sectors within the department (recruitment and selection, payroll and benefits, employee relations and discipline, training and development, and employee health clinic. Focus is on review of topics and targets contained in the current Business Plan. These same personnel are involved in developing projects and budgets for future Business Plans.

Question 2: this department's major project focuses 2021 (relevant to current Strategic Plan.)

Tier I—Tier II conversion, and implementation of the pay study. Some appropriately aggressive steps were taken moving forward on compensation.

Question 3: major initiatives/projects for the department that were not part of the current Plan

(Note: this question is not intended to list daily/weekly tasks that arise, but rather major initiatives that required large amounts of time and resources not anticipated by the Commission during the last planning session.)

No major disruptors noted.

Question 4: most critical projects involving this department for the next 2 years.

1. ERP—this is a new system, with a vendor still learning the special requirements of running a city. Go live date for human resources modules is 1/1/23, so there is time. City needs to continue to push the process and be supportive of the staff and contractors as hurdles are encountered and overcome.
2. Hiring and retaining quality personnel in the current job market. Attracting workers (particularly young entrants into the workforce) into public sector jobs is becoming increasingly difficult. Important that Dothan be wary to stay competitive, and seek opportunities to “grow our own” future workforce.
3. Looking at future vacancies due to retirees—not only in terms of filling slots, but also to fill knowledge gaps as senior workers leave the City.

Question 5: resources needed to accomplish these projects.

Replicable Funding—i.e., bringing the Police Department up to the Chief's desired standard by adding 30 officers is, in itself, a long-term fiscal commitment. The same issues exist in almost all city areas.

Question 6: major external partners for accomplishment of these projects.

Dothan City Schools and Houston County Schools—solutions to workforce challenges can be created by engaging youth (middle and high school levels). Will require a strategy and continual focus (more than simply appearing at an occasional student job fair.)

Apprenticeships, co-ops, academies (like those being created with the Wiregrass Public Safety Center), et al. Also ties in with other city leader thoughts about focusing City partnership resources on Dothan's youth.

Question 7: from vantage point of a city department leader, what should be the most critical investments/commitments for the next two years?

Mayor and Commission to remain committed to funding a highly skilled workforce. Budgeting accordingly. Sending positive public messages acknowledging their “love” for Dothan’s employee force. Considering incentives that float all boats: i.e., housing allowances for buying and/or renovating a home within Dothan City limits (available to current and new employees) vs. sign-on bonuses that may attract new personnel but also may discourage hardworking current staff.

Water, wastewater, fleet maintenance and replacement, facilities. City has made tremendous strides, but without continuing investments in current infrastructure and equipment, new projects will not be sustainable.

The current downtown (including surrounding neighborhoods and east Dothan corridor) opportunity. This Commission has the opportunity to rebrand Dothan for a vibrant future. Maximize what we are good at (retail, hospitality, light industrial, medical, et al) and create a new Dothan. The time is right for investment, with continuous positive messaging that keeps the citizenry informed of “why” these things are important. Both vision and fortitude will be needed.

Appendix B-7
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Jack Mason, IT
12/9/2021

Question 1: the planning process used in this department.

Division managers submit their priority projects/needs for a 2 year period. Staff meet to review and prioritize, and this forms basis for the budget request.

Question 2: this department's major project focuses 2022 (relevant to current Strategic Plan.)

1. Implementing the ERP
2. Onboarding new personnel (ERP IT Business Analysts, ERP IT Specialists, and Fiber Crew, et al)
3. Upgrading equipment in the five fiber huts that surround Dothan (going on 9 years old)
4. Preparing technology and network for the mobile workforce solutions associated with the new ERP system.
5. Continue upgrading/replacing network infrastructure (13 years old)

Question 3: major initiatives/projects for the department that were not part of the current Plan

(Note: this question is not intended to list daily/weekly tasks that arise, but rather major initiatives that required large amounts of time and resources not anticipated by the Commission during the last planning session.)

No major surprise initiatives requiring funding or Commission decisions at this time. However, based on City's experience hosting a successful and revenue-generating national junior college tournament at Jim Oates Park, planning is underway to prepare all City parks to be tech-enabled. Request should be ready for Commission consideration next planning cycle.

The budgeted construction at water world has generated rerouting of fiber again, as well as the Rip Hewes Stadium renovations have generated additional Network Engineering, equipment expense, and programming. None of these projects have budgeted funds resulting in unplanned IT expenses. Funds and labor are coming out of the regular IT Department operating budget.

Question 4: most critical projects involving this department for the next 2 years.

The following are department priorities, and are all budgeted:

1. ERP implementation for
 - A. Leisure Services
 - B. Human Resources
 - C. Planning and Engineering
 - D. Finance and Utilities
2. Continuing upgrade of network infrastructure—fiber crew
3. Equipment, programming, training for mobile workforce

Not budgeted:

Voice Over IP replacement (or transition to other devices/systems)

Question 5: resources needed to accomplish these projects.

All of the above are funded in the current budget plans, except for the phone solution and resulting tech needs resulting from water world and Rip Hewes work.

Question 6: major external partners for accomplishment of these projects.

Outside services and contractors—topical experts like Riley Group and ESC

Question 7: from vantage point of a city department leader, what should be the most critical investments/commitments for the next two years?

Technology equity—whether broadband, fiber, et al. COVID highlighted community and household disparities nationwide, and Dothan has the same problems. A study of area discrepancies from the end-user perspective could lead to grant applications, city/county/private investments, regulatory or licensing requirements for providers, et al.

The biggest impact on the City to build on future opportunities would be to concentrate on traffic flow and road capacity improvement. .

Appendix B-8
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Judge Rose Gordon, Judicial
1/12/2022

Projects of importance to Judicial Services are:

- Courtroom renovation. Plans have been developed, but implementation seems to be lagging. This project was not included in the strategic planning update voted upon by the commissioners last year, but it has been advanced by city leaders.
- Magistrate's office renovation. This project has not been initiated. Staff have outgrown the facility and infrastructure/building is in serious disrepair.

The two items, above, are projects of critical importance to this department. However, it was suggested that the Commission could/should also discuss and identify appropriate roles for City leadership in "human value" issues that are taxing the capacity of Judicial Services and are creating serious challenges to Dothan's quality of life. These include:

- Consideration of a Dothan-101 type of orientation for Commissioners to gain a deeper understanding of the regulations, rules, restrictions, et al, under which the Judicial system must function. The rules that determine current bonding criteria were offered as one issue that is seriously misunderstood and misrepresented to constituents. (It was noted that this same type of deep-dive orientation could be useful to dispel misconceptions about the role, function and externally imposed restrictions of other City departments.)
- Crime---is increasing in the City and in all communities (despite some social media attempts to ascribe these challenges to a discrete socio-economic and/or racial group.) What programs can the City initiate (or re-introduce) to bring citizens (especially teens) and law enforcement together?
- Homelessness—and the relationship of this issue to the lack of impactful and available mental health interventions.
- City involvement in developmental programs aimed at teens; programs for children and teens in evening hours when parents are working night shifts and children are unsupervised. (Dothan once had a more robust evening sports program with adult volunteer involvement.)
- Seeking more solutions for affordable and decent housing in Dothan. (Difficult to encourage children/teens to learn and to live "right" when they are going home to dilapidated houses in crime-riddled neighborhoods.)

Judge Rose encouraged a leadership conversation to identify effective ways to invest in people and communities.

Appendix B-9
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Lisa Reeder and Romona Marcus, Finance Department
12/14/2021

Question 1: the planning process used in this department.

Department planning revolves around the budget deadlines—initial biennial, mid-biennium, and the audit and publication of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. With the system adopted a few years ago, Finance works with the CM to identify funds to be set aside for capital projects, based on Department needs and Commission approvals.

Question 2: this department's major project focuses 2021 (relevant to current Strategic Plan.)

- The Department's involvement in the ERP system. Because of the centrality of the finance function, their staff are involved in meetings regarding transitions for each of the departments throughout the

NOTE: QUESTIONS 3--6 ARE NOT DIRECTLY APPLICABLE TO THIS DEPARTMENT AS IT IS THE PRIMARY FUNCTION OF FINANCE TO MANAGE AND ADMINISTER THE FUNDING FOR ALL DEPARTMENTS OF THE CITY, RATHER THAN DEVELOP A PUBLIC-SECTOR BODY OF WORK OF THEIR OWN.

Question 3: major initiatives/projects for the department that were not part of the current Plan (Note: this question is not intended to list daily/weekly tasks that arise, but rather major initiatives that required large amounts of time and resources not anticipated by the Commission during the last planning session.)

N/A

Question 4: most critical projects involving this department for the next 2 year

N/A

Question 5: resources needed to accomplish these projects.

N/A

Question 6: major external partners for accomplishment of these projects.

N/A

Question 7: from vantage point of a city department leader, what should be the most critical investments/commitments for the next two years?

Determine how to fund (cash or borrow all/part) the Honeysuckle project.

Consider authorization of funding of conditional items in the current Capital Plan before adding new projects.

Recognize that estimated costs on many of the budgeted projects are likely to be too low, some by significant amounts.

Appendix B-10
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Marshall Perry Performing Arts
12/20/2021 (via Zoom)

Question 1: the planning process used in this department.

Department staff meet weekly to go over the event calendar and upcoming events/programs. Due to high volume of events, many driven by clients seeking to use the performing arts venues, departmental planning is primarily reactive.

Question 2: this department's major project focuses 2021 (relevant to current Strategic Plan.)

- The Department was not given any funding for improvements to facilities outside of normal repairs. No new major initiatives were included in the '21 scope of work.

Question 3: major initiatives/projects for the department that were not part of the current Plan (Note: this question is not intended to list daily/weekly tasks that arise, but rather major initiatives that required large amounts of time and resources not anticipated by the Commission during the last planning session.)

Requests for additional staffing were put on hold until the downtown renovation initiative is more clearly decided.

Question 4: most critical projects involving this department for the next 2 year

Assuming the downtown initiative does not proceed, the following needs exist:

- Civic Center—arena lighting and wiring, HVAC, riser and seating repairs, dressing rooms refurbishments, interior painting, ceiling repairs, stage wiring lighting, digital walls and signage
- Opera House---interior lightin and wiring, HVAC, seating repairs, dressing room refurbishments, interior painting, exterior repairs.

Question 5: resources needed to accomplish these projects.

Capital funds allocations. Some were included in budget request for 2021 and were put on hold.

New staff positions—these will vary depending upon whether the current facilities remain (with renovations, above) or the newly designed facilities are funded.

Question 6: major external partners for accomplishment of these projects.

Area arts groups; Marshall's contacts in the industry.

Question 7: from vantage point of a city department leader, what should be the most critical investments/commitments for the next two years?

Continued investment in the arts and presentation of events at our venues. Upgrades and improvements for performing arts facilities are needed immediately. Cannot continue to defer necessary repairs to existing buildings. Events for first and second quarter of 2022 are already being planned. Advance notice of major facility changes (or closures that could result from renovation of current facilities) will be important. If a decision is made to proceed with the downtown initiative, staffing changes/additions should be addressed.

Appendix B-11
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Randy Morris, Interim Director of Public Services
12/16/2021

Question 1: the planning process used in this department.

N/A—Mr. Morris is an Interim Director. Anticipate the permanent director, once employed, will initiate his/her own planning system with staff.

Question 2: this department's major project focuses 2021 (relevant to current Strategic Plan.)

Memorial Trail—bid award expected next week.

Continuing work on Honeysuckle Road (ROW acquisition funded; utility work and road construction on the conditional capital appropriation.

Question 3: major initiatives/projects for the department that were not part of the current Plan (Note: this question is not intended to list daily/weekly tasks that arise, but rather major initiatives that required large amounts of time and resources not anticipated by the Commission during the last planning session.)

None noted

Question 4: most critical projects involving this department for the next 2 years.

1. Personnel—specifically a full-time Director and a traffic/engineering services professional.
2. A traffic study for downtown (regardless of movement on the downtown transformation initiative and before ALDOT begins any work on repaving)
3. Upgrade storm drainage on Main Street.
4. Continue 84 West improvements—(part of which will address concerns about heavy traffic on Brannon Stand between 84 and Fortner)
5. Consider additional intersection improvements: Flower Chapel-Woodburn; John D Odom near Publix.
6. Fund the next phase of storm water improvements that will be identified by the study currently underway.
7. Continue to assist (as needed) with RCC improvements that are largely state funded.

Question 5: resources needed to accomplish these projects.

- Additional traffic signal technicians to implement and maintain (budgeted) equipment upgrades
- Allocation of new funding for new items noted above.

Question 6: major external partners for accomplishment of these projects.

Consultants; contractors; general public whose “buy-in” is important in moving forward with these major projects, particularly those that are beneficial, but are temporarily disruptive.

Question 7: from vantage point of a city department leader, what should be the most critical investments/commitments for the next two years?

Dothan Strategic Planning 2022
Keep the City moving forward.

Be progressive with downtown development and roadway improvement

Be comfortable with the City's capacity to spend money on progressive and impactful projects.

Appendix B-12
Dothan 2-yr Strategic Planning
Conversation with Todd McDonald Planning and Development
12/9/2021

Question 1: the planning process used in this department.

Meets bi-weekly with staff to review status of current projects and discuss what will be before the Commission at the upcoming meeting.

Question 2: this department's major project focuses 2021 (relevant to current Strategic Plan.)

1. Activities focused on neighborhood enhancement initiatives (LOVE Dothan, et al) including Neighborhood Enhancement (Code Enforcement) Team initiatives that focus on revitalizing/rejuvenating neighborhoods. *
2. Working on Enterprise Resource Planning system, with Community Development (permitting, business licensing, and planning) one of the first functions scheduled to go-live.
3. Implementing the 84 E Plan*

*Not part of the prioritization list

Question 3: major initiatives/projects for the department that were not part of the current Plan

(Note: this question is not intended to list daily/weekly tasks that arise, but rather major initiatives that required large amounts of time and resources not anticipated by the Commission during the last planning session.)

1. Short-term rental regulation/policy issue has become a major focus that needs to be addressed.
2. Continuing neighborhood level planning efforts (Honeysuckle Road).

Question 4: most critical projects involving this department for the next 2 years.

1. More brownfields development projects (assessment grant #2).
2. Downtown renovation—traffic and land use.
3. Improving the competitive process for allocating CDBG funds.
4. Tree preservation ordinance and strategy (remove from zoning ordinance).
5. Either a Montgomery Hwy Main-Circle corridor revitalization plan, or full (comprehensive) city plan.
6. Continuing neighborhood development process (code enforcement team, etc.).

Question 5: resources needed to accomplish these projects.

1. Focused one-time and replicable funding.
2. Continue consideration of separate division to address all aspects of neighborhood development (Division manager needed).
3. Traffic study(ies).

Question 6: major external partners for accomplishment of these projects.

1. Business community, in general (Chamber)
2. Businesses and residents directly impacted by City projects and plans.
3. Department of Transportation
4. DDRA
5. Wiregrass Foundation

Question 7: from vantage point of a city department leader, what should be the most critical investments/commitments for the next two years?

1. If goal is to expand the local economy, need to invest in projects that improve the appearance of the City; understanding that appearance is directly related to attracting people, businesses—especially Next Generations of both
2. If goal is to make Dothan more livable, it will require long-term sustainable investment. Community appearance is fundamental to the economic well-being of the community (Dunn Foundation), neighborhoods and commercial areas. Dothan can be “the most beautiful, livable city in Alabama”.
3. If goal is to improve mobility, continue to invest in plans and projects to give people the ability to move around the City without cars.

APPENDIX C
BACKGROUND RESEARCH SHARED WITH COMMISSIONERS

The City of the Future: Walkable, Mid-Sized, and Built for Flexibility

Cathy Hackl

In Forbes

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/cathyhackl/2021/04/28/the-city-of-the-future-walkable-mid-sized-and-built-for-flexible-work/?sh=4a2fb7729e68>

State of the Cities 2021. McFarland, C.K., Rainwater, B, Grabowski, E, Pine J, and Yadavalli, A. National League of Cities, Center for City Solutions.

<https://www.nlc.org/resource/state-of-the-cities-2021>

Government Is Hiring, But Facing Tough Competition for Workers

Carl Smith

In Governing the Future of States and Localities

<https://www.governing.com/now/government-is-hiring-but-faces-tough-competition-for-workers>

Survey Findings: State and Local Government Workforce 2021.

In Mission Square Research Institute

<https://slge.org/resources/survey-findings-state-and-local-government-workforce-2021>

APPENDIX D PARTNERS SUMMARY INFORMATION

Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce: Focus for 2022-23 is on membership development and filling jobs. Unemployment rates are low, and attrition from critical worker positions is rising, with particular issues in local healthcare. They are dedicated to filling the current and near-term workforce needs in the area, with partnership programs with Wallace College and development of new co-op and internship opportunities for high school students. President Matt Parker stressed the importance of Chamber-City partnerships to continue to build infrastructure---for mobility (roads), housing, and spec buildings and industrial land capable of attracting companies.

Dothan City Schools: Superintendent Dennis Coe outlined the System's use of City support funds. Moving forward, in addition to continuing to battle issues related to COVID, the system is working to be competitive in personnel recruiting and retention, working on facilities to expand athletic support capacity, and focused on expanding pre-K opportunities. He also has committed the senior staff to a rotation to attend all future Commission meetings making it possible for Commissioners to ask questions at any time regarding the state of the schools.

Dothan Downtown Redevelopment Authority: The DDRA is focused on developing events for downtown, with special emphasis on supporting the current business owners. Director Jaime Bienvenu cited the DDRA's intention to "enhance what is organically going on downtown." She cited the many opportunities to partner with Dothan Leisure Services, and the essential partnerships with departments such as fire, police, utilities, public works.

Dothan-Houston County Library System: Two key initiative for DHCLS in 2022 are Literacy and Learning (a partnership with Bright Key at Selma Street Elementary), and new economic development outreach programs. Included in the latter is a new service provided free to area residents to provide online job assistance with resumes, goal setting, searches, et al. DHCLS is committed to community partnerships and making the library relevant to a broader base of Wiregrass residents. The organization also has a new strategic plan. City Personnel Director Delvick McKay was the City's representative for that process.

Visit Dothan: Executive Director Aaron McCreight provided an update on the organization's ability to reach or surpass the objectives presented last year through enhanced use of technology and social media. They continue their particular emphasis on sports/recreation bookings, seeking to expand visitor stays during weekdays. Efforts are regularly linked with facilities and/or support services of Dothan's Leisure Services. Visit Dothan requests the City's continuing development of good-to-excellent sports fields and facilities to attract larger tournament groups and promote longer stays by those attending.

Wiregrass Museum of Art: Focuses for 2022-23 include leveraging City support dollars to attract additional grant funds (a strategy with which they already have been successful), increasing community outreach with special emphasis on children's programming and opportunities, and continuing to promote the Museum as a regional destination. WMA also plans to pursue national accreditation.

Appendix E
City of Dothan Strategic Planning Workshop
Agenda Day 1—Friday 2/4—Eastgate Park

Next Level Conversations---Information, Dialogues, Directions and Commitments

7:45 -- 8:30	Arrival and Breakfast	
8:30 -- 8:45	Welcome & Invocation	Mayor Mark Saliba
8:45 -- 9:15	Strategic Planning Work Overview Review—City’s Mission, Vision and Goals Hot Topics for U.S. Cities 2022 Plans of Dothan City’s Strategic Partners 2022 Introduction to <i>Next Level Conversations—Information and Dialogues</i>	Barbara Alford
9:15 -- 9:55	<i>Next Level Conversation 1—Our City Organization</i> City Finance City Personnel City Commission	Finance Director Romona Marcus Personnel Director Delvick McKay Elected Officials & City Manager Kevin Cowper
9:55 -- 10:10	<i>Stretch Break</i>	
10:10 -- 10:40	<i>Next Level Conversation 2—Our Public Safety</i> Law Enforcement Fire Department	Police Chief Will Benny Fire Chief Larry Williams
10:40 -- 11:10	<i>Next Level Conversation 3—Building Up/Taking Back Our Neighborhoods</i> Enhancement Team & Ordinances Neighborhood Redevelopment Next Steps	Planning Director Todd McDonald City Manager Kevin Cowper
11:10 -- 12:00	<i>Next Level Conversation 4—Our Economic Development</i> Federal Grant Opps—Infrastructure Commercial Corridor Redevelopment Program Corridor Planning and Zoning	Asst. City Manager Randy Morris Kevin Cowper Todd McDonald
12:00 -- 12:30	<i>LUNCH</i>	
12:30 -- 1:15	Big Property Opportunities Federal Grant Opps—Focus on Red Water	Elected Officials; Kevin Cowper Utility Director Billy Mayes
1:15 -- 2:15	<i>Next Level Conversation 5—Our Downtown Opportunities</i> Overview of Vision, Plans, Partners Next Steps	Randy Morris Kevin Cowper
2:15 -- 2:30	<i>Stretch Break</i>	
2:30 -- 3:15	<i>Next Level Conversation 6—Our Children’s Education</i> Education Overview Concerns and Opportunities	Barbara Alford Elected Officials
3:15 -- 4:00	<i>Next Level Conversation 7—Our Best Communication</i>	Elected Officials
4:00 -- 5:00	Lightning Round (current projects)	Elected Officials and Dept. Heads

**City of Dothan Strategic Planning Update
Agenda Day 2—Saturday, 2/5—Eastgate Park**

8:00 -- 8:30	Arrival and Breakfast	
8:30 -- 8:45	Welcome Comments from Commissioners; City Manager	Mayor Mark Saliba
8:45 -- 9:05 Barbara Alford	Strategic Planning Overview of Work for Day 2	
	<i>Next Level Conversations—Dialogue, Directions and Commitments</i>	
	For each major focus area:	Mayor and Commissioners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage in general dialogue about key issues and opportunities• Identify appropriate and effective roles for City government• List and discuss expectations for success• Identify strategies/strategic directions for the Commission• Identify key community partners• Identify City resources• Communicate Commission commitments	
9:05 -- 9:35	Our City Organization: Focus on Personnel	
9:35 -- 10:05	Our Public Safety: Focus on Law Enforcement Personnel	
10:05 -- 10:20	<i>Stretch Break</i>	
10:20 -- 10:50	Our Public Safety: Focus on Fire Stations	
10:50 -- 11:20	Our Neighborhoods: Focus on Residential Properties	
11:20 -- 11:50	Our Economic Development: Focus on Big Property Opportunities	
11:50 -- 12:20	<i>LUNCH</i>	
12:20 -- 12:50	Our Downtown: Focus on Transformational Opportunity	
12:50 -- 1:20	Our Children’s Education: Focus on Dothan City Schools	
1:20 -- 1:35	<i>Stretch Break</i>	
1:35 -- 2:05	Our 360-degree Communication	
2:05 -- 2:30	Summary Comments	Mayor, Commissioners, and City Manager

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