

CITY of DOTHAN



STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE REPORT

February 2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Dothan Strategic Planning Retreat was held on February 10 and 11, 2023. In keeping with agenda preferences emerging in 2022, the major emphasis for the two-day event focused on discussions about “big issues and opportunities” facing the City. These were identified during interviews with elected leaders (the Mayor and Commissioners). Retreat time also was allocated to review, assess and consider any changes needed to the Commission Commitments from the 2022 Retreat, as these efforts will continue in-force through the current year. Summaries of actions taken on the continuing 2022-24 commitments and on the major 2023 issues/opportunities are presented in the tables, below.

Assessment, Re-Affirmation, Revisions to 2022 Commission Commitments			
	2022 Commission Commitment	Strategies Added for 2023	Report Page #
PERSONNEL	Re-affirmed	10	8
LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL	Re-affirmed	1	8
FIRE STATIONS	Re-affirmed	None	9
NEIGHBORHOODS	Re-affirmed	1	9
BIG PROPERTY OPPORTUNITIES	Re-affirmed	None	9
DOWNTOWN	“Transformation-through the Arts” is now a component of a larger vision	1	9
DOTHAN CITY SCHOOLS	Topic Revisited at 2023 Retreat		10 & 13
360-DEGREE COMMUNICATION	Topic Revisited at 2023 Retreat		10 & 14

<i>Our Time</i> Conversations--2023 Topics			
2023 Retreat Topic	Key Issue/Opportunity Defined	Strategies for 2023	Report Page #
Hudson-Alpha Expectations	To understand and communicate progress and realistic expectations to all stakeholders throughout the project development timeline.	7	11
City-Center Related Issues	Effectively integrate the new downtown initiatives with adjacent businesses, neighborhoods, and residents.	6	11
Federal Opportunities	Proactively seek and secure federal assistance for Dothan initiatives.	5	12
Dothan City Schools	Work effectively with Dothan City Schools to reverse declining enrollment and improve achievement for all students.	7	13
Violence, Crime and Dothan’s Youth	Significantly decrease the frequency and severity of youth violence	8	13
360-Degree Communication	Continue working on Commission communication and transparency, and to strengthen timely communication to the public.	4	14

The STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP PROCESS



To develop the agenda for a strategic planning retreat, individual interviews were conducted by consultant Barbara Alford (Wayfinder Solutions, LLC) with the elected City leaders and Department Heads. Interviewees were asked to reflect on progress to-date for the 2022-24 Commission Commitments and to identify the most important issues and opportunities for the City in the current year.

Interviews with the Dothan City Commissioners and the Mayor: City elected leaders indicated that they were well informed of project statuses related to the 2022-24 commitments. They asked to spend strategic planning time to gain a better understanding of, and develop effective responses to, the “big issues and opportunities” facing Dothan today. The agenda for the 2023 Strategic Planning Retreat was designed to address the topics they identified as most critical to Dothan’s future.

* **Hudson-Alpha Expectations**—The Commission is committed to the transformational potential of the new Hudson-Alpha Wiregrass partnership. However, they acknowledge that this initiative requires investment and patience. While the long-term goals have been identified, more information was needed about the short-range impacts that will be visible to them and to their constituents.

* **City-Center Related Issues**—As the downtown initiative progresses with a focus on a defined area of the city center, leaders wanted an opportunity to discuss the nearby neighborhoods and people who will be directly affected.

* **Federal Opportunities**—Tied directly to COVID fiscal responses, large amounts of federal money will be distributed to states and cities in FY23 and 24. This trend will not last indefinitely. The Commission required time to discuss the best strategies to ensure Dothan applies for and secures funding to advance its most critical, and costly, infrastructure projects.

* **Dothan City Schools**—Commissioners expressed that not enough was accomplished in partnership with DCS in 2022 to alleviate critical concerns—decreasing enrollment, unsatisfactory academic achievement, and disappointing community engagement. They requested an opportunity to revisit this topic at the 2023 Retreat, possibly to include engagement with Superintendent Dennis Coe.

* **Violence, Crime and Dothan’s Youth**—The increasing frequency and severity of violence, particularly involving youth, was mentioned as a concern by each of the elected leaders. Time was allocated to discuss the most effective roles for City governments in addressing this issue.

* **360-Degree Communication**—The Commission also wanted to continue to improve communication and transparency in City government.

(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 progress. (See Appendix B for summaries of individual Department Head interviews.)

A common message emerged from interviews with both the elected leaders and the Department Heads: that this is “our time” in Dothan for transformational and inter-generational progress. Retreat conversations were structured around that theme: *Our Time*

The City Commission met in a public work session on February 10 and February 11, 2023, at the Wiregrass Public Safety Center. A series of *Our Time* conversations was constructed to integrate presentations, discussions, and decisions centered on the topics of greatest concern to the Commission. These conversations were:

Hudson-Alpha Expectations
City-Center Related Issues (Adjacent Neighborhoods, 84E, Homeless Population)
Federal Opportunities
Dothan City Schools Opportunities
Violence, Crime, and Dothan’s Youth
360-Degree Communication

Day-1 was structured to provide information and opportunity for reflective dialogue amongst elected leaders and presenters. Time also was allotted for interactive updates between the Commission and the Department Heads regarding current major projects. Department Heads were present all day on February 10th to answer detailed questions that arose from “big issue/opportunity conversations”. i.e., Chief Benny added his expertise as the Commissioners discussed effective City responses to youth violence.

On Day-2, the Commission began with a review of the commitments from the 2022 planning session to re-affirm or revise those commitments and/or add updated strategies. The Commission then moved forward to consider the “big topics” for 2023. They defined key issues and opportunities and recommended strategies. Strategic directions resulting from the Planning Retreat will be used to inform the City Administration (City Manager, Assistant City Manager, and Department Heads) in development of future Capital Improvement Plans, biennial budgets, and proposals for Commission consideration in 2023.

To help ensure the continuity of this process with Dothan’s existing strategic planning documents, each new topic/conversation was linked to Dothan’s Goals 2034 and to the Love Dothan initiative.

The full Strategic Planning Retreat agenda is found in Appendix D.

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 2023 planning workshop these fundamentals were 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 highly-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 2023

Elected Leaders

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

Senior Administration

Kevin Cowper, City Manager
Randy Morris, Assistant City Manager
Thad Taylor, Internal Analyst

Department Heads

Alison Hall, Leisure Services Director
Andy Love, General Services Director
Billy Mayes, Utilities Director
Chief Larry Williams, Dothan Fire
Chief Will Benny, Dothan Police
Delvick McKay, Personnel Director
Jack Mason, IT Director
Rose Evans-Gordon, Municipal Court Judge
Kevan Kelly, Esq., Legal Services
Marshall Perry, Performing Arts Director
Romona Marcus, Finance Director
Todd McDonald, Planning Director
Tommy Wright, Public Works Director

Administrative Support

Lisa Matheny, Executive Assistant to the City Manager
Shirley Cosby, Administrative Secretary

Consultant

Barbara Alford, Wayfinder Solutions, LLC

Planning sessions were open to the public

UPDATES TO COMMISSION COMMITMENTS 2022-2024

Commission commitments from the 2022 planning session were developed for a two-year period, 2022-2024. As these commitments remain in force for another year, progress in each of the eight (8) areas was assessed (see Appendix C) and discussed. The Commission added strategies, as needed, to incorporate current conditions and new information. The areas of commitment from 2022 are: Personnel, Law Enforcement Personnel, Fire Stations, Neighborhoods, Big Property Opportunities, Downtown, Dothan City Schools, and 360-Degree Communication.

PERSONNEL

Commitment 2022: *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.*

Success Indicator: 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.

Added Strategies 2023: 1. Consider employee incentives (i.e., education) to increase recruitment and retention. 2. Identify the pros and cons of compensating for sick leave to decrease excessive use prior to retirement. 3. Review job requirements to take full advantage of experience in addition to and/or in lieu of degree requirements. 4. Continue market monitoring to ensure the City remains competitive. 5. Create competitive opportunities to recruit temporary and part-time personnel. 6. Continue to consider flex scheduling for employees where possible without negatively impacting public services. 7. Encourage partnerships with other agencies to develop paramedic pipeline. 8. Invest in Legal Services Division to maximize their efficiency. 9. Consider reorganizations for departments (i.e. Leisure Services) operating under outdated staffing systems. 10. Continue to work on diversity and inclusion, particularly at the leadership levels within the City workforce.

LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL

Commitment 2022: *Agreed to do what is necessary to effect compensation and marketing changes in order to increase and sustain full employment in DPD.*

Success indicator: 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.

Added Strategies 2023: 1. Consider addition of ten (10) School Resource Officers with dual responsibilities for Park Patrols. 2. Open to proposals to add staff to maximize use of technology such as NIBIN and ShotSpotter.

FIRE STATIONS

Commitment 2022: *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.*

Success Indicator: 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.

Added Strategies 2023: No new strategies added. Commission recognizes that construction costs continue to rise.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Commitment 2022: *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.*

Success Indicator: 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.

Updates 2023: Increase efforts to identify affordable housing opportunities for Districts 1 and 2.

BIG PROPERTY OPPORTUNITIES

Commitment: *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.*

Success Indicator: 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.

Added Strategies 2023: Commitment reaffirmed. No additional strategies added at this time.

DOWNTOWN

Commitment: *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.*

Success Indicator: 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.

Added Strategies 2023: 1. Communicate major venue closings and re-openings clearly to all constituents and partners. Note: This initiative has expanded beyond the Transformation-through-the-Arts concept discussed in 2022. Improvements to and integration of arts organizations and facilities remain as components of the revised plan, along with the addition of an Opera House renovation, major greenspace and outdoor attractions, relocation of City services, construction of a new Innovation Center, and inclusion of Hudson-Alpha.

DOTHAN CITY SCHOOLS

Commitment: *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.*

Success Indicator: 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.

Added Strategies 2023: Discussed on Page 13.

360-DEGREE COMMUNICATION

Commitment: *Recommitted to the time that is necessary to remain current on the large amount of information regularly provided by internal and external sources.*

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.

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.)

Success Indicator: Successful strategies will increase the timeliness and flow of information to the Commissioners and enhance transparency.

Added Strategies 2023: Discussed on Page 14.

COMMISSION COMMITMENTS 2023

HUDSON-ALPHA EXPECTATIONS	
Key Issue(s) and Opportunities	To understand and communicate progress and realistic expectations to all stakeholders throughout the project development timeline.
Link to Dothan Goals	Plan for Dothan’s Future; Expand the Local Economy
Link to LOVE♥Dothan	Love your downtown, schools, businesses
Commission Commitments and Recommended Strategies	<p>Commission committed to continuing the strong direction for this transformational partnership.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage H-A to continue communicating the importance of genetics to Wiregrass constituencies. 2. Include a link to H-A Wiregrass community email updates on the Dothan City webpage. 3. Consider a quarterly update to the Commission that can be shared with the general public. 4. Pursue multiple funding streams for the Innovation Center. 5. Actively participate in selection of Community Engagement Council members. 6. Stay the course for construction of the new building. The emergence of the new facility will inform and engage more people in the potential for the project.

CITY CENTER RELATED ISSUES (Adjacent Neighborhoods, 84E, Homeless Population)	
Key Issue(s) and Opportunities	Effectively integrate the new downtown initiatives with adjacent businesses, neighborhoods, and residents.
Link to Dothan Goals	Plan for Dothan’s Future; Make Dothan a More Livable City
Link to LOVE♥Dothan	Love your downtown, neighborhoods, businesses
Commission Commitments and Recommended Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be open to reconsideration of use of CDBG funds. 2. Strengthen ordinances to regulate vacant buildings. 3. Work with area nonprofit organizations to identify client-centered relocation opportunities for homeless population. 4. Consider the City’s relocated business services as the “first-in” major project in the Overlay District. 5. Seek additional partnership projects with Dothan Housing Authority. 6. Identify and address neighborhoods in need of additional lighting for walkability and general safety.

FEDERAL PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES	
Key Issue(s) and Opportunities	Proactively seek and secure federal assistance for Dothan initiatives.
Link to Dothan Goals	Plan for Dothan’s Future; Maintain a Financially Sound City
Link to LOVE♥Dothan	Love your neighborhood, downtown, businesses, orange barrels.
Commission Commitments and Recommended Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit a timely, competitive request package to federal representatives to ensure the best opportunity for Dothan funding from FY23 Supplemental Budget and/or the FY24 federal budget legislation. 2. Adhere to consultant advice to narrow the scope of the legislative request to enable representatives to focus efforts on projects with the best opportunity for funding. 3. Continue to seek alternative federal opportunities (i.e., federal grants) for projects not included in the current legislative package. 4. Monitor return-on-investment for contracted services. 5. This conversation included prioritization of projects to be presented in the request package due in early March 2023. Commissioners considered project impact, cost, ALDOT and ATRIP participation/advocacy, and work already completed or underway as evidence of local support for federal requests. <p>*Wiregrass Public Safety Center Auditorium \$11,200,000 *AL 12 (84 W; W. Main St.) widening \$23,500,000 *AL 605 (Brannon Stand Road) widening \$63,500,000 from AL 52W (Hartford Hwy) to Murphy Mill Rd (5.71 mi). Note—this project may be submitted in phases to reduce cost and increase likelihood of funding.</p> <p>*Adding lanes on AL 1 (US 231 S) from \$48,000.000 AL 210 (Ross Clark Circle) to near the Dothan City limits (Moffett Rd/Coskrey Rd)</p>

DOTHAN CITY SCHOOLS	
Key Issue(s) and Opportunities	Work effectively with Dothan City Schools to reverse declining enrollment and improve achievement for all students.
Link to Dothan Goals	Plan for Dothan’s Future
Link to LOVE♥Dothan	Love your neighbors, schools.
Commission Commitments and Recommended Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reaffirmed that the trajectory of the public schools affects the trajectory of the City. 2. Request School Board and Superintendent participation in a joint task force for dialogue and proactive planning. 3. Request copies of proactive DCS strategic plans. 4. Seek more information regarding DCS use of professional best-practices in development of policies, procedures, and community engagement. 5. Open to assisting with expansion of the current Bright Key program to the Full-Service Community Schools model in all Dothan elementary schools by pursuing a federal grant. 6. Contact the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama (PARCA) for possible data analyses. 7. Seek a more proactive approach to student truancy.

VIOLENCE, CRIME and DOTHAN’S YOUTH	
Key Issue(s) and Opportunities	Significantly decrease the frequency and severity of youth violence.
Link to Dothan Goals	Make Dothan a More Livable City
Link to LOVE♥Dothan	Love your neighbors
Commission Commitments and Recommended Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support Dothan Police Department efforts to create a City environment with zero tolerance for violent offenders. 2. Consider proposals for ShotSpotter, both with and without cameras, starting with higher-crime neighborhoods. 3. Increase police visibility in neighborhoods---foot and bike patrols; interpersonal interaction with residents. 4. Continue mapping to identify troubled areas; use data to determine best times to be visible for greatest effect. 5. Increase resource support to existing programs/organizations that are positively impacting this problem; invest in established programs (2yrs or more); and ask for measurable results. 6. Do not allow the City to duplicate intervention services that other organizations can do, or are currently doing, effectively. 7. Empower entrepreneurs. 8. Enforce the existing City curfew.

350-DEGREE COMMUNICATION	
Key Issue(s) and Opportunities	Continue working on Commission communication and transparency, and strengthen timely communication to the public.
Link to Dothan Goals	Maintain a High-Performance Team
Link to LOVE♥Dothan	Love your work
Commission Commitments and Recommended Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tailor the <i>Commissioner’s Weekly</i> for Commissioner’s to share with their constituents via their individual social media pages. 2. Consider shorter weekly updates to the Commissioners with fewer items targeting the most critical and time-sensitive issues. 3. Include proactive communications such as push-notifications for the City APP to keep the public informed and to boost civic engagement. 4. Consider quarterly (vs. topical) strategic discussions as major new issues/opportunities arise during the calendar year in-between annual strategic retreats.

APPENDICES

Appendix A-1

Interview with Commissioner Kevin Dorsey, District 1

***From the perspective of the constituents in your district, what were the most important accomplishments for Dothan City in 2022?**

The Love Dothan—Love Your Neighborhood projects. Constituents can see these initiatives taking place in all parts of the City. They also see people reaching out to help them in their own communities. Sustainability of efforts remains a challenge, primarily due to absentee owners and/or residents not having the knowledge and skills to continue neighborhood advancement without support.

***From your perspective as a City Leader, what do you believe were the most important accomplishments for the City as a whole in 2022?**

Partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce (i.e., business development) and with the County (i.e., Farm Center.) This is something the Commissioner would like to see continue to strengthen over time.

***Were there any major strategic plan priorities that were not funded, not attempted, or not executed?**

Not enough was done regarding the following commitment from the 2022 session:

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.

Schools continue to struggle. The Commissioner was hoping for some collaborative City-School strategic planning to take place in 2022.

***Going forward, what do you feel are the most important priorities or projects for Dothan City?**

Four priority areas were cited by the Commissioner: a) engaging to strengthen the schools; b) addressing the aging staff projections for the City; c) more emphasis on diversity; d) decreasing the number of “hurried” decisions required of the Commission.

***Are there any major regional, national or world-wide issues that you feel will be challenge for Dothan in the next two years?**

Juvenile crime is becoming, and will continue to become, a major disruptor for the City.

***What are your priority topics for leadership discussions on 2/10 and 2/11?**

Working with schools to better prepare young students for jobs. He believes increasing numbers of students will not go to college after high school graduation, yet they will stay in the community. What can the City do to address this as a workforce issue? The Commissioner also is interested in knowing what each Department Head sees as the biggest initiative (in terms of expenditure of resources) for his/her department for 2023-24.

***What is the most important outcome that you as a City Leader need to get from this year’s strategic planning meeting?**

To know more about the big-ticket projects for 2023-24, and what the City’s role may be (requests for funding, other commitments.) One project mentioned was the Animal Shelter.

***Miscellaneous Topics**

The Commissioner also would like to know more about the effectiveness of non-profits being assisted by the City. If warranted, a redistribution of those funds could be considered to scale-up the most effective programs.

Appendix A-2

Interview with Commissioner Aristotle Kirkland, District 2

***From the perspective of the constituents in your district, what were the most important accomplishments for Dothan City in 2022?**

The past year has seen such an increase in gun violence (in District 2 and in the City overall) that it is difficult for constituents to see many “wins.” The continuing work on the 84E corridor is being noticed in District 2.

***From your perspective as a City Leader, what do you believe were the most important accomplishments for the City as a whole in 2022?**

The Hudson-Alpha project has the potential to bring positive changes to Dothan. However this initiative still is a work-in-progress. Not much is definitively known about the return on investment for the city or for District 2. The likely benefits to the City are more easily, readily observable in a project such as the partnership with Izzell Reese for Grandview Community Center and NFL Flag Football.

***Were there any major strategic plan priorities that were not funded, not attempted, or not executed?**

Three areas of commitment from 2022 were cited: 1) Neighborhoods—there has been some progress (i.e., short-term rental policies), but strategies are needed to address long-term rentals and neglected properties; 2) Dothan City Schools—some conversations have taken place, but the City should engage in strategic planning with the schools to address ongoing problems; 3) Communication—a lot of information is provided, but not always enough information at the right time for Commissioner decision-making.

***Going forward, what do you feel are the most important priorities or projects for Dothan City?**

A major focus must be on the escalating violence. The Commission should determine what its role is in finding solutions. Adding police is the quick answer, but this solves a very small part of a complex issue. Related to this—84East infrastructure and development should be viewed in terms of neighborhood development that would directly impact the conditions that allow violence to incubate and thrive. Neighborhood development must focus beyond a 2-block section of downtown.

***Are there any major regional, national or world-wide issues that you feel will be challenge for Dothan in the next two years?**

Violence is a pandemic as widespread and dangerous as was COVID in 2020-21. However, support at the federal level has not been nearly as robust (financially, legislatively.) This makes it more imperative for solutions to be locally-driven.

***What are your priority topics for leadership discussions on 2/10 and 2/11?**

Public safety. Advance awareness of upcoming time-sensitive (major) projects and opportunities. 84E, both inside and outside of the circle. Diversity and inclusion---working toward creating departmental leadership that is reflective of the City population. A frank conversation about strengthening communication also was requested.

***What is the most important outcome that you as a City Leader need to get from this year’s strategic planning meeting?**

To leave the session with a clear understanding of agreed-upon focuses for the coming two years, more knowledgeable of the expected return-on-investment for City investments, and a unified commitment to doing what is in the strategic plan.

***Miscellaneous Topics**

While City leadership must stay open to the emergence of new opportunities, and although the Hudson-Alpha opportunity has huge potential, these are the kinds of major investments that need more time and reflection. If there are other big ideas in formative stages, these should be included in the annual strategic planning session. This planning time should focus on the big topics.

Appendix A-3

Interview with Commissioner Bradley Bedwell

***From the perspective of the constituents in your district, what were the most important accomplishments for Dothan City in 2022?**

Projects like Water World improvements and the ice rink. Constituents are more aware of projects that they can see. Smaller, more incremental movement on big projects (while important) are harder to notice.

***From your perspective as a City Leader, what do you believe were the most important accomplishments for the City as a whole in 2022?**

The Police Academy (now approved) with ties to the Wiregrass Public Safety Center. Downtown initiatives. Hudson-Alpha Wiregrass. A lot of things were moving forward during the year.

***Were there any major strategic plan priorities that were not funded, not attempted, or not executed?**

None cited.

***Going forward, what do you feel are the most important priorities or projects for Dothan City?**

To fully resolve the feeding program issue and be certain there is no repeat of a similar problem. Continue to focus on the Downtown initiatives and stay on the path with Hudson-Alpha to move that partnership forward.

***Are there any major regional, national or world-wide issues that you feel will be challenge for Dothan in the next two years?**

None cited. Dothan is a unique place, and its people do not necessarily follow national trends.

***What are your priority topics for leadership discussions on 2/10 and 2/11?**

The Commissioner would like some conversation about what else can be done for Dothan's public schools and the best strategies for the City's investment in education in general.

***What is the most important outcome that you as a City Leader need to get from this year's strategic planning meeting?**

That there has been an opportunity to speak freely. More time should be dedicated to deeper conversation about big issues and opportunities, vs. departmental updates which are handled through regular communication.

***Miscellaneous Topics**

Regarding the Hudson-Alpha partnership, the Commissioner noted that residents will want to hear outcomes that are quantifiable.

Continuing to strengthen relationships with key City partners such as Wiregrass Foundation.

Appendix A-4

Interview with Commissioner John Ferguson, District 4

***From the perspective of the constituents in your district, what were the most important accomplishments for Dothan City in 2022?**

Improvements to Rip Hewes stadium complex. Dothan's ability to boast a 7A facility supports the public school system and is a point of pride for District 3.

***From your perspective as a City Leader, what do you believe were the most important accomplishments for the City as a whole in 2022?**

Increasing compensation for police officers and addressing the dual-tier issue for the retirement system have improved recruitment and retention of police and fire. These are direct inputs into improved public safety. Emerging from the EPA consent decree and returning control of water/sewer to the City. The continuing focus on paying down City debt and excellent stewardship of public funds.

***Were there any major strategic plan priorities that were not funded, not attempted, or not executed? None cited.**

***Going forward, what do you feel are the most important priorities or projects for Dothan City?**

Industrial recruitment/expansion continues to be a priority. Opportunities may exist on the northern City boundary (near Napier Field), recruiting of industry around the airport, and/or for an additional spec building. Continuing to support the Wiregrass Public Safety Center as a regional/national training site and as a benefit to Wiregrass safety overall.

***Are there any major regional, national or world-wide issues that you feel will be challenge for Dothan in the next two years?**

As with many communities nationwide, ensuring that citizens understand what leaders are doing and why (aka. transparency) will continue to be an important objective for Dothan. The increasing impact of inflation on cities, and preparation for a severe lessening of COVID-era federal dollars. The socio-economic impacts that the Wiregrass may expect due to increasing immigrant in-migration.

***What are your priority topics for leadership discussions on 2/10 and 2/11?**

Time should be allocated to a conversation about the Hudson-Alpha Wiregrass partnership. Socio-economic stressors that seem to have increased panhandling and/or homelessness in and around the City. Exploring opportunities for the City to reduce operational expenses going forward to prepare for likely economic changes. Possibly some discussion to initiate new recreational projects (i.e., track, skateboard park) that could generate tourism revenue. Discuss AL605 (Brannon Stand) improvements to include proposed design and budget and present to ALDOT for potential shared cost project(s). The Commissioner would like to see less time allocated to department updates, with more time allocated to conversations between/amongst Commissioners, Mayor, and City Manager.

***What is the most important outcome that you as a City Leader need to get from this year's strategic planning meeting?**

That Leaders emerge better able to talk more clearly about the H-A Wiregrass partnership and Downtown initiative in terms of impact and job creation. To increase understanding of what progress the public can expect to see and when. To be able to help residents see the direct benefits to Dothan City from an initiative that may seem to them to focus (initially) on Ag-Science.

***Miscellaneous Topics**

Current method of keeping Commissioners informed of Strategic Plan status throughout the year may need a different approach.

Consider ways to incorporate information/projections about long-term implications (unintended consequences, precedents) of proposed projects.

Appendix A-5

Interview with Commissioner Gantt Pierce, District 5

***From the perspective of the constituents in your district, what were the most important accomplishments for Dothan City in 2022?**

The Hudson-Alpha Wiregrass partnership and the initiatives led by Dr. Marnix Heersink in connecting Dothan with UAB. There is an excitement in District 5 about both of these. With regard to H-A Wiregrass, the Commissioner anticipates that his constituents will have questions regarding the return-on-investment for the City's \$20 million dollar contribution.

***From your perspective as a City Leader, what do you believe were the most important accomplishments for the City as a whole in 2022?**

The Commissioner shares the same two major accomplishments as do those in his district. Both of these are generational projects, with a focus on doing the best things for the children. He emphasized the need for the H-A presence to be seen and known in Dothan and for there to be evidence of progress that is tangible. Getting the building under construction would be a major first step in this direction.

***Were there any major strategic plan priorities that were not funded, not attempted, or not executed?**

None cited. Plans for roadwork were particularly extensive and complex, but a lot got done.

***Going forward, what do you feel are the most important priorities or projects for Dothan City?**

City leadership needs a better understanding of the deficiencies in public school achievement outcomes. It is time to formulate a vision of what public school success looks like, and to determine where/how the Commission can help achieve that vision.

***Are there any major regional, national or world-wide issues that you feel will be challenge for Dothan in the next two years?**

Guns and violence will increase as challenges to Dothan's safety and quality of life. The same is occurring nationwide.

***What are your priority topics for leadership discussions on 2/10 and 2/11?**

At the project level, two issues are of interest: working with ALDOT to continue the work on Brannon Stand, and the potential for a skatepark at Westgate to add value to the City's recreational potential. The Commissioner would like the majority of Retreat planning time to involve deep discussions about major issues and initiatives. He would like the agenda to center on topics where the Commission needs focused time to talk together, vs department updates which are regularly provided.

***What is the most important outcome that you as a City Leader need to get from this year's strategic planning meeting?**

To engage in honest conversations that generate understanding and trust. To agree that this is a perfect, unique time in Dothan's history to make serious progress, and that City leaders are committed to doing so.

***Miscellaneous Topics**

The Commission's expectations for the DDRA. Identifying ways to minimize last minute alterations to decision items scheduled for Commission Meetings.

Appendix A-6

Interview with Commissioner David Crutchfield, District 6

***From the perspective of the constituents in your district, what were the most important accomplishments for Dothan City in 2022?**

Major improvements generally take time to be recognized. They tend to be disruptive to daily life when work is underway, but are much-appreciated once the work is done. Examples of such improvements for 2022 included storm water, red water and potable water infrastructure; continuing roadway work; tree limb trimming. The Commissioner noted that the latter resulted in no power outages due to falling trees during the bomb cyclone in late December 2022. He would like to see the City continue to be proactive in similar work going forward.

***From your perspective as a City Leader, what do you believe were the most important accomplishments for the City as a whole in 2022?**

The evolving partnership with Hudson-Alpha Wiregrass has the greatest potential to bring jobs, improve education, and transform the economy for the better. These outcomes will not be realized immediately. He also noted the continuing investment of businesses in the Wiregrass, including the construction/renovation of facilities, despite increasing costs. He applauded the approach of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce to encourage the City's involvement (including fiscal involvement) in projects outside of the city limits that will have a direct benefit on the economy and quality of life in Dothan. He highlighted the City's continuing fiscal responsibility, enabling Dothan to minimize borrowing and to use cash for many high-dollar projects.

***Were there any major strategic plan priorities that were not funded, not attempted, or not executed?**

No projects cited. The Commissioner noted that convincing citizens to invest in major changes continues to be a challenge. New strategies (i.e., a public building authority) are complex and require repeated and continual presentation and discussion.

***Going forward, what do you feel are the most important priorities or projects for Dothan City?**

The Downtown project; continuing water/sewer projects; participation with ATRIP (et al) to leverage Dothan investment with state and federal resources to improve roads, public safety (police staffing, fire stations), and other projects/strategies that directly impact the growth of Dothan.

***Are there any major regional, national or world-wide issues that you feel will be challenge for Dothan in the next two years?**

There appears to be a growing national tendency for persons who do not live in a community to attempt to intervene in decisions. He would like to see the future direction of Dothan driven by those who live in the Wiregrass and who have knowledge of and commitment to its development.

***What are your priority topics for leadership discussions on 2/10 and 2/11?**

The Commissioner looks forward to the planning sessions where City Leaders have time to focus, to speak freely, and to disagree respectfully. He would like to include time to understand and discuss the timing of expected outcomes for major investments such as H-A Wiregrass so that City Leaders can convey information accurately to constituents and assist in encouraging patience.

***What is the most important outcome that you as a City Leader need to get from this year's strategic planning meeting?**

That Commissioners emerge better informed of priority issues and opportunities and are better prepared to take action in a timely manner over the next two years.

***Miscellaneous Topics**

Consider a different strategy to keep Commissioners informed of Strategic Plan status.

The Commissioner noted that as a group, they work well to provide services and opportunities for all residents, of all ages, and in every represented district.

Appendix A-7

Interview with Dothan Mayor Mark Saliba

Mayor Saliba cited the potential for economic/community development and the need for courage and patience. Many major initiatives under consideration or underway for the City will take years to realize their full effects. Differentiating between the short-term impacts and those that are years in the future should provide City Leadership with more information and a higher level of comfort regarding risks necessary to bring about transformational change.

Substantial growth and development have taken place in Dothan this year, although these do not often receive lasting recognition. In addition to steady progress on the priority activities identified in last year's updated plan, the City and area partners have moved steadily forward with regard to economic development and job growth. One particular week included three major economic development announcements (Smart Lam, Renewable Resources, and Gateway Tires) that added \$100 million in investment into the business/industry sector. Despite timely news releases, the impact of that week's activity was too quickly lost on the public and on community leaders as well. Many of the opportunities and challenges facing the City for the future will require sustained effort, over time, and assumption of risk.

Recommended Conversations for the Strategic Planning Meeting on 2/10-2/11

The Hudson-Alpha Partnership. There remains some confusion about the potential impact of this partnership and the return-on-investment. The Mayor suggested some conversation with Dean Mitchell to develop a clear, succinct description of the expected short, medium, and long-term outcomes of this partnership. A presentation about the quickly observable benefits and those that will take years to realize would give the Commissioners an opportunity to ask questions and become more familiar with the direct and indirect benefits to be achieved. The presentation also could include identification of the essential roles that will need to be played, for a long period of time, by key partners—including, but not solely, the City.

The Relationship of Youth Education and Crime. Although this is a nationwide problem, incidents of youth involved in crimes and violence are increasing. The City's responsibility to provide law enforcement and public safety is a given. However, while essential components, these are reactive measures and are insufficient by themselves. How can/should communities bring resources to bear on early interventions that lessen the likelihood that children/teens will be involved in crime? Once again, the impact of successful ventures will be realized over time; strategies will require persistence and patience. Information on intervention models already underway in other cities may be shared with the Commissioners prior to 2/10-2/11.

The City Center Project. As with Hudson-Alpha, the Commissioners may benefit from discussing the reasonable expectations for short-term vs. the longer-term impacts. There may be a need for additional discussion about the role of Public Building Authorities.

Rescue and Adoption Center. The City's role in this project may be determined prior to 2/10-2/11. If not, a status update and an opportunity for discussion could be beneficial.

The Mayor would like to hear reports from Department Heads regarding forward-thinking projects and ideas that are not already part of the operational plan. Updates on infrastructure can be provided prior to the Retreat, and Dept. leaders will be in attendance to answer questions. Departmental presentations (if any) and subsequent Commission dialogue should be on progressive projects and initiatives to improve quality of life for residents.

Appendix B-1
Department Head Interviews
Alison Hall, Leisure Services
1/26/2023

1. Referencing the City's current Strategic Plan, what have been your department's major project focuses for 2022?

*Targeted improvement of program offerings (i.e., expansion of ice rink, Smores 'N Snores at Eastgate Park, Doggie Dip at Water World, etc.)

*Planned construction projects are moving ahead:

*Water World Phase II is progressing as scheduled.

*Doug Tew and Rip Hewes renovations are about to be completed.

*Wiregrass multi-use fields beginning.

*BMX/Skatepark restrooms progressing as scheduled.

*Westgate indoor filter project has been completed.

2. Was any Strategic Plan objective for 2022 delayed; if so, what were the challenges and what is the current status?

Personnel/procedure issues identified for the Feeding Program have had ramifications beyond that office, particularly regarding staffing at community centers for the after-school programs. Combined with continual difficulties in finding/keeping staff (full-time, part-time, and seasonal), the additional staff losses following the Feeding Program problem have the Department currently with 13 FT, 6 PT, and numerous seasonal vacancies. A new staffing model should be considered (see #5 below).

It has been difficult to remind outsiders that the Department is much more than the feeding program. Even though the City has partnered with Dothan City Schools to become the "sponsor", Leisure Services personnel still are responsible for daily and monthly paperwork, food pickup/delivery, and temperature checks.

Some supply chain issues caused partial project delays (i.e., HVACs for the Rip Hewes locker-room, kitchen equipment at Doug Tew/Rip Hewes), but facilities are already back in use (Rip Hewes for soccer and programs at Doug Tew.)

3. If there have been major initiatives/projects undertaken by your department that were not part of the City's plan for this year, what were these and why did they become important in 2022?

*Time and attention devoted to Feeding Program impact.

*Upgrades and maintenance needed at Westgate and Kiwanis Park trails were accelerated due to severely deteriorating conditions.

*The partnership with Visit Dothan is working extremely well, with excellent economic returns. The downside is, again, personnel are stretched very thin. Leisure Department staff worked 49 of 52 weekends in 2022.

4. What do you believe to be the top-5 most critical projects for your department for the next two years?

*Figuring out personnel solutions regarding staffing configurations, pay rates, recruiting strategies.

*Planning for new opportunities and partnerships of downtown initiatives and for the impacts on facilities around the City as downtown venues go off-line.

*Security—both proactive and reactive strategies to keep citizens and visitors safe when participating in Leisure Services activities and venues.

*Continuing to build upon Dothan's historic commitment to athletics and simultaneously find ways to expand the right mix of programs and services to build communities.

- * Construction projects currently in discussion:
 - *Dog park on the west side of town.
 - *Upgrades to Northcutt football facilities.
 - *Updating the Master Plan for Water World.
 - *Building the new skate park in collaboration with Visit Dothan.
 - *Increasing demand for sports facilities such as soccer and pickleball, etc.
- (Note: the Lazy River remains on the future projects list from 2022-23.)

5. With regard to these critical projects, what resources do you anticipate needing that do not already exist within your normal operating budget?

Funding.

Support for a review of staffing options that will enable the Department to function effectively and consistently.

Development of a park police division with the support and collaboration of the Dothan Police and Fire departments.

6. Who are the major external partners important to the accomplishment of your department's critical projects?

Wallace Community College, Troy State University, Hudson-Alpha, the Chamber of Commerce and other community organizations that can help create program opportunities and/or leverage City funding through resources available to them.

7. For the City as a whole, what do you believe to be the top-2 most critical investments (of time, money, and other resources) for the next two years?

Downtown City Center development—opportunities to elevate arts and sciences; to create a new “face” for the center of City government and to rethink operations and services for the future.

Finding an investment balance between the progressive opportunities being presented through the downtown projects and the progressive projects continually proposed by Dothan departments to keep these functions moving forward.

Appendix B-2
Department Head Interviews
Andrew Love, General Services
1/19/2023

1. Referencing the City's current Strategic Plan, what have been your department's major project focuses for 2022?

- *Rip Hewes Stadium—93% complete.
- *Design of two new fire stations--#3 and #10 (expected to be out for bid next month.)
- *Phase III of Water World—administration, decking, lockers, concrete repairs, etc.
- *BMX Concessions Building.
- *Westgate Park pool filter room remodel.

2. Was any Strategic Plan objective for 2022 delayed; if so, what were the challenges and what is the current status?

High prices and supply chain issues continue to create delays. Primary areas affected are vehicles (i.e., two-year lead time to receive a firetruck).

3. If there have been major initiatives/projects undertaken by your department that were not part of the City's plan for this year, what were these and why did they become important in 2022?

Other than day-to-day emergencies and opportunities to which they respond. General Services has stayed focused on the strategic plan and the resulting business plan.

4. What do you believe to be the top-5 most critical projects for your department for the next two years?

- *Fire stations #3 and #10.
- *Downtown City Center Block Phase I.
- *Renovating the Police Department facility.
- *Relocating the court, magistrate, et al, into a new facility.

5. With regard to these critical projects, what resources do you anticipate needing that do not already exist within your normal operating budget?

Allocation of funds to take advantage of opportunities and/or adjust prices for approved projects to keep them on track.

6. Who are the major external partners important to the accomplishment of your department's critical projects?

Design teams, architects, engineers, construction companies.

7. For the City as a whole, what do you believe to be the top-2 most critical investments (of time, money, and other resources) for the next two years?

Downtown City Center development—is a generational change for Dothan. A lot has presented/published, and it is time to follow-through.

New City Hall—while not in Phase I, it is a key component to the changes desired for the city. Development provided not only a new facility to be the face of Dothan, but also an opportunity to rethink organizational structure, business services, and technology.

Appendix B-3
Department Head Interviews
Billy Mayes, Utilities Department
1/24/2023

1. Referencing the City's current Strategic Plan, what have been your department's major project focuses for 2022?

- *Basin B4-53 Sewer—CIPP at 80% complete; open trench replacement at 20%.
- *Baywood Lift Station—Approximately 95% complete.
- *Indian Hills Lift Station Elimination—complete.
- *Beaver Creek Trunk Line Design—95% complete; on-time and within-budget.
- *Cypress WWTP Upgrade—Final report received 12/9/22; under review.
- *Red Water Program—FY22 project awarded to L&K Construction; 85% complete.
(See #3, below.)
- *Long Range Planning—consultant began working Jan 2022; final report due Feb 2023.

2. Was any Strategic Plan objective for 2022 delayed; if so, what were the challenges and what is the current status?

As noted, above: supply chain delays on B4-52 Sewer project; Geotech consultant work delays on Baywood Lift Station.

3. If there have been major initiatives/projects undertaken by your department that were not part of the City's plan for this year, what were these and why did they become important in 2022?

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funds became available. City drinking water approved for \$2M (ARPA) \$528,272 BIL and \$10M Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (EPA) loan. City Clean Water application not approved for 2022, but may be approved in 2023.

4. What do you believe to be the top-5 most critical projects for your department for the next two years?

- *Cypress WWTP—plant is 20 years old.
- *Woodland Redwater and RCC Water Main improvements.
- *Procure property and complete design of 115kV emergency backup station.
- *Sewer Basin Rehab and Trunk Line Rehab (\$23M total; grants/loans under review by ADEM for FY 2023).
- *J. B. Chapman Well Engineering Services, Well and Transmission Line Construction.

5. With regard to these critical projects, what resources do you anticipate needing that do not already exist within your normal operating budget?

- *Cypress—\$1M for FY23 for design; \$10M for FY24 for construction.
- *Woodland Redwater and RCC Water Main Improvements—debt service \$700,000/year for 20 years. Anticipate approx. \$12.58M in ARPA/BIL-SRF funding for Justice 40 Disadvantaged areas identified within the City limits.
- *Property and design of 115kV emergency backup station with FY24 AMEA funds.
- *Sewer Basin--\$4M in FY24 unless ARPA/BIL-SRF funding becomes available.
- *Well design \$250,000 in FY24; well and transmission line construction \$5M in FY25.

6. Who are the major external partners important to the accomplishment of your department's critical projects?

Consulting services for design; contractors for construction. AMEA, ADEM, other state and federal government revenue sources.

7. For the City as a whole, what do you believe to be the top-2 most critical investments (of time, money, and other resources) for the next two years?

Cypress WWTP improvements.

Honeysuckle Road Improvements Phases I and II.

And finding a balanced approach to allocating City resources (funds, equipment, personnel) to progressive initiatives (i.e., downtown center) and maintaining the strength of other critical City infrastructure.

Appendix B-4
Department Head Interviews
Chief Larry Williams, Fire Department
1/19/2023

1. Referencing the City's current Strategic Plan, what have been your department's major project focuses for 2022?

*Design of fire stations #3 and #10. Final designs due next week.

*Offered and delivered Advanced EMT courses in-house. There is a serious shortage of paramedics (in Dothan and nationwide). Thirty vacancies created in the DFD during last year; most trucks are down to a single paramedic vs. the desired two. Completion of the Advanced EMT course is required prior to attending paramedic school.

*Critical challenge of maintaining minimum staffing standards due to vacancies—retirements and resignations. Overtime costs remain high to provide the required level of expected service.

*Supporting numerous community activities, such as Love Your Neighborhood. Increase in community events and concerns over public safety increased requests for medical standbys.

*Wiregrass Public Safety Center programming is near max capacity. Professional use and commitment to train volunteers from the region are difficult to support with current staff.

*Internally—reorganization (two new Deputy Chiefs), total revision of policies and procedures, and continuing commitment to train regional volunteers.

2. Was any Strategic Plan objective for 2022 delayed; if so, what were the challenges and what is the current status?

*Insufficient percentage of Advanced EMT students received passing score to enter paramedic training. Department currently assessing causes and making necessary changes.

*Intention to decrease overtime costs by pre-hiring firefighters for stations #3 was more than offset by the large number of vacancies.

*Replacement plans for apparatus—pumper and ladder truck—impacted by supply chain issues. Now taking 2+ years from the point of order to receive delivery.

3. If there have been major initiatives/projects undertaken by your department that were not part of the City's plan for this year, what were these and why did they become important in 2022?

*Revision of the department narcotics and medication policies and procedures required due to internal theft of controlled substances.

*Lagging availability of the reserve fleet has called for unusual staffing configurations to cover service areas. Not optimal response capability.

*System computer upgrade has required time-on-task to re-sync department software.

*Pay increases for department personnel were welcome and should aid in recruiting/retention going forward.

*The need for additional, accessible COVID vaccination sites in 2022 was covered by Dothan Fire Department.

4. What do you believe to be the top-5 most critical projects for your department for the next two years?

*Adding paramedics; increasing enrollment and passing rates for members attending Advanced EMT and Paramedic schools.

*Develop a system to hire more than the approved staffing level to fill gaps to have staff ready to compensate for vacancies. Requires 8 months to train a new fire fighter.

*Consider system to increase the lead-time allowed for purchase of hard-to-acquire equipment and vehicles.

*Complete construction and occupy stations #3 and #10.

*Improve training opportunities to allow personnel to work in new (acting) positions without lowering the standard of coverage for those positions.

*Adopt the 2021 International Fire Code for Dothan.

*Research and develop a foundation for the Fire Department.

5. With regard to these critical projects, what resources do you anticipate needing that do not already exist within your normal operating budget?

*Full funding for fire stations #3 and #10. Promote three new Captains and Sergeants for Station #10 prior to opening.

*Hire 8 additional personnel over set staffing limit.

*Authorization to purchase apparatus and equipment 2 years in advance of need.

*Purchase materials for the evaluation, input, and implementation of the new Fire Code.

6. Who are the major external partners important to the accomplishment of your department's critical projects?

Wallace Community College, contractors, architects, and Pilcher's Ambulance Service.

7. For the City as a whole, what do you believe to be the top-2 most critical investments (of time, money, and other resources) for the next two years?

Fire stations #3 and #10.

The City Center project.

Appendix B-5
Department Head Interviews
Chief Will Benny, Police Department
1/18/2023

1. Referencing the City's current Strategic Plan, what have been your department's major project focuses for 2022?

Successful progress on staffing and compensation. DPD was able to recruit back up to 177 officers, with 14 vacancies at this time. 10% pay increase for service and reserve was implemented, with a raise effective Jan 1, 2023 for off-duty. Certified officers from around the region are beginning to apply to work in Dothan.

2. Was any Strategic Plan objective for 2022 delayed; if so, what were the challenges and what is the current status?

Goals were accomplished, but it was difficult to get to this level of staffing in one year.

3. If there have been major initiatives/projects undertaken by your department that were not part of the City's plan for this year, what were these and why did they become important in 2022?

The Chief was at a slight disadvantage going into last year's budget planning as he had been in office less than two months. The Commission and administration were very supportive of projects and needs brought to their attention, and the Department was successful in securing grants for many of these opportunities. Activities requiring funding included: taser upgrade; new radio consoles; license plate reader cameras; relocation of the WASP helicopter to Dothan Airport; upgraded SWAT weapons system; upgraded radio channels enabling Dothan City and Houston County officers to communicate; National Integrated Ballistic Integration Network (NIBIN); SmartForce integrated communication system; FBI Law Enforcement Leadership Development course; gun unit created; and mental health training for officers. Currently police cars are being replaced on a regular cycle, and the average age of the fleet will move from 10-years to 3-years by the end of 2023.

4. What do you believe to be the top-5 most critical projects for your department for the next two years?

With a continuing focus on increasing violence, the two priorities are to maintain competitive compensation to draw and retain a high-quality workforce, and additional investment in proactive and reactive technology. Successful development of the newly authorized Police Academy also will be a major focus.

5. With regard to these critical projects, what resources do you anticipate needing that do not already exist within your normal operating budget?

Technology will include: additional FLOCK license plate readers, Shot Spotter (for deployment and evidence collection); an analyst to use Smart Force software for predictive analytics; GrayKey forensics access tool. Dothan-Houston County weather sirens are aging. Some consideration may be needed to improve helicopter reliability. Personnel will be required to fully-develop the Police Academy, targeting early Summer 2023 for its first class. Advocacy may be required to support a planned realignment of patrol assignments into four distinct City districts to increase productivity and accountability.

6. Who are the major external partners important to the accomplishment of your department's critical projects?

APOST; federal partners; Houston County; E911; and Dothan-Houston County EMA.

7. For the City as a whole, what do you believe to be the top-2 most critical investments (of time, money, and other resources) for the next two years?

Consideration of a City-wide sick leave buy-back would alleviate the problem of personnel using accumulated sick time as they near retirement. These sick calls create disruption in staffing, and overtime costs may be as high, or higher, than the cost of buying-back some of the hours. There also needs to be a collaborative plan (including partners in addition the City) to address the crime rate and shootings/violence in Dothan.

Appendix B-6
Department Head Interviews
Delvick McKay, Personnel
1/18/2023

1. Referencing the City's current Strategic Plan, what have been your department's major project focuses for 2022?

*Successfully completed leadership development training for 200+ supervisors/managers throughout the city workforce (Learn....Love....Lead).

*Continued efforts to ensure that Dothan's pay plan is up to market by providing a 2% general increase, along with merit increases (e.g. 2%,3%,4%) for employee performance.

*Health Insurance renewal without any premium increases; expanded coverage for vision; and flexible spending cards for medical/childcare reimbursement.

*Reclassified, abolished, and added positions to meet operational needs in Leisure Services, Dothan Utilities, Information Technology; performed promotional assessments for Public Safety (Police/Fire) and added 20 new Police Officers.

*Managed various employee relations issues, including Personnel Board hearings and on-going appeals and legal actions.

2. Was any Strategic Plan objective for 2022 delayed; if so, what were the challenges and what is the current status?

The ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) project has been delayed for implementation of the HCM (Human Capital Management) module. The vendor is working on a new timeline with deliverables. There were several programmatic functions that did not meet City requirements (payroll, deductions, scheduling, etc.) and more attention is being given to ensure that the transition is accurately completed. More details and new delivery dates will be determined during the first quarter of 2023.

3. If there have been major initiatives/projects undertaken by your department that were not part of the City's plan for this year, what were these and why did they become important in 2022?

None

4. What do you believe to be the top-5 most critical projects for your department for the next two years?

*Hiring and retaining quality talent in the current job market.

*Be more aggressive in offering compensation incentives to attract the best talent.

*Education incentive pay for employees with advanced education above the minimum requirement of their position that is directly related to their job with Dothan City.

*Alternative scheduling to facilitate work-life balance.

*Intentional compensation incentives/market adjustments for skilled trades/technical and high-demand positions (i.e., CDL license holders, equipment operators, lineman, water/waste water treatment operators, etc.).

*Succession planning and anticipating future retirements. 93 employees currently are eligible to retire with 25 or more years of service. 111 employees can retire within 5 years with 25 or more years of service. In total, 204 employees (20% of the workforce) can retire within 5 years.

*Intentional budgeting for general pay increases to offset increases in inflation to keep the pay plan within a livable wage to retain employees. (CPI for December 2022 was 6.5%).

*Implementation of ERP is significant for Personnel and each department. More work is being done to make this happen this year or by January 2024.

5. With regard to these critical projects, what resources do you anticipate needing that do not already exist within your normal operating budget?

Sufficient funding for education incentive for all full-time and part-time city employees with advanced degrees above their current job requirement, directly related to impact their current job. This provides an effective recruitment and retention strategy and reward employees who have obtained advanced education and where the City benefits from this knowledge.

Budget for a proposed sick-leave payout option at retirement. Helps to guard against excessive use of sick leave leading up to retirement and reduces overtime costs when minimum staffing is required (Fire, Police, Waste Water, etc.)

Funding to add additional positions as approved.

6. Who are the major external partners important to the accomplishment of your department's critical projects?

Continued relationship building with local schools, colleges/universities, and community groups to utilize these entities as recruitment liaisons. Dothan's workforce has evolved to include multiple generations, with 633 employees with less than 10 years of service. The City remains a vital employer in Dothan and in the Wiregrass.

7. For the City as a whole, what do you believe to be the top-2 most critical investments (of time, money, and other resources) for the next two years?

People! Building and maintaining a culture that is responsive and inclusive of all ethnic groups, backgrounds, races, religions, et al, is essential. Consider all facets of the community to create pathways for progress. (i.e., affordable/workforce housing, adult education and workforce development programs, healthcare/community clinics that provide access to healthcare, improve public education and have tough conversations regarding funding and resource allocation.)

Capacity Building! From an infrastructure, economic, and social perspective (roads, bridges, water/sewer capacity, business/tax incentives, etc.) to plan for the growth in all quadrants of the City. More funding and support to social service agencies that provide for the health and well-being of the community. The City should consider matching the CDBG funds provided by the federal government to bolster the efforts of community development.

Appendix B-7
Department Head Interviews
Jack Mason, Information Technology
1/26/2023

1. Referencing the City's current Strategic Plan, what have been your department's major project focuses for 2022?

*Major efforts devoted to the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system conversion. Parks and Recreation system is now cloud-based, providing better customer service.

*Completed design and implementation of full-service data center next to Dothan Utilities.

*Initiated the Fiber Maintenance Team; increasing network speeds and through-put to main Dothan facilities; working now to reconfigure Dothan network backbone to be 100% redundant.

*Implemented new cloud-based document management system.

*City "app" implemented.

*Half of City's fiber hut equipment updated.

2. Was any Strategic Plan objective for 2022 delayed; if so, what were the challenges and what is the current status?

Vendor and implementer difficulties caused delay of the Citizen Engagement and Community Development modules. New resources being sought to take advantage of what has already been purchased, while providing total support for the unique needs of city services.

3. If there have been major initiatives/projects undertaken by your department that were not part of the City's plan for this year, what were these and why did they become important in 2022?

*Software vendor essential to compliance reporting for the Fire Department announced (with limited notice) a sunset date for system support. Necessitated identification and installation of a new system. Completed.

*Discovery that Microsoft 365 did not meet City email retention policy required the addition of third-party archiving system. Identified replacement also includes analytics and reports, and filters junks and spam. Implemented December 2022 for testing and will be rolled-out to other departments during 2023.

*New construction projects added in 2022 required IT inventory and consumed a higher level of IT personnel resources; all managed within deadlines and budgets.

4. What do you believe to be the top-5 most critical projects for your department for the next two years?

*Getting all ERP modules running effectively and decommissioning IBM i-series.

*Continue to update major components for City's fiber huts (half completed in 2022.)

*Replace/Upgrade 7-year-old WIFI/Wireless systems in all City facilities; expand WIFI capacity for City public buildings, particularly recreation centers; look ahead to the requirements that leisure facilities will have to support streaming to attract revenue-generating tournaments.

*Continue involvement in planning for the downtown renovation which will require robust, reliable, state-of-the-art technological infrastructure.

*Transition to cloud-based phone systems for all City operations.

5. With regard to these critical projects, what resources do you anticipate needing that do not already exist within your normal operating budget?

Funding...to complete fiber huts and upgrade/expand all City WIFI.

Funding...to transition to cloud-based phone system.

6. Who are the major external partners important to the accomplishment of your department's critical projects?

Oracle (vendor) and ESC (implementer) for the ERP system.

7. For the City as a whole, what do you believe to be the top-2 most critical investments (of time, money, and other resources) for the next two years?

Continue to build relationships and leverage City investments with partners who attract new business and new opportunities to Dothan.

*Look ahead to the needs of Leisure Services facilities that are currently generating revenue and have the potential to increase much further, but will be hampered by the lack of technology in demand by future vendors, agents, teams, local users, and visitors.

*Consider ways in which Dothan City departments can work with area high schools to begin to grow-their-own future employees, particularly in future-focused, high-demand, and highly skilled careers.

Appendix B-8
Department Head Interviews
Judge Rose Gordon
1/19/2023

Interviews with Judge Gordon do not follow the template for City Departments.

The Judge's three main focuses, currently and going forward, are:

- A facility that works to effectively administer the functions in the current courthouse.
- A comprehensive community focus on Dothan's children.
- City development strategies that include the disenfranchised, undereducated, and unemployed citizenry, or everything else being developed will fail.

Appendix B-9
Department Head Interviews
Kevan Kelly and Joe Herring—Legal Department
1/25/2023

Interviews with the City Attorneys do not follow the template for other City Departments.

Main areas of focus for their office in 2022.

*Defending lawsuits, processing claims, handling personnel matters, et al. (Note: reduction of office personnel to two full-time attorneys will lessen staff availability to attend planning meetings, board meetings, etc., to answer legal questions before problems occur.)

Anticipated areas of focus for the next two years.

*In addition to the items noted above which are expected to continue:

- The office is still unsettled regarding staffing-number and areas of expertise.
- Additional need for expertise related to major capital initiatives: real estate, land acquisition, zoning, federal contracting, et al.
- Resolving the landfill issue.
- Identifying proactive strategies to address potential legal problems.
- Meeting with Department Heads to understand their areas of need for legal services.

National events currently affecting Dothan or that could challenge Dothan going forward:

*Crime, particularly violent episodes. There is a direct impact (victims, property damage, city business development, increased policing costs, etc.) and an indirect impact as people start to withdraw from community activities.

*Protesters from outside of the Wiregrass disrupting the City. This is occurring with more regularity in urban centers nationwide.

General comments and suggestions.

*Increasing inter-departmental communication to give priority, where possible, to claim notices that are likely to result in repeat claims (i.e., road issues where claims already have been filed.)

*Current staffing levels limit the ability for legal expertise to be present consistently at Board meetings, planning meetings, etc., and negatively impacts the ability to provide timely responses to legal inquires.

*As the number of major City capital initiatives and partnerships increase, the need for legal services also will increase. Whether these are to be handled through additional office staffing, outside counsel, or a combination of the two is a decision for the Commission.

*Additional training (and/or more frequent reminders) for City workers driving City vehicles would lessen the number of accidents and resulting claim

Appendix B-10
Department Head Interviews
Marshall Perry, Performing Arts
1/20/2023

1. Referencing the City's current Strategic Plan, what have been your department's major project focuses for 2022?

*Progressive development of Downtown was a major commitment from the 2022 strategic retreat. Performing Arts has focused on creating strategies to bring audiences back to the Civic Center and Opera House—two major venues that are an important part of economic development of Downtown Dothan.

*The Department has worked not only on hosting concerts, plays, and events, but also on creating an experience that will have patrons wanting to come back again and again.

*The Performing Arts business plan included restructuring of the Rates and Service document (Policy 16 regarding fees charged for facilities use.) A presentation recommending changes was made to the Commission, but this item did not go forward. The document will need to be reconsidered as the new venues near completion.

2. Was any Strategic Plan objective for 2022 delayed; if so, what were the challenges and what is the current status?

The Performing Arts Department did not have any specific objectives in the Strategic Plan for 2022.

3. If there have been major initiatives/projects undertaken by your department that were not part of the City's plan for this year, what were these and why did they become important in 2022?

Increasing safety measures has become a major focus. National and local events have put additional pressure on venues to anticipate and plan for problems. Performing Arts continually reviews event staffing, crowd control strategies, and works with the Dothan Police Department to be proactive. This focus will intensify in the years ahead.

The main focus since 2013 has been to bring audiences back to the Civic Center and Opera House. COVID caused major disruption to efforts aimed at getting the Dothan market rediscovered by artists and audiences. Post-COVID, the Department has been working to get the number of event days back to an average of 260 contracted event days per year.

4. What do you believe to be the top-5 most critical projects for your department for the next two years?

*Conveying the message that there will be new entertainment venues available in Downtown Dothan to create excitement for the future and simultaneously maintain synergy and activity during the years of construction. Communication will need to be clear and timely for individual residents, promoters, non-profit organizations, and arts groups.

*Strive to make the venues (existing and new) safe, accessible, clean and welcoming--places that citizens will be proud of and that out-of-town guests will want to visit.

*Keep sporadic employees working for Performing Arts. Dothan cannot host major events without these workers.

*Keep our facility infrastructure in good operational order.

*Advocating for funding to keep critical infrastructure (HVAC, lighting, etc.) in place and add equipment needed now to increase safety.

5. With regard to these critical projects, what resources do you anticipate needing that do not already exist within your normal operating budget?

Funds to handle repairs of equipment needed to sustain the current facilities while new ones are renovated/constructed. Funds to purchase venue items such as safety, lighting and sound equipment that can be transferred to the new facilities. In terms of budgets, a dual-focus

is required—looking ahead to new facilities and equipment, while maintaining the safety and attraction of current facilities that will continue generating revenue during the transitions.

6. Who are the major external partners important to the accomplishment of your department's critical projects?

National touring acts, artists representatives, promoters and event organizers; local arts groups; area colleges, schools and non-profits that use City venues for major activities.

7. For the City as a whole, what do you believe to be the top-2 most critical investments (of time, money, and other resources) for the next two years?

Some investment in maintenance and upkeep of the existing arena while the new facility is being designed and funded. There are some essential items that can be used currently and also are portable to the new facilities as these open.

The importance of actively listening to the local arts groups regarding their needs in the new facilities. The downtown initiative began with a coalition of arts organizations. Although the emphasis for the arena has shifted toward a more multi-purpose, sports related facility, the input of the arts organizations that will continue to bring entertainment and revenue to downtown should be included.

Appendix B-11
Department Head Interviews
Romona Marcus, Finance Department
1/24/2023

1. Referencing the City's current Strategic Plan, what have been your department's major project focuses for 2022?

*Software implementation for the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. In addition to modules directly related to this department, Finance personnel are involved in each department's implementation to ensure accurate flow into the general ledger and financial reporting requirements.

*Funding for capital projects, economic development, and downtown development plans.

*Funding for the Police Department and Fire Department adjustments to ensure competitive compensation.

2. Was any Strategic Plan objective for 2022 delayed; if so, what were the challenges and what is the current status?

*The ERP implementation for payroll has been delayed. Finance, Utilities and other departments are currently scheduled to go-live on October 1, 2023.

*The Farm Center purchase has been postponed until May 2023, awaiting City/County decisions on best use of the facility.

3. If there have been major initiatives/projects undertaken by your department that were not part of the City's plan for this year, what were these and why did they become important in 2022?

*Performed a detailed audit of the Food Service Programs. Systems were evaluated to determine ways to eliminate similar situations from occurring in the future.

4. What do you believe to be the top-5 most critical projects for your department for the next two years?

*Development of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget.

*Completion of the ERP software implementation.

*Bond rating review.

*Identifying funding sources for the major capital projects (i.e., downtown).

*Identifying funding for department needs; balancing these with new opportunities.

5. With regard to these critical projects, what resources do you anticipate needing that do not already exist within your normal operating budget?

None

6. Who are the major external partners important to the accomplishment of your department's critical projects?

*Software Implementation Team (ESC)

*Bond rating agencies.

*Wiregrass Foundation and other community partners.

*Financial advisors and auditors.

7. For the City as a whole, what do you believe to be the top-2 most critical investments (of time, money, and other resources) for the next two years?

*Develop and communicate attainable goals for downtown improvements.

*Provide security for citizens at community related events.

*Retain skilled employees; proactively plan for the knowledge and experience that will leave the City workforce as many employees reach retirement age.

Appendix B-12
Department Head Interviews
Todd McDonald, Planning and Development
1/18/2023

1. Referencing the City's current Strategic Plan, what have been your department's major project focuses for 2022?

*An Alabama Supreme Court decision in summer 2022 directed that any program addressing retail housing could not be proactive but could be reactive (complaint-based.) A complaint-based residential rental program is in development.

*A complaint system for the public to report short-term rentals (STR's) was configured and is now available to the public.

*Continued to work toward acquisition of properties for affordable housing. Environmental studies required by CDBG (HUD) were completed to allow acquisition of structures on East Burdeshaw to proceed. A combination of CDBG and general funds will be used.

*The 84E Overlay District and ordinance amendment are completed. Federal dollars helped fund some sidewalk segments between downtown and ACOM. (Full implementation will require additional time and coordination with other initiatives underway for and adjacent to that area.)

2. Was any Strategic Plan objective for 2022 delayed; if so, what were the challenges and what is the current status?

*Acquisition of property for affordable housing was delayed due to HUD environmental requirements that necessitated a higher level of review and involvement of a consultant.

*The development/adoption of both the US 84 East Overlay district and the STR ordinance took longer than expected due to researching and designing regulations, development and institution licensing procedures, and enforcement. Community input altered both ordinances.

3. If there have been major initiatives/projects undertaken by your department that were not part of the City's plan for this year, what were these and why did they become important in 2022?

The department remained focused on planned initiatives including expansion of the Downtown Center project which has evolved substantially since the 2022 Retreat.

4. What do you believe to be the top-5 most critical projects for your department for the next two years?

*Focus on the Montgomery Highway Corridor—it is a main entryway to Dothan. Implement the Brownfield assessment grant (part of the Montgomery Highway Corridor Plan.)

*Use lessons-learned from 84E Overlay District process for application to enable implementation of the Honeysuckle Road Corridor Plan.

*Secure targeted properties on East Burdeshaw for housing development to proceed.

*Update the Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan for the City (last updated 2011).

*Adopt a residential rental program that includes habitation standards. This was topic of conversation at the 2022 Commission Retreat, and still needs to be considered and developed. It can be a highly-charged issue with the need to increase housing availability and private property rights on one side, and the desire of community members to insure quality, safety, and property values in their neighborhoods.

5. With regard to these critical projects, what resources do you anticipate needing that do not already exist within your normal operating budget?

The most critical needs are hard to quantify—staffing and time. One or two key personnel in Planning and Development are eligible to retire and will take with them history and

expertise. Having enough time for staff to complete projects is a related issue. Projects that impact the physical environment near people's homes and businesses require a lot of input, feedback, and continual design changes.

6. Who are the major external partners important to the accomplishment of your department's critical projects?

*For projects such as Montgomery Highway and Honeysuckle Road, the primary partners are internal to the City—Utilities, Public Works, et al.

*EPA and ADEM are key to Brownfields initiatives.

*For East Burdeshaw—CDBG/HUD and the Housing Authority.

*Houston County has indicated a desire to play a role in planning for a pedestrian/bicycle paths to extend these opportunities beyond the City limits.

*ALDOT is a key partner for bike/ped projects that are recommended by the plan.

7. For the City as a whole, what do you believe to be the top-2 most critical investments (of time, money, and other resources) for the next two years?

Phase I of City Center and the Downtown Road Diet. People need to see progress in the form of physical changes.

Appendix B-13
Department Head Interviews
Tommy Wright, Public Works
1/19/2023

1. Referencing the City's current Strategic Plan, what have been your department's major project focuses for 2022?

- *Honeysuckle Rd
 - a. Phase 1 – 95% design; 33% ROW; 100% offered.
 - b. Phase 2 – 90% design; 53% ROW; 100% offered.
- *Storm Drain Inventory/Hydro Analysis.
- *Hwy 84 W Improvements.
- *John D. Odom @ Publix signal.
- *ALDOT Efforts – Ross Clark Circle.
- *Downtown Traffic Study.
- *Girard Basin.

2. Was any Strategic Plan objective for 2022 delayed; if so, what were the challenges and what is the current status?

- *Flowers Chapel – funding/high bid; design complete; currently on hold.
- *Girard Storm Drainage – plans developed; high bid; new plan in process.

3. If there have been major initiatives/projects undertaken by your department that were not part of the City's plan for this year, what were these and why did they become important in 2022?

- *Repurposing Wiregrass Park Fields.

4. What do you believe to be the top-5 most critical projects for your department for the next two years?

- *City Landfill re-permitting.
- *ATRIP2 – US 84 at John D. Odom.
- *Honeysuckle Road.
- *Storm Basin Study/Hydrological Analysis.
- *Dothan City Center and associated road projects/streetscapes.
- *AL 605/Brannon Stand Study – AL 52 to US 231.
- *Supporting project initiated by other Departments.
- *Continued investment in ITS (Intelligent Transportation Systems).

5. With regard to these critical projects, what resources do you anticipate needing that do not already exist within your normal operating budget?

- *Funding allocations (much of what is listed above is not on the CIP funded list.)
- *Traffic Engineering staff—an additional signal tech is needed.
- *Traffic Management Center operator—current facility is equipped but not staffed.
- *Increased budget for solid waste removal, until the City's landfill is operational.
- *Environmental Services fleet upgrades accelerated to average replacement 5-7 years.

6. Who are the major external partners important to the accomplishment of your department's critical projects?

ALDOT, ADEM/EPA, consultants and contractors. Public buy-in also is an essential component as most projects involve some level of temporary disturbance to the residents affected.

7. For the City as a whole, what do you believe to be the top-2 most critical investments (of time, money, and other resources) for the next two years?

- *Continual infrastructure improvements
- *Solid waste/trash services available to the public at reasonable costs.
- *Planning and readiness for the fast-moving future impact of electric vehicles.

APPENDIX C
Dothan City Commission
2022-24 Strategic Plan Outcomes Assessment To-Date

Compiled by Department Heads and City Manager Kevin Cowper

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.*

- Police and Firefighter-Paramedic pay increased to remain competitive in the market.
- Merit increases and COLA provided to all eligible employees.
- Leadership development training (Learn, Love, Lead) successfully completed for 200+ employees.

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.*

- The Personnel Board approved pay increases for officers and dispatchers on March 14, 2022.
- The number of sworn officers was increased from 171 to 191 with a plan to reach 211 sworn officers by 2026.
- The annual number of new replacement marked police vehicles was increased to 25 with an eight-year replacement program. Additional marked vehicles were purchased for new positions.
- Technology (Integrated Ballistic Identification System-IBIS, Automate License Plate Reader Cameras) and equipment (tasers, radio consoles) investments were made. WASP helicopter was relocated to Dothan Regional Airport providing more efficient air support. ShotSpotter gunfire detection system is under development.
- The signature bond program was updated, and new bonding protocols were implemented.
- Training opportunities at WPSC continue to expand and provide opportunities that would otherwise not be available.
- A regional police academy will begin operating at the WPSC in 2023.

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.*

- A design contract with Seay Seay & Litchfield was approved, and design is 95% complete.
- Bids are planned to be opened March 21, 2023, with an 18-24 month construction timeline.
- A staffing increase was authorized to man the additional station (Station 10).
- Equipment (pumper truck) is on order.

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.*

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Team has been strategically targeting areas of the city and working with owners to get properties cleaned up and remove unsafe structures, junk cars, and tires.
- Love Your Neighborhood Clean-ups continued in the different Commission districts.
- A program outline to address residential rental property building code violations under the Alabama Uniform Residential and Tenant Act has been developed.
- A vacant/abandoned building ordinance has been drafted.
- Weed abatement has been successfully transitioned to private contractors.
- The Moody Hospital housing redevelopment is in progress.
- Affordable work-force housing program under development with Burdeshaw Street serving as pilot project.
- A new practice was implemented for eviction related trash pick-up. Ordinance changes are forthcoming.
- A short-term rental ordinance was adopted, and implementation has begun.
- Neighborhood infrastructure upgrades are being made in conjunction with the Neighborhood Clean-up program - sidewalks, lighting, addressing, street signs, pavement markings, fire hydrant painting, smoke alarms.
- Work is continuing to upgrade neighborhood infrastructure including:
 - Red-water and sewer line replacements
 - Underground residential electric service
 - Stormwater drainage
 - Streets resurfacing

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.*

- A contract for the Farm Center was executed with Houston County.
 - The contract closing date was subsequently extended to May 9, 2023.
- Several downtown properties were acquired:
 - DDRA purchased/demolished 427 East Main (car wash).
 - DDRA purchased 106 Columbia Highway.
 - DDRA was donated 313 N Foster St.
 - City purchased the property between the Vice Building and fuel station on N. Cherry Street.
- Grandview Elementary was leased to Izell Reese for 5 years for use as a community resource center and a flag football field is under construction with grants from NFL and Visit Dothan.

- Coordinating with The Harbor to possibly occupy the Old DCS Central Office buildings on Dusy Street.
- The USAF has fully released the Air National Guard property on Westgate Pkwy back to the City of Dothan.

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.*

- The HudsonAlpha Wiregrass agreement was executed, and operations have commenced.
- Contracts with the Executive Architect were approved.
- Contracts for the Opera House and Events Plaza were approved.
- Schematic design is 100% complete for Events Plaza and 100% complete for Opera House.
- Programming has begun for the new City Hall and Wiregrass Innovation Center.
- The Market Assessment is 75% complete.
- The Museum Needs assessment is complete.
- The Traffic Study is in the final draft stage.
- A Public Building Authority has been created.
- A plan to issue a Request for Proposals for a boutique hotel once the Market Assessment is complete is underway.
- Highway 84E Corridor Overlay district regulations approved.
- Plans are underway to generate corridor redevelopment on N. Oates St. from Powell St. to U.S. 431.

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.*

- Meetings/communications with DCS Superintendent are ongoing with topics including:
 - School security- including SRO program.
 - After school program.
 - Feeding program (program was successfully transition January 2023).
 - Pre-K program expansion.
 - Full-Service Community School initiative.
 - School facility needs.
 - School bus safety.

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.)*
- City Manager weekly updates provided to summarize information.
 - Communication facilitated with partner agencies including Dothan City Schools, Chamber of Commerce, Wiregrass Foundation and HudsonAlpha Wiregrass.
 - Annual updates provided by partner agencies.
 - Annual reports were provided for various activities including Wiregrass Public Safety Center, Waterworld and Ice-Skating Rink.
 - The City of Dothan App was successfully launched.
 - Continued with publication of the Commissioners' Weekly newsletter and the monthly employee newsletter.
 - Continued to enhance department reports and information available via the bi-weekly Commission update accessed on OneDrive.



Appendix D
City of Dothan Strategic Planning Workshop
February 10-11, 2023
Agenda Day 1—Friday 2/10—Wiregrass Public Safety Center

7:45 -- 8:30	Arrival and Breakfast Welcome to the Wiregrass Public Safety Center	Jason Wright WPSC Executive Coordinator
8:30 -- 8:45	Invocation and Welcome	Mayor Mark Saliba
8:45 -- 9:00	Strategic Planning 2023 * Introduction to the Retreat * Progress Update on 2022 Commission Commitments	Barbara Alford
9:00 -- 9:45	2022 Projects Lightning Round	Elected Officials and Dept. Heads
10:00 -- 10:15 Barbara	Introduction to <i>Our Time</i> Conversations & Commission Priorities for 2023	
10:15 -- 10:30	<i>Stretch Break</i>	
10:30 -- 11:30	Conversation 1--Hudson-Alpha Expectations	Dean Mitchell & Dr. Neil Lamb <i>Hudson-Alpha</i>
11:30 -- 12:15	Conversation 2--City Center Related Issues (Adjacent Neighborhoods, 84E, Homeless Population)	Commission
12:15 -- 1:00	<i>LUNCH</i>	
1:00 -- 2:30	Conversation 3--Federal Opportunities	Martha Roby <i>Bradley</i>
2:30 -- 3:30	Conversation 4--Dothan City Schools Opportunities	Dr. Dennis Coe <i>Dothan City Schools</i>
3:30 -- 3:45	<i>Stretch Break</i>	
3:45 -- 4:45	Conversation 5--Violence, Crime, and Dothan's Youth	Commission
4:45 -- 5:00	Overview of Day-2	Dr. Alford



**City of Dothan Strategic Planning Update
February 10-11, 2023
Agenda Day 2—Saturday, 2/11—Wiregrass Public Safety Center**

8:00 -- 8:30	Arrival and Breakfast	
8:30 -- 8:45	Welcome Comments from Commissioners; City Manager	Mayor Mark Saliba
8:45 -- 9:15	<i>Our Time</i> Strategic Updates: Current Commitments City Manager Kevin Cowper, Asst. City Manager Randy Morris	Commission
	<i>Our Time</i> Strategic Directions: New Commitments For each major focus area:	
	 Recap the key issue or opportunity	
	 Identify appropriate and effective roles for City government	
	 List and discuss expectations for success	
	 Identify strategies/strategic directions from the Commission	
	 Discuss City resources and essential partners	
	 Determine Commission commitment	
9:15 -- 9:45	Hudson-Alpha	
9:45 -- 10:15	City Center Related Issues	
10:15 -- 10:30	<i>Stretch Break</i>	
10:30 -- 11:10	Federal Opportunities—project prioritization	
11:10 -- 11:40	Dothan City Schools	
11:40 -- 12:30	<i>LUNCH</i>	
12:30 -- 1:00	Violence, Crime and Dothan’s Youth	
1:00 -- 1:30	Open Conversation: Time-critical Topics Not Yet Covered	
1:30 -- 2:00	<i>Conversation 6</i> —360-degree Communication	
2:00 -- 2:30	Summary Comments	Mayor, Commissioners, and City Manager

Appreciation to Lisa Matheny and Shirley Cosby for coordination and support.

APPENDIX E
BACKGROUND RESEARCH for 2023 CONVERSATIONS

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Reimagining Public Safety: A Toolkit for Cities and Towns. National League of Cities. 2023.

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Cardiff Model Toolkit. Mercer Kollar, L.M., Sumner, S.A., Jacoby, S.F., & Ridgeway, G. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. 2018.

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/cardiffmodel/cardiff-toolkit508.pdf>

Violence Prevention: Risk and Protective Factors. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, March 2020.

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html>

Juvenile Justice Statistics: National Report Series Fact Sheet. U.S. Department of Justice. August 2022.

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