

**City of Mount Vernon  
Mayor and Council Retreat  
Record of Retreat  
April 29, 2009**

The Retreat began at 6:00 p.m. after a 5:00 p.m. dinner.

Present: Mayor Norris, Councilmembers Cheney, Combs, Fiedler, Lindquist, McMullen, Ragan, and Urban.

Others present: Facilitator Dr. Charles Sandifer

1. Following dinner Dr. Sandifer provided a PowerPoint presentation on Supportive Communication. This portion lasted approximately one hour.
2. Next, Dr. Sandifer facilitated ensuing exercises that followed the attached Retreat Agenda. There was consensus that the Strategic Plan existing goals were still appropriate and considerable discussion ensued about the tasks under each goal. There were some minor changes in wording to the revised and updated Strategic Plan (see attached). The Council agreed they need to do an annual review.
3. Dr. Sandifer was excused at 9:00 P.M. and the Council and Mayor continued to meet until 10:00 P.M.

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Submitted by  
Alicia D. Huschka, Finance Director

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Approved by  
Bud Norris, Mayor

**Retreat Agenda  
Mount Vernon City Council  
2009 Strategic Plan Review**

When: April 29, 2009

Timing: 3-3 ½ hours

**Retreat Purposes:**

- **Enhance the working effectiveness between Council Members, the Mayor’s Office and staff**
- **Review and update the Strategic Plan**

6:00-7:00

I. Supportive Communication in the City Council—Presented by and discussion led by Chick Sandifer

- What is the nature of Supportive vs. Defensive Communication
- What is the impact of Defensive Communication
- What are examples of Supportiveness in our working together?
- What are examples of Defensiveness in our working together?
- What can be done differently?—Group and individual action planning

7:00-7:30

II. Appraisal and Discussion of progress from the 2008 Strategic Plan

- Council and Mayor will mark wall charts and discuss results
- Wall charts will be prepared as follows:

Strategic Plan Item	% Completed	How important is it to continue this item through 2009? (5=very important)
<b>Goal I—Economic Expansion and Development</b>	0----25-----50----75----100	1   2   3   4   5

7:30-8:15

III. Considering events and the current situation, what is missing from the plan **that is Genuinely Critical?**

What needs to be moth-balled (meaning, what needs to be suspended)?  
Council vote on Criticality—

Ground rules—2/3 votes required to achieve status of “Critical”

Process--each council member will get 1/3 the number of votes for the number of new critical ideas presented (e.g. if there are 9 ideas, each council member will get three votes; if there are 6 ideas, each council member will get 2 votes). If nothing receives a 2/3 vote it is not deemed to be critical.

8:15-8:55

IV. What actions/assignments need to be made at this time to move forward?

- Quick buy off on continuing actions on old plan items except for suspended items.
- Actions, assignments on critical new issues.
- Actions, assignments on notes and records from this session.

8:55-9:00

V. When/How do we complete the next strategic review?

**Strategic Plan Update  
City Council and Mayor Retreat  
April 29, 2009**

- **Update of Strategic Plan from February 20, 2008 Council Retreat**
- **Moderator, Chick Sandifer**
  
- **Retreat Purposes:**
  - **Enhance the working effectiveness between Council Members, the Mayor's Office and staff**
  - **Review and update the Strategic Plan**

**Revised Goals based on Council agreement**

<b>GOAL I</b>	<b>Economic Expansion and Development</b>
<b>GOAL II</b>	<b>Infrastructure/Transportation</b>
<b>GOAL III</b>	<b>Fiscal Responsibility</b>
<b>GOAL IV</b>	<b>Governmental Relations (revised)</b>
<b>GOAL V</b>	<b>Quality of Life</b>
<b>GOAL VI</b>	<b>Flood Protection (new)</b>

## Strategic Plan Update

### GOAL I Economic Expansion and Development

1. Expand UGA for commercial/industrial property.
2. Include Riverbend in UGA.
3. Update/Implement Overall Economic Development Plan.
4. Coordinate with Economic Development Association of Skagit County.
5. Develop a current marketing brochure, advertising plan, and stimulus package for the City of Mount Vernon.
6. Review Land use ordinances/zoning codes to remove roadblocks to development.
7. Develop a plan to redevelop current public works site, creating additional commercial inventory.
8. Raise the awareness level of economic development efforts through the City and business community.
9. Create a competitive tax base for the City of Mount Vernon.
10. Promote river corridor development, i.e., trails/hospitality facilities.
11. Complete inventory of Downtown Historical assets. ~~(new)~~ **(Done)**
12. Downtown Revitalization—preserve and redevelop downtown, promenade, parking. (new)
13. Attract more business to the city. (new)
14. **City Council, with support staff, examine options for Comprehensive Plan (new, 4/2009)**

### GOAL II Infrastructure/Transportation

1. Commit to a parking facility.
2. Strengthen fiber optics network/consortium. (revised)
3. Identify emergency medical service options.
4. Assist in a County library solution.
5. Obtain an agreement to build Hickox Road exchange.
6. **Continue to promote I-5 widening. Support increased capacity of I-5 (4/09)**
7. Design Roosevelt Street extension/frontage. (revised)
8. Construct LaVenture/Anderson Roadway.
9. Design South Mount Vernon regional drainage system.
10. **Pursue widening of I-5 underpass at College Way (4/09)**

## Strategic Plan Update

### **GOAL III Fiscal Responsibility**

1. **Review Annual review of property tax levy rate to be competitive with other cities (10 year project).**
2. Find ways to partner with external entities in order to eliminate duplication of expenses.
3. Review development costs/fees to determine if there is an additional revenue stream **– ongoing on an accelerated regular basis.**
4. Review impact fees—fire, parks, transportation and set rates **– ongoing on an accelerated regular basis.**
5. Develop a purchasing program to reduce costs in all departments.
6. Annual report at committee of Master Plans by Mayor and Department Heads with City Council. (new) **- More updates with Department Heads**

### **GOAL IV Governmental Relations (replaces former goal)**

1. Continue to improve county/city and other agencies relationships. (new)
2. Timely Labor Negotiations. (new)

## Strategic Plan Update

### GOAL V Quality of Life

- **PUBLIC SAFETY**

1. **Establish Implement** Officer/neighborhood program to develop a person-to-person relationship in our community. (new)
2. Complete the Fire Department 5-year Master Plan with annual updates.
3. Pursue improved staffing of fire response including but not limited to additional firefighters, volunteer staff, and medical transport. (new)
4. Fill the Patrol Division.
5. Explore fire authority possibilities by partnership with other agencies to provide services.
6. Provide Ambulance services to citizens of Mount Vernon.
7. Partnerships for ALS Transport. (new)
8. Go to Fire based EMS. (new)

- **PARKS AND RECREATION**

1. Identify and expand the trail system.
2. Complete the 18th Street Park
3. Plan and design Little Mountain park trailhead.
4. Purchase added activity fields.
5. Explore added indoor park facilities.
6. Construct public dock/river access system.
7. Locate and develop historical museum.
8. Partnerships for Recreational Services. (new)

- **STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS**

1. Establish strong Neighborhoods
2. City Clean-up. (new)
3. Greater variety of residential lot sizes. (new)

### GOAL VI Flood Protection (new)

1. Acquire funding for flood protection. (new)

## Strategic Plan Update

### Next Steps

- **Review updated and revised Goals and Strategies for the six year Strategic Plan**
- **Add detail to new Goals and Strategies as necessary**
- **Personal actions to accomplish Goals**
- **Set timeframe for annual review of Strategic Plan (check step)**

### Working Effectiveness agreements

- **Hold an annual Retreat to review strategic plan**
- **Jana, Esco, Alicia will address the concept of the two-reading rule in committee meetings.**
- **As appropriate, use Mayor pro-tem when there is an agenda vs. cancelling the City Council Meeting.**
- **Mayor will send agendas of other agency meetings to City Council members.**
- **Council members will seek Council approval when representing Council to another agency.**
- **All will try to live up to “Heads up” to Council Members on “Up-Coming” issues.**

## Strategic Plan Update

### Action Plans (on New Strategies adopted by Council)

<b>Who</b>	<b>Does What</b>	<b>When</b>
Fire Chief, Mayor, Council	Improve staffing for Fire Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Based EMS</li> <li>• Mid-year hiring of a FF (1 Apr, 08)</li> <li>• Set as priority in 2009 budget</li> <li>• Volunteer overnight program</li> </ul>	2008
Mayor, Council	Attract Business	2008
Mayor CED	Downtown Revitalization	2008+
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to engage stakeholders, including Chamber and merchants.</li> </ul>	2008+
CED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract businesses to build core</li> </ul>	2008
CED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish EPF plan to strategically place jail</li> </ul>	2008
CED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical Inventory</li> </ul>	2009
CED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish partnerships for concept and construction, then execute.</li> </ul>	2010
CED PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find funding for parking facility and execute</li> <li>• Always work toward securing Flood Protection</li> </ul>	2010 On-going
City, County	Expand UGA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hickox South</li> <li>• Riverbend</li> <li>• Infill</li> <li>• Commercial Land Allotment</li> </ul>	2008
Parks, City Works Program, Enforcement	City Clean-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Junk Cars</li> <li>• Graffiti</li> <li>• Over occupancy--Lawn Parking</li> </ul>	2008
Police	Establish Officer Neighborhood Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly Neighborhood meetings</li> <li>• Council member attendance</li> <li>• Block Watch</li> <li>• Improve Communication</li> </ul>	2008
ED, Mayor	Downtown Historical Assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop recognition program with non-profits like Downtown Business Association</li> <li>• Historical Tour of Downtown</li> <li>• Tie to Museum</li> </ul>	2010
ED, Dev. Community	Greater variety of Residential lot sizes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development continues to communicate to developers</li> </ul>	On-going