Tipp City Council Retreat Held Friday, February 19, 2016

Tipp City Planning Session

Participants

Katelyn Berbach (Council)	John Kessler (Council)	Tim Eggleston (City Manager)	Eric Mack (Municipal Services)
Joseph Gibson (Council President)	Tom Merritt (Council)	Chris Graham (Detective)	Brad Vath (Assistant City Manager)
Patrick Hale (Mayor)	Matt Owen (Council)	John Green (Finance Director)	
Carrie Kellar-Arblaster (Council)	Janice Bates (Clerk of Council)	Steve Kessler (Fire Chief)	

Mission

- The previous strategic plan articulated a vision and mission statement which may continue to be used.
  - Vision Statement: To be nationally recognized as one of the best small towns in America.
  - Mission Statement: To provide an environment that nurtures a high quality of life and a solid basis for economic growth for residents and those who do business within the community. This commitment is based on the respect of our past, the safe-guarding of our heritage and traditions, and through creative, innovative leadership in managing future growth while enhancing the community.
    - The Mission Statement should be considered when establishing goals to ensure alignment, and will be considered in the comprehensive master plan.
    - Some departments within the City have their own mission statements, which may rely upon the Ohio Revised Code or national codes for operation. For example, the Fire Department relies upon national principles such as: the department is committed to serving the City with the highest level of life and property protection.

Expectations of the Council for the Planning Retreat

- To set the direction for the City for the next two years and to lay the ground work for years beyond.
- To assess progress from two to four years ago.
- To use the retreat as an opportunity for two-way communication with staff.
- To provide policy guidance regarding the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Pre-retreat Survey Results

Prior to the retreat, a survey was distributed to capture Council and Staff perspectives to expedite the retreat. Both the Council members and the Staff identified the following priority topics. During the retreat, Council and Staff discussed these priority topics and articulated goals to address them. They are listed below (not in any priority order).

- Infrastructure and utilities
- Economic and Business Development
- Beautification
- Communications
- Public Safety
- Fiscal Stability

The next step after finalizing this document will be for Staff to develop strategies to address the goals and then share the completed strategic plan with Council. In this way, Council will have established goals as policy guidance, while Staff will develop strategies that operationalize the goals.

Goal Session to set the Direction for the City

I. Topic: Infrastructure and Utilities

Background: To accomplish the City's mission to provide a high quality of life and a solid basis for economic growth for residents and businesses, Tipp City will need to continue to invest in its infrastructure. The City has four more years to go on its 10 year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). A CIP allows for a systematic evaluation of all potential capital projects at the same time, and provides the ability to stabilize debt and consolidate projects to reduce borrowing costs. Other than annual paving, the City has completed all of its major projects for streets in the 10 year plan; reconstruction projects were front-loaded and are now being paid down. The current CIP enables the City to schedule and implement infrastructure improvements. Improvement needs will continue beyond 2020 when the current CIP will end. It is important to communicate the CIP progress to citizens. Setting up a citizen's advisory committee will be necessary in the short to intermediate-term to inform citizens and obtain support for the next capital improvement levy process.

Goals:

1) Continue current infrastructure investments according to the Capital Improvement Plan.
    - Use modelling to inform the cost to the community vs. the return on investment, including addressing the cost recovery period.

2) Renew the 0.5% levy tax for capital improvement in four years.

Background: Adequate water, sewer and electric capacity are necessary for livability and to market Tipp City development sites. Over the next five years, $5.5 million will be invested to upgrade electric substations. Continual investment is required to enhance water and sewer capacity as well. Some areas within the City still have the minimum 4 inch water lines and sewer mains, which can create flow problems depending on use and "upstream" larger capacity requirements. This situation creates capacity challenges for future commercial and industrial development. Staff members need to create an updated model for water usage that can relate the City's water capacity with various industries' water flow requirements. That way, industry recruitment strategies can be aligned to sites within the City that can accommodate water flow needs.

Goal:

3) Create a 10-15 year fiscally constrained plan for water, sewer, storm water, and electric utilities to correct existing deficiencies and position the community for future growth. Continue to use GIS to map high priority targeted areas for utility replacements and upgrades. To date, the City has mapped most of the clay and 4 inch lines.

II. Topic: Economic and Business Development

Background: Tipp City has three local organizations that lead economic and business development for the City—the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Tipp City Partnership, and the City of Tipp City. The Chamber focuses its expertise on small and medium sized companies, primarily those outside the downtown. The Downtown Partnership focuses on downtown businesses, which are primarily service establishments. The City focuses on major industry and commercial employers. Each of these organizations shares information with the other to optimize their respective specializations and to avoid duplication of services. Council members discussed this system and agreed (all but one Council member) that it is a best practice that works, and should be continued as is. At the same time, the City can work as a partner with one or both of the other economic development organizations to meet businesses' needs. One suggestion is to explore having a City Council member serve on the Chamber Board. Another suggestion is to work with the Chamber to create means for businesses to inform the City and Chamber about their needs and challenges.

Goal:

4) Conduct small and medium-size business round table discussions two times per year to provide opportunities for businesses to describe their needs and work with the City and

Chamber to identify solutions. City Staff should report back their findings to the Council two times a year.

Background: A key strategy to sustaining government services provision while mitigating the amount of taxes that must be generated from households is to grow and diversify the economy. Tipp City's long-term economic growth depends on development on the west side of the City.

Goal:

5) Develop a long-term plan for economic development on the west side of Tipp City, including recommendations from Staff on land acquisition guidelines. Such a plan has long-term implications for infrastructure investments (e.g., infrastructure that is laid under the Interstate, sewer infrastructure needs, a water tower, and the extension of Abbot Parkway toward Peters Road to create access).

III. Topic: Beautification

Background: As mentioned in the 2014 Tipp City Strategic Plan, there has been a distinct decrease in maintenance of the I-75 right of way by the Ohio Department of Transportation over the last decade. Therefore, the City of Tipp City had made the decision in 2014 to improve this most important entrance to the City, and Council prioritized the completion of this beautification project in 2016. The Council also discussed the option of instituting property maintenance codes, but decided that such codes are not appropriate for Tipp City. The Council and Staff also discussed Civic Signs, which were popular in 1940s and 1950s and one still sits near the Burger King parking lot and presents the old logo. Discussion of next steps regarding such outdated signs will occur in March 2016.

Goal:

6) In the near term, complete the beautification project of I-75 at Exit 68 for both of the on and off ramps.

IV. Topic: Communications

Background: Tipp City has made communications a strategic priority with the intent of increasing public awareness of the policies and programs of the City and generating enhanced engagement of constituents and partners. City websites are important to this communications strategy. Cities can use websites not just as a tool for broadcasting information, but as a space for interaction, feedback, and resident participation. Another important communications and

engagement strategy is to ramp up the relationship with the School District and Township to identify opportunities for shared services and other collaborative activities.

Goals:

7) Update the website within two years (the sooner, the better), making it more user friendly and including state-of-the-art features.

8) Build on the existing joint meetings of the City, the Tipp City Exempted Village School District, and the Township to determine interest in a collaborative partnership, working toward aligning efforts where there is shared interest and addressing challenges together.

V. Topic: Public Safety

Background: "Unintentional drug overdoses caused the deaths of 2,482 Ohio residents in 2014 based on preliminary data. This is the highest number of deaths on record from drug overdose and reflects a 17.6 percent increase compared to 2013 when there were 2,110 drug overdose deaths."[1] (For a 15 year trend, see the line chart below.) Furthermore, Ohio has one of the highest death rates from unintentional drug overdose among all 50 states, and its increase from 2013 to 2014 is statistically significant (see map below). On top of this, according to a leading local public safety officer, "If you put a pin on a map at the intersection of I-70/75 and draw a 100 mile circle, this area is an epicenter for heroin use." Taking all of this together, Tipp City is in a difficult location. While a lack of services to rehabilitate drug users is an issue, the Council determined that the first priority is to address public safety staffing needs. To protect and preserve its high quality of life, the Council is considering further investment into public safety staff, because the City is understaffed for this problem. Tipp City is the only Department in Miami County to have only one detective. Staff estimates that it will take 6 to 8 months until the budget and hiring processes are completed to add an additional detective.

Goal:

9) Hire a new detective in the short-term so that sufficient personnel are engaged in opioid overdose law enforcement response. By the end of 2016, the Tipp City Police Department hopes to have specific numbers and geographic locations of unintentional drug overdose patterns for the Council to review.

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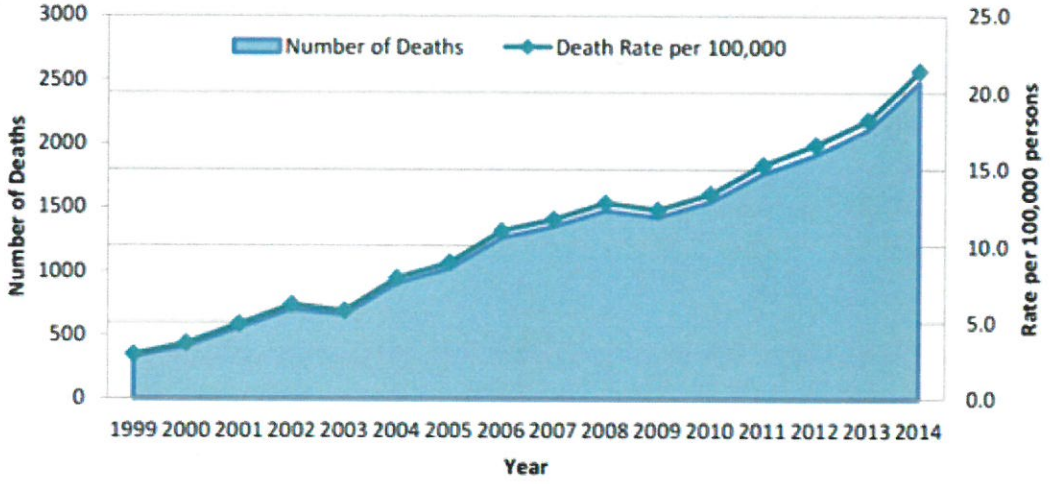
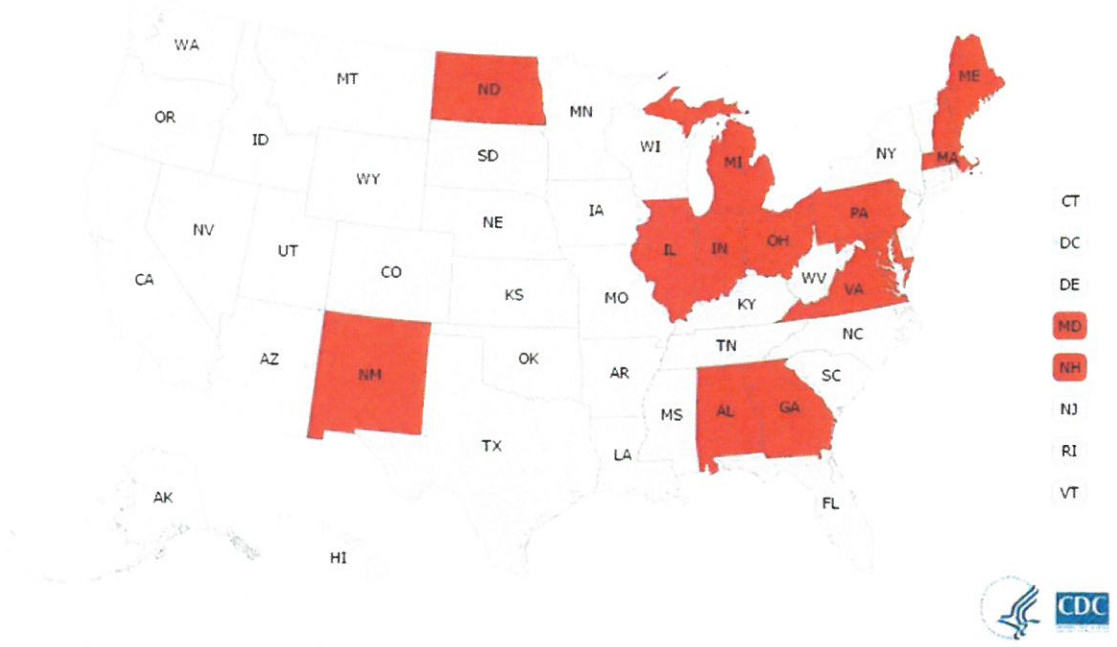
[1] 2014 Ohio Drug Overdose Preliminary Data: General Findings, Ohio Department of Health.

Number of Deaths and Death Rate per 100,000 from Unintentional Drug Overdose



Statistically significant drug overdose death rate increase from 2013 to 2014, US states



Statistically significant increase

Statistically significant increase from 2013 to 2014

No

Yes

Background: In past years, cities across the U.S. had sizable numbers of volunteers supporting the full-time fire/EMS staff. But there is a nationwide problem, according to Bernie Ingles, president of the Ohio Fire Chiefs Association. Some people estimate that there has been a drop in the number of volunteer firefighters in the U.S. from 300,000 to 50,000. There is also a nationwide shortage of part-time fire fighters and turnover rates can be very high. Several fire chiefs say that their part-time firefighters work at two or three stations and this adds to the complexity of staffing fire stations.

Goal: City Staff members will develop recommendations/options regarding staffing the Fire Department, which is forecasted to face a major staffing challenge within five years if the status quo is maintained.

VI. Topic: Fiscal Stability

Background: In their pre-retreat survey responses, both the Council and City Staff members identified fiscal stability as an essential goal to enable them to meet the City's mission—to provide an environment that nurtures a high quality of life and a solid basis for economic growth. Each of the fiscal issues listed in survey responses has already been addressed in previous goals presented in this planning summary including:

- Fiscal responsibility in the annual Operating budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- Developing new revenue streams (e.g., economic development)
- Fiscally stable electric, water, and sanitary sewer
- Securing the necessary CIP funding for future capital improvement needs beyond 2020
- Maintaining the Fire Department and current EMS structure in a fiscally responsible way

Other Topic Discussed, which was determined to be an Operations Issue and not a Strategic Issue

Community Swimming Pool

Background: A Council Member asked whether the City should continue to invest in the community swimming pool. It has not been profitable, however, it does improve quality of life for citizens. Staff members were asked whether having a recreational director or keeping the pool open past the summer months would contribute cost savings or increased revenues. Staff indicated that neither of these strategies results in savings or increased revenues and that it is very difficult in any community to break even on a community swimming pool. Staff will do what they can to obtain more than one bid for the management of the pool so that there is competition.