

2017 Strategic Plan Review

April 2019

Goals/Strategies/Objectives	
Goal A: Strengthen Financial Stability	
<i>Strategy 1(a): Maintain a Balanced Budget</i>	
<u>Objectives</u>	Comments/Status
Ensure ongoing revenues support ongoing costs.	The City continues to refine its financial reporting and planning tools in order to ensure this objective is met. Refinements to the Five Year Forecast and a more robust annual financial and budgeting annual cycle contributes to this objective. Efforts continue to address Landscape & Lighting Assessment District issues as this an important funding source for services. More timely completion of the annual audit also assists in regard, with the 2017/18 audit having been completed prior to December 31 st . A waste water fund review and analysis is also now underway.
Ensure one-time revenues fund one-time expenditures.	One-time revenues continue to be identified as part of the annual budget process and applied to one-time costs including topping up reserves and funding capital and other needs. Additional contributions have been made to the City's IRS Section 115 Pension Trust and to the OPEB Trust.
Restructure debt where possible to reduce near term debt payments.	The retained a financial adviser in 2019 and that firm is currently evaluating refinance opportunities.
Continue a formal volunteer program to help various departments.	The Police Department makes good use of volunteers in a variety of roles. A cadre of Police volunteers is also now working in support of our voluntary code compliance efforts to enhance the community. Volunteers were utilized in the recent upgrades at the Ohlone and Foxboro Community Centers. In Parks & Recreation volunteers support a variety of events and activities.

Consider new ways to deliver municipal services in more cost-effective ways.	The City looks for opportunities on an on-going basis. In February, 2019, the City recommenced cable broadcast of Council meeting through the County.
Consider service-sharing with other communities when mutually beneficial.	The CAD/RMS contract with Pinole and San Pablo, the contract with the County for Cable, and updated three party BART/WestCAT/City contract for operation of the Hercules Transit Center are on-going efforts of this nature. The wastewater plant is operated jointly with Pinole. The City also participates with 20 other agencies in the Clean Water Program for the City's storm water permit.
<i>Strategy 1(b): Balance the Budget and Increase Revenues</i>	
<u>Objectives</u>	
Review all Parks and Recreation fees before mid-year budget review.	A review and restricting of key program fees in Parks & Rec was completed in 2018. Possible fee adjustments will be considered as part of 2019/20 budget process.
Consider cost effectiveness of increasing code enforcement activities.	The City three-tier code compliance program which seeks voluntary compliance initially, followed by use of Administrative Citations, and then for the most egregious cases, the Nuisance Abatement Process, is operating. The roll out has been effective, though perhaps not as active as possible. All elements of the program are now in place and operating, with additional training and some fine-tuning needed.
Consider annual fee review.	A review of fees will be considered in conjunction with the annual budget process.
Partner with other entities when beneficial for grant and cost-sharing opportunities.	The most high profile example of partnership is the upgrade and expansion of the joint Pinole/Hercules Wastewater Plant now under construction. Other examples have been discussed under other Objectives.
Take advantage of telecommunication and broadband opportunities.	In August 2017, the City Council approved a program which will result in the City installing fiber when opportunities arise when utility work is taking place in City Streets. The City Council also allocated funding to allow these opportunistic installation of fiber to take place and has installed dark fiber down the extension of John Muir Parkway.
Push County and State elected officials to increase Hercules's share of each dollar of property taxes that is collected in Hercules.	The City continues to look for opportunities to address achieve this goal. The most likely opportunities to do so seemingly lie with efforts that might occur at the State-level.

Goal B: Continue to Provide Excellent Police Services to the Community*Strategy 1(a): Protect Life and Property*

<u>Objectives</u>	Comments/Status
Maintain core services, including police patrols and traffic enforcement.	The City was able to continue funding for the two additional Police Officers which were state granted for two fiscal years. The City Council also added one Police Officer as part of the 2018/19 budget adoption process. The Council approved overfill program, which allows for up to two additional positions to be filled to minimize the impact from retirements and other turnover to allow for the recruitment and training of new Police Officers, continues to be operative. A Traffic Enforcement assignment has been reinstated as of FY 2018/19.
Continue to utilize community policing strategies.	The Police Department continues to utilize a community oriented approach to policing. Examples include our School Resource Officer program, the Citizen's Police Academy, Neighborhood and Business Watch, and the use of volunteers in Policing and the expansion of a role of Police volunteers in code compliance which is also a crime prevention tools.

Maintain the special response team and school resource officers	The Special Response Team continues to be fully functional. School District funding in support of the School Resource Officer program may be impacted by School District budget issues, and the City Council and staff actively engage in efforts to preserve this funding.
Coordinate disaster preparedness with local police, fire, emergency medical services and the County and State office of emergency services	The Police Department takes the lead in the City's Emergency Operations efforts. A contract planner has commenced the update of the Safety Element of the General Plan and the Hazard Mitigation Plan in coordination with police, fire, and other agencies
Utilize Reserve Police Officers when feasible to keep costs under control	Reserve Officers continue to be a tremendous asset to our Police Department.
Complete a succession plan to deal with anticipated future retirements	Chief Imboden started with the City in 2018, and he has embarked on a review of the Department's succession planning efforts.
Complete an equipment replacement plan with a rationale, schedule and budget	While equipment replacement is on-going and considered as part of the annual budget process each year, a more formalized replacement plan still needs to be developed.

Seek federal, state and other funding to enhance police department funding for staff and equipment.	Staff actively scans for grant and other funding opportunities. A key funding source for equipment is the Asset Forfeiture funding received as result of criminal convictions.
Recruit volunteers to assist office personnel with front counter duties, records processing and data entry.	Volunteers, Reserve Police Officers, and Explorers play key on-going roles in support of Police operations.
Goal C: Enhance Economic Development Efforts	
<i>Strategy 1: Pursue High Priority Economic Development Initiatives</i>	
<u>Objectives</u>	Comments/Status
Develop and implement economic development strategies.	The City's current economic development efforts are primarily development site driven which will result in new retail space, the City's first hotel, and sales tax and in-lieu fee generating auto service park and self-storage facility. The City also participates in and support the soon to be launched Northern Waterfront Initiative being led by the County.
Consider whether the City's fee structure or permitting process might be impediments to new businesses opening in Hercules.	An update of the City's Traffic Impact Fees has been completed as of March, 2019, which includes reduced fees for certain economic development related uses. A comprehensive review of the City's Zoning Code is a desired future effort.
Recruit qualified volunteer help on a regular and/or ad hoc basis from the City Council, Chamber of Commerce, local business leaders and the community at large.	The City has increased cooperation with the Chamber in regard to a number of special events. Other outreach to volunteers is on a case-by-case basis and occurs infrequently.
Participate in regional economic development efforts that will help Hercules.	The City participates in the some activities of the East Bay Economic Development Alliance and in the Northern Waterfront Initiative.
Focus on high priority sites for new developments.	Moving forward proposed projects on the Safeway, Sycamore Crossing, Bayfront, Willow Avenue, and the Hilltown sites are a high priority. Other possible development sites include the Willow Loop and the Franklin Canyon Golf Course property.
<i>Strategy 2: Create a "Brand" for Hercules and Promote/Market the Brand</i>	
<u>Objectives</u>	
Enhance the entry gateways of City with volunteer landscaping/beautifying projects, public art, and signage.	Efforts are currently focused on the appearance of private developments taking place on key corners. Additionally, the City is currently replacing all street signs.
Promote the waterfront/intermodal transportation center (ITC) Development – A special place that is distinctive of other planned developments and serves as the City's downtown.	The first phase of the Bayfront development is under construction. The second phase is approved and has started construction as of March, 2019. The third phase is scheduled for approval by mid-2019. The Bay Trail West segment has been completed. The City continues to pursue grant funding necessary to construct the rail and station improvements. In addition, a major effort was made to ensure a Hercules friendly updated Capital Corridor Station Stop Policy which was approved in early 2019. The next step to be officially designated a "Candidate Station" under that updated policy which will likely occur in 2019, and which sets the stage for more competitive grant applications.

Work with the City Council, staff and volunteers to develop and implement a brand and marketing strategy in-house.	This objective has not yet been specifically pursued. Reusable bags have been purchased as part of efforts to promote recycling and brand the City. Additionally, a number of special events have been reinstated to further the development of a brand identity including a Chamber Bayfront Run. Unfortunately, the Social Bite will not be continuing, and the Chamber is planning on adding a festival/food truck component to its Bayfront Run. The City participates in these events with a booth. The City has also become more active in its Facebook and NextDoor social media presence with regular postings.
Consider whether the City's fee structure or permitting process might be impediments to new businesses opening in Hercules.	This objective has not yet been specifically pursued, other than the above mentioned traffic impact fee nexus study has been completed. In addition, this is a factor in the City's consideration of proposed increases to Fire Impact Fees promulgated by the Rodeo Hercules Fire District.
<i>Strategy 3: Recruit Businesses that Make Sense for Hercules; Retain and Grow Existing Businesses</i>	
<u>Objectives</u>	
Prioritize and visit potential businesses to recruit to Hercules.	Pending the development of new retail sites listing and to be done in conjunction with the developers of these sites.
Review various plans and ordinances for potential updates, with an eye towards balancing economic development with "new urbanism" planning principals	Undertaken currently on a case-by-case basis as development proposals are received. A comprehensive review has not yet been initiated.
Goal D: Enhance Transportation Access and Options	
<i>Strategy 1: Promote Alternative Forms of Transit</i>	
<u>Objectives</u>	Comments/Status
Leverage the Regional Intermodal Transportation Center (RITC) site control into grant funding for station and related infrastructure.	With grant funding having made the first three phases possible, the City is actively working to identify and apply for grant funding for the utility relocation phase and the rail/station improvement phases of the RITC. Next phase design contracts will be considered later in to 2019 to ensure all components are shovel ready.
Complete the Regional Intermodal Transportation Center.	This remains the major focus for the City with a contract planner having be retained with that person being dedicated to the project.
Look for opportunities to partner with rail for movement of goods.	The City facilitated interim improvements to the existing railroad trestle bridge across Refugio Creek by Union Pacific Railroad with the project completed. The design of the future rail and track improvements will result in enhanced goods movement and will set the stage for even better efficiencies.

Work with Capital Corridor to get a firm commitment for a train stop.	An updated Capital Corridor Station Policy was approved in February 2019. This policy will permit Hercules to be officially designated a "Candidate Station." The City has worked with Capital Corridor to do schedule update to reflect Hercules service, has completed a model run which demonstrates demand, and is working on expanding that model run to forecast out five years. In addition, the City has worked with CCTA and other funding partners on a financing plan which demonstrates opportunities to fund the cost of constructing the improvements as required by Capital Corridor.
Pursue future ferry service.	The City actively engages with the water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA), the ferry operator. A Hercules Ferry stop remains in their long-term business plan. Richmond ferry service, which Hercules supported, has been launched and has been very successful. This bodes well for future service expansions.
Work with WestCAT to expand service.	The interim improvements are under design which will allow for bus service to be commenced at the Waterfront. The City has also engaged with property owner David Cury in regard to expanded use of an alley easement to facilitate these improvements.
Expand City's walkways and bike path via Complete Streets program.	The recently completed Circulation Element update focused on incorporating Complete Street Standards into our circulation objectives. In addition, the City has applied for and received grant funding for a complete streets project along Sycamore to Palm and Willow to improve pedestrian safety and provide a sidewalk to the Hercules Transit Center. Preliminary engineering has also been done for other projects in anticipation of future grant activities. A large segment of the Refugio Creek Trail has been repaved and is substantially complete. Three traffic calming projects are in design – Hercules Avenue, Sycamore Avenue at Civic Drive, and San Pablo at Sycamore.
Provide leadership role in BART's participation to enhance services at Hercules Transit Center.	The City, BART, and WestCAT have entered into a new three party agreement on regard to operation of the Hercules Transit Center. The City recently completed the repair and upgrade to LED of the on-site lighting. BART is working on additional improvements of benefit to the users.
Goal E: Complete the Vision of the City's Development	
<i>Strategy 1: Undertake Updates of General Plan and Zoning Code to Implement the Vision.</i>	
<u>Objectives</u>	Comments/Status
Complete the update of the City's Circulation Element	The update of the Circulation Element of the General Plan was approved by the City Council on February 27, 2018.
Review various plans and ordinances for potential updates.	The City Council has considered ordinances which have addressed paving of front yards, adopted County animal control updates, codified the Zoning Code, and initiated an update of the appeals process and noticing provisions of the zoning code. A possible ordinance on smoking in multi-family developments is also being reviewed.
Revise the City's Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the General Plan and Specific Plans.	This objective has not yet been specifically pursued.

Plan for the resources and funding to update the priority elements of the City's General Plan.	The General Plan update fee should be sufficient to address the updates needed for most elements of the General Plan over time. An update of the Safety Element is underway. In addition, the update of the Traffic Impact Fee Nexus Study was completed with this funding source as it was tied to the implementation of the new Circulation Element.
Revisit the City's sign ordinance and update as needed.	A comprehensive update of the sign ordinance to bring the City into compliance with case law is pending.
Goal F: Provide Outstanding Cultural and Recreational Services to the Community	
<i>Strategy 1: Evaluate Programs for Community Impact and Cost Effectiveness, and Make Recommendations to Improve the Overall Effectiveness of the City's Efforts in Services Managed by the Parks And Recreation Department.</i>	
<u>Objectives</u>	Comments/Status
Work with volunteer organizations to ensure full funding for a 40 hour per week Library.	The City included funding to return the Library to 40 hours in the FY 2017/18 budget. This supplements funding provided by the Friends of the Library and the Library Foundation and these organizations are looking to phase out their support over the next few years.
Work with the County to reinstate 45 hours per week of Library services.	The City reaches out to the County to discuss funding priorities for the Library Budget each spring. Thus far, the County has not made hours reinstatement a priority for funding from their resources. However, the City was able to fund additional hours as part of the FY 2018/19 budget with County cooperation within their current funding and reallocation of resources.
Cooperate with public/private partnerships to enhance City cultural and recreation services.	The Parks & Recreation Department continues to add contract class instructors to meet community needs. Special events are also being done in conjunction with partners like the "May the Fourth Be With You" movie night and with anew Belly Flop with the Cops being introduced this year.
Continue to provide high quality recreation programs that reinforce Hercules' reputation for high quality of life.	Programs and offerings are regularly evaluated to enhance the City's offerings as described above in addition to changes and modifications made to the City's direct offerings.
Continue to work on the current cost recovery objective of being budget neutral to minimize General Fund support.	The Parks & Recreation Department makes the meeting of this objective a high priority.
Annually analyze and report on costs and revenues on a program by program basis.	Included as part of the annual budget each year and reviewed after the close the fiscal year to compare budget to actuals.
Create and implement new ways to fund Parks and Recreation programs, including increasing participation.	Fine-tuning of current offerings and new offerings are developed to meet this objective.
Continue to manage facilities rentals and find ways to increase number of rentals as well as income from rentals.	Facility rentals continue to increases. Enhancements to certain facilities like Ohlone, Foxboro , and the Samara Terrance have made these facilities more marketable. An initial round of chair replacement and table replacement will also ensure the facilities are properly equipped.

Strategy 2: Continue to Look for Ways to Augment City Funding for Parks and Recreation Programs and Initiatives

Objectives

Research federal, state and foundation funding availability under “Health and Wellness” and other programs.

The staff regularly scans the environment for grant opportunities.

Apply for federal, state, and foundation grants as appropriate to support and enhance our parks, open space and recreation programs.

The staff regularly scans the environment for grant opportunities.

Goal G: Invest In and Enhance Maintenance of Public Infrastructure and Facilities

Strategy 1: Re-evaluate and Make Recommendations to Improve the City’s Capital Improvements Programs, Clean Water Programs and all Lighting and Landscaping Assessment Districts

Objectives

Comments/Status

Prioritize the City’s capital improvement program.

The annual budget process includes a five year capital improvement program with the first year funded as part of the budget. The Public Works Department would like to prepare a more comprehensive Five Year CIP and this will be done in future years.

Develop and implement a new code compliance model based on the new administrative citation program.

A three-tier code compliance model has been developed and has been implemented with the required tools and resources now in place.

Secure maintenance and operations funding for all new capital facilities.

Elements of funding for improvements like the new segments of the Bay Trail have been added into the Citywide Landscape & Lighting Assessment District. Options to address these needs are being explored for other projects, including the Bayfront.

Effectively manage day-to-day operations to ensure Hercules keep its reputation as a well-maintained city.

Street sign replacement continues. A major sewer system cleaning and inspection contract has been completed. Red-curb and other street markings will be refreshed in Spring 2019.

Update lighting and landscaping districts annually.

The annual update process will kick off in April.

Consider updating the lighting and landscaping districts to increase funding and level of service.

The City was unsuccessful last year in securing approval for increased assessments in four Zones.

Goal H: Continue to Provide Exemplary Governance and City Administration

Strategy 1: Improve Administrative Processes and Overall of Executive and Administrative Management

Objectives

Comments/Status

Enhance strategic planning and implementation efforts with linkage to the budget.

An annual review and update of the Strategic Plan is part of the annual budget process.

Improve financial, personnel, and administrative functions.

A Class & Compensation Study is nearing completion. An update of the City’s records retention schedule was completed. Additional updates to the City’s records management policies and system are pending. An update of the City’s personnel rules is underway as is an update to the purchasing guidelines.

Ensure all required state and federal financial reports are timely.	The City is keeping current with its federal and state reporting requirements.
Complete financial and operational audits in a timely manner.	The annual audit was completed prior to December 31, 2018.
Provide regular financial reports including mid-year review.	The Finance Department provides the Finance Commission and City Council with quarterly reports including a mid-year review. In addition, the City is annually updating the League of California Cities Financial Diagnostic Tool. The Five Year Forecast is also updated each spring as part of the budget process, and in 2018, the Forecast was also updated at budget adoption time.
Evaluate financial controls and streamline where advisable.	The City Council approved an increase in the City Manager's contracting authority which has greatly streamlined the process to move projects and activities forward. A listing of City Manager approved contracts is being provided regularly. An update of the City's purchasing policies is currently underway.
Evaluate and re-engineer as necessary administrative processes.	This objective cross-over to a number of other objectives where activities related to this objective have already been described.
Evaluate IT systems, especially financial management to determine possible improvements.	A new web site was launched. Improvements needed to recommence cable broadcasts was also completed.
Ensure good inter-departmental communications and collaboration	This is on-going effort. Interdepartmental teams are leading efforts related to the website upgrade, the new code compliance model, and other initiatives.
<i>Strategy 2: Enhance Usage of the City's Finance Commission</i>	
<u>Objectives</u>	
Provide oversight of City tax measures.	The Finance Commission serves as the citizen's oversight board for the City's two local tax measures. The Finance Commission will provide its annual report on the Measures for the 2018 fiscal year to the City Council in April 2019. The City Council also serves as an additional level of oversight on the measures.
Serve as a resource to staff.	The Finance Commission serves as a sounding board for staff and assists in the enhancement of reporting efforts.
Provide training to commissions.	The City Clerk & City Attorney undertake annual training for Commissions, with that having taken place in February, 2019. In addition, a Leadership Coffee was launched in 2018, and the second Leadership Coffee took place in February 2019 with the Mayor and Vice Mayor meeting with the Chair and Vice Chair of each of the Commissions in a joint session to exchange ideas and information.
<i>Strategy 3: Provide and Enhance Exemplary Governance</i>	
<u>Objectives</u>	
Enhance relationships in support of education and schools.	The City has been actively engaged in the effort to preserve School Resource Officers which directly support a safe school environment which contributes to learning and performance.
Encourage and engage in regional collaboration and cooperation.	City active participation in many regional boards and Joint Powers Authorities is a key way this objective is met. A regional freeway camera project for Highways 80 and 4 to enhance community safety which is being implemented is another. In 2018, the City hosted the Contra Costa Mayor's Conference monthly meeting.

Continue to enhance transparency and open government.	The City has resumed cable broadcast of Council meetings. The City also now has a presence of Facebook and NextDoor and posts regularly.
Foster an ethical environment free from conflicts of interest.	The City Council has adopted a Code of Ethics which is reviewed annually and an annual acknowledgment of the policy is required for City Council Members, Commission Members and key staff.
Enhance access to information (sunshine provision).	The City's website is a key vehicle for enhanced access to information; together with our increased social media presence.
Provide a means for employees to report concerns or possible wrong doing (whistle-blowing).	The City maintains a whistleblower hotline through a third party and regularly makes that information available to employees.
Conduct annual review and update of anti-nepotism, anti-cronyism, conflict of interest, and Code of Ethics.	The City Council conducts an annual review of these policies with that having taken place last in January 2019.
Reduce exposure to litigation and claims.	The City has been successful in reducing claims and litigation over the past few years. Efforts to continue this trend include updates to the City's standard form of contracts and the development of specialty contract models, the investment of monies to address key infrastructure issue like the maintenance of trees and the filling of major potholes. However, the more recent period has seen an uptick in claims and possible litigation.