



Strategic Plan 2016-2019

July 2016

Acknowledgements

This plan is a result of the time, effort and community spirit of the Mayor, Aldermen, city administrator, assistant city administrator, and department heads who developed it.

Elected Officials

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Jim Kleinschmidt, Alderman, Ward Two
Paul Racziewicz, Alderman, Ward Two
Mark Becker, Alderman, Ward Three
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Jennifer Gray, Asst. City Administrator*

Department Heads

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Tracy Hansen, Finance
Keith Krumm, Public Safety
Steve Meyer, Public Works
Brian Schaffer, Parks and Recreation

Staff

Sean Quinn, Captain – Police Services
Eric Hall, Captain – Fire Services
Nikke Thole, Rec. Superintendent

Thanks to all. It was a pleasure to work with you and on behalf of Shockey Consulting, I wish you the best of luck as you move into the most important phase of your plan, implementation.

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* Ms. Gray contributed significantly to the plan from its onset through the first work session. She left employment with the city shortly afterwards.

Introduction

The City of Des Peres is a forward thinking organization that seeks to make the most of its financial resources. Des Peres currently enjoys vibrant retail, quality upper-end housing and excellent city services. Amidst ongoing discussions at the state and regional level regarding consolidation of municipal services and changes to sales tax distribution, leaders in Des Peres sought a strategic planning process to plan proactively for the City's future. The resulting strategic plan, Des Peres' first, provides citywide direction developed by elected officials in partnership with city staff. The plan applies for the period beginning July 2016 (when it is anticipated that the Board of Aldermen will adopt the plan) and ending December 2019. It will be used to drive decisions about budget, capital outlay, financial policies and operations. It will also provide valuable direction to staff as they conduct day to day operations and a means for elected officials to monitor progress towards strategic priorities.

Process

The strategic planning process was designed to bring key leaders in the city together to determine what was most important to them. The process began with a questionnaire to prepare for the first workshop. The questionnaire, included as Appendix A, gathered input on key issues and the context for planning including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing Des Peres. A total of nineteen surveys were completed as follows: staff (11), appointed officials (4) and elected officials (4).

The first of three work sessions was held on May 16th and included department heads, key staff and elected officials. At the work session, survey results were presented, the group completed several exercises and all participated in facilitated discussion designed to define the strategic plan's framework components and establish priorities. Results of the work session included vision concepts, value and organizational mission development, and early thinking regarding strategic priorities. Notes from the first work session, including survey results, can be found in Appendix B.

Next, a follow up survey was conducted with elected officials to rank the priorities identified in the work session. High priority items were assigned to year one, medium priorities to year two and low priorities to year three of the strategic plan. A final option of "don't do it at all" was also provided for each priority but did not result in the exclusion of any priorities from further consideration.

The list of ranked priorities was used as the basis for a staff work session on June 7. The purpose of the work session with staff was to review draft versions of key strategic framework elements (vision, mission, values and strategies) and to develop action items for the priorities identified by elected officials. The result of the staff work session was a draft action plan and strategic framework.

A final work session was held with elected officials, department heads and the city administrator on June 20 to review the draft action plan and strategic framework and address any remaining questions or concerns. The result of the meeting was a final strategic plan with action steps as found in this report and summarized in the Strategic Plan Framework (Appendix C) and Strategies and Action Steps Matrix (Appendix D), both of which incorporate comments made during the final work session.

Table 1. Strategic Planning Process

Pre-Workshop Questionnaire	May 4- May 13
Joint Work Session I: elected officials and staff	May 16
City Staff Work Session	June 7
Joint Work Session II: elected officials and staff	June 20
Final Strategic Plan	July 5

STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

The strategic planning framework consists of the key concepts that serve as building blocks of the plan: vision, values, organizational mission, and strategies.

Vision

A vision describes a future state, where the City will be in five or ten years.

The City of Des Peres will continue to be the premier place to live, work, shop, play and raise a family.

Values

Values are operating principles that guide implementation.

Financial Responsibility. The City of Des Peres will be a good steward of the public's money, both today and tomorrow.

Superior Service Delivery. The City of Des Peres approaches residents, business owners and visitors as respected customers and seeks to provide high quality professional services that exceed expectations.

Values (continued)

Balance. The City of Des Peres recognizes that successful businesses and thriving neighborhoods are both important to the City's wellbeing as are all who receive city services including residents, businesses and visitors.

Transparency. The City of Des Peres will seek to educate the public regarding city business, make the public aware of important decisions, and be open to input.

Organizational Mission

A mission describes what city government must focus on in order to achieve the vision.

The mission of the City of Des Peres is to enhance the quality of life in the community by offering comprehensive, efficient and responsive municipal services.

Strategies

Strategies describe a method of supporting the City's vision.

1. Prudently manage financial resources and proactively plan for the future.
2. Protect and enhance the City's tax base.
3. Support existing neighborhoods and housing options that add to the City's appeal.
4. Seek new ways to improve the quality and efficiency of municipal services.
5. Share information with citizens and provide opportunities for input.
6. Provide access to recreation and green space and improve livability of the City.

STRATEGIC PLAN: STRATEGIES WITH ACTION STEPS

About Strategies and Action Steps

The strategies and action steps detail the roadmap for achieving Des Peres' vision as defined by its elected officials and key city staff.

For purposes of this plan, a *strategy* is defined as a method of supporting the City's vision that answers the question "how will we achieve our vision?" It is "a means to an end," the end being the vision, and it summarizes a set of related activities. An *objective* is a concrete attainment that can be achieved by following a certain number of steps. An *action item* is a discreet task needed to accomplish the objective.

The plan is organized by strategy. For each strategy identified, objectives are listed in bold with their associated action steps listed underneath as bullets.

Each action step is assigned to a primary party which is listed first, and if applicable, a secondary party which is listed second. When city departments are listed, it should be assumed that the head of that department is responsible for its completion.

STRATEGY 1: Prudently manage financial resources and proactively plan for the future.

1.1 Develop a 3-year financial forecast.

Year 1

- Determine what will be included in the forecast (critical drivers in revenue and expense) and develop a forecasting tool. *(Administration, Finance)*

Years 2, 3 and 4

- Develop financial forecast document. *(Administration, Finance)*
- Present financial forecast to Finance and Audit Committee. *(Administration, Audit and Finance Committee)*
- Present financial forecast to the Board. *(Administration, Board of Aldermen)*

1.2 Develop a 3-year capital improvement plan.

Year 1 and 2

- Develop plan template and instructions for preparation of requests by department heads. *(Administration, Public Works)*

Years 2, 3 and 4

- Collect and compile capital requests from department heads. *(Department Heads)*
- Present capital improvement plan to the Board. *(Administration, Board of Aldermen)*

1.3 Examine city taxing structure to evaluate options for reduction in reliance on sales tax – a “Plan B” if sales tax stagnates or changes are made to distribution laws.

Year 1

- Prepare "Plan B" white paper. *(Administration, Finance)*
- Present white paper to Finance and Audit Committee. *(Administration, Audit and Finance Committee)*
- Present white paper to Board of Aldermen. *(Administration, Board of Aldermen)*

1.4 Determine when to seek renewal of Parks/Stormwater Sales Tax before 2020 and develop plans for how the tax will be used.

Year 1

- Prepare white paper that discusses implications of both sunseting and renewing of the tax. *(Administration, Finance, Parks and Recreation)*
- Present white paper to Board of Aldermen as part of 2017 budget discussions. *(Administration)*
- Make decision regarding whether to renew and if so, when. *(Board of Aldermen)*
- Voter Education (timing to be determined by Board decision regarding of when/if tax is placed on the ballot). *(Administration)*

STRATEGY 2: Protect and enhance the City's tax base.

2.1 Protect and enhance West County Mall.

All Years

- Meet regularly with manager of West County Mall to stay apprised of anticipated revenues as well as service needs. *(Administration)*
- Continue to provide satellite police station and patrolling services. *(Public Safety)*

2.2 Improve Manchester Road: traffic calming, pedestrian friendly, beautification.

Year 1

- Work with consultant to conduct Manchester Road East infrastructure analysis. *(Public Works, Administration)*

Years 2-4

- Utilize findings of Manchester Road East infrastructure analysis to apply for road and sidewalk improvements through East West Gateway. *(Public Works, Administration)*

Strategy 3: Support existing neighborhoods and housing options that add to the City's appeal.

3.1 Implement enhanced and aggressive neighborhood infrastructure maintenance.

Year 1

- Complete pavement maintenance plan. *(Public Works)*

All Years

- Implement pavement maintenance plan through annual budgeting process. *(Public Works)*

Years 2-4

- Identify and fill gaps on sidewalks to create continuous sidewalk coverage on main streets. *(Public Works)*

3.2 Explore a Minimum Housing Code.

Year 2

- Update existing white paper on minimum housing code. *(Public Works)*
- Present updated white paper to Board of Aldermen. *(Public Works, Administration)*

3.3 Evaluate options for Residential Planned Unit Development Districts.

Year 2

- Work with consultant to complete review of zoning code. *(Planning and Zoning Commission, Public Works)*
- Consider revised zoning code. *(Board of Aldermen, Administration)*

STRATEGY 4: Seek new ways to improve the quality and efficiency of municipal services.

4.1 Examine departmental service methods, explore changes or partnerships to reduce costs and/or improve services.

All Years

- Examine opportunities to partner with adjoining municipalities to improve services or make them more efficient. *(Department Heads, Administration)*

4.1 Examine departmental service methods, explore changes or partnerships to reduce costs and/or improve services (continued).

Year 1

- Pilot project using outside resources to start comprehensive crack sealing program. *(Public Works)*
- Prepare for CALEA accreditation by purchasing and installing needed software. *(Public Safety)*

Year 2

- Continue preparation for CALEA accreditation by updating policies and procedures to meet CALEA standards. *(Public Safety)*
- Evaluate new permitting and inspection software. *(Public Works)*

Year 3

- Consider implementation of new permitting and inspection software. *(Public Works)*
- Coordinate final audit and receive CALEA accreditation. *(Public Safety)*

4.2 Ensure staffing levels meet city service needs.

Year 1

- Develop backfill and succession plans. *(Administration, Department Heads)*

Years 2-4

- Monitor staffing needs in all departments and reflect adjustments through annual budget process. *(Administration, Department Heads)*

4.3 Consider results of Wage and Classification Study and make needed adjustments. (All Years) (Administration)

4.4 Implement enhanced infrastructure maintenance of city facilities including city hall, parks and public safety.

Year 2

- Complete facility analysis of city hall. *(Department Heads, Administration)*

Year 3

- Evaluate the needs of other city buildings. *(Department Heads, Administration)*

4.5 Advocate the interests of the City of Des Peres to regional and state policy makers.

All Years

- Continue to support the interests of Des Peres through participation in regional and state professional associations. *(Administration, Department Heads)*
- Promote Des Peres' interests, particularly regarding sales tax, to city's legislative delegation. *(Mayor and City Administrator)*

STRATEGY 5: Share information with citizens and provide opportunities for input.

5.1 Communicate with citizens in a variety of formats providing multiple opportunities for awareness and feedback on city services.

All Years

- Continue supporting comprehensive and compelling communications including city newsletter, website, social media and signage. *(Administration, Department Heads)*

Year 2

- Conduct Citizen Attitude Survey. *(Administration)*
- Consider mass notification software. *(Public Safety, Administration)*
- Consider enterprise solution to manage data related to citizen requests and associated work orders. *(Public Works)*

5.2 Cultivate community interest in Boards, Commissions, and Board of Aldermen in anticipation of retirements of long time members.

All Years

- Continue to advertise available positions on city website and in city newsletter. *(Administration)*

Years 2-4

- Develop, advertise and conduct a "Des Peres 101" to educate citizens about municipal affairs and generate interest in civic service. *(Administration)*

Strategy 6: Provide access to recreation and green space and improve livability of the City.

6.1 Continue to maintain and improve the Lodge to keep it competitive.

All Years

- Monitor attendance and solicit customer feedback to understand increases/decreases in attendance and program participation. *(Parks and Recreation)*
- Review rate structure and program fees to maintain cost recovery and understand market position. *(Parks and Recreation, Administration)*
- Continue assessment of long-term facility maintenance needs. *(Parks and Recreation, Public Works)*

6.2 Continue to maintain and improve green space for both parks and passive purposes.

Year 1

- Complete review of master plan for Des Peres Park and plan for future park improvements. *(Parks and Recreation)*
- Develop an action plan to enhance the parks system by improving existing parks and adding more park land. *(Parks and Recreation)*

Year 3

- Dedicate resources to pursue Municipal Park Grant Program through St. Louis County. *(Board of Aldermen)*