Strategic Plan

2024

CITY OF HELENA

Est. 1864

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City of Helena

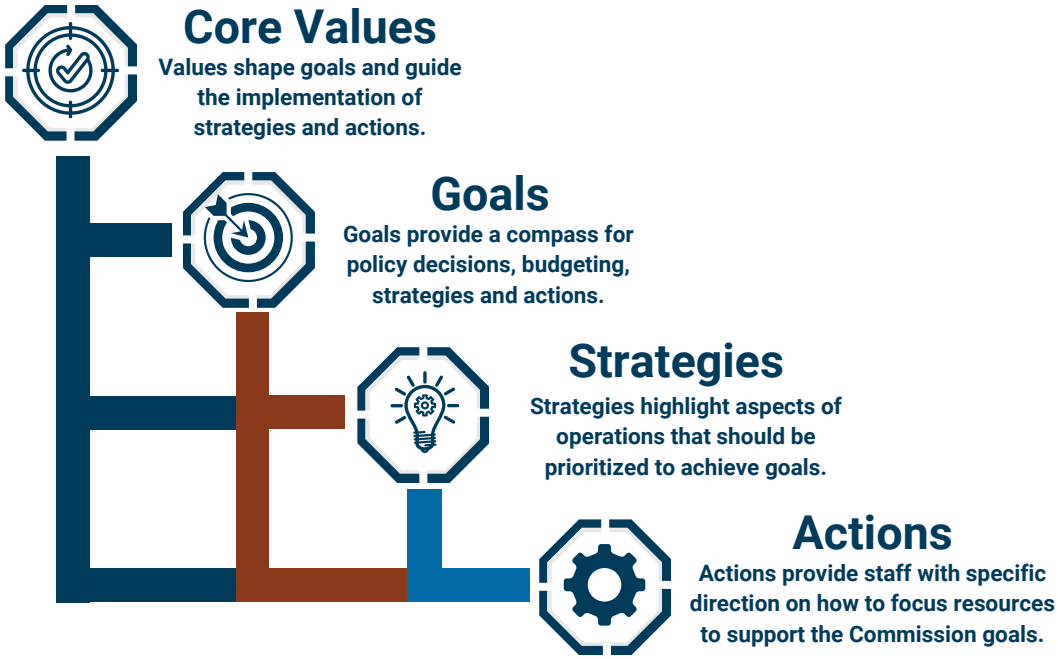
(Back left to right): City Attorney Rebecca Dockter, City Manager Tim Burton, City Clerk Dannai Clayborn, Municipal Court Judge Anne Peterson.
(Front left to right): Commissioner Andy Shirtliff, Commissioner Emily Dean, Mayor Wilmot Collins, Commissioner Sean Logan, Commissioner Melinda Reed.

Introduction

In December of 2023, the City Commission and City Manager hosted a Strategic Planning Retreat to establish goals and priorities for the City. The retreat was led by the Local Government Center at Montana State University. This document provides a summary of the values, goals, strategies and action plans that were derived from this planning retreat.

Strategic Plan Framework

The Values and Goals established in the 2023 Strategic Plan were a collaborative effort between the City Commission and staff.



Governing Principles

The City Commission's Governing Principles will guide how policies are implemented to support the strategies and actions identified in this plan.

We treat one another and members of the public with respect and courtesy.

We agree to be hard on ideas, not on individuals.

We prepare in advance of commission meetings, are familiar with the issues on the agenda, and ask questions of the City Manager and staff before meetings, so they are efficient.

We verbally explain to the public our rationale for votes at Commission meetings.

We share information, ideas, ask questions, and openly express concerns about issues.

We respect the roles of elected officials, City Manager, and staff in ensuring effective government; Commissioners make policy while the City Manager oversees day-to-day operations.

We are responsive to our constituents, the staff, and to one another.

We are elected to govern, make decisions, and serve the community to the best of our abilities.

Core Values

Accessibility

Sustainability

Community Engagement

Service

Strategic Goals

Maintain and Improve City Services to Residents

- Utilize technology and modernization of processes to improve City Efficiency.
- Improve Community Engagement and Access to City Services

Holistic Commercial and Residential Development

- Support a vibrant Helena that retains its character and supports thoughtful growth.

Maintain and Improve City Infrastructure

- Improve Wastewater System
- Improve Transportation System
- Improve Water Delivery System

Be the Employer of Choice

- Create and maintain a sustainable workforce comprised of nice, competent professionals.

Maintain and Improve City Services to Residents

Strategy	Action	Resources	Year	Department(s)
Modernize Internal Processes	Update City Code / Standards	Staff / Commission	1-3	Community Development / Public Works / Transportation / City Attorney /Clerk of the Commission
	Improve Visibility of Asset Management and Planning Documents	Staff / Budget?	1-2	Public Works / Transportation / Parks / Community Facilities
	Implement new ERP System	Staff	1-2	All
	Expand use of M-Files	Staff / Commission / Budget	1-3	All
Digitize Interface with Residents	Implement CAD/RMS System	Staff	1-2	Police / Fire
	Establish Process for Resident Communication Routing and Confirmation	Staff	1-2	Clerk of the Commission / City Manager's Office
	Improve Accountability of Public Information Requests	Staff	1-2	Clerk of the Commission / City Manager's Office / City Attorney

Maintain and Improve City Services to Residents

Strategy	Action	Resources	Year	Department(s)
Establish right size Police and Fire staff, and infrastructure to meet service demand.	Pass Mill Levy and Bond	Staff / Commission / Budget	1-3	Police / Fire
Expand community engagement and opportunities for positive interactions with police department.	Accomplish a better balance of proactive and reactive policing.	Staff	1-2	Police
	Develop chain of command regarding responding to the public.	Staff	1-2	Police

Holistic Commercial and Residential Development

Strategy	Action	Resources	Year	Department(s)
Integrate Development Process	Establish Single Point of Contact for Development	Staff	1	Community Development / Public Works / Transportation / Fire
	Create After Action Reports with Commission	Staff	1-2	Community Development / Public Works / Transportation / Fire
	Finetune Permitting Process	Staff	1-3	Community Development / Public Works / Transportation / Fire
	Strengthen Relationships with Development and Engineering Communities	Staff	1-3	Community Development / Public Works / Transportation / Fire
Promote Neighborhood Vitality	Update City Code / Engineering Standards	Staff	1-2	Community Development / Public Works / Transportation / City Attorney /Clerk of the Commission
	Improve Resident Engagement in Land Use Planning	Staff	1-3	Community Development
	Land Use Statute Implementation and Zoning Review	Staff	1-3	Community Development

Maintain and Improve City Infrastructure

Strategy	Action	Resources	Year	Department(s)
Implement Wastewater Master Plan	Document Condition and Inventory of System	Staff	COMPLETE	Public Works
	Develop Capital Improvement Plan Priorities	Staff / Commission	COMPLETE	Public Works
	Complete Wastewater Rate Study	Staff / Budget	COMPLETE	Public Works
Implement Long Range Transportation Plan	Update Plan Including Staffing / Rate Study	Staff / Budget	1-3	Transportation
	Develop CIP	Staff	COMPLETE	Transportation
	Establish Comprehensive Sidewalk Program	Staff / Commission / Budget	1-3	Transportation
Expand Transit System	Add hours, staffing, and increase service area.	Staff / Commission / Budget	1-2	Transportation
Implement Water Master Plan	Document Condition and Inventory of System	Staff	COMPLETE	Public Works
	Develop Capital Improvement Plan Priorities	Staff	COMPLETE	Public Works
	Complete Water Rate Study	Staff	COMPLETE	Public Works

Be the Employer of Choice

Strategy	Action	Resources	Year	Department(s)
Offer Competitive Compensation Package	Establish Competitive Market Based Pay Plan	Staff / Commission / Budget	1-2	Human Resources
	Maintain Competitive and Attractive Benefits	Staff / Commission / Budget	1-2	Human Resources
Cultivate Healthy Cohesive Supportive Culture	Empower Staff through Leadership Development	Staff	1-2	Human Resources
	Explore Work Schedule Flexibility	Staff / Commission	1-2	Human Resources
	Implement REAL Institute Principles	Staff / Commission	1-2	Human Resources
Improve Retention	Establish Mentorships / Internships / Apprentice (Succession Planning)	Staff / Commission / Budget	1-3	Human Resources
	Expand Professional Development Opportunities	Staff / Commission / Budget	1-3	Human Resources
	Enhance Process for Rewarding Enthusiasm and Commitment Throughout and Among Staff	Staff	1-2	Human Resources
	Implement Digital Interface / Efficiencies	Staff	1-2	Human Resources