

**Report on the Strategic Planning Session  
City of Norwich  
September 9 & 10, 2016**

**■ Background information - The Strategic Process**

- The focus of the two day meeting was to answer three important questions:
  - Where are we now?
  - Deciding where do we want to go?
  - Working out how best to get there?
  
- Where are we now?
  - Using the SWOT analysis assessment model, the City's Department Leadership gave their impressions of present state and opportunities or issues they wanted the City Council to address.
  - Their role was to influence the decisions of the City Council Members.
  
- Where do we want to go?
  - To establish a focus for the City Council Members, they were asked to write down their top three OUTCOMES or GOALS they would like to achieve with our final strategy
    - These needed to be BIG PICTURE ideas:
      - BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goals)
      - WIG (Wildly Important Goals)
    - Should answer these questions:
      - If we did nothing new, where would our current trajectory take us? Is that the future we want to co-create?
      - What do you believe the individuals in the city of Norwich really want us to do?
      - What is needed or desired right now, or might be needed or desired in the future, by the citizens of Norwich?
      - What is the view of the future that we described to the citizens of Norwich?
      - What legacy do we want to leave future generations?

■ **Results - The original OUTCOMES or GOALS chosen by individual City Council Members as their individual focus for the strategic plan:**

- A. *Develop clear objectives with benchmarks and plans to execute them*
- B. *Leave things better*
- C. *Financial accountability and transparency*
- D. *Set realistic goals – establish limits to the number and size of goals*
- E. *Look at what not to do with as much interest as what to do*
- F. *Become more self sufficient*
- G. *Focus on and narrow our plans*
- H. *Make Norwich a regional historical/enjoyment/tourism destination*
- I. *Attract more business/commercial entities*
- J. *Attract and retain population in the city*
- K. *Develop/rebuild/revitalize inner city and inner harbor, while improving positive image and perceptions*

■ **Background information – Strategy is about DISCIPLINE**

- **The Anticipatory Principle - Image Inspires Action**
  - Organizations are likely to make far more rapid progress if they are pulled towards a **SHARED POSITIVE VISION** of their future.
  - Our strategic process needs to harness the power of anticipation and ensure that strategies are developed to bring about visions which you genuinely want to see come into being.
  - To establish a clearer focus for the City Council Members were asked to arrive at a consensus on the top Outcomes or Goals that they wanted to focus their attention during this strategic planning cycle.
  - They were asked to focus on Outcomes or Goals they could actively work on in the next 12 months
  - Those Outcomes or Goals that were not chosen were not unimportant, nor would they lack attention. They would not however be the critical focus of the City Council or its leaders

■ **Results: FIRST CHOICES – FOCUS**

- A. *Develop clear objectives with benchmarks and plans to execute them*
- B. *Become more self sufficient*
- C. *Develop/rebuild/revitalize inner city and inner harbor, while improving positive image and perceptions*
- D. *Set realistic goals – establish limits to the number and size of goals*

## ■ Background information – The SOAR Analysis and Strategic Process

- The **SOAR** approach to strategy starts with a **strategic inquiry**.
- During this inquiry, the city’s greatest *Strengths* and *Opportunities* were discovered, listed and discussed.
- The City Council Members were invited to articulate their *Aspirations* and specific goals, and then co-construct potential strategies.
- Then, clear and measurable expectations or *Results* are defined.



## ■ **Results: Strengths – FOCUS**

- A. 132 Brown Fields
- B. City one of four CT cities who own the utilities
- C. Energy reliability and stability
- D. Low debt
- E. Adequate Fund Balance
- F. Motivated talented workers
- G. Low % borrowing rate
- H. Award winning and noteworthy City financial position
- I. Railroad access
- J. Relatively safe City
- K. Very low crime rate – reduced crime trend
- L. Historic City – many underdeveloped historic sites with a compelling story to tell
- M. Wonderful waterfront – river is a unique and natural resource
- N. City’s geographic location - the demographic center of the area
- O. Strong public safety organizations and positive track record

## ■ *Results: Aspirations – OUR GOAL CHOICES – FOCUS*

- A. *Develop clear objectives with benchmarks and plans to execute them, especially with a focus on increasing business/commercial entities in the City*
  - *Investigate potential improved use of Enterprise Zones*
  - *Investigate selling Foreclosures to businesses*
  - *Investigate opportunities for the City to offer options to reduce financial impediments and address infrastructure problems*
  - *Investigate opportunities to maximize opportunities for the rural businesses in the City, e.g. vineyards*
- B. *Become more self sufficient*
  - *Investigate potential Federal/State/EPA/other funds could be available to remediate and/or improve 132 Brown Field properties*
  - *Investigate selling unwanted/unneeded City properties including foreclosed properties*
  - *Investigate opportunities for regionalization*
    - *Using the City's geographic and leadership position, take a "Hub & Spoke" position in leading regionalization initiatives*
- C. *Develop/rebuild/revitalize inner city and inner harbor, while improving positive image and perceptions*
  - *Investigate and aggressively pursue potential sources of revenues, e.g. grants, regional approaches and pooling resources, collaboration with other Cities, Towns, Organizations, etc.*
    - *Investigate hiring, outsourcing or sharing a Grant Writer*
  - *Improve or initiate marketing the City's historical and other City treasures*
  - *Build fiber optic network in the inner City and inner harbor*
  - *Investigate offering free WIFI to all businesses in this area*
  - *Reach out to the Mohegan Tribal Council and the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Council to discover or renew business cooperation with our businesses and our City*
    - *Re-establish the connection to important historical Tribal grounds and update signage (e.g. Uncas Leap) – offer Casino customers complimentary access to these sites*
    - *Investigate cooperative possibilities between local businesses and the casinos, e.g. City businesses accepting "Casino bucks"*
  - *Investigate and execute appropriate changes to the waterfront*
- D. *Set realistic goals – establish limits to the number and size of goals*
  - *Focus on key goals listed above*
  - *Investigate necessity of on-going and/or approved plans*

■ **Tomorrow...Execution of The Plan**

- **How do we get there?**
  - How do we need to modify our original thinking in the light of feedback we heard yesterday?
  - What are we already good at and how can we build on this success?
  - Why did some elements of the last strategic plan go so well and what can we learn those successes?
  - What are the two to three most likely future scenarios that could have a significant impact on the central work that we need to consider today?
  
- **Goals Are All About Change**
  - Change requires action.
  - Action requires a plan.
  - A plan requires a strategy.
  - A strategy requires goals and enabling objectives.
  - Goals and objectives require a mission.
  - A mission is defined by a vision.
  - A vision is set by one's values.

## How do we get there?

### Tomorrow...Execution of The Plan

• **The Execution Gap:**

- 15% can identify Top Goals and Priorities
- 19% are committed to the goals
- 49% of work time is spent on goals
- 51% don't understand their roles in meeting goals

*The 8<sup>th</sup> Habit*, Stephen Covey