



**Special City Council Meeting**  
**February 17, 2017 - 2:00 PM**  
**Council Chambers**  
**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Nancy Backus called the special meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Auburn City Hall, 25 West Main

**ROLL CALL**

City Councilmembers present: Deputy Mayor Largo Wales, Bob Baggett, Claude DaCorsi, John Holman, and Rich Wagner. Councilmember Bill Pelosa arrived at 2:40 p.m. Councilmember Yolanda Trout-Manuel was excused.

**II. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Economic Development Strategic Plan**

1. Strategic Plan Summary
2. Workshop Format
3. 2017 Retail Activity and Update
4. Review of Goals
5. Prioritize Strategies and Budget Alignment

Economic Development Manager Lein introduced Jeff Marcell from TIP Strategies and Aaron Farmer from The Retail Coach.

Mr. Marcell explained the priorities for the first two years include formalizing departmental involvement in strategies, hiring consultants or position partner organizations for tasks and hiring additional staff. Each area will have four focus areas; delivery, product, place and messaging. Each focus area has multiple strategies to help implement it and each strategy has multiple tasks. Not all tasks will take the same time or resources, a portion of some tasks are being completed currently by staff while others are not. If the City chooses to allocate no addition resources or staffing the Ten Year Economic Development Strategic Plan will only be partially achievable.

Mr. Marcell stated Retail Coach suggests the City have a retail focus area that includes Auburn Way South, Auburn Way North, Robertson Group property, Lakeland Hills, the downtown area and the Outlet Collection area. The City will need to identify retailers and shoppers for each focus area. Retail Coach has identified a retail gap that identifies sales leakage (when auburn residents purchase

products and services outside the city). The City can use this information to work with developers to recruit the needed businesses.

Councilmember DaCorsi asked if there is a plan to tie the retail focus areas together or keep them separate. Mr. Farmer stated since the City of Auburn has to provide consumers something that appeals to them in order to bring the people to the areas, they recommend looking for ways to tie the retail focus areas together.

Mr. Farmer reviewed the primary retail trade area and the secondary trade area. Councilmember Wagner stated he believes the City should use a larger area to attract more businesses.

Mr. Farmer stated the City will need to use the data regarding the median age of the residents to find businesses to serve those demographics. Currently residents are spending \$1.5 billion outside the City. He stated as a municipality the City will have to recruit the businesses. The Retail Coach is focusing on developer recruitment and retailer development.

Councilmember Wagner stated he does not want to ignore the internet sales. Mr. Farmer explained only about 10% of all retail sales are online the remaining 90% of sales are at brick and mortar locations.

Mr. Marcell reviewed the components of the Strategic Plan. He started with the Strategic Opportunity areas; delivery, product, place and messaging. The performance indicators include the tax base, market and employment.

Councilmember DaCorsi asked about a city slogan. Mr. Marcell explained a slogan does not have a great return on investment.

Deputy Mayor Wales stated the slogan "More Than You Imagined" works well for the parks department. If the City is going to have a slogan, then there may need to be more than one.

Manager Lein explained that the department directors met and focused on the four areas of the plan and broke each area down into tasks. The four focus areas are delivery, product, place and messaging. He explained that each focus area has multiple strategies and each strategy has multiple tasks. Not all tasks will take the same amount of time or resources. Some tasks can be accomplished with existing staff and some will take additional employees. If the City does not hire the additional staff the Ten Year Economic Development Strategic Plan is only partially achievable as adopted.

Mr. Marcell shared the approach for implementation support for the first two years. Including formalizing departmental involvement in strategies, hiring consultants or partners for tasks the City should not do on its own and hiring additional staff.

Mr. Marcell explained the opportunity areas designated within the plan; Delivery - a comprehensive service delivery system that actively identifies and advances economic development opportunities in Auburn; Product - an inventory of sites, a business climate and a physical environment that foster business growth and ensure a resilient employment base; Place - attractive gateways, impression corridors and destinations that define the character of Auburn and Messaging - a coordinated marketing and branding campaign that elevates Auburn's reputation among internal and external audiences. They discussed the recommended approach for each opportunity area and the requirements for implementation.

Mayor Backus stated she has asked staff to bring forward the funds required for the additional staff for Council's consideration.

Councilmember Wagner stated he believes it would help to have a person whose job is to provide customer advocacy.

Deputy Mayor Wales stated she thought a portion of the business development position should be dedicated to help business owners work with the City.

Councilmember DaCorsi asked how the City of Auburn generates business tourism. Mr. Marcell explained his company will go out and introduce the business community to Auburn.

Mr. Marcell explained the next steps for his office will be to provide the TIP Workshop Outcome report including budget recommendations, department evaluations and implementation contractors and partners, an ongoing plan for implementation and action refinement plan and a year-end check in and performance matrix update and adjustments.

### III. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 3:46 p.m.

APPROVED THE 19<sup>th</sup> DAY OF ~~SEPTEMBER~~, February  
2017: 2019.

Nancy Backus  
NANCY BACKUS, MAYOR

Shawn Campbell  
Shawn Campbell, Deputy City Clerk