

## Tipp City Planning Session

### Participants

<b>Carrie Arblaster (Council)</b>	<b>Jeff Calicoat (Chief EMS)</b>	<b>John Kessler (Council)</b>	<b>Frank Scenna (Council)</b>
<b>Janice Bates (Clerk of Council)</b>	<b>John Donnelly (City Engineer)</b>	<b>Steve Kessler (Fire Chief)</b>	<b>Brad Vath (Assistant City Manager)</b>
<b>Katlyn Berbach (Council President)</b>	<b>Tim Eggleston (City Manager)</b>	<b>Tom Merritt (Council)</b>	
<b>Eric Burris (Police Chief)</b>	<b>John Green (Finance Director)</b>	<b>Logan Rogers (Council)</b>	

### Vision and Mission Statements

- Vision Statement: To be nationally recognized as one of the best small towns in America.
- Mission Statement: To provide an environment that nurtures a high quality of life and a solid basis for economic growth for residents and those who do business within the community. This commitment is based on the respect of our past, the safe-guarding of our heritage and traditions, and through creative, innovative leadership in managing future growth while enhancing the community.

### Expectations of the Council for the Planning Retreat

- To set the direction of the City for the next two years and to lay the ground work for years beyond.
- To assess progress from previous strategic planning retreats,
- To use the retreat as an opportunity for two-way communication between Council and staff.

### Pre-Retreat Survey Results

Prior to the retreat, a survey was distributed to capture Council and Staff perspectives on strategic priorities to expedite the retreat. Both the Council members and the Staff identified the following priority topics. During the retreat, Council and Staff discussed these priority topics and articulated goals to address them. They are listed below (not in any priority order).

- Economic and Business Development
- Infrastructure and Utilities
- Beautification
- Communications
- Public Safety
- Fiscal Stability

The next step after finalizing this document will be for Staff to develop strategies to address the goals. In this way, Council will have established goals as policy guidance, while Staff will develop strategies that operationalize the goals.

## Goal Session to set the Direction for the City

### **I. Topic: Economic and Business Development**

**Background:** Tipp City has three local organizations that lead economic and business development for the City—the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Tipp City Partnership, and the City of Tipp City. The Chamber focuses its expertise on small and medium sized commercial enterprises, primarily those outside the downtown. The Downtown Partnership focuses on downtown businesses, which are primarily service establishments. The City focuses on major industry and commercial employers. Each of these organizations shares information with the other to optimize their respective specializations and to avoid duplication of services. At the same time, the City can work as a partner with one or both of the other economic development organizations to meet businesses' needs.

**Goal:**

- 1) Build upon the relationship with Downtown Tipp City Partnership and the Chamber of Commerce to ensure a clear strategy concerning downtown properties.
- 2) Monitor City-owned properties that are downtown and retain government services in the downtown that merchants need.

**Background:** A key strategy to sustaining government services provision while mitigating the amount of taxes that must be generated from households is to grow and diversify the economy. Tipp City's long-term economic growth depends on industrial and commercial development.

**Goal:**

- 3) Allocate a proportion of the Assistant City Manager's time to strengthening commercial development in Tipp City.
- 4) Create a database and present it on the City website to advertise available commercial properties.
- 5) Develop a plan to present to Council on the pros and cons of pursuing state certified industrial sites. An Ohio Job Ready Site Certification ensures future investors that the property (1) meets site selection standards and (2) includes the necessary attributes demanded.

**Goal:**

- 6) Optimize the City's ability to advance, encourage, and promote the industrial and commercial development of the City by standing up a strong Community Improvement Corporation (CIC).

- a. Staff to develop a memorandum that describes the steps to create a CIC or to revitalize an existing CIC.
- b. Establish a downtown revitalization group that can spearhead the effort to strengthen the CIC.
- c. The long-term role of the CICI will be to purchase key properties and obtain best use for those properties.

**Background:** Broadway Elementary and Nevin Coppock Elementary are two older facilities in the community. The Board of Education is currently working on a master facilities plan and has not yet determined the use of those two buildings. A decision is expected in the next 6-18 months.

**Goal:**

- 7) Develop a vision for the school properties on Broadway and Nevin in the case that they become available. Explore park and community center ideas, among others.

**Background:** Currently, a heavily used railroad track controlled by CSX Transportation runs through Tipp City. Approximately 30-35 trains run through daily and it is expected to increase to 40-50 in the near future. The sound of their horns affect both residential and business areas. Quiet zones have been established in some communities so that the locomotive engineers do not sound the horn when approaching public crossings. The City then has to account for the increased risk of there being no horn by adding extra safety features to those effected crosswalks. The City of Loveland, Ohio has recently enacted these quiet zones and can serve as an example for Tipp City.

**Goal:**

- 8) Develop a plan for instituting quiet zones along the railroad tracks that go through town, including cost estimates and liability information.

## **II. Topic: Infrastructure and Utilities**

**Background:** To accomplish the City's mission to provide a high quality of life and a solid basis for economic growth for residents and businesses, Tipp City will need to continue to invest in its infrastructure. The current 10 year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is expiring in 2020 and will need to be on the ballot that year for renewal. A CIP allows for a systematic evaluation of all potential capital projects at the same time, and provides the ability to stabilize debt and consolidate projects to reduce borrowing costs. Other than annual paving, the City has completed all of its major projects for streets in the 10 year plan; reconstruction projects were front-loaded and are now being paid down. The current CIP enables the City to schedule and implement infrastructure improvements. Improvement needs will continue beyond 2020 when the current CIP will end. It is important to communicate the CIP progress and the need for renewal to citizens. There was a suggestion to hire a public relations professional to better get the message out about how important the CIP is and to

communicate the need for renewal, however, the Council decided to revisit that suggestion in 2019 and to work with current resources for 2018.

**Goal:**

- 9) Begin developing a plan to renew the 0.5% CIP levy (the prep time to develop the 10-year plan is about 8 months).
  - a. Establish a 30 member committee and begin the process of educating them (explaining funding flows and regulations).
  - b. Starting immediately, create communication materials to inform citizens about CIP progress in preparation of a renewal campaign. Such ideas mentioned were: placing a letter in with the utility bill about projects that were bought and paid for; “your tax dollars at work” signs on projects; a regular column in the newsletter; press releases; and city manager comments at public meetings.
  - c. Delineate major future infrastructure investments such as annual repaving needs of \$800,000 to \$1 million (up from \$600,000 annually); potential building implications for the Fire/EMS Department; a potential overpass; etc.
- 10) Continue to ensure that the City can service development through its utility infrastructure.
  - a. Continue to map City infrastructure (electric, water, and sewer lines are currently all mapped; the City is now mapping street signs).
  - b. Make the maps available to developers and to the public.
  - c. Continue to ensure that the Fire/EMS Department has access to this information.
  - d. Determine whether the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission wants Tipp City’s GIS data.
  - e. Work with Dayton Power & Light (DPL) to ensure the viability of the one line that comes into Tipp City from DPL.

**III. Topic: Beautification**

**Background:** As mentioned in the 2014 and 2016 Tipp City Strategic Plans, there has been a distinct decrease in maintenance of the I-75 right of way by the Ohio Department of Transportation that has continued over the last decade. The Council, staff, and citizens recognize the opportunity to improve this space as a main gateway into the City. They also recognize there are many thoughts and opinions on how this gateway should look and would like community input before committing to a concept.

**Goals:**

- 11) Obtain from the Ohio Department of Transportation a time line for bridge repair.
- 12) Develop concepts for how the I-75 exit 68 gateway should look by engaging community groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce and others, and agree on a low maintenance concept to present to Council.
- 13) Create and release a request for proposal (RFP) for FY 2019.

#### **IV. Topic: Communications**

**Background:** Tipp City has made communications a strategic priority with the intent of increasing public awareness of the policies and programs of the City and generating enhanced engagement of constituents and partners. City websites are important to this communications strategy. Cities can use websites not just as a tool for broadcasting information, but as a space for interaction, feedback, and resident participation. Another important communications and engagement strategy is to ramp up the relationship with the School District and other boards to identify opportunities for shared services and other collaborative activities.

##### **Goals:**

- 14) Add to the city website an “Ask the Mayor” or “Ask the Council President” feature to help engage citizens with these officials and to get their questions answered.
- 15) Staff will research and provide information on a possible interactive electronic display that would provide information about what’s happening in the City, a map, and advertisements for local businesses, among others.
- 16) Promote Council collaboration with the School Board and the Township.
  - a. Involve high school students in the government by having a student representative on the Council and/or provide mock council meetings with the student government.
  - b. Coordinate quarterly meeting schedules with the school board and other local community organizations, such as the zoning and restoration boards, and ensure updates are regularly communicated to Council.
  - c. Coordinate with the School Board on: levy timing, building plans, the impact of development/tax abatements on schools, industry trends to inform school counselors on the jobs for the future, stadium coordination, etc.
  - d. Coordinate with the Township on single family home development plans, commercial development, annexations, a water district, and a potential fire/EMS district.
- 17) Create and give Council access to a 30 day calendar with draft agendas for the month’s meetings.

#### **V. Topic: Public Safety**

**Background:** In past years, cities across the U.S. had sizable numbers of volunteers supporting the full-time fire/EMS staff. But there is a nationwide problem, according to Bernie Ingles, president of the Ohio Fire Chiefs Association. Some people estimate that there has been a drop in the number of volunteer firefighters in the U.S. from 300,000 to 50,000. There is also a nationwide shortage of part-time firefighters and turnover rates can be very high. Several fire chiefs say that their part-time firefighters work at two or three stations and this adds to the complexity of staffing fire stations. Tipp City is not exempt from this issue and needs to explore options for transitioning their volunteer and part-time fire and EMS personnel. With an increased demand for firefighters occurring across all communities, Tipp City is losing its volunteer firefighters to neighboring communities. Furthermore,

the public's demand for fire and EMS services continues to rise; as one example, the number of EMS runs made in 2013 was 1,400 and in 2017 was 2,000. The increased demand for services is primarily attributed to an aging population and hospitals releasing patients who do not understand their prescription regimen. Sepsis is the most common reason for EMS calls, while 32 runs out of 2,000 runs last year were for drug overdoses. At the same time, the level of training required for firefighters and especially EMS continues to rise dramatically. The City of Miamisburg and Miami Township have recently partnered for a new fire district and can provide an example. In the meantime, Tipp City has excellent mutual aid agreements and support (in emergency services, mutual aid is an agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictional boundaries). The Fire/EMS Department also has to continue to aggressively seek volunteers and hire qualified individuals.

**Goal:**

- 18) Develop a Fire/EMS Department long-term plan addressing personnel and facility needs.
  - a. City Staff members will develop recommendations/options regarding staffing the Fire/EMS Department, which is forecasted to face a major staffing challenge within three years if the status quo is maintained. They will also align it with the CIP in terms of long-term funding of facilities improvements and an equipment schedule.
- 19) Explore community paramedicine as a means of increasing revenue for the EMS Department.
- 20) Actively advertise and recruit volunteer firefighters and hire qualified personnel for the Fire/EMS Department.

**VI. Topic: Fiscal Stability**

**Background:** At the retreat both the Council and City Staff members identified fiscal stability as an essential goal to enable them to meet the City's mission—to provide an environment that nurtures a high quality of life and a solid basis for economic growth.

- 21) Staff will develop a manageable process model including cost-benefit analysis of possible new developments. This cost-benefit analysis would go beyond estimating infrastructure costs, and would address the impact of tax abatements.