

WHEAT RIDGE CITY COUNCIL RETREAT
Abrusci's Italian Restaurant and Seniors' Resource Center
March 3-4, 2017
Meeting Summary Draft

ATTENDANCE

Mayor and Councilmembers: Joyce Jay, Kristi Davis, Monica Duran, Tim Fitzgerald, Janeece Hoppe, Larry Mathews, George Pond, Zach Urban, Genevieve Wooden.

Staff and other elected officials: Patrick Goff, City Manager.

Jerry DiTullio, City Treasurer; Dan Brennan, Police Chief; Joyce Manwaring, Parks and Recreation Director; Heather Geyer, Administrative Services Director; Ken Johnstone, Community Development Director; Scott Brink, Public Works Director and Carly Lorentz, Assistant to the City Manager were in attendance for part of the retreat on March 4th.

Facilitation: Heather Bergman, Sam Haas

ACTION ITEMS

<i>Council and Staff</i>	<p><i>Study Session Agenda Items</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff presentation on previous efforts and program options related to rental inspection. • Staff presentation that compares successful homeowner incentive programs. • Staff presentation on how code enforcement is managed in other communities (where it resides, etc.) • Staff presentation and Council discussion on the vision for neighborhood identity. • Staff presentation on the design of the 38th Avenue streetscape. • Staff presentation regarding storm water utility. • Staff presentation on what the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Committee is doing. • Staff presentation on Recreation Center fund balance policy and ongoing funding questions. • Staff presentation on options and programs like the Citizen Academies that have been successful in other communities. • Council discussion to decide on whether and how to loan money for affordable housing.
<i>Staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research alternatives to creating a ballot question to expedite undergrounding power lines.
<i>Staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and commence a hometown pride campaign.

REVIEW OF REVISED VISION STATEMENT

Council members reviewed the revised vision statement that emerged from their discussion at the January 30 study session. Council agreed to several additional revisions, which are reflected in the attached updated 2035 Vision Statement.

PRESENTATION: STATE OF THE CITY

Patrick Goff, City Manager, provided an update on the state of the City, presenting goals, priority action items, and City department accomplishments. Highlights from his presentation are captured below (see attached presentation)

Action Agenda Update

Current City actions are focused on:

- Revenue enhancement
- Engage development and redevelopment opportunities
- Community and neighborhood building
- Code enforcement
- 38th Avenue corridor implementation
- Targeted housing incentive policies
- Multi-modal transportation

2015-2016 City Accomplishments and Workloads

Administrative Services Department:

- The Department assisted the Recreation Division to upgrade RecTrac, the Recreation Center software management system
- The Department recruited and hired a new Public Information Officer (PIO).

Community Development:

- The City continued to utilize remaining funding in the \$400,000 EPA Brownfields Grant to identify environmental contamination and develop remediation plans to facilitate private property redevelopment in priority areas of the City.
- In collaboration with Public Works, a consultant team, and CDOT, the Community Development Department finalized the Planning and Environmental Linkage study (PEL) for Wadsworth Boulevard and advanced well into the Environmental Assessment process for the preferred design.
- The Department completed numerous zoning and building code amendments and implemented an expanded over-the-counter permit system allowing homeowners and contractors to obtain building permits on the day of submittal.
- The Department hosted a technical advisory panel to define further the land use and urban design vision for the properties surrounding the Wheat Ridge Ward rail station. The vision for the area is being marketed to the real estate development community.

Police Department:

- The Department was reaccredited.
- The Department partnered with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, the West Metro, Evergreen and Arvada Fire Protection Districts, and member agencies from Arvada, Lakewood, and Golden to develop a regional communications center known as JEFFCOM.
- Arvada, Golden, Lakewood, Mountain View, Edgewater, and Wheat Ridge are engaging in a cooperative records management effort known as the Records Management System Consortium (RMSC).
- Wheat Ridge Police Department successfully investigated and adjudicated several violent crimes.

Municipal Court:

- The Department assessed transportation obstacles for homeless and transportation-challenged populations and provided Regional Transportation District (RTD) bus passes for those in a transportation crisis.
- The Department collected and distributed special "domestic violence" funds to support victim advocacy and assist sentenced defendants with costs of domestic violence counseling and treatment.

Parks and Recreation:

- The Department was accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA)
- The Department has completed the Prospect Park Phase One Master Plan.

Public Works:

- The Department completed various floodplain amendments and drainage improvements in cooperation with the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District.
- The Department completed the installation of eight community/neighborhood entryway signs at various locations on the City's perimeter.
- The Department completed construction of the Kipling Street multi-use trail from 32nd Avenue to 44th Avenue, including lighting and a new bridge over Clear Creek.
- The Department successfully attained Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approval for a Phase One Environmental Assessment Re-Evaluation for the Clear Creek Crossing Property.
- The Department has initiated and nearly completed the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan Update and the American Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan through extensive public participation and effort.

Awards and Recognitions: 2014 - 2016

The City received the following awards from outside agencies and entities:

- 3CMA Savvy Award for City Values Video
- Outstanding Management of a Loss Control Program for the Safety Committee
- Public Safety Appreciation Award for the "Aware and Alive" program

- Tree City USA Designation for the City's 37th year as a Tree City
- The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award
- Colorado Association of Senior Centers Outstanding Program Award for the Active Adult Center and the Healthy Wheat Ridge program
- Colorado Parks and Recreation Association Fitness Professional of the Year
- Safety Champion Award
- The following places were rated Best of the Best 2016 by Colorado Community Media:
 - Wheat Ridge Recreation Center
 - Active Adult Center
 - Anderson Park
 - Performances in the Park
 - Wheat Ridge Greenbelt
 - Wheat Ridge Carnation Festival

Grants Received: 2014-2016

- EPA Brownfields: \$270,000
- Kipling Trail: \$1.8 million
- Wadsworth: \$27.6 million
- Bus bench shelters: \$120,000
- Relocation of Clear Creek Trail: \$358,621
- Public Safety: \$570,000
- State Historic Fund (Fruitdale): \$225,000
- HUD HOME funds (Fruitdale): \$680,000
- Prospect Park: \$360,000
- Greenbelt shelters: \$88,000
- Gold Line Tabor Street improvements: \$600,000
- Street Sweeper: \$75,000
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Investing 4 the Future

- 0.5% temporary increase in sales and use tax rate providing \$33 million for four projects.
- Anderson Park: \$4 million for pool locker renovations, Anderson Building renovations, a new multi-purpose sports field, an improved soccer field, and upgraded pavilions.
- Clear Creek Crossing: \$10 million for the construction of I-70 hook ramps, the removal of off-ramp at 32nd Avenue, and the construction of a connecting street to 32nd Avenue.
- Wadsworth Boulevard: \$7 million city match for the \$45 million project to widen Wadsworth from 35th to I-70.

- Wheat Ridge-Ward Station TOD: \$12 million for the reconstruction of adjacent streets, including the addition of a traffic signal, a pedestrian bridge over the tracks, and pedestrian access improvements.

Current Redevelopment Projects

- 38th and Kipling: Development including a Sprouts, a new Starbucks, Morningstar Senior Living Facility, and one vacant lot; generating over \$500,000 in new city revenues annually
- Corners at Wheat Ridge: \$80 million project that will include an organic grocer, a multi-family residential unit, retail spaces, and public amenities and will generate approximately \$1 million in new city revenues annually.
- 44th and Wadsworth: A development including two senior living apartments with 138 units and one vacant lot
- Clear Creek Crossing: \$175 million multi-use project including retail, office, housing, lodging and entertainment and will generate approximately \$3.5 million in new city revenues annually.
- West End 38: 150-unit multi-family development with 8,000 sq. ft. of retail and will generate approximately \$300,000 in new city revenues annually.
- Other projects are highlighted in attached presentation including multi-modal transportation projects, G-Line Ward Station, Fruitdale School, miscellaneous residential and commercial projects, Prospect Park renovation and Ashland Reservoir.

Council Discussion and Clarifying Questions

Council members discussed and asked clarifying questions about the proposed and ongoing development projects. Below are highlights from their conversation.

Questions and concerns about the Wadsworth Boulevard intersection development:

- Several Council members were concerned about community resistance to the Wadsworth Boulevard intersection development and requested facts and figures so that they could begin thinking about a communication strategy. The project proposes a continuous flow intersection (CFI) design that will likely be controversial.
- Patrick will provide Council with talking points for interacting with constituents on this development. There is a review/update scheduled to be presented at the Council meeting on March 20, 2017.
- Snow removal on the new sidewalks will be managed as multi-use trails, so will be a responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Questions and concerns about the development at 38th and Wadsworth:

- The City has asked to hire a designer who can ensure that all the sites are integrated with clear pedestrian crossings and good landscaping. The developer has had conversations with Tokyo Joe's and Big Daddy's about renting units in the development.

- One Council member asked about plans to construct a barrier around the current residential units adjacent to the project that would minimize aesthetic shock and facilitate a smooth transition.

Questions and concerns about the development at Clear Creek Crossing:

- The new development plan includes a 30-acre office complex, 300-unit multifamily residences, a Super Walmart, hotels, and a village center/”eatertainment” district.
- There was some confusion about how the hook ramps proposed for Clear Creek Crossing would impact westbound I-70 traffic. It is unclear yet whether there would be a significant disruption from the construction, as it depends on whether the shoulder would be blocked off.
- The total cost for the Clear Creek Crossing development is approximately \$175 million. The development is projected to generate \$3.5 million annually in new city revenue; 2E would finance \$10 million for the hook ramps; and the City is negotiating an agreement with the developer to finance up to an additional \$17 million for other public improvements. Staff will present a financial framework to Council when it developed. The projected completion date for the development is 2018-2020.

A few Council members asked about creating a Police Department substation at this new development, as it is on the far west side of Wheat Ridge. It was confirmed that this concept has been discussed with the Police Chief.

Department Work Plans

Administrative Services Department:

- The Department will assist in the completion of a citywide conversion to digital timesheets and scheduling.
- Most divisions are focusing on aspects of the 2E implementation. The Accounting Division supported a 2E bonding process by providing financial information to be used in bond offering documents and creating processes for ongoing debt servicing and continuing disclosure reporting requirements.
- The Department will assist in the creation of a citywide innovation team. The team will encourage creative approaches to process improvement, cost savings, and efficiencies throughout the City.

Community Development:

- The Department will update the City’s sign code to comply with a US Supreme Court decision and other miscellaneous modernization updates.
- The Department is working to extend the moratorium on freestanding emergency rooms.
- In collaboration with the Police Department, the Public Works Department, and the Parks and Recreation Department, the Community Development Department, will develop strategies to revitalize the I-70/Kipling interchange area to reduce crime, address long-term stay lodging and create opportunities for redevelopment.

Police Department:

- The Department will develop and implement a Citizen Advisory Committee.
- The Department will continue planning, training, policy development, and change management strategies for the transition to a regional communications center (JEFFCOM) in the fourth quarter of 2017.
- The Department will work with community stakeholders on the issues and challenges related to homelessness in Wheat Ridge and Jefferson County.
- The Department will plan and conduct an emergency preparedness exercise for all department supervisors and at least one “active shooter” exercise with a school.

Municipal Court:

- The Department is remodeling the court entryway to accommodate security equipment and provide meeting space for attorneys, witnesses, and staff.
- The Department will hold cross-training, goal setting, and staff education to assist in professional development.

Parks and Recreation:

- The Department will complete the Master Plan for the Anderson Park renovation and award the contract for design development and construction drawings.
- Johnson Park – Clear Creek Trail reconstruction
- The Department will renovate existing ballfields and the irrigation system in Prospect Park and construct a new football field, sidewalk, shelter, and drainage system.
- The Department will install a new equipment storage building at the Public Works maintenance yard.

Public Works:

- The Department will continue working on the Gold Line Ward Road Station area improvement. In collaboration with Community Development and the City Manager’s Office, they will finalize the visioning plan, identify, prioritize, and schedule improvements, and design and construct the project.
- The Department will continue implementation of the Capital Investment Plan, including the 2E projects of Wadsworth Boulevard and Clear Creek Crossing.
- The Department is mandated to complete the American Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan, present it to City Council, and implement the plan.
- The Department will complete the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan update, present it to City Council, and commence implementation of the plan.
- The Department will complete plans and commence construction of the 29th Avenue re-alignment at Fenton Street.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4 – SENIOR RESOURCE CENTER

Strategic Planning: Goals and Action Items

City Council members worked in facilitated small groups to develop new goals for the City regarding the topics outlined in the revised Vision 2035. In these small groups, Council members brainstormed 2035 goals for each topic and action items to be completed in 2017-2018. The small groups visited four stations, each with two 2035 Vision Topics written at the top. Council members were asked to brainstorm goals that were specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and timely (SMART) and to specify the responsible department or person for each action item. Council was also asked to be mindful of current staff commitments when discussing potential 2017-2018 action items. Below is a summary of the goals and action items discussed during this exercise.

2035 VISION TOPIC: Wheat Ridge is an attractive and inviting city	
2035 SMART GOAL 1: Develop a visual art presence in the City	
2035 SMART GOAL 2: Ensure that the City has attractive and inviting open space and parks	
2035 SMART GOAL 3: Underground utility lines in commercial corridors and improve streetscapes	
2017-2018 ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON OR DEPARTMENT
Define the best place for an art presence through a public engagement process and support the Cultural Committee in creating a master art plan	Parks and Recreation
Plan, assess, and prioritize options to underground utility lines	Public Works
Create a ballot question to expedite the undergrounding of utility lines	City Manager
Investigate and develop an incentive program for homeowner investment	Community Development and Housing Authority
Update and create stricter and more proactive code enforcement	Police Department
Establish a rental inspection program	Community Development and Police Department
Update the sign code	Community Development and City Attorney

2035 VISION TOPIC: Wheat Ridge is a community for families	
2035 SMART GOAL 1: Improve the quality of Wheat Ridge’s public schools	
2035 SMART GOAL 2: Ensure that seniors are able to age in place	
2035 SMART GOAL 3: Support residents in taking an active role in community policing	
2035 SMART GOAL 4: Create a baseline assessment for “live, work, and play” metrics	

2035 SMART GOAL 5: Build a new library in Wheat Ridge	
2017-2018 ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON OR DEPARTMENT
Increase enrollment in neighborhood schools; identify problems that are specific to those schools and research how other cities have addressed similar problems	Wheat Ridge Education Alliance
Conduct a needs assessment of current senior programs	Administrative Services
Start a senior watch program to ensure that they are safe during the winter months	Police
Assist residents in setting up a neighborhood watch program	Police
Identify historical neighborhoods	Community Development
Work with Jefferson County Library District to develop partnerships for library planning	City Manager

2035 VISION TOPIC: Wheat Ridge has great neighborhoods	
2035 SMART GOAL 1: Set a clear policy to achieve diverse housing options	
2035 SMART GOAL 2: Facilitate neighbor-to-neighbor relations	
2035 SMART GOAL 3: Expand proactive code enforcement	
2035 SMART GOAL 4: Create a Complete Streets Program and assessment	
2017-2018 ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON OR DEPARTMENT
Resolve the status of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	Community Development
Update the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy (NRS)	City Manager
Set policy on “shared housing” (e.g., AirBnB)	Community Development
Expand the proactive traffic safety, life quality, and crime reduction (TLC) program	Police Department
Identify neighborhood “captains” and provide support for them	Local Works
Market Local Works neighborhood programs	Local Works
Identify and prioritize complete street improvements	Public Works
Create and update stricter code enforcement regulations	Police / Community Development
Create and support neighborhood internet Sharepoint programs	Administrative Services

2035 VISION TOPIC: Wheat Ridge has a choice of economically viable commercial areas	
2035 SMART GOAL 1: Build out key development sites along I-70 corridor (2025)	
2035 SMART GOAL 2: Provide support to existing commercial areas	
2035 SMART GOAL 3: Proactively identify emerging redevelopment areas	
2035 SMART GOAL 4: Become a leader in technological infrastructure	
2017-2018 ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON OR DEPARTMENT
Work with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to prioritize I-70/Kipling improvements	City Manager
Finalize design of 38 th Avenue streetscape	City Council
Market sites to the development community	City Manager
Develop an I-70/Kipling Corridor Strategy (to address crimes, aesthetics, redevelopment opportunities)	City Manager, Police, Community Development
Provide funding for business area marketing and organized support	City Manager
Create a plan identifying mid- and long-term redevelopment sites	City Manager and Community Development
Assess Internet Sales Tax leakage	Administrative Services
Incentivize priority business clusters	City Manager
Educate the community on Urban Renewal, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), and the Enhanced Sales Tax Incentive Program (ESTIP)	City Manager
Initiate proactive rezoning	Community Development

2035 VISION TOPIC: Wheat Ridge has diverse transportation	
2035 SMART GOAL 1: Improve public transportation and connectivity	
2035 SMART GOAL 2: Implement 50% of bike/pedestrian plan	
2035 SMART GOAL 3: Identify areas of need for public transportation	
2035 SMART GOAL 4: Increase connectivity to surrounding communities and local gathering centers (to ten new locations)	
2035 SMART GOAL 5: Maintain the level of existing RTD routes by 90%	
2035 SMART GOAL 6: Decrease barriers to the G line	
2017-2018 ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON OR DEPARTMENT
Coordinate with other communities on connectivity options between communities options between communities	Public Works
Finalize the bike/pedestrian master plan and the ADA plan	Public Works
Work on connections between public transportation and development	Public Works
Identify and prioritize connectivity options to the G line	Public Works
Improve pedestrian mobility on 29 th Avenue	Public Works

Implement a circulator bus service between the G line, commercial centers, and the Senior Resource Center	Public Works
Build sidewalks from 32 nd to 35 th	Public Works
Maintain bike lanes	Public Works
Support rideshare programs like Uber and Lyft	
Implement a bike-share program	
Support transportation maintenance companies	City Manager

2035 VISION TOPIC: Wheat Ridge is committed to environmental stewardship	
2035 SMART GOAL 1: Decrease the City's carbon footprint by 5%	
2035 SMART GOAL 2: Improve Clear Creek water quality	
2035 SMART GOAL 3: Increase resident participation in an integrated waste management program to 80% of the population	
2035 SMART GOAL 4: Create a Sustainability Department by 2018	
2035 SMART GOAL 5: Increase street sweeping by 50%	
2035 SMART GOAL 5: Manage storm water more effectively and safely	
2017-2018 ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON OR DEPARTMENT
Promote recycling opportunities	WRESC
Implement a glass recycling program	WRESC
Reuse, repurpose, and recycle asphalt	WRESC
Use natural gas as fuel	WRESC
Create an Environmental Stewardship Committee	City Manager
Identify actionable tasks in each department	Parks and Recreation
Attract environmental stewards/entrepreneurs to the community	WRESC
Increase dog waste awareness	WRESC
Conduct an environmental impact study of the homeless population	WRESC
Increase xeriscape education	WRESC
Hold Dumpster Days for electronics, chemicals, etc.	WRESC
Identify the top five pollutants in the City (water, chemicals, lead pipes, etc.)	WRESC
Discuss how to finance the Drainage, Infrastructure, Roads, and Trails (DIRT) Task Force	City Manager

2035 VISION TOPIC: Wheat Ridge residents enjoy an active, healthy lifestyle
2035 SMART GOAL 1: Increase young family participation by ____% in City-sponsored recreation programs
2035 SMART GOAL 2: Develop an active relationship with Lutheran Medical Center (LMC) and plan and implement three programs that promote an active, healthy lifestyle
2035 SMART GOAL 3: Create metrics and evaluation programs for defining an active, healthy lifestyle

2017-2018 ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON OR DEPARTMENT
Update plans and investigate funding for a ballot initiative expanding the recreation center	Parks and Recreation
Conduct a gap analysis regarding City programs/partnerships and resident needs for mental, physical, and emotional resources	Parks and Recreation
Complete an assessment of all City programs promoting the vision and identify opportunities for partnerships with LMC	Parks and Recreation
Identify Council's role in potential oversteps in the City's role in promoting active, healthy lifestyles	City Manager
Identify a percentage target for young family participation increase	Parks and Recreation

2035 VISION TOPC: Wheat Ridge residents are proud of their hometown	
2035 SMART GOAL 1: Create a public survey that captures the quality of resident life, specifically in terms of the "live, work, play" metrics	
2035 SMART GOAL 2: Create five additional opportunities for meaningful citizen engagement	
2035 SMART GOAL 3: Increase public participation by 20% in all city-wide meetings	
2017-2018 ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON OR DEPARTMENT
Fund a loan program through the Housing Authority (HA)	Community Development
Update and create stricter code regulations	Police Department
Identify choice destination metrics to inform future work plans	City Manager
Create a recognition campaign for hometown pride	Administrative Services
Create a charter commission to update the City Charter to increase pride in Wheat Ridge's government	City Manager
Create a City 101 course for residents	Administrative Services
Assess current levels of public participation and the needs of residents	Administrative Services

Additional Considerations Raised During Large Group Presentation of Goals and Action Items

- The goal of developing a stronger visual arts presence in the City was a priority for some and not for others.
- The goal of increasing the quality neighborhood schools sparked a conversation about responsibility. Some Council members did not believe that that this goal fit into the purview of City Council, and some believed that the onus rested with parents to deepen their engagement. There was also conversation about how the

City could attract a more diverse demographic that would be able to support the improvement of school quality.

- Regarding the topic of diverse transportation, Council members asked that staff work with RTD to confirm that they are not eliminating bus routes.
- Regarding the topic of active and healthy lifestyles, some Council members were not sure how to make goals realistic and measurable while still respecting residents' personal choices.

Group Reflection on the Exercise

City Council members reflected on the exercise, discussed recurring goals and action items that spanned the different topics, and shared the topics that they struggled with the most.

General Council Reflection

- Most Council members were interested in exploring the recurring themes that appeared under different topic headings. This might contribute to the creation of a more cohesive brand and vision for the community and help Council members prioritize issues. Code enforcement is an example of an action item that appeared multiple times. By promoting a single action item to advance multiple goals, the City will demonstrate efficiency and collaboration.
- Council agreed that the exercise generated productive conversation between individual members of Council who had not worked together in the past. The exercise revealed areas of common goals.
- One Council member expressed concern about a potential overreliance on assessment as a successful outcome or action item. This person urged the group to focus on tangible action items beyond studying a topic. Council members agreed that studying and assessing should only be a first step and not a final accomplishment.

Discussion of Topics that Council Struggled with:

- Many Council members struggled with the thin line between promoting an active, healthy lifestyle and forcing it on residents. Most agreed that Council should take an indirect role. The City has adopted a healthy eating and active living (HEAL) program.
- Some Council members struggled with identifying SMART goals and thought that developing action items was easier.
- Some Council members asked that Council work to develop a clear definition of the role and function of the "City." This would enable Council to outline which goals and action items lay outside of the City's purview and delegate tasks to staff more effectively. Defining the City's role would also provide residents with a clear set of expectations for the City.
- Some Council members agreed that an increase in the City's demographics would support the fulfillment of many of the specific goals, and thought that the City should plan to increase both the socioeconomic and racial diversity of the community.

Department Director Reflection:

- Department supervisors would like the Council to develop a clear purpose and strategy for code enforcement so that staff knows what to continue doing and what to stop doing. If Council hopes to pursue more proactive enforcement, that would require a shift in strategy.
- There was discussion about whether code enforcement should reside in a different department (the Police Department is currently responsible). There are cities that have created a Neighborhood Services Division that develops and enforces City codes.
- The Police Chief spoke to the importance of safety as it applied to each goal. Council discussed the importance of residents self-policing and taking responsibility for their own safety.
- Department Directors agreed that they would continue to clarify current efforts that aligned with the goals and action items established during the exercise.

Potential Areas of Duplication between Proposed Action Items and Ongoing Efforts

Council, department supervisors, and the City Manager considered potential areas of duplication/overlap between proposed action items and ongoing efforts for each topic and discussed how best to proceed. **Bolded** notes are agreed-upon action items.

Wheat Ridge is an Attractive and Inviting City

- Sign code revisions are planned to happen this year.
- A rental inspection program has been discussed, but Council has not reached a decision about how to prioritize. **Council agreed to have a study session on previous efforts and program options.**
- The City already has a homeowner incentive program, but it needs improvement and revision. **Council agreed to have a study session to compare successful incentive programs from other communities.**
- **Council agreed to have a study session on how code enforcement is managed in other communities (where it resides, etc.).**
- **Council agreed to discuss the financing of the Drainage, Infrastructure, Roads, and Trails (DIRT) Task Force as part of 2018's budget cycle.**
- **Staff was asked to research alternatives to creating a ballot question to expedite undergrounding of utility lines.**
- Regarding the goal of increasing Wheat Ridge's visual arts presences, the Cultural Committee is trying to create a Cultural Vision Plan. They requested an outside consultant for this and might require additional resources.

Wheat Ridge is a Community for Families:

- Staff is finishing an assessment of senior needs.
- **Council agreed to have a study session on the vision for neighborhood identity.** This will include a conversation about the development of potential neighborhood councils, as well as an update on street improvements, ADUs and

shared housing, and the NRS. The NRS discussion is high priority, as Council needs to provide staff with scope. Included in the NRS discussion is a conversation about initiating proactive rezoning.

Wheat Ridge has a Choice of Economically Viable Areas:

- Staff is currently working on the I-70/Kipling strategy.
- Staff continually markets to the development community.
- In terms of the leakage from the NRS sales tax, it looks to be approximately \$250,000. Regional organizations and finance staff are continuing to research this.
- Staff is working on creating brochures or informational packets to increase public education on Urban Renewal and TIF.
- **Council agreed to have a study session on the design of the 38th Avenue streetscape.**

Wheat Ridge has Diverse Transportation:

- Some work is being done on the sidewalks between 38th and Kipling to Youngfield.
- Staff is planning to present the finalized bike/pedestrian ADA plan at an upcoming study session. However, some of the other goals and action items cannot be addressed until the plan is finished.

Wheat Ridge is committed to environmental stewardship:

- There is nothing currently being done on stormwater utility. **Council agreed to have a study session on the key problem areas that need attention.**
- There is already a discussion planned for a future study session on the Sustainability Committee.
- Council agreed on the importance of creating a more comprehensive waste management program but thought that any discussion of this should happen after the Sustainability Committee has commenced their work.

Wheat Ridge Residents Enjoy an Active, Healthy Lifestyle:

- The City currently does not have a citizen committee or focus group to help decide and plan which programs should be offered.
- **Council agreed to have a study session to learn about what the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Committee is doing.**
- **Council agreed that staff should conduct a gap analysis on what needs remain after the recreation center development. Council agreed to have a study session to decide how they can support the study.** The study should involve Lutheran Medical Center, HEAL, outdoor/indoor recreation organizations, and Jefferson Center for Mental Health in the study.

Wheat Ridge Residents are Proud of Their Hometown:

- The City has been holding Citizen Academies every other year (similar to the proposed City 101 course). The Police Department is still doing police/citizen academies. **Council agreed to have a study session to learn about other options and programs that have been successful.** Council agreed that this program has the potential to increase citizen education and engagement, and it could even serve as the training for the proposed “neighborhood captains.”
- Staff is planning to present on the Charter Commission at an upcoming study session.
- **Council agreed that the PIO should research and commence a hometown pride campaign.** The campaign could capitalize on the upcoming 50th anniversary of Wheat Ridge, and push the “Born in Wheat Ridge” slogan to invite people back to the City. Include the Historical Society and LMC in the campaign.
- The Housing **Authority has** currently put a hold on their strategic plan and does not have enough resources to consider implementing a loan program. **Council agreed to have a study session do decide whether and how they want to loan money for affordable housing.**

GOVERNANCE

Council discussed how they function together, and their respective views of where room for improvement remains. Specifically, they discussed their views of the roles of elected officials, Council rules of order and procedures (including the current voting dynamic), building Council and community trust, and defining “agreement” in Council decision-making processes. The facilitator provided context for the conversation, referring to the pre-retreat interviews with Council members and offering the option of developing a code of conduct to provide rigor and clarity.

Council Voting Dynamic:

- Regarding concerns about “camping” among Council members in which there are sometimes common groups voting in the same ways, most Council members agreed that members often vote consistently on certain issues but always vote their conscience and not intentionally with or against certain people. If a pattern in voting does happen, Council agreed that it is typically around specific issues.

- Most Council members agreed that their opinions are informed by their constituents' input and that the diversity of Council members' opinions reflects the same diversity in the community.
- Most Council members agreed that the dais should be a place for constructive arguing with the purpose of fully vetting issues. One Council member specified that their comments made on the dais are not personal and should not be taken as a slight.
- Council members discussed the distinction between their legislative/policy role and their quasi-judicial function. Often the policy realm is where the most disagreements among Council members occur.

Trust among Council Members:

- Several Council members expressed frustration with the tone and binary framing of voting explanations given by Council members. For example, blanket statements such as "I voted for education, and you voted against education" are counter-productive to trust building. These types of statements often result in conclusions or assumptions being drawn from both sides.
- Most Council members agreed that they often attend the meetings with a firm idea of where they stand on an issue and do not necessarily have the time during the meeting to fully discuss alternative perspectives. Most Council members expressed a desire to remedy this and thought it would be helpful to talk with constituents before the meeting who represent both sides of an issue.
- One Council member requested that Council takes the time during meetings to actively deliberate on the dais after public comment, to ask questions of staff and each other, and to summarize what they heard during the deliberation and how/why they chose to vote the way they did. If Council does this, it would likely improve public opinion of Council and create a more fertile ground for trust and communication among Council members. One Council member emphasized the need to ask questions, even if the questions seem repetitive or have already been answered during a study session.
- Council members agreed that a greater level of trust must exist for them to feel comfortable being open with each other about what to expect from constituents during meetings. Trust among Council members is especially hard to maintain because there are antagonizing voices outside of the meetings that continually try to erode it. It is challenging to build and maintain trusting relationships both among Council members and with constituents.
- One Council member raised a concern about the timing and framing of certain questions asked by other Council members during public meetings. Specifically, the Council member thought that certain questions could be asked during study sessions but instead get raised at a public meeting for a dramatic impact. Also, many questions are framed as positions or are rhetorical in nature. This dynamic erodes trust.
- Council members agreed to call each other if they felt insulted or if they felt that other Council members had incorrectly assumed their intentions.

City Council Community Relations:

- A Council member urged his associates to focus on the decreased public approval rating of Wheat Ridge City Council (70% to 40% in the last ten years) and to consider why this has occurred.
- Council members agreed that they should utilize the time provided during public meetings to respond to public comment to answer direct questions.
- Most Council members agreed that they should strive to call an equal number of residents who support both sides of an issue if/when they want to ensure that their constituents are aware that Council will be discussing an important issue. Doing this would assist the Council member in understanding different views and build trust between the community and Council. Council members also agreed that there should be a more intentional effort to specifically call personal or professional experts in the fields that relate to the issue being discussed.
- Council members agreed that much of the public frustration with Council has stemmed from a feeling of not being heard. To begin to remedy this, Council agreed to practice active listening by summarizing what they have heard from residents, even if they do not agree.

City Council agreed to honor the following commitments in their future meetings and interactions with each other:

- Talk to people who do not agree with me
- Do not assume motives (just ask)
- No surprises
- Active listening
- When in doubt, talk to each other
- Prioritize understanding
- Share your *why* (your underlying interest)
- Close the loop on any promise to “get back to” a resident