

MEMO



TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: City Administrator, Jennifer Bergman
DATE: March 1, 2021
RE: City Administrator Report/Update

Goals Update

In July, the City Council adopted goals from the 2035 Comprehensive Plan. Attached is an update on the goals and objectives (see attached).

DDBC Holiday Lights Discussion

The Destination Downtown Business Coalition (DDBC) is meeting to discuss the potential replacement of the holiday lights downtown Brainerd. City and BPU representatives will also be attending this meeting to discuss the logistics.

Charter Commission

The Charter Commission cancelled their February meeting due to a family emergency for Attorney Langel. The next Charter Commission meeting will be held on March 10th and a recommendation for the next round of Charter amendments will be on the City Council agenda in April.



City Council Goals

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Land Use			
Goal	Strategies/Action Steps	Status	Staff Member/Dept
Goal 1: Support mixed-use development that is focused on integration instead of the separation of land uses.	Update city ordinances to reflect the changes in the plan	<i>Zoning Code Update is closing out Phase 1, and the Planning Commission is in the final stages of adopted an updated Future Land Use Map.</i>	CD Department
	Create policies that promote infill development and redevelopment	<i>Zoning Code Update is closing out Phase 1, and the Planning Commission is in the final stages of adopted an updated Future Land Use Map.</i>	CD Department
Goal 2: Through thoughtful planning, maintain the unique identity of the city and all appropriate land uses that support it.	Review, analyze, update and implement the suite of plans accordingly and consider new plans as they are adopted	<i>Planning Commission is in the final stages of adopting the Future Land Use Map.</i>	CD Department
	Develop new planning documents	<i>Zoning Code Update is closing out Phase 1.</i>	CD Department
	Deploy a form-based code for 1) Kingwood Street corridor and 2) Oak Street and 13 th node	<i>Zoning Code Update is closing out Phase 1.</i>	CD Department
	Via the City's website, show the progression of city planning	<i>Staff is researching strategies for effectively</i>	IT Department



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	initiatives, bench marking and long-range planning progresses	<i>communicating progress of the Comprehensive Plan and other initiatives with the public.</i>	
	Identify locations for special use district or overlays	<i>Zoning Code Update is closing out Phase I. Identification of potential special use districts or overlays will be an element of this update.</i>	CD and IT
Goal 3: Support and invest in the incremental enhancements of quality of life.	Formalize a downtown association	<i>Destination Downtown Business Coalition (DDBC) was formed; Administrator attends all DDBC meetings</i>	Admin/CD Department
	Take active steps to complete the MN Greenstep Cities program	<i>Community Development Director is working with the Assistant Planner with the goal to take the next steps in the Greenstep Cities Program in 2021.</i>	CD Department
Community Character			
Goal	Strategies/Action Steps	Status	Department



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Goal 1: Preserve and repurpose historic assets	Boost enforcement of city codes and ordinances	<i>As a result of COVID-19, staff is currently conducting code enforcement on a complaint driven basis per Council direction. However, staff plans on resuming proactive enforcement in the spring.</i>	CD Department
	Development a downtown beautification program	<i>Provided funds for banners in downtown Brainerd; Accepted donation of Babe the Blue Ox to be placed downtown; exploring painting of electrical boxes with DDBC and The Crossing Arts Alliance (TCAA)</i>	Parks and CD Departments
Goal 2: Enliven the community through intentional community design	Improve city-wide signage and wayfinding	<i>Staff have had numerous discussions with the staff of Crow Wing Energized, who desire to implement a wayfinding program in Brainerd. Discussions were placed on hold due to COVID, but plans for 2021 are in development. This is also an identified item of discussion by the Parking Commission.</i>	CD Department
	Leverage social media to market opportunities and existing success stories outward	<i>Intern created a social media calendar and posted regularly on City activities</i>	IT Department



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	<p>Integrate public art throughout the community in strategic locations</p>	<p><i>Accepted donation of Babe the Blue Ox to be placed downtown; exploring painting of electrical boxes with DDBC and The Crossing Arts Alliance (TCAA)</i></p>	<p>CD and Administration Departments</p>
	<p>Utilize tactical urbanism to evaluate pilot programs for implementation that improve walkability</p>	<p><i>Walkable Bikeable City Committee is actively looking at ways to increase walkability within the City. The comprehensive update of the Zoning Code is also looking into how the City's zoning effects walkability. Walkability is also an important issue for the Parking Commission. Engineering Department has been actively pursuing Transportation Alternatives and other funding opportunities to support Walkable Bikeable Plan and has been incorporating any infrastructure improvements adjacent to street improvements projects that are identified within the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan.</i></p>	<p>CD Department</p>



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Goal 3: Enhance the city's unique identity where the appropriate blend of historic and modern structures co-exists	Undergo a marketing and branding initiative	Park Board is exploring design standards for city parks.	Administration/IT Department/Parks
Housing			
Goal	Strategies/Action Steps	Status	Department
Goal 1: Provide a diverse mix of housing choices for all stages of life, income ranges and ownership/rental preferences	Support infill development	<i>Zoning Code Update is closing out Phase 1. Updating the zoning code to better support infill development is a key component to this strategy as the City's current Zoning Code is does not support infill development well.</i>	CD and Engineering Departments
	Ensure local land use controls and permitting procedures that do not discourage housing development	<i>Zoning Code Update is closing out Phase 1.</i>	
	Amend the comprehensive plan to include the updated housing study information	<i>The Comprehensive Plan is being updated to include the Crow Wing County HRA Workforce Housing Study when the Future Land Use</i>	CD Department



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		<i>Map update is complete and also included in the Comprehensive Plan.</i>	
Goal 2: Encourage the preservation and historical significance of existing neighborhoods	Seek ways to encourage mixed-use development/redevelopment in and around Brainerd where appropriate	<i>Exploring opportunities for mixed-use developments and redevelopments in Brainerd with developers. City and HRA staff have been working with a developer on a downtown redevelopment project, and also met with a current developer to discuss future residential development and redevelopment opportunities.</i>	CD Department and HRA
Goal 3: Ensure quality living conditions for all residents	Utilize targeted incentives to catalyze improvements within neighborhoods	<i>Staff is actively looking into incentives for residential improvements within the City. Staff hopes to provide the City Council with an update in mid-2021</i>	CD Department and HRA
Mobility			
Goal	Strategies/Action Steps	Status	Department
Goal 1: Maintain, develop and adapt a dynamic multimodal transportation system within	Actively implement the walkable/bikeable city plan	<i>Walkable Bikeable City Committee is actively looking at ways to increase walkability within the City, including</i>	CD Department



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<p>Brainerd that seamlessly accommodates all users</p>		<p><i>updating the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. Walkability is also a key component of the Zoning Code Update as well as a significant issue for the Parking Commission.</i></p>	
	<p>Hold yearly street live events</p>	<p><i>COVID restricted many events in 2020 but working with DDBC on 2021 events including the Farmers Market</i></p>	<p>Parks and CD Department</p>
<p>Goal 2: Continue to work collaboratively with MnDOT, federal and state agencies, neighboring cities, the private sector, residents and other agency partners to improve the mobility network in the region</p>	<p>In consideration of fiscal constraints and long-term maintenance, prioritize the maintenance of the existing transportation network and only expand thoughtfully and strategically</p>	<p><i>Current projects underway help to address transportation network deficiencies (ie TH 371 B Reconstruction and sidewalk improvements FY 2022 FY 2022, Highway 25 Bridge and Trail Construction FY 2022 with MnDOT, Highway 210 Reconstruction FY 2025 with MnDOT, Cuyuna Lakes State Trail Construction FY 2022 with MnDNR)</i></p>	<p>Engineering and CD Departments</p>
<p>Goal 3: Elevate consideration of other modes of transportation such as public transit, bicyclists and pedestrians to the same level as automobile users</p>	<p>Extend and increase the capacity of roadways that enhance circulation, mobility and anticipated growth and development</p>	<p><i>Focus in recent years has been maintenance of existing transportation systems and allowing for more pedestrian</i></p>	<p>Engineering and CD Departments</p>



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		<i>friendly infrastructure in lieu of street capacity upgrades.</i>	
	Use tactical urbanism and/or demonstration projects to identify and study pedestrian and bicycle improvements	<i>City staff have actively used the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan to implement priority projects as identified in the plan while also pursuing funding opportunities through State and Federal Programs (ie Transportation Alternatives, Safe Routes to School, MnDNR, LCCMR)</i>	Engineering and CD Departments
Economic Development			
Goal	Strategies/Action Steps	Status	Department
Goal 1: Support infill and redevelopment throughout Brainerd as a strategic component of growth	Keep a log of blighted or vacant properties	<i>An existing vacant properties map is available on the City's website. The Community Development Department plans on taking another look at the map in summer 2021 to ensure its accuracy.</i>	CD and IT/GIS Department
Goal 2: Support our workforce and help them thrive	Collaborate with local partners and stakeholders to address industry workforce needs	<i>Working with HRA and developer for potential workforce housing project in downtown Brainerd.</i>	Admin, HRA, BLAEDC, CD



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<p>Goal 3: Help local businesses grown and attract new businesses in our neighborhoods along our main corridors and downtown</p>	<p>Explore business improvement district options for the downtown</p>	<p><i>The Destination Downtown Brainerd Coalition (DDBC) is a grassroots group of downtown business owners who have come together to improve the downtown. City staff are actively working with DDBC on programs to further enhance the downtown.</i></p>	<p>BLAEDC, HRA and CD Department</p>
	<p>Appropriately budget funds for economic development and marketing</p>	<p><i>Staff recommended an economic dev incentives fund for 2021 EDA budget, which was adopted by the EDA at \$30,000; Portion of the funds to be used by DDBC to hire a downtown coordinator. Allocated \$25,000 in May 2020 for marketing Allocated an add'l \$25,000 in CARES Act funds for marketing</i></p>	<p>EDA and BLAEDC</p>
	<p>Develop a set of programs to help grow and promote business development</p>	<p><i>Will be considering programs with BLAEDC and EDA in 2021</i></p>	<p>BLAEDC</p>
	<p>Enhance the downtown retail environment</p>	<p><i>Participate in DDBC meetings; assisted DDBC with installation of banners; assisted Brainerd Restoration</i></p>	<p>EDA and BLAEDC</p>



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		<i>with the installation of speakers downtown</i>	
	Support businesses that promote entrepreneurship	<i>Working with the IF on an Enterprise Academy; Worked with the Entrepreneur Fund to identify downtown businesses to participate</i>	EDA and BLAEDC
Parks and Recreation			
Goal	Strategies/Action Steps	Status	Department
Goal 1: Brainerd will maintain a quality parks system that meets the recreational needs of a variety of users	Conduct a series of long-range plans	<i>Park Board surveyed all parks in 2020; created a capital plan for park improvements; will be discussing potential future masterplans for parks.</i>	Engineering and Parks Department
	Incorporate maintenance and improvement costs into future park system decisions		Parks Department
	Enhance safe walking and cycling routes	<i>The City was awarded \$2.85 million by LCCMR (pending legislative adoption) to construct the Mississippi Landing Trailhead Park, which will act as a regional trailhead for various state and local trails. Bill adopting LCCMR funding recommendations should reach the House floor</i>	CD and Parks Department



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		<i>in February 2021. If approved, funding will become available on July 1, 2021.</i>	
Goal 2: Brainerd will collaborate with local community partners to maximize the value and impact of the park system	Encourage the Park Board to seek revenue-generating sources within the parks and facilities		Parks Department
	Join the 10-minute walk campaign through the Trust for Public Land		Parks Department
Goal 3: Seek ways to expand event programming for each park in order to highlight the unique qualities of each neighborhood	Work with public artists to integrate public art into neighborhood parks	<i>Began discussions with The Crossing Arts Alliance on painting electrical boxes; received Babe the Ox statue, partnered with TCAA to work with a local artist to paint it.</i>	Admin, Parks and CD Departments
Facilities & Infrastructure			
Goal	Strategies/Action Steps	Status	Department
Goal 1: Improve the overall image of the city	Ensure that adequate infrastructure is provided to areas targeted for growth (residential, commercial and industrial)	<i>Adequate infrastructure is in place for all development types and city staff have been actively maintaining these areas to ensure they are suitable and appealing to prospective developers.</i>	<i>Engineering, Community Development.</i>



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Goal 2: Preserve the history and small-town feel of Brainerd	Prioritize infrastructure investments within existing neighborhoods and potential areas of growth		
Goal 3: Provide quality water/power and wastewater systems that support new and existing development and redevelopment; all while being adaptive to change	Continue to research and explore methods for funding options		
	Encourage the use of stormwater best management practices to improve local and regional water quality	<i>Engineering Department has been working on plans including Stormwater Retrofit Plan, Brainerd Hydraulic and Hydrologic model, and new MS4 permit and Stormwater Pollution and Prevention plan FY 2021 to apply for new MS4 permit. Focus will turn to implementation and applying for Clean Water Fund grants to fund projects as identified in these plans and to implement the plans in their entirety.</i>	<i>Engineering Department</i>
Public Safety			



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Goal	Strategies/Action Steps	Status	Department
Goal 1: Brainerd will protect and provide for the safety of residents and visitors	Continuously seek to eradicate crime through innovative and contemporary strategies including preventative, proactive and responsive measures	<i>On – going with an emphasis with staff to be proactive within our neighbors to build positive relationship – pending COVID timelines</i>	PD
	Fill the vacant police officer positions	<i>Up to 25 police officers – focus on local recruitment and CLC students 2021 create new hiring list</i>	PD/HR
Goal 2: Evaluate and improve Brainerd’s emergency management	Promote and expand existing programs whereby private business voluntarily share closed circuit security camera footage with law enforcement	<i>Plan in 2021 – Grant seeking for technology opportunities and reach out community partners</i>	PD
Goal 3: Continue to seek out and foster partnerships to better prepare the public and city staff for emergencies and natural disasters in the context of a changing climate	Continue to work with the school district with current and long-range planning efforts	<i>SRO involvement planned in all ISD facilities – threat assessment assignment of officers to individual elementary schools/private schools</i>	PD
	Continue partnerships and programs with MnDOT such as Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) and Towards Zero Deaths (TZD)	<i>See grant funding to update bicycle equipment and train officers on education and safety</i>	PD



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Natural Resources			
Goal	Strategies/Action Steps	Status	Department
Goal 1: Protect and preserve our waterways, wetlands and wooded areas, and identify threats to native species within and around the City	Conduct an evaluation of city-wide opportunities to integrate low impact development solutions		Parks, Engineering and CD
	Develop a best management practice guide or education series around water quality	<i>Stormwater retrofit analysis has been completed along with a full hydraulic model of City's stormwater infrastructure. Focus will turn to implementation of stormwater best management strategies to prepare the City for future MS4 permits and impending Total Maximum Daily Load Allocations.</i>	Engineering
	Clearly identify greenways and corridors that should be preserved	<i>Tree replacement program into the future will provide necessary funds to provide for green infrastructure by planting trees where diseased and dead trees have left gaps.</i>	Parks and Engineering



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	Develop a tree replacement plan	<i>Budgeted \$25,000 in streets and parks budget for tree replacement in 2021; Parks received a DNR grant for Emerald Ash Borer to complete a tree inventory, replace and treat diseased ash trees and develop a plan for tree resources</i>	Parks, Engineering and CD
Goal 2: Increase access to open space	Review and revise subdivision ordinances to reflect the content of the plan	<i>Zoning Code Update is closing out Phase 1. Subdivision ordinances will be amended to match the updated zoning code upon completion.</i>	CD
	Review and revise site design guidelines to align with the polices of this plan	<i>Zoning Code Update is closing out Phase 1.</i>	CD