

We are here and now....so what are we going to do to move forward.

We have a great vision and mission with well articulated goals and objectives. What is the strategy to achieve the vision and mission? My viewpoints for moving forward:

1. The solution of asking for new taxes or additional taxes is not a good one in the current economic conditions.
2. Our tax structure needs to be amended. There needs to be community dialogue and voter participation on the amendment. Council and Mayor should lead!
3. We should continue to develop five year forecasting and move towards developing five year full budget(s) beginning 2011.
4. Look to consolidate departments, aggressively pursuing combining services with surrounding communities, or contracting services out.
5. Eliminate services that are not critical to the functioning of the city govt.
 - a. Progress is being made to privatize Van Hoosen Museum. We need to set a deadline of 2012 by which an Action Plan is developed and implementation begins.
 - b. All EEC programs should be privatized to be collaborated and conducted by non-profit organizations.
 - c. The need for us to have a city TV should be evaluated
6. Facilities Fund has a balance of \$8.3 million as of Dec 2009. More than what I projected during the discussions last year of the 2010 budget. We need to stop putting more funds freeze the transfer of funds from General Fund for a period of three to five years to sustain police services and local road reconstruction.
7. Capital Fund has a balance over \$3 million. This is an opportunity for using some of the funds in short-term to sustain local road reconstruction.
8. Sustaining employee benefits at the current levels of 14% contribution to pension, 3.5% to 5% longevity year after year will be difficult. Rising health care costs need to be addressed more than what is being done now.
9. If none of the above makes sense, it will definitely force us to doing more layoffs, and cutting salaries and wages by 5% - 10% or so.
10. Council should be willing to forego their salary and benefits and the Mayor willing to take cuts during these tough economic times.

My hope is we will spend more time in discussing and developing a comprehensive approach to the budget for a sustainable long-term.