

FOUNTAIN HILLS
STRATEGIC PLAN



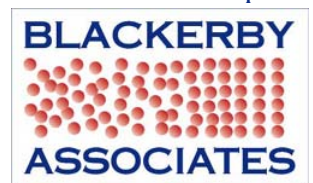
Our Town. Our Choices.
A Road Map to the Future

Implementing the *Strategic Plan*
Town Council and Staff
Planning Retreats 2007

Town Council Planning Retreat • February 2, 2007
Senior Staff Planning Retreat • February 23, 2007

Adopted April 5, 2007

Facilitation and Report:



Transforming Organizations

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**TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS
COUNCIL PLANNING RETREAT 2007**



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TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS COUNCIL PLANNING RETREAT 2007



Introduction

On February 2, 2007, the Town of Fountain Hills Town Council and Town Manager met at Boulder House to consider goals and objectives for the 2007-2008 budget year, July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. This one-day off-site retreat is part of an annual planning program. The meeting was posted as a public meeting, though no decisions were made and no formal votes were taken. The Town Council retreat participants included:

- Mayor Wally Nichols
- Vice-Mayor Keith McMahan
- Council Member Mike Archambault
- Council Member Ginny Dickey
- Council Member Ed Kehe
- Council Member Henry Leger
- Town Manager Tim Pickering

Council Member Jay Schlum was absent due to illness. He expressed his disappointment at not being able to participate in this planning process. Several Senior Staff members were present as observers, as were a few members of the public. Council Members, the Town Manager and the facilitators participated in the discussions, though Senior Staff members responded to questions.

Three weeks later, February 23, 2007, the Town's senior staff met at the same location to consider the Council's goals and objectives, and to develop tactical and operational objectives for the 2007-2008 budget year. This one-day off-site retreat is also part of an annual operating planning program.

Participants at the senior staff retreat included: Judge Ted Armbruster; Bev Bender, Town Clerk; Don Clark, Parks Supervisor; Samantha Coffman, Community Center Supervisor; Julie Ghatti, Finance Director; Megan Griego, Economic Development Specialist; Stephanie Haddy, Senior Services Supervisor; Bryan Hughes, Recreation Supervisor; Captain John Kleinheinz, Maricopa County Sheriff's Office; Eric Kriwer, Fire Marshal; Scott LaGreca, Fire Chief; Mark Mayer, Parks & Recreation Director; Joan McIntosh, Human Resources Administrator; Tim Pickering, Town Manager; Susan Trocki, Administrative Assistant; Richard Turner, Planning & Zoning Administrator; Tom Ward, Public Works Director; Shaunna Williams, Executive Assistant; and Kate Zanon, Office of the Town Manager.

Both retreats were facilitated by Phillip Blackerby and Lynne Brown of Blackerby Associates.

This document summarizes the results of both the Town Council and the Senior Staff retreats. On April 5, 2007, the Town Council modified and adopted the goals and objectives in this report as its priorities for budget year 2007-2008. The Town Council Goals shown on pages 3 through 6 of this report include the verbatim modifications adopted by Council on April 5, 2007.

Town senior staff will develop internal operating plans to identify and sequence tasks and staff assignments to implement the adopted goals and objectives. Senior Staff will also report periodically to the Town Council on progress in achieving the goals and objectives.



Executive Summary: Action Plan for Fiscal Year 2007-2008

During the Town Council retreat, participants set goals through Fiscal Year 2007-2008 (July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008), as guidance to the Town Staff. The goals are presented below under headings from the Town's *Strategic Plan 2006-2010*, adopted December 1, 2005, which lists Strategic Priorities for the first two years of the planning period, 2006-2007, and for years 3-5 of the planning period, 2008-2010.

The Town Council selected six topics for goal development. In interviews with the facilitators prior to the retreat, Council Members identified topics they thought the Council should address in the next year. The facilitators consolidated those topics into a single list, arrayed against the *Strategic Plan*. In the retreat, Council Members added several topics to the list. Council Members used seven red "dots" (stickers) to indicate their choices for goal development topics, using only one dot for any topic. The topics receiving the highest numbers of dots, and at least four dots, were selected for goal development.

The six topics the Council selected for developing goals for Fiscal Year 2007-2008, in random order, are:

- Financial implementation of Strategic Plan;
- Revenue shortfall;
- Annex State Trust Land;
- Enhance pedestrian safety;
- Enhance environmental stewardship;
- Enhance economic development.

The Council wrote eight goals under these six topics; the Council wrote two goals each for the "revenue shortfall" and "enhance environmental stewardship" topics. In addition, the Council wrote three objectives under the goal for "enhance pedestrian safety."

The senior staff wrote SMART¹ objectives to implement all eight of the Council's goals. Two goals under the "revenue shortfall" topic are closely interrelated, so the senior staff wrote one set of four objectives that would lead to accomplishment of both goals at the same time. The senior staff also re-wrote the Council objectives under "enhance pedestrian safety," addressing each of the three subjects of those objectives, but putting them into the SMART format to improve accountability.

¹ SMART: Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic and Time-bound.



Town Council Goals, Fiscal Year 2007-2008

Develop financial implementation plan for strategic priorities.

Goal 1. To create a timeline and implementation plan for the second year of the Strategic Plan.

Objective 1.1. To approve formally the Council's goals and objectives by March 15, 2007.

Objective 1.2. To identify and assign responsibility and costs of implementing the Council goals and objectives through the budget process by April, 2007

Resolve projected revenue shortfall by Dec. 31, 2007

Goal 2. To make a recommendation by December 31, 2007 for a resolution of the revenue shortfall, for the community.

Goal 3. To contract an economic study of the current and future impacts of changes in key revenue options.

Goals 2 and 3 are closely interrelated, so their implementation objectives are consolidated; implementing these objectives will result in both goals being accomplished:

Objective 3.1. The Strategic Plan Advisory Commission, in cooperation with a consultant, conduct the appropriate research and identify options to deal with our revenue shortfall.

Objective 3.2. Utilizing input from the SPAC and the consultant, a consortium of citizens, businesses, civic organizations, the SPAC and representatives of the Council propose a tax package.

Objective 3.3. We enter into a comprehensive public education process on the tax package proposed.

Objective 3.4. A scientific survey of citizens is conducted to determine whether or not the community will support the tax package proposed, and based on the survey the Council either proposes a ballot issue in May of 2008 or, if there is a thumbs down, then we, at that point, have to consider movement in another direction.

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Work with local schools

The Council noted that it will continue ongoing activities working with the Fountain Hills Unified School District the next year, including development of joint-use parks on District lands.

Low-water native landscaping

The Council noted that this Strategic Priority was effectively achieved in Fiscal Year 2006-2007.

Strictly enforce General Plan & zoning ordinances

The Council noted that it will continue ongoing implementation of this Strategic Priority during the next year.

Create commercial architecture review board

The Council noted that this Strategic Priority was effectively achieved in Fiscal Year 2006-2007.

Annex State Trust Land

The Council noted that, while it annexed the State Trust Land during 2006, the State Land Commission sold the land on March 15, 2007. Additional work with the new owner will be required before the land is developed.

Goal 4. To ensure responsible development of the State Trust Land for the community, in keeping with the character of the community.

Objective 4.1. To guarantee understanding of the development regulations and community character by the property owner (developer) by January 1, 2008.

Objective 4.2. To enhance processing of applications by Town departments by reviewing all submitted applications within two weeks.

Objective 4.3. To advise and facilitate community understanding of proposed development in keeping with the character of the community prior to public hearings.

Objective 4.4. To implement and apply the new PAD zoning ordinance to ensure keeping with the character of the community, by January 1, 2008.

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Enhance pedestrian safety

Goal 5. To improve pedestrian safety for residents and visitors

- Objective 5.1. To evaluate the existing draft study of pedestrian walkways relative to all schools, and present recommendations to the Town Council, by May 5, 2007 .
- Objective 5.2. To evaluate the existing draft study of sidewalk gaps forcing pedestrians into the street along major thoroughfares, and present recommendations to the Town Council, by May 5, 2007
- Objective 5.3. To assess the adequacy of downtown crosswalks, with recommendations to the Town Council, by June 14, 2007.
- Objective 5.4. To write a transportation study for the three minor arterials (Fountain Hills Blvd., Palisades and Saguaro) by March 2008.
- Objective 5.5. To develop a plan of action to improve crossing conditions at the Avenue of the Fountains-Fountain Park crossing to increase pedestrian safety and present a plan of action to Council by May 14, 2007.

Enhance stewardship of the natural environment

Goal 6. To provide open access to the McDowell Mountain Preserve for the public.

- Objective 6.1. To select a public access point to the McDowell Mountain Preserve by May 3, 2007.
- Objective 6.2. To reach an agreement with the appropriate association or owner on the site chosen by June 1, 2007
- Objective 6.3. To prepare a master park plan and construction documents by January 1, 2008.
- Objective 6.4. To construct a parking lot by April 2008.
- Objective 6.5. To construct a trail by April 2008 (construction in parallel with parking lot).

(Continued)

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Enhance stewardship of the natural environment (Continued)

- Goal 7. To create a responsible environmental policy for the community, addressing: air quality, dark skies, water, noise, recycling, hazardous waste, energy, solar energy, solid waste, trails and natural environment.
- Objective 7.1. To research all existing Town environmental policies and consolidate them into one report by July 1, 2007.
 - Objective 7.2. To identify gaps in existing Town environmental policies by July 1, 2007.
 - Objective 7.3. To research the laws and model policies of the State and the League of Arizona Cities and Towns by October 1, 2007.
 - Objective 7.4. To present a report to Town Council, and develop a consensus on environmental issues and liabilities by March 1, 2008.
 - Objective 7.5. To present to Town Council draft policy recommendations for agreed issues by June 1, 2008.
 - Objective 7.6. The formation of this comprehensive plan does not preclude action during the interim that is environmental in nature.

Business relations: integration with the Town and economic development

While business relations were not addressed by the Town's *Strategic Plan 2006-2010*, the issue was raised in the Town Council's discussion at the retreat, and the Council wrote a goal.

- Goal 8. To promote commercial development and business vitality in Fountain Hills, to meet consumer needs.
- Objective 8.1. To implement the business retention program by May 1, 2007.
 - Objective 8.2. To reveal common issues affecting business success by administering 10 business retention surveys by December 31, 2007.
 - Objective 8.3. To determine the Town's top five retail gaps, and contact businesses that might fill them, by December 31, 2007.
 - Objective 8.4. To update the Town's *General Plan* to include current economic development elements by June 30, 2008.
 - Objective 8.5. To develop an economic development plan for the 13-acre parcel on the south of the Avenue; to present the plan to Council by June, 2008.
 - Objective 8.6. To maintain a collaborative partnership with the Chamber in supporting the implementation of the Chamber's Fountain Hills Business Vitality Plan; ongoing through fiscal year 07-08.

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Council Retreat: Teambuilding

As an icebreaker and teambuilding exercise, Council Members were asked to share some personal information in response to the following questions. These questions were adapted for the Town Manager, shown below.

- Why did you originally decide to run for Town Council?
- Why do you think you were elected?
- What is your Role?
- What do you need from others to do your role the way you would like to?

The responses to these questions included:

Town Council Members

Why did you originally decide to run for Town Council?

- Public service, contribute, active in community, 3 generations, vision for town to evolve into small town, safe, business friendly, education, art, environment... woman on Council.
- Lots of issues: preserve State Trust Land, environment.
- Distraught over direction of town.
- Chaos.
- Not enough business representation, opposed preserve...the original plan.
- Advance vision and values, financial health, downtown businesses, quality of life, growth, strategic plan.

Why do you think you were elected?

- Committed, non-partisan, know a lot of people.
- Vision resonated, changed direction, strategic plan.
- Well-known, experienced: roads, schools, Chamber of Commerce.
- Citizen focused, positive, optimism, not one issue candidate.
- Lot of shoe leather, listened, put face to name...always ask why not?
- Listener...75 coffees, house to house, face to face. Then unopposed for next election.

What is your Role?

- Listen, act, plan, improve quality of life.
- Open mind, no agenda...further cause of open government.
- Represent my vision...balance, planned community...diversity...build a city.
- Represent and serve, objective, best interest of town, informed decisions, learn, lead with integrity, high involvement.
- Finger on pulse, listen and act, follow and lead.
- Leadership: facilitate, build consensus, outside face of community.

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What do you need from others to do your role the way you would like to?

- Trust, full knowledge, share goals.
- Communication leads to wise decisions.
- Cooperation, communication, support, camaraderie.
- Open, honest communication, non-manipulative, whole story, objective, complete, timely, lead time, respect, managed resistance, ask for my input.
- Respectfully listen to each other. Follow the organization chart...the citizens at the top of the chart, then the Town Council, then the Town Manager.
- No surprises, pre-work, open, honest, good data, good staff, committed to excellence, prepare.

Town Manager

Why did you originally apply for this job?

- Taco Bell; that is, when you enter Fountain Hills, you know you are in a special place..
- Nice look of the town and the size of the town.

Why do you think you were appointed?

- Experience in public safety and economic development.
- Tough situation in 2002.
- Fire department.

What is your Role?

- Coach, motivate, empower, and focus on goals.
- Support the Council, give advice, pros and cons, protect Council, media relations.
- Project manager.

What do you need from others to do your role the way you would like to?

- Get the pulse of the community from the Council.
- Resources to accomplish goals.
- Continue support...no shifting sands.
- Responsibility...allow us to fail.
- Respect and honesty.

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Staff Retreat: Teambuilding

In their teambuilding exercise, senior staff members were asked to address four questions:

- Why did you originally apply for your role?
- Why do you think you were hired?
- What do you need from others to do your work the way you would like to?
- If you could change one thing, what would it be?

Why did you originally apply for your role?

- Law enforcement goal...solve problems
- Wife, dog, home in Fountain Hills... judicial positions
- Offered in interesting times
- Interest in Town Management... hope to move to Fountain Hills
- Passion for community... opportunity on ground floor...security from cycles
- Did not apply...internship... opening appeared and offered
- Recruited by Council Member
- Wanted to move to Arizona
- Challenge smaller town
- Opportunity to come back... good team
- Moved to Fountain Hills... position opened
- Unemployed and family in area
- Work where I lived... change industries... reduce commute
- New department... recruited
- Breadth of experience... opportunity
- Take a chance
- Pick who to work for
- Like Southwest
- Good fit
- Get out of MN
- Pretty town
- No union
- Best staff

Why do you think you were hired?

- Met qualifications
- Fortunate timing
- Ties that bind
- Interests match to Council
- Previous contact
- Offered
- Ask hiring panel
- Work ethic
- Subject to audit
- Qualifications... gerontologist
- Youth, creative, energetic, enthusiastic
- Experience, outsider
- Marketing ideas, contacts
- Best qualified, experience, degree
- Qualifications, background, work ethic
- Like the town... make good parks
- Looked committee in the eye... confidence
- History and experience
- Wouldn't go away... persistence
- Last man standing... take all difficulties and still stand in the storm
- Long experience... leap of faith

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What do you need from others to do your work the way you would like to?

- Cooperation (5)
- Change to be effective
- Chocolate
- Communication (6) Communication at all levels...up and down. Know what's going on. Information. Timely honest accurate complete information. Communication
- Time to process decisions
- Preparedness
- Thought out recommendations
- Truth above harmony
- Have opinions and have a backup...bring proposal and solutions...tendency to delegate up... I am last resort, not 1st... give me recommendations
- Consider who are affected in decisions... their information
- Personal responsibility... count on folks to do their jobs without reminders... accountability... this applies to all of the Staff
- Shared goals
- Others understand value and importance of the job... events focused perception
- Mutual respect. Respect.
- Feedback to grow and learn
- Clear direction. Timelines. Know what problem is.
- Leaders to educate their employees on the role of HR... listen, coach, help, not just discipline.
- I'm "go to" so others need me
- Budget process... listen and recognize the needs of the Park's system

If you could change one thing, what would it be?

- Perception of residents to Law Enforcement (entitlement)
- Technology: current in some areas; learn more how to use computers... e-filing
- Better communication on how Council wants to proceed
- Structure of work week.... 4 X10 (2)
- Remove political process from decision making... when politics takes over a decision
- Too many meetings
- Less bureaucracy, process; more creativity and action
- Nothing... keep on
- Improve public perception... marketing?
- Community's sense of entitlement
- Have a table at the Council Meetings for materials
- Like to get things done... too much talk... moves forward... process is multi-tiered... empowered decision making.
- What should I do first?
- What are deadlines?
- What is important?
- Office... like to work on floor... too rigid...need more color
- Change budget process (2)
- Work with other divisions
- Hard to project future
- More productive meetings
- Too much time on details... get to big picture
- After budget process, priorities change and decisions change
- Having to sign concert contracts and purchase orders
- Town changes... we get busier... more trails... want less to do and more time to do it

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Process Improvements Brainstorming

During the interviews, Council Members raised some process-related concerns under four key topics: role clarity, communications, teamwork and problem solving. As a teamwork exercise, Council Members met in pairs to brainstorm ways to improve Council processes in these areas. The following lists summarize the Council Members' ideas. Like all brainstorming exercises, ideas were captured regardless of merit. This list has not been narrowed to items the Council wishes to work on; it is simply a list of ideas.

Participants in the senior staff retreat were given the list of Council ideas, and in small groups, were asked to identify those that either involved the staff, or to which the staff could contribute solutions, and, for those items identified, brainstorm responses to the Council's ideas. In the following tables, the Council's ideas are expressed in the left column, and the staff's ideas, if any, are in the right column.

In some cases, the items have been re-ordered from earlier versions of this report, to make reporting the staff ideas more clear. No items have been lost in this process.

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Role Clarity

Council Ideas	Staff Ideas
<p>1. Organization chart: <i>Action item: create a "Council 101" Training for Council, candidates, and staff.</i></p> <p>a. Q: Who is the top official for the town: the Town Manager or the Town Council?</p> <p>b. A: The Town Council.</p>	<p>Conduct a Council Orientation Annually. Should there be job descriptions for Council Members? Provide training for Council annually. Town Council as a collective, not as an individual. Council 101.</p>
<p>2. Public perception.</p>	<p>Conduct a Town Citizens Academy on a frequent regular basis. This will educate the public and groom future Mayor/ Council Member candidates and Board/ Commission members. We all play a role in public input and education. Possible coordination with Civic Association.</p>
<p>3. <i>Action item: Need position descriptions (roles/responsibilities) for the Council, the Town Manager, and the staff. These should also indicate who is accountable for what. We need to discuss this as a group.</i></p> <p>Q: Is their room in the organization chart for the Council to deal directly with the staff? Can Town Council deal directly with problems?</p> <p>A: It is recommended that Members go through the Town Manager.</p>	<p>See item 15 under Role Clarity, and item 3 under Communications; Council Members may go to the Department Director and Executive Management Team level; the Town Manager wants to encourage the Council to have a trusting relationship with the Executive Management Team. Questions to staff below these levels are discouraged. Answer questions of Council on proper chain of command in Council 101.</p>
<p>4. "Crossing lines" is not always clear. It is broken or fuzzy. <i>Action item: If Town Council Members forward something to the staff...the staff needs to "close the loop" with the Town Council Members who refer the item. Also if Town Council has strategic thoughts they would like implemented...they want to make sure these strategies are implemented as they envisioned them.</i></p>	<p>Develop a useful Council request system. Train Council on Council request system and use it. Train Staff too. When responding, cc: all parties involved in the issue. Implement visions of the collective, not of the individual. Council 101.</p>
<p>5. According to the organization chart, the citizens instruct Council Members who create policies to be implemented by the Town Manager and his staff.</p>	<p>No change. Council issue. Policy creation comes from several directions, from citizens, Council and staff.</p>

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Role Clarity, cont.

Council Ideas	Staff Ideas
6. Town Council does policy development: creation and implementation.	Implementation is by staff. Policy development is by Council; however, staff does develop and research policy for Council to review.
7. Council as legislators: passing laws vs. meeting on development; Council's role is not to meet with individual developers.	It is not mandatory for a staff member to be present when a developer is lobbying a Council Member when a development is on the agenda; however, if a development is at the beginning stages, and negotiations are continuing, Council should refer developer to Staff. See Council 101 (#1 above).
8. There are Council limitations as individual Council Members. An individual Council Member has no authority.	Council Members can speak only individually and not for the body. Direction comes from the entire Council. See Council 101 (#1 above).
9. <i>Action item: public protocol: who has permission for direct connectivity with the public...interaction with our constituents?</i>	Interact as long as there is not a quorum. Council 101
10. Research responsibilities: a. Q: Action item: How much is the Town Council supposed to do? b. A: This was not answered.	Direction from Council to Town Manager from dais. Quorum? At end of meeting: guidance/instructions to Town Manager when four are in agreement. Council 101.
11. Town Council stays on the balcony at the 30,000 foot level. Is this true?	Should be true.
12. Always respond to constituents even if you cannot meet their requests.	Constituent communication. Council Member email to Town Manager.
13. Responsibility for hiring and firing personnel...this is the Town Manager's responsibility. <i>Action item: Town Council would like for Town Manager to keep them informed about these items.</i>	Update in Manager's Report: personnel changes, such as promotions and hires.
14. We are all in this together. We need to "check our hats" when we come in so we have an equal playing field to problem solve.	Not a reasonable expectation. Treat Council Members as one of seven.

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Role Clarity, cont.

Council Ideas	Staff Ideas
<p>15. It is valuable for Town Council to talk directly to staff.</p>	<p>Yes, at work-study sessions. For every-day conversations, Council Members are encouraged to talk with Department Directors and Executive Management Team, who in turn will tell the Town Manager about direct conversations to ensure that the “loop is closed in the communications process.” Council Members are discouraged from giving direction to Staff, and if they do, it will be reflected back to the Town Manager.</p>
<p>16. Struggle with others not giving or sharing their ideas; would like for other Council Members to share their ideas as I will do with them; it should be reciprocal.</p>	<p>Council concern.</p>

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Communications

Council Ideas	Staff Ideas
1. Listen for understanding.	Staff must clearly understand what Council is requesting. Restate issues. If confusion, ask for clarification early in the process.
2. Provide timely information, e.g. agenda items monthly and well in advance.	See Council 101. See Town Manager Report. Need Department Directors' updates on Council Request Items at staff meetings. a. Hot Topics Issues email b. Revisit Town Manager Report c. Staff asks Council to give hot topics some time for Staff resolution.
3. Have a direct link to Town staff...an open door.	Good existing policy. Council is encouraged to contact Executive Management Team directly for information. Directors will email these issues to the Town Manager. The Executive Management Team consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Manager, • Parks and Recreation Director, • Public Works Director, • Financial Director, • Planning and Zoning Administrator, • Human Resources Administrator, • Executive Assistant to the Town Manager and Town Council, • Town Clerk, • Assistant to the Town Manager, • District Commander, Sheriff's Department, • Fire Chief.
4. Communicate even when you disagree, e.g. encourage explanations on why there is disagreement.	Express professional opinion. Reports need to reflect what we believe is the best course of action.
5. Ask for input.	Council issues.
6. Share ideas by direct communication. Make this the first move.	
7. Town Council members should "group together" to meet with staff in questions on the agenda...pull together a few members to meet with staff.	
8. Don't undermine or gossip.	
9. Remember, we are not full time legislators.	

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Communications, cont.

Council Ideas	Staff Ideas
<p>10. Email: if a quorum of the Council is included in the email message; this is a meeting and should be open. <i>Action item: we need a written policy on the use of email for communication.</i> We should use email to get and receive information quickly, i.e. “coffees” information and media updates...we need to mind the Open Meeting Law. Email is for information only and cannot be used to propose legal action.</p>	<p>Council issues.</p>
<p>11. Town Council needs to be available for questions from the Town Manager and his staff.</p>	
<p>12. Be as explicit as you can in communication...whether one-on-ones or by memos or by email, etc.</p>	
<p>13. Don't hesitate to use the telephone.</p>	
<p>14. Recognize Council has to direct by a majority. But Council should encourage all debate.</p>	
<p>15. Don't try to manage, lead to conclusions without full information...until all information/debate is provided.</p>	
<p>16. Provide room for divergent opinions.</p>	

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Teamwork

Council Ideas	Staff Ideas
<p>1. Clarify and confirm expectations and goals. Would like to know progress along the way...would like a quarterly schedule and what is in the works to be agendized in the future. Town Council may not know where some issues are in the process. It is helpful for the Town Council to see a project plan... a big picture...of what the staff is working on. <i>Action item: Town Manager said he presently does not have a “master plan” but it is a good process to work on.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Council Committees to cover areas of responsibility to act as a conduit for the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To share information, not to provide direction; make this distinction clear; • Share concerns the Council has with that particular area of responsibility; • Express concerns the Staff has with the particular topic; • Conduct Committee meetings and take votes on items before the committee; • Attend meetings and master materials. • Provide a designated Council Member as a liaison for each board or commission to do the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct <i>ad hoc</i> meetings with the Director; • Attend meetings; • “Close the loop” on communications between two stakeholders; • A downside to this idea is that boards and commissions are supposed to provide unbiased advice to the Council; under this scenario, they may turn to the liaison Council Member and ask, “What do you want to do?” thus, not providing advice as intended. • Rotate these duties among Council Members; consider each Council Member’s workload; after awhile, all Council Members would have a broad understanding of Town issues. • This would provide accountability for information. • Question: could this be done and honor the Open Meetings law? • The Town Manager’s Report could be used to provide tentative timelines for specific agenda items. <i>(Continued on next page...)</i>
<p>2. When the Town Council sees staff going in a different direction...confirm the destination with the Town Manager.</p>	
<p>3. ID expectations and seek consensus.</p>	
<p>4. Respect staff’s expertise...at end of day, we may not agree but by no means does it mean lack of respect.</p>	
<p>5. Agreement on goals.</p>	
<p>6. All members receive same information and are included in discussions. There are no secrets.</p>	
<p>7. Practice together consensus as long as there is opportunity and encouragement to debate prior to reaching consensus.</p>	
<p>8. Respect Council’s time...this is a part time role. <i>Action item: could meeting times be changed to better suit those Council Members who work?</i></p>	

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Teamwork, cont.

Council Ideas	Staff Ideas
	<i>(Continued from previous page...)</i> Could conduct informal quarterly or more often retreats on the status of Council goals (rather than just once a year retreats).
9. Listen for understanding.	These are basic common sense communication practices and are Council issues.
10. Manage personal resistance. Be respectful. No personal attacks.	
11. Have a sense of humor.	
12. Respect staff's time by asking them, "What's a good time?"	
13. Talking with each other.	
14. Socializing together; celebrate successes.	
15. Be agreeable despite some differences.	

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS COUNCIL PLANNING RETREAT 2007



Problem Solving

Council Ideas	Staff Ideas
1. Clarify goal...desired output...destination.	We have a role; clarify goal and ensure it relates to the definition.
2. Ask for input...brainstorm...also use committees and/or commissions. Q: When does the council have the opportunity to brainstorm? A: Can brainstorm with 3 or less members. Q: When should brainstorming take place? A: Where there is no clear answer or when we are at an impasse.	It is inappropriate and unwise to brainstorm at Council Meetings. Council can direct areas for brainstorming via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissions • Staff • Work study sessions • Blue ribbon committees
3. Begin budget discussions earlier. <i>Action item: May need multiple work sessions in March/May; maybe a preliminary budget earlier; if line items are controversial, we should have more than one opportunity to discuss it.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Action item: more training in financial accounting of the Town.</i> 	Focus on key line items for discussion in Executive Summary of Key Budget Highlights.
4. Allow research on problems to take place.	Only time input. Give the requesting Council Member the time period it will take to conduct the research. Staff should always ask the requester first, "Have you talked to anyone else about this?" The Staff needs ____ Council Members to agree to conduct the research. Mayor or three Council Members can add items to the agenda. The Staff can do a maximum of four hours' research on a request (to determine the full scope of the research efforts) then go to the full Council for more direction and to plan for expectations.
5. <i>Action item: Define the time for community input and procedures, i.e. work study, public committees.</i>	Council issue...Council 101.

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS COUNCIL PLANNING RETREAT 2007



Problem Solving, cont.

Council Ideas	Staff Ideas
6. Have a “can do attitude”. Provide full information. Do not manipulate where you want to go. When Town Council questions staff, they are not questioning integrity or expertise...they are just trying to understand.	Yes we will have a “can do attitude.” We will define our processes and provide a timeline. Identify research time on all research projects.
7. Follow up and close the loop on results of problem solving.	Get the facts and formulate timelines.
8. <i>Action item: We must understand the roles of the Town Council, the Town Manager and the Staff in problem solving: who is responsible and who is the final decision maker? Does one person have veto power?</i>	Inform and educate through already established rules and regulations...Council 101.
9. Town Council needs to read information given to them and ask or raise questions.	Council issue.
10. Town Council needs to receive timely information.	Yes. Staff to provide timely reports. Clarify deadlines. Due dates. Clarify when Council Members need information and why they need it.
11. Everyone needs to put their personal agenda aside.	Yes.
12. Work to have cordial relationships with each other and staff.	Yes.
13. Diverse points of view: Staff focuses on statistics; Council focuses on statistics and the human element impact (citizens for and citizens against).	Incorrect statement. Staff needs to show empathy; inform and communicate or “caring.”

**TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS
COUNCIL PLANNING RETREAT 2007**



Problem Solving, cont.

Council Ideas	Staff Ideas
<p>14. Council members would like to have more input into meeting agendas. Q: Who has the final say on meeting agendas? Council doesn't like surprises. A: Refer to Council Rules for process to get something on the agenda.</p>	<p>Yes, only in an educational way by informing of process. Council 101. Controversial issues that could be volatile are placed at the top of the agenda.</p> <p>“The Mayor or three Council Members may direct the Town Manager to place an item on an Agenda for action. Any Council Member may direct the Town Manager to place an item on a future Agenda during the ‘Council Discussion/Direction to Town Manager’ portion of a meeting for discussion relating only to the propriety of (i) placing such item on a future Agenda for action or (ii) directing staff to conduct further research and report back to the Council.” (from <i>Town Council Rules of Procedure</i>, sec. 4.2.B.2, December 7, 2006.)</p>

**TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS
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Next Steps: Council Retreat

At the conclusion of the Council retreat, the next steps in the annual planning process were outlined:

1. Consultants will document input from meeting.
2. The Executive Assistant to the Town Manager will distribute this documentation back to the Town Council Members.
3. The Town Council will discuss corrections and/or additions to the documentation at the Town Council Meeting.
4. Consultants will work with Town Staff on Actions Plans at Staff Retreat on February 23.
5. Consultants will document this information. The Executive Assistant will distribute this documentation back to the Town Council Members for consideration of acceptance.

Process Check: Senior Staff Retreat

At the conclusion of the staff retreat, participants were asked to note what aspects of the retreat were successful (plusses), and what changes they would make to improve future retreats (deltas).

What was successful (Plusses)	What changes should be made (Deltas)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue is fantastic, except for smoky fireplace and hard chairs. • Good opportunity for all different Department Directors to get together to communicate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much time spent on group process exercise. • Do goals first. • Multiple Council Members' concerns, not just one. • Don't throw pie away. • Is discussion influenced by Town Manager's presence? • Start earlier? No! • Finished late! • Overnight in S.D. (Ha, ha!)