

Memorandum to: Twin Falls Community Strategic Plan Update Participants
From: Phil Kushlan, Strategic Plan Consultant, Kushlan | Associates
Subject: Strategic Plan Update
Date: February 15, 2017

In 2012, the City of Twin Falls retained the services of Kushlan | Associates to assist the City in the development of a new Strategic Plan. The intent of the Plan is to identify a desired future vision of the City in 2030, and provide guidelines for City decision-making that would achieve that vision. The plan was adopted by the City in 2013 and has provided direction for the City, especially in decisions on the annual budget and City priorities.

The process for developing the plan included an analysis of the conditions as they existed in 2012 and participation in that process and included all City departments as well as a broad array of community stakeholders. During the early part of 2012, more than 30 interviews were held with people involved in the community in various roles. Several community forums were held to invite further input from interested citizens.

While effective strategic planning is essentially long-term, the City recognizes that communities exist in a dynamic environment. While much of what is envisioned for 2030 will remain static over time, new issues, unforeseen at the time the plan was developed can arise. External influences may demand revised priorities. It is with this knowledge that the City of Twin Falls has requested that the Strategic Plan be updated to ensure that it remains the vital guidepost it has been during its initial five-year period.

In keeping with the original commitment to a community-based process, we have expanded the extent of participation, both internally and externally so that more voices can be heard and accommodated. Input from more individuals is being sought. Meetings with the Chairs of City Boards and Commissions will again bring their informed perspective to the conversation. Dialogue with other public agencies in the area is being planned, and a broader base of employee input is expected.

Attached to this memorandum you will find a summary of the existing Strategic Plan with the major Focus Areas, along with Goals and Initiatives for each Focus Area. In addition to this summary information, the full Strategic Plan document provides specific objectives, priorities and Lead Departments. For the sake of brevity, the full document was not provided to you, but certainly can be accessed at www.tfid.org/DocumentCenter/View/779 to anyone seeking that level of detail. However, for our purposes here, we wanted to focus on the high-level issues facing the Twin Falls community.

We would appreciate your review of the eight Focus Areas adopted in 2013 with these questions in mind:

- Are these eight Focus Areas still relevant in 2017?
- How have the 2012 Conditions noted in the current plan changed? Has the situation described improved, degraded or remained the same?
- Have any new issues, not recognized in the existing Plan, evolved over the intervening years that should be considered for inclusion in this update?
- Is the identified 2030 Vision for each Focus Area still the desired condition for the city in the future?

We greatly appreciate the time you will spend on this effort. Effective governance requires a committed City Council supported by an effective staff. The essential third leg of this stool is an engaged citizenry. Your participation will strengthen the process in which we are currently engaged, ensuring the Plan remains relevant to the needs and interests of Twin Falls citizens.

City of Twin Falls

Community Strategic Plan

2017 Update

Focus Area 1 – Healthy Community (HC)

2012 Condition:

Reflecting national trends, statistics prepared by the South Central Health District demonstrates that the Twin Falls population continues to face substantial challenges with respect to individual and community health. Relative high incidence of various cancers, diabetes, high blood pressure and smoking suggest long-term health-related problems for the community as well as the growing economic costs associated with such conditions.

The community has worked hard to maintain compliance with regulations for their water and sewerage systems but continuing changes in standards has created facility and cost pressures.

The City and County have been active in the development of a trail system but it remains incomplete and disjointed. The urban design of the community tends to require vehicle use for most activities and discourages walking.

2030 Vision:

Twin Falls is a community with a broad-based commitment to the long-range health of its citizens and visitors. A wide array of activities exists through private, non-profit, and public entities, as well as partnerships among them, which lead to a healthy, well-rounded community.

Water, sewer and other public facilities function at a high level ensuring the public health benefits of that infrastructure are well-maintained and kept in compliance with acceptable standards. Community design standards facilitate individuals' commitment to maintaining a healthy life-style. Acute care and emergency response programs and infrastructure are maintained at the highest level and an active community-wide consciousness exists to help people make positive choices with respect to substance abuse of all kinds. Recreation, arts, and non-profit organizations contribute to a healthy community, as well. They attract and keep a skilled workforce and round out residents' interests in the outdoors and the arts.

Goal HC1: Improve the health of the community.

- **Initiative HC1.1: The City will provide facilities that support healthy lifestyles.**
- **Initiative HC1.2: The City will provide programs and services that support healthy lifestyles.**

Goal HC2: Maintain the environmental health of the community.

- **Initiative HC2.1: The City will maintain water and wastewater quality.**
-

Focus Area 2 – Learning Community (LC)

2012 Condition:

High school graduation rates, as well as the percentage of people possessing a bachelor’s degree or higher, is below comparative outcomes in the state and national data. Future economic viability of the community demands a highly trained and technically competent workforce. High regard exists in the community for both the school system and the community college, yet their efforts to meet evolving demands require enhanced support. Other, non-traditional sources of learning need to be identified and supported.

2030 Vision:

Twin Falls is a community that consciously supports an individual’s pursuit of intellectual as well as personal and professional growth. The formal education system is well supported and prepares the youth of the community to effectively function as a contributing member of society and a wide array of public and private institutions support a life-long pursuit of knowledge and skill development. Programs are in place to ensure the maximum level of success possible in meeting educational standards. Twin Falls continues to be known as the training center for our local economy.

Goal LC1: Extend the knowledge base of city government in support of a learning community.

- **Initiative LC1.1: The City will support efforts of others in creating a well-educated and trained community.**
-

Focus Area 3 – Secure Community (SC)

2012 Condition:

The community invests significantly in systems that ensure the safety and security of inhabitants, businesses and visitors. Police and Fire services are of a high quality and a competent building permit process ensures long-term structural integrity of building constructed in the community. However, a recent period of severe fiscal limitation has strained these systems to maintain the level expected by community members. A primary focus on the basics has resulted in a less than adequate level of communication between the service providers and those relying on them.

2030 Vision:

Twin Falls is a community where people feel safe and, in fact, enjoy a high level of safety. Effective partnerships among the professional public safety organizations and individuals and groups of private citizens help ensure broad-based, effective involvement in crime and fire prevention and Build code enforcement efforts. Community education and civil engineering efforts continue to show positive results in traffic, bicycle and pedestrian safety experience

Continued investment in professional development as well as in public safety systems, infrastructure and technology has ensured a robust emergency response capability.

Goal SC1: Maintain public safety at the highest practical level.

- Initiative SC1.1: The City will train personnel to maintain fire suppression capabilities for the fire service area.
- Initiative SC1.1: The City will maintain fire apparatus, equipment and facilities to the highest standards.
- Initiative SC1.3: The City will maintain a high level of interactive communication with the community on police services.
- Initiative SC1.4: The City will continue to balance perception vs. reality regarding police services.
- Initiative SC1.5: The City will improve professional and technical development in the City's communication system.

Goal SC2: Maintain safe public facilities and parks.

- Initiative SC2.1: The City will ensure that all public facilities are safe.
- Initiative SC2.2: The City will maintain public facilities and services during emergencies.

Goal SC3: Prevent crime, fire events, and life safety hazards.

- Initiative SC3.1: The City will provide high quality prevention through code enforcement, plan reviews, and public education programs.

Goal SC4: Focus efforts on specific public safety issues.

- Initiative SC4.1: The City will increase traffic, bicycle and pedestrian safety.
 - Initiative SC4.2: The City will improve community response to drug and alcohol issues.
-

Focus Area 4 – Accessible Community (AC)

2012 Condition:

In addition to significant growth within the community, Twin Falls has evolved into a regional retail and trade center for South Central Idaho and Northern Nevada. While notable investment has been made in transportation system improvements by state and local authorities, demand continues to outpace investment in the street and highway system. Maintenance levels had declined but recent enhancements to budget levels for major street programs have produced positive results. Investment in bicycle and pedestrian facilities has been of lower priority leaving those facilities incomplete.

Only minimal investment has been made in a system of public transportation, that being through College of Southern Idaho, with the system focused on student transit.

2030 Vision:

Through effective planning and timely investment, the Twin Falls area has kept pace with the mobility requirements of an expanding and changing population. An integrated and balanced system of transportation modes including bicycles and pedestrians, as well as a modern public transportation system supports the traditional street and highway vehicle users. A commitment to high levels of maintenance of these systems ensure the long-term integrity of the public investments made and maximizes the convenience of those dependent upon the proper functioning of these systems.

Effective coordination with a wide array of partners has ensured that regional transportation facilities such as state highways, the interstate system and Magic Valley Regional Airport continue to provide an improving level of convenient access to the area for residents, visitors and commercial interests.

Goal AC1: Expand multi-modal choices.

- Initiative AC1.1: The City will ensure that the city's sidewalks are walkable and safe.
- Initiative AC1.2: The City will expand and maintain pedestrian and bicycle trails.
- Initiative AC1.3: The City will explore a public transportation system.
- Initiative AC1.4: The City will explore land use patterns that support multi-modal transportation options.
- Initiative AC1.5: The City will continue to improve the condition and operation of its streets.

Goal AC2: Improve connectivity.

- Initiative AC2.1: The City will improve connectivity within and between transportation modes.

Goal AC3: Maintain and improve the Airport.

- Initiative AC3.1: The City will continue to maintain and improve the airport facilities.
 - Initiative AC3.2: The City will improve airport service.
-

Focus Area 5 – Environmental Community (EC)

2012 Condition:

The natural setting in which Twin Falls exists is viewed as a precious resource by those who reside in the community. The Snake River and Rock Creek Canyons provide a significant and irreplaceable amenity for the community. Balancing community interest and private property rights in these areas will be a challenge that requires clear vision and broad communication. Maintaining water and air quality in the face of a growing population and business demands has proven difficult. Short-term actions produce long-term consequences. Investment in preserving those things that are valued by the community has proven difficult in a period of significant fiscal restraint.

2030 Vision:

Twin Falls exists in an unparalleled natural setting that provides recreational opportunities, solace and inspiration for residents and visitors alike. An on-going commitment to maintaining the natural heritage acknowledges the significance placed upon this aspect of community life by Twin Falls residents. The business community also recognizes the essential role this commitment to our natural setting and proximity to outdoor activities plays in sustaining and expanding the region's economic vitality.

The community's commitment to maintaining clean water and clean air continues to set Twin Falls apart from those places allowed to degrade in the face of a growing population.

Goal EC1: Improve the environmental standards of the community.

- Initiative EC1.1: The City will reduce negative impacts of noise.
- Initiative EC1.2: The City will employ sustainable land use policies.

- Initiative EC1.3 The City will enhance property maintenance levels in the community.
- Initiative EC1.4: The City will support efforts to maintain air quality.

Goal EC2: Support environmental stewardship.

- Initiative EC2.1: The City will develop its assets to support environmental stewardship.
 - Initiative EC2.2: The City will manage its assets to support environmental stewardship.
-

Focus Area 6 – Prosperous Community (PC)

2012 Condition:

Recent, high profile successes in securing significant business investment in Twin Falls has produced needed jobs and tax revenue. Future successes in this area are endangered by certain factors that require attention and investment. Water and sewer capacity does not currently exist to support either industrial or significant residential expansion. Enhanced capacity in the workforce to effectively compete in a more technically oriented labor environment must be pursued.

The historic downtown is highly valued in the community, but it has languished in recent years with expanded commercial competition from other areas in the community. Solutions have been frustratingly difficult to find and implement.

2030 Vision:

A consistent commitment ensuring community residents have access to employment that supports personal and family well-being has resulted in a robust economy based upon the traditional agricultural base of the region as well as an expanded economic base from new fields of endeavor. A balanced focus by a variety of regional partners on preparing the local labor force to effectively function in an era of changing skill requirements as well as on-going investment in required infrastructure has allowed locally based businesses to expand as their business needs dictate while accommodating new industries and businesses into the marketplace.

Twin Falls has continued to serve as the regional retail and professional service center for South Central Idaho and North East Nevada.

Goal PC1: Revitalize the downtown.

- Initiative PC1.1: The City will provide leadership in the creation of partnership for revitalizing downtown.
- Initiative PC1.2: The City will improve access and eliminate barriers to downtown.

Goal PC2: Provide public services and facilities that support economic prosperity.

- Initiative PC2.1: The City will determine the need for infrastructure to support future growth.
- Initiative PC2.2: The City will seek opportunities for air service improvements and economic development opportunities associated with the airport.

Goal PC3: Expand the opportunities for business and tourism.

- Initiative PC3.1: The City will develop a business marketing strategy.

- **Initiative PC3.2: The City will use tourism as a tool in economic development.**
 - **Initiative PC3.3: The City will serve as the focal point for economic development efforts.**
-

Focus Area 7 – Responsible Community (RC)

2012 Condition:

Communities function best when supported by a committed and involved citizenry working in tandem with responsive and transparent community institutions. Voter participation has been low in recent years and surveys have suggested a need for enhanced levels of communication between government entities and the public they serve. Better understanding regarding what can be expected of government versus what can be best achieved through personal initiative and responsibility can result in a better community and lower cost of government.

2030 Vision:

The Twin Falls community has retained its human face as it has grown over time. New residents are welcomed and made to feel part of the tightly knit community. A vital aging population is an active segment of the population.

The community is actively engaged in the various public, private, civic, arts and religious institutions serving the area through volunteerism and involvement in neighborhood and local government activities.

Goal RC1: Involve the Community.

- **Initiative RC1.1: The City will seek the community's involvement in carrying out its responsibilities.**
 - **Initiative RC1.2: The City will support citizen responsibility.**
-

Focus Area 8 - Internal Organization (IO)

2012 Condition:

Twin Falls is one of the few cities in Idaho operating under the Council-Manager form of government. This professional approach to municipal administration working on close concert with elected policy leadership has produced high levels of service with relatively low costs. This has been produced through constantly analyzing operations for new efficiencies, investing in a skilled and respected city workforce supported by an unequivocal commitment to integrity.

While recent years have presented major fiscal challenges, a focus on the long-range has avoided much of the dramatic degradation of service experienced by many communities throughout the country.

2030 Vision:

The City of Twin Falls strives to carry out its mission with unquestioned integrity, and the highest ethical standards. In its role as stewards of the community assets it focuses on the proper use of available

resources, continually assessing programs and processes to ensure maximum effectiveness. In pursuit of shared obligation for community livability, opportunities are made available to citizens for direct involvement in civic affairs and transparency in decision-making.

In support of the desired effectiveness, the elected leadership works in close partnership with appointed professionals carrying out clear policy directives. A high level of competency is provided from a lean, properly compensated and respected core staff.

Maximum effort is expended in ensuring authorities granted through state legislation are maintained and expanded.

Goal IO1: Provide effective, professional, high quality services to City residents, businesses, industries, and visitors.

- Initiative IO1.1: The City of Twin Falls will empower, educate, and equip its employees with the knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as facilities and tools that are required for them to succeed.
- Initiative IO1.2: The City will be a leader and example for the community in promoting employee wellness.

Goal IO2: Treat our employees fairly.

- Initiative IO2.1: The City of Twin Falls will build a strong, informed, and committed workforce through fair compensation, good treatment, and professional development programs.

Goal IO3: The City of Twin Falls will continue to be a financially strong and viable.

- Initiative IO3.1: Create and execute sound fiscal plans and accompanying policies that ensure financial resources are allocated in a manner designed to achieve the strategic goals and objectives.

Goal IO4: The City of Twin Falls will plan responsibly for the future.

- Initiative IO4.1: The City of Twin Falls will prepare for growth through developing and updating critical Plan documents, collaborating with local/regional partners, and finding ways to match resources to increasing demand for services and state and federal mandates.