City of Cochran

Strategic Plan
2014 to 2016

January 2014

Overview

The City of Cochran is utilizing a Strategic Planning process to promote strategic leadership and performance planning while prioritizing goals within the organization and the community that address the major issues we expect to face over the next several years. In doing so, the Mayor and Council for the City of Cochran are providing a framework in which to determine what the City intends to be in the future and how it will get there.

The Strategic Plan addresses the vision and mission, the core values, and the goals and objectives of the City. As the City continues to serve the citizens of the City of Cochran, it is vital that we operate with a clear understanding of our major role. That role is to provide services to the Citizens of Cochran in an effective and efficient manner. In doing so, staff needs to effectively communicate with the elected officials, as well as with County, State, and Federal agencies to ensure that all regulations and laws are abided by in a way that promotes an overall improved quality of life for the citizens of Cochran. It is also critical that elected officials and staff effectively communicate with the other governmental entities within Bleckley County to ensure that the goals and objectives of the Plan are realized.

Vision

The City of Cochran is a uniquely progressive rural community built upon efficient and effective service delivery with an organizational culture that strives to embrace change and diversity. The City also strives to ensure a high level of innovation and sustainable development while maintaining and enhancing a quality educational system, with the ultimate goal of providing a safe and secure environment to live, work, and play.

Mission

As stewards of the public trust, our mission is to provide leadership, excellent services, and participatory government to enhance the quality of life and sense of community for all who live, work, raise families, play, or conduct business in the City of Cochran.

Core Values

- We are Accountable to the Citizens of Cochran.
- We are committed to earn, maintain, and enhance the trust of each other and the community.
- We conduct our work with integrity in an atmosphere of honesty, respect, and courtesy.
- We strive to exceed expectations and nurture successful relationships with all our partners.
- We are flexible and adaptive to the ever-changing needs of our community, and we encourage and support new ideas and creative approaches.
- We will manage our resources wisely.
- We recognize the vital role played by all staff and will support them in realizing their full potentials.
- We believe in our employees and our citizens.
- Our actions are transparent to all our citizens and ourselves.

Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal #1: *Provide a quality service tailored to meet the needs of our customers.*

Objectives:

- Identify customer needs by conducting periodic customer surveys of each service provided by the City. (conduct an online survey)
- Establish response standards.
- Continue to provide training in the area of customer service to all staff.
- Continue to conduct presentations upon request to agencies, industry and communities within the City.
- Continue to network with stakeholder, citizen and business groups within the City to identify ways of improving the service delivery. (business associations, economic development initiatives)

Strategic Goal #2: *Enhance and Diversify the Program Delivery of all City Departments.*

Objectives:

- Review and amend the Service Delivery Agreements with Bleckley County as needed.
- Consolidation and out-sourcing plans for any services should be done through community involvement and public outreach.
- Creation of standard operating procedures for all departments.
- Creation of an efficient and effective budget process that involves Directors and Supervisors from all City Departments as well as citizens.

- Implement a project management process so that projects can be better managed and status reports presented to City Council.
- Purchase and implementation of software that provides assistance with financial management that is specifically designed to serve a local government, providing tools to manage budgets, assets, human resources, projects, reports, and more.
- Creation of an annual report with information for the entire City with Department specific information.
- Coordination with the County Emergency Management Agency in the preparation of an Emergency Management Plan to ensure that City staff and elected officials are prepared for emergency/disaster situations.
- Creation of an inventory system to allow for accountability and cost savings.
- Maintain an effective file management system that complies with city, state, and federal records management practices.

Strategic Goal #3: *Maximize the City's principal resources (its people)*

Objectives:

- Develop and implement a plan for the training of all staff, including cross training.
- Improve staff participation by increased communication, delegation, and responsibility.
- Involve staff in meaningful consultation regarding departmental and organizational change.
- Work with City management and elected officials to develop a program that monetarily recognizes certifications/degrees and other educational achievements.
- Ensure that staff are directly involved in process improvements.
- Work with City management and elected officials to create an annual merit-based system to reward employees for consistent and superior service.
- Maintain an employee handbook to guide employees in the performance of their duties.

Strategic Goal #4: *Maximize the City's technological Resources.*

Objectives:

- Update outdated maps and surveys to allow for effective planning.
- Provide staff with the technology and training to improve the delivery of services to the City (i.e. Microsoft Office, Arc View)
- Implement a document screening process that will support a comprehensive file management system.
- Establish an on-line payment system for services.
- Review the City's technology providers for effective service.

Strategic Goal #5:   *Implement Cost Saving Measures in all operations of the City.*

Objectives:

➢ Reduce the City's surplus vehicle fleet and equipment and develop a long term plan for the purchase or lease of vehicles and equipment.
➢ Conduct energy, phone, water, and waste water system audits.
➢ Asses the operations of each department to ensure adequate staffing.

Strategic Goal #6:   *Create new revenue sources and assess the finances of the City to improve the revenues from existing sources.*

Objectives:

➢ Recover administration costs for all services.
➢ Creation of a Development Plan Review process to ensure review costs by consultants are recovered.
➢ Annually review and periodically adjust the fees of certain services to ensure the proper maintenance of infrastructure.
➢ Review application fees annually to be consistent with surrounding cities and counties.

Strategic Goal #7:   *A sound local economy which attracts investment, increases the tax base, creates employment opportunities for residents, and generates public revenues.*

Objectives:

➢ Reactivate the Downtown Development Authority (DDA).
➢ Creation of an Economic Development Plan.
➢ Review the relationship between the City, County, Chamber of Commerce, Classic Mail Street Program, and the Industrial Development Authority regarding economic development initiatives.
➢ Creation of a Marketing Plan for the City.
➢ Continue to improve the City's public relations process.
➢ Coordinate with grant writing companies or individuals to ensure the City and County are not missing out on available grant funding.

Strategic Goal #8:   *Support a community-wide welcoming environment through smart growth development, historical preservation, and environmental preservation.*

Objectives:

➢ Thorough review and update of the Bleckley-Cochran Joint Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives for the City.
➢ Adoption of a new Zoning Code and provide workshop training of the Code to City Staff and the general public.

- ➢ Adoption of a Master Plan for Water, Sewer, and Stormwater infrastructure that will provide a priority list for infrastructure improvements as well as financing options.
- ➢ Create and implement a parks, recreation, and open space plan for the City
- ➢ Creation of an Annexation plan.
- ➢ Enforcement of the City Ordinances designed to create a safe and appealing environment

Strategic Goal #9:   *Improve the Financial operations of the City.*

Objectives:

- ➢ Create financial policies.
- ➢ Continue to train staff in the operation of the new financial software.
- ➢ Review, update, and file all City contracts.
- ➢ Update all financial processes to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.

Strategic Goal #10:   *Construct new and maintain existing infrastructure.*

Objectives:

- ➢ Assess and repair existing utility infrastructure.
- ➢ Assess and repair existing roads.
- ➢ Assess and repair existing City structures.