

FOUNTAIN HILLS
STRATEGIC PLAN

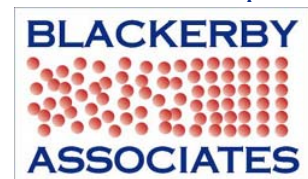


Our Town. Our Choices.
A Road Map to the Future

Implementing the *Strategic Plan*
Operational Planning Retreats 2006

Town Council Planning Retreat: February 10
Senior Staff Planning Retreat: February 17

Facilitation and Report:



Transforming Organizations

www.BlackerbyAssoc.com

(602) 908-1082

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



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TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



Introduction

On February 10, 2006, the Town of Fountain Hills Town Council and Town Manager met at Saguaro Lake Ranch to consider goals and objectives for the 2006-2007 budget year, July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007. 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 participants included:

- Mayor Wally Nichols
- Vice-Mayor Jay Schlum
- Council Member Mike Archambault
- Council Member John Kavanagh
- Council Member Ed Kehe
- Council Member Keith McMahan
- Town Manager Tim Pickering

Several Senior Staff members were present as observers, as were several members of the public, including some candidates for Town Council positions. Only Council Members, the Town Manager and the facilitators participated in the discussions.

One week later, February 17, 2006, the Town's Senior Staff of met at the same location to consider goals and objectives for the 2006-2007 budget year. This one-day off-site retreat is part of an annual operating planning program. Participants in this retreat included:

- Judge Ted Armbruster
- Don Clark, Parks Supervisor
- Samantha Coffman, Community Center Supervisor
- Lieutenant John D'Amico, Maricopa County Sherriff's Office
- Julie Ghetti, Finance Director
- Megan Griego, Economic Development Specialist
- Bryan Hughes, Recreation Supervisor
- Captain John Kleinheinz, Maricopa County Sherriff's Office
- Kenny Kurth, Streets Superintendent
- Scott LaGreca, Fire Chief
- Mark Mayer, Parks & Recreation Director
- Joan McIntosh, Human Resources Administrator
- John Morast, Assistant Public Works Director
- Ellen Pence, Assistant Town Manager
- Tim Pickering, Town Manager
- Richard Turner, Planning & Zoning Administrator
- Susan Trocki, Administrative Clerk
- Tom Ward, Public Works Director
- Shaunna Williams, Executive Assistant

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

This document summarizes the final results of both retreats. In March, 2006, the Town Council will consider adopting the goals and objectives in this report as its priorities for budget year 2006-2007. 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.

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Executive Summary Action Plan for Fiscal Year 2006-2007

During the Town Council retreat, participants set goals through Fiscal Year 2006-2007 (July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007), and identified some preliminary supporting objectives that would lead to achieving the goals, as guidance to the Staff. They are arrayed below consistent with the structure of 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.

Participants in the later Town Staff retreat reviewed those objectives, and in most cases, suggested changes to the objectives, to improve implementation and accountability for the goal. In one case (see Goal 3), the Staff further suggested modifying the goal, to make it more consistent with the *Strategic Plan 2006-2010*.

In the following description of the Strategic Priorities, goals and objectives:

- The "dots" represent the number of participants in the Town Council retreat who marked an issue for goal development. Three dots were needed for an issue to be developed as a goal.
- The name of the lead Town Staff member assigned to ensure completion of each goal is underlined; contributing Town Staff members are also listed.

Strategic Priorities, Years 1-2

Develop financial implementation plan for strategic priorities by June 30, 2006.

This Strategic Priority will be accomplished by the staff as part of accomplishing Objective 1.1, below, to quantify the first draft of the projected gap, by June 1, 2006.

Resolve projected revenue shortfall by Dec. 31, 2007 (7 dots)

Goal 1. To identify and inform Fountain Hills residents of the projected long-term revenue gap. [Ghetti, Morast, Pickering, other Senior Staff]

Objective 1.1. To quantify the first draft (baseline) of the projected gap by June 1, 2006.

Objective 1.2. To review projected gap report by June 30, 2006.

Objective 1.3. To prepare a communications program for residents by August 1, 2006.

Objective 1.4. To deliver communications program between September and November 2006.

Objective 1.5. To decide on a ballot initiative by December 2006.

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Strategic Priorities, Years 1-2 (Cont.)

Work with local schools (5 dots)

- Goal 2.** To establish and address common issues affecting the Town, schools and community by the end of the 2006-07 school year. [Pence, Armbruster, Hughes, Kleinheinz, LaGreca, McIntosh]
- Objective 2.1.** To reach consensus between the Town and Fountain Hills Unified School District (FHUSD) regarding common issues affecting the Town, schools and community, by June 30, 2006.
 - Objective 2.2.** To form two employee committees, one representing the Town and one representing FHUSD, by August 31, 2006.
 - Objective 2.3.** To establish operating ground rules and current and potential common services by September 30, 2006
 - Objective 2.4.** To develop measurable action plans for new services—including measures of effectiveness against the goal—by December 31, 2006.
 - Objective 2.5.** To facilitate three joint meetings between the Town Council and FHUSD Board by June 1, 2007, to finalize the list of common services (September), ratify action plans (January), and assess progress against the goal (May).

Low-water native landscaping (3 dots)

- Goal 3.** To promote the use of low-water landscaping in new Fountain Hills developments (revised). [Clark, McGuire, Rodgers, Zanon]
- Objective 3.1.** To inform developers of all new developments about low-water landscaping alternatives, by May 30, 2006.
 - Objective 3.2.** To adopt low-water landscape regulations for all new, non-residential developments by May 30, 2006.

Strictly enforce General Plan & zoning ordinances (3 dots)

- Goal 4.** To strictly enforce the General Plan and Town ordinances [Turner, McGuire, Zanon]
- Objective 4.1.** To increase variance filing fees significantly by May 1, 2006.
 - Objective 4.2.** To eliminate use of special use permits in lieu of variances for height and other categories of exceptions, by March 31, 2006.
 - Objective 4.3.** To inventory vacant land to project population for use in land use and infrastructure decisions, by September 2006.

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



Strategic Priorities, Years 1-2 (Cont.)

Create commercial architecture review board (4 dots)

Goal 5. To regulate architectural physical appearance for commercial properties. [Turner, McGuire, Pickering, Rodgers, Trocki]

Objective 5.1. To obtain a legal opinion by March 17, 2006.

Objective 5.2. To name a Planning & Zoning subcommittee to identify guidelines by April 2006.

Objective 5.3. To complete research of five existing ordinances and criteria by July 2006.

Objective 5.4. To draft standards and guidelines and an ordinance by August, 2006.

Objective 5.5. To present to the Planning & Zoning Commission and complete public hearings by October 2006.

Objective 5.6. To facilitate Town Council adoption of the ordinance in the first Council meeting of November 2006.

Annex State Trust Land (4 dots)

Goal 6. To annex the State Trust Land into Fountain Hills. [Pickering, Baxter, Harrel, Mayer, McGuire, Morast, Pence, Rodgers, Trocki, Turner, Ward, Zanon, CAD Team]

Objective 6.1. To conduct public hearings by May 4, 2006, and accept public input.

Objective 6.2. To adopt rezoning and General Plan Amendment by Council by May 4, 2006.

Objective 6.3. To prepare a packet of all relevant information for prospective bidders by May 4, 2006 (pre-emptive cooperation).

Objective 6.4. To oversee planning of State Trust Land through December 31, 2006, and beyond.

Objective 6.5. To develop a positive relationship with the successful bidder by December 31, 2006, and beyond.

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Strategic Priorities, Years 3-5

Increase pedestrian safety (4 dots)

Goal 7. To create a plan for pedestrian safety in Fountain Hills. [Morast, Clark, Harrel, Kleinheinz, Pence, CAD Team]

Objective 7.1. To identify and prioritize all gaps in existing sidewalk systems by June 2006.

Objective 7.2. To publish a Town-wide sidewalk improvement plan map by August 2006.

Objective 7.3. To identify and prioritize all gaps in existing intersections by February 2007.

Objective 7.4. To publish a Town-wide intersection improvement plan map by April 2007.

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



Other

The following issue was raised in the Town Council's discussions at the retreat. It is supplemental to the structure of Strategic Priorities in the Town's *Strategic Plan 2006-2010*.

Business relations: integration with the Town and economic development (5 dots)

Goal 8. To improve relations between the business community and the Town. [Griego, Ciccarone, Coffman, Hughes]

- Objective 8.1. To designate and define the Economic Development Specialist as an ombudsman to the business community by March 15, 2006.
- Objective 8.2. To survey a random sample of business owners and permittees annually, starting July 1, 2006, to measure business friendliness.
- Objective 8.3. To implement a B3 program to retain businesses, using volunteer trainers, by July 1, 2006.
- Objective 8.4. To promote special events supporting the community's small-town atmosphere in business venues, by July 31, 2006.
- Objective 8.5. To create an interactive web page to address business community concerns by March 30, 2007.
- Objective 8.6. To reduce "red tape" in applications, plan reviews and procedures by June 1, 2007.

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



Council Retreat: 'Personal Shields'

As an icebreaker and teambuilding exercise, participants in the Town Council retreat were asked to develop and share their "personal shield," consisting of five key elements:

- Background, in terms of location, profession and interests;
- A description of what the participant likes to do when not working;
- Hot buttons: types of people or events that inspire emotional reactions, either good or bad;
- One great accomplishment of which the participant is proud.
- Personal motto or philosophy, by which the participant tries to live his life.

Responses included:

Mayor Wally Nichols

Background

Massachusetts

New Jersey

Illinois

Paradise: Fountain Hills

When not working...

Reading

Travel

Dogs

Teach

Work out

Hot buttons

Stupidity

Intolerance

One great accomplishment

Raise funds for Fountain Hills Boys & Girls Club

My personal motto:

Character, honesty

Vice Mayor Jay Schlum

Background

Michigander, '77

Fountain Hills Elementary School

Family in Arizona now

When not working...

Coaching

Volunteering

Working

Travel/Vacations

Learning

Family

Hot buttons

Selfishness

One great accomplishment

Being a good parent

My personal motto:

Caring and helping others; family, loving father, husband

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



Council Retreat: 'Personal Shields' (Cont.)

Council Member Mike

Archambault

Background

Cabinet maker
Came from Columbus, OH
Active in civic clubs
Enjoys listening to employees
Employs 15 people

When not working...

Rebuilds vintage car engines
Surprises wife with an evening out or trip

Hot buttons

Misinformation
Disrespect for our flag and country

One great accomplishment

I was happy to be able to work and raise my family in Fountain Hills

My personal motto:

Find the Magic in an ordinary day.

Council Member John

Kavanagh

Background

New York City
Detective at Port Authority
Teacher
Big mouth

When not working...

Football
Television
Theater
Driving

Hot buttons

Illogic (1+1=3)

One great accomplishment

Basketball leagues

My personal motto:

Contribute something

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



Council Retreat: 'Personal Shields' (Cont.)

Council Member Ed Kehe

Background

New York
Teacher
Coach
Athletic Director

When not working...

Gardening
Hiking & camping
Oil painting
Phoenix Symphony
Musical comedy
Arizona Opera
Sailboat racing

Hot buttons

Broad spectrum, including environmental issues
Local governmental concerns pre-dating council service and arrival in Fountain Hills

One great accomplishment

Family
Former students and athletes

My personal motto:

When you are knocked down, get up.

Council Member Keith

McMahan

Background

Advertising agency
Adventuring
Advertising in L.A., San Francisco
Worked with original Fountain Hills developer in advertising and organization publicity
In Fountain Hills since 1971

When not working...

Movies
Theater
Fishing & boating
Restaurants
Reading
Dabbling in politics

Hot buttons

Rigidity in people
Inflexibility
Bureaucracy
Inability to change
Opinionated people

One great accomplishment

Helped in the development and growth of the Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce over 30 years

My personal motto:

Work hard, listen to people, and have fun!

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



Council Retreat: 'Personal Shields' (Cont.)

Town Manager Tim Pickering

Background

Basketball

Baseball

Football

St. Louis, MO

When not working...

Music

Golf

Hot buttons

Liars

One great accomplishment

Town Hall (that I get to have an office in for more than a week!)

My personal motto:

D.I.P (Do It Properly); D.I.N. (Do It Now); I'm Responsible

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



Staff Retreat: Personal Mottos

As an icebreaker and teambuilding exercise, participants were asked to participate in a briefer version of the “Personal Shield” exercise, and share their personal motto or philosophy by which they try to live their lives. Responses included:

- *Armbruster*: When in doubt, go with your instincts. The fellow who thinks he’s too old probably always was.
- *Clark*: Treat people as you want to be treated. Judge people not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.
- *Coffman*: Spend as much time possible with family and friends; you never know how much time is left.
- *D’Amico*: Persistence, thy name is success. If you think you can, or can’t, you’re right!
- *Ghetti*: If you love what you do, you will never work another day!
- *Griego*: With the right attitude, anything can happen. Those who fail never try to succeed.
- *Hughes*: Have fun! Life moves fast; if you don’t stop and look around, you might miss it!
- *Kleinheinz*: Not failures, but pick up and try. To make a difference: use empathy and compassion.
- *Kurth*: Keep humor in it.
- *LaGreca*: Lead by sacred heart; go with others on that journey.
- *Mayer*: Honesty and integrity.
- *McIntosh*: Balance: job, family, life.
- *Morast*: Work hard, play hard, be truthful.
- *Pence*: I’m a HIC: honesty, integrity and compassion.
- *Pickering*: D.I.P., Do It Properly; never send a boy to do a man’s job.
- *Trocki*: Positive thinking = happiness.
- *Turner*: Judge not lest ye be judged. No good deed goes unpunished.
- *Ward*: Lead, follow or get out of the way. *Semper Fi* (always faithful).
- *Williams*: Your task is to build a better world. How? Build a better you!

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



Council Retreat: Common Themes from Interviews

The following common themes were compiled from interviews with Town Council Members and the Town Manager on January 24 and January 30, 2006, by facilitator Lynne Brown. A “common theme” occurs when more than one interviewee mentioned the same topic. If only one person mentions a topic, it is not recorded here, to protect the anonymity of that individual.

What’s going well?

- Town Council Meetings are much shorter than they used to be thanks to Mayor Nichols’ facilitation skills.
- Most council members seem well prepared for meetings.
- Town Council Meetings are much less contentious and much more professional; members treat each other with dignity and respect; they listen to one another; they are open minded.
- Special interests do not “rule decisions,” as they used to.
- The *Strategic Plan* was completed; “the people spoke...we listened;” this *Strategic Plan* will help the Council make decisions.
- Many goals were completed.
- Most Council Members make an effort to attend community functions.

What could go better?

- Would like to receive more frequent and specific updates on goal and project status directly from the Town staff (rather than quarterly updates through the Town Manager); this approach will build a closer relationship between the Council and the Town staff.
- Would like to have a closer relationship with schools and service organizations than presently.
- Election is at the wrong time of year; *i.e.*, new Council takes effect June 1, after the budget and goals have been created for new year.
- Decisions may be made too prematurely without having accurate information and without understanding the consequences of the decisions.

What suggestions do you have for improving the Town Council?

- Council Members need to understand thoroughly the finances for the town.
- Would like to move the elections to the fall.
- Perhaps we need to make sure that our listening includes asking a lot of questions to get “to the bottom” of issues.
- Have an additional retreat after new Council Members are on board.

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Council Retreat: Possible Topics for Discussion

The following possible discussion topics were also compiled from the interviews with Town Council Members and the Town Manager, but they are not “common themes,” as only one interviewee may have mentioned any item. These potential topics were also integrated into the Strategic Priorities structure of the Town’s *Strategic Plan 2006-2010*. Town Council Members and the Town Manager considered all of these topics when they used “dots” to select the issues around which they wanted to develop goals during the Town Council retreat.

- Get to know people better as people...not just as “fellow council members”
- Need long term thinking on this council
- Goals for public affairs and grant writing role
- Strategic plan goals for next few years
- Drill down to action plans as well as goals
- How the town can work closer with the schools, the service organizations, the businesses
- Projected deficit at build out and what to do to compensate for this
- Ordinance change issues; zoning code changes
- Nursing home
- Fountain improvements
- Land annexation
- Signage
- Traffic control
- Recycling, garbage collection, environment issues
- Are commissions the best way to go?
- Attracting visitors

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Council Retreat: Lessons Learned During the Past Few Years

In a facilitated discussion, participants at the Council Retreat were asked to review the past few years and identify any lessons learned, either from successes or from things that did not go well. Responses included:

- Reduce Commission interviews
 - Control schedule of Commission openings?
 - Combine Commissions?
- Timely communications are important
 - Get information to Council firsts
 - Misinformation (when it sometimes occurs): get to source
 - Dispel rumors at coffees with the Mayor
 - Distribute information through email
- Staff empowerment
 - Get more community involvement
 - Leverage community resources
- Quick decisions need analysis
 - So far, it's all worked out
 - Develop decision criteria
 - Get consensus; deal with key stakeholders
 - Make a decision
- Homework – pre-work – should be no surprises – tell Staff about issues
- Rules for public participation are good; hear public input first
- Council Members should direct comments through the Mayor, rather than back and forth directly to each other
 - Always leave room for debate and response
 - Ask Mayor to call up staff

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



Staff Retreat: Lessons Learned During the Past Few Years

In a facilitated discussion, participants at the Senior Staff Retreat were also asked to review the past few years and identify any lessons learned, either from successes or from things that did not go well. Responses included:

<p style="text-align: center;">Successes Things that went well</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Changes Things that should be changed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan was completed • Moved to new Town Hall • Completed 20-year financial plan • Moved forward on annexation of State Trust Lands • Hired right folks, with higher skill set; got good guidance • Brought Senior Center under Town management successfully • Developed the Avenue of the Fountains improvement plan • Responded to businesses with success classes, and moved to close the gap between business and government. • Executed wash and dam maintenance programs. • Completed the succession plan • Decided on skate park design • Implemented pavement maintenance program • Eliminated A-frame signs • Increased development fees • Developed 20-year capital plan • Tried new things; let people go for it • Built future leadership with mentoring programs • Continued teen court • Established Town Council ethics policy • Created an emergency management plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give employees better tools, especially information technology • Ask people to get into new projects • Inform public of successes; talk about what you're doing as you lead • Publications: more and more timely. • Reduce knee-jerk reactions; give feedback to residents; talk to people involved. • Improve communications to Town Council; improve trust • Become more comfortable with communications • Don't lose the momentum and vision of the strategic plan; measure what you do. • Slough low-performers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid grade-creep when evaluating employee performance • Improve regular communications with employees about their performance • Make sure that ongoing communications with employees point out both good and bad aspects of performance.

TOWN OF FOUNTAIN HILLS PLANNING RETREATS 2006



Staff Retreat: Team Training

Town Manager Tim Pickering summarized *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable*, by Patrick M. Lencioni.¹ Key points include the five dysfunctions, and five dangers associated with each dysfunction:

Dysfunction	Danger
Inattention to Results	Status & Ego
Avoidance of Accountability	Low Standards
Lack of Commitment	Ambiguity
Fear of Conflict	Artificial Harmony
Absence of Trust	Invulnerability

Mr. Pickering recognized each Town Staff member present with a commendation for specific accomplishments in the past year.

The Town Staff also participated in “Frenzy,” a facilitated teambuilding activity, demonstrating that:

- The Town Staff Team includes all Town Staff; not just individual work groups, departments, divisions or silos within the Town Staff.
- When small groups within the Team compete with each other, the Team cannot achieve its larger objectives.
- When small groups unite toward a common goal, success is possible.

¹ *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable*, by Patrick M. Lencioni, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco: 2002. See <http://www.amazon.com/gp/search?search-alias=aps&keywords=five%20dysfunctions>.

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Process Reviews

After each retreat, participants were asked to identify what went well during the retreat (plusses), and what should be changed for the next retreat (deltas). Responses included:

Town Council Retreat

Plusses Things that went well	Deltas Things that should change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan framework; did not have to work in a vacuum. • Lunch was good • Setting was good • Laughs were good • Tim did not have to say, “We need money for that.” • Pre-work was good • Worksheets for writing goals and objectives were useful • Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like to have advice from the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission (SPAC) before next year’s session. • Have a summer retreat, to include SPAC members • Tim should serenade the group during lunch • More dots

Town Senior Staff Retreat

Plusses Things that went well	Deltas Things that should change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration of successes was valuable • Facilitators • Separate Council and Staff processes • Casual atmosphere is productive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about “how” rather than “what” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal operating plans • Quarterly or more often reports to Council • How to pay for it? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the budget process • What is the priority-setting process? • Strategic Plan recap was too long.