The Reno City Council and Redevelopment Agency Board held a joint Strategic Planning Workshop at 9:12 a.m. on Tuesday, March 10, 2015 in the Stout A & B rooms of the Desert Research Institute, 2215 Raggio Parkway, Reno.

PRESENT: Council Members Brekhus, Duerr, Delgado, McKenzie, Jardon, Bobzien and Mayor Schieve

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Clinger, City Attorney Hall and Interim City Clerk Beaty-Benadom

C. Public Comment.

Graham Kent, Ph.D., 14320 Ghost Rider Drive, Director of the Nevada Seismological Laboratory at the University of Nevada, Reno, and State Seismologist, discussed Alert Tahoe, a prototype fire camera system designed to provide emergency information about wild fires, earthquakes and floods.

Tim Jones, 1479 Wessex Circle, former chair of the Nevada Arts Council, President of the Cultural Alliance of Nevada, and co-founder of the Artown Festival, discussed the importance of the arts to the community.

Roberta Ross, 118 West Street, representing the Regional Alliance for Downtown (RAD), discussed the importance of continuing to revitalize the downtown district and to focus on clean and livable neighborhoods.

Fred Turnier, Community Development Director, read into the record a statement from Nikki Boyce regarding the Healthy Food Access Plan.

D. Approval of the Agenda - March 10, 2015.

It was moved by Council Member Delgado, seconded by Council Member Brekhus to approve the agenda.

Motion carried.
E.1 Discussion and potential direction to staff regarding the Strategic Plan for the City of Reno - Erica Olsen, COO/Co-Founder, onStrategy.

Greg Bortolin, Director of Communications and Government Affairs, Desert Research Institute (DRI), welcomed the Council to DRI, and discussed their services to the community.

Ryan High, Budget/Strategic Initiatives Manager, discussed the strategic planning process and desired outcomes of the meeting.

Erica Olsen, onStrategy facilitator, provided discussion guidelines. The Council Members agreed that the ground rules of the discussion should include: consensus (I may not agree with it, but I can live with it), everyone gets an equal opportunity to speak, compromise, clarify assumptions, policy level but the opportunity to use examples to add clarity, focus on the ‘what’ not the ‘how’, and encourage staff inclusion.

Ms. Olsen said that one or more persons during her individual meetings asked that the following three questions be posed, and requested that the Council Members prepare written answers to the following questions: 1) What can we create together than we cannot create apart? 2) What are one or two traits of effective teams (governing boards) that you want to be part of? 3) Where is the line between policy and management?

A RECESS WAS CALLED AT 10:10 A.M.; THE MEETING WAS RECONVENED AT 10:24 A.M.

While the results of the responses to the preceding three questions were being outlined, each of the Council Members was asked to discuss the following questions: 1) How many siblings are in there in your family? 2) What number are you in the group order? 3) Where were you born? 4) What was a defining childhood experience that helped define who you are as an adult?

Each of the Council Members responded to the four questions about their families and discussed a defining childhood experience.

Responses to the question “What can we create together than we cannot create apart?” were as follows: a great city, a direction that we could not have discerned individually, our future, a decision involving the governance of a city, sustainable growth, safe communities, a revitalized downtown, focused and synergistic energy and a balanced thought strategy.

Responses to the question “What are one or two traits of effective teams?” were as follows: generous, have each other’s back, differences but no infighting, trust and honesty, a team that passes the ball, similar visions, flexibility, respect for individuals that endures despite the difficult issues in voting, respect and trust, and strategic best city practices adapted to Reno.
Responses to the question “Where is the line between policy and management?” were as follows: trust and honesty, there is no clear line, what does the Council want as a group versus how do we get there, it is closer that you think, policy is politics and management is managers (electeds set policy and it is facilitated by management), policy establishes a goal and management helps utilize resources to reach the goal.

A lengthy discussion followed regarding the use of staff time, and the need for the City Manager’s Office to provide an estimate of the staff time it will take to complete a task before the Council votes to assign a task. Also discussed was the need to respect the work performed by staff, even if the ultimate decision is not in line with their recommendation. Council Member McKenzie suggested a future meeting to discuss exclusively communication issues and an appropriate action plan.

Ms. Olsen said that some of the things that could be taken away from the discussion were to engender a culture shift, a willingness to take risks, and open communication with no “got yas.”

Mr. High presented a historical overview of Reno and perceptions of Reno, and the importance of revisiting the past in order to plan for the future.

Ms. Olsen discussed the upcoming tour of the cave of visualization, and the need to clarify “Why we exist as an organization.”

City Manager Clinger said that the executive team drafted a statement to begin a discussion about the City’s mission: “The City of Reno is dedicated to creating a place that people are proud to call home.”

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the mission (aspiring to a goal that has not yet been achieved) versus the vision statement (the Council’s legacy).

A RECESS WAS CALLED AT 11:40 A.M.; THE MEETING WAS RECONVENED AT 1:04 P.M.

Ms. Olsen provided an overview of the goals of the afternoon portion of the meeting. She said that the discussion will include what legacy the Council wants to leave, the financial snapshot, and feedback from the citizen’s survey. She referred to a Life Magazine article about obtaining a divorce in Reno and the cover photograph of a woman kissing a column outside the Courthouse, and what the front cover image will look like in 2025. She asked that the Council Members break into groups and provide the headline and the iconic image for the 2025 magazine.

A RECESS WAS CALLED AT 1:10 P.M.; THE MEETING WAS RECONVENED AT 1:25 P.M. WITH CITY MANAGER CLINGER, MAYOR SCHIEVE AND COUNCIL MEMBER DELGADO FORMING GROUP 1; COUNCIL MEMBERS BOBZIEN, MCKENZIE AND BREKHUS FORMING GROUP 2; AND COUNCIL MEMBERS JARDON AND DUERR FORMING GROUP 3.
The three groups discussed and then illustrated their ideas about the headline and image for the 2025 magazine article about Reno. A composite illustration of their ideas was made by Ms. Olsen’s assistant as the discussion continued.

Council Member Delgado said that Group 1 felt that the following legacy issues should be addressed: quality of life, a vibrant downtown, new generations, healthy neighborhoods, arts and culture events, university, quality skilled jobs and infrastructure.

Council Member Brekhus displayed a drawing of the properly restored El Cortez Hotel, with the slogan “Reno embraces its seedy past and is the ‘now’ city.” She said that Group 2 felt that the Council should embrace a new history while at the same time preserving its past.

Council Member Jardon said that Group 3 envisioned the 2025 headline “Reno got it right.” Our illustration incorporates everything from Reno’s iconic arch (the past and everything that brought us to this point) as a cornerstone, and all the things that will get us where we want to go: build a beautiful community, financial stability, happy healthy families and university, solid business, bicycle friendly, solid infrastructure and roads, business and industry, and quality special events.

Ms. Olsen suggested that the “Reno got it right” slogan might be changed to “Reno gets it right.” She said that Reno gets it right because we have a vibrant downtown, healthy neighborhood, good infrastructure; we preserve history, fully engage with the university, practice fiscal responsibility, and listen to our history.

Discussion ensued regarding the importance of the arts to Reno’s future.

Kate Thomas, Assistant City Manager and Director of the Office of Management and Budget, discussed financial planning, and the prospect of a 5% increase in next year’s General Fund.

City Manager Clinger discussed the results of the on-going citizen survey. We have 252 responses (63% of our target goal of 400 responses) and those 63% believe that the three services that should receive the most emphasis are: 1) City financial management, 2) police services (crime prevention, visibility of police in neighborhoods and quick response to emergencies), and 3) maintenance of streets, facilities and buildings. He said that of the 252 responses, only one person thought that the customer services provided by City staff needed improvement.

Discussion ensued regarding the depth and breadth of public safety elements included in the questionnaire, and issues that were not addressed by the questions included in the questionnaire.

Ms. Olsen said that in translating from the vision (i.e., the legacy and “Where are we going?”) to a plan, priorities must be set. She noted that four of this Council’s strategic priorities were also those of the previous Council, and stated the necessity of determining broad categories into which specific goals can be placed.
How do we “Get it right?” Ms. Olsen asked. What came out of our vision discussion were financial or fiscal responsibility, a vibrant downtown, healthy neighborhoods, well built and managed infrastructure, supporting the arts, preserving our history, and university connection.

The list of stated priorities was debated at length, and the following short list of achievable priorities was proffered:

- a) Vibrant downtown (university connection)
- b) Healthy and safe neighborhoods (arts and culture)
- c) Fiscal sustainability and sustainable services (infrastructure and deferred maintenance)
- d) Planned growth (regional collaboration, infrastructure)
- e) Predictable and accessible business environment

A RECESS WAS CALLED AT 2:56 P.M.; THE MEETING WAS RECONVENED AT 3:12 P.M.

Discussion ensued regarding goals the Council wants to accomplish in the next two years.

A RECESS WAS CALLED AT 4:10 P.M. TO ALLOW INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL MEMBERS TIME TO CHOOSE FROM THE LIST THEIR MOST IMPORTANT GOALS FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS. THE MEETING WAS RECONVENED AT 4:15 P.M.

The following goals were determined to be the most important to the Council Members:

- a) Action plan for downtown
- b) Master Plan
- c) Pedestrian safety
- d) Financial sustainability
- e) Defining core services
- f) Staff

Ms. Olsen said that the City of Reno’s official, updated mission and strategic priorities will be presented for final approval at a future Council meeting.

F. Public Comment.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN ON THIS ITEM

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 4:28 P.M.