

October 31, 2024

Mayor Howell, Vice Mayor Bishop, Commissioner Behlau, Commissioner Boddy, Commissioner Wilson
City of Lakesite
9201 Rocky Point Road
Lakesite, Tennessee 37379

VIA ELECTRONIC

Dear Lakesite City Commission:

Thank you for allowing MTAS to participate in the Commission's strategic planning process on October 30, 2024. It was a great retreat and I firmly believe that the results were worth the time and energy.

As you recall, we began the session with an overview of the strategic planning process. The objectives of the process were to create a mission statement, scan the internal and external environments, create a vision statement, and then to devise goals to guide the city in achieving its vision.

We discussed the different roles that elected officials and staff perform and the percentages of time that each group should devote to planning. The Commission should spend a greater amount of time in planning (steering) than any other group in the municipal government.

The first task was to create a mission statement. A mission statement should explain the purpose of a city's being and why it exists. The Commission reviewed the mission statement written in 2022 and made some changes. The new mission statement is below:

Our city is a multi-generational, family-oriented city with a transparent government that strives to provide a safe, small-town character and has respect for all visitors, businesses, and residents who love to call it home.

The Commission then studied a variety of statistics about the U.S. labor data, Tennessee information, Hamilton County facts, and Lakesite specific statistics. Using all of this information, the Commission then was charged with coming up with a vision statement that builds upon the city's mission and takes it to the next level; a desired future state. The vision statement written in 2022 was reviewed and remains unchanged. The vision statement is below:

The vision of Lakesite is to be the most desirable, safe, and family-oriented community that offers multiple recreational, shopping, and business opportunities, and fosters an environment of community involvement.

The next step was to do a SWOT analysis – identify the internal strengths and weaknesses and the external opportunities and threats facing the City of Lakesite. These were not necessarily agreed on by the entire team, but were items offered by individual members.

The strengths that were listed include:

- Brain trust within government and residents
- Dedicated officials and staff
- Full-time city manager

- Ability to add a new full-time employee
- Finances within the city
- Low-income taxes
- Low property taxes
- New software
- Communication within the city

The weaknesses identified were:

- Businesses that don't produce revenue
- Number of employees (short-staffed at times)
- Not thinking outside the box (currently improving)
- Staff training and up-to-date on issues
- Being reactive to problems
- Limited staff and doing too many things
- Not staying focused
- Retirement-ready staff
- Lack of community engagement
- Communication to residents

The opportunities in the area include:

- Live-streaming meetings for citizen accessibility
- Business recruitment and growth
- Dockside marina area – water access and business growth
- Appropriate grant opportunities
- Recreation opportunities (i.e. pickleball court)
- Software use (learning more)
- Braintrust within the city (different professions and skills)
- Target revenue-generating businesses
- Façade grant program, other beautification improvements in business district

And finally, the threats are:

- Recession
- State changing tax rates (grocery sales, property tax cap, lowering others)
- Land locked regarding business growth
- Flooding in certain areas
- Stagnant growth
- Aging infrastructure
- Businesses that don't generate revenue but cost the city
- Rising expenses
- Development outside city limits (increasing traffic, other issues)
- Infrastructure for young families and ADA accessible

Next, each Commission member worked individually to identify goals that: address the key issues, meet the mission of the City and help the City to achieve its vision. Each member took a turn listing a goal

until all goals everyone had were listed on a chart. Commission members were given five stickers and asked to place them on the chart. The number of votes received is in parenthesis beside each goal listed:

- Increase communication with citizens to use their knowledge and ideas. (4)
- Improve park facilities and recreational areas. (3)
- Economic development that targets character or destination points and increases revenue. (3)
- Improve beautification of the city. (1)
- Improve drainage issues within the business district. (3)
- Identify and map current infrastructure city-wide. (3)
- Improve stormwater needs city-wide. (1)
- Increase sidewalk connectivity. (1)
- Implement a parks master plan. (1)

The end result was five goals. In no particular order, the goals were:

- Increase communication with citizens to use their knowledge and ideas.
- Improve park facilities and recreational areas.
- Economic development that targets character or destination points and increases revenue.
- Improve drainage issues within the business district.
- Identify and map current infrastructure city-wide.

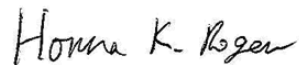
The final step in the process of strategic planning is to create a list of programs and policies (objectives) that will help the city achieve the goals. The city manager will work to prepare a draft list to present to you.

In closing, this is an ambitious plan and one that should be a living document. Examine it regularly and adjust as needed but always keep the vision in mind when doing so. I encourage you to set a time now for review, whether that is three, six, or twelve months away.

Giving up a full evening, especially during the work week, was a big sacrifice on the part of the elected officials. You are all to be commended for your active participation throughout the process.

I enjoyed working with the Commission and hope that you will contact MTAS if we can be of any assistance to the city in achieving its goals and vision.

Sincerely,



Honna Rogers
Municipal Management Consultant