



# TOWN OF KNIGHTDALE 2018 STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT



FEBRUARY 18, 2018



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## PURPOSE

The Knightdale Town Council held its second, Strategic Planning Retreat on February 18, 2018 at the Sea Trail Resort in Sunset Beach, North Carolina. The retreat was convened in conjunction with the Essentials of Municipal Government training offered by the University of North Carolina – School of Government at the Sea Trail Resort. The Essentials curriculum is offered after every municipal election cycle. The purpose of the training is to prepare newly elected officials and provide continuing education for incumbent municipal officials. Roles and responsibilities, ethics, and public finance are the core elements of the training. The Strategic Planning Retreat was facilitated by Mark Williams, retired Wake Forest Town Manager after the completion of the School of Government program’s conclusion.



Sea Trail Resort, Calabash, North Carolina

According to the Institute for Public Service and Policy Research at the University of South Carolina, “a retreat is a meeting that is typically designed and organized specifically to facilitate the ability of a group to step back from their day-to-day demands and activities for an extended period of concentrated discussion, dialogue, and strategic thinking about the organization’s future or about specific issues.” Retreats are a commonly recognized, best-practice for local governments to improve efficiency in communication and effectiveness in governance.

The Knightdale Town Council is elected through a two-year, general election cycle and is statutorily authorized to govern the Town by adopting policies to ensure their goals are achieved. In the Handbook for North Carolina Mayors and Council Members (2013), the University of North Carolina – School of Government states that the governing body “holds the ultimate authority to act for the city. It decides what services the city provides and at what level.” The Town Council is the physical representation of the expectations of their citizen constituents whom elected them to serve the Town. In order to effectively govern, an annual strategic retreat is a crucial element of the Council’s calendar. In essence, retreats are deliberate events that have a defined, strategic purpose. Retreats provide long-term organizational direction in addition to the Town’s daily administrative responsibilities.

Retreats are an effective tool to address the following common areas:

- Strategic and long-range planning
- Budgeting
- Discussion of specific issues or challenges
- Consensus building
- Problem solving
- Development of annual goals and objectives

The purpose of the retreat was to survey the Town’s current landscape, identifying vulnerabilities and future opportunities for Knightdale. The elected officials were able to express their individual ambitions as well as build group consensus and set direction as a governing body. The Town Council collaborated with the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, and the Administrative Services Director to clearly outline priorities, establish goals, and set target dates for completion. These administrative professionals will in-turn absorb these goals into the work plans for the applicable Town Departments for completion

over the upcoming and future fiscal years. These Council-mandated goals represent the strategic (long-term) direction in which the town staff's efforts will be focused in addition to their operational (short-term) responsibilities. The Strategic Retreat also offered an excellent opportunity to clarify roles and responsibilities of the elected officials, citizen advisory boards and the various administrative units of the Town.

## **KNIGHTDALE FIRE DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT**

Town Manager, Bill Summers, provided a status update on the Fire Service Evaluation and Analysis Study. The project study was awarded to Brooks Innovative Solutions on October 17, 2017. The contract is to perform a comprehensive assessment of the Knightdale Fire Department to assist the Town Council in proactively planning for future, protection service needs as Knightdale continues to grow. Mr. Summers noted that the project's consultant has identified, as a portion of his research, the potential benefits of a consolidation of services with the Eastern Wake Fire Department. Preliminary research has revealed that a merger would be potentially, advantageous for both the residents of the Town of Knightdale and the Alert Fire District. The Town of Knightdale will continue to explore the potential trade-offs of a consolidation of the Departments.

## **CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDING**

The Town of Knightdale has four major, capital facilities projects scheduled for construction over the next two fiscal years. The Harper Park Project, completion of Knightdale Station Park, a new Public Works Facility and a Splash Pad are programmed, upcoming projects. The necessary budgetary commitments for the splash pad are allocated in the current, fiscal year's budget. The Town Manager reviewed the funding strategies for the remaining projects with the Town Council at the Retreat to ensure the most cost efficient realization of these capital commitments.

### **Harper Park Renovations**

Harper Park is approximately a four-acre recreation facility located at the intersection of Main Street and Third Avenue. The park currently features a children's playground, restrooms, two tennis courts, and picnic shelters. The park was constructed in 1977 and still serves as a valuable amenity to the Town's citizens. For FY2018-19, the Town has committed to renovating Harper Park's existing, two tennis courts. Two, new courts and a pickle ball facility will be constructed as well. Construction of a new reception area with restrooms is the final portion of the project for the upcoming year. A contract was awarded to CLH Design on October 18, 2017 to prepare plans for the new facilities. The estimated cost of the project is approximately \$700,000. The project will be funded entirely with operating revenues or financial reserves in the upcoming fiscal year. The anticipated completion date for this project is Spring 2019.



Harper Park

## Public Works Facility

Per G.S. 143-128.1A, the Town of Knightdale awarded a design-build contract to Jackson Builders for the construction of a new, Public Works facility on November 15, 2017. The new facility will be built on Bozeman Drive. The key objectives of the project are as follows:

- Provide at least a 15-Year design.
- Provide covered storage for all equipment.
- Provide improved fleet maintenance capacity.
- Provide adequate warehousing capacity.
- Provide modern workspace for staff.

The future Public Works Facility meets this criteria by creating the following amenities for the Town of Knightdale:

- 7,750 SF of office and warehouse space
- 4,800 SF of fleet maintenance shop
- 6,000 SF of open air / covered equipment storage

The total project cost is an estimated \$2.15 million. The project will be funded in a Capital Project Fund with 100% of the funding coming from debt proceeds. Debt will be repaid over a ten-year period at an estimated interest rate of 3.5%. Estimated annual costs are \$160,000 plus interest ranging from \$56,000 in year one to \$5,600 in the final year.

## Knightdale Station Park, Phase III

The final phase of Knightdale Station Park includes a Veterans' Memorial, performance stage, and the construction of the infrastructure for Knightdale Station Village. The memorial and stage will complement the existing pavilions and expand the functionality of the park. The Village is a mixed-use project to be awarded in accordance with G.S. 160A-458.3. This legislation provides statutory authorization to local governments that offers the Town the most efficient vehicle to realize the Knightdale Village Project. The Council's goal is to convey the properties, either individually or as a whole, to the most qualified development partner to construct the mixed-use village in accordance with the Town's expectations. This statute specifically allows local governments to dispose of public property through private sale "for projects in a community development project area in accordance with a community development plan." A key objective of the project is to assist in the commercial redevelopment of the downtown area which was significantly damaged by fire on February 7, 1940.



Knightdale Station Park, Phase III

The Town Council has invested significant resources to ensure this area’s future growth, establishment, and prosperity.

The project cost for Knightdale Station Park, Phase III is \$3.53 million. Per the requirements of 143-128, a contract was executed with Jackson Builders for construction. The funding strategy for the project is a combination of utilizing financial reserves and debt service. The Town will utilize approximately \$891,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund to pay-down existing debt on the property. Approximately, \$1.75 million of the project will be funded with a combination of Capital Reserve and General Fund reserves. The remaining estimated \$1.87 million will be financed through debt proceeds over ten (10) years at an anticipated, interest rate of 3.5%.

## 2017 GOAL SUMMARY

The Knightdale Town Council held an inaugural, Strategic Planning Retreat on April 8, 2017. The Council conducted a S.W.O.T. analysis to build consensus and establish a collective vision of the Town's current, landscape. The elected officials identified thirty (30) target goals for the staff to complete in addition to each Departments’ operational responsibilities. Staff successfully completed twenty-one (21) of the goals. Of the remaining nine (9) goals, six (6) are currently in-progress for completion by staff. Of the in-progress goals, two (2) goals had future-year target dates for completion. Town staff failed to complete three (3) of the goals in the timeframe established by the Town Board. These goals will be carried forward to 2018 for completion.

<b>2017 ACCOMPLISHED GOALS</b>
Developed a repair needs list for town-owned facilities
Developed a Facilities Maintenance Plan
Developed a rehabilitation plan for the caboose
Developed a plan for a new Public Works Facility
Initiated the completion of Knightdale Station Park, Phase III
Developed a master plan for the Forestville Road property
Developed a plan for the rehabilitation of Harper Park
Evaluated the feasibility of providing a drinking fountain at Mingo Creek Park
Obtained an unqualified audit (and reduced management letter items) for FY2015-16
Revised the Fund Balance Policy
Streamlined the budget process
Revised the Organizational Chart
Developed a Diversity Plan
Completion of the utility merger with the City of Raleigh
Evaluated strategies for the extension of water and sewer utilities for economic development
Completion of the Rex Endowment Grant Project

Evaluation of a Hodge Road sidewalk crossing
Petition the City of Raleigh to review the jurisdictional boundary with Knightdale
Replace information technology system for the Town
Implemented Weekly Collection for Recyclables
Evaluate strategies to utilize PEG Media

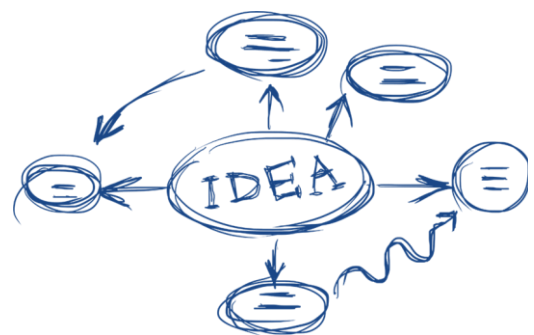
<b>GOALS IN PROGRESS</b>
Obtain evaluation and analysis of Fire Department
Develop a 5-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
Develop and implement a Communications Strategy Plan
Complete Mingo Creek Greenway Extension*
Update Comprehensive Plan*

*\*Future-year target goal*

<b>FAILED TO MEET GOALS</b>
Prepare a Spatial Needs Study
Determine the best use of the Environmental Park
Conduct a Mingo Creek Rehabilitation Study

## **BRAINSTORMING SESSION & GOAL IDENTIFICATION**

The Brainstorming Session was held in order for Town Council to identify priority areas, issues, and/or projects for Town staff to address in 2018 (and beyond). Once identified, each one was prioritized through the consensus of the elected officials. Then, each issue was translated into a defined target goal with associated strategies for successful completion. The goal of this portion of the retreat was to identify target goals to be undertaken by staff within the upcoming 1-5 years. Each goal was assigned a completion date mutually set by the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Administrative Services Director, and elected officials.



## 2018 PRIORITY ISSUES

- Plan for Parks & Greenway Maintenance
- Plan for Growth Management – Development Regulations
- Enhancing Economic Development Incentives and Opportunities
- Enhancing Education Initiatives
- Constructing Knightdale Village
- Explore Transportation Options – Light Rail Service
- Ensuring and Expanding Financial Resources
- Expanding Pedestrian and Biking Options
- Utilizing Conditional Zoning for Development Approvals
- Ensuring Equality for All Citizens
- Identify Expanded Space Options for Town Hall
- Focus on Improvement of Existing Services
- Develop Community Activities and Programs (Diversity)
- Implement Town Website Upgrades
- Need for a Local Transportation Plan
- Enhance Relationships with Other Elected Officials in Wake County
- Develop Event Schedules for Knightdale Station Park
- Review Citizen's Academies Offered
- Review and Improve Citizen Advisory Boards
- Improve Communication of Town Services and Responsibilities to all Stakeholders
- Evaluate Feasibility of Starting a Building Inspections Program
- Celebrate and Market our Successes and Accomplishments
- Revise Manual of Construction Specifications
- Establish a Stormwater Program
- Explore Feasibility for a Disc Golf Course
- Explore Opportunities / Strategies to Support Small Businesses

## STRATEGY PLAN

The Strategy Plan outlined below represents the realization of priority issues for Town Council translated into target goals for Town staff to complete. The goals are organized by area of service for Knightdale. The goals are prioritized within each area of service according to the consensus of the elected officials. The appropriate responsible parties are assigned to each task. The Town Manager will ensure that the appropriate resources will be allocated to each Department to successfully complete the Strategy Plan. The Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, and Administrative Services Director will translate these goals into the appropriate Department's annual performance plan. This approach to strategic visioning (and implementation) is crucial to ensuring proactive governance in meeting the Town's various needs.



## INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Priority	Goal	Person(s) Assigned to Complete Task	Target Date
1.	Establish Annual Reporting Requirement from Citizen Advisory Boards	Town Manager	December 2018
2.	Initiate Annual Meetings with the County Commissioners, School Board, and Appropriate State Officials	Administrative Services Director	February 2019

## PUBLIC FACILITIES

Priority	Goal	Person(s) Assigned to Complete Task	Target Date
1.	Determine Feasibility for Community Center Options	Town Manager / Parks & Recreation Director	June 2018
2.	Determine Options for Potential Disc Golf Course Locations	PRAB / Town Manager / Parks & Recreation Director	August 2018
3.	Report on Options for Downtown Space	Town Manager	December 2018
4.	Prepare Spatial Analysis Plan*	Assistant Town Manager	January 2019
5.	Determine Plan to Rehabilitate the Environmental Park*	Assistant Town Manager / Engineering Director	February 2019
6.	Prepare an Inventory and Maintenance Plan for Parks and Greenways	Assistant Town Manager / Public Works Director	March 2019

*\*Previous-year target goal*

## COMMUNICATIONS

Priority	Goal	Person(s) Assigned to Complete Task	Target Date
1.	Complete Website Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report User-Friendly Enhancements to the Town Council</li> </ul>	Town Manager / Public Information Officer	May 2018
2.	Develop an Events Schedule	Town Manager / Parks & Recreation Director / Public Information Officer	June 2018
3.	Conduct Work Session on “What We Do to Communicate our Message as Knightdale” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Outreach Strategies with the Town Council</li> </ul>	Town Manager / Public Information Officer	August 2018
4.	Develop a Knightdale 101 Academy	Administrative Services Director	November 2018
5.	Establish a Marketing Strategy Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal Stakeholder Committee facilitated by the Town Manager</li> </ul>	Town Manager	December 2018

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Priority	Goal	Person(s) Assigned to Complete Task	Target Date
1.	Initiate Launch Knightdale Program	Assistant Town Manager	May 2018
2.	Strengthen Relationship with Chamber of Commerce	Town Manager / Town Council	January 2019
3.	Revise Town Economic Incentives	Assistant Town Manager	April 2019
4.	Develop Internal Economic Development Program	Assistant Town Manager	February 2020

## GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Priority	Task	Person(s) Assigned to Complete Task	Target Date
1.	<p>Prioritize Pedestrian Plan Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify a Potential Pedestrian Project for Inclusion in the FY18-19 Budget</li> </ul>	Assistant Town Manager / Development Services Director	June 2018
2.	<p>Expand ULI Program to High School and Community College Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore Internship Program Potential</li> </ul>	Assistant Town Manager	July 2018
3.	<p>Approve Knightdale Village Partnership with Development Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Release RFQ (May 2018)</li> </ul>	Town Council / Assistant Town Manager / Development Services Director	September 2018
4.	Adopt Comprehensive Plan	Town Council / Assistant Town Manager / Development Services Director	September 2018
5.	Determine Feasibility of Internal Building Inspections Program	Assistant Town Manager	September 2018
6.	<p>Establishment of a Stormwater Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Session Presentation (August 2018)</li> </ul>	Assistant Town Manager / Engineering Director	October 2018
7.	<p>Approve Comprehensive Rezonings (i.e. "down-zoning")</p>	Town Council / Assistant Town Manager / Development Services Director	November 2018
8.	Educate Staff & Council on Rail Options for Knightdale	Assistant Town Manager / Development Services Director	November 2018
9.	Evaluate Mingo Creek Basin Erosion*	Assistant Town Manager / Engineering Director	March 2019
10.	<p>Adopt Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Revisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare RFQ (August 2018)</li> <li>Complete Committee Work (November 2019)</li> </ul>	Town Council / Assistant Town Manager / Development Services Director	January 2020

11.	Prepare Local Transportation Plan RFQ	Assistant Town Manager / Development Services Director	March 2020
12.	Adoption of Construction Specifications	Town Council / Assistant Town Manager / Engineering Director	March 2021

*\*Previous-year target goal*

## OPERATIONS

Priority	Task	Person(s) Assigned to Complete Task	Target Date
1.	Develop a 5-Year Staffing Plan	Administrative Services Director	November 2018

## IMPLEMENTATION

The Town Council Retreat allows the group to hold thoughtful discourse on the current strengths and weaknesses facing Knightdale. Significant time was dedicated to evaluating potential opportunities and threats that could be on the Town's horizon. By doing so, the council could then effectively set goals that minimize threats while maximizing opportunities to enhance the lives of Knightdale's citizens through facilities, programs, and services.

The ultimate goal of the retreat is to successfully implement these goals into action. The Town Council assumed the responsibility of setting goals that holistically seek to improve Town's services and direction. Town staff is charged with implementing the goals according to the timelines mutually agreed upon between the elected officials and Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, and the Administrative Services Director. Establishing target dates for completion for each goal seeks to maximize the efficiency of staff's performance through strategic governance. Each goal will be incorporated into the Departmental work plans to which the task applies. The Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, and Administrative Services Director through the management of the Town's Departments will ensure that all goals are successfully completed. All relevant information will be presented to Town Council for consideration and review. The overall process strives to keep staff's efforts aligned with the ambitions and direction set by Town Council.