

City of Concord Mayor/City Council Goals Fiscal Year 2008-2009

On February 1, 2008, the Mayor and City Council held the annual planning session. The direction that was provided by the Mayor and Council during the planning session has been developed into a statement of goals for the City of Concord for FY 2008-2009. These goals guide budget development and implementation. In addition to this statement of goals, the City has also developed a set of financial policies that are approved by City Council to guide the City in the financial management of all funds. Although North Carolina local governmental units must adhere to the requirements set forth in the North Carolina Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, the financial policies approved by City Council are often more stringent than State requirements to assure the City of Concord will continue to function in a very fiscally sound manner.

The FY 2008-2009 goals are presented according to functional areas. During the year, monthly functional meetings are held to monitor progress on these goals and to identify new issues that must be considered for long-range planning. City Departments are evaluated on their performance in meeting these goals.

Administration/Finance/Legal

Short-term

- Maintain a fund balance goal of 30% to 35% of General Fund expenditures and to use appropriated fund balance for capital items or nonrecurring expenditures only.
- Continue to include a performance measurement component in external agency funding process whereby agencies receiving City funding establish, monitor and report performance outcomes to the City.
- Support recommendations from the City Manager originating with the City's coworker customer service design team to ensure the City maintains a "culture of excellent customer service."
- Endorse the Federal funding agenda as a guide to seeking project funding through the US Congress and seek legislative approval of identified priority policy issues. (Any federal funds approved for I-85 widening should be "new money" and not impact State equity formula for roads or require City of Concord matching funds).
- Pursue planned technology changes that will save the City thousands of dollars including the purchase Microsoft Office 2007 and Vista systems for all new computer workstations and notebooks but continue to use Office 2003 for the life of existing computers and upgrade to Vista when compatibility issues are resolved.

Long-term

- Continue to pursue strategies to reduce fuel consumption including diversifying fueling methods, purchasing hybrid vehicles when possible, replacing aging light-duty vehicles with smaller, more fuel efficient vehicles, increasing fuel storage capacity and the use of blended fuels and working with departments to set target goals to reduce fuel consumption.
- Complete an email system review by 2010 to evaluate possible upgrades but continue to use Novell Groupwise for email until assessment is complete
- Continue policy of setting retail electric rates that are consistent with retail rates charged by Duke Power to their customers in Concord.
- Adhere to approved financial management policies that maintain the City's financial strength and integrity including continuation of conservative revenue estimates that reflect economic conditions and aggressive pursuit of revenue collections.
- Prepare the City's annual budget document in compliance with criteria established to obtain the Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Budget Award and submit the document for review to the GFOA.
- Keep the impact of local taxes to a minimum.
- Continue to implement a change in the budget process to a performance measurement and results-oriented budget document.
- Maintain a sound financial position to continue a minimum bond rating of Aa2/AA.
- Establish, update and readopt a Capital Improvement Program, which details each capital project, the estimated cost, description and funding source.
- Maintain accounting systems in compliance with the North Carolina Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.
- Prepare the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report in compliance with necessary criteria established to obtain the Government Finance Officer Association's (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting and submit the Report each year for that recognition.
- Finance major costs so that future growth can help pay for major capital needs, but continue to use pay-as-go methods for most other capital requests.

Planning/Economic Development/Redevelopment

Short-term

- Continue implementation of Logan Redevelopment Plan with goal of selecting private sector development partner for the public housing property.
- Adopt the updated Downtown Master Plan in May 2008 and budget funds, if available, for implementation of approved plan.
- Continue to regulate the design criteria for commercial development in accordance with the Concord Development Ordinance which requires higher standards for exterior appearance and amend the Development Ordinance so that owners and/or tenants of commercial buildings over 30,000 square feet are required to maintain the building appearance, parking, lighting and landscaping if the building goes vacant.
- Encourage all newly developed buildings have mechanical equipment designed in such a manner that would allow the building to be occupied in a multi-tenant fashion if the original tenant vacates the building.

Long-term

- Phase in facilities, personnel and equipment needed for services in annexed areas so that revenues from annexed areas cover the cost of service additions.
- Continue to focus on voluntary and city-initiated annexations in the Northwest area before pursuing annexations in other areas unless the annexation helps to fill a “hole” in the existing City limits that would make service provision easier.
- Continue to update the five-year annexation plan.
- Continue to use policy for voluntary annexations that includes cost-benefit assessments and requirement of acceptance of water and sewer utility service where feasible.
- Promote street connectivity and require additional subdivision entrances in accordance with the Concord Development Ordinance (CDO.) Ensure that final recorded plats contain clear notation of stub roads and investigate the requirement of permanent signage indicating anticipated future connection at all stub roads.
- Pursue public-private partnerships for parks, greenways and other recreational facilities for land to be annexed and developed.
- Work with Cabarrus County Commissioners and nonprofit groups to better promote options for preservation of farmland and open space in Concord and Cabarrus County.
- Continue to support the City’s neighborhood program and look for opportunities to increase the number of recognized neighborhoods.
- Continue to support business development efforts of Concord Downtown Development Corporation (CDDC) in attracting new businesses to and improving existing businesses in downtown Concord.
- Work closely with economic development partners in Cabarrus County to present a complete, coordinated recruitment and retention effort.
- Direct staff to administer Small Area Plans as flexible guides for physical development.

Transportation

Short-term

- Consider additional funding options for the Transportation Fund to provide additional resources to pay for high priority projects.
- Reprioritize transportation fund projects during the budget process to match project importance and develop an implementation schedule matching available revenue.
- Continue to budget \$100,000 in the Transportation Fund to pay for sidewalk projects recommended in the Pedestrian Improvement Plan.
- If equipment is available through the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS), fund one additional bus to serve riders of the Concord Express and help relieve overcrowding on current buses.
- Complete design, secure FTA funding and begin construction on new transit center in Concord and create a temporary transit center on site if feasible.
- Request that the Cabarrus Chamber coordinate discussion with interested entities in Cabarrus County to explore developing partnerships to fund a feasibility study for the extension of the Charlotte light rail corridor into Cabarrus County.

- Expand Concord Regional Airport facilities to provide necessary services for customers while minimizing the financial impact of facility development on the City by continuing to seek federal and state funding of projects.
- Support hosting the 2009 North Carolina Airport Association conference at Concord Regional Airport.
- Develop Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for public/private partnership to explore options for expanding the terminal building and providing adequate parking and present proposal to Council for consideration.
- Seek federal and state funds to construct an air traffic control facility to be built adjacent to the terminal expansion.

Long-term

- Continue efforts to obtain Congressional earmarks and FAA funding for capital projects at Concord Regional Airport, and if funding is available, pursue construction of capital projects as approved by City Council.
- Continue to pursue priority projects set by Council for the use of the Transportation Fund including the projects identified in the Pedestrian Improvement Plan.
- Investigate possible Federal funding options for the completion of the Transportation Operation Center.

Utilities

Short-term

- Continue to negotiate with wholesale power providers to ensure the most reliable source of electricity at the lowest cost for Concord electric system and approve a new agreement for wholesale power by January 1, 2009.
- Continue discussions for purchasing water from interested area local governments including a minimum of 5 million gallons per day of water from Albemarle and the design of infrastructure needed for Concord to receive this water.
- Work with the City of Charlotte on their water master plan update to include assessment of improvements needed for Concord to purchase water from Charlotte and pursue a contract for long-term purchase of water from Charlotte.

Long-term

- Continue to promote and support the City's recycling programs including residential, business, downtown and apartments.
- Continue to educate the public on the importance of water conservation. Explore additional opportunities for conserving water, determine costs and effectiveness and, where appropriate, incorporate as requirements into development standards or offer incentives for residents and businesses to use water saving devices, equipment or methods.
- Work with WSACC to develop a plan to reuse water for irrigation and other allowable purposes.
- Develop and enforce a consistent rights-of-way protection policy to include notification of property owners that currently maintain obstructions on or across city -owned right-of-way.

Solid Waste

Short-term

- Conduct cost/benefit analysis of different options and policies for collection of trash and large bulk items including using fully-automated trucks and present findings to City Council for review.

Recreation

Short-term

- Authorize staff, in partnership with the YMCA or other potential partners, to explore alternative locations for the construction of a skateboard park considering security, supervision, parking and input of nearby neighborhoods.

Long-term

- If funding is available, work with property owners to secure property needed for the Rocky River Greenway and participate fully in the Carolina Thread Trail initiative.
- Continue emphasis on improving community appearance through regular street sweeping, litter pick up and removal of signs violating City ordinance.
- Promote the City's litter removal program and adopt-a-street program to increase participation throughout the community.
- Develop a five-year plan of action to address the findings and recommended improvements as highlighted in the study of physical conditions of existing recreation centers.

Buildings and Grounds

Short-term

- Delay the demolition and landscape improvements of old Public Works site on Kerr Street until drought conditions improve and the City eliminates water restrictions banning irrigation.

Public Safety

Short-term

- Complete construction of Fire Station 9 on Ivy Cline Road.
- Create a Halloween public safety awareness program and encourage residents to stop offering treats after 8:00 PM.

Long-term

- Maintain code enforcement penalties and fees but monitor annually to recommend changes as needed to ensure the penalties and fees discourage City code violations.
- Continue planning and seeking alternative funding sources to upgrade the City's radio system to digital by 2012 as recommended by Homeland Security Interoperable Communications effort.
- Support continuation of and active participation in Project Safe Neighborhood.