

## Strategic Plan for Edmonds: What's next for the EDC?

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Now that the Council has approved the Strategic Plan and its action Items the EDC has an opportunity to help build momentum for the continued work. We have all seen numerous copies of the Plan as it has taken shape including the final plan approved by Council April 2. At its meeting Council did not propose the next steps but discussed moving forward with the items having the highest priority with the public.

The EDC could help Council by selecting the top items and request the EDC and Planning Board to move the issue forward by providing more ideas/resources for implementing a strategic objective(s) and/or plan action(s). Spending time on lower ranked items could take away focus from items where the community expressed strong support.

**Selecting the top items for our work is the focus of our discussion at our April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Each Commissioner should review the SP and select several items that they feel the "EDC" could focus upon to help implement. We will have some open discussion to help "scope out the action item". This scoping could do a number of things:**

1. Identify was added value the EDC could bring to the issue.
2. Outline a plan to move the action forward.
3. Identify actions that are in conflict or complementary to one another.
4. Identify cost elements to implement the item.
5. Identify impact both positive and negative to the community.
6. Outline the need for more input or data to move the issues forward.

Here is a brief summary of the purpose and goals for the SP and the how the process worked and what the results represent.

### **Purpose and Goals**

In February 2010 the EDC and Planning Board made our first report to council. Here is what we said about the need for a Strategic Plan for Edmonds:

*The City Council should commit to developing/reviewing/updating a strategic plan every year (and throughout the year, when necessary and appropriate), ideally corresponding to their annual retreat. The City should consider using the services of a skilled strategic planning facilitator to work with the community to develop a vision and strategic plan with active citizen participation. A City of the quality of Edmonds should move forward with a defined strategy. An overarching plan is needed. In addition, that plan needs to be revisited every year to see where the City stands, what has been accomplished and what should be modified. The plan needs to include indicators of achievement. It must involve the citizens in a meaningful way. There are a number of examples of successful strategic planning from our neighbors. There are even funds available to help cities in the process.*

The goal was to engage the public in as many ways as possible to produce the most reliable information from the most number of people possible to provide so the plan would be used and not just put on the shelf. Council approved our report and authorized the creation of a Strategic Plan.

## Process

1. Attached are some data (this is my data sheet showing the various groups that were involved as we put the SP together) that give us some idea of how many people have already been involved with the SP. There were 9 general groups and more than 2500 people. Yes some people were in more than one group but the consultant pointed out that in all of his work Edmonds produced the biggest number of participants for a town our size. See the top portion of the attached for some quantification of the various groups.
2. The work with the following groups lead to the development of the issues along with some inputs but the primary purpose of working with these groups as to identify issues to then gain more public input: Focus Groups, Adult Resident Survey, Business Owner Survey, Employee Survey, Customer Survey, and Young Adult Survey.
3. Charrettes and Open Houses were conducted to further engage the public in the process, gathering input and sharpening the issues for the voter survey.
4. A sub group of Council, EDC, Planning Board and staff met frequently all along the way to sharpen the questions and fine tune the process.
5. Joint meetings were held with Council, EDC and Planning Board to accept updates from the consultant and to offer guidance for future work.
6. The final public input was a comprehensive, statistically valid survey of the voters to create the most reliable data possible.

## Results

1. Note that for the voter survey 466 people were part of that survey. Other consultants have pointed out that to create a statistically valid survey for a town our size the sample size needs to be about 329 people to get results that are accurate to plus or minus 5%. So with 466 participates we had 141% of the needed sample size. I do not have the data to calculate what that sample size represents in terms of a tighter range: plus or minus 4% or 3% or whatever. The data shown may be understated because I left the range at plus or minus 5%. The point here is that all along the way the objective was to create a survey that was statistically valid. Clearly that has been done.
2. Also shown in the attached are some numbers that help us understand how many people are in favor of some issues. Shown are the actual number of people in the survey and the number of voters they represent. There are more than 20,000 voters so these numbers are conservative. One way to look at the results of the SP would go something like this. If one of the action items garnered a 60% positive result that that would mean that 280 people in the survey supported it and that would represent between 11,400 and 12,600 voters support it as well. When was the last time we had 280 people at the 3 minute mike for a Council meeting, much less 12,000 voters. These results are significant!
3. The final report also shows the groups that can be called upon for each respective issue. Team leaders are shown for each topic along with the groups who have a stake in the work and can contribute to the ongoing work for each issue.
4. The results show issues for which the public has expressed overwhelming support along with issues that show little support for action.