

City Commission Priorities

2005 - 2006



Public Safety - Police / Fire / Rescue / Ambulance

- Support Citizen's Fire and Police Academies
- Continue Drug Enforcement – Zero Tolerance
- Continue to encourage collaborative efforts in providing public safety services to surrounding communities
- Maintain positive relationships with St. Joseph County Court System
- Continue seeking grant opportunities and other support for Safe Community activities
- Continue to provide high quality ambulance / rescue services to the city and surrounding area

Economic and Community Development

- Promote Sturgis as a gateway city
- Prepare the community to meet the needs of the future employment environment
- Continue industrial and business retention visits
- Continue collaboration with County Economic Development Board and surrounding counties
- Develop and enhance industrial site entrances and streets into the City
- Continue leadership role in area and regional economic development activities
- Encourage the Building & Zoning Departments to be as “user friendly” and as responsive as possible
- Promote and encourage I-9 / M-66 Corridor development program
- Encourage Ordinance compliance (i.e. – unlicensed and inoperable vehicles, rubbish, etc.) through initially using verbal warnings instead of written citations
- Enforce residential overcrowding violations through city code enforcement and increase the quality of existing residential rentals
- Encourage the development of a vibrant downtown
- Develop plans for City Sub - Phase III Neighborhood design
- Pursue M-66 By-Pass Options, including bonding for streets and a bypass
- Continue pursuing a positive context sensitive U.S. 12 design with MDOT and continue coordination of all necessary utility / road / grant / development aspects for the project
- Encourage & facilitate housing redevelopment and neighborhood preservation (i.e. – MSHDA Grants, City \$1,000 Grants, SNP, etc.)
- Facilitate single family housing in neighborhoods, including neo-traditional concepts on the Paramount and Newport sites

Infrastructure / Public Services / Utilities

- Implement a city wide Cross Connection/backflow prevention water program
- Continue sanitary and storm sewer maintenance/cleaning program
- Continue progressive options regarding alternative energy sources
- Continue street and sidewalk repairs with an emphasis on street improvements
- Continue implementing a broad based Geographic Information System
- Ensure continued competitiveness of public utilities
- Improve current Public Service infrastructure and facilities (i.e. – Ram Building) to more efficiently and effectively serve City residents
- Objectively maintain a fiber optic network that meets the community's needs
- Adopt a unified (all utilities) utility Terms and Conditions policy
- Adopt a revised Street Light Policy
- Negotiate Charter Communications franchise and pole attachment agreement

Leisure / Parks / Culture

- Promote walkable community designs
- Establish a business plan regarding the future direction of the Library (i.e. – District Library, consolidated library, core value library, etc.)
- Increase auditorium usage (i.e. – 50th Anniversary, multi-cultural usage)
- Continue Tree City USA award
- Cooperatively work with area athletic groups to maintain and enhance recreation facilities

Administrative Services

- Continue City Charter amendments
- Continue intergovernmental relations, information sharing and joint Commission / committee / board meetings
- Promote City Web Site (enhance and maintain for economic development purposes)
- Focus on customer service – provide a quality, friendly environment
- Pursue Grant Writing opportunities by what ever means possible
- Pursue Non-Tax revenue generators to support City operations (i.e. – investments) and enhance long term financial forecasting
- Encourage the review of all activities and compare costs as opposed to outsourcing

General Policies

- Encourage Spanish language skills (both with existing staff and in possible recruitments)
- Continue education and training of City Commission, Boards and City staff
- Continue support for Sturgis Hospital
- Establish a team oriented approach to providing services to the public and continue employee morale and productivity incentives (i.e. – cross training, periodic employee personal growth workshops, FISH principles, etc.)
- Promote at least yearly meetings with adjacent townships and other governmental groups (i.e. - school, etc.)
- Promote Doing Business Locally as much as practical
- Establish methods to review City departments from a business perspective and consider implementing certain business models and fiscal improvements
- Work with Townships toward common goals and cooperation
- Promote the advancement of cultural diversity and understanding
- Continue looking at outsourcing opportunities
- Promote leadership development programs within the community (including the possibility of a government academy)