

# City of Burlington, Iowa Goal Setting Report

February 23, 2011

---

**Mayor:**  
**Bill Ell**

**City Council:**  
**Jim Davidson**  
**Matt Murray**  
**Bob Fleming**  
**Chris Reed**

**City Staff:**  
**Doug Worden, City Manager**



***Facilitated by:***  
***Jeff Schott***  
***Institute of Public Affairs***  
***University of Iowa***

# CITY OF BURLINGTON, IOWA GOAL SETTING SESSION 2011

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	Page 3
Goal Setting Work Session .....	Page 3
Major Accomplishments .....	Page 4
Issues, Concerns, Trends, and Opportunities.....	Page 6
Priorities .....	Page 8
Organizational Effectiveness.....	Page 9
Final Comments .....	Page 9
<u>Exhibit A</u> – Significant Projects, Programs, Policies, and Initiatives Considered	Page 10
<u>Exhibit B</u> - Agenda.....	Page 11
<u>Exhibit C</u> –Questionnaire .....	Page 12

# **CITY OF BURLINGTON, IOWA**

## **GOAL SETTING SESSION**

### **2011**

#### **Introduction**

The City of Burlington requested the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA) to assist the city with goal setting. IPA agreed to organize and facilitate a process that involved the following steps:

1. Prepare a questionnaire to identify recent accomplishments, issues/trends/concerns, potential new initiatives/programs/policies and suggestions to improve organizational effectiveness.
2. Conduct a preliminary session with department heads.
3. Conduct a goal-setting session with the elected officials.
4. Preparation of this report.

#### **Goal Setting Work Session**

City Council Members and the Mayor held a work session conducted by the IPA on February 23, 2011. In attendance and participating at this meeting were Mayor Bill Ell, Council Members Jim Davidson, Bob Fleming, Chris Reed, and City Manager Doug Worden.

A preliminary session was held with city department heads on January 20, 2011. In attendance and participating in that session were City Manager Doug Worden, Police Major Doug Beaird, Fire Chief Tom Clements, Development Director Eric Larson, Public Works Director Ron Knoke, Human Resources Director Bev Hunter, City Clerk Kathleen Salisbury, Parks and Recreation Director Phil Collier, Wastewater Treatment Supervisor Don Fitting and Library Director Rhonda Fervert.

## **Major Accomplishments**

The following were identified as major accomplishments during the past two years:

- Quiet Zone Implementation
- Quad Township Fire Agreement
- Continuation of Sealcoat Program
- Completion of Wastewater Treatment Facility Plans & Specs
- Passage of Criminal Loitering Ordinance
- REAP Grant and STP Funds/Construction Costs of Flint River Trail
- Completed Phase I of snake Alley Landscaping
- Completion of Non-Union Compensation Study
- Completed Hawkeye Equalization Tank Construction/Sewer Separation
  - Significantly Reduced Frequency and Amount Bypassing of Untreated Wastewater to River
- Cooperated with Area to Keep GE Plant
- Expanded Flint Hills Urban Renewal Area
- Demolished Old Homes & Sold Property to Get on Tax Roles
- Alternative Source Energy Feeder from Burlington South Substation
- Boat Ramp Repair in Process
- Rip Rap Replacement in Process
- Hawkeye Sewer Stop Log Repair Project in Process
- Updated Sections of Zoning & Subdivision Regulations
- Assisted CNH in Expansion of Burlington Plant
- Stabilize Bees Baseball Through Debt Relief
- Paid Off Babe Ruth Debt
- Hold Budget to Limited Tax Levy Increase
- Golf Course and RecPlex Improvements
- Mt. Pleasant Street Overlay 1.5 Miles Utilizing ARRA Funding
- Grant for Partial Funding of Cascade Bridge Project
- Continued crack seal maintenance as much as weather permitted
- Reduced sign pollution along all major roadways & 50% of residential streets
- Responded to major rains (washouts, alleys, flooding, etc.)
- Completion of downtown street lighting replacement
- Replaced 7 buses, 5 medium duty & 2 light duty, using 100% ARRA Funding
- Transit ridership increased 14% between FY 2008 and 2009 & was up another half a percent in 2010.
- Updated transit drivers' handbook
- Finished converting Roosevelt Ave traffic signals to LED technology
- Completed in-house remodeling of senior center restrooms
- Negotiated, & received approval of, two major engineering services agreements. One for design of a four million dollar bridge & one for a sewer study preceding design of a six million dollar sewer separation project.
- Completed construction of 2/3 mile of joint use trail in vicinity of the RecPlex.
- Completed & repaired 90 blocks of city streets
- Updated the L-3 on-board squad car digital video systems

### **Major Accomplishments, continued**

- Completing the state of the art E-911 communications center
- Deployed a new software based system that provides real time crime data for officers on patrol
- Added two new officers to the tactical response team
- Secured over \$500,000 dollars in federal grant funding including the hiring of two additional grant funded patrol officers.
- Completed a needs assessment for a new joint law enforcement center
- Added a part time dispatch position
- Preliminary permit application for a hydroelectric project
- Purchase of HESCO flood control barriers to use for future flooding
- Grant for Beautification Project (Plants) for Highway 61 (Roosevelt Ave)
- 2009 Repair of leaks in the tunnel & adjoining areas at the WWTF
- Purchase of a pipeline television inspection system, which replaces antiquated system
- New Linesaver program for property owners
- Continuation of Neighborhood Stabilization grant program
- Continued pride of the community award program
- Amending solid waste ordinance (providing revenue stability for landfill improvements, O&M and post closure through flow control)
- Council's review/action re: Functions of needs for each volunteer board
- Dog Park
- Internal ambulance billing (approx 90% + collection)
- Brought payroll processing back in-house
- Historic District grant funding (tax credits)-incentive for development (downtown district)
- Expanded enterprise zone (re-certified and expanded)
- Comp plan grant
- GIS - new aerials of city-improved clarity and accuracy
- Demo Program-expanded into garages for 2010
- Code compliance agreement
- Increased online resources at the library, including ebooks
- Gates grant to added public computers at the library
- Inventory of library collections
- Built an additional youth ball field at the Rec Plex
- New Perkins Park restroom completed
  - Constructed new playground in Dankwardt Park

## **Issues, Concerns, Trends and Opportunities**

The following were identified as issues, concerns, trends, and opportunities that may affect future city services, policies, finances or operations:

- Pension issues with fire and police/future increases in city contributions
- Health care costs
- Current economy still struggling/loss of jobs
- Stricter landlord ordinance
- Pressure to keep property taxes down-potential property tax reform by legislature
- Potential decline in road use funding
- DNR/EPA Regulations- WWTP project, sewer separation & land fill
- Crime rate is steady, but needs to decline
- Blighted neighborhoods
- Cascade Bridge
- Use for RR depot - would like to see sold
- Marketing of the manor project (needs to move forward with a commercial real estate firm)
- City wide healthy lifestyle promoting
- Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Sewer separation
- Downtown rehab
- Joint Law enforcement center
- RR depot exterior flood wall /renovation/reuse
- Program to build fund balances
- Population loss- (New census numbers) impact on revenue/HH needed to sustain current level of services
- Slow growing city assessed valuations
- Public attitude toward government
- Retirement of department heads
- Managing the significant loss of experienced personnel in a relatively short period of time in the foreseeable future with the least amount of O&M disruption/financial impact
- Increased cost of infrastructure maintenance & reduced revenue as a result of the economy and lost population
- Cost of adding new sewers and separating the old sewer systems while still maintaining the existing older sewers
- Finding the funding to pay for meeting new state and federal requirements (I.e. DNR, FCC, etc)
- Continued updating and expansion of riverfront boat ramps and docks--more out of town boater usage of downtown shops
- Aging population and becoming more transit and ADA dependent (and rising fuel prices)
- Work with Great River Medical Center about ongoing transportation issues and after hours service for ADA patients

### **Issues, Concerns, Trends and Opportunities, continued**

- Revitalize depot with transit hub component
- Work with Burlington Trailways for a local transit hub-minimizing route times while also enhancing transportation modal tying regional city and intra state service together
- Who will maintain and service the upcoming trail systems
- Available street funding continues to be approximately 60% of what's needed to maintain the status quo
- Cooperative graffiti removal ordinance
- Funding source for the cops grant officers after the grant expires
- Funding source for a new joint law enforcement center
- Indoor multi-purpose field/wellness center at the Rec Plex property
- Continue collaborative efforts between governmental agencies for more efficient services
- Failing police facility
- Local landmark eyesores such as abandoned schools and surrounding parking lots
- A demanding high volume of annual calls for service.
- Increased fuel & utility cost
- Continued perception by citizens that there is more crime
- USEPA/IDNR Pursuit of "Green" initiatives regardless of Cost/Benefit Ratio
- Partner with individuals wishing to build universal boat docks
- Roosevelt Ave landscaping-involve "Master Gardeners"???
- Promotion of infill development as more homes are developed (incentives?)
- Lack of knowledge of business-no tracking through business license, not meeting safety codes, leads to fire, etc.
- Abandoned/vacant downtown buildings cost to taxpayers if demolition is required.
- Lack of maintenance of owner-occupied homes, rentals inspected enforced to minimum standard but not owner occupied
- Allow two or more trash containers of waste to aid with the number of nuisance cases
- Continuance of negative publicity from the news/media (combat that with blogs, postings, and timely correct information)
- Image in the media
- State government changes
- Poverty
- Dropout rate
- Oak Street school
- Emerald Ash Borer
- Attracting quality employees – being competitive
- Animal shelter

## **Priorities**

The following were identified as priorities for the upcoming 12 – 24 month period:

- Attract developer for Hwy 61 Development Project (Manor Project)
- Sewer separation project
- Street repair program
- Continue to improve neighborhoods
  - Demolition of unoccupied, substandard, dangerous houses
  - Infill program for vacant buildings
  - Nuisance abatement program
- Continue to support Downtown Partners
- Continue to support Hwys 61 & 34 improvements
- Secure funding for Cascade Bridge replacement
- Achieve self-sufficiency of city enterprise funds and build up fund balances
- Make a decision regarding law enforcement facility – including joint facility alternative
- Downtown traffic signal removal project
- Make a decision regarding depot renovation, including flood wall possibility
- Make a decision regarding Animal Control Center remodel and expansion
- Waste Water Treatment Facility improvements
- Continue economic development programs and activities
- Update City Comprehensive Plan
- Complete Flint River bike trail
- Investigate utility franchise fee concept

A complete list of all programs and initiatives considered by the Mayor and City Council members is attached as **Exhibit A**.

## **Organizational Effectiveness**

The Mayor and City Council reviewed a variety of ideas relating to improving organizational effectiveness to accomplish the selected goals and priorities. After review and discussion, the Mayor and City Council selected the following steps to improve organizational effectiveness:

- Review City Policy Book – update as necessary
- Continue mentoring of new council members/council orientation
- Hold periodic meetings with other governmental entities
- Council tours at city facilities (work sessions)
- Continue to attend leadership meetings through Iowa League of Cities
- Enhance city website
- Periodic department head reports to Council
- Continue to pursue regional sharing opportunities

**Note:** The agenda for the Goal Setting Session and the Preliminary Questionnaire are attached to this report as **Exhibits B** and **C** respectively.

## **Final Comments**

It was a pleasure to assist the City of Burlington with this goal setting process. I was extremely impressed by the level of leadership and teamwork exhibited by the participants in the session.

It is important to note that the prioritization of projects and initiatives is not “cast in stone.” They can be modified as new circumstances may occur.

It is recommended that city staff prepare an “action plan” for accomplishing the planning goals. The action plan would define the steps that would be needed to accomplish each goal, identify who is responsible for implementation, and establish a timeline for accomplishment. The action plan should then be presented to the Mayor and City Council for review and approval. It is also recommended that staff review with the Mayor and City Council the status of implementing the goals on a quarterly basis.

Jeff Schott  
Institute of Public Affairs  
University of Iowa  
February 24, 2011

**Exhibit A**  
City of Burlington  
Goal Setting Session – 2011

---

**SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES OR PROGRAMS CONSIDERED**

- Renovate council chambers
- Comprehensive energy reduction of city facilities policy beyond 10%
- Continue beautification project of Hwy 61
- Embrace green tech - hydroelectric?
- Gun Ordinance
- Adopt utility franchise fee
- Burning ban
- Create city wide GIS based interface to keep inventory and history of all city owned infrastructure (signs, sewers, streets, etc.). Add sewer and water mains, storm sewers
  - Expand commitment to GIS system and common city wide data interface to GIS for storage of all data linked to any piece of infrastructure or private property
- Having ADA accessible transit vehicles available 24-7
- Establish a program to replace signage to meet upcoming retro-reflectivity mandates
- Consider a 5 year sewer replacement/rehab plan. (similar to 5-year street plan). Our separation projects have been adding additional infrastructure, not updating/improving the old system
- Establish involuntary special assessment districts for resurfacing and paving city streets including the paving of sealcoat streets
- Community Policing officer positions
- Improve technology infrastructure for two way radio communications
- 2nd part time animal control position
- Alley clean up initiative: Implement a reliable nuisance abatement program to deal with tree branches, hedges, bushes, flowers and weeds encroaching in alley ROW
- Adopt current building and fire codes
- Investigate new avenues for regionalization of services
- Business license required (very minimal or no fee)
- Resume city tab section
- Online payment options
- Add library assistant to better serve teens and youth
- Indoor rec facility at RecPlex

**Exhibit B**

**AGENDA**

**CITY OF BURLINGTON  
GOAL SETTING SESSION - 2011**

---

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23  
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM  
RecPlex**

1. Introductions and Opening Comments
  - a. Name, Tenure, and Background
2. General Overview of the Meeting and the Goal-Setting Process
  - a. The Ground Rules for this session
3. Update regarding status of 2010 goals/priorities
4. Discussion regarding City's major accomplishments in 2010
5. Discussion regarding issues, concerns, trends and opportunities
6. Identification of on-going priorities
7. Identification of programs, policies, projects, and initiatives
8. Discussion regarding organizational effectiveness issues
9. IPA Report to the Mayor and City Council – 2011 Strategic Planning Process
  - a. Development of Action Plan
  - b. Importance of Quarterly Updates
10. Questions, comments, and suggestions
11. Adjourn

Exhibit C

CITY OF BURLINGTON  
GOAL SETTING SESSION – 2011

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

---

**INTRODUCTION**

The City of Burlington’s Goal Setting Session will be held on Tuesday, February 1, at the RecPlex. The purpose of the session will be to identify and prioritize the City’s overall goals and objectives for the next two years.

In order to prepare for this session, you are requested to identify key issues and potential objectives that will be reviewed and discussed at the session. Please complete all sections of this questionnaire. If you need additional space, please feel free to attach additional page(s).

**Major Accomplishments**

Please list the major city accomplishments over the past two years. These accomplishments could be as large as a street project or as simple as a newly adopted city policy. The items do not need to be in any particular order.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Issues, Concerns, Trends, and Opportunities**

Please list specific issues, concerns, trends, and opportunities that affect future city services, policies, finances or operations (for example, loss of population, major new economic development success or resolving a policy question). You do not need to identify potential solutions to your concerns.

---

---

---

---

---

**Significant Initiatives or Programs**

Please list any initiatives, programs or policies that you think the City should consider in the next two years (for example, downtown revitalization, updating employee job descriptions, adopting a policy on open burning, conducting an annexation study, reviewing water and sewer rates, etc.)

---

---

---

---

---

**Organizational Effectiveness**

Please list several things that the Mayor/City Council and/or staff could do in the future to improve organizational effectiveness, decision-making process, teamwork and the ability to accomplish the City's stated goals and objectives.

---

---

---

---

**RETURN OF QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please return this questionnaire to Doug Worden by **Thursday, January 6.**

CITY OF BURLINGTON  
ACTION PLAN FOR ACHIEVING CITY COUNCIL GOALS  
MAY, 2011

1. Attract Developer for Highway 61 Development Project. Action plan pending.

2. Sewer Separation Project:

Cascade Basins report from RJN due by September 1  
January 1, 2012 submit to DNR plan for separation  
Design over winter  
Bid in spring  
Commence construction by May 1, 2012  
Complete by November, 2013

Angular, South, Market, Locust

Exact timing to be determined based on completion of Cascade Basin

3. Street Repair Program

We will continue to design approximately 40 blocks of hot mix asphalt overlay annually and four to four and a half miles of sealcoat based upon funding availability and the cost of the projects.

Design will take place over the winter months, public hearings, and bidding in the spring with construction over the summer.

Based upon availability of federal grant funds, major projects involving federal aid to urban system streets will occur periodically.

4. Continue to Improve Neighborhoods

We will continue to demolish old dilapidated housing as available funding permits. Continue to redevelop or construct new housing using NSP funds as they continue to be available.

We will continue to abate nuisances around town utilizing our two part time nuisance inspectors.

We are awaiting the contract for the CDBG award for the North Hill area. Once it is received we will have a time line for that project.

We will continue to work with Saunderson Heights and South Hill neighborhood groups to assist them in their efforts.

5. Continue to Support Downtown Partners.

The City Manager and one Council member will continue to serve on the Board of Directors for Downtown Partners. We will continue to work with Downtown partners in regards to issues such as parking, removal of traffic signals, decorative barriers at closed railroad crossings, bench programs, etc. We will continue to provide funding through the Self Supported Municipal Improvement District Tax levy (SSMID) and the Downtown Tax Increment area.

6. Continue to support Highway 61 and 34 Improvements.

City will continue to be a member of the Highway 34 and Highway 61 coalition and support their efforts. City representatives will make every effort to attend the annual functions of both entities.

7. Secure Funding for Cascade Bridge Replacement.

\$1,000,000 has been secured from the State of Iowa. Efforts will continue to be made by City Council and staff to secure additional grant funding or the process to secure bond anticipation financing will be undertaken commencing in August.

8. Achieve Self-Sufficiency of City Enterprise Funds and Build up Fund Balances.

Efforts to increase revenues and control expenditures will continue. Deficits have been greatly reduced or eliminated in most of the Enterprise Funds. Fund balances in the operating funds showed an increase last year, are projected to increase this year and show a modest increase in next years adopted budget.

9. Make a Decision Regarding Law Enforcement Facility – Including Joint Facility Alternatives.

This issue is currently awaiting a decision by the City Council and Des Moines County Board of Supervisors. Once a decision is reached a more definitive time line may be developed.

10. Downtown Traffic Signal Removal Project.

Based on discussions with Downtown Partners we are currently proposing a phased approach to removal of the signals. We currently anticipate removal of the signals on Washington and Valley to occur sometime after July 1. The exact timing could be impacted by major flooding, or other unanticipated events which take precedence for Property Maintenance. We would then anticipate the removal of the Jefferson Street lights sometime in the spring of 2012. We are working with DPI to identify poles for the stop signs which will be compatible with downtown.

11. Make a Decision Regarding Depot Renovation, Including Flood Wall Possibility.

We would anticipate making a report to City Council of our findings on possible uses by August 1 at the latest. We would therefore, expect Council to be able to make a decision regarding a possible reuse in September or October.

12. Make a Decision Regarding Animal Control Center Remodel and Expansion.

Final decision to be made when the Human Society presents the final figures.

13. Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements.

We continue to wait for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to issue the necessary permit to allow construction to commence. In anticipation of issuance of the permit, bids have been solicited and are due by April 19. Award of the successful bid will be contingent upon DNR issuing the permit.

14. Continue Economic Development Programs and Activities.

The City Manager will continue to meet monthly with representatives of the Greater Burlington Partnership and continue to work with Grow Greater Burlington to develop economic development incentive packages based upon the particular circumstances surrounding each inquiry. The Mayor will continue to attend meetings of Grow Greater Burlington.

15. Update City Comprehensive Plan.

Request for proposals for consulting services will be mailed this spring with proposals accepted in late spring or early summer and a contract awarded by July. Work will be completed by November, 2012.

16. Complete Flint River Bike Trail.

Phase II and IV of the project are planned to be bid on May 15 with construction completed this year. Phase III and a portion of Phase I will be bid and completed in 2012. Grant application will be submitted this year for funding to complete Phase I.

17. Investigate Utility Franchise Fee Concept

Staff has been in contact with Alliant Utilities regarding the process for updating the franchise agreement and has done preliminary investigation of the process to implement the fee. The implementation process could be lengthy as could the development of a report to Council detailing the process and impacts of implementing the fee. Due to limited staffing at this time staff would anticipate this issue not be presented to Council until early 2012 unless Council wishes to review it sooner.