

# *COUNCIL* *RETREAT*

**The Plateau Club, Alder Room, Sammamish WA  
January 18-20, 2017**

**Councilmembers present:**

Mayor Christie Malchow  
Deputy Mayor Tom Hornish  
Councilmember Pamela Stuart  
Councilmember Chris Ross  
Councilmember Karen Moran  
Councilmember Jason Ritchie  
Councilmember Ramiro Valderrama

**Staff present:**

Lyman Howard, City Manager  
Jessi Bon, Deputy City Manager  
Jeff Thomas, Director of Community Development  
Aaron Antin, Assistant City Manager/Director of Finance  
Angie Feser, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Glenn Akramoff, Director of Organizational Development  
Steve Leniszewski, Director of Public Works  
Mike Kenyon, City Attorney  
David Linehan, City Attorney  
Kim Adams Pratt, City Attorney  
Jeff Clark, Fire Chief ESF&R  
Michelle Bennett, Chief of Police  
Kellie Stickney, Communications Manager  
Mike Sugg, Management Analyst  
David Goodman, Management Analyst  
Maia Knox, Management Analyst  
Debbie Beadle – Senior Executive Assistant, City Manager’s Office

Jim Reid, Retreat Facilitator

## **Friday, January 19th**

### **Public Comment**

1. **Paul Stickney, email submission 01/18/2018 as follows: -**

Dear Councilmembers,

*To serve the best interests of the most residents of Sammamish in Sustainable, Temporal and Holistic ways:*

- **Pause all major planning efforts that have their foundations in land use.**
  - **Resolve to attain *Internal Housing Balance* for Sammamish, make it a top priority and put it on a fast track for completion.**
2. **Shaun Smith, 1605 218CT SE, Sammamish, WA – Sammamish Friends** – gave the first half of a joint presentation with Ms. Steinbis on the work of the Sammamish Friends group (the full presentation is available upon request to the City Clerk, manderson@sammish.us)
  3. **Sharon Steinbis, 24933 SE 14<sup>th</sup> St, Sammamish, WA – Stormwater Stewards** – gave the second half of a joint presentation with Mr. Smith on the work of the Stormwater Stewards group (the full presentation is available upon request to the City Clerk, manderson@sammish.us)
  4. **Mary Wictor, 408 208<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, Sammamish, WA** - commented on giving Public Comment & the procedures (the recording is available upon request to the City Clerk, manderson@sammish.us)
  5. **Jan Bird, 3310 271<sup>st</sup> Ave SE, Sammamish, WA** – commented on the East Lake Sammamish Parkway (the recording is available upon request to the City Clerk, manderson@sammish.us)

## **Saturday, January 20th**

### **Public Comment**

1. **Mary Wictor, 408 208<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, Sammamish, WA** - commented on giving Public Comment & the procedures (the recording is available upon request to the City Clerk, manderson@sammish.us)

# DRAFT SUMMARY

## OF THE KEY DISCUSSIONS, DECISIONS, AND AGREEMENTS

### THE COUNCIL'S MOST IMPORTANT CONSENSUS AGREEMENTS

The 2018 Sammamish City Council strategic planning retreat began on Thursday evening, January 18<sup>th</sup> and concluded at noon on Saturday, the 20<sup>th</sup>. During their discussions on Friday, City Councilmembers reached *tentative* agreements on their annual priorities and work plan. On Saturday, the Council refined and agreed on its 2018 priorities, and reiterated the commitment to this year's work plan.

In reaching agreement on a set of priorities, the Council set the stage for the next five years because the priorities include projects that are both immediate and long-term. The Council's five priorities should guide the City until at least 2023, when the process of updating the City's Comprehensive Plan begins.

Councilmembers also agreed that their five priorities are bound by an interest in ensuring that Sammamish is a High Performing Government. On both Friday and Saturday, as they discussed their vision for the future and priorities, Councilmembers and the City's leadership team emphasized the need for innovation. They reiterated a theme that the City cannot employ the approaches of yesterday or today to resolve the challenges and problems of tomorrow. Some legacy practices and programs, even if highly successful in the past, will need to be replaced with more innovative solutions that anticipate and reflect the future.

The Council's priorities are:

- Transportation/Concurrency
- Environmental Health and Protection
- Financial Sustainability
- Community Livability
- Communication and Engagement

The Council clearly stated that transportation is the City's #1 priority; the others were not ranked. Some Councilmembers expressed an interest in taking prioritization to a new level next year. They would like to see the Council "stack order" the priorities or focus areas and the set of priority projects. They also urged the group to come up with measures by which to evaluate progress.

Working with Communications Manager Kellie Stickney and Management Analysts Maia Knox, Mike Sugg, and David Goodman, Councilmembers devised the following graphic illustration of the priorities. They requested that this be turned into a one-page, colorful communication tool to help them explain and market their priorities to the public.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Includes: complete the Transportation Master Plan, improve the Issaquah-Fall City Road, and coordinate with King County Metro on transit planning.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND PROTECTION**

Includes: build the Ebright Fish Passage and produce the Urban Forestry Management Plan.

## **HIGH PERFORMANCE GOVERNMENT**

### **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Includes: develop the 2019-'20 budget and long-term financial planning.

### **COMMUNITY LIVABILITY**

Includes Town Center planning and implementation.

### **COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Includes: accurate, timely, and accessible information, focusing on public process, and listening to the community.

## **HOW THE COUNCIL REACHED THESE AGREEMENTS**

The Council's priorities began to emerge on Friday morning when each Councilmember articulated a vision for Sammamish in 2040-'50 (see pages 13-15). Transportation, the environment, financial sustainability, Town Center, and an active, engaged citizenry were most frequently mentioned. Parks and recreation, public safety, and local and regional partnerships were also raised. The Council's agreement on five priorities was aided by Community Development Director Jeff Thomas' presentation of a framework for strategic planning.

Jeff stated that the Sammamish Comprehensive Plan, required by the State's Growth Management Act (GMA), provides the framework for planning for the future with its vision, eight elements, and dozens of goals and policies. Furthermore, specific capital plans, such as the Capital Facilities Program (CIP), Transportation Master Plan (TMP), and Parks and Recreation Plan, advance and implement the Comprehensive Plan. To avoid planning in departmental "silos," City Manager Lyman Howard and his management team established eight focus areas as a collection of themes to organize projects, initiatives, and services. The focus areas are: transportation, financial sustainability, environmental health and protection, culture and recreation, community safety, community livability, communication and engagement, and high performing government.

Both the City's biennial budget and annual work plan reflect the Council's priorities and contribute to advancing the focus areas. The work plan includes projects, initiatives, and services that implement the focus areas, while the budget provides funding for the priority projects and daily operations of the City. And capital facility plans are vital to achieving the Council's vision and advancing the focus areas. Even the Council's committee structure generally reflects the focus areas.

Jeff reminded everyone that the last update of the Comprehensive Plan was in 2015. By law it must be updated every eight years; thus, the next update will be in 2023. He estimated that the City has approximately three years left to implement the Comprehensive Plan because by 2021 the City will begin to focus on the 2023 update, at which time the priorities for the next cycle (2023-'31) will be established.

When Jeff finished his presentation, Councilmembers reiterated some of what they said earlier in the morning when they defined their visions and interests. Transportation and concurrency; financial sustainability; a healthy and strong environment; growth management, including Town Center; and a close partnership with informed and active constituents were the tentative priorities that the Council settled on as the discussion ended right before lunchtime on Friday.

To open the Friday afternoon review of the workplan, Deputy City Manager Jessi Bon led an initial high-level discussion. She mentioned that in 2018 the staff will present to the Council some major studies for review, discussion, and adoption. Starting in 2019, once these studies are in place, there will be more emphasis on undertaking, managing, and completing projects. By the time the Comprehensive Plan is being updated, there will be more tangible evidence of the fruitions of the City's planning.

Deputy Mayor Tom Hornish suggested that the staff develop a three-year list of projects to reflect Council priorities and focus areas. He also suggested color-coding projects to highlight which priority (or priorities) they are helping advance. This tool would help communicate Council priorities to the public and allow both the Council and leadership team to track progress toward completion.

The Council, City Manager Lyman Howard, and his management team then reviewed the work plan by examining the projects listed under each of the eight focus groups. This review helped to crystallize Council priorities but did not result in any changes to the work plan. When discussing the Communication and Engagement, Mayor Malchow suggested that Citizen Action Requests (CARs) be tracked in a document, such as a matrix, so that both Council and staff could be assured that the City was responding to and bringing closure to the requests. At the end of the review, Council members indicated that the docket which was approved by the Council in December 2017 is still valid and a priority of the Council.

## COUNCIL'S OTHER AGREEMENTS ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

From the middle of the afternoon of the second day of the retreat, Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, until the adjournment of the Council's 2018 strategic planning retreat at noon on Saturday, the 20<sup>th</sup>, the conversations were related to operational issues that will influence the Council's and directors' leadership in advancing and achieving the priorities and work plan. Here is a summary of the consensus agreements listed under each operational or procedural issue.

### ***Council Meetings:***

Councilmembers are united in their interest in being effective and efficient leaders. One concern they all share is the length of Council meetings. Many extend beyond 10 p.m. They do not believe it is wise to make decisions late at night when they, the staff, and the audience are tired. They are concerned that long, drawn out meetings send the wrong signal to the public. Rather than communicating that Council

meetings are welcoming and accessible, they inadvertently convey that decision-making is inefficient and meetings are neither endurable nor accessible.

To ensure that meetings are more efficient and end on time, the Council agreed to these ground rules:

1. If an issue is not ready for Council deliberation, the staff has the Council's authorization to delay bringing it forward.
2. The cover sheet of an agenda bill should highlight what is expected of Council. Will there be a vote? Or, will there be a discussion, but no decision?
3. Do not pontificate and limit story telling.
4. If you agree with a colleague, say that, rather than repeating the colleague's arguments.
5. Call for a vote rather than taking time to announce how each member is going to vote.
6. Eliminate the requirement for a second reading of an ordinance if it is not controversial. If a second is required, such as for a public hearing, then the second reading would be conducted.
7. If the public comment period has closed, staff does not need to repeat presentations that already provided context or background information. That information is more for the public and does not need to be repeated once the comment period has closed, but the background slides may still be included as part of the council packet materials.
8. Staff presentations at Council meetings should complement, not repeat, the written materials in the packets. PowerPoint slides could be included in the packets. At meetings, they should communicate big picture messages and key areas of focus for the council.
9. To respect the time of citizens, the Council asked that when a group of citizens, such as students, are scheduled to make a report to the Council, allow them to be on the agenda early in the meeting, rather than keeping them waiting in the audience late into the night.

**NOTE:** On the first evening of the retreat, the Council also agreed to some additional protocols to make Council meetings and study sessions more efficient. See pages 9-11.

### ***The Council's Relationship with City Boards and Commissions:***

The Council is interested in building and maintaining stronger partnerships with the City's boards and commissions for two primary reasons: 1) utilizing the skills, talents, and experience of board and commission members respects their role and time; and 2) taking advantage of the boards' and commissions' expertise by allowing them to fulfill their duty to vet policy issues and make recommendations should enable the Council to more efficiently deliberate. To achieve these interests, the Council agreed that:

1. The Council should first examine a policy issue by acting as if it won't delegate it to a board or commission. This would spur the Council to identify the interests, needs, and concerns that must be addressed, scope the issues, and define the outcomes that the Council desires.

Going through this exercise may help the Council decide that it should not delegate the issue. But if it decides to do so, the Council would be able to give the board/commission members a blueprint for and a head start in addressing the issue. It is important for the boards and commissions to have better framework and direction on matters they are asked to consider.

2. The Council's leadership and City Manager should meet quarterly with the leadership of each board and commission. One purpose of these meetings is for the Council leadership to provide clarification on issues under consideration by the board/commission. At the start of each year, for example, the Council leadership could work with the boards and commissions and staff to define and agree on annual work plans. Council might provide a "statement of success" to each board/commission; these statements would define outcomes the Council expects during the year. In other words, "What will success look like?"

Another purpose for the meetings is to discuss the board/commission's progress. If they are getting off track, the Council would have the opportunity to help them get back on it.

3. Council should receive periodic reports from the boards and commissions. While some Councilmembers expressed the sentiment that written reports would be most helpful, the Council decided to not make this too burdensome a task for the volunteers who comprise the boards and commissions. Thus, the reports could be in the form that is easiest and most efficient for the members of the boards/commissions, and they need not always be provided by the board/commission chair.
4. The Council would benefit from receiving the majority and minority reports when a board or commission submits a recommendation that is not supported by all the members. Councilmembers said they would be aided in their deliberations by receiving the best arguments in favor of and against each option.
5. Meetings with the members of the boards and commissions might attract more attendees if they are periodically on Skype or some other electronic medium. Perhaps the Council and board/commission members could share a portal by which to communicate, too.
6. The Council should more frequently hear from or utilize the Youth Advisory Board as a way to connect and communicate with the City's younger residents. The City could stop using student liaisons to each middle and high school, and instead rely on the Youth Advisory Board to bring issues of interest to young people to the Council's attention. The Council would prefer that the Youth Advisory Board make a presentation to the Council once per month.

### ***Council and Regional Committees:***

For 2018 the Council agreed to have two standing Council committees and three ad hoc committees. The standing committees are Finance and Public Safety; the ad hoc committees, which will meet on an "as needed basis," are Communications, Legislative Relations, and Utilities.

Council agreed to nominate at a regular Council meeting the following membership for each committee:

- ***Finance:*** Deputy Mayor Tom Hornish and Councilmembers Pam Stuart and Chris Ross
- ***Public Safety:*** Councilmembers Ramiro Valderrama, Karen Moran, and Chris Ross
- ***Communications:*** Mayor Christie Malchow and Councilmembers Chris Ross and Pam Stuart
- ***Legislative Relations:*** Mayor Christie Malchow and Councilmembers Jason Ritchie and Ramiro Valderrama
- ***Utilities:*** Councilmembers Karen Moran and Ramiro Valderrama

Besides these five committees, the Council agreed to temporarily create an ad hoc committee on governance. It was established with the understanding it could go out of business in the not-too-distant future. Its purpose will be to address matters of governance, such as policies related to the council. The membership was not finalized. But Councilmembers Ramiro Valderrama, Karen Moran, and Chris Ross expressed interest in the committee.

As Mayor and Deputy Mayor, respectively, Christie Malchow and Tom Hornish take responsibility for working with Lyman to ensure internal communications among the Councilmembers and between them and the City Manager's Office and leadership team are clear, accurate, and efficient. The Council also delegates to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor authority to make some process decisions on behalf of the full Council. Christie and Tom plan to review some internal processes and procedures early in 2018. Councilmember Pam Stuart volunteered to assist in this endeavor.

In addition, the City of Sammamish participates in a number of regional committees. The Council decided upon this membership:

- ***Sound Cities Association Public Issues Committee***: Mayor Christie Malchow; Alternate: Pam Stuart
- ***Eastside Fire and Rescue Board of Directors***: Members: Deputy Mayor Tom Hornish and Councilmember Ramiro Valderrama; Alternate: Councilmember Karen Moran
- ***Eastside Fire and Rescue Finance Committee***: Deputy Mayor Tom Hornish
- ***WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council***: Member: Councilmember Jason Ritchie; Alternate: Councilmember Pam Stuart
- ***Lake Sammamish Kokanee Work Group (KWG)***: Member: Councilmember Chris Ross; Alternate: Councilmember Karen Moran
- ***A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH)***: Council liaisons to ARCH: Deputy Mayor Tom Hornish and Councilmember Jason Ritchie

Finally, the Council agreed on the membership of a committee to work with Lyman on his performance assessment. An immediate task would be to work with Lyman to establish his performance goals for the year. Later this year the committee would approve the process by which the Council will evaluate his performance according to those goals and a set of criteria. The Councilmembers who will serve are Mayor Christie Malchow and Councilmembers Karen Moran and Chris Ross. Councilmembers indicated their support for Lyman's suggestion that a neutral, independent facilitator be hired to help design and manage this process.

#### ***2019-'20 Biennial Budget Process:***

Finance and Risk Management Department Director Aaron Antin provided an overview of the City's budget process and issues that could affect City finances in the next few years. He reminded everyone that the City's budget is not just a plan, it is the law. He also led a brief discussion of current revenue sources; in addition to property and retail sales taxes, they include the Real Estate Excise Tax (REET), stormwater fees, impact fees, mitigation fees, and grants. He also included an overview of currently budgeted expenses and presented comparisons of Sammamish to other Eastside cities.

Much of the Council's discussion about development of the City's 2019-'20 budget centered on public outreach and engagement in the process. Some of the key principles that emerged from the conversation were:

- Continue to educate the public about the difficult choices facing the City.
- Demonstrating to the public that the City has been efficient in its use of resources.
- Help the public understand what is required (core functions or "necessities") versus what is additional or desired ("niceties").

To involve the public, the Council and staff generated these ideas: 1) staff a booth at the Farmers' Market to raise awareness and solicit ideas; 2) conduct Council-sponsored Town Hall meetings; 3) gauge the public's priorities by giving residents an amount of money and asking them how they would spend it; and 4) use the City's website and other social media tools.

Finally, the Council agreed on two strategies as the budget is being developed:

- Lyman and the directors should conduct a "stress test" to identify the potential impacts if the City's 2019-'20 budget were reduced by, for example, one percent. What dollar amount does this represent? If it were available to be spent, where might it be spent to reflect Council priorities? What would be the impact on existing programs and services, and on the City's standards for levels of service? What might be the impact on productivity? On contracts?
- Include as an option a possible tax increase. What might be the potential or acceptable sources? How much might be raised? What would the additional funding pay for?

As this discussion concluded, Councilmember Pam Stuart observed that the challenge is not with the City's operating budget, but with its capital budget. The City has more capital needs than funds in the capital budget. The City already uses some General Fund monies for capital projects, but capital needs continue to grow.

## THE COUNCIL'S AGREEMENTS ON THURSDAY EVENING, JANUARY 18<sup>TH</sup>

The 2018 Sammamish City Council strategic planning retreat began on Thursday evening, January 18<sup>th</sup> with a dinner meeting attended by the seven City Councilmembers, City Manager Lyman Howard, City Attorney Mike Kenyon, and facilitator Jim Reid.

Here are the Council's consensus agreements from the meeting:

- Retain the first Monday-of-the-month two-hour study session that Council experimented with last year. However, consistent with the starting time of Council meetings and the other study session, convene this study session at 6:30 p.m.
  - To ensure that Councilmembers get the Council meetings and study sessions on their calendars, Lyman will ask Debbie Beadle to send an Outlook invitation to Councilmembers at their City of Sammamish email addresses and to their personal email addresses.

- The Council agreed with Mike’s assessment that existing state law and the Council’s Rules of Procedure provide sufficient guidance to Councilmembers for carrying out their duties. Therefore, the Council and staff do not need to develop and discuss a Council Code of Ethics or Code of Conduct.
- In 2017, the Council’s did not hear public comments at the special study session on the first Monday of the month. Councilmembers agreed to continue this practice in 2018.
- In the interests of ensuring that Councilmembers and staff are well prepared for Council meetings and that meetings are efficient, the staff will move toward sending meeting packets to Councilmembers six or seven days prior to a Council meeting. Because the two Council meetings are on the first and third Tuesdays of each month, this would mean that the packet for a Tuesday meeting would reach Councilmembers the previous Wednesday or, eventually, one week prior to the Council meeting (the previous Tuesday). This would allow Councilmembers to review the packets and submit any questions they may have to staff before the Council meeting. The staff would be able to come to the Council meeting prepared to answer those questions.
- As the staff moves toward sending packets earlier, an interim step could be to stagger the distribution of materials. If the materials for an issue are ready to be distributed, but other materials related to other issues on the agenda are not ready, the materials that are ready for release and distribution could be sent. This includes PowerPoint presentations. Therefore, materials for a given meeting could reach the Councilmembers in shifts.
- If an item scheduled for a Council meeting is not fully prepared, the Council agreed that staff should delay presenting it to Council until the materials needed to support the Council’s discussion are fully prepared.
- The Council also requested that the staff not place too many big, complex agendas on one meeting agenda. Instead, the staff should balance the topics to ensure that these more challenging and difficult issues are spread out across the Council’s calendar.
- Councilmembers also agreed that if additional data and information are needed in order for the Council to make a decision, the matter could be referred to a Council committee for further vetting and a recommendation to the full Council.
- Council also requested that staff presentations be as focused and efficient as possible. Presentations, for example, should not include one hundred PowerPoint slides. The Council appreciates and benefits from the staff’s color commentary as background and context, but would like the staff to more judiciously use PowerPoint slides and to use their verbal briefings to complement the written materials that are included in the meeting packets.
- Retain the practice of not engaging in conversations with the public during the public comment time at meetings.
- While the Council decided to continue to allow members to have their cellphones while they are seated at the dais, they reiterated their interest in ensuring that every Councilmember pays close attention to discussions, demonstrates respect for colleagues as they speak, and does not

give the impression to members of the public in the audience that they are not paying attention or are conducting other business. Members should not email or text citizens or each other during meetings; this is a violation of the Open Public Meetings Act. Cellphones are not allowed in the Council's Executive Sessions.

The members also reviewed the Council's Rules of Procedure. Below are the two changes they agreed to; Mike will revise the Rules and Council will formally adopt the changes later this year.

- Page two, Section 2.B.8: Meetings/Meetings/Adjournment: The use of the term "Point of Order" is inaccurate. The accurate phrase is "Motion to Extend."
- Page four, Section 3.A.2: Order of Business/Agenda and Council Packet Preparation: An item for a Regular Business Meeting may be placed on the preliminary agenda by a majority vote or consensus of the Council, by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor in the absence of the Mayor, by the City Manager, or by any three Councilmembers who so advise the Mayor and City Manager.

In addition, the Council reviewed pages 5-6, Section 3.C.6: Order of Business/Public Comment and Testimony. They agreed to retain the five potential follow-up steps that are listed in this section of the Rules. While this would not be stated in the Rules, Councilmembers suggested that staff develop a matrix by which to track progress in following up on the public's comments and suggestions.

Finally, there is a possibility that the three Councilmembers will not be able to attend the regularly scheduled meeting on February 20<sup>th</sup>. The Council and Lyman agreed that the meeting, which will include a public hearing, will be moved to February 27<sup>th</sup>.

## COUNCILMEMBERS IDENTIFY RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND WHAT THEY MOST VALUE ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

On Thursday evening the Councilmembers sharing what recent accomplishments of the City they are proudest of and what they most value about Sammamish. Here are their responses listed in the order in which the Councilmembers spoke:

**Pam Stuart:** Proudest of Sammamish's amazing schools and teachers. Values most the community's diversity, which is great for kids.

**Tom Hornish:** Proudest of how the City has increased and improved communication with its citizens. Most values trees, schools, and that this community feels like home.

**Chris Ross:** Proudest of the high level of community engagement. Values unique neighborhoods and the healthy green plateau.

**Christie Malchow:** Proud of the City's stronger outreach to the community. Values the sense of community, the beautiful natural surroundings, and that Sammamish is a great place for kids.

**Karen Moran:** Proudest of communication between the Council and City Manager. Values that Sammamish is home—the people and families; everyone is welcome and accepting. Also values the scenery and schools.

**Ramiro Valderrama:** Proud that with all the growth and change the community has experienced, Sammamish still is a bedroom community with familiar faces (“I still see the same faces.”). Values the active participation of so many volunteers.

**Jason Ritchie:** Proudest of the community’s commitment to the environment, as evidenced by the trees and the open green spaces. Values most quiet areas that one can reach by walking, and that the community feels remote but attractions and destinations are within reach by walking or driving.

**City Manager Lyman Howard:** Proud of the community because it has come a long way. Also proud of the City’s partnerships with such agencies as the School Districts, Sewer and Water District, and Eastside Fire and Rescue. Values that people really care about the community and are engaged, and the unique and special character of Sammamish.

**City Attorney Mike Kenyon:** Proudest of the improvements to the parks and streets. Values being home (“Sammamish is comfortable.”).

## DEFINING THE CITY’S LEADERSHIP CULTURE

Friday’s meeting opened with everyone sharing what they find most compelling about public service and how that influences their leadership style.

**Ramiro Valderrama:** “I am committed to providing opportunities for citizens’ opinions to be heard, particularly those people who are often not heard. I try to hear the silent majority.”

**Tom Hornish:** “We make a difference in peoples’ lives.” Unlike in business, public service is about listening to others and hearing about their needs and concerns, and their lives.

**Christie Malchow:** “We—Council, staff, and the public—can do something. We can have a tangible impact on peoples’ lives.”

**Jason Ritchie:** “Citizenship is important. As elected officials, we can set an example. We should help where we can. We can lead the way to a community consensus.”

**Chris Ross:** The public is actively engaged in Sammamish. “We have been elected to represent the will of the people.”

**Pam Stuart:** “These opportunities to be engaged and to speak up are not available everywhere in the world. Because we represent everyone, we should not overemphasize our own perspectives. We need to be the change we want to see in the world. We should give a hand up, not a hand out.”

**Karen Moran:** “So many people in this community care. We can all make a difference.”

**Lyman Howard:** “Our challenge is to sustain programs. It is a matter of social responsibility.” “I am a cheerleader for Sammamish. It’s a special place, and I believe in listening to a wide variety of voices. In addition, we have opportunities to do things that no other city can do. We are influencing the next

generations.”

**Jessi Bon:** “When I look at the cross-section of people in Sammamish, I get chills. Our services reach many people and have an impact. I am a facilitator in helping people be more successful. A personal challenge is to always strive to do better.”

**Aaron Antin:** “I am interested in public service to generate value to the community. I think people make the difference. And I gain by learning from them.”

**Michelle Bennett:** Community connections and collaboration. “We are more about true service. The police are community, and the community is the police. We can’t be successful without being part of the community and working with the public.”

**Kellie Stickney:** The opportunity to create a healthy community. To be engaged and informed, to work with neighbors, and to help them work with government. “Through patience and dialogue we can come together.”

**Glenn Akramoff:** “We have an impact on the quality of life. We affect 100,000 daily. Public service is for me a family business. Public service and leadership are my internal drive. The reward is immeasurable.”

**Steve Leniszewski:** “I have a zest to build things for the community. I find this rewarding. And I have found that passion and pride are contagious.”

**Jeff Clark:** Service is helping people who need it most. “The recession was a wakeup call. We need to work together and be efficient and willing to compromise. We have to build a product that the public needs. We also need to educate our workforce about public service. Keep an eye on actual services and get employees to support the mission.”

**Angie Feser:** “It is an honor to create community. People choose to use the services my department provides, so I am compelled to make it a great experience. For me servitude is this: When we make a park, it is like asking 64,000 to come for dinner. We want them all to be satisfied.”

**Jeff Thomas:** “I have the ability to help people make a difference. I strive to be open, transparent, and accessible to everyone, including my staff.”

**Mike Kenyon:** “I like giving back. It is awesome to see the results. I see myself as a key cog in a functioning team.”

## ENVISIONING SAMMAMISH IN 2040-’50

Each Councilmember then articulated a vision for Sammamish in 2040-’50.

**Chris Ross:** Chris’ vision addressed transportation, recreation and parks, volunteerism, the environment, finances, and public safety.

- Transportation: Transit services are efficient, areas without sidewalks have them, trails help connect people to places they need or want to go.

- Recreation and parks: The “emerald necklace” of trails around Lake Sammamish is completed, playfields are enhanced, there is a Boys and Girls Club facility and synthetic turf on ballfields, and the City has made a strong case for funding maintenance.
- Volunteerism: Volunteers continue to provide the energy that fuels programs, services, and civic engagement.
- Environment: The City has successfully enhanced the community’s canopy and preserved at-risk species.
- Finances: The City has defined and made clear its obligations for a period of six to ten years, set aside funds for special projects, and reduced or minimized debt.
- Public safety: Sammamish is a safe place in which to live.

**Pam Stuart:** Sammamish is a model for environmental innovation. We are also known for our cutting edge use of technologies, and with so many of our citizens working in high tech industries, we utilize their knowledge and talents to lead the way. Sustainability is a value that is instilled in everything we do, and guides society for generations to come. We are “building green” and have less stormwater runoff.

Sammamish continues to be a great place for families. We look out for the needs of all members or generations of the family, including children and seniors. Important partners are the schools. In addition, we collaborate with other agencies, such as those who provide services for seniors.

**Jason Ritchie:** The issues facing this community don’t stop at the City’s borders. Transportation, garbage disposal and landfills, and stormwater are all examples of regional issues. It is imperative that we build stronger relationships with the other cities in our region, and with county, state, and federal agencies.

**Karen Moran:** Transportation: People move easily throughout the City. Finances: The City is able to pay for crucial projects. Environment: Sammamish is still a “tree city” and by protecting trees and forests, it has also preserved wildlife.

**Tom Hornish:** “In 2015 I stated my vision and it was a lot like what the four new members to this year’s Council just said. And it still stands today.” Sammamish in the future: family-friendly, welcoming to business, diverse, and financially healthy. A national sporting event will be held that attracts tourists, which leads to the development of hotels and restaurants.

**Christie Malchow:** Transportation, youth recreation, communications, and finances. Regarding communications, the City uses virtual town halls and social media to effectively connect with and inform the public. In addition, we emphasize and provide the necessities before the niceties.

**Ramiro Valderrama:** The City’s character is preserved; Town Center is developed and thriving; we have been certified as a “Green City;” Central Washington University offers classes here; the community is culturally diverse; we have made progress in ensuring affordable housing and protecting the environment through such things such as sewers and surface water management; and the City is helping to address mental health issues, with one outcome the reduction in suicides. In other words, Sammamish has effectively addressed change and is a vibrant “bedroom or family room” community.

After the Councilmembers spoke, these additional ideas were suggested: 1) The City has a proactive agenda and is even more effective in helping citizens understand its big initiatives, such as Town Center.

2) We have achieved balance between remaining a bedroom community and strengthening the economy, including providing jobs. 3) The community is taking care of both its kids and seniors. 4) Sammamish is nationally recognized as a desirable city in which to live, work, and play.

In addition, the exercise concluded with both Council members and directors listing some of the key trends that they predict will shape the City's future. The trends that were cited include:

- Local government will take the lead in resolving problems and developing creative solutions.
- The approaches used today won't work in the future. A "big leap forward" is needed.
- The world will be even more of a "24/7 place."
- Today's generation of "Millennials" will revolutionize the world and make those giant leaps that are needed in how things get done.
- Time, space, and more risk-taking will be needed to allow innovation in government, business, society, and politics. This may be harder to do because it appears our society is becoming more risk adverse.
- Government will have to be willing to let go of "legacy programs" that were right for an earlier era but now are outdated. In addition, how will society decide which programs to let go of? How will a consensus emerge that it is ok to let go of them and replace them with something new?
- Greater community engagement is needed. However, with the pressures of daily life and technologies that occasionally turn people more inward, this may be a greater challenge.
- Communities will have to be even more resolved to directly address the real issues that are influencing society and raising problems.

## BUILDING A NEW TEAM: WHAT WE NEED FROM EACH OTHER

In preparing for the 2018 strategic planning retreat, and throughout it, the Council and directors expressed enthusiasm about this new team. As the retreat drew near its end late Saturday morning, Councilmembers identified what they need from each other and from the leadership team to succeed, and leadership team members cited things they need from the Council to be able to serve the Council effectively.

Councilmembers need from each other:

- Open minds: Accept all ideas and suggestions.
- Common courtesy and respect: Don't interrupt; let people complete their comments.
- Tolerance and acceptance: Disagree agreeably and engage in civil discourse.
- Don't be afraid to voice your opinion even if you are the only one taking the position.
- Examine the unintended consequences of decisions and behaviors.
- Adopt an attitude that you're entitled to your opinion and others are entitled to theirs.
- Humility.

Councilmembers said they need from Lyman and his leadership team:

- Flexibility (and they committed to being flexible, too).

- Be frank and direct.
- We all want to be trusted and respected.
- We all want to succeed, so let's work together.

The directors need from the Council:

- Clear direction and expectations.
- Continue to dream and innovate, and allow us to do the same.
- Let us be part of your team. We all want to be on a winning team. We have talents and skills that should be used to the fullest.
- Enthusiasm.
- We all are willing to be held accountable, and we all will be by the people we serve.
- There are great people on this team; protect the team, not yourself (goes for everybody).
- Assume the best of each other.
- Let' jointly create and maintain a high performance government.
- Always be willing to hear the other side of the story...because there is one.
- Let's work together to avoid burning out ourselves and the staff.
- We want Council to succeed. To help you, we need room to breathe and to develop staff.
- Let's give each other license to make new mistakes, not repeat them.
- Let's all have fun, too.

At the end of this discussion, Chris Ross suggested that the citizens should be asked to nominate outstanding experiences they have had with employees as a means for employees to be thanked. In addition, a few people—both Councilmembers and staff—commented on the importance of celebrating successes and each other.

## FINAL THOUGHTS ABOUT THE RETREAT

The retreat ended with everyone expressing what had been most important or meaningful to them during this time together. Here are the themes of the comments:

- Clear goals and a unified direction. This is a new chapter and it will be exciting to see it unfold.
- A unified commitment to excellence.
- Passion, innovation, and a willingness to take risks.
- Magic is happening with this team. Creativity, respect, compromise, and inspiration.
- The new blood represented by four new Councilmembers is exciting.
- Rejuvenated and reenergized. The City is transforming and maturing.
- We have identified efficiencies that will make our jobs more satisfying.
- Communication lines are open. We have had respectful conversations and light-hearted banter.
- We are serious about serving the community but we aren't taking ourselves too seriously.
- This is a dedicated group of individuals working together for the good of the community.
- Reenergized; let's not lose that feeling. Let's continue to be ultra-responsive to each other. And remember to take time to thank each other.
- This retreat represents a quantum leap. Let's take it to next year's retreat.