

Strategic Planning Retreat Report City of Harriman, Tennessee

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March 2015

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In cooperation with the Tennessee Municipal League

**CITY OF HARRIMAN, TENNESSEE
STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT
March 6 and 7, 2015**

I. INTRODUCTION

During the city Strategic Planning Retreat, members discussed and presented advice on how to maintain and support the City of Harriman. Members collaborated and created recommendations based on the three questions proposed: “What should the city keep doing?,” “What should the city stop doing?” and “What is the city not doing that it should be doing?” City members also examined the city’s SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) and contributed their own viewpoints about what can be done to better support the City of Harriman. Members also answered questions about any previous changes that happened to the city from past years. Changes from previous years (specifically the period after 2007) included improvements to the city charter, progress on downtown renovations, a lower crime rate, more retail businesses, and the creation of a new city hall. The recent addition of the Renaissance Fair has been a positive step towards boosting tourism and attractiveness of the city. However, infrastructure still remains weak and plans for a new hospital have been stalled.

Looking back from the strategic planning session of 2007, some of the goals that were listed were completed or have been started. The riverfront study has already begun, with TVA already supervising the operation. The purchase of the tub grinder has also been completed. Redevelopment of the theater has been finalized and is currently scheduling events. Harriman has also enlisted the services of a public information officer as well as recreating a development board. The city has also finalized an active role with HUB. Enhancements to exits 347 and 350 had been suggested as target objectives during the 2007 meeting, however as of 2015, the project has not been finalized. The last target goal was to review HR practices, which has been completed, but currently needs to undergo personnel updates.

For the question, “What should the city keep doing?,” members listed numerous suggestions on what to work on or to continue doing for the City of Harriman. The following suggestions are listed below:

1. Continue cleanup of housing programs
2. Maintain property taxes at a level (flat) rate
3. Keep the Golf Course open
4. Continue to support community organized events
5. Operate within budget
6. Focus on downtown (revitalization)
7. Continue the Roane County Alliance

On the question of “What should the city stop doing?” members listed these recommendations:

1. High, uncollectable taxes
2. Expansion of animal control program (too large)
3. Inefficiency of controlling two departments
4. Static personnel (try reshuffling employees)

City members proposed several solutions to the question of “What should the city keep doing?”

1. Road paving and infrastructure
2. Park and Recreation advisory board
3. Better recreation programs for youths and seniors
4. Starting a compensation study for competitive performance payment
5. Merit based system
6. Capital improvement
7. Traffic control
8. Devote more time to city events (hiring a PR/Marketing person)
9. Improving quality of life (to attract outside groups)
10. Pursue housing for retirees
11. Encourage homeownership
12. Better home ownership opportunities
13. Obtain Grants (for development)

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Harriman Strategic Planning Retreat produced the summary of goals listed below. The summary can be used as a one page general strategic plan document to create more awareness of strategic plans and efforts among the community. Section VI of this report specifically addresses each goal statement with accompanying objectives.

Strategic Plan Summary

1. Develop a park system connecting Fisk to the river.
2. Develop a street repair program.
3. Staff trailhead with Public Relations employee.
4. Review and expansion of park.
5. Beautification of interchanges.

III. SWOT METHODOLOGY

The Mayor and Commission used the following steps to create a strategic plan for the City of Harriman:

- STEP 1 Identified Harriman’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). This external scan provided ammunition to facilitate goal statements.
- STEP 2 Brainstormed about ways to address each of the characteristics mentioned in step 1 by developing goal statements for each of the characteristics. For example, goal statements should appropriately take advantage of strengths and opportunities and minimize or eliminate weaknesses and threats. The result of step 2 was 14 goal statements. Each of the 7 officials provided 2 goal statements.
- STEP 3 Officials were given 6 dots to vote on the goal statements. Officials could vote for one goal statement 6 times or any combination thereof. A total of 42 dots (7 officials x 6 dots) were used in this step. The purpose of this step was to prioritize the goal statements by selecting 5 goals for the city to address immediately.
- STEP 4 Dots (votes) were tabulated and the goal statements were ranked and prioritized.
- STEP 5 The top 5 out of 14 goal statements were thoroughly reviewed by each Harriman official. Participants developed timetables to meet each goal. Objectives for each goal statement stated the timetable to describe measures to meet each objective.
- STEP 6 This time next year, the City of Harriman will monitor the progress in reaching its goals.

IV. SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT Analysis was used to describe general characteristics about the City of Harriman.

Examining SWOT, members also contributed solutions and opinions to each of the topics discussed. The SWOT results are as follows:

Strengths

1. Land for recreational facilities
2. Business activity
3. Large downtown
4. Has brought in more money than previous years
5. Progressive city council
6. Better run government

Weaknesses

1. Lack of senior opportunities
2. Swan Pond – Topography (rough to clean up)
3. Size of downtown
4. One dimensional approach to caring for the community (fractionalized community support)
5. Weak development of home ownership
6. Abundance of rental property

Opportunities

1. Midtown growth
2. Vacant hospital building
3. Long term success of Medieval Fair
4. Plan to enhance recreation
5. EPA cleanup of Emory River
6. Urban Growth Plan revisited
7. Bluff
8. Control illegal dumping
9. Historical opportunities
10. Economic recruitment

Threats

1. Negative self-image
2. Inefficient information
3. Annexation laws
4. Pain clinics
5. Poor utilization of river
6. Population losses
7. Low home ownership
8. Biases by realtors
9. Lack of long term plan
10. Social Media

V. GOAL STATEMENTS

1. Improve Public Image
2. Develop a park system connecting Fisk with river
3. Develop street repair program
4. Staff trailhead with public relations specialist
5. Emory River cleanup
6. Find tenant at vacant hospital
7. Review and expand Parks and Public Works departments
8. Develop a 5 year Capital Infrastructure Plan
9. Beautification of interstate interchanges
10. Develop a Sidewalk Repair & Replacement Program
11. Replace Margrave Bridge
12. Improve employee compensation
13. Install underground utilities in historic area
14. Build a state of the art recreation center

VI. RANKING OF GOAL STATEMENTS

Goal Statement #	Number of dots (votes)
1.	4
2.	7
3.	4
4.	5
5.	0
6.	3
7.	5
8.	4
9.	5
10.	1
11.	0
12.	1
13.	0
14.	3
Total # of dots (votes)	42 (7 participants multiplied by 6 dots)

VII. STRATEGIC PLAN: TOP 6 GOAL STATEMENTS AND ACCOMPANYING OBJECTIVES

Strategic Plan

1. Develop a park system connecting Fisk to the river.
 - a. Research grants with findings by September 1, 2015
 - b. Research land by June 1, 2015
 - c. Prepare Request for Proposals for study by January 1, 2016
 - d. Implement citizen survey by February 1, 2016
 - e. Complete study by April 1, 2016
 - f. Add infrastructure such as boat ramps by June 1, 2016

2. Develop a street repair program.
 - a. Update streets assessment by June 1, 2015
 - b. Develop funding mechanism by July 1, 2015
 - c. Start paving by July 1, 2015

3. Staff trailhead with Public Relations employee.
 - a. MTAS prepares job description by April 15, 2015
 - b. Fill position by June 1, 2015

4. Review and expansion of park.
 - a. PARTAS/MTAS conduct study by October 1, 2015

5. Beautification of interchanges
 - a. Study gateway program by July 1, 2015
 - b. Map out area by May 1, 2015
 - c. Implement improvements by September 1, 2015