

MEMORANDUM

2009 City Manager's Goals

This year, you will note a consistent theme of austerity and personal responsibility in my annual City Manager's goals. These are particularly appropriate in such challenging times.

During the next year I expect that distressed economic conditions will continue to be a challenge, and my goals for 2009 are focused on actions to help us weather these unprecedented economic times while keeping us poised to take advantage of improved conditions when economic recovery takes root. The goals are:

Essentials Only Find Increased Efficiency Preserve Our Future

More detail about each goal is below.

1. Essentials Only

From the Strategic Commitment: "Financial Health and Economic Vitality"

Direction: We continue to be careful with the valuable tax dollars with which we are entrusted. Under current conditions that is not enough. Although we have cut more than \$14.2 million in programs, personnel and services since 2001, we need to practice disciplined frugality in a way unseen by city government for more than 50 years. We must cut back on expenditures in every area possible that does not jeopardize essential public safety or resources. We will harvest one-time reductions anywhere we can without jeopardizing our future. We will hold ourselves to a higher standard than the community does, now more than ever.

Examples:

- Reduce out of state travel and use telephone, web conferences or email
- Although training is necessary to continue to serve the community well, we can reduce the cost by using in-state training, group on-site training and reducing training on overtime
- Extend replacement cycle for computers, vehicles, and other equipment
- Reduce professional services contracts – bring work in-house where it makes sense
- Critically review the need for every expenditure. Will it pass the "sniff test"?

2. Find Increased Efficiency

From the Strategic Commitment: "Accountable, Responsive City Government"

Direction: "Business as usual" is not the way we conduct business. We will use current financial and operational information to drive decisions on workload and finances. We will transform our business model and deploy our resources based on where current needs arise, not just the way we have always done it.

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Examples:

- Define your core businesses and focus efforts on what must be done – and do it well
- Consider adjusting VPD deployments based on where crime patterns are occurring
- Consider adjusting location of Rescue Units based on changing demand
- Adjust staffing levels based on workload; use staff in other capacities where feasible
- Adjust paving overlay plan based on repeated pothole reports in same area
- Do not print extra copies unnecessarily. Use electronic distribution where practical.
- Expand internet communications and payment options where there is clear payback

3. Preserve Our Future

From the Strategic Commitments: "A Healthy, Livable, Sustainable Vancouver" and "Transportation Mobility and Connectivity"

Direction: While we are focusing our efforts on short-term savings to respond to current economic conditions we will continue to invest in our future. We still need to act today to build the foundation for Vancouver's brighter tomorrow. We will take advantage of opportunities that will help our community to grow in the ways we want. We will capture business opportunities when they arise, especially if these opportunities result in job creation and a significant return on our investment. Our investment in our future will not adversely impact our community's natural beauty, resources and treasures.

Examples:

- Invest in infrastructure that spurs private investment
- Consolidate leases for facilities and centralize staff to cut down unneeded travel
- Investments in sustainability such as LED lighting or redesigned landscaping to reduce maintenance. These reduce costs and help us prepare for the future
- Increase recycling efforts within each city building or facility
- Pursue changes to state law to that will allow us to be more efficient and effective, like permanent tax-increment financing.

I have already asked our staff to begin putting together their list of significant accomplishments for 2008. I find this list helpful as I look back on the year to see how much of what we set out to do actually got done. I am always amazed by how much progress our talented and innovative employees are able to make for our community.

To see more about our strategic commitments, business planning, or performance improvement efforts go to www.cityofvancouver/performance

Pat McDonnell, City Manager