

Part 1 of 2: The city's strategic plan

Another coronavirus year has come and gone, and it is once again time for Gallup's city councilors and staff to look to the future as they begin strategic planning for FY22.

Every year the city council meets for strategic planning, where they discuss the successes of the past year and things they want to accomplish in the near and far future.

In a previous *Sun* article published last year, Councilor Yogash Kumar, Dist. 3, explained that the strategic planning sessions helps the council figure out what they want to get done in the upcoming years. They do so by looking at their own priorities and those of their constituents.

"When we run (for public office), we're promising our constituents this or that. Once you get in council, you realize ... 'can you really pave all of Gallup?' You cannot," Kumar explained.

The strategic planning allows the council to take a more realistic look at the future.

During the meetings — which ran Feb. 23 and 24 — city staff, the mayor, and the city council all discussed their one- and five-year priorities with Lyle Sumek Associates, a Florida-based consulting organization.

"We've got to have direction and that's what these sessions do," Kumar explained in a previous *Sun* interview. He acknowledged that these meetings can run long, but "it makes sense to go through this exercise to figure out what is important to all of us together, rather than individual needs."

The first day of meetings was spent discussing the previous year's successes and the goals for

Gallup nets a good annual review from Florida consultant

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next year in a more general sense.

In total Sumek listed 38 successes for the city from last year. These were all things that the city had prioritized at last year's meeting.

"... [Y]ou had a heck of a year in light of COVID because you again have positioned yourself well," he said. "You followed through on a lot of the things that we talked about a year ago... [and] many of these are positioning you to be in a good spot going forward. These are not short-term successes, but foundations for future successes as well."

Some of the successes include the completion of Coal Avenue Commons Phase 1, the police building funding being obtained, the new library's continued development and figuring out where it will be located, the work towards an autonomous vehicle testing center, and finally, the cannabis ordinance development and adoption.

Tune in next week when an article discussing the issues that the city council wants to see tackled in their one-year and five-year plans is published.

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