

J. Governance and Decision Making

This chapter details the Vision Statement, goal, and strategies developed by the Governance and Decision Making Citizen Topic Group. They looked at one specific subtopic:

- Subtopic: Structure

The Governance and Decision Making Vision Statement is as follows:

“Columbia’s governance is a model of transparency, efficiency, and citizen participation that enjoys the strong confidence of its residents.”

Structure

Goal:
Columbia’s governance is a model of transparency, efficiency, and citizen participation that enjoys the strong confidence of its residents.

Strategies and Action Plans

Strategy 1: Create a responsive integrated City system with clear access points to direct inquiries, suggestions, and complaints.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead:	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly advertise and promote access points A system that will record and identify each contact A system that will track delegation and progress A system that will respond within 3 business days

Strategy 2: Create and implement a City customer service policy that includes a tracking system. Each department should tailor their plan accordingly.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead:	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish customer standards for each service provided Evaluate compliance with published service standards Evaluate the standards twice a year Each department shall establish expanded hours of service to enhance public access

Strategy 3: Enhance collaboration between City departments.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead:	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments shall communicate to one another on an annual basis what is needed from other departments to ensure each department may achieve its mission

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a list of services which require action from multiple departments • Establish systems of interdepartmental cooperation which improves the delivery of the services to its citizens
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Strategy 4: Enhance and facilitate the use of neighborhood associations.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead:	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technology • Provide a platform for neighborhood association newsletter (e.g. website)

Strategy 5: Establish a system of ongoing reviews of the activities of boards, commissions, and task forces.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead:	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular progress reports on specific recommendations by the boards, commissions and tasks forces • Create a tracking system for specific actions recommended by boards, commissions, and task forces • Annual verbal public report by each board, commission, and task force to the City Council

Strategy 6: Increase the size of the City Council and provide compensation and other support to council members.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead:	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the council appoint a committee to investigate increasing the number of wards • Encourage the council appoint a committee to investigate compensation for council • City should provide support staff and money to better enable council members to communicate with their constituency. This should include, but is not limited to, planned public constituency meetings • City should provide space for council to allow for office hours

Strategy 7: Anticipate future needs, and review and determine the best way to finance City operations, improvements, and infrastructure over the next 20-25 years.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead:	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage council to appoint a broad-based study group to analyze best ways to finance operations, improvements, physical, social and economic infrastructure with a 25-year horizon. Present options to address needs and available revenue sources

Strategy 8: Increase the accountability of the City administration to the City Council and the public.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead:	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an independent citizen review board for the Columbia Police Department • Encourage City Council to take a more active role in the audit process • Encourage the City Council to take control of its own agenda, work flow, and work load • Encourage the council to make itself a part of the search committee to work with the City Manager in recruiting and hiring all Department Heads • Develop and implement a plan to ensure racial and ethnic diversity within City administration • Encourage City Manager to solicit input from City Council members on the performance of all Department Heads as part of the City Manager’s annual performance evaluation of all Department Heads • Establish a storm water utility commission

Strategy 9: Increase collaboration and coordination between the City and the County.

Action Plan

Who should take the lead:	
Who else should be involved:	Potential roles:
How to jumpstart implementation:	Other recommended action steps:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually publish a summary of high level interactions between City and County • Encourage similar City and County departments, boards, and commissions to meet, at least quarterly, to discuss common issues • Encourage City and County to publicly communicate to one another on an annual basis what is needed from each other to allow each party to achieve its mission