



Lynchburg
VIRGINIA



Citizen Engagement

**City Council Budget Retreat
Tuesday, January 19, 2016**



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- National Citizen Survey conducted in May 2015 – provides five years of comparative data
- Results reported to City Council on September 8, 2015
- City Council discussion of results on Sept. 24, 2015
- Leadership Team and Emerging Leaders participated in *Next Steps Workshop* on September 25, 2015
- Decision made to hold citizen engagement sessions prior to the development of the budget using the results of the survey as a framework



CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

- Four meetings held – one in each Ward
- Small group discussions
- Presentations of survey results were Ward specific/
City-Wide comparisons
- City staff facilitated the discussions
 - Focus areas
 - Action ideas
 - Identify top two ideas



ATTENDANCE

- All meetings began at 6:30 p.m.
- Ward I – Bedford Hills - 19
- Ward II – Dunbar Middle – 17
- Ward III – Sheffield Elem. - 5
- Ward IV – Linkhorne Middle -15

Total Attendance: 56



Citizen Feedback and Priorities

WARD I

- Economic Development – Resources needed for marketing industrial parks and business recruitment
- Economic Development – Incentives to bring grocery stores to areas of the city without them
- Economic Development – Resources needed to effectively market industrial parks and for business recruitment
- Environment – Environmental quality improvements needed
- Infrastructure - Road projects are not completed on a timely basis
- Infrastructure – Funding needed for waterline/hydrant extensions and upgrades
- Public Works – Trash and brush pick ups needed in Ward I especially side streets



Citizen Feedback and Priorities

WARD II

- Economic Development – Grocery and drug stores needed in downtown area
- Economic Development – Small business incubator in Ward II; start-up training/education
- Education – Reduce the school suspension rates
- Public Safety – Reengage Neighborhood Watch groups; conduct community neighborhood policing; assign officers to specific areas so they get to know neighborhoods
- Public Safety – More interaction and relationship building with police officers



Citizen Feedback and Priorities

WARD III

- Infrastructure – Wards Ferry Road improvements needed
- Infrastructure – More thoughtful and deliberate growth in Ward III
- Infrastructure – Additional street lights needed especially in annexed areas
- Public Safety – Better enforcement of speed limits in residential areas



Citizen Feedback and Priorities

WARD IV

- Economic Development – Better tracking, planning and code enforcement of vacant commercial properties
- Infrastructure – Better timing and management of road projects—stop overlapping
- Infrastructure – Better access and parking for Ed Page Trail system
- Public Safety – Improve wildlife management



TRENDS

CITIZEN FEEDBACK



Infrastructure
Projects



Economic
Development



Public Safety

COUNCIL PRIORITIES



Infrastructure
Projects



Economic
Development



Education



STAFF DEBRIEF

- Although attendance was small, it was worth doing
- Attendees were engaged
- Most had not received survey
- Attendees skewed towards an older demographic
- Meeting locations were good
- More targeted outreach to millennials needed
- Send background information out prior to the meeting as there was a lot to digest from the presentation



STAFF DEBRIEF

- Go where people are rather than asking people to always come to us
- Low attendance may be due to contentment/satisfaction with City services; no lightening rod issues
- Time of meeting may not work for some people
- Format provided a good atmosphere for conversation
- Staff outnumbered citizens in most of the meetings
- Some attendees had a specific concerns
- Not enough information to impact/inform FY 2017 budget development



WHAT'S NEXT

Ideas for future engagement activities?

