

# City of Claremont



## 2012 Action Plan



Adopted February 6, 2012

## **Mayor & City Council**

The City Councilmen of the City of Claremont pledge to create an environment in which the City will flourish around the concept of its mission statement and core values. The City Council acknowledges its role in Vision and Action Planning for the future of the City and pledges that this document will be a living, changing, and evolving document to help guide the City's path to the future.

### **Mayor**

David Morrow

### **Councilmen**

Tim Lowrance

Shawn Brown

Dale Sherrill

Nicky Setzer

DB Setzer

### **City Manager**

Doug Barrick

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## **Executive Summary**

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In 2011 the City of Claremont initiated a strategic planning meeting known as the Mayors' Planning Breakfast to develop a clear and concise action plan to guide the City towards the future. The City Council along with facilitation staff from the Western Piedmont Council of Governments evaluated past major accomplishments, issues, organizational effectiveness, priorities, and concerns for the future. These items were then used to set specific action points, goals, and programs to guide the City over the next several years. The specific responses of each category discussed are included as appendices to this Action Plan.

This Plan will be used to establish the City's priorities as it undertakes new ideas or amends existing programs. It is a proactive statement of where the City wants to be in the future. The Action Plan identifies key initiatives with corresponding goals to direct the City's actions to help achieve its overarching mission while remaining in line with its values. The City Council has committed to an annual review of this plan to measure progress and to update the plan to best suit the ever evolving needs of the community.

## **Components of the Plan**

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### **Mission Statement**

The City of Claremont Mission Statement describes how the community will reach its full potential and drives the action planning process. The Mission articulates and reflects the high ideals of the City as it looks to the future.

### **Mission Statement**

**“A progressive city dedicated to preserving small town values while planning for the future”**

### **Core Values**

The Core Values of the City describe the key attributes that are the most important to the City Council and the Community.

- Effective local, regional and state partnerships
- Excellent and Cost effective services including police, fire, rescue and public works.
- Long term financial stability
- Planned growth and economic development

- Fiscal accountability
- Leisure and culture activities
- Environmentally sensible practices
- Citizen Involvement

## **Action Plan Outline**

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The Action Plan identifies and defines key initiatives and includes corresponding goals and sub goals to direct future actions by the City to achieve the vision of the plan and the overarching City mission and values. The plan is broken down into five key areas:

- **Parks, Recreation & Culture**
- **Public Utilities**
- **Technological Innovation**
- **Economic Development**
- **Responsive Government**

Each of these key areas includes goals to help give shape to each topic. The goals are the specific desires of the City Council over the next several years. The goals are seen as comprehensive and give shape and substance to each key area of the plan.

### **Parks, Recreation & Culture**

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Vibrant parks and engaging programs play an important part in the overall health of our community. This key area defines the need to provide recreational and culture activities to meet the needs of all our citizens. It also indicates an approach to stewardship of the environment and history of the city to ensure the proper protection and development of these assets for the future.

#### **Goals**

##### **Expand/schedule programs and other functions in Claremont Park**

- Increase funding and support of the Parks & Recreation Committee
- Increase advertising and outreach for existing and future programs
- Continue to utilize staff in developing new programs

##### **Involve citizens and youth of our community**

- Continue to build on the Youth Council
- Increase volunteer opportunities with the City
- Ensure that communications for opportunities are reaching the citizens

### **Build on PJ Stanley Memorial Scholarship**

- Foster a positive and supportive atmosphere for the PJ Stanley Memorial Scholarship committee to operate
- Seek outreach and fundraising opportunities in the community

### **Historical preservations**

- Facilitate the collection and preservation of historical photos and documents from the City's past
- Seek ways to preserve the legacy of the City including buildings, documents, oral histories and traditions

### **Senior citizen promotions**

- Increase volunteer opportunities with the City
- Seek ways to connect retired citizens with opportunities provided in the community

### **Expand greenways**

- Create a master plan of sidewalk and greenway connections within the City
- Seek partnerships and grants to implement the construction of the plan

## **Public Utilities**

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High quality public utilities that reach the entire city not only ensures environmental protection, but the resources for future growth. This key area reinforces the cities desires to provide excellent cost effective services to all citizens of the community both residential and commercial.

### **Goals**

#### **Expand sewer capacity**

- Seek regional partnerships that will provide long term ability to provide sewer services at the most competitive rates
- Evaluate the current and future needs for sewer capacity in the City's service area

#### **Ensure availability of public utilities**

- Inventory all existing water and sewer lines and establish the current service area
- Examine the current service areas ability to expand
- Begin estimating and planning for expansion of existing under serviced developments

#### **Provide adequate and clean water distribution services**

- Continue partnerships for the delivery of water to the city
- Develop strategies to ensure potable water during times of critical need
- Ensure a commitment to proactive maintenance and upkeep of infrastructure

## **Technological Innovation**

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In order to ensure that the City provides the most cost effective services, the use of the most advanced technology should be used to help achieve the goals of this key area. The use of technology also furthers the City's e-profile for future growth and citizen transparency.

### **Goals**

#### **Expand the Cities E-Profile**

- Become more current on E-Commerce and Internet visibility.
- Examine the ability for City Services to be paid On-Line.
- Begin Direct Deposit for payroll
- Expand upon the use of electronic media

#### **Technology Initiatives**

- Evaluate the all ways to incorporate advances into City processes and implement the most cost effective alternatives
- Examine trends in government innovation to seek out new technology options
- Begin to review and gather ideas from other governments on how they are using technology to streamline processes
- Seek partnerships to expand the current use of technology
- Evaluate and implement ways to become a paperless organization

#### **Increase Wi-Fi Access**

- Develop free Wi-Fi access in the downtown area
- Build Wi-Fi Connections at all public buildings
- Look for ways to expand upon these initial connections

## **Economic Development**

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This key area includes the retention of existing businesses, attracting new businesses, and encouraging the creation of quality jobs for the community. In doing so the City must also strive to foster, support and retain a diverse economic base, to continue long term financial stability and planned growth.

### **Goals**

#### **Fill empty storefronts**

- Develop a report of the Claremont market area and profile
- Seek stores, NOT BIG BOX, that would fit our Market
- Promote the area through national and local brands

### **Local Promotion of Businesses & Non-Profits**

- Continue to host Business Breakfasts
- Seek ways to incorporate local businesses into City events and promotions
- Ensure education of existing opportunities and programs for all aspects of businesses and nonprofit operations

### **Continue Recruitment & Retention in the Business Park**

- Build on the relationship with the EDC and existing park partners
- Ensure the park meets the needs of the tenants and is easily marketable
- Look for ways to expand the park and to reuse/recycle existing vacant buildings

## **Responsive Government**

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This key area describes the City's responsibility to manage in a manner which seeks to be responsive to the community and accountable for actions taken. It also seeks to maintain effective operational standards that will equate to effective delivery of services. This area also seeks to assure that the appropriate services are provided in a manner that reflect both the needs of the community and the ability of the City to provide them.

### **Goals**

#### **Foster community input, involvement & transparency**

- Have Semi-Annual Town Hall Meetings so the Mayor & Council can hear from Citizens
- Initiate "Claremont City Government 101"
- Ensure availability of city documents, policies and ordinances are easily attainable
- Continue the use of city newsletters and surveys to enhance feedback and information delivery

#### **Evaluate Organizational Effectiveness**

- Review all city policies and ordinances and ensure they are upheld, updated and enforced
- Improve staff opportunities for professional development and networking
- Allow for pre council meetings for educational topics and round table discussions with staff and outside agencies

## City of Claremont Action Plan Matrix

Goals	Key Area	Time Frame	Lead Department	Status
Fill Empty Storefronts	Economic Development	0-2	Administration	Not Started
Local Promotion of Businesses & Non-Profits	Economic Development	0-2	Administration	Ongoing
Continue Recruitment & Retention in the Business Park	Economic Development	1-5	Administration	Ongoing
PJ Stanley Memorial Scholarship Fund	Parks & Recreation	0-1	Administration	Not Started
Senior Citizen Promotions	Parks & Recreation	0-2	Parks & Recreation	Not Started
Expand Parks Programming	Parks & Recreation	1-3	Parks & Recreation	Not Started
Historical Preservations	Parks & Recreation	1-5	Administration	Started
Expand Greenways	Parks & Recreation	1-5	Parks & Recreation	Started
Involve Citizens & Youth of the community	Parks & Recreation	3-5	Parks & Recreation	Started
Expand Sewer Capacity	Public Utilities	0-1	Administration	Started
Ensure availability of public utilities	Public Utilities	0-1	Public Works	Started
Provide adequate and clean water distribution	Public Utilities	1-5	Public Works	Started
Evaluate Organizational Effectiveness	Responsive Government	0-2	Administration	Not Started
Foster community input, involvement, & transparency	Responsive Government	0-5	Administration	Not Started
Increase Wi-Fi Access	Technological Innovation	0-1	Administration	Started
Technology Initiatives	Technological Innovation	0-2	Administration	Not Started
Expand the Cities E-Profile	Technological Innovation	1-5	Administration	Started

## **Implementation**

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Plan implementation will be dependent both on the City Staff and the City Council to take action on the recommendations contained in this report. Staff has the responsibility to take on these goals as a part of the operations of the City and the City Council must reinforce the desire and need for these actions to occur. The Staff and City Council must also be willing to update and review progress on these action points throughout the year along with a holistic annual review prior to the beginning of the budgeting process to ensure alignment of priorities and funding.

## **Appendix A**

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The Appendix includes the questionnaire used by the City Council to construct the framework of the discussions behind the formulation of this action plan and the resulting answers compiled to each question



**CITY OF CLAREMONT  
GOAL SETTING SESSION – 2011  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The City of Claremont’s Goal Setting Session will be held on Saturday, December 10, 2011 at the Claremont Fire Department. The purpose of the session will be to identify and prioritize the City’s overall goals and objectives for the next two to five years.

In order to prepare for this session, you are requested to identify key issues and potential objectives that will be reviewed and discussed at the session. Please complete all sections of this questionnaire. If you need additional space, please feel free to attach additional page(s).

**Major Accomplishments**

Please list the major city accomplishments over the past two years. These accomplishments could be as large as a street project or as simple as a newly adopted city policy. The items do not need to be in any particular order.

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**Issues, Concerns, Trends, and Opportunities**

Please list specific issues, concerns, trends, and opportunities that affect future city services, policies, finances or operations. You do not need to identify potential solutions to your concerns

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**Significant Initiatives or Programs**

Please list any initiatives, programs or policies that you think the City should consider in the next two years.

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**Organizational Effectiveness**

Please list several things that the Mayor/City Council and/or staff could do in the future to improve organizational effectiveness, decision-making process, teamwork and the ability to accomplish the City’s stated goals and objectives.

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**RETURN OF QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please return this questionnaire to Doug Barrick by **Monday December 5<sup>th</sup>** .

## Major Accomplishments

- Overall growth in a very controlled/organized manner
- Planned Expansion of Phase II Business Park
- Additions in our Business Park/New Business Partners
- “One Team” of all Departments working together
- Proactive EDC at Local Level and in the County
- Business Networking Breakfast
- Securing a Great, Forward Thinking Person for City Manager\*
- Much Improved communication & Involvement from City Manager’s Office\*
- Encouragement from City Manager for Downtown Redevelopment to Building Owners
- Downtown Upgrades/Beautification
- Being able to promote “City Government” as a Business Partner\*
- Completion of Rail Spur
- Infrastructure Support-City of Hickory, Public Works Training
- Public Works Equipment Expansion/Budget Alignment
- Baker Street Water line upgrade
- Identifying Traffic Issues/Re-Routing Truck Traffic, Securing Signage for Bypass Route\*\*
- Disposal of Surplus Property
- Promoting Events year round
  - Yard Sale
  - Claremont Day
  - Christmas Parade
- Staying within Proposed Operating Budget\*
- Updating Personnel Policy/Handbook\*
- New Businesses: \*
  - Claremont Florist
  - O’Cup
  - Sheer Bliss Salon
  - St. Marks
  - Quilting Mission
  - Claremont Hardware
  - Williams & Sonoma

\*Response given by more than one person

## Issues, Concerns, Trends and Opportunities

- Continued Financial Stability
- Continued Citizen Support (The Best in Years)
- How to Attract New Business/Industry (Opportunity)
- City Waste Water Treatment infrastructure issue has to be resolved to allow for future industrial growth\*
- Electronic Payment Options/Direct Deposit
- Infrastructure Expansion Update (Concern)
- City Ordinances – Revisit to see if all are Current, Being Upheld and Enforced.
- More Sidewalks in Heavy Travel Areas
- The Slow Economic Recovery
- Apply for Grants
- Unoccupied Store Fronts in Downtown Area, as well as Commercial & Industrial Property & Residential (Estate & Rental) properties.\*\*
- Identify other things to attract people to Claremont:
  - Arts & Crafts
  - Senior Citizen Living Areas
- Attract more young people
- Examine the needs for a Community Center

\*Response given by more than one person

## Significant Initiatives or Programs

- Parks & Recreation Committee :
  - Expand/Schedule Programs and other functions in Claremont Park
  - Involve Citizens and Youth of our Community
- Build on PJ Stanley Memorial Scholarship
- Historical Preservations – Photo Gallery
- Partnership with County on Sewer Project/Upgrades
- Become more current on E-Commerce and Internet visibility. The updated version of the website is a great step in beginning that initiative. Allow for City Services (specifically Water Bills) to be paid On-Line. Also change to Direct Deposit for all City employees pay, moving us forward in how we conduct business and will also save money long term.\*
- Our outward image through electronic media needs to be very forward thinking and advanced. We need a “Technology Initiative” to keep us on the cusp of future development and to share this vision with the citizens.
- Make Sewer Services available to all City homes (finish the streets that are unserved)
- Develop Free Wi-Fi access in the Downtown area\*
- Local Promotion of Businesses & Non-Profits
- Senior Citizen Promotions – Other than Breakfast
- Seek Other Commercial Type Stores, NOT BIG BOX, that would fit our Market and find tenants for existing storefronts\*
- Identify our Market Area, a 15 mile radius includes ???, Hickory & Statesville
- Initiate “Claremont City Government 101”
- Have Semi-Annual Town Hall Meetings so the Mayor & Council can hear from Citizens
- Staff should Complete or Begin NIMS Training
- Expand Greenways

\*Response given by more than one person

## Organizational Effectiveness

- Bring back the “Before Council Meeting Meeting” – this is when Council Members, City Manager, & Department Heads meet at the department location to inspect /discuss improvements, etc. This shows that we care!
- Continue the new efforts of City Manager & Staff of communications and organized work efforts
- Currently Better Run than Ever...Great Job and “Hats Off” to Doug and Staff!
- Periodic “Round Table” meetings as listed above including city hall staff as well.
- Electronic Notepad or Laptop Computer instead of Printing Agendas\*
- Learning & Networking with people from other cities & states is critical to our growth as leaders within Claremont. The city should support and encourage council & staff taking classes at the local, state & national level to expand their knowledge & grow in their individual roles.
- Wi-Fi Connections or Computer Access to all Public Buildings, including Public Works
- Strive to make everything “Paperless”\*
- Consent Agendas

\*Response given by more than one person