

# St. Charles Sustainability Initiative (SSI)



*“MAKING SENSE WITH DOLLARS”*



# What was the purpose?



- Achieve the vision of the City's 2014 strategic plan
  - City organization that maintains an optimal service delivery framework that *balances resources with needs*.
- To put it simply.... a balanced budget



# What was the city seeking?



- Identification of opportunities for increased efficiencies
  - New process/technology
  - Collaboration with other entities
  - Out-sourcing/in-sourcing
  - Use of volunteers to provide services
- Identification of underutilized resources
  - Equipment
  - Facilities
  - Positions
- Identification of services to be discontinued
- Identification of new revenues



# What were the results?



- Over 130 ideas/suggestions were submitted by
  - Employees
  - Residents
  - Business owners
  - Other interested parties
- Departments evaluated ideas/suggestions
- City-wide team of employees reviewed department evaluations
- Recommendations formulated for City Council consideration
  - Capital Projects & Assets
  - City Services & Programs
  - Employee Compensation/Benefits
  - Support for External Agencies/Groups
  - Taxes & Fees



# Where are we today?



- Of 54 ideas selected for implementation...
  - 34 ideas/suggestions have been implemented
  - 13 are still under consideration/in process
  - 7 have been eliminated from further consideration
- Implementation demonstrates success
- Financial benefit in excess of \$3 million
- Future financial benefit expected to grow as implementation continues.



# Top 4 ideas



- Offer voluntary separation incentive program for city employees
  - \$900,000
- Changes to employee health insurance program
  - \$400,000
- Reduce front-line engine companies in response to termination of relationship with fire protection district
  - \$750,000
- Review vehicle fleet; eliminate low-use vehicles or extend replacement schedule, as warranted
  - \$800,000

# Capital Projects & Assets



- ✓ Replace annual plants/plantings with more perennials
- ✓ Change street lights to LED lamps (over period of time)
- ✓ Review vehicle fleet; eliminate low-use vehicles or extend replacement schedule, as warranted



# City Services & Programs



- ✓ Use community restitution program for additional buildings/grounds maintenance
- ✓ Reduce front-line engine companies in response to termination of relationship with fire protection district
- ✓ Cancel mailing of city newsletter; use electronic methods and other City publications to distribute information
- ✓ Eliminate Monday evening office hours at City Hall



# City Services & Programs



- ✓ Consolidate GIS/CAD staff in Information Systems Department
- ✓ Eliminate the Tactical Emergency Medical Services (TEMS) unit in the Fire Department
- ✓ Implement cost-saving measures for snow & ice control program
- ✓ Sell surplus vehicles and equipment via on-line methods



# Employee Compensation & Benefits



- ✓ Offer voluntary separation incentive program for city employees
- ✓ Charge employees more for health insurance
- ✓ Allow employees to take unpaid time off/leave of absence
- ✓ Reduce the scope of SMILE (supervisory) training program
- ✓ Eliminate the tuition reimbursement program for city employees
- ✓ Suspend monetary awards for “Way To Be” employee recognition program



# Support for External Agencies/Groups



- ✓ Limit the number of parades held in the downtown area
- ✓ Suspend funding for the Corridor Improvement (landscaping) grant program
- ✓ Review/reduce city memberships in regional or national associations



# Taxes & Fees



- ✓ Charge a booking fee for processing those housed in the city's jail
- ✓ Review/increase the fee that parties are charged to rent water meters to fill pools, etc.
- ✓ Implement a disconnection notice fee for utility customers that disregard the notice on their utility bills
- ✓ Cite/fine those engaged in physical altercations, regardless of whether or not charges are filed



# Items still being pursued



- Use surplus funds from Red Gate Bridge tax levy to support General Fund activities
- Require developers to install survey monuments in new developments
- Utilize reverse auction for purchase of goods and services
- Consolidate management of cross-connection control program under single vendor
- Include 3<sup>rd</sup> party notices or advertisements in postal and electronic correspondence from city



# Items still being pursued



- Review/reduce amount of automobile allowance benefit
- Review/reduce target percentile for employee compensation
- Consider using civilian, rather than sworn employees, where feasible
- Extend the term of hiring and promotional lists in the police and fire departments
- Repeal the ordinance that exempts local government bodies from the payment of application, permit, and inspection fees
- Improve tracking for special events that involve retail sales to ensure that sales tax is collected on purchases
- Implement an additional permit fee to support the GIS system and GIS-related activities



# Items no longer being pursued



- Sell surplus property
  - Dunham-Hunt House, 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Avenue lots, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street well site, Langum Park site
- Offer credit for employees to opt out of city health insurance coverage
- Implement a franchise fee on water and sewer service
- Implement a fee for equipment/personnel costs related to motor vehicle collisions
- Implement a permit fee for commercial fire alarms.



# Summary



- Collaborative, open approach
- Over 130 ideas and suggestions submitted
- Implementation demonstrates success
- Financial benefit in excess of \$3 million to date
- Future financial benefit expected to grow.



# Questions?



## Taxes & Fees – Not recommended for implementation



- Sponsorship of city properties (i.e. parking structures)
- Reducing support for Mental Health Board and Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Vehicle licensing program (i.e. vehicle stickers)
- Business licensing program
- Contractor registration/licensing program
- Implement fee for parking in downtown parking structures
- Reinstate the food & beverage tax
- Increase the alcoholic beverage tax
- Implement fee for paper utility billing statement
- Implement fee for fire inspections

