



# THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

DAVID M. ROLLINS, MAYOR

CITY COUNCIL

MARCI A. ALEXANDER  
JEFFREY M. BILODEAU  
ANNA D. BLODGETT  
LINDA J. CONTI

DAREK M. GRANT  
DALE McCORMICK  
CECIL E. MUNSON  
PATRICK E. PARADIS

WILLIAM R. BRIDGEO  
CITY MANAGER

## INFORMATIONAL MEETING AGENDA

FEBRUARY 11, 2016

CITY HALL (COUNCIL CHAMBERS)

6:30 P.M.

- A. Items for discussion submitted by the City Council and/or the City Manager:**
1. Western Avenue Beautification – Councilor Grant
  2. Review Draft of 2016 Council Goals – Mayor and Council
  3. Update Regarding Membership of Boards and Committees – Mayor Rollins
- B. Persons wishing to address the City Council who have submitted a formal request in accordance with Section 2-61 of the Code of Ordinances:**
- C. Open comment period for any persons wishing to address the City Council.**



# CITY OF AUGUSTA, MAINE

DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY SERVICES

LEIF ERIK DAHLIN

To: City Manager, William Bridgeo

Re: Western Ave. Beautification staff review and recommendations

From: Leif Dahlin, Community Services Department

Date: February 5, 2016

Review Team: Betsy Melrose Poulin, Lionel Cayer, Charlie McCann, Matt Nazar, Lesley Jones, Jerry Dostie, Ralph St. Pierre and Leif Dahlin

The review team met four times and did a field trip to tour Western Ave. with the goal of identifying tasks and projects that could be undertaken by both the city and the private sector to help enhance and beautify Western Ave.

The Western Ave. Beautification team last met on November 17, 2015 to review the various and sundry items identified in several meetings and field trip for inclusion into a beautification plan and program for Western Avenue. It was decided to compile the list in the form of "Action Items", identify the means and mechanism to implement and address the identified need(s).

1. City items that are capital by definition go into the CIP plan for City Manager and Council consideration.
2. Smaller City items to be included in the responsible Department or Bureau's annual O & M budget and work plan
3. Utility related items. Staff to meet with the utility companies to discuss how they can play a role in the Western Ave. beautification plan.
4. Commercial-private sector
  - a. To review Planning Board approved landscape plans to ensure they are in compliance and if not to meet with those businesses to make sure the approved plan are brought into compliance.
  - b. To have Development Department staff meet with the Executive Director of the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce for the purpose of encouraging the chamber to work with the business sector to enhance their respective business locations.

## **Action Items:**

### **Development Department:**

1. Planning Board plans approved: Planning office to review approved landscape plans for businesses on Western Ave. Those businesses found to not be in compliance will be advised to do so and then monitor to ensure the plan is carried out.
2. Grants – Determine if there might be some DOT or other grant funds available to help the cause. Lionel indicated he would research.
3. TIF dollars – Determine what TIF dollars might be available to be used for city efforts.
4. Meet with the Executive Director of the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce to explore the idea of having the Chamber work with the business community to enhance business landscapes.
5. Utilities – See what can be done to address the needed street/sidewalk marking with paint by the various utility companies that seem to not go away in a timely manner.
6. CMP poles- talk to them about cleaning up and removing the unused hardware on their poles.
7. Armory – Meet with the Armory folks to see if they could do some landscape work adjacent to their facility.
8. Remove signs and or sign frames no longer in use or not in compliance with sign ordinance.

### **Public Works Department:**

1. Medians - CIP – Propose a budget of \$100,000 to clean, crack fill and paint green the Western Ave. medians.
2. Look at sidewalk work and budget accordingly.

### **Parks, Cemeteries & Trees**

1. Tree work: continue tree plantings, pruning & removal of dead and diseased.
2. Make sure wayfinding signs are free of obstructions such as tree branches.
3. Youth Memorial Park – budget for and establish an attractively landscaped entrance from Western Ave into the park to include a “Youth Memorial Park” park sign
4. State of Maine parcels such as the area adjacent to the Armory leading to the airport we maintain shall have a landscaping plan developed to enhance those sites.

## 2016 AUGUSTA CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND ACTIONS (February 3, 2016)



### INTRODUCTION

Augusta City Government had significant achievements in 2015 with respect to all of its annual goals. Achievements included:

- The opening of Cony Flatiron housing, and approval of Hodgkins School housing
- Assistance to Maine Instrument Flight in building a new hangar
- Groundbreaking for Western Avenue hotel
- Construction underway on Lithgow expansion
- Hiring of two detectives to investigate drug trafficking
- Increasing the MDOT commitment to Bond Street project from \$1.2 to \$4.0 million
- Revising Hospital Street road project to include reconstruction of sidewalks and curbs
- Drafting of Historic Protection ordinance
- Institution of vacant properties registry
- Testing and adoption of single stream recycling program with EcoMaine.

Still, though progress was made on all goals, there were so many recommended actions in 2015 that some have not been addressed. This year, in order to create more focus, the Mayor and Council have only included goals and actions that have the support of a majority of Council members (5). Those ideas which did not make the list are not dead for 2016; any councilor or councilors can bring up any idea at any time during the year. It just means that those ideas are not Council-wide goals for achievement in 2016. The list of actions that were proposed, but not supported by a majority of Council members, is provided in the Appendix to this report.

On the other side of the coin, some of the goals and actions which are included on the list were not unanimously supported at the retreat. All councilors, whether they supported or opposed the inclusion of these goals and actions at the retreat, have the right to oppose these ideas when they come up on a Council agenda during 2016.

### **GOAL A: CONTINUE THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUG ADDICTION AND CRIME**

The drug crisis continued to worsen in Maine in 2015. The state was on pace to set a record for drug overdose deaths. It's happening in Augusta and Kennebec County just as it elsewhere in Maine and the country.

Following the prioritization of drug abuse at last year's Council goal-setting retreat, the City conducted public forums and hired two new detectives. In addition, staff from both the City and the School department have played leading roles in the activities of the Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention (a project of Healthy Communities of the Capital Area).

The price of drug abuse in the area remains high. The fallout includes increased robberies, babies born with defects, school children suffering from neglect and abuse, and some high school students becoming addicted themselves. For this reason, the Council once more prioritized addressing the drug crisis as one of its top goals.

There was much discussion of what the Council can do, and how the Council can do it in a way which is coordinated with other partners. The conclusion was that more thought is needed about the best way for City government to address the issue.

**Action A1. The City Manager shall work with staff to deliver a draft action plan on drugs to City Council in March, 2016. That plan shall consider:**

- the potential need for a detox center in Augusta
- the need for training for teachers, parents, and others in identifying and addressing people with drug issues whom they encounter
- the mechanics of creating/linking to a website providing resources to those who are dealing with drug abuse and its effects (see Action A2)
- ways of coordinating with state efforts and maximizing the use of state resources
- the potential need for someone on-site in the schools to coordinate with agencies
- the potential need for an expanded health curriculum to deal with drug use
- the potential need for more neighborhood watch groups
- the need to assist support groups of parents and family members of abusers
- the need to engage medical professionals and neighborhood organizations

The draft plan should be available in time to be presented to the community forum scheduled for March 30, 2016.

**Action A2. In 2016, City government will develop and/or link to a web site to provide resources and help to family members, professionals, and individuals dealing with drug issues and their effects.** The website will list resources and telephone numbers, and provide general information on addiction, how to identify it, and how to address it.

## **GOAL B: PROMOTE THE LONG-TERM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF AUGUSTA**

Augusta has had great success in individual economic development projects in the past year. However, a long-term challenge remains. Central Maine has an aging population, and slow job growth overall compared to the rest of the state and nation. The City must be proactive in anticipating these challenges.

**Action B1. The newly-established Augusta Economic and Workforce Development Committee shall assist City staff to take advantage of development opportunities.** These opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- the Kennebec Locke at Head Tide site (see <http://augustamatters.com/2012/03/05/the-kennebec-locke-at-head-tide/>)

- the Arsenal site
- Riggs Brook
- former MDOT garage site (behind the Capitol building)

**Action B2. City government shall achieve “Certified Local Government” status by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.** This status will enable Augusta to qualify for grants and assistance in the redevelopment of historic properties.

**Action B3. City Council shall hold an informational meeting to learn from a representative of the AARP (American Association of Retired People) about what it would take to receive a designation as an “Age-Friendly Community,” and what benefits would come from that designation.** For background on this issue, see <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2014/an-introduction.html>

**Action B4. Support the redevelopment of the Colonial Theater and the northern end of Water Street.** It is not known at this time what kind of support the Colonial Theater needs from City government to be successful. At this time the Council is reaffirming its support for the project and for what it could mean for the economy of downtown Augusta, while reserving the ability to critically evaluate and decide upon any future requests for actual assistance.

**Action B5. Support the establishment of a “Creative Coalition” in Augusta.** With progress on the Colonial Theater, the recent announcement of a news museum at the former Gannett house, and the increased level of activity at the University of Maine at Augusta facility on Water Street, a critical mass of cultural activities is arising in Augusta. The establishment of a coalition of cultural groups to brand, coordinate, and market arts and cultural activities in Augusta would be a support to local economic activity.

## **GOAL C: CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

This section consists mainly of follow-ups to actions initiated in the 2015 goal-setting meeting, and taking them to the next steps.

**Action C1. Approve and enforce the proposed property maintenance ordinance.** The housing economy is improving, but there are still deteriorated properties with absentee owners in the city that present safety and fire hazards, and take away from the property values of neighboring homeowners. The Council should consider final technical adjustments to the ordinance which was developed last year, prior to enactment.

**Action C2. Enact the proposed historic ordinance.** This has been worked on for several years, and is now at a point where it is ready for enactment.

**Action C3. Create a Complete Streets committee with the charge of drafting a proposed complete streets policy for Council consideration.** Complete streets are streets that can

readily accommodate bicyclers and pedestrians as well as cars. For more detail, see <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets>.

#### **GOAL D: IMPROVING COUNCIL PROCESSES**

These are actions that will improve the capability of City government to provide quality services in the future.

**Action D1. The City Manager and staff shall analyze the current City government dependence upon the fund balance to supplement the operating budget, and suggest possible plans or policies to reduce this dependence in the future.** Right now the City has a comfortable fund balance that amounts to 12% of the annual budget. However, these funds are being used every year to supplement the annual budget, so that tax increases can be minimized. At the current trend, in three years or so the fund balance won't be available in the same amounts, and it will create upward pressure on taxes.

**Action D2. The Mayor and Council shall review existing policies governing membership on City government-established committees, and make appropriate changes.** For some committees, like Fort Western and Lithgow Library, it is appropriate for non-residents to serve as members. City staff will review membership and membership criteria for all city committees, and provide the information to the Mayor and Council for their deliberation.

#### **APPENDIX: PROPOSED ACTIONS THAT DID NOT RECEIVE MAJORITY COUNCIL SUPPORT.**

1. Add an additional code officer, to be paid for from fees.
2. Pass a plastic bag ordinance
3. Study two-way traffic on Water Street
4. Plant trees along Western Avenue
5. Study long-term recycling options
6. Educate taxpayers about how cuts in state aid affect property taxes
7. Update the comprehensive plan
8. Create an arts district downtown

Any of these proposals may be re-raised in the coming year by individual councilors.



# THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

LORETTA LATHE, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

To: Mayor, Dave Rollins  
Fr: Loretta Lathe  
Da: February 3, 2016  
Re: Boards & Committees

As requested, below is a listing of City of Augusta boards and committees including any expired terms, vacancies, frequency of meetings and residency requirements. This listing does not include ad-hoc committees or committees governed by other agencies. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance in this matter.

## **Assessment Review Board**

Frequency of Meetings: As needed  
Expired Terms: None  
Vacancies: None  
Residency: All five shall be voters of the city

## **Community Development Advisory Committee**

Frequency of Meetings: As needed  
Expired Terms: None  
Vacancies: None  
Residency Requirements: Five Neighborhood Seats

## **(Joint) Conference Committee**

Frequency of Meetings: Twice per year and as needed  
Expired Terms: None  
Vacancies: None  
Residency Requirements: Board Comprised of staff and elected officials only.

## **Conservation Commission**

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly  
Expired Terms: None  
Vacancies: 1  
Residency Requirements: Not mentioned

## **Dog Park Advisory Committee**

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly  
Expired Terms: 3  
Vacancies: ?  
Residency Requirements: Not mentioned

**Edwards Dam Selection Committee**

Frequency of Meetings: Twice per year

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: None

Residency Requirements: Board Comprised of staff and elected officials only.

**Fort Western Board of Trustees**

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: 2 (expecting two applications)

Residency Requirements: A majority of the board and the chair should be residents or tax payers

**General Assistance Fair Hearing Authority**

Frequency of Meetings: As needed

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: None

Residency Requirements: Not mentioned

**Greater Augusta Utility District Board of Trustees**

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly

Expired Terms: 2 – both are Hallowell trustees

Vacancies:

Residency Requirements: All trustees should be residents of the town from which they were appointed.

**Historic Preservation Commission**

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly

Expired Terms:

Vacancies: One

Residency Requirements: Augusta residents

**Augusta Housing Authority Board**

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: One

Residency Requirements: Not mentioned

**International Code Council-** Has not met in a year or more

Expired Terms: 5

Vacancies:

Residency Requirements:

**Joint Audit Committee**

Frequency of Meetings: Twice per year at audit time. Comprised of mayor, two council members, school board chair, two school board members, and one member at-large.

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: None

Residency Requirements: Not mentioned

**Licensing Board**

Frequency of Meetings: Weekly

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: None

This Board is comprised of staff only.

**Lithgow Library Board of Trustees**

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: One

Residency Requirements: Comprised of seven members and the Mayor or council designee. No mention of residency.

**Mill Park Advisory Committee**

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: None

Residency Requirements: ad-hoc, not mentioned

**Parking District Board of Trustees**

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: None

Residency Requirements: Not Mentioned

**Parks and Recreation Advisory Board – Not Active-possible merger with Tree Board**

**Planning Board**

Frequency of Meetings: Twice Monthly

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: None

Residency Requirements: Legal residents of the City only.

**Registration Board of Appeals**

Frequency of Meetings: As needed

Expired Terms:

Vacancies: None

Residency Requirements: Residency not mentioned

**Tree Board – Not Active-see above**

**Strategic Communications Committee**

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: None

Residency Requirements: Legal residents of the City only.

**TIF Committee** - Three council members appointed by Mayor

Frequency of Meetings: As needed

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: None

Comprised of staff and elected officials only.

**Zoning Board of Appeals**

Frequency of Meetings: As needed

Expired Terms: None

Vacancies: None

Residency Requirements: Legal residents of the City only.

Copy: Bill Bridgeo, City Manager



# THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

DAREK M. GRANT  
COUNCILOR, WARD 2

To: Mayor and Council  
Fr: Councilor Darek Grant  
Re: Mayor's Economic and Workforce Development Committee  
Da: February 8, 2016

Last week, Mayor Rollins, City Manager Bridgeo and I met to discuss proceeding with the establishment and activities of this committee. To ensure that the committee operates most efficiently, I suggested that the Mayor and I share the duties of chairing the committee and the Mayor agreed. Bill confirmed that Matt Nazar's department will be responsible for staffing the committee – primarily using the services of Deputy Director Keith Luke. We have set the first meeting of the committee for noon Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>. Of course, the meetings are open and all members of Council are most welcome to attend.

The Mayor and I are in agreement that at least initially the scope of the committee should encompass three things:

- Fostering enhanced educational opportunities in our community
- Advancing the economic development climate in the City
- Addressing specific development opportunities (e.g. the Kennebec Lockes; the Riggs Brook area; Lower Water Street).

As a reminder, the committee members are Councilors Alexander and Paradis, Superintendent of Schools Jim Anastasio, UMA President Jim Conneely, Board of Trade Chair Jason Gall, State of Maine economic development specialist Brian Whitney, and local realtor Bruce Holmes.

I am very enthused about this committee and its mission. I believe that Augusta is poised to continue to make major advances in the coming years and honored to have a chance to help shape those advances.