

# Town of Windham

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## MEMORANDUM

To : Town Council  
From : Anthony T. Plante, Town Manager  
Date : November 21, 2014  
Re : Goals 2015



At the meeting next Tuesday evening you will begin the process of setting goals for the new Council session. Along with this memo I have provided copies of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown plan, Lippman Park master plan, economic development strategic plan, and North Route 302 Corridor improvement plan, and the Council's most recent goals update.

There are several of the goals from the last session that are still active, and will require ongoing commitment of time and effort by the Council, staff, and others, and other resources. I strongly encourage the Council to keep the number of goals to a manageable few. Last session there were six priority goal areas in two groups – “Priority A” and “Priority B.” For each the goals this Council sets it will be very important to set clear, measurable objectives, milestones, targets by which we can measure progress and success.

Resist the urge to add too many goals to the list, or to identify things as “tasks” or “discussions.” These will also take up time, and take focus away from the things the Council will say are most important. Inevitably there will be issues that will come up that have to be dealt with, but these issues should be viewed with the other goals in mind. If something comes up that is so important it displaces other goals, that's fine, but we should be aware of it and make that choice consciously. Council time, staff time, effort and resources are not unlimited; we have to make the best use of them that we can.

Also included with this memo are suggestions, ideas, and thoughts from a few staff members for the Council's consideration. My own recommendation is to continue the work from this last session by defining specifically what is to be accomplished in those areas this year and not dilute the focus of our efforts.

## A Guide to Setting SMART Goals

- **Specific:** Goals must be clear and unambiguous; vagaries and platitudes have no place in goal setting. When goals are specific, they tell people exactly what is expected, when, and how much. Because the goals are specific, you can easily measure your progress toward their completion.
- **Measurable:** What good is a goal you can't measure? If your goals are not measurable, you never know whether you are making progress toward their successful completion. Not only that, but it's tough for people to stay motivated to complete goals when they have no milestones to indicate their progress.
- **Attainable:** Goals must be realistic and attainable by most people. The best goals require people to stretch a bit to achieve them, but they aren't extreme. That is, the goals are neither out of reach nor below standard performance. Goals that are set too high or too low become meaningless, and people naturally come to ignore them.
- **Relevant:** Goals must be an important tool in the grand scheme of reaching the town's mission and vision. Relevant goals impact performance and brings efforts into alignment with the town's mission and vision.
- **Time-bound:** Goals must have starting points, ending points, and fixed durations. Commitment to deadlines helps people focus their efforts on completion of the goal on or before the due date. Goals without deadlines or schedules for completion tend to be overtaken by the day-to-day crises that invariably arise in an organization.