

# City of Port St. Lucie

## Strategic Planning Session

### Meeting Minutes - Final

121 SW Port St. Lucie  
Blvd.  
Port St. Lucie, Florida  
34984

Shannon M. Martin, Mayor

Jolien Caraballo, Vice Mayor, District IV  
Stephanie Morgan, Councilwoman, District I  
Dave Pickett, Councilman, District II  
Anthony Bonna, Sr., Councilman, District III

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**Wednesday, May 7, 2025**

**8:00 AM**

**The Promenade on the River 2240 SE  
Veteran's Memorial Pkwy, Port St.  
Lucie, FL 34952**

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1. Meeting Called to Order

A Special Meeting of the CITY COUNCIL/CITY STAFF of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Mayor Martin on May 7, 2025, 8:53 a.m., at The Promenade on the River 2240 SE Veteran's Memorial Pkwy, Port St. Lucie, FL 34952.

2. Roll Call

Councilmembers Present:  
Mayor Shannon M. Martin  
Vice Mayor Jolien Caraballo  
Councilwoman Stephanie Morgan  
Councilman David Pickett  
Councilman Anthony Bonna

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Martin led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Public to be Heard

Diane Goldberg spoke regarding the fertilizer ban and urged the City to inform the residents as soon as possible.

5. New Business

**5.a** Hold the 2025 Strategic Plan Workshop

**[2025-403](#)**

Kate Parmelee, Deputy City Manager, introduced Alexis Baum and Tim

Fife from Transformed Learning Collective. The City Council and staff completed a warm-up exercise that was called “Rose, Thorns, Buds” where they each discussed items that were beneficial, effective & productive, professionally & personally.

A break was called at 10:27 a.m., and the meeting resumed at 10:50 a.m.

Deputy City Manager Parmelee stated that the staff compiled data from the Citizen Summit and the NCS Survey. The City Council and staff then compared all the citizen driven data, goal by goal, to refine the goals and projects within the Strategic Plan.

A break was called at 12:00 p.m., and the meeting resumed at 1:30 p.m.

The groups explained their selections on their own redefined project dashboards and they tried to align their dashboards to create one shared view. The group, as a whole, felt that Goal 1 should remain Safe, Clean and Beautiful, as it was ongoing and was extremely important to the residents. The group discussed the effects of terminology and certain language being used while communicating with residents because there may be different viewpoints or they may have difficulty understanding the terms, an example was “affordable housing”. Councilman Pickett added that most of the demographics of survey takers did not want nor care about affordable housing as they were 55+ and owned their homes, so demographics had to be kept in consideration when surveying the community. Mayor Martin stated that staff had to be more proactive at doing things differently when communicating with the community. She urged staff to present the beginning, middle and end of stories to increase public knowledge of projects and to allow the City to narrate the story; the group discussed changing project groundbreakings. Carmen Capezzuto, Neighborhood Services Director, suggested that they use the Historical Museums to dedicate current and future happenings within the City with a corresponding website- history in the making. Mayor Martin said that the City needed to go to the Community instead of having the Community come to City Hall; it would accomplish the task and show that the City cared. The City Manager stated that the way the City was hosting celebrations might not be working for the residents at this time and he suggested creating a policy on celebrations to reinvent community engagement. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that an option could be hiring employees for community engagement on the weekends or at night to be available to the residents.

Ms. Baum asked staff, table by table, to recreate the story or narrative & clarify Goals 1-3. At this time, the groups conducted an exercise,

“divergence, convergence”, and explained which projects they wanted to stop, continue, modify, or which new projects they wanted to start. Under Goal 1, the group decided to remove the Police Facility project as it was underway and collapse the beautification projects into one simple project of attractive and clean streets. The group discussed whether safety should be its own goal, to which Mayor Martin and Councilman Bonna added that safe, clean & beautiful were almost the brand of the City. Mayor Martin stated that having enough clean water was a goal under safety.

Leo Niemczyk, Police Chief, added that litter and low-level crime worked conjointly.

Colt Schwerdt, Public Works Director, added that if canals or drainage failed it would affect the roads, therefore stormwater and drainage could be included under safety.

Ella Gilbert, Risk Management Director, emphasized that ongoing maintenance could help reduce litigation, which she considered an important aspect of safety. She gave examples of common litigation issues such as a fatal car accident being blamed on street light outages or water intrusion cleanups or sidewalk hazards. She noted that the City needed to clearly define what safety means.

Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that the Strategic Plan would evolve even though there were continuous goals, she questioned whether “audacious goals” and “continuous goals” should be separated. Ms. Parmelee added that the Strategic Plan guided the budget and some projects had to be in the plan because of grants; she emphasized that the plan needed clarity and priorities of projects. Mayor Martin stated that the City Council should have a defined number of projects under each goal which they could explain to the public. Councilman Bonna stated that marketing and language were important but the plan itself was not communicated well to the public. Ms. Parmelee stated that re-communicating the plan to the public may be its own project. Ms. Baum stated that the message should be simple: tell the story of Goal 1—what we’re doing, why we’re doing it, and outline the top priorities followed by the secondary ones. Mayor Martin stated that departments were expected to send information to the Communications team so it could be shared with the public in clear, simple terms. However, the process was hindered by too many people making changes to the language along the way. Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested that the City Council/staff pick top three projects under each goal to discuss with the public. The City Council and staff discussed the use of a one-page document to simplify the Strategic Plan. Mr. Fife stated that there was a difference between projects and tasks, tasks were ongoing and

projects were accomplished. Councilman Bonna suggested using clear and simple hierarchy of goal, subgoal and initiative (two or three projects). He added that the residents had to believe and understand that the plan would impact their lives, therefore it had to be stated in language that the residents could read. Councilwoman Morgan emphasized that more was less, the plan had to be prioritized and focused. Deputy City Manager Parmelee stated that staff needed clarity on the new projects.

At this time, the City Council identified their go/stop projects to help refine the plan, and the Department Heads submitted their priority projects along with the planned year for comparison with the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

6. Adjourn

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

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Calleigh Nazario, City Clerk Administrator

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Shanna Donleavy, Deputy City Clerk