



## Staff Report — Growth Policy Steering Committee and Planning Board

**Meeting Date:** January 6, 2026

**Agenda Item:** Recommend Approval of Growth Policy with Changes

**Prepared By:** Jessica Chamberlin, City Clerk/Treasurer

**Department:** Administration

### Purpose of the Review

The Growth Policy is intended to serve as a long-range roadmap for how the community grows and develops over time. It helps guide decisions related to land use, housing, streets, utilities, and public services so growth occurs in a coordinated and intentional manner. While the Growth Policy itself does not create regulations or carry legal authority, it supports consistent, informed decision-making by the City as conditions and priorities change.

### Background

The draft Growth Policy was developed through technical analysis, agency coordination, and extensive community engagement. Public input was collected through meetings, surveys, and outreach activities to ensure the document reflects a broad range of perspectives and community values.

The draft was reviewed by the Budget & Finance Committee to evaluate areas where the document may create fiscal misunderstandings, imply policy commitments that are not under consideration, or conflict with existing financial or administrative practices of the City. Due to misunderstandings in the process timeline, however, this was done after the Steering Committee gave its final recommendation to the Planning Board for approval.

### Reason for Recommended Revisions from the Budget & Finance Committee

During drafting, certain sections were included to capture public feedback and community priorities, even when those concepts did not fully align with current City policy, statutory authority, or established budgeting and financial practices.

The Budget & Finance Committee is recommending revisions or removal of specific sections to:

- Avoid creating unintended precedent or expectations regarding programs, services, or funding levels;
- Prevent confusion about matters that are outside the scope of the City's ability or are not subject to change through this process; and
- Reduce the risk of future conflicts between adopted City policies and advisory planning language.

Some language that reflects meaningful public perspective has been retained for documentation and context, while sections that could imply future financial or policy obligations — or suggest changes not being considered by the City — are recommended for modification or removal.

## Details of Requested Changes

### 1. Page 83

-#C, objective #2, instead of "offer cash incentives" change to "zoning conforming and grant incentives"-The City of Sidney does not have the revenue streams available for cash incentives, we can, however, offer other incentives through these other options.

-#C, objective #3-delete-The City of Sidney is fearful that putting in writing these incentives for developers will give the precedence or perspective to them that this is a guarantee instead of a case-by-case scenario that the City Council can address as needed.

-#C, objective #5-delete-The City of Sidney is fearful that putting in writing these incentives for developers will give the precedence or perspective to them that this is a guarantee instead of a case-by-case scenario that the City Council can address as needed.

### 2. Page 93

-#A, objective #1, insert truck to read "truck bypass study"-We just want to clarify that this is just a "truck" bypass study, not a bypass study that plans to reroute the highway system away from the Sidney area.

### 3. Page 94

-#B, objective #4, insert "on city properties"-The City of Sidney does not have the capital, nor are we responsible, to do this on any properties except city properties.

-#C, objective #1, should be water tank on Highway 16-Clarification on proper location.

### 4. Page 95

-#E, objective addition- Jeff would like the "BNSF R/R Right of Way Storm Drainage Detention and Waterway Improvements" added towards the top of these objectives

### 5. Page 98

-#A, objective #1, replace fund with support-The City of Sidney does not have the revenue streams to fund, but we are happy to support.

### 6. Page 100

-#D, objective #2, delete part and insert application to read "...which further downtown goals, grant application assistance for catalyst.."-Same reasoning as before, we do not having the funding but can assist.

### 7. Page 102

-#B, objective #1, delete part and insert zoning conformance to read "...looking at creative parking solutions, reviews of zoning conformance permits,..."-We want to ensure there is no confusion on utilization of City Properties without going through all of the proper and legal channels and also cannot expedite or waive building permit fees, but can assist with zoning conformance permits.

### 8. Page 103

-#A, objective #1, delete "and financial incentives"-Same financial reasons as stated previous.

### 9. Page 103

The City of Sidney is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

-#A, objective #1, delete "and financial incentives" -Same financial reasons as stated previous.

10. Page 107

-#A, objective #1, replace for word of to read "...and consideration of tax incentives." -The City wants to ensure that any of these discussions surrounding tax incentives or plans for energy creation we are a part of, but knows that we likely will not have them in our jurisdiction for approvals.

11. Page 108

-#A, objective #3, delete "and incentives" -Same financial reasons as stated previous.

