1. **Equitable Sharing of Resources and Revenues with Clay County**

   **Goal:** To negotiate with Clay County an equitable sharing of revenues resulting from ambulance service provided by the Orange Park Fire Department, for coordination and cooperation relating to fire and ambulance service response areas and requests for mutual aid, and to plan for the provision of other services in cooperation and coordination with Clay County.

   **Background and Description**
   The Orange Park Fire Department (OPFD) provides ambulance service not only for areas inside of the Town limits, but also in a “Primary Service Area” outside of the Town that contains several thousand residents. This means that the OPFD is the first unit dispatched for any emergency calls in this area. Additionally, the Town has been dispatched to many areas beyond the Primary Service Area. About half of all fire and ambulance responses made by the OPFD are outside of the Town limits.

   Revenues have been collected by Clay County for ambulance services provided both by Clay County and the OPFD. However, none of those revenues are shared with the Town. This has been an issue since Clay County unilaterally cancelled the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with Orange Park in 2007. In that previous ILA, Clay County paid Orange Park for a variety of services, including ambulance service responses. Since the ILA was cancelled, the county collects a 0.5048 millage for Fire Control MSTU-8 which is paid for fire service by county residents that are outside the town limit including the residents that are served by the Town.

   A related issue is that the fire and ambulance calls take units far outside of the Town limits, sometimes as much as 10 miles. This can cause delays in responses to emergency calls in Orange Park and reduces the service level to Orange Park citizens.

   Last, the Town of Orange Park is inside a much larger and rapidly growing urban area. The provision of recreation, transportation and other services by both Orange Park and Clay County should be coordinated to ensure that they are as efficient and effective as possible. Annexation of some areas, particularly enclaves, should be considered.

   **Action Steps**
   (a) The Town Council must “speak with one voice” so that the message sent to the County Commission is clear and consistent. At the June 12, 2017 visioning meeting, the Council appointed Vice-Mayor Gary Meeks to be the Town’s spokesperson on this issue.

   (b) Vice-Mayor Meeks should work with the Town Attorney and staff to lay out the agenda of issues to be discussed with the County representatives.

   (c) Vice-Mayor Meeks should meet with the County representatives and staff to determine the most equitable and fair solutions to these issues. This has been a long-term problem and may require a considerable amount of time and effort to resolve.
(d) Vice-Mayor Meeks will keep the Town Council informed of his progress in working to resolve these issues.
(e) Resolution of the issues should be described in a new ILA that incorporates the agreements made with the County.

**Time and Budget Impact**

Working with the County may take a year or more but the ILA will have long-term impacts on services provided in Orange Park. No cost is expected to the Town during these negotiations other than the time of the Vice-Mayor and staff. However, the solution(s) may result in an increase of revenues, savings in costs or increased service levels to the Town of Orange Park.

2. **Waterway and Stormwater System Maintenance**

   **Goal:** To improve and maintain the stormwater drainage system that serves the Town of Orange Park to minimize or eliminate flooding of public streets and buildings during storms.

   **Background and Description**

   Storm drainage in Orange Park is carried through a system of creeks, ditches, pipes and ponds which drain into the St. Johns River or Doctors Lake. The manmade structures were built during development of the Town over many years, mostly from 1960-1990, by residential and commercial developers. Some of these systems are aging and need maintenance or further development. Additionally, the urbanization of property in Orange Park has, and will continue to reduce the natural pervious surfaces which allow stormwater to drain into the ground. Consequently, more and more stormwater will be running through the stormwater system.

   There have been three major storms in the last year beginning with Hurricane Matthew in the fall of 2016, followed by a tornado in February 2017 and a major straight-line wind in May 2017. Several hundred, and possibly thousands, of trees have toppled during these storms. Many of them remain in the creeks and drainage ways. Maintenance to clear those to allow for proper flow is needed.

   However, legal questions have been raised about the Town’s authority to enter onto private property to clear creeks. Most are not designated as public right-of-ways or have easements for maintenance.

   Immediate maintenance is required to remove obstructions to the creeks and a plan for the long term maintenance is needed.

   **Action Steps**

   (a) Town staff should prepare cost estimates for the clearing of trees and other large debris left from the storms. Once a report is made to the Council and legal authority is established, funding should be approved if above current budgeted amounts.
(b) A Stormwater master plan should be prepared that would include GIS mapping of the Town’s stormwater system, assessment of the condition of that system, prioritization for future maintenance and upgrades including cost estimates.
(c) The Town Council will need to review the stormwater master plan and make a decision on the future service levels to be provided by the Town for stormwater system maintenance. Where should the responsibilities of private owners end and Town’s begin?
(d) Future maintenance for the stormwater system should be calculated, included in the yearly Capital Improvement Plan, and necessary funds for that maintenance should be appropriated on a yearly basis in the General Fund.

**Time and Budget Impact**
The initial cleanup of the creeks should be completed within the next few months. The stormwater master plan should be included for funding in the 2017-18 fiscal year and completed.

Cost for the initial cleanup of the creeks will be estimated by the Town staff by the time this strategic plan is presented to the Council. The cost estimate for preparing the stormwater master plan is $70,000. Resulting maintenance as recommended by that plan is yet to be determined.

3. **Kingsley East Project**

   **Goal:** To make major improvements to the portion of Kingsley Avenue from Park Avenue east to the St. Johns River that will reflect the history of this scenic gateway to Orange Park.

   **Background and Description**
The first land developments in the Orange Park area were Pengree’s Laurel Grove Plantation in the 1780’s and later the Kingsley Plantation in 1803. The only access to this area at the time was by boat, with a dock located at the end of what became Kingsley Avenue. This remained the primary access to the Town until 1914 when River Boulevard was completed to connect Orange Park to Jacksonville. The river front, with its welcoming hotel and overhanging oak trees, welcomed residents and tourists every day. At one time, it boasted the world’s largest wooden sign: “ORANGE PARK” could be seen from far away.

   In recent years, parking in the medians of Kingsley East, combined with a lack of landscaping and maintenance, have resulted in a poor appearance of this historic entryway. The Town Council has considered various plans for improving this three block section for many years. Most recently, a design was prepared that would include curbing the medians, adding parking on the sides, improving the stormwater system, replacement and extension of the water line, landscaping and other modifications. A design was completed and bids were taken. However, council decided not to authorize construction because of cost and lack of agreement on what improvements should be made.
Action Steps
(a) Council should determine what renovations to the Kingsley East corridor should be
done in the first phase of work.
(b) Construction of these renovations and improvements should be completed during the
2017-18 fiscal year.

Time and Budget Impact
Construction is estimated to take approximately 8 months depending on the work chosen.

4. Traffic Calming, Working with Not-for-Profits, Purchase of Various Properties
and Sanitation Services

There were four other subjects raised by individual council members as priority goals during the
strategic visioning session and assignments were made to deal with each of them. Because they
reflect the interest of one Councilmember each, they will be treated as individual projects rather
than strategic goals. They are listed as follows;

(a) Traffic Calming; The Town Council has received complaints from citizens on several
streets over the last year about the volume and velocity of traffic on residential streets.
Several citizens have requested that traffic calming devices be installed including speed
humps, speed tables or similar devices. The Town Council has assigned this to the
Public Safety/Public Works Committee for consideration of a policy dealing with
installation of traffic calming devices on Town streets.

(b) Working with Not-for-Profits; Some of the citizens attending the strategic planning
meeting on June 12 represented non-profit entities that requested the Town’s
assistance in one way or another. One of those related to some complaints that had
been made about zoning at one particular location, and that subject was referred to the
Land Use Planning and Policy Committee.

(c) Purchase of Properties; Some of the citizens that attended the strategic planning
meeting asked that the Town Council acquire a vacant piece of property adjacent to the
T.C. Miller Center. This issue was assigned to the Culture and Recreation Committee.
The possibility of acquiring other property adjacent to the St. Johns River was brought
up for that committee to consider also.

(d) Sanitation Services; Partially resulting from the major storms that have occurred in
Orange Park over the last year, as well as complaints about the quality of service
provided by the Town’s refuse collection contractor, the possibility was raised about the
Town reconsidering the decision made several years ago to privatize sanitation services.
The contention was that Town employees would provide a higher level of service to the
citizens than we had been receiving from a private contractor. This issue was referred to
the Public Safety/Public Works Committee.