



CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

City Council Agenda Communication

Meeting Date: 6-2-2025

Prepared By: Dennis Carr – City Administrator/City Engineer

Agenda Item: Goal Setting and Strategic Planning Session Update

Discussion:

The Mayor and staff have been working with Midwest Municipal Consulting to assemble a proposal for a Goal Setting and Strategic Planning Session to help give direction for the City moving forward. This is the same consulting firm who assisted with a similar initiative in 2019.

While the timetable has not been finalized, below you will find a rough proposal for a timeline of events for this session.

DATE	TASK
May 2025	City Administrator to consider the proposal and approve the contract with the Consultant (or within 30 days of the proposal)
June 16, 2025	Goal Setting Questionnaires go out to the City Administrator, Department Directors, Mayor, and Council Members
June 30, 2025	Goal Setting Questionnaires are due from the City Administrator, Department Directors, Mayor, and Council Members
July 16, 2025	Department Directors' Strategic Planning Workshop
July 18 – August 15, 2025	Community Leaders Survey Conducted
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The Community Leaders Survey is a Communitywide Survey for all residents.

Fiscal Impact:

There is adequate budget for this initiative.

Action Requested: Staff is not requesting any action, this agenda item is meant for informational purposes only.



City Leadership Goal Setting and Strategic Planning Sessions May 20, 2025

Introduction

Midwest Municipal Consulting is a registered Limited Liability Company (LLC) in the State of Iowa. MMC represents municipalities, non-profit organizations, and businesses. Our professional team specializes in short and long-term goal setting and community visioning, strategic, action, capital improvement and equipment replacement planning, and a variety of human resource needs, including executive professional searches filling critical leadership positions.

Is the mission of your community to provide high-quality services that meet the needs of your residents and businesses? We can help build consensus to increase efficiency. You can call us to corroborate an action plan to support your growth and development. We can help you set goals or a strategic plan for implementation. We bring extensive experience and professionalism, and can customize our support to meet your individual needs and concerns.

Our executives and facilitators have been community leaders; leading sessions such as these for decades. We are on the pulse of local issues and have monitored evolution to form our approaches; all to give you exceptional tools that will last for years to come.

Contact us to set up a consultation to inquire whether our services are right for you.

What are the most important elements in the strategic planning process and outcomes that differentiate Midwest Municipal Consulting from the rest?

1. The process includes public input – your work is affected by the public interest.
2. The process includes teambuilding and clear role expectations for staff and the elected officials.
3. The process includes drafting an action plan.

Primary Contact and Services

Midwest Municipal Consulting, LLC
Ms. Elizabeth Hansen, President
1210 NE 29th Street
Ankeny, IA 50021

515-391-9816 Office and Cell
Ehansen.mmc@gmail.com
www.midwestmunicipalconsulting.com

A native of the Midwest, Ms. Hansen has over 20 years of experience in local government management, including as City Administrator in Elk Point, South Dakota, as well as Jefferson, Nevada, and Windsor Heights, Iowa. She continues her service in the City of Clive as Director of Administrative Services. Her communities benefited from her leadership and proficiency in community visioning and financial planning. These skills, abilities, and experiences are vital tools to promote and develop growth in rural and small communities throughout the Midwest. She has a master's in Public Administration from the University of South Dakota and a bachelor's degree in Paralegal Studies from National American University in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Hansen was named Manager of the Year in 2014 by the Iowa City/County Management Association, and in 2007 she became the first recipient of the organization's Emerging Leader award. Ms. Hansen is also a Credentialed City Manager from the International City/County Manager's Association (ICMA-CM), Certified Municipal Clerk in the State of Iowa and Certified Human Resource Professional from the National Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM-CP).

Assisting Midwest Municipal Consulting is Kandi Reindl-Sullivan. Reindl-Sullivan is a native of Iowa, Ms. Sullivan has over 29 years of experience in local government, recently retiring from the City of Des Moines, Iowa, as Assistant to the City Manager. Over the years at the City of Des Moines, her responsibilities included City Manager's Office liaison to the police and fire departments, staff to the City's Legislative Subcommittee, staff to the Metropolitan Advisory Council (MAC) and Coordinator for the City's Special Events Team.

Strategic Planning References (2021-2024)

May 2021	Hiawatha, IA	City Manager Kim Downs	563-608-9666
June 2021	Griswold, IA	City Manager Ted Marciniak	712-778-2713
Nov. 2021	Carroll, IA	City Manager Mike Pogge-Weaver	712-775-7505
Nov. 2021	Oskaloosa, IA	Interim City Manager Amy Miller	641-673-9431
Dec. 2021	Fairfield, IA	City Administrator Aaron Kooiker	641-472-6193
Feb. 2022	Humboldt, IA	City Administrator, Cole Bockelmann	515-332-3435
Feb. 2022	Manchester, IA	City Manager, Tim Vick	563-92-3636
Mar. 2022	North Liberty, IA	City Manager Ryan Heiar	319-626-5700
July 2022	Clinton, IA	City Manager, Matt Brooke	563-594-6742
Aug. 2022	Norwalk, IA	City Manager, Luke Nelson	515-493-9971
Aug. 2022	Grinnell, IA	City Manager, Russ Behrens	641-236-2600
Nov. 2022	Carroll, IA	Interim City Manager, Jeff Caylor	712-830-3794
Dec. 2022	Charles City, IA	City Administrator, Steve Diers	641-257-8618
Dec. 2022	Manchester, IA	City Manager, Tim Vick	563-92-3636
Aug. 2023	Mount Vernon, IA	City Manager, Chris Nosbisch	319-895-8742
Nov. 2023	Hiawatha, IA	Library Director, Chris Stoner	319-393-1414
June 2024	Hiawatha, IA	City Manager, Dennis Marks	319-393-1515
Nov. 2024	Grinnell, IA	City Manager, Russ Behrens	641-236-2600
Dec. 2024	Charles City, IA	City Administrator, Steve Diers	641-257-8618

Recent Testimonial

"Elizabeth did an excellent job planning & conducting the meeting! It was clear she spent many hours behind-the-scenes summarizing all the considerable questionnaire responses from council & staff & creating an easy to follow & complete work session booklet by critical category. Thanks also to the City Hall Team for spending the time doing the SWOT analysis and developing the Mission, Vision & Value statements for council review & discussion. Made it easy for the mayor & council members to review, discuss & formalize an excellent strategic plan for the next two years. The best strategic planning session I have participated in over the past 18 years. Looking forward to working as a Team to overcome the challenging headwind being created by the backfill loss & creating a book of several new Hiawatha growth initiative success stories over the next two years." Dick Olson ~ Hiawatha City Council Member

"Thanks for working with our department heads here in Norwalk. It was a very helpful session. Having been in library land for 35 years, I have been through several of these types of sessions and worked with many consultants. Working with you was very pleasant and positive and you made it feel like a "safe space", which is very much appreciated!"
Jean Strable ~ Norwalk Easter Public Library Director

Purpose and Project Understanding

The purpose of having a leadership goal setting and strategic planning session is:

1. Organizations need to periodically assess their progress, reestablish direction, and enhance team spirit.
2. How will the Council members and staff communicate and work together is key to the City's effectiveness.
3. It is easier to develop consensus on issues, opportunities, and goals in an offsite relaxed environment rather than the formality of the normal work environment; and
4. The leadership, goal setting, planning session is an excellent way to integrate new members into the leadership team.

Primary objectives:

1. To provide the opportunity for all members of the City's leadership team to be part of the planning process
2. To enhance communication and develop renewed team spirit among the participants
3. To review progress being made by the City
4. To discuss changes that are likely to impact the City
5. To develop consensus on issues and opportunities facing the City (1 to 3-year perspective)
6. To develop an updated goals program for the City (1 to 3-year perspective)
7. To review the roles and responsibilities of the City's leadership team
8. To be an educational and enjoyable day

Method and Implementation

Ms. Hansen brings years of experience working closely with Boards, elected officials, directors, administrators, and department directors in many planning settings. She has assisted and been involved with small and medium-size communities, chambers of commerce and economic development councils goal setting work sessions. She also has teamed up with several professional facilitators to provide any size community, nonprofit and business with the assistance they are looking for. She provides energy to engage participant discussions, so the presentation is not only informative, but enjoyable.

Phase 1 – Discovery: The Consultant will conduct stakeholder interviews via electronic survey with the Mayor, each of the Council Members, and Department staff to capture their ideas, thoughts, and input ahead of the session.

Phase 2 – Meet and Retreat: Following the collection of input, the details and the agenda of the session will be confirmed by the City Administrator. The Consultant will provide a computer, projector, extension cord, and meeting workbook materials. The Client will provide a meeting space, screen, refreshments and/or meals. The Consultant will facilitate the discussion, while the Client will participate in the three or four-hour retreat.

Phase 3 – Community Input: Following the Department Director Workshop, the Consultant will provide a summary of the proposed new initiatives. This exhaustive list can be put together in a simple electronic survey to be distributed to community leaders, service groups, boards and commissioners, etc. to provide input; ranking of the top priorities for the community.

Phase 4 – Meet and Retreat: Following the collection of director and community input, the details and the agenda of the session will be confirmed by the City Administrator. The Consultant will provide a computer, projector, extension cord, and meeting workbook materials for the City Council Work session. The Client will provide the open meeting notices, a meeting space, a screen, refreshments, and/or meals. The Consultant will facilitate the discussion, while the Client will participate in the three or four-hour retreat.

Phase 5 – Document and Vet: An Executive Summary will be provided by the Consultant, including the draft Strategic Plan.



Project Management and Proposed Timeline

The Consultant recommends two (2) work sessions: one Goal Setting and Strategic Planning Session for Department Directors and one City Leadership Goal Setting and Strategic Planning Session. Here are the tentative meeting agendas:

Session 1: “One Organization” – Goal Setting for Department Directors

- 1:00 – 1:45 Check-in – Opening Remarks – City Administrator
- Review Agenda
 - Housekeeping and Basic Principles
 - Objectives and expectations for the session
 - Enhancing Communications
- 1:45 – 2:45 “Working as a Team – Review
- Focus:
- Review of 2020-2022 Goals and Action Plan
 - Review Recent City Accomplishments from last two years
 - Review Issues, Concerns, Opportunities, and Trends
- 2:45 – 3:45 “Building Our Team For Success” - Proposed Solutions
- Focus:
- Review Proposed Programs, Policies, Projects, and New Initiatives
 - Identify final On-Going Priorities and New Priorities
- 3:45 – 4:00 Summary and Wrap Up Comments

With the collected responses of proposed new initiatives, a Community Survey will be conducted. Also, at the conclusion of the Department Directors’ Session, they will provide their collective staff responses to a questionnaire and recommendations for the top five priorities. The staff recommendations will be provided to the Mayor and Council to impart their ideas, thoughts, and input ahead of ranking during the City Leadership Session.

Session II: Goal Setting and Strategic Planning for City Leadership

- 8:30 – 8:45 Check-in – Opening Remarks – Mayor and City Administrator
- 8:45 – 9:30 “Working as a Team – Enhancing Team Spirit ”
- Focus:
- Review Agenda
 - Housekeeping and Basic Principles
 - Objectives and expectations for the session
 - Enhancing Communications
- 9:30 – 10:45 “Working as a Team – Reviewing Plans, Progress, Values, and Issues”
- Focus:
- Review of Recent City Accomplishments for 2020-2022
 - Review and consensus on Issues, Concerns, Opportunities, and Trends
- 10:45 – 11:45 “Working as a Team – Providing Direction”
- Focus:
- Updating the City’s Goals Program

- Ranking of Priorities for 2026-2028
- 11:45 – 12:45 “Working as a Team – Preliminary Planning to Achieve your Goals”
- Action Planning
- 12:45-1:00 “Working as a Team – Clarifying Roles”
- Knowing and fulfilling Roles and Responsibilities
- Summary and Wrap Up Comments

Here is a proposed timeline based on recent discussions:

DATE	TASK
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Professional Fees and Payment Policy

The Consulting fee for a strategic goal-setting session is as follows:

Phases	Fee
Phase 1 and 3 – Discovery: Preparation of and conducting digital questionnaires/interviews for up to twenty (20) shareholders, public input survey, and preparation of the retreats, including agendas, materials, and presentation.....	\$38 50.00
Phase 2 and 4 – Meet and Retreat: Set up, Facilitation, and Tear Down.....	\$46 75.00
Phase 5 – Report: Consultant will provide an Executive Summary and Strategic Plan	\$ 750.00
Return Client Discount 15%	\$-1,158.75
Consulting fee for all phases	\$7,883.75

Fees are payable in two equal payments, with the first payment due at the conclusion of the Department Director Session and the final payment due 10 days upon receipt of the report and invoice for the Council Goal Setting Work Session.

Approval to Proceed

If the above meets with your approval, please sign below and return one original to me.



Liliya Stevens, Mayor

Elizabeth A. Hansen, President
Midwest Municipal Consulting, LLC