



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Matthew R. Schmitz, MPA - City Manager

DATE OF MEETING: January 5, 2026

ITEM TITLE: Strategic Plan

DISCUSSION:

This memo presents the draft 2025 Strategic Plan for City Council review and discussion. This document is the result of the collaborative planning session held on April 26, 2025, involving the Mayor, City Council, and Department Heads. The plan reflects our unified commitment to guiding the city's future by addressing challenges and building upon our strengths, from our natural resources along the Wapsipinicon River to our engaged community.

The proposed plan articulates a vision of balancing resilience with progress. It honors our history as the "Lexington of the North" while fostering a thriving environment for modern businesses and families. The document is organized around six strategic goals that will serve as a framework for our future decision-making:

- **Goal 1:** Support high-quality City Services by ensuring we can handle future growth and supporting employees through adequate resources.
- **Goal 2:** Encourage a supportive environment for businesses and workforce, specifically by creating opportunities for students to learn trades with current employers.
- **Goal 3:** Support and enhance City infrastructure, with a focus on preventing failures, including on key bridges.
- **Goal 4:** Efficient and effective planning of resources to position Independence as a regional hub for Buchanan County.
- **Goal 5:** Promote community involvement by ensuring all voices are heard, catering to both the loudest and quietest voices in our community.
- **Goal 6:** Support tourism and historical sites, integrating tourism as a key component of the city's economic development strategy.

This Strategic Plan is not an end, but a beginning. It acts as the primary guide for our policy-making and budget development. While reviewing this draft does not have an immediate financial impact, the final adopted plan will direct how we prioritize our Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and allocate resources in future fiscal years. It ensures that our financial stability is pursued through efficient planning.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends discussion of this topic. No action is needed at this meeting, as any decision items needed would be brought forward to a City Council meeting for approval.