

Memorandum

To: Whitewater Common Council

From: City Manager

Re: 2026 Council Visioning Session

Date: May 6, 2026

The City of Whitewater has continued its renewed focus on strategic planning and collaboration through annual Council Visioning Sessions. Over the past two years, these discussions have helped identify community priorities, organizational challenges, and long-term opportunities facing the City.

As the Council prepares for the 2026 Visioning Session, staff believes this year presents a unique opportunity — and challenge — in determining how best to move forward strategically. During 2026, the City expects to receive significant additional community input and planning data through both the community survey process and the development of the new Comprehensive Plan. These efforts are anticipated to provide valuable insight into resident priorities, growth expectations, infrastructure needs, housing, economic development, and overall community vision.

At the same time, portions of the City's existing strategic and planning framework are becoming dated and may no longer fully reflect current conditions or community expectations. As a result, staff is seeking Council direction regarding the appropriate "fork in the road" approach:

- Whether to continue advancing and updating current strategic priorities in the near term;
- Whether to focus primarily on completing or refining existing initiatives while awaiting additional public input and planning outcomes; or
- Whether to pause major strategic shifts until the Comprehensive Plan and community engagement efforts provide a more complete picture for long-term decision-making.

The Visioning Session will provide an opportunity for the Council to discuss these approaches, reaffirm immediate priorities, and help establish a framework for aligning future policy decisions with the forthcoming community-driven planning efforts.