



City Council Memorandum

To: Mayor Fasbender & City Councilmembers
From: City Administrator Dan Wietecha
Date: October 4, 2021
Item: Strategic Initiatives: 3rd Quarter 2021 Report

Council Actions Requested:

No action necessary. Report is presented for review, discussion, and feedback.

Background Information:

Over several months this spring and summer, the City Council and Management Team developed a set of Strategic Initiatives to help guide efforts and resources over the next year to year-and-a-half. The Strategic Initiatives were approved by the City Council on September 7.

During the development of the Strategic Initiatives, there was a consistent and clear expectation that there would be regular progress reports. In addition to individual review, the Management Team reviews progress monthly, and we intend to report progress to the City Council and the community on a quarterly basis. This is the first quarterly report.

Even though the Strategic Initiatives were approved only a month ago, I believe it important to submit the first quarterly report now for several reasons:

- It demonstrates the Management Team's commitment to the Strategic Initiatives.
- It demonstrates the Management Team's commitment to regular reporting.
- There has been already been progress toward some of the Strategic Initiatives.
- It enables the City Council to give feedback about format and/or content of the quarterly report immediately rather than waiting until January for the first report.

There are several parts in the format of the report that should be highlighted:

- The Executive Summary page identifies specific accomplishments during the quarter.
 - Only the immediate quarter is included in the report. As we progress into future quarter, someone will be able to refer back to prior reports posted online at [hastingsmn.gov/strategic planning](http://hastingsmn.gov/strategic_planning)

- Each of the eight Initiatives has a page noting progress status toward individual milestones.
 - Please note that under the Lake Rebecca Park/Lake Isabel Park initiative, several of the milestones is reported as “delayed.” In these cases, we are awaiting LCCMR decision about project funding for the Lake Rebecca Park project and NPS review of the grant for the Lake Isabel Park project.
- The Future Topics section is included in the report for several reasons:
 - To ensure that these proposals are not lost
 - To note progress that has been accomplished
 - To provide flexibility to add new proposals (such as the welcome sign project added during this quarter)

I firmly believe that as we proceed through a few iterations of the reporting process, and have practice using this tool, we will become more comfortable in recognizing progress toward and in articulating our commitment to the Strategic Initiatives.

Financial Impact:

Not applicable

Committee Discussion:

Not applicable

Attachment:

Strategic Priorities 2021 Q3 Progress Report (Oct 4, 2021)



**CITY OF HASTINGS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
2021-2023**

Adopted by the Hastings City Council on September 6, 2021

**2021 Q3 PROGRESS REPORT
October 4, 2021**

VISIT [HASTINGSMN.GOV/STRATEGICPLANNING](https://www.hastingsmn.gov/strategicplanning) FOR PRIORITIES & QUARTERLY REPORTS

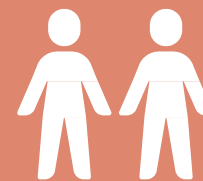
Q3 2021		
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY		
Strategic Priority	Initiative	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ People, Processes, Infrastructure, and Finance 	1.1 Multi-Year Financial Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analyzed preliminary budget ✓ Identified looming construction-related debt and advised council
	1.2 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Expanded job posting distribution to target diverse organizations for police positions. ✓ Encouraged Council and management attendance at YMCA diversity sessions on story development ✓ Organized and promoted events related to downtown mural about Hastings diversity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Community Image and Public Engagement 	2.1 Strategic Communications Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identified 15 key stakeholders from various audiences to interview about the City's story ✓ Developed reporting plan, documents for communicating the City Council's Strategic Priorities
	2.2 Tourism Funding	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parks and Public Spaces 	3.1 Parks and Public Space Beautification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1st maintenance season with team approach. ✓ Additional Parkskeeper included in 2022 budget recommendation
	3.2 Vermillion Street Corridor Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conversations with various property owners near 5th and Vermillion of future acquisition for redevelopment.
	3.3 Lake Rebecca/Lake Isabel Parks Renovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Submitted for and received DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant (\$240k) for Lake Isabel Park Redevelopment. ✓ Hired ISG Inc. to complete Design and Engineering for Lake Isabel Park Redevelopment. 90% of plans just submitted to staff for review. ✓ Submitted grant application to LCCMR for \$2m for Lake Rebecca Park redevelopment/restoration.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Housing and Economic Development 	4.1 Downtown Special Service District	
*Future Topics		
Develop an internal communication strategy focused on	2.1 Strategic Communications Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Developed internal communications strategies for improved council/staff communications, including

for council/staff communications		scheduling a series of Council workshops, expanding Council emails related to important topics, and more.
Continue to Improve environmental sustainability of City operations.	1.1 Multi-year financial model to improve stability	✓ Approved idle reduction feature on new fire engine 8/16
Incorporate elements of the HPAAC Arts & Culture Plan into City goals and initiatives.	2. Community Image and Public Engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sculpture project approved 9/7, installation 9/22 ✓ Star Tribune article featured public art in Hastings on 9/26

*Denotes ideas put forward by City Council members as important, but not yet added to the strategic initiatives. As initiatives are completed, additional initiatives will move up as priority initiatives, based on Council approval. See pages 13-14 of this report for a list of all Future Topics.

1. PEOPLE, PROCESSES, INFRASTRUCTURE & FINANCE

1.1 Develop a multi-year financial model to improve planning and long-term stability for the City.



End state: A functioning multi-year operational financial model that consistently captures and communicates projected expenses, investments, and revenue streams to city leaders, staff, and citizens.

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
Analyze preliminary budget	Finance Manager	Sept 2021	Completed
Identify inflationary increases	Finance Manager	4Q21	In progress
Identify one-time capital expenditures	Finance Manager	4Q21	In Progress
Identify projected revenue	Finance Manager	4Q21	In Progress
Update model with final budget	Finance Manager	Dec 2021	Not Started
Identify looming operating, debt, and capital needs.	Management Team	1Q22	Not Started
Report model to Finance Committee	Finance Manager	1Q22	Not Started
Update projections prior to annual budget cycle	Finance Manager	May 2022	Not Started

1. PEOPLE, PROCESSES, INFRASTRUCTURE & FINANCE

1.2 Enhance diversity, equity and inclusion in City processes and operations and continue to improve Hastings as a welcoming community for all.



End state: A Hastings city government and community that honor, respect, and practice diversity, equity, and inclusion as lived values.

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
Create a Workplace Culture that Prioritizes Equity and Inclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase diversity in hiring • Increase retention of employees • Increase DEI training for staff and officials 	Human Resources Department Heads	Ongoing	In Progress
Engage More People Who Are Not Often Heard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit feedback and input from diverse audience • Create opportunities for advisory and commission engagement by diverse residents of the City 	Department Heads	Ongoing	Not Started
Increase Experience of Hastings as Welcoming for All <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue strategic partnerships with community organizations • Create marketing campaign to promote diverse perspectives • Increase public art, culture and history projects focusing on diverse communities 	Department Heads	Ongoing	In Progress



2. COMMUNITY IMAGE & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

2.1 Develop a strategic communications plan that reaches multiple and diverse audiences

End state: A communications infrastructure that shares the City’s story with its various stakeholders, enables the City to disseminate accurate information in emergencies, promotes economic development and reaches underserved or underrepresented populations in the City.

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
Define the story, key audiences and messaging for each	Management Team and Communications Coordinator	2Q22	In Progress
Review metrics and analytics to evaluate content and channels	Communications Coordinator	2Q22 and ongoing	Not Started
Assess and build internal communications processes and procedures	City Council, Management Team, and Communications Coordinator	3-4Q21	In Progress
Assess and build an external communications strategy (strategies for target audiences)	Communications Coordinator	3Q22	Not Started
Assess and build an emergency management/crisis communications plan	Public Safety and Communications Coordinator	TBD	Not Started
Assess and build strategy for under-represented populations	Communications Coordinator with partners	3Q22	Not Started
Assess and improve the user experience with the City’s website	Communications Coordinator	Ongoing	In Progress
Review and amend communications-related policies and procedures (web, social media, media relations, event policies, and processes)	Communications Coordinator	4Q22	Not Started



2. COMMUNITY IMAGE & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

2.2 Find new funding streams to stimulate tourism in collaboration with Tourism Bureau/Chamber of Commerce. This initiative includes leveraging partnerships and maximizing return on investment.

End state: New funding sources for promoting tourism leads to a measurable increase in tourism over pre-COVID levels.

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
Review existing marketing and communications	City and Chamber/Tourism	4Q21	In Progress
Review U of M tourism study	City and Chamber/Tourism	4Q21	Not Started
Identify alternate revenue sources	City and Chamber/Tourism	1Q22 and Ongoing	Not Started
Continue using free resources such as press releases, online event calendars, or online rating	Chamber/Tourism staff	Ongoing	In Progress
Continue lead generation to build email database for future marketing.	Chamber/Tourism staff	Ongoing	Not Started
Send Chamber/Tourism staff to Explore Minnesota annual conference	Chamber/Tourism staff	Feb 2022	Not Started
Annual report (including occupancy rate at local hotels) to City Council.	City and Chamber/Tourism staff	Sept 2022	Not Started

3. PARKS & PUBLIC SPACES

3.1 Improve beautification and maintenance of parks and public spaces.



End state: All Hastings parks are maintained to documented standards; non-park public spaces defined in the initiative are likewise clean with landscaping well maintained and snow managed.

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
Identify priority list of high-profile and high-use locations	Parks Dept and Parks Committee	1Q22	In Progress
Maintain high-profile and high-use locations using team structure	Parks Dept	Ongoing	In Progress
Identify underutilized spaces to convert to lower-maintenance areas	Parks Dept and Parks Committee	1Q22	In Progress
Approve additional staff, both seasonal and full-time (may be phased in over several years)	City Council	Ongoing	Pending
Sustain existing adopt-a-park and volunteers	Parks Dept	2022	Ongoing
Educate the community on the elements of the parks & trail system and the work of the park maintenance division	Parks Dept and Communications Coordinator	2022	Not Started

3. PARKS & PUBLIC SPACES

3.2 Assure enhancements to the TH 61 (Vermillion Street) are consistent with the goals and measures of the Council-adopted Vermillion Street Corridor Plan.



End state: Implement the Vermillion Corridor Plan for economic revitalization of the TH 61 corridor. Ensure MN DOT enhancements are consistent with the plan.

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
Continue participation in joint planning with MN DOT	Public Works Director	Ongoing	On Target
Consultant begins corridor study	Consultant	4Q21	On Target
Completion of corridor study	Consultant	1Q23	In Progress
Final design and cost estimates	MNDOT	2023-2025	Not Started
Hwy 61 construction begins	MNDOT	2026	Not Started
Communicate to council any updates to MN DOT planning	Public Works Director	Ongoing	Ongoing
Identify priority areas for redevelopment	Community Development Director	Ongoing	Ongoing
Meet with property owners to determine likelihood for redevelopment and the extent to which HEDRA would play a role	Community Development Director	Ongoing	Ongoing
Meet with interested redevelopment partners to determine interest and identify obstacles	Community Development Director	Ongoing	Ongoing
Determine any HEDRA resources to spur development	Community Development Director	Ongoing	Ongoing

3. PARKS & PUBLIC SPACES

3.3 Pursue projects for Lake Rebecca and Lake Isabel Parks, contingent upon pending funding proposals.



End states: If finding is received, the Lake Rebecca Revitalization Project results in a unique amenity and asset to the community. Lake Isabel park restoration is completed consistent with available funding to restore that beloved public space to its full beauty and usefulness.

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
LAKE REBECCA PARK:			
Monitor progress of grant for Lake Rebecca	Parks Dept	3Q21	Pending decision by LCCMR
If funded, RFP and complete plan for Rebecca restoration	Parks Dept and consultant	3Q22 – 2Q23	Pending
If funded, approve plan for Rebecca restoration	Parks Committee and City Council	3Q23	Pending
If funded, begin construction at Lake Rebecca		3Q23 – 2Q24	Pending
If funded, complete work at Lake Rebecca			Pending
If not funded, consider plan for future restoration	Parks Dept and consultant	2022	Not Started
If not funded, appearance/security improvements (e.g.: remove back parking lot)	Parks Dept	2022	Not Started
LAKE ISABEL PARK:			
Grant approved for Lake Isabel Park	DNR	July 2021	Pending NPS review and approval.
Complete D&E plan for Isabel restoration	ISG, Parks Dept	4Q21	In Progress
Approve plan for Isabel restoration	Parks Committee and City Council	4Q21	Pending
Final grant authorization	NPS	Sept 2021	Delayed
Bid construction project		Late 2021/Early 2022	Pending

Begin construction at Lake Isabel		May 2022	Pending
Complete work at Lake Isabel		Summer 2022	Pending



4. HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Explore the feasibility of a special taxing district as a mechanism for enhanced services in downtown area.

End state: A special taxing district is established in the downtown area providing enhanced maintenance and services for Downtown Hastings leading to a 10% increase in visitors to the businesses in the district.

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
Research the mechanics of establishing an SSD	Community Development Dept.	3Q21	Completed
Research experiences of others in establishing and operating an SSD	Community Development Dept.	4Q21	Not started
Discuss initiative with downtown property and business owners to determine support, obstacles, and areas for potential funding of a future SSD	Community Development Dept.	1Q22	Not Started
Prepare a draft list and budget for potential service and activities that may be provided as part of an SSD	Business Community	1Q22	Not Started
Hold meetings to discuss the draft plan with downtown property and business owners	Business Community	2Q22	Not Started
Incorporate changes and concerns adjusting plan as necessary	Business Community	3Q22	Not Started
Develop the ordinance amendment and SSD Plan for official public hearing	City Attorney	3Q22	Not Started
Public hearing and approve ordinance	City Council	3Q22	Not Started

Future Topics - A list of items deemed important but not identified as a top priority at the time of planning. When initiatives are complete, parking lot items will be added as new initiatives.

Future Topics for Consideration

See Page 16 of the City of Hastings **Statement of Strategic Direction** at www.hastingsmn.gov/strategicplanning for details related to these topics.

Ideas Related to People, Processes, Infrastructure, and Finance

1. Continue to Improve environmental sustainability of City operations.
 - Approved idle reduction feature on new fire engine 8/16

Ideas Related to Community Image and Public Engagement

1. Develop an internal communication strategy focused on council-staff communication.
 - Communications Plan submitted to City Council 9/27
2. Develop policy for public recognition.
3. Incorporate elements of the HPAAC Arts & Culture Plan into City goals and initiatives.
 - Sculpture project approved 9/7, installation 9/22
 - Star Tribune article featured public art in Hastings on 9/26
4. Install new welcome sign on Hwy 55 (new initiative 9/7)

Ideas Related to Parks and Public Spaces

1. Expand Hastings's status as a trail hub to drive tourism and awareness of Hastings.
2. Develop a plan for a new multipurpose indoor sports field.

Ideas Related to Housing and Economic Development

1. Stimulate job creation in Hastings.
2. Complete a full housing inventory analysis to guide development strategy.