

City Council Memorandum

To: Mayor Fasbender & City Councilmembers

From: City Administrator Dan Wietecha

Date: January 17, 2023 Item: Strategic Initiatives

Council Action Requested:

No action necessary. Quarterly informational report.

Background Information:

Over several months during spring and summer 2021, the City Council and Management Team developed a set of Strategic Initiatives to help guide efforts and. The Strategic Initiatives were approved by the City Council on September 7, 2021.

- 1. The approved plan includes eight Strategic Initiatives. These are the primary goals of the plan, and we have reported their progress quarterly.
- 2. It also includes a Future Topics section (which we have affectionately nicknamed the "parking lot") to ensure other good ides (and potential future Initiatives) are not forgotten. Where there has been progress in these areas, we have also reported it.
- 3. And the plan included an Additional Initiatives & Efforts section in recognition of other significant projects planned the City. These need to be balanced in terms of time and budget with decisions about other Initiatives. Their progress status is also reported.

Staff is preparing a final report covering the past 6 quarters to present to the City Council in February.

Financial Impact:

n.a.

Committee Discussion:

n.a.

Attachment:

City of Hastings Strategic Priorities: 2022 Q4 Progress Report



CITY OF HASTINGS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2021-2023

Adopted by the Hastings City Council on September 6, 2021

2022 Q4 PROGRESS REPORT

Q4 2022	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
Strategic Priority	Initiative	Accomplishments
People, Processes, Infrastructure, and	1.1 Multi-Year Financial Model	✓ Completed earlier in year
Finance	1.2 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	 ✓ BR4R "Breaking the Silence: Remembering Brown's Chapel AME" 10/23 ✓ LMC "Exploring Race Equity" seminar 11/1 ✓ Panel Discussion "Homelessness in Hastings" 11/16 ✓ Embedded Social Worker starting 12/7 ✓ Opened interest forms for new Arts & Culture Commission
Community Image and Public Engagement	2.1 Strategic Communications Plan 2.2 Tourism	 ✓ Developed key message pyramid for key audiences ✓ Reviewed web, social media and enewsletter analytics and developed report ✓ Attended MAGC conference and developed plan for enhanced social media strategies for 2023. ✓ Built external communications strategies for reaching target audiences. ✓ Developed strategies for reaching underrepresented populations. ✓ Developed strategies for improving the user experience for website visitors, to be implemented with the next web redesign. ✓ Developed a web governance strategy for web maintenance. ✓ Levee Park Programming: 31 programs, over 8,300 attendees, increased
Parks and Public Spaces	3.1 Parks and Public Space Beautification	marketing ✓ Big Belly trash/recycle bins ordered for downtown with frames for poster ads ✓ CIF project: partnered with DBA for new holiday lights ✓ Launched Restaurant Week promotions ✓ Parks Commission working on Parks Five-Year Plan. ✓ Parks Commission reviewing

	3.2 Vermillion Street Corridor Plan	underutilized spaces. ✓ Partner with Dakota County for MRRT and VRGT ✓ HEDRA Façade Grant Program: \$44K to 11 projects, leveraged \$76K private investment ✓ MNDOT and City outreach to
	3.3 Lake Rebecca/Lake	businesses in corridor. ✓ Produced video with HCTV highlighting façade improvement grant project results. ✓ Lake Isabel Park construction started
	Isabel Parks Renovations	10/19/22, completion by 6/30/23
Housing and Economic Development	4.1 Downtown Special Service District	 ✓ Held meetings with downtown property and business owners ✓ Provided information on proposed cost of activities ✓ Awaiting further questions or petition to begin consideration from business\property owners.
*Future Topics		
People, Process, Infrastructure, & Finance	Continue to Improve environmental sustainability of City operations.	✓ Held an annual office cleanup day and diverted the following amounts from the landfill by bringing them to the Recycling Zone in Eagan: 756 lbs. of electronics, 52 fluorescent light bulbs, and 61 lbs. of batteries.
	Develop an internal communication strategy focused on council/staff communications	✓ Completed earlier in the year.

Prepare for likely health advisory due to PFAS.	 ✓ MPCA hired Wood for Phase One environmental review, completion due 1/6/23 ✓ Meetings with state legislators ✓ WSB to provide quotes as consulting engineer
Incorporate elements of the HPAAC Arts & Culture Plan into City goals and initiatives. Incorporate elements of the HPAAC Arts & Culture Plan into City goals and initiatives.	✓ City Council approved 2-year Arts & Culture Commission 12/5 ✓ Promoted call for new comm
Install new welcome sign on Hwy 55	✓
Hastings as Trails Hub	✓
Stimulate job creation in Hastings.	✓ HEDRA hired Rokos Advisors for industrial park marketing 7/14
Complete a full housing inventory analysis to guide development strategy. Impact Studies	✓ ✓
	Incorporate elements of the HPAAC Arts & Culture Plan into City goals and initiatives. Incorporate elements of the HPAAC Arts & Culture Plan into City goals and initiatives. Install new welcome sign on Hwy 55 Hastings as Trails Hub Stimulate job creation in Hastings. Complete a full housing inventory analysis to guide development strategy.

^{*}Denotes ideas put forward by City Council members as important, but not yet added to the strategic initiatives.

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.

Accomplishments:

Q4 2022

✓ Completed earlier in year

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
Analyze preliminary budget	Finance Manager	Sept 2021	Completed
Identify inflationary increases	Finance Manager	4Q21	Completed
Identify one-time capital expenditures	Finance Manager	4Q21	Completed
Identify projected revenue	Finance Manager	4Q21	Completed
Update model with final budget	Finance Manager	Dec 2021	Completed
Identify looming operating, debt, and capital needs.	Management Team	1Q22	Capital & Operating done
Report model to Finance Committee	Finance Manager	1Q22	Ready
Update projections prior to annual budget cycle	Finance Manager	May 2022	Completed

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.

Accomplishments:

- ✓ BR4R "Breaking the Silence: Remembering Brown's Chapel AME" 10/23
- ✓ LMC "Exploring Race Equity" seminar 11/1
- ✓ Panel Discussion "Homelessness in Hastings" 11/16
- ✓ Embedded Social Worker JPA starting 12/7
- ✓ Opened interest forms for new Arts & Culture Commission

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
Create a Workplace Culture that Prioritizes Equity and Inclusion 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 Solicit feedback and input from diverse audience Create opportunities for advisory and commission engagement by diverse residents of the City 	Department Heads	Ongoing	In Progress
Increase Experience of Hastings as Welcoming for All	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.

Accomplishments:

- ✓ Developed key message pyramid for key audiences
- ✓ Reviewed web, social media and e-newsletter analytics and developed report
- ✓ Attended MAGC conference and developed plan for enhanced social media strategies for 2023.
- ✓ Built external communications strategies for reaching target audiences.
- ✓ Developed strategies for reaching underrepresented populations.
- ✓ Developed strategies for improving the user experience for website visitors, to be implemented with the next web redesign.
- ✓ Developed a web governance strategy for web maintenance.

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
Define the story, key audiences and	Management Team	2Q22	Completed
messaging for each	and Communications		
	Coordinator		
Review metrics and analytics to evaluate	Communications	2Q22	Initial
content and channels	Coordinator	and	metrics
		ongoing	gathered;
			ongoing
Assess and build internal communications	City Council,	3-4Q21	Completed
processes and procedures	Management Team,		
	and Communications		
	Coordinator		
Assess and build an external	Communications	3Q22	Completed
communications strategy (strategies for	Coordinator		
target audiences)			
Assess and build an emergency	Public Safety and	TBD	In progress
management/crisis communications plan	Communications		
	Coordinator		
Assess and build strategy for under-	Communications	3Q22	Completed

represented populations	Coordinator with partners		
Assess and improve the user experience with the City's website	Communications Coordinator	Ongoing	Assessment Completed; need site overhaul
Review and amend communications- related policies and procedures (web, social media, media relations, event policies, and processes)	Communications Coordinator	4Q22	Completed



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.

Accomplishments:

- ✓ Levee Park Programming: 31 programs, over 8,300 attendees, increased marketing
- ✓ Big Belly trash/recycle bins ordered for downtown with frames for poster ads
- ✓ CIF project: partnered with DBA for new holiday lights
- ✓ Launched Restaurant Week Promotions

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
Review existing marketing and communications	City and Chamber/Tourism	4Q21	Completed
Review U of M tourism study	City and Chamber/Tourism	4Q21	Completed
Identify alternate revenue sources	City and Chamber/Tourism	1Q22 and Ongoing	Ongoing
Continue using free resources such as press releases, online event calendars, or online rating	Chamber/Tourism staff	Ongoing	Ongoing
Continue lead generation to build email database for future marketing.	Chamber/Tourism staff	Ongoing	Ongoing
Send Chamber/Tourism staff to Explore Minnesota annual conference	Chamber/Tourism staff	Feb 2022	Completed
Annual report (including occupancy rate at local hotels) to City Council.	City and Chamber/Tourism staff	Sept 2022	Completed

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.

Accomplishments:

- ✓ Parks Commission working on Parks Five-Year Plan.
- ✓ Parks Commission reviewing underutilized spaces.
- ✓ Partner with Dakota County for MRRT and VRGT.
- ✓ Communications and Parks partnered on social media posts related to parks maintenance duties.

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	In Progress
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	In progress; ongoing

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.

Accomplishments:

- ✓ HEDRA Façade Grant Program: \$44K to 11 projects, leveraged \$76K private investment
- ✓ MNDOT and City outreach to businesses in corridor
- ✓ Worked with HCTV to produce a video featuring the façade grant project results.

Milestone	Responsible	Date	Status
Continue participation in joint planning	Public Works	Ongoing	Ongoing
with MN DOT Consultant begins corridor study	Director Consultant	4Q21	Completed
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.

Accomplishments:

Q4 2022

✓ Lake Isabel Park construction started 10/19/22, completion by 6/30/23

Milestone	Responsible Leader(s)	Date	Status
LAKE REBECCA PARK:			
Monitor progress of grant for Lake Rebecca	Parks Dept	3Q21	Approved
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	Approved
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 Applicable
If not funded, appearance/security improvements (e.g.: remove back parking lot)	Parks Dept	2022	Not Applicable
LAKE ISABEL PARK:			
Grant approved for Lake Isabel Park	DNR	July 2021	Completed
Complete D&E plan for Isabel restoration	ISG, Parks Dept	4Q21	Completed
Approve plan for Isabel restoration	Parks Committee and City Council	4Q21	Completed
Final grant authorization	NPS	Sept 2021	Completed
Bid construction project		Late 2021/Early	Completed

VIII-09

	2022	
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.

Accomplishments:

Q4 2022

✓

Milestone	Responsible	Date	Status
	Leader(s)		
Research the mechanics of establishing an	Community	3Q21	Completed
SSD	Development		
	Dept.		
Research experiences of others in	Community	4Q21	Completed
establishing and operating an SSD	Development		
	Dept.		
Discuss initiative with downtown property	Community	1Q22	In progress
and business owners to determine support,	Development		
obstacles, and areas for potential funding of	Dept.		
a future SSD			
Prepare a draft list and budget for potential	Business	1Q22	Completed
service and activities that may be provided as	Community		
part of an SSD			
Hold meetings to discuss the draft plan with	Business	2Q22	Started
downtown property and business owners	Community		
Incorporate changes and concerns adjusting	Business	3Q22	In progress
plan as necessary	Community		
Develop the ordinance amendment and SSD	City Attorney	3Q22	Awaiting
Plan for official public hearing			confirmation
			from
			business
			property
			owners
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

Some of the ideas put forward by Councilmembers have not been developed into strategic initiative concepts. These ideas are not lost; rather, they remain as viable options for strategic initiatives that could be developed into concepts at the direction of Council.

Ideas Related to People, Processes, Infrastructure, and Finance

- Continue to Improve environmental sustainability of City operations.
 - ✓ Held an annual office cleanup day and diverted the following amounts from the landfill by bringing them to the Recycling Zone in Eagan: 756 lbs. of electronics, 52 fluorescent light bulbs, and 61 lbs. of batteries.
- 2. Prepare for likely health advisory due to PFAS (new initiative 9/2022)
 - ✓ MPCA hired Wood for Phase One environmental review, completion due 1/6/23
 - ✓ Meetings with state legislators
 - ✓ WSB to provide quotes as consulting engineer.

Ideas Related to Community Image and Public Engagement

- 1. Develop an internal communication strategy focused on council-staff communications. Completed earlier.
- 2. Develop policy for public recognition

- 3. Incorporate elements of the HPAAC Arts & Culture Plan into City goals and initiatives.
 - ✓ City Council approved 2-year Arts & Culture Commission 12/5
- 4. Install new welcome sign on Hwy 55 (new initiative 9/7/21)

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.
 - ✓ HEDRA hired Rokos Advisors for industrial park marketing 7/14
- 2. Complete a full housing inventory analysis to guide development strategy.
- 3. Impact Studies (new initiative 10/2022).

Additional City Initiatives and Efforts

The initiatives presented above should not be read in a vacuum. In many areas, the City is already undertaking aspects of the initiatives. Looking forward 6 to 18 months, the City already has many initiatives that support each of the four Strategic Priorities of this report. And these need to be balanced in terms of time and budget with decisions about new initiatives.

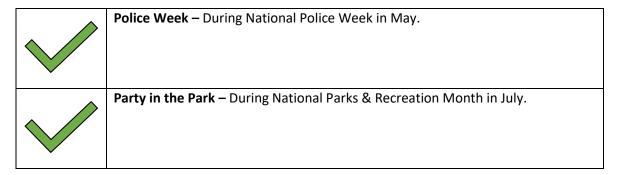
PEOPLE, PROCESSES, INFRASTRUCTURE, and FINANCE

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	Accounting Software – Current software is outdated, not user friendly, and has
	limited functionality in remote-work environment. 2021 Budget includes funds
	to hire consultant to assist with vetting needs and options. With budget
_	amendment for new system, this could be implemented in Oct 2022.
	Multi-Family Utility Billing – In summer/fall 2021, Finance Department will be
	updating process for calculating utility bills on multi-family accounts.
,	
	2021 Audit – Annual independent financial audit monopolizes Finance
	Department time for several weeks in February, April, and June 2022.
	Update Personnel Policy – The last significant amendment to the City's
	Employee Handbook was in 2012. It needs to be updated to reflect policy and
	law changes since then as well as ensuring it meets operations needs now and
	going forward.
	Employee Engagement Survey – The City will be conducting a survey to gauge
	employee satisfaction, performance, and perspective about the City as an
	organization. Information will provide insights into areas for organization
	improvement and baseline data for future comparison.
	Compensation & Classification Study – The City last conducted a comprehensive
	compensation and classification study of all positions in 1999-2000. There have
	been periodic updates since then with the last significant review in 2006-2007.
	Updating the study now would help with recruiting and retaining employees as
	well as maintaining internal consistency. Hiring a consultant is estimated at \$15-
	20K; implementation may be phased in over a couple years.
	Union Contracts – 5 collective bargaining agreements expire at the end of the
	year. Negotiation for renewal contracts begins in late summer.
	Photocopier/Printer Lease – Current lease expires at the end of the year and
	replacements need to be decided by end of September. IT staff has asked for
	input from all departments before soliciting quotes.
	City Hall Boilers – At 30+ years, the boilers have exceeded their lifespan and are
	requiring more frequent repair. Replacing them with high-efficiency model is
	anticipated in 2022. This will be part of the City Hall Dome Project (see Parks and

Public Spaces priority).
LeDuc Security Cameras – DCHS has requested security cameras. MNHS requires
a study prior to approving camera installation. Staff has solicited quotes for
study anticipating cost will be covered by a grant.
Fire Department Study – The City has issued an RFP for a consultant to review
staffing model, workload, service calls and their impact on Department
performance.
Ice Arena Refrigeration System – The CIP anticipates a \$1.8M project in the next
couple years to upgrade the refrigeration system from R-22 to an ammonia-
based system. We have requested state bonding support for this project.
Police Hiring – Two long-tenured officers are retiring in Oct/Nov 2021. The hiring
process for these positions can easily take three months.
Plan for 2022 Neighborhood Project – Design and engineering work for the 2022
Neighborhood Project actually begins in the summer of 2021, so it is ready to bid
early in 2022.

COMMUNITY IMAGE and PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

	Administrative Citations – City Council has approved the concept of
	administrative citations as a streamlined mechanism for responding to property
	maintenance and similar code violations. This would require changes to the City
•	Charter and City Code. We are presently seeking individuals to serve on the
	Charter Commission to start the process.
	State of the City – All City departments, particularly Communications, have
	considerable time in preparing this annual presentation in February.
	National Night Out – During National Night Out in August.
	Fire Department Open House – During National Fire Prevention Week in
	October.
	Machinery Hill – During Rivertown Days in July.



PARKS and PUBLIC SPACES

Mural – Contract with the artists and HFS has been extended for the mural to be painted in mid-August to early September. Communications is planning a press release and other publicity. City Hall Dome Project – The City has hired architects from Miller Dunwiddie for repair/renovation of the City Hall dome, as well as HVAC and climate control systems. Updated cost estimates and construction documents are anticipated in fall 2021, with construction planned for 2022. This project has \$2M in state bonding support. No Wake Ordinance – Washington and Dakota County Sheriff Departments are studying appropriate river speeds over the summer and expect to make recommendations to their respective boards in fall 2021. Flint Hills Land Donation – The Parks Department is working with Flint Hills Pine Bend on a land donation and conservation easement to add to open space of the
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Lake Rebecca and River Flats Parks area.
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EAB 2021 Implementation – Approximately 49 boulevard trees have been
identified for removal and an additional 90+ for mandatory treatment. The City
adopted a hardship relief program to offset removal costs for eligible residents.
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EAB 2022 Survey – During winter 2021-2022, Forestry staff will continue
inventory of boulevard trees and identify additional ash trees for removal or
treatment. This will be the second of a four-year survey.
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HOUSING and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Review Zoning and Development Code- Review changes to ensure consistency
with the Comprehensive Plan and development standards of the market.
Money approved for Zoning Code update to be completed in 2023
Shoreland and Critical Areas Ordinance - Adopt changes to the Shoreland and
Critical Areas Ordinance consistent with MN DNR regulations. To be completed
by Spring of 2023.

	Architectural Assessment of Downtown Buildings - Hire a consultant to
	complete an inventory of the architectural and structural conditions of historic
	downtown buildings. Assessment not completed but Façade Improvement
Ť	Grant initiated in 2022 and will continue in 2023
	Review Existing Incentive Programs - Review HEDRA loan, and land incentive
	programs to ensure they meet current needs. To be completed by the end of
	2022.
	Designed Detection and Europeian (DDOF) Visite Conduct at least 42 visite
	Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Visits - Conduct at least 12 visits
	annually and provide survey report to HEDRA. Ongoing.
	Business Drop-in Visits - Complete at least 100 unique business cop ins per year
	and provide semi-annual updates to HEDRA. Ongoing.
	Blight Identification - Proactively identify and pursue code enforcement
	violations. Review Revolving Loan Fund to better target towards properties.
	Improvements to Development Process - Meet with at least six commercial
	residential developers that have completed projects in the last three years to
	determine any necessary improvements.

Descriptions

