

VISION 2030
ACTION PILLARS
IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS
ADOPTED: June, 2018

Create High Quality Community Assets

Specific Action Steps:

1. Launch Programs that Attract and Retain Youth and Young Professionals

- a.* Develop housing options targeted at changing expectations and amenities for young workers and families. **Implementation Recommendation: Establish a Task Force to review and analyze data included in the 2016 Housing Study. Task Force shall make recommendations based on Study review.**
- b.* Create a program that connects local business owners with students. **Implementation Recommendation: School District, Chamber of Commerce and other interested parties meet to discuss options to implement, and build upon current efforts (e.g. Discover Waseca Careers).**

2. Transform Education System into Lifelong Learning

- a.* Expand opportunities for cultural and educational training programs open to the community through organizations such as the Library, Arts Center, and Historical Society. **Implementation Recommendation: Inventory existing programs that pertain to this action step. School District, Library, Arts Center, Historical Society and other interested parties meet to discuss options to implement.**
- b.* Set up Waseca's own recreational programs for multiple generations (sports leagues, classes in parks, etc.). **Implementation Recommendation: City of Waseca, Community Education, established sports leagues, and other interested parties meet to discuss options to implement.**

3. Update Community Aesthetics and Infrastructure

- a.* Create opportunities and initiatives that enhance aesthetic improvements along key driving corridors, parks, trails and in the maintenance of community facilities. **Implementation Recommendation: City staff review of driving corridors, parks, trails, and facilities and develop plans to enhance.**
- b.* Evaluate zoning and maintenance code requirements and enforcement to ensure they meet expectations for community aesthetics are aligned with community vision. **Implementation Recommendation: City staff review ordinances and codes.**
- c.* Establish programs to address blighted and distressed residential properties through incentives, assistance and enhanced code enforcement. **Implementation Recommendation: City staff review current policies and practices and enhance as needed.**
- d.* Install artwork in public spaces. **Implementation Recommendation: Art Council take the lead in identifying opportunities for art in the community.**

4. Anchor Downtown as the Heart of the Community

- a.* Focus on creating next stage amenities when developing new infrastructure in the community. **Implementation Recommendation: City to review options for improvement when planning for infrastructure upgrades, and work with EDAs, HPC, Chamber and others in the planning process.**

- b. Encourage and incentivize reinvestment in downtown properties. **Implementation Recommendation: City, EDAs, HPC, Chamber, and other interested parties review options for enhanced investment in downtown properties.**
- c. Create community spaces that allow for unstructured gatherings and social interactions as well as program regular activities, events and programming to draw visitors downtown. **Implementation Recommendation: City, HPC, Chamber, and other interested parties develop options for additional, and enhancement of existing community spaces downtown.**
- d. Hire a Downtown Mainstreet Coordinator to engage downtown business and property owners in exploring coordinated promotions, events and operational practices that encourage increased commercial activity downtown. **Implementation Recommendation: City, HPC, Chamber, and other interested parties discuss options for hiring staff specifically dedicated to downtown enhancement efforts.**

Bold Ideas:

1. Establish a Community Vitality Strategic Action Area Leadership Committee tasked with overseeing the development of high quality community assets and making sure they are in line with the community vision. **Implementation Recommendation: B.E.S.T. take leadership in determining make-up, and timing for establishing this committee.**
2. Encourage development of the downtown as the “Heart of Waseca” to provide a sense of place and promote community pride. Make it a community gathering location and a place to stay for entertainment. **Implementation Recommendation: City, HPC, Chamber, and other interested parties coordinate efforts to further develop downtown as the “Heart of Waseca”.**

Expand and Leverage Economic Development Initiatives

Specific Action Steps:

- 1. Establish a Long-Range Economic Development Plan with Metrics for Success**
 - a. Ensure that all metrics for Waseca's Economic Development plan comply with Waseca's community vision. *Implementation Recommendation: EDAs, City, and County ensure metrics are consistent with the community vision.*
 - b. Develop incentive packages and facilities targeted to biotechnology businesses, start-ups and research. *Implementation Recommendation: EDAs, City, County, and other interested parties coordinate incentives to targeted businesses and industries.*
- 2. Create a Community Marketing and Branding Initiative**
 - a. Create a community marketing and branding initiative by establishing a subcommittee that will compile the necessary information needed to hire a communications firm to create a new, dynamic brand for the community. *Implementation Recommendation: B.E.S.T. take leadership in determining make-up, and timing for establishing this subcommittee.*
- 3. Diversify and intensify the Agricultural Sector**
 - a. Convene regional agricultural sector business meetings with the aim of building partnerships and collaborations among researchers in agricultural and biotechnology businesses for practical applications and development purposes. *Implementation Recommendation: EDA inventory existing meetings and bring back information to City, EDA, B.E.S.T. and others to determine if use of existing meetings is prudent or if new meetings need to be established.*
 - b. Develop partnerships with area higher education for training programs for high need skills for existing businesses and skill sets in demand by biotechnology and agricultural businesses. *Implementation Recommendation: School District and other Schools in the County take the lead working with MSU, South Central College, and Riverland College along with B.E.S.T., EDAs, and Chamber assistance to develop programs to guide students into emerging biotechnology and agricultural fields of study.*
 - c. Utilize existing resources to connect businesses and organizations in the regional agricultural supply chain and build relationships with the community to encourage expanded regional business connectivity. *Implementation Recommendation: EDAs and Chamber make businesses aware of and get listed on Made in Minnesota, and Greenseam to expand their reach. <https://mn.gov/deed/data/data-tools/made-minnesota/>*
- 4. Expand Technology, Professional and Business Sectors**
 - a. Create new programs and partnerships that focus on the development of novel approaches to address environmental regulations and challenges, then use those approached to attract new businesses. *Implementation Recommendation: City and County work with B.E.S.T., DNR, SROC, AURI, and the Department of Agriculture to define objectives and evaluate options.*
 - b. Build skills training programming through higher education and community education to meet the community's future anticipated workforce needs. *Implementation Recommendation: School District take the lead working with MSU, South Central College,*

and Riverland College along with B.E.S.T. and EDAs to create programming that prepares students for careers and workplaces that will change dramatically during their working lives.

Bold Ideas:

1. Establish an Economic Development Strategic Action Area Leadership Committee tasked with creating a long-range Economic Development Plan for the community with metrics for success. The committee would determine priority projects, spearhead regional connections to bring new businesses and align the plan with the community vision. ***Implementation Recommendation: B.E.S.T. take leadership in determining make-up, and timing for establishing this committee.***
2. Encourage the repurposing of buildings to create maker spaces for start-ups in the agricultural and biotech industries. ***Implementation Recommendation: EDAs take the lead on building use/re-use, and start-up/incubator space.***

Strengthen Regional Connectivity

Specific Action Steps:

1. Collaborate with Regional Entities to Build Connectivity

- a. Develop timeline and funding stream for trail completion within City of Waseca and connection to regional trail systems. **Implementation Recommendation: City and County work with MnDOT, DNR, neighboring counties, and other interested parties to accomplish this action step.***
- b. Seek MnDOT's partnership in conducting commuter study to explore commuter transportation services to Minneapolis-St. Paul and Southern Minnesota regional areas. **Implementation Recommendation: City staff coordinate with MnDOT.***

2. Expand Higher Education Connections to Attract Regional Innovation

- a. Actively collaborate with higher education facilities to promote innovative agricultural research programs in the broader regional area. **Implementation Recommendation: B.E.S.T., City, and other interested parties work with SROC and related agricultural research programs to enhance collaboration.***

3. Build Top Grade Infrastructure

- a. Create a development plan for the South Interchange as a gateway to the Community, focusing on retail and commercial services to attract regional visitors and highway traffic. **Implementation Recommendation: City staff develop options for City Council consideration.***
- b. Upgrade infrastructure by extending utilities to the West Interchange to allow for industrial growth. **Implementation Recommendation: City staff develop options for City Council consideration.***
- c. Continue updating of aging infrastructure to protect existing development and encourage future development and regional connectivity. **Implementation Recommendation: City staff develop options and priorities for City Council consideration.***
- d. Develop pedestrian loops as part of a master pedestrian plan for the community. **Implementation Recommendation: City and County staff, with support of the City Council and County Board include review of measures to increase safe walking and biking options during planning for infrastructure improvements, and general review of improved transportation.***

4. Become a "Destination Location"

- a. Develop parks, recreation and tourism master plan to identify development of events, activities and recreational opportunities to draw visitors from the region. **Implementation Recommendation: City, County, School District, Chamber, and other interested parties meet to commence development of a master plan.***
- b. Create development plans for the Maplewood Park and Northwest Nature Area to transform them into regional recreational attractions. **Implementation Recommendation: City establish plans for enhancement of these community resources.***
- c. Develop and invest in plans to address water quality issues at Clear Lake and add water-based activities to attract visitors and local investment. **Implementation Recommendation: City and County staff work with DNR, Lake Association and other interested parties to address water quality issues. City, County, School District, and businesses review additional water-based activities.***

Bold Ideas:

1. Establish a Regional Connectivity Strategic Action Area Leadership Committee tasked with promoting Waseca's assets to integrate into the broader regional fabric and building Waseca's reputation and leadership in the region. Implementation Recommendation: ***B.E.S.T. take leadership in determining make-up, and timing for establishing this committee.***
2. Encourage development of Waseca's image as a "Destination Location" in the region using the results of the Strategic Plan's new marketing and branding. ***Implementation Recommendation: Use the results of the branding efforts to develop this image.***

Create a Vibrant Dynamic Community

Specific Action Steps

1. Leverage Governmental Collaboration and Cooperation

- a.* Evaluate shared and consolidated service opportunities among local governments to increase efficiency, better coordinate services and provide long-term planning. **Implementation Recommendation:** *All local governments meet to inventory existing shared services, and establish a process for program review and joint planning efforts.*
- b.* Develop and maintain a comprehensive contact list of shared services between counties and cities and update it annually to ensure coordination of services. **Implementation Recommendation:** *City and County staff establish list of shared services and staff contacts, and update on a continual basis.*

2. Active Leadership to Encourage Collaboration between Organizations

- a.* Enhance communication, collaboration and programming coordination among cultural and recreational organizations to better reach residents and cut down on program overlap. **Implementation Recommendation:** *B.E.S.T. arrange meeting(s) with identified groups to discuss ways to prevent overlap, share resources, and complement the other's efforts.*

3. Promote Social Connectivity

- a.* Actively seek community input on major initiatives and program enhancements through coordinated institutional communications. **Implementation Recommendation:** *All entities review current communication and public involvement processes, and make any changes to go beyond the minimum required communication and community involvement.*
- b.* Develop comprehensive communication plans and practices to ensure an informed and engaged community. **Implementation Recommendation:** *Each entity review current community outreach and communication efforts. Identify gaps, duplicate efforts, and ways to coordinate, enhance, and expand community communication.*
- c.* Encourage walking and biking within the community. **Implementation Recommendation:** *City and County staff, with support of the City Council and County Board include review of measures to increase safe walking and biking options during planning for infrastructure improvements, and general review of improved transportation.*
- d.* Follow a Healthy Community Checklist to ensure an overall healthy community orientation. **Implementation Recommendation:** *City staff research and propose a Healthy Community Checklist for adoption, and establish metrics to measure performance and attainment.*

4. Foster Entrepreneurships and Encourage Innovation

- a.* Identify and engage existing and up-and-coming leaders in the community with key leadership roles in the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan. **Implementation Recommendation:** *All parties assist in the involvement of a broad spectrum of the community in leadership roles.*
- b.* Work with school system and library to develop a coding educational program to connect students to the business community and build entrepreneurial spirit at a young age. **Implementation Recommendation:** *School District, Library, and other interested parties meet to develop a program.*

- c. Encourage and incentivize the establishment of start-up companies in Waseca. ***Implementation Recommendation: EDAs and other economic development organizations work together to identify resources and methods to accomplish this action step.***
- d. Institute a mentorship program between existing businesses and emerging businesses to provide support and guidance. ***Implementation Recommendation: Chamber of Commerce take leadership of establishing a program to accomplish this action step.***

Bold Ideas:

- 1. Establish an Intergovernmental Collaboration Strategic Action Area Leadership Committee consisting of the committed members of the December 2017 Action Plan Focus Group. The Committee would be tasked with aligning all decision-making with the community vision and reporting out to the community in an annual “Report Card”. ***Implementation Recommendation: B.E.S.T. take leadership in determining make-up, and timing for establishing this committee.***
- 2. Convene an annual “Idea Summit” to collect original input on community development planning. ***Implementation Recommendation: B.E.S.T. leadership in arranging an Idea Summit as a stand-alone event, or in conjunction with planned events.***