

City of Mount Vernon, Iowa
Municipal Strategic Plan
2013

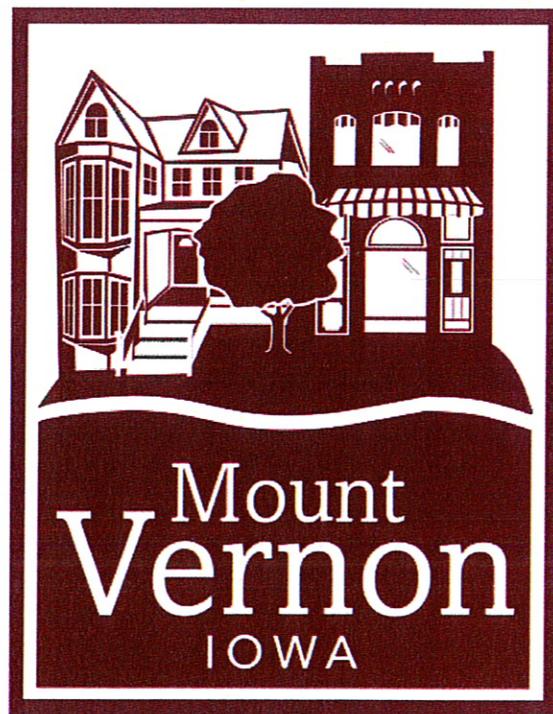


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Contributors

Scott Petersen	Mayor
Marianne Taylor	Council
Steve Maurice	Council
Jamie Hampton	Council
Slaton Anthony	Council
Marty Christensen	Council
Michael Beimer	City Administrator
Sue Ripke	Deputy Clerk
Mark Winder	Chief of Police
Matt Siders	Parks & Recreation Director
Dan Boggs	City Engineer
Loren Hartelt	Public Works Director
Chris Rodman	Lead Operator, Public Works

Purpose

By defining the mission, values, and prioritized strategic goals for the City of Mount Vernon, this strategic plan shall guide the allocation of city resources through the annual budgeting process, development of capital project plans, and guide the general agenda and focus of staff and elected officials. Beyond regular operational activities, the efforts of the city government will be dedicated to achievement of the strategic goals while respecting the values and ultimately serving the mission.

Lifecycle of the Plan

This plan will be reviewed and updated annually to reflect any shift in priorities or changes internal or external to the community. The review will take place prior to capital project planning and budgeting process for the upcoming fiscal year.

Our Mission

To ensure the highest quality of life for our citizens and visitors through the efficient and effective provision of basic municipal services, and by promoting cultural, recreational, and economic opportunities, and by protecting our history.

Our Values

Transparency and Inclusiveness

The business of the City of Mount Vernon will be conducted in an open manner, always striving to communicate and collaborate with our citizens and businesses, schools and churches, and with neighboring cities and governmental agencies.

Execution and Improvement

We strive for excellence in execution of our plans and duties, always mindful of opportunities to improve our performance in serving the community.

Safety and Wellness

Our concern for the safety and wellness of the citizens of Mount Vernon and our staff is reflected in our goals, policies, and actions.

Aesthetics

We believe in the positive influence of aesthetic quality on the general quality of life in a community, and thus will invest in the aesthetics of all capital improvement projects.

Quality and Sustainability

We value quality in our services and infrastructure, and will ensure the financial and environmental sustainability of our city services and the community as a whole.

Planning Framework

Eight municipal planning areas span the breadth of the functions and responsibilities of city government and provide a context within which strategic goals have been defined and prioritized in support of the mission. The goals are to be achieved through one or more projects or actions of city government.

Municipal Planning Areas

Economic Development

Creating jobs and increasing the property tax base.

Public Safety

Providing police and fire protection, and an ambulance service.

Transportation

Planning, building and maintaining our streets, trails, sidewalk system, and public transportation.

Utilities

Delivering water, wastewater, storm water, gas, electricity, and internet services.

Refuse and Recycling

Managing solid waste, recycling, yard waste, and brush to promote efficient use and disposal of materials.

Recreation and Culture

Providing youth and adult sports, public art, parks, community center, recreation facilities, trails, theater, festivals, historical programs, library, wellness programs.

General Administration

Administering general government, information technology and human resources.

Community Betterment

Building streetscapes, gateways, and other improvements with Main Street/CDG and other development groups.

Planning Area Prioritization

Participants were asked to select the two planning areas, beyond essential services in which they feel Mount Vernon should make the most strategic investment.

Planning Area	% of votes	# of votes
Section 1 – Transportation Streets, trails, sidewalk system, and public transportation	66.7%	8
Section 2 - Economic Development Creating jobs and increasing the property tax base	50.0%	6
Section 3 – Utilities Delivery of water, wastewater, storm water, gas, electricity, internet	25.0%	3
Section 4 - Recreation and Culture Youth and adult sports, public art, parks, community center, recreation trails, theater, festivals, historical programs, the library, wellness programs	25.0%	3
Section 5 - Community Betterment Streetscapes, Gateways, Main Street/CDG	16.7%	2
Section 6 - Public Safety Providing police and fire protection, and an ambulance service	8.3%	1
Section 7 - Refuse and Recycling- Management of solid waste, recycling, yard waste, and brush	8.3%	1

Strategic Goals and Actions

Goals were defined within each planning area by the working group. The goals were prioritized through a process where each participant was allowed to select two goals within each planning area, of those getting at least one prioritization vote, that they deemed to be of the most immediate strategic importance.

Transportation Goal Priorities

Goal	Votes
Complete master transportation plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete street inventory and ratings • continue sidewalk improvement program • prioritize street improvements • review street uses and classifications - current and future • consider embargos and/or truck routes • compile master plan 	10
Provide additional safe, convenient, and attractive parking for the uptown district <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve the north side municipal lot • acquire additional land for parking • improve south side municipal lot 	6
Promote non-automobile transportation (biking, walking, car pools/van pools)	4
Provide a commuter lot and facilities for a regional commuter transportation system	1

Economic Development Goal Priorities

Goal	Votes
Promote hwy 30/1 corridor development through zoning, etc	7
Provide incentives to attract businesses and light industry	6
Recruit professional service providers	2
Develop affordable housing	2
Fill existing commercial spaces	1
Resolve issue of providing city services north of the Union Pacific tracks	1
Promote our utilities capacity to potential industries	1
Coaching for small business startups	1
Business owner organization	1

Utilities Goal Priorities

Goal	Votes
Improve the efficiency and sustainability of the wastewater treatment system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve sludge management • implement treatment of wastewater effluent to meet particulate and disinfection standards • replace and maintain valves and pipes to improve the quality and continuity of service 	8
Create and maintain a water and wastewater improvements plan using the GIS system as a data source	3
Ensure good planning and design for stormwater management in new developments and public improvement projects	3
Ensure adequate funding for stormwater management improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revise stormwater fee schedule to charge based on area of pavement and structures 	3
Improve the aesthetics of above ground utilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • always include buried utilities in all major street reconstruction projects • replace telephone junction boxes with historically appropriate fittings/covers 	2
Assure better access to high-speed communications and information networks	2
Encourage more efficient use of stormwater <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote the use of rain barrels and cisterns 	1

Recreation and Culture Goal Priorities

Goal	Votes
Complete development of the Community Center by the end of 2015	8
Complete master parks plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete parks inventory • do planning for each park • compare parks and recreation resources to national standards for parks facilities and services according to local demographics • establish target metrics for parks and recreation facilities, programs, and citizen utilization 	6
Complete the inter-urban recreational trail system	2
Increase the amount of public art in the community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require the inclusion of public art in city improvement projects • Plan for inclusion of public art in parks development • Require public art in private development projects 	2
Connect the city's recreational trails with the regional trails network	2
Increase the variety of, and level of participation in, parks and recreation arts programming	1
Collaborate with other local entities to build a larger community theater facility	1

Community Betterment Goal Priorities

Goal	Votes
Begin implementation of uptown streetscape plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incorporate relevant improvements during the planned DOT highway 1 resurfacing project in the summer of 2013 • involve historic preservation commission in final design for uptown streetscapes 	7
Support the CDG sufficiently to allow it to provide design and economic development services in collaboration with city government	6
Acquire professional city planning services	5
Ensure consistent use of the appropriate streetscape fixtures and design elements in all city improvement projects	4

Public Safety Goal Priorities

Goal	Votes
Ensure adequate staffing of ambulance service 24/7/365 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit city staff • Gain agreement from businesses to allow employees to leave for calls 	7
Consolidate public safety services with nearby entities	5
Provide adequate space for the police department	4
Ensure adequate staffing of MVFD 24/7/365 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit city staff • Gain agreement from businesses to allow employees to leave for calls 	3
Provide a storm shelter for residents of the mobile home park	1
Additional training and preparedness drills for emergency management scenarios	1
Ensure adequate staffing for police department coverage 24/7/365	1

Refuse and Recycling Goal Priorities

Goal	Votes
Increase the percentage of city waste recycled (rather than disposed of in the landfill) by 10% by the start of fiscal year 2015	8
Improve the information and education for citizens related to refuse and recycling services, including the availability of special curbside pick-up	4
Provide recycling opportunities beyond curbside service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide recycling containers on the streets, especially during public events • provide recycling a drop-off for batteries, oil, fluorescent bulbs, styrofoam, and cardboard, etc 	4
Increase the convenience and reduce the cost for refuse removal	3
Work with local businesses and institutions to encourage them to recycle more	3

1. Strategic Planning: Goals, Objectives, Mission Statement. Christensen explained that strategic planning is an organization's process of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy, including its capital and people. Strategic planning and decision processes should end with objectives and ways to achieve them. The concept is to define guiding elements such as a mission statement, the role of City government, and guiding principles. After a lengthy discussion City Administrator Beimer summarized the mission statement; "To efficiently provide the highest level of municipal services at the lowest possible cost providing a sustainable quality of life and economic development while maintaining the uniqueness of Mount Vernon." Christensen suggested that at the next session there be a discussion on guiding principles, planning areas and the section in the Comprehensive Plan that deals with strategic planning.

Minutes 3-26-2012