

# City of Park Ridge Strategic Plan and Goal Development 2019



Prepared by project facilitators:

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**NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY – CENTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL STUDIES**

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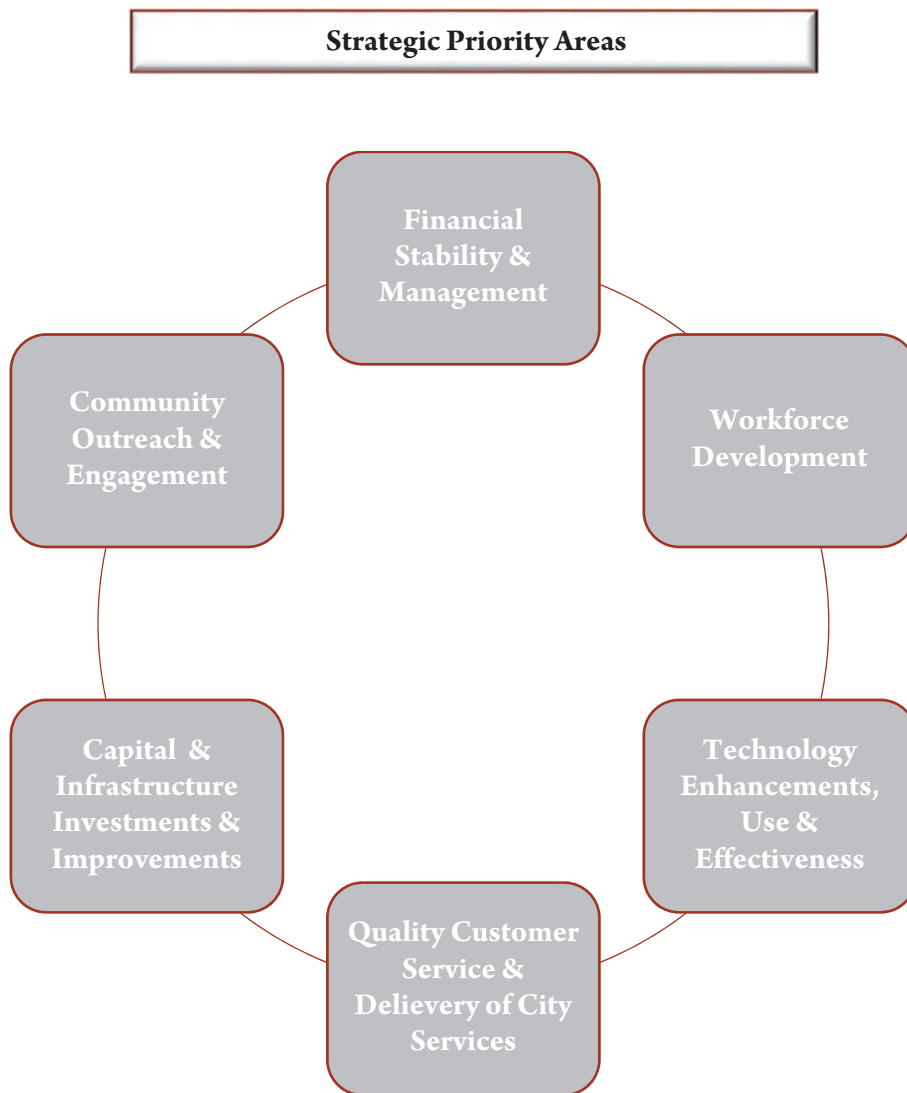
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Strategic planning is a preferred approach to guiding an organization’s future rather than making decisions issue by issue. The City of Park Ridge (“the City”) engaged the Center for Governmental Studies (CGS) at Northern Illinois University (NIU) to facilitate a strategic planning workshop with Council and senior staff members in October of 2019. The strategic planning workshop provided a positive atmosphere for the Council and senior staff members to work together and collaboratively review and develop the Council’s visions for the future and strategic goals to determine where it is the City wants to go as an organization.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Ultimately, six key strategic priority areas were identified as an outcome of the process highlighting activities and initiatives that the City should focus on in both the short- and long-term. The strategic priority areas identified during the workshop [in no particular order] are illustrated below.



## STRATEGIC GOALS

After discussions regarding the City’s visions for the future, current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, participants were asked to identify short-and long-term goals. After the goals were developed, participants were then asked to classify each goal according to a matrix model of time and complexity. Agreed upon criteria were used to classify a goal as short- or long-term and as complex or routine (please see full report for defined criteria).

Following the classification exercise and after the strategic planning workshop retreat, the Council was asked to delineate, via an online ranking exercise, which goals should be given the highest priority. In total, the group developed four short-term routine goals, eight short-term complex goals, four long-term routine goals and eight long-term complex goals. The *top three goals* from each category are offered as a process “snapshot” representing the most important strategic goals or priority areas for the Council and staff to address in the months and years ahead (see below). For a full review and appreciation of all the strategic goals developed, discussed and ranked, please refer to the full report.

### SUMMARY OF TOP 3 GOALS ORGANIZED IN TIME/COMPLEXITY MATRIX

#### SHORT-TERM GOALS

##### Short-term Routine Goals

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- Continue to improve external customer service to residents
- Develop an internship program to promote careers in local government while adding organizational capacity
- Explore inclusion of recreational cannabis on the next election/referendum ballot

##### Short-term Complex Goals

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- Redevelop the City’s website to make it more accessible and user-friendly
- Continue to address Organizational Development and Workforce Planning needs
- Examine and reorganize departments to align with needs of the community, expected service levels and strategic goals

## LONG-TERM GOALS

### Long-term Routine Goals

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- Continue to emphasize the City's commitment to financial stability and fiscal management to address goals, priorities and needs
- Develop an overall communication strategy for both external and internal stakeholders
- Continue to build institutional knowledge, staff depth, skills and strategy on how to "evolve" the organization for the future

### Long-term Complex Goals

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- Continue to manage our stormwater utility master plan and regularly communicate projects, impacts, outcomes and scheduling
- Continue to improve the technological infrastructure at City Hall and in Departments; enhance technology in all units
- Highlight/communicate when the installation phase/construction begin on portions of our long-term/ adopted infrastructure plan
- Continue to update the City's comprehensive plan/overall land use plan

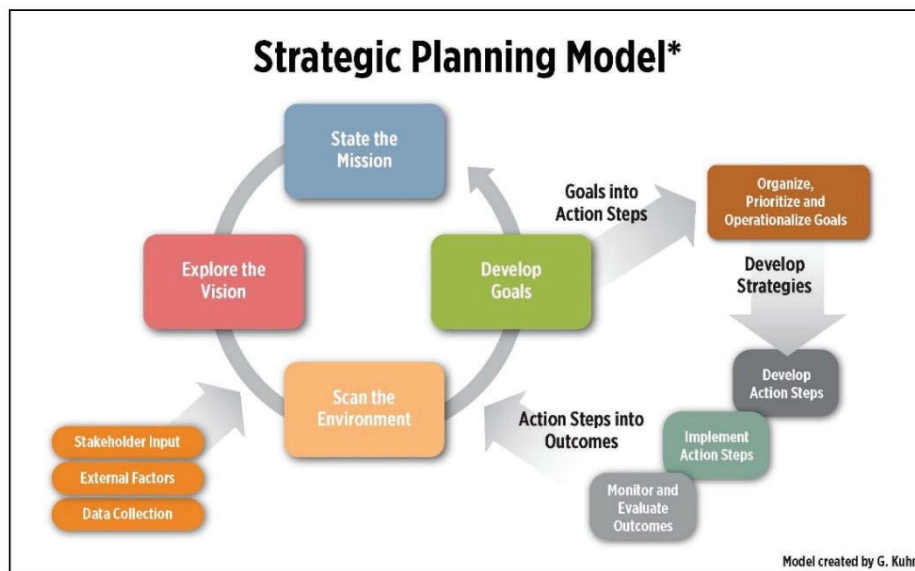
***\*Note: Two goals in the long-term complex category received tied scores for being ranked third.***

# INTRODUCTION

As an organization, the City has placed itself among the special class of governmental entities that have made a commitment to formalized strategic planning and goal setting exercises (Figure 1). As City leaders are aware of, strategic planning is not a new phenomenon for progressive communities and government agencies. Policymaking boards and staff in both private and public organizations, including the City, recognize the value of such processes. This important work will serve the community well into the coming years.

The Council and senior staff members gathered in October 2019 to discuss the City's vision, develop goals, and ultimately establish the future direction for the City. The strategic planning workshop provided a positive atmosphere to set aside time to methodically, *strategically*, determine where it is the City wants to go as an organization. As was shared with the Council and senior staff members at the conclusion of the workshop, the organization

**Figure 1. Strategic Planning Model**



\* Model generally represents the steps that are taken for this type of initiative.

should resist the temptation to rearrange priorities as the fiscal year moves along. It is important to adhere to the results of the Council and senior staff members' efforts throughout this process and the City's budgeting process.

Keep in mind that the judicious use of the City's limited resources (including financial resources and professional staff time) will be the key to good results. These high standards can place a strain on the organization, as excellence requires adequate staff time, expertise and resources. In the end, quality policies and quality implementation equate to tough choices in setting priorities and in allocating resources. Only a limited number of goals and objectives can be effectively managed and implemented at any given time. In a very realistic sense, clear and stable priorities must be maintained if the City desires to stretch its resources as far as they can go.

## Outline of Workshop Leadership Exercises and Discussion Sessions

The format for all of the discussion sessions used in the planning effort employed approaches that were highly participative and interactive. The process was informed by the environmental scanning components and the identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the City. The workshop facilitators utilized a group discussion approach called 'Nominal Group Technique' where participants were assured equal

opportunities to speak and share opinions by the facilitator. During the workshop sessions, individuals had the opportunity to generate and share their ideas, as well as participate in group activities allowing them to weigh alternatives and refine their thinking through dialogue. As ideas were shared and debated, the group worked steadily toward a consensus regarding organizational values, purpose, future directions and priorities.

## Session I. Introduction Exercise – Icebreaker and Visioning

Each participant engaged in a visioning and important topic identification exercise by selecting two items from the “garage sale” table and using them to answer two questions. The first item was used to answer the question, “What do you see as an important topic the City should address in the next 1-3 years?” The second item was related to the visioning question, “In 10-15 years when I return to the City, I hope to see, or think I will see...,” in regards to services, programs, staffing levels, capital needs and general concepts that should or would be present in the City at these intervals. Participants were asked to think about their ideas ahead of time and then be ready to share them with the group during the first session of the workshop. This was a brainstorming exercise—all ideas about the City’s future were encouraged and shared. No evaluative or judgmental debate was permitted during this session. Below is a summary of those answers.

### Exploration of the City of Park Ridge’s Important Current Topics/Issues

Garage Sale Item	Important Topics/Issues
Phone cable	Technology improvements
Charger	Technology advancements with green components; plug-in to relevant technology trends (e.g., electric car stations), cost-effective and environmentally-friendly
Eye glass wipes	Misinformation/communicate facts and make decisions based on facts – develop a communication/education strategy (e.g., value of city tax)
Brick	Development in underdeveloped/vacant commercial properties
Garbage can	Implement solutions that are also environmentally-friendly and sustainable and include in the goals
Fire hydrant	Infrastructure improvements
Brick	Innovative strategies to encourage, manage and maintain commerce, including e-commerce
Drafting set	Doing things more efficiently (i.e., “smarter” approaches and strategies}
Police car	Addressing what a sustainable policing model is in the future (e.g., drones, cameras, self-driving squad cards, etc.)
Checkbook	Financial stability
Valve/pipe	Maintain funding for infrastructure improvements; don’t fall behind and continue to elevate the employee experience focused on performance and retention. Become an attraction/employer of choice to have more talent to choose from
Metra schedule	Parking availability, especially for commuters, connectivity through the town and the access points for bikers and walkers

Garage Sale Item	Important Topics/Issues
<b>Flower</b>	Continue to make Park Ridge a livable, enjoyable, adaptable community by meeting current and future expectations, demands and trends. Enhance accessibility for all residents (e.g., transportation) and work to become/maintain being an attraction and destination and to be the choice along the Metra line (i.e., be competitive for residents, workforce, and businesses)
<b>Valve</b>	Shutting off troubled water mains – addressing and resolving flooding issues
<b>Fire sprinkler</b>	Keep sprinkler systems in homes and businesses
<b>CD</b>	Investment in employees – education for employers from a technology standpoint and attract and retain skilled staff, especially with technology

**Exploration of the City of Park Ridge’s Desired Future Condition: Visions of the Future**

Garage Sale Item	Visioning
<b>Batteries</b>	Less reliant on ComEd Public Works department’s functions and staffing levels relatively the same
<b>Fire truck</b>	Maintain fleet and equipment updates and quality and see a safer community. Possible regionalization of public safety– not to be feared and plan for impact of healthcare development in the city
<b>Slinky</b>	Financial stability, stable and predictable tax levy. Finance department is more reliant on technology. Different skilled workforce – tech savvy and customer service oriented and can communicate and educate residents
<b>Fish</b>	Communication about flood mitigation and private solutions embraced by residents. Technology improvements embraced by the public (e.g., online permits), processes more reliant on technology, take on larger role for economic development, more outsourcing could result in lower staffing levels
<b>Ruler</b>	Vertical growth and a more vibrant uptown (e.g., theater, dining, entertainment options); Mixed-use buildings (condos) on the parcel where city hall is, a new municipal center; more consolidation of 911 call centers and police records, more reliance of police functions using technology and police recruitment
<b>Smart Gov. Coaster</b>	More efficient processes via technology, more social/technology interaction with residents
<b>Athena</b>	Continue to use/enhance technology to improve the customer experience and employee experience/efficiency - embrace technology rather than become stagnant. Become a community that embraces progressive opportunities while maintaining a small town feel and charm
<b>Golf ball</b>	Public-private partnerships to enhance recreational opportunities and technology improvements
<b>Cork</b>	Vibrancy in uptown and around the community (e.g., Busse Highway/business districts)
<b>Dollar bill</b>	Financial discipline – stable and responsible

Garage Sale Item	Visioning
<b>Construction hat</b>	No more flooding
<b>Map</b>	Maintain green space and tree canopies to lead to quality of life enhancement
<b>Necklace</b>	Preserve property values and culture
<b>Ball repair marker</b>	Innovative ways to improve active and recreational opportunities to encourage a healthy and happy community
<b>Pipe</b>	Active and vibrant community, city-wide infrastructure improvements (e.g., roads, flooding, technology, facilities, etc.)

**Vision Statements from 2016/17 – Carried forward to 2019**

Mature trees/restored canopy urban forests
Flood City reputation is a thing of the past
Uptown, S. Park & Higgins corridors are thriving (new buildings – refurbished buildings)
Bustling commerce in all our business areas – people walking from store to store
Stable finances
Organizations seen as efficient, well-run organization in service to citizens
An active and diverse population as I drive through town – enjoying the community, the downtown, gathering places, etc.
Innovative ways to encourage happy, healthy, and an active community
Returning generation – our kids will come back and live here/want to be here – desirable return – a <u>destination</u> where people want to be
Employees’ jobs will be safer, easier, more efficient, more technology – might be services we haven’t imagined
Use technology to enhance the employee experience
New Public Safety building with Police and Fire departments, but where? A new E.O.C. (but not in the basement)
More technology (like sprinklers) reduces time on the scene, etc. More shared resources – we almost act like a regional department now with MBAS. Demographics will impact our services
Technology advanced organization/operation that meets residents’ needs – keep pressing to advance
Proactive organization and government that drives/supports being proactive and innovative, now we are reactive – in future trends, models, stats and dashboards will be used
A more collaborative Council and Senior Staff – remove roadblocks –to keep high performing staff and keep the team motivated
An even more vibrant downtown – daytime foot traffic, night time activity and less storefront vacancies
More online technology and transactions city-wide, like transactions with finance, permitting, data, citizen requests, etc.



## Session II. Surrender or Lead

Participants were introduced to a leadership exercise entitled “Surrender or Lead.” The premise is that participants work to develop responses to some simple, but effective and thought-provoking questions. Participants were asked to respond to a series of structured questions designed to initiate discussion and reveal hopes, perspectives, challenges, opportunities or possible barriers based on the collective view of each participant’s team. The group’s responses were recorded on flip chart paper and are reported below. Underlined sections are key phrases that the group provided in response to the exercise’s open questions and prompts.

### Group #1

*[Team name: Omaha Beach]*

1. We want to lower property taxes, but our costs and needs are growing.
2. The two most important things to focus on are quality of life and development mix.
3. If it weren’t for being landlocked, we would have more stormwater management and park options.
4. We need to finally recognize that City character and progress are not necessarily opposed to each other
5. Other units of government will have the biggest impact on the City in the coming 2-3 years.

### Group #2

*[Team name: When the Levy Breaks]*

1. We want to raise the bar, but have limited resources.
2. The two most important things to focus on are financial stability and infrastructure because it improves the quality of life.
3. If it weren’t for the finite resources and levy concerns, we would accelerate progress.
4. We need to finally make a decision about flooding.
5. The Illinois General Assembly will have the biggest impact on the City in the coming 2-3 years.

### Group #3

*[Team name: Speedy 3’s]*

1. We want to invest, but need to be careful.
2. The two most important things to focus on are community development and infrastructure because Park Ridge should be a desirable place to be in.
3. If it weren’t for the TIF burden, we would be more secure.
4. We need to finally have a financial plan to sustain infrastructure investments and ongoing operations.
5. State of Illinois and the economy will have the biggest impact on the City in the coming 2-3 years.

## Session III. Environmental Scanning, Internal and External S.W.O.T Analysis

The next step of the strategic planning process involved reviewing and accounting for the internal and external factors present in the environment that can potentially influence the success of the City, both negatively and positively. Given the exploratory statements and challenges raised in the Surrender or Lead exercise, participants were then asked to identify what constraints and practical difficulties are likely to be encountered that will make it challenging to achieve the desired future state. These elements included both internal and external factors, conditions, trends, regulations, agencies, resources, etc. Furthermore, participants were asked to identify the organization's **strengths (S)** and **weaknesses (W)**. In what areas does the City regularly excel, and in what areas are there difficulties or shortcomings in terms of expertise, resources, training, etc.? What **opportunities (O)** are on the horizon that can be used to the City's advantage? Conversely, what trends or **threats (T)** lie ahead that would be obstacles or hindrances?

### S.W.O.T. EXERCISE (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

#### INTERNAL

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Location</li> <li>◆ Proximity to high quality assets: the City, O'Hare airport, highway network, etc.</li> <li>◆ Home values</li> <li>◆ Safety of the community</li> <li>◆ Transparent government</li> <li>◆ Schools</li> <li>◆ Financial stability</li> <li>◆ Citizen involvement</li> <li>◆ Reputation as a city</li> <li>◆ Quality staff/professionals</li> <li>◆ Vibrant uptown area</li> <li>◆ Positive leadership approaches and relationships</li> <li>◆ Life-long residents</li> <li>◆ Park Ridge as a destination</li> <li>◆ Restaurant profile</li> <li>◆ Access to public transportation</li> <li>◆ Faith community/churches</li> <li>◆ Private schools</li> <li>◆ Railroad</li> <li>◆ Strong residential base</li> <li>◆ Adjacent to forest preserves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Landlocked/built-out</li> <li>◆ Home values – barriers to entry</li> <li>◆ Small commercial base</li> <li>◆ Zoning ordinance – vague/staid</li> <li>◆ Reputation</li> <li>◆ Perception of parking</li> <li>◆ Facilities</li> <li>◆ Environment sustainability</li> <li>◆ Airport noise and pollution</li> <li>◆ Real estate options for the elderly population</li> <li>◆ South Park parking</li> <li>◆ Railroad division</li> <li>◆ Limited pedestrian crossings</li> <li>◆ Traffic congestion</li> </ul>

## EXTERNAL

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Improving financial position</li><li>◆ Vacant commercial properties</li><li>◆ Enhanced communication with community</li><li>◆ Clarified priorities</li><li>◆ Social media</li><li>◆ Succession planning</li><li>◆ Technology needs</li><li>◆ Community demographics</li><li>◆ Changing development opportunities</li><li>◆ Exploring user fees and revenue distribution</li><li>◆ Facilities</li><li>◆ Environment sustainability</li><li>◆ Strong credit rating</li><li>◆ Bond rating</li><li>◆ Pension reform</li><li>◆ Real estate options for the elderly population</li><li>◆ Technology options/use for customers</li><li>◆ South Park parking</li><li>◆ Promoting/marketing Park Ridge</li><li>◆ Open-minded to progressive opportunities</li><li>◆ Communication and community awareness</li><li>◆ Community policing strategies</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Springfield – mandates or other government policies: local, county, state, federal</li><li>◆ Climate change</li><li>◆ Aging infrastructure</li><li>◆ Small commercial base</li><li>◆ Social media</li><li>◆ Next recession</li><li>◆ Outdated zoning ordinances</li><li>◆ Community demographics</li><li>◆ Parking</li><li>◆ Salary compression/salary market</li><li>◆ Perception of the tone at the top</li><li>◆ Employee changes, retirement attrition, turnover</li><li>◆ Pension reform</li><li>◆ Stabilization of the tax levy</li><li>◆ O’Hare’s new runway</li><li>◆ Overall community health</li><li>◆ Large employers (i.e., concentration risks)</li><li>◆ Terrorism/mass violence</li><li>◆ Cyber security/cyber attacks</li></ul>

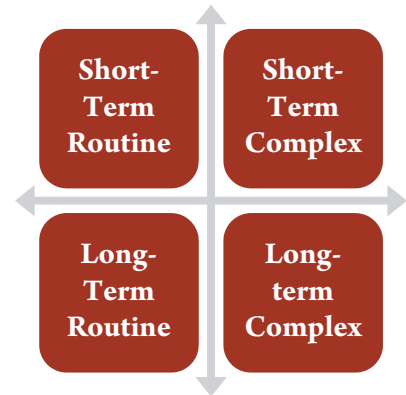
## Session V. Nominal Group Goal Identification

With the preceding sessions as a sound foundation for goal-setting, the final session was a healthy group discussion of goals and/or action items needed to achieve the future visions as expressed by the group. To begin the process, participants returned to the groups they had worked with during the previous exercise. Each member was allotted time to highlight the three or four most important policy and program goals that he or she thinks the City should accomplish in the next one to five years. The groups then shared their short- and long-term goals with the larger group. Goals that participants developed could be highly specific or general.

**Classification.** At the end of the open discussion, participants were asked to classify each goal according to a matrix model of time and complexity (Figure 2). Agreed upon criteria were used to classify a goal as short- or long-term and as complex or routine. The purpose of the exercise is to group goals of roughly the same type together so when prioritization occurs, the participants can avoid the problem of comparing “apples to oranges.”

The agreed upon criteria used for classifying goals as either short- or long-term and routine or complex involved the following: **Short-term goals** were those goals that could or should be completed or substantially underway in the next one to three years. **Long-term goals** were those goals that could or should be completed or substantially underway within a three to eight year timeframe. **Routine goals**, although not necessarily simple or easy, were goals that could be accomplished with a strong commitment by the City, and could likely be accomplished within present budget streams, some modest outside assistance, or with minor task or staff reallocations. **Complex goals** were goals that required extraordinary resources, specialists, funding, or the agreement of outside organizations or agencies, or, a private partner/contractor.

**Figure 2. Goal Time & Complexity Matrix**



### Open Group Discussion and Consolidation of Goals

This final phase of the discussion served as the forum for Council and staff members to discuss, evaluate, and debate the ideas and goals offered by each participant in the previous sessions. Participants were asked to give their opinions, evaluations and judgments of the worthiness and value of different policy objectives.

### Prioritization of Goals

After the workshop, each Council member was asked to delineate, via an online ranking exercise, which goals should be given the highest priority. The Council was provided an online ranking tool where point values were assigned to each goal in each quadrant of the time and complexity matrix by individuals. The calculation of goal prioritization consisted of “forced ranking” where the ranking of each identified goal is averaged by the rankings given by all participants. For example, if a goal were given the scores of 2, 5, 6, 6, 1, 2 and 3, the average total would be 3.57. **The lower the score, the higher the priority.** Again, the average totals were based on the ratings provided.

The following illustration presents the Council’s **top three goals**, within each quadrant, as they emerged from the consensus ranking exercise (Figure 3). The top three goals are offered here as a *process “snap shot”* of the most important strategic goals or issues areas for staff to address in the months and years ahead. In total, the group developed four short-term routine goals, eight short-term complex goals, four long-term routine goals and eight long-term complex goals.

*Figure 3. Top Three Goals within Each Quadrant of the Time and Complexity Matrix*

Short-Term Routine Goals

- Continue to improve external customer service to residents
- Develop an internship program to promote careers in local government while adding organizational capacity
- Explore inclusion of recreational cannabis on the next election/referendum ballot

Short-Term Complex Goals

- Redevelop the City’s website to make it more accessible and user-friendly
- Continue to address Organizational Development and Workforce Planning needs
- Examine and reorganize departments to align with needs of the community, expected service levels and strategic goals

Long-term Routine Goals

- Continue to emphasize the City’s commitment to financial stability and fiscal management to address goals, priorities and needs
- Develop an overall communication strategy for both external and internal stakeholders
- Continue to build institutional knowledge, staff depth, skills and strategy on how to “evolve” the organization for the future

Long-Term Complex Goals\*

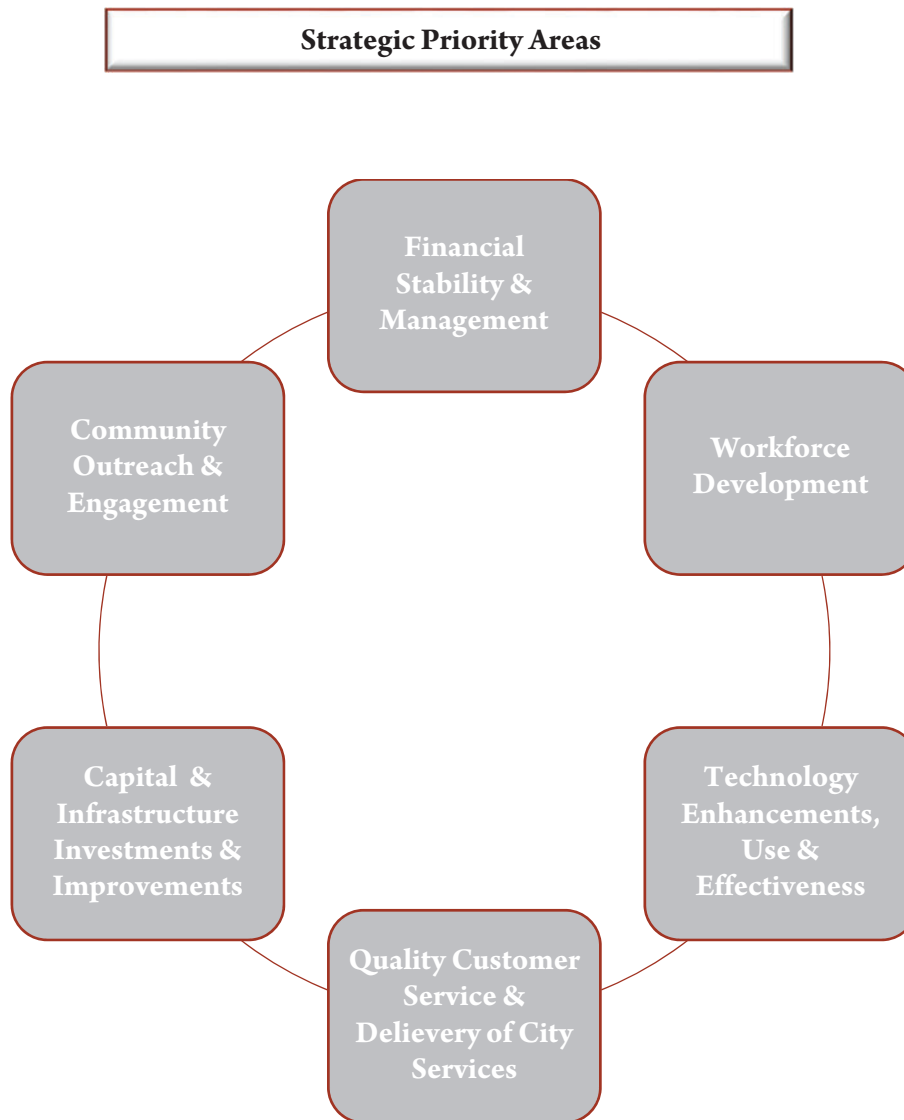
- Continue to manage our stormwater utility master plan and regularly communicate projects, impacts, outcomes and scheduling
- Continue to improve the technological infrastructure at City Hall and in Departments; enhance technology in all units
- Highlight/communicate when the installation phase/construction begin on portions of our long-term/ adopted infrastructure plan
- Continue to update the City’s comprehensive plan/overall land use plan

**\*Note: Two goals in the long-term complex category received tied scores for being ranked third.**

As part of the overall planning process, the strategic planning team developed a total of 24 goals. The above summarizes only the top 3 priorities as arranged in the time and complexity matrix. For a full review and appreciation of *all* the strategic goals developed, discussed and ranked, please see [Appendix A](#).

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS

Ultimately, six key strategic priority areas were identified as an outcome of the process highlighting activities and initiatives that the City should focus on in both the short- and long-term. The strategic priority areas identified during the workshop [in no particular order] are illustrated below.



As the City knows from prior experience, the value of the strategic planning process will be best realized when it is used as an active working guide to both City's leadership team and staff. The process report here is designed to capture the content of the discussions and to assist the City in developing action plans in a follow-up session for appropriate committees, departments and elected officers.

The exchange of ideas and dialogue during the discussion sessions and the strategic planning workshop demonstrates that the City remains committed to progressive leadership. The Council and management team are looking ahead and committed to strategic thinking and planning. One noted observer who is often recognized by the project team for his views on organizational change summarizes the challenges of organizational progress this way:

***"The art of progress is to preserve order amid change,  
and change amid order..." -A.N. Whitehead***

We wish you well with the ambitious year that lies ahead.

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature on the left is for Greg Kuhn, and the second signature on the right is for Jeanna Ballard. Both signatures are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Greg Kuhn and Jeanna Ballard, Session Facilitators

# APPENDIX A:

## CITY OF PARK RIDGE PRIORITIZED STRATEGIC GOALS



# APPENDIX A: Prioritized Strategic Short- and Long-term Strategic Goals

## Short-Term Routine Goal Prioritized Rankings

SHORT-TERM ROUTINE GOALS	GROUP AVERAGE
Continue to improve external customer service to residents	1.6
Develop an internship program to promote careers in local government while adding organizational capacity	2.8
Explore inclusion of recreational cannabis on the next election/referendum ballot	2.8
Revisit the City's recent compensation study data related to all positions including aldermanic compensation, ensure compensation philosophy remains competitive and market appropriate	2.9

## Short-Term Complex Goal Prioritized Rankings

SHORT-TERM COMPLEX	GROUP AVERAGE
Redevelop the City's website to make it more accessible and user-friendly	2.9
Continue to address Organizational Development and Workforce Planning Needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct/develop succession planning analysis/program in departments</li> <li>• Undertake employee retention and motivation enhancements to reduce employee turnover</li> <li>• Build a strong community service culture dedicated, public trust, professionalism for all public safety (police &amp; fire) services</li> </ul>	3.6
Examine and reorganize departments to align with needs of the community, expected service levels and strategic goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refine current department structures to respond to changing dynamics and enhancements to organizational processes and priorities</li> <li>• Assess staffing profile in the police and fire departments to match staffing to mitigate shift shortfalls, reduce overtime and build the bench</li> </ul>	3.9
Work to enhance mobility improvements throughout the community; explore options for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking, especially commercial, Metra, downtown</li> <li>• Biking/walking</li> <li>• Commuting</li> </ul>	4.0
Formulate and adopt a green/sustainability plan/provide services in an environmentally friendly way according to our plans and approaches	4.9
Retain planning consultant to begin to update, revise the zoning code/ordinance	5.3
Establish and specify a city-wide facility maintenance, repair, replacement program and begin repairs based on priority needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review facility enhancements, improve work environment &amp; space, including HVAC, effectiveness, and service delivery efficiency</li> </ul>	5.5
Implement an automated water meter reading and improved tech-based water loss system	6.0

# Long-Term Routine Goal Prioritized Rankings

LONG-TERM ROUTINE	GROUP AVERAGE
<p>Continue to emphasize the City’s commitment to financial stability and fiscal management to address goals, priorities and needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce TIF debt</li> <li>• Prepare for any adverse impacts or changes due to State of Illinois factors</li> <li>• Continue to strengthen our financial position</li> <li>• Continue to improve bond/credit rating</li> <li>• Forecast funding needs of the City’s internal service funds that have been depleted since 2008</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1.5</b></p>
<p>Develop an overall communication strategy for both external and internal stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-examine resident newsletters and their distribution cycle to provide more timely material</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2.4</b></p>
<p>Continue to build institutional knowledge, staff depth, skills and strategy on how to “evolve” the organization for the future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be willing to revise and flex the organization and processes to best serve the community</li> <li>• Solidify a collaborative council - staff relationship</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2.9</b></p>
<p>Continue to improve/resurface/reconstruct alleys in town and improve gravel alleys; develop a long-term/comprehensive approach to alley improvements</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3.3</b></p>

# Long-Term Complex Goal Prioritized Rankings

LONG-TERM COMPLEX	GROUP AVERAGE
<p>Continue to manage our stormwater utility master plan and regularly communicate projects, impacts, outcomes and scheduling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of flood projects resulting from master planning underway</li> <li>• Explore/discuss/determine funding options (SSA’s, utility model, financing, etc.) for stormwater projects</li> </ul>	<p><b>2.4</b></p>
<p>Continue to improve the technological infrastructure at City Hall and in Departments; enhance technology in all units:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore technology for financial reporting, tracking, building, and permitting functions</li> <li>• Implement and expand use of online technology for transactions, meter reads, payables, receivables, etc.</li> <li>• Move toward a digital office</li> <li>• Replace planning and development software that integrates with finance</li> <li>• Implement applicant tracking software in HR</li> <li>• Take steps to move to an entire digital flow in community development, planning, and inspections including digital storage and retention</li> <li>• Move to a paperless HR recordkeeping system from recruitment to day-to-day, benefits, performance evaluation</li> </ul>	<p><b>3.5</b></p>
<p>Highlight/communicate when the installation phase/construction begin on portions of our long-term/adopted infrastructure plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain expanded sewer lining program and lengthen service life of sewer facilities</li> </ul>	<p><b>3.9</b></p>
<p>Continue to update the City’s comprehensive plan/overall land use plan</p>	<p><b>3.9</b></p>
<p>Commit to exploring and then confirming our overall economic development strategy and policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embrace progressive opportunities while maintain small town feel and historic charm</li> <li>• Review a business recruitment &amp; retention program as part of our broader economic development strategy</li> <li>• Strengthen our identity, uniqueness, branding, and gateways</li> <li>• Examine the Community Preservation and Development Department’s role, focus and expansion</li> </ul>	<p><b>4.1</b></p>

LONG-TERM COMPLEX	GROUP AVERAGE
Continued evaluation of our Uptown area while also making progress improvements in other commercial outdoors with focus on South Park, Higgins Corridor and Busse area	4.8
Explore changing/restructuring the City Clerk's position	6.5
Complete the remaining police department space improvement plan	7.0