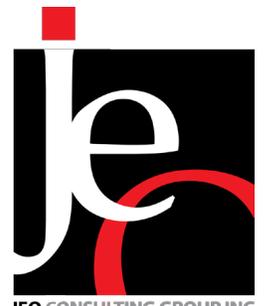


Fort Calhoun Strategic Plan



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JEO CONSULTING GROUP INC

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1 INTRODUCTION

As a comprehensive plan prepares a community for future growth and development; a community's strategic plan helps identify and prioritize the specific projects that will assist the city to reach its ultimate destination. These projects do not happen overnight, nor are they accomplished by one person. Careful planning and consideration should be given to each. The city should rely on staff, appointed officials, elected officials, community groups, and other organizations to help achieve these identified projects planned for the benefit of the entire community. The projects may include those necessary to maintain status quo, while others will be necessary or desired for continued community growth. The Fort Calhoun Strategic Plan will identify the top five (5) goals of the community and list individual concerns, objectives, actions, timelines, responsible groups/agencies, potential resources, and measurable outputs for each goal. The intent of the projects or goals is to enhance the high quality of life for the residents of Fort Calhoun and its economic vitality.

A high quality of life, in general, tops the list of attributes a community must strive for in an effort to both survive and prosper. The availability of quality housing, education, parks facilities, recreation programs, and commerce must be in place to keep current residents from relocating and to entice new families into the community.

For existing residents of Fort Calhoun, the decision to stay or move is largely based on the satisfaction and connection they have with the community. While residents may deliberate leaving the city for educational or economic reasons, other factors do play a role in helping them to decide. If another community (or region) offers the quality of life they desire, then residents may show an interest in making plans to relocate. However, community satisfaction and attachment could overrule that decision to relocate.

Studies show that existing residents are less apt to move from their place of residence if they feel a sense of satisfaction or connection with that community. That's because people support what they help create. As feelings of connection grow between person and place, sentiments associated with that place increase as well. For this reason, public engagement in shaping the community's future is crucial and transformative because it empowers residents to define what's important to their community and enables decision-makers to formulate strategies and target limited local resources (both human and financial) to address these community priorities. This sense of community ownership (connection and attachment) can play an impactful role in retaining existing residents and improve the city's local economic standing.

Studies have also shown a strong link between quality of life amenities and economic development. In today's competitive economic development climate, businesses and industries make relocation and expansion decisions partly on quality of life amenities that can be offered to their employees. Most business prospects will not even consider an area that does not offer modern quality of life amenities. Employee recruitment and retention

all depend on how happy workers are where they live and work. Workforce talent (both individuals and families) prefer livable communities with easy access to large open parks, walking paths, hike-and-bike trails, recreational opportunities, performing and visual arts centers, museums, playgrounds, gardens and similar facilities where they can spend their leisure time.

Although quality of life amenities are costly to own, operate, and maintain, the payoff in terms of community pride and marketing can be of almost immeasurable value. They reveal the values and underpinnings of the local community and serve as a measure of civic health and vitality. New residents are attracted to communities that exude a strong feeling of hope and optimism about the future. They want some assurance that the community is a quality place to live, work, recreate, and invest.

Purpose:

It is the purpose of this plan to help identify projects or goals that will serve as a catalyst for attracting new residents by enhancing the quality of life available to them, promote regional tourism, and eventually stimulate the types of development that will enhance the economic vitality of Fort Calhoun. Thus, this strategic plan is to align the city's priorities and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with the goals of the community to foster sustainable growth, economic development and amenities for a high quality of life.

Planning Process:

In a preliminary met to prepare for the strategic planning workshop, the Mayor, city staff and JEO staff meet to discuss the process, the generalized city goals and conduct a SWOT analysis.

The general goals identified for Fort Calhoun are:

- Maintain the high quality of life the citizens of Fort Calhoun enjoy.
- Develop opportunities for modest community growth.
- Make Fort Calhoun the desired choice for new residents.
- Promote economic development of tourism.
- Seek funding sources to reduce local property tax burden while providing additional city services.

A SWOT analysis identifies the community's perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats to develop a preliminary list of strategic issues. The SWOT analysis is characterized in these terms:

- Strengths (Positive, Internal): Positive attributes of the city particularly in comparison to competitors in the region.
- Weaknesses (Negative, Internal): Local issues or characteristics that limit the city's current or future growth opportunities.
- Opportunities (Positive, External): External factors that offer the city potential for remedying its weaknesses.
- Threats (Negative, External): Potential that threatens the city's future and attractiveness to new residents or businesses.



Planning Process Continued:

The Strengths of the community identified included:

- Strong school system with updated facilities
- Safe community
- Emergency services and facilities
- Proximity to Omaha and Blair
- Popular restaurants
- Fort Atkinson State Park
- Cargill (Major Employer, North off of HWY 75)
- OPPD Nuclear Power Plant (Major Employer, North off of HWY 75)
- Niche businesses (meat shop, wine bar, granola maker, etc...)
- Existing Festivals and Events
- Quality youth sports program

The Weaknesses of the community identified included:

- Lack of businesses
- Limited buildable lots for new businesses
- Limited activities for teens
- Must travel to Omaha or Blair to see movie (Entertainment)
- Housing prices are high compared to similar homes in Omaha
- Lack of available land for new housing subdivisions
- No modern homes to downsize (retirement), and
- Shortage of active park space (basketball, soccer, ball fields).

The Opportunities of the community identified included:

- Coordinated tourism promotions
- Growth in residential housing units
- New businesses and jobs
- Day trips from Omaha
- High traffic volume coming through town on HWY 75
- New High School facility, and
- Visitors coming to Fort Atkinson.

The Threats of the community identified included:

- Non-willing land owners to develop property
- OPPD's Fort Calhoun Nuclear Power Plant (man-made disaster or closure)
- Limestone mine expansion north of town removing additional developable land
- Rural acreages locking in the boundaries
- City fiscal constraints, and
- Federal and state regulations.

On April 13, 2015 members of the Fort Calhoun City Council, city staff, community leaders, and concerned members of the community held a strategic planning workshop to discuss and prioritize various strategic issues in and around Fort Calhoun. A total of 22 stakeholders participated in the workshop. JEO Consulting Group, Inc. facilitated the workshop which followed an agenda geared to inform, educate and build consensus of the group. The group reviewed the intent of the meeting, summarized the strategic issues identified with city staff and discussed additional potential issues. The goal of the strategic planning workshop was to establish consensus on civic betterment initiatives so the city could formulate strategies

and target local resources (both human and financial) to accomplish the goals. It was agreed that a formal plan of action is needed to keep Fort Calhoun moving forward and to provide efficiency in its resources, regardless of personnel changes. This plan will be reviewed and referenced for ongoing consistency in future planning initiatives.

Based on the SWOT analysis, 12 strategic categories were presented at the public workshop and the stakeholders agreed with their importance. These issues or projects were discussed in detail to identify all associated issues, concerns, opportunities and constraints. The 12 strategic categories were:

- Tourism Development
- Economic Development
- Housing Development
- Downtown
- Parks and Recreation
- Trail Development
- Street Improvements
- City Facilities
- Youth Activities
- Water System Improvements
- Sidewalks
- Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure

| | Helpful | Harmful |
|----------|---|---|
| Internal | <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School system • Safe community • Emergency services and facilities • Proximity to Omaha and Blair • Popular Restaurants • Fort Atkinson • OPPD Nuclear Power Plant • Niche Businesses • Christmas in Fort Calhoun • Quality Youth Sports | <p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of businesses • No buildable lots for new businesses • Limited children's activities • Must travel to Omaha or Blair to see movie • Housing prices are high • Lack of available land for new housing subdivisions • No modern homes to downsize (retirement), • Lack of active park space (basketball, soccer, ball fields). |
| External | <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinated tourism promotions • Growth in residential housing units • New businesses and jobs • Day trips from Omaha • High traffic volume coming through town • New High School facility, and • Visitors coming to Fort Atkinson. | <p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of land for businesses or housing • OPPD's Fort Calhoun Nuclear Power Plant • Limestone Mine expansion north of town • Rural acreages locking in the boundaries • City fiscal constraints, and • Federal and state regulations. |

The stakeholders were then asked to consider each of the 12 categories and identify their top priorities through a voting exercise. Participants could place more than one vote on a particular project but were allowed only a total of five votes. Based upon the voting, the top categories` were tallied and selected for more detailed discussion. What follows is a more in depth analysis of these five categories.

Based upon the Strategic Issues and Priority Setting Exercise, the Fort Calhoun Strategic Planning Group developed the following Strategic Plan to strengthen the Fort Calhoun community and improve the quality of life for the citizens of the city. This Plan will empower Fort Calhoun residents and businesses to look towards the future with confidence and resolve and boldly commit to undertaking the identified issues.



Planning Process Continued:

Note from the Authors:

It was noted that during the strategic planning session the stakeholders that were present did not place much emphasis on utilities and infrastructure (water, sewer, streets, etc.). It is understood by the authors of this plan that quality infrastructure is needed to support many of the initiatives within this document. The lack of emphasis during the session may be attributed to the distribution of the attendees and their various backgrounds that are not directly related to city functions. The authors of this plan do have intimate knowledge of the infrastructure systems of the city. The city is currently undertaking a major asphalt overlay project to improve the street conditions and has studied alternatives to improve the reliability and fire flow capacities of the water system. It is recommended that a second water connection continue to be pursued as well as continue to plan for regular street maintenance and another overlay project in approximately 5 years. In addition, the sanitary sewer system should be continually evaluated utilizing closed circuit TV inspections and repairs should be made as needed. These projects should be assumed to be an underlying requirement to continue to support the other recommendations of this plan. Specific CIP projects related to these have been added to each major category as well as to the timeline in the rear of this document.

The final step in the prioritization process was to divide the categories into short-term (defined as 1-3 years), mid-term (defined as 4-6 years), long-term (defined as 7-10+ years) and ongoing project development timeframes. The timeframe for priority projects include:

Short-Term

- Tourism Development
- Housing Development
- Downtown
- City Facilities
- Youth Activities

Mid-Term

- Parks and Recreation
- Trails Development

Long-Term

- Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure
- Water System Improvements
- Sidewalks

Ongoing

- Economic Development
- Street Improvements
- Water System Improvements
- Sidewalks

This Strategic Plan has identified five (5) priority goals of the City of Fort Calhoun and lists individual concerns/needs, objectives, actions, timelines, responsible groups/agencies, potential resources, and measurable outputs for each goal. The five (5) priority goals are: 1. Tourism, 2. Economic Development, 3. Housing, 4. Downtown Business District, 5. Recreation. Although the previous goals are numbered, it is realized that such goals may take on different forms, be consolidated with other goals/projects or be re-prioritized based upon unforeseen issues or opportunities. In such cases, this strategic plan shall be re-examined and adopted to provide proper guidance. At a minimum the city should conduct an annual review of the adopted Fort Calhoun Strategic Plan to assure all goals, objectives and actions are kept current.

In addition to the top prioritized projects/goals listed in the Strategic Plan below, the stakeholder group also identified and discussed five other categories, which should be considered at a later date. They are:

- City Facilities
- Youth Activities
- Water System Improvements
- Sidewalks
- Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure



2 TOURISM

Target to be Addressed:

ENHANCE THE TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CITY

During discussions with the Mayor, city staff, and at the strategic planning session, it became evident that tourism is one of the City’s current greatest strengths as well as its top opportunity. Tourism can positively impact a community by fluxing outside dollars into the City’s local economy that can grow business, generate taxable sales, and help offset the costs of quality of life amenities for the residents of the community. In addition, business growth that meets the demands of the tourism can also provide additional services and jobs for local residents.

Fort Calhoun is uniquely situated in a rural setting with direct access to the Omaha metro along Highway 75 that also provides a steady flow of traffic traveling between Omaha and Blair. It also has a deep and rich history in the area and can illustrate that history at the Washington County Museum and the local Fort Atkinson State Park. Niche businesses as well as established eateries are also a draw for the community.

It is recommended that the city work to better enhance the local tourism opportunities and then capture the benefit that tourism can provide for quality of life betterment. To do this, it is recommended that the city forms a Fort Calhoun Community Association that can work with the City, existing businesses, Fort Atkinson State Park, and existing organizations to better coordinate, advertise, and market events held within the City. This group could create a shared branding message that would tie the tourism goals of Fort Calhoun very closely to the opportunities at Fort Atkinson.

To better capture the benefits that tourism can provide, it is strongly recommended that a sales tax be passed within the City. A sales tax would generate tax dollars from the out of town visitors and allow the city to take on additional quality of life improvements for the residents of the City. It is recommended that consideration be given to using a portion of the sales tax dollars to self-fund additional tourism growth through such items as marketing costs to spread the branded message to the broader market of the City of Omaha and Washington County, creation of a starter grant or loan program for new businesses that are geared towards tourism opportunities, grant programs to support events or the creation of a recurring event such as a concert series, or for quality of life improvements that would have a direct impact on tourism growth such as a camper park or the creation of sports fields that would attract tournaments or additional teams to the city.



With the most recent data available for Fort Calhoun, the seven year period of 2007-2013, the city averaged \$10,285,111 in net taxable sales. As depicted in the table below, the net taxable sales have increased substantially over the past three years.

| Net Taxable Sales | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Fort Calhoun, NE | |
| 2007-2013 | |
| 2007 | \$ 9,163,583 |
| 2008 | \$ 6,870,766 |
| 2009 | \$ 7,722,106 |
| 2010 | \$ 8,586,565 |
| 2011 | \$ 12,744,368 |
| 2012 | \$ 14,338,257 |
| 2013 | \$ 12,570,129 |
| Average | \$ 10,570,129 |

Utilizing a conservative estimate of the seven year average, a voter passed local option sales tax could reasonably expect to generate \$51,500 to \$154,500 in sales tax proceeds per year, depending on the approved sales tax rate of 0.5% to 1.5% respectively. If these proceeds were used to repay a bond issue (assuming 4% for 15 years), the city could borrow \$570,000 to \$1,710,000 based upon the sales tax revenue.

Topics Identified During the Strategic Planning Session

- Numerous attractions and events, but no coordination or unified marketing
- Fort Atkinson
 - 20,000 visitors a year, 90% of students are from out of town
 - Living History event is the 1st week of the month -6 Living Events/Year
 - No coordination with other events in town
- Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge is a local attraction
- Too Far North is a niche business that attracts visitors
- Restaurants

- Washington County Museum
- School Activity
- Ball Fields
- Gun Shows – can draw up to 1,000 persons week
- Fish Fry – during Lent attract approximately 1,400 people per week
- Tractor Show
- Christmas in Calhoun
- Poker Runs
- Community has become a bicycle turn around point for cyclists riding from Omaha
- Storm the Fort Warrior Dash (Run/Walk) has approximately 80 to 90 participants
- Pottery Tour – 4 stops
 - Based out of Omaha North and lasts two days
 - Approximately 1,000 visitors/year participate
 - Not independently operated out of Fort Calhoun
- New wayfinding signs have been added for Fort Atkinson
- Digital Signs
- Super Bee Orchard
- No public camping sites



Objective: #1-1

Consider the need to create a Fort Calhoun Community Association

Method of Achieving Objective:

- Hold a town hall meeting to discuss the need to create the Fort Calhoun Community Association.
- Educate stakeholders on the benefits to coordinating of activities and events.
- Explore the future role of the Association including creation of a community calendar.
- Identify a broad-based group of stakeholders that may be willing to serve on the Association including officials from Fort Atkinson, existing businesses, and existing organizations within the City.
- Consider the long-term benefits of incorporating the Association as a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization.
- Discuss the annual cost and administrative requirements of maintaining the non-profit status.
- Meet with officials from the Nebraska Community Foundation to discuss becoming an affiliated member of the statewide organization.
- If appropriate, seek professional assistance in preparing and submitting the necessary paperwork to incorporate the Association as a non-profit organization.

Timeline: Ongoing

Objective: #1-2

Implement the intent of Fort Calhoun Community Association of coordinating community activities

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Appoint a Board of Directors to establish and oversee the Association's priorities and policies for allocating resources (human and financial) that support local initiatives.
- Establish the Association's areas of interest, types of support or sponsorship, strategies for soliciting donations, and general funding priorities.
- Review local planning documents (Fort Calhoun Strategic Plan, Comprehensive Development Plan, and other community plans) to identify civic betterment projects and funding needs.

- Establish priorities and annual funding-raising goals.
- Investigate outside resources to help leverage local contributions.
- Develop a list of community events. Consider the likelihood/feasibility of each event including combination of small events.
- Assist with providing the resources (human and financial) necessary to support community projects and events.
- Encourage local businesses to develop special events to be a primary tourism draw or to complement existing community events.
- Nominate a Committee Chairperson to facilitate scheduling, planning, advertising, and managing the calendar of events.
- Develop a community calendar to coordinate the much-enjoyed, well-attended community events.
- Foster cooperation with travel and tourism partners within the greater Omaha area to avoid scheduling conflicts with, or capitalize on, other area/regional events
- Develop weekly/monthly “Visit Fort Calhoun” marketing materials for print and other media distribution to target tourists.
- Enhance the community website with highlights of local attractions and a calendar of events.

Timeline: Ongoing

Objective:#1-3

Implement a community branding plan for Fort Calhoun

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Engage key stakeholders in the discussion of a shared brand identity including a logo, message, and vision. Key stakeholders should include the City, Fort Atkinson State Park, existing businesses, existing community organizations, and the school.
- Survey key stakeholders to determine existing attitudes, perceptions, opportunities and challenges regarding the city’s image.



- Provide opportunities for public input. These opportunities may include: one-on-one meetings and focus groups, a vision survey to be completed by civic and business leaders, a community survey to be available to local stakeholders, and a perception study that will be conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of the brand perceptions among important targeted audiences inside and outside of Fort Calhoun.
- Hold an area-wide competition to design the elements that best represent the branding message for the Fort Calhoun.
- Select the community branding message that best represents a unified message that reflects the community's identity and past experiences that distinguishes it from other communities in the area.
- Use community branding (message/logo) in all printed advertising, web site design, media placement, public relations, and civic events.

Timeline: 2016

Objective: #1-4

Implement a community branding plan for Fort Calhoun

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Engage key stakeholders in the passage of a local option sales tax in order to fund the Economic Development Goal.
- Identify a key leader within the community willing to take on the task of leading a campaign for success of a ballot initiative.
- Establish an ad-hoc committee to review and provide recommendations on the intended uses of the sales tax. It is recommended that a portion be utilized to self-fund the growth of tourism as well as a portion be utilized for community betterment improvements and additions within the City. Consider the use of the Association for the distribution of tourism dollars.
- Work with an attorney on the preparation of the final language of the initiative.
- Place the initiative on the ballot at a general or primary election.
- Let the committee conduct campaigning for the ballot initiative.

Timeline: 2016

Responsible Group/Agency

Fort Calhoun residents, Fort Calhoun City Council, Fort Calhoun Community Association, local organizations and businesses, Nebraska Game and Parks, Washington County Museum Board, Gateway Economic Development Group, Omaha Conventions and Visitor's Bureau, and Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

Potential Resources

Some funding sources are limited governmental entities, 501 (c) 3 non-profits or private organizations. Potential funding sources include: local option sales tax, charitable donations, life insurance proceeds, bequests, endowments, gift annuities, personal investment instruments, private foundations, tourism marketing grants, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Tourism Development Initiative, and Community Development Assistance Act.

Measurable Outputs

Fort Calhoun's efforts to capitalize on existing local tourism attractions through event coordination can be measured by the number of visitors to the community annually and more importantly the amount of economic activity associated with the coordinated events including increased net taxable sales. The use of visitor surveys from the Omaha Convention & Visitors Bureau can provide meaningful feedback and assist in measuring the effectiveness of the community promotion. Locally, the community website promoting local attractions and the calendar of community events can monitor the number of unique site visits.

Enhancement of the tourism opportunities is a short-term goal for the city.

CIP Projects Associated with this goal:

- Park-313 Construct RV Campground at Municipal Complex
- Park-318 Hiking and Biking Trail to Boyer Chute National Refuge
- Park-307 Construct Soccer Fields at Municipal Complex
- Park-316 Additional Baseball Fields

Additional CIP Projects that should be considered:

- Trail connectivity from Downtown to Fort Calhoun Trail



3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Target to be Addressed:

PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CITY OF FORT CALHOUN

Community and government leaders across the country have, for the past 15 to 20 years come to the realization that they not only can, but must initiate programs to enhance their local economies. Governments have sometimes provided enormous subsidies to try to entice large businesses to build manufacturing plants within their communities; while others have started small loan funds to encourage “micro-enterprise” businesses or created “incubators” that provide office space and services to a variety of small businesses. Results of these rural economic development efforts have been decidedly mixed.

“Smokestack chasing” has lost favor with many rural economic development practitioners because of the unintended impact it has had on community systems and local fiscal restraints. In these difficult environments, Fort Calhoun must have a clearly focused and structured economic development strategy that is consistent with the vision statement and values contained within the city’s Comprehensive Plan. This guide is an important first step in attaining the city’s long-term commitment of job creation, increased tourist traffic within the city, filling vacant store fronts, growing sales tax revenues, and the promotion of the city as an attractive place to visit, live, work, and invest.

Most often, successful organizations are achieving their goals as a result of having community support for a well-conceived “plan of action” which serves as a blueprint for an economic development program. An economic development plan for the city could serve as a powerful, yet focused guide for the community in formulating intervention strategies that will allow the city to achieve economic development successes. Likewise, the Plan must emphasize the importance of preserving the high quality of life enjoyed by local residents, and supports community values such as environmental preservation, small town atmosphere, recreational facilities, and human resources.

It is recommended to target businesses and opportunities that will support the tourism opportunities of the city or that would benefit from the high traffic counts along Highway 75. Such businesses could include additional retail shops, eateries, niche wine/beer/whiskey dispensaries, or destination and history based businesses to name a few. The city must decide what incentives, if any, could be made available to new or relocating businesses. Incentives could include the use of an incubator grant/loan program or the implementation of tax increment financing (TIF) strategies.

Topics Identified During the Strategic Planning Session

- Currently there are no local incentives
- Lack of available and developable land
- Currently have an existing electrical substation with additional capacity
- Existing city utilities are available
- No control of developable sites by the city or Gateway Development Group
- Housing affordability is an issue
- Need to curb “Brain Drain”
- How to enhance entrepreneurial development
- Currently viewed as a niche community
- Need both grocery and a pharmacy
- No video rental store or kiosk in town
- Need local trade workers
- In Nebraska, there are favorable fees to promote food processing
- No catering in town
- A new coffee shop is coming to town.

Objective: #2-1

Establish an Economic Development Culture within the City

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Define the economic development vision for the City of Fort Calhoun with Gateway Development Corporation. Consider key industries for which the city desires to market to the community. It is recommended that the city develop a vision around recruiting and incentivizing businesses that will support and grow the tourism opportunities for the city including destination type of businesses and retail and service-based businesses.
- Establish clear public policy as it relates to dedicating resources for economic development activities.
- Establish economic development goals, objectives, action steps and timelines.

Estimated Time Frame: 2015



Objective: #2-2

Examine the economic profile of Fort Calhoun and external factors that may influence future economic development efforts

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Establish a broad-based city Economic Development Committee.
- Hold focus group sessions to discuss trends in the city business community (business startups, failures, expansions or relocations).
- Review economic indicators (housing starts, employment, unemployment, per capita income, net taxable sales, and existing business make-up) to establish a baseline.
- Survey the city business community to gather information on products/services, number of employees, future plans, and strengths/barriers to economic development within the City.
- Survey the residents of the city to gather information on pertinent demographics, income, commuting patterns, purchasing characteristics, and community economic development needs.
- Consider the economic composition of Fort Calhoun to determine its susceptibility to business cycles, comparative advantages, potential value-added business prospects, economic clusters, and other factors that will lead to economic sustainability.
- Consider the capacity of existing public infrastructure/utilities to support future economic development efforts.
- Consider the capacity of public safety (fire protection, law enforcement) to support further economic development efforts.
- Analyze the existing housing situation with a Housing Study.
- Review the City's Land Use Plan/Zoning Ordinance to ensure adequate/appropriate space for business expansion/recruitment.
- Inventory available business space within the existing downtown area.
- Consider the opportunities and constraints associated with economic development within the city.
- Consider the opportunities and constraints of a "commuter" population base.
- Consider the opportunities and ways to reduce threats of new economic expansion within the immediate area, especially throughout Washington County and the Omaha metropolitan area.

- Consider the leakages (purchases made in other communities by residents of Fort Calhoun of the local economy).
- Consider the availability of labor in and around the community.
- Consider the availability of “site ready” sites within the city and its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Estimated Time Frame: 2015-2017.

Objective: #2-3

Develop strategies for promoting/fostering economic development in the City.

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Establish a Business Association as a sub-committee of the Economic Development Committee to discuss and implement strategies to promote the success of existing city businesses.
- Encourage the use of a city-wide brand by existing businesses.
- Identify businesses that have enormous growth potential within the local economy including existing and new businesses, value-added businesses, and new opportunities that slow economic leakages.
- Outline intervention strategies that respond to specific barriers and opportunities that face city businesses (job training, housing affordability/availability, labor market skills, new marketing strategies including regional marketing efforts, public infrastructure, and economic development resources).
- Identify new development areas within the community which are suitable for economic development.
- Identify partners for economic development, including financial assistance partners, technical, educational and job training partners, improve communication among business and government leaders, and foster cooperation among industry coalitions, and local residents.
- Review activities associated with city festivals and identify other activities that may enhance the economic impact resulting from community events. Actively promote any of the civic celebrations on a regional basis.
- Review the use of a local option sales tax to be a reinvestment into promoting and marketing existing businesses.

Estimated Time Frame: Ongoing.



Objective: #2-4

Support small business development and entrepreneurial training.

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Survey city residents to determine community economic development leakages, patronage potential and interest in and concerns about starting a small business within the City.
- Tabulate and analyze survey results.
- Consider the feasibility/possibility of addressing the concerns of potential small business concerns.
- Offer ongoing training and education to small business concerns/entrepreneurs about accessing capital, preparing business plans, effectuate niche markets, expanding market share, foster economic clusters, or develop effective marketing strategies.
- Incentivize small business development efforts through strategies such as city funded small business loans/grants, property tax relief, or through a reinvestment of a local option sales tax for business development that matches the economic development vision of the city.

Estimated Time Frame: Ongoing.

Responsible Group/Agency

City Council, Planning Commission, Gateway Development Corporation, city businesses and residents, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce.

Potential Resources

Local Funds, Tax Increment Financing, LB840 Local Option Sales and Use Tax, U.S.D.A. Rural Development Programs, Utility Providers, Nebraska Investment Finance Authority Programs, Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED), Nebraska Department of Roads, U.S. Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration.

Measurable Outputs

Increased economic development in the community can be measured by the number of businesses and new businesses within the community. It also can be measured through the number of jobs and net taxable sales.

Improving the local economy is an ongoing goal of the city.

CIP Projects Associated with this goal:

- PW-121 2nd Water Source Connection
- STR-215 Downtown Parking Lot

Additional CIP Projects that should be considered:

- Infrastructure extensions for developable land
- Development of a TIF district



4 HOUSING

Target to be Addressed:

TO IMPROVE THE HOUSING CHOICE FOR ALL CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS OF FORT CALHOUN.

Throughout the participation process, citizens cited the lack of buildable lots as a major deterrent to housing development. The availability of land and infrastructure for new subdivision development are key factors in reducing the cost barriers for this type of development. The city of Fort Calhoun should review policies and programs to facilitate private subdivision development including potential incentivizing strategies such as the use of tax increment financing (TIF).

New development on the periphery of the community allows flexibility of lot size and home type that infill development may not. New homes provide move-in ready quality with modern amenities that are currently in high demand in Fort Calhoun. New housing allows for not only housing options for future residents, retirees and families, but also allows current Fort Calhoun residents the option to upgrade or downsize, increasing the inventory of available housing. The city should encourage the development of a mix of housing types including traditional single family homes and multi-unit housing options including duplexes, apartments, condominiums, or rowhouses. A healthy mix of housing types can help achieve a housing stock that spans multiple demographics. Consideration should be given to annexation of adjacent developments to provide the city greater control over the future development plans of peripheral area. Additional residential growth benefits the school district, local business and provides more households to reduce the local tax burdens.

Existing empty or developable lots within the city should be inventoried and analyzed to understand if a single family home and what size or another housing type would be desirable for the lot. Through this process the city should work with existing lot owners to prepare a list of lots that can be provided to potential home builders or developers to fit the preferred housing type and size they desire to build.

The community’s existing housing stock is its largest total physical investment. The neighborhood’s quality as a living environment is largely determined by the quality of its housing structures. Since most of the housing supply that will be present by the end of 2025 is already standing today, conservation of the existing housing supply is very important to the vitality of the community. Consequently, Fort Calhoun should consider establishing an owner-occupied, single family housing rehabilitation program and a renter-occupied housing rehabilitation program, if demand warrants. The investment of these resources will provide the financing to significantly improve living conditions of low and moderate-income



homeowners of area; property-owners who could not otherwise afford a conventional loan. Strategically utilizing public/private resources will allow financial assistance to be provided to lower-income homeowners/landlords, at a rate which will accommodate their payback capacity.

To further expand housing choice, Fort Calhoun should revisit and potentially update the City's Housing Study. Previous recommendations and action plans should be analyzed for their applicability to today's environment and if needed the study should be updated to reflect current trends and needs. This study should look to qualify and quantify the future housing needs of the community and help the city and local developers better understand the strengths and weaknesses of its residential housing market. The ultimate goal of the study is to help create a balanced community, one that adequately serves its residents with the greatest needs, and offer new and exciting housing opportunities for existing and potential residents of the city.

Lastly, it is recommended that the city take on a larger role in actively promoting and marketing housing growth to potential developers. The city and School District should partner to produce marketing materials highlighting the strengths of the community and the attractiveness to potential new residents. These materials should be shared with potential developers through active solicitation.

Topics Identified During the Strategic Planning Session

- Existing good and desirable School District
- Limited land available to develop
- Demand for acreages on periphery of the community
- Need affordable housing < \$200K
- Comparison: home in Fort Calhoun for \$290k, but similar home in Omaha for \$140k
- Limited vacant or lots for sale
- No smaller/nice homes to downsize into (Town Homes)
- Some lots are too narrow for desirable modern homes
- Existing property taxes are high
- Code Enforcements is a concern
- Limited city incentives with infrastructure
- Open School District discourages families from locating in the city
- One potential area for new homes is south of baseball fields next to Southern Heights

Objective: #3-1

Provide an environment that encourages and promotes residential development within the study area.

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Revisit the City’s Housing Study and review the recommendations and action plans as to whether they are still applicable to today’s environment.
- Conduct an update to the Housing Study (if needed) to quantify and qualify the present housing needs of Fort Calhoun. Present the results of the Study to the public and private housing developers.
- In conjunction with the school district, prepare marketing materials that highlight the strengths of the community and attractiveness to potential new residents.
- Hold a Housing Developers/Builders Summit to discuss housing demand opportunities and local policies.
- Actively solicit potential housing developers within the region.
- Review the goals and policies contained within the adopted Fort Calhoun Comprehensive Development Plan and Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Regulations that support housing development.
- Develop public/private partnerships, where necessary, to facilitate new housing development.
- Consider all public financing options that may be used to promote, incentivize, and stimulate housing development on infill properties and new developments including the use of tax increment financing (TIF).
- Prepare an inventory of available infill properties and the desired housing types and sizes for each.
- Visit with peripheral landowners and discuss the ability to obtain purchase options on their property that can be shared with potential housing developers.

Estimated Time Frame: 2016



Objective: #3-2

Consider adjacent land and existing subdivisions within the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction to be legally annexed into the corporate limits.

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Identify potential land and existing subdivisions to be legally annexed, as indicated in the Comprehensive Development Plan and other studies.
- Conduct an annexation study on specified sites to determine feasibility, cost-benefit and legality of the annexation.
- Consider the initial and ongoing cost of extending public infrastructure/utilities to these new areas.
- Consider the potential revenues generated of these new areas.
- Determine the cost-effectiveness of annexing these specific sites.
- Hold a public hearing of the Fort Calhoun Planning Commission and City Council to solicit public input on the annexation.
- Approval of annexation ordinance.

Estimated Time Frame: 2016

Objective: #3-3

Provide financial assistance for the rehabilitation of the City's existing housing stock.

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Develop a Housing Rehabilitation Program. Discuss any issues that hindered the efficient and effective implementation of past housing rehabilitation programs.
- Where appropriate, formulate and officially adopt revised guidelines which will govern the fair and effective implementation of Fort Calhoun Housing Rehabilitation Program. Include specific language that addresses the responsibilities of the homeowner during the compliance period.
- Continue to identify local, regional, state and federal resources available for housing rehabilitation activities.
- Consider applying for funding from NE Department of Economic Development to establish the Program.
- Package and secure funding for housing rehabilitation activities.
- Structure resources to accommodate payback potential of low- and moderate-income homeowners.

- Consider Program Guidelines that would govern the implementation of a Fort Calhoun Renter-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program. Review guidelines from previous Programs implemented in other communities. Discuss any issues that may have hindered the implementation of those programs.
- Formulate and officially adopt revised guidelines which will govern the fair and efficacious implementation of Fort Calhoun Renter-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program. Include specific language that addresses the responsibilities of the landlord during the compliance period.
- Secure funding for a renter-occupied housing rehabilitation program.
- Structure assistance to accommodate payback potential/return on investments for landlords that own rental properties in the study area.
- Advertise the Fort Calhoun Housing Rehabilitation Programs, using local media outlets, online resources, direct mailing, and/or social service agencies.
- Conduct a town hall meeting to discuss eligibility requirements for participation in the Program.
- Accept applications from eligible homeowners; verify eligibility.

Estimated Time Frame: 2016-2018

Responsible Group/Agency

City of Fort Calhoun, Fort Calhoun Planning Commission, Fort Calhoun Residents, MAPA, city staff, Property Owners, Media Outlets, Social Service Agencies, Private Developers, Gateway Economic Development Corporation, and local lending institutions.

Potential Resources

Local lending institutions, Tax Increment Financing, private funds, Nebraska Energy office, Nebraska Investment Finance Authority Programs, Nebraska Department of Economic Development Housing Programs, and U.S.D.A. Rural Development Programs.

Measurable Outputs

The existing housing stock can be measured through the number of homes, variety of types of homes, and the net property values of the City. Improving the quantity, quality, and appearance of the city’s housing stock is a **short term and ongoing priority of the community.**

CIP Projects Associated with this goal:

- PW-121 2nd Water Source Connection
- Park-309 Construct Spray Ground

Additional CIP Projects that should be considered:

- Infrastructure extensions as need to support new development.



5 DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT

Target to be Addressed:

IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE AND VIABILITY OF THE DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT.

The image of the downtown area is vital to the community's overall perception of itself and to the region. Image can impact the economic viability either by attracting consumers or pushing consumers out of the area. To attract consumers, the image and environment of the downtown area must be friendly, inviting, and at a comfortable scale.

Fort Calhoun's principal entrance to the community is Highway 75 (a highly traveled north-south corridor). The highway provides a gateway and ushers traffic through various community features on its way through the downtown area. This entrance offers visitor's a first impression of the community; the cardinal attribute that portrays Fort Calhoun as a quality place to visit, work, live, recreate and invest.

It is through the implementation of downtown revitalization efforts that residents can expect to witness economic and civic progress. A thriving downtown builds a positive self-image for the community; creates job opportunities; attracts new industry and strengthens service and retail job markets; symbolizes a community's confidence, vitality and long-term viability; saves tax dollars; stabilizes and improves the area's tax base; protects the investments already made in downtown infrastructure, while attracts new private investments; preserves the community's historic resources; and enables property-owners to maintain commercial buildings and preserve an critical component of the community.

A revitalized streetscape and building façade improvements can be beneficial to Fort Calhoun and enhance the image within the downtown area by creating an environment that will continue to be inviting and friendly to the consumer. Streetscape development and image may not seem like economic development, but these concepts can play a vital role in the economic development process. The implementation of these recommendations will be primarily the responsibility of the building and business owners. However, programs providing low interest loans, for redevelopment, will provide a means to spread the cost of improvements over a period of time. These loans should be repaid with the principal and interest going to assist other building owners. Assisting these projects or improvements area-wide can be supported by benefit districts. Potentially, a Community Redevelopment Authority (CRA) using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) would be beneficial. The use of these funds can be used to aid the enhancement of the businesses and can be set-up to serve more people and more projects.

It is recommended that the city embrace a downtown identity. This begins with identifying a downtown district including the main frontage of Highway 75, but also look to incorporate the side streets. Architectural standards for new development within this district including side streets should be adopted as design guidelines or an overlay zoning district. Additional public parking opportunities on side streets and more pedestrian friendly features should be investigated that would assist with the growth of existing businesses or the attraction of new businesses to the district. The purchase and installation of a community kiosk to improve public communication could also be beneficial.

The downtown area should be marketed to align with the overall economic development vision of the City. It is recommended that the city focus marketing toward additional retail, eateries, wine/bar/whiskey dispensaries, or other destination or history based businesses that would encourage additional tourism to the city and becoming a visitor's destination. Thought should be given to sponsorship of civic events/programs within the downtown area. Such events/programs may include: street dances, cultural celebrations, performing arts, concerts series, soap box derbies, bed-races, street closures for sidewalk sales, etc. These events/programs not only promote economic activity, but they reestablish the downtown as the center of civic life, fostering a sense of celebration and exploration.

Lastly, the city should consider taking a role in the redevelopment of existing empty downtown storefronts either through incentivizing practices for small business as previously discussed or through the purchase of the storefronts as public property that can then be rented at a low cost or offered as a rent to own to startup companies. Additional uses of a public owned storefront could include a co-op style of business that depends upon volunteer labor for operations, incubator spaces that offer office space or multi-tenant space to new startups, or partnerships with the local school system to provide on the job training to current students in the operation of a business.

Topics Identified During the Strategic Planning Session

- Currently have nice niche businesses
- Highway 75 is governed by State, thus limited control by the city
 - Highway 133 Closure until November 2015 will increase traffic through the business district on highway 75
- Traffic study needed along Highway 75
- Vacant buildings need some work
- Not enough parking off street. Alleys are narrow and do not allow for parking.
 - People park at existing businesses
 - Parking within walking distance is needed
- Need a downtown identity – lights, one idea is decorative lighting on buildings
- Limited size of the district – consider expanding on north and south side
- Need a grocery store
- No Business Association – need association communication



- Potential opportunity to draw from Omaha/Blair for local niche retail and restaurants
- Is part of the Lewis & Clark Scenic Byway
- During Lent many people come for the Catholic Church's Fish Fry

Objective: #4-1

Evaluate the physical condition of the Fort Calhoun downtown business district and consider additional streetscape and façade improvements.

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Inspect the physical condition and capacity of the downtown area including, but not limited to, streets, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, grade changes, parking, surface drainage and underground utilities.
- Inspect the existing building facades and provide recommendations of improvements.
- Meet with business-owners to evaluate the future needs and deficiencies of the downtown area.
- Provide opinion of costs to correct physical deficiencies and facades.
- Prepare the Fort Calhoun Downtown Condition Report.
- Develop a Business District Master Plan to incorporate elements of the Fort Calhoun Downtown Condition Report and visioning process to encourage a unified downtown revitalization strategy.
- Hold a meeting with downtown stakeholders to unveil the Business District Master Plan.
- Revise the plan as necessary to ensure that it reflects the needs, thoughts, and desires of residents and downtown business-owners.
- Develop downtown design guidelines to protect the investments and ensure building aesthetics.
- Present the Business District Master Plan to the Fort Calhoun Planning Commission and City Council for their review, approval, and implementation.
- Consider downtown stakeholder's willingness and financial capacity to support implementation of the Business District Master Plan.
- Meet with the city's fiscal agent to determine the bonding capacity of Fort Calhoun.
- Identify local, regional, state and federal resources for downtown improvements

- Prepare plans and specifications for downtown revitalization activities.
- Hold a town hall meeting to solicit public input on the plans and specifications.
- Make necessary revisions and submit the plans and specifications to the Fort Calhoun City Council for final approval.
- Bid improvements and award contract to the lowest, responsible/responsive bidder.
- Implement the proposed improvements.

Estimated Time Frame: 2015-2019.

Objective: #4-2

Develop a vision for downtown revitalization.

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Foster cooperation and communication among downtown business-owners through the establishment of a Business Association as a sub-committee to the city Economic Development Committee.
- Hold a working conference with downtown stakeholders to create a vision for the redevelopment of the downtown area.
- Identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the downtown.
- Survey local residents about spending habits to identify economic leakages within the downtown business district.
- Identify other potential niches that will make the Fort Calhoun downtown a visitor’s destination that will lead to lasting economic activity.
- Identify potential programs/measures to incentivize new businesses, including startups and small businesses, to locate in the downtown district.
- Create a marketing plan for the downtown area with the proposed Fort Calhoun Community Association
- Recruit businesses that are consistent with the Business District Master Plan and the City’s Economic Development Plan.
- Identify potential programs/measures to incentivize downtown property-owners to renovate their building façades.
- Evaluate the need/desire/potential for urban landscaping within the downtown area.
- Consider Wayfinding signs along Highway 75 to educate visitors/travelers about the various goods and services found in Fort Calhoun.



- Contact the Nebraska Department of Roads and Washington County Highway Superintendent to obtain necessary permits to install Wayfinding signage along these routes.
- Invest in aesthetic improvements along Highway 75 and Fort Calhoun’s “featured street” that ushers traffic from the highway to local attractions.
- Sponsor civic events/programs within the downtown area.
- Consider applying for Leadership Community Designation through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

Estimated Time Frame: 2015-2016.

Responsible Group/Agency

Fort Calhoun City Council, Fort Calhoun Planning Commission, Fort Calhoun Downtown Association/business-owners, Fort Calhoun residents, Gateway Economic Development Corporation and Fort Calhoun Community Association.

Potential Resources

General Obligation Bonds, Special Assessment Districts, Local Option Sales Tax, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program-Downtown Revitalization Program, Tax Increment Financing, private monies, Business Improvement District, private foundations, Nebraska Arts Council, Nebraska Energy Office, Nebraska Enhancing, Developing and Growing Entrepreneurs (EDGE), GROW Nebraska™, Recreational Trails Program, Transportation Alternatives Program, Rural Enterprise Assistance Act (REAP), Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Community Development Assistance Act, Federal Home Loan Bank – Joint Opportunities for Building Success, Small Business Administration and USDA Rural Development.

Measurable Outputs

The continued success of existing businesses and the attraction of new business to the downtown area.

Improving the downtown business district is a short-term goal of the city.

CIP Projects Associated with this goal:

- STR-215 Downtown Parking Lot
- CD-405 Fountain in Downtown Area

Additional CIP Projects that should be considered:

- Downtown Façade Improvement Program
- Streetscape on Side Streets of Downtown
- Trail connectivity from Downtown to Fort Calhoun Trail

6 RECREATION

Target to be Addressed:

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A RECREATION PLAN FOR THE CITY OF FORT CALHOUN.

It is clear that a high quality of life, in general, tops the list of attributes communities must strive for, in their efforts to both survive and prosper. The availability of quality housing, education and commerce must be in place to keep current residents from relocating, and to entice new families into a community. Parks and recreational amenities are no less important than other city amenities in satisfying a stable and growing population.

In an era where municipal budgets leave little room for non-essential services/facilities/ programs, it is vital that local residents outline their recreational priorities to provide direct guidance to local decision makers. These efforts will ensure that limited local resources are supporting only those programs and amenities that are desired by residents.

A professional planning firm can assist the city in soliciting public input on asset identification/ prioritization (i.e., splash pad, sporting fields, trails, playground equipment, picnic shelters, picnic tables, barbecue grills, open space, tennis/basketball courts, etc.), park layout and cost opinions. This professional consultation will ensure that the outdoor recreational interests of today’s generations are met so that the park will provide long-term service to the community.

Through our discussions with city staff and stakeholders it was obvious that additional recreational amenities are desired within the community including water features, larger basketball courts, additional ball fields, and soccer fields. In addition, the city has begun a trail system and it is desirable to continue the connectivity of this trail to other areas of the city.

Topics Identified During the Strategic Planning Session

- Need new basketball court
- Planned Drainage Project for West Market Square by voluntary engineering group is on-going
- Currently have some good baseball fields



- Pioneer Park has:
 - Improvements. New trail, but not connected to other available trail systems
 - Play structures
- Add new pieces of playground equipment every year
- Need play structure in West Market Park
- Maybe add a gazebo to West Market Park
- Need a complete sports complex – additional ball fields and soccer fields
- Splash Pad would be nice to have
- No ADA accessible play structures
- Need coordination with youth sports association to help maintain existing play fields
- Need to coordinate with Fort Atkinson State Park
- Southern Heights Park should be developed
- Fort Atkinson State Park Master Plan - State lacks funds to be implemented

Objective: #5-1

Evaluate the recreational needs of Fort Calhoun families and residents and develop a long term Recreation Master Plan

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Expand the park board to comprise of parents, students, coaches, seniors, and outdoor recreational enthusiasts to encourage better communication between residents, the city, and the youth sports organizations.
- Consider the current and desired usage of the city park system.
- Outline current programs/facilities that are offered in Fort Calhoun, whether publicly or privately-sponsored.
- Determine the programs/facilities overall strengths and weaknesses.
- Identify potential opportunities and threats to the long-term sustainability of these programs/facilities.
- Survey the residents of Fort Calhoun about the need for a splash pad, ball field improvements, soccer fields, trails and other potential programs/facilities desired by local residents.

- Summarize the findings and publicize the results.
- Review and update park system maintenance procedures.
- Procure the services of a professional planning consultant to develop a Recreational Master Plan for the Fort Calhoun parks and trail system.
- Hold a town hall meeting to discuss how residents plan (if available) to use the city park and trail system.
- Identify and prioritize park amenities that will encourage maximum usage for community, social and family, and general affairs.
- Develop a park schematic showing location of existing amenities.
- Investigate new park areas including the city owned property near the existing sewer pump station located in the floodplain for ball field and soccer field expansion and other city owned property within the community.
- Consider measures to integrate recreational opportunities and community amenities via walking/biking trails.
- Develop a plan showing the layout of a future park and trail improvements and their relationship to each other.
- Prepare opinions of cost for planned park and trail improvements.
- Develop a phasing plan for the implementation of the proposed improvements.
- Identify the appropriate public agencies and/or community organizations that will be responsible for the implementation and ongoing oversight of the programs.
- Consider the most appropriate resource (human and financial) to undertake the park and trail projects.
- Conduct local fund-raising activities.
- Pursue public/private monies to offset the construction cost of the projects.



Objective: #5-2

Implement priority and cost-effective park improvements/programs.

Method(s) of Achieving Objective:

- Consider the feasibility of implementing the Fort Calhoun Recreation Master Plan in phases
- Implement feasible/viable programs/facilities desired by local residents.
- Develop and support programs which encourage activities where families can participate together.

Estimated Time Frame: 2015-2016.

Responsible Group/Agency

Fort Calhoun City Council, Fort Calhoun Park and Recreation Board, local sports associations, Fort Calhoun residents, Fort Atkinson State Park, Fort Calhoun Community Association, Papio-Missouri Natural Resources District, local businesses and outdoor recreational enthusiasts.

Potential Resources

Local monies, Local Option Sales Tax, private donations, private foundations, volunteer efforts, fee for use, concession stand proceeds, Community Development Assistance Act (CDAA), Nebraska Recreational Trails Program, Transportation Alternatives, Papio-Missouri NRD, Nebraska Game and parks, and Land and Water Conservation Program.

Measurable Outputs

Developing and Implementing a Recreation Master Plan for the community is a mid-term goal of the city.

CIP Projects Associated with this goal:

- STR-215 Downtown Parking Lot
- CD-405 Fountain in Downtown Area

Additional CIP Projects that should be considered:

- Downtown Façade Improvement Program
- Streetscape on Side Streets of Downtown
- Trail connectivity from Downtown to Fort Calhoun Trail



7 OTHER GOALS

Although other categories were identified as strategic issues and ranked as priorities, this study does not recognize them as the general public’s top priorities due to the lack of community support at this time. However, some of the categories are critical and important to the function of the local government and may be necessary to support or enhance the top categories. Thus the city of Fort Calhoun should focus on the top identified goals and address the following goals at a later date.

TRAILS

Comments:

- Currently has limited trails system within community
- Develop a connection to regional trail
- Develop an 8-foot wide trail from school
- Develop a trail to Fort Atkinson State Park and Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge
- Develop Pioneer Park Trail to Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge
- Could use Safe Routes to School funding
- Need a trail from Southern Heights subdivision to Elementary School
- Need trail from Boyer Chute National Wildlife along River
- Christmas in Calhoun – no good route for 5K or 10K, could utilize a trail
- Connectivity needed for existing pieces of trail
- No need for hard surface trail at Fort Atkinson State Park



STREETS

Comments:

- Need to overlay/improve and has a \$500K of overlay planned in 2015 for 12 – 13 Blocks
- Some streets are gravel
- Not all current standard of curb and gutter (Rural Sections)
- Some streets have cracks (16th and 17th Streets)
- “Road” not always centered in ROW
- Many streets are unimproved and still “Paper” Streets
- Area of ROW encroachments
- Existing alleys are narrow and limited
- Community does work from 1&6-yr plan as stated in the Road Program

CITY FACILITIES

Comments:

- Structural condition of buildings should be evaluated
- Cost of new maintenance building estimated to be \$600K
- Renovation of existing maintenance building estimated to be \$300K
- Storage building encroaches into the ROW
- City Council Chambers not big enough for large public meetings

WATER

Comments:

- Second connection needed to ensure safe water supply
- Rural Water District can supply second source
- Need more storage capacity
- System has a few dead ends
- What to do with the “Old Tank”
- Some cast pipes still exist
- Current Capacity for 1,200 GPM in system

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Comments:

- Not much to do outside of school
- Need for more recreational activities (fish, camp, hunt...)
- Need a soccer complex
- Archery/trap shoot range is desired to be a great fit
- No unified Fort Calhoun youth association
- Library has Wi-Fi but limited hours and books selection
- Need to create opportunity to for youth to return – jobs and housing options
- Currently 40% of pupils option in at school
- Before and after school programming is needed through 6th Grade
- Need a youth center

SIDEWALKS

Comments:

- Could implement a sales tax
 - Estimated revenue (\$10.3M 7 Year Average - \$51,500 - \$154,500)
 - Bond capacity (\$570K - \$1.71M – 4% for 15 Years)
- Lack of sidewalks
- Many rural streets with no area for sidewalk
- Poor condition of some existing sidewalks
- New houses required to put in sidewalks
- Residents do not want to pay for the sidewalk installation or maintenance

SEWER

Comments:

- Currently pump to Blair for disposal and treatment
- Need some lining of sewer main
- Need to televise lines all sewer mains



OTHER GOALS

SEWER CONTINUED

- 12" Force Main to Blair with no back-up in case of failure of main
- Television mains about 20%/year
- Need a lift station designed for growth

Summary of CIP Projects that should be considered for the implementation of this Strategic Plan:

0-2 Years:

- PW-121 2nd Water Source Connection
- STR-214 Public Works Facility***
- Recreation Master Plan**
- Obtain Purchase Options on Peripheral Land**
- Park-304 Construct Basketball and Tennis Courts
- Drainage Improvements in West Market Square Park**

2-5 Years:

- Streetscape on Side Streets of Downtown**
- STR-215 Downtown Parking Lot
- Park-310 Purchase Additional Parkland (Pioneer-Ballparks)
- Park-309 Construct Spray Ground
- Park-313 Construct RV Campground at Municipal Complex
- Park-307 Construct Soccer Fields at Municipal Complex
- Park-316 Additional Baseball Fields
- Trail along Wastewater Easement**
- Downtown Façade Improvement Program**

Beyond 5 Years:

- Park-318 Hiking & Biking Trail to Boyer Chute National Refuge
- Trail connectivity from Downtown to Fort Calhoun Trail **
- Park-301 Construct Trail Extension: Court St., 7th St.
- CD-405 Fountain in Downtown Area

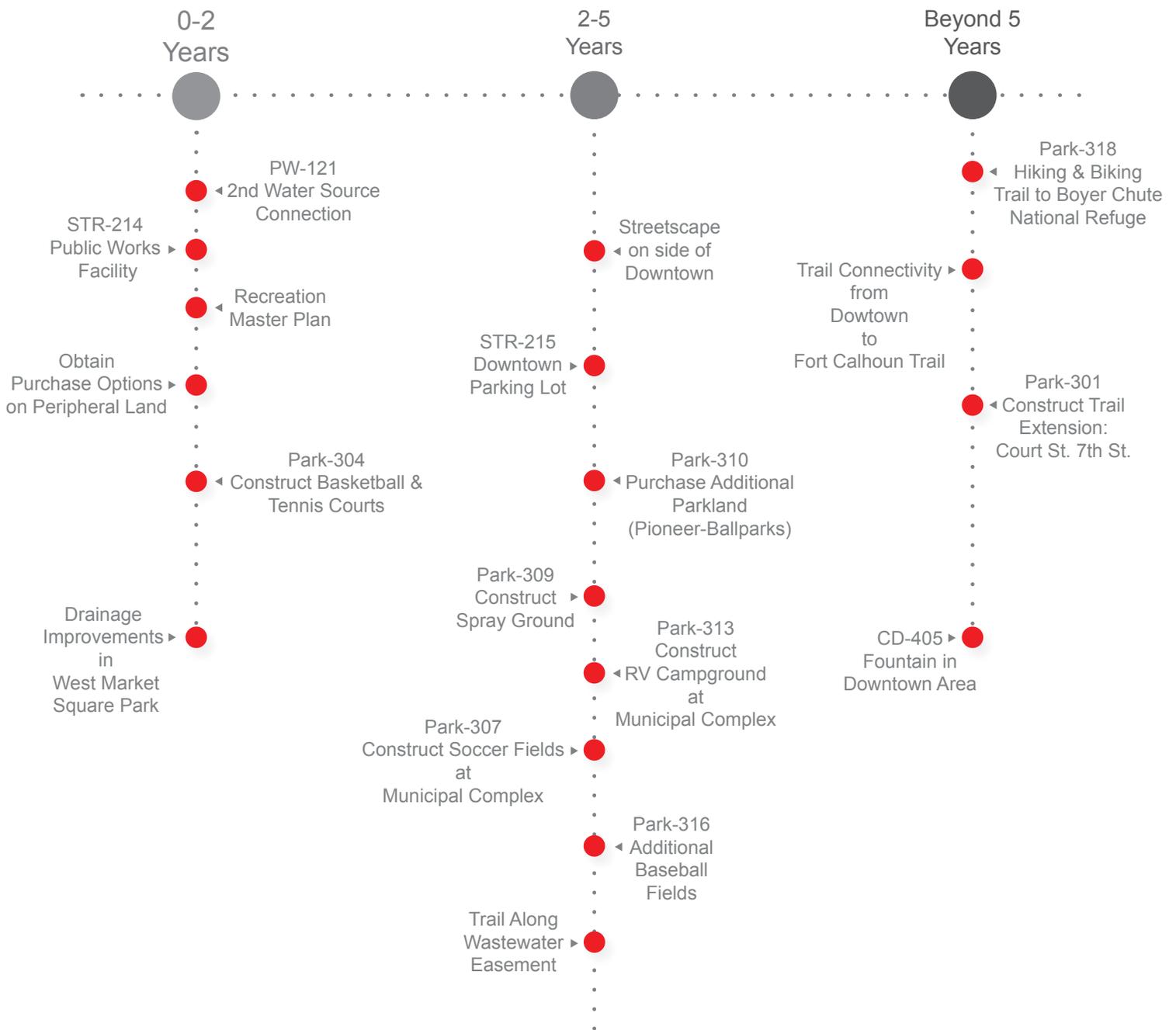
**New Projects to be added to the CIP

***Does not address in this Strategic Plan, but needs to be developed and implemented at a later date

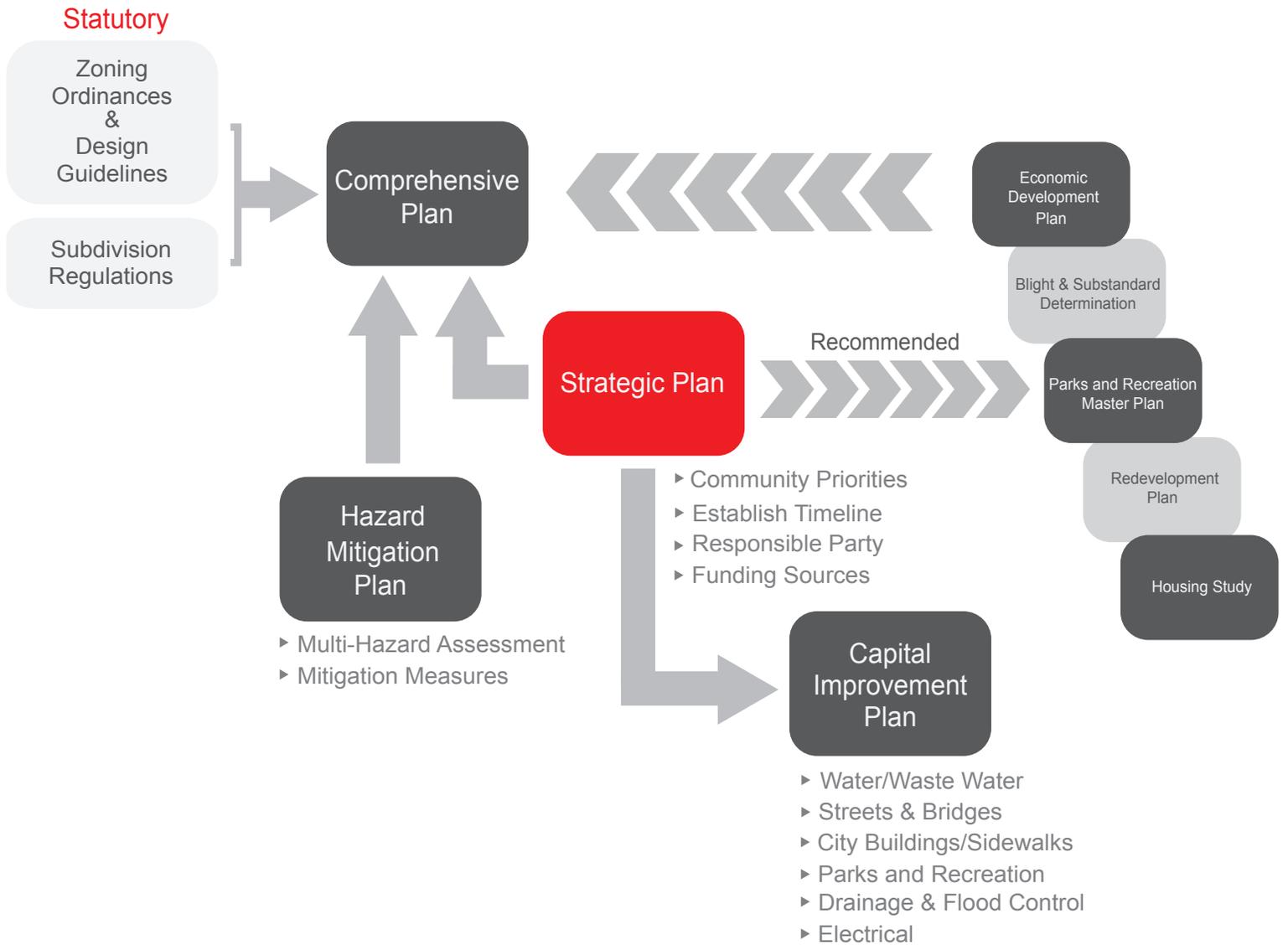


8 VISUAL AIDS

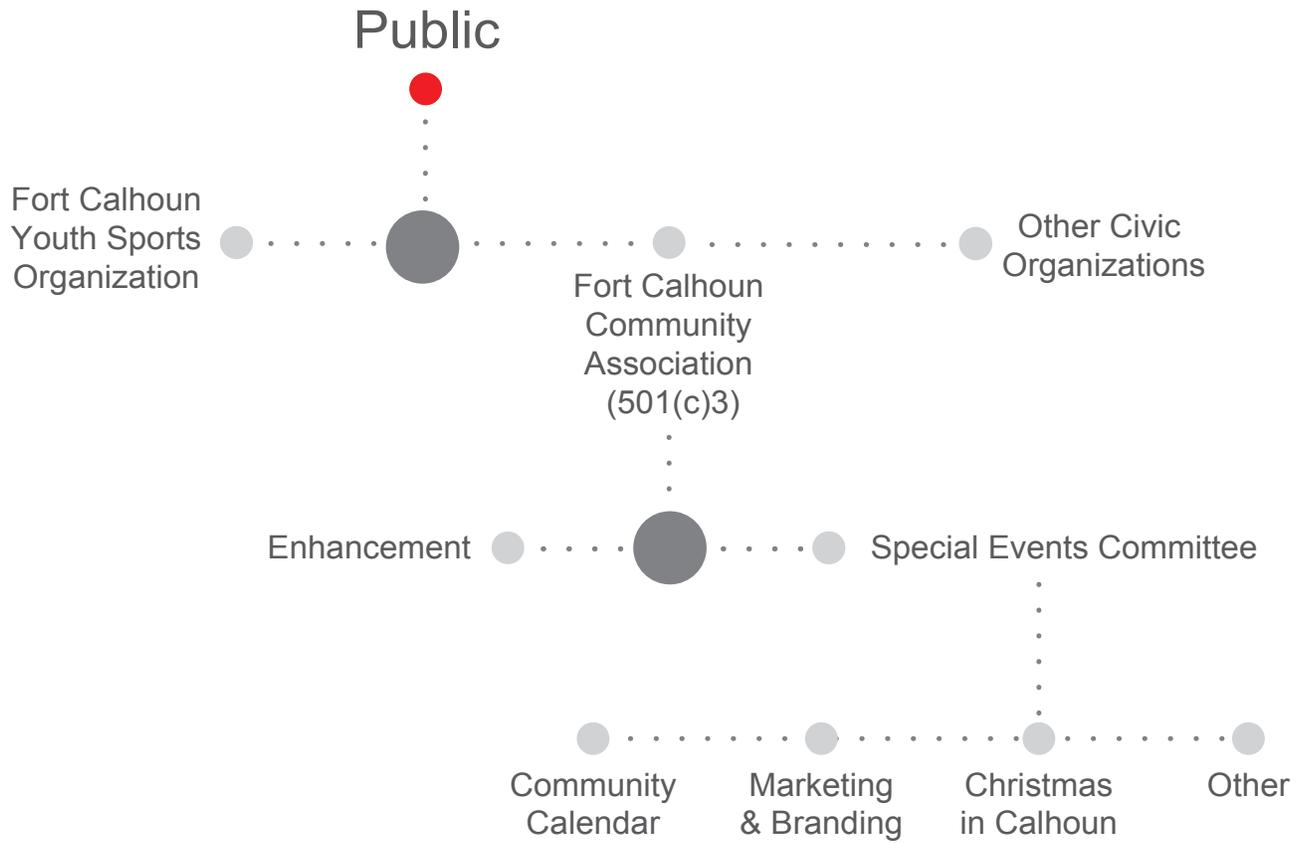
Timeline of CIP Projects for Consideration in this Strategic Plan



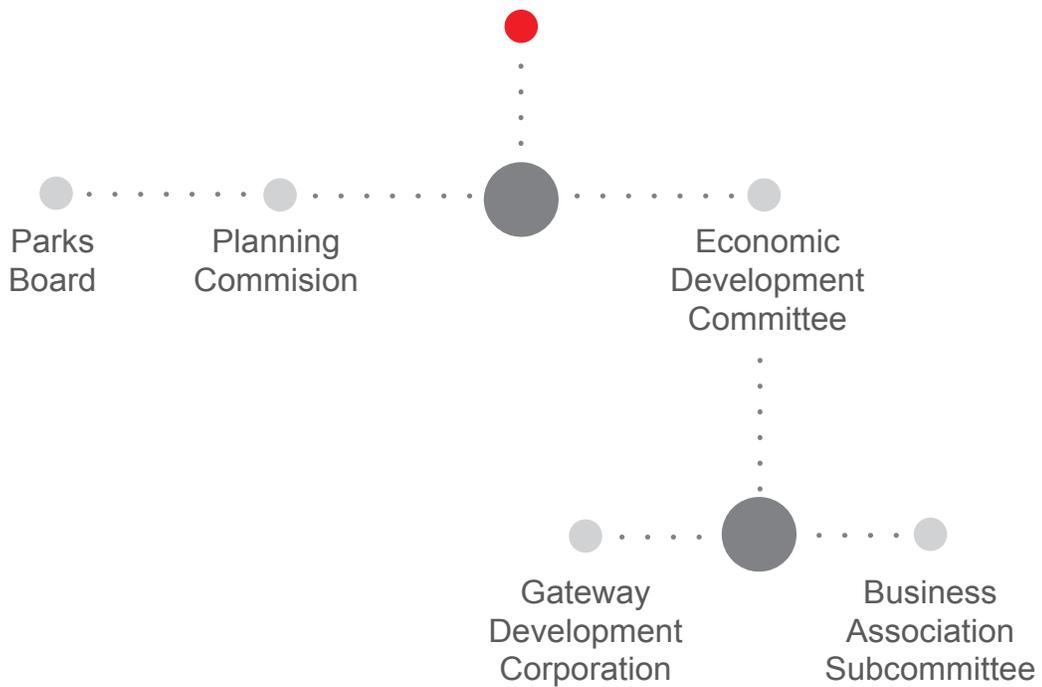
Relationship of Planning Documents



Organization Structure



City Government



APPENDIX A

Vision Implementation Plan Workshop Sign In Sheet: April 13th, 2015

| Name | Email |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| DAVE ROMANS | dromey@abnnebraska.com |
| Bob Prieksat | prieksat82@gmail.com |
| Nick Schuler | schulerz1@yahoo.com |
| Sandy Kucera | toofarnorth1@gmail.com |
| Lara M. Pleak | lpleak@mchhs.org |
| Michelle Dill | michelleMDill8@gmail.com |
| Randy Schrum | Randa1833@Juno.com |
| Bruce Sill | |
| COBBAN HELMADOLLAR | C.DOLLAR77@GMAIL.COM |
| Lori Lammers | LoriLammers@yahoo.com |
| Sherman Berg | seberg@abnnebraska.com |
| Micki Hernandez | mhernandez@ftcpioneers.org |
| JOHN SLADER | john.slader@nebraska.gov |
| Bob Hanover | bob.hanover@nebraska.gov |
| Tom Thiem | tthiem@abnnebraska.com |
| Rich Johnson | MrJohnson48@hvtel.net |
| Jeane Knight | none 468-5670 |
| Deb Sutteland | ftc deputy clerk @ abnnebraska.com |
| Paul Marney | ftcnewsp@ftcpioneers.org |
| Brida Welshed | ftcalhounctyhall@abnnebraska.com |
| Greg, Cavi + Abley Hillmer | Abby.Hillmer18@gmail.com |

