



FY 2024 – 2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

AUGUST 2023





RAPP CONSULTING GROUP

August 1, 2023

RE: 2024-2027 Strategic Plan – City of Hastings

Dear Mayor Fasbender,

I am pleased to present the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan and Summary Report to the City of Hastings. The plan reflects the organization's priorities, commitment to measurable results and the delivery of quality services.

It has been a pleasure assisting the City of Hastings with this important effort. The entire organization displayed openness, dedication, and a desire for continuous improvement.

I particularly wish to thank City Administrator Dan Wietecha along with the City of Hastings' Management Team for their help and support during the process.

Yours truly,

Craig R. Rapp
President



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From April 2023 through July 2023, the City of Hastings engaged in a strategic planning process. The process yielded a strategic plan covering 2024-2027.

The plan consists of five **strategic priorities** — the issues of greatest importance to the City over the next four years. Associated with each priority is a set of **desired outcomes**, **key outcome indicators**, and **performance targets**, describing expected results and how the results will be measured. The plan also includes **strategic initiatives** that will be undertaken to achieve the targeted outcomes.

The planning effort began with an examination of the operating environment, consisting of a Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) analysis. On April 28, 2023, the City's leadership team held a full day strategic planning session. They identified a set of priorities, key outcomes, performance targets, and reviewed the City's vision, mission, and values statements.

Based upon those priorities, the City's management team met on May 18, 2023, to determine a set of strategic initiatives and begin the process of developing detailed action plans. The strategic priorities, key outcome indicators, performance targets and strategic initiatives are summarized here and on the following page.



strategy

The Plan

Five Strategic Priorities

- 1 FINANCIAL RESILIENCE
- 2 OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
- 3 RESPONSIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- 4 INFRASTRUCTURE SUSTAINABILITY
- 5 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2027

City of Hastings

Strategic Priority	Desired Outcome	Key Outcome Indicator	Target	Strategic Initiatives
Financial Resilience <i>A financially sound organization</i>	Expanded revenue base	- Increase in revenues by fund - Increase in revenue sources	10% non-tax revenue increase (above growth) 2024-2027	- Alternative revenue analysis - Asset management funding strategy (debt financing is within this) - Budgeting system evaluation
	Responsible use of debt	Debt as percentage of General Fund revenues	- Maintain compliance with City debt policy - Debt financing plan developed by 12/2024	
	Spending aligned with growth demands	- Operating budget increase - CPI annual change - Tax base growth increase	Operating budget increases limited to CPI + growth adjustment annually	
Operational Effectiveness <i>An organization that delivers results</i>	Staff capacity to meet service demands	% of authorized staffing levels achieved	All departments meet authorized staffing levels by 7/2024	- Develop recruitment plans - all departments - Process improvement program - Develop organizational training plan
	Improved core service delivery	# of core processes improved % improvement in processes	10% improvement in each department's core process by 12/2027	
	Improved workforce capabilities	% of training requirements met # of credentials achieved	100% of employees meet minimum training requirements by 12/2024	
Responsive Community Development <i>Development that meets present and future needs</i>	Clarity regarding housing supply needs	- Housing units available by demographic segment - Housing demand by demographic segment	Housing supply needs for all demographic segments determined by 12/2026	- Housing needs analysis - Opportunity site development strategy - Complete Vets Park and Arena projects, including economic investment analysis
	Successful development of opportunity sites	- Block 28 completion - Block 1 completion	- Block 28 completed by 12/2027 - Block 1 completed by 12/2027	
	Strategic Park investments determined	Investment analysis completed	Park strategic investment analysis completed by 6/2024	
Infrastructure Sustainability <i>Infrastructure that supports our community</i>	Improved water treatment capacity	Completed water system improvements	Key water system improvements completed by 12/2027	- Develop asset management plan - Implement water system expansion plan - WWTP construction plan - Highway 61 construction plan
	Successful completion of outside agency projects	- Highway 61 rebuild targets met - WWTP construction targets met	- Highway 61 completed by 6/2028 - WWTP completed by 12/2028	
	Expanded asset management capability	- Asset management plan developed - Funding options identified	Comprehensive asset management plan developed and funding strategy proposed by 2026	
Strategic Communication <i>A transparent, responsive government</i>	Improved collaborative relationships	Partner satisfaction rating	>90% of partners report improved collaborative relationship 2024-2027	- Comprehensive communication Plan - Collaboration improvement plan - Community engagement strategy
	Improved media communication and relationship	# of one-on-one meetings with local media # of reporting inaccuracies	Increase in one-on-one communications with local media from 2024 to 2027	
	Enhanced community engagement	- Improvements in external responsiveness - Increases in inquiries via technology	Community engagement via expanded communications options increases 10% 2024-2027	

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Strategic planning is a process that helps leaders examine the current state of the organization, determine a desired future state, establish priorities, and define a set of actions to achieve specific outcomes. The process followed by the City of Hastings was designed to answer four key questions: (1) Where are we now? (2) Where are we going? (3) How will we get there? (4) What will we do? The process is divided into a development phase and an implementation phase. The full process is depicted below.



DEVELOPMENT

IMPLEMENTATION

Where we are

- Scan the environment
 - Conduct internal and external analysis (SWOT)
 - Develop Strategic Profile
 - Identify Strategic Challenges

Where we're going

- Define our Mission
 - Articulate Core Values
 - Set a Vision
 - Establish Goals
- Identify Key Intended Outcomes

How we'll get there

- Develop Initiatives
 - Define Performance Measures
 - Set Targets and Thresholds
 - Cascade throughout organization

What we'll do

- Create Detailed Action Plans
 - Establish Accountability: Who, What, When
 - Identify Success Indicators
 - Provide Resources

Initiating the Process: Setting Expectations, Charting the Course

The strategic planning process began with a meeting of the consultant and the City's senior staff on April 10, 2023. The meeting included a review of strategic planning principles, discussion on the status of previous strategic plans, current organizational challenges, and other operational issues.

The group established a timeline for the strategic planning effort, a process for conducting a SWOT analysis, coordination of Council interviews and details regarding implementation.

Setting Direction: Mission, Value Proposition, Vision, Priorities

On April 28, 2023 the City Council and senior staff held a retreat to develop the strategic plan. To address the question "Where are we now?" the group was challenged to define its value proposition. A value proposition is how an organization chooses to deliver its services and provide value to its customers (citizens). Three different value propositions used across all sectors of the economy (see below). Organizations choose a primary value proposition, then set, and meet threshold standards on the other two.

During extended discussion, it was acknowledged that value propositions and service approaches varied by department and circumstance. It was concluded however, that operational excellence has been foundational and will continue to be important for operational stability. For that reason, **operational excellence** was chosen as the primary value proposition, with **customer intimacy** the secondary focus.

From Challenges to Priorities

The leadership team engaged in a review of the current operating environment using the results of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis conducted in advance of the planning session.

THREE VALUE PROPOSITIONS

Operational Excellence

(example: Wal-Mart, Southwest Airlines) *Motto:* They adjust to us

Product/Service Leadership

(example: Apple, Google) *Motto:* They 'ooh and ah' over our services

Customer Intimacy

(example: Nordstrom, Ritz-Carlton) *Motto:* We get to know them, solve their problems, satisfy their needs



Using the SWOT data, a facilitated process yielded a set of organizational challenges and strategic issues confronting the City.

Based upon the challenges and issues, the leadership group established a set of five strategic priorities. Within each priority, a set of desired outcomes were defined, along with key outcome indicators (KOI's), and a set of performance targets.

To successfully address the strategic priorities, achieve outcomes and reach the targets, the management staff, in collaboration with the City Council, identified a set of strategic initiatives and detailed action plans to be implemented over the duration of the plan.



Our CORE Values

COMMUNICATIONS

- We Will Value and Promote Participation and Interaction with Citizens and Staff.
- We Will Seek to Assure Timely and Open Communications, While Providing Background and Context for the Decisions that Are Made.

OPTIMAL SERVICE

- We Recognize the Importance of Providing Timely, Courteous and Respectful Service to the Public and One Another.
- We Will Seek to Serve the Public and Other Employees in a Constructive, Creative and Practical Manner.

RESPECT FOR RESOURCES

- We Recognize the Value of Using All City Resources in an Efficient and Effective Manner.
- We Will Seek to Utilize City Resources to Serve The Common Good of All.

ENTHUSIASM

- We Are Committed to Protect and Promote the Unique Characteristics of Our Community, Including Its History and Scenic Beauty.
- We Will Seek to Infuse Enthusiasm in Our Daily Interactions with Citizens, Visitors, and One Another.

Reviewing the Environment, SWOT Analysis

An important part of the strategic planning process is a review of the current operating environment and an evaluation of the challenges confronting the community. This was accomplished via a SWOT analysis—a process that examines the organization’s internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities and threats in the external environment. The results are displayed below. A link to the entire SWOT data can be found [HERE](#).

STRENGTHS

- Strong Community Support
- Many Businesses & Groups want to be engaged
- Staff is committed, knowledgeable, dedicated & work hard
- Elected leaders are engaged & competent
- There is strong communication between Staff, Council & Community

WEAKNESSES

- There is a lack of money and a weak tax base
- Being behind on both long-term and short-term maintenance / improvements
- Needing forward thinking goals or a future plan
- Lack of shared goals/direction between Council & staff
- Inadequate working relationships at leadership levels

SWOT Analysis

- Collaboration between Businesses/Government Agencies/School Districts/Residents/Staff
- Update attractions: Parks & Rec/Tourism/Arts & Culture/Local Businesses
- Create development between Business/Residential/Tourism
- Increase communication via our brand & message

OPPORTUNITIES

- Lack of growth in housing & population
- Attracting & retaining staff
- Lack of a collective vision
- Increasing service need (+ Staff to accommodate)
- Lack of funding to meet growing service needs
- Mistrust of Government

THREATS

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Financial Resilience



OUTCOME

Expanded revenue base

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

Increase in revenues by fund; increase in revenue sources

TARGET

10% non-tax revenue increase (above growth) 2024-2027

OUTCOME

Responsible use of debt

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

Debt as a percentage of General Fund revenues

TARGET

Maintain compliance with City debt policy
Debt financing plan developed by 12/2024

OUTCOME

Spending aligned with growth demands

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

Operating budget increase; CPI annual change; tax base growth increase

TARGET

Operating budget increases limited to CPI + growth adjustment annually

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Alternative revenue analysis
2. Asset management funding strategy (debt financing is within this)

3. Budgeting system evaluation

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Operational Effectiveness



OUTCOME

Staff capacity to meet service demands

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

% of authorized staffing levels achieved

TARGET

All departments meet authorized staffing levels by 7/2024

OUTCOME

Improved core service delivery

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

of core processes improved; % improvement in processes

TARGET

10% improvement in each department's core processes by 12/2027

OUTCOME

Improved workforce capabilities

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

% of training requirements met; # of credentials achieved

TARGET

100% of employees meet minimum training requirements by 12/2024

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Develop recruitment plans - all departments
2. Process improvement program

3. Develop organizational training program

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Responsive Community Development



OUTCOME

Clarity regarding housing supply needs

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

Housing units available by demographic segment; housing demand by demographic segment

TARGET

Housing supply needs for all demographic segments determined by 12/2026

OUTCOME

Successful development of opportunity sites

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

Block 28 completion; block 1 completion

TARGET

Block 28 completed by 12/2027
Block 1 completed by 12/2027

OUTCOME

Strategic Park investments determined

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

Investment analysis completed

TARGET

Park strategic investment analysis completed by 6/2024

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Housing need analysis
2. Opportunity site development strategy

3. Complete Vets Park and Arena projects, including economic investment analysis

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

Infrastructure Sustainability



OUTCOME

Improved water treatment capacity

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

Completed water system improvements

TARGET

Key water system improvements completed by 12/2027

OUTCOME

Successful completion of outside agency projects

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

Highway 61 rebuild targets met; WWTP construction targets met

TARGET

Highway 61 completed by 6/2028
WWTP completed by 12/2028

OUTCOME

Expanded asset management capability

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

Asset management plan developed; funding options identified

TARGET

Comprehensive asset management plan developed and funding strategy proposed by 2026

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Develop asset management plan
2. Implement water system expansion plan

3. WWTP construction plan
4. Highway 61 construction plan

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

Strategic Communication



OUTCOME

Improved collaborative relationships

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

Partner satisfaction rating

TARGET

>90% of partners report improved collaborative relationship 2024-2027

OUTCOME

Improved media communication and relationship

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

of one-on-one meetings with local media;
of reporting inaccuracies

TARGET

Increase in one-on-one communications with local media from 2024 to 2027

OUTCOME

Enhanced community engagement

KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR

Improvements in external responsiveness;
increases in inquiries via technology

TARGET

Community engagement via expanded communications options increases 10% 2024-2027

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Comprehensive communication plan
2. Collaboration improvement plan

3. Community engagement strategy



STRATEGIC PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

The Strategic Plan was developed with the hard work and dedication of many individuals. The City Council led the way, taking time out of their schedules to commit to long-term thinking. They defined a direction and a set of outcomes that are important to the community stakeholders with whom they partner and serve.

The City's senior staff supported the Council and offered an operations perspective as well as ideas for continuous improvement.

CITY COUNCIL

Mary Fasbender, *Mayor*
Tina Folch, *Councilmember*
Jen Fox, *Councilmember*
Angie Haus, *Councilmember*
Lisa Leifeld, *Councilmember*
Trevor Lund, *Councilmember*
Dave Pemble, *Councilmember*

DEPARTMENT HEADS & STAFF

Dan Wietecha, *City Administrator*
Kelly Murtaugh, *Assistant City Administrator*
Chris Eitemiller, *Finance Manager*
John Hinzman, *Community Development Director*
Chris Jenkins, *Parks Director*
Dawn Skelly, *Communications Coordinator*
Ryan Stempski, *Public Works Director*
John Townsend, *Fire Chief*
David Wilske, *Police Chief*

CONSULTANTS

Rapp Consulting Group
Craig Rapp, *President*