

# City of Wheaton

## Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025

February 2021



*Prepared for the City of Wheaton by Management Partners*



# Table of Contents

Message from Mayor Suess .....	1
City Council .....	2
Background .....	3
City of Wheaton Strategic Priorities .....	4
Vision, Mission and Organizational Values .....	5
Strategic Priority 1: Financial Stability .....	6
Strategic Priority 2: Enhanced Infrastructure .....	7
Strategic Priority 3: Responsive and Efficient Services.....	8
Strategic Priority 4: Community Safety.....	9
Strategic Priority 5: Environmental Sustainability .....	10
Conclusion .....	11



*This page is purposely left blank.*



# Message from Mayor Suess



Dear Wheaton Community Member:

The Wheaton City Council is pleased to present the City of Wheaton's 2021 to 2025 Strategic Plan. This document is the result of a collaborative effort by the City Council, our residents and City employees.

The Strategic Plan identifies 5 key priorities for the City and highlights the key tasks that have been identified as essential to maintaining Wheaton as a premier community. The Strategic Plan document also defines the City's vision statement and mission statement.

The Plan's 5 key priorities are: Financial Stability, Enhanced Infrastructure, Responsive & Efficient Services, Community Safety, and Environmental Sustainability. These priorities are critical to our vision of maintaining Wheaton as a safe, inclusive and vibrant community.

I would thank my colleagues on the City Council, our residents and our City employees for their contributions to the Strategic Plan. The collaboration of all parties has resulted in providing clear direction as to how we move the City forward.

We are all fortunate to live in Wheaton, and we all have pride in our City. Our Strategic Plan provides the structure through which we move forward in enhancing our City as a desirable, inclusive residential community in which to live and raise a family.

Best regards,

**Philip J. Suess**  
Mayor  
February 2021



# City Council



Michael Barbier

Councilman, East District



Erica Bray-Parker

Councilwoman, At-Large



Suzanne Fitch

Councilwoman, At-Large



Lynn A. Robbins

Councilwoman, West District



John K. Rutledge

Councilman, South District



Christopher J. Zaruba

Councilman, North District





# Background



## Introduction

Wheaton City leaders have adopted a strategic plan every four to five years for the past 20 years to guide priority-setting and resource allocation, making Wheaton the premier place in the region to live, work, shop, and play. In January 2020, City leaders sought to recalibrate the current strategic plan and refine the vision, mission and values of the City, take a fresh look at the current strategic priorities and set initiatives to guide planning for the next five years. The City initiated its strategic planning process to chart a clear path for the future in early 2020. The process was briefly paused because of the COVID-19 pandemic and resumed in September.

The purpose of this strategic planning update is to provide a long-range framework to guide decision-making by the City Council in a focused and unified manner.

## Methodology

This strategic planning process included interviews with the Mayor, members of City Council, city manager and leadership team; design and deployment of a community and employee survey; two community engagement sessions held via Facebook Live; review of local and regional data; and a review of financial trends to lend context to the current and anticipated operating environment.

The strategic plan elements were crafted during two department head workshops and further refined during a Council strategic plan workshop held on September 12, 2020. The process resulted in this plan, which emphasizes five strategic priorities for the future with accompanying goals, initiatives, and outcome measures. To ensure accomplishment of the goals, an action plan (Attachment A) has been prepared to ensure attention to progress in achieving each strategic priority.



# City of Wheaton Strategic Priorities



This Strategic Plan has five overarching strategic priorities as listed below. Each has a series of goals and initiatives to achieve them.

## Financial Stability

- Control expenditure increases over a five-year period
- Maintain structurally balanced budgets, with a continued focus on operating expenditures and infrastructure investment
- Effectively communicate information about City finances to the community
- Maintain fund balance reserves based on established policy targets

## Enhanced Infrastructure

- Decrease overland flooding into primary structures
- Decrease sanitary sewer backups
- Establish annual investment and operating targets to maintain existing and support new infrastructure

## Responsive and Efficient Services

- Prioritize essential services for the City of Wheaton
- Identify key performance indicators to track service delivery levels for operating departments
- Offer comparable service levels at less cost

## Community Safety

- Continue to prioritize the health, safety and welfare of the community
- Increase partnerships that focus on the health, welfare and safety of Wheaton residents
- Increase community outreach concerning safety and security issues
- Increase availability of statistical safety data

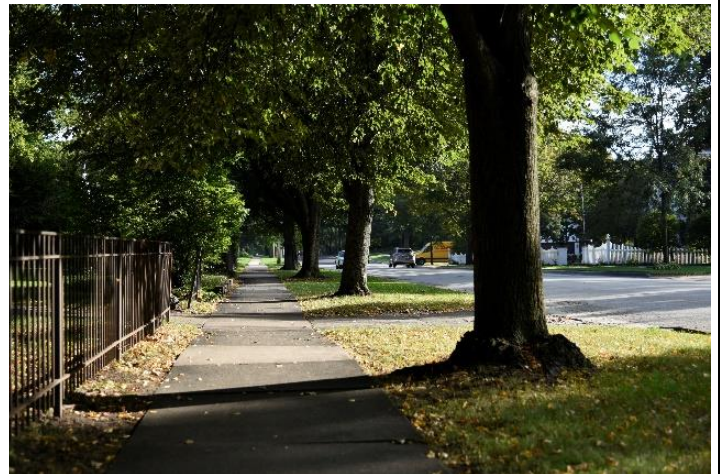
## Environmental Sustainability

- Develop policies and create programs that preserve the natural environment





# Vision, Mission and Organizational Values



## Vision

**Wheaton is a safe, inclusive, and vibrant community that is connected to the past while moving toward the future.**

## Mission

**To maintain Wheaton as a desirable residential community by providing quality infrastructure and services that meet community needs, enhance safety, and enrich the quality of life by being responsive, innovative, and efficient.**

## Organizational Values

### *City Leaders and Employees Value:*

- Accountability
- Serving the Community with Pride
- Fairness
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Honesty
- Innovation
- Respect
- Transparency



# Strategic Priority 1: Financial Stability

## Desired Outcomes

- Control expenditure increases over a five-year period
- Maintain structurally balanced budgets with a continued focus on operating expenditures and infrastructure investment
- Effectively communicate information about City finances to the community
- Maintain fund balance reserves based on established policy targets

## Key Performance Indicators

- Percent change in General Fund expenditures
- Ratio of General Fund expenditures to the adopted target
- Percent of costs recovered from fees and charges
- Reserve balances meet targets
- Percent change in revenue growth

## Goals and Initiatives

### *Goal A: Maintain Long-term Financial Plan*

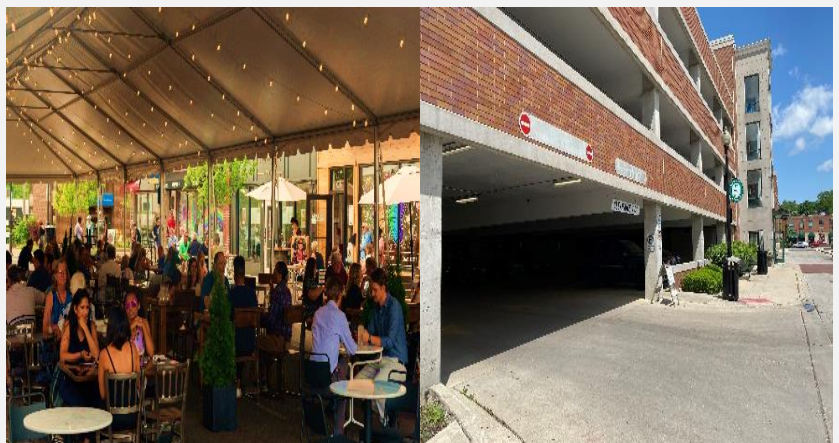
1. Prepare a long-term financial forecast
2. Annually prepare a budget decision-making framework
3. Reevaluate the City's fund balance reserve policy
4. Develop a financial dashboard on the City's website

### *Goal B: Identify Expenditure Reduction Opportunities*

1. Conduct a review of contracted and in-house services to get the most effective and economical quality service
2. Analyze the unfunded liabilities of police and fire pension plans
3. Analyze current service levels to identify expenditure reduction opportunities
4. Pursue intergovernmental cooperation, consolidation or service sharing for governmental efficiencies

### *Goal C: Identify Revenue Enhancements*

1. Diversify and grow revenue sources to reduce the City's reliance on property taxes and state-shared revenues
2. Seek and leverage federal and state grant opportunities
3. Review fees and assess operational cost recovery



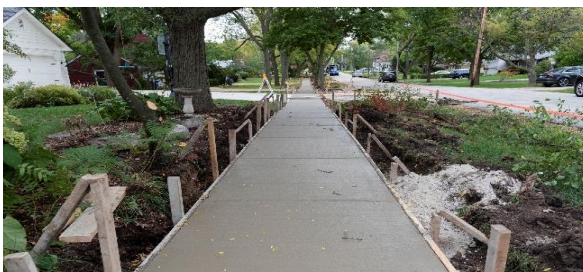
# Strategic Priority 2: Enhanced Infrastructure

## Desired Outcomes

- Decrease overland flooding into primary structures
- Decrease the number homes affected by sanitary sewer backups
- Establish annual investment and operating targets to maintain existing and support new infrastructure
- Increase the number of public and private lead service lines replaced

## Key Performance Indicators

- Percent change in primary structures impacted by flooding
- Percent change in sanitary sewer backups
- Level of spending on infrastructure
- Number of private/public lead services replaced



## Goals and Initiatives

### *Goal A: Improve Planning and Maintenance of Existing Infrastructure*

1. Create an inventory of all infrastructure assets
2. Develop a long-term financial plan to address rehabilitation, replacement, and maintenance of existing infrastructure
3. Prioritize existing infrastructure projects within each department annually
4. Track existing infrastructure maintenance operations to ensure alignment with industry best practices and standards

### *Goal B: Use Innovative Methods to Address Flooding Issues*

1. Apply best practices to prevent recurring overland flooding of structures in identified flood-prone and flood-plain areas
2. Develop programs that provide relief to property owners experiencing flooding on private property
3. Develop criteria for prioritizing flooding mitigation efforts

### *Goal C: Improve Programs to Reduce Sanitary Sewer Back-ups and Overflows*

1. Identify best practices to address overflows
2. Create programs to provide relief for property owners experiencing basement backups

### *Goal D: Prioritize Road, Sidewalk and Other Infrastructure Projects and Funding*

1. Develop criteria for prioritizing all new and replacement road, sidewalk, and other infrastructure improvements
2. Prepare a capital funding plan for new and replacement infrastructure improvements

### *Goal E: Remove Lead Public and Private Water Services*

1. Identify locations of lead public and private water service lines
2. Develop a program identifying and prioritizing the replacement of public and private service lines.



# Strategic Priority 3: Responsive and Efficient Services

## Desired Outcomes

- Prioritize essential services
- Identify key performance indicators to track service delivery levels for operating departments
- Offer comparable service levels at less cost

## Key Performance Indicators

- Percent of service requests completed within the programmatic service standard
- Percent of respondents rating the service provided as good or excellent



## Goals and Initiatives

### *Goal A: Identify and Analyze Essential Services*

1. Establish criteria and identify the highest priority essential services for each department
2. Identify necessary resources to support the high priority services in each department

### *Goal B: Improve Service Delivery through Process Improvements and Data Analysis*

1. Use process and data analysis to improve service delivery and/or reduce service-related costs; explore appropriate technologies
2. Leverage technology to improve processes that require in-person visits
3. Use surveys to assess resident/customer satisfaction with City services
4. Use employee training to improve job performance and customer service
5. Enhance the electronic service request system to ensure service delivery and accountability

### *Goal C: Promote Programmatic Performance Measures and Benchmarks and Report Goals*

1. Enhance ways to assess City programs and services
2. Prepare annual performance reports for each department

### *Goal D: Regularly Communicate with Wheaton Residents and Stakeholders about City Services, Programs, and Initiatives*

1. Enhance social media footprint
2. Develop survey and feedback mechanisms to ensure that communication remains effective



# Strategic Priority 4: Community Safety

## Desired Outcomes

- Continue to prioritize the health, safety and welfare of community
- Increase partnerships that focus on health and safety of Wheaton residents
- Increase community outreach concerning safety and security issues
- Increase the availability of safety statistical data

## Key Performance Indicators

- Fire/Building Insurance Ratings (ISO)
- Number of social service gaps identified
- Number of shared services promoted
- Number of new safety initiatives developed



## Goals and Initiatives

### *Goal A: Promote and Preserve Wheaton as a Safe City*

1. Identify opportunities to enhance public safety through services provided by all City Departments
2. Enhance and strengthen education and outreach initiatives with residents, schools, the Park District, and other city/county service providers, and civic organizations
3. Increase citizen engagement in community safety efforts

### *Goal B: Ensure that City Services Match Community Needs*

1. Strengthen strategies that lead to practices to support the wide range of needs of all residents
2. Identify social service gaps and needs within our diverse populations
3. Promote shared services and partnerships to address local needs



# Strategic Priority 5: Environmental Sustainability

## Desired Outcome

- Develop policies and create programs that preserve the natural environment

## Key Performance Indicators

- Percent change in solid waste tonnage routed to the landfill
- Percent change in the number of residents and businesses that recycle
- Reduce energy expenses and gain efficiencies

## Goals and Initiatives

### *Goal A: Reduce the City's Carbon Footprint*

1. Identify and expand programs to reduce the City's carbon footprint
2. Implement carbon reduction strategies

### *Goal B: Reduce the Amount of Waste Routed to Local Landfills*

1. Educate Citizens and support programs encouraging recycling
2. Promote salvaging usable materials from building demolitions

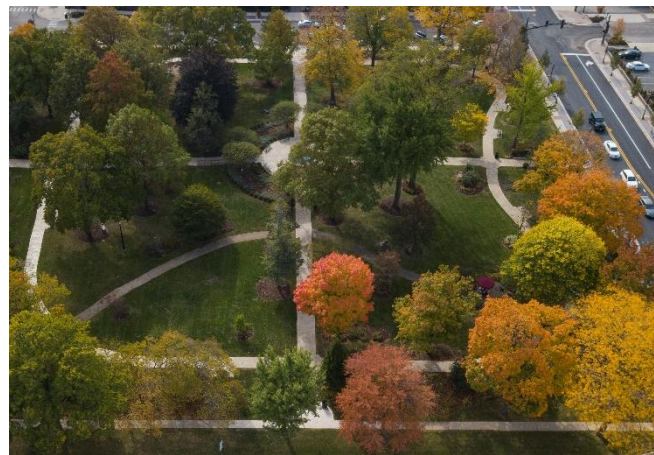
### *Goal C: Lead Efforts to Educate and Inform Wheaton Residents about Environmental Sustainability Opportunities*

1. Develop public information on alternative energy, and biodiversity landscaping
2. Increase the use of composting through programs and education





# Conclusion



## Executive Leadership Team

**Michael Dzugan**  
City Manager

**John Duguay**  
Assistant City Manager

**Susan Bishel**  
Public Information Officer

**Jim Kozik**  
Planning and Economic  
Development Director

**Vince Laoang**  
Public Works Director

**Robert Lehnhardt**  
Finance Director

**Chad Michaelis**  
Information Technology Director

**William Murphy**  
Chief of Police

**William Schultz**  
Fire Chief/Building & Code Director

**Holly Schulz**  
Human Resources Director

**Joseph Tebrugge**  
Engineering Director

This Strategic Plan provides a clear path forward for the City of Wheaton. City leaders are committed to achieving the priorities, goals, and initiatives through the planned allocation of resources over the next five years. An Implementation Action Plan will be used to help guide our actions and progress over time, as City leaders work to accomplish the adopted priorities and goals.

We know that successful implementation will require a collective effort by City employees in all departments. The City of Wheaton is committed to working collaboratively with members of our community and periodically communicating with residents and businesses about how we are doing, how we are going about our work, and how well we are delivering services.

We look forward to working with you to preserve a City that is safe, inclusive and vibrant, connected to the past, and focused on the future.

