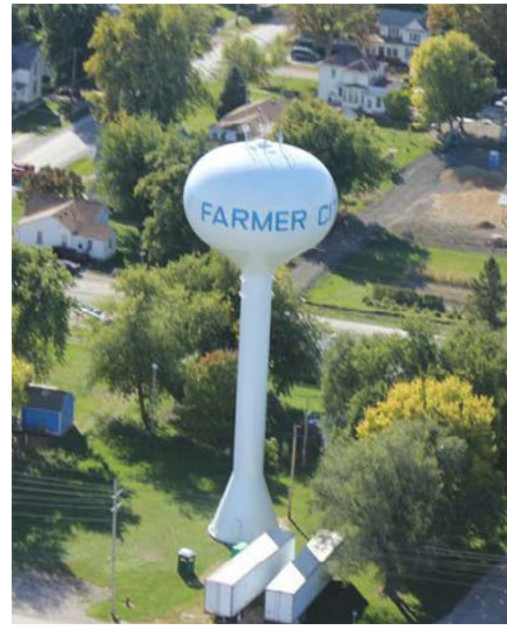


# Executive Summary



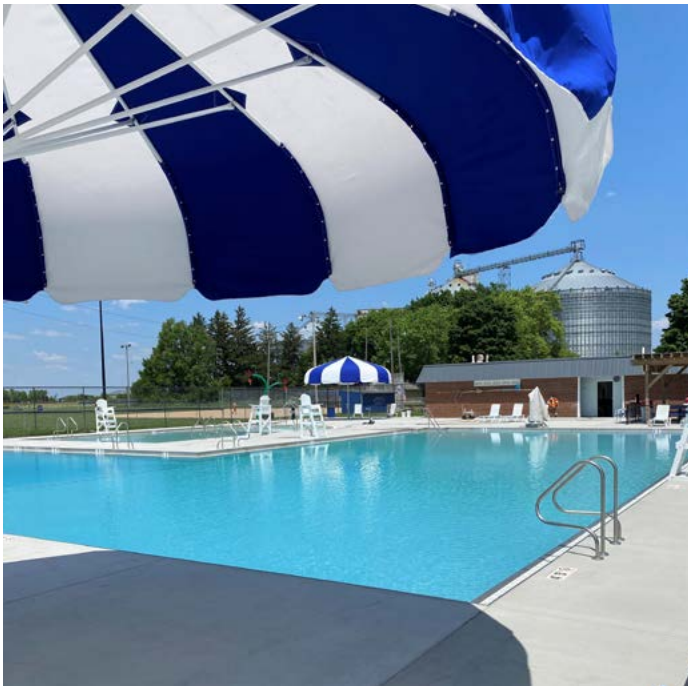
## City of Farmer City

### Strategic Planning and Goal Development Update 2022

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NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

**Center for  
Governmental Studies**

*Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development*



# Executive Summary

Strategic planning is a more effective approach to guiding an organization's future than making decisions issue by issue. As an organization, the City of Farmer City has followed a regular process of establishing goals for the City government and community it serves. In early 2022, the City engaged the Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies (NIU-CGS) to facilitate a strategic planning update process and leadership workshop with Council and senior staff members.

The strategic planning update workshop, held in July 2022, provided a positive atmosphere for the Council and senior staff members to collaboratively review and develop their vision for the City's future. Ultimately, workshop participants created strategic goals focusing on where the City wants to go as an organization in both the short and long term. As was discussed during the workshop, executive-level strategic planning sessions are a staple of good governance and leadership for progressive organizations and are recommended to be done routinely.

## Strategic Goals/Initiatives

After a series of scanning discussions regarding the City's visions for the future, as well as current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges, leadership workshop participants were asked to identify short-and long-term goals. Upon completion of an updated list of goals, participants were then asked to classify each goal according to a matrix model of time and complexity. Agreed upon criteria were used to classify a goal as short or long term and as complex or routine (please see full report for defined criteria).

After the strategic planning workshop, the City Council was asked to delineate, via an online ranking exercise, which goals should be given the highest priority. In total, the group developed six short term routine goals, nine short term complex goals, and ten long term complex goals. The *top three goals* from each category are offered as a process "snapshot" representing the most important strategic goals or priority areas for the Council and staff to address in the months and years ahead (see below). For a full description of all the strategic goals developed, discussed, and ranked, please refer to the full report.

### Top 3 Short Term Routine

- Identify vacant housing/buildings in the City and market them — Explore tear down and rebuild options in town, funding, repurposing, etc.
- Complete water improvements throughout the City
- Improve streetscape and beautification efforts along Main Street including facade matching program

### Top 3 Short Term Complex

- Explore the development of City-owned 20 acres parcel on I-74
- Continue prioritizing and funding infrastructure improvements — Update/repair/maintain roads, water improvements, sidewalks on a regular cycle
- Explore branding/marketing plan for the City — What is Farmer City's niche? Who are we?

### Long Term Routine

- No new long term routine goals were created during the update

### Top 3 Long Term Complex

- Develop a long term sidewalks and streets improvement plan
- Expand housing options — work to overcome landlocked parcels
- Full development of 20 acres on I-74, built out and fully rented/leased

## **Strategic Priority Areas**

Several high-level priorities areas were identified as an outcome of the strategic planning process, and they highlight activities and initiatives that the City should focus on in both the short and long term. The strategic priority areas identified during the process (in no particular order) are illustrated below and include infrastructure improvements, economic advancement, housing development and redevelopment, and branding and marketing.

