



Special City Council Meeting

**Wednesday, October 5, 2011
City Council Chambers
7:00 p.m.**

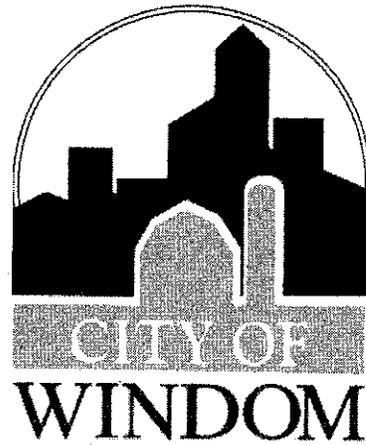
AGENDA

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

1. Long Range Planning and Goal Setting – Springsted, Inc.
2. Old Business
3. New Business
4. Adjourn





City of Windom, Minnesota

Working Draft

Revised Second Version of Framework for Strategies and Goals

For City Council Discussion

October 2011

PERSPECTIVE

The revised second draft of the goals and strategies is a compilation of thoughts, input, and discussion from four distinct sources: 1) city staff internal survey; 2) two community meetings (July 6 and July 11); 3) feedback obtained from the Finding Windom group via their social media contacts; and 4) three City Council work sessions (July 13, July 27, and August 29) which included the Mayor, City Council, members of City Administration and Mari Harries (Finding Windom).

This compilation of information and important municipal topics is meant to stimulate further discussion of the priorities and strategies in anticipation of taking formal action on them in the near future.

At the July 13th City Council meeting the various planning components were outlined and presented. On July 27, the first draft of a document was presented and thoroughly discussed. On August 29, the City Council reviewed second draft. At the next meeting, the City Council moves to the development and implementation phases of your process. Further delving into the strategies and goals and putting the language into more specific, concrete and understandable terms is the objective of the next meeting.

NOTABLE COMMENTS

Thoughts and reflections on the process from the City Council, City Administrator and lead participant Mari Harries.

For a long time now, the City has not had a strategic plan that brings our community together. This is an opportune time to get everyone on the same page. We are a resilient and strong community; this process will help us prepare a road map for our future.

Windom City Council – July 2011

We want this process to develop a shared vision with specific action statements that we can follow and implement. We need a plan that moves us our community forward.

Steve Nasby, Windom City Administrator – July 2011

We have so much to be proud of in Windom. I came home to invest in the future of my community; we need to remove the myth that you have to leave Windom to be successful.

Mari Harries, Finding Windom Group – July 2011

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The following terms are suggested for the planning process. They are defined for practical purposes as follows:

- Vision:** An outcome; a result and an ideal to strive for over a period of time. A destination and long-term community quality and value that requires a resolve and commitment to realize and then to maintain.
- Strategy:** An essential public policy priority which defines the vision and organizes the goals. Typically a five to ten year timeframe; strategies will not change often, if at all.
- Goal:** A significant measurable and desired activity, project or purpose that requires resources. The time commitment in pursuit of goals will vary – they can be succinct and short, but also longer term, even up to five years.
- Action step:** Individual steps and actions that are priorities of the city that are necessary to implement a goal, reach a strategy and strive for your mission. Action steps are continuously evolving and changing as they are completed.

COMMUNITY VISION

The City of Windom is recognized for its rich history and proud community. One of the key determinants of securing a successful long term future is the city’s ability to adapt and respond to ever changing societal, economic and fiscal challenges. The 2011 planning process must be mindful of how these conditions evolve and change in time. Coupled with lingering recessionary impacts and an unpredictable future, both flexibility and creativity must be strong considerations in your planning framework. Towards this end, the City Council identified the following seven (7) elements as a foundation for the City’s future vision.

- Deep sense of pride and community self-esteem
- Connected, engaged, and invested citizens
- Competent, professional and progressive workplace culture
- Promote and cultivate local business retention and development
- Promote, invest and discover the future community leaders
- Commitment to a collaborative future for our community
- Market and brand the traditional values of our community

WINDOM PRIORITIES (STRATEGIES)

These five (5) strategies are created to serve as the foundation to guide city officials in their pursuit of the vision through the day-to-day policy, financial and program actions. A commitment to each – over time – will ensure that the City Council matches its financial resources with the community’s highest priorities.

- I. **Community Pride** A positive image and reputation developed by a progressive and active community.
- II. **Community Vitality** Create a diversified jobs base and a thriving, revitalized downtown square.
- III. **Organizational Culture** Provide high quality public services.
- IV. **Public Facilities** Maintain and upgrade public infrastructure and City facilities pursuant to a defined and prioritized plan.
- V. **Natural Resources** Utilize and market the value and beauty of its land and geography.

Included in the second draft are 10 preliminary goal statements. They incorporate the themes from the input to date and the discussion on July 27 and August 29. The next meeting will review and explore these goal statements for their accuracy, relevancy and appropriateness.

STRATEGY	Number of Preliminary GOALS	Number of ACTION STEPS
Community Pride	2	13
Community Vitality	2	10
Organizational Culture	2	16
Public Facilities	2	11
Natural Resources	2	14



Strategy I

Community Pride: A positive image and reputation developed by a progressive and active community.

Characteristics and descriptions that define this strategy include:

- Market What We Already Have
- Capture the Value of Telecom Assets
- County Seat
- Safe Community
- Variety of Activities Available
- Numerous Recreational Activities
- Educate and Inform the Public
- Involve and Invest in our Youth
- Civic Groups
- Reputation
- Debunk the “Leave Windom” Myth
- First Impressions
- Community Appearance
- Vacant Building Needs
- Painting and Upkeep
- Trash and Junk Image

Goals -- 2

1. A progressive reputation and community pride.

Action Steps:

- a. Support the Finding Windom Group.
- b. Align the goals of different community groups.
- c. Work with local partners to market the Windom Community Center, Arena, Pool, Parks and Windom Recreation Area.
- d. Engage residents of all ages in activities to make Windom an attractive community such as community clean-ups of trash in public areas, volunteer to adopt a park or boulevard, participation in exterior enhancements (e.g. painting program).

2. A positive image.

Action Steps:

- a. Erect welcoming and directional signs in strategic locations in the community.
- b. Upgrade the appearance of public buildings and grounds.
- c. Target the Windom Community Center and grounds as a welcoming point the community, regional groups and residents, and visitors to Windom.
- d. Develop a highway corridor and streetscape plans to clean up and enhance the appearance of the TH 60/71 corridor through landscaping/trees/screening.
- e. Update City code and ordinances to provide tools and resources for the community to improve its appearance and image.
- f. Review time and staffing for additional code enforcement.

- g. Create brochures to market recreation programming, community center and arena facilities, Windom parks, and the pool to current community members, prospective businesses, and future residents.**
- h. Clean up public and private property: Annual Community Pride Day, "Spruce-Up" Week, contests (civic groups), highlight improved properties (newspaper spot), "Adopt a House" Event – for painting and yard maintenance.**
- i. Encourage commercial property owners to refresh their building facades.**



Strategy II

Community Vitality: Create a diversified jobs base and a thriving, revitalized downtown square.

Characteristics and descriptions that define this strategy include:

- Create a new business climate
- Use broadband network as a resource
- Support the EDA
- Highway Access
- Location between Minneapolis and Sioux Falls
- Agriculture Assets
- Land and open spaces
- Revitalize town square
- More family businesses
- Motel needs
- More restaurants
- Small steps matter a lot

Goals – 2

1. Attract and prioritize a diversified jobs base.

Action Steps:

- a. Support the EDA in its programs to seek out potential commercial and industrial prospects.
- b. Retain and grow existing industries.
- c. Develop and execute a branding and marketing plan that maximizes the value of the City's assets including broadband network and location (on major highways between Minneapolis and Sioux Falls).
- d. Network with DEED and other state/regional organizations for exposure.
- e. Partner with the WADC in an economic development strategy for retail.
- f. High quality, cost-effective utility services that encourage growth and development.
- g. Promote Windom's businesses and recreational opportunities, including the Windom Recreation Area, Windom Community Center, Arena and pool to prospective businesses, visitors, and non-resident users.

2. A thriving, revitalized downtown square and commercial corridor.

Action Steps:

- a. **Prepare a list of property (building) owners in the downtown square; communicate with owners to understand the reasons for vacancies and motives of the absentee landowners.**
- b. **Partner with WADC, WACC, and other civic groups to develop strategies to encourage new business in the downtown area specifically. .**
- c. **Utilize vacant store fronts building space for signage and information purposes.**



Strategy III

Organizational Culture: Provide high quality public services.

Characteristics and descriptions that define this strategy include:

- Deliver cost-effective and efficient utility services
- Maintain quality city staff
- Internal communication
- Find ways to retain quality people, utilize employees' suggestions and abilities, and improve morale
- Public Safety Services
- Parks and Parks Programming
- Location of state and federal offices
- Outreach to business community
- Improved interaction with county, school district and community groups
- Student representative as liaison on the City Council
- Enhance and improve the website
- Look at new ways of doing business
- Cultural change underway – transitioning from old to new
- Other Facilities - Cemeteries

Goals – 2

1. Deliver high quality public services.

Action Steps:

- a. Research equipment, operations and procedures to enhance delivery of the most efficient and cost-effective utility services.
- b. Streamline the services that the City of Windom provides to its residents to provide those services that benefit the most citizens.
- c. Deliver electric power and energy that are both reliable and economical from the lowest cost available resources.
- d. Deliver quality water service and maintain the wastewater system for residential, commercial and industrial users in the most effective manner and at the most cost-effective prices.
- e. Provide a friendly, well-kept, and clean atmosphere for all customers, visitors, and guests at the Windom Community Center.
- f. Emphasize continuing education for staff in City departments, as applicable, to retain required certifications/licenses and to gain information regarding new and improved methods for delivery of services.

- g. Improve internal communication with city staff, utilize employees' special abilities, and encourage submission of ideas and suggestions for improved procedures and delivery of services.**
 - h. Seek to enhance team work among departments and the sense of collaboration within the workplace.**
 - i. Hold team-building and customer service training for all City of Windom employees and council members.**
 - j. Obtain staff input concerning policies and procedures, research ways to improve employee morale, and explore networking and appreciation events for employees.**
- 2. Maintain lines of communication with other governmental offices, schools, the business community, and community groups.**

Action Steps:

- a. Hold regular meetings with representatives from other public entities (county, schools, local state and federal government offices).**
- b. Work with the school district to place a student representative as a liaison to the City Council.**
- c. Encourage school government/civic classes to become familiar with city services through the city's website and also to follow city council activities via public broadcasts and council agendas and minutes.**
- d. Presentations to community groups concerning the workings of city departments.**
- e. Seek citizen input concerning city services, facilities and programs. Continue to review all customer rental surveys submitted by customers of the Windom Community Center.**
- f. Work with Community Education to create additional programming and activities that will utilize indoor and outdoor spaces that exist in the community. Place a liaison on both boards and commissions.**



Strategy IV

Public Facilities: Maintain and upgrade public infrastructure and city facilities pursuant to a defined prioritized plan.

Characteristics and descriptions that define this strategy include:

- Develop a maintenance plan for public infrastructure and city facilities
- Prioritize upgrades to equipment and facilities
- Prioritize capital improvements, such as fire hall, dam, community center, pool, arena and library
- Research resources to plan and finance capital improvements
- Seek creative financing tools
- Discuss the current assessment policy
- Explore other sources of revenue

Goals -- 2

1. Implement a capital improvement plan.

Action Steps:

- a. Update, enhance and formalize the capital improvement plan.
- b. Work with city staff, engineers and consultants to develop plans and schedules for maintaining and upgrading public infrastructure and city facilities.
- c. Annual upgrade program for electrical infrastructure, including the burying of electric lines where possible.
- d. Upgrade water and wastewater facilities as required and needed to enhance the delivery of services to the residential, commercial and industrial users in Windom.
- e. Maintain and upgrade the Windom Community Center to make it the premiere event center for meetings and receptions.
- f. Revisit the 2007 Pool Feasibility Study to determine what actions should be taken regarding upgrading or replacing the existing pool facility.
- g. Prioritize improvements to the Windom Recreation Area and continue fundraising activities.

2. Develop resources and funding available for capital improvements.

Action Steps:

- a. Research available resources for planning and financing capital improvements.
- b. Research and study the possibility of a local option sales tax.
- c. Research and study the possibility of franchise fees including storm water and street lights.
- d. Evaluate current utility billing for conversion to e-payments through the City's website.



Strategy V

Natural Resources: Utilize and market the value and beauty of its land and geography.

Characteristics and descriptions that define this strategy include:

- Community has evolved around the river
- Utilize value of river
- Outdoor Activities
- Trails and Bike Paths
- Camp Sites
- Fishing
- Hunting
- Clean-up activities
- Pest Control
- Weeds

Goals – 2

1. Utilize and market Windom's land and beauty.

Action Steps:

- a. Protect Windom's natural resources.
- b. Continue to meet effluent standards set by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for flows into the West Fork of the Des Moines River and continue to meet goals set forth by the Minnesota Department of Health for Windom's wellhead protection areas.
- c. Plan an outdoor garden and wedding area on the Community Center grounds which overlook the beauty of Cottonwood Lake and promote use.
- d. Work with the Parks and Recreation Commission and community members to organize a community group to assist with the planning of the Des Moines River Valley Trail.
- e. Explore grants for trails, bikeways and paths.
- f. Develop a plan for enhancing Island Park facilities and services.
- g. Upgrade existing parks and public facilities.
- h. Market and brand Windom as an outdoor destination and to increase the use by citizens and visitors.

- i. Market use of Windom's facilities.
- j. Research options for pest and weed control.

2. Markets Windom's geographic location.

Action Steps:

- a. Market the river and local lakes for fishing opportunities.
- b. Market local hunting areas.
- c. Encourage community groups to market Windom's motels, restaurants, and businesses to sports enthusiasts.
- d. Work with the MN DOT to move ahead improvements to TH60.

NEXT STEPS

The following represent ideas for the next steps in the process. The importance of each can be discussed and then prioritized in the upcoming City Council discussions.

- 1) Present the plan to the City Council for action
- 2) Communicate the plan to the staff and general public

Ideas to consider for communicating the plan include:

- Staff briefings
- Electronic messages (emails)
- Website
- News articles
- Incorporate into memos and background material

- 3) Incorporate the information into ongoing work with the Council

Ideas to incorporate the information into the Council's business include:

- Alter the City Council agenda format and how information is organized and structured
- Schedule periodic updates and reviews (quarterly)
- Hold periodic work sessions on selected topics
- Identify Capital Projects and formalize CIP

- 4) Update and revisit on an annual basis. Adopt new goals and action steps.