



Strategic Plan Framework Conceptual Phase

Introduction

This paper outlines preliminary ideas for each of the components to be included in Naperville's Strategic Plan. These ideas are informed by consultant research, conversations with elected officials and city staff, and results of the NapervilleNext Community Survey.

Strategic planning processes are meant to be iterative - as the planning process progresses, the components will be discussed, refined, and brought into focus. Though it can seem repetitive, there is value in the discussion and establishing a solid foundation of consensus on priorities.

This framework document summarizes input received to date, suggests themes or direction, and describes next steps for each component of the Strategic Plan listed below:

- Community Vision
- Core Values
- Mission Statement
- Goals and Strategies

All ideas proposed here are preliminary and the second City Council workshop will provide the opportunity to further refine and direct the structure of the Plan.

Strategic Plan Component 1: Community Vision

A community vision describes the future in idealistic and aspirational terms. Its timeframe is typically 10 years or more. By definition, the community vision cannot be realized by municipal government alone; it is a vision for the community as a whole. Knowing the community's vision helps the City define its role.

During the Discovery Phase, input for the community vision was collected from the public, elected officials, and city staff.

NapervilleNext Survey - Top 5 Responses to "What do you want to be able to say about Naperville 10 years from now?" *Important terms appear in bold.*

- Naperville's **strong neighborhoods** are accessible to **parks, schools, goods and services**, and are places where people feel **safe** and are **connected** to each other.

- Naperville is a place where I am **welcome** and can **access opportunity**, a place where **discrimination and biases are purposefully addressed**.
- Healthy and Active – Our **world-class health services** and second-to-none **recreational opportunities** allow residents of all ages to **thrive physically, socially and emotionally**.
- Infrastructure - City investment in **infrastructure** is paying off, **attracting businesses and investment** of all kinds.
- Place – Naperville is a place people want to **live, work, and play**; **gathering places** and **unique points of interest** draw both locals and visitors.

At their June workshop and in their pre-workshop survey, elected officials and city staff echoed many of these ideas, emphasizing:

- Economic **opportunity** for businesses/residents/employers and employees
- **People and community**
- Civic engagement and **inclusion**, being a **welcoming** place
- **First-class amenities, including city services**
- **Safety**
- **Resilience**, defined broadly as the ability to bounce back from adversity

Taken together, themes to consider for Naperville's vision are:

- First-class
Naperville wants to be the best.
- Welcoming and Inclusive
Naperville is open and inclusive, balancing its identity as a premier community with a sense of welcome and belonging for all.
- Connected
Naperville is place where people connect with each other and have easy access to amenities that offer a high quality of life.
- Abundant Opportunity
Businesses large and small will thrive in Naperville. The robust local economy ensures that daily needs are fully met. All residents have access to the opportunities and amenities the community offers.
- Strong/Resilient
Resilience implies strength through adversity – whether adversity is climate change, natural disasters, economic downturns, or social unrest.

Next Steps in Developing Community Vision

At their next workshop, consultant will work with Council to solidify themes and review a draft vision statement.

Strategic Plan Component 2: Mission Statement

A mission statement is a statement of an organization's purpose, the reason it exists. While the community vision for Naperville considers the community as a whole, the mission statement is exclusively focused on city government.

In 2019, the City adopted a mission statement that will be incorporated into the Strategic Plan:

To provide services that ensure a high quality of life, sound fiscal management, and a dynamic business environment, while creating an inclusive community that values diversity.

This mission statement is considered final. No further action is needed.

Strategic Plan Component 3: Core Values

Core values are enduring, passionate, and distinctive core beliefs. They are why people do what they do and what they stand for. Naperville has an existing set of core values that will be included in the Strategic Plan.

People:

We value each other as professionals working together to provide quality services. We strive for a rewarding work environment through teamwork, professional development, and employee recognition.

Respect:

We treat each other with dignity, courtesy, and compassion.

Trust:

We build trust and credibility through professional interactions, honest communications, and a caring attitude.

Pride:

We are driven to provide exceptional service and believe our achievements and successes reflect our work ethic.

Next Steps in Discussing Core Values

At their next workshop, City Council members will engage in a facilitated exercise to discuss current core values for City government and whether any additional values should be added. In a second exercise, they will apply the core values to the six critical issues and consider the approaches (strategies) that result.

Strategic Plan Component 4: Goals and Strategies

Goals are long-term desired results. Strategies provide direction toward achieving the goals and move the community toward its vision.

Six critical issues were identified through the Discovery Phase. These issues were brought to the June workshops with elected officials and city staff to explore trends that might impact them and how the City might respond. It is anticipated that these six critical issues will be addressed by goals in the strategic plan.

The six critical issues are:

- Economy
- Infrastructure and Utilities
- Sustainability
- Housing Choice
- Safety and Security
- Governance and Finance

Each critical issue is discussed below including its context, a significant trend to consider that impacts the issue, and direction for goals and strategies.

Economy

Context

Naperville's economy is strong despite the pandemic. Staff from the Naperville Development Partnership (NDP) report that by last summer, most businesses were rebounding after re-opening following lockdowns due to the pandemic. An exception is tourism which has been slower to come back, making for a more significant and long-lasting impact on hotel business and associated revenues. Supply chain issues also have been affecting the automobile industry which is a major contributor to Naperville's tax base. NDP notes that Naperville is nearly completely built out so land for development is limited. It will be important for Naperville to maintain a diverse tenant mix and protect its commercial property to preserve the City's revenue base.

NapervilleNext Community Survey Insight

Results to an initial set of questions in the NapervilleNext Community Survey provide community input on important aspects of strategic planning: strengths (Q4), challenges (Q5), and preferred (vision) statements related to Naperville's future (Q3).¹ Summary results related to the economy are shared below.

¹ Strengths and challenges report input from responses 1-10 on Q4 and Q5. Vision ideas report key terms in top 5 responses to Q3. For more information on survey results, a survey report is available.

Economy Strengths	Economy Challenges	Economy Vision Ideas
K-12 Education (#1) Downtown (#2)	Business Growth (#8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible to goods and services • Access to opportunity • Live, work, and play

Trend to Consider

During their June workshop, Council received a presentation on trends related to the critical issues. Afterwards, they voted on which trend would have the greatest impact on each issue. The retail trend identified as most important was: Retail is not dead; it's evolving.

Direction/Potential Strategies

Current strategies should continue including retaining existing businesses and attracting new business, promoting Naperville to potential visitors, and redevelopment of Ogden Avenue and big box store locations. As part of Naperville's efforts to be more welcoming and inclusive, strategies might also consider whether there are barriers to economic opportunity and how to address them. In small group discussions during the workshop, elected officials suggested: ensuring zoning balances the need to allow new types of business (like showrooms) with the need to maintain the City's sales tax base and diversifying sources of sales tax revenue.

Infrastructure and Utilities

Context

A majority of the City's roads, bridges, and sidewalks are in good or satisfactory condition. Naperville's buried assets, particularly its water utility, are in need of renewal and upgrades in order to maintain service levels. The Springbrook Water Reclamation Center is also in need of upgrades to meet regulatory requirements. Rate studies for both Water and Electric are underway to consider cost factors that could affect rates and determine an appropriate rate structure. The City is also monitoring pending state energy legislation with potential impact on Naperville's power supply.

NapervilleNext Community Survey Insight

Infrastructure Strengths	Infrastructure Challenges	Infrastructure Vision Ideas
Walking and biking (#8)	Traffic (#1) Aging Infrastructure (#6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in infrastructure • Attracting businesses and investment • Connected

Trend to Consider

Infrastructure is aging.

Direction/Potential Strategies

Continue City's practice of ongoing investment in infrastructure to support community well-being and economic growth. Revisit Downtown streetscape project, as other surrounding communities have upgraded downtown areas, to maintain function and aesthetics of Downtown and keep it competitive. Continue to monitor pending energy legislation and advocate for support for affected ratepayers. Additional strategies identified during council workshop included: complete phosphorous upgrades at the water treatment plant, upgrade the water main distribution system, invest in cyber-security to protect against threats, and explore alternative energy sources.

Sustainability

Context

Naperville is in the process of reviewing its current sustainability efforts and determining priorities. The Naperville Environmental and Sustainability Task Force (NEST) released its Sustainable Naperville 2036 report last year, calling attention to the need for more sustainable energy sources to mitigate climate change and recommending actions the City and others can take in response. A Sustainability Coordinator was recently hired, providing dedicated staff to drive sustainability activities for the first time.

Community Insights

Sustainability advocates in Naperville have rightfully pointed out that the NapervilleNext Survey did not offer answer categories for sustainability in its questions on what is most important/vision (Q3) community strengths (Q4), and community weaknesses (Q5). Through responses to the survey's open-ended question (Q19), it is clear that sustainability is important to the community. Public input gathered during NESTs's Sustainable Naperville 2036 report also documents considerable community support for sustainability initiatives.

Trend to Consider

Increasing risk of disruption to energy grid and long-term planning for climate change mitigation .

Direction/Potential Strategies

To be determined. The City's last sustainability plan, completed in 2010, has been implemented and new goals are needed. A sustainability workshop with City Council is scheduled for late August which will shape the direction of the City's sustainability program and incorporated into the Strategic Plan. During their small group discussions at the June workshop, Council members confirmed the need to explore alternative energy sources and suggested involving community representatives in discussions on future direction.

Housing Choice

Context

Naperville is in the midst of important conversations on housing choice. The Comprehensive Plan Update (adoption pending) observed that because Naperville is

fully developed, there is a need to diversify housing in order to accommodate future growth. Elected officials and city staff, as well as the public, have engaged thoroughly with this challenging issue through deliberations on the Comprehensive Plan Update, the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (2017), the Housing Needs Assessment Study and Affordable Housing Workplan (2020), and last month's Council workshop on Inclusionary Zoning.

NapervilleNext Community Survey Insight

Housing Strengths	Housing Challenges	Housing Vision Ideas
Neighborhoods (#6)	Housing options for all (#3) Attracting/Keeping young adults (#7) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong neighborhoods • Live, work, and play

Trend to Consider

Affordability and lifestyle changes will drive people to different types of housing.

Direction/Potential Strategies

Continue to explore ways to provide housing options in Naperville including choices for seniors and housing choices to keep and attract young adults. Establish a definition for affordable housing that will guide policy development. Focus efforts on voluntary alternatives to Inclusionary Zoning such as density bonuses and fee-in-lieu options. Prioritize strategies and actions to preserve Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH). The Strategic Plan will incorporate strategies identified through work with housing consultant (SB Friedman) and approved by Council. Additional strategies identified by elected officials during their June workshop include: consider use of micro-apartments and provide information to the community about the benefits of housing choice.

Safety and Security

Context

Naperville is a very safe place compared to others - violent crime and property crime are well below national averages and have decreased in the last decade.³ Recent events have contributed to an increase in the perception of crime, namely, rising crime in the nearby City of Chicago and protests in Naperville over the last year where some protestors became destructive.

Like police and fire departments nationwide, Naperville is actively working on its relationship with and safety of communities of color and increasing training in mental

² Housing is not the only factor in the challenge of keeping/attracting young adults but it often comes up in conversations around housing needs.

³ Source: Naperville Police Department Annual Report, 2019

health and de-escalation. These efforts have been underway for some time and will continue.

NapervilleNext Community Survey Insight

Safety Strengths	Safety Challenges	Safety Vision Ideas
Safe community (#3)	Addiction and mental health (#4) Crime (#5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safe (and connected)• Thrive physically, social, and emotionally.

Trend to Consider

Technological advances will help improve the safety of the public but also put it at greater risk.

Direction/Potential Strategies

Strategies for Police and Fire in the Strategic Plan will rely heavily on their recently completed department-level strategic plans so the planning efforts are aligned. Additional strategies identified by elected officials during their June workshop include: continue to invest in information technology staff to support operations (such as body cameras) and the need to continue training for public safety personnel.

Governance and Finance

Governing is having the authority to conduct the policy, actions, and affairs of the City. *Governance* considers how that work gets done – how decisions are made, how services are executed, and how the City's support functions (information technology, human resources, finance, and administration), serve the organization. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are important aspects of governance that the City has placed increasing emphasis on recently. A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Manager was hired earlier this year and is in the process of defining ways the City can grow into its mission statement which calls for “creating an inclusive community that values diversity.”

Naperville is served by a high-performing staff that is often sought after by others for their best practices. The City's budget is very healthy. Like all cities in Illinois, Naperville's revenue structure relies heavily on sales tax and is vulnerable to its volatility. The fiscal health of the State of Illinois, as the conduit for much of sales tax revenue, adds additional uncertainty that is beyond the City's control, underscoring the need for sound financial management.

With regard to decision-making and public policy development, Naperville is noteworthy in a couple of ways.

- First, public engagement is high but often comes from single contributors and often through social media. In social media or an email from a single contributor, it is uncertain as to whether the views expressed are those of single individual, a group, or a majority. It is worth considering a policy for how to

respond to single contributors respectfully but not acting upon their input without vetting the ideas and suggestions they raise with a larger group.

- Second, governance in Naperville is noteworthy in the way the Council interacts with staff. Compared to other communities the consultant has worked with, ***Naperville staff is more responsive to elected official requests.*** While this could be considered an asset in some ways, it can negatively impact on general operations. Without some gatekeeping to moderate the pace and nature of requests, which often require considerable staff time, staff can be pulled in too many directions to perform at their best. ***This is particularly problematic when requests relate to policy issues that have not been given from a Council consensus.*** Though Council members are very much within their rights to put forward such requests, the issue is worthy of discussion to consider whether some moderation would be worthwhile to free up staff time for top priorities.

NapervilleNext Community Survey Insight

Gov./Finance Strengths	Gov./Finance Challenges	Gov./Finance Vision Ideas
Diversity and Inclusion (#9) Festivals and Events (#10)	Diversity and Inclusion (#2) Sense of Community (#10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome• Discrimination and bias are purposefully addressed• Gathering places and unique points of interest⁴

Trend to Consider

Citizens expect high levels of service and stable tax rates.

Direction/Potential Strategies

Commitment to financial principles should continue. The Strategic Plan should be used to set priorities and develop a framework to evaluate future decisions. Ways to improve communication and workflow between Council and staff should be explored. Strategies to establish procedures for gathering and applying public input should be discussed. Strategies for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will rely on recommendations from Naperville's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion manager and the results of her community outreach..

Additional strategies suggested by elected officials during their June workshop include: prioritize basic city services, communicate the positive work the City does in the community, continue to provide high quality services, and convey the importance and power of diversity and diverse perspectives to the community as a whole.

⁴ Gathering places and unique points of interest are not just the purview of governance. They are included here because they relate to the City's support for events and public art.

Next Steps in Developing Goals and Strategies

At their next workshop, Council will be asked how to define success for each of the critical issues, which will become the basis for wording of goal statements. In a separate exercise, Council will apply the core values to the six critical issues and consider the approaches (strategies) that result.

Concluding Remarks

In a community that is already successful by many measures, what is next?

Naperville is a thriving community, recognized within the City and beyond as a highly desirable place to live, to do business, and to visit. Naperville already has many of the features other communities aspire to: great schools, a bustling downtown, abundant parks and recreational opportunities, and safe and beautiful neighborhoods to name only a few.

Competition for businesses and residents is steep in the Chicago Metro area. Ongoing improvement is needed to maintain Naperville's position relative to peers and keep that advantage as demographics change and consumer preferences shift in the coming years. The Strategic Plan is an opportunity to determine how Naperville will distinguish itself and an opportunity to affirm the City's commitment to excellence, not only in the quality of services but how it does business. And it is an opportunity to continue important dialogue on how to make the quality of life Naperville is known for available to all.

Appendix A

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

STRENGTHS

What are the community's strengths?

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- **K-12 Schools**
- Downtown
- **Safe Community**
- Parks and Recreation Amenities
- Public Library System
- **Neighborhoods**
- Health Care
- Walking and Biking
- Diversity and Inclusion
- **Festivals and Events**

Other Council Strengths mentioned
Services
Attractive to businesses
Mix of businesses
People who care about the community
Spirit of volunteerism

- Traffic
- **Diversity and Inclusion**
- **Housing Options for All**
- Addiction and Mental Health
- Crime
- Aging Infrastructure
- Attracting/Keeping Young Adults
- Business Growth
- Aging Population
- Sense of Community

Other Council Weaknesses mentioned
Divisiveness on viewpoints
Affordability
Maintenance community

W

Weaknesses

What are the community's weaknesses?

Sources

The Strengths and Weaknesses listed are the final top 10 results from the Naperville Community Survey with overlapping council survey responses highlighted in bold.

Opportunities and Threats were identified through pre-workshop surveys completed by staff and council feedback.

OPPORTUNITIES

What opportunities do community members need to capitalize on in the next three years?



- Invest in infrastructure
- American Rescue Plan funds
- Make Naperville more walkable and bikeable
- Make Naperville more environmentally friendly
- Save NOAH
- More inclusion practices
- Strong leadership

- Realistic affordable housing
- Housing
- Safe affordable housing
- Sustainability
- Crime
- Climate Change
- Traffic
- IMEA contract
- Obstructionism



Threats

What challenges will the community face over the next three years?