



**CITY OF HASTINGS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
2021-2023**

Adopted by the Hastings City Council on September 6, 2021

2021 Q4 PROGRESS REPORT

VISIT [HASTINGSMN.GOV/STRATEGICPLANNING](https://www.hastingsmn.gov/strategicplanning) FOR PRIORITIES & QUARTERLY REPORTS

| Q4 2021 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Strategic Priority | Initiative | Accomplishments |
| People, Processes, Infrastructure, and Finance | 1.1 Multi-Year Financial Model | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identified inflationary assumptions and capital expenditures ✓ Continued to project revenue estimates ✓ Updated model with the final budget |
| | 1.2 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Several attended THRIVE's "Creating a better story for Hastings" DEI sessions ✓ Expanded outreach to people who are not often heard from via online resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Online resources (such as presentations, design summary, assessment information, project maps, online communications forms) during COVID to reach more residents ○ Encouraging 1-on-1 meetings via phone, Zoom, or in person with City Staff to make comments and questions available and convenient to all ○ Started using School District's Peach Jar online tool to reach families. |
| Community Image and Public Engagement | 2.1 Strategic Communications Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continued stakeholder meetings ✓ Expanded Rivertown News to a quarterly newsletter |
| | 2.2 Tourism Funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Applied for and received funding for a \$5,000 grant from Explore Mn to increase online marketing for winter and spring tourism campaigns. ✓ Reviewed metrics from Fall marketing campaign; currently developing Choose Your Winter in Hastings campaign ✓ Updated the annual Visitor Guide in September ✓ Initiated conversations with O'Rourke Media Group to update printed trail maps, including an expanded trail map that includes the Point Douglas Trail and connection to the Greenway Trails that will highlight the top 10 |

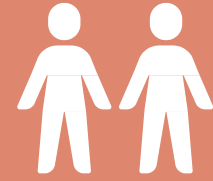
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|----------------------------------|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> trail attractions. ✓ Regularly review the U of M tourism study and use the suggested target markets and other ideas for marketing plans ✓ Regularly update tourism attractions and events up-to-date with Explore MN to take advantage of their robust email distribution list. ✓ Will send two chamber staff to the Explore Minnesota Annual Conference in March. |
| Parks and Public Spaces | 3.1 Parks and Public Space Beautification | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Budgeted for Louis Lane Ponding Basin – FMR grant, pollinator friendly ✓ Budgeted and posted Parkskeeper position |
| | 3.2 Vermillion Street Corridor Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MNDOT hiring HR Green ✓ Scope of study increased to be more comprehensive and technically sound ✓ HEDRA Block 28 acquisitions, focus on redevelopment for that area ✓ Façade grant program includes Vermillion ✓ Private projects – Jersey Mikes, Schlomkas, Pool & Spa - continued investment |
| | 3.3 Lake Rebecca/Lake Isabel Parks Renovations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Held Corps of Engineers habitat management meeting in November to discuss invasive species. ✓ Lake Isabel Grant-Received preliminary approval; awaiting final approval by National Park Service ✓ New playground equipment ordered for Lake Isabel ✓ Design completed for Lake Isabel |
| Housing and Economic Development | 4.1 Downtown Special Service District | Delayed to Q12022 |
| | | |

| *Future Topics | | |
|--|--|--|
| Develop an internal communication strategy focused on council/staff communications | 2.1 Strategic Communications Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Departmental work sessions with the City Council to gain deeper knowledge ✓ Developed 3-plus Thursday weekly emails to keep Council abreast of important topics ✓ Expanded meetings with the Mayor and City Administrator ✓ City Administrator meeting with Councilmembers prior to each meeting. |
| Continue to Improve environmental sustainability of City operations. | 1 People, Process, Infrastructure, & Finance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Purchased a hybrid squad, electric Zamboni ✓ Explored battery powered small equipment for parks and PW ✓ Installed solar lights at dog park ✓ Exploring federal funding ✓ Held House Capital Investment Committee tour to request funding for rooftop solar panels on the arena. |
| Incorporate elements of the HPAAC Arts & Culture Plan into City goals and initiatives. | 2. Community Image and Public Engagement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Renewed Arts Task Force and appointed 8 members in Jan 2022. |
| Install new welcome sign on Hwy 55 | 2. Community Image and Public Engagement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Removed old sign by the library |
| Stimulate job creation in Hastings. | 4. Housing and Economic Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Quality One expansion ✓ Fleet Farm to open and provide jobs ✓ Smaller retail and new businesses |
| Complete a full housing inventory analysis to guide development strategy. | 4. Housing and Economic Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Report completed January 2019 ✓ Housing continues to happen, develop ✓ CC workshop w/ <u>CDA held 12/20</u> |

*Denotes ideas put forward by City Council members as important, but not yet added to the strategic initiatives. As initiatives are completed, additional initiatives will move up as priority initiatives, based on Council approval. See pages 17-18 of this report for a list of all Future Topics.

1. PEOPLE, PROCESSES, INFRASTRUCTURE & FINANCE

1.1 Develop a multi-year financial model to improve planning and long-term stability for the City.



End state: A functioning multi-year operational financial model that consistently captures and communicates projected expenses, investments, and revenue streams to city leaders, staff, and citizens.

Accomplishments:

Q4 2021

- ✓ Identified inflationary assumptions and capital expenditures
- ✓ Continued to project revenue estimates
- ✓ Updated model with the final budget

| Milestone | Responsible Leader(s) | Date | Status |
|--|-----------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Analyze preliminary budget | Finance Manager | Sept 2021 | Completed |
| Identify inflationary increases | Finance Manager | 4Q21 | Completed |
| Identify one-time capital expenditures | Finance Manager | 4Q21 | Completed, review Jan 2022 |
| Identify projected revenue | Finance Manager | 4Q21 | In Progress |
| Update model with final budget | Finance Manager | Dec 2021 | Completed |
| Identify looming operating, debt, and capital needs. | Management Team | 1Q22 | In Progress |
| Report model to Finance Committee | Finance Manager | 1Q22 | Not Started |
| Update projections prior to annual budget cycle | Finance Manager | May 2022 | Not Started |

1. PEOPLE, PROCESSES, INFRASTRUCTURE & FINANCE

1.2 Enhance diversity, equity and inclusion in City processes and operations and continue to improve Hastings as a welcoming community for all.



End state: A Hastings city government and community that honor, respect, and practice diversity, equity, and inclusion as lived values.

Accomplishments:

Q4 2021

- ✓ Several attended THRIVE’s “Creating a better story for Hastings” DEI sessions
- ✓ Expanded outreach to people who are not often heard from via online resources
 - Online resources (such as presentations, design summary, assessment information, project maps, online communications forms) during COVID to reach more residents
 - Encouraging 1-on-1 meetings via phone, Zoom, or in person with City Staff to make comments and questions available and convenient to all
 - Started using School District’s Peach Jar online tool to reach families.

| Milestone | Responsible Leader(s) | Date | Status |
|---|----------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Create a Workplace Culture that Prioritizes Equity and Inclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase diversity in hiring • Increase retention of employees • Increase DEI training for staff and officials | Human Resources Department Heads | Ongoing | In Progress |
| Engage More People Who Are Not Often Heard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit feedback and input from diverse audience • Create opportunities for advisory and commission engagement by diverse residents of the City | Department Heads | Ongoing | In Progress |
| Increase Experience of Hastings as Welcoming for All <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue strategic partnerships with community organizations • Create marketing campaign to promote diverse perspectives | Department Heads | Ongoing | In Progress |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase public art, culture and history projects focusing on diverse communities | | | |
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2. COMMUNITY IMAGE & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

2.1 Develop a strategic communications plan that reaches multiple and diverse audiences

End state: A communications infrastructure that shares the City’s story with its various stakeholders, enables the City to disseminate accurate information in emergencies, promotes economic development and reaches underserved or underrepresented populations in the City.

Accomplishments:

Q4 2021

- ✓ Continued stakeholder meetings
- ✓ Expanded Rivertown News to a quarterly newsletter
- ✓ Held two departmental work sessions with the City Council to gain deeper knowledge
- ✓ Developed 3-plus Thursday weekly emails to keep Council abreast of important topics
- ✓ Expanded meetings with the Mayor and City Administrator
- ✓ City Administrator meeting with Councilmembers prior to each meeting.

| Milestone | Responsible Leader(s) | Date | Status |
|--|---|------------------|-------------|
| Define the story, key audiences and messaging for each | Management Team and Communications Coordinator | 2Q22 | In Progress |
| Review metrics and analytics to evaluate content and channels | Communications Coordinator | 2Q22 and ongoing | In Progress |
| Assess and build internal communications processes and procedures | City Council, Management Team, and Communications Coordinator | 3-4Q21 | In Progress |
| Assess and build an external communications strategy (strategies for target audiences) | Communications Coordinator | 3Q22 | Not Started |
| Assess and build an emergency management/crisis communications plan | Public Safety and Communications Coordinator | TBD | Not Started |
| Assess and build strategy for under-represented populations | Communications Coordinator with partners | 3Q22 | Not Started |
| Assess and improve the user experience with the City’s website | Communications Coordinator | Ongoing | In Progress |

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| Review and amend communications-related policies and procedures (web, social media, media relations, event policies, and processes) | Communications Coordinator | 4Q22 | Not Started |
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2. COMMUNITY IMAGE & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

2.2 Find new funding streams to stimulate tourism in collaboration with Tourism Bureau/Chamber of Commerce. This initiative includes leveraging partnerships and maximizing return on investment.

Accomplishments:

Q4 2021

- ✓ Applied for and received funding for a \$5,000 grant from Explore Mn to increase online marketing for winter and spring tourism campaigns.
- ✓ Reviewed metrics from Fall marketing campaign; currently developing Choose Your Winter in Hastings campaign
- ✓ Updated the annual Visitor Guide in September
- ✓ Initiated conversations with O'Rourke Media Group to update printed trail maps, including an expanded trail map that includes the Point Douglas Trail and connection to the Greenway Trails that will highlight the top 10 trail attractions.
- ✓ Regularly review the U of M tourism study and use the suggested target markets and other ideas for marketing plans
- ✓ Regularly update tourism attractions and events up-to-date with Explore MN to take advantage of their robust email distribution list.
- ✓ Will send two chamber staff to the Explore Minnesota Annual Conference in March.

End state: New funding sources for promoting tourism leads to a measurable increase in tourism over pre-COVID levels.

| Milestone | Responsible Leader(s) | Date | Status |
|--|--------------------------|------------------|---|
| Review existing marketing and communications | City and Chamber/Tourism | 4Q21 | In Progress |
| Review U of M tourism study | City and Chamber/Tourism | 4Q21 | Already utilize in planning |
| Identify alternate revenue sources | City and Chamber/Tourism | 1Q22 and Ongoing | In Progress |
| Continue using free resources such as press releases, online event calendars, or online rating | Chamber/Tourism staff | Ongoing | In Progress |
| Continue lead generation to build email database for future marketing. | Chamber/Tourism staff | Ongoing | Currently updating all events via Explore MN and using their email distribution |

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| | | | lists |
| Send Chamber/Tourism staff to Explore Minnesota annual conference | Chamber/Tourism staff | Feb 2022 | Completed; staff will attend March conference |
| Annual report (including occupancy rate at local hotels) to City Council. | City and Chamber/Tourism staff | Sept 2022 | Not Started |

3. PARKS & PUBLIC SPACES

3.1 Improve beautification and maintenance of parks and public spaces.



End state: All Hastings parks are maintained to documented standards; non-park public spaces defined in the initiative are likewise clean with landscaping well maintained and snow managed.

Accomplishments:

Q4 2021

- ✓ Budgeted for Louis Lane Ponding Basin – FMR grant, pollinator friendly
- ✓ Budgeted and posted Parkskeeper position

| Milestone | Responsible Leader(s) | Date | Status |
|---|---|---------|-------------|
| Identify priority list of high-profile and high-use locations | Parks Dept and Parks Committee | 1Q22 | In Progress |
| Maintain high-profile and high-use locations using team structure | Parks Dept | Ongoing | In Progress |
| Identify underutilized spaces to convert to lower-maintenance areas | Parks Dept and Parks Committee | 1Q22 | In Progress |
| Approve additional staff, both seasonal and full-time (may be phased in over several years) | City Council | Ongoing | In Progress |
| Sustain existing adopt-a-park and volunteers | Parks Dept | 2022 | Ongoing |
| Educate the community on the elements of the parks & trail system and the work of the park maintenance division | Parks Dept and Communications Coordinator | 2022 | Not Started |

3. PARKS & PUBLIC SPACES

3.2 Assure enhancements to the TH 61 (Vermillion Street) are consistent with the goals and measures of the Council-adopted Vermillion Street Corridor Plan.



End state: Implement the Vermillion Corridor Plan for economic revitalization of the TH 61 corridor. Ensure MN DOT enhancements are consistent with the plan.

Accomplishments:

Q4 2021

- ✓ MNDOT hiring HR Green
- ✓ Scope of study increased to be more comprehensive and technically sound
- ✓ HEDRA Block 28 acquisitions, focus on redevelopment for that area
- ✓ Façade grant program includes Vermillion
- ✓ Private projects – Jersey Mikes, Schlomkas, Clear Choice Pool & Spa - continued investment

| Milestone | Responsible Leader(s) | Date | Status |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Continue participation in joint planning with MN DOT | Public Works Director | Ongoing | In Progress |
| Consultant begins corridor study | Consultant | 4Q21 | In Progress |
| Completion of corridor study | Consultant | 1Q23 | In Progress |
| Final design and cost estimates | MNDOT | 2023-2025 | Not Started |
| Hwy 61 construction begins | MNDOT | 2026 | Not Started |
| Communicate to council any updates to MN DOT planning | Public Works Director | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| Identify priority areas for redevelopment | Community Development Director | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| Meet with property owners to determine likelihood for redevelopment and the extent to which HEDRA would play a role | Community Development Director | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| Meet with interested redevelopment partners to determine interest and identify obstacles | Community Development Director | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| Determine any HEDRA resources to spur development | Community Development Director | Ongoing | Ongoing |

3. PARKS & PUBLIC SPACES

3.3 Pursue projects for Lake Rebecca and Lake Isabel Parks, contingent upon pending funding proposals.



End states: If finding is received, the Lake Rebecca Revitalization Project results in a unique amenity and asset to the community. Lake Isabel park restoration is completed consistent with available funding to restore that beloved public space to its full beauty and usefulness.

Accomplishments:

Q4 2021

- ✓ Held Corps of Engineers habitat management meeting in November to discuss invasive species.
- ✓ Lake Isabel Grant-Received preliminary approval; awaiting final approval by National Park Service
- ✓ New playground equipment ordered for Lake Isabel Park
- ✓ Design completed for Lake Isabel Park

| Milestone | Responsible Leader(s) | Date | Status |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| LAKE REBECCA PARK: | | | |
| Monitor progress of grant for Lake Rebecca | Parks Dept | 3Q21 | Pending decision by LCCMR – 1Q22 |
| If funded, RFP and complete plan for Rebecca restoration | Parks Dept and consultant | 3Q22 – 2Q23 | Pending |
| If funded, approve plan for Rebecca restoration | Parks Committee and City Council | 3Q23 | Pending |
| If funded, begin construction at Lake Rebecca | | 3Q23 – 2Q24 | Pending |
| If funded, complete work at Lake Rebecca | | | Pending |
| If not funded, consider plan for future restoration | Parks Dept and consultant | 2022 | Not Started |
| If not funded, appearance/security improvements (e.g.: remove back parking lot) | Parks Dept | 2022 | Not Started |
| LAKE ISABEL PARK: | | | |
| Grant approved for Lake Isabel Park | DNR | July 2021 | Pending NPS review and |

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|--|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| | | | approval. |
| Complete D&E plan for Isabel restoration | ISG, Parks Dept | 4Q21 | Completed |
| Approve plan for Isabel restoration | Parks Committee and City Council | 4Q21 | Pending |
| Final grant authorization | NPS | Sept 2021 | Delayed |
| Bid construction project | | Late 2021/Early 2022 | In Progress |
| Begin construction at Lake Isabel | | May 2022 | Pending |
| Complete work at Lake Isabel | | Summer 2022 | Pending |



4. HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Explore the feasibility of a special taxing district as a mechanism for enhanced services in downtown area.

End state: A special taxing district is established in the downtown area providing enhanced maintenance and services for Downtown Hastings leading to a 10% increase in visitors to the businesses in the district.

| Milestone | Responsible Leader(s) | Date | Status |
|--|-----------------------------|------|-------------|
| Research the mechanics of establishing an SSD | Community Development Dept. | 3Q21 | Completed |
| Research experiences of others in establishing and operating an SSD | Community Development Dept. | 4Q21 | Not started |
| Discuss initiative with downtown property and business owners to determine support, obstacles, and areas for potential funding of a future SSD | Community Development Dept. | 1Q22 | Not Started |
| Prepare a draft list and budget for potential service and activities that may be provided as part of an SSD | Business Community | 1Q22 | Not Started |
| Hold meetings to discuss the draft plan with downtown property and business owners | Business Community | 2Q22 | Not Started |
| Incorporate changes and concerns adjusting plan as necessary | Business Community | 3Q22 | Not Started |
| Develop the ordinance amendment and SSD Plan for official public hearing | City Attorney | 3Q22 | Not Started |
| Public hearing and approve ordinance | City Council | 3Q22 | Not Started |

Future Topics - A list of items deemed important but not identified as a top priority at the time of planning. When initiatives are complete, parking lot items will be added as new initiatives.

Future Topics for Consideration

See Page 16 of the City of Hastings **Statement of Strategic Direction** at www.hastingsmn.gov/strategicplanning for details related to these topics.

Ideas Related to People, Processes, Infrastructure, and Finance

1. Continue to Improve environmental sustainability of City operations.

Q4 2021 Accomplishments:

- ✓ Purchased a hybrid squad, electric Zamboni
- ✓ Explored battery powered small equipment for parks and PW
- ✓ Installed solar lights at dog park
- ✓ Exploring federal funding
- ✓ Held House Capital Investment Committee tour to request funding for rooftop solar panels on the arena.

Ideas Related to Community Image and Public Engagement

1. Develop an internal communication strategy focused on council-staff communication.

Q4 2021 Accomplishments:

- ✓ Held two departmental work sessions with the City Council to gain deeper knowledge
- ✓ Developed 3-plus Thursday weekly emails to keep Council abreast of important topics
- ✓ Expanded meetings with the Mayor and City Administrator
- ✓ City Administrator meeting with Councilmembers prior to each meeting.

2. Develop policy for public recognition.
3. Incorporate elements of the HPAAC Arts & Culture Plan into City goals and initiatives.

Q4 2021 Accomplishments:

- ✓ Renewed Arts Task Force and appointed 8 members in January 2022.

4. Install new welcome sign on Hwy 55 (new initiative 9/7)

Q4 2021 Accomplishments:

- ✓ Removed old sign by the library

Ideas Related to Parks and Public Spaces

1. Expand Hastings's status as a trail hub to drive tourism and awareness of Hastings.
2. Develop a plan for a new multipurpose indoor sports field.

Ideas Related to Housing and Economic Development

1. Stimulate job creation in Hastings.

Q4 2021 Accomplishments:

- ✓ Quality One expansion
- ✓ Fleet Farm to open and provide jobs
- ✓ Smaller retail and new businesses

2. Complete a full housing inventory analysis to guide development strategy.

Q4 2021 Accomplishments:

- ✓ Report completed January 2019
- ✓ Housing continues to happen, develop
- ✓ CC workshop w/ CDA held 12/20