



FY 2018 – 2022
**STRATEGIC
PLAN**

June 2018



CRAIGRAPP
Envisioning the possible. Making it achievable.

June 22, 2018

RE: FY 2018-2022 Strategic Plan- City of River Falls

Dear Mayor Toland:

I am pleased to present this FY 2018-2022 Strategic Plan and Summary Report to the City of River Falls. The plan reflects the organization's commitment to strategic thinking, measurable results and the delivery of quality services.

Thank you for the opportunity to assist the City with this project. The City Council and senior staff are to be commended for your interest, dedication and collective effort.

I also want to thank Scot Simpson, Julie Bergstrom, and Kristi McKahan and for their help and support during the process.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Rapp', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Craig R. Rapp
Senior Advisor NIU/CGS
President, Craig Rapp, LLC

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	1
Strategic Plan Summary 2018-2022.....	2
Mission, Vision, Values.....	3
Strategic Planning Process - Setting Direction.....	4
Examining the Environment.....	8
Defining Priorities, Outcomes, Targets.....	11
Strategic Planning Participants.....	13
Appendix I: Questionnaire Results	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From April-July 2018, the River Falls City Council and senior management team engaged in a strategic planning process to set the course for guiding City workplans and resources for the next four years. The process resulted in a strategic plan covering FY2018-2022.

The plan consists of four **strategic priorities** — the issues of greatest importance to the City over the next four years. Associated with each priority is a set of **desired outcomes, key outcome indicators, and performance targets**, describing expected results and how the results will be measured. The plan also includes **strategic initiatives** that will be undertaken to achieve the targeted outcomes.

The planning effort began with an examination of the current operating environment, which was supported by a questionnaire. The group also clarified the City’s mission, vision and core values—adopting new mission and vision statements and affirming the values currently in place.

Based upon those priorities, the City’s senior staff met on June 11 and developed a set of strategic initiatives and action plans. The strategic priorities, key outcome indicators, and performance targets are summarized on the following page.



- 1 CONNECTED COMMUNITY
- 2 ECONOMIC VITALITY
- 3 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY
- 4 QUALITY MUNICIPAL SERVICES

STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY 2018-2022

City of River Falls

STRATEGIC GOALS	DESIRED OUTCOME	KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR	TARGET	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
CONNECTED COMMUNITY	An engaged community	-Citizen participation in City-sponsored events, social media platforms, meetings, outreach activities by all departments, customer service calls, volunteer activity by Council, boards, committers, vote counts, and library usage., e-mail, phone, etc.	-Establish baseline number of citizen participation in 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New board recruitment strategy - New applications for digital engagement -Kinni Corridor Plan -Kinni Corridor Public-Private Partnership Formation -establish baseline # of citizen contacts - Utilize new tools to monitor and enhance online citizen engagement - Expand social media toolbox
	Effective communications with citizens	-Citizen Survey results	- 70% of residents say they get their city info from City communication toolbox	
	Progress on Kinni Corridor Plan	- Project milestones achieved	- Plan adopted by March 2019 - Public/private partnership (P3) created by Q1 2020	
ECONOMIC VITALITY	Thriving corporate parks	- Investment value - Lot acreage availability	- \$20M in increment by 2022 -50 acres shovel-ready lots by 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mann Valley Concept Plan -Sterling Ponds Phase 3 -Whitetail TID #13 -Incentive Policy target areas -Hire additional development staff -Develop ED plan -Town of Kinni Boundary agreement
	Housing that supports economic objectives	- Units developed 2020+	Establish category targets in 2019	
	Clear economic development strategy	- Economic development plan	- Complete economic development plan by Q1 2019	
FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	Prepared for financial contingencies	- Unassigned general fund reserves	- Meet fiscal plan reserves of 50% of General Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fiscal Plan 2020 -Street Light Utility -Sewer Business Plan -Water Business Plan -GO Aa2 -Revenue bonds A1
	Diverse revenue sources	- Local revenue sources supporting Gen Fund	- 70% of revenue in GF from locally controlled sources	
	Excellent credit rating	- General obligation bond rating	-Maintain Aa 2 rating, A1 or above on revenue bonds	
QUALITY MUNICIPAL SERVICES	Satisfied citizens	- Survey results - Feedback received	- 90% of citizens indicate satisfaction w/city services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -North sewer project -Org plan/succession plan -Police Department Design -Glen Park Phase 1 -Maintain infrastructure -EMS service review (2020) -CIP Implementation -Assessing Services review (2019)
	Regular review of services	-Analysis results	Complete 1 major service area review per year	
	Adequate response to meet service demand	- Staffing ratios - Industry standards	- Establish Staffing/Delivery Level Benchmarks	
	Sustained Capital Investment in public infrastructure	-Infrastructure report card	Meet Benchmark Grade (C or better) for 70% of measured categories	

VISION

A distinct, vibrant, and safe community with an abundance of nature and easy access to metropolitan amenities. A place where families, students and businesses flourish.

MISSION

To coordinate and deliver essential services and ensure a sustainable future.



VALUES

WE PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Engage customers – identify yourself and greet them

Practice empathetic listening

Create high quality outcomes and exceptional customer experiences

WE PURSUE EXCELLENCE

Professional image and conduct

Effective communication in a timely manner

WE ACT WITH INTEGRITY

Do what we say

Keep our commitments

Be honest and truthful

Transparent, accessible, and fair governance

WE EMBRACE CHANGE

Flexible problem solving

Embrace innovation and search for opportunities and evolve in the way we do things

Ask “why”

WE SERVE OUR COMMUNITY

Demonstrate passion and pride for our job

Have a positive impact on our community

Continuous feedback using surveys and monitoring dashboards

WE CONSIDER FUTURE GENERATIONS

Make big plans

Have a positive impact on our community

Leave things better than we found them

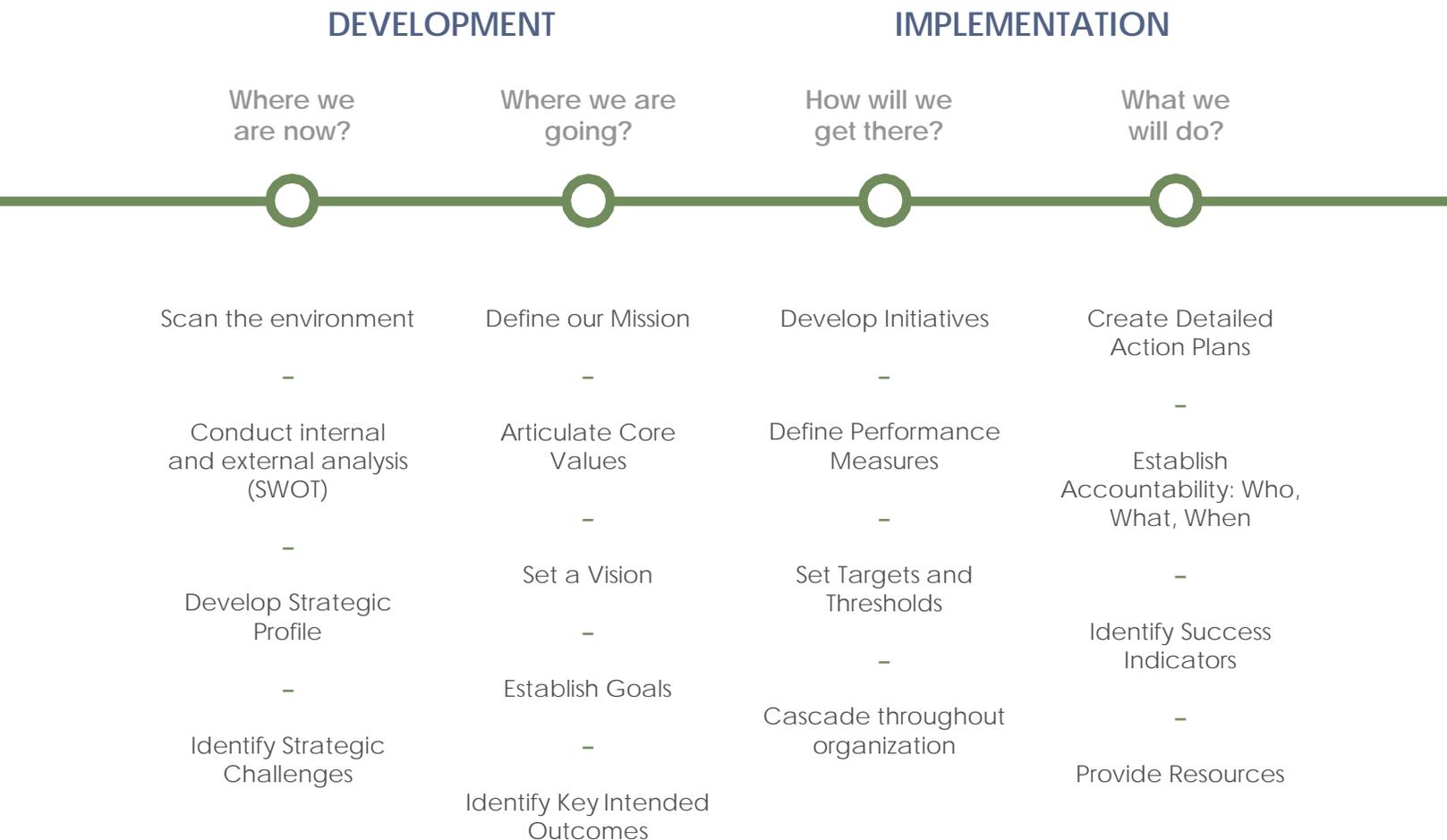
Take care of the assets we inherited as a community

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Strategic planning is a process that helps leaders examine the current state of the organization, determine a desired future state, establish priorities, and define a set of actions to achieve specific outcomes. The process followed by the City of River Falls was designed to answer four key questions: (1) Where are we now? (2) Where are we going? (3) How will we get there?



(4) What will we do? The process is divided into a development phase and an implementation phase. The full process is depicted below.



Setting Direction, Value Proposition and Organizational Culture

On May 8, 2018, the City Council and senior staff held a retreat to develop a strategic plan. As they addressed the question of “Where are we now?” the group was challenged to define the current organizational culture and its value proposition—understanding that an organization’s culture, and the value proposition it puts forth provide the foundation for the way in which services are delivered and strategic direction is set. The three value propositions and core cultures are summarized below:

Three Value Propositions

Operational Excellence

Provide good services at a fair price

Product/Service Leadership

Customers ‘ooh and ‘ah’ over our products/services

Customer Intimacy

We get to know our customers and solve their problems/satisfy their needs



The group engaged in an extended discussion regarding the value proposition and its relationship to the culture. While there were a variety of different perceptions regarding the value proposition, it was generally believed that customer intimacy reflects much of the current approach, and **operational excellence** has been important and will continue to be important for operational stability, therefore it should be the primary value proposition, with **customer intimacy** as a secondary focus.

Four Core Cultures

Control Culture

Strengths: Systematic, clear, conservative
Weaknesses: Inflexible, compliance more important than innovation

Competence Culture

Strengths: Results oriented, efficient, systematic
Weaknesses: Values can be ignored, human element missing, over planning

Collaboration Culture

Strengths: Manages diversity well, versatile, talented
Weaknesses: Decisions take longer, group think, short-term oriented

Cultivation Culture

Strengths: Creative, socially responsible, consensus oriented
Weaknesses: Lacks focus, judgmental, lack of control

The team then directed its attention to the mission, vision and values statements. The City did not have current mission and vision statements; therefore, the team worked on new ideas for each, brainstorming key concepts, which were then used by the consultant to create draft statements. The City had a set of values determined to be acceptable, so they were left in place. The proposed mission and vision statements, along with the brainstormed concepts for each, are listed below.

Brainstormed Mission Statement Concepts

Genuine, preserving heritage, cost-effective/efficient, high quality of life, growing, public services, fiscally responsible



MISSION STATEMENT

To coordinate and deliver essential services and ensure a sustainable future.

Brainstormed Vision Statement Concepts

Existing statement - too long, a place where people want to live, people want to live generationally, include residents and visitors, recreational opportunities-unique advantage, safe, attractive, feel welcoming, authentic/distinctive.



VISION STATEMENT

A distinct, vibrant, and safe community with an abundance of nature and easy access to metropolitan amenities. A place where families, students and businesses flourish.

Values

TRANSPARENCY

We value honest, open communication and easy access to information. We are committed to accessible and fair governance.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

We value and support the active pursuit of suggestions, ideas, and creative approaches to service delivery and problem solving—leading to continuous improvement in everything we do.

ENTHUSIASM

We value positive energy and a “can do” spirit. We foster an enjoyable working environment where we deliver services with a smile and a helpful attitude.

INTEGRITY

We are consistent and fair in our words and deeds. We value sincerity and decency in treatment of our residents, visitors and fellow employees.

TEAMWORK / COLLABORATION

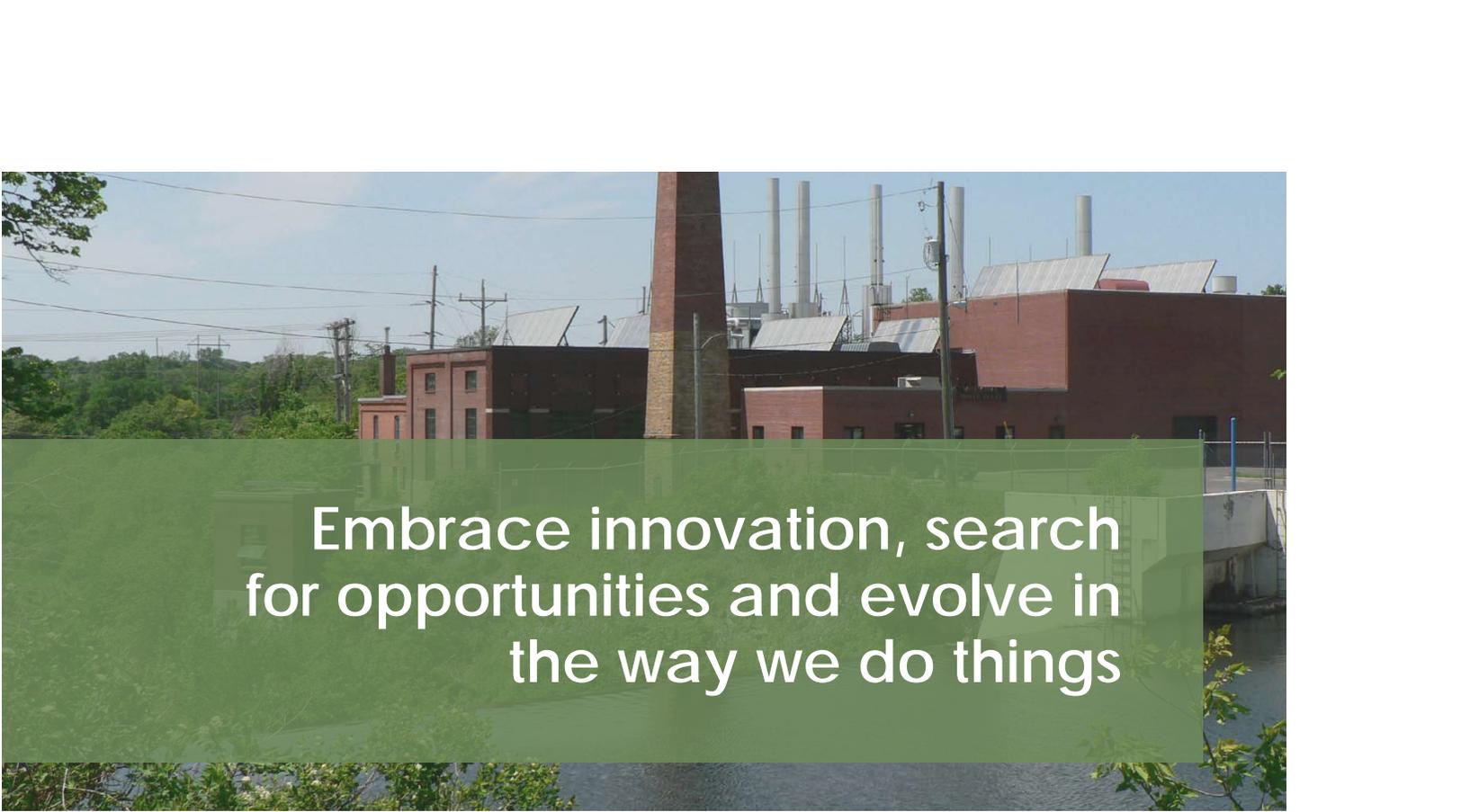
We are supportive and respectful of each other as we work together to achieve our organizational goals. We value a commitment to service, teamwork and support that achieves our desired outcomes



Examining the Operating Environment

Following the vision, mission, values and value proposition discussions, the group reviewed the results of a questionnaire completed by the City Council and senior staff, which covered the current operating environment in the following categories: general concerns, things the City does well, areas for improvement, what the City should do more of, and key challenges. They considered the data, and summarized the results into most frequently mentioned categories: (See all responses in Appendix I)





Embrace innovation, search for opportunities and evolve in the way we do things

The group then compared the things they did well with the things they should do more of to determine which opportunities maximize strengths, and then compared areas needing improvement with general concerns to determine how weaknesses could be exacerbated by problem issues. The results of this analysis.

DO WELL — DO MORE

- Engagement with citizens
- Financial – economic planning (including business development)
- Collaboration with partners
- Strategic long-term vision

IMPROVE — CONCERNS

- Infrastructure
- Fiscal stability
- Quality of life
- Public engagement
- Affordability/fiscal stability
- Quality/pace of growth and development
- Infrastructure maintenance

Based upon the issues and challenges identified, the group debated where the City's focus should be over the next four years. They considered the current set of priorities in the last strategic plan and compared those priorities with the issues identified. After significant discussion, they determined that the previous priorities were still valid. They reaffirmed the following four priorities.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

CONNECTED COMMUNITY

ECONOMIC VITALITY

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

QUALITY MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Key Outcomes, Indicators, and Targets by priority

With priorities in place, the group determined the most important outcomes to be achieved for each priority, defined Key Outcome Indicators (KOI's), and developed Performance Targets. KOI's define progress toward desired outcomes, and performance targets define successful outcomes, expressed in measureable terms.

The alignment created between priorities, outcomes and targets is important, not only for clarity, but also for maintaining a disciplined focus on the desired results.



Connected Community

- a. **Outcome:** An engaged community
- b. **Outcome:** Effective communications with citizens
- c. **Outcome:** Progress on Kinni Corridor Plan

Economic Vitality

- a. **Outcome:** Thriving corporate parks
- b. **Outcome:** Housing that supports economic objectives
- c. **Outcome:** Clear economic development strategy

Financial Sustainability

- a. **Outcome:** Prepared for financial contingencies
- b. **Outcome:** Diverse revenue sources
- c. **Outcome:** Excellent credit rating

Quality Municipal Services

- a. **Outcome:** Satisfied citizens
- b. **Outcome:** Regular review of services
- c. **Outcome:** Adequate response to meet service demand
- d. **Outcome:** Sustained capital investment in public infrastructure

Strategic Planning Participants

The strategic plan was developed with the hard work and dedication of many individuals. The City Council led the way, taking time out their schedules to commit to long-term thinking. They defined a direction and a set of outcomes that are important to the City, their citizens, and stakeholders with whom they partner and serve. The City's senior staff supported the City Council and offered an operational perspective and challenges to conventional thinking.

City Council

Mayor Dan Toland

Aldersperson at Large Diane Odeen

Aldersperson at Large Scott Morrissette

Aldersperson at Large Michael Page

Aldersperson – District 1 Sean Downing

Aldersperson – District 2 Christopher Gagne

Aldersperson – District 3 Hal Watson

Aldersperson – District 4 Todd Bjerstedt

City Staff

Scot Simpson, City Administrator

Julie Bergstrom, Assistant City Administrator

Keri Schreiner, Management Analyst

Kevin Westhuis, Utility Director

Gordon Young, Police Chief

Buddy Lucero, Community Development Director

Amy Peterson, Development Services Director

Karen Bergstrom, Human Resources Director

Kristi McKahan, Executive Assistant

APPENDIX I

Questionnaire Results

What are your greatest concerns for the future of the City?

- We need municipal broadband internet that is high speed -lack of affordable housing -improve our roads
- More jobs
- The need for a community center / event center
- The need for a bigger community pool that can be used by the entire community
- We need more bike trails -we need improved parking
- We need zoning that will stimulate affordable housing
- The transition from corridor planning process to public-private partnership will be rocky. –
- We will end up in a fight over the dam relicensing and terms of negotiated settlement.
- The need for housing will lead to cookie-cutter developments ringing the city.
- We won't invest in walking/biking infrastructure and greenways beyond corridor.
- We will spend too much too fast on Police/Fire/EMS facilities without prioritizing between them.
- Lack of affordable housing options maintaining affordability for residents
- Raising expectations for more urban service levels with suburban tax base
- Irrelevance of State of WI given Metro MN location
- Town/City challenges holding the community back -maintaining identity
- Keeping charm
- finding right mix and pace of development
- finding right mix and pace of community change
- finding right mix and pace of organizational change
- The need to address housing is an important, albeit difficult topic for the city to tackle. This dovetails with the need to nail down our boundary agreements.
- The ongoing struggles with our neighbors make it very difficult to plan effectively. I am becoming more concerned about the police department facilities. Unfortunately, as we grow the possibility for crime increases. It seems our facilities might make recruitment and retention difficult.
- Being able to continue to offer and deliver the same quality of services that we do now. Worried that the council will lose sight of big picture.
- Adequate staffing to handle increased economic development requests and processes
- Need for development in the City's tax increment districts
- Maintaining fiscal stability with increased staffing/infrastructure pressures
- Continuation of existing leadership from City Administrator and Council
- Orienting new staff to River Falls culture
- Losing ability to innovate due to time constraints
- Regionalizing services such as EMS and Fire
- Our ability to maintain the current quality of life
- Lack of housing options
- We will be losing key staff to retirement
- The loss of history/experience with the City.
- The ability to replace those people.
- Land for business parks
- Keeping infrastructure current

Continued...

- Internally, the ability of current staffing levels to keep up with development
- Changing technologies and times, while at the same time, trying to catch up on 10-20 years of set aside projects
- Housing. Both managing the rental/student housing aspect as well as affordability.
- Maintaining compact development and ensuring multi-modal transportation options and connections are available throughout the community.
- Determining if the impacts predicted of self-driving cars will come to fruition.
- Redevelopment for increased density.
- Cost of everything, from health care to construction.
- Income inequality.
- Fast pace of technology and data.
- Losing the University of Wisconsin
- River Falls to State budget cuts.
- Ability to afford proper facilities to departments (Police, Fire, EMS, Public Works, Library).
- Ability to keep good employees from going to MN.
- Lack of a clear Vision of what we want River Falls to become or not to become.
- High quality of life in conjunction with affordability to live.
- Convincing the community that nice amenities cost money.
- Keeping River Falls a safe, friendly, quant place to live, work, and play while embracing a controlled growth formula.
- Finding the sweet spot for Governments role in nudging and fostering development, encouraging entrepreneurship, and modeling a "success" culture while balancing the role of a regulator and rule maker. Ability to find a way to afford the amenities the community desires.
- That the City is going to grow to fast that the demand on employees may be too great. This could result in stress and burnout on our employees.
- Grasping our opportunities to grow responsibly, developing our natural resources to make the City of River Falls an amazing place to live.
- Our ability to attract and maintain new young families as residents in our City - Opportunity cost of delayed action on the biggest planning process our community has ever known
- Succession planning of staff -positioning city to continue to grow responsibly
- Public engagement and understanding of issues

What should the City be doing more of?

- public electric bus plan with neighboring cities, Hudson, and New Richmond
- having more community input on where police patrols should be to stop speeding
- Have more community input on getting municipal broadband
- Have more community input on what kind of pool we should have as a city that is expanding
- Have more community participation in event planning.
- work with main street to recruit new business
- work on parking issues in a more proactive manner
- collaborate more closely with the school district
- collaborate more closely with the university.
- planning green walk/bike/migration corridors that link downtown to rural landscape
- succession planning
- business development
- downtown development
- involvement of other governments - regional approach to delivery
- demand attention of County governments
- celebrating success
- resident engagement
- capture history of community and its origin stories
- do a great job with business recruitment.
- wage scales of the businesses moving here need to be in keeping with the cost of housing
- Collaboration with other governments starts with boundary agreements.
- consider working with other cities to create regional EMS, Fire Departments, etc. if there is greater efficiency created
- looking for alternative funding options
- Letting people know how great of a place this is.
- More time spent on long term planning
- Seeking partners for future economic development opportunities
- Marketing the City for development
- letting everyone know how great River Falls is
- Future planning to ensure we grow our vision
- Regional collaboration and outreach
- Connecting with residents
- Housing stock asset management
- Adopting proactive codes to ensure development style to fit River Falls sense of place and quality of life.
- Proactive transportation planning; the grid we build today is our quality of life tomorrow
- Regionalize local EMS and Fire Departments
- Community education about things going on in the City with the use of Social Media
- Building relationships with the people and businesses in the community
- Active partners with other organizations in the community
- Business recruitment

Continued...

- Marketing of our Community
- Collaboration with other governments or separate entities for training, ambulance service, etc.
- More/Better communication within the City.
- SharePoint communication amongst our employees.
- Embracing opportunities
- Avoiding groupthink
- proactive citizen engagement on issues viewed as less important (cable tv)
- economics development

What Does the City Do Well?

- I think our street department does a good job in the winter with snow removal.
- The city has done a great job engaging the citizens during the Kinni Corridor study. I don't know what else we could have done.
- infrastructure
- city services, police, fire and ambulance
- utilities
- openness with the citizens
- Completing major projects with existing staff
- Culture of innovation and appropriate risk taking
- Fiscally conservative
- Forward looking - 10+ years
- Reacting quickly to change
- Accepting change
- Working as a team
- Maintaining the customer/citizen as a priority
- we have great staff with a customer service focus that values its citizens
- great staff leadership at the top with the ability to vision/plan/communicate
- staff always goes above and beyond
- council supports staff; its willingness to work with staff -
- Staff management.
- Philosophy and vision, support and freedom provided staff is unheard of in Midwest government. We are a hidden jewel.
- Customer Service Model implementation.
- Public safety.
- Community connections.
- Utility/infrastructure planning
- Excellent customer service
- Manage and plan special events
- Roadway maintenance
- Public land use (access to trails)
- Professional Fire Department with excellent response time, caring firefighters
- Professional Police Department with excellent response
- Safety
- Friendliness
- Responsive
- Caring
- Calculated fair responses to situations that can often have the allure of high drama
- Affordable services
- Dependable services
- Good roads
- Great youth programs
- Good schools
- Everything!

Continued...

- Economic development (planning and implementing large scale financial projects)
- Being civil & polite
- Including all residents
- long term planning
- implementation of projects

What things does the City need to improve on?

- finding alternative revenue
- finding ways and outlets at being more responsive to community feedback
- fixing roads and potholes
- fixing sidewalks
- creating new bike paths
- policing new developments that are more recent and may be out of the way for our policeman
- advertising share ride taxi service
- fixing the backside of the Downtown
- finding new outlets for green energy
- getting better estimates on large projects, too much sticker shock
- downtown business attraction
- maintain alleyways and incorporate into street maintenance plans
- shedding services that may not be best done by City
- integrating technology in service delivery and customer service
- better customer relationship management
- keeping focus on best ideas/ priorities
- fair amount of employee turnover
- filling needed positions on staff
- Being more proactive in taking what we need without always trying to be the great neighbor that everybody can walk all over
- we could improve in person customer service
- communication between departments
- communication with residents
- review processes to weed out unnecessary procedures
- ways to communicate with residents can always be improved
- finding ways to work with other partners can always be improved
- finding a way to recruit volunteers especially for City boards and committees
- finding more revenue
- Internal communication between departments and administration
- More efficient land use
- Give the community better access to City Administrator and Department Heads
- Customer Service
- Building systems around the customer and rate payer and not internal staff's needs
- surveying need to instantaneous surveys as all other big companies do rate me now
- more communication with community never hurts
- continue to enhance our partnerships with University and School District
- making tough decisions by gauging the quality of information at hand rather than trying to make everyone happy
- focusing on the process rather than quality decision making
- taking things personally
- allowing for flexibility versus long term planning
- better engagement of the various committee members to the long-term vision of the city
- stronger engagement with state and national elected officials

If you could change one thing about the City, what would it be?

- Making it more responsive
- how could we improve our community?
- apply same energy and resources to downtown business and redevelopment as we do to current corporate business park recruitment and development.
- Take more time to enjoy successes as a community
- We need an ordinance to outlaw Free the Kinni signs. :)
- getting the citizens more involved
- Update the physical infrastructure of downtown, sidewalks, planters, areas for sidewalk cafes, etc.
- citizen involvement
- volunteerism
- Determine our sense of place and vision for the future.
- We're growing up; what do we want to be.
- Less alcohol abuse by our bars
- Change City Hall's reputation to a place people feel advocacy and not hindrance to achieving their dreams.
- Have a greater appreciation for the opportunities we have available as a community
- We are currently ignoring the value of and delaying for generations to come.
- citizen engagement. Too often I hear from citizens AFTER a decision has been made.