



FAIRMONTTM

CITY OF FAIRMONT

Strategic Plan

PREPARED BY: **wsb**

Process



The City of Fairmont undertook a strategic planning process in April of 2021. The process included individual meetings with the consultant as well as a 1 day facilitated session on Tuesday, April 13th. The session included:

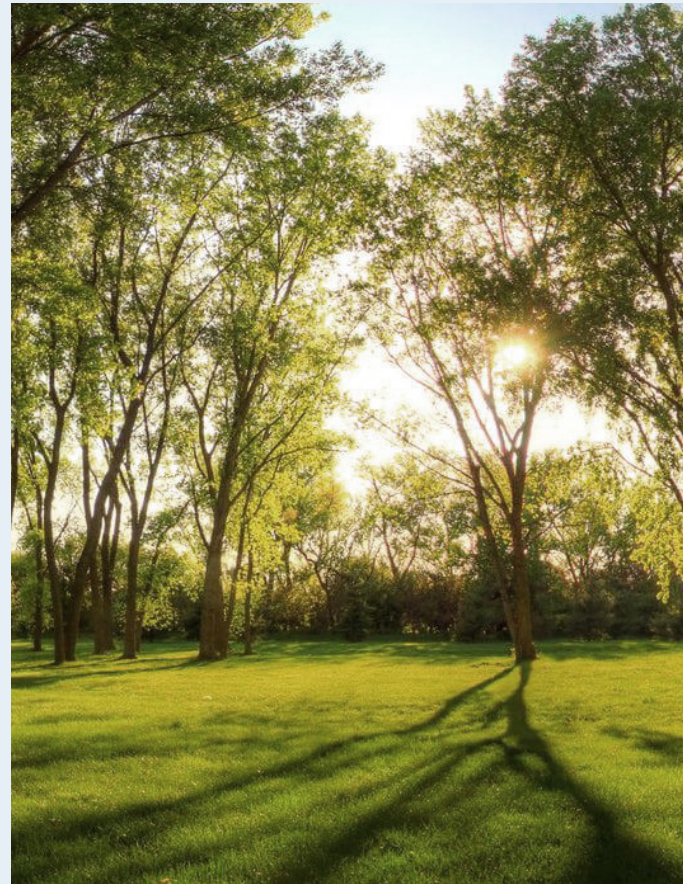
- Team building
- Mayor, Council, and Staff expectation presentations
- A discussion on roles and responsibilities
- A SWOT analysis for the community
- Discussion on Vision, Mission, and Priorities
- Discussion on metrics for measuring success

Participants included:

- Mayor Debbie Foster
- Councilmember-At Large Michele Miller
- Ward 1 Councilmember Bruce Peters
- Ward 2 Councilmember Britney Kaweck
- Ward 3 Councilmember Randy Lubenow
- Ward 4 Councilmember Wayne Hasek
- City Administrator Cathy Reynolds
- City Clerk Patty Monsen
- Finance Director Paul Hoyer
- Economic Development Coordinator Linsey Preuss
- Director of Public Works/City Engineer Troy Nemmers
- Chief of Police Mike Hunter

Consultants

- Bart Fischer, WSB
- Dan Pfeiffer, WSB



This plan summarizes the discussions from the individual meetings and facilitated session. It is intended to be a working document that is fluid as it elicits continued discussion on the vision, mission and priorities for Fairmont.

Mission

Deliver high quality service while striving to make Fairmont a place where people want to be.

Vision

A Thriving Fairmont

Goals

MAXIMIZE COMMUNITY POTENTIAL

- Emphasize development potential
- Promote community as a location for remote work
- Focus on Re-Development Opportunities
- Support a range of housing options
- Focus on childcare challenges
- Create an environment that fosters community and business growth
- Take calculated risks and a progressive approach
- Support our business community
- Develop and adopt new zoning code
- Improve online platforms for service delivery
- Promote a vibrant downtown
- Promote community as a regional hub for business development

CULTIVATE A CULTURE OF TRUST, EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION, AND COLLABORATION

- Focus on effective, inclusive, and respectful communications
- Expand upon internal and external communications
- Encourage citizen engagement
- Maintain open and transparent government
- Encourage positive communication
- Build relationships with all members of our community
- Build and strengthen partnerships
- Explore methods to engage our diverse population in all aspects of the community
- Conduct community meetings at locations around the community

ENHANCE AND PROTECT COMMUNITY AMENITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Focus on infrastructure maintenance and repair
- Protect and promote our lakes
- Provide accessible, clean, friendly parks and trails
- Encourage, support, and enhance community events
- Provide a safe community
- Seek alternative funding sources and grants

Priorities



This chart represents the priorities gleaned from the strategic planning session as well as the individual meetings. This list is meant to be fluid and adaptable. It is recommended that the Fairmont Team discuss target timelines and lead people/persons for each.

PRIORITY	TARGET	LEAD
EFFECTIVE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Trusting Relationships • Create Open Lines of Communication between Council & Staff • Educate Councilmembers and other Staff • Collaboration 		
EFFECTIVE EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain & Maintain the Community's Trust • Collaboration • Website Overhaul • Improve Positive Messaging • Celebrate Successes • Regular City Newsletter • Community Listening Sessions with Council & Staff • Recommendation: Strategic Communications Plan Development 		
MARKETING/STORY TELLING OF FAIRMONT AS THE PLACE TO LIVE AND BE IN THE REGION.		

PRIORITY	TARGET	LEAD
UPDATED INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE, REPLACEMENT, AND FUNDING PLAN.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative funding options (i.e. franchise fees, infrastructure charge, special assessments) 		
ENHANCE, CREATE, AND MAINTAIN AMENITIES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Lakes/Recreation Community Center development Underutilized/Unused amenities Campground Development 		
DEVELOPMENT/JOBS POTENTIAL		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Community Development Software 		
ANALYZE THE DEVELOPMENT AND SALE OF THE DAY FARM		
ANALYZE THE HIRING OF IT, HR & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POSITIONS.		
CITY CODE UPDATE		
BUILDING INSPECTORS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve perception Community relations 		
SUCCESSION PLANNING/TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP AT COUNCIL AND STAFF LEVELS		
SAFE COMMUNITY – POLICE DEPARTMENT		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on Code Enforcement...CSO Focus on victim services...Victim Services Investigator 		

SWOT Analysis



Fairmont's Strengths

- Clean, safe water
- Streets
- Police Department – Safe Community
- Schools
- Hospital/Medical Facilities
- Lakes
- Trails
- Broadband within City Limits
- Community Engagement
- Low Taxes
- Potential Development/Revenue
- City-Owned Lakefront
- Potential Tourism Revenue

Fairmont's Weaknesses

- Aging Infrastructure
- Perception of Building Inspectors as Obstructionists
- Post-Secondary Schooling Options
- Broadband outside of City Limits
- Everything is Aging – People and Infrastructure
- Public Engagement Expectations
- Lack of Revenue for Needs
- Last of the City-Owned Lakefront

Fairmont's Opportunities

- Online Post-Secondary Education
- Trade & Professional Jobs
- Leadership Teams' ability to take Calculated Risks
- Improvement of Built Environment – Re-Development
- Lakeshore Preservation
- Tourism
- Capture of Remote Workforce

Fairmont's Threats

- Post-Secondary Educational Options
- City Finances/Local Government Aid (LGA)
- Regulatory/Unfunded Mandates from Feds, State, County
- Staffing Levels
- Leadership Team being Risk Adverse
- Municipal Liquor Store (The loss of revenue if this goes away.)
- Impact on Shoreline and Water Quality of Lake

Roles & Responsibilities



MAYOR/COUNCIL ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Set policy and direction
- Focus on the big picture and the end goal
- Build trusting relationships with staff, stakeholders, and the community
- Effectively communicate with staff
- Ask staff questions
- Listen and seek to understand policies, rules, and requirements
- Trust that staff are knowledgeable experts in their roles and experiences and have the best interest of Fairmont in mind
- Realize staff's role is to provide information, advice, and process recommendations in order for you to make an informed decision
- Seek to understand the whole picture/issue
- Avoid changing course to evade short-term hurdles and understand that sidestepping the process can get the city in trouble and be costly
- Address performance issues in private

STAFF ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Implement the Mayor & Council's policy and direction
- Build trusting relationships and effectively communicate with the Mayor & Council
- Answer Mayor & Council questions and ask them questions to clarify their intent
- Listen and seek to understand the Mayor & Council's point of view
- Trust that the Mayor & Councilors have a deep knowledge, understanding of, and passion for the Community
- Realize that the Mayor & Councilors do not "live and breathe" the local government process everyday
- Seek to understand the whole picture and not just one side of an issue
- Provide the messaging the Mayor & Council need to successfully communicate with residents and stakeholders
- Seek to help the Mayor & Councilors succeed in their roles
- Continuously strive for ways to make the process of local government efficient and effective

The key for everyone is to keep the lines of communication open in an effort to respectfully listen and understand, which all lead toward an attitude of partnership and consensus around what is best for the Community.

Summary/Conclusion



The 2021 Fairmont Strategic Planning Process allowed the Mayor, City Council, and City Staff to begin thinking through and discussing the vision, mission, and priorities for Fairmont. The process allowed for listening and better understanding of individual goals in an effort to collaborate and move forward with a list of priorities.

It is recommended that opportunities are created throughout the year for continued discussion and refinement by the Fairmont Team of the vision, mission, and priorities as laid out in this document. This will be vital in keeping the lines of communication open for collaboration, understanding, the building of trusting relationships, and the continued momentum in creating a successful Fairmont.

