

**City of DeWitt, Iowa**  
**Strategic Planning and Goal Setting 2025**  
Monday, December 9, 2024

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**Mayor:**  
**Steve Hasenmiller**

**City Council:**  
**Dawn Marcus**  
**Garey Chrones**  
**Luanne Smith**  
**Gerin Goldensoph**  
**Carole Dunkin**

**Facilitated by:**  
**Steve Lindner**

**City of DeWitt, Iowa**  
**Strategic Planning and Goal Setting Session**  
**2025**

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**City of DeWitt, Iowa  
Strategic Planning and Goal Setting Session  
2025**

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**Introduction**

The following steps were conducted by the City Administrator for the City of DeWitt's Annual Strategic Planning Process:

1. Prepare a questionnaire to identify department needs, accomplishments, programs, issues, and trends
2. Prepare a list of the suggested priorities and policies based upon the comments of the elected officials and city department heads.
3. Conduct a strategic planning and goal setting session with the elected officials and department heads – identifying top priorities of the City Council for the next calendar year and beyond.
4. Preparation of this final report.

**Goal Setting Work Session**

City Council members and the mayor held an informal non-binding work session that was conducted by the City Administrator on December 9, 2025. The city's elected officials were asked to do the following:

1. Review the major accomplishments of the City in 2024 (provided by department heads).
2. Review the list of most important issues, concerns and trends, potential initiatives, policies and programs facing the city in 2025. Exhibit B shows the vote tabulations for these items. The Council also reviewed results from the Comprehensive Plan Survey for additional context.
3. Indicate those initiatives and programs that are the most urgent or important at this time.
4. Review previous priorities and discuss the need to continue work on these items.

**Note:** The Agenda for the Goal Setting Session, and the responses from the Council and Department Heads to the Preliminary Questionnaires are attached to this report.

## **Initiatives and Programs – 2025**

*The Mayor and City Council identified the following initiatives and programs as the most urgent or important.*

### **SHORT TERM PRIORITIES**

1. Complete the East Industrial Street Extension Project including improvements to 300<sup>th</sup> Avenue (East 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue South) to US 30. The project includes \$3.4 million in Federal Funding and a Request for a \$2.1 million RISE Grant from the State of Iowa for the \$8 million project.
2. Continue to strongly fund (\$500,000+ annually) the Street and Alley Maintenance Program. In addition to the patches, overlays, seal coat, and crack filling, including repaving where it is practical.
3. Continue to plan the development of a new larger Fitness Center. Develop a plan that includes partners, outside funding sources, and community input. Acknowledge that the project's funding will depend on a voter-approved referendum.
4. Maintain a steady levy rate and support the growth of taxable value with new residential, commercial, and industrial developments.
5. Continue to investigate and implement ways to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of City processes by utilizing technology and other process changes.
6. Maintain appropriate staffing levels for all departments as the City continues to grow in population and property value.
7. Implement an annual large-item solid waste collection program.

### **LONG TERM PRIORITIES**

1. Put together a reasonable funding plan for the construction of a new Community Fitness Center. Funding will include outside sources and partners. City funding will be dependent on a successful voter-approved referendum for the project. Construct a Community Fitness Center that appeals to a majority of community members.
2. Look for opportunities and funding sources to extend the Paul Skeffington Memorial Trail. Possibly work with Clinton County to extend the trail to a neighboring community.
3. Continue the sidewalk maintenance program. Expand the program to include the installation of public sidewalks on properties and in areas where there are none.
4. Maintain a steady levy rate and support the growth of taxable value with new residential, commercial, and industrial developments. Continue to partner with the DCDC to grow the employment base and tax base of the City.
5. Maintain appropriate staffing levels for all departments as the City continues to grow in population and value.

**NOTE:** A complete listing of all responses from the questionnaire regarding important issues, concerns and trends, potential initiatives, policies and programs facing the city in 2025 from the City Council, Mayor, and Department Heads. This is attached in exhibit C.

### **FUTURE PLANNING SUGGESTIONS**

It is recommended that the city staff and management team prepare an “action plan” for the top-priority capital projects and initiatives/programs. The action plan for each goal would define the steps needed to accomplish the various tasks or objectives. This action plan could then be presented to the mayor and city council for review and approval and made a part of this strategic plan.

It is recommended that the city take the time to review the lists of priority items and of capital projects and monitor the progress that is made on each item on a quarterly basis.

It is important to note that the prioritizing of all the capital projects and various initiatives is not “cast in stone.” The two lists can be modified as new circumstances may dictate.

## Exhibit A

### Accomplishments: Mayor-Council

1. Streets
2. purchase of Street Shop and Building for Parks and Rec.
3. Housing
4. FIRE STATION
5. PARK REC storage building purchase
6. Skef Trail Expansion
7. Public Works cold storage building
8. DCDC & City Industrial Street extension plans/grants
9. Communication of City with customers and taxes
10. Apartments done
11. EICC on Industrial Street
12. finding funding for E Industrial Street
13. the fire station is almost done
14. 6th Ave North done
15. 17th Ave complete
16. Successfully completed the Library bonding period and tax rates were reduced accordingly as promised.
17. The Fire Station expansion is close to being completed.
18. Despite property tax rollbacks and increase in exemptions, we were able to create a budget without personnel and service reductions.
19. Tunes in Town continues to be a successful community event following transition to DCDC oversight.
20. Completed updated Code of Ordinances of City of DeWitt
21. Agreement in place to purchase J & L Building for park and rec usage.

### Accomplishments –Departments

1. updated server, firewall, pcs, Laserfiche, windows, emails
2. generator at City Hall
3. code update
4. updated bathrooms
5. sidewalk tracking
6. took last library project donation
7. began updating UB billing dates
8. survived last year's budget process changes with state
9. Built a cold storage facility
10. Started planning a new street shop
11. Most city trees are in good condition
12. addition of pickleball complex
13. addition of security cameras at DAC
14. The purchase of J&L building for parks department
15. Development of The Shed room at DFC
16. enhancement of DCC landscaping
17. New recreation software for 2025

18. Increase in County Funding
19. Added a Full Time Employee
20. Family Leave Policy
21. Increased Program Attendance
22. Began the Clinton County Union Catalog
23. Staff beyond the walls- outreach and as professional presenters representing DCL
24. TIF LMI Housing Rehab Program continues
25. Industrial Growth: New Industry ICONIC – MRW Expansion
26. IA MUTUAL LOFTS nearly completed – market rate housing options
27. Tall Grass and Brookline nearly completed – workforce housing options
28. Secured Federal Funding (partial) for Extension of East Industrial Street
29. Successful (and sometimes controversial) sidewalk improvement program
30. Successfully maintaining awesome group of employees
31. Full Implementation of Body Worn Cameras
32. New Uniform Implementation
33. Maintained FTE Staffing numbers
34. CALEA Re-Accredited
35. Completed ALERT & AAIR Training for Active Attacker
36. Worked with Central Schools and Clinton County Emergency Mgmt. to complete a comprehensive Active Attacker School Response plan for all DeWitt Schools.
37. Began fixed LPR rollout.
38. - Launch of Cloudpermit online permitting software.
39. - Built three new multi-family residential facilities. Tallgrass, Brookline, Mutual Lofts.
40. - Commercial projects such as Dewitt Eyecare, Dewitt Family Practice, Dollar General, EICC, Motion Raceworks, Grothus Drag Bikes, Twisted Paddle, Eastern IA Light and power, Urban Eats, Mezcal...
41. - # City sponsored housing rehab projects.
42. - One year from completing city wide sidewalk rehabilitation efforts. 4 of 5 years completed.
43. - Finishing assisted living Legacy of the Meadows.
44. - Wellspire.

## Exhibit B

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING 2025 VOTE TABULATIONS** **SHORT TERM PRIORITIES**

- Complete Industrial Street project to allow for expansion of our business park. (5)
- Continue to expand the Paul Skeffington trail. (4)
- Continue to put funds in Streets and Alleys (4)
- Build a larger fitness center. (4)
- Maintain a steady levy rate (4)
- Maintain (Police) Staffing Level- Harksen to retire in 2025 (4)
- Evaluation of staff efficiency (library) (3)
- Finish a full round of sidewalk rehab and make long-term plan for sustainability. (3)
- Explore partnerships to help make a new recreation center possible (1)
- Continue to work with developers who are interested in creating new housing developments. (2)
- Strongly fund annual street maintenance program including repaving w/o infrastructure where it's practical (2)
- Try River Bend Transit again – first time there was not enough traffic to make it feasible (1)
- Might be time to refresh West Brook Facilities. (1)
- Continue to plan for and complete renovations at the new Public Works building(1)
- Add teen programming to serve the patrons we are now seeing after “growing our own” (1)
- Maintain enough budget dollars from all funders to provide high-quality services (1) (library)
- Develop a plan for the 11<sup>th</sup> Street/Westwood Drive intersection to safely accommodate growth in that area as well as the entire 11<sup>th</sup> Street corridor (1)

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING 2025 VOTE TABULATIONS**

### **LONG-TERM PRIORITIES**

- A new fitness center. (6)
- Expand Sidewalk program to get those who don't have them, installed. (5)
- Partner with County to get a Bike Path to Grand Mound or Low Moor (4)
- Large Item trash pick up day for residents. (4)
- Continue to partner with the DCDC in bringing industry and businesses to DeWitt. (2)
- continue to investigate ways to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness of City processes (2)
- Consider expanding the wastewater plant and adding another well to be ready for potential future businesses (1)
- Construct a new road near the police station between 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Humeston Road. (1)
- Keep moving forward with the Industrial Street expansion (1)
- Leaf vacuum service for residents. (1)
- Develop the park space at pickleball complex (1)
- Renew- Body Worn Camera and Fixed LPR Contracts (1)
- Maintain an acceptable work load with increased housing and population (possible addition of an 11<sup>th</sup> Officer.) (1)

**CITY OF DEWITT STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION AND GOAL SETTING  
SESSION FOR 2025  
PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Introduction**

A strategic planning session has tentatively been set for 6:00 p.m. on Monday, December 9, at the DeWitt City Hall Council Chambers. The purpose of the session will be to identify and prioritize the City's overall goals and objectives for the next two years. In order to prepare for this session, I am asking you to help identify key issues and potential objectives as well as review previous priorities. It is requested that you list your responses to the following requests for information. Please put your responses in a separate Word document saved under your.name.planning.2025 – such as "Lindner.Planning.2025" and email to me at administrator@cityofdewittiowa.org. If you would prefer to handwrite or provide a hard copy of your responses that will work as well. **Please provide your responses by Wednesday, November 13**

**I. Major Accomplishments**

**A. Please rank order, in your opinion, the 5 most important accomplishments the City has made in the last 12 months.**

**(IN SEPARATE DOCUMENT)**

**II. SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES: Please provide 1-3 responses for each of the questions below. Think in terms of shorter duration activities that can be completed in 12-24 months. If you do not have an answer you truly believe in you can leave a question unanswered.**

- More restaurants More
- local jobs
- Expend tax funds wisely/conservatively
- Continue to work with DCDC to bring new businesses and business expansion to DeWitt.
- Continue to work with and be supportive of our current industries and businesses to make it advantageous for them to continue operating in DeWitt.
- Complete Industrial Street project to allow for expansion of our business park.
- Continue Quad City Arts sponsorship
- Continue to expand the Paul Skeffington trail.
  
- Finish the extension of industrial drive,
- continue using TIF whenever possible.
- Develop a new subdivision.
- Continue the LMI program.
- Add flashing yellow turn signals at Manard Way from 11<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Build a larger fitness center.
- Maintain or lower the tax levy.
- Continue current community events and look at options for new or alternate activities.
- Explore partnerships to help make a new recreation center possible
- Apartments soon to be done and fully open, Iowa Mutual lofts
- Continue to work with developers who are interested in creating new housing developments.
- Continue TIF LMI Owner-Occupied Rehab program.
- Try River Bend Transit again – first time there was not enough traffic to make it feasible
- Build a New Family Y

- Continue to put funds in Streets and Alleys
- Look at possibility of bike racks in downtown area to encourage bicycling within DeWitt.
- Might be time to refresh West Brook Facilities.
- Continue to put funds in Streets and Alleys
- Continue to plan for and complete renovations at the new Public Works building.
- Keep a close eye on escalating crime
- Continue to encourage volunteerism within the city.

## **SHORT TERM DEPARTMENT HEAD PRIORITY LISTS**

1. new cemetery software with online maps for staff and public
2. continue updating UB billing dates
3. investigate time/attendance solutions
4. improve timeliness/follow up on broken water shut offs
5. Review GIS information
6. Update water SCADA system
7. Update digester lid
8. Fix dead end roads and drainage issues
9. Make Recreation Supervisor position full time
10. Prioritize a new fitness center or upgrade current facility.
11. Add field lights to D4 at Westbrook Park
12. Develop the green space at Pickleball complex for recreation usage
13. Add lights to pickleball courts
14. Engage the business community more with Media Room and marketing
15. Add teen programming to serve the patrons we are now seeing after “growing our own”
16. Sensory Programs for children
17. Evaluation of staff efficiency
18. Maintain enough budget dollars from all funders to provide high quality services
19. Growing the Clinton County Union Catalog
20. Increasing tech options for patrons in the building
21. Maintain a steady levy rate
22. Be competitive in attracting and retaining City workforce
23. Strongly fund annual street maintenance program including repaving w/o infrastructure where it's practical
24. Develop a plan for the 11<sup>th</sup> Street/Westwood Drive intersection to safely accommodate growth in that area as well as the entire 11<sup>th</sup> Street corridor
25. Improve the Website by increasing interactive components such as fillable forms for often-used forms
26. Update/Transition to new ECW's (Tasers)
27. Begin updating Body Armor to include ceramic rifle plates
28. Maintain Staffing Level- Harsen to retire in 2025
29. Continue AAIR training & refresher training.
30. Maintain vehicle replacement program (1 per year)
31. - Get Cloudpermit fully capable of handling Code Enforcement.
32. - Update all of our current building code adoptions.
33. - I have a lot of CEU's required over the coming months.
34. - Revamp City Housing Program.
35. - Finish a full round of sidewalk rehab and make long term plan for sustainability.
- 36.

**III. LONG TERM OBJECTIVES: Please provide 1-2 responses for each of the questions below. Think in terms of longer-duration activities that might require 3-7 years to accomplish. Try to have at least one response for each item, but if you really do not have a response that you truly believe in you can leave a question unanswered. Additionally, a response to these questions can be similar/same to responses to the above questions.**

- A. More local jobs
- B. Continue to push business to the Industrial Park.
- C. More restaurants
- D. Partner with County to get a Bike Path to Grand Mound or Low Moor
- E. Consider expanding the wastewater plant and adding another well to be ready for potential future businesses, continue using TIF whenever possible.
- F. A new fitness center.
- G. Develop a new subdivision.
- H. Construct a new road near the police station between 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Humeston Road.
- I. Continue to partner with the DCDC in bringing industry and businesses to DeWitt.
- J. Continue to use TIF dollars to attract new industry and businesses.
- K. Continue to explore ways to afford a new recreation center.
- L. Work to lower property tax rate if possible to make homeownership more affordable
- M.** Expand Sidewalk program to get those who don't have them, installed.
- N.** Keep moving forward with the Industrial Street expansion
- O. Study the need for public transportation options in DeWitt. What public transportation options exist in DeWitt?
- P. New Streets Building, Fitness Center is next
- Q. Make plans for cost-effective renovation of the Community Center.
- R.** Slowly Manage Growth
- S. Continue to make safety and low crime a priority.
- T. Leaf vacuum service for residents.
- U. Large Item trash pick up day for residents.
- V.**

## **LONG TERM Department Head Priority Lists**

1. continue to plan/budget for building improvements/maintenance
2. .reclaim cemetery lots
3. improve organization of records retained in basement-maybe 1 day/mo Downstairs
4. continue to investigate ways to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness of City processes
5. continue to work to improve online access for customers/employees
6. Continue to reduce I+I
7. Continue pavement preservation techniques
8. Continue to budget and hire summer help
9. Develop new fitness center
10. Develop the park space at pickleball complex
11. Expand PSMT into county
12. update DCC facility.
13. Evaluation of physical vs electronic materials and put dollars where the readers are.
14. Add full-time tech staff
15. Evaluate the library's strategic plan and do new one, responding to community library use, and funding changes.
16. Do a building evaluation as we would have been completely open and functioning for 10 years. What needs changed, repaired, etc.
17. Begin communication on a Clinton County Hybrid Model for library sustainability.
18. Generate growth of the tax base to allow the reduction of tax rate without diminishing programs or services
19. Improve Bond Rating by one step
20. Continue to have steady leadership and dedication from elected officials and appointed Commission & Board members.
21. Renew- Body Worn Camera and Fixed LPR Contracts
22. Maintain an acceptable work load with increased housing and population (possible addition of an 11<sup>th</sup> Officer.)
23. Begin Radio replacement set- aside fund to help defray costs that will likely not be covered in full by Clinton County Communications. (Est. radio life 10 yrs)
24. Replace/update both handguns and rifles in approx. 5 yrs.
25. - Help Cloudpermit develop software to include City rental program inspections and administration.
26. - Eventually CBO certification.
- 27.

## CONCERNS:

- a) Wind Mills
- b) Decreased Property Tax Revenue for 2025
- c) Workload and complexity continue to increase on staff
- d) lack of funding
- e) continued state/federal changes to keep up with
- f) potential retirements
- g) SCADA and I+I are expensive
- h) Full-time employees have vacation to use.
- i) Building maintenance and projects for other departments take PW time
- j) Town is growing with infrastructure and we don't always keep up with maintenance or replacement.
- k) P&R department is understaffed to maintain & truly grow
- l) Lack of redundancy with DFC office manager duties.
- m) DFC needs to be upgraded or replaced
- n) Age of DFC staff and impending retirements, replacement of long-time staff
- o) Legislation against libraries and library staff
- p) Funding cuts
- q) Resistance to change
- r) Major shifts in how people spend their leisure time
- s) Lack of general support for city government and home rule by Iowa Legislature
- t) The increasing reliance and cost of technology systems – subscriptions to software and the required maintenance become more expensive and more complex to manage every year
  
- u) Funding for additional staffing needs with our growing community.
- v) Adequate funding to continue to keep up with advancing technology.
- w) Generating a deep and qualified applicant pool for available positions.
- x) Several senior staff members will likely be retiring in the next few years, which will likely cause a drop in the agency experience level. As a result this will likely impact the agency to some extent until the experience level rises again.

**EXHIBIT D**

**AGENDA**

**CITY OF DEWITT  
MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GOAL SETTING 2025  
6:00 P.M.  
Wednesday, December 9, 2022  
City Hall Council Chambers**

1. Opening Comments
2. Brief Review of City Accomplishments
3. Review/Discuss CIP and projected projects
4. Brief Review of short term/long term objectives, and review of concerns:
  - A. Review of Proposed objectives
  - B. Clarification of objectives
  - C. Revisions, Additions, Deletions, and Combinations of objectives
  - D. Independent selection of top objectives with results presented at future meeting
5. Discussion of Results including the drafting of a Final Report to the Mayor and City Council – 2022 Strategic Planning Process
6. Questions, Comments and Suggestions
7. Adjourn