



Internal Memo

April 18, 2019

TO: Mark C. Meyers, City Administrator

FROM: Anthony Chandler, Director of Administrative Services *Ac*

SUBJECT: Strategic Plan 2019

As you know, over the past several months City Council and staff have been working through the process of updating the strategic plan with Woods Consulting Group. The process consisted of four group sessions that culminated into five key areas of strategic focus. Attached is the draft strategic plan that incorporates the five areas of focus along with priorities for each category.

I am requesting this item be included on the April 23, 2019 work session agenda to provide an opportunity for final review for both City Council and staff. Once all parties are satisfied with the draft plan as presented, the item will be placed on a Council meeting agenda for formal approval. Staff will then formulate an implementation strategy to set the plan in motion over the next 3-5 years. Staff will also create a one page pamphlet/brochure as a condensed version of the plan which can be used as a hand-out to staff and the public.



Strategic Plan 2019

Introduction

The City Council and senior staff worked with Woods Consulting Group, LLC to update the previous strategic plan from 2009. Several group sessions were conducted in the early part of 2019 and the group discussed both the internal and external environment which was formulated into a revamped version of the existing strategic plan. The final draft consisted of five key areas of focus; 1) Financial Stability, 2) Economic Development, 3) Communication and Marketing, 4) Organizational Structure, and 5) Natural Resources and Leisure. The five areas of focus were broken down into practical goals with attainable objectives. Implementation strategies will be developed as the goals and objectives evolve over the next 3-5 years.

Areas of Focus

1) Financial Stability

The City of Norton Shores will focus on operating with balanced budgets based on reliable sources of revenue and with a vigilant view of necessary expenditures. The City will continue to seek ways to cooperate and/or collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions for efficiencies in services provided to the public. Local millage levies provide essential funding and their continuation as a source of revenue is vital.

- Create and maintain sufficient and sustainable financial resources for the City. (City Council/Administration/Finance)
- Achieve a mix of balanced development in the City: commercial-retail, industrial, and residential. (Administration)
- Continue to use and enhance the development of multi-year budget forecasting and establish a fund balance policy. (City Council/Administration/Finance)
- Renew “public safety” and “streets” millage to assure sufficient funding of essential public services and to improve and maintain adequate infrastructure. (City Council)
- Continue to enhance the current system of multi-year budget forecasts to maintain economic stability. (Administration)
- Establish a Debt/Unfunded Accrued Liabilities elimination plan. (City Council and Administration)

High Priority: Renewal of public safety millage and streets millage

2) Economic Development

The City continues to grow its commercial and industrial base through business friendly practices and the high quality infrastructure available. Retention of existing companies is solid, and staff will continue to explore alternative approaches to expand business attraction and retention efforts. The City will continue to evaluate tax incentive policies and other economic development tools offered through the State to attract commercial and industrial investment.

- Monitor the economic stability of the Harvey Street Corridor and neighboring properties involved directly with the changing conditions in the retail market place. The current retail environment may pose risks to current retailers. (Administration)
- Continue to implement the Seminole Road/Henry Street Place Plan for infrastructure improvements and mixed-use redevelopment to include medical, retail, and housing along the corridor. (Administration and Public Works)
- Cooperate with the Native American tribe that is proposing a development of a casino on property north of The Lakes Mall. (City Council and Administration)
- Develop “Place Plans” for the following areas of the City: Harvey Street Corridor, and East Broadway neighborhood. (Administration)
- Stay abreast of the commercial real-estate market locally and acquire available land for industrial development. (Administration)

High Priority: Seminole Road/Henry Street Corridor, Harvey Street Corridor

3) Communication and Marketing

Several advancements in technology have occurred since the 2009 strategic plan. Most notably is the advent of social media and the methods used for public outreach. Today, the public has numerous outlets available for information sharing. The City strives to engage the public and incorporate technology advancements into its process of community engagement. This plan will deliver guidance to develop a marketing strategy for the City to effectively promote the services offered and to provide local businesses and property owners with a distinctive sense of identity.

- Develop a Communications Plan on how to most effectively reach city residents and other key audiences on issues related to city prosperity and services through effective use of multiple, and targeted communication channels. (City Council and Administration)
- Develop a marketing strategy for a strong brand development to be used by the City to effectively communicate “brand promises” to multi-generational audiences: residents, employees, local industry, business owners, etc. Integrate the marketing strategy with the Communications Plan to share the “brand statement” with key

audiences within and outside of the community on a consistent basis. (City Council and Administration)

- The City recognizes that the “millennial” generation will be a key component to long-term city growth and prosperity. Research and develop a set of strategies that effectively promote the values, activities, and benefits of living in Norton Shores. Monitor the effectiveness of these strategies and modify as needed. (City Council and Administration)
- Continue to develop and expand efforts to communicate with strategic audiences within the City and the metropolitan area; this includes both promotional strategies and “listening” tactics. (City Council and Administration)
- Initiate a focused effort to engage civic and various residential and business groups on a consistent basis; coordinate efforts with Police and Fire Departments for community meetings and other public events. Cultivate Council and employees to serve as “ambassadors” regarding employee recruitment efforts. (City Council/Administration/Employees)

High Priority: Development of a City “Communications Plan” and marketing strategy for reaching citizens regarding key issues.

4) Organization

The City aspires to maintain the status of being a great place to be employed and build a career, up to and through retirement. This initiative has become more challenging due to the tightening of the labor market and the leveling-out of benefit packages being offered.

- Continue to make the City of Norton Shores an “Employer of Choice” and a great place to work by offering competitive compensation, a positive employment culture, timely access to important training, and the City’s investment in first-rate facilities and equipment. (City Council and Administration)
- City Administration will actively evaluate the current management framework with an emphasis on the employee positions that combine two or more sets of responsibilities and review the need for positions to continue in this manner. (Administration)
- Conduct a staffing analysis to provide a data driven report to identify actual workload and appropriate staffing/deployment levels for operational efficiency. (All Departments)
- Develop a formal succession plan. (City Council and Administration)

High Priority: Seek creative ways to preserve the City of Norton Shores as an “Employer of Choice”

5) Natural Resources and Leisure

The City recently updated the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in 2019. The Plan incorporates the forecasting of future projects for development to enhance the connectivity for pedestrian travel. This particular initiative coincides with the main goal of connecting existing public parks via non-motorized pathways.

- Develop and implement (over time schedule) the City’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to ensure that the City maintains a more “walk-able” and bicycle friendly environment. (Administration and Public Works)
- Develop a schedule for and funding support toward implementation of the City’s Park and Recreation Plan. (Administration and Parks/Recreation)
- Continue the City’s goal to protect its unique access to Mona Lake and the Lake Michigan shoreline. (City Council and Administration)
- Make every effort to apply for and secure grant funding for future sidewalk/trail networks and park projects. (Administration)
- Pursue opportunities for improved recreation and leisure with the addition of “pocket parks”, dog parks, and ball fields when viable land becomes available. (Administration and Parks/Recreation)

High Priority: Implement Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

City of Norton Shores

Demographic Projections: 2018-2023

Source: ESRI

- Population forecast to increase from 24,691 to 25,218 residents
- # of Households forecast to increase from 10,284 to 10,494 (+200)
- Average household size to remain at 2.39 persons
- % of owner-occupied households to increase from 75.7% to 76.3%
- % of renter-occupied households to remain at 17.1%
- % of vacant households to decline from 7.1% to 6.6%
- # of housing units (all) to increase from 11,075 to 11,241 (up 180)
- Median Household Income forecast to increase from \$55,292 to \$63,226 (increase of \$8,000)
- Median Home Value forecast to increase from \$142,256 to \$172,003 (increase of \$29,250)
- Median age of residents forecast to increase from 44.4 years to 44.6 years

Household Income Distribution:

| Household Income | 2018 | 2023 | |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|--|
| <\$15,000 | 7.5% | 5.8% | |
| \$15,000 - \$24,999 | 10.4% | 8.4% | |
| \$25,000 - \$34,999 | 11.4% | 9.8% | |
| \$35,000 - \$49,999 | 14.8% | 13.4% | |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 20.5% | 20.1% | |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 13.8% | 14.8% | |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 13.4% | 16.7% | |
| \$150,000 – plus | 8.3% | 11.0% | |

- 2018 Average HH Income: \$73,750
- Forecast 2023 Average HH Income: \$86,908
- Median Home Value: increase from \$142,258 to \$172,000
- Median Age: 44.4 - 44.6 years

Value of Owner-Occupied Housing:

Mean Value forecast to Increase from \$188,309 in 2018 to \$226,131 by 2023

Population Ethnicity

| | 2010 | 2018 | 2023 |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| White | 91.8% | 90.4% | 90.4% |
| Black | 3.2% | 3.2% | 3.4% |
| Asian | 1.2% | 1.7% | 1.7% |
| Hispanic | 3.8% | 4.8% | 4.8% |
| Native American | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% |

- Racial group is predominantly White with Black and Hispanic as the largest racial minorities in City

Education Level Attained by Adults Ages 25+

| Education Level Completed | % of Population Age 25+ |
|--|-------------------------|
| Did not finish High School | 6.0% |
| Completed 9 th -12 th No Diploma | 4.4% |
| High School graduate | 23.7% |
| High School GED | 3.4% |
| Some college – no degree | 23.9% |
| Associate Degree | 11.5% |
| Bachelor's Degree | 20.6% |
| Graduate/Professional Degree | 10.7% |

- 10.4% did not complete high school
- 27.3% completed high school or a GED
- 35.4% completed some college (no degree) or earned an Associate Degree
- 20.6% completed a Bachelor's Degree
- 10.7% earned a graduate or professional degree

Employment by Industry

| Employment Sector | % of Residents Employed |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Agriculture/Mining | 0.7% |
| Construction | 3.7% |
| Manufacturing | 20.9% |
| Wholesale & Retail Trade | 15.7% |
| Transportation & Utilities | 3.2% |
| Finance/Insurance/Real Estate | 4.0% |
| Public Administration | 5.0% |
| Services | 45.5% |

- 80%-plus of city residents age 25 plus are employed in manufacturing, retail/wholesale trade, or services
- 59.3% of jobs are classified as “white collar”; 21.6% are classed as “blue collar” and 19.1% are classed as “services”

Size of Households

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| 1-person | 27.6% |
| 2-persons | 37.9% |
| 3-persons | 14.3% |
| 4-persons | 12.1% |
| 5+ persons | 8.1% |

- 65.5% of all households in the City contain 1 or 2 persons
- 26.4% of all households contain 3 or 4 persons

Mortgage Status/Tenure

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| % of Owner-Occupied Housing | 81.6% |
| Housing with mortgage | 51.2% |
| Owned Free & Clear | 30.4% |
| Renter-Occupied Housing | 18.4% |

Household Spending (% of National Average) on Goods and Services

| Category | % of National Average |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Health-Care | 93% |
| Entertainment & Recreation | 89% |
| Food at Home | 89% |
| Household Furnishings & Equipment | 88% |
| Personal Care Products | 87% |
| Support Payments | 88% |
| Vehicle Maintenance & Repairs | 87% |
| Shelter | 87% |
| Food Away from Home | 87% |

Source of Information: US Consumer Expenditure Survey