



Strategic Plan

2025-2029

City of Augusta

Executive Summary

On June 11, 2024, the Augusta City Council established a Strategic Plan Committee to engage in a process to set the course for guiding the City’s priorities and resources. From January through May 2025, the Committee worked to develop a strategic plan covering 2025 through 2029.

The strategic planning effort began with the Committee adopting a vision, mission, and set of core values for the City of Augusta. The Committee then conducted an examination of the current operating environment, specifically identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Based on this examination, the Committee identified three strategic priorities, the issues of greatest importance to the City over the next five years. For each strategic priority, key action items have been identified.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Sound municipal equipment, facilities, and infrastructure
- Financial stability
- Improving housing stock

Vision, Mission, Values

VISION STATEMENT

Augusta will be recognized as a safe, family-oriented community with a welcoming, small-town feel. The thriving business community and access to outdoor recreation will make it an ideal place to live, work, and play.

MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Augusta strives to provide a safe, healthy, and vibrant community through the efficient delivery of public services.

VALUES

Integrity

We are consistent and fair with our words and actions.

Transparency

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

Collaboration

We are supportive and respectful of each other as we work together to get things done.

Sustainability

We make decision with an understanding of their impact on the environment, people, community and finances.

Community

We are welcoming and respectful of all residents and visitors and make decisions to promote a feeling of safety within our community.

The Current Operating Environment

In order to assess the current operating environment, the Committee performed a SWOT analysis. A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to assess **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats** facing an organization. When applied to local governments, this analysis can help governing bodies make informed decisions about policies, projects, and overall direction.

SWOT Analysis Results

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
- Financial stability (no general obligation debt, TIF district near closing, adequate fund balance)	- Lack of adequate housing within City limits	- Attractive to young families (schools, location, etc.)	- DNR requirements
- Self-sustaining community (grocery store, banks, clinics, laundromat, nursing home, variety of employment opportunities, etc.)	- Lack of City owned land to develop	- Property within City which could be developed	- Levy limits restricting ability to increase tax revenues
- Robust community services services available (Senior Center, Library, Aquatic Center and Fitness Center, Performing Arts Center, Early Learning Center)	- Vacant/under-utilized storefronts	- Potential ability to utilize a TIF district for development	- Aging infrastructure and facilities and potential for related unexpected costs
- Full-time police department; safety of community	- Aging City facilities & infrastructure; lack of long-term capital plan	- Collaboration with other governments (grant or low-interest loan funding)	- Declining enrollment in school district; recent financial difficulties
- Access to outdoor recreation, both within and around the City	- Small City staff with limited time for special initiatives	- New auditorium and strong theater program; brings people into the City	- Community members lack of time to enjoy what City has to offer, makes it difficult to find volunteers.
- Convenient location	- Lack of opportunities for tweens/teens outside of school functions		- Level of public support for referendum due to recent school referendum

Strategic Priorities and Key Action Steps

After completing the SWOT analysis, the Committee identified three strategic priorities:

- Sound municipal equipment, facilities, and infrastructure
- Financial stability
- Improving housing stock

Key action steps were identified for each strategic priority. The Committee also discussed who was responsible for next steps, a proposed timeframe, and resources needed for each action step. The key actions are not intended to be all inclusive, as implementation of this plan will be an evolving process.

Sound municipal equipment, facilities, and infrastructure

Action Steps	Who	Timeframe	Resources Needed
Develop and implement a long-term capital improvement plan focused on proactive repairs and replacements	City Council, CIP Committee	Initial plan completion by July 2025; ongoing	The committee has been established; Staff time for information gathering and plan development. No budget impact.
Seek community engagement in decisions regarding municipal capital needs and financing	City Council, CIP Committee	Ongoing	Continuing review of CIP Committee appointments; CIP committee community engagement strategy. No budget impact.
Explore feasibility of utilizing a new TIF district for planned improvements	City Council	By end of 2029	Consultation with engineer or municipal advisor needed. May have budget impact.

Financial stability

Action Steps	Who	Timeframe	Resources Needed
Gain an understanding of the impact of TIF district closure and capital improvement plan on tax rates in order to avoid unexpected changes in tax rates.	City staff, City Council	2025-2029	Consultation with municipal advisor needed. May have budget impact.
Diversify revenue sources, including expanding grant funding and investing in related resources	City staff, City Council	2025-2029	Staff time; possibly third-party resource regarding grant funding; possible budget impact
Increase tax base through promoting industrial and economic development	City Council, Augusta IDC working with Eau Claire Area EDC	By end of 2029	To be determined

Strategic Priorities and Key Action Steps (continued)

Improve Housing Stock

Action Steps	Who	Timeframe	Resources Needed
Review zoning/ordinances regarding new developments, with a focus on making residential development easier	City staff, City Council, Planning Committee	2025; ongoing	Staff time; no budget impact
Review options for acquiring buildable property	City Council	By end of 2029	Budget impact to be considered if acquirable property is identified
Promote revolving loan fund for residential improvements	City staff	By end of 2025, then ongoing	Staff time; no budget impact
Explore use of one-year TIF district extension for affordable housing	City staff, City Council	By end of 2029	Staff time; would delay TIF closure by one year

Strategic Plan Implementation

Implementation is the final step in the strategic planning process. Success in achieving the City of Augusta's strategic priorities will be dependent on the following actions:

- Those involved in implementation of the strategic plan must be willing to collaborate, cooperate, and effectively communicate throughout the process.
- The strategic plan must be reviewed by the City Council, City staff, and Committee members at least annually.
- The City's comprehensive plan and other policies should be reviewed to ensure consistency with the strategic plan.
- Roles and responsibilities for key action steps must be assigned and clearly defined.
- A work plan and feasible timelines for key action steps should be developed.
- The Committee should meet at least semi-annually to review progress on plan priorities and key action items.
- The City Council should consider the strategic priorities outlined in this plan when making budget decisions regarding allocation of resources and/or pursuing funding.

Strategic Planning Participants

The strategic plan was developed with the work and dedication of many individuals. Mayor Jason TePaske and the City Council led the way by appointing the Strategic Planning Committee and prioritizing long-term planning for the City of Augusta.

Members of the Strategic Planning Committee

Brain Leslin, Chairperson

Patricia Wessel

Robert Chaffee

Jordan Doyle

Brian Abley (since April 15, 2025)

The committee was assisted by City staff, who provided support throughout the process.