



CITY OF
OWATONNA

Strategic Plan

2024 - 2026



The City of Owatonna is committed to providing a community where residents and businesses can thrive. This growing micropolitan consistently ranks among the most livable small towns in the country and serves as a shopping, tourism and healthcare magnet for southern Minnesota. Rich in waterways, woodlands and other recreational areas, its strong community, education and business culture provide a high quality of life. Located in southeastern Minnesota, Owatonna is the county seat for Steele County and is home to several major employers.

OWATONNA.GOV

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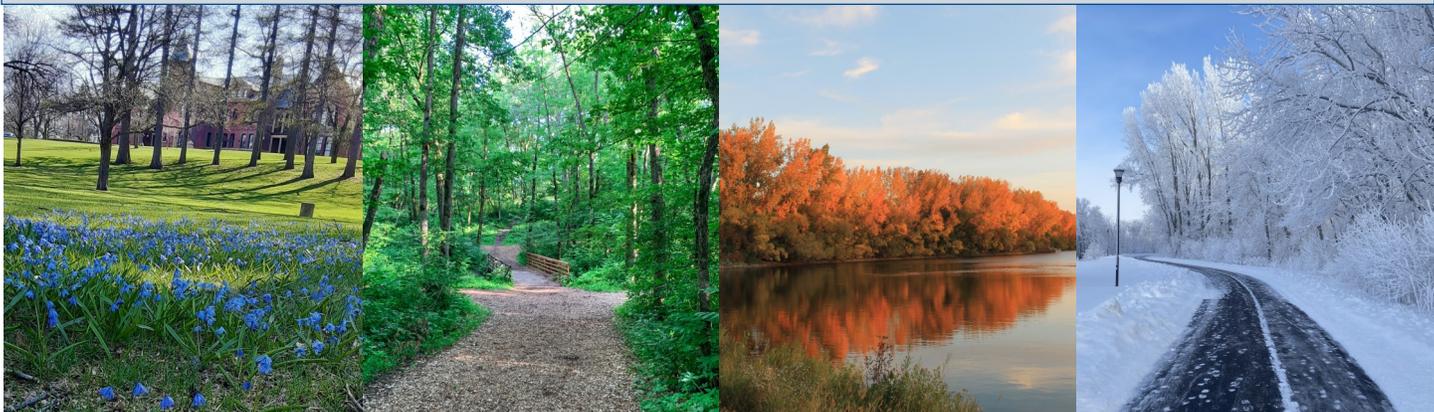
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The City of Owatonna's vision, to enhance the quality of life, is the foundation for its four Key Focus Areas: Infrastructure, Economic Vitality, Quality of Life & Efficient, Effective Government.

MISSION:

Provide a high quality of life by serving the community's needs.

PURPOSE STATEMENT:

WE CREATE A BETTER TOMORROW

CORE VALUES:

Better Together

We are one team of diverse perspectives and talents working to create a better tomorrow for Owatonna. We support each other, listen to understand, and respectfully challenge each other—always recognizing and trusting that we will succeed more as a team than on our own.

Community Stewardship

We are here to proactively care for, protect and serve our community. We understand that our community trusts and empowers us to do our work responsibly, with integrity, and utilize resources efficiently and effectively.

Pride in Our Work

We care, we show up prepared to work and we strive for excellence in all that we do. We commit to continuously learn and improve each day. We believe if it's worth doing, it's worth doing well.



City of Owatonna Elected Officials



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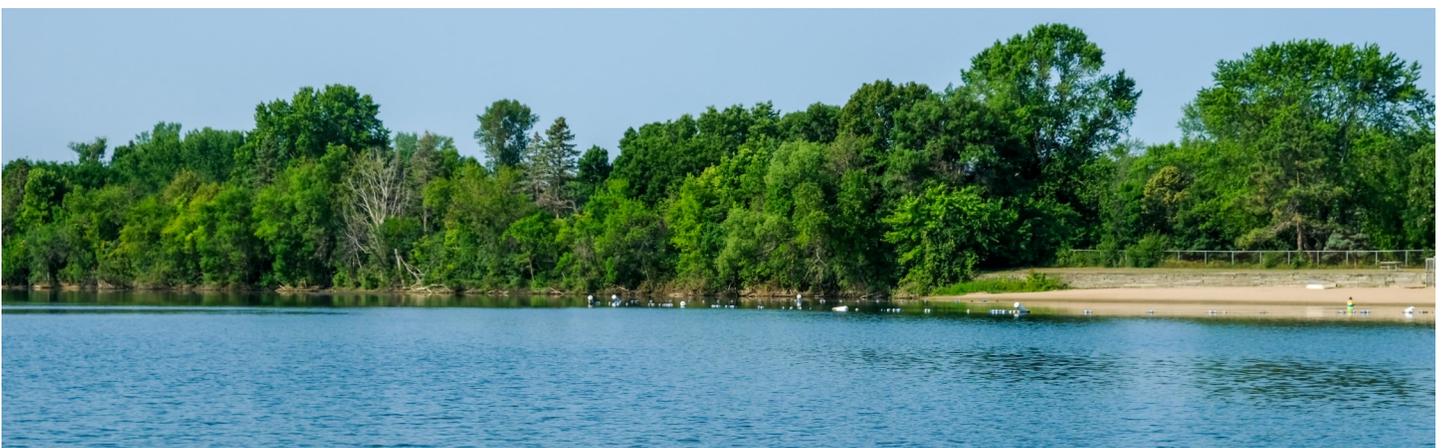
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Hello,

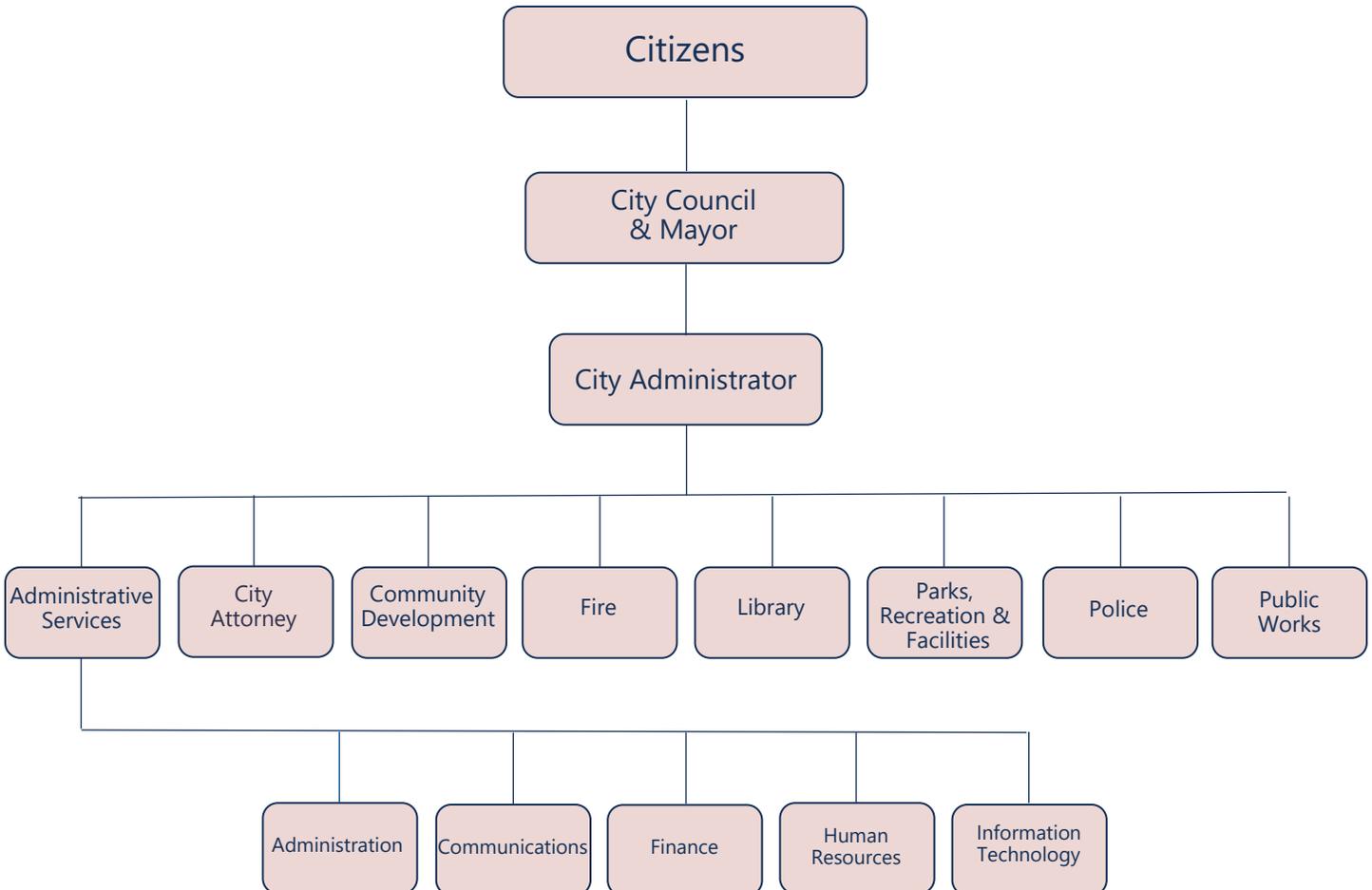
On behalf of the Owatonna City Council, Mayor and City staff, I am pleased to share with you our Strategic Plan that will guide our work through 2026. This year's annual update of the City's Strategic Plan began with a facilitated planning session in February that involved discussions with department directors and elected officials to develop high-level priorities. Since then, we have refined those priorities and developed a system to track and report progress on them.

The City's four Key Focus Areas have remained the same; however, the action plans for each have been updated to prepare for the community's expected growth. Owatonna is increasingly becoming more of a regional hub for southern Minnesota. The City of Owatonna is preparing to accommodate the community's evolving needs with development goals planning to reach population goals of 30,000 residents before 2030 and 40,000 before 2040. With added growth, we need to prepare to expand our services, infrastructure, recreational facilities and programs. We are committed to continuing to provide a community that welcomes and serves all of our residents, visitors, commuters and business leaders.

The Strategic Plan will continue to be updated annually. Our 2050 Comprehensive Planning process that kicked off recently includes public engagement opportunities to advise future strategic planning processes and an update to our Vision

Statement. We invite community members to attend meetings, participate in surveys, focus groups and online engagement opportunities and, as always, contact staff, your City Council Member or the Mayor to ensure your voice is heard in City decision-making. Thank you for choosing Owatonna and helping make this community a great place to call home!

City Departments & Organizational Structure



Strategic Planning

Owatonna's Mayor and City Council worked with the City Administrator and staff to develop this three-year Strategic Plan to envision the future. The vision, to plan for continued growth, serves as a foundation to align its efforts and resources to accomplish its goals in four Key Focus Areas. This plan sets a course to ensure the City of Owatonna's vision is accomplished.

KEY FOCUS AREAS & GOALS



Infrastructure: Develop and implement fiscal sustainability policies that guide investments in facilities and utilities supporting core services that proactively ensure residents' health, safety and welfare.



Economic Vitality: Collaborate with other public and private entities to drive economic development that attracts, retains and creates quality jobs to ensure a diverse economic base and a resilient, growing city tax base.



Quality of Life: Maximize resources that accentuate Owatonna's intrinsic assets to provide quality amenities, services and programs that make it convenient for residents to enjoy art, cultural and recreational activities.



Efficient, Effective Government: As good stewards of taxpayer dollars, function as an innovative, responsible and customer-focused government that works collaboratively to meet the community's needs.



Key Focus Area:



**Fiscal Year
2024-2026
Key Goals:**

**Fiscal Year
2024-2026
Action Plan:**

Develop a sustainable asset management plan for current and future needs

- Develop a strategy for prioritization for all City needs, facilities, equipment, infrastructure
- Evaluate long-term facility plan including funding strategies
- Evaluate assessment process to determine viable alternatives (i.e. franchise fees or levy increase)
- Develop annual preventive maintenance program and standards for all City facilities
- Minimize risk to City facilities located in a floodplain

Provide a transportation system of roads, trails and sidewalks that aligns with growth

- Maintain average Pavement Management Index (PMI) of 70
- Partner with Steele County on developing an East Side Corridor and a trail
- Develop Capital Improvement Plan for signal lighting system
- Update 2012 Sidewalk & Trail Plan and implement in accordance with established priorities

Provide wastewater capacity that aligns with projected growth

- Identify collection system capacity constraints and develop Capital Improvement Plan
- Manage the Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion project
- Continue enhancing training program to meet plant's staffing needs
- Identify collection system expansion areas and prioritize according to projected development

Establish a stormwater resilient community

- Complete engineering studies to address local flooding and stormwater issues
- Develop stormwater Best Management Practices Maintenance Plan and Capital Improvement Plan
- Enhance Stormwater Education Outreach Plan

Key Focus Area:



Fiscal Year 2024-2026 Key Goals:	Fiscal Year 2024-2026 Action Plan:
<p><i>Implement community growth strategies</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue infrastructure investment to facilitate business growth downtown—utilities, streetlights and downtown parking lot • Facilitate and continue incentive programs for expansion, relocation and retention of businesses • Collaborate on increased utilization of makers spaces at Owatonna Public Library and Owatonna Area Business Development Center • Review and amend zoning and subdivision ordinance to support growth and equity • Increase housing types throughout Owatonna • Assist in developing community assets • Develop parkland development policy • Develop and redevelop commercial areas and vacant properties
<p><i>Create a vibrant downtown</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Main Street Program in partnership with the Chamber to enhance the downtown experience • Continue utilizing Economic Development Agency loan funds to redevelop the downtown and riverfront areas • Pursue proactive opportunities for redevelopment that provide long-term benefits • Pursue beautification efforts in the downtown area • Continue implementing Streetscape Plan

Key Focus Area:



**Fiscal Year
2024-2026
Key Goals:**

**Fiscal Year
2024-2026
Action Plan:**

Provide quality amenities, services and programs

- Create a wish book for new or enhanced amenities
- Develop collaborative programming across all departments
- Obtain regional park designation for Lake Kohlmier, Morehouse and Kaplan Woods
- Maximize grant opportunities for programs and amenities
- Develop library remodeling plan to better align with community needs
- Explore new and existing partnerships to meet community needs
- Develop service level standards and agreements with partners

Commit to providing a safe community

- Engage with community members to build trust, strengthen relationships and provide information
- Ensure staffing levels align with community growth and needs
- Strive to maintain a crime rate lower than comparable cities and the region
- Develop a plan to address areas of opportunity identified in the 2023 ISO audit
- Develop a plan to address public safety facility needs
- Develop Continuity of Operation Plan for the City
- Pursue strategic removal of homes in floodplain
- Develop plan to increase use of security cameras

Enhance external communications & engagement

- Implement community-wide brand
- Continually improve website for better user experience
- Refine and expand social media and engagement strategies
- Implement public access programming on web-based platform and enhance programming
- Assess effectiveness of two-way communication methods and refine strategies
- Conduct community satisfaction survey
- Adopt a Crisis Communications Plan
- Ensure timely responses to citizen requests

Key Focus Area:



**Fiscal Year
2024-2026
Key Goals:**

**Fiscal Year
2024-2026
Action Plan:**

Become an employer of choice

- Proactively monitor staffing statistics
- Develop a long-term staffing plan that aligns with the Comprehensive Plan
- Analyze organizational structure
- Incorporate Core Values into people systems—hiring, evaluation, development
- Expand staff development
- Promote collaboration and continuous improvement across organization
- Commit to enhancing a positive workplace culture

Leverage technology to improve efficiency, effectiveness and data security

- Ensure staff are trained to fully utilize all technology available to them
- Improve website accessibility, useability and public communication
- Develop formal Cyber-security Plan

Ensure current and future fiscal sustainability

- Balance long-term goals with short-term needs
- Continue to develop policies to promote fiscal sustainability—capital asset replacement, debt, fund balance, budget
- Consider local option sales tax and prioritize projects to determine most appropriate use
- Continue long-term strategy for tax levy to follow growth
- Monitor property tax competitiveness