

# City of Elmhurst 2018 Strategic Planning and Goal Development Update EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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As the leadership team of the City of Elmhurst carved out time in 2018 for an update of the City’s 2015 strategic plan, the process of strategic planning is the preferred approach to expressing and guiding an organization’s future. Rather than making decisions issue by issue, a holistic strategic planning process serves as a designed conversation to provide a forum for a methodical exchange of ideas and development of strategic goals.

The City of Elmhurst (the “City”) engaged the Center for Governmental Studies (CGS) at Northern Illinois University (NIU) to facilitate a strategic planning workshop retreat session with Council members and staff to update the City’s goals and environmental scanning elements from the 2015 plan. As an organization, the City has followed a regular process of establishing goals for the Council and staff to follow to provide quality services for the community. As part of the 2018 update process, the workshop retreat sessions provided a collaborative atmosphere for the Council and management staff to take the time to work together to further explore the future, develop or update strategic goals, and affirm or adjust the City wants to go as an organization and community. As was discussed and reviewed during the strategic planning workshop, executive-level retreats and strategic planning sessions are a staple of good governance and leadership for progressive organizations.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Ultimately, six key strategic priority areas were identified as an outcome of the 2018 strategic planning process. These six strategic priority areas or ‘pillars’ highlight the key activities and initiatives the City should focus on in both the short- and long-term. The strategic priority areas that emerged as one of the outcomes of the 2018 update workshop [in no particular order] are:

- *Financial management and stability,*
- *Economic development,*
- *Technology planning and advancement,*
- *Stormwater management,*
- *Intergovernmental collaboration, and,*
- *Community engagement and communication.*

## STRATEGIC GOALS

As part of the 2018 planning process, participants were asked to identify short-and long-term goals for the City. After the goals were developed, participants were then asked to classify each goal according to a matrix model of time and complexity. Agreed upon criteria were used to classify a goal as short- or long-term and as complex or routine (please see full report for defined criteria). Following the classification exercise, the Mayor and Council were asked to delineate, via an online ranking exercise, which goals should be given the highest priority. In total, the group developed twelve short-term routine goals,

seventeen short-term complex goals, five long-term routine goals and ten long-term complex goals. The top three goals based on the Council’s average scores from each category, provided by the online ranking exercise, are offered here as a process “snapshot” representing the most important strategic goals or priority areas for the Council and staff to address in the months and years ahead. For a full review and appreciation of all the strategic goals and priority areas presented, discussed, and ranked, please refer to the full report.

**Top Three Goals within Each Quadrant of the Time and Complexity Matrix**

