



## City of Newport, Minnesota Strategic Plan



# 2015

### OVERVIEW

#### City of Newport

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Newport is primarily a residential community and its strength is the people who live within the City. Newport is a small river community with residential streets bordered by large trees, which wind their way along the river's edge and the bluff lands. Newport's small town persona is retained within its people and its physical environment even though it is within a 15 minute commute to St. Paul and Minneapolis. With a population of 3,435, Newport continues to encourage growth and development within the community.

Even with numerous strengths and assets, the City is faced with challenging issues and exciting opportunities. This policy and plan is to ensure these issues and opportunities addressed are in a timely, efficient and effective manner. The City seeks to create positive outcomes through a realistic and practical work plan. To that end, Newport is served by a strong vision and mission statement.

#### City Vision Statement

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Newport is a historic city on the Mississippi River where small-town tradition is preserved. The City is known for a strong work ethic and self-reliance where a shared sense of community pride fosters active family neighborhoods, expanding business opportunities, and a healthy lifestyle for all to enjoy!

#### City Mission Statement

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The City of Newport is committed to serving the people and businesses of Newport by creating an environment which encourages pride in the community, promotes prosperity for businesses and improves the quality of life for all.

#### The Session

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The 2015 process was designed to update the Strategic Plan adopted in July of 2014. The 2014 Plan was used as the foundation for the discussion. A copy of the facilitator's handout used during the meeting is available in the City Administrator's Office.

The work session was held on April 15, 2015 in Newport City Hall. The Mayor, City Council members, City Administrator, Police Chief and Public Works Director attended and participated in the meeting. The agenda included a focus on reviewing the 2014-2016 documents, updating the Council on the progress within each goal, a discussion of new ideas and opportunities, and a review of the Plan format. The discussion highlighted current challenges and future opportunities. The agenda was free-flowing and the discussion was inclusive and participatory. City officials stayed together in one group with informal conversation dominating the discussion. The City Administrator was encouraged to weigh in on her ideas, thoughts and expectations.



## Achievements

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The City Council is very proud of the work the City completed and noted a variety of achievements. Three major areas and specific achievements include work in infrastructure projects, land and property and operations and finance:

- **Infrastructure projects**
  - Transit station
  - Dealing with the flood
  - Street reconstruction work
  - I and I reduction projects
  - Installation of radio read water meters
- **Land and Property**
  - Basketball/Tennis courts
  - Construction of a gazebo at the school forest
  - Removal of A & W Building
  - Vacant building registration
  - North Ravine project
  - Purchasing Johnson Estate
  - Knauff clean-up
- **Operations and Finance**
  - GIS SCADA work
  - Crime rate down
  - Fire safety enhancements
  - Maintain AA stable rating
  - Long term financial planning for all government and utility funds
  - Work with neighboring cities, i.e. building inspection

## Work Session Goals

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The goals of the City work session were simple and straightforward -- 1) have open and honest discussions; 2) put ideas and opinions on the table; 3) identify and discuss important priorities; and 4) update the strategic plan.

## City Assets and Strengths

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Newport City Council and staff are proud of the community. City officials enjoy talking about their city and identified the following characteristics as major assets and strengths of the City and community:

- Historic community
- Proximity to amenities (*minutes from everywhere*)
- Maintain strong financial position
- Country feel within a city
- Hidden gem; emerging presence
- Access, transportation and transit
- Safe and affordable



## Strategic Planning

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The primary objective of the City Council and staff is to establish a consensus-based direction for the City and then pursue implementation strategies to achieve that direction. In order to accomplish this outcome, an understanding of the value and purpose of strategic planning is essential. The City of Newport has a solid track record of strategic planning. It is important to note that strategic planning is fundamentally a tool to assist city leaders in reviewing where you have come from, where you are today and where you want to go in the future. This was a feature in the Council-staff discussion. The critical link is to connect plans with resources, time and the priorities of the City Council. By understanding the value and committing to implementation, city leaders ensure that their time and commitment will be purposeful, useful and successful.

## Short Term Priorities

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The City Council continues to pursue a set of short-term goals. These goals move “above and beyond” the day-to-day operations of the City and serve to move the City and community forward in an optimistic and progressive manner. While preserving the small town feel and historic charm of the City, the purpose of the short-term goals are to revitalize, restore and reinvigorate the city and greater Newport community. We plan to address the appearance and look of our City as well as the tangible assets such as roads and public facilities. The City will accomplish its goals through wise financial planning, progressive thinking, innovative solutions, deliberate risk-taking, and collaborative decision-making. The City is committed to effective planning to ensure that it will build a consensus for future direction. As stewards of the future, high expectations are set for ourselves, the citizens, and this special place we call the City of Newport, Minnesota.

## Short Term Goals

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The City Council feels real good about the achievements in the past year. To continue the momentum and energy, the following six short-term goals are adopted by the City Council:

1. Maintain our fiscal health
  2. Ensure successful development on the transit site and surrounding areas
  3. Focus on business outreach and retention
  4. Develop city properties
  5. Analyze city facilities for long-term efficiency
  6. Develop the city’s workforce
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## Short Term Goals (2015-2017)

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### 1.) *Maintain our fiscal health*

Action Steps	Status
a. Actively monitor the budget and provide timely financial reports	
b. Link budget priorities with the strategic plan	
c. Explore partnerships and collaborations that may result in new revenues or cost savings	

### 2.) *Ensure successful development on the transit site and surrounding areas*

Action Steps	Status
a. Partner with the HRA and revisit the recent HRA studies related to the transit site	
b. Establish the rights to the MnDot property	
c.	

### 3.) *Focus on business outreach and retention*

Action Steps	Status
a. Meet with builders, developers and contractors to obtain input on existing regulations	
b. Develop a business outreach program	
c. Market the City and promote our small town brand	

### 4.) *Analyze city facilities for long term efficiency*

Action Steps	Status
a. Obtain quotes on improvements to City Hall	
b. Continue street infrastructure programs	
c. Maintain and improve city facilities	
d. Develop action plan for I and I reduction	



**5.) *Develop city properties***

Action Steps	Status
a. Continue dialogue to purchase the island (acquisition goal)	
b. Return city owned property to the tax rolls	
c. Develop park and river access	

**6.) *Develop the City's workforce***

Action Steps	Status
a. Continue staff professional development	
b. Add GIS technology	
c. Council, staff and advisory committees participate in training programs and professional development	

**Implementation**

The strategic plan is designed to be a guide and roadmap for the City moving forward. A strategic plan is updated as needed, both informally and formally. The City Council encourages the City Administrator to ensure the plan is relevant and alive for current and future opportunities and to consider changing the meeting schedule to include more monthly workshops.

The City Council is requesting regular updates on the implementation of the plan throughout the year.