

# 2021-2022 Strategic Plan Update

## VALUES

Ethics and Integrity

Fiscal Responsibility

Cooperation and Teamwork

Open and Honest Communications

Excellence and Quality in the Delivery of Service

Treating People with Respect and Fairness

Adaptability and Continuous Learning

## VISION

Ramsey will be a secure, citizen-driven, collaborative community that respects the balance and connectivity between its unique suburban, rural, and natural environments.

## MISSION

To work together to responsibly grow our community and to provide quality, cost-effective and efficient government services.

## OBJECTIVES

Financial Stability

A Balance of Rural Character and Suburban Growth

An Active and Connected Community

Smart, Citizen-Focused Government

An Effective Organization

## STRATEGIES

Identify and implement operational efficiencies, cost savings and additional funding sources while maintaining and increasing transparency and accountability.

Promote economic growth and development.

Create a positive image for residential neighborhoods, business districts and key corridors.

Improve the safety and mobility of transportation corridors.

Connect the community through Parks and Trails Capital Improvements along with Recreational Programming.

Spotlight sustainability and efficiency through public facilities and infrastructure investments.

Strengthen and enhance our identity, brand and image.

Improve City's communication.

Strive for high organizational morale and employee retention.

# ACTION PLAN

Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
<b>Strategy: Identify and implement operational efficiencies, cost savings and additional funding sources while maintaining and increasing transparency and accountability.</b>				
1. Establish a committee for web site design update	Q2 <b>COMPLETED</b>	Budget Impact - Low	Improve web site to allow City to identify and answer the most common questions in order to improve customer service and staff efficiency.	Jason Fredrickson
2. Review and analyze development review process	Q3 <b>COMPLETED</b>	Budget Impact - Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify issues at the start of the development process (i.e., no last minute surprises)</li> <li>Eliminate mistakes in the preparation of development agreement</li> <li><b>Revised and implemented a new calendar for 2023 to give staff and applicants adequate review and response time prior to Planning Commission.</b></li> <li><b>Creating standard template.</b></li> </ul>	Brian Hagen <b>Todd Larson</b>
3. Review and analyze turf maintenance of City properties	Q3 <b>COMPLETED</b>	Budget Impact - Medium	<p>Significantly reduced time and expense of maintaining City turf.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A detailed experiment on the efficacy of turf growth regulants occurred on one half of the 16-acre soccer field at Elmcrest Park.</b></li> <li><b>Staff analyzed turf maintenance practices at two underutilized parks, 3.3 acres of boulevard and the city's infiltration basin, and through P &amp; R Commission recommendation and City Council action, have now converted to a more sustainable, native ground cover eliminating the need for unnecessary mowing of more than 20-acres.</b></li> <li><b>Additional opportunities (2023-24) exist for removing more park acreage from unnecessary mowing.</b></li> </ul>	Mark Riverblood
4. Seek ways to optimize cost savings from new Public Works Facility and communicate savings to Community	Q4 <b>COMPLETED</b>	Budget Impact - Low	<p>Additional documented cost savings from new Public Works Facility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Many savings have been realized from the first year of operating from the new PW facility (see also action item 22 below).</b></li> </ul>	Mark Riverblood

Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
5. Solicit support from Anoka County License center to help with staffing front desk services	Q3 <b>IN PROGRESS</b>	Budget Impact - Low	Reduce City resources to staff front desk.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current lease goes through June 30, 2025; in the meantime, improved signage to better direct customers directly to the License Center is in place and the with the new 20-hour per week receptionist, customer traffic is managed.</li> </ul>	Colleen Lasher

**Strategy: Promote economic growth and development.**

6. Continue Business Retention and Expansion efforts for retail and industrial.	Ongoing	Budget Impact - Low (use existing staff)	Stable base of local employers, representing the largest opportunity for future growth of jobs and tax base. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number of business visits from the 41 business visits conducted in 2021, and the 19 done in 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30 business visits in 2022 / many more informal visits</li> </ul> </li> <li>Improve the quality and attendance at EDA events such as the Business Network, Business Appreciation Day, and the Business Expo. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2022 Business Appreciation event Full (144 Golfers)</li> <li>Biz Expo 51 booths 2021(66% Ramsey Biz) 59 2022 (Full) (65% Ramsey Biz)</li> <li>2023 Business Network Meeting (119 registered) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2022 (127 Registered)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>5,000 square feet of new retail space per year on average. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15,000 SF in 2022 (Gigi's Salon and O'Reilly Auto)</li> </ul> </li> <li>50,000 square feet of new industrial per year on average. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>323,300 SF in 2022 (Oppidan 1 and 2, Anderson Dahlen)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Sean Sullivan/EDA
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<p>7. Consider strategic infrastructure investments to prepare more shovel ready parcels.</p>	<p>Q4</p> <p><b>COMPLETED</b></p>	<p>Budget Impact - Medium</p>	<p>Primary Effort = West Armstrong Retail/West Armstrong Industrial Redevelopment Area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct improvements in area West of Armstrong. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ West of Ferret St ideal location for additional industrial. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ARAA Sportsdome site plan approval 1/24/23</li> <li>▪ Ferret Street Cost Study Completed 2023</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Construct Riverdale Drive and related improvements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Completed 2022.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Import and place fill on City-owned property in the COR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1.74 Acre Lot (South of Affinity at COR – Happy Days site) completed in 2022.</li> <li>○ COR Infrastructure/Wetland Study Complete. – 2023</li> <li>○ Costs for Fill and filling of wetlands identified. – 2023</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Digital Display Sign Ordinance adopted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Digital Display Billboard Lease executed with iDigital. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Anticipate construction in 2023</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Sean Sullivan/EDA</p>
<p>8. Complete a Comprehensive City Code Audit and Update</p>	<p>Q3</p> <p><b>IN PROGRESS</b></p>	<p>Budget Impact - Medium</p>	<p>Reduce redundant regulations and regulations that conflict with City’s vision or otherwise detract from City’s economic development goals.</p> <p>Continue to address code sections. In 2021 – Q1 2022 the following code sections have been reviewed and adopted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update of Home Occupation Ordinance</li> <li>• Code amendment allowing restaurants in E3 Employment District</li> <li>• Amended City Code Section 117-56 Regarding Easement Vacations</li> <li>• Ordinance #22-08 Amending City Code Section 117-51 Regarding Conditional Use Permits</li> <li>• Ordinance #22-11 to Allow Taprooms, Breweries, Microbreweries, and Brewpubs</li> <li>• Ordinance #22-05 Amending Sections 117-111, 117-349, and 117-355 of City Code Creating Additional Requirements for Driveways/Parking Pads</li> <li>• Ordinance #22-04 Amending Section 117-349 of City Code to Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU’s)</li> </ul> <p>Zoning Code re-write is in process with several PC discussions to date. Subdivision Ordinances are also planned to be reviewed.</p>	<p>Brian Hagen/Planning Manager and Planning Commission</p>

Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
9. Solicit input from the public and City staff for guidance on the modernization and streamlining of City Codes, and provide updates to all impacted parties	Q2  <b>IN PROGRESS</b>	Budget Impact – Low (use newsletter and social media)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop list of outdated or inefficient ordinances that can be improved.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Survey was created for the public to submit their ideas for code improvements. This was advertised in the Ramsey Resident and on social media.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Implementation of new ordinances.</li> <li>• Zoning Code re-write is in process with several PC discussions to date.</li> </ul>	Brian Hagen Todd Larson

**Strategy: Create a positive image for residential neighborhoods, business districts and key corridors.**

10. Consider a Proactive Multifamily Property Management Program	Q3  <b>IN PROGRESS</b>	Budget Impact - High (RCP Report, use existing staff)	Ensure that multifamily properties maintain high quality and free of nuisance.  Consider a coalition of multifamily property managers to ensure property managers hold each other accountable and provide adequate long-term maintenance.  <b>Licensing inspection program in discussion and development</b>	Brian Hagen Craig Swalchick
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Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
11. Create a Crime Free Multifamily Housing Program	Q3 <b>IN PROGRESS</b>	Budget impact - Medium	<p>Ensure that multifamily properties maintain high quality and free of nuisance.</p> <p>Consider a Crime Prevention Multifamily Program.</p> <p>Note: The Crime Free Multi-Family Housing Program is approved by the MN Crime Prevention Association. Nearby cities with CFMH programs <a href="https://www.coonrapidsmn.gov/262/Crime-Free-Multi-Housing">https://www.coonrapidsmn.gov/262/Crime-Free-Multi-Housing</a> <a href="https://www.anokaminnesota.com/278/Crime-Free-Multi-Housing-Program">https://www.anokaminnesota.com/278/Crime-Free-Multi-Housing-Program</a></p> <p><b>Received Council support for allocating staff resources to a crime-free crime prevention-type program. Review of current and needed city ordinances in progress. PD will be allocating 1 officer full-time initially for coordination of this program. Staffing needs will be continually assessed. This program will work in concert with the rental licensing program and city ordinance adoption/creation.</b></p>	Jeff Katers
12. Support and recognize community volunteers	Q4 <b>PARTIALLY COMPLETED</b>	Budget Impact - Medium	<p>Better community ownership of community events and community cleanup efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create “Volunteer of the Month Award” to be presented at City Council meeting.</li> <li>• Invite outside groups to lead Pledge at Council meetings</li> <li>• Spotlight existing community cleanup efforts on social media</li> </ul> <p><b>An Earth Day community clean-up program was initiated for April of 2022, with 163 participants this first year—the event is to be repeated in 2023, also with appropriate social media coverage.</b></p> <p><b>Ramsey business Dedicated Networks took ‘ownership’ of the streetscape along Unity Street as part of an Arbor Day, by planting 6 street trees and the donation of another \$600 oak. They were recognized with a certificate of appreciation at a subsequent City Council meeting.</b></p>	City Administrator <b>Mark Riverblood</b>
<b>Strategy: Improve the safety and mobility of transportation corridors.</b>				
13. Complete County Road 5 Corridor Study.	Q4 <b>COMPLETED</b>	Budget Impact - Medium (Budget impact to City is low due to Anoka County involvement)	<p>Unified long-term vision for Nowthen Boulevard (CR5)</p> <p>Improved safety and reduced congestion.</p> <p>Ensure adequate capacity for planned development.</p> <p><b>Study completed May 2022.</b></p>	Bruce Westby/Public Works Committee

Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
14. Advance the Ramsey Gateway Plan.	Ongoing	Existing Staff/Resources Budget Impact = High RCP Report	Unified vision for Highway 10.  Improved safety and reduced congestion.  Secured final funding for the Highway 10/169 Plan (currently at \$92M of \$138M)  Project construction to commence in 2023.	Bruce Westby/Public Works Committee
15. Update Priority Street Light Program and Pedestrian Safety Plan.	Q1  ONGOING	Existing Staff/Resources Budget Impact = Medium	Improved pedestrian and vehicle safety at critical intersections.  Improvements are identified and implemented during PMP projects, private developments, and in response to public requests.	Bruce Westby/Public Works Committee

**Strategy: Connect the community through Parks and Trails Capital Improvements along with Recreational Programming.**

16. Establish a Funding Plan to Complete Parks Capital Replacement Improvements.	Q2  COMPLETED	Existing Staff/Resources Budget Impact = Medium RCP Report	Adequate parks, trails and public spaces, both future and existing.  Following the adoption of the Playground Replacement Policy, two older neighborhood parks were renovated in 2022 with funding from the Lawful Gambling Improvement Fund.  Unique recreation destinations. A unique neighborhood park and playground has been designed for Riverstone South neighborhood and is expected to be completed in 2023, fully funded by development fees.  Complete and implement the local park improvement plan. A sixth Community Park has been planned-out that will preserve a historic farmstead as part of the 200-acre Trott Brook Crossing subdivision, that will be funded by Park Dedication land and fees.  Another community destination is in the schematic design phase in Ramsey's downtown known as The Waterfront, which will be considered for landscape restoration and development following expected grading in 2023.	Mark Riverblood/Park and Recreation Commission
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Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
17. Implement and Spotlight the Recreation Programming Plan	Ongoing	Existing Staff/Resources Budget Impact = Low	<p>Increased awareness of recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Will restart the effort following staffing vacancy and transition to 30Hrs per week in June 2022.</p> <p>Increased awareness of rec programs happened through various means, including social media, flyer dissemination, the Ramsey Resident, and reporting via the televised P &amp; R Commission meetings and QCTV.</p> <p>Additionally, at the November 2022 City Council work session, a thorough review of the Recreation Programming Plan was presented, noting that residents benefitted from 31,596 programmed recreation experience hours (including Happy Days) year-to-date.</p>	Mark Riverblood/Park and Recreation Commission
<b>Strategy: Spotlight sustainability and efficiency through public facilities and infrastructure investments.</b>				
18. Commence construction of new water treatment plant Treatment.	Q4 <b>IN PROGRESS</b>	Budget Impact = High	<p>Reduce levels of iron and manganese in municipal water supply.</p> <p>Initiated design, bidding in mid-summer, construction to commence fall 2022 with completion expected in October 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction plans and specifications advertised for bids Q1 2023. Construction is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2023 with final completion in the fall of 2025.</li> </ul>	Bruce Westby/Public Works Committee
<b>Strategy: Strengthen and enhance our identity, brand and image.</b>				
19. Provide quarterly updates to USPS to secure new Ramsey ZIP Code.	Ongoing	Existing Staff Budget Impact = Low RCP Report (community identity)	<p>ZIP Code will identify itself as Ramsey.</p> <p>Provide regular updates.</p> <p>Detailed Update in 2026.</p> <p>Note: Annual development update sent to USPS Jan. 2022</p> <p>USPS indicated the following:  <i>"It is not necessary to provide population or economic growth. The data we use is based upon delivery points (number of addresses) vs population. We monitor specific data regarding the need for a new ZIP Code." 2026 is when a formal request may be submitted again to the District Manager of the MN-ND District.</i></p>	City Administrator

Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
20. Improve and promote community holiday light contest	Q4 2022 <b>COMPLETED</b>	Existing Staff Budget Impact = Low	<p>Create additional awareness of the community and create additional social connections.</p> <p>The City hosted the first annual event in 2021 with improvements to be made in 2022 based on experience and staffing capacity that has been added.</p> <p>Following improved promotion, and with the timeframe for voting opened and increased 5 days to 11 days there was a 40% increase in voter participation.</p> <p>The contest was marketed in the Ramsey Resident, and winners were recognized in both the newsletter and on the city's Facebook page.</p>	Megan Thorstad/Recreation Specialist

**Strategy: Improve City's communication.**

21. Improve proactive and time-relevant communication.	Ongoing	Existing Staff Budget Impact = Low RCP Report	<p>Explore new avenues to tell the story of Ramsey and market the community to prospective residents and businesses.</p> <p>Stay relevant by harnessing new technologies and social media platforms to evolve with the ever-changing media landscape.</p> <p>Regular communications report added to council work sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is completed quarterly.</li> </ul> <p>Implement an annual Social Media/Communications Calendar that everyone can access for Departments to promote events and/or happenings that may impact residents in a timely fashion.</p>	Megan Thorstad <b>Pat Johnson</b>
22. Quantify cost savings for the new Public Works Facility and communicate savings to Community.	Q4 <b>COMPLETED</b>	Budget Impact = Low	<p>Newsletter article and social media posts regarding savings achieved with new public works building.</p> <p>In February 2023, City Council was presented examples of many 10's of thousands of dollars in cost savings and measurable efficiencies associated with the new PW facility.</p>	Mark Riverblood

**Improve and sustain high organizational morale.**

23. Update Telecommuting Policy	Q2 <b>IN PROGRESS</b>	Existing Staff Budget Impact = Low	<p>Recruitment and retention tool for existing and future employees.</p> <p>Pending City Council WS discussion / add clarity around PT employee participation.</p> <p>Draft policy to be finalized April/June 2023.</p>	Colleen Lasher
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Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
24. Consider additional Employee Events to strengthen relationships.	Q3 <b>COMPLETED</b>	Existing Staff Budget Impact = Low	<p>Improved organizational morale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised Annual Employee Recognition event with a separate event for staff and community volunteers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>A combined event will continue</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Added ice cream social with the City Administrator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Will continue each May</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• To consider wellness-related programs – staff resources permitting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>New HR Specialist coordinates a re-established Employee Wellness program including Lunch &amp; Learns, promotion of the Employee Assistance Program, engagement activities and Employee Fitness. Activates occur during employee break time or off duty.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• To consider bringing back the Ramsey Communicator (monthly vs. weekly)/with an opt-out option by the Police Department only. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Change to individual opt-out, if requested.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Begin in April 2023.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• To consider a monthly birthday event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Begin in April 2023 to occur during afternoon breaktime</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Colleen Lasher
25. Complete an Employee Survey	Q2 <b>IN PROGRESS</b>	Existing Staff Budget Impact = Low	<p>Establish baseline metric of existing organizational morale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Survey questions were reviewed by the Labor Management Committee Q4 2022-Q1 2023. Survey will release to employees March 2023. Results will be analyzed prior to 2024 budget planning.</b></li> </ul>	Colleen Lasher

*Budget Impact Key; Low = Existing Staff/thousands of dollars; Medium = Additional Staff/Consultants/tens of thousands of dollars; High = capital improvement/hundreds of thousands of dollars.*

*RCP Report = Partnership with the University of Minnesota completed in 2018. This partnership created a library of resources and policy alternatives. A full list of completed reports can be found online at [rcp.umn.edu/ramsey-projects](http://rcp.umn.edu/ramsey-projects).*

## PARKING LOT LIST/FUTURE PROJECTS

Action	Strategy
Improve background data provided in conjunction with establishing Rates and Charges, especially for Development Impact Fees. .	Identify and implement operational efficiencies, cost savings and additional funding sources.
Complete Organization Staffing Plan.	Improve and sustain high organizational morale.
Complete Streetscape Plan for Key Corridors.	Create a positive image for residential neighborhoods, business districts and key corridors.
Complete a Highway 47 Plan <i>(after current Bunker/47 intersection improvements)</i>	Improve the safety and mobility of transportation corridors.
Consider Local Open Space Preservation Funding, if initiated by Ballot Referendum	Spotlight sustainability and efficiency through public facilities and infrastructure investments

The above are important topics but are not the highest priority of the Council and will only be worked on if not interfering with approved Action Items and as time/resources allow.

## CULTURE

- Utilize the Strategic Plan to prioritize budget requests.
- Leverage additional funding sources.
- Seek grants to do high-priority projects.
- Seek public and private partnerships.
- Improve Park and Recreation revenue through user fees and sponsorships.
- Provide adequate public safety staffing based upon common metrics (i.e., calls for service, time of day caseload, land use and population, and citizen expectations).
- Continue Staff Recognition Programs.
- Increase awareness of various employee resources.
- Enhance Community Engagement in policy decision-making processes.
- Enhance customer service through process improvement.
- Strive to reflect the demographics of the community.