



City of East Moline Committee of the Whole

City Council Chambers
915 16th Avenue
East Moline, IL 61244

DATE: **Monday, April 1st, 2013**

TIME: **“Immediately Following the
Regular Council Meeting”**

1	TIF Reimbursements	Kelley
2	Adoption of 2013-2017 Strategic Plan	O'Donnell
3	FYE December 31, 2013 Budget	O'Donnell

City of East Moline, Illinois
Strategic Planning Document
2013-2017

March 9, 2013

The proposed 2013-2017 Strategic Planning Document includes the results from four public focus sessions as well as the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis, city vision statement, mission statement, core city values, strategic goals, and objectives for each major strategic goal as determined by the city Governing Body and City Administration. Many of the ideas and recommendations from the four (4) focus sessions have been included in the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan Document. Not yet included in this document are the action plans and performance measures/standards that will be used to track progress toward achieving each objective and strategic goal. The action plans and performance measures and standards will be included in the next draft of the document.

On September 7, 2012 the Mayor, seven Aldermen, the City Clerk, City Administrator, City Engineer, Finance Director, Fire Chief, Police Chief, Maintenance Services Director, and the Water and Wastewater Director conducted a strategic planning session. The purpose of the strategic planning session was to conduct a SWOT (internal strengths and weakness and external opportunities and threats) analysis; develop a city vision statement, core city values, and a mission statement; and identify and prioritize long term strategic goals. When conducting the SWOT analysis and identifying and prioritizing strategic goals, the Governing Body and City Administration considered the input from the 33 participants who attended four focus sessions on August 9 and 10, 2012 (see the Appendix for the focus session results).

SWOT Analysis

The Governing Body and City Administration conducted a SWOT analysis that involved brainstorming municipal organizational (internal) strengths (S) and weaknesses (W) and community, regional, and national (external) opportunities (O) and threats (T) to the City of East

Moline. The results of the SWOT analysis served as a basis for the participants to identify, discuss, and develop a city vision, core values, mission statement, and strategic goals that would make it possible to reduce or eliminate internal weaknesses and external threats and/or take advantage of or build upon internal strengths and external opportunities.

Below are the list of internal organizational strengths and weaknesses and the external (community, regional, national) opportunities and threats (challenges, constraints) to the City of East Moline that were identified by the session participants. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are not listed in order of priority.

Strengths (internal)

- The city administrator and department heads are very professional
- Elected officials and professional staff care about and are committed to their jobs and to citizens
- City officials, elected and professional, are honest
- The quality of communication between elected officials and professional staff is exceptional
- There is much cohesiveness between department heads
- The level (quality) of city services is exceptional given the limited resources available
- Elected officials and professional staff are very creative and innovative

Weaknesses (internal)

- There are insufficient professional staff that result in not meeting codes and city regulations
- There is unequal treatment of city employees, particularly between union and non-union employees
- There are limited financial resources
- Current elected officials and professional staff are challenged by some past decisions, policies, and practices
- There is an aura of pessimism and unwillingness about making financial decisions or plans
- City officials are not sufficiently future oriented
- Unions are too rigid, too powerful, and resist change. As a result, there is frustration about being unable to increase efficiency
- There is lack of trust between union and management
- There is lack of trust between professional staff and elected officials which sometimes is caused by a failure of process (communication)

- The city does not fully utilize committees that make recommendations to the governing body, thus improving the efficiency and effectiveness of council meetings
- City council meetings are not well organized in terms of frequency, time held, and the day held

Opportunities (external)

- The city of East Moline has a diverse population
- There are many economic development possibilities from developing the River Eagle Project
- The undeveloped annexed land in the I80/I88 corridor offers much economic development possibilities
- There is a cadre of dedicated citizens and volunteers that assists the City of East Moline
- There is good inter-governmental relationships between professional staff in the region
- The city has several community partners that can assist in the development of an economic development strategic plan
- The Riverfront property offers the city the opportunity for economic development
- The presence of Western Illinois University offers the city the opportunity for economic development
- The Rock island Arsenal is a community economic, fiscal, and social asset
- The city has the opportunity to use other successful Illinois cities as a model for economic development
- East Moline has a potential opportunity for community development and tourism
- The Mississippi River is a community resource and asset for the City of East Moline
- John Deere Harvester is a community asset for the City of East Moline
- The City of East Moline has the opportunity to educate citizens about the available community assets and to improve the image of East Moline in the eyes of citizens

Threats (external)

- The State of Illinois has too many rules, regulations, and laws that adversely affect the City of East Moline in terms of self-governance, own-source revenues, and efficient delivery of public services
- The State of Illinois owes the city of East Moline about \$1.2 million in past due bills
- There are too many United States government unfunded mandates; namely, U.S. EPA regulations
- The State of Illinois law regarding insurance and tort is too restrictive
- Possible pension reform at the state level poses a threat to the city in terms of property tax increases
- The city's non-home rule status has resulted in the inability to expand the city revenue base and exercise self-government

- There are too many geographical and socio-economic divisions in East Moline
- There is too much inter-governmental competition in the region
- East Moline's property and sales tax base is too small
- The local, state, national, and global economy is poor
- There are too few motels/hotels in East Moline
- There is resistance to intergovernmental service consolidation by local governments in the area
- Citizens are excessively motivated and driven by the not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) mentality
- There is too much reliance on user fees in the delivery of city services
- The Rock Island County Fairgrounds is an eyesore
- East Moline citizens have a negative image of the East Moline city government
- East Moline citizens do not trust the East Moline city government mainly because they do not feel they receive an adequate return on their investments (tax dollars)
- The State of Illinois tax system is unfair with regard to the property tax freeze for seniors and not taxing pension income
- There are too many taxing districts in the state of Illinois

City Vision Statement

Elected officials and professional staff developed a list of characteristics that embodied their ideal community, assuming there were no internal weaknesses or external threats and there were unlimited internal strengths and external opportunities (see below, in no particular order).

- The community is vibrant and affordable
- The community is economically and culturally diverse
- The city delivers services efficiently and effectively
- The community celebrates and builds upon their past
- The city government is responsive and sustainable
- The community is progressive and forward thinking
- East Moline is an attractive community for retirees and children

Below is the Vision Statement that embodies the seven characteristics above:

East Moline is a vibrant, diverse, affordable, and progressive community that celebrates and builds upon their past, is responsive and sustainable, delivers city services efficiently and effectively, and remains attractive for persons of all ages.

Core City Values

Elected officials and professional staff also developed a set of principles or virtues that will be used to guide decision-making and action toward the ideal community or vision. Below are the core values identified by the session participants (in no particular order):

- Continuous improvement
- Innovative
- Forward thinking
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Uphold the public trust
- Respectful of others
- Responsive
- Sense of responsibility
- Accountable to our stakeholders
- Good communication
- Neighborly attitude
- Helpful
- Kindness
- Care about our community/city
- Work together

City Mission Statement

Elected officials and professional staff then articulated the components of a general (broad) statement of purpose as to how the vision can be achieved and how the core values can be expressed. The components of the city mission statement that were identified are as follows:

- Pursue business employment opportunities that expand the tax base
- Act in a responsive, responsible, and accountable manner
- Work together while drawing upon diverse perspectives to maximize service/program efficiency and effectiveness
- Partner with community and regional stakeholders to develop solutions and strategies for improvement
- Maintain current infrastructure
- Achieve a high quality of life
- Plan for (shape) the future with our history in mind

Below is the Mission Statement that embodies the seven components above:

The City of East Moline is committed to provide a high quality of life for our citizens through regional partnerships, continuous improvement, diverse perspectives, planning, and the pursuit of fiscal sustainability.

Strategic Goals

The elected officials and professional staff identified eighteen (18) long term broad strategic goals that would make it possible to achieve the city vision and mission statements, express the city core values, and reduce or eliminate internal weaknesses and external threats and/or take advantage of or build upon internal strengths and external opportunities. The 18 strategic goals were prioritized by using the red dot method. Each elected official was given 10 red dots to allocate across the 18 strategic goals; however, each elected official could not place more than two red dots on each strategic goal. Therefore, the overall priority of a strategic goal is related to the number of red dots placed on that strategic goal.

Below is the list of strategic goals identified by the elected officials and professional staff, in order of priority. The number of red dots assigned to each strategic goal is indicated beside each goal, in parenthesis. The elected officials decided, by consensus, that the city should target organizational resources to achieve the six highest priority strategic goals over the next five years (2013-2017). The seven highest priority strategic goals are marked in bold below because there is a tie for the sixth highest priority strategic goal.

Strategic Goals (in order of priority):

- **Develop more and better communication (interaction) and relationships with all city stakeholders, including citizens and community groups (16 red dots for three substantially similar goals)**

- **Develop a plan to expand the city revenue base by 1% each year, to include an economic development plan (12 red dots for two substantially similar goals)**
- **Develop a plan to develop the I80/I88 corridor (11 red dots)**
- **Seek to obtain home rule status for the City of East Moline (9 red dots)**
- **Develop a long-range financial plan and policies to ensure fiscal sustainability (8 red dots)**
- **Develop a plan to control operating expenditures and improve efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness, beginning in FY 2014 (7 red dots)**
- **Develop and maintain a 5 year Capital Improvement Program (7 red dots)**
- Develop a plan to provide more efficient and effective city services given limited resources (6 red dots)
- Develop strategies to retain and expand existing business (5 red dots)
- Improve major traffic corridors (4 red dots)
- Conduct a study to enhance economic development in East Moline (2 red dots)
- Develop a plan to fill key municipal positions to improve city services (2 red dots)
- Develop a more positive image of East Moline (1 red dot)
- Study the feasibility of consolidating public services (0 red dots)
- Study ways to increase the employment base (0 red dots)

Strategic Planning Goals and Objectives

On March 9, 2013, the Governing Body and City Administration met to discuss the proposed objectives developed by City Administration to achieve each of the seven major strategic goals.

After discussion, the Governing Body approved and ranked the objectives that would be included in the 2013-2017 Strategic Planning Document (see results below).

Strategic Goal # 1: Develop more and better communication (interaction) and relationships with all city stakeholders, including citizens and community groups.

Objectives (in order of priority)

1. Improve the web page design to allow better interaction with citizens and more information for citizens.
2. Develop and implement a plan to use social media outlets.
3. Research an automated telephone notification system.
4. Hold council meetings in various neighborhoods to allow citizens a better opportunity to interact with City Elected Officials.
5. Establish a citizen leadership academy to educate citizens about their government and prepare them for possible participation in city boards and commissions.
6. Form a citizen corps to assist departments and staff with tasks due to budgetary shortfalls
7. Conduct a citizen survey to determine areas for improvement, effectiveness of services, and greater needs of our citizens.

Strategic Goal # 2: Develop a plan to expand the city revenue base by 1% each year, to include an economic development plan.

Objectives (in order of priority)

1. Complete the Economic Development Strategic Plan by September 2013.
2. Promote and provide economic assistance to River Eagle Development
3. Hire an Economic Development Director (part-time or full time).
4. Create an advisory committee to research the possibility of creating an ambulance service to reimburse fire personnel costs.
5. Achieve home rule status for East Moline (see Goal #4).
6. Accept credit/debit cards for all city fees and charges by the end of 2013.
7. Identify additional fees and charges for services not already collected and institute those fees and charges.
8. Create a downtown redevelopment program including 15th and 16th Avenue from 6th St. to 14th St.
9. Develop a revitalization plan for the Avenue of the Cities corridor.
10. Improve Beacon Harbor for rental and hire a vendor to sell items from the facility.
11. Conduct a sale of surplus city property in order to raise funds for demolition of dilapidated and abandoned houses.

Strategic Goal # 3: Develop a plan to develop the I80/I88 corridor

Objectives (in order of priority)

1. Work with Riverstone on a marketing and development plan.
2. Extend sanitary sewer to the development area within five years.

Strategic Goal # 4: Seek to obtain home rule status for the City of East Moline

Objectives (in order of accomplishment)

1. Form a citizens' home rule exploratory committee to determine the legal rights and obligations of Illinois home rule cities, recommend to the Governing Body whether or not to conduct a home rule referendum, and educate citizens about the rights and obligations of home rule status in Illinois.
2. Pass needed resolutions/ordinances necessary for a home rule referendum (if applicable).
3. Determine what home rule legal rights (opportunities) should be adopted by East Moline (if referendum is approved).

Strategic Goal # 5: Develop a long-range financial plan and policies to ensure fiscal sustainability

Objectives (all objectives below need to be completed to achieve the strategic goal)

1. Adopt the Government Finance Officers' Association (GFOA) financial model in order to assess our financial policies and budgeting process.
2. Review all departmental financial policies for possible revisions, and combine the financial policies into one financial policy document.
3. Revise the chart of accounts and budget forms to improve the annual budgeting process by allowing better tracking of revenue and expenses across all Funds and departments.
4. Consolidate Funds in order to enhance transparency, in accordance with the GFOA recommendation.
5. Integrate a long range (5 year) financial plan with the 5-year CIP (see Goal #7) and the 5 year Strategic Plan.
6. Update the investment policy by July 2014.

Strategic Goal # 6a: Develop a plan to control operating expenditures and improve efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness, beginning FY 2014

Objectives (in order of priority)

1. Invest in technologies that can be used to improve efficiency and productivity, as well as reduce costs.

2. Conduct a total compensation study to determine true personnel costs and use the results to develop and implement a managed competition policy that includes outsourcing of services, when cost-effective.
3. Create a paperless office by 2015, including electronic storage of all records unless otherwise required by law.
4. Revise health insurance benefits to minimize costs and maximize benefits while complying with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Strategic Goal # 6b: Develop and maintain a 5-year Capital Improvement Program

Objectives (in order of priority):

1. Implement the recently adopted CIP.
2. Educate officials and the public regarding the CIP purpose, process, and implementation.

Future Strategic Planning Steps

Next, City Administration will prepare an action plan for each objective that describes how the objective will be achieved, a timeline to complete the objective, funding source(s), and expected measures and standards of performance. The action plans and performance measures and standards will be discussed with the Governing Body and then included in the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan Document. The 2013-2017 Strategic Plan Document will be adopted by Resolution, and the Resolution will be included in the strategic plan. Also, the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan will be integrated with the annual city budget, 5-year financial forecast, and 5-year CIP.

Each year the Governing Body and City Administration will revisit the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan Document, and revise if necessary. City Administration will periodically measure the progress made toward the accomplishment of each objective and report such progress to the elected officials and citizens.

Appendix: Results of the Four (4) Strategic Planning Focus Sessions

On August 9 and 10, 2012 Dr. Curtis Wood, East Moline strategic planning consultant, facilitated four strategic planning focus sessions that included 33 participants. The city administrator attended the four sessions. The first focus session included two large-business owners and the second focus session included five small-business owners. The third focus session included 15 persons that sit on East Moline municipal boards and commissions, and the fourth focus session included 11 community leaders that represented East Moline neighborhood groups as well as K-12 teachers, school administrators, and a school board member. Each focus session lasted approximately two hours. In this Report, the individual and aggregate results of the four focus sessions are described.

The participants in the four focus sessions were asked to conduct a SWOT analysis that involved brainstorming municipal organizational (internal) strengths (S) and weaknesses (W) and community, regional, and national (external) opportunities (O) and threats (T) to the City of East Moline. The results of the SWOT analysis served as a basis for the focus session participants to identify, discuss, and prioritize strategic (broad and multi-year) goals that would make it possible to reduce or eliminate internal weaknesses and external threats and/or take advantage of or build upon internal strengths and external opportunities. Focus session participants prioritized the identified strategic goals by using the red dot method. Each participant was given five red dots to allocate across their highest priority strategic goals; however, participants could place no more than two dots on any strategic goal. Therefore, the overall priority of a strategic goal is directly related to the number of red dots placed on that strategic goal.

Results of Each Focus Session

Focus Session 1: Large-Business Owners (2 participants)

SWOT Analysis: Below are the list of internal organizational strengths and weaknesses and the external (community, regional, national) opportunities and threats (challenges, constraints) to the City of East Moline that were identified by the participants in the first focus session. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are not listed in order of priority.

Strengths (internal)

- Long-term work force that has resulted in much experience and expertise
- City employees have much pride in their work
- The city uses modern equipment across all departments
- City has a long term vision and a commitment to making plans and acting upon the vision and plans
- The mayor is very responsive
- City employees are responsive, efficient, and effective
- City uses a disciplined and controlled approach when managing organizational finances

Weaknesses (internal)

- Some city council members micro-manage city staff at all levels
- There does not appear to be any succession planning
- The AFSCME union is too inflexible and unbending; therefore, too unrealistic
- CEDS is too limited in that economic development projects and equipment are not included. Thus, CEDS cannot be used by the Bi-state Regional Commission
- There is no long term financial forecast of capital improvement program
- No city strategies to increase citizen engagement or volunteers to serve on city boards/commissions or elective office
- The city allows irresponsible or unqualified developers to start projects in the city

Opportunities (external)

- About half of the 2,200 acres of newly annexed property (I80/I88 corridor) is available to be developed
- Civic associations such as the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs are involved in the beautification of the city and providing scholarships to East Moline citizens
- City officials have strong ties to officials in other cities, the schools, the county, the state, and national government
- There is a diversity of businesses in terms of size and type of business

Threats (external)

- Lack of partnerships between the city and businesses with regard to city beautification
- Too many school districts that result in excessive governmental expenditures and property taxes
- Too much rivalry between the city and other governmental bodies in the Quad Cities despite the existence of a regional chamber of Commerce and the Bi-state Regional Commission
- Too much blighted property in the city
- The poor state fiscal situation and pension problems have adversely affected city finances by late disbursements (\$1.4 million)
- Poor appearance of city entryways, thoroughfares
- Irrational organized opposition to economic development by some residents

Strategic Goals: The focus session participants identified eight (8) strategic goals that would, if included in the City of East Moline 2013-2017 Strategic Plan, make it possible to reduce or eliminate internal weaknesses and external threats and/or take advantage of or build upon internal strengths and external opportunities. The eight strategic goals are listed in order of priority based upon the outcome of the red-dot prioritization exercise.

Strategic Goals (in order of priority):

- Increase partnerships between the city and other cities and the county by sharing equipment and services (2 red dots)
- Conduct an ongoing/annual review of strategic goals (2 red dots)
- City should develop a regional compost plan (2 red dots)
- Develop a long range (5 years) financial plan (1 red dot)
- Develop a comprehensive 5-year capital improvement program (1 red dot)
- Develop a plan to improve and maintain city streetscapes and entryways by involving citizens and community groups (1 red dot)
- Develop/improve partnerships with businesses (1 red dot)
- Develop a city employee engagement (participation) program (0 red dots)

Focus Session 2: Small-Business Owners (5 participants)

SWOT Analysis: Below are the list of internal organizational strengths and weaknesses and the external (community, regional, national) opportunities and threats (challenges, constraints) to the

City of East Moline that were identified by the participants in the second focus session. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are not listed in order of priority.

Strengths (internal)

- City staff worked well with businesses with regard to coordinating the focus sessions
- The Inspection Department efficiently and effectively brought codes up-to-date
- The sanitation city employees go the extra mile by picking up garbage left on the street
- The performance of the sanitation, police, and fire employees is of high quality
- Elected city officials are in touch and know the citizens they represent
- City officials appreciate the city's history
- The Engineering Department is top-notch

Weaknesses (internal)

- There is lack of consistency (continuity) between mayors and councils over time with regard to the downtown area
- There is no strategic plan that includes a vision and mission statement or strategic goals
- There is lack of mayoral leadership with regard to the creation of a vision and action to implement the vision
- City staff do not pursue grants
- Some city workers do not care about their performance
- City officials do not show up at city functions or community events
- Food permits should not be required for non profit groups/functions
- City employees have a sense of entitlement; thus, they are not as accountable as they should be
- City employees are resistant to change. They do not want to rock the boat and prefer to do things "the way we have always done it"
- The financial condition of the water utility is poor. City water rates are too high (tripled during the last 10 years)
- The city is not aggressive in recruiting businesses as are neighboring cities
- The city does not offer financial incentives for economic development
- The city does not fully participate in regional economic development institutions and initiatives

Opportunities (external)

- Good source of laborers in the city
- There is affordable rental space (commercial/retail) in the city
- Real estate is affordable in the city that creates the opportunity for housing expansion
- The new Western Illinois University Campus creates the opportunity for growth and development
- There is a diverse culture and languages in the city population

- The Riverfront area provides an opportunity for growth and development
- The cost of living is relatively low in the city

Threats (external)

- There is the perception that the city is a second class citizen to other cities in the region
- The economy is poor in terms of consumer demand
- There is a lack of locally-based businesses
- There is a lack of hotels/motels in the city
- There is a small tax base in East Moline; therefore, the property tax rate is too high for all units of government
- The small city population reduces the opportunity for economic growth
- There is a lack of cultural/recreational activities in the city

Strategic Goals: The focus session participants identified eight (8) strategic goals that would, if included in the City of East Moline 2013-2017 Strategic Plan, make it possible to reduce or eliminate internal weaknesses and external threats and/or take advantage of or build upon internal strengths and external opportunities. The eight strategic goals are listed in order of priority based upon the outcome of the red-dot prioritization exercise.

Strategic Goals (in order of priority):

- Identify venues and strategies that would turn the city into a destination city (4 red dots)
- Develop a plan to grow the city financially, economically, culturally, socially, and physically (3 red dots)
- Plan and develop the Riverfront property to complement the WIU Quad Cities campus (3 red dots)
- Develop a plan to create a more positive image of the city (3 red dots)
- Develop Jacobs Park (3 red dots)
- Plan and develop the I80/I88 corridor (2 red dots)
- Develop a plan to hold big events to put the city on the map (1 red dot)
- Develop a feasibility study regarding the best way to own/manage/operate the water utility (0 red dots)

Focus Session 3: Members on City Boards and Commissions (15 participants)

SWOT Analysis: Below are the list of internal organizational strengths and weaknesses and the external (community, regional, national) opportunities and threats (challenges, constraints) to the

City of East Moline that were identified by the participants in focus session 3. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are not listed in order of priority.

Strengths (internal)

- City departments work well together
- There is an organizational culture of continual improvement and responsiveness (accountability) to elected officials and the community
- There is strong mayoral leadership. The Mayor is dedicated and appears at community functions and events
- The fire and police departments are well-led, and reflect a positive image to citizens/youth
- The city staff provides sufficient information to the Board of Zoning Appeals so they can make good decisions
- The library staff is very professional
- There is professionalism in the Finance, Engineering, and Building Inspection Departments
- The selection of Board and Commission members are based on expertise and not politics
- There is strong leadership and dedication by persons serving on city Boards and Commissions
- The Public Works Department provides effective and efficient assistance to the Park Board
- The Public Works Department also provides excellent snow removal services
- There is long tenure of middle management in all city departments that provides for continuity and expertise

Weaknesses (internal)

- City is not a home rule city
- The city is losing experienced members of Boards and Commissions, elected officials, and city staff
- There is no economic development director
- There is no city grant writer
- Positions have been consolidated, thus reducing program and service effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity
- The city website is too limited and not transparent
- The city council does not focus enough on downtown events and issues. Organizations and businesses have to pay for food permits and police security; codes and ordinances affecting the downtown are too “hefty”(strict and constraining)
- City does not recognize/appreciate the strengths of the neighborhoods
- City officials are not mindful or sensitive to the diversity of the city population
- City services and economic development initiatives are not equally distributed across all neighborhoods
- There is no organized effort to preserve historic buildings
- The Police Department is not community oriented enough and there is a lack of professionalism in the Police Department

Opportunities (external)

- The necessary local leadership exists to recruit, educate, and cultivate in the younger generation a sense of civic-mindedness and social responsibility
- East Moline has a diverse population, but the city population is small enough so there is sufficient homogeneity in the population
- The Riverfront property
- Western Illinois University
- The newly annexed developable land in the I80/I 88 corridor

Threats (external)

- Some East Moline citizens and business owners are opposed to economic growth (change in general) and fight new business development
- Some East Moline citizens are opposed to home rule for East Moline
- The Illinois EPA and transportation departments are inefficient and ineffective in that they are slow to act or respond to the felt needs of East Moline
- There is a lack of state and federal funding
- The development of the Riverfront is a threat to the revitalization of the Downtown
- Property taxes for the schools are too high
- There is too much competition and conflict between cities in the Quad Cities
- The county and state political climate
- There is too much municipal fragmentation in the region (too many cities)

Strategic Goals: The focus session participants identified ten (10) strategic goals that would, if included in the City of East Moline 2013-2017 Strategic Plan, make it possible to reduce or eliminate internal weaknesses and external threats and/or take advantage of or build upon internal strengths and external opportunities. The 10 strategic goals are listed in order of priority based upon the outcome of the red-dot prioritization exercise.

Strategic Goals (in order of priority):

- Develop a plan to educate citizens (includes students, members of civic clubs, and those in their 30s-40s) as to how city government works and the services provided; involve citizens; and recruit citizens to volunteer for Boards and Commissions and run for elective office (13 red dots)
- Conduct a study and develop a plan to enhance economic development in the city (11 red dots)
- Develop a downtown revitalization plan (10 red dots)
- Become a home rule city (10 red dots)

- Develop a plan to fill key municipal positions that make it possible to better promote economic and community development (10 red dots)
- Improve communication and coordination between municipal Boards and Commissions (8 red dots)
- Develop a detailed comprehensive plan for the city that includes land use, zoning, economic development, and infrastructure improvement (7 red dots)
- Study whether to consolidate government services with other municipalities in the region (6 red dots)
- Develop a plan that makes it possible for East Moline to become the # 1 industrial development city in the Quad Cities (2 red dots)
- Develop the River Front (2 red dots)

Focus Session 4: Community Leaders (11 participants)

SWOT Analysis: Below are the list of internal organizational strengths and weaknesses and the external (community, regional, national) opportunities and threats (challenges, constraints) to the City of East Moline that were identified by the community leaders in the fourth focus group. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are not listed in order of priority.

Strengths (internal)

- Take charge city department heads, particularly the Fire Chief and the Police Chief
- The Mayor and City Council have a strong commitment to the community
- The Public Works Department is effective and efficient at sweeping streets, street maintenance, and garbage collection
- City is blessed with a strong cadre of volunteers
- City officials are approachable, responsive, and accountable
- Police and fire officials cooperate with surrounding cities
- The city has a program for housing assistance to first-time home buyers

Weaknesses (internal)

- Too few city employees and funding for roads and neighborhoods
- No full time economic director
- No full-time Parks and Recreation Director; thus, lack of park leadership
- Lack of funding for Parks and Recreation
- Lack of park and recreation programs (For example, no summer youth program)
- Lack of upkeep/maintenance of parks
- No opportunity for civic groups to adopt a park
- Lack of support for arts/culture that could be included in the Parks and Recreation Department
- Not enough support for community events by some Aldermen

- Aldermen too focused on their ward, not city-at-large
- Collective bargaining agreements are too restrictive. For example, city officials may not hire seasonal employees
- Lack of city funding for a façade program
- Lack of building and code enforcement along the Avenue of the Cities
- Lack of enforcement of neighborhood aesthetics

Opportunities (external)

- The Riverfront
- The Downtown
- The I80/I88 corridor
- Western Illinois University
- Support from federal elected officials, including grant funds
- The Bi-state Regional Commission
- The diversity of the city population (including non-English speaking population)
- Tourism
- Affordable housing
- There exists much collaboration between school and city officials
- High quality schools
- Great volunteers
- Living lands and water
- River Action Group, a non-profit
- Avenue of the Cities

Threats (external)

- Decreasing/lack of state and federal funding
- Increasing poverty in the city
- Declining city and regional economy
- Poor condition of the roads and sidewalks as well as entryways
- Poor public image of East Moline

Strategic Goals: The focus session participants identified nine (9) strategic goals that would, if included in the City of East Moline 2013-2017 Strategic Plan, make it possible to reduce or eliminate internal weaknesses and external threats and/or take advantage of or build upon internal strengths and external opportunities. The nine strategic goals are listed in order of priority based upon the outcome of the red-dot prioritization exercise.

Strategic Goals (in order of priority):

- Develop a plan to enhance /improve all major city traffic corridors (10 red dots)
- Develop/improve city infrastructure to promote business/economic development (8 red dots)
- Create durable partnerships with community resources such as volunteers, the schools, churches, environmental groups, and arts groups to maximize the efficient and effective use of financial, human, and technical resources (8 red dots)
- Assist East Moline citizens to develop a more positive self-image (7 red dots)
- Develop a plan to create an environment to enhance educational achievement/opportunities, economic growth, social opportunities, culture/arts and park/recreational activities, and spiritual nourishment (6 red dots)
- Encourage the development of the Quarter to maximize the use of the Riverfront (3 red dots)
- Develop a plan/policy to provide financial incentives for economic development initiatives (1 red dot)
- Hire a fulltime city planner in order to attract tourism and new business (idea written down by a participant but not brought up in group discussion)
- Celebrate East Moline history (idea written down by a participant but not brought up in group discussion)

Aggregate Results of the Four (4) Focus Sessions

In this section the aggregate results of the focus sessions with regard to the SWOT analyses and the identification and prioritization of strategic goals are analyzed.

SWOT Analyses

Internal Strengths and Weaknesses: Focus session participants are generally complimentary toward professional staff and the elected officials. The participants consider most city staff to be committed to their work, professional, and responsive to the public. Elected officials are also generally considered to be effective leaders and committed to serving the public. However, focus session participants identified more internal weaknesses than internal strengths (33 internal strengths and 46 internal weaknesses). Internal weaknesses that are mentioned in more than one focus session included the following:

- Program/service effectiveness and efficiency has been reduced by eliminating/consolidating position. Many focus session participants felt there should be a full-time economic development director, grants writer, parks and recreation director, Examples include the loss of an economic Development Director, the absence of a grants writer, and too few employees for maintaining roads and neighborhoods

- The city is losing experienced members on city boards and commissions, governing body, and city staff, and there does not appear to be a succession plan in place
- The city does not have a long term vision or mission embodied in a strategic plan, a financial plan, and a comprehensive capital improvement plan
- City officials (elected and appointed) do not show up at or focus enough attention toward community and downtown events and issues
- Collective bargaining agreements with AFSCME are too restrictive
- Some city employees are resistant to change, have a sense of entitlement, and do not care about their performance
- City does not offer financial incentives for economic development initiatives such as a façade building program
- Lack of city enforcement of building codes

External Opportunities and External Threats (Challenges): The focus session participants

identified 31 external opportunities and 28 external threats (challenges). Commonly mentioned external opportunities (actual or potential) included the following:

- The I80/I88 corridor
- The Riverfront
- The Downtown
- Western Illinois University
- The diversity of the East Moline citizens
- Affordable housing and property
- City officials have strong ties with school and federal officials
- City is blessed with a cadre of volunteers and civic associations that are civic-minded

There are seven (7) external threats (challenges) mentioned by participants across the focus sessions:

- Lack of or decreasing funding from the state and federal governments
- Some organized citizens and businesses oppose efforts to bring in new business that can promote economic development and growth
- The declining local and regional economy and increasing poverty in the city
- There is too much rivalry between the city and other municipal governments in the Quad Cities
- Local government property taxes are too high primarily due to the small property and sales tax base
- East Moline has a poor image in the eyes of citizens and government officials across the Quad Cities region
- There is a poor appearance and condition of the city entryways and thoroughfares

Strategic Goals

The 35 strategic goals identified by the participants in the four focus groups are organized into four general theme: 1) Community and Economic Development; 2) City Governance and Administration; 3) Inter governmental Coordination, Consolidation; and 4) Long Range Planning. There are 151 red dots allocated by the 33 focus session participants across the 35 strategic goals. The total number of red dots allocated for each theme is placed in parentheses. The number of red dots allocated for each strategic goal within each theme is also placed in parentheses, in descending order.

1) Community and Economic Development (91 Total Red Dots Across 21 Goals):

Conduct a study and develop a plan to enhance economic development in the city (11 dots)

Develop a downtown revitalization plan (10 red dots)

Develop a plan to enhance /improve all major city traffic corridors (10 red dots)

Develop a plan to fill key municipal positions that make it possible to better promote economic and community development (10 red dots)

Develop/improve city infrastructure to promote business/economic development (8 red dots)

Develop a detailed comprehensive plan for the city that includes land use, zoning, economic development, and infrastructure improvement (7 red dots)

Develop a plan to create an environment to enhance educational achievement/opportunities, economic growth, social opportunities, culture/arts and park/recreational activities, and spiritual nourishment (6 red dots)

Plan and develop the Riverfront property to complement the WIU Quad Cities campus (5 red dots)—includes two (2) strategic goals

Identify venues and strategies that would turn the city into a destination city (4 red dots)

Develop a plan to grow the city financially, economically, culturally, socially, and physically (3 red dots)

Develop a plan to create a more positive image of the city (3 red dots)

Encourage the development of the Quarter to maximize the use of the Riverfront (3 red dots)

Develop Jacobs Park (3 red dots)

Plan and develop the I80/I88 corridor (2 red dots)

Develop a plan that makes it possible for East Moline to become the # 1 industrial development city in the Quad Cities (2 red dots)

Develop a plan to improve and maintain city streetscapes and entryways by involving citizens and community groups (1 red dot)

Develop/improve partnerships with businesses (1 red dot)

Develop a plan to hold big events to put the city on the map (1 red dot)

Develop a plan/policy to provide financial incentives for economic development initiatives (1 red dot)

Hire a fulltime city planner in order to attract tourism and new business (idea written down by a participant but not brought up in group discussion)

2) City Governance and Administration (46 Total Red Dots Across 8 Goals):

Develop a plan to educate citizens (includes students, members of civic clubs, and those in their 30s-40s) as to how city government works and the services provided; involve citizens; and recruit citizens to volunteer for Boards and Commissions and run for elective office (13 red dots)

Become a home rule city (10 red dots)

Improve communication and coordination between municipal Boards and Commissions (8 red dots)

Create durable partnerships with community resources such as volunteers, the schools, churches, environmental groups, and arts groups to maximize the efficient and effective use of financial, human, and technical resources (8 red dots)

Assist East Moline citizens to develop a more positive self-image (7 red dots)

Develop a feasibility study regarding the best way to own/manage/operate the water utility (0 red dots)

Develop a city employee engagement (participation) program (0 red dots)

Celebrate East Moline history (idea written down by a participant but not brought up in group discussion)

3) Inter-governmental Coordination, Consolidation (10 Total Red Dots Across 3 Goals):

Study whether to consolidate government services with other municipalities in the region (6 red dots)

Increase partnerships between the city and other cities and the county by sharing equipment and services (2 red dots)

City should develop a regional compost plan (2 red dots)

4) Long Range Planning (4 Total Red Dots Across 3 Goals):

Conduct an ongoing/annual review of strategic goals (2 red dots)

Develop a long range (5 years) financial plan (1 red dot)

Develop a comprehensive 5-year capital improvement program (1 red dot)

