

Village of Decatur



Strategic Plan

For the Years

2015-2017

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Village of Decatur Public Officials

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Preface

Over the course of the summer of 2014 the Village of Decatur underwent a Strategic Planning Process. The process brought together all different levels of the organization. Original analysis groups consisted of employees, supervisors, and department heads. These groups took time to analyze internal and external factors and how they affect the Village of Decatur.

Goal setting took place with Council Members as well as department heads and employees. The collaborative effort is what follows on these pages. The plan has identified four strategic priorities for the coming years.

It is important to remember that this is a plan. Like any plan, if the contents become unfeasible the plan would need to be revisited and altered. Any alterations of this plan should be done in consultation of staff and the Village Council.

Village of Decatur Mission Statement

The mission of the Decatur Village government is to provide quality public services at the lowest possible tax rate that will promote health, comfort, safety and convenience to its citizens and the community.

Planning Process

The planning process took place over a number of months during the spring and summer of 2014. The following steps were part of the process: analysis (SWOT), issue identification, issue prioritization, and goal setting.

The lengthiest part of the process was the analysis. This phase began with many different committees comprising different aspects of Village Government and Services. The committees were represented by police, public works, and department heads. Each committee met to perform a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis. During these meetings, the committees identified what they felt were the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing either their operation or the Village as a whole.

After the committee meetings, the information collected was then combined into a master list for each item. This information was then redistributed to all employees and council members. Everyone was asked to select what they felt were the top three issues in each category. Once collected, the information was then used to select what was collectively viewed as the top five strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

During the time that the internal analysis was taking place, a citizen satisfaction survey was taking place. The purpose of this survey was to identify potential issues that citizens might be encountering that had yet to be identified by the Village groups.

Once the analysis process had been completed, an issue identification/goal setting session was scheduled. This session took place with Village Council members and Village staff. At this session the results of the internal and external analysis was shared. The attendees were divided into three different groups. These groups used the information shared to identify their top three issues. These issues were all shared with the larger group, like issues were combined, and then the group voted on the issues selecting their top three. Once the top four issues were identified, the groups each selected an issue to develop goals and objectives to address.

Analysis

During the analysis phase a set of meetings took place with the different committees. At the end of these meetings the information was recorded and compiled together to create a master list of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Table 1 below). This master list was what was used to create the final list of the top five, as voted by members of the organization, in each category.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Responsive to needs Technical knowledge of workforce Ability to work as a team (within departments) Community is close knit Overall Leadership Well-equipped Police Department Supportive Council Reputation of Departments in other communities Responsiveness to changing budgetary constraints Experience level of Department Heads Overall Financial position and health Departments are well ran Active business community	Overall communication and teamwork across the organization Turnover of staff/retention Perception of the Village as a whole, to outside communities The number and condition of rentals in town -Rental program overall Lack of Focus and direction from council Organization and clarity of our ordinances Aging infrastructure Walkability of town Benefits/retirement Pay scale Blight/buildings falling down Overall supervision styles Holding off of needed improvements Older equipment, outside of the Police Department Staff complaints go unheard/no action taken Perception that some people are treated differently than others in town Feeling that residents don't appreciate services
Opportunities	Threats
Chance for better overall organization of tasks Replacing used and unserviceable equipment Growth and Expansion of Police Department -Cross training Police for Fire Growth of Community Outreach Increase for Council Engagement in overall decision making Opportunities to attract new business (Based on Cargill's growth) Using new funding sources Better project identification and prioritizing Overall Benefit Structure Change Some spots in town for redevelopment (Potential to redefine our Downtown District)	Turnover-people leaving/retiring (Succession planning) Potential changes to Council directions (New members with new priorities) Constant threats of job security (losing funding, etc.) Walmart and Meijer coming to the area might hurt our local businesses Downward property cycle (Rentals that aren't being taken care of drop property values, making homes cheaper and more attractive to potential landlords) Potential breakdown of equipment Turnover in administration –changes in priorities Potential Sheriff Take-over of PD

Table 1: SWOT Analysis

The top five that were identified are listed in Table 2. The strengths tended to focus on the overall level of cooperation, dedication, and leadership of the Village. The weaknesses tended to focus on overall issues with compensation and with organizational infrastructure.

Opportunities were mostly focusing on different areas in which people felt a weakness within the organization was prevalent. The threats to the organization mostly showed a theme of fear of organizational change, either in leadership or in membership.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Responsive to needs Ability to work as a team (within departments) Overall Leadership Experience level of Department Heads Overall Financial position and health	Organization and clarity of our ordinances Benefits/retirement Pay scale Older equipment, outside of the Police Department Feeling that residents don't appreciate services
Opportunities	Threats
Replacing used and unserviceable equipment Growth and Expansion of Police Department -Cross training Police for Fire Opportunities to attract new business (Based on Cargill's growth) Better project identification and prioritizing Overall Benefit Structure Change	Turnover-people leaving/retiring (Succession planning) Potential changes to Council directions (New members with new priorities) Constant threats of job security (losing funding, etc.) Potential breakdown of equipment Turnover in administration –changes in priorities

Table 2: Top 5 SWOTs

Strategic Goals and Objectives for the Years 2015-2017

The following is a list of each issue that was identified during the goals setting season, followed by a goal to address the issue, objective to achieve the goal, and action steps to make the objectives happen.

Issue #1

The Village of Decatur currently operates under ordinances that are outdated, inconsistent, and generally ineffective.

Goal

Improve the effectiveness of the ordinances of the Village of Decatur

Objective #1

Create an updated code of ordinances for the Village of Decatur

Action Steps

- 1.) Categorize ordinances based on the subject of the ordinances.
 Responsible Party – Village Manager and Village Attorney

- 2.) Work with the Village Attorney to review all ordinances.
 Responsible Party – Village Manager, Police Chief, and Village Attorney

- 3.) Adjust ordinances to be more consistent and up-to-date.
Responsible Party – Village Manager and Village Attorney
- 4.) Create a municipal code based upon the new ordinances.
Responsible Party – Village Manager and Village Attorney
- 5.) Develop both paper and electronic versions of the new code.
Responsible Party – Village Manager
- 6.) Present the municipal code to Village Council for adoption.
Responsible Party – Village Manager

Objective #2

Improve the enforcement of ordinances

Action Steps

- 1.) Develop written and consistent procedures and protocols for handling ordinance violations and ordinance complaints.
Responsible Party – Police Chief
- 2.) Train all Village officers on the newly developed Village Code and the procedures for handling an ordinance violation or ordinance complaint.
Responsible Party – Police Chief and Village Manager
- 3.) Work with the Village Attorney and County Prosecutor to continue to improve and streamline the prosecution of ordinance violations.
Responsible Party – Police Chief

Objective #3

Monitor the effectiveness of the changes.

Action Steps

- 1.) Create benchmarks and performance measures for success.
Responsible Party – Police Chief and Village Manager
- 2.) Measure improvements or shortfalls with regard to the benchmarks.
Responsible Party – Police Chief and Village Manager
- 3.) Investigate shortfalls to discover the potential reasons and address them.
Responsible Party – Police Chief and Village Manager
- 4.) Report on the findings.
Responsible Party – Police Chief and Village Manager

Issue #2

The Village water quality is in need of improvement.

Goal

Improve the quality of drinking water for all Village Residents.

Objective #1

Discover the causes for the poor water quality.

Action Steps

- 1.) Assess current state of all water related infrastructure.
Responsible Party – DPW Director and Village Manager
- 2.) Contact DEQ to investigate alternative methods of water delivery.
Responsible Party – DPW Director and Village Manager
- 3.) Develop a list of all infrastructure improvements and possible changes.
Responsible Party – DPW Director and Village Manager

Objective #2

Make the necessary improvements as identified in the assessment of the infrastructure.

Action Steps

- 1.) Prioritize the list of possible improvements based on potential impact on the water system.
Responsible Party – DPW Director and Village Manager
- 2.) Develop an improvement plan based on the prioritized projects.
Responsible Party – Village Manager
- 3.) Investigate potential funding sources for improvements.
Responsible Party – Village Manager
- 4.) Develop an annual budget with specific allocations towards water improvements.
Responsible Party – Village Manager and Budget Committee
- 5.) Make the recommended improvements.
Responsible Party – DPW, Private Contractors, Village Manager

Issue #3

There is too much blight in the Village of Decatur.

Goal

Decrease the amount of blight in the Village of Decatur and improve the overall image of the Village.

Objective #1

Create a more effective blight enforcement program.

Action Steps

- 1.) Review current blight enforcement ordinance to determine necessary changes, if any.
Responsible Party – Police Chief, Village Attorney, and Village Manager
- 2.) Review current blight enforcement practices within the Village.
Responsible Party – Police Chief and Village Manager
- 3.) Investigate best practice models for the enforcement of blight violations.
Responsible Party – Police Chief and Village Manager
- 4.) Develop an updated Anti-Blight Ordinance and program.
Responsible Party – Police Chief, Village Attorney, and Village Manager

Objective #2

Improve the appearance of vacant lots and abandoned homes.

Action Steps

- 1.) Create an inventory of vacant lots and abandoned homes based on current Water accounts.
Responsible Party – Village Clerk and Village Manager
- 2.) Assess current condition of vacant lots and abandoned homes.
Responsible Party – Village Clerk and Village Manager
- 3.) Develop a plan to address and improve the current condition of abandoned homes and lots.
Responsible Party – Village Clerk and Village Manager
- 4.) Investigate alternate funding sources for cleanup of vacant lots and abandoned homes.
Responsible Party – Village Manager

Objective #3

Improve the overall appearance of the Downtown Area

Action Steps

- 1.) Assess the current state of Downtown Buildings
Responsible Party – Village Manager
- 2.) Work to develop on overall Downtown Development Plan
Responsible Party – Village Manager, DDA, Planning Commission, Village Engineer
- 3.) Investigate alternative funding methods for Downtown Improvements
Responsible Party – Village Manager, Village Engineer

- 4.) Implement Downtown Development Plan
Responsible Party – Village Manager, DPW

Objective #4

Improve community involvement in blight elimination.

Action Steps

- 1.) Educate residents about the Council's Direction on cleaning up the Village
Responsible Party – Village Manager, Police Department
- 2.) Investigate Community Based Blight Elimination Programs
Responsible Party – Village Manager, Police Department
- 3.) Implement a best practices model of Community Based Blight Elimination
Responsible Party – Village Manager, Police Department

Issue #4

The current wages and benefits offered lead to potentially high turnover of staff.

Goal

Improve overall compensation package.

Objective #1

Assess current status of the issue

Action Steps

- 1.) Create a method to assign a monetary value to all benefits and compensation
Responsible Party – Village Manager
- 2.) Identify Comparable communities
Responsible Party – Village Manager
- 3.) Compare overall compensation with comparable communities
Responsible Party – Village Manager

Objective #2

Identify potential changes in compensation structure

- 1.) Identify alternatives for all benefits and pay structure.
Responsible Party – Village Manager
- 2.) Identify potential financial impact of all changes

Responsible Party – Village Manager

Objective #3

Implement changes

1.) Create a recommendation based on information collected and alternatives identified.

Responsible Party – Village Manager

2.) Implement the changes selected.

Responsible Party – Village Manager

3.) Monitor the impact of the changes.

Responsible Party – Village Manager