

2022-2024

City of Freeport

Strategic Vision and Goals

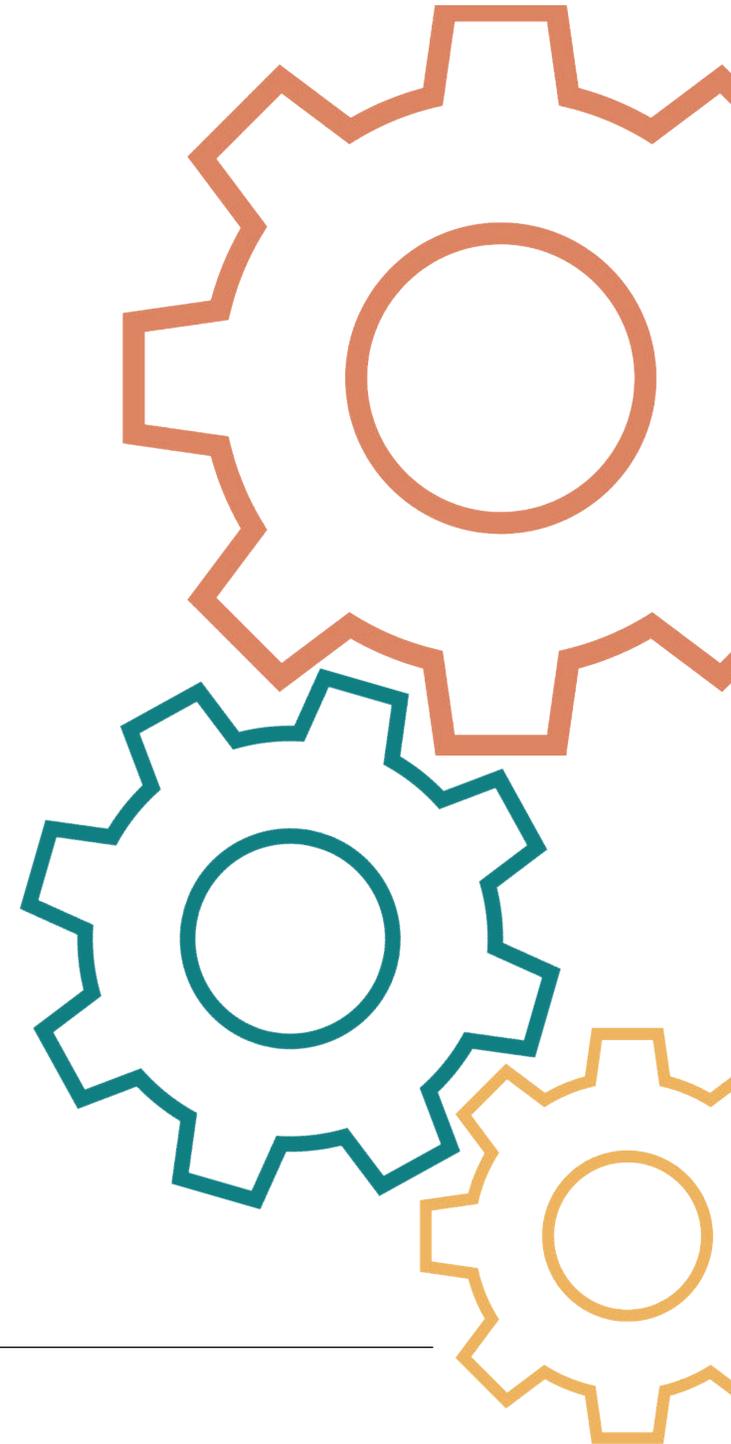


Strategic Vision

Freeport's Strategic Vision is the city's guide to help shape the work of the city, both internally for staff and externally to address the community's needs. The framework guides all plans that are being created within city departments, setting the direction for implementation.

It provides direction to city staff, consultants, and contractors that are working in the city on projects and policies. The Vision informs community partners, helping to build more alignment while strengthening partnerships.

Freeport's Strategic Vision builds upon Freeport's entrepreneurial and makers heritage. At the same time, it sets a fresh path towards a future filled with emerging opportunities, rapid change, and new partnerships. This framework lays out the key issues which need our attention and resources in the near term, while holding up a vision for progress and prosperity over the long term.



2040 Vision Statement

Freeport is a destination of choice. Our innovative city boasts an entrepreneurial economy with vibrant and safe neighborhoods. Freeport supports an abundance of educational, cultural and outdoor experiences for all residents including visitors. Our community is connected, accessible and welcoming. There are opportunities and growth for all.

2040 Mission Statement

The City of Freeport is an engaged partner that helps foster entrepreneurship and an inclusive, vibrant city by providing efficient, modern services to our community.

2040 Priority Areas



Thriving Neighborhoods



Safe and Welcoming Community



Responsive, Efficient Government



Connected and Accessible Community



Strong Public/Private Partnerships



Growing Entrepreneurial Economy Built on our Makers Heritage



Quality Communication and Engagement



Effective Land Use



Vibrant Arts and Culture Experiences

Thriving Neighborhoods

Freeport's neighborhoods are affordable with a small-town feel that attracts families and a growing workforce. Each of our neighborhoods are connected to the many parks and recreation areas.

Just a short walk or drive from any of our neighborhoods, our downtown streetscape is revitalized, supporting a wide variety of shops, restaurants, and businesses. Our commercial corridors host a mix of businesses that meet the needs of the community while attracting regional commerce.



Key Strategies

- Complete inventory of infrastructure projects (w/ shovel ready identified)
- Street improvement plan
- Demolition/blight reduction plan
- Water/sewer/storm sewer improvements
- Tree removal/replacement program
- Streamline and enhance code enforcement

Safe and Welcoming Community

Our community is safe and welcoming. Our police, fire, and emergency management systems are well equipped and staffed by a team of people who foster a community service approach to their work, resulting in lower crime rates and faster response times. The community appreciates and supports their work.

People from all backgrounds feel welcome in any part of our community. The City's policies and practices encourage equity and inclusion.



Key Strategies

- Increase police force census to support proven strategies such as community policing, gang units
- Hire and retain a diverse team (police, fire, and throughout City staff) to reflect the community we serve
- Deploy technology to reduce gun violence and improve efficiency of the police force
- Evaluate fire department structure, equipment, and capital needs vs. similar communities
- Ensure neighborhoods and buildings are well kept to help change the narrative around safety in our community



Responsive, Efficient Government

Freeport's City Government responds quickly to community needs through open channels of communication internally and with the community. We use our debt capacity and revenue wisely to maintain and improve the City's infrastructure. We strive to control costs while providing the highest possible level of service. We have a diverse revenue base that enables us to plan for growth far into the future. City government is trusted and transparent. The community is empowered to participate with the Government using the latest technologies and communication methods.



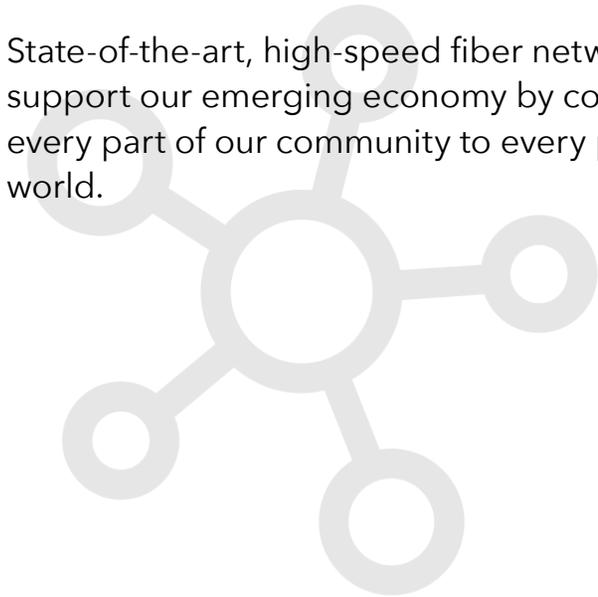
Key Strategies

- Leverage forgivable loan and grant programs to maximize taxpayer dollars
- Review use of overtime in staffing strategies
- Facilitate cross-departmental ideation strategies
- Increase staff development and succession planning efforts
- Review staff job responsibilities to empower teams
- Integrated capital improvement plan

Connected and Accessible Community

Our community is easy to navigate and connected globally. Whether you drive a car, use Pretzel City Transit, a ride-share or taxi, ride a bike or walk, getting around Freeport is easy. Public transportation is widespread, frequent, and reliable. Sidewalks, greenways, and nationally recognized bike facilities get us where we want to go safely keeping us active and healthy. It is easy to live in our community without a car while enjoying economic, academic, and social success.

State-of-the-art, high-speed fiber networks support our emerging economy by connecting every part of our community to every part of the world.



Key Strategies

- Connect Freeport as a high-speed internet hub
- Fiber network expansion
- Fund and execute the Sidewalk Plan
- Increase bike lanes and bike paths to major attractions (i.e. schools, downtown, parks, shopping, Jane Addams, and Pecatonica River Trails)
- Encourage ride share and other flexible transportation options
- Work with the Dubuque/Rockford passenger rail committee to bring a train/commuter stop to Freeport

Strong Public/Private Partnerships

Public and private partners have a demonstrated unity of purpose and create clear value for the citizens of Freeport and its partners. Anchor institutions in our community work in strong alignment with our city government. We work closely with local, regional, and statewide economic development partners by aligning our work with shared resources. Individual and corporate citizens generously invest in our community through partnerships, including public/private projects that enrich the quality of life in the city.



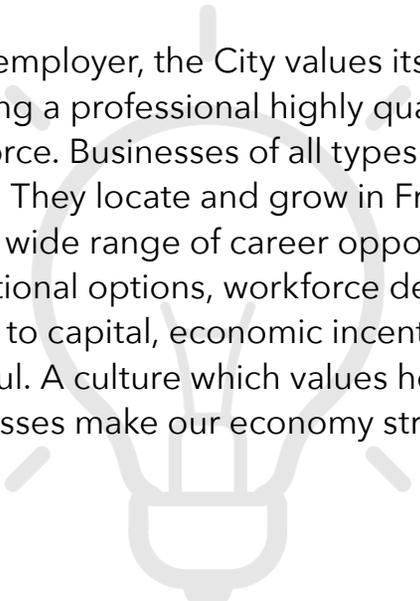
Key Strategies

- **Economic Development:** strengthen Greater Freeport partnership
- **Education:** encourage stronger education and workforce outcomes through partnership (e.g., career readiness and skills training to meet employer needs)
- **Stephenson County:** increase coordination of services and development objectives with the County (e.g., trails, airport, 911, animal control, roads/bridges)
- **Healthcare:** improve coordination with healthcare institutions
- **Park District:** coordinate land use and maintenance efforts

Growing Entrepreneurial Economy Built on our Makers Heritage

Our city is unique in its locally focused economy. Local businesses are vibrant. No matter where you are in the city, you see a diversity of customers, employees, and business owners. Historic buildings are home to eclectic businesses that reflect the character of the city. A creative economy of artists, makers, and innovators thrives. If you do your part, you will find opportunity for success.

As an employer, the City values its workers, retaining a professional highly qualified workforce. Businesses of all types share these values. They locate and grow in Freeport, to offer a wide range of career opportunities. Educational options, workforce development, access to capital, economic incentives are plentiful. A culture which values homegrown businesses make our economy strong.



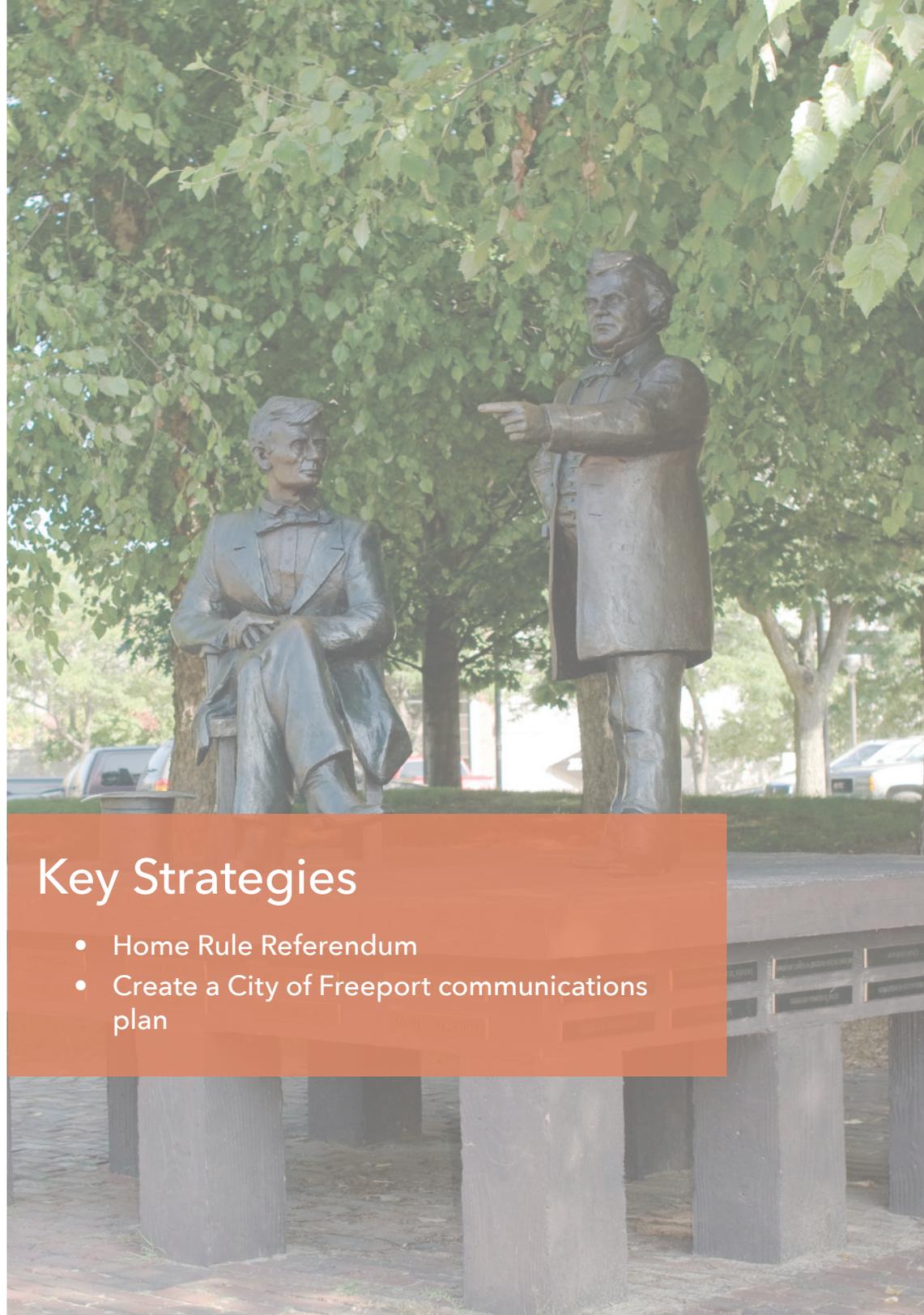
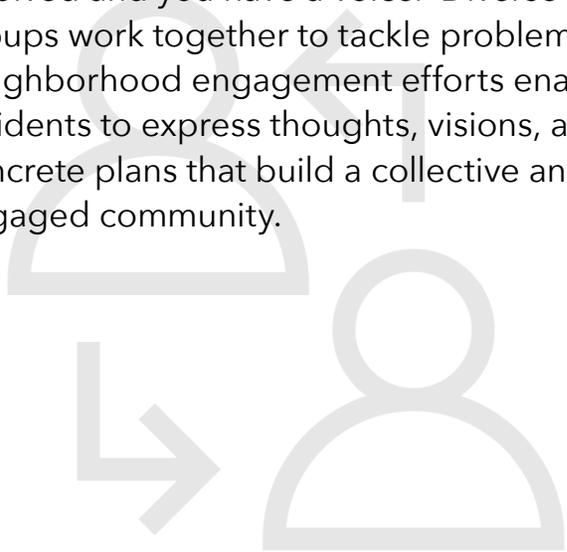
Key Strategies

- Improve coordination with Greater Freeport Partnership to ensure one-stop-shop for business starts
- Engage minority leaders to help encourage minority business starts
- Explore anchor institution strategy to spark and align investment
- Identify, increase engagement with developers to spark and align investment

Quality Communications and Engagement

We are an inclusive, diverse, and growing community comprised of engaged citizens. Freeport is a community where everyone can participate. The City shares information and keeps citizens informed of progress and opportunities to participate. People are engaged in a variety of programs using multiple channels to reach our diverse population of citizens.

If you live, work, or play here, you want to be involved and you have a voice. Diverse interest groups work together to tackle problems. Neighborhood engagement efforts enable residents to express thoughts, visions, and concrete plans that build a collective and engaged community.



Key Strategies

- Home Rule Referendum
- Create a City of Freeport communications plan

Effective Land Use

We make long-range land and development plans. Land use within the City is designed to create opportunities for housing, businesses, and new amenities for citizens to enjoy. The City creates master plans for land to encourage development in the downtown, new housing in neighborhoods, and the creation of green spaces in the flood plain and elsewhere in our community. Partners, developers, and citizens inform these plans and generate value from the City's land use policies.



Key Strategies

- Review City Centre Plan and complete downtown master plan
- Complete master plan for 3rd Ward flood mitigation area
- Create vacant/abandoned property inventory and master plan
- Create Burchard Hills master plan
- Zoning map/policy updates
- Create a 5-year plan for Albertus Airport



Vibrant Arts and Culture Experiences

Freeport's art-and-culture sector offers extraordinary cultural events, learning opportunities and outdoor experiences for people of all ages. Distinctive cultural districts are linked to Freeport's bustling commercial districts. Open spaces, bike paths, parks, and greenways are abundant throughout the city. The river is accessible for recreation, enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Key Strategies

- Establish an Arts and Culture Commission
- Complete Chicago Avenue streetscape project
- Facilitate Art Museum transition to new location



Management

Agenda

Management Agenda items are priorities for which the Mayor and City Council has set the overall direction and provided initial funding, may require further City Council action or funding, or are major management projects that may take multiple years to implement.

- Home Rule Referendum

Thriving Neighborhoods

- Complete Inventory of Infrastructure Projects (w/shovel ready identified)
- Street Improvement Plan
- Demolition/Blight Reduction Plan
- Water/Sewer/Storm Sewer Improvements
- Tree Removal/Replacement Program
- Streamline & Enhance Code Enforcement

Safe and Welcoming Community

- Increase police force census to support proven strategies e.g, community policing, gang units
- Hire & retain a diverse team (police, fire, and throughout City staff) to reflect the community we serve
- Deploy technology to reduce gun violence & improve efficiency of the police force
- Evaluate fire department structure, equipment, capital needs vs. similar communities
- Ensure neighborhoods and buildings are well kept helping change the narrative around safety in our community

Responsive, Efficient Government

- Leverage forgivable loan & grant programs to maximize taxpayer dollars
- Review use of overtime in staffing strategies
- Facilitate cross-department ideation sessions
- Increase staff development & succession planning efforts
- Review staff job responsibilities to empower teams
- Integrated Capital Improvement Plan

Growing Entrepreneurial Economy

- Improve coordination with GFP to ensure one-stop-shop for business starts
- Engage minority leaders to help encourage minority business starts

Quality Communication and Engagement

- Create City of Freeport Communication Plan

Policy Agenda

Policy Agenda items are priorities that need direction or a policy decision by the Mayor and City Council, need a major funding decision by the Mayor and City Council, or that need Mayor and City Council leadership in the community or with other government bodies.

- Home Rule Referendum

Thriving Neighborhoods

- Fund & Execute the Sidewalk Plan

Safe & Welcoming Community

- Deploy technology to reduce gun violence & improve efficiency of the police force
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Responsive, Efficient Government

- Integrated Capital Improvement Plan

Connected, Accessible Community

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Strong Public/Private Partnerships

- Economic Development - strengthen Greater Freeport Partnership
- Education - encourage stronger education & workforce outcomes through partnership e.g., career readiness & skills training to meet employer needs
- Stephenson County - increase coordination of services & development objectives with the County e.g., trails, airport, 911, animal control, roads/bridges
- Healthcare - improve coordination with healthcare institutions
- Park District - coordinate land use and maintenance efforts

Growing Entrepreneurial Economy

- Explore Anchor Institution strategy to spark & align investment
- Identify, increase engagement with developers to spark & align investment

Effective Land Use

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How

the strategic vision and goals are implemented

The City Manager and Mayor/City Council each have responsibility to ensure the strategic vision and goals are carried out and the entire community is equitably served.

The Mayor/City Council have developed the long-range strategic vision and goals. Together they oversee the general administration, make policy and set the budget. Mayor and City Council action items are outlined in the Policy Agenda.

The City Manager and his team carry out day-to-day operations and the policies established by the council. Management team action items are outlined in the Management Agenda.

About

the vision and goals for 2040

During a series of meetings and a retreat in the fall of 2021, the Freeport Mayor and City Council reaffirmed a vision for the year 2040 and a detailed list of priorities that will be pursued over the next 3 years.

The vision and priorities were informed by community stakeholders and department leaders from the City of Freeport through surveys and a day-long, in-person, planning session.

The vision statement describes how Mayor/City Council envisions Freeport in 2040. The seven priority areas explain where the Mayor/City Council will focus its energy and the measures it plans to take.

The policy and management agenda will be the focus of the current Mayor/City Council, in coordination with City staff, in the next 3-years, to do its part in fulfilling the vision.







Freeport Mayor & City Council Members

Mayor Jodi Miller

Eric Borneman - 1st Ward

James Monroe - 2nd Ward

Art Ross - 3rd Ward

Don Parker - 4th Ward

Patrick Busker - 5th Ward

Greg Shadle - 6th Ward

Dan Misek- 7th Ward

Jim Berberet - At Large

Randy Bukas - City Manager

Thanks to Greater Freeport Partnership and DREIBELBIS + FAIRWEATHER Studio for sharing photos.

Facilitation for Freeport's Strategic Planning conducted by:

next level
PARTNERS FOR BIG IDEAS