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The City of Elgin is located in Cook and Kane Counties, 35 miles from the City of Chicago. With a population of nearly 115,000 residents in the 2020 Census, its population growth is outpacing state trends. Elgin’s residents are diverse, with 47% of residents identifying as Hispanic or Latino, 5% identifying as Black, and 5% identifying as Asian. Over a quarter of Elgin’s population is foreign born, and 46% of residents report speaking a language other than English.

According to the 2022 American Community Survey, Elgin’s top employment sector is Educational Services, Healthcare, and Social Assistance, which employs 19% of residents. The Elgin School District is the City’s top employer. The second largest industry in Elgin is Manufacturing, which employs 18% of residents. In 2021, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the City’s unemployment rate is slightly higher than the national average at 7.3%.

Elgin offers a wide array of cultural and recreation amenities for residents and visitors, including the Lords Park Zoo and Hemmens Cultural Center, which hosts the nationally renowned Elgin Symphony Orchestra. The City is host to popular events such as Nightmare on Chicago Street and the annual Historic Elgin House Tour. Additionally, the Fox River provides opportunities for outdoor recreation and more adult entertainment at the Grand Victoria riverboat casino.

The City of Elgin is the sixth largest city in Illinois, with a growing and diverse population. It is a unique community with a rich history that distinguishes it from the rest of the Chicago metropolitan area.
Strategic Planning Process

The City of Elgin initiated a strategic planning process in 2022 to guide the direction of the City for the next three to five years.

The process used to develop the plan was designed to ensure:

+ A shared vision of the outcomes that City sought to create. Organizations driven by clear purposes and shared values have a greater capacity to succeed than those that are not.
+ A collective understanding of the available resources, environment, and principles upon which the initiatives will be based.
+ Acceptance of the direction and urgency of the strategic plan, which will be integrated into the way the City operates on a daily basis.

Elgin’s strategic planning process involved input from a broad group of internal and external stakeholders to achieve these conditions for success. To date, this has included:

+ Interviews with the Mayor and Council and listening sessions with Board and Commission Chairs
+ A workshop with the City Manager and Senior Leadership Team
+ Development of an environmental scan with background on the current state of the community
+ Three work sessions with the City’s Mayor and Council in 2022 and two work sessions in 2023 dedicated to refining objectives.
+ Two in-person and two online community input sessions attended by 78 community stakeholders

Following adoption of the strategic plan, members of the City’s Senior Leadership Team will convene implementation team meetings related to each Strategic Outcome Area to develop projects for implementation and key performance indicators.
Mission
A transformative organization at the forefront of governmental service delivery

Values
+ Dedicated: Unwavering in our commitment toward advancing our mission
+ Collaborative: Routinely engaging each other in planning and problem solving while equally weighing ideas and opinions to arrive at the best possible outcome
+ Respectful: Thoughtfully considering all viewpoints in all interactions
+ Innovative: Committed to introducing progressive change and ideas to be creative and impactful to the organization

Vision
Elgin is a diverse and authentic City that embraces its history while aspiring to be an inclusive, innovative, and vibrant community
Strategic Outcome Areas and Objectives

**Connected, Engaged, and Inclusive Community**

Elgin fosters collaboration and communication and provides resources and events to strengthen the community’s social fabric.

**Objectives:**
- Develop a diverse internal workforce and vendor base
- Enhance special events
- Enhance technology and media utilization to achieve goals and engage with the community
- Improve communication to and from the community
- Strengthen identity and engagement of neighborhoods. Communicate through network of neighborhood organizations, churches, etc.

**Financially Sustainable Infrastructure and Services**

Elgin provides high-quality services and reliable infrastructure through innovative approaches and long-term planning in a fiscally responsible manner.

**Objectives:**
- Encourage sustainable development and redevelopment
- Improve street and transportation options
- Proactively improve intergovernmental relationships
- Safe and reliable sustainable drinking water
- Use technology to streamline services and costs
Vibrant Community

Elgin creates and supports inviting and accessible venues including outdoor spaces for recreation and entertainment, supported by lively commercial hubs.

**Objectives:**
- Develop commercial, arts and entertainment hubs
- External branding and marketing
- Foster year-round active lifestyles by enhancing use of city owned facilities
- Increase the use of the river for recreation and entertainment
- Use other agencies’ buildings for recreational opportunities

Diverse Housing and Livable Neighborhoods

Elgin advances the creation of safe and desirable neighborhoods by supporting a variety of housing options.

**Objectives:**
- Develop and implement a plan to address homelessness
- Enhance quality of life focused on neighborhoods
- Fully fund police and fire and encourage new technologies to enhance public safety in neighborhoods
- Improve existing housing stock
- Promote more density and provide for a variety of housing stock at different price points

Environmental Stewardship

Elgin partners with residents and businesses to promote ownership of our shared environment, while also preparing for shifting climate impacts.

**Objectives:**
- Encourage preservation of green space in our community
- Encourage strong focus on sustainable and environmental friendly growth
- Complete climate action plan to include various initiatives.
- Imbed environmental perspectives into city actions
- Provide education to increase participation in environmental stewardship.

Diversified Growth

Elgin’s balanced growth is intentional, planned, and supportive of our vision for a vibrant community.

**Objectives:**
- Consider staff position at City Manager’s Office that includes strategic business development with a regional view
- Maintain Elgin as a welcoming community
- Pursue proactive partnerships to facilitate business and industry
- Pursue development and redevelopment initiatives in all parts of the city
- Review city regulations to facilitate diversified growth