



2017 - 2021 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE | 2020



2017 – 2021 CITY OF WEST ALLIS STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2015, the City of West Allis began a multi-stage process to identify the strengths, opportunities, long-term aspirations, and measurable results that would position West Allis for a prosperous and positive future.

A steering committee made up of City officials, City employees, community stakeholders, and residents worked with members of the Milwaukee County UW-Extension Program to undertake the process of creating a Five Year Strategic Plan that would:

- Establish a road map for the City's future and measure the progress made.
- Be used on a daily basis to ensure resources are being allocated to the appropriate programs and services.
- Be used on an annual basis to establish City budgeting priorities and develop and implement programs to effectuate progress toward future goals.
- Provide greater accountability.
- Create shared visions and innovations City wide.

Under each goal within the Strategic Plan document are specific strategic actions. These measurable, actionable items are assigned to City officials or City departments to execute within the five year time frame to move the City closer to achieving the five overarching goals.



Goal #1 – Image/Brand/Destination

The City of West Allis will become the “preferred municipality in the Milwaukee Metropolitan area, the state, and the country” for visitors, residents and businesses through focused rebranding, marketing and promotion actions.

Strategic Actions

1. Formalize a clear image through marketing and brand development process
2. Align City marketing activities with businesses and stakeholders activities; invest in collaborative partnerships with businesses and community organizations
3. Collaborate with key community groups to center citizen and stakeholder engagement on community/neighborhood heritage, history and sense of community experiences/goals
4. Coordinate communication of housing development and improvement goals, priorities and opportunities across citizen demographic groups and markets
5. Create a Farmers Market marketing plan that expands the market’s role as a city-wide and regional destination
6. Develop a city-wide residential and commercial corridor, common community streetscape, and signage program which markets neighborhood, community, and corridor culture, and welcomes visitors, residents, and stakeholders
7. Increase entertainment and specialty retail opportunities city-wide to deepen block-level commitment to commercial corridor connections as destinations
8. Leverage Library success as City, County destination and local community center; Link library ad campaign to City branding and marketing plan
9. Promote city-wide businesses across sectors by creating a city-wide marketing plan that connects them to the City’s renowned walking and biking paths and trails
10. Expand opportunities for Seniors through external collaborations
11. Elevate image through planning and architecture

What it means for citizens

At the time of the Strategic Plan’s creation, West Allis was combating negative perceptions in the media about the community that were based on outdated misconceptions and belied the facts: crime was down, redevelopment was up, and the City was investing in amenities to attract businesses and residents. The challenge was telling West Allis’ very positive story to the community, the region, and beyond.

Goal #1 identified the City’s many strengths – our Farmers Market, library, biking and walking trails, sense of history, and strategic partnerships – and provided direction for how to leverage those strengths to reshape the public narrative surrounding the community. Branding and marketing efforts could then focus on promoting the community and continuing to attract businesses and new residents, while encouraging current residents to rally behind their own community.

Goal #2 – Quality of Life

The City of West Allis will promote the quality of life for residents by ensuring a safe and healthy community. (Public Safety, Health, Private and Public Infrastructure, Aesthetics, Sense of Community)

Strategic Actions

1. Create and implement a city-wide commercial and residential code compliance program that includes city-wide beautification improvements, site, landscaping and infrastructure improvements
2. Support/leverage Health Department's partnerships and Community Health Improvement Plan 2016-2020 across additional City departments, agencies and key groups to focus on health lifestyles, substance abuse and addiction, and mental health issues.
3. Identify most impactful crime prevention strategies and expand/improve them; communicate strategies' success with citizens (i.e. reduce highest call volume)
4. Expand existing efforts to achieve city-wide Complete Streets program that provides safe and healthy transportation choices for multiple users of all ages, including driving, biking, walking or taking transit.
5. Improve city-wide parks, open space and art: utilization, maintenance and security
6. Improve key service supports for the City's vulnerable populations (underemployed, homeless, impoverished)
7. Develop and implement city-wide best strategies that improve city-wide safety and security
8. Continue to ensure safety, security and continuity of technological services (fiber networks, community networks and phone/communications systems)
9. Expand City and community-wide crisis/emergency/critical incident response training

What it means for citizens

The City of West Allis is committed to providing a safe, healthy, attractive environment for citizens to live, work, and play. West Allis encompasses over a dozen neighborhood parks, two county parks, and two state walking/biking trails within its 11-mile square borders. City leadership and partners are passionate about maintaining these green spaces and investing over \$2 million annually in outdoor recreational opportunities for residents. The City has also invested in improving public safety and additional community outreach efforts by West Allis Police Department.

West Allis Health Department is a key leader in in the Strategic Actions to support Quality of Life for West Allis residents. Its Healthy Lifestyles Coalition, Mental Health & Substance Abuse Taskforce, and Violence-Free West Allis Cooperative are at the forefront of addressing serious health issues impacting the community.

Goal #3 – Citizen Engagement

The City of West Allis will increase citizen engagement to facilitate a sense of community, belonging, and ownership for citizens.

Strategic Actions

1. Create “City 101 Academy” to deepen citizen and stakeholder knowledge regarding city services and budget/plans/priorities, and strategic goals and outcomes/progresses of city-wide plan alignment
2. Develop Strategic Communications Plan and Cohesive City Brand for Citizen Communication
3. Optimize strong partnerships with stakeholders to create new volunteer, employment and training opportunities
4. Grow city-wide citizen-centered programs and services by cultivating strategic partnerships with local, regional and national businesses and organizations
5. Expand access to City information through citizen focused city-wide communications and social media activities
6. Create Virtual City Hall where citizens can access city-wide e-services, City publications, public reports, plans and meeting information, observe steps of City legislative/review processes (Legistar® software expansion and consistency) and make online payments
7. Query and track citizens opinions and experiences regarding City services through Citizen Satisfaction Surveys; review and improve processes based on responses
8. Create Neighborhood Association Council to strengthen neighborhoods and neighborhood associations, provide information regarding needed commercial and residential code compliance and other factors negatively impacting neighborhoods

What it means for citizens

Citizens who take pride and ownership in their communities are key to that community’s success and strength. Through the Strategic Plan, the City outlined its efforts to keep residents informed about city activities and services and motivate them to become engaged and active participants in their community.

Communication and education are key drivers of Citizen Engagement. In 2017 the City developed a new Communications Department to steer and craft consistent, strategic outgoing messaging through the media, websites, social media, and print communications the City shares. This new department has led collaboration with other City departments to ensure City communications are easy to understand and include clear calls to action. The City has also placed emphasis on developing electronic tools to make it easier for residents to stay connected to and participate in their local government.

Goal #4 – Economic Vitality & Sustainability

The City of West Allis will protect the organization's fiscal well-being through long term planning and fiscal analysis. Further, proactive and well planned development and redevelopment opportunities will be promoted and maintained.

Strategic Actions

1. Update City's long-term financial plans and debt policy; promote data-driven decision-making processes; reduce reliance on alternative funding sources for essential services
2. Engage city-wide departmental priority based budgeting, including shared City services review/implementation and related organizational operation innovations to determine how the City can provide the same level of service differently to maintain or reduce costs
3. Develop city-wide human resource succession plans and documentation of processes and procedures to provide efficient and effective continuity of City services during times of transition and vacancies
4. Actively engage citizens and community stakeholders to identify the areas/facilities/assets to market the City of West Allis as a leading place to start a business or relocate a business or public organization; develop and implement plan based on results
5. Continue to develop city-wide technology opportunities and utilization of software to ensure efficient and effective use of government resources
6. Promote economic vitality and business growth within the City's business community through the promotion of entrepreneurialism and financial programs to help open a business, expand business retention and expansion efforts to strengthen current employment base, and having a progressive business environment that attracts quality businesses and further diversifies the City into new commercial, retail, and industrial markets
7. Develop a sustainable Capital Improvement Plan which includes equipment and facilities replacement cycles, and maintenance and repair plans

What it means for citizens

Municipalities are increasingly challenged by ever-more restricted budgets. As a landlocked, heavily developed City, West Allis faces unique challenges to redevelop and leverage its commercial spaces to attract and retain businesses that create job opportunities and contribute back to the strength of the community. In addition, West Allis is facing the same struggle as many other cities, to maintain aging infrastructure and facilities while cost-effectively supporting a high level of service for residents.

Economic Vitality and Sustainability solidifies the City of West Allis' commitment to fiscal responsibility and data-driven budgeting. Through our collaborative budgeting process and by expanding strategic development and redevelopment initiatives, the City is positioning itself to remain economically viable for years to come.

Goal #5 – Excellence in Government

The City of West Allis will continually review the best methods for effective and efficient service delivery by utilizing continuous improvement and LEAN operation techniques. Innovation and service excellence is expected and employees will be held accountable and rewarded for such.

Strategic Actions

1. Create a culture of innovation and continuous improvement among City departments by establishing city-wide employee performance standards, core values and competencies for employees; including LEAN training and technological competencies
2. Increase city-wide department and agency employee knowledge of organizational operations, processes, goals and plans where employees demonstrate active and successful implementation of policies and programs adopted by the Mayor and Common Council.
3. Create a streamlined citizen and business service environment city-wide, eliminating the need for citizens and stakeholders to go to multiple departments for City permitting, licenses, or other requirements and services
4. Align common/connected strategic goals, outcomes and results across all City mandated, department and agency plans (City strategic plan, Department Plans, Comprehensive Plan, Parks Plan, Facilities Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, commercial corridor plans)
5. Develop and Implement ongoing Operational Analysis/Audit/Alternative Service Delivery Options/Organizational Structure Analysis; Review each process and related ordinance/procedure/practice to ensure they comport with actual activities and current best practices; eliminate or provide discretion to allow for continuous improvement activities
6. Revise and streamline hiring, retention, performance recognition and rewards programs/processes to focus on abilities and adherence to core values and competencies (pay for performance)

What it means for citizens

The City of West Allis is a municipal organization comprised of over 600 employees working within 24 unique departments at more than 10 municipal facilities. At the time the Strategic Plan was adopted, 50% of the City's employees were expected to retire within the subsequent five years. Public sector agencies everywhere struggle to attract and retain qualified younger workers. Budget constraints prevent the public sector from offering the salaries and benefits their private sector counterparts enjoy. These challenges put great urgency on the City to develop programs and streamline operations to improve efficiency. The City is constantly striving to work smarter in order to work harder. LEAN training has instilled employees with a process-improvement mindset, and training and cross-training have allowed employees to leverage their skills in new and innovative ways. In order to provide exceptional service to residents, the City is committed to exceptional operations itself.

OUR VISION STATEMENT

The City of West Allis will provide a living and working environment throughout the community that is focused on providing its citizens and businesses a coordinated, efficient, effective, and responsive level of services. The City of West Allis will make this community the preferred municipality in the Milwaukee metropolitan area, the state, and the country.



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The City of West Allis is a municipal organization operating under the constitution and statutes of the State of Wisconsin, and the ordinances, policies, and procedures of the City in order to:

- Provide cost effective municipal services consistent with the needs and desires of the citizens of the West Allis community (residences and businesses, as well as other community stakeholders);
- Provide for the health, safety, and welfare of the community;
- Provide a quality living and working environment, and
- Provide a positive, progressive, and creative approach to the budget, management and operations of the City.



OUR CORE VALUES

Service excellence

Exceptional professional service for and by outstanding people; responsive, efficient, dedicated and engaged workforce.

Continuous improvement

Innovations through creative and strategic management; sustained improvement through goal oriented customer focused results.

Open and transparent

Ethical, accessible and accountable government operations.

Renewal

Revitalization through collaborations and partnerships with a focus on image, economic development, and growth.

Equitable

Respectful, responsible, compassionate, and welcoming to all.

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

Accountable

Is responsive to the community's interests and needs; timely; dependable; consistent; answerable; effective in the use of resources; adheres to established policies and procedures as appropriate; able to justify decisions and actions.

Driven

Is goal oriented, creative in problem solving; exhibits initiative: sets and pursues high standards; motivated to succeed.

Dedicated

Demonstrates service to others; is customer focused; displays cultural competency and professionalism.

Integrity

Is sincere, honest, trustworthy, and ethical; models values and embodies competencies.

Technical

Has and grows knowledge and skill in area of expertise; is competent and proficient in the use of available technology; develops cross functional skills.

United

Encourages and exemplifies teamwork, positive attitude, and emotional intelligence; is an effective communicator, tactful and diplomatic; mentors others; regularly gives and receives feedback.

Progressive

Is strategic, innovative, skilled in change management and agile; challenges the status quo; explores and drives continuous improvement opportunities.



Our guiding principles: what it means for citizens

The City of West Allis' Vision and Mission formed the framework that helped create the five strategic goals of the Strategic Plan. The action items within each goal directly support the City's Vision and Mission by providing actionable, accountable activities for City departments and partner organizations to work to achieve in order to make West Allis "the preferred municipality in the Milwaukee metropolitan area, the state, and the country."

As part of Goal 5, "Excellence in Government," City leadership defined five Core Values and seven Core Competencies all City employees are expected to uphold and demonstrate. The Core Values were not aspirational, but were defined to reflect the reality of the level of service the City of West Allis was already providing residents and cemented its commitment to continue to provide that level of service for years to come.

The Core Competencies established baseline expectations for all City employees, and both the hiring process and employee lifecycle process have been redefined to evaluate each individual employee's demonstration of the Core Values and Core Competencies in their daily work. This provided much-needed clarity for what is expected of City employees to ensure a consistently high level of service across the organization.

Strategic Plan Implementation Highlights: 2017 - 2019



Goal #1 – Brand/Image/Destination

- Issued RFP to contract with professional marketing firm to develop new brand and strategic marketing plan
- Creation of West Allis Tourism Commission
- Launch of new food truck event at West Allis Farmers Market

Goal #2 – Quality of Life

- Creation of West Allis-West Milwaukee Mental Health & Substance Abuse Task Force
- Creation of Violence Free West Allis Coalition
- Civilianization of West Allis Police Department dispatch center to minimize sworn members working in non-patrol duties
- Reduction in reported crime year over year
- Introduction of Bublr® Bikes bike share program
- Completion of improvements to Reservoir Park, Liberty Heights Park, and Veterans Memorial Park
- Introduced single-stream recycling carts

Goal #3 – Citizen Engagement

- Redesigned City newsletter, “It’s Your City,” from 2 color, text-heavy publication to engaging, full color magazine
- Launched monthly e-newsletter for residents; increased social media usage and service opportunities

Goal #4 – Economic Vitality & Sustainability

- \$10 million FIRE/NMTC allocation to support working capital
- First year of implementing Five Year Capital Improvement Program
- Creation of Employee Benefit Committee, which includes citizen members to provide oversight

Goal #5 – Excellence in Government

- Reaccreditation secured by West Allis Health Department, West Allis Fire Department, and West Allis Police Department
- West Allis Building Inspection and Neighborhood Services (BINS) Department received high praise following an audit by the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS).
- First Q12 Employee Engagement Survey Conducted to evaluate City employee engagement levels and strategize improvements to ensure retention
- Required FEMA training for all employees

IMPLEMENTATION SPOTLIGHT

In 2017, the City of West Allis switched from a complicated system of residential recycling to an easy-to-understand, single-stream cart. The new carts were introduced to residents through a comprehensive, bilingual communications campaign that leveraged social media, direct mail, the City newsletter, and print collateral. Within July – September of 2017 vs. 2016, recycling tonnage collected increased by 45% thanks to the ease-of-use of the carts.



Goal #1 – Brand/Image/Destination

- Developed and launched new City brand and strategic, three-year marketing campaign to promote West Allis
- Enhanced content and reach of West Allis Farmers Market website; hosted new events at Market including Makers Market and Curds & Kegs
- Phase 1 of National Ave. Corridor Plan reconstruction of National Ave. begun

Goal #2 – Quality of Life

- Launched West Allis Dog Park Project fundraising and volunteer working groups
- Overall decrease in crime rate of 20% over 2017

Goal #3 – Citizen Engagement

- Amplified efforts to establish Neighborhood Associations city wide
- First Homeowner Resource Fair attended by over 100 residents
- City received 14.4 million impressions across City social media networks
- Fifth annual Mayor’s Challenge – over 300 residents participated in summer fitness challenge
- Klentz and Roosevelt Park equipment upgrades and enhancements complete

Goal #4 – Economic Vitality & Sustainability

- \$10 million FIRE/NMTC allocation to support working capital
- Groundbreakings held for largescale new developments with Ogden Corporation (Element 84, 84th St.) and Mandel Group (The West, Six Points area)
- Began redevelopment efforts of 70th St. Corridor in partnership with Cobalt Partners
- Aurora Medical Clinic - 30,000 ft.² medical office valued at over \$10,000,000 opened at 6609 W. Greenfield Ave.
- Blast Cleaning Technologies acquired 120,000 ft.² manufacturing within the former Allis Chalmers industrial complex bringing 90+ high paying jobs and investing over \$ 5,000,000 equipment, working capital, and renovation of the existing building

Goal #5 – Excellence in Government

- Reaccreditation secured by West Allis Health Department, West Allis Fire Department, and West Allis Police Department
- LEAN Green and Yellow Belt training offered to mid-level and front line staff
- Increased promotion of/enhanced use of online Let Us Help resident service system
- SCORE Corps Employee Recognition Program introduced
- Pay for Performance employee performance review system implemented
- Space planning survey & facility study completed to assess City facility maintenance needs



IMPLEMENTATION SPOTLIGHT

On October 13, 2018, the City of West Allis launched its new brand. The brand was over nine months in the making and included input from residents, City leaders, business owners, City employees, and school district staff. A three-year strategic marketing campaign also launched that day. The campaign included print, digital, billboard, radio, and targeted ad spending to promote business and residential opportunities in West Allis. The campaign’s theme – That’s Why West Allis – invites business owners and residents to share their West Allis stories in their own words. In the final 3 months of 2018, ads promoting the City received over 1.6 million impressions.

Goal #1 – Brand/Image/Destination

- First full year of marketing campaign implemented
- Phase 1 of National Ave. Corridor Plan construction completed; Phase 2 begun
- Bus shelter at 92nd and National Ave. installed
- West Allis Farmers Market new brand and marketing plan developed to celebrate Market's 100th year

Goal #2 – Quality of Life

- As of June 2019, tactical data suggests a 2019 vs. 2018 decrease in crime of 23%
- City's first bike boxes painted at National Ave. and 76th St. intersection to promote safety of cyclists
- RFP issued for builder of West Allis' first dog park
- Sidewalk Poetry Project beautified neighborhoods by stamping resident-written poetry in sidewalks

Goal #3 – Citizen Engagement

- Launch of new City of West Allis website to function as virtual City Hall. 100% increase in City website visits to www.westalliswi.gov/letushelp, City's online help form
- Second annual Homeowner Resource Fair held (renamed Resident Resource Fair)
- Better Block Foundation program launched in 60th & Burnham area

Goal #4 – Economic Vitality & Sustainability

- \$15 million FIRE/NMTC allocation to support working capital
- Cobalt Partners LLC acquired nine parcels of land at 70th and Greenfield for proposed \$87 million redevelopment
- City of West Allis named KIVA City, expanding financial funding opportunities for small business owners
- Streamlining of payroll and benefit budgets through use of financial software; review and consolidation of Public Works accounts to streamline and simplify budgeting and accounting of PW operations
- Finish Implementation to Total Benefit Package
- Reduction of OPEB Liability from ~\$147 million to \$119 million

Goal #5 – Excellence in Government

- Reaccreditation secured by West Allis Health Department, West Allis Fire Department, and West Allis Police Department
- 100% of property maintenance complaints received by Building Inspection and Neighborhood Services investigated within 24 hours of receipt of complaint
- City rebranding and website win national 3CMA Savvy Awards



IMPLEMENTATION SPOTLIGHT

National Avenue has been a keystone in the social and economic history of West Allis. Built before there were cars, National Avenue continues to connect homes, businesses, and institutions across several neighborhoods. In 2016, the City adopted the National Avenue Corridor Strategic Plan to outline the future of this major thoroughfare. The project is broken into three phases, with Phase 2 expected to be complete in 2019. When complete in 2020, the newly-built National Avenue will include additional traffic calming measures, streetscaping, bike lanes, and other amenities designed to ensure National Avenue thrives as a destination corridor.

Goal #1 – Brand/Image/Destination

- Facilitated West Allis Living Streets Mural Program with Artscape Grant Program
- Burnham Pointe redevelopment continued
- City improvements made through various projects involving fencing and fabric installation at the new dog park; installation of art benches at the Library; Orchard Hills Neighborhood Signs, EANA butterfly garden; Rogers Park fencing install; Skate Park improvements; Active Street initiative and boulevard gateway sign installs.

Goal #2 – Quality of Life

- Began work to maintain or replace current, and expand the number of, security cameras Citywide
- Provided general City funding for Crisis Assessment Response Team (CART) Officer
- Continued implementation of National Ave. Corridor Strategic Plan (82nd – 76th Sts)

Goal #3 – Citizen Engagement

- Began improving information available in property files available to citizens through My Government Online software implementation
- Created Citywide Volunteer program
- Conducted comprehensive campaigns to promote 2020 Census and voting information

Goal #4 – Economic Vitality & Sustainability

- Created a Structural Deficit Action Team to make recommendations for service delivery and operational adjustments/reallocations
- Created Customer Service Center to further facilitate collaboration between citizen-facing service delivery departments
- Completed Highway 100 Corridor Study

Goal #5 – Excellence in Government

- Completed Citywide revaluation of all commercial properties.
- Selected My Government Online software to further Virtual City Hall initiative
- Provided mobile technology for staff to increase efficiencies and facilitate remote and field work
- Executed drive thru in person absentee voting to protect the health of voters, ease of use and speed of helping voters
- Established a new culture in the Assessor's Office based on fair and equitable distribution of the tax burden, transparent communication with property owners, Established transparency, accountability, and standardization of the property value appeal process.



IMPLEMENTATION SPOTLIGHT

West Allis Living Streets brought four new murals to West Allis in 2020. Led by the Artscape Committee in partnership with Milwaukee-based Wallpapered City, four artists were selected to paint new artwork on four formerly blank walls. One artist, Dan Herro, is a West Allis resident. These murals join other previously installed City murals to create a cohesive Artscape for residents and guests to enjoy. The murals will be promoted by the City as a destination attraction visitors may experience as part of other tourism initiatives being furthered as part of Strategic Goal #1 – Brand/Image/Destination. More information can be found at www.westalliswi.gov/wals

www.westalliswi.gov





5th DIST. SCHOOL

OLD HENRY CREEK
SCHOOL SITE
This site was the location of the
first school building in the
community. The building was
destroyed by fire in 1900. The
present building was built in
1901. It was the first building
to be built of brick in the
community. It was the first
building to be built of brick in
the county. It was the first
building to be built of brick in
the state.

Historical Society
Museum
1115 1st St. N.
Fargo, ND 58102
907-735-1111