



Rock Rapids

Vision, Balanced.

Strategic Goals, Objectives and Actions

Priority: Housing

Goal 1: Fulfill the community's rental and owner occupied housing needs and ensure that housing is available for residents at any point along the continuum of residential dynamics

Objective 1.1: Ensure adequate rental units exist for families (specifically multi-bedroom homes or apartments)

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Review the 2017 Housing Needs Analysis for rental demand and unit recommendations (e.g. list types here)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids RR Development 	In progress/ongoing	Discussions ongoing with private developers – something should be happening in the spring (10-12 plex)
b. Identify potential lots/parcels to address demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids RR Development 	August, 2018 and ongoing	P & Z has met to discuss some parcels – should meet with finance to get on the same page
c. Purchase or acquire option on locations as available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RR Development 	August, 2019 Ongoing	
d. Finalize incentive package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RR Development City of Rock Rapids 	August, 2018 and ongoing	Have a lot of good incentives in place for housing – in discussions with finance committee about multi-family incentives (for blighted areas, etc.). Still need to communicate what we have to offer.
e. Recruit developers given needs analysis and land availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RR Development 	In progress/ongoing	Ongoing

Objective 1.2: Develop new construction or additional owner-occupied housing options in Rock Rapids

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Review the 2017 Housing Needs Analysis for owner-occupied demand and unit recommendations (e.g. types...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids RR Development 	August, 2018 and ongoing	54 to 60 structures needed – on track with current pace of construction. May need more with community growth and structure replacement
b. Develop or update a plan (with map) that identifies demand type with existing lots/parcels and future land use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids RR Development 	FYE 2019	
c. Continue development of the four existing subdivisions through RFP and current incentives (TIF, reduced or forgivable lots)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids RR Development 	July, 2019	

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Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
d. Consider the feasibility of modular housing development, including: type and cost of unit, transportation, pad or foundation and installation plus utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development 	FYE 2020	
e. Share feasibility information with potential developers and investors, assist with lot identification and possibly financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • RR Municipal Utilities 	September, 2018 and ongoing	Ongoing

Objective 1.3: Promote the rehabilitation of existing housing in Rock Rapids

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Develop a low interest loan program for homeowners to assist with housing rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • City of Rock Rapids 	January, 2019	Some discussion ongoing. Demo project and flood have reduced dilapidated housing stock – reevaluating funding program
b. Enforce existing housing ordinances to prevent dilapidated housing issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Rock Rapids 	In progress/ongoing	Ongoing
c. Educate the community about existing programs like the NW Iowa Housing Trust Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development 	September, November 2018 and ongoing	Will be on website

Objective 1.4: Reevaluate the use of housing incentive funds and promote their availability

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Take an inventory of existing incentive funds and sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development 	August, 2018 and ongoing	List compiled, always looking to update and change (might need a down payment assistance program)
b. Create a matrix of housing incentive opportunity programs (eligibility, amount available, etc.) based upon current need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development 	August, 2018	Done and will be incorporated on new website

Priority: Resident Attraction and Retention

Goal 2: People and families want to stay in or move to Rock Rapids because services and amenities are attractive and residents are welcomed and supported by the community.

Objective 2.1: Childcare space and hours fit the needs of families in Rock Rapids

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Conduct research to understand the current and future gaps in spaces for each age level, infants to 4 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids Club 	January, 2019 and Annually	No update at this time
b. If more space is needed, identify options for growth (expansion at existing space, recruiting more home providers, new larger or additional center)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids Club 	January, 2019	No update at this time
c. Prioritize options and identify actions to pursue priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids Club 	May 2019	
d. Explore opportunities for financial subsidies for childcare options (e.g. corporate support, organizations, government)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids Club 	May 2019 and Annually	

Objective 2.2: New residents are welcomed and informed about the community, its resources and opportunities for new residents to become involved

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Work with local employers, utilities and realtors to develop a way to reach new residents with a “welcome system”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Chamber of Commerce • RR Municipal Utilities • Central Lyon CSD • Council of Churches 	August, November 2018	In the beginning stages of planning
b. Consider a “first responders” program where established family volunteers reach out to new families with a direct invitation to community events or shared community meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Chamber of Comm. • RR Municipal Utilities • Central Lyon CSD • Council of Churches 	August, November 2018	In the beginning stages of planning
c. Be intentional about inviting new residents to participation in volunteer opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Chamber of Comm. • RR Municipal Utilities • Central Lyon CSD • Council of Churches 	August, November 2018	In the beginning stages of planning

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Goal 3: Raise the profile of Rock Rapids among current and prospective residents.

Objective 3.1: Residents are retained and new people have moved to the community as a result of targeted marketing

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Marketing plan is completed and new logo is incorporated into print materials, signage and online presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • RR Chamber of Commerce 	September, December, 2018	Logo done, incorporated into many things so far, still waiting for website - still in progress
b. Videos and testimonials are collected that feature: community celebrations, industry, Main Street, schools, river, parks and trails, recreational events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • RR Chamber 	October, 2018	Still in progress – getting fall images now
c. Videos, testimonials and other community images are distributed widely through the internet, television and other outlets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • RR Chamber • Council of Churches • Central Lyon CSD 	Start distribution by January, 2019	In progress, should meet timeline

Objective 3.2: Elevate the level of two-way communication among city entities, organizations and residents

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Identify persons to take responsibility for community communication distributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Rock Rapids • RR Development • RR Chamber • Central Lyon CSD • RR Municipal Utilities 	TBD July, 2019	Still trying to determine who the right person is for this assignment. Chamber does a lot of current communications, City is considering a PT person to be dedicated to communications
b. Put tools in place to maintain ongoing communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Rock Rapids • RR Development • RR Chamber • Central Lyon CSD • RR Municipal Utilities 	TBD Ongoing	Chamber has and utilizes a large email distribution list, the new website will also be useful. Chamber is on Facebook and writes newspaper articles
c. Inventory local and county level organizations that need to be included in communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Rock Rapids • RR Development • RR Chamber • Central Lyon CSD • RR Municipal Utilities 	TBD	A task for the PT person?

Priority: Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion

Goal 4: Rock Rapids is a growing community where new and existing business and industry are succeeding and growing resulting in an increased tax base and new jobs and investment in the community.

Objective 4.1: Rock Rapids has identified targeted industries and businesses and has prepared a menu of incentives for successful recruitment efforts

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Research community needs and workforce availability to identify targeted traded and local industry and businesses (review/consider a target market analysis and laborshed study)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • IEDA (Laborshed study for county) 	August, 2019 and annually	
b. Create incentive packages based on targets, including TIF, capital options, abatement, tax credits, RLFs, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • City of Rock Rapids • RR Municipal Utilities 	August, 2018	Packages set, TIF is situational, everything is in place and ongoing – website will include this
c. Update information on LOIS regarding sites, the community, buildings, add files/brochures/photos and videos featuring assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development 	September, 2018 and ongoing	Updated – and ongoing
d. Utilize Iowa’s Business Concierge (IASourceLink) to obtain information on recruitment targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development 	Ongoing	No update at this time
e. Reach out to potential targets and site selectors, conduct visits, invite to familiarization tours, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • RR Municipal Utilities 	Ongoing	No update at this time

Objective 4.2: Existing businesses are monitored and served in order to encourage and support success and expansion in Rock Rapids

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Develop a formalized business retention and expansion program with regular visits and surveying of Rock Rapids businesses using a system such as Synchronist to address red flags and offer assistance and available incentives as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Chamber • RR Development 	September, 2019	
b. Host workshops, trainings or networking opportunities designed to assist businesses as common needs or areas of interest are identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • RR Chamber • RR Municipal Utilities • Lyon County Economic Development 	January 2019 and ongoing	Will be discussing topics for workshops or trainings

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Objective 4.3: Entrepreneurs and businesses are supported and encouraged to start, stay and/or grow businesses in Rock Rapids

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Review existing loan products for gaps (e.g. start-ups or no building collateral) and consider new products designed to take on a little more risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • RR Municipal Utilities • City of Rock Rapids 	August, 2018	Programs exist in the county for any size/type of business: City and county both have revolving loan funds – good for gap financing. Utility has an RLF too.
b. Form a think tank of community entrepreneurs who discuss local businesses and offer assistance and ideas to promote success and growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • RR Chamber 	January, 2019	A couple of people have been approached by Micah and are interested, no group has been convened yet.
c. Seek ways to highlight the stories of existing business owners/entrepreneurs to inspire new entrepreneurs and increase awareness within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development • RR Chamber 	January, 2019	Will be highlighting on website, and are in discussions for other ideas/spotlights.

Objective 4.4: Downtown Rock Rapids is thriving. Storefronts are filled and second story housing options are available

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Continue to offer the façade improvement incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Rock Rapids 	Ongoing	Ongoing: have done 3 storefront projects in past 6 months.
b. Conduct a comprehensive parking study to determine need and identify parking opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Rock Rapids 	August, 2018 2019	On agenda for next public works meeting
c. Research second story housing tax credit programs offered through IEDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Development 	December, 2019	

Priority: Health and Education

Goal 5: Strengthen the level of engagement, collaboration and dialogue between the Central Lyon Community School District and the community of Rock Rapids

Objective 5.1: Promote a local workforce by intentionally connecting faculty and students to area business professionals to improve awareness of local career opportunities and needs

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Develop program(s) to educate all teachers, guidance counselors, parents and administrators on local job opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Lyon CSD • NW AEA • Entrepreneur Think Tank 	Start process in 2018-19 school year	School staff toured DGR, industrial tech getting out into businesses too. Hosted the Lyon County Career Exploration Day. Still have work to do to get students into the businesses to see what the work is like – discussions are ongoing.
b. Create a job shadow or apprenticeship program with the school so that students can experience local job opportunities and small business ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Lyon CSD • NW AEA • Entrepreneur Think Tank 	Start process in 2018-19 school year	Working to find opportunities for job shadows and apprenticeships. Can be hard to line up, due to state restrictions (e.g. HIPA, school time requirements)

Objective 5.2: Position the Central Lyon Community School District to be a long-term attraction for new families

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Invest in overall school safety and maintenance, while regularly communicating progress and needs with residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Lyon CSD 	In progress/ongoing	Have made several safety improvements (renovations to the bus drop off, traffic signage, repainting lines) and maintenance upgrades (the roof). Have also increased the marketing of the district
b. Develop and promote a long-term term infrastructure and capital improvement plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Lyon CSD 	In progress/ongoing	Making continual updates: roofing, technology, etc. Are in the process of reaching out to community members and parents for input

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Goal 6: Ensure individual and family wellbeing throughout the community

Objective 6.1: Become a recognized provider of excellent medical services for the region

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Recruit physicians and healthcare professionals (including dentists and optometrists) to Rock Rapids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avera • Sanford • RR Development 	Fall, 2020	Dentists and optometrists will take a broader community effort.
b. Increase access to mental health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyon Cty Public Health • Sanford • Avera 	Fall, 2020	Transportation is a limiting factor for people accessing services. Will be meeting with a Resource Advocate to discuss and seek solutions for this issue
c. Develop a regular collaborative forum for all healthcare related service providers to work collectively to position Rock Rapids as a hub for regional care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyon Cty Public Health • Sanford • Avera 	Fall, 2020	

Objective 6.2: Improve access to local information on health and wellness related resources and programs

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Conduct an annual inventory of existing organizations' programs offering stewardship assistance, including an assessment of unmet needs of residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyon Cty Public Health • Sanford • Avera 	Fall, 2020 and annually	
b. Develop an awareness campaign of available services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyon Cty Public Health • Sanford • Avera 	Fall, 2020	Public Health is developing an informational brochure for county services, and are airing some commercials too.
c. Develop a community website and calendar to share information on service providers, wellness programs, youth activities and volunteer opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyon Cty Public Health • Sanford • Avera • RR Chamber 	Fall, 2020	Community Website up in November
d. Educate residents of all ages on healthy lifestyle choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyon Cty Public Health • Sanford • Avera 	Fall, 2020	County has 3 wellness programs in Rock Rapids and do blood pressure clinics where info is distributed. Public Health will work with Sanford and Avera once they are ready to offer collaborative services.

Priority: Public Facilities and Infrastructure

Goal 7: Develop a Rock Rapids Recreation and Wellness Center

Objective 7.1: Assess the overall demand and feasibility of a community owned recreation and wellness center

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Develop and/or expand a rec center project committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RR Chamber 	Fall, 2019	No committee yet, but have added a couple of new members to recreation board
b. Tour facilities in other communities to explore amenities, project development and funding, challenges to be overcome, level of community support and operational/management models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec Center Project Committee 	TBD by committee	
c. Survey area residents about interests, needs, frequency of use, membership fees and other key aspects of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec Center Project Committee 	TBD by committee	
d. Determine a budget and secure funding for an engineering/architectural firm to guide and oversee project exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec Center Project Committee • City of Rock Rapids 	TBD by committee	
e. Inventory and assess existing recreation and wellness assets in Rock Rapids and how a new facility could positively and/or negatively impact these programs or offer new partnerships and collaborative opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec Center Project Committee • City of Rock Rapids 	TBD by committee	
f. Develop recommendations on possible sites for the new or expanded facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec Center Project Committee • City of Rock Rapids 	TBD by committee	
g. Prepare recommendations to the City of Rock Rapids and other key organizations including project scope, estimated budget and potential funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec Center Project Committee 	TBD by committee	

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Objective 7.2: Secure funding for project construction and early stage operations

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Recruit a Rec and Wellness Center fundraising task team to work with the project planning committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec Center Project Committee 	TBD by committee	
b. Develop a project budget for construction and the first three years of operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec Center Fundraising Task Team 	TBD by committee	
c. Launch fundraising efforts for the new facility (e.g. capital campaign, grants, bonding and all other available options)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec Center Fundraising Task Team 	TBD by committee	

Objective 7.3: Open the new Recreation and Wellness Center

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Develop an operational plan for all programming, promotion, members services and maintenance of the new facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Rock Rapids • RR Chamber • Central Lyon CSD • Rec Center Project Committee 	TBD by committee	
b. Hire staff for the new facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Rock Rapids 	TBD by committee	
c. Undertake a community-wide membership drive in advance of the opening of the facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Rock Rapids • RR Chamber • Central Lyon CSD • Rec Center Project Committee 	TBD by committee	

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Goal 8: Expand Rock Rapids' system of biking and walking trails

Objective 8.1: Implement plan for trails expansion

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Develop a trails development committee under the City of Rock Rapids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids RR Development 	August, 2018	There has been some high level discussion but haven't had a formal committee meeting
b. Develop a trails improvement plan including funding strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trails Committee 	TBD by committee	
c. Promote plan and annual progress to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids Trails Committee 	TBD by committee	

Goal 9: Streets, sidewalks and gateways are aesthetically pleasing and in good condition.

Objective 9.1: The SW retention basin is converted to a wet pond to improve the aesthetics at that gateway

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Conduct an engineering study to determine cost and scope of project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids 	July, 2018 2019	Engineer still working on this (weather delays)
b. Research funding sources for the conversion (DNR, IDALS, USDA, State Revolving Fund, etc.) work with COG or RC&D for assistance in funding search	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids 	Ongoing	No update at this time

Objective 9.2: Streetscape improvements are made in the downtown area

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Replace lighting along Main Street and some side streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids RR Municipal Utilities 	October, 2018 and ongoing	Currently in progress on two blocks of the downtown. This stretch is scheduled for completion by end of 2018
b. Make sidewalk repairs and renovations for safety and handicap accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids 	Fall, 2021	
c. Conduct a "First Impressions" visitor exchange to get feedback on the downtown and other areas of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids RR Chamber 	April, 2019	
d. Assess needs and install Wayfinding signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Rock Rapids RR Chamber 	October, 2018 and ongoing	Ongoing as possible

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Objective 9.3: Roadways throughout the town are long-lasting, in good condition and (where feasible) can accommodate bicyclists

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Continue the replacement of city streets with concrete per city street plan	• City of Rock Rapids	5 year plan in place, ongoing	Working on Story Street – scheduled for completion this year
b. When replacing streets, add trail width where applicable	• City of Rock Rapids	5 year plan in place, ongoing	No update at this time

Goal 10: City staff are readily accessible to the public and better communication between departments enhances overall services

Objective 10.1: City staff and Council Chambers are housed in one location

Action:	Responsibility:	Timeline:	Updates/Progress:
a. Evaluate needs for consolidated government offices	• City of Rock Rapids	2023	
b. Examine options (build new, use existing, etc.)	• City of Rock Rapids	2023	
c. Determine plan of action and budget (option, engineering/architect, funding sources)	• City of Rock Rapids	2023	